



Saša S. Marković^[1]

University of Novi Sad,
Faculty of Pedagogy
Sombor (Serbia)

UDK316.75:323.14(=163.42)(497.13+497.15)"1941/1945"

323.1(=163.4)(497.5)"1941/1945"

Original research article

Received: 08.08.2022.

Accepted: 23.08.2022.

doi: 10.5937/napredak3-39547

Ideological Self-obsession and the Burden of Victims. Review of the ISC case

Summary: In this paper, we intend to present the anchor points of the Ustasha ideology that used to be the foundation of the Independent State of Croatia. This puppet creation, made on the ruins of the Yugoslav monarchy, promoted nationalist fury. Its intention was to create an ethnically clean state in the territory where, in geopolitical terms, it was impossible without an exodus and execution of the population with other nationalities. Commitment to anti-Semitism was used by this state as an impetus for national intolerance towards Serbs and it largely exceeded the intended pattern of the Nazi Holocaust. The remembrance culture was created presenting the past as a decades-long struggle, the cause of which was mostly attributed to Serbs. The culmination was the Yugoslav dungeon. Young generations were brought up and educated to represent national purity and to serve the Supreme Leader loyally. The personality cult was the crown of such furious ideology that, in its decisive intention to reach its realization, despite the resistance of the reality, used all available means. The war and uncontrollable hatred were favourable circumstances for the final solution to the Croatian question that, in the Ustasha ideology, was impossible without the thorough solution to the Serbian factor. The consequences of this were innumerable victims.

Keywords: ideology, hatred, Ustasha, Serbs, victim

National purity and adjusted interpretations

Having decided to implement "Directive No. 25", Nazi Germany, led by Führer Adolf Hitler, intended to punish decisively and energetically, in the shortest period possible, the coup leadership of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the Serbian people^[2] because

of the refusal to join the Tripartite Pact, despite the assurances by Dušan Simović's government to the contrary. This decision was not made in the rashness of Nazi anger towards Serbs, although it was guided by that anger. The idea about destroying Yugoslavia as a Versailles and Great Serbian creation was the backbone of the new world order in the southeast of Europe. In that respect, German

[1] milnik.markovic@gmail.com

[2] "German army is not coming as an enemy to Croats, Muslims and Macedonians. It wants to protect them from Serbian nationalists" (See Nikolić, 2009, p. 12).

intelligence service agents had worked for years in the past on the internal destabilization of the Yugoslav monarchy (Marković & Vučković, 2021).

One of the most important segments contributing to the development of the crisis, despite the intentions of the Yugoslav government Cvetković-Maček and the signed agreement, was the escalation of nationalist intolerance among Croats. It was enticed by the militant squads of the Croatian Peasant Party, as well as the increasingly pronounced activity of the Ustasha movement. Their unambiguous “open sympathies” were directed towards Nazi Germany’s struggle for “New Europe”.

The new order, as interpreted by the Ustasha, implied the fall of the existing order and “the dungeon of Yugoslavia”, as well as the resistance to the status of the “Serbian spoils and colony” (Novak, 1986, p. 531) because “Ustashism created a new man in the new order” (Bzik, 1944, p. 21). With the hope that the “new order” would soon prevail in the geopolitical territory of Southeast Europe as well, Germany was expected to attack the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The attack occurred on 6 April 1941 and proceeded with individual unprecedented examples of heroism, on the one hand, and the surprising speed of degradation and collapse of the defensive human and military potential of the Yugoslav army, on the other hand.

Encouraged by the belief that the victory of “totalitarian states of Germany and Italy” (Novak, 1986, p. 531) is not questioned, the Ustasha promote their own creation on the ruins of the still existing state. Ante Pavelić’s opinion that “Croatia will be the Ustasha state” (Bzik, 1942, p. 42) began to be implemented. The introduction to the implementation of this policy was “resistance to the Serbian

enemy force... that held the Croatian people and the Croatian homeland in shameful slavery” (Bzik, 1942, p. 72). The collapse and separation of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, as interpreted by the newly created nationalist ideology, was the defeat of the “Jewish-democratic and Versailles world” (Bzik, 1942, p. 30), whose exponents in the Balkans were Serbs and their national-assimilating ambition.

The Independent State of Croatia, or “Axis creation” (Trifković, 2020, p. 209) was declared by Eugen Kvaternik, in the absence of Supreme Leader Ante Pavelić, with the support, with no participation or trust of Italian leader Benito Mussolini, who strongly believed that Pavelić was his “only pawn in the Balkans” (Matković, 2002, p. 64). After his arrival in Zagreb, Ante Pavelić took an oath in which, among other things, he stated that in his work he would observe “the Ustasha principles” (Novak, 1986, p. 548).

Categorized in 17 points, these principles, in the form of a pamphlet with the pronounced nationalist rhetoric and through demagogical content, promote that “Croatian people has its supreme right (sovereignty) by which it is the only one to rule in its state” (Pavelić, 1941, p. 8). Moreover, “in the Independent State of Croatia, decisions must not be made by anyone who is not a member of the Croatian nation by ascendants and by blood” (Pavelić, 1941, p. 9). It was a specific “paradigm shift” (Mitrović, 2001), or rejection of the unique Yugoslav state and expressing the need for a national state that, with its boundaries and interpretations, became a nationalist claim and imposed homogenization. This need clearly pointed out that the state and the nation constituted a unity, although historical processes do not confirm it fully and among all nations

and states. Insisting on that connection between the nation and the state, according to Ernest Gellner, creates nationalism that “fatefully turns one to the other” and where “one without the other is incomplete, and that is a tragedy” (Gellner, 1998, p. 26).

The creation of a homogeneous state was the programme interest of the Independent State of Croatia. This “worldview” is certainly not “innocent” and it emphasizes an irrational moment in the formation of the national idea occurring through a fierce struggle with the “dialectical method”, i.e. the method of a critical approach to real historical processes, with no self-deceit or self-delusion in imagining one’s own greatness. Intellectuals popularizing this approach to the interpretation of social phenomena and the development of the national idea and state “reduce the reason and mind, uncritically admiring intuition... creating myths” (Lukács, 1966, p. 14). In such mythical catharsis, national ideas dedicated attention mostly to the ideological development of youth. Through militarist training and discipline of attachment to the movement, the atmosphere of patriotic charge was created with the intention of, if necessary, not hesitating in the event sacrifice was needed.

The ideology of nationalism was presented as a faith whose dogma warned about the revival of paganism and rituals, thus embodying the Croatian identity. “Nationalism in its essence is not just love for one’s country and nation – but, in the first place, religion. Every religion has something unpredictable and inexplicable to the mind, has something that is taken as final and undeniable truth – or better, it is taken as reality; either true or imagined reality, but reality that affects minds and souls... Nationalism is a faith because it believes... in its mis-

sion, which means its special, Godsent and higher value” (Karamarko, 1941, p. 14).

An emotional attitude of the nationalist to the territory and readiness to make sacrifice for it was the message of the Ustasha ideology and, in that context, it constituted part of the exclusive principles of “New Europe” as perceived by Nazis... “Soil and blood are the fierce strength that moved and moves nations and individuals in the struggle for their rights. Soil and blood are the source of strength, which has kept us for more than a thousand years on this ground and finally taken us to the creation of our own state” (Oršanić, 1941, p. 3). The symbol of “blood and soil” became a complete ideology only with the embodiment and symbolism of the national leader, or the Supreme Leader. To him, the development of the cult of personality and blameless and exemplary actions that should motivate revolutionary idealism of the young, together with simultaneous insistence on their unre-served loyalty. “The Ustasha youth must transfer its meaning of life and work and creation into the world of eternal ideals – because only they create fighters who live for ever... The Supreme Leader’s youth must, together with him, create Croatia as He would like it to be. Namely, Supreme Leader’s Croatia is not an area of personal aspirations and enrichment and materially inebriated people – but Croatia where eternal values are holy: justice, truth, honesty, order, work and law” (*Ustaška mladež*, 9 November 1941, p. 2).

It was the road of deepening geopolitical uncertainty strengthened by the exclusive regime insisting and persisting on clear ethnic and homogeneous territories which were equal to the state borders. In their “murderous *reductio ad absurdum* national-

ism” (Hobsbawm, 1993, p. 147),^[3] as emphasized by Hobsbawm, or “Judgment Day nationalism” (Ekmečić, 2008, p. 392), as described by Ekmečić, they relied on “mass extradition or extermination of the minorities” (Hobsbawm, 1993, p. 147).

The promotion of nationalist fury and pure blood faced the newly formed state with the demographic situation in which Serbs accounted for one third of the population, or almost two million inhabitants. Serbs were presented as a destructive factor in the development of the ideology of the Independent State of Croatia. The solution to this problem became one of the most important interests of the developing simulacrum. In that respect, it was necessary to stigmatize the historical role of Serbs as an enemy in the development of the Croatian state and national independence. “The alleged Serbian predominance” (Hobsbawm, 1993, p. 149) became a doctrinarian obsession guiding the state politics of the ISC. The interpretation of the past developed in the direction of pronounced Serbophobia. Serbs became the archetype of the enemy and the focal place of eruptive national intolerance. Distancing from Serbs reached the scale of negating own racial origin. “It is worth mentioning the fact that shows that, after the cessation of the Eastern Gothic state, vivid memories of that nation remained among their direct descendants, Croats” (Dugački, 1942, p. 25).

The Yugoslav state was the symbol of Croatian forced submission, while King Aleksandar Karađorđević was the most responsible person for the national collapse. “Serbian violence had reached

its climax in the bloody dictatorship introduced by the Serbian king with the aim of not only forcibly conquering the Croatian people forever, but also to erase its name and any trace of its existence from the face of the earth” (Bzik, 1942, p. 69). The creation of the unified Yugoslav state occurred, in the context of this interpretation, opposite to the aspirations of the political and Croatian national elite. For that reason, exceptionally pronounced attention was paid to the processes of opposing integration from 1918.

Its media presence was particularly visible through the remembrance and lamentation over the events of 5 December 1918, when armed resistance was put up in the streets of Zagreb against the unification. “Every Croat is familiar with the history about 5 December 1918... On that day, several squads of the Croatian Army went out in Zagreb, to Jelačić Square, in order to make a coup against the unification with Serbs and Slovenes into a single state” (*Ustaša*, 5 December 1943, p. 1). The defeat suffered on that occasion marked the beginning of the forced rule and occupation that deprived the Croatian nation of the right to self-determination and the state. “In the days of December 1918, Croatia searched for life. Croatia searched for the future. Croatia searched for freedom, looking for it in the sacrifice and the revolutionary campaign; Croatia searched for it in blood” (*Ustaša*, 7 December 1941, p. 5). Sole responsibility for these dramatic processes was ascribed to the “uncultured Serbian people” (*Ustaša*, 6 December 1942, p. 8) and “the undesired community of the supposed Yugoslav-

[3] Hobsbawm emphasizes that the Ustasha declared themselves as greater Nazis than the SS (See Hobsbawm, 2002, p. 105)

ism” (*Ustaša*, 6 December 1942, p. 8) which was imposed by the Serbian people in an invasive and hypocritical manner. In addition, in *Ustasha Views* from 1944 we can read that the greatest enemy of Croats is “coup-inclined Serbs and Great Serbian tendencies” ... which “has for many years brought up in our territories, in all possible manners, its janissaries, arming them and instructing them, at the moment when the Croatian state is created, to take their hidden weapons into their hands and by any means prevent the building of the Croatian state” (Bzik, 1944, p. 66).

It was a suggestive and reduced view of instruction that in the recent past negated all complexity of the phenomena, aware that its “brave new world” is being built exactly on rejecting “unpleasant historical facts” (Huxley, 1977, p. 12). The creation of the independent state proceeded through a difficult struggle and heroism of ancient proportions, against the enemy that remained identical. “At the beginning of this struggle, initiated by the Croatian nation immediately after the establishment of the ISC, no Croat doubted or hesitate when thinking who to fight. We knew, we felt that the struggle starting between the Croatian people, on the one hand, and partisans, Chetniks and communists, on the other hand, was nothing but the struggle between Croatism with Great Serbian politics that systematically for years had been preparing plans to destroy the Croatian nation” (*Ustaša*, 7 March 1943, p. 1).

Obsession with the strictly defined enemy, which was seen as the Serbian people, was constantly and repeatedly emphasized. It was also sought in the development of “historical memory”. “The Croatian people got its state christened name a thousand years ago. That name was recognized in the international world uninterrupted until 1918, while after 1918, Serbs tried to change it by their Eastern Saint Sava Orthodox rites and name it as Yugoslav” (*Ustaša*, 1 April 1945, p. 2). The Serbian usurpation of the freedom of Croats was the continuity of the historical development of this nation. “For three hundred years already, Serbs have been the greatest obstacle round our necks. With so many of them and with them as they are, there is never happiness in our Croatian state... We must kill one third, one third will flee, while one third will convert to Catholicism and become Croats!” (Goldstein, 2012, p. 113).^[4] In this process of forced spiritual denationalization, there was specific rivalry with the intention of certain local hodjas, particularly in the region under Kozara, to make Serbs “accept Islam” (Arbutina; Bogunović-Ljubičić; Radaković, 2022, p. 7).

Continuing this narrative, in line with the current geopolitical regrouping, the image was developed about new-old alliances in the Balkans. “The whirlwind of migration took us Croats, as well as Bulgarians, to the Balkans. We settled on the western edge of the Balkans, and Bulgarians on the eastern one... We used to be neighbours for

[4] According to Slavko Goldstein, these are the words of Vlado Singer, an Ustasha officer who gave up his Jewish identity and participated in many crimes, such as the killings in Glina in 1941, for the sake of proving his proper religion. However, it was enough for him to win trust because the Holocaust ideology did not tolerate Jews, no matter how committed and loyal they were. He was imprisoned in Jasenovac and killed several months later.

more than two hundred years, from 803 to 1018... The Balkans is represented by these two brotherly and friendly nations, both by their position and their strength... throughout history, Serbs placed themselves between like a wedge, lustfully looking at our national territories... In the recent history, Bulgarians and Croats always appear together, side by side. They have a common enemy in Serbs and those from London and Paris" (*Ustaška mladež*, 16 November 1941, pp. 1–2).

In line with the search for a "new man" of new European and world order, led by Nazi Germany, it was necessary to accuse Serbs even of the most extreme cultural and identity owning aspirations. "Just as all great people want to be declared as their own by many nations, Greeks and Serbs also want to take them away from Bulgarians. We know very well that Serbs want to declare dear God as their own by saying 'God is Serbian.' That is why we will valiantly let them continue further fervent desire to take away St. Cyril and St. Methodius" (*Ustaška mladež*, 16 November 1941, p. 11). The real situation in which the process of forced Bulgarization proceeded was not written about because it was close and comparable to the process of forced Croatization and conversion to Catholicism. The cultural and identity genocide, as well as the forced conversion are labelled as sacrifice and, in that manner, the imagination, through the reversed process opposed to reality, was satisfied.

It grew concurrently with the intensity of crime that was actually perpetrated against the same enemy. That is how the bizarre conscience of the nationalist schizophrenia coped with the bloodthirsty acts it perpetrated. It was an "illness

that darkened cognition and blocked conscience" (Goldstein, 2012, p. 112). As such, it was a doctrine that, according to some testimonies, became the "fetishism of the state".

The notion that victims were actually executioners was accepted as a motive for the continuation of killing and the preparation for new feats. "The spirit of destruction and annihilation, infinite and hellish hatred towards Croatian people and Croatian state" was a cynical excuse for the identical feeling cherished towards Serbs. While ascribing the crime in which "outlaws butcher people, roast them on the stake, poke eyes of the living, break bones, throw men, women and children into open fires, skin them, take out the hearts from the living, pour resin over them and set them on fire, cut off limbs, noses, ears, throw barely live people into ravines and bury them, rape girls in front of their parents, take away children from their mothers and impale them on knives, put horseshoes on people, kill individuals and groups" (*Ustaša*, 22 August 1943, p. 6), Croats actually emphasize their own inhuman acts with the insatiable need to ascribe them to those against whom they were perpetrated.

Within that context, the preservation of impermissible pretentiousness of own megalomaniac national and state interests was also visible through ascribing such aspirations to those who endangered the process of a great and ethnically clean state solely by their historical presence, forced to defend themselves. "Serbian chauvinists, supposedly dissatisfied with their narrow region, are trying to cross their borders and expand..." That "Great Serbia will be ethnically clean ... in their struggle, they set a goal to clean Sandžak of Muslim

population, and to clean Bosnia and Herzegovina of Muslim and Catholic population ... they want to move that Muslim and Catholic population under the ground, so that they can settle in this territory” (*Ustaša*, 4 August 1943, p. 6). This media attention and false image deriving from it were part of the project about the justified necessity of the existence of independent and ethnically clean ISC.

Although, with the passage of time, reality supported it less and less, while the defeat was imminent, there was an increasing need for cherishing media self-deceit. This fiction culminated in facing the most shameless and unseen project that took place in the multipurpose Jasenovac concentration camp. In March 1945, when the state construction of exclusion and paroxysm collapsed, an article about this camp was published. It was written in the form of a record of the journalist who, with his text, intended to show an allegedly ordinary day and status of the prisoners. Behind such writing, there is definitely a hidden need to deny the accusations for perpetrated crimes, but, consistently with its ideological narrative of impeccable nationalist ideology, it is not recognized; on the contrary, its upbringing-educational character is emphasized through sarcastic remarks about equally odd everyday routine visible outside the camp as well. “When it is written and spoken about Jasenovac, curiosity appears from all sides, and feasibility... However, things are not so simple and ordinary. The national and state community had to protect itself in some way from those unconscientious, impertinent or just deluded individuals, who do not think and do not know to respect that community” (*Ustaša*, 4–11 March 1945, p. 4).

At the very beginning of this text, the role of Ustasha is made relative, while the landscape that has been remembered by the Ustasha crimes is mentioned within the context of the enemy’s crimes. “At the entrance to the camp and in some places with groups of people, we encounter the Ustasha guards. That is their only duty here. Nothing else. The camp is surrounded by the large wall of bricks and barbed wire... Somewhere in the fog, in the north, we can discern the shape of Papuk, while on the other side, there is Kozara. Two concepts that denoted partisan fury, rule and power – while here, between them, there is a place trying to make people out of them...” (*Ustaša*, 4–11 March 1945, p. 4).

The emphasis is laid on the morality and discipline that are imposing and observed by everyone. “The inevitable and just strictness. For all. Including the guards... At the entrance, the new prisoner is received by other prisoners, camp inmates, the sentenced ones. Namely, the whole management of the camp is held by the prisoners themselves... At the proposal of the prisoner-supervisor, punishments or awards are given. Punishments involve transferring to a harder job, the prohibition of writing, receiving packages... However, there is a surprising fact here. Many have expressed the wish not to return to their previous jobs” (*Ustaša*, 4–11 March 1945, p. 4).

The message about many of them staying to live “like free people! Being regularly paid, just like all workers in their profession” was the ultimate mimicry and ideological cynicism. In the carefully pursued narrative of innocence, it is a prolegomenon worthy of the culmination of the false statement speaking about the status of the

children in the camp. “The question of the children has been solved here. Little children, nicely dressed and with ruddy cheeks, standing by their teachers – prisoners, are trained for crafts every day... In the morning, the children are at work, while in the afternoon they attend school or do their military duty. At the same time, they are prepared for life as workers, developed as fighters, so honest Croats, the Ustasha, are made and bred here!... I have seen that their living quarters are far better than those of the majority of the refugees throughout Croatia... I have seen their shoes and they are also far better than the shoes of many who are free...” (*Ustaša*, 4–11 March 1945, p. 15). The members of this community, which is more than satisfied with its status, is supervised by “one Ustasha officer – an Orthodox Christian. His brother was killed somewhere on the front. They have been Ustasha ever since 1941” (*Ustaša*, 4–11 March 1945, p. 15). Less than two months after this text, there was a desperate breakthrough of the camp prisoners from Jasenovac.

In the Easter issue of the journal, published in 1945, just before the defeat that few in the movement wanted to admit, the validity of own goal and the generosity to other nations, including Serbs, were still emphasized. “In 1941, they were allowed to choose the border towards the East. We did not take a centimetre more. As a matter of fact, we took less than belonged to us! That same year, we could attack Serbia with our Ustasha legions and pillage it. We let the enemy be and felt sorry for its lunacy” (*Ustaša*, 1 April 1945, p. 1). It was not enough to defeat this state creation in military terms – “the state of the lunatics” (Miletić, 1988, p. 7).

It was necessary to destroy its distorted ideology and inform the population that was subordinated to it by presenting the truth about its real actions. Research was also required as a moral and a scholarly obligation. The development of research depended on the credibility of the new state and its readiness to face reality, regardless of its own ideological needs and, in that respect, state interests. Then avoidance followed, because the priority was new unity that had to keep silent and take unspoken memories into oblivion. Although the written trace was hidden, scarce and scattered, the new state kept neglecting and irresponsibly treating it (Milošević, 2021). Nevertheless, suppression could not prevent the eloquence of perpetrated crimes. A way was sought for “the dead to open the eyes of the living” (Vujošević, 1989, p. 400).

Reality of suffering

In contrast to the ideological imagination about the justness of the ISC, the reality witnessed and historiography recorded that Jasenovac was the largest camp in Europe that was not managed by Nazis, but the Ustasha movement obsessed with paroxysm and Serbophobia, which used favourable circumstances to establish the state and, like a puppet, subordinated its blind fury to the Axis powers.

The disastrous number of victims in the territory of the ISC, which was “filled with killing grounds” (Ekmečić, 2008, p. 462), and which has remained controversial and indefinite to date, is the subject of numerous impugnments and attempts to

reduce the number of victims to an acceptable level. In the present, it should testify in favour of a new, equally vicious ideology of alleged facing with painful moments in the recent past of compatriots, and repentance for perpetrated bestialities. It is formed on the bases of adjusting to the dominant interpretation that the public opinion of Europe cherishes the need to popularize and accept responsibility and critically view own prejudice.

The promoted attitude is actually a farce that does not speak about the modern society and democratic maturity, but witnesses to a more serious extent essential revisionism that hides perpetrated crimes by insisting on the testimonies about Serbian crimes and vindictiveness, allegedly directed against innocent civilians at the end of the 20th century. In that way, through the narrative gradation, the “proved” crimes of the Serbian people are reflected onto the past and a rather unpleasant prejudice is created about the permanent need of Serbs for an ethnically clean state and for the displacement of undesired and unassimilated members of other nations.

That returns us to the maelstrom of nationalism from the period of the Second World War, on the basis of which the Ustashism ideology about stigmatization of Serbs is becoming actual and valid for its new followers nowadays. Such revisionism is also supported by certain part of European historiography (Zundhausen, 2009). This interpretation promotes the attitude about pretentious Serbs who, in their obsession with the creation of a national state, resort to the systematic process of ethnic cleansing. In that way, it justifies the relativization of indisputable sacrifices suffered by Serbs, through

the process of denial of the numbers, because numbers show megalomania and exaggeration of one nation, destructively inclined towards the stable geopolitics of the Balkans.

In such atmosphere of distrust and suspicion, “Pandora’s box of comparing crimes and number of victims” was opened (Lajbenšperger, 2019, p. 124). It was conditioned by political circumstances and, despite the work of numerous committees, the promoters of the familiarity with the number of victims have most often been current political actors. Their manipulation, depending on the ideological need to keep or take over power, was ready to degrade the victims in Jasenovac. It advocated a thesis about 1,000 people who dead – and were not killed (Geiger, 2020, p. 534) or a thesis that “mostly Croats” were the victims in Jasenovac (Kaleb, 1971, p. 15).

However, the preserved testimonies sound devastating even for this type of pathological paroxysm and Serbophobia. The testimonies about murders and bestialities are sublimed through incredible tranquillity of the words told by Vukašin from Klepci near Čapljina: “Child, just do your job!” These words caused momentary fury in Žile Frković, the executioner who did not win that night because his fellow guard slaughtered 1,350 prisoners, the same ones who, according to the above-mentioned article, did not want to leave the camp and the human socialization it provided. Frković had nightmares and testified about himself as the “last carrion” (Miletić, 1988, p. 94), who was persecuted by Vukašin, but his frenzy and the spasm of hatred forced him to perpetrate further crimes.

Suggestive reduction of the number of victims was also aimed at discrediting the established demographic losses (Lajbenšperger, 2019, p. 101) of almost two million inhabitants after the Second World War. While Serbian insistence on over 700,000 victims in the Jasenovac camp was characterized as an obscure and fabricated story, which to Serbs constituted “a social law” (Tomasevich, 2010, p. 813) was not brought to question. In this manner, the interpretation of the Serbian opinion about the number of victims was belittled as a dogma encouraging self-deceit and developing the pathology of self-pity. From

it derives an uncontrolled urge of vindictiveness that the Serbian people allegedly put under the regime responsible for the war conflict in the territory of the Yugoslav state in the last decade of the 20th century.

Undefined relations regarding victims have become a strong impetus to nationalist antagonism. In that respect, it is difficult to accept the attitude that “Jasenovac is the deepest wound of Serbian and regional history” (Marković, 2021, p. 5). It is true for Serbian history, but, after all, not for the current regional interpretation of the past.

References

- Arbutina, B., Bogunović-Ljubičić M., Radaković, B. (2022). *Kozara 1942, Selected Testimonies and Documents*. Beograd: Muzej žrtava genocida. Available at: <https://www.2.muzejgenocida.rs/images/Kozara%20za%20sajt.pdf> [In Serbian]
- Bzik, M. (1942). *Ustasha Victory*. Zagreb: Naklada glavnog ustaškog stana [In Croatian]
- Bzik, M. (1944). *Ustasha Views*. Zagreb: Naklada i izdanje Ustaške tiskare u Zagrebu. [In Croatian]
- Bulgaria and Croatia. (16 November 1941). *Ustaša, vesnik hrvatskog oslobodilačkog pokreta* (16). [In Croatian]
- Croatian Guard*. (19 October 1941). [In Croatian]
- Croatian Plebiscite. (1 April 1945). *Ustaša, vesnik hrvatskog oslobodilačkog pokreta*. (13). [In Croatian]
- Destructive and bloodthirsty outlaw spirit. (22 August 1943). *Ustaša, vesnik hrvatskog oslobodilačkog pokreta*. (34). [In Croatian]
- Dugački, Z. (1942). *Geography of Croatia, General Part*. Zagreb: Izdanje Matice hrvatske. [In Croatian]
- Ekmčić, M. (2008). *Long Movement between Slaughter and Plowing, History of Serbs in the New Century 1492–1992*. Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike. [In Serbian]
- Fifth of December 1918 (5 December 1943). *Ustaša, vesnik hrvatskog oslobodilačkog pokreta*. (43). [In Croatian]
- First Years of the Serbian Rule in Croatia. (6 December 1942). *Ustaša, vesnik hrvatskog oslobodilačkog pokreta*. (49). [In Croatian]
- Geiger, V. (2020). The question of the number of victims in the Jasenovac camp in Croatian and Serbian historiography, journalism and public after the breakup of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia – facts, controversies and manipulations. *Časopis za suvremenu povjest*, LII(2), 517–587. doi: <https://doi.org/10.22586/csp.v52i2.11253> [In Croatian]
- Gellner, E. (1998). *Nations and Nationalisms*. Zagreb: Politička kultura. [In Croatian]
- Goals of the Defeated Enemy. (4 August 1943). *Ustaša, vesnik hrvatskog oslobodilačkog pokreta*. (31). [In Croatian]
- Goldstein, S. (2012). *1941: the Year that Keeps Returning*. Beograd: Službeni glasnik; Synopsis [In Serbian]
- Hobsbawm, E. (1993). *Nations and Nationalism: Programme, Myth, Reality*. Zagreb: Novi Liber. [In Croatian]
- Hobsbawm, E. (2002). *The Age of Extremes*. Beograd: Dereta. [In Serbian]
- Huxley, A. (1977). *Brave New World*. Beograd: Kentaur. [In Serbian]
- I Was in Jasenovac. (4–11 March 1945). *Ustaša, vesnik hrvatskog oslobodilačkog pokreta*. (9–10). [In Croatian]
- Kaleb, V. (19 November 1971). I Am Speaking about Tolerance. *Hrvatski tjednik, novine za kulturna i društvena pitanja*, br. 31 [In Croatian]
- Karamarko, M. (1941). The Cult of Rakovica. *Plava revija, mjesečnik ustaške mladeži*, II (1). [In Croatian]
- Lajbenšperger, N. (2019). *Victims of the Second World War in the Politics of the Yugoslav State 1945–1980* (doctoral dissertation). Filozofski fakultet: Beograd
- Lukács, G. (1966). *The Destruction of Reason, the Road of Irrationalism, from Schelling to Hitler*. Beograd: Kultura. [In Serbian]

- Marković, P. (2021). (Un)counted Victims of Jasenovac. In: D. Nikodijević, *Jasenovac between the Number and the Victim, a Contribution to the Study of the Number of Victims in the Jasenovac Concentration Camp System*. Beograd: Muzej žrtava genocida. [In Serbian]
- Marković, S., Vučković, Ž. (2021). The Breakthrough of National-socialism - Germans in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1941, *Sociološki pregled*, (3), 1165-1182. doi: 10.5937/socpreg55-32323 [In Serbian]
- Matković, H. (2002). *History of the Independent State of Croatia*. Zagreb: Naklada Pavičić. [In Croatian]
- Miletić, A. (1988). *Ustasha Death Factory, 1041-1945*. Beograd: Vojnoizdavački i novinski centar. [In Serbian]
- Milošević, T. (2021). Genocide of the Independent State of Croatia over the Serbian People in the Studies of the Military-Historical Institute. In: B. Dimitrijević, D. Tasić, D. Denda (eds) *The Second World War 75 Years Later, Volume II* (341-359) Beograd: INIS [In Serbian]
- Mitrović, A. (2001). *Clio before Temptations and Debates with Clio*. Beograd: Čigoja. [In Serbian]
- Nikolić, S. (2009). *Allies and the Resistance Movements in Yugoslavia (1941-1945)*. Beograd: Zavod za udžbenike. [In Serbian]
- Novak, V. (1086). *Magnum Crimen, Half a Century of Clericalism in Croatia*. Beograd: Nova knjiga. [In Serbian]
- Oršanić, I. (1941). Our Task. *Plava revija, mjesečnik ustaške mladeži*, II(1). [In Croatian]
- Pavelić, A. (1941). *Ustasha*. Zagreb: Ured za promociju glavnog ustaškog stana. [In Croatian]
- Resurrection and Peace. (1 April 1945). *Ustaša, vesnik hrvatskog oslobodilačkog pokreta*. (13). [In Croatian]
- Revolutionary Campaign on 5 December 1918, Bloody Protest against "Unification". (1.12.1943). *Ustaša, vesnik hrvatskog oslobodilačkog pokreta*. (1). [In Croatian]
- Saint Cyril and Saint Methodius. (1941, November 16). *Ustaša, vesnik hrvatskog oslobodilačkog pokreta*. (16). [In Croatian]
- Tomasevich, J. (2010). *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia 1941-1945. Okupacija i kolaboracija*. Zagreb: EPH Liber [In Croatian]
- Trifković, S. (2020). Ustasha crimes, Serbian victims, numbers and politics: Toward a rational debate, *Istorija 20. veka, XXX-VIII* (1), 203-222. doi: 10.29362/ist20veka.2020.1.tri.203-222 [In Serbian]
- Ustasha Youth and Idealism (9 November 1941). *Ustaška mladež, omladinski prilog Ustaše*, (15) [In Croatian]
- Vujošević, J. (1989). Suffering of Yugoslavs in the Second World War. *Vojnoistorijski glasnik*, XL (3), 393-401 [In Serbian]
- We Knew You (7 March 1943). *Ustaša, vesnik hrvatskog oslobodilačkog pokreta* (9). [In Croatian]
- Zundhausen, H. (2009). *History of Serbia from the 19th to the 20th Century*. Beograd: Klio. [In Serbian]