

INTELLECTUAL DISCOURSE ON RACE AND CULTURE IN CROATIA 1900-1945

(A reply to the article by Tomislav Jonjić, 'From Bias to Erroneous Conclusions', published in the *Review of Croatian History*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 2010)

Nevenko BARTULIN*

The following article is a reply to certain criticisms made by Tomislav Jonjić in the *Review of Croatian History*, Vol. 6, 2010, in relation to arguments I presented in an earlier article on the Independent State of Croatia (RCH, Vol. 3, 2007). This article examines the intellectual and ideological discourse on race and cultural identity in Croatia in the first half of the twentieth century. It highlights the important role racial anthropology played in the formulation of a distinct Croat ethnolinguistic identity in the works of leading anti-Yugoslavist intellectuals.

Key words: race, Dinaric, Aryan, Germanic, barbarian.

Introduction

An article rarely allows the historian the opportunity to explain all of his arguments at length. This was certainly the case with my article in the *Review of Croatian History* (RCH) from 2007, 'The NDH as a "Central European Bulwark against Italian Imperialism": An Assessment of Croatian-Italian Relations within the German "New Order" 1941-1945,' in which I examined the complex political relations between Fascist Italy and the Independent State of Croatia (*Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, NDH), and explored some of the ideological differences between Fascism and Ustashism, particularly with regard to the question of race.¹ The article was, admittedly, a little too ambitious in its scope, but I still stand by its main arguments, even if they require a more detailed analysis.

* Nevenko Bartulin, Ph. D., Hobart, Australia

¹ Nevenko Bartulin, 'The NDH as a "Central European Bulwark against Italian Imperialism": An Assessment of Croatian-Italian Relations within the German "New Order" 1941-1945,' *Review of Croatian History* (hereinafter: RCH), 3 (2007), no. 1: 49-74.

My 2007 article provoked Mr. Tomislav Jonjić into writing a somewhat rambling critical piece entitled, 'From Bias to Erroneous Conclusions', which was published in *RCH* in 2010.² Jonjić's commentary clearly highlights that he did not read my article carefully and that he has a rather simplistic understanding of the cultural theories of Ustasha, and other anti-Yugoslavist, ideologists. In particular, he has a clichéd view of anti-Yugoslavist nationalist attitudes toward Croatia's historical and cultural relationship to both the 'West' and 'East.' He erroneously argues that Ustasha and anti-Yugoslavist nationalist ideologists held the view that the Croats were an exclusively Western people with no ties to the East. Furthermore, Jonjić appears to possess little knowledge of the history of racial anthropology. He rightly argues that the ideology of Yugoslavism had a 'racialist and racist foundation,'³ but also implies that anti-Yugoslavist Croat intellectuals had no interest in the question of racial identity and racial anthropology. Although I had already explored the subject of Yugoslavist racial ideology in some detail in two articles written prior to 2010,⁴ Jonjić completely ignored my analysis of this topic. I will not attempt here to answer every single criticism Jonjić made in his article, but will instead offer a more detailed examination of the three most important questions regarding my 2007 article, namely, the questions of racial anthropology, Western civilizational identity and the cultural notion of 'barbarism.'⁵

Racial anthropology and ethnography

Jonjić makes the assertion that the conclusions reached in my 2007 article reveal 'the deep impression' left upon me 'by the theories of sociologist Dinko Tomašić and his epigones on the allegedly dramatic differences and divisions between "Dinaric" and other Croats,' then adding that 'this is not the place to discuss the roots and motives underlying Tomašić's quasi-scientific assessments, nor the role played in this motivation by the Serbian ethnographer Jovan Cvijić and the political manipulation of his nonsense about the racial

² Tomislav Jonjić, 'From Bias to Erroneous Conclusions', *RCH*, 6 (2010), no. 1: 227-250.

³ *ibid.*, p. 228.

⁴ See Nevenko Bartulin, 'Ideologija nacije i rase: ustaški režim i politika prema Srbima u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj 1941-1945', *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest* 39 (2007): 209-241; and Nevenko Bartulin, 'The Ideal Nordic-Dinaric Racial Type: Racial Anthropology in the Independent State of Croatia', *RCH* 5 (2009), no. 1: 189-219.

⁵ Jonjić cited my 2007 article three times in an article published in the *Journal of Contemporary History* in 2008. He made only one criticism, namely, that the Ustasha marching song, 'Forward Sailors from the Blue Adriatic' was not in fact banned by the Ustasha government at the insistence of Italian diplomatic representatives, as I had previously argued in my 2007 article (See Bartulin, 'The NDH as "Central European Bulwark"', p. 65). I accept that I made an error in this case. See Tomislav Jonjić, 'Jadranske teme u *Hrvatskom narodu* od travnja 1941. do rujna 1943', *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* 40 (2008), no. 3: 915, 918, 920.

features of the “Yugoslavs.”⁶ Firstly, I did not even mention Tomašić in my article, but more importantly, Jonjić’s remarks show that he is on unfamiliar historiographical territory, for he makes no distinction between the two disciplines of ethnography and racial anthropology, and gives a very brief and otherwise vague description of the ethnographic and anthropogeographic theories of Dinko Tomašić and Jovan Cvijić.

Dinko Tomašić (1902-1975) was a Croatian sociologist connected to the pan-Slavist Croatian Peasant Party. In his main pre-war studies Tomašić promoted the theory of the ethical and moral superiority of the democratic and collectivist culture of the Slavic *zadruga* (commune), found in the Pannonian lowlands of northern Croatia. In contrast to this cultural type, Tomašić argued that the tribal and patriarchal culture of the Dinaric mountain areas (Lika, the Dalmatian hinterland, Bosnia-Herzegovina) was ‘based on an egocentric and competitive foundation’, where individuals vied for power and social relations were based on hierarchic principles.⁷ He further argued that both the Pannonian ‘communal culture’ (*zadružna kultura*) and the Dinaric ‘tribal culture’ (*plemenska kultura*) were the two basic types of autochthonous Croatian cultures – in contrast to the Western civilization of the Croatian nobility and bourgeoisie – but he regarded the ‘communal culture’ as the preferred basis for the socioeconomic re-organization of a future peasant Croatia.⁸ Tomašić’s cultural types were largely based on ethnographic and geographical, rather than racial-anthropological, factors. He was critical of theories of Dinaric and/or Nordic racial exceptionality or superiority.⁹ In particular, Tomašić was very critical of the theories of Serbian Dinaric racial supremacy and expansionism articulated by leading Serbian intellectuals in the first half of the twentieth century. According to Tomašić, ‘the outstanding theorist of this Serbian imperialism was Jovan Cvijić.’¹⁰

The Serbian geographer Jovan Cvijić (1865-1927), for his part, had formulated an ethnographic and anthropogeographic theory to explain the peculiarities of what he saw as South Slav culture and way of life, and his theory was to have a marked influence on subsequent anthropological, historical and sociological studies of the South Slav peoples. Cvijić promoted the idea of the common Dinaric racial identity of the greater part of the ‘Yugoslavs’, and in that sense one could describe him as a Yugoslav nationalist, but Cvijić also considered the ‘Serbian type’ of Dinaric man as the core or leading component of the South Slavs. According to Cvijić, two-thirds of the population of the

⁶ Jonjić, ‘From Bias to Erroneous Conclusions’, p. 228.

⁷ Dinko Tomašić, *Politički razvitak Hrvata: Rasprave i eseji* (1938; reprint Zagreb: Naklada Jesenski i Turk, 1997), p. 113.

⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 109-114, 118-121.

⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 139-188.

¹⁰ Dinko Tomašić, ‘Sociology in Yugoslavia’, *The American Journal of Sociology* 47 (1941-42): 54.

mountainous Dinaric area were Serbs, and 'the best example of the really pure patriarchal Dinaric type is certainly the Serbian variety.'¹¹

Although Cvijić also described the Dinaric race in anthropological terms, his approach to South Slav ethnography and anthropology was in essence an anthropogeographic one. Cvijić defined this approach as the study of the psychic constitution of a people in a particular environment and the influences of geographic factors on that people.¹² He also considered the influences of historical, ethnic and social elements on the development of human psyches. Geographic factors (both direct and indirect) were of predominant concern to Cvijić; these included climate and soil characteristics, natural resources and settlement patterns, forms of economy, food, clothing and so on.¹³ In his influential work, *La Péninsule balkanique* (1918), Cvijić identified four ethnographic-psychological types among the South Slavs: Dinaric, Central, Eastern Balkan and Pannonian.¹⁴ He thus paid little attention to the classic taxonomies employed by racial anthropologists, which had divided Europeans into several racial (physical-psychological) types, such as the Nordic, Dinaric, Alpine and Mediterranean races.

The theories of Cvijić and Tomašić were ideologically opposed to one another, but both were similar in their methodological approach and ethnographic classifications. The main difference lay in their contrasting estimation of the psychological characteristics of the main South Slav types of Dinaric and Pannonian; while Cvijić praised the typical Dinaric virtues – heroism, patriarchy, love of freedom and bravery – Tomašić valued the pacifist and democratic traits of the Pannonian type. Jonjić fails to compare and contrast the theories of Cvijić and Tomašić, and furthermore, he dismisses these ideas, in a decidedly unscholarly fashion, as 'quasi-science' and 'nonsense', and claims that these theories were nothing more than politically motivated 'preconceived beliefs, prejudices and stereotypes',¹⁵ which is not to say that certain stereotypes and political beliefs played no part in their formulation.

What Jonjić further fails to note is the fact that leading anti-Yugoslavist Croat intellectuals, such as Ćiro Truhelka (1865-1942), Filip Lukas (1871-1958) and Ivo Pilar (1874-1933), used the discipline of racial anthropology in order to present a scientifically based critique of the ethnographic and anthropogeographic theories of Serbian nationalist intellectuals. Jonjić seems to be

¹¹ Jovan Cvijić, 'Studies in Yugoslav Psychology', trans. Fanny Foster, *The Slavonic and East European Review* 9 (1930-31): 377-378.

¹² Karl Kaser, 'Planinski ljudi, ravničarski ljudi: Prostor i etnografska reprezentacija' in Tihomir Cipek and Josip Vrandečić eds., *Nacija i nacionalizam u hrvatskoj povijesnoj tradiciji* (Zagreb: Alinea, 2007), p. 231.

¹³ *ibid.*

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 233.

¹⁵ Jonjić, 'From Bias to Erroneous Conclusions', p. 229.

unaware of the fact that in the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century there was nothing 'quasi-scientific' about racial anthropology at all. As Christopher Hutton notes, the science of race

'[...] became a branch of scientific learning at the beginning of the nineteenth century with the application of morphological techniques from animal and human anatomy, botany and zoology to the study of humankind. Many physical or racial anthropologists had zoological or medical training [...]. The basic premise of this discipline was that human beings could be divided into distinct races, and that their physical and mental characteristics were shaped by climate and geography'.¹⁶

It should be pointed out that racial anthropologists were as interested in the question of racial differences among Europeans as they were in the more obvious differences between the main races of white (European), yellow (Asian) and black (African).¹⁷

As an anthropological term, the 'Dinaric race' was first used by the French anthropologist Joseph Deniker (1852-1918), who divided the European population into six main or 'primary' races: Northern, later to be known as the Nordic race (characterized by fair hair, a dolichocephalic head and tall height); Eastern (fair, sub-brachycephalic, short); Ibero-insular (dark, dolichocephalic, short); Cevenole or Western (dark, brachycephalic, short); Littoral (dark, sub-dolichocephalic, tall); and Adriatic or Dinaric (dark, brachycephalic, tall).¹⁸ Deniker explained that the Adriatic or Dinaric race received its name from the Adriatic Sea and/or the Dinaric Alps 'because its purest representatives are met with along the coast of the Northern Adriatic and especially in Bosnia, Dalmatia,

¹⁶ Christopher M. Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich: Linguistics, Racial Anthropology and Genetics in the Dialectic of Volk* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), p. 21. By the 1920s new developments in the science of genetics had highlighted the 'increasing uncertainty about the status of anthropological features such as hair colour and skull shape.' Under the influence of the laws of Mendelian inheritance, many scientists began to view race as a 'set of hereditary features', which were inherited independently of one another so that there was no necessary direct correlation between the observable physical characteristics of a person (phenotype) and the totality of the inherited genetic constitution of that person (genotype). See *ibid.*, pp. 25, 31-32. All the same, traditional racial taxonomies continued to be employed by physical anthropologists and, to a lesser extent, by geneticists and biologists. See, for example, an article by the Slovenian born Croatian biologist Boris Zarnik (1883-1945): Boris Zarnik, 'Rasa i duševna produktivnost', *Priroda: Popularni ilustrovani časopis Hrv. Prirodoslovnog društva u Zagrebu*, Prof. dr. Miroslav Hirtz ed., Vol. XXI (1931), Nos. 5/6 (May-June 1931): 129-140.

¹⁷ Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, p. 24.

¹⁸ Joseph Deniker, *The Races of Man: An Outline of Anthropology and Ethnography*, Havelock Ellis ed. (London: Walter Scott, Limited, 1900), pp. 325-326. One of the basic measurements employed in determining race was the 'cephalic index' (the percentage of breadth to length in any skull), first coined by the Swedish scientist Anders Retzius (1796-1860) in 1842. The cephalic index was able to distinguish between brachycephalic (broad-headed) and dolichocephalic (long-headed) skulls.

and Croatia.¹⁹ Although Deniker referred to the Croats as ethnic 'Serbo-Croats', he had pointed to a possible racial distinction between the Croats and/or western South Slavs on the one hand and the Serbs in Serbia on the other. Thus, while the Croats/Dalmatians/Bosnians were the 'purest representatives' of the Adriatic or Dinaric race, the Serbians of Serbia proper were only 'probably' marked by the 'same [Dinaric] characters, somewhat softened.'²⁰

The anthropological theory that Croats and Serbs were separated by different racial types was very important for anti-Yugoslavist intellectuals keen to disprove the idea of the common racial origin of the Croats and Serbs. This is a significant point, for Jonjić would have his readers think that anti-Yugoslavist Croat intellectuals had no interest in the question of race. These intellectuals, most notably Truhelka, Pilar and Lukas, stressed the predominance of the Dinaric and Nordic racial types in the racial composition of the Croats. Ćiro Truhelka, a noted archaeologist, was the first anti-Yugoslavist intellectual to write a detailed study of the subject of racial anthropology in the western Balkans. In a booklet published in 1907 Truhelka argued that the Catholics and Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina belonged predominantly to the same fair Slavic-Croatian 'ethnic element' in an 'anthropological sense', while the Orthodox Bosnian Serbs were largely the dark-skinned descendants of the Balkan Romanic Vlachs.²¹ Truhelka described the authentic racial features of the Bosnian Catholics and Muslims as fair hair, blue eyes, a brachycephalic head and broad chest; although he did not specifically name this racial type, it is clear he was speaking of a Nordic-Dinaric racial admixture.²² In 1934 Truhelka wrote an article on the racial origins of the Bosnian Muslims, arguing that they belonged to the tall Dinaric race.²³ In this article Truhelka stated that there was little difference among the Muslims, Catholics and Orthodox in Bosnia and Herzegovina with regard to height and skull shape.²⁴ However, he continued to anthropologically distinguish the Muslim and Catholic population

¹⁹ *ibid*, p. 333.

²⁰ *ibid*, pp. 333-334, 344-345.

²¹ [Ćiro Truhelka], *Hrvatska Bosna (Mi i "oni tamo.")* (Sarajevo: Tiskara Vogler i drugovi, 1907), pp. 13-15. Truhelka wrote this text anonymously. He argued that the 'pure Slavic race' (*čista slovjenska pasmina*) was distinguished by the traits of fair hair and blue eyes. See *ibid*, p. 14.

²² See *ibid*, pp. 13-15. Deniker had argued that the Dinaric race was probably closely related to a 'secondary race' with similar features. He suggested the name of 'Sub-Adriatic' for this secondary race, which was 'not quite so tall and less brachycephalic, but having lighter hair and eyes.' Deniker hypothesized that the Sub-Adriatic type had probably emerged from a mixture of the Adriatic/Dinaric race with the secondary 'Sub-northern race', a tall, fair and mesocephalic (medium headed) type. The Sub-Adriatic race was located mainly in Bavaria, Austria, south-east Bohemia and parts of northern Italy. See Deniker, *The Races of Man*, p. 334.

²³ Ćiro Truhelka, 'O podrijetlu bosanskih muslimana' (1934) in Petar Šarac and Miljenko Primorac eds., *Hrvatsko podrijetlo bosansko-hercegovačkih muslimana: Rasprave i članci* (Zagreb: Hrvatska tiskara, 1992), pp. 11-19.

²⁴ *ibid*, p. 18.

from the Orthodox on the basis of pigmentation, which was at least as important, if not more, as 'a factor in forming and determining race.' The Catholics and Muslims were thus said to possess a greater percentage of fair hair, light eyes and fair skin.²⁵

Truhelka's anthropological arguments were echoed in the work of the sociologist Ivo Pilar, who, in a book published in 1918, wrote that the medieval 'old Croats' had been a 'Slavic-Aryan people of pure Aryan type: fair-haired, blue-eyed, tall height and [with] dolichocephalic heads.'²⁶ To substantiate his theory that the ancient Slavs were of Nordic-Aryan type, Pilar cited the English racial theorist and philosopher Houston Stewart Chamberlain (1855-1927) as a source. In his famous work, *Die Grundlagen des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts* (1899), Chamberlain argued that the old Slavs were, alongside the Germanic and Celtic peoples, part of the 'Germanic race.' Chamberlain preferred the term 'Germanic' to 'Indo-European', which was 'a mere theoretical and hypothetical term.'²⁷ Pilar explained that 'in Chamberlain's sense, I understand Germanics to include all Aryans, Teutons, the old Slavs and Celts.'²⁸ While Pilar admitted that the old Croats had assimilated other peoples (Illyrians, Romans, Avars and Vlachs), he also argued that the Croats had preserved the Nordic-Aryan heritage of their Slavic ancestors to a far higher degree than the Serbs. According to Pilar, the typical Serb had inherited his predominant physical features of black hair, dark eyes and dark skin from the Romanic Vlachs.²⁹ As he further noted, anthropological studies had confirmed that in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 'there are more than two times [the number] of fair, Nordic types among the Catholics and Muslims than among the Orthodox', the latter belonging largely to 'some other dark, pre-Aryan type.'³⁰

²⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

²⁶ See L. von Südland (Ivo Pilar), *Južnoslavensko pitanje: Prikaz cjelokupnog pitanja*, trans. Fedor Pucek (1943, reprint: Varaždin: Hrvatska demokratska stranka, 1990), pp. 19-20. Pilar's book was first published in German as L. von Südland, *Die südslawische Frage und der Weltkrieg. Übersichtliche Darstellung des Gesamt-Problems* (Vienna: Mans Verlag, 1918)

²⁷ Houston Stewart Chamberlain, *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, Vol. 1, trans. John Lees (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1910), p. 498.

²⁸ Pilar, *Južnoslavensko pitanje*, 18f, p. 419. Chamberlain also remarked that 'the thick-set body, round head, high cheek-bones, dark hair, which we to-day consider to be typically Slavonic, were certainly not characteristics of the Slav at the time when he entered European history [...]. In Bosnia one is struck with the tallness of the men and the prevalence of fair hair.' Chamberlain cited the work of the Austrian anthropologist Augustin Weisbach (1837-1914), who had argued that there had been some transformation of the skull shape among the Bosnians, for the present day population was predominantly round (or broad) headed, in contrast to the greater number of long-headed skulls (of the Nordic type) found in ancient and medieval graves in Bosnia. Nevertheless, the shape of the typical Bosnian face had remained long (which was characteristic of Nordics). See Chamberlain, *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, p. 505.

²⁹ Pilar, *Južnoslavensko pitanje*, pp. 108, 121-122, 170, 316.

³⁰ *ibid.*, p. 122.

The geographer and geopolitical theorist Filip Lukas offered the first detailed critique of Jovan Cvijić's theory of Serbian-Dinaric racial exceptionalism in an essay from 1925.³¹ Lukas was keen to disprove one of the central tenets of Cvijić's Dinaric theory, namely, that it was the Serbs who made up the bulk of the South Slav Dinaric population. Lukas observed that Cvijić's 1918 publication ('The Balkan Peninsula') was largely 'anthropogeographic' in its approach, and while there was no doubt that his book represented an 'expert and thorough work', Cvijić was not an anthropologist and the areas in the book that dealt with anthropology contained many imprecise or incorrect claims.³² Lukas argued that contemporary anthropological research had established that 'the Dinaric race is represented in purer form in regions populated predominantly by Croats.' In contrast, the entire Serbia proper (including Šumadija) east of the Kolubara River was inhabited by a population that was racially closer to the non-Dinaric Bulgarians. The 'core' of the Dinaric race was thus found along the Adriatic coast.³³

Lukas based his arguments on race on the work of the Swiss anthropologist Eugène Pittard (1867-1962).³⁴ According to Pittard, the Croats belonged predominantly to the Dinaric race, which was very different to the main racial type of the northern Slavs (Poles and Russians), which led him to hypothesize that the Croats (along with the Bosnians and Slovenes) were probably a 'Slavonized folk.'³⁵ As far as the racial difference between Croats and Serbs was concerned, Pittard found that, according to the preliminary anthropological research, the Serbs tended to be more dolichocephalic in skull shape and thus seemed to be more closely related to the equally long-headed Bulgars.³⁶ The Swiss anthropologist concluded that 'in these Yugo-Slavs we have a very good example of the anthropological mistakes to which a linguistic label may lead.'³⁷ He noted that it was unfortunate that 'even to-day we hear of "the Latin", "the Germanic" or "the Slavonic" races in current speech, in any number of textbooks and in journalistic parlance', despite the fact that no such categories existed in an anthropological sense.³⁸ Pittard's distinction between racial and linguistic identity was a universally accepted tenet among leading racial anthropologists and race theorists.³⁹ The main popularizer of racial anthropol-

³¹ Filip Lukas, 'Geografska osnovica hrvatskoga naroda' (1925) in Filip Lukas, *Hrvatska narodna samobitnost*, Mirko Mađor ed. (Zagreb: Dom i svijet, 1997), pp. 108-118.

³² *ibid.*, 33f, p. 111.

³³ *ibid.*, 33f, p. 113.

³⁴ *ibid.*

³⁵ Eugène Pittard, *Race and History: An Ethnological Introduction to History*, trans. V. C. C. Collum (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1926), pp. 258-261.

³⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 285-286.

³⁷ *ibid.*, p. 260.

³⁸ *ibid.*, p. 46.

³⁹ Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, pp. 84-85.

ogy in Germany during the interwar period, the race theorist and anthropologist Prof. Hans F. K. Günther (1891-1968), had also stressed the importance of being on 'guard against confusing Race and People (generally marked by a common language), or Race and Nationality, or (as in the case of the Jewish people) Blood kinship and Faith.'⁴⁰

The distinction between racial and linguistic identity was very important for anti-Yugoslavist intellectuals such as Lukas in their effort to prove Croatian national individuality. As Lukas explained in one of his most important essays, 'The Problem of Croatian Culture' (1938), 'language is not a blood and racial characteristic.'⁴¹ In the case of Croat ethnic-racial history, Lukas explained that, during the course of their migration from their proto-Slavic homeland (located somewhere between the Vistula and Dnepr rivers) to the western Balkans, the proto-Croats had already interbred with various Caucasian, Tatar-Mongol and Germanic tribes, such as the Antes, Avars and the Goths.⁴² The Croats received their greatest 'blood admixture', however, in their new Adriatic homeland, where they subsequently intermarried with 'the large number of Romanized Illyro-Celts, Romans, remnants of the Avars and Germanic tribes, and some other ethnic splinters.'⁴³ Lukas argued that the dominant Dinaric racial type among the Croats emerged from a 'crystallization' of this ethnic-racial admixture.⁴⁴ Accordingly, as a result of all this mixing, 'the Croats, regardless of how much they belong to the Slavic group by their language, have come to be racially closer to some neighbouring tribes than to the Slavic Russians.'⁴⁵

The Dinaric race was today found predominantly in the Balkan regions of Croatia where the first independent Croatian state was established and which had been historically inhabited by the strongest Croatian clans and families.⁴⁶ Alongside the Dinaric racial type, Lukas noted, other races existed among the Croats, though usually not in their original purity, but rather mixed with other types: in the lowlands of northern Croatia one could find many members of the Alpine and, to a lesser extent, East-Baltic races, while the Adriatic littoral contained some individuals of the Mediterranean race. Croatia had also been settled by members of the Nordic race, 'who, merging with the old [Dinaric] inhabitants, gave our culture many beautiful contributions.'⁴⁷

⁴⁰ Hans F. K. Günther, *The Racial Elements of European History*, trans. G. C. Wheeler (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1926), p. 2.

⁴¹ Filip Lukas, 'Problem hrvatske kulture' (1938) in Filip Lukas, *Hrvatska narodna samobitnost*, Mirko Mador, ed. (Zagreb: Dom i svijet, 1997), p. 252.

⁴² *ibid.*, pp. 250-251.

⁴³ *ibid.*, p. 251.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, p. 252. According to Lukas the Russians had acquired a good deal of non-Aryan blood through admixture with Finno-Ugric and Mongol tribes. See *ibid.*, pp. 251-252.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, p. 251.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*

Lukas stressed that no nation belonged to one and the same race, but one 'does not have to be a proponent of an exaggerated racism' to accept that 'every nation must have a blood core as a dominant and hereditary biological mass.'⁴⁸ In the case of the Croats, Lukas argued, the dominant racial type was the Dinaric race, since the mountainous Dinaric region was better protected from the infiltration of foreign blood than the fertile land of northern Croatia, which did not have natural barriers such as mountains protecting it from foreign immigration.⁴⁹ In 1936 Lukas had argued that the heterogeneous nature of Croatian culture and history had resulted in the emergence of distinct Croatian 'geo-psychic' types, the three most important being the Mediterranean, the Pannonian-Alpine and the Patriarchal (Dinaric) type.⁵⁰ He added that the 'patriarchal [Dinaric] part of our nation, a-musical, hard, frugal, serious, persevering and warlike, represents the purest type of our people.'⁵¹

Ethnographic and anthropological taxonomies were regularly employed by nationalist intellectuals and Ustasha ideologists in the NDH, a topic I have examined in some detail in an article on racial anthropology in the NDH, published in *RCH* in 2009.⁵² Jonjić seems to think that only Yugoslavist ideologists referred to 'the allegedly dramatic differences between "Dinaric" and other Croats', but the Ustasha government accepted the standard anthropological classification of the European races (which had undergone changes since the time of Deniker's authoritative classificatory model but generally tended to include five or six main races). This was expressed in both the legal and cultural spheres of the NDH. The NDH's Law Decree on Racial Affiliation, issued on 30 April 1941, stated that an Aryan citizen of the NDH was one 'who descends from ancestors, who are members of the European racial community or who descends from ancestors of that community outside of Europe.'⁵³ In the Ustasha daily *Hrvatski narod*, on 3 May 1941, an official article explaining the racial decrees defined the European racial community as 'a group of those races that have for centuries been mixing with one another in Europe: Nordic, Dinaric, Alpine, Baltic and Mediterranean.'⁵⁴ The article noted that there was no such thing as a separate Croatian race, for 'the Croats, as all European nations in general, are a mixture of the Nordic, Dinaric, Alpine, Baltic and Mediterranean races with small admixtures of other races.'⁵⁵ While the Croats

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, p. 261. Also see Filip Lukas, 'Zašto je Dubrovnik bio velik' (1938) in Filip Lukas, *Hrvatska narodna samobitnost*, Mirko Mađor, ed. (Zagreb: Dom i svijet, 1997), p. 224.

⁴⁹ Lukas, 'Problem hrvatske kulture', p. 261.

⁵⁰ Filip Lukas, 'Za hrvatsku kulturnu cjelovitost' (1936) in Filip Lukas, *Hrvatski narod i hrvatska državna misao* (Zagreb: Matica Hrvatska, 1944), p. 198.

⁵¹ *ibid.*

⁵² See Bartulin, 'The Ideal Nordic-Dinaric Racial Type', pp. 189-219.

⁵³ 'Krv i čast hrvatskog naroda zaštićeni posebnim odredbama', *Hrvatski narod*, 1 May 1941, p. 1.

⁵⁴ 'Tumačenje rasnih zakonskih odredbi', *Hrvatski narod*, 3 May 1941, p. 7.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*

exhibited traits of all the European races, the NDH's scholars and ideologists who wrote on the subject of race stressed the ideal physical and spiritual qualities of the Dinaric and Nordic races, which were regarded as the leading and decisive types in the Croatian nation's racial composition.⁵⁶

The Croats and Western Civilization

Jonjić argues that my 2007 article 'overlooks not just one, but thousands of examples of prewar and wartime propaganda by Croatian nationalists (from Pilar and Lukas, through Šufflay to Pavelić and the Ustasha) in which the Croats are extolled as a highly civilized Western nation.'⁵⁷ Jonjić, for his part, obviously overlooked the following sentence in my article: 'Although the Ustasha movement consistently stressed Croatia's Western, Catholic, Latin-Germanic cultural heritage, the movement also asserted that the authentic Croatian spirit and culture were to be found in the patriarchal tribal communities of the mountainous Dinaric areas of the NDH, and especially among the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina.'⁵⁸

Furthermore, if Jonjić had read the work of Filip Lukas more closely he would have realized that Lukas specifically defined the Croats as a 'Western-Eastern' people. In a speech given in 1930 Lukas argued that the Croats were an 'Eastern people' by their origin, and were geopolitically rooted in the Balkans and linked racially and linguistically to the Slavic East.⁵⁹ The Eastern characteristics of the Croats had, however, been successfully adapted to Western civilization, from which the Croats had received their Catholic faith, notions of law and state, art, literature and philosophy.⁶⁰ This Western-Eastern dualism represented the 'spirit' of Croatian culture.⁶¹ The Croats had preserved their autochthonous patriarchal culture, which was also expressed in the beautiful epic folk songs of the 'Islamicized Croats' (i.e. the Bosnian-Herzegovinian Muslims).⁶² The Croats thus represented a 'bridge' between the West and East.⁶³

In an article from 1932 Lukas referred to the Croats as a 'Western-Eastern [nation] in its full complexity, but [which] in its psychic depth and racial struc-

⁵⁶ Bartulin, 'The Ideal Nordic-Dinaric Racial Type', pp. 203-213.

⁵⁷ Jonjić, 'From Bias to Erroneous Conclusions', p. 229.

⁵⁸ Bartulin, 'The NDH as a Central European Bulwark', p. 61.

⁵⁹ Filip Lukas, 'O duhu hrvatske kulture' (1930) in Filip Lukas, *Hrvatski narod i hrvatska državna misao* (Zagreb: Matica Hrvatska, 1944), pp. 125, 129.

⁶⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 124-125.

⁶¹ *ibid.*, p. 129.

⁶² *ibid.*, p. 127.

⁶³ *ibid.*, p. 125.

ture has more Eastern characteristics.⁶⁴ Lukas defined the West as the product of the Romanic and Germanic cultures, while the East was represented by the Slavic peoples (which did not, however, represent a uniform cultural or racial entity).⁶⁵ According to Lukas, the strong autochthonous character and spirit of Croatian culture had ensured that the Croats had not completely 'lost' themselves and their originality within the West, as had happened to the Slovenes. At the same time, in having accepted Western civilization as a framework, the Croats had secured their place as a 'cultured nation.'⁶⁶

It should be pointed out that the theory of the Eastern origins of the Croats did not bring into question their Indo-European/Aryan racial identity. In 1929 the Croatian economist Dr. Ivan Krajač (1877-1945?) argued that the Croats derived their origins from one of the main areas of historical settlement of the Indo-Europeans, and as he explained, 'the cradle of the Aryan race is in the mountains of central Asia.' It was from this original homeland that the Aryans began to spread forth and settle other lands.⁶⁷ One of the new centres of Aryan settlement was the Carpathian Mountains and the surroundings of Cracow, which, according to tradition, was the former homeland of the Croats.⁶⁸ The Aryan race, Krajač noted, possessed a deep spiritual connection to mountains and this was clearly expressed in the history of the Croats. As members of the 'great Aryan family of peoples', the Croats carried a 'more or less inherited relation and love toward the world of mountains and the majesty of its phenomena.'⁶⁹

The Iranian theory of Croat origins, which was supported by many intellectuals and ideologists in the NDH,⁷⁰ enabled Croat nationalists to forge a direct link between their people and the home of the first great Indo-European civilization, ancient Persia. The French diplomat, historian and race theorist, Joseph-Arthur Comte de Gobineau (1816-1882) had argued that 'in very remote times the white race began to settle into its first home in the heights of Asia.' The name 'Irany', Gobineau noted, 'is nothing other than "Aryan" or "Aryan", which was the name common to all the white races at their origin.'⁷¹ In

⁶⁴ Filip Lukas, 'Smjernice i elementi u razvoju hrvatskoga naroda' (1932) in Filip Lukas, *Hrvatski narod i hrvatska državna misao* (Zagreb: Matica Hrvatska, 1944), p. 96.

⁶⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 93-94.

⁶⁶ *ibid.*, p. 101.

⁶⁷ Dr. Ivan Krajač, 'Narodne planine i Hrvati', *Hrvatski Planinar* XXV (1929), No. 4 (April 1929): 85.

⁶⁸ *ibid.*

⁶⁹ Dr. Ivan Krajač, 'Narodne planine i Hrvati', *Hrvatski Planinar* XXV (1929), No. 5 (May 1929): 111.

⁷⁰ See Bartulin, 'The Ideal Nordic-Dinaric Racial Type', pp. 197-199, 207-213.

⁷¹ J. A. de Gobineau, *The World of the Persians*, John Gifford ed. (Genève: Editions Minerva S. A., 1971), p. 6. According to Gobineau, the white race had consisted of Celts, Thracians, Latins, Hellenes, Slavs, Hindus and Persians. See *ibid.*

1940 the Croat archaeologist Dr. Zdenko Vinski (1913-1996) noted that the Medes and Persians, who represented the ruling elite of ancient Iran, had both belonged to *homo europaeus* (Nordic race).⁷² According to the theory of the Polish anthropologist Jan Czekanowski (1882-1965), the Dinaric race itself was the anthropological product of an admixture that had occurred between the Nordic race and the Armenoid (or Near Eastern) race.⁷³ One can find acceptance of this theory on the origins of the Dinaric race in the works of Filip Lukas from the period of the NDH.⁷⁴

In his chapter on the NDH's geographical and geopolitical position, published in a 1942 textbook on Croatian geography, Lukas noted that the greater part of the NDH's territory belonged to the Balkan Peninsula. This Dinaric part of Croatia was the 'gravity centre of our people', in which the medieval Croatian state had been founded and which had best preserved the Croatian language and original culture.⁷⁵ According to Lukas, in a cultural and racial sense the Balkans formed a world of its own, which was distinct from both East and West.⁷⁶ He argued that the 'peculiarity of the Balkans and its cosmic forces' were so strong that even four hundred years of Turkish rule had not led to a 'process of degeneration.' On the contrary, after the collapse of Ottoman rule, the Balkan peoples reappeared on the stage of history 'full of vital force and anthropological freshness.'⁷⁷ Although the peripheral western parts of Croatia had been heavily exposed to Western cultural influences, the Croatian people as a whole had not lost their 'spiritual peculiarity', and this was due to

⁷² Dr. Zdenko Vinski, *Uz problematiku starog Irana i Kavkaza s osvrtom na podrijetlo Anta i Bijelih Hrvata* (Zagreb: "Grafika", 1940), 45f, p. 15.

⁷³ Jan Czekanowski, 'Anthropologische Struktur der Slaven im Lichte polnischer Untersuchungsergebnisse', *Etnolog*, Vol. 10/11, 1937/1939, p. 239. Czekanowski argued that the old Slavs had been predominantly of Nordic race. See *ibid*, p. 233. Hans Günther also regarded the earliest Slavs (or at least their ruling class) as Nordic. According to Günther, the Dinaric race probably shared a common origin with the Hither Asiatic (Near Eastern) race in the Caucasus region; a part of this common Caucasian group left its homeland and afterwards 'a change in the process of selection under different conditions must have formed two groups out of the original single group.' Despite their common origin, Günther argued that the Dinaric and Hither Asiatic races differed considerably according to their physical and (especially) mental characteristics. He had a very high opinion of Dinaric mental traits (such as bravery in war and love of nature and home), which he felt were similar to those of the Nordic race. See Günther, *Racial Elements of European History*, pp. 58-59, 67-70, 111, 225.

⁷⁴ Nordic-Armenoid admixture occurred in the western Balkans in the late Stone Age. See Filip Lukas, 'Osebnost hrvatske kulture' in Filip Lukas, *Hrvatski narod i hrvatska državna misao* (Zagreb: Matica Hrvatska, 1944), p. 144.

⁷⁵ Filip Lukas, 'Zemljopisni i geopolitički položaj' in Dr. Zvonimir Dugački ed., *Zemljopis Hrvatske: Opći dio*, Vol. 1 (Zagreb: Matica Hrvatska, 1942), p. 32.

⁷⁶ *ibid*, pp. 32-33.

⁷⁷ *ibid*, p. 33.

the dominant blood of the Balkan-Dinaric Croats and their original patriarchal culture.⁷⁸

Contrary to Jonjić, who views anti-Yugoslavist Croat nationalism as having an exclusively Occidentalist concept of cultural identity, Ustasha ideologists and nationalist intellectuals in the NDH had a much more complex attitude toward the Balkans and the 'East' in general. For one thing, the Ustashe considered the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina to be of authentic Croatian ethnic descent and were more than tolerant of their Islamic faith.⁷⁹ What counted above all in the NDH in terms of national affiliation was not religious and/or civilizational identity, but racial origin. As an article in the Zagreb daily *Novi list* (from May 1941) stated, the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina were Croats according to their 'blood, language and history.'⁸⁰

The European Idea of 'Barbarism'

In my 2007 article I noted that, as Croatian nationalists, the Ustashe were not necessarily ashamed of the Croats being referred to as barbarians by Italian nationalists, including the Fascists, and that 'this was something they shared with the Nazis, at least in the sense of using the notion of "barbarism" to counter Italian claims of Latin-Mediterranean or "Roman" cultural superiority.' As I further argued in my article, 'barbarism' in this context would refer to the virtues of the ancient Germanic 'barbarians' as described by the Roman historian Tacitus in his *Germania*: 'the simple, brave and honourable Teutons as compared to the urban, decadent and civilized Romans.'⁸¹ This idea of 'barbarism' thus applies specifically to the Germanic tribes and to what Tacitus saw as their positive traits. The argument that Croatian nationalists may have had a similar view of this European idea of 'barbarism' is particularly disagreeable to Jonjić. Completely ignoring the reference to Tacitus, Jonjić adopts a sort of postcolonialist position in an attempt to refute what he sees as my unacceptable accusations of 'barbarism' aimed against the Croats. In complete contradiction to his 'Occidentalist' argument concerning Croatian political and cultural identity, Jonjić likens the historical experiences of the Croats in relation to their 'foreign antagonists' in 'Vienna, Budapest and Rome' to the history of 'African or American natives' under European colonial rule.⁸²

⁷⁸ *ibid.*

⁷⁹ Ante Pavelić (1889-1959) even authorized the building of a mosque in the centre of Zagreb, which was completed and opened in August 1944 as 'The Poglavnik's Mosque.' For more on this topic, see Nada Kisić Kolanović, *Muslimani i hrvatski nacionalizam 1941.-1945.* (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 2009), pp. 292-300.

⁸⁰ 'Hrvatstvo bosansko-hercegovačkih muslimana: Zvjerstva Srba nad muslimanima, *Novi list*, 8 May 1941, p. 7.

⁸¹ Bartulin, 'The NDH as a "Central European Bulwark"', pp. 68- 69.

⁸² Jonjić, 'From Bias to Erroneous Conclusions', p. 229.

One has to understand that the notion of barbarism we are discussing is linked to a long European intellectual tradition. Firstly, the very word 'barbarian' acquired a positive connotation during the Middle Ages. While, in the Roman period, the term defined 'anyone alien to Mediterranean society and culture and to Roman political norms', from the third century onward, as the Roman army began to fill with many 'barbarians', the word came to acquire the meaning of 'soldier' and the connotation of courage.⁸³ This meaning of 'barbarian' entered the Romance languages; the English word 'brave' comes (via French) from the Italian word 'bravo' (meaning 'fine' or 'spirited'), which itself originates from 'brabus' (a corruption of 'barbarian').⁸⁴

There was also a strong cultural tradition in Germany, dating to the Humanist rediscovery of *Germania*, which praised the virtues of the honest, courageous and freedom-loving ancient German barbarians in contrast to the decadent and civilized Romans of the south.⁸⁵ From the late nineteenth century to the end of Adolf Hitler's regime, German scholars generally held that 'the ancient Germans were morally and culturally superior,' and 'they owed this superiority to a miraculous combination of cultural skill and barbaric vigor,' or in the words of the National Socialist historian Otto Höfler (1901-1987), to a combination of 'state-building power' and 'heroic ecstasy.'⁸⁶ As the Czech historian Jan Peisker (1851-1933) had noted in 1911, 'the primitive German was as savage in war as the mounted [Asiatic] nomad, but far superior in character and capacity for civilisation.'⁸⁷

As I clearly noted in my 2007 article, the National Socialists saw themselves, somewhat paradoxically, as both the defenders of historical Western civilization and as the defenders of their own autochthonous Nordic-Germanic culture, so that there was a 'problematic opposition' between ancient Germanic 'barbarism' and classical Greek and Roman civilization (even if the original Greeks and Romans were also considered Nordic-Aryans).⁸⁸ As Christopher Hutton explains, 'one strategy was to reject the historiographic tradition that defined the northern tribes as primitive savages and affirm a Germano-centric view of history in which the Germanic peoples were viewed as having their own institutions and cultural order.'⁸⁹ Overall, the most important intel-

⁸³ David Gress, *From Plato to Nato: The Idea of the West and Its Opponents* (New York: The Free Press, 1998), pp. 203-204.

⁸⁴ *ibid.*, p. 204.

⁸⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 204-205.

⁸⁶ *ibid.*, p. 206.

⁸⁷ [Jan] T. Peisker, Chapt. XIV, 'The Expansion of the Slavs,' *The Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. II, H. M. Gwatkin and J. P. Whitney, eds. (1911; reprint Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), p. 433.

⁸⁸ See Bartulin, 'The NDH as a "Central European Bulwark"', p. 69 and Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, p. 105.

⁸⁹ Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, p. 105.

lectual strategy was to differentiate between Aryan/Indo-Germanic/Indo-European heroic 'barbarism' and wild Asiatic-Turanian-Semitic 'nomadism'. Among others, Hans Günther and the National Socialist ideologist Walther Darré (1895-1953) 'rejected the idea that the Nordic race should be seen solely as marauding [nomadic] invader, arguing that the history of the Nordic race showed the qualities both of peaceful agricultural settlement and of warlike heroism.'⁹⁰ Nomadism was thus restricted to non-Aryan peoples such as the Jews, Gypsies and, in the case of Ustasha ideology, to the Balkan Romanic Vlachs. The NDH's intellectual and ideological discourse on race and culture stressed the fundamental racial/cultural/social difference between the settled, warrior Indo-European Croats and the nomadic, racially Near Eastern peoples, consisting of Vlach-Serbs, Jews and Gypsies.⁹¹

According to Ustasha racial ideology, the Croats were predominantly of Indo-European (Iranian-Slavic-Gothic-Illyrian-Celtic) anthropological-racial origin, which meant that they had also inherited (in a spiritual sense) the martial qualities of their Aryan warrior ancestors.⁹² Anti-Yugoslavist Croat nationalists, including the Ustashe, considered their people a warrior nation, or as the historian Kerubin Šegvić (1867-1945) had described the Croats, a heroic *Herrenvolk* (meaning a 'nation of masters' and not 'master race').⁹³ This idea was in line with German race theories which held the Nordics to be a heroic warrior race (*Kriegerrasse*).⁹⁴ The tradition of Indo-European martial heroism was viewed by a number of European intellectuals as a healthy and positive trait. Among others, the Swiss psychologist Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961) 'saw the dichotomy between Aryans and Jews in terms of the vital, youthful, bar-

⁹⁰ *ibid.*

⁹¹ I could cite a great many works dealing with this topic, but I would point the reader to the two following specialist articles: Ćiro Truhelka, 'O podrijetlu žiteljstva grčkoistočne vjeroispovijesti u Bosni i Hercegovini' in Dr. Ćiro Truhelka, *Studije o podrijetlu: Etnološka razmatranja iz Bosne i Hercegovine* (Zagreb: Matica Hrvatska, 1941), pp. 29-43; and Franjo Ivaniček, 'Beiträge zur Anthropologie und Rassengeschichte der Kroaten (Eine Untersuchung an Schülern aus Gau Hum.)', *Zeitschrift für Morphologie und Anthropologie* 41 (1944), no. 1: 177-192. In his article Truhelka argued that the nomadic Orthodox Vlachs of Bosnia and Herzegovina were 'the descendants of pre-Aryan, pre-historic Mediterraneans.' See Truhelka, 'O podrijetlu', p. 30. The anthropologist Ivaniček argued that the Croat population of the NDH belonged predominantly to the Dinaric race, while the Orthodox minority was mainly of Near Eastern race (*Vorderasiatische Rasse*). See Ivaniček, 'Beiträge', pp. 178-181, 192.

⁹² See Bartulin, 'The Ideal Nordic-Dinaric Racial Type', pp. 197-199, 203-213.

⁹³ Prof. Cherubin Šegvić (Kerubin Šegvić), 'Die gotische Abstammung der Kroaten', *Nordische Welt* (Berlin: Verlag Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1935), pp. 35-36. Šegvić argued that the Croats were of Germanic-Gothic origin. According to the German historian Ernst Förstemann (1822-1906), in the Middle Ages, the Germanic-Gothic adjective 'hrôthi' (from 'hrôt', meaning 'victory' or 'glory') had a number of forms, such as 'Hruat' and 'Chrou'. Šegvić argued that the Gothic name Hruat 'completely corresponded' to the Croat ethnic name (*Hrvat*). See *ibid.*, p. 35.

⁹⁴ Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, p. 104.

barian versus the over-refined and overcivilized.⁹⁵ In the case of the Ustashe, James Sadkovich also notes that ‘rather than a race of cultured cosmopolitans, the Croats were presented by Ustaša propaganda as a “warrior people”, renowned not because of the sharpness of their intellect, but for their prowess with a sword.’⁹⁶ To be more precise, the Ustashe regarded the Croats as both a warrior people and a nation that had achieved great cultural feats.

The idea of the Indo-Germanic combination of cultural skill, high morality and ‘barbarian’ heroism can also be found in discourses on culture and race in the NDH. In 1943, in an article in the newspaper *Spremnost*, Ivan Krajač argued that the ‘essential features of the untainted Croatian national character’ consisted of the following three characteristics: ‘The first [trait] is the feeling of honour, honesty and the straight path, which is completely contrary to the typical trait of the Orient. The second is military heroism, bravery and ability. The third is cultural ability [...]’.⁹⁷ As was made clear in Žarko Brzić’s article in the 1942 *Ustasha Annual*, which I analysed in my 2007 article, the Croatian notion of barbarism – and Brzić used the word ‘barbarian’ – specifically referred to old Croatian heroism and bravery, ‘victory or death, the motto of our race and blood.’⁹⁸

A short entry on German history in a 1944 Ustasha handbook for Croatian soldiers noted that the young Germanic tribes, which were ‘morally uncorrupted’, had, through centuries of warfare with the Romans, overthrown the ‘corrupt Roman Empire.’⁹⁹ An article in *Novi list* had already argued in May 1941 that the Roman Empire began to disintegrate at the point when ‘the large contribution of foreign, in good part Semitic, blood took a firm hold of Rome.’ Thus began the ‘degeneration’ of old Roman blood and nothing could no longer be done to save the Empire from collapse.¹⁰⁰ In an article in the Ustasha newspaper *Neue Ordnung* from May 1942, Dr. Božidar Murgić argued that ‘the ancient autochthonous culture’ of the Croats came from the ‘high north’ and was related to the *urgermanisch-nordische Kultur* (‘original Germanic-Nordic culture’).¹⁰¹ Basing his argument upon the work of the eminent German art historian Josef Strzygowski (1862-1941), who had argued that Old Croatian art was of Nordic origin, Murgić stated that even in their ‘southern homeland’

⁹⁵ *ibid*, p. 13.

⁹⁶ James J. Sadkovich, *Italian Support for Croatian Separatism 1927-1937* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1987), p. 154.

⁹⁷ Dr. Ivan Krajač, ‘Kulturna sposobnost Hrvata’, *Spremnost*, 6 June 1943, p. 9.

⁹⁸ Žarko Brzić, ‘Vizija prošlosti’, *Ustaški godišnjak 1942* (Zagreb: Glavni ustaški stan, 1942), p. 209.

⁹⁹ *Hrvatu u borbi: Vojnički godišnjak za godinu 1944.* (Zagreb: Odgojni odjel Ministarstva oružanih snaga, 1944), p. 133.

¹⁰⁰ ‘Povjesna važnost zakonskih odredaba o zaštiti arijske krvi’, *Novi list*, 3 May 1941, p. 5.

¹⁰¹ Dr. Božidar Murgić, ‘Die Kulturbeziehungen des kroatischen und deutschen Volkes’, *Neue Ordnung*, 26 May 1942, p. 13.

along the 'blue Adriatic', the Croats 'have remained a Nordic people', as they had retained 'their Nordic soul, their Nordic bravery [...] their honour and their Nordic art.'¹⁰²

The German, and Croatian, racial concepts of 'barbarism' were essentially intellectual reactions to Italian arguments of Roman-Latin cultural superiority. Jonjić fails to observe that Ustasha Croatian nationalism was far more ideologically compatible with German National Socialism than with Italian Fascism precisely because of the question of race. From the mid- 1930s, Italian racial theory was caught between the increasing political-ideological need on the part of Benito Mussolini to confirm the Aryan racial identity of the Italians, on the one hand, and upholding traditional Italian racial anthropology, which stressed the unique Mediterranean (Eurafrican) racial origin of the Italians, on the other. The leading Italian anthropologist of the early twentieth century, Giuseppe Sergi (1841-1936), had rejected the influential German (and Anglo-Saxon) theory of the Aryan and Nordic origins of Roman civilization. He argued that the Mediterranean, black African and Nordic races all originated from a Eurafrican species (with the Mediterranean and Nordic races migrating to Europe from Africa in the Neolithic period).¹⁰³ The Aryans or Indo-Europeans were of Asiatic (Eurasiatic) origin (from the Hindukush region) and, according to Sergi, were not responsible for the origin of the Mediterranean Greek and Latin civilizations even though they somehow eventually managed to impose their Indo-European speech upon the Mediterranean race. Though they shared a common origin with the Mediterranean race, the Nordics had, Sergi maintained, contributed very little to the civilization of antiquity.¹⁰⁴ The brunet Mediterranean type was the 'greatest race in the world', which 'derived neither from the black nor white peoples' and thus formed 'an autonomous stock in the human family'.¹⁰⁵

By the late 1930s, as Italy moved to a closer political relationship with Germany, pro-Nazi Italian racial anthropologists such as Dr. Guido Landra (1913-1980) started to erect 'a barrier between the Mediterranean Italians on one side and the Jews and Africans on the other,' so that the 'Mediterranean race had to be understood in a more narrow sense than it had been previously'.¹⁰⁶ The official Fascist Manifesto of Racial Scientists from 1938 stated that the Italians were 'of Aryan origin' and that 'Italian racial concepts must be informed by Italian ideas and Aryan-Nordic in orientation'.¹⁰⁷ This Manifesto did not, how-

¹⁰² *ibid.* Also see Mirko Kus-Nikolajev, 'Nordijsko podrijetlo starohrvatskog pletenca', *Spremnost*, 10 April 1942, p. 7.

¹⁰³ Aaron Gillette, *Racial Theories in Fascist Italy* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 25.

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*, p. 27.

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*, p. 26.

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*, p. 66.

¹⁰⁷ Aaron Gillette, 'The Origins of the "Manifesto of racial scientists,"' *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 6 (3) (2001): 319.

ever, stop the strong intellectual and ideological influence of the Mediterranean race theory, and many Italian scholars and Fascist ideologists 'would fight a virtual intellectual and political war against those advocating the "Nordic orientation" from the time the Manifesto was first published until the fall of Mussolini in July 1943.' The Mediterranean racial theory implicitly contained an 'anti-German, anti-Aryan bias.'¹⁰⁸ As the German anthropologist and anatomist Prof. Eugen Fischer (1874-1967) stated in a letter in November 1940, one of the leading Mediterranean racial theorists, Giacomo Acerbo (1888-1969), had described the Nordic-Germanic tribes as culturally inferior peoples 'whose aim was not the creation of States but only pillage and plunder', while 'descendants of the Goths [...] have been absorbed into the lowest strata of the Italian population.'¹⁰⁹

In contrast to the Fascist intellectual and ideological emphasis on Italy's fundamentally Mediterranean racial identity, the NDH's leading scholars and ideologists, who dealt with the topic of race, argued that the Mediterranean racial type was insignificant in the racial composition of the Croatian people.¹¹⁰ What Jonjić further fails to note, or is perhaps unaware of, is the fact that the German National Socialists had a far more positive attitude toward the Croats and their ethnic-racial value than the Italian Fascists. The National Socialists did not, of course, consider the Croats to belong to the upper northern Germanic group of European nations, but, in their eyes, the Croats stood far higher in their racial hierarchy than the Mongol-Slav masses of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.¹¹¹

To conclude this section, I would like to comment briefly on the topic of the Ustasha use of the phrase, 'offspring of wolves and lions' (*porod vuka i arslana*), to describe the Croats, a subject that Jonjić went into some detail in his article. Admittedly, in my 2007 article I did not mention the fact that this phrase originates from a poem written by the Croatian poet Vladimir Nazor (1876-1949), but I did not claim that this phrase was 'an invention of Ustasha propaganda' as Jonjić implies.¹¹² In any case, I am not a historian of Croatian

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.*, p. 316.

¹⁰⁹ Gillette, *Racial Theories in Fascist Italy*, pp. 135-136.

¹¹⁰ For example, the Croatian ethnographer Mirko Kus-Nikolajev (1896-1961) argued that the influence of the Mediterranean racial type was not 'decisive' in the Croatian racial composition. Mirko Kus-Nikolajev, 'Rasni sastav Hrvata: Nordijske primjese pojačavaju i onako visoku životnu i kulturnu vrijednost hrvatskog naroda', *Spremnost*, 12 July 1942, p. 5. The Ustasha journalist and editor Milivoj Karamarko (1920-1945) noted that while 65% of Croats belonged to the Dinaric race (and a further 10% to the Nordic race), only 1% of Croats were of Mediterranean racial type. Milivoj Karamarko, 'Dinarska rasa i Hrvati: Osebnije naše značajke i pozitivni prinos nordijske rase', *Spremnost*, 22 November 1942, p. 7.

¹¹¹ For more on this topic, see Bartulin, "The NDH as a "Central European Bulwark""; pp. 59-61, and Bartulin, "The Ideal Nordic-Dinaric Racial Type", pp. 213-216.

¹¹² Jonjić, 'From Bias to Erroneous Conclusions', p. 233.

literature and do not possess expertise on the subject of the use of literary metaphors by Croatian poets and writers. However, it is still possible to argue, as I did in my 2007 article, that the use of the above phrase by the Ustashe reflects their ideological predilection for the folk culture of the Dinaric regions. As the Croatian sociologist Josip Županov points out, Nazor had in mind the Dinaric 'tribal' folk culture, which extolled martial virtues and heroism, when he wrote that 'we are the offspring of wolves and lions [*Mi porod jesmo vuka i arslana*].'¹¹³

Conclusion

When discussing the NDH's intellectual and ideological discourse on culture, one cannot, as Tomislav Jonjić did in his article, overlook the question of race, namely, the subjects of race theory and racial anthropology. By race theory, one should understand a theory that presents a racial interpretation or philosophy of history and culture, while racial anthropology postulates that human races possess distinct mental/spiritual traits alongside their physical attributes.¹¹⁴ The racial idea in the NDH shared much in common with National Socialist racial thought (*Rassengedanke*), including the notion of inherited 'cultural skill' combined with 'barbarian vigour.' On the other hand, the question of racial politics in the NDH, in other words the complex relationship between race theory and racist practice, is another question altogether that requires a further detailed and nuanced study.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Josip Županov, 'Aktualnost Tomašičeve sociologije', *Društvena istraživanja* 2 (1993), no. 6: 951. Jonjić fails to note that 'arslan' is in fact a Turkish loanword in the Croatian language. See Petar Šimunović, *Hrvatska prezimena* (Zagreb: Golden marketing, 2006), p. 154. Jonjić also does not take into consideration the fact that the Ustasha government allowed the literary use of Turkish words in deference to the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who traditionally used many Turkish (and via Turkish, Arabic and Persian) loanwords. See Marko Samardžija, *Hrvatski jezik u Nezavisnoj Državi Hrvatskoj* (Zagreb: Hrvatska sveučilišna naklada, 1993), p. 67.

¹¹⁴ For more on the topic of race, race theories, the history of racial anthropology and some of the controversies surrounding the question of race, see Gillette, *Racial Theories in Fascist Italy*, Hutton, *Race and the Third Reich*, Leon Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth: A History of Racist and Nationalist Ideas in Europe*, trans. Edmund Howard (New York: Basic Books, Inc. Publishers, 1974), and Pierre L. van den Berghe, 'Does Race Matter?', *Nations and Nationalism*, 1, 3, 1995, pp. 357-368.

¹¹⁵ The histories of all states based on a racial *Weltanschauung* have highlighted the difficulty of translating race theory into actual government policy. National Socialist Germany was, without doubt, history's ultimate example of a racialist state, but the German State Secretary of Aviation, Field Marshal Erhard Milch (1892-1972), had a Jewish father. The case of Milch, and tens of thousands of other Germans of Jewish and/or partly Jewish descent (*Mischlinge*) serving in the Wehrmacht and Nazi Party, draws attention to the complexity of the Third Reich's racial policies. For more on this topic consult Bryan Mark Rigg, *Hitler's Jewish Soldiers: The Untold Story of Nazi Racial Laws and Men of Jewish Descent in the German Military* (Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 2002).

Die intellektuellen Diskussionen über Rasse und Kultur in Kroatien von 1900 bis zum Jahre 1945

Zusammenfassung

Der Autor veröffentlichte im Jahre 2007 in dieser Zeitschrift den Artikel unter dem Titel „The NDH as a Central European Bulwark against Italian Imperialism: An Assessment of Croatian-Italian Relations within the German ‘New Order’ 1941-1945’ (Der Unabhängige Staat Kroatien (NDH) als mitteleuropäisches Bollwerk gegen den italienischen Imperialismus: Eine Beurteilung der italienisch-kroatischen Beziehungen innerhalb der deutschen ‘Neuen Ordnung’, Vol. 3, Nr. 1), in dem er auch Unterschiede zwischen Faschismus und Ustascha-Ideologie besonders in Rassenfrage behandelte. Tomislav Jonjić setzte sich mit dem genannten Artikel im Text „From Bias to Erroneous“ (Von Parteilichkeit bis zum falschen Folgern) kritisch auseinander, der ebenfalls in *Review of Croatian History* veröffentlicht wurde (Vol. 6, Nr. 1, 2010). Dieser Text ist die Antwort des Autors auf die von Tomislav Jonjić ausgesprochene Kritik, wobei der Autor zusätzlich die Genesis theoretischer Debatten über Rasse und Kultur in Kroatien zwischen 1900 und 1945 darstellte. Beurteilend, dass die kritischen Bemerkungen von Tomislav Jonjić auf ungenügenden theoretischen Kenntnissen von rassistisch-anthropologischer Problematik begründet sind, erklärt der Autor in diesem Text ergänzend die Fragen der Rassenanthropologie, der Identität der westlichen Zivilisation und der kulturologischen Auffassung des Barbarismus. Nachdem er einen Überblick über theoretische Auseinandersetzungen mit genannten Fragen, besonders in kroatischen nationalistischen Kreisen, gegeben hat, zieht der Autor die Schlussfolgerung, dass man bei Behandlung von intellektuellen und ideologischen Diskussionen über Kultur im Unabhängigen Staat Kroatien (USK, kroatisch: Nezavisna Država Hrvatska, NDH) keinesfalls den Einfluss von Rassentheorien und Rassenanthropologie vernachlässigen darf. In seiner Antwort auf die von Tomislav Jonjić ausgeübte Kritik erklärt der Verfasser zusätzlich, dass die Ustascha-Ideologen und nationalistische Intellektuellen im USK keine ausschließlich okzidentale kulturelle Identität hatten, sondern dass sie viel kompliziertere Auffassung vom Balkan und vom Osten im Allgemeinen pflegten. Die Rassenidee im USK hatte mit dem nazistischen Rassengedanke viel Gemeinsames, zog aber gleichzeitig auch geerbte „kulturologische Fertigkeiten“ und „barbarische Kräfte“ in Betracht.