

UNIVERZA V LJUBLJANI
FAKULTETA ZA DRUŽBENE VEDE

Stevo Đurašković

Politike zgodovine na Hrvaškem in Slovaškem v 1990-ih
The Politics of History in Croatia and Slovakia in the 1990s

Doktorska disertacija

Ljubljana, 2013

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Remarks

The results of the initial research on the topic are published in the following articles: Stevo Đurašković, “Politike povijesti: pregled razvoja discipline u Hrvatskoj i Slovačkoj. *Politička misao*, vol. 45 (2008), no. 3-4: 201-221; Stevo Đurašković, “In Search for One- Thousand-Year Statehood: The Politics of History in Croatia and Slovakia in the 1990s.” *Der Donauraum: Zeitschrift des Institutes für den Donauraum und Mitteleuropa*. 49 (2009), 1-2: 141-151.

The most important parts of research on Slovakia have been included in the chapter: Stevo Đurašković, “From ‘Husakism’ to ‘Meciarism’: the National Identity-Building Discourse of the Slovak Left-Wing Intellectuals in the 1990s Slovakia”, in *Thinking Transition: Liberal Democracy, Authoritarians Pasts and the Legacy of 1989*, eds. Michal Kopeček and Piotr Wciślik, Budapest- New York: CEU Press (forthcoming).

Izjava o avtorstvu

Politike zgodovine na Hrvaškem in Slovaškem v 1990-ih

Povzetek:

Disertacija obravnava povezavo med zgodovino/spominom in politično močjo na Hrvaškem in Slovaškem v 1990-ih letih. Padeč komunizma v Vzhodni Evropi je povzročil pojav različnih vrst nacionalizmov in z njimi povezanih etničnih politik. Te politike so upočasnile procese demokratične konsolidacije, predvsem z vidika procesov soočanja s preteklostjo obeh totalitarizmov. Kljub temu je bila demokratična konsolidacija v državah vzhodne-srednje Evrope in baltskih državah na splošno dosežena v 1990-ih letih. Hrvaška in Slovaška sta bili edini izjemi, saj sta se obe državi v tem obdobju soočali z resnim demokratičnim deficitom, ki ga je označevala odkrita raba zgodovine v politiki. Pri tem je zanimivo, da imata obe državi izredno podobne vzorce zgodovinske dediščine: do leta 1918 sta bili del Kraljevine Madžarske in Habsburškega cesarstva, medtem ko sta v 20. stoletju predstavljali mlajša partnerska naroda v Jugoslaviji oziroma Češkoslovaški. V obeh državah so na proces konstrukcije nacionalne identitete močno vplivale ideje o etnični in politični enotnosti južnih Slovanov oziroma Čehov in Slovakov. Položaj mlajših partneric je v obeh državah vodil v pojav nacionalizma proti starejšim narodom Srbov oziroma Čehov. Poleg tega je na hrvaški in slovaški nacionalni identiteti vplivala dediščina nacistične satelitske države v drugi svetovni vojni. Ker je celotno zgodovino Jugoslavije in Češkoslovaške označevalo sočasno vmešavanje in zamere med Srbi in Hrvati ter ločena procesa konstrukcije češke in slovaške nacionalne identitete, je zgodovina postala močno politično orodje v procesu razpada Jugoslavije oziroma Češkoslovaške. Nazadnje sta izpostavljeno zgodovinsko dediščino v danem političnem kontekstu zelo uspešno izkoriščala Hrvaška demokratska skupnost (HDZ) pod vodstvom Franja Tuđmana in Gibanje za demokratično Slovaško (HZDS), ki ga je vodil Vládimir Mečiar. Posledično skuša glavno vprašanje v disertaciji odgovoriti kakšne politike zgodovine in nacionalistične ideologije sta uporabili HDZ oziroma HZDS za pridobitev in ohranjanje moči v toku 1990-ih let ter kako so bile te politike in ideologije povezane z zgodovinsko dediščino narodov in konkretnim političnim kontekstom razpada Jugoslavije oziroma Češkoslovaške. Predvsem ker so politike HDZ oziroma HZDS glede oblikovanja države postavljale nacionalna gibanja na skrajni konec omenjenega demokratičnega deficita.

Ker pričujoča disertacija preučuje vpliv zgodovine in spomina na politike, je tematika obravnavana v okviru kulturne primerjave v politologiji. Kulturna primerjava ne uporablja strogo določenih spremenljivk, ampak pristopa k pojavu z vidika "splošne kompleksnosti njegove zgodovinske in družbeno-politične specifičnosti (Beichelt). Teoretični okvir temelji na različnih teorijah nacionalizma, a predpostavlja, da so narod primarno osnovali politične in intelektualne elite, delovanje katerih okvirjajo zgodovinske dediščine in kolektivni spomnini o narodu. Z metodološkega vidika so pojavi preučevani s pomočjo metod primerjalne zgodovine, kot sta opisna metoda ter analiza konceptov in pripovedi, ki so uporabne tudi za kulturno primerjavo v politologiji. Te metode so vključene tudi v konceptualni pristop k ideologiji, kot sta ga razvila Michael Freeden in Cas Mudde, ki omogoča razumevanje najboljšega oblikoslovja ideologij in njihovega delovanja v politikah. Zaradi značilnosti kulturne primerjave študiji obeh držav primerjamo glede na podobnosti in tudi razlike. V vsakem poglavju v primerjavi najprej izpostavimo Slovaško in nato Hrvaško, pri kateri poudarimo tudi podobnosti s primerom Slovaške. Vsako poglavje na koncu vključuje zaključke, ki povzemajo glavne ugotovitve.

Disertacija je razdeljena na štiri poglavja. Prvo poglavje obsega zgoraj izpostavljene teoretične in metodološke pristope k raziskovanju. Drugo poglavje obravnava zgodovino procesov konstrukcije hrvaške in slovaške nacionalne identitete do 1990-ih let in njune zgodovinske dediščine. V pripovedih se pri obeh procesih konstrukcije identitete kaže

podoben trend zamere glede prizadevanj za priznanje državnosti. Zamera je bila močnejša v primeru Hrvaške, ki je za razliko od Slovaške imela bolj travmatično zgodovinsko dediščino v 20. stoletju. Čeprav sta jugoslovanski in češkoslovaški medvojni vladi zatirali konstrukcijo hrvaške oziroma slovaške nacionalne identitete s politikami identitete, ki so težile k izgradnji enotnega jugoslovanskega in češkoslovaškega naroda, je slednje prineslo vpliv modernizacije za slovaško družbo, katero je pred tem ostro zatirala madžarska oblast. Nasprotno je bila pred letom 1918 preklicana hrvaška politična avtonomija, njeno gospodarstvo pa je do določene mere izkoriščal manj razviti srbsko dominiran kraljevski režim. Položaj mlajšega partnerskega naroda je skupaj z dejstvom, da so srbske in češke elite sčasoma enačile svojo nacionalno identiteto z jugoslovansko oziroma s češkoslovaško identiteto, povzročilo pojav ostrih hrvaških in slovaških proti-nacionalizmov, ki so se najbolj radikalno kazali po drugi svetovni vojni v nacističnih satelitskih državah. Kljub temu je na Hrvaškem v drugi svetovni vojni ustaški režim izvajal genocid predvsem nad Srbi in Judi. Na koncu vojne so Titovi partizani izvajali množične zločine nad hrvaškimi nacističnimi vojaki iz satelitskih držav, ki so jih spremljali tudi hrvaški državljani. V istem obdobju nacistična satelitska vlada Slovaške ni izvajala množičnih zločinov, je pa pregnala 70.000 slovaških Judov v nacistično Nemčijo. Čeprav je Titova vlada od vsega začetka oblikovala socialistično Jugoslavijo kot federacijo, je dediščina omenjenih zločinov pustila dolgotrajno travmo za hrvaško nacionalno identiteto. Ta travma je prinesla do določene mere mirne in samostojne politike glede hrvaške nacionalne identitete v socializmu, a tudi močno razdeljeno družbo. Za razliko od navedenih trendov na Hrvaškem je obdobje po letu 1968 prineslo federalizacijo komunistične Češkoslovaške. Federalizacija je sčasoma omogočila preboj idej o slovaški komunistični nacionalni identiteti, katera je uspešno premagala dominantno predvojno klerično miselnost, predvsem ker je bila slednja na slabem glasu kot dominantna ideologija slovaške nacistične satelitske države v drugi svetovni vojni. Omenjen trend zmanjšanja moči Cerkve je bil nasproten v socialistični Hrvaški, kjer je katoliška Cerkev konec 1970-ih let oblikovala vplivno klerično protijugoslovansko nacionalno pripoved, ki je uspešno nasprotovala režimu. Nazadnje to poglavje prikaže kako si je navedene zgodovinske dediščine prisvojila nacionalistična politična misel Franja Tuđmana, ki se je razvila od konca 1960-ih let. Tuđmanova premetena nacionalistična misel je oblikovala hrvaško zgodovino z vidika teološkega tisočletnega boja za državnost, ki je ovrigel celotno jugoslovansko dediščino. Nadalje je Tuđman do največje mere oddaljil hrvaško nacionalno identiteto od srbske preko uporabe kleričnega koncepta Vzhod/Zahod. Tuđman je z uporabo koncepta o hrvaških zgodovinskih in naravnih mejah nakazal teritorialno širitev preko dejanskih hrvaških (socialističnih) meja. Nazadnje je Tuđman vpletel svoj osrednji koncept tudi v spravo Ustašev in Partizanov v zadnjem boju za dosego samostojnosti Hrvaške. Tako konceptuirana Tuđmanova nacionalna politična misel je bila še posebej pomembna, ker je bila kasneje enostavno prenešana v ideologijo njegove stranke.

Tretje, osrednje, poglavje izpostavlja politike zgodovine, s katerimi je HDZ in HZDS uspelo pridobiti in ohranjati politično moč v 1990-ih letih. Pri tem pojasnjuje, da sta obe stranki pridobili volivce z zatrjevanjem, da veljata za "najboljša" agenta ustanavljanja države pri nasprotovanju srbskim oziroma češkim političnim elitam, ki so nasprotovale hrvaškim oziroma slovaškim zahtevam za samostojnost v času razpada Jugoslavije in Češkoslovaške. Če obravnavamo nacionalne zgodovine kot tisočletni boj narodov za ustanovitev države in dosego neodvisnosti, sta se HDZ in HZDS uspešno predstavili za agenta, ki bosta prinesla konec zgodovini želja narodov po samostojnosti. Obema strankama se je uspelo predstaviti za agenta oblikovanja države preko opredelitve, da z zблиževanjem vseh, ne glede na levo ali desno usmeritev, zaobjemata vsa nacionalna gibanja v nacionalni spravi zgodovinsko deljenih narodov. Nadalje sta obe stranki trdili, da predstavljata združitev celotnih zgodovinskih misli o državnosti, ki je temeljila na nenavadni kombinaciji predvojne nacionalne misli in komunistični dediščini o oblikovanju državnosti. Obe stranki sta za legitimizacijo svojih

politik o oblikovanju države konceptualizirali celotni zgodovini Jugoslavije in Češkoslovaške skladno z neprestanim podrejanjem hrvaškega oziroma slovaškega naroda s strani Srbov oziroma Čehov. Navedene politike zgodovine omejujejo nacionalne zgodovine na teologije o iskanju državnosti, ki so prinesle pozitiven revizionizem za nacistično satelitsko Hrvaško in Slovaško v procesu pridobivanja državnosti. V okviru razpada Jugoslavije in Češkoslovaške so opisane ideologije omogočile HDZ in HZDS, da sta premagali tekmece s še boljšim nacionalističnim slovesom, kot so bila srečanja različnih disidentov in nasprotnikov iz komunističnega obdobja. Nazadnje tretje poglavje pokaže, da so opisane ideologije obeh strank neizogibno vodile v demokratični deficit, saj so bile v ostrem nasprotju z načeli večstrankarskega političnega sistema in civilne družbe. Ta deficit se je le povečal do sredine 1990-ih let, ko sta se novi osamosvojeni državi konsolidirali. Konsolidacija Hrvaške in Slovaške kot neodvisnih držav je prinesla postopno izčrpavanje legitimizacijskega potenciala osrednjih strankarskih konceptov glede umetnega ustanavljanja države in vključevanja vseh nacionalnih gibanj. Tako sta se obe vladajoči stranki v drugi polovici 1990-ih let obrnili bolj na desno, kar je na Slovaškem med leti 1994 in 1998 vodilo v koalicijsko vlado HZDS in močno desničarske Slovaške nacionalne stranke – SNS ter odprt zgodovinski revizionizem slovaške zgodovine v času druge svetovne vojne. Kljub temu je bil deficit do določene mere še vedno manj radikalen v primeru Slovaške kakor Hrvaške. Takšne trende lahko pripišemo najprej nasilnemu razpadu Jugoslavije za razliko od mirnega razpada Češkoslovaške; ta trend je posledično prispeval k bolj travmatični hrvaški dediščini v 20. stoletju v primerjavi s slovaško dediščino. Ker je obdobje po letu 1968 prineslo Slovakom politično avtonomijo, katero sta spremljali visoki stopnji industrializacije in urbanizacije, je slovaška družba leta 1989 želela “ohranitev preteklosti znotraj sedanjosti” (Gil Eyal). Tako je HZDS do določene mere pridobila moč s privajanjem misli o komunistični nacionalni identiteti po letu 1968. Posledično je bila v 1990-ih letih dediščina antifašizma manj opuščena na Slovaškem, predvsem ker je antifašistična Slovaška nacionalna vstaja leta 1944 predstavljala domače slovaško nacionalno gibanje. Ker so slovaški komunisti leta 1968 pridobili nekakšno slovaško državnost, HZDS enostavno ni potrebovala dediščine državnosti nacistične satelitske države za legitimizacijo svojih ciljev. Zaradi istih razlogov si HZDS ni mogla privoščiti spora s katoliško Cerkvo. V primeru Hrvaške je Miloševićovo nasilje Velike Srbije, katerega je podpirala jugoslovanska vojska, prineslo popolno diskreditacijo jugoslovanske dediščine, saj so nasilje izvajali v imenu ohranitve Jugoslavije. Takšna simbolika je dala zagon Tuđmanovi protijugoslovanski ideologiji. Vojni spopadi so omogočili pozitivno ponovno oceno hrvaške dediščine državnosti kot nacistične lutke in so sočasno zmanjšali pomen antifašistične partizanske dediščine, saj se je Titovo gibanje na skrajnem koncu borilo za Jugoslavijo. Končno je katoliška Cerkev na Hrvaškem v 1990-ih pridobila osrednji politični položaj zaradi pretekle vloge varuha naroda proti komunistom. Na ta način je Cerkev v veliki meri pripravila tudi temelje za dvig moči HDZ.

Četrto poglavje izpostavi kako so bile politike zgodovine HDZ in HZDS prenešene na konkretne politike zgodovine. Posebna pozornost je namenjena razlagi kako so ideologije vladajočih strank zanemarjale *vergangenheitsbewältigung* ali procese tranzicijske pravičnosti in povezanih procesov soočanja s (totalitarno) preteklostjo. Posledično to poglavje izpostavi načine, na katere so bili narodi oblikovani preko različnih politik spomina, vključno z nacionalnimi simboli, prazniki in proslavami, kakor tudi zgodovino, ki se poučuje v šolah. V obeh primerih so ovire za tranzicijsko pravičnost izvirale iz ideološkega jedra zaobjemanja vseh nacionalnih gibanj, s čimer so skušali sčasoma razbremeniti narode kakršne koli zgodovinske odgovornosti. Razlike v politikah zgodovine se nanašajo tudi na že izpostavljene razlike v ideologijah HDZ in HZDS. V primeru Slovaške je bil proces de-komunizma zanemarjen z izogibanjem celovitemu obsojanju komunistične dediščine, medtem ko so bile na Hrvaškem te dediščine obsojane za pretekle “jugo-komunistične” krivice. Tako je katoliška

Cerkev na Hrvaškem v 1990-ih letih pridobila privilegiran položaj, medtem ko se podobno ni zgodilo v primeru Slovaške. Končno so najpomembnejše razlike glede politik tranzicijske pravičnosti izvirale iz dediščine domovinske vojne, predvsem z vidika vojnih zločinov in kasneje odnosov z Mednarodnim sodiščem za vojne zločine v Haagu. Z vidika politik zgodovine so se na Slovaškem ohranili spominski prostori na antifašistično slovaško nacionalno vstajo leta 1944, kljub naporom SNS, da obnovi dediščino nacistične satelitske države. Na primer v šolah so se uporabljali komunistični učbeniki vse do konca 1990-ih let. V 1990-ih letih so bili na Hrvaškem spominski prostori na partizanski antifašistični boj v veliki meri odstranjeni ali uničeni, medtem ko so bili nacionalni prazniki spomina na antifašistični boj do velike mere izsiljeni. Tuđman je skušal zmanjšati pomen politik spomina na domovinsko vojno s simboliziranjem novo oblikovanega mita o hrvaškem boju za neodvisnost. Kljub temu so se zločini iz domovinske vojne in Tuđmanove agresivne politike proti Bosni sčasoma spremenile v “težko breme nedavne preteklosti”.

Sklepni del povzema splošne ugotovitve disertacije, kakor tudi obsega izvorni znanstveni prispevek. Prispevek disertacije je obsežno izpostavljanje zgodovine/spomina in povezav moči v okviru študije primera dveh držav. Te povezave so se izkazale za zelo pomembne, saj je konstrukcija nacionalne identitete močno vplivala na politično kulturo in s tem na procese demokratične konsolidacije. Posledično disertacija ponuja možne načine za preučevanje primerov držav, ki delijo podobne zgodovinske in politične trende, kot sta Ukrajina in Gruzija. Nazadnje disertacija z oblikovanjem povezav med spominom in močjo ponuja tudi možnost razvoja modela, ki razlaga prisotnost ali pomanjkanje demokratičnega deficita v primeru držav naslednic nekdanje Jugoslavije, Češkoslovaške in Sovjetske zveze, katere so bile v preteklosti mlajše partnerice v omenjenih federacijah.

Ključne besede: politike zgodovine, zgodovinska dediščina, HDZ, HZDS, Franjo Tuđman, Vladimir Mečiar.

The Politics of History in Croatia and Slovakia in the 1990s

Abstract:

This dissertation deals with the nexus between history/memory and political power in Croatia and Slovakia in the 1990s. The breakdown of communism in Eastern Europe resulted in an outbreak of various forms of nationalism and related ethnic politics. These politics burdened the processes of democratic consolidation, especially with respect to the processes of coming to terms with the past of both totalitarianisms. However, democratic consolidation in general terms was achieved in the countries of East Central Europe and the Baltic states in the 1990s. Croatia and Slovakia represented the only two exceptions. Namely, both countries suffered through the 1990s from serious democratic deficits characterized by overt use of history in politics. It is of special interest here that both countries share outstandingly similar patterns of historical legacies: up to 1918 both countries were a part of the Hungarian Kingdom and the Habsburg Empire, whilst in the twentieth century both countries represented the junior-partners in Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia respectively. The national identity-building processes of both nations were outstandingly shaped by the ideas of ethnic and political unities of Southern Slavs and the Czechs and the Slovaks respectively. In turn, the junior-partner positions of both nations brought about fervent resentment counter-nationalism against the senior-nations of Serbs and Czechs respectively. Finally, both Croat and Slovak national identities were eventually burdened by the legacies of the World War II Nazi-satellite states. Since the entire histories of Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia were characterized by simultaneous interference and resentment of Serb and Croat as well as of the respective Czech and Slovak national identity-building processes, history became a powerful political tool during the disintegration processes of Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. Finally, outlined historical legacies were most successfully exploited in the given political contexts by the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) led by Franjo Tuđman and the Movement for Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) led by Vládimir Mečiar. Thus, the main question of this dissertation is to answer what kind of politics of history and nationalist ideologies HDZ and HZDS used for gaining and maintaining power during the course of the 1990s and how these politics and ideologies related to the nations' historical legacies as well as to the concrete political contexts of Yugoslavia's and Czechoslovakia's respective dissolution processes. Especially since HDZ's and HZDS' politics of state-founding, all embracing national movements at the very end produced the previously mentioned democratic deficits.

Since this thesis deals with the influence of history and memory on politics, it has been designed within the scope of cultural comparison in political science. The cultural comparison does not operate with strict variables, but instead approaches the cases in the "overall complexity of its historical and socio-political specificity" (T. Beichelt). The theoretical frame is grounded in the scope of various theories of nationalism, however assuming nation to be primarily forged by political and intellectual elites whose agency becomes framed by historical legacies and collective memories of nation. In terms of methodology the cases are approached through methods of comparative history such as the description and analyses of concepts and narratives since these methods have also been appropriated by cultural comparison in political science. These methods have been added to by the conceptual approach to ideology as developed by Michael Freeden and Cas Mudde since this approach enables us to best comprehend the morphology of ideologies and their operation in politics. Due to the characteristics of cultural comparison, the cases are compared both in relation to similarities as well as to their differences. The comparison is done in such a way that in each chapter parts on Slovakia are discussed first and then followed by the exposition on Croatia accompanied with reference to the corresponding Slovak part. Finally, each chapter contains conclusions summarizing the findings.

The thesis is structured into four chapters. The first one exposes the above outlined theoretical and methodological approach to research. The second chapter deals with the histories of the Croat and the Slovak national identity-building processes up to the 1990s and with the accompanying historical legacies. Both identity-building processes show the similar narrative of statehood-striving resentment. However, the resentment was stronger in the case of Croatia than in the case of Slovakia due to more the traumatic Croatian twentieth century historical legacies. Although both the Yugoslav and the Czechoslovak interwar governments suppressed Croatian and the respective Slovakian national identity-building processes through identity politics tending to forge a single Yugoslav and a single Czechoslovak nation, the latter brought an overall modernizing impact to the Slovak society, previously harshly oppressed by Hungarian rule. In contrast, the pre-1918 Croatian political autonomy was annulled and its economy exploited to an extent by the less advanced Serb-dominated royalist regime. The junior-partner positions accompanied by the fact that the Serb and the Czech ruling elites eventually equalized their national identities with the Yugoslav and respective Czechoslovak identity brought about the emergence of fervent resentment in Croatian and Slovakian counter-nationalisms, which were most radically expressed in the WWII Croat and the Slovak Nazi-satellite states. However, WWII in Croatia brought about the large scale genocidal crimes committed by the Ustaša regime mainly against Serbs and Jews as well as the subsequent large-scale crimes perpetrated at the end of the war by Tito's partisans against Croatian Nazi-satellite soldiers and accompanying Croatian civilians. Simultaneously, the Slovak Nazi-satellite government - although deporting 70 000 Slovak Jews to Nazi Germany - did not commit any large-scale crimes. Although Tito's government constituted the socialist Yugoslavia as a federation from the very beginning, the legacy of the mentioned crimes left a persistent trauma on Croatian national identity. This trauma to some extent brought a silent and discrete Croatian national-identity politics in socialism, as well as a deeply divided society. Contrary to the exposed trends in Croatia, the post-1968 period brought the federalization of the communist Czechoslovakia. The federalization eventually enabled forging of the Slovak communist national identity which successfully overpowered the pre-war dominant clerical national thought, especially since it had been discredited by being the dominant ideology of the World War II Slovak Nazi-satellite state. This trend of depowering the Church turned out to be quite the opposite in the socialist Croatia, where in the late 1970s the Catholic Church had established a clerical anti-Yugoslav national master narrative which successfully countered the regime. Furthermore, this chapter shows how these historical legacies were appropriated by Franjo Tuđman's national-political thought, as developed from the late 1960s onwards. Tuđman's subtle nationalist thought framed Croatian history in the scope of a teleological millennial statehood struggle accompanied by the discarding of the entire Yugoslav legacy. Moreover, Tuđman distanced Croatian and Serb national identities as much as possible by appropriating the clerical east/west concept. Tuđman also appropriated the concept of Croatian historical and natural borders implying territorial expansionism beyond actual Croatian (socialist) borders. Finally, Tuđman forged his central concept of the reconciliation of Ustašas and Partisans in a final struggle to achieve Croatian independence. Tuđman's national-political thought as conceptualized has been of special importance since it was later simply transferred into the ideology of his party.

The third, central chapter focuses on exposing the politics of history by which HDZ and HZDS managed to gain and maintain political power in the course of the 1990s. The chapter explains that both parties attracted the electorate by claiming to be "the best" state-founding agents against the resentment of the Serb and the respective Czech political elites towards Croatian and Slovakian claims on sovereignty during Yugoslavia's and Czechoslovakia's dissolution processes. Assuming the national histories as the thousand-year long statehood-founding struggle of the nations to achieve independence, HDZ and HZDS managed to

present themselves successfully as agents who will finally bring an end to the nations' statehood-striving histories. Both parties managed to become state-making agents by conceptualizing themselves as presenting all-embracing national movements, bringing national reconciliation of historically divided nations by gathering everyone in favor of independence regardless of left/right division. Thus, both parties also claimed to present a synthesis of entire historical statehood-bearing thoughts founded on the peculiar blending of pre-war national thought and communist statehood founding legacies. In a way to subsequently legitimize their state-founding politics, both parties conceptualized the entire histories of Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia to be in line with the continual subjugation of Croat and Slovak nations respectively by the Serbs and the Czechs. The depicted politics of history restricting national histories to statehood-seeking theologies brought about the positive revisionism of the Nazi-satellite Croatia and Slovakia in respect to the statehood-gaining fact. In the given contexts of the dissolution of Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, the depicted ideologies enabled HDZ and HZDS to defeat competitors of even better nationalist reputation, as were the parties gathering various communist-period dissidents and opposition. Finally, this chapter shows that the depicted ideologies of both parties inevitably lead to the emergence of democratic deficits since they went against the very principles of the multiparty political system and civic society. These deficits only increased after the newly achieved independences, consolidated by the mid-1990s. Consolidation of Croatia and Slovakia as independent states brought about a gradual exhaustion of the legitimizing potential of the parties' central concepts of the synthetic state-founding, all-embracing national movements. Thus, both ruling parties in the second half of the 1990s moved more to the right, which in the case of Slovakia resulted in the 1994-1998 coalition government of HZDS and the far-right Slovak National Party- SNS pushing for open historical revisionism towards the Slovak WWII history. However, the chapter shows that the deficits were, to some extent, still less radical in the case of Slovakia than in the case of Croatia. These trends can be prescribed firstly to the violent dissolution of Yugoslavia in respect to the peaceful dissolution of Czechoslovakia; the trend which was subsequently added to by the more traumatic Croatian twentieth century legacy in comparison to the respective Slovakian legacy. Since the post-1968 period brought Slovaks political autonomy accompanied by high rates of industrialization and urbanization, Slovak society in 1989 wished for a kind of "preservation of the past within the present" (Gil Eyal). Thus, HZDS, to a great extent, gained power by appropriating post-1968 communist national-identity thought. Hence, the legacy of antifascism was less dismissed in 1990s Slovakia, especially since the 1944 antifascist Slovak National Uprising presented an indigenous Slovak national movement. Since, in 1968, the Slovak communists obtained a kind of Slovak statehood, HZDS simply did not need the statehood legacy of the Nazi-satellite Slovakia for its legitimizing purposes. For the very same reasons HZDS could afford to clash with the Catholic Church. In the case of Croatia, Milošević's Greater-Serb aggression, backed by the Yugoslav army, brought complete discredit to the Yugoslav legacy since the aggression was committed in the name of the preservation of Yugoslavia. Such symbolism in turn put wind in the sails of Tuđman's anti-Yugoslav ideology. The context of the warfare enabled a positive reassessment of the Croatian Nazi-puppet statehood legacy and simultaneously enabled downplaying of the partisan anti-fascist legacy since at the very end Tito's movement fought for Yugoslavia. Finally, the Catholic Church in Croatia gained a central political position in the 1990s due to its previously established role of guardian of the nation against the communists. Thus, the Church to a great extent also prepared ground for the HDZ rise to power.

Finally, the fourth chapter is devoted to how HDZ's and HZDS' respective politics of history had been transferred to concrete policies of history. Special attention has been devoted to exposing how the ideologies of the ruling parties' led to the omitting of

vergangenheitsbewältigung or processes of transitional justice and the related processes of coming to terms with the (totalitarian) pasts. Subsequently, the chapter discusses the ways nation was built through the various policies of memory, including national symbols, holidays and commemorations, as well through history teaching in schools. In both cases the hindrance of transitional justice stemmed from the ideological core of all-embracing national movements tending to eventually release the nations from any kind of historical responsibility. Simultaneous differences in the policies of history are related to previously exposed differences between HDZ's and HZDS' respective ideologies. In the case of Slovakia, the de-communization process was omitted by avoiding the entire condemnation of communist legacies, while in Croatia these legacies were condemned as “Yugo- communist” past injustices. In turn, the Catholic Church in the 1990s Croatia had an ultimately privileged position, while nothing similar happened in the case of Slovakia. Finally, the most important differences in relation to transitional justice politics stemmed from the Homeland War legacy, especially in respect to the issue of war-crimes and accompanying relations with the International Criminal Tribunal in the Hague. In respect to subsequent policies of history, in Slovakia the spaces and places commemorating the 1944 antifascist Slovak National Uprising were preserved, in spite of efforts by the SNS to rehabilitate the legacy of the Slovak Nazi-satellite state. In respect to the school textbooks, the communist ones were retained in service up to the late 1990s. In 1990s Croatia, spaces and places commemorating the Partisan antifascist struggle were largely removed or demolished, whilst the national holiday commemorating the antifascist uprising seemed to be more extorted than the genuine one. The left-right cleavage the HDZ leader Tuđman tried to overcome by policies commemorating the Homeland War and symbolizing the new founding myth of the Croatian independence fight. However, the issues of the crimes committed during the Homeland War as well as Tuđman's aggressive politics towards Bosnia became eventually “the heavy burden of the recent past”.

Finally, the conclusions summarize the general findings of the dissertation, as well as its contributions. These are a comprehensive discussion of the history/memory and the power nexus on the examples of the two particular cases, which have been researched. This nexus came to be of special importance since national identity-building outstandingly influences political culture and thus the democratic consolidation processes. Subsequently, the dissertation offers possible ways to research cases sharing similar historical and political trends, such as the Ukraine or Georgia. Finally, this dissertation establishes that the memory/power nexus leads to the prospective development of a model explaining presence or absence of democratic deficits in the cases of Yugoslav, Czechoslovak and Soviet Union successor states, who were previously junior-partners in the mentioned federations.

Key Words: politics of history, historical legacies, HDZ, HZDS, Franjo Tuđman, Vladimir Mečiar.

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Introduction

The world-wide ongoing process of globalization accompanied by the breakdown of communism in Eastern Europe has been countered by an outburst of various types of movements based on religious and national identities which are perceived as the last shelter against the maelstrom of (neo-liberal) globalization (Castells 1997/ 2002). The rising importance of identities, already present throughout the course of the 1980s, triggered a cultural turn, a turn in social sciences and humanities (Cipek 2007b). In political science, this cultural turn brought about a cultural approach focused on explaining political phenomena such as communist upheavals, process of democratic transition as well as identity politics and related ethnic violence by comprehending “how political identifications are established; how rhetoric and symbols...produce political compliance; why some political ideologies, policies and self-policing strategies work better than others“ (Weeden 2002 714). Since national identities are outstandingly formed by collective memories, every form of politics has to be inevitably legitimized by politics of history, forging self-identification of a particular national group and a projection of its future by interpreting history (Cipek 2007b). The importance of articulating historical consciousness is best visible through its influence on political culture and therewith on the level of democratic consolidation of political systems, as shown by Igor Lukšič in case of Slovenia (Lukšič 1999).

The ‘politics of history’ as a discipline was originally founded in Germany during the 1990s in order to analyze how different historical legacies and collective memories in Western and Eastern Germany influenced the process of German unification (Schiller 2004). Thus, the politics of history is focus on researching the use of history in political legitimization as well as on the impact of historical narratives and symbolic politics on the national-identity building processes and on the very fabric of political culture and democratic consolidation of political systems (Cipek 2007a). Research on the link between history and politics soon expanded to the English speaking social sciences mostly taking the form of collective memory studies and analyses of school textbooks (Müller 2002). The special focus of all the above mentioned streams of study has been devoted to the post-communist European countries, especially in respect to historical the legacies of Nazi and communist totalitarianisms and the related difficulties in the transitional processes (Müller 2002; De Brito et al 2004; Lebow et al 2006; Kopeček 2008; Miller and Lipman 2012). The importance of historical legacies on the democratic consolidation in Post-Communist Eastern Europe has

been recognized even by the “core” political science, where Herbert Kitschelt and others (1999) touched on the relations of various communist legacies on democratic consolidation within field of studying the post-communist party systems.¹ Kitschelt’s research very much links the level of achieved democratic consolidation with the presence, or absence, of pre-communist liberal-democratic legacies in particular countries. Therefore, the transition turned out to be quite successful in the regions of East Central Europe and the Baltic, while it simultaneously failed to a great extent in Southeastern and Eastern Europe², at least during the course of the 1990s.

Assuming Kitschelt’s findings, it is especially interesting to note that only Croatia and Slovakia suffered from serious democratic deficits during the 1990s in the East Central European and the Baltic region. Indeed, Claus Offe pointed out that Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and the former Soviet Union states additionally had to cope with the state-building processes alongside going through a triple transition of the legal, political and economic system (Offe 1991). Although Offe offered plausible arguments to explain the additional burden on the transition to succeed in the case of the ex-Soviet successor states, it still did not offer comprehensive enough of an answer in the case of Croatia and Slovakia in the 1990s. In spite of the fact that the “resentment nationalism”- which Erika Harris described as grievances to past injustices committed against a nation (Harris 2002, 2009) - was a common trend in all of the Post-Communist European countries, Croatia and Slovakia were the only countries in ECE in which historically based nationalist appeals gained such

¹ Again, types of communism are related to the pre-communist legacies. Moreover, Kitschelt *et al.* differentiate three types of communist regimes the first of which is patrimonial. Being highly corruptive and repressive, it is characterized by the fact that the countries are entirely devoid of capitalist society and representative democracy in their pre-communist period. The countries falling into this model are most of the former Soviet Union republics as well as the Balkan states. National-accommodative communism is the second model with intermediate levels of corruption and bureaucratic professionalism accompanied by a moderate scale of repression and high levels of co-optation. During their pre-communist period modern institutions and capitalist society existed, to an extent. This model encompasses the Baltic and East Central European countries (ECE) except the Czech Republic. The Czech Republic together with Eastern Germany are counted as the third type, bureaucratic-authoritarian communism. It is characterized by high levels of repression and bureaucratic professionalization, having western-like democracy and capitalist society during their pre-communist period (Kitschelt et al 1999, 35-41).

² The geopolitical concepts of East Central Europe (ECE), South-Eastern Europe (SEE) and Eastern Europe have been divided along the lines of cultural legacies combined with the EU accession. Consequently, ECE encompasses EU member states sharing simultaneously western catholic/protestant culture which nowadays is limited to Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia and Croatia. The Baltic countries are sometimes counted among them, even though they do not belong to the region in strictly geographical terms. They share the same cultural legacy of simultaneously becoming EU members. The SEE encompasses former Yugoslav states, apart from Croatia and Slovenia, and with the addition of Albania, Rumania and Bulgaria. The term Eastern Europe relates to former Soviet Union countries with the exception of the Baltic states. Although the stated concepts have been highly debated (Kasapović 2008) I find them quite plausible, especially in respect to the relation between historical and cultural legacies and an achieved level of democratic consolidation of particular countries.

dominance. It is important to note the fact that both Croatia and Slovakia shared outstandingly similar patterns of history. Firstly, both Croat and Slovak ethnic ancestors founded independent early medieval polities, which were almost simultaneously incorporated into the Hungarian Kingdom and later the Habsburg Empire. The two nations remained as parts of both until 1918. Subsequently, the Croatian and Slovakian modern national identity-building processes took parallel forms of grounding both Croat and Slovak nationhood within the idea of national sameness with the Serbs and the Czechs respectively, simultaneously contesting the ideas of separate Croatian and Slovak national identities. Moreover, the very bearers of Yugoslavism and Czechoslovakism were mostly Croats and Slovaks respectively. This eventually brought about a development, a strong resentment towards the Czechs and the Serbs due to the “junior-partner” positions of both nations in the twentieth century Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. In the twentieth century, both national identities experienced similar historical breaks in 1918, 1939/41, 1944/45-47, 1968/71, 1989-91/93. The legacy of Croat and Slovak Nazi- satellite states in World War II turned out to be very significant. Such historical contexts, in both cases, brought about the formation of national identity-building master narratives grounded in a teleological concept, one of a nations’ thousand-year struggle for independence. Thus, during the 1990s the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) and the Movement for Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) respectively used strikingly similar patterns of politics of history. They eventually gained and maintained their power through successful self-presentation as all-embracing national movements bringing an end to the nations’ thousand-year search for statehood.

There has been only one study recognizing the above mentioned similarities, namely the book *Political Change in Post-communist Slovakia and Croatia: from Nationalist to Europeanist* from 2006 written by Sharon Fisher. Explaining the rise, maintaining and fall of HDZ and HZDS during the course of the 1990s, the book traces the main concepts of nationalist politics of history, such as the myth of the thousand-year statehood striving process, the twentieth century nations’ victimization by the Serb/Czech hegemony, as well as the partial rehabilitation of the legacies of Croat and Slovak Nazi-satellite states. Moreover, Fisher is nicely connecting political context to the success of the ruling parties’ nationalist appeals, as well as subsequently presenting how politics of history is transferred to various state policies of national identity, such as policies of memory, symbols and textbook policies alike. Although contributing fairly to the subject-matter, the book is still missing additional comprehensive analyses in a few areas. Firstly, it fails to acknowledge the link between HDZ and HZDS’ nationalist ideologies and gaining power in respect to the nations’ historical

legacies. Consequently the book does not offer the crucial answer of how exactly HDZ and HZDS respectively managed to gain power, and not other competing parties with an even better nationalist reputation, such as Christian Democrats (KDH) in Slovakia and Coalition of People's Accord (KNS) and its successor Croatian Social-liberal Party (HSLHS) in Croatia. The statement that "both the HDZ and HZDS could be considered "impure" nationalist organizations that used other messages in addition to nationalism to attract voters" (12) could be considered, at best, not to be comprehensive enough. Secondly, also relating to the above stated, the book is unable to elaborate on the main concepts of the leading parties' national ideas by not sufficiently explaining their internal structure.

Quite a few pieces have been written on various aspects of using history in politics and in the case of numerous nations. In the case of Croatia, Tihomir Cipek has been the one introducing the discipline and writing extensively on the politics of history in Croatia (Cipek, 1995, 2007a, 2007b, 2009). Some similar works have been written by Davor Pauković (2012), Ljiljana Radonić (2012) as well as Stjepan Matković (2011). Here we must emphasize the works of Holm Sundhassuen (2004/2006), Sabrina Ramet (2007) and Ilana Bet-El (2002) which analyze Croatian politics of history alongside Serbian regarding the area of Yugoslavia's process of dissolution and subsequent wars. Politics of symbols, spaces and places of memory have been analyzed by Dunja Rihtman Auguštin (2000), Reana Senjković (2002) and Vjeran Pavlaković (2008a, 2009, 2011...), while the politics of textbooks has been analyzed by a group of historians belonging to the younger generation headed by Magdalena Najbar-Agičić and Damir Agičić (2001, 2003, 2006, 2007) and Snježana Koren (2005, 2012a, 2012b). To the latter group we can add Neven Budak's analyses of Croatian historiography (2004). By comprehending particular aspects of politics of history, the above-mentioned writings offer a great contribution towards constructing a complete picture, especially in relation to the power-memory nexus. Finally, there are writings dealing with the HDZ ideology, such as writings by Siniša Malešević (2002/2004), Gordana Uzelac (1998, 2006) and James Sadkovich (2008, 2010). Although the mentioned writings discuss Tuđman's ideological concepts, they do not deal closely enough with the memory-power nexus, nor comprehend it with respect to the national identity-building legacies. Moreover, Sadkovich approaches Tuđman in quite an apologetic way. A special case is a book by Alex Bellamy on the 1990s formation of the Croatian national identity (2003). Although the book traces the master narrative of Croatian national identity-building legacy, as well as the main concepts of the ideology which Bellamy calls "Franjoism", the book is unable to explain some concepts more thoroughly, like the central concept of national reconciliation.

Similar circumstances are present in the case of Slovakia. Silvia Miháliková (2002, 2005, 2008) and Eva Krekovičová (2005a; 2005b) offer a great insight into the politics of memory in 1990s Slovakia, especially with respect to national symbols as well as places and spaces of memory. Besides dealing with the politics of memory, Andrej Findor in his several works gives a very comprehensive insight into national identity-building narratives found in history textbooks (1997, 2001, 2009). The same is done by Slavka Otčenášová (2005, 2010). Here the writings on Slovak historiography by some of the most outstanding Slovak historians L'ubomir L'iptak and Dušan Kováč (2006) should not be omitted, especially in relation to L'iptak's subsequent canonical analyses of *longue duree* myths of Slovak national-identity building process. Much like in the Croatian case, these works, by their comprehensive treatment of particular aspects of politics of history, offer a great starting point for subsequent research on "Mečiarist" nationalist ideology. With respect to the ideology, works by Shari Cohen (1999), Josette Baer (2001) and Tim Haughton (2003) detected some central concepts of HZDS' politics of history, however not the ones concerning the memory-power nexus and its relation to the historical legacies. The exception turns to be the writing of Gil Eyal (2003, 2004) who rightly detected Mečiarism present in its very core - "the preservation of past within present". However, Eyal too does not perceive completely the various legacies of the Slovak national identity-building processes appropriated by Mečiarism.

In respect to above exposed, the main question of this dissertation is to answer on what kind of politics of history and nationalist ideologies the HDZ and respectively the HZDS used for gaining and maintaining power in the course of the 1990s, and how these politics and ideologies were related to the nations' historical legacies as well to the concrete political contexts of Yugoslavia and respective Czechoslovakia dissolution processes? Consecutively, the dissertation will examine how the similarities and the differences in Croatian and Slovak historical legacies contributed to the similarities and the differences between the HDZ and the respective HZDS ideologies and politics. Finally, it will be examined how the differences in Yugoslavia's and Czechoslovakia's dissolution processes influenced prospective differences between the ruling parties' ideologies, as well politics and governing.

Keeping the aforementioned in mind, this thesis claims that both ruling parties in Croatia and Slovakia gained and maintained power in given political contexts to great extent by a particular use of history in politics in relation to national historical legacies. More precisely, during the dissolution of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia both parties managed to convince the electorate that they are the ones to achieve the national independence by presenting themselves as all-embracing national movements, embodying the synthesis of the entire

nations' historical statehood-building legacies regardless of their faction. Peculiar legacies of Croat and Slovak national identity-building processes contributed to a legitimate success of politics of history. This is marked by resentment stemming from the junior-partner roles the two nations had in Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia respectively. Moreover, the resentment shown by the senior-partners, the Serbs and the Czechs, was a necessary precondition for the junior-resentments to be convincingly aired and used. Thus, HDZ and HZDS used these resentments better than moderate nationalists with a better reputation and better than the far right option. This occurred simply because Tuđman and Mečiar had focused almost exclusively on the statehood-building issue however based it was on the concept of historical synthesis achievable via all-embracing national movements. The thesis will show that HDZ's governance was much more stable than that of HZDS. The reason for this is the violent dissolution of Yugoslavia in comparison to the peaceful dissolution of Czechoslovakia, the trend which again, in turn, made Croatian historical grievances much more politically convincing than the Slovak ones, especially considering the much more traumatic twentieth century of Croatian history in comparison to Slovak history. However, the thesis will not only compare the two but it will also expose the differences in the parties' politics of history stemming from still different historical legacies. With respect to particular cases, the thesis is the first to explain how exactly the Slovak communist usage of history in politics was appropriated by the HZDS to its full potential and how that brought them electoral success. Also, this thesis offers an entirely comprehensive analysis of Tuđman's subtle nationalist ideology as well as its translation into politics.

So as to understand the above mentioned thesis, the research is designed in the area of cultural comparison of political science, which does not operate under strict, mechanical variables, but instead approaches the individual cases in their wholeness, as Tim Beichelt elaborated (2005). The research has been focused on the various types of resources, including the parties' programs, manifestos, as well as various writings and speeches delivered by the outstanding political agents. To some extent this comparison is asymmetrical, since more space is devoted to the Croatian case. The asymmetry stems from several facts, the first being that a familiar or "local" case is naturally always better mastered than the "foreign" one, especially in such an extensive and comprehensive comparison as this one. This asymmetry originates from extensiveness and complexity of Franjo Tuđman's ideology, as well as his politics and the policies of history. Such an occurrence has no counterpart in the case of Slovakia. The additional peculiarity is that the Croatian case is almost entirely devoted to Franjo Tuđman's utterances and deeds, since he was an agent that almost entirely determined

the Croatian national identity-building process during the 1990s. Moreover, the asymmetric inevitably stems from the way the cases are compared. The exposition of the Croatian case is accompanied by a reference to the Slovak case. The exposition of the Slovak case precedes the Croatian one in each of the chapters simply because the Slovak case was researched prior to the Croatian one. As was stated above, the exposition of the Croatian case is accompanied by references to the Slovak one and each chapter is subsequently equipped with conclusions which summarize the findings. On one hand, I find the depicted way of comparability most suitable since simultaneous exposition of the cases would make impossible to comprehend various clusters of ideological concepts. On the other hand, exposing the cases completely separately and presenting this comparison only in the conclusions would make the depiction vaguer and less comprehensive.

This thesis is structured into four chapters. The first of which is devoted to a theoretical and methodological frame. The theoretical approach is based on the dominant theories of nationalism, as well as theories dealing with the usage of history and national identity in politics. Discarding the question of whether the nation is an ancient or an invented entity and focusing instead on how nations work out in political practice, the approach assumes a fundamental role of the agency of political and intellectual elites in the national identity-building process, as is best shown by Rogers Brubaker (1996). Nonetheless, my approach also departs from Brubaker's by assuming that the agency is not entirely contingent, but instead delineated by historical legacies, especially by traumatic collective memories stemming from historical breaks of particular nations. Since national identity forging is a matter of ideology, the method of conceptual analysis of ideologies developed by Michael Freeden (1996) and Cass Mudde (1995, 2000) was used. The method offers the best scope to detect and relate how particular concepts on the nations' histories constitute an appealing legitimizing means in politics.

The second chapter deals with the history of the Slovakian and Croatian national-identity building processes prior to 1990, since they turned out to have an outstanding influence on the 1990s ruling parties' politics of history and, consequently, national identity-building narratives. Here, the focus is on the nations' histories post-1918 and especially World-War II and post-war histories, since their legacies had a special impact on the 1990s politics of history. In respect to Slovakia, the special focus is on the post-1968 forging of what I called Slovakian "red nationalism" because it was appropriated to a greater extent by the party as a powerful legitimizing tool. As far as Croatia is concerned, the special focus is on the post-war relation of the communist regime and Croatian national identity considering the burden of

World War II legacy and the eventual rivalry of the Catholic Church and the regime over the national identity-building dominance. Lastly, special attention is devoted to Franjo Tuđman's political thought developed entirely prior to the 1990s, which turns out to be especially important since Tuđman simply transformed his previous writings into HDZ's ideology. While exposing both the Slovakian "red nationalism" and Tuđman's ideas, I shall show how both were fashioned in an anti-liberal manner, ultimately aiming to construct the ethno-national organic polities.

The third chapter exposes the use of history in politics by which the HZDS and the HDZ managed to gain and maintain (in) power during the 1990s. It shows how resentments vented by the senior nations (Czechs and Serbs respectively) during the processes of dissolution of the two countries helped the HZDS and the HDZ gain the electoral support. The chapter is focused on explaining how, with respect to the differences in historical legacies and to the different political contexts of the federations' dissolution, the national ideologies of these ruling parties' differed, and how these differences caused a stronger historical revisionism of the far-right in the case of Croatia. Finally, the chapter shows how in both cases these similar ideologies produced similar trends of democratic deficits and how above listed differences contributed to the political power grip, which in the case of Croatia turned out to be much stronger than in the case of Slovakia.

The final chapter is devoted to explaining how the national identity-building legitimizing ideologies transferred to concrete policies of history. Here it is examined how the ruling parties' hindered *vergangenheitsbewältigung* or the process of transitional justice and came to terms with their (totalitarian) past. Since the mentioned processes have not been researched extensively enough unlike some other aspects of policies of history, I devoted a special subchapter to them. The subsequent subchapter uncovers how a nation was built by various policies of memory, including national symbols, holidays and commemorations, as well as teaching history in schools. Using already completed research of afore stated subjects, my main focus here was to follow the transfer of the parties' national thoughts into concrete policies, as well as to show differences regarding the different political contexts in Slovakia and Croatia.

Last but not the least important are the conclusions which summarize the main findings of this dissertation, equally highlighting similarities and differences between the cases. Furthermore, the conclusions will point towards a possible direction of further research, especially the one relating to the countries with similar historical legacies and political trends of the 1990s. The conclusion will show a possible research route i.e. a link between history,

political power and democratic consolidation of former member states of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia.

1 Theoretical & Methodological Background

1.1 Theoretical Background: Nation as a Category of Political Practice

Although research on the concept of a nation and consequently nationalism has been mushrooming in the last thirty years, the study of nation and nationalism has not been able to reach a consensus yet, with a definition neither of a nation nor the basic categories. This can be summarized in the following two questions: what is a nation, and nationalism respectively, and how old is a nation (Katunarić 2003, 136). However, since the study of nation and nationalism was established by the gradual deterioration of the bipolar world of the 1980s, the revival of nationalist conflicts following the breakdown of communist regimes in East Central Europe (hereafter ECE) showed that at least - nation matters! The politicization of a nation in everyday politics in the ECE since 1990 as well as the actual political trend of the rise of the populist radical right parties through the Western Europe pushed even the social sciences towards the discussion of whether “the end of history and the great ideologies” brought about the rise of the new ideology of nationalism (Freeden 1998). In social sciences there is almost a consensual view that globalization brought about the revival of nationalism and religious fundamentalism represented as the last remaining anchors of stability in the constant flux of globalization (Cipek 2007a; Castells 1997/2002). This furthermore emphasized the importance of researching national identity as the “category of praxis” in politics (R. Brubaker). Thus, it is necessary to illustrate how the main and usually contesting streams of theory on nation and nationalism - ethno-symbolist, modernist/constructivist and “post-modernist”- contribute to the research of the aforementioned political phenomenon and especially to the subject of this dissertation and its categorical apparatus. Therefore, in this chapter I shall not present an overview of the aforementioned theories in great detail, nor am I to enter the extensive discussions on their hypotheses since I do not find these fundamental to my research. Instead, I shall delineate the main characteristics of particular theories when necessary for understanding of the subject-matter whilst elaborating on particular aspects I found suitable as analytical tools for the topic of my thesis, which is namely the research on politics of history as the core of the national identity-building process.

1.1.1 Nation as a Concept: “Real” vs. “Invented”

Although the “Era of Nations” lasted for more than 200 hundred years, the scientific interest in the question of what a nation and nationalism are has been quite recent. Nineteenth century political and social thinkers were much more occupied with the universalist liberal concepts of the state and society, perceiving nationalism as a peripheral phenomenon of everyday politics, or discarding it as a pure bourgeoisie category of false consciousness, as did the various streams of socialism (Katunarić 2003, 59-65). After all, during the liberal nineteenth century the concept of nation was ceded exclusively to political practices, where various national-awakening thinkers promoted the idea of a nation as the bearer of individual and collective rights and freedoms against the old feudal system. The formation of the concepts of a nation and nationalism as categories of analyses started at the turn of the century when the classical liberal idea of a nation started to contest the authoritarian ideas of integral nationalism and organic society (Cipek 2007c, 23-30). The first thinker who referred to a generic concept of nation was Max Weber, defining it as a subjective social category founded on beliefs of a particular social group with a common history and a potential for political mobilization. The first widely influential definition is one of Ernst Renan from 1882, who defined the nation as a daily plebiscite originating from a common historical memory projected into the future as a wish of the group to share a common destiny (Smith 1998/2003, 9-11). The first half of the twentieth century, in response to the rise of totalitarian ideologies of fascism and Nazism, brought about the first concise theories on nation and nationalism, of whom Hans Kohn's was the most influential from 1944. Kohn followed Friedrich Meinecke's division of states and cultural nations and developed a theory of western civic versus eastern ethnic nations, where the latter implies a non-liberal, organic genesis of a nation lacking the developed bourgeoisie as an agent of a national identity-building process. This theory was very widespread and influential until recently, when it was refuted by the claim that all nationalism has a civic and ethnic component. The aforementioned significant theory on nation and nationalism was one of Karl Deutsch from 1953. Deutsch defined a nation as a process, a process of transformation from a pre-modern ethnic community into the modern society with the help of industrialization and urbanization followed by a linguistic and cultural standardization and, finally, a construction of the common national past (Katunarić 2003, 139-145; Cipek 2007c, 17-21). Deutsch's theory is very important since it is comprised of all of the components which were later developed and contested by the various streams of theory on nations and nationalism. Furthermore, it is important to emphasize here that all of

these early attempts to define the concept of a nation have helped recognize the importance of historical memory for the formation and maintaining of the national identity.

As was previously mentioned, the study of nation and nationalism developed in the 1980s and was divided into four main streams: primordialism/perennialism, modernism and ethno-symbolism. The first school, the primordialist/perennialist one, was already established in the late 60s/early 70s of the last century through the writings of a famous anthropologist Clifford Geertz. The primordialist/perennialist school conceptualized a nation as an extension of the primordial social form of human existence based on kinship. In such an interpretation, a nation is founded by a fundamental biological need of all human beings to belong and is expressed in primordial sentiments and facts, such as race, common language, religion and land. In fact, a nation turned out to be a hibernating social structure existing from the very beginnings of human civilization. The modernization of liberal epochs just gave this social structure means to fully thrive and flourish. Although the primordial theory of nation is has been discarded today as being too close to nationalist ideology and therefore biased, it emphasized a very important aspect of human emotional dedication to belong to a particular community, especially in relation to the notions of sameness and difference (Katunarić 2003, 150-172). More importantly, the primordialist concept of a nation triggered an ongoing dispute between the latter two schools on whether the sense of belonging falls under the category of “real” or “imagined”.

A nation perceived as an imagined entity is the departure point for the modernist school, whose main authors Ernst Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm and Benedict Anderson approach a nation as a product of modern industrialization and urbanization processes forged via mass education and the appearance of the public. This is the main argument of Ernst Gellner, who put emphasis on the process of cultural, linguistic and legal standardization of society. This process is undertaken by political elites whose intention is to forge a homogeneous national identity from the previously heterogenic groups of population (Gellner, 1983/1998). Gellner’s structuralist approach was later upgraded by Eric Hobsbawm’s concept of “invented tradition”, defined as a “... a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which...attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past” (Hobsbawm 1992, 1). Although Hobsbawm approached the ideological substrate of a nation as purely invented by the political elites for legitimation, he still recognized that the invention does not appear out of thin air, but that it originates from modification and/or prefabrication of the pre-modern traditions and myths (Hobsbawm 1990/1993, ch.2). Soon after Hobsbawm

noticed a very important fact, namely that the process of inventing takes part in periods of historical breaks. Hobsbawm calls them “breaks in continuity”, which would present breakdowns of old and constructions of new political and social systems (Hobsbawm 1992, 7). Additionally, Hobsbawm correctly pinpointed that the invented tradition has been consolidated via mandatory rituals characterized by regular repetition. The common rituals are those that are emotionally related to political symbols such as the national flag, national anthem and national emblem. Approaching the phenomenon of a nation from a Marxist stance, as an expression of the “false consciousness” of the bourgeoisie society, Hobsbawm insisted that nationalism produced nations by questioning the pre-modern traditions and whether they are adaptable and could be utilized in modern societies (Hobsbawm 1992). The process of inventing traditions Hobsbawm historically linked to the process of “nationalization of the masses” from 1870s onwards, implying modern nationalism's negative connotations by seeing it as an elite tool in achieving imperialist and subsequently extremist causes (Hobsbawm 1990/1993).

Gellner’s and Hobsbawm’s structuralist approach to a nation was built onto and modified by Benedict Anderson’s theory of a nation not as an invented, but an imagined community, but nevertheless still constructed. Unlike Gellner and Hobsbawm - who focused on elites’ coercion during the process of national formation - Anderson approached national identity-building by emphasizing the importance of mass communication, mainly that of the press and popular novels. This is the reason why Anderson positioned national identity within a frame of emotions. It is, in fact, an acceptance of the notion of the common origins and destiny of a group by every member of the community without knowing all other members. It is vital to state that Anderson did not ponder whether a nation is real or not, but instead emphasized the importance of the conviction, which he found similar to religious or utopian beliefs, that a nation is imagined as a big harmonious family, shelter against severity of modern capitalist society (Anderson 1983/1990).

The most outstanding challenge for the previously mentioned structuralist approach was exposed by Anthony D. Smith, the leader of the ethno-symbolist school and the most extensive writer on this topic. Smith contested modernists' fundamental claim of a nation as a novel identity emerging after the French revolution by claiming the pre-modern origins of a nation. Furthermore, he also distanced himself from the primordialist claim that a nation is an ancient and immutable category. He found a nation to be like a novel collectivity, which is not purely invented, but is however determined by symbols, myths and memories of the pre-modern high and new strata of feudal society, which Smith calls *ethnies*. Smith defines *ethnie*

as “a named human community connected to a homeland, possessing common myths of ancestry, shared memories, one or more elements of shared culture, and a measure of solidarity, at least among the elite” (Smith 2001, 13). At the same time he defined nation as “a named human community occupying a homeland, and having common myths and a shared history, a common public culture, a single economy and common rights and duties for all members (Smith, *ibid.*). Smith’s theory suggests that nations emerged by merging collective memories of feudal aristocratic and folk cultures in a new single national culture on a territory with clear boundaries. It consists of institutions with a single law and economic system (Smith 1991/1998). Smith did not elaborate enough on how and why some *ethnies* became nations, and others not. It is important to note Smith’s main categories of national identity, namely his definition of myths, memories and traditions, since they represent valuable analytical tools.

Delineation of the concept of national identity Smith approaches emphasizing the role of human agency in respect to structures and defining national identity as a “continuous reproduction and reinterpretation of the pattern of values, symbols, memories, myths and traditions that compose the distinctive heritage of nations” (Smith 2001, 18). Not only that national identity is formed by the aforementioned processes of politics of history, but it is also that these processes are subject to a constant battle between various competing elite groups for the (re)appropriation of myths and memories. However, Smith emphasized that reinterpretation cannot be equal to invention, since the national identity-building process is always restricted by popular resonance, dependent on *longue duree* structures of collective memory, and finally contingent with cultural, political and social heritage of a distinctive nation (Smith 1999, 12-18).

Finally, Smith anchored national identity into three myths, common to all nations. The first one is the myth of the Golden Ages, symbolically described by Smith as “history which produces destiny”. The very core of the myth is designation of a period in history when a nation was supposedly at its climax of power and wealth. The purpose of the Golden Ages Myth is not to be replicated, but to exist solely to embody the spirit of past glory only in a way to break the putative decadence or oppression of the present. The myth provides a notion of national authenticity by establishing a picture of national continuity and providing an integrative identity resource including the one of political mobilization, especially important in times of crisis and internal and external conflicts (Smith 1997). The myth of the Golden Ages is pivotal since it, in fact, comprises two subsequent myths: the myth of ethnic election and the myth of ancestry and territory. The former provides the unique character of a nation

by conceptualizing the nation's unique origin and descent, their authenticity on this particular land and unique culture. By providing the notion of "chosen people" and clear boundaries between "us" and "them", the myth of ethnic election also provides a symbolic tool for political mobilization in achieving particular political goals, this is why, according to Smith, these are common in the rhetoric of politicians and statesmen. The myth of a sacred territory is related to the previous myth by naming this "ancestral homeland" as an eternal home and a territory of sacred ground, of past glorious moments symbolized in graves and holy places of historical battles. After providing the group with land, that is indispensable for economic well-being and the physical security of the group, this in turn leads to nationalist discourses on the glorification of folk agrarian life as well as the "beauty of nature" (Smith 1999, ch.10). Finally, after defining these myths Smith concludes that national identity has a twofold form – one of political ideology and political religion, the former of which will be discussed later. Nationalism as a political religion Smith finds in the notion of a nation as a "sacred communion", becoming most "palpable" in commemorative ceremonies and quasi-messianic adoration of the great individuals in this nation's history (Smith, 2001, 35-36). Moreover, Smith ascribes the violent nationalism of small nations - as Central and Eastern European nations mostly are - neither to their alleged backwardness, nor to their mostly ethnic-based national identity, but to a feeling of deprivation of ethno-historical myths due to a historic oppression by larger nations, usually neighboring ones (Smith 1999, 272-273). It is important to stress that Smith points out how small nations, due to lack of authentic historical myths, and especially those of the Golden Ages, usually have to invent them. (ibid, 265). I would like to connect Smith's observation on invention of such to the subsequent myth of foundation, which George Schöpflin described as a construct of a very new beginning where "... afterwards everything will be different ('better') and that the newly founded system has dispensed with everything that made the old reprehensible" (Schöpflin 1997, 33). Schöpflin ascribed the myth of foundation to the first post-communist elections in ECE as a mark of the end of communism and the creation of democracy. However, I would add that the myth of foundation represents suitable category for analyzing the national identity-building processes in the newly founded independent states which emerged after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. This is especially valid for those that exercised the roles of minor partners in abovementioned communist federations.

To conclude, both the modernist as well as the ethno-symbolist approach to the study of nationalism brings valuable insight for research on politics of history in the 1990s in Croatia and Slovakia. Not taking into consideration the fact that nation are either invented or

“inherited”, Hobsbawm’s theory is especially valuable because of its accent on an elite agency in production of collective memory, as well as its emphasis on importance of commemorative practices for national identity-building. At the same time, Anderson emphasizes and warns us of the notion of public as well as press materials important for national identity formation. He claims that national identity is an emotional category which cannot be rationalized. Lastly, Smith’s taxonomy of myths gave a great general insight into the main concepts used by politicians in the fight for legitimization, where the discourse of national identity, and thus history represents an irreplaceable aspect of political processes since the nation still represents the main frame of the political process (Cipek 2007a). In the next section I shall present more specific theories related to a usage of a nation as a category of political process, which includes the topic of whether or not nationalism is an ideology, and whether it has become a dominant ideology in the era of globalization as well as in the related discipline of politics of history.

1.1.2 Nationalism as a Form of Politics (of History)

The new approach to nation and nationalism which emerged in the 1990s renounced both modernist as well as ethno-symbolist theories labeling them too static. The modernist stream has been criticized because it neglects agency in respect to structure. Both “classical” approaches have been disputed for linear and continuous grasping of the phenomenon of national identity with a simultaneous neglect of its fundamentally contingent nature. Moreover, the approach to nation as substantial, enduring collectivity has been labeled by the new theories to correspond too much to the nationalist stance and therefore to some extent even supporting it (Malešević 2006, ch. 5, 6). The claim about contingency, as well as the later refute of the “ontological” dispute whether nationalism preceded nation or vice versa is a main common denominator of otherwise very different and heterogenic new approaches to nationalism.³ The conceptual frame of the new approaches was created by the writings of Rogers Brubaker, whose starting point is to refute the notion of identity as substantial, enduring categories (“things in the world”) and instead departing from the definition of identity as a cognitive perspective on the world (Brubaker 2006, 17). Hence, Brubaker treats

³ Some scholars label the new approaches as postmodernist due to their renouncement of the evolutionistic approach of the development of humankind and also the validity of general theories. Others simply use the term new approaches to nationalism (Katunarić 2003, 265-266). I am in favor of the later, mostly due to the pejorative meaning sometimes prescribed to the term postmodern.

nation as a category of practice instead as a category of analysis, where “We should not ask what a nation is, but rather: how is nationhood, as a political and cultural form, institutionalized within and among states? What makes the nation-evoking efforts of political entrepreneurs more or less likely to succeed?” (Brubaker 1996, 16). Brubaker defines a nation “not as a substance but as institutionalized form; not as a collectivity but as practical category; not as an entity but as a contingent event” (ibid). Without discussing whether a nation is cognition and pure category of practice or a substantive entity, I would like to emphasize Brubaker’s following observations on the concepts of nation, nationalism and national identity which provide valuable analytical tools in study of nationalism. The first is Brubaker’s model of a triadic nexus appearing during the processes of the politicization of ethnicity which was prominent in the 1990s, and whose dynamics make the politicization of ethnicity remain as one of the most crucial issues on the political agenda in post-communist Central and Eastern Europe. The triadic nexus involves mutually antagonistic interplay between the “nationalizing” nationalism of the ethnic majority, nationalism of the ethnic minority and nationalism of “external national homeland”, the state where ethnic minority represents the ethnic majority. The nationalizing nationalism - mostly expressed in newly independent states - perceives the state as a state *of* and *for* the core nation as apposed to national minorities’ demands for certain nationally-based cultural and political rights. This indeed is supported by the external national homeland acting as a protector of ethno-national kin in other states (Brubaker 1996, 4-6). Although almost every post-communist ECE state is drowning in both the nationalizing state and the eternal national homeland role, from the perspective of successor states who had a minor-position in the communist federations, the role of a nationalizing state is the most characteristic one. The politics of nationalization can be described as a process starting from an idea of a core nation and about the shortcomings in it's justified ownership of the state, which in turn triggers the all-embracing appeal of nationalization justified by calling upon the historical discrimination of the core nation, usually the external national homeland. This appeal becomes the most powerful tool of political mobilization implemented through various state and non-state organizations in nationalization policies justified by a discourse of historical discrimination (Brubaker 1996, 83-84). However, Brubaker warns that the post-communist ECE is not a “seething cauldron” of national conflicts, since inter-ethnic violence only occurs if the narratives about the past national conflicts can be successfully connected to the present situation, as the conflict in ex-Yugoslavia nicely illustrates (Brubaker 1998, 281-285). Brubakers claims how the post-communist ECE did not represent the simple “seething cauldron of nationalist conflicts”

(ibid.) are in line with Erika Harris's valuable theoretical contribution to the analyses of the post-1990 transition in ECE countries through the nexus of nationalism and democracy. Harris's fundamental claim is that nationalism was a "... logical concomitant of transition to democracy...because a weak democracy was too weak to legitimize the enormous task of the transition in new states..." whose path mostly depends on historical legacy and the events surrounding the end of the communist regimes (Harris 2009, 101). Harris showed that in a situation of overall feeling of insecurity in post-communist societies brought about by the multiple transition of the state, political and economical system, the emergence of ethnic nationalism offered the most stable and secure ideology due to the historical legacy of the lack of civic values. The mentioned lack Harris does not simply find in the ethnic path of the national identity-building formation, but also in the legacy of both fascist and communist totalitarianism, which hindered the development of democratic values as well as the democratic institutions. However, beyond the vulgar division of civic/western/liberal/inclusive vs. ethnic/eastern/non-liberal/exclusive nationalism, Harris showed that the politicization of ethnicity, and not the mere fact of its existence, was the factor which produced post-1989 democratic deficits in some of the ECE countries. Whether or not the deficit appears, Harris relates not only to historical legacy, but also to both internal and international politics of each individual state. These mentioned factors turned out to be especially important in the case of the newly founded successor states which were additionally involved in the processes of nation- and state-building, causing the reconstitution of both "core nation" and national minorities as well (Harris 2009, ch.4). Beyond this general frame of understanding the ECE nationalisms post-1989, for the analysis especially useful was taxonomy of historical legacy, which Harris divided into three components: pre-communist past, communist national policy, and a founding myth constitution in the aftermath of the communist breakdown in 1989.

Harris confirmed that the pre-communist past was emphasized by the fact that the pre-1918 history neglected the liberal and democratic state- and society-building due to the fact that all political issues were turned to (ethnic) national ones during the fight for the national rights in the Austro-Hungarian, Russian and Ottoman Empires. This was only worsened by the overflowing feeling of permanent insecurity and threat produced by the shifts in borders and population both after 1918 and 1945 as well as by the political turmoil during the inter-

war period and WWII atrocities.⁴ However, communist government in the second half of the twentieth century was not just another totalitarian experience for the ECE countries. The government followed a Leninist doctrine of the national being a prelude to social revolution, it institutionalized ethnicity entitling them with a territory and administration led by indigenous elites, while the national consciousness was enhanced by education. The party's simultaneous ideologies of proletarian internationalism alongside communist party centralism and authoritarian political system hampered the federalist national self determination (Harris 2009, 107-120; Harris 2002, ch.1). Brubaker explained the complex relation of communist regimes towards the issue of nationalism even more subtly. Namely, Brubaker neglected a widespread claim about communist regimes as being the ones that freeze national conflicts, showing instead how communism suppressed nationalism with simultaneously institutionalizing nationhood as "obligatory ascribed status". Thus, Brubaker showed that tensions between federalism and simultaneous party centralism and authoritarianism produced conflict which post-1989 transformed the collapse of the regime into the disintegration of the federations (Brubaker 1996, ch. 2; Brubaker 1998, 285-289). Moreover, Malešević rightly observes, the communist national elites, pressured by the demands for democratization and liberalization from below, often turned to the nationalist discourse to obtain the legitimization (Malešević 2006, ch.7). The breakdown of the regime brought about an outburst of exclusivist nationalism, not only because it was the logical continuation of the previously institutionalized politics released from the previous hindrances, but also due to the explored historical legacy as well as political, institutional and social incapacities of the ECE countries to face a multiple transition. Recovery of the national myths, memories and symbols suppressed or suspended during communism showed that "history matters", especially in the new states that emerged from the breakdown of the communist federations where historical grievances produced what Erika Harris called *resentment nationalism*. Borrowing from the previously mentioned concept from Elie Kedourie's theory of the non-European nationalism, Harris defines the concept to present revanchist discourses of the junior partners' elites towards senior nations in the region of the communist multinational federations (Harris 2009, 62-63). How and to what extent nationalisms will be shaped into resentment depends on the historical legacies in relation to Brubaker's triadic nexus model. While the nexus model, and especially the concept of "nationalizing nationalism" nicely show the importance of politics

⁴ How the feeling of permanent threat and insecurity shaped the east European nationalism from the early modern period is covered by István Bibó's seminal treatise "The Misery of the Small Eastern European States" written in the very aftermath of World War II (Bibó 1995).

of history, it is worth stressing here a legitimizing role of politics of history in a political fight of the elites with the same nationality, as Sharon Fisher pointed out in her study (Fisher 2006). The fight over the meaning of the notion within the political elites of the same nationality is especially important in the cases of the newly emerged states, which were junior-partners in the communist federations and awaited an inevitable fight over the new state-founding myth. In my opinion, even discourse against the external Other is connected to the fight over national identity-building within its own political community.

However, the nexus between history and politics is most closely inspected by the politics of history, the discipline of political science analyzing "... the political function of history in political processes as well as in legitimizing and delegitimizing particular politics. It researches who is using various interpretations of history and in which political context and for what purpose" (Cipek 2007a, 14). The discipline emerged in the context of the 1980s cultural turn in social sciences following the deterioration of the bipolar world and a subsequent collapse of the historical grand narratives of World War II in both the eastern and western bloc respectively (Cipek 2007b; Judt, 2002). In political science, the cultural turn manifested itself by contesting the then contemporary and dominant rational choice perspective on politics with a cultural perspective, that approaches politics as a system of symbolic practices representing the frame for the formation of *Lebenswelt* (lifeworld) mostly understood as a way in which the world is perceived and experienced (Cipek 2011, 15). The fundamental part of the lifeworld is collective (cultural) memory, defined by Jan Assman as symbolic figures by which a particular group establishes common remembrance used for defining the presence and projecting the group's common future (Assman 2000/2006, 64-65). Since the collective memory represents the origin of the formation of collective identities, politics has to be inevitably legitimized by discourse on (national) history (Cipek 2007b, 271-281). It is not only collective memory that, with its link to identity, influences political culture, but as Jan Werner Müller argues, "memory to some extent is political culture" (Müller 2002, 26), thus framing political processes and especially the process of democratic consolidation of a particular state. It could be claimed that political culture is to a great extent historical culture (*Geschichtskultur*), described by Jörn Rüsen as the articulation of the historical consciousness (*Geschichtsbewusstsein*) in everyday life providing the present self-definition of a particular society as well as its projections for the future (Carr 2006). As Cipek emphasized, historical culture is a product of intertwining of both memory and politics, where memory and history are not mutually exclusive entities but where the former represents a living phenomenon of collective identity construction, and the latter a scholarly and objective

reconstruction of past events. On the contrary, scholarly historiography always takes part within particular social and political contexts hence being determined by one's personal *Lebenswelt* (Cipek 1995). Finally, academic works are always publicly disseminated in some way, where they go through what Cipek calls "process of filtration" thus shaping collective memory and hence national identity (Cipek 2011, 17). The relation between history and memory has been molded by social elites, both political and intellectual, representing the dominant agents of shaping what Timothy Snyder calls „the organizational principle, or set of myths, according to which nationally conscious individuals understand the past and its demands on the present“ (Snyder 2002, 50).

Although the term "politics of history" was firstly pejoratively coined in the context of famous *Historikerstreit* in 1986⁵, the discipline was founded in early 1990s Germany, when, following the process of unification, a young generation of German historians and social scientists started to research how different historical memories of Eastern and Western Germans influence the process of German political integration. ⁶ The research of the nexus between history and politics started to be affirmed from the 2000s in Central and Eastern Europe, mostly through the analyses of school textbooks by historians (Höpken 2006), while the Anglo-American social sciences and humanities are still mostly focused on the studies of collective memory and culture of remembrance and were mainly devoted to the sociological and anthropological studies of commemorations, monuments and museums. Although these studies seriously contribute to the approach of politics of history, they lack its main research concept, the history-power nexus, which crucially influences the national identity-building process (Müller 2002, 2).⁷

⁵ The term was firstly used to label the adversaries using false historical facts to prove their thesis (Cipek 2010, 221). For good overview on the *Historikerstreit*, see Geoff Ely, *Nazism, Politics and Public Memory: Thoughts on the West German Historikerstreit 1986-1987, Past and Present* (Nov.1988): 171-208. Also Tihomir Cipek, 2006. *Počinjte li 1945. zapravo 1917.?- Historikerstreit*. In *1945 - razdjelnica hrvatske povijesti*, eds. Nada Kisić Kolanović, Mario Jareb, Katarina Spehnyak, 45-58. Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest.

⁶ The pioneer work is considered to be Norbert Frei's book *Vergangenheitspolitik: die Anfänge der Bundesrepublik und die NS-Vergangenheit*, München, 1996. The book investigates the 1950s legislation on the rehabilitation of ex-Nazi officials and its function for the Adenauer's politics of national unity. However, the writing that finally established the discipline is considered to be Edgar Wolfrum research on the politics of history of Kohl's government in the 1980s, *Geschichtspolitik in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Der Weg zur Bundesrepublikanische Erinnerung 1984-1990*, Dramstadt 1999. It is also worth mentioning Jeffrey Herf's seminal study on the divided memory of the Nazi past in Western and Eastern Germany (Schiller 2004). Also; German Political Science Association established the section „Politik und Geschichte“ for the research of politics of history. See the bulletin of the German Political Science Association *Politikwissenschaft* (section „Politik und Geschichte“).

⁷ However, from 2000 the research on the nexus between various aspects of politics and collective memory appeared (De Brito, Gonzales-Enriquez, Aguilar 2004; Lebow, Kansteiner, Fogu 2006; Kopeček 2008; Miller 2012). Jeffrey Olick also pointed out the absence of the memory-power nexus in collective memory studies and stated that theories of nationalism, and especially Roger Brubaker's theory, are a good guideline on how to establish the missing nexus (Olick 2003).

The discussed nexus of history and power not only contains the research on the link between historical interpretations and the processes of political legitimization, but also on the impact of historical interpretations used in politics of the national identity-building processes, and on political culture and democratic consolidation. The area of analysis of the discipline encapsulates the function of historical interpretations on the integration of society, then the previously discussed impact of historical legacy on the actual political processes, and finally the research on the usage of particular historical event in everyday politics (Cipek 2010, 221). It is worth mentioning here the conceptual division and clarification of various fields of research in the discipline, emphasized by some of the most prominent German scholars in the discipline Norbert Frei, Edgar Wolfrum, Michael Kollstruck and Erik Meyer. They differentiate concepts of *Vergangenheitspolitik* (politics of the past) and the related concept of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (coming to terms with the past, internationally known as politics of transitional justice) from *Geschichtspolitik* (politics of history) and related *Erinnerungspolitik* (politics of memory). Both the concepts of *Vergangenheitspolitik* and *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* are related to the process of dealing with the dictatorial past in a post-dictatorial society via political-administrative deeds, including legal processes such as retribution, restitution, financial compensation, amnesty, and establishment of various truth commissions for inspecting the legacy of the dictatorial past in the government and state services (Gonzales- Enriquez 2004; Arnold, 2006). On the other hand, *Geschichtspolitik* (Politics of History) is primarily aimed at the research of the instrumental usage of historical discourses for legitimization purposes. Hence, its aim is not to research the accuracy of particular historical interpretations and utterances, but to focus on historical interpretations of politicians, intellectuals, journalists and scholars who directly influence the public sphere, and hence actively contribute to national identity-building processes, political culture and democratic consolidation. Relating to the nexus of politics of history and identity, it is especially important to emphasize the usage of interpretations of historical breaks as “places of condensing of history”, i.e. traumatic moments in histories of particular nations. Subsequently, politics of history deals with *policies of history*, represented by the aforementioned legal dimension, political-administrative dimension including “sites of memory” (monuments, museums, memorial centers), national symbols (flag, anthem, coat of arms, etc.), public holidays, and finally political-educational dimension related to school curricula and school textbooks. However, politics of history does not approach the aforementioned dimensions with the idea of coming to terms with the effects of a dictatorship, but rather to research how the historical interpretations exercised by the governing political

faction are transmitted through legislative and administrative executions and are used for legitimizing purposes (Meyer 2008; Koren 2011a, 1-7; Cipek 2007a).⁸ In English speaking science on the subject-matter where the studies of politics of history emerged in recent years, there is no such strict division of terminology. This is why the concepts “politics of past”, “politics of memory” and “politics of history” are used as synonyms related to the same aforementioned research of *Geschichtespolitik*, while the politics of transitional justice would respond to German *Vergangenheitspolitik* (Meyer 2008, 173-75; Koren 2011a, 6).

Besides the subject of research and demarcation of concepts, along with the taxonomy of policies of history, it is worth noting two additional analytical concepts here which influence the memory-power nexus and hence influence memory in the construction and legitimization of international politics as well as on the contestations in domestic politics. The first one is agenda setting done by a political power, defining which historical issues are to be raised and which are to be tamed both in public debates and in legal and administrative policies, whilst the second is the concept of historical analogy. (Müller 2002, 26; Leggewie and Meyer 2002, 5). Müller describes the usage of historical analogies as use of earlier historical experience in legitimizing domestic and international politics, which is especially convenient since it reduces the complexity of politics and thus creates instant legitimacy (Müller 2002, 25-28). Although Müller differentiates historical analogies from myths by labeling the former as consequence of memory, and latter as a fictional construction, I would here emphasize how Smith’s taxonomy of myths (does not matter whether myths are invented or a part of the collective memory) states that myths play the same role in the political processes as historical analogies. Considering the elite’s role in collective memory framing, it is necessary to add one more objection, which is along the lines of Anthony Smith’s approach to nation and nationalism. Although the political and intellectual elites have been the main agents in national identity building, the legitimate appeal of their politics of history depends on the historical legacies of a particular society, including the *longue durreé* structures of collective memories. Hence, collective memory is not only molded by the previously mentioned Snyder’s concept of national memory, but also by what he calls “mass personal memory”. It is defined as “personal recollection held by enough individuals to have national significance”, usually related to traumatic experiences of historical breaks (Snyder 2002, 50). In this research, the dual influence of Snyder’s concepts of mass personal memory and national

⁸ According to Michael Kohlstruck, *Erinnerugspolitik* (politics of memory) is used in public discourse as a synonym for *Geschichtespolitik*, and is related to research of similar aspects (Koren 2011b, 5).

memory along side the frame they pose for politics of history is most visible in the case of Bleiburg, Croatia and the Slovak National Uprising in Slovakia.

To summarize, the exposed complexity of the memory vs. power nexus shows how difficult it is to relate the impact of politics of history on the political culture, and how these impacts are finally translated into political changes (Müller 2002, 25-28). For sure, the most extreme consequences were visible in the 1990s wars in ex-Yugoslavia, showing, unfortunately, to what extent “history matters” or, even more precisely, to what extent politics of history matters.

1.2 Methodological Background

1.2.1 Research Design: Cultural Approach to Comparative Politics

The mainstream of comparative research in political science is founded on an experimental-like methodological model, framed within the stable context of researched cases which are based on a transparent differentiation between dependent, independent and intervening variables connected by a strict cause-effect chain. The model is primarily focused on verifying a particular research hypothesis, tending to establish a general model or theory for a particular comparison where “cases are those countries that feature in the comparative analyses, units of analysis are the objects on which the scholar collects data, such as individual people, countries, electoral systems, social movements etc., variables are those concepts whose values change over a given set of units, such as income, political party identification or propensity to join a protest movement” (Landman 2003, 18; Hopkin 2002/2005). However, as Hugh Stretton argued that “rather than imitating experimental control, a more promising use of comparative study is to extend the investigator’s experience and thus help his imagination of question prompting” (Stretton in Lijphart 1975, 159). Indeed, the quoted sentence indicates a way in which mainstream comparative analyses differentiate from the cultural approach to comparative studies of politics, which assumes culture to be a system of symbolic practices influencing outstanding political processes and institutions (Cipek 2007a). As Tim Beichelt stresses, the cultural approach to comparative politics is specially focused on the case study and research of a dynamic context of historical breaks - in a context of regime transitions and revolutions - where the cultural variable of national identity turns to influence transformation processes. Cultural comparison takes as its basic analytical unit a case “in overall complexity of its historical and social specificity” (Beichelt 2005, 223), thus not being strictly focused on defined variables and their relational interference like the mainstream discipline of comparative political science (Cipek 2007b, 282-283). The holistic approach to the cases in cultural comparative politics is important not only because the category, as the national identity, varies from case to case, but also because dynamic context turns do not let us strictly define what independent, dependant and interfering variables are; for example historical memory influences political processes, but also vice versa (Weeden 2002, 714). The cultural approach is primarily focused on the critical understanding of the cultural context of a particular case in comparison with another, and

therefore being applicable in comparison to the “small N” cases. Moreover, the cultural approach does not usually establish general models, but its explanatory power usually reaches a range of researched cases (Beichelt 2005; Cipek 2007b). As Beichelt points out, due to its particular and contextual focus, cultural approach is usually supported by the methods of comparative history devoted to description, reconstruction, and analyses of concepts and narratives, where the historical legacy of particular societies play an outstanding role (Beichelt 2005, 227). Heinz Gerhard Haupt and Jürgen Kocka stressed that “comparison is not a method in the strict meaning of the word, but more a perspective” (Haupt and Kocka 1996/2004, 151). Cultural comparison in political science is primarily focused on describing and interpreting a distinctive case followed by a comparison of both similarities and differences with the respect to each of the cases (Ibid. 151-154; Beichelt 2005). This is why historical comparison as well as the cultural comparative approach in political science usually do not reach the generally applicable findings, but rather tend to explain a single, usually indigenous case by its comparison to the “other” respective case (Kocka 1999, 48-50). The depicted approach originates from the fundamental principle of individuality in historical science, since “history is not a mere sum or a chain of occurrences which lets the simple identification of general trends” (Haupt and Kocka 1996/2004, 161). I would like to point out that the same sentence can be deliberately used for the category of national identity, especially since historical memory plays an outstanding role in the national identity-building process.

This research is designed as a comparative study of two cases which aims primarily to expose the role of politics of history in legitimizing the politics of the ruling parties in 1990s Slovakia and Croatia. The research shows how and why the politics of history defined the Croat and Slovak national identity-building processes of the 1990s, also the very political process and the institutional frame as well. The dissertation has an explanatory character thus satisfying the fundamental requirement of comparison in political science (Yin 2003, ch.2). However, since the study is conducted from a cultural perspective, its primary goal is interpretative, aimed at understanding rather than explaining, and at discovering rather than constructing“ (Mudde 2000, 22). The methodological focus is on the politics of history as the unit of analysis contextualized within the frame of contemporary political processes and *longue durée* structures of historical legacies⁹ during the 1990s in Croatia and Slovakia. The comparison includes and respects both similarities and differences equally. As was previously stated while researching cultural concepts such as national identity, it is hard to define strictly

⁹ The importance of the historical context even in the mainstream comparative approach in political science is emphasized by Landman (2003, 27-28) and Hague and Harrop (2004, 82-83).

dependent and independent variables since both domestic and international political processes greatly influence national identity-building processes and vice versa, especially in the dynamic context of a regime change followed by political, institutional and economical transition processes. Moreover, both political processes and national identity-building processes are influenced by various historical legacies, which can be labeled as only stable interfering variable in this research. The research is designed in four steps. The first step is analysis of the history of Croat and Slovak national identity-building processes with a special focus on the legacies influencing the 1990s national identity-building processes. The second step is an analysis of the political processes which enabled HDZ and HZDS seizure of power followed by the analysis of the legitimizing politics of history in the ideologies of the two parties. The third step is the analysis of the policies of politics of history, with the primary focus on the educational and administrative dimensions of the policies, for example history textbooks, national symbols and public holidays as well as places and spaces of national memory (*lieu de memoire*) such as museums, monuments, memorials and finally, in the naming of public spaces. Special focus is devoted to the mutual relation between the political processes and the politics and policies of history. The cases are simultaneously compared in every single step and both similarities and differences are stated, while the conclusion finally summarizes and highlights the main findings.

1.2.2 Method of Analysis: The Conceptual Approach

Given the afore depicted research design, the most suitable method of analyzing the politics of history, primarily understood as legitimizing a political narrative of national history, is the method of conceptual analysis. A similar approach has already been used by Cas Mudde to analyze the contemporary radical right (1995, 2000) and to approach national identity-building processes in contemporary research of historiography (Trencsényi et al. 2006-). In a way, to expose the method of conceptual analysis, the relation of nationalism and national identity towards the concept of ideology, should firstly be explained.

Considering the very meaning of ideology, in contemporary political theory, the most preeminent definition turns out to be one of Michael Freeden. He defines ideology as “an ideational formation through which specific meanings, from a potentially unlimited and essentially contestable universe of meanings, are imparted to the widest range of political concepts they inevitably employ” (Freeden 1996, 54). Hence, every ideology consists of

concepts defined as “complex ideas that inject order and meaning into observed and anticipated sets of political phenomena” (Freeden 1996, 52) and also being specific carriers of ideological meanings. The main characteristic of concepts is that they have “essentially contested meanings”, noticeable in the fact that they contain a wide range of meaning related to an assigned political phenomenon. Various ideologies are fighting to fill this wide range with their own meaning and thus delegitimizing political values of their opponents. Furthermore, concepts are arranged in specific clusters where the most fundamental concepts of a particular ideology represent its core that is supported and clarified by adjacent concepts, while the least important concepts for a particular ideology are set on its periphery. Finally, this “morphology of ideology” has been modifying in the light of changing political circumstances, and in a constant relation to the ‘real world’ and ‘ideologues’ in which ideology inevitably operates.¹⁰

While the issue of ideology in today’s social sciences as well as humanities has reached a broad consensus, it is still disputed whether nationalism represents a distinctive ideology or not. Freedden argues that nationalism, at best, represents “thin-centered” ideology, since it doesn’t offer solutions to questions such as social justice, distribution or conflict management. According to Freedden, it emerges as an independent ideology only in crisis, when nation and state-building problems occur, and the political system is predominantly devoted to it, while in consolidated political systems nationalism represents an inevitable component of various mainstream ideologies. In the both cases, Freedden lays out five core concepts which, in fact, overlap largely with Anthony Smith’s elaboration on national identity, and especially to his taxonomy of myths. They are: 1. nation as a homogeneous, holistic group where each individual belonging to the community is subservient to a monolithic set of values attached to national wills and purposes; 2. nation as a group sharing a notion of a chosen people superior to other nations; 3. the sameness of the state and the nation, narrowing the understanding of politics as exclusive means of achieving desired nationalistic ends; 4. Control over space and time, conceptualized via narratives on national history, (founding) myths and memories as well as symbolic representations of a nation; 5. Sentiments and emotions as basis for socio-political ties and political action, which are supporting components of any ideology, but as far

¹⁰ Freedden’s theory of ideology challenges the previously dominant approaches of political philosophy to ideology, defining it as a form of originally sloppy thinking becoming only comprehensive - and therefore research worthy - if derived from logical rigor and a high level of abstraction (Mackenzie 2003, 7-9). In my opinion, the depicted approach makes it almost impossible to catch the very power of ideologies which, in other words, is their impact on 'real life'.

as nationalism is concerned emotions become the main force of legitimizing (Freeden 1998, 752-754).¹¹

Moreover, Freeden emphasized that nationalism as a component is most extensive in a conservative ideology, since conservative organic vision of a nation gives it a notion of historical continuity via national memory that offers a teleological picture of national history (Ibid). Elaborations on nationalism as a distinct ideology and its link to conservative ideology turned out to be especially applicable to this research, which can be suitably tested on the HDZ ideology since its core concepts were certainly related to national identity but supported by peculiar visions of economy and distribution, as is discussed in the following chapters of the thesis. Freeden's later observation of nationalism as an indispensable part of every ideology, is accepted by political theory, since the idea of nationality appears to be an inevitable part of everyday living, such as other basic concepts like liberty, democracy, justice, etc. (Finlayson 2003, 108-109).

However, putting aside the question of whether nationalism represents a mere component of ideologies or a distinct ideology, the conceptual approach leaves room to viewing the politics of history via conceptual analysis. I found it to be true because politics of history, represented as perhaps the most important ingredient of any nationalism, always contained several concepts, including Smith's myths of foundation, antiquity and ethnic election which are then linked to the concepts of historical statehood, victimization and finally, national character (Smith 2001; Harris 2009). This thesis will be approached methodologically using Freeden's definition of a concept and its morphological relation explained above. Freeden's theory was later modified by Cas Mudde's method of operational conceptualization of ideology, which he developed while conducting his research on the populist radical right. Mudde's method is made up of three steps and is, indeed, very similar to Freeden's one. The first step includes defining and interpretation of the concepts, where the concept should be sufficiently abstract so as to be applicable in the different national contexts. The second step involves close reading of ideological materials (such as party programs, manifestoes, speeches, works of the party members intellectuals) to monitor the presence or the absence of the defined concepts (Mudde 1995, 206- 207). Finally, the last step is positioning the

¹¹ It is interesting that Anthony Smith contests Freeden's claims on nationalism by extracting very similar concepts to Freeden's in a way to support his claim that nationalism is a full-blown ideology (Smith 2001, 23-33). Although I shall elaborate on this topic in greater detail in following chapters, the dispute about whether nationalism is or is not a distinct ideology is not fundamental for my thesis.

I would just like to point out a very common objection to theories of nationalism. The objection that theories of nationalism scarcely explain how nationalism as an ideology operates, is common among political theorists (Finlayson 2003, 106).

“caught” concepts in what Mudde calls *causal chain approach* which “... aims at discovering the hierarchy of the various features that are found to be part of the ideology. This is done by following the direction of the argumentation and assessing what the prime and secondary arguments are, etc.”(Mudde 2000, 23). Mudde warns that the pure propaganda materials such as manifestos and election programs with “a primarily external orientation” are simply not enough to be able to grasp an ideology and so the analysis followed should include, what he calls, writings with “primarily internal orientation”. These are writings aimed at members and supporters on behalf of the party leadership, and include interviews, internal speeches and works of important party members and initiatives but also published works of prominent intellectuals close to the party (Mudde 1995, 208).

Taking the above explained methodological frame, the main variables of the research are concepts of national history used by HDZ and HZDS. The first concept is a teleological narrative of national history, comprised of myths previously defined by Anthony Smith; the myth of the Golden Ages, the myth of ethnic election, the myth of ancestry and territory joined by the narrative of historic nationhood and statehood. The second concept is the narrative of a nation’s victimization, which was conceived mainly because of the position of minor importance the states had in Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. The third concept is the narrative of World War II connected to the myth of foundation which was, clearly, encapsulated in the independence gaining process. These narratives are contextualized by both domestic and international politics, showing the change of politics of history over time, primarily for legitimizing purposes. Special attention was paid to previously mentioned historical analogy as form of expression, since it represents one of the most common ways of using politics of history in legitimizing both domestic and international politics (Müller 2002, 25-28).

The units of analysis are various writings of prominent members of the parties, including interviews and public speeches, as well as various materials belonging to the parties such as election programs, declarations, manifestos, etc. Further units would encompass analysis of the policy materials, including legal documents (laws, acts, regulations, declaration, etc.) related to history, history textbooks, national symbols, public holydays along with places and spaces of national memory (museums, monuments, memorials and, finally, the naming of public spaces). The listed textual units were broached with an in-depth, close interpretative reading in order to grasp the aforementioned concepts, while places and spaces were analyzed using photos in relation to defined concepts.

Since the research is designed as a cultural approach to comparative politics, the comparison of the two countries in question will reveal conclusions that relate exclusively to Croatia and Slovakia. However, the conclusions could make room for the possibility of further application of the research to countries with similar historic legacies as were the cases compared in this thesis. This, firstly, refers to the successor states of the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia who experienced the position of a minor-partner whilst being members of the respected federations. The main advantage of this research is an in-depth descriptive analysis of the researched subjects and the creation and production of a valuable study since, to cite Roy Hague, in comparative politics it is often more useful to expose a comprehensive description of some topics than to approach it by testing some insufficiently developed and elaborate theory or model (Hague 1998/2001, 450).

2 Slovak and Croat National Identity-Building Processes up to 1990

For almost a thousand years Croatia and Slovakia, besides belonging to the Slavic ethno-language group, shared a very similar background of political history which overwhelmingly determined the similarities in their national identity-building processes. Both *ethnies* became a part of the Hungarian Kingdom in the early medieval period (Slovakia in the tenth, Croatia at the turn of the twelfth century). Since they were a part of the Hungarian kingdom, they both simultaneously joined the Habsburg Empire in the early sixteenth century and stayed under the Habsburg rule until the very end of the Monarchy in 1918. The afore depicted common statehood frame, shared by both nations for such a long time period, stipulated a similar pattern to their national identity-building processes. Coinciding with the ethnic and cultural proximity of the Czechs, Slovaks, Croatians and Serbs respectively, it is not surprising that both Slovak and Croat national identity-building processes emerged against much stronger contemporary Hungarian and German identity-building processes nestled within the frame of respective Czechoslovak and Yugoslav national identity-building ideas. This kind of choice was stipulated by the relatively weak political positions of both *ethnies* which entered the “era of the nations” as “nations without a state”, where Slovak and Croat contemporaries, so called national awakeners, saw the ideas of Czechoslovakism and Yugoslavism firstly as the solution to Slovak and Croat national identity emancipation (Stančić 2002; Mannová 2000). It is also no wonder that the minor-partner roles experienced in their respective states with Czechs and Serbs brought about frustration and delegitimizing of Czechoslovak and Yugoslav ideas accompanied by a simultaneous rise of exclusive Slovak and Croat national ideas which originally emerged in the nineteenth century concurrently to Czechoslovakism and Yugoslavism. It is no wonder that during World War II, two parallel though contested solutions to the national question popped up. On one hand, we had the idea of a Nazi-puppet, but still independent states, while on the other hand, there was a communist project for national and social emancipation within the envisioned federal form of the future Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. However, these later projects failed in the both cases due to the contestations similar to the ones of the interwar major-minor issue, originating from the concurrent Slovak and Czech and Croat and Serb national identity-building processes. Although the contestations in the both cases showed quite a similar pattern, the bloody disintegration of Yugoslavia in respect to the peaceful “velvet” divorce of Czech Republic

and Slovakia shed a light on a many differences in the history of Slovak and Croat national identity-building processes, especially concerning their relations to the Czechs and the Serbs. These differences basically originated from a different political and social position of Slovakia and Croatia at the time of the foundation of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia in 1918. Although both nations were without states, Croatia - unlike Slovakia - enjoyed political autonomy up to 1918, originating from the medieval feudal municipal rights. Moreover, the more advanced economic and social level of the Czech lands in comparison to Slovakia were completely different in the case of Serbia and Croatia, since Slovakia was an economically and socially much less advanced country in comparison to Croatia. Finally, Serbian statehood-building process did not share the Austro-Hungarian political legacy of the “hybrid” political system characterized by a mixture of the old feudal elements and a modern civic constitution based on the high standards of the rule of law leaning towards concept of the feudal state right (Cipek 2006). Instead the Serb nation and state-building process created an expansionist pattern that gathered all Serbs into a Serb state and with the legacy of nineteenth century military battles, a tradition used to gain and secure their independence (Banac 2001). The legacies remained and affected the new state of southern Slavs. The afore depicted differences of the Slovak and Croat national identity-building processes influenced a more traumatic and turbulent end to the twentieth century for Croats than for Slovaks, especially when it came to the issues of nation and state-building. However, since the legacy of minor positions of Slovakia and Croatia in Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia was accompanied by the legacy of Slovak and Croat Nazi-puppet states, they, in both cases, influenced, above all, the emergence of a non-liberal-democratic pattern of national identity-building in the 1990s. This chapter aims to uncover, elaborate and analyze Slovak and Croat pre-1990s national identity-building processes, especially with respect to streams and narratives which greatly influenced the 1990s forging of the Croat and Slovak national identity-building.

2.1 Slovakia: From the Clerical to the Communist National Identity-Building Master Narrative

2.1.1 The Slovak National Identity-Building Process up to 1968

The Slavic ethnic population settled in the territory of today's Slovakia around the sixth century during a migration wave of Slavic nations towards Europe. They organized their first early medieval polities over the course of the following three centuries (Samo's Empire, Pribina's Principality), reaching its peak by the mid-ninth century with the Great Moravian Empire. The Empire encompassed today's territories of the Czech Republic and Slovakia as well as parts of northern Hungary. This brought about the Christianization of the Slavic population and the invention of the Glagolitic script, the first Slavic writing system invented by the byzantine priests Cyril and Methodius (Lukačka and Steinhübel 2000). Soon the polities were invaded and conquered by the Hungarian tribes in the early tenth century, thereafter staying a part of the Hungarian kingdom until its collapse in 1918.

In medieval times, the territory of the present-day Slovakia was characterized by the flourishing mining industry as well as craft production, becoming thus one of the most prosperous parts of the Hungarian kingdom, especially after the Ottoman occupation of the southern parts of the kingdom in the sixteenth century. The emigration of the Hungarian ethnic population from the territories occupied by the Ottomans - including the resettlement of the most powerful noble families, followed by a final shift of the capital from Buda (part of today's Budapest) to Pozsony (today's Bratislava) in 1536 - brought about an ethnic mix to the territory, which had already been started by a thirteenth/fourteenth century settlement of Carpathian Germans and Jews (Mannová 2000, 9-154). After the Ottoman withdrew in the late seventeenth/early eighteenth century the political significance of the territory decreased (with the final transfer of the country's capital back to Budapest in 1848), it stayed the most industrially advanced territory of the Hungarian kingdom until its disintegration in 1918 (Skalnik-Leff 1996, 121) .

The first proto-national ideas in Slovakia were related to the late-medieval penetration of Czech protestant liturgical language (so-called *Bibličtina*) and with the expansion of the Hussites in Slovakia. Although hussitism failed to spread within the folk, a large part of the contemporary Slovak elite converted to it, subsequently adopting the notion of ethnical, cultural and lingual proximity of Czechs and Slovaks, which later become the basis of the

idea of the Czecho-Slovak national oneness. However, the idea of the commonness of Czech and Slovak protestant groups "... became a disability, impairing the chances of winning the mainly Catholic Slovak population over to the idea of Czechoslovakism." (Suda 2000, 109). As was predicted, the idea became immediately contested by a cultural movement from largely catholic, western Slovakia that in the late 18th century developed the notion of a separate Slovak language, and a separate Slovak ethnicity. Although the mentioned group, led by a priest Anton Bernolák, failed to codify the Slovak official language, it based a foundation for the future building of Slovak national identity, which was subsequently triggered by the work of the contemporary historians. In order to claim the right of the Slovak nobility's participation in feudal notion of the *Natio Hungarica*, these historians developed an interpretation of some kind of Slovak state right. It was based on the idea of early medieval Great Moravia as the first state of the Slovaks and which had been historically situated on the territory actually inhabited by the Slovaks. Moreover, this myth of the Great Moravia was subsequently triggered by the myth of the Slovak high culture achieved at the time of Great Moravia and codified by the invention of the Slavic writing system called "Hlaholica" by Saint Cyril and Methodius. Although these two myths - the Great Moravian and Cyrilo-Methodius one - were, back then, primarily developed to justify equal position of Slovaks in the Kingdom of Hungary, they penetrated into the consciousness of a wider public, and became very important for the modern Slovak national identity-building (Kowalská 2000, 178-181).

The modern Slovak national identity-building in the first part of the 19th century started by the adoption of the idea of common Czechoslovak nation, which was developed by the Czech national awakers led by František Palacký. With the ongoing process of Germanization in the Czech lands in mind, the Czech awakers subsequently developed an idea of Czecho-Slovak mutuality. It was based on the idea that Czechs and Slovaks - although historically separated by being a part of the Austrian Empire (Czechs) and the Hungarian Kingdom (Slovaks) - form one nation on the basis of ethnic, linguistic and cultural proximity. However, on the basis of statehood tradition of the Czech historical right, as well as on the basis of a much higher development of the Czech lands compared to Slovakia, Slovaks were understood as a minor, less developed tribe of the Czechoslovak nation that needed to be enlightened and developed in this common political union with Czechs (Přihoda 2000, 131-132). In Slovakia, this idea was advocated by protestant intelligentsia led by Ján Kollár and Pavol Jozef Šafárik, who within the ongoing process of Magyarisation in Slovakia framed it into a broader idea of

pan-Slavism, which then developed as the pillar of resistance to dominant German and Hungarian assimilations of national identity-building processes (Kowalská 2000, 181-182).

The Czechoslovak idea was contested by the Slovak national awakening movement called *Šturovci* led by the charismatic L'udovít Štúr. Perceiving the idea of Czechoslovakism as the Czech expansionism negating Slovak national identity, Štúr formed the primordialist idea of the Slovak nation, based on two fundamental national identity concepts: the idea of history, and the idea of the nature of Slovak people. The idea of history originated from the appropriation of the myth of the Great Moravia as the starting point of Slovak nationhood. The whole history of Slovakia was viewed through a prism of the Hungarian Empire and the myth with time transformed into the myth of Hungarian "thousand year oppression" over the Slovak nation. This concept of Slovak history led to a similar concept of the Slovak nation, whose history was now completely excluded from the Hungarian history via constructing the myth of Slovak "plebeian nation". Since Slovakia completely lacked a domestic noble stratum, as well as the medieval statehood tradition of the state right, *Šturovci* defined the nation exclusively as a community of ethnic folk sharing the same customs and language. The folk were then idealized as the people with a pigeon-like soul (*holubici narod*) by adopting Herder's idealistic notion about the Slavs (Pichler 1999). These constructions were politically expressed in the codification of the Slovak standard language in 1843, as well as in the claim for Slovakian political autonomy, referred to as the Demands of the Slovak Nation from 1848 (*Žiadosti slovenského národa*), and later the Memorandum of the Slovak Nation from 1861 (*Memorandum národa slovenského*). However, after the collapse of the liberal, national-emancipating movements in the 1848 revolution, Slovak national awakeners shifted from the western-like idea of liberalism and ideologically as they turned to the ideas of organic community. Politically, they exclusively shifted to the ideas of pan-Slavism and Rusophilia, seeing that Slovak national and political emancipation is only attainable through cultural and political merging with the Russians (Zajac 1999). The answer of the Czech national awakeners and Slovak "Czechoslovakists" was straight and simple; they disapproved of a separate Slovak national identity-building, understanding it as a national betrayal. They created a stereotype of Slovak inferiority based on the Slovak socio-economical backwardness and political immaturity (Přihoda 2000, 132). The aforementioned concepts of the Slovakian "Czechoslovakists" and "Independentists" national and political thought marked the fundamental cleavage of the national identity-building process of the Slovak nation, where both factions developed comparable theories at the same time.

After the crackdown on the 1848 revolution, the process of Magyarisation increased, especially after the Austro-Hungarian compromise in 1867. Slovakia stayed a backward, mostly agricultural country with a high rate of assimilation of the Hungarian national identity by the wider population. Because of the situation, Slovak political elites united and established the Slovak National Party in 1870 (*Narodna Strána*). The party continued with Štúr's national program of traditionalism and pro-Russian feelings. At the same time, the Czech political elites abandoned the Czechoslovak idea, and put all their efforts towards Czech political emancipation on the basis of the Czech historical right, especially after the Austro-Hungarian compromise in 1867. Although the Czech lands achieved remarkable socio-economic progress in the last few decades of the 19th century, the Czech political program of pushing for political autonomy within a dualist system failed. The Czech political elites returned to the idea of political cooperation with the Slovaks, especially after monarchy plummeted into a permanent state of crisis at the turn of the century which was caused by the destabilization of Austro-Hungarian political relations¹² (Mannová-Holec 2000). The new program of Czechoslovak mutuality was formed by Tomáš Masaryk's political thought, whose abandonment of political romanticism and his development of the "realist" liberal idea of "small deeds" as a way of enlightening the masses as well as the idea of Slavic cooperation within the monarchy, inspired not only young generations of Czechs and Slovaks, but young generations of other Slavic intellectuals in the monarchy too. The youth then was mostly studying in Prague. Considering Czecho-Slovak relations, Masaryk abandoned the notion of the Czech historical right, and turned almost exclusively to the notion of the national self-emancipation which was seen as the future program of Czech and Slovak cooperation and suited the Slovaks. However, Masaryk's approach to the Slovak national question was inspired by Palacký's as well as Kollár's and Šafárik's thought. This was the reason for abandoning the tradition of the Slovak national awakening and seeing Slovak's as somewhat of an exotic less-developed part of the unique Czechoslovak nation. Moreover, Masaryk's specific philosophy of Czech history, which describes the Czech protestant tradition as universal values of political morality, as well as their liberal socio-economic progressivity, was very much unlike the Catholic religion, which was perceived as anti-modern, in spite of the strict development of the religion as a private and politics as a public matter, even more

¹² The crisis was caused by the strengthening of the national and the state-building process in Hungary since the Compromise in 1867, which reached its golden era at the turn of the century. The crisis was triggered in 1897 by the failure to renew the conditions of the economic part of the Compromise, reaching its peak in the 1900s, when the posts of power in Hungary were seized by the anti-dualist Hungarian Independence Party (Mannová-Holec 2000).

surely planted the seed of how the Czech national identity is perceived in comparison to Slovak one (Bakoš 1999). Masaryk's political and national ideas were adopted by the new, young generation of Slovak, mostly Prague educated, students called *Hlasisti*, who contested the old generation of Slovak politicians around the National party and saw in Masaryk's political thought the only way to preserve the Slovak national identity in front of Magyarisation process, as well as to modernize the then backward Slovakia, both economically and socially.¹³ However, just before World War I, the concept of Czech and Slovak political unity was also adopted by other Slovak parties, National Party and the newly founded Slovak People's Party (*Slovenská ľudová strana*- SLS) led by the charismatic catholic priest Andrej Hlinka. They, together with *Hlasist* politicians and Czech politicians gathered around Masaryk, founded the Czechoslovak republic on the ruins of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in 1918. It greatly determined not only the Czech-Slovak relations, but also the future of the Slovak national identity- building process as well (Lipták 2002).

Although the Cleveland Agreement from 1915 and the Pittsburg Agreement from 1918 guaranteed Slovak autonomy in the framework of a future state¹⁴, after the foundation of a new state, the model of the centralist Czechoslovak political (state) nation was imposed and finally recognized the cultural and political equality of Czechs and Slovaks (Mannová-Holec, 2000, 234-241). However, the Czech elites perceived the new state as restoration of Czech historical statehood, now only extending over Slovaks, who were perceived as a backward and immature side of the Czech nation (Lipták 2000a 128-129). They officially created the concept of the Czechoslovak nation as merging of the Czech rational, enlightened and modern "older brother" and the Slovak emotional, infantile, immature "younger brother", which was basis for Czech relations with the Slovaks up to the breakdown of the common state in early 1990s (Přihoda 2000). Although Slovak elites recognized the Czech ineluctable contribution to the modernization of Slovakia, especially in the 1920s when Czechs built Slovak national economic and administrative infrastructure (such as university, theatre, national academia, etc.) practically from scratch, soon after the unification, the Slovaks started to express an open dissatisfaction with the minor position of Slovakia in the state (Lipták 2000b, 244-246).

¹³ The *Hlasist* movement got a name by the periodical *Hlas* (The Voice), where the young generation published their political and ideological articles during the period 1898-1904. Later the *Hlasist* ideas were continued to be published in the periodical *Prúdy* (Currents) during the years 1909-1914. Most of the *Hlasist* generation gained leading political posts in the inter-war Czechoslovak republic, and some of the most famous names were Vavro Šrobár and Milan Hodža (Mannová-Holec 2000, 212-213).

¹⁴ The both agreements were concluded between Czech and Slovak emigration in the USA, whose communities strongly politically and materially supported the foundation of the common state. The Cleveland agreement spoke of federal relations between Czechs and Slovaks, while Pittsburg agreement, signed by Masaryk, guaranteed Slovakia political autonomy in the future state (Mannová-Holec 2000, 237)

Basically, for Slovak elites the new common state was first and foremost a frame of realization of the old Slovak autonomist program and envisioning a new state constituted like Austro-Hungary (Rychlík 2000a, 102-103).¹⁵ The problem of the minor position of Slovaks within the state became especially acute by the 1930s, when the great economic crisis uncovered a destroyed traditional craft and agriculture production by more progressive Czech and foreign capital. This was followed by the parallel formation of the young and educated Slovak stratum, who now missed the opportunity to take a governing position in the country previously occupied by the Czechs (Lipták 2000b, 248-253). Although the major Slovak “Czechoslovakist” inter-war parties, namely the Social-democrats and Agrarians (led by Milan Hodža), were consciousness of the aforementioned problems of Slovak national and social emancipation, they avoided advocating for the Slovak political autonomy and national particularity. Both parties criticized the centralist political system and Czech predominance; however, their dedication to the notion of “political Czechoslovakism”, consisted of a lack of belief in the Slovak ability to govern themselves as well as in the creation of a united Czechoslovak nation as a step of furthering the Slovak modernization processes and a way to stop them from advocating political autonomy of Slovaks (Lipták 2000a, 130-136).

Instead, the program of the Slovak national emancipation was formed by the Slovak People’s Party (*Slovenská ľudová strana- SLS*), led by the charismatic catholic priest Andrej Hlinka. Although, in the interwar period, the support for the parties echoing Masaryk’s political view of Czechoslovakia were becoming increasingly more popular, the HSLs became Slovakia's strongest political party with more than one third of the electoral vote (Lipták 2000b). Under the charismatic leadership of pater Hlinka - who already possessed the charisma of a national hero prior to WWI¹⁶- the party changed the name in 1925 to Hlinka’s Slovak People’s Party (*Hlinkova slovenská ľudová strana- HSLs*) (Lipták 1992, 109-122). Although other parties as well, such as the National Party, openly advocated Slovak political emancipation, the secret of the *ludaks*’ success was the combination of national and social issues, which, in turn allowed for the party’s mass support (Ibid, 24). Contrary to other

¹⁵ The strongest symbolic expression of this was the claim for the so called “Slovak visibility”, expressed by the Slovaks advocating that the name of the common state should be “Czecho-Slovakia” instead of “Czechoslovakia”, which internationally was simply recognized as Czech. This so called “hyphen problem” as the symbolic expression of the Slovak national identity-building process appeared again in 1939, as well as in 1989, making it a marking symbol of the Czech-Slovak relations in the 20th century (Suda 2000, 117-118).

¹⁶ Andrej Hlinka (1864-1938) became broadly known during the Černova tragedy, when Hungarian gendarmes killed twelve and wounded more than sixty peasants during the consecration of the church led by Hlinka in the small central Slovak village Černova, which turned to the pro-Slovak national manifestation. This tragedy warned the European public of the hegemonic policy of nationality in the Hungarian Kingdom. (Mannová-Holec 2000, 214; Kováč 2005, 176).

political parties, which were led exclusively by urban elites and, therefore, were completely isolated from the lower strata of the population - especially the rural one. The leadership of HSLS consisted of lower catholic clergy and so was able to skillfully build up the nationalist ideology which echoed in the Slovak peasantry and lower strata of urban population. The national thought of the party followed the Šturovite “plebeian myth” of the foundation of the Slovak national identity, which was now being shifted from its original lack of religiousness - originating from the fact that Slovaks were divided into a catholic majority and a protestant minority - to the concept of the naturalness of Catholicism and the piety of the Slovak peasant identity (Lipták 1992, 90-96). The party then strengthened the notion of a separate Slovak national identity not only by emphasizing the alleged political and economic hegemony of Czechs over Slovaks, but also by emphasizing the notion of the hegemony of Czech protestant, agnostic, liberal urban decadency over healthy Slovak rural piety (Suda, 2000, 134-135). It was at this point that the People’s Party constructed the notion of itself as the sole speaker for Slovak national particularity (Kováč 2005), subsequently expressed in the political claims for autonomy, which were based on the emphasis on the implementation of the Pittsburg agreement from 1918 (Lipták 2000b, 247-248). They were also based on social claims for exclusive reservation of the state and public administration posts in Slovakia exclusively for Slovaks and the state protectionism of the Slovak craft and family agriculture against the modern Czech and foreign capital (Lipták 2000a, 136-141). The HSLS’ mixture of national and social ideas had a very complex and nuanced impact on the future Slovak national identity-building process, especially concerning the HSLS led Slovak Nazi satellite state during the WWII.¹⁷ While the proclamation of the independence was interpreted by nationalist intellectuals and politicians simply as using any chance given to finally achieve the long awaited independence, for Czechs this process, was achieved by using the dramatic political context of the Munich partitioning of Czechoslovakia in 1938-1939, which formed a

¹⁷ After the death of its long-term charismatic leader and priest Andrej Hlinka in 1938, Jozef Tiso assumed the party leadership; he was also a priest and the president of the Slovak quisling state which was founded in March 1939, following the post-Munich agreement breakdown of Czechoslovakia in 1938-39. Tiso’s regime was a mixture of conservative-clerical and fascist elements, advocated by the party’s minor pro-fascist faction (the so-called Hlinka’s Guard) led by the Prime Minister Vojtech Tuka, minister of interior Alexander Mach and by one of the main party’s ideologists Ferdinand Ďurčanský. Although Tiso’s major faction was not prone to Nazism, it organized and triggered the deportation of the majority of Slovak Jews (around 70,000) to Nazi Germany. Tiso’s regime gave rise to the illegal pro-Czechoslovak anti-fascist movement consisting of both communists and democrats, supporters of the Benes Czechoslovak government in exile, which organized the Slovak National Uprising on 29 August 1944. The so-called ‘First Slovak Republic’ was abolished by the Soviet Army liberation of Slovakia in 1945. (Jelinek 1980, 367-378).

huge trauma in the Czech collective memory.¹⁸ Furthermore, Czech collective memory created a concept of Slovak betrayal and as a final expression of their ungratefulness, aka “a stab in the back by your nearest kin” (Suda 2000, 119; Skalnik-Leff 1996, 137-138). Moreover, until the regime fully slipped into the war with the Soviet Union in 1942-43, the folk experienced the wartime era of the independence as the time of relative economic prosperity, or at least economic stability, which was even more apparent after the inter-war decline of Slovak economy. Hence, the first years of the regime can be perceived mainly as HSLs’ fulfillment of the major pre-war national and social promises (Lipták 2000b, 195-210), which gradually evaporated only after the regime joined the German attack on the USSR in 1941, partly because the living conditions began to gradually decline, and partly due to the *long duree* Russophile sentiments in the national identity-building master narrative taking root in the folk. Simultaneously, for Czechs, traumatized by the German occupation and the purge of Czechs from Slovakia, Tiso’s regime simply symbolized hard-line fascism, which subsequently compromised the project of Slovak independence (Skalnik-Leff 1996, 137-138).

However, there was another political party, whose thought on the national identity fatefully determined the Slovak national identity-building process during the next fifty years, that was the communist party. In the inter-war period, the Slovak communists, being only the branch of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (CPC), represented the minor political force having only partially supported by the weak Slovak working-class movement (Lipták 2000a, 142-154). The relative unpopularity of communists was - similar to other central and east-European countries - caused by the strict adherence to the nationally insensitive politics of the Comintern, vacillating between the advocacy of the Czechoslovak unitarism in the early 1920s, paying more attention to the question of sensitive national politics over the course of the Comintern’s pro-national self-determination politics in the late 1920s and 1930s, and the politics of the “people’s front” during the late 1930s. However, the “critical turn” in Slovak communist ideology was implemented simultaneously with the proclamation of the

¹⁸ The proclamation of the Slovak independence resembles with its drama a popular detective novel. Following the stipulations of the Munich Treaty from September 1938, which allowed the Nazi Germany to annex Czech Sudetenland region with German majority, the leadership of the HSLs proclaimed Slovak autonomy in October 1938. Following the continued and heated relations of the Czechs and Slovaks which culminated in the attempt of the Czech government to crack down on the autonomy on 9.3.1939, Hitler called Jozef Tiso demanding an urgent audience on 13.3.1939 and forced him to proclaim Slovak independence, which was then done by the Slovak parliament on the next day, 14.3.1939. Hitler needed this proclamation in order to be able to occupy Czech lands without starting a war with France and Great Britain, since the stipulations of the Munich Treaty allowed the occupation if Czechoslovakia collapsed because of internal matters. On the other hand, the final aim of the major, moderate fraction of HSLs was not the independence, but the autonomy which would eventually lead to the independence. Tiso decided to undertake the “final step” only after Hitler threatened him with allowing Hungary to annex Slovakia. (Lipták 2000a, 154-178)

Slovak independence in 1939, which led to the foundation of the autonomous Communist party of Slovakia (CPS) with the program advocating the “Soviet Slovakia” which meant inclusion of the autonomous Slovakia to the USSR as one of the its republics (Lipták 1992, 178-188, 235-241; 2000a, 142-154). Of course, this politics emerged in the context of the turn in the Soviet politics after the signing of the Soviet-German pact in August of 1939 and with subsequent recognition of the Slovak independence (Lipták 2000a, 152-153). Although the proclamation of the independent Slovak state in March of 1939 was firstly met by common apathy, very soon the regime gained outstanding popular support due to the political and economic reasons discussed in the previous paragraph. However, the rise in popularity of CPC did not only correspond to the new national pro-independent course, but also to the fact that this new course was nicely highlighted by its consonance to the historical legacy of the Russophilism which became especially significant when Tiso’s regime started to lose their legitimacy after joining the German attack on the USSR in 1941. Even when Slovak communist politics yet again turned to the People’s front and the Czechoslovak federation project after 1941, the national politics 1939-41 left the legacy of the national self-confidence in Slovak communists, which had a great impact on the Slovak national identity-building process, especially during the normalization period 1968-1988, as will be seen later. For now, the crucial moment of Slovak national identity-building process was the Slovak National Uprising, representing the uprising in eastern Slovakia in August 1944, both against Germans and Tiso’s regime. This event, organized by the resistance consisted predominantly of communist organized partisan units and joined by the Slovak state army, redeemed Slovakia and lifted the fascist stigma in the eyes of the democratic world as well as had a significant impact on the construction of the Slovak national identity-building. As any historical break, it had a few contested interpretations: communists used it as legitimization for their following non-democratic rule, democrats and liberals tried to emphasize its non-communist, antifascist side, while the nationalist political émigrés labeled it as a “betrayal of the Slovak independent state” (Lipták 1999, 186-199; Kamenec 2005). While the character of SNP will be explained more thoroughly later in the context of the thematisation of the 1990s national identity-building processes, now it is more important to emphasize that the legacy of SNP enabled the coalition of Slovak communists, socialist and agrarians to raise a claim for the “equal with equal” (*rovný s rovným*) principle of the future constitution of the common state during the constitutional negotiations with the Czech representatives 1944-45, mostly consisted of the politicians belonging to Beneš’s Czechoslovak exile government in London (Rychlík 2000b, 188-192). The Czech side neglected the Slovak demands, advocating instead the pre-war

ruling ideology of Czechoslovakism, especially due to the trauma of the memory of the Munich partitioning of the state in 1938-39, at the same time not seeing that the WWII state, "... was the proof of maturity of Slovak people to govern themselves" (Suda 2000, 120), however paradoxical it may sound at first. The subsequent harm to the Slovak national identity-building process was stopped when the Czechoslovakian bourgeoisie parties helped the Communist party of Czechoslovakia to crack down on the Slovak Democratic Party¹⁹ during the course of the communist government takeover 1946-48 (ibid. 119-121). It was interpreted as the act of the fanatical Czech hegemonism, which is no difference in respect to the political orientations, even pushed on the self-destructive cost to the establishment of the communist dictatorship.

After the communist takeover in 1948, all bodies of the Slovak autonomous government were cracked down on during the consolidation of the system, which caused the implementation of the centralism to become even harder than the inter-war one. The politics of the party in the Stalinist period of 1948-1960, by strictly following directions from Moscow, was ideologically enhanced by "vulgar Marxism" (Istvan Bibo) postulating that "in classless communist societies nations would gradually merge together" (Rychlík 2000b, 193), i.e. that the national question would be simply solved through the economic emancipation of the working-class. Translated in the context of the country, it meant that the national question would be solved when Slovakia reaches the economic level of the Czech lands (Skalnik-Leff 1996, 143). Slovak communists obediently followed this politics by "... abandoning its nationalist program in favor of 'class struggle' and socialist revolution...having the naïve idea that after the "final victory of the working class Slovakia would regain all jurisdiction", which would lead to the abolition of the CPS and its inclusion in CPC (Rychlík 2000b, 191). The above explained ideology was implemented through the fundamentalist interpretation of history, which labeled fascism as a mere product of capitalism with the interpretation of the Slovak wartime republic as a pure puppet of German Nazism, only enjoying the support of a small minority of the population. When it came to the national identity-building, Slovak people, peasantry and the working class, were depicted as the greatest victims of Tiso's regime, while the Holocaust in Slovakia was exclusively prescribed to Germans (Cohen 1999,

¹⁹ The Democratic Party was founded in late 1944 as the anti-communist block gathering the all bourgeoisie antifascist forces in Slovakia. It consisted of the prominent members of the pro-Czechoslovak pre-war parties, led by the agrarians, which were joined by the minor moderate faction of the HSLS members which did not compromise during the war. On the ideological platform which blended Christian democracy with Czech-Slovak federalism it soon turned to the national movement, followed by the 62% of the Slovak electorate on the elections in 1946, while the communist joined by the social-democrats got only 32 %. The Democratic Party was abandoned in February of 1948 following the communist coup d'état (Lipták 1992, 255-263).

95-99), which was built into the communist version of the myth of the plebeian nation. The myth consisted of the interpretation of Slovak history as “the thousand-year long class struggle” of the peasantry against the foreign aristocratic exploitation, giving dignity to Slovak history towards to the concurrent Czech and Hungarian “political nation” for the first time, now disregarded as reactionary (Lipták 2008, 13-15). However, this “red thousand-year myth” was contested by the regime condemnation of the nineteenth century national awakening movement, which was interpreted as reactionary since it followed Marx’s works on revolution in Europe in 1848²⁰. It was reactionary by downplaying of the role of the SNP by emphasizing the leading role of Moscow as well as the “Moscowite” CPC leadership (consisted mostly of Czechs) whilst simultaneously discarding the role of the local Slovak communists (Cohen 1999, 95-99). Besides being dictated by the Soviet party, the reason for such national identity-building politics was that the majority of the prominent Slovak communist leaders of the uprising - Gustav Husák, Ladislav Novomeský, Vladimír Clementis²¹ - were sentenced and imprisoned in the Stalinist trials in the early 1950s under the accusation of “bourgeoisie nationalism”. They collaborated with Tiso’s regime to preserve the First Slovak Republic. Hence, when Slovakia by the early 1960s economically caught with the Czech lands, instead of the expected solution to the Slovak national question, it brought about the rise of Slovak national self-consciousness, carried by the new reform faction of the party led by Husák, who was released in the early 1960s. Their reform politics followed by the reinterpretation of the national identity-building process - which will be discussed further in the following paragraph – increased the public feeling of frustration with the alleged Czech hegemony, which was until then suppressed. In the Czech national identity-building, communist dictatorship was viewed as a Moscow imposed disaster which irreversibly worsened the country, especially in economic terms. Three historical arguments

²⁰ The interpretation of the national awakens reactionism had been already launched in the 1933 by Ladislav Novomeský (Novomesky, 1933). Over the course of the party's politics of the 'People's Front', starting from the late 1930s and lasting until the end of WWII, was abandoned only to be raised again during Stalinism (Hudek, 2010).

²¹ Gustáv Husák (1913-1991); Slovak politician and writer. In the 1930s Husák became one of the most prominent Slovak communists, eventually being appointed as the head of the autonomous Communist party of Slovakia (CPS) in 1939. However, being one of the organizers of the 1944 Slovak national uprising, in 1950 he was imprisoned together with Ladislav Novomeský (1904-1976) and finally sentenced for “bourgeoisie nationalism”. They were released and rehabilitated in the early 1960s. He acted as Alexander Dubček’s deputy during the Prague Spring and after its break Husák was appointed as the Party’s general secretary and the president of the Czechoslovakia. He resigned in 1987. Ladislav Novomeský (1904-1976) was one of the most prominent Slovak interwar communist intellectuals. After being rehabilitated he worked in the literary institute of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. In 1969 Novomeský was appointed as a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Slovakia as well as head of Matica Slovenská, the highest Slovak cultural institution. Vladimír Clementis (1902-1952); journalist. He joined the party and became its member in the 1920s. During WWII he acted as the party’s representative in the Czechoslovak exile government. Clementis was sentenced together with Novomeský and Husák, and executed in 1952 (Mat’ovčík 2002, 56-57, 142-143, 262-263).

stressed the Slovaks claim of the Czech hegemony. The first one was that the communist rule was exclusively implemented by the Czechs, while the Soviet government played only a supportive role was proven by the last democratic elections in 1946 when the CPC took the majority of votes in the Czech lands but in the Slovak lands the winner was the anti-communist Democratic Party. The second one was that the central governance was in Prague, although Slovaks participated in all levels of the party and the state apparatus (Rychlík 2000b, 193-194). The third, the last and the most important one was the violation of the Slovak national feelings by the mentioned falsification of the SNP, followed by the fact that all Slovak opponents of communism were labeled as Nazi collaborators and separatists, including the aforementioned communist leaders of the Uprising Gustav Husák, Ladislav Novomeský and Vladimír Clementis. This was especially traumatic since this national element was completely absent in the communist clash with the “class enemy” in the aftermath of the war and the Stalinist purges of Czech communists in the 1950s, most famous of which was the trial of the group around Rudolf Slánský²² (Příhoda 2000, 135). Since the Slovak public was only satisfied by the relative modernization endorsed by the regime, it was logical that the intellectual and political elites’ claims during the regime reform period, and triggered by the Hruščov revisionism in Moscow, were for more national rights, or, again, for more “Slovak visibility”.

The Czech and Slovak support for the 1960s reform government led by Alexander Dubček (who is ethnically Slovak), proclaiming the politics of “socialism with a human face” referred to a completely different source. While the main demand of the Czech reform politicians, as well as intellectual elites led by dissidents was democratization, the main claim of the Slovak reform politicians and the party intellectuals, as well as of the smaller circles of the opposition was - federalization. However, the Slovak political and intellectual elites were, including the catholic and democrat factions of the opposition, split on the issue of the national identity-building and federalization vs. democratization. Although the dissident and opposition intellectuals in Slovakia did not have nearly the same influence as the Czech ones, their split in the national identity-building ideology turned out to be very important during the 1990s in Slovakia. The Catholic opposition in the country, led by Ján Čarnogurský and František Mikloško,²³ advocated the same as the reform communists, that is, the recognition

²² Rudolf Slánský, together with other prominent members of the Czech Communist movement Antonín Novotný and Klement Gottwald, belonged to the hard-line unitarists, who led the purges of the Slovak communists in the 1950s (Cohen 1999, 94-95).

²³ Ján Čarnogurský was the son of the prominent HSLP ideologist Pavol Čarnogurský, an MP during the First Slovak Republic 1939-1945. He studied law, and together with František Mikloško became the leader of the

of Slovak national rights, but from a different perspective. They called upon the legacy of the inter-war People's Party (HSLS), seeing the WWII Slovak independent state as the climax of Slovak historical process for national-emancipation. There, they neglect its fascist character, emphasizing instead the antifascism of the party's main, clerical faction led by Jozef Tiso, and stressed economical and cultural growth and prospect of the nation during the independent state. However, unlike the nationalist émigrés, they did not neglect the partial guilt of the regime for the deportation of the Jews. They did not entirely condemn the Slovak National Uprising, seeing it as a betrayal of the state (since some catholic politicians took part in it), but did not see it as a mere expression of the liberal-democratic anti-fascism, but mostly as the non-democratic action orchestrated by the Soviet Union and the Slovak communists (Cohen 1999, 58-69). Although these stances greatly changed during the course of the 1990s, leading to the condemnation of the WWII Slovak state, the Catholics still kept the legacy of the HSLS' interwar concept of Slovak Catholics opposed to the alienated godless western liberal materialism, embodied in the Czechs (Čarnogurský 1997). On the other hand, liberal-democratic dissidents, whose most prominent members were Miroslav Kusý, Peter Zajac and Milan Šimečka²⁴, inherited the ideological legacy of the Slovak pre-war pro-Czechoslovak parties, and connected with liberal dissidents of Vaclav Havel circles in the Czech Republic. They took over the ideology of Czech dissidents, advocating a civic ideology which emphasized the democratic legacy of the inter-war Czechoslovakia as well as Czech and Slovak victimhood of both the black and red totalitarianism, who both fundamentally used the liberal concept of the emancipated free individual. In that vein, they completely condemned the legacy of Tiso's state labeling it as the fascist, and emphasized the legacy of the SNP instead, interpreting it as the anti-fascist movement of all democratic circles of Slovakian elites and people wanting to recreate democratic Czechoslovakia (Cohen 1999, 69-80). Although Slovak liberal dissidents in the 1960s emphasized democracy before the

catholic underground movement called *Tajna cirkev* (The Secret Church) in the 1970s and 1980s, which published various samizdats (Cohen 1999, 58-69).

²⁴ Miroslav Kusý (1931-), a philosopher and publicist. In the 1960s was a professor of the Marxist philosophy on the Philosophical faculty in Bratislava, in 1968-69 a member of the central committee of KSS. At the time of Normalization, he was one of the most notable Slovak dissidents, and one of the initiators of the *Charta 77*. In 1989, he was one of the founders of *Verejnost' proti násiliu* -VPN [Public against violence], the oppositional political movement which got the first elections in the 1990. During the 1990s, he was one of the most notable intellectual to oppose Mečiar's regime. Since 1992, he is a professor on the Faculty of Political Sciences in Bratislava; Peter Zajac is a political publicist and literary scientist. One of the founders of the VPN, later active in various opposition parties during the 1990s; Milan Šimečka (1930-1990), philosopher and literary scientist. In the 1950s and 1960s, he lectured on various faculties in Bratislava. He was persecuted during the time of the Normalization. He was one of the founders of the VPN and its main ideologist. One of the most famous and celebrated foundations for promoting democracy in named after him (*Nádacia Milan Šimečka*) (Cohen 1999, 69-76).

federalization claim, they did, unlike their Czech counterparts, take the Slovak national question into account, looking for a more autonomous position of Slovakia within the federation (Skalnik-Leff 1996, 145). The question of the Slovak nation eventually turned into a dispute between the Czech and the Slovak dissidents in the early 1990s, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

2.1.2 The Communist- Nationalist Identity Building Narrative 1968-1989

The process of building a new national identity master narrative started in the shadow of the liberalization process, not triggered by the opposition, but by the Slovak communists, most notably Gustav Husák. The communist party pushed the democratization process into the foreground while being split into two factions. One faction's concern was best possible democratization whilst the other faction was mainly concerned with the federalization of the country. On one hand, the "democrats" led by the new party's general secretary Alexander Dubček,²⁵ gathering most of the Czech reform faction, were focused greatly on the democratization of the system, without the tendency to overthrow socialism, but to implement "socialism with a human face", taking the one practiced in the Socialist Yugoslavia as their role model. On the other hand, the "federalists", gathered around Gustav Husák, then appointed deputy Prime Minister, pushed the politics of Slovak national identity-building and mostly focused on the rehabilitation of the SNP, whose memory capital "... gave this faction (federalists - S.Ď.) not only credibility, but also emotional potential, certain pathos of the battle for the nation's cause" (Lipták 1999, 194). In his book, *Svedectvo o Slovenskom narodnom povstaní* [Testimony of the Slovak National Uprising] from 1964, published soon after his rehabilitation, Husák established a concept of the SNP as "... the spontaneous and massive people's action, in which workers, peasants and the intelligentsia appeared as the active revolutionary creator of history" (Husák 1968, 111). Therefore, through this interpretation the SNP became the fundamental "historical break", a final moment of people's expression and their will to be emancipated. It was, of course, influenced and exclusively led by communist national-social emancipating ideas. In Husák's narrative the SNP presented a plausible solution to the Slovak national question based on the principles of Marxism-

²⁵ On the other hand, it is incorrect to state that Dubček was immune to the national question. During his leadership the anniversaries of birth of Ľudovít Štúr and Jozef Miloslav Hurban were commemorated, the centennial of Matica slovenská was celebrated in 1963 while in 1964 public commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the Slovak National Uprising took part. See Michalová 1993.

Leninism, against the national ideas of “the right-wing-opportunist forces” (Barnovský 2005, 221) of both the ludaks and the bourgeoisie inter-war parties. Although discrediting the ideologies of the aforementioned parties as the bourgeoisie’s reactionary hegemony reaching its final peak during Tiso’s fascist regime, he recognized the participation of the non-communist groups within the SNP, especially the insurgent uprising of Tiso’s state army. This fact stressed the communist argument about the conflict between the masses and the regime, but also found fertile ground for the upcoming final transformation of the SNP from an uprising of the working masses to an all-embracing national movement. This was done in a way to obtain final validity of the national-communist concept of the SNP “... by which the Slovak people joined the progressive and self-confident nations of Europe” (Husák 1968, 136). Husák contested and opposed then present Czech antifascist factions, both the bourgeoisie and communist ones, depicting them as reactionary due to their non-communist character (Beneš’s government), or simply unitarist (the leadership of the Party prior to the 1960s). This interpretation reached its fully-fledged shape only after 1968, when it became the official interpretation of history, and one of the main pillars of legitimizing the Normalization regime, at least in Slovakia (Hudek 2010, 200-201). This has also been used for the subsequent creation of the cult of Husák and his closest colleagues Vladimír Clementis and Ladislav Novomeský. They were conceptualized as life-long martyrs for the national cause: they were depicted as greatest hard-line advocates of the federal model of Czechoslovakia during the war as well as in the immediate aftermath. Whilst the final communist crackdown on Slovak autonomy in 1948 was exclusively prescribed to the hardliners coup, the faction which finally, due to national causes, sentenced the trio Husák - Novomeský- Clementis to year-long imprisonment in 1952 (Barnovský 2005, 220-221).

Simultaneously, the party leadership’s national-identity building ideas were subsequently nationalized by the contemporary prominent Slovak communist intellectuals- who after the 1968 mostly gained a position of the “national bards” finally completing the national identity-building ideology founded on the notion that “... the national energy of the modern Slovak nation is the outcome of the permanent rehabilitation of our own history” (Števček 1968, 172).²⁶ This rehabilitation of history in the 1960s was mostly focused on the nationalization of

²⁶ The party's most outstanding intellectuals were Vladimír Mináč, Roman Kaliský, Pavol Števček, and L'uboš Jurík. For Mináč, see footnote 30. Roman Kaliský (1922-), journalist; participant of the Uprising. After 1968 was banned from publishing. He made his living as a physical laborer until the 1990s. In 1991-1994, he was the director of Slovak national TV; Pavol Števček (1932-) acted in the 1950s and 1960s as an outstanding cultural journalist. After the 1968 firstly persecuted, but from the late 1970s rehabilitated and got a high-ranking position in the ministry of culture. In the 1990s close to the HZDS, eventually being an mp for the party in 1998-2002 ; L'uboš Jurík (1947-), a writer. Wrote novels legitimating the Normalization period, most famous of which is

the SNP, representing the starting point of the 1970s formation of the concept of the thousand-year plebeian nation, which will be analyzed later in greater detail. Departing from the concept that Slovaks during the war founded "... our own state, not only as fascist, but also Slovak" (Kaliský 1968, 166), they did not interpret the uprising as the emancipation of the folk, but first as foremost as the "... fundamental movement of the nation towards its own ethnical and historical authenticity" (Števček, 1968, 172). Hence, the SNP somehow turned out to be fundamentally devoted to the preservation of the achieved statehood via the political transfiguration of the regime, of course adding to the uprising - due to the political context - the aspiration of the Slovak rejoining with the Czechs, but in the new, federally founded Czechoslovakia (Kaliský 1968, 166-167). The actual political process tending to the final federalization of the state was finally emphasized by an almost heretic argument, that the existence of the Slovak wartime state proved the Slovakian capability to govern themselves (Cohen 1999, 102)²⁷. The neglect of this concept offered a *longue dureé* legitimizing argument for the concept of a united Czechoslovak nation, as is shown previously in this chapter. In a way, to finally legitimize the federalization process, the intellectuals even departed from the official interpretation of the 1950s deformations as the outcome of the Stalinist cult of personality, instead depicting the 1950s neglect of the SNP as the outcome of the country's special path to Stalinism, which tended to suppress the Slovak national identity not primarily due to the contemporaneous Marxist vulgarism, but mostly due to the Czech nationalist unitarism of the party's leadership, and especially of Klement Gottwald and Vladimír Novotný (Števček 1968, 177-180).

It is also important to mention here the parallel historical interpretations of some non-party artists and historians, such as L'ubomír Lipták and Ivan Kamenec, who rose to prominence during the 1960s public space opening. They challenged the official party interpretation of the wartime period by emphasizing the issue of the Holocaust and especially the role of people's collaboration and participation in it. Although becoming quite appreciated in the intellectual circles at the peak of the reform process 1967-68, after the crackdown on

Emigranti [Emigrants] from 1977. In the 1990s acted as the main editor of HZDS publications *Koridor* and *Parlamentný Kuriér*, and as a spokesperson of then HZDS' head of the parliament and today's Slovak president Ivan Gašparovič (Eyal 2003, 120-125).

²⁷ Although in my opinion Shari Cohen has right by pinpointing that "In these arguments, the question of the autonomy existed outside of...the moral character of the wartime regime" (Cohen, 1999, 102), I consider that this concept was gradually developed, achieving its full clarity only in the 1990s by HZDS' ideology, constructed to a great extent by the previous communist national intellectuals.

the Prague spring, they were banned. The red-nationalist politics of history became exclusively dominant in the Normalization period (Cohen 1999, 106-110)²⁸

After Dubček's reforms went too far for the liking of the Soviet communist party leadership, the troops of the Warsaw pact invaded Czechoslovakia in the late August of 1968 and cracked down on the Prague Spring. The liberal policies of Dubček's government were abandoned; however, in the late November of 1968 the national assembly passed the law on the federalization of the country, which came into force by January 1969 and remained there with its amendments until the dissolution of Czechoslovakia in 1992. In April 1969, Dubček was replaced from the party leadership by Gustav Husák, who took over the task of annulling the legacy of the Prague Spring. Here, the Soviet leadership estimated that supporting the politics of Slovak national claims is much more dangerous than supporting the Czech claims for the democratization, which was advocated by almost the whole Czech public. (Rychlík 2000b, 196-197)²⁹. In general, Husák tried to legitimize by implementation of the consumption politics that increased the living standard in the 1970s, especially compared to the one in the 1960s, which, however, failed during the economic crisis in the 1980s. Politically, by constitutional amendments promulgated in the period 1969-1971, Husák recentralized the federation and imposed the official ideology of the 'socialist internationalism'.

However, the Czech public perceived the cracking down on the Prague Spring together with the implementation of the Normalization regime, as a "Slovak betrayal" similar to one in 1938 (Skalnik-Leff 1996, 138-139). The whole Normalization regime was interpreted as the Slovak hegemony, not only because of the fact that the top-party posts were occupied by Slovaks (the most notable two were, of course, Husák, the general secretary, and Vasil' Bil'ak, the minister of interior), but also because the regime was founded on the power of the Soviet tanks, erasing an old historical analogy of Russophile Slovaks vs. pro-Western Czechs. These stances were cemented by a widely spread feeling that the Czechs were also harshly economically exploited by the regime. An example of it was financing of the Slovak

²⁸ This relates to possibly the most celebrated Slovak historical book in the twentieth century, Lubomír Lipták's *Slovensko v 20. storočíu* [Slovakia in the 20th Century], which was published in the 1968, and banned in 1969. The book was rehabilitated in the 1990s and to this day still represents the most profound work of the Slovak twentieth century history. Other significant book is the thematisation of the holocaust in Slovakia written by Lipták's assistant at the time, Ivan Kamenec, *Po stopách tragédie* [Following the Footsteps of the Tragedy], written as his PhD dissertation in the 1970s, published only in 1991, and serving meanwhile as a referring point on the topic of the liberal dissidents (Cohen 1999, 69-84, 108-109)

²⁹ It is interesting that the Soviet leadership implemented the same political tactic in cracking down on both the Hungarian revolution in 1956 and the Prague Spring in 1968. After removing the reformists from the office, the Soviets appointed the most moderate politicians from the conservative faction - Janos Kadar in the Hungarian case and Gustav Husak in the case of Czechoslovakia - to impose hard-line politics.

development by central budget redistributions during the Normalization time, which largely contributed to the state economical crisis in the late 1970s and the 1980s, according to the Czech opinion (Pithart 2000).

Meanwhile, the Slovak public, although satisfied with the economic growth of the country, as with the achieved state autonomy so with the (over)representation of Slovaks in the central government, still perceived it as being “Czech”, simply due to the fact that all the central bodies, the party and the state, were both in Prague (Pithart 2000, 205-208). Although the public was mostly aware of the fruits of the industrialization and urbanization process - which finally made Slovak society catch up with the Czech one, while being completely unconsciousness of the regime crisis in 1989 - the most important legacy of the Normalization period was the final completion of the construction of the Slovak “red-national” national identity-building ideology. It represented the most important turning point in the Slovak national identity-building process, however not only by marginalizing the previously dominant, HSLC based Catholic concept of the Slovak national political thought. In fact, although the dominance of the “red-l’udak” nationalist ideology to some extent contributed to the communists breaking away from the church, it managed to succeed because it finally accomplished the historical goals of the mainstream collectivist Slovak national political thought. Those respectively were the organic national identity building, which followed almost all collectivist patterns of the previous national identity-building project and to which the the collectivist social-economic modernization had been added by the Normalization regime. This is the reason for the dominance of HZDS’ politics in the 1990s Slovakia, who just took over the national identity-building legacy of the Normalization period, with the marginalization of the right-wing parties founded on the ludak legacy of national-political thought.

The Slovakian “red-ludak” (1970s-1980s) national identity-building can be divided into the two main factions, the one made up of writers (“National bards”), and the one comprised of the professional historians. The writers debated the general character of Slovak history, especially contesting the previous party’s dogmatic interpretation of the Slovak national awakening process, as well as the Slovak National Uprising. These issues were most concisely elaborated by Vladimír Mináč, one of the most outstanding Slovak contemporary writers.³⁰ In the second half of the 1960s and the first half of the 1970s, especially in the

³⁰ Vladimír Mináč (1922-1996) became an outstanding writer in the 1950s. His literary work depicted the reality of the Slovak wartime and the post-war time life. In 1955 and 1962 he won the most prestigious literary prize of communist Czechoslovakia, the Klement Gottwald Prize. He was active in the party reformist movement in the

works *To žije národ* [Here Live the People] from 1965 and *Dúchanie do pahrieb* [Blowing in Firebrands] from 1973, Mináč developed a concept of Slovak plebeian history, which he subsequently used for the rehabilitation of the 19th century Slovak national awakening process as well as the Slovak National Uprising.

Approaching the Normalization period, as the era of final Slovak national and social emancipation, he approached history as the "... key, which opens the gate of nationhood, the fundamental precondition of the national existence" (Mináč 1973, 10). In his interpretation, Slovak history does not look as a pure class fight, but is more of the collective martyrdom. "The history of labor, the history of constantly interrupted, but always again victorious labor" (Ibid, 17) understood as peasant's eternal struggle for pure survival, not only enabled the survival of the historically perpetually suppressed and subjugated Slovak nation, but also represented the Slovakian unique contribution to the history of Central Europe (Mináč 1997, 80) as well as for the progress of the world. Since the classical view of history focused on the history of kings, states and glorious battles, Mináč delegitimated it by interpreting the feudal statehood history as pure history of robbery and human exploitation (Mináč 1973, 17-19). He, in fact, switched the classical Šturovite concept of the Slovak historical nation based upon the early medieval history (Great Moravia) for the concept of the Slovak historical nation based upon the history of labor. Consequently, even the Slovak 19th century national awakening process originated from the plebeian character of the nation, i.e. from the national rebellion against the Hungarian hegemony originating from the people's historically authentic feeling for righteousness, "... which forced us, to love our nation." (Ibid, 33-36). To construct such a concept, Mináč firstly refused the concept of the "pigeon-soul" character of the Slovak nation, originating from Herder's influence on Ján Kollár and Pavol Jozef Šafárik, and instead emphasized the parallel myth of the *longue dureé* tradition of the folk rebellions, so called *Janošičenie* that were strongly rooted in the historical memory the folk.³¹ Naturally, all these concepts presented the ground for the further national identity-building, especially to contest

1960s. In 1968-89 he was a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, and 1974-1990 the president of Matica Slovenská, the highest Slovak cultural institution. Although being active in the opposition ecological movement in the late 1980s, he condemned the Velvet revolution in 1989, and continued to be active in politics as the deputy of the communist party in the Czechoslovak assembly 1990-1992 (Červeňák 1997). Since 1992 he openly supported Vladimír Mečiar. In 1998 he was posthumously honored by the I. class Order of Ľudovít Štúr, one of the highest medals of the Slovak Republic.

³¹ Juraj Jánošík (1688-1713) originated from a prosperous peasant family. In 1706 joined the Hungarian uprising led by Ferenc Rákocý. After the breakdown of the uprising Jánošík organized a gang of the road-robbers, however soon the gang was caught and executed. The legend on Jánošík as Slovak Robin Hood took a strong root in the folk culture and with time, becoming even more exploited by communists interpreting Jánošík as a direct predecessor. Besides, Janošik also embodied the people's *long dureé* collective memory of fascination with strong, self-confident individuals releasing the suffering from feudal subjugation (Hlôšková 2005).

the previous hard-line communist interpretation of the Slovak national awakening process and abolition of the Slovak national uprising.

Building on the plebeian concept, Mináč now reinterpreted L'udovít Štúr and the Slovak national awakeners as predecessors of the communist revolution.³² In a way to contest Marx's interpretation of the counter-revolutionary character of Slavic national movements in 1848, Mináč firstly renounced the absolute validity of historical materialist interpretation in the case of small nations whose history is history of survival, and equaled the 1848 alliance of the Slovak national awakeners with the Habsburgs with the outcome of the struggle of the Slovak nation for survival against the Hungarian hegemony (Mináč 1997, 76-84). However, he went much further by depicting 1848 as the result of the progressive, spontaneous uprising of the masses, guided by Štúr's awakeners. It was not only against a nationally hegemonic, but also feudal and reactionary Hungarian revolution, whose final aim was to recover the power of Hungarian feudal ruling classes, and thus continuing with the exploitation of not only Slovak, but also Hungarian peasantry (Mináč 1973, 103-118). In the rehabilitation of the Slovak national awakening process, Mináč emphasized the indivisibility of social and national components in Štúr's national awakening thought (Mináč, 1997, 76-78), concluding that only by the 1944 National Uprising, and finally the installation of Husák's regime, the ideals of Štúr came to be implemented (Mináč 1997, 173). Finally, Mináč emphasized Štúr's idea of Slovakia being a bridge between the east and the west, and mentioned Štúr's Russophilism and his condemnation of the "greedy, materialist West" (Mináč 1997, 80), which has been a *longue dureé* concept used by all Slovak nationalist political factions throughout history, from the 19th century Slovak National Party to the HSLs. Thus the concept was also exploited by the HZDS during the 1990s, as is shown in the following chapter.

After rehabilitating Štúr, Mináč took a step further in the rehabilitation of the "diachronic historical line" of Slovak national-building. In his article, *Povstanie* [The Uprising] from 1973, he upgraded Husák's interpretation of the SNP not only by emphasizing the already mentioned legacy of the Slovak national awakening process but also by the fact that it was founded on the principle of the Leninist national self-determination doctrine, which emphasizes the solution of the national question as a precondition to social emancipation. Moreover, he emphasized the importance of the opponents of the regime being in the state apparatus and "quiet citizens" for the uprising (Mináč 1997, 164, 172). Hence, Mináč

³² It is interesting that Mináč was firstly discredited by the inter-war Czechoslovak and the HSLs' interpretation of the national history. He was especially discredited by Štúr when calling it „rape of the historical truth“ (Mináč 1997, 161-162).

managed to forge a picture of the SNP not only being a massive people's movement, but an all-embracing national movement. Such interpretation of the Uprising was also later appropriated by the HZDS, as can be seen in the following chapter.

Besides the party's prominent writers, there was another national identity-building group, a particular group of mid-level Slovak historians of the time, who in the 1990s mostly took quite prominent posts in the new government.³³ Starting from the late 1970s, they created the historical memory of the early-medieval epoch of the Great Moravian Empire, trying to appropriate it as a moment of foundation of the modern Slovak nation (Eyal 2003, 127). They started by contesting the official interpretation of the Great Moravia as the first common state of Czechs and Slovaks, which remained constant both in the inter-war period as well as in communist Czechoslovakia (Findor 2009, 51-145), by excluding Czechs totally from the Great Moravian history.³⁴ This was followed by prescribing the ruling positions to the Slovaks. This exclusion of the Czechs - symbolically contesting the position of the "lesser brother" in the federation (Eyal 2004, 18) – was also amplified by the 19th century national awakeners' developed concept of statehood and civilization precedence of Slovaks over Hungarians. Moreover, this concept of precedence was then highlighted by appropriating Cyril and Methodius' linguistic legacy exclusively to Slovaks, advocating its later adoption by Hungarians by pointing out Slovak linguistic roots not only in Hungarian names of towns and villages, but also in the noticeable number of Hungarian noble families (Eyal 2004, 13-19). In these claims one can find parts of the historical facts, simply because the pre-modern feudal *Natio Hungarica* was composed of nobility with different ethnic origins. The final aim of these findings was, for sure, to create collective memory strata of both the statehood and nationhood Slovak present-day emancipation from the Czechs and the Hungarians. Finally, the historians built their interpretation of Great Moravia into the Plebeian myth by arguing that the legacy of the empire was preserved in the *long durée* of folk customs of "life and

³³ Matúš Kučera (1932-) is one of the most outstanding historians dealing with early-medieval Slovak history. 1992-1993 he acted as the first minister of education in the independent Slovakia (1992-1993) and afterwards became the Slovak ambassador to Croatia (1993-1999). Kučera edited the Slovak translation of Franjo Tuđman's selected works published under the title *Dejinný úděl národov* [Historical Destiny of Nations]. Dušan Čaplovič (1946-), an outstanding Slovak archeologist, served in the late 1990s as political advisor to the notorious HZDS' minister of culture Ivan Hudec. In 2001 became a vice president of the newly founded nationalist left-wing party SMER, which won the national elections in 2006, when he became the deputy Prime Minister of the Slovak republic. Anton Hrnko (1955-), historian, one of the founders of the far right-wing Slovak national party (SNS), later its vice president and a member of the parliament. Richard Marsina and Ján Dekan are historian and archeologist working at the Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAV) (Eyal 2003, 120-125)

³⁴ The present Czech Republic is consisted of three historical regions – Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia. Bohemia was a centre of the Czech medieval statehood tradition, while Moravia developed a separated regional identity, which is still present nowadays. Slovak historians, like Kučera, argued that the Great Moravia was actually composed of only two ethnic groups, namely of Moravians and Slovaks, and Slovaks were in the dominant position (Eyal 2003, 130).

work". Hence, "... the struggles (with the Czechs-S.Đ.) over the historiography of Tiso's regime and the uprising...become analogous to the struggles over the historiography of Great Moravia" (Eyal 2004, 18-19). Although the latter struggle was not as present in the public as the concept of the Plebeian nation, the struggle of Slovak national awakeners, and the struggles of the SNP (being "possessed" by Husák and the "national bard" Vladimír Mináč together with the group of intellectuals surrounding them). The 1980s extensive archeological excavations of alleged ruins of the Great Moravian civilization throughout the country stole the focus of the public. This brought about the political use of the above mentioned interpretation of Great Moravian history by the nationalist parties in the 1990s, and especially by the HZDS.

The above discussed national identity-building process become accepted by the ruling Normalization nomenclature, by apparatchiks, managers and the technical and humanist intelligentsia, as indicated by Gil Eyal (2003, 93-135). Since the nomenclature mostly kept its positions, especially after HZDS seized power in 1992, the presented national identity-building master narrative was just upgraded by the HZDS' following narrative of the nation and national history, finally serving as powerful means of political legitimizing.

2.2 Croatia: The *longue durée* Cleavage Yugoslavism & (Exclusive) Croatism

2.2.1 The Croatian National Identity-Building Process up to World War II

The first polities of Croatian tribes, known as a white and red Croatia, emerged sometime in the seventh-eighth century, managing to unite into one realm over the course of the next two centuries. Although the territory of the present-day Croatia was contested by both the Frankish and the Byzantine Empire, the early-medieval Croatian princes and kings gradually managed to consolidate the sovereignty of the realm during the tenth and eleventh century. After the last indigenous dynasty perished, Croatia at the turn of the eleventh century, constituted a union with the Hungarian Kingdom, which finally joined the Habsburg Empire in the early sixteenth century. However, Croatia during the course of ten centuries managed to preserve certain autonomy whose bearers were the institutions of the feudal diet called *Sabor* and an appointed viceroy called *Ban*. Croatian autonomy was based on a feudal right backed by the claim that Croatia joined both the Hungarian Kingdom the Habsburg Empire by the willing consent of the *Sabor*; the claim which constituted a cornerstone of the Croatian historical state right doctrine.³⁵ However, during the middle Ages the original territory of the Croatian kingdom - encompassing approximately territory of the present day Croatia plus western and central Bosnia - was rumpled by the Venetian occupation of the southern littoral regions of Dalmatia and Istria, as well as the Ottoman Empire and their conquests of the eastern parts of the territory. Finally, the prerogatives of Croatian autonomy were subsequently disturbed by turning the borderlands of the Ottoman Empire into the Military Frontier (*Vojna Krajina*) under the direct jurisdiction of the Habsburg emperors. The presented status reflected in the medieval name of the kingdom, now called the Triune Kingdom of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia (Banac 1983/1995, 22-45).

Thus, in contrast to Slovakia, the proto-national ideas in Croatia emerged in late-medieval period as a mixture of the ethnic concept based on the Slavic supranational national identity combined with the historic concept of the state right. The former concept was based on

³⁵ Subsequent legal documents constituted the basis of the Croatian historical state right: The *Pacta Conventa* from 1102 where the Hungarian king guaranteed the preservation of the sovereignty of the Croatian kingdom under the Hungarian Crown; 1526 declaration of joining the Triune Kingdom of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia to the Habsburg Empire; so called *Pragmatic Sanction* from 1712 recognizing the right of the female line of the Habsburg family to become heirs to the throne followed by the Emperor's, Charles of Habsburg's, certification on the sovereign prerogatives of the Croatian Kingdom (Banac 1983/1995, 22-45).

tracing Croatian origins directly to the first ancient inhabitants of the Croatian territory called Illyrians, which was created by the appropriation of the legend about three Slavic brothers Czech, Lech and Mech (Russian) exclusively to Croats. According to the legend, the three aforementioned brothers left the ancient Slavic habitat around the Carpathian Mountains and decided to west, north and south, thus founding today's Czech lands, Poland and Russia. Croatian first proto-national thinkers, Dominican Vinko Pribojević and Benedictine Mavro Orbini appropriated the myth by settling the ancient habitat on the territory of Croatia. This is how the first national myth on ancestry and antiquity was constructed; by separating the Croatian *ethnie* wrapped in a broader Slavic context from the Habsburg and the Venetian government. Pribojević's and Orbini's ideas were at the turn of the eighteenth century developed by a lay nobleman Pavao Ritter Vitezović, whose seminal work *Croatia Rediviva* contained a notion of Croatian feudal state right. Since, according to Vitezović, early medieval Croatian kingdom encompassed the territory of the whole of the Balkans excluding Greece, he claimed that the Croatian kingdom after the defeat of the Ottomans should be restored to its presented borders (Cipek 2001). The seventeenth century witnessed the peculiar "career" of Juraj Križanić, a priest, who assuming the sameness of the language and culture of all Slavic nations advocated the unification of Catholic and Orthodox churches for the benefit of Slavic unity. Moreover, Križanić was the first proto-national identity builder referring to the emancipation of all Slavic nations under the auspices of Russia (Banac 1983/1995, 70-75). Vitezović's concept of the state right inspired both Croatian factions of the national identity-building process, while Križanić's concept inspired especially the Yugoslavist faction.

As in the case Slovakia, the idea of the common Slavic *ethnie* subsequently supported by the proto-national idea of the common ethnic origins of the South Slavs was the basis of the 1830s first modern Croatian national identity-building movement called the Illyrian movement, or Illyrians. In a way to counter expanding German and Hungarian national movements, Illyrians out of three spoken Croatian dialects chose the one common to both Croats and Serbs to represent the basis of the standard Croatian language³⁶ (Stančić 2002, 153-171; Korunić 1989). However, the issue of the standard language burdened, from the very beginning, not only the Yugoslavist national identity-building idea, but also the Croatian national identity-building process as well. The leading Slavic philologists Šafárik and Jernej Kopitar labeled only *čakavian* dialect, spoken by the population of littoral Croatia, to be

³⁶ Present day Croats use three standard idioms. Kajkavica, spoken in Central Croatia, but also in Slovenia; Čakavica, spoken in Dalmatia, Istria and the littoral parts of Croatia; Štokavica spoken in Slavonia, the mountain regions of Lika and Dalmatian Hinterlands, but also by Croats in Bosnia, Montenegro and Vojvodina.

authentically Croatian, while *kajkavian* spoken in western Croatia and *štokavian* spoken by the majority of the population were labeled as being Slovenian and Serb influenced. The main contemporary argument of national identity-building was Herder's claim that language represents the very soul of every nation, if it were the case, the Croatian nation would not exist or, at very best, would exist as a small local ethnic community not capable of becoming a nation (Stančić 2007). Croatian Yugoslavists had to turn to the concept of the state right as the only remaining argument to counter the aforementioned concept of language, which was developed by Šafárik and Kopitar and often used by concurrent Serb national identity-builders. The concept was constructed both by Illyrians and their successor the National Party (*Narodna stranka*) led by the Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer and his associate, a priest called Franjo Rački. The concept of the state right developed by Croatian Yugoslavists represented a kind of conciliatory concept between the concepts of exclusive Croatism and the Serb national idea: although recognizing different ethnic communities in Croatia, it advocated the idea of the Croatian political nation. Most popular and most accepted was the Triune kingdom of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia. Even though it might not have been intended by the Croatian Yugoslavist, the idea of the state right enabled development of the Croatian identity separate from the Serb one, especially with respect that this increased mournful objections that Croats and Serbs, due to their history of different cultural and political traditions, form separated nations (Stančić 2007). Indeed, the narrative of the Croatian and Serbian western-eastern cultural and political differences, were, ironically for the first time comprehensively elaborated in works of the leading Croatian Yugoslavist Franjo Rački (Gross 1979), later serving as a backbone argument of Croatian exclusivist national identity-building factions (Gross 1979/1980). However, contemporary Serb intellectual and political elites refused the Yugoslavist idea labeling it as an attempt to disintegrate the ongoing Serb national identity-building process based on a firmly enclosed language based ethnic concept of a nation (Banac 1983/1995, 79-81). The clash of stated parallel national identity-building ideas brought about the weakening of the Yugoslav idea in Croatia in the second half of the nineteenth century and simultaneously the rise of the idea of the exclusivist Croatism.

Unlike the Slovak case and, somehow ironically, in respect to the elaborated Yugoslavist idea, the exclusive Croatian national idea formulated in the 1860s by the Party of the (State) Right (*Stranka Prava*) was not founded on the notion of Croat and Serb linguistic and ethnic differences. Party's charismatic leader Ante Starčević, primarily influenced by the French political ideas, entirely disregarded the concept of an ethnic nation, advocating instead the state-nation idea based on the concept of the state right. Inspired by the works of the famous

French historian Jules Michelet, Stračević and his closest colleague Eugen Kvaternik, conceptualized the Croatian national identity on the idea of the past of the glorious Croatian statehood based on Vitezović's writings. The concept of the glorious Croatian medieval statehood past legitimized not only the claim for independence, but also the subsequent neglect of the very existence of the Serb nation as well as of the pan-Slavist and Yugoslavist ideas labeling them, at best, as illusions hampering the unleashing of Croatian statehood. It is important to explain that Starčević's concept of the statehood right, accompanied by the radical democratic anticlericalism, attracted the majority of the Croatian public, especially the youth and the petty bourgeoisie (Gross 1973; 2000). However, the increasingly tough Hungarian assimilation politics followed by the reconstitution of the Monarchy by the 1867 compromise, produced a similar political impact as in the Slovak case, leading to a transformation of Starčević's original ideas by the turn of the twentieth century. Although the major party's faction called *Frankovci* (for its leader Josip Frank) turned to the conservative right and adopted to some extent an ethnic idea of exclusivist Croatism based upon Catholicism. A minor faction embraced Masaryk's political thought, projecting his liberal idea of Czechoslovak nation onto its counterpart, the Croat-Serb national oneness (*Narodno jedinstvo*) representing a platform for the revival of Croatian and Serb political cooperation at the turn of the twentieth century (Gross 1973, 260-281). As in the Slovak case, the bearers of the politics of national oneness were Croatian students whom Tomáš Masaryk gathered in the Progressive Youth group (*Napredna omladina*) that discarded the state right concept and instead adopted Masaryk's notion of natural rights. Croats and Serbs were still seen as presently separated nations which would prospectively merge (Gross 1969; Zaninović 1958-59).³⁷ At the time, the Serb national master narrative - at least the one forged by Serbian political and intellectual elites - did not embrace any kind of Yugoslavist idea until the interwar period (Banac 1983/1995). To the contrary, the contemporary Czech national integration process needed the idea of the common Czech and Slovak national identity, whereas the Serb one did not need the respective Yugoslav idea. In the nineteenth century, the Serbs won their independent "national homeland", thus focusing primarily on incorporating territories of the Austro-Hungarian Kingdom populated by the Serb majority and within the borders of the Kingdom of Serbia (Banac 1983/1995).

³⁷ It is important to notice that the successors of the Progressive youth known as the Yugoslav Nationalist Youth (*Nacionalistička omladina*) appropriated the idea of the national oneness as the idea of an integral Yugoslav nation. The Nationalist Youth, emerging in the very eve of World War I is significant since it introduced Croatian politics into the "Age of Extremes" becoming a "nursery garden" of later most prominent fascist and communist cadres in Croatia (Banac 2000).

The Kingdom of south Slavs emerged in 1918, mostly due to the effort of the predominantly Croatian southern Slavic political elites on the territory of Austro-Hungary. Similar to the case of the foundation of Czechoslovakia, the Corfu Declaration from the 1917 as well as the Cleveland and the Pittsburg Agreement guaranteed the preservation of national entities in the frame of the future state of southern Slavs. Political strivings of both Croat and Slovak political elites played out in the new states, since the Serbs perceived a new state to present the end of its national emancipation process, which in the case of Serbian political elites has even been perceived as the restoration of Serbian medieval empire (Banac 1983/1995, 91-111). However, the disappointment and emergence of resentment in the case of Croatia was considerably more traumatic than in the Slovak case. Firstly, because the new regime ceased a century-long Croatian political autonomy and jeopardized the Croatian national identity-building much more than the respective process in Slovakia. Moreover, the feeling of political subjugation was subsequently accompanied by a widespread feeling of economic exploitation stemming from the state's economic politics, which seemed to exhaust Croatian much more advanced economic potentials at the expense of Serbia's.³⁸ In the Croatian case, even the expected impact of modernization failed (Cipek 2000), unlike in the Slovak case where the Czech dominance was, however, balanced by the widespread modernization impact of the Prague government policies, especially in the 1920s. The most dominant political faction, in the Croatian case, unlike the Slovak case, focused narrowly on the national question advocated, but instead molded the national and social claims. It was the Croatian Peasant Party (*Hrvatska seljačka stranka- HSS*) led by Stjepan Radić, whose charisma was somewhat parallel to Starčević's, and even more so, since Radić got unanimous support from the Croatian peasantry representing the eighteen percent of the Croat society. A student of Tomáš Masaryk who subsequently got a degree in political science in Paris; Radić was a subtle political ideologist. He was highly inspired by the cultural pan-Slavism, hence adopting the idea of the south Slavic ethnic and linguistic sameness. However, with respect to nationhood Radić stayed firmly focused on the state right identity-building legacy, conceptualizing Croatian and Serb national identities as unalterably separated due to their political and cultural legacies. This is why Radić accepted the program of creating the independent south Slav state almost unwillingly when it became obvious that the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was doomed to disintegrate; otherwise his highest political aim was

³⁸ The exploitative measures included the much higher tax rates on the ex-Austro-Hungarian territories compared to Serbia and much less favorable exchange rate of Austrian Crown for the new Yugoslav dinar in comparison to the exchange rate of the old Serbian Dinar (4:1 in former and 1:1 in the latter case; Banac 1983/1995, 113-123).

Austro-Slavism. Politically, Radić's accompanied the idea of liberal democracy with the agrarian corporatist socio-economic system and wiping out hardly any clericalism, which was obviously the influence of Masaryk's legacy (Cipek 2001). Unlike in the Slovak case, Catholicism became the central concept of the Croatian national identity-building process only during the 1930s, when the assassination of Stjepan Radić in the Yugoslav National Assembly in 1928 followed by the proclamation of the King Alexander's dictatorship cleared a path for the political influence of the Catholic Church in Croatia.

Up to the second half of the 1930s, the Catholic Church in Croatia had quite a marginal position in the Croatian national identity-building process. That position was influenced by the dominance of the national idea based on the concept of the state right separating religion from the nation. The turn of the century witnessed the emergence of the Croatian Catholic movement, which became a prominent political force in Dalmatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina via the aforementioned merging of major faction of the Party of Right and political Catholicism (Strecha 2001). Moreover, the first two decades of the twentieth century marked a period when the Croatian Catholic intellectuals conceptualized a full-blown concept of Croatian national identity based on Catholicism, which took the dominant position during the late 1930s and especially World War II.

The narrative of the Croatian Kingdom as *Antemurale Christianitatis* was developed by the Catholic Church in the medieval period. As in the case of other central European countries that bordered the Ottoman Empire, such as Poland or Hungary, the *Antemurale* narrative firstly conceptualized the medieval Croatian Kingdom as a bulwark of Christianity against Islam. The narrative was then appropriated by the Croatian Yugoslavists as a concept of a bridge, which unifies south Slavs in the form of reconciliation of Catholicism and Orthodoxy (Žanić 2003). However, the *antemurale* narrative contained also a minor narrative of Croatian bulwark against Eastern Orthodoxy, which was cultivated by the legends of early medieval Croatian kings' relationship to the Papacy (Žanić 1995). The Croatian Catholic intellectuals in the first half of the twentieth century appropriated this narrative and connected it to a national question. It was most profoundly explained by Ivo Pilar, the turn of the century Bosnian Catholic intellectual of Croatian ethnic identity. Writing his seminal book on the south Slavic question just on the eve of the foundation of the South Slavic state, Pilar contested the Yugoslav political and national project with the idea of *longue duree* clash of civilizations, the western civilization represented in Croatia and the eastern Byzantine civilization represented in Orthodoxy. Pilar prescribed to Croats the legacy of central European civilization characterized by the German influence of enlightenment and high culture,

stemming from the separation of the Church and the state. This contested the Byzantine civilization, characterized by moral corruption due to the despotic tradition of Russia based on the unity of secular and religious power in the person of the Czar (Pilar 1918/1990). Pilar neglected the Yugoslav idea not only from the perspective of Croat-Serb relations, but also from the broader European context that interpreted the new south Slavic state as a 'Trojan horse' of the Byzantine conquest of Western civilization. He even interpreted Bolshevism not as a revolutionary Marxist political force, but as a new cloak to an old form of Russian despotic expansionism (Pilar 1918/1990; Jančiković 2002; Matijević 2002). Pilar's theses, suggesting "that the 'South Slav Question' was in essence a religious question" (Biondich 2006, 436) become relevant during the 1930s escalation of the Croat-Serb political disputes followed by the introduction of the King Alexander's dictatorship after the assassination of Stjepan Radić in 1928. Although the Catholic Church praised the foundation of the new state of south Slavs, it was getting more frustrated with the subjugated position at the expense of the Serb Orthodox Church acting in fact as the state church. The political situation in the country become especially tense due to the politics of dictatorship and the attempts of trying to put a stop to the south Slavic nationalisms, especially the Croatian one, in the name of regime's politics of a united Yugoslav nationality. These policies slowly brought about a hardening of the state's politics towards the Catholic Church, reaching its peak in 1937 when the harsh public campaign, triggered by the Orthodox Church, caused a failure to sign the Concordat with Vatican. It made the Catholic Church finally abhor Yugoslavism and turn to advocating Croatian nationalism (Perica 2002, 17-21). The Church's final nationalistic turn overlapped with the HSS' convergence to conservative right to gather all Croatian nationalist factions under the party's umbrella and to not only successfully counter royal dictatorship, but also to influence, by similar trends as those in Europe that were characterized by the rise of popularity of not only fascism and communism, all anti-liberal political factions. The dictatorship politics opened the door for the rise in significance of Croatian Catholicism, perhaps best expressed by the rise of the Catholic youth organization Crusaders through the 1930s (Biondich 2007, 388-393; Prlenda 2004). However, the entrance of Catholicism into the mainstream of the Croatian national identity-building process happened during the Concordat crisis in 1937, when the Catholic Church countered the Serb nationalist mobilization triggered by the Orthodox Church by announcing the nine-year jubilee commemorating 1300th anniversary of the evangelization of Croats and their loyalty to the Pope. Although the jubilee - imagined as a nine-year long series of commemorations and pilgrimages to historical sites symbolizing Croatia's century long bonds to the Papacy and

western civilization - was abandoned after the breakdown of Yugoslavia following the attack of axis forces in April of 1941. The narrative of historic continuity of the church-nation symbiosis mobilized a large number of supporters (Perica 2002, 19-21). This became very apparent in the aftermath of August 1939, the agreement of HSS with the Belgrade Court (so called Cvetković-Maček Agreement) brought about a Croatian autonomous political unit called *Banovina Hrvatska*.³⁹ The establishment of *Banovina Hrvatska* brought about the rise of the far-right options pushing for a step further towards independence, and because politics was especially popular with the youth and students this is why it was inclined towards the notorious fascist Ustaša movement. Although the Ustaša movement enjoyed almost negligible support in the Croatian people before the war, it used the unwillingness of HSS to retain the power after the Axis attack on Yugoslavia and under the German Nazi and Italian Fascist auspices that founded the Nazi puppet Independent State of Croatia (*Nezavisna država Hrvatska - NDH*) (Jelić-Butić 1978).

The ideology of Ustaša appropriated, or better yet held hostage, most of the Church concepts of national identity-building, thus discrediting the Croatian Catholic Church during the existence of the infamous wartime Nazi puppet state. The Ustaša movement originally emerged from the main far-right faction of the Party of the State Right, as a pure radical nationalist reaction to the assassination of Stjepan Radić and subsequent proclamation of the King's dictatorship. However, being founded as a terrorist organization in Italy with the support of Mussolini's regime, by the late 1930s, Ustaša appropriated fascist anti-liberal and anti-democratic ideological features to Croatian volksgemeinschaft and corporatist society (Jelić-Butić, 1978). The most important was Ustaša's concept of the Croatian nation, which for the first time in the history of Croatian national identity-building neglected the concept of the state right at the expense of an ethnic-racial concept of the nation. It was forged on the basis of several ideas of Croatian Aryan, non-Slavonic origins, where most dominant one was the idea about the Iranian origin of Croats, who only during the course of history adopted Slavic language and culture. Whilst an elaboration on all of the nuances of Ustaša's racial theory is not included in the scope of this thesis, it is still necessary to state that it served as a differing concept from Serbs, labeled to belong to Asian races similar to Jews and the Roma, thus being physically unsightly and morally corrupt, unlike the Aryan Croats characterized by a harmonious physical appearance and highest dedication to the community and the state

³⁹ Cvetković-Maček Agreement from August 26, 1939 is named after its signatories, former Yugoslav prime-minister Dragiša Cvetković and the HSS leader Vlatko Maček, who succeeded Stjepan Radić after his assassination in 1928. Banovina Hrvatska got its name because of the historical role of the Ban (Viceroy). Banovina comprised mostly of the territory of present-day Croatia along with western Herzegovina.

(Bartulin 2007). This racial argument was supported by the ethnic-cultural concept of the nation, and presented how the Ustaša appropriated a concept previously developed by the Church. More precisely, Ustaša appropriated previously discussed Ivo Pilar's theory of religious-cultural differences of Croats and Serbs (Bartulin 2007, 176), restricting Croats exclusively to Catholicism and Islam, and conceptualizing Croatian history in a teleological image of frontier defenders of the western civilization against eastern, Byzantine, Orthodox, Judeo-Bolshevik invaders (Crljen 1943). Moreover, Ustaša's ideology also emphasized the early medieval allegiance of Croatian rulers to the Papacy as proof of Croats belonging to western civilization from the very beginning, and had shattered only with the establishment of Yugoslavia in 1918 which represented a catastrophic penetration of the culturally inferior and morally corrupt east into the west (Crljen 1943). The founding of NDH in 1941 represents not only the end of a teleological and historical striving for statehood and the following nationalist revolution, which will transfigure society into *volksgemeinschaft* (Cipek 2008), but also a turning point of taking Croatia back to its natural environment and to her civilization.

However, unlike in the Slovak case, the murderous Ustaša regime in NDH was far from Clerical fascism, since it abandoned clerical conservative concepts on society and acted instead as a fascist revolutionary movement tending to forge a new man and a new totalitarian society, which is far from the clerical conservative concepts of piety and corporative subsidiary. Moreover, unlike Tiso's regime, the Ustaša openly adopted a racial theory fundamentally unacceptable to the conservative right (Blinkhorn 1990). The very reason why it attracted quite a lot of low and middle rank clergy to support the Ustaša government and its atrocious politics of the large scale mass extermination of Serbs, Jews, the Roma and Croats in the opposition, was the central position which the Church got in the new state, at least on a symbolic level. As is seen by Mark Biondich, who has definitely written some of the best works on the role of the Catholic Church in Croatia during World War II, "The creation of the Croatian state seemingly and at first glance afforded the Church a significant improvement over its marginal status in the previous decades". The state was also supposed to be an efficient protection against Bolshevism and against the influence of still anticlerical HSS (Biondich 2006, 439). Although some catholic intellectuals and priests joined the Ustaša movement, and even participated in the atrocities, the subsequent politics of forced conversion of the Serbs to Catholicism was undertaken by the regime itself with additional refusal of the high clergy, and especially archbishop Stepinac to participate in it. Stepinac, who was after the war sentenced by the communist regime for the alleged support and agency of the Ustaša's fascist politics, in fact, he had quite tense relations with the leader of the NDH,

poglavnik Ante Pavelić. Furthermore, Stepinac on a several occasions publicly condemned the racial politics of the Ustaša regime however, he never did so it officially. He also could not distance himself from separating the regime from the very state, not seeing the Independent State as a creature made by the Axis forces but as a legitimate national state preferred to Yugoslavia in any form. This is the reason why Stepinac was partly blind to the real nature of the Ustaša regime and understanding the crimes as "... committed within the context of a cruel fratricidal war in which all sides, including the royalist Četniks and the Communist Partisans, perpetrated horrific atrocities." (Biondich 2006, 451). To summarize, the regime, by publicly emphasizing its adherence to Roman Catholicism, managed to deceive the Church and hold it a hostage of Ustaša's politics, bringing about severe persecution of the Church in the post-war period.

2.2.2 Identity and Trauma in the Socialist Yugoslavia

The Ustaša and the Church national identity building process was contested by the partisan movement led by the Communist Party of Yugoslavia (CPY) under the leadership of Josip Broz Tito. During the interwar period, the mentioned party went through the same process relating to the national question as did the one in Slovakia, i.e. following the direction of the Comintern, it switched from the original principles of class struggle and national unitarism in the early 1920s to the gradual recognition of the national question, and finally ending with the program of the South Slav socialist federation based on the Soviet Union model (Banac 1988/1990). Although in 1937 Croatian and Slovenian autonomous branches of the party were founded, the outbreak of World War II and the dissolution of Yugoslavia did not bring about the foundation of the national communist party as was in the Slovak case. Instead, the leadership of the CPY managed to keep the grip over the party's branches⁴⁰ and to establish the overall Yugoslav large-scale antifascist partisan movement presenting its fight as a the people's liberation fight (*Narodnooslobodilačka borba- NOB*) leading towards simultaneous and inseparable national and social emancipation of each and every Yugoslav nation (Ramet 2006/2009, ch.4.). Far from the universalist Bolshevik ideology, the NOB was legitimized first and foremost with a particular ideology of "brotherhood and unity" (*bratstvo*

⁴⁰ There were some tendencies that the Comintern in 1941 pushed for the founding of the separate Communist Party of the NDH in a similar vein as the separate Communist Party of Slovakia was founded following the breakdown of the Czechoslovak state in 1939. Allegedly Tito and the CPY politburo managed to hinder 'separatist' tendencies (Banac 1990/1988, 78-90).

i jedinstvo) which, in the words of Vjekoslav Perica "... emphasized the diversity and distinctiveness of nation's ethnic groups but taught the people...that unity means freedom, pride and prosperity as opposed to ethnic strife, which brings all groups back into poverty and humiliation" (Perica 2002, 100). The "brotherhood and unity" ideology managed to contest competing nationalist ideologies - especially ones of the Ustaša and greater-Serb royalist Četnik movements respectively - by conceptualizing the NOB as the final accomplishment of the history of national struggle of every Yugoslav nation. In the Slovak case as well as in the Croat case this meant appropriation of a previously constructed teleological image of national history, where, unlike the NDH, the NOB was conceptualized to present the end of the thousand year national fight against foreign occupation, which started from the resistance of south Slavic early medieval princes to the Frank and the Byzantine rule. Although the narrative put a great emphasis on the medieval peasant uprisings as direct predecessors to the NOB, it tried to appropriate as much of the whole national identity-building master narrative⁴¹. Consequently, Starčević's State Right idea was presented as a progressive struggle for national emancipation, especially because of his radical democratism and anti-clericalism, while Stjepan Radić's agrarian ideology was interpreted as a particular prelude to the socialist revolution (Cipek 1995; Malešević 2002/2004, 237-259; Koren 2012a, 283-297). The discussed "national-communist" narrative was especially dominant during the early stages of the war to attract ethnic Croats whose participation was far lower than that of Croat Serbs and encourage them to join the Partisans to counter, in a way, the Ustaša's massacres. However, it was gradually suppressed by the Yugoslav perspective as the end of the war was approaching due to a need to legitimize the new and subsequent centrally organized communist government.

Since the new communist government was still witnessing quite strong opposition in almost all of the nations, it consolidated through a combination of large scale Stalinist executions⁴² while legitimizing the founding myth of the NOB and over the course of the

⁴¹ Most emphasized were the 16th century peasant rebellion in Central Croatia led by Matija Gubec and the rebellion of peasants on the island of Hvar led by Matija Ivanić. Since national liberation was in Leninist manner depicted as a step towards social liberation, communist politics of history appropriated the glorification of various Croatian princes, kings and knights, especially if they cooperated with their counterparts in other south Slavic nations in the fight against foreigners (Cipek 1995; Koren, 2012a, 118-154, 278-283).

⁴² The most notorious case was the „Bleiburg Massacre“ named after the small village in southern Austria where the south-Slavic quisling units accompanied by thousands of mostly Croatian civilians surrendered to Tito's army on the 15th of May 1945. During the late May and June 1945 they were executed on a mass-scale level on the "death marches" through Slovenia and Northern Croatia. The total number of Croatian victims by the calculations of a Croatian demographer Vladimir Žerjavić amounts to around 50 000 (Žerjavić 1992, 75-79). This number has been almost consensually accepted by the contemporary academic community on the ex-Yugoslav territories. Simultaneously, the executions represented the base for the construction of the "Bleiburg

following decades using symbolism of the breakup with Stalin, the concept of the self-managing socialism, international politics of non-alignment and finally, the cult of Tito (Sundhaussen 2004/2006; Koren, 2012b). However, the founding myth of the NOB was from the very beginning flawed by its “Manichean” conceptualization. In a way to avoid the process of coming to terms with the traumatic outcome of war, which could jeopardize the party’s authoritarian governance, the NOB was conceptualized on the narrative of an equal share of merit and guilt of each Yugoslav nation. The concept was constructed on the narrative of equal distribution of both partisan fighters and quislings in every nation, where a great majority of every nation supported the NOB, while the quislings were depicted to be almost a negligible minority representing a minor and distant part of each national group (Sundhaussen 2004/2006; Petrungraro 2006/2009, 89-93). The discussed narrative subsequently froze any public discussion about the national question both in the past and the present; the fact being even more dangerous not only from the perspective that the regime hampered the overcoming of the traumatic stories of families whose members had died in combat against or were persecuted by Tito’s partisans (Cipek 2009), but also with respect to the regime’s rather flippant politics of dealing with the crimes of the Ustaša regime making way for the emergence of a unofficial narrative on the collective ‘Croatian guilt’, which eventually exploded with the explosion of Greater-Serbiann nationalism in the course of the 1980s.⁴³ Moreover, the depicted narrative was simultaneously accompanied by the concurrent narrative of the renovation of the Greater-Serbiann dominance stemming not only from the over-representation of Serbs and Montenegrins in both the Party and the State apparatus, but also from the fact that Belgrade was again the locus of highly centralized power (Rusinow 2008a, 132). Above presented authoritarian hindrance of coming to terms with the traumatic past just strengthened the process which Rogers Brubaker (1996, 23-55) named the “institutionalization of ethnicity”, where ethnic nationality became the “obligatory ascribed status”, as is already described in the introductory chapter. Since the institutionalization process made national identity the citizens’ “dominant cognitive perspective on social reality”

Myth”, originally conceptualized by the Croatian Ustaša emigrants and which was during the 1990s transmitted into Croatian politics (Pavlaković 2009a). The content and the political usage of the Bleiburg Myth in the 1990s politics will be discussed in the following chapter.

⁴³ The concept of the Croat guilt stemmed from very inept circumstances of war-victim counting in the aftermath of the war. Namely, the demographic calculation of the number of victims amounting to 1 700 000 was immediately turned into a number of actual victims for the purposes of reparations. Automatically, the number between half a million and 700 000 was derived as the number of victims of the notorious concentration camp Jasenovac representing a symbol of Ustaša's mass-scale terror. Due to the symbolism of Jasenovac, the communist authorities hesitated to downplay the number of the Jasenovac victims. The first escavation from 1964, however incomplete, reached about 60 000 victims on the territory of Croatia. The number was immediately banned from release (Žerjavić 1992, 13-70; Škiljan 2009).

in a context where communist regimes tried to avoid the liberalization and democratization process by merging Bolshevism with nationalism, brought about the fact that all competing political issues were interpreted in terms of the (ethno)-national question (Malešević 2006, ch. 7).

The revival of the national question popped up as the outcome of the regime's liberalization in the 1960s, which took part after the post-war period of highly centralized governance where the status of all of the republics was in fact quite similar to the status of administrative units. The process of liberalization started in the early 1950s following the normalization of the relations with the Eastern Block after Tito's break with Stalin in 1948.⁴⁴ The first wave of modest and very gradual liberalizing measures brought about the renaming of the communist party into the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY) - a trend followed by the branches in every single republic - and mild formal imposition of the self-managing system. However, the real reform process - concerning the issue of national question - started in the late 1950s with an economic dispute between more developed and export-oriented Slovenia and Croatia and less developed and federal budget depending republics such as Bosnia & Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro over the transfers to centrally controlled investment funds (Ramet 2006/2009, ch.5,6). By the early 1960s, a reformist faction gained the upper hand from Tito and the party's main ideologist Edvard Kardelj and triggered both constitutional and economic decentralizing reforms to decrease the power of the federal institutions and to strengthen the self-managing autonomous power of companies. However, in words of Dennison Rusinow the reform "... had indeed decentralized control of the economy, primarily to the republics, but without effective de-etatization. The result was six still almost completely "politicized" republican economies sponsored and promoted by their respective national state-Party apparatus" (Rusinow 2008a, 136). The trend of even further etatization of republics was triggered when the economic reforms were accompanied by the political one, following the 1966 ousting of the head of the secret service and alleged leader of the conservative pro-centralist party faction Aleksandar Ranković. In the Croatian case, the liberalization of the political system, in the League of Communists of Croatia (LCC), brought about the rise of the reformist faction consisted of a predominantly younger generation who did not directly participate in the NOB. Led by Savka Dabčević-Kučar and Miko Tripalo, the liberal faction headed the 1967-1971 reform movement known

⁴⁴ Socialist Yugoslavia during the course of the 1950s gradually established economic relations with the West and achieved one of world's fastest contemporary economic growth rates during the 1950s (Ramet 2006/2009, ch.6).

as the Croatian Spring or the Mass Movement - *Maspok* (abbreviation from *Masovni pokret*-Mass Movement).⁴⁵

The leadership of the Croatian Spring was initially appointed and supported by Vladimir Bakarić, the “party baron” who led the Croatian Communist Party for almost forty years (1944-1983). Educated, ideologically well-grounded and politically very prudent and cunning, Bakarić was very much aware of Croatia’s sensitive position in the federation, brought on not only by the World War II legacy, but also by its actual power stemming from Croatia’s pivotal position, being the second largest republic and the first economic power in Socialist Yugoslavia. This is why Bakarić directed the LCC towards tactful policies of undertaking new initiatives, however siding with Kardelj in reform politics of decentralization and de-etatization. During his stint in government, Bakarić managed to suppress not only all newly formed factions trying to challenge his undisputable power, but also managed to successfully dodge the occasional question of establishing a prospective Serb ‘autonomous’ region on the Croatian territory where Serbs constitute a majority. Bakarić approached such politics from the standpoint that “The question is whether we will be able to win our struggle against nationalism by carrying out our reform. If we do not win it... then the question of nationalism could indeed change from being a question number two into becoming a number one question” (Bakarić in Rusinow 2008a, 137-138). To summarize, his politics of national identity originated from the assumption that republicanism and federalism, however important, are still only means of achieving Marxist ideals, and especially the socialist self-managing system, and implementing them into reality (Jović 2011, 121-128).

Hence, Bakarić to some extent directed and even supported the politics of the liberal LCC’s faction right up to the very end, until - to use his own words - the question of nationalism did not become question number one on the agenda. Although the Croatian Spring Leadership started its politics originally with the claims for further economic and political liberalization in respect to centralized investment funds and foreign currency earnings, decentralization and self-managing system, as well to political liberties, the scope of fundamentally a authoritarian political system hindering democratization and liberalization directed all competing political issues to be expressed in terms of (ethno)-national question, as both Sabrina Ramet and Siniša Malešević aptly presented (Ramet 2006/2009, ch.1); Malešević 2006, 169-177). Similar to the case of Slovakia in the 1960s, the afore-depicted

⁴⁵ *Maspok* was the name which was then assigned to the reformist process, however later it was used mainly by its opponents. The name Croatian Spring was later assigned and used by the supporters of the movement.

politics known as the politics of “fair accounts”,⁴⁶ in the course of the Spring was preceded with the promotion of the national culture, language and history, i.e. to the national identity-building project. The depicted switch was the outcome of the political liberalization process, where the LCC had to compete over legitimacy with groups of intellectuals gathered around the most outstanding institution for promoting national culture *Matica Hrvatska* as well as with the parallel student movement. They somewhat aggressively launched the narrative about the past record of Serbian political and cultural hegemony over Croatia.

As Jill Irvine (2008) nicely elaborated, the national identity-building politics of the LCC's liberal faction in fact drove upon the legacy of Andrija Hebrang, the war time CPC leader replaced in 1944 by Vladimir Bakarić due to the ‘nationalist aberrations’, i.e. asserting the maximum autonomy of the CPC towards the CPY. This tendency was the most obvious in the case of the Croatian Antifascist Council ZAVNOH, which acted as a Croatian partisan parliament in almost full authority to a higher, central Yugoslav antifascist council AVNOJ.⁴⁷ Similarly to Husák and Novomeský, Hebrang was imprisoned in the Stalinist-like purges following Tito's breakup with Stalin- however unlike two former this for the accusations of Stalinism (Banac 1988/1990, 113-117); hence the LCC liberals could not rehabilitate him. Instead, they emphasized the legacy of the ZAVNOH's resolutions for keeping Croatian territorial integrity and sovereignty. Moreover, under the auspices of the LCC the national identity-building legacy of Stjepan Radić was much more strongly stressed than before, while there were even attempts to rehabilitate Croatian mid-nineteenth century *ban* Josip Jelačić, important figure for the national-identity building process, who was condemned by the communists to be reactionary⁴⁸ (Ramet 2006/2009, 302-303). Finally, the liberals also tried to ‘normalize’ relations with the Catholic Church, however unsuccessfully (Irvine 2008).

Unlike the Slovak case, the Croatian case witnessed strong opposition formed outside the communist party. While Bakarić's “whiz kids” (Rusinow 2008b, 139) were obliged to stick to

⁴⁶ The politics of “fair accounts” was predominantly about the issue of the federal control over the foreign currencies earnings which were obtained mostly by Croatian tourism and the remittances of Yugoslavs working abroad (so called “gastarbiters”), who were predominantly Croats. (Rusinow 2008b, 141-142).

⁴⁷ In 1943-44, when the ZAVNOH was preceded by Hebrang, it autonomously promulgated declaration on annexation of occupied Croatian territories, announced the formation of an independent telegraph agency for Croatia and appealed openly against usage of Serbian standard in official documents related to the partisan movement in Croatia. Moreover, he pushed for reduction in the dominance of Serbs in the Partisan Movement in Croatia. As it was comprised by a majority of Serbs joining to defend themselves from the Ustaša's atrocities, the CPY Politbureau became worried about possible negative effects of Hebrang's policies on the Serbs in Croatia. Finally Hebrang got released from the post both due to the nationalist aberrations and disobedience to the centralist party's chain of command (Banac 1988/1990, 90-102)

⁴⁸ While visiting Croatia in the May 1971, Tito was outraged by depicted revisionism of Jelačić and Radić, stressing the unalterability of the party's interpretations of their 'reactionary' historical roles (Ramet 2006/2009, 317).

the stretched but still existing frame of official LCY ideology and phraseology, the intellectuals gathered around *Matica Hrvatska* could move on much more challenging claims. The intellectuals' action started in March 1967 launching the Declaration on the Croatian Language which, assuming discrimination of the Croatian variant of the hitherto officially defined single Serbo-Croatian language, demanded an official distinction between the Croatian and Serbian languages (Irvine 2008). Although the Declaration met with a strong campaign against it by the LCC's new leadership, the signatories were not legally sanctioned, and so were allowed to conduct subsequent national identity-building activities. The most outstanding (re)interpretation of national history was done by Franjo Tuđman, back then the freshly dismissed director of the Institute for the History of the Workers Movement in Croatia due to 'nationalist aberrations'. While Tuđman's ideational system will be entirely explored later in this chapter, here it is simply important to stress that his interpretation of the NOB emphasized the indigenous and autonomous national character of Croatia's NOB thus contesting some contemporaneous Yugoslav People's Army-circles that discredited the Croatian NOB and imposed unofficial and indirect accusations of 'Croatia's guilt' (Irvine 2008, 163; Banac 1992). Building on the wartime legacy of both the NOB and Stjepan Radić, some requested the establishment of a separate home guard national defense force, as well as Croatian application for UN membership. Much more difficult for the system was the narrative on the economic exploitation of Croatia, which went far beyond the LCC's claims, at times sounding nebulous at best, like the claim that the large scale emigration of Croats to western countries as migrant workers in fact presented the preconcerted politics of the Belgrade central government to settle Serbs in place of Croats working abroad; the narrative even included the building of weekend houses by Serbs on the coast.⁴⁹ However, the *Matica Hrvatska* became real challenge for the system when it started to question the righteousness of the Croatian borders and began active nationalization policies by hastily founding new branches in territories of other federal republics which were populated by Croats - especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina- while simultaneously demanding changes in

⁴⁹ The most notable advocates of the depicted narrative were Šime Đodan and Marko Veselica. Šime Đodan (1927-2007) in the 1960s thought political economy at the Faculty of Law in Zagreb. In 1972 he was sentenced at the six years prison. In the 1990 Đodan joined Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) led by Franjo Tuđman, however being quite soon released from the high-rank posts due to the inactivity (Šime Đodan 2013). Marko Veselica (1936-) during 1960s also thought economy at the Economical Faculty in Zagreb. In 1972 he was sentenced at seven years of prison; 1980 he was sentenced again at eleven years due to the interview he gave to „Der Spiegel“. Being hereafter called „Croatian Mandela“, Veselica in the 1990 founded Croatian Christian-Democratic Union (HKDU), which stayed however marginal party. In 2000s he retrieved from political life (Maletić 1993).

the constitutional stipulations which would declare Croatia to be the state of the Croatian nation and the state's citizens⁵⁰ (Ramet 2006/2009, ch.8).

During the Croatian Spring the national question imposed itself as the main question on the agenda. Thus, the LCC was automatically forced to support Matica's policies even more as a way to avoid delegitimization. In this way becoming a particular hostage of the Matica's nationalist demands, the LCC with its unilateral political demands contested the very foundation of the balance of the political system between single republics, thus, turning all of them against the Croatian Party's liberals in the end. Moreover, the LCC's backing of Matica's nationalist claims contesting the very foundations of the brotherhood and unity ideology also made a major part of the Croatian Serbs uneasy by holding to traumatic WWII memories and also found resistance from the partisan war-veteran associations who had already objected to the gradual decentralization of Yugoslavia (Jović 2011, 129-130). Although both Tito and Bakarić supported the liberals until very late since their policies, reaching their peak in the Tenth Session of the LCC in January 1970 represented a counter balance to the still strong conservative-centralist faction, Tito was finally forced by the overall uneasiness over the political situation within the LCY to crack down on the Croatian Spring in December 1971. The resignation of the LCC liberal leaders was followed by a wave of repressions in 1972 and 1973, where around a thousand LCC members were expelled from the organization, while between two and three hundred people were arrested and put on trial (Ramet 2006/2009, 322-329). Tito Simultaneously cracked down on the liberal party's factions in the other republics and switched the ideology back towards a class-based self-management concept, whose final expression was achieved by the new 1974 constitution; however this decentralized even more power from the federation towards the individual republics.

Although the 1974 constitution, followed by the respective constitutions of the individual republics, accepted almost all of the political and economic demands of the ousted LCC liberals (Ramet 2006/2009, 403-406), the post-1971 LCC leadership- appointed from the counter-faction under the auspices of the "eternal" Vladimir Bakarić- did not enjoy any legitimacy, but despite that in the 1970s Croatia had the greatest level of investment of all Yugoslav republics (Jović 2011, 132). Hence, unlike in the Slovak case, after 1971 Croatia entered the so called "Croatian silence", where the new leadership repeated the previously

⁵⁰ During the mid-1971 ongoing debate on amendments on Croatia's constitution the Matica rejected by the LCC proposed amendments defining Croatia as the state of Croatian nation, Serbs living in Croatia and other nationalities, instead claiming that the bearer of sovereignty could be only one nation (Irvine 2008, 164-165).

depicted repression and again imposed Bakarić's ideology of the supremacy of class-based rhetoric over national rhetoric. Even though the post-1971 leadership, in the words of Dejan Jović, differed from the Spring leadership "over the degree of toleration of anti-communist groups, not over the issues of the Croatian position in Yugoslavia" (Jović 2011, 131), the return of authoritarianism often garnished with highly protean class-based rhetoric left a vacuum in national identity politics. Unlike in the Slovak case, the national identity-building vacuum was soon occupied by the Catholic Church, which in 1975 launched the Great Novena jubilee being a nine-year long series of various religious manifestations all together mobilizing few hundred thousand people. In the words of Nikša Spremić (2011, 50-52) the Great Novena presented exclusive ethno-national mobilization where the Church, by remaking the Croatian historical narrative, paved the way for Croatian secular nationalists recognizing the efforts of the church to seize power and subsequently to push towards the creation of an independent Croatian state. The faction recognizing the Church's efforts best was the Croatian Democratic Union (*Hrvatska demokratska zajednica*- HDZ) and its charismatic leader Franjo Tuđman, who according to Spremić, owed his seizure of power to a great extent to commandeering the national identity-building narrative previously developed by the Church.

The grand jubilee of the Great Novena appropriated the late 1930s idea of Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac which had been abandoned due to the onset of war.⁵¹ The aftermath of the war put an end to religious celebrations due to the harsh persecution of the Catholic Church by the new communist government, including the closure of numerous parishes as well the large-scale persecution of the clergy. The Archbishop Stepinac was sentenced in 1946 to sixteen years in prison under the fabricated charge of active support for the Ustaša's regime.⁵² Although the sentence was eventually changed to house arrest, state-church relations remained extremely tensed until the 1960s (Cipek and Spehnjak 2004, 196-197). However, following the Second Vatican Council, the SFRY signed protocol with the Vatican in 1966 guaranteeing the Church unrestricted religious activities while Vatican agreed not to reopen Stepinac's case and also to restrain the Catholic Church in Croatia of any political activity; especially in respect to émigré nationalists (Perica 2002, 35). Thus, during the Croatian Spring the church was extremely careful not to side with neither the LCC liberal faction, the

⁵¹ Stepinac finally triggered the Great Novena celebration in 1940 by commemorating the alleged establishment of first contacts of the Croats and the Papacy in 641 (Spremić 2011, 58; Hudelist 2008a, 42).

⁵² In the immediate aftermath of the war Tito and Vladimir Bakarić pressed Stepinac to declare a national catholic church and to break with Vatican. Stepinac of course refused and was consecutively charged in 1946 for tolerating forced conversions of the Orthodox to Catholicism during the War (Biondich 2006).

Matica Hrvatska nor the students' movement, even secretly. Although the church stayed passive due to the Vatican's policies towards Yugoslavia, it is also true that the Church was highly reluctant to cooperate with any faction of the Croatian Spring due to their overall communist background (Hudelist 2013).⁵³ However, the Church used the political liberalization to introduce a commemoration to the tomb of Archbishop Stepinac in Zagreb's Cathedral, as well to reintroduce the pilgrimage to the national shrine of the Virgin Mary in Marija Bistrica near Zagreb. The pilgrimage, originally launched by Stepinac in 1941, was attended by masses of people in 1972, hence being a sign that the Church had begun to fill up the national identity-building gap stemming from the collapse of the Croatian Spring (Perica 2002, 59-63). Being inspired by the Polish Great Novena of the Millennial jubilee in 1957-1966, a circle of the prominent church intellectuals finally calculated a similar celebration using the pope's proclamation of the year 1975-76 to be the International Year of Mary as a pretext and in 1975 announced the jubilee of "Thirteen Centuries of Christianity in the Croat People" (*Trinaest stoljeća kršćanstva u Hrvata*- Hudelist 2008b). The subsequent years were devoted to praising early-medieval rulers important for the history of the Catholic Church in Croatia: the International Year of Mary was associated with the year of Helena, devoted to the oldest Marian shrine in Croatia allegedly founded by queen Jelena in 976; 1977 was devoted to celebration of the 800th anniversary of the first papal visit to Slavic Lands; 1978 was devoted to praise the King Zvonimir (1076-1088) the first Croatian King crowned by the Pope's envoy; 1979 was devoted to prince Branimir (879-897) interpreted as the one who finally allied the Croatian Polity with the Rome, hence being the continuation of the previous Zvonimir's jubilee (Žanić 1995, 105). Finally 1982-1983 was devoted to the commemoration various historical anniversaries of the presence of Catholicism in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Vojvodina, that is, parts of other federal republics populated by ethnic Croats (Perica 2002, 63-73). The height of the Great Novena was the National Eucharistic Congress at national shrine to the Virgin Mary in Marija Bistrica, attended by four hundred thousand people in September 1984. The congress completely disoriented the LCC leadership at the time who did not know how to handle such massive counter-movement being in fact a sign of the complete delegitimization of the regime by the Church (Hudelist 2008a).

The very 'tool' which delegitimized the post-1971 Croatian communist government was the church's narrative on history, overtly disseminated during the whole jubilee. It tended to

⁵³ One outstanding Church intellectual explained the Church's unwilling to cooperate with the Croatian Spring Movement by stating that the leader of Student movement Ivan Zvonimir Čičak was only declared Catholic laymen of all contemporaneous Croatian secular nationalists (Hudelist 2013, 36).

present the oneness of the national and religious history, hence presenting the church as the only true bearer of the national identity originating from an organic link of the church and the people. In the words of the contemporaneous head of the catholic church in Croatia, the archbishop Franjo Kuharić, “It is the church which lives in their midst and which has been present in all the centuries of this often difficult and painful history so that this church becomes quite simply the soul of that history (Kuharić in Ramet 1985b, 164). This organic link between the church and the nation was forged by the narrative of the unbroken historical continuity of Croatian allegiance to the papacy and hence indisputably belonging to western civilization. Subsequently the previously mentioned symbols of Prince Branimir, Queen Jelena and King Zvonimir was inbuilt into the narrative of indisputable Croatian allegiance to the papacy hence being the strongest ally in preserving the prerogatives of the Croatian medieval kingdom (Spremić 2011, 56-59). The concept of belonging was upgraded by the teleological narrative of the nation’s victimization due to its Catholicism, starting from the early-medieval threat to the kingdom’s sovereignty by the Byzantine Empire stretching through to the early-modern threatening role of the Serb Orthodoxy towards Catholicism in Croatia- where the great migration of Serbs to Croatia following late seventeenth century Habsburg- Ottoman wars were presented as invasion of Croatian territory- finishing finally with postwar communist persecution of the church and especially of the archbishop Stepinac (Perica 2002, 69). The depicted narrative was used to build the latent historical analogies with the present political situation: the narrative on the threat by the Byzantine empire and the Frank Empire was an obvious analogy to the central government in Belgrade, but also to the western block unwilling to recognize Croatian sovereignty, while the narrative on the Popes recognition of Croatian polity symbolized by Prince Branimir and King Zvonimir was a clear analogy to the Croatian right to exercise the highest sovereignty (Hudelist 2008a, 42).

As both Vjekoslav Perica and Nikša Spremić convincingly argued in their writings on the Catholic Church and post-1971 ethno-national mobilization, the Church “thoroughly remade the big stories on Croatian national identity in the period between 1971 and the early 1990s” thus paving the way for the Croatian secular nationalists’ (Spremić 2011, 52). Indeed, the Church was the one keeping the people mobilized for nationalist causes until the eve of the dissolution of Yugoslavia, especially in respect to the fact that the Church was the first Croatian faction contesting late 1980s upsurge of Great-Serbian nationalism. Indeed, the Church was the one speaking quite clearly against Slobodan Milošević’s orchestrated Great-Serbian nationalist mass movement by organizing the celebration of nine hundred years of King’s Zvonimir death in September 1989, when the above exposed narrative on nation was

highlighted once again (Žanić 1995, 108-109). However, the Church did not manage to position itself as the central national identity-builder only due to the weakness of the communist government that was withering away, as Spremić claims following Dejan Jović's main argument contributing to Yugoslav disintegration.⁵⁴ Nor was the Church indigenously strong enough to defeat the regime with the upswing of ethnic nationalism contributing to disintegration of the socialist Yugoslav federation, as Vjekoslav Perica in his seminal book *Balkan Idols* claims (2002). Although both arguments are valid, they should be joined by the already explored argument on the communist institutionalization of ethnicity. The process of leaning communist ideology onto nationalism was especially present from the 1960s onwards in the whole of communist Central and Eastern Europe, as visible in the cases of Poland, Kadar's Hungary, Ceausescu's Romania and finally Husák's Slovakia (Wandycz 2001/ 2004, 294-333; Verdery 1991). After Bolshevik ideology lost its utopian legitimizing potential, latching onto nationalism was the last resort of communist regimes to avoid democratization and liberalization processes (Malešević 2006, ch.7; Harris 2008, ch.4).

Although post-1971 Croatia seems to present a case opposite to the afore depicted general trend at first glance, it does in fact match it. Namely, as Siniša Malešević aptly elaborates, the subsequent decentralization following the 1974 constitution in fact produced a quasi multi-party system of eight competing autonomous parties of individual republics and autonomous provinces, hence opening an even more institutional space than before for competing political issues to be interpreted in ethno-nationalist terms (Malešević 2006, 172-175).⁵⁵ In this respect Dejan Jović's argument that the post-1971 leadership held Croatian interests dear looks quite convincing, especially in the respect that the leadership acted as the "constitution defenders" soon began being suspected of discreetly continuing the 'nationalist' policies of ousted Croatian Spring faction (Jović 2011, 131). In the context where the national question was highly institutionalized, the ethno-national mobilization triggered by the Church turned to be highly successful. Even more, the communist institutionalization of ethnicity constituted a precondition upon which the church managed to compete successfully its communist adversary bounded to ideology of class-based self-management socialism as well to the politics of balance between single republics).⁵⁶ The post-1974 power of the republics'

⁵⁴ In his book *Yugoslavia: A State that Withered Away* Dejan Jović's main argument was that the federation disintegrated to a great extent due to the deliberate and consistent following of the Marxist ideology by the leadership of the LCY (Jović 2003).

⁵⁵ The first one who dared to exploit to the depicted constitutional tool to an utmost end was in fact Slobodan Milošević (ibid.).

⁵⁶ As the contemporaneous chairman of the LCC Commission for Relations with religious Communities stated in the aftermath of Great Novena, the Church activities tended „...to distance the Croatian People from their present

institutionalization and promotion of their single nationality was already visible from the contemporaneous failure to achieve consensus on the common federal core curricula in history and literature education,⁵⁷ as well from the failure of two important federal projects: the third volume of the series “History of the Peoples of Yugoslavia”⁵⁸ and the new edition of “Encyclopedia of Yugoslavia”.⁵⁹ Although the culture and education in Croatia was directed by socialist hardliner Stipe Šušvar, Croatian historians opposed some unitarist-centralist revisions of history launched even before the rise of the Great-Serbian nationalist movement in the mid-1980s.⁶⁰

Hence, the claim that the Croatian ruling party of the 1990s, the Croatian Democratic Union (Hrvatska demokratska zajednica- HDZ) led by Franjo Tuđman, simply took over the nationalist narrative previously developed by the Church- as Spremić claims- overlooks the legacy of the communist national master-narrative on Franjo Tuđman’s national ideology. Originating from a communist background, Tuđman managed to blend communist and non-communist- including the Church’s- master-narratives on nation and to update them successfully into an original and subtle nationalist ideology. Hence, in the final part of this chapter I will elaborate on Tuđman’s idea on the Croatian nation which gradually developed in the course of three decades preceding the fall of the communism and subsequent breakdown of Yugoslavia. Tuđman’s national identity thought came to be very important since the first Croatian president built it into his party’s ideology which to a great extent contributed to such a dominant position for HDZ in 1990s Croatian politics. Instead of simply exposing the morphology of Tuđman’s national identity-building thought, I would rather

national state, the Socialist Republic of Croatia, which is the only representative of the national identity, independence, sovereignty and integrity of Croatian people“ (Zdenko Svete in Spremić 2011, 67).

⁵⁷ The crisis stemmed from how to teach a separate national and common Yugoslav history, especially since the values that textbooks from each single republic reflected upon the content of the common history were different. Hence, as Wolfgang Höpken wisely suggested, the textbooks although not being nationalistic, „did so little to contribute to a political culture prepared for the dangers of ethnocentrism“ (Höpken 1997, 93). Even worse was with the common literature curricula, where the open clashes of republics’ delegations, most notably between the Slovenian and the Serbian, hindered any attempt to define the common core (Wachtel and Marković 2008).

⁵⁸ The “History of the Peoples of Yugoslavia” was LCY’s project hoping to forge a common perspective on the history of south Slavs and hence to contribute to the building of brotherhood and unity. While the first two volumes dealing with ancient and medieval history were released in 1950s, the third volume dealing with the nineteenth century was finally abandoned in the late 1970s due to the clash of historians from individual republics (Banac 1992).

⁵⁹ A similar dispute as over History of the Peoples emerged in the case of the new edition of the “Encyclopedia of Yugoslavia”. Here is worth emphasizing that the entry on the NOB written by Croatian historian and member of the LCC central committee Dušan Bilandžić was refused by Serbian historians due to alleged nationalist bias (Dragovic-Soso 2002/ 2004, 75-76).

⁶⁰ The most outstanding example is the controversial book “History of Yugoslavia” from 1972 exposing the unitarist standpoint on the modern national identity-building of Yugoslav nations, written mostly by Serbian writers (Banac 1992).

elaborate on the course of its development since it would make it more intelligible, especially in respect to the historical context in which Tuđman's thought was forged.

2.2.3 Franjo Tuđman's National-Political Thought

Being an officer in the NOB and later in the General Staff of the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA)⁶¹, Tuđman started to conceptualize his thought on the dispute over the introduction of the Territorial Defense Units (TO) aimed to be bounded to each single republic in the context of the late 1950s. The dispute that originated from the start of the overall decentralization process in the country, eventually triggered a peculiar *Historikerstreit* between the Army's historians, where the "centralist" faction - consisted mostly of Serb military historians - argued for retaining the existing constitution of the army, legitimizing their claim upon the official concept of the single character of the NOB. However, they simultaneously went so far to scale down the significance of ethnic Croat and Slovene participation in the NOB and eventually even prescribed the Croats collective guilt stemming from claims of the wartime enmity of the Croats towards very idea of Yugoslavia as a polity while simultaneously passivity towards Ustaša regime.⁶² Hence, what started as a pure strategic-organizational dispute eventually ended as a question national of dispute.

These in fact Serb nationalist claims were the most openly contested by Tuđman's writings, most notably the books "War against the War" (1957) and especially "The Creation of the Socialist Yugoslavia" (1960). In these books Tuđman in fact bended the official Manichean myth of the NOB by assuming the unavoidable peculiarities of the Partisan movement in each individual republic stemming from the particular historical contexts in which each nation was found itself at the outbreak of the war. Hereafter Tuđman justified the

⁶¹ Franjo Tuđman, PhD, (Veliko Trgovišće, 12.5. 1922- Zagreb, 19.12. 1999). While attending commercial school in Zagreb he joined the CPY. During the NOB Tuđman operated as a political officer in central Croatia. 1945-1960 he worked in the General Staff of the JNA, where he finished the military academy. In 1961, he retired with the rank of general-major and 1961-67 acted as the head of the Institute for the History of the Worker's Movement. Because of his „nationalist aberrations“ he was stripped of the position and released from the Party. In 1972 and 1981 he was tried for nationalism. In 1989 founded the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), ruling Croatia in 1990. 1990-1999 acted as the President of the Republic of Croatia (Sadkovich 2010).

⁶² Against mostly guerilla-like organized partisan troops in Croatia and Slovenia, the centralist faction prescribed the nucleus of the JNA to the foundation of the massive partisan army-like troops around Tito and the NOB leadership in the 1943 in Bosnia. These troops consisted to a great extent of Serbs from Croatia and Bosnia, as well by the Montenegrins. The supporting argument for the centralist politics of history was emphasizing large-scale partisan uprisings in Serbia and Montenegro in July 1941 unlike in Croatia, where the first units appeared only later in this year, moreover in the parts populated by Serb Majority. The syndrome of Croatian Guilt was implied in the book *Yugoslavia in the April War* (Jugoslavija u aprilskom ratu), written by the director of the Military Institute, general Velimir Terzić in 1963 (Hudelist 2004, 233-271).

trend of the gradual and slow rise of ethnic Croat participation in the NOB not only by the fact that the Croats were not directly jeopardized by the Ustaša's terror, but also that considering the inter-war experience the Croats were not prone to support the renewal of Yugoslavia until Tito's Partisans managed to convince them that new a socialist Yugoslavia would bring both Croatian national and social emancipation. Showing how ethnic Croats very soon after the declaration of the NDH distanced from the Ustaša's government due to its fascist character and the Nazi-puppet political status, Tuđman subsequently separated the Ustaša and the NDH Homeguard unit, insinuating the non-fascist character of the latter (Hudelist 2004, 233-271; Sadkovich 2010, 60-68).⁶³

The afore depicted narrative made the Croatian party baron Vladimir Bakarić invite Tuđman in 1961 to take over the newly founded Institute for the History of the Worker's Movement of Croatia, the institution which was in fact supposed to represent the legitimization tool of the contemporaneous decentralization process of the political and economic system headed by Edvard Kardelj and Bakarić. However, in the course of the 1960s Tuđman went far beyond his original writings, developing the peculiar interpretation of WWII in Croatia which inverted the primacy of the class-based concept at expense of the national one. Assuming class and nation to be one and the very same in the socialist society (as would happened during the forthcoming Croatian Spring with the LCC liberal faction), Tuđman now openly labeled the hitherto ultimately condemned 1939 Croatian-Serb agreement to be a positive step towards the solution of the Croatian national question, as well as through a revisionist interpretation of several aspects of World War II. Similar to the Slovak case, Tuđman now developed further nationalization of the Croatian NOB emphasizing its autonomous character where the state-like network of partisan institutions was developed, acting almost completely autonomously towards the central institutions headed by Tito; however supporting it by appointing the NDH regular home-guard troops in reserve of the Partisan combatants (Tuđman 1995a, 80-110; Tuđman 1996a, 201-217; 285-293).⁶⁴ This narrative, supported by highlighting King's Alexander dictatorship to be the cause of the emergence of the Ustaša terrorist movement, represented a milestone of

⁶³ Here is important to stress that both books were harshly depicted to be plagiates by outstanding historian Ljubo Boban, as well by the military historian Fabjan Trgo (Sadkovich 2010, 65-68). However, the issue of plagiarism is not important for the scope of this dissertation, since it approaches Tuđman exclusively as politician and national identity-builder.

⁶⁴ On the Croatian-Serb agreement in 1939 see page 10 of this chapter. The Agreement was depicted by the communist politics of history as the agreement of the Croatian and Serb bourgeoisies against the working classes of the two mentioned nations (Mujadžević 2011) In the Socialist Yugoslavia the inter-war kingdom was in general narrated as the Great-Serb hegemony stemming however from the historically positive act of the unification (Cipek 1995).

Tuđman's later nationalization of the anti-fascist fight. The ultimate point which triggered Tuđman's breaking away from the nomenclature was his downplaying of the official numbers of Jasenovac concentration camp from the 700 000 to vague sum of "tens of thousands", however acknowledging quite rightly that the official numbers would offer a prospective political tool to impose the stigma of a collective guilt on the whole Croatian nation.⁶⁵ Although Tuđman's narrative was partly supported by the LCC's high echelons, especially considering the victim issue, it represented however a harsh challenge to the party's official politics of history, forcing Bakarić to remove Tuđman not only from the post of the director of the Institute, but also to strip him from the Party in 1967.⁶⁶ By then Tuđman's dissident career had begun, lasting more than three decades, firstly in the circles of the Matica Hrvatska during the Croatian Spring, and then as a single writer being sentenced firstly to two years prison in the aftermath of the Spring in 1972 and then also in 1981 followed by the eight years of the ban on printing and public speaking.

During his dissent lasting until 1989 Tuđman developed an overall and subtle nationalist ideology, varying from thematization on the nature of the history of humankind and the relationship of the concepts of national and international, towards a narrative on Croatian history and national identity, finally developing a concrete political program towards gaining statehood. Tuđman's departure from Yugoslavism was grounded in his seminal book "Great Ideas and Small Nations" from 1969 and fully developed in "Nationalism in Contemporary Europe" from 1981. The books assumed that ideas of supra-national integrations like pan-Slavism, Yugoslavism, Czechoslovakism and also "liberal globalism" and socialist internationalism, however idealistic in their conceptualization, always act as a politically legitimizing tool of the imperialism of great powers against smaller nations especially (Tuđman 1996a, 65-77). Hence, as Tuđman later elaborated, the political and intellectual elites of the small nations should throw away the illusions of the aforementioned ideas and to devote themselves wholly to nation and state-building (Tuđman 1981, 1-4). As Tuđman concluded, the concept of nationhood was the very one emancipating small nations from both capitalist and socialist exploitation in Western and Eastern Europe respectively, as shown in the case of socialist Yugoslavia (Tuđman 1989, 10). Far from legitimizing Yugoslav

⁶⁵ In the issue of Jasenovac victims, see footnote 16. Tuđman was acquainted with the 1964 excavation results, and claimed the number of victims on the basis of these results (Tuđman 1995,73-121).

⁶⁶ The claims on the numbers of the Jasenovac concentration camp victims as well as on its political utilization was supported by most of the contemporaneous members of the central committee of the LCC, including Bakarić. However, he considered Tuđman's claims not to be politically lucrative enough to be launched, he also condemned Tuđman's subsequent theses, especially the ones on the 1939 agreement (Mujadžević 2011; Hudelist 2004, 403-449; Sadkovich 2010, 86-97, 147-153).

constitutionalism, the discussed narrative served to develop Tuđman's concept of a Croatian nation based on organic teleology, where he appropriated the concepts of a pre-communist Croatian national identity master-narrative.

Assuming the previously discussed narrative launched by the Matica Hrvatska on the political, economic and financial exploitation of Croatia by the Belgrade federal centre, as well as of the narrative of the suppression of the Croatian language and culture at expense of the Serb language and expression, in his writings from the 1970s Tuđman wrapped it in an overall teleological vision of Croatian history as a thousand-year search for statehood. Assuming Croats to be one of the oldest nations of Europe due to the centuries-long continuity of its historical statehood (Tuđman 1995a, 351), Tuđman marked 1918 to be the “black hole” of the history. Such a historical break was not only related to the abolition of the autonomous Triune Kingdom by the centralist and unitarist inter-war Kingdom, but also to the fact that Tuđman also claimed the continuity of the Great-Serb hegemony in the socialist Yugoslavia, simply mutated to the “bureaucratic centralism” of the federal government (Tuđman 1981, 103-138). Similar to the Slovak case, Tuđman backed his claim with the previously developed concept of the autonomous character of the Croatian NOB, however now openly stating the leading role of Andrija Hebrang (Ibid, 117, 159; Irvine, 2008).⁶⁷ The immediate post-war Greater-Serbiann hindering of Hebrang's achieving statehood during wartime, Tuđman found not only in Hebrang's purge in 1948, but also in the simultaneous neglect of both the historic- and natural-right principle in determining the borders of socialist

⁶⁷ For the wartime Hebrang's policy see footnote 47. After the war Hebrang was appointed as Minister of Industry in the federal government; in 1948 he was arrested for allegedly siding with Stalin; he died under the suspicious circumstances in prison (Banac 1988/1990, 113-117, 120-126)

Here it is important to stress that Tuđman presented Gustav Husak as the Slovak counterpart of Andrija Hebrang, hence depicting him as “the central figure in Slovak national democratic developments”. Tuđman conceptualize Husak as the national savior firstly by asserting how Husak in 1944 “suggested that the best solution was the inclusion of the Slovak republic in the USSR. If however, it was to be included in Czechoslovakia, then this should be a federal and socialist state”, which brought about sentence for bourgeoisie nationalism in Stalinist purges. Tuđman subsequently also stressed how Husak “...before the Soviet intervention, was upbraiding with full justification the most progressive Czech leaders for their conservative, negative attitude towards the national rights of the Slovaks and also criticizing...Dubček for his lack to resolve in breaking with Stalinism.” Meanwhile Husak's role in the Normalization regime was depicted in a tone of deliberate sacrifice when “...he could not even guarantee his Slovakia the federal order which he had long considered a minimum” (Tuđman 1981, 191-193). According Tuđman's statements he was quite close to Husak in the 1960s, even to the extent that Husak payed a visit to Tuđman's home in 1965 during Husak's trip to Yugoslavia (Ibid; Tuđman 1995a, 286-287). It is sure that Tuđman established close relations of the IHRPH with the Historical Institute of the SAV in Bratislava, even presenting in 1964 and 1968 at the conferences of the Czechoslovak and the Slovak historians respectively. Hence it can be assumed that Tuđman was acquainted with the actual trends in the Slovak historiography, especially in respect to the ‘nationalization’ of the SNP for purpose of the Slovak communist national identity-building process.

Croatia in the aftermath of the war (Tuđman 1981, 110-117).⁶⁸ Subsequently elaborating on the sustainability of Yugoslavia solely in a form of a loose alliance of independent single republics due to the inalterably competing character of the Croatian and Serb national identity-building processes- where Serb elites used Croatian Yugoslavism to achieve and subsequently empower dominance over Croatia-, Tuđman supported this political argument by appropriating the previously exposed east-west narrative conceptualized by the church, and most profoundly elaborated on by Ivo Pilar. Hence, Tuđman also prescribed the difficulty of sustaining Yugoslavia as a polity to the intransigent cultural differences stemming from Croatia's millennium belonging to western-catholic civilization in opposition to the Byzantine-orthodox civilization of the Serbs (Tuđman 1981, 140). Assuming given narrative, Tuđman constructed the teleological Manichean concept of Croatian history, where delusive historical faction of the nineteenth and twentieth century Croatian Yugoslavism, stemming from “abortiveness of the national consciousness due to the trendy adoption of contemporary ideas”, were contested to the nation- and state- building faction starting with the early medieval Croatian princes over the medieval feudal diet up to the nineteenth century Starčević’s Party of the Right statehood idea and twentieth century ideas of the Croatian Peasant Party merging the national and the social issue and finally of the Croatian communists acting in the “interest of the Croatian nation and working class”, represented by Andrija Hebrang and the LCC leadership of the Croatian Spring (Tuđman 1995a, 335-336).

Tuđman simultaneously “decanted” this Manichean teleological concept of Croatian national identity history into politics in “The Draft of The Programmatic Thesis on Croatian National and Socialist Movement” from 1977. The Movement was imagined to embody the synthesis of “all positive factions in the social development of the nation” comprised in above depicted statehood teleology, however now supporting it by the subsequent inclusion of “those which in the vortex of World War II sided with the opposition (then partisans- S.Đ.), but from the standpoint of the same struggle for national-emancipation”, excluding followers of the Ustaša ideology (Tuđman 1995a, 335-341). This narrative represents the earliest elaboration on the later idea of Croatian national reconciliation, which in the course of the 1990s will become the core concept of HDZ, and which Tuđman appropriated from the émigrés. It was conceptualized by the notorious commander of the Ustaša concentration camp

⁶⁸ In the case of Serbia, historic principle was taken into account by assigning Kosovo, and natural-right by assigning Vojvodina in 1945 (Pauković 2012, 205). Croatian historic principle was represented by the territory of the Triune Kingdom, encompassing the eastern Sylvania and Boka Kotorska basin, both assigned in the 1945 to Vojvodina and Montenegro respectively. The natural principle would represent parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Vojvodina populated by the Croat majority, encompassing approximately the territories assigned to Banovina Hrvatska in 1939 (Tuđman 1981, 110-117).

system Vjekoslav-Maks Luburić who in the course of the 1950s renounced the Ustaša ideology and assuming the unbreakable historical trend of the Greater-Serb hegemony over Croatia, advocated merging of Ustaša and the communists in the cause of the fight for statehood (Hudelist 2004, 614-620). Subsequently also emphasizing the concept of “Croatian historical and natural borders”, the 1977 Program turns out to be especially significant by representing a peculiar predecessor of HDZ, being initially politically operational in the late 1980s. Namely, back then Tuđman and some Croatian liberal intellectuals visited Croatian émigrés communities in Canada and the US seeking support for their competing projects of Croatian nation and state-building. Tuđman was the one receiving it to a great extent, especially from the right-wing faction gathered around the powerful stronghold of Herzegovina Franciscans in Norval near Ontario, Canada, as well as in Chicago (Hudelist 2004, 581-633) where prominent members of the HDZ right faction would later originate from.⁶⁹ Simultaneously Tuđman developed the national reconciliation concept and related World War II interpretation in detail in the book *Wastelands of Historical Reality*⁷⁰ from 1989, which caused huge controversies due to parts of the book reflecting certain anti-Semitic claims. The *Wastelands* were published on the eve of the final stage of disintegration of the Yugoslav federation preceded by the ongoing 1980s crisis of the economic and political systems accompanied by the simultaneous historical revisionism undertaken by the Serb nationalist intellectuals. In sum, the main issue of this historical revisionism gaining its ultimate expression in the Memorandum of Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts in 1986 was to (re)construct the concept of Serb historical victimization by claiming alleged anti-Serb policies in Tito’s Yugoslavia and re-launching the debate over the Ustaša’s genocidal crimes against the Serbs (Dragovic-Soso 2002/2004, 154-175). Together with the rehabilitation of the Četnik movement, the victimhood narrative represented a powerful legitimization tool for the political outbreak of the Greater-Serb nationalism under the leadership of Slobodan Milošević (Ramet 2002/2005, ch.3).

Although *The Wastelands* seemed to aim primarily to contest the exposed Greater-Serb historic revisionism that tended to exaggerate the number of the Jasenovac concentration camp victims and hence to attach the label of a collective guilt on the entire Croatian nation, the ultimate purpose of the book was to accomplish the final elaboration of the author’s

⁶⁹ Before and during World War II western Herzegovina was the most notable stronghold of far-right Croatian nationalism. Its bearers were the Franciscans becoming notorious for being open advocates of the Ustašas. After the war they established communities in Chicago and in Norval acting as the centers of far right political activities (Perica 2002, ch.7)

⁷⁰ The revised version of the book was published in English in the 1996 under the title *Horrors of War: Historical Reality and Philosophy* (Tuđman 1996c).

political project. Starting with the conceptualization of the history of humankind as an inevitable continuance of interethnic violence over dominance and territory, Tuđman concluded that while ethnic conflicts incite an interethnic hatred, they simultaneously "...lead to the ethnic homogenization of certain nations, to a greater harmony between the ethnic composition of the population and the state borders of certain countries. That can minimize the reasons for new acts of violence and provocation." (Tuđman 1996c, 124-125)⁷¹ If the exposed conceptualization of violence is related to the overtly large role of the Croatian Serbs in the Croatian state-building process from the beginning of their very settling on Croatian territory in the fifteenth century up until the present (Tuđman 1989, 358-363)⁷², the conclusion is self-evident: Croat-Serb future exchanges of populations as a precondition to their harmonic mutual relations, especially the light of Tuđman's praising of the Greco-Turkish populations exchange in the early 1920s stating it to be the preconditions for "the normal national development of both countries" (Tuđman 1989, 147). As Darko Hudelist quite convincingly pointed out in his sometimes bizarre but still quite prudent biography of Tuđman, the first Croatian president appropriated the concept of the exchange from Dominik Mandić, the founder of the previously mentioned emigrant community of Herzegovina Franciscans in Canada and the US.⁷³ Assuming Pilar's concepts on Croats, Serbs and on the very nature of Yugoslav state, Mandić, in the context of the 1939 Croat-Serb agreement, published the book *Croats and Serbs- two Ancient Nations* where the founding of the independent Croat and Serb states on the basis of a prospective agreement over the partition of disputed territories and a consensual exchange of populations (Hudelist 2004, 506-515). Hudelist's theory seems quite plausible since Tuđman developed the concept of population exchange simultaneously with establishing the tight contacts with the right-wing political communities in the US and Canada gathered around the Herzegovina Franciscans.

⁷¹ Tuđman already in his previous book *Nationalism in Contemporary Europe* warned about the "...hardships of those legacies arising from mixed populations the existence of cases of smaller and larger national minorities, all of which is result of the distant conquest campaigns and migrations of the population, and also the long term denationalization rule of foreign parts" (Tuđman 1981, 244), hence adding already back then the ethnic heterogeneity to supranational ideas to represent to be national- emancipation obstacles.

⁷² Tuđman's narrative on the role of Croatian Serbs represented a peculiar counter to contemporaneous Serb nationalist narrative on the few-centuries long oppression of Croatian Serbs by Croatian authorities from the federal diet up to the communist government (Dragovic-Soso 2002/2004, 154-175).

⁷³ Dominik Mandić (1889-1973) was an inter-war head of the Franciscan Province in Herzegovina, being subsequently appointed in Rome as the head representative of all the Franciscan provinces in Slavic countries in 1939. Spending the war in Rome where he advocated strongly against the regime but for saving a Croatian state, in 1945 Mandić organized a successful channel for several hundred common people, but also the instinctual and political elites of the NDH escaping the new socialist government. In 1952 he eventually moved to Chicago, where he became the head of Herzegovina Franciscans in North America (Budak 1990).

However, the most controversial part of the book turned to be the one thematizing World War II, written at first glance as a response to current revisionism of the Serbian nationalist intellectuals. Although the biggest controversy was raised by Tuđman's quite nebulous thematizing of the history of the Jews,⁷⁴ much more relevant from perspective of Tuđman's ideology was the part thematizing the nature of the NDH and the related issue of wartime crimes. Yet again, the background was already discussed in the book *Nationalism in Contemporary Europe*, where in a similar manner as in the case of the Slovak contemporaneous interpretations of Tiso's Nazi-puppet state Tuđman suggested that "... the declaration of an independent Croatia following the collapse of Yugoslavia meant the realization of the goals held dear not only by the radical, separatist current in Croatian political life, but also by majority of Croatian people" (Tuđman 1981, 106). In the *Wastelands* Tuđman incorporated the Croatian Nazi-puppet wartime statehood in the concept of historic synthesis firstly by emphasizing the acceptance of the NDH proclamation by the HSS and finally labeling "... that the declaration of the independent and free Croatian state at first meant the realization of the "centuries-old dream", dreamed by national, but also class revolutionaries", however consecutively backing this argument by stating "increase and resolute" distancing of the Croats from the regime due to its "pro-Fascist, pogrom methods of rule and the handing of Dalmatia over to Italy" (Tuđman 1996c, 349-350). As the most outstanding example of this twofold statehood support/regime condemnation concept, Tuđman for the first time openly emphasized the role of Archbishop Stepinac. It is important to emphasize here that Tuđman appropriated not only the Church's narrative of the archbishop, but also the Archbishop's previously exposed interpretation of the wartime annihilations as the mutual Ustaša- Četnik- Partisan bloodshed perpetrated in the face of war to a equal scale (Tuđman 1989, 375-388)⁷⁵. Thus departing from the far right interpretations of the Ustaša crimes as a radical reaction to the preceding Serb rebellion against the Independent Croatian state accompanied by committing immediate crimes against Croats (Škiljan 2009), Tuđman now neglected completely the singularity of the crimes committed by the Ustaša movement. He achieved it by upgrading his previous elaboration on the nature of Ustaša's genocidal politics to be a peculiar outcome of the inter-war dictatorship by labeling

⁷⁴ In the *Wastelands* Tuđman elaborated on the history of anti-semitism as stemming from the Jewish „anti-nationality“, moreover depicting the Jewish prisoners of Jasenovac concentration camp as taking part in the administration of the camp (Radonić 2012, 167; Goldstein I. 2001a, 600-610). The anti-semitic parts of the book raised a protests in both the Croatian and international public; therefore Tuđman revised his claims on the Jewish issue in the english version of his book *Horrors of the War* (Sadkovich 2010, 264-271).

⁷⁵ It included elaborating on numerous condemnation of the regime by Stepinac on ceremonies, his tense relations with radical factions of the regime and finally numerous examples of saving Jews and Orthodox from Ustasha terror. On controversies over Stepinac and his quite nuanced position see Biondich 2006, 2007.

the Četnik extreme politics to be even more ideologically radical than Ustaša's (Tuđman 1989, 372-375), as well as by stating that Jasenovac concentration camp was not only a death camp, but also a labor camp, adding to it even the alleged privileged position of the Jewish prisoners (ibid, 316-320). Besides that argument about "tens of thousands" of Jasenovac camp victims turned to be very plausible in the light of the final non-partisan demographic research counting the number of victims to around 80 000 (ibid, 335-341)⁷⁶, Tuđman, in general, undertook a revisionist interpretation of World War II similar to Ernst Nolte's in the *Historikerstreit*.⁷⁷ In the similar vein as Nolte, Tuđman wanted to release the Croatian nation from the burden of guilt stemming from the accusations of the singularity of Ustaša's crimes based on particular cruelty of the Ustaša fascist regime.⁷⁸ Here Tuđman especially targeted not only the right-wing emigrants, but even more the offspring of the wartime Ustaša-sided families in Croatia (Cipek 2009, 159-160), since both presented the *condition sine qua non* for Tuđman's envisioned political action based on the national reconciliation platform. It turned out to be of special importance for Tuđman's politics when during the 1990s the right-wing faction provided firstly a huge financial and logistic support for HDZ and finally obtained the arms supply during the war in Croatia (Hockenos 2003, 53-59).

To conclude, during the three decades of writing, Franjo Tuđman's synthetic and subtle national identity-building idea founded on threefold clusters of concepts, where the first one would comprise of thematizing history of humankind as history of unavoidable inter-ethnic wars that will last until the formation of ethnically homogenous polities. Adjacent to the vision of world history, one would be the concept elaborating supranational ideas to present a pure ideological tool of great powers attempt to subjugate small nations, whereas national elites of latter should abandon universal ideas and devote unanimously to a nationalist causes.

⁷⁶ See footnote 42. In the late 1980s two demographers, Serb Bogoljub Kočović and Croat Valdimir Žerjavić independently counted a number of the victims of Jasenovac concentration camp at around 80 000 (Škiljan 2009). This numbers became almost consensually accepted by non-partisan members of both Croatian and Serbian scientific community. It proves to be valid by the recent individual list of the victims done by the Jasenovac Memorial centre, which counted a total number of 83 145 individual victims (List of Individual Victims of Jasenovac Concentration Camp, 2013).

⁷⁷ As mentioned before, Tuđman interpreted both nature of Ustaša's as political movement as well as the terror of the NDH regime being partly caused by the inter-war Greater-Serbian hegemony, where the mass-scale terror he prescribed not exclusively, but to a great extent to represent the answer to the preceding crimes done by the Četnik's. Moreover, he peculiarly labeled Četnik extreme nationalism to be even more radical than Ustaša one. Hence, similarly to Nolte Tuđman tried to contextualize and moreover depict crimes committed by the Ustaša's to represent a "copy", not the original. However, as Fikreta Jelić-Butić showed, in the most comprehensive work on the Ustaša to date, that the first wave of the mass-scale crimes were triggered practically a few days after the NDH was declared (Jelić-Butić 1977, 163-187). Tuđman was even compared to Nolte by German historian Max Ehrenreich (Sadkovich 2010, 267).

⁷⁸ For quite plausible explanation on the causes of peculiar cruelty of the Ustaša's regime see Payne 2006.

The second cluster would comprise Tuđman's elaboration on Croatian history framed similarly, like the Slovak case, as the teleological thousand-year statehood achieving process, with historical breaks in 1918, 1939/41, 1945 and finally 1971, where the first one, unlike in the Slovak case, represents the rupture of the historical state right and also relation with the western civilization, both projected to exist continuously from the foundation of first Croatian feudal polities in the seventh century. The twentieth century is depicted in a similar vein as in the Slovak case: continuity of the great-Serb hegemony over Croatia in the frame of both royal and socialist Yugoslavia, whereas the declaration of the NDH similarly as the declaration of Tiso's Slovakia - besides both regimes being undoubtedly fascist and criminal - represented the symbolic expression of Croatian and Slovak statehood strivings.

Taking the described clusters, Tuđman developed the program of political action on the vision of an all-embracing national movement being exclusively capable to achieve Croatian independence on the basis of subsequent two main pillars: first, the movement should present the synthesis of the nation- and state-building thought, expressed by the legacies of the nineteenth century Party of the State Right, the Croatian Peasant Party and the nationally conscious faction of Croatian communists. Secondly, the movement should achieve national reconciliation, in other words unite the offspring of the Partisan and the Ustaša families in a common struggle against Greater-Serbiannn hegemony, also added to by Croatian Serbs representing the statehood "disordering factor". Finally, the achieved polity should encompass the "historic and natural borders" and be prospectively ethnically homogenous; the status desirably achieved by an exchange of populations.

Exposed clusters of concepts, and especially the concepts of Croatian history and an all-embracing national movement, Tuđman translated into the ideology and political action of the Croatian Democratic Community (HDZ). The late 1980s outburst of the Greater-Serb nationalism led by Milošević finally brought about violent dismantling of Socialist Yugoslavia and the subsequent war in Croatia. In such political context, Tuđman and the HDZ gained and maintained political power in the 1990s to a great extent by legitimizing upon Tuđman's idea of national history and national reconciliation, as will be shown in the following chapter.

2.3 Conclusions

To conclude, both Slovak and Croat pre-1990s national identity-building processes were characterized by resentment nationalism, which Erika Harris finds to be common in the east European national identity-building processes. However, I would add that in the Slovak and Croat case this resentment was also fueled by the historic legacy of the “minor experience” of both countries. This stemmed from the twentieth century resentment of the national identity-building elites and with the failure of Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia to fulfill expected nation and statehood goals. This resentment differed in both countries due to the differing historic legacies of Croats and Slovaks as well as due to the character of the politics in interwar Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. The 1918 abrogation of Croatian historical statehood in relation to very harsh inter-war Greater-Serb dominance when compared to the “Prague centralist” dominance, both politically and economically modernizing over Slovakia contributed to the much more radical extreme nationalist counter-reaction during WWII in the Croat case than in the Slovak. However, both Slovak and Croat World War II Nazi-puppet states brought traumatic historic legacy to both nations. This legacy was used in the post-war period to some extent to curb the national- and state-building processes of the respective nations by their counterpart Czech and Serb elites. This is why, in both cases, the national identity-building master narratives were later dominated with statehood grievances, which in a way tried to absolve both nations of their wartime fascist legacies. The release from the fascist burden was not only achieved through the nationalization of the anti-fascist struggle, but also by the aforementioned interpreting all contesting national factions in a light of a somehow unanimous statehood striving process. Although the discussed narratives were in the Slovak case forged by the post-1968 ruling communist elites and in the Croat case by the post-1971 communist dissidents- most notably by Franjo Tuđman- in both cases the exposed narratives prepared the ground for the later dominance of the statehood striving “national reconciliation” politics. Given these narratives, it is no wonder that in the 1990s, out of all East-central European countries, the serious democratic deficits appeared only in Slovakia and Croatia. Namely, in these two countries the breakdown of the communism and subsequent building of the independent states was dominated by the statehood striving national reconciliation narrative, which was by far best conceptualized by the HZDS and HDZ politics of history. Since both 1990s ruling political factions were not founded as political parties but as political movements, their governing designed the political systems

upon the non-liberal categories of enemy and foe which brought about the subsequent democratic deficits. How HZDS and HDZ managed to legitimize their politics by the national identity-building politics of history - and hence to delegitimize their political opponents - will be elaborated upon in the following chapter.

3 Politics of History and Power in Slovakia and Croatia in the 1990s

As has already elaborated on in the introduction, the 1989/1990 breakdowns of the authoritarian communist regimes pushed the countries of the Soviet block towards the process of transition which Claus Offe depicted as the simultaneous transition of the states towards becoming a liberal-democratic state with multiparty political system and a free market economy (Offe 1991). However, in the case of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia successor states the mentioned triple transition was accompanied by the states independence gaining and subsequent state-building processes. However, out of all East-Central European and Baltic states- expected to represent the most successful transition cases- only in Slovakia and Croatia were the transitional processes especially dominated by the “national question” issue bringing about serious democratic deficits. The primacy of the nation and state-building issues were imposed from the very beginning by the dispute between the elites of the federations’ “major” and “minor” partners over the future constitution of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia respectively: while the Czechs and the Serbs respectively insisted on the further centralization of the federations, the Slovaks and Croats advocated further strengthening of the authorities of the republics, prospectively even leading to a gradual dissolution process. Since both political stances were accompanied by mutual nationally-related grievances, the issue of nation and state-building easily managed to dominate the agendas in Slovakia and Croatia, especially due to the dominance of the “statehood seeking” national identity concepts, as is discussed in the previous chapter. The dominance of the state and nation-building issues with the accompanying democratic deficits are not surprising in the case of Croatia, whose independence-gaining process was accompanied by the brutal war caused to a great extent by the great-Serb politics. Similar trends were present in Slovakia in general terms however they were not so radical and Slovakia gained the independence through the deliberative and peaceful dissolution of the common state with the Czechs, however also brought economic turmoil. Considering the stated, it is wonder that political dominance was achieved by the political factions whose core represented the national identity politics, and hence the politics of history. However, even when both states consolidated the state-building process by the mid-1990s, the “state-founding” HZDS and HDZ respectively despite their semi-authoritarianism continued to dominate, representing the single strongest political factions in Croatia and Slovakia even

after losing power in the late 1990s. The reason for stated political trends can be related to the historical legacy of the national identity-building processes dominated by *longue durree* cleavage between Czechoslovakist/Yugoslavist and exclusive Slovakist/Croatist factions accompanied by the statehood-seeking concept, as is covered in the previous chapter.

Hence, in this chapter I shall elaborate on the nationalist ideologies of HZDS and HDZ respectively, showing how these two political factions managed with their politics of history to gain power. Subsequently I shall show how HZDS and HDZ both managed to delegitimize their political opponents and hence maintain power in spite of the policies which brought about serious democratic deficits, as well as the international isolation of the both countries.

3.1 Politics of History in Slovakia in the 1990s

3.1.1 From “Husakism” to “Mečiarism” The HZDS Rise to Power 1989-1992

The mainstream of the scientific writing on the 1990s Slovakia held the main cause of the nationalist Movement for Democratic Slovakia's (HZDS-*Hnutie za demokratické Slovensko*) seizure of power to be in the hardship of democratic transition. Hence, the HZDS has been usually referred as the most skilful agent in exploiting the turmoil of the transition for its own political ends by offering a mixture of fervent nationalism together with advocating a slowing down of market reform (Mesežnikov and Szomolányi, 1994; Gould and Szomolányi, 1997; Deegan-Krause 2006; Henderson 2006). Subsequently, the party's success is additionally prescribed to the populist charisma of its leader Vladimír Mečiar (Haughton 2005; Baer 2001), while the movement's national identity-building narrative, if examined, is mainly detected as a pure demagogic phraseology used pragmatically to attract voters inclining to nationalism due to the hardship of the transition, but also due to the legacy of the Slovak national identity-building process. Thus, Shari Cohen relates the HZDS dominance to appropriating communist legacies of shaping society without any historical consciousness and thus HZDS refuse to come to terms with totalitarian pasts (Cohen 1999). Assuming Cohen's claim on a lack of ideological commitment, Sharon Fisher in her study prescribes the HZDS success to so called “impure nationalism”, meaning the ideology which “used other messages in addition to nationalism to attract votes” (Fisher 2006, 12). Some studies point the 1990s democratic deficits to the history of the Slovak national identity-building process characterized by clerical rural traditionalism for the democratic deficits of 1990s (Kúsy 1994/1998, Baer 2001). However, the aforementioned argument does not comprehend the national identity building of “Mečiarism”, and so does not comprehend the nexus of HZDS's politics of history and seizure of power, especially in relation to other nationally oriented parties of a much better nationalist reputation than HZDS, such as the Christian Democrats (KDH). What the mentioned studies omit is to see the influence of the national-communist identity building master narrative developed during the Normalization period, which was eventually appropriated by HZDS, and which to a great extent contributed to party's political legitimizing in the course of the 1990s.⁷⁹ As mentioned in introduction, particular

⁷⁹ Here it is important to mention that Vladimír Krivý's study on the voting behavior of the Slovak regions in the 1990s shows overlapping of the regions dominated by the HZDS and the ones dominated in the interwar period

appropriation of the communist national identity building legacies is recognized by Gil Eyal who thus labelled HZDS's identity politics as “preservation of the past within the present (Eyal 2003, 2004). However, even Eyal did not show how the national-communist intellectual narratives depicted in the previous chapter entered the politics and eventually contributed to the successful transformation of Mečiar and his henchmen from liberals to a particular form of nationalists acceptable to majority of the electorate. Hence, in this chapter I will expose the main national-identity building concepts of HZDS, especially in relation to the appropriation of the national-communist identity building eventually enabling HZDS and Mečiar to present themselves successfully as the only “saviors” of the nationhood and the statehood.

The breakdown of the communist system in Czechoslovakia was done by the dissident and the civil society movement which arose in the context of the Gorbachev Perestroika reform process. Following the political transition processes in Poland and Hungary in late 1988- early 1989, the Czech and Slovak dissidents gathered around the core originating from the “Prague Spring” and Charter ’77 forced the Communist Party to resign its power and begin the process of the political and liberal transition of society. In the days between November the 17th and the December the 10th the huge non-violent protests of the people led by the dissidents forced the Communist party to relinquish power and to appoint the first non-communist parliament with Vaclav Havel as the president of the Republic and Alexander Dubček as the president of the Federal Assembly (Žák 2000). The first elections in June 1990 brought about the election victory of the Civic Forum (*Občanské fórum*-OF) in the Czech republic and the Public against Violence (*Verejnost’ proti násiliu*-VPN) in Slovakia. Although the main factions of the both movements originated from the same dissident circles advocating the same goals- transition to the liberal-democratic form of state and an open society- already in the immediate aftermath of the regime change the first dispute popped up concerning the vision for the future constitution of the federation. The Czech side was pushing for a liberal-democratic version of the interwar-like centralized state, while the VPN- although the liberal traditions of inter-war Czechoslovakia and Masaryk’s political thought- was still advocating, however mildly, the more autonomous position of Slovakia within the

by Andrej Hlinka’ nationalistic clerical party of the SLS to a great extent (Krivý et al 1996; Krivý 1997). Although Krivý gives an important insight into the continuity of elements of political culture, his results shouldn’t still lead us to simply reifying measurement as explanation, the tendency which Jan Werner-Müller correctly prescribed to much of political science (Müller 2002, 2).

common state.⁸⁰ Partly, the VPN was pressured into following that political position due to the fact that after June 1990 it formed a coalition government with the conservative Christian Democratic Movement (*Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie*- KDH), which advocated the legacy of the inter-war clerical HSLS party while simultaneously distancing itself from its WWII role. Subsequently, although the liberal Slovak dissidents were handed the main posts in the VPN, it was basically constituted as a broad coalition of the reformed communists gathered in the circle called “Narodna Obroda” led by Alexander Dubček and various heterogenic civil-society oppositional factions. However, in political issues the VPN followed the Czech dissident policies, advocating radical market reforms combined with the opening of the society by the insistence on the politics of the coming to terms with the totalitarian past. Both policies- which also included a strong emphasis on the liberal legacy of the inter-war Czechoslovakia and Masaryk’s thoughts- were seen by the Slovak liberals as the only way to modernize Slovakia by hailing what they perceived as the non-liberal legacy of the Slovak national-identity building processes (Cohen 1999, 125-127; Fisher 2006, 34-40). These policies brought about an immediate cleavage within the VPN, and the subsequent deterioration of the initial support of the electorate due to several reasons.

The first one was related to the Czech-Slovak negotiations on the reform of the common state which started in the immediate aftermath of the Velvet Revolution. Although the 1968 constitution shaped Czechoslovakia as a federal state, with the constitutional amendments 1969-70 the federal states’ political and economical authorities were taken over by the central government (Pithart 2000). In the negotiations, the Czech side was pushing for the strong competences of the federal government over the states ones, while the VPN was reluctant to push for the broader autonomous position of Slovakia within the common state. The VPN’s leadership perceived that the implementation of liberal democracy in Slovakia can be only achieved in the frame of the common state, since “Post-1989 efforts to revive the national issue in Slovakia were perceived by a considerable part of Slovak intellectuals as a danger of a new totalitarian regime” due to the historical memory of the wartime Slovak Fascist satellite state (Findor and Kusá 1999, 605). The second reason in fact originates from the first, since the VPN’s rather hectic policies of pushing the politics of coming to terms with the past

⁸⁰ The first symbolic expression on the reconstitution of the common state had already appeared in March 1990 under the name of „hyphen war“. Namely, the new name was to be the “Czechoslovak Republic”, obviously being the very same as the one of the inter-war republic. The Slovak dissidents objected on the grounds of Slovak visibility, asking the hyphen to be inserted in between words Czech and Slovak. Since the very same name was introduced following the Munich treaty in 1938, it triggered historical trauma in the Czech public. Hence the compromise solution was adopted by passing the new official name to be Czech and Slovak Federative Republic (Žák 2000, 250-251).

produced a cleavage by dividing society along the lines of “good citizens” and the “dark forces”, encapsulating the broad spectrum from the radical nationalists gathered around the Slovak National Party (*Slovenská národná strana*- SNS) to the political, economic and intellectual circles related to the communist nomenclature (Bunčák and Harmadyová 1996c). This radical stance in the promoting of civil society values, which overlapped with the rapid economic decline of the Slovak heavy industry- consisting of the great majority of the Slovak industry- brought about by the rapid economic reforms pushed through by the federal government caused a gradual decline in support for the movement, which began to be publicly visible in late 1990 to early 1991. The gradual decline of the VPN's legitimizing potential was already obvious by the mid-1990s when the various nationalist factions gathered around the SNS organized several public protests, provoked mainly by both the VPN's “soft line” on constitutional politics as well by the movements fervent pushing for policies of coming to terms with totalitarian past, in line with the Czech political agenda of open society politics (Bunčák and Harmadyová 1996b, 100-114). The nationalist protesters accused the VPN of using communist like totalitarian methods in cleansing the state apparatus of the compromised communist cadres, as well as for being simple “puppets” in the hands of the Prague federal government (Cohen 1999, 134-145). The VPN won the first post-communist elections in June 1990 due to their short-term rise of support after people such as Alexander Dubček and Václav Havel appeared at pre-election rallies. When, following the elections, the VPN formed a government with the KDH, the one appointed as the new Prime-minister was none other than Vladimír Mečiar (Fisher 2006, 35). As Marian Leško points out, Mečiar was picked by the leading VPN intellectuals while already while serving as the minister of interior in the first post-Velvet revolution Slovak government where , if anything, Mečiar gained the public reputation of firm and decisive politician (Leško 1996, 36-37).

Vladimir Mečiar originated from the ranks of the reformed communists, and became the minister of the interior in the first post-revolutionary government on the recommendation of Alexander Dubček. Before the revolution, Mečiar worked as a layer in the glass factory, and didn't belong to the high-ranking communist circles that joined the VPN, and so became the minister by pure accident.⁸¹ The starting point of Mečiar's political career was the crackdown on the first anti-VPN demonstrations in March-April 1990, when he stated “To all, who are abusing their ranks, I state an open message: There is enough room in the prisons” (Mečiar in

⁸¹ According to Leško, Mečiar didn't personally know Alexander Dubček, but was recommended by Dubček's close friend as a candidate to government post. Eventually Mečiar was accepted since the new post-Velvet government simply missed personnel with any experience in politics and leadership (Leško 1996, 20-25).

Leško 1996, 28). His political activity built up his public image of the determined executive person who knows how to cope and solve the political problems in the opposition to the other VPN leaders, who started to be perceived as politically incapable intellectuals. That image caused the VPN to appoint Mečiar as the prime ministerial candidate after the elections in June 1990 which the VPN won. Back then, Mečiar followed the VPN's political agenda of coming to terms with the communist totalitarian past, and later the claim for the higher autonomy of the republics in relation to the federal government. Moreover, the successfully constructed image of the "man of action" increased his popularity, making him to be publicly perceived in the public as the right person capable of achieving "Slovak visibility" within the federal state (Leško 1996, 30-37). However, Mečiar back then did not drive farther on the nationalist stream; in the summer of the 1990 Mečiar condemned the joint KDH and SNS initiative to erect a monument of Andrej Hlinka in his birthplace place of Ružomberk, as well as the SNS initiative to erect the plaque of Jozef Tiso in Bánovce nad Bebravou, the small village in a northwestern Slovakia where Tiso served as a priest. Mečiar sharply condemned these actions as "the waking up of the brown totalitarianism" (Mečiar 1990, 2) in spite of the resistance of some prominent VPN members (such as Augustín Marián Húska and Milan Kováč, later of HZDS). Finally, the peak of Mečiar's clash with the nationalist faction was reached over the debate about the "language law" in October 1990. As a response to the open claims of the Hungarian minority for the reaffirmation of their rights partly suppressed under the communism, the government decided to promulgate the Language Law enabling the national minorities the official usage of the minority languages in the minority-dominated areas. As a response the "red nationalist" intellectuals from the Slovak central institution for cultural *Matica Slovenská* (MS) together with the SNS organized large anti-government demonstrations demanding the promulgation of the Language Law which would proscribe Slovak as the only official language in the whole territory of the country. They presented their claims as the opposition to the revival of the "Great Hungarian" politics and for the precedence of the Slovaks in the Slovak territory (Eyal 2003, 171; Bunčák and Harmadyová 1996a), imputing thus the government of treason of the nation. Mečiar's reaction to the demonstrators was radical: he threatened the leaders with arrest, and labelled the demonstrations with fascist tendencies (Leško 1996, 40). However, the large scale of the demonstration seemed to show the lack of the support for the government's policies of national identity, which was expressed in the local elections in November 1990s, when the VPN ceded first place to the KDH, while the SNS also got quite a modest result in the elections. As Gil Eyal greatly remarked, it seemed that the electorate wanted some kind of

“middle course politics” between the VPN federalist, basing its politics on the quick transition to an open market and the legacy of the Czechoslovakism, and the SNS standing for the exclusive anti-Hungarian and anti-Czech Slovak nationalism based on the rehabilitation of the legacy of the First Slovak republic (Eyal 2003, 172; Cohen 1999, 134-142).

The winner of the local elections, KDH, was party driven by the catholic dissidents, whose leader was Jan Čarnogurský whose father Pavol Čarnogurský occupied high-ranking positions in the Slovak World War II fascist satellite state. Although the party distanced itself from the fascist legacy - hence breaking away from the SNS - it kept insisting on the clerical nationalism of the inter-war HSLS. During the 1990s, although being a junior partner in the ruling coalition, the party was building the image of the “national party”, criticizing the VPN's liberal and pro-Czechoslovak ideology, emphasizing instead the concept of the Slovak national identity based on the catholic naturalness and piety of the rural Slovak population. Moreover, they criticized the VPN's federal politics accusing it of “Prague centralism” (Cohen 1999, 58-65, 125-127; Čarnogurský 1997). However, “The critique of the Federation from the position of the Catholic Party...was too close, in terms of field of historic memory to a position vindicating the Slovak fascist state of World War II...” (Eyal 2003, 172). Simultaneously, the KDH legitimacy was subsequently undermined by the fact that they didn't take an open stance against the politics of the contemporary government, which brought about the economic turmoil causing the massive deterioration of the majority of the Slovak heavy industry.

Thus, the opportunity to gain broad political support was placed in the politics of the “middle course” which would be “nationally conscious”, while simultaneously distancing from the “dark legacy” of the Slovak fascist past. That type of “nationalism without the burden of the fascism” had already been developed by the “red nationalists” during the Normalization period, as is shown in the previous chapter. Gathered around the central national cultural institution of *Matica slovenská*, the intellectuals in late 1990 and early 1991 launched the “Initiative for a Sovereign Slovakia” (*Iniciatíva zvrchované Slovensko*) which undertook a huge national-identity building campaign characterized with harsh attacks on the politics of the contemporaneous government, but while simultaneously distancing itself from the far-right. The first claim of the Initiative was so called “Slovak visibility”, i.e. the full recognition of the Slovak nationhood and the statehood within the frame of the common Czech and Slovak state. The claim was comprised of the concept of the “Authentic Federation”, whose starting point would be the full recognition of the 1968 federal constitution, while the ultimate goal would be the recognition of Slovak statehood above the

federal one, especially in matters of foreign and economic policy. Discarding all contemporary political parties as being too partisan to achieve the full recognition of both Slovak statehood and the nationhood, they invoked the necessity of the emergence of a new political force, an all embracing national movement capable to achieving desired goals. In their proclamations the intellectuals also demanded the politics of the elevation of the national-consciousness within the broadest strata of the Slovak population. Of course, the national-consciousness was supposed to be built upon the notion of the national history, i.e. it's peculiar vision of the Slovaks as the “thousand year old nation” whose history is comprised in the teleological process of the “thousand-year search for statehood” (Ferko M. et al 1996, 11-19; Ferko M. 2004, 7-20; Húska 2006)

Indeed, the politics of the intellectuals earned them huge success, expressed by a few massive anti-government rallies in the late 1990 and early 1991 demanding more nationalizing politics and slowing down the process of economic transition. It overlapped with the already mentioned rise of popularity of the KDH, thus expressing the widespread discontent of the electorate by the government's liberal and anti-statist politics. Simultaneously, the government “truncheon” Vladimír Mečiar organized a minor faction within the VPN and started to criticize the politics of the government who's Prime Minister he was, from positions very close to the aforementioned intellectuals. He blamed the policies of “Prague centralism” for all the setbacks of Slovakia and started to advocate the policies of the “authentic federation” and the “social market economy”. While the former implied calling upon the legacy of the 1968 constitution, the later in fact implied the slowing down of the rapid market liberalization and privatization and standing for the Slovak autonomous economic and monetary policies (Haughton 2005, 33-34). In an attempt to discredit Mečiar's rapidly increasing popularity, the VPN leadership pushed the issue of lustration forward trying to prove that Mečiar and some of his followers were agents of the communist secret service (*Štátna bezpečnosť*). The lustration issue was harshly pushed by the new Czech political elites in the immediate aftermath of the revolution, a crucial instrument to implement for the process of coming to terms with totalitarian past. However, from the very beginning the process transpired to have quite an unexpected outcome, since the people eventually targeted were mostly ex-dissidents, in the case of Slovakia those related to the Catholic Church, that is, the ones perceived by the public as the harshest opposition to the communist regime. Such an outcome came about due to unreliable information offered by the secret service files, thus bringing about overall public discontent both in the Czech Republic and in Slovakia, where discontent was subsequently added to by the perception of lustration as being

one more method of the politics of “Prague centralism” (González-Enríquez 2004, 224-228; Bunčák and Harmadyová 1996c). The peak of discontent was reached when in the midst of the fight between VPN’s major faction and Mečiar’s minor group, the spokesmen of Vaclav Havel stated that “It appears as if a new coalition is emerging in Slovakia consisting of reform communists from 1968, contemporary communists, separatists, and people who think of the wartime Slovak state as a golden age in the history of the Slovak nation... (Žantovsky in Eyal 2003, 177). Although Mečiar was eventually forced to resign the post in the march 1991, the whole atmosphere surrounding the issue helped him to successfully present himself and his faction as kind of martyrs fallen in a struggle for 'Slovakness'. The resignation in fact marked the beginning of Mečiar’s winning political career by giving rise to his “savior of the nation“ persona who would preserve the past within the present. The “middle course” between VPN federalists and far-right nationalists made Mečiar’s newly found party, HZDS, by far the strongest party in Slovakia. It became especially obvious in the course of late 1991 and early 1992, when the VPN formed a governing coalition with the KDH, abandoning the post of the prime-minister to the leader of the KDH Jan Čarnogurský. Although VPN thus tried to legitimize itself as the nationally oriented party, the continuation of the strict following of the Prague model of both political and market reforms entirely delegitimized the ruling coalition. As Gil Eyal wisely stated, the path of the economic transition was much more than a narrow economic issue. Namely, for both Czech and Slovaks it was firstly the issue of the symbolic relation to the past, where the Czech shock therapy market model- aiming at the quick dismantling of the Communist system with simultaneous preservation of the competencies of the federation- was perceived in Slovakia as similar to the resurrection of interwar “Prague centralism” (Eyal 2003, 180-181). Since the Normalization period brought about the rapid modernization of Slovakia for the first time in history, resulting in the rapid growth of industrialization, urbanization and hence the living standard (Pithart 2000), the Slovak expectations for the transition process was “the preservation of the past within the present” (Eyal 2003, 180). It was exactly what HZDS offered via the two pillars of its ideology: the concept of the “social market economy” and the concept of the “preservation of the nation” via the all-embracing national movement. They brought about the massive HZDS victory in the elections in July 1992 in the context of the devastated Slovak heavy industry. Subsequently, the image of the savior was only strengthened by the continued negotiations over the federation’s future, where the winner of the 1992 elections in the Czech lands, the neoliberal Civic Democratic Party (*Občanská demokratická strana*- ODS) led by Václav Klaus firmly advocated strong federation competences or the dissolution HZDS’s

“preservation of the past” confederation project. Klaus’s approach to Slovak politicians as “nationalists who were falsely evoking 100-year-old national spirits when they should have been building a liberal civil society” (Žák 2000, 252) subsequently strengthened Mečiar and HZDS “national-statist” image. Namely, HZDS publicly advocated a common state on the legacy of the 1968 constitution, since an open claim for independence was out of the question due to both internal and external reasons. Considering international politics, the European countries, as well the USA and Russia leaned towards the preservation of the common state, and Slovakia could not afford to be seen as the dismantler of Czechoslovakia, if for no other reason than its legacy of the World War II past. Considering internal politics, the poor condition of the Slovak economy together with the overall lack of the trust of the Slovak political elites in the capacity of the country to govern itself hindered the ongoing claim for state independence.⁸² Thus, it could be said that in late 1992 Slovakia was pushed out of the federation by the Czechs. Anyhow, since the gaining of independence happened under the leadership of HZDS, it appropriated the concept of the state-founding party after the thousand-years of Slovaks waiting for independence, which was the one of the main tools in the later legitimization of HZDS's governance.

Hence, when just a little more than a year after gaining independence Mečiar’s government was overthrown by a kind of parliamentary putsch in April 1994, it didn’t mean the start of the final fall of the party, but on the contrary, its ultimate rise. Anchored by the two previously mentioned ideological pillars mediated by Mečiar’s charisma, the HZDS beat the fractious opposition in the early elections in November 1994. Mečiar then decided to take a hold over the party and the state, forming the semi-authoritarian regime during his third and the last government 1994-98, legitimizing it mainly by the discourse of the savior of the state and the nation. For the sake of the truth, HZDS didn’t get an absolute majority in the elections, but was eventually pressed to form the coalition government with the far-right SNS.⁸³ However, the national identity discourses of HZDS and SNS were not so different: both were claiming to be the “national preserver” parties, with the important difference that

⁸² The fact that Mečiar advocated to the very end the preservation of the common state with Czechs can be explained by the mutual agency of several factors. The one is the unwillingness of the international community to the emergence of the new independent states in Central and Eastern Europe due to security reasons. Also, there was a suspicion of both indigenous and international political elites in the institutional capacity of Slovakia to sustain it as an independent state. However, it was not only caused by the institutional non-capacity, but also by the historical legacy of the lack of the confidence in a sustainability of the independent state (See Musil 2000; Deegan-Krause 2006).

⁸³ Mečiar entered the coalition with the SNS only after being rebuffed by the minor successor of the communist party called the Party of the Democratic Left (*Strana demokratickej ľavice*- SDE),. However, he managed to provoke a clash within the SDL thus managing to attract its minor seceded faction which established The Union of the Workers of Slovakia (*Združenie robotníkov Slovenska*, ZRS) (Deegan-Krause 2006).

the SNS was calling upon the legacy of the wartime Slovak state, the one that HZDS condemned. Unlike the openly anti-communist SNS and KDĽ, HZDS's ideology offered the preservation of the "good parts of the past", not only through a program of economic gradualism, but also through the identity politics of national reconciliation, with the aforementioned subtle condemnation of the fascist past. The subsequent important fact which reinforced the legitimacy of the HZDS policies was that all the pressures imposed on HZDS's government from the west due to its democratic deficits, Mečiar managed to present as the continuation of the western historical policies of unwillingness to recognize the legitimate process of the "thousand-year long search of Slovaks for statehood." When HZDS lost the 1998 elections, it happened of course due to the non-democratic politics of the regime, like the criminal privatization process which seriously lowered the living standard, or the criminal actions of the government in the long-standing clash between Mečiar and the state president Milan Kováč (see Fisher 2006) However, it is questionable to what extent the loss of the 1998 elections was a sign of economic discomfort, and to what extent an expression of the electorate's desire for an open society, since HZDS remained by far the strongest single political party in Slovakia until the mid-2000 emergence of a new social-democratic party called SMER-SD (*Smer – sociálna demokracia*; Direction – Social Democracy; Fisher 2006, ch 7,8).

In the second part of the chapter I will discuss the main ideological concepts of HZDS outlined in this introduction, especially how they were implemented while the party was in power.

3.1.2 "Preservation of the Past within the Present": HZDS in Power 1992-1998

Before I analyze the main concepts of HZDS's politics of history, I shall discuss the main concepts of the "Red Nationalist" intellectuals on the nation. They are significant since the pillars of HZDS's ideological concepts of the nation were developed by the intellectuals, and subsequently only appropriated by HZDS (Ferko M. 2004, 20). Finally, it is not strange that the "national intellectuals" - who in late 1990 gathered around "Matica Slovenská" and formed the "Initiative for a Sovereign Slovakia"- later took many of the high ranking positions in the government structures.

As mentioned previously, the intellectuals struck the government with several public memorandums, launched between October 1990 and March 1991⁸⁴, and so overlapping with the series of public rallies taking the part in the context of the clash between VPN leadership and Mečiar's faction. As has already been stated in the previous section, the intellectuals stood for the recognition not only of the Slovak statehood, but also for the passing of the highest sovereign power from the federation to the republics, comprised within the concept of the "Authentic federation". However, and more importantly, the intellectuals stressed that Slovak sovereignty can be achieved only if there "...exists a movement, which connects the nation with its highest interests." (Ferko M. et al 1996, 15), subsequently condemning all existing political parties for the partisanship causing the disintegration of national unity. The invoked national movement was supposed to finish the teleological historical process of the thousand-year search for statehood, which formed the fundamental lens through which the intellectuals formed their national-identity building discourse. The starting point for the intellectuals' politics of history was the national exclusivist reinterpretation of the history of the early medieval empire of the Great Moravia, prescribing it and its Cyrilo-Methodius legacy exclusively to the Slovak ancestors (Ferko M. 2004, 28-32).

However, the complete interpretation of the national history was developed by the early 1990s writings of Vladimír Mináč, the intellectual poet of the Normalization period, whose main ideological concepts were examined in the previous chapter. Although Mináč never joined HZDS, his narrative about the nation and the national history began a line of interpretation which was then taken and subsequently developed on some issues by other intellectuals who joined HZDS.⁸⁵ In fact, Mináč's narrative on the nation and the national history represented a further elaboration of his concept of Slovak "plebeian history"⁸⁶ towards the legitimization of the final achievement of independence. Hence, now Mináč turned to the elaboration of Slovak Twentieth Century History as a way to delegitimize both the "Prague Slovaks" from VPN and SNS from "Tisonostalgia". He departed from neglecting previously

⁸⁴ The most important of them are *61 Krokov k slovenskej identite* [61 Steps Towards the Slovak National Identity] launched in the late October 1990, *Novoročné vyhlásenie* [New Years Eve Proclamation] and *Návrh Deklarácie o štátnej suverénite Slovenskej republiky* [The Draft of the Declaration on the Sovereignty of the Slovak Republic] from March 1991 (Ferko M. et al 1996, 11-19)

⁸⁵ Vladimír Mináč harshly criticized Mečiar while he was the VPN Prime Minister. He started to praise Mečiar by early 1991. Other HZDS intellectuals, including the controversial 1994-98 minister of culture Ivan Hudec praised him as their intellectual father (Červeňák 1997). The importance of Vladimír Mináč's thoughts on the nation is testified by the fact that the SMER's leader and the actual Slovak prime-minister Robert Fico put a memorial plate with Mináč's verses on the Parliament building in 2002 for the tenth anniversary of the proclamation of the Declaration of the Sovereignty of the Slovak Republic Fico (17.7.1992).

⁸⁶ When Mináč was asked why he signed the Declaration of the Sovereignty in July 1992, he answered that he already wrote the declaration twenty years ago in his main writings on the history of the Slovak national destiny (Mináč in Ferko M. et al 1996, 51).

almost consensually accepted interpretation of the interwar Czechoslovakia as the Slovak national savior from the Magyarization process, as well as the political, cultural and economic modernizer of Slovakia. Instead Mináč basically appropriated Andrej Hlinka's grievances of the inter-war Czech government over Slovakia, accusing the inter-war Czech governing elites of the deliberate destroying of the predominantly Slovak craft-based industry as a way to hinder the Slovak national-identity building process. In the same fashion Mináč discussed the contemporaneous state and the societal modernization process, particularly emphasizing that all fundamental national cultural institutions- such as the University, the Slovak National Theatre etc.- were founded with one single aim: to 'Czechisize' the Slovaks. Then Mináč brought a similar argument to the communist period, emphasizing the Czech taming of the Slovak National Uprising legacy, along with the imprisonment of the leaders of the nationally-conscious communist Slovak uprising (Gustáv Husák, Ladislav Novomeský, Vladimír Clementis) (Mináč in Ferko et al 1996, 52). The afore depicted interpretation Mináč stretched the line of the Slovak historical suffering basically up to 1990, equalizing to some extent the alleged Czech hegemony with the Hungarian one. Although his interpretation of the Slovak minor partner position within the Czech and Slovak common state resembles to a great extent the concurrent interpretation of the far right, Mináč highly condemned the Wartime Fascist Satellite State, but not only using the condemnation of the regime. He also took it a step further by challenging the interpretation of the state's foundation as "the lesser evil" in the contemporaneous political context⁸⁷ in a way to entirely delegitimize any far-right revisionism towards Tiso's regime. Mináč simply condemned the proclamation of the Slovak state within the Axis camp as just one more example of the historical elites' betrayal by serving external hegemonies, while the folk were furthermore left alone to struggle for their pure physical as well national survival (Mináč 1993a, 18-24). Along the same lines of argument he subsequently labelled the SNS and other far-right wing factions, accusing them of compromising the Slovak state building by serving international politics not prone to the

⁸⁷ The proclamation of the Slovak independence resembles with its dramatic to some popular detective novel. Following the stipulations of the Munich Treaty from September 1938, which allowed the Nazi Germany to annex Czech Sudetenland region with German majority, the leadership of the HSLS proclaimed the Slovak autonomy in October 1938. Following the further heating up in Czech-Slovak relations which culminated by the attempt of the Czech government to crack down on the autonomy on 9.3. 1939, Hitler called Jozef Tiso for urgent audience on 13.3. 1939 and forced him to proclaim the Slovak independence, which was done by the Slovak parliament on the next day, 14.3.1939. Hitler needed this proclamation in order to be able to occupy Czech lands without starting the war with France and Great Britain, since the stipulations of the Munich Treaty allowed the occupation if Czechoslovakia would collapse due to internal matters. On the other hand, the final aim of major, moderate fraction of the HSLS was not the independence, but the autonomy which would gradually lead to the independence. Tiso decided to undertake the "final step" only after Hitler threaten him that he would otherwise allow Hungary to annex Slovakia. (Lipták 2000b, 154-178)

Slovak independence through the revisionism towards the wartime history (Mináč in Ferko M et al 1996, 52). Finally putting the VPN leaders in the same line of historical betrayal for allegedly harming the people by indisputably serving their Czech masters, Mináč subsequently drew a historical parallel between the contemporaneous hardship of Slovak industry and the Czech interwar politics of the Slovak economic exploitation. The conclusion was obvious: Slovaks are waiting for their specific end of the history of suffering, for the authentic national politician and the all-embracing national movement who would lead the final cutting of the peculiar Gordian knot of the contemporaneous state-building process. According to Mináč, the nation found their savior in the person of Vladimír Mečiar and his Movement, since he was by seen Mináč as the embodiment of the plebeian spirit, characterized by the hard-work, decisiveness and most important self-confidence directed against both Prague and the international hampering of the Slovak state-building, as opposed to the intellectual contemplativeness of his VPN adversaries (Mináč 1993b, 136-140).

Indeed, HZDS immediately positioned itself in “middle course politics”, or to quote Mečiar’s beloved phrase, repeated many times, HZDS was constituted as an “all-embracing peoples movement” [*Hnutie všet’udoveho pohyba*] (Mečiar 1996a) consisting of the “national-democratic, liberal-democratic and social-democratic factions”, supposedly blended in an organic harmonic oneness (Mečiar in Leško 1996, 173; Mečiar 1996b). In fact Mečiar’s words about the factions can be rather understood as the national and state-building thoughts that HZDS was encompassing: the legacy of the Ludovít’s Štúr nineteenth century national awakening movement, the inter-war Hlinka’s People’s party striving for the Slovak autonomy, as well the legacy of the Slovak National Uprising and the subsequent striving of the Slovak communists for national emancipation (Mečiar 1996b; Prvý “Program Hnutia za Demokratické Slovensko“ 2006, 11). Defining HZDS as the all-embracing state-founding national movement in fact made all other political parties redundant to a great extent, since they were perceived at best as the agencies fractioning the nation. Taking over the “Red Nationalist’s” discourse, HZDS delegitimized other parties as traitors of the nation due to their alleged anti-Slovak politics that consisted in serving the foreign centres of power (Slovak liberals), or being directed toward pro-fascist aims (SNS), or simply being too partisan and weak to lead the country towards the independence (KDH) (Mečiar 1996b, 4; Huska in Mesežnikov 1997a, 21). Mečiar and the prominent HZDS members stated very frequently that the historical lack of unity of the Slovak political and intellectual elites was the main reason why national sovereignty hadn’t been achieved hitherto. The stated “lack of unity” was not only related to the historical partisan cleavages of the various political factions

at the expense of the nation, but also often the concept of the historical elite's alienation from the people. It was comprised of the elites serving the foreign centres of power - mainly the Hungarian and the Czech - in the best case scenario due to the lack of the confidence in the powers of the Slovak people to liberate itself through its own agency (Lipták 2008, 46), or in the worse case scenario due to the rejection of the people's "plebeian character" as being seen as something backward (Leško 1997, Mečiar 1998). Hence, the ideology of the movement was anchored in the two clusters of concepts. The first one was related to the past- HZDS was representing itself as the all-embracing national movement which brought about "the end to the thousand-year search for statehood", achieved by bringing about not only the unity of the nation, but also by installing a leadership of the plebeian origins for the first time in Slovak history. The second one was related to the present- the movement managed to finish the process of the institutional state-building, but even more importantly it managed to sustain the state stability through the policies of the "social market economy" aimed to hinder the emergence of "social antagonisms" (Mečiar 1998, 43-44, Mečiar 1996b). It was done through resistance to the 1990s neo-liberal free-market dominance process common for the whole of post-communist central and eastern Europe (Vláda Slovenskej republiky 1992, 7-9), which was interpreted as the deliberate agency of the "western centres of power" to transform the post-communist transitional countries to the economical colonies of the EU (Huska 2006, 60-61). Hence, in the following sections I will elaborate more on the afore outlined national identity-building ideology of HZDS, whose main legitimizing concepts were comprised in the Movement's politics of history.

The main themes of HZDS's discourse on the politics of history is comprised in the book *Starý národ - mladý štát* [Old Nation-Young State], written in 1994 by the prominent nationalist intellectuals Milan Ferko, Richard Marsina, Ladislav Deák and Imrich Kružliak.⁸⁸ Although the book was used as an auxiliary school textbook or as a school reader, its primary purpose was to represent the governing party's national identity-building politics. It was not only notable by the relatively simple-language and condensed overview of the Slovak history from early medieval time to the present, but also by the fact that the book was published by the Slovak National Bank⁸⁹. Moreover, in 1998 the English edition of the book was published by

⁸⁸ Except for Kružliak, others were middle rank cultural nomenclature during the Normalization regime. Milan Ferko and his brother Vladimír were fiction writers, whose literature similarly to Mináč's was devoted to the life of Slovak peasantry approached via the lens of plebeian myth. His nephews Jerguš and Vladimír Ferko were prominent cultural activists of HZDS in the 1990s. On Ferko family see Pynsent 1998. Marsina and Deák worked at Department of History at the Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAV) (osobnosti.sk 2010).

⁸⁹ The first governor of the Slovak National Bank Marian Tkáč was also a prominent nationalist intellectual. Besides being one of the founding individuals of the "Initiative for the Sovereign Slovakia", he subsequently

the Ministry of Culture for the obvious purposes of the international legitimization of Slovak statehood⁹⁰. The book highlights all of the concepts of the party's national discourse: the antiquity of the Slovak nation and its statehood tradition, the thousand-year old Hungarian oppression, the hegemony over the Slovak national identity both during inter-war Czechoslovakia, as well post-war communist Czechoslovakia, and finally the gaining of independence in the early 1990s described as the final resolution of the process of the thousand-year search for Slovak statehood. Due to the mentioned characteristics, I will refer to the book in detail, adding to its various thematic sections writings from other sources which subsequently highlight the party's politics of history.

The first concept was of the primordial "chosen people" already justified by settling the country which is the centre of Europe, hence "having the rest of the world as the frame of the reference" (Ferko M. et al. 1998, 5). As mentioned in the previous chapter, the appropriation of the Great Moravia to the Slovaks was first done by the Nineteenth century National-Awakening movement. This historical construction was aimed to counter the concurrent Hungarian national-identity building narrative of Slovaks as the peasant crowd with neither statehood nor nationhood, as well the Czech narrative of Slovak inferiority being one of the main concepts for legitimizing the creation of Czechoslovak nation (see Pichler 1999; Zajac 1999). However, the book is interesting because it pares back and simplifies the concepts of ancient Slovaks as the founders of the first state and the highest culture in the territory of present-day Slovakia very narrowly. The claim of the Slovaks as the founders and leading strata of the early medieval great Moravia is justified by the narrative of how prince Svätopluk, one of the prominent great Moravia leaders, conquered the Czech territories and established vassal Czech duchy (Ferko M. et. all 1998, 36; Ferko 1997 28-29), and moreover nicely elaborated by the narration of the later disintegration of the empire after Svätopluk's death: "The subordinate tribes used the disunity of the Svätopluk heirs to free themselves from a disliked yoke. First the Czechs freed themselves... Then the Poles, Silesians, Lusatians and others broke away" (Ferko M. et all 1998, 44-45). As Andrej Findor nicely shows, the appropriation of the legacy of St. Cyril and Methodius to the Slovaks constructed the concept of Slovak superiority (Findor 2002). The concept was constructed not only by stressing how Slovaks gave the other ruled nations the Slavonic literary language "at the time when other

dealt with elaborating on the historical foundations of the Slovak economy, going so far to appropriate Ludovít Štur to as the founder of the modern Slovak banking (Pynsent 1998, 281).

⁹⁰ As the contemporaneous director of the press office of the Ministry of Culture stated in the short introduction, the book is intended to refute the internationally widespread opinion that Slovak state "...sprang into being out of the blue, not as a result of a historical process and an effort at emancipation of an old European people with a time-honoured culture, but as an artificial attempt at pernicious separation" (Ferko M. et all 1998, 4).

nations used only Latin” but also by labeling the Cyril and Methodius legacy as one of the origins of the present-day European culture which presented the Slovaks as “a century ahead of their time” (Ferko M. et al. 1998, 42). The notion of the Slovaks as the “chosen people” (A. Smith) is even more emphasized in the case of Hungarians, where the old interpretation of the Slovaks civilizing the Hungarian is even more notable by its European-wide framing:

If the Magyars wanted or had to give up their nomadic way of life, they had to learn to farm, weave cloth, build houses, fortresses, bridges and churches. Yes, learn, but who from? From their nearest neighbors, the inhabitants of Svätopluk’s former empire, in the territory where they lived. That empire was excellently organized.... It's merchants were equally welcome on the shores of the Black sea, the Baltic and Adriatic. They were faithful to the land, and to the faith which was the faith of the whole of rich Europe. Therefore the Magyars had to accept it ... The old Hungarian state took over the whole system of names for court dignitaries: nádor ispán- nádorný špán (župan), udvarnok- nádorník, asztalnok-stolník... (Ferko M. et al 1998, 49-50).⁹¹

However, the equally very important political aim of this story was not only to emphasize the Slovak ancestry, its highest political and cultural potential, but also to “...give an authenticity to a medieval historical event and person by appropriating some of their characteristic features to resemble a modern and undoubtedly ‘national’ historical event and person.” (Findor 2002, 200). In the case of Milan Ferko, it is visible in the narration of the uprising of the Great Moravian population against the Frank government in the 9th century. It was depicted as an uprising which involved the whole population, from the purest peasant to the highest noblemen in a harmonic alliance against foreign hegemony (Ferko M. et al 1998, 33). In the end, Ferko stated “It was **the first Slovak uprising!**” (ibid.- bold in original), leaving no doubt that the 9th century rebellion was brought into line with the SNP, as Andrej Findor first noticed (Findor 2002, 198-99). Since the SNP was the most important historical event interpreted as the direct predecessor of HZDS, as will be shown later, it turned out that the 9th century uprising is somehow connected to the “forefathers” of HZDS. The same parallel is made with some other modern events in the Slovak history, as in the case of the most prominent Slovak communists Gustáv Husák, Ladislav Novomeský, Vladimír Clementis whose political career was brought into line with the Cyril and Methodius national-identity building process (Ferko M. 2004, 30-31).

⁹¹ The centrality of the myth of ancestry, i.e. conceptualization of Slovaks as the first-comers on the territory of the present day Slovakia is visible from the fact that a compilation of essays by Mináč and other HZDS intellectuals under the title *Slovaks & Magyars* was published in 1995 in English by the Ministry of Culture (Števček 1995). It is interesting that the book was published in the midst of political dispute over the rights of Hungarian Minority in Slovakia, thus obviously serving as legitimizing means for governmental agenda of not letting Hungarian language to be proclaimed as official in areas of south-Slovakia dominated by Hungarian minority (Fisher 2006, 65-66; Bunčák and Harmadyová 1996a, 93-96).

Furthermore the book very much skips the eight centuries of “the dark ages” of the medieval and early-modern period when Slovakia was the part of the Hungarian kingdom. The concept of “the dark ages” is especially emphasized in the depiction of the history of the Nineteenth century as the “era of the nations”, where the contemporaneous Hungarian government- especially after the Austro-Hungarian compromise- is depicted as demonic, tending almost to the physical annihilation of Slovaks.⁹² Subsequently the national-identity building legacy of the Slovak national awakeners is emphasized with the simultaneous darkening of the concurrent Czechoslovak idea, narrowly explained as a desperate counter-reaction towards Hungarianizing politics (Ferko et al 1998, 106-108). However, while the interpretation of the Hungarians as the main “Others” was not contested and so, due to the “*longue durree*” structures of the national identity-building process, the interpretation of the Czech and Slovak common state was shaped in a more subtle manner. Surely it was due to HZDS’s goal to rise as the all-embracing national movement which would gather various political factions on the basis of Slovak statehood. On the other hand, the conceptualization of the legacy of the common Czech and Slovak state beneath the radical interpretations of Czechoslovakia exclusively in the lights of the Czech hegemony over Slovaks, was necessary for the international legitimizing of the Slovak independence since - as is already previously depicted - the Czechoslovak idea was very positively labelled in the west. Thus, after gaining independence in 1993 the interpretation tended to emphasize the Slovak contribution to the positive legacy of the common state while simultaneously prescribing the negative one to the Czechs, especially in relation to the Slovak minor position within the common state. The assuming point was construction of the concept of equality in a foundation of the common Czech and Slovak state. It was constructed through the various arguments, from the emphasis on the role of Milan Rastislav Štefánik and American Slovak’s for the foundation of the new state, along with the simultaneous construction of Štefánik’s death as a Slovak statehood martyr⁹³, to the emphasis on the Slovak autonomous proclamation of the common state (Ferko

⁹² For example, Ferko is quoting the alleged words of one Hungarian official „*The Magyar school is like a machine: we put hundreds of Slovak children at one end, and Magyars come out of the other*“ (Italics in original). A few lines down he also states “*Tót nem ember, the Slovak is not a human being!*“ - proclaimed the Magyars (Italics in original; Ferko M. et al 1998, 106).

⁹³ Milan Rastislav Štefánik was the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Slovak politician of a quite novel-like life. He traveled to Africa, dealt with astronomy and finally become a general in the French army. As such, he was the most famous Slovak abroad. During World War I he enabled Tomáš Masaryk and Eduard Beneš to make contact with French political leadership, thus contributing enormously to the Entente support for a Czechoslovak state. In the immediate aftermath of the war he died in a bizarre plain crash, being shot down by some Czechoslovak soldier. Immediately after his death the myth on Štefánik’s statehood martyrdom was forged according to which the general’s death was a deliberate assassination organized by the Czech political leadership due to Štefánik’s alleged firm advocacy for the Slovak autonomy. Simultaneously, Štefánik was also canonized

J. 1998, 213-215). If we relate to the emphasis on Masaryk's post-war neglect of the war time Pittsburgh and Cleveland declarations guaranteeing Slovak autonomy in the post-war common state⁹⁴ the symbolic turns into obvious: the emergence of the common state not only turns out to be a great disappointment, but also turns out to be a "stab in the back" by the Czechs to the Slovak unification role. Since the unification is constructed as the symbolic interlude into the future victimization of the Slovaks by the Czechs, the latter in fact turned out to be the ones who corrupted the idea of the common state, both with the politics of Czechoslovakization and the economic politics of destruction of the Slovak craft. Notwithstanding the emphasis of the positive role of the Czech in Slovak state- and nation-building process especially in the 1920s, the previous line of the discourse still dominated (Ferko M. et al 1998, 113-116; Ferko J. 1998; Huska 2006, 69-72).

However, the interpretation of the communist period was somehow different due to the ambiguous approach to it. The pre-1968 period is particularly depicted as the ultimate repression, not only due to the Czech cadre dominated party's centralist politics, but also due to the depiction of even harder regime repressions in the Slovakia than in the Czech lands due to the prevailing religiousness of the Slovak population. On the other hand, the industrialization and urbanization process is stressed, as well as the fact that the federal constitution of the state brought about the Slovak autonomous government released from the burden of the fascist legacy (Ferko M. et al 1998, 132-137). In a way to counter the Czech discourse accusing the leading Slovak communists for the assistance in the Soviet crackdown of the Prague Spring, in the light of the Slovak non-liberal national identity-building process (Pithart 2000), HZDS' intellectuals prescribed the totalitarian legacy of communism exclusively to the Czechs from its very beginning in the early twentieth century to the communist 1945-48 seizure of power.⁹⁵ The symbol of mentioned totalitarian politics mixed

in the inter-war Czechoslovakia as one of its founders (Macho 2005). Being internationally recognized and simultaneously canonized by both Czechoslovak and Slovak national cannon, Štefánik was very useful figures to be appropriated for the purposes of political symbolism in the 1990s, as shown in the last chapter.

⁹⁴ The Cleveland agreement from 1915 and the Pittsburg agreement from 1918 guaranteed Slovak autonomy in future common state of the Czechs and Slovaks. Moreover, the Czechoslovak Republic was declared in Prague on 28th October 1918 while the declaration was recognized on the 30th of October by the Declaration of the Slovak nation declared by the Slovak National Council assembling Slovak politicians (Lipták 2000, 237). After this the Martin Declaration from 30th October - called after the place where the Slovak national council assembled - was interpreted by the Slovak nationalists as the act of equal legal power as the Prague declaration, thus trying to construct the concept of the 1918 Slovak sovereignty. This interpretation was later refuted by Lipták and other Slovak professional historians, especially when it came the matter of political dispute in the course of state holiday namings in the 1990s, as discussed in the last chapter (Miháliková 2002, 60-63).

⁹⁵It was even emphasized that the communism in Slovakia was established and led by the Czech communists in 1918 (Ferko M. et al 1998, 114). The fall of the 1948 democratic government is interpreted in the light of the the Czech bourgeoisie parties refusal to cooperate with the Slovak anti-fascist bourgeoisie factions due to the formers' unconditional advocacy of the Czechoslovak unitarism, while the communist government took-over in

with the anti-Slovak stance of the Czech Stalinist were 1950s trials to the Slovak top communists for the “bourgeoisie nationalism”, symbolizing the victimhood of Slovakia (Ferko J. 1998, 275-279; Huska 2006, 66-72). The discourse of the victimization was subsequently thread through the interpretation of the Normalization period, since it was strongly stressed that the regime was imposed by the Soviet tanks on Slovakia against the will of the people, which however due to the new federal constitution of the state somehow unexpectedly opened the nationhood and statehood building processes. This twofold approach on the Normalization period served quite apparently the purposes of the HZDS legitimizing, since the ideology of the all embracing national movement could not afford the open and unequivocal praising of the regime, not only since its authoritarian character didn't enjoy the support of the population (Pithart 2000), but also since the regime's mutilating of the prerogatives of the federal units in the early 1970s couldn't be inbuilt into the national narrative. Hence, the emphasis on the positive legacy of the 1968 federal constitution was contested by emphasizing the processes of the centralization as well the regime's repressions, as well as the positive stress on the national conscious pre-1968 role of Gustáv Husák and his associates was contested by their and his post-1968 role of the “Prague Slovaks”, the agents of the regime centralization which hindered further Slovak national-emancipation process (Mináč 1993b, 43-44; Barnovský 2005).⁹⁶ Simultaneously, while the positive effects of the economic modernization were emphasized, they were simultaneously contested by the emphasis on the side-effects, such as the waste of material resources, pollution etc (Ferko M. et all 1998, 132-137). The main purpose was to prove that the regime didn't enjoy any consent from the population, but that the statehood was imposed on the Slovaks from above, and then just used in the best possible way to progress the Slovak statehood building process. This was the discourse publicly used by Mečiar. He broad the parallels between the historical breaks of the 1938-39 and 1968 when the Slovak statehood was imposed by Nazi and Soviet tanks, and further condemned the repressive character of the Normalization regime. However, he always simultaneously emphasized the role of the Slovak “socialist patriots” ranging from

February 1948 is prescribed predominantly to the Czechs due to the power of the communist party in the Czech lands. The depiction of the era of the Czech and Slovak common state in the light of the Czech exclusive tending to hinder the Slovak national emancipation process popped up in the 1998 election campaign, when the HZDS due the electoral discontent by its government radicalized its statehood rhetoric (Ferko J. 1998, 275-279).

⁹⁶ The role of the Slovak „fallen red angels“ is especially nicely pinpointed by Mináč. He justified Husak's „denationalization“ by framing it into historical destiny of the all Slovak politicians leaving to Prague which were inevitably forced to “Czechisize” (Mináč, 1993, 44-45). Ján Čarnogurský, leader of the KDĽ, catholic dissident and son of the high-rank official of the Slovak Nazi-puppet State Pavol Čarnogurský praised Husák as nationally conscious communist preserving the Slovak statehood by preserving federation after the 1968 (Čarnogurský 2011).

the elite to the rank-and-file party members by interpreting their role as the idealistic work to push further the Slovak national and social emancipation (Mečiar 1998, 52, 62). The role of such a discourse was obvious: on the one hand, to release the national identity from the historical guilt- or as Shari Cohen put it more politically, from coming to terms with the past (Cohen 1999, 165) - while on the other hand to stress the positive role of the Slovak socialist patriotism for the Slovak state-building and national-identity building process.

The seminal role of the Slovak socialist patriotism for framing the concept of the HZDS as the state-founding national movement was most obviously used by the interpretation of the Slovak National Uprising (*Slovenské národné povstanie*- SNP), which together with the interpretation of the independence gaining process represented the two founding myths of the current Slovak statehood. Basically, the HZDS'es discourse on the SNP followed the concept already developed by the "red nationalists" during the Normalization era, now only pushed to the full blown public use. Since the SNP was the milestone which redeemed both the Slovak nationhood and the statehood building process previously compromised by the Wartime Slovak Nazi Puppet state, the appropriation of its legacy presented a strong legitimating tool, both domestically and internationally.

Domestically, the legacy of the SNP was especially important for the HZDS'es legitimizing since it was contested by the 1994-98 minor coalition partner, the far-right wing Slovak National Party (SNS). The SNS was typical radical right-wing party with the thin ideology focused exclusively on the fervent far-right Slovak nationalism of making "Slovakia for the Slovaks". Hence, it was exclusively focused of the politics against the national minorities- mostly Hungarian, but also having strong anti-Czech resentment, especially during the independence gaining period in the early 1990s (Hudek 2002, 2004). Moreover, it had an open revisionist stance towards the World War II Slovak Republic, labeling it to be the direct predecessor of the contemporaneous Slovak Republic. The SNS neglected completely the fascist character of the regime by depicting Tiso's authoritarian regime, as well the politics of the deportation of the 60 000 Jews to be exclusively undertaken due to the Nazi pressure. Moreover, the head of the state is presented as the savior of various Jews and anti-fascists, while the fascist tendencies were exclusively prescribed to the minor far-right faction of the party. Finally, the wartime Slovak society was presented as the welfare island of social and economic progress in the contemporaneous Europe (Hoffman 1996; Kováč 2006). Hence, the SNP was depicted as the act of betrayal of both communist and bourgeoisie "Prague Slovaks" against their own state, leading Slovakia back to the Czechoslovak "dark ages" (Lipták 1999, 186-199). Since the HZDS'es government depended upon the SNS'es backing, but also due to

the right-wing faction within the Movement Mečiar was forced to make the concessions to the SNS's politics (Johnson 2008, 134-136; Hoffman 1996, 137-157). Hence, the SNS got the post of the minister of the education, whose politics eventually produced the international scandal in 1997 when the book *Dejiny Slovenska a Slovákov* written by one of the most prominent far-right émigré historian Milan S. Ďurica was implemented in the schools as the auxiliary textbook. The book contained the aforementioned interpretation of the WWII Slovak history, and will be elaborated in the next chapter depicting policies of history.

Hence, in a way to contest the far-right wing politics of the national identity, whether originating from the right-wing faction of the HZDS or from the minor coalition partner of the SNS, Mečiar and the most prominent HZDS intellectuals turned to the twofold interpretation of the SNP. Firstly, they marked the SNP as the milestone of the Slovak modern statehood and nationhood, symbolically even more adding the aspect of the massive scale of the people's participation. In Mečiar words, the role of the communist in the SNP was not so crucially important, since it was "...mass scale uprising of the broadest strata of the Slovak society against the fascist regime" (Mečiar 1998, 90). Moreover, the HZDS's major faction contested the claim of the far-right labeling the Wartime Slovak Republic to be the embodiment of the historical Slovak striving for the independent state by appropriating that role exclusively to the SNP. The Uprising was now proclaimed to be the embodiment "of the few centuries long folk statehood striving", as well the national-democratic statehood fight of the Slovak folk by which supreme sovereignty is taken back from the non-legitimate pro-fascist elites to the folk (Števček 1998, 120-122). In that line of the interpretation both political and the statehood projects of the various SNP factions were darkened, since they were presented as the homogeneous fighting oneness for the Slovak statehood emancipation, whose striving was eventually hindered due to the allies pressure for the renewal of the pre-war Czechoslovakia (Chovanec 1996, 22-28). Exactly this line of the interpretation is intending to form the "national reconciliation" concept, since if the various insurgent factions were labeled to fight for the statehood; the SNP subsequently turns to be the uprising against the regime, and not the mere fact of the independent state (Mečiar 1998, 37-39). Off course, the HZDS never conceptualized clearly whether the SNP was the movement for the independent state, or the autonomous Slovak status in the future Czechoslovakia. Indeed, the vagueness of the SNP interpretation was related to the HZDS's political ends, where on the one hand it tended to form as the all-embracing national movement, hence not letting the revisionist interpretations to become an official state politics. On the other hand the HZDS couldn't afford to enter the open clash on the SNS's core agenda, since the support of the

minor partner was crucial for the coalition stability (Mesežnikov 1997b). Hence, Mečiar kept emphasizing on the already mentioned concept of the imposed foundation of the Wartime Slovak republic by the Nazi Germany, as well on the authoritarian character of the regime with its peak in the politics of the Jew's deportation, which didn't enjoy the support of the great majority of the population (Mečiar 1998, 37-39, 90; Mečiar 1995, 4.). As Shari Cohen claims, this ideological narrative tended to release the broadest strata of the population of the responsibility of the both fascist as well communist authoritarian past for the HZDS's political ends (Cohen 1999). Finally, the HZDS added a step further to the definite rehabilitation of the Wartime Slovak Nazi-puppet state by appropriating the pre-1990s already forged concept of the Wartime state as the historical proof that the Slovaks could govern themselves, adding moreover to it the role of the protection of the nation against expansionist politics of the Horthy's Hungarian regime (Mečiar 1998, 39; Chovanec 1996, 20-21).⁹⁷

Finally, the SNP was conceptualized as prelude to the "the end of the Slovak statehood seeking history", i.e. to the 1989-on process of gaining the independence. Hence, Mečiar and the party ideologues insisted on the 1990s to be the major founding myth, where the Party was depicted as the state-founding party which "...took upon itself the historic task of uniting all nationally oriented Slovak initiatives, associations and organizations with the political program of achieving the sovereignty and independence... thus fulfilling the old desire of the Slovaks for a full life in the national state" (Ferko M. et al. 1998, 140-141). Hence, the most important for the Movement was to present itself as the only one capable to bring the end to the "old desire". The state-founding concept was legitimated by the appropriation of the "plebeian myth" to the HZDS: not only that the Movement represented the will and the striving of the people, but moreover it represented the only contemporaneous political agent able to gain and to save the independence due to the fact that for the first time in the Slovak history the political force embodying the people's spirit came to the fore. To use the words of Tim Haughton, the state-founding concept was constructed by the myth of the "The Leader and his Party" (Haughton 2005).

The state-founding myth was constructed, to use the words of Tim Haughton, by the myth of the "The Leader and his Party" standing against all internal and external political

⁹⁷ When following the 1938 Munich treaty Hitler decided to occupy the Czech lands, Hitler forced Jozef Tiso to proclaim independence by otherwise threatening to partition Slovakia between Hungary and Poland (Lipták 2000a, 164-178). Thus, the proclamation of the Nazi-puppet Slovakia was later interpreted especially by the moderate right-wingers as Tiso's act of "lesser evil" tending to preserve nation. At the same occasion when praising the nation and statehood building role of Gustáv Husák, Ján Čarnogurský eventually constructed historical parallel between Husák's 1968 role and Tiso's 1939 role by interpreting their agency to be choosing of "lesser evil" and preserving Slovakia from annihilation (Čarnogurský 2011).

opponents of the Slovak independence. Both “the Leader” as well “his Party” (or the Movement, more precisely) were constructed by using the three concepts: teleological one, depicting the leader and the as being the advocates of the independence from the very beginning, which were related to the two already previously mentioned: the leader and the party as the only political agent able to gain, but also to save the independent state. Following the teleological concept, Mečiar was publicly depicted as being persecuted from his teenage up to the breakdown of the communist regime for his advocating of the democracy and the Slovak national rights (Leško 1996, 13-25). Consecutively, the politics of Mečiar and the HZDS in the period 1990-1992, which can very vaguely be described as “independist”, was depicted as the wise politics of the gradual achieving of the independence without the breaks. Hence, Mečiar’s and later members of the HZDS participation in the VPN government 1990-91 was depicted as their ultimate but futile sacrifice to save the country by changing the “incompetent” and “anti-national” politics of the VPN’s, failure of which action very soon forced Mečiar and others to resign and form the Movement (Mečiar 1996c, 29).⁹⁸ In the same vein was depicted the government’s 1992 politics of keeping the common Czech and Slovak state during the negotiations about the future arrangement of the common state. It was presented as the wise politics of the gradual independence achieving due to the unwillingness of the international community to acknowledge the politics of the independence (Žvach 2006, 46).

Considering the state making-saving concept the HZDS tried to delegitimize any opposition to its politics and government, whether domestic or international, by depicting it as the act against the Slovak independence. Hence, as already emphasized many times in this chapter, the political opposition was labeled or to be the agents of the foreign Czech and Hungarian interests, or simply depicted as the corrupted neoliberal economical elites pursuing their own interests, going against the previously depicted HZDS’s politics of the social market economy, and hence against the people. On the level of the everyday’s politics the statehood bearer image was maintained by making of the historical analogies, which Jan Werner Müller described as the appropriation of historically already created narratives (Müller 2002, 27). In the case of the HZDS these were the narratives of the unbroken

⁹⁸ Mečiar later stated how soon after taking the post he saw the impossibility to arrange the federation in a way that full statehood rights of Slovakia would be recognized. In the same fashion Mečiar legitimated his first prime-minister term in the VPN government, especially cracking down of the October 1990 public protest organized by the Matica slovenská and the SNS against the government draft of the Language Law introducing Hungarian besides Slovak as official language in the southern Slovakia populated by Hungarian Minority. Mečiar stated that he was fully compliant to the law, however opposed it due to the simultaneous crisis of the ongoing Czech-Slovak negotiations about the reconstitution of the federation, which he labeled to present number one contemporaneous threat to Slovak statehood seeking (Mečiar 2000, 44).

historical victimization of the nation. Thus, for example, the throw of the Mečiar's third government in the March 1994 by the coalition of the opposition and the HZDS's dissidents was brought to analogy to the February 1939 overthrow of the Tiso's Slovak autonomous government by the contemporaneous Czechoslovak president Emil Hacha. The similar discourses were used to delegitimize the pressures of the international community on the government, which became especially visible during the Mečiar's last mandate in 1994-98. The especially significant was the political turmoil produced by the EU demarche to Slovakia in October 1995 threatening to hinder Slovakia's EU accession process due to stated increase of the democratic deficits in the country. In his speech following the demarche Mečiar drew historical parallels between the EU politics and the earlier politics of the European powers towards Slovakia by stating that "Deciding about us without our presence happened here (in the West Europe-S.Đ.) already in the years 1938, 1939 and 1968. Is there not enough of these kinds of experiences?!"(Mečiar 1998, 164).⁹⁹ The similar historical analogy Mečiar used to legitimize the March 1995 signing of Slovak-Hungarian treaty on a friendship relations stipulated as a precondition for joining the NATO. In that particular occasion, Mečiar stated that the treaty brought about final end to "Trianon historical revisionism" and pretensions by Hungary on the Slovak territory. When the NATO in summer 1996 excluded Slovakia from Visegradi group states targeted for the Alliance enlargement process, Mečiar used similar historical analogy as in the case of the EU demarche (Leško 1996, 160-165). The both demarches were to a extent induced by the SNS far-right agenda including approval of the controversial Law on the State Language introducing restriction on the use of Hungarian language in the southern Slovak territories populated by the Hungarian minority (Fisher, 2006, 65-66). Here is important to stress that the Law linked directly the language to the history and national identity by stipulating the language to represent the "the most important sign of the Slovak national personality, the most significant value of the nation's cultural legacy and the symbol of the sovereignty of the Slovak republic basis of the Slovak statehood" (Zákon 270/1995, preamble).

Since the HZDS-SNS governing coalition formed after the snap elections in October 1994 pushed the Movement more to the right (Deegan-Krause, 2006), the concept on the Slovak religious legacy was getting the centrality in the HZDS'es politics of history. The concept of

⁹⁹ The contemporaneous spokesman of the HZDS Stanislav Háber „emboldened“ Mečiar's above statement by constructing historical analogy between the March 1939 Nazi demarche to Jozef Tiso forcing the later to proclaim Slovak independence, the 1968 Soviet demarche to Alexander Dubček announcing the intervention of the Warsaw Pact Troops to Czechoslovakia and the actual EU demarche from 1995. Háber was however ousted a few days after his announcement (Leško 1996, 136).

the Slovak religious legacy was off course the best represented by the Cyril-Methodius myth. The “Cyril-Methodius traditions” was a core of the Slovak myth of ancestry, and was consisted by the appropriation of the Glagolitic alphabet and its subsequent interpretation as the earliest contribution of the Slovaks to the European cultural heritage. As such, the concept was used to contest Hungarian counter-claims neglecting the very existence of the Slovak nation, thus being founded at the very beginning of the modern Slovak national-identity building process, subsequently “travelling” to all following Slovak national-integration ideologies (Pichler 1997).¹⁰⁰ The HZDS upgraded Cyril-Methodius legacy by stating Christian morality to stem from the legacy as authentic part of the national character thus eventually presenting desirable foundation of the societal values in the society, especially in respect to family stipulated as traditional base of the morality. (Prvý “Program Hnutia za Demokratické Slovensko“ 2006, 10; Vláda Slovenskej republiky 1992, 31; Slovensko do toho 1994, 89). The 1995 Program Declaration of the government stressed even stronger than before on the relation of the Christian morality and desirable socio-political culture, moreover paying honor to the churches by defining them to be the historical bearers and saviors of the Slovak national identity (Vláda Slovenskej republiky 1995, 56-63). Here the HZDS obviously appropriated the SLS dominant inter-war concept of equalizing Slovakness and Catholic morality, now just transformed into the Christian due to the multi-confessional composition of the Slovak society.¹⁰¹ The appropriation of Andrej Hlinka’s concept on the national character can be explained as a way to contest the KDH contemporaneously representing the second strongest party in Slovakia.¹⁰² Finally, increasing accent on religiousness was a way to balance increasing HZDS right-wing faction pushing together with the far-right émigré intellectuals and the SNS for Jozef Tiso’s rehabilitation (Hoffman 1996; Dostál 1997, 72). However, Mečiar and the left-nationalist major faction did not want to allow too much room for the right-wing faction, not only since it would furthermore harm quite weak international position of the third Mečiar’s government, but also since feeling that pushing the Movement to much to the right would jeopardize the ideological positioning of the HZDS as a “wide-spectrum peoples movement of the center” (Leško 1996, 173) and hence also Mečiar’s power. Thus in spite of centrality of afore depicted concept of religiousness in the HZDS ideology,

¹⁰⁰ The Cyril-Methodius represents the role model of Eric Hobsbawm’s theory on invention of tradition (Hobsbawm 1992) since the Cyril and Methodius doctrine was entirely eradicated by the tenth century from the territory of present day Slovakia, hitherto be dominated by the Roman Catholic Church ousting the Glagolitic script and the Greek type of the liturgy (Turčan 2005).

¹⁰¹ Around 62% of the population declared as Roman Catholics, around 8% declared as Protestants and around 4% as Greek Catholic (Slovakia 2012). Here is of special importance to emphasize that Protestants participated outstandingly in the history of the Slovak national identity-building process, including Eudovít Štúr.

¹⁰² On the 1994 elections the HZDS got 35% while the KDH got 10.1% of the votes (Mesežnikov 1997b, 50).

Mečiar did not hesitate to enter an open clash with the Catholic Church in 1995 after the Church publicly condemned the government for the authoritarian politics, even neglecting the HZDS to represent proclaimed Christian values. The Church leadership was split on the major faction supporting the KDH and the minor supporting the government; thus Mečiar accused the church for siding with the opposition, while the diocesan seat of the Slovak Conference of Bishops was searched by the police for alleged illegal activities related to church property (Zajac 1997, 204-205). The smoothness by which Mečiar tensed the relations to the Catholic Church and simultaneously retained the position of the strongest party was a clear sign that the communist national identity-building successfully ousted the pre-war dominant clerical national identity ideology. Depicted trend was especially important since the HZDS could now successfully claim to represent authentic spirit of the folk against the church counterclaim.¹⁰³

“The myth of the folk” or the “Plebeian Myth” has been the core concept of the Slovak national identity building process founded already by the nineteenth century national awakeners, as shown before. Thus, it was appropriated also by the communists claiming to represent the most authentic embodiment of the nation’s plebeian core consisted from the working-class and the peasantry. Considering the later, the regime especially exploited various folk customs for its political ends, including folk songs and dances (Krekovičová 2005a, 112-115). Thus the concept was appropriated to the utmost end by the HZDS, especially since it was closely linked to the concept of the state-founding, while the link was the person of Vládimir Mečiar. As is elaborated already previously, the teleology of the Slovak thousand year statehood struggle history does not include only victimization by others, but also the concept on the betrayal of elites; the discourse publicly spread by Vládimir Mináč (Mináč 1993a, 18-24). Thus, both the independence gaining and saving was preconditioned by achieving a rule of non- alienated elites over the nation, hence the elites originating from the people. As already mentioned, Mináč glorified Mečiar to be the utmost symbol of the plebeian heroic individual, since he was characterized by the hard-work and direct simple communication to the people, being simultaneously self-confidently decisive against all pressures from Prague and elsewhere abroad tending to hamper Slovak sovereignty (Mináč 1993b, 136-140). The core of “Mečiar as a myth” is expressed nicely by the following statement by the well-known journalist Marian Leško: “The Slovaks like the political

¹⁰³ In this respect previously mentioned research by Vladimír Krivý's showing the congruence of the regions dominated by Andrej Hlinka's SLS in the interwar period and Mečiar's HZDS in the 1990s (see footnote 79) lacks important missing link: appropriation and simultaneous distortion of Hlinka's ideology by the national communists, and final appropriation of the post-1968 communist master narrative by the HZDS.

robustness of Mr. Mečiar, his decisiveness and directness, his skepticism towards a theories and inclination to the common knowledge of the people... his ability to speak like that, that the people perfectly understand him.” (Leško 1996, 52). Mečiar’s “decisiveness and directness” were coined by building the image of the politician working around the clock and making all crucial government decision “by his own and then addressing directly the people” (Hud’ová 1996, 28-29), thus forming an image of the individual being capable to take a full responsibility in the opposition to the lazy, contemplative, coward political leaders from other parties (Mečiar 2000, 15-18). Here Mečiar and the HZDS exploited the ambiguity of the “plebeian myth”, which on the one hand conceptualized the historical character of the Slovaks as the “pigeon-soul like” peasant nation being constantly victimized by evil others, while on the other hand waiting for heroic individual to appear and organize the people in their righteous uprising for justice (Krekovičová 2005a).¹⁰⁴ Exactly hence Mečiar had been constantly building his public image of a robust and simple-manner leader related to “the milieu where the people are making their everyday’s life by the hard work...for the interests and ideas, originating from the wishes, thinking and working of the people” (Mináč 1993b, 140). Building of the image of the folk’s greatest son included Mečiar and his henchmen extensive attending to various folklore festivities and singing folk songs- especially during pre-election campaigns¹⁰⁵ - while the past boxing career of the prime-minister was especially emphasize as a symbol of his robust decisiveness (Baer 2001). Finally, the folk culture as a symbol of everyday life plebeian spirit was emphasized in all HZDS’es programmatic documents, being labeled to represent a wishing foundation of the modern Slovak culture (Slovensko do Toho 1994, 89; Vláda Slovenskej republiky 1995, 57). Thus, the 1994-1998 cultural politics was especially focused to finance various projects and celebrations of Cyril-Methodius legacy and folk customs (Kolektív autorov 2006), while even some state holydays were link with the plebeian myth and eventually exploited for the legitimizing purposes, as will be elaborated in the next chapter.

The exposed politics of history narrative reached its full implementation during the third Mečiar’s mandate in 1994-98 (the first one was September 1990-March 1991, when Mečiar

¹⁰⁴ The most famous historical myth was one about the sixteenth century rebel Juraj Jánošík representing the Slovak version of the Robin Hood. The myth on Jánošík as a symbol of fight against the reach nobility for rights of the poor peasantry was especially exploited during the communism, while the myth as itself was also simultaneously prone to be appropriated by all national identity-building factions due to the opposition nobility equalized with Hungarians vs. peasantry equalized with Slovaks (Hlôšková 2005).

¹⁰⁵ The most famous is Mečiar's singing of the „goodbye folk song“ in the aftermath of the 1998 elections TV which the HZDS lost against coalition of the oppositional parties. See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uR0CodnrNAo> (approached July 7, 2012).

headed the VPN-KDH government, while the second was July 1992- March 1994, the term which ended prematurely due to the parliamentary overthrow). Mečiar's third term bringing about the coalition HZDS-SNS government was characterized by cleansing of the state services from the all "non-national" cadres as well by the authoritarian policies towards media and public in general, eventually producing outstanding democratic deficits of the political system of Slovakia. Especially targeted was a sphere of culture, where Minister Ivan Hudec undertook a kind of crusade to impose the government "nationalizing politics" over the art production in general, and especially over the theaters, where he entered a long-standing public clash with almost entire actors corps, some of them being previous avow supporters for the HZDS (Fisher 2006, ch. 5). Besides the state authorities, the nationalizing policies were entitled to Matica Slovenská, which even was by the 1997 special law entitled to "strengthen the Slovak patriotism" and to "deepen the relation of the citizens towards the Slovak statehood" (Zákon 68/1997, ar.2.). The Matica was gathering quite a portion of the far-right intellectuals, especially from the émigré circles; thus depicted politics towards Matica can be understood as a concession Mečiar was obliged to the minor coalition partner SNS, who also got the post of the minister of education, whose policies finally brought about the 1997 international scandal related to introduction of already mentioned controversial textbook *Dejiny Slovenska and Slovákov* by Milan S. Ďurica (Kritika & Kontext, 1997). The book was the most significant sign of overall far-right offensive on public memory revisionism during the 1994-1998 government term. Thus, the next chapter will be devoted a great deal to the transmission of the HZDS ideological politics of history into concrete policies of history, especially in relation to "preservation of the past within the present" and subsequent counter of radical SNS' far-right historical revisionist agenda.

3.2 Politics of History in Croatia in the 1990s

3.2.1 Forging the All-Embracing National Movement: HDZ's Rise to Power 1990-1992

Unlike the Slovak case, the resentment and accompanying contestations between the separate republics over the future constitution of the Yugoslav federation started long before the breakdown of Socialist Yugoslavia. As has already been mentioned in the previous chapter, immediate aftermath of Tito's death released an outburst of Serb nationalism, stemming from the long dissatisfaction with the gradual decentralization of the federation culminating in the 1974 federal constitution. The Serb nationalist (re)interpretation of socialist Yugoslavia, initially triggered by the nationalist historians and subsequently accompanied by writers, finally had its political expression with Slobodan Milošević's rise to power in 1987. To summarize, historians' and writers' discourses reinterpreted the history of socialist Yugoslavia to represent the fatal suppression of Serb national interests, assuming the interwar CPY policies backed by the Comintern to be a conspiracy against Serb national interests taking the full force after 1945 when the state was governed by Croat Tito and Slovenian Kardelj. The socialist government was accused for partitioning Serbia and exploiting it both economically and politically for mostly Croatian and Slovenian ends (Cipek 2007a). Even more importantly, these narratives were accompanied by the simultaneous conceptualizing of the idea of the eternal history of Serb victimhood via the exaggeration of the 'Jasenovac discourse', pumping the number of victims of the mentioned Ustaša concentration camp to almost two million and so implanting the belief of the genocidal nature of a Croat nation. Eventually some authors suggested the concept of collective Croatian guilt was due to a particular Croatian "sonderweg" pointing to the Ustaša atrocities as the final expression of the centuries long agenda of Croatian political elites towards Croatian Serbs. Anyhow, the 'Jasenovac discourse' received huge public attention through a few fictional novels published in the mid-1980s (Dragović-Soso 2002/2004, 154-175). Moreover, Dobrica Ćosić, the most prominent Serb 'savior of the nation' even stretched the aforementioned Serb victimhood discourse to the very foundation of the Yugoslav state in 1918, interpreting the centralist South Slavic kingdom to represent the fatal and naive Serb concession to Croats and Slovenes at expense of the alternative righteous annexation of the Serb dominated territories in Croatia and Bosnia by the Kingdom of Serbia (Ibid, 140-154). The message was clear: Serbia should

again take on the role to which it naturally belongs, meaning to recentralize Yugoslavia and to take the leading position again.

By 1987 the previously depicted politics of history were articulated politically when Slobodan Milošević took the leadership of the Serbian communist party. Rising on a firm nationalist response to a lasting Serb-Albanian ethnic conflict in the autonomous province of Kosovo, Milošević also announced the actual central problems of the federation, inter alia the dysfunction of the existing political system and deep economic crisis. However, instead of offering an agenda of liberalization, Milošević aimed for recentralization of Yugoslavia, accompanied by the nationalist discourse of Serbia and Serbs being victims of Tito's Yugoslavia. Receiving support from the JNA, as well much more tacitly from the Serb Orthodox church, Milošević orchestrated a series of mass-rallies called the "anti-bureaucratic revolution" ousting allegedly anti-national leaderships of the autonomous provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo, as well of Montenegro, and subsequently change the Serbian constitution in a way so that autonomous provinces practically ceased to exist (Ramet 2002/2005, 46-70; Gagnon 2004, 61-71). The peak of Serb nationalization politics was the June 1989 rally commemorating the 600th anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo, where the Serb feudal army was defeated by the Ottomans. In the presence of more than one million Serbs coming from all over Yugoslavia and surrounded by the entire leadership of the Orthodox Church, Milošević stated again the narrative of Serb victimhood with the accompanying politics of strengthening Serbia as well as the federal governance, marking out his speech by announcing that "Six centuries later, again we are in battles and quarrels. They are not armed battles, though such things should not be excluded yet" (Silber and Little 1996, 72). Simultaneously the new Serbian leader tried to export the anti-bureaucratic revolution to Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, republics with a large proportion of ethnic Serb population. Although the leaderships of these republics managed to resist the destabilizing attempts by and large, only the Slovenian leadership openly and firmly countered Milošević's politics. Moreover, the export of Greater-Serbiann nationalism in the form of mass rallies triggered the deterioration of inter-ethnic relations in Bosnia and Croatia (Gagnon 2004, 72-76).

During 1987/88 the LCC's leadership was ambivalent towards Milošević's politics, considering it to be Serbia's internal matter, hence acting in accordance with the post-1971 politics of a silent Croatia focused exclusively on defending the stipulations of the 1974 federal constitution, as is expanded upon in the previous chapter. However in 1989, when Milošević exported the anti-bureaucratic revolution to Croatia by orchestrating a series of

mass rallies with the climax at the one in Kosovo near Knin in June, commemorating the previously mentioned anniversary of the Kosovo battle (Matković 2011; 111; Jelić 1996, 48-102), the Croatian party leadership was alarmed. Milošević's greater-Serb politics now brought together both conservative and reformist factions of the LCC regardless of their being Croats or Serbs, and subsequently opened the liberalization processes "in large part to gain support and legitimacy among the wider population in the face of attempts by Serbian conservatives to undermine the SKH's autonomy" (Gagnon 2004, 82). Hence, many of the non-communist NGO's as well as the first political parties were founded by the second part of 1989. The LCC's turning a blind eye to the emergence of the oppositional factions in the formally communist system took its final form at the party's congress in December 1989 when the reformist faction finally took over and announced multiparty elections for spring of the following year (Ibid, 77-83). The LCC's political turn was finally propelled by the 14th Congress of the LCY in January 1990 ending in the demonstrative walkout by the Slovenian and the Croatian delegations who faced the unacceptable centralization demands by the Serbian and Montenegrin delegations (Ramet 200/2005, 77-78). Since the delegations of the two western republics were followed eventually by the Macedonian and the Bosnian party delegations, the congress in fact represented the key moment of the disintegration of the single Yugoslav League of the Communists, and so represented the tipping point of the disintegration process.

As in the case of Slovakia, the first to organize and approach the public were liberal dissidents and many individuals having prominent roles during the Croatian Spring. They founded the Croatian Social Liberal Party (*Hrvatska socijalno liberalna stranka-HSLS*)¹⁰⁶ in May 1989, which in 1990 joined the Coalition of People's Accord (*Koalicija Narodnog sporazuma- KNS*), the bloc of various liberal, social-democratic and moderate nationalist factions led by the legendary Croatian Spring leaders Savka Dabčević-Kučar and Miko Tripalo. Unlike the case of Slovakia and other East central European Countries, the coalition didn't manage to rise to become a broad, dissident anti-communist umbrella movement who eventually seized power (Wandycz 2001/2004, 333-340), simply because the KNS's policies of stressing civic social values and the free market economy (Đurić and all 1990, 111-132, 211-235; Pauković 2012, 189) didn't correspondent successfully with the actual politics in

¹⁰⁶ The HSLS was originally founded as a Croatian Social-Liberal Alliance in the scope of the Socialist Alliance of Working People of Croatia (Socijalsitički savez radnog naroda Hrvatske- SSRNH), representing sort of quasi-socialist NGO gathering the broadest range of the people. The HSLS was founded in the given way since the contemporaneous laws prohibited the existence of any parties except the communist one. On the foundation of the first Croatian parties in 1989 (Hudelist 1991).

Croatia, unavoidably marked by arising ethnic conflict orchestrated by Milošević's greater Serbian expansionist policies. Instead the most effective counter to Milošević's politics was recognized in the newly founded Croatian Democratic Union (*Hrvatska demokratska zajednica- HDZ*). HDZ didn't focus exclusively on any one political issue except to stress nationhood and statehood demands and criticize the communist government more radically and specifically than other opposition party, as Vernon Gagnon rightly pointed out (Gagnon 2004, 136-137).

It should be stressed here that HDZ won the April-May elections of 1990 due to the combination of its ideology, organization, and finally the electoral system. Eventually it turned out that HDZ was much better organized than even the ruling LCC. Similarly to Mečiar, Tuđman managed to side with the crucial contemporaneous structures of power even before the 1990 election victory, including most of the secret service establishment, as well as the parts of economic and political nomenclature (Hudelist 2004, 581-669; Radoš 2012, 4-8). The public's persistent belief that the Croatian branch of the secret service "handpicked" Tuđman "to push the nationalist envelope" as a counter to Milošević's politics seems quite plausible given that the service¹⁰⁷ could have recognized Tuđman's ideas to be the most suitable in a given political context. Not only from the perspective that Tuđman nationalist ideology could represent the best counter to Milošević, but also since the concepts of reconciliation and the all-embracing national movement offered an umbrella to the nomenclature to save their power structures. Josip Manolić, until 1971 one of the highest ranked officials in the Croatian secret service branch and the number two in HDZ in the early 1990s, claimed that he was the one not only enabling Tuđman to get a passport in 1987, but also organizing his crucial visit to Canada "right down to buying the plain tickets" (Hockenos 2003, 22).

Being backed by the most powerful structures in the country, Tuđman in his landmark 1987 trip to Canada received unanimous support from the right-wing political emigrants, who although representing a small minority of mostly non-political *émigrés* still had the potential to mobilize huge political and financial resources. In his revealing study on the role of the Croatian and Serbian emigrants in the politics of 1990 in Croatia and Serbia respectively, Paul Hockenos showed how Tuđman, despite being a partisan general, obtained a charismatic

¹⁰⁷ It should be stressed that the service in fact represented the real centre of the power in 1989 Croatia, since the party lost its monopoly as well credibility to a great extent. The notorious Yugoslav secret police known as UDB-a (Uprava državne bezbednosti- The State Security Organization) had practically disintegrated by the late 1970s since the highest authority was transferred to the republican branches, while the federal secretariat of internal affairs represented hereafter just coordination body (State Security Service (Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) 2013).

following even in the most extreme far-right factions after exposing his ideas on the Croatian nation and history and statehood-building via an all-embracing national movement founded on the concept of national reconciliation (Hockenos 2003, 42-47). In return, the emigrants managed to raise around three million US\$ which was pumped into the 1990 election campaign allowing HDZ to be the best organized of all the parties (ibid, 50-55). However much logistics mattered, it was that was most important in obtaining legitimacy.

In summary, the ideology of HDZ represented Tuđman's ideas first revealed in his books, however now "decanted" into political practice. What gave it additional power was the turbulent political context marked by aggressive Greater-Serbiann nationalist expansion, which HDZ contested the most successfully by stressing the Croatian nationhood and statehood demands more radically and specifically than any other emerging party in Croatia, to again repeat Vernon Gagnon's claim. Already the earliest HDZ documents, including the Draft on Programmatic Foundations from February 1989 as well the later Founding Programmatic Declaration from June 1989 in fact stressed the very same points as Tuđman's program from 1977, elaborated on in the previous chapter. Hence, HDZ was announced as the representative of an "original and credible voice of that Croatian public opinion which is based upon the genuine historic legacy of the Croatian people" that was founded on the thirteen century legacy of the Croatian nation and state-building process, and especially on the traditions of "Ante Starčević's historical state on the right, Stjepan Radić's universal democratic republicanism, and the visions and experiences of the Croatian Left" (Pauković 2012, 201; Đurić et al 1990, 59-60). Subsequently the founding documents stressed the concepts of national reconciliation and hence the party's claim to represent an all-embracing national movement (ibid, 59-83); the very same cluster of concepts as in the case of HZDS, meaning that both parties were announced as the synthesis of the teleological statehood history and the subsequent representation of an all-embracing statehood striving national movement. As has also already been discussed in the previous chapter, Tuđman envisioned his conceptual cluster to represent a necessary precondition to achieving Croatian national sovereignty, as is also pointed out by Davor Pauković in his excellent study on the legitimizing function of historical narratives in the 1989/90 early transitional period (2012, 201). However, the cluster in question would, in my opinion, represent quite an abstract construct to the electorate if Tuđman had not simultaneously proposed the concept of "living history": the interpretation of World War two and the following post-war communist crimes, as well as a harsh critique of the entire legacy of the communist government. Early credibility was given to HDZ on the eve of the transition for harsh attacks by both the party's officials as

well by the Serbian nationalist intellectuals on Tuđman's freshly released book *Wastelands of Historical Reality* for exposing "pro-Ustaša" historical revisionism especially with respect to the nature of NDH and the related Jasenovac myth (Sadkovich 2010, 264-273). As in the case of HZDS, the fierce attack from the main "Other" put a strong wind in the HDZ sails enabling the party to present successfully itself as the truest defender of Croatian national interests.

Since in 1989 and early 1990 the LCC represented the main opponent, Tuđman focused on depicting the Croatian communist leadership as a servant puppet of the Serb dominated federal government from the very beginning, however not only in respect to being responsible for the crackdown on the Croatian Spring. Namely the LCC legitimized itself as a true bearer of Croatian national interests by portraying its post-1971 politics as representing the first-line defence for the 1974 constitution. Indeed, by the late 1970s the LCC's politics were semi-officially criticized as representing an actual continuation of the Croatian Spring agenda by the Serbian party leadership (Jović 2011, 131-132) while during the 1980s the Greater-Serbian nationalist intellectuals had been publicly attacking the Croatian party branch for leading the anti-Serb politics since 1945.¹⁰⁸ However, since the LCC didn't counter Milošević's aggressive Greater-Serbian politics firmly enough, Tuđman's narrative on the LCC depicting it almost as an assistant agent in the overall economic exploitation and cultural subjugation of the Croatian national identity in Yugoslavia (Tuđman 1995a, 741) was much more convincing, especially since during 1989 the party occasionally attempted to hamper formation of HDZ. Simultaneously the HDZ image as the true defender of the national interests was cemented earliest during the October 1989 campaign for returning the Statue of Ban Jelačić to Zagreb's main square. Although the campaign was launched by the HSLS, it was overshadowed by the simultaneous HDZ action, simply since the former conceptualized the return of the statue from the civic standpoint of bringing back the symbols of the pre-war bourgeoisie society, while the latter interpreted the statue's removal to be "a symbol of suppression of Croatian national emotions, a symbol of a policy of soulless hatred towards their own people and their history, culture and heritage" (Pauković 2012, 204; Radoš 2012, 20).¹⁰⁹ HDZ's image was highlighted subsequently by the „Proclamation to the Citizens and Parliament of the Socialist Republic of Croatia and All of the Croatian People” from 29th of November 1989. Launched at the height of the clash between Serbian and Slovenian leaderships due to the latter's open resistance to Milošević's attempts to recentralize the

¹⁰⁸ Some Serbian historians like Vasilije Krestić went so far to claim that criminal Croatian anti-Serb politics have centuries long roots, only reaching its climax during World War II (Dragović-Soso 2002/ 2004, 169-171).

¹⁰⁹ On ban jelačić see the page 72.

federation¹¹⁰, the proclamation harshly criticized the LCC's indecisiveness to side with the Slovenian politics and additionally appealed for the introduction of the multi-party system and protection of rights the Croatian People and its political autonomy (Đurić et al 1990, 70-71). The proclamation represented thus far the most public stance criticizing Milošević's politics from the Croatian point of view, bringing about the huge subsequent rise of HDZ, especially in the terms of the size of the membership. Although not being officially condemned, the part of the Proclamation claiming the territorial integrity of the Croatian people in its historic and natural borders against the Greater-Serbian expansionism jeopardized the Yugoslav federal constitution and the actual borders of the socialist republics and raised harsh criticisms in the press for representing extreme Croatian nationalism, eventually leading to prospective bloodshed (Pauković 2012, 205).

Publicly the borders-issue was Tuđman's most contested idea before his statement on the NDH in his famous speech at the 1st General Assembly of HDZ in February 1990. Although the claim on the borders appeared to be publicly shocking, Tuđman in fact simply repeated what he had discussed previously in his books: the unrighteous drawing of the socialist Croatian borders being congruent with neither Croatia's historical borders nor with the natural self-determination rights in opposition to the borders of the socialist Serbia, were both natural and historical rights were that respected by appending Vojvodina and Kosovo (Tuđman 1995a, 748). Tuđman publically debated the issue of the borders inter alia the in previously mentioned speech in the 1st General Assembly which represented party's election program. Tuđman indeed recognized Bosnia and Herzegovina to be a national state of Croatian people subsequently recognizing its borders, however the adjoining borders' recognition to the validity of the AVNOJ legacy, i.e. claiming to respect the Yugoslav federal constituencies unless they were threaten by Milošević's politics. Tuđman's "conditional border revisionism" becomes even more clear in light of his elaborations on the positive aspects of the socialist legacy at the 1st General Assembly, singling out only the issues of antifascism and the return to statehood in the form of a federal unit, while simultaneously calling upon the historical legacy of Bosnia representing a "geopolitical unity and with Croatia and with the West" (Đurić et. all 1990, 76). Although Davor Pauković in his otherwise very good and hence here many times cited study claimed that the HDZ support for the actual Croatian borders was truly sincere, I would still rather claim that Tuđman's ultimate intention was to reconstitute borders towards matching the Croatian first president's ideas on the congruency of Croatian

¹¹⁰ On the Serbian-Slovenian clash bringing eventually about the ban on importing Slovenian goods by the Serbian authorities (Ramet 2006/2009, 447-451).

nation and state. This congruency is very clearly stemming from Tuđman's writings, as is discussed in the previous chapter, as well from his politics, especially from his 1992-93 politics in Bosnia, as will be shown later in this chapter. Hence, unlike the case of Slovakia, the ultimate intention of HDZ was to exit Yugoslavia and to reconstitute the borders, whereas the advocating of a confederation acted only as a transitional solution, as Tuđman had already clearly stated to the political emigrants in 1987 (Hockenos 2003, 44-47).

However, the issue which became the most controversial was Tuđman's public speaking on the nature of the NDH at the First General Assembly. The Assembly took part on 24th-25th February 1990, just after the government officially scheduling the multiparty elections for April 1990. The atmosphere of the assembly was saturated with the frenetic (nationalist) excitement bursting out in the packed Lisinski congress hall in Zagreb. It was dominated by a vast group of political emigrants, most of them being in Croatia for the first time after fleeing the country. They were frenetically flaunting Croatian flags having the "chessboard" coat of arms, those being banned during communism for its ties with the Ustasha regime¹¹¹ (Silber and Little, 1996, 85-87). Hence the assembly took part in the context of appealing to the unity of Croats in the country and beyond (*jedinstvo domovinske i iseljene Hrvatske*), a very important concept adjacent to the national reconciliation idea and the one which Tuđman started to build since he established ties with the emigrants (Hudelist, 2004, 581-633). However, Tuđman's elaboration on the NDH at the 1st Assembly was neither shocking nor surprising from the perspective that he had already wrote narrative he delivered as follows:

The supporters of hegemonic-unitary or Yugoslav statist views the HDZ program's goals as nothing more than a demand to re-establish the Ustaša NDH. By doing so, they are forgetting that the NDH was not only a mere "Quisling" entity and a "fascist crime," but also an expression of the historic aspirations of the Croatian people to establish their own state. It was also an expression of the understanding of international factors of Croatian aspirations and its geographical borders, in this case the government of Hitler's Germany, which was, on the ruins of the Versailles order, building a New European Order...Therefore, the NDH did not represent a

¹¹¹ The Chessboard (*Šahovnica*) coat of arms- called upon the white and red quadrants scheduled in a way resembling a chessboard- has been official symbol of the Triune Kingdom since medieval times, therefore appropriated as the national insignia in the early nineteenth century. Although partly compromised by its appropriation by Ustasha, the chessboard however was also appropriated by the communists, however arranged with a sheave and offing in the coat of arms of the Socialist Croatia. The HDZ retrieved the usage of the chessboard, which was however sometimes used in a Ustasha-style, hence starting with the white quadrant. The later chessboard was especially harshly exploited by the right-wing faction. Hence, in the immediate aftermath of the 1990 elections the new government introduced official emblem composed of the chessboard starting with the red quadrant and subsequently arranged by the crown composed of Croatian regional coat of arms (Senjković 2002, 22-24; Rihtman- Auguštin 2000, 23-25). Here I would claim that thus Tuđman achieved double goal by introducing the new emblem: firstly, on a symbolic level he delegitimized the Serb nationalist pointing on the coat as a proof of the resemblance of Ustasha and the HDZ; secondly, the new emblem nicely reflected Tuđman's ideological conservative strivings.

mere whimsy of the Axis Powers, but also a consequence of distinctive historic factors” (Đurić et al 1990, 75; Pauković 2012, 209)

As already elaborated upon in the previous chapter, Tuđman’s labelling of the NDH served two purposes, both aiming at achieving the national reconciliation concept. The first one was to attract the political *émigré*, at the very least it’s most powerful right-wing faction, while the other was to attract the decedents of the wartime NDH families, many of them had suffered various forms of quite often unjustified persecutions during the communist government. Although Tuđman’s statement was far from the spectre of the NDH, a famous response on Tuđman’s speech by the LCC leader at the time, Ivica Račan¹¹² stating that HDZ represents a “party of dangerous intentions” bringing a message of conflict (Pauković 2012, 200) was indeed to be quite plausible in the light of Tuđman’s election campaign, run under the slogan “Let’s decide our fate by ourselves” (*Odlučimo sami o svojoj sudbini!*), which could be said to be very close to a claiming that ethnic Croats should be exclusively entitled to make decisions about politics in Croatia. What Tuđman’s slogan really meant could be decyphered from his words that “The Serbs in Croatia in their own interest should understand that the Republic of Croatia represents the national state of the Croatian nation, who seeks... it’s own sovereignty and emancipation which hitherto, in the single party system, it had not fully enjoyed”. According to Tuđman, full-scale Croatian sovereignty could only be achieved by fixing the disproportional representation of the Serbs in the state services, and especially in the police force, which Tuđman claimed to be 60 per cent (Tuđman 1992, 57-58). Hence, the new government undertook policies of redressing the disproportional representation, having no confidence in the loyalty of the Serbs.¹¹³ Moreover in June 1990 the government set the agenda with the changes on Croatian constitution stipulating Croats as an exclusive constituent nation, besides the category of citizens (Silber and Little 1996, 87-97).¹¹⁴

¹¹² In January 1990 the LCC changed its name into the LCC-Party of Democratic Changes (*Savez komunističke Hrvatske- Stranka Demokratskih promjena: SKH-SDP*). Following a further transformation, in 1992 the party finally adopted the name Social Democratic Party of Croatia (*Socijaldemokratska partija Hrvatske -SDP*) (Plećaš 2000).

¹¹³ According to the 1991 census the Serbs represented around 12% of the population of Croatia. Ramet claims that the Serbs were represented around 75% of the police staff in Socialist Croatia (Ramet, 2006/2009 438-439). Silber and Little claims that the proportion of the Serbs in the Croatian police force was “no more than twenty per cent” (1996, 99), the number coinciding with data on the percentage of Serbs in the LCC and state and public services exposed by Drago Roksanđić (1991, 155-157).

¹¹⁴ The last Croatian socialist constitution from the 1974 defined the sovereignty as residing within the Croatian nation, the Serb nation in Croatia and the nationalities living in Croatia (*Ustav Socijalističke republike Hrvatske*. Narodne novine, 8/1974). It is interesting enough that the previous socialist constitution laid the sovereignty with the Croatian nation and the working people, while the constitutions from the 1947 and the 1953 gave the sovereignty to the people and the working people (*Ustav Narodne republike Hrvatske*. Narodne novine, 7/1947; *Ustav Socijalističke republike Hrvatske*. Narodne novine, 15/1963). Obviously the stipulation of the constituency

Although especially later, the policies of the constitutional changes do not appear to be something exceptional since most of the Eastern European constitutions define sovereignty as residing exclusively in the major ethnic groups and citizens (Dimitrijević 2002), described politics in a given political context subsequently fueled already rebelled Croatian Serbs and added weight to the Belgrade orchestrated Greater-Serbian nationalist propaganda.

Therefore, in line with the afore mentioned it is worth repeating again that Tuđman's nationalist ideas were far from being pro-Ustaši, as already examined in the previous chapter. However, with his teleological statehood seeking ideas on Croatian history and subsequently on the national reconciliation and related historical revisionism, he went against the values of civic society in a similar vein as to their counterpart's, HZDS's, ideological concepts in the Slovak cases. However, with its ideological concept of an all-embracing national movement appealing to the ethnic homogenization HDZ offered the most plausible and attractive political solution to the ethnic Croat electorate in the given context of competing with Milošević's great-Serbian politics. Similar to how the attacks of the Czech elites on HZDS and Mečiar for representing the authoritarian Slovak national identity-building path and highly increasing the Movement's popularity, the Serb nationalist attacks on the HDZ for allegedly being the reincarnation of the Ustaša added massively to the popularity of HDZ. The rise of Tuđman's nationalist movement was even more fueled when the newly established nationalist party of Croatian Serbs, the Serb Democratic Party (*Srpska demokratska stranka-SDS*) additionally laid claims on the century-long victimhood of Croatian Serbs. Namely, the SDS focused especially on emphasizing the political and economic neglect of the Serb-populated regions perpetrated by the LCC, eventually leading to the disintegration of the Serb national community in Croatia (Matković 2011, 116). In fact, the SDS's and HDZ's antagonistic policies of history, as well their concrete politics strengthened each other, as Vernon Gagnon nicely observed in his already cited book *the Myth of Ethnic War* (2004). The HDZ narrative on the hegemony of the Serb-dominated federal government over Croatia eventually produced a Croatian demographic exodus due to the mass-scale emigration that was countered by the SDS reflecting narrative on the post-war suppression of the Croatian Serb claims for autonomy accompanied by intentional economic abandoning of Serb-populated parts of Croatia eventually leading to assimilation of the Serbs due to their mass-scale emigration mostly to large and prosperous Croatian towns (Đurić et al

reflected a particular political context, in a case of the 1974 Croatian constitution framed by the aftermath of Croatian Spring.

1990, 336-141) . Moreover, HDZ's "conditionally revisionist" stance on the border issue was in fact supplemented by Milošević's expansionist counterpart stance on the existing borders representing a purely administrative issue preceded by the national right to self-determination (Ramet 2006/2009, 438-439), the stance advocated in Croatia by the SDS (Đurić et all 337-338). Although being at odds, both politics in fact led towards the same outcome- the opening of the border changing process, unavoidably accompanied by a war.

In the political context where all issues were eventually traced and reduced to inter-ethnic antagonistic relations, the politics of the Coalition of People's Accord (KNS), focused primarily on the issue of civil liberties as well the LCC's transitional policies towards social-democracy, simultaneously distancing itself from the legacy of the authoritarian past while advocating for the Yugoslav federation (Đurić et all 1990, 273-274) did not have much of a chance. In the case of the communists, now renamed to the Party of Democratic Changes¹¹⁵, the biggest additional problem was to save the cohesion of the party, i.e. to save the branches in the Serb-dominated territories. Hence, in an already ethnically very polarized situation the SKH-SDP's relative success in the election was in fact sign of its weakness, because although the reformed party came out of the election as the second strongest getting the 26 percent of the votes, it attracted much more of the Serb than the Croat votes, not only due to the Party's federalist platform, but also due to the late foundation of the SDS (Šiber 1991, 98-100). The LCC's weakness would soon become obvious in the aftermath of the elections, when the aggressive nationalistic policies first pushed by Milošević and his puppet SDS and eventually responded to by HDZ, coerced the electorate to side with the mentioned political factions along ethnic lines.

However, HDZ achieved a dominant victory in the May 1990 parliament elections getting 41.8 percent of the votes, which thanks to the election system, became an absolute majority of 67.5 percent of the parliamentary seats (Zakošek 2002, 32)¹¹⁶. Additionally, such a powerful HDZ victory was also reached due to the discrete but crucial backing from that most important of societal agents- namely the church. As has been described in the previous chapter, during communism the church managed to build the image of an undisputable "saviour of the nation", especially with the "Great Novena" jubilee. Moreover, the church was the first to openly contest the Greater-Serbian expansionism as early as the late 1980s

¹¹⁵ See the footnote 112.

¹¹⁶ The 1990 elections were still organized through the old communist election law, where voters in two rounds elected deputies in three chambers of parliament, partly on a system of list, and partly in single-candidate units. For more see Grdešić, Kaspović, Šiber, Zakošek, 1990. The most interesting is that the election system was "tailored" by the LCC expecting to profit the most of it.

(Bellamy 2003, 158-159). The Church's February 1990 statement on the introduction of democracy didn't endorse any party besides expressing concern with the possible LCC victory. As both Sabrina Ramet and Alex Bellamy rightly point out, the church's leadership was very careful not to openly take sides; however many lower level clergy openly advocated for HDZ (Ramet 2008a, 178-179; Bellamy 2003, 159). Živko Kustić, one of the most influential church intellectuals and one of the "intellectual fathers" of the Great Novena, stated that "The clergy wanted a HDZ victory for sure. ...At that particular moment there was no other option than to wish the victory of HDZ, however not the HDZ perceived as Tudman's party, but rather as the national movement for liberation" (Hudelist 2008b, 47). As Darko Hudelist nicely summarized, HDZ took over "the infrastructure" already created by the church (ibid, 48), meaning the people resonated with the HDZ concepts of national history, and especially the one on Croatian belonging to the Catholic and Western European civilization (Perica 2002, 187-188); meaning that they were more civilized than the Serbs belonging to the Orthodox-Byzantine civilization.

The political situation following the elections was marked by an increase in the number of violent ethnic conflicts predominantly conducted by SDS hardliners, however also followed by their HDZ counterparts. The prelude to the war of July 1990 - May 1991 was characterized by a gradual organizing of the rebellious Serb-dominated municipalities followed by an increasing number of armed border conflicts eventually leading to the proclamation of "Republic of Serb Krajina" (*Republika srpska krajina- the RSK*) polity declaring secession from the Croatian constituency (Barić 2008, 89-93). Within a few months of the beginning of the war in June 1991, approximately one-third of Croatian territory was occupied by the Serbian paramilitary accompanied by the JNA, now openly siding with the rebellious RSK units. The occupation was accompanied by large scale devastations, with their height in the sieges of towns of Vukovar in eastern Croatia and Dubrovnik on the southern Croatian coast and followed by the cleansing of the ethnic Croat population from the occupied territories (Ramet 2002/2005, 90-98; Silber and Little 1996, 169-189). Simultaneously the conflict was shadowed politically by the European Community pressuring the leaderships of the separate republics to reach any agreement over keeping Yugoslavia as a single polity; an action which brought about a similar result as with the negotiations of the Czech and Slovak leaderships to save Czechoslovakia; that was simply bringing the opposite and antagonistic Czech vs. Slovak and Serb vs. Slovenian/Croatian viewpoints to the surface over the constitutional

redressing of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia respectively.¹¹⁷ Threatened by the aggressive greater-Serbian politics that eventually resulted in a short-term arm conflict in Slovenia and open warfare in Croatia, both republics declared the independence on the 25th of June 1991. After a three-month moratorium imposed by the EC in order to try a last futile attempt to save Yugoslavia, the declarations become valid on the 8th of October thus starting the official process of the dissolution ending with the international recognition of Croatian and Slovenian independence in January 1992.

The increasing levels of ethnic conflict following the May 1990 inauguration of the new government divided the population along those ethnic lines, pushing the electorate to homogenize around SDS and HDZ respectively, and so obtaining an unchallenged position for both parties. However, as the great-Serbian expansionist politics gradually ramped up the conflict towards open war, Tuđman deployed a twofold legitimizing narrative. Intra-ethnically he switched his pre-election discourse towards more a conciliatory tone, emphasizing the concept of the political unity in achieving Croatian sovereignty. Simultaneously he framed the political structures in Belgrade, both the Serbian leadership as well the hard-line federal structures such as the JNA, to now represent the main "Others", as Sharon Fisher has already emphasized (Fisher 2006, 15-18).

The former discourse was based on emphasizing the HDZ election victory as an overall "end of the ideational civil war which lasted in Croatia since World War II", as Tuđman emphasized in his inauguration speech at the constitution session of the first post-communist multiparty Croatian parliament on the 30th of May 1990 (Tuđman 1995b, 88). Thus, Tuđman now stretched the concept of national reconciliation to all Croatian political parties by emphasizing their dedication to "the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Republic of Croatia", moreover recognizing the statehood role even of those "who until the last day remained inside the communist movement, finding a space for preserving the Croatian Statehood Traditions and for defending the interests of the Croatian nation" (Tuđman 1995b, 136). The widening of the national reconciliation idea beyond HDZ had previously been exclusively equalized with the nation obviously served to achieve the homogenization of the polity endangered by an open aggression, which eventually led to the October 1991 constitution of the umbrella Government of Democratic Unity. The need for such homogenizing politics also stemmed from international unwillingness to quickly recognize

¹¹⁷ In the Czech and Slovak case the numerous and eventually lousy meetings during 1990-1992 became known as „touring castles and palaces“ due to the meeting points of the delegations (Žák 2000). In the case of Yugoslavia, there were meetings of the presidents of single republics in the first half of 1991 (see Ramet 2006/2009, 467-505).

the sovereignty of the communist federations' successor states in general, which in the Croatian case was added to by an international press writing on HDZ as a party flirting with the Croatian fascist legacy (Pavlaković 2008a). As a way to present the new government as liberal-democratic both internally and internationally, Tuđman depicted his politics as moderate by very harshly condemning the openly pro-ustaša manifestations occasionally coming from the far-right Croatian organization "The Party of the Right" (*Hrvatska stranka prava*-HSP) while simultaneously stressing the ZAVNOH to be a foundation of the modern republic against the Nazi-puppet NDH (Tuđman 1995b, 82,105), which found its expression in the preamble of the 1990 Croatian constitution. Finally he used a very conciliatory narrative to Croatian Serbs, stressing the loyalty of the huge majority to the new government by prescribing the rebellion to a slight minority manipulated by Belgrade (Ibid, 79-163).¹¹⁸ However, this conciliatory narrative was often accompanied by highlighting the need to halt the overrepresentation of the Serbs in Croatian economic and state apparatus, sending a twofold message; a technique Tuđman often used.

Moreover, Tuđman's politics spoke of the preservation of Yugoslavia in some form of confederation, legitimizing it through the legacy of the wartime partisan AVNOJ constitution interpreted as emphasizing the sovereignty of the individual Yugoslav nations (Tuđman 1995b, 82,105). Hence Tuđman pointed out the Great-Serb Milošević's politics along with the Army (the JNA) to be the actual destructive force of the very same Socialist Yugoslavia they claimed to guard by suppressing the rights of self-determination of the non-Serb nations (Tuđman 1992, 159-169; Tuđman 1999a, 142). On same point Tuđman also contested the politics of liberalization and the open market economy advocated by the federal Prime Minister Ante Marković, since he accompanied his reform politics with keeping some form of federal constituency (Tuđman 1995b, 133). Tuđman legitimized the confederation project by constructing parallels to the EC, arguing that history showed how only a democratic form of a multinational polity can be achieved in the form of a loose alliance of sovereign national states such as the European Community is. However, the confederation project was also additionally legitimized by stressing the Serb and Croatian "East-West" cultural differences, making them incapable of living in a common single state; a discourse which Tuđman had also previously developed in his books and was now using especially frequently in various statements and interviews given abroad (Tuđman 1999a, 101-189).

¹¹⁸ Tuđman supported the claim of the loyalty of the majority of Croatian Serbs by subsequently elaborating that the rebellious territories encompass only around one third of the Croatian Serb population, while the two-third of it lived in larger Croatian towns. Tuđman also used This interpretation as supporting argument for denying requests for Serb political autonomy (Tuđman 1999a, 173, 204).

However, the resistance to the greater-Serb politics as well to the accompanied JNA agenda of keeping a centralized and, in so much as possible, a communist Yugoslavia¹¹⁹ was much more powerfully legitimized by framing the conflict within the “east-west” concept, which Ivo Žanić aptly described as “opposition *civilized West (Croatia)- non-civilized Byzantine East (Serbia)*, but also as *democracy-communism* (Žanić, 2003, 190; ital- original). Although Tuđman primarily used the latter construction labelling the Greater-Serbian aggression as the neo-communist assault striving to “take us back into national slavery and the Bolshevik darkness” (Tuđman, 1992, 173) - especially while seeking international recognition of Croatian independence and sovereignty during the 1991- the competing democracy-communism concept was less central than the “east-west” core. As Tuđman sharply expressed in an interview to French newspapers in the midst of the warfare in November 1991 “The Legacy of the Communism doesn’t explain all. In fact, we are presenting the clash of two civilizations. And the border-line which divides them matches the line which once divided the Eastern and Western Parts of the Roman Empire, traditionally orthodox territories from traditionally Catholic ones” (Tuđman 1999a, 182). Here it should be added that the quoted “clash of the civilization” concept, that translated from Tuđman’s books into his politics, existed from the very beginning of the Croatian transition, serving before the onset of the war as the legitimizing argument for the reconstitution of Yugoslavia towards a confederation, since “the differences between the nations of the states constituting present Yugoslavia are not only ethnic, religious and economic, but also ones of civilization; they are reflected in different world views” (Ibid. 148). As Ivo Žanić nicely points out, the west-east concept was also accompanied by the *antemurale* narrative “...aiming to establish an equivalence between the two historical situations and by using such a pattern to get help from Europe” (Žanić 2003, 190). I would add that besides constructing the equivalence, or more precisely, historical analogies being one of the most common patterns of the politics of history (Müller 2002, 27), Tuđman was using the *antemurale* concept equally in its classic core of reminding Europe of a historic debt, emphasizing that while “...being ‘*antemurale christianitatis*’ for centuries, Croats defended Europe from Ottoman despotism, thus enabling development of what we call the modern European democratic and cultural traditions” (Tuđman 1992, 72). Finally it could be claimed that the “east-west” concept,

¹¹⁹ In the 1990 and early 1991 the JNA strongly advocated the preserving of the socialist Yugoslav constitution, even organizing the party in such a way as to hinder the democratic reforms. The JNA general staff maintained connections to hardliners in the USSR Army and considering attempting a coup similar to one attempted at Gorbachev in late 1991. Finally by late 1991 the army had cast off any residuals of Titoist Yugoslavism and openly sided with the Serb paramilitary troop's aggression on Croatia (Ramet 2006/2009, ch.13, 14).

although manifestly appealing to function so as to rally the entire population for the purpose of defence in the midst of the warfare, in fact aimed to additionally strengthen the HDZ's nationalist ideology and hence to delegitimize the concurrent oppositional concepts, mainly that of the liberal-nationalist HSLŠ.

However, the identification of Serbs with communism- expressed by terms such as "Serbo-communism" and "Yugo-Communism" frequently used during the 1990s- had its origins in the interpretation of the large-scale execution of the various south Slav quisling units perpetrated by the Yugoslav partisans in the immediate aftermath of the war. The crimes, mostly known in Croatian public discourse as the "Bleiburg Massacre", represented a historical trauma ever since due to the total number of executed NDH soldiers and accompanying civilians, reliably calculated to a number in the region of 50 000 victims.¹²⁰ Hence the memory of the Bleiburg massacre represented an opposite but equally traumatic historical break as the memory of the Jasenovac death-camp, not only because the massacre represented a taboo during Socialist Yugoslavia, but also due to the fabrication of the "Bleiburg Myth" by the Croatian Ustaša political émigrés. Namely, the emigrants refused to recognize the communist crimes as the Stalinist type of "the settling of accounts with all political and ideological opponents regardless of ethnicity", as Vjerran Pavlaković aptly points out (Pavlaković 2009a, 179) and is what these crimes seem to be to a great extent.¹²¹ Instead, the emigration interpreted the crimes as the intentional attempt of the greater-Serbs to perpetrate genocide over Croats due to the Croatian's alleged unequivocal commitment to an independent Croatian state. Similarly to the case of the Slovak far-right, the fascist character of the Croatian Nazi-puppet state has been neglected, the Ustaša siding the axis-powers was interpreted as the unwilling choosing of the side who would enable the foundation of an

¹²⁰ On the short historiography description of the Massacre see the footnote 42 in the first chapter. Here is important to stress that the calculation on the Bleiburg Massacre victims was done by Croatian demographer Vladimir Źerjavić and still hasn't been verified with more concrete field methods, unlike in the case of the Jasenovac death camp. Namely, in 1989 Źerjavić made calculations of both the Jasenovac and Bleiburg victims in the area of his overall work on the total amount of World War II victims within the territory of Yugoslavia. Firstly, it is important to stress that the number of Jasenovac camp victims calculated by Źerjavić approximately matches the number calculated simultaneously by Bogoljub Koćović, Serb mathematician living in the US. They both came up with a total number of approximately 80 000 victims (Źerjavić 1992, 69-74). Secondly, and even more importantly, the numbers calculated by Koćović and especially Źerjavić almost exactly match the number of victims listed on the basis of individual counting so far by Jasenovac Memorial Site, namely 83 145 (List of Individual Victims of Jasenovac Concentration Camp 2013).

¹²¹ The book by Nikolai Tolstoj *The Minister and Massacres*, dealing with the controversies regarding the British role in the extradition of Russian and Yugoslav quislings to Stalin and Tito respectively, describes the perpetration of the crimes as a large-scale shooting in front of trenches where the victims were later buried; a "technique" which followed the pattern of the Stalinist executions previously perpetrated in Baltic states as well in Poland during the 1939-40 (Courtois et. all 1997/1999, 182-192, 337-347). Also, Tolstoj's writing suggests that the executions were done along the co-national lines, i.e. that the Croatian quislings were executed by Croatian partisans, the Serb by the Serb etc. (Tolstoj 1986/1991, 155-177).

independent Croatian state, while the crimes of Ustaša regime were interpreted as a reaction to the preceding Serb mass rebellion against Croatian independence. Moreover, the perpetrators were described as Četniks disguised in partisan uniforms, with an adjacent emphasis on the overt domination of Serbs in the partisan movement (Jurčević et al. 2005) As Vjeran Pavlaković nicely summarized the discussed myth hid the real nature of the crime stated above, transforming all victims into Croats, subsequently blurring the distinction between innocent victims and war casualties and finally exaggerating the number of victims from 200 000 up to 600 000 (Pavlaković 2009a, 178).

Although Tuđman rejected the above stated radical right-wing concept of the Bleiburg Myth- especially in relation to the nature of the NDH as well the numbers of the Bleiburg victims¹²²- he did however appropriate the equalization of the perpetrators with Serbs, since Tuđman needed it to implement the central concept of his ideology, namely the national reconciliation concept. As Tihomir Cipek correctly elaborated upon , since the communist dictatorship was interpreted mainly as “Serb product”, then the crimes were also ascribed to Serb partisan units, while the ethnic Croatian partisans were exculpated, at least in Tuđman’s interpretation (Cipek 2007a, 19-20). Subsequently, it is rightly recognized by several eminent intellectuals that Tuđman’s government intended to rehabilitate the Ustaša legacy; after all, HDZ was founded and to a great extent led by partisan veterans, including Tuđman¹²³, whereby the legacy of the partisan antifascist struggle has been unambiguously stipulated in the preamble of the constitution, against the legacy of NDH. Subsequently, the mentioned the intellectuals recognized that the politics of national reconciliation were indeed the crucial agent allowing a particular rehabilitation of the Ustaša, especially with escalating the open aggression on Croatia perpetrated by the Serb paramilitary troops backed by the JNA (S. Goldstein 1993; Pavlaković 2008a; Cipek 2009). Hence, it is clear that “Ustaša-nostalgia” (to

¹²² In the *Wastelands of Historical Realty* Tuđman openly stated that the emigration's narrative on Bleiburg was a historical falsification, emerging due to the national identity-building trauma stemming from the subjugated position of Croatia in Yugoslavia, reaching its peak with the label of the genocidal nature of Croats given by the Greater-Serbian construct of the Jasenovac Myth (Tuđman 1989, 79-113). Like Tito in a case of Jasenovac, Tuđman never appeared at a Bleiburg commemoration (Pavlaković 2009a, 187); the non-appearance of the both leaders can be explained by the fact that both myths as forged could not be used appropriately for either Tito’s or Tuđman’s political ends.

¹²³ Josip Manolić (1920-) in the 1950s and 1960s had risen to be third ranking person of the Croatian branch of Yugoslav secret service and was ousted after the crackdown on Croatian Spring. Between 1990-1994 he occupied the highest government posts (prime-minister 1990-91; that of the Croatian secret service 1991-93; head of the upper chamber of the parliament 1993-94); Josip Boljkovac (1920), also a high-rank member of the Croatian branch secret service, ousted in 1971; 1990-91 the first minister of interior; Stjepan Mesić (1934-), offspring of the notable partisan family from Slavonia, later head of municipality, ousted after 1991; 1990-94 served as a prime-minister (1990), Croatian member of the Yugoslav presidency (1990-91) and finally as a head of the parliament (1992-94); Slavko Degoricija (1931-), 1990-91 served as the deputy minister of interior (Maletić 1993, 70, 144, 442, 474).

use Cipek's term) or "flirting with the Ustaše" (to use Pavlaković's term) in part represented a radical counter-reaction to the aggression (Senjković 2002, 29-32), partially stemming from the interpretation of 1991 as the continuation of the 1945 Greater-Serbian crimes, at lastly by part of the population, as Cipek convincingly elaborated upon (Cipek 2009, 159-163). Also, it is of no doubt that the partial rehabilitation of the Ustaša stemmed from the subsequent release of the long suppressed traumatic family memories of the 1945 communist crimes (ibid.), as well from the presumptive concessions made by Tuđman to the powerful right-wing (emigrant) faction in HDZ (Hockenos 2003), perceiving the reconciliation as a green light for the rehabilitation of the Ustaše rather than in the fashion of Tuđman's "forgetting the past" intention¹²⁴, as rightly claimed by Slavko Goldstein (Goldstein in Pavlaković 2008a, 125). However, it was still not understood that national reconciliation was perceived in a such fashion, enabling in turn such a dominant outburst of Ustaša iconography and rhetoric both on the level of everyday life as well as in particular areas of politics¹²⁵. I would claim that the dominant outburst of "the flirting with the Ustaša" was to a greatest extent caused by the unintentional incoherence in the "morphology ideology", to borrow Michael Freeden's phrase. Namely, I think that Tuđman didn't realize that his concept of national reconciliation could not be achieved with the competing interpretations of both the kingdom as well socialist Yugoslavia as a fundamental representation of the same continuous (greater) Serb hegemony over Croats, with disastrous outcomes. If Croatian communists in total were represented as puppet agents of the hegemonic Belgrade government, then it logically follows that everyone fighting against Yugoslavia as a polity and for Croatian independence in the end becomes a positive historical agent, no matter how politically erroneous that agent may be. As Vjeran Pavlaković rightly discusses, the final outcome of the national reconciliation politics was the one damaging relations with Croatian Serbs since they understood it as "the Ustaše have been forgiven" (Pavlaković 2008a, 125), where I would add a subsequent claim that the national reconciliation concept as is forged, at very best excluded the Serbs as an ethnicity in totality. Since it was added by a concrete political claim on an overrepresentation of the Serbs in the Croatian socialist state apparatus - a narrative Tuđman especially overtly exploited during the 1990 election campaign, it is of no wonder that the reconciliation politics just poured fuel on

¹²⁴ As elaborate in the previous chapter, Tuđman forged the national reconciliation concept as Croatian partisan and Ustaša casting off the conflicts, and their subsequent allying on an equal level to struggle for an Croatian independence.

¹²⁵ Ulice Mile budaka, ukljanje imena ulice žrtava fašizma u Splitu, a imenovanje Ulice žrtava komunizma i Ulice Bleiburških žrtava (S.Goldstein 1993,15). omnipresence on a level of everyday life (from selling various Ustaša insignia freely on streets to naming cafes and restaurants after Ustaša head Ante Pavelić) to its open showing off on particular levels of levels governance (naming streets after some notorious Ustaša leaders, Ustaša iconography in official usage in some units of the Croatian army) (Radonić 2012, 167-171)

the fire lit by the preceding Greater-Serbian propaganda orchestrated from Belgrade, as Vjeran Pavlaković argues. By relating the aforementioned exclusiveness of the national reconciliation concept to the traumatic collective memories of Croatian Serbs on World War II Ustaša atrocities, the Greater-Serbian propaganda managed to successfully exploit the ultimately pernicious historical parallel between the new Croatian government and the NDH. Whereas the previously mentioned construction parallel between the new Croatian “chessboard” flag and the Ustaša represents pure a SDS fabrication,¹²⁶ the 1990 Croatian constitution by dropping Croatian Serbs as a constituent nation in a given political context highlighted Tuđman’s ultimate political intentions. Moreover, one of the most prominent Croatian liberal intellectuals and Tuđman’s fervent opponent Slavko Goldstein rightly claimed that the first Croatian president “... was not an Ustaša or an anti-Semite, nor was he a radical Serbophobe. He was fervently obsessed with the ambition to become the creator of an independent Croatia, to expand its borders as far as possible, and to serve as its absolute leader” (Goldstein in Pavlaković 2008a, 128). Hence- and as elaborated upon in the previous chapter- both Tuđman’s general concept of a national state as well the subsequently derived concept of the Croatian national state pledged for as the possible ethnically homogenous polity, assuming ethnic heterogeneity to produce politically unstable societies, whereas large groups of ethnic minorities represent a “factor of disorder”. Thus, the various forms of discrimination experienced by the citizens of Serb ethnicity living in the territories controlled by the Croatian government did not only occur as a consequence of the war, but were also simultaneously unleashed by the previously exposed political outcome of HDZ’s ideology. It can be claimed, especially in the case of the numerous wartime evictions of Serbs from their flats in Croatian towns, as well in the case of the planned executions organized by particular warlords, not only on the frontline towns.¹²⁷ As Michael Freedon convincingly argues, the ideologies are not only valued by their intentional morphological construction, but also by their outcome in political practice, and finally by the perception of a particular ideology and its practice both by its followers and opponents (Freedon 1996, 47-95). Thus, I would disagree with the claims quite often shared by most contemporaneous oppositional journalists that the national reconciliation politics represented *conditio sine qua non* of a successful

¹²⁶ On the checkerboard issue see footnote 111.

¹²⁷ The most 'famous' examples include Tomislav Merčep, the commander of the armed militia unit committing crimes both in Zagreb and in Slavonia; contemporaneously being trialled under the accusation for the war crimes; Đuro Brodarac, the wartime mayor of the frontline town of Sisiak during whose mandate the crimes against Serb civilians were committed; Branimir Glavaš, the head of the eastern-Slavonia municipality, also trialled in absentio for the crimes committed in the town of Osijek. For a good summary see Feral Tribune 2003, special edition for the tenth anniversary, pp. 32, 38-41, 44-45, 52-53, 55-56.

Croatian defence, notwithstanding the “ustaša-nostalgia” (Pavlaković 2008a, 122-123). At last, the arming, organizing and commanding of the police force and the home defence guard units (*Zbor narodne garde*, ZNG) during the 1991-92 warfare was already done almost exclusively by the mentioned HDZ ex- partisan left-wingers and the ex-JNA officers (Silber and Little 1996; 105-119; 169-190; Špegelj 2001). Here I would even claim that the right-wing émigré role in the money-collecting has also been over-estimated to some extent, not only due to the highly non-transparent money-handing process (Hockenos 2003, 85-88), but also since it can be speculated that the Croats living abroad in a time of defensive war would contribute money to any political faction advocating Croatian defence and independence.¹²⁸ Considering the previously discussed arguments, I think that the reconciliation concept- at least how it was forged by Tuđman- not only compromised the Croatian position abroad, but also harmed its society, having in fact a completely different outcome than was intended by its founder. It would already become obvious in the aftermath of the war, when the offensive of the right wing faction produced a cleavage in the ruling party, causing subsequent compromising of the Croatian role in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina accompanied by the rapid deterioration of Croatia’s international reputation ever since.

The factional war in HDZ indeed started simultaneously with the outburst of open ethnic tensions following the 1990 parliamentary elections and subsequent constitution of the new Croatian government. Already in election campaign Tuđman had featured mostly moderate candidates belonging to the ex-LCC political and economic establishment, who were mostly appointed government posts, while the sectors of interior and defence were hand to the left-wing moderates originating from the ex-police and the army circles, hence leaving the right-wing emigrate faction “in the shadow”. In a same fashion Tuđman responded to the Serb rebellion (called also Log Revolution)¹²⁹ by leading two parallel lines of politics. The public one was a sign of peacemaking, tending to negotiate with the nationalist Serb leaders, actioned by the HDZ left-wingers. Simultaneously Tuđman unleashed the right-wingers, who raised tensions through terrorist like actions aiming to subsequently provoke the Serb

¹²⁸ Paul Hockenos brings an interesting story of Boris Maruna, a prominent exile beat-generation poet far from being part of Tuđman’s emigration far-right circles. After returning to Croatia in 1990, Maruna was appointed as a director of Croatian Heritage Foundation (*Hrvatska matica iseljenika*), the cultural state body originally responsible for relations with Croats abroad, however during the war serving as a supply channel of goods and money for the defense purposes. Since famous among the diaspora worldwide, Maruna was very successful in executing his entrusted mission, however resigning the post in 1992 due to a clash with Gojko Šušak’s emigration faction (Hockenos 2003, 82-84).

¹²⁹ It is called a Log revolution (*Balvan revolucija*) since the rebellious Serbs blocked the roads with logs so as to prevent the Croatian police force action in August 1990 to re-establish the government in rebellious Serb-dominated municipalities in Croatia. For a whole action, see Silber and Little 1996, 92-105.

rebellion, even including the assassination of the moderate Croatian police commander of Eastern Slavonia who pressed for every effort in avoiding the onset of the war (Silber and Little 1996, 140-144). The Described parallel politics mirrored Tuđman's ultimate political intentions; the avoidance of open warfare accompanied by the simultaneous keeping the inter-ethnic tensions to serve as an instrument for prospectively easing the issues of reshaping the borders as well the prospective exchange of the populations, both imagined to be reached peacefully via negotiations with the Serb leadership (Butković, 2013)¹³⁰; Tuđman's ultimate goal, discussed in his writings as presented in the previous chapter. The peacemaking politics towards the rebellious Serbs accompanied by the politics of keeping Yugoslavia reconstituted as a confederation presented Tuđman's moderate and smart tactic of aiming at international recognition of Croatian sovereignty. However, following the onset of actual hostilities in June 1991, Tuđman appointed the Government of National Unity not only including the HDZ moderates but also members of the opposition, the extremist right-wingers responded with an unsuccessful attempt to oust Tuđman (Čulić 1991). The right-wing faction was temporarily tamed, mainly leaving it to continue with ethnic violence on fringes, including the previously mentioned perpetrations of Serb citizens and mostly in warzones (Gagnon 2004, 147-148). The HDZ radicals now waited for their moment to come and come it did by the mid-1992, after at least the basic stabilization of the political situation in Croatia achieved with the February 1992 ceasefire and accompanied by the allocation of the United Nations Peace Keeping Force (UNPROFOR) along the frontlines, along with the completion of the process of international recognition of Croatian independence.¹³¹ Following the stated fundamental stabilization of the political situation, Tuđman scheduled parliamentary elections for August 1992 in order to try to consolidate his political power, challenged both by the ongoing factional war in HDZ as well by the opposition critics both to his authoritarian style of ruling as well his political concessions towards the international community.¹³² However, in the

¹³⁰ Silber and Little describe Tuđman's ultimate enthusiasm after meeting with Milošević in Karadordevo in late March 1991 which brought about the reaching the agreement on the partition of Bosnia. Although it turned out that for Milošević the meeting was just a step of political tactics to retain the power, Tuđman really believed that his long waited ultimate dreams were about to come true: avoiding the war, gaining independence for Croatia in expanded borders and the exchange of populations (Silber and Little 1996, 133-134, 144).

¹³¹ The armistice accompanied by the UNPROFOR allocation was set by the plan of the EZ envoy Cyrus Vance. Although it stipulated the gradual reestablishment of the Croatian constitutional order in the rebellious areas accompanied by the return of the refugees and the retreat of the Yugoslav Army from Croatian territory, it in fact secured the Serb territorial gains by maintaining status quo (Barić 2008, 93)

¹³² The "Government of National Unity" began to fall apart by February 1992 when Tuđman pressed by the international community offered territorial autonomy to ethnic Serbs in Krajina in exchange for their formal recognition of Croatian sovereignty. Dražen Budiša, one of government's ministers and leader of HSLs left the government in protest, being followed by representative from other parties who gradually left the government by summer 1992 (Gregurić 1998, 417-418, 514-515, 559).

aftermath of the elections- which HDZ easily won with a huge majority- instead of consolidating the party, the factional war came to a climax and was relatable to the simultaneous escalation of the war in Bosnia and especially to the Croat-Muslim conflict. The almost simultaneous fractioning taking part both in HDZ and HZDS respectively, although not originating from the same cause, produced however quite a similar outcome: the gradual slipping of both movements more towards the right, an irreversible trend which could not be reversed by even the utmost efforts of both leaders, especially Tuđman, to keep the factions within the scope of the all embracing national movements. Here, the conclusion which Kevin Deegan-Krause brought in the case of Slovakia can be applied also in the case of Croatia: that the polarization of the electorate concerning the governing politics inevitably produced an impact on HDZ by dragging it more and more to the right (Deegan-Krause 2006).

3.2.2 Trying to Maintain National Reconciliation: HDZ in Power 1992-2000

HDZ easily won the August 1992 parliamentary and presidential elections by using slogan “Let’s build our Croatia by ourselves in a way we wish” (*Izgradimo sami svoju Hrvatsku onako kako je želimo*). The quoted slogan in fact represented two clusters of concepts: one of HDZ as the state-founding and war-winning agent thus delegitimizing oppositional discourse on political and economic deficits (Gagnon 2004, 158-159), and an adjacent cluster on Croatian statehood building.

Tuđman assumed the state-founding concept by stressing the achieved goals of national reconciliation, uniting Croats both in the country and abroad and eventually bringing about the independence “achieved by the Croatian people, due to the fact that the HDZ had inbuilt in its program everything positive that the Croatian nation had kept in it's heart for centuries” (Tuđman 1993, 54). The opposition critics slammed the actual policies for being too submissive towards the pressures of the international community, resulting in the arrival of UNPROFOR as well as the passing of the constitutional law guaranteeing political autonomy to the Croatian Serbs. Tuđman subverted this by depicting the criticized policies as the only wise tactic to achieving international recognition as well as minimizing further war casualties in a clash with a much better armed enemy (ibid. 57, 61-64). Instead, Tuđman portrayed the defensive war as a miracle which astonished the whole world as Croatians with almost bare hands managed to successfully defend three quarters of the state territory against “the fourth strongest European army” (ibid, 134). Moreover Tuđman tried to discredit the opposition “for being neither for nor against Yugoslavia” and “for not having faith in its own people...for

believing international emissaries when neither HDZ nor Croatian independence...enjoy the support of international community at all (ibid, 61-62). The given narrative was also convincing since the HSLS, the most powerful opposition party who mixed liberalism with nationalism, did not challenge the very core of HDZ ideology at the time, but rather only its practices (Bellamy 2003, 80-82). The discussed statehood-founding narrative was accompanied by a statehood building narrative on cleansing the state apparatus and public services from “the leftovers of the communist bureaucracy... hitherto not ousted due to the war and national unification, as well establishing the national police, army and diplomatic services, which in Yugoslavia were “opened only to Croatian turncoats” (Tuđman 1993, 56-58, 79-80). However, to keep his national reconciliation concept which was now being eroded by the mushrooming warfare of “Ustašo-nostalgia”, Tuđman kept emphasizing the antifascist legacy strongly throughout the whole election campaign. He probably also did it in order to prevent open clashes between the factions in his own movement, which were ongoing from practically the very foundation of the HDZ.

However, the cleavage which Tuđman tried to prevent with the elections erupted in the immediate aftermath. The main cause was the politics of territorial expansion in Bosnia and Herzegovina which were aiming to annex at least the territory of Western Herzegovina, the Croatian ethnic stronghold where the most of the HDZ émigré radicals originated from (Hockenos 2003, ch.3). The government's policies towards Bosnia was twofold; while it officially supported the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Tuđman and his closest circle, consisting mostly of his radical right “henchmen” (S. Ramet), simultaneously led a clandestine policy of reaching an agreement with the Bosnian Serbs over the partition of Bosnia (Lucić 2005). Ideologically a partition originated from Tuđman’s earlier consideration of Bosnia as an historically artificial entity due to its multinational composition, thus being eligible for Croatian-Serb partitioning where Croatian borders were supposed to expand towards the territories that encompassed Banovina Hrvatska from 1939, as has already been discussed in the previous chapter. By late 1991 Tuđman had already replaced the original, moderate leadership of the HDZ branch in Bosnia and Herzegovina, arguing for keeping the integrity of the state with hardliners who eventually founded the secessionist state of Croatian Republic of Herzeg-Bosnia by late 1992 (*Hrvatska republika Herceg-Bosna*, HR-HB). As Sabrina Ramet emphasized, both the founding of the HR-HB as well the subsequent outbreak of the Croat-Muslim war by late 1992 was caused to a great extent by the Croatian expansionist policies that aimed at reaching the borders of the Banovina from 1939 (Ramet 2006/2009, 530-538).

In the immediate aftermath of the 1992 elections the HDZ radicals launched an open attack on the moderate-left wingers due to their firm resistance to the politics in Bosnia. However, it was the politics in Bosnia that supplied the spark that ignited the clash; the background was the long lasting and mutual ideological antagonism between the radicals and the left-wing moderates. Whereas the latter opposed the historical revisionism towards NDH, the former considered the latter as anti-national elements due to their previous careers in the state apparatus and secret service of the communist regime (Jurčević et al 2005, 177-179). Thus the cleavage took the form of politics of history, starting in October 1992 when the Croatian Television broadcasted a movie relating some left-wingers, including the actual head of Croatian secret services Josip Manolić¹³³, to the crimes committed by the partisans in 1945. The movie broadcast coincided with the start of Croatian-Muslim conflict in Bosnia; by the onset of the war in early 1993 Manolić had been ousted from the post and appointed to the relatively less important post of the Speaker of the Chamber of the Counties; a sign that the radicals gotten the upper hand with Tuđman.¹³⁴ Subsequently the moderates backed the opposition in undertaking a vast public critique of the disastrous HDZ politics in Bosnia which lead Croatia to international isolation, as well as of other democratic deficits of the ruling government, including Tuđman's authoritarian style and the HDZ radicals flirtation with fascism (Gagnon 2004, 163-164)¹³⁵, while even the Church openly stated discontent with the violations of human rights in Bosnia (Ramet 2008a, 180-181; Bellamy 2003, 159). Finally, the Second General Assembly of the HDZ held on 15th-16th of October 1993 brought the clash into the public eye. Tuđman tried to overcome the split by legitimizing the existence of both factions within the all-embracing national movement of HDZ, however emphasizing that both the right and the left-wing faction "should convey to the main line", meaning not to subvert the "morphology of the HDZ ideology", to use Michael Freeden's vocabulary. Hence, Tuđman warned the radicals not to renew the cleavages of the past, considered to be overcome by the national reconciliation politics once for all (Tuđman 1995b, 316), while warning the left-wing moderates to stop claiming the very existence of the "pro-Ustaša" faction within HDZ (Tuđman 1995c, 83-84). However, the newly elected representatives were mostly radicals, joined by moderates from the third, so called "techno-

¹³³ For the short data on the leftist moderates see the footnote 123 on the page 138.

¹³⁴ Manolić's ousting from the post of the head of Secret Services coincided with the crimes in the villages of Ahmići and Stupni Do in central Bosnia, committed by some paramilitary units of Herzegovina Croats (Gagnon 2004, 163-164; Silber and Little 1996, ch.22).

¹³⁵ See the Open Letter to Franjo Tuđman from 20.9.1993; signed by some outstanding Croatian oppositional intellectuals and politicians, *Vrijeme je za odlazak* [It is a Time to Resign].

manager" faction, all appointed by Tuđman (Tuđman 1995c, 38-39).¹³⁶ While the repressive apparatus remained in control of the radicals, the techno-managers were entitled to the post of prime-minister, as well to the ongoing anti-inflation politics of economic reforms, including the introduction of the new currency called Kuna, which shall be discussed more in the next chapter. Hence, as Gagnon nicely points out, by appointing the moderates Tuđman overruled the right-wing attempt to take over total control of the party (2004, 165-166). However, he simultaneously gave support to the radicals against the left-wingers since the former fitted the better into his political plans, especially the ones related to Bosnia, as Paul Hockenos rightly observes (Hockenos 2003, 101).

Being completely deprived of the structures of power, the left-wing moderates now undertook an open public campaign accusing radicals, and especially their leader, the powerful minister of defence Gojko Šušak of being responsible for the aggressive Croatian policies in Bosnia, also tackling the issue of the war-crimes committed as well the existence of the concentration camps for Muslims. Moreover, the moderates' leaders accused Tuđman of authoritarianism and leading the right-wing revisionist course the party allegedly took (Manolić 1994/2003; Mesić 1994/2003), finally attempting to overthrow the government in the parliament in April 1994. The attempt failed and most of the left-wing moderates were eventually kicked out of the party.¹³⁷ Tuđman contested the moderates' narrative by labelling it as "the continuation of the communist-era accusations related to World War II", meaning the continuation of laying the collective guilt for Ustaša crimes on Croatian nation. Therefore, Tuđman emphasized that "Manolić forgets that the Croatian people to some extent sided with NDH not because they were fascist, but because they just wanted their own independent state (Tuđman 1995c, 108-109).

As has already been mentioned, Tuđman publicly denied any accusations of partitioning Bosnia and Herzegovina. In doing so, he used a manifold narrative, firstly one emphasizing all the help Croatia provided to Bosnian Muslims, from accommodating around half a million Muslim refugees in Croatia to the help provided in arming Bosnian troops controlled by the Sarajevo government (Tuđman 1993, 147). Consequently, the existence of the Croatian Community of Herzeg-Bosnia-, in the words of Laura Silber and Allan Little, "came to mirror, in almost every sense, the Serb Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina" (Silber and Little 1996, 293)- Tuđman legitimized this by forming an historical analogy between Yugoslavia

¹³⁶ So called techno-managers would include high-ranking directors and entrepreneurs mostly originating from the state oil company INA.

¹³⁷ Besides Manolić, it included also Stjepan Mesić, the actual Deputy Speaker of the Chamber of the Parliament and later Croatian President. On Mesić see the footnote 123 on page 138.

and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Since in Tuđman's words, both states presented the very same kind of multinational polities, the only way to maintain Bosnia as a state was in the form of a confederation of the three constituent nations and its particular political units (Tuđman 1995c). Here Tuđman again used a twofold narrative; to the international press he claimed his politics as being in line with the UN and the EZ principles, hence being the one who hindered the B&H Croats proclaiming their secession to Croatia (Tuđman 1999a, 225). Speaking simultaneously to the party members he defended the confederation proposal as a kind of wise tactic by raising an analogy to the 1991 confederation proposal “which I proposed then not wishing that we should stay in the confederation, but since such a proposal was congruent with global thinking” (Tuđman 1995c, 85). However, only in meetings with his closest circle did Tuđman speak openly of his ultimate intentions, to partition Bosnia with the Serbs and simultaneously creating a “small Muslim state in central Bosnia” (Lucić 2005a,b); not hesitating to speak on described plans publicly even to the international press, since “it would definitely stop all pretensions of the creation of large Islamic state in the hearth of Europe” (Tuđman 1999a, 232).¹³⁸ These words of Tuđman’s also reveal his ultimate “politics of history tool”, that being the concept of a clash of civilizations in Bosnia. From the very beginning Tuđman lamented Bosnia being a state populated with three ethnic groups being mutually distinct due to the differences of their cultures (Tuđman 1995c, 25). The narrative was firstly used to legitimize the proposal on confederative reconstitution of B&H, while during the early phase of the conflict the narrative describing the conflict mainly along ethnic lines where the Bosnian Croats were defending against attack by the Bosnian Muslim army trying to expand their territories at expense of the Croats in central Bosnia¹³⁹ was still dominant. However, by late 1993 the legitimizing narrative was dominated by the “clash of civilization concept”, coinciding with the launch of Samuel Huntington’s controversial theory

¹³⁸ On the dinner organized in honor of the 50th anniversary of victory over fascism organized in London on the 6th of May 1995, Tuđman allegedly drew a map on partitioning Bosnia on a napkin and passed it to British politician and later high representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Paddy Ashdown. The napkin soon became famous as „Tuđman's napkin“ both in international and domestic media (Katunarić 2002).

¹³⁹ Already in late 1992 approximately two-third of the B&H territory was conquered by the Bosnian Serb troops, armed by the JNA resources who were in the territory of Bosnia at the moment of the onset of the war in April 1992, as well the ones taken from Croatia in early 1992 according to Vance’s plan. The territories occupied by the Bosnian Serbs were originally mostly populated by the Muslim ethnic majority, which squeezed the territory controlled by the Bosnian government into a very small area overpopulated by the huge number of the refugees (Ramet 2006/2009, 522-530). Hence, Sabrina Ramet’s arguments that the Army of B&H was to an extent responsible for the conflict was valid, especially in the light of the attempt to ease the difficult situation by expanding on the neighboring Croatian territories, as with respect to the argument that Bosnian Muslims turned gradually radicalized by the inflow of Mujahedin troops from Arabic countries (Ramet 2006/2009, 531-532). However, as Silber and Little emphasize, the main origin of the conflict still rests with Tuđman’s expansionist plans, practically leading the Bosnian Croats to partake in an unofficial alliance with Bosnian Serbs, while officially being allied with government in Sarajevo (Silber and Little 1996, 291-301; Gagnon 2004, 162).

on the clash of civilizations (Žanić 2003, 192; Milardović 1998, 25-28). Huntington pointed to the war in Bosnia as the most outstanding contemporaneous proof of his theory about a border war between civilizations (Huntington 1996/1998); the narrative which coincided nicely with Tuđman's presenting the conflict in ex-Yugoslavia as one "threatening to polarize... along the divisive lines of civilization and religious blocks" (Tuđman 1993, 226).¹⁴⁰ However, the discourse did not manage to legitimize the government's policies in Bosnia either domestically, nor internationally and so it ended up with international condemnation (Gagnon 2004, 164-165). However, the inability of the European countries to stop the war in Bosnia and especially in convincing Bosnian Serb forces end the war, accompanied by the large scale committing of war-crimes caused the new US Democrat government to intervene. As a first step to the pacification of Bosnia, the American government convinced the Croats and Muslims to sign the Washington Agreement in January 1994 which ended the Croat-Muslim war and soon after established the Croat-Muslim Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Federacija Bosne I Hercegovine, FBiH*); alongside Republika Srpska as the constitutional entities of modern Bosnia and Herzegovina. Moreover, the treaty expected the Federation to enter into a confederative relationship with Croatia (Morel 2008, 360-365; Ramet 2008b, 39). Tuđman was ecstatic; he had legitimized the treaty as the unique moment of synergy between global and Croatian politics "where I realized and predicted that the Western and European hopes were that we, the Croats, would be the one connecting Muslims to the western-European civilization, so that Muslims do not become a spring board for fundamentalist, extreme politics, or even terrorism in Europe" (Tuđman 1995c, 86).

The Washington Agreement consolidated Tuđman's position as a statesman and a party leader, both eroded by the politics in Bosnia and simultaneous turmoil in HDZ. Internationally, the HDZ government improved its deteriorating international position by gaining the US government as an ally, or even better as a patron, at least until Operation Storm in the summer 1995 which brought about the retaking of the rebellious Serb territories into the Croatian legal system (Morel 2008, 364-365). Domestically, the Washington

¹⁴⁰ It is interesting how the politics of history in the HR-HB entered a particularly schizophrenic position stemming from the clash of Tuđman's master-narrative politics of history and the historical legacy of especially Herzegovina Croats. The Croat-Muslim war was legitimized in Herzegovina by with narrative of Croatian defense against „Ottoman Muslims“ (Žanić 2003, 191). However, since the Bosnian Croats were sharing the historical tradition of the Hajduk as historical rebel fighters against Ottoman rule, the Bosnian Croat military units were to be depicted in the Hajduk fashion. However, as Ivo Žanić nicely states, the Hajduk politics of history were immediately blocked by Tuđman, since the Hajduk legacy was one of the fundamental pillars of Serb national identity-building, hence a symbol of eastern, Balkan civilization. This narrative was aided by the fact that the Serb rebellion in Croatia was labeled by Tuđman as "hajduk rebellion" (Žanić 1998, 131-164).

agreement blunted the plausibility of the opposition critics towards Tuđman's politics in Bosnia, especially since the Croatian president depicted the Washington agreement as the crucial moment that eventually broke ground for the international community to focus on the issue of the occupied territories in Croatia, while simultaneously emphasizing the loyalty towards territorial integrity of the Bosnia and Herzegovina (Tuđman 1995c, 98-101). However, Tuđman's kind of delightfulness towards the Washington Agreement stemmed fundamentally from the fact that he saw it as an instrument leading to absorption of the Federation by the Croatian state, as he once stated to his closest circle of henchmen (Lucić 2005b, 437-439).

Thus, it can be claimed that Tuđman successfully survived the 1993-94 political crisis; very similar to the one Mečiar experienced simultaneously, as is shown in the section on Slovakia in this chapter. They both originated from very similar positions: the oppositions and the moderate factions in HZDS and HDZ respectively gathered along the same lines due to an overall dissatisfaction with the leader's increasing authoritarian trends of governance, followed by the rapid deterioration of countries' international position, in Croatian case even more so due to its involvement in aggressive politics towards a neighboring country. Both leaders, Tuđman and Mečiar, seemed to grow even stronger from the crisis. However, in both cases the ousting of the moderates moved HDZ and HZDS more to the right,¹⁴¹ thus taming their ideological core of being an all-embracing national movements. Henceforth, 1994 marked the beginning of the subsequent downfall of both HZDS and HDZ, even more serious in the case of the HDZ since the Croatian national reconciliation was burdened by a much more traumatic collective memory. Hence, Paul Hockeno's claim that the émigrés helped Tuđman shift popular discourse to the right (2003, 101) seems to be implausible; henceforward Tuđman desperately tried to retain the Croatian national reconciliation concept. He did it firstly by highlighting the statehood and nationhood legacy of the Croatian partisan movement, especially in contrast to the "dark sides of the NDH". Hence Tuđman was now bolder and more brazen than before the NDH politics of the extermination of Jews, Serbs and Croatian antifascists, as well as its puppet position towards Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy

¹⁴¹ In his famous research on the influence of family siding during the World War II and party preferences, Ivan Šiber claims that although HDZ advocates the Croatian national reconciliation „according to data, that party (the HDZ) attracts, after all, the individuals with the NDH family tradition” (Šiber 1998, 67). However, the data shows almost equal participation of HDZ voters in the Ustasha and the Partisan family tradition (12.4% to 13.7%), indeed with over-proportional voters of the voters with the NDH home-guard tradition (33.2%). If would be subsequently counted in the percentage of voters claiming to be on no side (18.7%), as well the ones claiming to not know (14.9%), and finally if the fact that the home-guard was a regular military where people were mostly drafted was taken into consideration, I would claim that Tuđman's national reconciliation concept was much more successful than Šiber claims.

(Tuđman 1995c, 253, 270-275; Barić 2007, 213-217); a case that Vernon Gagnon also nicely elaborated upon (Gagnon 2004, 168). However, Tuđman's desperate pushing to keep the national reconciliation was eventually in vain; as in the case of the HZDS, the shifting of the party more to the right opened a space for the consolidation of the hitherto quite fragmented oppositional scene, especially by the end of the war in 1995 and subsequent sight of the failings of the HDZ government by society, including various democratic deficits of the political system as well the deterioration of the economy dominated by "crony capitalism" (Bellamy 2003). The opposition, which hitherto tried to contest HDZ by presenting itself predominantly as a more liberal political nationalist than the HDZ was, a strategy doomed to fail due to the HDZ statehood bearing position, now had a political issue where they could successfully present themselves as a political agent distinct from the HDZ (Fisher 2006, 123-147). Tuđman and HDZ now tried to delegitimize the opposition in a two ways, firstly by legitimization of the continuous HDZ government stemming from its successful state-founding and state-defending role and subsequently by labelling any opposition to be "Yugo-communist" and "Yugo-unitaristic" anti-statist elements.

The former narrative became dominant by the August 1995 parliamentary elections, which the HDZ called prematurely, obviously trying to capitalize on the fresh impact of Operations Flash and Storm finally bringing an end to the war however also triggering the exodus of around 200 000 Croatian Serbs. Already in the speeches delivered in the aftermath of the operation Tuđman portrayed the Serbs leaving as a definite end to the Croatian Serb few-centuries long role of being an internal "factor of disorder" by serving "Vienna, Budapest and Belgrade without difference" against the Croatian statehood- building process (Tuđman 1996d, 32, 75-77). In the subsequent election campaign Tuđman framed the solving of the Serb question as the five-year long statehood building process "where never again Knin would rule Zagreb and Croatia" (Tuđman 1998a, 8). In general, Tuđman deployed the very same legitimizing discourse as before, emphasizing the state-founding and the statehood bearing role of the HDZ based upon the synthesis of Croatian national-integration history and the national reconciliation concept. Now he used it to claim that "the people who knew how to pull Croatia out of the Yugo-Serb and communist hell... are now the best to lead Croatia into prosperity" (Tuđman 1998a, 37). Simultaneously, Tuđman kept pushing harshly to preserve his national reconciliation politics, now emphasizing even more strongly the Homeland War as the new founding myth and in particular "the end of the history" where Croatians for the first time fought as one for an independent national state (Tuđman 1998a; Cipek 2009). In that vein, in 1995 the parliament took over the endorsement of the Bleiburg

commemoration, previously being dominated by the radical right and hence being totally revisionist towards World War II (Pavlaković 2009). Subsequently, in the 1996 presidential address to Croatian parliament Tuđman announced the policy of transforming the Jasenovac Memorial into a memorial for all victims fallen for the Croatian state, hence planning to also bury the bones of the “victims of communism” in Jasenovac, as well as those fell in the homeland war and thus aiming to create the “pantheon of the national reconciliation”, following Francisco Franco’s project of the “Valley of the Fallen” ; an idea which Tuđman occasionally expressed in public already from the 1990 (Tuđman 1999a, 62; Tuđman 1995c, 31). While both Bleiburg and Jasenovac policies will be described more in detail in the next chapter, it is enough here to emphasize that the public scandal triggered by the Jasenovac issue simply added to the international exclusion of Croatia, caused fundamentally by the country’s democratic deficits, and especially the reluctance to cooperate with the International Criminal Tribunal in Hague related to the crimes the Croatian Army committed during and especially in the aftermath of Operation Storm (Pavlaković 2008b, 447-453). While the issue of cooperation with the Hague Tribunal and the HDZ government will be examined more in the next chapter, here I will emphasize that Tuđman’s reluctance to cooperate stemmed from the fact that the war brought about the political implementation of the very core of Tuđman’s ideology: forging the unity and historical reconciliation of the Croatian people through the fight for independence and, no less importantly, the removing of the Serbs from the Croatian territory. Tuđman stressed both issues very clearly especially in the aftermath of the Operation Storm (Tuđman 1996d; 1998a; 7-74), while simultaneously abolishing the perpetration of the crimes necessary to inspect by labelling them as reactions of revenge where “... even the most organized armies of the world, such as the US army, committed individual crimes as incidents taking part in every war, which simply couldn’t be controlled” (Tuđman 1996d, 31; Tuđman 1998b, 50-51). The issue of war crimes, together with government’s various democratic deficits, in turn brought logistical and financial support from the international community to facilitate the consolidation of the non-government sector in a similar way to that of Slovakia (Fisher 2006, 123- 147). Hence, in the last phase of his government Tuđman subverted now the legitimizing discourse towards the opposition. While previously the opposition was labelled “addle-headed”, that is, to be as immature children and incapable of leading the state-founding process, henceforth the opposition were labelled as anti-Croatian elements. This label was framed into the overall argument of contemporaneous EU and US politics as being the ones pushing Croatia in back “Euroslavia, the Balkans or the Union of South-eastern Europe”, that is, some form of Yugoslavia. Since the politics of the

international community was depicted as the expression of the West's historical reluctance to the idea of Croatian statehood, the opposition in general were agents of "Yugoslavism"; the label previously only reserved for the opposing liberal intellectuals. Tuđman now depicted the opposition's activities as the *longue duree* historical continuity of the Croatian elite's betrayal of the nation to "Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade" (Tuđman 1998a, 1998b); discourse which he had not used in politics hitherto, and one which was now very similar to HZDS's strategies to delegitimize the opposition. Moreover, Tuđman now made the claim that up to twenty percent of ethnic Croats were against Croatian independence due to being "tied to the Yugo-communist political tradition" (Tuđman 1998a, 120; Aralica 1999, 13-19, 35-55). By doing this, Tuđman moved the cleavage inside the ethnic Croatian community, which in my opinion outstandingly ruined the national-reconciliation concept; the one Tuđman tried desperately to save with the aforementioned conceptualization of the homeland war, as well as the intended balancing of Jasenovac and Bleiburg. Probably since feeling the weakening of the regime's legitimacy, Tuđman tried to give the party a Christian-democratic image in the latter stages of the government, and tried to openly establish close relations with the church. The shift towards a Christian-democracy was already announced in the Second General Assembly in 1993 (Petrač 1994, 113-115), while its full blown implementation was announced by the Fourth Assembly in March 1998 (Stublić 1998). However, this ideological shift was not recognized due to the reasons. Firstly, although in late 1998 the state had signed a series of treaties with the Holy See giving the church a privileged position in society, this coincided with the second papal visit to Croatia resulting in the beatification of Archbishop Stepinac. The Catholic Church in Croatia was not only reluctant to openly side with HDZ, but also criticized the war crimes to some extent, as well as the economic policies bringing about the rapid deterioration of living standards (Bellamy 2003, 189-190; Ramet 2008a). Besides this distancing of at least the church leadership from the direct grip of HDZ, the second reason of the failure of the transformation of HDZ towards a Christian-democratic party was Tuđman's inability to do it; Tuđman kept warning the various sessions of the party's bodies that HDZ should retain the position of "the pivotal party of the centre", which would gather "all the estates and professions in Croatian society" and would be seconded by the right and left-wing centre (Tuđman 1998b; Tuđman 1999b); the obvious sign that Tuđman could not give up the idea of HDZ as the broadest possible national movement.

Finally last but not least important aspect of HDZ's legitimization was charisma of Franjo Tuđman. While the support for HDZ declined over time, the support for Tuđman remained stable, which was evidenced by the presidential elections in 1997 when Tuđman received by

far the most of votes, although the HDZ government was already quite compromised (Gagnon 2004, 171-172). As in the case of Mečiar, Tuđman's charisma owed most to being a symbol of the state-founding and the state-building, being the only politician to gain and to save the statehood. Although Tuđman's charisma as a prophet of the nation was differed from Mečair's plebeian charisma, the ways in which these two charisma's were forged following similar tracks in the narratives of the two leaders fighting for Croatian and Slovak independence from the very beginning. Tuđman depicted his own personal history to reflect the nation's history of being a victim due to his advocacy of Croatdom. Starting with his participation in the partisan movement up until his career in the JNA, as well in the Institute for the Working Class movement all of his personal life was depicted through these lenses. Moreover, he was forged as a prophet not only in respect to his role in the 1990s, but also in respect to the fact that he brought an end to that particular part of Croatian history by embodying the national synthesis he prescribed to HDZ (Hudelist 2004, ch.20). Unlike the case of Mečiar, HDZ was Tuđman, not only leadership-wise, but also in terms of ideology, which in the case of HZDS was developed by the "red-nationalist" intellectuals, as presented in the section on Slovakia.

Finally, as in the case of Slovakia, the discussed ideological politics of history were rallying points for "nationalizing state" politics. Politics in Croatia were characterized by the same trends as in Slovakia: purging the state apparatus and public sector from the "non-national" cadres- initially the Serbs, and later the one labelled as communists, as well as the autocratic tendencies of taking hold over the media and cultural production. It could be said that in the case of Croatia the outlined nationalizing of state politics went even deeper, which can be prescribed to the much more stable government of HDZ in respect to HZDS, the former lasting almost ten years in comparison to the latter's six. Moreover, the defensive war in Croatia opened up a space for more aggressive politics, ending not only in the purging of the Croatian language of Serb words, but also of elementary and secondary school libraries from those books printed in Cyrillic or written by the Serbian writers (Fisher 2006, 101-121; Bellamy 2003, ch.5,6). This greater control of the cultural sphere with respect to Slovakia also stemmed from the personality of Franjo Tuđman, best expressed in the case of the football club Dinamo Zagreb, which was renamed "Croatia" and imagined to be the sporting symbol of the HDZ state and nation-building project. It was the same with the Croatian national football team (Bellamy 2003, 112-121). Although all of the above outlined were related to national identity-building for sure, hence inevitably tackling the politics of history aspect, in practice it's main implementation came in the form of renaming streets and other public spaces, the

politics of monuments and the politics of history textbooks, or, in short in policies of politics of history, which will be discussed more in detail in the following chapter.

3.3 Conclusions

This central chapter of the thesis showed how and to what success HDZ and HZDS respectively used history as a powerful tool to grasp and maintain power during the 1990s. The usage of the politics of history as one of the most important means of legitimization was due in part to the nature of the processes of dissolution for both Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, when the issue of a nation and state-building was number one on the agenda and so overshadowed transitional issues of the political and the economic system common to all countries of East Central and Eastern Europe who were commencing their post-communist transition to a liberal-democratic society. The presence of nation and state-building issues above all was legacy of communism, where in the multinational communist federations all other issues came before those of nationality, as is shown in the previous chapter. This trend was especially valid in the case of the federations' junior partners such as Slovakia and Croatia whose national identity-building process was loaded with a strong statehood building resentment towards the senior partners, the Czechs and the Serbs. In the context of the federations' dissolution, where the senior partners harbored strong resentment towards the junior partners - in Croatia even taking the form of the war of aggression by the Greater-Serb forces - the above mentioned resentment came to be of great importance for political legitimization. Thus, one of the main reasons why some other 'nationally conscious' parties had an even stronger initial historical legitimization than HZDS and HDZ respectively - in the case of Slovakia the Christian Democratic Union/KDH, and in the case of Croatia the Coalition of People's Accord/KNS - lies in the fact that they did not focus so ardently on the statehood founding issues but rather approached them by blending the complete statehood striving historical legacy and other factions. Such nationalist politics of history from HZDS and HDZ, enabled the widest demographic of the electorate to identify with these two "all-embracing statehood seeking movements". Moreover, such a conceptualization of the national identity enabled HZDS and HDZ to successfully counter the far right-wing parties, whose extreme nationalist politics turned to out be too partisan for the electorate, even taking into account the war in Croatia. In Slovakia, blending various statehood seeking historical legacies turned to out be an appropriation of the "Husakist" national identity-building patterns accompanied by a jettisoning of the Marxist Bolshevik content and with the instant addition of the Christian concept to it. In the case of Croatia, the process of blending legacies was somehow complicated, with Tuđman appropriating various right-wing legacies from clerical

to “reformed” Ustaša and blending them with his own interpretation of the nationally-conscious Croatian left and into a subtle ideological patchwork. Since Tuđman developed a whole “ideological” superstructure for a pure thematization of the history of the Croatian nation, including an elaboration on the nature of human history as well as the nature of supranational and national ideologies. The politics of history used by him in the legitimization of a current in politics was far richer than in the case of Mečiar and HZDS. Besides, what Mečiar and HZDS, apart from the discussed national identity-building ideology lacked, was a sufficient comprehension the ideas, leading to a kind of ‘everyday’ politics, Tuđman pushed for the political implementation of his previously nationally ‘fateful’ concept of the borders’ revision to match the ‘historical and natural’ ones He accompanied this by prospective exchanges of populations, in order to achieve the ethnic homogeneity projected as a necessary precondition of stability. Finally, the much more radical historic revisionism of the World War II legacy in the Croatian case than in the Slovak case originated not only from the context of the dissolution of Yugoslavia, but also from the dominance of the far-right émigré faction in HDZ, as well as from the discussed morphological gap in Tuđman’s ideology. The synergy of stated elements brought about a much stronger flirtation with fascism and a subsequent suppression of the nationalized anti-fascist legacy in Croatia than in Slovakia. Simultaneously, the different political contexts related to the dissolution process and subsequent war in Croatia, gave HDZ and Tuđman a much stronger legitimizing potential than was enjoyed by Mečiar and his party. However, both ruling parties by identifying with the mythic body of the nation produced sharp democratic deficits, because such a “holism” subsequently brought about not only ethnic minorities, but also political oppositions to be labeled as enemies of statehood and nationhood. Instead of bringing about a polity constituted from a harmonious ethno-national organic community, the depicted equalization of the nations and the parties caused sharp cleavages in societies, amplified moreover by the authoritarian style of governance. With consolidation of the newly achieved independence by the mid-1990s and the exhausted legitimizing potential of the statehood-founding cluster of concepts, the support for both ruling parties began to gradually wane. This trend in turn caused an ideological shifting of both parties more to the right in an effort to consolidate their electorate as much as possible, which ironically contributed to their subsequent loss of support, because shifting more to the right jeopardized national reconciliation politics as being a cornerstone of the parties’ support.

4 Policies of History in Slovakia and Croatia in the 1990s

Besides having a narrative dimension used in the process of political legitimization and presenting the core of the national identity-building process, the politics of history also has its policy dimension, generally stipulating “historical contents worth being remembered”. This is the reason why the policy of history defines a wide range of agenda, from state symbols and history textbooks to commemorations and “places of national memory” (Leggewie/ Meyer 2002; Cipek 2007a, 15). If the politics of history is approached in its policy aspect, it can be divided into four areas:

The first area would be *Vergangenheitspolitik* (Policy of the Past) which Erik Meyer defines as “generic term for temporary policies by which primarily post-dictatorial states, through legal regulations, deal with problems resulting from a regime change” (Meyer 2008, 175). These policies, of course, originally appeared in Germany as an instrument for dealing with the Nazi past, eventually transforming into policies dealing also with the authoritarian legacies of the communist past. Thus *Vergangenheitspolitik* was implemented in societies going through a processes of transition from various forms of authoritarianism to liberal-democracy, such as south American, southern Europe (Greece, Spain, Portugal), and the post-communist central and eastern Europe. *Vergangenheitspolitik* consists of two aspects: the first, dealing with dictatorial past using various forms of penalty regulations from trials through abolition and amnesty, while the second aspect deals with the economic measures related firstly to the restitution and compensation of victims. Hence, *Vergangenheitspolitik* is related to a concept of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* or transitional justice referred to as a process of coming to terms with an authoritarian past, where the ultimate goal is to achieve a pluralistic civic society (Meyer 2008).

The other three dimensions of the policy of history are not specifically related to regimes in transition, but represent a standard policy package of every regime. The first one would be politico-educational, related to the contents of history taught in schools, such as history textbooks. The second is the politics of national symbols, such as a national flag and a coat of arms, then banknotes, coins and stamps, all primarily aimed towards affecting an emotional attachment to a national symbolic identity. Finally, the last area is politico-administrative, which is focused on institutionalized commemorations and “places of national memories”. The administrative dimension is focused on naming public spaces (streets and squares), stipulating memorial days and finally dealing with various forms of memorial sites, including monuments, memorial plates and museums (Leggewie and Meyer in Cipek 2007a, 14-15).

The aforementioned dimensions of the policy of history have already been quite well researched in both the Slovak and the Croatian cases respectively. Besides, the discussed content represents a core subject of research for other disciplines close to politics of history, such as sociological and anthropological collective memory studies, as well as the textbook analyses done by historians gathered around the Georg Eckert institute for international textbooks studies. This chapter will to an extent present an overview of the mentioned studies while interpreting the findings through a lens of establishing a closer link between HZDS and HDZ's respective ideologies and their concrete implementation, since the link between policies-politics of history is one which the mentioned studies have to an extent missed. Moreover, I shall focus more on *Vergangenheitspolitik*, since unlike in the case of other East Central European countries, Slovakia and Croatia represent countries with serious democratic deficits, hence greatly disregarding the process of coming to terms with the past. Moreover, the Croatian case is unique due to the Homeland War and the related subsequent relations with the Hague Tribunal.

Since the policies of history, unlike ideological concepts, represent clearly demarcated units of analysis, in this chapter I shall describe both cases partly and not as a whole, as was done in the previous two chapters. Moreover, since *Vergangenheitspolitik* represents an extremely important dimension not hitherto having been comprehensively analyzed, I shall devote the first part of the chapter exclusively to it, while the second part will be devoted to the other dimensions: symbolic, the dimension of memory and textbooks.

4.1 *Vergangenshebewältigung* Hindered by National Reconciliation

The breakdown of the communist regimes was followed by the beginning of a process of transitional justice in all countries of East Central Europe (ECE) and was considered to be an unavoidable part of the process of democratizing societies. It was primarily focused on the issue of “de-communization”, or dealing with the communist past. The de-communization consisted mostly of judicial processes for the repressors of the communist time, from screening state servants to various forms of lustration, in other words “cleansing state institutions” of people compromised through abusing their authority in serving authoritarian communist regimes. On the other hand, the de-communization politics also included some kind of symbolic or economic compensation to those who suffered past injustices (González-Enríquez 2004, 218-219). However, González-Enríquez showed that there is no direct link between the attained level of democratic-consolidation and the accomplishment of de-communization measures, but that the link between the former and the latter primarily depends, of course, on the political culture of a country. While the political culture is, indeed, a fundamental variable affecting the strength of the rule of law, there are also factors such as an existing agreement between old and new elites, as well as the presence of the old communist cadre within the new ruling elites, which, in itself, can also decisively influence the processes of democratic consolidation. Moreover, González-Enríquez shows that the issue of transitional justice in the ECE countries was quite often abused, especially by the right-wing parties for their own political ends. Despite these trends, in ECE countries such as Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary the transitional justice achieved certain levels of universality, impartiality and objectivity, which meant that they offered more or less objective policies on coming to terms with the past injustices. On the other hand, in the countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe the politics of de-communization were completely omitted. In cases like Bulgaria, Romania and Albania the de-communization process took the form of arbitrariness, serving exclusively as a political tool to delegitimize political opponents and so was completely lacking when coming to terms with the dimension of the past (González-Enríquez 2004; Arnold 2006).

4.1.1 Slovakia: Preservation of the Past within the Present by Omitting Lustration

Unlike in Poland and Hungary, where the transition was achieved through an agreement between the ruling communist elites and the various opposition groups over the peaceful introduction of the multi-party system resulting in the quite mild politics of transitional justice during the 1990s, in the case of Czechoslovakia the communist regime was overthrown by the Velvet Revolution. Since the Czechoslovak communist regime was the most hardline in the region besides the East German one, the new Czech ruling coalition consisted of factions of the dissidents pressuring from the very beginning their radical policies on coming to terms with the totalitarian pasts. Hence, in the immediate aftermath of the Revolution various forms of lustration politics began to be implemented, aiming firstly to exclude agents and various types of collaborators from public service. The peak of the lustration process was reached after passing the Lustration Law in the Federal Parliament in October of 1991. However, from the very beginning the lustration legislation began to have unexpected results due to unreliable information offered by the secret service files, where even people targeted by the service were listed as potential collaborators (González-Enríquez 2004, 224-228; Zákon 451/1991). The most passionate opponents of the communist regime, namely dissidents from the Charter 77 circles at the very end turned out to be the most harmed by the process. Such an outcome, in turn brought about an increasingly popular discontent with the outcome of the whole process, in the Czech Republic and in Slovakia too, although partly due to different reasons (Cohen 1999, 169-171). In Slovakia the lustration was increasingly seen as another tool of “Prague centralism” and its politics. Opposing the whole package of reformed politics advocated by the Czech elites, whether it was the sudden introduction of the free market, strong competences of the federal bodies over the states, or the lustration issue, was often labeled as the legacy of the non-democratic national Slovak identity-building path. This very lustration was one of the issues contributing most to the fall in popularity of the Slovak VPN government due to their ardent support of the lustration with the subsequent labeling of its critics and opponents as the “red and black dark forces” (Bunčák and Harmadyová 1996c). As shown in the previous chapter, this exact depicted cleavage was then used by Mečiar who in early 1991 established HZDS on the “politics of preservation of the past within the present”, to use the very accurate term of Gil Eyal to describe the ideological package advocated by HZDS. The politics of preserving the past within the present that HZDS inaugurated by the politics of national reconciliation necessary to achieve the highest Slovak interests, in other

words, Slovak sovereignty separate from the Czech political elites pushing to retain the highest position and most power in the federal structure dominated by the Czechs (Žák 2000). The part of the statehood seeking politics of national reconciliation was in direct opposition to lustration, which Mečiar and HZDS presented as politics of allowing the society come to terms with the totalitarian past, as Shari Cohen rightly pointed out (Cohen 1999, 165). In the case of socialism, the HZDS narrative was simultaneously a condemnation of the authoritarian character of the Normalization regime and an emphasis on the idealistic “socialist patriotism” of the Slovak communists who promoted the Slovak state and her nation-building cause (Mečiar 1998, 52, 62). Hence, in February 1992 when Mečiar himself was finally accused of being a secret service collaborator, he easily managed to dismiss the accusations as an “attack on the road leading to Slovak sovereignty” (Leško 1996, 71). Mečiar managed to the present attack on him as one in the series of many ongoing “Prague centralist” attacks on the struggle for Slovak statehood, using this tactic fiercely in the 1992 election campaign (Bunčák and Harmadyová 1996c, 177). After winning the elections, the lustration issue was completely abandoned henceforth, while the issue of total condemnation of communism was hindered by the impression of the narrative on the nation and socialist patriotism was integral to the HZDS ideology, as can be seen from the previous chapter. The separation of the repressive nature of the regime was most clearly seen in the March 1996 Law on the Immorality and Illegitimacy of the Communist regime passed during Mečair’s third government, which was obviously passed due to the pressure of their minor partner in the ruling coalition, the far-right Slovak National Party (SNS). The SNS, being a one-issue nationalist party trying to define it's image inter alia through an ardent anti-communist narrative (Hudek 2002, 2004), which during the 1994-1998 HZDS-SNS coalition government changed into the policy of historical revisionism especially towards the Slovak wartime Nazi-puppet state, including its president Jozef Tiso (Hoffman 1996). Indeed, passing the Law coincided with the simultaneous attempt of the SNS minister of education to introduce the previously mentioned revisionist textbook *Dejiny Slovenska a Slovákov* written by the most outstanding Slovak far-right emigrant historian Milan Ďurica (Kováč 2006). Indeed, the government introduced a law condemning the communist government, however it did not condemn the communist party entirely as a criminal organization, but only as ‘a party which did not prevent it's members from committing crimes’, as Carmen González-Enríquez nicely pointed out. Moreover, the law also omitted certain measures against the persons responsible for particular repressive acts, but just excluded a statute of limitation covering crimes committed under communist rule (González-Enríquez 2004, 228). However, equally

important is that the law contained a condemnation of the crimes from the liberal perspective of human rights, not discriminating against any nation or anything similar (Zákon 125/1996). From this perspective it is understandable why Mečiar did not have a problem retaining and executing various laws related to dealing with the past that were passed by the VPN and VPN-KDH government. Mečiar held the post of Prime Minister when some of these laws were passed, but simply the fact that the laws on the rehabilitation of the individuals sentenced for anti-communist actions (Zákon 119/1990; Zákon 87/1991), as well the laws on the restitution of various kinds of property nationalized and confiscated during the communist government (Zákon 403/1990, Zákon 229/1991), were all passed before the 1990-91 period was all simply based on the condemnation of communism from the liberal-democratic perspective of jeopardizing individual human rights and liberties. No particular responsibility was appointed by them on society or the nation through the above-referred laws. Hence, the laws did not jeopardize the preservation of “Husakist red nationalism”. Besides, the simultaneous implementation of the rehabilitation and restitution laws could serve as a legitimizing policy against the accusations over the democratic deficits of governance, as well as against labeling of HZDS as the party embracing the old red and the black totalitarian structures.

The policy on the restitution of various churches and religion communities’ property confiscated during communism served a similar purpose. While the VPN governments laws regulating particular issues of the church restitution were passed (Zákon 211/1990; Zákon 298/1990; Zákon 308/1991), in October 1993 the HZDS government passed a general law on the restitution of the church property confiscated during communism (Zákon 282/1993). As is discussed in the previous chapter, the HZDS’ ideological concept was stress on the Christian legacy in general; hence it encompassed all Christian denominations in the territory of Slovakia without exception, whose legacy was emphasized as important to the history of Slovak national identity building (Programové vyhlásenie vlády Slovenskej republiky 1995, 56-63). Although representing by far the largest denomination in Slovakia, the Catholic Church did not receive special treatment not only due to the fact that approximately one third of all Slovaks belonged to other Christian denominations, but also because the HZDS “red nationalist” ideology caused the party to clash with the Catholic Church leadership in the mid-1990s, especially since the episcopate largely supported the Christian democratic party - KDH (Kollár 1997, 271). From a religious aspect, a sensitive issue turned out to be the restitution of the Jewish community and the legacy of the Slovak Wartime Nazi puppet state. On Christmas 1990 the government and the parliament of the Slovak Republic announced the Declaration

on the Deportation of the Jews from Slovakia, expressing "... regret for everything that our ancestors did against our Jewish co-nationals during World War II" (Vyhlásenie Slovenskej národnej rady a vlády Slovenskej republiky k deportáciám Židov zo Slovenska 1990). The HZDS government retreated on that issue in thus releasing the nation from guilt of the Holocaust while simultaneously countering the SNS far-right revisionist politics which tended to rehabilitate the wartime Nazi-puppet republic, which certainly resulted in the destruction of several Jewish graveyards and other memorial sites during the 1994-1998 government term (Kollár 1998, 55). Hence, the government resituated some Jewish property, and returned the gold of the Slovak Holocaust victims, which was deposited in Prague in the 1950s and handed it over to the Jewish Religious Community (Kollár 1999, 56). In 1996 the government erected a monument devoted to the victims of the Holocaust in the very centre of Bratislava (Kolektív autorov 2006, 40). However, a problem arose in the drafting of the law on the restitution of the people deported to Nazi concentration camps, which was refuted by the Alliance of Jewish Communities in Slovakia since the government would not accept the restitution of the Jewish victims executed in concentration camps run by the Slovak state (Kollár 1997, 271). The government simply did not want to recognize the existence of concentration camps run exclusively by the wartime Slovak Nazi-satellite republic, because it would acknowledge historic responsibility of the aforementioned, only recognized in relation to the deportation of Jews to Nazi Germany as well as in relation to the existence of anti-Semite legislation.

4.1.2 Croatia: Reconciling the Nation by the Homeland War Policies

Similar to the case of Slovakia, the process of coming to terms with the totalitarian past was in Croatia hindered by the statehood-seeking national reconciliation politics. The policy of coming to terms with the past would simply go against the very core of Tuđman's national ideology: the concept of synthesis of the whole Croatian historic statehood thought, including the communist left, as well as the adjacent concept of HDZ as an all-embracing national movement gathering all factions of Croatian politics devoted to the Croatian nationhood and statehood cause. As Tihomir Cipek nicely summarized, Tuđman prescribed the communist crimes "by default to the Serb partisan units, while Croatian partisans were to a great extent protected from public condemnation by their ethnicity" (Cipek 2007a, 19). National reconciliation took its ultimate symbolic legal form in the Parliament Declarations on the rehabilitation of the Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac and the wartime Croatian communist leader

Andrija Hebrang. Both declarations were passed in the same parliament session in February 1992, and it did not happen by accident that both were rehabilitated simultaneously. Namely, the declarations depicted Stepinac and Hebrang struggling at the same time for the very same cause, but on the opposing sides. Both declarations assume the nine-century long teleological statehood-seeking struggle of the Croatian people, then expressing nation's gratitude to the late Stepinac and Hebrang, who had fallen, martyr-like, in the struggle for the rights of the Croatian nation against the Yugoslav Communist government (Deklaracija o osudi političkog procesa i presude kardinalu dr. Alojziju Stepincu 1992; Deklaracija o osudi uhićenja i umorstva Andrije Hebranga 1992).

Unlike in the case of Slovakia, an additional problem in the forging of national reconciliation was present in the trauma of previously discussed communist crimes from 1945 known as the Bleiburg Crimes. Although HDZ invoked memories of the crimes and exploited the issue during the 1990 election campaign, Tuđman faced a constant problem of dealing with the Bleiburg memory and, at the same time not jeopardizing the national reconciliation. This kind of contradiction was earliest expressed in Tuđman's speech delivered on the first commemoration of the victims of the communist crimes at Jazovka Cave near Zagreb in summer of 1990:

The issue of the war victims...should be understood as a chance to mend all cleavages. However, disclosure of crimes like these in Jazovka Cave is nowadays trying to be used as basis of discrediting the antifascist movement in total, which a democratic Croatia cannot accept. The crimes were an element of World War II...Everyone who had lost a member of their family in the war could today hardly reason rationally; therefore politics is here to provide judgment on the historic crimes and to prevent any recurrence of crimes like this in a future (Tuđman in Jurčević et al 2005, 179).

What Tuđman insinuated here is that no prosecution of the perpetrators would be pursued, partly because many members of the HDZ left faction were the members of the secret service (Josip Manolić, Josip Boljkovac, etc.). Instead, a peculiar kind of lustration was done by ousting certain numbers of Serbs and Yugoslavs from public service (Ivančić 2003). Interestingly enough, the strongest pressure on Tuđman to execute *vergangenheitspolitik* came from the HDZ right-wing faction. In a way to satisfy the right-wingers, Tuđman allowed the Committee for the Identification of the War and the Postwar Victims to be founded on the 8th of October 1991, that is, in the very same session that independence was declared. Although the task of the Committee was stipulated to be "... identification of a historical truth on the number of people who died in World War II and after..." (Zakon o utvrđivanju ratnih i

poratnih žrtava II. Svjetskog rata 1992, art.1; Poslovník Komisije za utvrđivanje ratnih i poratnih žrtava 1992). From the very beginning the Committee focused its activity on providing material for “hunting” moderate leftists. Named colloquially “Vukojević’s Committee” after its head, the notorious HDZ hawk Vice Vukojević. During 1992 the Committee undertook hectic digging on a variety of sites, eventually announcing several bills on indictment. The bills targeted some of Tuđman’s closest wartime partisan fellows, as well as some party functionaries. Hence, the bills were eventually cast away (Jurčević et al 2005, 181-185). However, in the aftermath of the 1992 elections when the right-wingers undertook an open offensive against the leftist moderates, the Committee released a documentary on the assassination of Bruno Bušić, the outstanding Croatian political emigrant. The movie, broadcast on prime-time Croatian television, openly accused some individuals close to a moderate-left faction to be the agents of the Yugoslav secret service. According to the moderate leader Josip Manolić, the movie gave Tuđman the upper hand, probably as a way to tame the moderate leftist opposition towards ongoing politics in Bosnia (Đikić 2004, 77). However, when the moderates were finally ousted from the party by early 1994, Tuđman warned the Commission “not to jeopardize the national reconciliation with “a grave-digging”” (Tuđman 1995c, 31). He hereafter directed the Committee to implement the national reconciliation policy. This is particularly visible through the fact that from 1994 onwards the Committee had agreed to erect various monuments and memorial plates commemorating all victims of World War II together with the victims of the Homeland War where possible (Jurčević et al 2005, 197-199). The symbolic peak of the commission's activities was the October 1996 common burial of remnants of the fallen Ustaša and Partisans in the small Dalmatian town of Omiš (Ivančić 2003, 28-31). The burial in Omiš could be interpreted as a kind of a “pilot-project” for Tuđman’s “master-project” on transforming the Jasenovac memorial site into a site commemorating all the Croats who died for the statehood cause. While the Jasenovac memorial will be further discussed in the next section of this chapter, it is necessary here to emphasize the scandal produced by the Committee’s Final report submitted to the Parliament in September 1999. Being produced shortly before the parliamentary elections, the report in general downplayed the number of victims of Ustaša’s terror while simultaneously focusing almost exclusively on the victims persecuted by the partisans. The most scandalous data the report produced turned out to be the number of Jasenovac death camp victims, stated to amount to 2,238 people (Izvješće o radu Komisije za utvrđivanje ratnih i poratnih žrtava od osnutka (11. veljače 1992) do rujna 1999; Perica, 2002 189). The Report was immediately and harshly attacked by the opposition press, while the

exterior member of the Committee, and one of the most outstanding Croatian liberal intellectuals, Slavko Goldstein labeled the report as the height of the effort “to cover Jasenovac with the veil of Bleiburg” (Goldstein S. 2011). Although leading members of the Committee tried to counter the objections with the claim of focusing on the “Croatian victims” as they had not been properly researched unlike the crimes perpetrated by the Ustaša, the parliament rejected the report and returned it for further processing (Jurčević et al 2005, 200-202). However, after the January 2000 parliamentary elections were won by the opposition, the commission was practically dismissed. It could be speculated, from a contextual point of view, that the Report by far exceeded the frame of the national reconciliation concept that was launched during the progressive stage of Tuđman’s illness and which reflected HDZ's progress in moving to the right in the course of the late 1990s.

Shortly before the Committee scandal another case of forced *vergangenheitsbewältigung* struck the public, namely the trial of the former commander of the Jasenovac concentration camp Dinko Šakić. Similar to other Croatian and European fascists, Šakić fled from Croatia to Argentina in 1945. In 1995 he allegedly had a long conversation with Tuđman during a state visit to Argentina. This fact turned out to be quite compromising when in 1998 the influential Simon Wiesenthal Centre for uncovering Nazi criminals unveiled Šakić’s identity and pushed for the Croatian government to request his extradition and to finally put him on trial. In the words of Ljiljana Radonić, Šakić’s trial “was mostly seen as necessary not because he committed the crimes, but rather to prevent harm to Croatia’s international image” (Radonić 2012, 170). According to the outstanding Croatian jurist Vladimir Primorac, the charges were brought in a bad way since the Ustaša commander was not charged with genocide - which would be understandable due to the NDH's racial politics against Jews, Serbs and the Roma - but instead only for war crimes against civil population. Besides, most of the witnesses called by the prosecution were the death camp prisoners of Croatian ethnic origin, “thus confirming exactly what the Ustaša had previously claimed and what the Neo-Ustaša are claiming now, namely, that only the enemies of the regime were imprisoned in the death camps” (Primorac 2000, 145). However, in 1999 the court found Dinko Šakić guilty and eventually sentenced him to a maximum sentence of twenty years in prison. In the above discussed context, the international community labeled the trial as additional proof of the democratic deficits in Croatia; a critique which Tuđman countered by stating the “Šakić case” to be another attempt to discredit Croatia’s independence by bringing the state in line with the fascist NDH. Finally, Tuđman concluded that “in that way, after fifty years, the Šakić case was forced onto us; he was returned to Croatia precisely to provoke us into treating him in a

negative way” (Tuđman in Mijatović 1999, 205). The “Šakić Case” indeed went against the very core of Tuđman’s national reconciliation politics “where we do not intend to retrospectively call upon anyone and their responsibility for sins of the past, but will not allow the sins to be repeated in the present nor in the future” (Tuđman 1998b, 32). Besides, the Šakić case came in the midst of Tuđman’s political fight against the EU and the US to save the purity of the Homeland War. As Tihomir Cipek nicely pointed out, Tuđman considered the Homeland War to be the real founding myth of modern Croatia, since it had been conceptualized as the final moment in the nation's history where the previously factioned nation united unanimously to fight for independence under the leadership of Tuđman and his party (Cipek 2009, 162).

The government was pressured into coming to terms with the Homeland war by the International Criminal Tribunal in the Hague (ICTY). Initially the government believed that the Tribunal would serve primarily to prosecute the crimes committed by the Greater-Serbian aggression on Croatia, thus enforcing the victimhood concept of Croats and Croatia. The earliest signal that the Tribunal politics could turn in quite the opposite direction than the government wished for had already come by 1993, when international observers warned Tuđman regarding various crimes against civilians committed by the Croatian Army in the “Medak Pocket” operation.¹⁴² Tuđman responded to the warning by only dismissing a few commanding officers, without taking any further measures to punish of the perpetrators (Pavlaković 2008b, 450). The government was additionally discredited with discovery of the concentration camps near Mostar for the Muslim prisoners, and finally with the accusations of the crimes committed in the aftermath of the Operation Storm. The Croatian Helsinki Committee registered around 400 murdered civilians and numerous cases of retaliation and other criminal actions committed against the remaining Serb civil population (Feral Tribune 2003; Primorac 2000, 139-140). Disregarding even whether the crimes purportedly happened as an instrument of the intentionous politics of the ethnic cleansing of Croatian Serbs, or were they just the outcome of warfare,¹⁴³ it remains that the government refused to recognize any

¹⁴² The Medak Pocket operation was led by the Croatian Army in 1993 to free the town of Gospić besieged by the Krajina troops. The commander of the action, General Mirko Norac was later accused of crimes committed against Serb civilians during the action, trialed and sentenced to ten years in prison (Feral Tribune 2003).

¹⁴³ I would claim however, that the crimes were the outcome of the former to a greater extent. It is indeed true that the Krajina authorities immediately pushed evacuation to the Republika Srpska and Serbia on their own people at the very start of the Operation, as Nikica Barić claims. However, I think that the crimes committed during and after the Operation were deliberate acts, sending the Serbs a message of hostility. It can be concluded it brought the crimes in line with Tuđman's speeches delivered in the aftermath of the Operation where he depicted Croatian Serbs as being the “factor of disorder” from their settlement in the fifteenth century until the present, concluding that “their politics made them disappear from Knin and these territories as if they had never been here” (Tuđman 1996d, 76)

form of criminal action committed during Operation Storm (Primorac 2000, 93-100). In speeches delivered in the immediate aftermath of the Operation Storm, Tuđman announced the abolishing of any criminal acts by stating that “even the greatest armies of the world such as the US Army and the British Army could not have prevented the incidents, hence neither could we”, adding that “in a war where Croatian victims have fallen again, the fact that some Serb house was destroyed could not have been avoided” (Tuđman 1996d, 32-33). While some individuals were accused, no Croatian soldier was sentenced. At the same time around 400 guilty verdicts for Serb crimes against Croats were passed in Croatian courts (Pavlaković 2008b, 452). Operation Storm was simply considered to be a glorious ending of the defensive and righteous Homeland War with no place for possible crimes; the claim most notoriously expressed by the head of the Croatian Supreme Court Milan Vuković stating that ‘Croatian soldiers could not commit a war crime since they fought a defensive war’ (Primorac 2000, 108). Thus any intent by the Tribunal to inspect the possibly committed crimes was depicted by the ruling party as an attack on the Croatian statehood and independence (Tuđman 1998b) which would eventually lead to pressing charges as high as the leadership and eventually to him, as he expressed most clearly in the speech delivered to the General Staff of the Army in December of 1998 (HTV Dnevnik 2011). Hence, Tuđman prohibited the generals who commanded Operation Storm from attending the questioning requested by the ICTY officials in August 1997. He also showed a reluctance to pass on requested documents. Both actions the state was obliged to perform by the Constitutional Law on Cooperation with the Hague Tribunal which passed in the Croatian Parliament in April 1996 (Ustavni zakon o suradnji Republike Hrvatske s Međunarodnim kaznenim sudom 1996). Under the threat of sanctions by the international community, the government finally passed on the documents and transferred two contingents of the Bosnian Croat military leadership to the Hague in October 1997 and in September 1999 (Ivančić 2003, 50-54, 73-76; Pavlaković 2008b, 451-453). Following Tuđman’s speech from December 1998, in March 1999 the parliament passed the Resolution on Cooperation with the ICTY, claiming that the Court's actions were politically biased against Croatia. The Resolution stated grievances about the lack of prosecution for the crimes committed against the Croatian nation during the greater-Serb aggression, moreover, complaining about the ICTY prosecution of leading Bosnian Croats. These grievances were legitimized by pointing out that “the self-organizing of Croatian people in Bosnia and Herzegovina...hindered a complete occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina” and also proclaimed “that any possible individual criminal acts perpetrated in relation to these actions [the Flash and the Storm - S.Đ.] are under the exclusive authority of the Croatian judiciary

system” (Rezolucija o suradnji s Međunarodnim kaznenim sudom u Haagu 1999). The resolution was obviously also passed to help in the forthcoming elections in order to preserve the image of HDZ as a state-founding party. Relations between Croatia and the ICTY henceforth seriously influenced Croatian politics; however, this goes beyond the scope of this thesis. I shall not discuss as to what extent have the actions of the ICTY been distorted by the influence of global politics.¹⁴⁴ To conclude, I will emphasize a convincing argument by Vladimir Primorac on how avoiding to recognize and prosecute criminal acts demeans the very principles of the rule of law, hence also demeaning the process of coming to terms with the past as a necessary precondition for the forming of a liberal-democratic society (Primorac 2000, 138-141). Similar impact as the one in line with Primorac’s stated claim had also been produced by the policies of amnesty for crimes committed during the Homeland war. The Law on the Amnesty from September 1992 as well as the Law on the General Amnesty passed in September 1996, cleared perpetrators of criminal acts with the exception of acts such as genocide or crimes against civilians and prisoners of war, all defined in accordance with international laws on the abolishing of war crimes (Zakon o oprostima od krivičnog progona i postupka za krivična djela počinjena u oružanim sukobima i ratu protiv Republike Hrvatske 1992, art.2; Zakon o općem oprostima 1996, ar. 1-3). The Laws were passed firstly to guarantee non-arbitrary prosecution of the rebellious Serbs and so produced discontent in the right-wing faction of Croatian politics. However, ultimately the law, or even better its abuse, presented a legal basis for clearing members of various Croatian paramilitary groups for the crimes committed against Serb civilians in the war zones as well as in large Croatian cities (Ivančić 2003, 57-73).

The second aspect of the ‘policy of dealing with the past’ is comprised of the restitution of subjects suffering past injustices. Unlike in the Slovak case, the politics of restitution in Croatia was written into the ‘Law on the Restitution of the Property Confiscated during the Yugoslav Communist Rule’ from October 1996 which covered real-estate, movables, as well as land property (Zakon o naknadi za imovinu oduzetu za vrijeme vladavine Jugoslavenske komunističke vlasti 1996, ar.1). While in the Slovak case the focus was on the authoritarian communist rule with complete omission of the national, the simple title of the Croatian restitution law points to a completely opposite symbolic meaning. Namely, the Law is titled as a restitution of property confiscated during the “Yugoslav Communist Regime”, hence

¹⁴⁴ On this issue see the book by ex-spokesmen Florence Hartman, as well as by the ex-prosecutor Carla del Ponte. For a good commentary on the actual practice of the Court I suggest the statement of the outstanding Belgrade lawyer Srđa Popović in Peščanik audio show from June 2013 (Popović 2013).

forging legally, the HDZ ideological concept of communism as being an alien concept to the Croatian nation. Again, unlike in the Slovak case, special attention was paid to the restitution of the Catholic Church, naturally due to its strong national identity-building role. Although the Church actually, if not officially, supported HDZ in the early 1990s, the high officials of the Church openly criticized the HDZ policies in Bosnia and condemned prospective crimes committed both during and in the aftermath of Operation Storm (Ramet 2008a, 181-183). The distancing of the church from the government was especially visible with the first visit of Pope John Paul II to Croatia in September 1994, when the Pope openly contested Tuđman's speech on Croatia acting as a thousand-year bulwark for western civilization against the East (Tuđman 1995c, 174-177) by calling against usage of religion for nationalist ends, as well as sending a message for the reconciliation of the nations in the ex-Yugoslav territories (Bellamy 2003, 161-162). However, by 1997 the Church-State "cozy symbiosis" (C. Cviich) came to the fore, resulting in four agreements between the Holy See and the state. The agreements defined the legal question of cooperation in education and culture, spiritual care in the military and police and finally the economic issues between the state and the Church. Ultimately the agreements gave the Church a privileged position in society, resulting in the introduction of mandatory religious education in public schools (Odluka o proglašenju Zakona o potvrđivanju Ugovora između Svete Stolice i Republike Hrvatske o suradnji na području odgoja i kulture, 1997), as well as restitution of the property nationalized during the Yugoslav communist regime with additional financial compensation for the property not eligible to be returned, and finally the state also committed to pay the Church an annual financial subsidy (Odluka o proglašenju Zakona o potvrđivanju Ugovora između Svete Stolice i Republike Hrvatske o gospodarskim pitanjima 1998, ar.2). It is important to add here that the passing of the agreements was legitimized by stating "... the indispensable historic and present role of the Catholic Church in Croatia in the cultural and moral education of the nation" (Odluka Zakon odgoj i kultura 1997, preamble; Odluka o proglašenju Zakona o potvrđivanju Ugovora između Svete Stolice i Republike Hrvatske o pravnim pitanjima 1997, preamble). As Vjekoslav Perica succinctly stated, the enhanced roll of the Church came in the context of the Pope's "politics of history" trying to clean up the relationship of the Church towards fascism by conceptualizing the image of the Church as a harsh and equal opponent to both totalitarianisms. Since "the policy of the Pope's" was an ongoing cause for the beatification of the controversial wartime Pope Pious XII, the Pope's second visit to Croatia in October 1999 was devoted to the beatification of the wartime Croatian archbishop Alojzije Stepinac for his opposition to both totalitarianisms (Perica 2002, 170-177). As Marinko Čulić

nicely put it, the “causa Stepinac” turned to “... a coupling point between the Pope and Tuđman forming some kind of the unofficial political alliance with obvious benefits for both sides. In Croatia the Pope found a country with a surplus of nationalism to some extent, but also a country of similarly strong Catholic feelings” (Čulić 1999, 45). Simultaneously Tuđman saw a good opportunity to exploit the ad-hoc alliance to legitimize his ends, especially in relation to then current attempts to build the Christian-democratic image of his party (Stublić, 1998). Tuđman’s effort to use the Church for his own ends eventually turned out to be in vain, since HDZ lost the 2000 parliamentary elections in spite of the national identity-building capital that the Catholic Church possessed.

To quickly sum up, the process of coming to terms with the (totalitarian) past was omitted in both countries by peculiar national reconciliation politics, which were the core ideological concepts of HZDS and HDZ respectively. The lustration and de-communization politics in both cases were hindered by conceptualizing the parties as all-embracing national movements devoted to end the nations’ thousand-year histories of struggle for statehood. Hence, the regimes were relating the past history through executing the policies of ‘Mečiarism’ and ‘Tuđmanism’ respectively: in the case of Slovakia by omitting any mention of the perpetrators and their responsibility, while in the case of Croatia by pointing out the “Yugo-communist” past injustices. Thus in both cases the fundamental aim was to release the national identity from any kind of historic responsibility. Finally, the Croatian case differs from the Slovak one in respect to a two points. The first one is the exceptional favoring of the Catholic Church, stemming from the symbolism of Church as a national identity-building institution in the recent past and present. The second is that Croatia, unlike Slovakia, suffered from the recent war for the independence. So, the issue of the Homeland War added to all previous historical breaks and started to dominate the history by the mid-1990s, especially in respect to the war-crimes issue and the accompanying relations towards the International Criminal Tribunal in the Hague.

4.2 Polices of Memory: Symbols, Ceremonies, Sites, Textbooks

As has already been mentioned previously, various aspects of politics of memory in Croatia and Slovakia have been comprehensively compared and contrasted by Sharon Fisher's study on the Post-communist Slovakia and Croatia (Fisher, 2006). Simultaneously, most aspects of the state's policies of history have been hitherto comprehended to a great extent on the level of individual cases: the symbols and rituals by Silvia Mihaliková in the Slovak and Dunja Richtman-Auguštin in the Croat case, public commemorations by Andrej Findor in the Slovak and Vjeran Pavlaković in the Croat case and finally the textbooks by Findor and Slávka Otčenášová in the Slovak and by Damir Agičić, Magdalena Najbar-Agičić and Snježana Koren in the Croat case; just to mention some names. Hence, this section of the chapter will assume the findings of the mentioned authors while simultaneously analyzing where and how policies of history are reflected in the core ideological concepts of HZDS and HDZ respectively.

4.2.1 Slovakia: Forging the Plebeian Myth by Blending Christianity and Slovak Socialist Patriotism

Quite a while ago both political science and political anthropology recognized the importance of political symbolism for political legitimization. Murray Edelman and David Kertzer exposed how the symbolic contributes to voters identification with a particular political faction, usually much stronger than rational reasoning based on utility and disutility arguments. As Edelman and Kertzer argued people ascribe to a kind of sense to otherwise quite complex political processes via symbols, thus making symbolic politics turn from pure symbolism to reality (Kertzer 1988; Edelman 1970, 1988/2003). The power of symbolic politics has an even more crucial role in the national identity-building process where symbols represent milestones of collective memory making. As Maurice Halbwachs already argued, symbols and rituals commemorating "moments of memory crystalizing" construct a fundamental identity of a particular group, subsequently maintained and strengthened by regularly repeated rituals (Assman 2000/2006, 54-55).

The central symbol of the nation is for sure its flag and coat of arms. The actual Slovak flag featuring the coat of arms, a double cross, on the top of Tatra, Fatra and Matra mountain peaks that symbolize Slovak's highest mountains, was constructed by the Slovak national-

awakening movement in the 1840s. The mountain peaks were introduced due to their contemporaneous conceptualizing as an expression of the Slovak rural habitat, hence the utmost expression of the myth of the plebeian nation. As L'ubomír Lipták emphasized, the coat was especially harshly exploited during Tiso's fascist Slovak Republic as the symbol of authentic Slovakism. However, since the very same coat of arms was, at various times, part of the Interwar, communist, and post-1989 Czechoslovakia emblems, it was whitewashed from any further discrediting (Lipták 2005). It was the very same with the currency name koruna (crown), since besides being the wartime currency it was simultaneously the currency of all Czech and Slovak common states (Fisher 2005,76). However, there was a slightly different situation with particular images on some Slovak banknotes.

As Silvia Miháliková stated, the images on the Slovak banknotes in general emanates the myth on "the thousand-year thorny historic road to the statehood". This symbolism was conceptualized by two kinds of images: one on the early-medieval "golden ages" of the nation, represented by images of Duke Pribina on the 20 koruna banknote and subsequent images of Saint Cyril and Methodius on the 50 koruna banknote. The images on the following banknotes of 200, 500, 1000 and 5000 koruna represent the "martyrs" fighting for a survival of the Slovak nation during its "thousand-year oppression" (Miháliková 2002, 47, 51): Anton Bernolák on the 200, Ludovít Štúr on the 500, Andrej Hlinka on the 1000, and finally Milan Rastislav Štefánik on the 5000 koruna banknote. Moreover, the banknotes also suggest Slovakia symbolically as a Christian land, the intention being openly stated by the first governor of the Slovak national bank Marian Tkáč. Indeed, in the legend Pribina was the first Slovak ruler who accepted Christianity (Turčan 2005); Bernolák was the Catholic priest and the codifier of the first version of the Slovak standard language at the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century (Kowalská 2000, 178-180), while Štúr was a protestant and Hlinka a Catholic priest. Finally the 100 koruna banknote was decorated with an image of medieval Madonna from Levoča. Hence, it could be claimed that the symbolism on the banknotes was in service of building HZDS's core concept of Christian values as being integral to the Slovak national identity. Moreover, the banknotes were comprised of images of all three HZDS national identity-building cornerstones, as claimed already in the first program from 1991, those being the legacy of Cyrilo-Methodious tradition, Ludovít Štúr's thoughts on the national awakening and Andrej Hlinka's interwar struggle for the Slovak autonomy (Žvach 2006, 11). Previously dominating symbols on the Czechoslovak banknotes, such as Tomáš Masaryk, Jan Kollár and Pavol Jozef Šafárik, were now completely omitted (Fisher 2006, 78). The dual presence of Milan Rastislav Štefánik on the Czechoslovak as well as on the Slovak banknotes

can be explained as a symbolic striving of the HZDS government to achieve “Slovak visibility” and hence to prove the country’s pro-European course. As Silvia Miháliková nicely elaborated, Štefánik was perfect for the banknote since he was still by far the most internationally recognized Slovak. Štefánik achieved great status during his lifetime and became internationally recognized as an astronomer as well as a general of the French army in World War I. Besides Masaryk, Štefánik was the most prominent agent of the foundation of Czechoslovakia. Finally, his mysterious death in the plane crash in early 1919 has been interpreted by the Slovak nationalists as deliberate assassination of the general due to his alleged ardent persuasive measures for the Slovak autonomy in the common state with Czechs (Macho 2006). Thus Štefánik was eligible to be highly appropriated by both the Czech and Slovak national thought, whilst the communists eventually removed his image from the national symbols due to his anti-Bolshevism (Miháliková 2002, 56-58). Štefánik’s symbolism was perfect to be appropriated due to a multitude of reasons: simultaneously being internationally recognized whilst being neglected by the communists, he could represent a perfect symbol of liberal democracy, moreover the national one. While Štefánik’s image was welcomed by everyone, Hlinka’s image on the 1000 koruna banknote triggered consternation on the part of influential liberal intellectuals when the government in 1994 decided to name the State order given for contributions to the foundation of the independent Slovakia after Hlinka brought about a public protest by the Jewish Community (Miháliková 2005, 46-47). The legacy of Andrej Hlinka is still being contested in Slovakia; while the nationalist faction see Hlinka as a kind of “father of the nation”, the liberals relate him to the legacy of the wartime Slovak Nazi-satellite state since it was governed by his successors (Kováč 2005; Miháliková 2002, 44-45). The symbolism of the state orders and medals followed the trend established by the banknotes led to them being named after Hlinka, Pribina, L’udovit Štúr and Milan Rastislav Štefánik. In the words of Silvia Miháliková, the images on the banknotes, state medals and orders did not reflect any symbolic orientation to the present and future being acknowledged in the national symbolism of the western countries. Instead, the Slovak images were devoted exclusively to a particularly Christian vision of the past (Miháliková 2005, 36-37). Finally, it is obvious that the symbolic world of the currency missed the fourth pillar of the HZDS national identity-building, namely the Slovak National Uprising and its accompanying nationalist-communist legacy. The motive of the SNP was probably omitted since it was highly exploited on the communist banknotes. Moreover there was no suitable historic person to represent a nationally oriented communist, since Gustav Husák would not be appropriate due to his dubious legacy described in the previous chapter. However, the

“right-wing trend” on the banknotes was “balanced” by the preservation of the “left-wing national” symbolism in the policies of memories related to spaces and places as well as to the politics of state holidays.

The politics of renaming streets and squares after historic figures suppressed by the communism, accompanied by the simultaneous removal of symbols of the communist authoritarian government, was a common trend in all post-communist European countries. In Slovakia, statues and busts of various communist leaders were removed and the streets and squares renamed, especially if they symbolized characters promoting Czechoslovak centralism, as was the case with the first communist president Klement Gottwald. At the same time, HZDS led a war to preserve the “nationalist-adaptable” parts of the communist legacy by struggling to prevent the erasing of the Uprising memory and the subsequent attempts to name streets and squares after the right-wing historic figures, most notably after Andrej Hlinka (Miháliková 2008, 56-59). Such an initiative was not only exclusively pushed by the SNS, but was also partly supported by the KDH, which built on the inter-war Slovak People’s Party legacy while simultaneously condemning the World War II episode. However, the KDH also labelled the SNP as a fundamentally communist action to seize power, and only then embrace the anti-fascist struggle (Miháliková 2002, 58-59). However, the large-scale naming of public spaces after Hlinka and Tiso appeared mostly in the towns and villages controlled by the SNS, most notably in the party’s strongholds like the town of Žilina in the northwest of Slovakia, near the border with the Czech Republic. Consequently, the public spaces named after the SNP as well as the statues devoted to the Uprising remained untouched (Fisher 2006, 79). The preservation of the anti-fascist legacy was also notable by the maintenance of the grandiose memorial park on a hill of Slavin in Bratislava commemorating the Soviet soldiers and the Slovak partisans who lost their lives during World War II. Similarly, the Museum of the Uprising in Banská Bystrica, whose 1990s collection did not differ radically from the previous communist one, was simply further “nationalized” by downplaying the extent of the role of the Soviet army in the SNP (Findor and Lášticová 2008). The fight to preserve the SNP was also related to the politics of national holidays. It is worth mentioning that the August 29th anniversary of the Uprising commemorating the initial day of the 1944 armed struggle of the Slovak partisans against the Germans and the Slovak Nazi-satelite army had the status of Memorial Day until 1969. The Normalization regime made it into a public holiday during the process of the federalization of the country; whilst in 1975 it was derogated again to the status of Memorial Day in the context of the country’s re-centralization (Miháliková 2002, 57-58). Such “policy of the SNP” obviously followed the contested

interpretation of the SNP presented in the previous chapter, while the 1975 derogation could be explained by the Normalization leadership's intention not to add further fuel to the fire of existing Czech grievances, that the Normalization regime was a kind of hegemony of authoritarian Slovaks over liberal and democratic Czechs (Pithart 2000). August 29th was declared to be a state holiday by Mečiar's government again in 1992. Mečiar did not only contest the attacks on the SNP's legacy by the SNS, labelling it to be a "betrayal of the first independent state", but also the KDH's reluctance to recognize the Uprising. Mečiar wanted to relate the Uprising legacy directly to his own politics; a fact obvious by his repeated statements about his personal highest achievement of proclaiming the new Constitution of the Independent Slovakia on August 29 1992 (Mečiar 1998). Such an effort is especially significant in line with the fact that in 1993, September 1st and July 17th were declared as national holidays. The former date represents the actual day when the 1992 Constitution was passed, while the latter stands for the day when the Declaration of Sovereignty of the Slovak Independence was passed. As Silvia Miháliková wisely points out; "These holidays can be regarded as an expression of 'state-creating vanity' of the political representation" (Miháliková 2008, 156). This state-creating vanity especially related to politics of celebrating July 17th by creating a celebration called The Fires of Sovereignty (*vatier zvrchovanosti*). These festivities encompassed various public dances and subsequent celebrations around fires allegedly representing ancient peasant customs embodying symbolism of the plebeian character of the Slovak nation. The policies of commemorations were predominantly focused on reifying the plebeian myth by over promoting the folklore assumed to represent the genuine Slovak folk character in a very similar fashion to the previous communist regime (Krekovičová 2005a, 112-115). The HZDS rallies were usually accompanied by the prominent party members singing folksongs, while in the 1998 election campaign Mečiar alone sang a few folk songs on a TV show (Krekovičová 2005b, 96-98) thus affirming his image of "the greatest son of our folk."¹⁴⁵ This is why the policies of national identity, especially ones implemented by the notorious Minister of Culture Ivan Hudec during his term 1994-98, were to a great extent, devoted to promoting alleged folk culture, including

¹⁴⁵ It is worth mentioning here that the nation's best resided in central Slovakia for several reasons. Firstly, L'udovít Štúr codified standard Slovak upon the central Slovak dialect, which was considered, together with the central Slovak folk culture, to be least corrupted by the foreign influence. Moreover, Hlinka was from central Slovakia where the 1944 Slovak National Uprising took part as well. Finally, but not less importantly, Mečiar was from central Slovakia. Hence, Mečiar's third government even considered moving the capital to the central Slovak town of Banská Bystrica, however it failed (Fisher 2006, 65). The intention to move the capital was not something new, but followed a *longue duree* historic discussion over the disadvantages of Bratislava being the capital due to its geographically limited position and its mentality alleged corrupted by foreign influences (Lipták 2008).

manifestations celebrating the myth of Cyril-Methodius' legacy as the foundation of Slovak national culture and language (Kolektív autorov 2006; Fisher 2006, 111-115). Hence July 5th, the day when the two saints allegedly came to Slovakia was declared a state holiday. Besides this, cultural policies were also devoted to protecting the Slovak language as being one of the foundations of the Slovak national identity; policies whose outcome was the declaration of the notorious Language law in 1995 that restricted the use of languages other than Slovak. Although the law was initially pushed by the SNS tapping into the agenda of the “nationalization” of southern Slovakia, populated predominantly by ethnic Hungarians, was also backed by HZDS. The law was claimed to be indispensable as a way of protecting the language as the most important expression of national culture, especially with respect to Slovaks living in the southern region (Kolektív autorov 2006, 44-62). Finally, it is worth mentioning that the nationalizing policy of memory abolished not only the communist holidays related to the legacy of Czechoslovakism, but also to October 28th commemorating the foundation of the interwar Czechoslovak republic. The abolishment of October 28th yet again triggered public debate with similar views to the one over the image of Andrej Hlinka on the banknote. The right-wing historians and intellectuals argued for the introduction of October 30th instead of October 28th, emphasizing the October 30th 1918 Martin Declaration issued by Slovak politicians independently from the October 28th 1918 Prague Declaration of the foundation of Czechoslovakia. The nationalist historians interpreted the Martin Declaration as a sovereign act of Slovak politicians to join a common state with the Czechs; the claim was contested by the liberal historians claiming that the Martin Declaration was not of equal status to the Prague Declaration from October 28 (Miháliková 2002, 60-63). The HZDS government again took a “middle nationalist course” by declaring the 30th of October as Memorial Day, while the first post-HZDS government also declared the 28th of October to be Memorial Day.

The politics of the preservation of the past within the present was maybe most visible in the politics of textbooks. Namely, the old communist textbooks from the 1980s were in use and circulation even until 1997, when the new series of textbooks for both primary and secondary schools was published. As Slávka Otčenášová nicely pointed out, the communist textbooks were used in a way that “dismissed the parts related to a class struggle or revolution, and the Marxist ideas, generally, were simply ignored while the national history teaching until 1918 more or less focused on the traditions prior to 1918” (Otčenášová 2010, 91). While such late release of the new textbooks can be prescribed to an extent to the unstable political situation reflected by a three year process of disintegration of the federation

and the overthrowing of Mečiar's second government in 1994, the last communist textbooks offered a narrative adaptable to Mečiarism, at least with respect to the history of the 20th century: although being in a common frame, the Slovak history was recognized as being separate from the Czech. The early medieval history was conceptualized within the common Czech and Slovak frame, even though it reflected the myth of national superiority by depicting the Great Moravian Empire as a great and developed culture both economically, and with respect to the language and the glagolitic script as a part of the Cyril-Methodius legacy. Moreover, the superiority concept was subsequently backed by a narrative of the Great Moravian legacy as the cultural steppingstone of the Hungarian Empire, while the history of Slovakia was depicted through the lens of the "thousand-year oppression", only adopted to the class struggle narrative by forging the Slovak-peasant vs. Hungarian-nobleman opposition. Moreover, the 19th century national awakeners led by L'udovít Štúr were also highly positively labelled by fitting into the Leninist formula of national revolution preceding the socialist one (Findor 2009, ch.6; Otčenášová 2005, ch.2; Otčenášová 2010, ch.3). The only socialist textbooks excluded were ones dealing with the twentieth century, since the narrative had to go through more re-fabrication in order to fit "Mečiarism". However, the mentioned gap was already filled by the book "Old Nation-Young State", published in 1994 and prescribed as an educational supplement for both elementary and secondary schools. The book "corrected" the discussed communist narrative by its further "nationalization" via emphasizing the separate ethnic identity of Slovaks in early-medieval Slavic polities. Moreover, it described the ruling position of the Slovak in the Great Moravian Empire, as well as appropriating the Cyril-Methodius legacy exclusively for the Slovak *ethnie* whilst subsequently adding to it the Christian component neglected during communism. The period of the "thousand-year oppression" was just cleansed of the class component, being replaced exclusively by the nation. As was already discussed, the twentieth century common state with the Czechs was depicted in a twofold way: when it came to the interwar Republic, the positive impact of the Czechoslovak government was not omitted but accompanied with the narrative on the Slovak subordinated position as well as by the condemnation of the idea of the Czechoslovak nation and simultaneous emphasis on Andrej Hlinka's struggle for the Slovak national emancipation. The communist rise to power was prescribed exclusively to Czechs, while emphasis on the authoritarian character of the communist regime was accompanied by the positive view of the 1968 federalization, as well as with some positive outcomes of communist economic politics. The Slovak wartime Nazi-puppet republic was condemned for its participation in the Holocaust as well as for siding with axis powers, without ascribing it

any statehood building legacy. The statehood-founding moment was exclusively reserved for the SNP, now interpreted as the anti-fascist uprising of the broadest strata of the Slovak population for the national emancipation along with the simultaneous reduction of the leading role of the communists, who were “compensated” by emphasizing the 1950s Stalinist trials of Gustav Husák and others for bourgeoisie nationalism (Ferko et. all, 1998). The central position of the Slovak National Uprising to the HZDS national identity-building idea was nicely detected by Andrej Findor and his observation on the textbooks’ construction of historical analogies between the SNP and the alleged uprising of the Great Moravian population against the Frank rule in the ninth century (Findor 1997, 28; Findor 2002, 198-199). However, the most revisionist politicization of history in textbooks came two years later with introduction of the controversial book *Dejiny Slovenska a Slovákov* [A History of Slovakia and the Slovaks] written by the most prominent right-wing émigré historian Milan S. Ďurica. The book was introduced as an auxiliary textbook in public schools during Mečiar’s third government when the post of the Minister of Education was held by an SNS minister. The book immediately raised a series of public protests by Historians from the Slovak Academy of Sciences, as well as by the Jewish Community and the Lutheran Church in Slovakia and finally by the European Commission since the book was published with funds Slovakia received from the PHARE program. The book was criticized for presenting a primordial teleological image of entire Slovak history founded on Catholicism as a pillar of national identity-building, whilst simultaneously depicting the whole history of the Czech and Slovak relations as a “continuous attempt by the Czechs to suppress and dominate the Slovaks”, thus portraying both the inter-war as well as the communist post-war Czechoslovakia entirely negatively. However, height of the objections was related to Ďurica’s interpretation of the World War II period, especially his interpretation of the leadership of the Slovak Nazi-satellite state and President Tiso acting as saviours of the Slovak Jews while simultaneously assigning the responsibility for Holocaust exclusively to the Germans. Moreover, historians objected to the downplaying of the number of victims and especially to depiction of the Slovak National Uprising as an “anti-Slovak and anti-state putsch organized from abroad” (Kováč and Lipták 1997, 34-40). To an extent, Ďurica was forcing a Christian teleological narrative of the state using a similar pattern to Ferko’s now linking the leader of the ninth century uprising against the Franks to Jozef Tiso, since both were priests (Findor 1997, 29; Findor 2002, 198-199). The effort to introduce the book as an official educational supplement by the SNS far-right political offensive, also aimed at the official rehabilitation of Jozef Tiso and the Slovak wartime state (Hoffman, 1996). The book was supported by the

Catholic Church, as well as by Matica Slovenská “for being the first works of Slovak historiography to uplift our national consciousness”. Although the HZDS' official statement was in a similar tone, in the end, Mečiar condemned some sections of the book for being inaccurate and historically incorrect and announced the withdrawal of the book under the pressure of the European Commission (Kritika & Kontext 1997, 62-64). The Ďurica book affair also publicly revealed a long lasting clash in Slovak history between historians gathered around the Slovak Academy of Sciences which can be labelled as “oppositional”, but I would say, rather distanced from employing history directly into the national identity-building process, and Nationalist historians gathered around Matica Slovenská, most of them originating from the émigré circles (Kováč 2006). Hence, it is surprising to what extent the new series of the textbooks, implemented in schools in 1997, were written by the former group. As both Andrej Findor and Slávka Otčenášová argued, although the new textbooks also kept some obsolete trends, such as focusing exclusively on national political history and still depicting the early medieval period as a “golden age” of Slovaks, they renounced the teleological nationalist approach to history in general, and especially with respect to the myth of the thousand-year oppression in the Hungarian Kingdom (Findor 2009, 149-161; Otčenášová 2010, ch.4). This is the reason why I shall here partially disagree with Katarina Vanekova and Sharon Fisher’s objections on the nationalist tendencies of new textbook dealing with the twentieth century. Both authors objected on the textbook statements of the subjugated position of Slovakia in the inter-war period, as well on the label of the war-time Slovakia to present “hollow totalitarianism”. However, the textbook simultaneously emphasizes the positive outcomes of the inter-war period, as well states the Slovak nazi-satellite regime’s anti-Semitic politics and responsibility for the deportation of about 70 000 Slovak Jews to the death camps in the Third Reich (Vanekova 1998, 31-32; Fisher 2006, 68-75). The process of the introduction of new textbooks in schools was only finalized in 2005, after the elementary school, technical school and finally high school textbooks were released (Otčenášová 2010, 90-91).

4.2.2 Croatia: Suppressing 'The Positive Tradition of the Croatian Left' by Mixing the Bones of the Fallen

In Croatia, the break with communist legacy was much more radical than in the case of Slovakia. The causes can be found in both the past and the present. They can find them in the fact that historical memory of Croatian and Serb relations is much more traumatic than the

Czech and Slovak one and in the violent breakdown of Yugoslavia followed by the Greater-Serbian aggression. This is why, from the very beginning, the policies of history came to be a much more contested political issue in Croatia than in Slovakia, especially since most of the debated issues were related to the legacy of World War II.

The basic political symbol, the flag, or even better the coat of arms, had already affected contested political issues from the onset. Namely, the red-and-white checkerboard called *Šahovnica* had already appeared as a part of the medieval Triune kingdom's coat of arms, eventually becoming the national symbol in the nineteenth century. Though it was a part of the coat of arms of the inter-war kingdom, its use became problematic because to its exploitation by the Ustaša regime during World War II. Hence, the Croatian socialist government created the new coat of arms where the checkerboard was floating over the offing and was surrounded by the ears of grain. Although the socialist government recognized the checkerboard to represent "the historical Croatian coat of arms" (Senjković 2002, 24) it was not widely present and used since it was replaced by the red star on the flag of the socialist Croatia. HDZ was already using the old checkerboard flags during the 1990 spring election campaign, which brought about a mass scale revival. They were immediately pegged by the greater-Serb propaganda to represent a clear sign of HDZ's "filo-Ustašism". However, as Dunja Rihtman-Auguštin emphasized, the symbols have had their meanings altered down through the years, making it "impossible to forget that symbols contain connotations of the time in which they were consumed" (Rihtman-Auguštin 2000, 23). Realizing the possible negative connotations the checkerboard could bring the new government, a new coat of arms was introduced in December 1990. The checkerboard received a "crown" consisting of five historical coats of arms representing Croatian regions and "the oldest known historical coat of arms" (Zakon o grbu, zastavi i himni Republike Hrvatske te zastavi i lenti predsjednika Republike Hrvatske 1990, art.7). Besides, now visibly distancing themselves from the coat of arms used by the Ustaša, it could be claimed that the new coat of arms fitted nicely to Tuđman's historicism. The same can be said of the subsequent political symbols introduced by the new HDZ government, such as introducing the presidential guard's gold-trimmed uniforms or the introduction of the omnipresent *pleter* - an interlacing ribbon-pattern that appeared as an ornament in architecture from an early medieval Croatian polity. As Reana Senjković nicely highlighted, the *pleter* "represented the Christian tradition, and even more importantly, the one of Western Christianity, while simultaneously highlighting the thousand-year presence of Croats on the territory between the Pannonian plains and the Adriatic sea" (Senjković 2002, 21).

A much more dubious issue then presented itself. A national symbol had become the name of the new Croatian currency, Kuna (marten), which replaced the Croatian dinar, introduced as a kind of transitional currency in the latter part of 1991. Although the Kuna was used as a currency only in NDH, Tuđman contested these claims by arguing that marten's fur was a widely used medieval trade unit on the territory of the Triune Kingdom, concluding that "we have all rights to introduce ourselves to the world also through our currency, which we have named so because of its use as a means of payment since antiquity" (Tuđman 1995c, 126-127). In 1994 the Croatian national bank even published a book legitimizing the aforementioned narrative, written by the outstanding nationalist linguist Dalibor Brozović (Brozović 1994). Though the name of the currency is still controversial, the images on the banknotes did not appear as objectionable as in the Slovak case. However even for the Croatian banknotes the cited claim that Silvia Miháliková used for the Slovak currency can be applied, they both do not reflect any symbolic connotation to present and future. As in the Slovak case, the historical images on the banknotes represent "martyrs for the nation" with addition of a couple of notable medieval writers. The reasons for the differences in comparison to the Slovak case are different histories of both nations. Many of the images found on the banknotes from the nineteenth century and earlier reflected the statehood-building struggle. On the 5 Kuna note were the late seventeenth century insurgents against the Habsburgs, Count Zrinski and Count Frankopan; Ban Jelačić's image was on the 20 Kuna banknote, while the 100 Kuna note depicted Ban Ivan Mažuranić, despite his pro-Yugoslav inclinations since is considered to be the founder of the modern Croatian legal and institutional system (Cipek 2004, 21-23). The 200 Kuna banknote was devoted to Stjepan Radić, while on the largest note, the 1000 Kuna note, was "the father of the homeland" Ante Starčević. The mentioned images of the writers, the one of Ivan Gundulić from Dubrovnik on the 50 Kuna banknote and of Marko Marulić from Split on the 500 Kuna note reflect the importance of language for national identity building, especially since the latter is canonized as the father of Croatian literature (Novak 2004, 56-62). Choosing medieval historical characters can be seen to reflect the fact that the modern codifiers of national literary language were proponents of the single Serbo-Croatian language. As Sharon Fisher already observed, Croatian banknotes, in the same fashion as the Slovak ones, ignored the historical figures advocating Yugoslav unity, such as bishop Strossmayer. However, Fisher also observed that the banknotes lacked religious images (Fisher 2006, 77-78), as well as images of the early medieval Croatian kings. Both facts are quite astonishing considering Franjo Tuđman's political thought. However, the absence of the latter was in a way balanced by naming the

most important state orders and medals after the early medieval Croatian princes and kings. Similarly, in the Slovak case, the equivalent orders were named after the same historical characters that appeared on the banknotes (*Zakon o odlikovanjima i priznanjima Republike Hrvatske* 1995). As in the case of Slovakia, the Croatian banknotes were missing the symbols of the left-wing national identity-building pillar of HDZ, namely “the positive tradition of the Croatian left”. However, unlike the Slovak case, this fact was not balanced by the policies of national memory; on the contrary, policies of state holidays, as well as policies of spaces and places of memory showed an even more radical suppression of the left-wing legacies. Again, these policies reflect a different historical legacy of Yugoslavia in Croatian collective memory, one related to World War II as well as the position of the junior partner and its subsequent bloody dissolution in comparison to the respective historical legacy of Czechoslovakia in Slovak collective memory.

The removal of communist monuments in Croatia was not as widespread as in Slovakia simply because Socialist Yugoslavia had already rejected socialist realism through Tito’s break with Stalin in 1948. The trend of renaming streets and squares after historical figures suppressed by the communist identity-building was similar in both cases. Quite often the names were changed into the pre-war ones, excluding the ones celebrating the Yugoslavist ideas (Rihtman- Auguštin 2000, 44-47). The communist public holidays and commemorations were completely derogated (*Zakon o blagdanima i neradnim danima u Republici Hrvatskoj* 1991; *Zakon o prestanku važenja zakona o spomen-obilježavanju povijesnih događaja ličnosti* 1991). No public discussion, similar to the Slovak dispute over preserving 28th of October as a holiday since on that day in 1918 Czechoslovakia was founded, ever appeared in Croatia. This can be prescribed to previously stated differences in the historical memories of the Slovaks and the Croats in the twentieth century as well as to then ongoing violent dissolution of socialist Yugoslavia. In both cases plenty of new religious holidays were introduced, symbolizing the fundamental contribution of Christianity and Catholicism to the Slovak and Croatian national-integration processes. Although the day commemorating the anti-fascist struggle was also retained as a state holiday in Croatia, it had been completely altered from the previous communist one. In socialist Croatia the holiday was called the Day of the Uprising, and was celebrated on July 27, commemorating the day in 1941 when the communist party organized a massively popular uprising of the Croatian Serbs against the Ustaša terror. As Drago Roksanđić argues, July 27 was taken as the day of the Uprising due to the predominant political myth that Serbs were the carriers of the National Liberation Struggle, whereas Croats remained addled with the guilt of Ustaša. Moreover, a whole

“hierarchy” in the Uprising commemorations was established, it began with Serbia on July 7 and Montenegro on July 13 (Roksandić in Pavlaković 2008c, 10). This was in complete dissonance with Tuđman’s interpretation of the Croatian partisan branch being on the forefront of the national-emancipatory struggle, as well as to preceding in every sense the struggle of the branches in other republics (Tuđman 1989; Barić 2007). Hence, the new Day of Anti-fascist Struggle was declared to be June 22, representing the day in 1941 when the first partisan rally was gathered in a forest nearby Sisak in central Croatia (Pavlaković 2008c, 10). This brought symbolic politics in line with the preamble of the new Croatian constitution stipulating that the anti-fascist struggle represents the historical precedence of the actual Croatian independence (Ustav Republike Hrvatske, izvorišne osnove). Since June 22 was ignored in communist Yugoslavia for above mentioned reasons, Vjeran Pavlaković rightly claims that the reassessment of the actual Day of Anti-fascist Struggle challenged the communist distortion of the past without rejecting the anti-fascist legacy (Pavlaković 2008c, 11). However, it should be noted that the newly proclaimed holiday also nicely reflected Tuđman’s ideology, since the day contained symbols of Croatian anti-fascism that preceded the uprisings in all of the other Yugoslav republics and the squad was made up predominantly of ethnic Croats. However, the Day of Anti-fascist Struggle did not achieve the proper symbolic significance in the 1990s, which can inter alia be seen by the fact that almost 3000 sites of memory commemorating the partisan fight and representing almost half of the sites erected during the communist government, were demolished or removed over the course of the 1990s, (Hrženjak in Banjeglav 2012, 99-100). Tihomir Cipek nicely argued how this demolition “from below” stemmed from Tuđman’s interpretation of socialist Yugoslavia to be a Serb hegemony over Croats and where the partisan crimes of 1945 were prescribed exclusively to the Serb partisan units. Thus, the historical analogy between the 1945 crimes and the aggression on Croatia in 1991 was forged. In both instances, the symbol of the red star was worn by both partisan units and the Yugoslav Army. This interpretation is very convincing, especially because of the argument that the demolition was occurring mostly in war zones, while in the parts of Croatia with a strong partisan tradition and the ones not directly affected by the war, the partisan sites of memory were not demolished, only the star was removed, where possible (Cipek 2009, 160-162). However, I would add here that the treatment of the spaces and places of partisan anti-fascist memories was in particular supported “from above” and eventually presented an erosion of the national reconciliation concept and actually symbolized a green light for rehabilitating the Ustaša movement. Although Tuđman preserved Marshal Tito’s square in Zagreb, as well as naming the street

crossing the square after Andrija Hebrang (Rihtman-Auguštin 2000, 47), the prominent streets named after ethnic Croatian partisans were renamed in Zagreb and elsewhere. The streets of seventeen Croatian towns and villages were named after the Ustaša minister and writer Mile Budak, including the one in the second largest city of Croatia, Split (Radonić 2002, 169; Ivančić 2003, 37-43; Banjeglav 2012, 123). Moreover, the HDZ government denounced the International Day of Victory over Fascism and it no longer was a public holiday. In contrast, Slovakia had retained and celebrated it as a public holiday. Opening a space to what Slavko Goldstein, possibly a little too radically, labeled a “neo-Ustaša offensive” (Goldstein in Pavlaković 2011, 227). This was firstly and most significantly visible in September of 1990 when one of Zagreb’s central squares, The Square of the Victims of Fascism (Trg žrtava fašizma) was renamed into the Square of Great Croats (Trg hrvatskih velikana) (Pavlaković 2011). Here Tuđman, in my opinion, resigned his reconciliation concept by claiming that “if we keep ‘The Square of the Victims of Fascism’, then we should also have an equivalent ‘Square of Victims of Communism’, since the latter are no less important than the former” (Tuđman 1992, 69); he could have simply added victims of communism to the square’s original name. However, in the same speech Tuđman revealed his ultimate intentions when he added that “besides, we already made the decision to erect a monument commemorating all of the fallen, so as not to deepen the wartime and revolution cleavage, but instead to built spiritual unity in freedom and democracy”.

Indeed, the monument to all who have fallen for the national cause was a core pillar of Tuđman’s national reconciliation policy of memory whilst also commemorating the Homeland War by presenting a fresh founding myth for the newly independent Croatian state. Jasenovac Memorial Site was chosen to be the space, where Tuđman imagined a memorial commemorating all the Croatian war victims, including those of fascism and of communism, as well as those who fell in the Homeland War, “thus representing a symbol of the Croatian national reconciliation” (Tuđman 1995c, 31). Although Tuđman’s stated idea provoked a heated public debate soon after Tuđman announced the definite implementation in his address on the state of the nation delivered before the parliament in 1996. Since the very beginning of his political career Tuđman kept openly announcing the idea of turning Jasenovac into a site commemorating all of the fallen for the Croatian cause. Namely, in the interviews given to Slovenian and German newspapers in the 1990s, Tuđman announced his intention to implement reconciliation politics following the example of the Spanish dictator Francisco Franco, thus creating a site where Ustaša and Partisans would be buried together (Tuđman 1999a 62, 103). The intention was simultaneously supported in the works of a few amateur

historians who were trying to prove that in the immediate aftermath of the war, Jasenovac was, for a brief period, used as a death camp for the execution of NDH soldiers and civilians captured in Bleiburg; a claim which was resolutely disproved by professional historians (Goldstein I. 2001a; Škiljan 2009, 126-130). Eventually the policies of “Bones in the Mixer” (*Kosti u mikseru*)- as the whole issue was ironically labeled in the most oppositional journal in Croatia, *The Feral Tribune* (Čulić 1999)- were renounced under threat of protests from a series of protesters, including the Croatian Jewish community, the league of partisan veterans and several liberal intellectuals, as well as the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (Banjeglav 2012, 107-108). The reason why the policies of Jasenovac came into play so late was the fact that the Memorial Site was occupied by rebel Serbs, and demolished. It was returned to Croatian authority through Operation Flash in early May of 1995. Just ten day after the Operation, a delegation of Croatian parliament visited the Jasenovac memorial site with the idea of commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the Bleiburg crimes and honoring all victims who died for the Homeland (ibid). This act perfectly reflected Tuđman's policies of infusing Jasenovac and Bleiburg together to achieve the implementation of his reconciliation politics. Until 1995 the Bleiburg commemorations were neither under the auspices of the state, nor given any special treatment by the state broadcast services, showing that Tuđman obviously allowed the commemorations in order for the far-right to vent, while to an extent simultaneously marginalizing it. However, by the end of the homeland war Tuđman could no longer afford any commemorations with such symbolic meaning as Bleiburg to be potentially turned against him by the far-right, as Vjeran Pavlaković pointed out (Pavlaković 2009a, 185). Hence, he decided to take control of the commemoration by putting it under the auspices of Croatian parliament and appointing the already mentioned parliamentary commission to organize and implement the commemoration activities. Simultaneously the parliament declared May 15 as the Memorial Day of Croatian Victims Fallen in Struggle for Freedom and Independence, which is very significant since May 15 symbolized the day when the NDH soldiers and civilians surrendered to Tito's partisans at Bleiburg. The date was, however, also celebrated in the Socialist Yugoslavia as the Day of Victory over Fascism following Tito's breaking of ties with Stalin (Pavlaković 2009a, 175, 186). Although placing both Jasenovac and Bleiburg commemorations under his control, Tuđman never attended a single commemoration at either sites of memory. As Vjeran Pavlaković rightly observed, for Tuđman “victory in the Croatian War for Independence was his greatest accomplishment, and therefore he preferred to use anniversaries of key moments from the 1990s to make appearances and issue speeches” (Pavlaković 2010, 139). The perception of the Homeland

war being a glorious defense that eventually brought about the long desiderated independence was unanimously accepted by the nation, unlike the historical consciousness of World War II, as Ivan Šiber showed in his study (Šiber 1998). Hence, building the Homeland War into a new founding myth served Tuđman as the best means of also forging the his own myth as the final creator of independence and bringing an end to the cause of Croatian history. Thus, August 5th 1996, the day commemorating the Croatian Army's entrance into the capital of the self-proclaimed RSK during Operation Storm, was declared as the Day of Homeland Thanksgiving (Dan domovinske zahvalnosti) (Koren 2011b, 131). August 5th was triumphantly commemorated, with Tuđman delivering speeches extolling the historical "spiny road" to independence and the grandeur achieved under his government, without, of course, mentioning any wrongdoings on the Croatian side (Tuđman 1998a, 192- 200; Pavlaković 2009b). To what extent Tuđman sought to link his personal legacy with the victorious Homeland War is best seen in the fact that he chose August 5 as the day of his second inauguration in 1997. However, rather than choosing to celebrate the Thanksgiving Day in Knin, Tuđman celebrated it at the Altar of the Homeland. The Altar, erected as a monument devoted to the victims of the Homeland War, was supposed to present a place of symbolic paying of respects to the homeland. As Tamara Banjeglav nicely pointed out, the altar contained several elements reflecting Tuđman's national identity-building idea: it was built from slabs delivered from all over Croatia, forming the checkerboard-like image and subsequently being decorated by the motifs from Croatian early medieval history, hence forming a visual image of the 'myth of ancestry'. The altar was not only the place of memory visited by high state officials, but also a place where international politicians during state-visits were taken to (Banjeglav 2012, 132-133), which reflects the symbolic importance Tuđman ascribed to the altar. Finally, it should be emphasized that in the very centre of the monument an eternal flame was placed, which Tuđman lit on May 30 1994. May 30 was declared as Statehood Day, which, along with the Day of Homeland Thanksgiving, was surely the most important holiday in the 1990s. Linking the Homeland War to Statehood day ultimately reveals the same trend of 'state-creating vanity' which Silvia Miháliková highlighted in the case of the HZDS government. Hence, Statehood Day was declared to be neither on October 8, when the 1991 Croatian parliament declared independence, nor on January 15, when in 1992 Croatia become internationally recognized as an independent state. Instead May 30 commemorated the day when in the 1990 Tuđman was elected as Croatian president by the parliament and the day on the first post-communist multiparty Croatian parliament was summoned. Another commemoration relating to the Homeland War was the

Day of the Memory of the Victims of Vukovar, commemorating the fall of the town of Vukovar on 18 November 1991. It presents a different side of the Homeland war memory, one symbolizing suffering and the price paid to achieve independence (Kadrov 2006). The day was not highly exploited for political cause probably due to its mourning character and the fact this was only declared in November 1999 (Odluka o proglašenju Dana sjećanja na žrtvu Vukovara 1991). This could have also been related to an election characterized by a strong pressure of the ICTY to extradite the individuals charged with committing war crimes.

Finally, the policies of school textbooks reflected similar trends to the stated policies of memory. Unlike in the Slovak case, the break with the communist and Yugoslav past was much more radical, resulting in the introduction of the new school syllabus as early as 1991 which avoided the Marxist approach and separate Croatian history from the Yugoslav framework (Najbar-Agičić and Agičić 2006). However, complete revision came only in 1992, when a group of historians loyal to the new government wrote textbooks intended to bring about de-ideologizing and Croatization of the school syllabus, as is emphasized by Magdalena Najbar-Agičić and Damir Agičić (*ibid*, 175-176). The textbooks in 1990s Croatia exposed similar trends as in the case of Slovakia: exclusive focus on the history of Croatia, with a predominant focus on political history and with simultaneous neglect of contextualization of the national history into a European and regional context (Budak 2004; Baranović 1999). However, the main focus of textbook policy in Croatia was on the revision of nineteenth and twentieth century history, which is not surprising, taking into consideration that modern history had a much more traumatic impact on the Croatian national identity-building process than on the one in Slovakia. Thus, the early medieval history was taken out of the Yugoslav framework and was put into service of forging the thousand-year old statehood myth by conceptualizing Croatian polity as a direct precedent to the contemporary Croatian state. Moreover, it mentioned belonging to western Christianity for the first time, serving as a benchmark of difference with Serb and the fact that their early medieval polities belonged to the Byzantine political sphere and eastern Christianity (Budak 1997; Goldstein I., 1993.). The textbooks on medieval history, however, were been less focused on the concept of national victimhood than in the Slovak case, although the history of Croatia as a part of the Hungarian and the Habsburg empire is also approached as an everlasting struggle to preserve the sovereignty of the Triune Kingdom (Koren 2005; Najbar-Agičić and Agičić 2007). This lesser antagonism in Croatian textbooks than in the Slovak case can of course be easily explained by the existence of the autonomous Croatian polity in comparison to Slovakia, which was a province of the Hungarian kingdom. As regards to Bosnia, its medieval history was

interpreted as integral part of Croatian history (Posavec 1997), with the accompanied conceptualization of the Croatian primordial cultural legacy against the Muslim and the Serb one, hence the impression of the latter two acting as some kind of historical intruders into Bosnian territory (Agičić 2003). The depiction leaves a similar impression of the seventeenth century settlement of Serbs in the territory of present-day Croatia. It was treated as intentions of the Serb actions to derogate the power of the Croatian feudal diet and the viceroy over the territories that the Serbs settled (Koren and Najbar-Agičić 2002, 136-137). As is obvious and expected, the construct of the main 'Other' in the textbooks was devoted to Serbs. Even the depiction of medieval politics was not immune to historical parallels with the present. The extent of the antagonism is shown by the fact that one textbook labeled the Serb medieval polities as acting in line with “perfidious Byzantine politics ... sowing hatred towards everything Latin (Catholic)” (Mirošević et al 1999, 126). The Croatization of history increased, of course, as we approached modern history, i.e. “the era of nations”. Nineteenth century Croatian Yugoslavist faction in the textbooks is mostly depicted through a lens of the preservation of the Croatian (historical) states rights against the Serb political expansionism (Agičić 2001). However, according to Agičić, Najbar-Agičić and Koren, the biggest revision was undertaken in interpretation of history of the twentieth century, where the inter-war and Socialist Yugoslavian era of consisted of the Serbian hegemony over Croatians and the foundation of Yugoslavia in 1918 was depicted as a break in the millennium long Croatian sovereignty. As for the history of World War II, the foundation of the NDH was presented as being hailed by the majority of the population as their long-awaited independent national state. It also stated that, however, people were soon disappointment by politics of the Ustaša regime in general, even though criminal politics of Ustaša were only mentioned but not described in any detail. At the same time, a lot of space was devoted to events at the Bleiburg field and the communist crimes that followed, as well as to the persecutions of the Catholic Church and especially the Archbishop Stepinac. In partisan anti-fascist struggle, the communist leading role was to an extent tamed by emphasizing the role of the Croatian peasant party in the anti-fascist struggle. As Ivo Goldstein and Agičić and Najbar Agičić pointed, it was obvious that the backdrop of the previously mentioned textbook's content presented Tuđman's interpretation of Croatian history (Goldstein I. 2001, 17; Najbar-Agičić and Agičić 2007, 203-204). The grip over the textbook content became even more evident with the new history syllabus for elementary and secondary schools prepared in 1995. According to a statement of the head of the team preparing the new syllabus, its basis is to represent the state-administrative individuality of the Croatian kingdom, as well as

emphasizing the persecution of Croats in both Yugoslav states accompanied by downplaying of the criminal character of the NDH (Szabo in Najbar-Agičić and Agičić 2007, 203-204). Finally, the new school curriculum brought an open criticism by the OSCE finding that, *inter alia*, the textbooks contained a high level of intolerance towards national groups other than Croats and particularly towards Serbs and an unacceptable historical revisionism towards World War II history. The ministry of education responded by indeed recognizing certain overemphasis on the communist crimes in respect to the fascist ones, justifying it, however, by previous neglect of the former, subsequently refusing the claim of ethnic intolerance stated by the OSCE report (Bellamy 2003, 150-152). The ministry, eventually let the appearance of some parallel textbooks by the late 1990s, mostly written by historians not directly related to the HDZ government. However, the trend was quite modest until the year 2000, when the new coalition government introduced a whole series of parallel textbooks making them a choice of teachers (Najbar-Agičić and Agičić 2007, 207).

4.3 Conclusions

In conclusion, it is obvious that in both countries, policies of history were set in order to obtain legitimacy for the ruling parties as the “founding fathers” of the new states. In line with legitimizing their state-founding role within the concept of all embracing national movements, both ruling parties purposely omitted implementing policies of transitional justice, at least in respect to the lustration issue. The differences, like the many privileged legal positions obtained by the Catholic Church in Croatia, are far greater than in Slovakia and they reflect the previously depicted differences in the national identity-building ideologies of both parties. However, the subsequent policies show revealing differences between the Slovak and the Croat cases respectively. In the Slovak case the policies of history merely followed politics of history that consisted of blending the clerical, right-wing, pre-World War II statehood legacy with the “nationalized” communist past. It is visible from the mere preservation of the “normalization” legacy of the national uprising that was only recently cleansed of the Marxist residuals. This trend is not only obvious in the manner of how lustration is omitted, as was done to the 1996 Law on communist legacy, but moreover also in the preservation of the spaces and places commemorating the Uprising, and finally by the long-lasting preservation of communist textbooks. This was done in spite of a general effort from the far-right to push for complete historical revisionism, especially when it came to the salvation of the Slovak Nazi-satellite republic and its president Tiso, accompanied by simultaneous attempts to denigrate the legacy of the uprising. On the contrary, the link between politics-policies of history turned out to be quite different in the Croatian case. Tuđman’s narrative on the synthesis of Croatian history was not a response to the policies of history. Although the ‘positive traditions of the Croatian left’ presented one of the pillars of HDZ’s politics of history, they were completely suppressed by erasing most of the spaces and places of memory of the partisan antifascist legacy, whether through the renaming or demolishing of the aforementioned. The holiday commemorating the anti-fascist struggle also seemed to be more forced, more so than in Slovakia where the Day of the Uprising is one of the central national holidays. This trend also continued when it came to school textbooks. Indeed, the depicted trend could partly be prescribed to the particular context of the violent dissolution of Yugoslavia and subsequent defense against Greater-Serbian aggression. However, I find that erasing the memories of the anti-fascist legacy are the reasons for conceptual discrepancy of Tuđman’s ideology as well as a much stronger stress on the statehood character of the

Croatian Nazi-satellite state than was the case in Slovakia. Finally, the ‘agenda-setting’ power of the far-right émigrés turned out to be much stronger in 1990s Croatia than in Slovakia, where the *Neo-L’udaks* had been quite marginalized, in spite of their occasional breakthroughs in governance, as in the case of Āurica’s controversial textbook. However, in both cases similar trends of the ‘state-creating’ vanity are present, aiming to be a fundamental pillar strengthening the ruling parties’ legitimacy, especially by serving as a fresh founding myth, overcoming all previous historical cleavages. The myth was much more convincingly forged and exploited by the ruling party in Croatia than the one in Slovakia, simply because in the latter case independence “suddenly happened” rather than being directly legitimized by the people, while in Croatia the struggle for independence was unanimous, eventually bringing about a defensive war against Greater-Serbian expansionism. However, the war simultaneously brought about ‘the heavy burden of the recent past’ that had gone unrecognized, especially in the 1990s, and was still a burden to the process of coming to terms with past.

Conclusions

This thesis posits several conclusions, both with respect to the similarities and differences of the compared cases, as well as with respect to the individual cases.

Firstly, both HZDS and HDZ gained and maintained their power by presenting themselves to be the ones protecting national interests against the Czech and the Serb resentments respectively, during the turbulent dissolution of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. Both ruling parties managed to forge such an image by presenting themselves as the very synthesis of the nations' statehood-striving legacies. They presented themselves as all-embracing national movements that will finally bring about an end to the nations' long-term struggles for independence. The centrality of the discussed clusters of concepts supplied both leaders and their parties with a fundamental advantage over nationally oriented competitors with a much better starting reputation. Indeed, the KDH embodied a pre-communist and dominant Slovak national identity-building idea cleansed of its World War II legacy, whilst in the Croatian case the KNS gathered the most prominent individuals of the 1971 Croatian Spring. Both the KDH as well as the KNS lacked their exclusive focus on national rights, while those once offered by the far-right parties were simply too radical and overly partisan to be acceptable to the majority of the respective Slovak and Croat electorate. Moreover, the dissolution of the federations accompanied by the senior-partners resentment was best answered by the "nationalist middle courses" politics offered by HDZS and HDZ respectively. The dominance of the politics of historical statehood-striving synthesis, forging all-embracing national movements, is best visible in the Slovak case, where in the course of less than two years Mečiar and his followers managed successfully changing from liberal to nationalist.

Secondly, the politics of history of HDZ and HZDS, besides the obvious similarities, also highlighted noticeable differences. The former as well as the latter stemmed from the historical legacies and nature of the dissolution processes of the federations, propelled by the personalities of their parties' leaders and other prominent members.

Considering the similarities, both parties assumingly appropriated the myths of statehood and nationhood antiquity as being a *longue durree* concept present from the very beginning of the national identity-building processes of both states. These processes had, both then and today, served to legitimize the statehood striving struggles of Slovaks and Croats respectively. Furthermore, most important observation is the fact that both parties forged their concepts of

the historical synthesis by appropriating pre-communist identity-building master narratives alongside an unlikely appropriation of communist legacies. The historical synthesis was followed by the grievances towards the Czechs and Serbs i.e. their senior partner roles which eventually brought about the condemnation over the entire past existence of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia as examples of polities. Both federations were eventually in large part pegged and viewed as Czech and Serb hegemony over the Slovaks and the Croats. Such an interpretation echoed among the electorate simply because the already stated grievances existed vividly and plausibly during the communist era, as was presented in the second chapter. Overall condemnation of the twentieth century Czechoslovak and Yugoslav history subsequently brought about discord to the complete historical line of “Czechoslovakist” and “Yugoslavist” national identity-building narratives, or at least revisions of some parts of them by their nationalization, as was the case with communist legacies. Such overall condemnation of the Czechoslovak and Yugoslav legacies led inevitably to a particularly positive revisionism of Slovak and Croat World War II Nazi-puppet states which continued throughout the forging of their independence. This World War II revisionism – being adjacent to the parties’ core concept of messianic-like all-embracing national movements who brought about a peculiar end to these national histories - represented the ideological background which led to notable democratic deficits both with respect to the exercising of power as well as the standards of civic society.

In relation to the differences, they were mostly conditioned by the differences in historical legacies stemming from the fact that Slovak memories of Czechoslovakia were much less burdened with resentment than Croatian memories of Yugoslavia. This was related not only to the trauma of Croatian memory, related both to the Ustaša and the communist World War II crimes, but could be also stretched to the whole of their twentieth century history. 1918 primarily brought Slovaks a release from a very nationally oppressive Hungarian regime, unlike Croats who uniting with the Serbs, brought about an unexpected abrogation of an existing statehood instead of it's upgrade. The related royal Yugoslav inter-war regime was much more backward in all respects than the more advanced, Czech dominated, inter-war liberal democracy in Czechoslovakia. It should be stated here that Croatian national elites, due to existing statehood tradition were still much more self-confident. The elites also had higher expectations of the new south Slavic state than their Slovak counterparts had from Czechoslovakia. Finally, the Slovak Nazi-puppet state left a much less traumatic legacy in general and with respect to future Czech-Slovak relations in comparison with their Croatian counterpart, especially when it came to it's genocidal policies towards Serbs that cast a huge

shadow over Croatian national identity. This is the reason why the crackdown on the Slovak branch of the 1968 reform movement was much less traumatic than the one on the Croatian Spring in 1971. It is wise to note that since the former was not originally a Slovak movement and its break was administered by an “external” force, the Soviet force, whilst the latter was an indigenous national movement brokered by the central government which was perceived to be dominated by the Serbs. Finally, the crackdown on the Prague Spring was followed by the final federalization of the country; although the Yugoslav constitution from 1974, accepted in fact, many of the claims of the Croatian Spring movement. The year 1971 was perceived as a humiliation for the national identity, and such a fact, combined with above-mentioned legacies and the violent dissolution of Yugoslavia, contributed towards a different outcome than the one in Czechoslovakia. There was much less condemnation of the Czechoslovak legacy in 1990s Slovakia in comparison to the Yugoslav legacy in Croatia during the 1990s. Indeed, the exposed trend was cemented by the defensive war Croatia was forced to lead against forces formally and symbolically representing Yugoslavia. However, the war was not the only factor that brought about the complete discarding of the Yugoslav legacy in Croatia, but it offered fertile ground for Tuđman’s indigenous narrative conceptualized long before the war so as to reach ultimate persuasiveness. Tuđman’s national-political thought contained a complete abandonment of the ideas of Yugoslavism and Yugoslavia since it, in the context of warfare, brought about a positive reassessment of the Croatian Nazi-puppet statehood while simultaneously downplaying the communist partisan legacy even out of Tuđman’s original national-reconciliation concept. Simultaneously, the referred to trend was declining in Slovakia during the 1990s, which was especially visible in policies of memory, spaces and places, where Mečiar firmly defended the legacy of the 1944 Slovak National Uprising against the far-right attempts to stifle it. Mečiar simply did not need the legacy of the Nazi-satellite Slovak republic for his own ends since the SNP was an indigenous and exclusively Slovak anti-fascist movement, therefore being very convenient for further nationalist appropriation. Similar appropriation was not possible in Croatia, since the branch of the partisan movement there was still a part of the wider Yugoslav one; and these were comprised mainly of Serbians.

Finally, the differences in World War II and post-war legacies conditioned different role for the Catholic Church in the national identity-building processes. Namely, in the case of Slovakia, the national-communist identity-building master narrative managed to successfully dethrone the previously dominant clerical one, since it had been compromised by its World War II role. In the case of Croatia the church was also quite compromised due to its

ambiguous relations towards the Ustaša regime. However, Croatian twentieth century legacy did not allow the complete discrediting of the church as it occurred in Slovakia. On the contrary, from a relatively marginal national identity-building role in the pre-war period, the church in Croatia managed to impose itself as a successful national identity-building rival of the communist regime, especially since the aftermath of the Croatian Spring. The national identity-building agency of the Catholic Church shows completely opposing trends in the Slovak and Croat cases, whilst in the former case the Church was successfully ousted as the national identity-building master agent, in the latter case it managed to rise from a marginal to a central identity-building role. What this trend achieved during communism became completely obvious in the 1990s when Mečiar could afford to engage in an open clash with the Church, while Tuđman not only appropriated the Church's concepts into the national identity, but also relied very much their close relations.

The third and final cluster of conclusions is related to individual cases. Because of the aforementioned facts, my research provided a comprehensive picture in the case of Slovakia. It explained how and to what extent “Mečiarism” appropriated the communist national identity-building master narrative. It's astonishing power was visible in the fact that Mečiar and his followers managed to whitewash their image by appropriating the narrative and in such a short time. Similarly, in the case of Croatia, the final contribution of this thesis is to comprehensively present the complex nationalist ideology of Franjo Tuđman. Here, the thesis defines three clusters of concepts. The most abstract cluster conceptualizes nationhood to be a kind of supernatural driving force of human history, adjacent to the concept of an intransigent clash between supranational universalism and the national identities of small nations. The second cluster of concepts is devoted to the understanding of the thousand-year old process of striving for statehood in Croatia through history marked by the clashes between Croatism and other –isms, and particularly Yugoslavism. Finally, the third cluster of concepts translates the previous two clusters into direct political action based on ideas of an all-embracing national movement founded upon synthesis of a history striving for statehood and is aimed at achieving national independence. In my opinion, Tuđman's outlined thoughts represent a unique case of nationalist ideology with its complexity and elaboration, if we consider ideology as a set of ideas aimed primarily to operate in concrete political action.

To summarize, the presented conclusions open a few possible directions for further research. Such comparison could be expanded on even further by including various cases sharing similar historical legacies and the political trends of the 1990s, such as Ukraine or perhaps Georgia. Moreover, the comparisons made in this thesis can be prospectively upgraded by a

more classic model of political science which would explain the presence and absence of democratic deficits in newly independent states that were previously junior partners in the socialist federations of Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. We can only speculate how the link of absence and/or presence of democratic deficits in the 1990s relates to the following two variables: firstly, whether the senior partners threateningly resented the junior partners during the process of dissolution of the federations; and secondly, whether the junior partner's national identity-building legacy had a dominant faction advocating supranational Yugoslav, Czechoslovak and Russian/Soviet identities. If both variables co-exist, we could speculate that deficits would be present as they were in the cases of Croatia and Slovakia. The afore outlined model which is now based solely on speculation, could finally present a prospective way of merging classical and culturally comparative approaches in political science. As was previously stated, the conclusions of this thesis as well as it's upgrade of the afore outlined model could contribute to the processes of dealing with the past, and thus help in democratization of national identities and political culture.

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Politike zgodovine na Hrvaškem in Slovaškem v 1990-ih (daljši povzetek v slovenskem jeziku)

Splošni raziskovalni okvir in tematika raziskovanja

Splošno znani proces globalizacije je skupaj s padcem komunizma v Vzhodni Evropi prispeval k pojavu različnih oblik gibanj, ki temeljijo na verski in nacionalni identiteti ter so obravnavana za zadnja varnostna zatočišča pred viharjem (neoliberalne) globalizacije (Castells 1997/2002). Naraščajoči pomen identitet je že v toku 1980-ih let sprožil kulturni preobrat v družbenih vedah in humanistiki. V politologiji je kulturni preobrat prinesel kulturni pristop, ki se osredotoča na razlago političnih pojavov, kot so komunistični prevrati, proces demokratične tranzicije, politike identitete in z njimi povezano etnično nasilje, z razumevanjem “kako so politične identifikacije oblikovane; kako retorika in simboli /.../ prispevajo k političnemu sporazumu; zakaj nekatere politične ideologije, politike in politične strategije delujejo bolje kakor druge” (Weeden 2002, 714). Ker nacionalne identitete izrazito oblikujejo kolektivni spomini, je potrebno vsako politiko legitimizirati s politikami zgodovine, ki prispevajo k samoidentifikaciji določene nacionalne skupine in napovedi njene prihodnosti z interpretacijo zgodovine (Cipek 2007b). Pomen artikulacije zgodovinske zavesti je najbolj viden preko njenega vpliva na politično kulturo in s tem na stopnjo demokratične konsolidacije političnih sistemov, kakor prikaže Lukšič (1999) na primeru Slovenije.

“Politike zgodovine”, kot znanstvene discipline, so bile osnovane v Nemčiji za analizo kako so različne zgodovinske dediščine in kolektivni spomini v Zahodni in Vzhodni Nemčiji vplivali na proces nemške združitve. Posledično se politike zgodovine osredotočajo na uporabo zgodovine pri politični legitimizaciji. Nadalje se disciplina osredotoča na raziskovanje vplivov zgodovinskih pripovedi in simboličnih politik na procese konstrukcije nacionalne identitete in s tem na politično kulturo in demokratično konsolidacijo političnih sistemov (Cipek 2007a). Poseben pomen raziskovanja je namenjen postkomunističnim državam, predvsem z vidika zgodovinske dediščine nacističnih in komunističnih totalitarizmov in povezanih težav v procesih tranzicije. Pomen zgodovinske dediščine za demokratično konsolidacijo v postkomunistični Vzhodni Evropi priznava tudi samo “jedro” politologije. Herbert Kitschelt in drugi (1999) so povezali predkomunistične s komunističnimi političnimi dediščinami, pri čimer oba procesa demokratične konsolidacije sčasoma kažeta, da

so bile v 1990-ih letih konsolidirane demokracije dosežene le v državah Vzhodne-Srednje Evrope in baltskih državah, torej državah, ki delijo zahodno kulturno in politično dediščino.¹⁴⁶

Pri tem je posebej zanimivo, da sta izmed vseh vzhodno-srednje evropskih in baltskih držav le Hrvaška in Slovaška utrpeli resni demokratični deficit v 1990-ih letih. Ta trend ni mogoče v celoti pojasniti s teorijo Clausa Offeja glede tegob sočasne pravne, politične in ekonomske tranzicije postkomunističnih držav, ki je bila dodana procesom oblikovanja držav v primeru Sovjetske zveze, Češkoslovaške in držav naslednic nekdanje Jugoslavije (Offe 1991). Hrvaška in Slovaška sta bili edini državi v demokratično konsolidirani regiji, kjer je v politikah očitno prevladovala zgodovina, kar ni presenetljivo, če vzamemo v obzir zelo podobne vzorce zgodovinske dediščine obeh držav. Najprej so hrvaški in slovaški etnični predniki osnovali neodvisne zgodnje srednjeveške politike, ki so bile skoraj sočasno vključene v madžarsko kraljestvo, ki je bilo od sredine 16. stoletja do leta 1918 del habsburške monarhije. Posledično sta potekala procesa konstrukcije moderne hrvaške in slovaške nacionalne identitete vzporedno v obliki utrjevanja hrvaške in slovaške nacionalnosti znotraj ideje o etnični enakosti s Srbi oziroma Čehi. Te ideje so v primeru obeh narodov kasneje spodbijale ideje o enotni hrvaški in enotni slovaški nacionalni identiteti. Poleg tega so bili nosilci jugoslovanskih oziroma češkoslovaških nacionalnih idej predvsem Hrvati oziroma Slovaki. Izdana pričakovanja hrvaških oziroma slovaških elit v položaju mlajših partneric tako v meščanski kakor tudi komunistični Jugoslaviji oziroma Češkoslovaški so prinesla razvoj močne "zamere in nacionalizmov" (E. Harris) do starejših srbskih oziroma čeških narodov. Hrvaška in slovaška nacionalna identiteta sta izkusili podobne zgodovinske preboje v letih 1918, 1939/41, 1944/45-47, 1968/71 in 1989-91/93, pri čimer se je posebej pomembna izkazala njuna dediščina nacističnih satelitskih držav v drugi svetovni vojni. Končno so procesu razpada Jugoslavije in Češkoslovaške sledile zgodovinsko legitimizirane zamere starejših narodov, med drugim do hrvaških in slovaških zahtev po neodvisnosti. Tako sta v obeh državah politično moč pridobili stranki, ki sta trdili, da predstavljata najboljši zaščitnici nacionalnih interesov. Ti stranki sta bili Hrvaška demokratska skupnost (HDZ) pod vodstvom Franja Tuđmana in Gibanje za demokratično Slovaško (HZDS), ki ga je vodil Vládimir Mečiar. Obe stranki sta bili oblikovani po principu, da vključujeta vsa nacionalna gibanja in s tem prinašata konec tisočletnim zgodovinom iskanja državnosti. Pri tem sta močno uporabljali zgodovino za politično legitimizacijo, predvsem v odnosu do zgodovinske dediščine.

¹⁴⁶ Geopolitične enote Vzhodne-Srednje Evrope, Jugovzhodne Evrope in Vzhodne Evrope so bile najpogosteje opisane z utemeljitvami iz zgodovinske in kulturne dediščine (Kasapović 2008). Posledično Vzhodna- Srednja Evropa obsega Poljsko, Češko, Slovaško, Madžarsko, Slovenijo in Hrvaško, predvsem po vstopu v EU.

Opisane podobnosti je prikazala le ena knjiga, *Politična sprememba in postkomunistična Slovaška in Hrvaška*, avtorice Sharon Fisher iz leta 2006. Omenjeno delo razlaga dvig, ohranjanje in padec HDZ in HZDS v 1990-ih letih, pri čimer sledi glavnim konceptom nacionalističnih politik obeh strank, kot so miti o tisočletnih procesih prizadevanja za državnost, konceptom o viktimizaciji narodov s strani Srbov in Čehov v 20. stoletju ipd. Delo tudi lepo poveže politični kontekst z uspehom obeh strank in preučuje različne politike konstrukcije nacionalnih identitet, ki sta jih sprejeli vladi HDZ oziroma HZDS. Kljub pomembnemu znanstvenemu prispevku, v knjigi manjka obsežnejša analiza nacionalističnih ideologij HDZ in HZDS, predvsem z vidika zgodovinskih dediščin narodov. Tako knjiga ne ponuja obsežnega odgovora na vprašanje zakaj je ravno HDZ in HZDS v danem političnem kontekstu uspelo privabiti volivce in ne drugim strankam, ki so imele boljši nacionalni ugled, kot so bili krščanski demokrati (KDH) na Slovaškem, Koalicija nacionalnega soglasja in Hrvaška socialno-liberalna stranka na Hrvaškem. Na tem mestu velja izpostaviti, da je več del obravnavalo različne vidike uporabe zgodovine v politiki na posamičnem primeru Hrvaške in Slovaške. Čeprav imajo ta dela pomemben prispevek za razumevanje posamičnega vidika politik zgodovine v raziskovanem primeru, še vedno ne ponujajo splošne in obsežne razlage.

Glede na raziskovalno vrzel skuša glavno raziskovalno vprašanje v disertaciji odgovoriti kakšne politike zgodovine in nacionalistične ideologije sta HDZ oziroma HZDS uporabili za pridobitev in ohranjanje moči v 1990-ih letih in kako so bile te politike in ideologije povezane z zgodovinskimi dediščinami narodov in konkretnim političnim kontekstom procesa razpada Jugoslavije oziroma Češkoslovaške. Posledično disertacija preučuje kako so podobnosti in razlike med hrvaško in slovaško zgodovinsko dediščino prispevale k podobnostim in razlikam med ideologijami in politikami HDZ oziroma HZDS. Končno preučujemo kako so razlike med procesom razpada Jugoslavije oziroma Češkoslovaške vplivale na razlike med ideologijo obeh vladajočih političnih strank ter na njune politike in oblike vladanja.

Glede na zgornje navedbe v disertaciji trdimo, da sta obe vladajoči stranki na Hrvaškem in Slovaškem pridobili in ohranjali moč v danem političnem kontekstu v veliki meri z določeno uporabo zgodovine v politiki. Natačneje je v kontekstu procesa razpada Jugoslavije oziroma Češkoslovaške obema strankama uspelo prepričati volivce, da prinašata konec tisočletnim zgodovinom narodov glede želje po državnosti in s tem, da sta najboljši predstavnici oblikovanja države. Obema strankama je uspelo pritegniti volivce z zatrjevanjem, da sta celotni zgodovini Jugoslavije oziroma Češkoslovaške skladni s stalnim podrejanjem hrvaškega oziroma slovaškega naroda s strani Srbov oziroma Čehov. Tako sta se HDZ in HZDS opredelili za stranki, ki zaobjemata vsa nacionalna gibanja in s tem prinašata spravo

zgodovinsko deljenim narodom na osnovi strnitve celotne zgodovinske dediščine narodov o oblikovanju države ne glede na frakcijo. Uspeh legitimizacije politik zgodovine so predvsem omogočile zgoraj omenjene zamere do starejših narodov iz obdobja razpada federacij, ki so omogočile tudi prepričljivo uporabo hrvaških in slovaških zgodovinskih krivic. HDZ in HZDS je uspelo premagati zmerne nacionaliste in druge tekmece, ker sta se Tuđman in Mečiar izključno osredotočila na agendo o oblikovanju države, ki so jo legitimizirale omenjene ideologije o zaobjemu vseh nacionalnih gibanj. Z vidika razlik zgodovinskih dediščin narodov in razlik v procesih nasilnega razpada Jugoslavije in mirnega razpada Češkoslovaške disertacija ne izpostavlja le podobnosti, ampak tudi razlike med obema primeroma raziskovanja.

Teoretični in metodološki okvir k raziskovanju

Za odgovor na izpostavljena vprašanja je disertacija oblikovana kot primerjalna študija dveh primerov, ki primarno analizira politike zgodovine HZDS in HDZ v 1990-ih letih, predvsem glede na njuno pridobitev in ohranjanje politične moči. Povezava med zgodovino in močjo je tesno povezana z zgodovinsko dediščino in predvsem političnim okvirom na način, ki skuša odgovoriti kako so vladajoče stranke legitimizirale svojo vladanje ter kako so njihove nacionalne ideologije in spremljajoče politike povzročile demokratični deficit. Za dosego raziskovalnih ciljev je tematika obravnavana v okviru kulturne primerjave v politologiji. Za razliko od prevladujočega modela primerjalne politike, ki uporablja strogo določene spremenljivke in njihove interakcije, kulturna primerjava pristopa k pojavi z vidika “splošne kompleksnosti njegove zgodovinske in družbeno-politične specifičnosti” (Beichelt 2005). Po mnenju Beichelta je kulturna primerjava najbolj uporaben raziskovalni okvir za razlago posamičnih primerov v kontekstu tranzicije režimov in revolucij, kjer nacionalna identiteta močno vpliva na procese sprememb (glej tudi Cipek 2007b). Holistični pristop k primerom ni le pomemben, ker se kategorije kot je nacionalna identiteta spreminjajo od primera do primera, ampak tudi, ker dinamični kontekst ne omogoča jasne opredelitve neodvisnih, odvisnih in vmesnih spremenljivk; npr. zgodovinski spomin vpliva na politične procese in obratno. Tako se kulturni pristop primarno osredotoča na kritično razumevanje kulturnega konteksta določenega primera v primerjavi z drugimi primeri, zato ga je mogoče aplicirati v primerjavi s primeri “majhen N”. Nadalje kulturni pristop ne poskuša oblikovati splošnih modelov, ampak njegova razlagalna moč navadno doseže le obseg raziskovalnih primerov

(Beichelt; Cipek 2007b). Beichelt (2005) izpostavlja, da kulturni pristop zaradi posebnega in kontekstualnega fokusa ponavadi podpirajo metode komparativne zgodovine, ki vključujejo opis, obnovo, analizo konceptov in pripovedi, v katerih ima zgodovinska dediščina določene družbe izjemno vlogo. Heinz Gerhard Haupt in Jürgen Kocka poudarjata, da “primerjava ni metoda v strogem pomenu beside, ampak bolj stališče” (Haupt and Kocka 1996/2004, 151), zato se kulturna primerjava v politologiji primarno osredotoča na opis in interpretacijo značilnih primerov in kasneje primerjavo podobnosti in razlik med primeri (Ibid. 151-154; Beichelt 2005). Zgodovinska primerjava in tudi pristop kulturne primerjave v politologiji ne poskušata doseči splošno aplikativnih ugotovitev, ampak sta bolj usmerjena v razlago posamičnega in navadno domačega primera v primerjavi z “drugim” primerom (Kocka 1999, 48-50). Posledično v disertaciji nacionalni politični misli HZDS in HDZ predstavljata enoti analize z vidika zgodovinskih dediščin narodov. Obe enoti sta tesno povezani s kontekstom političnih procesov, medtem ko skuša primerjava enako predstaviti podobnosti in razlike v obeh primerih.

Teoretični pristop v disertaciji predvideva, da je po teorijah nacionalizma nacionalna identiteta v osnovi “kategorija prakse” (Rogers Brubaker), zato jo najprej podpirajo politične in intelektualne elite. Kljub temu v disertaciji upoštevamo, da elite še vedno omejuje okvir priljubljenih “mitov in spominov” (A. Smith), predvsem tistih, ki segajo v travmatična obdobja nacionalnih zgodov. Poleg Brubakerjevega pristopa k narodom disertacija upošteva tudi modernistični pristop Erica Hobsbawma, predvsem njegov koncept nastanka naroda z izmišljanjem tradicij, in pristop Benedicta Andersona, ki dojema narod kot zamišljeno skupnost nasproti sredstvom množične komunikacije. Z vidika procesov oblikovanja narodov v disertaciji uporabimo sistematiko mitov, kakor jo opredeli Anthony Smith, saj so ti miti (mit o zlatih letih, prednikih in usodi, svetem ozemlju ipd.) imeli temeljno vlogo pri konstrukciji vsake nacionalne identitete. Poleg tega disertacija izpostavi skupne trende vzhodnoevropskih nacionalizmov Brubakerja, Erike Harris in Siniše Maleševića. Medtem ko Brubakerjev koncept “institucionalizacije etničnosti” (1996) razlaga kako so komunistični režimi s svojo “leninistično” politiko dejansko okrepili namesto uničili nacionalne identitete, Malešević (2006) poudari, da so komunistične federacije, kot je socialistična Jugoslavija, vsaki politični problem na koncu spremenile v nacionalno zadevo. Erika Harris (2002, 2009) lepo izpostavi kako je povečanje “zamere” etničnih nacionalizmov v Vzhodni Evropi v 1990-ih letih bila “logična spremljevalka” zgodovinskih dediščin, v katerih so prevladovala nacionalna vprašanja skupaj s šibko civilno družbo in liberalno demokratičnim političnim sistemom. Končno disertacija temelji na že omenjen pristopu politik zgodovine, v katerih kolektivni

spomin ne vpliva le na politično kulturo, ampak predstavlja tudi njen temeljni del (Müller 2002). Pri tem je potrebno izpostaviti nekaj različnih konceptov, ki tvorijo središče discipline. Koncepta *Vergangenheitspolitik* (politik preteklosti) in *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* (soočanja s preteklostjo, znan tudi kot politike tranzicijske pravičnosti) predstavljata procesa, ki ju uporabljajo postdiktatorske družbe za soočanje s “težkimi bremenami preteklosti” nasproti politikam, kot so odškodnina, finančna kompenzacija, pomilostitev, ugled ipd. (Gonzales-Enriquez 2004; Arnold 2006). Na drugi strani se *Geschichtspolitik* (politike zgodovine) in povezane *Erinnerungspolitik* (politike spomina) osredotočajo na raziskovanje uporabe zgodovinskih pripovedi političnih in intelektualnih elit za namene legitimizacije. Nazadnje je koncept politik zgodovine povezan z raziskovanjem kako se politike zgodovine spreminjajo v konkretne vladne politike konstrukcije nacionalne identitete z (pre)imenovanjem javnih prostorov (ulic, trgov ipd.), praznikov, spominskih mest (muzejev, spominskih centrov ipd.) in določanjem zgodovinske vsebine in identitete v izobraževanju, npr. v učnih načrtih in učbenikih (Meyer 2008; Koren 2011a; Cipek 2007a).

V disertaciji smo uporabili različne vire, vključno s strankarskimi programi, manifesti ter različnimi pisanji in govori vplivnih politikov, katere preučujemo z metodo konceptualne analize ideologij, ki sta jo razvila Michael Freeden (1996) in Cass Mudde (1995, 2000). Freeden pokaže kako te koncepte v primerih deljene nacionalne zgodovine spodbijajo različne politične stranke, ki skušajo legitimizirati svoje interpretacije in sočasno deligitimizirati svoje nasprotnike. Nadalje sta Freeden in Mudde razvila model “oblikoslovja ideologije”, ki omogoča povezavo hierarhije in medsebojnega delovanja konceptov v določeni ideologiji. Ta metoda ponuja najboljši okvir za razlago kako določeni koncepti zgodovin narodov predstavljajo privlačna legitimizacijska sredstva v politiki in za prikaz kako si koncepte prisvajajo iz preteklih misli o nacionalni identiteti.

Primerjava je do določene mere asimetrična, saj je več prostora namenjeno hrvaškemu primeru. Omenjena asimetrija izvira iz več dejavnikov. Najprej so “domači” primeri vedno bolje obravnavani kot “tujji”, predvsem v holistični primerjavi kot je pričujoča disertacija. Nato asimetrija izvira iz obsega in kompleksnosti ideologije Franja Tuđmana, saj njegove politike zgodovine niso imele ekvivalenta v slovaškem primeru. Za hrvaški primer je značilno, da je skoraj v celoti namenjen mislim in dejanjem Franja Tuđmana, ki je skoraj v celoti določil proces konstrukcije hrvaške nacionalne identitete v 1990-ih letih. Nadalje asimetrija izvira iz načina primerjave, pri čimer primerjamo hrvaški primer s slovaškim. V vsakem poglavju najprej izpostavimo Slovaško in nato Hrvaško, ker je bil slovaški primer preučevan pred hrvaškim. Nazadnje vsako poglavje vključuje zaključke, ki povzemajo glavne

ugotovitve. Takšna metoda primerjave omogoča najboljšo razlago različnih ideoloških konceptov, kar ne bi mogli doseči niti s sočasno razlago primerov ali z razlago posamičnega primera, kateri bi sledila primerjava sklepnih ugotovitev.

Struktura disertacije, raziskovalni rezultati in sklepi

Glede na razumevanje povezave med spominom, zgodovino in močjo je disertacija razdeljena na štiri poglavja. Prvo poglavje preučuje zgoraj izpostavljene teoretične in metodološke pristope k raziskovanju.

Drugo poglavje obravnava zgodovino procesov konstrukcije hrvaške in slovaške nacionalne identitete do 1990-ih let in njihove zgodovinske dediščine, predvsem z vidika zgodovinske dediščine, ki je močno vplivala na ideologije in politike zgodovine HDZ in HZDS. Oba procesa konstrukcije nacionalne identitete kažeta podobne vzorce, saj temeljita na idejah o etnični enakosti Južnih Slovanov oziroma Čehov in Slovakov pri soočanju z veliko močnejšima procesoma konstrukcije nemške oziroma madžarske nacionalne identitete. V obeh primerih so izpostavljene pripovedi spodbijale ideje o konstrukciji identitete ločene hrvaške oziroma slovaške nacionalne identitete. Slednje je pospešila predvsem reakcija proti idejam o konstrukciji srbske oziroma češke nacionalne identitete, ki so obravnavale Hrvate v veliki meri za Srbe oziroma Slovake za Čeha. Ker je Hrvaška bila politično avtonomna v Avstroogrski, je pripoved o hrvaški nacionalni identiteti temeljila na konceptu o zgodovinski pravici Hrvaške do države, medtem ko je bila slovaška pripoved osnovana na etnično-kulturnih idejah o narodu. Končno je obdobje po ustanovitvi Jugoslavije in Češkoslovaške leta 1918 prineslo postopen pojav ostre zamere in nacionalizma proti jugoslovanski oziroma češkoslovaški državi, kakor tudi proti starejšim narodom Srbov in Čehov. Politike novih držav so sprožile občutke izdaje hrvaških oziroma slovaških političnih elit, saj so srbske oziroma češke politične elite sčasoma enačile Jugoslavijo in Češkoslovaško s svojo lastno nacionalno identiteto. Hrvaške in slovaške zamere so se okrepile, ko sta si obe vladi začeli prizadevati za oblikovanje enotnega jugoslovanskega oziroma češkoslovaškega naroda. Zamera je bila veliko močnejša v primeru Hrvaške kakor Slovaške zaradi več razlogov. Češko dominirana medvojna vlada je imela modernizacijski vpliv na slovaško družbo, ki jo je pred tem močno zatirala madžarska oblast. Nasprotno je bila pred letom 1918 preklicana hrvaška politična avtonomija, jugoslovanski kraljevski režim pa je izkoriščal njeno gospodarstvo in zatiral konstrukcijo hrvaške nacionalne identitete. Pojav hrvaških in slovaških proti-

nacionalizmov je bil najbolj radikalen v nacistično satelitskih državah v času druge svetovne vojne. Kljub temu je na Hrvaškem v drugi svetovni vojni ustaški režim izvajal genocid predvsem nad Srbi in Judi. Na koncu vojne so Titovi partizani izvajali množične zločine nad hrvaškimi nacističnimi vojaki iz satelitskih držav, ki so jih spremljali tudi hrvaški državljani. V istem obdobju slovaška nacistično satelitska vlada ni izvajala množičnih zločinov, čeprav je izgnala 70.000 slovaških Judov v nacistično Nemčijo. Čeprav so komunisti po vojni oblikovali socialistično Jugoslavijo kot federacijo nominalno enakih republik, so omenjeni zločini pustili travme za procesa konstrukcije srbske in hrvaške nacionalne identitete. Ker je režim zatrl kakršne koli razprave o zgodovinskih travmah, so bile pogosto navedene visoke številke žrtev ustaškega režima, kar je vodilo v razvoj pripovedi o kolektivni krivdi celotnega hrvaškega naroda. Takšna pripoved je le dodala napetosti predvojnimi pripovedim o nelojalnosti Hrvatov v Jugoslaviji. Sočasno je dejstvo, da so bile osrednje institucije v Beogradu, prineslo podobne poluradne nasprotno pripovedi o ponavljajoči se srbski prevladi v Jugoslaviji. Slednje je postalo zelo prepričljivo po zatrtju hrvaškega gibanja za komunistične reforme leta 1971, ki je Tita in zvezne institucije pozivalo k hrvaški pomladi. Zgodovinska zamera je narasla po letu 1971 zaradi večinoma mirnih in diskretnih politik hrvaških komunistov glede nacionalne identitete. Sočasno so v mnogih družinah, ki so izgubile svoje člane, živeli "množični osebni spomini" na komunistične zločine iz leta 1945. Zatiranje teh spominov je predstavljalo plodna tla za tiho širjenje mita, da so bili komunistični zločini iz leta 1945 oblika namernega genocida Srbov nad Hrvati, ki ga je prvotno pospešila politična emigracija. Uničujoča moč opisanih mitov o zgodovinskih travmah je v 1980-ih letih prinesla porast velikega srbskega nacionalizma, kakor tudi nasilen razpad Jugoslavije na začetku 1990-ih let.

V povojni Slovaški niso bile prisotne podobne travme. Predvojna dominantna slovaška klerična stranka je dosegla kompromis zaradi vladanja slovaške nacistične satelitske države. Čeprav je politični okvir nastanka in obstoja slovaške nacistične satelitske države prinesel češke zamere glede slovaške nelojalnosti Češkoslovaški, je bila slovaška nacionalna identiteta obnovljena z antifašistično Slovaško nacionalno vstajo (SNP) septembra 1944. SNP so v veliki meri organizirali in vodili slovaški komunisti v sodelovanju z drugimi slovaškimi nekomunističnimi politikami, skoraj brez sodelovanja Čehov. Čeprav je povojna komunistična vlada obnovila centralistično strukturo, ki je bila podobna predvojni, je zatrtje praške pomladi leta 1968 prineslo federalizacijo države. Nadalje so Sovjeti imenovali Gustava Huska in druge ugledne slovaške komuniste, voditelje SNP, za vodenje države. Obdobje po letu 1968 je na Slovaškem prineslo visoki stopnji industrializacije in urbanizacije, kar je vodilo v

konceptualizacijo nove komunistične pripovedi o konstrukciji nacionalne identitete. Ta nova pripoved je opisovala vstajo leta 1944 kot osrednji dogodek za slovaško državnost, ki je bila dosežena s sprejetjem zvezne ustave leta 1968. Slovaški komunisti so se predstavljali ustanovitelji "prave" slovaške državnosti, ki temelji na antifašistični dediščini, s čimer jim je uspelo zatreti klerično misel o konstrukciji nacionalne identitete, ki je prevladovala pred vojno. Z vidika odnosov med Cerkvijo in režimom je bil na Hrvaškem prisoten popolnoma drugačen trend. Katoliška Cerkev je bila na Hrvaškem do določene mere diskreditirana zaradi spornih odnosov z ustaškim režimom v času vojne. Kljub temu je Cerkvi po zarttju hrvaške pomladi leta 1971 uspelo organizirati vrsto različnih proslav na tematiko "Trinajst stoletij krščanstva Hrvatov". Jubilejne prireditve so od sredine 1970-ih do sredine 1980-ih let predstavljale sredstvo širitve krščanske misli o nacionalni identiteti, ki je temeljila na enotnosti nacionalne in verske zgodovine. Poleg tega je bila konceptualizirana na pripovedi o dolgotrajnem trpljenju Hrvatov, ki so pripadali Zahodni civilizaciji, katera je prikrito kazala na viktimizacijo narodov s strani ortodoksno-bizantinsko-komunističnih Srbov. Jubilejna praznovanja so mobilizirala velike množice ljudi, kar kaže, da je Cerkev uspešno tekmovala z režimom in oblikovala novo vplivno pripoved o konstrukciji nacionalne identite, ki je bila osnova za dvig sekularnih nacionalistov po letu 1990.

Nazadnje to poglavje prikaže kako si je navedene zgodovinske dediščine prisvojila nacionalna politična misel Franja Tuđmana, ki se je razvila od konca 1960-ih let. Tuđmanova premetena nacionalistična misel je temeljila na več konceptih. Če gledamo po Heglu na zgodovino človeštva kot teologijo medetničnih sporov, ki sčasoma vodi v oblikovanje etnično homogenih politik, je Tuđman trdil, da nadnacionalne ideje, od liberalizma do Jugoslavije, predstavljajo jasno ideološko orodje velikih sil za podrejanje manjhnih narodov. Tuđman si je prilastil tudi cerkvene koncepte o hrvaškem narodu in pogled, ki predstavlja hrvaško zgodovino kot tisočletni boj Hrvatov za državnost. Nadalje je degradiral celotno jugoslovansko dediščino stalne srbske nadvlade nad Hrvati, pri čimer je označil deklaracijo hrvaške nacistične satelistske države za simbolični izraz prizadevanja za hrvaško državnost. Glede na opisane ideološke koncepte je Tuđman sčasoma razvil program političnega delovanja, katerega namen je bilo oblikovati vseobsežno nacionalno gibanje, ki naj bi temeljilo na dveh glavnih stebrih in vodilo v neodvisno državo. Prvi steber je bil koncept nacionalne sprave, ki ga je pred tem razvila politična emigracija. Koncept je temeljil na ideji združitve vseh Hrvatov, ki so bili v skupnem boju za neodvisnost razdeljeni na podpornike NDH in podpornike Titovih partizanov. Drugi steber je temeljil na ideji, da bo zamišljeno gibanje predstavljalo sintezo hrvaške zgodovinske misli o ustanovitvi države z idejo hrvaških

komunistov. Končno bi bodoča neodvisna hrvaška država vključevala “zgodovinske in naravne meje”, pri čimer bi bila etnično homogena. Koncept “zgodovinskih in naravnih meja” je pomenil, da bi se Hrvaška razširila na območja preko dejanskih hrvaških socialističnih meja in ozemlje, ki ji je v preteklosti pripadalo predvsem v Bosni in Hercegovini. S konceptom etnične homogenosti, ki ga je Tuđman smatral za nujen predpogoj za državno stabilnost, je skušal doseči hrvaško-srbsko izmenjavo prebivalstva. Tako konceptualizirana Tuđmanova nacionalna politična misel je bila posebnega pomena, saj se je kasneje v veliki meri pretvorila v ideologijo in politiko njegove stranke.

Tretje, osrednje, poglavje izpostavlja kako so politike zgodovine prispevale k pridobitvi in ohranjanju politične moči HDZ in HZDS v 1990-ih letih. Pri tem pojasnjuje, da sta obe stranki pridobili volivce z zatrjevanjem, da veljata za “najboljša” agenta ustanavljanja države v času procesa razpada Jugoslavije oziroma Češkoslovaške. Te trditve so bile privlačne za volivce zaradi sodobne zamere do srbskih oziroma čeških političnih elit, ki so nasprotovale hrvaškim oziroma slovaškim zahtevam po suverenosti. Če obravnavamo nacionalne zgodovine kot tisočletni boj narodov za ustanovitev države in dosego neodvisnosti, sta se HDZ in HZDS uspešno predstavila za agenta, ki bosta prinesla konec prej omenjeni teološki podobi zgodovin narodov. Obema strankama se je uspelo predstaviti za najboljša agenta ustanavljanja države preko samoopredelitve, da predstavljata vsenacionalno gibanje, ki prinaša spravo zgodovinsko deljenim narodom in tako ponuja vsem neodvisnost ne glede na levo ali desno delitev. Koncept nacionalne sprave je bil prepričljiv zaradi načina, na katerega sta obe stranki pozivali k sintezi zgodovinskih misli o oblikovanju nacionalne države. Ta sinteza je vključevala mešanico predvojnih nacionalnih misli in komunistično dediščino o oblikovanju naroda in države, kjer sta bili celotni zgodovini Jugoslavije in Češkoslovaške predstavljeni z neprestanim podrejanjem hrvaškega oziroma slovaškega naroda s strani starejših narodov Srbov oziroma Čehov. Navedene politike zgodovine so sčasoma prinesle pozitiven revizionizem za nacistično satelitsko Hrvaško in Slovaško glede pridobivanja državnosti. V okviru razpada Jugoslavije in Češkoslovaške so opisane ideologije omogočile HDZ in HZDS, da sta premagali tekmece s še boljšim nacionalističnim slovesom, kot so bila srečanja različnih disidentov in nasprotnikov iz komunističnega obdobja. Nazadnje so opisane ideje obeh strank o enotnih etnično nacionalnih skupnostih neizogibno vodile v demokratični deficit, saj so bile v ostrem nasprotju z načeli večstrankarskega političnega sistema in civilne družbe. Ta deficit se je le povečal do sredine 1990-ih let, ko sta se novi samostojni državi konsolidirali. Konsolidacija Hrvaške in Slovaške kot neodvisnih držav je prinesla postopno izčrpavanje legitimizacijskega potenciala osrednjih strankarskih konceptov in potisnila stranki

sredi 1990-ih let bolj na desnico. V primeru Slovaške se je HZDS celo zavezala v oblikovanje koalicijske vlade s skrajno desničarsko Slovaško nacionalno stranko (SNS). SNS si je v obdobju koalicijske vlade med leti 1994-1998 močno prizadevala za zgodovinski revizionizem slovaške dediščine v času nacistične satelitske države v toku druge svetovne vojne. Kljub temu je bil deficit do določene mere še vedno manj radikalen v primeru Slovaške kakor Hrvaške, kjer je HDZ vodila enostrankarsko vlado vse do konca 1990-ih let. Opisane razlike lahko pripišemo nasilnemu razpadu Jugoslavije za razliko od mirnega razpada Češkoslovaške in bolj travmatični hrvaški dediščini v 20. stoletju v primerjavi s slovaško.

Ker je obdobje po letu 1968 prineslo Slovakom politično avtonomijo, katero sta spremljali visoki stopnji industrializacije in urbanizacije, je slovaška družba leta 1989 želela "ohranitev preteklosti znotraj sedanjosti" (Eyal, 2003). Slednje jasno potrjuje zmaga HZDS na volitvah leta 1992. Žametna revolucija je leta 1989 prinesla politično moč Javnosti proti nasilju (VPN), ki je predstavljalo krovno protirežimsko gibanje, katero je obsegalo precej heterogene stranke, vse od različnih odpadniških skupin do reformiranih komunistov. Vodstvo VNP so sestavljali slovaški liberalni odpadniki, ki izvirajo iz krogov Listine 77 in so tesno sledili agendi čeških nasprotnikov. Ta agenda se je zavzemala za takojšnjo ekonomsko tranzicijo in ostro politiko soočanja s totalitaristično preteklostjo. Vodstvo VPN je kot prioriteten cilj skušalo premagati temeljne neliberalne desničarske in levičarske dediščine procesa konstrukcije slovaške nacionalne identitete. Kljub temu so po Žametni revoluciji postala najpomembnejša agenda pogajanja o prihodnji ustavi federacije, v katerih je češka stran zagovarjala velike pristojnosti federacije na osnovi predvojne ustave. Blaga stališča VPN proti češkim zahtevam so sočasno s hitrim upadom slovaške ekonomije prinesla resne proteste, ki so jih organizirali skrajni desničarski nacionalisti. Močno zmanjšanje legitimnosti VPN so skušali leta 1991 nadomestiti s koalicijo s Krščansko demokratično unijo (KDH). KDH je bila ideološka naslednica predvojne klerične nacionalne misli, vendar se je sočasno oddaljila od dediščine slovaške nacistične satelitske države. Vseeno Eyal meni, da je KDH močno zagovarjala avtonomijo Slovaške, kar z vidika zgodovinskega spomina kaže na položaj branitve slovaške nacistične satelitske države (Eyal 2003, 171-172), s čimer so slovaški volivci želeli različno "sredinsko politiko", ki bi omogočala "ohranitev preteklosti znotraj sedanjosti". Ta trend je prepoznala manjša stranka znotraj VPN pod vodstvom Vladimira Mečiara, ki je začel odločno zagovarjati bolj avtonomni položaj Slovaške in upočasnitev gospodarskih reform. Na tem mestu je zanimivo izpostaviti, da je bil Mečiar konec leta 1990 in v začetku leta 1991 predsednik vlade VPN. Poskusi odstranitve Mečiara s položaja predsednika vlade in sčasoma njega in njegove stranke iz VPN so omogočili, da je

pridobil skupaj s svojo novo stranko HZDS podobo resničnega “rešitelja naroda”. Podoba rešitelja se je okrepila, ko so Mečiar in njegovo stranko začele zapostavljati češke politične elite in ga imenovati za simbol “temnih komunističnih sil”. Kljub temu prevlada HZDS ne bi prišla tako daleč, če si stranka ne bi začela prisvajati edino miselnost o oblikovanju države, ki se je dovolj oddaljila od dediščine slovaške nacionalistične preteklosti v drugi svetovni vojni, in sicer slovaške nacionalne komunistične pripovedi, ki se je razvila po letu 1968. HZDS si je prisvojila miselnost o nacionalni identiteti in na svojo stran pridobila izjemne nacionalistične levičarske intelektualce, ki so razvili komunistično nacionalno misel po letu 1968. Ti intelektualci so želeli nadgraditi preteklo nacionalno pripoved s celotnim prisvajanjem predvojne nacionalistične misli, katero so osvobodili klerikalizma in slovaške komunistične preteklosti in je bila tako popolnoma nacionalizirana. Antifašistična Slovaška nacionalna vstaja, ki je po letu 1944 predstavljala domače slovaško gibanje, je bila sedaj uspešno predstavljena kot ekskluzivni boj za nacionalno emancipacijo. V položaju, kjer je bila Vstaja uspešno konceptualizirana za mit ustvarjanja in oblikovanja države, se HZDS ni bilo potrebno opirati na dediščino državnosti slovaške nacistične satelitske države. Moč opisane levičarske nacionalistične misli dokazujeta dejstvi, da si je HZDS lahko privoščila spor s katoliško Cerkvijo sredi 1990-ih let in da je Mečiar stalno zagovarjal komunistično dediščino nasproti vztrajnemu revizionizmu skrajno desničarske Slovaške nacionalne stranke v času koalicijske vlade HZDS-SNS med leti 1994-98. Pri tem je potrebno izpostaviti, da niti slovaška družba in niti slovaške politične elite niso v celoti želele razpada Češkoslovaške, kar lahko pripisujemo zgodovinskim dediščinam. Razpad je bolj kazal na dejstvo, da sodobne vladajoče češke elite niso bile pripravljene sprejeti slovaških “zahtev po ohranjanju preteklosti znotraj sedanosti”. Kljub temu se je HZDS leta 1993, ko je bila neodvisnost dosežena skoraj po naključju, uspela uspešno integrirati ideologijo strankinega oblikovanja države.

V 1990-ih letih je mogoče prepoznati nasprotne trende v primeru Hrvaške, tako z vidika komunistične dediščine kakor tudi odnosov s Cerkvijo. V 1980-ih letih je porast velikega srbskega nacionalizma pod vodstvom Slobodana Miloševića prinesel revokacijo zgodovinske travme, kateri je sledila nasilna nacionalizacija srbske etnične skupnosti na območju celotne Jugoslavije. Naraščajočim medetničnim napetostim in Miloševićevim splošnim nasilnim politikam je precej blago nasprotovalo hrvaško komunistično vodstvo, ki je bilo še vedno vezano na politike “tihe Hrvaške”. Čeprav jo je zanimalo nacionalno vprašanje, se Koalicija ljudskega soglasja (KNS), ki so jo vodili voditelji hrvaške pomladi iz leta 1991, ni v celoti osredotočila na narod, ampak tudi na civilno agendo in kasnejše liberalno demokratične reforme. V okviru, kjer je veliki srbski nacionalizem neizogibno produciral hrvaško etnično

povezovanje, so bile vse preostale stranke zasenčene z ideologijo oblikovanja države HDZ, ki je ponujala krovno nacionalno politično platformo, kateri je uspelo pritegniti širok spekter volivcev. K legitimizaciji HDZ je dodatno prispevalo stalno slabšanje medetnični odnosov, ki se je končalo z vojno. Miloševićeva velika srbska agresija, ki jo je podpirala jugoslovanska vojska in je potekala v imenu ohranitve Jugoslavije, je dala zagon Tuđmanovi nacionalni politični misli. Takšna vojna simbolika, v kateri je Tuđmanova misel komunistične zločine iz leta 1945 popolnoma pripisovala srbskim partizanom, je omogočila pozitivno oceno dediščine Hrvaške kot nacistične lutke in zmanjšanje pomena antifašistične partizanske dediščine, predvsem ker so se partizani na koncu borili za ohranitev Jugoslavije. Splošno zanemarjanje partizanske antifašistične dediščine je predvsem v času vojne preseglo prvotne Tuđmanove ideološke namene spajanja desničarskih in levičarskih nacionalnih misli. Revizionizem se je povečal tudi zaradi postopnega dviga moči radikalne skrajno desničarske veje v stranki, ki je izvirala iz ustaške politične emigracije. Končno je k desničarskemu revizionizmu prispevala tudi Tuđmanova ozemeljska politika, ki je nameravala doseči predvidene “zgodovinske in naravne meje”, kar je vodilo v nasilne hrvaške politike v Bosni, in oblikoslovna vrzel v Tuđmanovi ideologiji. Če nekdo zavrže celotno hrvaško jugoslovansko miselnost, ker ni dovolj nacionalna, slednje neizogibno vodi v dojetanje, da nekdo zagovarja hrvaško neodvisnost in tako postane pozitiven agent v nacionalni zgodovini. Takšen revizionistični premik stranke na desno je bil prisoten predvsem leta 1993, po odstranitvi zmernih levičarjev iz stranke. Tuđman je od takrat skušal zaustaviti pomikanje HDZ na desno preko predstavitve domovinske vojne za novi mit nastanka Hrvaške. Tuđman je mit domovinske vojne konceptualiziral za gibanje, ki je prineslo konec zgodovini oblikovanja hrvaške države in končno spravo zgodovinsko deljenega naroda. Kljub temu je tudi mit domovinske vojne sčasoma postal obremenjen s “težkim bremenom zgodovine” in povezan z vojnimi zločini, ki so jih izvajali nad hrvaško srbskimi državljani v Operaciji nevihta leta 1995. Vojni zločini so skupaj z demokratičnim deficitom poslabšali mednarodni položaj Hrvaške, predvsem zaradi problematičnih odnosov z Mednarodnim sodiščem za vojne zločine v Haagu. Čeprav je kontekst domovinske vojne HDZ prinesel veliko večji legitimizacijski potencial kakor HZDS na Slovaškem, je sočasno odprl prostor bolj avtoritarnemu načinu vladanja HDZ v primerjavi z načinom vladanja HZDS. Nazadnje se je HDZ zaradi zmanjšanja legitimnosti konec 1990-ih let morala celo opirati na legitimizacijski potencial katoliške Cerkve.

Četrto poglavje izpostavi kako so bile politike zgodovine HDZ in HZDS prenešene na konkretne politike zgodovine. Posebna pozornost je namenjena razlagi kako so vladajoče stranke zanemarjale *vergangenheitsbewältigung* ali procese tranzicijske pravičnosti in

povezanih procesov soočanja s (totalitarno) preteklostjo. Posledično to poglavje izpostavi načine, na katere so bili narodi oblikovani preko različnih politik spomina, vključno z nacionalnimi simboli, prazniki in proslavami, kakor tudi zgodovino, ki se poučuje v šolah. Z vidika tranzicijske pravičnosti so bili procesi očiščevanja zanemarjeni zaradi zahtev po konceptih nacionalne sprave, pri katerih so vseobsežna nacionalna gibanja želela sčasoma razbremeniti narode kakršnekoli zgodovinske odgovornosti. Kljub temu so se pripovedi o razbremenitvi razlikovale med ideologijama HDZ in HZDS. Čeprav HDZS leta 1996 ni pristala na sprejetje Zakona o večnosti in nezakonitosti komunističnega režima, ki ga je predlagala manjša koalicijska skrajno desničarska SNS, Zakon še vedno ni obsojal komunistične stranke in je tako pravno ohranjal dediščino komunistične konstrukcije naroda in države. V primeru Hrvaške je komunistična dediščina izločala "jugo-komunistične" pretekle krivice, zato je na simbolni ravni v veliki meri razbremenila hrvaške komuniste zgodovinske krivde. Procese soočanja s preteklostjo je dodatno bremenila nepripravljenost vlade za soočanje z ostanki ustaških zločinov v drugi svetovni vojni, kar je bilo najbolj vidno med leti 1998-99 v primeru sojenja Dinku Šakiću, bivšemu ustaškemu poveljniku v zloglasnem koncentracijskem kampu Jasenovac. Z vidika odnosov med Cerkvijo in državo je vlada HZDS resnično obnovila vse cerkve, vendar ne v takšni meri kakor na Hrvaškem. V letih 1997-98 je Cerkev podpisala z državo štiri sporazume, ki niso le zagotovili obnovo cerkvene lastnine, ampak so tudi obvezovali državo, da letno daje Cerkvi bogato denarno pomoč. Nazadnje so sporazumi prinesli sprejetje verouka v javnih šolah za skoraj obvezni predmet. Glede na procese soočanja s preteklostjo je bila zadnja razlika med Hrvaško in Slovaško v dediščini domovinske vojne. Pri tem je bila izrazito občutljiva obravnava vojnih zločinov, ki jih je storila hrvaška vojska v Operaciji nevihta leta 1995, in zločinov, ki izvirajo iz hrvaško-muslimanske vojne v Bosni med leti 1992-94. Čeprav je hrvaški parlament sprejel Ustavni zakon o sodelovanju z Mednarodnim sodiščem za vojne zločine v Haagu, je Tuđman zavračal priznanje kakršnih koli zločinov hrvaške vojske in paravojaških sil. Namesto tega je vlada uporabila nekaj zakonov o amnestiji srbskih upornikov, ki so bili sprejeti pod pritiskom mednarodne skupnosti in namenjeni izognitvi kazenskega pregona vojnih zločinov hrvaških sil. Končno je zavračanje izročitve večih politikov in vojaških uradnikov Mednarodnemu sodišču v Haagu sčasoma vodilo v izolacijo Hrvaške v mednarodni skupnosti konec 1990-ih let.

Ti trendi so se odražali na način, da so politike tranzicijske pravičnosti postale prisotne v drugih politikah zgodovine. Tako so na Slovaškem ohranili spominske prostore na antifašistično slovaško nacionalno vstajo leta 1944, kljub naporom SNS, da obnovi dediščino

nacistične satelitske države. HZDS je želela konceptualizirati vstajo za ustanovni mit, kar so dokazovali nameni Vladimira Mečiarja, da razglasi 29.8, ko se je začela vstaja leta 1944, za dan slovaške neodvisnosti. Simbolika nacionalnih praznikov je odražala nacionalno ideologijo HZDS glede spajanja klerične predvojne dediščine z nacionalizirano komunistično dediščino. Nadalje je osrednje mesto komunistične dediščine v ideologiji HZDS do določene mere vidno v dejstvu, da so bili učbeniki iz komunističnega obdobja obvezna literatura v šolah vse do konca 1990-ih let, čeprav se je SNS zavzemala tudi za revizionizem izobraževalnih politik. Nasprotno od trendov na Slovaškem je Hrvaška v 1990-ih letih v veliki meri odstranila ali uničila spominske prostore na partizanski antifašistični boj, medtem ko so bili nacionalni prazniki spomina na antifašistični boj do velike mere izsiljeni. Končno je bila preimenovana večina ulic in trgov, ki so se imenovali po partizanih hrvaškega izvora, kar kaže, da so bile politike nacionalnega spomina najbolj protislovne s Tuđmanovo politiko zgodovine. Čeprav je bila "pozitivna tradicija hrvaške levice", kot je antifašistični boj, razglašena za enega od stebrov Tuđmanove zgodovinske sinteze, so bili partizanski spomini celotno zatirani v praksi. Dejstvo, da so Tuđmanovi koncepti o zgodovinski sintezi in nacionalni spravi na koncu dajali prednost (skrajno) desničarski dediščini, so sčasoma razkrili namen spremembe spominskega mesta koncentracijskega kampa Jasenovac, ki je bil največji in najbolj zlogasen kamp ustaškega režima, v spominsko mesto na vse padle za Hrvaško. Namen je bil skupaj pokopati vse kosti hrvaških partizanov, hrvaških fašistično satelitskih vojakov in preostanke padlih v domovinski vojni. Tuđman je trdil, da skuša v tem pogledu slediti Franciscu Francu in njegovemu projektu Sreče padlih. Opisane "politike Jasenovca" so bile sčasoma opuščene zaradi pritiskov opozicije in mednarodne skupnosti. Ker je projekt Jasenovac močno razdelil hrvaško javnost namesto načrtovane sprave, se je Tuđman predvsem po letu 1995 osredotočil na obeleževanje domovinske vojne. Z vidika spominskih praks in povezanih politik o nacionalnih praznikih je potrebno poudariti, da sta oba režima odražala zelo podobno "praznino glede oblikovanja državnosti" (S. Miháliková). Večina novih nacionalnih praznikov je v obeh državah obeleževala pomembne simbolične dneve iz 1990-ih let in tako povečevala dosežke režimov glede nastanka države. Končno so na Hrvaškem učbenike iz komunističnega obdobja očitno zamenjali novi učbeniki, ki so obsegali Tuđmanovo misel o hrvaški nacionalni zgodovini.

Sklepni del povzema zgoraj izpostavljene ugotovitve. Obe stranki sta se opredelili za gibanji, ki želita doseči oblikovanje države in skušata zajeti vse dele narodov ter s tem končati predvideno dolgotrajno zgodovino iskanja državnosti hrvaškega oziroma slovaškega naroda. Vseobsežni značaj obeh gibanj so legitimizirali koncepti o zgodovinski sintezi in nacionalna

sprava zgodovinsko deljenih teles narodov. HDZ in HZDS sta podprli svoja ideološka koncepta o spravi in zgodovinski sintezi z upodobitvijo celotne zgodovine Jugoslavije oziroma Češkoslovaške za naprestano podrejanje Hrvatov oziroma Slovakov Srbom oziroma Čehom. Te ideologije so sčasoma pritegnile večino volivcev zaradi sočasne zamere srbskih oziroma čeških političnih elit do hrvaških oziroma slovaških političnih zahtev za neodvisnost v času procesov razpada Jugoslavije in Češkoslovaške. Zamere, ki so jih izpostavljale elite starejših narodov, so omogočile pritožbe Hrvatov in Slovakov, ki so bili v mlajšem položaju v Jugoslaviji in na Češkoslovaškem, pri čimer sta te pritožbe najbolje uporabili HDZ in HZDS za legitimizacijske namene. HDZ je pridobila veliko bolj konsolidirano moč od HZDS zaradi konteksta nasilnega razpada Jugoslavije, ki je prispeval k bolj travmatični hrvaški zgodovinski dediščini od slovaške. Vojni politični kontekst je proizvedel večji demokratični deficit v primeru Hrvaške kakor Slovaške. Kljub temu je deficit v obeh primerih izviral iz podobnih konceptov HDZ in HZDS glede složnih etnično nacionalnih organskih skupnosti, torej koncepta, ki je bil v nasprotju s samimi načeli liberalne demokracije. Končno je lahko veliko močnejši skrajno desničarski zgodovinski revizionizem v primeru Hrvaške pripisan vmešanju vojnega političnega konteksta, zgodovinski dediščini in ideologiji HDZ, ki so skupaj proizvedli veliko močnejši nacionalizem zamere proti Srbom kakor je bil nacionalizem slovaške zamere proti Čehom. Posledično so razlike v zgodovinski dediščini in razlike v procesih razpada Jugoslavije in Češkoslovaške prinesle razlike v nacionalističnih ideologijah HDZ in HZDS, predvsem z vidika odnosov do antifašistične in komunistične dediščine. Navedene razlike so se sčasoma odražale v politikah in politikah zgodovine.

Prispevki

Pričujoča disertacija prinaša znanstveni prispevek na različnih področjih. Najprej obravnava povezavo med zgodovino, spominom in politično močjo. Disertacija z razumevanjem uporabe zgodovine v politiki izpostavi povezavo med konstrukcijo nacionalne identitete in politično kulturo. Pri tem na primerih Hrvaške in Slovaške predstavi možnosti za demokratizacijo obeh procesov konstrukcije nacionalne identitete, predvsem z vidika soočanja s preteklimi procesi. V disertaciji na primeru Slovaške najprej obsežno izpostavimo kako si je HZDS prisvojila komunistično nacionalno pripoved za svoj velik volilni uspeh. Nadalje na primeru Hrvaške obsežno preučujemo oblikoslovje prefinjene nacionalistične ideologije Franja Tuđmana in prenos "Tudjmanizmov" v konkretne politične prakse.

Disertacija z vzpostavitvijo obsežne povezave med zgodovino in močjo ponuja možne načine za raziskovanje primerov s podobno zgodovinsko dediščino in političnimi trendi v 1990-ih letih, kot sta Ukrajina in Gruzija. V disertaciji uporabljen pristop lahko končno vodi tudi v razvoj politološkega modela, ki bo omogočal razlago prisotnosti in pomanjkanja demokratičnega deficita v primerih novih neodvisnih držav, ki so bile v preteklosti mlajše partnerice v socialističnih federacijah Jugoslavije, Češkoslovaške in Sovjetske zveze. Model bi lahko bil razvit s povezovanjem prisotnosti in pomanjkanja demokratičnega deficit z dvema neodvisnima spremenljivkama. Prva spremenljivka bi bila prisotnost ali odsotnost zamere do zahtev za neodvisnost mlajših partneric v procesih razpada v začetku 1990-ih let. Druga spremenljivka pa bi bila zgodovina procesov konstrukcije nacionalne identitete mlajših partneric, predvsem z vidika obsega, do katerega so elite starejših partnerskih držav sodelovale pri konstrukciji supranacionalnih identitet (jugoslovanske, češkoslovaške, ruske oziroma sovjetske). Če sta prisotni obe spremenljivki, bi lahko predvidevali, da bodo prisotni podobni trendi kot na Hrvaškem in Slovaškem v 1990-ih letih. Prej izpostavljen model lahko kaže tudi na možne uspešne načine spajanja prevladujočega in kulturnega pristopa v primerjalnih politikah.