Branimir Janković

Do the Dictatorships Ever End? Historians and Publishers under the Dictatorship in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia

#4 / 2022 HISTORY IN FLUX PP. 113-135

Branimir Janković
University of Zagreb, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
bjankovi@ffzg.hr

UDC 94(497.1)"1920/1930": 3794(497.1)"1920/1930":655.4
https://doi.org/10.32728/flux.2022.4.5
Original scientific paper

Do the Dictatorships Ever End? Historians and Publishers under the Dictatorship in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia[1]

The theme of the paper are the ways in which the dictatorship of King Alexander influenced the politics of history, the educational system, historians, publishers of historical literature, and publishers in general in the late 1920s and early 1930s in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. In order to put this first dictatorship in the Yugoslav area in a diachronic perspective, I will analyze the presence of certain types of continuities and discontinuities. I will also show the trajectories of historians and publishers during King Alexander′ s dictatorship and other dictatorships which followed in the 20th century's Age of Extremes. Moreover, all these dictatorships inevitably referred to each other. I will also explore the contemporary attitude toward the first dictatorship in the Yugoslav area, the attitude which was shaped by the stance toward Serbo-Croatian conflicts and Yugoslavism as a whole. All this contributed to the constant presence of this dictatorship in the ongoing symbolic struggles over the interpretation of national history.

KEYWORDS:
Kingdom of Yugoslavia, dictatorship, King Alexander, politics of history, education system, historians, publishers

1 This study emerged as part of a project funded by the Croatian Science Foundation (Hrvatska zaklada za znanost): project no. 5974, *The Transition of Croatian Elites from the Habsburg Monarchy to the Yugoslav State*, led by Iskra Iveljić. The article is inspired by the special issue "History under Dictatorial Regimes" of the *Revista de História das Ideias* 39 (2021).

When commenting on the dictatorship in interwar Yugoslavia, Croatian journalist Josip Horvat wrote in his memoirs: "Dictatorships have one thing in common with war: it is known how they start, but at the moment they start, nobody can know how they will end; they always bring unexpected, unpredictable results."[2] Although King Alexander's dictatorship only lasted from 1929 until 1931 and then into 1935, during the century of extremes the Yugoslav people faced several dictatorships without knowing when and how they would end. However, various dictatorships in Yugoslavia in the 20th century did not simply follow one another; they were also connected to one another, for example, as a counter-reaction to the previous one. Moreover, a large part of the population in Yugoslavia throughout the 20th century experienced more than one dictatorship.

Since existing literature often focuses on synchronic comparisons of the dictatorships, I will go in the opposite direction, by opting for a more diachronic approach. But instead of diachronic comparison, I will focus on diachronic interconnections. By crossing over the period of one dictatorship, it is possible to perceive further dissemination of its direct influence, legacy, and afterlife. Therefore, I will use King Alexander's dictatorship in the 1920s and 1930s as the first dictatorship in Yugoslavia and as a point of reference for other Yugoslav dictatorships in the 20th century. Bearing in mind the legacy and afterlife of the dictatorships, their persistence in the collective memory, and the constant symbolic struggles over their interpretation in the Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav space, it may be appropriate to raise the question of if dictatorships ever truly end.

A history of 20th century Yugoslav dictatorships is not just a story of their legacies and afterlives. It is also a history of various individuals who have experienced them and maintain their own attitudes toward particular dictatorships. This is especially the case with historians and publishers. It is common to analyze the relationship between historians and dictatorships. While historians legitimize dictatorships or oppose and suffer from them, the dictatorships attempt to put historians, history, and the collective memory under their control and use them for their own political goals. As opposed to historians, it is not common to analyze publishers under dictatorships, although they are also a part of the broader historical field along with historians, university professors, and history teachers. Therefore, my first research question is how historians and publishers were affected by the dictatorship, especially in the long run and when it comes to individuals who experienced more than one dictatorship throughout the 20th century. The second one is how these dictatorships relate to each other, especially when it comes to history, historians, and publishers.

Which Dictatorship(s)?

In 1929, Yugoslavia encountered a modern dictatorship for the first time when King Alexander I Karađorđević dissolved Parliament; suspended the constitution; banned political parties, organizations, and associations; appointed General Petar Živković as head of government; and concentrated all power in his hands. The immediate cause for this was an armed assault on Croatian MPs, members of the Croatian Peasant Party (*Hrvatska seljačka stranka*), in the Parliament in Belgrade in

2 Josip Horvat, Živjeti *u Hrvatskoj: zapisci iz nepovrata 1900–1941.* (Zagreb: Sveučilišna naklada Liber, 1984), 296.

1928, including the leading Croatian politician Stjepan Radić, who died of his wounds. The wider causes were long-term parliamentary and political crises and conflicts and constant instabilities and unrest in the state. Founded as the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes in 1918, the state was renamed as the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1929 to further emphasize its Yugoslav character instead of the existing parallel and individual national identities.

The 6th January Dictatorship was declared in 1929 and abolished in 1931 with the declaration of the new constitution. However, because the constitution had been imposed, its declaration restored the constitutional monarchy in name only. Most historians agree that the dictatorship lasted not only from 1929 to 1931, but it also continued afterward. They believe the real turning point was the assassination of King Alexander in 1934, which brought political changes that were more visible during the parliamentary elections in 1935. Considering the intense political repression, which resulted in many politicians and other opponents of the dictatorship being imprisoned, and the number of political assassinations, historiography mostly holds the view the dictatorship—whether it was direct, disguised or partly restrained—as being present from 1929 to 1935.[3] Contemporaries also characterized the dictatorship as such. One example of this was the politician Svetozar Pribičević who emigrated to Paris in 1931 and published the book *La Dictature du roi Alexandre* in 1933, which further supported the term "the dictatorship of King Alexander" within the literature.

The dictatorship in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia that lasted from 1929 to 1935 is interesting in historiographic terms because it can be connected or compared to other dictatorships and developments related to dictatorships in Europe and the world during the 1920s and 1930s. Furthermore, the dictatorship in question was the first dictatorship in the Yugoslav region, for which the 20th century became the "century of dictatorships." The second dictatorship followed soon afterward during the Independent State of Croatia in 1941–1945, which was a satellite state of the Third Reich, and the third one in socialist Yugoslavia in 1945–1991 which, after the initial, totalitarian phase gradually entered an authoritarian phase.[4] Authoritarian political tendencies were also present after the breakup of socialist Yugoslavia and the 1990s wars, and were characteristic of a number of post-Yugoslav states, or are still present in some of them.[5] The dictatorship in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia is historiographically significant not only as the first dictatorship in the 20th century in the Yugoslav region, but also because it raises the question of its influence on other dictatorships which followed it and the ways in which these dictatorships were connected to it despite their many differences.

The aspects of the legacy and the afterlife[6] of the dictatorship are also important in this respect and the ways in which that legacy was used in later

---

3 I will mention just a few recent titles: Ivica Šute, *Hrvatska povijest 1918.–1941.* (Zagreb: Leykam international, 2019), 104–40; Stipica Grgić, "The kingdom of diversity and paternalism: The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes/Yugoslavia, 1918–1941," in *Interwar East Central Europe, 1918–1941: The Failure of Democracy-building, the Fate of Minorities*, ed. Sabrina P. Ramet (New York: Routledge, 2020), 227–29.

4 Tihomir Cipek, "'Stoljeće diktatura' u Hrvatskoj," in *Hrvatska politika u XX. stoljeću*, ed. Ljubomir Antić (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 2006), 283–305.

5 Florian Bieber, *The Rise of Authoritarianism in the Western Balkans* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).

6 I borrow this notion from Adam Kożuchowski, *The Afterlife of Austria-Hungary: The Image of the Habsburg Monarchy in Interwar Europe* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2013).

dictatorships. The Ustasha movement, for example, which was active from the 1930s and formed the puppet Independent State of Croatia in 1941 and claimed to be a response to the previous "Greater Serbian dictatorship." From the perspective of the Serbo-Croatian conflict and the war of 1991–1995, this is also emphasized by a part of contemporary Croatian historiography and the public, which still view the Independent State of Croatia somewhat positively as a kind of Croatian state. This view disregards the fact that the Ustasha movement was a Fascist movement (as were many other radical nationalist movements in Europe and the world in the 1930s), and therefore it was not only a result of a reaction to the "Greater Serbian dictatorship"; it was also anti-Serbian because it violently opposed those whom it viewed as enemies of the (Croatian) nation.[7]

In the public and the historiography of the post-Yugoslav area, there are constant disputes over the appropriate use of the terms *dictatorship*, *totalitarianism*, and *authoritarianism*. This includes questions of whether socialist Yugoslavia was a dictatorship during the entirety of its half century existence, and whether its president, Josip Broz Tito, was a dictator. In Croatian history, this especially pertains to the usage of the term totalitarianism in reference to socialist Yugoslavia of 1945–1991 and to use of the term two totalitarianisms in a way which equalizes them (the Fascist and the Communist) in reference to the Independent State of Croatia and socialist Yugoslavia. Further polemics can be also observed around the question whether and to which extent the term authoritarianism may be applied to the rule of Croatian president Franjo Tudjman after the breakup of Yugoslavia and during the 1990s in the Republic of Croatia. This all serves to demonstrate how controversial use of the terms *dictatorship*, *totalitarianism*, and *authoritarianism* are, as well as the historical eras to which they are applied. What makes this use more sensitive is its inevitable connection with political and value-laden stances toward national history and national identity. Moreover, these terms have not been sufficiently defined in public discourse. Instead, they are applied without clear differences made between dictatorship, totalitarianism, and authoritarianism or the major dissimilarities among various regimes and political orders in Yugoslavia and Croatia throughout the 20th century.

Many discontinuities and strong breaks with the past are characteristic of the Yugoslav region during the 20th century, usually with an equally vigorous attitude toward previous, contentious historical eras. This is also often the case with the contemporary attitude toward the dictatorships of the 20th century, which are often viewed from today's perspective and the perspective of recent political and ideological positions. The same is true for the dictatorship in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, which today is viewed in Croatian historiography mostly from the perspective of Serbo-Croatian relations and experiences from the 20th century, and because of this, many authors reduce their interpretation of the dictatorship solely to the execution of the idea of Greater Serbia. In the same manner, later dictatorships in the Yugoslav region during the 20th century are observed not only in ideological terms (whether Fascist or Communist), but also in terms of how they relate to the issue of nationality, and especially in Serbo-Croatian relations.

---

7 Among recent titles: Constantin Iordachi, "Radikalizam, fašizam i (državni) terorizam: slučaj Mije Babića i ustaša," in *Revolucionari i ubojice: iz povijesti hrvatske nacionalističke emigracije u međuraću*, eds. Goran Miljan and Ivica Šute (Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2018), 1–24.

Because of this, the problem of dictatorships needs to be analyzed in a wider European perspective of the dictatorships of the time and movements toward dictatorships[8] that were characteristic of that era of European and world history. What also definitely needs to be taken into account is the diachronic and contemporary relationship toward them. All of these factors influence how we view dictatorships of the past. These are also the reasons why these ongoing disputes still persist over the meaning and interpretation of particular dictatorships. Therefore, we can elevate Bayly's remark on "interwar dictatorship, fascism and Communist authoritarianism" to a global perspective in which "the different regimes and political parties involved constantly referred to each other and eyed each other's successes and defeats,"[9] in order to apply it not only synchronically but also diachronically.

Why Historians and Publishers?

Historians were obviously important to 20th century dictatorships because they used history and historians to strengthening their legitimacy and justify their political goals.[10] History was, therefore, a field of intense political struggle, because both the oppositional political forces and the regime endeavored to make use of it. What was at stake was a conflict between the official and the oppositional politics of history. Apart from political elites as the primary sources of contested policies of history, historians have also contributed to its formulations and disseminations, and either supported the dictatorship or opposed to it for various reasons.

Professional historians, university professors, schoolteachers, and publishers of textbooks were directly involved in state funding and in state attempts to control them, especially during the dictatorship. However, these attempts were not always successful. Therefore, despite examples of historians and publishers who eagerly served dictatorial and authoritarian regimes, along with cases of sanctioned historians and publishers, there were always those who managed to avoid state control. Although my focus is on areas the Yugoslav state tried to exercise more control over, there were certainly intellectual circles with more autonomous space, especially around diverse institutions and associations such as Matrix Croatica (*Matica hrvatska*) and other.

Along with historians, university professors, teachers and other intellectuals also participated in the field of warring politics of history mentioned previously, there were also publishers who published and disseminated books that ideologically supported the regime or were opposed to it in different ways. And while historians and teachers have been analyzed in historiographic works on interwar Yugoslavia,[11] the same definitely cannot be said publishers, who are not analyzed enough in the

8 *Rethinking Fascism and Dictatorship in Europe*, eds. António Costa Pinto and Aristotle Kallis (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); *Crises in Authoritarian Regimes: Fragile Orders and Contested Power*, eds. Jörg Baberowski and Martin Wagner (Frankfurt/New York: Campus Verlag, 2022).

9 C. A. Bayly, *Remaking the Modern World 1900–2015: Global Connections and Comparisons* (Hoboken/NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2018), 66.

10 Antoon De Baets, *Crimes against History* (London: Routledge, 2018).

11 Pieter Troch, *Nationalism and Yugoslavia: Education, Yugoslavism and the Balkans before World War II* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2015). About geographers cf. Vedran Duančić, *Geography and Nationalist Visions of Interwar Yugoslavia* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).

existing historiographic works in the context of the social and political struggles of the time. Historians are not the only ones in the historical field. Therefore, the example of publishers illustrates that the historical field is much broader than is usually perceived. Not only historians, professors, and teachers take part in this; so too do publishers, journalists, writers, the public, etc., but from different positions, of course.

All the social groups mentioned here—university professors and instructors, historians and publishers—are also connected through the field of education and through teaching history in schools and at universities. History was one of the crucial national subjects in Yugoslav schools, alongside language and literature, religious education, and geography. Those subjects, as well as the entire education system of that time, were tasked with firmly supporting Yugoslavism and to strengthen Yugoslav identity among their students. This meant that "education should make Yugoslavs out of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes." In doing so, the education system, along with some of the politicians, publishers, and intellectuals, promoted one of the main ideological tenets of the new Yugoslav state: Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes are in fact one nation that had three different names.[12]

Besides that, the example of the historians and publishers illustrates the ways in which the dictatorship influenced various individuals who had often lived through as many as three dictatorships during the turbulent period of the mid-20th century before the Second World War, during it, and after it. This approach is oriented toward the social history of historians and publishers as a part of the social history of the intellectual elite, and it is also an attempt to present some new perspectives and raise new questions about historians and publishers under dictatorship.

However, the political pressure and attempts to control historians and publishers did not start with King Alexander's dictatorship. All these processes were in play to some extent even during the Habsburg Monarchy. Therefore, there is a certain dynamic of continuity and discontinuity regarding these issues. Of course, having in mind not only Austria-Hungary but also the other dictatorships in the Yugoslav 20th century, there is always a dynamic of mutual references among different regimes at the diachronic level when they looked back at the past.

Austria-Hungary and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia: Continuity of Political Unrest and Violence and the Discontinuity of Dictatorship

Dictatorship is usually defined as a form of government of individuals in which all power is monopolized; opposition and political pluralism are suppressed; the media is tightly controlled; and there is the dominant control of a police state as opposed to rule of law.[13] In that sense, the period between 1929 and 1935 really does represent a distinctive period. But along with this discontinuity, it is possible to see gradual transitions and different continuities, even before the new Yugoslav state was

12 Charles Jelavich, "Južnoslavensko obrazovanje: je li postojalo jugoslavenstvo," in *Jugoslavija i njeni povjesničari: razumijevanje balkanskih ratova u 1990-im*, eds. Norman M. Naimark and Holly Case, trans. Krešimir Krnic et al. (Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2005), 87.

13 Cipek, "'Stoljeće diktatura' u Hrvatskoj," 284.

founded in 1918. This is particularly true when viewing the period of the late Austria-Hungary and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, for instance, as a period of transition from empire to nation-state.[14]

In fact, instabilities and unrest and attempts to restrain them were definitely present even before. Political and social unrest, violence, and suppression was also present in Croatia during Austria-Hungary. It is enough to mention the insurrection in Rakovica in 1871 and serious unrest in 1883 and 1903. During the First World War, the Austro-Hungarian authorities arrested political opponents (who were oriented toward Yugoslavism or Serbia), interned or resettled the population, and introduced strict media censorship. Close to the end of the war and after it, the unrest and violence in Croatia came from Austro-Hungarian soldiers, known as the Green Cadres (*zeleni kadar*), who had deserted or returned from imprisonment in Russia and from peasants who attacked the nobles' estates. Shortly after the new Yugoslav state was founded, demonstrations in Zagreb in 1918 turned violent, leaving a dozen people injured or killed.[15]

The following year was marked by numerous workers' strikes and a fear that the October Revolution and social revolutions that had broken out in the neighboring countries, and the one in Hungary in particular, would spill over into Yugoslavia. Although it there were revolutionary rumblings in Yugoslavia due to the social situation, a revolution did not not take place. The Communists had only just emerged and were growing fast, which could be seen in the number of votes they would receive in the 1920 elections for the Constituent Assembly, in which they won enough votes to become the third strongest political force. Bans on their activity would soon follow with the Proclamation (*Obznana*) of 1920 and the State Protection Act of 1921. The Communists responded with assassinations of government representatives and with extensive illegal activities, for which they were constantly persecuted during the 1920s and 1930s. The peasant uprisings from 1920 on that left many dead or wounded should also be mentioned.[16]

The entire period of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and later the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, was marked by political instability and unrest. As soon as the new Yugoslav state was founded, political divisions were drawn around how the new state should be organized—whether it would be monarchism or republicanism, centralism or federalism. Political instability continued after the the adoption of the 1921 Vidovdan Constitution that defined the state as a parliamentary monarchy, and this was accompanied by ongoing parliamentary crises and unstable governments that often changed. Along with political conflicts came arrests and imprisonments of political opponents. It should be emphasized, however, that there were many major political trials under Austria-Hungary. One example was Agram trail for high treason (*Veleizdajnički proces*) aimed against Serb politicians in Croatia in 1908–1909. These big political trials also began soon after the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes

---

14 Stefan Berger and Alexei Miller, eds., *Nationalizing Empires* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2015); Paul Miller and Claire Morelon, eds., *Embers of Empire: Continuity and Rupture in the Habsburg Successor States after 1918,* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2019); Magdalena Baran-Szołtys and Jagoda Wierzejska, eds., *Continuities and Discontinuities of the Habsburg Legacy in East-Central European Discourses since 1918* (V&R unipress, Vienna University Press, Göttingen, 2020).

15 For postwar violence in Europe cf. Robert Gerwarth, *The Vanquished: Why the First World War Failed to End* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2016).

16 Šute, *Hrvatska povijest*, 24–26, 48–56, 67–69.

was founded. Some of these included the Diamantstein Affair of 1919 and the ensuing trial against the Communists, and the trial of historian Milan Šufflay and others accused of treason in 1921, among others.

Although there were examples of political repression and persecution of political opponents under Austria-Hungary and from the very beginning of the Yugoslav state, they would nevertheless intensify during the dictatorship. Widespread public expressions of political dissatisfaction, later followed by an ever-growing mobilization of wider social strata, were met with political repression. In this sense, the dictatorship that began in 1929 is certainly representative of an important novelty and discontinuity. It represents the first dictatorship in interwar Yugoslavia that came with the dissolution of the Parliament, prohibitions of political parties, and an escalation of the police state. It was a modern dictatorship, one that wanted to control as many aspects of the political and social spheres as possible—from politics, society, culture, and education to the media and the public. Certainly, the interwar Yugoslav dictatorship did not have the capacity to fulfill this extensive ambition. However, the later dictatorships in the Yugoslav area, inspired by modern totalitarian dictatorships, tried to realize this aspiration throughout the 20th century but also did so with limited success.

It is not surprising, therefore, that this period of dictatorship has drawn the attention of historians, and that several works have been published that focus precisely on aspects of political terror and state repression.[17] It should be emphasized, however, that a part of Croatian historiography, popular literature, and the public often insist that the entire interwar period in Yugoslavia was characterized by such political terror and Greater Serbian repression aimed primarily at Croats. This is a result of the aforementioned view of history from a contemporary perspective that references Serbo-Croatian conflicts throughout the entire 20th century. Of course, many works of Croatian historiography deal with other topics from the period, but a view of interwar Yugoslav history from the Croatian perspective is predominant. Because of this, it is noteworthy to emphasize works from international historiography in which, for example, attempts to create a unique Yugoslav nation during the dictatorship of King Alexander are explored.[18]

These examples can serve as an impetus for Croatian historiography to transcend this mononational perspective or viewing monarchist Yugoslavia exclusively from the perspective of Serbo-Croatian conflicts. Although this paper is also quite focused on Croatian and Serbian figures within the Yugoslav political struggles of that time, I also will include actors from Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. But more importantly, I will not exclusively use these Yugoslav actors to illustrate the predominant Serbo-Croatian conflicts, which is so characteristic of Croatian historiography. By broadening the scope from Croatia to Yugoslavia, and by employing a diachronic perspective with an interest in the processes of continuity and discontinuity, it is also possible to broaden our traditional understanding of

---

17 Bosiljka Janjatović, *Politički teror u Hrvatskoj 1918.–1935.* (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest: Dom i svijet, 2002); Ivana Dobrivojević, *Državna represija u doba diktature kralja Aleksandra 1929–1935* (Beograd: Institut za savremenu istoriju, 2006); Hrvoje Čapo, *Kraljevina* čuvara*: represivni aparat monarhističke Jugoslavije na području hrvatskih zemalja (1918.–1941.)* (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2015).

18 Christian Axboe Nielsen, *Making Yugoslavs: Identity in King Aleksandar's Yugoslavia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014).

the historical field. Considering that the dictatorship strove to encompass politics, culture, and education, it is interesting to see, for example, the way in which all of this has manifested in the attitude toward history and historical education, historians, and publishers. I will start with historians by looking how they stood in the long run regarding the dictatorship.

Historians under Dictatorship: A Diachronic Perspective

Historians in interwar Yugoslavia had a certain effect on the politics of history, and they either supported the king's dictatorship or were opposed to it. In that sense, as I mentioned before, the example of historians can also illustrate how the dictatorship influenced numerous individuals who often lived through several dictatorships in the 20th century. As has already been shown in historiographical and other works, the pressure of totalitarianism—both Fascist and Communist—affected historians in the interwar period on a global level as did the growing number of dictatorships introduced by the end of the 1920s. In many countries, this entailed limitations on historians' freedom and autonomy along with direct political control over them. At the same time, loyalty to the regime was expected, as was support for one's own nation,[19] which, in the case of Yugoslavia, entailed integral national or supranational projects.

Just as contemporary Croatian historiography mostly views dictatorships from its own national perspective, so did Croatian historians of that time. Their attitude toward the dictatorship, and interwar Yugoslavia in general, depended on answers to a few interconnected questions. Their position depended on whether they thought the new Yugoslav state should be organized based on centralism or federalism, whether they saw differences between Croats and Serbs as being irreconcilable, and whether Croats, Serbs and Slovenes were one (Yugoslav) nation, meaning "three tribes of the same people," as was said at the time. These divided views have persisted, to a certain extent, in some of contemporary historiography—for example in interpretations of whether Yugoslavia was doomed to failure from the beginning because of the national question and inter-ethnic conflicts or whether it had still attempted numerous times to establish a Serbo-Croatian compromise.[20]

These differing positions between Croatian historians of the time also divided them into pro-regime and pro-opposition historians. This means their political and historiographic views were either to the regime or to the opposition. Historians did not, however, encounter this division only in interwar Yugoslavia; it was also present in Austria-Hungary. Even then for university historians, the division into pro-regime and pro-opposition camps had an impact on their chances for employment, early retirements, and how exposed they were to manifold political pressures. There were many people who were opposed to the regime in various ways and were not promoted to full professorships at the University of Zagreb or who were forced into retirement.

---

19 Lutz Raphael, *Geschichtswissenschaft im Zeitalter der Extreme: Theorien, Methoden, Tendenzen von 1900 bis zur Gegenwart* (München: C.H.Beck, 2003), 84–85. Cf. also Monika Baár, "Of communism, compromise and Central Europe: the scholarly persona under authoritarianism," in *How to be a historian: Scholarly personae in historical studies, 1800–2000*, ed. Herman Paul (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019), 164–81.

20 Ivo Banac, *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984); Dejan Djokić, *Elusive Compromise: A History of Interwar Yugoslavia* (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 2007).

The case of of historian Gavro Manojlović being forced into political retirement in 1908 especially gained attention and was a cause for large student demonstrations and a strike.[21]

This tactic of forcing opposition historians into retirement was also employed in the new Yugoslav state, and it was used against those who persisted in their demands for federalism and republicanism. This was the case with Albert Bazala, a professor of philosophy at the University of Zagreb, who was forcibly retired in 1924 because he was a member of the council of the Croatian Union (Hrvatska zajednica), an opposition party that was a proponent of republican organization for the Yugoslav state. For this it was emphasized that Bazala "cannot legally work toward his republican idea and also be a civil servant."[22]

Although Croatian historians were mainly not subject to forcible retirements in the new Yugoslav state, they were certainly affected by an employment policy at the university that favored historians oriented toward Yugoslavia. This presented an obstacle to the employment of historians who were not oriented toward the regime and were closer to the Croatian opposition such as Milan Šufflay. Šufflay and other authors (Ivo Pilar is another example) wrote against the dominant ideological tenet that Croats and Serbs were a part of one people. They emphasized their cultural, civilizational, and biological differences instead—which was quite contrary to the official politics of history—and they called Yugoslav unification into question.

Because of that, Šufflay's professorship at the University of Zagreb, where he had been a lecturer from 1908 to 1916, was not renewed in 1918. Although students had protested against Šufflay's employment at the university in 1908 because they considered him a "professor of the regime" who had been directly appointed by the political authorities rather than the university senate,[23] Šufflay was quickly put on trial in the new state as an "anti-regime intellectual." After a political trial of Šufflay, Pilar and others in 1921, in which they were accused of treason due to alleged cooperation with an émigré organization that was calling for an independent Croatia, Šufflay was sentenced to three and a half years in prison. He was later released after serving half his sentence.[24]

Clearly, political pressure was exerted on historians under Austria-Hungary and after the founding of the new Yugoslav state, which is an example of continuity. However, political interventions became more frequent, and political repression during the dictatorship—this time an example of discontinuity—would become increasingly harsher. The case of the Milan Šufflay confirms this: After his sentencing in 1921, he was monitored by the police during the dictatorship and eventually attacked in the streets of Zagreb in 1931. He died from his injuries soon after. Although the circumstances of the murder were never completely uncovered, it was thought the attackers had been associated with Janko Bedeković, the chief of the Zagreb police, and the regime.[25] Considering that he was a prominent member of the opposition Croatian Party of Rights (Hrvatska stranka prava), his murder can be connected with

---

21 Tihana Luetić, *Studenti Sveučilišta u Zagrebu (1874–1914): društveni* život, *svakodnevica, kultura, politika* (Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2012), 389–91.

22 Penzionisanje dr. A. Bazale. Ministarstvo prosvete Kraljevine Jugoslavije. Belgrade: Arhiv Jugoslavije (henceforth: AJ). AJ-66-173-441.

23 Josip Horvat, *Hrvatski panoptikum* (2nd ed., Zagreb: Globus 1982), 200–3.

24 Horvat, *Hrvatski panoptikum*, 221–33; Janjatović, *Politički teror u Hrvatskoj*, 191–221.

25 Horvat, *Hrvatski panoptikum*, 250–54; Janjatović, *Politički teror u Hrvatskoj*, 296–306.

numerous other murders of political opponents, including the 1933 murder of Josip Predavec, one of the leading members of the Croatian Peasant Party. But Šufflay's case is relevant here because it represents an example of the murder of a historian during the dictatorship.

As one of the ideologues of the Croatian Party of Rights, Šufflay was a political opponent of the regime,[26] but as a historian (a medievalist specializing in Balkan and Albanian history), he also criticized the idea of integral Yugoslavism. In his writings, he emphasized the irreconcilable differences between Croats and Serbs and pointed to the civilizational border between East and West that divided them. This can also be seen in statements that, for example, "Croatian nationalism is something far more than the nationalism of any non-border people; it is greater and more useful to mankind than integral Yugoslavism."[27] Besides criticizing integral Yugoslavism, Šufflay also participated in forming the politics of Croatian nationalism in the Yugoslav state. His case clearly illustrates both strong connections between historians and politics and that certain historians were also active as politicians or as members of political parties. All of this blurred the boundaries between scholarship and politics. As was the case with Šufflay and several others, historians have often used scholarship to influence politics of memory and politics in general, yet they also relied on politics to influence scholarship and academia.

As a victim of Alexander's dictatorship, Šufflay would either be used politically by subsequent dictatorships or ignored. As Josip Horvat wrote, "It was only after he died, that he become 'famous'"[28] Even up until today, Croatian nationalists have often invoked Šufflay, especially in the Independent State of Croatia and just before the disintegration of socialist Yugoslavia (in which he was ignored). In the Independent State of Croatia, scholarly articles were published with titles such as "Dr. Milan Šufflay—Fighter, Martyr, and Ustasha."[29] Croatian nationalists in the Independent State of Croatia and during the war in the 1990s emphasized "the Greater Serbian dictatorship" as the culprit for his murder. In socialist Yugoslavia, in the foreword to Josip Horvat's book Hrvatski panoptikum (Croatian Panopticon), in which there is a reference to Šufflay, the publisher did not write about "pretentions toward a Greater Serbia"; instead, in the spirit of "brotherhood and unity," it emphasized the "chief of the Croatian police, Dr. J. Bedeković, who has blood on his hands,"[30] who was also well-known for his harsh prosecutions of Communists.

The case of Ivo Pilar, who died by suicide in 1933 during the dictatorship, can be added to this. Some Croatian historians doubt it was suicide, believing instead it was an act of political violence connected to the 1931 murder of Milan Šufflay as an example of an assignation of a political opponent. Because of this, and especially because he was a writer who, like Šufflay, was opposed to Yugoslavia, from the 1990s onwards he had the full attention of the public in the Republic of Croatia after being ignored in socialist Yugoslavia. The Ivo Pilar Institute of Social Sciences has borne his name since 1997.

---

26 About Šufflay as political thinker cf. Tomislav Kardum, "Ideološki pogledi Milana Šufflaya," Časopis *za suvremenu povijest* 52, no. 3 (2020): 899–932.

27 Milan Šufflay, *Izabrani politički spisi*, ed. Dubravko Jelčić (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 2000), 84.

28 Horvat, *Hrvatski panoptikum*, 192.

29 Cf. Šufflay, *Izabrani politički spisi*, 33–34.

30 Horvat, *Hrvatski panoptikum*, 8.

While pro-Yugoslav authors were given attention both in monarchist and socialist Yugoslavia, anti-Yugoslav and national authors who were prosecuted or ignored were become objects of attention in the Independent State of Croatia and the Republic of Croatia. However, because of this other political assassinations during the dictatorship are not mentioned in parts of the Croatian public and historiography: for example, the assassinations of numerous Communists at the hands of the police, or murders committed by members and supporters of the Croatian Party of Rights and the Ustasha, such as the 1929 murder of journalist Toni Schlegel, who had supported the establishment of the dictatorship. All of this points to conflicting heritages of dictatorships and the political use of the history of the dictatorship. Many of these events are well-known in the existing scholarship, but I mention them here because they have shaped the collective memory of the interwar Yugoslav dictatorship in Croatia. This is why a clear asymmetry is evident in certain historical events that have prevailed in today's Croatian collective memory while others are omitted.

Considering Bayly's previously mentioned remark that the dictatorships "constantly refer to each other and eye each other's successes and defeats," it is worth mentioning that Milan Šufflay wrote about his contemporary, Mussolini, and was drawn to his nationalist politics because of Mussolini's invocation of nation. Later editors of Šufflay's selected works stated that his positive attitude toward Mussolini was characteristic of many of his contemporaries who could not have known what would later ensue.[31] This is correct, but it is never mentioned that it was indeed Šufflay who wrote about Mussolini because they shared similar nationalist views, as he stressed in 1924: "Yes, Mussolini is a dictator in Italy. Yes, Bethlen is a politician of the old order. But both of these men are the living champions of their peoples. Not the peasant peoples of the future but nations in the modern sense of the word, historical peoples with a memory and a strong remembrance, and with that a strong sense of self and strong egotism."[32]

What is shown here is the principle of understanding a dictatorship if it has a national connotation. Along with the importance of the relationship toward the nation, Fascism was thought of as a "cure for Bolshevism,"[33] and in his writings, Šufflay made use of the term race, which was widely used at that time. In any case, this confirms the need to observe the problem of dictatorship at a wider European and global level—and not just for making comparative determinations of similarities and differences in certain dictatorships' ideas and practices, but also because of their numerous shared ties, interconnections, and, in Bayly's sense as shared observations. This also includes the issue of how the dictatorships were later viewed in retrospect.

The case of the Croatian historian Rudolf Horvat also clearly illustrates certain questions regarding issues of political repression, relations toward the dictatorship, and the heritage and use of the dictatorship. Horvat was imprisoned as a secondary school (gymnasium) teacher for political reasons: he was interned during the First World War, and in the new Yugoslav state, he was also forced out of his job in 1919 for political reasons. He was a member of the opposition Croatian Republican Peasant Party (Hrvatska republikanska seljačka stranka). In the mid-1920s he again worked as a secondary school teacher, and was again forcibly out by the

31 Šufflay, *Izabrani politički spisi*, 20–23.
32 Šufflay, *Izabrani politički spisi*, 68.
33 Šufflay, *Izabrani politički spisi*, 225.

dictatorship in 1932. During the Independent State of Croatia, he was politically active and managed to be promoted as a history professor at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb. He was thus able to materialize his political agency under the new dictatorship during the Second World War. In his works, for example in the 1942 book Hrvatska na mučilištu (Croatia in the Torture Chamber)that was reprinted in 1992, Horvat was critical of Yugoslavia and the "Belgrade dictatorship" and was positive about the Ustasha movement. Because of this, he was stripped of his political and civil rights in socialist Yugoslavia,[34] once again losing out under the new postwar dictatorship.

Horvat, therefore, is an example of a historian who lived through three dictatorships in the mid-20th century, whereas subsequent dictatorships took opposite stances toward him in comparison to those that had come before. Political repression and dictatorship in interwar Yugoslavia radicalized numerous politicians and intellectuals in the opposition, and later some of them sided with the ultra-nationalist Ustasha movement, which they were punished for in the socialist Yugoslavia. Just like Šufflay and Pilar, Horvat was also the object of later political use because he was an important figure for Croatian nationalism due to his anti-Yugoslav stance. To this day, the revisionist Dr. Rudolf Horvat Croatian Society of Historians (Hrvatska družba povjesničara Dr Rudolf Horvat) bears his name. All this shows that, in the end, Horvat has profited symbolically from his experiences under the dictatorships and gained a place in the national pantheon.

It should be mentioned that during the dictatorship in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the attitude toward pro-nationalist historians and professors was not the only one that hardened. The same was true for attitudes toward those suspected of being close to the Communist movement and the spread of Communist propaganda. Numerous pupils and university students, schoolteachers, and university professors were convicted and penalized for this. For example, in Slovenia, when the University of Ljubljana changed its name to the University of King Alexander I (Univerza Kralja Aleksandra I) in 1929 during the 10th anniversary of its founding in 1919 (at the beginning of the dictatorship) a trial was being held against a group of students who had been spreading leaflets about this.[35] But of the historians in Yugoslavia who joined the Communist movement, almost none and were prosecuted for it.

The case of Aleksije Jelačić, a Russian émigré and historian in Yugoslavia, however, is an exception. He was fired from the gymnasium in Skopje because he gave a public lecture on the Russian Marxist thinker Plekhanov during the dictatorship in 1932. However, Jelačić returned to his post because the investigation showed that his lecture did not have a political background.[36] This case shows the scope of monitoring and control that historians were subject to during the dictatorship in Yugoslavia, when the regime viewed everyone close to the nationalist or Communist movement, or those who were suspected to be part of those movements, as its primary main

---

34 Rudolf Horvat, *Hrvatska na mučilištu* (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1992).

35 Policijska direkcija v Ljubljani, Širjenje komunističnih letakov ob priliki proslave 10 letnice obstoja ljubljanske univerze, 1929. ZAMU-IV-211-17. Zgodovinski arhiv in muzej Univerze v Ljubljani.

36 Izveštaj, Aleksije Jelačić, 1932. Ministarstvo prosvete Kraljevine Jugoslavije. AJ-66-873-1290.

political enemies. Communists and party sympathizers in publishing houses, as well as schools and universities, were prosecuted for disseminating Communist literature and ideas. This also speaks to the importance of the educational field at the time.

History Education and Textbooks at the Crossroads of Historians, Publishers, and Dictatorship

Despite education being thought of as centralized, the educational system in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes was founded on largely different regional traditions, depending on, among other things, whether certain areas of the kingdom had previously been part of Austria-Hungary or not. These different traditions of education were mostly kept in the new Yugoslav state during the 1920s[37]as part of distinctly pre-Yugoslav continuities, which also created ongoing tensions between Yugoslav centralism and unitarism and national particularities.

A more direct attempt at change in the educational field actually came ten years after the new state was founded with the introduction of the dictatorship in 1929. Instead of the motto that proclaimed one people with three names, the new ideological motto was "one state, one nation, one king."[38] The result of this was changing the name of the state to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia that same year, a strong impulse toward the ideology of integral Yugoslavism, and a determination to shape a unitary Yugoslav nation. Now Yugoslavism was no longer a supranational framework that allowed for individual national identities; it was a unitary national identity which excluded all other national identities.[39] These ideological impulses presupposed the adoption of new laws for the educational system that would support stronger centralization and greater political control over education. Standardized curricula and textbooks were also planned.[40]

Because of this, only the Yugoslav Teachers' Association (Jugoslavensko društvo učitelja) in Belgrade was maintained during the dictatorship, and the regional and nationality-based associations of teachers were dissolved. At the same time, both the Yugoslav Teachers' Association and the teachers themselves acted as "the pillars of Yugoslav nationalism." Historians were expected to provide historical arguments for Yugoslavism, which they did in the form of "romantic historical nationalism."[41] History textbooks played an important role here, and they were approved by the Ministry of Education in Belgrade based on reports from historians about whether they corresponded to new circumstances and needs.[42]

Besides monitoring textbooks as a part of a wider attempt to supervise the educational system, attempts to standardize them should also be mentioned, especially concerning textbooks those for subjects of national importance. The

---

37 Jelavich, "Južnoslavensko obrazovanje," 88; Stefano Petrungaro, *Pisati povijest iznova: hrvatski udžbenici povijesti 1918.–2004. godine*, trans. Franko Dota (Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2009), 53; Troch, *Nationalism and Yugoslavia*, 45–46.

38 Jelavich, "Južnoslavensko obrazovanje," 88.

39 For a more detailed disscussion of this topic cf. Andrew Baruch Wachtel, *Making a Nation, Breaking a Nation: Literature and Cultural Politics in Yugoslavia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

40 Jelavich, "Južnoslavensko obrazovanje," 92; Petrungaro, *Pisati povijest iznova*, 53, 57–59; Troch, *Nationalism and Yugoslavia*, 46–47.

41 Jelavich, "Južnoslavensko obrazovanje," 93.

42 Materijali u vezi ocene vrednosti školskih knjiga i njihove upotrebe, 1929, 1930, 1931. Ministarstvo prosvete Kraljevine Jugoslavije. AJ-66-503/504/505/506/507-801.

aim of standardizing textbooks was to shift the prevailing focus among Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs on the history of their individual nationalities that they used to strengthen their individual national identities, to the propagated, integral Yugoslav identity. During the dictatorship in the 1930s, historians attempted to give equal space in textbooks to Serbian, Croat, and Slovene history. When doing so, they mostly romanticized the history of the South Slavs by emphasizing cooperation throughout history and avoiding the issues behind the conflicts among them.[43]

Thus, a new history textbook by Serbian historian Stanoje Stanojević published in Belgrade in 1930–1931 was titled The History of Yugoslavs (Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes) for Secondary and Vocational Schools, while the previous textbook from the 1920s had been called The History of the Serbian People (with a Review of Croatian and Slovene History) for Secondary and Vocational Schools. The Yugoslav name was also inserted into the titles of history textbooks during the dictatorship, just as it had been inserted into the name of the state. A history textbook by the Croatian historian Živko Jakić, which was published in Zagreb in 1935, was also named The History of Yugoslavia with a General History for the 4th Grade in Secondary Schools and Similar Schools, instead of previous title The History of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes for Junior Classes in Secondary Schools from the 1920s. However, when presenting the history of Yugoslavia in the textbook, Jakić made no mention of the conflicts within the new state between the time it was founded in 1918 and when the textbook was published in 1935, and he also made no mention of the dictatorship introduced in 1929. Both authors placed an emphasis on Croatian and Serbian history, but much less space was given to Slovene history, which calls into question the success in practice of the supposed orientation toward integral Yugoslavism.[44]

Just as the complete standardization of textbooks was not successful, integral Yugoslavism as a project of state Yugoslavism was also not successfully introduced through the educational system.[45] After the assassination of King Alexander in 1934, the dictatorship came to an end and political changes followed, which brought about a consensus regarding the Croatian question by moving more toward a federal rather than an integrated model by the end of the 1930s. The end of the state project of integral Yugoslavism as an attempt to create a unique Yugoslav nation also meant an end to efforts regarding culture and the educational system.[46] Historians, therefore, also returned to emphasizing individual national identities such as Croatian and Serbian, a moved away from their previous focus on integral Yugoslavism during the dictatorship.[47]

It should be emphasized that one Croatian author, Stjepan Srkulj, published history textbooks in Austria-Hungary, the new Yugoslav state (also during the dictatorship), and in the Independent State of Croatia. Another Croatian author, Živko Jakić, published textbooks in interwar Yugoslavia and in the Independent

43 Jelavich, "Južnoslavensko obrazovanje," 95–96; Petrungaro, *Pisati povijest iznova*, 67; Troch, *Nationalism and Yugoslavia*, 96–100.

44 Jelavich, "Južnoslavensko obrazovanje," 97–99; Troch, *Nationalism and Yugoslavia*, 94, 101.

45 Jelavich, "Južnoslavensko obrazovanje," 99; Petrungaro, *Pisati povijest iznova*, 61–62.

46 Petrungaro, *Pisati povijest iznova*, 63–65. About cultural politics cf. Ljubodrag Dimić, *Kulturna politika u Kraljevini Jugoslavije 1918–1941*, 3 vols. (Beograd: Stubovi kulture, 1996–1997).

47 Jelavich, "Južnoslavensko obrazovanje," 97; Troch, *Nationalism and Yugoslavia*, 100-1.

State of Croatia.[48] They lived briefly into socialist Yugoslavia. Jakić and Srkulj are thus examples of historians who faced several dictatorships in their lifetime. They were part of the many history teachers and historians who lived through the interwar dictatorship, the wartime Independent State of Croatia, and postwar socialist Yugoslavia.[49] All these regimes exercised control and subsequently sanctioned historians, history professors, and schoolteachers. However, a number of them were very young and did not have a position during the interwar dictatorship, and were thus less important for the regime.

The reason it was even possible for textbooks from the same authors to be published under two opposing regimes and during two periods of dictatorship in the 1930s and 1940s—monarchist Yugoslavia and the Independent State of Croatia—was that even in Yugoslavia, these textbooks contained Croatian national elements along with integral or supranational Yugoslav elements. It was strongly emphasized in the Independent State of Croatia, and the Yugoslav element was left out or completely demonized. But after the Independent State of Croatia fell, textbooks in socialist Yugoslavia also moved away to some extent from the ideology of integral Yugoslavism, and only embraced Yugoslavism as a supranational frame that did not exclude Croatian, Serbian, and other specific national identities.[50]

This confirms the fact that the main elements emphasized during a dictatorship always cause direct reactions in during the period immediately after their collapse. Because of this, subsequent dictatorships or authoritarian regimes usually took positions within their politics of history that were extremely critical, but they were also sometimes even somewhat affirmative toward a particular dictatorship. These positions most often depended on the national characteristics of a particular dictatorship. This attitude was, for example, highly critical if a certain dictatorship was considered anti-national from the contemporary perspective, and it was more lenient if it was considered to be pro-national. In cases where the attitudes of dictatorships and authoritarian regimes were extremely critical toward the past that had preceded them, the politics of history which they formed were most often quite intense and antagonistic. This can also be the case with democratic orders and democratic regimes with certain authoritarian tendencies that emerged after the breakdown of previous dictatorships or authoritarian regimes. In this sense, there were also historians who have published textbooks in both authoritarian and democratic regimes.

Publishers under the Dictatorship: A Diachronic Perspective

In interwar Yugoslavia, publishers were involved in political conflicts simply through suspicions that they might be involved in the spreading of Communist ideas, which was strictly forbidden. In fact, publishers were very much connected to certain political options and published works that ideologically favored either integral or supranational Yugoslavism or certain nationalisms. These aspects have not been

---

48 Petrungaro, *Pisati povijest iznova*, 37–38; Snježana Koren, *Politika povijesti u Jugoslaviji (1945.–1960.). Komunistička partija Jugoslavije, nastava povijesti, historiografija* (Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2012), 193.

49 Cf. Koren, *Politika povijesti u Jugoslaviji*, 178; Magdalena Najbar-Agičić, *U skladu s marksizmom ili* činjenicama*? Hrvatska historiografija 1945–1960.* (Zagreb: Ibis grafika, 2013), 86–171.

50 Petrungaro, *Pisati povijest iznova*, 83–84; cf. Wachtel, *Making a Nation, Breaking a Nation*.

sufficiently studied in the existing literature about publishers in interwar Yugoslavia.[51] They have not been analyzed in more detail within the socio-political context of the time or within the predominant conflicts in Yugoslavia, and they have certainly not been studied in the context of the dictatorship of King Alexander. Besides this, publishers have remained neglected in the broader scope of the literature dealing with interwar Yugoslavia, in which education (schools and universities) and historians were given priority. The latter have not been studied in connection with publishers, although they were inextricably connected to them through publishing textbooks and other books.

After the disintegration of Austria-Hungary, publishers initially adjusted to the circumstances in the new Yugoslav state, and after that to the new era and all the challenges it presented. For various individual publishers, the transition from the Dual Monarchy to the new Yugoslav state presupposed a battle to maintain their monopoly, and for the majority of publishers this meant battling growing competition and an increasing number of publishers, bookshops, and printing houses in interwar period. Publishers mostly stated that the period immediately after the First World War was successful for them. They printed more books than ever before and that books sales were also doing well. However, they soon began complaining that, in this new era, cinema and sports were taking away their readers, and that unfair competition—mostly from kiosks that sold books—was eating away at their profit. This had become a much more serious issue during the Great Depression in the 1930s.[52] The publishing business at that time was very often a family business that was passed down from father to son (as was the case with the Kugli publishing house in Zagreb and many others), and in that sense, the businesses were passed down from Austria-Hungary to Yugoslavia. There were those who achieved their greatest success in the new Yugoslav state (as was the case with the publisher Geca Kon from Belgrade[53] and others), and of course there were many publishers who had only just started their business in interwar Yugoslavia. Although publishing was mostly a family business, an increasingly larger firms and joint-stock companies began getting involved in it.

The political sensitivity of publishing was a concern for those who published political works. This was especially true of those who published political newspapers and works connected to particular political movements or parties. All political options of the time published their own newspapers or other types of publications. A good example of this is the city of Osijek, where the First Croatian Joint-Stock Printing House (Prva hrvatska dionička tiskara) and the Citizens' Printing House (Građanska tiskara) supported the Croatian national movement, the Serbian Printing House (Srpska štamparija) supported the Serbian national movement and the Workers' Printing House (Radnička štamparija) supported the workers' movement.[54] The Workers' Printing House (1918–1926), where members of the Communist movement were active, faced suppression and changed the name of the workers' newspaper it published—along with Marxist works and socialist brochures—when confronted

51 Marija Malbaša, *Povijest tiskarstva u Slavoniji* (Zagreb: Hrvatsko bibliotekarsko društvo, 1978); Ljubomir Durković-Jakšić, *Jugoslovensko knjižarstvo 1918–1941* (Beograd: Narodna knjiga, 1979).

52 *Iz povijesti hrvatskoga knjižarstva i nakladništva*, ed. Ivica Matičević (Zagreb: Ex libris, 2010).

53 Velimir Starčević, *Knjiga o Geci Konu* (Beograd: Prosveta, 2009).

54 Malbaša, *Povijest tiskarstva u Slavoniji*, 56–59.

with state's fight against Communist propaganda.[55] Of course, there were many private publishers and printers who published leftist works or who were nationally, politically, or socially positioned in various ways. For example, a printing house run by Aleksandar Tajkov, a Communist who printed socialist newspapers, was active in Slavonska Požega from 1913 to 1924. For this reason, his printing house was shut down, and he subsequently moved to Serbia, where he was shot by the Germans in 1941 for participating in an act of sabotage.[56]

Of course, the battle was not fought only around publishing works on Marxism, socialism and communism, but also around the national question and Yugoslavia. For example, in 1923 the Citizens' Printing House in Osijek (1920–1945), which published the opposition Croatian Paper (Hrvatski list), was attacked. Later on during the dictatorship, because of the prohibition of the activities of political parties and associations, the Association for Publishing the Croatian Paper (Društvo za izdavanje Hrvatskog lista), which published the Croatian Paper at the Citizens' Printing House, was banned in 1929.[57] One of their associates was the historian Rudolf Horvat, who was mentioned previously. Charges were also brought against people who distributed political calendars published by the Slavic Bookstore in Zagreb in 1929 and 1930 among the peasants in Slavonia, despite the calendars being prohibited because of their connection to Stjepan Radić and the Croatian Peasant Party.[58]

Bans, monitoring and strict control during the dictatorship extended not only to political and cultural associations, but also reading rooms that existed in many cities, and which were also nationally oriented. For example, the Croatian Citizens' Reading Room (Hrvatska građanska čitaonica) in Osijek (Upper Town), after it was permitted to operate in 1929, was under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Education in Belgrade, as were others, and it had to send the ministry had to send annual reports and change its rules. As a part of the Croatian national movement, in 1935 the Croatian Citizens' Reading Room "held a traditional funeral mass in the honor of the eternal Croatian heroes Petar Zrinski and Fran Krsto Frankopan, and afterward, it participated in every Croatian cultural celebration."[59] These kinds of celebrations also bore witness to the inherent conflicts within the antagonistic policies related to history—integral or supranational Yugoslav policies and specific national policies like the Croatian national identity. This also held true for historians. And while historians who supported the idea of integral Yugoslavism—and even the dictatorship—stressed events from the history of the South Slavs that were unifying and binding, historians who were opposed to this and were part of national movements emphasized their own national history and prominent national figures.

It is possible to follow the way some of those involved in publishing also became nationally radicalized in the 1930s due to the dictatorship and, in the Croatian case, they often placed their newspapers and printing houses at the service of Ustasha propaganda under the Independent State of Croatia. The Citizens' Printing

55 Malbaša, *Povijest tiskarstva u Slavoniji*, 56.
56 Malbaša, *Povijest tiskarstva u Slavoniji*, 74.
57 Malbaša, *Povijest tiskarstva u Slavoniji*, 57–58.
58 Žandarmerijska stanica Bizovac, Kaznena prijava, 21. februara 1930; Državno tužioštvo u Osijeku, Obtužnica, 1. aprila 1930. Stjepan Heffer, HR-DAOS-1177, kutija 3. Državni arhiv u Osijeku (henceforth: DAOS).
59 Zapisnik redovite glavne skupštine Hrvatske gradjanske čitaonice održane 15. marta 1936. Hrvatska građanska čitaonica u Gornjem gradu, Osijek, HR-DAOS-418, kutija 5.

House in Osijek and its Croatian Paper are an example of this,[60] as is the Croatian Citizens' Reading Room. Many printing houses were taken over by the Germans in Osijek and in other Yugoslav areas under the Independent State of Croatia or German occupation. In 1941, many publishers who were of Jewish background had their property confiscated, and they themselves did not survive the Ustasha and German dictatorship. Geca Kon, a respected publisher from Belgrade, who had been interned during the First World War, was killed in 1941 because of his Jewish background. After the Second World War, publishing houses, bookshops, and publisher's printing houses were nationalized within socialist Yugoslavia, and they were the basis on which new state publishing and printing companies were often founded. Certain publishers had thus gone through several dictatorships in the mid-20th century, although, of course, their experiences differed.

One of these publishers was Isidor Đurđević, a bookshop owner from Sarajevo and Belgrade. After the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo in 1914, his bookshop was demolished during a street protest because he was Serbian. After the war he published, among other things, socialist literature in Sarajevo and Belgrade, for example Werner Sombart's *Socialism and the Social Movement* in 1922 and August Babel's *Woman and Socialism* in 1923, and he emphasized that he had taken over the Socialist Bookshop in Belgrade. Socialist and Communist publications drew the attention of the public and some publishers published them even though they were not members of the Communist movement or supporters of Communist ideas. This was the case with Geca Kon, who published Marx's *Capital* in 1924, which had been translated by Moša Pijade, a Communist who started an illegal printing house in Belgrade, for which he was imprisoned.

Đorđević stated that he had had problems with the police in Yugoslavia during the interwar period because of his Communist publications, for which he had been penalized. He also mentioned that during the Second World War, the Ustasha destroyed all of his books in Sarajevo that were written in the Cyrillic alphabet. After the Second World War, his bookshop was nationalized in socialist Yugoslavia, and he continued to work in the newly founded state publishing company.[61] Just like university professors, schoolteachers and historians, publishers also adapted to the turbulent period of the mid-20th century in various ways, and tried to keep doing their work in any way they could, although many could not maintain it. Even though many experienced several dictatorships in Yugoslavia in the 20th century, publishers (and for Isidor Đorđević among them) specifically rarely managed to obtain a symbolic afterlife in the way historians often did. Unlike historians, publishers are usually not the architects of national identity, and for this reason why they do not automatically become part of the collective memory.

Conclusion

Dictatorships demonstrate a particular interest in history and in controlling historians, education, culture, and, of course, politics. And, while political control and repression existed before, the dictatorships of the 20th century displayed a stronger desire for increasingly broader control and were much more ambitious. This

60 Malbaša, *Povijest tiskarstva u Slavoniji*, 59.

61 Kratak pregled prosvetne delatnosti izdavačke knjižare I. Dj. Djurdjevića. Isidor Đurđević, HAS-0-ĐI-226, kutija 1. Historijski arhiv, Sarajevo.

can be seen in the dictatorship of King Alexander in the late 1920s and early 1930s. This was the first dictatorship in the Yugoslav region. It should also be noted that the dictatorships of the turbulent mid-20th century spilled into one another—of course taking into account all their specificities and various differences—and numerous professors, historians, and publishers lived through several dictatorships.

Numerous actors suffered serious consequences during the dictatorship of King Alexander, and the murder of historian Millan Šufflay in 1931 is particularly emblematic. Although it only lasted for a relatively short period—1929 to 1931, and then extended into 1935—the dictatorship tried to inaugurate a kind control over historians that was far more encompassing than it had been in the newly founded Yugoslav state in 1918 and previously in Austria-Hungary. Later dictatorships in the mid-20th century would develop this even further. The relationship of the dictatorship in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia toward the historical field is visible in the politics of history, the educational system, history textbooks, and in the activities of historians and publishers of historical works. At the same time, publishers—who have not been analyzed in the existing literature in the context of the dictatorship—were also politically positioned and were a part of political conflicts in which historians also participated.

In interwar Yugoslavia, these conflicts included clashes over the concept of the new state (monarchism vs. republicanism, centralism vs. federalism) along with inter-ethnic conflicts—especially between Croats and Serbs—and conflicts that revolved around the propagation of an integral Yugoslav nation during the dictatorship of King Alexander. There were constant tensions due to the emphasis on an integral Yugoslav nation and on particular national identities. The struggle against the Communist movement and the spread of Communist ideas was also apparent, but it did not involve historians as much as it did publishers and printing houses in Yugoslavia.

The extent of the dictatorship in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia—which should be observed in the context of other European dictatorships from the 1930s—demonstrated there was a desire not to allow historians and publishers to be removed from it. However, the first Yugoslav dictatorship did not manage to achieve this demanding ambition. Yet, King Alexander's dictatorship remained in the collective memory throughout the 20th century. Moreover, the memory of the dictatorship was often used politically in ongoing symbolic struggles over the interpretation of national history and identity. With all of this in mind, the question of whether these dictatorships ever ended becomes a relevant one. However, the afterlives of the dictatorships sometimes symbolically secured the afterlives of certain historians who ended up as their victims, but this mainly did not apply to publishers under the dictatorships. All this speaks in favor of employing the more diachronic approach to identify numerous interconnections between the various dictatorships and their interrelated legacies throughout the 20th century and beyond.

SOURCES

Arhiv Jugoslavije (Archive of Yugoslavia, AJ), Belgrade

1. Materijali u vezi ocene vrednosti školskih knjiga i njihove upotrebe, 1929, 1930, 1931. Ministarstvo prosvete Kraljevine Jugoslavije. AJ-66-503/504/505/506/507-801.
2. Penzionisanje dr. A. Bazale. Ministarstvo prosvete Kraljevine Jugoslavije. AJ-66-173-441.
3. Izveštaj, Aleksije Jelačić, 1932. Ministarstvo prosvete Kraljevine Jugoslavije. AJ-66-873-1290.

Zgodovinski arhiv in muzej Univerze v Ljubljani (University of Ljubljana Historical Archives and Museum, ZAMU)

1. Policijska direkcija v Ljubljani, Širjenje komunističnih letakov ob priliki proslave 10 letnice obstoja ljubljanske univerze, 1929. ZAMU-IV-211-17.

Državni arhiv u Osijeku (State Archive in Osijek, DAOS)

1. Žandarmerijska stanica Bizovac, Kaznena prijava, 21. februara 1930; Državno tužioštvo u Osijeku, Obtužnica, 1. aprila 1930. Stjepan Heffer, HR-DAOS-1177, kutija 3.
2. Zapisnik redovite glavne skupštine Hrvatske gradjanske čitaonice održane 15. marta 1936. Hrvatska građanska čitaonica u Gornjem gradu, Osijek, HR-DAOS-418, kutija 5.

Historijski arhiv Sarajevo (Historical Archive Sarajevo, HAS)

1. Kratak pregled prosvetne delatnosti izdavačke knjižare I. Dj. Djurdjevića. Isidor Đurđević, HAS-O-ĐI-226, kutija 1.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Bieber, Florian. *The Rise of Authoritarianism in the Western Balkans.* London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020.
2. Baár, Monika. "Of communism, compromise and Central Europe: the scholarly persona under authoritarianism." In *How to be a historian: Scholarly personae in historical studies, 1800–2000,* edited by Herman Paul, 164-81. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019.
3. Baberowski, Jörg, and Martin Wagner, eds. *Crises in Authoritarian Regimes: Fragile Orders and Contested Power.* Campus Verlag, Frankfurt/New York, 2022.
4. Baets, Antoon De. *Crimes against History.* London: Routledge, 2018.
5. Banac, Ivo. *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984.
6. Baran-Szołtys, Magdalena, and Jagoda Wierzejska, eds. *Continuities and Discontinuities of the Habsburg Legacy in East-Central European Discourses since 1918.* Göttingen: V&R unipress, Vienna University Press, 2020.

7. Bayly, Christopher Alan. *Remaking the Modern World 1900–2015: Global Connections and Comparisons.* Hoboken/NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2018.

8. Berger, Stefan, and Alexei Miller, eds. *Nationalizing Empires.* Budapest: CEU Press, 2015.

9. Cipek, Tihomir. "'Stoljeće diktatura' u Hrvatskoj." In *Hrvatska politika u XX. stoljeću*, edited by Ljubomir Antić, 283–305. Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 2006.

10. Čapo, Hrvoje. *Kraljevina čuvara: represivni aparat monarhističke Jugoslavije na području hrvatskih zemalja (1918.–1941.).* Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2015.

11. Dimić, Ljubodrag. *Kulturna politika u Kraljevini Jugoslavije 1918–1941.* 3 vols. Beograd: Stubovi kulture, 1996–1997.

12. Djokić, Dejan. *Elusive Compromise: A History of Interwar Yugoslavia.* New York and London: Columbia University Press, 2007.

13. Dobrivojević, Ivana. *Državna represija u doba diktature kralja Aleksandra 1929–1935.* Beograd: Institut za savremenu istoriju, 2006.

14. Duančić, Vedran. *Geography and Nationalist Visions of Interwar Yugoslavia.* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020.

15. Durković-Jakšić, Ljubomir. *Jugoslovensko književarstvo 1918–1941.* Beograd: Narodna knjiga, 1979.

16. Gerwarth, Robert. *The Vanquished: Why the First World War Failed to End.* New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2016.

17. Grgić, Stipica. "The kingdom of diversity and paternalism: The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes/Yugoslavia, 1918–1941." In *Interwar East Central Europe, 1918–1941: The Failure of Democracy-building, the Fate of Minorities,* edited by Sabrina P. Ramet, 213–48. New York: Routledge, 2020.

18. Horvat, Josip. *Hrvatski panoptikum.* 2nd ed. Zagreb: Globus 1982.

19. Horvat, Josip. *Živjeti u Hrvatskoj: zapisci iz nepovrata 1900–1941.* Zagreb: Sveučilišna naklada Liber, 1984.

20. Horvat, Rudolf. *Hrvatska na mučilištu.* Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1992.

21. Iordachi, Constantin. "Radikalizam, fašizam i (državni) terorizam: slučaj Mije Babića i ustaša." In *Revolucionari i ubojice: iz povijesti hrvatske nacionalističke emigracije u međuraću,* edited by Goran Miljan and Ivica Šute, 1–24. Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2018.

22. Janjatović, Bosiljka. *Politički teror u Hrvatskoj 1918.–1935.* Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest: Dom i svijet, 2002.

23. Jelavich, Charles. "Južnoslavensko obrazovanje: je li postojalo jugoslavenstvo." In *Jugoslavija i njeni povjesničari: razumijevanje balkanskih ratova u 1990-im,* edited by Norman M. Naimark and Holly Case, 81–99. Translated by Krešimir Krnic et al. Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2005.

24. Kardum, Tomislav. "Ideološki pogledi Milana Šufflaya." *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* 52, no. 3 (2020): 899–932, https://doi.org/10.22586/csp.v52i3.10804.

25. Koren, Snježana. *Politika povijesti u Jugoslaviji (1945.–1960.). Komunistička partija Jugoslavije, nastava povijesti, historiografija.* Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2012.

26. Kożuchowski, Adam. *The Afterlife of Austria-Hungary: The Image of*

the Habsburg Monarchy in Interwar Europe. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 2013.
27. Luetić, Tihana. *Studenti Sveučilišta u Zagrebu (1874–1914): društveni život, svakodnevica, kultura, politika.* Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2012.
28. Malbaša, Marija. *Povijest tiskarstva u Slavoniji.* Zagreb: Hrvatsko bibliotekarsko društvo, 1978.
29. Matičević, Ivica, ed. *Iz povijesti hrvatskoga knjižarstva i nakladništva.* Zagreb: Ex libris, 2010.
30. Miller, Paul, and Claire Morelon, eds. *Embers of Empire: Continuity and Rupture in the Habsburg Successor States after 1918.* New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2019.
31. Najbar-Agičić, Magdalena. *U skladu s marksizmom ili činjenicama? Hrvatska historiografija 1945–1960.* Zagreb: Ibis grafika, 2013.
32. Nielsen, Christian Axboe. *Making Yugoslavs: Identity in King Aleksandar's Yugoslavia.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014.
33. Petrungaro, Stefano. *Pisati povijest iznova: hrvatski udžbenici povijesti 1918.–2004. godine.* Translated by Franko Dota. Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2009.
34. Pinto, António Costa, and Aristotle Kallis, eds. *Rethinking Fascism and Dictatorship in Europe.* London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
35. Raphael, Lutz. *Geschichtswissenschaft im Zeitalter der Extreme: Theorien, Methoden, Tendenzen von 1900 bis zur Gegenwart.* München: C.H.Beck, 2003.
36. Starčević, Velimir. *Knjiga o Geci Konu.* Beograd: Prosveta, 2009.
37. Šufflay, *Milan. Izabrani politički spisi,* edited by Dubravko Jelčić. Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 2000.
38. Šute, Ivica. *Hrvatska povijest 1918.–1941.* Zagreb: Leykam international, 2019.
39. Troch, Pieter. *Nationalism and Yugoslavia: Education, Yugoslavism and the Balkans before World War II.* London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2015.
40. Wachtel, Andrew Baruch. *Making a Nation, Breaking a Nation: Literature and Cultural Politics in Yugoslavia.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998.