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## **NATIONAL IDENTITY OF THE SERBS IN CROATIA: FROM CONSTITUTIVE PEOPLE TO MINORITY**

(Settore scientifico-disciplinare: SPS/10 - SOCIOLOGIA DELL'AMBIENTE E DEL TERRITORIO)

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***"Jednako se ponosim moga  
Srbskog roda i moje Hrvatske domovine."***

***(I am equally proud of my Serbian  
origin/nation and of my Croatian homeland)***

Nikola Tesla, 26<sup>th</sup> May 1936  
(Telegram addressed to Vladko Maček)

# NATIONAL IDENTITY OF THE SERBS IN CROATIA: FROM CONSTITUTIVE PEOPLE TO MINORITY

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## **Note on pronunciation**

Serbian/Croatian words and names will be used in this research and commonly should be pronounced as follows:

**a** - a as in father (long), above (short)

**c** - ts as in rats

**ć** - 'soft' ch, as in Pacino, chilli

**č** - 'hard' ch, as in chalk

**đ** - g as in gender, or j as in juice

**dž** - 'dzh' as in jam, edge

**e** - as in pet (short), or grey (long)

**g** - as in go (never as g in 'large' !)

**h** - 'kh' (guttural) as in loch

**i** - as in pin (short) or machine (long)

**j** - y as in yet or yes

**lj** - li as in million, halyard

**nj** - ni as in dominion, canyon

**o** - 0 as in upon

**s** - as in hiss

**š** - sh as in shawl, sugar

**u** - u as in rule

**ž** - zh, as in French jour

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Identities in general, and especially national identity, have been in the last years a very popular topic of research in the field of social studies. Scientific interest in the topic was enhanced after the World War I, following creation of numerous nation-states in Europe (Wehler, 2001). Since then, there have been numerous increasingly differentiated studies, offering diverse approaches and theoretical frameworks. The issue has gained even more importance with the enlargement of the European Union and the creation of a disputed common “European identity”.

So far, empirical studies of nation, nationalism and national identity in the ex-Yugoslavian states have predominately dealt with analyses of intensity, distribution and the effect on the day-to-day politics. Only recently, there have been studies comparing European and national identity. It has been shown that the second half of the 20th century was marked by dominant attachment to Yugoslav nation. Attachment to Serbian and Croatian nation emerged during 80’s and early 90’s. Its intensity strengthened during multiethnic conflicts in former Yugoslavia, and it remains dominant today. (Milošević Đorđević, 2007)

It seems that notions of nation, nationalism and national identity, regardless of what exactly is defined by them, will accompany us well into 21st century. Recent worldwide political developments indicate that simultaneous and contrary to leveling of nations through globalization, there is a process of further differentiation among the nations, characterized by an ever increasing number of ethnic groups looking for their political and territorial independence and by progressively stronger statements of obvious national interests of world’s most powerful nations.

While most democratic western nations have adopted a civic nationalism as the basis for their state-building, the new nation states that emerged from the dissolution of former Yugoslavia were characterized by an extremely ethnic nationalism, based rather on blood and common roots than on

a community of equal, rights-bearing citizens. According to Bazić (2009:38), the intensity of national identity is stronger among the ethnic than in the civic model of the nation.

The dissolution of Yugoslavia and of the common Yugoslav identity created the emergence of a series of new national minorities in all its ex republics, and the beginning of their struggle in order to determine and preserve their national identities.

The case of the Serb minority in Croatia is particular, because we have a situation where a relatively large minority and historically so important that it had the status of constitutive people<sup>1</sup>, entered in an armed conflict with the dominant population, the Croats, with the military support of the minority's country of origin. The result of this conflict for the Serbs in Croatia was, among others, the loss of their previous legal status, which saw them becoming a national minority overnight. Not only the Serbs have lost their centuries-long privileged status in Croatia, but they lost as well the protection offered them previously by the Yugoslav Constitution (1946, 1953, 1963 and 1974). They not only became an unwanted and hated minority, but they also became the main public enemy, the "aggressors", and very soon experienced the legal discrimination of their new status as a national minority.

This new situation produced uncertainty and an identity crisis among the Serb community in Croatia, who had no other choice but to "rediscover" or "reinvent" its own national identity in a changed society of a new formed nation-state.

Aware of the loss of their historical position, which, as a constituent people Serbs have built for centuries, and are again on the path from an unrecognized community to a community which is organizing itself through the mechanisms of personal autonomy and restoring the memory of its historical role, and are already building, in new historical circumstances, a new community of post-Yugoslav and future European society.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the 1971 Yugoslav Constitution, Croats, Serbs, Slovenians, Muslims, Montenegrins and Macedonians were considered as constitutive people or "nations" (*narodi*) regardless of their Republic of residence, while the other 18 ethnic groups and/or minorities present in Yugoslavia were considered as "nationalities" (*narodnosti*). It is interesting to point out that none of these nations represented the "majority" since the most numerous nation, the Serbs, were only the 36.3% of the entire Yugoslavian population in 1981.



The Civil (or Homeland) war in Croatia ended sixteen years ago, and in the meanwhile the country managed to gain its access into the European Union, which will soon follow (very possibly in the year 2013). But what happened in the meanwhile to Croatia's most numerous and most controversial national minority, the Serbs? Who are these Serbs today, are any of them left? Or did they "disappear" in order to be able to remain?

This research will try to answer to some of these questions, through the study of the predominant elements of Serb national identity in contemporary Croatia.

### **1.1. The structure of the thesis**

The thesis is structured into five chapters, starting from a general framework that analyses the historical aspects, continuing with a more specific approach towards the main concepts of the thesis and ending with a methodological framework that describes the techniques used and further elaborates and interprets the data gathered.

The first chapter includes some general aspects of methodological approach and makes a brief introduction of the main thesis' topics by presenting the objectives of the research and its hypotheses. It also contains the reasons why the present work represents an interesting topic for the researched area and for future research.

The second chapter presents a historical overview of the Serbs in general, starting from their settlement in the Balkans, describing the creation of the first Serb and Croatian states, the Serb migrations in the Croatian territories<sup>2</sup> and the realization of their special status, the formation of the first and second Yugoslavia, and finally the events that brought to the dissolution of Yugoslavia and to the new Serb status in Croatia.

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<sup>2</sup> During most of its Middle Eve and Modern history, most Croatian territories were incorporated into Hungarian and successively into the Austro-Hungarian Empire, while the rest were occupied by Venetian and Ottoman rule.

The third chapter explores the Legislation framework of independent Croatian state after 1992 concerning minority rights in general, with a special reference to the Serb status as a new minority and its respective rights.

The fourth chapter introduces the key concept of the research: national identity according to various theories, as well as the introduction of correlated concepts such as nation, nationalism, nationality. Since the Serbs of Croatia are at the same time a national, ethnic, cultural and religious minority, also these types of identity have been introduced.

The last chapter deals with the methodological aspects of the research. The questionnaire was used as a methodological tool, in order to verify the hypothesis and the objectives of the research. The obtained answers were quantified into variables, and their correlation was analyzed in order to detect the factors that influence the attitudes of the respondents. A focus group was also used as a qualitative methodological tool, which enabled a further analysis and offered a deeper understanding of the phenomenon.

The final part of the thesis represents the conclusive part, the bibliography and the appendixes.

## CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH THEME

### 1.1. Choosing the research theme

The first question that comes into mind when reading the title of the thesis is “why this theme?”. Aware of the uncertainty and broadness of the central concept, national identity, it has been decided to analyze it from the perspective of a “new” national minority, the Serbs in Croatia. The main reason is that the Serbs living in Croatia are at the same time a national, ethnic, religious and cultural minority in a country where they used to be a constitutive people. The dissolution of Yugoslavia produced the disintegration of the common civic “Yugoslav” identity and the creation of new identities, thus creating an “identity crisis” among different groups of population. For most Serbs in Croatia, identification with the Yugoslav nation was one among many social identities that were lost and have not been adequately replaced so far. During the last decades names of states and national symbols changed frequently. Not well defined and not deeply rooted national symbols lead to confusion about national identity by making it harder to identify with the state, favoring a primordial concept of national identity. The new minorities, such as the Serbs in Croatia, were forced to “rediscover” or sometimes even “invent” their national identity in order to find their place in the society of a new established nation state.

This research will study the concept of national identity among the Serb minority in Croatia through the analysis of some elements of their contemporary national identity. Starting from the premise that Serb national identity is a result of the interaction between the Serb ethnic, cultural and religious identity and it has evolved during the formation of the first nation-states under the expansion of nationalism, this research will try to measure the level of importance of each of these identities among the chosen sample, in order to identify the most predominant aspect(s) of Serb national identity. Another premise is that Serb national identity is based on a predominantly

primordialistic concept of identity<sup>3</sup>, which limits the importance of the state, culture<sup>4</sup> and politics. Under such circumstances, national identity is primarily tied to ethnic and personal characteristics (such as birth, history, tradition, territory, language, alphabet, religion and ancestry).

The objectives of the research are the following:

- Investigate the predominant aspects of national identity among the Serb minority in contemporary Croatia;
- Compare the differences and find similarities in the attitudes toward elements of national identity on a territorial division of the sample;
- Determine the basic concepts of national identity in theoretical approaches and among the respondents;
- Examine the presence of different understandings of the aspects of national identity, as well as experiences, emotions and individual constructs of national identity;

## **1.2 The research questions and the hypotheses**

Aside from the given objectives, the research will also try to answer the following questions by using various techniques of measurement:

- How do the Serbs in Croatia identify themselves today (nationally and religiously)?
- Does a common Serb identity in Croatia exist today? If not, how does it differ from region to region? What are the factors that influence this differentiation?
- Will most of the respondents, regardless of the territorial distribution, highly rate (“very important” or “moderately important”) all the questions about the importance

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<sup>3</sup> See Milošević-Đorđević J. (2007), “Primordialistic concept of national identity in Serbia”, *Psihologija*, Vol. 40 (3), 385-397

<sup>4</sup> Intended here as common mass and civil culture.

of the ethnic aspects (religion, tradition, costumes, language, alphabet, history, myths) of their national group for the preservation of their identity in Croatia?

- What will prevail among the Serb minority in Croatia: a modern/civic or rather a traditional/ethnic model of national identity?
- Will the chosen areas of Istria and Zagreb show more modern attitudes in despite of the more traditional responses offered by the War affected area and the Area of peaceful integration?
- Do the Serbs feel discriminated with their new status (from constitutional people to minority)? Do they wish to change their status and regain the previous one?
- Is there a sense of belonging to the state of origin (Serbia), and what is it influenced from?
- What is stronger: the attachment to the state symbols of the country of origin (Serbia), or to the symbols of the country of residence (Croatia)?
- How do the Serbs feel about the dominant population, the Croats? What trend is predominant: a high degree of ethnic tolerance or rather a discriminatory feeling with elements of ethno nationalism?

The above listed research questions simply introduce some of the aspects of Serb national identity in Croatia and their potential relationships, while the chosen hypotheses will test a novel relationship with the use of several statistical techniques. There are four main hypotheses<sup>5</sup> that have been chosen which express the probable relationship between variables:

First hypothesis (H1): *Serbian national identity in general is defined by a strong religious (Christian Orthodox) connotation. Therefore, a high percentage of respondents who will identify as Serbs or Croatian Serbs will mostly indicate Christian Orthodoxy as their religious confession. A correlation between national self-identification and religious confession will show a strong association between the two categories. Additionally, all the questions related to the role of religion*

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<sup>5</sup> The techniques that will be used in this research to measure correlations and strength of association between variables (Chi-square test, T-test, etc.) imply the existence of a null hypothesis (no relation) and of an alternate hypothesis (the variables are related) which are then whether accepted or rejected depending on the obtained result. They will be mentioned in the sections regarding data analysis in chapter 5 ("Fieldwork").

*in preserving the Serb national identity in Croatia will be highly rated (“very important) by most of the respondents.*

*Second hypothesis (H2): Assuming that national self-identification is a dependent variable, it will be influenced by elements (independent variables) such as age, level of education, negative war experiences, active membership in Serb organization, country of birth and longer period of stay in Serbia. The correlation between these variables will show that there is a relationship between them, expressed in a high strength of association.*

*Third hypothesis (H3): Since Serb national identity in general, as most of the eastern nations, can be considered mostly ethnic rather than civic, it is expected that the respondents will give higher importance to the ethnic/primordial elements rather than to the civic/modern ones. Moreover, the respondents will show a higher degree of traditionalism than modernity (expressed in indexes that will be subsequently calculated).*

*Fourth hypothesis (H4): The respondents will show a high degree of ethnic tolerance toward the Croats, regardless of the territorial distribution, which will show that the Serbs of Croatia are mostly a high tolerant population.*

### **1.3 Methodological approach**

This research studies the concept of national identity among a minority group using techniques which allow a possible generalization (Quantitative research on a representative sample of Serb ethnic citizens in Croatia) but also other techniques that examine the deep personal interpretations that can't be measured by quantitative tools (qualitative techniques like focus groups).

The obtained answers will be quantified and transformed into variables by using the SPSS. The most relevant ones will be correlated and expressed into crosstabs and illustrated into bar charts.

### **1.4 Fieldwork**

The quantitative investigation technique utilized to measure the elements of national identity among the Serbs in Croatia is a closed ended questionnaire, combined with dichotomous yes/no questions, as well as multiple choice and categorical questions, open ended questions and importance questions that rate the importance of a particular issue. The obtained answers were finally elaborated by SPSS, to better quantify the results. A further qualitative research method, the focus group, was used in order to get a deeper insight of the studied phenomenon.

## **1.5 Advantages and limitations**

The present thesis offers a real and current situation in the republic of Croatia, among a limited group of its citizens. Although the chosen sample is statistically representative, it can never be fully representative of the whole reality, but it can be a good indicator of the new tendencies.

One of the most important limitations is the fact that there are not many researches about the Serb national identity in general, and practically none about the Serb identity in Croatia. Aside from few studies about the possibility of cohabitation between Serb returnees and Croats, the theme has been practically neglected. This unconcern about the Serbs in Croatia heavily influenced the lack of sources relevant to the theme of this research.

Since the Serbs from Croatia were one of the constitutive people in former Yugoslavia, they were not included in the studies about minorities and ethnic distance that were previously conducted. They became a theme of interest only in the numerous reports dealing with human rights, where they represented the most numerous refugees in the region and the most subjected group to discriminatory laws.

This lack of information and general disinterest about the Serbs of Croatia outside the conflict context can also be interpreted as an advantage of this research, because it gathers new useful information about social attitudes that have never been studied before. However, the lack of previous studies regarding the subject of the research increases the possibilities of erroneous assumptions and deductions about the phenomenon, as well as the impossibility to compare the obtained results with previous ones questions their frequency and significance.



## **1.6 The relevance of the research**

The ethnic conflict in former Yugoslavia and its consequences has been for quite a time at the center of various studies and researches, but none of these ever dealt with the topic of national identity among the “new” minorities that emerged from the dissolution of Yugoslavia. Most of the studies were based on some aspects of national minority among the dominant population (whether Serb or Croat), on a comparison between two or more nations, on ethnic distance between minority and majority, and more recently, on the attitudes toward a new European identity.

This research offers a close insight in a group that hasn't been appropriately studied, and can be seen as the first attempt in studying the Serb minority of Croatia from a social point of view, where their attitudes are the main subjects of interest. It also offers a comprehensive analysis of all their social and collective identities that differs them from the “Others”, and make them unique.

The questions formulated in the given questionnaires<sup>6</sup> are a fruitful source of information that represent a precious database and can be used for future studies. The theme of the research and the obtained result leave room for further comparison in the future.

Thus this research presents a challenge and a helpful resource for future studies and researches which will deal with minority national identity, and especially among the new minorities that have appeared after the dissolution of former Yugoslavia.

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<sup>6</sup> See appendix number 1

## CHAPTER 2:

### THE SERBS OF CROATIA: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

During the process of definition of the research question, it is essential to define the subject of the research. As a consequence, the first research question is quite concrete: who are the western Serbs residing in today's Croatia? The answer is far from being simple. It is not enough to define the Serbs as South Slavs of Christian Orthodox faith, whose mother country is today's Serbia and who settled early in today's Croatia, where they became through the centuries a significant national minority<sup>7</sup>.

Although the temporal and geographic context of research focuses on the contemporary status of the Serbs in today's Republic of Croatia, it is impossible to understand the peculiarity of the subject of the research, and the research itself, without a deeper explanation of its historical and socio-cultural background. Since the case of the Serb minority in Croatia is a particular one, with a very tumultuous history that marked their status in today's Croatia, it would be impossible to define them without understanding their history in the Croatian territories.

The Slav phenomenon in general is very complex and most historians have concerns about the prehistory and the origin of the Serbs and Slavs in general. A further difficulty is represented by the attempts of various historians to give a modern national character (whether Serb or Croat) to these early Slav tribes who settled in the Balkan Peninsula. Up to the 7<sup>th</sup> century, Serbs as well as Croats weren't a defined nation, but rather tribes or social classes of the South Slavs. The name of Serbs and Croats became a nation and received its actual ethnonymic designation only during the creation of the first South Slavic states in the Balkans. (Nikolić; 1935:36) But even this period is full of uncertainties because it is still too early to distinguish a national identity in the modern sense of its

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<sup>7</sup> The legal status of national minority was given to the Serbs for the first time in 1991, when Croatia declared independence from Yugoslavia. They held through their history in Croatian territories a special status, but they were not referred to as a minority.

meaning, which is a phenomenon that will rise only in the 19th century, for both the Serbs and the Croats.

As a consequence, it is very difficult to make a clear distinction between Serbs and Croats until the Middle Ages, and especially between the territories they inhabited. Upon their arrival in the Balkans, they both interacted and mixed between each other, as well with other Slavs and the indigenous population of the Balkans (Illyrians, Thracians and others).

Still today various historians and social scientists argue about the national identity of the Serbs living outside Serbia, especially in today's Bosnia and Herzegovina and in today's Croatia. The reason for such a practice is to be found in the past attempts of various national political options to neglect whether the Serbian or Croatian national being in order to gain political points or to achieve higher goals or interests. This is why Serbs in Croatian territories are known under different names, such as *Vlachs*, *Rascians*, *Uskoks*, *Greeks*, *Schismatics* and others (Ivić; 1922:7), although many historians for various political purposes, especially Croats, try to neglect their common (Serb) identity.

National identity and national consciousness is deeply rooted in the history of each nation, so it is essential to present and analyze the most significant historical stages of the Serbs in the territories of contemporary Croatia, as well as the creation of the Serbian nation state. In order to put some clarity and define as good as possible the subject of the research and its ethno genesis, it is necessary to begin from the first mention and appearance of Serb tribes in the Balkan Peninsula, with emphasis on the territories of today's Croatia. Since the Serbs and Croats share a very similar language and have lived for centuries adjacent to each other, their history is interconnected. It is impossible to trace a Serb history in the territories of today's Croatia and ignore the history of Croatia and its people. Therefore, a comparative history of both their people and their nations is necessary in order to understand their ethno genesis, their relations and their diversities and/or similarities, all of which contributed to create an individual national identity. Since this is not a

historical research, the synthesized and selected historical overview that follows shouldn't be criticized, but rather considered as an introduction that will help to understand better the subject of the research.

### **7.1. Serb prehistory and early settlements in the Balkans**

As it has been mentioned in the introduction, Serbs belong to the group of South Slavic peoples, who are an ethnic and linguistic branch of Indo-European peoples, living mainly in Central and Eastern Europe, and in the Balkans. Slavs are classified geographically and linguistically into West Slavic (including Czechs, Kashubs, Poles, Slovaks, Sorbs, Silesians), East Slavic (including Belarusians, Russians and Ukrainians), and South Slavic (including Bosniaks, Bulgarians, Croats, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Serbs and Slovenes)<sup>8</sup>.

The circumstances surrounding the formation and expansion of Slav identity remain a topic of intense academic debate. The question of Slavic origins has generated many theories, none of which have been universally accepted. It is no intention of this research to take part in the debate over the origin of the Slavic tribes, but rather present only generally accepted facts and theories concerning the Slav early history.

Little is known about the Serbs and the South Slavs in general before the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Their history prior to this can only be tentatively hypothesized via archeological and linguistic studies. According to Porphyrogenitos both Serbs and Croats came to the Balkans from an original homeland called, consecutively, White Croatia and White Serbia. In this context, the term "white" designates "west" as well as "unbaptized" and "pagan". (Mandić; 1990:18) According to the Byzantine emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus, whose work "De Administrando Imperio" is the main source of information on Slavic arrival in the Balkans, White Croatia was located somewhere between Bavaria, Hungary and White Serbia (Barada 1934:3-4). In more specific terms, Porphyrogenitus'

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<sup>8</sup> Encyclopædia Britannica. "Slav (people) - Britannica Online Encyclopedia". Britannica.com. Retrieved 28-01-2011

Great or White Croatia, extended north of Hungary and east of Germany, in today's Czech and Slovakia, and south of Poland. (Mandić; 1990:18-19)

On the other side, White Serbia (also known as *Bojka*), the original homeland of today's Serbs, was situated along the Elbe river, in today's northern Czech Republic. (Mandić; 1990:24) According to Porphyrogenitus, White Croatia and White Serbia were adjacent. (Barada; 1934:5). Although the names Serbs and Croats appear in their original homelands, these Slavs at the time didn't have a clear national identity, these were rather names for dominant tribes in a general Slav mass united by a common language. (Mandić; 1990:30) Prior to their settlement in the Byzantine Empire, these early Slav tribes were known by the Byzantines as *Veneti/Wends*, *Antes* and *Sclaveni* (Ćirković; 2008:47). All of these terms referred to "barbarian" tribes living in proximity of the Byzantine Empire, whether along the lower Danube (*Antes*), the middle Danube (*Sclaveni*) or between the rivers Elbe and Oder (*Wends*). However, by the year 800, the term *Sclaveni* also referred specifically to Slavic mobile military colonists who settled as allies within the territories of the Byzantine Empire<sup>9</sup>. Eventually, the name Slav (deriving from the *Sclaveni*) prevailed and under the general name of *Sclaveni/Slavs*, these early Slav tribes occupied territories of central Europe from the Danube till the Alps and the whole Balkans, while the names of Serbs and Croats on the south will appear in the sources only in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. (Mandić; 1990: 29)

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<sup>9</sup> "Slavs." Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium. Volume 3, pp. 1916-1919.

Figure 1: Slavic people in the 6<sup>th</sup> century



Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Slavic\\_peoples\\_6th\\_century\\_historical\\_map.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Slavic_peoples_6th_century_historical_map.jpg)

**Figure 2: Early Serb migrations**



Source: [http://commons.wikimedia.org/?title=File:Migration\\_of\\_Serbs.png](http://commons.wikimedia.org/?title=File:Migration_of_Serbs.png)

The first arrival of Slav tribes to the south, in the Byzantine territory, is a result of the Great Migration Period at the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> century. The territories of White Croatia and White Serbia were conquered by the nomadic tribe of Avars in the 5<sup>th</sup> century and the Slav tribes were subdued to the new strong ruler. The big Avar state lied between the Alps, the Sava and Danube rivers, the Black and the Baltic Sea, as well as the rivers Don, Donets and Elbe, across the Slav territories. This state was constituted by various subjugated Slavic tribes, while the central state on the banks of the Danube was purely Avarian. (Barada; 1934:9) The Avars, who arrived at the banks of the Danube in 558, established themselves as rulers of the Slavs who inhabited the borders around their centers, and often galvanized Slav groups and led them into the Byzantine territory. (Ćirković; 2004:8) This was the first encounter between Slav tribes and the Byzantine Empire (which ruled at the time over the whole Balkan Peninsula and beyond), characterized by incursions

and raids. As a result of internal disorders and weakening of the Byzantine Empire during the 5<sup>th</sup> century, the borders of the empire became unprotected and the early Slav tribes started to cross the border not only for looting, but also for permanent settlement. (Ćorović; 2010:33)

It is important to note that the Slavs didn't settle in the Balkans at one time, but during two main migration flows: the first one, between the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> century, when a generally Slavic population with the Avars and the Goths came to the right bank of the Danube; the second one, during the 7<sup>th</sup> century, when specific Slav tribes as the Croats (who came first), then the Serbs and the Bulgarians, inhabited the southern territories. The second migration flow is quite important because the Serbs and the Croats, as well as the Bulgarians, came as built nations<sup>10</sup> and during time they melted with the Slavs of the first migration flow and thus created their first national states. (Mandić; 1990: 30)

The second migration flow during the 7<sup>th</sup> century is better documented than the first one, and it provides important information about the settlement for both the Serb and the Croat tribes in the territories of the Byzantine Empire. Moreover, the weakening of the Avar state in the 7<sup>th</sup> century encouraged several revolts among the Slav tribes in order to free themselves from the Avarian rule. The Byzantine Empire supported these revolts, and as a consequence, the emperor Heraclius (c. 575 – 641) offered free lands to these Slav tribes in exchange for their fight against the Avars. (Ćorović; 2010:37). The early Croat tribes arrived in the Avar territories of Pannonia and Dalmatia, between the years 625 and 630. (Mandić; 1990:39) They came as warriors to these territories upon a request of help by the Byzantine emperor Heraclius in order to defeat the Avars. When they accomplished their mission, they were free to settle in the liberated territories. They inhabited the Roman provinces of Dalmatia, Illyria and Pannonia. (Mandić; 1990: 43)

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<sup>10</sup> They were not nations in the modern connotation, but rather tribes who bore a name that characterized them, which later became synonym of their nation.



According to Constantine Porphyrogenitus, the early Serbs came some time later in the Byzantine Empire, probably in the year 635 or 636. (Mandić; 1990:55) An Unknown Archont<sup>11</sup> led half of the Serbian folk in the Balkans and claimed protection of the emperor Heraclius, who gave them land in the province of Thessaloniki at a place called Serblia. After some time they decided to depart home, but having crossed the Danube, they sought permission to return. They were then given land to settle on in what is now Serbia (i.e. the region of the Lim and Piva rivers), Paganía<sup>12</sup> (the lower Neretva), Zahumlje, Trebinje and Konavli, regions which have been made desolate by the Avars. (Fine; 1983:52)

By the end of 7th century, the Slavs occupied most parts of the Balkans, and the territories they inhabited in the Byzantine Empire were called "Sclaviniae", based on their general name Sclaveni (Slavs). (Ćirković; 2008: 47) Both the Serbs and the Croats organized their territories upon their settlement, but they weren't actual states, rather tribal organizations of various sizes. These groups were led by native chiefs, called *župans* ("heads of tribal states"), because they were organized into *župas*, a form of territorial organization, being roughly equivalent to a county. (Stanojević; 1923:7-8) Each *župa* consisted of several villages, linked by clan (i.e. extended family, the so-called *zadruga*) relationships. (Ćorović; 2010:71) The *župas* became part of Serbian principalities led first by a *knez* ("duke, prince, archont") and then subsequently by *župans*, while the Croat tribes were ruled by *bans*<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> The Unknown Archont is a conventional name given by historians to the Serbian leader who led the White Serbs from their homeland to settle in the Balkans after 610, during the reign of Byzantine Emperor Heraclius (610-641). The main record of this person is in the "De Administrando Imperio", a book written in the 950s by Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus.

<sup>12</sup> According to Byzantine emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus in his "De Administrando Imperio" (Chapter 36), "Pagani are descended from the unbaptized Serbs", while according to the Chronicle of the Priest of Duklja written 1298-1300, the region has also been referred to as being part of Red Croatia. As a consequence, both Serbs and the Croats historians appropriated this land. However, Paganía kept its own identity and independence for a long time, until it was incorporated in the Kingdom of Croatia during the 11<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>13</sup> Ban was the Croatian name for a ruler of a tribe, which was made by several *župas* (villages with brotherhoods). The ban was both referee and duke, and had the authority to convoke the council of elders. It was considered as the most dignitaries among all the rulers. (Horvat; 1924:24) In historiography it is referred to "duke" or "prince".

During the course of the 8th and 9th century these tribal organizations would become embryonic Medieval states: the Kingdom of Croatia (Dalmatia) and the Principality of Serbia, known later as *Raška/Rascia*, as well as the powerful Bulgarian Empire.

## 7.2. The Serbian and Croatian Medieval states

The peoples, who inhabited the lands of today's Istria, Medjugorje, Dalmatia, Croatia, Slavonia with Syrmia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Monte Negro, a part of northern Albania and Serbia, were the same from an ethnical point of view. On the contrary, the lands they inhabited didn't form a unitary state until the year 1918, so the expansion of the name Serb and/or Croat in the past depended on the political power of whether one or the other part. (Šišić; 1920:9-10)

The history of the Croatian people and of their state can be divided and summarized into four periods: the first one includes the period from their settlement in the Balkans and the period of Croatian Princes and Kings of native birth up to the crowning of the Hungarian king Coloman as Croatian-Hungarian king, i.e. from the mid-6<sup>th</sup> century to the year 1102; the second period goes from 1102 to 1526, i.e. from the crowning of the Croatian-Hungarian king Coloman to the battle on Mohacs Field; the third period, dating from 1526 to 1790, when Croatia was ruled by the royal house of Habsburgs; the fourth period goes from the year 1790 to 1918, and it is characterized by the Habsburg rule over Croatian territories. (Šišić; 1920:48-50) Although Ferdo Šišić, a renowned Croatian historian, makes a distinction of the Croatian history in four periods, it is necessary to include as well the more recent history: Croatia in the first Yugoslavia (1918-1941), The Independent State of Croatia (1941-1945), Croatia as a republic in Tito's (or second) Yugoslavia (1945-1991), and finally, the internationally recognized Republic of Croatia (January 1992). This paragraph will deal with the first and second period, while the other periods will be covered by the following sections.

When the early Croat tribes settled in Pannonia and in Dalmatia, they didn't form a unitary state. Partly it was because of their geographic position which was divided by the rivers Kupa and Sava, being Dalmatia<sup>14</sup> south of these rivers, and Pannonia on the north. As a consequence, individual Croat tribes lived separately; each tribe was ruled by a "ban" (sometimes referred to as prince) and spread in different districts called "banovine"<sup>15</sup>. (Horvat; 1924:27) It is natural that some of these bans tended to subject the other tribes, which led to several internal wars. Eventually, both the Pannonian and the Dalmatian Croatia had their own ban, which ruled separately and independently. A further obstacle to a unitary Croatian state was the separate development of Pannonia, which fell under Avar rule during the first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century. (Horvat; 1924:28) The arrival of the Franks at the doors of Croatian lands at the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> century marked a new stage in Croatian history. The Franks first defeated the Avars in Pannonia with the help of the Pannonian Croats, and then tried to conquer the Croatian lands. The Franks didn't succeed in their attempt, but when their king Charlemagne was crowned by the Roman pope Leo III in the year 800, the Croats recognized him as their supreme ruler. With the new crown, Charlemagne became the protector of all Christian lands on the west, and since the Croat lands used to belong to the West Roman Empire, it was natural that the Croats would accept Charlemagne as their ruler. Croats were still able to choose their own bans and rule in their traditional way, but they had to recognize the new Christian king and ask approval for their election. (Horvat; 1924:29) At that time (probably under the Frankish influence) two Croatian principalities were formed: one in the former Roman Pannonia between the Sava and Drava rivers, and the other was formed in the hinterland of the Dalmatian coast and the coast of Dalmatia. The first known rulers of these principalities (the early 9<sup>th</sup> century) were the princes (bans) Ljudevit in Pannonia and Borna in Dalmatia. Very soon the Croats rebelled to the

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<sup>14</sup> With the exception of the cities on the coast and the islands which remained under Byzantine rule, in the so called Byzantine Thema of Dalmatia. The Byzantium will renounce its rule over Dalmatia in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, during king Tomislav's rule.

<sup>15</sup> The first known *banovinas* are "White Croatia", which included Istria and Dalmatia till the river Cetina, while "Red Croatia" was formed by the southern regions of Duklja, Zahumlje and Travunja. (Horvat; 1924: 28) The latter will be inhabited and conquered by the Serbs, becoming Serbian principalities and eventually part of the medieval Serbian kingdom.

Frankish rule, especially in Pannonian Croatia. The resistance was led by the Pannonian ban Ljudevit Posavski, and it spread to the neighboring counties, but it didn't succeed for several reasons. However, this event is interesting and therefore mentioned here, because it was the first time (recorded in historiography) that Croats, Serbs and Slovenes collaborated to achieve a common goal. The Serbs of the river Timok are explicitly mentioned in having participated to the rebellion raised by the Pannonian ban (Horvat; 1924:30). After the demise of the rebellion, Ljudevit Posavski had to escape from Frankish retaliation, and according to Porphyrogenitus he sought refuge in Serbian lands. For unknown reasons, during his stay among the Serbs, prince Ljudevit killed the Serb *župan* who offered his shelter and thus appropriated all of his lands. (Horvat; 1924:74) After Ljudevit's escape in 822, Pannonian Croatia came again under Frankish rule.

Prince Trpimir, who ruled from 845 to 864 in Dalmatian Croatia, issued in 852 the oldest known governmental document in the Latin script, where the Croatian name was explicitly mentioned for the first time (*dux Chroatorum* and *regnum Chroatorum*). This is important, because it means that at the time Croatia, although not yet a kingdom, ruled as an independent state, free from Frankish and Byzantine rule. Prince Trpimir is also the founder of the royal house of Trpimirović, which will govern Croatia until the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century (with interruptions). Probably during Trpimir's rule the diocese of Nin was established, which was responsible for the entire area under the rule of Croatian rulers. He also founded the first Benedictine monastery in Croatia. (Horvat; 1924:34)

In the meanwhile, Dalmatian Croatia was threatened by a new force at the Adriatic coast, the Venetians. In the 9<sup>th</sup> century begins the period of conflict between Croats and Venetians that will last for centuries. Moreover, in the first half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century began a process of gradual independence of Croatian principalities in Dalmatia from the Frankish supreme rule, which ended in the era of prince Branimir whom the Pope recognized as independent ruler. At the end of 9<sup>th</sup> century another important factor in Croatian history took place: the appearance of Hungarians in the Pannonian Plain.

Figure 3: The Balkans in the late 9<sup>th</sup> century



Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Balkans850.png>

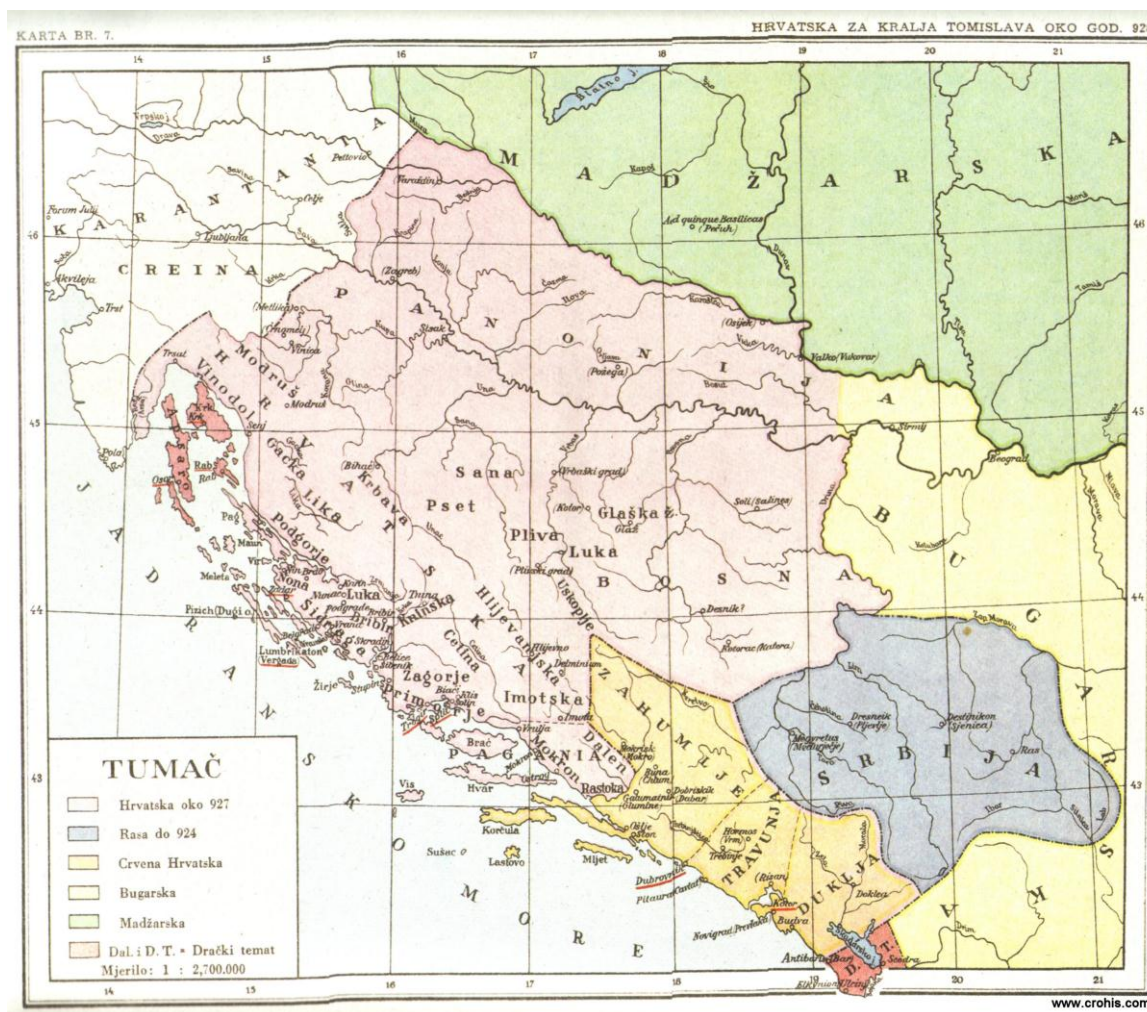
Croatia was ruled by bans (princes) up to the year 925, when Pope John X crowned Tomislav, making him *rex Croatorum*, King of Croatia and Dalmatia. (Horvat; 1924:7) From Tomislav's rule on, Croatian rulers constantly wore the title of king, a sign that marked the strengthening of the Croatian medieval state. Tomislav (910 - 928) fought successfully against the Bulgarians and Hungarians, thus extending his authority in the area between the rivers Sava and Drava and uniting all Croatian lands. (Horvat; 1924:42) The Croats interfered also in the opportunity of neighboring Serbia. The Croatian court has become the refuge of exiled Serbian contenders, as well as a base for their military campaigns. Among the first to seek refuge toward the Croats was Peter Gojniković,

who undertook a successful action in 891, chasing away from Serbia Prvoslav, Bran and Stephen, sons of Serbian Prince Mutimir. (Budak; 1994:20)

Helping Byzantium in their conflict with the Bulgarians, Croatia became a Byzantine ally, together with Serbia. As a consequence, Byzantine entrusted Croatia with the administration of their territories in Dalmatia. Another important event occurred during Tomislav's rule, which is worth mentioning. Since the Serbian župan Zaharije betrayed the Bulgarians and joined the Byzantines together with the Croats, the Bulgarians wanted to get revenge for the suffered grievance. As a result, in 924, a mighty Bulgarian army was sent to Serbian lands in order to punish Zaharije and the Serb people for the betrayal. Being aware of the fact that he was not able to face such a power, Zaharije sought help and protection to the Croatian King Tomislav. Many Serbs, as well as Zaharije, were granted shelter in Croatian lands and thus saved their lives, while the remaining Serbs were taken into slavery by the Bulgarians. (Horvat; 1924:43)

The first successors of king Tomislav maintained the territory and power of the Croatian state, but it later deteriorated because of dynastic struggles. (Horvatić; 1991:61) Among his successors was Petar Krešimir IV (1058-74), who bore the title of king of Croatia and Dalmatia, meaning that he ruled over former Byzantine territories. He is worth mentioning because he reestablished the bishopric of Nin (after it had been abolished and not recognized as a metropolitanate having jurisdiction over the entire territory of Croatia), and because during his reign the Croats chose western Christianity (as consequence of the Great Schism in 1054), i.e. Roman Catholicism. (Horvatić; 1991:61) As a Pope's ally, Croatia fought against Byzantium and lost, while at the same time both the Venetians and the Byzantines continued menacing Dalmatian Croatia.

Figure 4: Croatian kingdom under Tomislav (year 928 ca.)



Source: [www.crohis.com](http://www.crohis.com)

Following the disappearance of the major native dynasty by the end of the 11<sup>th</sup> century in the battle of Gvozd Mountain, and in attempt to reestablish the unity of Croatian territory, representative of Croatian tribes agreed in the *Pacta Conventa*<sup>16</sup> on a personal union with king Coloman of Hungary in 1102. From then until 1918, the Croatian state was, regardless of the size of its territory, tied by personal union to Hungary - that is, Croatia shared a ruler with Hungary but had separate statal and legal attributes. (Horvatić; 1991:62) The trouble was the relocation of most of the central (royal) power outside the state. Croatia has lost the political center around which it could gather, left to

<sup>16</sup> Pacta conventa (Lat. "agreed accords") was an alleged agreement concluded between King Coloman of Hungary and the Croatian nobility. While some claim it was a voluntary union of the two crowns, leaving Croatia as a sovereign state, others argue that Hungary simply annexed Croatia outright and forced an agreement.

accelerated feudalization and atomization of its societies. Thus, in some way, at the end of its independence, Croatia found itself where it started three centuries earlier: shattered into regions (*županije*). (Budak 1994:40) Croatia continued to exist as a dual monarchy ruled by a Hungarian king, first by the Arpads dynasty until the year 1290 and then by the House of Anjou until 1526 (with several interruptions)<sup>17</sup>.

The arrival of the Ottomans during the 14<sup>th</sup> century and their conquest of most of the Balkan Peninsula in the following years had a very strong impact on all the political matters of the neighboring countries and beyond. Especially Croatia found itself in a very difficult position: surrounded by the Ottomans on one side and the Venetians on the other.

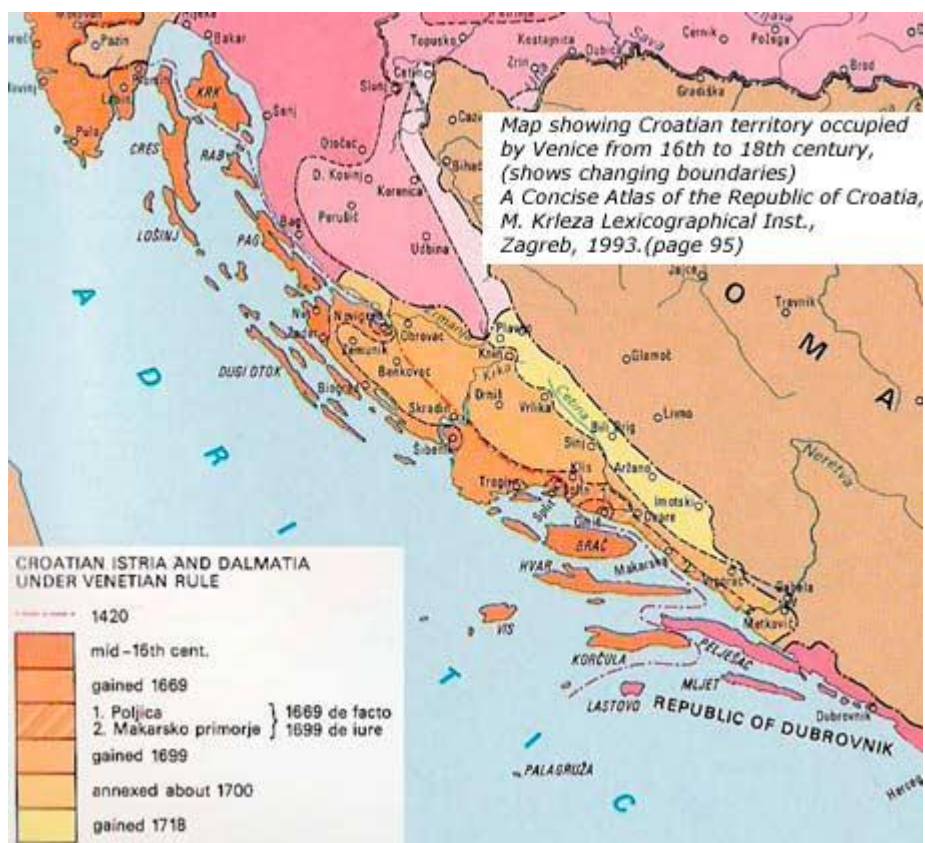
The 1526 Battle of Mohacs and the death of Hungarian King Louis II marked the end of the Hungarian authority over Croatia. The Croatian parliament, sitting at Cetin on January 1, 1527, unanimously elected Ferdinand Habsburg of Austria as King of Croatia. The parts of Croatia that were not occupied by the Ottomans received Austrian rule and protection. Croatia thus became a frontier of Christendom.

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<sup>17</sup> Croatia was ruled by the House of Luxembourg (1387-1437), the House of Habsburg (1438 -1439, 1440-1457), the Jagiellon dynasty (1440-1444, 1490-1526), the House of Hunyadi (1458-1490), and the House of Zápolya (1526-1540). The latter was due to Kingship disputed between Ferdinand of Austria and John Zápolya during the Ottoman invasion.



**Figure 5: Croatian territory under Venetian rule**



It is important to note that the Croats were the first among the other South Slavs to convert to Christianity, during the first half of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. (Horvat; 1924:26) This is understandable, due to the fact that they inhabited the lands that were most closely situated to Rome and the pope, i.e. the center of Christian life. The lands they inhabited were purely Christian, with several dioceses in Dalmatia, as well as in Pannonia. As a consequence, their conversion to Christianity happened more naturally than in any other South Slav tribe. Nevertheless, Christianity among the Croats strengthened at the beginning of 9<sup>th</sup> century under Frankish rule, and probably through the action of the clergy from the Patriarchate of Aquileia. At the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century Dalmatian Croats were baptized from the Frankish missionaries and soon after a separate Croatian diocese was established in Nin which was directly subjected to the Pope. (Horvat; 1924:72) The first known by name Christian Dalmatian-Croatian Prince was Višeslav (about 800), who left behind a baptistery which remains an important symbol of early Croatian history and the people's conversion to

Christianity. However, Croatia was torn between two religious spheres of influence: the Roman/Latin and the Byzantine Christianity. Since the islands on the Adriatic and most of the towns on the coast remained under Byzantine rule during the first centuries, until the Venetians conquered them, the Byzantine church had major influence on the Croats living in that area, i.e. Dalmatia. On the other side, the geographic proximity to Rome and the West Christian world in general, as well as the missionary work done by Frankish priests, brought the Roman influence in Pannonian Croatia. The connection between Dalmatian cities and Croatian hinterland during king Tomislav's rule encouraged the connection of the two ecclesiastical areas, especially since the Dalmatian towns came again under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Pope.

Over time the differences between the two rites became more emphasized until the great schism finally occurred in 1054, creating two distinct churches. Of all the South Slavs, only Croats and Slovenes became followers of the West Christianity, which created a socio-cultural gap between them and the other south Slavs who accepted Greek Orthodoxy (Serbs, Montenegrins, Macedonians and Bulgarians).

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The Serbs are first mentioned in the west part of the Balkan Peninsula in 822. They populated the regions east of the river Cetina, mountain Plješevica and the area between the rivers Una and Kupa. It means that the significant part of the present Republic of Croatia had been populated by the Serbs since the settlement of the Slavs. The main regions mostly populated by the Serbs were north-west Dalmatia, the larger part of Lika and Kordun, Banija, west Slavonia and smaller sections in east Slavonia, west Srem and Baranya. (Ilić; 2006: 270)

The earliest Serbian state<sup>18</sup> (referred to as Sclavinia) called "Baptized" by Porphyrogenitus, consisted in the principalities of Neretva/Pagania (from the river Cetina to the river Neretva), Zahumlje/Zachlunia (from the river Neretva to the hinterland of Dubrovnik, in today's

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<sup>18</sup> The earliest rudimentary Serb state arose in the mid-11th century, although it was mostly a vassal principality to the Byzantine Empire and Bulgarian Empires alternatively.

Herzegovina) and Travunija (from Dubrovnik's hinterland to Boka Kotorska, in today's eastern Herzegovina and southern Dalmatia, now part of Croatia). In the immediate vicinity was located the principality of Duklja<sup>19</sup> ("Dioclea"), which encompassed the territories of present-day southeastern Montenegro. On the west, the "Baptized" Serbia bordered with Croatia, (Ćirković; 2008:50) and on the east with the Bulgarian khanat, whose border was marked by the fort of Ras. However, this early principality was far from a consolidated, centralized state, and the various *župans* retained considerable independence. The Sclaviniae were endangered from three sides: the Byzantine Empire, the early Bulgarians and the powerful Franks (who demolished the Avar state). Progressively the Sclaviniae were conquered and ceased to exist in their original form in the year 806 (Mandić; 1990: 34) and developed into rudimentary state forms such as *kneževine* and/or *županije*. The Serbs became federates to the Byzantines and held the frontiers as vassalage (initially Sclaviniae, later *Župas*), subsequently receiving greater autonomy with Višeslav, the ruler of the *županijas* of Neretva, Tara, Piva and Lim, who united various Serbian provinces (*kneževine*) and tribes of the Byzantine Sclaviniae in the 8<sup>th</sup> century into the Principality of Serbia (known anachronistically in western sources as *Raška/Rascia*<sup>20</sup>).

Serbia was collocated in the pathway of the Bulgarian expansion in the Balkan Peninsula, and found itself between two strong empires: the Bulgarian Khanate and the Byzantine Empire both of which tried to subjugate Serbia and regularly interfered in its internal affairs. Bulgaria already managed in installing Bulgarian despots<sup>21</sup> over the Slavic tribes which inhabited what is present-day northern Serbia - the Srem region and eastern Slavonia. The Serb tribes were encircled by the Bulgarians and

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<sup>19</sup> In 1148 Duklja was reinstated as a *Županate* of Rascia and is since referred to as "Zeta", and remained so until the fall of the Serbian Empire, when it subsequently becomes semi-independent in 1362.

<sup>20</sup> The name is derived from the name of the region's most important fort near its border with the First Bulgarian Empire, Ras, which eventually became the capital district and seat of the first bishopric of Serbia (Bishopric of Ras, *Raška episkopija*). The name of the bishopric eventually started to denote the entire area under jurisdiction and later, under Stefan Nemanja, Ras was re-generated as state capital and the name spread to the entire land. Soon after *Raška* became one of the common names for Serbia in western sources, but *Raška* appears scarcely in Serbian and never in Byzantine works to denote the state. Constantine's Serbia is often identified as *Raška* by modern historiography to differentiate it from the other provinces ruled by the Serbs: *Zahumlje*, *Travunia*, *Duklja*, *Bosnia* and *Paganja*.

<sup>21</sup> Despot was a title in Byzantine aristocracy and bureaucracy that was originally used as an honorific address for the sons of reigning emperors and later came to denote the rulers of the medieval despotates of Epirus, the Morea and Serbia. By the end of the nineteenth century, the term "despot" was a nobility title in the Balkans. Today it is used mainly in reference to despotism, a form of government in which a single entity rules with absolute power.

as a response to this, with Byzantine support, a few Serbian *župas* united defensively under the lead of *Knez* ('Prince') Vlastimir, the founder of the Vlastimirović dynasty which ruled directly until 960, through its cadet branches up to 1371. The extent of Vlastimir's realm encompassed Raška, Travunija and Konavli, which corresponds to modern southern Serbia, southeastern Bosnia, eastern Herzegovina and present day Konavli n Croatia. Vlastimir's eldest son Mutimir succeeds him as the *Knez* while his brothers Strojimir and Gojnik became *Župans* with own domains directly under their brother's rule. Under the rule of Vlastimir's son Mutimir (851-892.), started the Christianization of the Serbs by the missionaries Cyril and Methodius, sent by the Byzantine Emperor Basil I (867–886).

Figure 6: Serb lands in the 9<sup>th</sup> century



Serb lands in the 9th century

Source: [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Serb\\_lands04.png?uselang=de](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Serb_lands04.png?uselang=de)

For much of the second half of the 9th century and first half of the 10th century, Serbia oscillated between Byzantine and Bulgarian control. This period was marked by continual internal rivalries

between the male members of the Serbian ruling family who, sometimes with Bulgarian and sometimes with Byzantine support, ousted each other and assumed control of Serbia in turn. With the death of the powerful Bulgarian emperor Simeon I in 927, Byzantine was finally able to regain power in its territories. In this period (931), Byzantine aided Prince (*knez*) Časlav to restore self-rule and to unify all the Serb populated lands, centered between contemporary South Serbia and Montenegro and the coastal south of Croatia. He liberated the central Serbian tribes from Bulgarian empire, concluded a voluntary confederation with the chiefs of Bosnia that brought them out of Croatia's control and together with Zahumlje, Pagania, Neretva, Travunia, Duklja and Raška established a unified Serb state that encompassed the shores of the Adriatic sea, the Sava river and the Morava river valley as well as Northern Albania. The written information about the first Serbian house of Vlastimirović ends with the death of Časlav, thus creating a gap in the history of Raška as it is annexed by the Byzantine Empire and the Bulgarian Empire and it dissolved back into many small *županijas*. The Vlastimir dynasty continued to rule their lands in Duklja (based in what is today Montenegro), which now became the main Principality of the Serbs. The kingdom of Duklja became the seat of the Serbian state in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, ruled by the House of Vojislavljević (cadet branch of the Vlastimirović) between the 1050s up to 1186. The founder of the House of Vojislavljević, *Knez* Dobroslav I (or Stefan) Vojislav (1018–1043), raised a rebellion against the Byzantines in 1038, overthrowing their supremacy over Serbs in Duklja (Ćirković; 2008:59). He managed to conquer the neighbouring Travunija, Konavli and Zahumlje<sup>22</sup>, thus expanding his realm (Ferjančić; 2009:71). Vojislav was succeeded by his son Mihailo (1050–1082), who managed to expand further his father's realm to Raška as well. Among his most significant deeds was the establishment of the independent Serbian Catholic Archbishopric in the town of Bar (Stanojević; 1923:10), thus exiting from Croatian's religious sphere<sup>23</sup> and establishing the basis for the future

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<sup>22</sup> This maritime region of Medieval Serbia is often referred to as “Srpsko Pomorje” (Serbian Maritime), which encompassed present-day parts of Montenegro, Croatia and Herzegovina.

<sup>23</sup> Prior to the establishment of the Archdiocese in Bar (in present day Montenegro), the dioceses in the south coastal towns was subordinated first to the Archdiocese of Split and then (in 1022) to the one in Dubrovnik, i.e. Croatia. There

independent metropolis of the Serbian Orthodox church. Mihailo was the first Serbian ruler to be crowned as king by the Roman Pope Gregory VII in 1077, which put him out of the Byzantine hierarchical system where he was given the initial title of *protospatar*<sup>24</sup> around the year 1052 (Ferjančić; 2009:72). In the aftermath of the great Church schism of 1054, Pope Gregory VII had an interest in bestowing royal titles on rulers in the rift area. This practice was a result of the competition between the pope and the emperor, who mutually granted royal titles in order to bind the rulers to themselves (Ćirković; 2008:61). As a consequence, Mihailo was given the title of "king of Slavs" by the pope and Duklja (Zeta) was referred to as a kingdom, until its reduction in the following century.

King Mihailo was succeeded by his son Constantine Bodin (1081 - 1101) who was, among the title of king, recognized the title of emperor<sup>25</sup> (*car*) of Bulgaria as well. Among his accomplishments was the annexation of Raška (where he installed his nephews Marko and Vukan as *župans*) and Bosnia to his realm in Zeta, previously retrieved by the Byzantines from his father king Mihailo, as well as the jurisdiction<sup>26</sup> of the Archdiocese in Bar over the dioceses on the south coastal towns and over Serbia (at least what was left of it at the time), Bosnia and Travunija, that were previously subordinated to the Archdiocese in Dubrovnik (Ćirković; 2008:62).

After Bodin's death (in 1011) came to big discords in the royal family. As a consequence, Duklja was largely weakened and soon fell apart into several independent regions who became

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has been a long controversy between the Churches of Split and Dubrovnik, where even king Mihailo was involved. The cause of the controversy was Dubrovnik's desire for secession from Split's Archdiocese and the establishment of its own. Serbian king Mihailo advocated the separation of Dubrovnik's Church from Split's Metropolis. The exact outcome of the Split-Dubrovnik controversy is not known. However, the Diocese of Dubrovnik was no longer returned to Split and at the end of the 11th century its ruler was recognized as Archbishop.

<sup>24</sup> Protospatar was one of the highest court dignities of the middle Byzantine period (8th to 12th centuries), awarded to senior generals and provincial governors, as well as to foreign princes.

<sup>25</sup> Bodin was crowned as emperor of the Bulgarians under the name of Peter III in 1072. This was the result of his military intervention in Bulgaria, with the aim to help the restoration of the Bulgarian Empire during an uprising that started in Skoplje.

<sup>26</sup> From the antipope Clement III he was given a papal bull in 1089 which approved the use of Archdiocesan symbols and honors to the Bishop of Bar, as well as the jurisdiction over the aforementioned territories. This act led to a long struggle between Dubrovnik and Bar regarding the jurisdiction over the southern coastal towns and their hinterland. Since the antipope's bull didn't have actual power, the dispute ended in favour of Dubrovnik, which regained its dioceses in Zahumlje, Travunija, Bosnia and Serbia. The jurisdiction of Bar's Archdiocese didn't exceed Pilot, a plain north of the Skadar Lake. (Ćirković 2008:63)

competitive. The most important of these regions were Raška, Bosnia and Zeta/Duklja (Stanojević; 1923:11) Vukan (1083–1115) was the first Grand *Župan* of Raška<sup>27</sup>, appointed by king Bodin. During this period, the state center of the Serbian realm started to move to Raška, especially since Duklja and the region succumbed to Raška's reign between 1183 and 1186. After a series of rebellions raised by Vukan and his successor Uroš II (1140–1155) against the Byzantine Empire with the assistance of the newest actor on the political scene in the Balkans, the Hungarians, several dynastic struggles arose in the Serbian territories. After the Byzantine Empire managed to suppress the rebellions and re-instate its power on these territories, in order to avoid future political complications in Raška, the emperor decided to divide the authority over the land between four brothers: Tihomir, Nemanja, Miroslav and Stracimir (Ferjančić; 2009:82). The oldest one, Tihomir, was given the title of Grand *Župan* in 1166 ca. but was very soon overthrown by his brother Nemanja, whom was previously given the authority over the most eastern part of the state (Toplica, Ibar, Rasina and Reke). After a battle against his brothers, Nemanja declared himself as the Grand *Župan* of Raška (1166-1196). Taking advantage of Byzantine's difficulties, Nemanja started to conquer some of its territories, thus initiating Serbian expansion with the aim of gathering all Serb provinces around one state (Stanojević; 1923:12). He managed to expand the borders of his state on areas of Duklja, Travunija and Hum on Adriatic coast.

Nemanja's appearance on the historic and political stage is of great importance for Serbian history, because with Nemanja the Serbian history actually begins. Since their arrival in the Balkan Peninsula, the Serbs were subjugated by the neighboring powers and were not able to form an independent state until the 12<sup>th</sup> century, when Nemanja's Raška rose to become the paramount Serb state<sup>28</sup>. Henceforth, the name Serbia became synonymous with the state of Raška from the 12th century onwards. Not only Nemanja created the first independent Serbian state and is thus

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<sup>27</sup> At that time Raška encompassed the territories of Kosovo and the Ibar's plain (Ćirković 2008:63).

<sup>28</sup> Nemanja conquered different territories that were under Byzantine rule, but the Byzantines always succeeded in retrieving them back. Although Nemanja put a lot of effort in expanding his realm, it actually embodied only Raška, Duklja/Zeta, Zahumlje, Travunija, as well as some towns on the coast and their hinterland.

considered the founder of the Serbian state, but he is also the founder of the Nemanjić dynasty<sup>29</sup>, which ruled Serbia up to the 14th century. Another of Nemanja's accomplishments was the raising of monasteries and churches, which would become a tradition for all the Serbian rulers of the Nemanjić dynasty. After Nemanja resigned from the throne (1196) in favour of his son Stefan, he took monastic vows and retired to the Mount Athos. After his death in 1199, he was proclaimed saint (St. Simeon) by the Serbian Church. As a result, the House of Nemanjići is often referred to as the "holy root dynasty", with Nemanja as its initiator, which will produce other saints as well. The veil of holiness that surrounded the dynasty in general, as well as some of its members, made it possible to develop a specific Serbian tradition within the general Christian tradition. (Ćirković; 2009:72)

Nemanja's youngest son, Sava<sup>30</sup>, secured the autocephaly (independence) for the Serbian Church as a national church of Serbia in 1217, and became the first Serbian Archbishop in 1219. The Serbian Orthodox Church assumed the role of the national spiritual guardian and it profoundly shaped the Serbian identity.

The Serbian Kingdom was proclaimed in 1217, after the coronation<sup>31</sup> of Stefan Nemanjić Prvovenčani ("the first crowned"). As King of Serbia, he inherited all the territories<sup>32</sup> unified by his father, Stefan Nemanja. The recognition of Serbia as a kingdom and the establishment of the Serbian Orthodox Church marked for the Serbs the acquisition of both forms of independence: political and religious.

In 1166-1168 Stefan Nemanja, took control of the coastline from northern Dalmatia to today's Albania. His younger son Sava, subsequently canonized as the founder of the autocephalous

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<sup>29</sup> The House of Nemanjić, descendants of the kings of Duklja (the House of Vlastimirović), moved in the late 12th century the state center from Duklja to Raška, i.e. towards continental Serbia. The Nemanjićs ushered a golden period in Serbian history, whereby it became a dominant Balkan power.

<sup>30</sup> His secular name was Rastko Nemanjić, but was given the monastic name of Sava after he joined the Orthodox monastic colony on Mount Athos. Due to his accomplishments for the Serbian Orthodox Church, and for the Serbian people in general, he was proclaimed saint shortly after his death, in 1237. Hence, he is referred to as "Saint Sava" and is venerated by the Serbian Orthodox Church as well as by the Serbian people all over the world.

<sup>31</sup> Stefan was proclaimed King of Serbia, Dalmatia and Bosnia by Pope Honorius III in 1217.

<sup>32</sup> These territories included Raška, while Duklja, Travunija, Hvosno and Toplica were appointed to Stefan's brother Vukan, who governed these territories under the title of *veliki knez* (great prince) and consequently as king of Zeta.



Serbian Orthodox Church, established the diocese of Hum in this region in 1219. Its seat was in the city of Ston, linking the Sabioncello (Pelješac) peninsula with the Hum mainland. By the late medieval times, compact settlements of Serbs were established further north, in central and northern Dalmatia, along the Krka and Cetina rivers. The oldest major Orthodox monastery in the region, Krupa (r.), dedicated to the Ascension of the Mother of God, was founded in 1317. Its building was paid for in part by two prominent Serbian kings, Dragutin and Milutin, and it was later endowed by the most powerful medieval Serbian king (later Tsar, 'Emperor') Stefan Dušan.(Trifkovic, 2010:14)

Although thanks to the House of Nemanjići, medieval Serbia reached its military, economic and legal climax, as well as the Church autonomy, their reign was characterized by several overturns and internal dynastic struggles and feuds among brothers. However, the Nemanjići succeeded in expanding further their state to new territories that had never been under Serbian rule. Serbian king Stefan Dragutin (1276-1282) managed to expand his realm to the Kingdom of Syrmia<sup>33</sup> in 1281, which was previously part of the Hungarian kingdom. Due to the fact that Dragutin was married to a Hungarian princess, he was given by the Hungarian king Ladislaus IV lands in northeastern Bosnia, the region of Mačva, and the city of Belgrade, whilst Dragutin managed to conquer and annex lands in northeastern Serbia. Thus, some of these territories became part of the Serbian state for the first time. His new state was named Kingdom of Srem and he was its king from 1282 to 1316. After Dragutin died (in 1316), the new ruler of the Kingdom of Srem became his son, king Vladislav II, who ruled this state until 1325. However, in 1324 Lower Syrmia became a subject of dispute between the Kingdom of Rascia and the Kingdom of Hungary. The Upper Syrmia was, after 1311, included into the possession of the Hungarian king, while its western part was later included into the Banovina of Slavonia<sup>34</sup> (initially part of the medieval Hungarian kingdom, but later of Croatia) .

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<sup>33</sup> Syrmia (*Srem* and/or *Srijem*) is a fertile region of the Pannonian Plain in Europe, between the Danube and Sava rivers. It is divided between present day Serbia in the east and Croatia in the west.

<sup>34</sup> The Banovina of Slavonia was formed in the 13th century, and existed until 1476, when it was joined with the Banovina of Croatia.

Dragutin's territory near the rivers Sava and Danube and the territorial gains in Macedonia achieved by his brother and successor on the Serbian throne, king Milutin<sup>35</sup> (1282-1321), doubled the size of the first state of Nemanjići and made it possible to move the state center toward the east (Ćirković; 2008:86). The city of Ras lost its importance and will be soon forgotten, while the rulers will get attached to a series of courts in Kosovo (around Uroševac and Prizren) and in Skoplje (today's capital of Macedonia). (Ćirković 2008:87) The most visible side of this displacement are the churches and monasteries left behind by the Nemanjići all around Kosovo, as well as the seat of the future Patriarchate, making Kosovo Serbian holy land (*Metohija*<sup>36</sup>), i.e. the center of its spiritual life.

With the appearance of Stefan Uroš Dušan IV "the mighty" (usually called only Dušan) on the Serbian throne in 1331, a new era would begin for medieval Serbia. Dušan managed to expand his territories by conquering all the provinces in the western part of the Balkan Peninsula which had been held until then by the Byzantines, so he expanded Serbian territory to the river Sava, the Adriatic Sea and he conquered almost the entire territory of today's Greece, except the Peloponnese and the islands. An interesting fact is that Dušan's territory embodied also the peninsula of Pelješac, which he sold to the Republic of Ragusa in 1333 (Fine; 1983:286).

Dušan was attempting to become the successor of the Byzantine Emperors, but he didn't succeed. However, during his time Serbia reached its territorial, spiritual and cultural peak, becoming the most powerful state in the Balkans. As a result of his territorial gains, Dušan proclaimed himself as "Emperor (*car*) and autocrat of Serbs and Romans (Greeks)" in 1345, while he was crowned the following year by the first Serbian Patriarch<sup>37</sup> Joanikije II.

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<sup>35</sup> Milutin's rule was characterized by the feud with his brother Dragutin, king of Syrmia, as well as by the conquest of northern parts of Macedonia with the city of Skoplje, which became his capital. He is the initiator of Serbia's expansion toward the south, which will be continued by his son Stefan Konstantin, but will reach its highlight with the future emperor Stefan Dušan.

<sup>36</sup> Metohija is a large basin and the name of the region covering the southwestern part of Kosovo. The name derives from the Greek, meaning "monastic estates" - a reference to the large number of villages and estates in the region that were owned by the Orthodox monasteries of Serbia and Mount Athos during the Middle Ages.

<sup>37</sup> After King Stefan Dušan assumed the imperial title of tsar, the Archbishopric of Peć (in present day Kosovo) was correspondingly raised to the rank of Patriarchate in 1346.

By the middle of the 14th century, Serbs were present in and around the fortified cities of Clissa (Klis) and Scardona (Skradin) in central and northern Dalmatia. Their settlement coincided with the arrival of Jelena, King Dušan's sister, who was married to a local prince, Mladen II Šubić of Bribir. A detachment of her brother's Serbian soldiers accompanied her to Dalmatia and remained there, initially as her retinue and then as her husband's mercenaries. By that time one's denominational allegiance had already become largely synonymous with national identity. Along the Balkan fault line between Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism the struggle for this allegiance has only intensified in subsequent centuries.

Princess Jelena, a Serb, was a patron of several Orthodox churches and monasteries in the region, although her husband, a Croat, was a Roman Catholic. (Trifkovic, 2010:14)

Aware of the approaching Ottoman menace, Stefan Dušan tried to organize a Crusade with the Pope against the threatening Ottomans. But this attempt was stopped by his sudden death in 1355. He was succeeded on the throne by his son, Stefan Uroš V "the weak" (1355-1371). Due to the cultural differences between the new conquered territories and the old Serbian lands, as well as due to the heterogeneous population that Dušan's empire embodied, the empire couldn't survive for long. As a matter of fact, Dušan's empire ceased to exist shortly after his death, in 1371.

Figure 7: Serbian Empire under *car* Dušan



Source: <http://crohis.com/shisatlas2/dusan.htm>

The Serbian Empire of Uroš V fragmented into a conglomeration of principalities, divided between the feudal lords. The most powerful among them was Vukašin Mrnjavčević, whom Stefan Uroš V gave the title of despot. In 1365 Vukašin was crowned King of the Serbs and Greeks as the co-ruler of Emperor Uroš V, but he died in the Battle of Marica in his campaign to drive the Ottomans out of Europe. The Serbian royal title thus survived in this family, but in fact the authority of these kings was circumscribed by the local nobility and confined to parts of central and eastern Macedonia (Kingdom of Prilep).

With the death of Uroš V in the same year, the Nemanjić dynasty came to end. However, a new figure emerged - Lazar Hrebeljanović, ruler of Moravian Serbia, who managed to unite most of Serbia with war and diplomacy. He could not unite all of Serbia, because some of the regional feudal lords were significantly powerful, and yet he had to fight the greater threat, the Ottoman Empire. Lazar did not assume the imperial or royal titles (although he is referred to as car/emperor), but in 1377 accepted king Tvrtko I of Bosnia as titular king of Serbia.

The influx of Serbs continued under Tvrtko I (1354-1391), who in 1377 was crowned 'King of the Serbs and Bosnia.' By the 15th century the entire region of Knin, with the villages of Golubić, Padjene and Polača, had an Orthodox majority.(Trifkovic, 2010:15)

The first Ottoman raids on Lazar's territory began in 1381, but the real invasion came in 1389. On 28 July 1389, known as Vidovdan in Serbian (St. George's day), the Ottoman and the Serbian armies met at Kosovo, in what became known as the Battle of Kosovo. The Serbs were heavily beaten by the Ottomans, with huge losses, including car Lazar. These events inspired the Serbs to write a cycle of beautiful epic poems, considered the finest work of Serbian folk poetry, where the battle of Kosovo came to be seen as a symbol of Serbian patriotism and desire for independence in the following centuries. The Battle of Kosovo defined the fate of the medieval Serbia. After the Battle of Kosovo there was no army among the Balkan states capable of halting the advancing Ottoman Empire. Kosovo was taken by the Ottomans in the following years and the Serbian realm

was moved northwards. Serbia however managed to recuperate under despot Stefan Lazarević, car Lazar's son, surviving for 70 more years and experiencing a cultural and political renaissance. The state is known as the Serbian Despotate, and its capital was the newly built fortified town of Smederevo in the north of the state.

**Figure 8: Serbian lands in the 14<sup>th</sup> century**



Source: [http://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datoteka:Central\\_balkans\\_1373\\_1395.png](http://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Datoteka:Central_balkans_1373_1395.png)

Serbia proper became a vassal of the Ottomans in 1390 but remained effectively ruled by the Lazarevićs and then by their successors, the Brankovićs, until the fall of Smederevo in 1459. After Stefan Lazarević's death, his successors from the House of Branković did not manage to stop the

Ottoman's advance. However, a Serbian principality was restored a few years after the fall of the Serbian despotate by the Brankovićs and existed as a Hungarian dependency situated in what is now Vojvodina and the northern Hungary/Romania. It was ruled by exiled Serbian nobles and existed until 1540 when it fell to the Ottomans. Serbia remained under their occupation until 1804, when it finally managed to regain its sovereignty from the Ottomans.

With the arrival and conquest of the Ottomans, both the medieval Kingdoms of Croatia and Serbia ceased to exist in their original form, becoming integrated into the new powerful and opposite empires ruling the Balkan Peninsula: the Habsburg Empire on one side and the Ottoman Empire on the other.

### **2.3. The Ottoman menace and the Serb migrations: the Military Frontier**

The arrival of the Ottomans not only changed the political balance in the Balkans, but it also caused a series of migrations that altered the demographic appearance of the whole region. This is especially true for the territories of Croatia<sup>38</sup> bordering with Ottoman lands (Bosnia and Herzegovina in particular), which found itself in the position of the last Christian stronghold before the approaching Ottoman menace.

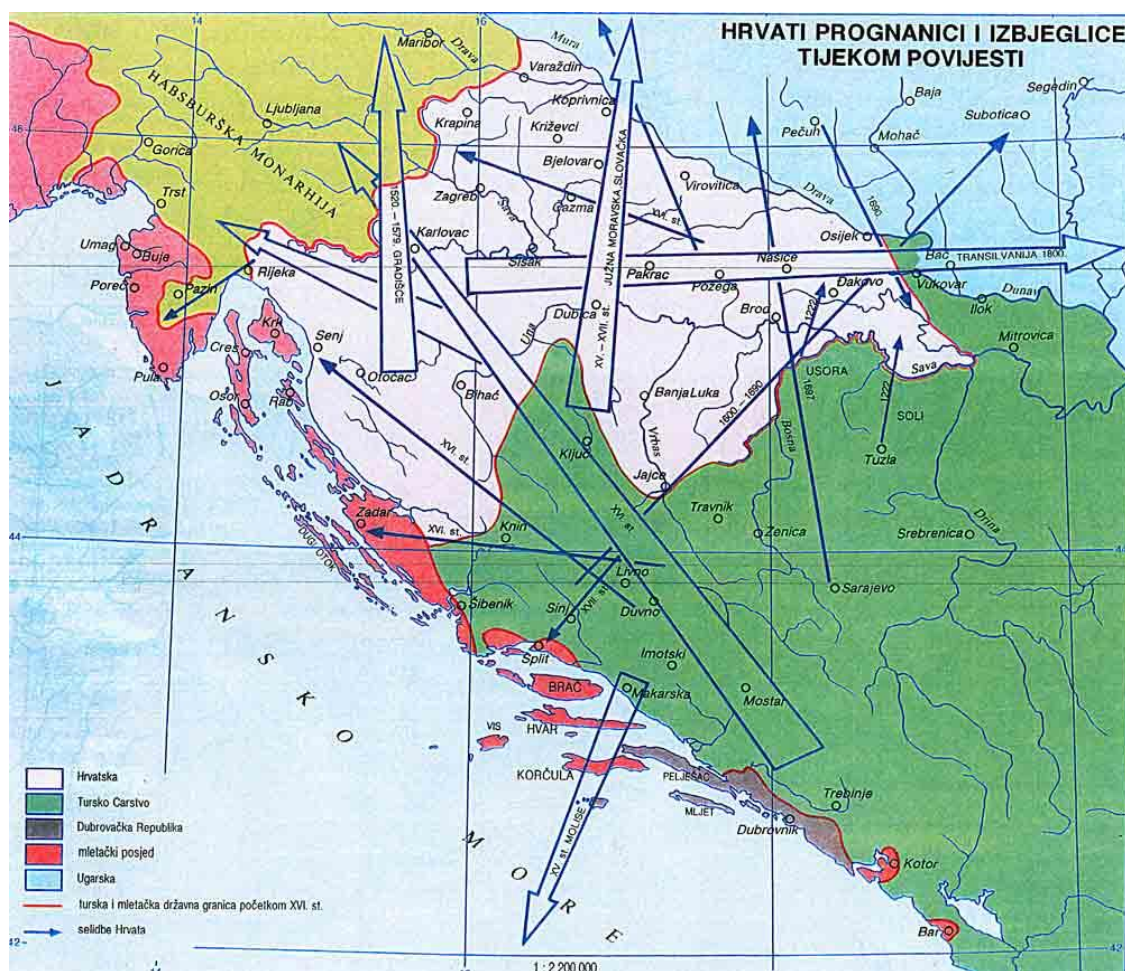
The Ottoman conquests in the Serbian lands and in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the 15<sup>th</sup> century, characterized by unseen terror and violence toward the local population, generated a series of migrations toward the neighboring territories. In the first years following the Ottoman campaigns across the Serbian Despotate, the migration fluxes were directed to the northern Serbian lands and to the Hungarian lands, moving the centennial nucleus of the Serbian state (what was left of it) from the south to the north of the Balkan Peninsula. On the other hand, after the Ottoman conquest of Bosnia and Herzegovina the migrations of refugees were directed toward the northwestern and

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<sup>38</sup> At that time, Croatian territory was divided into 3 distinct parts: Slavonia, Dalmatia and Croatia itself. Dalmatia was mostly under Venetian rule, while Slavonia and Croatia itself belonged to the Dual monarchy, with a limited self-rule.

western Austrian, Hungarian and Venetian lands. These territories were largely depopulated because of the frequent Ottoman raids that induced the autochthonous population to find shelter in the neighboring territories of the kingdom, on the Dalmatian islands and in Italy<sup>39</sup>.

Figure 9: Croatian migrations from 1222 to the 17<sup>th</sup> century



Source: <http://www.croatia-in-english.com/images/maps/emigA.jpg>

The Ottoman incursions in the Croatian territories started in 1463, as soon as Bosnia and Herzegovina was conquered, and lasted for 70 years, until 1527, when in the aftermath of the Battle of Krbava field, the entire Croatian region of Lika fell under Ottoman hand. (Pribičević; 1955:10-11)

<sup>39</sup> These migrations originated the historical Croatian Diasporas in today's Austria, Hungary, Slovakia and Italy. (Dabić, 1992:266)



As a consequence, vast territories became practically depopulated and at the same time became attractive destinations for the Serbs fleeing from Ottoman lands. In order to fill up the territories of the population that fled from the Ottomans, who forced these people to migrate, the Ottoman army took many of these fleeing Serbs into their army. These numerous Serb migrations, starting from the 16<sup>th</sup> century and lasting up to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, marked the massive arrival and settlement of the Serbs in the Croatian territories.

According to several sources, the migration of Serbs into Croatian lands took place during the 14th century under the initiative of Croatian noblemen Zrinski and Frankopan. They possessed several properties throughout the Croatian lands, but most of them were seized or devastated by the incoming Ottomans. In order to preserve the left properties, Zrinski and Frankopan took advantage of the Serbs who started coming into the Croatian lands, and started to entice others as well. Around the year 1493, the first Serbs in Croatian lands are mentioned. (Pribičević; 1955:19)

This was most probably connected to the fact that in the year 1434, the daughter of Serbian Despot Đurađ Branković, Catherine Cantacuzena, married the Count Ulrich II of Celje. Count Ulrich owned the Croatian cities of Medvedgrad, Rakovac, Koprivnica and Kalnik. In order to defend his properties, he brought Serbian soldiers from the Serbian Despotate into these towns. These Serbian troops remained in these territories even after his death in 1456, but were probably turned to Catholicism and progressively assimilated. (Kašić; 1967:7)

Also all the Serbs who were settled by the noblemen Zrinski and Frankopan were gradually turned into serfs and Catholicized, because in Croatia until 1781, every religion aside Catholicism was banned. Only when the Military Frontier was instituted, the confession of the Orthodox religion was allowed on its territory. (Pribičević; 1955:20)

The first reliable facts about the Serbian migrations in Croatia are proved in the documents about the arrival of Serbs in the Žumberak<sup>40</sup> area. This mountain range represented a weak spot in the

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<sup>40</sup> Žumberak (Croatian) or Gorjanci (Slovene) is a range of mountains and hills between present-day Croatia and Slovenia.

frontier, allowing the Ottomans to freely cross into Austrian lands. The Serbs already proved to be good defenders of the borders on the Ottoman side of the frontier, so the Austrian authority decided to extensively settle them into their frontier territories. Before the year 1531, Serbs came and settled into the Žumberak area individually, while after that year, their settling began in larger masses. . (Pribičević; 1955:21)

After the fall of the Bosnian Kingdom into the Ottoman hands in 1463, the southern and central parts of the Kingdom of Croatia remained unprotected, the defense of which was left to Croatian gentry who kept smaller troops in the fortified border areas at their own expense. But this method proved to be inefficient, especially since the battle of Mohacs, when the Ottomans conquered vast territories in Slavonia and started their offensive toward the west. So not only the Ottomans were closer then ever, but also vast territories around this new border became practically depopulated.

Since the beginning of the Ottoman conquests of the Serbian lands (the 14th and the 15th centuries) migrations towards Dalmatia never stopped and the number of the Serbs permanently grew. They were most frequent during the wars between Venice and the Ottoman Empire (1537-1540; 1570-1573; 1645-1649; 1683-1699; 1716-1718), but both organized and individual migrations continued in times of peace. (Gašić; 2003:14)

One of the largest immigrant waves came to Dalmatia during the long-lasting Candian War (1645-1669). The Border laid on the both sides of the frontier, so the Serbs were divided by the state border and thus made fight each other. Migrations were continuing all over this period. Venetians organized them to fill up their Border. Besides, they were also forming the uskok homelands (in Ravni Kotari, the Makarska Border, and Boka Kotorska). In the first half of the war the Serbs populated the areas of Zadar, Šibenik and the middle-Dalmatian islands (Brač, Hvar, Korčula), and to a lesser extent of Istria. (Gašić; 2003:15)

The Austrian Emperor was forced to find a solution in order to keep the borders safe and to stop a further Ottoman expansion to the west. The idea was to create mercenary troop, especially Serbs,

who would be entrusted to defend the borders. In 1540 the first Serbs started to come to western Slavonia from Žumberak and adjacent territories. In order to attract more Serbs, the Austrian commanders started to negotiate with the Serbian troops on the Ottoman side, enticing them to cross the border with the civilians and promising them various privileges. (Kašić; 1967:29)

Serbs formally obtained the promised privileges on September 5th 1538 by the emperor himself, Ferdinand I, and on July 16th, 1544 the privileges were expanded. According to these privileges, the Serbs were to receive properties as free peasants, without the duty to pay any taxes for the following 20 years. They were also allowed to keep the plunder during their incursions on the Ottoman side of the frontier. In the privileges they are referred to as „*Serviani seu Rasciani*“, i.e. Rascians or Serbs. (Pribičević; 1955:21)

Although these privileges were addressed to the Serbs of the Žumberak area, they marked a model for the settlement of Serbs on the entire Croatian frontier. (Pribičević; 1955:22)

The Serbs lived in Slavonia even before the 1530s, but their number increased there after the Ottoman conquests. Slavonia was then divided into Lower Slavonia (under the Ottoman rule), and Upper Slavonia (under the Habsburg rule). The Serbs made the majority in the surroundings of Pakrac, Požega and Voćin, and this area was called "small Wallachia"<sup>41</sup>. The next wave of migrations started during the Long War between Ottoman Empire and Habsburg Monarchy (1593-1606). The greater number of them were coming, led by their secular and spiritual leaders. (Gašić; 2003:2)

The burning of the relics of St. Sava, the founder of Serbia's autocephalous Orthodox Church, by Sinan Pasha in Belgrade on 27 April 1594, marked a symbolic turning point: the end of a century-

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<sup>41</sup> The notion of "Wallach"/"Vlach" means easily movable cattle breeding population that in the feudal society of the Mediaeval Serbia, and later in the Ottoman Empire, had privileges which differentiated them from the serfs. The term, therefore, denotes a social group, but most frequently coincides with the ethnic group, since the immigrated Serbs were movable and had privileges which differentiated them from the Croatian serfs. (Gašić; 2003:2) Although, the term is still a matter of dispute between Serbian and Croatian historians, who tend to use its meaning for their own purposes. According to Serbian historians, the term "Vlach" denotes a social group which included also Serbs, while according to the Croatian historians, it denotes the rests of a Romanized autochthonous population living in the Balkans, who due to their Orthodox faith was soon assimilated by the Serbian Orthodox Church and turned into Serbs.

long period when many Serbs served as auxiliaries in the Sultan's army and were used as settlers along the western borders of the Ottoman Empire. From the 1590's century onward the Ottomans could no longer rely on local Serbs along the Austrian border. The allegiance of the latter became strictly confessional. The Emperor in Vienna was not always reliable as a defender of their privileges, but he was still a Christian and an enemy of the hated Turk.(Trifkovic, 2010:24)

In 1630 the Habsburg government issued a charter, called the *Statuta Valachorum* (Vlach Statutes), which formally established the conditions for the area. The Military Frontier was put directly under the control of the emperor; the land thus remained in the possession of the state. It was granted in return for military service, not to individuals but to household communities, *zadrugas*, which were considered the best basic unit of organization in a difficult and dangerous time. Each *zadruga* was expected to provide one soldier, and they were collectively responsible for the obligations to the state. The *zadrugas* were joined in villages, which elected their own leaders, the vojvodas and the knezes; these, along with the Habsburg officials, were responsible for local administration. The members of the border communities thus enjoyed much self-government. The Habsburg government also gave assurances to the Serbian population in regard to the Orthodox church.

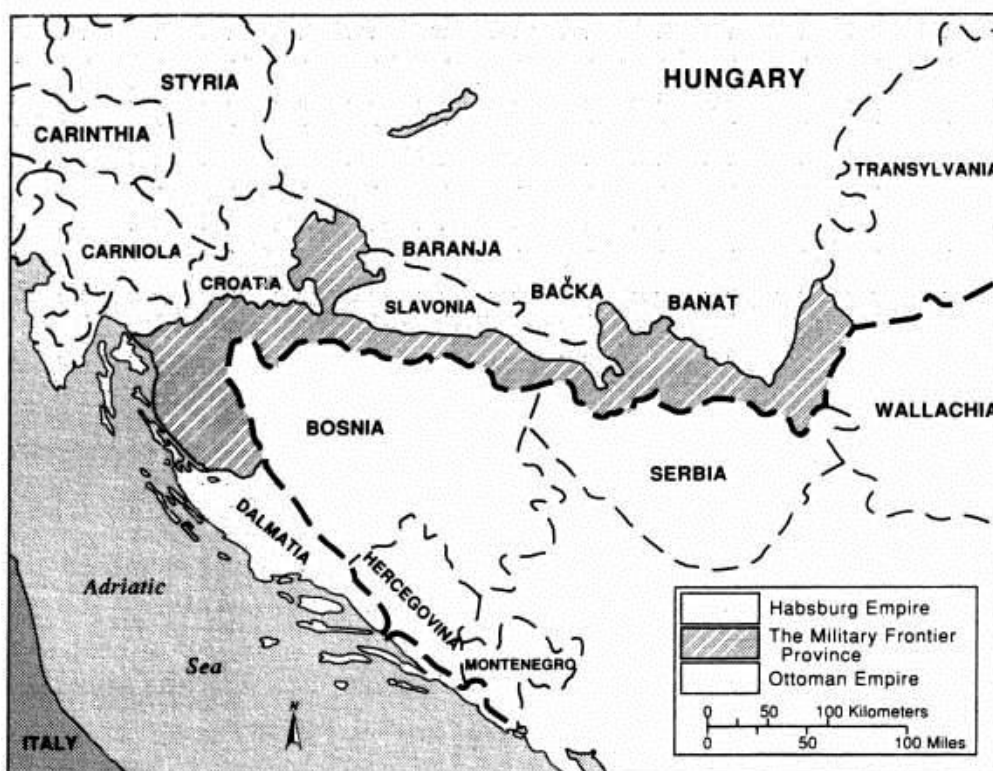
The Military Frontier was advantageous to the state in that it provided a cheap source of manpower to garrison the border. The frontier soldier was not paid a salary, but was supported by his family. For the settlers the conditions were much superior to those in the adjoining provinces, where the peasants also usually wanted to join the frontier. The soldier was not a serf; he was a free man living in a self-administering community, and he was proud of his status. (Jelavich; 1983:145)

Although the Croatian nobility continually struggled to maintain their own control of the region, the Military Border was kept explicitly separate from the legal, administrative and political system of the Hungarian provinces of Croatia and Slavonia. In places scarcely thirty miles wide, the zone covered the southern flank of 'Civil Croatia' and shielded it from Ottoman territory. The Border divided Civil Croatia from Slavonia, reaching northwards to touch Austria. From the 1550's until

the late 1680's, the Habsburg defensive zone passed eastwards through the Magyar parts of Royal Hungary. After Ottoman Hungary was recovered following the second siege of Vienna, the Border achieved its final form. It now included the Velebit highlands just north of Knin and passed west of the border of Bosnia and north to the Kupa, and in a northward extension west of the Ilova to the Drava, flanking the city of Zagreb. (Trifkovic, 2010: 29)

**Figure 10: The Military Frontier**

*Yugoslavia: A Country Study*



Source: Based on information from United Kingdom, Admiralty, Naval Intelligence Division, *Yugoslavia, 2: History, Peoples, and Administration*, London, 1944, 20.

*Figure 2. Military Frontier Province Between the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires, ca. 1600-1800*

The Serbian population of the empire lived in circumstances quite different from those of the majority of the inhabitants of the Habsburg Empire. They controlled no definite portion of territory, and they were of the Orthodox religion, which was under attack in other parts of the monarchy.

Nevertheless, they had certain privileges that set them apart and put them in a better position than some of the peasant populations of other ethnic origins. Having hoped to win the privileges promised by the Emperor, a great number of people left Serbia, guided by Patriarch Arsenije III Černojević. This was the so-called "Great Migration of the Serbs" - called "great" not only because so many people left Serbia, but also because it changed the legal position of the Serbs in Habsburg Monarchy, now guaranteed by Emperor's privileges. (Gašić; 2003:2)

Their relatively favorable status rested on the special privileges<sup>42</sup> granted by Leopold I in 1690 at the time of the migration of Arsenije III and his adherents. It will be remembered that the Serbian refugees were promised freedom of religion and an autonomous church administration. The Serbian Orthodox citizens enjoyed their privileges wherever they settled; their rights were not dependent on a territorial base. As in the Ottoman Empire, the church dignitaries became in practice the leaders of a kind of Serbian secular government, with a Serbian metropolitan, established at Sremski Karlovci, at its head. The regular meetings of the councils came to resemble national assemblies. They were held primarily to choose bishops and the heads of monasteries, but they also discussed general problems and matters of interest to the Serbian community. They could hear complaints and make protests.

By the end of the eighteenth century Serbian colonies were present not only in the countryside, but also in the cities. The Serbian population of the monarchy, organized under the Orthodox Church and in possession of definite privileges, by the end of the century had established a strong position

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<sup>42</sup> Appeal Manifest issued on 6 April 1690, and privilege issued on 21 August 1690, constituting the basis for the Serb religious-national self-government in the monarchy; Protection Certificate issued by the Hungarian Royal Office on 11 December 1690; Protection issued on 20 August 1690, according to which the rule of the Serbian Archbishop was extended to secular issues; Privilege issued on 4 March 1695 by the Hungarian Royal Office granting the spiritual organization of the Serbian Orthodox Church and by which the appointment of bishops and previous privileges were confirmed. The most important privileges were issued by Josip I on 7 August 1706, by Karlo VI on 2 August and 8 October 1713, in addition to the Protection Certificate issued on 10 April 1715 and that by Maria Theresia issued on 24 April and 18 May 1743.

and had a community of different social levels. The merchants, the Orthodox clergy, the teachers, and the officers of the Military Frontier formed an upper class. The peasant-soldier of the Military Frontier was not only a free man, but one who had gained considerable experience in fighting. The Orthodox church was more than a religious institution. It formed a substitute for secular leadership, and it preserved the memory of Serbian statehood. (Jelavich; 1983:150)

The political events in neighboring Serbia affected also the Border: during the First Serbian Uprising (1804-1813) the Serbs from both sides of the Border were bound together in the joint attempt to overthrow the Ottoman rule over Serbia, so that for the first time in the history of the Serbs in Habsburg Monarchy the question of their loyalty to the Emperor was set.

Regardless of the penetration of nationalism, the Border allegiance to the dynasty was not seriously endangered, for as long as the serfdom existed, the status of a frontiersman was highly rated. That is why the frontiersmen opposed the Croatian aspirations to reincorporate the Border into the Kingdom of Croatia, which was later considered to be one of the causes of Serbo-Croatian conflict. (Gašić; 2003:10)

As years passed and the frontier stabilized, it was to be expected that the Serbian population would press for a special territory and a recognized secular administration. The question of a national area was almost impossible to settle. It could only have been carved out of Hungarian or Croatian lands and accomplished at the expense of these people. The recognition of a civil government brought up similar problems. Despite these differences, in general the Serbian population preferred to cooperate with the central authority. Serbian privileges depended upon the protection of Vienna, and when this was not given, the Orthodox Serbs could not withstand Croatian and Hungarian pressure.

When the Ottoman Empire ceased to be a menace for the Austro-Hungarian lands, the pleas of the Croatian Parliament to demilitarize the Frontier finally subsided. In 1787, the civil administration was separated from the military, but this was reversed in 1800. By the Basic Law of the Frontier from 1850, the administration of Military Frontier was split and the land started to look like a state.

The Main Command was headquartered in Zagreb, but still directly subordinate to the Ministry of War in Vienna.

The demilitarization began in 1869 and on August 8, 1873, under Franz Joseph, the Banatian Frontier was abolished and incorporated into the Kingdom of Hungary, while part of Croatian Frontier (Križevci and Đurđevac regiments) was incorporated into Croatia-Slavonia. The decree in which the rest of Croatian and Slavonian Frontiers were incorporated into Croatian-Slavonian crown land was proclaimed on July 15, 1881, while incorporation was performed in 1882.

#### **2.4. Serbs under Austro-Hungarian rule and World War I**

In the nineteenth century many European nations became politically conscious of their “nationhood”, which became one of the factors in the crumbling of the two great empires in Central-East Europe – the Habsburg and the Ottoman Empire – at the beginning of the next century. The peoples of future Yugoslavia, most notably Croats and Serbs, matured as nations during this period. They strived for greater independence not only by resisting foreign rule but also by means of diplomacy and cooperation with nations who shared their aspirations either out of idealism or out of interest. (Trbovich, 2007:195)

By 1882 Serbia was internationally recognized as an independent kingdom<sup>43</sup>, while Croatia was divided into four provinces (Croatia proper, Slavonia, Dalmatia and the Military Border) ruled either by Hungarians or Austrians<sup>44</sup>.

It was not until the nineteenth century that the provinces of Croatia and Slavonia had a first governor of Croatian origin, Josip Jelačić, previously a mid-ranking Austrian military officer.

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<sup>43</sup> The Congress of Berlin in 1878 recognized the formal independence of the Principality of Serbia, which was ruled by the Karađorđević dynasty from 1817 onwards (as a result of the Serbian revolution which lasted between 1804 and 1817). The Kingdom of Serbia was created when Prince Milan Obrenović, ruler of the Principality of Serbia, was crowned King in 1882.

<sup>44</sup> Austrians ruled Dalmatia, while Hungary administered Croatia and Slavonia in the Empire. The Military Frontier was ruled by the Austrians until 1881 when it was placed under Hungarian auspices.



Jelačić entertained a good relationship with the Habsburg Serbs. He referred to the “Croat and Serbian People” in his proclamations, and declared on 7 September 1848: “Religious differences make no barriers between brothers in social or public life. We proclaim full equality [between Croats and Serbs].”<sup>45</sup>

**Figure 12: Croatian lands in 1868**



Source: [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map\\_of\\_the\\_Kingdom\\_of\\_Croatia\\_%281868%29.png](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_the_Kingdom_of_Croatia_%281868%29.png)

When the Hungarians began to demand greater rights from the Austrian Habsburgs, the Croats and the Serbs in the Empire, led by Ban Jelačić, fought fervently on the Austrian side. Croats, who were under Hungarian rule in the Empire, resisted Magyarization and hoped to obtain greater rights from

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<sup>45</sup> Branko Vincic, “History of Serbs in Croatia”, *Krajina: Tragedy of a People* (Hamilton, ON: Canadian-Serbian Council, 1998), 41.

the Austrian emperor. The Krajina Serbs supported the Croats not only because of Jelačić's fair treatment of Serbs and Croats, but also because the Hungarians had begun encroaching on the Austrian rule in Krajina. Finally, the Hungarians had directed their Magyarization policy not just against Croats but also against Serbs and other ethnic groups in the provinces under their rule. A key factor in forging a Croato-Serb military coalition against the Hungarians was the uprising of the Voivodina Serbs (then a part of Southern Hungary) against the Hungarian authorities during the 1848–49 revolution. The Krajina Serbs demanded that Jelačić provide military aid for their brethren. The Serb Patriarch Josif Rajačić, who had consecrated Jelačić as a ban, seconded this demand. Although the Croat - Serb army then delivered a serious blow to the Hungarian forces, they lost the battle.

The good relations between the Serbs and the Croats in the Habsburg Empire were further strengthened in 1867, when the Croatian Diet declared that the Serbian and Croatian nations and their languages were equal.<sup>46</sup> However, this decision was not always respected. Notably the first Croat teachers' general assembly in 1871 concluded that teaching was to be in Croatian only.<sup>47</sup> Perhaps this change in attitude came as a result of the 1868 Croato-Hungarian agreement (*Nagodba*). The agreement dealing with Croato-Hungarian relations was a consequence of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867, which had turned the Habsburg Monarchy into a Dual Monarchy, now placing the province of Croatia-Slavonia completely in the sphere of Hungary.

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

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<sup>46</sup> Saborski spisi sabora kraljevinah Dalmacije, Hrvatske i Slavonije od godine 1865–1867 [Parliamentary Acts of the Parliament of the Kingdoms of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia 1865–1867] (Zagreb, 1900), 308.

<sup>47</sup> Decision quoted in Vasilije Dj. Krestić, *Iz istorije Srba i srpsko-hrvatskih odnosa* [From the History of Serbs and Serb-Croat Relations] (Belgrade: BIGZ, 1994), 210-211.

rights within the Empire, Hungarians considered it a first step in Croatia's transformation into an integral part of Hungary. Hungarian and other foreign historians, including those writing in that period, constantly emphasized the limits to Croatia's autonomy within Hungary, while Croatian historians tended to exaggerate its scope. Notably, just as Hungarians wanted to render Croats a Hungarian "political nation", Croats preferred to view the Serbs as 'political Croats', a view that Serbs fiercely rejected.<sup>48</sup> This issue formed the core of Croato-Serb antagonism, which developed as Croatian nationalism ripened in the second half of the nineteenth century.

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

*With the new lands, Croatia added 61% more territory and 663,000 more people, of which 55 % were Serbs. This simple transfer of land and people from one jurisdiction to another upset the equilibrium of Croatian politics by inserting a non-Croatian element into what had been a largely Croatian land. By 1910, Orthodox Serbs made up approximately 25% of Croatia [-Slavonia-]'s population.*<sup>49</sup>

While the majority of the Serbs living in the Austro-Hungarian Empire were peasants, some were also bankers and wealthy landowners. In 1897, Serbian farmers' collectives began to be formed in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, providing small-scale aid in the form of seeds, feed, educational materials, and classes to Serbian peasants. Linking all the collectives was the Serbian Bank and the

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<sup>48</sup> See Tihomir Cipek, "Oblikovanje hrvatskoga nacionalnog identiteta. Primordijalni identitetski kod u ranoj hrvatskoj političkoj misli" [Shaping of Croatian national identity. Primordial identity code in early Croatian political thought] in *Dijalog povjesničara-istoričara; Mirjana Gross and Agneza Szabo, Prema hrvatskome građanskom društvu. Društveni razvoj u civilnoj Hrvatskoj i Slavoniji šezdesetih i sedamdesetih godina 19. stoljeća* (Zagreb, 1992), 129-157.

<sup>49</sup> Miller (1997), *Between Nation and State*, 18. Importantly, Serbs constituted absolute majority in more than a dozen towns and a relative majority in many more. See "Popis žitelja od 31. prosinca 1910. u Kraljevinama Hrvatskoj i Slavoniji" [Census of 31 December 1910 in the Kingdoms of Croatia and Slavonia] in *Publikacije Kr. zemaljskog statističkog ureda u Zagrebu LXIII* (Zagreb, 1914), 50-51.

influential Serbian Economic Society with its newspaper, *Privrednik* (The Tradesman), seated in Zagreb. Started in 1888, it was devoted to economic education and general advancement of Serbs who dominated Croatia's economy until 1914.<sup>50</sup>

The *Matica Srpska*, Serbian scholarly and cultural organization, was founded in Budapest in 1826, but subsequently transferred to Novi Sad (Voivodina), the hub of Serb publishing activities. However, while promoting Serb interests, the Serb banks, cultural institutions and party organizations, according to Miller, also "served to segregate Serbs from their neighbours and inculcate an insular sense of community". (Miller, 1997:24)

Anxious about the termination of Krajina in 1881, the Serbs received reassurances from Emperor Francis Joseph that "all measures have been taken to place [the inhabitants of Krajina] on equal status with all other inhabitants of [Habsburg] lands of the Hungarian crown". In return for the preservation of their previous privileges, the Serbs opted for loyalty to the Hungarian governor of Croatia-Slavonia, Count Charles Khuen-Hédervary (1882–1903). Khuen-Hédervary began a divide-and-rule policy in the region by granting greater privileges to the Serbs. In directly placing the Hungarian government rather than the Croatian Diet in the service of Serbian interests, Khuen-Hédervary drew Serbs into the Hungarian, rather than Croatian, administrative context. In 1887 and 1888, the Parliament passed two laws, one legalizing the use of the Serbian language and Cyrillic alphabet, and the other assuring the existence of Serbian Orthodox schools in the districts where Serbs were a majority. Many Serbs were dissatisfied with the scope of these laws, which they believed to be less generous than the privileges granted to Serbs in 1868, emphasizing religious and cultural rather than national rights.

Count Khuen-Hédervary's actions generated a strong Croatian opposition. He was portrayed as a tyrant in Croatian historiography. The Croatian nationalism that developed very timidly in resistance to Hungarian rule, aiming at the unification of Croatia, Slavonia, the Military Frontier (Krajina), Dalmatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina into a single state according to a national

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<sup>50</sup> All these organizations were founded by members of the Serbian Independent Party.

programme drafted by Janko Drašković in 1832, was rapidly enhanced by Khuen-Hedervary's actions – and directed against the Serbs who agreed to the ban's concessions hopeful to preserve their own culture represented by the Christian Orthodox faith and Cyrillic alphabet.

According to Miller:

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

(Miller, 1997:42)

Croatian politics became one of resisting the granting of any recognition to Serbian institutions and cultural peculiarity without previous acceptance by Serbs of the concept that the only “political nation” in Croatia was the Croatian. This politics was emanated by the extreme nationalist Ante Starčević (1823–96) and the Croatian Party of Rights. Starčević launched the slogan “The Serbs are a breed fit only for the slaughter house”. He aspired towards a Greater Croatia that would encompass Slovenia, the provinces of Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia and Krajina, as well as Bosnia and Herzegovina. In brief, Starčević was “the progenitor of extreme Croatian nationalism, which sought to suppress and perhaps even to exterminate all those who had a different national consciousness”.

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

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

The Independent Serbian Party (later the Serbian National Independent Party) was founded in August 1881 as the first Serbian opposition party in Croatia, demanding Serbian church and school autonomy, budgetary support for Serbian institutions in Croatia, equality of the Cyrillic with the Latin alphabet, the right to fly the Serbian flag, and a revision of the agreement with Hungary. (Miller, 38) The party's leader, Svetozar Pribićević, was the most active and influential Serb politician in Croatia from late 1902. Born in Kostajnica in Krajina, he was brought up in such a way as "to have deep devotion toward the Serbian national idea and fully uncritical love towards Serbia, Montenegro and Russia". His party advocated a broader version of Serbdom seeing Serbs as part of a larger, Serbo-Croatian nation.

A more vocal party, the Serbian National Radical Party, came into force in 1887. It was not active in the entire province of Croatia-Slavonia, which then included Krajina, but based its political activity on the privileges granted to Serbs by the earlier Habsburg monarchs. The party goal was to extend the Serbian church and school autonomy to the political realm, building a basis for Serb territorial autonomy. According to the Radicals' Autonomy Programme of 1897, Serbs should seek "the right of autonomy not only in the church/school and property/financial [fields] but also in the political arena".

The Radicals based their claims on the set of privileges granted by Habsburg Emperor Leopold I in 1690, refusing the changes introduced by the subsequent Croato-Hungarian agreement. According to Miller, the Serbian Radical Party, led by Jaša Tomić, "represented a tried and true version of Serbianness: that the Serbian community was [Christian] Orthodox, isolated, threatened with

assimilation, and needful of vigilance”. This vigilance developed in response to Magyarization and the Croats’ increasing denial of Serbian identity.

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

Three years after this incident, however, a small group of enlightened Serbs and Croats formed an official political coalition, realizing that Magyarization threatened them both and that the Viennese authorities did not support a further federalization of the Empire. Thus, at the turn of the century, a policy of Croato-Serb cooperation prevailed, born out of the 1897 unification of the Croat and Serb youth organizations into the United Croatian and Serbian Youth. The youth leaders later formed parties that entered into a Serbo-Croatian government coalition, reflecting Pribičević’s belief that “the Serbo-Croatian conflict cannot be considered a national question, because Serbs and Croats are not two different nations but parts of one and the same nation”.<sup>51</sup>

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

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

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<sup>51</sup> Svetozar Pribičević, “Misao vodilja Srba i Hrvata” [Guiding Idea of Serbs and Croats] in Jovan Banjanin et al., *Narodna misao* (Zagreb: Dionička tiskara, 1897), 50.

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

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

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

In the decades preceding the First World War Austria-Hungary was in a state of latent crisis. Its mosaic of nationalities could not be held together without radical constitutional reforms, but these were vehemently opposed-for different reasons-by the Hungarian land-owning nobility in the east and by the German nationalists in the west. The Monarchy tried to overcome home tensions through expansion in the Balkans, by occupying Bosnia Herzegovina in 1878 and annexing it three decades later. In doing so, however, it turned Serbia from a client state of the Habsburgs as it was in the 1880s under King Milan Obrenović - into an enemy under the rival Karađorđević dynasty, restored after the coup of May 1903.



The immediate trigger of the European war in 1914 was the desire of Austria-Hungary to settle accounts with Serbia once and for all, with Germany's backing and protection vis-a-vis Russia. The murder of Archduke Francis Ferdinand in Sarajevo (r.) was an opportunity to be snatched while it was available. This was the culmination of a conflict between Austria's Balkan expansionism and Serbia's implicit Piedmontism.

Serbia's unexpected achievements in 1912-1913<sup>52</sup>, however, inflamed the 'Yugoslav' sentiment in Habsburg lands. Vienna saw with consternation the triumph of Serbian arms against Turkey then Bulgaria, and the doubling of its territory.

The shots fired by Gavrilo Princip were seen as an opportunity to settle the scores with a small but bothersome adversary. With a blank check hastily granted from Berlin, the Monarchy presented Serbia with an ultimatum with extravagant demands. It was not meant to be accepted: Austria-Hungary willed the war, and rushed into it, fuelled by a heady brew of crude Serbophobia that blended outright racism and a peculiarly Danubian brand of Orthodoxo-phobia. The popular jingle of August 1914, *Serbien muss sterben* ("Serbia must die!"), suggested that the Frankist bile had been approved by the Mitteleuropa. The consequences were dire for the Serbs of Croatia. Frankist-led rioters again took control of the streets of Zagreb, this time with the assistance of the police. Ivan Frank, their leader later admitted that the Zagreb Chief of Police Mraovic had urged him to murder several prominent local Serbs.<sup>53</sup>

The atmosphere of pogrom was fuelled by the nationalist press, which, as a Croat deputy in the Austrian parliament recalled, published invented accounts of attempts made by Serbs to use bombs to wreck trains, railway lines, ships, and other means of communication, in order to justify the draconian measures adopted by the various authorities. All whose national sentiment was awake...

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<sup>52</sup> The Balkan wars 1912–13, terminated the Turkish domination in the Balkans.

<sup>53</sup> Obzor, Zagreb, August 11, 1918

were arrested, interned, cast into prison, ruined, condemned, executed; all who were too young or too old were doomed to die of hunger; and the rest were intimidated, demoralized, and outraged.<sup>54</sup>

*"I'll never forget the horrible scene at the end of the first day of mobilization", another Croatian political leader recalled, "when a huge bonfire was burning at Jelačić Square fuelled by furniture and household items looted from the shops and homes of the Serbs of Zagreb. The bonfire was surrounded by a screaming Frankist mob greeting with loud joy those bringing fresh items to feed the fire ... and chanting 'Hang the Serb on a willow tree' [Srbe na vrbe]."*<sup>55</sup>

The war against Serbia proved to be immensely popular among many Croats. Dr. Zivko Prodanovic, a Serb from Zagreb who was mobilized as a reserve medical corps lieutenant into the 26th Regiment in Karlovac, noted that *"the entire city was filled with enthusiasm and joy: now was the moment to exterminate the Vlachs - down with Serbia!"*<sup>56</sup>

Lynchings of Serbs and lootings of Serb property were common throughout the months of July and August 1914; they were to continue with lesser intensity, for the rest of the war. Thousands of prominent Serbs were arrested and summarily deported, and dozens were killed, even before the war against Serbia was declared. As a Serb deputy stated during a debate at the Croatian Sabor in the summer of 1918: *"When the war broke out, the prisons were filled to overflowing with Serbs from Zemun to Zrmanja. The cloud of suspicion fell upon them, Serb houses were ransacked and demolished Serbs massacred and hanged without judge or judgment."*<sup>57</sup>

The Serbs were saved from wholesale massacre thanks to the commendable sang-froid of the ruling Serb-Croat Coalition administration domestically and then to the sobering news of the Habsburg armies' military defeats externally. Croatian soldiers fought with dogged determination in Serbia in the summer and fall of 1914. Having suffered humiliating defeats in Serbia in 1914, Austria-Hungary focused its war effort on the Russian front. But after the Allied landings at Gallipoli in

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<sup>54</sup> Speech by Dalmatian deputy Ante Tresid-Pavicic in the parliament in Vienna, as quoted in *Novosti* (Zagreb), October 25, 1918.

<sup>55</sup> Dr. Ivan Ribar, *Iz moje politicke suradnje, 1901-1965*. Zagreb: Naprijed 1965. p. 133.

<sup>56</sup> Quoted by Vasa Kazimirovic in *Srpsko nasledje* No. 10 (October 1998.)

<sup>57</sup> Srdjan Budisavljevic in the Sabor August 1. 1918. *Novosti* (Zagreb daily), August 2. 1918.

April 1915, Germany could no longer ignore Serbia and the Danubian link to Turkey any further' and after the fall of Russian Poland Germany was free to act. By October Serbia was doomed: Field Marshal August von Mackensen(r.) led the attack from the north while Bulgaria entered the war in support, and cut off Serbia's southern flank. The campaign crushed Serbia but it did not destroy the Serbian army, which, though cut in half, marched across Albania to the coast.

For the remaining three years of the war Austria-Hungary deployed its South Slav conscripts mainly on the Italian front. Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks fought hard to prevent Italy from gaining the borders promised by Entente powers, which included most of Dalmatia. In an ironic twist, both Serbs and Croats fought the Italians under the Habsburg banner, although for different ends. They were ably commanded by Field Marshal Svetozar Borojević von Bojna, the highest-ranking South Slav (Krajina Serb) in the history of the Habsburg army.

As the war entered its decisive stage in the winter of 1917-1918, the future of the Monarchy was becoming uncertain. The Allies were prepared to see Serbia expand into Habsburg lands with large Serb populations, such as Bosnia and Vojvodina. Until the war's last year they did not envisage the creation of a Yugoslavia, let alone complete dismemberment of Austria-Hungary.

Serbia was concerned with mere survival during the first months of the Austrian onslaught, but soon she articulated war aims that envisaged the 'liberation and unification of all our brothers Serbs, Croats and Slovenes" as was officially stated in the temporary capital Niš, in December 1914. The declaration was made in the heady days after Serbia's early victories, when it may have seemed that the downfall of the Dual Monarchy was only a matter of time. Yet from a realist perspective, Serbia's adoption of a radical program of South Slav unity-at such a nearly stage of the war, and despite the evident enthusiasm with which some of those 'South Slav brothers fought against Serbia-was an act of bravado, if not outright folly.

The Serbian prime minister, Nikola Pašić (I.) acted as the Yugoslav project's strong supporter just before and during the war. He claimed that South Slav unity would bring peace and stability to the

Balkans by creating" one national state, geographically sufficiently large, ethnically compact politically strong, economically independent, and in harmony with European culture and progress."

To that end in early 1915 a Yugoslav Committee' came in to being composed of Croat, Serb and Slovene political emigrates from Austria-Hungary who had made their way to Western Europe. They lobbied the Allies on the (often exaggerated) plight of the South Slavs in the Dual Monarchy and propagated their unification with Serbia into a single state. The creation of Yugoslavia was not the result of a wide Serbian grassroots movement.

Ordinary Serbians did not feel any need for a wider South Slav context (*Illyrianism, Yugoslavism*) to protect and assert their identity. Having completed the process of emancipation from the Ottoman Empire (1878) and the parallel expulsion of the Turks and other Muslims, they no longer needed 'the Other' in order to define their identity and to articulate their objectives. Millions of Serbs in the devastated, occupied Serbia, and further hundreds of thousands in the Serbian Army overseas or in captivity, were fighting and praying for a resurrected and enlarged Kingdom of Serbia.

The Corfu Resolution of 1917, eventually agreed between the government of Serbia and the Yugoslav Committee, proposed the creation of a "constitutional, democratic, and parliamentary monarchy headed by the house of Karađorđević, "to be called the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Both Serbia and Montenegro were supposed to cease existing as sovereign states. This outcome was a major political success for the Croats on the Committee.

Under the Treaty of London, Italy was to get Dalmatia north of Split. Such an outcome would have left Croatia with a mere 'four counties' of its heartland around Zagreb. It would have been squeezed between two enlarged, victorious neighbours, Italy and Serbia. Without much coastline, it would have had an uncertain future. The political class in Zagreb understood the danger and started looking beyond the Serb-Croat coalition. In the final year of the war, with the deteriorating internal situation in Austria-Hungary, the Yugoslav sentiment started gaining strength. The 1917 May

Declaration (*Majska deklaracija*) of South Slav deputies in Vienna heralded the trend, by demanding the union of the provinces where Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs lived in a single state.

As the Dual Monarchy struggled to maintain the war effort, in early 1918 South Slav political representatives went a step further and urged the creation of a grouping of all forces aimed at the establishment of a 'democratically-based state Of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs.' The new wave was driven by the fear of Italy's ambitions if the collapse of the Monarchy caught Croatia alone. The Yugoslav solution was seen as an obvious means of protecting Croatian interests. As the Monarchy crumbled in the autumn of 1918, the Croat-Serb Coalition was the driving force hind the founding in Zagreb of the National Council, an ad hoc body that proclaimed the 'State of Slovenes, Croats and Serb' in the South Slav lands of the Monarchy. The delegates from Zagreb informed Regent Aleksander Karađorđević, on the last day of November, of the National Council's decision in favor of the unconditional union. On 1 December, 1918, the Regent accepted the offer of the National Council and proclaimed the establishment of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Yugoslavia was born.

## **2.5. The first Yugoslavia**

After the defeat of the Austro–Hungarian Empire in 1918 and the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the new Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (SHS) was established on 1 December, comprised of Bosnia Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia. The state was ruled by King Alexander Karađorđević. As a constitutional, democratic and parliamentary monarchy, the new State was about to recognize the two alphabets (Cyrillic and Latin), the three names, the three national flags and the three religions (Catholic, Orthodox and Islamic), adopting universal male suffrage for the election of the future constituent assembly.

The Serbian King and the state met with resistance from Croatia and Montenegro from the beginning. The Croats felt that the new state was a 'greater Serbia' and did not feel that Croats were treated as equal citizens. The seeds of mistrust were sown with the growth of Serb and Croat nationalism. . Even the intellectual groups which initially greeted with enthusiasm Yugoslavia's unification, were about to change their minds, embracing Croatian national cause. The Croats, however, politically weak, were forced to accept the Serbian conditions also in order to ensure international protection from Belgrade, in order to counter the Italian aspirations for national completion and strategic security in the Adriatic Sea.

There was fierce ethnic competition for key official positions in the state apparatus. The Serbs were seen to hold the most prestigious positions and to control the economy. The state was dominated by Serbian institutions (above all, the Serbian House of Karadjordjevic), including the military, the political leadership, and the civil service. These institutions were mechanically transferred to the new parts of Yugoslavia, even though these old Serbian institutions lacked the integrative potential for a new state that was five times larger than Serbia and that now brought under its dominion fragments of old empires that were arguably more developed than Serbia from a legal, cultural, and economic standpoint. After the creation of Yugoslavia as a unified nation and centralized state under Serbian domination, the Croatian political parties entered the opposition, obstructing the work of parliament and state organs. Practically from the very founding of Yugoslavia, the Croatian national question was opened up.

The culmination of ethnic tensions between the two major ethnic groups in the SHS – the Serbs and the Croats – was reached in the summer of 1928, when a Serbian MP, Puniša Račić, assassinated the most influential Croatian politician, Stjepan Radić, his brother Pavao and the MP Đuro Basaricek. . During the funerals, attended by around 100.000 people scattered in the streets of Zagreb, impressive demonstrations and violent uprising took place all over Croatia (Kulundžić, 1967:173).

**Figure 13: The Kingdom of Yugoslavia**



Source: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7251376.stm>

**Table 1. Serbs on the Territory of the former Croatia in 1910, 1921 and 1931.**

(Source: Population census)

Year	Total Population	Serbs	
		Count	Percent
1910	3,460,584	611,257	17.7
1921	3,443,375	606,252	17.6
1931	3,785,455	636,284	16.8

The existence of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes came actually to an end. A few months later, the State assumed the name of “Yugoslavia”, with the pointless purpose of reinforcing the State and creating a common feeling of national union. King Aleksandar took actual sovereignty of its own kingdom only after Pašić’s death: in 1929 he changed the denomination of the Yugoslav State, strengthening the authoritarian regime in a dictatorship and leading to an increasing discontent of Yugoslav nationalities and a rapid development of centrifugal nationalist movements.

King Alexander’s imposition of dictatorship in 1929 decisively defeated the idea of Yugoslavia as a liberal state based on “national unity.” Through repression and persecutions, the King imposed his own version of national unity, including extensive regional reorganization aimed at severing ties among ethnic communities and lessening their potential for resistance. This policy was not only unsuccessful, it intensified dissatisfaction among the national groups it sought to include in the monarchy’s ideal of Yugoslavism, including Serbia. Such a policy found support only among diaspora Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The king was assassinated on 9 October 1934 in Marseilles, France, right by the IMRO (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization)<sup>58</sup> but organized by the Croatian nationalists, the “*Ustaše*”.

Because Alexander's eldest son, Peter II, was a minor, a regency council of three, specified in Alexander's will, took over the role of king. The council was dominated by the king's cousin Prince Paul.

In the late 1930s, internal tensions continued to increase with Serbs and Croats seeking to establish ethnic federal subdivisions. Serbs wanted Vardar Banovina (later known within Yugoslavia as Vardar Macedonia), Vojvodina, Montenegro united with Serb lands while Croatia wanted Dalmatia and some of Vojvodina. Both sides claimed territory in present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina populated by Bosniak Muslims. The expansion of Nazi Germany in 1938 gave new momentum to efforts to solve these problems and, in 1939, Prince Paul appointed Dragiša Cvetković as prime

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<sup>58</sup> The IMRO was a political organization that fought for secession of Vardar Macedonia from Yugoslavia.



minister, with the goal of reaching an agreement with the Croatian opposition. Accordingly, on 26 August 1939, Vladko Maček became vice premier of Yugoslavia and an autonomous Banovina of Croatia was established with its own parliament.

These changes satisfied neither Serbs who were concerned with the status of the Serb minority in the new Banovina of Croatia and who wanted more of Bosnia and Herzegovina as Serbian territory. The autonomous Croat province, Banovina, was to embrace the Savska Banovina, the Primorska Banovina and the district of Dubrovnik. The new Banovina of Croatia would enjoy wide autonomy. A joint government would be formed to see the agreement (Sporazum) through. It was based on Article 116 of the 1931 Constitution, which provided for emergency measures in case of a threat to the country's security. After some additional talks the final version was signed by Prince Paul on 24 August 1939. The Agreement opened with the statement that Yugoslavia is the best guarantee of the independence and progress of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. This declaration of principle by the HSS reaffirmed its acceptance of the Yugoslav state. The Banovina of Croatia comprised more territory than envisaged in the provisional agreement of 27 April, by including several districts of Bosnia and Herzegovina inhabited by Croats. The Croatian nationalists Ustaše were also angered by any settlement short of full independence for a Greater Croatia including all of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Adopted mainly by the liberal intelligentsia among the Serbs and Croats, the Yugoslav idea could not be implemented in the undeveloped, predominantly agrarian society, impregnated by various feudal traditions religious intolerance, and often a xenophobic mentality. It was the example of an imagined community. Both Serbs and Croats used linguistic nationalism in the form of a Yugoslav idea as and when needed, as an auxiliary device in respect of their own national integrations. Within the framework of their different political and socio-economic backgrounds, the Serbs and the Croats used it with fundamentally different interpretations of its real content.

Serbia had a stronger position in the negotiations over Yugoslavia, largely owing to its reputation as one of the victors in the Balkan Wars (1912–13), then as a state on the side of the Entente during

World War I (in which Serbs suffered enormous casualties), and finally as an organized military force capable of blocking the pretensions of neighboring countries to Yugoslav lands (primarily Italy's claims on Dalmatia). For these reasons, Serbia believed that it had the right to speak in the name of all Yugoslav peoples and to influence decisively the form of the state in conformity with Serbian national interests. Given the historical circumstances and balance of power, the Serbian position prevailed. Serbia's basic objective remained the unification of all Serbs in one state. Following this nationalist ideology, Serbia entered World War I with the aim of bringing together all Serbs and Serbian lands, including those in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Vojvodina (all under Austro-Hungarian rule).

Pressed by an internal Yugoslav movement (which was especially strong in Dalmatia and among Croatian Serbs who were pushing for unification with Serbia), Croatia joined Yugoslavia, but with a strong feeling of its unequal position in the partnership.

## **2.6. The Independent State of Croatia and World War II**

As previously seen, in 1939 according to the Cvetković-Maček Agreement, the Croatian Banovina was established. However, the Agreement was an emergency political measure meant to unify and strengthen the country on the eve of a new European war. For that it was too late. Far from strengthening Yugoslavia King Alexander's dictatorship had disrupted political life and created disorientation among the Serbs, without breaking the Croats' striving for self-rule. The Serbs, as it turned out, were the only ones to fall for their own propaganda of 'one nation with three names.' However, the Agreement wasn't accomplished to the Nazi invasion of Yugoslavia, and it became obsolete when the marionette Independent State of Croatia was established as a de jure independent Croatian state.

Prince Paul submitted to the fascist pressure and signed the Tripartite Treaty in Vienna on 25 March 1941, hoping to still keep Yugoslavia out of the war. But this was at the expense of popular support for Paul's regency. Senior military officers were also opposed to the treaty and launched a coup d'état when the king returned on 27 March. Hitler then decided to attack Yugoslavia on 6 April 1941, followed immediately by an invasion of Greece where Mussolini had previously been repelled. The Kingdom's territory was later divided by the Axis forces and their allies. The independent Croatian state was proclaimed, including a large part of Bosnia Herzegovina, with Nazi blessing. The proclamation of the 'Independent State of Croatia' on Zagreb's radio was made on April 10, 1941 by one of Pavelić's followers, former Austrian-Hungarian officer Slavko Kvaternik. This was not the Germans' favorite option, however. It was adopted in the absence of a better alternative following the entry of German troops into Croatia's capital earlier that day.

The terror started on the same day Ante Pavelić arrived to take over his "state". His mix of Nazi brutality and racism, fascist irrationality and reinvented primitivism soon turned Croatia into a pandemonium of anarchy and genocide. The all-pervasive Serbhatred and copycat Nazi antisemitism were coupled with the proclaimed goal to turn the NDH into an 'Ustaša-state' (*Ustaška država*).

Pavelić's creation was to grow into a paradigmatic manifestation of 'native fascism in South Slav lands: rabidly nationalist, racist, antidemocratic, and violent to the point of genocide.

An elaborate apparatus of internal control was soon established. On 10 May the Ustaša movement constituted an armed militia (*Ustaška vojnica*) as its military muscle, and the Ustaša Supervisory Service (*Ustaška nadzorna služba*, UNS) the security service similar in structure and methods to the Gestapo in Germany. The tools of terror were ready; the bloodbath could begin.

**Figure 14: The Independent State of Croatia (NDH)**



Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Independent\\_State\\_of\\_Croatia\\_1941-43.png](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Independent_State_of_Croatia_1941-43.png)

The first recorded mass murder of Serbs occurred in Bjelovar on the night of 27-28 April 1941, when between 180 and 190 unarmed civilians of all ages were shot. Such instances were repeated in different areas throughout the month of May.<sup>59</sup>

The Serb population in Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Srem was shocked by the speedy fall of the state they regarded as their own, and displayed mute acceptance of the new order. Some saw it as a re-enactment of Austria-Hungary - a state which while not loved, was well respected. As they were to learn to their peril in the NOH there was no rational correlation between a Serb's deeds and the state's attitude. Having a Serb identity was a political act in itself tantamount to treason: "those who 'wanted to be Serbs' and who 'insisted on being Serbs' should be punished for that."<sup>60</sup>

Pavelić postulated a thoroughly demonic concept of the Serb. The hatred of the 'Vlach' was the cornerstone of his followers' outlook and above all the key defining trait of their Croatness. The

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<sup>59</sup> See Fikreta Jelic-Butic: HSS . Zagreb 1983, p. 47.

<sup>60</sup> Aleksa DjiJas unpublished PhD thesis , History Department, Harvard University, Cambridge, Ma ., p. 245.

Serb was a subhuman beast (Starčević), racially different from the Croat and genetically inferior to him (Sufflay), a 'scheming Byzantine oriental... an alien thorn in Croatia's very flesh ' (Pavelić).

On 17 April 1941, Pavelić enacted a fiat called The Law on the Protection of the People and the State. It literally made it ' legal' for the regime to kill anyone. Pavelić's men were frank about the Serbs: "Destroy them wherever you see them, and our Poglavnik's blessing is certain."<sup>61</sup>

Pavelić's ' minister of justice' was equally clear:

*"This State, our country, is only for the Croats, and not for anyone else. There are no means which we will not be ready to use in order to make our country truly ours, and to cleanse it of all Serbs. All those who came into our country 300 years ago must disappear. We do not hide this is our intention. It is the policy of our State. In the course 'Of its execution we shall simply follow the Ustaša principles".*<sup>62</sup>

In a highly publicized speech in the town of Gospić (Lika) on 22 July 1941, Mile Budak, Pavelić's minister of education, announced to the roar of approval, *"We have three million bullets for Serbs, Jews and Gypsies. We shall kill one third of all Serbs. We shall deport another third, and the rest of them will be forced to become Catholic."* The so called Serbs, Budak (r.) added, are not any Serbs at all, but people brought by the Turks *"as the plunderers and refuse of the Balkans ... They should know, and heed, our motto: either submit, or get out!"* Ustaša ideology evolved from three intertwined intellectual, social and emotional components: Ethnicity, religion, and violence.<sup>63</sup>

In the tradition of Starčević, the Serbs' nationality was denied and the term Vlachs or 'Greek-Easterners' (*Grko-iztočnjaci*) applied instead. Paradoxically, however, they were also depicted as apostates and traitors, implicitly not of alien stock at all, but apostates who had betrayed 'their mother country' Croatia to foreign, Austrian, Hungarian, or Serbian interests. The implication was that they were Croats who had converted to Orthodoxy and thus accepted the Serb name by default

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<sup>61</sup> Kazi mirović, p.III .

<sup>62</sup> From a speech by Dr. Milovan Zanic. Novi list (Zagreb daily), 3 June 1941.

<sup>63</sup> Jonathan Gumz "German Counterinsurgency Policy in Independent Croatia, 1941-1944." The Historian, Vol. 61 ( 1998), pp. 33-51.

This view was reflected in Pavelić's 1942 experiment with the Croatian Orthodox Church, which was a religious body created during World War II in the Independent State of Croatia (NDH). The reason for formation of this church was that Orthodox Christian Churches are state-based. Since Orthodox Christians lived on the territory of NDH, and not that of Serbia, as well as the fact that many countries and peoples of Orthodox Christian faith, that were friendly to NDH, couldn't have properly organized religious life in NDH (Bulgarians, Romanians, Ukrainians, Montenegrins etc.). Authorities finally made a move to organize domestic Orthodox Church. This was also part of policy to eliminate Serbian culture -- and the Serbs -- from Nazi Croatia.

The religious component was prominent. The old notion that Serbs were 'Orthodox Croats' was replaced by the demand for outright conversion or death. Orthodox priests and other prominent local leaders were the first targets of Ustaša slaughters.

Forced conversions from Orthodoxy to Catholicism figured prominently on the Ustaša agenda: since being Croat was equivalent to confessing to the Catholic faith, and being Serb followed the profession of Orthodoxy, they now began to convert the Orthodox to Roman Catholicism under duress. Forced conversions were actually a method of Croatization.<sup>64</sup>

When the anti-Serb and anti-Jewish racial laws of April and May 1941 were enacted the Catholic press welcomed them as vital for "the survival and development of the Croatian nation."<sup>65</sup>

In late spring and summer of 1941 dozens of towns and villages throughout the NDH were subjected to a wave of terrorist operations. It was unprecedented, far bloodier than anything seen in the Balkans until that time. Hundreds of thousands of Serbs, as well as tens of thousands of Jews and Gypsies, were murdered on the spot or led away to camps to be killed.

The number of victims will never be known; it is still a politically charged issue. Holocaust historians estimate that half a million, and perhaps as many as 530,000<sup>66</sup> Serbs were killed.

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<sup>64</sup> Walter Hagen. *The Secret Front: the Story of Nazi Political Espionage*. London : Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1953, p. 238. 'Hagen' was Hoettl

<sup>65</sup> Hrvatska Strata, May 11, 1941

Yad Vashem center in Jerusalem quotes a similar figure:

More than 500,000 Serbs were murdered in horribly sadistic ways (mostly in the summer of 1941), 250,000 were expelled, and another 200,000 were forced to convert to Catholicism.

Some 30,000 of Croatia's Jews died ... 80 percent of the country's Jewish population.<sup>67</sup>

Given that, in April 1941, the Serbs constituted about one third of the total NDH population of six million, this level of casualties makes them the second hardest hit population in Hitler's Europe, right after the Jews.<sup>68</sup>

The NDH needed no quasi-legislation for the slaughter to begin. With all power in the hands of Pavelic, and some 30,000 armed Ustaša volunteers at his disposal by June 1941 he and his henchmen on the ground felt they could do literally as they pleased. They would pick up a Serb village or town, as they did in Glina in August 1941, have it surrounded, order all inhabitants to gather in the local Orthodox Church, tie them and kill them on the spot. They could throw them down a nearby karst pit - as they did at Golubinka near Međugorje, in Herzegovina - or send them to a death camp such as Jadovno, which operated in June-August 1941. Throughout the summer of 1941 one of these scenarios was unfolding on daily basis. The method of killing, in the camps and villages alike, was typically a slit throat or a blow with a heavy club in the back of the head. More piquant methods, such as sawing off the head of the victim, were too time consuming and therefore rare. The hardest hit areas were in Herzegovina and the Krajina.

Between May and August 1941 over a dozen camps were established to handle huge numbers of Serbian and Jewish deportees from all over the NDH (Danica, Caprag, Kerestinec, Pag, Kruscica, Tenj, Loborgrad, Gornja Rijeka, Ojakovo, Sisak, Jastrebarsko, Jadovno, Lepoglava ... ). The system

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<sup>66</sup> Jonathan Steinberg, "Types of Genocide: Croatians, Serbs, and Jews, 1941-1945," in David Cesarani *The Final Solution: Origins and implementation*. Routledge 1996, p. 175

<sup>67</sup> Croatia," in Shoah Resource Center. Jerusalem: The International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem, 2005.

<sup>68</sup> For a demographic study using statistical methods of calculating demographic losses, see Bogoljub Kocovic. *Zrtve drugog svetskog rata u Jugoslaviji*. Belgrade 2005.

of hastily constructed and rudimentally organized facilities, of which the one at Jasenovac was the most prominent, turned the NDH into 'a land of concentration camps.'<sup>69</sup>

The wave of anti-Serb terror caused a series of Serb uprisings all over the Independent State of Croatia, which eventually turned into a major guerrilla war with international ramifications. Uprisings also occurred in the summer of 1941 in Serbia and Montenegro but their motivation was resistance rather than survival. The political and social contexts were different, which was reflected in the response to German pressure. By the end of 1941 both had been pacified, and remained so - in the case of Serbia - for almost three years, until the arrival of the Red Army in late September 1944. No such pacification could be effected in the NDH. The constant threat of Ustaša massacres gave the Serbs an unmatched incentive for immediate and sustained resistance. It was at first an exclusively anti-Ustaša resistance.

In eastern Herzegovina a spontaneous Serb uprising occurred as early as June 1941, in response to a wave of savage slaughters the Ustašas carried out in the area of Bileća Gacko Nevesinje and Trebinje.<sup>70</sup> The regions of western Bosnia, Lika, Kordun, and northern Dalmatia, which were also the scene of savage mass slaughters, were up in arms by late July. At the same time, other areas with a Serb majority or plurality - Srem, Semberija, parts of Slavonija and Podravina remained relatively quiet for as long as they were less brutally affected by terror.

The initial form of self-defense in many Serb villages was to establish village guards, to set up observation posts and patrols on the surrounding roads and to warn their inhabitants if an Ustaša column was approaching. When alerted of danger people escaped into the surrounding countryside. Rudimentary sanctuaries (*zbežovi*) were organized in remote spots, such as caves and hidden crevices, to accommodate women, children and the infirm. Village committees organizing such evacuations were usually led by men with some prior military experience, typically reserve officers or gendarmes. They soon joined the ranks of the two factions of the clandestine Yugoslav resistance

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<sup>69</sup> Cf. Croatian historian Antun Miletic in *Koncentracioni logor Jasenovac 1941-1945*. Beograd: Narodna knjiga 1986.

<sup>70</sup> This event, long ignored under Tito, belied the official myth that the uprising throughout Yugoslavia was organized and led by the CPY.



forces: the communist-led Yugoslav Partisans and the royalist Četniks, both fighting for the liberation of Yugoslavia from Nazi occupation.

As previously seen Yugoslavia formally surrendered to German forces in 1941, but a small group of officers led by Colonel Draža Mihajlović refused to surrender and continued to resist the occupation from a base in western Serbia. They called themselves the Četnik Detachments of the Yugoslav Army of the Fatherland. The Četnici also represented the royal government in exile. They received a British military liaison officer and considerable amounts of British supplies and equipment. However, they avoided attacking the occupiers because they feared reprisals against the noncombatant population. The Četnici believed their military actions could not influence the course of the war, and they waited instead for the Allies to defeat the Axis powers. They were later discredited in Yugoslavia as collaborators because of their unwillingness to resist.

The Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY) under Tito also refused to accept defeat. It remained inactive, however, until Germany attacked the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941. Through the Comintern (Communist International), the CPY received orders from the Soviet Union to resist the German occupation. Initially the military committees of the CPY collected arms and organized available manpower. Then they conducted small armed attacks and acts of sabotage against occupying Axis forces. They waged their military campaign without regard to the fate of civilians living under the occupation--often the occupiers executed large numbers of civilians in retaliation for attacks and sabotage. The difference in strategies and political views quickly brought the Četnici and CPY forces into a state of civil war.

The CPY military wing formally became the People's Liberation Army and Partisan Detachments of Yugoslavia (commonly known as the Partisans) on December 22, 1941. With approximately 80,000 fighters, the Partisans fought occupying forces, collaborators such as the Ustaše in Croatia, and their political opponents, the Četnici. By the end of 1942, the Partisans had grown to 150,000 troops organized into two corps, three divisions, thirty-one brigades, and thirty-eight detachments. Axis

occupation forces launched several major offensives to destroy the Partisans, but they failed in each case. Although the Partisans liberated some areas of the country, they generally avoided major engagements with superior forces. By late 1943, the Partisans began to resemble a regular army.

On 25 November 1942, the Anti-Fascist Council of National Liberation of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ) was convened in Bihać, modern day Bosnia and Herzegovina. The council reconvened on 29 November 1943, in Jajce, also in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and established the basis for post-war organization of the country, establishing a federation (this date was celebrated as Republic Day after the war). It was a quasi-legislative body under Communist control, which was supposed to provide a pseudo-legal cover for Tito's intended take-over of post-war Yugoslavia.

As the Germans retreated from Greece through Yugoslavia and the Soviet Red Army advanced into Romania in 1944, the Partisans cleared most of the German troops from the country while simultaneously battling their domestic Ustaše and Četnik enemies. Tito flew to Moscow to meet Stalin and to coordinate Partisan and Red Army operations on Yugoslav territory. The Red Army wheeled north after entering the country and, together with the Partisans, liberated Belgrade on October 20, 1944. The Red Army pursued the retreating German forces from northeast Yugoslavia into Hungary, leaving the Partisans in control in Yugoslavia. The 800,000 troops of the People's Liberation Army officially became the Yugoslav People's Army (YPA) on March 1, 1945.

## 2.7 Socialist Yugoslavia

After the Second World War, the Communist partisan Tito, who had resisted the fascists, came to power. He and the Communist Party recognized the persecution that Serbs had suffered under the Nazis, and attempted to placate ethnic tensions with a complex state structure based on national and historical ethnic group characteristics. On 31 January 1946, the new constitution of Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, modeled after the Soviet Union, established six republics, an autonomous province, and an autonomous district that were part of SR Serbia. The federal capital was Belgrade. No debate was ever allowed on the issue of internal borders, although many questions remained unanswered. Just over one percent of all inhabitants of the Republic of Serbia were Croats, while in 1948 - even after the Ustaša genocide - the Serbs accounted for 17 percent of the population of Croatia. Ethnically devoid of balance, those boundaries had a dubious basis in history. They had never been subjected to a popular plebiscite, let alone to the process of negotiation, signature and ratification by the representatives of the peoples affected by them. One consequence of Tito's division of Yugoslavia was to split the Serbs into four federal units, leaving a third of them outside the confines of the Republic of Serbia. Furthermore, within Serbia two autonomous provinces were created, thus diminishing that republic's coherence even further. 'Serbia-proper' (or 'Inner Serbia,' Uža Srbija) was effectively reduced to the boundaries of the Kingdom before the Balkan Wars of 1912-13. No other federal republic had autonomous provinces carved out of its land although the same set of ethnic, historical, cultural, and geographic principles would have dictated the granting of the same status to Istria or Dalmatia, let alone the Krajina. Communist Yugoslavia was built not on a nationality or supra-nationality, but on territorial adjudications which would have been impossible at any point between 1918 and 1941. The Serbs of western Yugoslavia, who had provided the core fighting force of the Partisan movement (as well as some of its most competent enemies), were dismayed by Tito's territorial arrangements. At the First Congress of Serbs in

Croatia, held in Zagreb in September 1945 they were told, neither for the first nor for the last time, that those arrangements did not matter since the Yugoslav state remained in place: "The boundaries of our federal units do not cut up or divide the Serbian people, but provide firm links that tie together all Serbs in Yugoslavia."<sup>71</sup>

The Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Croatia (Article 1) defined this state as '*the national state of Croats, Serbs in Croatia and other nationalities*'. Apart from Articles on national equality, 'brotherhood' and unity, this Constitution does not provide further details on the implementation of the Serbs' ethnic rights in Croatia, but determines the exercise of their civil rights through the rights of 'the working class and working people'. Within such a constitutional and socialist-based system the Serbs in Croatia felt secure.

The new regime was not, of course, officially anti-Serb; but its newly-promulgated principle of equal contribution to victory and equal suffering for it the corollary of 'brotherhood and unity,' had as its chief practical consequence a massive official cover-up of Ustaša crimes.

Tito's edifice thus came to be built on three fictions: the myth of Yugoslav nations' equal contribution to the Partisan victory; the myth of all groups equal suffering under the 'occupiers and their domestic servants'; and the equating of the Četniks with Pavelić's Ustaše. These three myths were firmly imposed by the Communist authorities in Zagreb. The Serbs in the Croatian Communist Party, indoctrinated in Partisan ranks, provided the middle ranking apparatus and a disproportionate number of army and police personnel, but not the top-ranking leaders. They were in the forefront of enforcing ideological rigidity among their own people, by imposing collectivization of agriculture in the Serb-majority areas and preventing the rebuilding of Orthodox churches demolished by the Ustaša regime (or even ordering the demolition of those that had been spared). In the name of 'brotherhood and unity,' they even opposed the desire of local Serbs to exhume the bodies of Ustaša victims from mass graves and mountain pits for proper funeral.

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<sup>71</sup> Momcilo Diklic, *Srpsko pitanje u Hrvatskoj, 1941-1950*. Beograd: Zora, 2004, p. 242.

Consequently the process of de-Nazification never took place in Yugoslavia. This has been, and still is, a paramount factor of Croatian society and politics.

Power was devolved and Tito attempted to suppress nationalism by means of the one-party state. A policy of full ethnic equality was proclaimed and to some extent successfully implemented, and a minority of the population wanted to be called Yugoslavs rather than be identified with any ethnic group.

The Krajina Serbs emerged from the Second World War as a devastated community. Decimated by genocide and years of fighting, pauperized, devoid of traditional local leaders and intelligentsia, the rural population literally faced starvation in 1945-1946.

Croatian Communist authorities devised a plan to resettle tens of thousands of homeless Serbs not by rebuilding their houses and villages in the Krajina, but by physically relocating them to Vojvodina and housing them in the confiscated properties that had belonged to the expelled German minority. The priority was given to Partisan veterans and their families. In 1945-1947 some 60,000 Krajina Serbs were resettled in the northern Serbian province under the colonisation program.

The Serb-Croat ethnic balance, already altered through massive bloodletting in 1941-1945, thus had continued to shift under Tito's Communists: by the time of the 1948 census the Serbs constituted only 14.5 percent of Croatia's population. The cultural balance was shifting, too.

**Figure 15: The Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRJ)**



Source: <http://www.libreria-mundoarabe.com/Boletines/n%BA54%20Nov.07/IslamBalcanesEstadoYugoslavo.html>

Over the ensuing two decades the regime relied extensively on the Krajina-Serb lower and middle-ranking *nomenklatura*, notably during the 'Croatian Spring' of 1970-1971. This created the illusion of influence and the semblance of a stake in the political order, but in reality the Serbs in Croatia lacked both. Their cultural and political institutions - such as the Club of Serb Deputies in the Croatian assembly - were abolished. They lacked leaders and strategy. They were singularly ill-prepared for the crisis of the Yugoslav state that became acute within a decade of Tito's death in 1980.

## 2.8. The SAO Krajina and the war in Croatia

Following the first multi-party elections for more than 50 years, held on 22 April and 6 May 1990, Croatia began the transformation to a parliamentary democracy and market economy. Along with other republics of the former SFRY, Croatia also began a political struggle for equality within the federation. According to the then SFRY Constitution (1974) the Croatian Republic had all the prerogatives of a state, including the right of self-determination and secession.

After the formation of the new, democratically elected government, the Croatian parliament adopted Croatia's first civil Constitution on 22 December 1990. According to the Constitution, Croatia was declared a republic with a semi-presidential system of government.

The genocide attempted by Croatian Quislings in 1941-1945 was still in vivid collective memory in 1991. It shaped the determination of the Krajina Serbs not to live under a post-communist Croatian government which took some pains to revive the symbolism, discourse, and even some methods of the Ustaša state. The internal history of Communist Croatia also played a role. Croatia kept the Krajina in 1945 but thereby kept its Serbian Question. The Serbs in Croatia may have had little real clout under Tito and after him, but the Communist apparat and the police were disproportionately Serb. This was resented by Croats just as Serb privileges had been resented before 1881, and Serb identity thereafter. As the Croatian Party (*Savez komunista Hrvatske, SKH*) became more nationalistic this was consequential; when Communists failed, this nationalism detonated. The Serbs were identified as the origin of the Communist revolution. In 1990-1991 the Krajina Serbs, Communists and all others, had the memory of the genocide as a salient feature of their outlook. Their fears were kindled by the government of Franjo Tuđman and his Croatian Democratic Community (*Hrvatska demokratska zajednica, HDZ*), which came to power in 1990 after the first multiparty election since Second World War. It was composed of hard-line nationalists with strong emigrates' connections.

Serbs occupied a disproportionate number of state posts throughout the SFRJ, including in Croatia, and dominated the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA). By contrast, Croatia's Serb minority viewed the nationalism that accompanied the Croatian independence movement with alarm, recalling Croatia's prior incarnation as a fascist puppet state during the Second World War, and the thousands of Serbs, Jews, and Roma who had died in the Jasenovac concentration camp.

The violations of the rights of Serbs in Croatia began soon after the HDZ electoral victory in April 1990. Thousands of Serbs were soon fired from their jobs or else forced to sign humiliating 'declarations of loyalty' to the new government in Zagreb. Next came clandestine distribution of weapons to 'reliable Croats' in the villages, members of the ruling party. Nocturnal shots fired at the windows of Serb apartments, Ustaša slogans spray-painted on Serb-owned houses and businesses, threatening late-night telephone calls, all became the order of the day in the summer of 1990. Within months over one-hundred-thousand Serbs, mainly women, children, and old people, left their homes and sought refuge in Serbia. On May 30, 1990, the newly-founded Serb Democratic Party (SDS), led at that time Jovan Rašković, decided to break all ties to the Croatian parliament.

In June the Serbs established the Association of Municipalities of Northern Dalmatia and Lika in Knin. The Serbian National Council was founded in July 1990 to co-ordinate opposition to Croatian independence. Its position was that if Croatia were to secede from Yugoslavia, then the Serbs should have the right to secede from Croatia. Milan Babić, a dentist from Knin, was elected president of the Council. In August 1990 a referendum was held in the Krajina affirming Serb sovereignty and autonomy' within Croatia. As expected it was declared illegal and invalid by the Croatian government. Also in August, barricades of logs were placed across roads leading to Serb-majority areas. This effectively cut Croatia in two, separating the coastal region of Dalmatia from the rest of the country. Franjo Tuđman (I.) and his followers were undeterred: a new Croatian constitution was passed in December 1990. It treated Serbs as an ethnic minority by abrogating their previous status as a constituent nation of the Republic of Croatia. A community of blood and soil



(or kinship) was promoted by Tuđman who considered himself the ‘President of all Croats’. He would address the people as ‘the Croat brothers and sisters and others’. Babić's administration responded by announcing the creation of the Serbian Autonomous Region of Krajina (*Srpska autonomna oblast, SAO Krajina*) on 21 December 1990. On 1 April 1991, it declared that it would secede from Croatia. Other mainly Serb communities, in western and eastern Slavonia, announced that they would join the SAO Krajina. Tudjman's government staged a referendum on independence on 19 May 1991. On 25 June 1991, Croatia and Slovenia both declared their independence from Yugoslavia.

During talks held in Ohrid on 19 April 1991, it was agreed that a referendum would be called to decide whether the SFRY would be preserved as a federation or transformed into a confederation of sovereign states. The referendum, held in Croatia in May 1991, had a 94 percent vote in favour of an independent and sovereign Croatia. Consequently, on 25 June 1991, the Croatian parliament passed a Constitutional Act on Independence and Sovereignty of the Republic of Croatia, formally severing its ties with the SFRY. Slovenia declared its independence and sovereignty on the same day. Slobodan Milošević's government in Belgrade refused to accept the results of the referendum and, supported by the JNA, began a military intervention with the stated aim of protecting the Serbian minority in the Republic of Croatia.

Milošević's aggression towards Croatia coupled with the mobilization of a part of the Serb minority in Croatia, and compounded by the nationalistic policy instigated by the HDZ against the Serbs in Croatia, led to a bloody war.

Fighting was heaviest in Baranja, Eastern Slavonia. Local Serb forces backed by the JNA seized the area. Croat forces in Vukovar held out for over 100 days before surrendering in November 1991 but the city was devastated by some of the worst fighting in Europe since the Second World War. Neighbours fought neighbours in brutal inter-ethnic warfare with tens of thousands displaced in

many parts of Croatia. By the end of 1991 close to a third of Croatian territory was under Serb control.

In Croatia bloody clashes between insurgent Serbs and Croatian security forces broke out almost immediately, leaving dozens dead on both sides. At this point the Serbian cry was 'Yugoslavia'. The European Community (after December 1991, the European Union) and UN attempted to broker ceasefires and peace settlements. After Brussels decided to recognize Tito's borders as international frontiers, however, such efforts were to no avail. The Yugoslavia's divorce should have reflected the nature of its 'marriage' in 1915. Yugoslavia came into being with the approval of the international community - a voluntary union of its three initial constituent peoples: Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes.

Prior to 1918, only Serbia and Montenegro were sovereign states: the rest of Yugoslavia was incorporated into Austria-Hungary. They joined Serbia in union as peoples, not as 'states'. The right to secession remained vested in the constituent peoples of Yugoslavia (as distinct from national minorities), and not in Tito's arbitrarily delineated republics. EU negotiator Lord David Owen thus conceded that Tito's internal boundaries were arbitrary and that their redrawing should have been countenanced at the outset of the crisis in 1990- 1991. This outcome flowed from the decision of the Foreign Ministers of the European Community on 16 December 1991, and was given a legal basis in the Opinions issued by the Badinter Arbitration Commission established by the European Community four months earlier. A wide-scale war broke out four months earlier in August 1991. This time the Krajina Serbs had the benefit of JNA officers and equipment, and they fought with conviction and enthusiasm. Over the following months a large area, amounting to a third of the Republic of Croatia, was controlled by the Serbs. On 19 December 1991, the SAO Krajina proclaimed itself the Republic of Serbian Krajina. On 26 February 1992, the SAO Western Slavonia and SAO Slavonia, Baranja and Western Srem were added to the RSK. The Serb Army of Krajina (*Srpska vojska Krajine*) was officially formed on 19 March 1992, its officer corps consisting entirely of the former YPA personnel. The self-proclaimed Republic of Serbian Krajina consisted of

a large section of the historical Military Frontier as well as parts of northern Dalmatia with a majority or a plurality of Serbian population, including the city of Knin which became its capital. It covered an area of 17,000 square kilometers, but it was strategically vulnerable, politically unconsolidated, and economically weak. A ceasefire agreement was signed by Presidents Tuđman and Milošević in January 1992, paving the way for the implementation of a UN peace plan put forward by former U.S.

Secretary of State Cyrus Vance. Under the Vance Plan, four United Nations Protected Areas (UNPAs) were to be established in the Krajina. On 21 February 1992, the creation of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) was authorized by the UN Security Council for an initial period of one year. The agreement effectively froze the front lines for the next three years. The two sides had fought each other to a temporary standstill. The partial implementation of the Vance Plan drove a wedge between the governments of the Krajina and Serbia, the RSK's principal backer and supplier of fuel, arms and money. Milan Babić strongly opposed the Vance Plan but was overruled by the RSK assembly. On 26 February 1992, after a long and arduous meeting with the leaders of Serbia in Belgrade, Babić refused to relent and was forced to resign. He was replaced as President by Goran Hadžić, a Milošević loyalist. Hadžić signed the Vance Plan, which implied the recognition of Croatian sovereignty. Babić (I.) remained involved in politics as a much weaker figure.

The position of the Krajina eroded steadily over the following three years. On the surface, the RSK had all the symbols of a state: an army, parliament, president, government and ministries, currency and stamps. But it was surrounded by hostile territory. On two sides lay Croatia, and though the Bosnian Serb Republic gave the RSK some protection on the third side, Krajina was itself all but split in half by enemy territory. The economic situation soon became disastrous. By 1994, only 36,000 of the RSK's 430,000 citizens were employed. With few natural resources of its own and no access to its natural markets, it had to import most of the goods and fuel it required. Agriculture

operated at little more than a subsistence level. Professionals went to Serbia or abroad to escape the hardship.

It was becoming clear by the mid-1990s that without a peace agreement, or more energetic support from Belgrade, the RSK was not economically viable. In Serbia, however, it was seen as an unwanted economic and political burden by Milošević. To his frustration, the Krajina Serb assembly continued to reject his demands to settle the conflict by accepting the principle of Croatian sovereignty.

**Figure 16: The Republic of Serbian Krajina (1992-1995)**



Source:

[http://bs.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Datoteka:Map\\_of\\_Republika\\_Srpska\\_Krajina.png&filetimestamp=20100501](http://bs.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Datoteka:Map_of_Republika_Srpska_Krajina.png&filetimestamp=20100501)

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The RSK's weakness adversely affected its armed forces. Since the 1992 ceasefire agreement, Croatia had spent heavily on importing weapons and training with assistance from American contractors. In contrast the Krajina forces had grown steadily weaker, with its soldiers poorly motivated, trained and equipped. Croatian preparations took almost two years, and proceeded with the support of Germany and the United States, political as well as military.

Political divisions between Hadžić and Babić led to tensions between their supporters; Babić himself was assaulted in an incident in Benkovac. Serbian positions around Maslenica in southern Croatia, which curtailed their access to the sea at Novigrad and reopened the vital Adriatic highway. In a second offensive in September 1993 the Croatian army overran the Medak pocket in southern Lika, committing shocking and well documented atrocities against the unarmed civilians trapped in the area.

Following the anticipated failure of the international plan for reintegration (Z-4), the beginning of the end of the RSK came in the first week of May of 1995, when Croatian forces gained control of western Slavonia (Operation Flash), to Belgrade's conspicuous indifference. Finally on August 4, 1995, Operation Storm was launched by the Croatian army and police. It was a massive, brutal and well announced onslaught.

As Croatian troops launched their assault on August 4, U.S. NATO aircraft destroyed Serbian radar and anti-aircraft defenses. Following the elimination of Serbian anti-aircraft defenses, Croatian planes carried out attacks on Serbian towns and positions. The roads were clogged with escaping civilians. Croatian aircraft bombed and strafed refugee columns. Several thousand Serbs lost their lives during the exodus, or else were killed by the Croatian forces if they stayed behind. It was the biggest act of ethnic cleansing in post-1945 Europe. A few thousand remained, mostly the elderly, in an area inhabited by half a million people a century ago. It was not the first mass migration produced by war in the Balkans, but it was among the largest. Most of the refugees ended up in

Serbia and the Serbian part of Bosnia (*Republika Srpska*). Massacres continued for several weeks after the fall of Krajina.

To the Croats, its causes were in the program of a 'Greater Serbia,' pursued and elaborated for a century and a half that separated Ilija Garašanin in the 1840s and Slobodan Milošević in the 1990s. It was a war of Serbian aggression and Croatian Defence of the Motherland, plain and simple. It was also a war, it is often implied yet seldom openly stated in Croatian sources, between an outpost of the 'Western' civilization and a relic of an inherently incompatible and indubitably more primitive 'Byzantine' one. To the Serbs the war was above all a reaction to what they perceived as intolerable provocation, an existential response to the revamping of Ustašism in rhetoric, symbols, and substance. In their view, they were reacting to Tuđman's escalating political ploys in Zagreb and his minions' terrorist acts on the ground. The establishment of autonomous regions, and the subsequent proclamation of the Republic of the Serbian Krajina, was seen as an act of rebellion by most Croats and as necessary response by most Serbs.

Croatia celebrates August 5 as Victory and Homeland Thanksgiving Day. In reality there was hardly any fighting. Belgrade ordered a retreat. The Krajina leaders obeyed. A handful of Croatian officers (such as General Ante Gotovina, I. with Tuđman in Knin, August 1995) were indicted by the ICTY at The Hague for command responsibility for the atrocities committed by Croatian forces against the civilian Serb population. The key leaders and masterminds - starting with Franjo Tuđman, who died in bed in 1999 - remained immune. The crime itself, not unlike the horror that preceded it in 1941-1945, remains unacknowledged and untainted for.

The international community's only major success was the Erdut Agreement, in November 1995, which enabled the beginning of the peaceful integration of Eastern Slavonia into the Republic of Croatia.

The 1991–5 conflict resulted in many terrible consequences and much suffering among the Serbian and Croatian communities. Yet amid this tragedy there were rays of hope, and examples of good practice and of peaceful coexistence between Serb and Croat communities.

At the end of 1995, Eastern Slavonia was devastated. It was populated by an estimated 150,000 people, 85 per cent Serbs and 8 per cent Croats, including about 60,000 Serb refugees from other parts of FRY, who lived in the ruins of the towns and villages. The Krajina Serb government was in a state of collapse after its flight from Knin in August.

The Serbs living in Eastern Slavonia avoided the tragic consequences of those living in other parts of 'Republika Srpska Krajina', by accepting the Erdut Agreement. Following considerable efforts and substantial guarantees by the international community, the Basic Agreement on the Region of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium, a bilateral agreement between the Croatian government and the local Serb authorities in Eastern Slavonia (the Erdut Agreement), was signed in November 1995. According to the Agreement, demilitarization was to be carried out under the Serbs' control, while a two-year transitional period, under UN auspices, initiated the process of the peaceful reintegration of Baranja, Eastern Slavonia and Western Sirmium into the Republic of Croatia.

This Agreement was elaborated simultaneously with the Dayton Accord on Bosnia and Herzegovina, and was closely related to it. The Erdut Agreement's brevity was an advantage in that it made the mandate clear, yet it was also a disadvantage because it did not spell out how the mandate was to be implemented.

Based on the Erdut Agreement's provisions, the UN Transitional Administration in Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES) was established on 15 January 1996. The UNTAES mandate was primarily to supervise and facilitate the demilitarization of the region within 30 days; to monitor the voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons; to contribute, by its presence, to the maintenance of peace and security in the region; to establish and train a transitional

police force; to organize elections; and to monitor and facilitate the determining of territory within the region. The UNTAES mandate ended on 15 January 1998.

The Erdut Agreement greatly contributed to peace and the (re)integrating of the region of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium into the legal and political system of the Republic of Croatia. It also led to new, inconceivable, rights for Serbs, including autonomous organizations, and their representation in the Chamber of Counties. Further, this led to the foundation of the Joint Council of Municipalities, and the Serb National Council as a main body representing Serbs in Croatia. The latter Council was designed as a consultative body to make representations on the situation of the Serb minority in Croatia.

## **2.9. The Serbs in Croatia today: status and perspectives**

After the end of the war, Serbs became the target of a severe bureaucratic apparatus that made it impossible for them to obtain Croatian citizenship, to return to their pre-war homes, and to have access to a series of human and civil rights. During the final years of Franjo Tuđman's era, tensions between Croats and Serbs reduced but with significant problems remaining. The two pressing issues are high levels of official and societal discrimination against Serbs and the indeterminate position of hundreds of thousands of Serb refugees (some of whom have returned) who have not had their property restored or been compensated for their losses. New laws continue to be introduced to combat discrimination, demonstrating an effort on the part of authorities, but it will take time to assess their implementation and efficacy.

Recent court decisions also suggest progress on property restoration and allocation of reconstruction funds to Serbs but, again, these are small advances relative to the size of the challenge.<sup>72</sup> Lengthy and in some cases unfair proceedings, particularly in lower level courts, remain a major problem for returnees pursuing their rights in court. Croatian Serbs continue to be discriminated against in

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<sup>72</sup> Human Rights Watch World Report: Croatia 2001-2003.



access to employment and in realizing other economic and social rights. Some cases of violence and harassment against Croatian Serbs continue to be reported.<sup>73</sup>

The current reasons why many Serb refugees still have not returned vary:

- Integration at the current place of displacement.
- Appalling economic conditions in areas they fled from, by and large rural ones.
- Fear of prosecution for war crimes. The Croatian legal system, like the ICTY, has secret lists of war crimes suspects, and many returnees were caught by surprise when the authorities arrested them upon re-entering the country.
- Fear of retribution.
- Ethnic discrimination.
- Unfavorable property laws.

The property laws allegedly favor Croats who immigrated into the previously Serb-dominant areas after having been forced out of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the Serbs. Under the current law, a person who occupies someone else's previously vacated house and does not have alternative accommodation (such as their own home or a place in a refugee camp), is allowed to stay in someone else's private property as a refugee, without being charged for squatting. The number of such individuals and families has dropped significantly in the 2000s, and a certain amount of property was returned to its previous owners. However, at the same time not all of the former refugees actually left the same houses, and instead remained in the occupied houses illegally. In 2004, the authorities noted around 1,400 houses still occupied by former refugees, and in 2005, this number was reduced to 385 housing units.

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<sup>73</sup> "Croatia: European Court of Human Rights to consider important case for refugee returns" (Press release). Amnesty International. 2005-09-14

With regard to reparation of war damages, the plight of the Serbs is similar to the plight of the Croats - the money and/or resources offered by the government often amount to only a small fraction of the value of the people's properties prior to the war. In a recent public protest, a group of Serbs from Vukovar who had worked in the Borovo shoe factory demanded that their pre-war employment was honoured as it was for the Croatian employees which have stayed loyal to Croatia during war. Because during Krajina period Serb workers have made payment outside Croatia pension funds (in Krajina pension funds) state position is that they have lost this and many others workers' rights.

Successive peacetime governments have worked with local Serb representatives to attempt to rectify war-related problems with the support of the international community and under the watch of the independent media. At the same time, cooperation on the lower levels has been lacking. The participation of the largest Serb party SDSS in the Croatian Government of Ivo Sanader has eased tensions to an extent, but the refugee situation is still politically sensitive. In 2005 and 2006, the presidents Mesić of Croatia and Tadić of Serbia exchanged official visits and met with the respective national minorities of their respective countries.

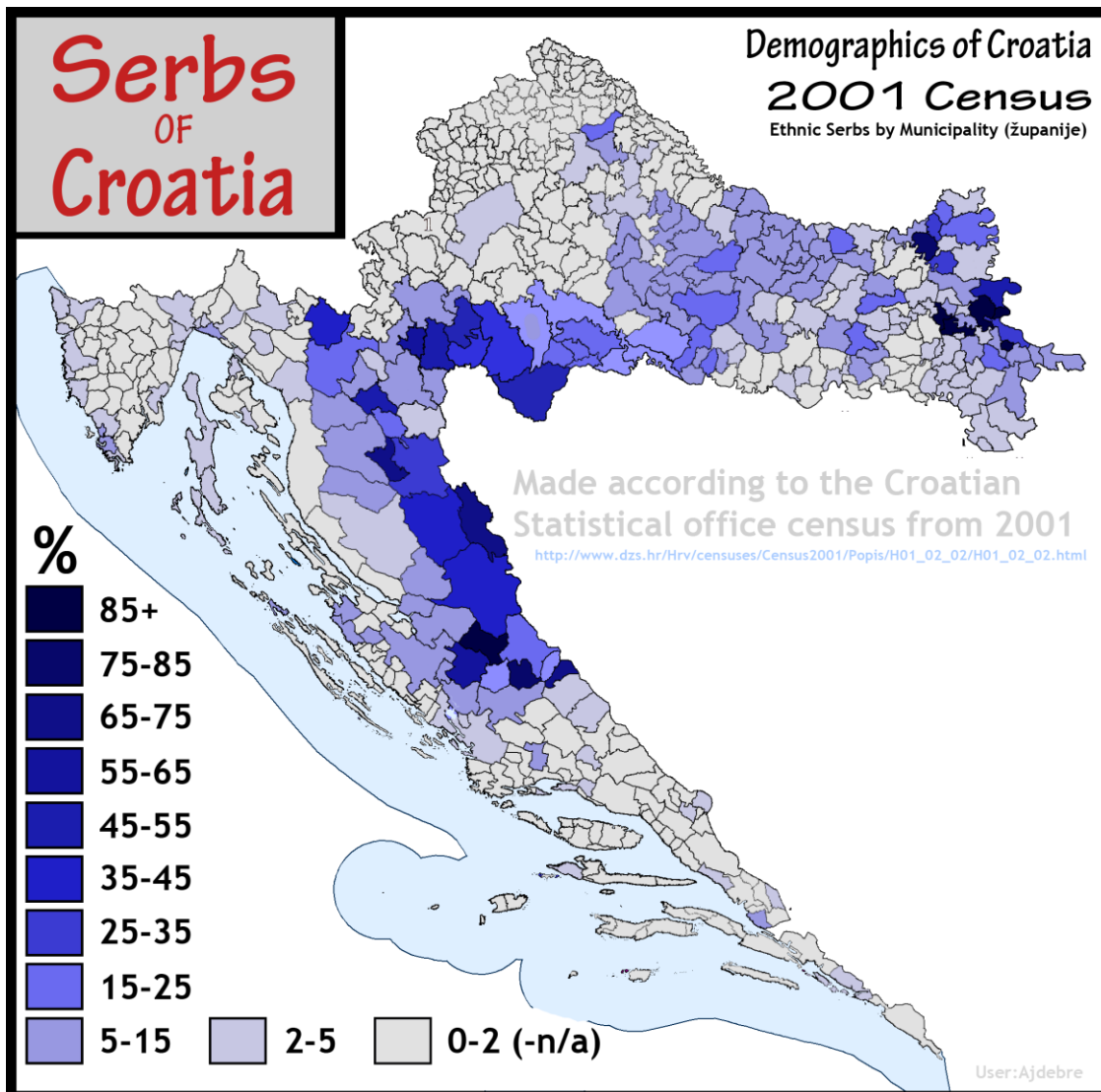
If we look at the following table, we can conclude that during the course of history, the population of Serbs in Croatia has steadily gone down. This trend can chiefly be attributed to the casualties of war, as well as the mass migrations that were induced by it. Today, Serbs represent only 4, 54% of the total population in Croatia. They are still the largest national minority in Croatia, but they have been numerically seized if compared to the situation before the war, in 1991.

**Table 2: Serb demographics in Croatia**

Population of Croatia 1931-2001			
Year	Serbs	%	Total pop.
1931	633,000	18.45 %	3,430,270
1948	543,795	14.39 %	3,779,858
1953	588,756	14.96 %	3,936,022
1961	624,991	15.02 %	4,159,696
1971	626,789	14.16 %	4,426,221
1981	531,502	11.55 %	4,601,469
1991	581,663	12.16 %	4,784,265
2001	201,631	4.54 %	4,437,460

Source: the Croatian Institute for Statistics, [www.dzs.hr](http://www.dzs.hr)

Figure 17: Territorial distribution of the Serbs in Croatia



## **CHAPTER 3: POLITICS OF MINORITY PROTECTION IN CROATIA**

Judging by the number of recognized national (ethnic) minorities, Croatia can be considered as one of the most multiethnic Eastern European transitional democracies. The last census, in fact, in 2001 registered that 22 minorities live in Croatia and are entitled to public (government) support in their language and cultural preservation and development. They differ in the number of belongers, tradition, position and political influence. Of all the ethnic minorities, three minorities, Serbs, Bosniaks and Roma are in a specific position and have great importance for the resolution of minority issues in Croatia. These three ethnic minorities are still in the process of resolving the status issue of its members and the construction of minority institutions.

But the minority corpus only makes a modest 7.5% of the total country population of 4,381,352 inhabitants. Despite the increase in number of recognized minorities, their share in the total population of just halved compared to 15% from the 1991 census. The largest portion of this decrease relates to the Serbs, who in 1991 constituted 12.16%, and now constitute 4.58% of the Croatian population, which means that the number of Serbs was reduced by two thirds compared to their number in 1991. No other minority exceeds one-half percent of the total population. (Mesić, 2003:165) It could be concluded that this reduction occurred primarily because of forced emigration (i.e. expulsion) during the war and due to the fact that many belongers of national minorities changed their ethnicity in the Census in order to avoid persecution.

However, one of the main consequences of the significant reduction in the number of persons belonging to national minorities in Croatia is an increased public awareness of the need for additional mechanisms for the protection of national minorities. This has already resulted in the 2002 Constitutional Law on National Minorities and the new, pro minority policy.

**Table1: Ethnic structure of the population in Croatia, 1981–2001**

Nationality	1981		1991		2001	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Albanians	6,006	0.1	12,032	0.3	15,082	0.3
Austrians	267	0.0	214	0.0	247	0.01
Bosniaks	–	–	–	–	20,755	0.47
Bulgarians	441	0.0	458	0.0	331	0.01
Croats	3,454,661	75.1	3,736,356	78.1	3,977,171	89.6
Czechs	15,061	0.3	13,086	0.3	10,510	0.24
Germans	2,175	0.1	2,635	0.1	2,902	0.07
Greeks	100	0.0	281	0.0	–	– <sup>6</sup>
Hungarians	25,439	0.6	22,355	0.5	16,595	0.37
Italians	11,661	0.3	21,303	0.4	19,636	0.4
Jews	316	0.0	600	0.0	576	0.01
Macedonians	5,362	0.1	6,280	0.1	4,270	0.1
Montenegrins	9,818	0.2	9,724	0.2	4,926	0.1
Muslims	23,740	0.5	43,469	0.9	–	– <sup>7</sup>
Polish	758	0.0	679	0.0	567	0.01
Roma	3,858	0.1	6,695	0.1	9,463	0.21
Romanians	609	0.0	810	0.0	475	0.01
Russians	758	0.0	706	0.0	906	0.02
Ruthenians	3,321	0.1	3,253	0.1	2,337	0.05
Serbs	531	11.5	581,663	12.2	201,631	4.5
Slovaks	–	–	5,606	0.1	4,712	0.11
Slovenes	25,136	0.6	22,376	0.5	13,171	0.3
Turks	320	0.0	320	0.0	300	0.01
Ukrainians	2,515	0.1	2,494	0.1	1,977	0.04
Vlachs	16	0.0	22	0.0	12	0
Yugoslavs	379,057	8.2	106,041	2.2	–	– <sup>8</sup>
Others	1,553	0.0	3,012	0.1	21,801	0.49
Regional affiliation	8,657	0.2	45,493	0.9	9,302	0.2
Non-determined	17,133	0.4	73,376	1.5	89,130	2.61
Unknown	64,737	1.4	62,926	1.3	17,975	0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,601,467</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4,784,265</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4,437,460</b>	<b>100</b>

SOURCES: STATISTICAL ALMANAC OF CROATIA, 1992, P. 64; CROATIAN GOVERNMENTAL OFFICE FOR STATISTICS CENSUS 2001, WWW.DZR.ORG.

### 3.1 Legislative framework

The situation in Croatia is unique in the context of the Western Balkans in that the country has minority rights provisions in the constitution, in a specific constitutional law on the rights of national minorities (the current version was adopted in 2002), and in several other Acts of legislation. This creates a very broad legal framework for the protection of minorities in Croatia, including constitutional rights guaranteeing equality with citizens of Croat nationality and the realization of ethnic rights in accordance with international standards, freedom to express their national identity, freedom to use their language and script, and cultural autonomy. According to Article 82 of the constitution, “Laws (organic laws) which regulate the rights of national minorities shall be passed by the Croatian Parliament by a two-thirds majority vote of all representatives.”

Croatia is one of those countries that regulated the position and rights of national minorities with a special act – the Constitutional Act on Rights of National Minorities. The first act concerning protection of national minorities was adopted in 1991, but a number of revisions and amendments of the act were made in the subsequent years.

The constitutional law further elaborates these rights, making specific reference to all major international human and minority rights instruments and allows for necessary ‘positive measures’ to implement these rights (known as “positive discrimination”).

The legal and institutional framework for the protection of minority rights has changed in the independent Croatia several times, as well as the list of recognized minorities. As one of six Yugoslavian republics, Croatia was defined as a "national state of the Croatian people, the state of the Serbian people in Croatia and the state of the nationalities living in it."<sup>74</sup>

National minorities, according to the new Constitutional Law, are “a group of Croatian citizens the members of which have been traditionally living in the territory of the Republic of Croatia, and the members of which have ethnic, language, cultural and/or religious characteristics different from

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<sup>74</sup> Article 1 of the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Croatia

other citizens, and who are guided by the desire to preserve these characteristics” (Article 5). For the first time, then, in Croatian law, the concept of a national minority is defined.

In the Preamble of the new Croatian Constitution, the national minorities that are considered "autochthonous" are explicitly listed:

*... [Croatia is constituted as] the national state of the Croatian people and the state of members of autochthonous national minorities: Serbs, Czechs, Slovaks, Italians, Hungarians, Jews, Germans, Austrians, Ukrainians, Ruthenians and others, [...]*

The constitutional changes in the beginning of 1998 were rather controversial on this matter, deleting Slovenes and Muslims [Bosniaks] from the list. However, they are now included among "others".

In December 1991 the Croatian Parliament passed the Constitutional Law on Human Rights and Freedoms and the rights of National and Ethnic Communities or Minorities in the Republic of Croatia (NN 65/91). Passing this law was a precondition for the international recognition of Croatia as independent state in January 1992. At that time Croatia, like the other states that were created after the crackdown of the former Yugoslavia, had been left a relatively high degree of protection of collective rights of minorities (right to education in own script and language at all levels of education, right to the official use of the language, various opportunities for the preservation of ethnic, language and religious identity and the institution of the political representation of minority interests). Croatia took over and recognized all these inherited rights. (Vasiljević, 2004) The problem, however, came into being with the new minorities, that is, with the members of the peoples that had been constituent nations in the former Yugoslavia, particularly with the Serbs of Croatia, who in the socialist Croatia had the status of sovereign or constitutive people (Daskalović, 2003).

However, in 1996 Croatia was obliged to pass a new Constitutional Law on the Rights of National Minorities, as a result of its acceptance into the Council of Europe.



Some improvement in political cooperation on minority issues has also been achieved by the Agreement on the Normalization of Relations between the Republic of Croatia And The Federal Republic Of Yugoslavia (23 August 1996), which in Art. 8 guarantees the protection of the rights of the Serb and Croat minorities respectively.

On May 11, 2000 the Parliament of the Republic of Croatia in accordance with Articles 14, 15 and 139 of the Constitution passed a proclamation of changes and amendments to the Constitutional Law on Human Rights and Freedoms and the Rights of National and Ethnic Communities or Minorities in the Republic of Croatia.

According to these amended documents, Croatia shall protect the equality of members of national minorities which includes Albanians, Austrians, Bosniacs, Bulgarians, Montenegrins, Czechs, Hungarians, Macedonians, Germans, Poles, Romanians, Romanians, Russians, Ruthenians, Slovaks, Slovenians, Serbs, Italians, Turks, Ukrainians, Vlachs, Jews and other ethnic and national groups or minorities. The intended purpose of these laws is to encourage their overall cultural and linguistic development.

After the general elections of 23 November 2003, the Government of the Republic of Croatia reached and concluded agreements with representatives of national minorities, and in its programme it undertook the obligation to develop specific measures whereby it would continually work on the protection and promotion of national minorities, and resolve the remaining open issues faced by national minorities. The Government also committed itself to fully implement the Constitutional Law on the Rights of National Minorities, and the 2000 Law on the Use of Language and Script of National Minorities in the Republic of Croatia and the 2000 Law on Education in the Language and Script of National Minorities, which regulate details of language use in public and in communication with authorities and of mother-tongue education.

In general, in the past few years a significant progress in improvement of national minority rights has been made, and especially so in the legislative sphere. There has also been improvement in the

exercise of their rights to their own culture and language as well as in extension of the rights of members of national minorities to participate in decision-making process. (Tatalović, 2004:111)

Croatia has made enormous efforts in order to establish a legal system for protection of human rights as indispensable components of functioning of a democratic system. As a result of these efforts, Croatia has become a member of almost all international organizations on the global and regional level concerning human and minority rights. In consideration of the fact that Croatia used to be a constituent part of another state and that it gained its independence in 1991 after dissolution of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia, the Republic of Croatia committed itself to many agreements concerning this sphere by the on the basis of the Succession Agreement. Croatia has also concluded many other significant agreements concerning human and minority rights and it accepted furthermore the majority of controlling mechanisms as envisaged by international agreements in this field as well as all newly adopted additional protocols on the strength of which the sphere of protection of these agreements has been broadened.

The admission of Croatia into the Council of Europe as well as the ratification of the European Convention on Human Rights and the additional Protocols brought in Croatia a new element of protection of human rights and secured the process of bringing the national legislation into harmony with international standards. Croatia is party to a full range of human rights obligations through its constitution and its membership in the Council of Europe, notably through ratification of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (European Convention on Human Rights). Croatia has also ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the Convention Against Torture.

### **3.2 The rights of national minorities in Croatia**

Despite the postwar and transitional hardships, Croatia managed to design a comprehensive model of the protection of its national minorities at the national, regional and local levels, and bring it into line with the European practice and standards. It should be noted that the model of cultural autonomy promotes the integration of national minorities and not their assimilation into the Croatian society. This model guarantees national minorities the preservation and the promotion of their identity (ethnic, cultural, linguistic, religious), either individually or collectively.

According to the adopted model of cultural autonomy, most ethnic rights of national minorities (education, science, libraries, protection of monuments) are enforced through the institutions professionally and administratively responsible for certain areas of social life, which enables the realization of the principle of the integration of national minorities into the Croatian society, but also guarantees the protection of their cultural and ethnic identity. The second aspect of the ethnic rights (information, publishing, cultural amateurism, cultural manifestations) is fostered through the activities of the national minorities' nongovernmental organizations, thus additionally ensuring the protection from assimilation. The model enables and fosters the development of the relationships of the national minorities with the states of their parent nation to facilitate their cultural and linguistic development.

Croatia is one of the rare states, such as Slovenia and Romania, which not only ensures to its ethnic minorities the protection of their national and cultural identity, but it also reserves for them a special place in the Parliament. Thus, minorities have the right to political representation and to the harmonization of their specific interests, although the number of representatives is limited, which has a symbolic impact on state politics.

Croatia employs an intricate system of minority self-governments and guarantee of representation in the Croatian Parliament. Members of national minorities elect no less than five and no more than

eight of their representatives in special election constituencies, pursuant to the elections law. This guarantee is further broken down in to representation numbers of minorities according to percentages of the population of Croatia.

The Constitutional Law on the Rights of National Minorities, adopted on 13 December 2002 by the Parliament and published on 19 December 2002 in the official gazette No. 154, determines the organization of local councils for national minorities in the Towns, Municipalities and Counties in order to enable the establishment of the national coordination of such councils to act as a body representative of the national minorities.

Furthermore, the constitutional law mandates the representation of members of minorities in local, regional, and national legislative organs through a system of reserved seats in proportion to the share of the minority in the total population of the relevant level of government. Similar provisions apply for minority representation in executive organs of the state at local, regional (Councils of National Minorities) and national (Council for National Minorities) level, and they are to be given priority in recruitment to posts in state administration and judicial services if they are equally well qualified.

Within the Parliament exists a committee for human rights, with a Subcommittee for the rights of ethnic and national minorities, which determinates the implementation of minority policy and its implementation in the process of accepting the new laws. The Committee is also an authorized working body that deals with the preparation of implementation of international protection of human rights, international treaties, minority rights and programs of international cultural co-operation between international groups.

The Council of National Minorities was established in 1998 as a non-governmental, coordinating and consultative body for all recognized minorities in Croatia with the aim to promote all minority communities. This body deals with the implementation and promotion of minority rights, by giving legislative proposals that concern minority issues in politics, conveying their views to the

Parliament, to the government agencies and to the government with the aim of solving specific problems, as well as cooperation with governmental and international organizations. (Stanković Pejnović, 2010:154)

In Croatia, members of national minorities are given the right to freely use their language and script for both private and public use, including the right to set up signs<sup>75</sup> and other information in the language and script they are using.

The Croatian minority law gives national minorities the right to education and schooling in the language and script that the national minority is using.

Article 18 of Croatia's law gives the task of promoting the understanding for members of national minorities to the radio and television stations of national, regional and local levels, further the law states that national minorities have the right to perform activities of public information consistent with the law.

Under the Constitutional Act, the Republic of Croatia ensures realization of special rights and freedoms of members of national minorities enjoyed by them individually or together with other persons belonging to the same national minorities, and when being determined by this Constitutional Act or special acts, together with members of other national minorities, which is stipulated. This especially refers to:

- usage of own language and script, in private and public use, and in official use;
- education and schooling in the language and script they are using;
- usage of own insignia and symbols;
- cultural autonomy by means of keeping, developing and expressing their own culture, and preserving and protecting their cultural material heritage and tradition;
- right confessing own religion and founding of religious communities together with other members of this religion;

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<sup>75</sup> In the case of signs designating the name of a location, they can be only bilingual (first the name written in the official language and script, followed by its translation in the minority's language and script).

- access to media of mass communication and performing of actions of public information (receiving and distribution of information);
- self-organizing and uniting for realization of common interests;
- representation in representative bodies on national and local level, and in administration and judicial bodies;
- participation of members of national minorities in public life and administration of local affairs by means of Councils and representatives of national minorities;
- protection from every act that endangers or may endanger their existence and exercise of rights and freedoms.

Although the model of cultural autonomy and political representation of national minorities in Croatia can structurally get high marks, there are still some problems in its implementation:

- inadequate training and preparedness of some institutions;
- insufficient interest of some bodies of local and regional self-government;
- lack of interest and/or motivation of members of national minorities or their organizations.

Resolving these problems and eliminating prejudices (mostly the consequence of the war) in a portion of the population towards some national minorities are the priorities in advancing the position of national minorities in Croatia. (Tatalović, 2006:50)

### 3.4 Serbs: from constitutive people to minority

In the ex-Yugoslavian Constitution, the notion of “people” (*narod*) was reserved for the six constituent federal nations (Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, Montenegrins and Muslims). Their members living in other republics were, in principle, considered nationalities, except for specific historical or political reasons. Minorities are simultaneously renamed nationalities (*narodnosti*), as it was thought that the former term has a pejorative connotation. In such a conception of federalism, the Serbs in Croatia could not have only the status of national minorities (nationalities). An additional, important factor was a kind of moral compensation to the mass extermination of Serbs under the Ustasha regime in NDH (Independent State of Croatia), and for their massive participation in the partisan movement. However, they were not fully equivalent to the Croats regarding the Croatian nation-building.<sup>76</sup>

The SFRJ (Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia) tried to solve the nationality question by establishing a complex institutional framework of representation and power-sharing which eventually collapsed when the constituent republics entered the logic of nationalism.

The dynamics of new nationalism and the breakdown of federal structures affected the situation of minorities in several ways. To the degree that the constitutional framework of representation and power-sharing of "nations" within the SFRJ dissolved, groups that had formerly constituted numerical minorities in one of the republics while being majorities in another republic now found themselves legally unprotected and vulnerable to violent hostilities. The nationalizing states also restricted the rights of what had formerly been "nationalities", i.e. minorities. In fact, only through pressure from the EC and the UN have the rights of minorities become incorporated into the legal framework of the new states.

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<sup>76</sup> Therefore, the Serbs in Croatia had the right to argue that in former Croatia they were not a minority, but they did not have the constitutional and legal arguments for the claim of their constitutive status in it. This legally vague semi constituency referred explicitly to "the Serbs in Croatia", and not to all the Serbs in Serbia and Yugoslavia.

In the new Croatian legislative framework, Serbs are considered as a new national minority, whose defining characteristics is that they have become minorities by losing their status as constituent “nations” of the SFRJ and that, after the collapse of the federal structures, they now rely on one of the successor states of the former Yugoslavia as their external national homeland. New national minorities have been particularly affected by the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia, in so far as they have inevitably been involved in border conflicts between the new states. As a consequence of their involvement in the civil wars in ex-Yugoslavia and the corresponding loss of inter-ethnic communication and trust, they have also suffered from post-war discrimination.

Main problems concentrated on violation of human rights, especially of members of „new” national minorities and absence of independent judiciary.

Respect of human rights of members of certain national minorities, especially Serbs, Bosniacs and Roma, is still conditioned by the legacy of war and discriminatory policy from the 1990s. Discriminatory legal regulations have mostly been changed by new legal solutions, but in certain fields of realization of the rights they often do not have any impact on improvement of the situation. Problems of discrimination can still be encountered in recognition and realization of a broad spectrum of the so-called acquired rights, such as right to status, property, pension and social rights, labour code, tenancy rights, compensation of victims of terrorist acts, etc. This discrimination affects to the largest degree citizens of Serbian nationality in the category of refugees, displaced persons and persons who lived in the areas under the UN protection during the war.

One of the basic problems that cause such a discriminatory attitude towards the mentioned category of citizens, and therefore affect their survival and/or their sustainable return to Croatia, is the fact that judiciary and civil-service bodies, unlike the relation towards members of the majority nation, do not recognize them the fact of war as legally relevant in realization and recognition of their acquired rights. Consequently, some categories of the citizens did not experience the war as a form of «greater force» and thus legal regulations designed to be implemented under normal (peaceful)



conditions were applied restrictively in their case (especially in the case of members of the Serbian national minority).

In line with possibilities provided by the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and the Constitutional Law on the Rights of National Minorities, over the years Serbs in Croatia have restored a part of their institutional and organizational tradition in accordance with the requirements of new times and their new status as a national minority.

Serbs in Croatia practically have one political party – the Independent Democratic Serb Party (SDSS). Others, like Serb People's Party, which was founded by Tuđman's regime in the early 1990's, and the Party of Danube Serbs, founded in connivance with the former regional HDZ leaders, are either close to disappearance or have never seriously started operating. The SDSS covers the largest part of political representation of Serbs in Croatia, from the Parliament to municipalities; the Serbs now have three parliamentary deputies (all three are from SDSS ranks) and more than 250 councilors in county assemblies (in six counties), towns and municipalities (more than 30 towns and municipalities). After the 2005 local elections, the SDSS won executive power in 15 municipalities, and it participates in power in the same number of municipalities and leading officials or their deputies are chosen from the SDSS ranks. In line with the Erdut Agreement and the Constitutional Decision, SDSS representatives perform the duties of Deputy County Prefects in two eastern Slavonian counties and they are members of local governments in the Sisak-Moslavina County, the Šibenik-Knin County, the Karlovac County and potentially in the Lika-Senj County. On the State level, the SDSS holds 13 official positions in various ministries (one state secretary, seven assistant ministers, four ministers' advisors, two deputies of the Head of the Government's Office). All this has been achieved in the period of ten years, and the largest part has been achieved in the period from 2003 to the present day. In that period Serbs have outgrown the limits of the regional political force (eastern Slavonia) and a nongovernmental organization and grown into a national political force; in terms of the councilor and deputy mandates, the SDSS is

now the sixth party in the country. Even though it appears as the representative of Serbs in the Republic of Croatia, the SDSS is, in terms of its political programme and ideology, a party of left orientation, with special interest in multi-cultural and multi-ethnic issues, balanced regional development, social justice and anti-fascist tradition. In the next coming period, the SDSS plans to improve the representation of Serbs by winning at least four mandates, firstly in the Croatian Parliament, and then, in local elections in the areas and regions where Serbs have not been adequately represented (e.g. in western Slavonia).

In line with the Constitutional Law, Serbs in Croatia are entitled to elect their minority councils – from the level of municipalities to the level of counties. These councils act as minority self-government and corrective mechanisms of government, if the government's decisions are contrary to the minority rights or interests. The county minority councils may form their national coordination bodies and transfer part of their authority envisaged by law to those bodies. The Serb National Council (SNV) has taken advantage of the possibilities defined by the Constitution, and under its aegis, structured the self-government of Serbs in Croatia in the majority of municipalities, towns and counties where Serbs have legal preconditions for the election of councils. At the elections for national minority councils, held in June 2007, the SNV put up its list of candidates in almost all towns, counties and municipalities, and won 1,684 mandates, i.e. over 84 % of the total number of councilor posts (others were won by other lists). This means that the SNV has formed the councils in 19 counties with 470 councilors, in 49 towns with 657 councilors, in 54 municipalities with 527 councilors, and also with 30 representatives (who are elected in places where the number of Serbs is lower than the legally defined minimum for the election of councils). The mentioned number of councils and councilors is potentially a huge force; however, due to the lack of adequate working conditions, undefined status and insufficient training, the potential of these councils has not been fully used so far. For this reason, the SNV, as the national coordination body, sees the following task as its obligation: after the next elections in 2011 it should overcome the state of

horizontal fragmentation, status instability and functional lack of training of a certain number of councils and turn them into a true body of Serb self-government in the Republic of Croatia as regards the issues of culture, media, education, employment and development.

In line with the Erdut Agreement and the Croatian Government Letter of Intent, and prior to the adoption of the new version of the Constitutional Law on National Minority Rights, a regional body of minority self-government was formed on the territory of two counties, the Osijek-Baranja County and the Vukovar-Srijem County, called the Joint Council of Municipalities (*Zajedničko vijeće općina – ZVO*).

The ZVO is a co-founder of the SNV, and it has retained the status of an autonomous, regional body of minority self-government of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium within the SNV.

The ZVO played an extremely important role in the process of peaceful reintegration as well as affirmation of the constitutional rights of Serbs in the Republic of Croatia; at present it devotes special attention to the advancement of local self-government work in Serb communities, education in Serbian language and script, realization of different rights of members of the Serb community in that area, building of multi-ethnic tolerance and development of Serb communities in the area. The ZVO is also a co-founder of the “Novosti [*News*]” weekly, the founder of Radio Danube and the publisher of a monthly bulletin.

Over the past two decades, two non-governmental organizations have been active in the sphere of culture and civil society; they are, in various segments, also active in the realization of rights and interests of Serbs in Croatia. Over the mentioned period, there have also been other organizations, but their importance and continuity, and their identity among the Serbs (and with the Croatian public) are far from the recognizability of the two mentioned organizations.

The Serb Cultural Society (SKD) “Prosvjeta”, which emerged under the wings of the Serb anti-fascist movement in Croatia, was founded in 1944 in Glina. Its operation was banned in the socialist period in the early 1970's; however it renewed its activity twice in the late 1980's and early 1990's.

After the SNV and the SDSS, SKD “Prosvjeta” is the most ramified Serb organization with most members in Croatia.

The Serb Democratic Forum (SDF) is the first Serb non-government organization that was established against the background of disintegration of the former joint state. The Forum has long functioned as a basic organization of Serbs in Croatia and a central institution which worked out the programme of a largest part of Serb institutions in Croatia and developed their staffing. In that period the Forum acted as a substitute for non-existent Serb organizations, gathering the leading intellectuals and political figures.

In the first half of the 1990's, the Forum's activity was marked by peace-keeping efforts, defence of Serb's rights in cities, humanitarian assistance and proposals for the legal and political status of Serbs in Croatia.

As of 1995, the SDF has directed its activities towards the provision of legal assistance, restoration of inter-ethnic trust and refugee return. Until 2000, with the aim of realizing those three basic activities, the SDF formed offices in almost all urban returnee centers; for a majority of returnees and those who remained in those areas it was the only body they could address and receive the necessary assistance. Offices have also been opened in Belgrade and Banja Luka for the purpose of return; they soon developed into independent organizations. The activity of the SDF Belgrade is especially noticeable.

In the period after 2000, the SDF has broadened its activities to another two fields – social programmes and reconstruction assistance and the development of areas of return.

Since 1996, the SDF has published the monthly “Identitet [Identity]”, which deals with the issues of refugees, refugee milieus, but also wider social and political topics.

Along with a stronger political representation of Serbs in the areas of return, especially after the 2001 and 2005 local elections, elected representatives of Serbs and local authorities have taken over part of activities that used to be performed by the SDF; thus, the SDF is now facing the need to

redefine is immediate future in terms of its organization and programme. This presumes a greater SDF openness towards other key institutions of the Serb community, which was insufficient in the past years.

Serbs in present day Croatia, after experiencing ordeal of almost disappearing from the territory of Croatia in the 1990's, are re-establishing themselves again as an important part of the Serb people and an important part of the Croatian society.

## CHAPTER 4 : NATIONAL IDENTITY

National identity, as one of social collective identities that define the individual's personality, is a modern phenomenon built in the Modern era and contemporary society by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards. (Korunić, 2003) It is a multidimensional concept that has been developed and analyzed in various disciplines and that is relevant to a wide range of research fields. However, the objectification of the notion of national identity still remains a problem, as well as the criteria that determine the nation.

The term national identity contains two important constructs that must be analyzed: identity and nation. First, national identity has to be considered as one particular form of identity, a definition of this latter term as well as a differentiation between individual and collective identity will therefore be necessary in order to understand the construct of interest. Second, as we talk about "national" identity, we refer to the concept of a nation. The most common usage of "nation" is as a political concept, and most studies of national identity investigate "nations" in political terms.

First of all, it is important to clarify that Serbs in Croatia represent a national, ethnic, cultural and religious minority, with a strong civic identity as a result of their historical legal status and political engagement. Due to the fact that Croatia was part of former socialist Yugoslavia, based on a communist ideology of classification of its citizens, class identity is also one kind of identification that described, among the others, the Serbs in Croatia. In order to define the elements of Serb national identity in Croatia all of these aspects of their minority identity will be covered and further explained.

#### 4.1 The concept of identity

The concepts of identity and national identity originally stem from the social sciences, particularly from sociology and political science, but have also been studied in psychology, philosophy and geography. Identity is an abstract concept; therefore we can distinguish different uses and meanings for the concept of “identity”. The most frequent meanings are the following forms: personal identity and collective identity, gender, cultural, ethnic, social, national and multicultural identity. In some researches “cultural identity”, “ethnic identity” and “national identity” become synonyms by being related; in other researches each has its own meaning by using different concepts. Generally speaking, the term of identity involves language, culture, history, customs, national and political attitudes. The individual or the group is able to have in the same time several different identities: a national, ethnic, linguistic, religious, cultural and political identity.

According to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, identity is defined as *"those attributes that make you unique as an individual and different from others"* or *"the way you see or define yourself"* (Olson, 2002). Identity can therefore be seen as the positioning of the "self" as opposed to the "others". This concept refers to individual rather than to collective identity and may be determined by the gender as well as the territorial, cultural, social, religious, ethnic, linguistic and national identity (cp. Smith 1991, p. 15).

The term “identity” is problematic. In its pure philosophical usage, it implies “uniqueness,” the concept of being equal to oneself, and nothing else. From this basic concept, implying “sameness and difference,” identity has come to refer to individuals, groups or conglomerates; it can also be used to refer to something externally or consensually defined, or to something subjective or individually experienced. Identity also refers to the permanence over time, to the notion of unity, to the ability to recognize and be recognized (Melucci, 1995:45).

The problem of identity becomes particularly accentuated in a time of social and civilizational crisis, when the turbulence shakes all the existing values and principles, and breaks down the established life schemes without yet ensuring new ones. This leaves individuals in a vacuum of social norms and their increasing uncertainty and insecurity. This is especially the case of what happened in former Yugoslavia.

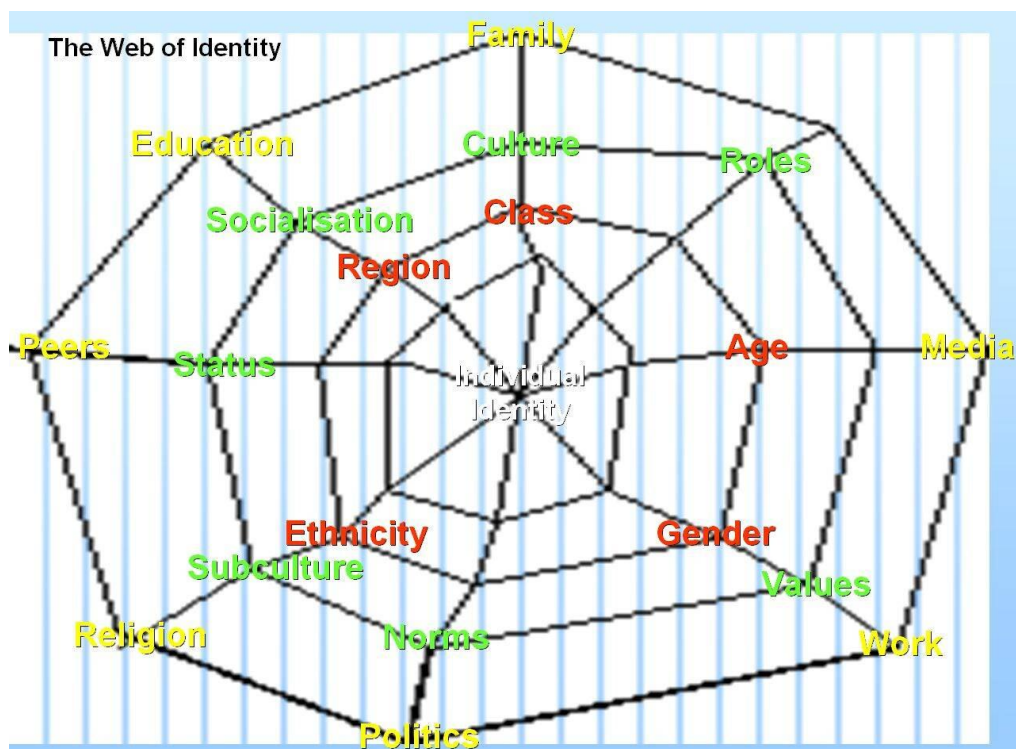
### **4.1.2. Social identity**

According to the theory of social identity, only by being a member of a group creates in an individual a sense of belonging and a positive social identity is built. The theory of social identity looks at the national group as at any other social group, so we can conclude that national identity derives from the feeling of belonging to a particular nation that is to a national group. An individual shares with his national group common beliefs, attitudes, values, customs, language, religion.

There is no straightforward relationship between identity and social concepts such as Religion, Family and Gender. Our identities are embedded in a Web of Identity (Livesey, 2004), which is a visual representation of the intersection between identity and society. The Web of Identity illustrates that the interaction between identity and social structure is complex and multi-layered. Individuals are surrounded by large social forces; they live out their lives, making decisions and choices but have limited options available to them.



Figure 1: Web of identity (Livesey, 2004)



In sociology and political science, researchers consider the idea of social identity and refer to this notion as "to a person's self- definition in relation to others." Social identity is "sustained primarily through social comparison, which differentiates the in-group from relevant out-groups." (Spießberger and Ungersböck, 2005:1)

Jelić (2003) suggested that national identity is an important part of social identity that results from a feeling of belonging to a particular national group, to which an extreme emotional importance is given. Essential for national identity is the individual's subjective identification with the group, but also the recognition of the group by external members (Huić, 2004).

Namely, the fact that one is a member of various social groups is a very important contributing aspect of an individual's self-definition. In that sense, "group" has not only objective, social, but also psychological, meaning. (Vasović, 1999)

Social identity can be seen as a quite certain consequence of group membership: it is defined as the part of an individual's self-reflection which derives from knowledge of one's membership in a

social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership (Tajfel, 1981: 255). Although an individual's view of himself is much more complex, some aspects of that view are undoubtedly contributed by one's membership in certain social groups and categories. Some memberships are more prominent and more important for an individual than others; and both their importance and their salience may vary as a function of time and a variety of social situations.

An individual will tend to remain a member of a group and seek membership in new groups if these groups have some contribution to make to the positive aspects of his social identity. But, if a group does not satisfy this requirement, if possible the individual will tend to leave it, literally or symbolically, if this does not conflict with some of his own important values.

In a socialist society, such as was former Yugoslavia, social categorization was not created out of social reality, but imposed from above and ideologically prescribed. That is, the social consensus in regard who was "in" and who was "out" of a certain group was replaced by ideological differentiation or homogenizations which were normative in character. Thus, the limited and prescribed scheme of social structure narrows an individual's perspectives and the available repertoires of group identification. This provides the basis for a limited choice of identity models.

In the context of an ideological paradigm of "classless and pacified society" differences between classes were erased, and the importance of confessional and ethnic belonging were denied. At the same time, new social categories ("working people", "nation of proletariat"), supranational affiliations ("Yugoslav"), as well as new elements of social structure were established.

This limited, ascribed and static paradigm of identities made socialist society similar to a traditional one, and at the same time differentiated it from the modern and democratic one. However, in traditional as well as in modern democratic society, the established social consensus about the criteria of membership to certain groups was the product of social, political, cultural, and economic evolution.

Forced "intervention" in the given social reality and existing social categorization in the post-revolutionary period, caused individuals and whole social groups "overnight" to be left without not only their social, but also their psychological grounds. The new categorization which was beyond any social experience, constituted an uncertain basis for an individual's self-image. (Vasović,1999)

Obstacles in establishing social identities manifested themselves in the previous Yugoslav society in different ways. The most striking examples are found in the class, ethnic and confessional group identifications.

One example of empty identities is related to the fate of the national/ethnic identification in multiethnic former Yugoslavia. This kind of identity reaches the very core of an individual's self-identification and self-respect, because it is formed early in an individual's life cycle and has a strong emotional charge. The Communist regime in former Yugoslavia, however, offered as a solution for historical interethnic conflicts, suppression and denial of the importance of any kind of ethnic identity. In the name of so called "brotherhood and unity" it introduced the supranational concept of "Yugoslav identity". (Vasović, 1999)

However, some data indicate that Yugoslav affiliation had also an additional psychological function: that is, the defense of the positive social identity for those minority groups who lived in ethnic enclaves. Namely, Croats in Vojvodina and in Bosnia, Muslims in Bosnia and in Montenegro, Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija, etc., emphasized Yugoslav identity much more than their compatriots from ethnically homogenous social environments (Pantić, 1991). Accepting "Yugoslav", which was socially and ideologically a highly desirable identity, was a means of gaining parity with, or a positively valued differentiation from, the ethnic majority, and, hence, the means of rejecting the "inferior" status of the group. But, this kind of identity was mainly instrumental. Yugoslav self-identification also provided individuals a means of avoiding competing claims to their national allegiance. This was especially important for the children of nationally-mixed marriages, where each parent might expect their child to recognize their particular national

identity. By identifying as a Yugoslav, one could resist claims that others might make on one's identity and thus avoid potential conflicts. (Sekulic, Massey, Hodson, 1994:85-86)

Yugoslav identification also provided a way of breaking with an increasingly discredited past, especially among younger persons it was a protest against traditional nationalist politics that seemed to be at the heart of the region's problems (Banac, 1984).

In the context of political events in the former Yugoslavia, obviously it did not present authentic, stable or sufficient ground for an individual's self-definition and self-respect.

### **4.1.3. Collective identity**

Collective identity can be perceived as positioning the "self" of a community as opposed to the "others". Concerning national identity, the fronts are specified and the "national self" is opposed to "not national" or "foreign" (Smith, 1991: 8).

It is necessary to differentiate individual from collective identities as well as the various forms of collective identity. A collective identity is formed when the members of a group accept the common, collective norms and demands as the historical and cultural frame of reference which determines their place in a community. Individual identity comes about when a person learns to differentiate oneself from the environment and consciously to reevaluate tradition, becoming thereby an independent and autonomous individual. But both collective and individual identification go through a process of socialization which has two phases: adaptation to socio-cultural norms (identification), and separation and critical evaluation of the given standards (constitution of identity). Only when both phases are passed one may speak of the formation of a mature personality with a distinct identity.

A traditional society emphasizes collective identity, while modern society stresses the importance of achieving individual identity (in cultural terms this is the opposition of collectivism and

individualism; in political terms it is between liberalism and communitarianism). That is to say, one can speak about two sides of the formation of identity: one consists of homogenization (that is linked with heteronomy) and another with differentiation (that leads to autonomy). A complete achievement of identity is reached when both of these sides are reconciled and a balance attained which enables individuals to realize both personal and social integration. When these dimensions are in collision, the results are either collectivist or individualist extremes. (Golubović, 1999)

Since the process of socialization that stimulates identification is under the strong impact of culture (from the primary institutions to the more complex social institutions), the social and cultural settings should be analyzed in order to understand why certain forms of identification prevail.

If collective identity is in question one may distinguish the following forms: cultural identity which expresses individual and group identification with the basic values and patterns of behavior and attitudes; religious identity that relates to identification with given beliefs and confessional belonging; ideological/political identity that expresses the acceptance of the particular political demands of given political groups (or states); regional/ethnic identity that relies upon a recognition of ethnicity as a focus of identification; class identity in which the recognition of a given class is the primary group identification; professional identity which refers to an adherence to a particular vocation, and generational identity that links individuals with the same generation. (Golubović, 1999)

According to Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt and Bernard Giesen's theories of collective identity, who also developed a typology of symbolic codes of national identity, the collective and hence national identity is never pre-given and unchangeable. They examine the mechanisms by which the stability of national identity is achieved, and the submission of this kind of prevalence of different interests, values and desires of the members of the nation is enabled. They consider that for this is responsible the social construction of borders, which enables the separation to perform on a symbolic level, in three forms, which in practice are intertwined: primordial, civic, and cultural or sacred form.

Thus, three ideal-types of collective identity are distinguished. The first is the primordial code, which refers to the naturally given and, therefore, to unquestionable differences: it is about differences caused by race, gender, kinship, etc. These properties, however, can be socially constructed on a variety of myths about the origin of a particular collectivity.

The second ideal type is the construction of collective identity in the scope of the civil code, when the core identity of is formed by institutions, customs, traditions and the basic laws of the community. The boundaries of such a shaped identity are thus not completely impassable as the ones in the primordial code, and, therefore, the elements of modern societies and states, such as obeying the law and the constitution, the parliament and other state institutions, allow the inclusion of all. It is considered therefore that others can also gain our collective identity.

In the third ideal type, collective identity is formed on the basis of the sacred, regardless of whether God is defined as sacred, progress or rationality: it is expressed in ideologies or religions. (Eisenstadt, Shmuel Noah/Giesen, Bernhard, 1995)

Due to its less rigid form of socialism, there was more space in Yugoslavia for the growth of individual identities on behalf of the collectivist form of identity, which was weaker. Still, what prevailed over the large part of the population was an authoritarian model of identity.

Unlike in other ex -socialist countries, where the religious form became dominant during the Solidarity resistance and afterwards, in the states of the former Yugoslav republics national/ethnic identity absolutely prevailed. This absolutization of ethnicity is accompanied by a trend towards re-traditionalization in terms of a revival of the past history from time immemorial with its historical myths so as to confirm a "glorious past" of one's own nation.

According to Jonathan Friedman, a time of crisis produces a desire for roots and security by a return to stable traditional values with an increase in primitive cults (Friedman, 1994: 243). This new form of the collectivist identity enables mobilization of the population when it becomes disillusioned with regard to the old ideologies, and when anxiety and fear are the responses to the actual threats

(Giddens, 1991:44). Confronted with the dilemma of authority vs. uncertainty, writes Giddens, people choose a new form of authority which seems to be biologically rooted (in terms of "blood and soil"). This seems more original and becomes more attractive to a population which has lost the old forms of identity which fostered a feeling of belonging. (Golubović,1999)

Analyzing definitions of collective identity of a great number of authors (Brewer, 1993; 1999; Djurić, 1995, Brewer and Gardner, 1996; Žagar, 2001), it can be noted that, although not always using the same terminology, they all specify that two important mechanisms are always present in social identity: differentiation and equivalency. It means that the knowledge and the sense of belonging to a certain social group are based on subjective and/or objective recognition of similarities with the members of one`s own group (equivalency), i.e. perceiving and realizing differences in relation to the entities from other social categories (differentiation).

It is important to emphasize that every identity, whether individual or collective, is not a given fact, but a process. This means that it is formed under the influence of social factors, but also that once established identity can develop, transform or, occasionally, cease to exist. (Francesko, Kodzopeljic & Mihic, 2005)

#### **4.1.4. Civic identity**

Civic identity is based on a specific territory, a community of laws and institutions, a single political will, equal rights for the members of the nation, shared values, traditions and emotions that bind people together. (Sekulić, 2003:144)

According to Ignatieff<sup>77</sup> a civic nation is in principle a community of equal, rights-bearing citizens, united in patriotic attachment, to a shared set of political practices and values, united by a civic

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<sup>77</sup> See Ignatieff M. (1993) *"Blood and belonging": journeys into the new nationalism"*, Farrar, Straus And Giroux, New York

rather than an ethnic definition of belonging, by attachment to civic institutions like Parliament and the rule of law.

Civic identity represents a sense of belonging, equality and solidarity with the local community members, being linked to the state structure. The civic identity is linked to the political or civic nation.

Yugoslav identity was a typical example of a civic identity, adopted primarily by people of ethnically mixed backgrounds or by minorities who wanted to avoid being “different”. However, it was more accepted by the Serbs than by the Croats, especially among the Serb minority in Croatia.

The identification with “Yugoslav” in socialist Yugoslavia was a multifunctional phenomenon which served as a back door for those who wanted to avoid a narrow ethnic identification. With the disintegration of Yugoslavia, its functional equivalent occurs in the form of a "civic" identity which replaces the ethnic identity. This difference, which is more or less "imported" from the modern Western political discourse, enters into the processes of identification. This civil identification is a Yugoslav equivalent in the sense that it allows people to express broadly, away from a narrow ethnic identification and from the intense ethnic revival in the first post-communist phase.

In particular, it fulfills the function of escaping from a minority status in the same way that it was fulfilled by the Yugoslav orientation. (Sekulić, 2003:163)

"Yugoslav" was first included in the third post-war census in 1961. Officially this category was reserved for "nationally non committed persons," and was treated as a residual category for those who offered no particular national identity (Petrovic, 1983). Table 1 presents the percentages of the population of Yugoslavia identifying as Yugoslav in 1961, 1971, and 1981.

The modest decline in self-identification as a Yugoslav for the country as a whole between 1961 and 1971 was primarily the result of a decline in Yugoslav identifiers in Bosnia-Hercegovina (hereafter referred to as Bosnia) in 1971.



**Table 1.**

Table 1. Percentages of Adult Population of Yugoslavia Identifying Themselves as Yugoslavs in Yugoslavia and within Each Republic and Province: 1961, 1971, and 1981

Geographic Area	Percentage Identifying as Yugoslav			Predominant Nationality in 1981	
	1961	1971	1981		
All of Yugoslavia	1.7	1.3	5.4	36.3%	Serbian
<i>Republics and Provinces</i>					
Croatia	.4	1.9	8.2	75.1%	Croatian
Serbia	.2	1.4	4.8	85.4%	Serbian
Bosnia/Herzegovina	8.4	1.2	7.9	39.5%	Moslem
Kosovo	.5	.1	.1	77.4%	Albanian
Macedonia	.1	.2	.7	67.0%	Macedonian
Montenegro	.3	2.1	5.3	68.3%	Montenegro
Slovenia	.2	.4	1.4	90.5%	Slovenian
Vojvodina	.2	2.4	8.2	54.3%	Serbian

Sources: *Statisticki Bilten SFRJ* (No. 1295), 1982, Beograd, Yugoslavia: Government Printing Office. *Statisticki Godisnjak SFRJ*, 1981, Beograd, Yugoslavia: Government Printing Office.

Apart from Bosnia between 1961 and 1971 and Kosovo, self-identification as a Yugoslav shows a general pattern of increase from 1961 to 1981, especially in Croatia and the Vojvodina, and in Bosnia between 1971 and 1981. (Sekulić, 1994:84-85)

The category of “Yugoslav” in the Population Censuses of the newly states formed after the dissolution of former Yugoslavia still exists but it is statistically irrelevant. It is connected to a state that no longer exists, and it will be probably excluded from the Census or included in the categories of “Others”.

It is very likely that, in the absence of a common civic identity that the people can relate to, especially national minorities, the new European identity will be a substitute for the lost Yugoslav civic identity.

### 4.1.5. Class identity

Class is also one type of collective identity in which the recognition of a given class is the primary group identification. (Golubović,1999) In Marx's sociology, class is the supreme and the only relevant collective identity and the sole motor of history.

By class identity is understood the feeling of belonging to a class of individuals in society and the differentiation of those who belong to another class. (Bazić, 2009:34)

In socialist countries, such as ex-Yugoslavia, ideological/political and class identity were dominant forms of a collective identification, and the sole officially recognized form of identity, while individual identities were repressed into the closed circle of private, family life. The state was the only acceptable source of belonging; all the other forms, in particular religious, ethnic and professional, were marginalized. This was the reason why they emerged as the main focus after the fall of the totalitarian regimes. (Golubović,1999)

In the socialist period (until 1990), despite nominal ideological egalitarianism, the main criterion for class membership was the participation in political decision-making, so we could say that the membership of the ruling party was the main definition of "higher" class and the major mean of social mobility of the "lower" class, which consisted of manual workers, peasants and unemployed. "Middle" class consisted of "technocrats" (ie. engineers, managers) who were not directly involved in the political decisions, and "intelligence" - educated people, professionals, teachers, etc., which were a source of recruitment for the "political class" or the nomenclature. This layer (or slightly lower) can be attributed as the "remnants of the bourgeoisie", individuals who were not prone to the political regime, but who in their civil aspirations, or the residues of property inherited from previous regimes, formed a thin and very fragile layer of unstructured "intelligence." (Polšek, 2005)

Theories of social class always refer to systems of social ranking and distribution of power. Ethnicity, on the contrary, does not necessarily refer to rank; ethnic relations may well be

egalitarian in this regard. Still, many poly-ethnic societies are ranked according to ethnic membership. The criteria for such ranking are nevertheless different from class ranking: they refer to imputed cultural differences or "races", not to property or achieved statuses.

There may be a high correlation between ethnicity and class, which means that there is a high likelihood that persons belonging to specific ethnic groups also belong to specific social classes. There can be a significant interrelationship between class and ethnicity, both class and ethnicity can be criteria for rank, and ethnic membership can be an important factor for class membership. Both class differences and ethnic differences can be pervasive features of societies, but they are not one and the same thing and must be distinguished from one another analytically. (Eriksen, 1993)

### **4.1.6. Ethnic identity**

Ethnic identity, although a recent and uncertain term, can be approached according to the analysis of Hutchinson and Smith (1996, p.4;6) as the sense of belonging to a named human population with myths of common ancestry, shared historical memories, one or more elements of common culture, a link with a homeland and a sense of solidarity.

The most widely used definitions of ethnic identity proposed in previous literature include the following:

- According to Max Weber, *“ethnic groups are those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization or migration; this belief must be important for the propagation of group formation; conversely, it does not matter whether or not an objective blood relationship exists.”* (Hutchinson and Smith, 1996:35).

- According to Donald Horowitz: *“Ethnicity is based on a myth of collective ancestry, which usually carries with it traits believed to be innate. Some notion of ascription, however diluted, and affinity deriving from it are inseparable from the concept of ethnicity.”* (Horowitz, 1985:52).
- According to Fearon and Laitin, an ethnic group is *“a group larger than a family for which membership is reckoned primarily by descent, is conceptually autonomous, and has a conventionally recognized “natural history” as a group.* (Fearon and Laitin, 2000:20).
- In a subsequent refinement, Fearon defines a “prototypical” ethnic group as one that has several of the following features as possible: (1) Membership is reckoned primarily by descent (2) Members are conscious of group membership (3) Members share distinguishing cultural features (4) These cultural features are valued by a majority of members (5) The group has or remembers a homeland (6) The group has a shared history as a group that is *“not wholly manufactured but has some basis in fact.”* (Fearon, 2003:7)

All definitions in this inventory agree that descent is somehow important in defining an ethnic group. The differences are over how precisely to specify the role of descent, and whether and how other features should be combined with it in defining ethnic groups. The role of descent is specified in four different ways: (1) a common ancestry (2) a myth of common ancestry (3) a myth of a common place of origin and (4) a “descent rule” for membership. The features combined with 7 descents include: (5) a common culture or language (6) a common history and (7) conceptual autonomy. (Kanchan, 2006:6) Without the myths of origin, it's difficult to imagine a survival of an ethnic community.

For the Serbs, the myth of common descent and ancestry dates back to the Sacrosanct Nemanjić dynasty and the first Serbian state, *Ras* or *Raška* (Rascia). As already explained in chapter 2 (“The Serbs of Croatia: a historical overview”), the Nemanjić dynasty during its rule achieved to unite all

Serbian lands into a kingdom and also established the Serbian Orthodox Church. Rascia can be considered as the nucleus of the Medieval Serbian State, although it has been used to refer to various Serbian states throughout the middle Ages. Rascia was the crown land, seat or appanage of the following states:

Serbian Principality (768-960), Catepanate of Serbia and Theme of Sirmium (960-1043), Grand Principality of Duklja (1043-1101), Serbian Grand Principality (1101-1217), Serbian Kingdom (1217-1345), Serbian Empire (1345-1371), Serbian Despotate (1402–1459).

Though, Rascia is a regional name of one part of the Serbian lands, which gradually became the sign for the entire State. Different suppositions have been stated in the literature so far about the possible origin of the term "*Raška*". Some scientists supposed that the town of Ras<sup>78</sup> transmitted its name to the surroundings. The others, however, attributed a crucial role to the river Raška, which flows through the region of the today's town of Novi Pazar and empties into the Ibar river. A certain role in forming a notion "*Raška*" could be attributed to the church organisation of the country, to Rascian bishopric, but only within a definite chronological framework.

The analysis of the available historical sources, and the Byzantine ones are the oldest, shows that there was not such a term for the State of Serbian Princes until the middle of the 12th century.

Constantine Porphyrogenitus connects the term "Rassa" with the border area between Serbia and Bulgaria in the 9th century.

The turning point is the time of Stefan Nemanja. During his time the Serbs finally conquered the Rascian region. It was recorded in the sources that Stefan Nemanja, celebrating the victory over his enemies, built the monastery of St. George "*in the very centre of Ras*". At that time Ras became the

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<sup>78</sup> Ras (*Stari Ras*) was one of the first capitals of the medieval Serbian state of Raška, and the most important one for a long period of time. Located in today's region of Raška or Sandžak of Serbia, the city was right in the centre of the early medieval state that started to spread in all directions. It was founded between 8th and 9th centuries and got deserted sometime in the 13th century. Its favorable position in the area known as Old Serbia, along the Raška gorge, on the crossroads between the Adriatic Sea and state of Zeta, Bosnia in the west and Kosovo in the east added to its importance as a city.

centre of the Serbian State and only then the conditions were made for the old name to appeal in its new role.

In other words, only from the time of Stefan Nemanja the term "*Raška*" becomes the signification for the Serbian State - a new political and areal whole in South-eastern Europe. And to use the viewpoints of Nemanja himself, that was the state which united the territories from Niš to Kotor. Finally, it is possible to draw a conclusion that the most important institutions of the medieval Serbian State were founded in the Rascian region during the period of the first Nemanjić.

Additionally, the Rascian bishopric was the main religious centre of the country until the foundation of the Serbian Autocephalous Church at the time of St. Sava (1219). The Serbian Orthodox Church has actually saved the name of Ras until our days (Kalić, 1995), by nurturing the cult of the Nemanjić dynasty<sup>79</sup> and preserving it alive among all the Serbs scattered around the world.

The most significant prove of the importance of the Nemanjić dynasty and its cult in contemporary Serbian national and ethnic identity was the solemn escort of Prince Lazar's relics throughout Serbia in 1989, on the 600<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the battle of Kosovo.

Kosovo is particularly significant for the Serbs. At the moment when Kosovo stopped being the factual homeland of Serbian people (when the Turks came), it became their mythic homeland. Smith mentions that the devotion to the particular territories is of mythic and subjective origin, and that it is precisely this devotion and attachment that confirms the existence of the ethnic identification, and not the settlement or possession of the territories themselves. (Gavrilović, 2003:725)

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<sup>79</sup> Seventeen members of the Nemanjić dynasty (mostly rulers of the Serbian Kingdom) were declared saints by the Serbian Orthodox Church, generating a cult starting from the initiator of the dynasty, Stefan Nemanja, and consequently passing it to the whole dynasty, known as the sacrosanct dynasty.

In the Kosovo myth we discover the indicators that lead us to recognize Kosovo as the holy place of the Serbs and to acknowledge its mythic heroes (Saint Sava, Princ Lazar, Miloš Obilić, Kraljević Marko) as sacred figures of the Serbian nation. (Gavrilović, 2003:727)

The historical defeat of Prince Lazar's forces at the hands of the advancing Ottomans at the Battle of Kosovo serves as one of the most significant historical pillars for Serbian ethnic identity and the Serbian Orthodox Church.

The basis of the Serbian nation is in the ethnic community of the Serbs whose identification was completed before the enslavement and this identification was preserved through many years of slavery. If we are to use the words of Anthony D. Smith, we would say that "an ethnic core" was organized in the Serbian community. Names, religion, language, customs, the myth of common origin, of a holy dynasty, of the holy land are the things that make the borders of the ethnic community more recognizable. A combination of these attributes and their emphases in social interaction is what makes ethnic identity. In the period of slavery all major elements that comprise the identity corpus were created – Kosovo as the mythic homeland above all, as well as the cult of Prince Lazar, Miloš Obilić, and the motive of Vuk Branković's betrayal. Myths and memories of the homeland of an "imaginary" ethnic community carry ethnic title-deeds with them. (Gavrilović, 2003:729)

The internal Serbian name, built on the medieval tradition related to the Serbian Orthodox religion based on the cult of St. Sava and the Serbian saints, as well as on a mythological collective memory related to the importance of the Serbian rulers, to the development and then the suffering of the Serbian state in Kosovo, was preserved primarily through the customs related to daily life. Under the centuries-old slavery, the Serbian name was cultivated mainly, and in longer intervals exclusively, through popular culture.

The external "Vlach" name imposed by the Turks expressed the status of a disempowered mass, with unrecognized importance of any right to its own ethnic name and the possibility to develop its

own culture in a larger society. For Serbs, however, the military “Vlach” status in the Croatian Military Frontier was meant exactly to preserve the identity of the Serbian Orthodox religion. The loss of military status led to the loss of ethnic identity and religion, and the loss of ethnic identity and religion meant in practical terms to be exposed to exploitation by either side. (Sekulić, 1999:16)

As a consequence, the Vlach military status became essential for the formation of ethnic identity of Serbs in the Croatian border. Being a soldier and being a Serb became the same thing: *"The longest held name was the name border guards. This name almost became part of our character. It virtually precluded any other name, and it became identical with our popular Serbian name."* (Begovic, 1986: 9).

For the Krajina Serbs, the military status had already been largely identified with their ethnic identity. In many ways, the elements of the military lifestyle were incorporated in the consciousness of border guards as their ethnic symbols, becoming an integral part of their social organization and community, social consciousness, valued orientations, ways of doing business, character, and even costumes (military elements can be recognized even in the women's traditional costumes). (Sekulić,1999:19)

In socialist Yugoslavia, ethnic identity was seen as politically irrelevant, and partly for this reason, the use of various languages and the practice of different religions were tolerated in civil society. It is true that the merging of Serbian and Croatian into one language, Serbo-Croatian, in the 1950s signaled an attempt at building a unitary Yugoslav identity, but the two languages were so closely related that few, except Croat intellectuals reacting against the relegation of specific Croat variants as "dialect", seem to have taken offence. (Eriksen, 2001)

Although the ruling Communist party seems to have believed that a common Yugoslav identity would eventually supersede the national identities based on ethnic membership, ethnic identity remained strong in most parts of the country throughout the postwar era.



Ethnic identities did, in other words, not disappear during the existence of Yugoslavia. In some urban areas they were arguably weakened, but it could be — and has been — argued that the non-ethnic character of Yugoslav politics actually led to its strengthening as a vehicle for the political opposition and made it possible for Serbs to gain control over the armed forces and state bureaucracy: since political ethnicity officially did not exist (only cultural ethnicity did), there were no institutionalized ways of preventing one group from dominating the public sector.

The organization of political access along ethnic lines can also promote ethnic identification and ethnic political mobilization. Much ethnic conflict around the world arises out of competition among ethnic contenders to control territories and central governments. The civil war in the former republic of Yugoslavia is a clear example of ethnic political competition (Hodson, Sekulic, Massey, 1994). The result was an armed scramble for territory based on a fear of domination or exclusion by larger, more powerful ethnic groups. (Nagel, 1994:167)

### **4.1.7. Religious identity**

While class identity comes from the sphere of economic power, religious identity derives from the sphere of beliefs, values, symbols, myths and traditions, often codified in the customs and rituals. Differently from class identity, religious identity is a very strong form of collective identity. (Bazić, 2009:35-36)

According to Smith, religious identities derive from the spheres of communication and socialization. They are based on alignments of culture and its elements — values, symbols, myths and traditions, often codified in custom and ritual. They have therefore tended to join in a single community of the faithful all those who feel they share certain symbolic codes, value systems and

traditions of belief and ritual, including references to a supra-empirical reality, however impersonal, and imprints of specialized organizations, however tenuous. (Smith 1991:6)

Religious communities are often closely related to ethnic identities. While the 'world religions' sought to overstep, and abolish, ethnic boundaries, most religious communities coincided with ethnic groups. In his book, Smith enlists the Serbs and the Croats among ethnic minorities who retain strong religious bonds and emblems whose identity is based on religious criteria of differentiation. (Smith, 1991:7)

According to Smith, for a long time religious cleavages prevented the emergence of a strong and enduring ethnic consciousness among these populations - until the era of nationalism succeeded in uniting the community on a new, political basis.

It is important to state that both religious and ethnic identity stem from similar cultural criteria of classification. They frequently overlap and reinforce one another and singly or together, they can mobilize and sustain strong communities.

As we have seen in the previous chapters, Serbs confess the Christian Orthodox faith, while Croats are Catholics. They are both Christians, but the differences caused from opposing influences (Byzantine for the Serbs and Western for the Croats), as well as the centuries long animosities between the two Churches can hardly be overcome.

The religious confession includes a series of peculiar costumes deeply rooted to it, which further differentiate the Serbs from any other nation. For example, of all Slavs and Orthodox Christians, only Serbs have the custom of "*slava*", which is the celebration of a family's patron saint, a protector, which is inherited mostly, though not exclusively, paternally. Another particularity is that the Serbian Orthodox Church uses the Julian calendar, so Christmas currently falls on 7 January of the Gregorian calendar.

During the century long occupation by the Ottoman Empire the Serbian Orthodox Church has been the only pillar of a somehow national identity and hence it has had a significant influence as far as

culture, customs and religious beliefs, which, according to Max Weber, play a certain role when it comes to the creation of national identity. (Ristić, 2007:191)

The Serb Orthodox Church was, and still is, an important cohesive factor for the Serb communities scattered around the world. Thanks to the Serb monasteries and churches present in contemporary Croatia it was possible to trace the first Serb settlements in these territories as well as their migrations. One of the main reasons that attracted the Serbs in moving to the Military Border was the freedom of faith offered by the Austrian rule. However, Serbs were forced to fight against the numerous attempts of Uniatism<sup>80</sup> by the Catholic Church in Croatia. This struggle represents the strong connection between their Orthodox religion and their identity.

During World War II the Serbs in Croatia were forcibly converted into Catholics, because religious confession was seen as the main trait of their Serbian identity, opposed to the Croatian one.

All the Churches were suppressed in Yugoslavia by the Socialist government of Josip Broz Tito. However, the gradual demise of Yugoslav socialism and the rise of rival nationalist movements during the 1980s also led to a marked religious revival throughout Yugoslavia.

In recent studies about national identity in Serbia<sup>81</sup>, religion resulted to be the most important element of national identity.

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<sup>80</sup> Uniatism is the union of an Eastern Rite church with the Roman Church in which the authority of the papacy is accepted without loss of separate liturgies or government by local patriarchs.

<sup>81</sup> See Milošević-Đorđević J. (2008): *Čovek o naciji- shvatanje nacionalnog identiteta u Srbiji*, Institut za Političke studije, Beograd.

#### 4.1.8. Cultural identity

Cultural identity can be understood as the belonging of an individual to a given culture, with which he/she identifies. The formation of cultural identity influences all important spheres of life of the individual. One of the important areas of cultural identity are the cultural values that make up the main frame of reference by the overall behavior of the individual. (Bazić, 2009:36)

Although cultural identity encompasses a very broad range of human characteristics, it is still narrower compared to the national identity which emerges as the most comprehensive form of collective identity. (Bazić, 2009:37)

Serbian cultural identity differs from the Croat one, due to the different historical influences. Not only the Serbs brought with them in the Croatian territories their cultural heritage, but they developed also another peculiar culture related to their status as servicemen. Their status of frontiersmen differentiated them further more from the Croats living outside the Military Frontier.

The language is a theme of dispute: the language defined as “Serbian” and the one defined as “Croatian” are strictly correlated. They can be defined as variances of the same language, and most foreigners couldn’t identify the differences between the two languages. However, each language has its own peculiarities, and it was necessary to create a reform in order to bring near the two languages and create a standard “Serbo-Croatian” language, the official language in use in both Yugoslav states. Several attempts have been made throughout history to assimilate different Serbian and/or Croatian-speaking groups on the means of language.<sup>82</sup>

Today we have a paradox situation; a same language is called by different names (Croatian, Serbian, Bosnian and Montenegrin) with the purpose of giving it a national character, which serves to reinforce the individuality of small states, because language is a very important feature of

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<sup>82</sup> For example, Vuk Stefanović Karadžić (1787- 1864), reformator of the Serbian literary language, claimed that all Štokavian dialect speakers are Serbs.

national sovereignty. Although language can't be seen as a strict cultural peculiarity in the case of the Serbs in Croatia, due to the fact that most of them speak the variations of the language used in Croatia (the *Ijekavica*, differently from the *Ekavica* used in Serbia proper). However, the alphabet is a matter of distinction between the two groups: Serbs use the Cyrillic alphabet, while Croats use the Latin alphabet. Actually Serbs use both the alphabets, while Croats use exclusively the Latin one. Only during the war in Croatia, Serbs started to insist on the use of the Cyrillic alphabet as their official mean of communication. According to the Croatian constitution law on the rights of minorities, Serbs (and other minorities) have the right to use their own language and alphabet publicly where they represent a significant portion of the overall population. However, the several attempts to include the Cyrillic alphabet on the official signs in the area of Vukovar, where the Serbs represent a significant portion of population, were interrupted by the protest of the local Croat population.

Other elements of Serb cultural identity are: the names, both personal and family, that differ from the ones used among Croats and others; literature, with specific focus on the Serbian epic poetry, which became the only integrating factor for the Serbian people and a means of spiritual survival and resistance to assimilation after the demise of the Serbian medieval state; traditions and customs, most strictly related to the Orthodox faith; folklore, music and art in general; cuisine, etc.

## 4.2. National identity

National identity is the most comprehensive form of collective identity. Smith's definition of national identity is the following:

*"... 'National' identity involves some sort of political community, however tenuous. A political community in turn implies at least some common institutions and a single code of rights and duties for all the members of the community. It also suggests a definite social space, a fairly well demarcated and bounded territory, with which the members identify and to which they feel they belong."* (Smith, 1991, p. 9)

According to Smith, national identity has a strong impact on the individual and it is characterized by the following:

- a) it satisfies all personal answers of the individual oblivion fear by the identification with a nation;
  - b) the individuals can feel personal dignity and renewal by being part of a "political super-family";
  - c) the consolidation of the feelings of fraternity, by using ceremonies and symbols
- (Smith 1991: 160-161).

According to A. Smith, national identity includes the following five elements: 1) historical territory; 2) common myths and historical memory; 3) common mass and civil culture; 4) common juridical rights and duties of citizens; 5) common economy with opportunities to move within the national territory.

There is an apparent confusion in the literature, when it comes to defining of national identity (Connor, 1994). Several intersecting and not clearly delineated definitions and terms are in use: nation, race, ethnicity, national bonding, national identity, nationalism, national attitude, ethnocentrism, patriotism; even such notions as authoritarianism and patriarchalism.

One of the key dilemmas in the literature relates to the origins of national identity: whether national identity is something that we secure at birth or something that we arrive at during maturation and therefore is a subject of an individual choice.

Primordialism states that national identity is fixed and durable, remaining unchanged during the lifetime. According to this view, national identity is hard and essential, a basic human category given by birth (Cornell & Hartman, 1998), connecting people with shared ancestral origin (Putinja & Žoslin-Fenar, 1997), colored with irrational and unutterable feelings. National sentiments are not related to concrete and rational facts; instead, they are quite independent from real social relationships and individual needs. As an extreme perspective, primordialism is easily criticized. Basic shortcomings of this approach are highlighted by common findings such as: individuals with dual national identity (Waters, 1990), individual differences in importance given to national identity, and changes of national identity over a lifetime of an individual.

As a theoretical reaction to primordialism there has been a whole string of theoretical concepts rivaling this account of national identity. According to instrumentalism, national identity is fluid and changeable. People emphasize their national belonging functionally: only in those situations where they can make a certain gain by professing it. As situation changes, so will the identification with one's nation or, at least, the level of its intensity. National groups are based on interest, set up for pragmatic reasons and maintained by man-made means. Needless to say, instrumentalism has its own problems explaining the phenomenon of national identity. It postulates existence of national identity outside of an individual, and it has problems explaining the strong mobilizing nature of national identities.

Instead of primordialism - instrumentalism dichotomy, some authors discuss the difference between objective and subjective designations of national identity. Thus, Smith (1991) differentiates between Western and non-Western model of national identity. These two concepts of national identity somewhat correspond to primordialism - instrumentalism dualism. The Western concept of

national identity is based on a definition of a nation united in a political community on a given territory, sharing of common political institutions and equality of all citizens. Thus, territory and formal citizenship define national belonging and consequently the very national identity. Non-Western concept of national identity is primarily based on subjective feeling relating to genetic lineage and common ancestors. Nation is defined as a collective identity transmitted through myths, archetypes, shared history, culture and language.

National identity can be specified through: language (Anderson, 1991), visible physical indicators such as height, facial appearance, color of the skin, etc. and behavioral signs - clothing, general appearance; but also by invisible indicators of culture (Horowitz, 2000; Kecmanovic, 1996); existence of the state, shared historical development and religion.

Keillor et al. (1996) define the dimensions of national identity as belief structure, national heritage, cultural homogeneity and ethnocentrism. These categories were developed following "Huntington's (1993) four elements of civilization: 1) religion, 2) history, 3) customs, and 4) social institutions" (Huntington 1993, in Keillor et al. 1996, p. 59). The belief structure refers to the degree to which religion or supernatural beliefs influence cultural participation and solidarity. National heritage stands for the importance that a nation accords historical figures and events in history and focuses therefore on the nation's opinion of its historical uniqueness. Cultural homogeneity is defined as "the number of subcultures [that exist] within a given set of national boundaries" (p. 68). The last influencing dimension is ethnocentrism and suggests a tendency of judging other cultures by the standards of the own culture which is believed to be superior.

According to Cipek (Cipek, 2001) nation and national identity have been defined as a social construct in whose development a prominent role is played by the past, the course of history and cognitive schemes which are being acquired by processes of socialization, whereby an important role is played by inter- subjective exchange and processes of understanding.



National identity may refer to the subjective feelings people have about a national group. This is the degree to which they identify themselves with a particular nominal category, using “cultural markers” and “family resemblance” rules, rather than substantive content to create the boundaries of the category (Barth, 1969).

According to Milošević Đorđević (2003), a distinction between "us" and "them" leads to the strengthening of a national identity, which is constantly changing, and is a result of an interaction and national identity also implies self-determination of a person as member of a national group (Čorkalo and Kamenov, 1998) of drawing boundaries toward other groups.

### **4.2.1 The Serb national identity**

Serbian national identity was predominantly formed in a secular form, as a local, Balkan combination of the two most widely used models of national integration: the French, which equalized the nation and the state, and the German, which takes the criterion of ethnic kinship, language, tradition and unity. While the French model was applied in Serbia proper, where all citizens were considered Serbs, the German model imposed itself in the definition of ethnic widespread and in the criteria for ethnic belonging outside Serbia proper.

According to Milošević-Đorđević (Milošević-Đorđević, 2007) the Serb national identity is dominated by primordial concepts such as birth, history, tradition, territory and religion, while suppressing the importance of the state, culture and politics. National identity in Serbia is best described as primordial or pre-political. Such concept of national identity limits importance of the state, culture and politics and may indeed result from their lack of power. The old social identities have waned and were deserted (due to decay of the middle class and pauperization of the most), and new social identities have not emerged yet. Under such circumstances, national identity is primarily tied to ethnic and personal characteristics.

There are probably many reasons for the prevalence of the primordial concept and they can be broadly classified as social and personal. Possible social reasons are: general distrust in the state and its institutions; recently and frequently redefined state symbols such as the flag, the coat of arms, the national anthem and the like; recently and frequently redefined Croatian statehood, and general negative perception of the state.

For some 40-50 years following World War II, Serbian population was led to think in terms of belonging primarily to Yugoslav rather than belonging to Serbian nation. Attachment to Yugoslav identity and the accompanying emotions are still strong and prevailing in some. For many citizens of Serbia, identification with Yugoslav nation was one among many social identities that were lost and have not been adequately replaced, so far. During the last decades names of states and national symbols changed frequently. Not well defined and not deeply rooted national symbols lead to confusion about national identity by making it harder to identify with the state, favoring primordial concept of national identity.

The narratives of Serbian identity are, according to the so called Eastern ethnic model, based on epics, myths and even the prophecies of “folk” origin, or, on the political ethno-myth. (Marković, 2007)

According to prof. Milorad Pupovac (Pupovac, 1999), Serbian identity in Croatia relies around their religious faith (Orthodoxy), their culture, their alphabet, their language and their consciousness of belonging to a Serbian nation.

He makes a distinction between traditional and modern Serb identity in Croatia that resembles the ethnic and civic division, as well as the one between primordialism and instrumentalism. The main elements of traditional Serb identity in Croatia, according to Pupovac, are the Cyrillic alphabet, the Orthodox Church and the military service. Although the first two elements have a longer tradition, according to prof. Pupovac, it is necessary to include the military service because it represents, as

we have previously seen, a specificity of Serb identity in Croatia since it represented the basis of their life over several pre-modern centuries.

The main elements of Serb modern identity in Croatia don't differ much from most modern European nations: language and literature, civil social and political values, nationality status and national institutions, supranational and international identification, and antifascism.

According to Ignatieff, in Croatia and Serbia there is a desire for a separate identity between the two nations. The fear of losing one's national identity has caused ethnic hatred. A terror so strong and historically persistent, it has driven people to a desperate state to do anything. This is a large contributor to the reasons for the extreme violence present there in the past decade. The author states, "*A Croat, thus, is someone who is not a Serb. A Serb is someone who is not a Croat.*" This quotation profoundly expresses the short-sighted mentality present in their conflict.

### **4.3 Nationalism**

Smith defines nationalism as "*an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity on behalf of a population deemed by someone of its members to constitute an actual or potential nation*" (Smith 1991: 14, 73). While nationalism "*invents nations where they do not exist*" (Smith, p. 71) and is therefore an artificially built construct, national identity cannot be "*easily or swiftly induced in a population by artificial means*" (Smith, p. 14).

According to Smith, nationalism, the ideology and movement must be closely related to national identity, a multidimensional concept, and extended to include a specific language, sentiments and symbolism.

Being primarily defined in confrontation to "others", nationalism excludes a number of the subjects of the new nation-states and deprives them of their full status of citizens because the latter is limited

to the ethnically dominant community. Hence, the subjects of the other nationalities become "second-class citizens". In that case one may speak of a "nationalist fundamentalism" as the trend of the new collectivist identity in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. (Golubović, 1999)

Kecmanović (Kecmanović, 1995) defined the border-line between a natural national feeling and nationalism by attributing to the latter the following characteristics: (a) a tendency to possess certain territory; (b) a conception that every nation is to be separated and independent; (c) a belief in the existence of common history and common origin; (d) a sense of a common pride thanks to the achievements of one's own nation; (e) animosity towards the similar (ethnic) groups; (f) a dogma that individuals live exclusively for the nation; (g) a doctrine that one's own nation is superior; and (h) a belief in the basic link between an individual destiny and the destiny of the nation. This means that nationalism exists whenever the affective ties with, and loyalty to, the nation dominate over all the other forms of belonging, i.e. when the nation becomes a value over all the other values. (Golubović, 1999)

Nationalism is closely linked with ethnocentrism which overvalues one's own nation and, at the same time, underestimates the others'. In view of these characteristics it is not difficult to conclude that national identity in the sense of an exclusive nationalism, belongs to the same type as an authoritarian/collectivist model, that is, that its substance has not been changed essentially but only in form. Therefore one may accept the following conclusion that a communist totalitarianism was successfully replaced by a nationalist totalitarianism.

The former Yugoslav state never succeeded in constituting itself as a political community (Pešić, 1996:3), but remained an ideological construct. As such it has not succeeded in substantially linking the constituent nations to its ideological project, which means that the ideological/political identification remained superficial. Therefore, it was rather easy for the power elites of the new nation-states to use nationalism as a weapon for a new division of power and as a new means of legitimization.

According to Claus Offe, the collapse of communism awakened and restored a tendency to rediscover national identity; when citizens are confronted with uncertainties and ambiguities in a society in which democratic values are not widely spread, and with the economic costs of the transition, it seems that only a "golden past" provides certainty. This holds true for the Yugoslav states which emerged as a result of a sudden and unprepared events, intensifying the problems of national minorities when the borders of the former Yugoslav state were changed. Therefore, as Offe warns, people feel no longer part of the state, but of the nation (Offe, 1996: 31).

When frustrated people become aggressive and find refuge behind the authority of the nation to express their aggressiveness, without feeling their own responsibility because they act in the name of the nation with which they identify, when the lifeworld is fragmented and people are unrooted, then nationalism offers security and stability. This is because it helps create a feeling of wholeness and continuity with the past (Eriksen, 1993:105).

Nationalism can be generally thought of as an ideology that uses national identity as the basis for social and political action. The ultimate goal of a nationalist movement is the achievement or maintenance of power in the form of the nation state. Gellner perhaps puts it best when he defines nationalism as:

*“primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent. Nationalism as a sentiment, or as a movement, can best be defined in terms of this principle. Nationalist sentiment is the feeling of anger aroused by the violation of the principle, or the feeling of satisfaction aroused by its fulfillment”.* (Gellner 1983:1).

Although there are many types of nationalism, for this research is interesting in the contrast between two specific types of nationalism: official (Croat) nationalism and (Serb) minority nationalism. Official nationalism is promoted by the state (e.g., an official language, and other state-sanctioned symbols) to cultivate and maintain the dominance of a specific nation (Kellas 1991:52); minority nationalisms evolve in reaction to official nationalisms. This is especially true for the Serb

nationalism in Croatia, which was a reaction on the official Croatian nationalism propagated by the new party in power, the Croatian Democratic Community (HDZ) and the new Croatian President, Franjo Tuđman.

Minority nationalism works on two levels: it has to adopt a political agenda vis-à-vis the state, in order to formulate its demands, but at the same time it has to sustain a certain vision of that state as a threatening one - otherwise the rationale behind the mobilisation is less credible. If the state does not respond to demands from minorities, the perception of mutual threat increases: minority comes to view the state as not worth the emotional commitment, confirmed in its not belonging, whilst the majority is vindicated in its view of the minority as not committed to the state which it invariably views as its own. (Harris, 2003:6)

### **4.3.1 Serbian and Croatian nationalism**

Serbian and Croatian nationalism evolved side by side, but on different grounds. Unlike the Serbs, whose nationalism at the beginning of the nineteenth century was a combination of religious and ethnic identities with a linguistic model of the nation; Croatian nationalism began as an artificial creation, with the terminology and argumentation practically taken over by the Hungarians, and relies on the historical rights of the apocryphal Triune Kingdom. (Bataković, 2000:201)

Nationalism was used in the post-socialist Yugoslavia as a means to mobilise a population for war, both during wars and often in preparation for war (Hardin, 1995, p. 150; 156-163). In Yugoslavia in the 1980s and 1990s, nationalism was overtly ethnic, or ethno-nationalism, based on the subjective belief of the people of an ethnic group in their common descent (Allen, 2000, p.491).

According to Smith, myths of national identity typically refer to territory or ancestry (or both) as the basis of political community, and these differences furnish important, if often neglected, sources

of instability and conflict in many parts of the world. It is no accident that many of the most bitter and protracted 'inter-national' conflicts derive from competing claims and conceptions of national identity. It is no accident that many of the most bitter and protracted 'inter-national' conflicts derive from competing claims and conceptions of national identity.

The Balkan nations had not attained independence up to the beginning of the 19th century. Since they are therefore new nations with strong primordial roots, and since national affiliation was not historically synonymous with a sense of belonging to a state, relatively objective pre-state attributes such as language, ethnicity, tradition and culture functioned as common denominators for social cohesion or inclusive/exclusive criteria. The sense of a common destiny for the Balkans' ethnic and ethno-national groups was strengthened even further by oppressive empires. As a result, nationalism was (in the case of all Balkan states) and often still is (in Serbia and Macedonia, for example) typically an instrument for building statehood.

The Serbian national programme - *Načertanije* – was put together in 1844 by Ilija Garašanin, a proponent of a Greater Serbia - a Serbian state whose borders were extended to include all Serbs in the Balkan region. Planning the unification of the Serbian lands under Ottoman rule (Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Northwestern Macedonia), Garašanin did not exclude the possibility of the creation of a common state of South Slavs with the Croats and the Bulgarians. Bosnia and Herzegovina were considered as Serbian lands inhabited by Serbs of the Orthodox and Islamic faith, with a small Catholic minority, who much later emerged as Croats. The national aspirations expressed in the *Načertanije*, were based on the concept of the sovereignty of the people, and they were used for the formulation of the state programme of the Principality of Serbia. This programme accorded with the model of l'Etat-nation, thus there was no difference between the state and the nation. The basic idea of Serbian union in the *Načertanije*, based as it was

on the l'Etat-nation model, was imbued to a certain degree with historicism (the renewal of the medieval Serbian Empire of Stefan Dušan).<sup>83</sup>

The Serbian linguist Vuk Stefanović Karadžić is commonly considered the father of Serbian nationalism. Karadžić created a linguistic definition of the Serbs that included all speakers of the Štokavian dialect regardless of their religious affiliation or geographical origin. As this definition implied that large areas of continental Croatia, Dalmatia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, including areas inhabited by Roman Catholics. Vuk Karadžić is considered by some to be the progenitor of the Greater Serbia<sup>84</sup> program.

The Communist regime in Yugoslavia repressed nationalism of any culture that was deemed to be a threat to the state. However, Serbian nationalism escalated following the death of Tito in 1980. Serbian intellectuals began breaking a number of taboos: the highly controversial Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts was produced by the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts in 1986. The Memorandum claimed to promote solutions to restore Yugoslav unity, but it focused on fiercely condemning Titoist Yugoslavia of having economically subjugated Serbia to Croatia and Slovenia and accused ethnic Albanians of committing genocide against Serbs in Kosovo. The Memorandum was harshly condemned by the ruling League of Communists of Yugoslavia.

Among Serb nationalists, this culminated on the idea that a revised "Greater Serbia" would be the new aim for Belgrade once each republic declares independence. This movement's main ideology is to unite all Serbs (or all historically ruled or Serb populated lands) into one state, claiming, depending on the version, different areas of many surrounding countries.

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<sup>83</sup> Bataković D. T. (1994), The national integration of the Serbs and the Croats: a comparative analysis, Dialogue, N° 7/8, septembre-décembre 1994, Paris, pp. 5-13.

<sup>84</sup> The Greater Serbian ideology included claims to territories of modern day Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Macedonia.



During the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s, the concept of a Greater Serbia was widely seen outside of Serbia as the motivating force for the military campaigns undertaken to form and sustain Serbian states on the territories of the breakaway Yugoslav republics of Croatia (the Republic of Serbian Krajina) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (the Republika Srpska). From the Serb point of view, the objective of this policy was to assure Serbs' rights by ensuring that they could never be subjected to potentially hostile rule, particularly by their historic Croatian enemies (the Ustaše).

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

*While Serbian nationalism was fashioned so as to appeal to the minds and hearts of all Serbian people, regardless of where they lived, Croatian nationalism, largely legalistic, was predicated on territorial claims, without taking account of who lived in these territories.*<sup>85</sup>

As in the case of the Serbs, language and literature became the building blocks of Croat national consciousness in the nineteenth century. From the supra-national, linguistic (Illyrian and Yugoslav), through which a framework had been made for Croatian national integration, based on opposition to the Imperial Austrian and the feudal-national Hungarian ideology, it moved towards the narrower, exclusively national model.

Ljudevit Gaj (1809–72) led this language reform, modifying the Latin alphabet to partially conform to the rule “one sound–one letter”, established for the Cyrillic alphabet by Vuk Karadžić. Gaj also adopted the Štokavian dialect of the Serbian language as the Croat literary dialect. His reform was an essential part of the so-called Illyrian movement, resisting the attempts from Budapest to Magyarize the Croats and entertaining the idea of a common “Illyrian” (that is, South Slav) state.

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<sup>85</sup> See Žarko Bilbija, “The Serbs and Yugoslavia” in *The Serbs and their National Interest*, eds. Norma von Ragenfeld-Feldman and Dusan T. Batakovic (San Francisco: Serbian Unity Congress, 1997), 96-97

Serbs, including Garašanin, mistrusted Ljudevit Gaj and therefore questioned the authenticity of the Illyrian movement.

The Croats, after the first phase marked by Illyrian ideology, emulating the legitimistic organisation of the Habsburg Monarchy, found in the 'historical rights': the theory about the legal continuity of their medieval state, later known as the Triune Kingdom of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia the model for their *Volkgeist*. From the Hungarians, Croatian political thought borrowed the theory of one political nation in the whole historic space of the Triune Kingdom, regardless of ethnic origin.

That theory directly threatened the national identity of the Serbs, who in Croatia and Slavonia constituted about one third of the population, concentrated mostly in the Military Frontier (Vojna Krajina or simply Krajina), which was directly ruled by Vienna (up until 1881).

Ante Starčević (referred to as *Father of the Fatherland* by Croats.), founder of the Party of Rights in Croatia in 1861, regarded Croatia to include not only present-day Croatia but also Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, Serbia —all people in this Greater Croatia whether Catholic, Muslim, or Orthodox were defined as Croats.

During the 19th to mid-20th century Croatian nationalists competed with the increasingly Pan-Slavic Illyrian movement and Yugoslavists over the identity of Croats. The founder of Yugoslavism, Croatian Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer advocated the unification of Croat lands into a Yugoslav monarchical federal state alongside other Yugoslavs.

Croatian nationalism reached a critical point in its development during World War II, when the Croatian extreme nationalist and fascist Ustaše movement took to governing the Independent State of Croatia (NDH). In the Second World War, Croatian nationalism, while hardly very articulate or aggressive in the nineteenth century, burst forth with hitherto unequalled fury. It found its strongest and most effective ally in the Croatian Roman Catholic clergy which brought to the secular national movement in the homeland their own brand of religious exclusionism, intolerance, and a militant proselytizing thrust that were deemed necessary to create a religiously and racially pure Croatian

state within "historical boundaries". Both Hitler's Berlin and Vatican Rome gave their blessing to Ante Pavelić's Independent State of Croatia (NDH) that was set up in 1941 and Pavelić's Ustaše conducted genocidal campaigns against the Serbs, Jews, and Gypsies until 1945. The most appalling crimes in the name of religious and racial purity in which the Croatian Roman Catholic clergy and Pavelić's Ustaše collaborated were directed against the Serbian Orthodox population. (Bataković, 1997)

After the defeat of the Axis Powers in 1945 and the rise of communist Josip Broz Tito as leader of a new communist-led Yugoslavia, Croatian nationalism along with other nationalisms were suppressed by state authorities. Croatian nationalism did not disappear but remained dormant until the late 1960s to early 1970s with the outbreak of the Croatian Spring movement calling for a decentralized Yugoslavia and greater autonomy for Croatia and the other republics from federal government control. The Yugoslav leadership interpreted the whole affair as a restoration of Croatian nationalism, dismissed the movement as chauvinistic and had the police suppress the demonstrators. Many student activists were detained and some were even sentenced to years of prison. Some estimate that up to two thousand people were criminally prosecuted for participation in these events. Among those arrested at this time were future president of Croatia Franjo Tuđman. Eventually the Croatian demands were effectively implemented by Tito's regime in the new federal Constitution of 1974, which gave more autonomy to the individual republics, thereby basically fulfilling the main goals of the 1971 movement.

Croatian nationalism revived in both radical, independentist, and extremist forms in the late 1980s in response to the perceived threat of the Serbian nationalist agenda of Slobodan Milošević who sought a strongly centralized Yugoslavia.

The most recent expression of a Greater Croatia arose in the aftermath of the breakup of Yugoslavia, and the subsequent partition of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The policies of Croatia and

Franjo Tuđman towards Bosnia and Herzegovina were never totally transparent and always included Tuđman's aim of expanding Croatia's borders.

The concepts of 'nation' and 'ethnic identity' were over simplified and then exploited by nationalist leaders in ex-Yugoslavia. Milošević reinforced Serbian nationalism by rekindling memories of the Croatian underground organisation, the Ustaše. In Croatia on the other hand, once Tuđman was in power, Serbs were defined as second-class citizens and they were fired from positions in the police and military. He also placed the red-and-white "checkerboard" of the Nazi-era Ustaša flag in the new Croatian banner (Bowen, 2002:335; 339).

What can be said with certainty in the case of Yugoslavia is that popular past events have been reinterpreted by nationalist leaders as a means to retain political leadership in grim times. In the disintegrated post-socialist Yugoslavia, it was not the past that dictated to the present but the present that manipulated the past (Hardin, 1995, p.161).

Separatist politics in Yugoslavia formed borders which enclosed a "We" and excluded, often violently, others (Bowen, 2002, p.335). Nationalistic politics, aided by the international community and the mass media, contributed to creating negative stereotyping and fear of another group. This means that the violent conflicts in Yugoslavia were the makings of political leaders who reinterpreted the popular past of the Second World War to manipulate ethnic tensions for the purpose of ensuring their political boundaries at the expense of minority groups.

#### 4.4 Nation, state and nation-state

The terms “nation” and “state” are often used interchangeably, in an indiscriminate fashion (such as the "United Nations", which is actually an association of states, not of nations). In laymen's minds, the difference between the two concepts is vague - to such an extent that the term nation-state is sometimes used. Therefore, it is important to make a distinction between the three terms in order to make some clarity and avoid possible misconceptions.

The nation, in most theories, is characterized by three elements: spatial – the territory; social – the population of a nation which is sharing the same memories, traditions, myths, beliefs and aspirations; and politic – represented by the state.

The ‘great debate’ in nationalism studies is between the so-called ‘primordialists’ and ‘modernists’: primordialists argue that the nation derives directly from a priori ethnic groups and is based on kinship ties and ancient heritage. For their part, modernists insist that the nation is an entirely novel form of identity and political organisation, which owes nothing to ethnic heritage and everything to the modern dynamics of industrial capitalism. (Bellamy, 2003:7)

Three classic statements regarding the definition of the concept of “nation” are those of Renan, Stalin, and Weber. (Hutchinson and Smith, 1994:15)

In the words of Ernest Renan, *“a heroic past, of great men, of glory, that is the social principle on which the national idea rests. To have common glories in the past, a common will in the present; to have accomplished great things together, to wish to do so again, that is the essential condition for being a nation.”* Renan defines the nation as *“a grand solidarity constituted by the sentiment of sacrifices which one has made and those that one is disposed to make again. It supposes a past, it renews itself especially in the present by a tangible deed: the approval, the desire, clearly expressed, to continue the communal life.”* (Renan, 1887)

According to Stalin, “*A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up<sup>86</sup> manifested in common culture*”. (Stalin, 1994:8)

Max Weber examines the nation as a “prestige community”, endowed with a sense of cultural mission. Nations, he claims, are too various to be defined in terms of any one criterion, but the affiliates nations to ethnic communities as populations unified by a myth of common descent. What distinguishes the nation is a commitment to a political project. (Hutchinson and Smith, 1994:15)

According to Smith, a nation can be defined as “*a named human population sharing a historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members*”. (Smith, 1991:14)

According to E.J. Hosbawm, “*two men are of the same nation if and only if they share the same culture, where culture in turn means a system of ideas and signs and associations and ways of behaving and communicating; two men are of the same nation if and only if they recognize each other as belonging to the same nation. A mere category of persons becomes a nation if and when the members of the category firmly recognize certain mutual rights and duties to each other in virtue of their shared membership of it. It is their recognition of each other as fellows of this kind which turns them into a nation, and not the other shared attributes, whatever they might be, which separate that category from non-members.*” (Hosbawm, 1992:7)

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<sup>86</sup> Or otherwise called “national character”, is something intangible for the observer, but in so far as it manifests itself in a distinctive culture common to the nation it is something tangible and cannot be ignored, since it leaves its impress on the physiognomy of the nation.

Krejčí and Velímský identify five objective factors which can contribute to the identification of a group as a nation: territory, state (or similar political status), language, culture and history. Usually the sixth subjective criterion, national consciousness, is also present. (Krejčí and Velímský, 1981)

The nation can be defined as a community of descent (Weber, Connor), but it differs from the notion of ethnic community by its degree of self-consciousness; whereas an ethnic group may be other-defined, a nation must be self-defined. (Hutchinson and Smith, 1994:16)

Nations are not eternally defined entities, but they are in fact created. They are “imagined communities”, in the words of Benedict Anderson. They will be replaced, in all probability, by a European confederation as Renan has predicted 125 years ago.

Discussion of the state may begin with Max Weber’s definition of it, as the agency within society which possesses the monopoly of legitimate violence. (Hosbawm, 1992:3)

The state is almost universally considered an institution of social service. Some theorists venerate the state as the apotheosis of society; others regard it as an amiable though often inefficient organisation for achieving social ends; but almost all regard it as a necessary means for achieving the goals of mankind. (Rothbard, 2009:1)

Briefly, the state is that organisation in society which attempts to maintain a monopoly of the use of force and violence in a given territorial area; in particular, it is the only organisation in society that obtains its revenue not by voluntary contribution or payment for services rendered, but by coercion. (Rothbard, 2009:2)

According to Smith, the concept of “state” refers exclusively to public institutions, differentiated from, and autonomous of, other social institutions and exercising a monopoly of coercion and extraction within a given territory. (Smith, 1991:14)

Thus, the following attributes can be considered the characteristics of a state:

- Monopoly on exercise of force.
- Legitimacy, as perceived by the governed.
- Institutional structures established to handle governmental tasks, including, but not limited to, the exercise of force.
- Control over a territory - absolute or partial. (Rasmussen, 2001)

The term “nation-state” was designated to describe a territorial political unit (a state) whose borders coincided or nearly coincided with the territorial distribution of a national group. More concisely, it described a situation in which a nation had its own state. (Connor, 1994)

The nation-state is a type of politico-military rule that, first, has a distinct geographically defined territory over which it exercises jurisdiction; second, has sovereignty over its territory, which means that its jurisdiction is theoretically exclusive of outside interference by other nation-states or entities; third, it has a government made up of public offices and roles that control and administer the territory and population subject to the state’s jurisdiction; fourth, it has fixed boundaries marked on the ground by entry and exit points and, in some cases, by fences patrolled by border guards and armies; fifth, its government claims a monopoly on the legitimate use of physical coercion over its population; sixth, its population manifests, to a greater or lesser degree, a sense of national identity; and, seventh, it can rely, to a greater or lesser degree, on the obedience and loyalty of its inhabitants. (Opello and Rosow, 2004:3)

Smith notes, "*We may term a state a 'nation-state' only if and when a single ethnic and cultural population inhabits the boundaries of a state, and the boundaries of that state are coextensive with the boundaries of that ethnic and cultural population.*" (Smith, 1995:86).



The way the Balkan nations emerged — simultaneously with the nation-states or even preceding them — resulted, however, in the overlapping of two processes: nation-building and state-building.

First, this overlap made the new nationalist identities more suspicious and aggressive. Second, the rebirth of independent states often preceded the accumulation of administrative experience by a significant part of the nation's elite, so that those engaged in policymaking were often incompetent and state bureaucracies were extremely corrupt (a “phenomenon” also present in the experience of post-colonial countries).

According to Michael Howard (Howard, 1994), it is hard to think of any nation-state that came into existence before the middle of the twentieth century which was not created, and had its boundaries defined, by wars, by internal violence, or by a combination of the two. States have either disappeared or as the result of unsuccessful wars or have never succeeded in coming into being. Briefly, up till our own century, war has been a principal determinant in the shaping of nation-states.

This is especially true for all the states that emerged from the dissolution of former Yugoslavia, whose process of state-building coincided with the ongoing bloody wars. These states can be considered as ethnic states which aimed at becoming nation-states through severe use of the methods of ethnic cleansing. Although the demographic distribution of the population in all the new ex-Yugoslav states was seriously changed, none of them managed in creating an ethnically homogenized nation-state. They all incorporate several groups of “historical” national or ethnic minorities, but also a series of “new” national minorities that emerged after the dissolution of ex-Yugoslavia and the shifting of its internal borders. This scenario perfectly reflects the theories of Walker Connor (Connor, 1994) who claimed that the greatest barrier to state unity has been the fact that the states each contain more than one nation, and sometimes hundreds.

#### 4.4.1 Nationality and citizenship

There is much terminological confusion in the study of citizenship statuses and laws. While public international law uses the term nationality to refer to the legal bond between an individual and a sovereign state, several domestic laws use the term citizenship or its equivalent. In some states, a distinction is made between nationality as a status independent of residence and citizenship as a bundle of rights granted only to nationals residing in the territory.

In most European languages, the term nationality can also refer to individual membership in a nation as a cultural, ethnic and historic community rather than a legal entity. Sometimes, nationality is also contrasted with nation when distinguishing dominant national groups from national minorities.

The concept of citizenship, too, has a broad range of meanings that stretch beyond its core as a legal status. In various academic literatures, citizenship presupposes the existence of democratic institutions of government and refers to a bundle of legal or moral rights and obligations or to individual and collective forms of participation in the public realm. While we acknowledge the importance of linking the literatures on citizenship as a legal status to these broader sociological and normative debates, we limit our use of the concept to its legal core meaning.

In Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro, *državljanstvo* (citizenship) is a neutral term designating an individual's link with a state (*država*) without any reference to ethnicity and is used in all legal documents. *Nacionalnost* (nationality) or *narodnost* (from *narod*, people) refers primarily to someone's ethnic background. Therefore it is safer to use the term citizenship when one refers to someone's legal status as citizen of a state instead of the ambiguous term nationality because of its clear ethnic connotations. Citizen could be translated both as *državljanin* and *građanin* and citizenship as *državljanstvo* but also as *građanstvo*. Very often *državljanin* and *građanin* are used as synonyms, although *državljanin* is primarily legal status whereas *građanin* has

additional civic and political connotations. The same word also describes a resident of a city (*grad*). When it comes to citizenship, *državljanstvo* refers only to legal status; *građanstvo* is again related more to a civic and political status to and activities of citizens. Additionally, the term *građanstvo* could also, in a different context, refer to urban population or, nowadays rarely, to the upper urban classes.<sup>87</sup>

The Serbs in Croatia are considered a national minority (*nacionalna manjina*) but also Croatian citizens (*građani*) in possession of Croatian citizenship (*hrvatski državljani*) as well. They consider themselves as a nation (*narod*), regardless of state boundaries. It is important to note that the word "nation" (*narod*) in the context of former Yugoslavian states has an ethnic connotation ; *narod* is cognate to the verb *roditi* (to give birth) . When preceded by the ethnic adjective (Croatian, Serbian, etc.), the construction excludes those not of the specified ethnicity. (Hayden, 1994:12)

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<sup>87</sup> According to the European Union Democracy Observatory (EUDO), available online at <http://eudo-citizenship.eu/citizenship-glossary/terminology#bcms>

## CHAPTER 5: FIELDWORK

### 5.1 The questionnaire

The instrument utilized to measure the elements of national identity among the Serbs in Croatia is a closed ended questionnaire, combined with dichotomous yes/no questions, as well as multiple choice and categorical questions, open ended questions and importance questions that rate the importance of a particular issue. There are 35 total questions, which are structured in 4 sections.

The time needed in order to fill out the questionnaire is about 5-7 minutes

The first section (questions n. 1-7, 30)<sup>88</sup> includes general information about the respondents: offers information about the respondents' background, such as age, gender, citizenships, level of education, participation to Serb minority institutions and war experience (whether tragic or not).

This section is important because it gives us some general aspects about the respondents. These characteristics also represent the independent variables that were used in the correlation with other variables in order to determine the factors that influence certain attitudes.

The second section includes questions (n. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26 and 27) about national, ethnic, cultural and religious identity, which helps us to understand the respondents' attitudes toward the importance of these elements in their auto-reflection of national identity. As a result, 4-scale importance questions were used (1-very important, 2-moderately, 3- little, 4- not at all) rather than 5-scale Likert questions, because it was more appropriate for the purpose of the research. One of the hypotheses of this research is that all the traditional elements of national identity (religion, tradition, myths, etc.) are still predominant in the Serb perception of their national identity, but we don't know to what extent they are important. So it was decided to formulate the

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<sup>88</sup> See appendix n.1

questions in such a way that it was possible to quantify the importance of these elements among the respondents.

The third section includes questions (n. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31) about the importance of civic or modern elements in Serb national identity (sense of belonging to Serbia, attachment to state national symbols, civic discrimination, special status, etc.). Since the third hypothesis of the research is that the ethnic/traditional elements of Serb national identity will prevail over the modern/civic elements, it was necessary to include and therefore measure also the importance of these aspects in order to compare the results.

The fourth section of the questionnaire includes questions (n. 32, 33, 34 and 35) about ethnic distance, in order to have some insight on the levels of integration and ethnic tolerance present among the Serb community in Croatia.

The questionnaire was structured in standard Croatian language, understood by all the respondents and the questions were formulated in such a way to be as much explanatory as possible, in order to avoid misinterpretations.

The questionnaires were always submitted by the aid of an interviewer in each region who was acquainted with the aim of the research. This was very helpful, especially when dealing with illiterate or half literate respondents. Furthermore, since the research involved several dispersed regions within Croatia, the questionnaires were sent by e mail to the interviewers and once completed, were returned whether personally or by post to the researcher.

## 5.2 The sample

As already seen, the Serbs of Croatia make up a population of 201, 631 people, which is 4, 5% of the total population<sup>89</sup>. This is a very broad segment of population, dispersed not only internally, but also outside the country. In order to simplify the sampling, it has been decided to divide the Serbs into 4 categories based on territorial distinction: 1) Serbs from the Croatian region of Istria; 2) Serbs from the capital city of Zagreb; 3) Serbs from war-affected areas; 4) Serbs from areas of peaceful integration. These areas not only differ geographically from each other, but they also represent some individual peculiarities that will help to understand better the subject and the theme of the research.

The Serbs that reside in Istria (6 180<sup>90</sup> in total) are not autochthonous to the region or the country in general, most of them inhabited the region after World War II for several reasons: some for better life conditions, while others were servicemen settled by the Yugoslav People's Army in this area. Most of them are from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, but there is also a significant portion of Serbs from other Croatian counties (mostly war affected areas). Of course, today there is the second generation of Serbs born and raised in Istria, who are the successors of the before mentioned "immigrants".<sup>91</sup> In the context of the research, the region of Istria represents a neutral area, untouched by warfare and also an urban multiethnic environment where the Serbs are relatively well integrated.

The second area, the city of Zagreb (with 18 221 Serbs), represents the urban center *par excellence*, characterized by a historic Serb upper class and center of most Serb institutions and organizations. Apart from few individual incidents, Zagreb wasn't directly affected by the war. The Serbs living in Zagreb are of miscellaneous origin: some are native of Zagreb, while others moved from other parts

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<sup>89</sup> According to the 2001 Census

<sup>90</sup> According to the Croatian 2001 census of the population.

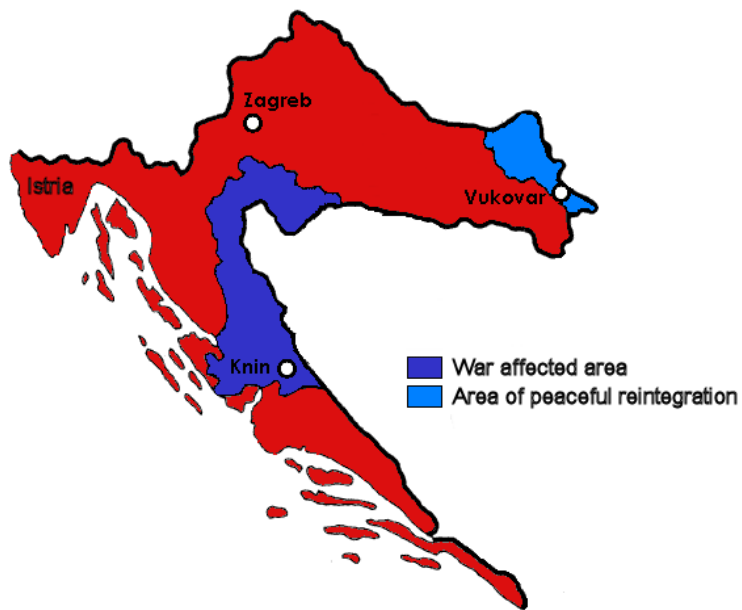
<sup>91</sup> Serbs can't be considered as immigrants in none of the former Yugoslav republics, due to their previous constitutive status. They had the right to move internally within Yugoslavia, like any other citizen, without losing their status.

of Croatia for different reasons: education, better job opportunities or to find shelter from the war events. Zagreb, as Istria, is a multiethnic environment where the Serbs represent the most numerous national minority.

The war affected area was divided among 4 counties (Karlovačka, Ličko-Senjska, Šibensko-Kninska and Zadarska, with a total number of 35 848 Serbs) in order to cover the whole territory of the former SAO Krajina. As seen in the historic preview, this area overlaps with the historic Military Frontier, bordering with Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this area Serbs have been autochthonous for centuries, and their special status was granted to them since 1690. All the counties covered by this mostly rural area were constituent part of the Republic of Serbian Krajina (1991-1995) and highly devastated during the last war. The military operation “Storm” in august 1995 caused most of the Serbs to leave and find shelter in the neighboring Bosnia and Herzegovina or Serbia.

The area of peaceful reintegration encompasses 2 counties bordering with Serbia (Vukovarsko-Srijemska and Osječko-Baranjska, with a total of 53 512 Serbs), where lives the highest number of Serbs in Croatia. This area was also very affected by the war, it was among the first to experience war tragedies, but it wasn't the scenario of massive Serb expatriation. After the liberation of all Serb occupied territories in 1995 (with the operations “Flash” and “Storm”), this area was put under UN protection (United Nations Transitional Authority for Eastern Slavonia – UNTAES) for few years (1995 -1998) until its peaceful reintegration into Croatian territory. This area was also part of the former Republic of Serbian Krajina (1991-1995). The population of this area was ethnically mixed, with a relatively high percentage of Serbs (32% before the war). Today, Serbs in this area live separated from the Croats, in ethnically Serb villages, and in separated parts of town. They have their own self-government and several institutions.

**Figure 1: Map of territorial distribution of the sample**



Aside from this social, historical and territorial categorization of the sample, a further selection was made by encompassing only adults (from 18 to 70 years old), divided by level of education and gender. The partitions were made on the basis of the 2001 Census of the population in Croatia.

In each area, 100 questionnaires were handed to the respondents, for a total of 400 respondents which represent the sampling population of this research. The respondents come from different backgrounds, and were carefully chosen in order to include as many segments of the population as possible.



### 5.3 Data analysis

As already explained in chapter 1, one of the objectives of this research is to explore the differences and/or similarities among the Serb population in Croatia regarding their attitudes toward some elements of their national identity. Since the method used to study the phenomenon is quantitative, it was necessary to set some variables that will help to understand and quantify the obtained data.

The first set variables are general demographic (independent) variables such as gender, level of education, age, profession, area of residence (among the 4 previously explained areas) and country of birth. Along these “typical” demographic variables, two additional independent variables were set: membership in Serb organizations and experience of the war.

Among these independent variables, five were chosen (age category, gender, level of education, tragic war experience and membership in Serb organization) to be correlated with 19 dependent variables in order to obtain cross tabulations (or contingency tables) that will be expressed in charts.

The dependent variables are the ones that determine the elements of traditional Serb national identity (importance of religion, importance of the Serbian Orthodox Church, importance of Serb tradition, importance of Serb history in Croatia, importance of Serb culture in Croatia, importance of Serbian language and script), and the elements of modern Serb national identity (sense of belonging to Serbia, attachment to Serbian state symbols, attachment to Croatian state symbols, importance of Serbian language and script, familiarity with Serb organizations in Croatia), in addition the variable of self-identification (Serb, Serb from Croatia or other) and the variable of ethnic tolerance<sup>92</sup> (marriage with a Croat, Croat as a neighbor, Croat as a friend).

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<sup>92</sup> The variable „ethnic tolerance“ consists of the sum of the responses „Yes“(1) to the variables of „marriage to a Croat“, „Croat as a neighbour“, „Croat as employer“, and „Croat as a friend“. 0= none of the respondents answered „Yes“; 1= respondents with one „Yes“ response; 2=respondents with two „Yes“ responses; 3=respondents with three „Yes“ responses; 4=respondents with all four „Yes“ responses

The method of analysis chosen for this research was a cross-territorial comparison of the obtained data among the 4 territorial areas, and subsequently to analyze the correlations<sup>93</sup> on a wider scale that can be applied to the whole Serb population in Croatia.

First of all, a statistical review<sup>94</sup> expressed in bar charts using SPSS will follow for each of the independent variables by areas in order to understand some characteristics of the sample and their general attitudes. Then a comparison<sup>95</sup> between the obtained results among areas will follow, in order to identify the differences and/or similarities of the respondents' attitudes.

Since a large set of variables (most of which are correlated to each other) was gathered, in order to help clarify the obtained results, a factor analysis scaling technique has been used, for purposes of evidence of reliability and validity.

In order to verify one of the hypothesis (H3)<sup>96</sup>, it was necessary to calculate, respectively, the index of modernity and the index of traditionalism of Serb national identity in Croatia (lower value = higher intensity) expressed in charts, and the correlation between the two indexes for the purpose of obtaining the predominant aspect of their national identity.

Before the presenting the final results, the attitudes of a focus group will be analyzed to further understand the theme of the research from a qualitative point of view.

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<sup>93</sup> Using Phi (f) correlation and Cramer's V

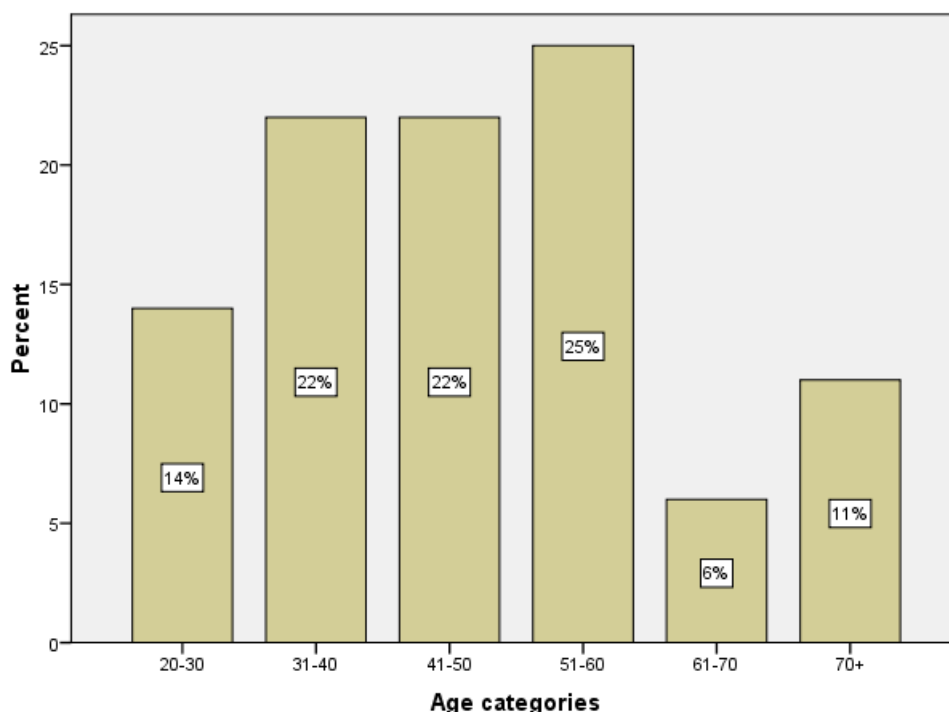
<sup>94</sup> Only the valid percent was used and expressed in the graphic representations, excluding the missing values.

<sup>95</sup> By using the COMPARE MEANS tools (T-test and ANOVA)

<sup>96</sup> "(...)the respondents will show a higher degree of traditionalism than modernity (expressed in indexes that will be subsequently calculated)". See chapter 1.

**a) Istria**

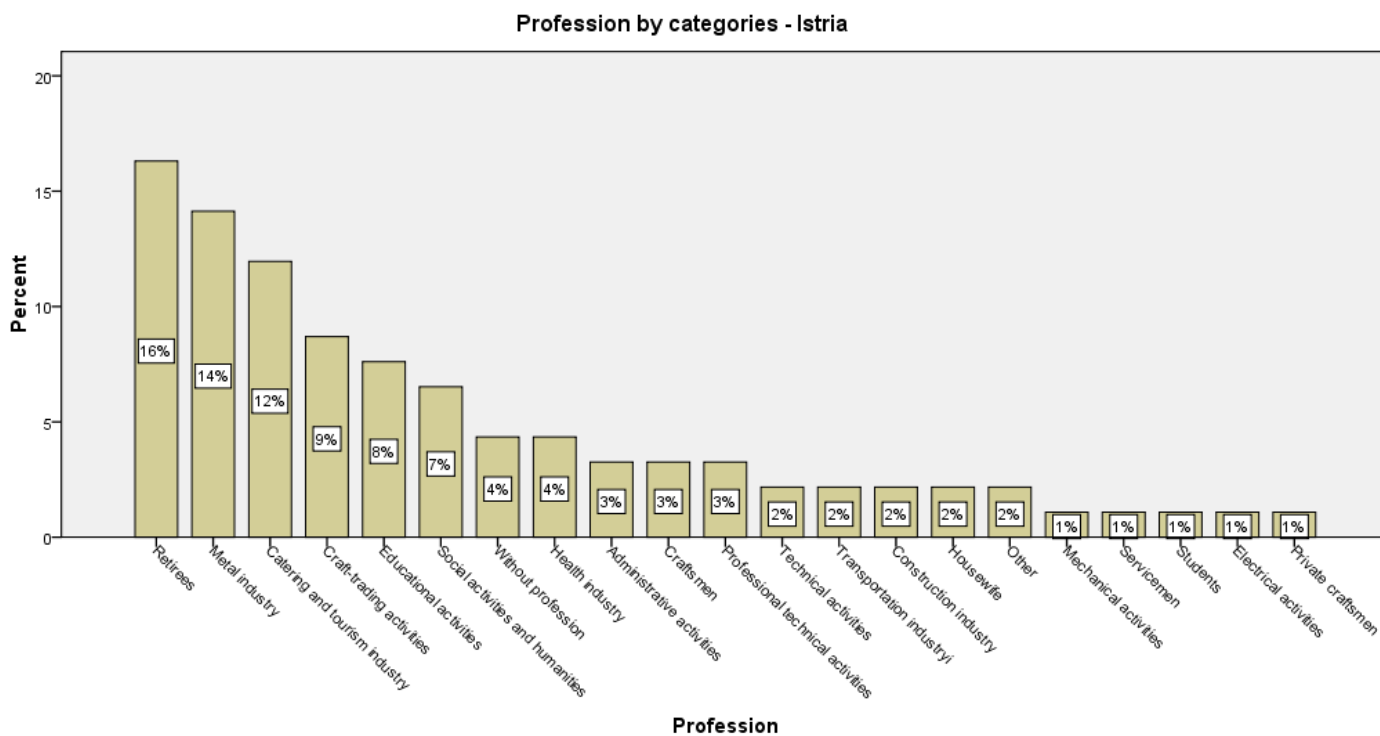
The respondents were divided into the following age categories: 20-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, 61-70, 70+. In the region of Istria, according to the variable of age, the results showed a slighter predominance of the 51-60 age category (25% of the total).

**Figure 1****Age categories of respondents - Istria**

The division between genders was done on an equal basis, so in every area the percentage of females and males is the same (50 female and 50 male respondents).

The professions of the respondents were very broad, so it was decided to categorize the professions as well. (See figure 2). The most numerous category is the one represented by the retirees, which makes sense considering the predominant age category of the respondents. The second and third most represented category of profession, i.e. metal industry and tourism industry, are the leading sectors in Istria.

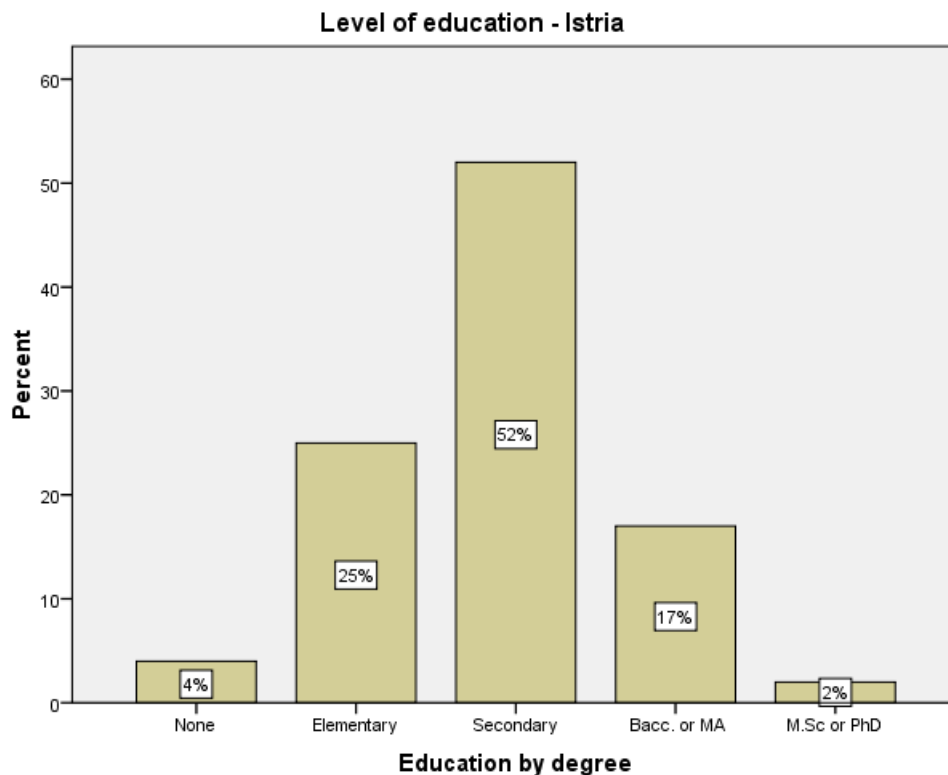
Figure 2



The level of education (see figure 3) was divided among those without any school degree (“none”), those who have an elementary school degree or finished only few classes<sup>97</sup> of elementary school (“elementary school”), those who have a secondary or high school degree (“secondary”), those who have a University degree of Bachelor’s or Master of Arts (“Bacc. or MA”), and those who have a degree of Master of Science or PhD (“M.Sc. or PhD”).

<sup>97</sup> It is very common in Croatia, especially within the older generation, to have completed only few classes of elementary school. It has been decided to include all these cases in the category of „elementary school“, rather than in „none“, because they are literate, differently from those without any level of education.

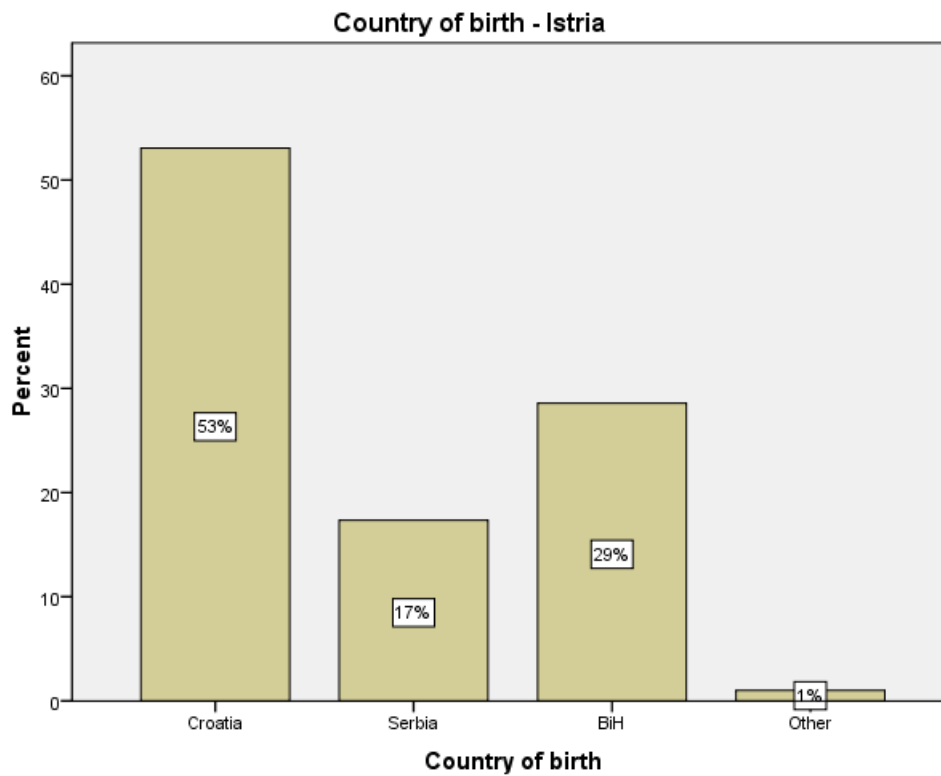
Figure 3



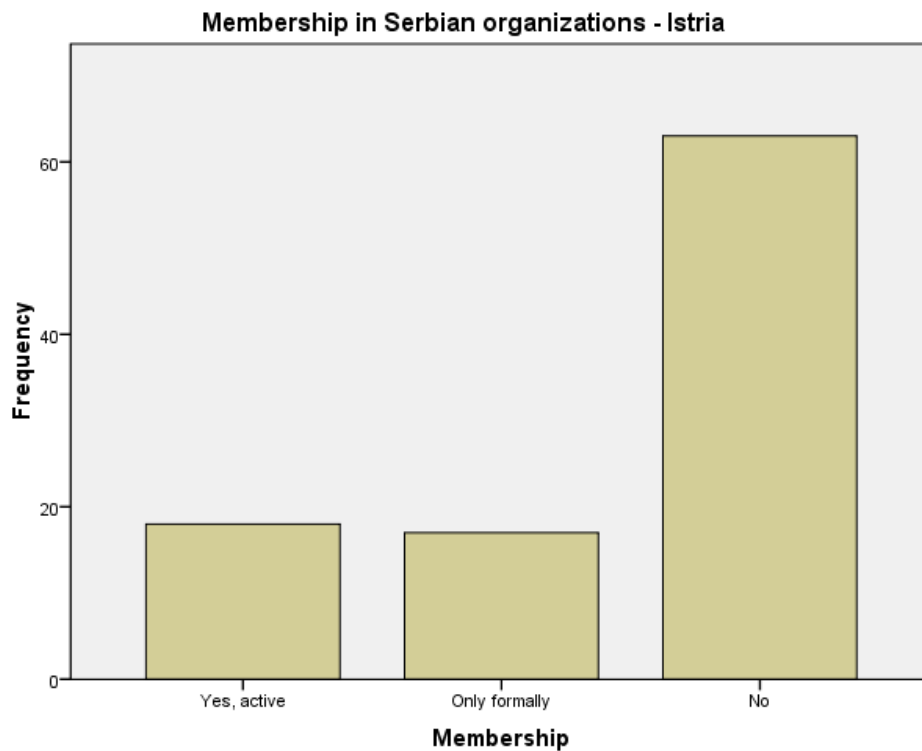
The level of education for the Serbs in Istria is in line with the state's average, where most of the population possesses a secondary school degree. As it has been mentioned earlier, the sample was chosen and stratified according to the level of education, based on the 2001 Census of the population.

When looking at the graphical representation of the respondents' country of birth (See figure 4), it is immediately visible the high percentage (47%) of respondents born outside Croatia (mainly Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina). Although the percentage of respondents born in Croatia is slightly higher (53%), the obtained results confirm that Istria was mainly settled by Serbs coming from Serbia and/or Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Figure 4

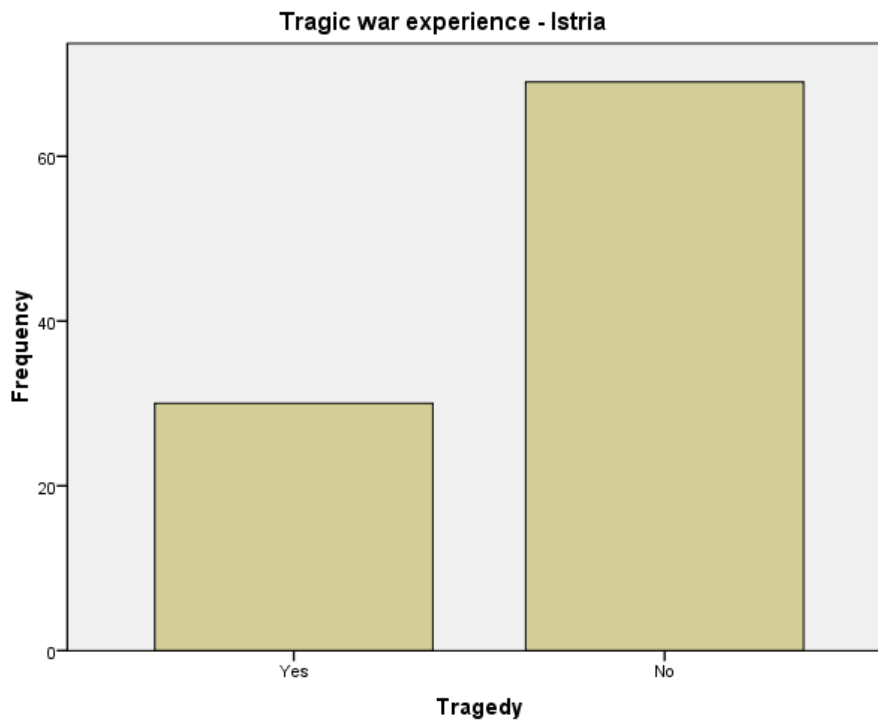


The participation of Serbs from Istria in the activities offered by the Serbian organizations in Croatia is a little disappointing (See Fig. 5), because only 18,4% of the respondents claim to be active members of some Serbian organization, while the majority is whether not a member (64,3%) or only a formal member (17,3%).

**Figure 5**

Since the region of Istria wasn't directly affected by the war in Croatia, it is not surprising the fact that most of the respondents from Istria (69,7%) claimed that they didn't experience any war correlated tragedy (See Fig. 6) The remaining percentage of those respondents who did experience a war tragedy can be ascribed to the fact that Istria hosted many refugees from the War affected area who chose to stay here even after the conflicts ended.

**Figure 6**

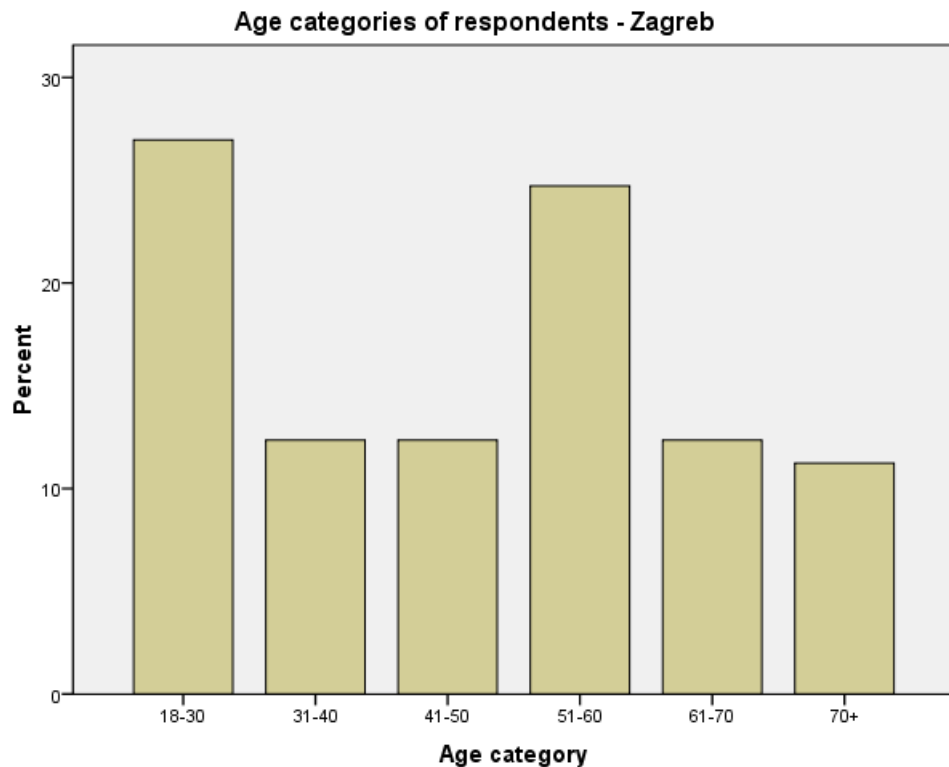


**b) City of Zagreb**

Differently from Istria, where the most predominant age category was 51-60, the respondents from Zagreb represent a younger population, making the age category 18-30 the most numerous one. This is logic due to the fact that Zagreb is the most important university center in Croatia, attracting young students from all over the country, but is also a big city that offers more job opportunities for graduates.

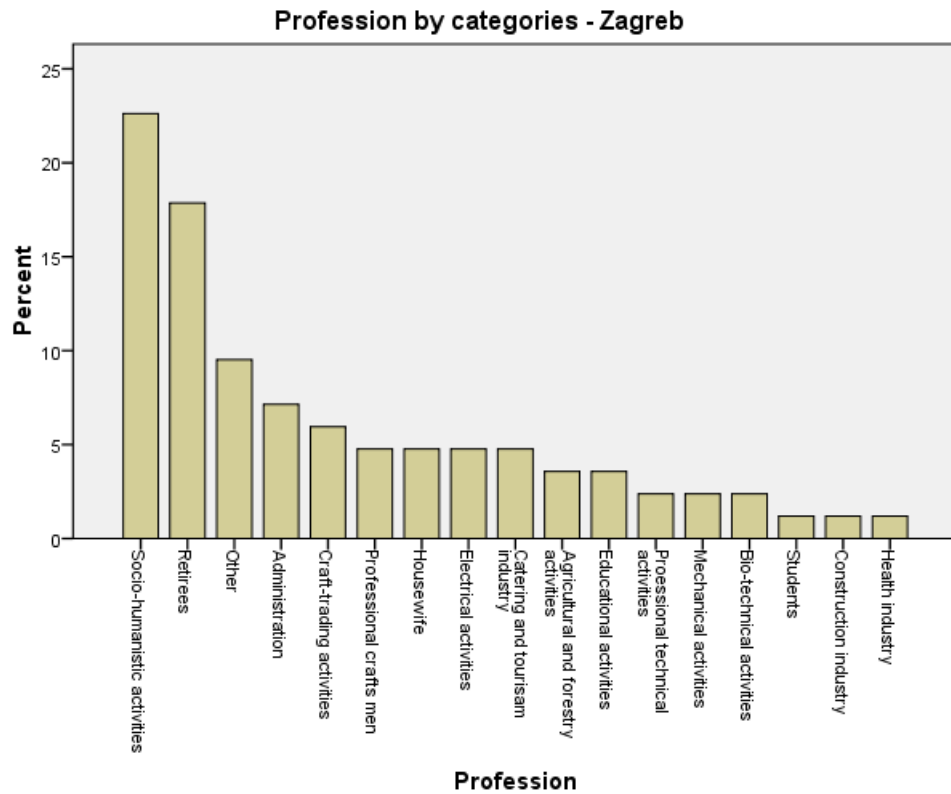


Fig. 7

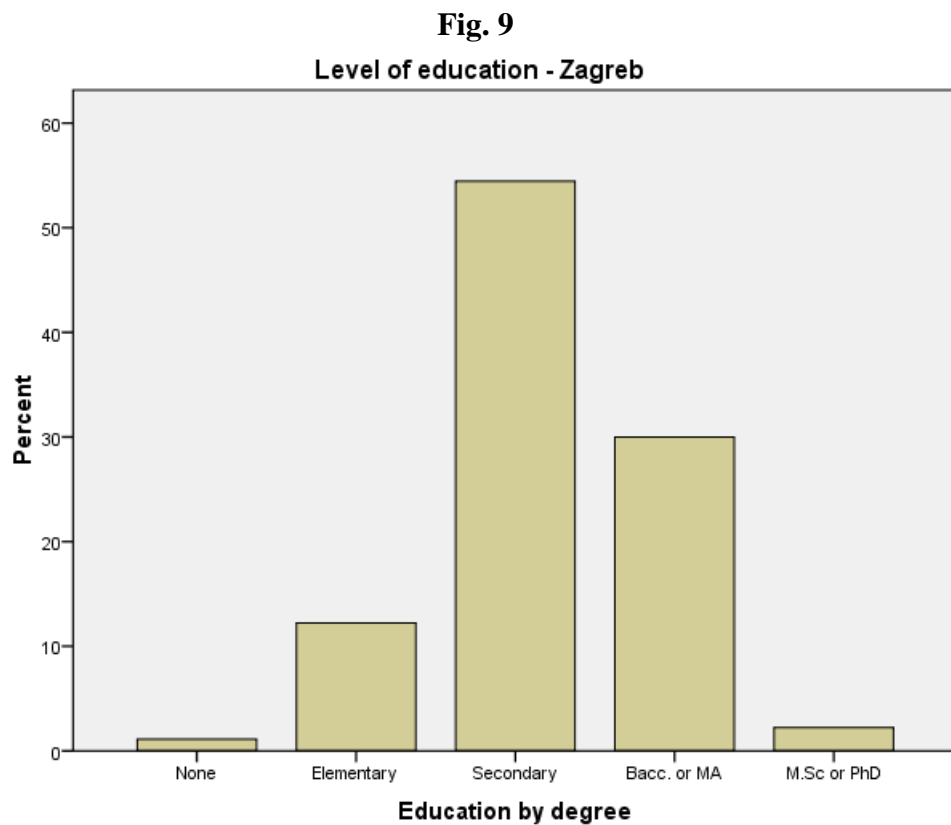


Regarding the profession of the respondents from Zagreb (See Fig. 8), the predominant category of profession is Socio-humanistic activities, which encompasses professions such as lawyers, economists and accountants. Aside from being the most important university center in the country, Zagreb also offers a broad range of job opportunities due to the presence of several administrative headquarters of private and public sector. This explains the highest number of employees in the category of Socio-humanistic activities rather than students, if we consider that the most predominant age category among the respondents was 18-30. Another reason for such a trend is also the fact that it is very common in Croatia for young people to study “part-time” and work full time at the same time.

**Fig. 8**

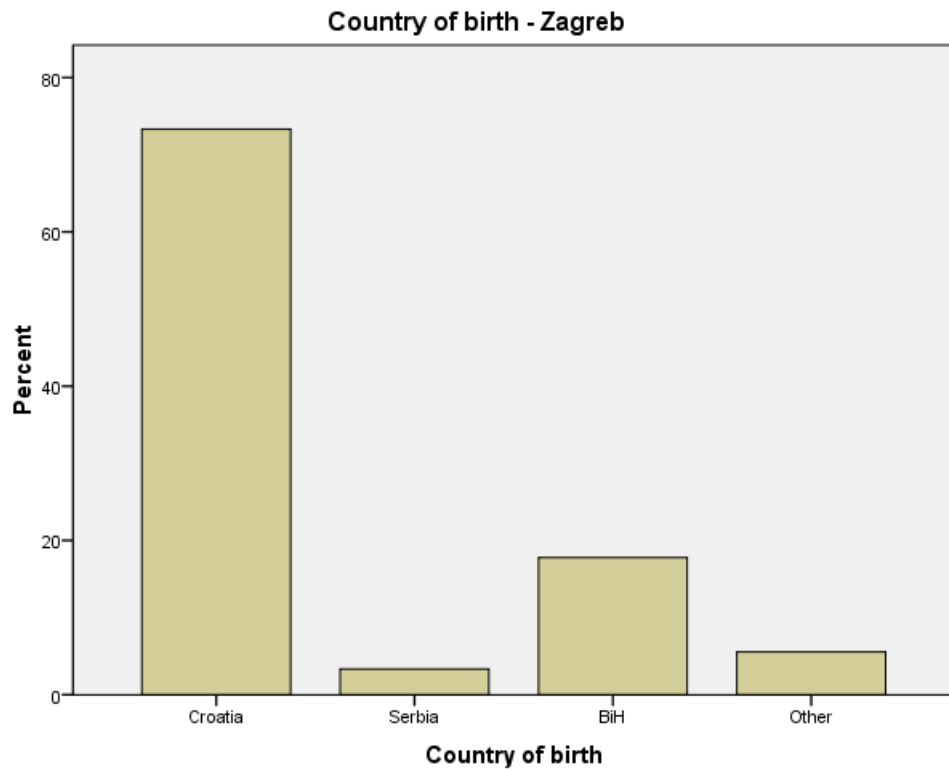


Concerning the respondents' level of education (See Fig. 9), it doesn't differ much from the results obtained in Istria. The most numerous category is the one representing secondary school graduates, followed by university graduates. The higher number and percentage of university graduates rather than elementary graduates (as was the case in Istria) reflects what has been previously said about the importance of Zagreb as an academic center.



Looking at the country of birth of the respondents from Zagreb (See Fig. 10), it is immediately visible that most of them were born in Croatia, while only a smaller part indicated Bosnia and Herzegovina or Serbia as their country of birth. This proves that most of the Serbs residing in Zagreb are not immigrants, but rather autochthonous, differently from their Istrian co-nationals, where almost half of the respondents stated a neighboring country of birth (whether Serbia or Bosnia and Herzegovina). It will be interesting to analyze whether there is a correlation between their country of birth and their national self-identification as we have seen in the previous case of Istria.

Fig. 10



Looking at the chart concerning the respondents' membership in Serbian organizations (See Fig. 11), it is immediately visible the higher percentage of those who claimed to be active members (41,1%) in comparison to the trend registered among the respondents from Istria. This can be attributed to the fact that Zagreb not only hosts a much larger Serbian community than Istria, but Zagreb is also the center of the major Serbian organizations present in Croatia, while Istria has only a few available.

Fig. 11



Another difference so far noted between the respondents from Istria and Zagreb is regarding their tragic war experience. As we have previously seen in Istria, the majority didn't experience any war-related tragedy, while in Zagreb 57,8% of the respondents had such an experience. Although Zagreb wasn't a badly affected by the war (it was lightly bombed during 2 occasions), the Serbs from Zagreb were violently harassed during the war by special paramilitary formations known as "Merčepovci" (after the name of their leader, Tomislav Merčep). They would usually take Serb civilians out their home during night to allegedly interrogate them, but they would never return home and usually would be found dead. If we add to this scenario also those Serbs who moved to Zagreb as refugees from war affected areas, then we can find the explanation of such a high percentage of respondents from Zagreb with a tragic war experience.

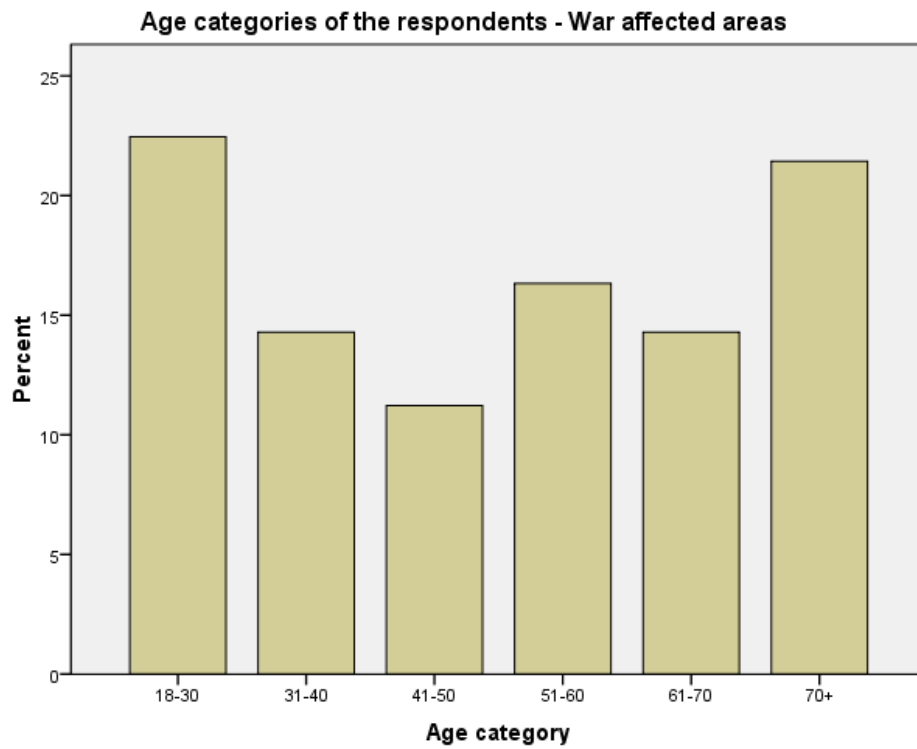
Fig. 12



### c) War affected area

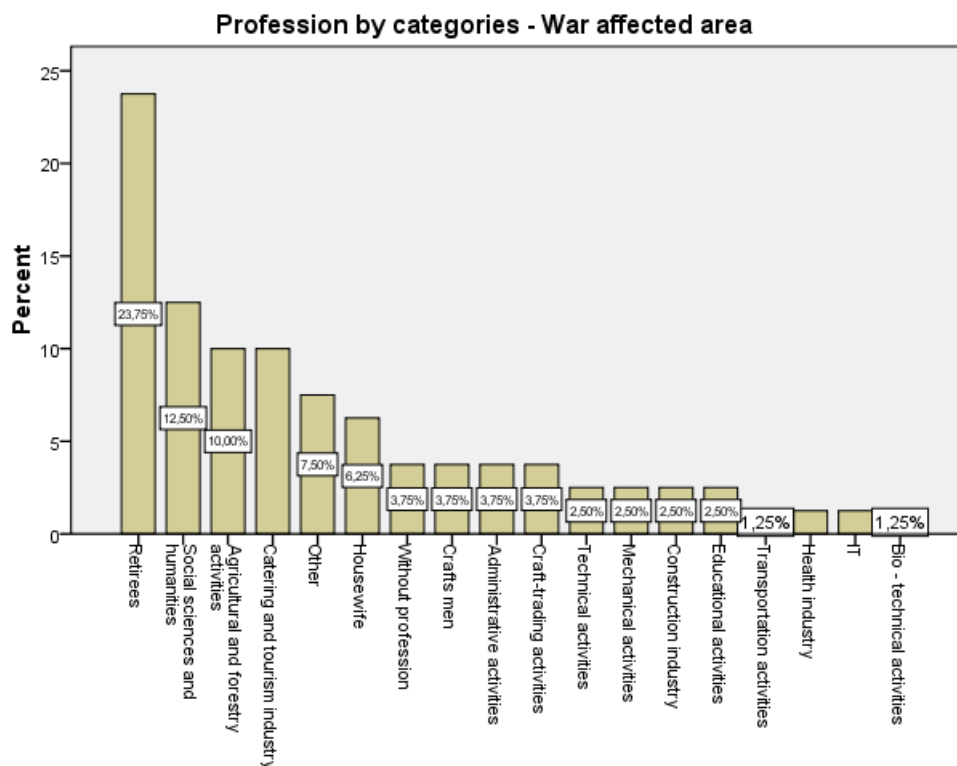
Looking at the age categories of the respondents from the War affected areas (See Fig. 13), the most predominant is the one including 18-30 (22%), immediately followed (21%) by the category 70+. This can be explained by the fact that most of the population left in these areas is elderly people, while the young generations are returnees from neighboring countries, who chose to return to their country of origin due to its better economic status, as well as due to the incentives offered by the Croatian state to the returnees.

**Fig. 13**



When looking at the professions of the respondents from the War affected area (See fig. 14), the category of retirees is the most numerous one, which is a logic result of the previous graph where the elderly age categories are more represented than the younger and middle-age ones.

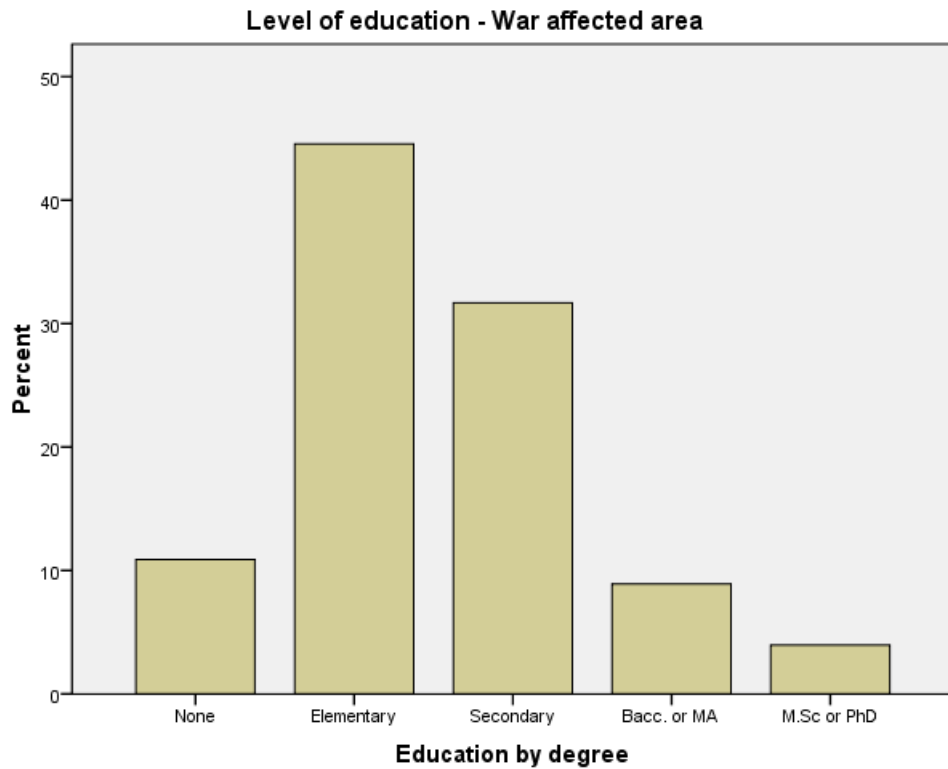
**Fig. 14**



The level of education of the respondents from the War affected area (See Fig. 15) is lower than the one registered in Istria and Zagreb, which is associated to the numerically significant older population living here and to the fact that this is a predominantly rural area, with a high “brain drain”. Since this area was widely affected also during World War II, most of the children at that time weren’t able to attend school and didn’t continue their education. Still today this area is the most precarious concerning level of education, development in general and infrastructure. This partly explains the differences between the War affected area, Zagreb and Istria.

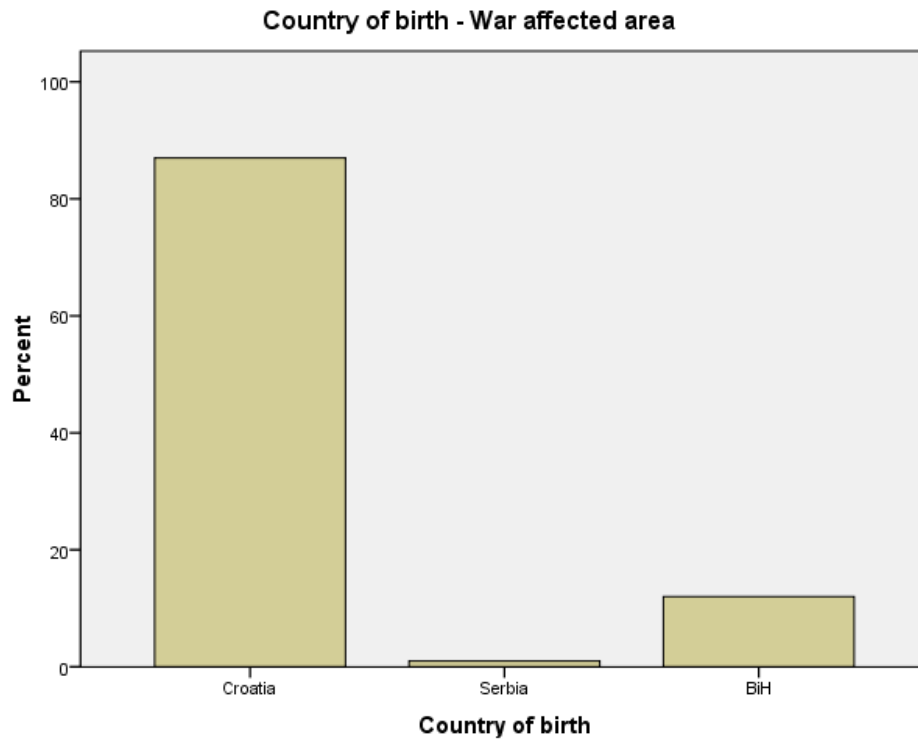


**Fig. 15**



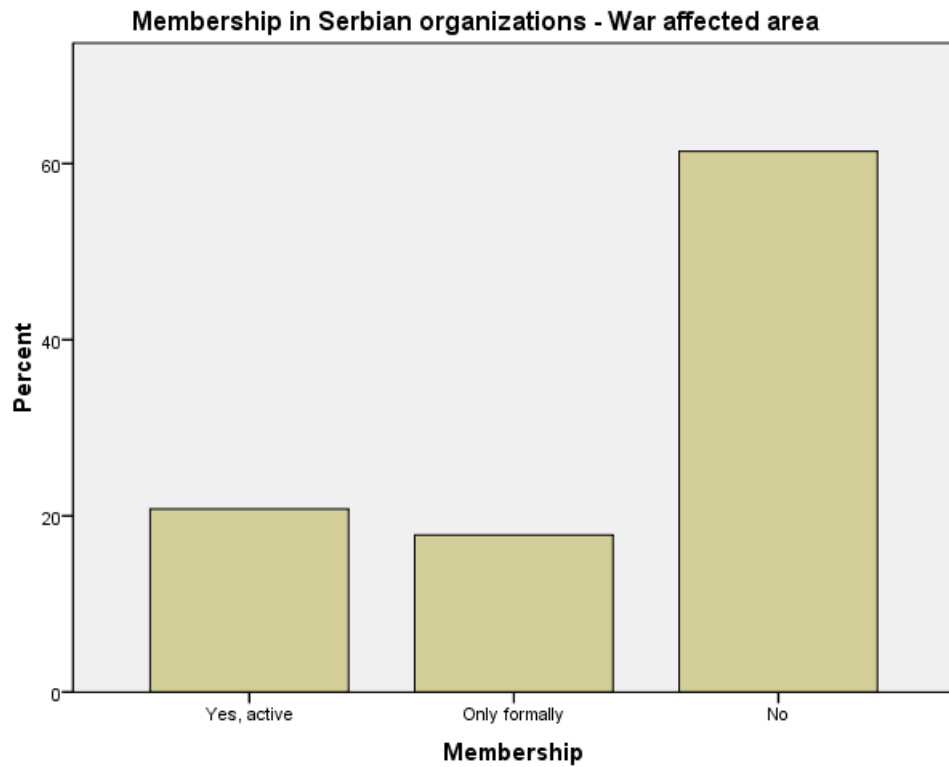
Most of the respondents from the War affected area indicated Croatia as their country of birth (See Fig. 16), and only in smaller share Bosnia and Herzegovina or Serbia. This reflects the characteristic of the Serb population living here, being this the area of their first settlement 500 years ago, making them the most numerous and autochthonous minority living in Croatia.

Fig. 16



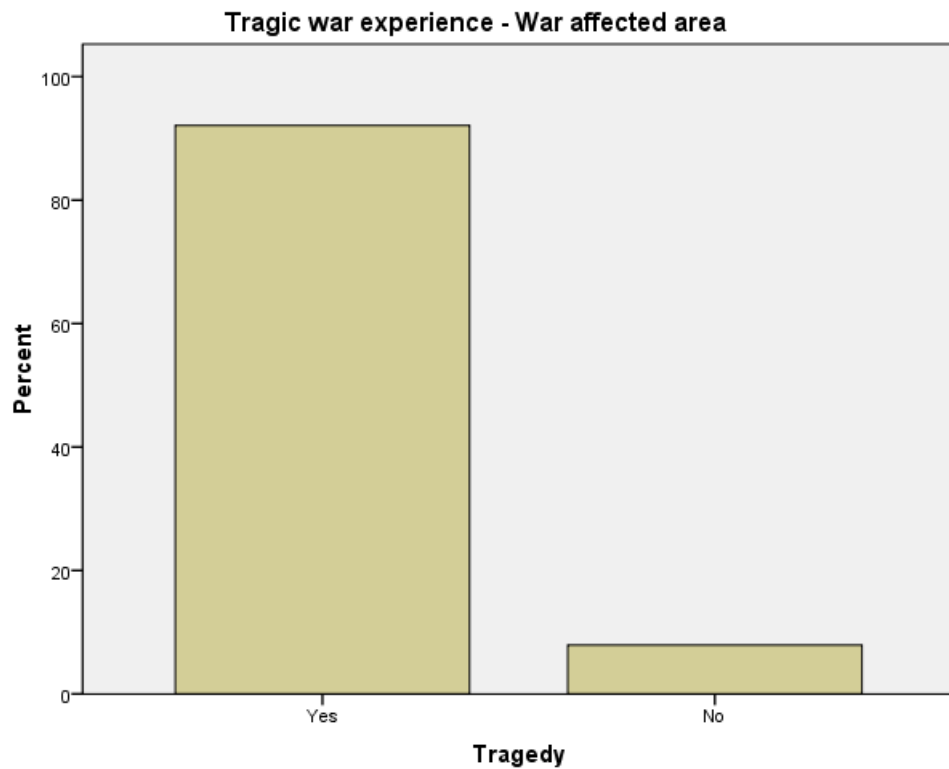
Curiously, a very similar trend to the one observed in Istria was also registered in the War affected area concerning membership in Serbian organizations (See Fig. 17): 61,4% of the respondents claimed not to be members of any Serbian organization in Croatia, 20,8% are active members and 17,8% are only formal members. It is difficult to find an explanation for such a trend, but one of the reasons could be the high percentage of elderly people registered among the respondents from both the areas, who are not able or not willing to participate in such activities.

**Fig. 17**



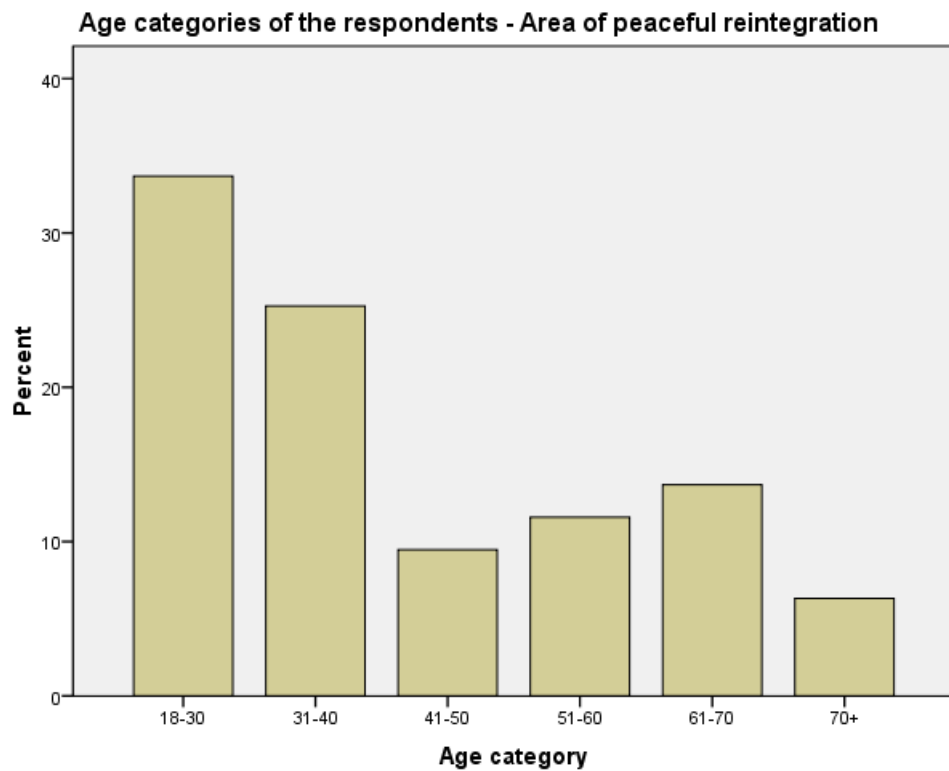
Since the War affected area was the scenario of violent and severe crimes against humanity during the war in Croatia, it is not surprising that the vast majority of the respondents from the War affected area (92,1%) indicated to have experienced a war-related tragedy (See Fig. 18).

Fig. 18



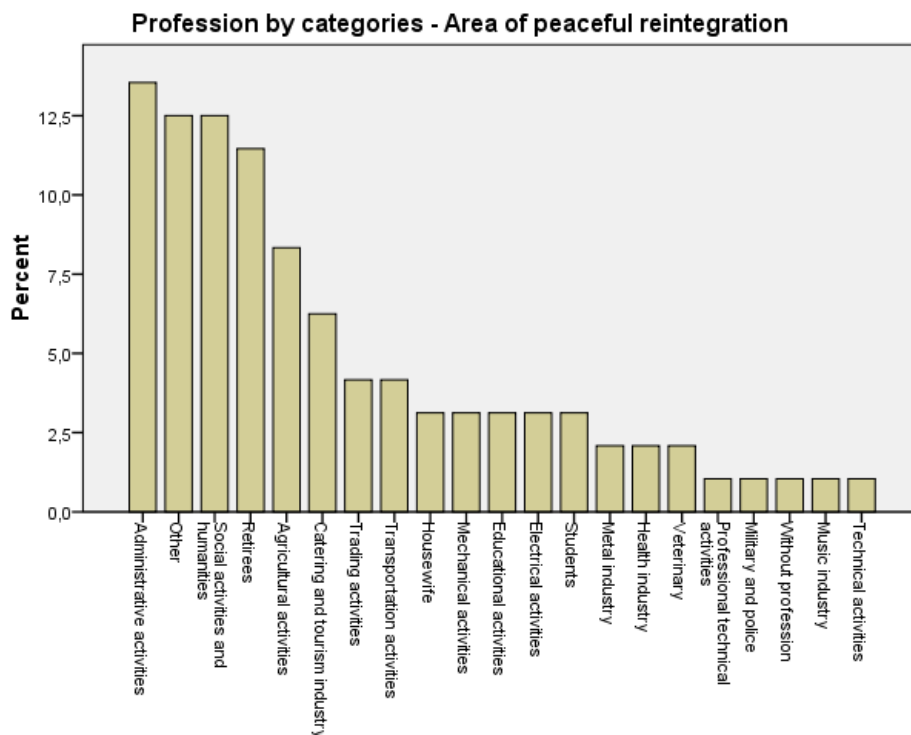
#### **d) Area of peaceful reintegration**

In the Area of peaceful reintegration, the most represented age category of the respondents is the 18-30, followed by the category of 31-40 (See Fig.19). This trend is similar to the one registered in Zagreb, which can be attributed to the similar conditions offered in this area: presence of urban centers with good educational and professional opportunities (the city of Osijek is the fourth largest city in Croatia).

**Fig. 19**

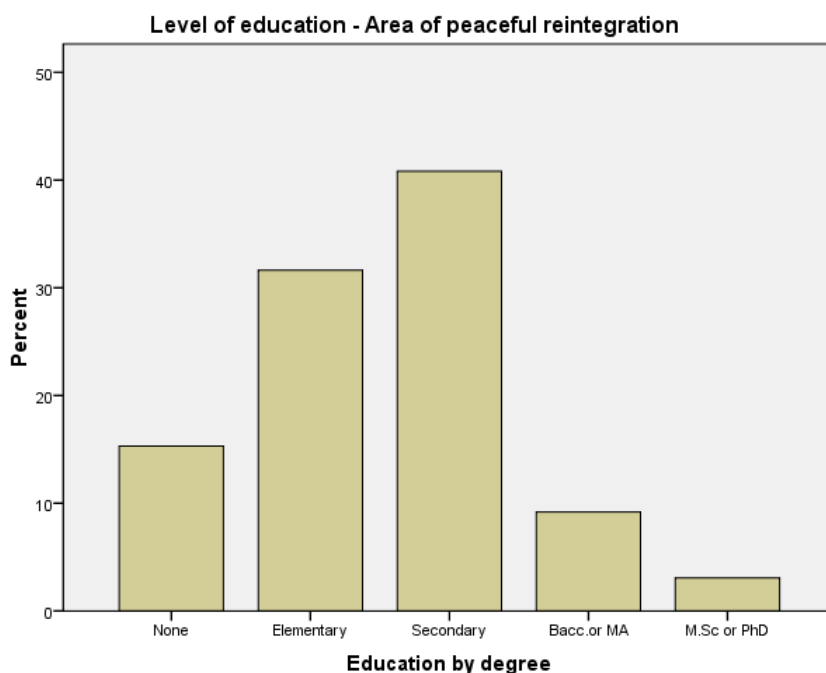
The professions of the respondents from the Area of peaceful reintegration (See Fig. 20) are very broad, with a slighter predominance of employees in the Administrative sector. As it has been seen so far among all the territories included in the research, the respondents' professions are various and there is not an absolute predominance of any category. This could be the result of the current world wide economic crisis and lack of available jobs, where people are compelled to accept any offered job on the market.

**Fig. 20**

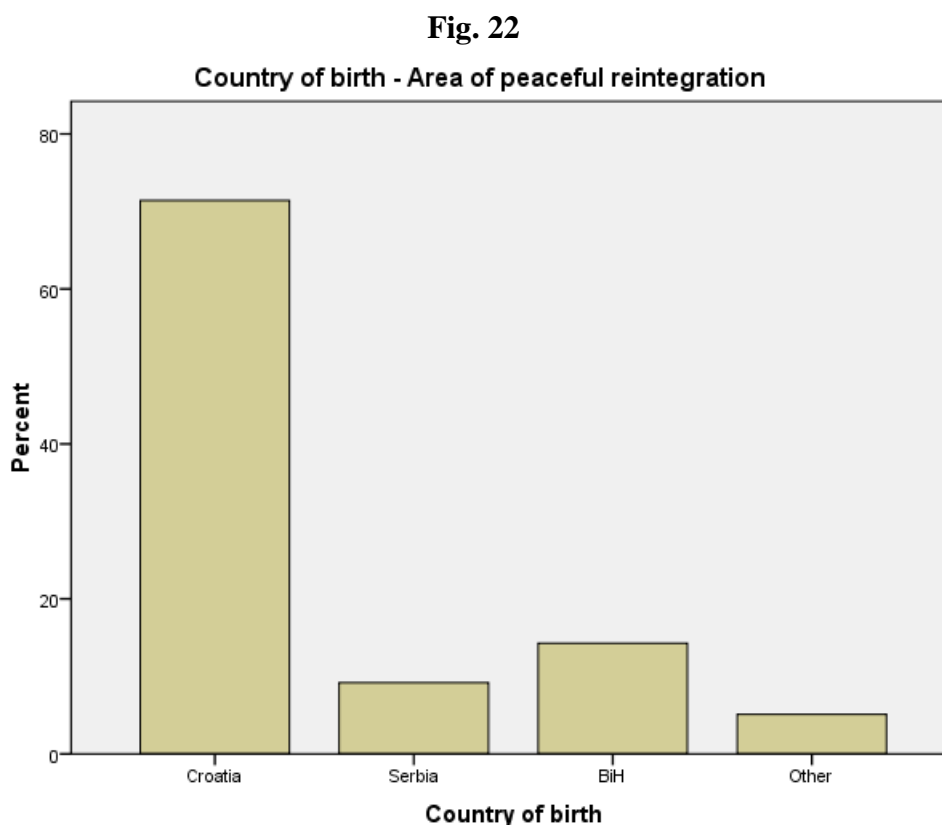


The level of education of the respondents from the Area of peaceful reintegration (See Fig. 21) is similar to the one registered among the respondents from Istria and Zagreb, who are predominantly secondary school graduates. However, the percentage of respondents without any education is quite significant (15%), as already seen in the previous section concerning the War affected area (11%).

**Fig. 21**

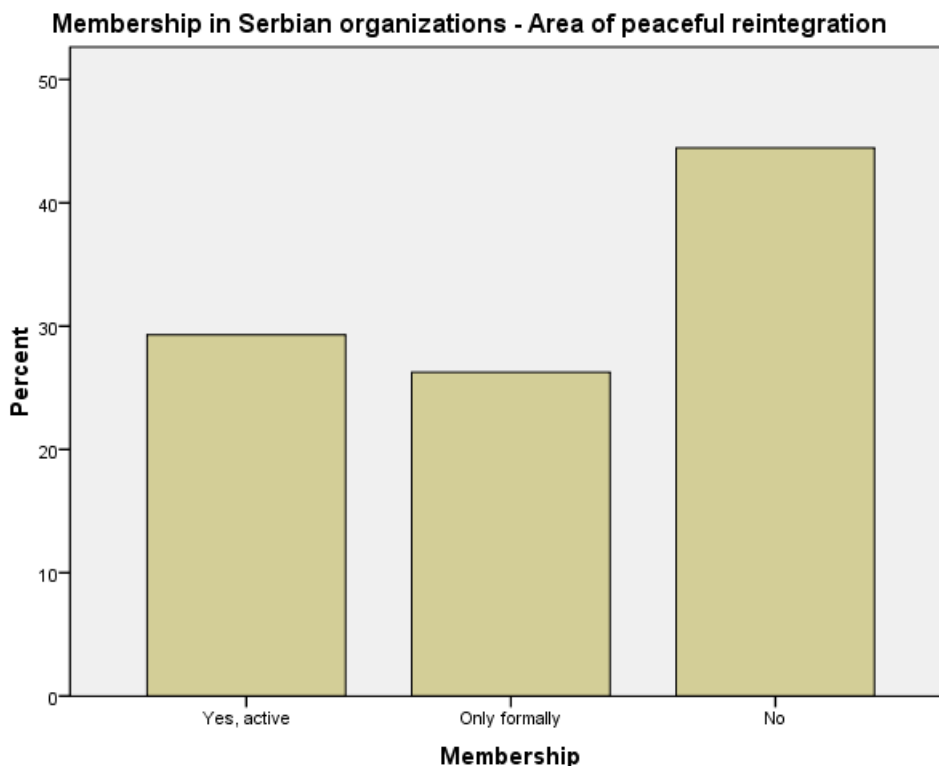


As registered so far among the respondents from all the territories, the majority of them indicated Croatia as their country of birth. The same trend is registered also in the Area of peaceful reintegration (See Fig. 22), where 71% of the respondents were born in Croatia, while only a smaller percentage in Bosnia and Herzegovina (14%) or Serbia (9%). This is curious if we consider that this area is a borderland adjacent both to Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. But due to the fact that it encompasses urban centers such as Osijek and Vukovar with good hospital facilities, it makes it unnecessary to give birth in a neighboring country.



The respondents from the Area of peaceful reintegration are similar to the ones from Zagreb if looking at their membership in Serbian organizations (See Fig. 23): a total of 55,6% are engaged in such activities (out of which 29,3% actively and 26,3% only formally). This can be explained, as in the case of Zagreb, by the large number of Serbian organizations present on the territory and also by the numerically strong Serbian community living there.

Fig. 23

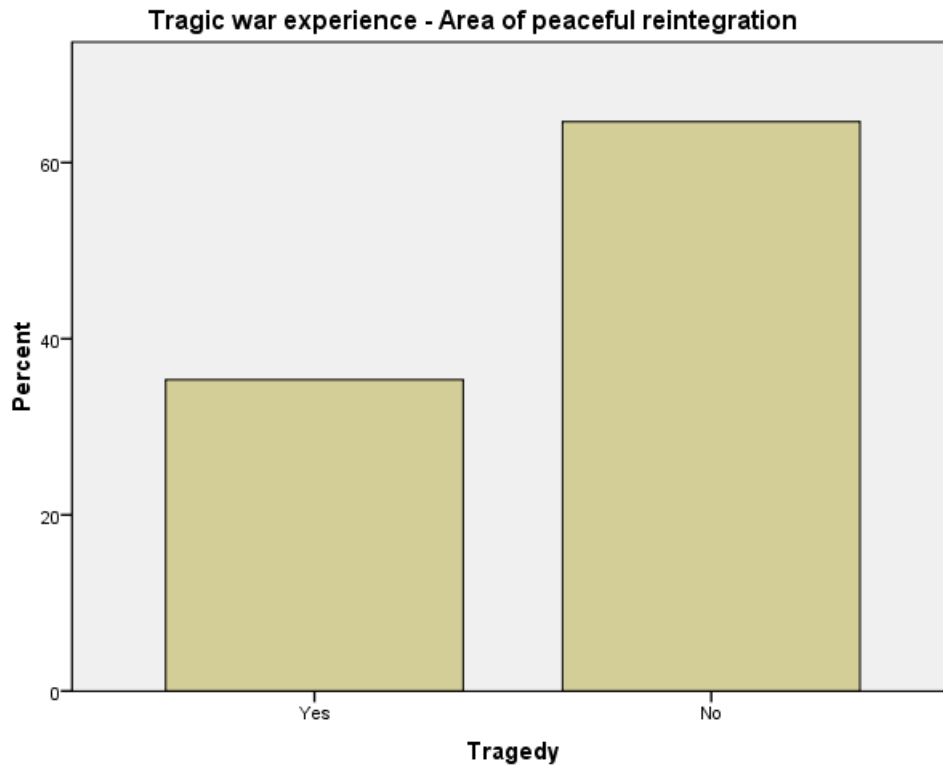


Although the Area of peaceful reintegration was directly affected by the war, with severe violence and losses, the majority of the respondents from this territory (64,6%) didn't experience a war-related tragedy. This is very similar to the trend registered among the respondents from Zagreb, probably because the Serbs from the Area of peaceful reintegration also experienced rather isolated and almost hidden violences during the war, contrary to what happened in the War affected areas where the Croatian military and para military formations committed organized actions of ethnic cleansing on behalf of the Serb population. Additionally, the Area of peaceful reintegration was conquered at the beginning of the war in Croatia by the Yugoslav People's Army who supported the local Serb rebels and successively passed them the authority over this area until when the area was peacefully reintegrated into Croatia's territory. These events made it possible to avoid a large-scale



persecution of the local Serbs in this area and as a consequence to decrease the possibility of a tragic war experience, which isn't the case for the Croatian population living here during the war.

**Fig. 24**



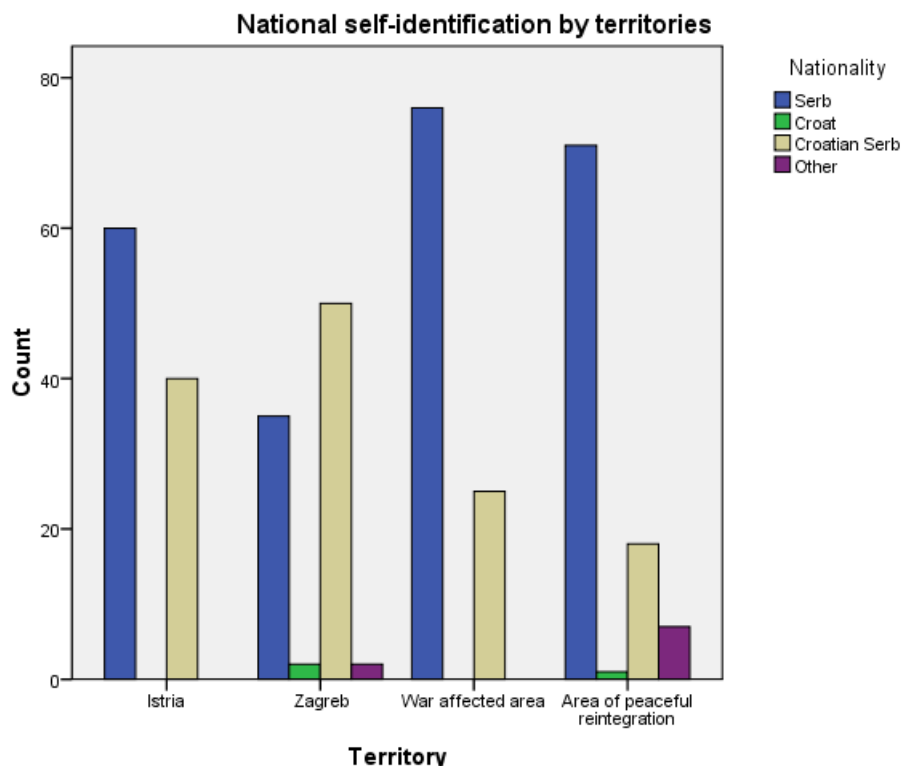
### 5.3.1 Cross-territorial comparison of the respondents' attitudes

In the previous section a statistical description of some general characteristic (demographic and social) of the respondents per territory has been made, which served as an introduction to the characteristics of the population sample used in the research. As seen so far, each territory has its own peculiarities and shares differences and similarities with the other chosen territories. This section will analyze the respondents' attitudes toward the questions (from the questionnaire) that are relevant to the objectives of the research. The previous section represented the independent set variables, while the attitudes studied in this section represent the set dependent variables in this research that will be used for ulterior analysis and comparison in the following sections. The analysis of the respondents' attitudes will also help to verify the set hypotheses in this research, as well as to provide answers to the set research questions.

One of the key questions present in the questionnaire is definitely the one interrogating the respondents about their national self-identification: "*Which of the following categories describe you best?*" and the offered possibilities were *a) Serb; b) Croat; c) Croatian Serb; d) Other (indicate which)*. It was decided to ask the question in such a way to avoid any reference to concepts of "national", "nationality", "identity", "ethnic", "minority" and any other that might influence the attitudes of the respondents or mislead them in any way. Although all the respondents belong to the Serb minority in Croatia, it doesn't automatically mean that they identify as Serbs: as we have seen in the previous chapter, one's sense of belonging to a certain nation and therefore one's national identity is an extremely personal and individual choice.

In the following chart (See Fig. 25) are expressed the respondents' answers regarding their national self-identification, divided by territories.

Fig. 25



As it is visible, the category of “Serb” was chosen by most of the respondents (62,5% of the total) and it was the dominant category in all the studied territories, with the only exception of Zagreb. The category of “Croatian Serb” was chosen by the 34,4% of the respondents, 2,3% opted for “Other”, and only 0,8% self-identify as “Croats”.<sup>98</sup>

In Istria, 60%<sup>99</sup> of the respondents have identified themselves as “Serbs” rather than “Serbs from Croatia”(40%), while none of the respondents chose the given category of “Croat” or “Other”.

Looking at the bar representing the answers from Zagreb, it is immediately visible the predominance of those who identify themselves as “Croatian Serbs” (56,2%) rather than

<sup>98</sup> These percentages refer to the total of responses.

<sup>99</sup> These percentages refer within the territory, not of the total.

“Serbs”(39,3%), as well as the presence of the category “Croat” (2,2%), which was chosen only by the respondents from Zagreb and the Area of peaceful reintegration.

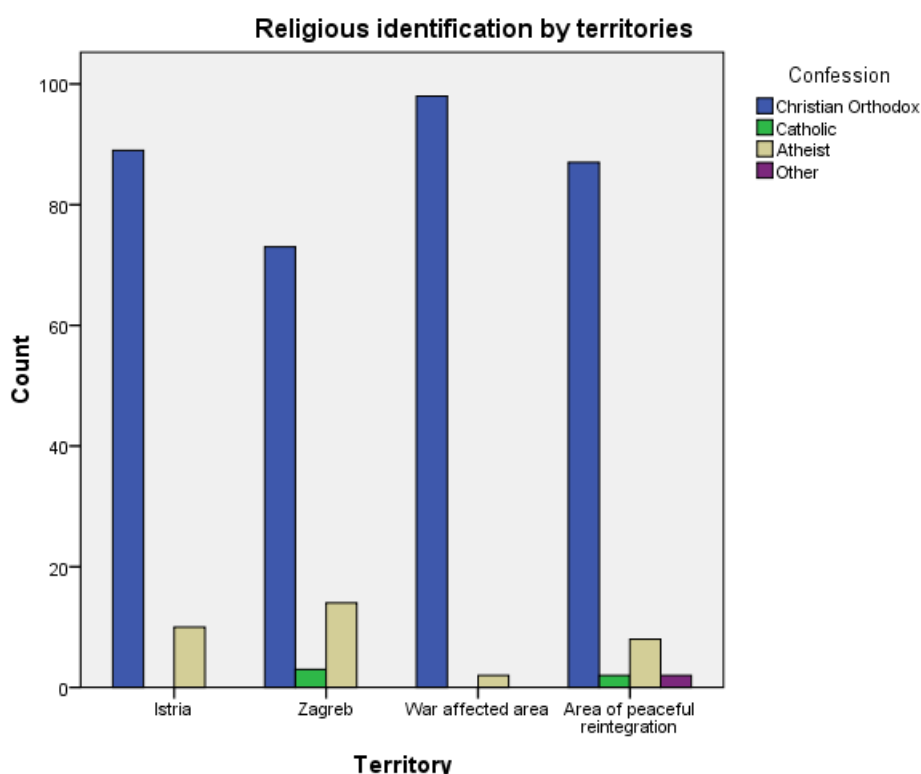
The highest percentage of “Serbs”(75,2%) was registered among the respondents from the War affected area, followed by 24,8% of “Croatian Serbs”, while the categories of “Croat” and “Other” are absent. This result is very similar to the one obtained in Istria while it is opposite to the trend registered in Zagreb. This is curious, if we consider that the Serbs from the War affected area share more similar characteristics to their co-nationals from Zagreb rather than to the ones in Istria. This trend can be explained to the fact that the Serbs from Zagreb assimilated over time due to the geographic distance from any “Serbian lands” or due to their personal choice (whether to avoid possible discrimination or to “fit in” easier); while the Serbs from War affected area are a historical, compact and numerous community with a highly enunciated national identity; and the Serbs from Istria still keep alive the heritage brought from their country of birth (Serbia or Bosnia and Herzegovina), or the ones of their parents.

The most predominant category in the national self-identification of the respondents from the Area of peaceful reintegration is “Serb” (73,2%), similarly to the result obtained in the War affected area (75,2%), and 18,6% of them opted for “Croatian Serb”. However, it’s curious the presence of a small percentage of “Croats” (1%), just like it has been registered in Zagreb (2,2%). These are the only 2 territories where this category of national self-identification was chosen by the respondents, as well as the category of “Other”(7,2% in the Area of peaceful reintegration and 2,2% of in Zagreb), which encompasses Yugoslavians, Montenegrins, Bosniaks and Slovenes (these were the categories listed by the respondents under the section “Other”).

The following chart (See Fig. 26) will illustrate the religious identification of the respondents by territories. Although it is a common belief that the Serbs are exclusively of Christian Orthodox

faith, which is the major factor that differentiate them from the Croats (who are Catholics), this important part of one's identity couldn't only be *a priori* assumed without a confirmation from the respondents. So following the question "What is your religion?", 4 possibilities were given: a) *Christian Orthodox*; b) *Catholic*; c) *Atheist*; d) *Other (indicate which)*.

Fig. 26



As it can be easily noted, in every territory the category of "Christian Orthodox" is the most represented, counting 89,4% of the total on the whole sample, followed by 8,8% of Atheists, 1,3% of Catholics and 0,5% of Others.

The vast majority of Serbs living in Istria consider themselves to be Christian Orthodox (89,9%), while only 10,1% of respondents identify as Atheists. It is surprising that the given category of Catholic wasn't chosen by anyone, which means that the Serbs in Istria didn't assimilate and kept their original religious confession.

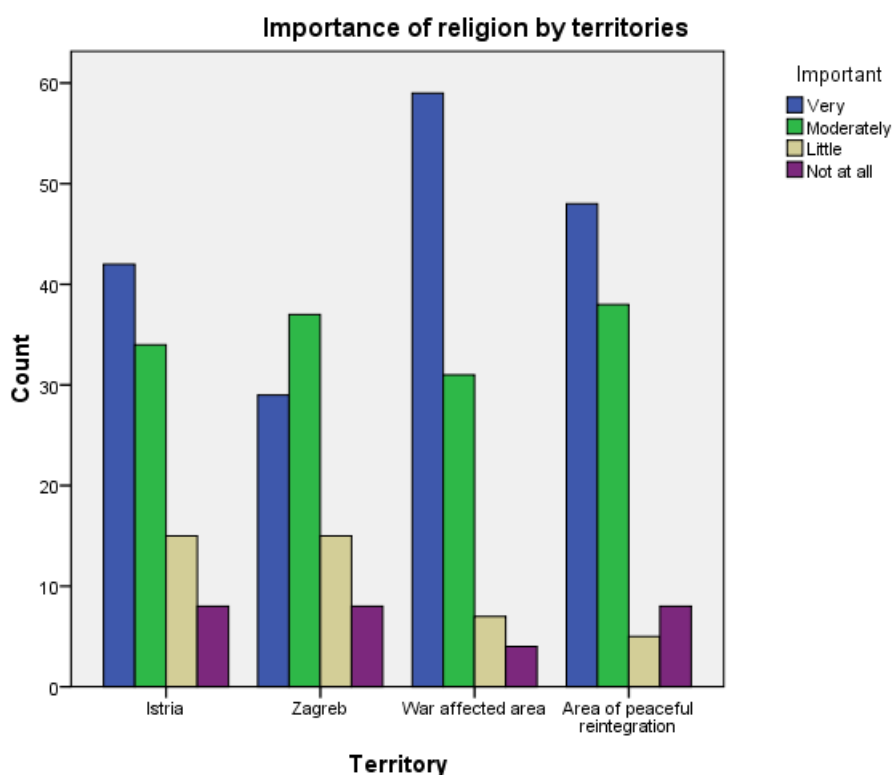
Among the respondents from Zagreb, the predominant category is the one of Christian Orthodox faith (81,1%). The result is very close to the one obtained for Istria (89%), which is very interesting if we consider the differences noted so far (especially regarding national self-identification and country of birth). Differently from Istria, where the category of “Catholic” wasn’t chosen by anyone, a minor percentage (3,3%) of respondents from Zagreb indicated it as their religious confession. This can be related to the previously seen low percentage (2,2%) of respondents from Zagreb who self-identified as “Croats”. Zagreb has also the highest percentage of Atheists (15,6%) among its respondents.

The War affected area has the highest percentage of Christian Orthodox (98%), with only a smaller percentage of Atheists (2%), and not any Catholics. This trend is also very similar to the one registered among the respondents from Istria, rather than the ones from Zagreb.

The Area of peaceful reintegration also registered a high percentage of Christian Orthodox (87,9%) 8,1% of Atheists, 2% of Catholics and 2% of Other. Only the respondents from Zagreb and from the Area of peaceful reintegration chose the category of “Catholic”, which is absent among the respondents of the other 2 territories (Istria and War affected area). The category of “Other” was chosen only in this area, but the answer was missing (the respondents didn’t provide an alternative answer) so it is difficult to foresee what it could be. But since the percentage is quite insignificant (2% within the territory, and 0,5% of total), it can’t influence the overall results.

After the analysis of these two aspects of Serb identity in Croatia (the national and the religious), which are treated as dependent variables<sup>100</sup>, the next chart (See Fig. 27) will illustrate the importance of religion for the respondents on an individual level.<sup>101</sup>

**Fig. 27**



The majority of the respondents (45,9% of the total) feel that religion is very important for them, 36,1% feel that is moderately important, 10,8% find it little important, and 7,2% thinks it's not important at all. The respondents from all the territories, with the only exception of those from Zagreb, found religion to be very important.

<sup>100</sup> In the next sections a correlation between different variables will follow in order to identify which factors influence the variables of national self-identification and the variable of religious identification.

<sup>101</sup> The question was "How important is religion for you?", and the offered scale consisted in "Very important", "Moderately important", "Little important" and "Not important at all".

In Istria 42,4% of the respondents feel that religion is very important, 34,3% find it moderately important, 15,2% find it little important and 8,1% think that it is not important at all.

Zagreb registered a different trend: the majority of the respondents (41,6%) find religion to be moderately important rather than very important (32,6%); 16,9% find it little important and 9% don't find it important at all.

The War affected area registered the highest percentage of respondents who find religion to be very important (58,4%), while 30,7% find it moderately important, 6,9% think it is little important, and 4% find it not important at all.

The Area of peaceful reintegration registered the second highest percentage of those who claim religion is very important (48,5%), followed by 38,4% of those who find it moderately important, the least registered percentage (5,1%) of those who think it's a little important and 8,1% of the respondents think just like the ones in Istria, that religion for them is not important at all.

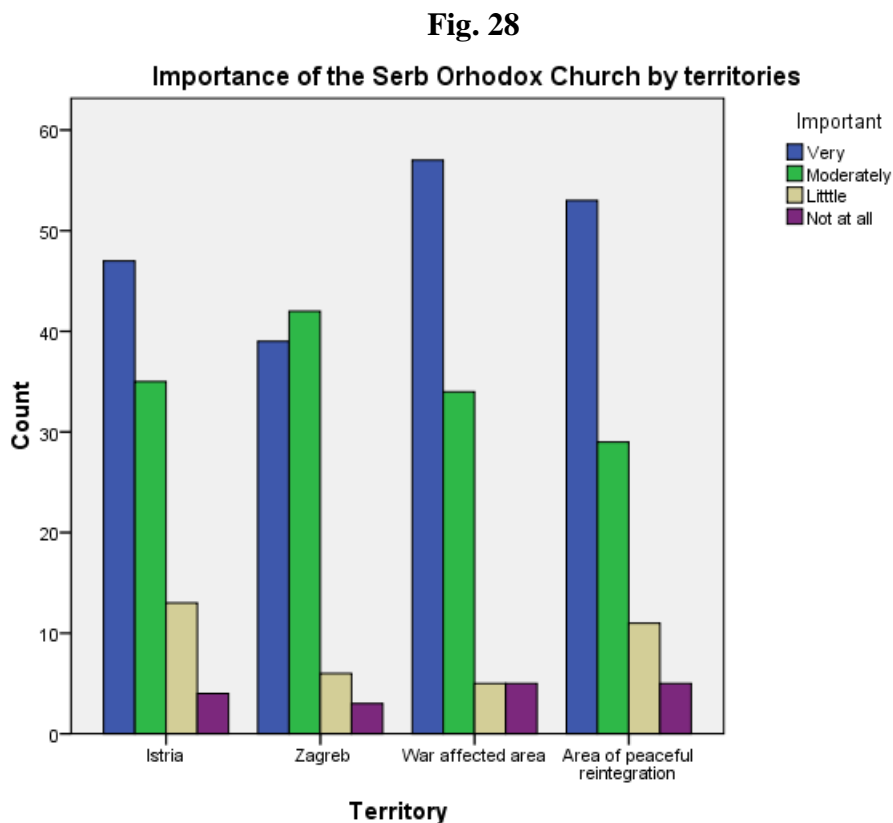
As already explained in the previous chapters, Serbs have their national church called Serbian Orthodox Church, whose jurisdiction reaches wherever there are significantly numerous Serb communities. Differently from the universality of the Catholic Church, the Orthodox Church has a rather national character<sup>102</sup> due to variations in style depending on country of origin, or local custom, or both. The role of the Serbian Orthodox Church in preserving Serb national identity during the centuries is indisputable, but it is uncertain how its role is seen today. In order to understand the respondents' attitudes toward the Serbian Orthodox Church in Croatia and its present importance, the following question was addressed in the questionnaire: *"How important for you is the role of the Serbian Orthodox Church in preserving Serbian national identity in*

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<sup>102</sup> Beside the Serbian Orthodox Church, there are also the Albanian Orthodox Church, the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, the Georgian Orthodox Church, the Greek Orthodox Church, the Russian Orthodox Church, the Romanian Orthodox Church, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, and the self-proclaimed Macedonian and Montenegrin Orthodox Churches.



*Croatia?*”. The respondents’ answers can be seen in the following chart (See Fig. 28), where they have been divided per territories and values.



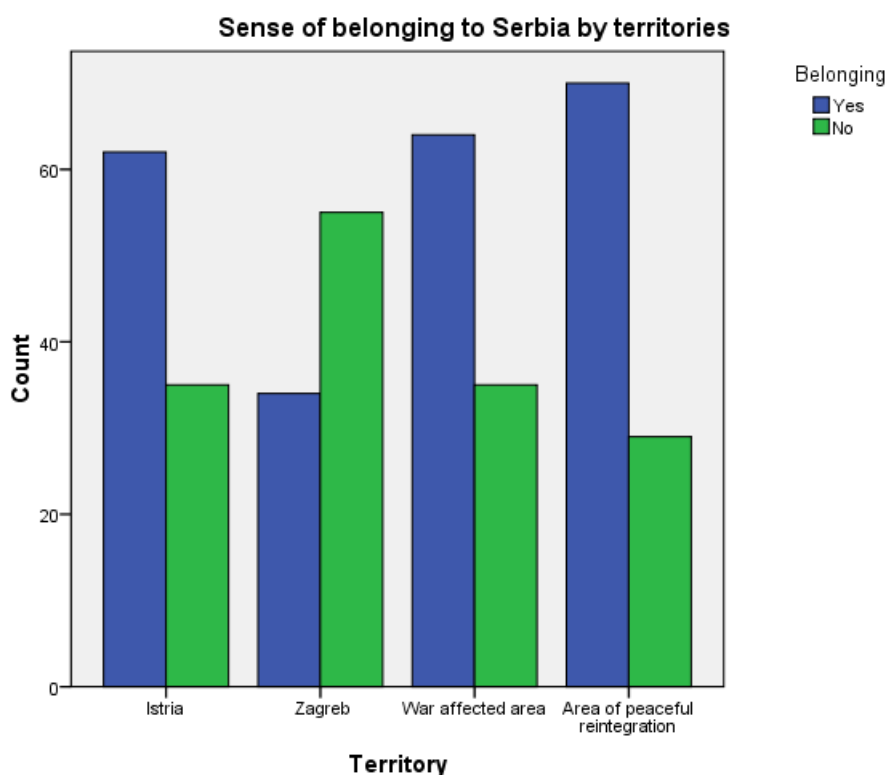
Half of the respondents (50,5%) find very important the role of the Serbian Orthodox Church in preserving Serbian national identity in Croatia, 36,1% find it moderately important, 9% think its role is little important, while 4,4% doesn’t find it important at all. Zagreb is the only territory with a slighter predominance of those who find it moderately important (46,7%) rather than very important (43,3%). The War affected area has shown once again the highest percentage of those who find the Serbian Orthodox Church to be very important (56,4%), followed by the Area of peaceful reintegration with 54,1%.

Although now Croatia is the homeland of the Serbs living here, taking the place of Yugoslavia after its dissolution, it is also a matter of fact that Serbia is their country of origin (whether they were born in Croatia or emigrated from Bosnia and Herzegovina or Serbia). In order to find out if there is

any kind of attachment to Serbia 20 years after the end of the conflicts, and how the Serbs of Croatia perceive their country of origin, the following question was addressed in the questionnaire:

*“Do you feel any sense of belonging to the Republic of Serbia?”* (See Fig. 29).

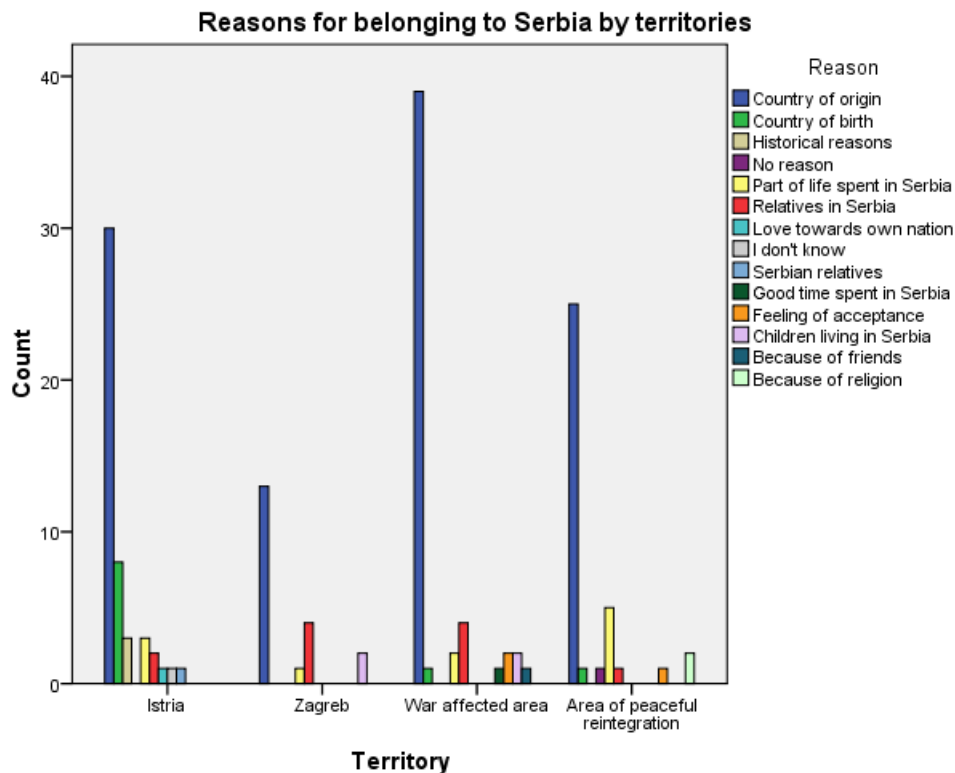
**Fig. 29**



Surprisingly, 59,9% of the overall respondents feel a sense of belonging to Serbia, especially in the Area of peaceful reintegration (70,7%), while 61,8% of the respondents from Zagreb don't feel any connection to Serbia.

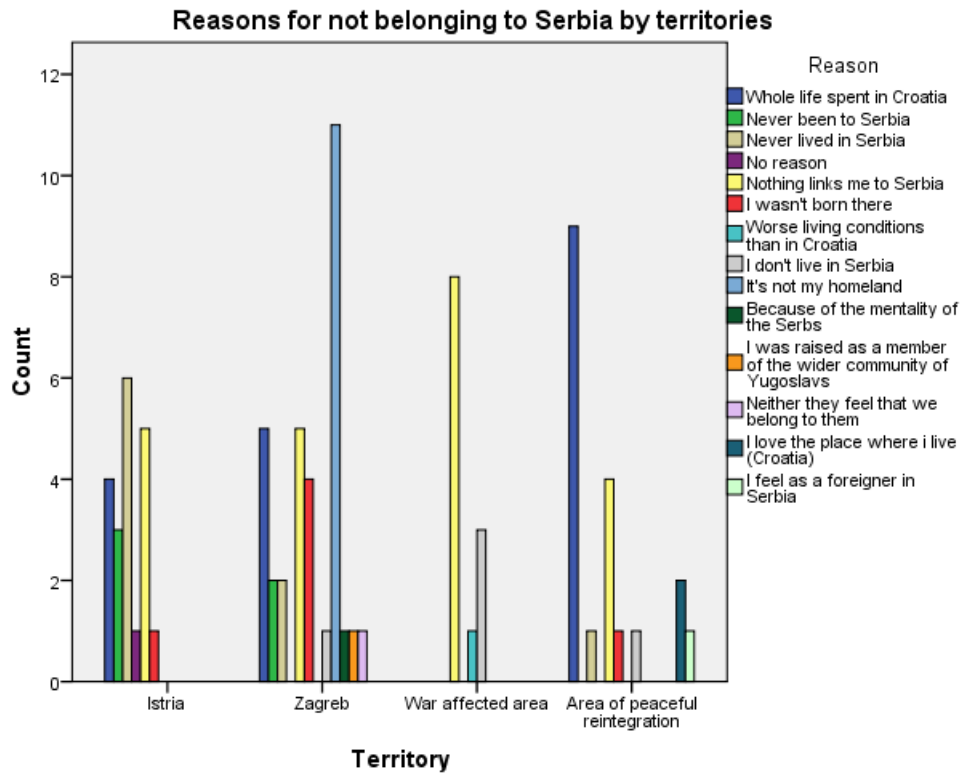
Additionally to the asked question (see above), the respondents were also asked to justify their answer by indicating a reason (See Fig. 30). The most frequent given reason in all the territories for feeling a sense of belonging to Serbia was *“because Serbia is my/our country of origin”* (68,2% of the total). This provides an interesting acknowledgement concerning also Serbian national self-awareness in Croatia: Serbs are aware of their origin and consider Serbia to be their country of origin, regardless of their autochthony in the land they live now.

Fig. 30



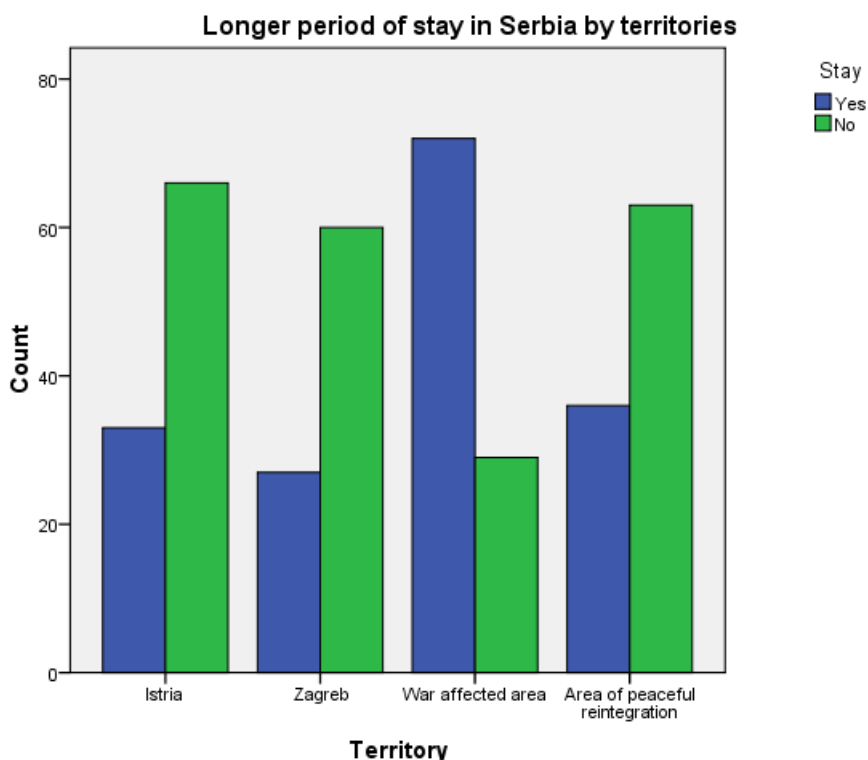
The given reasons for not belonging to Serbia (See Fig. 31) were more widely spread than the previous ones, resulting in lower percentage of the predominance of the most frequent given reason: 26,2% of the total respondents indicated that they didn't feel any sense of belonging to Serbia *"because nothing ties to me Serbia"*. The answers given by the respondents are not territorially heterogeneous as the previous ones, resulting in different reasons predominating in each territory. The most visible and numerically significant reason is the one given in Zagreb: *"It (Serbia) is not my homeland"* (33,3% within territory).

Fig. 31



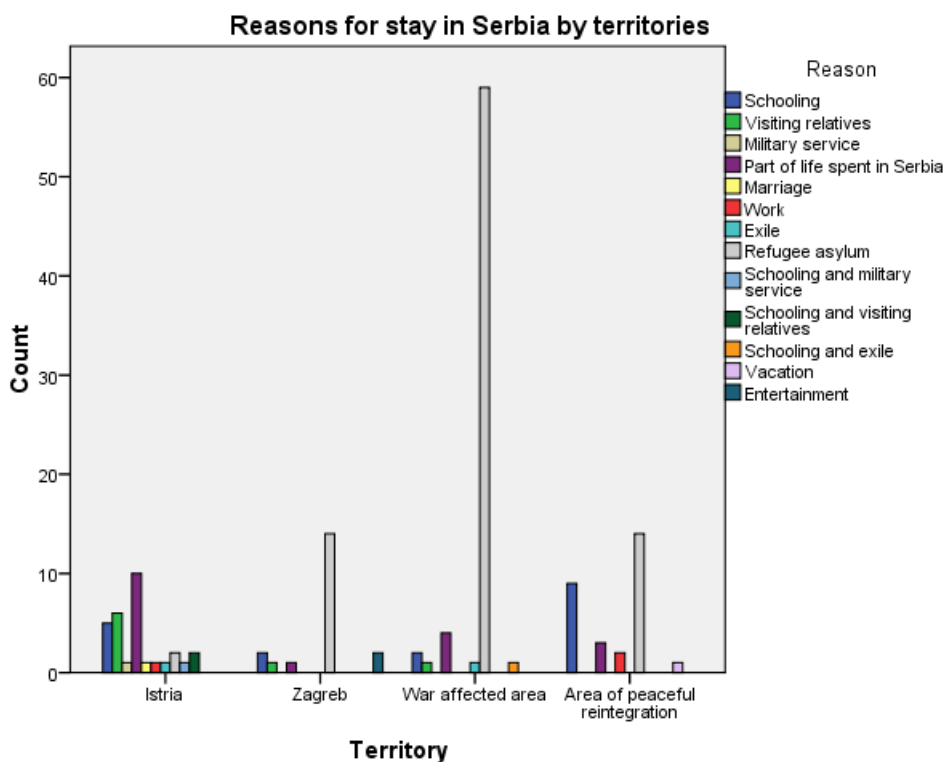
Another useful information that needed to be gathered in order to further understand some aspects concerning the Serbs from Croatia is whether they spent or not a longer period of time in Serbia (See Fig. 32). A little more than half of the total of the respondents, 56,5%, answered negatively. The only territory with the majority of respondents claiming to have spent longer periods of time in Serbia is the War affected area with 71,3%.

Fig. 32



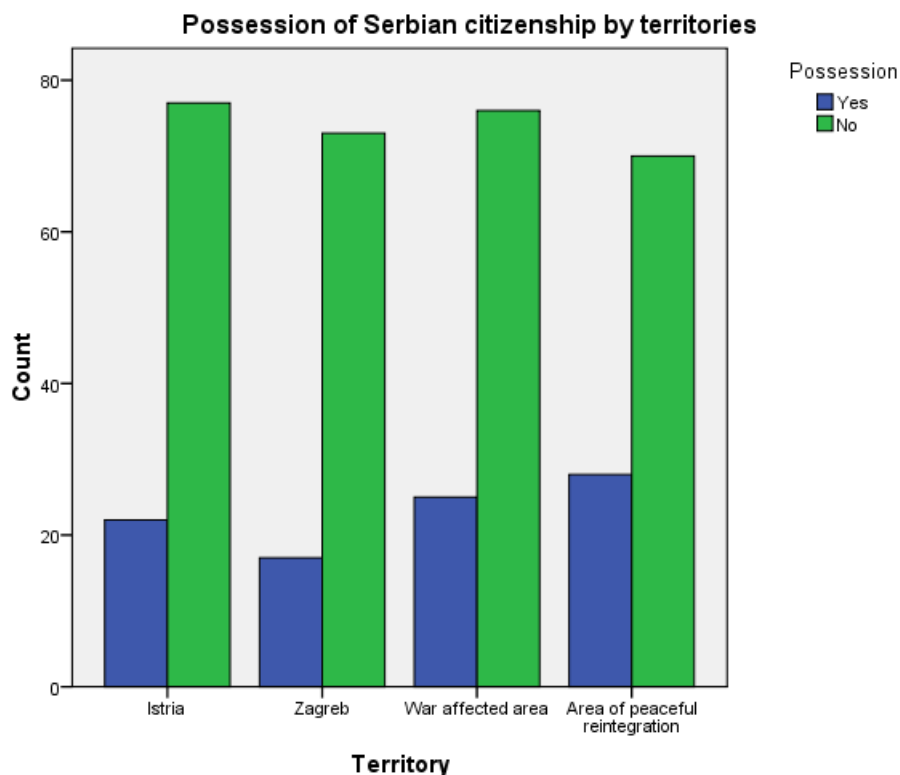
In order to further understand the nature of their stay in Serbia, the respondents were asked to give a reason (See Fig. 33). The majority of them, 60,5% indicated “*refugee asylum*” as the main reason for their stay in Serbia. This is not surprising if we look at the chart and see that 86,8% of the respondents from the War affected area found asylum in Serbia as refugees, as well as the majority of them from Zagreb and the Area of peaceful reintegration. Only in Istria the predominant given reason is “*Part of life spent in Serbia*”, which corresponds to the background of its respondents, being mainly immigrants from Serbia.

Fig. 33



Since the Croatian state allows the possession of a dual citizenship, it is not uncommon among minority members to have also the citizenship of their country of origin. Among the sample of this research, the majority of the respondents (76,3%) do not possess Serbian citizenship (see Fig. 34). This trend has been registered in all the territories; among those who have Serbian citizenship, the Area of peaceful reintegration shows a slighter predominance (28,6%), most probably due to its geographic vicinity to Serbia.

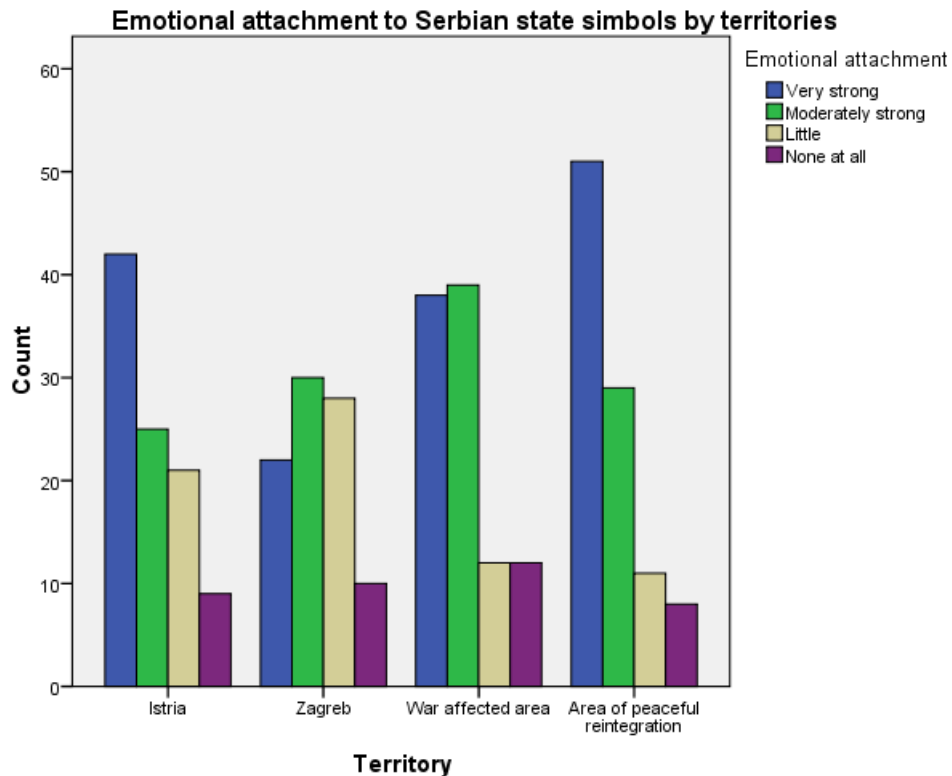
Fig. 34



Another aspect considered important in the process of understanding Serb national identity in Croatia is the degree of emotional attachment associated to state symbols, both Serbian and Croatian. The question asked in the questionnaire was “*How strong is your emotional attachment to the official state symbols of Serbia (ex. national flag and national anthem)?*” and four possible answers were offered: *a) Very; b) Moderately; c) Little; and d) Not at all.*

Concerning the degree of emotional attachment to Serbian state symbols (see Fig. 35), 39,5% of the total respondents claimed to have a very strong emotional attachment to these symbols. The highest percentage among these respondents was registered in the Area of peaceful reintegration (51,5%), followed by Istria (43,3%). A different trend was registered in Zagreb and the War affected area where a higher percentage of respondents opted for a moderately strong emotional attachment to Serbian state symbols (33,3% in Zagreb and 29,3% in the War affected area).

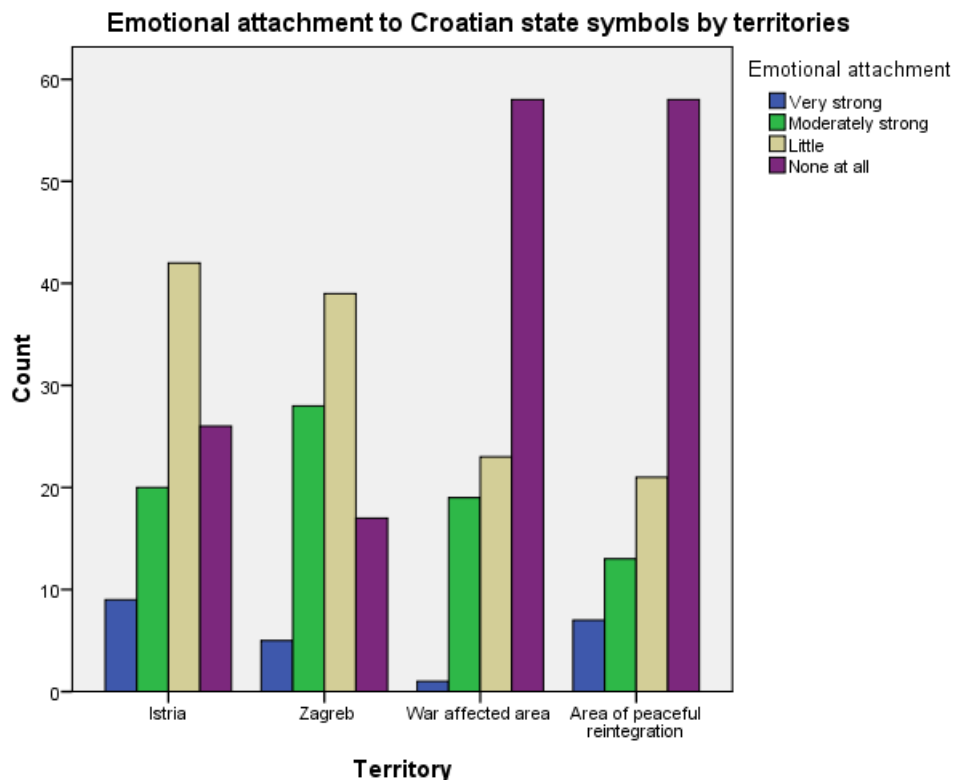
Fig. 35



Concerning the degree of emotional attachment to the Croatian state symbols (See Fig. 36) , 41,2% of the respondents opted for “none at all”, showing a general predominance of the absence of an emotional attachment toward Croatian state symbols, differently from the trend previously registered about the Serbian state symbols. Only in Istria (43,3% of the respondents) and in Zagreb (43,8%) a little emotional attachment was registered among the respondents rather than none, while the War affected area (57,4%) and the Area of peaceful reintegration (58,6%) opted predominantly for none.



Fig. 36

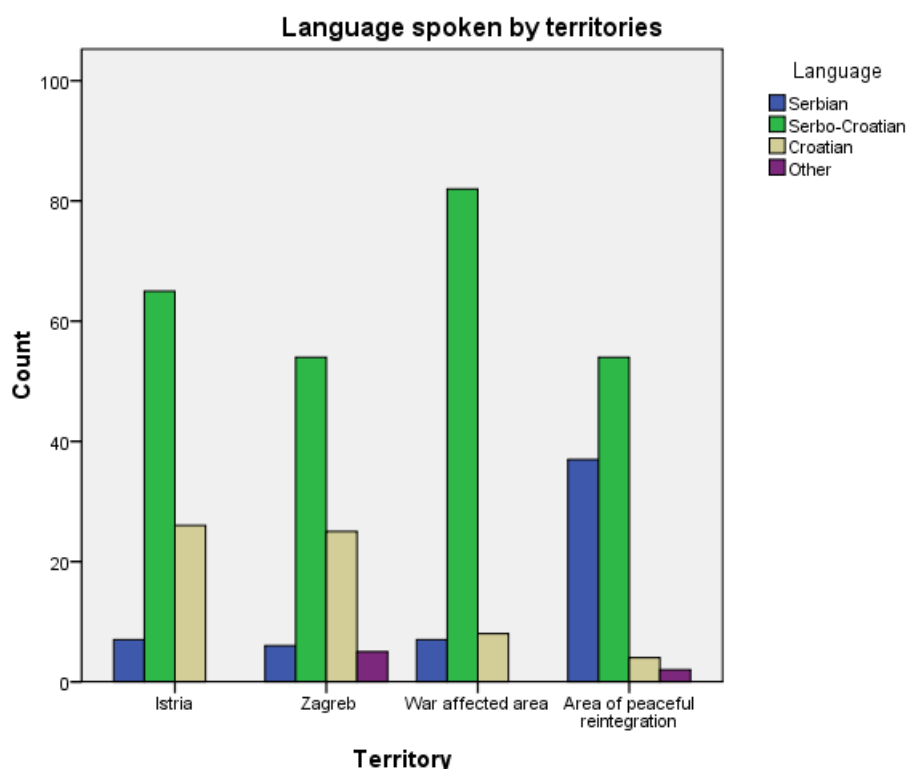


Language is an important aspect of one's identity, especially in the sphere of national identity, wherefore most nations identify themselves by the language they speak and hence their official language is named after their nation. After the dissolution of former Yugoslavia the language question became a political issue, resulting in the revival of new national languages: new words were re-invented or "borrowed" in order to justify the language "uniqueness" in comparison to the one spoken by the neighbours. The official language used in ex-Yugoslavia was Serbo-Croatian (with multiple standard forms, dialects and 2 writing systems), which lost its official status after the dissolution of ex-Yugoslavia and was replaced by new<sup>103</sup> official languages separated on ethnic and political lines: Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian and Montenegrin. The main difference between the Serbian and Croatian language is the type of pronunciation (or reflex) used: in Croatia the ijekavian

<sup>103</sup> This doesn't imply that the above mentioned languages didn't exist before the 1990's, but that they became official languages for the first time since 1850, when the term Serbo-Croatian was officially and jointly established. Since then, in both the Yugoslavian states (from 1918 to 1991) it had served as the official language, recognizing its regional variations (considered as standard forms of the language).

and ikavian pronunciations are mainly used, while in Serbia the ekavian pronunciation is exclusively used. In order to acknowledge with which language the Serbs in Croatia identify, they respondents were asked to indicate the language and the pronunciation they use in their communication. Concerning the language (See Fig. 37), most of the respondents, 66,8%, consider their language as “Serbo-Croatian”. The same trend was registered among all the territories, without exceptions. Only in the Area of peaceful reintegration was registered a slightly higher percentage of those who speak Serbian (38,1%). Under the category “Other” the respondents indicated “Bosnian”, “both Serbian and Croatian”, and “several other foreign languages”. Since the category represents only a total of 1,8% it was decided not to express it in a chart.

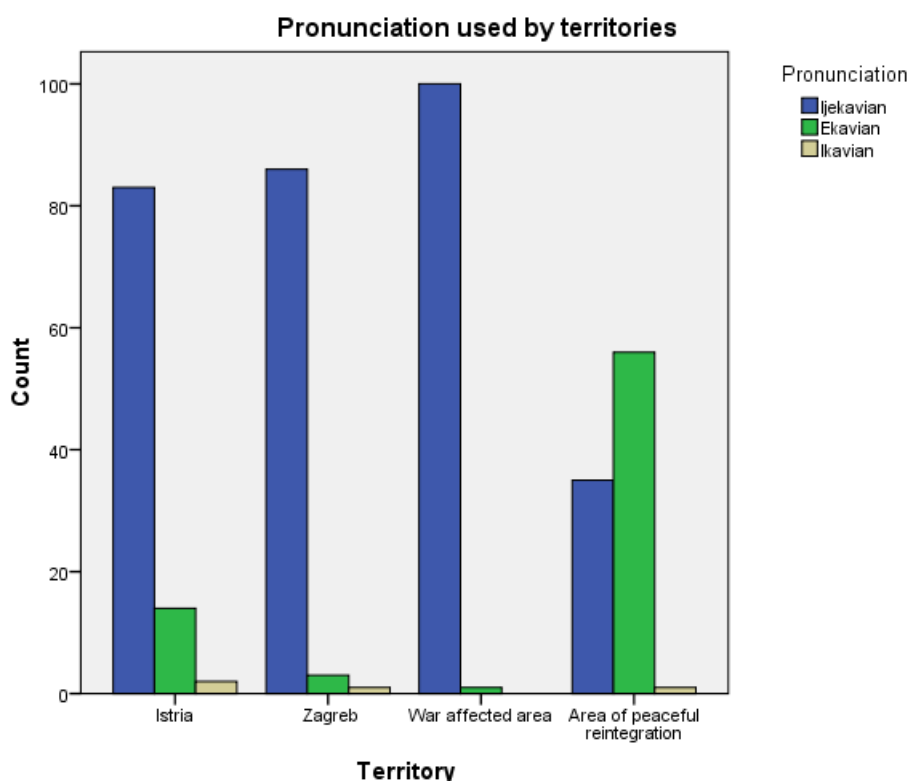
**Fig. 37**



As previously mentioned, Serbo-Croatian had multiple standard forms, but it also allowed the use of 2 official pronunciations: the Croatian ijekavian and the Serbian ekavian. Since Serbo-Croatian is no longer the official language in these territories, the Croatian language spoken in Croatia uses the

official ijekavian and ikavian<sup>104</sup> pronunciations, while the Serbian language spoken in Serbia uses the ekavian pronunciation as the official one (with some exceptions). As we have seen above, most of the respondents of this study identify their language as Serbo-Croatian, but since it is a wide concept due to its multiple standards, it was necessary to ask the respondents what pronunciation (or reflex) they use in their daily communication (See Fig. 38).

**Fig. 38**

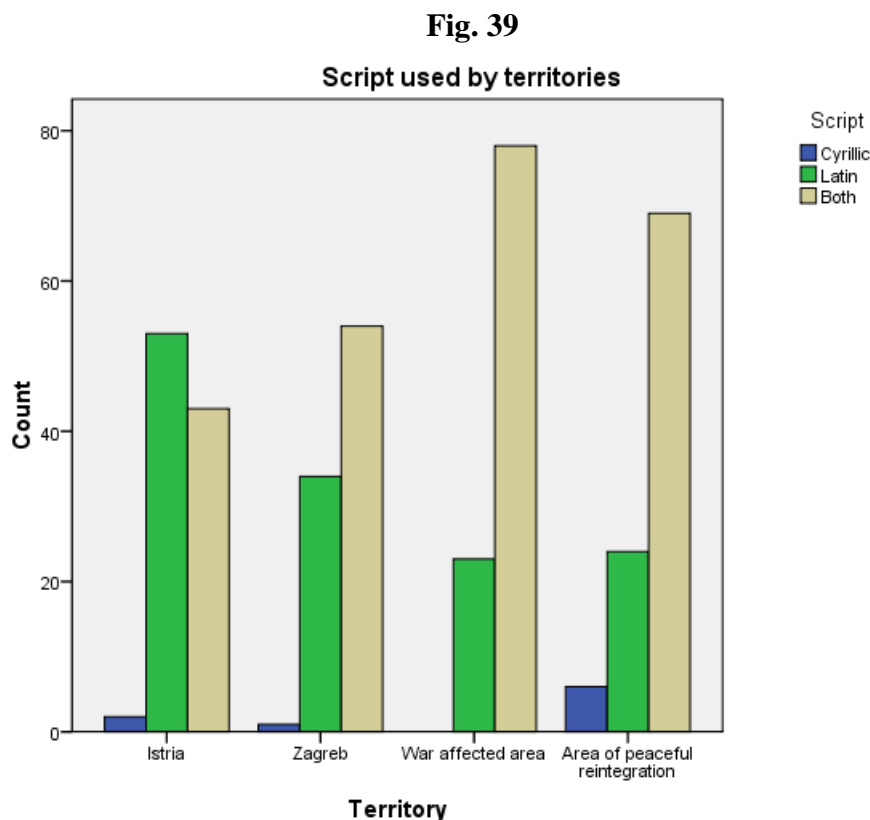


The vast majority of the respondents, 79,6%, indicated that they use the Croatian ijekavian pronunciation. The only exception was registered in the Area of peaceful reintegration, where 60,9% of the respondents use the Serbian ekavian pronunciation. The fact that although most the respondents use the Croatian ijekavian pronunciation but prefer to identify their language as Serbo-Croatian rather than Croatian, is very interesting, and can be seen as an attempt of a passive

<sup>104</sup> The ikavian pronunciation is territorially confined: it is spoken only in some parts of Istria, in most of Dalmatia and the islands, in the county of Lika, parts of Slavonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

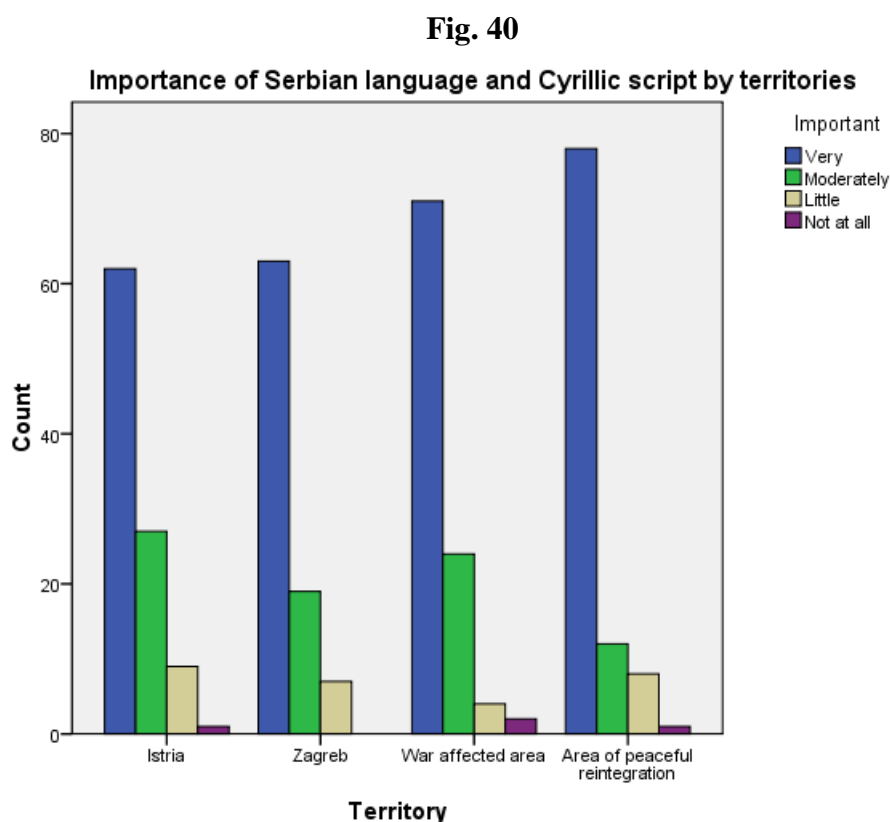
resistance and also as an effort to keep alive the national language and therefore the Serbian national identity in Croatia.

As mentioned before, Serbs use also another official alphabet, the Cyrillic, while the Croats use the Latin alphabet. Both of the alphabets were officially recognized in the use of the Serbo-Croatian language. Today in Croatia, according to the Constitutional law on the rights of national minorities, Serbs are allowed to use officially their language and script in the municipalities where they represent a significant share of the population. Since the Serbian language and Cyrillic script (alphabet) represent an indivisible and important part of their national identity, the respondents were asked in addition to the language they use also about the script (See Fig. 39).



The majority of the respondents, 63,0%, indicated that they use both the Latin and the Cyrillic script. Istria is the only region with a slighter predominance of those who use rather the Latin script (54,1%).

After the acknowledgment of the language and script used by the respondents, in order to understand the value of the role given to the Serbian language and the Cyrillic script in the maintaince of Serb national identity in Croatia, the respondents were asked to answer such question and choosing between *a) Very important; b) Moderately important; c) Little important; d) Not at important at all.*

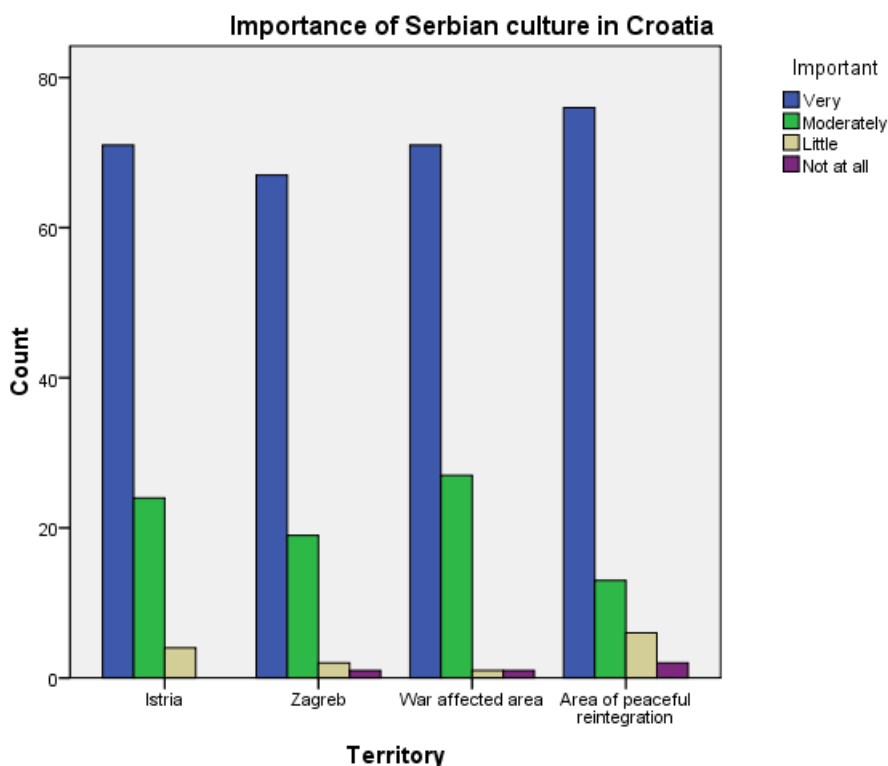


Most of the respondents, 70,6% in total, find very important the role of Serbian language and Cyrillic script in preserving Serb national identity in Croatia. This trend was registered in all the territories, with the Area of peaceful reintegration showing the higher percentage of 78,8%.

Interestingly, none of the respondents from Zagreb opted for “Not important at all”, although it was a seldom chosen category (1% of the total).

Another important aspect of national identity is culture, so the next chart illustrates the importance given by the respondents to the role of Serbian culture in Croatia (See Fig. 41). Since culture is a broad concept, it was decided not to suggest any examples in the asked question, but leave to the respondents their individual perception of Serbian culture and what it means to them.

**Fig. 41**

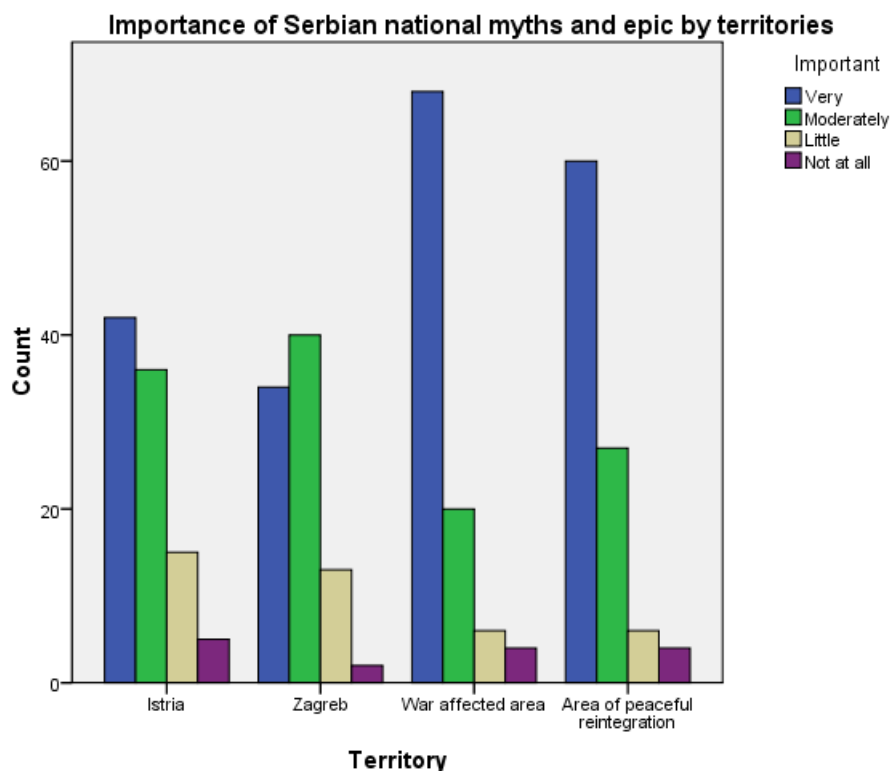


One again we can see that most of the respondents, 74,0%, agree that Serbian culture in Croatia is very important to them. The same trend has been registered in all the territories, while Istria is the only territory where none of the respondents opted for “not important at all”.

In the previous chapter it was explained that according to A. Smith, national identity includes five elements, one of which is represented by common myths and historical memory (which is also one of the the main characteristics of ethnic groups). As we have seen, Serbs trace their myths of origin in the figure of the Sacrosaint Nemanjić dynasty and the first Serbian state, Raška. The loss of their statehood after the lost battle of Kosovo against the Turks, marked the beginning of a new period of their history and as well the beginning of a new epic tradition that caused new common myths.

In order to verify the presence and importance of these national myths and epic in the present national identity of the Serbs in Croatia, the respondents were asked to give an individual value of importance on the matter (See Fig. 42). Since the concept may be misleading and confusing, at the end of the question was put an example between parentheses indicating the Nemanjić’s Dynasty and the Battle of Kosovo.

**Fig. 42**

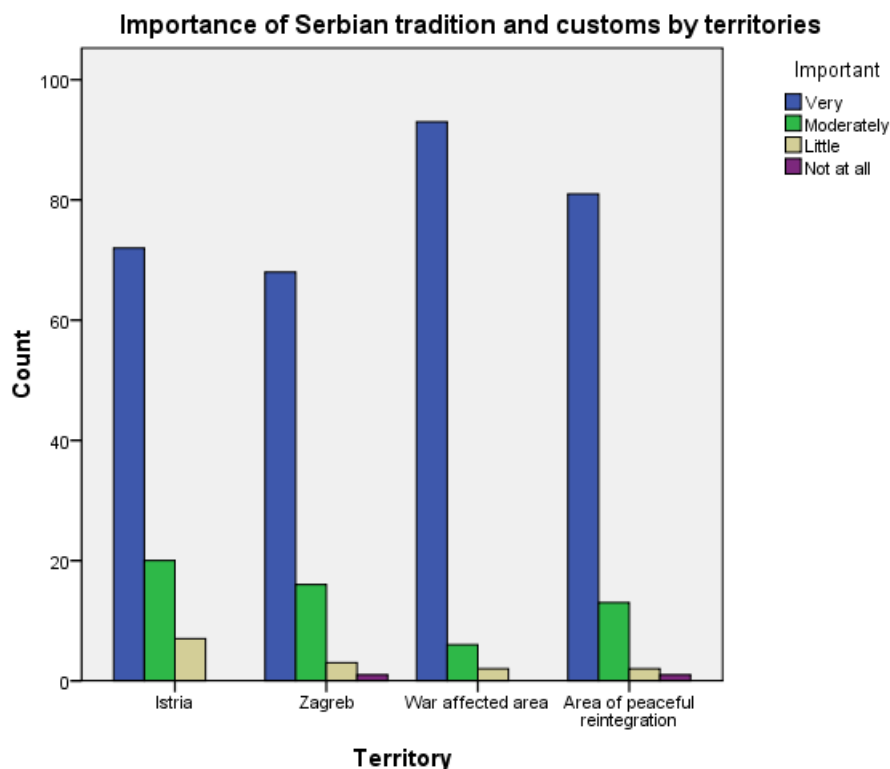


A little more than half of the respondents, 53,4% in total, find very important the Serbian national myths and the Serbian epic tradition. Zagreb was the only territory with the slighter predominance of those who find it moderately important (44,9%), rather than very important (38,2%).

Since these aspects of Serbian history and identity are not studied in the schools in Croatia, the attitudes of the respondents on this matter are really surprising.

The next chart illustrates the importance of a more private aspect of Serbian national identity, i.e. Serbian tradition and customs (See Fig. 43). Since Serbian tradition and customs are mostly influenced by religion, at the end of the question was put an example between parentheses indicating “the “Krsna slava”, marriage and others” in order to better explain the question to the respondents.

Fig. 43



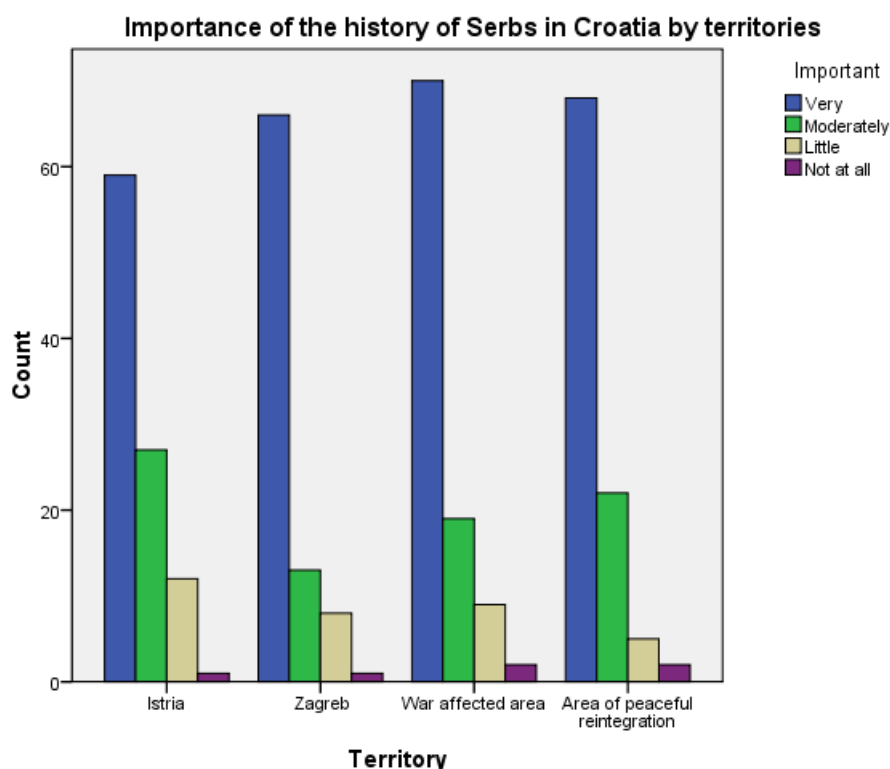


The vast majority of the respondents, 81,6% of total, think that Serbian tradition and customs are very important for the preservation of Serb national identity in Croatia. The same trend was registered in all the territories, with the highest percentage (92,1%) registered in the War affected area.

The following charts will explore the importance of national history as well as the degree of familiarity of the respondents about their own history and status in Croatia, their opinions about the new status they have in Croatia and the degree of familiarity with Serb organizations in Croatia.

When asked how much they find important the history of Serbs in Croatia, most of the respondents (68,5% of total) answered “very important”, regardless of the territory (See Fig. 44).

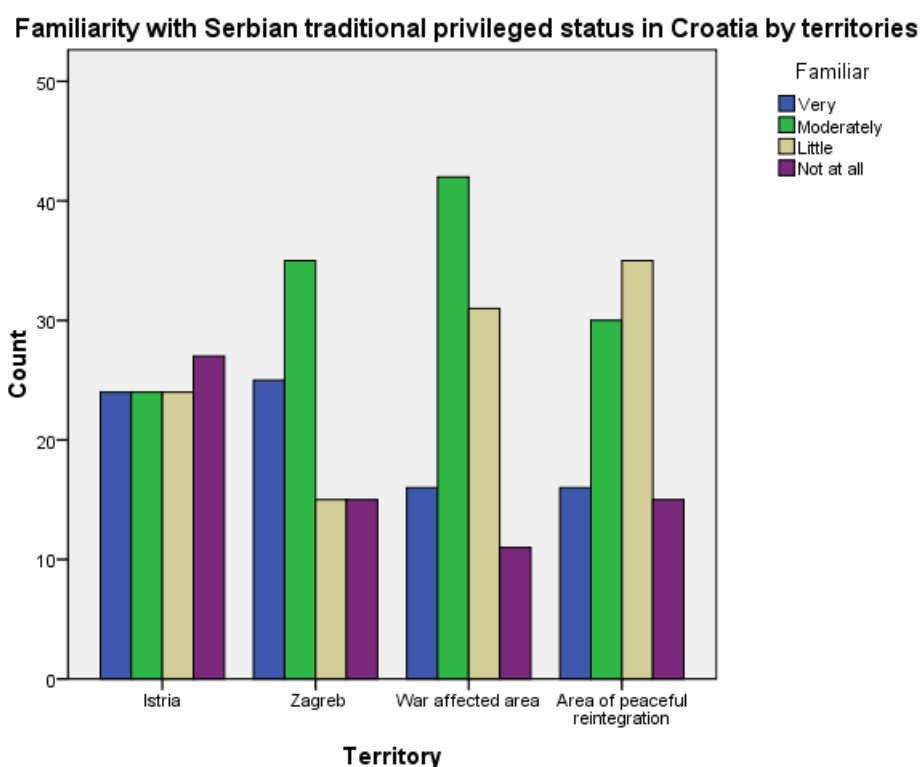
**Fig. 44**



But when asked to indicate the degree of familiarity with the Serbian traditional privileged status in Croatia, which represents their peculiarity and the basis of their social rights in Croatia, most the

respondents (34,0%) claimed to be “moderately familiar” with the notion (See Fig. 45). Istria registered the highest percentage of those who are “not familiar at all” with the Serbian traditional privileged status in Croatia (27,3%), while the Area of peaceful reintegration registered the highest percentage of respondents with “little familiarity” with the concept (36,5%). Even the War affected area, whose territory mainly coincides with the Military Frontier and had directly benefited from the privileged status, registered the highest percentage of respondents with a moderate degree of familiarity with the concept (42,0%). Surprisingly, Zagreb registered the highest percentage of those who claim to be “very familiar” (27,8%) with this part of their own history in Croatia.

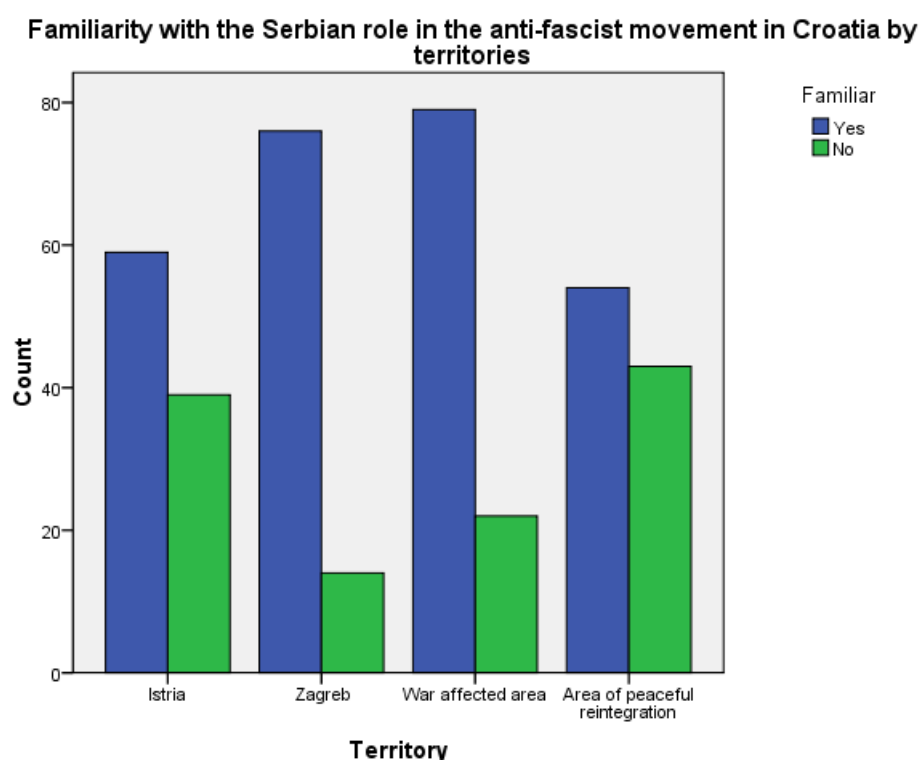
**Fig. 45**



The respondents were also asked about a more recent event in their history in Croatia, i.e. the Serbian role in the anti-fascist movement in Croatia during World War II (See Fig. 46). Since it is a more recent historical event than the previous one, whose memory was solemnly celebrated by the regime during ex Yugoslavia, it was decided not to ask the degree of familiarity but to offer instead

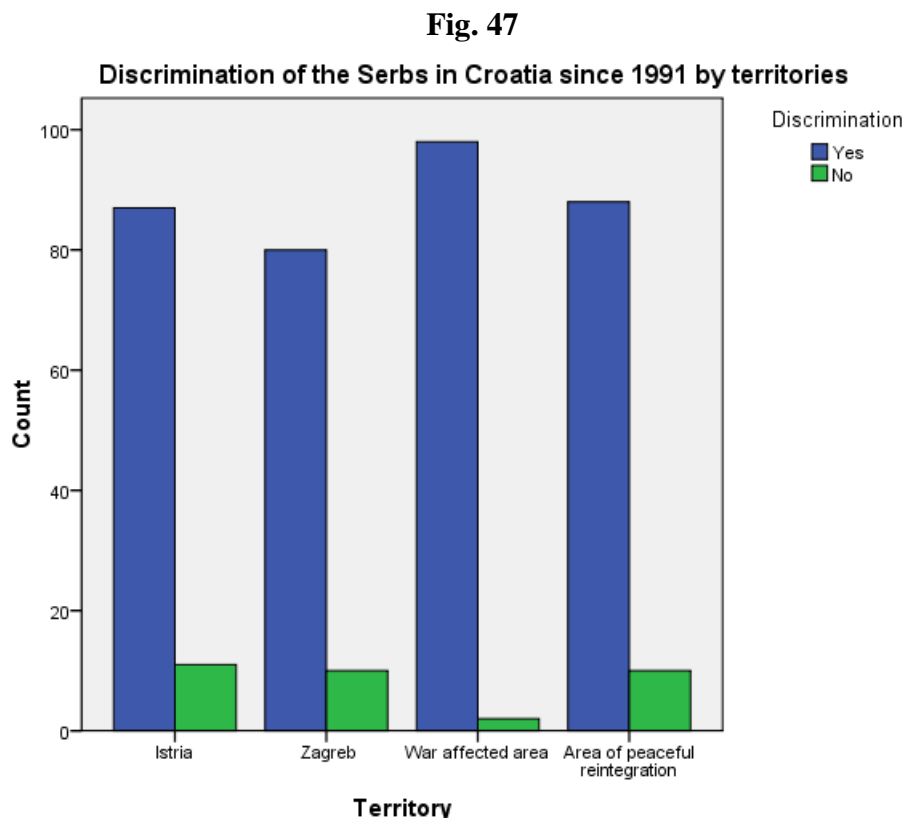
only a choice of positive or negative answer. The majority of the respondents, 69,4% of total, gave a positive answer, indicating that they are familiar with the concept. The same trend was registered in all the territories, with only the Area of peaceful reintegration representing a relatively high percentage of those who are not familiar with the Serbian role in the anti-fascist movement in Croatia (44,3% within territory and 11,1% of total).

**Fig. 46**



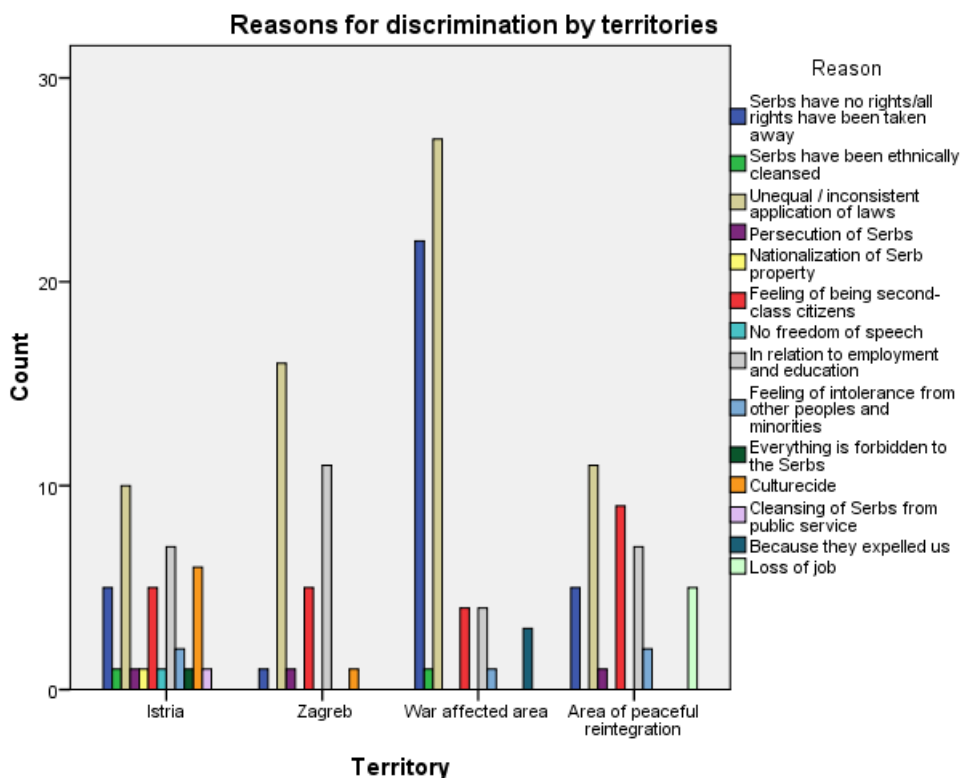
The next question deals with an even more recent event in Serb history in Croatia: the year 1991, when their constitutional status in Croatia was taken away by the newly elected government. The question was the following: *“Do you think that Serbs in Croatia are discriminated since they became a minority in Croatia (from the year 1991)?”*. The respondents were also asked to give a reason if their answer was positive.

As we can see in the following chart (See Fig. 47), the vast majority (91,5%) of the respondents feel that Serbs in Croatia as discriminated, regardless of the territory. However, the highest percentage of positive answers was registered in the War affected area (98,0%), most probably due to their private experience during and after the war.



Looking at the reasons offered by the respondents to justify their positive answer regarding the discrimination of Serbs in Croatia (See Fig. 48), the majority thinks (36,0% of total) that it manifests in the “Unequal / inconsistent application of laws”. Although the given reasons were numerous and various, mainly influenced by personal experiences, all the territories were unanimous about the predominant reason.

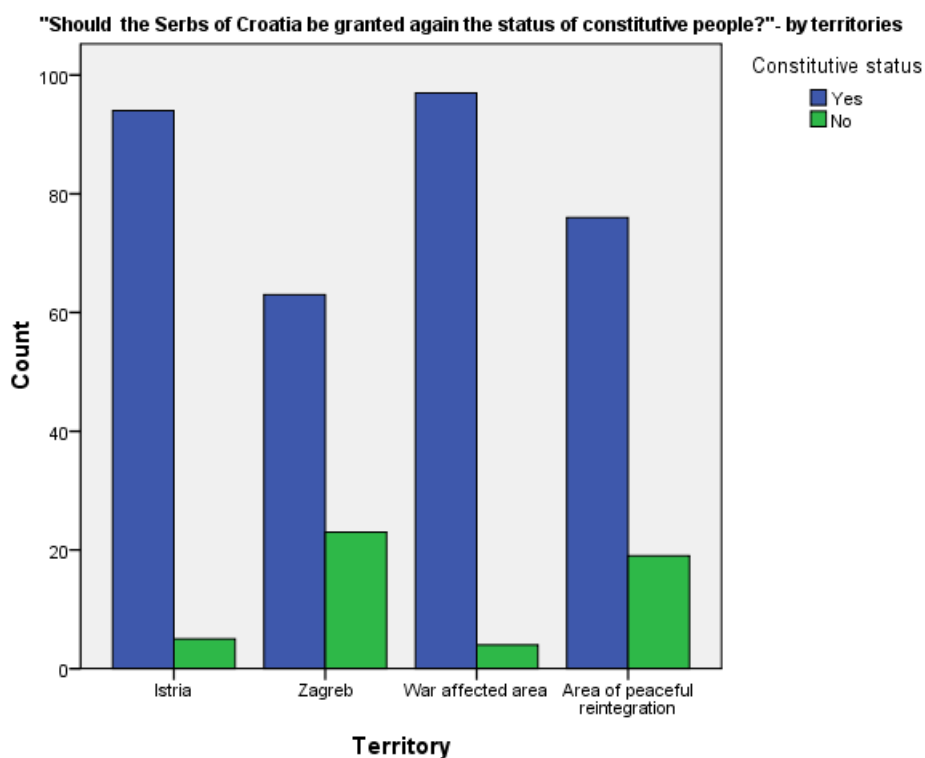
Fig. 48



The respondents were also asked if they think that the Serbs should be granted again the status of constitutive people, and also to explain their answer (whether positive or negative).

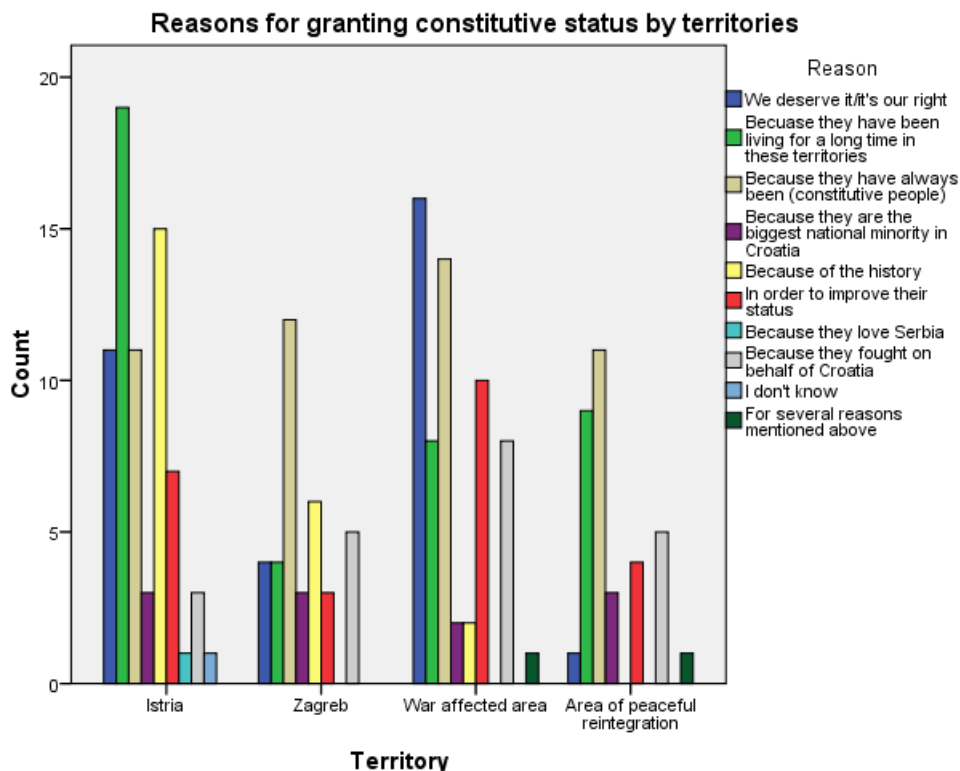
The vast majority (86,6% of total) think that Serbs should be granted again the status of constitutive people (See Fig. 49). The highest percentage was registered in the War affected area (96,0% within territory), while Zagreb showed the highest percentage of respondents with negative answer (26,7% within territory and 6,0% of total).

Fig. 49



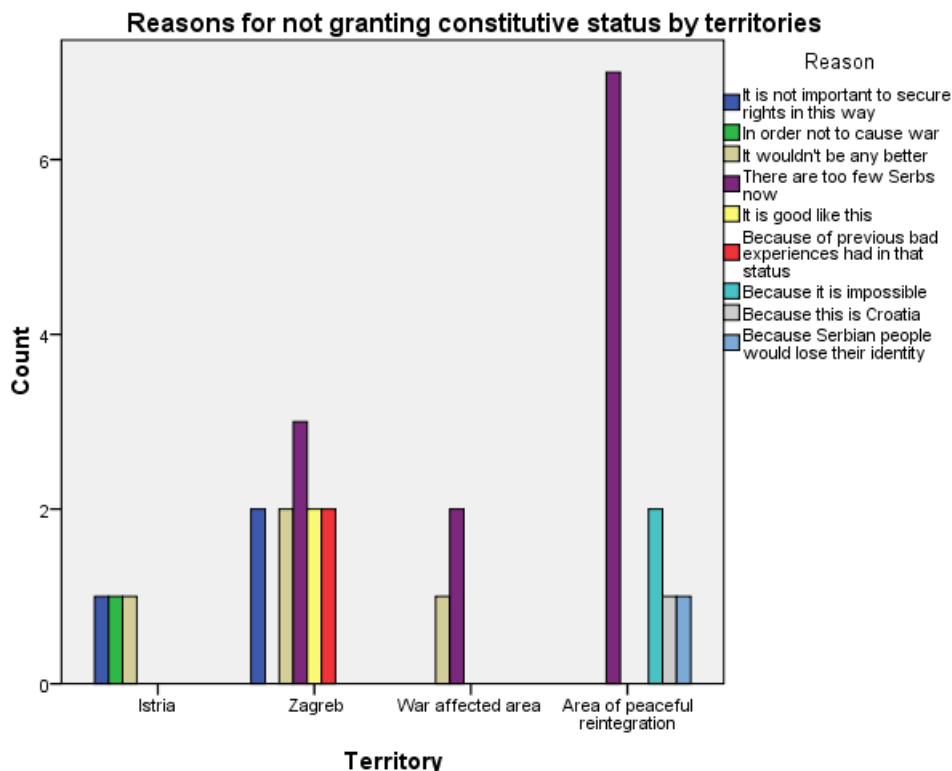
Looking at the justification of their answers, the given reasons were very broad. Among the given reasons for the previously given positive answer (See Fig. 50), a slighter predominance was given to the fact that “Serbs have always been constitutive people” (23,6% of total). Every territory showed a different trend: in Istria 26,8% of the respondents wrote “Because Serbs have been living for a long time in these territories”; in Zagreb 32,4% of the respondents and in the Area of peaceful reintegration 26,5% of them claim that Serbs should be granted constitutive status again in Croatia “Because Serbs have always been constitutive people”; while in the War affected area 26,2% think that “Serbs deserve it/it’s their right”.

Fig. 50



The given reasons for not granting the constitutive status to Serbs in Croatia were also varied and numerous (See Fig. 51). Most of the respondents, 42,9% of total, agree that there are “Too few Serbs now (in Croatia)” and therefore there is no need or possibility for a constitutive status. Istria was the only exception: it didn’t register a predominant answer, but only 3 with the same percentage (33,3%). The remaining territories agreed that “There are too few Serbs now”, aware of the fact that the numerical strength is an important prerequisite for obtaining certain particular rights.

**Fig. 51**



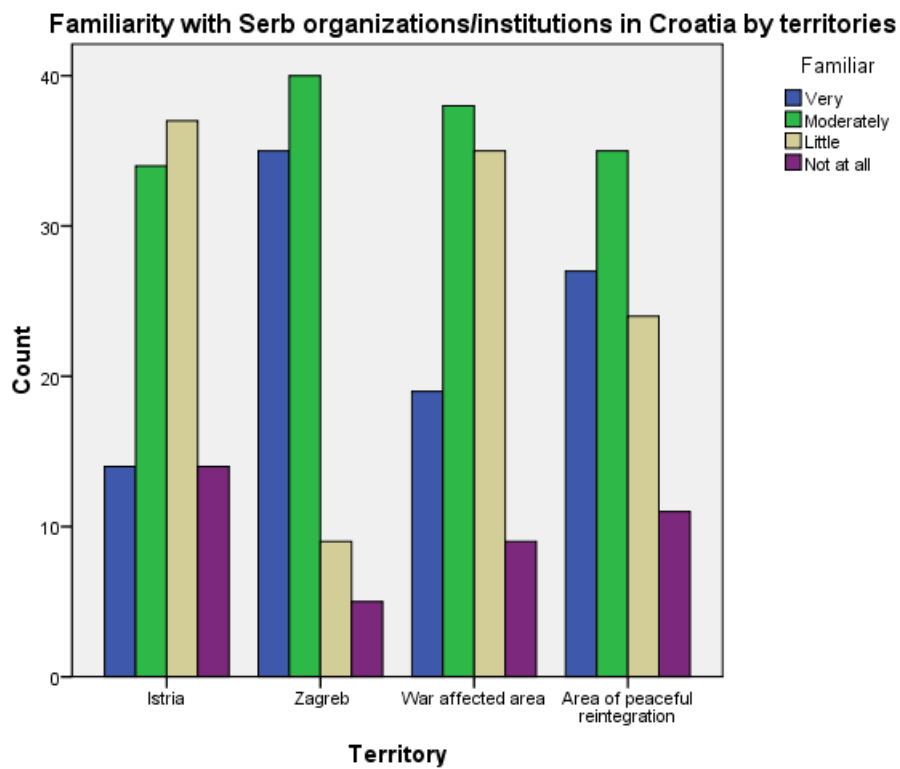
In the previous section concerning the independent variables, the membership of the respondents in Serb organizations was shown. However, since the establishment of these organizations is an important part of minorities rights granted to Serbs in Croatia and these organizations are responsible, among others, for monitoring the execution of Serb minority rights, it was considered necessary to verify the degree of familiarity of the respondents with these organizations. This trend is a good indicator not only of Serbian familiarity with these organizations, but also of the familiarity with the acquired rights, being the Serb organizations the main intermediary between the Serb minority and the authorities.

A little more than half of the total respondents (53,1%) are not members of any Serb organization in Croatia, which may be connected to the predominance (38,1% of total) of those who have a moderate degree of familiarity (See Fig. 52) with these organizations. Only in Istria was recorded a slighter predominance (37,4%) of the respondents with little familiarity with the Serb organizations in Croatia. Although the other territories showed a similar trend, Zagreb registered the highest



percentage (39,3% within territory and 9,1% of total) among those respondents who are very familiar with these organizations. This could be connected to the fact that all the main Serb organizations in Croatia are located in Zagreb, as well as all the state organs, thus facilitating the communication between the two sides.

**Fig. 52**



### 5.3.2 Indicators of modernity

While the previous section explored the correlation between dependent variables and the territory (considered an independent variable) in order to allow a cross-territorial comparison of the respondents' general attitudes gathered in the questionnaire, this section will be testing the significance of some of the variables (dependent vs. independent) considered important indicators of the Serb modern national identity, in order to obtain valuable results that can be applied to the whole population (i.e. the Serb minority in Croatia).

The 4 chosen independent variables to be crossed with the dependent ones are age category, level of education, tragic war experience and membership in Serb organizations.

The chosen dependent variables are the ones that indicate some aspects of current and modern Serb national identity in Croatia: national self-identification, sense of discrimination, positive grant of constitutive status to Serbs in Croatia, sense of belonging to Serbia and Serbian citizenship<sup>105</sup>.

So far all the graphs have been expressed in percentages (the count on the Y axis), but the following ones will express the number of cases (respondents) because of the vast distribution<sup>106</sup> of the categories that represent the independent variables. However, in order to better understand the proportions and their significance, the percentages within categories will be mentioned in the text.

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<sup>105</sup> The remaining indicators of modernity were used to calculate the index of modernity in the next section.

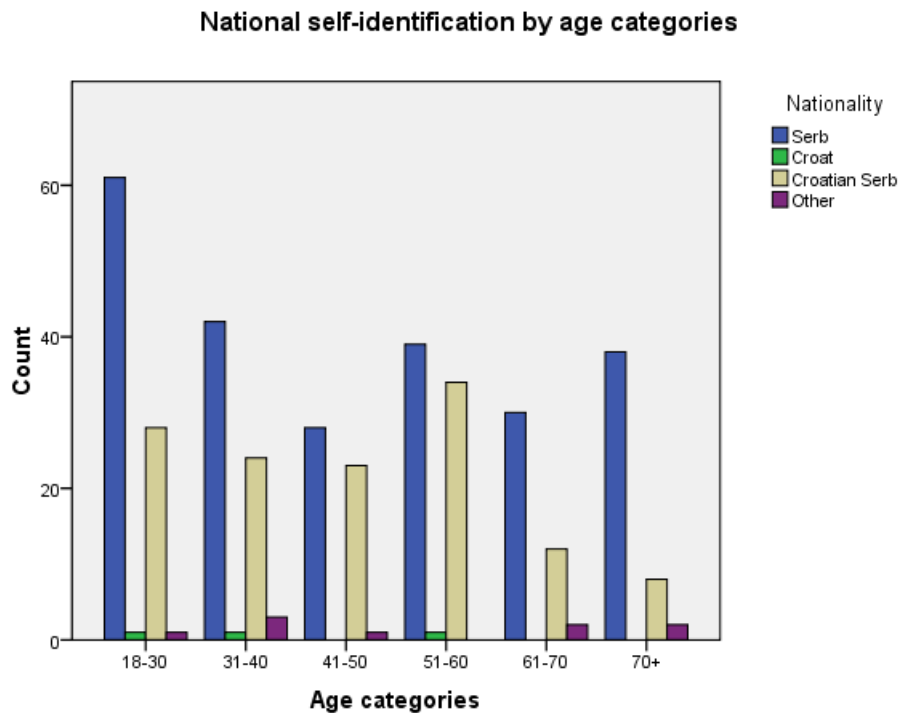
<sup>106</sup> The categories of age and level of education are very broad and vastly distributed among all the respondents, which will make it difficult to find strong associations between the studied variables. However, it will provide useful information about the studied population, regardless of the obtained results.

### **a) National self-identification**

In this research, the national self-identification of the respondents has been treated as a dependent variable. However, it is hard to say what it depends from and what influences it, beside a personal choice of the individual. By correlating this variable with other independent variables that are hypothesized to have an influence on it, new helpful data will be obtained in order to further understand the nature of national self-identification among the respondents its correlation to other elements. Cross tabulations expressed in graphs will be used to illustrate the correlations between variables, but also a Chi square test of independence and a Phi coefficient will be calculated to verify the existence of association and its strength. In addition to the already mentioned independent variables, two more will be used in this section: the country of birth, religious confession and longer period of stay in Serbia, since they might influence national self-identification.

The following chart (See Fig. 53) represents the correlation between the variable of national self-identification and the age categories of the respondents. It is visible that the youngest population (age 18-30) self-identifies mostly (25,6% within nationality) with the national category of “Serb”. It is hard to say why it is so, since the young population was born mainly in Croatia and wasn’t directly affected by the war (being most of them born after the end of the conflicts). This could be the emergence of a new trend, a re-discovery of one’s own origin without the fear of possible discrimination. However, the age category of 70+ represents the highest percentage of “Serbs” within the age category (79,1%) but also the least represented category (12,7% of the total) due to the small number of this category of respondents, making it numerically insignificant on a larger scale. Moreover, a gradual decrease of the category “Serb” is visible up to the age category 51-60 where we see a slightly increase as well as the highest percentage of “Croat Serbs” (45,9% within age category), followed by another decrease in the age category 60-70 and ending with an increase in the last age category of 70+.

**Fig. 53**

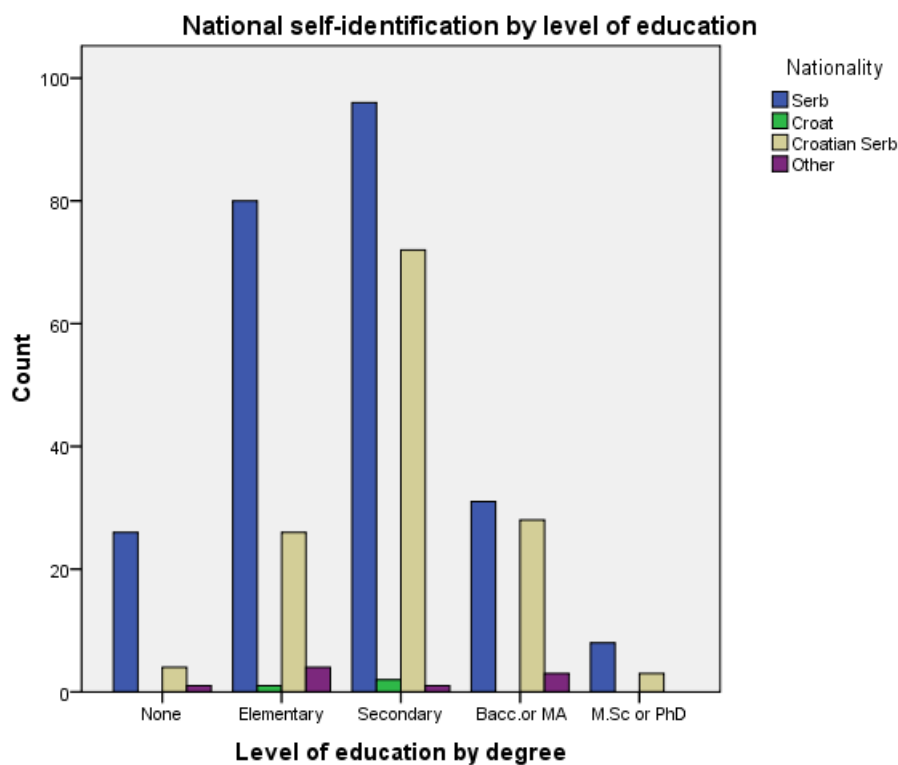


Since the obtained cross tabulation didn't offer enough data on the correlation between the 2 variables, a symmetric measure using Phi correlation and Cramer's V was conducted to calculate the strength between the two variables. Phi varies between -1 and 1, while Cramer's V varies between 0 and 1; both show little association between variables if the obtained value is close to 0 it; close to 1, they indicate a strong positive association; if Phi is close to -1 it shows a strong negative correlation. In the chart below it is visible that the obtained value both for Phi and Cramer's V is 0,196 which indicates a little association, very weak and therefore minimally acceptable.

Symmetric Measures		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	,196	,015
	Cramer's V	,196	,015
N of Valid Cases		367	

The following chart (See Fig. 54) will explore the correlation between national self-identification and level of education. The highest number of “Serbs” is represented by the category of secondary school graduates (39,8% within nationality), as well as the category of “Croatian Serbs” (54,1% within nationality), which could be a result of the fact that these graduates are the most numerous category among the respondents. However, the number of self-declared “Serbs” decreases with the increase of the level of education, which indicates a tendency of people with lower educational degree to self-identify as “Serbs”, while the number of “Croatian Serbs” increases with the level of education. The only exception is the category of M.Sc. and PhD where a different tendency was registered: 72,7% within level of education have identified as “Serbs” rather than “Croatian Serbs” (27,3% within level of education).

**Fig. 54**



In order to verify the strength of association<sup>107</sup> between the two variables, a Cramer's V coefficient is calculated (because we have more categories that don't fit in a 2x2 table). Cramer's V varies between 0 and 1. Close to 0 it shows little association between variables. Close to 1, it indicates a strong association. Our obtained value is 0,150 which indicates a weak association between the variables.

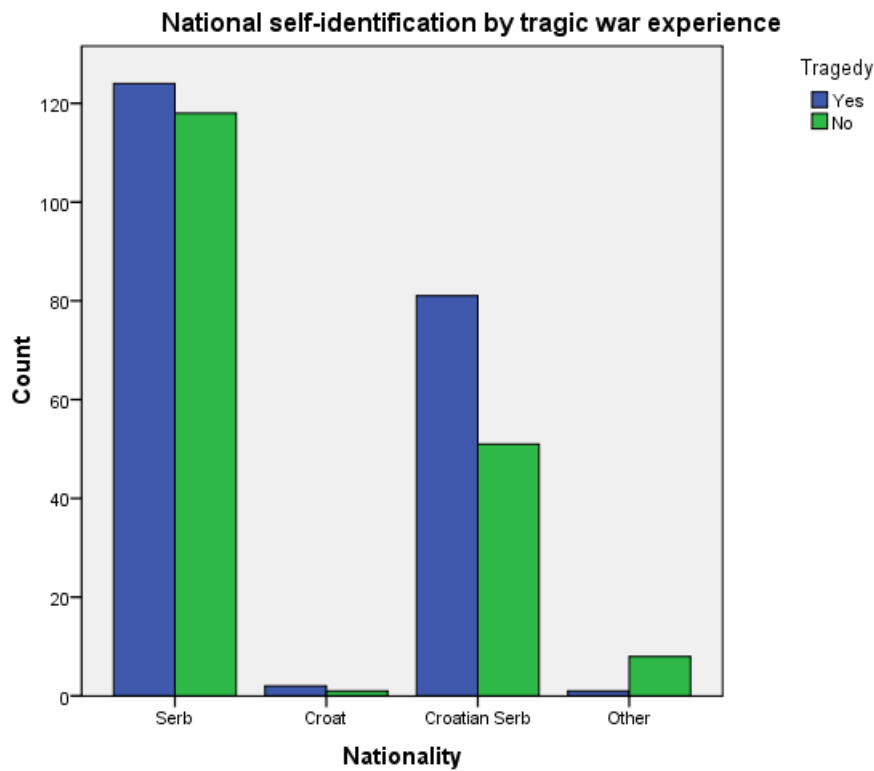
Symmetric Measures			
		Value	Approx. Sig.
<i>Nominal by Nominal</i>	<i>Phi</i>	,260	,010
	<i>Cramer's V</i>	,150	,010
<i>N of Valid Cases</i>		386	

The following graph (See Fig. 55) illustrates the contingency between national self-identification and tragic war experience. It shows that the category of "Serb" is almost equally distributed in both the categories of positive and negative tragic experience (51,2% and 48,8% within category), while the "Croatian Serbs" are more numerous among the respondents who experienced a war related tragedy (61,4% within category), but the "Croats" are most numerous among the respondents who didn't experience a war tragedy (88,9% within category).

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<sup>107</sup> After chi-square has determined significance.

**Fig. 55**



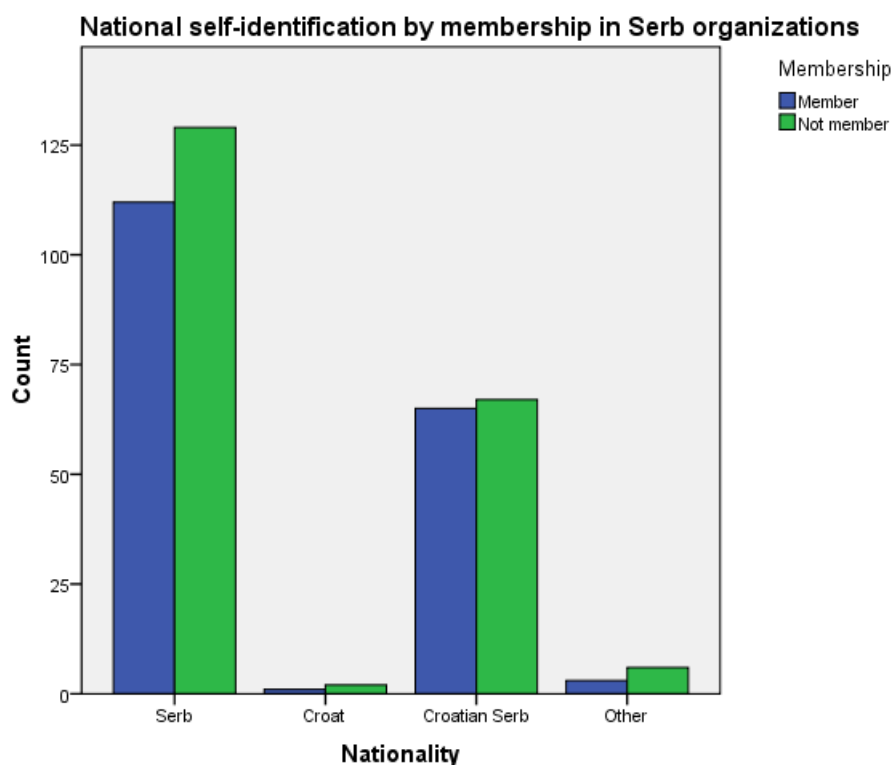
In order to verify the possible correlation between the two variables, the Phi and Cramer’s V methods were used again. The obtained value of  $-0,097^{108}$  indicates little or no association between the two variables, and therefore the differences obtained in the frequency distribution are purely random. However, a negative coefficient means that those who are lower on one variable are more likely to be higher on the other variable, which is especially true for the category of Croatian Serbs.

Symmetric Measures		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	-,097	,060
	Cramer's V	,097	,060
N of Valid Cases		374	

<sup>108</sup> Phi is used for 2X2 tables and Cramer’s V for larger tables, and since we rejected the categories that were less than 5%, we ended up with a 2X2 table and therefore can use Phi coefficient.

When looking at the following graph (See Fig. 56) we can see that there is a higher number of declared “Serbs” among those who are not members of any Serb organization in Croatia, while the number of those who self-identified as “Croatian Serbs” is equal in both the categories of membership. However, the percentage of “Serbs” as members is higher (61,9% within membership) than the ones of “Croatian Serbs” (35,9% within membership).

**Fig. 56**



Looking at the table below indicating us both Phi and Cramer’s V coefficient,  $-0,027^{109}$ , we can see that there is a very low association between the two variables. Once again a negative coefficient means that those who are lower on one variable are more likely to be higher on the other variable.

This indicates that neither the membership in Serb organizations influences significantly the national self-identification of the individual, having the two variables no or little association.

<sup>109</sup> We use the Phi coefficient because we have a 2x2 table, since the categories with less of 5% are not taken into account.



Symmetric Measures			
		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	-,027	,609
	Cramer's V	,027	,609
N of Valid Cases		373	

The cross-tabulation representing the contingency between national self-identification and religious confession showed that 94.2% of the Orthodox Christians declared themselves as Serbs, and 86.8% as Croatian Serbs. Regarding the category of Atheists, 5.8% of them considered as Serbs, while 13.2% of them declared as Croatian Serbs. To check whether these two categorical variables are associated with each other, a chi-square test for independence was conducted. A Chi-square test will allow to test how likely it is that national self-identification and religious confession are completely independent; or in other words, how likely it is that the distribution of “Serbs” and “Croatian Serbs” in the categories of Christian Orthodox and Atheists is due to chance.<sup>110</sup>

Chi-Square Tests					
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5,944 <sup>a</sup>	1	,015		
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	5,023	1	,025		
Likelihood Ratio	5,647	1	,017		
Fisher's Exact Test				,018	,014
Linear-by-Linear Association	5,928	1	,015		
N of Valid Cases	370				

a. 0 cells (,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 10,81.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

The fact that the Pearson chi-square value under "Asymp. Sig (2-sided)" is 0,015, which is more than 0,005, indicates that the rows and columns of the contingency are independent, i.e. they are not related. Therefore, the research hypothesis that differences in national self-identification are related

<sup>110</sup> Since certain subcategories are under-represented (less than 5%) they couldn't be taken in the analysis, so only “Serbs”, “Croatian Serbs”, “Christian Orthodox” and “Atheist” were used for the analysis.

to differences in religious confession is rejected by this analysis, while the null hypothesis that differences in national self-identification are independent of differences in religious confession is supported. This means that there is no association between national self-identification and religious confession, thus one variable doesn't influence the other and vice versa.

A possible reason for the results can be the consequence of the great similarities between the subcategories of national self-identification, or the fact that the understanding of the notion "Serb" and "Croatian Serb" among the respondents doesn't differ much from each other.

Looking at the contingency table<sup>111</sup> representing the correlation between national self-identification and country of birth, it is noted that for instance that 66.2% of the respondents born in Croatia declared as Serbs, while 87.9% as Croatian Serbs. In order to check whether this difference is statistically significant, and if it refers to the entire population, a chi-square test was conducted.

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
<i>Pearson Chi-Square</i>	21,860 <sup>a</sup>	2	,000
<i>Likelihood Ratio</i>	24,821	2	,000
<i>Linear-by-Linear Association</i>	15,957	1	,000
<i>N of Valid Cases</i>	363		

a. 0 cells (,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 9,45.

**Symmetric Measures**

		Value	Approx. Sig.
<i>Nominal by Nominal</i>	<i>Phi</i>	,245	,000
	<i>Cramer's V</i>	,245	,000
	<i>Contingency Coefficient</i>	,238	,000
<i>N of Valid Cases</i>		363	

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<sup>111</sup> It is not shown in the text; its most important results are described in the text.

Both the chi square test and Phi and Cramer’s V show a moderate strong correlation between the two variables, which indicates that national self-identification is associated to the country of birth. Therefore it is not a random coincidence that most the of the declared Serbs (63,6% of total) were born in Serbia (92,3% within category) and most of the declared Croatian Serbs (87,9% within category) were born in Croatia. The obtained result is significant enough to be applied to the whole population.

When correlating national self-identification with longer period of stay in Serbia, it was noted for instance that 49.0% of the respondents who consider themselves Serbs stayed for a long time in Serbia, compared to 51.0% who did not. On the other hand, 66,2% of declared Croatian Serbs didn’t stay in Serbia for a long time.

In order to check whether this difference is statistically significant, and therefore it refers to the entire population, a chi-square test was conducted.

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7,979 <sup>a</sup>	3	,046
Likelihood Ratio	8,084	3	,044
Linear-by-Linear Association	6,833	1	,009
N of Valid Cases	383		

a. 3 cells (37,5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1,31.

Since the Chi Square test shows no significant differences (Sig.> 0.005), the variables are independent and therefore are not correlated. This means that national self-identification isn’t associated or influenced by longer periods of stay in Serbia.

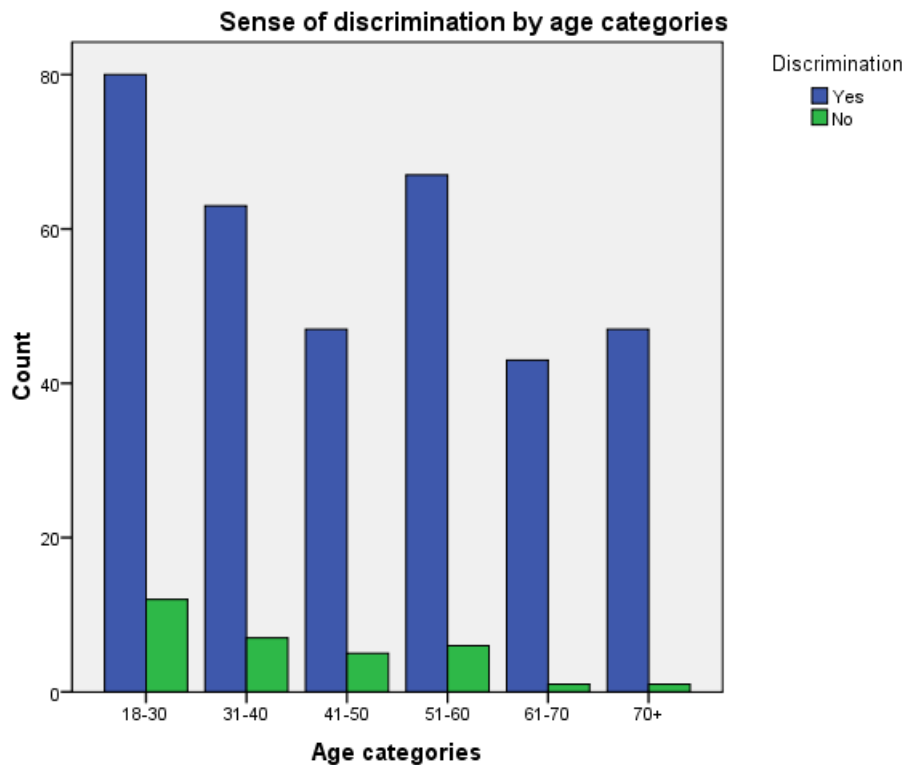
## **b) Sense of discrimination**

The presence of an individual sense of discrimination towards the own minority group is a strong indicator of the perception of the minority group about the dominant group and the environment they both live in. It also offers an image of the current situation concerning Serb-Croat relations in Croatia.

In the previous sections it was illustrated that among the Serbs in Croatia there is a high sense of discrimination since they lost their constitutive status and became a national minority in 1991. Even the reasons that justify such a feeling have been categorized and illustrated in the form of a graph, but we still don't know what influences such a trend, considered as a dependent variable.

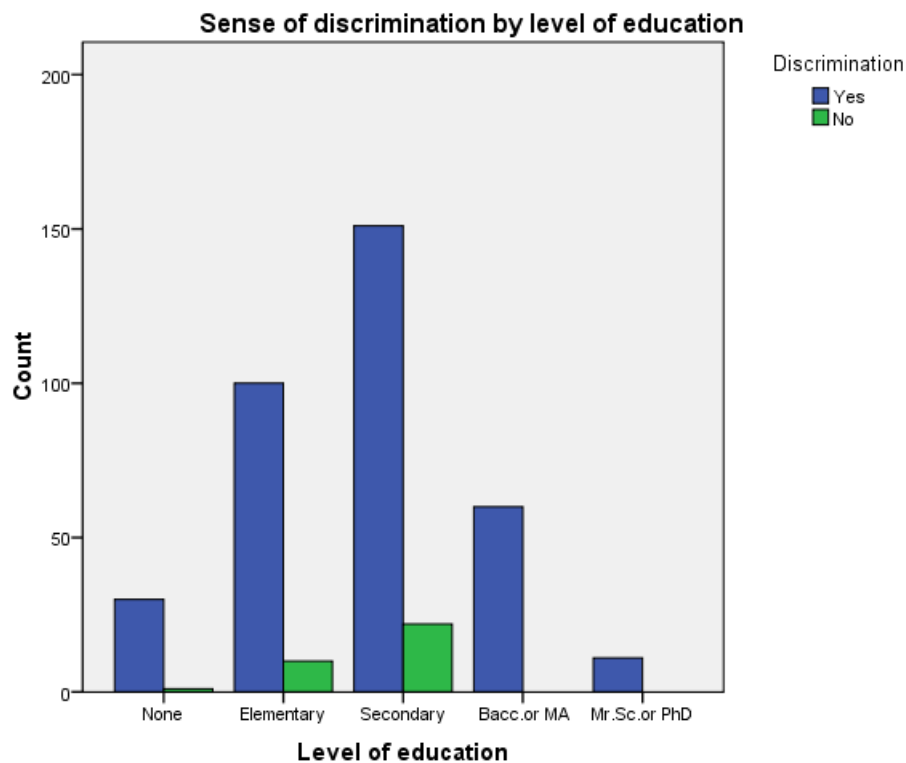
Looking at the graph representing the contingency sense of discrimination and age category (See Fig. 57), we can see that most of the respondents from each age category feel a sense of discrimination of their own minority group. However, it is surprising that the youngest generation (18-30) who was not even born when Serbs had the status of constitutive people is the most numerous (86,9% within age category) in feeling a sense of discrimination of the own minority group. This could be the result of their dissatisfaction with the current situation in Croatia and therefore they hope that the change of their status would improve things.

Fig. 57



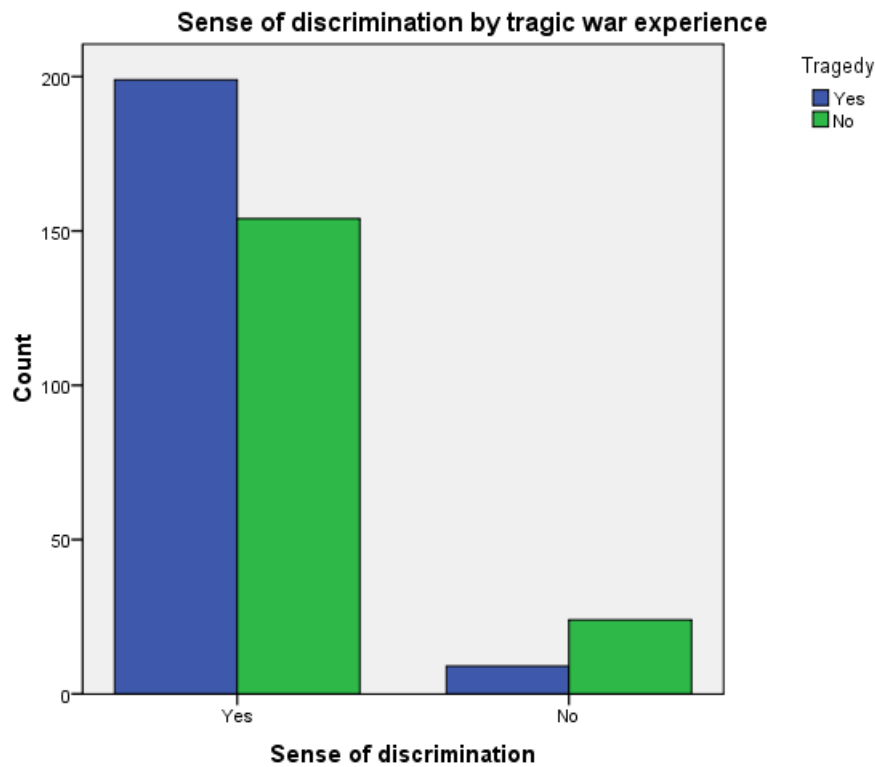
When looking at the association between sense of discrimination and level of education (See Fig. 58), it is immediately visible that the respondents with a higher level of education feel a sense of discrimination in contrast to those who don't. If we look closely, none of the respondents with a M.Sc. or PhD feels that there is no discrimination, differently from those without a degree (3,2% within level of education) or from those having an elementary (9,1%) or secondary school degree (12,7%). Although the category of secondary school graduates seems to be the most represented in both categories ("Yes" and "No"), this is a result of its numerical superiority compared to the other categories, and therefore, doesn't interfere with the association between high level of education and sense of discrimination.

Fig. 58



The following chart (See Fig. 59) illustrates the contingency between the sense of discrimination and tragic war experience. Although there is a slighter predominance of respondents with a tragic war experience who feel a sense of discrimination (95,7% within category of tragedy) rather than those without a tragic war experience (86,5% within category), and consequently a higher percentage of those without a tragic war experience who don't feel discriminated (13,5% within category) vs. the ones with a tragic war experience (4,3% within category). However, this doesn't prove that the sense of discrimination is influenced by a tragic war experience, but rather only that most of the respondents with a tragic war experience feel discriminated, as well as those who didn't have such an experience (although to a lesser extent).

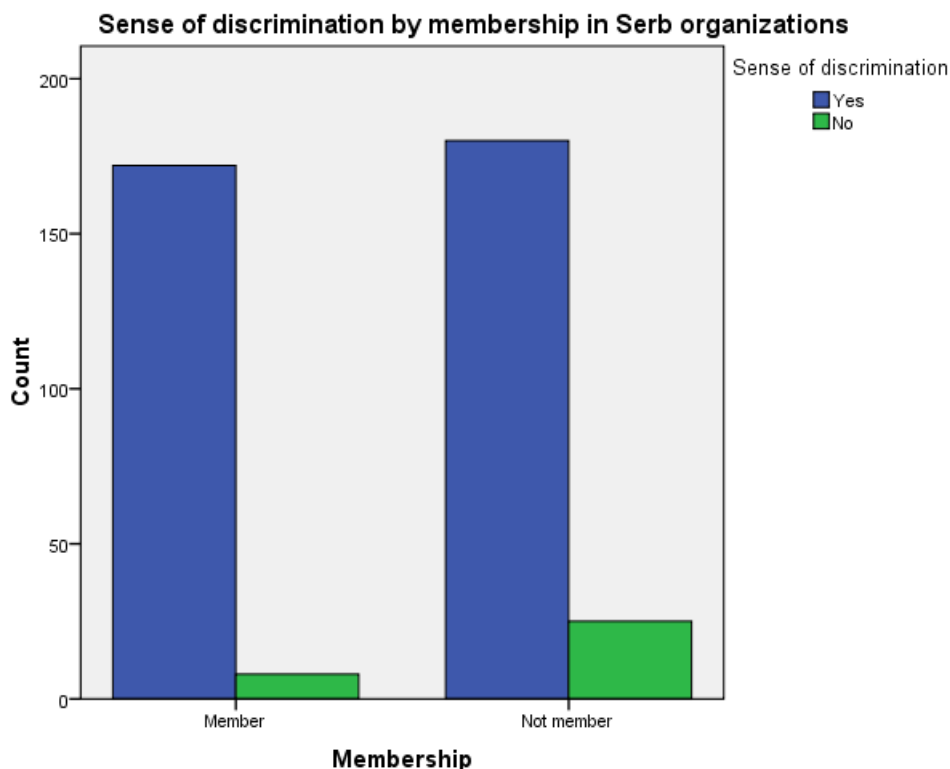
Fig. 59



Looking at the graph representing the contingency between sense of discrimination and membership in Serb organization in Croatia (See Fig. 60), once more we find no association between the two variables. It only shows us that most of the members<sup>112</sup> (95,6% within category) and most of the non-members (87,8% within category) feel a sense of discrimination. However, non-members tend to not feel discriminated to a larger extent than members (75,8% within category vs. 24,2% within category).

<sup>112</sup> For convenience, the previously seen categories of “Active member” and “Only formal member” have been merged in a single category of positive membership.

Fig. 60



### c) Grant of constitutive status to Serbs in Croatia

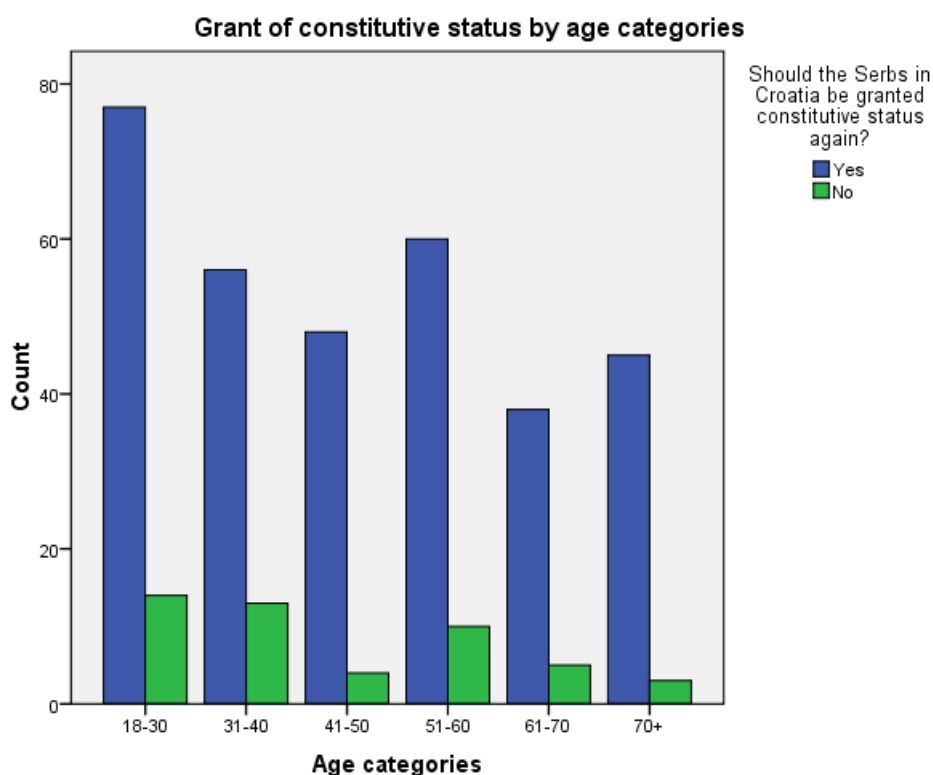
Another trend that has been registered in the previous section is the high number of respondents (86,6% of total) who think that Serbs should be granted again the status of constitutive people in Croatia. We have already illustrated the reasons justifying both a positive and a negative answer offered by the respondents, so we know the cause behind this trend. However, in order to verify if there is any association between this indicator of Serb modern national identity and other independent variables that might have influenced the respondents' attitudes, we need to proceed with an ulterior analysis of the indicator.

When looking at the graph expressing the cross-tabulation between the grant of constitutive status to the Serbs in Croatia and the age category of the respondents (See Fig. 61), we can't see any association between the two variables since the age categories are almost equally distributed among both the categories of "Yes" and "No" on the X axis. The only visible data is the increase of the



respondents aged 31-40 in their wish not to grant constitutive status to the Serbs (18,8% within age category), as well as of those aged 61-70 (14,3% within age category). Interestingly, the highest registered percentage of respondents who would like the Serbs to be granted constitutive status again is of those aged 70+ (93,8% within age category).

**Fig. 61**



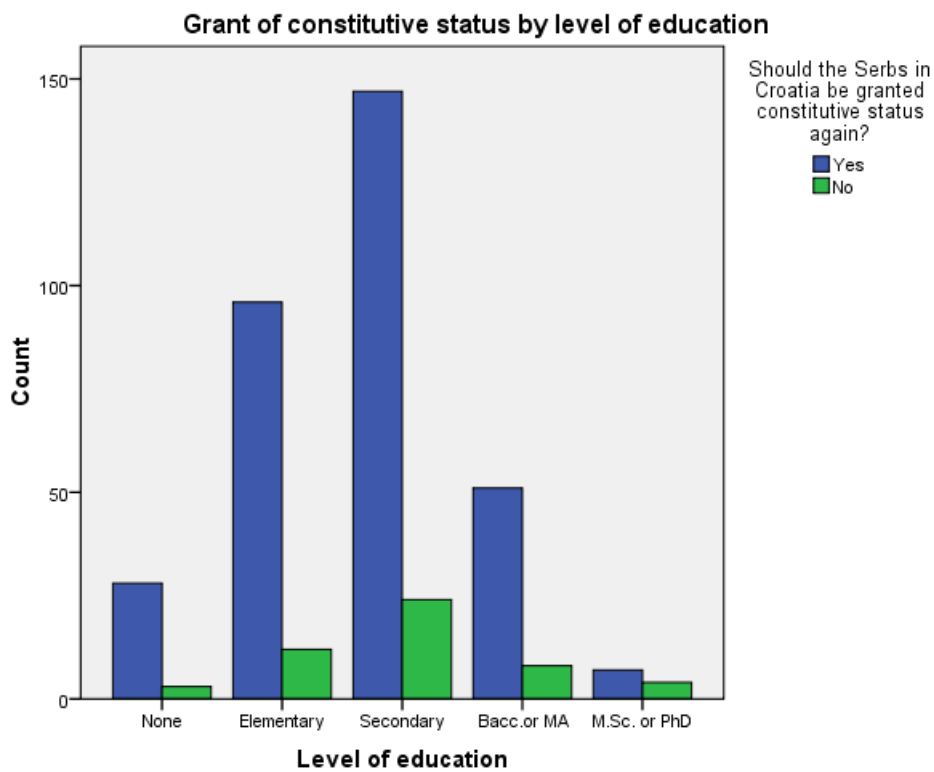
Neither the following graph illustrating the contingency between grant of constitutive status and level of education (See Fig. 62) offers any visible association between the two variables. However, in the following table that expresses the percentages within categories (and not the number of cases as in the graph), it is possible to see that the percentage of those respondents who think that Serbs should be granted constitutive status decreases proportionally with their level of education: the less educated they are, the more they think that Serbs should be granted constitutive status and vice versa. Another interesting fact that resulted as a consequence is that the respondents with the

highest level of education represent the highest percentage within category of those who opted for not granting constitutive status to the Serbs in Croatia.

**Constitutiveness \* Education Crosstabulation**

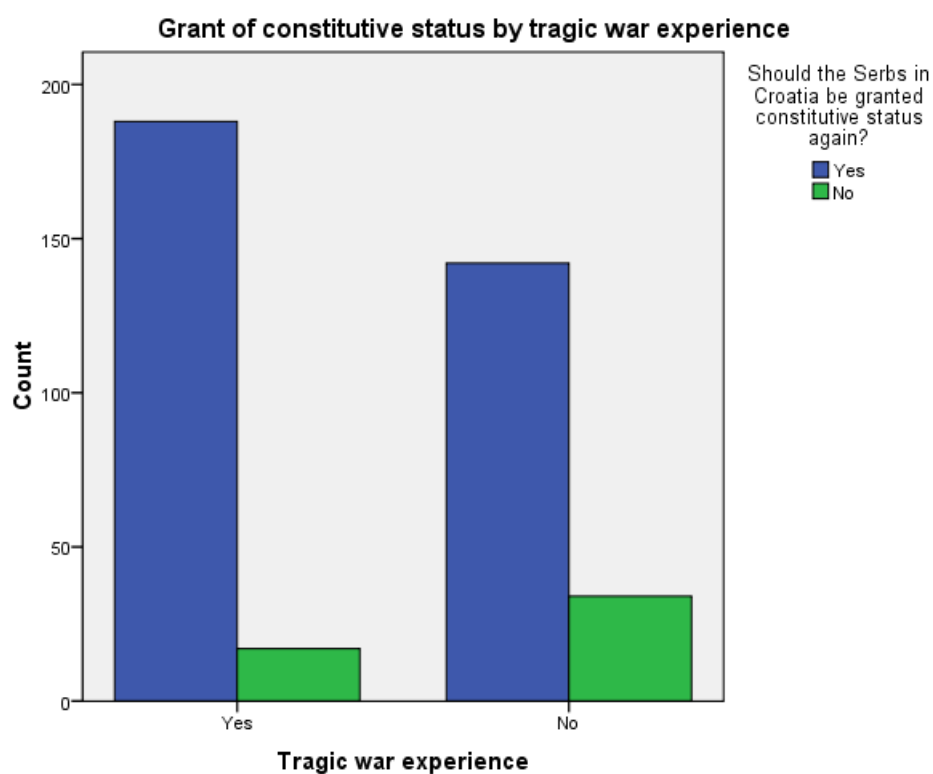
			Education					Total
			None	Elementary	Secondary	Bacc.or MA	Mr.Sc.or PhD	
Grant of constitutive status	Yes	Count	28	96	147	51	7	329
		% within Education	90,3%	88,9%	86,0%	86,4%	63,6%	86,6%
	No	Count	3	12	24	8	4	51
		% within Education	9,7%	11,1%	14,0%	13,6%	36,4%	13,4%
Total	Count	31	108	171	59	11	380	
	% within Education	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	

**Fig. 62**



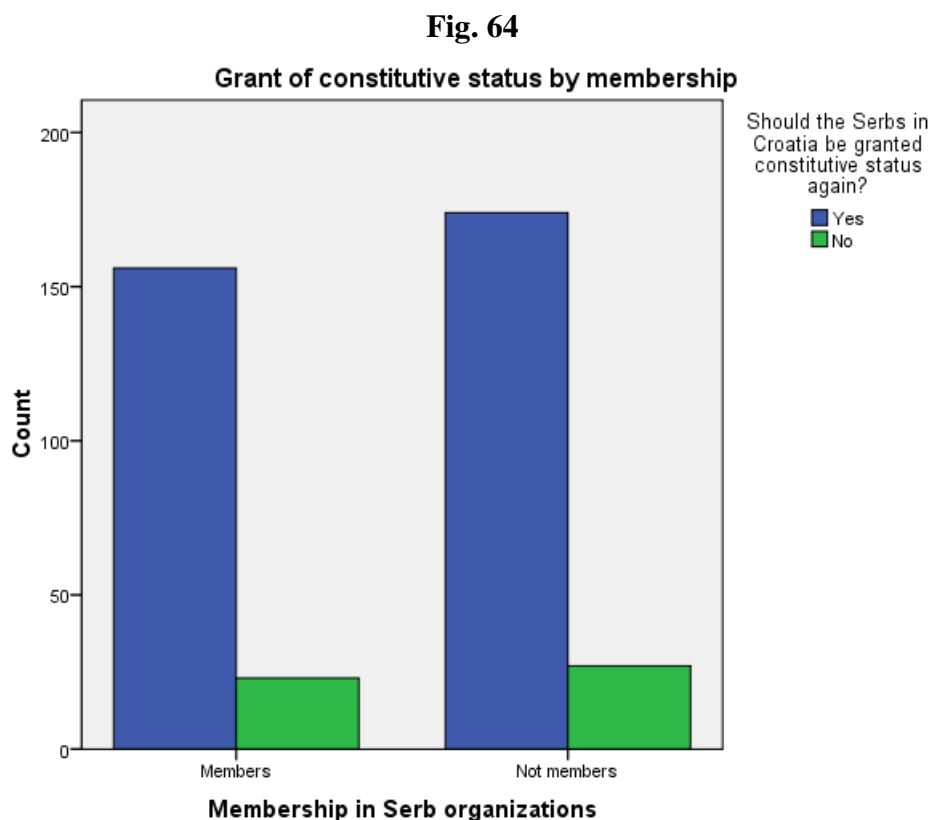
The following graph (See Fig. 63) illustrates the contingency between the grant of constitutive status and the tragic war experience. The number of the respondents who experienced a war tragedy is higher than the number of those who didn't experience a war correlated tragedy in both of the categories. However, the percentage of those who didn't experience a war tragedy is higher in the category of those who wouldn't grant constitutive status (66,7% within category) rather in the one who would (43% within category), which shows a preponderance of the respondents who suffered a tragic war experience to opt for the positive grant of constitutive status to Serbs in Croatia (57% within category).

**Fig. 63**



The last graph illustrates the cross-tabulation between the variables grant of constitutive status and membership in Serb organizations in Croatia (See Fig. 64). The very closed obtained percentages for members (47,3% within category) and not members (52,7% within category) who opted for the positive grant of constitutive status indicate that there is no association between the two variables,

and therefore the membership in a Serb organization doesn't influence the positive opinion of those who believe that Serbs should be granted constitutive status.

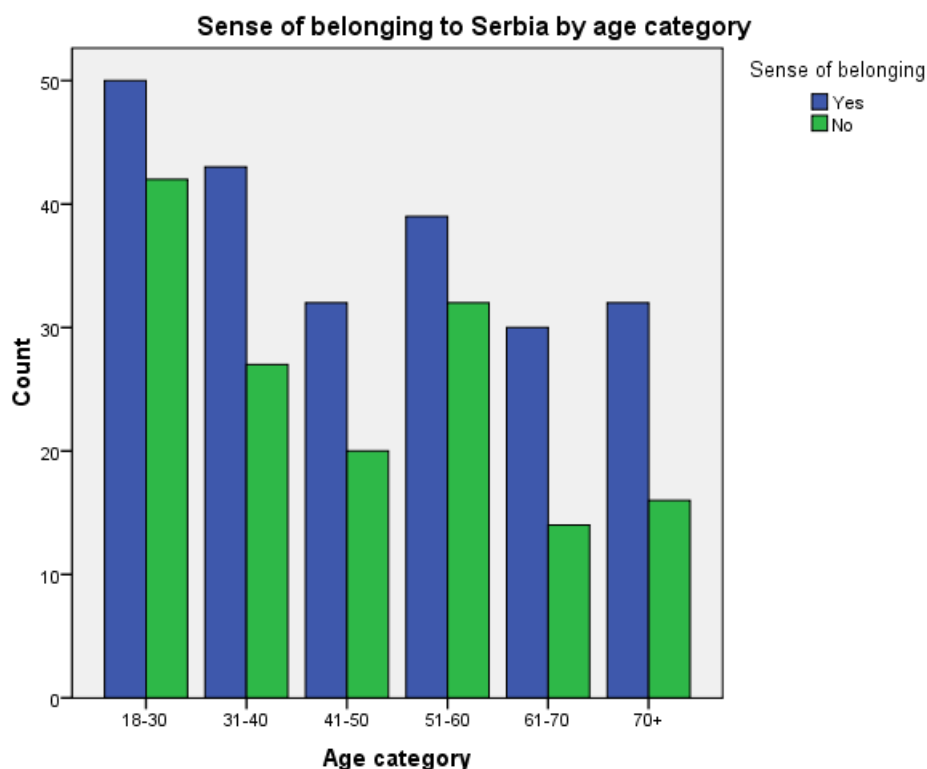


**d) Sense of belonging to Serbia**

Another aspect of modern Serb national identity in Croatia that was measured in the previous sections is the sense of belonging to Serbia, and more precisely a numerically significant percentage of respondents who feel a sense of belonging to Serbia (59,9% of total). As in the previous case with the grant of constitutive status, the respondents were also asked to offer a reason for their positive or negative answer. But aside from the given reasons which justify the given answers, it is unknown what influences this trend and what it is associated with. Hopefully the following cross tabulations will offer some new information to better understand this trend.

The graph illustrating the contingency between the sense of belonging to Serbia and the age category of the respondents (See Fig. 65), shows that most of the respondents do feel a sense of belonging to Serbia regardless of their age. The age categories on both sides of the X axis (“Yes” and “No”) are equally distributed, not showing any significant change. The only significant data is that the most elderly respondents (61-70 and 70+) registered the highest percentages within age category of sense of belonging to Serbia (respectively 68,2% and 66,7%), while the youngest age category (18-30) registered the lowest percentage within age category (54,3%) but the highest percentage within sense of belonging (22,1%) due to the numerical predominance of the age category 18-30.

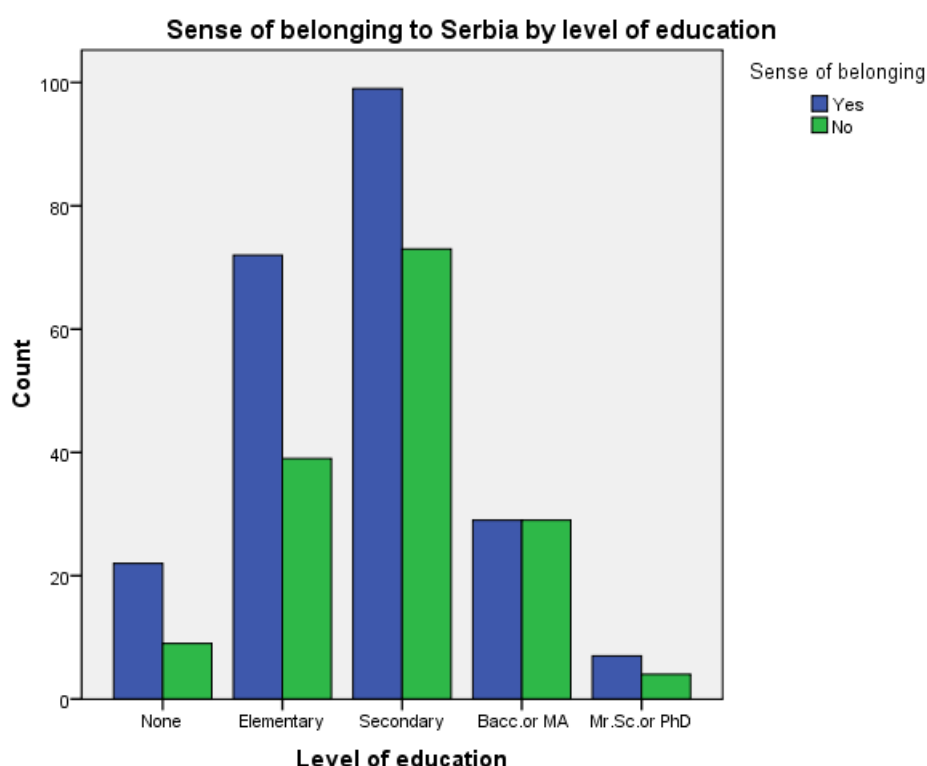
**Fig. 65**



The graph illustrating the contingency between the sense of belonging to Serbia and level of education of the respondents (See Fig. 66), shows a similar distribution in both the “Yes” and “No” categories, with the only exception of the respondents with a Bachelor’s or MA degree who are

numerically equal in both the categories (50% within category). It has also been noticed that the percentage of those who feel a sense of belonging decreases with the increase of the level of education, with the only exception of the category of Mr. SC. or PhD where an additional increase has been recorded. The respondents with the highest level of education show a moderately strong sense of belonging to Serbia (63,6% within category).

**Fig. 66**

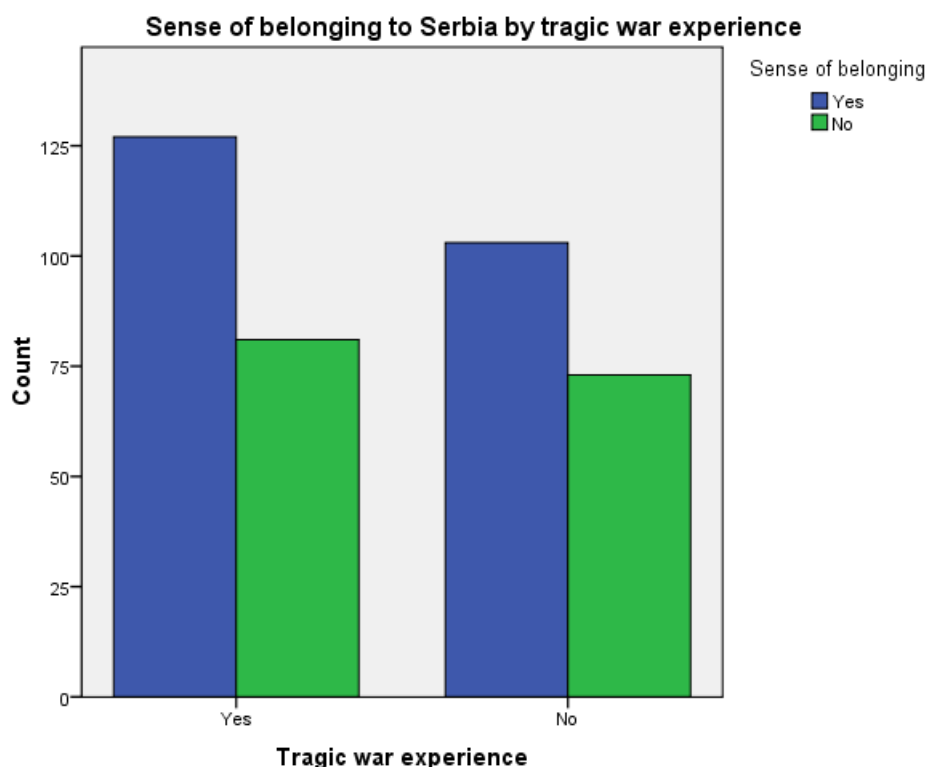


The following chart illustrates the relationship between the sense of belonging to Serbia and tragic war experience (See Fig. 67), in order to verify if the respondents who experienced a war related tragedy are more likely to feel a sense of belonging to Serbia rather than those who didn't.

The count of the cases is represented on the Y axis, as well as the percentages within categories, show a similar trend among both the categories of respondents: 61,1% of the respondents with a tragic war experience feel a sense of belonging to Serbia as well as the 58,5% respondents who didn't experience a tragic war experience. However, the positive sense of belonging to Serbia is

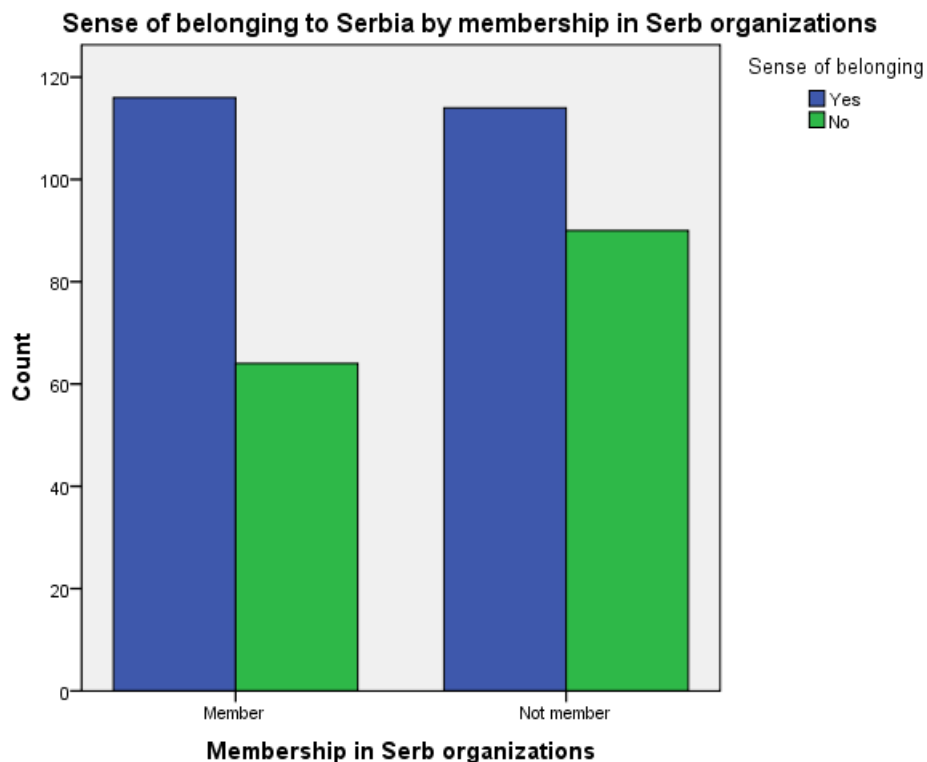
slightly higher among those who experienced a tragic war experience (55,2% within category) but at the same time 52,6% of the respondents who experienced a war tragedy don't feel any sense of belonging to Serbia. These results may seem confusing because the data was acquainted from 2 different cross-tabulations in order to obtain a further insight: tragic war experience by sense of belonging to Serbia and vice versa.

**Fig. 67**



Looking at the following graph representing the contingency between sense of belonging to Serbia and membership in Serb organizations in Croatia (See Fig. 68), we can see that we have almost the same amount of members (50,4% within category) and not members (49,6% within category) with a sense of belonging to Serbia. However, the percentage of those who don't feel any sense of belonging to Serbia is higher among the not members (58,4%).

Fig. 68



A further correlation that was decided to check and that resulted in being significant is the one between the sense of belonging to Serbia and a longer period of stay in Serbia. From the obtained contingency table<sup>113</sup> it was noted that 77.4% of the respondents who stayed longer in Serbia feel a sense of belonging to Serbia in contrast to the 22.6% who feel no affiliation to it. On the other hand, 53% of the respondents who don't feel any sense of belonging to Serbia haven't stayed a longer period of time in Serbia.

In order to check if this difference is statistically significant and whether it refers to the entire population, a chi-square test was conducted.

<sup>113</sup> Not showed in the text



Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	36,081 <sup>a</sup>	1	,000		
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	34,823	1	,000		
Likelihood Ratio	37,337	1	,000		
Fisher's Exact Test				,000	,000
Linear-by-Linear Association	35,986	1	,000		
N of Valid Cases	381				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 65,43.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

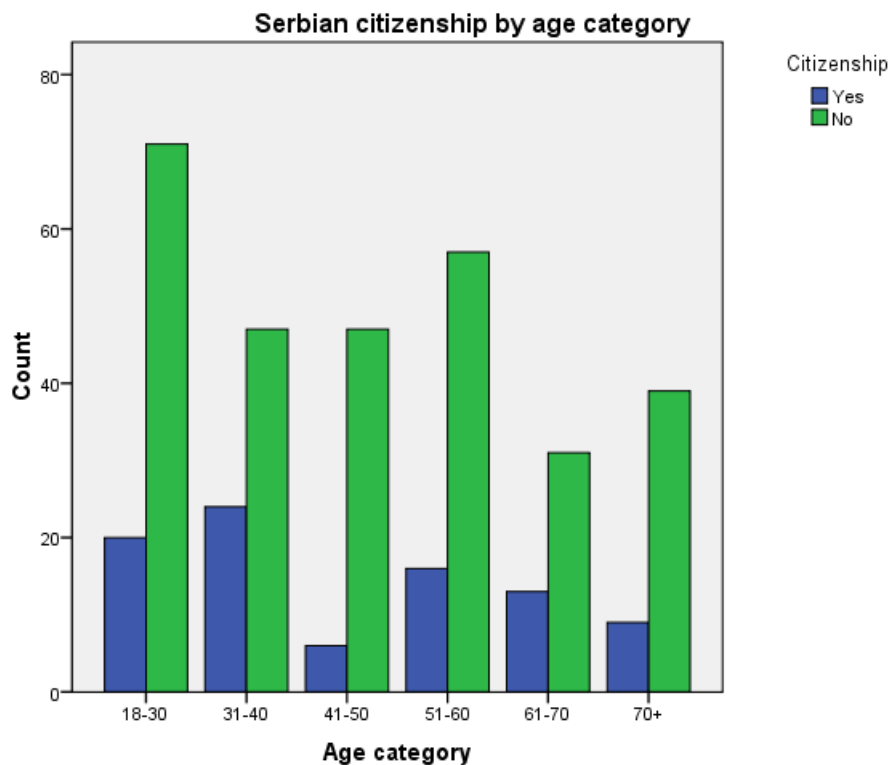
Since the Chi Square test shows significant differences (Sig. <0.005), it is accepted the research hypothesis that the variables are not independent and thus there is an association between the sense of belonging to Serbia and the longer period spent in Serbia.

### e) Serbian citizenship

The possession of a dual citizenship is a modern aspect of national identity, and although the percentage of the respondents who claimed to have Serbian citizenship is quiet low (23,7% of total), it can be an interesting source of new and useful information regarding the registered trend.

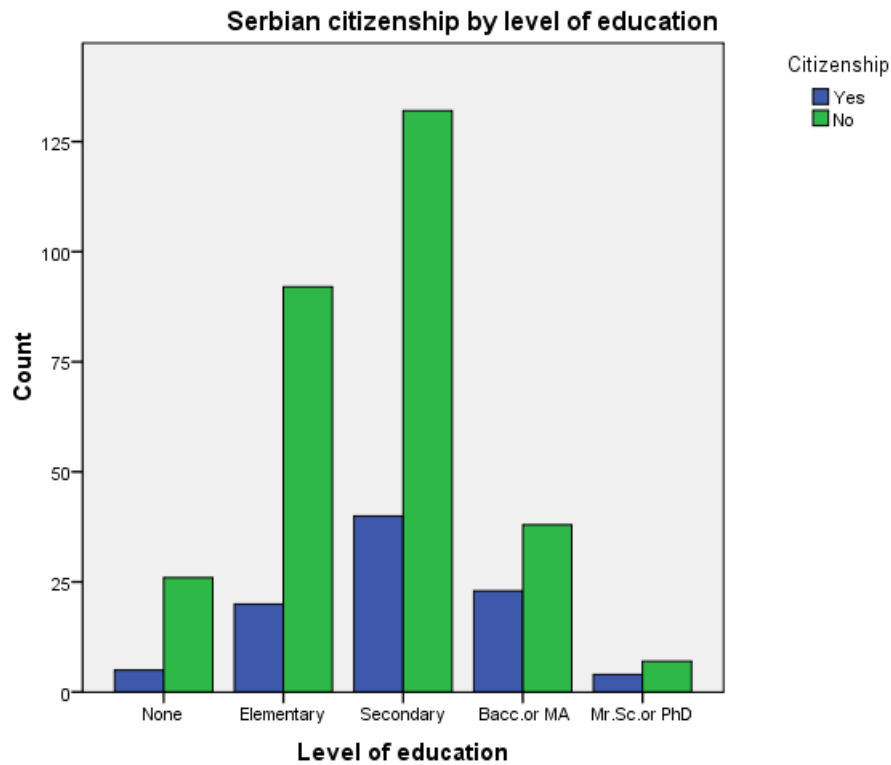
As we have previously seen, the age categories of the respondents are very broad and therefore don't leave much possibility to significant correlation, but they can offer some interesting information. The graph representing the cross-tabulation of Serbian citizenship and age category (See Fig. 69), shows that the respondents aged between 31-40 represent the highest percentage of respondents in possession of a Serbian citizenship (33,8% within category). The age category 51-60 follows (29,5% within category), while the age category 41-50 (11,3% within category) represents the smallest percentage of respondents with a Serbian citizenship.

Fig. 69

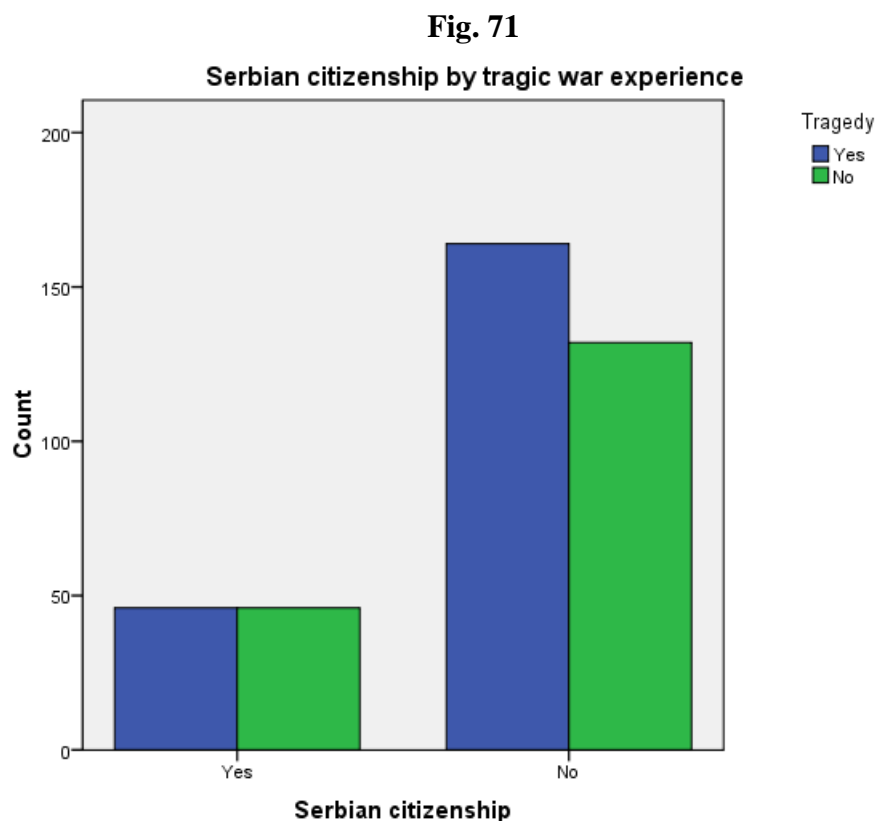


Concerning the correlation between Serbian citizenship and level of education of the respondents (See Fig. 70), the highest percentage within category has been registered among the highest levels of education: 37,7% of Bacc. or MA and 36,4% of M.Sc. or PhD are in possession of Serbian citizenship. This could be related to the fact that most of them gained their university degrees in Serbia (12,2% of the total reasons given for a longer period of stay included schooling). This trend can be confirmed by the fact that lower levels of education show a linear decrease in percentage of those in possession of a Serbian citizenship (only 16,1% within category of the respondents without any degree have Serbian citizenship).

Fig. 70



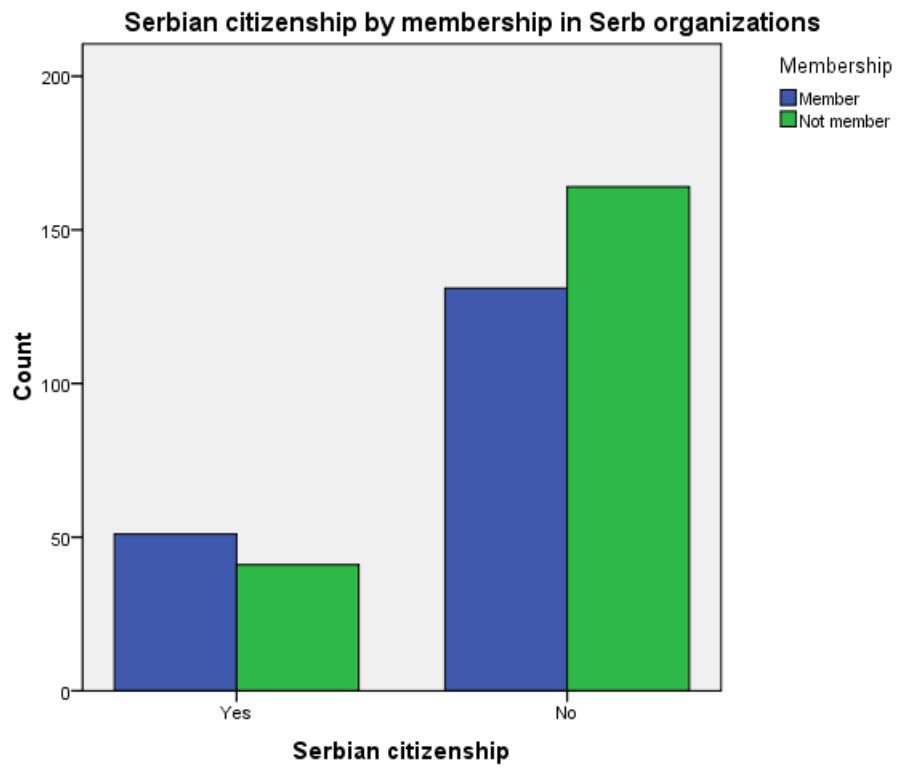
The graph illustrating the results from the contingency table between possession of Serbian citizenship and tragic war experience (See Fig. 71) shows no correlation between the two variables. The category of “Yes” on the X axis shows the same numerical distribution of cases who suffered a war related tragedy as well of those who didn’t. Even the distribution among the category of “No” is similar among the two groups of respondents: 78,1% within category with a tragic war experience and 74,2% who didn’t experience it.



When looking at the graph illustrating the contingency between Serbian citizenship and membership in Serb organizations in Croatia (See Fig. 72), there is a slighter predominance of members in Serb organization who possess Serbian citizenship (28% within category) in contrast of the 20% of not members who also possess it. On the other hand, among the respondents who don't have Serbian citizenship, the most numerous are the non members (80% within category).

However the difference is too weak to claim that membership affects the possession of Serbian citizenship, which is also due to the small percentage of respondents who claimed to have Serbian citizenship (23,8% of the total), as well as the almost equal distribution of members and non members among the respondents (47% vs. 53%).

**Fig. 72**



### **5.3.4 Index of modernity and traditionalism**

After analyzing in the previous section some of the indicators of modern national identity among the Serbs in Croatia, this section will deal with the main objective of this research: to verify the predominant character of Serb national identity character. It has been pre-assumed that Serb national identity is a typical example of Smith's (Smith, 1991) division between Western-civic model and Eastern-ethnic model of nation, whereas the non-Western concept of national identity is primarily based on subjective feeling relating to genetic lineage and common ancestors and nation is defined as a collective identity transmitted through myths, archetypes, shared history, culture and language.

Also according to Milošević-Đorđević (Milošević-Đorđević, 2007), the Serb national identity is dominated by primordial concepts such as birth, history, tradition, territory and religion, while suppressing the importance of the state, culture and politics. National identity in Serbia is best described as primordial or pre-political.

Since the Serb national identity in Croatia has never been studied closely before and its nature can only be assumed, this section will verify the predominant nature of Serb national identity: its modernity or rather its traditionalism.

The indexes were created by calculating the averages for each respondent obtained from their answer (the number of each answer) on specific variables: on "traditional" variables for the index of traditionalism, and on "modern" ones for the index of modernity. The smaller the value (because 1 = "very"), the greater the intensity of traditionalism (for example, "we consider that Serbian oral tradition is very important (1)", etc.). The traditional variables include the respondents' attitudes dealing with the so called ethnic or primordial aspects of identity: importance of religion, importance of the Serbian Orthodox Church, importance of Serbian language and Cyrillic script,

importance of Serbian national myths and epic, importance of Serbian tradition and customs, importance of the history of Serbs in Croatia and familiarity with the Serb privileged status in Croatia.

The modern variables include the following ones dealing with national institutions, supranational and international identification: emotional attachment to Croatian state symbols, emotional attachment to Serbian state symbols (reversed<sup>114</sup>), familiarity with Serbian organizations in Croatia (reversed), and importance of Serbian culture in Croatia<sup>115</sup> (reversed). The index of modernity was more difficult to calculate due to the ambiguous concept of “modernity” regarding Serb national identity in Croatia. Since Serbs in Croatia are mainly a traditional national minority with strong historical ties with their country of origin, it was necessary to identify some elements that would indicate a different, more modern attitude. Thus, modernity is represented by these elements that are not traditional and are linked to the state, but not the one of origin: it should represent Serb acceptance of Croatia as their own country and the acceptance of their new status in Croatia, i.e. as a national minority.

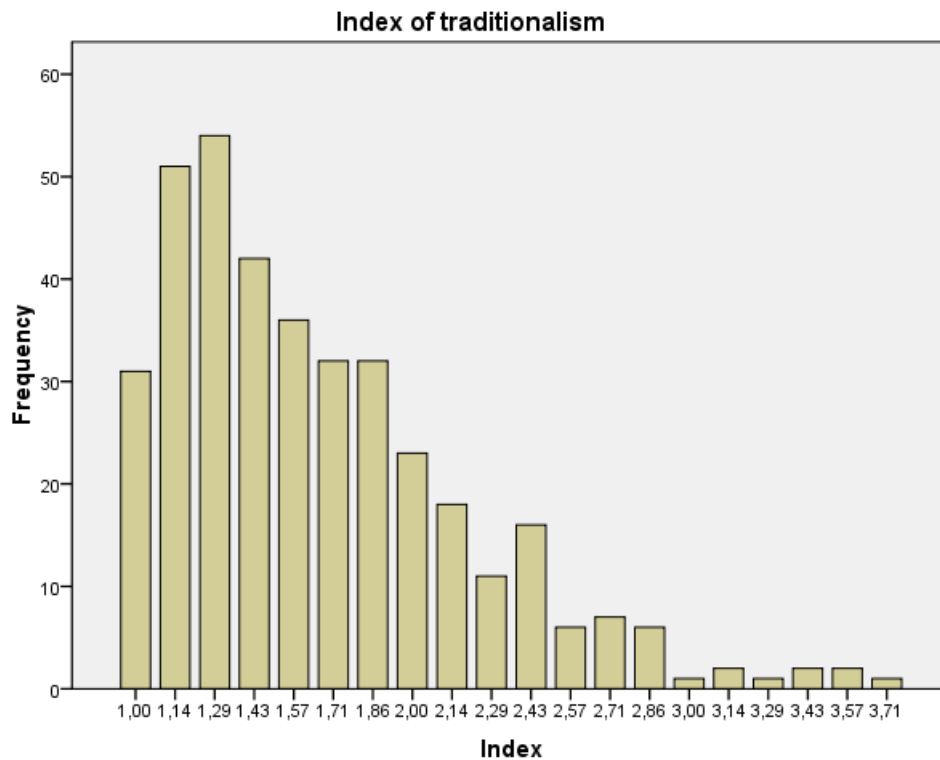
The next chart (See Fig. 73) represents the value of the calculated index of traditionalism for the whole sample. The calculated average is 1,6578 which indicates a very high degree of traditionalism among the respondents (being 1 the highest value and 4 the lowest).

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<sup>114</sup> The given value was put in reversed order: 1=not at all, 2=little, 3=moderately, 4=very, because for these variables a higher value indicates modernity.

<sup>115</sup> The notion of culture used here involves “modern” achievements in the sphere of literature, folklore, music, arts, etc. and is therefore to be separated by the categories of Serbian language and Cyrillic script that rather belong among the indicators of traditional Serb national identity. Moreover, a common mass and civil culture is a characteristic of modern national identity, not the attachment to the own minority’s culture. Therefore, a high attachment to Serbian culture implies a low or inexistent attachment to a common mass and civil culture in Croatia.

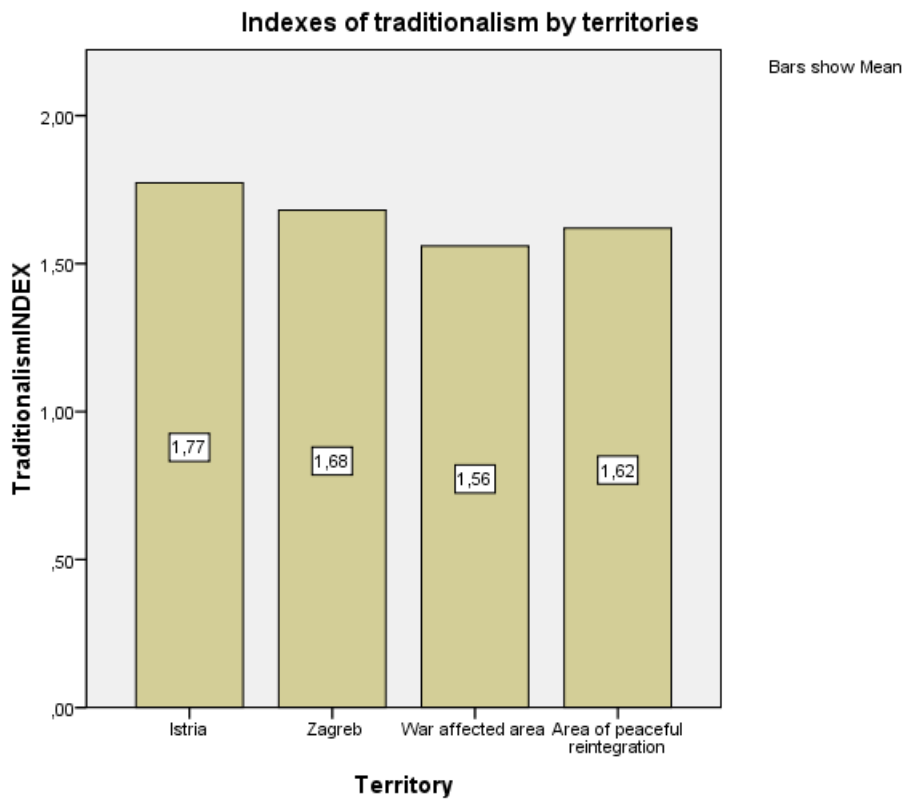
Fig. 73



The next chart (See Fig. 74) represents the value of the calculated index of traditionalism per territories. As we can see, the War affected area has the highest index of traditionalism (1,56) which makes it the most traditional territory in terms of national identity, when compared to the other three studied territories. The least traditional among the four territories is Istria, with an average index of 1,77 that still indicates a high traditional national identity. All the territories however show a high index of traditionalism (Zagreb with a value of 1,68 and the Area of peaceful reintegration with 1,62), which means that the Serbs in Croatia have a predominantly traditional national identity regardless of the territorial distribution.

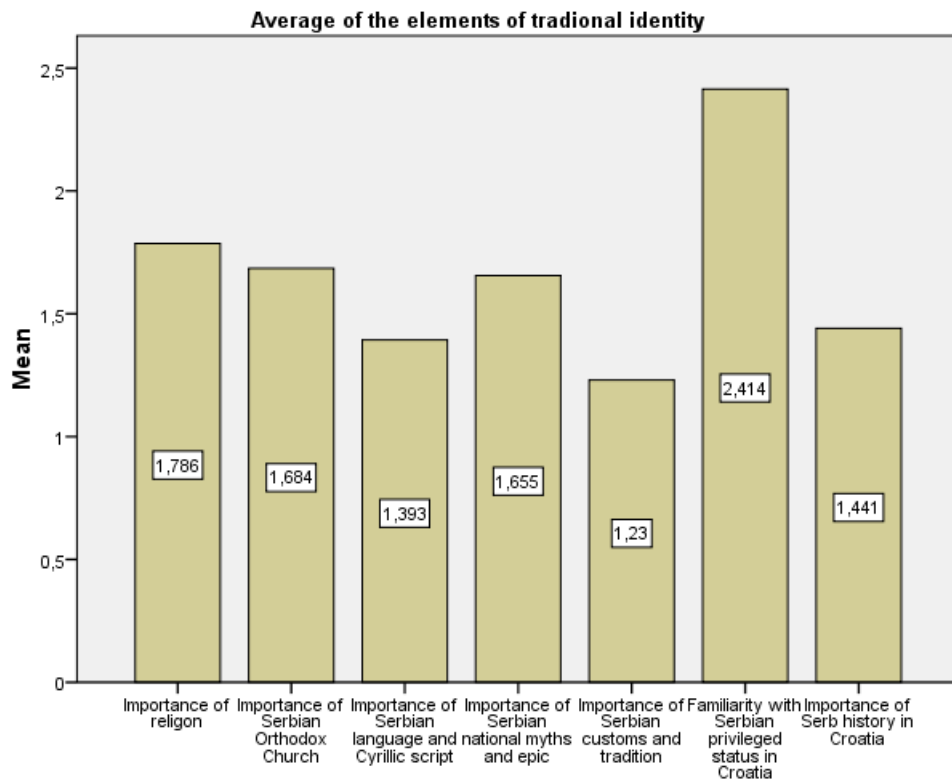


**Fig. 74**



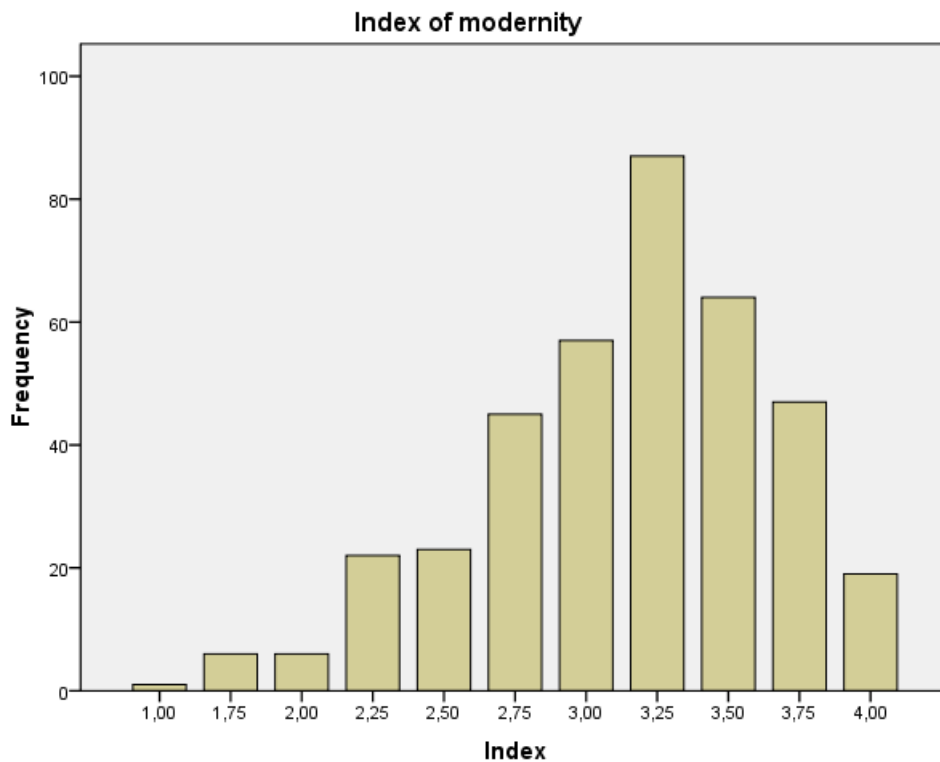
The following chart (See Fig. 75) shows a scale of the elements (variables) that form the index of traditionalism in order to understand what element prevailed. The respondents opted most for the importance of Serbian customs and tradition (1,23) which is the most prevailing element of traditional Serb national identity in Croatia. The least “traditional” element seems to be Serbian privileged status in Croatia (2,414) due to the scarce familiarity shown by the respondents about this aspect (34% of the total respondents have “moderate” familiarity with its meaning).

**Fig. 75**



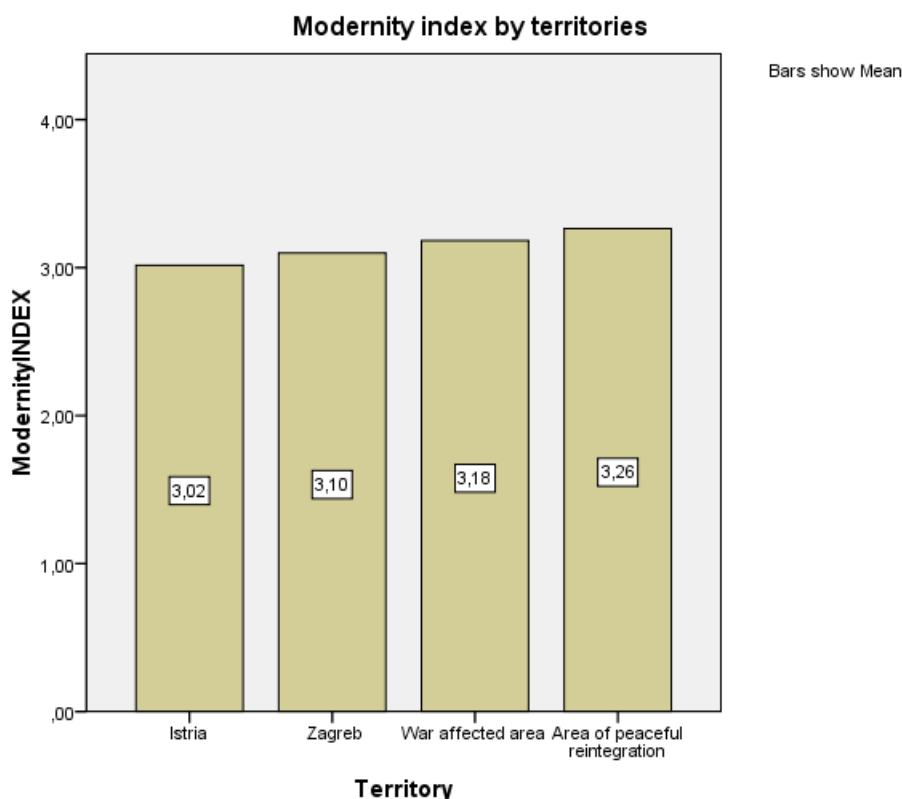
The next chart (See Fig. 76) represents the value of the calculated index of modernity for the whole sample. The obtained average is 3,1412 which represents a low degree of modernity among the respondents (being 1 the highest value and 4 the lowest).

Fig. 76



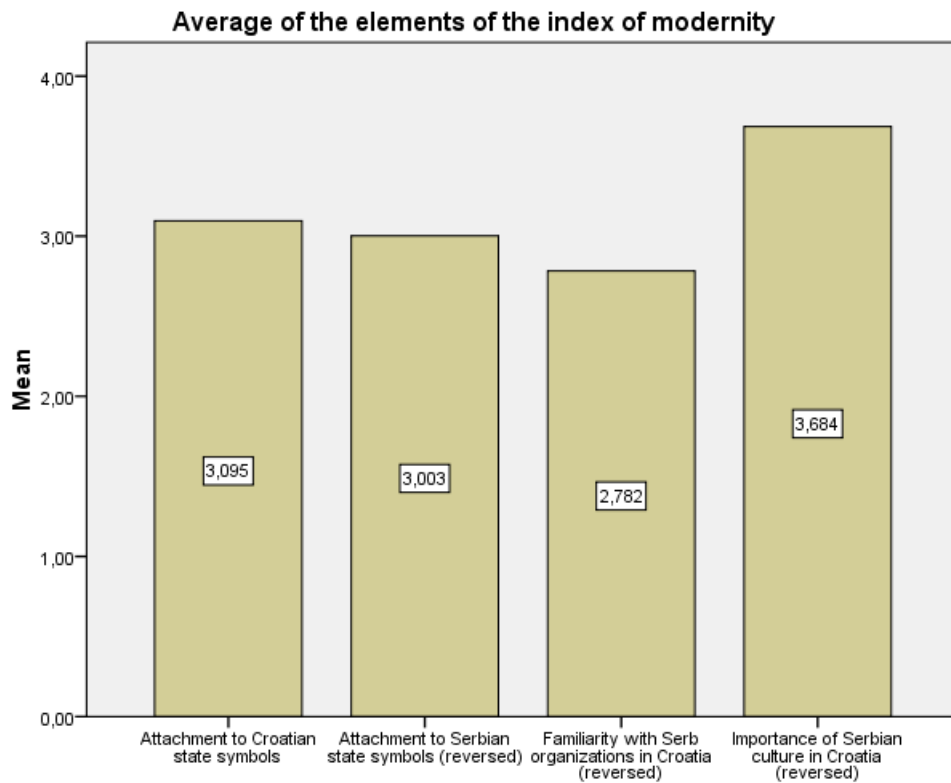
The next chart (See Fig. 77) represents the value of the calculated index of modernity per territories. Although all the territories show a low degree of modernity with minor difference among each other, the Area of peaceful reintegration proved to be the least modern (3,26) among the studied territories. The most modern territory is Istria with an average value of 3,02, followed by Zagreb (3,10) and the War affected area (3,18).

Fig. 77



The following chart (See Fig. 78) illustrates a scale of the elements (variables) that form the index of modernity in order to see what element prevailed. The respondents gave higher values to the importance of Serb organizations in Croatia (2,782), making it the most dominant element within the modernity index. Due to the fact that the value for the importance of Serbian culture in Croatia was reversed because its higher value represents rather a traditional aspect than a modern one, it proved to be the least modern element (3,684). This means that Serbs in Croatia find their culture very important, but this is an aspect of rather traditional identity than modern. This is why a higher value of importance given to this element resulted in a lower degree of modernity.

Fig. 78



In conclusion, a correlation was done between the index of traditionalism and the index of modernity by using the Pearson's Correlation. Looking at the boxes that contain numbers that represent variable crossings, we are interested in the crossing between the "modernity index" variable and the "traditionalism index" variable. They will have the same information so we really only need to read from one. In these boxes, we will see a value for Pearson's  $r$ , a Sig. (2-tailed) value and a number (N) value.

**Correlations**

		<i>ModernityINDEX</i>	<i>TraditionalismINDEX</i>
<i>ModernityINDEX</i>	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	1	-,726**
	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>		,000
	<i>N</i>	377	366
<i>TraditionalismINDEX</i>	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	-,726**	1
	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	,000	
	<i>N</i>	366	374

\*\*. *Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

The obtained correlation<sup>116</sup> between the two indexes (-0,726) is high, negative and significant, which means that the variables are related. Since the Pearson correlation is negative, this means that as one variable increases in value, the second variable decreases in value. This is called a negative correlation. That means, increases or decreases in one variable do significantly relate to increases or decreases in our second variable. More specifically, when one increases in value, the value of the other decreases, thus they are inversely proportional. This means that the more traditional the respondents are, the least modern they are, and vice versa.

The Sig. (2-tailed) value will tell us if there is a statistically significant correlation between our two variables. Since our Sig. value is lower than 0,05 (0,000), we can conclude that there is a statistically significant correlations between our two variables..

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<sup>116</sup> The correlation coefficient can range from -1 to +1, with -1 indicating a perfect negative correlation, +1 indicating a perfect positive correlation, and 0 indicating no correlation at all.

### 5.3.4 Correlations between indexes and variables

After we obtained the indexes that indicate the degree of traditionalism and modernity of Serb national identity in Croatia, it is possible to combine them with few of the most significant variables and assess whether the means of two groups are statistically different from each other by using the T-test. Since this study includes a fairly large group of respondents divided in several categories according to the studied aspect, the independent means t-test is the best choice to answer to this question: Is there any difference between the means of the two populations of which our data is a random sample? The t-test is also called a test of inference because we are trying to discover if populations are different by studying samples from the populations, i.e., what we find to be true about our samples we will assume to be true about the population.

The T-test relies always on two hypotheses: 1. the means of the two groups are not significantly different (Null); and 2. The means of the two groups are significantly different (Alternate). The obtained value whether rejects or confirm one of the two hypotheses.

But before we can interpret the results of the t-test, first we will need to look at the column labeled Levene's Test for Equality of Variances which is a test that determines if the two conditions have about the same or different amounts of variability between scores. The Levene's Test tells us if we have met the assumption that the two groups have approximately equal variance on the dependent variable. If the Levene's Test is significant (the value under "Sig." is less than 0,05), the two variances are significantly different. If it is not significant (Sig. is greater than 0,05), the two variances are not significantly different; that is, the two variances are approximately equal. If the Levene's test is not significant, it means that the two groups are independent of one another.

A value greater than 0,05 (Sig. >0,05) means that the variability in two conditions is about the same, which means that the variability in the two conditions is not significantly different. Therefore, if the Sig. value is greater than 0,05, we read from the top row ("Equal variances assumed").

The results of our T-test will tell us if the means for the two groups were statistically different (significantly different) or if they were relatively the same. We look at the value in the box “Sig (2-Tailed) value”, which will tell us if the two condition means are statistically different.

If the P value is small, then it is unlikely that the observed difference is due to a coincidence of random sampling. Thus, the difference is a not coincidence, and that the populations have different means.

#### **a) Modern and traditional identity vs. national self-identification**

As we have previously seen, the variable national self-identification had a very weak or none association with all the variables that we correlated by using the Chi square test and the Phi coefficient. In this section, the two most numerous national categories of the respondents, i.e. Serbs and Croatian Serbs, will be analyzed by using the T-test in order to identify differences in means of modernity and traditionalism between the two categories. The question that needs to be answered is the following: Is there any difference among the “Serbs” and the “Croatian Serbs” regarding modern and traditional identity?

In the table below, “Group Statistics”, is shown the condition mean for each of the two groups in the section. This output shows the magnitude of the difference between conditions and we can see which group has a higher mean. Here the variables being compared are identified, the Mean, N, Standard Deviation, and Standard Error of the Mean for each variable is given.

We can see that the average value of the index of modernity expressed by the “Serbs” is 3,2234, while the one expressed by the “Croatian Serbs” is 3,0430. This obtained result indicates that the Serbs are less modern than Croatian Serbs (being 1 the highest value and 4 the lowest) and vice versa.



Group Statistics

NationalityCorrelation		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
ModernityINDEX	Serb	235	3,2234	,49741	,03245
	Croatian Serb	128	3,0430	,49317	,04359

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
								95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
ModernityINDEX	Equal variances assumed	,188	,665	3,312	361	,001	,18044	,05448	,07330	,28757
	Equal variances not assumed			3,320	262,920	,001	,18044	,05434	,07344	,28744

Since the Levene's test showed a value higher than 0,05 (Sig. 0,665), we look the results obtained in the first row ("Equal variances assumed").The p-value is 0,001 (Sig.) and, therefore, the difference between the two means is statistically and significantly different from zero at the 5% level of significance. The group means are significantly different as the value in the "Sig. (2-tailed)" row is less than 0.05. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative is accepted.

The larger the t-value the smaller the probability that the means of the two populations are the same. The result is significant  $t(361) = 3,312, p = 0,001$ . We reject the null hypothesis in favour of the alternative, and therefore affirm that the difference in modernity between Serbs and Croatian Serbs is significant enough to be applied to the whole population.

The next table show us that the mean for the Serbs is 1,58, while for the Croatian Serbs is 1,73, which means that the Serbs are more traditional than the Croatian Serbs (being 1 the maximum and 4 the minimum value).

**Group Statistics**

NationalityCorrelation		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
TraditionalismINDEX	Serb	232	1,58	,517	,034
	Croatian Serb	128	1,73	,508	,045

**Independent Samples Test**

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
								95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper	
TraditionalismINDEX	Equal variances assumed	,443	,506	-2,698	358	,007	-,153	,057	-,264	-,041
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,713	266,199	,007	-,153	,056	-,264	-,042

The Levene's test shows a value higher than 0,05 (0,506), so we look at the results in the first row.

The pi-value (Sig.) is 0,007 which is smaller than 0,05 and therefore there is a significant difference between the two groups. Thus the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative is accepted.

The obtained result is  $t(358)=-2,698$ ,  $pi=0,007$ . The t-value is negative because the first mean is smaller than the second.

So we can say that there is a significant difference between the Serbs and the Croatian Serbs; the Serbs are more traditional than the Croatian Serbs, but we have previously seen that the Serbs are also less modern than the Croatian Serbs.

### b) Modern and traditional identity vs. age category

Since the age categories of the respondents represent more than three groups, instead of the T-test, the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) is used to determine whether there are any significant differences between the means. Just like the T-test, ANOVA tests the null hypothesis that the means of all the groups being compared are equal, and produces a statistic called F which is equivalent to the t-statistic from a t-test. But if the result tells us to reject the null hypothesis, we still don't know which of the means differ. We solve this problem by performing what is known as a "post hoc" (after the event) test, the Tukey test.

The following descriptive table (see below) provides some very useful descriptive statistics including the mean, standard deviation and 95% confidence intervals for the dependent variable (index of modernity) for each separate group (age categories) as well as when all groups are combined (Total). We can see that the respondents aged 18-30 are the most modern (3,0972), while the respondents aged 31-40 are the least modern (3,2210) in terms of national identity.

#### Descriptives

ModernityINDEX

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
18-30	90	3,0972	,58624	,06179	2,9744	3,2200	1,00	4,00
31-40	69	3,2210	,56480	,06799	3,0853	3,3567	1,75	4,00
41-50	53	3,1557	,51475	,07071	3,0138	3,2975	1,75	4,00
51-60	70	3,1357	,47527	,05681	3,0224	3,2490	1,75	4,00
61-70	43	3,1337	,47355	,07222	2,9880	3,2795	2,25	4,00
70+	44	3,1080	,41902	,06317	2,9806	3,2353	2,25	3,75
Total	369	3,1416	,51943	,02704	3,0884	3,1948	1,00	4,00

The table Test of Homogeneity of Variances (see below) shows the result of Levene's Test of Homogeneity of Variance, which tests for similar variances. If the significance value is greater than 0.05 (found in the Sig. column) then we have homogeneity of variances. The obtained value is 0,293, therefore the assumption of homogeneity of variance is met.

**Test of Homogeneity of Variances**

*ModernityINDEX*

<i>Levene Statistic</i>	<i>df1</i>	<i>df2</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
1,232	5	363	,293

**ANOVA**

*ModernityINDEX*

	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
<i>Between Groups</i>	,678	5	,136	,499	,777
<i>Within Groups</i>	98,611	363	,272		
<i>Total</i>	99,289	368			

The obtained result is ANOVA ( $F(5,363) = 0,499$ ,  $p = 0,777$ ), whereas 0,777 is higher than 0,05, therefore there are no statistically significant differences between the groups (age categories). We accept the null hypothesis and confirm that there is no difference in the mean of modernity index with the age categories of the respondents.

Looking at the below descriptive table, we can see that the age category 61-70 has the least index of traditionalism (1,54), while the age category 18-30 has the highest index (1,79), which means that the age category 61-70 is more traditional than the others, while the age category 18-30 is the least traditional when compared to the others.

**Descriptives**

*TraditionalismINDEX*

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
18-30	88	1,79	,599	,064	1,66	1,91	1	4
31-40	71	1,66	,554	,066	1,53	1,80	1	3
41-50	50	1,65	,518	,073	1,50	1,79	1	3
51-60	73	1,66	,478	,056	1,54	1,77	1	3
61-70	41	1,54	,499	,078	1,39	1,70	1	3
70+	45	1,55	,519	,077	1,39	1,70	1	3
Total	368	1,66	,539	,028	1,61	1,72	1	4

The test of homogeneity of Variances shows a value greater than 0,05 (0,699) and therefore the assumption of homogeneity of variance is met. We can continue with the ANOVA test.

**Test of Homogeneity of Variances**

*TraditionalismINDEX*

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
,602	5	362	,699

**ANOVA**

*TraditionalismINDEX*

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2,579	5	,516	1,794	,113
Within Groups	104,068	362	,287		
Total	106,648	367			

The obtained result is ANOVA (5,362)=1,794, p=0,113. The Sig. value is bigger than 0,05, therefore the null hypothesis is accepted that there are no significant differences in means between the given categories.

### c) Modern and traditional identity vs. level of education

Since the groups representing the level of education are more than three, we use once again the One-way ANOVA.

The following descriptive table shows us that the respondents with an elementary level of education have the highest mean of modernity index (3,0718), while those with a Mr.Sc. or PhD have the lowest mean of modernity index (3,5227). This means that the respondents with an elementary degree are more modern than those with a Mr.Sc. or PhD degree.

Descriptives

ModernityINDEX

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
None	30	3,1167	,54033	,09865	2,9149	3,3184	2,25	4,00
Elementary	108	3,0718	,54263	,05222	2,9682	3,1753	1,00	4,00
Secondary	168	3,1220	,51110	,03943	3,0442	3,1999	1,75	4,00
Bacc.or MA	59	3,2627	,45822	,05966	3,1433	3,3821	2,25	4,00
Mr.Sc. or PhD	11	3,5227	,28405	,08564	3,3319	3,7136	3,25	4,00
Total	376	3,1410	,51550	,02659	3,0887	3,1932	1,00	4,00

Before the One-way ANOVA can be performed, first we test whether the variances of means are similar (it is one of the assumptions that have to be met). The test of homogeneity of variances give us a value higher than 0,05 (0,258), therefore the assumption has been met and we may continue with the ANOVA.

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

ModernityINDEX

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1,330	4	371	,258

## ANOVA

*ModernityINDEX*

	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
<i>Between Groups</i>	3,073	4	,768	2,951	,020
<i>Within Groups</i>	96,581	371	,260		
<i>Total</i>	99,654	375			

The obtained value is ANOVA (4,371)=2,951,  $p=0,020$ . Since  $\text{Sig.} < 0,05$  the null hypothesis is rejected, and we accept that there are significant differences between the groups as whole.

In order to find out which groups differed from each other, we perform a Tukey post-hoc test (see below). We can see from the table below that there is a significant difference in modernity index between the respondents with an elementary school degree and those with a Mr.Sc. or PhD ( $P = 0.043$ ). However, there were no significant differences between the other groups. The obtained result tells us that the most significant difference in modernity index is between the group of those respondents with an elementary degree and those with a Mr.Sc. or PhD (as we have seen in the descriptive table).

Multiple Comparisons

ModernityINDEX

Tukey HSD

(I) Level of education	(J) Level of education	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
None	Elementary	,04491	,10530	,993	-,2437	,3336
	Secondary	-,00536	,10113	1,000	-,2826	,2719
	Bacc.or MA	-,14605	,11441	,706	-,4597	,1676
	Mr.Sc.or PhD	-,40606	,17984	,161	-,8991	,0869
Elementary	None	-,04491	,10530	,993	-,3336	,2437
	Secondary	-,05026	,06293	,931	-,2228	,1222
	Bacc.or MA	-,19095	,08260	,143	-,4174	,0355
	Mr.Sc.or PhD	-,45097 <sup>*</sup>	,16148	,043	-,8936	-,0083
Secondary	None	,00536	,10113	1,000	-,2719	,2826
	Elementary	,05026	,06293	,931	-,1222	,2228
	Bacc.or MA	-,14069	,07721	,362	-,3523	,0710
	Mr.Sc.or PhD	-,40070	,15879	,088	-,8360	,0346
Bacc.or MA	None	,14605	,11441	,706	-,1676	,4597
	Elementary	,19095	,08260	,143	-,0355	,4174
	Secondary	,14069	,07721	,362	-,0710	,3523
	Mr.Sc.or PhD	-,26002	,16757	,529	-,7194	,1993
Mr.Sc.or PhD	None	,40606	,17984	,161	-,0869	,8991
	Elementary	,45097 <sup>*</sup>	,16148	,043	,0083	,8936
	Secondary	,40070	,15879	,088	-,0346	,8360
	Bacc.or MA	,26002	,16757	,529	-,1993	,7194

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The below descriptive table for the index of traditionalism shows us that the group of respondents with a Mr.Sc. or PhD have the highest index of traditionalism (1,45), while those with a Bacc. or MA degree have the lowest index (1,69).



**Descriptives**

*TraditionalismINDEX*

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
None	30	1,60	,527	,096	1,40	1,79	1	3
Elementary	107	1,68	,599	,058	1,56	1,79	1	4
Secondary	167	1,66	,509	,039	1,58	1,74	1	4
Bacc.or MA	58	1,69	,543	,071	1,55	1,83	1	3
Mr.Sc. or PhD	11	1,45	,246	,074	1,29	1,62	1	2
Total	373	1,66	,537	,028	1,60	1,71	1	4

The test of homogeneity of variances shows us that the obtained value is smaller than 0,05 and therefore that the assumption of homogeneity of variance hasn't be met (we do not have similar variances). Most probably, the ANOVA won't give us significant results.

**Test of Homogeneity of Variances**

*TraditionalismINDEX*

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
2,492	4	368	,043

**ANOVA**

*TraditionalismINDEX*

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	,680	4	,170	,587	,672
Within Groups	106,440	368	,289		
Total	107,119	372			

As assumed, the obtained Sig. value is higher than 0,05 (0,672) and therefore we accept the null hypothesis that the differences between the groups are not statistically significant.

**d) Modern and traditional identity vs. country of birth**

In regard to the country of birth, it was decided to divide the respondents into two categories: those born in Croatia and those born outside Croatia. The following table shows us that the mean of those born in Croatia is higher than of those born outside Croatia, which means that the respondents born in Croatia are less modern (in terms of national identity) than those who were born outside Croatia. But to verify whether this difference is statistically significant, we must perform a T-test.

Country of birth		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
ModernityINDEX	Born in Croatia	266	3,1814	,49928	,03061
	Born outside Croatia	109	3,0505	,53983	,05171

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.						95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
ModernityINDEX	Equal variances assumed	,995	,319	2,251	373	,025	,13093	,05815	,01658	,24528
	Equal variances not assumed			2,179	187,592	,031	,13093	,06009	,01240	,24947

First we look at the Lavine's test to see if the two conditions have about the same or different amounts of variability between scores. Since its value is 0,319 (>0,05), the variability in our two conditions is not significantly different and therefore we look at the results in the first row ("Equal

variances assumed”). The Sig. (2-tailed) value is 0,025, which means that there is a statistically significant difference between our two conditions. More precisely, the difference in mean of modernity index between the respondents born in and outside Croatia is statistically different. As seen in the group statistics box, the respondents born in Croatia have a higher modernity index than those born outside Croatia and therefore are less modern.

Looking at the below group statistics box, we can see a slight difference in the index of traditionalism between the two categories: those born in Croatia have a lower index of traditionalism (therefore they are more traditional) than those born outside Croatia.

**Group Statistics**

	Country of birth	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
TraditionalismINDEX	Born in Croatia	265	1,62	,493	,030
	Born outside Croatia	107	1,75	,624	,060

**Independent Samples Test**

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
								95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper	
TraditionalismINDEX	Equal variances assumed	9,408	,002	-2,181	370	,030	-,133	,061	-,254	-,013
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,976	161,959	,050	-,133	,067	-,267	,000

The Levene’s test for equality of variances is 0,002 (<0,05), which means that the two variances are significantly different. Since the variances are not equal, we read the bottom row (“Equal variances not assumed”). The Sig. (2-tailed) is 0,050 which indicates that the differences between the means are not statistically significant. As seen in the descriptive statistic box, the difference in

traditionalism index between those born in and outside Croatia is not big enough to be statistically significant.

**e) Modern and traditional identity vs. membership**

We have divided the membership in Serbian organizations in Croatia between members and not members, and as the following table indicates, the members have a higher modernity index (3,3666)<sup>117</sup> than the not members (2,9407) and are therefore less modern. In order to verify the significance of this difference in means, we conduct a T-test.

	Membership	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
ModernityINDEX	Members	178	3,3666	,39250	,02942
	Not members	198	2,9407	,52953	,03763

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
								95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
ModernityINDEX	Equal variances assumed	15,251	,000	8,779	374	,000	,42592	,04851	,33052	,52131
	Equal variances not assumed			8,917	361,214	,000	,42592	,04777	,33198	,51985

Since the Levene's test for equality of variances indicates that Sig. is 0,000 and therefore less than 0,05, meaning that the two variances are significantly different, we look at the bottom row for the

<sup>117</sup> Since 1 equals "very important", 2 "moderately important", 3 "little important" and 4 equals "not important" at all, an index value closer to 4 indicates a very low degree of modernity.

result. The Sig. (2-tailed) is 0,000 which is lower than 0,05, thus there is a significant difference between the two groups (members and not members). We reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate that the differences of means between the two categories are statistically significant, which means that members in Serb organizations in Croatia are less modern than the not members.

Regarding the means indicating the index of traditionalism between the two categories, the box below shows that the members have a lower index of traditionalism (1,48) and are therefore more traditional than the not members (1,82). Once again the T-test will tell us whether the means are significantly different or not.

**Group Statistics**

Membership		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
TraditionalismINDEX	Member	175	1,48	,408	,031
	Not member	198	1,82	,584	,042

**Independent Samples Test**

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
TraditionalismINDEX	Equal variances assumed	22,516	,000	-6,461	371	,000	-,341	,053	-,445	-,237
	Equal variances not assumed			-6,600	352,786	,000	-,341	,052	-,443	-,240

Since the Levene's test indicates a value less than 0,05, (the two variances are significantly different), we look at the bottom row. The Sig.(2-tailed) is 0,000 (<0,05), which confirms the

alternate hypothesis that the means of the two groups are significantly different. Therefore, the difference between members and not members in the index of traditionalism is significant.

**f) Modern and traditional identity vs. tragic war experience**

If we look at the below group statistics box, we can see that the group of those respondents who experienced a war related tragedy has a higher modernity index (3,2122) of those who didn't experienced a war tragedy (3,0567), which means that the first group has a less modern national identity than the second one.

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
ModernityINDEX	Yes	205	3,2122	,46846	,03272
	No	172	3,0567	,55480	,04230

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
ModernityINDEX	Equal variances assumed	12,169	,001	2,951	375	,003	,15551	,05270	,05189	,25913
	Equal variances not assumed			2,908	335,993	,004	,15551	,05348	,05031	,26071

Since the Leven's test for equality of variances is smaller than 0,05 (0,001), indicating that the two variances are significantly different, we look at the results in the second row. The obtained Sig. (2-

tailed) value is 0,004, which confirms that there is a statistically significant difference between our two conditions.

The table below shows us that the respondents who experienced a war related tragedy are more traditional (1,55) than those who didn't experience it (1,78). The T-test will show us whether this difference is statistically significant.

	Tragedy	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
TraditionalismNDEX	Yes	203	1,55	,498	,035
	No	171	1,78	,553	,042

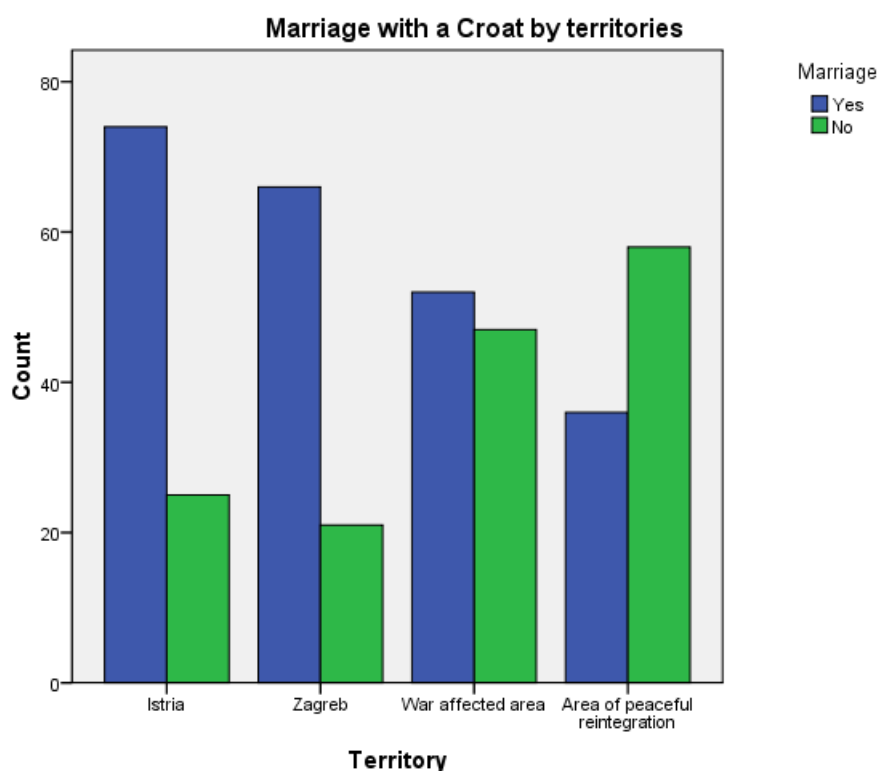
	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper	
TraditionalismNDEX	4,244	,040	-4,263	372	,000	-.232	,054	-.339	-,125	
Equal variances assumed										
Equal variances not assumed			-4,225	345,866	,000	-.232	,055	-.340	-,124	

Since the Sig. in the Levene's test is smaller than 0,05 (0,040), indicating that the variability in the two conditions is significantly different, we read the result from the bottom row. The obtained Sig. (2-tailed) value is 0,000 which indicates a statistically significant difference between our two conditions. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternate is accepted.

### 5.3.5 Degree of ethnic tolerance

Another set of questions asked to the respondents that were not analyzed in the previous sections, are the ones that can be considered as “ethnic distance” questions. Their purpose was to measure the closeness or the distance of the individual in relation to another ethnic group, in this case to the Croats. The respondents were asked in the last part of the questionnaire to answer whether they accept or not the following relations: marriage with a Croat, Croat as friend, Croat as neighbor and Croat as employer. They were also asked to justify their negative answer by writing down a reason. The following graphs illustrate the respondents’ attitudes by territories.

**Fig. 79**



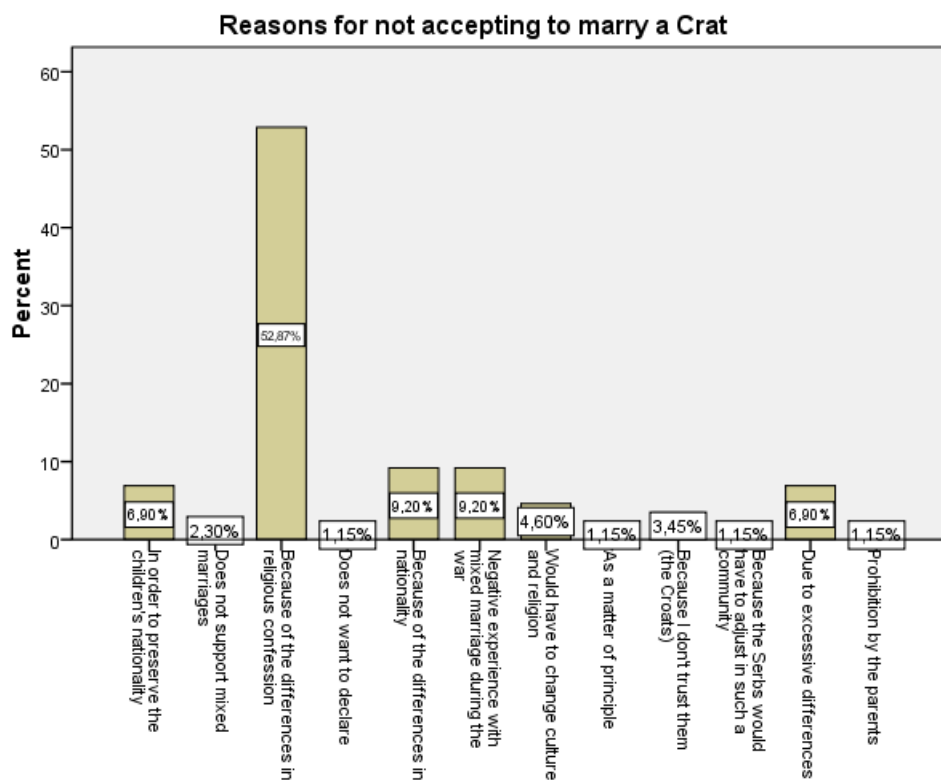
Regarding the acceptance of a Croat as a spouse, most of the respondents (60,2% of total) would agree into marrying a Croat, while only in the Area of peaceful reintegration the registered trend is different (61,7% within territory won't agree into marrying a Croat). The territory with the highest



percentage of pro marriages with Croats is the city of Zagreb, where 75,9% of the respondents would marry a Croat; Istria follows with 74,7% of respondents who would also marry a Croat. The War affected area shows a decrease, where only 52,5% would agree into marrying a Croat. The least willing to marry a Croat are the respondents of the Area of peaceful reintegration, with only 38,3% in favour of such a marriage.

The next graph (See Fig. 80) illustrates the reasons given by the respondents to justify their reluctance to accept a Croat as spouse. The most popular reason is “*Because of the differences in religious confession*” (52,9%), followed by “*Because of the difference in nationality*” (9,2%) and “*Negative experience with mixed marriage during the war*”(9,2%). These reasons are associated with the fear of losing the own’s religious and national identity, as well as to the fear of repeating a mistake that proved to be a negative experience.

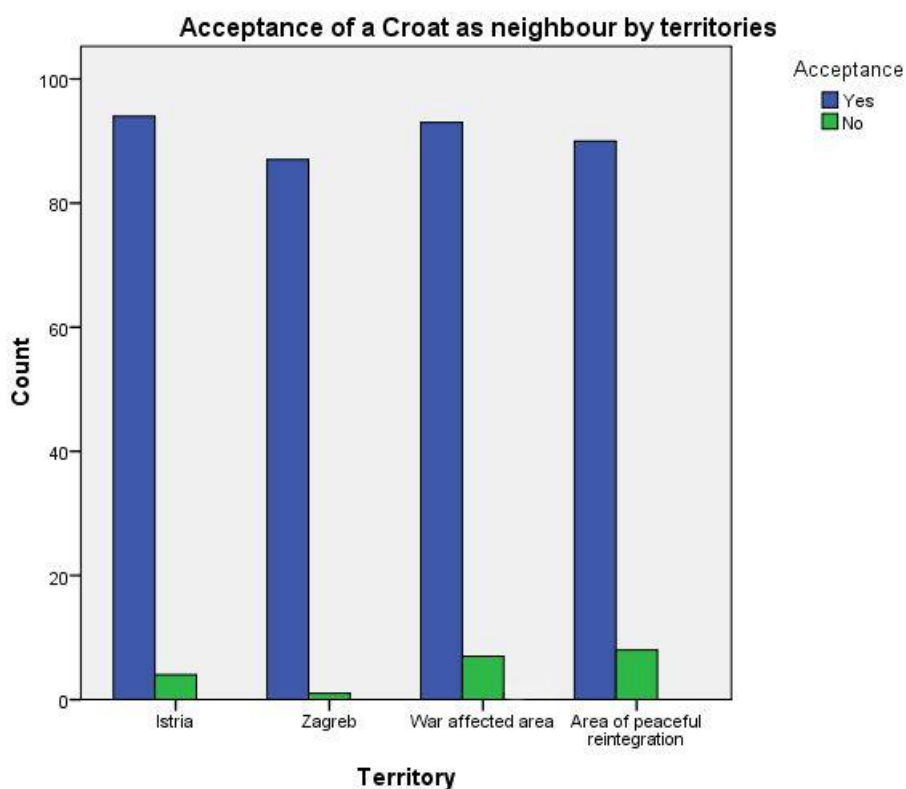
**Fig. 80**



Looking at the next graph (See Fig. 81) illustrating the respondents' attitudes toward accepting a Croat as a neighbour, we can see that all the territories expressed the same positive trend (94,5% of the total respondents would accept a Croat as a neighbour).

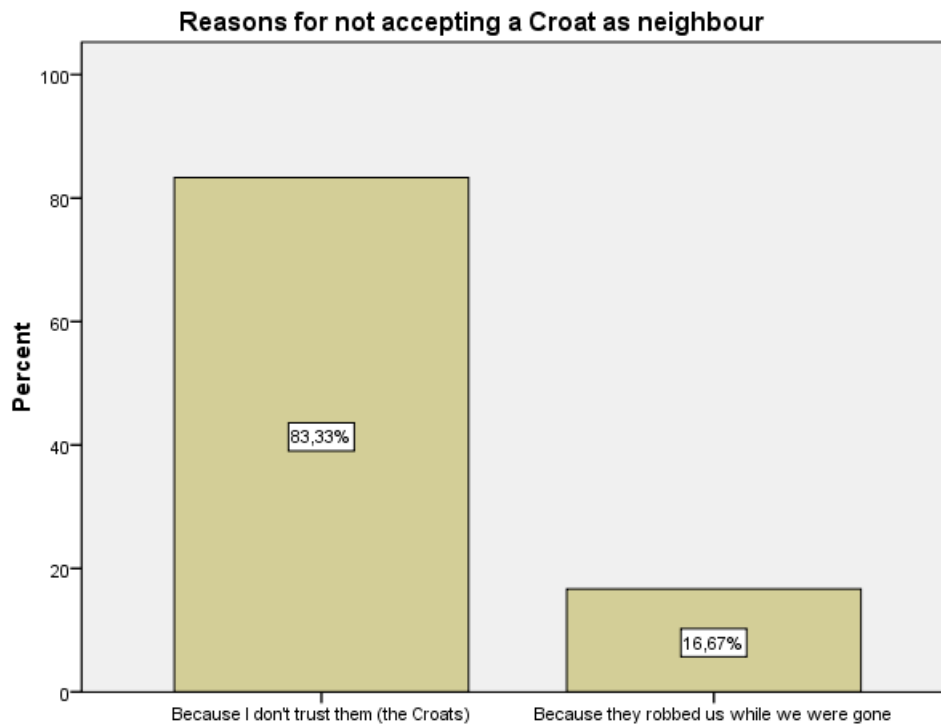
Zagreb recorded the highest percentage of respondents willing to have Croats as neighbours (98,9%), followed by Istria (95,9%), the War affected area (92,1%) and finally the Area of peaceful reintegration (91,8%).

**Fig. 81**



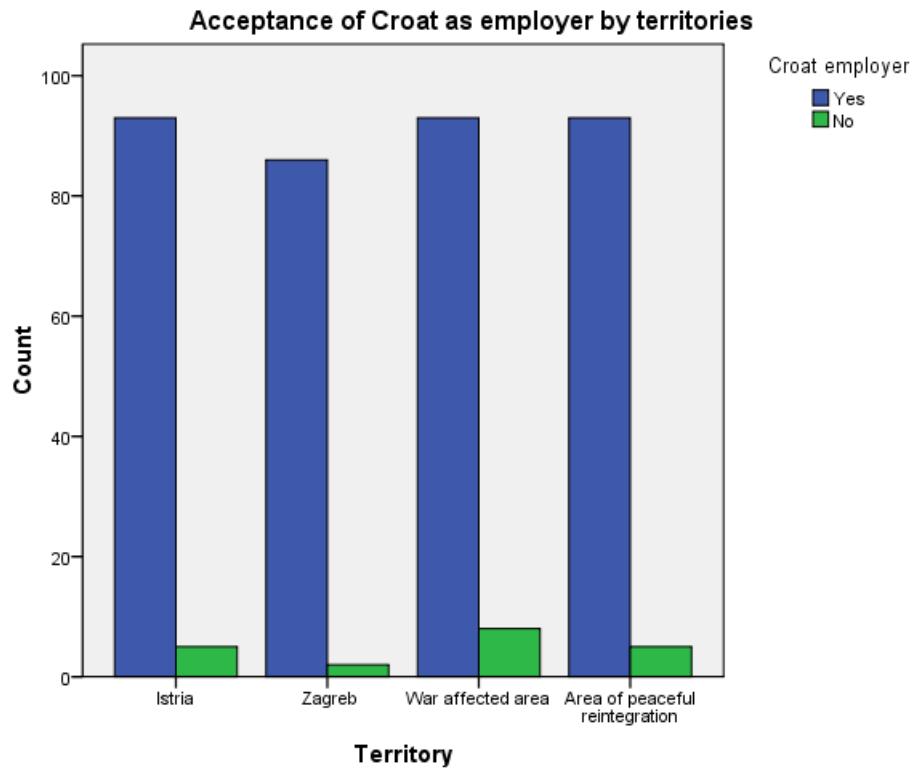
Among the reasons (See Fig. 82) of the few respondents (5,2%) who wouldn't accept a Croat as a neighbour, only two were given: "Because I don't trust them" (83,3%) and "Because they robbed us while we were gone" (16,7%). Both the reasons are related to personal negative experience suffered during the war.

Fig. 82



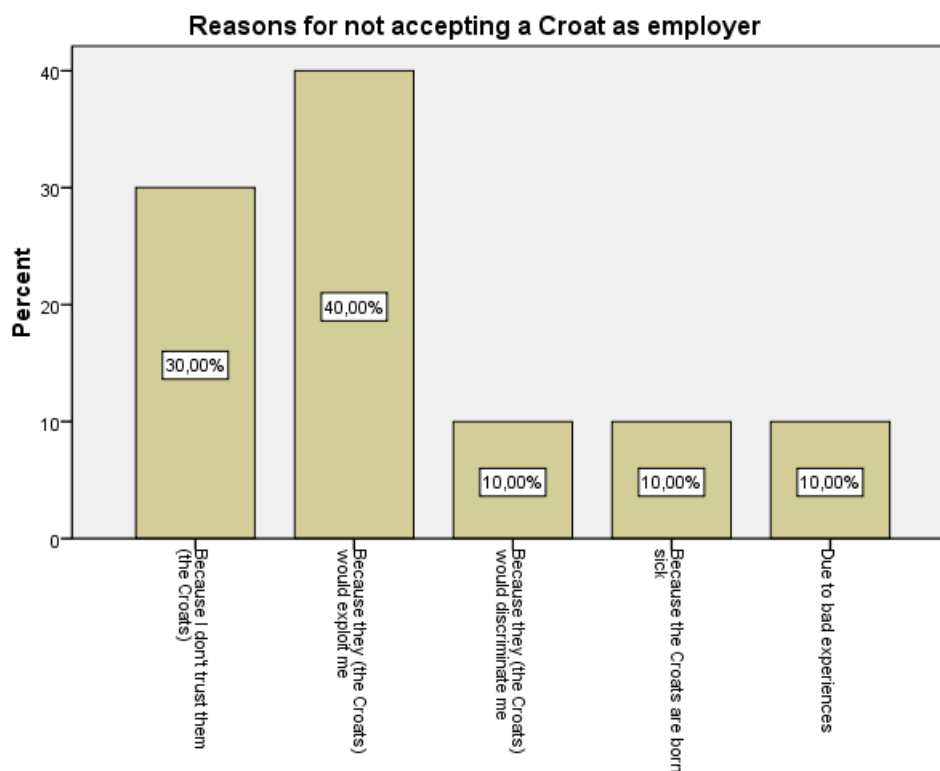
When asked if they would accept a Croat as employer, 94,8% of the respondents answered positively. The following graph (See Fig. 83) illustrates the respondents' attitudes by territory, and we can see that the same positive trend was registered in all four the territories. Zagreb has the higher percentage of positive answers, 97,7%, Istria and the Area of peaceful reintegration follow with 94,9% both, and finally the War affected area with 92,1%.

Fig. 83



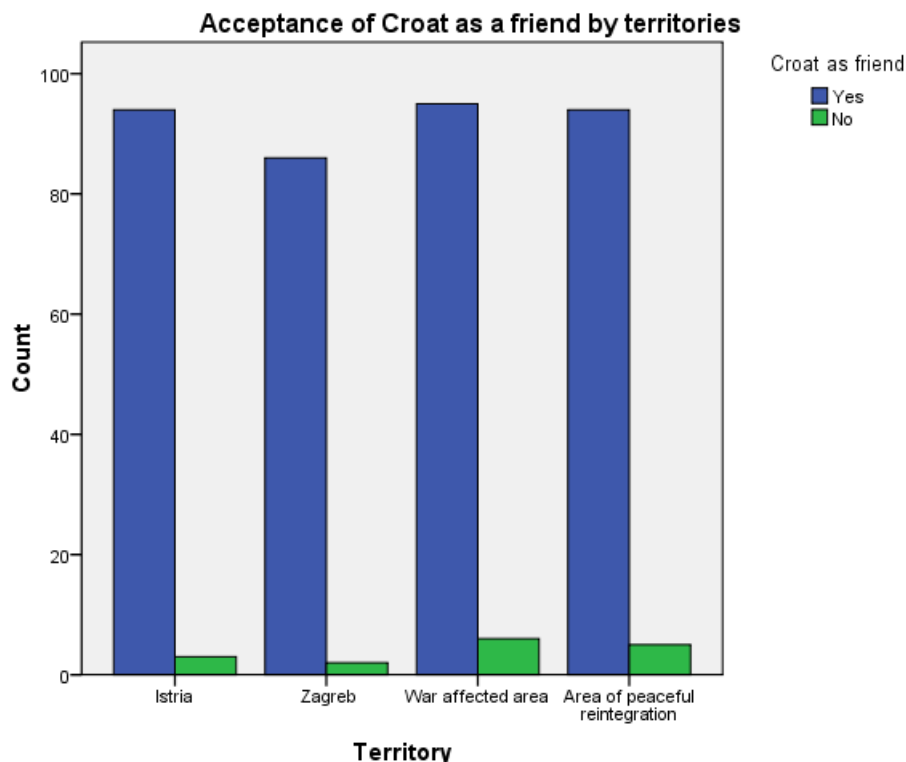
Among the given reasons for not accepting a Croat as employer (See Fig. 84), the most numerous was “*Because they (the Croats) would exploit me*” (40%), followed by “*Because I don’t trust them (the Croats)*” (30%). Both are the result of fear and distrust due to negative personal experiences (10% claimed to have had “*bad experience*”), but also a result of prejudice (10% stated that the “*Croats are born sick*”).

Fig. 84



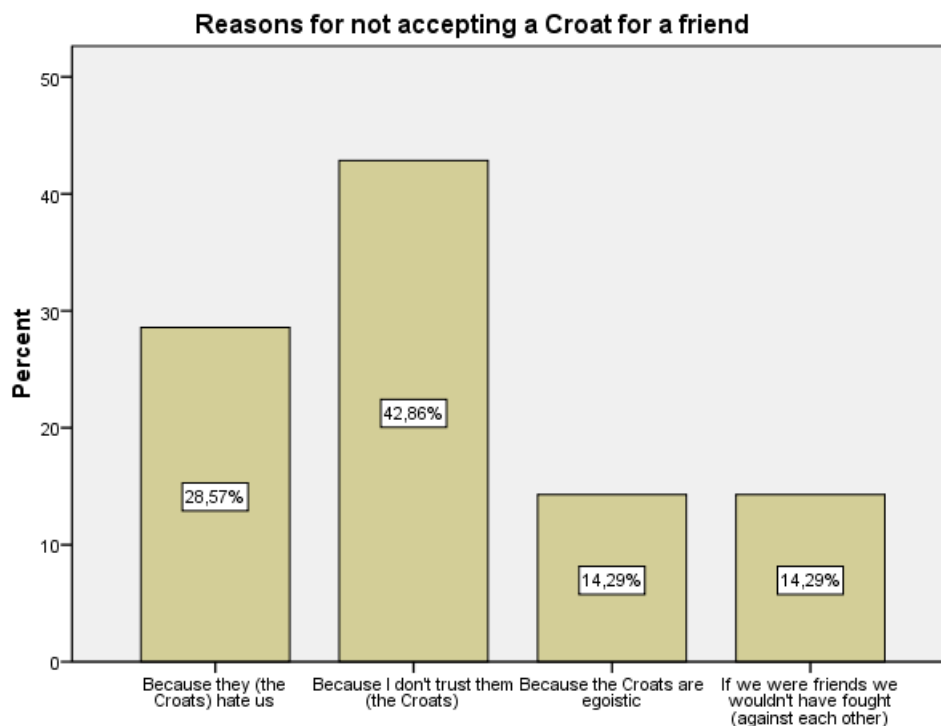
When asked if they would accept a Croat for a friend, 95,8% of all the respondents answered positively. The following graph (See Fig. 85) shows us that all the territories registered the same positive trend. Zagreb once again showed the highest percentage of positive answers, 97,7%, followed by Istria (96,9%), the Area of peaceful reintegration (94,9%) and the War affected area (94,1%).

Fig. 85



Among the given reasons to justify their negative answers (See Fig. 86), the respondents mostly wrote down *“Because I don’t trust them (the Croats)”* (42,9%), while 28,6% of the respondents feel that *“The Croats hate us”*. This reflects a feeling of distrust and even paranoia among those respondents who answered negatively to the above question. Answers such as *“Because the Croats are egoistic”* (14,3%) reflect also ethnic prejudice and stereotypes about the members of the other ethnic group, while statements such as *“If we were friends we wouldn’t have fought against each other”* (14,3%) express the impossibility to be friends due to the war and questions the credibility of past friendships.

Fig. 86



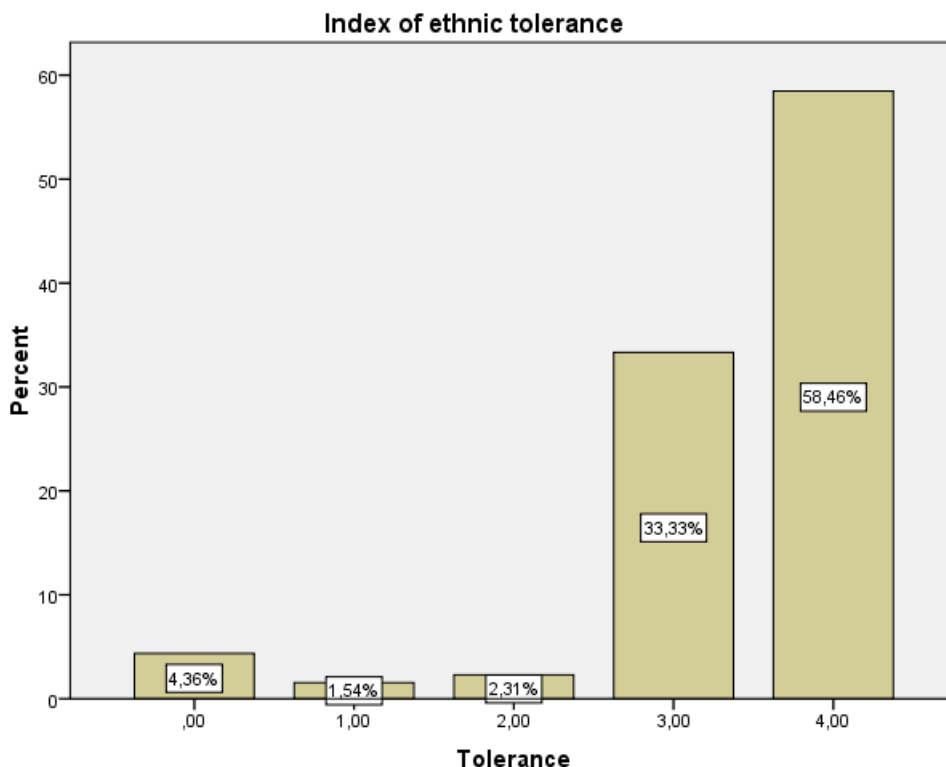
The variable of “ethnic tolerance” was created by simply summing each answer "yes" that brought 1 point, or "no" which brought zero points. The variable category of “ethnic tolerance” grouped the respondents into categories (“high tolerant”, “middle tolerant”, “intolerant”<sup>118</sup>) and depending on the number of points (of affirmative answers) the respondent was "located" in a category. The more points result in a higher index of tolerance and consequently in a higher level of tolerance.

The obtained value of ethnic tolerance index for the overall sample is 3,40 which is a high value indicating that the respondents are highly tolerant.

The following graph (See Fig. 87) illustrates the distribution of the indexes among the whole sample.

<sup>118</sup> High tolerant are those with an average score between 3 and 4 points, middle tolerant those with an average between 1,1 and 2,99, and intolerant those with an average score between 0 to 1 points.

**Fig. 87**

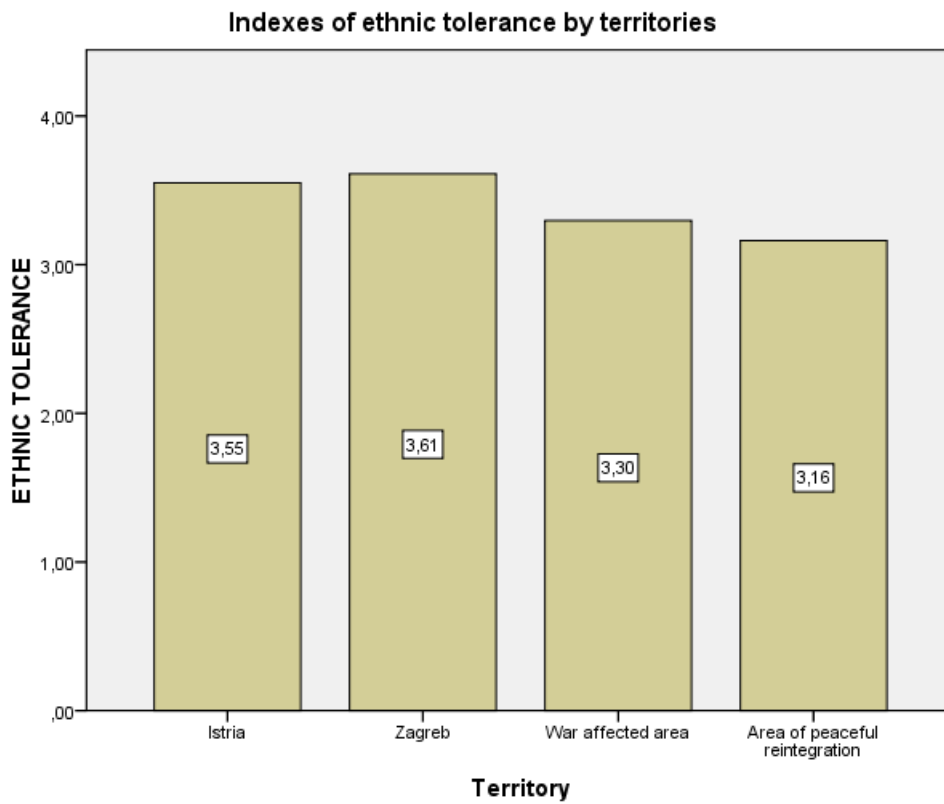


As we can see, 58,5% of the respondents have answered positively to all the questions concerning ethnic distance, while 33,3% of the respondents answered positively to three out of four questions.

The following graph will illustrate the obtained indexes per territories (See Fig. 88). The most tolerant territory is represented by Zagreb, whose index of ethnic tolerance is 3,61, followed by Istria (3,55) and the War affected area (3,30). The least tolerant territory is represented by the Area of peaceful reintegration (3,16).

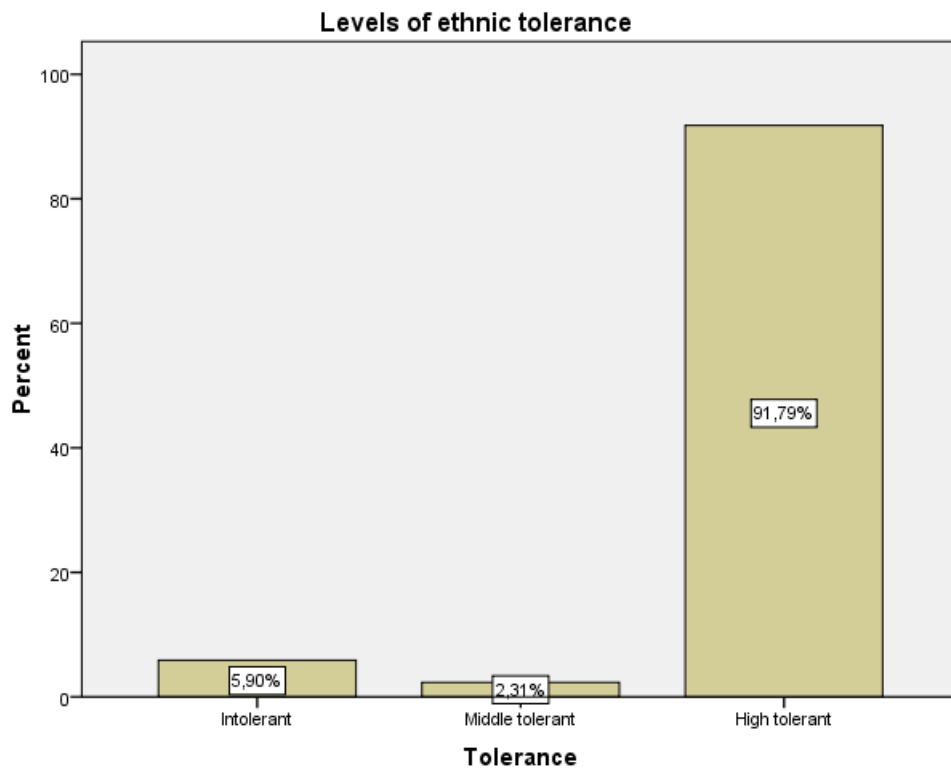


**Fig. 88**



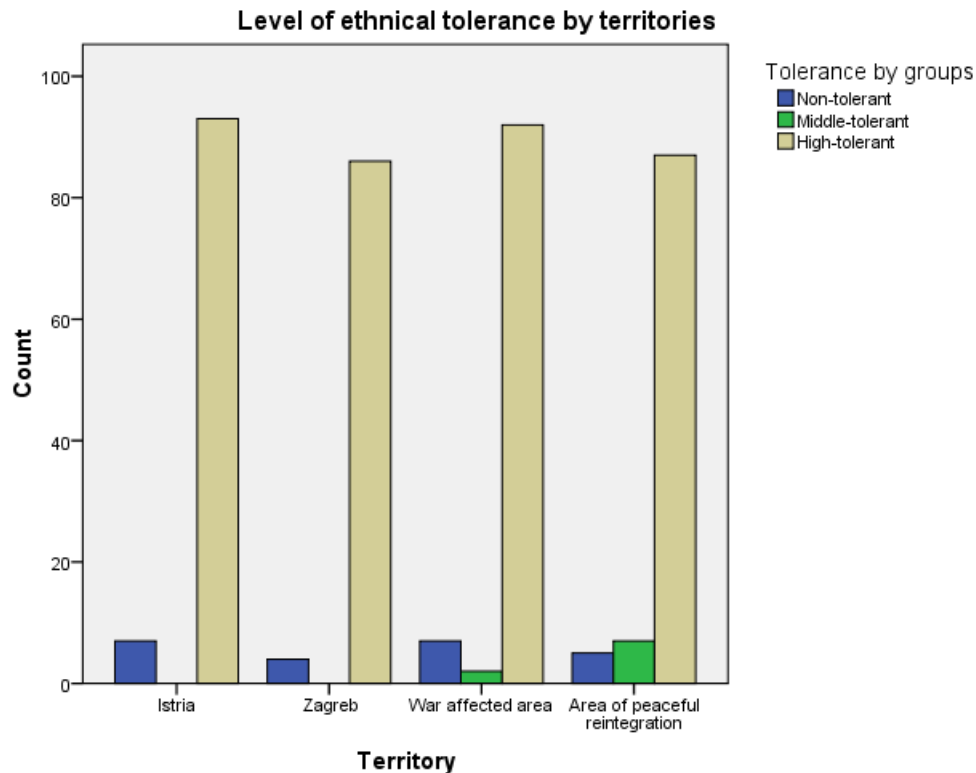
The following bar chart illustrates the index of ethnic tolerance by degrees (See Fig. 89) on the overall sample. The vast majority of the respondents, 91,8%, are considered to be high tolerant (because their calculated index was between 3 and 4 points).

**Fig. 89**



The following bar chart (See Fig. 90) illustrates the levels of ethnic tolerance by territories. We can see that all the territories are predominantly highly tolerant, with Zagreb showing the highest percentage (95,6%). Istria follows with 93% of high tolerant respondents, but also with the highest percentage of intolerant respondents (7%). The War affected area has 91,1% of high tolerant respondents, while the Area of peaceful reintegration has the lowest percentage of high tolerant (87,9%) and the highest of middle tolerant (7,1%).

Fig. 90



## 5.4 Results

This section will synthesize and explain the so far obtained results. It will begin with a general statistical overview, followed by the results of the focus group and ending with the verification of the hypotheses and the research questions. The last section (“Further interpretations”) will explore and explain relevant or interesting results that emerged from the analysis of the data, but are not directly the theme of the research.

First a presentation of the most significant statistical results that represent the respondents’ characteristics and attitudes will follow, both on a general and on a territorial level. Then the results of the correlation between variables will be presented, in order to find out what influences some of the respondents’ attitudes.

As already mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, the gender was equally divided among all the territories, whereas we find 50% of men and 50% of women in each territory and in the overall calculation. Since the category of gender wasn't considered as an influential factor in the studied phenomenon, it was excluded from further analysis.

It was intended to include in this research as many age groups as possible, and therefore, as we have seen, the respondents were divided into 6 age categories: 18-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, 61-70 and 70+. The most represented age category among the total number of respondents was the one between 18 and 30 (24,1%), which was also the most numerous one in three territories: Zagreb (27%), the War affected area (22,4%) and the Area of peaceful reintegration (33,7%). We can say that the youngest territory is the Area of peaceful reintegration, where 1/3 of the respondents are aged under 30. Istria can be considered as the oldest territory, since 25% of its respondents are aged between 51 and 60.

Regarding the level of education, most of the respondents have a secondary school degree (44,5%), while only 2,8% of the respondents have whether a Mr.Sc. or a PhD degree. This trend was registered in three territories, while in the War affected area most of the respondents have an elementary school degree (44,6%), but also the highest percentage of Mr.Sc. or PhD's (4%) was registered in this territory. The territory with the highest percentage of respondents without a degree is the Area of peaceful reintegration (15,3%), while Zagreb has the highest percentage of university graduates (30%).

Regarding the country of birth of the respondents, most of them (71,2%) were born in Croatia, followed by 18,1% of people born in Bosnia and Herzegovina and 7,8% born in Serbia. Istria recorded the highest percentage of respondents born in Serbia (17,3%) and BiH (28,6%), which is connected to the fact that Serbs living in Istria are mainly immigrants. The remaining three territories followed the general registered trend (mostly born in Croatia, little percentage of born in BiH and very low percentage of born in Serbia). Only the Area of peaceful reintegration registered

a similar trend to the one noted in Istria: 9,2% of its respondents were born in Serbia and 14,3% in BiH.

Regarding membership in Serbian organizations in Croatia, 53,1% of the respondents declared not to be members, 27,1% are active members and 19,8% are only formal members. Zagreb has the highest percentage of active members (41,1%), while Istria has the highest percentage of not members (64,3%), followed by the War affected area (61,4%). The Area of peaceful reintegration follows the trend of Zagreb with 29,3% of active members. According to this, the respondents are moderately familiar (38,1%) with Serb organizations in Croatia, while Istria has the highest percentage of those who have little familiarity (37,4%).

Concerning tragic war experience, 54% of all the respondents claimed to have suffered a war related tragedy. The highest percentage was registered in the War affected area, where 92,1% of the respondents experienced a war tragedy. Zagreb follows the trend with 57,8% of respondents with a tragic war experience, which is due to the fact that Zagreb is largely inhabited by people who escaped from the ongoing conflicts. Istria recorded the highest percentage of respondents who didn't experience any war related tragedy (69,7%), followed by the Area of peaceful reintegration (64,6%).

One of the most important data gathered in this research is the national self-identification of the respondents, i.e. how the Serbs in Croatia nationally identify themselves. The respondents were given the possibility to choose between four given categories ("Serb", "Croatian Serb", "Croat" "Other"). Most of the respondents think of themselves as "Serbs" (62,5%), while a significant percentage of them identify rather as "Croatian Serbs" (34,4%). The War affected area registered the highest percentage of "Serbs" (75,2%), while Zagreb registered the lowest percentage (39,3%), rather opting for the category of "Croatian Serbs" (56,2%). The trend registered in Istria (60% of "Serbs" and 40% of "Croatian Serbs") is more similar to the trend in the War affected area (75,2% of "Serbs" and 24,8% of "Croatian Serbs") rather than the one registered in the Area of peaceful

reintegration (73,2% of “Serbs”, 18,6% of “Croatian Serbs” and 1 % of “Others”). It can be concluded that the Serbs from Istria still keep alive the national consciousness brought from their country of birth (Serbia or Bosnia and Herzegovina), or the ones of their parents.

Religion is also an important aspect of one’s identity, especially in the countries that emerged from the dissolution of ex-Yugoslavia where religious confession is one of the main differentiating traits between a population who share similar characteristic (language, mentality, etc.). Although Serbs are known for being exclusively of Christian Orthodox faith, opposite to the Catholic Croats, this important aspect of identity couldn’t be just a priori assumed. The majority of the respondents (89,4%) indicated to be of Christian Orthodox faith, while 8,8% are Atheists and only 1,3% claimed to be Catholics. The most Orthodox territory resulted to be the War affected area, where 98% of the respondents are of Christian Orthodox faith. Zagreb has the highest percentage of Catholics (3,3%) and Atheists (15,6%)

The majority of the respondents (45,9%) find that religion is very important to them, only the respondents from Zagreb find it mostly moderately important (41,6%).

The results concerning the importance of the Serbian Orthodox Church as preserver of Serb national identity in Croatia follows the noted religious trend, whereas 50,5% of the respondents find it very important. Once again, Zagreb is the only exception with the majority (43,3%) of respondents who find it moderately important, rather than very important like the other territories. Zagreb proved to be the least religious territory, while the War affected area is the most religious one.

Most of the respondents (59,9%) feel a sense of belonging to Serbia because it is their country of origin (68,2%). The Area of peaceful reintegration registered the highest percentage of respondents with a sense of belonging to Serbia (70,7%). Only Zagreb showed a different trend, where the majority of the respondents claimed not to have any sense of belonging to Serbia (61,8%) mostly because they feel that Serbia is not their homeland (33,3%).

A little less than half of the respondents spent a longer period of time in Serbia (43,5%), mostly because of exile (60,5%). So it is not surprising that the territory with the highest percentage of respondents who spent a longer period of time in Serbia is the War affected area (71,3%). However, the percentage of respondents with Serbian citizenship is quite low (only 23,6% have it), regardless of the territorial distribution.

On the other hand, the emotional attachment toward Serbian state symbols is very high (39,5% of the respondents find it very strong). But this time Zagreb is not the only exception (33,3% opted for moderately strong), the War affected area also showed a different trend (38,6% also opted for moderately strong). The Area of peaceful reintegration recorded the highest percentage of respondents with a very strong emotional attachment toward Serbian state symbols (51,5%), followed by Istria (with 43,3%).

The opposite trend was registered regarding the emotional attachment to Croatian state symbols, regarding to which the majority of the respondents (41,2%) don't feel any attachment at all. However the respondents from Istria and Zagreb mostly feel a little emotional attachment (respectively 43,3% and 43,8%). Istria also registered the highest percentage of those respondents with a very strong emotional attachment (9,3%), while the Area of peaceful reintegration registered the highest percentage of those with a very strong emotional attachment (58,6%), followed by the War affected area (57,4%).

Regarding their language identity, most of the respondents indicated that they speak the Serbo-Croatian language (66,8%), rather than Croatian (16,5%) or Serbian (14,9%), although Serbo-Croatian is no more in official use. Serbo-Croatian is mostly spoken in the War affected area (84,5%), while Croatian is mostly used in Zagreb (27,8%) and Serbian is spoken the most in the Area of peaceful reintegration (38,1%).

The two pronunciations used in Serbo-Croatian are the main distinctive traits between the Serbian and Croatian language: the Ijekavian and the regionally confined Ikavian are exclusively used in the

Croatian language; while the Ekavian is used by the official Serbian language in Serbia (Serbs from Bosnia use the Ijekavian, as well as the Montenegrins). The Serbs in Croatia mainly use the Ijekavian pronunciation (79,6%), with the only exception of the Area of peaceful reintegration where most of the respondents use the Ekavian (60,9%). The Ikavian is mostly spoken in Istria (2%).

In addition to Serbo-Croatian and the Ijekavian pronunciation, the Serbs of Croatia also use both the Latin and the Cyrillic script (63%), rather than only the Latin script (34,6%) or the Cyrillic one (2,3%). Only in Istria the respondents prefer to use only the Latin script (54,1%). The highest percentage of Cyrillic users was registered in the Area of peaceful reintegration (6,1%).

The Serbs in Croatia find very important the role of Serbian language and Cyrillic script as preservers of their national identity (70,6%), regardless of the territorial distribution. They also feel that Serbian culture in Croatia is very important (74%), equally in all the territories.

The respondents also found very important all the ethnic aspects of their identity, such as Serbian national myths and epic (53,4%), Serbian tradition and customs (81,6%) and Serb history in Croatia (68,5%). However they didn't show a high degree of familiarity with the basis of their social rights in Croatia, i.e. the Serbian traditional privileged status as frontiersmen, whereas most of the respondents indicated a moderate degree of familiarity with the notion (34%). Although most of the territories showed a similar trend, Zagreb represents an exception regarding the importance of Serbian national myths and epic since most of its respondents rather found it moderately important (44,9%), while on the other hand, its respondents were the best informed regarding the Serbian traditional privileged status in Croatia when compared to the other territories (27,8% claimed to be very familiar with the notion).

Respondents resulted to be much more informed about a more recent historical role played by the Serbs, i.e. their contribution in the anti-fascist movement in Croatia that provided them Constitution equality with the Croats, whereas most of the respondents (69,4%) indicated to be familiar with this



notion. This is mainly due to the education system that during socialist Yugoslavia propagated the importance of the antifascist movement and the Partisans (54,8% of the respondents indicated that they learned about it in school). The respondents from Zagreb proved to have most familiarity with it (84,4%), while the Area of peaceful reintegration showed to be the least familiar with the Serbian role in the antifascist movement in Croatia (44,3%).

A sense of discrimination of the Serb minority in Croatia since 1991 is the main attitude registered among the respondents (91,5%), mostly in all the territories but almost absolutely in the War affected area (98%). The main reason for such an attitude is mostly because due to the unequal or inconsistent application of laws (36%). As a consequence, most of the respondents feel that Serbs should be granted again the status of Constitutive people in Croatia (86,6%) because of the historical continuum of their status, i.e. Serbs have always been Constitutive people in Croatia (23,6%). Respondents from Istria mostly feel that Serbs should be granted again the Constitutive status because they have been living for a long time in these territories (26,8%), while most of the respondents from the War affected area think that Serbs deserve it since it's their right (26,2%). Among those who feel that Serbs shouldn't be granted again the Constitutive status in Croatia (13,4%), mostly think that currently there are too few Serbs in Croatia (42,9%), with the exception of Istria where the respondents are indecisive between three main reasons: "It is not important to secure rights in this way" (33,3%), "In order not to cause war" (33,3%) and "It wouldn't be any better" (33,3%).

After a statistical overview of all the respondents' characteristics and attitudes was obtained, it was possible to correlate some of the variables in order to find out the associations between them.

One of the most important variables is national self-identification, which was correlated with age, level of education, tragic war experience, membership in Serb organizations, country of birth, religious confession and longer period of stay in Serbia. The obtained results showed that the youngest population aged between 18 and 30 mostly identify themselves as "Serbs" (25,6% within

nationality) while the oldest population 70+ showed the highest percentage of Serbs within age category (79,2%). The category of Croatian Serbs was mostly chosen by the respondents aged 51-60 (26,4% within nationality). Although the category of Serbs was mostly chosen by all the age categories, it has been noted that the youngest and the oldest population have the tendency to self-identify as Serbs to a greater extent than the middle aged respondents (41-50 and 50-60) who expressed high percentages of Croatian Serbs. However, the Phi correlation and Cramer's V used to measure the strength of association between national self-identification and age category showed a very weak association between the two variables.

Regarding the association between national self-identification and level of education, it was recorded that the number of self-declared "Serbs" decreases with the increase of the level of education, which indicates a tendency of people with lower educational degree to self-identify as "Serbs", while the number of "Croatian Serbs" increases with the level of education. The only exception is the category of M.Sc. and PhD where a different tendency was registered: 72,7% within level of education have identified as "Serbs" rather than "Croatian Serbs" (27,3% within level of education). However, the Phi coefficient and the Cramer's V measured a weak association between the two variables.

When national self-identification was correlated with tragic war experience, it showed that Serbs are almost equally distributed in both the categories of positive and negative tragic experience (51,2% and 48,8% within category), while the Croatian Serbs are more numerous among the respondents who experienced a war related tragedy (61,4% within category), but the Croats are most numerous among the respondents who didn't experience a war tragedy (88,9% within category). The Phi coefficient indicated a low negative value which shows little association but since the coefficient is negative it also means that those who are lower on one variable are more likely to be higher on the other variable.

Although all the national categories proved to be slightly more numerous among the not members, the Serbs resulted to be the most numerous category among the members (61,9% within membership). The obtained Phi coefficient was once again very low and negative, indicating a very weak association between national self-identification and membership in Serbian organizations in Croatia, as well as a negative coefficient meaning that those who are lower on one variable are more likely to be higher on the other variable.

The correlation with religious confession measured with a Chi-square test also showed no association due to the fact that both the national categories of “Serbs” and “Croatian Serbs” are predominantly of the same religious confession. Therefore it can't be claimed that national self-identification is influenced by religious confession and vice versa. The only useful obtained data is that Serbs are Christian Orthodox to a greater extent than Croatian Serbs (94.2% of the Orthodox Christians declared themselves as Serbs, and 86.8% as Croatian Serbs), who are more numerous in the category of Atheists (5.8% of Atheists are Serbs, while 13.2% of them declared as Croatian Serbs).

The only valuable that measured an association was between national self-identification and country of birth, which confirmed that the fact that most the of the declared Serbs (63,6% of total) were born in Serbia (92,3% within category) and most of the declared Croatian Serbs (87,9% within category) were born in Croatia, was recorded to such an extent to be statistically significant.

Not even a longer period of stay in Serbia influenced the national self-identification, since the Chi Square test shows no significant differences between the two categories, although the contingency table indicated that Serbs spent a longer period of time to a greater extent than Croatian Serbs.

Since national self-identification was independent from all the variables it was correlated with, the initial assumption that it was a dependent variable influenced by something concretely more measurable than the individual's personal choice, it must be concluded that national self-

identification must be treated rather as an independent variable. Thus, ethnic and national belonging is voluntary, mutable, and a reflection of belief, rather than based on tangible facts.

A further analysis of the respondents who feel a sense of discrimination since Serbs became a national minority in 1991, showed that the youngest generation (18-30) who was not even born when Serbs had the status of constitutive people is the most numerous (86,9% within age category) in feeling a sense of discrimination of the own minority group. It was also registered that the respondents with a higher level of education feel a sense of discrimination in contrast to those who don't, as well none of the respondents with a M.Sc. or PhD feels that there is no discrimination. Additionally, most of the respondents with a tragic war experience feel discriminated to a larger extent than those who didn't have such an experience, although this doesn't confirm that the sense of discrimination is influenced by personal war related tragedy. Furthermore, it was noted no difference and therefore no association between members and not members regarding the feeling of discrimination, since both the categories mostly feel discriminated; however, not members tend to feel not discriminated to a larger extent than members.

The analysis of the characteristics of the respondents, who would grant constitutive status to the Serbs in Croatia, showed that the respondents aged 70+ are the most numerous within age category among those who would grant Serbs constitutive status while those aged 18-30 are the most numerous within the other category to its predominance in the overall number of respondents. It was also registered that the percentage of those respondents who think that Serbs should be granted constitutive status decreases proportionally with their level of education: the less educated they are, the more they think that Serbs should be granted constitutive status and vice versa. Moreover, the number of the respondents who experienced a war tragedy is higher than the number of those who didn't experience a war correlated tragedy in both of the categories; as well it was noted a preponderance of the respondents who suffered a tragic war experience to opt for the positive grant

of constitutive status to Serbs in Croatia. The equal distribution of members and not members in Serb organizations who feel that Serbs should be granted constitutive status in Croatia shows that membership in a Serb organization doesn't influence the opinion of those who believe that Serbs should be granted constitutive status.

The respondents who mostly feel a sense of belonging to Serbia are the most elderly ones (61-70 and 70+) who registered the highest percentages within age category, while the youngest age category (18-30) registered the lowest percentage within age category but the highest percentage within sense of belonging due to the numerical predominance of the age category 18-30. Regarding the level of education of the respondents, it has been noticed that the percentage of those who feel a sense of belonging decreases with the increase of the level of education, with the only exception of the category of Mr. SC. or PhD where an additional increase has been recorded. Moreover, the positive sense of belonging to Serbia is slightly higher among those respondents who experienced a tragic war experience. Regarding membership in Serb organizations and sense of belonging to Serbia, it was noted that the percentage of those who don't feel any sense of belonging to Serbia is higher among the not members. Finally, the result of the Chi Square test showed there is a significant association between the sense of belonging to Serbia and the longer period spent in Serbia, whereas most of the respondents who stayed in Serbia for a longer period of time feel a sense of belonging to Serbia to a greater extent than those who didn't spend any time in Serbia.

Regarding the analysis of the respondents in possession of Serbian citizenship, it turned out that the respondents aged between 31 and 40 represent the highest percentage of those in possession of Serbian citizenship. Concerning the level of education of the respondents, the highest percentage within category in possession of Serbian citizenship has been registered among the highest levels of education. Tragic war experience also didn't seem to have any influence whatsoever on the possession of Serbian citizenship since it was registered the same numerical distribution of cases who suffered a war related tragedy as well of those who didn't. Regarding the association between

membership in Serb organizations and possession of Serbian citizenship, it has been noticed a slighter predominance of members who possess Serbian citizenship over the not members.

Another interesting aspect measured in this research is the degree of traditionalism and modernity of the respondents regarding their national identity. The indexes were created by calculating the averages for each respondent obtained from their answer (the number of each answer) on specific variables: on "traditional" variables for the index of traditionalism, and on "modern" ones for the index of modernity. The smaller the value (because 1 = "very"), the greater the intensity of traditionalism. The obtained value of the calculated index of traditionalism for the whole sample is 1,6578, which indicates a very high degree of traditionalism among the respondents (being 1 the highest value and 4 the lowest). The War affected area has the highest index of traditionalism (1,56) which makes it the most traditional territory in terms of national identity, while Istria is the least traditional territory (1,77). The most prevailing element of Serb national identity in Croatia is the importance of Serbian customs and tradition (1,23), while the least "traditional" element seems to be Serbian privileged status in Croatia (2,414) due to the scarce familiarity shown by the respondents about this aspect.

The obtained average for the modernity index is 3,1412 which represents a low degree of modernity among the respondents (being 1 the highest value and 4 the lowest). The Area of peaceful reintegration proved to be the least modern (3,26) among the studied territories, while the most modern territory is Istria (3,02). The most dominant aspect within the modernity index is the importance of Serb organizations in Croatia (2,782). . Due to the fact that the value for the importance of Serbian culture in Croatia was reversed because its higher value represents rather a traditional aspect than a modern one, it proved to be the least modern element (3,684).

A correlation was done between the index of traditionalism and the index of modernity by using the Pearson's Correlation, which resulted to be high, negative and significant, meaning that the variables are related and that the correlation between the two variables is statistically significant.

The obtained negative correlation indicates that increases or decreases in one variable do significantly relate to increases or decreases in our second variable. This means that the more traditional the respondents are, the least modern they are, and vice versa.

In order to verify which categories of respondents are more modern and which are rather more traditional, the obtained indexes were correlated with some of the categories by using the T-test or the ANOVA. The results showed that Serbs are less modern than Croatian Serbs and vice versa and the obtained value by the T-test confirmed that the difference in modernity between Serbs and Croatian Serbs is significant enough to be applied to the whole population. The Serbs also resulted to be significantly more traditional than the Croatian Serbs.

Some minor difference were noted among the age categories of the respondents, where the respondents aged 18-30 are the most modern (3,0972), while the respondents aged 31-40 are the least modern (3,2210) in terms of national identity, while the age category 61-70 has the least index of traditionalism (1,54) and the age category 18-30 has the highest index of traditionalism (1,79). However, the results obtained by the ANOVA test showed no statistically significant differences between the groups, and therefore there is no difference in the means of modernity and traditionalism index with the age categories of the respondents.

The One-way ANOVA also showed that there are significant differences in modernity index between the levels of education. A post-hoc Tukey test showed that the most significant difference in modernity index is between the respondents with an elementary school degree and those with a Mr.Sc. or PhD, being the respondents with an elementary degree are more modern than those with a Mr.Sc. or PhD degree. Additionally, the group of respondents with a Mr.Sc. or PhD have the highest index of traditionalism (1,45), while those with a Bacc. or MA degree have the lowest index (1,69), but since the assumption of homogeneity of variance hasn't be met the ANOVA showed that the differences between the groups are not statistically significant.

The T-test also showed that the difference in mean of modernity index between the respondents born in and outside Croatia is statistically different. The respondents born in Croatia have a higher modernity index than those born outside Croatia and are therefore less modern. Regarding the index of traditionalism, those born in Croatia have a slightly lower index of traditionalism (therefore they are more traditional) than those born outside Croatia, but the difference of means between the two categories is not big enough to be statistically significant.

The difference between members and not members in Serb organizations in Croatia also proved to be statistically significant. The T-test confirmed that the members have a higher modernity index (3,3666) and are therefore less modern, than the not members (2,9407). The members have also a lower index of traditionalism (1,48) and are therefore more traditional than the not members (1,82). The T-test confirmed that the means of the two groups are significantly different.

Finally, the group of respondents who experienced a war related tragedy has a higher modernity index (3,2122) of those who didn't experienced a war tragedy (3,0567), which means that the first group has a less modern national identity than the second one. The T-test confirmed that there is a statistically significant difference between the two conditions. Moreover, the respondents who experienced a war related tragedy are more traditional (1,55) than those who didn't experience it (1,78). The obtained value from the T-test shows that the difference between the two groups is statistically significant.

A further aspect concerning the Serbs in Croatia that was measured in this research is the degree of closeness or distance of the individual in relation to another ethnic group, in this case to the Croats. The last section of the questionnaire measures the degree of respondents' acceptance of the following relations: marriage with a Croat, Croat as friend, Croat as neighbor and Croat as employer.

The variable of "ethnic tolerance" was created by simply summing each answer "yes" that brought 1 point or "no" which brought zero points. The variable category of "ethnic tolerance" grouped the



respondents into categories (“high tolerant”, “middle tolerant”, “intolerant”) and depending on the number of points (of affirmative answers) the respondent was "located" in a category. The more points result in a higher index of tolerance and consequently in a higher level of tolerance. The obtained value of ethnic tolerance index for the overall sample is 3,40 which is a high value indicating that the respondents are highly tolerant. The most tolerant territory is represented by Zagreb, whose index of ethnic tolerance is 3,61, followed by Istria (3,55) and the War affected area (3,30). The least tolerant territory is represented by the Area of peaceful reintegration (3,16).

The vast majority of the respondents, 91,8%, are considered to be high tolerant. Zagreb showed the highest percentage of high tolerant respondents (95,6%), Istria follows with 93% of high tolerant respondents, but also with the highest percentage of intolerant respondents (7%). The War affected area has 91,1% of high tolerant respondents, while the Area of peaceful reintegration has the lowest percentage of high tolerant (87,9%) and the highest of middle tolerant (7,1%).

Looking at the attitudes expressed by the respondents regarding the acceptance of different degrees of relations with Croats, it was registered that most of the respondents (60,2% of total) would agree into marrying a Croat, while only in the Area of peaceful reintegration the registered trend is different (61,7% within territory won't agree into marrying a Croat). The territory with the highest percentage of pro marriages with Croats is the city of Zagreb, where 75,9% of the respondents would marry a Croat; Istria follows with 74,7% of respondents who would also marry a Croat. The War affected area shows a decrease, where only 52,5% would agree into marrying a Croat. The least willing to marry a Croat are the respondents of the Area of peaceful reintegration, with only 38,3% in favour of such a marriage. The respondents' most popular reason for justifying their reluctance to marry a Croat is “Because of the differences in religious confession” (52,9%), which confirms to the previously registered high degree of individual importance given by the respondents' to their religious confession.

The respondents' attitudes toward accepting a Croat as a neighbour showed a much higher willingness to accept such a relation (94,5%). Zagreb recorded the highest percentage of respondents willing to have Croats as neighbours (98,9%), followed by Istria (95,9%), the War affected area (92,1%) and finally the Area of peaceful reintegration (91,8%). Among the reasons of the few respondents (5,2%) who wouldn't accept a Croat as a neighbour, only two were given: "Because I don't trust them"(83,3%) and "Because they robbed us while we were gone" (16,7%). Both the reasons are related to personal negative experience suffered during the war.

When asked if they would accept a Croat as employer, 94,8% of the respondents answered positively. Zagreb has the higher percentage of positive answers, 97,7%, Istria and the Area of peaceful reintegration follow with 94,9% both, and finally the War affected area with 92,1%. Among the given reasons for not accepting a Croat as employer, the most numerous was "Because they (the Croats) would exploit me" (40%), followed by "Because I don't trust them (the Croats)" (30%). Both are the result of fear and distrust due to negative personal experiences (10% claimed to have had "bad experience"), but also a result of prejudice (10% stated that the "Croats are born sick").

When asked if they would accept a Croat for a friend, 95,8% of all the respondents answered positively. Zagreb once again showed the highest percentage of positive answers, 97,7%, followed by Istria (96,9%), the Area of peaceful reintegration (94,9%) and the War affected area (94,1%). Among the given reasons to justify their negative answers, the respondents mostly wrote down "Because I don't trust them (the Croats)" (42,9%), while 28,6% of the respondents feel that "The Croats hate us". This reflects a feeling of distrust and even paranoia among those respondents who answered negatively to the above question. Answers such as "Because the Croats are egoistic" (14,3%) reflect also ethnic prejudice and stereotypes about the members of the other ethnic group, while statements such as "If we were friends we wouldn't have fought against each other"( 14,3%)

express the impossibility to be friends due to the war and questions the credibility of past friendships.

In conclusion it can be said that Serbs are more willing into accepting the dominant ethnic group, the Croats, in less intimate social interactions such as employers, neighbours and friends. But they tend to accept Croats as spouses to a much lesser extent, mostly for being afraid of losing their national and religious identity.

#### **5.4.1 Focus group**

It is well known that group discussion produces data and insights that would be less accessible without interaction found in a group setting—listening to others' verbalized experiences stimulates memories, ideas, and experiences in participants. Therefore, a focus group made of representative individuals for the theme of the research has been organized. Observing the interaction and the attitudes of individuals regarding the topic of the research will offer a deeper insight on the treated subject. The obtained information will be helpful for better understanding the theme in general, and to confirm the results obtained with the quantitative tools.

The group was formed by 15 people, all ethnic Serbs from Croatia, coming from different backgrounds. The participants already knew each other, which helped to create a relaxed and intimate atmosphere where they could freely express their individual thoughts on a given topic. The

group had 7 women and 8 men, aged from 22 to 40 years old, mostly with a high level of education (Bachelor's or Master's degree), and all are members of a Serbian organization in Croatia.

Although the sample of the quantitative research was broader and it included people from different backgrounds, starting from the premise that people with a higher level of education and active involvement in Serb organizations will be more willing to freely discuss about their national identity, it was decided to include in the focus group only people with such characteristics.

The participants have been introduced with the topic of the discussion by presenting them a copy of the questionnaire used in the quantitative research. They were incited to fill out the questionnaire, but it wasn't mandatory. The purpose was that the participants get acquainted with the theme of the discussion and have some time to think about what they will say.

The group had one moderator who directed the discussion on the right path and made sure that all the participants interacted, while one observer was recording (by camera) the whole discussion in order to analyze later all the non – verbal communication and group dynamics that could have been easily unnoticed. The discussion lasted 105 minutes, with a 15 minutes coffee break in between.

The participants were first given an introduction about the theme of the discussion and were explained about the general rules of behavior. After the participants got acquainted with the theme of the discussion, they were motivated to answer the questions of the following topics:

1) *National self-identification*

How would you describe your national identity? How do you self-identify nationally? When did you start thinking about your national identity? How important is nationality to you? Does a national affiliation imply also a religious affiliation?

2) *Religion*

How important is religion in your self-identification? Is it more important than national self-identification? How do you feel about the role of the Serbian Orthodox Church as keeper of Serb national identity in Croatia?

4) *Language*

Which language do you speak? Which pronunciation do you use? How important are language and script in preserving Serbian identity?

5) *Ethnic aspects of national identity*

What do you think are the ethnic aspects of Serb national identity in Croatia? How important are for you the ethnic aspects of Serb national identity such as tradition, history, national myths, language and script, etc.? What do you find to be the most important element of Serbian ethnic identity in Croatia?

6) *Civic aspects of national identity*

Do you feel a sense of belonging to Serbia? How strong is your emotional attachment to Serbian and Croatian state symbols? Do you possess Serbian citizenship? What do you think are the modern aspects of Serb national identity in Croatia?

7) *Serb legal status in Croatia*

How familiar are you with the Serb privileged status in Croatia? Do you feel discriminated since the loss of the constitutive status? Do you think Serbs should be granted the constitutive status again? Explain why.

8) *Ethnic tolerance*

Would you agree into marrying a Croat? Explain why not. Would you agree to have a Croat as a friend/neighbor/employer? Explain why not.

These were the main topics covered in the focus group, whose purpose was to obtain new information that would confirm the results obtained from the quantitative research. Even disagreement with the so far obtained results would give additional useful information about the research theme. The participants' most frequent and interesting responses will be cited in the

following text and will be treated as units of information (data) that will later become the basis for defining categories, in order to create a pattern of findings.

National identity can be taken to mean affiliation to a nation and as such is subjective and self-perceived. The concept of national identity should be treated as separate from both citizenship – which involves bureaucratic or legal statuses – and ethnicity. Although these concepts may be strongly associated, citizenship and ethnicity are not necessary conditions for holding a particular national identity.

The discussion held in the focus group revealed similar interpretations of the term “national identity” by the participants. Most equated it with their nationality, differently from their citizenship and country of birth, and some expressed only the ethnical understanding of belonging to a nation. However, they all identify mostly as Serbs, while only a smaller part as Croatian Serbs. The most frequent answers were the following:

*“I closely associate national identity with my nationality. National identity that’s my nationality, that’s how I see it.”*

*“Being a Serb is both my national identity and my nationality; I see no difference between the two concepts.”*

*“I was born in Croatia and I am a Croatian citizen, but my nationality is Serb because this is just who I am.”*

*“Nationality should be the same as citizenship, which makes me a Croat, but my national identity is Serb, therefore I am a Croatian Serb.”*

*“I am a Serb because I speak Serbian, I use the Cyrillic, I am of Orthodox faith, my ancestors came from Serbia, my family and I have the “Slava” and we cherish Serbian traditions. I think that this is all part of my national identity, but mostly I think that national identity is associated with nationality.”*

Most of the participants started to think about their national identity during the war in ex-Yugoslavia, especially from its beginning. Prior to the war, the participants were too young to care about such things, but the circumstances made them realize that it was something unavoidable and that they had to learn about their nationality and accept it. This indicates that the consciousness of one's nationality is built by a mere sequence of social and political events and very often by a mistaken usage of the term "nation" by the political elite and without a clear effort to build an attitude toward the nation through a developed social strategy. On the other hand, this fact may point to the dominance of a situational formation of national awareness in this region, precisely because the events that originated in the last decades were so intense and related to national issues, as it is almost impossible to talk and think about the nation out of this context.

*"Before the war, I knew my family was of Serb heritage, but I really didn't care, as none of my friends did. I didn't know whether my friends or neighbors were Serbs or Croats, it was something nobody talked and cared about."*

*"When the first interethnic incidents started to take place in Croatia, at once nationality became a matter of death or life."*

*"I realized that my family and I were Serbs when people started to harass us and call us bad names such as "Chetniks".*

*"I have a typical Serbian name and last name which made it impossible for my family and me to try to hide our nationality, while other Serbs with less obvious names hid their real origin in order to avoid harassment."*

*"Before the war I only knew that my family and I had different religious costumes from some of the kids I went to school with. But I never knew it was a matter of nationality, I realized it was just religious affiliation. When the war broke out I learned that my family was of Serb heritage, mainly because of our religion."*

Most of the participants agreed that nationality is an important aspect of their identity, but it shouldn't be given the importance and significance it carries in ex-Yugoslavia, because it is mainly a mean of discrimination and it raises ethnic intolerance.

*"To me nationality is very important because it defines me, is something I was born with and can't escape from. It is part of my identity and it tells me who I am and where I come from."*

*"I think nationality is important especially for minority groups because it keeps alive the national consciousness and allows them to exist. Otherwise, they would be assimilated and lose their identity. This is why we, Serbs, must keep alive our name and our identity, in order not to disappear."*

*"Nationality shouldn't be important, but unfortunately here in ex-Yugoslavia it still is a major trait of distinction and discrimination. Only here (in ex-Yugoslavia) you are asked about your nationality in every public institution, being a citizen is still not enough."*

*"I think that nationality shouldn't matter, it is just a minor part of who we are. We should be judged based on how good or bad we are, not from our nationality."*

The participants expressed a high connection between national identity and religion, almost as indissoluble. According to the participants, Serbian national identity and Christian Orthodoxy are so deeply related that one implies the other (but not vice versa, since not all the Orthodox Christians are Serbs).

*"I am a Serb and obviously I am a Christian Orthodox."*

*"All Serbs are Orthodox, it can't be otherwise."*

*"We are Serbs and therefore we are Orthodox."*

*"Being Christian Orthodox is just who we (the Serbs) are, is an essential part of our heritage."*



*“The Serbs were able to preserve their national identity thanks to their religion which kept alive the memory of the Serbian nation even outside its borders. Therefore, religion and particularly Orthodox Christianity must be considered as an inseparable part of Serbian identity.”*

*“Religion is what defines us Serbs and differentiates us from the others, especially the Croats.”*

When asked about the importance of religion in their identity, the participants agreed that religion is very important and religious affiliation is even more important than belonging to a nation. Religion is recognized as a necessity to believe in something, but also as a mean of preserving values and tradition. The religious affiliation is deeper and more permanent than the national self-identification and the other social identities in general.

*“I find my religion to be very important because it is part of my identity, it was transmitted to me from my parents and it has been cherished in the family for generations, like a family tradition.”*

*“I think religion is essential for the Serbs because they fought the Turks in the name of Christianity, and considered themselves as the last guardians of Christianity in this part of the world.”*

*“I don’t remember whether I was nationally a Serb or a Yugoslavian, but I remember that my family and I have always been Orthodox Christians; it was very important for us and it still is.”*

*“Religion is to me something more personal and deeper than national self-identification, because as we have seen, political affiliation and citizenship don’t last forever, while religion has always been here and will remain here after we are gone. “*

*“I might change my nationality for several reasons, but I would never change my faith. It is just part of who I am.”*

When asked to discuss about the role of the Serbian Orthodox Church as keeper of Serb national identity in Croatia, most of the participants agreed about its importance in keeping alive the spirit of *Serbdom* outside the borders of Serbia and especially when the Serbian state ceased to exist as such.

The Serbian Orthodox Church is seen as the main guardian of Serbian national identity and tradition, as well as the sole force that prevented assimilation.

*“If it wasn’t for the Serbian Orthodox Church, our ancestors would get assimilated as soon as they came to the Military Frontier.”*

*“The Serbian Orthodox Church is more than just an institution; it must be seen as a guardian of Serb tradition, costumes and history.”*

*“Even when Serbia ceased to exist as a state entity during the Ottoman occupation, the Serbian Orthodox Church managed to gain its independence and functioned almost as a state.”*

*“The Church is the only point of reference for the Serbs living outside Serbia, the only thing that gathers them and keep alive the memory of their homeland.”*

*“The Serbian Orthodox churches and monasteries present in Croatia are the proof of our historical presence in these territories and the foundation stone of our identity.”*

The participants’ attitudes toward language, script and its importance in preserving Serbian identity showed that most of them prefer to call their language Serbo-Croatian. Only a smaller part of the participants, mainly from the Area of peaceful reintegration, claimed to speak Serbian. Croatian was mainly chosen by younger participants from Istria and Zagreb. However, most of them agree that language and script are important elements of Serb identity in Croatia and they should be preserved.

*“I speak Serbo-Croatian with the ijekavian pronunciation and the shtokavian dialect. I could easily call the language only Croatian, but I refuse since I think Serbian and Croatian are one language with different standards and dialects. I can read the Cyrillic script but I prefer to use the Latin, it is simpler. I don’t think this makes me any less Serbian, although I am aware that Cyrillic is an important element of our Serbian identity.”*

*“I rather call my language Serbian because I use the ekavian pronunciation, and I use both the scripts to the same extent. I guess it would be different if I would live in another part of Croatia*

*where the Serb minority is not as numerous as here in the Area of peaceful reintegration where the right to communicate in our language is guaranteed to us by the state. I think that Serbian language and Cyrillic is an important aspect of our national identity and we must preserve it.”*

*“For me it is the same whether I call it Serbian, Croatian or Serbo-Croatian, because it is the same language. But to be politically correct I call it Serbo-Croatian because I want to emphasize that we shouldn’t be divided by language, because we share the same language. I personally use the ijekavian pronunciation which makes it more Croatian, but anyway I think that Serbian language and script should be maintained in Croatia.”*

*“Since I was born and raised in Croatia after the dissolution of Yugoslavia and I use the ijekavian, I would identify my language as Croatian. But I can perfectly understand Serbian, and I can read the Cyrillic script. I don’t think language is the main element of preserving Serbian identity, I would rather say that Cyrillic is more important. “*

When asked about the ethnic elements of Serbian national identity in Croatia, most of the participants were acquainted with what the notion implies. But they were undecided when asked to name the most important element because they felt that all the elements were equally important and hardly opted for one.

*“I think that Orthodox religion, our language and script, our traditions and our history define who we are and differentiate us from the others. I think that they are equally important, but I would rather opt for our tradition, because I think that is something we all cherish.”*

*“I guess that language, Cyrillic script, Orthodox faith and culture are the main characteristics of Serbian identity in Croatia. The most important? For me it’s the religious affiliation, that is, Orthodoxy.”*

*“I agree with everything that has been said, but I would also add the privileged status we enjoyed as Krajišnici (Frontiersmen) as one of the main characteristics of the Serbs in Croatia. Although I*

*can't say that is the most important element of their identity. I rather think is maybe our history in general."*

*"Also their role in World War II should be mentioned, when they helped to liberate the country from Nazis. Unfortunately this is a black period of Serb history in Croatia; even I lost some relatives that were killed by the Ustaše. But I think that Serb identity is rather represented by Orthodoxy, script and tradition, being tradition the most important."*

The discussion about the civic elements of identity showed among all the participants a positive sense of belonging to Serbia and a strong attachment to Serbian state symbols rather than to Croatian. The majority of them don't have a Serbian citizenship because they don't find it useful, showing that they perceive citizenship only from a functional point of view. When asked about the elements of modern Serb identity in Croatia, the participants weren't as sure as before when asked about the ethnic elements of Serb identity. However, most of the participants think that Serbs in Croatia should accept their legal status and participate in state politics through their organizations. They see their civic or modern identity directed to the future rather than to the past.

*"Yes, I feel a sense of belonging to Serbia because it is my country of origin. I don't have Serbian citizenship but I do feel a stronger attachment to Serbian state symbols rather than to Croatian. I don't know why... I just do. It's something difficult to explain. Although Croatia is my homeland, I can't help cheering up for Serbs during sport events (laughs). I think we should accept Croatia as our homeland and respect its laws and regulations, but never forget where we came from. "*

*"I don't have a Serbian citizenship because I don't need it. It is much better to have a Croatian passport because you can easily travel pretty much everywhere. But anyway I do feel a sense of belonging to Serbia and to its state symbols."*

*“I have Serbian citizenship because I studied in Novi Sad (Serbia) and it was easier to handle bureaucracy as a Serbian citizen. Of course I feel a sense of belonging to Serbia and an attachment to its state symbols.”*

*“The modern elements of our national identity should be oriented toward the future and should deal with our new political values, such as democracy and pro EU politics. We must forget the past and learn how to live in a new political environment and struggle for our rights.”*

*“I think that the modern aspects of our identity in Croatia should revolve around the acceptance of our minority status and our new political strategy. What I mean is that we must be good citizens and use only the tools prescribed by the law to ensure our rights. We must accept Croatia as our homeland and distance ourselves from Serbia.”*

The discussion about Serb legal status in Croatia raised some discomfort among the participants of the focus group, because they all feel that a big injustice has been done to the Serbs in Croatia by degrading them to the status of simple national minority. All the participants agreed that Serbs are discriminated and that they are second-class citizens in Croatia. They all feel that due to the historical status they enjoyed since their settlement in these territories, Serbs should have a special status in Croatia. Most of the participants talked about personal negative experiences regarding discrimination and they all agreed that Serbs should be granted again the constitutive status in Croatia.

*“I am very familiar with the traditional status of the Serbian Frontiersmen, and I think that based alone on this historical fact we should hold a special status. We are an important part of Croatian history and society, we can't be judged only by what happened during the war. It's like we are all being punished because of our politicians. Definitely we are discriminated because the Croats look at us as we are monsters, the media constantly demean us and we are supposed to be grateful just because we are alive, without the possibility to seek or exercise our rights. I don't know if anything*

would change with the grant of constitutive status, but I see it as a matter of principle: it belongs to us, it is our right.”

“I think that in theory we are not discriminated because the laws guarantee us many rights, but the implementation of these laws is problematic. I don’t know if this is due to bureaucracy or if there is just unwillingness from the state organs to secure us our promised rights. I am saying this from personal experience, because I couldn’t obtain from the state a compensation for my destroyed house. The Croatian government motivated us to return to Croatia by promising us a compensation for the destroyed houses, but I have been waiting for years and nothing happened. My Croatian neighbours all received a compensation for their houses. If this is not discrimination, I don’t know what is.”

“In my city, Vukovar (Area of peaceful reintegration) we have a perfect example of discrimination based on an inconsistent application of law. As you all know, Serbs in Vukovar represent a third of the population, and therefore have the right to demand for their language and script to be in official use on all the public inscriptions and so on. But since an extreme right wing party disagrees with it and raised a petition among the locals, we can’t obtain our promised right to use officially our language and script. We don’t ask for anything that hasn’t been guaranteed to us by the Croatian state. Look at the case of other minorities whose language wasn’t an issue, such as Italians in Istria. They are a much smaller community than we are, but bilingualism in Istria is seen as something valuable while Serbian language is seen as a shame. I think that if we were a constitutive people this couldn’t happen to us, because we would be more protected.”

The discussion about ethnic tolerance showed that the participants are relatively high tolerant and accept any type of relation with the Croats. The only relation that was contested by some of the participants is marriage, because they feared they would lose their national or religious identity in such a union.

*“I already have Croatian friends, neighbours and I work for a Croatian employer. So I definitely accept them in any relation. I am not married yet, but I don’t think of the nationality of my future wife. I really don’t care, as long as she is a good person.”*

*“I have no problem in interacting with Croats, I accept them as equals. I just would rather marry one of our own because I want to preserve our traditions and customs in the family.”*

*“I think nationality shouldn’t be an obstacle in any relation, so I accept Croats and any other nationality as my equals. I am married to a Croat, so I definitely don’t mind getting close to them (laughs).”*

Once all the topics have been explored, the participants were offered the opportunity to add something in conclusion or to further talk about a topic but they all refused, so the moderator thanked the participants who were invited to stay and informally interact while offered refreshments. Since the participants already knew each other from before, the atmosphere in the focus group was really friendly and pleasant. Since they are all politically involved and with similar characteristics (such as level of education and age), they mostly agreed about all the topics covered in the discussion. However, some differences were noted among the participants coming from different regions: the participants from Istria and Zagreb showed a more open and tolerant attitude toward everything Croatian, expressing a higher degree of integration than the other participants. The participants that proved to be the most traditional are the ones from the Area of peaceful reintegration, where a stronger Serbian national consciousness was registered (in terms of usage of Serbian language and script, Serbian citizenship and so on). The participants from the War affected area showed the highest sense of resentment and frustration due to their war related experiences, and think of themselves as being mostly discriminated.

There was large agreement in the group of participants in relation to particular issues, while there was present a certain confusion regarding the concepts of national identity. A small number of

participants had a clear idea on what is national identity and knew how to verbalize it. Qualitative analysis indicated certain confusion in thinking about national identity, especially about its ethnic and modern elements, expressed by a situation of silence, emotional absence or negative associations. The participants agreed that the elements of ethnic identity are difficult to separate since they all carry an important meaning and therefore they are all equally important. The elements of civic or modern identity were more difficult to distinguish, there was no universal understanding about it, but all the participants agreed that it must be oriented toward state politics and to the future of their legal status.

The obtained information helped to further understand the nature of Serb national identity in Croatia and how its members perceive it. Most of the data coincide with the obtained results from the quantitative research; others don't because of the qualitative method used that allows the emergence of unknown and unexpected attitudes that weren't taken into account while formulating the questionnaire. However, there is no right or wrong answer regarding this topic since it deals with the individual's most private identity. Only the studied group can offer the most adequate and credible definitions about the aspects of their national identity, and they shouldn't be questioned. It must be accepted that very often the individual's perception about his/her national identity doesn't exactly reflect the theoretical framework. Individuals don't spend a plenty of time reasoning and explaining to themselves what national identity is, they rather "feel" their national self-identification without actually thinking how and why it appeared, and what is its meaning. Therefore, no obtained information on the matter can be confirmed or contested, but it must be accepted and taken into account for new acknowledgement and used as a base for future researches on the topic.

#### **5.4.2 Verification of the hypotheses and the research questions**



This section will provide answers to the research questions asked at the beginning and as well explain whether the set hypotheses have been confirmed or rejected based on the obtained overall results.

The first research question was about the current general identification of the Serbs in Croatia (*How do the Serbs in Croatia identify themselves today?*). Based on the obtained data, it is possible to say that Serbs in Croatia are very well aware of both their national and religious identity: they mostly identify nationally as Serbs and to a lesser extent as Croatian Serbs, while their religious affiliation is mostly Christian Orthodox.

The second research question was about the nature of Serb identity and its universality or whether its differentiation based on a territorial subdivision (*Does a common Serb identity in Croatia exist today? If not, how does it differ from region to region? What are the factors that influence this differentiation?*). Although there have been noticed differences among the respondents' attitudes coming from different areas, it didn't influence much the general trend. They all mostly identify in the same way, i.e. as Serbs of Orthodox faith, with minor differences registered from territory to territory. The Serbs from Zagreb mostly identify nationally as Croatian Serbs rather than only Serbs, and at the same time a high trend of Croatian Serbs was registered in Istria (40%). It was pre-assumed that Serb national identity in Croatia might be influenced by factors such as religious affiliation, age, level of education, membership in Serbian organizations, tragic war experience, country of birth and longer period of stay in Serbia. However, all the mentioned variables showed a very weak or an inexistent association with national self-identification. This brought to the conclusion that national belonging is voluntary, mutable, and a reflection of belief, rather than based on tangible facts.

Concerning the research question about the respondents' attitudes toward the ethnic aspects of identity (*Will most of the respondents, regardless of the territorial distribution, highly rate ("very important" or "moderately important") all the questions about the importance of the ethnic aspects*

*(religion, tradition, costumes, language, alphabet, history, myths) of their national group for the preservation of their identity in Croatia?*), it was registered both in the quantitative and in the qualitative research that most of the respondents find these aspects to be very important. Only in the city of Zagreb the respondents opted rather for “moderately important” when evaluating the importance of religion, church, national myths and epic.

The calculated index of traditionalism and modernity, based on the responses about the ethnic and civic elements of national identity, made it possible to verify what trend is predominant among the Serbs in Croatia. So, the answer to the following research question (*What will prevail among the Serb minority in Croatia: a modern/civic or rather a traditional/ethnic model of national identity?*) is that a traditional model of national identity is stronger among the Serbs of Croatia. The measured index of traditionalism was 1,6578, which is very high considering that its value is between 1 and 4 (1 indicating very important and 4 indicating no importance at all). The calculated modernity index is 3,1412 which indicates a low degree of modernity. Moreover, the correlation between the two indexes indicated the more traditional the respondents are, the least modern they are, and vice versa. The registered attitudes about traditionalism and modernity showed that Istria and Zagreb are the least traditional and consequently the most modern territories among the measured indexes. Istria's traditionalism index was 1,77, while the modernity index was 3,02. Zagreb followed with an index of traditionalism of 1,68 and a modernity index of 3,10. This answers the research questions about the supposed modernity of Istria and Zagreb (*Will the chosen areas of Istria and Zagreb show more modern attitudes in despite of the more traditional responses offered by the War affected area and the Area of peaceful integration?*).

The vast majority of the Serbs feel a sense of discrimination (91,5%) since they became a national minority, mostly due to the inconsistent and unequal application of laws. As a consequence, most of the respondents think that Serbs should be granted again the status of constitutive people in Croatia (86,6%). This pretty much answers the research question whether the Serbs feel discriminated with

their new status (from constitutional people to minority) and if they wish to change their status and regain the previous one they enjoyed.

Regarding the research question that deals with the sense of belonging to Serbia (*Is there a sense of belonging to the state of origin (Serbia), and what is it influenced from?*), most of the respondents (59,9%) indicated that they feel a sense of belonging to Serbia, mainly because it is their country of origin. The results obtained with statistical tests showed there is a significant association between the sense of belonging to Serbia and the longer period spent in Serbia, whereas most of the respondents who stayed in Serbia for a longer period of time feel a sense of belonging to Serbia to a greater extent than those who didn't spend any time in Serbia. But this is not the only factor that influences it, since less than half of the respondents spent a longer period of time in Serbia (43,5%). The participants of the focus group weren't able to verbalize why they feel a sense of belonging to Serbia; they only stated that "*it's our country of origin*". Therefore, the sense of belonging to Serbia must be understood also as a singular choice of the individual, independent from any other measurable factor.

The research question about the strength of attachment to state symbols (*What is stronger: the attachment to the state symbols of the country of origin (Serbia), or to the symbols of the country of residence (Croatia)?*) is easily answered by the statistical obtained data whereas most of the respondents (39,5%) stated to feel a very strong attachment to Serbian state symbols, while only 5,7% of the respondents indicated a very strong attachment to Croatian state symbols. Most of the respondents rather didn't feel any sense of attachment to Croatian state symbols (41,2%). Only in Istria and Zagreb it was registered a predominance of the respondents who feel a little sense of attachment to the Croatian state symbols.

The last research questions deals with ethnic distance and the perception the Serbs have about the dominant population, the Croats (*How do the Serbs feel about the dominant population, the Croats? What trend is predominant: a high degree of ethnic tolerance or rather a discriminatory feeling*

*with elements of ethno nationalism?*). The questions regarding ethnic distance and the calculated index of ethnic tolerance showed that Serbs in Croatia can be considered a very tolerant group. Most of the respondents would accept Croats in any kind of relation, whether marriage, or as friends, neighbors or employer. In the focus group it was said that they treat Croats as equals, and don't think nationality should be important. Only marriage with a Croat was contested by some of the participants, as well by some of the respondents (39,8% wouldn't marry a Croat), mainly out of fear for losing their national and religious identity.

Let's have a look at the stated hypotheses and verify whether they have been confirmed or rejected by the obtained results from both of the used methods (quantitative and qualitative).

First hypothesis (H1): *Serbian national identity in general is defined by a strong religious (Christian Orthodox) connotation. Therefore, a high percentage of respondents who will identify as Serbs or Croatian Serbs will mostly indicate Christian Orthodoxy as their religious confession. A correlation between national self-identification and religious confession will show a strong association between the two categories. Additionally, all the questions related to the role of religion in preserving the Serb national identity in Croatia will be highly rated ("very important) by most of the respondents.*

As we have seen, most of the respondents did identify religiously as Christian Orthodox, both the national categories of Serbs and Croatian Serbs, which were the most chosen by the respondents. As well, most of the respondents did rate "very important" all the questions concerning the importance of religion and church. But the correlation between national self-identification and religious affiliation measured by a Chi-square test showed no association between the two categories, due to the fact that both the national categories of "Serbs" and "Croatian Serbs" are of predominantly of

the same religious confession. Therefore it can't be claimed that national self-identification is influenced by religious confession and vice versa, but the data obtained from the focus group indicate that the participants imply that Serbs and Croatian Serbs are exclusively Orthodox Christians, and that there is an unbreakable bond between the two concepts. Thus, the combination of the two methods used in the research allows us to accept the first hypothesis and confirm that Serbian national identity in general is defined by a strong religious (Christian Orthodox) connotation.

*Second hypothesis (H2): Assuming that national self-identification is a dependent variable, it will be influenced by elements (independent variables) such as age, level of education, negative war experiences, active membership in Serb organization, country of birth and longer period of stay in Serbia. The correlation between these variables will show that there is a relationship between them, expressed in a high strength of association.*

All the values obtained by correlation between national self-identification and the chosen variables showed no association between the categories or it was too weak to be statistically significant. The only valuable measured association was between national self-identification and country of birth, which confirmed that the fact that most of the declared Serbs (63,6% of total) were born in Serbia (92,3% within category) and most of the declared Croatian Serbs (87,9% within category) were born in Croatia, proved to be statistically significant.

Even the responses given by the participants in the focus group showed no correlation between national self-identification and other measurable factors, whereas nationality was perceived as a free choice of the individual, partly influenced by the choice of the parents (since it is not uncommon that parents and children differently identify nationally) and partly connected to the religious affiliation (as seen in H1).

Since national self-identification proved to be independent from any of the variables it was correlated to, it must be concluded that it is not a dependent variable as it was assumed. Therefore, the second hypothesis (H2) must be rejected in favour of an alternate one which wasn't taken in consideration: *national self-identification isn't related to factors such as age, level of education, war tragedy, membership in Serbian organizations and longer periods of stay in Serbia; it is partly related to the country of birth and to religious affiliation (as seen in H1) and is mostly a result of the free will of the individuals. Therefore, it must be whether treated as an independent variable or must be related to variables that weren't taken in consideration in this research.*

Third hypothesis (H3): *Since Serb national identity in general, as most of the eastern nations, can be considered mostly ethnic rather than civic, it is expected that the respondents will give higher importance to the ethnic/primordial elements rather than to the civic/modern ones. Moreover, the respondents will show a higher degree of traditionalism than modernity (expressed in indexes that will be subsequently calculated).*

According to the obtained indexes of modernity and traditionalism, calculated on the base of the respondents' attitudes toward the elements of ethnic and civic elements of their national identity, it has been shown that the Serb minority in Croatia is more traditional than modern. Most of the respondents highly rated ("very important") all the elements of traditional or ethnic identity, which resulted in a relatively high index of traditionalism (1,6578). On the other hand, most of the respondents didn't highly rate the elements of modern or civic identity, which brought to a low index of modernity (3,1412). Thus, hypothesis n. 3 (H3) can be fully accepted and can be claimed that both A. Smith's theory about the predominance of an ethnic model of national identity in eastern countries (Smith, 1991) and J. Milošević Đorđević's theory about the predominance of a

primordial model of national identity among the Serbs (Milošević Đorđević, 2007) confirmed to be true for the nation identity of the Serbs in Croatia.

Fourth hypothesis (H4): *The respondents will show a high degree of ethnic tolerance toward the Croats, regardless of the territorial distribution, which will show that the Serbs of Croatia are mostly a high tolerant population.*

Based on the obtained data from the respondents' attitudes toward ethnic distance, both from the qualitative and quantitative tools, it can be concluded that Serbs in Croatia are highly tolerant toward the dominant population, i.e. the Croats. Most of the respondents answered positively to the questions about accepting different relations with Croats, which resulted in a high index of ethnic tolerance (3,40). Even the vast majority of the participants of the focus group agreed about accepting Croats in any relation. Therefore, the last hypothesis of the research (H4) can be confirmed.

## **5.5 Further interpretations**

As we have seen, Serbian national identity in Croatia is dominantly primordial, ethnic, and traditional. Conservative understanding of nation hinders redefining national identity towards primacy of state symbols and citizen interests over sentiment and ancestry. There are probably many reasons for the prevalence of the primordial concept and they can be broadly classified as social and personal.

Possible social reasons are, according to Milošević Đorđević: general distrust in the state and its institutions; recently and frequently redefined state symbols such as the flag, the coat of arms, the national anthem and the like; recently and frequently redefined statehood, and general negative

perception of the state. In a nut shell, the states emerged from the dissolution of ex-Yugoslavia are still not civil societies, countries that serve the best interests of their citizens. Consequently, they are not a suitable place for dominance of instrumentalistic and functional concepts of national identity. When and whether at all it will happen here, remains to be seen. Most probably, Croatian formal accession to the European Union (in July 2013) will bring some improvements in the functioning of the state, resulting in the citizens' belief in its values. But it is most probable that a common European identity won't be able to substitute the minority identities, especially in the case of the Serbs in Croatia, for the fear of losing a national identity that is still fragile due to the historical and social circumstances.

Historical discontinuity and proven short life expectancy of states has been a regional rule rather than an exception for quite some time. Under these circumstances, it was difficult to conceive thorough social strategies of education and to develop continuous positive esteem of one's own nation for a longer period of time.

If national identity is not formed early enough, then knowledge and sentiments related to the nation fail to get fully integrated into personality. An individual is left wandering in search of the true meaning of her/his national identity. This is especially obvious among the young. Almost by definition, the concept of national identity remains dominantly primordial, personal. For some 40-50 years following World War II, Serbian population was led to think in terms of belonging primarily to Yugoslav rather than belonging to Serbian nation. Attachment to Yugoslav identity and the accompanying emotions are still strong and prevailing in some. For many citizens of ex-Yugoslavia, identification with Yugoslav nation was one among many social identities that were lost and have not been adequately replaced, so far. During the last decades names of states and national symbols changed frequently. Not well defined and not deeply rooted national symbols lead to confusion about national identity by making it harder to identify with the state, favoring primordial concept of national identity.



At the end, it should be emphasized that there are neither right or wrong answers, nor good or bad concepts of national identity. Primordialism should not be rejected as retrograde, and instrumentalism should not be accepted as progressive. (Milošević Đorđević, 2007)

In the case of Serb minority identity, the obtained results lead to the question whether minority identity is rather ethnic than national. The Serb minority are considered a nation, not an ethnic group, although they have also an ethnic identity. The Serbian Ministry for Diaspora does not even consider the Serbs living in the region of ex-Yugoslavia as members of a Serbian diaspora. Since the Serbs of Croatia are a political community with all the five elements determined by A. Smith (1991) (historical territory; common myths and historical memory; common mass and civil culture; common juridical rights and duties of citizens; and common economy with opportunities to move within the national territory), they are entitled to be a nation and therefore have their own national identity. The fact that their national identity is still pre-state and pre-political, and rather ethnic and traditional, can not question the nature of their identity. They are still developing their national identity and building their trust in the state, which may be a long process, not just for the Serbs but for all the citizens in ex-Yugoslavian countries, especially the minorities.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

After this long journey through Serb national identity in Croatia, we have learned that Serbs are an autochthonous population of these territories who enjoyed several legal privileges up to the recent conflicts in ex-Yugoslavia. Their loss of legal status and constitutive protection caused them to face on one hand the loss of their Yugoslav identity and the revival of a new one. Their new status of national minority in the Croatian Constitution (1990) was perceived as a humiliation and subsequently it proved to be also the basis for legal discrimination. Serbs were put under a difficult choice: deny their national and religious identity in order to avoid possible harassment and discrimination, or begin a political battle for the establishment of their legal rights that would allow them to freely express and therefor preserve their national identity.

The set objectives of this research were to investigate the current national identity among the Serb minority in Croatia, its characteristics and predominant aspects; compare the differences and find similarities in the attitudes toward elements of national identity on a territorial division of the sample; determine the basic concepts of national identity in theoretical approaches and among the respondents; and examine the presence of different understandings of the aspects of national identity, as well as experiences, emotions and individual constructs of national identity. Additional research questions and hypothesis were set in order to analyze and confirm some of the assumptions we learned about Serbian national identity from other studies.

The use of different statistical methods in SPSS such as contingency tables, graphs, Chi square test, Phi coefficient and Cramer's V, T-test, ANOVA, Pearson's correlation, etc. allowed to acquire new information and verify the set hypotheses. The used cross-territorial comparison showed us that there are some minor differences between the four set territories, but in most cases they didn't influence the obtained overall results. In order to acquire further acknowledgement about the Serb

national identity in Croatia and how its members perceive it, a focus group was held with participants from all the four territories used in the quantitative research.

The discussion in the focus group reflected the same trend registered from the quantitative approach: Serb national identity in Croatia is traditional, ethnic, oriented toward the past while its modern and civic aspects are still not well understood by its members. There are still stronger ties to the state of origin, Serbia, rather than to the state of residence, Croatia.

However, among the participants of the focus group (who were mainly young people with a higher level of education), it was noted a willingness to distance from the past and to turn toward the future. Therefore, it is possible to predict that in future studies about Serb national identity in Croatia, a new trend will be registered where the importance and understanding about modern and civic aspects of national identity will increase.

The four hypotheses set in the research were aimed to verify the correlation between factors that may influence national identity. Not all the test showed significant results, which brought to the rejection of some of the hypothesis, but all the obtained results were useful in understanding such a complex notion as national identity.

The first hypothesis predicted a strong relation between Serb national identity and Orthodoxy, which was confirmed by the respondents' attitudes about the role of religion. However, the Chi square test used in the quantitative research to measure the correlation between the two categories showed no significant result due to the similarities of the two most predominant national categories: Serbs and Croatian Serbs. But when the participants in the focus group were asked about their religious affiliation and the role of religion in their national identity, they all agreed that Serbian national identity is inseparable from their Christian Orthodoxy, that religion is the main trait of their identity that differentiate from the others (particularly the Croats).

The second hypothesis assumed that national self-identification can be treated as a dependent variable that will be influenced by other independent variables such as age, level of education,

country of birth, membership in Serbian organizations, tragic war experience and longer period of stay in Serbia. In most of the cases, the obtained values showed a very weak or inexistent association between the variables. The obtained result, in addition to the information gathered from the discussion in the focus group, led to the conclusion that national self-identification or nationality is something that can't be measured because is the result of an individual's interior choice. Thus, the second hypothesis has been rejected and it has been accepted that national self-identification is rather an independent variable.

The third hypothesis concerning the predominant ethnic aspect of Serb national identity has been also accepted, as well as the last hypothesis that predicted a high degree of ethnic tolerance among the Serbs in Croatia. As we can see, the fact that Serb national identity is traditional and ethnic doesn't necessarily imply a return to ethno nationalism. Serbs are both traditional and tolerant, they feel a sense of belonging to Serbia and have a stronger emotional attachment to Serbian state symbols rather than Croatian, but they accept the Croats as equals. They also recognize the need to distance from Serbia and get more involved in Croatian state politics. Yugoslavia ceased to exist as well as Yugoslavian identity; Serbs are now Croatian citizens and must learn to function in these new circumstances. Very soon they will be European citizens and in a determinate time all the ex-Yugoslavian countries will join the EU, resulting in all the Serbs living in the same supra-state entity. In such a multinational state union, even the dominant nations will become national minorities. Serbs from Croatia will be faced with the new European identity that maybe will succeed in replacing the lost Yugoslavian identity. Maybe they will self-identify as "European Serbs" rather than "Croatian Serbs", and replace their Serbo-Croatian language with the BSC standard (Bosnia, Serbian, and Croatian) or rather with English. What is sure is that the Serbs from Croatia will not lose their religious identity and will never repeat the same mistake as happened in Croatia.

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1. Year of birth:
2. Gender:
  - a) Male
  - b) Female
3. Profession:
4. Level of education:
  - a) None
  - b) Elementary
  - c) Secondary
  - d) Bacc. or Mr. SC.
  - d) Master or PhD
5. Country of birth:
  - a) Croatia (indicate place and county):
  - b) Serbia
  - c) Bosnia and Herzegovina
  - d) Other (indicate which):
6. Current place of living (city and county):
7. Have you or any of your closest relatives experienced any personal tragedy (death, exile and similar) during the war in Croatia between the years 1991 and 1995?
  - a) Yes
  - b) No
8. Which of the following categories describe you best:
  - a) Serb
  - b) Croat
  - c) Croatian Serb
  - d) Other (indicate which):
9. Have you ever changed your nationality (for example from “Yugoslavian” to something else)?
  - a) Yes (indicate which one and when):
  - b) No
10. What is your religion?
  - a) Christian Orthodox
  - b) Catholic
  - c) Atheist
  - d) Other (indicate which):
11. How important is religion for you?
  - a) Very much
  - b) Moderately
  - c) Little
  - d) Not at all



22. How important are for you Serbian national myths and epic (for ex. The Battle of Kosovo, the Nemanjić dynasty, etc)?

- a) Very much                      b) Moderately                      c) Little                      d) Not at all

23. How important are for you Serb tradition and Serb customs (for ex. “Krsna slava”, marriage and others) for the preservation of Serb national identity in Croatia?

- a) Very much                      b) Moderately                      c) Little                      d) Not at all

24. How much familiar are you with the Serbian traditional privileged status in Croatia?

- a) Very much                      b) Moderately                      c) Little                      d) Not at all

25. Are you familiar with the Serbian role in the anti-fascist movement in Croatia?

- a) Yes (indicate the source):                      b) No

26. How much important is for you the history of Serbs in Croatia?

- a) Very much                      b) Moderately                      c) Little                      d) Not at all

27. How much important is for you the Serbian culture in Croatia?

- a) Very much                      b) Moderately                      c) Little                      d) Not at all

28. Do you think that Serbs in Croatia are discriminated since they became a minority in Croatia (from the year 1991)?

- a) Yes (indicate why):                      b) No

29. Do you think that the Serbs in Croatia should be granted again the status of constitutive people?

- a) Yes (indicate why):                      b) No (indicate why):

30. Are you a member of any Serb organization in Croatia (for ex. Prosvjeta, SNV, SDSS, etc)?

- a) Yes, I am an active member                      b) I am only a former member                      c) No

31. How much familiar are you with Serb organizations/institutions in Croatia?

- a) Very much                      b) Moderately                      c) Little                      d) Not at all

32. Would you agree to have a Croatian spouse?

- a) Yes    b) No (indicate why):

33. Would you agree to have a Croatian neighbor?

- a) Yes    b) No (indicate why):

34. Would you agree to have a Croatian employer?

- a) Yes    b) No (indicate why):

35. Would you agree to have a Croatian friend?

- a) Yes    b) No (indicate why):

*Please note that the translation provided below is only provisional translation and therefore does NOT represent an official document of the Republic of Croatia. It confers no rights and imposes no obligations separate from those conferred or imposed by the legislation formally adopted and published in Croatian language.*

*Please note that this translation is a final text version published in the Official Gazette no. 155/2002.*

(Official Gazette no. 155/2002)  
**CONSTITUTIONAL LAW**  
**ON THE RIGHTS OF NATIONAL MINORITIES**  
**ZAGREB, December 13, 2002**

**I BASIC PROVISIONS**

**Article 1**

The Republic of Croatia, pursuant to:

- the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia,
- the principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations,
- the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,
- the Final Act of the Organisation for European Security and Co-operation, the Charter of Paris for a New Europe and other OSCE documents relating to human rights, especially the Document of the Copenhagen Meeting (OSCE) of the Conference on the Human Dimension and the Document of the Moscow Meeting (OSCE) on the Human Dimension,
- the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, with the pertaining Protocols
- the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the Convention on the Rights of the Child,
- the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief
- the Convention Against Discrimination in Education,
- the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic Religious and Linguistic Minorities,
- the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
- the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages
- the European Charter of Local Self-Government,
- CEI Instrument for the Protection of Minority Rights.
- the Lund Recommendations on the Effective Participation of National Minorities undertakes to respect and protect the rights of national minorities and other fundamental rights and freedoms of man and citizen, the rule of law and all other highest values enshrined in its own Constitution and in international law in relation to all its citizens.

**Article 2**

In addition to the human rights and freedoms recognised under its constitutional provisions, the Republic of Croatia shall recognise and protect all other rights envisaged in the international documents referred to in Article 1 of this Constitutional Law, subject to exceptions and limitations provided in these documents, without any discrimination based on gender, race, colour of skin, language, religion, political and other beliefs, national and social background, association with a national minority, property, status inherited by birth or on any other basis, in accordance with Articles 14 and 17, paragraph 3 of the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia.

### **Article 3**

(1) The rights and freedoms of the members of national minorities, being fundamental human rights and freedoms, shall constitute an inseparable part of the democratic system in the Republic of Croatia and shall enjoy necessary support and protection, including relevant measures taken in favour of national minorities.

(2) Ethnic and multicultural diversity, the spirit of understanding, mutual respect and tolerance contribute to the enhanced development of the Republic of Croatia.

### **Article 4**

(1) Every citizen of the Republic of Croatia shall have the right to freely express his/ her national affiliation, the right to exercise individually or jointly with other members of his/her respective national minority or jointly with members of other national minorities the rights and freedoms defined in this Constitutional Law and other minority rights and freedoms as defined in special laws.

(2) Members of national minorities shall enjoy on an equal footing with other citizens of the Republic of Croatia the rights and freedoms guaranteed under the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia as well as the rights and freedoms defined by this Constitutional Law and special laws.

(3) The rights and freedoms defined by this Constitutional Law as well as the rights and freedoms of the members of national minorities defined in special laws shall be exercised by the national minorities and their members pursuant to and under the conditions stipulated in this Constitutional Law and relevant special laws.

(4) Any discrimination based on ethnic origin shall be prohibited. The members of national minorities shall be guaranteed equality before law and equal legal protection.

(5) It shall be prohibited to take any measures designed to change the ethnic structure in areas populated by national minorities, with a view to undermining the exercise of or limiting the rights and freedoms defined by this Constitutional Law and special laws.

(6) Under this Constitutional Law or a special law it shall be possible to exercise certain rights and freedoms depending on the share of population which members of national minorities enjoy in the Republic of Croatia or one of its areas, the already acquired rights and the international treaties, which in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia are part of the internal legal framework of the Republic of Croatia.

### **Article 5**

A national minority within the terms of this Law shall be considered a group of Croatian citizens whose members have been traditionally inhabiting the territory of the Republic of Croatia and whose ethnic, linguistic, cultural and/ or religious characteristics differ from the rest of the population, and who are motivated to preserve these characteristics.

### **Article 6**

(1) The Republic of Croatia may enter into international treaties with other States to regulate issues concerning the rights and freedoms of members of national minorities in the Republic of Croatia.

(2) When entering into international treaties referred to in para. 1 of this article the Republic of Croatia shall seek thereby to create and upgrade conditions required for the preservation and development of minority cultures and the preservation of essential components of their identity, such as religion, language, traditions and cultural heritage.

### **Article 7**

The Republic of Croatia shall also ensure the exercise of special rights and freedoms of national minority members they enjoy individually or jointly with other members of the same national minority or, where so provided in this Constitutional Law or a special law, jointly with members of other national minorities, in particular with regard to:

1. the use of their language and script, private and public, as well as official use;
2. education in their language and script;



3. the use of their insignia and symbols;
4. cultural autonomy through the preservation, development and expression of their own culture, preservation and protection of their cultural heritage and tradition;
5. practising their religion and establishing their religious communities together with other members of the same religion;
6. access to the media and public information services (receiving and disseminating information) in their language and script;
7. self-organisation and association in pursuance of their common interests;
8. representation in the Parliament and in local government bodies, in administrative and juridical bodies;
9. participation of the members of national minorities in public life and local selfgovernment through the Council and representatives of national minorities;
10. protection from any activity jeopardising or potentially jeopardising their continued existence and the exercise of their rights and freedoms.

#### **Article 8**

The provisions of this Constitutional Law and of special laws governing the rights and freedoms of national minority members shall be construed and applied with a view to ensuring respect for the members of national minorities and other citizens of the Republic of Croatia, to promoting understanding, solidarity, tolerance and dialogue among them.

### **II RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS**

#### **Article 9**

(1) Members of national minorities shall have the right to use their family name and first name(s) in the language they use, and to have their name officially recognised to them and their children through entry in registers of vital statistics and other official documents, in accordance with current regulations of the Republic of Croatia.

(2) Members of national minorities shall have the right to have their identity cards printed and completed also in the language and script of their use.

#### **Article 10**

Members of national minorities shall have the right to freely use their language and script, in private and in public, including the right to display signs, inscriptions and other information in the language and script of their use, in accordance to law.

#### **Article 11**

(1) Members of national minorities shall have the right to education in the language and script used by them.

(2) Education of members of national minorities shall be provided in kindergartens, primary and secondary schools with instruction in the language and script of their use, under the conditions and as prescribed by a special law on education in the language and script of national minorities.

(3) Schools with instruction in the language and script of a national minority can be established for a number of students smaller than the one prescribed for schools with instruction in the Croatian language and script.

(4) The syllabus and curriculum of education in the language and script of a national minority shall along with its general part comprise minority-specific subjects (native language, literature, history, geography and cultural tradition).

(5) Students being educated in the language and script of a national minority shall have the right and obligation to study in parallel the Croatian language and script according to the prescribed curriculum.

(6) Teachers in schools with instruction in the language and script of a national minority shall be members of that national minority and fully proficient in the respective minority language and

script, or teachers who are not members of that national minority but are fully proficient in the language and script of the respective national minority.

(7) Higher education institutions shall organise teacher training courses for instruction in the languages and script of national minorities in the part of the curriculum containing minority specific subjects (native language, literature, history, geography, cultural tradition).

(8) Members of national minorities may for the purposes of minority education establish kindergartens, primary and secondary schools and higher education institutions, in the manner and under the conditions stipulated by law.

(9) For pupils of a Croatian language school arrangements shall be made for instruction in the language and script of a national minority as defined in a special law, according to a curriculum defined by the competent central government body, with funds to be provided from the state budget and the budget of the local self-government unit concerned.

#### **Article 12**

(1) Equality in the official use of a minority language and script shall be exercised in the territory of a self-government unit where the members of a national minority make at least one third of the population.

(2) Equality in the official use of a minority language and script shall also be practised when so envisaged in international treaties to which the Republic of Croatia is a party and when so stipulated in the statute of a local or regional self-government unit, pursuant to the provisions of the special Law on the Use of Minority Languages and Script in the Republic of Croatia.

(3) Other conditions and modalities of the official use of minority languages and script in representative and executive bodies, in procedures before administrative bodies of local and regional self-government units, in first-instance procedures before government bodies, in first instance court proceedings, in procedures conducted by the Public Attorney's Office, notaries public and legal persons with public powers, shall be regulated by a special law on the use of minority languages and script.

#### **Article 13**

The law regulating the use of minority languages and script and/ or the statutes of self-government units shall define measures to facilitate the preservation of traditional names and signs and the naming of places, streets and squares after the persons or events important for the history and culture of the respective national minority in the Republic of Croatia, in the areas traditionally or in terms of numbers significantly populated by the national minority concerned.

#### **Article 14**

(1) The use of insignia and symbols as well as the celebration of national minority holidays shall be free.

(2) In the official use of insignia and symbols of national minorities the corresponding insignia and symbols of the Republic of Croatia shall be displayed concurrently. When a national anthem and/ or ceremonial song of a national minority is played, the national anthem of the Republic of Croatia shall be played first.

(3) Local and regional self-government units shall define in their statutes the official use and the manner of using the flag and symbols of a national minority.

#### **Article 15**

(1) Members of national minorities may for the purpose of preservation, development, promotion and manifestation of their national and cultural identity establish organisations, trusts and foundations, as well as institutions engaging in public information, cultural, publishing, museum, library or scientific activities.

(2) The Republic of Croatia, the local and regional self-government units, according to their capacities, finance the functioning of the institutions from para 1. of this article.

(3) The names of organisations, trusts, foundations and institutions under para. 1 of this article may contain a reference to the particular national minority.

#### **Article 16**

(1) Members of national minorities, their organisations and minority self-governments may maintain contacts with people with whom they share the same ethnic, linguistic, cultural and/ or religious characteristics, as well as with legal entities having a seat in the country of that people, engaging in educational, scientific, cultural, publishing and humanitarian activities.

(2) National minority organisations and minority self-governments may receive from the bodies and legal entities of the country of the people with whom they share the same characteristics referred to in para. 1 of this article duty-exempted newspapers, magazines, books, films, videocassettes, sound carriers in a limited number of copies for their own use and may distribute them without charge to the members of the national minority concerned.

(3) National minority organisations may arrange guest performances of professional and amateur cultural societies, as well as organise other cultural and artistic events and exhibitions contributing to the enrichment of culture and identity of a national minority. In such cases the visiting aliens need not be in possession of a labour permit.

(4) National minority members shall be free to manifest and practise their religion and thereby express their allegiance to that religious community.

#### **Article 17**

(1) The laws regulating public information services, production and broadcasting of radio and TV programmes, education, museum and library activities, preservation and conservation of cultural heritage shall create conditions for better acquaintance of all citizens of the Republic of Croatia, particularly children and young people through educational programmes, mandatory and optional school curriculum subjects, with the history, culture and religion of the national minorities.

(2) To this end steps will be taken to facilitate access by national minority members to the media.

#### **Article 18**

(1) Radio stations and TV studios at nation-wide, regional and local level shall be specifically tasked to promote understanding for members of national minorities, to produce and/ or broadcast programmes designed to inform national minority members in minority languages, to encourage and promote the preservation, development and manifestation of minority cultural, religious and other identity, preservation and conservation of national heritage and traditions, as well as to inform national minority members in the region about the work and tasks of the respective minority self-government.

Legal entities engaging in public information services (the press, radio and TV) shall enable the minority organisations and institutions to participate in the creation of programmes intended for national minorities

(2) In the state budget and the budgets of the local and regional self-government units funds shall be assigned for co-financing minority programmes on radio and television stations owned by them, in accordance with available capacities and the criteria defined by the Croatian Government on the proposal of the Council for National Minorities or by the competent local and regional self-government units on the proposal of the national minority councils.

(3) In order to ensure the right of national minority members to information through the press, radio and TV in the minority language and script, national minority members, minority self-governments and minority organizations can engage in public information activities (publish newspapers, produce and broadcast radio and TV programmes and engage in news agencies) as provided for by the law.

#### **Article 19**

(1) National minorities shall have the right to representation in the Croatian Parliament.

(2) Members of national minorities can elect at least five and not more than eight MPs in special constituencies in accordance with the law regulating the election of MPs, which, however, shall not derogate the already acquired rights of national minorities.

(3) A national minority with a share of more than 1.5% in the total population of the Republic of Croatia shall be guaranteed at least one and not more than three parliament seats in accordance with the law regulating the election of MPs.

(4) National minorities with a share of less than 1.5% in the total population of the Republic of Croatia shall have the right to elect at least four MPs from among the members of national minorities in accordance with the law regulating the election of MPs.

#### **Article 20**

(1) The Republic of Croatia guarantees national minority members the right to representation in the representative bodies of local and regional self-government units.

(2) Unless at least one member of a national minority having a share in the population of a self-government unit above 5% and below 15% is elected by universal suffrage to the representational body of the self-government unit, the number of members of the representational body shall be increased by one member and as elected shall be considered a minority member who has not been elected as the first in the order of proportional success of each electoral list, unless otherwise provided in the law governing the election of members of the representational body of the self-government unit.

(3) Unless an election by universal suffrage fails to result in as many minority members in the representational body of a local self-government unit as pertaining to the respective national minority having at least 15% share in the local population, the number of members of the representational body of that unit shall be increased to a number required to achieve that representation and as elected shall be considered minority members who have not been elected in the order of proportional success of each electoral list, unless otherwise provided in the law governing the election of members of the representational body of the local self-government unit.

(4) Unless an election by universal suffrage fails to result in as many minority members in the representational body of a regional self-government unit as pertaining to the respective national minority having more than 5% share in the population of the regional self-government unit, the number of members of the representational body of that unit shall be increased to a number required to achieve that representation and as elected shall be considered minority members who have not been elected in the order of proportional success of each electoral list, unless otherwise provided in the law governing the election of members of the representational body of the regional self-government unit.

(5) Should even the application of the provisions of paras. 2 and 3 of this article fail to result in the desired representation of minority members in the representational body of a local self-government unit, or a regional self-government body under para. 4 of this article, in compliance with these provisions, a by-election shall be announced in the self-government unit concerned.

(6) Candidacy and the election of members of the representational bodies of local and regional self-government units pursuant to the provisions of paras. 2, 3, 4 and 5 of this article shall be regulated under the law governing the election of members of the representational bodies of local and regional self-government units.

(7) Official census results shall be a basis for determining the number of minority members required for the implementation of the provisions of this article. Prior to any election, the official census results in respect of the number of minority members in a local or regional self-government unit shall be adjusted to changes which may have been recorded in the latest confirmed polling list of that unit.

### **Article 21**

The local and regional self-government units where minority members do not constitute a majority can stipulate in their statutes that minority members are to be elected to the representational body in or above their proportional share in the total population of that unit.

### **Article 22**

(1) In a local or regional self-government unit (hereinafter: self-government unit) where a proportional representation of minority members is required under the provisions of this Constitutional Law, such minority representation shall also be secured in the unit's executive body.

(2) Minority representation shall be ensured in government and judiciary bodies in compliance with a special law, with allowance to be made for the share of a national minority in the total population in the area where a government or a judiciary body has been formed, as well as for the acquired rights.

(3) The members of national minorities shall be granted the right to representation in the administrative bodies of self-government units in compliance with the provisions of a special law regulating local and regional self-government and with the acquired rights.

(4) In filling the vacancies referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3 of this article, preference under the same conditions shall be given to the representatives of national minorities.

## **III MINORITY SELF-GOVERNMENT IN SELF-GOVERNMENT UNITS**

### **Article 23**

For promotion, preservation and protection of the position of national minorities in the society, the members of national minorities can elect, in the manner and under the conditions defined in this Constitutional law, their minority self-governments or minority representatives in the self-government units.

### **Article 24**

(1) Minority self-governments can be elected in self-government units where members of a national minority have at least 1.5% share in the total population, or where more than 200 members of a national minority are resident, or in the area of a regional self-government unit where more than 500 members of a national minority are resident.

(2) 10 representatives shall be elected to a minority self-government of a municipality, 15 to a minority self-government of a town, 25 to a minority self-government of a county.

(3) In cases where at least one of the requirements for the election of a minority self-government under para. 1 of this article has not been met, and in an area with at least 100 residing members of a national minority, a minority representative shall be elected for the territory of such self-government unit.

(4) Candidates for minority self-governments or candidates for minority representatives can be nominated by minority organisations or at least 20 members of a national minority from the territory of a municipality, or 30 from the territory of a town or 50 from the territory of a county.

(5) Members of minority self-governments and minority representatives shall be elected by direct secret ballot for a four-year term, with the election procedure to be conducted in compliance with the law regulating the election of representatives to representative bodies of local self-government units.

(6) Relevant for the determination of the number of national minority members for the purpose of implementing the provisions of this article shall be the national census increased or reduced by the number of voters entered in or deleted from the electoral register drawn up to elect representatives to the representative bodies of local self-government units.

### **Article 25**

(1) A minority self-government shall be considered a non-profit legal entity. Its legal status shall be acquired by registration with the ministry responsible for general administrative affairs.

(2) For its obligations the minority self-government shall be liable with its entire assets.

(3) The name of a minority self-government shall be in both the Croatian language and Latin script and in the language and script of the national minority which has formed the minority self-government.

(4) The name of a minority self-government shall contain a reference to the national minority in question and the territory it has been established for.

(5) The minister responsible for public administration affairs shall define the tenor of the register of the minority self-government and the manner in which it is to be kept, as well as the application form for entry in the register of national minorities

#### **Article 26**

The members of the minority self-government shall elect their chairperson by secret ballot. The minority self-government shall also elect a person to act on behalf of the chairperson in case of his or her absence or inability to perform his or her duties.

#### **Article 27**

(1) Minority self-government shall pass its programme of work, financial plan and annual balance sheet, as well as its statute regulating matters relevant for work of the minority selfgovernment.

(2) The chairman of the minority self-government shall represent and act on behalf of the minority self-government, convene council sessions, and have powers and duties as defined in the statute of the minority self-government.

(3) The minority self-government statute, programme, financial plan and annual balance sheet shall be passed by a majority vote of the council members.

(4) The minority self-government statute, financial plan and annual balance sheet shall be published in the official gazette of the self-government unit where the minority self-government has been established.

#### **Article 28**

(1) Self-government units shall ensure funds for operation of minority self-government bodies, including funds required for their administrative services, and may also ensure funds for specific activities as defined in the respective minority self-government programmes.

(2) Funds required for certain minority self-government programmes can also be provided from the national budget.

#### **Article 29**

(1) The funds obtained by a minority self-government from its property, from donations, grants, inheritance or other sources may only be used for the activities and purposes relevant for the respective national minority as defined in its programme.

(2) The funds obtained by a minority self-government from the national budget or a selfgovernment unit's budget can be used solely for the purposes envisaged in the budget or the law or a decision regulating budget expenditures, or, when it comes to national budget funds, for purposes designated by the Council for National Minorities.

(3) When purchasing goods or services or performing works financed from funds referred to in para. 2 of this article, the minority self-government may use them solely under the conditions and in the way stipulated by the Procurement Act.

#### **Article 30**

(1) Members of a minority self-government and its bodies shall, as a rule, perform their duties on a voluntary basis and with due care of a good husband.

(2) Members of a minority self-government and its bodies may only be reimbursed for costs incurred while carrying out their duties for the minority self-government and remunerated on a monthly or other basis, only if so approved and up to a limit thus approved by the minister in charge of general administration.

#### **Article 31**

(1) Minority self-governments in a self-government unit shall be entitled to:

- propose to self-government units measures to improve the position of the respective national minority nation-wide or in a specific area, including proposals of by-laws to regulate issues relevant for that national minority;
  - propose candidates for duties in government administration bodies and bodies of self-government units;
  - be informed of any issue to be discussed by the committees of the self-government unit's representative bodies, of relevance to that national minority;
  - give their views and make proposals to self-government unit's bodies concerning local and regional radio and TV broadcasts intended for national minorities or addressing minority issues.
- (2) In their bylaws the bodies of self-government units shall define the manner, time schedule and procedure applicable in exercising the rights stipulated in paragraph 1 of this article.

### **Article 32**

- (1) In drafting its by-laws the self-government unit's administration shall seek opinions and proposals of the minority self-government formed in its area regarding the provisions regulating minority rights and freedoms.
- (2) Should a minority self-government deem a self-government unit's by-law or any of its provisions to be in contravention of the Constitution, this Constitutional Law or special laws governing the minority rights and freedoms, it shall immediately notify thereof the ministry in charge of general administration, the self-government unit's administration and the Council for National Minorities.
- (3) If the ministry responsible for general administration or the Council for National Minorities assess the by-law from para. 2 of this article or any of its provisions to be in contravention of the Constitution, this Constitutional Law or the special laws governing the minority rights and freedoms, the ministry shall suspend its implementation within eight days.
- (4) A decision suspending implementation of a by-law shall be forwarded without delay to the mayor or county prefect as well as the chairman of the representative body which has passed the by-law, and the notification of the decision shall be forwarded to the Council for National Minorities and the minority self-government on the basis of whose notification the decision has been made.
- (5) The Ministry in charge of general administration shall forward to the Croatian Government the decision suspending the implementation of the by-law along with a proposal to initiate proceedings to assess its conformity with the Constitution and the law before the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Croatia and notify the respective self-government unit accordingly.
- (6) The suspension of a by-law shall cease to apply if the Croatian Government fails to initiate the proceedings from para. 5 of this article within 30 days of the date of receipt of a decision to this effect.

### **Article 33**

- (1) Two or more minority self-governments of a local or regional self-government unit may for the purpose of harmonisation and promotion of joint interests set up a steering committee of minority self-governments.
- (2) Through the steering committee the minority self-governments shall harmonise their views on matters within the scope of their responsibilities.
- (3) Minority self-governments may authorise the steering committee to take on their behalf measures from article 31 of this Constitutional Law.
- (4) The minority self-governments of regional self-government units shall be deemed to have set up a steering committee for the territory of the Republic of Croatia once the agreement to set up such a steering committee has been acceded by more than half of the minority self-governments of regional self-government.

(5) The minority self-government steering committee set up by minority self-governments of regional self-government units for the territory of the Republic of Croatia can make decisions on the national minority insignia and symbols and on minority holidays, in concordance with the Council for National Minorities.

#### **Article 34**

(1) A minority representative shall perform his/ her duties under the title both in the Croatian language and Latin script and in the language and script of the national minority which has elected him/ her, containing also a reference to the region for which he/ she has been elected.

(2) The minority representative shall open an account for funds utilised to implement minority rights in the area of the self-government unit for which he/ she has been elected, present the financial plan for utilising such funds and prepare the balance sheet. The financial plan and the balance sheet for funds utilised in the implementation of minority rights shall be published in the official gazette of the local self-government unit for the area of which the minority representative has been elected.

(3) To the minority representative, his/ her powers and obligations the provisions of articles 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33 hereof shall apply as appropriate.

### **IV COUNCIL FOR NATIONAL MINORITIES**

#### **Article 35**

(1) A Council for National Minorities shall be set up to consider and propose ways of regulating and addressing issues related to the exercise and safeguarding of minority rights and freedoms. To this end the Council shall co-operate with competent government and self-government bodies, minority self-governments, national minority organisations and legal entities engaged in activities related to the exercise of minority rights and freedoms.

(2) The Council for National Minorities shall be entitled to:

- propose to legislative and executive authorities debates on particular issues relevant for a national minority, especially the implementation of this Constitutional Law and the special laws governing minority rights and freedoms;
- propose to legislative and executive authorities measures to improve the position of a national minority nation-wide or in a specific area;
- give views and make proposals concerning public radio and TV broadcasts intended for national minorities, or the treatment of minority issues in public radio and TV broadcasts or other media;
- propose taking economic, social or other measures in areas traditionally or significantly populated by national minorities with a view to preserving their existence in those areas.
- seek and receive from the central government and local and regional government bodies information and reports required for considering matters within their scope;
- invite and request the presence of representatives of a central government or local and regional government body responsible for matters within the scope of the Council as defined in this Constitutional Law and the Statute of the Council.

(3) The Council for National Minorities shall co-operate in matters of interest to national minorities in the Republic of Croatia with competent international organisations and institutions engaged in minority issues and with the competent authorities of the countries of origin of the national minorities in the Republic of Croatia.

(4) The Council for National Minorities shall disburse the state budget funds earmarked for the needs of national minorities. The beneficiaries of these funds shall file annual reports on the use of funds being remitted to them from the state budget, which in turn shall be reported by the Council to the Croatian Government and Parliament.

(5) In case of failure of the Council for National Minorities to decide upon the disbursement of the funds referred to in paragraph 4 of this article within 90 days of the passage of the state budget, the matter shall be decided upon by the Croatian Government.



### **Article 36**

(1) Members of the Council for National Minorities shall be appointed by the Croatian Government for a four-year term, viz.:

- seven minority members from among the persons proposed by minority self-governments
- five minority members from among prominent cultural, scientific, professional or religious figures proposed by minority organisations, religious communities, legal entities or individual members of national minorities.

(2) Members of the Council for National Minorities shall also be national minority MPs.

(3) The Council for National Minorities shall have its Chairman and Vice-Chairman, appointed by the Croatian Government from among the Council members.

(4) In appointing the members of the Council for National Minorities the Croatian Government shall take into account the share of particular national minorities in the total population of the Republic of Croatia, as well as the need for the Council's composition to reflect the identity and distinctive features of those national minorities, their historic values, their ethnic, cultural and every other peculiarity.

(5) Chairman of the Council for National Minorities shall carry out his/ her duties professionally and head the Council's administrative and technical services.

(6) The Croatian Government shall form the Council's administrative service to perform technical and administrative duties for the Council for National Minorities, and establish the approximate number of its staff.

(7) The Council for National Minorities shall have its statute being passed with the approval of the Croatian Government. The statute shall define in more detail the Council's scope of work and organisation.

(8) The Council for National Minorities shall pass its agenda, financial plan, balance sheet and decisions on the disbursement of state budget funds assigned for the needs of national minorities.

(9) The Council for National Minorities shall pass the organisation rules, proposed by the chairperson of the Council, applicable to its professional services.

(10) The decisions by the Council for National Minorities shall be passed by the majority of votes of all its members.

(11) The agenda, financial plan and balance sheet of the Council for National Minorities, as well as the bylaws by virtue of which the Council is disbursing the funds provided from the state budget for the needs of national minorities, shall be published in the Official Gazette.

## **V SUPERVISION**

### **Article 37**

(1) The implementation of the minority rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution, this Constitutional Law and the special laws shall be supervised by relevant government bodies within the scope of their responsibilities.

(2) The Croatian Government shall co-ordinate the work of government bodies in the application of this Constitutional Law and the special laws regulating issues of relevance to national minorities.

(3) At least once a year the Croatian Government shall report to the Croatian Parliament on the progress of implementing this Constitutional Law and the utilisation of funds provided from the state budget for the needs of national minorities, whereas the Council for National Minorities shall file semi-annual reports to the Croatian Parliament or its committee in charge of minority rights on matters within the responsibility of the Council plus quarterly reports on the utilisation of funds provided from the state budget for the needs of national minorities.

### **Article 38**

(1) A minority self-government or a minority representative in a self-government unit may request from the competent government body to review the application of this Constitutional Law and the

special laws governing minority rights and freedoms by the self-government units where they were established, and to take actions to ensure the legality of procedure, and to notify thereof the Council for National Minorities, which in turn shall inform the minority self-government or a minority representative about its position on the matter.

(2) The Council for National Minorities may request from the Croatian Government to review the application of this Constitutional Law and the special laws governing minority rights and freedoms by the government bodies and to take actions to ensure the legality of procedure.

(3) Pursuant to the provisions of the Constitutional Act on the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Croatia, the minority self-governments or a minority representative and the Council for National Minorities may lodge a constitutional complaint with the Constitutional Court if in their opinion or if acting upon an initiative by national minority members they consider the minority rights and freedoms safeguarded by this Constitutional Law and the special laws to have been violated.

## **VI TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS**

### **Article 39**

(1) The provision of article 19 of this Constitutional Law shall apply as of the date of entry into force of a law regulating in line with this provision the election of MPs.

(2) The representative bodies of local and regional self-government units whose mandate is running, but where the right to representation by minority representatives has not been exercised in line with the provisions of article 20 hereof, shall be replenished by a corresponding number of minority representatives in the manner and within the time limits prescribed by the law regulating the election of representatives to the local and regional self-government representative bodies.

### **Article 40**

Nothing in this Law shall be construed as including any right to engage in any activity or perform any act contrary to the fundamental principles of international law, and in particular the sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity and independence of the Republic of Croatia.

### **Article 41**

The rights of national minorities arising from international treaties to which the Republic of Croatia is a party shall not be altered or abolished by this Constitutional Law.

### **Article 42**

(1) The Government of the Republic of Croatia shall appoint the members of the Council for National Minorities as well as its Chairman and Vice-Chairman as provided in article 34, para. 1 hereof within 90 days of the date of entry into force of this Constitutional Law.

(2) If by the expiry of the deadline from para. 1 of this article minority self-governments are not established, or if they fail to nominate before the Croatian Government their candidates to the Council for National Minorities, the Council shall be composed of the members appointed under the provisions of article 36, para. 1, indent 2 and the members appointed according to the article 36, para 2 hereof.

(3) Pending the formation of the administrative service of the Council for National Minorities, the required technical and administrative services for the Council shall be provided by the Government Office for National Minorities.

### **Article 43**

(1) As of the date of entry into force of this Constitutional Law the provision of article 4, para.1, clause 1 of the Law on the Use of Minority Languages and Script (Official Gazette No. 51/2000) shall cease to apply.

(2) As of the date of entry into force of this Constitutional Law the provision of article 9 of the Law on the Election of Representatives to Representative Bodies of Local and Regional Self-government Units (Official Gazette No. 33/2001) shall cease to apply in its part stipulating the election of representatives to the representative bodies of local and regional self-government units from among the members of national minorities, as well as the provision of article 61 thereof.

**Article 44**

As of the date of entry into force of this Constitutional Law the Constitutional Law on Human Rights and Freedoms and of the Rights of Ethnic and National Communities or Minorities in the Republic of Croatia (Official Gazette Nos. 65/91, 27/92, 34/92 - revised text, 51/2000 and 105/2000- revised text) shall cease to apply.

**Article 45**

This Constitutional Law shall enter into force as of the date of its publication in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Croatia.

*December 13, 2002*

**Number of Serbs and Yugoslavs in the former SR of Croatia in the post-war period**

Year	Total number of inhabitants	Serbs		Yugoslavs	
		Count	Percent	Count	Percent
1948	3,779,858	543,795	14.4		
1953	3,936,022	588,756	15.0	16,964	0.4
1961	4,159,696	624,991	15.0	15,560	0.4
1971	4,426,221	626,789	14.2	84,118	1.9
1981	4,601,469	531,502	11.6	379,057	8.2
1991	4,784,265	581,653	12.2	106,041	2.2
1991/1948 index	126.6	107.0	-	-	-

**Distribution of the Serbs in the former SR of Croatia after World War II**

Territory	1948		1953		1971		1981		1991		Index 1991/ 1948 = 100
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
Northwest Dalmatia	83,503	15.4	87,095	14.8	93,255	14.9	83,171	15.6	92,213	15.9	110.4
Lika and Gorski Kotar	81,420	15.0	81,600	13.9	70,168	11.2	54,435	10.3	55,114	9.5	67.7
Bania and Kordun	134,731	24.8	142,664	24.2	131,076	20.9	110,184	20.7	117,058	20.1	86.9
Slavonia, Baranja and Western Srem	199,929	36.7	212,098	36.0	227,803	36.3	180,339	33.9	197,209	33.9	98.6
Other part of the former SR Croatia	44,212	8.1	65,299	11.1	104,487	16.7	103,373	19.5	120,069	20.6	271.6
Total	543,759	100	588,756	100	626,789	100	531,502	100	581,663	100	107.0

### Number of Serbs in Yugoslavia by Population Censuses from 1948-1991

Republics & Regions	1948	1953	1961	1971	1981	1991
Bosnia & Herzegovina	1,136,116	1,264,372	1,406,057	1,393,148	1,320,644	1,369,258
Montenegro	6,707	13,864	14,087	39,512	19,407	57,176
Croatia	543,795	588,411	624,985	626,789	531,502	580,762
Macedonia	29,721	35,112	42,728	46,465	44,182	44,159
Slovenia	7,048	11,225	13,609	20,521	42,182	47,097
Serbia-total	4,823,730	5,152,939	5,704,686	6,016,811	6,182,159	6,428,420
Central Serbia	3,810,573	4,088,724	4,459,953	4,699,415	4,865,283	5,081,766
Vojvodina	841,246	874,346	1,017,717	1,089,132	1,107,378	1,151,353
Kosovo and Metohia	171,911	189,869	227,016	228,264	209,498	195,301
SFR of Yugoslavia	6,547,117	7,065,923	7,806,152	8,143,246	8,140,507	8,526,872

### Persons Declaring Themselves as Yugoslavs by Population Censuses from 1961 to 1991

Republics & Regions	1961	1971	1981	1991
Bosnia & Herzegovina	275,883	43,796	326,316	239,845
Montenegro	1,559	10,943	31,243	25,854
Croatia	15,559	84,118	379,057	104,728
Macedonia	1,260	3,652	14,225	-
Slovenia	2,784	6,744	26,263	12,237
Serbia - total	20,079	123,824	441,941	317,739
Central Serbia	11,699	75,976	272,050	145,810
Vojvodina	3,174	46,928	167,215	168,859
Kosovo & Metohia	5,206	920	2,676	3,070
SFR of Yugoslavia	317,124	273,077	1,219,045	-

Source: The Serbian Questions in The Balkans, University of Belgrade, publisher - Faculty of Geography, Belgrade 1995. Available online at <http://www.rastko.rs/istorija/srbi-balkan/index.html>

*"The Serbs are descended from the unbaptized Serbs, also called 'white', who live beyond Turkey in a place called by them Boiki, where their neighbour is Francia, as is also Great Croatia, the unbaptized, also called 'white': in this place, then, these Serbs also originally dwelt. But when two brothers succeeded their father in the rule of Serbia, one of them, taking a moiety of the folk, claimed the protection of Heraclius, the emperor of the Romans, and the same emperor Heraclius received him and gave him a place in the province of Thessalonica to settle in, namely Serbia, which from that time has acquired this denomination."...*

*..."Now, after some time these same Serbs decided to depart to their own homes, and the emperor sent them off. But when they had crossed the river Danube, they changed their minds and sent a request to the emperor Heraclius, through the military governor then governing Belgrade, that he would grant them other land to settle in."...*

*..."And since what is now Rascia (Serbia) and Pagania and the so-called country of the Zachlumi and Trebounia and the country of the Kanalites were under the dominion of the emperor of the Romans, and since these countries had been made desolate by the Avars (for they had expelled from those parts the Romans who now live in Dalmatia and Dyrrachium), therefore the emperor settled these same Serbs in these countries, and they were subject to the emperor of the Romans; and the emperor brought elders from Rome and baptized them and taught them fairly to perform the works of piety and expounded to them the faith of the Christians."...*

*..."And since Bulgaria was beneath the dominion of the Romans \* \* \* when, therefore, that same Serbian prince died who had claimed the emperor's protection, his son ruled in succession, and thereafter his grandson, and in like manner the succeeding princes from his family"...*

***-De Administrando Imperio chapter 31, Constantine VII (10th century)***

Source: <http://archive.org/details/DeAdministrandoImperioonTheGovernanceOfTheEmpire>

### **Ferdinand I Privilege awarded to the Serbian captains and dukes (1538)**

*Ferdinand, by the grace of God always his highness king of Rome and king of Germany, Hungary, Chechia, Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia etc...*

*By this document We proclaim and announce to all concerned that Our beloved nobleman Nikola Jurišić, baron of Kisek, Our head officer in charge has informed Us that some Serbian or Rascian captains and dukes have decided to arrive together with their soldiers and others ruled by their honorable ducal names, to come into Our service and to always loyally and irretrievably stay and stand their ground in Our service. That is why We want, for these Serbian or Rascian captains and dukes, their soldiers and men under their command and their dependents, to be given and to be awarded an abundant and merciful gift of royal sympathy and kindness.*

*So that they can confirm their pledge strongly with their deed, We will, because of their faithful intentions and attitudes towards Us and the Christianity, give, procure, allow, award and pledge this later presented privilege of exemption from certain obligations, of assignation of certain rights and of awarding the freedom which should, in Our opinion, be promised, given and procured to consist of these things:*

*When these Serbian or Rascian captains and dukes, soldiers and aforementioned men under their command pledge an oath to Our loyal service, each family that will have lived in one household, under one roof and on one estate\*, must, can and is allowed to live freely on Our lands in place of residence that Our aforementioned head officer in charge designates, and for twenty years without interruption shall without any tax of fee farm the land or have it leased, gather all crops and income from that land, without any limitation or argument. Also, We will order for each captain or duke of these Serbians or Rascians who has under his leadership or command 200 soldiers, an award each year to be received and be given, to be paid and counted in money of 50 aranyforints\*, for as long as he serves Us well and faithfully. Besides that, whatever they take away from the hands of nonbelievers and sworn enemies of the Christian faith, the Ottomans, whatever they win into their governance and possession, all of that is to belong to these Rascians except towns, market places, fortresses, watchtowers, captains and dignitaries, all of which We will keep to rule of Our own accord.*

*With this a condition is also added: when in Our paid service, and when having captured something from the nonbelievers while in this paid service, they are obliged to as well as above mentioned limits, to turn to Our treasurer a third of any such gain or goods, for We shall not denounce the profit or income of this one third of gains.*

*We are prepared to, when and if the need arises, issue a new privilege or modify it to the advantage of the very Serbs or Rascians, like paying the ransom for captured men, if any of them fall prisoner or under the rule of Our enemy, or to reward and show special gratitude to those who prove themselves beyond others, by some extraordinary and praiseworthy deed, performed in the name of Christian community against its sworn enemies, and when We witness that the aforementioned dukes, their soldiers and men in their service are working for Our own benefit and when they show that they deserve to be given not only this one privilege that is awarded, but a far greater gratitude and mercy on behalf of Us and on the behalf of the entire Christianity.*

*We pledge and promise that We shall honor this privilege, and We demand and request that all pledge to do the same. We confirm this with Our own signature. In Our city of Linz, on September the 5th 1538."*

*Ferdinand.*

Source: <http://www.rodoslovlje.com/en/documentation/ferdinand-i-privilege-awarded-serbian-captains-and-dukes>



Ethnic groups in ex- Yugoslavia (1991)



Source: Central Intelligence Agency, "Ethnic Groups in Yugoslavia," Making the History of 1989, Item #170, <http://chnm.gmu.edu/1989/items/show/170>



Ethno-political variants of Serbo-Croatian as of 2006



Ethno-political division of the Serbo-Croatian language or Serbo-Croatian diasystem - areas where Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian / Bosniak, and Montenegrin are spoken by the majority or plurality of speakers (as of 2006):

- - Serbian language
- - Croatian language
- - Bosnian language (Bosniak language)
- - Montenegrin language

PL - Municipality of Plav

● - areas where other languages are spoken by the majority or plurality of speakers

Note: Terms Bosnian language and Bosniak language are often used as synonyms and are presented as such in this map. In the official results of 2003 census in Montenegro, Bosnian and Bosniak are listed as separate languages and plurality of citizens of Montenegrin municipality of Plav declared in census that their language is Bosniak.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Serbo\\_croatian\\_languages2006\\_02.png](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Serbo_croatian_languages2006_02.png)



Source: [http://govori.tripod.com/hrvati\\_ijekavci.htm](http://govori.tripod.com/hrvati_ijekavci.htm)

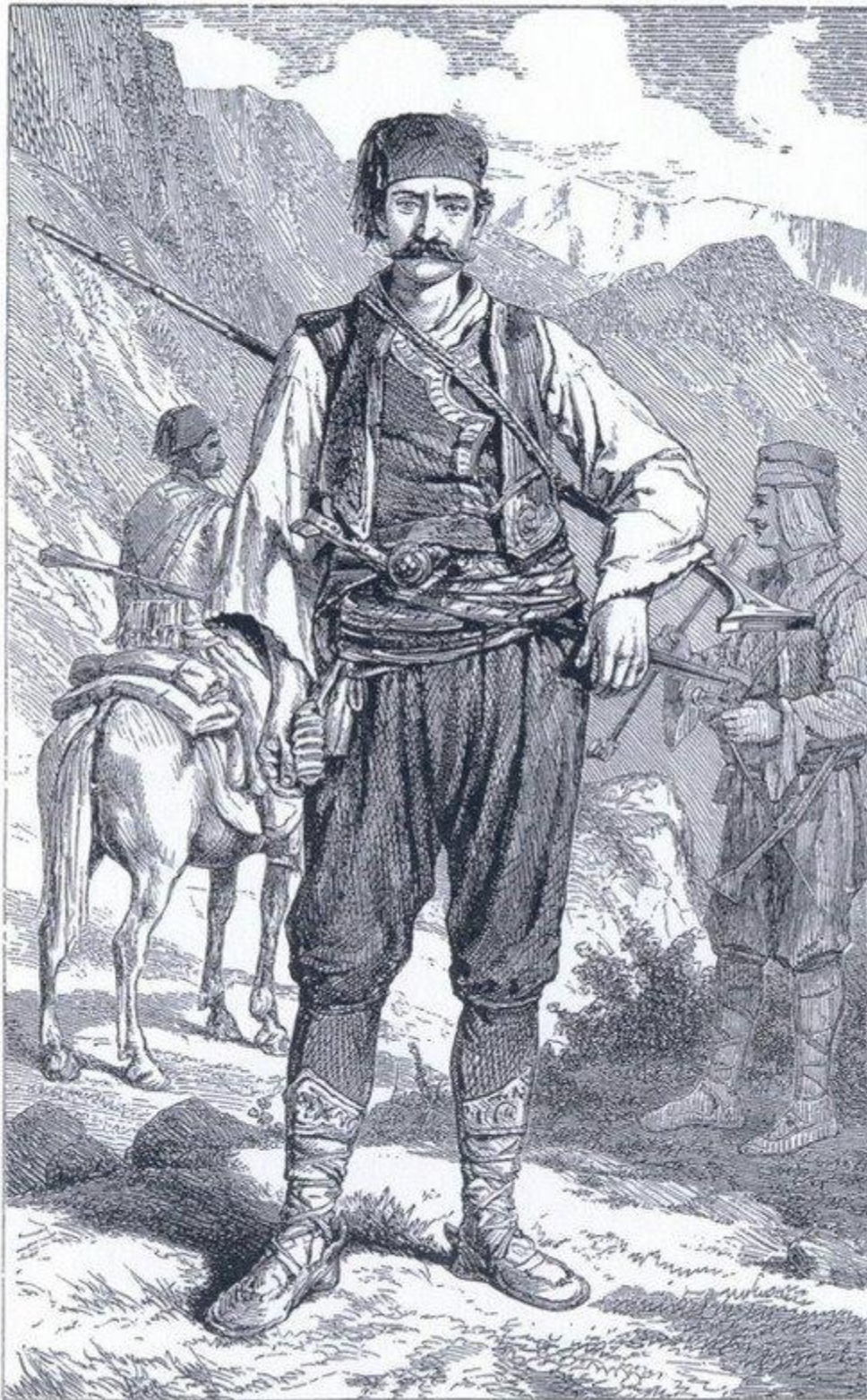
### The Serb migrations (1690)



*The Moving of the Serbs* (Seoba Srbalja), painting by Paja Jovanović in 1896, portrays the Serbian Orthodox Patriarch Arsenije III Crnojević, surrounded by soldiers, flocks of sheep and women with babies, leading some 36,000 families from his seat in Peć, Kosovo and Southern Serbia to what is now Vojvodina and further to Hungary in 1690, after Serbian revolts failed.

Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Serbmigra.jpg>

**Serbian *Krajšnici* (Frontiersmen), 16th century–1882**



SERBIAN BORDER GUARD.

Source: [http://carskepovlastice.blogspot.com/2008\\_05\\_01\\_archive.html](http://carskepovlastice.blogspot.com/2008_05_01_archive.html)



Source: <http://grenzer.blogspot.com/2010/05/austrian-grenzers-krajisnici.html>

**Serbian national costumes in Croatia (Western Slavonia, first half of XX century)**



Source: [http://www.kolo.rs/kolo\\_plugins/autogallery/autogallery.php?show=Costumes](http://www.kolo.rs/kolo_plugins/autogallery/autogallery.php?show=Costumes)

**Traditional Serbian costumes from Lika**



Source: <http://imageshack.us/photo/my-images/507/lican2006bh5.jpg/>





Source: <http://www.pirn.hr/hr/posudionica-i-radionica-narodnih-nosnji-home/posudionica-i-radionica-narodnih-nosnji-galerija/posudionica-i-radionica-narodnih-nosnji-galerija-nacionalne-manjine-u-hrvatskoj.html>

### Traditional cap from Lika



Source: <http://www.korenici.com/slike/kapa.jpg>



Source: <http://www.nasa-lika.com>

The traditional cap from Lika appeared in the rocky area of the region of Lika. It symbolizes the suffering of the Serbian people during the Ottoman Empire and the Battle of Kosovo. The cap is a symbol of the Old Jug Bogdan, and its nine fringes symbolize the death of nine Jugović brothers. The red color symbolizes the bloodshed in the Serbian struggle for the freedom of all the Serbian people. The black rim symbolizes the mourning Serbian mothers, sisters, daughters and other women's for the death of the Serbian knights. The rim of the cap is made of strong embroidered thread as a symbol of the connection among the Serbs. The inside is set with black lining. There are no markings on it. The Lika cap is worn also in Dalmatia, Herzegovina and Montenegro, with some differences. The Lika cap is worn also in the Bosnian Krajina, because the Bosnian Krajina was populated with people from Krajina, Lika and Dalmatia.

Source: [http://www.licka-sarenica.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=47:lika-kapa&catid=61:obiaji](http://www.licka-sarenica.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=47:lika-kapa&catid=61:obiaji)

### Serbian Orthodox monasteries in Croatia



(In the picture the former Croatian president Stipe Mesić and the actual Serbian president Boris Tadić in a visit to the Krka Monastery)

Three and a half kilometers east of Kistanje, in the canyon of Krka River, stands a monastery named after the river that runs beside it. This ancient monastery Krka erected the Serbian princess Jelena, sister of Serbian Emperor Dušan, married to Croatian Prince Mladen Šubić II. It was the year 1350. Monastery Krka is dedicated to St. Archangel Michael. The monastery was devastated and burned during the wars between Turks and Venetians.



Krupa Monastery is located at the foot of the Velebit Mountains, near the sources of the eponymous river. It was built at the time of King Milutin in 1317<sup>th</sup>. Tradition has it that he set the foundations of monks from the monastery Krupa on the Vrbas. Just like the monasteries Krka and Dragović, the Krupa Monastery has always shared the fate of the Serbian Orthodox people from these regions, where it belonged. He often suffered in the various invasions. But after that is always restored.





Monastery Dragović is situated on a hill downstream the Cetina River not far from the place called Vrlika. The present monastery building is the third one placed on the third locality. The Serbs from Bosnia, who ran away from Turks to the territory of the Cetinska krajina, erected the first monastery building in 1395. It has been looted and devastated several time during the centuries. In autumn 2004, basic conditions have been achieved for the return of monks.

Source: <http://www.eparhija-dalmatinska.hr/Frames-e.htm>



Lepavina monastery was built around the 1550th year, soon after the formation of the first Serbian settlements in this area. The history of the monastery Lepavina is inextricably linked with the history of the Serbs in Varaždin Generalship. From the time of its restoration, heavy fighting was led against the attempts of religious assimilations and the attempts of feudalizing the Serb Frontiersmen. In defense of their religion and national privilege (*Statute Valahorum*) the monks from Lepavina fought with the people and often suffered them. It has been ruined several times, but the worst episode was the bombing during World War II.

Source:

[http://www.mitropolija-zagrebacka.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=37%3A2009-12-23-08-25-22&catid=2%3A2009-12-23-08-21-46&Itemid=5&lang=sr](http://www.mitropolija-zagrebacka.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=37%3A2009-12-23-08-25-22&catid=2%3A2009-12-23-08-21-46&Itemid=5&lang=sr)

### Notable Serbs of Croatia



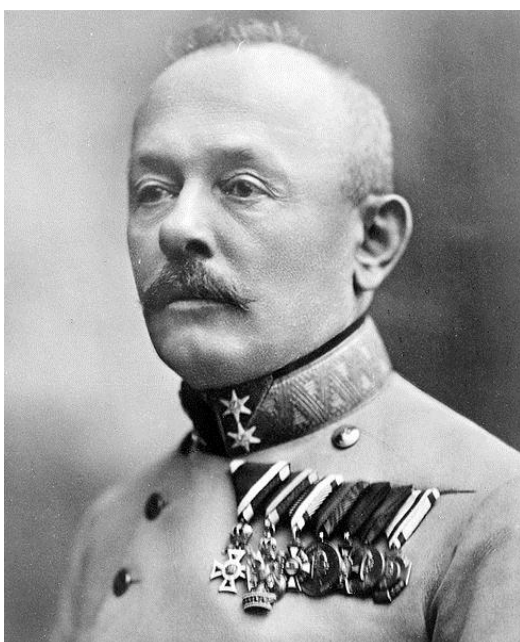
**Ruder Josip Bošković** (Dubrovnik, Croatia, 18 May 1711 – Milano, Italy, 13 February 1787) was a physicist, astronomer, mathematician, philosopher, diplomat, poet, theologian, Jesuit, and a polymath from the city of Dubrovnik in the Republic of Ragusa (today Croatia), who studied and lived in Italy and France where he also published many of his works. He is famous for his atomic theory and made many important contributions to astronomy, including the first geometric procedure for determining the equator of a rotating planet from three observations of a surface feature and for computing the orbit of a planet from three observations of its position. In 1753 he also discovered the absence of atmosphere on the Moon. His father, Nikola Bošković, was a Serb trader from present day Bosnia and Herzegovina, and his mother, Paola Bettera was a member of a cultivated Italian merchant family established in Dubrovnik since the early seventeenth century.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roger\\_Joseph\\_Boscovich](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roger_Joseph_Boscovich)



**Josip Runjanian** or **Josif Runjanin** (Vinkovci, Croatia, 8 December 1821– Novi Sad, Serbia, 2 February 1878) was a Serb composer from Habsburg Monarchy (born in the territory of present-day Croatia, died in the territory of present-day Serbia), most notably known for composing the melody of the Croatian national anthem “Lijepa naša domovino”(Our beautiful homeland) and of the Serbian patriotic song "Rado Srbin ide u vojnike" (Gladly will the Serb enlist in the Army). He was lieutenant-colonel in the Habsburg Army.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josif\\_Runjanin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josif_Runjanin)

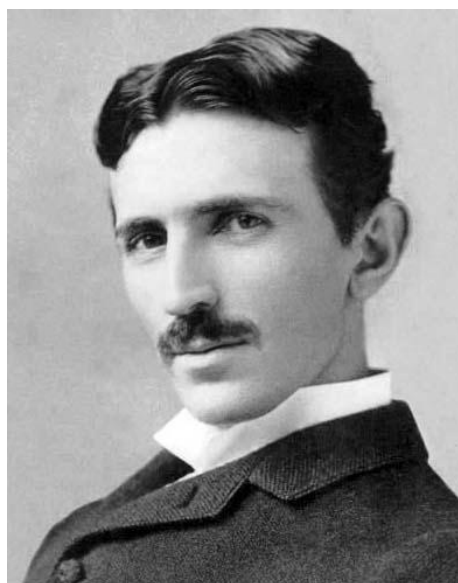


**Svetozar Borojević von Bojna** (Umetić near Kostajnic, Croatia, 13 December 1856 – Klagenfurt, 23 May 1920) was an Austro-Hungarian field marshal who was described as one of the finest defensive strategists of the First World War. He



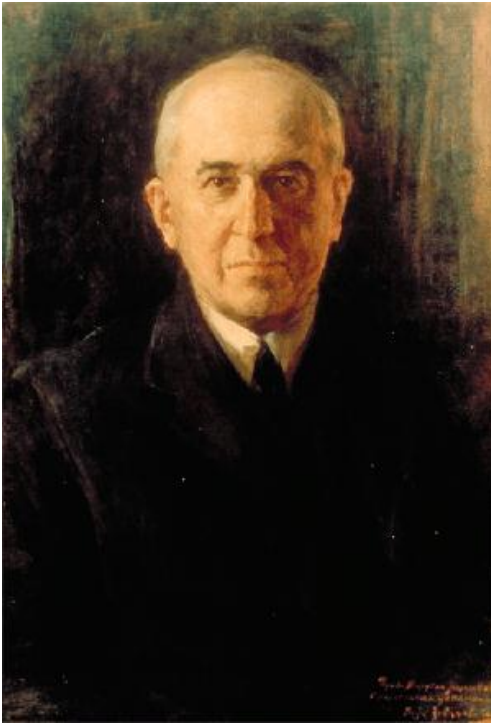
came from Croatia but spent his entire life in the imperial military, becoming a nobleman as Baron von Bojna, and later rising to the rank of Field Marshal before the end of the First World War in 1918, becoming the first and only holder of that rank in the Austro-Hungarian Empire who was not of German origin. The accounts of his ethnic and national origin differ because even though he was baptized in the local Orthodox Church and his family was described as a "Serbian Grenzer family", he did not express a Serb nationality, rather he consistently stated that he was a "Croat" and is sometimes described as such, while most foreign sources simply refer to him as "Croatian".

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Svetozar\\_Borojevi%C4%87#cite\\_note-Tucker135-0](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Svetozar_Borojevi%C4%87#cite_note-Tucker135-0)



**Nikola Tesla** (10 July 1856 – 7 January 1943), was an inventor, mechanical engineer, and electrical engineer. He was an important contributor to the birth of commercial electricity, and is best known for developing the modern alternating current (AC) electrical supply system. His many revolutionary developments in the field of electromagnetism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries were based on the theories of electromagnetic technology discovered by Michael Faraday. Tesla's patents and theoretical work also formed the basis of wireless communication and the radio. He was born in the village of Smiljan in the region of Lika (in present day Croatia) to Serbian parents, being his father Milutin Tesla a priest in the Serbian Orthodox Church. During World War II the Croatian Ustaše burned the Orthodox Church near his house and murdered several of his fellow villagers as well as destroyed his monument, while during the Yugoslavian wars of the early 1990s his family house was burned by the Croatian army. On July 10<sup>th</sup> 2006, a Memorial Center was open in his family home on the occasion of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Tesla's birth, under the sponsorship of the Government of the Republic of Croatia.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nikola\\_Tesla](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nikola_Tesla)



**Milutin Milanković** (Dalj, Croatia, 28 May 1879 – Beograd, Serbia, 12 December 1958) was a Serbian geophysicist and civil engineer, best known for his theory of ice ages, suggesting a relationship between Earth's long-term climate changes and periodic changes in its orbit, now known as Milankovitch cycles. Born to Serbian, Orthodox parents in the village of Dalj, Austria-Hungary, today Croatia.

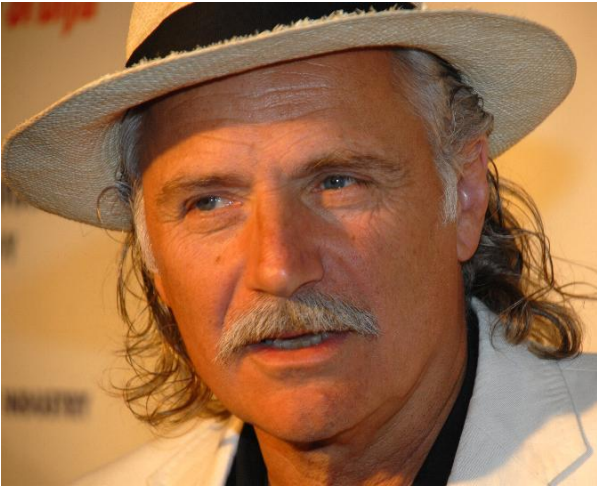
Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milutin\\_Milankovi%C4%87](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milutin_Milankovi%C4%87)



**Patriarch Pavle** (11 September 1914 – 15 November 2009) was the 44th Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church, the spiritual leader of Eastern Orthodox Serbs, from 1990 to his death. His full title was His Holiness the Archbishop of Peć, Metropolitan of Belgrade and Karlovci, Serbian Patriarch Pavle. Before his death, he was the oldest

living leader of an Eastern Orthodox Church. Pavle was born Gojko Stojčević in the village of Kućanci, near Donji Miholjac in what is today Croatia.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patriarch\\_Pavle\\_of\\_Serbia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patriarch_Pavle_of_Serbia)



**Rade Šerbedžija** (born 27 July 1946), is a Croatian actor, director and musician of Serb origin. He was one of the most popular Yugoslav actors in the 1970s and 1980s. He is now internationally known mainly for his supporting roles in Hollywood films during the 1990s and 2000s. His last known role is in the controversial film produced by Angelina Jolie, “In the land of blood and honey” (2011).

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rade\\_%C5%A0erbed%C5%BEija](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rade_%C5%A0erbed%C5%BEija)