ARYAN RACE THEORY IN CROATIA FROM THE LATE HABSBURG PERIOD TO THE NDH – THE SCHOLARLY CONTRIBUTION OF ĆIRO TRUHELKA

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This article examines the race theory of the noted Croatian archaeologist Ćiro Truhelka (1865–1942), who served as first curator of the Provincial Museum in Habsburg Sarajevo. During the period of Austro-Hungarian rule, Bosnia and Herzegovina became the centre of the struggle of rival nationalisms – Serbian, Croatian and Yugoslav – eager to assert their dominance over the land, identity and history of the core South Slavic peoples. Truhelka's role in these political-ideological tensions was to introduce race theory (in an influential booklet published anonymously in 1907) as a means to explain the ethno-religious antagonism in Bosnia. According to Truhelka, the Catholics and Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina were both ethnically Croatian and racially Aryan-Slavic, characterized by the predominance of 'Nordic-Dinaric' racial traits in contrast to the Orthodox Serbs, who were mainly distinguished by the non-Aryan racial features they were said to have inherited from the nomadic and 'degenerate' Balkan Vlachs. As an 'Oriental' reservoir of rich ethnographic material, Bosnia and Herzegovina became an object of particular interest to late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century racial anthropologists. Truhelka was therefore ideally placed to make an intellectual contribution to the wider Aryan race theory. He continued to write on the subject of race after the fall of the Habsburg Monarchy, maintaining his position on the Aryan-Slavic/Croat racial origins of the Bosnian Muslims, as well as linking Croatia's racial history to the earliest settlement of Nordic Aryans and the Dinaric race in the Balkans. Although the earliest origins of the Dinaric race were considered to be non-Aryan, the admixture of the Nordic race with a Dinaric population had purportedly led to the emergence of a 'blond Dinaric' racial type in the western Balkans. Truhelka's race theory was to have a marked influence on Ustaša racial ideology.

Key words:
Race, anthropology, Aryan, Nordic, Dinaric, Slavs, Croats, Serbs, Bosnia.

Introduction

The influence of racial theories on South Slavic national ideologies has, in recent years, become a topic of increasing historiographical interest, particularly in relation to the period of the interwar Kingdom of Yugoslavia and the Ustaša-ruled Independent State of Croatia (NDH).[1] A growing number of historians have highlighted how, during the first half of the twentieth century, the Dinaric race theory was used by opposing South Slavic nationalist ideologies to buttress rival claims over land, identity and history. Thus, for Yugoslav nationalists, the idea of a common Dinaric race was employed to assert South Slavic ethnolinguistic-racial unity, while Serb nationalists used it to justify 'Greater Serbian' racial domination over other South Slavs (and non-Yugoslavs such as Albanians). In contrast, anti-Yugoslav Croat nationalists used the Dinaric race theory to separate the Croats from other (South) Slavs and claim a distinctive racial identity. What has been lacking in studies of South Slavic racial nationalist theories, however, is a more precise elaboration of how the Dinaric race theory was linked to racial notions of pan-Slavism and Aryanism.

It needs to be underlined that all three nationalist ideologies stressed that the Dinaric race carried a Nordic racial strain, which enabled the classification of a 'blond Dinaric' or 'Nordic-Dinaric' racial type. Early twentieth-century racial anthropologists generally traced this Nordic racial strain to the proto-Slavs who had colonized the Balkans – being the last in a line of conquering Aryan peoples – in the early Middle Ages. The primor-

1 See, for example, Aralica 2016; Bartulin 2014; Yeomans 2019.

dial origins of the Dinaric race on the other hand were located in the Near East or Caucasus, which, conversely, separated the Dinaric South Slavs from the rest of the Slavic, and Aryan, world. The identification of a fair Dinaric type, however, enabled South Slavic racial-nationalist ideologists to place their people(s) firmly within the Nordic-Aryan racial fold, particularly during the period of the NDH.[2] One of the foremost scholars who promoted the Nordic-Dinaric racial theory was the noted Croat archaeologist and first curator of the Provincial Museum in Sarajevo under Habsburg rule, Ćiro Truhelka (1865–1942), whose works dealing with race, published between 1907 and 1942, are examined in this article. Beginning in the early twentieth century, Truhelka played a central role in introducing racial terminology to explain the ethno-religious antagonism in the former Ottoman provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which represented the greatest bone of contention, in terms of tensions over land, identity and history, between Serb and Croat nationalisms. Truhelka's racial interpretation of Croat-Serb relations would also have a significant impact on the development of later Ustaša race theory.[3] Although Truhelka was dedicated to purely scholarly pursuits during the NDH, his racial ideas exerted 'an important influence' on Ustaša 'racial thinking about both Muslims and Serbs'.[4] The Ustaše were committed to fully integrating Bosnia and its highly valued, Nordic-Dinaric Muslim population into the Aryan-Croat 'national community', whilst simultaneously removing the racially foreign Vlach-Serb 'element', and Truhelka's race theory certainly helped to provide those aims with modern scientific legitimacy.[5] Not surprisingly, at the time of his death in September 1942, the young Muslim Ustaša journalist Hasan Šuljak praised Truhelka as the 'apostle of Croatian Bosnia'.[6]

This article emphasizes Truhelka's broader intellectual contribution to Aryan race theory, which dominated much of European scholarship from the mid-nineteenth century onward. As Christopher Hutton notes, the 'Aryan paradigm' had its main 'political origins' in early nineteenth-century Germany but it had also been shaped by 'European Orientalist scholarship, arising with new authority out of British colonial engagement with India'.[7] He further points out that 'the period from 1830 to 1870 saw the articulation of a series of powerful dichotomies: between the true Aryan and the modern-day Indian; between the conquering Aryan and the indigenous Dravidian; and between the Aryan and the Semite'.[8] Truhelka added a further dichotomy: between the Aryan Slavic Muslims and Catholics (Croats) and the pre-Aryan/Mediterranean 'Greek-Easterners' of Vlach origin (Serbs). The Aryan paradigm itself, based originally on a philological tradition and comparative linguistics, was somewhat weakened by the emergence of the discipline of racial anthropology (which diminished the link between language and race) but possessed enough narrative power to remain influential in both scholarly and (particularly) popular discourses on European identity.[9] In his works, Truhelka continued to refer to the 'Aryans' as a related family of peoples while also adopting the classificatory terms provided by racial anthropology – his Croats were thus characterized by a significant Nordic-Dinaric racial component. As it formed an integral part of a wider Croat-Serb-Yugoslav discourse on race, Truhelka's nationalist use of Aryan race theory cannot be properly understood without a brief historical overview of racial ideas in Croatia from the mid-nineteenth century onward.

Historical Background: Pan-Slavism, Aryanism and Dinaricism

Habsburg rule in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1878–1918) was accompanied by a program of rapid economic, political and cultural modernization. Among the modernizing ideologies adopted by local elites during this period was that of ethnic nationalism.[10] The national struggle in Bosnia[11] revolved around the question of the ethnic 'ownership' of the provinces – Croat or Serb – and the 'true' national affiliation of the Muslims. Modern Croat nationalism was divided, however, into two main types – pan-Slavic or Yugoslav and exclusively Croatian or anti-Yugoslav. Pan-Slavic Croatian nationalism can be traced to the Illyrian movement of the 1830s and reflected both the Croat intellectual pan-Slavic tradition that can be dated back to the Renaissance[12] and the influence of Herderian cultural nationalism, which divided Europe into the three main linguistic 'races' of the Germanic, Latin and Slav.[13] Alongside the late eighteenth-century anthropological classification of a common 'white race' (*Homo Europaeus*), nineteenth-century Romanticism also defined 'race' as an ethnolinguistic group sharing a common national 'spirit'.[14] Language was thus 'taken as natural proof of volkish or tribal relationships', even though this type of proto-nationalism was 'still a mainly cultural notion'.[15] Modern Croat

2 Bartulin 2014, 169–181.

3 The question of this influence has been rather neglected by historians. Aralica only briefly refers to Truhelka's race theory as a probable influence on the work of the Croatian sociologist Ivo Pilar (in an otherwise detailed analysis of racial theories in interwar Croatia). Aralica 2016, 422, n.1205. The first major biography of Truhelka does not discuss his racial ideas at all (for example, Truhelka's well-known booklet from 1907 entitled 'Croatian Bosnia' is not even mentioned). See Kaljanac 2024.

4 Yeomans 2013, 210. Although Yeomans recognizes the importance of Truhelka's work, he does not provide a more detailed analysis of Truhelka's specific racial ideas.

5 For more on Truhelka's influence on Ustaša racial ideology, see Bartulin 2014, 8–9, 52–57, 120–125.

6 Yeomans 2013, 209–210.

7 Hutton 2019, 118–119.

8 Hutton 2019, 126.

9 Hutton 2019, 126.

10 For more on this topic, see Carmichael 2020, 43–54.

11 In line with earlier historical practice, this article uses the term 'Bosnia' to refer to the entire territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

12 Banac 1984, 71.

13 See Hutton 2005, 84–87; Adamovsky 2005, 596–597.

14 Mosse 1978, 34, 94.

15 Motadel 2014, 121.

pan-Slavism was also an expression of the practical necessity of providing a cultural foundation to the political efforts of the Croat nobility and burgeoning intelligentsia to safeguard the traditional autonomy of the Triune Kingdom of Dalmatia-Croatia-Slavonia against Hungarian nationalist efforts to Magyarize the entire Hungarian realm (which included the Croatian Kingdom).

Hungarian nationalism could point to Hungary's superiority over the Croats in a political and economic sense, but pan-Slavism provided the Illyrian movement with a powerful cultural argument – affiliation to the superior Aryan 'race' or family of peoples. Already in 1823 the Croat poet Antun Mihanović (1796–1861) had written about the hopeful prospects of Indo-European comparative philology shedding light on the earliest history of the Slavs, 'for they say that a beautiful period is approaching, in which the night that has covered the prehistory of our race for thousands of years is finally being extinguished by the light that shines from India'.[16] The South Slavic or Yugoslav paradigm was thus closely linked to the emergence of Indo-European comparative linguistics, which focused on studying forms of speech rather than texts in order to classify an 'abstract language family' or 'a set of formal linguistic relationships'.[17] The connection made by European scholars between Sanskrit, Old Iranian and the Germanic, Romanic and Slavic languages would enable the national movements of the nineteenth century to seek the authentic cradle of European culture in India or Persia rather than amongst the Semitic peoples of the Near East.[18] As the Anglo-German philologist Friedrich Max Müller (1823–1900) noted, 'we are by nature Aryan, Indo-European, not Semitic: our spiritual kith and kin are to be found in India, Persia, Greece, Italy, Germany; not in Mesopotamia, Egypt, or Palestine'.[19] Although racial anthropology would eventually discard the idea of a distinct Aryan race based on specific anthropological/physical characteristics, the notion of a unique Aryan racial 'spirit', which was primarily opposed to the Semitic spirit, enabled the 'Aryans' to be defined as a closely related family of peoples.[20]

In the specific case of Croatia, Illyrian newspapers of the late 1840s frequently made a distinction between the Finno-Ugric-speaking Hungarians of 'Asiatic' (Hunnic or Mongol) origin and the Aryan-Slavic Croats who were affiliated 'to the European civilizational circle'.[21] The identification of the Croats as Indo-Europeans or Aryans was also adopted by the direct ideological successor of the Illyrian movement, the Yugoslavist National Party, led by the Croat Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer (1815–1905). The Yugoslavist Croat historian Natko Nodilo (1834–1912) employed the Aryan paradigm to assert Croat/Slavic linguistic rights in the Italian-dominated towns of Austrian-ruled Dalmatia. According to the political program of the Dalmatian National Party, written by Nodilo in 1862, 'the Dalmatian Slavs' were 'noble according to their pure Indo-European origin, from which all the great civilized nations have emerged', and possessed the 'unwritten right of the free development of their nationality'.[22] But while the Illyrian and Yugoslav movements had managed to provide the Croats with a firm ethnolinguistic and cultural identity in relation to their non-Slavic neighbours, they were unable to win over their fellow South Slavs – specifically the Serb and Slovene cultural elites – to a cultural program of South Slav 'national' unification.[23] Indeed, under the influence of the ethnolinguistic nationalism of Vuk Stefanović Karadžić (1787–1864), which identified all South Slavs who spoke the *štokavian* dialect as ethnically Serb (including the majority of Croats), the Serb cultural elite expanded the borders of 'Serbia' to include most of the Croat Triune Kingdom.[24]

In reaction to Illyrian efforts to create a common South Slav nation and the rise of Serb nationalist expansionism, the writer Ante Starčević (1823–1896) founded the Party of Right in 1861 to represent an exclusively Croat form of nationalism. Starčević rejected notions of a racially united Slavdom and sought to 'Croatize' the entire population of the 'historic' Kingdom of Croatia, including both the Triune Kingdom and Ottoman-ruled Bosnia and Herzegovina. He combined the words 'Slav' and 'Serb' (both purportedly derived from the Latin words for 'slave') to create the term *Slavoserb* to designate both individuals and peoples who possessed a slave-like nature opposed to true national freedom.[25] *Slavoserbs* included both Croatian traitors and a racially defined group of Balkan nomads of 'impure blood', identified with the Vlachs and regarded as the ancestors of most contemporary Serbs.[26] Starčević also described the Bosnian Muslims as the racially purest Croats.[27] Although he thus (sometimes) used racial terminology, Starčević usually defined his people according to civic nationalism rather than in terms of a 'community of blood': all the South Slavic Catholics, Muslims and Orthodox Christians who lived in 'Croatia' thus belonged to the same civic Croat nation.[28] Starčević was mainly concerned with the preservation of Croatia's historic autonomy, which would hopefully form the basis of eventual Croat independence. His insistence on historic state right, however, was beginning to appear anachronistic in the age of ethnolinguistic nationalism.

16 Cited in Katičić 2005, 63–64.

17 Hutton 2019, 123, 127.

18 While the existence of a close linguistic link between Sanskrit, Greek and Latin had been noted by scholars before the lecture on the topic by Sir William Jones (1746–1794) in 1786, it was not until the early nineteenth century that the generic terms 'Aryan/Indo-European/Indo-Germanic' started to be employed to classify the particular family of languages (and their speakers) located in Europe and central Asia. See Wiedemann 2018, 34–36.

19 Cited in Hutton 2005, 88.

20 Hutton 2019, 124.

21 Kolak 2008, 184–186.

22 Cited in Nodilo 2006 (1862), 143.

23 Banac 1984, 78–79.

24 Banac 1984, 80.

25 Gross 2000, 18, 221, 230.

26 Gross 2000, 249–250, 341.

27 Starčević 1995 (1894), 39–40.

28 Banac 1984, 106.

It was in his intermittent use of racial terminology that Starčević followed contemporary political trends, since 'nineteenth-century political language must be acknowledged as being infected by racial idioms' and race also became recognized as one of the significant 'elements of nationality' alongside factors such as language and culture.[29] Although Starčević's racial ideas were rather hazy – he never defined the specific racial origins or anthropological type/s of the Croats – his periodical use of race theory to distinguish Croats from Serbs allowed the Croat writer Antun Gustav Matoš (1873–1914) to view him as a probable follower of the famous popularizer of the Aryan race theory, the French diplomat and historian Joseph Arthur de Gobineau (1816–1882). Thus, in some writings, Starčević stressed 'the racial, ethnic factor' by 'branding the Serbs as a foreign element by their race and blood'.[30] Starčević's primary influence in terms of the development of race theory in Croatia was to disassociate race from language, in other words, to point out that language was not a clear marker of racial or ethnic affiliation; this was one of the main tenets of the increasingly influential discipline of racial anthropology, which made terms such as *Volk* or people and nation become 'increasingly biologically and racially charged'.[31]

Racial anthropology would gradually, though not completely, replace the more linguistic term 'Aryan' with the more anthropological one of 'Nordic'. The latter term was popularized by the French anthropologist Joseph Deniker (1852–1918), who noted 'that we can no longer speak to-day of an "Aryan race"', clearly distinguishing between racial and linguistic affiliation.[32] It should be pointed out, however, that the terms 'Aryan' and 'Nordic' continued to be used interchangeably by numerous scholars, writers and racial theorists in the early twentieth century to designate those peoples marked ideally by the physical characteristics of tall height, fair hair, blue eyes and dolichocephalic skull and the mental traits of leadership, courage and intelligence; in a historical sense, the Aryans or Nordics were regarded as the greatest conquerors and builders of states and civilizations in Europe and central Asia such as ancient Greece, Rome, India and Persia.[33] According to leading race theorists from Gobineau to the German anthropologist Hans F. K. Günther (1891–1968), these great civilizations had declined and collapsed due to miscegenation between the Nordic ruling classes and the native non-Aryan masses which had adopted the Indo-European language of their masters.[34] Consequently, dark-skinned Indians, for example, were not the Aryan racial brethren of the British despite their linguistic affiliation to the Indo-European family.[35]

Similarly, the Croats were not, according to Starčević, racially 'Slavic' simply because they spoke a Slavic language; they were primarily a 'historic', state-building people marked by the ruling spirit of their conquering ancestors from the north. Relying on the tenth-century Byzantine account *De administrando imperio*, Starčević proudly emphasized that, by defeating the fierce Avars (and freeing their Slavic subjects), the Croats had taken enduring possession of the former Roman provinces of Dalmatia and Pannonia.[36] In his well-known study of the 'South Slav Question' from 1918, the Croat sociologist Ivo Pilar (1874–1933) recognized Starčević as having been the first Croat political figure to refer to the 'so-called Vlach question or the question of the Balkan Romans'.[37] In other words, Starčević had made a racial distinction between the linguistically similar Croats and Serbs based on the Vlach origins of (the majority of) the latter. However, no one (including Starčević) had yet managed to make the Vlach question the subject of authoritative 'scientific research'.[38]

The subject of scientific or anthropological research would be left to some of Starčević's ideological followers, who had no trouble accepting the Slavic (Aryan) racial identity of the Croats, because, unlike Starčević, they explicitly accepted the Aryan paradigm. His intellectual adherents, such as Pilar and Truhelka, argued that the Croats were in fact racially purer Slavs, and hence purer Nordic-Aryans, than the Serbs. In that way, Croat nationalists could continue to claim the prestige of belonging to the Aryan family of peoples while also creating a firm racial distinction between Croats and Serbs. As George Mosse pointed out, racism in general provided 'new dimensions to the idea of rootedness inherent in all of nationalism, while at the same time sharpening the differences between nations, providing clear and unambiguous distinctions between them'.[39] Accordingly, anti-Yugoslavist Croat nationalists employed modern scientific (racial) arguments to prove the existence of a separate Croat ethnicity. In 'The South Slav Question', Pilar claimed that the Croats had inherited a more dominant Aryan-Nordic racial strain from the Slavic settlers of the Balkans in comparison to the Serbs, who were characterized by a strong admixture with a 'dark pre-Aryan type' of Romanic-Vlach origin. Pilar described the medieval Croats as a predominantly faired-haired, blue-eyed and dolichocephalic 'Slavic-Aryan people of only a slightly tarnished Aryan type'.[40]

It should be underlined that Pilar was able to rely on the arguments of leading race theorists such as the Anglo-German racial philosopher Houston Stewart Chamberlain (1855–1927) to

29 Turda 2003, 7–8.

30 Matoš 1917, 72.

31 See Motadel 2014, 122; Hutton 2019, 123–124.

32 Deniker 1900, 318–319, 325, 329.

33 Wiedemann 2018, 39–42.

34 As Günther argued, 'every "fall" of a people of Indo-European speech is brought about through the running dry of the blood of the creative, the Nordic race' (Günther 1927, 198).

35 The notion of Anglo-Indian Aryan kinship, which had at first been favoured by a number of British writers and scholars, was gradually abandoned in favour of the belief that Europeans were racially separate from dark-skinned Hindus (Hutton 2005, 84–86).

36 See Gross 2000, 348 and Spalatin 1975, 64–65.

37 Südland (Pilar) 1918, 337.

38 Südland 1918, 337. For more on the controversial question of the contribution of the pre-Slavic Balkan Vlachs to South Slavic ethnogenesis (particularly in regard to the Bosnian Serbs), see the chapter, 'Serbs and Vlachs', in Malcolm 1996, 70–81.

39 Mosse 1999, 55.

40 Südland 1918, 31–32, 224.

claim the (original) Slavs as authentic Aryans or 'Germanics'.[41] Chamberlain had also noted favourably that, 'in Bosnia, one is struck with the tallness of the men and the prevalence of fair hair'.[42] The problem for Pilar's theory was the widespread notion that most Slavic peoples had, in comparison to Germanics, weaker state-building abilities. The Czech historian Jan Peisker (1851–1933), for example, argued that 'all so-called Slav States of which we have sufficient information turn out to be either Germanic or Altaian foundations.'[43] To be sure, Peisker defined the Old Slavs as a predominantly Aryan (Nordic) people in a racial sense, but due to the invasions of various Asiatic nomads, the Slavs had over time become more polluted (in comparison to other Aryan peoples) by the admixture of Altaian or Mongol blood.[44] While Pilar clearly rejected Peisker's claim that the medieval Croat ruling class was of non-Aryan Avar and/or Bulgar origin, he agreed with the idea that Slavs generally had inferior organizational and state-building capabilities.[45] On the other hand, Pilar made the Croats (and Poles) an exception to this rule and tried to link the early medieval Croats more closely to the Aryan Goths and Persians.[46]

Although he made reference to Truhelka's anthropological study from 1907, which argued that Catholic and Muslim Bosnians (Croats) included a much larger number of 'fair Nordic types' (Pilar's words) than the Orthodox Serbs,[47] Pilar remained somewhat more wedded to the older Aryan paradigm.[48] In contrast, racial thinkers such as Truhelka placed more emphasis on the taxonomies introduced by racial anthropology, which (in the context of the period) provided their racial theories with greater scientific legitimacy and authority. By the late nineteenth century, racial anthropology had 'achieved recognition as an academic discipline, with a distinct methodology and with different criteria for classification from those applied by linguists or historians'.[49] On the other hand, many race theorists, particularly in Germany, also started to fuse racial science with Gobineau's Aryan race theory, anti-Semitism and Darwinism.[50] This also meant that various racial and linguistic terms, such as 'Aryan', 'Nordic', 'Indo-European' and 'Caucasian', continued to overlap.[51] For example, in a speech delivered in March 1891, which defended Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, the Croat zoologist Spiridion Brusina (1845–1908) made the following observation:

> 'According to the opinion of all anthropologists, of any school or system, and according to the most recent [i.e. Deniker's 1889] classification, we Croats are a part of the most perfect race (namely, the Aryan, Indo-European, Indo-Germanic, Indo-Atlantic, Caucasian, Germanic, Mediterranean, or whatever else they called our race or species), i.e. [Ernst] Haeckel's *Homo mediterraneus*'.[52]

Deniker's classification (from 1900) of a distinct Dinaric race, which was included as part of his taxonomy of six main races in Europe, would have a 'decisive' influence on 'the discourse of "racial science"' in central and eastern Europe.[53] Although Dinarics were located in a wide expanse of territory stretching from southern Germany to the western Balkans, the South Slavs formed the core population of this 'dark, brachycephalic, tall race'. It was named the 'Adriatic or Dinaric', Deniker explained, 'because its purest representatives are met with along the coast of the Northern Adriatic and especially in Bosnia, Dalmatia, and Croatia' (i.e. the Dinaric Alps).[54] One of the earliest promoters of a distinctly South Slavic Dinaric identity was the Serbian geographer Jovan Cvijić (1865–1927) who, in 1902, described the tall, 'chivalrous' Dinaric, or what he first referred to as the 'patriarchal' type, as 'the most beautiful race on the Balkan Peninsula'.[55] Cvijić would, however, claim the Dinaric race primarily for his own people. Although he would accept the idea of Yugoslav national unity in principle, Cvijić believed that the Serbs represented the 'best example of the really pure patriarchal Dinaric

41 See Südland 1918, 251; Chamberlain 1910, 498, 505. Chamberlain used the term 'Germanic' rather than 'Indo-European' to group together Germanics, Celts and Slavs; 'Indo-European' was 'a mere theoretical and hypothetical term' (Chamberlain 1910, 498).

42 Chamberlain 1910, 505.

43 Peisker 1913, 433.

44 Peisker 1913, 420, 437–440; Peisker 1911, 353–356, 359.

45 Südland 1918, 8–9.

46 Südland 1918, 158, 276, 623–624.

47 Südland 1918, 222–223, 337.

48 For a summary of Pilar's race theory, see Bartulin 2014, 57–63. Višeslav Aralica has argued that the 'problem of race is unimportant' in Pilar's 'South Slav Question' (Aralica 2016, 422, n. 1205). But the sixth part of Pilar's book, entitled 'What is the Core of the South Slav Question', has a section on 'The Nomadic [Vlach] Element as a Social and Political Factor'. At the end of this section, Pilar concluded that 'the dangerous traits, traditions and tendencies of the Byzantine Church found in the Serbian people an extremely effective supplement for the penetration of the Balkan-Romanic nomadic blood, which [due to] its innate racial greed for acquisition, anti-social tendencies, destructive fury and talent for subversion has made the Serbs a first-class danger for all neighbouring peoples and states'. Südland 1918, 350. If the 'core of the South Slav question' was based, at least partly, on the Vlach/Balkan-Roman nomadic factor, which Pilar clearly defined as a racial one, then it seems logical to conclude that race theory was a significant theme of his book.

49 Hutton 2005, 21.

50 Weikart 2013, 540.

51 Hutton 2019, 117.

52 This speech was made at a meeting of the Croatian Society of Natural Sciences. See Brusina 1890, xiv. Haeckel's use of the term 'Mediterranean' as a synonym for 'Aryan' or 'Caucasian' should not be confused with the late nineteenth-century classification of a specific Mediterranean racial type characterized by dark pigmentation, low height and dolichocephaly. For more on the Mediterranean race, see Gillette 2002, 24–32.

53 Promitzer 2003a, 27.

54 Deniker 1900, 333.

55 Promitzer 2003b, 377.

type' (a type that he actually defined mainly in ethnographic and anthropogeographic terms).[56]

Racial anthropology actually undermined the traditional notion of a united *Volk* linked by a common origin, language and culture, because all European nations were now defined as consisting of several different races (Nordic, Alpine, Mediterranean, etc.), characterized by distinct physical and mental traits, in varying proportions.[57] Racial science could, however, provide nationalists with the argument that there still existed a core racial component that shaped the dominant spirit and culture of a particular nation. Furthermore, racial anthropology could identify those racial elements considered completely foreign such as Jews and black Africans (in contrast to the closely related European races such as the Nordic and Dinaric).[58] In his book on Yugoslav ethnogenesis from 1920, for example, the Slovenian Yugoslavist ethnographer Niko Županić (1876–1961) admitted that the South Slavs 'possess a considerable percentage' of non-Aryan blood, acquired primarily through the admixture of the Nordic Slavic settlers with the earlier inhabitants of the Balkans, who consisted mostly of an admixture of Aryan Illyrians and pre-Aryan Pelasgians.[59] Županić maintained, however, that the South Slavs were still physically more Aryan (Nordic) than many European peoples, including Greeks, Italians and Romanians. To be sure, the South Slavs underwent a physical transformation, particularly in relation to the growing dominance of brachycephalic (Dinaric) skulls amongst their descendants. But due to their much greater share of Aryan blood, the South Slavs were the only people of the Balkans who could be called the true Aryan successors of the ancient Greeks.[60]

The dominant or core 'Nordic-Dinaric' racial admixture of the South Slavs, Županić argued, 'would enable them to be the future masters of the Balkan Peninsula'.[61] In practice, the interwar Kingdom of Yugoslavia, ruled as it was by the Serbian Karadjordjević dynasty and dominated by a predominantly Serbian officer corps,[62] corresponded more to Cvijić's idea of Serbian Dinaric mastery over other South Slavs. But other Yugoslavist ideologists tried to construct a unified South Slavic nation on the basis of a common Nordic-Dinaric racial foundation. As Christian Promitzer points out, the 'national elites' of ethnically heterogeneous regions of the Balkans could postulate ethnic homogeneity 'by "racial science", so that different South Slavic national groups – Serbs, Croats and Slovenes – could be moulded into one single nation'.[63] One of the intellectuals involved in the interwar Yugoslavist project of creating South Slavic national homogeneity was Boris Zarnik (1883–1945), a Slovenian-born Croat professor of biology at the University of Zagreb.[64] In an article on the racial composition of Europe, published in the Croat cultural journal *Hrvatsko kolo* ('Croatian Circle') in 1927, Zarnik explained that the South Slavs constituted a distinct and unified racial body because, 'apart from Sweden, no other state in Europe has a population with such a relatively equal racial composition as our land', which he defined as 'the same Dinaric-Nordic core'. Furthermore, South Slavic history was filled with 'superhuman deeds of bravery and daring', proving that 'our racial composition produces the most excellent virtues', and that the South Slavs 'knew how to preserve untainted their noble blood'.[65]

Zarnik argued that Nordic-Dinaric admixture was a positive and exceptional example of racial mixing and he cited the racial studies of German racial anthropologists such as Günther and, in particular, Eugen Fischer (1874–1967) as supporting sources.[66] Günther, for his part, argued that Dinarics and Nordics shared similar mental traits, such as bravery, musical talents and a love for home and nature; in fact the Dinarics were 'second among the races of Europe', after the Nordic, in terms of 'mental capacity'.[67] Although the Dinaric race appeared to share a common descent with the Hither Asiatic or Near Eastern race (probably from the Caucasus), Günther noted their important physical and mental differences, such as the seemingly 'bold' Dinaric face compared to the 'cunning' Hither Asiatic facial expression.[68] The Dinaric race theory enabled South Slav nationalist ideologists to not only claim a distinct and elevated racial identity for their people(s), but also to link it to the superior Nordic race. As the Serbian racial anthropologist Branimir Maleš (1897–1968) noted in an article from 1935, 'the greatest chauvinists' among 'German scientists' admired the Dinaric race, 'whose characteristics, both physical and spiritual, are placed on the same level with the characteristics of the "German" Nordic race'.[69] On the basis of medieval frescoes, Maleš also classified members of the Serbian royal Nemanjić dynasty as 'blond Dinarics'.[70]

The trait of blondness (i.e. light hair/eye/skin colour) was the essential characteristic that separated the Nordic-Dinaric Croats/Yugoslavs/Serbs from the other 'darker' peoples of the Balkans and moved them closer to the Germanic peoples. While the blond Dinaric or Nordic-Dinaric type was extolled as

56 Cvijić 1930, 377–378.

57 Hutton 2005, 22–23.

58 Hutton 2005, 23–24.

59 Milosavljević 2013, 729–736.

60 Milosavljević 2013, 729–730.

61 Promitzer 2003a, 33–34.

62 Banac 1984, 150–151.

63 Promitzer 2003a, 29–30.

64 Zarnik's promotion of Aryanist racial ideas helps explain why he became the main racial expert who drafted the NDH's race laws in April 1941. See Bartulin 2016, 82–89.

65 Zarnik 1927, 79–80. Racial anthropologists generally agreed that Scandinavia was one of the few regions in Europe marked by a strong correspondence between geography, (Germanic) language and (Nordic) race (Hutton 2005, 25, 32).

66 Zarnik (and Fischer) also had a positive opinion of Nordic-Alpine racial admixture. For more on this topic, see Bartulin 2014, 83–89.

67 Günther 1927, 58–59.

68 Günther 1927, 67–70, 111.

69 Cited in Malović 2008, 88.

70 Malović 2008, 90.

an ideal type by Croat, Serb and Yugoslav nationalists alike, it was particularly stressed by anti-Yugoslav Croat ideologists and scholars because it corresponded to a cultural stereotype much more common in Croatia than Serbia. As part of the Habsburg Empire for centuries, the Croats (at least those in north Croatia) could point to a far longer cultural and historical association with the 'Nordic' German-speaking world, while Serbia was more quintessentially 'Balkan', marked by centuries of Ottoman cultural influence. According to the Yugoslavist Croat writer Miroslav Krleža (1893–1981), interwar anti-Yugoslav Croat nationalists believed in 'some sort of racial, blue-blooded, noble isolation from the plebeian, primitive, Balkan schismatic reality'. This attitude had been shaped historically by the 'inertia of the Austrian Eastern Marches, the Military Frontier, Viennese waltzes, Austro-Hungarian monarchy' and 'west European prejudices', which separated the Croats (and Slovenes) from the 'Balkan Gypsies', i.e. the Serbs.[71]

Croat racial elitism was not, however, simply or only the result of adopting Austro-German prejudices, because it was also easily attached to the aristocratic tradition of Croat historic state right. While Croat anti-Yugoslav nationalism stressed the historical importance of the Croat nobility, both Greater Serbian and Yugoslav nationalists, such as Cvijić, tended to emphasize the 'democratic' traditions of the common people and/or the historical figure of the Serbian *hajduk* or outlaw.[72] Furthermore, from the early twentieth century onward, an increasing number of Croat nationalist scholars and ideologists began to stress the possible Iranian and/or Gothic origins of the early medieval Croat ruling class, which strengthened the sense of elitist separation from other Slavs.[73] It was also Croat anti-Yugoslav nationalists, such as Truhelka, who emphasized the Slavic-Aryan racial purity of the Bosnian Muslims, who were explicitly identified, in the tradition of Starčević, as the descendants of the medieval Bosnian Croat nobility, which had converted to Islam under Ottoman rule and formed the only feudal ruling class in the Ottoman Empire.

Ćiro Truhelka: Conquering Slavs and Nomadic Vlachs

Born in Osijek in Croatia-Slavonia in 1865, Truhelka was given the Christian name Ćiril (Cyril), which, as he noted in his memoir, reflected the popularity of 'the cult of the Slavic apostles' Cyril and Methodius.[74] His father was the teacher Antun Truhelka, who was of Czech origin, while his mother Marija descended from German settlers in Hungary.[75] Osijek had a large German-speaking community and Truhelka became fluent in German from an early age, but Croatian was his first language and he explicitly identified himself as a Croat or Catholic Slavonian child (*Šokac*) in his memoir.[76] Truhelka is but one example of numerous significant cultural and political figures hailing from the towns of northern Croatia who were the descendants of migrants from other parts of the Habsburg Empire (such as Strossmayer).[77] Truhelka studied art history and archaeology at the University of Zagreb, where he also joined the ranks of students who supported Starčević's Party of Right.[78] In 1886 he travelled to Sarajevo to take up the position of first curator of the Provincial Museum (*Zemaljski muzej* or *Landesmuseum*), founded in 1885 and opened in 1888.[79] Thus began Truhelka's long residence in Bosnia where he became an expert in the history of the country from prehistoric to Ottoman times. Through his research and archaeological excavations, Truhelka helped draw even more international scholarly attention to Bosnia as a reservoir of rich ethnographic and archaeological material; under Habsburg rule Bosnia increasingly became a land of tourist attraction for west European travellers inspired by Oriental romanticism.[80] Truhelka himself also became very well known in scholarly circles throughout Europe, becoming an honorary or corresponding member of several anthropological and/or archaeological societies, including those in Berlin, Munich, Copenhagen and Moscow.[81]

As a Starčevićist, Truhelka entered the political arena of rival Croat-Serb claims over the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina by writing a booklet published (anonymously) in 1907 under the title, 'Croatian Bosnia: We and "They over There"',[82] which Ivo Pilar had identified in 1918 as the first study to analyse the Vlach question on the basis of a 'scientific apparatus'.[83] In this booklet, Truhelka justified the Croat claim to Bosnia and Herzegovina by employing historical, geographical and, in particular, anthropological arguments.[84] A clear racial distinction could thus be made between the Bosnian Catholics and Muslims (Croats), on the one hand, and the Orthodox Bosnian Serbs, on the other. Truhelka claimed his anthropological data was gathered from the measurements of Bosnian soldiers,[85] most likely sourced from the research conducted by the Austrian anthropologist and senior Austro-Hungarian military doctor in Sarajevo, Augustin Weisbach (1837–1914). Truhelka did not mention Weisbach by name, but it was the latter who conducted the most detailed anthropological surveys of the Bosnian population in the late nineteenth century, publishing an authoritative study in

71 Cited in Goldstein 2003, 117.

72 See Bartulin 2014, 91–92.

73 Bartulin 2014, 45–49, 109–120, 181–190.

74 Truhelka 1942a, 5.

75 See Truhelka 1942a, 7, 162; Lucerna 1943, 110.

76 Truhelka 1942a, 6.

77 As the Croat geographer Filip Lukas (1871–1958) argued in a speech in Zagreb in July 1943, unlike the racially foreign eastern Balkan immigrants (mainly Vlachs and Gypsies), the western immigrants (such as Germans, Czechs and Slovenes) were largely kindred to the Croats in a cultural and racial sense (Lukas 1943, 28–29).

78 Truhelka 1942a, 19–20.

79 Truhelka 1942a, 26–30.

80 Truhelka 1942a, 101–102.

81 Truhelka 1942a, 96.

82 Truhelka 1907.

83 Südland 1918, 337.

84 In a letter to the Croat art historian and politician Isidor Kršnjavi from 4 January 1908, Truhelka mentioned ancestry, language and 'anthropological constitution' as key factors of nationhood that 'bound' the Bosnian Muslims to Catholic Croats (Zadro 2012, 140).

85 Truhelka 1907, 14.

1895.[86] Weisbach concluded that the Muslims contained a larger number of mixed types (i.e. a mix of light and dark colouring) including a 'considerable number of individuals of lighter type' and 'numerous light eyes'. The Catholics also included 'many individuals of light brown hair and light eyes'.[87] In contrast, the 'Greek-Oriental' population represented the 'purest ethnic element' (*Volkselement*) because it included the largest number of the pure dark type (i.e. dark hair and eyes).[88] Anthropology, Truhelka maintained, could 'determine a drop of ethnic blood even in an intricate mix with other elements'.[89]

Truhelka estimated there were more than twice as many fair-haired and blue-eyed types among the Catholics and Muslims, while the majority of Bosnian Serbs were of swarthy pigmentation, a trait they had inherited from their Vlach ancestors; the Vlachs themselves were the descendants of the dark-skinned Romanized Dacians who, in turn, had been formed by a racial admixture between an aboriginal population and 'Cymric [Nordic]-Celtic settlers'.[90] In an anthropological sense, the Catholics and Muslims exhibited the 'traits of an identical ethnic element', which Truhelka defined as the 'Slavic race' (*slovjenska pasmina*); he also noted the greater percentage of broader chests and brachycephalic skulls found among the Croats.[91] The combination of brachycephaly, broad chests and fair pigmentation marked the Nordic-Dinaric type even though Truhelka had not specifically used these racial terms in his booklet. The Serbs had originally belonged to the Slavic type as well – the minority of fair-haired Serbs were true Slavs – but miscegenation with the Vlachs had forced 'a wedge into our body, which split the consanguineous brothers of Slavic blood' (i.e. Croats and Serbs).[92] The contemporary Vlach-Serbs were thus more similar to the Jews and Armenians, who also belonged to a physically sterile and degenerate *Dauerrasse* ('permanent race'), beset by 'endemic' illnesses such as tuberculosis and 'feebleness of the physical and psychic constitution'.[93] These peoples had once been 'cultured races' but their descendants had become 'cultural parasites', characterized by nomadism and operating in contemporary society as merchants and speculators.[94]

Truhelka wrote a more detailed study on the Slavic racial origins of the Bosnian Muslims in an article published in the nationalist cultural journal *Hrvatska smotra* ('Croatian Review') in 1934.[95] He was keen to stress the stark differences between the European Bosnians and Ural-Altaic or Turanian Turks, even though Truhelka's historical view of Ottoman rule in Bosnia was actually quite positive, particularly in comparison to traditional Habsburg/Croat historical accounts.[96] Although the name 'Turk' was employed as a 'confessional label' for all Muslims in the Ottoman Empire, including Bosnians, no one considered the latter to be of 'Turanian origin'. Very few Turks ever settled in Bosnia or other parts of the Balkans; the only exception were the nomadic Yuruks, whose descendants bore, as Truhelka had personally observed, 'the essential anthropological characteristics of the Turanian race' and could not be compared to the Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina at all.[97] In any case, the Bosnian Muslims (particularly the nobility) had followed a policy of the 'strictest endogamy', reinforced by the exclusive nature of the Bosnian harem. Admittedly, there had been a very small number of intermarriages between Ottoman officials who resided in Bosnia and native Muslim girls, their descendants thus inheriting 'a certain portion of Turanian blood'. But since the children and grandchildren of these 'extraordinarily rare' mixed marriages continued to marry Bosnian girls, 'this foreign blood was resorbed according to Mendelian laws' and hardly observable by the third generation. Truhelka explained that, during the 'modification of race', the 'female portion of blood' was actually stronger than the blood inherited from the male.[98] The Bosnian Muslim tradition of endogamy was 'the most successful protection for the preservation of the Slavic racial element' and Slavic/Croatian language and nowhere in Europe had *slavenstvo* ('Slavdom') been so well preserved 'from foreign admixtures' than among the Bosnian Muslims.[99]

Anthropologically, the Bosnian Muslims were on average the tallest people in Europe (alongside the Scandinavians) with Dinaric skulls.[100] In this article, Truhelka argued that, in relation to height and skull shape, there was no essential difference between the Muslims, Catholics and Orthodox Serbs. The Dinaric race in the Balkans could be traced to the end of the Neolithic period and had received a 'stronger increase of brachycephalic elements' from the later arrival of the Slavs.[101] However, the

86 Weisbach 1895, 206–239.

87 Weisbach 1895, 236.

88 Weisbach 1895, 236. In his study of Bosnian geography from 1878, the Croat historian Vjekoslav Klaić (1849–1928) stated that all Bosnians (including the Orthodox) were ethnically Croatian and most closely related, anthropologically, to the Croats of the Dalmatian hinterland. The majority of Bosnians had grey eyes, a brownish skin complexion and brown hair, 'which crosses over more often into a blond, and rarely into a black, colour' (Klaić 1878, 78).

89 Truhelka 1907, 12.

90 25.7% of Catholics and 22.8% of Muslims had fair hair compared to 10.4% of Orthodox Serbs. 25.7% of Catholics and 17.5% of Muslims had blue eyes, while only 6.3% of the Orthodox population were blue-eyed (Truhelka 1907, 13–20).

91 Truhelka 1907, 14–15.

92 Truhelka 1907, 20.

93 Truhelka 1907, 27–28.

94 Truhelka 1907, 28.

95 Truhelka 1934, 249–257. Another summary of a slightly different version of this article (published in 1992) can also be found in Bartulin 2014, 121–23.

96 Truhelka 1934, 251. As he reiterated in his memoir, 'the Turks were not uncultured, bloodthirsty barbarians' (Truhelka 1942a, 130).

97 Truhelka 1934, 250–51.

98 Truhelka 1934, 254–55, 257.

99 Truhelka 1934, 255–56.

100 Truhelka 1934, 257.

101 Truhelka 1934, 257. This was linked to the theory that the proto-Slavs had absorbed a brachycephalic strain. In his entry on human races in the *Croatian encyclopaedia* (1942), Zarnik argued that the Nordic proto-Slavs assimilated Finno-Ugric elements of the brachycephalic Baltic (or East Baltic) race. The Slavic-speaking Nordic-Baltic ruling class that settled in the west Balkans (Croatia) subsequently interbred with Dinarics (Zarnik 1942, 364–365).

Catholics and Muslims were racially distinct from the Orthodox in regard to pigmentation, which was an equally (and possibly more) 'important factor in the formation of race'.[102] The Catholic and Muslim population thus included a larger percentage of individuals with light hair and eyes and a fair complexion (the following figures were taken from Weisbach's study): 9.40% of Muslims and 7.51% of Catholics were of the 'pure fair type' in comparison to the 5.59% of Orthodox Serbs of this type. The number of Catholics and Muslims belonging to the 'dark type' was 11% lower than the percentage of dark Serbs (47.96%).[103] Like the Muslims, the Bosnian Catholics had largely preserved their Croat racial heritage because they also followed the practice of confessional endogamy, only intermarrying with Catholics who originated from other parts of Croatia. In contrast, the Orthodox Bosnian Serbs mixed with the racially foreign Orthodox peoples of the Ottoman Empire, such as Armenians, Greeks and Vlachs.[104] Truhelka concluded that 'the Slavs, who settled in the south of Europe, were the first representatives of the fair type, the main racial traits of which are blond hair and blue eyes' and 'the pure fair type is most strongly represented among the Muslims' making them 'the purest Slavs in Bosnia.'[105]

Truhelka's 1934 article was reprinted as the first chapter of his book, 'Studies of Origin: Ethnological Reflections from Bosnia and Herzegovina', which was published in 1941 (in the NDH).[106] In the third chapter of this book, Truhelka once again derived the origins of the majority of the Orthodox or 'Greek Eastern' population in Bosnia and Herzegovina from the Vlachs, who were 'the descendants of pre-Aryan, prehistoric Mediterraneans' (in contrast, the sizeable number of Greek Easterners with a fair complexion found in eastern Bosnia were the descendants of Catholic Croats who converted to Orthodoxy).[107] The Mediterranean race had achieved 'the height of its cultural ascent' during the Mycenaean period but had then 'succumbed to the Greeks, later the Romans and, in the Middle Ages, to the Slavic conquerors'. Although they had lost their original language, replacing it with 'vulgar Greek or Latin [Romanic]', the Vlachs had 'preserved the essential peculiarities of their race', both 'good and bad'.[108] The Vlachs became a predominantly nomadic people, moving into Bosnia in greater numbers during the Ottoman period. Under Ottoman rule, they started to live and work as military-peasant colonists, serfs or merchants in the towns. In contrast, the Balkan Slavs who converted to Islam (primarily Croats) became janissaries or state officials, so that their 'Aryan blood' ended up rejuvenating 'the Turanian blood of the [Ottoman] conquerors'.[109]

The Slavs represented the last wave of Aryan conquerors of the Balkans.[110] As Truhelka explained in one of two articles on Balkan prehistory in *Hrvatska smotra* in 1935, the 'first Aryan settlers' were the Greek Achaeans who found the autochthonous, racially Mediterranean, inhabitants of the Balkans living in a matriarchal society, in which the men were idle and wasted away the 'days and their strength in orgies and various excesses'.[111] This type of society was characterized by 'sexual promiscuity and…incest, which leads to the moral collapse of the individual and the physical degeneration of the race', something that seemed so 'dreadful' to the Aryan settlers that Greek tragedians derived their 'motifs of tragic guilt' and 'tragic figures' such as Clytemnestra and Antigone from the 'primeval traditions' of the earlier inhabitants.[112] The patriarchal Aryans were able to crush such 'weaklings' and reduce them to the status of helots. But Aryan society was not as patriarchal as the nomadic societies of the Near East, in which women held the position of slaves in relation to men. In contrast, Aryan women had authority over the home and family, while their men exercised authority in public life, with such equality forming the foundation of both pagan Roman and later Christian marriage.[113]

Apart from the use of bronze, the Aryans brought important cultural advancements such as the plough and the potter's wheel.[114] The Aryans (probably the Aryan Celts) were also responsible for creating the prehistoric (late Neolithic) cultural centre of Vučedol in north-east Croatia, which belonged to the wider European culture characterized by inlaid ceramics. The cultural artefacts found there represented 'the oldest documents of the expansive strength of the Aryan peoples in Europe'.[115] Osteological remains showed that the creators of the Vučedol culture were racially Dinaric or Nordic-Dinaric, since they had brachycephalic skulls that also included a 'prominent and nicely profiled nose', which pointed to a Nordic admixture; to be precise, the Dinaric type was the product of an admixture of the Nordic with a brachycephalic race.[116] Dinaric brachycephaly originated from a long 'symbiosis with Mongoloid elements in the Asian proto-homeland' (the origins of the Nordic Aryans could be traced to either the Hittite region south of the Caucasus or inner Asia). Despite the presence of a Mongoloid strain, Truhelka defined the Nordic-Dinaric skulls of the bearers of the

102 Truhelka 1934, 257.

103 The remaining percentages consisted of the 'so-called mixed type'. See Truhelka 1934, 257; Weisbach 1895, 224.

104 Truhelka 1934, 254.

105 Truhelka 1934, 257.

106 In this slightly revised edition of Truhelka's article from 1934, the concluding paragraph refers only to 'Croats' and not to 'Slavs' (i.e. the Muslims were the 'purest Croats in Bosnia'). Truhelka 1941a, 16. An article in the party journal *Ustaša* from October 1943 cited Truhelka's book as a source for proving that the Bosnian Muslims were Croats according to their race and blood (Humski 1943, 10–11).

107 Truhelka 1941a, 30, 37.

108 Truhelka 1941a, 30–31.

109 Truhelka 1941a, 30–43.

110 In a short article from 1939 on the possible origins of the proto-Croats, Truhelka noted that many Croatian words were very probably of Iranian origin, which pointed to the possibility that Iranians and Croats had once 'lived in close relations' (Truhelka 1939, 282–286).

111 Truhelka 1935a, 7, 85.

112 Truhelka 1935a, 80.

113 Truhelka 1935a, 85.

114 Truhelka 1935a, 85.

115 Truhelka 1935b, 365.

116 Truhelka 1935b, 364–365.

Vučedol culture as belonging to a fundamentally Aryan or 'Arioid' people.[117]

The Dinaric race (*homo dinaricus*), as Truhelka outlined in an entry on Balkan prehistory in the NDH's *Croatian encyclopaedia* from 1941, originated from the Near East and arrived in the Balkans (via the north) towards the end of the Neolithic period.[118] During the late Stone Age, the Balkan Peninsula was dominated by the short, dark and long-headed Mediterranean race (*homo meridionalis*) and its highly advanced culture. The Aryan or Nordic Greeks, Illyrians and Thracians arrived in the Balkans as the bearers of Bronze Age culture and, with their 'physical strength and bronze weapons', were able to overpower the autochthonous Mediterranean inhabitants. It was clear that these 'first Indo-Europeans' were blond and blue-eyed, as attested to by literary sources such as the works of Homer, which extolled fairness as the ideal form of human beauty; the Greek heroes Achilles, Menelaus and Odysseus, as well as the deities Zeus, Apollo and Athena, all had a fair complexion.[119] The Illyrians, who originated from the 'Iranian heights and the steppes between the Black and Caspian Seas', were as 'tall and strong as *homo nordicus*', but had a greater percentage of brachycephalic skulls, which was probably the result of admixture with 'Mongoloid elements' in the 'Asian proto-homeland' and the earlier Dinaric inhabitants of the Balkans.[120] It was this Nordic-Dinaric Illyrian population that the Slavs would find on their arrival to the Balkans in the early medieval period.[121] In an entry on the Balkan population in the same encyclopaedia article, the Croat geographer Zvonimir Dugački (1903–1974) noted that the western Balkans (Croatia) was home to a lighter type of Dinaric. In contrast, the eastern half of the peninsula contained a 'much darker' and shorter 'average type', which was a mixture of the Dinaric, Near Eastern and Oriental races.[122]

In 1942, the year of his death, Truhelka's memoir was published in the NDH. In this work, Truhelka wrote about the 'powerless anger' the Serbs had felt toward the anonymous author of 'Croatian Bosnia' (1907), which had revealed their true origins through the use of reasoned arguments. Truhelka reiterated that the 'main source of antagonism' in Bosnia was the fact that the Serbs were 'an ethnically foreign racial element' and the 'struggle which is being waged before our eyes' was 'the struggle of the Vlach immigrants against the autochthonous population of Bosnia, which has always been only Croatian'.[123] Naturally, the original or proto-Croats themselves had not always been autochthonous to this land, but unlike the nomadic and 'parasitic' Vlachs, the ancestors of the Croats had reputedly arrived as a conquering and state-building people. In his article on medieval art and architecture in Bosnia, also published in 1942 in *Hrvatsko kolo*, Truhelka argued that the early medieval Croats were not only warriors who brought with them the sword, but also 'the axe, plough and distaff, their artistic patterns and their martial organization'.[124] The Croats had thus 'set in order the chaos' that had been caused in Bosnia by the barbaric Huns and Avars, who had been 'hurled out of Asia' only to 'destroy the old culture'.[125]

Conclusion

In Truhelka's work, the theory of racial Slavdom was used to create a barrier between the South Slav peoples and erect an exclusive and elitist sense of Croat nationhood, best characterized in the figure of the Bosnian Muslim aristocrat maintaining his Slavic-Aryan racial purity against the degenerate and foreign influences of the Romanic-Vlach and Turanian races. Truhelka's notion of Slavic-Aryan racial identity also separated the South Slavs as a whole from the rest of the Slavic world because they were descendants of a conquering people who had left their original homeland in the north to settle in the south of Europe – the cradle of classical civilization – where they formed the last Aryan ruling class of the Balkan Peninsula. Given the association made from the mid-nineteenth century onward between Aryan settlement and the founding of the greatest Indo-European civilizations, the notion of Slavs as conquering Aryans could not really apply to the Western or Eastern Slavs. The sense of separation was strengthened by Truhelka's use of the Nordic-Dinaric race theory, which further provided the Croats, as the most authentic South Slavs, with a distinct and equally elitist racial identity and made them, if not quite the equals of the Germanic peoples, then at least the purest representatives of the 'Aryan race' in the Balkans.[126] This racial elitism, first articulated by Truhelka in 1907 – and further developed by other Croat racial thinkers – would eventually provide one of the ideological justifications for the alliance between the Third Reich and the NDH.[127]

117 The oldest example of the Dinaric type was a skeleton found in a Neolithic settlement in Osijek. Truhelka 1935b, 365. Also see Truhelka 1929, 1–6.

118 Truhelka 1941b, 152.

119 Truhelka 1941b, 153.

120 66% of the skulls discovered at the Iron Age Illyrian centre of Glasinac (in Bosnia) were long and only 59.5% of those were purely dolichocephalic (Truhelka 1941b, 154).

121 The anti-Yugoslavist Croat historian Milan Šufflay (1879–1931) argued that the 'dark, pastoral blood' of the Vlachs, which was 'very foreign' to the Slavs, could be traced to 'Illyrian-Thracian prehistory' (i.e. the 'pre-Indo-European substratum of Balkan blood') and formed the 'main component of the violent Dinaric type' of the South Slavs and Albanians (although the Serbs had a far greater admixture of Vlach blood) (Šufflay 1999 (1928), 32–33). This argument was cited by the Ustaša ideologist Mladen Lorković (1909–1945) in his interwar study of Croat ethnic history. He explicitly defined the Illyrians and Thracians as racially Aryan in contrast to the earlier pre-Aryan/Near Eastern Balkan inhabitants, who must have passed on their 'dark' blood to the Vlachs (Lorković 2005 (1939), 17, 35–42, 68–70).

122 Dugački 1941, 150.

123 Truhelka 1942a, 136.

124 Truhelka 1942b, 1.

125 Truhelka 1942b, 1.

126 The German anthropologist Wilhelm Mühlmann (1904–1988) argued that, of all the Balkan peoples, the Croats had the closest racial link to predominantly Nordic central Europe (Von Loesch, Mühlmann 1943, 49).

127 Bartulin 2014, 93–143, 160–202.

SAŽETAK

TEORIJA O ARIJSKOJ RASI U HRVATSKOJ OD KASNOG HABSBURŠKOG RAZDOBLJA DO NDH — ZNANSTVENI DOPRINOS ĆIRE TRUHELKE

Ovaj članak razmatra rasnu teoriju istaknutoga hrvatskog arheologa Ćire Truhelke (1865. – 1942.), koji je djelovao kao prvi kustos Zemaljskog muzeja u habsburškom Sarajevu. Tijekom razdoblja austro-ugarske vladavine Bosna i Hercegovina postala je središtem sukoba suparničkih nacionalizama – srpskoga, hrvatskoga i jugoslavenskoga – koji su nastojali uspostaviti svoju prevlast nad zemljom, identitetom i poviješću matičnih južnoslavenskih naroda. Truhelkina je uloga u tim političko-ideološkim napetostima bila uvođenje rasne teorije (u utjecajnoj knjižici objavljenoj anonimno 1907. godine) kao sredstva za objašnjenje etno-religijskog antagonizma u Bosni. Prema Truhelki, katolici i muslimani Bosne i Hercegovine bili su etnički Hrvati i rasno arijevsko-slavenskoga podrijetla, obilježeni prevlašću „nordijsko-dinarskih" rasnih obilježja, za razliku od pravoslavnih Srba, koji su se uglavnom razlikovali po ne-arijevskim rasnim značajkama koje su, kako se tvrdilo, naslijedili od nomadskih i „degeneriranih" balkanskih Vlaha. Kao „orijentalni" rezervoar bogatoga etnografskog materijala, Bosna i Hercegovina postala je predmet osobitoga interesa rasnih antropologa krajem devetnaestoga i početkom dvadesetoga stoljeća. Truhelka se stoga nalazio u idealnom položaju da svojim intelektualnim doprinosom sudjeluje u široj teoriji arijevske rase. I nakon pada Habsburške Monarhije nastavio je pisati o rasi, zadržavajući svoje stajalište o arijevsko-slavenskom/hrvatskom rasnom podrijetlu bosanskih muslimana, a rasnu je povijest Hrvatske povezivao i s najranijim naseljavanjem nordijskih Arijaca i dinarske rase na Balkanu. Premda se smatralo da su najraniji korijeni dinarske rase nearijevski, navodno je miješanje nordijske rase s dinarskim stanovništvom dovelo do pojave „plavokosog dinarskog" rasnog tipa na zapadnom Balkanu.

Truhelkina rasna teorija trebala je imati znatan utjecaj na rasnu ideologiju ustaškoga pokreta.

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