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Tito under Glass: Museum and Myth in the Making of Croat Yugoslavism

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in

History

by

Joel Palhegyi

Committee in Charge:

Professor Patrick Patterson, Chair
Professor Robert Edelman
Professor Thomas Gallant
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2019

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Chair

University of California San Diego

2019

DEDICATION

To Nat and Phil,

For comforting me when I am lost in the past,
For giving me continued hope about the future,
And most importantly,
For keeping me anchored in the present.

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NOTE ON TRANSLATIONS AND ARCHIVAL ABBREVIATIONS

TRANSLATIONS

Due to the complexity and ambiguity of the Serbo-Croatian language when it comes to certain key words for the study of nationalism—particularly the adjectival forms of *hrvatski* (Croat/Croatian) and *narodni* (National/People's)—some clarification is necessary for how I have chosen to translate these terms. For the purpose of this dissertation, I have chosen to translate the adjective *hrvatski* in two distinct ways. On the one hand, I translate *hrvatski* as "Croat" to indicate when the term applies specifically to the ethnic Croat nation and the people that belong to it. On the other hand, I translate it as "Croatian" to indicate when the term refers to the broader territory of Croatia and the people living therein, regardless of ethnic or religious background. In similar fashion, I translate the adjective *narodni* in two ways to indicate when the term refers to "national" versus "people's" or "popular." When the term clearly refers to a national idea, be it an early conception of a multi-ethnic, multi-religious Yugoslav nation or a reference to a specific, ethnically defined Croat nation, I have translated it as "national." Conversely, I translate the term as either "people's" or "popular" when the term refers to the people of Yugoslavia more broadly, absent a national connotation, and is in reference to a mobilized and politicized public. These distinctions in Serbo-Croatian are largely context specific, meaning that I have made each distinction on a case to case basis throughout this dissertation.

ARCHIVAL ABBREVIATIONS

MSB	The Museum of the Peasant Uprisings Collections

MDC	The Museum Documenation Center
MRNH	The Croatian History Museum Collections of the Former Museum of the Revolution of the Peoples of Croatia
MGR	The Rijeka City Museum Collections
SPJ	The Jasenovac Memorial Site Collections

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It was only through the help and encouragement of a great number of people that this dissertation was possible. I am indebted to Patrick Patterson in particular, who has guided and shaped me as a scholar throughout my years under his guidance. Pamela Radcliff, Thomas Gallant, Robert Edelman, Hasan Kayali, and John Marino also each provided crucial guidance during my early development as a scholar and researcher, for which I am forever grateful. Furthermore, I must thank Vjeran Pavlakovic for his insights into my research, as well as his crucial guidance during my field research.

I must also thank my fellow colleagues who formed a remarkably supportive–and necessarily fun–community in San Diego. I would like to thank David Idol, Patrick Adamiak, Robert Terrell, Benjamin Smuin, Joe Djordjevski, Johanna Peterson, Ivana Polić, David Henderson, Leonidas Mylonakis, and Matt Davis for making my time at the University of California a truly life changing experience. I will forever remember our “solidarity” café trips and post-work happy hours fondly. I would like to especially thank David Idol and Robert Terrell for their gracious comments and assistance in helping me complete my dissertation. Any mistakes remaining in the dissertation are my own and do not reflect the quality of their assistance.

Lastly, I must thank my family. My parents, my grandmother, and my siblings provided me with a lifetime of fulfillment, intellectual engagement, and affection that shaped the core of who I am. Most importantly, I thank my wife and son, Natalie and Phil, for their constant inspiration and love that keeps me grounded in the here and now when every other impulse in my brain sends me tumbling down the historical abyss. I love you, now and forever.

Chapters 2, 3, and 4 of this dissertation contain direct portions of two previously published articles: Palhegyi, Joel. “National Museums, National Myths: Construction socialist Yugoslavism for Croatia and Croats,” *Nationalities Papers* 45, no. 6 (2017): 1048-1065; and Palhegyi, Joel. “Revolutionary Curating, Curating the Revolution: Socialist Museology in Yugoslav Croatia,” *Martor* 23 (2018): 17-34. The dissertation author was the primary researcher and author of these papers.

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

Tito under Glass: Museum and Myth in the Making of Croat Yugoslavism

by

Joel Palhegyi
Doctor of Philosophy in History
University of California San Diego, 2019
Professor Patrick Hyder Patterson, Chair

In this dissertation, I investigate the history of Croatian museum theory and practice during and after the era of socialist Yugoslavia. In particular, I explore the development of socialist museology, the extent to which these ideas were implemented in Croatian history museum spaces, the role these history museums played in the development of what I term "Croat Yugoslavism," and likewise, the extent to which they participated in its destruction in the post-socialist context. I argue firstly that Croatian museology developed into a robust and critically engaged academic study during the socialist era that in many ways kept up with—if not outpaced—advancements in Western museology during the same period. At the same time, as both products and producers of the predominant state mythology of socialist Yugoslavism, I argue that Croatian history museums played a key role in the negotiation of socialist Yugoslav identity and ethnic Croat identity. Far from mere mouthpieces for the socialist Yugoslav state, I

contend that Croatian history museums were complex, living institutions that contained a great deal of variety depending on their thematic and temporal scope. As such, I engage with two related conversations: the ongoing process of nationalization in the context of postwar communism, and the role of socialist countries in the development of modern museology. I join these conversations, on the one hand, by analyzing Croatian museological literature in the context of postwar international museology. Specifically, I investigate how Croatian museology developed within the parameters of postwar museology, and crucially, the extent to which it helped establish a new orthodoxy of public oriented museology. On the other hand, I explore a range of Croatian history museums, from Party-line revolutionary and memorial museums to locally oriented regional and city museums. In doing so, I demonstrate the extent to which Croatian history museums played a role in the overall construction of Croat Yugoslavism, and in the process, shed light on the specific areas of Croatian history the Yugoslav state was most interested in harnessing.

Chapter 1: Introduction
How the Croats Were Won (and Lost) in Historical Museums

In 1954, the Historical Museum of Croatia hosted an exhibition titled "The Croatian Popular Uprising, 1903-1904" (*Hrvatski narodni pokret, 1903-1904 godina*) that is emblematic of socialist-era history telling. Examining the events of 1903-1904 in which massive protests against Hungarian authorities broke out throughout Croatia, the exhibition carefully crafted a story that embodied the very idea of socialist Yugoslavism—the predominant state ideology based upon a fusion of South Slavism and revolutionary socialism—in order to present to the visitor the deep historical precedents of the socialist Yugoslav state. According to the exhibition, in 1903 ethnic Croats and Serbs rose up in unity to protect their common South Slavic culture and way of life against the Hungarian authorities who were then governing Croatia within the Habsburg Empire. Likewise, the incipient socialist movement in Croatia played a key role in these uprisings as a member of the Croat and Serb opposition that helped to mobilize the peasantry forge ties between the various Croatian political parties.

Thirty nine years later, the same museum, now titled the Croatian History Museum, hosted the similarly-titled exhibition "National Uprisings in Croatia, 1883 and 1903" (*Narodni pokreti u Hrvatskoj, 1883 i 1903*).[1] Held in 1993 during the middle of the Croatian War of

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[1] In both of these exhibitions, the term *narodni* took on different meanings that get to the heart of the competing national models of socialist Yugoslavism and Croatian nationalism. During the socialist era, the term *narodni* in adjective form more often indicated something massive and popular in nature rather than something rooted in a particular ethno-national group. Take for instance the *Narodnooslobodilačka borba* (NOB) that translates to English as "the People's Liberation Struggle." Referring to the communist-led resistance against Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and local collaborators, the NOB was at the heart of socialist Yugoslav state mythology as it represented both the *popular* and the *multi-national* elements of the Yugoslav communist cause for social, economic, political, and national justice. In many other contexts, however, *narodni* can refer to a specific ethno-national idea of peoplehood, such as in the present day Croatian constitution whose preamble begins with a reference to the "millennial national identity and survival of statehood of the Croatian people." In this case, the noun form *narod* specifically refers to the ethno-national Croatian people, and not merely people living within the territory of Croatia. Crucially, these differences are not indicated simply through differentiating adjectival and noun forms but rather are highly

Independence (1991-1995), this exhibition depicted a starkly different take on the 1903 uprising and its similarly natured predecessor in 1883. Instead of embodying the common South Slavic and socialist cause against Hungarian domination, the exhibition now depicted 1883 and 1903 as crucial moments in the Croatian national movement when all classes of Croatian society—urban elites and rural peasants alike—rose up in unity to protect their national rights and push for independent statehood. Nowhere did the exhibition mention a common Serb-Croat cause, nor did it include any references to the socialist movement. Instead, the 1883 and 1903 uprisings represented a distinctly ethno-national uprising for Croatian political and economic independence, much as the ongoing war in 1993 represented Croatia's continued struggle for national sovereignty from Serb-dominated socialist Yugoslavia.[2]

The curators of both of these exhibitions, of course, took great liberty with the historical realities of these events.[3] Relatively minor in scale and deeply divided between urban and rural movements, the 1883 and 1903 uprisings were just as much emblematic of Croatian nationalism as they were of Coat-Serb cooperation against a common Hungarian enemy. Likewise, both uprisings were deeply divided between urban intellectual nationalists concerned with political sovereignty and national culture, and rural peasants driven to revolt over their dire conditions in the countryside. Thus, the 1954 socialist-era and the 1993 post-socialist exhibitions both reflect

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contingent upon context. Thus, the *narodni* in the 1953 title connotes the popular-revolutionary character of the 1903 uprising, while *narodni* in the 1993 title implies a distinctly ethno-national character.

[2] See *Pogled događaja kroz izložbu "Hrvatski narodni pokret 1903-1903 god." [Overview of the Events throughout the Exhibition "The Croatian Popular Uprising, 1903-1904"]* (Zagreb: Historical Museum of Croatia, 1954). See Jasna Tomičić and Ela Jurdana, *Narodni Pokreti u Hrvatskoj, 1883 i 1903 [National Uprisings in Croatia, 1883 and 1903]* (Zagreb: Croatian History Museum, 1993).

[3] For an extended analysis of each of these exhibitions, see Chapter 4 and Chapter 5, respectively.

Renan's famous argument that nation-building is just as much a process of *active forgetting* as it is a process of *active remembrance*.[4]

It is this dual process of selective forgetting and remembrance that drives the focus of my project as I investigate the ways in which Croatian historical museums partook in the process of nation building in the context of socialist Yugoslavia. As more recent scholarship on nationalism and nationalization have demonstrated, the development of popular national consciousness is rooted in the experiential, the symbolic, and the emotional—and crucially, not the result of nuanced historical engagement or long lasting cultural traditions. The museum space is therefore particularly suited for developing popular national consciousness as the museum visitor, by process of freely traversing the exhibition space, becomes witness to their nation's mythological foundations. The same can be said for socialist ideology. Much as museum spaces transform the visitor into witness of their national history, so too can the museum make them witness to the long trajectory of class struggle that culminated in the rise of state socialism. None of this is to say that museums are mere passive reflections of the dominant ideologies of the society to which they belong. Rather, they are institutions maintained and governed by individuals whose personal biases, skill sets, and agendas determine their outcomes just as much, if not more so, than state actors.

This process of nation building and the formation of socialist consciousness at the level of public museums remains rather underrepresented and underdeveloped within the broader body of literature on Yugoslav and Croatian identity. Of the few examples that do exist, most do not engage deeply with the content and form of Croatian museum exhibitions but rather provide broad surveys of the development of Croatian museums.[5] As such, at the time of this writing there exists no comprehensive study of Croatian history museums and their relationship to socialist and post-socialist era identity formation in Croatia. Similarly, while a larger body of literature exists concerning Croatian museology, it is largely confined the development of theory and practice and lacks a proper historical contextualization of Croatian museology in both its internal socialist Yugoslav context, as well as its broader post-war international context.[6] Therefore, my contribution is twofold as I investigate the development of a distinct socialist museology in Yugoslav Croatia in its proper historical and international context, while also conducting intensive micro-level analysis of many exhibitions hosted in Croatian history museums from the early 1950s to the present day.

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[4] See Ernest Renan, "What is a Nation?", trans. Ethan Rundell (text of a conference delivered at the Sorbonne on March 11th, 1882), in Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?*, Paris, Presses-Pocket, 1992. Accessed online on 06/21/2018 at http://ucparis.fr/files/9313/6549/9943/What_is_a_Nation.pdf.

With all this in mind, I propose two central arguments about the role of Croatian history museums during and after the socialist era that speak to their roles in mediating the complicated relationship between socialist Yugoslavism and Croatian nationalism. First, I argue that as both *products* and *producers* of official socialist Yugoslavism, Croatian history museums were key sites for negotiating the inherent tensions between Croatian nationalism and mythology, one the one hand, and the supranational mythology of the socialist Yugoslav project on the other. Given the strictures of the one party communist state, Croatian museum professionals certainly were limited in the types of history and discourse they could present to the public. As such, I view Croatian history museums as important reflections of the larger educational and mythological frameworks of the socialist state. At the same time, however, the federal structure of socialist Yugoslavia allowed a great deal of autonomy for each of its constituent republics in the realms of history and culture, particularly so after the 1963 and 1974 constitutions that relegated majority of state power to the republic level. This was especially true when it came to the academic and professional field of history on topics prior to the twentieth century such as early modern feudalism and the 19th century Croatian national revival. I therefore also consider Croatian history museums key actors in the production and presentation of public history—and not merely passive recipients of Party-line history. Throughout my research, I found surprisingly little evidence of top-down state dictates to which Croatian history museums had to adhere, and even less evidence of Party or state officials actively doctoring exhibition plans to fit a pre-approved narrative. This pattern is less true when it came to more politicized twentieth century topics such as the Workers' Movement, the communist resistance during the Second World War, and the post-war experience of lived socialism. But even when Croatian history museums engaged with twentieth century topics, I found little evidence of direct involvement by Party or state officials approving their activities; rather, the clear adherence to Party-line narratives on twentieth century topics appears to have happened organically by museum professionals who presumably were well aware of their limitations on topics as sensitive as the Second World War.

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[5] See, for instance, Nada Guzin Lukic, "National Museums in Croatia" in *Building National Museums in Europe 1750-2010*, ed. Peter Aronsson and Gabriella Elgenius (Linkoping: Linkoping University, 2011), 151-164; and Mihaela Bingula, "The Role of Museums in the Construction of the Social Memory of the 1990's in Croatia," *Etnološka istraživanja*, no. 17 (2002): 153-170. Some notable exceptions exist, of course, that engage in an in depth analysis of certain exhibitions. See Vjeran Pavlakovic, "Contested Sites and Fragmented Narratives: Jasenovac and Disruptions in Croatia's Commemorative Culture" in *Framing the Nation and Collective Identities: Political Rituals and Cultural Memory of the Twentieth-Century Traumas in Croatia*, ed. by Vjeran Pavlakovic (London: Routledge 2019), 119-140; and Ljiljana Radonić, "Croatia – Exhibiting Memory and History at the 'Shores of Europe,'" *Culture Unbound*, no. 3 (2011): 355-367.

[6] While extremely valuable in their own light, most studies that include Croatia in the broader development of postwar museology fall short of recognizing the full extent to which Croatian museology led the field and experimented with now-orthodox ideas, such as the primacy of the visitor experience, long before their Western European and American counterparts. See, for instance, Darko Babić, "Experiences and (Hidden) Values of Ecomuseums," *Etnološka Istraživanja*, No. 14 (2009): 237-252; and Jesús-Pedro Lorente, "The Development of Museum Studies in Universities: From Technical Training to Critical Museology," *Museum Management and Curatorship* 27, no. 3 (2013): 237-252.

This degree of freedom allowed to Croatian museum professionals applied equally to the academic discipline of museology centered at the University of Zagreb under the direction of Antun Bauer and Bože Težak. Establishing the first Yugoslav academic journal for the field, *Muzeologija*, in 1954, and later founding one of the earliest post-graduate programs for museology in the world in 1966, Bauer and Težak were crucial voices in theorizing museology as an independent academic discipline.[7] Furthermore, their work in theorizing the socio-cultural function of museums in a socialist society laid the practical foundations for so-called Native Place Museums (*Zavičajni muzeji*) that in many ways predated the famous French ecomuseum model developed in the early 1970s.

This brings me to my second argument: that Croatian museum professionals were in many ways at the forefront of museological theory and practice as the field transformed internationally from a research-based practice with a limited target audience of educated elites to a popularly oriented discipline based in public history, education, and community engagement. As early as the mid-1950s, for instance, Croatian museologists theorized a new social role for museums as sites of active learning where the public would learn socialist Yugoslav values organically by nature of being exposed to their revolutionary culture and past. This rhetoric, of course, was quite politicized, but the core of the practice involved democratizing museum spaces by increasing their accessibility to the public, functioning transparently by involving the visitor in the professional aspects of museums, engaging the local community in museum management, and creating easily digestible thematic exhibitions that did not require prior education or expertise. Thus, even when practiced within the clear ideological confines of Yugoslav state socialism, Croatian museology maintained a great deal of autonomy that allowed for creative innovation and experimentation that preceded many Western trends in the field.

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[7] See Jesús-Pedro Lorente, "The Development of Museum Studies in Universities: from Technical Training to Critical Museology," *Museum Management and Curatorship* 27, no. 3 (2013): 240.

The legacy of Croatian history museums and the museological principles that informed them is therefore a complicated mixture of institutional autonomy and dependence, as well as ideological adherence and technical innovation, that goes to the heart of the socialist Yugoslav system itself. Always a paradox, socialist Yugoslavia was simultaneously a state based upon supranational civic patriotism and ethno-national particularism; a one-Party federal state whose power increasingly 'withered away' to the national republic level; the leader of the Non-Alignment Movement that relied heavily on Western loans; a hybrid-economic 'Self-Management' economy that blended state socialism with an effort to incorporate some of the incentives of market capitalism; and a state whose citizens' passports allowed them access to both sides of the Iron Curtain. Precisely because of this paradoxical state, Croatian museologists and museum professionals left behind a socialist-era legacy that could not simply be abandoned after the collapse of communism but rather continues to influence the institutional practices and rhetorical contours of Croatian history museums to this day.

1.1 Museums and Myth in Nation Building

This study is grounded in the body of literature on national museums that understands them first and foremost as institutional representations of the larger process of producing and maintaining master narratives and myths. I use the term "myth" here to connote those stories—fictional or not—employed in modern state building projects to anchor the current socio-political order in sacred and unquestionable 'truths' that define society's predominant values and aspirations. As Andrea Orzoff puts it in the context of twentieth century Europe, "the term ‘myth’ helps highlight the essentialist, fabulistic narrative underscoring political and academic discourse” so central to modern state building.[8] Crucially, modern state building myths function through intentionally simplistic and highly moralistic paradigms that render otherwise complex histories comprehensible to the average citizen. In this way, myths lay the foundation for broader symbolic systems that permeate society through various mediums, such as public memorials and commemorations, literature and memoirs, theater, music, radio, and television. In the present study, I investigate the ways in which one particular medium—the public oriented history museum—engaged with myths in order to traverse two symbolic systems related to Croatian statehood: traditional Croatian ethno-nationalism, and revolutionary supranational socialist Yugoslavism.

As mediums involved in the dispersion of myths, national museums are therefore inherently tied to the political, social, and cultural discourses and power structures of the society to which they belong. Not surprisingly, museums have often served as powerful propaganda tools and centers for developing and distributing official mythologies about the state.[9] In particular, museums—as fundamentally interactive spaces—set the “scenography and stage for the performance of myths of nationhood” wherein the individual can discover his or her place within the larger national body, in turn reifying the symbiotic nature of the individual and their national community.[10] National museums therefore function as “key sites” for the playing out of cultural politics, ownership of the past, and the transformation of history into popular memory.[11]

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[8] See Andrea Orzoff, *The Battle for the Castle: The Myth of Czechoslovakia in Europe, 1914-1948* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) 14.

[9] For a discussion on the weight of official and authoritative constructions of history on the selection, analysis, and display of objects, see Peter G. Stone and Brian L. Molyneaux, “Introduction: the Represented Past,” in *The Presented Past: Heritage, Museums, and Education*, ed. Peter G. Stone and Brian L. Molyneaux, (London: Routledge, 1994), 10. For a discussion on the nature of museums as “places where professional and public performances are structured, scripted, and staged,” see Simon Knell, “National Museums and the National Imagination,” in *National Museums: New Studies from Around the World*, ed. Simon Knell and Peter Aronsson (London: Routledge, 2011), 6. Finally, for a discussion on the role of museums in setting the trajectories and traditions of national master narratives, see Peter Aronsson, “Explaining National Museums: Exploring Comparative Approaches to the Study of National Museums” in *National Museums: New Studies from Around the World*, ed. Simon Knell and Peter Aronsson (London: Routledge, 2011), 50.

In the context of state socialism, national museums played a similar role in distributing the central tenets of socialist mythology. In particular, national museums were employed throughout the communist Europe to develop and maintain an origin myth of popular socialist revolution.[12] In virtually all history museums in Soviet satellite states, for instance, the visitor would find a section dedicated the country or region’s role in the Second World War in which stories of anti-fascist resistance and mass socialist mobilization were greatly exaggerated and placed in juxtaposition to the barbarity and horrors of fascism. The visitor was subsequently expected to show due reverence to what they witnessed, a process that was accomplished in museums by emphasizing group visits, restricting the path of movement throughout the exhibition, and employing highly didactic objects and legends. As such, history museums in the Soviet sphere served as sites of “socialist pilgrimage” in which the visitor was expected to undergo a spiritual transformation that forever transformed their consciousness.[13]

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[10] See Knell, “National Museums,” 4.

[11] See Dipesh Chakrabarty, “Museums in Late Democracies,” in *Humanities Research* 9, no. 1 (2002): 7. Similarly, see Knell, “National Museums,” 11, on the role of material objects in physically anchoring nations and making history into memory.

[12] See the following studies on the communist museological emphasis on didactic items and displays, general lack of interpretive space, cult of personalities, and anti-fascist legacy: On Romania, Simina Badica, “Same Exhibitions, Different Labels? Romanian National Museums and the Fall of Communism,” in *National Museums: New Studies from Around the World*, ed. Simon Knell and Peter Aronsson (London: Routledge, 2011), 272-289; On Bulgaria, Radostina Sharenkova, “After the Fall of the Berlin Wall,” in *National Museums: New Studies from Around the World*, ed. Simon Knell and Peter Aronsson (London: Routledge, 2011), 418-428 and “Forget-Me(-Not): Visitors and Museum Presentations about Communism before 1989,” in *History of Communism in Europe*, vol. 1 (2010): 65-82; On Serbia, see Olga Manojlović Pintar and Aleksander Ignjatović, “National Museums in Serbia: A Story of Intertwined Identities,” in *Building National Museums in Europe 1750-2010*, ed. Peter Aronsson and Gabriella Elgenius (Linkoping: Linkoping University, 2011), 779-812; On Croatia, see Lukic, “National Museums in Croatia.”

[13] See Simina Badica, “Curating Communism: A Comparative History of Museological Practice in Postwar (1946-1958) and Post-Communist Romania” (PhD diss., Central European University, 2013), 167.

In democratic and communist states alike, therefore, the predominant myths and values of society exert great pressure on museum institutions. A great deal of my research is accordingly focused on how these pressures affected the course of Croatian museum practice. At the same time, however, I want to draw attention to the agency museum workers and theorists possessed when running their institutions. Even under state socialism, the transmission of knowledge from the museum space to the visitor always passed through the museum professional who acted as a mediator, be that as the director who sets the general agenda of the museum, the curator who designs the exhibition, or the exhibition guide who directs and informs visitors. This was especially true in the case of socialist Yugoslavia. Having broken ties with the Soviet Union in 1948 and pursued its own brand of state socialism based on a hybrid socialist-market economy, workers' self-management, and decentralized federalism, socialist Yugoslavia allowed considerable room for cultural workers to engage with historical knowledge critically so long as it did not directly challenge the state's foundational myths. Thus, my main contribution to the literature on national museums under state socialism is to take the agency of museum workers and theorists seriously. Rather than treat their work as mere reflections of socialist ideology, I have instead aimed to show how museum theory (chapter 2) and museum practice (chapters 3 and 4) worked within the already-loose confines of socialist Yugoslavism in order to create what they believed to be a distinctly modern and democratized museum going experience.

To that end, I have completed an exhaustive review of the two main professional journals for Croatian museum theorists and professionals, *Muzeologija* and *Informatica Museologica*.[14]

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[14] The journal *Muzeologija* first began publication in 1953, while *Informatica Museologica* began publication in 1973. Both journals still function to this day and reflect the long and robust history of museological theory and practice in Croatia. The only other significant professional journal in Croatia during this time was *Muzej Vjesnik* that functioned primarily as a news bulletin with little to no engagement with the questions and concerns of professional museology.

Investigating these journals provided me with crucial insights into the logic and purpose of the museum profession, the values and concerns of museum practitioners and theorists, and the various ways these professionals developed a distinct and modern form of museology rooted in both socialist principles and international trends. I have also engaged extensively with the exhibition guides and brochures published by museums to accompany their physical exhibitions. While varying in length and detail, these guides and brochures allowed me to reconstruct numerous socialist and post-socialist era exhibitions. Finally, in select cases I have engaged with in-depth planning documents for certain key museum projects, such as the Jasenovac Memorial Museum, the Museum of the Revolution of the Peoples of Croatia, and the Museum of Peasant Uprisings.

1.2 Museums and the Public

Along those lines, I argue that Croatian[15] museological theory and practical models such as the Native Place Museum (*Zavičajni muzeji*) were quite revolutionary in nature and well ahead of the game compared to Western museums when it came to transforming museums into popular institutions focused on the visitor experience and community engagement. As such, I am challenging the predominant narrative found in museum studies that locates the roots of this popular transformation in the so-called 'museum crisis' of the late 1960s and the French school of New Museology that developed in response to it.

According to scholars like Sharon Macdonald, Peter Davis, and Darko Babić, the late 1960s marked a turning point in museum practice and theory as museum professionals responded to the broader social upheavals embodied by the 1968 student protest movement.[16] In particular, the ‘68 movement charged museum professionals with complacency and elitism for catering their institutions’ activities and outlook to a small class of highly educated elites while ignoring the needs and interests of the general public. As a direct response to this critique, the French school of New Museology led by Georgies-Henri Rivière sought to reinvent museums by transforming them into publicly oriented cultural centers focused on community engagement and the visitor experience. To this end, Rivière developed the so-called ‘ecomuseum’ model. Based upon a mixture of professional and public management of the museum and its collections, Rivière theorized ecomuseums as “a laboratory, conservation centre and school” that actively engaged the local community and promoted a positive self-image of local heritage.[17] Ecomuseums therefore marked a transformation in museum theory in which the public was no longer a passive recipient of knowledge but rather an active force in the production and consumption of knowledge, thereby not only opening museums to the general public but also shifting the museum’s research and collection activities to match the interests of the everyday person.

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[15] I use the term Croatian here despite the fact that Native Place Museums were a pan-Yugoslav phenomenon. The predominant theorists and professionals involved in developing this museum model were based mostly in Zagreb and Slavonia, meaning the elements of this model originated within Croatian circles before being adopted throughout Yugoslavia.

Other prominent voices in museum studies, such as Peter van Mensch and Jesus-Pedro Lorente, at least recognize the influence of Eastern European museological circles on Rivière’s ecomuseum model. In particular, they point out the work of the Czech museologists Zbyněk Stránský and Jan Jelínek at the Moravian Museum in Brno whose ideas on the contingent and shifting meaning of objects and the active role of museums in public life greatly influenced Rivière's early work on ecomuseums. Lorente, for instance, points out how Stránský's ideas on 'museology' and 'museography'—the theoretical exploration of museum institutions and the practical implementation of said theories, respectively—were foundational to Rivière's ecomuseum model.[18] Likewise, van Mensch has demonstrated how Jelínek's idea of a multidisciplinary and publicly oriented museum served as a conceptual model for Rivière's ecomuseum.[19] In both cases, however, van Mensch and Lorente still credit the French school of New Museology as the predominant force in revolutionizing museums into popular oriented institutions from the late 1970s onward.

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[16] See Sharon Macdonald, “Expanding Museum Studies: An Introduction,” in *A Companion to Museum Studies*, ed. Sharon Macdonald (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 2. According to Macdonald, this shift led to the “supremacy of the visitor” in modern museum theory and practice, a trend which she both admires and critiques. See Peter Davis, “New Museologies and the Ecomuseum,” in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity*, ed. Bryan Graham and Peter Howard (London: Routledge, 2008), 397. According to Davis, this new form of museology “emerged in the early 1970s as a response to concerns that museums were failing to interact with, represent, develop and sustain local communities” which emerged “during and following the 1960s.”

[17] See Darko Babić, “Experiences and (hidden) Values of Ecomuseums,” *Etnološka Istraživanja*, No. 14 (2009): 246.

While this may be accurate in the case of Western European museums, it was certainly not the case in Eastern European museology. Although the subject is a rather under-researched one in English language literature, Simina Badica's work on Soviet museology and socialist-era Romanian museums sheds a great deal of light on the matter. As early as 1920s, for instance, Soviet authorities sought to "democratize" museum spaces by opening them to the general public. In some cases, this involved moving traditional objects of grandeur like crowns, thrones, and imperial regalia to a newly founded People's Museum where the objects were "neutralized [of] their former symbolic power" and exhibited to remind the everyday person of the "exploitative order of luxury and oppressive power" the socialist revolution had overthrown.[20] By the 1950s, Soviet museologists had expanded their theoretical and practical approaches to redefine the relationship between museum, object, and visitor such that the displayed object was no longer the predominant concern in the exhibition space. Instead, Soviet museology focused on the overall visitor experience, and their comprehension of the exhibition's overall meaning in particular. As such, Soviet museology "was arguably the first museology to grant an important place to the visitor in the exhibitionary complex, to research the profile of the visitor, and to try and adapt its discourse in order to open communication channels to particular kinds of visitors."[21] These principles—even if quite restrictive in practice and obviously designed to reinforce Soviet ideology—clearly reflect a much earlier impulse in communist circles compared to Western ones to reinvent the bourgeois museum institution as a popular space geared towards the interests and values of the everyday person.[22]

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[18] Lorente, "The Development of Museum Studies in Universities," 241.

[19] See Peter van Mensch, "Towards a Methodology of Museology" (PhD diss., University of Zagreb, 1992), 17.

[20] See Badica, "Curating Communism," 143

In the case of Yugoslav Croatia, similar ideas were evident as early as 1953 in the first issue of the professional journal *Muzeologija* in which Antun Bauer set out the goals of reinventing Croatian museums as popular institutions designed to serve first and foremost the everyday urban citizen. And unlike Soviet museologists who worked under the massively restrictive structures of the Soviet state, Yugoslav-Croatian museologists were relatively free to develop their own theories and practices to serve this new purpose so long as they did not directly challenge socialist ideology. Therefore, much of the work done by Croatian museologists and practitioners predated the French school of New Museology, at least at the theoretical level. The extent to which this played out *in practice* is much more complicated, a topic I explore in greater detail throughout this project.

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[21] See Badica, "Curating Communism," 167.
[22] For an in depth discussion on early Soviet museum practices during the late-1920s and early-1930s, see Adam Jolles, "Stalin's Talking Museums," *Oxford Art Journal* 28, No. 3 (2005): 431-455; and Masha Chlenova. "Soviet Museology during the Cultural Revolution: An Educational Turn, 1928-1933," *Histoire@Politique*, no. 33 (2017): 1-16.

1.3 Nationalism and Nationalization in Central and Eastern Europe

Beyond the realm of museum studies, I aim to contribute to the body of literature on nationalism and nationalization in Central and Eastern Europe. By nationalization, I mean the process by which intellectuals, politicians, state officials, and otherwise significant figures in society actively sought to instill national consciousness in the masses, either in the pursuit of an independent national state or for the purpose of reinforcing the legitimacy of the current state. As several scholars have demonstrated in the past two decades, throughout much of Central and Eastern Europe, national fluidity and indifference was the rule, not the exception, and widespread consciousness only developed well into the 20th century after a series of state-led processes. This was due in large part to the history of heterogeneity and pluralism in both the Habsburg and Ottoman empires, and consequently, the multiple shifting borderlands between and within each empire. Throughout these borderlands—understood here "not as places or even events, but as social processes" that are by nature in a constant state of flux[23]—the nature of peoples identity had far more to do with local communal ties, religious affiliation, professions, and social class than a distinct sense of belonging to an ethnic nation. And yet, by the mid-19th century a small but highly influential number of urban nationalists actively sought to undermine communal coexistence and win over the masses to their national cause.

Language in particular became a powerful point of cleavage, as demonstrated by Jeremy King and Pieter M. Judson in their studies on language borderlands in the Habsburg empire. In these cases, it was the work of national "ultras" (to borrow King's language) in the rural countryside that instigated national-linguistic tensions in communities that had been multilingual for centuries. And even then, as Judson argues, national indifference remained a perpetual roadblock to the nationalization process, much to the chagrin of urban nationalists.[24] Likewise, vying state building projects by incipient nation states in the late 19th and early 20th centuries had much to do with establishing national consciousness among the masses. Be it the nationalization of children through state led education in Bohemia,[25] or the competing attempts by Serbia, Greece, and Bulgaria to claim Ottoman Macedonia through the use of armed paramilitaries,[26] nationalists in control of state bodies were central to the process of creating and reinforcing national consciousness.

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[23] See I. William Zartman, "Introduction: Identity, Movement, and Response," in *Understanding Life in the Borderlands: Boundaries in Depth and Motion*, ed. I. William Zartman (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010), 2.

Even still, a number of scholars have demonstrated that it was not until the catastrophic experience of Second World War that Central and Eastern European states became truly nationalized. As Chad Bryant and Benjamin Frommer have argued, it was the experience of Nazi occupation in which individuals were forced to 'choose' a nationality, and the subsequent postwar retribution against perceived ethnic Germans, that finally ended the tradition of national indifference and fluidity in the Czech-German borderlands. Likewise, Emily Greble convincingly argues that the multi-confessional nature of Sarajevo with distinct Jewish, Catholic, Orthodox, and Muslim populations had long prevented the development of competing nationalisms in the city itself. However, the tri-part experience of fascist governance over the city—direct occupation first by Fascist Italy and later by Nazi Germany, both of which relied on the indigenous Croatian fascist Ustaša movement—effectively destroyed Sarajevo's pluralistic and confessionalist traditions as each religious group was ethnically categorized while competing for survival within the structures of a racialized fascist government.[27]

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[24] See Jeremy King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans: A Local History of Bohemian Politics, 1848-1948* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002) and Pieter M. Judson, *Guardians of the Nation: Activists on the Language Frontiers of Imperial Austria* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007).

[25] See Tara Zahra, *Kidnapped Souls: National Indifference and the Battle for the Children in the Bohemian Lands, 1900-1948* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

[26] See Ipek K. Yosmaoglu, "Constructing National Identity in Ottoman Macedonia" in *Understanding Life in the Borderlands: Boundaries in Depth and Motion*, ed. I. William Zartman (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010), 160-188, and Ryan Gingeras, "Between the Cracks: Macedonia and the 'Mental Map' of Europe," *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 50, No. 3/4 (2008): 341-358.

1.4 Croatia, the Yugoslav Idea, and Croat Yugoslavism

It is within this context then that I seek to position my contribution to the long process of nationalization in Croatia. Much as in the aforementioned histories, national fluidity and indifference among the rural population characterized most of the regions that today make up the Croatian nation state. By the start of the 20th century, however, peasant interests were becoming increasingly tied to national symbols, such as the Croatian coat of arms, *šahovnica*, and successfully coopted by nationalist political groups like Ante Štarčević's Party of Right and Stjepan Radić's Peasant Party. At the same time, a competing form of nationalism—South Slavic Yugoslavism—provided an alternative to a distinctly ethno-national model based upon common South Slavic heritage and language, and crucially, the desire for independent statehood. Arguing that the Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs (as well as the Muslim population of Bosnia) were distinct peoples within a broader South Slavic ethno-linguistic group, early Yugoslav proponents like Josip Juraj Strossmeyer and Ljudevit Gaj aimed to unify all South Slavs under a common state. This brand of Yugoslavism was embraced primarily by middle-class intellectuals and liberal members of the Catholic clergy, and ultimately did not generate much popular support.[28] At the same time, however, the idea remained a powerful force for self-identifying Croats and Serbs alike interested in creating a common South Slavic state, as evidenced by the Croat-Serb

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[27] See Emily Greble, *Sarajevo, 1941-1945: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Hitler's Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011).

[28] See Dennison Rusinow, "The Yugoslav Idea before Yugoslavia" in *Yugoslavisms: Histories of a Failed Idea*, ed. Dejan Djokić (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003): 11-28.

Coalition who controlled the Croatian *Sabor* (parliament) from 1906 to 1918.[29] Thus, by the time the first Yugoslav state was founded in 1918 under the title of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, everyday Croatians were faced with two competing national models, the more popularly embraced ethno-national model and the state-supported Yugoslav model. The inherent tension between these two models, as well as the domination of the kingdom's government by Serb nationalists, ultimately led to an incomplete nationalization process in Croatia that in the context of the Second World War proved to be violently combustible.[30]

After the initial invasion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia by Italian and German forces in 1941, the state was divided by means of direct occupation, annexation, and crucially for this project, the establishment of a puppet state under the Croatian fascist Ustaša movement, the Independent State of Croatia. A chaotic and bloody civil war ensued throughout the entirety of the former kingdom that pitted Slovenes, Croats, Bosnian Muslims, and Serbs against one another. This ethnic conflict therefore presented an existential challenge to the Yugoslav idea in Croatia as the Ustaša regime initiated a vicious campaign of ethnic cleansing and genocide against its Serbian population. This likely would have sounded the death knell of the Yugoslav idea in Croatia had it not been for the successful anti-fascist resistance led by the Yugoslav communist Partisans under Josip Broz Tito. Easily the most successful anti-fascist resistance group in Eastern Europe, Tito's Partisans quickly gathered mass support among every major ethno-religious group in Yugoslavia under the banner of South Slavic unity and to a lesser degree, socialist revolution. As Aleksa Djilas argues, the ethno-national divisions and violence of the interwar period and subsequent civil war ultimately granted the communist Partisans significant legitimacy among the masses as an “enlightened movement” whose specifically *supranational* character appeared to transcend the chaos of the present moment.[31] Therefore, in spite of these deeply embedded national identities and the extraordinarily tumultuous nationalist politics of the previous decades, the wartime revolutionary experience revived popular support—or at least popular hope—for Yugoslavism as a supranational identity in parallel with ethno-nationality.

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[29] See Tihomir Cipek, "The Croats and Yugoslavism" in *Yugoslavisms: Histories of a Failed Idea*, ed. Dejan Djokić (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003): 71-83.

[30] See Ivo Banac, *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984).

As such, I approach the process of nationalization in socialist Yugoslavia as an incomplete and ongoing project that fundamentally altered the nationalisms of the various peoples of Yugoslavia.[32] Understanding full well that the interwar and Second World War experience had fundamentally undermined older versions of the Yugoslav idea, the communist party under the leadership of Josip Tito sought to transform the “Yugoslav” idea into simultaneously supranational and multinational form wherein each constituent South Slav nation was bound under the common flag of socialist patriotism. This brand of socialist Yugoslavism hinged upon the “civil religion” of Brotherhood and Unity in particular, “the keystone of the new Yugoslav nationalism [that] combined the with the Tito cult, the myth of Pan-Yugoslav antifascist struggle during World War II, the victory of Soviet hegemony, the Yugoslav model of socialism, and the country’s non-aligned foreign policy.”[33]

More specifically, I am interested in how this broader Yugoslav civil religion contributed to an ongoing nationalization process that led to the creation of what I term “Croat Yugoslavism,” i.e., the specific brand of socialist Yugoslavism developed in the Socialist

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[31] See Aleksa Djilas, *The Contested Country: Yugoslav Unity and the Communist Revolution, 1919-1953* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 183.
[32] See Sabrina P. Ramet, *Balkan Babel: The Disintegration of Yugoslavia from the Death of Tito to the Fall of Milošević* (London: Routledge, 2002), xiii.
[33] See Vjekoslav Perica, *Balkan Idols: Religion and Nationalism in Yugoslav States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 94-95.

Republic of Croatia. Due to the fact that in Serbo-Croatian "*hrvatski*" can imply both an ethno-national people as well as non-national territorial designation, distinguishing the English adjectival form of "Croat" versus "Croatian" is particularly important here. I use the term "Croat" in order to get at the heart of socialist-era Croatian nationalism in which the history of a distinct ethno-national people, the Croats, was re-imagined within a larger history of common South Slavic heritage and unity. In particular, Croat Yugoslavism hinged upon three key factors that I trace throughout the entirety of this project: first, that the Croats share significant lingo-cultural heritage with their fellow South Slavs, the Slovenes, Serbs, Bosnian Muslims, Montenegrins, and Macedonians; second, that the territory of Croatia is home to not only ethnic Croats but also a large number of fellow South Slavs, namely Serbs; and third, that like all the South Slavs, the long historical trajectory of the Croats pointed towards South Slavic unification and socialist revolution, as evidenced by the nation's history.

Of course, this official form of Croat Yugoslavism did not go unchallenged in Croatia. Throughout the socialist period, the Croatian national question remained an active force in Yugoslav society and politics, while broader political dissidence against the nature of the communist party, its monopoly on power, and the direction of the economy was more common than in other East European communist states. The structures of the 1953 constitution, for instance, had created "a disproportionally small Croatian faction" at the federal level and "permanent patterns" of predominantly Serb and Montenegrin staffing of the federal offices that set the stage for future conflict over the representation of ethnic Croats in federal positions.[34] Likewise, the New Left movement of the mid-1960s, the student protests of 1968, and the Croatian Spring of 1970-71 challenged outright much of the official culture and economic structures of socialist Yugoslavism.[35] Finally, after a brief "golden age" between 1974 and 1981 when "the nationality question seemed … to have been laid to rest," Yugoslav politics increasingly devolved to republic based, ethno-specific quarrels over the direction of Yugoslav society that ultimately culminated in the rise of Slobodan Milošević and inter-ethnic warfare.[36]

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[34] See John R. Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History: Twice There Was A Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 262.

I therefore seek to measure the extent to which Croatian history museums were active participants in building Croat Yugoslavism. As such, I aim to demonstrate the ways in which Croat Yugoslavism provided the parameters of a stable relationship with a Yugoslav federation by allowing the public display and celebration of traditional Croatian nationalism within a socialist framework. In spite of the recurrence of Croatian national grievances during the socialist period, as well as various pan-Yugoslav concerns over the federal structure of the state and its hybrid economy, the national narrative in Croatian history museums remained remarkably stable. While one could read this as evidence of state control over said museums, I believe it to instead indicate the flexibility, and thus the durability, of Croat Yugoslavism as a viable form of Croatian nationalism. At the same time, the rapidity with which Croatian history museums transformed to support a new distinctly ethno-national and anti-Yugoslav narrative during the 1990s serves as a reminder that no matter how organically or genuinely Croat Yugoslavism may have developed in museums, the very nature of national museums makes them highly susceptible to sudden and dramatic discursive shifts.

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[35] See Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History* and Madigan Fichter, "Yugoslav Protest: Student Rebellion in Belgrade, Zagreb, and Sarajevo in 1968" in *Slavic Review* 75, No. 1 (2016): 99–121.
[36] See Ramet, *Balkan Babel*, 6.

1.5 Chapters Overview

I begin my project by investigating the development of professional museology in Yugoslav Croatia (chapter 2). While I am very much concerned with questions from the field of museum studies in this chapter, I have also sought to historicize developments in Croatian museology as much as possible with the aim to show how a critical and remarkably forward-looking theoretical museology developed within the structures of state socialism. The main questions driving this chapter therefore derive from this conceptual basis. To what extent did the project of building a socialist society inform developments in museological theory and practice? When socialist concerns were at the forefront of museological development, did this hinder the development of modern publicly oriented museums, or rather, did it in fact drive it? Finally, given Yugoslavia's 'in-between' status as a non-aligned state and the freedom granted to museum professionals to engage with international museum networks, should we consider socialist era Croatian museology as uniquely "communist"? If so, what exactly makes "communist museology" distinct from, say, post-1968 New Museology that redefined the museum landscape in Western Europe? I hope to answer these questions with clarity by showing the ways in which socialist principles and Croat Yugoslavism drove the development of publicly oriented and socially inclusive museum institutions. At the same time, I have tried to demonstrate the analytical shortcomings inherent in Croatian museology as it ultimately served the interests of the socialist Yugoslav state.

To this end, I investigate two types of history museums throughout the entirety of the Socialist Republic of Croatia: those committed to collecting, preserving, and exhibiting the legacy of Yugoslav socialism (chapter 3), and those concerned with the longer national history of the Croatian territory and people (chapter 4). In each case, I have attempted to show how and why Croat Yugoslavism was a viable national discourse given its broad scope and relative compatibility with traditional ethno-national Croatian nationalism. To put it simply, Croatian national history contained a genuine foundation for Croat Yugoslavism, even if it required a good deal of selective memory and historical revisionism, making the project of exhibiting Croat Yugoslavism a relatively smooth process. All that being said, I also aim to show in these chapters just how political these projects were, particularly so when it came to exhibition of the legacy of socialism. If a person or topic was deemed too good a story for socialist Yugoslav propagandists to pass up, Croatian museums made sure to toe the Party line, as was the case in the Museum of Peasant Uprisings in Gornja Stubica (chapter 4). And considering the centrality of the Second World War in the mythological foundations of the Yugoslav state, this meant that all museum exhibitions dealing with the history of the Workers' Movement, the People's Liberation Struggle, or the building of socialism were massively political in nature (chapter 3). Thus, I am to show that even while Croatian museum professionals operated with great intellectual autonomy at the level of museological theory, the actual practice of running historical museums was a far more mixed process ranging from Party-led exhibitions to reasonably objective academic projects to grass roots local history.

Finally, I conclude my project with an exploration of post-socialist Croatian history museums (chapter 5). Three questions in particular guided this chapter: first, how does the treatment of Croatian history museums after the collapse of communism reflect Croatia's transition to a capitalist and democratic nation state? Second, did the process of democratic transition fundamentally alter the ways Croatian history museums function in service of the state? And third, how much has socialist-era museology, both theory and practice, influenced Croatian history museums in the post-socialist era? For the Croatian History Museum, at least, the answer to all these questions is quite simple: during the 1990s and early 2000s, the museum replicated many socialist era tropes and exhibition tactics, only now with an inverted national narrative in service of a new nation-state paradigm. The matter becomes much more complicated when expanded to the entirety of Croatia, however, as the general trend has been a retreat to focusing on local, and in many ways less political, topics. I demonstrate this by tracing the fate of museums dedicated to the history of socialism, some of which were shut down entirely while others were transformed to local history museums. Finally, I contend that many Croatian history museums still operate on the basis of a state origin myth, much as they did in the socialist era. Now, however, in place of the People's Liberation Struggle and the Second World War serving as the predominant origin myth for the socialist Yugoslav state, the 1990s Homeland War (*Domovinski rat*) functions as *the* foundational mythology for Croatian statehood.[37] And just as socialist-era exhibitions toed the Party line when it came to the history of the Second World War, so too today do Croatian history museums reinforce the predominant nationalist myths of the Homeland War.

Considered in its totality, my project therefore sheds light on the everyday institutional structure of Yugoslav Croatia in the cultural sphere. Much as the entire history of socialist Yugoslavia presents us with an historical enigma—simultaneously as an inspiration story for multi-nationalism and tempered state socialism while also serving as a cautionary tale about the dangers of state-led supranationalism that collapsed under the weight of ethnic tensions—so too do Croatian historical museums and museology leave us with a mixed legacy. Throughout my research, it became clear to me just how reasonable Croat Yugoslavism was as a viable form of supranationalism bound by common language, heritage, and socialist patriotism. And yet, the cracks in the foundation were startlingly visible when I looked close enough: most every element of Croatian national history in support of Croat Yugoslavism could just as easily be inverted against the Yugoslav cause, just as the very museological theories and practices developed "in the spirit of socialist principles" ultimately worked in service of its destruction.

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[37] The term itself "Homeland War" requires some explanation. I have chosen to use the word despite its highly politicized nature since it is the term most popularly used in Croatia today, including in the museum that I analyze. The term itself originated in the context of re-imagining Croatia's role the 1990s Yugoslav Civil War, specifically in order to paint Croatia as a victim of Serbian aggression and thus forced into a war of noble defense. Consequently, the term ignores much of Croatia's own culpability in the outbreak of war or the numerous war crimes committed on its soil. I do not, of course, intend to reproduce this narrative through my use of the term, and I explore the complexity of this time in Croatian history in much greater detail in chapter 5. For a further discussion on this term and the broader form of Croatian identity built around it, see Michel-Andre Horelt and Judith Renner, "Denting a Heroic Picture: A Narrative Analysis of Collective Memory in Post-War Croatia," *Perspectives* 16, no. 2 (2008): 13.

Chapter 2: From the "Cultured Elite" to the "Critical Public" Transforming Professional Museology in Yugoslav Croatia

Before the outbreak of the Second World War, Croatian museums embodied the traditional bourgeois museum model, focusing primarily on collection and research by subject experts (historians, ethnographers, archaeologists, etc.) and hosting exhibitions for a highly limited target audience of social and intellectual elites. This approach—comparable to virtually all European museums at the time—was rooted in the spirit of 19th century national revival and bourgeois culture as museums served to reinforce the national narratives, aesthetic values, and subject interests of Croatia's upper class. While the Croatian National Museum was originally founded in 1846 on the premise of promoting Croatian national identity, it did not contain a branch for Croatian history, which was only accomplished in the early socialist era with the founding of the Croatian Historical Museum in 1951. Instead, the national museum focused primarily on subjects like archeology, zoology, mineralogy, and art history—subjects that to the Habsburg and interwar Yugoslav authorities did not pose a direct national challenge to the existing state structure.[1] Thus, by the time the socialist era began in Yugoslav Croatia, there was little precedent for distinctly historical museums in Croatia, just as there was virtually no theoretical basis for developing popularly oriented, socialist museums.

In this chapter, therefore, I trace the development of Croatian museology from the early 1950s until the late 1980s, a period in which Croatia played a leading role in theorizing and implementing a distinct form of socialist museology.[2] Due to Yugoslavia's non-aligned status,

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[1] See Nada Guzin Lukic, "National Museums in Croatia," in *Building National Museums in Europe 1750-2010*, ed. Peter Aronsson and Gabriella Elgenius (Linkoping: Linkoping University, 2011), 158-159.

[2] While Croatia was not isolated from its fellow Yugoslav republics when it came to the museum profession, I use the term "Croatian museology" instead of "Yugoslav museology" since Croatia often led the way in Yugoslavia when it came to museum theory and practice. This is in no way meant to indicate a specific ethnic designation but rather a territorial one that refers to the museological developments in the Socialist Republic of Croatia. There was

Croatian museologists were quite integrated with the developments of both Western and Eastern European museology, as evidenced by the range of literature with which they engaged in their own writings, and their continued presence at UNESCO's International Council of Museums (ICOM) from the 1960s onward. As such, Croatian museologists were often at the forefront of international museum trends, so much so that I argue their theories regarding visitor participation, communal engagement, and the preservation of heritage were well ahead of the French school of "New Museology" that today is generally regarded as the founding movement for these modern principles. This chapter is based primarily on developments in museological theory and education, an area where Croatia certainly excelled relative to both Western and Eastern Europe. The story becomes much muddier in terms of the practical application of these principles, however, which I demonstrate later in chapters three and four.

My story begins in the early 1950s when early Croatian museologists began to theorize what exactly it meant to develop distinctly socialist museums and museological theory. It was during this time that Antun Bauer, the most important figure in Croatian museology, came to prominence. Bauer led the charge in developing a practical form of socialist museology. In practice, he aimed to shift museums' research and exhibition activities towards a popular audience while also democratizing the museum going experience through new pedagogical goals and interactive approaches. While certainly operating under the ideological weight of early socialist Yugoslav state, this early phase of Croatian museology was, I conclude, far more the

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undoubtedly a "Yugoslav spirit" in the development of Croatian museology, particularly so in the early postwar decades. Likewise, Croatian museologists were often in conversation with their fellow Yugoslav practitioners and theorists from other republics. Nonetheless, through the University of Zagreb, the Museum Documentation Center, and the key Croatian publications, *Muzeolgija* and *Informatica Museologica*, Croatia remained a powerful center for museological theory and practice that, more so than any other republic, laid the foundation for Yugoslav museology.

product of Bauer's desire to modernize and popularize museums in a broad sense than the result of a strict interpretation of Marxian or socialist principles.

The same cannot be said for the next significant era in Croatian museology between the early-1960s and late 1970s when Croatian museologists adopted a more critical approach to the nature of objects and exhibition practices in order to revolutionize the traditional museum space and better meet the needs of the contemporary socialist citizen. During this time, Antun Bauer remained a powerful voice in Croatian museology, while his close associate Bože Težak also emerged as a significant force in Croatian museology, with whom he co-founded the postgraduate museology program at the University of Zagreb. Both figures were increasingly influenced by the works of early Soviet museologist Teodor Schmidt and Czechoslovak museologist Zbyněk Stránský, leading to a far more explicit attempt to develop distinctly socialist practices revolving around the role of original objects, the development of "thematic whole" exhibitions, and engagement with contemporary (i.e., 20th century) history. This period also reflects Croatia's "peak" in terms of the practical implementation of revolutionary principles with the founding of numerous Native Place Museums (*Zavičajni muzeji*) that embodied this era of socialist museology.

Finally, I conclude my analysis by looking at museological developments during the 1980s. Two prominent voices define this period, Tomislav Šola and Ivo Maroević, who attempted to update the socialist principles of the previous decades by integrating them into modern museological trends from Western Europe, namely the broader practice of preserving and exhibiting culture beyond the physical confines of museum spaces, heritology. In terms of critical theory and international engagement, this era reflects Croatia's museological zenith as Šola and Maroević conceptualized a powerful merging of socialist practice and thought with the most modern trends in Western museology. At the same time, however, the broader body of Croatian museological literature makes it clear that this was also a period of institutional stagnation as the innovative concepts espoused by Šola and Maroević rarely made it into the actual museum spaces. In many ways, therefore, this era of Croatian museology reflects the condition of the socialist Yugoslav state as a whole: a vibrant period in terms of forward-looking attempts to reform the socialist inspired principles of the 1960s and 1970s countered by gross institutional stagnation in terms of the day to day running of museums.

2.1 Modernization and Socialization

By the end of the Second World War, Croatian museums were in disarray. During the war years, the majority of museums were neglected while the immediate postwar years were defined by chronic shortages of funding and trained staff and a lack of public enthusiasm. Not surprisingly, museums were low-priority during the late 1940s as major infrastructural reconstruction and rapid industrialization took precedent. By the early 1950s, however, conditions began to improve, and the first wave of modernization and professionalization began. Due to Yugoslavia's unique position in the Cold War following the 1948 Tito-Stalin split, Croatian museum professionals were able to draw from Western European and American models on the one hand, and Eastern Bloc models on the other. Much of the development during the 1950s was of a pragmatic nature geared towards addressing basic professional concerns in order to modernize Croatian museums in line with well-established museums in Western Europe and the United States. For the most part, these concerns were rather mundane—new systems to categorize and organize museum materials, collection and preservation efforts, hiring and training staff, and so forth—and therefore will not be discussed in detail here. In the process of addressing these concerns and adjusting to the realities of a new socialist state, however, two key developments occurred that would set the stage for the a more robust theorization of socialist museology: the development of museology as an independent academic discipline at the University of Zagreb under the tutelage of Antun Bauer and Bože Težak; and a fundamental re-imagining of museums as socio-educational agents to transform everyday people into cultured, literate, and most importantly, *socialist* citizens.

2.1.1 Modernization and Professionalization in International Museum Practice

The early development of museum theory and practice in Croatia combined Western European and American practices with certain aspects of Soviet museology. In Western Europe and the USA, major changes in museum practice and theory took place between the late-19th century and the beginning of the Second World War. Described as the "first museum revolution" by various practitioners and scholars, the exact nature and timing of this "revolution" remains opaque. As Ivo Babić claims, this revolution took place primarily between 1880 and 1920 "when a similarity between practical problems that almost all museums share was recognized." These concerns were primarily about practical issues but contained a small amount of "theoretical and critical background" that formed the groundwork for museology as an academic discipline.[3] Likewise, Peter van Mensch defines the first museum revolution by the "professionalization trend" of the late 19th and early 20th century in which "the museum modernization movement brought about many activities that contributed to the shaping of a shared [museum] paradigm" so that museology "gradually became recognized as a field of interest with its own identity."[4] For Antun Bauer, however, this first revolution came later and was grounded in a seminal event, the publication of the first international museum studies journal *Musées* in Paris in 1931. Throughout the 1930s, an intensive development of museum practice occurred in the "cultured and advanced states of Europe" such as France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, when each of these states developed a supervisory office for museum practice that functioned "as a professional forum for organizing the work of museums, the founding of new museums, and the creation of an organized network of museum institutions." Yet the most important development during this period—what made it truly "revolutionary"—was the reorientation of museums towards the public: "The first step of European museums' contribution to the realization of the endeavor for the modernization of museums [was] not just opening up to the public but rather *reorienting towards the public*," as exemplified by the *Landesmuseum* in Bonn in 1935 when it granted public access to its collections and began to develop thematic exhibition concepts that would be intelligible to the general public. Ultimately, Bauer concludes that this was the exception to the rule and the main conflict between the museums, as scientific research centers, and the general public, as intellectually curious but effectively ostracized, continued well into the 1950s.[5]

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[3] See Darko Babić, "Experiences and (hidden) Values of Ecomuseums," *Etnološka Istraživanja,* No. 14 (2009): 238.
[4] See Peter van Mensch, "Towards a Methodology of Museology" (PhD diss., University of Zagreb, 1992), 6.

In sum, what defined the progress in Western European and American museums was the degree of professionalization centered on the development of a shared set of concerns and practical solutions to museum practice. While laying the foundation for a more theoretical approach to museum practice—what would later be referred to as *museology* as opposed to *museography*—the "first revolution" was primarily a "stage of unification and synthetization" that contributed to an increasingly international perspective among European and American museum professionals.[6] The social reorientation to Bauer refers to during the interwar period was far too limited in scope to constitute a genuine paradigm shift, although it did became a fundamental aspect of Croatian museum theory and practice in the 1950s under Bauer's direction at the University of Zagreb. In fact, this development in Croatian museums paralleled an international trend in the 1950s and early 1960s, although the main thrust of reorienting museums towards the public in Western Europe came only after the social upheavals of the 1968 student movements. In this sense, Croatia, along with many Central and Eastern European socialist states, was ahead of the game. While a push towards making museums more accessible and agents of public education existed in Western Europe and America, it paled in comparison to developments under communist regimes where museums became centralized educational institutions in coordination with primary schools and industrial factories, the former constituting the majority of museum visitors.[7]

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[5] See Antun Bauer, "Muzejska pedagogija" [Museum Pedagogy], *Muzeologija*, no. 17 (1975): 101.
[6] See Van Mensch, "Towards A Methodology," 5.

The other major pole of museum theory and practice from which Croatian museologists drew inspiration was the Soviet Union and its bloc states during the interwar and immediate postwar period. Unlike in Western Europe and America, Soviet museology was forthright in its commitment to building a socialist society by means of adopting Marxist historical materialism as the main mode of processing and presenting material culture. As such, it emphasized education and propaganda geared towards the working class, particularly the youth, while rejecting some of the fundamental tenets of "bourgeois" science such as objectivity, political neutrality, and historical positivism. Much like other aspects of culture in the early Soviet period, museums underwent a number of significant transformations subject to the whim of both

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[7] As Duncan Cameron concluded in 1970, American museums had began an institutional shift towards the public during the 1950s but not in such a way to successfully meet the needs of the public: "In summary, the organization and administration of museums changed in two principle ways. First, the non-curatorial staff of the museum began to share with the curatorial staff the direction of the institution, although a harmonious balance of power was seldom achieved. Second, the administration concerned itself to an increasing degree with its public and the building of an audience. In my view this concern too often related tot he institution's emotional need for acceptance or to the competition for public funds, and related too rarely to the public's need for the museum as a unique learning environment." See Duncan Cameron, "Museums and the world of today," *ICOM News* 23, no. 2 (1970): 43.

Leninist and Stalinist extremes. In the early days of the revolution, the traditional bourgeois museum was "deromanovized" by removing or negatively representing certain relics and symbols of the aristocracy while simultaneously preserving others objects of national heritage deemed politically neutral.[8] This was followed by a brief period in which the proponents of the Russian avant-garde movement attacked museums of all forms as bourgeois holdovers in which the visitor, distracted by the beauty and grandeur of items and art on display, perpetuates consumerist mentalities inherent in museum visiting that ultimately distanced them from aesthetic qualities of socialist transformation and everyday life.

By the mid-1920s, however, the Soviet government had quelled this more extreme critique. Recognizing the propagandistic power of museums, the Soviet government developed a top-down, heavily centralized and bureaucratized form of modern museology through which museums transformed into "a particular kind of institution, with a focus on education and not inspiration, and a focus on words not objects."[9] According to Adam Jolles, the initial attempt by the Soviet government to harness the power of museums, namely art museums, produced the so-called "talking museum" characterized by "the invasion of didactic text into the traditionally austere interior space of the museum." Coming at the height of Stalin's Cultural Revolution, this museum model was based primarily on denunciatory discourse against the previously failed avant-garde aesthetics, western imperialism, and the religious establishment, going as far as to establish anti-religious museums like the Central Anti-Religious Museum in the Strassnoi Cathedral. More importantly in terms of museological legacy, however, the talking museum embodied a revolutionary turn in which accompanying text, designed to convey original objects

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[8] See Richard Stites, *Revolutionary Dreams: Utopian Vision and Experimental Life in the Russian Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 65.

[9] See Simina Badica, "Curating Communism: A Comparative History of Museological Practice in Postwar (1946-1958) and Post-Communist Romania" (PhD diss., Central European University, 2013).

"as a part of one organic, complex whole," took precedence over the original object in the exhibition space. This shift was rooted in the logic of democratizing the museum space "in favour of the proletariat" by creating easily intelligible exhibitions that could be read by the everyday Soviet citizen, much as a schoolchild would read a historical textbook.[10]

By the early 1950s, Soviet museology had developed into an expansive discipline that, if not exactly rich in nuance and creativity, produced a great deal of professional literature, guidelines, and institutional structures. As a part of 1950s-era Stalinism, this museology was strictly imposed on the Eastern European bloc states where Soviet-based museological textbooks were considered canon and provided strict guidance for institutional structure, exhibition topics, and display methods. Entirely new museums committed to documenting, preserving, and exhibiting the communist revolution and the building of socialism were founded, while preexisting museums were restructured to represent their subject matter within the larger Marxist teleology of class struggle and revolution. According to a 1955 Bulgarian professional guide, for instance, *all* museums, not just historical museums, should adopt a three-tiered structure consisting of historical sections from pre-modern to modern times, a section on the contemporary "building of socialism," and a section on natural history. Even more striking, this guide established criteria that any quality exhibition—whether historical or not—must demonstrate the ongoing class struggle, the role of the Communist Party in protecting the working class, the local history of the socialist revolutionary movement, and the benefits of the socialist way of life in comparison the capitalist world.[11] Likewise, in the 1957 Romanian *Bases of Soviet Museology*, museums were understood as primarily "propaganda means for communist ideas, the communist world view and thus for communist education," and as Badica points out, "Romanian museums were supposed to embrace and represent through exhibitions not only a totally new narrative on distant and recent history, art, folklore or science but also to achieve this by using the new museological forms provided by Soviet museology."[12] In addition to these structural and discursive guidelines, the implementation of Soviet museology in Eastern Europe in the 1950s also meant a shift towards emphasizing items with clear didactic value for presenting a triumphant Marxist historical narrative. Whether this came in the form of recreating prison cells in the Doftana Prison Museum where Romanian communists activists were jailed or tortured, or in the form of reprints of early Party documents and pamphlets for the Working Class Movement, it was clear which type of objects were appropriate for communist museums: those that would provide an indisputable moral lesson to the viewer of the historical march towards socialism, the antagonism and aggression of the bourgeoisie, and the role of the Party in defeating fascism and establishing social justice.[13]

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[10] See Adam Jolles, "Stalin's Talking Museums," *Oxford Art Journal* 28, No. 3 (2005): 439.

[11] See Gabriela Petkova-Campbell, "Communism and Museums in Bulgaria," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 15, no. 5 (2009): 403.

For early Croatian museologists such as Antun Bauer, the appeal of the Soviet model was low, not only because of its strict parameters, but also because of the Soviet-Yugoslav split in 1948 that made it politically unsafe to openly align with Soviet models. At the same time, however, the pressures of the early communist Yugoslav state to transform museums into truly socialist institutions meant that museum workers needed to navigate Western European and American museological models, as well as and Soviet ones. In fact, there was a clear parallel to the Soviet focus on democratizing and socializing museum spaces in Croatian museums—albeit without the heavy language found in Soviet guides—even if most of the literature cited in Croatian professional articles from the 1950s came from Western Europe and the United States. The 1950s developments in modernizing Croatian museums were therefore hybrid in nature as Croatian museologists attempted to harness the early democratizing elements of Western museology and combine it with the text-heavy didacticism of Soviet models for the goal of socialist transformation.

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[12] See Badica, Curating Communism, 150.

[13] See Scharnowski's study on GDR memorial and monumental aesthetics for an example of how Soviet Realism transformed the traditionally austere memorial aesthetic into a celebratory one that emphasized Soviet liberation and military victory in an easily digestible public form. Susanne Scharnowski, "Heroes and Victims: The Aesthetics and Ideology of Monuments and Memorials in the GDR," in *Memorialization in Germany since 1945*, ed. Niven B. and Paver C. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010). See Badica for her study on the Doftana Prison Museum. Badica, "Curating Communism"; see Petkova-Campbell for examples of how written documents were integrated into museum spaces along the lines of Soviet museological theory. Petkova-Campbell, "Communism and Museums."

The University of Zagreb proved central to these developments in Croatian museum practice and theory. It was here that Antun Bauer, along with Bože Težak in the 1960s, and Ivo Maroević and Tomislav Šola in the 1980s, developed one of the most thorough curricula in postgraduate studies for museology in Europe.[14] Although the formal degree program was not founded until 1966, as early as 1946 Antun Bauer had developed courses specific to museum practice under the umbrella of library, documentation, and information sciences that drew on both Western and Eastern inspirations. In Europe and the Americas, this was one of the earliest examples of recognizing and building museology as its own academic discipline independent from the subject-matter disciplines that informed museum collection, research, and publication activities. Certain exceptions predated this, of course, such as courses offered by Professor Paul J. Sachs at Harvard from 1922 onward, the museology chair established at the Masaryk University in Brno, Czechoslovakia in 1922, the honorary chair at the University of Halle, Germany in 1930, and courses offered at Argentinian universities in Buenos Aires (1923) and

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[14] Importantly, the term "museology" (*muzeologija*) is found throughout the entirety of the academic literature coming out of the University of Zagreb at a time when the concept museology as an academic discipline was still in its infancy and highly questioned throughout Western Europe and the United States. In Anglophone literature and universities, the title "museum studies" was preferred, as seen, for example, at the Department of Museum Studies at the University of Leicester, while "museology" only gained traction in France in the late 1960s.

Rio de Janeiro (1938). Likewise, the majority of central and East European communist states founded museology departments during the 1950s, such as the East Berlin Zentrale Fachstelle für Museen. As Lorente concludes, however, it was "the universities of Brno and Zagreb [that] became the two main cradles where the discipline of museology nurtured a thesaurus of terms universally agreed upon today," such as *museography* (exhibition practice), *museology* (museum theory), and *museality* (the meaning of a particular museum object).[15]

Another key development in Croatian towards museum professionalization was the founding of the professional journal *Muzeologija* in 1953 and the establishment of the Museum Documentation Center in Zagreb in 1955. Representing a key moment in the modernization of museum practice and the strengthening of museology as an academic discipline, these institutions were initiatives of Antun Bauer designed to address the lack of "systematized records" that hindered any attempt to categorize and streamline museum work within modern international developments. As the first of its type in Yugoslavia, *Muzeologija* was designed to establish a body of professional and scholarly literature in lieu of a single professional manual. While other professional journals were later established such as *Informatica Museologica* (1973) and *Muzejski Vijesnik* (1978), *Muzeolgija* remained the most prominent professional journal throughout the socialist period, providing both practical guides to museum work and updates on museum developments throughout Europe, as well as scholarly studies aimed at establishing a shared theoretical foundation for museum work. Likewise, the Museum Documentation Center functioned as the central hub for the museum profession in Croatia. Initially based upon Bauer's personal collection of museum literature and documentation, the center soon developed a professional library, archive of documents and collections, and a publication division that supplemented the academic activities at the University of Zagreb.

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[15] See Jesús-Pedro Lorente, "The Development of Museum Studies in Universities: from Technical Training to Critical Museology," *Museum Management and Curatorship* 27, no. 3 (2013): 239.

2.1.2 Socialization of the Museum Institution

In addition to these institutional structures established in the 1950s, Croatian museologists also began to theorize ways to revolutionize the traditional bourgeois museum into a truly socialist institution. At the most basic level, this meant democratizing museum spaces by increasing their accessibility by the general public. And secondly, this entailed a fundamental shift in the institutional goals of museums towards social engagement, cultural empowerment, and of course, a good deal of Party-line propaganda. These developments—democratizing and socializing the museum institution—formed the practical and theoretical foundation for museum work throughout the entirety of the socialist period.

In the earliest literature from *Muzeologija*, for example, one finds repeated references to the outdated and disconnected state of Croatian museums *vis-à-vis* the general public. It appears these concerns were valid. During the immediate postwar years, museums were failing to attract a working-class audience while their traditional association with the cultured elite remained. A 1953 estimate, for example, cites permanent Zagreb residents as accounting for only 15% of the total attendance in Zagreb's museums.[16] In fact, the majority of visitors (upwards of 60%) came from primary school children on school trips that were often chaotic, uninformative, and disorganized.[17] The main reason for this, according to the professional literature, was due to the culture surrounding museum practice that remained rooted in the pre-revolutionary elitism that had effectively ostracized the population. For instance, many of these museums were founded during the Habsburg period when museum practice was dominated by the politics and policies of an "isolated circle of officials" who sought to maintain museums as elite cultural institutions outside the reach of those who were not highly educated.[18] Likewise, during the interwar Kingdom of Yugoslavia, museums were so closely tied to universities and their corresponding fields of study that their activities were guided almost entirely by research. When these museums did exhibit objects, they often did so without accompanying text so that only the most educated of citizens would have the requisite knowledge to gain anything meaningful from the displays. Furthermore, museum professionals had so far failed create effective advertising and exhibition techniques that would appeal to the "wider public," as opposed to the traditional bourgeois "cultured minority."[19]

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[16] See Antun Bauer, "Muzejska propaganda i povremene muzejske izložbe" [Museum Advertising and Contemporary Museum Exhibitions], *Muzeologija*, no. 2 (1953): 71.

[17] See Zdenko Vojnović, "Prosvjetni zadaci muzeja" [Educational Data on Museums], *Muzeologija*, no. 1 (1953): 26.

In order to address this disconnect between museums and the public, Croatian museologists theorized a "socialist environment of a new type" that would produce national unity and instill socialist values.[20] Unlike previous models used by authoritarian regimes such as the Nazi era "degenerate art" exhibitions or the early Stalinist era "talking museums" that used denunciatory discourses in order to define the ideal self,[21] this new environment was envisioned to enable individuals to come to their own *positive* definition of the proper socialist Yugoslav citizen by virtue of learning about their own "cultural inheritance" and "natural values."[22] Practically speaking, this meant orienting museums towards the general public and creating institutional transparency. One example of this was a new advertising approach developed by Antun Bauer. According to him, it was no longer enough to just inform the public of the museums' main collections and working hours. Instead, advertisements needed to appeal to working class sensibilities and *excite* the viewer if they were to overcome the previous decades' alienation of the wider public. For instance, even the "most beautiful statue [in] the best lighting" would appear "lifeless" if the advertisement only showed it in its resting place in the museum. Instead, the advertisement should include a photo of the statue being moved by truck in order to show not only its grandeur and scale but also the human element of the impressive feat of transporting the object. In doing so, the advertisement would convey more than just the value of the object on its own cultural terms; by showing the human labor needed to move the object, the advertisement would tap into the symbolic value of working class labor. In turn, this imagery would effectively position museum going *within* the everyday, working class experience while breaking down the traditional cultural boundaries that surrounded museums.[23]

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[18] See Marcel Gorenc, "Kulturno-historijski muzeji i umjetničke galerije u Hrvatskoj" [Cultural-Historical Museums and Art Galleries in Croatia], *Muzeologija*, no. 1 (1953): 12

[19] See Bauer, "Muzejska propaganda," 70-72.

[20] See Vojnović, "Prosvjetni zadaci," 19.

[21] See Paul B. Jaskot, *The Nazi Perpetrator: Postwar German Art and the Politics of the Right* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012). See Jolles, "Stalin's Talking Museums."

[22] See Bauer, "Muzejska propaganda," 71.

Once the visitor was inside the museum, their experience also needed to reflect the popular nature of modern museums. According to Bauer once again, the best way to accomplish this was to make the visitor feel that they were "co-owners and beneficiaries of the cultural valuables and goods" on display.[24] This experience of ownership would instill proper national and socialist values *naturally* by virtue of the visitor becoming familiar with their own cultural history that reflected the long historical drive towards socialist Yugoslavism. In order to accomplish this, museums needed to be more transparent in their workings and allow the average citizen a glimpse into their practices. For this, Bauer looked to a model already established in

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[23] Ibid., 74

[24] See Antun Bauer, "Neki problemi muzejske arhitekture" [Some Problems of Museum Architecture], *Muzeologija,* no. 03, 140.

Paris by museums such as the *Musee de l'Homme* and the *Musee du monuments Francais*, the so-called "periodical exhibitions." These exhibitions were akin to an entry hallway where the visitor could get a glimpse into the most recent workings of the museum, be that newly purchased items or texts that explained the decision-making process for various museum activities.[25] This was intended to provide the public with a "concrete picture of museum work," effectively demystifying the professional work of museums as reserved for the educated elite and therefore outside the realm of the general public. The implication of this, made explicit in later writings, was that in becoming more transparent and focusing more on the visitor, Croatian museums were, in fact, becoming more *modern.* Therefore, by providing this glimpse into museum work to the everyday visitor, these exhibitions would prove "that the museum in its internal life immediately keeps up with the times, that it isn't stuck in the past,' but rather is a domain in which the public can encounter the current issues" in museum practice.[26]

Finally, Bauer also conceptualized a number of spatial practices rooted in egalitarian logic that focused on the visitor experience. Recognizing that most museums were housed in inherited buildings that were not originally designed as museums, Bauer developed some foundational principles to ensure that the value and meaning of the collections would be conveyed to the visitor instead of being lost in translation. In general, this meant redesigning the layout of museums to serve not only the staff but also the city residents who had generally been left out of consideration in these designs.[27] As it stood, most museums lacked any sort of lobby space for visitors to meet and discuss their impressions which limited the ability of visitors to engage in critical conversation with their fellow citizens[28] As such, the average museum experience was often chaotic, overwhelming, and lacking clear direction, leaving the visitor either confused or dissatisfied. Similarly, modern museums needed to provide entry halls in which the visitor could take a moment to collect their thoughts and "exhale" after coming in from the busy streets, instead of immediately "falling into a museum collection" upon entering. This entry hall would then lead into the different exhibitions and serve as a "transitory space" between exhibitions and other rooms geared towards the public such as the library, a reading room, or lecture spaces. Developing this space, according to Bauer, was necessary for creating truly publicly oriented institutions since "museum life does not unfold only in the exhibition halls" but rather in the entirety of the visitor experience.[29]

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[25] See Bauer, "Muzejska propaganda," 101.
[26] Ibid., 104.
[27] See Bauer, "Neki problemi," 135.
[28] Ibid., 141.

In addition to these spatial practices, new ideas about the educational role of museums were being developed at the time. This educational role was not limited to simply educating the masses about their cultural inheritance; it was also geared towards altering the individual's core culture and values in order produce "conscious citizens of a single social whole." In this sense, museums needed to function as "social institutions equally useful for the community as churches or libraries," as opposed to institutions that simply housed cultural valuables and rarities limited to the enjoyment of the educated class. This in turn required reorganizing museum education in order to establish closer ties to both primary and adult public education, assert a more direct role for museums in the cultural politics of society, and develop a modern professional network of museum theory and practice.[30]

As previously mentioned, while museums statistically had great numbers with primary education that accounted for 50-60% of their total attendance, the actual visits were often chaotic and uninformative as the teachers lacked knowledge about the objects and topics on display, while the pupils, in numbers far too large for the small museum space, more or less ran amok. One solution suggested by the director of the Museum of Arts and Crafts in Zagreb, Zdenko Vojnović, was to embrace non-traditional methods, such as thematic lectures, public readings of literature on the exhibition topic, live performances, and public access to collections. Unlike the traditional method of displaying objects on their own terms with little to no accompanying text, a practice that "for a long time was lacking as an attraction, as an interesting didactic and educational structure,"[31] these workshops would transform the passive and uninteresting learning experience into something active and multi-faceted.[32] Similar principles applied to the modern, working class citizen who was uninterested in exhibitions that required "too much studying" and instead desired "attractive helping resources" to accompany exhibitions. None of this would work, however, without developing specialized museum workers who were trained in both the scientific elements of museum work as well as education. These so-called "pedagogues" would function as intermediaries between the museum professionals and their research and processing roles and the general public that consumed this knowledge.[33]

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[29] Ibid., 168.

[30] See Vojnović, "Prosvjetni zadaci muzeja," 19-20.

Lastly, the museum director Vojnović insisted that museums take on a more direct socio-political role and engage directly with themes of cultural and political significance that would not only garner interest but also serve to reinforce proper socialist Yugoslav values. As centers of public education, museums were key intermediaries between the state and the population that could help shape public discourse and perception about contemporary events. Given the political moment of the early 1950s, Vojnović unsurprisingly emphasized themes "that affirm the resistance of our peoples through the centuries" and the South Slavs' historical march towards socialism. At the same time, however, Vojnović made clear that museum exhibitions must avoid becoming unscientific instruments for propaganda and that museum workers must resist any attempt to "vulgarize" the past for the sake of reinforcing the politics and values of the present. For instance, he criticized an art exhibition that, instead of basing its work on historical and art-historical practice, exhibited feudal-era portraits with accompanying texts that depicted the figures as nothing more than oppressive and "bloodthirsty" social elites.[34]

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[31] Ibid., 26.
[32] Ibid., 29.
[33] Ibid., 27.

In fact, the degree to which socialist ideology actually inspired these reforms is questionable as both Bauer and Vojnović were already established museum professionals before the outbreak of the Second World War and were not known for their socialist activism or agitation in the interwar period. Regardless of their ideological roots, however, the egalitarian ideas presented here clearly fit within the imperatives of the socialist state to spread official culture by means of educating a largely rural and uneducated population. Furthermore, these principles of museum education developed in Zagreb at the time—to remake museums in institutions of the public that helped to negotiate the current political and cultural moment—were early precursors to international trends in museum practice during the 1970s that began to take a more direct role in the community by engaging with contemporary concerns.

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By the end of the 1950s, Croatian museum theorists such as Antun Bauer had laid the practical and theoretical foundations for museology as independent discipline dedicated to common problems and approaches in museum practice. The full "emancipation" of museology came in the following decades, as outlined in the following section, but not without prior precedent. In similar fashion, these early museum theorists addressed the problem of how to transform the traditional bourgeois museum into a genuinely socialist institution by rethinking foundational practices in order to engage with their new target audiences, the urban working class and the youth. This shift towards socially-rooted museum practices would be more fully realized in the coming decades as museology gained increased institutional support and recognition as an academic science.

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[34] Ibid., 32.

Having the ability to draw on both Western and Eastern sources, Croatian museologists were able to theorize socialist museology without the heavy handed dogmatism and institutional authoritarianism associated with other Eastern-bloc states. In fact, the professional literature from the 1950s heavily favored Western sources on museum practice but did so in such a way as to fuse Western democratization practices with distinctly Yugoslav socialist thinking. In the following decades, this rapidly balanced out as the literature coming out of Eastern Europe, as well as internal Yugoslav literature, became increasingly critical and nuanced in nature. Thus, in the realm of Croatian museology, the 1950s represented the time in which the hybrid nature of Croatian museum practice solidified.

2.2 Contemporary History and Object-Based Displays

The next major phase in the development of Croatian museology came in the early-1960s and lasted through the late-1970s. During these decades, a major transformation in international museology took place, marked by the "second museum revolution" and the advent of French New Museology (*nouvelle muséologie*), both of which happened at least partly in response to the social crisis of 1968. Unlike museum practice in Central and Eastern European socialist states, Western European museology in the early 1960s had yet to develop a clear social orientation towards the general public. Despite some attempts to increase public education and access, Western museums had largely maintained their "traditional role in the conservation of cultural property" and subject-matter discipline research while failing to reach their "principal targets," the youth.[35] Likewise, the continued emphasis on traditional objects of grandeur—"artefacts and other documents which perhaps no more than 10 per cent, the wealthiest and best educated, were able to use and live with"—had effectively silenced the experiences and interests of the everyday person.[36] From 1968 onward, then, western museology embraced a much more critical turn in its theorization and application of museum practice that fundamentally shifted its outlook towards the general public, democratization, cultural action and empowerment, and the maintenance of a diversity of heritage outside the main paradigms of national history.

At the beginning of the 1960s, therefore, Croatian museology was markedly more advanced than Western museology in terms of its emphasis on social change, education, outreach, and cultural empowerment. Given its socialist underpinnings, it is easy to see why: the necessary transformation of the traditionally national and bourgeois museum entailed an institutional *socialization* geared towards the revolutionary primacy of the proletariat. Therefore, the post-1968 ideal explored in Western European museology—a new social role for museums based on "education and cultural action" to serve *all* of mankind in an increasingly educated and politically active society[37]—was well established in Croatian museum theory and institutional structure by the early 1950s.

2.2.1 Emancipation of Croatian Museology

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[35] See *The Museum and the Modern World: The Papers from the Tenth General Conference of ICOM* (Paris: International Council of Museums, 1975), 86.

[36] Ibid., 66.

[37] See Van Mensch, "Towards A Methodology," 7.

Entering the 1960s, the conversation in the professional literature began to shift away from the pragmatic concerns about modernization towards more theoretical considerations about the nature of museum practice and material objects. A key shift in towards theorization came in parallel with an increased understanding of museology as its own academic discipline, as opposed to a looser and ill-defined aggregation of various constituent fields like history, ethnography, archeology, and so forth. According to Peter van Mensch, the history of museology in general is one of a gradual "emancipation process" where museology as a discipline over time separated itself from the subject-matter disciplines that are represented in museum spaces and museum research.[38] While the emancipation process started as early as the late 19th century, van Mensch argues that it was the modernization and theoretical stages of the 20th century that effectively solidified museology as an independent discipline. At the heart of this emancipation process was a focus on public education and outreach. As opposed to previous decades when museums essentially functioned as research centers for subject-matter specialists and restricted their intended audience to the most educated segments of society, the development of museology as its own discipline allowed for public education and engagement to become the new primary focus of museum practice.

As outlined in the previous section, this shift towards public education happened relatively early in Eastern and Central Europe during the first decades of communist rule as Eastern European museological circles determined that museum practice needed to be guided by universal museological principles regardless of their subject-matter basis. Even if the practical aim of this process was to gain ideological control over museums, these theoretical considerations nonetheless envisioned a number of essential features of modern museology, namely public accessibility, education, outreach, and engagement. Similarly, the social considerations outlined previously in Croatian museology clearly related to the propaganda interests of the new socialist state but nevertheless laid the foundation for the final "emancipation" of museology in Croatia.

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[38] Ibid., 4.

Arguably, the key moment in this emancipation came in 1966 when Antun Bauer and Bože Težak founded the postgraduate studies program in museology at the University of Zagreb, thus giving museology gained institutional recognition as an independent discipline. In particular, the program aimed to expand beyond traditional *museography* (exhibition practice) and consider more theoretical questions about the nature of museology and modern museums, specifically when it came to the role of subject-matter disciplines in the museum profession, the socio-educational role of museums, and the value and role of original objects. For instance, in his inaugural lecture, Težak defined museology as an "independent discipline [that] treats the conceptualization, organization, and functions, as well as the social role and positions" of museums in society. While there were still a number of museum professionals in Croatia "constrained by the narrow scope of their field and science," the program aimed to develop a new generation of museum specialists trained in both the practical and theoretical aspects of modern museology. To be clear, this did not mean abandoning subject-matter disciplines in museum spaces. Rather, Težak considered subject-matter specialization and "subject-based knowledge" as one of four categories that comprised modern museology, alongside the theorization of museum practice, the study of institutional conditions that determine museum practices, and the development of museums' social and scientific roles.[39]

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[39] See Bože Težak, "Uvodne misli prof. Bože Težaka održane kao uvod u nastupno predavanje za postdiplomski studij muzeologije na Sveučilištu Zagrebu 13. XII 1966" [Introductory Note by Professor Bože Težak Held as an Introduction to the Inaugural Lecture for the Postgraduate Study of Museology at the University of Zagreb, 12 December 1966], *Muzeologija*, no. 06 (1967): 3-5.

Regarding the museum space itself, the emancipation process required that modern museums reevaluate their collecting and processing practices and actively embrace their socio-educational role. Here, the idea of "valorization" was particularly important. When collecting objects, what criteria should museums follow? How should museum workers determine the value of an object for collection, and how should the object itself be understood? For Antun Bauer, traditional collecting practices had misunderstood the value of objects by misplacing value on rarity and grandeur, and by considering the inherent meaning of objects to be an expression of their creator and not the larger historical context from which they came. For instance, Bauer accused traditional museum workers of too often valorizing objects as "the work of creative power of genius and perfect superhuman beauty" that effectively misplaced the value of the object on the brilliance of its creator rather than illuminate the larger historical lessons embodied in the object. Bauer therefore argued that objects instead must be treated "as precious historical documents" whose value lay in their ability to convey historical processes that relate to the thematic focus of the museum. In doing so, museums would increase their capacity to educate the visitor by presenting interpretations of objects that were accessible to the everyday visitor.[40]

Another aspect of emancipated museology entailed removing the shackles of an individual subject discipline, say archeology or history, and embracing interdisciplinary practices that allowed for a thematic approach to history. For instance, instead of a history museum being limited to written documentation and material culture alone, it should also employ archaeological and ethnographic objects. In doing so, the history museum would move beyond the traditional focus on top-down political history and instead focus its preservation efforts on non-traditional objects that were better suited to demonstrate the history of everyday people. According to a 1975 report from the Croatian History Museum, this shift was quite necessary. Due to its traditional subject-discipline approach, the majority of the museum's collection pertained to 18th and 19th century bourgeois life and the political efforts of Croatian national figures since these items were the most recognizable by historical methodology. Meanwhile, the feudal era was grossly underrepresented. The few objects the museum did contain were collected mostly by chance and without any systematic approach. In order to remedy this, a member of the museum, Ljelja Dobronić, proposed a dual approach to illuminate the feudal past: first, adopting the methodology of social history in order to access the history of peasants and the urban poor; and second, engaging with archaeologists and ethnographers in order to fill the historical gap between late antiquity and the premodern era.[41] While clearly containing an ideological tinge, this shift in collection efforts meant that the modern emancipated museum could more effectively reach a broader audience. Considering that a great deal of urban citizens in Croatia in the 1960s and 1970s were first generation urbanites, the history of peasant life in particular was seen as a key route to connecting with the masses.

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[40] See Antun Bauer, "Nastupno predavanje za postdiplomski studij muzeologije na Sveučilištu Zagrebu 13. XII 1966" [Inaugural Lecture for the Postgraduate Study of Museology at the University of Zagreb, 12 December 1966], *Muzeologija*, no. 06 (1967): 10.

In fulfilling the dual task of preserving the cultural heritage of the masses and functioning as a center for cultural education, the emancipated museum would function as a "forum" for the general public.[42] Unlike older conceptions of museums where subject disciplines essentially dictated what the visitor would take away from the exhibition, the modern emancipated museum would instead empower the visitor through cultural knowledge so that they could converse with their fellow visitors in the museum space, engage with what they learned, and exchange ideas.

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[41] See Lelja Dobronić, "Program povijesnog muzeja hrvatske za istraživanja materijalne kulture feudalizma" [Program of the Historical Museum of Croatia for Exhibiting the Material Culture of Feudalism], *Muzeologija*, no. 18 (1975): 128-131.

[42] See Bauer, "Nastupno predavanje," 15.

This meant that in addition to making their exhibitions more accessible to the everyday person, museums needed to provide the visitor with the adequate tools to participate in this type of experience, such as exhibition brochures, popular publications, and an effective museum pedagogy.

At the level of international museology, the process of emancipation in Croatia was in line with many communist countries where museology had been developed as an independent discipline since the 1950s. This fact is telling of the relationship between disciplinary emancipation and how museums were conceived to function in a communist society. The number one task for a socialist museum was public education, followed by the collection, preservation, and processing of material culture related to the everyday person. Since traditional bourgeois practices were associated with a subject-based approach to museum practice that prioritized the educated elite as their target audience, and because museological emancipation conversely prioritized an interdisciplinary approach in which public education and thematic exhibitions were the main avenues to engage with the wider public, it is quite logical that this process came earlier to socialist societies than the postwar democracies of Western Europe and the United States.

In fact, it was not until the 1968 protest movements that certain Western European countries developed an emancipated discipline of museology in response to the so-called "museum crisis" of the late 1960s. Accused for reinforcing institutional elitism, a lack of accessibility, indifference to the general public, and a passive role in social change, museum professionals were seen as part and parcel of the larger conservative order the 1968 movement condemned. In France, this led to the New Museology movement and the advent of the so-called ecomuseum that in turn became a central component of Western European museological theory from the early-1970s on. In many ways, New Museology mirrored the developments in Croatian museological theory from the 1950s and 1960s in that it recognized the traditional conservative nature of museum practice and attempted to revolutionize museum practice and theory to transform museums into genuinely social institutions. According to Darko Babić, this movement represented a "conscious, mental turning" premised upon "the need to transform the role of museums in the society and insisting upon their active role."[43] Therefore, much like the emancipation process in Croatia, the transformation of museological theory in Western Europe was not simply a matter of developing universal principles for museum practice but rather an attempt to change the core characteristics of museums from passive/conservative institutions to active/progressive agents of social change.

Not surprisingly, aspects of this emancipation process and New Museology were met with skepticism and even suspicion at the international level over their ideological underpinnings. As late as 1968, the ICOM General Conference "exclusively referred to the curator as [a] university-trained subject-matter specialist" despite two earlier conferences (1965; 1967) dedicated specifically to the topic of museum training in which museology as an emancipated discipline was widely discussed.[44] Following this, the 1974 General Conference passed resolutions that recognized "the concept of museology [had] evolved from an applied discipline towards an independent field in connection with the changing views of the social role of the museum institute." As Van Mensch points out, however, the "unanimity" of this recognition was soon replaced "by a confusing multitude of competing paradigms," ranging from absolute opposition to guarded support.[45]

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[43] See Babić, "Experiences and (hidden) Values," 238.
[44] See Peter van Mensch, "Museology as a Profession," in *ICOFOM Study Series* (2000), 20.
[45] See Van Mensch, "Towards A New Methodology," 8.

Representative of the opposition was Wilcomb E. Washburn from the Smithsonian Institute U.S. National Museum. According to Washburn, the development of museology stemmed from a deep insecurity among its proponents to gain the recognition and prestige of an established university "ology":

> The universities, which hoard the respectable "ologies," are constantly the envy of those in less respectable professions who want "in" by coining their own related medium of verbal exchange … The growing prestige gap between the university professional and the non-university professional has led to the coining of verbal currency to close the gap. Courses in "museology" and "library science" will surely, in the eyes of those who control them, raise the standards of their respective "professions.[46]

As for the new socio-educational goals of museology, Washburn remained unconvinced. These educational goals, lacking the training and structure of a university education, essentially substituted entertainment for education with the facade of quality learning. Museum education was "at best, it is a leisure-time activity, a way of spending the twenty-fifth hour painlessly and in a socially approved fashion." Even more problematic, Washburn saw a trend among museum directors to use educational departments and activities as convenient trends to impress museum donors that their museum was indeed doing something new and exciting.[47]

Even at the highest levels of ICOM in its International Committee for Museology (ICOFOM), certain members questioned the ideological underpinnings of the committee. The committee was charged with the threefold task of establishing museology as a scientific discipline, studying the development of the museums and the museum profession and their social role, and critically analyzing museological trends. Therefore, members of this committee (presumably) agreed with the notion that museology should be treated as an independent discipline. Nonetheless, there was among them "a considerable group … with doubts concerning content and ideological orientation of ICOFOM" due do the high number of museologists from Eastern European socialist states.[48] This suspicion embodied the larger divide in international museology between professionals from Western Europe and the United States and Eastern Europe, wherein a great deal of what defined modern museology in the post-68 Western context had already been theorized by Eastern European museologists. Nevertheless, the general trend from the late 1960s onward was a slow, often contentious, acceptance of museology as an emancipated, independent discipline with its own theoretical foundation and academic training. In particular, the democratization of museum spaces and the recognition of museums' socio-educational role became widely accepted in Western museums, even if the debate over the nature of museology as a discipline continued well into the 1980s.

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[46] See Wilcomb E. Washburn, "Grandmotherology and Museology," *Curator: The Museum Journal* 10, no. 1 (1967): 44.
[47] Ibid., 46-47.

2.2.2. Museum Pedagogy

During the 1960s and 1970s, Croatian museologists further crystallized the educational aims of museums, referred to throughout the professional literature as "museum pedagogy." Museum public education was understood as a vital aspect of modern museums' social outlook and seen as complimentary to the democratization process that had begun in the 1950s. Increasing museum education had the dual value of simultaneously reinforcing socialist values and reinforcing the legitimacy of the Yugoslav state but it would be overly simplistic to see the movement towards expanded museum education as little more than propaganda. The types of educational activities developed at this time ranged from after school youth activities and summer programs, to traveling exhibitions, public lectures, and museum guides. And the operating logic, as will be demonstrated, was far more geared towards increasing public access and promoting cultural empowerment than towards supporting a top-down state driven ideology.

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[48] See Van Mensch, "Towards A New Methodology," 18.

Much like the logic employed during the initial wave of modernization, expanding museum education and defining a theoretical foundation for museum pedagogy was seen by museum professionals as a necessary step in redefining the traditional bourgeois museum as a popular socialist institution. As more and more citizens became educated and urbanized, and therefore increased their consciousness as members of a socialist working class, museums could no longer limit themselves to traditional topics and methods. Rather, they needed their exhibitions to be relevant and meaningful to the modern socialist audience in Croatia, or as Antun Bauer puts it, the new "critical public."[49] Far too often, according to Bauer, "passive and rich" museums understood public access as little more than opening their doors to the public while leaving their exhibitions essentially incomprehensible. In a modern socialist society, therefore, museums could not be satisfied acting as mere "temples of arts" since "today's average citizen … is no longer satisfied with only an impression of the exposition, in which they must admire it and must ask what it means, what is its purpose and aim. Today's visitor wants an explanation and understanding about the values and significance of the exhibition—they want information"[50] This quote is particularly revealing of the underlying logic for museum pedagogy. Merely exposing the general public to material culture was not enough since this had a limited impact on those other than the highly educated. Instead, exposure to material culture needed to be complemented by an *explanation* of how the objects on display relate to larger historical processes and cultural phenomena, which would in turn empower the average citizen by granting them knowledge of their own social and cultural inheritance. Simply put, the modern museum audience was no longer satisfied with admiring objects as curiosities and visiting museums as sacred temples, and museum pedagogy therefore needed to develop methods for engaging with this new critical public.

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[49] See Bauer, "Muzejska pedogagija," 104.

[50] Ibid., 101.

To this end, museum professionals in Zagreb took direct action in 1968 to better understand the wants and needs of museum visitors. The Historical Museum of Croatia, for instance, conducted audience research by mailing questionnaires to "well-known visitors …, teachers and professors who visited it with their pupils and students and the rest of the citizens whose addresses were in the museum's records." These questionnaires asked the visitors a variety of questions about the museum's work throughout 1967, including their favorite exhibition and the quality of accompanying material, and more importantly, about what sorts of "new activities and services" the museum should offer to further engage the community, such as "organized visits to historical sites, dinners for friends and members of the [museum], and the like."[38] Meanwhile, Antun Bauer conducted research during the same year on visiting students and tourists in Zagreb based on three simple questions: "How many museums have you visited?"; "What is your general opinion about museums?"; and "What improvements would you suggest for museums?" The responses, according to Bauer, demonstrated "a surprisingly high interest" by students in particular when it came to the museums' objects and collections, the arrangement and labeling of exhibitions, and their constantly "squeaky floors." Thus, while seemingly mundane in nature, this research conducted by museum professionals in 1968 clearly reflects the broader trends in Croatian museology to gear their work towards the needs and desires of the everyday citizens in order to empower them.[39]

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[38] See Žarka Vujić and Helen Stubić, "Acknowledged and Empowered Visitors in Socialist Croatia: Diachronic Exploration," in *Visiting the Visitor: An Enquiry Into the Visitor Business in Museums*, ed. Ann Davis and Kerstin Smeds (Bielefed: Transcript Verlag, 2016), 193.

[39] Ibid., 194.

Museum pedagogy was thus defined as the methods and theories for effectively engaging with the general public by finding "the matching language for the museological modes of expression" designed to increase public engagement.[51] One key aspect of this pedagogy was to develop a new professional position, that of the museum pedagogue. This position would engage in a multiplicity of activities ranging from acting as a museum guide to developing public outreach and engagement programs. In doing so, the pedagogue would effectively bridge the gap between museological theory, the subject-matter content on display, and the museum:

> The museum pedagogue is the mediator between the museum and museum exhibitions and the museum-going public; the creator of pedagogical concepts of museum exhibitions in which the public will be persuaded in its own comprehensible language; the interpreter of thematic exhibitions with the mode and language that the public will understand and accept; the mediator and informant in the museum reading room and library.[52]

Two examples of museum pedagogue activities demonstrate that these new pedagogical theories were more than just rhetoric. The Historical Museum of Croatia, for instance, actively sent museum pedagogues to primary schools to promote upcoming exhibitions and their accompanying public activities. As part of a 1975 exhibition, "May Day Celebrations in Croatia," the museum sponsored a public program titled "May Day Celebrations through the Eyes and Imagination of the Youth" in which youth drew pictures about the topic. These pictures were then displayed in the museum entrance and entered into a contest where the winner's art would be published in an upcoming museum publication and receive a free trip to the neighboring Turopolje region.[53] The museum also developed a summer program in 1974, "Youth Friends of the Museum," where children and teenagers visited the Veliki Tabor and Golubovec castles and participated in museum workshops. For instance, participants took a hands-on approach with the museum staff to develop a temporary exhibition concerning medieval weapons, music, and dress. The participants were given direct access to a number of original objects from the museum and asked to produce some sort of reproduction like a drawing, painting, or model. These works were then displayed side by side with the original objects in the museum as part of a special event for both the parents of the youth and the larger public. According to the museum worker who put together these programs, these programs were very successful in lessening the disconnect between the museum and the public since the participants "stopped seeing the museum as only a glass shop-window filled with often incomprehensible objects, but instead have gained insight into the technique of museum work, and in that way have come to love the museums as their own institution."[54]

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[51] Ibid., 101.

[52] Ibid., 110.

[53] See Jelena Špoljarić, "Pedagoški i andragoški rad u Povijesnom muzeju Hrvatske" [Pedagogical and Adult Education Work in the Historical Museum of Croatia], *Muzeologija*, no. 17 (1975): 139-140.

Similarly, the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb developed a program of "pedagogical-didactic-propagandistic work" alongside the traditional scientific processing and exhibition work. One development from this work was a series of rotating lectures and exhibitions on non-European peoples to compliment the economic and cultural history of "our socialist community" that defined the standard educational goals of the museum. The program apparently had great success as it brought in over nine hundred students over the course of six months.[55] Likewise, the museum held a yearly workshop in conjunction with primary schools where the pupils produced their own art inspired by Yugoslav Croatian figures, such as the Baroque painter Ivan Gundulić, the 19th century national thinker Ivan Filipović, and the prominent Croatian Serb Partisan leader Rade Končar. According to the author of this workshop, Nada Majanović, this workshop achieved its goals as the initially frightened and quiet pupils soon became so comfortable at the museum that they treated it as they would their own home and actively asked questions about the content they were producing.[56] Lastly, the Ethnographic Museum developed a traveling exhibition and workshop program that would bring temporary exhibitions to more remote schools and communities and directly involve them in the exhibition process. The first of these exhibitions, “Preserving the Tradition of Our Women,” exhibited the process of created manufactured linens in the pre-modern putting out system, “from the processing of raw materials, through weaving, to the production of finished product-clothing goods, sewing and ornamentation.”[57] As for the workshop component, students were invited to see original textiles up close and then reproduce these designs on paper, which were then displayed in the traveling exhibition. All of this was documented with pictures and film and sent to the local schools and broadcasted on local television and radio.

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[54] Ibid., 142.

[55] See Nada Majanović, "Iskustva i program suradnje Etnografska muzeja i škola u širjenju likovne kulture" [Experiences and Program Connecting the Ethnographic Museum and Schools in the Realm of Fine Art], *Muzeologija*, no. 17, 161.

2.2.3. Contemporary History and Object-Based Displays

In addition to the emancipation process and developments in museum pedagogy, Croatian museum theory in the 1960s and 1970s established two key principles for museum exhibitions: an emphasis on contemporary history and the concept of object-based display. Emphasizing contemporary history entailed museum professionals not only embracing “the present as a museological theme for the future” that needed to be collected, researched, and displayed,[58] but also using the contemporary socialist Yugoslav state as a thematic framework for all of South Slavic history such that the present state would represent the pinnacle of the South Slavs’ historical evolution. As for display and exhibition methods, museologists adopted an object-based display method to remedy previously stagnant and inaccessible exhibitions. In object-based displays, traditional topics were relegated to a secondary position while the nature of museums objects was reevaluated so that the rarity, grandeur, and even authenticity of the items was of less concern than their didactic value in explaining the evolution of human history. Museum practices, both theoretical and applied, therefore shifted dramatically towards the use of replicas, reprints, and audio-visual aesthetics while minimizing the role of original objects. In sum, contemporary history and object-based displays were attempts to actualize the socially-rooted logic of modern museum practice theorized in the previous decade, and in the process ultimately undermined the value of original objects themselves.

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[56] Ibid., 162.

[57] Ibid., 163.

[58] See Slobodan Pešić, “Sadašnjost kao muzeološka tema za budućnost” [The Present as a Museological Theme for the Future], *Muzeologija*, no. 17 (1975): 1-13.

In order to properly understand how contemporary history was conceptualized by museum professionals, one must understand its relation to Marxist thinking. Contemporary history was firmly rooted in the logic of Marxist historical materialism that emphasized “Marxist conclusions of historical phenomena,” meaning that contemporary history functioned both as a temporal category—the most recent history concerning socialist movements and revolution—and as a thematic framework for all of human history.[59] As a temporal category, it referred primarily to the 19th and 20th century workers’ movement, the First World War and the Interwar Period, the events during and after the Second World War, and the postwar experience of building and living in a socialist state. In a broader sense, contemporary history as a thematic category meant analyzing all material culture as evidence of humanity’s drive towards socialism. This applied to anything from archaeological work on ancient societies and ethnographic objects from peasant life to political histories of proto-socialist figures from the medieval and premodern era. Museum professionals therefore understood the function of contemporary history in museum work in primarily three ways: first, as a way to narrate the current socialist Yugoslav state and the contemporary "building of socialism" (*socialistička izgradnja*) as the final stage in the trajectory of South Slavic history; second, as a means to eternalize the Partisan resistance and socialist revolution for a new generation of Yugoslav youth, and to exhibit the progressive nature and legitimacy of the socialist Yugoslav project; and third, as a way to further connect with the general public by exhibiting events and phenomena that pertained to their daily lives, such as the development of modern urban life and changes in the rural landscape stemming from modern technological advances.

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[59] See Edib Hasaganić, “Istorijski muzeji i suvremeni svet” [Historical Museums and the Contemporary World], *Muzeologija*, no. 75 (1975): 18.

Within Yugoslav academia, as in other communist states, historical materialism became a guiding principle in the social sciences and humanities. In the Croatian context, this entailed a debate over "historical distance" and the writing of history. Those in favor of historical distance believed that history was first and foremost the study of the past, and as such was not required to connect the past to the present moment. Furthermore, historians needed proper distance of at least thirty to fifty years before they could properly analyze the past without contemporary bias. Writing about contemporary events was therefore a violation of this principle on both fronts.[60] Those on the other side of the debate, such as Slobodan Pešić, argued that these concerns were rooted in remnant bourgeois logic that was still pervasive throughout Yugoslavia. This "bourgeois historiography," according to Pešić, was deliberately developed by traditional elites in the pre-socialist context in order to silence the history of the workers' movement and other socialist developments. Expanding the content of contemporary history in museums, therefore, was understood as a way to cleanse museum practice of these latent conservative and nationalist elements by presenting the progressive reality of the present day.[61]

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[60] See Hasaganić, "Istorijski muzeji," 20.

By the mid-1970s, it appears that the debate had been settled and the conservative "crystallized attitudes of historiography" had been silenced.[62] To a degree, this was a political affair. As Pešić admitted, the study of contemporary history in socialist societies was rooted in certain political objectives of the state. Nonetheless, what the study of contemporary history had provided since its initial political inception was a way for museums to better fulfill their cultural-educational roles by meeting the social demands of the public and their interests in contemporary events and phenomena. Due to rapid industrialization, urban growth, and fundamental changes in the social realities and agricultural production of the rural countryside, the average Croatian citizen, "who [was] simultaneously the bearer of these changes," was greatly interested in the changes of the most recent decades.[63] To ignore this interest simply because of a conservative notion of historical distance would be to ignore the socio-educational needs of those to whom museums rightfully belonged.

This shift towards contemporary history had strong implications for the types of objects displayed, the methods of display, and the museological principles guiding museum exhibitions. For one, collecting, preserving, and displaying the most recent past meant collecting new types of objects that museums had either traditionally ignored, or that were so new that museums had sparse time to collect them previously. Objects like films and audio recordings were entirely new to the majority of Croatian museums, while exhibitions dealing with contemporary events like recent battles or modern urban planning required the use of photographs, replicas, dioramas, and various paper documents, all of which had long been considered inauthentic and therefore not proper for the museum space.[64] Likewise, accessing subaltern voices of the peasantry and the working class throughout history often meant exhibitions on these topics often lacked original objects since the material culture of non-elites was never the focus of museum collecting practices in the past. Therefore, museum professionals had to re-conceptualize what constituted a museum object in order to include purely didactic and inauthentic objects like modern visual renditions, reprints of maps, documents, and writings, and an abundance of text-based legends.

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[61] See Pešić, "Sadašnjost kao muzeološka tema," 7.
[62] See Branka Milošević, "Prezentacija muzeja radničkog pokreta sa osvrtom na presentaciju socialističke izgradnje" [A Presentation of Museums of the Worker's Movement with Reference to the Presentation of the Building of Socialism], *Muzeologija,* no. 17 (1975): 73.
[63] Ibid., 5-8.

In order to deal with these challenges, a new type of display method was proposed: object-based displays. In the same 1967 inaugural lecture mentioned previously, Bauer outlined what this would look like by drawing on an earlier principle developed by the Soviet museologist Theodor Schmidt in the 1930s that stipulated a distinction between “subject” and “object” based display methods. Subject-based display methods treated any given material object as carrying its own inherent value based upon its rarity, grandeur, particularity, or artistic merit. This approach made no attempt to connect the object to any broader theme or subject matter and therefore functioned simply as a *celebration* of the object, rather than an *explanation* of the object, its context, or its historical meaning. Not surprisingly, Bauer saw this approach as a bourgeois holdover by “conservative museologists” who understood themselves as “treasurers” of rarities rather than agents of socio-cultural education.[65] Instead, Bauer argued that material culture needed to be exhibited according to object-based display methods where physical materials are understood as documents of the past and treated as a means by which the visitor is guided towards an understanding of a certain theme or phenomenon. As such, the actual authentic object carried little inherent meaning and generally needed to be accompanied by other materials, be they photographs or explanatory texts, that collectively function as a "complete whole" to convey a singular meaning. For instance, a piece of stone left alone offered little explanatory power but when exhibited with photographs of its various uses, or with physical examples of stone tools made from it, could provide a direct visual link to its place within the broader scope of human history.[66]

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[64] Pešić, “Sadašnjost kao muzeološka tema,” 8.
[65] See Bauer, “Nastupno predavanje,” 10.

This idea of object based museology remained a topic of discussion in the professional literature well into the 1970s, which suggests that this theoretical model was indeed making its way into the actual museum space. In a 1975 report on curating the worker's movement, Branka Milošević cited Bauer as she elaborated his ideas and suggested how to practically implement them. For example, in confirming his point that it was not enough to simply exhibit objects on their own terms, Milošević went as far as to warn her fellow curators about the dangerous "charm" of original objects and "the distant past" they represent. The danger Milošević references, it seems, was the tendency to revert to traditional subject-based exhibitions that fail to grasp the totality of human history, and instead focus on the isolated significance of individual items. She therefore concluded that all objects, recent or ancient, must be employed as "artifact[s] of the future" that illuminate the course of history to the present moment of Yugoslav socialism.[67]

At the practical level, this meant dealing with fundamentally different types of objects, often more mundane in nature, which brought forth a whole new set of issues about how to keep visitors engaged and entertained. Unlike more traditional museum exhibitions where items of great grandeur could keep the visitor entertained on their own terms, museums dealing with contemporary history needed to make objects such as party documents and political pamphlets appealing to the everyday citizen. According to Milošević, the tendency to use quantity over quality and to display an array of these items without any aesthetic criteria amounted to a "disease" of modern museums that ultimately undermined their socio-educational goals.[68] In order to address this, Milošević instructed curators to rely heavily on accompanying texts and legends that tied the items to the "thematic whole" of the exhibition.[69] The logic of Milošević's solution to this problem is particularly important as it highlights the theoretical grounding of socialist museology at the time. As the shift towards Marxist historical materialism dictated a teleological telling of all human history, museums ironically became less concerned with material authenticity, since what was actually important was the ways in which items, original or not, demonstrated the contemporary moment. Simply put, these new museological principles shifted the focus of historical museums away from the objects themselves and towards the stories they told.

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[66] Ibid., 11-12

[67] See Milošević, "Prezentacija muzeja radničkog pokreta," 81.

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In sum, the 1960s and 1970s were crucial decades for solidifying and expanding upon the initial modernization efforts of the 1950s. Attempts to modernize were intertwined with ideas of how to reform the bourgeois museum into a socialist institution, and as such created the impetus for more socially-rooted practices. The logical consequence of this was the emancipation of museology from the subject matter disciplines that had previously dominated museum practice. As museology became an independent discipline with universal pedagogical principles, so too did museum practice in Croatia effectively democratize, leading to much greater public outreach and engagement that lessened the traditional elitism of museum work. In this regard, Croatian museum theory and practice—and more generally, Yugoslav and Eastern European—predated the post-1968 New Museology movement in Western Europe and the United States. The "new orthodoxy of visitor sovereignty"[70] stemming from this revolution in museum theory and practice was, in fact, not so new, if one takes seriously the museological principles established in different Eastern European communist states. The extent to which the above museological principles developed in socialist Croatia should even be considered uniquely "communist" will be addressed in the following chapter.

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[68] Ibid., 75.
[69] Ibid., 75.

At the level of exhibition practice, the two most notable museological developments in Croatia during the 1960s and 1970s entailed employing contemporary history as a temporal category and thematic framework and implementing object-based display methods in museum displays. Both of these trends were rooted in the logic of Marxist historical materialism that posited all of human history to be guided by material-economic factors. For object-based displays, this took the form of emphasizing *meaning* over *authenticity* such that the original objects came second to accompanying materials such legends, replicas, artistic renditions, and so forth. While this meaning was inherently ideological and based upon the assumption of historical materialism as a demonstrable science, it should not be assumed that it was purely the result of state-led propaganda. Rather, the meaning assigned to objects and historical phenomena by museum professionals fits within a larger trend in Eastern European academia that resulted in often ideologically-driven but still historically-grounded empirical research. The same can be said of contemporary history. Insofar as contemporary history as a thematic category contained similar problems maintaining historical of objectivity, it also encouraged museum professionals to focus on new topics of Croatian history, such as the everyday life and experiences of the Croatian peasant, the Workers' Movement, and the building of socialism.

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[70] See Sharon Macdonald, "Expanding Museum Studies: An Introduction," in *A Companion to Museum Studies*, ed. Sharon Macdonald (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 8.

2.3 The Wake Up Call: Critics and Heretics

The last stage of Croatian museological development during the socialist Yugoslav period coincided with the gradual collapse of the state itself. While there was never a heavy state presence in matters of museum theory at the academic level, Croatian museological theory was still couched in socialist rhetoric from the early 1950s through the late 1970s. By the 1980s, however, museologists justified their work less and less by reference to serving a socialist state and society in particular.[71] Instead, their theory became rooted in international trends concerning heritage, non-traditional museum experiences, and the role of museums in assigning object meaning and negotiating complex identity.

Two key figures led this phase, Tomislav Šola and Ivo Maroević.[72] Both were concerned with expanding the field of museology to incorporate the broader notion of heritage as they considered the traditional commitment in museology to the physical museum space outdated. Much of this can be credited to their academic backgrounds in which heritage—in the broad sense—informed their thinking. Tomislav Šola, for instance, studied museology directly, first at the postgraduate program at the University of Zagreb, followed by the Sorbonne under Georges

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[71] According to Peter van Mensch, unlike museologists from Czechoslovakia, the DDR, and the Soviet Union in the 1980s, the main proponents of Croatian museology in the 1980s, Tomislav Šola and Ivo Maroević, never explicitly refer to Marxist-Leninism in their museological theory. See Van Mensch, "Towards A Methodology," 34.

[72] Both Šola and Maroević served as professors in the postgraduate museology program at the University of Zagreb, taking over the roles of first wave of Croatian museologists like Antun Bauer and Bože Težak. From 1981-1989, for instance, Šola acted as director of the Museum Documentation Center in Zagreb and editor of the museology journal, *Informatica Museologica*. Meanwhile, Maroević was instrumental in gaining formal recognition of museology as an independent academic discipline in 1983 and soon after established the Sub-Department of Museology and Heritage Management in 1984.

Henri Rivière, and finally competing his PhD at the University of Ljubljana. In particular, Šola's time with Rivière introduced him to French New Museology and the ecomuseum model that built off of Eastern European precedents and radically redefined the boundaries of museology in terms of spatiality and the intangibility of heritage. Ivo Maroević, on the other hand, first studied art history and conservation at the University of Zagreb before becoming a curator and conservationist at the Museum of Sisak in 1969. Through his museum work, Maroević was introduced to the main trends in museological theory and practice at the University of Zagreb by Antun Bauer. In particular, the works of Bože Težak, as well as the Czech museologist Zbyněk Stránský, influenced Maroević as he theorized museology as "a means for expressing a theoretical concept of the preservation and communication of human cultural values and natural heritage."[73]

2.3.1 Heritage, New Museology, and the Ecomuseum Model

In 1982, Tomislav Šola introduced the term "heritology" at the ICOFOM (International Committee for Museology of the International Council of Museums) symposium. Heavily influenced by developments in French New Museology and the *ecomusuem* model during the 1970s, Šola imagined heritology as a broad interdisciplinary approach to capturing, preserving, exhibiting, and empowering all aspects of human culture at the local level. If museology had determined "the field of theory and practice of the museum institution," then heritology, "no longer museum-centered," was an extension of museology that could "handle the overall problems concerning the protection and the treatment" of heritage as a whole.[74] As with earlier museological trends in Croatia, heritology was not primarily concerned with preserving physical objects for display but rather dealt with heritage as a mixture of tangible and intangible cultural expressions. To be certain, Šola understood the importance of preservation, as much of his later work concerns the integration of information sciences (librarian, archival, and computer sciences) with museology in order to better document the ever expanding collections of museums. But the central impulse of heritology concerned cultural empowerment for local communities by involving them in the preservation, management, and celebration of their past, present, and future experiences. In other words, heritology understood museums and physical objects as only one aspect of a larger "philosophical museology" that could move beyond the traditional confines of the museum institution.[75]

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[73] See Ivo Maroević, *Introduction to Museology: the European Approach* (Munich: Verlag Dr. Christian Muller-Straten, 1998), 10.

[74] See Tomislav Šola, "A Contribution to a Possible Definition of Museology" (presentation, ICOFOM Paris, France, 1982), accessed August 2, 2019, www.heritology.com.

According to Šola, most modern museums were still "fatally" attached to the museum object since, unlike most sciences, museology was from its inception "totally attached to the phenomenon of an institution.[76]" Heritology would therefore address this through a commitment to "total heritage" that expanded beyond solely physical material culture to include intangible heritage that belonged to the realm of ideas and shared values. Here, the influence of French New Museology and the ecomuseum seem particularly clear. Both of these phenomena are notoriously difficult to define, mostly because they reflect a reaction to traditional museology rather than form a coherent program for future museum practice. New Museology was the guiding philosophy of museum practice that emphasized empowering local communities by "reinforcing a sense of (cultural) identity" and directly involving them in the management, preservation, and celebration of their local heritage.[77] The ecomuseum, meanwhile, embodied a

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[75] Ibid.

[76] Ibid.

[77] See Van Mensch, "Towards a Methodology," 32.

(loose) guide to how this philosophy would look in practice when the museum collection, as the primary focus of the museum institution, was replaced by heritage, "which (in)directly includes a totality of heritage in a specific defined territory selected by a local people living there and assisted in this process by museologists."[78] According to Peter van Mensch,

> In new museology the museological objectives are geared towards community development [such that the] presentation and preservation of the heritage are considered within the context of social action and change. As the communities concerned usually suffer from a negative self image, it is necessary to provide positive imagining. Heritage is a resource to be considered and developed within the context of community improvements. The people of the community themselves have to take care of their own heritage … Characteristic is the view that the concept of museum is not confined to a building. The museum can be anywhere, and is anywhere and everywhere within a specified territory. For this museum concept the term ecomuseum has been coined.[79]

The ecomuseum model first developed in the early 1970s around the towns of Le Creusot and Montceau-les-Mines. These towns were quintessential postindustrial towns that had been ravaged by the closure of local factories that resulted in the loss of over 150,000 local jobs. In this context, the first ecomuseum, The Museum of Man and Industry, was theorized as a potential force for economic revival, but more importantly, to "help the local population rediscover meaning, their own identity, and open new development possibilities."[80] The museum content consisted of local history and features, experiences of everyday life in the region, and examples of industrial and artistic productions from the region meant to celebrate the region's rich industrial history. Furthermore, the museum explored a new spatial model of a "fragmented museum" where the local landscape, sites, and events were put into museum form *in situ* rather than being moved to the main museum building.[81] This development, according to Darko Babić, "enabled an important theoretical and practical breakthrough—from an exclusive focus on the museum building towards the wholeness of the territory the museum is covering." Furthermore, in defining the museum's collection as "any movable or unmovable object within the community's perimeter" the museum developed "a kind of cultural ownership, which has nothing to do with legal ownership."[82]

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[78] See Darko Babić, "Bridging the Boundaries between Museum and Heritage Studies," *Museum International*, no. 269-270 (2016), 23.

[79] See Van Mensch, "Towards a Methodology," 32.

[80] See Babić, "Experiences and (Hidden) Values," 238.

More generally, ecomuseums have developed under the loose banner of local commitment, empowerment, and identity. George Henri Rivière, a central player in the early conception of ecomuseums, defined them in 1980 by the following characteristics: having a mixture of professional and public management and involvement in collection, preservation, exhibition, and education activities; acting as a "mirror" of self-image of the local community, in which it "discovers its own image" and projects this image to the visiting public; expressing the position of man in nature and man's manipulation of his natural environment; detailing natural history from pre-history to present to visions of the future; and functioning as a "laboratory, conservation centre and school" to promote "awareness of [the local culture's] dignity and artistic manifestations" from all stratum of society.[83] Later definitions have emphasized a contractual relationship between museum and community in order to create "sustainable development" of local heritage, as well as commitment first and foremost to "user," that is, members of the local community who participate in its activities.[84] In addition to this, ecomuseums are defined by a rethinking of museum space and objects. According to Rivard, traditional museums were concerned with buildings, collections, experts, and a *passive* public, while ecomuseums address territory, heritage, memory, and the *active* local population.[85] In their commitment to heritage more broadly, ecomuseums thus replaced the sole commitment to *physical* collections with an evaluation and presentation of both tangible and intangible heritage.

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[81] Ibid., 239.

[82] Ibid., 239.

[83] Georges-Henri Riviere, as cited in Babić, "Experiences and (Hidden) Values," 244.

[84] Ibid., 246.

Šola therefore rooted his notion of heritology in the philosophical principles of New Museology and viewed the 1970s ecomuseum as the best model for how museums should function within the larger theory of heritology. While Šola would later rename his methodology "mnemosophy" to better reflect the integration of cybernetic technologies and information sciences into museology, the basic principle of heritage remained the same and has defined his museological theory to the present day. While it is tempting to view Šola's contribution to Croatian museology as a revolutionary integration of New Museology, his ideas actually fit within the trajectory of previous Croatian museum theorists like Antun Bauer and Bože Težak in that heritology aimed to reform the traditional museum into a dynamic and accessible social institution that could engage with, educate, and empower the general public. In much the same way that object-based displays were seen as a cure to the elitism of bourgeois museums, heritology and ecomuseums envisioned museum practices that moved beyond a stagnant commitment to items of grandeur and rarity, and instead demonstrated a point about Croatian traditions, history, and values. As such, heritology required "a museological programme [that] should not be based on the items we possess or want to possess, but on the ideas that we wish to express." Šola predicted accordingly that museums of the future would increasingly move away from using the physical object in favor of remakes or even holograms, since "there is only a formal difference between the perfect hologram and the object enclosed in a glass case set at a safe distance."[86]

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[85] Rene Rivard, as cited in Babić, "Experiences and (Hidden) Values," 246.

[86] See Tomislav Šola, "The Concept and Nature of Museology," *Museum International* 39, no. 1 (1987): 47.

It is worth noting that in much of his writing during the 1980s, Šola was speaking to an international audience just as much, if not more so, than to fellow Croatian museologists. His ideas on the role of objects and museum commitments to the lives of everyday people, therefore, seem somewhat redundant since these principles had been established in the previous decade among Croatia museologists. Yet Šola still considered these "reformed museums" in Croatia and abroad alike as falling short of the broader goals of heritology. Primarily concerned with the past and seeking to become "a memory of the society [in order] to influence the world and to instruct it," reformed museums still fell short of a full commitment to the past, present, and future of everyday life.[87] Likewise, while the Croatian Native Place Museum model (*Zavičajni muzej*; discussed in detail in chapter four) contained many of the features of ecomuseums, Šola and later Croatian museologists such as Darko Babić do not consider these institutions as true predecessors to the ecomuseum. Native place museums, for instance, were theorized as developing from the specific conditions of the local community they served, and outside of modernized collection and preservation techniques they did not conform to any specific model, much like the ecomuseum. They similarly emphasized local history and an interdisciplinary approach to capturing the total cultural legacy of the region, often times including sections on natural history, archeology, and ethnography alongside a more politicized version of history. And in line with the main trends in Croatian museology from the 1950s onward, native place museums engaged in public outreach, education, and interactive workshops. Therefore, the fact that native place museums receive little attention in Croatian museological theory, while the French ecomuseum model is extolled, is quite striking. Even Babić's 2009 study on the ecomuseum phenomenon, for instance, only mentions native place museums in passing as a parallel to the German *Heimatmuseum.*[88]

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[87] See Šola, "A Contribution," 8.

How do we explain this disconnect? Most likely it is a matter of execution rather than theory. While native place museums were theorized to include locals in the everyday management of museums, the extent to which they actually did this varies. In some cases, the local population was indeed central to the everyday running of their local museum, such as in Native Place Museums in Čazma and Virje where local retired pensioners were central in founding and running their institutions (see chapter four). In others, however, like the Museum of the Peasant Uprisings in Gornja Stubica, outside professionals from Zagreb were brought in to found and run the institution. Thus, Native Place Museums did not universally embrace local governance to the same extent that ecomuseums have.

Far more importantly, however, Native Place Museums were always subject to some level of politicization. Each museum, for instance, was required to have a department and exhibition space dedicated to the communist resistance in Second World War, popularly referred to as the People's Liberation Struggle (*Narodnooslobodilačka borba*). Unlike most other activities in these museums, those related to preserving and exhibiting the local history of the People's Liberation Struggle were massively politicized, functioning first and foremost to legitimize the communist party by demonstrating the ubiquitous nature of the wartime resistance throughout the entirety of Croatia. This aspect of Native Place Museums alone may explain why authors such as Šola and Babić give little attention to them as predecessors to the ecomuseum: they were simply too closely aligned with the Party to be considered truly popular, grass-roots institutions. Nonetheless, it would be imperceptive to ignore the clear parallels between Native

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[88] See Babić, "Experiences and (Hidden) Values," 240.

Place Museums and ecomuseums, or to deny that Native Place Museums predated several essential characteristics of ecomuseums, especially considering that they developed a full decade and a half before the earliest ecomuseum model.

2.3.2 Practice and Meaning: Musealia and Museality

In addition to Šola, Ivo Maroević played a key role in the final phase of Croatian museology during the socialist era. Much like Šola, Maroević was concerned with expanding museum practice towards a broader definition of heritage and heritage-related practices, and accordingly, was influenced by the French New Museology movement. Maroević's main contribution, however, was to clarify and solidify key terms in Croatian museum theory. And unlike Šola, Maroević relied heavily on Central European museum theory developed in communist Eastern Europe, namely the ideas of Zbyněk Stránský in Brno, Czechoslovakia, in addition to French museology.[89] In the process of clarifying the main terms of engagement for Croatian museology, therefore, Maroević pushed the field towards the more critical aspects of New Museology regarding the application of meaning and significance to museum objects.

As early as 1969, Croatian museologists were introduced to the ideas of Zbyněk Stránský at an international museology conference in Brno, and shortly after this, his general concepts and terms for museum practice and theory were published in the 1970 issue of *Muzeologija*. While Stránský contributed to various aspects of museology, ranging from definitions of the discipline to practical concerns, his concept of "museality" heavily influenced Maroević's work. Stránský's idea of museality concerned the inherent meaning or value of objects, and more precisely, the capacity for an object to convey the reality from which it came when relocated and displayed in the museum space. Museality, therefore, "is that aspect of reality which we can know only through a presentation of the relationship between man and reality."[90] Put simply, Stránský's concept of museality refers to the quality and capability of an object to represent its broader significance in the museum space. Conversely, Stránský refers to the actual museum object—as opposed to the object's quality or capacity— as "musealia," distinguishing the physical object from its inherent cultural and social meaning.

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[89] According to Babić, "Maroević's notion of museology focuses primarily on the 'museality' of heritage objects and environments," itself stemming from Central European museologists circles. Babić, 2009, 20.

In many ways, Maroević adopted Stránský's definition, referring to museality in 1987 as "a characteristic feature of an object which enables the object, separated from its real environment and placed in the musea environment, to become the document of that reality from which it is separated, i.e., to become the musealia."[91] Likewise, the goal of museology is to study the museality of objects, to contribute to scientific and cultural knowledge by means of transmission through the museum institution, and to identify and improve museum practices that enable these processes.[92] Expanding on these definitions, however, Maroević considered museality more so a matter of *information* than *value* or *meaning*.[93] The main power of this distinction is to recognize that meaning(s) attached to objects is not, in essence, inherent or singular, but rather a process of *recognizing* and *applying* one of a multiplicity of meanings that is most relevant to the needs of the contemporary society. In considering museality a matter of information, therefore, Maroević moved beyond the dogmatic aspects of earlier Marxist-Leninist historical materialism that assigned a singular and normative meaning to all material objects.

Maroević rationalized this difference in museality by explaining how identity (read: meaning) is formed for objects. Any given object is subject to a combination of time, space, and society, all of which factors are subject to change. Therefore, the meaning of objects is actually multiple and contingent, and the task of museums is to identify the most relevant meaning(s) for their audience and convey them through various forms of museum messaging:

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[90] See Maroević, *Introduction to Museology*, 134.
[91] See Ivo Maroević, "Identity as a Constituent Part of Museality," *ICOFOM Study Series*, no. 10 (1986).
[92] Ibid., 185.
[93] See Van Mensch, "Towards A Methodology," 44.

> Identities which we can find in museums, whether only potential according to the structure of the collective fund or expressed and defined by means of one of the forms or methods of museographical work, *are in practice never unambiguous or exclusive* [emphasis added]. They may be added to or combined, but each keeps its own characteristics. By the cumulation, a new quality is often created. For instance, a memorial museum of a certain important person gives evidence of the identity of that person, part of the identity of the time in which the person had lived and worked, elements for the identity of his philosophy, class, nation and space in which he acted. At the same time, such a museum takes part in creating and maintaining the cultural identity at all those levels which are readable from the interrelation of musealia in the exhibited and the available collective fund of the museum. Moreover, the identity created through the contextualisation of the movable museum cultural property is supplemented by an action of the narrower or wider environment in space, which can act as a wider framework of the museum's adventure, as preparation as well as continuation, as an addition to those insights of identity which have derived from the museum's organised programme.[94]

Considering that object meaning results from active process by museum workers to choose and combine meanings, Maroević recognized the potential for museums to be manipulated into little more than mouthpieces for the dominant social and/or political ideology. He therefore warned against "a certain idealogisation … contrary to the democratic substance of expression and perception of an object's characteristics and the creation of an identity of different forms."[95] And it was precisely this "idealogisation" of object meaning that many Croatian museum practitioners and theorists were increasingly critical of by the late 1980s, particularly when it came to collections and exhibitions on the Second World War.

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[94] See Maroević, "Identity," 186.
[95] Ibid., 187.

Just like with Šola’s notion of heritology, Maroević’s definitions of museality and musealia are the logical outgrowth of the object-based display model championed in the previous decades. This model sought to identify the inherent meaning of objects—particularly those relevant to a socialist society—and the most efficient way to convey this meaning (i.e., museum messaging) to the general population. As such, museum workers were less concerned with authenticity of original objects (i.e., replicas or print versions), instead focusing on exhibition themes and lessons. Unlike in Maroević’s idea of museality, however, object-based displays in practice tended to treat most material culture as testaments to the historical trajectory of Yugoslav socialism. Or in other words, the object-based displays of the 1960s and 1970s (and those well into the 1980s, for that matter) had a less nuanced understanding of object meaning that reflected Stránský’s earlier concept of museality. Maroević, therefore, represents the de-politicization of museum theory and practice in socialist Croatia, along with Šola and others who quite rapidly during the 1980s moved away from explicit references to Marxist-Leninist ideology, and increasingly aligned themselves with the trends of New Museology.

2.3.3 The Wakeup Call: Museums of the Past and Exhibiting Socialism

The last major trend in Croatian museology during the 1980s was a rather critical evaluation of actual museum practice versus the developments in museum theory outlined above. This critique was somewhat general in that it applied to all museums that fell behind the major trends of New Museology. Both Šola and Maroević, for instance, were critical of traditional museums, and even those reformed museums that sought to realign the social outlook of museums towards the general public. In general, their critiques centered around museums being stuck in the past, both in terms of modern practices, but also in terms of the subjects they tackled and their lack of foresight. According to Šola, many Croatian museums still operated on the "sad" premise that "biological death" must precede the musealization of an object or topic, amounting to a "necrophilia complex" that effectively limited museums' potential for positively effecting the present and future.[96] Likewise, Maroević criticized "museums of the past" as "conservative institutions" since they were primarily concerned with stopping and preserving time rather than engaging with the "wider social significance" of museum work regarding the preservation of heritage and cultural empowerment.[97]

Furthermore, museums were still far too concerned with the appearance of stoicism and dignity, much to the detriment of appealing to the everyday person. According to Šola, this continued obsession with dignity stemmed from the legacy of 19th century "gruff, aggressive capitalism, Jesuit seriousness, and icy Protestant temperance" that rejected creativity as "indecent" for museum practice, and insisted upon treating museums as simultaneously sacred and scientifically rational.[98] Šola even went so far as to recommend Disneyland as an effective model for heritage practices. Recognizing his own "heresy" among traditionalists, he argued that many of Disneyland's entertainments were legible, transparent, and "contained the balanced and appropriate dose of scientific foundations and entertainment that gained the precious attention" of the general public. Attractions such as Main Street and Tom Sawyer's Island, for instance, gave meaningful depictions of culture and everyday life in New Orleans and Native Americans, all the while emphasizing fun and entertainment.[99] These "general ambitions" about visitor experience and cultural education were therefore applicable to museum theory and practice as museums attempted to move away from a traditional notion of culture rooted in the "excessive seriousness" of "elite culture and logic."[100]

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[96] See Tomislav Šola, "Sadašnjost kao muzeološka tema za budućnost" [The Present as a Museological Theme for the Future], *Informatica Museologica* 13, no. 3-4 (1982): 58.

[97] See Ivo Maroević, "Muzeologija i muzej budućnosti" [Museology and Museum Futures], *Informatica Museologica* 18, no. 1-4 (1987): 52.

[98] See Tomislav Šola, "Disneyland kao prilog muzeološkom iskustvu" [Disneyland as a Contribution to Museological Experience], *Informatica Museologica* 13, no. 3-4 (1982): 33.

[99] Ibid., 35-36.

In particular, however, contemporary history exhibitions concerning the Workers' Movement, the People's Liberation Struggle, and the building of socialism were the target of intense critique within the Croatian museological circle by the end of the 1980s. This included anything from Native Place Museums' People's Liberation Struggle sections, to memorial museums, to the Revolutionary Museums discussed in detail in chapter 3. Suffice it here to say, these exhibitions were dedicated to preserving and exhibiting the revolutionary socialist tradition in all of Yugoslavia, with an emphasis on the local history of the revolution in various Croatian locales. Revolutionary Museums in particular originated as military history museums dedicated to the People's Liberation Struggle, but over time came to encompass two other major themes: the development of the working class movement and communist party, and the postwar "building of socialism" (*izgradnja socijalizma)*. In Croatia, there were six official Revolutionary Museums located in Zagreb, Rijeka, Split, Makarska, Pula, and Slavonski Brod.

In 1989, the Museum Documentation Center in Zagreb sponsored and published the findings of a republic-wide study on these sorts of exhibitions. While this study occasionally praised certain museums for their professionalism and innovations, the findings were resoundingly negative. In regard to the contents, concepts, and exhibitions of these museums, for example, the study concluded that far too many relied almost solely on either documents or weapons, creating tiresome exhibitions of "the entire arsenal." Likewise, the histories conveyed in these exhibitions were often biased and one-sided, focused far too much on suffering and destruction, and rarely attempted to answer the “why” or reconstruct the lives of various social classes.[101] The study also noted the problem of original items. Many of these museums, having adopted the object-based display method, relied almost exclusively on replicas, leading the author of the study to question if these exhibitions should not instead be considered archives.[102] There was also an issue of professional staffing. Out of the one hundred and fifty museums investigated during the same year, there were only fifty six specialists in modern history, and eight of those specialists also functioned as director of their institutions. Furthermore, most specialized talent was concentrated in certain institutions such that twenty seven of the fifty six specialists were located in only seven museums, leading to some museums having no specialists at all.[103]

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[100] Ibid., 43.

In addition to this, the 1989 issue of *Informatica Museologica* contained a number of articles questioning the present state of Revolutionary Museums and related exhibitions. In it, “critics point out that there are many of these museums, all under the control of the Communist Party, with exhibitions carried out under the control, both in terms of design and interpretation.” Likewise, many authors criticized exhibitions on contemporary history over “the presentation of a selective national history, the importance given to World War II and the socialist revolution in detriment to other historical periods.”[104] Đurđa Knežević, for instance, labeled the Museum of the Revolution of the Peoples of Croatia in Zagreb “outdated,” claiming it had “become uninteresting to young visitors” due to its excessive use of “two-dimensional material and copies" and "legends explaining the history in an abstract manner." Furthermore, the historical narrative presented was "characterized by numerous subjective presentations and omissions" meant to valorize the communist party at the cost of nuance and detail.[105]

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[101] See “Muzejske zbirke, muzejske izložbe i stalne izložbe sadržajno vezane uz Radnički pokret, NOB i poslijeratnu socijalističku izgradnju na teritoriju SR Hrvatske” [Museum Collections, Museum Exhibitions, and Permanent Exhibitions Thematically Connected to the Worker’s Movement, the NOB, and the Postwar Building of Socialism in the Territory of the Socialist Republic of Croatia], *Muzeologija*, No. 26, (1989): 13.

[102] Ibid., 137.

[103] Ibid., 14.

[104] See Lukic, “National Museums in Croatia,” 161.

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These critiques represent the disconnect between Croatian museological theory and everyday practice that had developed over the decades of socialist rule. In the early 1950s, the driving force behind both theory and practice was to modernize museums and increase their accessibility so that they could serve the new socialist society. As the New Museology movement gained momentum internationally in the 1970s, Croatian museum practice had already incorporated certain key elements such as public outreach, education, and accessibility, even if the more dynamic ecomuseum model quickly outpaced these developments. By the 1980s, however, the critical turn in international museology concerning museality and heritage had clearly influenced museum theory in the works of Šola and Maroević but apparently had not yet filtered down to everyday museum practice. In part, this was due to the communist party and various veteran associations having a good deal of control over museums and museum exhibitions pertaining to the Workers' Movement, the People's Liberation Struggle, and the postwar building of socialism. At the same time, however, other museums were simply outdated, understaffed, underfunded, or led by directors who rejected the more radical ideas of New Museology.

In the period leading up to the violent dissolution of Yugoslavia, Croatia was well prepared at the academic and theoretical level to remain a prominent voice in museology and has in fact remained so to the present day. In particular, Šola and Maroević, and more recently Darko

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[105] See Đurđa Knežević, "Budući posta muzeja revolucije naroda hrvatska" [The Future Exhibition of the Museum of the Revolution of the Peoples of Croatia], *Informatica museologica* 20, no. 1-2 (1989): 47.

Babić, have elaborated on New Museology, ecomuseums, and the incorporation of non-tangible heritage into museum theory and practice. On the ground, however, many of museums were left behind. The Croatian History Museum to this day, for instance, does not have a permanent exhibition space. Likewise, the closure or hasty appropriations of every Revolutionary Museum into local history museums has led to the majority of these collections to be ignored, with only the occasional exhibition including objects related to the Second World War. Therefore, the disconnect between theory and practice that was so acute by the late 1980s remains a palpable trend to this day.

2.4 Conclusion: Toward a Theorization of Socialist Museology

There is, of course, the question of whether or not any of the aforementioned theories and practices constitute a truly "socialist" form of museology. Certainly, outwardly socialist logic is pervasive in not only the professional literature, but also in actual museum practice, as seen by the distrust of original objects, the precedence of contemporary history and historical materialism, and the focus on social ownership and public indoctrination in socialist values. And rather than explaining the above trends away as nothing more than lip service to the official culture of socialist Yugoslavism, I have argued thus far that this socialist logic was, in fact, internalized by museum professionals as they modernized museum theory and practice and fought to maintain the relevance of their institutions in a rapidly industrializing and modernizing society.

It would be overly simplistic, however, to see the main trends in museum theory and practice in Yugoslav Croatia as *solely* the result of socialist ideology and state practice. Throughout the Yugoslav period, Croatian museum professionals and theorists were part of a larger international community of museum workers who, while limited by the contours of the Cold War, were nonetheless in conversation about modernizing museum practice. According to Peter van Mensch, this conversation was skewed such that a "one-way flow of information" from Western Europe and the United States to communist Eastern Europe effectively limited the impact of communist museum theory and practice on the west until at least the late 1970s.[106] The inverse, however, is not true. Croatian museum theorists throughout the entirety of socialist era were just as willing to look as Western European and American literature, theory, and models as they were to engage with their communist contemporaries throughout the world. Even if at the rhetorical level, one finds plenty of condemnation of "bourgeois" logic and practices in the professional literature, this generally refers to internal and outdated practices rather than specifically Western-capitalist practices, and there is little to no evidence that museum workers were pressured to rely mostly on Yugoslav and Eastern European sources.

Part of the explanation for this was the Stalin-Tito split in 1948 that shielded Yugoslav Croatian museum professionals from a strict imposition of Soviet museology in the 1950s, as was the case throughout the Soviet bloc in places like Bulgaria, Romania, and East Germany. As explained earlier in this chapter, Soviet museology dictated that *all* museum exhibitions relate back to the central themes of class struggle and socialist revolution regardless of their precise topic. Similarly, most every museum was required to have a specialized department related to the history of socialism. These strict Soviet parameters of museum practice, however, were never enforced in the Yugoslav case. True, a similar tiered structure developed in some Native Place Museums that focused on connecting the *longue durée* of local history to the contemporary moment of building socialism while subjugated other subjects like ethnography and archeology to the predominance of historical materialism. This similarity, however, was more one of a general nature than of degree. Despite the departmental structure and stated goals of Native Place Museums, the actual ethnographic and archaeological exhibitions put on display were mostly politically neutral and tended to reflect the practices and methodologies of contemporary European and American ethnography and archeology. The same can be said for Croatian historical museums. Institutions such as the Historical Museum of Croatia in Zagreb and the various Revolutionary Museums throughout the republic were indeed bound to the ever-present historical theme of "contemporary history" that, in one way or another, framed exhibitions to legitimize the present moment of socialist Yugoslavism. And yet, there is nothing uniquely *socialist* about this since the same can be said for most any 20th century national history museum that functioned as a mouthpiece for the predominant myths and aspirations of the modern European nation state.[108]

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[106] See Van Mensch, "Towards A Methodology," 8.

Furthermore, starting in the early 1950s Yugoslavia began an experiment in "self-management socialism." Characterized by state leaders as Yugoslavia's unique path to socialism free of the authoritarian dogmatism of Stalinism, self-management socialism decentralized the majority of federal Yugoslav institutions and transferred these responsibilities to each national republic, in this case the Socialist Republic of Croatia. This system allowed "individual enterprises to act with much greater independence from the central power than before," in turn opening the door for significant exchange and interaction with the international community through professional conferences and joint business enterprises. Most importantly for museums, "despite keeping hold of all economic levers of culture and a certain level of censorship, the state greatly relaxed its control over cultural production" under self-management socialism. And while this process was often contentious and lead to internal debates about creeping bourgeois capitalism corrupting the foundations of a socialist society, it ultimately became standard practice for many Yugoslav institutions to draw on professional resources from both sides of the Iron Curtain.[109] Croatian museum theorists and practitioners followed this trend as they partook in various international museum conferences held by UNESCO's International Council of Museums (ICOM), published recaps in professional journals, and directly cited ICOM literature and conference reports. And as previously mentioned, many of the professional articles published in the journals *Muzeologija* and *Informatica Museologica* engaged with Western literature and models just as frequently as they did with internal or Eastern European communist ones. Therefore, tracing the actual professional resources that Croatian museum workers were engaged with demonstrates that they were participating in an enterprise that was by no means purely socialist.

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[108] See, for example, Simon Knell and Peter Aronsson, *National Museums: New Studies from Around the World* (London: Routledge, 2011).

In fact, certain aspects of Croatian museum theory and practice *predated* crucial developments in international museology in the late 1960s and 1970s. As previously outlined, many of the concerns credited to the New Museology movement—the democratization of museum space, communal engagement and education, and the centrality of visitor experience—are found in Croatian museological literature as early as the 1950s. The impulse to transform the bourgeois museum into a socialist institution that would harness and perpetuate socialist revolution in Yugoslavia, while ideologically grounded in socialist thought, in practical terms often simply meant increasing access and transparency in order to draw in the everyday working class citizen and most importantly, the next generation of Yugoslav youth. Far removed from the "isolated circle of officials" and "cultured elites" who had populated museums in the interwar period, the new audience for *modern* Croatian museums was the common person living in a rapidly industrialized society. By the time museum professionals in Western democracies such as France and the United States began to deal with these same concerns in the wake of the 1968 protest movement—referred to contemporaneously in the international museum community as the "crisis of museums"—both the moral-philosophical and practical-institutional foundations for democratized museum spaces had been laid throughout Yugoslav Croatia. Therefore, if we are not willing to describe New Museology as stemming from socialist logic, but rather as an impulse of liberal democratic principles, why then should we think of the aforementioned concerns as somehow inherently socialist? Rather, it seems far more accurate to describe the "new orthodoxy of visitor sovereignty"[110] in Croatian museology as stemming from a *modernizing* impulse that was shared by Western European and American practitioners as well: an impulse to push museums beyond their traditional roles as repositories of rarities run by, and designed for, the educated elite, and transform them into agents of social change and cultural enlightenment. If nothing else, this suggests that there is far more overlap than distance between the socio-educational goals of state communism in Eastern Europe, on the one hand, and post-1968 Western European democracies on the other.

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[109] See Vladimir Kulić, "National, Supranational, International: New Belgrade and the Symbolic Construction of a Socialist Capital," *Nationalities Papers* 41, no. 1 (2013): 43.

So, if not at the level of professional networks and development, and certainly not at the level of visitor engagement, what *was* distinctly socialist about Croatian museology? Should we even bother to talk about a "socialist museology" that, unique in both the ideology that informed it and the practices that it produced, fundamentally differed from Western European and American practices?

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[110] See Sharon Macdonald, "Expanding Museum Studies: An Introduction," in *A Companion to Museum Studies*, ed. Sharon Macdonald (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 6.

Perhaps then the best way to theorize communist museology is to consider it a sub-branch of modern museology. At its core, Croatian socialist era museology developed in response to the realities of postwar Europe, both East and West: how to (re)build nations and national narratives in the wake of Nazism and fascism; how to create ideological and cultural unity despite the social disruptions caused by rapid industrialization and urbanization; how to engage with a population that for the first time was predominantly literate and increasingly politically engaged; and by the late 1960s, how to traverse the new challenges brought on by protest and youth culture, environmental devastation, new forms of media, and modern modes of consumption.[111] These realities served as the impetus for the most significant changes in modern museum practice internationally regarding visitor engagement, public outreach, accessibility, and democratization, and it should therefore come as no surprise to find a good deal of commonality across the Cold War front.

What makes Croatian museology a distinct sub-branch of modern museology, however—and why it belongs to generally theorized "socialist museology"—are two characteristics rooted in distinctly socialist logic that, if not entirely unique to socialism, were so ubiquitous in socialist museum practice as to constitute a particular brand of museum theory: an aversion towards and distrust of original objects; and a pervasive didacticism that elevated written text and photographs to the forefront of museum practice.

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[111] As Tony Judt argues, memories of Nazism and the "special nature" of warfare and destruction during WWII turned into a "common currency" in postwar Europe in order to re-forge national history and culture. As such, an anti-fascist resistance mythology developed in every European country, including problematic cases like France, Italy, and Hungary. Croatian museum professionals, to their credit, did not need to falsely adopt this 'currency' considering that the Yugoslav Partisan resistance movement was one of the largest, best armed, and most effective resistance movement Europe. Furthermore, Judt argues that the most immediate concerns of postwar European societies was to create "social harmony and material improvement," and that at the forefront of these state-sponsored memory regimes were various forms of public history such as novels, radio, cinema, memorials, commemorations, and museums. Under communism, these attempts ultimately failed to "forge new ways of identifying and describing local and national interests [and] merely sought to expunge from public language all trace of the old ones," in turn allowing in the postcommunist context for a revival of problematic anti-communist figures in Eastern Europe such as Ion Antonescu in Romania and Alojzije Stepinac in Croatia regardless of their proximity to fascist projects. See Tony Judt, "The Past Is Another Country: Myth and Memory in Postwar Europe," *Daedalus* 121, no. 4 (1992): 83-118.

As central as collecting, documenting, and processing original objects were to the stated goals of Croatian museum practice, there was not an equal celebration of original objects on their own terms. Rather, original objects were generally seen as too ambiguous in nature to serve the didactic goals of museum work. Branka Milošević's 1975 warning to her fellow museum workers about the "charm" of original objects, far from an oddity, demonstrates well this aspect of socialist museological theory: to be distracted by the romance of the distant past, or to fetishize authenticity at the cost of demonstrating historical truths, is to ignore the central tenets of historical materialism. True enough, original objects served as the material basis for museum work, but they were ultimately to be treated with great caution so not to instill the wrong values in the museum visitor. Exceptions were sometimes made for objects pertaining to 20th century history, namely those found in Revolutionary Museums. But even these objects were usually relegated to a secondary position behind exhibition legends, photographs, dioramas, maps, and various audiovisual practices.

In order to make sure museums were exhibiting "true" history despite the ambiguity of original objects, it became standard practice for museum workers to insert a heavy, arguably overwhelming amount of written text in their exhibition spaces. This text generally took the form of one-dimensional, moralistic, outrightly political text that framed original objects within the thematic goal of the exhibition.[112] Likewise, text-based objects, such as political pamphlets, newspapers, transcribed speeches and quotes, reports, poetry, and so forth, were understood as the most valuable for instilling historical lessons in the museum visitor. This second characteristic, what I refer to as a pervasive didacticism,[113] was equally a matter of propaganda as it was a matter of making museums accessible and understandable for the general public. In fact, drawing a line between propaganda and education is virtually impossible for any public education institution, not just those under state socialism. The heavy use of text and text-based objects was intended to establish a clear connection between original objects and the "thematic whole," or perhaps better put, the *moral lesson* of the exhibition. More akin to a professional museum guide than a mere mouthpiece of a Party bureaucrat, written text was understood by museum professionals to function as a mediator between the object and visitor that allowed the visitor to understand the deeper meaning and relevance of the object on display. Therefore, rather than hindering the visitor's ability to analyze original objects by feeding them a ready-made connection to the present socialist moment, museum professionals understood written text as a way to *empower* and *culture* the visitor, thus inverting the traditional museum reverence for objects that required previous cultural knowledge of the visitor. Simply put, the heavy use of text in exhibition spaces was just as much about assuring Party-line interpretations as it was about tipping the scale in favor of the museum visitor.

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[112] According to Hasanagić in 1975, for example, history museums should function as interdisciplinary museums that drew on ethnography, archeology, and art to demonstrate a given "historical theme" that, according to "the general guiding principle of historical development, comes out of the museum a single, logical whole." See Hasanagić, "Istorijski muzeji," 16.

Considering where Croatian museological theory ended up by the late 1980s, any characterization of Croatian museum theory and practice as purely socialist is simply inaccurate.

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[113] As referenced previously, Adam Jolles refers to an "invasion of didactic text into the traditionally austere interior space of the museum" in the early Stalinist era. I use the term "pervasive" instead of "invasion" to connote the self-perpetuating nature of didactic texts in Croatian museum spaces. Rather than the extensive use of texts stemming from a conscious "invasion" led by museum professionals, as in the early Soviet case, I argue that museum professionals were trained in a professional environment that had already accepted and internalized the paramount place of text and text-based objects as part of a larger theorizing of museum work within the framework of historical materialism. Therefore, the heavy reliance on didacticism as a guiding principle of museum work, if not referred to directly as such but rather in more opaque terms such as "historical truths" and exhibitions functioning as "thematic wholes," was more so a matter of perpetuation than active invasion. See Jolles, "Stalin's Talking Museums," 434.

From the onset, Croatian museologists were walking the line between official socialist rhetoric, genuinely internalized socialist logic, and the major trends of international museology. Museum practice often had a distinct socialist tinge to it, particularly so when it came to contemporary history dealing with the Workers' Movement, the People's Liberation Struggle, and the building of socialism. This perhaps should come as no surprise since these myths, more than anything others, constituted the mythological pillars of the communist party. More generally, the evolution of museological theory on the nature of objects and the inherent meaning(s) they contain certainly had a socialist impulse to it, although this impulse had clearly faded by the 1980s and was replaced by Šola and Maroević's more nuanced understandings of museality.

This chapter contains direct portions of two previously published articles: Palhegyi, Joel. "National Museums, National Myths: Construction socialist Yugoslavism for Croatia and Croats," *Nationalities Papers* 45, no. 6 (2017): 1048-1065; and Palhegyi, Joel. "Revolutionary Curating, Curating the Revolution: Socialist Museology in Yugoslav Croatia," *Martor* 23 (2018): 17-34. The dissertation author was the primary researcher and author of these papers.

Chapter 3: "In the Spirit of Socialist Principles"
Brotherhood and Unity in Revolutionary and Memorial Museums

Throughout the communist period, Yugoslav authorities placed great importance upon contemporary history (i.e., history of the twentieth century) in order to legitimize the socialist Yugoslav state. In particular, the history of the Second World War and the so-called People's Liberation Struggle played a central role in the postwar state building process. While this trend was common to all of the Eastern European communist regimes, it bore particular importance for Yugoslavia. Unlike most Eastern European states where communism was mostly an external development imposed by the USSR in the immediate postwar years, socialist Yugoslavia was formed entirely by an indigenous, pan-Yugoslav resistance led by the Josip Broz Tito and his communist Partisan forces. As such, the legacy of the People's Liberation Struggle—in particular, its pan-Yugoslav nature[1]—was especially important as "one of the main pillars of legitimization of the new state."[2]

Of particular importance was the idea of Brotherhood and Unity (*bratstvo i jedinstvo*), wherein everyday Croats, alongside their South Slavic brothers, rose up against the fascist powers of Italy, Germany, and local collaborators in order to build a united socialist society. Unbound by the traditional nexus of nationality and religion between the South Slavic nations, Brotherhood and Unity served to unite the peoples of Yugoslavia under a common patriotic framework that superseded ethno-religious identity such as Croat Catholicism or Serb Orthodoxy. According to Vjekoslav Perica, this constituted far more than political jargon or propaganda. Instead, Brotherhood and Unity functioned as a powerful civil religion, “an alloy of myths, quasi-religious symbols, cults, rituals, beliefs, and practices that secure[d] the nation’s legitimacy and convince[d] the people that the system was ‘good.’”[3] Brotherhood and Unity thus consisted of various elements such as the cult of Tito and socialist heroism, catch phrases like “Death to Fascism, Freedom to the People,” and public rituals such as the annual Relay of Youth, all of which was built upon the history of the Second World War. In no small part, Brotherhood and Unity developed as a response to the violent and devastating civil war that took place throughout Yugoslavia during the Second World War in which internecine cycles of massacres, reprisals, and ethnic cleansing pitted the various Yugoslav peoples against one another. Brotherhood and Unity was therefore understood as a necessary panacea for the collective suffering and internal conflict that defined the Yugoslav experience during the Second World War.

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[1] It is worth noting that while the Yugoslav authorities went to great efforts to depict the People's Liberation Struggle as a distinctly socialist movement, it was in reality a pan-Yugoslav anti-fascist movement that combined Tito's communist Partisan forces with myriad local resistance movements that were not always socialist. This was particularly true of the early years of the anti-fascist resistance (1941-1943). By the end of the war, however, the entirety of the People's Liberation Struggle was institutionally structured and administered as branches of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia.

[2] See Đorđe Tomić, "From 'Yugoslavism' to (Post-)Yugoslav Nationalisms: Understanding Yugoslav Identities," in *European National Identities: Elements, Transitions, Conflicts*, ed. Roland Vogt (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2014), 276.

Due to its vital importance, the communist authorities immediately set out to establish a centralized popular memory of the Second World War. According to Tea Sindbaek, the question of how to properly historicize and memorialize the history of inter-Yugoslav ethnic cleansing and genocide was one of the most vital yet delicate tasks of the early communist state. The answer, at least to Party authorities, was to establish an official state narrative wherein “the history of these [inter-ethnic] massacres was subordinated to a state-bearing myth of united patriotic Yugoslav resistance and revolutionary struggle,” and instances of inter-ethnic violence, when mentioned at all, where "made to fit into that narrative."[4] As Hajke Karge demonstrates in her work on Yugoslav Second World War monuments, already in the early 1950s the Yugoslav authorities worked to establish a universal pan-Yugoslav memory of the Second World War by identifying and memorializing key sites of communist victories and collective suffering. While the board only lasted into the early 1960s, it effectively functioned as a "Yugoslav think tank" that set the foundation for a centralized Yugoslav memory of the Second World War that Croatian actors maintained throughout the socialist era.[5]

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[3] See Vjekoslav Perica, *Balkan Idols: Religion and Nationalism in Yugoslav States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 95.

In this chapter, therefore, I demonstrate how this process of institutionalizing the history of the Second World War—primarily the positive history of socialist Yugoslav resistance but also the history of genocide committed at the Jasenovac concentration camp—played out at the level of Croatian historical museums. Throughout the Republic of Croatia, history museums were integrated into this centralized memory of the Second World War and its aftermath. Exhibitions and collections ranged in extent and form but in virtually all cases, museum work of this type conformed to the official memory of the Second World War. Most important among historical museums were Croatia's Revolutionary Museums whose primary purpose was to memorialize the history of the People's Liberation Struggle and document the ways in which the present socialist state embodied its values. These museums—developed "in the spirit of socialist principles," as one Croatian museologist put it[6]—therefore embodied the centralized Yugoslav memory of the Second World War at the republic and regional level, effectively localizing and reifying one of the central pillars of the socialist state.[7]

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[4] See Tea Sindbaek, *Usable History? Representations of Yugoslavia's Difficult Past from 1945 to 2002* (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2012), 10.

[5] See Hajke Karge, *Sećanje u kamenu - okamenjeno sećanje?* [*Memories in Stone - Petrified Memory?*] (Belgrade: Biblioteke XX Vek, 2014), 98.

[6] See Branka Milošević, "Prezentacija muzeja radničkog pokreta sa osvrtom na presentaciju socialističke izgradnje" [The Presentation of Museums of the Worker's Movement with Reference to the Presentation of the Building of Socialism], *Muzeologija,* no. 17 (1975): 74.

I further investigate this point by addressing the Jasenovac Memorial Museum complex that ultimately served the same civil-religious purposes of Revolutionary Museums. The site itself was the location of the infamous Croatian concentration camp operated throughout the Second World War by the indigenous Ustaša fascist state. Thus, unlike Revolutionary Museums whose primary focus was the *positive* affirmation of the socialist state, the Jasenovac Memorial Museum was rooted primarily in a *negative* depiction of fascist horror. Furthermore, the fact that Ustaša racial ideology targeted ethnic Serbs just as much, if not more so, than Jews meant that the site posed an existential threat to the very idea of Brotherhood and Unity. Perhaps for this reason alone, the socialist state determined the site could not be left unattended but rather required an official memorial and museum complex to assure its history conformed to the socialist Yugoslav ideal. This they accomplished by reinforcing not just the barbarism of fascism but also the foreign nature of the Ustaša movement as little more than puppet of Nazism while exaggerating the presence of communist resistance in the camp. Therefore, despite its clearly contradictory nature, the Jasenovac Memorial Museum functioned from the early 1970s on to reinforce the same civil-religious framework of its complementary Revolutionary Museums.

Functioning as key sites for presenting the civil religion of Brotherhood and Unity, I argue that Revolutionary Museums functioned primarily as “temples of Truth” wherein the visitor was expected to demonstrate awe and reverence to the sacred tenets of socialist Yugoslavism.[8] Nowhere in Revolutionary Museums was there room for critical engagement with the objects, a plurality of voices, questions to be posed, or alternative interpretations. As such, they were designed as sites of "socialist pilgrimage"—a term that I borrow from Simina Badica[9]—wherein the visitor's journey through the museum mimicked that of a religious pilgrimage as they were presented sacred truths and pressured to show reverence as a way transforming their consciousness and instilling them with a secular orthodoxy.

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[7] As Jagdhuhn demonstrates, a network of revolutionary and memorial museums existed throughout Yugoslavia and designed to reinforce “historical patriotism … as a solid ideological foundation in the creation and maintenance” of the multinational Yugoslav state. These museums therefore functioned dually as museums of political history, documenting the development of the Worker’s Movement and the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, as well as museums of heroism, collective suffering, and reconciliation. See Nataša Jagdhuhn, “Jugoslavizacija muzejskog polja” [Yugoslavization of the Museum Field], *Zbornik radova historijskog muzeja Bosne i Hercegovine* 12, 2017: 18.

Therefore, as embodiments of "the spirit of socialist principles," it comes as no surprise that Revolutionary Museums were heavily involved in incorporating contemporary Croatian museological trends discussed in detail in the previous chapter. In particular, Revolutionary Museums relied heavily on object-based museology that focused primarily on the visitor-museum relationship through highly moralistic and easily comprehensible thematic exhibitions while simultaneously minimizing the importance of original objects as historical evidence. To this end, Revolutionary Museums were organized according to "thematic wholes" that, in essence, were little more than ideologically driven conclusions about the history of the People's Liberation Struggle and the sanctity of the present day socialist state. Accordingly, the permanent and temporary exhibitions in all the Croatian Revolutionary Museums were extremely reliant upon written text, photographs, and replicas. Of the few original objects displayed, most tended to be text-based, such as original copies of party documents, fliers, or letters. In the 1978 exhibition "Women in the People's Liberation Struggle in Word and Deed" in Rijeka for instance, only two out of ninety objects on display were original, non-documentation related objects: a red star dedicated to a certain Ivana Blašković, and a handkerchief given as a gift to a female soldier. The rest consisted of either photographs or reprints of the wartime events, battle maps, newspapers, fliers, party documents, and so forth.[10] Likewise, the permanent exhibition of the Museum of the Revolution of the Peoples of Croatia in Zagreb—designed in 1962 with only minor alterations until its closure in 1990—was dominated by replicas, maps, photos, documents, and thematic displays, while only a handful of original military artifacts were presented on the exhibition floor (Images 3.1 and 3.2).

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[8] I use the term "temples of Truth" to describe museum models wherein the visitor is presumed to enter with due reverence generally accorded to religious or spiritual experiences. It therefore goes beyond a museum simply dedicated to a singular narrative or 'truth' and instead refers to museum practices meant to memorialize and eternalize a *sacred* national lesson. In the case of socialist Yugoslavia, the sacred national lesson was the 'truth' of popular heroism and revolution that defined the NOB and Tito's Partisans movement. See Cristea and Radu-Bucurenci for the original usage of the term "temples of Truth," which they describe as a museum experience where "the visitor enters like a Temple, to receive a single Truth, Reality, uniqueness, and accumulation of information for a better identification with an ideal." In particular, they point out how contemporary Romanian national museums have been employed to reinforce the "anti-communist victimizing discourse" that functions the predominant sacred national lesson for Romania today. See Gabriela Cristea and Simina Radu-Bucurenci, "Raising the Cross: Exorcising Romania's Communist Past in Museums, Memorials and Monuments" in *Past for the Eyes*, ed. Oksana Sarkisova and Peter Apor (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2008): 275-305.

[9] See Simina Badica, "Curating Communism: A Comparative History of Museological Practice in Postwar (1946-1958) and Post-Communist Romania" (PhD diss., Central European University, 2013), 167.

In Croatia's network of Revolutionary Museums, museum professionals operated predominantly within three thematic frameworks that I identify as the myth of popular socialist heroism, the myth of the revolutionary state, and the myth of pan-Yugoslav suffering. According to the myth of popular socialist heroism, Croatia's role in the People's Liberation Struggle was both popular and organic, and therefore evidence of Croatia's historical drive towards the socialist Yugoslav state. Similarly, the myth of the revolutionary state stipulated that the current socialist Yugoslav state was one born of revolution and thus the governmental embodiment of the values of the People's Liberation Struggle. And lastly, the myth of pan-Yugoslav suffering presented a universal narrative of Yugoslav suffering wherein the actions of foreign and local fascists equally devastated all of the Yugoslav peoples, meaning in turn that no single constituent

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[10] See Antun Giron, *Tematski plan za izložbu "Žene u NOB riječju i djelom"* [Thematic Plan for the Exhibition "Women in the NOB in Word and Deed"], 1978, I/38, MGR.

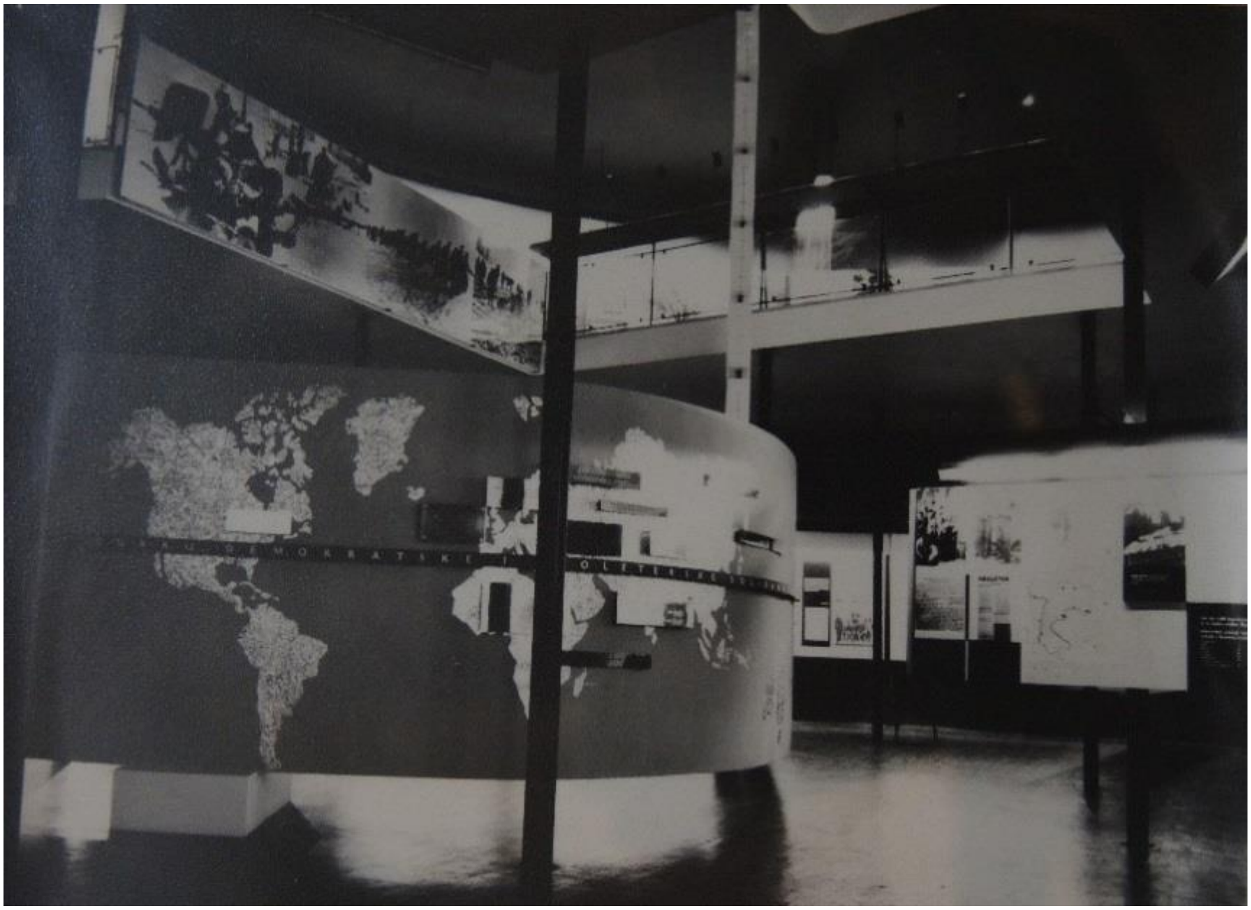

Image 3.1: Permanent exhibition of The Museum of the Revolution of the Peoples of Croatia, circa 1962. The pillar in the middle contained the phrase “workers of the world unite” in various languages. The image is property of the Croatian History Museum.

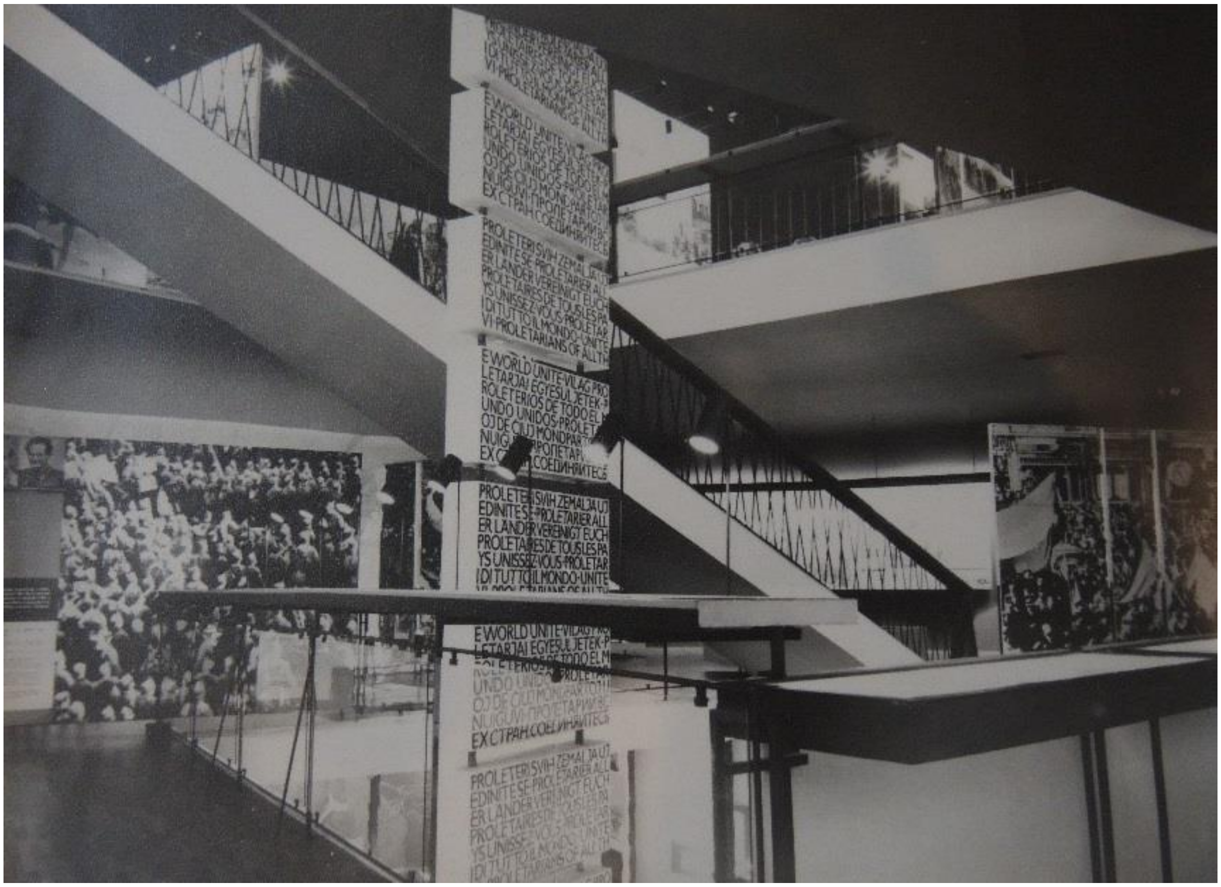
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Image 3.2: Permanent Exhibition for the Museum of the Revolution of the Peoples of Croatia, circa 1962. A display of international "democratic and proletariat solidarity." The image is property of Croatian History Museum.

nation of the Yugoslav state suffered more, nor bore any more responsibility, than its fellow nations.

3.1 Displaying the Revolution in Croatian Revolutionary Museums

Nowhere were these themes clearer than in the republic's six specialized Revolutionary Museums. According to their original 1945 governing law, Revolutionary Museums were charged with collecting and processing the material remains of the communist resistance during the Second World War, commonly referred to simply as the People's Liberation Struggle, in order to educate the public on "the cult of national victims and sufferers, casualties and heroes." As such, they were provided with "unconditional financial support" and political backing by various federal and republic institutions.[11] The early conceptualization of Revolutionary Museums concerned almost solely Tito's Partisan resistance during the Second World War with a heavy emphasis on military and political history. By the early 1960s, however, Revolutionary Museums expanded their focus to cover other aspects of contemporary history such as the building of socialism, women's participation in the war effort and in modern society, and topics related to everyday life under socialism. The first of these Revolutionary Museums in Croatia opened in 1953 under the title "The Museum of the People's Liberation Struggle" in Zagreb and was later renamed "The Museum of the Revolution of the Peoples of Croatia" in 1960 as it expanded its topical focus. Following the Zagreb model, the remaining Revolutionary Museums in Split, Rijeka, Makarska, Pula, and Slavonski Brod opened between the mid-1960s and early 1980s.

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[11] See Dubravka Peić Čaldarović, "History Museums in a Changing Political Environment: Experiences of the Croatian History Museum during the 20th Century," in *Museums and Universal Heritage: History in the Area of Conflict Between Interpretation and Manipulation*, ed. by Marie-Paule Jungblut and Rosmarie Biere-De-Haan (Luxembourg: ICMAH, 2008): 106.

Each of these museums housed permanent exhibitions concerning the course of the Second World War in Croatia's different locales. Zagreb's Museum of the Revolution aimed to show the entirety of Croatia's role in the war, while each regional museum accordingly specialized in their local history. Therefore, the regional Revolutionary Museums effectively "localized" the revolution and the present socialist state, demonstrating that the revolution was not a foreign or top-down imposition but rather an organic and popular phenomenon that bound everyday Croatian citizens—Croats and Serbs alike—by a common revolutionary history and a shared set of socialist values. This narrative of Croat and Serb unity was particularly important considering the escalation of Croat-Serb tensions before the outbreak of the Second World War, the genocidal policies of the wartime Independent State of Croatia against its Serb population, and the multifaceted civil war throughout Yugoslavia involving the royalist and ultranationalist Serb Chetniks, the fascist Croat Ustaše, the anti-communist Slovene Home Guards, and Tito's communist Partisans. Thus, Revolutionary Museums were at the heart of the socialist state project to re-imagine the history of the Second World War as first and foremost a history of Yugoslav unity and popular revolution.

3.1.1 From Croatian Resistance to Yugoslav Revolution: Popular Socialist Heroism

One of the most common tactics employed in Revolutionary Museums involved framing the Croatian anti-fascist resistance as a genuinely popular socialist movement rooted in the desires of common people for social, political, and economic justice. Exhibitions based on this theme were designed to emphasize the indigenous and organic development of the Croatian popular revolt and its fusion with the socialist Yugoslav movement. The entirety of the Croatian resistance against occupying forces and local collaborators was therefore depicted as part and parcel of the larger Yugoslav communist resistance led by Tito and the Partisan army.

This process of integrating Croatia's popular heroism into the Yugoslav Partisan narrative bears particular significance. According to Stevo Đurašković, in the late 1950s, a number of military historians of primarily Serb and Montenegrin descent argued that the People's Liberation Struggle consisted primarily of ethnic Serbs and Montenegrin forces. Likewise, these historians claimed that the majority of ethnic Slovenes and Croats only joined towards the end of the war and in much smaller numbers, while the Croats in particular were "resistant towards the very idea of Yugoslavia as a polity."[12] By the 1960s, however, a number of Croat historians, including the future first president of Republic of Croatia, Franjo Tuđman, began to challenge this narrative by emphasizing the depth of Croatian participation in the People's Liberation Struggle. Furthermore, under the guidance of Vladimir Bakarić, the Institute for the History of the Workers' Movement sought to legitimize "the authenticity of the Croatian communist movement" by supporting research and publications ranging the inter Workers' Movement to the Croatian popular anti-fascism. Therefore, one of the main goals of Revolutionary Museums was to highlight the extent of popular socialist heroism among everyday Croats during the Second World War.[13]

As the first Revolutionary Museum, Zagreb's Museum of the Revolution held a number of exhibitions of this nature. One of the earliest examples was the 1957 exhibition, "From Partisan Units to the Yugoslav Army." Geared towards a target audience of children and schoolteachers, the exhibition followed the development of early resistance paramilitaries in the territory of Croatia and their later merging with the communist Yugoslav army. In particular, the exhibition emphasized how these popular paramilitaries demonstrated "the contribution of the people of Croatia in the general struggle of the peoples of Yugoslavia in national revolution," effectively ingraining a socialist Yugoslav spirit into these nationally Croat military units.[14] In doing so, the exhibition simultaneously reinforced the mythology of the Yugoslav army as the protector and guarantor of its constituent nations—Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia, Montenegro, and Macedonia—as it battled against occupying and collaboration forces throughout all of Yugoslavia.

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[12] See Stevo Đurašković, "Nation-building in Franjo Tuđman's Political Writings," *Politička Misao: Croatian Political Science Review* 51, no. 5 (2014): 62.
[13] Ibid., 63.

Similarly reinforcing the organic fusion of Croat and Yugoslav resistance, the Museum of the Revolution hosted a 1973 exhibition titled, "Croatia, 1943." Focusing on the pivotal year of 1943 in the course of Croatian liberation from Axis occupation, the exhibition presented a glorified narrative of the six-month offensive in Banija, Kurdun, and Lika against Italian occupiers, the founding of the Croatian Liberation Council, and their cooperation with the Yugoslav communist movement. In one sense, it was a distinctly *ethno-national* story of the Croat people. Presenting a newspaper clipping with the headline, "our Istria is free and reunited with the Croatian fatherland," alongside an image of Croat refugees and soldiers, the exhibition gave fair space for the particular Croat nature of the event. At the same time, the Croatian uprising embodied the *supranational* values of socialist Yugoslav cause against foreign occupiers and local collaborators that "secured the foundation of a new socialist Yugoslavia." Likewise, the exhibition placed great emphasis on the formation of the National Anti-Fascist Council of the People's Liberation of Croatia (ZAVNOH), the highest governing organ of the Croatian branch of the anti-fascist movement. While ZAVNOH was recognized as a product of

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[14] See Dragutin Ščukanec, *Od partizanskih odreda do jugoslavenske armije* [*From Partisan Unit to Yugoslav Army*] (Zagreb, Museum of the Revolution of the Peoples of Croatia, 1957), 3.

Croatian popular action, the exhibition stressed that the greatest accomplishment of ZAVNOH was to establish permanent relations between the Croatian resistance and the Yugoslav communist authorities, therefore cementing "brotherhood and unity between Croats and Serbs."[15]

Perhaps most telling was the museum's 1985 exhibition, "The Battle for the Liberation of Croatia, 1944-1945," which exhibited the various military fronts throughout Croatia on the eve of victory. In each case, the specific regional front was positioned directly adjacent to a larger Yugoslav event, body, or figure, as if to demonstrate the direct connection between each local Croatian battle and the larger socialist Yugoslav revolution. For instance, the first room of the exhibition documented three separate events: to the left, a section on the Dalmatian 1944 front; to the right, a section on the entire Yugoslav war effort in 1944; and directly in front, a section committed to the entirety of the People's Liberation Struggle between 1941 and 1944. Likewise, the second room of the exhibition positioned the Lika and Croatian Littoral fronts next to the Bosnian region of the Sremski front, all of which led to a display on the *Narodna vlast* (The People's Authority), an organ of popular governance established throughout Yugoslavia in each newly liberated territory. Finally, the third and last room of the exhibition positioned the Rijekan and Istrian fronts opposite of one another—between which stood a bust of Tito—before ending with a section on the postwar reconstruction effort.[16] If all this was not clear enough, the exhibition brochure began with a quote from Tito in which he laid out the importance of Brotherhood and Unity in building a prosperous future for each of its nations: "without Brotherhood and Unity there cannot be a strong and happy Yugoslavia, and without a strong and happy Yugoslavia, there cannot be a strong and happy Croatia, Serbia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina."[17]

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[15] See *Hrvatska 1943* [Croatia, 1943] (Zagreb, Museum of the Revolution of the Peoples of Croatia, 1973).

[16] See Ruda Polšak, *Borba za Oslobođenje Hrvatska, 1944-1945* [*Battle for the Liberation of Croatia, 1944-1945*] (Zagreb: Museum of the Revolution of the Peoples of Croatia, 1985).

Exhibitions of this sort were of course not limited to Zagreb alone. Each of the six other Revolutionary Museums held numerous exhibitions of a similar nature. Much like the previous example, these local cases attempted to connect regional stories from the Second World War to the larger story of Brotherhood and Unity in the Second World War, in effect localizing the revolution in various regions of Croatia. The Museum of National Revolution in Split, for instance, narrated the local history of Split (and Dalmatia more broadly) in direct connection with the People's Liberation Struggle and socialist revolution. Consisting of three sections, the museum's 1980 permanent exhibition depicted the region's 20th century history as evidence of the progressive forward march towards socialist Yugoslavism. For instance, the first section traced the development of the Workers' Movement in Split up to 1940 before leading into the story of the People's Liberation Struggle itself. Due to the relative insignificance of the communist party in Split before the outbreak of the Second World War, this section was clearly designed to create an exaggerated sense of continuity between interwar labor unionism more broadly and the communist party's wartime ascension. The exhibition's third section dedicated to the postwar reconstruction effort likewise functioned to link the interwar Workers' Movement with the early development of self-management socialism between 1945 and 1950. Tellingly, both of these sections paled in comparison to the second section dedicated to Split's role in the People's Liberation Struggle, which consisted of over sixty separate displays. This disproportionate representation of the People's Liberation Struggle effectively pulled Split's preceding and subsequent history into one of the most recognizable aspects of Yugoslav Brotherhood and Unity: popular socialist heroism.[18]

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[17] Ibid., 1.

More telling, however, was the museum's 1973 exhibition "Dalmatia 1943". Much like the aforementioned Zagreb 1943 exhibition in which the Croatian anti-fascist resistance merged with the larger socialist Yugoslav cause, this exhibition focused on the particular importance of Dalmatia in the larger Yugoslav struggle. In its opening dedication, for instance, the exhibition's praise of Dalmatian soldiers was immediately followed by a reference to "the most fateful battles of our revolution throughout all of Yugoslavia." The exhibition then began with a military history documenting the centrality of the 1943 Dalmatian front in the larger communist offensive throughout Yugoslavia. Crucially, the brochure informed the visitor, this front would not have been successful without the "management of the Communist Party" who transformed the popular Croatian resistance into an organized Yugoslav army.[19] Finally, the exhibition concluded with a section on the Dalmatian island of Vis which functioned as a regional headquarters for Tito's Partisans during their final 1944 offensive, described by Tito himself as vital in "laying the foundation for a new Yugoslavia [born out of] the liberation struggle."[20]

Further imbuing local wartime developments with a larger Yugoslav meaning, the 1943 exhibition highlighted focused on popular governance bodies such as the People's Liberation Committees (NOO), a local communist organ directly tied to the Yugoslav communist party, and the Women's Anti-Fascist Front (AFŽ), a wartime organization focused on liberating women through their involvement in the People's Liberation Struggle. Both bodies in this context served to demonstrate the organic fusion of the Dalmatians' anti-fascist resistance with the Communist

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[18] See Mihovil Vojnović, "Stalni muzej postav muzeja Narodne revolucije Split" [The Permanent Museum Exhibition of the Museum of National Revolution Split], *Informatica Museologica* 20, no.1-2 (1989): 73.
[19] See Jelena Markovina, *Dalmacija 1943* [*Dalmatia 1943*] (Split: Museum of the National Uprising Split, 1973), 3.
[20] Ibid., 10.

Party of Yugoslavia as everyday people were driven to join the communist ranks “out of concern” for the well-being of their fellow patriots.[21] Everyday Dalmatians were likewise driven to the communist cause out of love for their Croatian culture that “the occupier attempted to destroy [by] imposing their language, settling their people, and closing national cultural-historical institutions and organizations.”[22] Dalmatian artists, authors, and historians, for instance, “closely tied their creations and work with the people’s struggle for liberation and the building of a new socialist society,” which was enabled by the communist party whose prolific wartime publications “advanced Brotherhood and Unity among our peoples.”[23]

Similar examples can be found throughout virtually all of Croatia. The Museum of National Revolution in Rijeka, for instance, held a series of exhibits in the 1970s and 1980s concerning the local history of the People’s Liberation Struggle in Rijeka and Istria. This practice extended to a number of local or city museums as well. The Šibenik and Zadar city museums, for example, were both notable for their extensive engagement with the history of the Second World War and its aftermath, containing a permanent department, staff, and exhibition within their museum. Accordingly, they were heavily involved with developing a story of popular Croatian heroism, localized in various regions and cities, and culminating in the pan-Yugoslav struggle for liberation and socialist revolution. In sum, therefore, Revolutionary Museums were deeply concerned with projecting the history of the Second World War as story that exemplified not only the popular aspects of the People’s Liberation Struggle but crucially, its multi-national character as well.

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[21] Ibid., 4.
[22] Ibid., 6.
[23] Ibid., 6.

3.1.2 Realizing Socialist Yugoslavism: The Revolutionary State

In order to complement their recurring message about the popular and multi-national heroism of the Croatian People's Liberation Struggle, Revolutionary Museums promoted a related myth: that of the revolutionary state. According to this myth, the current Yugoslav state was one born from socialist revolution and was therefore charged with forging a new socialist society founded upon socio-economic justice, national emancipation, cultural flourishing, and gender emancipation. More specifically, these museums often used the postwar "building of socialism" (*socijalistička izgradnja*) as evidence of how socialist Yugoslav society embodied the wartime revolutionary values established during the People's Liberation Struggle. Numerous exhibitions, for example, displayed the postwar reconstruction efforts in Croatia, emphasizing how newly developed socio-economic and gender relations proved the actualization of socialist revolution. Likewise, the building of socialism emphasized the connection between wartime cultural phenomena—art and theater in particular—and their postwar flourishing due to the direct support of the socialist state.

The concept of the revolutionary state also represented the culmination of Croatia's centuries long struggle for national independence. This idea of "state right"—the continuous practice of Croatian statehood from the medieval kingdom through the Austro-Hungarian period and into the Yugoslav period—held great symbolic value as a way of bridging 19th and 20th century Croatian nationalism and present day supranational Yugoslavism. Revolutionary Museums therefore played off this idea of state right by posing the contemporary revolutionary state as the defender of Croatian state right, guaranteeing its national independence through the devolution of governance to the national republic level while also maintaining a federative structure that protected Croatia from foreign threats, whether those threats came from the fascist powers of the Second World War or from present day anti-communist and anti-Yugoslav forces abroad.

The Museum of the Revolution quite often engaged with the idea of the revolutionary state through exhibitions dedicated to entirety of postwar Croatia. For example, the 1970 exhibition, "A Quarter Century of Our Development," emphasized that the current socialist state served as a continuation of the decades-long working class movement. Providing a short presentation of socialist development since the liberation, the exhibition displayed the revolutionary developments in social relations and the economy made so far under the communist regime. In part, the exhibit used these advances to justify the need for one party rule and centralism in the 1940s and 1950s. As part of the revolution, political freedom was subordinated until the "indispensable material conditions for the further development of socialist relations" were created. The exhibition quickly moved on, however, to emphasize the progress in internal decentralization, democracy, and the improvement of daily life. In particular, the exhibition focused on the postwar reconstruction of crucial economic infrastructure, such as factories, bridges, and rail lines, as well as specifically Croatian cultural monuments like the rebuilding of Split.[24]

In a similar vein, the exhibition presented the unique Marxist path of Yugoslavia and the resulting transition from a backward agricultural economy to a modern industrial one. Keeping in mind that this was at the height of the economic boom of Yugoslavia, these images were likely to resonate with the average Croatian citizen whose standards of living had steadily increased over the previous two decades.[25] Reconstruction, decentralization, and economic progress were also linked to social justice. Alongside this narrative of economic reconstruction was one of popular participation, both socially and politically. For instance, the exhibition displayed an image of gleeful factory workers dancing around a Yugoslav flag with a newly constructed factory in the background. Likewise, two images were placed side by side in the exhibition brochure, one of electric workers at the ballot casting their votes for their elective workers council, and another of Tito and fellow Party members at the 9th Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. While in reality these congresses were a far cry from democratic, the placement of these two images side by side created a striking visualization of republican democracy and popular participation in the process of state building.

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[24] See Ksenija Dešković and Katarina Babić, *Četvrt stoljeća našeg razvitka* [*A Quarter Century of Our Development*] (Zagreb: Museum of the Revolution of the Peoples of Croatia, 1970).

[25] See Patrick Hyder Patterson, *Bought and Sold: Living and Losing the Good Life in Socialist Yugoslavia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011).

The museum likewise presented various wartime cultural products as evidence of the revolutionary nature of the present state, particularly so in the realm of culture and art. One of the museum's earliest exhibitions, "Cultural Work in the People's Liberation Struggle," sought to demonstrate how the wartime cultural accomplishments of the Croatian communists—described as "the continuation of the pre-war efforts made by the working class, peasants and progressive intellectual"—laid the foundation for present day cultural institutions in Croatia. In particular, the exhibition credited the socialist state for its leadership in the "struggle against ignorance and cultural backwardness" brought about by fascist attempts "to eradicate [Yugoslavia's] cultural and artistic heritage." To this end, the exhibition highlighted how early governing bodies such as the Croatian National Antifascist Council served to unite myriad popular organizations for education, literature, and theater by providing them with the "firm organizational forms and expert leadership" they needed to develop into full-fledged institutions.

Thus, the revolutionary state "laid the foundations of further cultural life in the liberated country."[26]

Additionally, the Museum of the Revolution often employed wartime art as a powerful representation of the popular struggle, as evidenced by the 1974 exhibition, "Art in the National Liberation Struggle of Croatia." Displaying an array of pieces ranging from the rough sketches of unknown soldiers to refined pieces of art, this exhibition used these items as visual testaments that spoke to the suffering and strength of the resistance while "materializing the socialist ethics" of the Partisan movement.[27] Accordingly, the artist, "fraught with the grave reality of a cultural worker and artist, was no less filled with the nobility of their artistic vision and the ideals of life... and therefore could alone symbolize and signalize the universality of the advanced humane national spirit." Similarly, the artist fought for the freedom of mankind, "negated the destruction and crimes of the fascist occupation," and together with his people, the Communist party, and Tito, sought "to ignite the torch of freedom, brotherhood, struggle, art and science, to preserve our culture and heritage from the destruction of fascist barbarism."[28] While the exhibition spoke mostly to the individual artists as embodiments of revolutionary values, it nonetheless spoke to the nature of revolutionary state since it was the state who supported postwar cultural production, often times by these same wartime artists.

Lastly, the Museum of the Revolution hosted a 1985 exhibition designed to promote the theme of gender equality and women's emancipation. In doing so, the museum demonstrated the truly revolutionary character of the state and its distance from a traditionally gendered bourgeois society. Titled "The Women of Croatia in the Revolution," this exhibition considered the role of women and the need for gender equality in the long continuum of socialist revolution, displaying the long history of women's participation in the 19th and 20th century Workers' Movement, their role in the People's Liberation Struggle as both soldiers and nurses, and their modern place in Croatian society with "the same opportunities as men" as "scientists and highly educated experts." While women were credited with having achieved these successes through their own actions, the exhibition nonetheless points out that this was only made possible through the revolutionary state and "its vanguard – the Communist Party of Yugoslavia."[29] In this way, the exhibition coopted the broader goals of gender equality, emancipation, and social progress in order to present the socialist state as the ultimate culmination of women's rights and therefore, truly revolutionary.

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[26] See *Kulturni Rad u NOB-i* (Zagreb: Museum of the Revolution of the Peoples of Croatia, n.d.), 2.

[27] See Smiljka Mateljan, *Likovna umjetnost u NOB-i Hrvatske* [*Art in the Croatian NOB*] (Zagreb: Museum of the Revolution of the Peoples of Croatia, 1974), 7.

[28] Ibid., 3.

Much as popular socialist heroism was presented in various locales, so too was the story of the revolutionary state throughout Croatia. In 1984, for instance, in Split's Museum of National Revolution held the exhibition "Split Forty Years Ago" in commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of Split's liberation by communist forces. Beginning with a celebration of 1944 as the year "when Split began to live a new life in freedom," the exhibition documented the extreme conditions everyday Split citizens were exposed to on their path to freedom. The story was not limited to just liberation, however, as the exhibition also emphasized the "huge efforts" put in by the communist authorities to return normalcy to the life of everyday Split citizens. Lying in ruins due to bombings and occupation, Split was hardly inhabitable at the moment of liberation. Thanks to the new socialist state and its "great effort" to supply the citizens with desperately needed provisions, however, life managed to continue. Likewise, the communist authorities immediately saw to the plight of wartime orphans, worked to repatriate refugees, and reestablish primary schooling. All of this, according to the exhibition brochure, resulted from Split's central role in the war effort, and the communist party's "acknowledgment and thankfulness" for their "great contribution to the People's Liberation Struggle and socialist revolution."[30]

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[29] See Andro Purtić, *Žene hrvatske u revoluciji* [*Croatian Women in the Revolution*] (Zagreb: Museum of the Revolution of the Peoples of Croatia, 1985), 51.

The following year, the museum held a similar exhibition touting the first form of popular governance in Croatia in 1945. The institution of government, the so-called *Narodna vlada* or People's Government, was the first form of republic-level government granted under the newly federated socialist Yugoslav state. According to the exhibition, this early government was first inaugurated in Split as a reward from the communist party for the wartime sacrifices the city made. Its significance, however, lay not in the simple fact that it was the first peace time government of the socialist era but rather in the symbolic meaning associated with Croatian popular governance. Throughout Yugoslavia—and especially important in Croatia—these *Narodne vlade* were meant to embody the *national* emancipation of each of the Yugoslav peoples as they united under a socialist federation. Thus, the exhibition celebrated the 1945 government for ensuring "the national equality of the Yugoslav nations and peoples," and more specifically, for realizing "the eternal aspirations of the peoples of Croatia that they secure independence and decide their own fate." The exhibition therefore managed to localize the tradition of Brotherhood and Unity *and* the pinnacle moment of Croatian national emancipation in the city of Split.[31]

Rijeka's Museum of National Revolution meanwhile held a number of exhibitions celebrating the cultural achievements of the revolutionary state. For instance, the museum held multiple exhibitions on wartime and postwar art as well as wartime theater brigades and their postwar institutionalization. Of particular interest, however, was the topic of women's emancipation as seen through their wartime participation in the People's Liberation Struggle and their role in postwar socialist society. The museum held two exhibitions within three years on this topic, "Women in the People's Liberation Struggle in Word and Deed" (1978) and "Those Who Walked, Those Who Carried" (1981). Taken as a whole, these exhibitions documented the emancipation of women in Yugoslavia through local stories of Rijekan women who directly participated in the Second World War, the reconstruction process, and present day society and politics. Crucially, each exhibition rooted women's progress in the revolutionary nature of Yugoslav communism and the contemporary state that embodied it, in turn making women's emancipation inseparable from the People's Liberation Struggle and the postwar socialist state.

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[30] See Mijo Vojnović, *Split prije četrdeset godina* [*Split Forty Years Ago*] (Split: Museum of the National Uprising Split, 1984).

[31] See Mijo Vojnović, *Prva narodna vlada Hrvatske* [*The First People's Government of Croatia*] (Split: Museum of the National Uprising Split, 1985).

The first exhibition, "Women in the People's Liberation Struggle in Word and Deed," dealt solely with the Second World War but nonetheless made clear that present socialist state was the successful culmination of women's wartime goals. Based primarily on the Women's Anti-Fascist Front (AFŽ) and women's wartime publications, the majority of the objects on display consisted of photocopies of AFŽ documents and women's wartime literature. By showing women in positions of political and social power, these objects functioned to demonstrate that women's role in the war was not limited simply to behind-the-lines support on the home front but rather permeated throughout every aspect of the war effort, including direct combat, and thus sparked the beginning of women's social and political emancipation.[32]

The opening display made this point quite clear: a portrait and speech by Tito at the first meeting of the Women's Anti-Fascist Front in which he argued that women's emancipation, the war effort, and the rise of socialism were closely interlocked. According to him, women's participation was not an accident, coincidence, or force of circumstance but rather a conscious choice made by women to decide "their own fate …, conscious that the struggle … for the freedom of our people, is a struggle for a prosperous future of our people and our women."[33] Therefore, the progress of women was cemented into the larger socialist Yugoslav cause as part and parcel of its revolutionary values. Marija Prizmić's speech at the opening ceremony of the exhibition drove this point home even further. According to Prizmić, "the bloody path to the Yugoslav women's emancipation" was inseparable from the "battle of the disenfranchised masses for freedom," and therefore it was no coincidence that the politicization of women during the war was "most closely tied to the flow, development, and goals of the People's Liberation Struggle."[34] And although women's participation in the war often followed the contours of prewar gender roles (i.e., nursing wounded soldiers, caring for children, and preparing food), significant progress was still made as women fought as soldiers and governed as members of wartime revolutionary bodies. This wartime participation, although limited, allowed for "the birth of the new woman, the Yugoslav woman - combatant, soldier, AFŽ activist, and council member," which in turn translated into the present day equality of women in Croatian society.[35]

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[32] See Milica Truklja, *Plan ekspozicije izložbe "Žene u NOB riječju i djelom"* [Exhibition Plan of the Exhibition "Women in the NOB in Word and Deed], 1978, I/38, MGR.

Three years later, the museum held a similar exhibition, "Those Who Walked, Those Who Carried," dedicated to showing the progress of Rijekan women in the 20th century. With the stated goal to present "woman as an important subject for our city's social and working fabric" due to their "huge contribution to our socialist reality," this exhibition documented different key phases of the women's movement in Croatia, beginning with the interwar period. For instance, several displays exhibited documents, images, and biographies of women involved in 1920s labor movements in Rijeka, as well as women who volunteered as communist fighters in the Spanish Civil War. The pinnacle moment, however, was Tito's founding of the Communist Party of Croatia in 1937 that signified "the start of a new era not only in the development of the KPJ … but also in the history of the women's movement of Yugoslavia."[36] The exhibition thus presented Tito and the Communist Party as the guarantor of women's rights, bringing to fruition the previous centuries' efforts for emancipation.

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[33] Ibid., 1.

[34] See Marija Prizmić, *Pozdravni govor drugarica Marije Prizmić prilikom otvaranje izložbe "Žene u NOB riječju i djelom* [*Opening Speech by Marija Prizmić at the Opening Ceremony of the exhibition "Women in the NOB in Word and Deed"*] 1978, I/38, MGR.

[35] Ibid., 3.

After briefly covering the history of women in the People's Liberation Struggle, the second half of the exhibition concerned women's role in the postwar Rijeka. According to this section of the exhibition, the great strides women made during the People's Liberation Struggle to overturn their "centuries old submission" immediately translated to their postwar position in society.[37] Throughout the 1950s, for instance, numerous direct measures were taken to improve women's everyday life, such as the new universal requirement for girls' primary education and the opening of free nurseries at local factories. Likewise, the exhibition celebrated women's integration into positions of power in the socialist state, holding positions on local management boards and even rising in the ranks of local branches of the Communist Party. Finally, the exhibition concluded with a long quote from one of Tito's final speeches in which he discussed the centrality of women's emancipation in the overall project of building a prosperous socialist society. The goal of gender equality was not simply an addition to the general goals of socialism but rather "of direct strategic importance" since "without real participation by women in social and political life, there would have been no path to democracy or the development of self-management."[38]

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[36] See Milica Truklja, *Tematski plan za izložbu "One su hodile, one su nosile* [Thematic Plan for the Exhibition "Those Who Walked, Those Who Carried], 1981, I/60, MGR, 4.
[37] Ibid., 7.

Women were therefore incorporated into the history of the socialist revolution and the newly formed socialist state according to the same pattern that other cultural and socio-economic developments were. The present socialist Yugoslav state, as guarantor and protector of the revolution itself, functioned as the vanguard of both modern socialism and of each its constituent nations' independence against the threat of fascist barbarism, foreign conquest, and traditional backwardness. Thus, the state was truly *revolutionary* in nature, led by the Communist Party as it worked to construct a new socialist society.

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The network of Revolutionary Museums established in Croatia between the 1950s and 1970s effectively transmitted a universal war memory based on the sacred tenet of Brotherhood and Unity that served to localize the popular nature of socialist revolution throughout Croatia while granting legitimacy to the present federative Yugoslav state. The fact that the museum professionals who ran Revolutionary Museums never outwardly questioned or complicated these central tenets tells us a great deal about this form of popular memory in socialist Yugoslavia. While political wars raged between Croatian and Serbian academics over war memory throughout the socialist era, they seldom affected the popular history and memory of the People's Liberation Struggle, and certainly not the revolutionary values embodied in the socialist state. Thus, while the process of exhibiting Brotherhood and Unity and the legacy of the Second World War in Croatian museums was done almost entirely at the republic and local level, it maintained a universal characteristic that, in essence, paralleled other forms of public history in

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[38] Ibid., 35.

Serbia, Slovenia, Bosnia, Macedonia, and Montenegro. The very fact that this form of popular memory remained intact in Revolutionary Museums up until the dissolution of Yugoslavia suggests a compelling counterpoint to the much argued conclusion that the Second World War remained a point of cleavage between Croats and Serbs that ultimately culminated the outbreak of civil war in the 1990s. At the very least, it demonstrates that Revolutionary Museums played a central role in constructing a narrative of the Second World War that, taken at face value, crafted a story of unified resistance out of a massively complex and paradoxical Yugoslav experience. At the level of popular history and memory, therefore, it appears that the legacy of the People's Liberation Struggle and the Second World War remained a powerful binding force, even as the socialist Yugoslav state began to unravel in the late 1980s.

Revolutionary Museums, of course, were not alone in displaying the history of the Second World War and its aftermath. Just about every history museum in Croatia held a collection on the People's Liberation Struggle, either dedicating a section of their permanent exhibition to it or hosting temporary thematic exhibitions on the topic. Likewise, a number of memorial museums were founded to memorialize significant events and figures in the history of the People's Liberation Struggle, such as the memorial museums dedicated to wartime communist conferences or popular martyrs such as Ivan Goran Kovačić and Rade Končar. Most significant of these memorial museums, however, was the Jasenovac Memorial Museum located at the site of the notorious Ustaša concentration camp that in the socialist era simultaneously served to reinforce the centralized memory of the Second World War while also posing an existential threat to it.

3.2 Memorializing Pan-Yugoslav Suffering: The Jasenovac Memorial Museum

Precisely due to its nature as a site that embodied the cruelty and anti-Serbian sentiments of the Croatian Ustaša regime, one would not necessarily expect the Jasenovac site to have served as a central location in the memorialization of Yugoslav Second World War memory. And yet, Jasenovac by the early 1970s functioned as one of the most significant socialist-era public history projects in Croatia. A great deal of controversy surrounded Jasenovac during the socialist era, of course, and continues to this day, ranging from vitriolic debates over the total number of victims to how the site has been employed in public commemorations for various political agendas. As such, some extended context is needed here before delving into the memorial project and museum under investigation.

The camp itself was run by the government of the wartime Independent State of Croatia, a Croatian fascist state brought to power by and allied with Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy between 1941 and 1945. At the heart of this state was the fascist Ustaša party and its leader, Ante Pavelić. During the interwar period, Pavelić's Ustaša party was not particularly significant, playing only a marginal role in a diverse and splintered Croatian Right. As the outbreak of war loomed, however, Pavelić's movement gained increased support as it led an internal Right revolt against the otherwise predominant Croatian Peasant Party from 1935 onward.[39] It was not until the Axis invasion and occupation of Yugoslavia, however, that Pavelić's Ustaša movement came into direct political power. As head of the new Independent State of Croatia state, Pavelić ruled directly as *Poglavnik* (the Croatian equivalent of *Der Führer* or *Il Duce*), overseeing nearly every facet of the state's operations in its newly acquired territory of present day Croatia

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[39] See Mark Biondich, "Vladko Maček and the Croat Political Right, 1928-1941," *Contemporary European History* 16, No. 2 (2007): 203-21.

(excluding large portions of Istria and Dalmatia annexed by Fascist Italy) and Bosnia-Herzegovina.[40]

During the short but brutal reign of Pavelić's Ustaše in the Independent State of Croatia, the territory's Serbs, Jews, and Roma were subject to a combination of state laws, deportations, and mass killings aimed at creating an ethnically "pure" Croatian state. In each case, the acts of the Independent State of Croatia regime unquestionably constituted genocide, while the Serbian population of the Independent State of Croatia in particular—at the time constituting roughly 30% of the total population—suffered the most under these genocidal policies. The scale of atrocities was massive, ranging from summary execution of entire Serbian villages and forced conversions to Catholicism to the systematic deportation and execution of tens of thousands of Serbs in wartime concentration camps.[41] The most notorious of these camps was Jasenovac where some of the most brutal forms of execution and torture were unleashed upon its prisoner population. Although the camp was loosely observed by Nazi authorities on select occasions, it was otherwise administered purely by Croatian state officials and therefore must be considered a truly "Croatian" entity.[42]

The total number of victims at Jasenovac has long been a controversial topic subject to various ideological manipulations. In fact, questions surrounding the total number of victims, perpetration, and responsibility for Jasenovac "created contradictions in the official universal narration" of the Second World War, resulting in fierce polemics between Serbian and Croatian historians in the late 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. The official Party figure was that roughly 700,000 prisoners perished at Jasenovac. This number is particularly striking considering that contemporary estimates of the total number of deaths in the entirety of Yugoslavia amounted to 1,700,000. At various points in the socialist-era, this number came under scrutiny, no more so than by Franjo Tuđman in the mid-1960s when in the capacity of a professional historian he claimed that no more than 40,000 people perished in all of the Independent State of Croatia camps combined.[43] Thus, even during the socialist-era, the question of perpetrator and victimhood posed a serious problem to the mythological frameworks of socialist Yugoslavia, namely a sense of common Yugoslav patriotism and suffering. While the number of victims is still under active debate, the general consensus by notable institutions such as the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum is that roughly 100,000 individuals perished at Jasenovac and surrounding sites.

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[40] Pavelić's relationship with Hitler and the Nazi regime began much like other wartime collaborator regimes throughout Europe. The Ustaša's racial ideology, for instance, closely mimicked that of the National Socialists, leading Hitler to believe he had a close ally in his attempt to eradicate the Jews of Europe. Pavelić's movement, however, soon proved unwieldy for this purpose. Far more than Jews, the Ustaše considered the Serbs to be the biggest threat to the Croatian nation and directed much of their genocidal policies at them. And since Serbs constituted roughly 30% of the population of the Independent State of Croatia, Pavelić's genocidal policy directed toward them was far more visible, chaotic, and brutal than Hitler approved. By the end of the war, Pavelić and Hitler's relationship had greatly deteriorated over precisely this issue.

[41] See Rory Yeomans, *Visions of Annihilation: The Ustasha Regime and the Cultural Politics of Fascism, 1941–1945* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013).

[42] See Karge, *Sećanje u kamenu*, 194.

The memorial site first opened in 1966 with the unveiling of the famous concrete flower monument designed by Bogdan Bogdanović (Image 3.3). According to Bogdanović, the monument was designed to represent "a sign of eternal … looking towards the light and the sun. Symbolically, towards life and freedom."[44] In the monument itself, there were no legends or explanations but rather just a short passage from Ivan Goran Kovačić's poem, "The Pit." Although the poem predominantly concerned the horrors committed by the Ustaše, the selection chosen for Bogdanović’s monument instead recalled a peaceful childhood memory of the protagonists’ family home:

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[43] See Vjeran Pavlakovic and Benedikt Perak, "How Does This Monument Make You Feel? Measuring Emotional Responses to War Memorials in Croatia" in *The Twentieth Century in European Memory: Transcultural Mediation and Reception*, ed. Tea Sindbæk Andersen and Barbara Törnquist-Plewa (Leiden: Brill Publishers, 2017): 277.

[44] See Gojko Jokić, *Spomen-Područje Jasenovac* [The Memorial Area Jasenovac] (Belgrade: NIŠRO Turistička Štampa, 1983), 23.

That simple happiness, the window’s glint;
Swallow and young; or windborne garden sweet -
Where? - The unhurried cradle’s drowsy tilt?
Or, by the threshold, sunshine at my feet?[45]

Certainly, the average Yugoslav visitor may have known the larger context of the passage: that the protagonist recalled his home as he inhaled the smell of his village burning. And yet the decision to present the visitor with this passage alone reflects Bogdanović’s themes of life and renewal. With the exception of a metal statue of a mangled body and a stretch of rail line, the remainder of the site similarly conformed to these themes with walkways along the river Sava and through grassy fields. And while there were a series of hollows and grassy mounds throughout that indicated the location of camp buildings, mass graves, and execution sites, their seamless integration into the landscape certainly did not connote a sense of horror or dread. This abstract commemoration form therefore avoided any direct moral condemnation of perpetrators, focusing instead on the themes of loss and future hope.

In addition, the Jasenovac memorial museum opened shortly thereafter in 1968. Conceptualized as both a memorial and educational project, the museum’s purpose differed somewhat from that of the actual memorial site. In addition to memorializing the victims of Jasenovac—as was the case with Bogdanović’s stone monument and the grassy mounds—the museum had the explicit goal of educating the general public, particularly the youth, about the horrors committed there.

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[45] Ibid., 22. English translation by Alec Brown. See Ivan Goran Kovačić, *The Pit*, trans. Alec Brown (Zagreb: Matica Hrvatska, 1961).

Much like the Revolutionary Museums discussed in the previous section, the first 1968 permanent exhibition of the Jasenovac memorial museum conformed to the centralized memory of the People's Liberation Struggle the Second World War. In particular, this exhibition worked within the mythological framework of the revolutionary state described in the previous section, posing Tito's Partisans as liberators and the Communist Party as guardians against future genocide. Unlike these other museums, however, the Jasenovac memorial museum was dedicated to the *victims of fascism* instead of the heroic socialist Yugoslav struggle to defeat it. Due to its nature as an extermination camp, and the fact that there was no significant escape attempt until the final days of the camp's functioning, museum professionals at Jasenovac were thus challenged to paint Jasenovac as a story of pan-Yugoslav suffering while also placing it within the broader pantheon of socialist heroism. The struggle to simultaneously memorialize victimhood, while celebrating triumph and hope, similarly challenged the designers of the 1988 exhibition and heavily affected their decision to focus on the theme of genocide in particular. Likewise, the current permanent exhibition, first opened in 2006, has been plagued by critiques centering precisely on this balance of commemoration and education, namely for its victim-centric approach and its lack of engagement with the ideology of the Ustaša regime.[46]

Conversations concerning the memorialization of Jasenovac began almost immediately after the Second World War at various levels of local, republic, and federal governance. As early as 1952, however, the project came under the direct supervision of the federal-level Committee for the Ordering and Marking of Historical Places, which quickly ended all local and republic level initiatives.[47] This did not, however, lead to a consensus about the site or how to approach memorializing it. This was due in large part to the fact that the committee sought to identify

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[46] For a more detailed conversation on the controversies surrounding the 2006 permanent exhibition, see Chapter 5.
[47] See Karge, *Sećanje u kamenu*, 118.

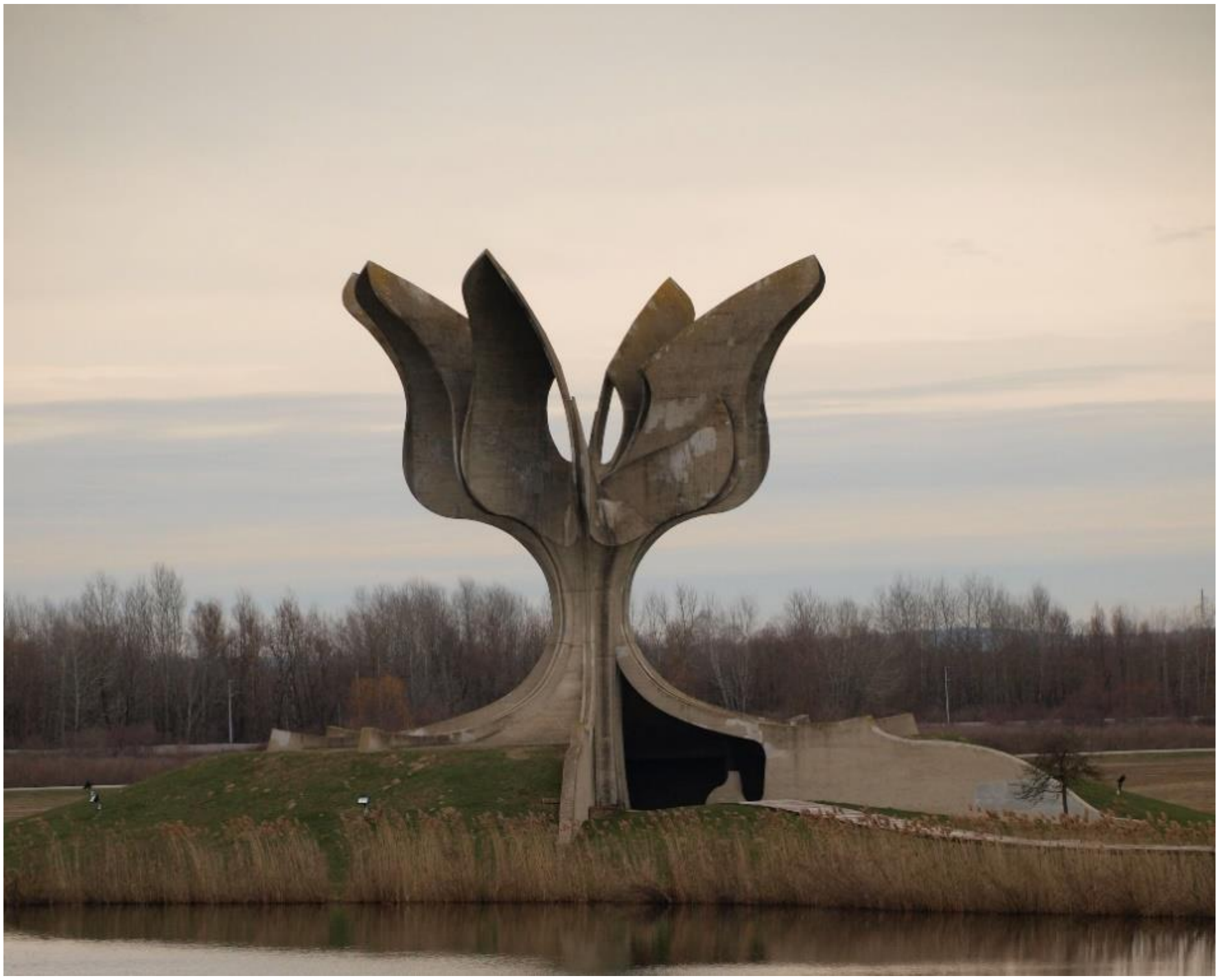

Image 3.3: Bogdan Bogdanović's stone flower monument at the Jasenovac memorial site, February 28th, 2010. The image is property of the Petar Milošević licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International license.

"pan-Yugoslav places of memory" that embodied a heroic memory of the Second World War focused on the victories of Partisan forces and the role of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in defeating fascism.[48] Therefore, Jasenovac, as the site of a former concentration camp in which ethnic Croats committed genocide against ethnic Serbs, posed a particular problem for the committee. On the one hand, it was an obvious choice since it so clearly represented the brutality of fascism. On the other hand, as a concentration camp established and run independently of Nazi Germany by an indigenous fascist movement, Jasenovac presented a complicated reality of local collaboration with the potential to undermine the idea of Brotherhood and Unity.

Throughout the 1950s therefore there was much discussion about whether or not this site was appropriate to utilize as a place of pan-Yugoslav memory. Among the various critiques made by members of the committee, such as its viability as a tourist site, two critiques in particular stand out. First, members questioned the extent to which focusing on the theme of victimhood and suffering was appropriate. In general, the committee never considered the suffering of the civilian population "at the same rank" as sites of Partisan battles or locations where Party elites sought refuge or organized. According to one member, therefore, creating an entire memorial site premised upon common Yugoslav suffering was too broad and arbitrary to function powerfully. And secondly, members were well aware of the challenges Jasenovac posed to a centralized narrative of unified Yugoslav resistance since the perpetrators were not foreign enemy soldiers but rather Ustaša Croats.[49]

Before these concerned were ever settled, the Central Committee was recessed in 1960 and officially abolished in 1963. Just before this, however, the committee had approved a Croatian republic-level initiative by the republic branch of the Association of Allied Veterans of the People's Liberation War (SUBNOR). While the committee granted the republic initiative funding for the early conceptual design, the remainder of the project was guided and funded at the republic level. Tellingly, despite the fact that the project came to fruition under the guidance of a republic-level institution, the concerns voiced during the 1950s in the Central Committee over how to handle the issue of Croatian perpetrators foretold one of the central narrative points I have identified in 1968 permanent exhibition: in order for Jasenovac to function as a pan-Yugoslav memory site, the question of perpetration and culpability had to be answered with simplistic clarity by placing all blame on "fascist terror" while framing the Ustaše as little more than Hitler's puppets. Painting the Ustaša movement as therefore *foreign* to Croatia, this narrative device effectively avoided indicting the Croatian nation itself and instead framed dissenting Croats as equal victims to Serbs, Jews, Roma, and communists. Likewise, the 1968 exhibition repeatedly inserted the Partisan legacy into the story of Jasenovac by framing the Party as liberator and protector of all Yugoslavs from fascist terror. This portrayal of the Ustaša movement as fundamentally foreign thus allowed for a seemingly contradictory conclusion: that Jasenovac, one of the most horrific testaments to Croatian fascism, could actually function as *celebration* of Croatia's anti-fascist heritage.

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[48] Ibid., 98.
[49] Ibid., 128-132.

3.2.1 Jasenovac as a Site of Socialist Pilgrimage: the 1968 Permanent Exhibition

This complex and contradictory conclusion was first envisioned and put into practice under Ksenija Dešković whose 1968 exhibition lasted until 1988. In addition to its narrative qualities, Dešković's exhibition is also important as an example of how Croatian museological theories played out in practice, more specifically, how object-based displays and the concept of thematic whole exhibitions created a site of sacred socialist pilgrimage. The exhibition space itself was relatively small: a single rectangular hall of roughly 180 square meters. This limited space presented Dešković with a particular challenge: how to simultaneously present an educational narrative of the Jasenovac camp while also giving fair space for the large collection of original objects collected from the site. To this end, Dešković oriented her design around a two-tiered exhibition that lined the walls of the hallway. The bottom tier consisted of glass vitrines that displayed various original objects from the camp, while the top tier consisted of a combination of legends, photos, and numerous photocopies of documents relating to Ustaša policies and the Jasenovac camp itself. The exhibition therefore contained more original objects than other similar museums. And yet, the ways in which these objects were employed is quite indicative of the museological concepts that influenced Dešković: loosely and haphazardly displayed side by side in glass cabinets without dedicated legends, objects such as eye glasses, shaving blades, and silverware were employed merely to accompany the exhibitions thematic narrative and text-based conclusions rather than dialectically informing them. Put simply, the displayed were important only insomuch as they reinforced the moral lessons presented to the visitor through the more visible, graphic, and descriptive images and legends that hovered over them (Image 3.4).

The original planning documents make Dešković's narrative concept quite clear. First, the exhibition sought to explain the horrors of Jasenovac as solely "the products of a monstrous fascist ideology and regime … founded upon the lowest animal instincts and emotional exhortations (*emociji propovljedajući)* to annihilate entire nations." And second, the exhibition was designed to demonstrate that the struggle and victory over fascism was first and foremost accomplished by the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, "the carrier of humane

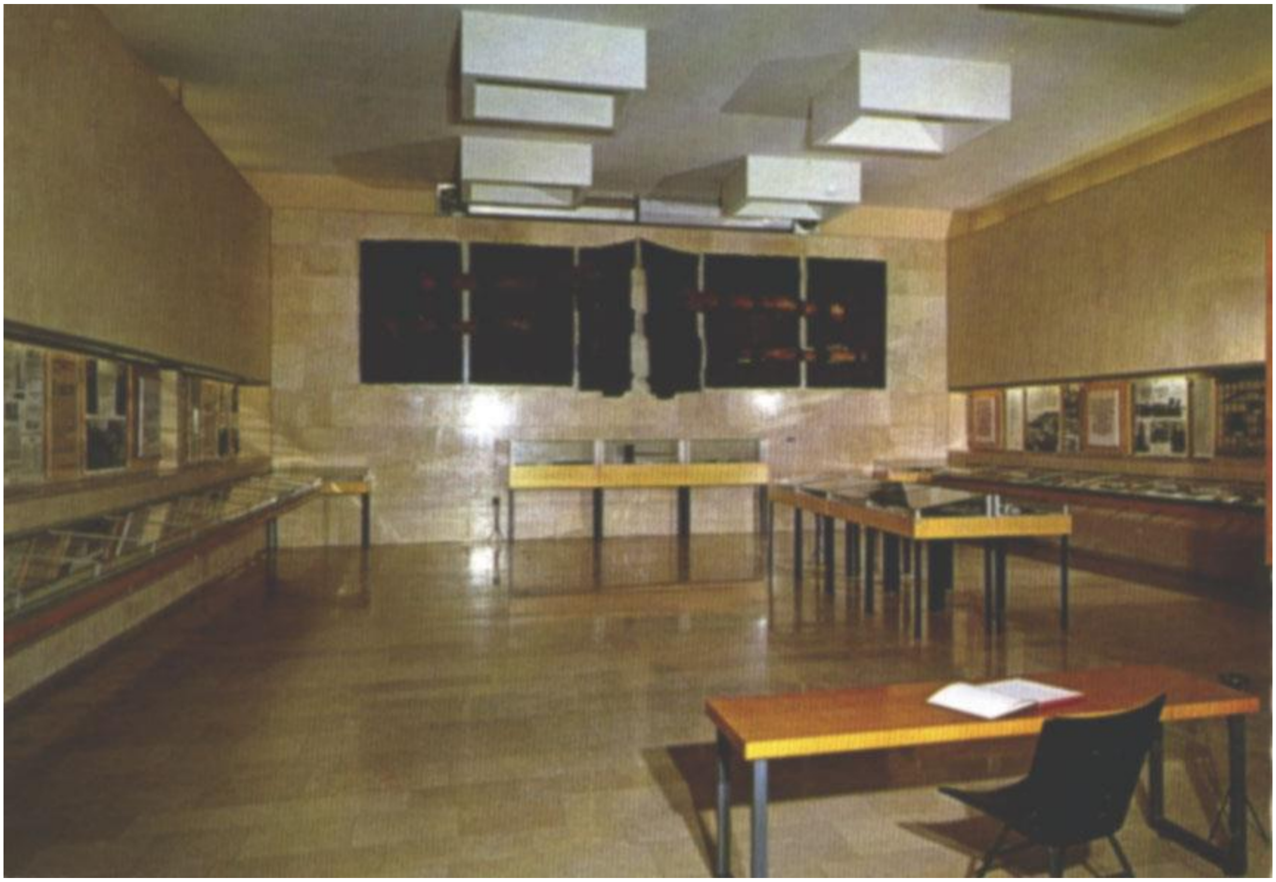

Image 3.4: Permanent exhibition for the Jasenovac memorial museum, circa 1968. The image is property of the Jasenovac Memorial Site.

Marxist ideology."[50] In this sense then, Jasenovac was the site of a dramatic ideological war between fascism and communism, while the Croatian roots of the Ustaša regime were pushed to the margins of the story. Likewise, the exhibition framed the victims of Jasenovac as pan-Yugoslav in nature. While the overwhelming of victims were, in fact, Serbs, followed by Jews and Roma, Dešković went to great lengths to emphasize the deaths of Croatian patriots and Yugoslav Partisans at the hands of the Ustaša and the Independent State of Croatia, effectively equalizing all Yugoslav suffering.[51]

This exhibition was also laid out in clear chronological order so that the visitor would begin with the rise of the Independent State of Croatia and the Ustaša before learning about the camp itself. While this strategy is not inherently problematic, the ways in which this initial part of the exhibition contextualized the Independent State of Croatia and the Ustaša bear mentioning as they set the tone for one of the underlying arguments of the exhibition: that the Ustaša were first and foremost fascist; that they only came to power due to Nazi intervention, and not popular support; and that they therefore did not represent a truly homegrown movement but rather a fundamentally foreign ideology.

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[50] See Ksenija Dešković, *Idejna koncepcija stalne izložbe muzeja u Jasenovcu* [*Conceptual Idea of the Permanent Exhibition of the Museum at Jasenovac*], 1967, SPJ, 1.

[51] As Ljiljana Radonić puts it, "the history of the Jasenovac camp memorial demonstrates the tension between heroic and victim memory … In 1966 Bogdan Bogdanović's giant flower monument was inaugurated, and a memorial museum opened two years later. The abstract flower symbol that opens toward the sky stood for hope and the future. It does not accuse anyone nor does it categorize the victims ethnically. Another suggestion at the time was to install a huge black skull, but this did not fit the "brotherhood and unity" narrative. In Tito's Yugoslavia, Jasenovac on the one hand remained an ambivalent *lieu de mémoire* since it was taboo to assert that only Croats had committed crimes there, while Serbs, Jews, and Roma were the largest victim groups. On the other hand, it became a central site of memory for victims "of all Yugoslav nations," a site with tourist infrastructure, souvenirs (postcards, pins, or key ring pendants), and other forms of kitsch, visited by 50,000 people in 1985 on the fortieth anniversary of the inmates' attempted breakout in 1945." See Radonić, "Equalizing Jesus's, Jewish, and Croat Suffering–Post-Socialist Politics of History in Croatia" in *Of Red Dragons and Evil Spirits: Post-Communist Historiography between Democratization and the New Politics of History*, ed. Oto Luthar (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2017), 38.

For instance, the first set of images and legends presented to the visitor consisted of Ante Pavelić next to photographs of Italian and German occupier forces terrorizing Croatian villages. Bookending the image of Pavelić was an excerpt from one of his speeches that in this context further demonstrated the foreign nature of the Ustaša movement: "The Croatian Ustaša movement did not begin today but rather ten years ago by the side of our friends, by the side of the great Italian and German peoples, and therefore today the mighty and huge military of the great figures Hitler and Mussolini."[52] This, combined with images of Italian soldiers burning a village and German soldiers enacting reprisals against Croatian civilians by hanging at Lekenik, effectively demonstrated the fundamental foreignness of the Ustaša regime.

Continuing forward in the exhibition, the visitor encountered a quote by the predominant Ustaša racial theorist, Dr. Mladen Lorković, who, in line with Nazi Aryan theory, proclaimed the Croats were in fact not of Slavic origin but rather Germanic Goth. Considering the centrality of South Slavism in Yugoslav era mythology, Lorković's claim would likely have struck a nerve, demonstrating just how absurdly alien Ustaša racial theory was. This then was followed by a legend describing the Ustaša's use of terror against the Croatian people to suppress all "anti-fascist, democratic, and progressive forces [including] the vanguard Partisans," once again reinforcing the notion that the Ustaše were enemies of the Croatian nation.[53]

In addition to presenting the foreignness of the Ustaša movement, the exhibition also highlighted the role of the Roman Catholic Church and its clergy in the Independent State of Croatia and Ustaša movement. While not the equivalent of describing fascism as foreign, this focus on institutional Catholicism conveniently condemned an early enemy of the communist party without implicating the entirety of the Croatian nation.[54] In the section titled, “The Ustaša campaign against patriots, communists, Serbs, and Jews,” for instance, the visitor was presented with a chilling quote by the Catholic priest Mate Mugeša blessing new Ustaša soldiers:

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[52] See Ksenija Dešković, *Tematski plan za postav muzeja u Jasenovcu* [*Thematic Plan for the Exhibition of the Museum at Jasenovac*], 1967, SPJ, 1.
[53] Ibid., 1.

> Hitherto, we have worked for the Catholic faith with prayer book and cross, but now we have arrived at a time that we work with gun and revolver. We will evict and annihilate the Serbian people in Croatia, and it will be joyous when we can distribute Serbian lands to Croats. The Ustaše unmercifully battle and annihilate those who are not faithful to the Independent State of Croatia and its leader and creator Ante Pavelić. Look, people, at the 16 brave Ustaše who have 16,000 bullets and who will kill 16,000 Serbs.[55]

Likewise, the following section’s accompanying legend outlined “the clerico-Ustaša politics” of the movement that sought “the annihilation of the existence of the Serbian people in the Independent State of Croatia,” bookended by images of a Franciscan delegation with Ante Pavelić, a leaflet calling for the “re-baptism” of Serbs, and a photo of forced conversions in Bosanska Dubica. Finally, the section ended with a legend explaining that these forced conversions were often just for show and a convenient means to gather groups of Serbs before massacring them, as was the case in the now infamous Glina massacre where 700 Serbs were gathered in a church, slaughtered, and dumped into mass graves.[56]

Regarding the nature of victims under the Independent State of Croatia and at the Jasenovac camp, the exhibition went to great lengths to elevate the suffering of communists and Croatian “patriot” dissenters to the same level of Serbian and Jewish suffering.[57] This strategy had the dual purpose of infusing the communist movement into the story of Jasenovac while also equalizing the suffering of different Yugoslav peoples, namely Croats, with Serbs and Jews. For instance, in the section dealing with Ustaša persecution and genocide, the first image the visitor encountered was of Ante Pavelić in front of a giant map of Europe containing the phrase "Europe in battle against Bolshevism" followed by a quote declaring that all Home Guards, Croatian Youths, and Ustaše would stop the spread of "Jewish Marxian science."[58] Immediately after this image and quote, the exhibition contained a legend describing the "crazed lynching" of patriots, communists, Serbs, and Jews alike.

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[54] While the relationship between the Catholic Church in Croatia and the Communist Party improved greatly after the 1950s, as Perić demonstrates in his work, *Balkan Idols,* the fact remains that religion remained secondary to official socialist Yugoslav values. Thus, emphasizing the role of the Catholic church and clergy in this exhibition functioned to distance proper Yugoslav patriots in Croatia from the forces of traditionalism and nationalism in Croatia.

[55] See Dešković, *Tematski plan,* 5.

[56] Ibid., 6.

[57] Notably, with a few minor exceptions, the suffering of Croatia’s Roma population was largely ignored in this exhibition.

Undeniably, the exhibition did directly engage with the Serbian and Jewish genocides. Beginning with the infamous quote by Mile Budak, "one part of the Serbs will be killed, another removed, and the remaining converted to Catholic faith and in this way transformed into a Croat," the exhibition displayed a barrage of objects, photocopies, legends, and photos documenting the persecution of Serbs and Jews. In particular, the colored identity badges that Serbs and Jews were forced to wear were displayed with small legends beneath copies of military reports, announcements, and laws that documented the killings of Serbs and Jews. One striking image of Serbian peasants forced to dig their own graves certainly proves that this section of the exhibition did not shy away from documenting these two genocides.

The subsequent displays, however, delved into the persecution of Croatian dissenters and Partisans without any distinction between what happened to them—fundamentally political persecutions—and the genocide against Serbs and Jews. For example, towards the end of this section on Serbian and Jewish persecution, the exhibition documented a late 1930s agreement between the Croatian *Ban* (Governor) Šubašić and the Yugoslav prewar authorities to turn over all communists and "progressive citizens" to the Ustaše for later liquidation. Likewise, the last images and legends of this section concerned reprisals against Serbian and Croatian villagers who cooperated with the Partisans, detailing the death of forty five people in one instance while displaying an image of Ustaša troops setting a communist sympathizer village aflame.[59] Thus, by the time the visitor got to the sections of the exhibition dealing with the actual Jasenovac camp, they had already—in theory, at least—internalized a narrative in which the Independent State of Croatia and Ustaše had equally targeted Croatian dissenters and communists as they did Serbs and Jews.

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[58] See Dešković, *Tematski plan*, 4.

Dešković's "Yugoslavization" of collective suffering under the Independent State of Croatia therefore set the stage for a similar understanding of the Jasenovac camp itself. This portion of the exhibition began in dramatic fashion with images of the camp's landscape next to the famous line from Dante's Inferno: "Abandon all hope, ye who enter here." Immediately following, the visitor would see an Ustaša document that dictated all captured communists be sent directly to Jasenovac for internment and execution. Likewise, images of mass graves, hangings, bodies floating in the river Sava, and bloodied children framed a legend that described the mass killings of Serbs, Croatian communists, Jews, Muslims, and Roma. An array of original objects used in the camps to brutalize prisoners accompanied these images, such as daggers, clamps used to hang prisoners from trees, chains, iron plates, and an aluminum tray inscribed by a prisoner with "no water."[60] Tellingly, in a following section devoted to documenting individual prisoners and their experiences, only three individuals were discussed in any detail. Of the three, two were communists, Jurica Bocak and Ozren Novosel, while the third was a certain Slavko Brill, killed for "knowing too much about the camp."[61]

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[59] Ibid., 10-11.
[60] Ibid., 17.
[61] Ibid., 19.

In similar fashion, these sections concerning the camp itself also highlighted the foreign fascist nature of the camp by pointing to its direct connection with Hitler and the Nazi movement. For instance, the exhibition employed images of Ustaša and German soldiers side by side, “surrounded by the things they stole from the prisoners,” as well as Ustaša functionaries casually conversing with Nazi representatives at the camp. And in case the message was still lost on the visitor, Dešković made sure to explain that “cutthroat” Ustaše were fully “under the control of the Gestatpo,”[62] as opposed to the mostly independent force that they actually were. Additionally, this section pointed out the great lengths to which the Ustaše went to hide what they were doing at the camp from the Croatian public. Therefore, the Ustaše’s attempts to “negate the truth about the horrors” of the camp, while also directly taking orders from the Nazi authorities, demonstrated to the visitor just how far removed the Independent State of Croatia was from the will of its populace.

Lastly, the 1968 permanent exhibition concluded with a number of sections dedicated specifically to the communist party. Much as Dešković sought to elevate communist suffering to be equal with Serb and Jewish suffering, these last sections amplified the impact of the Party inside Jasenovac and the extent to which the Partisans sought to liberate it. These sections also contained a glaring lack of objects—original or replica—on display and instead consisted mostly of legends, images, a few scattered documents, and an artist’s rendition. For instance, in the section committed to “the work of the Party to help detainees of the camp,” there were only two paper documents to display, both communist letters smuggled into the smaller but equally brutal Stara Gradiška camp. The next section, “the work of the communists: prisoners in the camp,” similarly contained no objects at all but rather consisted solely of a legend explaining the work of communists recruiting in the camp by “developing comradery, boosting morale, and mutual economic help.”[63] Finally, the exhibition concluded by describing the organized escape in April 1945 by the most of the remaining 1073 prisoners, the majority of who were members of the communist party with only a few non-members (*vanpartijaca*) involved. A photo of three corpses at the entrance of the prison, as well as an artist’s rendition of the prisoners breaching the camp, further dramatized the escape as a communist victory, while the last images of the exhibition showed the road on which the Ustaše retreated from Jasenovac, ruins of the site, and soldiers from the 21st Serb Division of the Partisans who liberated the camp.

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[62] Ibid., 13.

Including the Partisans in the story of Jasenovac would not be so striking if it were not for the reality that their presence at the camp was fairly negligible. The decision by the Partisans to not mount a full offensive against Jasenovac is subject to much debate.[64] The fact remains, however, that Partisan forces never made it to Jasenovac until 1945 despite knowing details of the atrocities committed there as early as 1942. Likewise, while the communist party certainly had an ongoing presence in the camp and an official Party organ committed to the camp (The Committee for Assistance in Camps), there was no organized escape attempt until the final days of the camp’s operation as Partisan forces closed in. Dešković’s decision to close the exhibition with a heroic narrative of communist organization and intervention therefore seems to have been guided far more by ideological interests than historical reality.

The 1968 exhibition remained in place throughout almost the entirety of the socialist era where it was regularly visited by schoolchildren and tourists alike. For almost two decades, these visitors would have been exposed to a narrative in which an indigenous Croatian death camp somehow served to celebrate the heroism and legitimacy of the Yugoslav Communist Party. The reality of genocide against Serbs, Jews, and Roma certainly would not have been lost. And yet, if taken at face value, this exhibition also would have taught visitors that dissenting Croats and communists suffered equally, and that therefore Jasenovac embodied a fundamentally foreign campaign of terror against all the peoples of Yugoslavia located in the Independent State of Croatia. This narrative, of course, fit quite nicely within the broader state mythology of Brotherhood and Unity that emphasized pan-Yugoslav unity and solidarity above all else. But unlike most Revolutionary Museums that focused on celebrating heroic deeds, the 1968 Jasenovac exhibition was one of the few Croatian examples of employing victimhood and suffering to this end, a compelling testament to just how pervasive and powerful Brotherhood and Unity was in the history and memory of the Second World War.

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[63] Ibid., 21.

[64] For a detailed and fair discussion on the recent debate surrounding the Partisans and their decision to not move on the camp until 1945, see the Jasenovac Memorial Site website. “Why did the Partisans not Liberate Jasenovac Concentration Camp?,” *Jasenovac Memorial Site*, http://www.jusp-jasenovac.hr/Default.aspx?sid=7619.

3.2.2. Collapse of the Yugoslav Narrative: the 1988 Permanent Exhibition

By the late 1980s, however, the narrative of Brotherhood and Unity began to unravel at Jasenovac. In place of a story emphasizing pan-Yugoslav suffering and the heroic role of the communists Partisans, a new 1988 permanent exhibition instead sought to elevate the genocide against Serbs committed at Jasenovac above all else. While the original exhibition did not, in fact, accurately represent Serbs' disproportionate suffering under the Ustaše, we should not read the 1988 exhibition as simply a remedy. Rather, we must consider the context of the late 1980s in Yugoslavia in which growing nationalist tensions over official memory of the Second World War became increasingly publicized and debated, particularly so between Croats and Serbs. In particular, the idea of Brotherhood and Unity, which shielded Yugoslavia from the reality of wartime "internecine slaughter of civilians and revenge killings" along primarily ethnic lines, began to unravel in the years following Tito's death.[65] Serbian and Croatian academics and politicians alike tore open these old wounds as they attempted to gain legitimacy by playing upon nationalist sympathies in the chaotic politics of post-Tito Yugoslavia. Not surprisingly, Jasenovac was increasingly referenced in these public and vitriolic debates, either to support Serbian grievances over unsettled wartime atrocities, or to reinforce Croatian claims of political persecution under the socialist regime. The 1988 exhibition thus came about at moment when it had the potential to do grave damage to the foundations of the Yugoslav state.

The decision to renovate the permanent exhibition at Jasenovac followed a 1985 visit by members of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Science who expressed concern over some missing "first-class documents," which likely indicated a sense that they lacked representation of the full extent of Serbian suffering.[66] Over the following three years, Dragoje Lukić and Antun Miletić designed a new permanent exhibition that opened in April 1988. Miletić in particular is worth discussing as he was a long established historian of Jasenovac who, as a member of Serbian Academy of Arts and Science, wrote extensively on the Serbian genocide in the Independent State of Croatia. Perhaps more revealing, Miletić is still heavily involved with the Jasenovac Research Institute based in Brooklyn, New York, an institution whose problematic take on Jasenovac can be seen in its current homepage listing of 300,000 to 700,000 victims, as well as its listed goal "to mobilize the Serbian people, and all progressive political forces worldwide, in a political struggle to end the war currently being waged against the Serbs."[67] Suffice it to say, therefore, Miletić's involvement in planning the 1988 exhibition represents a clear shift towards abandoning the pan-Yugoslav aspect of the original 1968 exhibition in favor of emphasizing the suffering of ethnic Serbs in particular.

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[65] See Pavlakovic and Perak, "How Does this Monument," 273.

[66] See Nataša Jovičić, "Jasenovac Memorial Museum's Permanent Exhibition - The Victim as an Individual," *Review of Croatian History* 2, no.1 (2006): 295.

[67] See "Statement of Principles," *Jasenovac Research Institute*, http://www.jasenovac.org/statement_of_principles.php?lang=en.

One notable change made in the new exhibition was the addition of a third horizontal tier composed of large friezes (173cm x 193cm) showing mutilated bodies, mass executions, forced detentions, and other crimes committed by the Ustaše. These images lined the top tier of each side wall of the exhibition as a sort of photo essay that, according to Lukić and Miletić, would "visually represent the drama of the Jasenovac camp."[68] As such, these photos contained no accompanying text but rather hung side by side in order to capture the essence of what took place at Jasenovac (Image 3.5). As demonstrated by Nataša Mataušić, however, only two of these nineteen images were actually from Jasenovac. Three others came from the Lepoglava prison camp with the images intentionally cropped to leave out their original caption indicating their location. The remaining images came from arrests and deportations of Serbs in and around Kozara in Bosnia.[69] The choice to have the most visibly dominant aspect of the exhibition consist of predominantly images outside of the camp itself tells us a great deal about Lukić and Miletić's conceptual approach. Rather than the exhibition focusing on the particularities of Jasenovac, the camp came second to the larger story of Serbian genocide, in essence functioning as a synecdoche of the Ustaša regime's atrocities.

Lukić and Miletić also differed greatly in their presentation through their willingness to engage with—and arguably, exaggerate—the support for the Ustaša movement from broader segments of Croatian society while only marginally engaging with the larger context of Italian

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[68] See Dragoje Lukić and Antun Miletić, *Tematsko-ekspozicioni plan sa materializacijom stalne postavke Memorijalnog muzeja "koncentracioni logor Jasenovac 1941-1945"* [*Thematic-Exhibition Plan with the Materialization of the Permanent Exhibition of the Memorial Museum "Concentration Camp Jasenovac 1941-1945*], 1988, SPJ, 1.

[69] See Nataša Mataušić, *Jasenovac: Fotomonografija* [*Jasenovac: Photo Monograph*] (Jasenovac: Spomen-Područje Jasenovac, 2008), 20.

Fascism, Nazism, and occupation. This inverted narrative seriously challenged the 1968 approach to painting the Ustaša as a fundamentally foreign threat to all Yugoslavs. Instead, the Independent State of Croatia was first and foremost a Croat creation that was supported by the highest level of Croatian politics and the Catholic Church. The opening section of the exhibition made this clear.

For one, Lukić and Miletić positioned the rise of the Ustaše within the context of the 1930s Croatian opposition parties who pushed back against the Serb-dominated politics of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. In particular, they linked the Ustaša movement with the much more moderate Croatian Peasant Party, making the rather dubious claim that its leader, Vladko Maček, granted their full support to the Ustaša takeover. Interestingly, the only evidence they provided of this was a single photograph titled in the planning document simply as "Keeping Up with the Ustaše: Maček's 'Protection' — Full Support."[70] Due to a lack of further explanation of the image, and the fact there remains very little visual documentation of both the 1968 and 1988 exhibitions, it is impossible to know what this image contained for certain. Presumably, the image showed Maček in conversation with Pavelić or in a similar situation demonstrating his "full support" of the Ustaše. The fact that there was only one image, however, is quite telling, considering how willing Lukić and Miletić were to employ an array of photos in their exhibition in general.

The reality of Maček and the Ustaše was, of course, much more complicated than represented in this section of the exhibition. As Mark Biondich demonstrates, Maček and the Peasant Party—as well as other members of the diverse Croatian opposition—had indeed cooperated with Ante Pavelić in the early 1930s as part of a united opposition bloc. By 1935,

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[70] See Lukić and Miletić, *Tematsko-ekspozicioni plan,* 5.

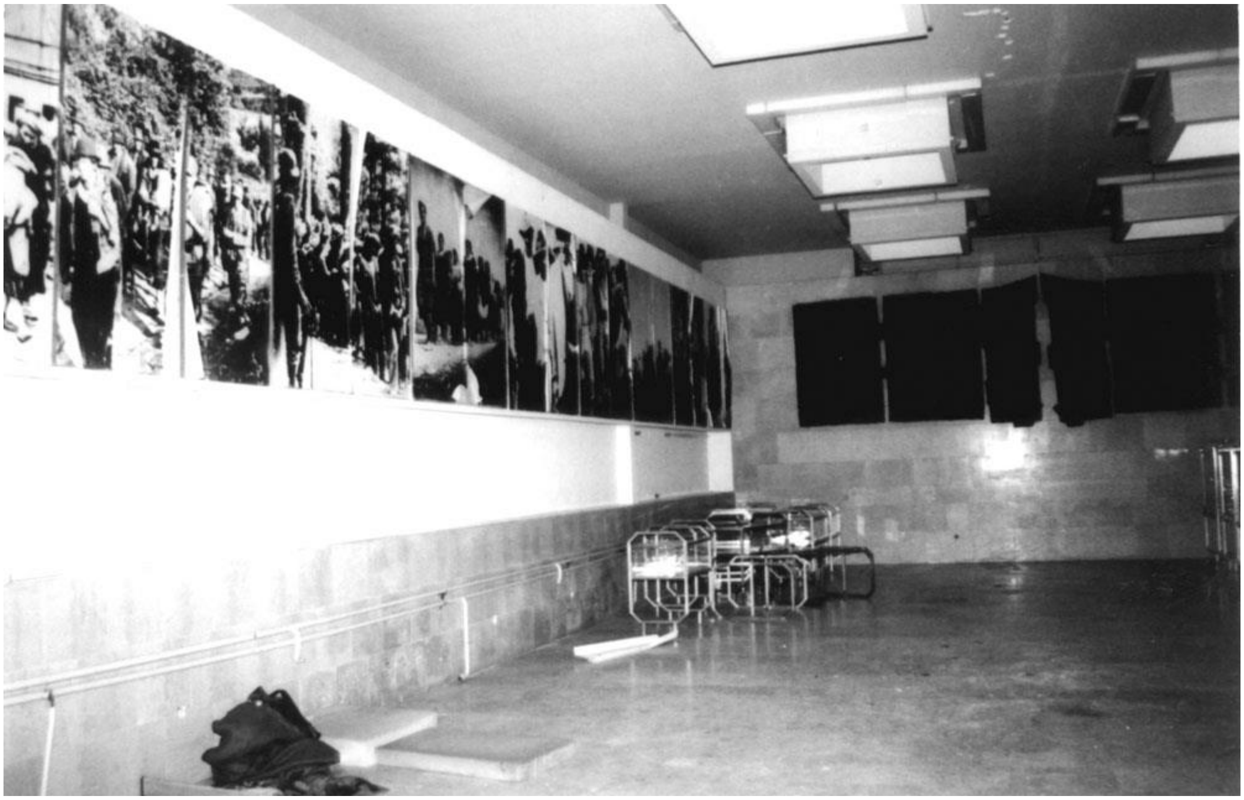

Image 3.5: Permanent exhibition for the Jasenovac memorial museum, circa 1991. This image depicts the state of the exhibition after it had been ransacked by Croatian and Serbian forces. No images of the permanent exhibition in its proper condition are known to exist. The image is property of the Jasenovac Memorial Site.

however, Pavelić and the Ustaše had broken ties with Maček and the Peasant Party for their apparent lack of commitment to an independent Croatian state. In particular, Maček's decision to work with the Serbian opposition within the context of a reformed Yugoslavia was seen as a betrayal to the Pavelić's radical nationalism and unyielding calls for full Croatian independence. This, combined with Maček's 1939 negotiation with the Yugoslav premier, Dragiša Cvetković, led Pavelić to publicly accuse Maček of betraying Croatdom and committing treason. Thus, by the time Pavelić and the Ustaše came to power, Maček's ties to the movement had been fully severed. Perhaps most shocking about Lukić and Miletić's depiction of Maček in this opening legend was their decision to leave out a very crucial detail in the context of Jasenovac: between October 1941 and March 1942, Maček himself was imprisoned in Jasenovac for his supposed betrayal to the national cause, while spending the rest of the war under house arrest.[71]

Secondly, Lukić and Miletić emphasized the support of Pavelić and the Independent State of Croatia offered by Catholic Church in Croatia, focusing in particular on the figure of Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac. Much like with Maček, the opening text accused Stepinac of granting full support to the Pavelić and the Independent State of Croatia, in essence demonstrating unified Croatian political and religious support for the new regime. Among the numerous images and documents in this section were copies of Catholic publications celebrating prominent Ustaša figures such as Slavko Kvaternik, as well as various images of Stepinac side by side with members of the Ustaša leadership. While the role of the Catholic Church was well documented in the 1968 exhibition, the decision to now focus heavily on Stepinac is quite significant. In one of the earliest and most important show trials in the first years of communist rule, Stepinac was tried for his supposed collaboration with the Ustaše.[72] He was quickly found guilty in 1946 and charged with a lifetime sentence, later commuted to house arrest, where he remained until his death in 1960.[73] Throughout the socialist period, official memory of Stepinac confirmed this ruling, although his memory was often invoked in various Croatian nationalist and religious circles, particularly so in the late 1970s and 1980s.[74] And to this day, Croatian politicians and clergy alike herald Stepinac as a Croatian martyr who embodies the persecutions of Croats under Yugoslav communism, even having a public memorial tomb in the Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in central Zagreb. The decision therefore to focus heavily on Stepinac in the opening section of this exhibition, particularly so in the late 1980s when memories of Stepinac were increasingly politicized, demonstrates Lukić and Miletić's design to undermine the narrative of pan-Yugoslav suffering in favor of a more blatant Croatian contextualization of Jasenovac and the Independent State of Croatia.

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[71] See Biondich, "Vladko Maček."

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[72] The extent to which Stepinac directly worked with the Ustaše authorities, and more specifically, the extent to which Stepinac gave his tacit approval for the genocidal policies of the regime, has long been subject to debate on both sides of the political spectrum. On one side, Stepinac represents a Croatian and Catholic martyr who did everything he could to stop the Ustaše's genocidal acts against Jews, Roma, and Serbs. On the other, Stepinac embodies the support granted to the Ustaša by the Catholic Church in Croatia. In reality, Stepinac's actions under the Ustaša regime reflected both cooperation and opposition, although his lack of immediate and forthright action against the Ustaše's genocidal campaigns rightfully deserves criticism. According to John Lampe, "Stepinac did not encourage, much less initiate, the criminal propaganda and acts spreading outside of Zagreb. But he did … welcome the new regime openly and enthusiastically, congratulating Kvaternik on his proclamation of the NDH two days afterwards and meeting formally with Pavelić." And while Stepinac did increasingly voice his concerns internally over the atrocities committed against Jews and Serbs, his lack of any sort of public denunciation against the horrors committed by the Ustaše certainly suggests he was complicit in the events. See John R. Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History: Twice There Was A Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 209. Likewise, Vjekoslav Perica concludes that "Stepinac never convened the national bishop's conference in order to condemn Croatian fascists' crimes, although he, for various reasons, did privately criticize the Croatian regime's excessive brutality. Nor did the Cardinal ever discipline any of the numerous priests and prominent Catholic lay leaders who served as the discredited regime's officials some of whom actively participated in drawing up the regime's racist laws, which led to the massive persecution of the hated ethnic groups and political opponents. Finally, … [he] never made any public statement of regret or apology regarding the crimes for which the Croatian World War II regime was found responsible." See Perica, *Balkan Idols*, 229.

[73] See Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History*, 229.

[74] See Perica, *Balkan Idols*, 151-152.

The second section of the exhibition covered the genocidal acts committed by the Ustaše between 1941 and 1945. Unlike in the previous exhibition that attempted to paint all persecution in the Independent State of Croatia on equal footing, Lukić and Miletić referred to the persecution of the Jewish and Roma population only in passing in the accompanying text. Instead, this section focused almost entirely on the Serbian genocide, while any reference to Croatian patriots or Partisans, as found extensively in the 1968 exhibition, was strikingly absent. For instance, the legend gave no details about laws or acts committed against Jews or Roma. Meanwhile, the Serbian experience was explained in detail as the "entirety of the Serbian population" were removed from state positions, limited in their movements, banned from using Cyrillic even on their tombstones, forced to change the names of their villages and towns, and forbidden to print books in Serbian.[75] While all of the above applied to Jews and Roma as well, the visitor, without prior knowledge or context, would be left with an uneven impression of the nature of persecution against each ethnic group. Similarly, the objects displayed in this section—solely photographs or copied documents—disproportionately referenced Serbs over Jews and Roma. While Serbs were represented in 13 of the 19 objects, Jews were represented in only 5, while there were zero references to Roma to be found.[76] Thus, much as this new exhibition abandoned the narrative of the Ustaša as a fundamentally foreign ideology, it also elevated Serbian suffering to the forefront of the Ustaše's policies of ethnic cleansing.

From here, the rest of the 1988 exhibition did not differ greatly from the previous one, although one still finds evidence of this shifted narrative throughout. When explaining the construction of the camp, for example, Lukić and Miletić did in fact contextualize it within the broader framework of Italian and German occupation. And yet, they made sure to emphasize that those camps run by Ustaše were the worst of the worst, locations where “outpourings of the lowest passions” took place, and where “everything pathological and criminal that characterized the Ustaša movement” culminated.[77] In order to demonstrate this particular level of barbarism, Lukić and Miletić opted to display an array of weapons used to murder inmates, such as knives, adzes, axes, hammers, and iron bars, as well as objects related to other methods of killing such as ovens, boilers, and empty aluminum dishes representing death by starvation and thirst. While these objects did not differ greatly from those chosen for the 1968 exhibition—at least not in nature—many more were included in this exhibition than the previous one, while an even greater number of images depicting various atrocities were added here as well.

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[75] See Lukić and Miletić, *Tematsko-ekspozicioni plan*, 5.
[76] Ibid., 6-7.

Similarly, while Lukić and Miletić by no means ignored the role of the Communist Party in their exhibition, they did reduce its representation overall. Throughout the exhibition in places where the Partisans were previously mentioned alongside Serbs, Jews, and Roma, they were now left out. In particular, the 1988 exhibition did not attempt to elevate the persecution of communists and political dissidents to match that of the genocidal policies against Serbs, as was found in the original 1968 exhibition. There was, of course, a full section committed to the Communist Party in Jasenovac in Lukić and Miletić’s exhibition (leaving them out entirely would likely have led to the exhibition never being approved). And in terms of discourse, this section essentially mimicked the 1968 exhibition by focusing on the development of party management and networks in Jasenovac, letters secretly moved in and out of Jasenovac to the Partisans, and the role of the communists in organizing the final escape effort in 1945. But it bears mentioning that this was a single, isolated section of only 29 photographs and photocopied documents that paled in comparison to the overall representation of the communists seen in the original permanent exhibition.

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[77] Ibid., 8-10.

Ultimately, the lasting impact of the 1988 exhibition is somewhat questionable. On the one hand, it was only open for a few years before the site was ransacked by both Croatian and Serbian forces during the Wars of Yugoslav Succession, and therefore would have been viewed by a much smaller number of visitors than its predecessor. On the other hand, the nature of the 1988 exhibition—in particular, its emphasis on focusing on the particularly Croatian nature of the Independent State of Croatia and Jasenovac—drove the curator of the 2006 permanent exhibition to condemn it as anti-Croat propaganda that fueled hatred towards Croats immediately before the outbreak of war in the 1990s.[78] As such, this greatly influenced her conceptualization of the present day exhibition as a site commemorating individual victims while celebrating life and perseverance in order to "remove the ideological strata that previously made [the victims] such a convenient instrument to generate hatred."[79] Perhaps the most important lesson from the 1988 exhibition, however, is just how vulnerable Tito's civil religion of Brotherhood and Unity had become in the final years of socialist Yugoslavia. Up until the late 1980s, Revolutionary Museums and the Jasenovac memorial museum alike had steadily and unquestioningly upheld the mythological tenets of Brotherhood and Unity. By 1988, however, the question of culpability for crimes committed during the Second World War—embodied by Jasenovac but in reality expanding to crimes committed by Serbs, Slovenes, Croats, Bosniaks, and Montenegrins alike—had grown into an existential threat to socialist Yugoslavia. Thus, when Lukić and Miletić's 1988 exhibition brought this issue to the public in dramatic and graphic fashion, they severed a vital unifying thread of not just the socialist state but the entirety of the Yugoslav idea.

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[78] See Jovičić, "Jasenovac Memorial Museum's Permanent Exhibition," 296.
[79] Ibid., 297.

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The case of the Jasenovac memorial museum reflects just how complicated it was to harness sites of wartime suffering for a common socialist Yugoslav core. Due to the bloody and multifaceted civil war that raged all across Yugoslavia during the Second World War, postwar memory projects in socialist era focused almost exclusively on stories of Partisan Yugoslav triumph over fascist barbarism as a way of circumventing the bloody reality of inter-ethnic warfare that posed an existential threat to the Yugoslav project. And yet, the scale of horrors committed at Jasenovac conversely meant that leaving the site unaddressed could likewise prove fatal. Furthermore, Jasenovac was a prime example of the sort of fascist barbarism the Yugoslav authorities were always keen to exploit for their own purposes. All of this led to an original 1968 permanent exhibition designed to claim Jasenovac as a site of both collective suffering *and* collective triumph, which in turn resulted in the problematic 1988 exhibition whose primary focus on Serbian suffering at the hands of Croatian actors engendered ethnic tensions leading up to the violent dissolution of Yugoslavia.

During the socialist era, the Jasenovac memorial site functioned successfully as "a central site of memory for victims 'of all Yugoslav nations'," drawing upwards of 50,000 Yugoslavs in 1985 on the fortieth anniversary of the attempted prison break. At the same time, the intransigence of Party-line war memory, combined with waves of political disputes over the number and nature of victims there, resulted in Jasenovac functioning as "an ambivalent *lieu de memoire*" with the equal potential to unite and divide the nations of Yugoslavia.[80] Like the swing of a pendulum, the two socialist era permanent exhibitions demonstrate this well. While the 1968 exhibition managed to craft a story of pan-Yugoslav suffering and communist victory, its watered down approach to equating genocide to political persecution did little to settle disputes over contested war memories. Likewise, the 1988 exhibition rightfully engaged with the particularity of the Serbian experience under the Independent State of Croatia. In the process, however, it grossly exaggerated the range of popular and elite support for the regime, effectively condemning the Croatian nation as a whole for the crimes committed at Jasenovac.

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[80] See Radonić, "Equalizing Jesus's, Jewish, and Croat Suffering," 38.

3.3 Conclusion

The simplest way to understand Croatian Revolutionary Museums and the Jasenovac memorial museum may well be the best: these museums were little more than propaganda organs for the official socialist Yugoslav line on the history of the Second World War. These museums were certainly not open forums for public debates on the complicated legacy of the war. Nor did they move beyond the rather simplistic socialist model of object-based museology in which the easily comprehensible narrative took precedent over original objects. Thus, it is not surprising that these museums were the first to rebrand or entirely shut down in the immediate aftermath of Croatian independence.

But we must take propaganda seriously. Entire generations of Yugoslav youth were exposed to these types of museums whose heroic anti-fascist narrative would have been impossible to contest. Combined with an entire cultural infrastructure consisting of film, biographies, poetry, theater, and visual art, these museums undeniably helped shape the outlook of Croatian youth. The simplicity of these museums' thematic approach also meant that any given local could easily reproduce a common core of public memory that effectively localized the socialist Yugoslav meta-narrative in even the most remote corners of Croatia.

Nowhere was this clearer than at the Jasenovac Memorial Site located in an otherwise rural periphery. Indeed, the assertion made by one member of the Committee for the Ordering and Marking of Historical Places that Jasenovac "present[ed] nothing from the perspective of tourism" proved to be utterly false given the consistent influx of visitors between 1968 and 1988."[81] Instead, Dešković's 1968 exhibition managed to transform the most heinous example of indigenous Croatian fascism into a site of socialist pilgrimage with all the necessary infrastructure to take in thousands of visitors per year. This alone stands as a testament to just how powerful the centralized memory of the People's Liberation Struggle had become by the 1960s throughout Yugoslavia.

When considering the complicated relationship between popular memory and politicized academic discourse, Croatia's Revolutionary Museums represent the extent to which state-directed public memory trumped the more nuanced—and in the case of Yugoslav Croatia, more *politicized*—practice of professional history when it came to the state's core mythological foundations. Precisely because these museums functioned as "temples of Truth" as part of a broader network of "socialist pilgrimage," they are rather easy to critique. This fact alone explains why these museums (with the lone exception of the Jasenovac memorial museum) all ceased to function by the mid-1990s as Croatia's new state mythology was built in no small part upon a rejection of both communism and Yugoslavism. And yet, Revolutionary Museums should also be considered testaments to just how compatible Croatia's experiences during the Second World War were with socialist Yugoslav ideology. There is nothing intrinsically false about painting Croatia's anti-fascist resistance as a forerunner of socialist revolution and pan-Yugoslavism, just as there is nothing inherently wrong with employing the Jasenovac concentration camp as a stark warning to future generations about the dangers of fascism. Rather, the devil was always in the details, as Croatian Revolutionary Museums remained fundamentally conservative institutions that failed to evolve with the socio-political currents of the late Yugoslav era and provide meaningful and critical answers to the critiques emerging in Yugoslavia's robust—albeit volatile—1980s civil society. As I will demonstrate in the following chapter, museum professionals managed to harness Croatia's *national* history in similar fashion, crafting a dual-layered narrative in which the history of the Croat nation neither directly challenged, nor completely submitted to, the prerogatives of socialist Yugoslavism. And just as in the case of Revolutionary Museums, Croatian historical museums engaging with the more distant past leave us with a mixed legacy of success and failure, simultaneously embodying Croatia's historical compatibility with socialist Yugoslavism as well as the shortcomings of its conservative Party-line ideology.

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[81] Karge, *Sećanje u kamenu,* 129.

This chapter contains direct portions of two previously published articles: Palhegyi, Joel. "National Museums, National Myths: Construction socialist Yugoslavism for Croatia and Croats," *Nationalities Papers* 45, no. 6 (2017): 1048-1065; and Palhegyi, Joel. "Revolutionary Curating, Curating the Revolution: Socialist Museology in Yugoslav Croatia," *Martor* 23 (2018): 17-34. The dissertation author was the primary researcher and author of these papers.

Chapter 4: Gluing together the Puzzle
Croatian Nationalism and the Bonds of South Slavism

The history of the territory of Croatia, much like all the regions of the former Yugoslavia, is defined in large part by the confluence of different peoples, religions, and empires. For exactly this reason, Croatian medieval and pre-modern history has allowed for a diversity of historical interpretations ranging from an ethno-national narrative rooted in the singular Croatian nation, to a supranational narrative that emphasizes the plurality of national traditions in the historical territory of Croatia rooted in the commonality of the South Slavs. During the socialist period, politicians, Party thinkers, and cultural actors alike appropriated this complex history to construct a history of the *territory* of Croatia, as well as the Croat *nation*, that would reinforce official tenets of socialist Yugoslavism. In particular, they employed medieval and pre-modern history in two key ways: first, to exemplify the role of the Yugoslav state as a guarantor of Croat nationhood that engaged with the historical tradition of Croatian statehood to protect the interests and autonomy of the Croat people as a nation; and second, to demonstrate Croatia's common South Slavic culture and historical experiences that bound it with Yugoslavia's other constituent nations and led them to a shared socialist revolution.

Interestingly, history as an academic discipline in the Socialist Republic of Croatia was not systematically dominated by the discursive or political pressure of socialist Yugoslavism. As Nevan Budak notes, post-socialist historiography in Croatia contains a revisionist tendency to paint all socialist-era historical work as overtly Marxist and insufficiently national in nature. And certainly, this was true when it came to contemporary history on the Workers' Movement and the

People's Liberation Struggle, which, according to Budak, "served only the purposes of politics."[1] Outside of that period of history, however, Budak argues that Croatian historians were free from the sorts of "dogmatic Stalinism" that dominated other Eastern European historical institutions.[2] Rather, the most lasting consequence of the socialist era was that Croatian historians were effectively isolated from both eastern and western historiography, leading "to a certain self-sufficiency and loss of interest in the histories of other peoples and regions, thus stressing the national character of Croatian historiography and pushing Croatian historians towards nationalism."[3]

And yet, many historical museums in Croatia did not follow this trend, evidence of the ways in which socialist-era museology—in particular, object-based displays and the thematic element of contemporary history—affected the study and exhibition of history in museum institutions. As Edib Hasanganić concluded in a 1975 report on historical museums, historical exhibitions were unique in that they allow the curator to frame an array of ethnographic, archaeological, and artistic objects within a single historical theme, thus making the exhibition comprehensible to the average visitor. While this may sound innocent in and of itself, Hasanganić continues to explain that the historical themes presented in museums should specifically derive from the Marxist "notion of historical development" that speaks to the long

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[1] See Neven Budak, "Post-Socialist Historiography in Croatia since 1990," in *(Re)Writing History: Historiography in Southeast Europe after Socialism,* ed. Karl Kaser (Munster: Lit, 2004), 130.
[2] Ibid., 129. Interestingly, the entire notion of "dogmatic Stalinism" dominating historical institutions in Eastern Europe has come under increasing scrutiny. As Connelly argues in his study of Polish, Czechoslovak, and Polish universities, there was indeed "a face of uniformity" in the Eastern Bloc in the historical sciences; however "separate national traditions" developed in academia throughout the region. In general, Connelly concludes that the extent of Stalinization has been exaggerated, and while Eastern Germany represents a clear case where "Red professors" replaced purged prewar professors *en masse,* other cases like Poland show that prewar actors retained power and ultimately created an more open and critical academic environment. See John Connelly, *Captive University: The Sovietization of East German, Czech, and Polish Higher Education, 1945-1956* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).
[3] See Budak "Post-Socialist Historiography," 131.

historical trajectory of socialist development. Furthermore, the extent to which exhibited objects were originals or well preserved was rather unimportant in historical museums since "various helping materials" like texts, graphics, and audio-visual techniques allow for the realization of historical themes far more than the objects themselves.[4] Therefore, it is clear that while socialist-era historiography avoided many of the pitfalls of top-down state ideology, the same cannot be said about historical museums. A similar trend can be found in Croatian historical textbooks,[5] which suggests that unlike professional academic history that engaged with a fairly isolated segment of society, institutions dealing with public history, such as public schooling, national memorials, and in this case, museums, were under much greater pressure to affirm the main mythological tenets of the state.

In this chapter, therefore, I consider how these two intersecting forces—traditional (albeit it tamed) national historiography and the socialist impulses of Marxist historiography and museological theory—played out in Croatian historical museums. On the one hand, based primarily on an investigation of the Historical Museum of Croatia and the Museum of Peasant Uprisings in Gornja Stubica, I argue that historical museums in socialist Croatia were part and parcel of a larger socialist myth making enterprise that positioned Croatian national history within a socialist Yugoslav framework, itself a fluid category that allowed a fair amount of cultural and intellectual space for articulating the Croat nation. In doing so, historical museums often employed an ambiguous national discourse that referred to the Croat nation with its *singular* people, and the territory of Croatia with its *multiple* peoples, interchangeably as part and parcel of the supranational Yugoslav idea. As such, historical museums were important actors in the process of nationalizing the population of Croatia as ethnic peoples bound by common South Slavic heritage (predominantly as Croats but also as Serbs) and as socialist Yugoslav citizens bound by a shared history of socialist values.

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[4] See Edib Hasaganić, "Istorijski muzeji i suvremeni svet" [Historical Museums and the Contemporary World], *Muzeologija*, no. 75 (1975): 16-17.

[5] See Ljiljana Radonić, "Equalizing Jesus's, Jewish, and Croat Suffering–Post-Socialist Politics of History in Croatia." In *Of Red Dragons and Evil Spirits: Post-Communist Historiography between Democratization and the New Politics of History*, edited by Oto Luthar (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2017), 44-46.

On the other hand, I argue that most small-scale local historical museums, referred to commonly as Native Place Museums (*Zavičajni muzeji)*, were less politicized in nature and in many ways embody a crucial predecessor to the oft-celebrated French ecomuseum model first developed in the early 1970s. As discussed in detail in chapter two, ecomuseums are often touted as the first model for truly popular, community-centered museums whose thematic scope focused on the local while avoiding the predominant national narratives of more centralized institutions, and whose institutional structure allowed for the local population to be involved in its day to day management and activities. As such, they are seen as a cure for the institutionalized elitism, methodological stagnation, and politicized nature of Western museums that had come under fierce critique during the late 1960s. While this narrative mostly holds true in the case of Western Europe, it is far more problematic when applied to Eastern Europe in general, and Yugoslav Croatia in particular. Native Place Museums, I argue, were truly *local* in terms of their thematic scopes, their engagement with the local community, and their institutional structures. Likewise, Native Place Museums were markedly less oriented towards affirming the mythological framework of socialist Yugoslavism, instead focusing primarily on local history and culture that was neither outrightly socialist or South Slavic in nature. These museums were conceptualized in the early 1950s as a way to meet the modern museological goals of democratizing museum spaces, cultural empowerment, and public engagement, and peaked during the 1970s, particularly so in the less-developed eastern region of Slavonia. Thus, in several important ways, Native Place Museums embodied and predated the central components of ecomuseums by involving and giving voice to local actors, and perhaps more crucially, by *celebrating* local identity and culture above all else.

4.1 The Historical Museum of Croatia

The origins of the Historical Museum of Croatia date to the 19th century Croatian cultural revival. Originally founded in 1839 as the Croatian National Museum, the museum took on multiple functions including archeology, history, and ethnography. These practices mostly continued during the interwar Kingdom of Yugoslavia, though in 1940 the Croatian National Museum was divided into more technically specific forms, such as the Croatian National Archeological Museum and the Croatian National Zoological Museum, as well as the more historically focused Croatian History Museum. Therefore, the present form of a distinctly historical museum only emerged on the verge of World War Two, which gave museum professionals little time to fully establish history as an independent branch of museology.[6]

During the socialist period, the museum was renamed the Historical Museum of Croatia and organized under the auspices of the Yugoslav Academy of Science and Art but still retained its basic mission of "collecting and protecting various and compound cultural heritage … to enable and to encourage complex historical studies.[7] Yet as part of the new communist state and under more or less direct state supervision, the myths of the Historical Museum had to be altered in accordance to the new socialist Yugoslav framework. Not surprisingly therefore, the Historical Museum partook in a process similar to the socialist hero-making found in Revolutionary

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[6] See Dubravka Peić Čaldarović, "History Museums in a Changing Political Environment: Experiences of the Croatian History Museum during the 20th Century," in *Museums and Universal Heritage: History in the Area of Conflict Between Interpretation and Manipulation* (Luxembourg: ICMAH, 2008), 104.
[7] Ibid., 108-109.

Museums by appropriating older Croat national figures and stressing (or perhaps *creating*) their egalitarian proto-socialist values, their involvement with South Slavic movements such as Illyrianism or South Slavism, and their sympathies towards or involvement in early communist movements. This reorientation served to position already known and celebrated—and at times, even blatantly *ethno-nationalist*—figures from Croatian national history within a specifically Yugoslav framework, recognizing their specific national merits while re-narrating them as evidence of the historical precedents of socialist Yugoslavism. Additionally, due to the Historical Museum's far greater breadth of historical topics than Revolutionary Museums, it was capable of promoting historical continuity between the more distant Croatian past and the Yugoslav present. Therefore, the Historical Museum was particularly suited to promote the cultural aspects of socialist Yugoslavism and its deep historical roots in the territory of Croatia. A prime example of "in-between-ness," the culture of socialist Yugoslavism was grounded in both Western and Eastern cultural currents as a fusion of South Slav and Western European heritage. This "in-between-ness" served not only to promote socialist Yugoslavia's unique Cold War position as the leader of the Non-Alignment Movement but also maintained Croatia's cultural affinity for Central Europe while also promoting common South Slavic heritage with its fellow Yugoslav nations.

4.1.1 National Heroes, Socialist Revolutionaries: The Historical Precedents of Socialist Yugoslavism

As part of the larger process of legitimizing the socialist Yugoslav state, numerous figures from Croatian history as far back as the medieval period were re-imagined to reflect the deep historical precedents of the socialist Yugoslavism. As a visible and integrated player in public history, the Historical Museum of Croatia was a key institution in this process through its collection, preservation, and exhibition activities. It is not surprising, therefore, that a great deal of the museum's exhibitions focused on individual figures, intellectual movements, or momentous events. One striking example is the 1975 exhibition on Matija Ivanić, the leader of a 16th century peasant revolt on the island of Hvar against Venetian rule. The exhibition began by introducing Ivanić with a dramatic story of his rise as a social figure, beginning with the exploited condition of the Croatian peasants under foreign rule who, despite their efforts to negotiate more rights through the local assembly, were increasingly deprived of basic rights and harshly overworked. Born into a poor peasant family himself, Ivanić arose from these conditions to lead the revolt and set up an egalitarian society and government referred to as "a unique oasis of democracy in feudal Europe."[8] During this time, Ivanić successfully battled the numerically superior Venetian fleet while maintaining his commitment to his peasant followers. Eventually the revolt was defeated by Venetian forces, and Ivanić fled to Vieste where he tried unsuccessfully for the next five years to return and free his people.[9] Clearly, this narrative was saturated by a good deal of romanticism and mythicizing typical of national heroes. What is unique and revealing about it, however, is the emphasis on egalitarianism and activism present throughout the story that infuses Ivanić's heroism with a certain socialist spirit. For instance, the exhibition claimed that Ivanić led a group of peasants directly into the Venetian Doge's palace to disrupt the speech of a senator positioned in Dalmatia while failing to mention how this was even possible and what the repercussions were.[10]

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[8] See Luka Dančević, *Pučki ustanak Matija Ivanića i njegovo doba* [*The Popular Uprising of Matija Ivanić and his Era*] (Zagreb: The Historical Museum of Croatia, 1975), 2.
[9] Ibid., 4.
[10] Ibid., 3.

Needless to say, the events described here were grossly exaggerated to highlight Ivanić's social activism, his revolutionary spirit, and his commitment to the common man. As Neda Klaić argued only two years after the exhibition, the reality of Ivanić's role in the Hvar uprising was far less egalitarian and revolutionary in nature. Rather than Ivanić responding to social and economic factors with the aim create a peasant democracy, his interests were purely political and aligned with the wealthier commoners and local nobility. Furthermore, Ivanić initially attempted to work as a Venetian military vassal against the Ottomans; only when he was denied this position did he shift his alliance towards the Hvarian cause for increased judicial rights and a lessened military burden.[11] Clearly then, the Historical Museum was less concerned with accuracy and more concerned with depicting Ivanić as a proto-socialist example of the Croatian people's historical desire for social justice that culminated in the present socialist Yugoslav state.

The Historical Museum continued this pattern in a number of exhibitions on 19th and early-20th century cultural and political figures that, in varying ways, contributed to the Yugoslav idea. While these figures generally were not egalitarian in their politics, their involvement in cultural-political movements espousing South-Slav unity made them suitable candidates for re-narrating their activities as part of the greater Croat historical drive towards Yugoslavism. Particularly suited for this was the 19th century Illyrian Movement, a cultural and later political movement for South Slav cultural unity, linguistic cohesion, national rights, and political autonomy.[12] For example, the Historical Museum held an exhibition in 1967 dedicated to the movement, in which it described the movement a bulwark against Germanization and Magyarization through its promotion of a common South Slav language and culture. Furthermore, the exhibition claims that the movement's use of the "common name" Illyrian was designed to include both Serbs and Croats equally so that the South Slavic movement did "not impose the name of a nation or region" above another.[13]

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[11] See Nada Klaić, "Novi pogledi na uzroke bune Matija Ivanića u svjetlu društvenih pokreta u srednjovjekovnoj Dalmaciji" [New Views on the Causes of the Uprising of Matija Ivanić in Light of the Social Uprisings in Medieval Dalmatia], *Radovi: Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskoga fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu* 10, No. 1 (1997): 51-53.

[12] The reality of the Illyrian movement is, of course, more complicated than how the Historical Museum depicted it. According to John Allcock, "the principal object of the unifying 'Illyrian' idea was the overcoming of the acute regional differences which separated 'Croats' from each other" rather than the commonly held notion that it was based "upon the common the common cultural foundations shared by Serbs and Croats. And yet, it was precisely this popular misunderstanding of Illyrianism—that it was based first and foremost upon common social, cultural,

The Historical Museum held similar exhibitions on figures closely associated with the Illyrian movement, such as its 1960s exhibition on the 19th century Croatian statesman Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski. Described as one of the most important and active Croatian revivalists, the exhibition lauded Sakcinski for his Illyrian activities and promotion of common South Slav culture whose entire work was dedicated to hoisting up Illyrianism, the founding of specifically Yugoslav cultural institutions, and the promotion of "the need for unity and celebration of our past."[14] In similar fashion, the Historical Museum hosted a 1972 exhibition on Ljudevit Gaj, one of the earliest founders and leader of the Illyrian movement. Displaying a number of his written works on Illyrianism, the exhibition highlighted Gaj's main contribution to the movement: his articulation of a unique, South Slav literary language that "open[ed] the way for national life."[15] Finally, in 1980 the Historical Museum hosted an exhibition on J.J. Strossmayer, one of the most revered Croatian national figures to this day. As a founding figure of the Illyrian movement, devoted Catholic priest, and at one point leader of the People's Party, Strossmayer's story was quite suitable for expressing the historical drive of the Croat people towards Yugoslavism. The exhibition therefore highlighted Strossmayer's contributions to both Croat and Yugoslav culture,

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and political conditions between Serbs and Croats, and the movement's role as a unifying force—that the Historical Museum employed when exhibiting the movement. See John Allcock, *Explaining Yugoslavia* (New York: Colombia University Press, 2000), 331.

[13] See Marijana Schneider, *Iz kulturnog i društvenog života Ilirskog preporoda* [From the Cultural and Social Life of the Illyrian Revival] (Zagreb: The Historical Museum of Croatia. 1967), 2.

[14] See *Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski* (Zagreb: The Historical Museum of Croatia, 1960), 3.

[15] See *Ljudevit Gaj, 1809–1872* (Zagreb: The Historical Museum of Croatia, 1972), 2.

such as founding the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zagreb, and his political project of "uniting the Southern Slavs that ran parallel to the struggle for the formation of the Croatian nation."[16] As these exhibitions demonstrate, the Historical Museum was deeply interested in presenting the Illyrian movement to the public as evidence of Croatia's long historical trajectory towards Yugoslav unity. This, of course, required some historical revisionism by highlighting the movement's cultural and political contributions to the Yugoslav cause and ignoring the fact that the movement was primarily composed of ethnic Croats in nature and often clashed with other South Slav, namely Serbian, interests.

While the Illyrian movement and its members were the most common figures chosen for display, the Historical Museum engaged with other prominent figures and events in the 18th and early-19th centuries. Take for instance the 1970s exhibition on Frano Supilo is particularly illuminating of the rationale behind the Museum's exhibition activities.[17] As a member of the Croatian Party of Rights, an ethno-nationalist party committed to Croatian independence and opposed to South Slavism more generally, Supilo's political alignments were not as easily reconciled with the museum's promotion of Yugoslavism. And yet, the exhibition stressed that despite being a member of the party, Supilo was vehemently opposed to its anti-Yugoslav sentiments, leading him to leave the party and become a prominent figure in the Croat-Serb Coalition in 1903. During this time, according to the exhibition, Supilo came to favor a federal model of Yugoslavia wherein Croatia would constitute a federal state alongside Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Slovenia. Thus, "this sufferer of Croatian politics always aspired towards the same goal: unification, freedom, and equality of the Croatian people," despite his problematic association with the Croatian Party of Rights. In this way, the Historical Museum transformed Supilo into a Yugoslav visionary, "one of the most far-sighted [and] honest fighters for the freedom and unification of the Croatian people and the creation of a Yugoslavia based on a community of equal peoples."[18]

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[16] See Jelena Borošak-Marijanović and Ela Srzić. *J.J. Strossmayer* (Zagreb: The Historical Museum of Croatia, 1980).

[17] This exhibition catalog does not contain an exact date. Judging by its font and cover style in comparison to other catalogs from the Historical Museum of Croatia, however, the exhibition most likely took place in the early- to mid-1970s. See Nikša Stačić, *Frano Supilo, 1870-1917* (Zagreb: The Historical Museum of Croatia, n.d.).

Additionally, the Historical Museum appropriated two key events to similar ends: the popular uprising of 1903-1904, and the 1861 meeting of the Croatian *Sabor* (parliament). Held in 1954 on the 50th anniversary of the uprising's conclusion, the first of these exhibitions sought to re-frame the popular uprising of 1903-1904 as a distinctly socialist and Yugoslav event. The uprising itself was a mixed affair, combining the intellectual and nationalist interests of urban Croats with otherwise nationally indifferent peasants who protested for economic reasons.[19] At the urban level, the uprising can be traced back to 1901 with the fixed victory of pro-Hungarian parties in the Croatian parliament that infuriated the nationalist bloc. These tensions turned into direct action in 1903 when the Hungarian authorities changed the language at public and state buildings from Croatian to Hungarian and displayed the Hungarian coat of arms. Led by a combination of already established political actors, university students and intellectual youths, these protests targeted Hungarian inscriptions and flags in public spaces as a general protest against perceived "Magyarization" and the autocratic tendencies of Karoly Khuen-Hedervary, the ethnic Hungarian governor of Croatia. After the military was deployed against the protests and several peasant protesters were killed, the protests became so intense that Khuen-Hedervary was removed from his position and replaced by the ethnic Croat Teodor Pejačević. These events preceded a significant shift in Croat-Serb politics in Croatia in 1905 marked by the Croat-Serb Coalition and the so-called New Course politics based on Croatian-Serbian cooperation against the common Imperial Habsburg enemy.

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[18] Ibid., 7.

[19] See John Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History: Twice There Was A Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 63-64.

While the exhibition more or less depicted the events as outlined above, there are several aspects of the exhibition's narrative worth pointing out where elements of socialist Yugoslavism were elevated while less favorable historical realities were entirely left out. One example is how the exhibition dealt with Croat-Serb relations. According to the exhibition, there was coordinated Croat-Serb opposition to the pro-Hungarian parties and Khuen-Hedervary from 1901 onward that sowed the seeds for the Croat-Serb Coalition and the New Course in 1905.[20] In reality, however, the years between 1901 and 1905 were far from amicable between the two groups. For instance, "the nadir of mutual relations was reached in the summer of 1902" when *Srbobran* reprinted the article "Serbs and Croats" that argued "Croats were not a nationality… for they did not possess their own language or other attributes of nationality." The resulting "bitter polemics" between the two groups then turned violent as a three day anti-Serb riot in Zagreb erupted until martial law was imposed and over 100 individuals were arrested.[21] Therefore, while the culminating moment of Croat and Serb cooperation in 1905 was fairly represented as such, the underlying tensions between the two groups—tensions that erupted pronouncedly during the 1920s and 1930s—were written out of the story.[22]

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[20] See *Pogled događaja kroz izložbu "Hrvatski narodni pokret 1903-1903 god." [Overview of the Events throughout the Exhibition "The Croatian Popular Uprising, 1903-1904"]* (Zagreb: Historical Museum of Croatia, 1954).

[21] See Mark Biondich, *Stjepan Radić, the Croat Peasant Party, and the Politics of Mass Mobilization, 1904-1928* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 20.

[22] Interestingly, this depiction of the events of 1901-1905 with regard to Croat-Serb relations parallels an earlier narrative by the Serbian historian Milenko M. Vukičević during the Interwar Kingdom of Yugoslavia. According to Charles Jelavich, Vukičević's 1914 depiction "glossed over much of the reality. The conflicts between the two peoples in the era of Khuen Hedervary were the most serious of the nineteenth century, precisely because of the policy of 'divide and rule' was exploited so effectively by the Ban. However, Vukičević's interpretation presented Serbo-Croatian relations as the leaders of the Yugoslav idea wanted them to be understood at the time. The goal was to stress the co-operation and to blame any problems primarily on Vienna and Budapest." (120)

In addition to highlighting Croat-Serb unity, the exhibition wove the Croatian socialist movement into each stage of the events between 1901 and 1905. Although predictable, this is particularly striking considering that the socialist movement in Croatia was virtually non-existent before 1914.[23] For example, the exhibition painted the Croatian socialists as an integral part of the unified opposition of 1901 equal to the Croatian nationalist parties, the mobilization of the peasants, and the integration of the Serbian Independent Party. Likewise, the exhibition highlighted the joint cause of the Croatian Progressive Youths—a student dominated left-leaning nationalist movement by Croatian intellectuals such as Stjepan Radić—and the socialists, who found joint cause in a "parallel battle for financial independence."[24] Finally, when explaining the outbreak of revolt in 1903, the exhibition began by describing a series of labor strikes called by the socialists, the arrest of all of their leaders, and how in Vienna a socialist assembly was summoned "in solidarity" with the events unfolding in Croatia.[25]

A similar infusion of socialist Yugoslav ideas can be found in the Historical Museum's 1961 exhibition "The Year 1861 in Croatia." Held in commemoration of the 100-year anniversary of the 1861 Croatian *Sabor*, the exhibition focused on the significance of the meeting in establishing the foundations for a future Croat-Serb unity. In reality, the 1861 *Sabor* was first and foremost concerned with whether or not Croatian deputies would attend the upcoming parliament in Vienna, or to follow with the Hungarian opposition in protesting the session over Austrian centralization practices.[26] The exhibition, however, painted the *Sabor* meeting as nothing short of momentous as it established the rights of ethnic Serbs in Croatia and integrated various Yugoslav principles into the idea of a future Croatian state. For instance, the exhibition argued that the South Slav question dominated the meeting, that ethnic Serbs were present and equally included in the proceedings, and that the *Sabor* recognized the "equality of Croats and Serbs" alike.

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[23] Operating under the banner of the Social Democratic Party of Croatia-Slavonia, Croatia's marginal contingent of socialists had failed to gain all but one seat in any pre-1914 election, due in no small part to a series of arrests of the top socialists leaders in 1897 that "smashed the party's nascent rural network." See Mark Biondich, *Stjepan Radić, the Croat Peasant Party, and the Politics of Mass Mobilization, 1904-1928* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 19.
[24] See *Pogled događaja kroz izložbu*.
[25] Ibid.
[26] See R.W. Seton-Watson, *The Southern Slav Question and the Habsburg Monarchy* (London: Constable and Co., 1911), 53.

Furthermore, the exhibition pointed out that the *Sabor* agreed on the official language of a future Croatian state as "Yugoslavian" (*Jugoslavenska*) to demonstrate that the hope for Croatian statehood was rooted in broader Yugoslav values.[27] Unsurprisingly, the exhibition failed to mention that the decision to embrace "Yugoslavian" as the state language was quickly reversed the following year.[28] Perhaps most problematic, the exhibition made it appear as if these accommodating attitudes towards Serbs and the Yugoslav idea were pervasive in all of Croatia's party politics. For example, the exhibition mentions Josip Juraj Strossmeyer and Franjo Rački's Yugoslav-centric People's Party side by side with the nationalist and anti-Yugoslav Party of Rights led by Ante Starčević and Eugen Kvaternik with no mention whatsoever of the tensions between the two over the Serb question. Thus, the exhibition concluded "the Yugoslav idea based on the principle of equality and reciprocity, and especially the idea of rapprochement of Croats and Serbs [was] deeply expressed in the year 1861," continually gaining momentum from that point forward, and finally "accomplished through the revolution in the present day Yugoslav federation."[29]

Ranging from the medieval period to the first decade of the twenty first century, the Historical Museum of Croatia systematically re-narrated national heroes, movements, and events in order to draw a direct line of continuity between a crucial moment in Croatian national history and the present day socialist state. In doing so, the museum managed to preserve vital aspects of ethno-national Croatian nationalism by re-framing them as evidential examples of Croatia's long march towards socialist Yugoslavism.

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[27] See *1861 godina u Hrvatskoj* [The Year 1861 in Croatia] (Zagreb: The Historical Museum of Croatia, 1961), 5.
[28] See Ivo Goldstein, *Croatia: A History* (Montreal: McGill Queen's University Press, 2001), 79.
[29] See *1861 godina*, 5.

4.1.2 Celebrating Yugoslav "In-Between-Ness": The Cultural Bonds of South Slavism

The ideas of socialist Yugoslavism were not limited to just the sphere of national heroes and events, of course. The Historical Museum of Croatia also sought to present Croatian culture and history as hybrid in nature, claiming both Western European and South Slavic heritage and emphasizing Croatia's cultural contribution to both cultural poles. As Pintar and Ignatović argue in their study of the National Museum in Belgrade, museum workers crafted a similar story for Serbia, negotiating distinctive Serbian cultural features with those of the broader Yugoslav culture that sat "at a cultural crossroads" between East and West.[30] In the case of Croatia, museum professionals at the Historical Museum branded Croatia's cultural hybridity as both Western-Central European and South Slavic, locating Croatian cultural achievements within Western and Central European cultural currents, while simultaneously promoting Croatia's South Slavic particularisms of a more Eastern-Balkan pole. In doing so, they created a rather complex cultural nexus encapsulating European, Yugoslav, and Croat achievements that reflected cultural commonality with both sides of the Iron Curtain and promoted the "authentic and mediatory" essence of the Yugoslav identity between East and West.[31]

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[30] See Olga Manojlović Pintar and Aleksander Ignjatović, "National Museums in Serbia: A Story of Intertwined Identities" in *Building National Museums in Europe 1750-2010*, edited by Peter Aronsson and Gabriella Elgenius (Linkoping: Linkoping University, 2011), 795.

[31] Ibid., 794.

This was particularly true for exhibitions on musical composition, opera, and theater. According to the Historical Museum, Croatian musical culture developed as part of a broader European cultural current that organically reflected the national aspirations of Croats and their Yugoslav inclinations. For instance, the Historical Museum hosted an exhibition in 1969 on the 19th century Revivalist Vatroslav Lisinski. Aside from his work as a writer and teacher, Lisinski was one of the earliest Croatian folk-based composers who operated within 19th century European Romanticism and composed the first opera in the Croatian language. In doing so, Lisinski was fundamental to the development of Croatian Yugoslav musical culture, elevating Croat accomplishments to an "unusually important position" within Europe and "affirming the musical culture of Croatia and the other people of our socialist community"[32] The Historical Museum told a similar story in an exhibition on Antun Dobronić, the early 20th century composer who focused primarily on developing a unique Croatian musical style based upon folk culture and tradition. Part of a "new generation of Croatian composers" who looked to folk music as "the sole basis for their works," the exhibition credited Dobronić for his contributions to a burgeoning Yugoslav musical culture that reflected his ideological commitment to Yugoslavism.[33]

The museum spelled out the relationship between Croatian culture and the Yugoslav project more explicitly in a 1971 exhibition, "125 Years of Croatian Opera." Here, the exhibition juxtaposed the South Slavic character of Zagreb's theater with the repeated Germanization and Magyarization efforts by the Habsburg authorities. For instance, the 1843 premiere of the first Croatian opera by Vatroslav Lisinski, in collaboration with "extraordinary talents" such as

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[32] See *Vatroslav Lisinski, 1819–1847. Život i djelo* [*Vatroslav Lisinski, 1819-1847. Life and Work*] (Zagreb: The Historical Museum of Croatia, 1969). 1.

[33] See *Antun Dobronić: Skladatelj, 1878–1955* [*Antun Dobronić: Composer, 1878-1955*] (Zagreb: The Historical Museum of Croatia. 1979), 1-3.

Sodonija Rubido-Erdoby ("the first Illyrian Prima Donna") and Ognjan Štriga ("the Illyrian Bard"), was met with "enormous enthusiasm." Shortly afterward, however, the theater was closed by an "Austrian absolutist regime pursuing violent Germanization" that thwarted "all the positive developments to create a national theater."[34] Similarly, the achievements of the next three decades, such as the formation of an all-Yugoslav ensemble touring throughout Europe and the United States, were followed by another closure of the theater by the new Hungarian Ban, Károly Khuen-Héderváry.[35] Nonetheless, by the turn of the century the theater was hosting a number of European operas and concerts, as well as incorporating new productions by South Slavic composers that established the place of Croatia and the South Slavs within broader European artistic trends.[36]

Along with framing these cultural developments within a common European trajectory, the Historical Museum also emphasized common South Slavic heritage, particularly in reference to Serbian and Montenegrin cultural achievements. Colored by the need to repair the Croat-Serb cleavages of the 1930s and 1940s, the museum demonstrated the "authentic and mediatory" essence of Yugoslav culture by highlighting the cultural achievements and influences of Serbs and Montenegrins on Croatia. Take for instance a 1970 exhibition on the Montenegrin Bay of Kotor in collaboration with the Kotor Maritime Museum. For one, the exhibition framed the bay as "one of our most important maritime centers" throughout the medieval and early modern periods, with "our" (*naši*) here implicating a broader Yugoslav experience and ownership. To this end, the exhibition highlighted Kotor's South Slavic character while almost entirely leaving out its quite substantial Venetian influences. For instance, the exhibition explained that the bay became a vital maritime center as an Illyrian province under the Romans, and that this tradition continued in the 9th century under "Slavic immigrants" who founded their own navy and turned Kotor into a major center of European trade between the Balkan Peninsula and the Adriatic Sea.[37] Likewise, the Bay contributed to the larger South Slavic legacy by producing significant figures such as Ivan Visin, "the first Yugoslav to circumnavigate the world."[38] Finally, the exhibition highlighted two 20th century events that expressed the bay's distinct Yugoslav character and "tradition of freedom": a sailor's revolt against the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918 inspired by the October Revolution, and a 1941 maritime battle against Italian forces wherein members of the warship "Zagreb" sunk their own ship in order to prevent it from falling into hands of Italian fascists.[39] Thus, the long history of the Bay of Kotor reflected the interconnected importance of Montenegro's Southern Adriatic port to Croatia's own development and national independence.

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[34] See Slavko Batušić, *125 Godina hrvatske opere: 100 godina stalne opere Hrvatskog narodnog kazališta* [*125 Years of Croatian Opera: 100 Years of the Permanent Opera of the Croatian National Theater*] (Zagreb: The Historical Museum of Croatia, 1971), 1.
[35] Ibid., 2.
[36] Ibid., 7.

Perhaps the most obvious case of the Historical Museum's attempt to integrate a broader South Slavic story into Croatian history and culture was its sub-department, The Museum of the Serbs in Croatia. Founded on the initiatives of the Committee of Serbs in Croatia and the Serbian cultural society "Prosvjet" in 1946, this department did not function with a separate exhibition space but rather worked directly with the museum to host exhibitions celebrating the cultural legacy of Croatian Serbs. Thus, its everyday functioning reflected socialist Yugoslav values that superseded the wartime conflicts between Croats and Serbs as the department worked in unison with the museum's broader goals. Furthermore, as one museum professional put it in 1948, the

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[37] See *Pomorstvo boke Kotorske* [Seafaring of Kotor] (Zagreb: The Historical Museum of Croatia, 1970), 1.
[38] Ibid., 3.
[39] Ibid., 3.

Museum of Serbs in Croatia reflected the deep-seated tradition of unity between everyday Croats and Serbs, functioning as a "lasting monument to the love, brotherhood, and unity of the Serbian and Croatian people" whose shared struggle against "foreign conquerors and class oppressors" bound them together.[40]

Throughout the socialist period, the department held numerous exhibitions that recognized the broader Eastern Slavic influences side by side with native Serb innovations and accomplishments as a way of cementing the multi-national and multi-confessional character of the territory of Croatia. An exhibition on the Orahovica Monastery in eastern Croatia, for example, described the exterior architecture as Moravian in character, while the interior paintings were of a distinctly Serbian medieval tradition, a sort of fusion of the two. Furthermore, the monastery was a center of Slavic learning that held a number of Russian and Ukrainian writings on philosophy, history, literature, science, agriculture, and physics, as well a site for the development of Serb metallurgy "characteristic of the goldsmiths of the Balkans during the 17th century."[41] In similar fashion, a 1972 exhibition on the iconostasis painting school of Gomirje Monastery told a comparable story, wherein Russian and Ukrainian Orthodox iconostasis painting traditions served as the foundation for the development of a Serb school of painting unique to itself. Recognized as a significant cultural monument, this monastery was restored by the Yugoslav Academy of Arts and Sciences, revealing Gomirje's "true face, clumsy, lovable and naïve, until now hidden by grime, smears and wormholes."[42]

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[40] See Fedor Moačanin, "Muzej Srba u Hrvatskoj" [The Museums of Serbs in Croatia], *Historijski Zbornik* 1, no. 1 (1948): 218-221.

[41] See *Starine manastira Orahovice* [The Antiquities of the Orahovica Monastery] (Zagreb: The Historical Museum of Croatia, 1976).

[42] See Vera Borčić, *Ikonostas slikarske škole Simeona Baltića iz Gomirja* [*The Iconostasis Painting School of Simeon Baltić from Gomirje*] (Zagreb: The Historical Museum of Croatia, 1972), 3.

By focusing on the distinctly Eastern Orthodox influences on Croatia's Serbs, such as the Russo-Ukrainian philosophical and artistic traditions at Orahvica and Gomirje, the Museum of the Serbs in Croatia thus cemented the history of Serbs in Croatia as a reflection of Croatia's cultural "in-between-ness" as both Western-Central European and Eastern Slavic. More broadly, the Historical Museum applied this discourse to various aspects of Croatia's cultural history, be they Croatia's role in producing Slavic language theater and opera productions or its shared history with Montenegro's Adriatic Coast. In doing so, the museum preserved Croatia's claim to Western values and civilization while also reinforcing its "authentic and mediatory" Yugoslav characteristics.

4.1.3 Sanitizing Croat Nationalism: State-Right and the Bulwark of Christendom

While the pull to orient Croatian national heroes and events towards a socialist Yugoslav pole was ever present, it is worth noting that within the mythological structures of socialist Yugoslavism, there existed a fair degree of space for more conservative myths and national heroes stemming from 19th century Croatian nationalism. In particular, the Historical Museum of Croatia gave fair space to two potentially volatile national myths without much attempt to frame them as particularly socialist or Yugoslav: the tradition of state-right—"the myth of continuous Croatian statehood for the past thousand years"[43]—and the myth of Croatia as the *Antemurale Christianitatis* or "Bulwark of Christendom" against the Muslim Ottomans. This is in many ways surprising considering that Croatian politicians had long employed the tradition of state-right to push for increased autonomy or even independence in both the Habsburg era and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, not to mention that the 1940s fascist Ustaša state framed itself as culmination of state-right. Similarly, celebrating Croatia as a bulwark against the Muslim Ottomans had the potential to stir up tensions between Catholic Croats and Bosnian Muslims and undermine South Slavic cultural unity.

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[43] See David Bruce MacDonald, *Balkan Holocausts? Serbian and Croatian Victim-Centered Propaganda and the War in Yugoslavia* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 114.

And yet, the very fact Yugoslav authorities allowed these exhibitions to take place tells us a great deal about the degree of autonomy the Republic of Croatia had obtained in the cultural sphere by the 1970s. While Yugoslavia's federal character that granted republic-level control over each republic's cultural production had existed since the early 1960s, the 1970s brought about further de-federalization that was encapsulated in the 1974 constitution. During the so-called "Croatian Spring" from 1968-1971, for instance, a number of distinctly ethnic-Croat newspapers were founded, such as *Hrvatski Tjednik* (Croatian Weekly) that functioned as a "public platform" for young Croat intellectuals who pushed for increased Croatian national, cultural, and linguistic autonomy. The movement culminated in the 1971 student strike whose leaders demanded the Republic of Croatia be recognized as "the sovereign state of the Croatian nation" while also promising securities for Serb minorities and maintaining its republic status within the federal Yugoslav state. Ultimately, the tone and rhetoric from the more extreme elements of the movement—like the popularization of a song including the lyrics, "Croatia gave birth to two bandits—Ante Pavelić and Marshal Tito"—led Tito to act and suppress the movement in December, 1971, leading to a wave of arrests and expulsions from the League of Communist of Yugoslavia.[44] Despite this suppression, however, Croatia was ultimately granted increased autonomy in the 1974 constitution, whose enshrinement of republic autonomy was in no small part an attempt to answer the more moderate aspects of the Croatian Spring. Thus, by the mid-1970s, virtually all aspects of cultural production were regulated at the republic level, meaning these types of myths were likely to be received more warmly than they would have been in previous decades.

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[44] See Goldstein, *Croatia: A History*, 181-184.

Furthermore, the fact that the Historical Museum hosted a number of exhibitions in the 1970s on the myths of state-right and *Antemurale Christianitatis* does not mean that the museum was moving away from the main tenets of socialist Yugoslavism. Rather, the ways in which these exhibitions were framed suggests that that museum professionals at the Historical Museum of Croatia were still committed—or at the very least, obligated—to ideas that were not just distinctively socialist, but still distinctively Yugoslav as well. Fusing these two nationalist myths with socialist Yugoslavism was not completely unfounded, after all: by the 1970s, Croatia functioned as relatively autonomous republic under the federalist Yugoslav system, and while significant Muslim populations existed in Yugoslavia, Croatia had, in fact, retained much of its Central European and Catholic character.

Take for instance the 1971 exhibition on Eugen Kvaternik, the 19th century co-founder of the Croatian Party of Rights who, together with Ante Starčević, developed an ardently Croatian nationalist and anti-Yugoslav platform. As Allcock observes, Starčević and Kvaternik's movement was conceived in conscious contrast to "the Illyrian tradition and incidentally introduc[ed] the idea of a 'millennial' Croatian state." This idea later culminated in the Pure Party of Rights whose ideology was based on "extreme and aggressive nationalism" that reached "its apotheosis" in the fascist and deeply anti-Serb Ustaša movement.[45] It is not surprising, therefore, that the early communist authorities viewed Kvaternik with hostility, even removing a statue of him from the village of Raković in the immediate postwar years. By the early 1970s, however, Croatian historians had rehabilitated Kvaternik as the less exclusionist and volatile of the two. For instance, in a 1972 paper, the well-known historian Mirjana Gross argued that the state-right ideology inherent in Kvaternik's ideas was "a phenomenon characteristic to the constitutional process of European nations" and that the Party of Rights therefore reflected "a typical European integrational national ideology."[46] Thus, while the later developments and consequences of the Party of Rights' state-right ideology were likely too complicated for the Historical Museum to engage with, the museum framed Kvaternik himself as a remarkable Croatian national figure who, despite his anti-Yugoslav ideas, could be rehabilitated under the context of 1970s Croatian socialism.

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[45] See Allcock, *Explaining Yugoslavia*, 331.

According to the exhibition's curator Nikša Stančić, for instance, Kvaternik's exclusionary nationalism was an understandable consequence of competing irredentist ideas that threatened the very existence of Croatia, such as parallel movements of "Greater Serbia", "Greater Hungary", and "Greater Italy". And even though Kvaternik argued that Slovenes were simply "mountain Croats" and Serbs "Orthodox Croats," this form of nationalism fell "in line with similar phenomena of civic nationalism that existed in Europe at the time" and therefore did not preclude him from being recognized as a Croatian—and consequently, Yugoslav—national hero.[47] In further defense of Kvaternik, Stančić explained that unlike many of his political contemporaries, Kvaternik was willing to engage in armed rebellion and sacrifice himself for the Croatian national cause. Therefore, "through his energy that he put into his work, through dynamism, the boldness of ideas, and self-sacrifice, Kvaternik far out rivaled his contemporaries, and his attempt at armed rebellion for the freedom of Croatia and the sacrifice that he then laid were one of a kind in Croatian history of the second half of the 19th."[48] By painting Kvaternik as first and foremost a national hero while simultaneously disassociating him from the more extreme ethno-nationalism of the Party of Rights, the Historical Museum managed to celebrate a polarizing figure like Kvaternik without directly undermining the socialist Yugoslav ideal. And even though this exhibition was held during the peak of the Croatian Spring, it seemed to reflect the more moderate aspects of the movement that allowed the museum to avoid the ire of the post-Spring clampdown, as evidenced by the fact that Stančić retained her position and hosted multiple exhibitions after this.

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[46] See Mirjana Gross, "O nacionalnoj ideologiji Ante Starčevića i Eugena Kvaternika" [On the National Ideology of Ante Starčević and Eugen Kvaternik], *Historijski Zbornik* 4, no. 1 (1972): 26.
[47] See Nikša Stančić, *Eugen Kvaternik i rakovička buna* [Eugen Kvaternik and the Rakovica Uprising] (Zagreb: The Historical Museum of Croatia, 1971), 4.

In the years following from 1974 to 1979, the Historical Museum held three exhibitions concerning the Habsburg-Ottoman Wars in the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries that highlighted Croatia's crucial role as a borderland between the two powers. In all three exhibitions, the Historical Museum employed the history of Habsburg-Ottoman Wars to demonstrate the great costs Croatia paid in its attempt to preserve its state-right tradition and fend off Ottoman forces. For instance, at the 1493 Battle of Krbava Field, the Kingdom of Croatia—still existing in "personal union" with the Hungarian crown—managed to unite "the most prominent representatives of the Croatian nobility" and a "multitude of peasants" in common cause against the Ottomans. Although fighting valiantly, the "poorly armed peasants" were easily defeated and their bodies brutally desecrated as the Ottoman troops removed their heads and noses to keep as "cash prizes." Consequently, "the most developed, powerful, and deep-rooted regions of the old Croatian territory" were lost, exposing the heartland of Croatia to repeated "Turkish burglary" over the next century and a half.[49] Thereafter between 1493 and the Battle of Sisak in 1593,

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[48] Ibid., 11.

[49] See Vlasta Brajković, *Bitka na Krbavskom polju 1493* [The Battle at Krbova Field] (Zagreb: The Historical Museum of Croatia, 1974).

Croatia formed “the border between the Christian West and the powerful Ottoman Empire,” meaning that Croatia “bore the entirety of the burden of defense.” This prolonged period of constant war economically crippled Croatia, forcing the Croatian *Sabor* in 1527 to end its personal union with Hungary and accept Ferdinand Habsburg as its king “solely because they expected help from him against the Turks.” Thus, the massively important tradition of statehood under the Hungarian personal union only came to a close due to Croatia’s extended exposure to Ottoman incursions without help from its Christian allies.[50]

Furthermore, these exhibitions went to great lengths to account the Habsburg’s continuous violation of Croatia’s state-right. After this transfer of power, for example, the last exhibition explained that large parts of historical Croatia were “segregated” under Austrian military governance that created a stretch of “desolate lands along the Turkish borders.” As a result, even though the Ottomans were forced to give up certain European territories after their defeat at Sisak in 1593, Croatia lost more of its territorial integrity.[51] This story of imperial exploitation and betrayal culminated in the events of the brief Austro-Turkish War (1663-1664). After a series of victories by the Croatian Zrinski family in 1663, the Ottomans defeated them at the siege of Novi Zrin after the Habsburg Imperial army failed to send reinforcements: “while the whole of Western Europe followed with great admiration and support,” the imperial general Montecuccoli “quietly watched as the Grand Vizier Ahmed Köprülü conquered Novi Zrin.” This defeat was followed by the “shameful” Vašvar Peace that “in complete contradiction to the success of the past war years… represent[ed] the violation of state-right and a warning of an absolutist endeavor” to suppress the Croatian state tradition. As a consequence, the Zrinski family—“bearers of the state-right tradition of Croatia”—led a failed revolt that resulted in the execution of Petar Zrinski and further set the stage for Habsburg absolutism.[52]

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[50] See Vlasta Brajković, *Bitka kod Siska 1593 Godina* [The Battle of Sisak 1593] (Zagreb: The Historical Museum of Croatia, 1974) 1.

[51] See Ankica Marić, *Oslobođenje Hrvatske od Turaka u 17. Stoljeću* [The Liberation of Croatia from the Turks in the 17th Century] (Zagreb: The Historical Museum of Croatia, 1979), 1.

Looking at these three exhibitions in their totality, it seems clear that the Historical Museum managed to embrace the myths of state-right and *Antemurale Christianitatis* in such a way that did not compromise its current position within socialist Yugoslavia. For one, the historical antagonists were the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires, both of whom according to national traditions had collectively oppressed *all* of the peoples of Yugoslavia. Whether it was through direct warfare or absolutism, the historic enemies to state-right therefore did not include fellow South Slavs. Likewise, while the Muslim forces of the Ottoman empire were accused of all sorts of atrocities in these exhibitions, their religion was conveniently left out. Despite clearly speaking to the *Antemurale Christianitatis* myth, therefore, these exhibitions did not frame the wars as Christian versus Muslim, but rather as Croat versus Turk, and as European Civilization versus the Orient. In doing so, the Historical Museum drew no direct correlation between the Ottoman Empire and Yugoslavia’s present-day Bosnian Muslims while also managing to frame Croats as defenders of European civilization.

It is worth noting that these two traditions—state-right and *Antemurale Christianitatis*—became extremely important during the 1990s as a way to reconstruct the Croat nation *in opposition* to Serbia and the supposed Greater Serbianism inherent in both of the Yugoslav states. In this thinking, Croatia’s secession from Yugoslavia came to represent the actualization of states-right since “the 1990 Constitution described the new state as the realisation of ‘the thousand year dream of the Croatian People.’”[53] Similarly, Croatia as a bulwark came to represent its position as the last Western European nation along the Byzantine-Orthodox border and its “barbarians coming from their darkness to the lights of the Mediterranean.”[54] Both myths, therefore, could have just as easily been employed during the turmoil of the Croatian Spring to push back against Tito’s Yugoslavia. And yet, we instead see that the Historical Museum embraced these older nationalist ideas in order to simultaneously “re-discover” lost heroes and moments from its national past *and* affirm its relationship with the federal Yugoslav system.

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[52] Ibid., 2-3.

[53] See MacDonald, *Balkan Holocausts?,* 114.

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In constructing the mythology of socialist Yugoslavism in Croatia, the Historical Museum drew on the long tradition of Croat nationalism without fundamentally altering it. Selectively appropriating older national figures or phenomena that in one way or another represented the socialist Yugoslav ideal, the Historical Museum reified the historical continuity of the communist regime and the Croatian people’s drive toward Yugoslavism. Similarly, the Historical Museum played an important role in clarifying Croatia’s position within a broader Yugoslav culture as it exhibited and narrated material evidence of its national particularisms, its pan-Yugoslav elements, and its general European heritage, all while lauding the socialist state as protector of each nation’s cultural legacy. In doing so, the Historical Museum of Croatia simultaneously functioned as a national and supranational institution that carefully walked the line of nationalist historiography by amalgamating its traditional focus on cultural heroes, national awakenings, and popular uprisings with stories of Croatia’s multi-national, multi-confessional, and proto-socialist past.

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[54] Ibid., 119.

4.2 Native Place Museums

While the Croatian Historical Museum was the clearest example of a concerted effort to re-imagine the history of Croatia in line with the main tenets of socialist Yugoslavism, local museums similarly participated in this process, albeit in a much less blatant and direct manner. These local museums were often titled after a city or region but were referred to by museum professionals as Complex Native Place Museums (*Kompleksni zavičajni muzeji*). Designed to explore a total history of a given region, city, or town, these museums maintained a "complex" museums structure that drew on numerous subject fields—natural history, ethnography, archeology, numismatics, art, and new trends in social and contemporary history—in order to move beyond the traditional focus on political history and objects of rarity, and provide a total account of local history and culture. As such, Native Place Museums were able to fulfill the museological goal of object-based displays by incorporating different subject disciplines and a broader scope of object types into thematic exhibitions designed to educate rather than impress or intimidate the average visitor. Likewise, Native Place Museums relied a great deal on written text that framed the displayed material culture as a "single, logical whole" so that the average visitor could *explicitly* understand the otherwise *implicit* historical significance of mundane objects.[55] To the cynic, this may sound like little more than a form of textual propaganda, and certainly the case can be made that some Native Place Museums framed their exhibitions in such a way. But as previously discussed in chapter two, the theoretical foundation for the heavy didacticism of object-based displays was rooted in the drive to democratize museum spaces for the average working class visitor since simply displaying decontextualized objects for the sake of their rarity, grandeur, or authenticity would reinforce the elitism in museums that had in previous decades ostracized the average visitor.

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[55] See Edib Hasaganić, "Istorijski muzeji i suvremeni svet" [Historical Museums and the Contemporary World], *Muzeologija*, no. 17 (1975): 16.

All that being said, it is difficult to make any substantial claims about *all* Native Place Museums due to their heavily decentralized nature, particularly so when it comes to their relationship with official socialist Yugoslavism. In terms of quality and professionalism, size and scope, and their engagement with socialist Yugoslavism, the spectrum for these museums was huge. This section therefore aims to explore case studies at each end of the spectrum: at one end, municipal museums like the Native Place Museums in Virje, Našice, and Čazma were designed, governed, and administered almost entirely on a local, and often *amateur* basis. As such, their professional foundations were often lacking, and their resources limited. That being said, the genuine local character of these museums also meant that they tended to avoid direct prescriptions of socialist Yugoslavism in their exhibitions. Rather than "localizing" the precedents of socialist Yugoslavism in their museum spaces, the municipal museums almost entirely focused on the history of local institutions, figures, natural phenomena, and other cultural legacies in notably apolitical ways. At the other end of the spectrum, the case of the Museum of the Peasant Uprisings in Gornja Stubica represents a clear case of how outside actors—subject-discipline and museum professionals from Zagreb and other urban centers, republic and federal level bureaucrats and politicians, and even Tito himself—designed a local museum institution that would emphatically reinforce the legacy of socialist Yugoslavism at a specific locale. Focusing on the legacy of the 1573 Croatian-Slovenian Revolt, a peasant uprising led by the now legendary Matija Gubec that combined proto-socialist class struggle with an example of South Slavic unity, this museum is the clearest example of politicizing local history to reinforce the charter myths of the socialist Yugoslav state.

Given this spectrum, I consider Native Place Museums as important, albeit *limited*, precursors to the French ecomuseum model. They were logical embodiments of Croatian Yugoslav museology that developed from the 1950s on with the intention to revolutionize museums as truly public institutions. In terms of their local impact, they usually represent genuinely grass roots institutions that not only served but *empowered* local communities by promoting a positive self-image of the rural countryside at the very time that urbanization and industrialization were dislodging these communities. At the same time, as the case of the Museum of the Peasant Uprisings clearly demonstrates, Native Place Museums could not fully avoid top-down national and ideological pressures. Even the smallest Native Place Museums still included a department on the history of the Peoples Liberation Struggle and the Workers' Movement, while the entirety of the Museum of the Peasant Uprisings' permanent exhibition sought to demonstrate the authenticity of socialist Yugoslavism in the Croatian countryside. This contradictory legacy leads to my second argument about Native Place Museums: they were complicated and living institutions whose goals were guided by the oft-conflicting forces of local, regional, republic, and even on occasion, federal actors, thus making any singular claim about the nature or goals of Native Place Museums impossible. On the one hand, they clearly represent a realization of modern museology that emphasizes inclusion and empowerment of the visitor and local community well before the advent of French ecomuseums. On the other hand, Native Place Museums often fell short of representing truly authentic local history as they were to varying degrees pressured to integrate their local legacies into the broader socialist Yugoslav framework.

4.2.1 The Croatian Ecomuseum or “Localizing” Socialist Yugoslavism?

Given this complex legacy, it is worth exploring the extent to which Croatian Native Place Museums accomplished their community-based goals on the ground, and the extent to which their day to day functioning remained independent from non-local actors. In order to do so, we must explore a number of examples throughout Croatia as to avoid problematic generalizations. The following analysis therefore draws attention to the most important functioning elements of Native Place Museums: their departmental structure and topical scope; their pedagogical goals; and the main actors who founded, funded, and ran the day to day activities of the museums.

Some of the earliest examples of Native Place Museums come from the early 1950s when already existing city or regional museums were converted into “complex” museums. The Town and Archeology Museum in Brod na Savi, for example, was founded in 1934 and quickly developed an impressive array of local objects based on the efforts of local actors like Julije Hoffman and the regional museum society. In terms of professional processing and exhibiting, however, the museum was quite weak and was subsequently restructured in the early 1950s with the goal of converting to a “Native Place Museum of a complex type.”[56] Similarly, two prewar museum institutions in Rijeka, The City History Museum and The City Museum of Sušak, were combined to form the People’s Museum in 1953, and later renamed The Maritime and History Museum of the Croatian Littoral - Rijeka in 1961.[57] In each case, this new complex structure involved expanding the museums’ scientific work to additional subject disciplines in order to provide a complete presentation of local history and life.

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[56] See Vlado Horvat, “Osnivanje i razvoj muzeja u Slavoniji” [The Founding and Development of Museums in Slavonia], *Muzeologija*, no 19 (1975): 33.

[57] See “History of the Museum,” *Maritime and History Museum of the Croatian Littoral*, http://ppmhp.hr/en/povijest-muzeja-2/.

More commonly, entirely new museums were founded as Native Place Museums starting in the 1950s and peaking in the late 1970s. Rather than constructing new buildings designed for museum purposes, Native Place Museums were commonly housed in existing buildings of local significance such as former palaces of a local noble family, prominent institutions, or in the case of Virje, the first primary school building in the region. The City Museum of Vinkovci and the City Museum of Vukovar, for instance, were founded in 1946 and housed in a former bank and castle respectively. From their inception, these museums were designed to have a complex local character that brought in multiple subject disciplines under one roof. Over the following decades, both museums developed collections in archeology, numismatics, cultural history, ethnography, contemporary history, and art galleries.[58] The number of Native Place Museums continually grew throughout Croatia, and in many places this became the most prominent form of museums over traditional subject-discipline museums like archeology, ethnography, or history museums. In the region of Slavonia, for instance, the total number of museums with this complex local structure increased from 3 in 1945 to 5 in 1950, 13 in 1960, 17 in 1970, and 23 in 1974.[59]

The date of these early Native Place Museums is important since they predate the advent of the French ecomuseum model that developed in response to the 1968 social crisis (see chapter 2). For a number of reasons, Native Place Museums should therefore be understood as significant parallels, if not direct predecessors, to ecomuseums. In terms of structure and execution, these museums were primarily geared towards the inclusion of the local community through education and outreach programs, cultural empowerment and the reinforcement of local identity, direct local involvement in funding, managing, and governing these museums, and various other

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[58] See Horvat, "Osnivanje i razvoj," 34.
[59] Ibid., 42.

"functions that the community seeks from them."[60] Native Place Museums were generally organized and approved by local self-governance bodies, and funded by contributions from local and republic funds for the advancement of culture,[61] regional companies and industries, cultural societies, and individual donors. In terms of administration and execution, Native Place Museums were primarily governed by local residents who began as amateur enthusiasts and initiated the museum project in the first place. Certainly, there was a good deal of collaboration with more established museums and museum professionals as in order to bolster local museums. Zdenka Lechner, for example, was a prolific museologist involved in the planning of ethnographic exhibitions in various Native Place Museums. From her position at the Museum of Slavonia in Osijek, and from 1965 onward, the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb, Lechner drafted the permanent ethnographic exhibition for numerous museums such as the Museum of the Požega Basin, the Ethnographic Museum in Split, the Vukovar Municipal Museum, the Museum of Brod Posavina, and the Native Place Museum in Našice.[62] Nonetheless, locals still held the majority responsibility in the oversight, planning, and day to day functioning of these museums, and were often involved in the direct planning of exhibition work as well.

As to the influence of Native Place Museums in Western museological circles, the evidence is far more limited. There is little evidence that the French museologists responsible for the early theorization and development of ecomuseums knew about or modeled after Native

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[60] See Bože Težak, "Uvodne misli prof. Bože Težaka održane kao uvod u nastupno predavanje za postdiplomski studij muzeologije na Sveučilištu Zagrebu 13. XII 1966" [Introductory Note by Professor Bože Težak Held as an Introduction to the Inaugural Lecture for the Postgraduate Study of Museology at the University of Zagreb, 12 December 1966], *Muzeologija*, no. 06 (1967): 3-5.

[61] Usually this was done by local and regional governance bodies such as Local Communities (*Mjesna zajednica*) and Self-Governing Interests Association (*samoupravna interesna zajednica*), while other cases institutions were funded in conjunction with republic level organs like the Regional Fund for the Advancement of Culture (*unapređenje za kulturu*).

[62] See Jozefina Dautbegović, "Iz personalnog arhiva zaslužnih muzealaca: Zdenka Lechner" [From the Personal Archives of Meritorious Museologist: Zdenka Lechner], *Informatica Museologica* 44, no 1-4 (2013): 197-204.

Place Museums, for instance. At the same time, however, Croatian museologists were present at most international museum conferences and workshops, and some prominent Croatian museologists such as Tomislav Šola worked directly with French ecomuseums during the 1970s. Therefore, while Native Place Museums cannot be considered *sources* to ecomuseums since there is no traceable line of direct influence, they nonetheless represent a distinct museological development that contained many of the essential features of French ecomuseums.

Another compelling aspect of Native Place Museums was their relative autonomy from regional or republic oversight. Outside of "the general directives connected to museological problematics" such as standards and laws for the collection and preservation of original objects, for instance, there is little evidence that Native Place Museums were under much republic or federal level oversight.[63] Rather, what oversight did exist for these local museums was conducted by larger regional museums such as the Museum of Slavonia in Osijek, the Maritime and History Museum of the Croatian Littoral - Rijeka, and the Historical Museum of Croatia in Zagreb. As such, the extent to which these museums' activities were politicized varied greatly. Like the ecomuseum model, the emphasis of Native Place Museums was on local—as opposed to overtly national or socialist—history and culture in order to function as a "mirror" of local self-image that could be presented to both the community and visitors.[64] At the same time, most historical analysis in Croatian museums was usually understood through the prism of Marxist historiography. According to Edib Hasaganić, a contemporary museologist who specialized in historical museums, historical exhibitions in museums needed to cover "all processes of development such as the economy and economics, society and politics, education and culture" and their "dialectical unity" to express the "connectivity and conditionality" of any given historical phenomenon. In other words, historical exhibitions needed to account for the underlying economic drive that guides all of human history. The major focus, therefore, should be socio-economic transitions of a given people such as the transition from feudalism and foreign rule to national liberation and socialist revolution, as well as the development of class consciousness and the history of class conflict.[65]

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[63] See Težak, "Uvodne misli".

[64] See Darko Babić, "Experiences and (Hidden) Values of Ecomuseums," *Etnološka Istraživanja*, No. 14 (2009): 240.

These conflicting forces—an emphasis on the particularities of the local and an overarching socialist Yugoslav paradigm—resulted in a great deal of variety in Native Place Museums. Generally speaking, most of these museums engaged with topics that only loosely related to the larger socialist Yugoslav paradigm such as everyday life in the Croatian countryside, agricultural techniques and development, local personalities and artists, charter stories of the city or municipality, the history of local institutions, and various other topics of local importance. Certainly, any of these topics had the potential to be highly politicized, but to a remarkable extent these exhibition themes retained their local character without significant attempts to position them within the framework of socialist Yugoslavism. One notable exception, the Museum of the Peasant Uprisings, will be discussed in detail in the following section as it represents a much clearer example of "localizing" socialist Yugoslavism by drawing direct parallels between local history and culture and the Croatia's historical trajectory towards the socialist Yugoslav state.

The particularly local nature of many Native Place Museums can be seen in the case of rural village of Virje. Located in a small municipality near the Hungarian border, Virje bore little historical significance for either the Croatian national story or the history of South Slavism and socialism. Nonetheless, the museum project was initiated in 1977 by a small group of residents and approved by the local governing board (*Mjesna zajednica Virje*) with the goal to "collect, protect, and display the cultural-historical riches of this region" and to preserve "how our people lived, created, and worked in this area throughout history as well as in the contemporary period."[66] The project was funded by a combination of municipal funds for advancing culture and agriculture,[67] working organizations such as the agricultural collective Fruit Product Virje (*Voćeprodukt Virje*) and the Zagreb based textile group *Pobjeda*, the Virje soccer club *Podravac*, and resident contributions. In terms of administration and management, the museum was founded and ran on a self-proclaimed "amateur basis." Of the seven founding members who initiated, built, and managed the museum, for instance, none had any formal training in museum theory or practice, only one held a graduate degree, and the rest consisted an agronomist, a radio mechanic, a biology and chemist teacher, a farmer, a city official, and a retired pensioner.[68]

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[65] See Hasaganić. "Istorijski muzeji," 15.

Not surprisingly, therefore, the collections and scope of the museum were largely focused on ethnographic and technological objects related to agriculture and rural everyday life. Three out of the four exhibition halls, for example, displayed objects such as 18th and 19th century furnishing, popular dress, food preservation tools, harvesting and storing mechanisms, and so forth. The cultural-historical hall likewise emphasized the "working and social organizations that influenced this region" in addition to more traditional museum objects like a medals and numismatic collection, an art gallery, a collection of local literary works, pictures of the old city, and a objects from the communist resistance during the Second World War.[69] Considered as a whole, according to a prominent figure at the museum, the permanent exhibition captured the essence of the municipality, "picturesquely speak[ing] to life, work, customs, and events in historical and contemporary Virje."[70] In addition to this, the museum hosted several temporary exhibitions in honor of local institutions, specifically those who were involved in its initial founding. Exhibitions on the 75 year anniversary of a local savings and loan service, the 70 year anniversary of the *Podravac* soccer club, the history of the Virje train station, the agricultural working organization *Voćeprodukt*, and a photo exhibition on local events exemplify the genuine local flavor of the museum, and crucially, how the interests of the residents and institutions that funded and maintained the museum were prioritized over sweeping claims about the evolution of socialism or South Slavism in the region. [71]

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[66] See Martin Matišin, "10 godina muzejskih aktivnosti Zavičajnog muzeja Virje" [10 Years of Museum Activities of the Native Place Museum Virje], *Muzejski Vjesnik*, no. 10 (1987): 79.

[67] Specifically, the funding came from the SIZ funds of the nearby Đurđevac municipality, the Self-Governing Interests Association for Culture and Information Archives Đurđevac (*Samoupravna interesna zajednica za kulturu i informiranje Đurđevac*) and the Self-Governing Interests Association for the Advancement of Agriculture and Protection against Hail Đurđevac (*Samoupravna interesna zajednica za unapređenje poljoprivrede i protugradne zatište Đurđevac*).

[68] See Martin Matišin, "O osnivanju i djelovanju Zavičajnog muzeja Virje" [On the Foundation and Development of the Native Place Museum Virje], *Muzejski Vjesnik*, no. 7 (1984), 9.

Another compelling example of the local flavor of these museums is the Native Place Museum in Našice housed in the Pejačević family palace and opened to the public in 1972. Like the case of Virje, this museum was initiated at the municipal level, funded by a combination of municipal and republic funds, and governed, administered, and maintained by local professionals. Unlike Virje's "amateur basis," however, the Našice museum brought in four subject-discipline experts, ranging in expertise in ethnography and archeology to contemporary and art history. The result was an array of museum activities that documented local history, natural phenomena, prehistorical archeology, native artists and authors, and rural life in the region. The first 1972 exhibition, for instance, contained 2,300 objects related to archeology, prehistory, and ethnography, including ancient pottery from the region, wooden carvings, and traditional textiles.[72] Over the following decade, the museum held a series of temporary exhibitions and public lectures on subjects such as petrology and amateur collecting, the "Našice 2000" urban development plan, amateur art and sculptures, the regional author Josip Kozarac, as well as an anthropological lecture by a local researcher on Papua New Guinea. Furthermore, the museum worked in conjunction with neighboring Native Place Museums in Valopova, Đakovo, and Ilok to put on exhibitions like "Ilokian Grape Harvesting" and a joint collaboration on textiles.[73] Finally, the museum regularly worked with primary schools in the municipality as part of the school's "nature and society" curriculum where students received hands on experience with the collections and received lectures on ethnography and local history.[74]

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[69] See Martin Matišin, "Zavičajni muzej Virje" [The Native Place Museum Virje], *Muzejski Vjesnik,* no. 3 (1980): 25.
[70] See Matišin, "O osnivanju," 9.
[71] See Martin Matišin and Petar Petričec, "Vijesti iz Zavičajnog muzeja Virje" [News from the Native Place Museum Virje], *Muzejski Vjesnik*, no. 4 (1981): 88-89.

The most telling feature of the Našice museum's local character was its focus on the local Pejačević family, in particular, the young woman Dora Pejačević. Despite the ideological restrictions of the socialist era —"times that were not well-disposed to the topic of the Croatian nobility"—the Našice museum considered the family an essential feature of the region's cultural fabric and began a systematic study of their legacy.[75] As the current director of the museum, Silvija Lučevnjak notes, when the project began in the 1970s, "there were still living memories among the inhabitants of the region of Pejačević family," especially of the daughter Dora who tragically died in her thirties.[76] Considered by musicologist Koraljka Kos to be the first modern female Croatian composer and "one of the rare women at the time who occupied herself intensively and relatively successfully with composing," Dora's legacy had been largely ignored until the museum began their research on the family.[77] The museum's efforts culminated in 1985 with the opening of the Dora Pejačević Memorial Room on the one hundred year anniversary of her birth, thus assuring that "her rich heritage will remain permanently in the building and the region."[78] Today, the museum is referred to colloquially as the "Dora Museum" or the "Palace of Dora Pejačević," evidence of just how ingrained the family's history has become in local memory.[79]

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[72] See "Osnivanje Zavičajnog muzeja Našice" [Founding of the Native Place Museum Našice], *Informatica Museologica* 5, no. 25 (1974): 11-12.
[73] See Ivana Jurković, "Izložbe i muzejske aktivnost u Našicama" [Exhibition and Museum Activities in Našice], *Informatica Museologica* 8, no. 3-4 (1977): 60-61.
[74] See Josip Waller, "Suradnja Zavičajnog muzeja u Našicama i osnovne škole" [Collaborations between the Native Place Museum in Našice and Primary Schools], *Informatica museologica* 8, no. 3-4 (1977): 62.
[75] See Silvija Lučevnjak, "Zavičajni muzej Našice i glazbena baština obitelj Pejačević" [The Native Place Museum Našice and the Musical Inheritance of the Pejačević Family], *Muzeologija*, no. 51 (2014), 175.
[76] See Silvija Lučevnjak, "Dorina baština i Zavičajni muzej Našice" [Dora's Inheritance and the Native Place Museum Našice], *Informatica Museologica* 32, no. 1-2 (2001): 58.

The Našice museum clearly demonstrates the local flavor of most Native Place Museums. Despite functioning during the 1970s under a socialist regime, the Našice museum structured its collection and exhibition goals around a local noble family that had little to do with the broader mythology of socialist Yugoslavism. In doing so, it exhibited a genuinely local story based upon the popular memory of an exiled seigniorial family and the accomplishments of a young female composer, demonstrating the "especially important place" of Native Place Museums in the discovery, preservation, and display of local history.[80]

All things considered, however, Native Place Museums did contain one key element that clearly diverged from the French ecomuseum model and reflected their status as cultural institutions in a socialist state. Whereas the French ecomuseum, at least in its ideal form, avoids tethering local history and culture to the political foundations of the state, Native Place Museums almost universally contained a department and permanent exhibition space committed to topics that reinforced the socialist state like the Workers' Movement, the People's Liberation Struggle, and the building of socialism. Interestingly, it seems this practice was not driven by law. Instead, two intertwined forces likely explain how this became standard practice in Native Place Museums: an unwritten expectation that any and all history museums cover the local history of socialism and the People's Liberation Struggle; and the influence of Marxist historical methodology in historical museums to frame local history within "independent Marxist conclusions about historical phenomena" that inevitably culminated in the present socialist Yugoslav state.[81] Perhaps for this reason above all else, Native Place Museums have received little attention as predecessors to the French ecomuseum, even among contemporary Croatian museologists such as Tomislav Šola and Darko Babić.

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[77] See Lučevnjak, "Zavičajni muzej Našice i glazbena baština," 175.
[78] Ibid., 171.
[79] Ibid., 173.
[80] Ibid., 175.

In cases like the municipality of Čazma, the local history of the People's Liberation Struggle was indeed significant to the contemporary experience of the region and therefore logically fit within the structures of local history and culture. According to one of the founders of the museum, Čazma was the heart of Croatian Communist movement in Northern Croatia. As early as 1927, the first communist cell in the region was established, by 1940 there were three local communist party committees, and from 1943 onward the Northern Croatian Committee of the Communist Party of Croatia was located in Čazma. Due to the predominance of communist organizations and the Partisan resistance, the wartime losses were extraordinary as over 80% of the town's buildings were burned or destroyed from German air bombings.[82] Furthermore, the museum project began in 1957 with the founding of the local Society of the Friends of Museums by a number of locals interested in preserving the history of the People's Liberation Struggle. The first exhibition space in 1958, for example, was dominated by the People's Liberation

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[81] See Hasaganić, "Istorijski muzeji," 18.

[82] See Mihajlo Bradić, "Kako smo stvorili Zavičajni muzej u Čazmi" [How We Founded the Native Place Museum in Čazma], *Muzejski Vjesnik*, no. 3 (1980), 31-33.

Struggle exhibition which consisted primarily of "two-dimensional objects" like archival documents, propaganda, photographs, and illustrations, with a few three-dimensional objects like weapons and uniforms.[83] Despite not having a single museum expert at the institution, the museum collaborated with regional subject-discipline experts and museologists from the Revolutionary Museum in Zagreb, the project quickly expanded beyond just the People's Liberation Struggle to include all aspects of local history and culture.[84] By 1976 the museum had maintained a "complex" structure that included exhibitions for ethnography, the works of a local author Slavko Kolar, a weapons collection, and an entry hall containing archaeological objects, photocopies of documentations relating to premodern Čazma, and amateur paintings of the region throughout history. Nevertheless, the Native Place Museum in Čazma retained its heavy emphasis on contemporary history with three of its seven halls exhibiting the local history of the Workers' Movement, the People's Liberation Struggle, and the building of socialism in the region.

In many cases, however, there was little history to tell, leading to a number of contemporary history exhibitions that relied on extremely generalized statements and experiences of the Workers' Movement and the People's Liberation Struggle in Croatia. Even in the case of Virje—previously discussed as an example of the non-politicized nature of Native Place museums—the museum contained a collection and display on the Workers' Movement and the People's Liberation Struggle. This collection contained objects like weapons, propaganda, and photographs but it is unclear whether or not these objects were actually from the surrounding region. In three reports on the Virje museum published in the museological journal *Informatica*

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[83] See "O radu Zavičajnog muzeja u Čazmi u 1976. godina" [Concerning the Work of the Native Place Museum in Čazma], *Informatica Museologica* 8, no. 3-4 (1977): 58-59.
[84] See Bradić, "Kako smo," 33.

Museologica, the People's Liberation Struggle collection was mentioned only in passing as part of the cultural-historical section, suggesting it was likely an addition that received little formal attention. Likewise, the Native Place Museum Našice had in its early years employed the full time contemporary historian Josip Waller and considered contemporary historical topics as "prioritized themes" for the museum. Nevertheless, "judging by the materials that were collected in the museum collections, all the attention of the professional workers was increasingly attracted towards research on the history of the family Pejačević and their seigniory" while the People's Liberation Struggle collection stagnated.[85] Perhaps most telling is a 1989 report that concluded Native Place Museum contemporary history departments were generally poorly maintained, consisting on average of an 80:20 ratio between two-dimensional and three-dimensional objects, most of which were copies that dealt with generalized patterns and trends throughout Croatia rather than the specifics of the locality.[86] Clearly then, Native Place Museums were not entirely spared from top-down pressure to integrate local histories of socialist development, even if in practice it seems most cases were merely for show.

Lastly, it should be noted that while Native Place Museums became increasingly prominent in Croatia and represented the realization of modern museological principles, they were often greatly hindered by practical issues relating to funding, professionalism, and execution. Certainly, some cases were hailed as great successes. The 1952 opening of the Native Place Museum in Đakovo was described by Antun Bauer as "a record success without a comparison in our museology."[87] Likewise, older and more established museums that were converted into “complex” museums between 1945 and 1950 were generally maintained quite well. Smaller municipal Native Place Museums founded from the 1950s onward, however, suffered from a variety of problems ranging from a shortage of staff to inadequate facilities for proper museum work. These shortages were sometimes so great that some Native Place Museums lacked the resources “for regular execution of professional and scientific responsibilities … the maintenance of buildings, and the implementation of necessary measures for the protection of precious collections.”[88] According to a 1975 report on the eastern region of Slavonia, Native Place Museums averaged between four or five permanent staff, usually consisting of only two museum professionals, one administrator, and one assistant. In the most extreme case, the Museum Valopštine in Valpovo reported a permanent staff of only *one* full time professional.[89] Furthermore, these museums were hindered by the buildings in which they were housed. Standard practice was to house municipal museums in 19th century “monuments of culture” like palaces or manors with minimal renovation to facilitate modern museum practices in processing and storing objects. For example, only two of the reported museums maintained preparatory workrooms and photo labs while most of the museums lacked security systems or measures for tracking weathering factors like humidity or cold.[90]

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[85] See Lučevnjak, "Zavičajni muzej Našice i glazbena baština," 167.

[86] See "Muzejske zbirke, muzejske izložbe i stalne izložbe sadržajno vezane uz Radnički pokret, NOB i poslijeratnu socijalističku izgradnju na teritoriju SR Hrvatske" [Museum Collections, Museum Exhibitions, and Permanent Exhibitions Thematically Connected to the Worker's Movement, the NOB, and the Postwar Building of Socialism in the Territory of the Socialist Republic of Croatia], *Muzeologija*, No. 26, (1989): 13.

[87] See Krešimi Pavić, "Povijesni pregled muzejske djelatnosti u Đakovu" [A Historical Review of the Museum Work in Đakovo], *Informatica Museologica* 13, no. 3-4 (1982): 24.

To conclude, the legacy of Native Place Museums in Croatia is difficult to assess in any categorical fashion. These museums were quite decentralized, varied a great deal in their execution and maintenance, and played a complicated role within the larger mythology of socialist Yugoslavism. As I have demonstrated, however, the predominant drive behind Native Place Museums was genuinely local, even if we see evidence of top-down state building mythologies bleeding into their work. Throughout most of the socialist period, Native Place Museums therefore fulfilled many of the essential features of modern museology, namely engagement with and management by the local community, the bolstering a positive self-image of local identity, and an emphasis on everyday rural life over and above overarching national frameworks. Furthermore, the mandatory inclusion of contemporary history to "localize" the legacy of socialism and South Slavism, while heavily emphasized at the theoretical level, in most cases was quite minimal in terms of execution.

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[88] See Horvat, “Osivanje i razvoj,” 38.
[89] Ibid., 38.
[90] Ibid., 39.

4.2.2 "Localizing" Socialist Yugoslavism: The Museum of the Peasant Uprisings

One massive exception to this is the Museum of the Peasant Uprisings in Gornja Stubica dedicated to the 1573 Croatian-Slovenian Peasant Revolt. From its inception, the management of the Museum of Peasant Uprisings did not reflect a truly local flavor as outside experts were brought in to design and run the institution. Similarly, the thematic scope of the museum went far beyond the standard local scope of Native Place Museums as the museum crafted a narrative of proto-socialism and South Slavic unity out of a fundamentally local uprising driven by the immediate material concerns of the peasantry. Therefore, while the museum maintained some of the key elements of Native Place Museums outlined above—namely its complex structure, temporary exhibitions on local phenomena, and public outreach programs—it was far and away the most politicized Native Place Museum in Croatia.

Inaugurated in 1973 on the 400-year anniversary of the revolt, the museum opened with massive fanfare and political attention unusual to Native Place Museums. Josip Broz Tito himself took part in the opening ceremony, for example, while over 70,000 people traveled to the otherwise nondescript village of Gornja Stubica (Image 4.1). This opening ceremony also

included the unveiling of a massive statue and mural by Antun Augustinčić. At the front of mural stood a statue of Matija Gubec, the most famous of the revolt leaders, in tattered and beaten clothing, hands clenched in the air, and arms spread as if crucified on a cross. Directly behind the statue, a mural of peasant soldiers valiantly fighting against their better armed feudal overlords spread out in both directions, creating the illusion of wings on Gubec's back (Image 4.2).[91]
The planning for this museum was also unusual for Native Place Museums, both in terms of attention and funding. Beginning in the late 1960s, the project included a number of high level officials such as the presidents of the Croatian Sabor and the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts, in addition to the more typical municipal actors. Likewise, the project received a large share of republic level funding from Fund for the Advancement of the Cultural Works of Croatia. As Maligec notes, this was likely due to the fact that the project was directly endorsed by Tito, "which surely contributed to the easy collection of the necessary resources," as well as the project being connected to a larger urban planning project that included the construction of the 235-bed "Hotel Matija Gubec."[92]

The peasant rebellion this museum commemorated was one of many in the surrounding regions and throughout Central Europe during the 16th century and has been the subject of various historical and ideological interpretations. The events themselves are rather straightforward: on January 29th, 1573, peasants in the Croatian Zagorje region revolted against their feudal lord, Franjo Tahy, and spread the rebellion as far as north as Varaždin and southern Slovenia. After a number of noblemen were killed and their manors captured, the Ban of Croatia,

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[91] See Vladka Filipčić Maligec, "40 godina Muzeja seljačkih buna (1973.-2013.)" [40 Years of the Museum of the Peasant Uprisings (1973-2013), *Informatica Museologica* 44, no. 1-4 (2013): 81.
[92] Ibid., 82.

Juraj Drašković, sent an imperial army against the peasant army and swiftly defeated them. A large portion of the 10,000-strong peasant army was killed, the leaders of the revolt, including Matija Gubec, were publicly executed, and the imperial army was given free rein to plunder the countryside as a punishment and warning to future rebellions.[93]

While historians agree on these basic facts, there has been much debate over the question of motive. As Vjeran Pavlovic points out, the legacy of 1573 has long been subjected to various ideological interpretations that have attempted to assign ideological motive to the peasants, and in particular, the leadership of Matija Gubec.[94] During the 19th century, for instance, the 1573 uprising and Matija Gubec were the subjects of romantic-nationalist historiography and touted as examples of the undying spirit of Croatian, Slovenian, and/or Yugoslav nationalism against foreign Hungarian rule. Likewise, in the interwar period, the events were subjected to conservative-populist, far-right, *and* far-left interpretations. The Croatian Peasant Party, for instance, focused on Gubec as the ideal Croatian peasant who fought feudal exploitation while also maintaining a conservative and *non-revolutionary* socio-political program that sought to restore the "old rights" and "social order, which existed during the old Croatian kingdom."[95] The Ustaša movement, meanwhile, employed the events of 1573 and the historical persona of Gubec as examples of the undying Croatian national spirit and the centuries-long struggle for national independence. Finally, the communist interpretation—first developed in the 1930s but employed far more dramatically during World War Two as a means of inspiring peasants to rise up in socialist revolution—was deeply rooted in both Marxist historical materialism and populist peasant folklore. In the tradition of Engels', *The Peasant War in Germany,* socialist historians

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[93] See Vjeran Pavlakovic, "Matija Gubec Goes to Spain: Symbols and Ideology in Croatia, 1936–1939," *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 17 no. 4 (2004): 727-755.
[94] Ibid. 727-728.
[95] Ibid., 731

Image 4.1: Josip Broz Tito at the opening ceremonies for the Museum of the Peasant Uprisings, 1973. The image is property of the Museum of the Peasant Uprisings.

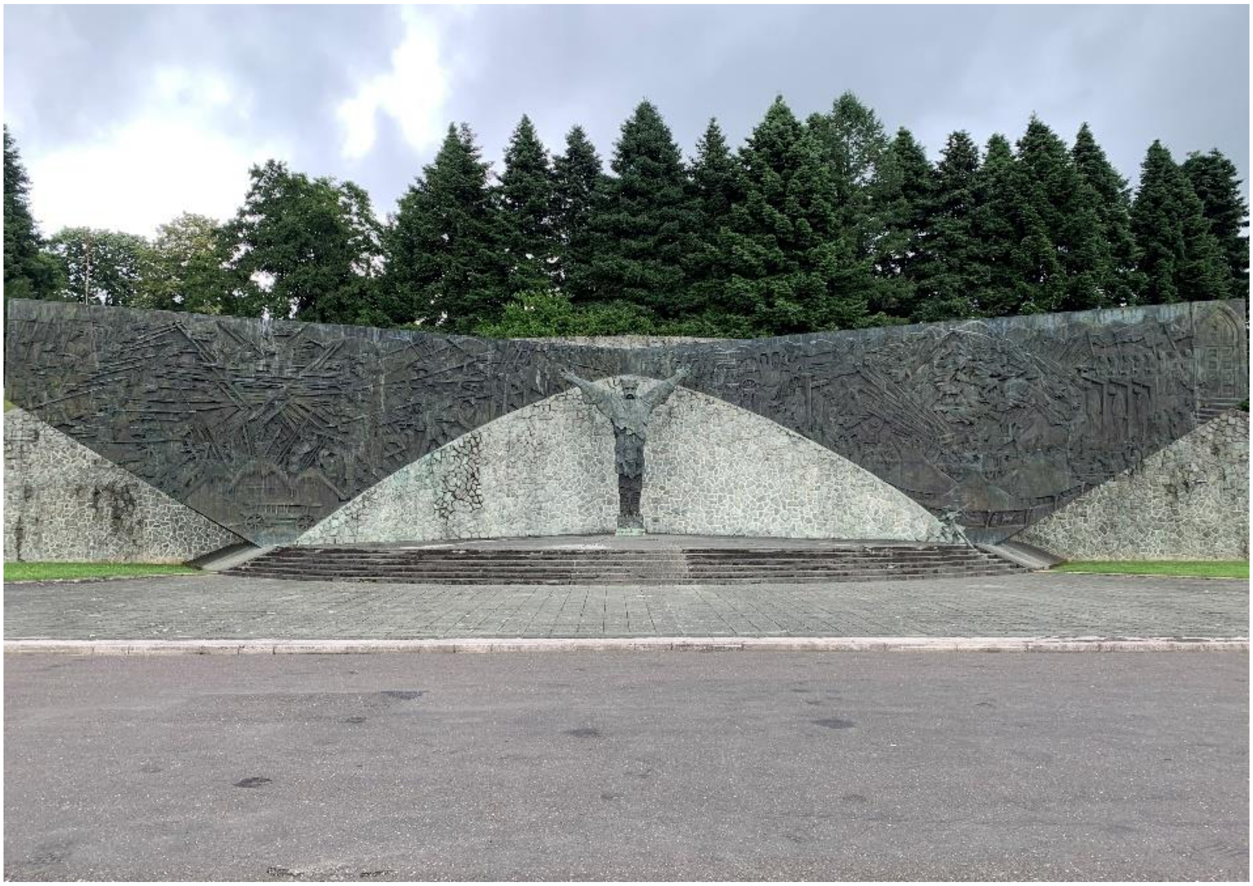

Image 4.2: Antun Agustinčić's statue and mural outside the Museum of the Peasant Uprisings, June 18th, 2019. The image is property of the author.

rejected earlier interpretations that looked at religious or political reasons, and instead argued that this revolt was caused by inevitable class conflict over changes in the socio-economic landscape of Central Europe. At the same time, the communist interpretation tapped into popular myths and legends about peasant rebels against foreign oppressors and aristocratic exploitation in order to inspire the largely peasant population of Croatia in World War Two to rise up against Italian and German occupiers. Lastly, the legend that this was a dual Slovene-Croat rebellion (regardless of its anachronism) served to bolster claims about the common historical heritage and national struggles of all the South Slavs.

As Neven Budak notes, the 1573 rebellion was part of a much larger trend of peasant discontent due to a regional trend in which cash payments for feudal dues were converted to in-kind payments, namely wine, that in turn limited a nascent peasant market that had developed over the past century. This interpretation fits well with the communist interpretation since it emphasizes the underlying economic conditions related to class conflict. But as Budak also points out, the particularities of Tahy's rule played a huge factor in the scale and intensity of the 1573 rebellion. Even though Tahy was acting according to "the spirit of the time" by reverting to in-kind payments, he further exacerbated the situation through his particularly cruel treatment of the peasantry, including the reported practice of "dishonoring" (*obeščašćivanje*) local women on the night of their marriage.[96] Likewise, Budak argues that the scope of the rebellion was limited to addressing the issues of dues and Tahy's behavior, contrary to the more heroic version that claims Gubec and his fellow peasant leaders aimed to take "power over the entirety of the Croatian-Slavonian kingdom," and that Gubec was contemporaneously elected by his followers as the “peasant king.”[97] Thus, Budak concludes that the 1573 uprising, like various other peasant uprisings during the 16th and 17th centuries, was mostly a matter of addressing obligations and privileges in a general sense, even if the initial outbreak of armed rebellion was specifically triggered by Tahy’s actions. Furthermore, any attempt to assess the motives of the peasants with the few “poor sources” at our disposal is, at best, problematic.[98]

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[96] It seems Budak is referring to some form of *jus primae noctis*, although he does not elaborate further. See Neven Budak, *Hrvatska i Slavonija u ranome novom vijeku* [*Croatia and Slavonia in the Early Modern Period*] (Zagreb: Leykam International, 2007), 148.

The Museum of Peasant Uprisings did not take such a nuanced approach in its permanent exhibition. Under the guidance of professor Josip Adamček, the designers of the permanent exhibition adopted and expanded upon the popular communist interpretation of class struggle and South Slavic unity. In general, the study of the medieval period among Croatian historians during the socialist period was not heavily marred by ideological interpretations. Josip Adamček, however, was by far the most ardently Marxist medieval historian in his methodology and conclusions, “whose ideological background can be recognized … in the economic determination of his explanations … and the terminology he used (e.g. ‘exploitation’).”[99] Not surprisingly, therefore, the entirety of the permanent exhibition was framed by a Marxist historical interpretation of class struggle that drew a direct historical line from the peasant uprisings of the 16th century to the contemporary socialist Yugoslav state.

In planning this sort of exhibition, Adamček and his fellow professionals faced a common problem when it comes to exhibiting history from the bottom: a lack of material objects that could fill the spaces of the halls. Since the “heroes” of the 1573 exhibition were peasants, and since all of the leadership was executed, there was very little physical evidence left to collect and exhibit. Likewise, the majority of contemporary accounts of the events were from the perspective of the nobility who had a vested interest in characterizing the peasants as little more than violent barbarians. In order to circumvent this, Adamček and his colleagues employed the principles of object-based displays discussed in chapter two by relying heavily on replicas, recreations, images, graphics, and a great deal of written text, while sprinkling in what few authentic ethnographic objects they had at their disposal (Image 4.3).

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[97] Ibid., 149.
[98] Ibid., 150.
[99] See Budak, “Post-Socialist Historiography in Croatia,” 130.

An examination of the original 1971 planning documents backs up this conclusion and suggests that among the many concerns of the museum planners, the authenticity of material culture was of relatively low priority.[100] As Adamček explains in these documents, he and his colleagues needed to rely on later depictions and "modern artistic intervention" in the form of maps, illustration, and graphics in order to paint a clear image of the conditions of the peasantry in the 16th century. For instance, the majority of the exhibition "would consist of freestanding and hanging panels, drawings based on original engravings, glass cases, photocopies of documents and enhanced photography, original ethnographic examples … of tools and weapons, written text translations, and fixed legends."[101] This accompanying material—considered by Adamček to be equally important as the original objects—would present the true meaning of each display and connect them to the predominant theme of class struggle throughout the museum.[102] Adamček's heavily didactic approach was later criticized by the current director of the museum, Vlatka Filipčić Maligec, as replicating "a book on the wall," although she concedes Adamček succeeded in making "use of all the multimedia possibilities of the time."[103]

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[100] It should be noted that the original 1971 plans vary slightly from the actual executed exhibition in 1973. For the most part, these differences are negligible as the biggest difference was that the nine rooms originally planned were condensed into seven. Notably, room five, described in detail below, was an entirely new addition to the original 1971 plan.

[101] See Josip Adamček, *Stalna Postava Izložbe Seljačkih Buna 1573* [*Permanent Exhibition Setup of the Peasant Uprisings of 1573*], 1971, 7687, MDC, 33.

[102] Ibid., 3.

[103] See Maligec, "40 godina Muzeja", 86.

Adamček's use of object-based displays also manifested in how he assigned motive and meaning to the peasants and their leadership. Driven by the need to create a comprehensible and "thematically whole" exhibition, he crafted a linear narrative that placed the 1573 Peasant Revolt in the context of both socialism and South Slavism. For instance, because the uprising was interpreted as the culminating moment of class struggle and truly international in nature, Adamček applied the motives of other regional riots and uprisings that were studied in greater detail, such as the German Peasant War, to the 1573 rebels, thus positioning this revolt within the larger history of class struggle in East Central Europe.[104] Likewise, Adamček further concluded that the peasant leadership sought to abolish the entire feudal system once "the rebels realized that their goals could not be achieved in a struggle against an individual feudal lord, and that it was necessary to take the struggle against the entire feudal class and oust them from power."[105] The Slovenian and Croatian peasants—anachronistic categories in and of themselves—were similarly described as unified by "common class interest" and opposition to outside "invaders" such as the German Habsburgs and the Ottoman Turks.[106]

Finally, Adamček designed the exhibition to culminate in the legacy of 1573 for the present day. The last two rooms of the exhibition were dedicated to the historical legacy of 1573 in popular culture, art, and politics, and how the spirit of 1573 manifested the Yugoslav communist party. It seems clear, therefore, that Adamček was less concerned with direct

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[104] It is unclear in the document how exactly this was accomplished. Adamček references "including the motives of peasant uprisings in Germany" alongside other forms of "modern artistic intervention." That being said, he later explains in the document the need to connect the events of 1573 to other regional uprisings, rebellions, and riots, such as the Sisak uprising of 1544, riots at the Topuška monastery in the 1550s, and the Stubička uprising of 1567. See Adamček, *Stalna Postava*, 4.

[105] See Josip Adamček, *Vodić kroz Muzej seljačkih buna* [*Guide through the Museum of the Peasant Uprisings*] (Gornja Stubica: Museum of the Peasant Uprisings, 1973), 8.

[106] Ibid., 9.

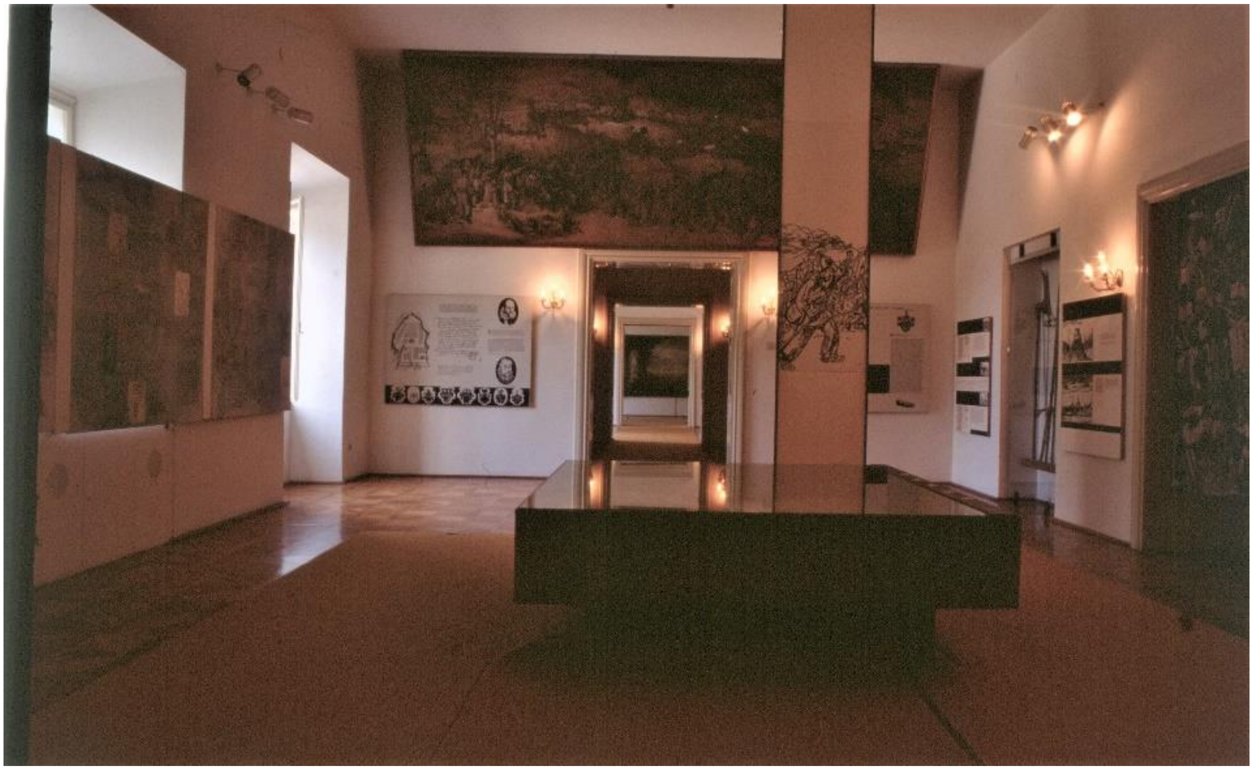

Image 4.3: Interior of the permanent exhibition of the Museum of the Peasant Uprisings, circa 1975. The image is property of the Museum of Peasant Uprisings.

empiricism backed by authentic material objects than he was with constructing a narrative of class struggle and South Slavic unity in line with the socialist Yugoslav imperatives of the time.

In order to truly understand Adamček's politicized exhibition design, it is worth describing each exhibition hall, focusing on both Adamček's use of objects and multimedia, and his Marxist historical conclusions. The permanent exhibition was divided into three sections throughout which Adamček wove in both socialist and national features: 1) the conditions of the peasantry vis-a-vis their feudal lords; 2) the outbreak of rebellion and its suppression; and 3) the immediate and long term repercussions of the rebellion, and its lasting historical legacy. The first section contained three rooms, beginning with a room on the general conditions and everyday life of the peasantry in East Central Europe. Here, Adamček stressed two interwoven narratives: that the 1573 revolt was part and parcel of a larger class conflict throughout the region, and that conditions leading up to the revolt were worsened by foreign rulers with little interest in the fate of the South Slavs. For example, the room contained an array of ethnographic objects that were accompanied by a series of panels meant to "illustrate" the harsh conditions of the peasantry in relation to their feudal overlords.[107] The room also highlighted the local elites who contributed to the peasants' exploitation, such as Juraj Drašković, the Catholic cardinal and regional Ban "who as a representative of earthly and spiritual power suffocated the peasant uprising."[108] Likewise, the exhibition positioned a replica of Franjo Tahy's gravestone against the central wall surrounded by images of the regional fortress and reprints of documents related to feudal rents. The negative impact of foreign "invaders" was also described in detail to demonstrate the common South Slavic cause in the uprising. Maps showing Croatia and Slovenia divided between Ottoman, Venetian, and Habsburg rule lined the adjoining walls, while illustrations depicting battles between Habsburg and Ottoman troops and panels describing “Turkish burglaries” accompanied a list of peasants enslaved by Ottomans as spoils of war.[109]

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[107] See Adamček, *Stalna Postava,* 33.
[108] See Adamček, *Vodić kroz Muzej,* 7.

The second and third rooms—easily the most Marxist in nature—concerned the specific circumstances of the peasants in the region and the “sharpening” of class conflict that led to the outbreak of armed rebellion. Once again combining ethnographic objects with a heavy amount of written text, maps, and graphics, the second room painted a more specific picture of everyday life for Slovenian and Croatian peasants in the Croatian Zagorje, Styria, and Carniola regions. Interestingly, while the cruelty of Tahy was hinted at through a replica of a contemporary complaint by the serfs against him, his rule was quite literally framed within the larger context of feudal rule as the document was couched between seven other panels and documents describing *all* the feudal lords of the surrounding regions.[110] Furthermore, the story of the feudal lords was heavily framed in socio-economic terms. A historical map of noble land holdings and accompanying diagrams, for instance, highlighted that almost the entirety of the surrounding regions were the holdings of ten magnates and a handful of church institution. Likewise, multiple graphics and panels described changes in feudal rents to in-kind payments and the “propulsion” of the peasants from the market to highlight the “organization of the nobility, the forms of legal dependency of the peasants on the nobility, and most importantly, the communal burden placed on the peasants.”[111]

This narrative continued in the third room that focused on how these changing conditions led to “a general sharpening of class conflicts that sometimes grew into armed conflict.” As Adamček noted in the original planning document, the idea behind this room was to create a

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[109] Ibid., 7.

[110] See Adamček, *Stalna Postava*, 34.

[111] See Adamček, *Vodić kroz Muzej*, 8.

"remarkable and very serious impression" of "the forces of riches and power that the rights-less peasants served, classically and totally oppressed."[112] To this end, the room contained two panels discussing a series of armed rebellions that preceded 1573 in the region, such as the revolt in Donja Bukovica in 1479, the Slovenian uprising in 1515, and a series of uprisings in Sisak, Ludberg, Pazin, and Susjedgrad-Stubička between 1544 and 1572. Furthermore, the goals of the 1573 were elaborated in detail, noting that while the immediate cause was a "struggle against feudal burdens, a battle for a free market, and a battle for old rights," the peasants soon aimed to fundamentally change their social relationship with the nobility. Likewise, the room displayed documents demonstrating "the rebel leadership intended through the uprising to destroy the feudal order and subsequently create an independent peasant society with headquarters in Zagreb," although it is unclear to which documents Adamček was referring.[113]

The second section of the exhibition focused on the actual uprising and its brutal suppression. As the central part of the exhibition, the fourth room described in detail the course of the 1573 rebellion, including the overall strategy by the peasant leadership, the "planned repression" by the nobility, and the details of crucial battles including the crushing defeat and retreat of the peasant military leader Ilija Gregorić. In terms of objects, the room mostly contained maps, graphics, and legends describing the course of events and the overwhelming odds the peasant soldiers faced. This was complemented by replicas of weapons from both armies displayed throughout the room, creating a clear contrast between the poorly improvised peasant arms and the professionally trained and equipped feudal forces.[114] The tragic story climaxed in the fifth room, however, where the "feudal terror" following the suppression of the revolt was exhibited. This room was by far the most theatric in nature: in order to capture the essence of this "terror," the room was "darkened" with black walls and only sparse lighting over the panels, while copies of "old graphics about the torture of peasants" were projected via overhead projector on the wall. Additionally, multiple panels described contemporary torture and interrogation techniques in detail and framed a modern painting of Matija Gubec's torture by a red-hot iron crown titled "The Coronation of Gubec. Even more striking, an audio reenactment of the rebel leaders' interrogation was played on loop to demonstrate "the actual course of the interrogation," even though Adamček admits that they had to reconstruct most of these questions based a few sparse descriptions of the interrogations.[115] According to Nevan Budak, these same interrogation sources are often cited for explaining the rebel leadership's goals, but given their coercive and biased nature, "we must assess them with extreme caution."[116] Needless to say, extreme caution was not applied in this instance.

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[112] See Adamček, *Stalna Postava*, 35.
[113] See Adamček, *Vodić kroz Muzej*, 9.
[114] Ibid., 10.

The exhibition concluded in its third section on the lasting legacy of the 1573 uprising. Set in two rooms, this section similarly focused on both the socialist and the national story of 1573 by linking it to Yugoslav communists and the historical precedents of South Slavic unity. The first room of the section, room six, exhibited how 1573 and the memory of Gubec in particular played out in the socialist Yugoslav movement, which itself embodied the common South Slavic struggle for socialist revolution. Adamček describes the exhibition hall as explaining to the visitor how "the spirit of freedom and the idea of the peasant uprising lived on" throughout the history of "our peoples"—a clear reference to the different nations of Yugoslavia—after 1573. In order to do this, the exhibition pointed to examples of "the revolutionaries [who] renewed the tradition of the peasant uprising" in the 20th century. For example, the exhibition highlighted Pavle Gregorić—a significant figure in the People's Liberation Struggle and ranking member of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia until 1970—who joined the "Great October Revolution" in 1917 as a member of the Yugoslav regiment titled "Matija Gubec." Likewise, the exhibition described volunteers from all the Yugoslav peoples" who participated in the Spanish Civil War. Naming their battalion after Gubec, these Yugoslav communists continued the "tradition of their Slovene and Croat peasant ancestors [and] continued the collective struggle towards the ultimate victory" of socialist revolution. The story continued with the legacy of Gubec in the Peoples Liberation Struggle. The exhibition contained a panel on the thirteen different battalions, units, and brigades that were named after Gubec, which was accompanied by the poem "*Gupcu*" ("To Gubec") by the peasant poet Mihovil Pavlek Miškina that was "often recited at cultural events during the People's Liberation Struggle."[117] Finally, the room concluded with a famous 1952 excerpt from Tito in which he spoke of "the four hundred year struggle of the people of Hrvatsko Zagorje against foreign conquerors for freedom and social justice that, together with the other peoples of Yugoslavia, was finally achieve in the socialist revolution."[118]

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[115] Ibid., 10.

[116] See Budak, *Hrvatska i Slavonija,* 149.

The final room of the permanent exhibition provided an overall picture of the legacy of 1573 in Yugoslav literature, art, music, folklore, and quite interestingly, historiography. All of this was done namely through written text on panels for each category. For literature, art, music, and folklore, Adamček described the legacy in rather generalized terms: Gubec became a very popular figure in 19th and early 20th century national literature; "echoes" of Gubec and the 1573 uprising can be found in popular folk music; and the tale of Gubec's "Peasant Kingdom" in numerous folklore traditions. Regarding the historiographical legacy, however, Adamček elaborated. According to him, "feudal" historians "characteristically referred to the peasants with hate and scorn … imitating the nobility with slurs at the expense of Gubec and the peasants." It was not until 1918 with the "liberation" of the South Slavs that the events of 1573 became hugely important in Croatian and Slovenian historiography, as evidenced by ten monographs, fifteen collections, and over one hundred scientific articles being published between 1918 and 1937. The fact that Adamček refers to historiography here is likely representative of a larger socialist Yugoslav myth: that the national traditions of the South Slavs had for centuries been suppressed by foreign rulers, and that only through unity in the form of a common Yugoslav state could each national tradition be protected.[119]

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[117] Interestingly, Miškina is better known for his membership in the Croatian Peasant Party and his populist understanding of the peasantry than his communist sympathies. In fact, in 1938 he published "Why the Croatian Peasant is not Communist" in which he argued that maintaining the traditional way of life of the peasantry was paramount. Nonetheless, Miškina was lauded in the exhibition guide for his general socialist values and martyrdom at the hands of Ustaša fascists. See Mira Kolar, "Kniježevnik Mihovil Pavlek Miškina i politika" [The Writer Mihovil Pavlek Miškina and Politics], *Podravina* 5, no. 9 (2006): 41.

[118] See Adamček, *Vodić kroz Muzej,* 11.

As this walkthrough of the 1973 permanent exhibition shows, the Museum of the Peasant Uprisings narrated the events of 1573 through the lenses of class struggle and socio-economic exploitation. By subsequently connecting the revolutionary spirit of the peasant actors to contemporary revolutionary events, the Museum of the Peasant Uprisings effectively demonstrated the museological idea of contemporary history. This emphasis on the contemporary—both in terms of narrating the past according to Marxist teleology, and in terms of narrating contemporary events thematically related to the peasant uprising—was certainly not unique to this museum, but in terms of the broader picture of Native Place Museums was certainly the most blatant. Similarly, the ways in which this museum employed physical objects, often favoring two-dimensional graphics, maps, and written text over authentic or replicated three-dimensional objects, demonstrates how actualizing the thematic goals of object-based displays often times resulted in museum exhibitions that were more akin to a “book on a wall” than a celebration of material culture.

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[119] Ibid., 11.

If anything, the Museum of the Peasant Uprisings demonstrates that *if* and *when* communist leaders decided a certain museum or topic suited their larger cultural-propaganda aims, they were more than able to influence the local museum’s development. In this case, we see that the Museum of the Peasant Uprisings was far more akin to the Historical Museum of Croatia than to its fellow Native Place Museums. Given the complex legacy of the 1573 Croatian-Slovenian Peasant Revolt—a legacy claimed by the political left and right alike—and the potential of the revolt to reinforce class-based socialism and ethnic-based South Slavism, it seems the topic was far too valuable for republic level leaders to ignore. And while Adamček’s exhibition design was clearly designed towards political ends, it also reflected the extent to which Croatian museums could still produce engaging and modern visitor oriented experiences regardless of their politicized content.

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The history of Native Place Museums is a complicated and underrepresented one. It seems very odd that these institutions have not received more attention in museological literature given the various ways that they predate the celebrated ecomuseum model. One might be tempted to explain this simply as a result of Croatian museology being underrepresented in Western museum literature, but there are a number of academics who recognize the important role Croatia played in postwar museology.[120] Therefore, recognition of socialist era museum practice in Croatia is certainly not absent enough to explain this void. The fact that Tomislav

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[120] See Peter Van Mensch, “Towards a Methodology of Museology.” PhD Dissertation, University of Zagreb, 1992. See Jesús-Pedro Lorente. “The Development of Museum Studies in Universities: From Technical Training to Critical Museology,” *Museum Management and Curatorship* 27, no. 3 (2013): 237-252.

Šola and Darko Babić, two of the biggest names in contemporary Croatian museology, have similarly avoided labeling Native Place Museums as predecessors to the ecomuseum is also quite striking. Ultimately, it is beyond the scope of this chapter to fully explain this. The most likely answer lies in the politicized nature of *certain aspects* of Native Place Museums, namely their mandatory inclusion of contemporary socialist history, and in the case of the Museum of the Peasant Uprisings, the saturated Marxist interpretation of the premodern past as a history of perpetual class conflict. Nonetheless, these museums must be considered important developments in modern museology given their close ties to the local community and their pedagogical goals. Furthermore, they represent the ways in which the structures of a socialist state—namely, the potential to reinforce state legitimacy through public commitments to egalitarianism, education, and cultural empowerment—can simultaneously advance *and* hinder the democratization of cultural institutions.

4.3 Conclusion

Ultimately, the legacy of socialist-era historical museums in Croatia is mixed. The Historical Museum of Croatia clearly represents the pressure to frame Croatian history—national and territorial—within the constructs of state-led socialist mythology rooted in the South Slavs' common struggles for national independence and socio-economic justice. While this was most pronounced in this museum, one finds a similar trend in other historical museums. The most pronounced local example of this came from the Museum of the Peasant's Uprising in the rural municipality of Gornja Stubica. Narrating the history of a 16th century peasant revolt as a prime example of the larger South Slav drive towards national and socio-economic emancipation, this museum followed a similar discursive trajectory as the Historical Museum of Croatia. It is clear, therefore, that unlike the academic discipline of history, which remained somewhat shielded from these ideological constructs, historical museums, as public educational institutions, were under considerably more pressure to toe the Party line.

At the same time, this did not permeate *all* historical practices in museums. A number of smaller Native Place Museums throughout Croatia, particularly those concentrated in the less-developed region of Slavonia, were only loosely tethered to these larger historical narratives. Instead, the focus of these museums was truly local in nature, and generally avoided arbitrary formulations of local traditions within the national and supranational constructs of socialist Yugoslavism. Their institutional structures were similarly local, often being founded and run on an amateur basis by locals themselves and funded by a combination of local and republic cultural funds, local companies and institutions, and avid collectors and donors in the region. Native Place Museums were nonetheless compelled to incorporate a mandatory collection and display focused on the Workers' Movement and the People's Liberation Struggle, regardless of whether or not there was a strong local legacy of these historical events. For perhaps this reason more than any other, Native Place Museums have received little attention as forerunners to the French ecomuseum model, despite sharing several key characteristics.

This chapter contains direct portions of two previously published articles: Palhegyi, Joel. "National Museums, National Myths: Construction socialist Yugoslavism for Croatia and Croats," *Nationalities Papers* 45, no. 6 (2017): 1048-1065; and Palhegyi, Joel. "Revolutionary Curating, Curating the Revolution: Socialist Museology in Yugoslav Croatia," *Martor* 23 (2018): 17-34. The dissertation author was the primary researcher and author of these papers.

Chapter 5: Burying Tito's Yugoslavia
Historical Museums in Post-Socialist Croatia

In late 1991, war broke out between Croatia and Yugoslavia, leading to a five year conflict in which Yugoslav, Serb, and Croat troops and paramilitaries alike committed numerous atrocities and acts of ethnic cleansing. In the early years of the war, everyday Croats were systematically targeted as Serb-dominated Yugoslav People's Army troops and Serbian paramilitaries bombarded, occupied, and looted regions of Croatia including the now emblematic siege of Vukovar in between August and October 1991, and the sustained shelling campaign on the old city of Dubrovnik between October 1991 and May 1992. During this time, it became common practice for invading and occupying Serb troops to torture, rape, and execute Croatian civilians in a bid to ethnically cleanse regions deemed to belong to the Serb homeland. By the end of the war in 1995, the tables had turned, and the Croatian military successfully recaptured all of its occupied territories in western Herzegovina and eastern Slavonia. In the process, however, the vast majority of the Serb population in these regions fled in fear of reprisals by the Croatian military and paramilitaries. What ensued was the single largest refugee crisis in Europe since the Second World War as between 100,000 and 300,000 ethnic Serbs fled regions that they had called home for centuries. In these newly recaptured regions, Croatian troops responded in kind, looting and destroying thousands of Serb homes while torturing and killing the few Serb civilians who chose not to or could not flee, most commonly elderly individuals. Thus, Tito's socialist Yugoslav project came to a bitter and bloody end in Croatia as the values of Brotherhood and Unity and South Slavism were literally purged from the country by force.[40]

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[40] See Sabrina P. Ramet, *Balkan Babel: The Disintegration of Yugoslavia from the Death of Tito to the Fall of Milošević* (London: Routledge, 2002); John R. Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History: Twice There Was A Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); and Laura Silber and Allan Little, *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation* (New York: Penguin Books, 1997).

The scale of the civil war in the former Yugoslavia meant its successor states faced a unique challenge in their post-socialist transition towards liberal democracy, free market capitalism, and European Union membership. Throughout the entirety of the Eastern Bloc, no country witnessed this sort of sustained violence and warfare during the early post-socialist transitional years. For Croatia in particular, however, the experience of five years of violent occupation and war presented a particular challenge to the transitional process. While Croatia for the most part retained international support from Western European governments, it took until 2013 for Croatia to achieve EU membership. This process was delayed by a combination of fervent ethno-nationalism developed under Croatia's first president, Franjo Tuđman, and the unresolved question of war crimes by Croatian leaders and soldiers who were put on trial through the Hague's International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

In this chapter, therefore, I demonstrate how historical museums participated in this transitional process, both as instruments of Franjo Tuđman's aggressive nation building project, as well as crucial sites for navigating Croatia's complex 20th century history. I begin by analyzing how Croatia's new nation-state paradigm led to a fundamental re-framing of Croatian national history that effectively amounted to purging the legacy of Yugoslavia and Yugoslavism from Croatia's past, both in terms of revolutionary socialism and South Slavism. I then investigate the history of Revolutionary Museums after the death of the 'revolutionary state,' i.e., socialist Yugoslavia, showing how their fates reflect a similar process to actively forget the socialist past. And lastly, I investigate how the legacy of Croatia's War of Independence, popularly known in Croatia as the Homeland War, has effectively replaced the legacy of the Second World War in Croatia today as *the* foundational origin myth for the modern Croatian state. These three cases reflect a new era in Croatia's history as an ethno-national European nation state in an increasingly internationally oriented European Union. But more importantly, these cases reflect the near-complete process of burying the history of Tito's Yugoslavia in Croatian history museums today.

5.1 Purging the YU: Re-Narrating Croatian National History after the Collapse of Socialism

On May 31st, 1991, the Croatian Ministry of Culture ordered the Historical Museum of Croatia to be renamed the Croatian History Museum. Occurring during the escalation of anti-socialist and anti-Yugoslav sentiments and immediately before the outbreak of war, this change of name clearly reflected Croatia's larger transitional process from a socialist republic to a democratic and capitalist nation-state. During the socialist era, the name Historical Museum of Croatia was designed specifically to de-emphasize ethno-nationalism by labeling it a historical museum of the *territory and state* of Croatia, which in its socialist form, was understood as a multi-ethnic, multi-religious entity. Thus, the transition to a specifically *Croatian* museum gave the institution an ethno-national outlook focused on the Croat nation. Simply put, the museum was no longer a historical museum of a given territorial entity, Croatia, but rather of a national people, the Croats.

This name change is indicative of the larger trends seen at the Croatian History Museum since 1989 as it transformed—or one might argue, reverted—into a traditional nationalist historical institute. Similar trends are visible throughout regional museums in Croatia, although they vary a great deal in form and extent. One of the clearest examples of how Croatia's post-socialist national paradigm has played out at the local level is the Museum of Peasant Uprisings in Gornja Stubica. As a highly politicized institution in the socialist era, the Museum of Peasant Uprisings presents an all the more compelling case study of post-socialist museum transitions.

In this section, therefore, I investigate these two examples, the Croatian History Museum and the Museum of Peasant Uprisings, in order to demonstrate the evolution of Croatia's national paradigm at the museum level. Considering their rapid shifts in terms of topics, themes, and language, it is clear that these institutions were heavily affected by Croatia's nationalist politics first articulated by Franjo Tuđman and the Croatian Democratic Union party (HDZ) in the late 1980s and 1990s. Under the guise of removing ideology from their exhibitions, the museums have instead simply replaced socialist ideology rooted in South Slavic and socialist values with a modern Croatian national ideology rooted in traditional ethno-nationalism.

5.1.1 Transforming Brothers and Revolutionaries into Fathers and Nationalists: Exhibiting Croatian National History during the 1990s

During the socialist-era, Croatian nationalism was carefully constructed within the framework of socialist Yugoslavism, which in practice meant focusing primarily on two things: the proto-socialist or socialist values of Croatian national figures and events, and the bonds of South Slavic brotherhood throughout Croatian history. In this way, the Croatian History Museum (at the time titled the Historical Museum of Croatia) functioned as a key site of public history wherein the legacy of Croat nationalism was negotiated into the prominent mythologies under state socialism. With the crisis and collapse of communism in the late 1980s, however, the Croatian History Museum rapidly transitioned to displaying traditional conservative nationalism. In this form of nationalism, all reference to social justice and revolution have been removed and elements of South Slavism have been replaced by distinctly Croatian national characteristics. As such, the socialist tradition of 'brothers and revolutionaries' has effectively returned to a conservative national tradition of ‘fathers and nationalists’ focused on the Great Men of Croatian national history and largely disconnected from their broader South Slavic context.

As I demonstrate in the previous chapter, a fair amount of space existed in the Croatian History Museum during the socialist era to articulate Croatian nationalism. Thus, the exhibition activities of the Croatian History Museum since 1989 do not simply reflect a re-emergence of Croatian nationalism. Rather, they reflect the new paradigm of Croatian nationalism as the era of socialist Yugoslavia came to a close and Croatia transitioned into its current status as a democratic nation-state. In particular, the Croatian History Museum has emphasized three themes related to Croatia’s new nation-state status: national sovereignty and state-right; liberal democracy; and Croat ethno-nationalism.

The upsurge in nationalist exhibitions at the Croatian History Museum came under the guidance of the museum’s director, Jasna Tomičić, who as early as 1989 shifted the museum’s exhibition activities towards an ethno-national and liberal-democratic framework. Take for instance the 1989 exhibition, “Croatian Lands during the French Revolution.” Held at the height of growing nationalism and the verge of communism’s collapse, the exhibition contained language and messages that clearly spoke to the contemporary moment in Yugoslav Croatia. Tomičić, for example, stated that the goal of the exhibition was to “contribute an introduction to the works of Croat history and their contributions to the shaping of the world.” While this statement appears innocent enough on the surface, similar statements made by Tomičić in later exhibitions make her point much more clear: that until now, a great deal of Croat national history had been suppressed during the socialist era, and that only with the crisis of the system are Croats able rediscover their contributions to world history.[1] More tellingly, the exhibition’s main

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[1] For example, in an introduction to the 1993 exhibition, National Uprisings, 1883 and 1903, Tomičić argued that many of the most important events in Croatian history had been marginalized during the socialist era so that “an

curator, Maja Škiljan, employed the failure of the French Revolution to uphold its values as a thinly veiled critique of the failures of the communist system. For instance, Škiljan begins with a segment of the 1793 Jacobin Constitution that promised radical and social egalitarianism but was never enacted as the war effort required postponing its implementation. Thus, at the exact moment when "mankind clearly sensed its freedom on the horizon, they could not, as usual, reach it." This legacy of failure, according to Škiljan, had followed humanity since as various attempts to realize the goals of the French Revolution, including the 1848 revolutions, the October Revolution, totalitarianism, and "different types of democracy, real and false," failed in the "endless cycle of human misfortunes."[2] Given the political climate of Croatia in 1989 in which anti-Yugoslav and anti-communist sentiments were rampant, and the lack of individual, economic, and political freedom in particular were waged as the primary critique of the system, it seems clear that Škiljan employed the failures of the French Revolution to uphold its egalitarian ideals as a thinly veiled critique of the socialist system.

The museum held a similarly politicized and nationalist exhibition in 1990 on Ivan Mažuranić, the 19th century Croatian Ban (governor) from 1873-1883. Sponsored and partially funded by the Croatian Sabor, the exhibition clearly reflected the national revivalism occurring in 1990 that sought to rediscover Croatian national heroes and history. Thus, the exhibition curator Jelena Borošak-Marijanović depicted Mažuranić as a powerful nationalist leader who modernized Croatia, ended the last vestiges of feudalism, established the foundations for civil society and liberal democracy, and fought for Croatian national rights against Hungary, earning

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entire generation of youth" grew up without exposure to its own national history. Thus, it was now the responsibility of the Croatian History Museum to rectify this "now that all the barriers to learning about our history have been removed." See Ela Jurdana and Jasna Tomičić. *Narodni Pokreti u Hrvatskoj, 1883 i 1903* [*National Uprisings in Croatian, 1883 and 1903*] (Zagreb: Croatian History Museum, 1993), 1.

[2] See Maja Škiljan, *Hrvatske zemlje i frankcuska revolucija* [*The Croatian Lands and the French Revolution*] (Zagreb: The Historical Museum of Croatia, 1989), 10-11.

him the popular title, the Ban of the People (*Ban Pučanin*). For example, despite inheriting a volatile situation in Croatia as national tensions grew with Hungary and the peasantry was squeezed between a grain crisis and increased taxes, Mažuranić managed to embark on a modernization period that by 1883 had laid the foundations for a "modern civil state form" and national autonomy. More specifically, according to Borošak-Marijanović, Mažuranić managed to reform Croatian legislation, ensure freedom of press and assembly, and establishing a modern secular education system, all the while resolving the "administrative feudal anarchy" and ending the "remnants of feudalism" that had plagued the Croatian peasantry since 1848. Thus, she concludes that "although mostly misunderstood by contemporaries, [Mažuranić's] farsighted moves in creating the state-right politics of Croatia was rightly evaluated after his death" so that today he "rightly belongs in one of the leading places in the Pleiad of important figures in Croatian history."[3] Clearly then exhibition was aimed first and foremost at 'recovering' a lost Croatian national hero who had been ignored under socialism, one whose legacy for Croatian democratic principles and practice of statehood laid the foundation for the democratic changes happening in 1990.

The reality, of course, is much murkier as Mažuranić was not quite the nationalist Borošak-Marijanović made him out to be, nor does his record suggest such sweeping success at improving the lives of the peasantry. To be fair, Mažuranić did enact significant reforms in education, legislation, and free press that won him significant support among the urban bourgeoisie of Zagreb in particular. And yet, when it came to his national platform, Mažuranić was both an Illyrian and a royalist whose conciliatory approach to both Vienna and Budapest earned him his promotion to Ban in the first place. For instance, while Mažuranić pushed for

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[3] See Jelena Borošak-Marijanović, *Ivan Mažuranić: Ban Pučanin* [*Ivan Mažuranić: The Ban of the People*] (Zagreb: The Croatian History Museum, 1990), 22.

Croatian autonomy, he did so within the frameworks of the 1868 *Nagodba*, the legal arrangement between the Hungarian Crown and the Croatian lands that granted some Croatian lands a limited degree of political and economic autonomy. As such, Mažuranić was far more a political moderate interested in liberal modernization reforms than he was an ardent defender of Croatian national rights. Likewise, Mažuranić's national ideas aligned more closely with the pan-South Slavic sentiments of the Illyrian movement than the ethno-national ideas of his colleague and former pupil, Ante Starčević, that later came to dominate Croatian national thought in the 20th century.[4] More glaringly, Borošak-Marijanović's depiction of Mažuranić as a 'Ban of the People' who successfully alleviated the plight of the peasantry grossly misrepresents his actual legacy. According to John Lampe, for instance, Mažuranić's rural reforms were limited to allowing the division of rural *zadruge*, the traditional peasant family-based rural units that by the late 19th century were seen as obstacles to liberal economics. This reform, in fact, did little to help the conditions of the peasantry as the division of *zadruge*, combined with the initial 1848 abolition of feudalism, "promoted parcellization of peasant land into uneconomically small homesteads." Thus, Mažuranić "shared responsibility with [his] successor for neglecting peasant interests" and creating the conditions that led to the 1883 peasant revolt.[5]

As the communist system collapsed and Croatia waged a war of independence from Yugoslavia, Tomičić's approach to the Croatian History Museum's exhibitions became blatantly nationalist with the design to "recover" lost national heroes and events and demonstrate the long history of Croatian statehood and democratic values. Perhaps the most significant of these exhibitions came in 1991 when the museum hosted an exhibition on Stjepan Radić, leader of the left-leaning populist-nationalist Croatian Peasant Party that served as the main Croatia opposition party during the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. During the socialist era, the legacy of Stjepan Radić was by no means taboo as his populist politics towards land reform and egalitarianism fit the general socialist model. At the same time, Radić's nationalism and push for Croatian autonomy within the interwar Kingdom of Yugoslavia, and his mortal wounding by Serbian-Montenegrin nationalist Puniša Račić on the floors of the Yugoslav parliament on June 20th, 1928, made Radić's legacy complicated at best in terms of appropriating him for the socialist Yugoslav project. As such, the Croatian History Museum had entirely avoided Radić in its exhibition activities until this point.

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[4] See John R. Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History: Twice There Was A Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 62.

[5] Ibid., 64.

Since the early 1990s, however, Croatia's nationalist politics presented the perfect environment to reclaim his legacy and paint it as the very embodiment of Croatian nationalism. When the Croatian History Museum therefore decided to host an exhibition dedicated to Radić in 1991, it was a distinctly political affair. Franjo Tuđman personally sponsored the exhibition, for example, and the exhibition catalog made continual references to the Radić's contribution to the contemporary political transition. As explained by Jasna Tomičić in the exhibition introduction, Croatia's transformation into a democratic nation-state made it possible for the first time to see "a complete picture" of Radić whose political and national beliefs in "Croatian sovereignty as a democratic, parliamentary state … inspired generations." Tomičić likewise drew direct continuity between the present moment in Croatia and Radić's life work, claiming that "the democratic changes that have taken place in the most recent Croatian history are rooted in the intentions and teachings of Radić."[6] In similar fashion, the entirety of the exhibition authored by Ela Jurdana resembled a sacred hagiography as Radić's life was described with reverence and sadness. For instance, Jurdana selected several events to highlight the momentous and heroic nature of Radić's life, including his "return to his homeland" in 1900, his subsequent arrest in 1902 for an "act of courage" to ease Croat-Serb tensions, the "great policy speech" in July 1918 on Croatia's long state-right tradition, and his tireless work throughout the 1920s to achieve Croatian sovereignty within the structures of the Kingdom, all of which unjustly culminated in the moment of his national martyrdom as he was shot on the floor of parliament.[7] Furthermore, Jurdana played off populist and nationalist themes throughout the exhibition. A prominent image on display, for instance, portrayed Radić in a peasant village among musicians in traditional folk garb. In his hand, Radić held a political pamphlet on which the word "home" (*dom*) was prominently visible.[8] Thus, Tomičić and Jurdana located Croatia's most prominent elements of 1990s Croatian nation-state building—sovereignty, democracy, and ethno-nationalism—in the figure of Stjepan Radić, celebrating not only his life's work but also its culmination in the current political moment in contemporary Croatia.

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[6] See Ela Jurdana and Jasna Tomičić, *Stjepan Radić* (Zagreb: Croatian History Museum, 1991), 15.

Even in 1993, as the war between Croatia and Serb-dominated Yugoslavia continued in through Croatia, Herzegovina, and Bosnia, the Croatian History Museum continued to host nationalist exhibitions designed to present the public with otherwise forgotten episodes of national history. By this point, Tomičić took on a far more aggressive and explicit tone in her exhibition introductions, while the exhibition curators themselves became increasingly engrossed in the national paradigms of the contemporary moment. This pattern is shown explicitly in the 1993 exhibition, "National Uprisings in Croatia, 1883-1903." Introducing the events as crucial moments in the Croatian national movement whose history was suppressed during the socialist era, Tomičić explains that it was only possible to host this exhibition "now that all the barriers to learning about our history have been removed," a clear reference to Croatian independence with the accompanying anti-Yugoslav undertones. Likewise, Tomičić drew a direct parallel to the current war for independence and the uprisings of 1883 and 1903. These uprisings, according to Tomičić, were rooted in Croatia being "politically and economically dependent on Hungary," culminating in popular national uprisings. And much as the current war being waged exposed the plight of the Croat people under Serbian hegemony, the 1883 and 1903 uprisings "signif[ied] to the entire free world the condition of the Croat people in the monarchy." Thus, these uprisings and the current war against socialist Yugoslavia shared the same motive: "the love for freedom—political and economic."[9] Considering that anti-communism was just as strong of a political current as anti-Yugoslavian and anti-Serbian sentiments, the emphasis on economic freedom was clearly in reference to the new goals of Croatia to transition to free market capitalism.

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[7] See Jurdana and Tomičić, *Stjepan Radić*, 44-55.

[8] See Mihaela Bingula, "The Role of Museums in the Construction of the Social Memory of the 1990's in Croatia," *Etnološka istraživanja*, no. 17 (2002): 161.

In terms of the actual uprisings and how the exhibition presented them, we see a similar pattern of politicization geared towards demonstrating Croatia's centuries-long struggle for national independence. According to exhibition curator, Ela Jurdana, the 1883 and 1903 uprisings were emblematic of growing national consciousness among all classes of Croatian society. While Jurdana admits both revolts were complicated and unorganized in nature, with peasants initially driven primarily by economic concerns, her depiction of the events continually stressed the peasantry's association with Croatian national symbols and their disdain for Hungarian authorities. Because of that, the fervently anti-Habsburg Party of Rights, led by Ante Štarčević, rapidly grew in popularity among the peasantry, while the more conservative pro-Habsburg National Party saw its popular support dwindle.[10] Thus, 1883 and 1903 represented crucial moments in Croatia's struggle for national autonomy as the Party of Rights became the "bearer of Croatian independence politics" and the entirety of Croatia's popular politics became "united in demanding national and civil freedom."[11]

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[9] See Jurdana and Tomičić. *Narodni Pokreti u Hrvatskoj*, 1.
[10] Ibid., 7.

Jurdana's decision to lionize the Party of Rights bears particular significance as Štarčević's brand of ethno-nationalism hinged upon anti-Serbianism, and as such celebrating the Party of Rights during the socialist era was largely prohibited. Furthermore, Jurdana's claim that the Party of Rights became the "bearer" of Croatian popular politics grossly exaggerates their popular support after 1903 as they were still a minor political force well into the first decade of the 20th century since their brand of ethno-nationalism garnered little support among the peasantry. Similarly, Jurdana's depiction of the uprisings deserves scrutiny for its overt and misleading nationalist paradigm. In each case, the 1883 and 1903 uprisings were relatively small scale and disorganized. Instigated initially by urban Croatian resistance to Hungarian Magyarization efforts such as placing the Hungarian flag at train stations and displaying the Hungarian language in government and public spaces, these revolts soon took on an entirely different character in the rural countryside. For example, while young Croatian nationalist intellectuals, students, and politicians led the initial 1883 revolt against Magyarization in urban centers, attempts to then rally the peasantry to the national cause failed miserably. Instead, this urban trigger set off peasant revolts that targeted tax-collectors and public officials, Hungarian and Croat alike, and thus represented an economically driven uprising far removed from the anti-Habsburg nationalist currents in urban centers.[12] The 1903 uprising was similarly divided along urban and rural lines, even as the peasantry began to more closely identify with specifically

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[11] Ibid., 10.

[12] See John R. Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History: Twice There Was A Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 63-64.

Croatian symbolism in their revolts, such as the Croatian flag and coat of arms, the *šahovnica*.[13] Therefore, while traces of popular nationalism among the peasantry can be seen by the end of 1903, the character of both revolts in the rural countryside was fundamentally an economic one driven by a combination of destabilizing land reforms, grain crises, and increased taxes.

In sum, Jasna Tomičić's direction of the Croatian History Museum during Croatia's transitional years to liberal democracy and capitalism (1989-1995) amounted to the institution becoming a highly politicized instrument for re-imagining Croatian national history to fit the needs of the contemporary moment. As I will demonstrate later in this chapter (5.3), Tomičić also actively involved the museum in the war effort between 1991 and 1995 by using the institution as a platform to document and condemn Serbian actions during the war. Thus, Croatia's transition from single-party socialism to democratic capitalism ushered in a new age for the Croatian History Museum marked first and foremost by a new Croatian national paradigm based on national sovereignty, liberal democracy, and ethno-nationalism. This trend continued after Tomičić's retirement in 1993 under the new director Ankica Pandžić (1993-2016), albeit in less overtly political forms, and appears to firmly be entrenched to this day under the present director, Matea Brstilo Rešetar (2016-Present). Numerous exhibitions in the 21st century affirm this, such as the 2002 exhibition "Coloman's Way" on the eleventh-century king of Hungary, Coloman, who established the dual crown between Hungary and Croatia and thus set the precedent of continued practice of Croatian statehood and state-right;[14] the 2009 exhibition

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[13] See Stefano Petrungaro, "Popular Protest Against Hungarian Symbols in Croatia (1883–1903). A Study in Visual History," *Cultural and Social History* 13, no. 4 (2016), 512-513.

[14] See Ela Jurdana and Ankica Pandžić, *Kolomonov Put* [*Koloman's Way*] (Zagreb: Croatian History Museum, 2002).

"Reminiscences of One Ban: Jelačić's Inheritance in the Croatian History Museum"[15] based on the Ban Josip Jelačić, the governor of Croatia between 1848 and 1859 who is credited with laying the foundation for modern Croatian civil society; and the 2016 exhibition, "Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski: the Initiator of Croatian Identity" who despite his Illyrian leanings is described in primarily ethno-national terms as a Croatian national hero.[16] Moving outside of Zagreb, I now turn to the state of the Museum of Peasant Uprisings in Gornja Stubica to demonstrate a similar transition at the local level.

5.1.2 From Revolutionary Peoples to a National Elite: The Museum of the Peasant Uprisings since 2002

As demonstrated in chapter 4, the Museum of the Peasant Uprisings in Gornja Stubica was one of the most significant regional history museums in Croatia, receiving a great deal of funding and political support from as high up as Tito himself. As such, it was one of the few examples of regional museums that were blatantly politicized to fit the larger tenets of socialist Yugoslavism à la the Historical Museum of Croatia in Zagreb. In particular, the museum employed the 1573 peasant revolt and its legendary leader, Matej Gubec, to demonstrate at a local level the long history of South Slavic and socialist values, thus anchoring the mythological framework of socialist Yugoslavism in local history. Accordingly, the museum was well-visited throughout the socialist era as it was a regular site for primary school excursions and averaged 100,000 visitors a year. Since the collapse of communism, however, the Museum of Peasant

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[15] See Matea Brstilo Rešetar and Andreja Smetko, *Uspomene na jednoga bana: ostavština Jelačić u Hrvatskom povijesnom muzeju* [*Reminiscences of One Ban: Jelačić's Inheritance in the Croatian History Museum*] (Zagreb: Croatian History Museum, 2009).

[16] See Kristian Gotić, *Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski: Začetnik hrvatskog identiteta* [*Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski*] (Zagreb: Croatian History Museum, 2016).

Uprisings has shifted its focus dramatically to affirm the new paradigm of Croatian nationalism, largely ignoring the popular and revolutionary elements of 1573 while focusing on the daily life and habits of the local nobility.

As such, the Peasant Uprising museum has not appropriated Matej Gubec as a proto-socialist or Croatian national hero. Rather, the current permanent exhibition, first installed in 2002, employs Gubec and the 1573 revolt as testaments to the core problem of feudalism: the retardation of proper economic development towards free market capitalism, and consequently, the delayed national revival and rise of Croatian civil society. Certainly, the 2002 exhibition employs the traditional national hero paradigm in line with Croatia's new course as modern nation state. But instead of presenting Gubec as emblematic of Croatia's long struggle for national independence, the 2002 exhibition focuses on local aristocratic contributors to the 19th century Croatian national revival such as Ljudevit Gaj and Antun Mihanović. This shift away from a popular peasant figure towards nationally minded members of the nobility encapsulates the new national narrative at the core of the 2002 exhibition.

This new national paradigm is best understood through three major thematic shifts developed in the 2002 exhibition. First, unlike the original 1974 exhibition in which the peasantry and their revolutionary character were central to the museum's narrative, the 2002 exhibition dedicates only two of its eight exhibition halls to the conditions of the peasantry that led to the 1573 uprising. Secondly, the modern exhibition now focuses heavily on the local nobility and church who are represented in five of the eight halls. And lastly, the 2002 exhibition presents a continuum of local developments that culminated in the development of national consciousness and political endeavors for independent statehood. This stands in stark contrast to the 1974 exhibition in which the continuum of local developments instead stood as a testament to the South Slavs' (in this case, Slovenes' and Croats') centuries-long struggle towards socialist revolution and Yugoslavism. Taken as a whole, these thematic shifts result in a dramatic decrease of the *popular* and *revolutionary* components of the museum, replaced by a traditional *national* narrative focused on the educated and wealthy members of Croatian society.

The new 2002 exhibition was first drafted in 1998 by Vladimir Maleković, a veteran art historian and museum professional stationed in nearby Zagreb. Maleković mainly critiqued the original exhibition for its overly "didactic character" based on maps, models, panels, and "extensive legends" that took place of authentic "source documents and artifacts."[17] In calling out overt didactic strategies and a lack of authentic objects, Maleković employed language commonly found in post-socialist critiques of socialist-era museums. These critiques, while valid, ultimately hinge upon an understanding of socialist-era exhibitions as little more than tools of socialist era propaganda. Thus, Maleković's stated goal to "present a complete picture of the socio-cultural events in the region of Hrvatsko Zagorje from the middle ages to the present day" should be read as a direct counter to socialist-era methods and an attempt to capture the authenticity lacking in the previous displays.

Maleković's focus on authentic "source documents and artifacts" consequently meant shifting the overall focus of the permanent exhibition towards the lives of the local nobility and church as the vast majority of objects available to the museum were those left behind by these same actors. To this end, Maleković designed an entirely new wing of the exhibition located beneath the main exhibition floor dedicated to sacred objects and art from the region. This room, housed in the manor's 18th century private chapel, now contains preserved frescoes, religious volumes, and sacred objects in order that "visitors will be shown the significant role of the church in this religion not only as an estate holder but also as an exceptional client of valuable art works."[18] In comparison to the 1974 exhibition in which the role of the local church was entirely ignored, this new hallway represents a significant narrative shift in Maleković's exhibition that stands in stark contrast to the popular and revolutionary nature of the museum's original design.

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[17] See Vladimir Maleković, "Prijedlog postava 'Muzeja hrvatska zagorja' u Gornjoj stubici" [Proposal for the Permanent Exhibition of 'The Museum of Hrvatsko Zagorje in Gornja Stubica], 1998, MSB, 1.

Likewise, Maleković opted to focus predominantly on the lives and personalities of the local nobility. For instance, the manor which holds the museum originally belonged to the noble Oršić family whose preserved belongings now make up much of the original objects on display in the exhibition. According to Maleković, focusing on the Oršić family as emblematic of all of the region's noble families would "contribute to the authenticity of the museological concept" and allow him to move away from the heavily didactic nature of the original 1974 exhibition.[19] To Maleković's credit, his original 1998 plan called for an entire hall dedicated to daily life of the peasantry in an attempt to preserve this aspect of the museum's story. Due to a sparsity of original objects, however, this room was replaced in the final 1999 draft by a hall dedicated to the burgs (walled cities) of the local nobility.[20] This room, which today functions as the main entry to the permanent exhibition, consists of mostly archaeological objects from burgs of the region, accompanied by panels, images, and maps describing the various holdings, coat of arms, and seals of the local nobility. Likewise, hallway six of Maleković's exhibition is devoted to the everyday life of local nobility that traces the rise of new noble families after the "Turkish threats" of the 16th and 17th centuries had passed. Architectural changes to noble estates, for instance, are highlighted to demonstrate changes from the defensive burg structures of the middle ages to the pre-modern “Baroque manor houses … from the beginning of the 17th century [when] it was possible to move from uncomfortable castles into more pleasant manor houses.”[21]

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[18] See Vladimir Maleković, "Prijedlog postava Muzeja hrvatska zagorja - Muzeja seljačkih buna u dvorcu Orišićevih u Gornjoj stubici" [Proposal for the Permanent Exhibition of the Museum of Hrvatsko Zagorje - Museum of the Peasant Uprisings in the Palace of the Oršić Family in Gornja Stubica], 1999, MSB, 2.

[19] Ibid., 2.

[20] Already in his original 1998 proposal, Maleković seemed skeptical of how realistic it was to include this exhibition hall since they could collect "very few objects from this early period." See Maleković, "Prijedlog postava 'Muzeja hrvatska zagorja u Gornjoj stubici," 6.

The extent to which Maleković focused on the conditions of the peasantry and the 1573 uprising should not be overlooked, of course. The fourth hallway of the exhibition, for instance, consists of model armed peasants placed in juxtaposition to the far better armed feudal infantrymen and cavalry. At the end of this room, the visitor is faced with a model toll gate representing the feudal tolls imposed upon the peasantry, accompanied by a re-creation of the long list of complaints by the peasantry against their feudal lord, Franjo Tahy. Similarly, the fifth room of the exhibition is dedicated to the course of the 1573 uprising. Consisting of legends, maps, and panels describing the harsh conditions of the peasantry, as well as an interactive model that traces the major battles of the uprising, this room certainly engages with the peasant experience as it traces the underlying causes of the 1573 uprising. Tellingly, however, these two rooms contain the fewest original objects of the exhibition by far, while many of the displays are leftovers from the original 1974 exhibition such as the model weapons and armor used in the fourth hall and the previously mentioned interactive display. As such, these rooms more directly reflect the museum’s original design, only in truncated form.

And yet, when tracing the narrative design in these two hallways, it is clear that Maleković sought to redirect the peasant experience towards a different narrative goal. In the original 1974 exhibition (see chapter 4), Josip Adamček’s design highlighted the socio-economic conditions of the peasantry in order to demonstrate the long precedents of class conflict in the region, and crucially, how the fundamentally class-driven uprising reflects the South Slavs' centuries-long struggle for socio-economic justice that ultimately culminated in socialist revolution. In Maleković's exhibition, however, a similar socio-economic driven analysis ultimately culminates in a different, now specifically ethno-national phenomenon: the abolition of feudalism and the rise of national consciousness and civil society in Croatia.

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[21] See Goranka Horjan and Vlatka Filipčić Maligec, *Feudal Period in Hrvatsko Zagorje: Guide through the Permanent Exhibition of the Museum of Peasant Uprisings* (Gornja Stubica: Museum of the Peasant Uprisings, 2007), 45.

As described in the permanent exhibition guide, the roots of the 1573 peasant uprising lay in the "internal tensions in the feudal system" as the peasants and nobility alike sought to engage with a burgeoning market economy that ultimately pitted their interests against one another. The nobility, interested in their own preservation, established a "feudal monopoly in trade" that hindered "the development of a true market economy" and simultaneously stagnated the development of peasant agriculture.[22] Against these economic conditions, the peasantry ultimately rebelled in 1573, only to be decisively crushed within two months. At this point, the "feudal lords used their defeat to strengthen the feudal rights that would tie the serfs to their estates even more."[23] Thus, in Maleković's 2002 exhibition, the failed 1573 uprising exhibition represents a continuation of the backward feudal economic model that only comes to an end during the 19th century Croatian national revival and the rise of modern civil society.

Maleković quite literally built this historical break into his exhibition as the last two halls jump forward three centuries, culminating in the 19th century Croatian national revival and Ban Jelačić's abolition of serfdom in 1848. In terms of lighting and mood, the visitor transitions from the darkened hallways on the 1573 revolt into a series of brightly lit hallways displaying various objects from the local nobility, such as fine art, a dark wood writing desk, glass cabinets holding fine china, and a grand piano, as well as busts and portraits of local nobility involved in the national movement. In line with this historical break, the peasantry makes no appearances in these final halls as the story shifts towards a "great man" history focused upon 19th century national revivalists like Ljudevit Gaj and the Croatian Ban Josip Jelačić.

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[22] Ibid., 30.
[23] Ibid., 42.

Crucially, Maleković justified the exhibition culminating in the 19th century national revival since this era marked the end of "the period of Croatian history characterized by feudal relations … and the beginning of the path towards civil society [and] a strengthening national consciousness."[24] Likewise, the 2007 exhibition guide describes these final two halls as reflecting the "historical process that made a contemporary society" as "the Croatian Sabor became a modern national assembly based on ideas of national rights and a sovereign Croatia."[25] Thus, in Maleković's exhibition, the values that informed the 1573 peasant uprising—social and economic justice—come to fruition three centuries later at the hands of the Croatian national revival and the formation of a modern Croatian civil society. Accordingly, the 1573 peasant uprising is now portrayed as "synonymous with the struggle for rights and all the endeavors to create justice in the struggle against tyranny of all sorts" that was only achieved as Croatia fought to become a sovereign nation state in the 19th century.[26] This, of course, stands in stark contrast to Adamček's original 1974 exhibition in which these same values were seen as having only come to fruition with the socialist revolution and rise of the socialist Yugoslav state.

In sum, the post-socialist transformation of the Museum of Peasant Uprisings in Gornja Stubica demonstrates the broader trend in contemporary Croatian nationalism to strip Croatia's national history of its revolutionary, socialist past, and instead revert to a more traditional nationalist mythos rooted in the 19th century national revival and the beginning of Croatia's struggle for sovereignty and national rights. As I have previously demonstrated (see chapter 4) this traditional form of nationalism was never absent in Croatian historical museums but rather served the ideological purposes of socialist Yugoslavism that presented the socialist state as the guarantor of Croatia's long struggle for national independence. This modern day inversion at the Museum of the Peasant Uprisings should therefore be considered another evolutionary step in Croatian nationalism more so than a complete departure from socialist era nationalism.

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[24] See Maleković, "Prijedlog postava Muzeja hrvatska zagorja - Muzeja seljačkih buna u dvorcu Orišićevih u Gornjoj stubici," 4.

[25] See Horjan and Maligec, *Feudal Period,* 62.

[26] See Vlatka Filipčić Maligec, "40 godina Muzeja seljačkih buna (1973.-2013.)" [40 Years of the Museum of the Peasant Uprisings (1973-2013), *Informatica Museologica* 44, no. 1-4 (2013): 87.

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Over the course of the 1990s and 2000s, exhibiting Croatian national history has arguably been just as politicized a project as it was during the socialist era. With Croatia's transition to democratic capitalism modeled upon postwar western European nation-states came a dramatic shift in how Croatian historical museums have documented and presented national history. While none of this is surprising, it does tell us a great deal about how political national history remains in Croatia today, just as it tells us how closely linked historical museums remain to this process. Throughout the 1990s in particular, the Croatian History Museum aggressively sought to re-imagine its own national past as a way of granting legitimacy to the new nation state project. A large part of this process was about removing its Yugoslav past, which in practice meant purging its own history of its revolutionary and socialist heritage while celebrating the Great Men of Croatian history and the centuries-long struggle for national independence.

The Museum of the Peasant Uprisings in Gornja Stubica likewise demonstrates this process through its 2002 permanent exhibition. By greatly reducing the story of the peasants themselves and replacing it with a story of the local aristocracy and their contribution to the 19th century national movement, the museum has effectively purged itself of its socialist Yugoslav past. Accordingly, the museum no longer serves as a site of common Yugoslav heritage but rather a localized story of one region's history and place in the Croatian nation. Not surprisingly, the museum is geared almost solely towards an internal national audience that very rarely attracts an international audience, which has led to a dramatic decrease in annual visits: 100,000 visitors a year to only 10,000 a year. An even more dramatic example exists in the history of Revolutionary Museums since 1989, to which I now turn.

5.2 Shortcomings and Redundancy: Revolutionary Museums after the Death of the Revolutionary State

By the late 1980s, Yugoslavia was facing several existential crises, ranging from ethnic tensions and competing territorial nationalisms to economic collapse and the death of the "good life" in Yugoslavia.[27] Reverberations of these crises were felt in virtually all aspects of Croatian society. At the level of Revolutionary Museums, this led to a critical reflection in the field to reassess how museums have approached 20th century history. The main critiques levied by Croatian museum professionals focused on Revolutionary Museum's outdated presentations, their archaic pedagogy, and most importantly, their clear ideological underpinnings. Croatian museum professionals were not, however, aiming to upend these institutions, nor were they pushing to remove the predominant themes relating to socialist Yugoslavism, i.e., the Workers' Movement, the People's Liberation Struggle, and the building of socialism. Rather, the most common solution was to re-imagine Revolutionary Museums as contemporary 20th century history museums with a heavier focus on the social and cultural aspects of Croatian life.

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[27] See Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History*; see Sabrina Ramet, *Balkan Babel: The Disintegration of Yugoslavia from the Death of Tito to the Fall of Milošević* (London: Routledge, 2002); and see Patrick Hyder Patterson. *Bought and Sold: Living and Losing the Good Life in Socialist Yugoslavia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011).

With the rapid collapse of communism and the outbreak of bloody civil war, however, this gradual process of reassessing and transforming Revolutionary Museums buckled beneath the pressures of anti-communist, anti-Yugoslav sentiments throughout Croatia. By the time the Homeland War had come to an end in 1995, virtually every Revolutionary Museum institution in Croatia had ceased to function, either closing entirely, being subsumed by another regional museum, or transforming into a more apolitical institution such as a maritime history museum. The one exception to this story is the Jasenovac Memorial Museum. Unlike its Revolutionary Museum counterparts, the Jasenovac Memorial Museum survived the collapse of communism and continues to function as a state-funded institution committed to events during the Second World War—the only museum of this kind left in Croatia today. That being said, the museum ceased to function from 1991 to 2006 as the site was ravaged during the Homeland War, and the current permanent exhibition (opened 2006) clearly diverges from the socialist principles that informed the museum original foundation in 1968. Thus, the Jasenovac Memorial Museum presents us with a compelling example how a fundamentally socialist museum transformed to meet the needs 21st century Croatian state building.

In this section, therefore, I provide a brief overview of the closures and transformations of Revolutionary Museums, a process that has greatly marginalized the collections of Revolutionary Museums such that they are hardly visible today in Croatia’s museum landscape. I likewise investigate the transformation of the Jasenovac Memorial Museum since its re-opening in 2006, paying particular attention to the ways in which Croatia’s drive towards EU membership served as the predominant ideological framework for the new exhibition.

5.2.1 Removing the Revolution and Retreating to the Local

There is no single trend in how museum professionals sought to adapt Revolutionary Museums during the collapse of socialism. In each case, however, these museums ceased to function as Revolutionary Museums as the revolutionary state itself died over the course of the bloody 1990s civil war. Take for instance the Museum of the Revolution of the Peoples of Croatia in Zagreb. While there were conversations about transforming the museum into a less overtly political contemporary history museum since the late 1960s, by January, 1991, the Museum Council of Croatia, under the direct guidance of the Ministry of Culture, decided that "the museum no longer needed to exist" and instead should be subsumed by the Historical Museum of Croatia.[28] Afterward, on May 31, 1991, the Museum of the Revolution of the Peoples of Croatia and the Historical Museum of Croatia were merged and renamed the Croatian History Museum. As a result, the Museum of the Revolution was decommissioned as an independent institution, most of its staff was fired, and its collections were transferred the Croatian History Museum.[29] Perhaps more tellingly, the collections of the former Museum of the Revolution are quite literally disconnected from the other collections of the Croatian History Museum as they housed in a rented out portion of the Museum of the Revolution's former building that now belongs to the Croatian Creative Artists' Association. Furthermore, as of 2008, "no more than 4 curators altogether situated on 500 square meters of space" maintain the

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[28] See *Zacljučci sa 9. sjednice Muzejska savjeta Hrvastke, održane 9. siječnja 1991. godina u Zagrebu* [Conclusions from the 9th Meeting of the Museum Council of Croatia, held on January 9th, 1991 in Zagreb], 1991, Box "stručni koleg. 1981., 1982., 1991.," MRNH, 4.

[29] See Dubravka Peić Čaldarović, "History Museums in a Changing Political Environment: Experiences of the Croatian History Museum during the 20th Century," in *Museums and Universal Heritage: History in the Area of Conflict Between Interpretation and Manipulation*, ed. by Marie-Paule Jungblut and Rosmarie Biere-De-Haan (Luxembourg: ICMAH, 2008): 109.

Museum of the Revolution's former collection that amounts to over 120,000 objects, which clearly reflects the general neglect of this collection since the collapse of socialism.[30]

The Museum of the National Revolution - Split met a similar fate. In November 1990, the museum released a proposal to transform itself into the Historical Museum of Dalmatia. In cooperation with museums throughout Dalmatia, the project aimed to develop a less overtly politicized museum focused on the cultural and social history of Dalmatian from the 19th century to present day. Considering its previous holdings, the project would also build upon its extensive holdings on the Workers' Movement and the People's Liberation Struggle.[31] According to members of the museum, this was necessary due to the "shortcomings" of the permanent exhibition, namely its similar approach to already established Revolutionary Museums that relied heavily on images, photocopied documents, and text-heavy legends.[32] Interestingly, they did not mention the specific ideological outlook of the museum as a key reason for its reformation.

After a series of meetings with the museums staff and members of the local museum council, the Secretary for Education and Culture Split decided in June 1991 to permanently close the Museum of the National Revolution - Split. As stated in their decision, secretary Nada Ružić argued that "social changes and the recovery of democratic organizations in society have created the need for a metamorphosis of facilities that were in previous times ideologically instrumentalized." In particular, Ružić critiqued the Museum of the National Revolution - Split for "uncritically singling out the period of the most recent history from the general museum-historical professional treatment," and that new social changes make the museum "redundant," therefore necessitating that its collections be moved and the institution closed.[33] In practice, this meant some of the museum's physical objects were consolidated with the collections of the Split City Museum and certain pieces of art were sent to the Split Gallery of Art, while all of the remaining historical documents—the largest part of the museum's collection—were processed and transferred to the Split Historical Archive. Thus, much like the Museum of the Revolution of the Peoples of Croatia in Zagreb, the Museum of the National Revolution - Split was fully dismantled despite attempts to preserve its collections and transform into a more professionally objective contemporary history museum.

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[30] Ibid., 109.

[31] *Prijedlog transformacije Muzeja narodne revolucije hrvastke-split u Povijesni muzej dalmacije* [*Proposal for the Transformation of the Museum of the National Revolution of Croatia-Split into the Historical Museum of Dalmatia*] 1990, Box "stručni koleg. 1981., 1982., 1991.," MRNH, 8.

[32] Ibid., 7.

Other Revolutionary Museums, meanwhile, survived albeit in much altered forms. The Museum of the National Revolution - Rijeka, for instance, was renamed the Rijeka City Museum in April, 1994 and reformed to function as a "general cultural-historical city museum institution" focused on the "collection, processing, and restoration of precious materials, the organization of research projects, setting up of significant exhibitions, and the publishing of comprehensive catalogs on themes related to contemporary city history."[34] Considering that the neighboring Rijeka Maritime and Historical Museum of the Croatian Littoral had functionally worked as a local regional museum for decades prior to this, and that during the socialist era Rijeka did not have its own committed city museum, the new Rijeka City Museum was able to fill a need that simply did not exist in Zagreb and Rijeka. Perhaps for this reason alone, the members of the museum managed to save the institution and transform it into a functioning contemporary historical city museum.

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[33] See Nada Ružić, Correspondence from Nada Ružić to the Museum Council of Croatia, 5 June 1991, 2181-07-91-TP-1, Box "stručni koleg. 1981., 1982., 1991.," MRNH.

[34] See "Jučer" [Yesterday]. The Rijeka City Museum. http://www.muzej-rijeka.hr/o-muzeju/#povijest.

In each of the above cases, as well similar situations in Pula, Makarska, and Slavonski Brod, museum professionals have made little use of the collections from former of Revolutionary Museums. This is not terribly surprising considering that most of these collections concerned objects and documents related to the Workers' Movement, the communist-led People's Liberation Struggle, and the so-called 'building of socialism' in the postwar decades. Even more so, a great deal of these collections were two dimensional objects, either panels, maps, images, and legends, or copies of Party documents and correspondences, that in the immediate post-socialist era did not seem to contain much inherent aesthetic or cultural value.

On the rare occasions that museum exhibitions have included objects from these collections, they have generally been employed to condemn the communist legacy or reclaim the People's Liberation Struggle as a Croatian national movement, such as the Croatian History Museum's 1991 exhibition on Croatian political posters during the 1940s. In theory, the exhibition was designed to demonstrate the dominance of political discourse and allegiance imposed upon Croats during this time that tore the nation apart between the fascist Ustaša movement and the communist Partisan resistance. In practice, however, the curator of the exhibition, Snježana Pavičić, clearly intended the exhibition to paint the Partisan movement as equally totalitarian and brutal as the Ustaša movement. For example, she justified including fascist propaganda side by side with communist examples since Partisan propaganda was designed to "indoctrinate ideological prejudices" while leaving out the perspectives of "so-called enemies, namely the Ustaše."[35] And as the exhibition catalog suggests, the majority of the posters on display were in fact communist propaganda with examples of Ustaša posters mixed in ad hoc, as if to suggest their interchangeability. Two Ustaša posters, for instance, are shown couched on all sides by Partisan propaganda. The first Ustaša poster, depicting a buffoonish Partisan carrying heads on pikes with the caption, “Bolshevism cuts off everybody’s head,” is placed next to a Partisan poster depicting a capitalist and Catholic priest dismayed by the hard work of a Partisan peasant. Likewise, the second poster that depicts a sword, shield, and bow and arrow with the caption “today, Croatian blood shouts out form every honest Croat” borders a Partisan poster depicting a communist soldier strangle holding a giant snake labeled “fascism” with a Nazi swastika.

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[35] See Snježana Pavičić, *Hrvatksi politički plakati, 1940-1950* [Croatian Political Posters, 1940-1950] (Zagreb: Croatian History Museum, 1991), 12.

Furthermore, the catalog describes the 1940s in Croatia as the “bloody century,” focusing not just on the Second World War but also the establishment of a one party communist state. Here, the fascist Ustaša movement is given only minor treatment and described as a movement with the aim to actualize the eternal goal of Croats for statehood. While the movement is also condemned for its totalitarian nature, there is no mention of the Ustaša’s racial ideology or their acts of genocide committed against Serbs, Jews, or Roma.[36] Meanwhile, the catalog spends considerably more time on the early decades of communism, highlighting the elements of Yugoslav communism that most closely resembled Stalinism such as agrarian collectivization, five year plans, nationalization of industries, and political repression. As such, “it was not possible nor allowed to articulate the particularities of Croatian political thought,” a trend that continued into the 1960s and 1970s despite the processes of self-management and federalism.[37] Taken as a whole, this exhibition therefore represents the ways in which collections of former Revolutionary Museums, on the rare occasions that they have been employed at all, are used to condemn the legacy of socialist Yugoslavia in Croatia.

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[36] Ibid., 17.

[37] Ibid., 18.

Notable exceptions exist, of course, such as a recent 2016 exhibition by the Rijeka City Museum, "(R)Evolution in the Rijeka City Museum," that presented a surprisingly balanced discussion of the history of socialism in Rijeka and Croatia.[38] Likewise, the Croatian History Museum's 2016 exhibition ".45" focused on the pivotal year 1945 in Croatia provided a compelling balance between less overtly political aspects of everyday life such as theater and television with more political topics such as the defeat of fascism and the establishment of a one party communist state by Tito's Partisans.[39] With the exception of these aforementioned cases, however, there are remarkably few examples Croatian museum exhibitions that employ the collections of former Revolutionary Museums to engage with contemporary history from the 1920s to the collapse of communism. Therefore, Dubravka Peić Čaldarović's 2008 assessment that in Croatian museums the "cultural heritage of the contemporary age is [no] longer considered important … for Croatian national history and culture" appears to ring true to this day.[40]

5.2.2 From Socialist Pilgrimage to European Sin: the Jasenovac Memorial Museum since 2006

The one exception to this rule is the Jasenovac Memorial Museum, the only state-sponsored museum in Croatia dealing directly with events during the Second World War. Due to its visibility as a site of Holocaust memorialization, the history of Jasenovac could not simply be swept under the rug, as was the case with the topics and collections from former Revolutionary

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[38] See Ema Ančić and Marija Lazanja Dušević, *(R)evolucija u Muzeju grada Rijeka* [*(R)evolution in the Rijeka City Museum*] (Rijeka: the Rijeka City Museum, 2016).

[39] This analysis is based on images of the exhibition accessed at the Croatian History Museum in July 2019, as well as the Croatian History Museum's digital description of the exhibition. See "'.45". The Croatian History Museum. http://www.hismus.hr/hr/izlozbe/arhiva-izlozbi/45/.

[40] See Čaldarović, "History Museums," 109.

Museum. It did, however, take fifteen years for the site to re-open after its 1991 closure, evidence of just how delicate and contested memories of Jasenovac are. Finally, in 2006, the Jasenovac Memorial Museum re-opened after having gone through a fundamental transformation that effectively stripped the site of its socialist past while building new bridges to 21st century Europe, namely the European Union. Below I provide a brief history of the course of this transformation before analyzing the content of the new permanent exhibition.

Armed conflict broke out between Croatian and Serbian forces in early May 1991, after which point the Jasenovac Memorial Museum was closed to visitors. Fearing indifference—if not outright aggression—towards the site from Tuđman's nationalist government, the Assistant Director of the Jasenovac Memorial Site, Simo Brdar, continued to work at the site through August 1991 in an attempt to safeguard its collections. Himself a Bosnian Serb, Brdar was well aware that Jasenovac represented an existential threat to Tuđman's brand of extreme nationalism that sought to rehabilitate the image of the Independent State of Croatia and Ustaša movement. His fears proved correct. In mid-1991, the Croatian parliament downgraded the status of the Jasenovac site to that of a nature park and entirely cut its state funding. By September 1991, Croatian forces occupied the memorial site until driven out by Yugoslav National Army forces the following month. During this month long occupation, Croatian forces vandalized, looted, and destroyed large portions of the site's exhibition and collections while also bombing the bridge over the Sava river that connected the main Jasenovac site with the Stara Gradiška camp in neighboring Bosnia. Immediately thereafter, Yugoslav National Army forces further damaged the site through their own acts of vandalism and looting, leaving the institution in complete disrepair. Only after this did Brdar return to the site in late October 1991 with permission from the Yugoslav National Army, managing to preserve what little was left at his own home for the remainder of the war.[41]

Following the conclusion of the war in 1995, the Croatian Ministry of Culture assigned a special commission to assess the damage done to the site since the initial looting in August 1991, concluding that roughly 7,800 exhibition documents and displays, and 2,500 objects from the library and archive, were destroyed or stolen.[42] Fortunately, Brdar and other museum workers managed to microfilm portions of the site's collections before the arrival of Croatian troops in August 1991. These microfilms, combined with the return of Brdar's holdings in December 2001, amounted to a partial restoration of the museum's collections by February 2004. Following this, work began in earnest on a new permanent exhibition led by the curator and author of the exhibition, Nataša Jovičić. Conceptualized and executed between early 2004 and late 2006, Jovičić's exhibition design virtually unchanged today.

Jovičić's exhibition concept is based first and foremost on an attempt to restore dignity to the victims of Jasenovac by removing ideology and politics from the displays in favor of personal stories and testimonies of the victims themselves. Considering how politicized the previous permanent exhibitions were and how haphazardly images of victims were employed (see chapter 3, section 3.2), Jovičić's premise seems like a logical solution to the museum's previous ills. Unfortunately, however, the actual execution of Jovičić's premise led to two fundamental problems that, I argue, amount to an ideological whitewashing of the Ustaše and their state, the Independent State of Croatia. First, Jovičić's exhibition concept is heavily influenced by the emerging Holocaust commemoration genre and the Europeanization of postwar/post-communist memory such that the particular Croatian features of Jasenovac are replaced by a generalized story condemning the dangers of totalitarian ideologies of all types. In effect, this approach results in the question of Croatian culpability once again being skirted, as was the case in the original 1968 exhibition, such that the Ustaše again appear more foreign in nature than national. And secondly, Jovičić's decision to opt for an abstract and highly emotional visitor experience focused on individual victims ultimately required an overreliance on artistic expression and technological mediums—namely TV monitors—such that the exhibition fails to provide any sort of in depth history about the origins of the Ustaše or the specificities of Jasenovac. Instead, Jovičić's reliance on dramatic aesthetics and digital reproduction effectively marginalizes physical objects to such a degree that the visitor experience is shaped primarily by emotional theatrics that lend to only a surface level understanding of Jasenovac as a synecdoche for the Holocaust.

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[41] See Hellen Walasek, *Bosnia and the Destruction of Cultural Heritage* (London: Routledge, 2016), 83-85.
[42] See "Renovation of the Jasenovac Memorial Site," The Jasenovac Memorial Site, http://www.jusp-jasenovac.hr/Default.aspx?sid=6484.

As has been pointed out by numerous scholars, memorial practices concerning the Holocaust and the legacy of anti-fascism have long been subject to universalizing processes in both Western and Eastern Europe. Understood as a "rupture in civilization,"[43] fascism and the Holocaust have functioned collectively as a "negative founding myth" for postwar Europe, upon which was built the moral foundations of both Western democratic capitalism and Eastern state socialism.[44] Not surprisingly, therefore, anti-fascism and the Holocaust became popular themes for memorialization in the postwar European landscape. Over the course of the 1950s and 1960s, for example, an uncoordinated genre of anti-fascist memorialization emerged throughout Europe based upon “expansive, complex, avant-garde sculptures” meant to symbolize the collapse of civility caused by fascism, as well as signs of hope and renewal. Diverging sharply from the previously austere aesthetics of war memorials based on “stelae, towers, [and] realistic statuary,” these new memorial spaces—at the behest of former prisoners themselves—were designed to the capture the horror of fascist prison camps through visually expressive forms such as Nandor Glid’s memorial at Dachau which depicts an assemblage of metal skeletons in the shape of a barbed wire fence.[45]

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[43] See Ljiljana Radonić, "Univerzalizacija holokausta na primjeru hrvatske politike prošlosti i spomen-područja Jasenovac" [The Universalization of the Holocaust as Exemplified by the Croatian Political Past and the Jasenovac Memorial Site], *Suvremene Teme* 3, no. 1 (2010).
[44] See Ljiljana Radonić, "Croatia – Exhibiting Memory and History at the 'Shores of Europe,'" *Culture Unbound,* no. 3 (2011): 356.

More importantly for the 2006 Jasenovac exhibition, another development in Holocaust memorialization occurred in the 1990s and continues to this day. Specifically, the symbolic value of heroic resistance—in both Western and Eastern Europe—has given way to memorials focused primarily on the victims of fascism. While this new emphasis is rooted specifically in memorializing the Jewish experience of the Holocaust, it has effectively functioned as “a universal imperative to respect human rights in general”[46] that increasingly determines the legitimacy of Western democracy.[47] Thus, memorial and museum institutions dedicated to the Jewish Shoah in particular have simultaneously promoted a universalized discourse wherein instances of mass killing, ethnic warfare, or genocide can be placed in parallel with the mass murder of Jews during the Holocaust as cautionary examples of the consequences of divisive rhetoric or platforms. This shift towards employing the symbolic value of victims over perpetrators has been accompanied by a clear shift in exhibition aesthetics. Generally speaking, Holocaust museums emphasize a highly emotional and transformative visitor experience comparable to that of a pilgrimage where the visitors are "encouraged to engage in certain ritual behaviors and to emerge from their experiences with a transformed identity or consciousness."[48] At the core of this pilgrimage is the universal message of tolerance and human rights, ingrained in the visitor first by providing a history of the Jewish experience during the Holocaust, and second, by employing this history as a warning against future intolerance and hatred.

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[45] See Harold Marcuse, “Holocaust Memorials: The Emergence of a Genre,” *American Historical Review*, no. 115 (2010): 85.
[46] See Radonić, “Croatia — Exhibiting Memory,” 358.
[47] See Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider, “Sovereignty Transformed: A Sociology of Human Rights,” *The British Journal of Sociology* 57, no. 4 (2006): 673.

In order to achieve this transformation, modern Holocaust museums often employ a common aesthetic core rooted in austerity, disorientation, and monumentality. One common method is to list or display the names of thousands of individual victims in dramatic and overwhelming fashion. The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum permanent exhibition, for instance, contains multiple glass bridges through which the visitor passes whose walls are engraved with the names Holocaust victims throughout Europe. Similarly, the information center beneath Berlin's Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe contains the so-called "Room of Names," an austere, empty gray room containing a digital display of individual names accompanied by an audio recording reading them aloud.[49] Finally, Jerusalem's Yad Vashem World Holocaust Remembrance Center contains a circular hallway, the "Hall of Names," made up of an interior circular shaft lined with victims' portraits and an exterior wall that functions as a repository for thousands of individual names and biographies. In each case, the visitor is surrounded in dramatic fashion by an incomprehensible number of names, effectively functioning as a testament to gravity and scale of human suffering committed during the Holocaust.

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[48] See Jennifer Hansen-Glucklich, *Holocaust Memory Reframed: Museums and the Challenges of Representation* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2014), 184.
[49] Similar examples can be found in the Yad Vashem World Holocaust Remembrance Center's Hall of Names,

As I will demonstrate, Jovičić's design for the new Jasenovac permanent exhibition is firmly positioned within the modern aesthetics of Holocaust memorialization. The politics as to why, however, need further explaining. Much how Jasenovac was an "ambivalent *lieu de memoire*" during the socialist era that contained both the raw materials for pro-Yugoslav as well as Croatian and Serbian nationalist rhetoric,[50] Jasenovac has functioned since the 1990s as a complex site for negotiating memory politics in post-Yugoslav Croatia. For example, part of Franjo Tuđman's nationalist program involved rehabilitating Jasenovac as a site dedicated to Croatia's eternal struggle for national independence. Going as far as to suggest reburying the bones of former Ustaša and Domobrani soldiers at Jasenovac to establish a Croatian national memorial site, Tuđman proposed that "Jasenovac could become a place for all victims of war, which would warn the Croat people that in the past they were divided and brought into an internecine conflict, warn them to not repeat it, and to reconcile the dead just as we reconciled the living, their children, and their grandchildren."[51] Almost immediately, however, Tuđman abandoned this plan due to the sheer scale of international outrage.

Following the death of Franjo Tuđman in 1999, however, Croatia's top two political parties, the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), both shifted away from Tuđman's hardline nationalism in favor of politics geared towards European reintegration and EU membership. As was the case throughout all of post-communist Eastern Europe, Croatia was required to adopt an unofficial cultural program based on historical reconciliation of the Second World War, common European democratic values, a universal recognition of human rights, and the celebration of a common multicultural European future. More specifically, post-communist European countries have faced pressure to adhere to the "informal standards of confronting and exhibiting the Holocaust" in order to demonstrate their "return" to the core democratic values of Europe.[52]

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[50] See Ljiljana Radonić, "Equalizing Jesus's, Jewish, and Croat Suffering–Post-Socialist Politics of History in Croatia." In *Of Red Dragons and Evil Spirits: Post-Communist Historiography between Democratization and the New Politics of History,* ed. Oto Luthar, (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2017), 38.

[51] See Vjeran Pavlakovic, "(Re)constructing the Past: Museums in Post-Communist Croatia," in *Post-Communist Museums,* ed. Constantin Iordachi and Peter Apor (Budapest: Central European University Press, forthcoming), 13.

For many post-socialist states, however, this process has been much more nefarious than simply recognizing the universal principle of human rights. Rather, in virtually every post-socialist country, right-wing politicians and certain museum institutions have appropriated the genre of Holocaust memorialization to condemn the legacy of communism, equalize both 'red' and 'black' terror, and frame their nation "as an innocent victim of oppression from outside … [whose] participation in the communist regime is denied and externalized."[53] Hungary's House of Terror Museum in Budapest, for example, makes this clear to the visitor in its entry exhibition room dedicated to the "double occupation" of the fascist Arrow Cross and communist regimes, referred to as "two sides of the same coin."[54] Likewise in Croatia, numerous "right-wing political parties have also adopted the EU discourse on the Second World War, although by condemning communist crimes, and they have sought to equate all totalitarian systems through EU memorial days such as the Day of Remembrance for Victims of all Authoritarian and Totalitarian Regimes."[55]

It is in this context that we must understand Jovičić's 2006 permanent exhibition at Jasenovac. For one, Jovičić actively sought guidance from international experts in order to make the exhibition “internationally recognizable … in the context of international standards.” Crucially, these experts were not drawn from comparable institutions like memorial camps or prisons, but instead from institutions dedicated specifically to the Jewish Shoah such as the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C., the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, and the Yad Vashem institute in Jerusalem. As such, Jovičić opted not to model her exhibition on examples of former concentration camps, “which try to show the complex character and the daily routine of the concentration camps,” but rather on institutions committed specifically to the mass murder of Jews.[56] Considering that the majority of victims at Jasenovac were ethnic Serbs—to say nothing of the disproportionate targeting of Serbs by the Ustaše throughout all of the Independent State of Croatia—Jovičić’s approach appears much more oriented towards a universalized narrative of the Holocaust geared towards an international audience than one dedicated to the specificities of Croat-Serb relations, the Croatian roots of the Ustaša movement, or the genocide committed against Serbs.

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[52] See Ljiljana Radonić, "Croatia — Exhibiting Memory," 355.
[53] Ibid., 360.
[54] See "Second Floor," The House of Terror Museum, http://www.terrorhaza.hu/en/permanent-exhibition/second_floor.
[55] See Vjeran Pavlakovic and Benedikt Perak. "How Does This Monument Make You Feel? Measuring Emotional Responses to War Memorials in Croatia," in *The Twentieth Century in European Memory: Transcultural Mediation and Reception*, ed. Tea Sindbaek Andersen and Barbara Törnquist-Plewa (Leiden: Brill Publishers, 2017), 269.

Furthermore, Jovičić adopted the deeply emotional aesthetics common to the universalized Holocaust memorial genre (Images 5.1 and 5.2). In terms of building materials, for example, Jovičić combined glass—a material with “a dual symbolic connotation” of both fragility and danger—with wood from the camp’s rail lines in order to “connote the horrors of people being deported to the death camp” and create “the perception of a specific smell, dampness and rot, that will evoke feelings of discomfort in the visitors.” Furthermore, Jovičić borrowed directly from the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum by installing large glass panels with the names of almost 70,000 victims hanging from the exhibitions ceiling. These panels, lit only by fixtures behind them, were designed to provide most of the lighting of the exhibition “so

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[56] See Radonić, “Croatia — Exhibiting Memory,” 364.

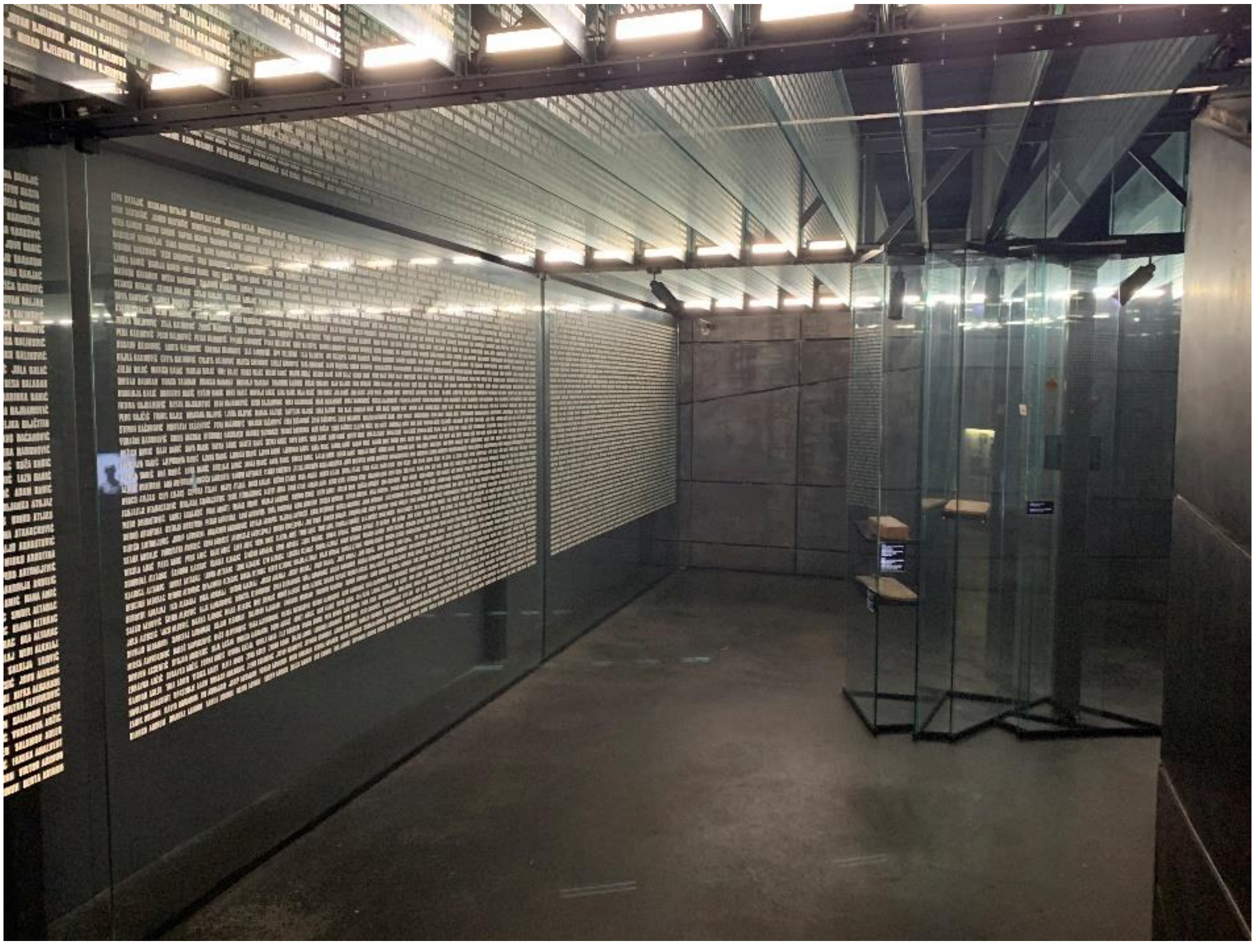

Image 5.1: Permanent exhibition of the Jasenovac Memorial Museum, July 3rd, 2019. The image is property of the author.

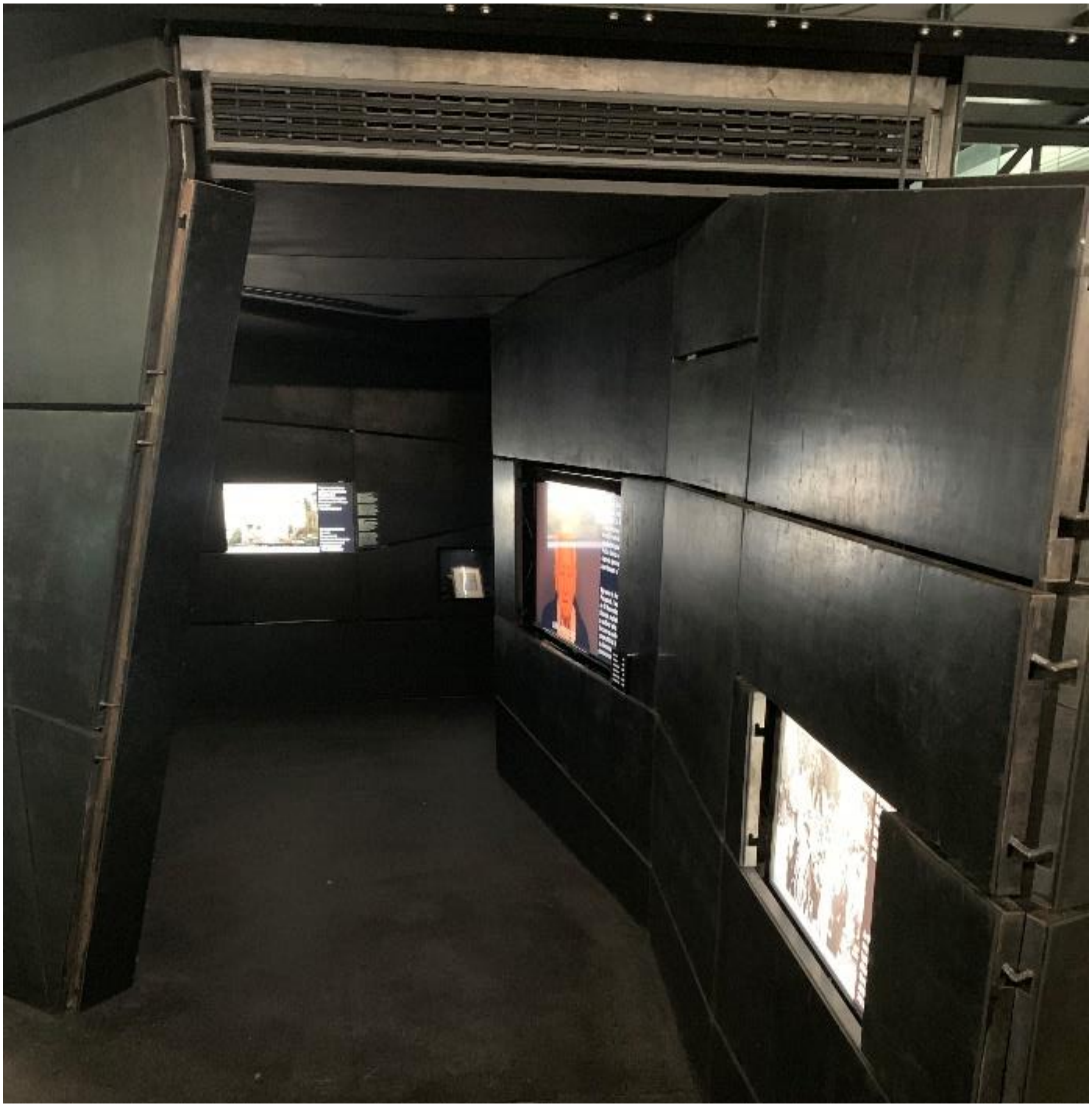

Image 5.2: Permanent exhibition of the Jasenovac Memorial Museum, July 3rd, 2019. The image is property of the author.

that the whole hall gets its light entirely through the printed names of the victims."[57] The exhibition therefore resembles that of a dark cavern lit by rays of light projected from the ceiling, as if to reflect a heavenly ray reaching into the black abyss. Jovičić likewise employed a spatial layout designed to increase dramatic nature of the exhibition. Designed intentionally to be disorienting and non-linear, the layout reflects that of a "hemisphere" out of which "different displays arise," functioning not as an "individual spatial whole" but rather as a "mutually interactive set of individual phenomena," as if to connote the fundamental incomprehensibility of hatred and totalitarianism.[58]

Additionally, Jovičić's exhibition appears to fit within the broader Eastern European trend of appropriating the Holocaust in order to condemn the legacy of communism, albeit less blatantly than other cases. While the exhibition does not directly equate the horrors of fascism and the crimes of communism, this type of language is found in both the original planning documentation and a 2006 defense published by Jovičić in the historical journal, *Review of Croatian History*. In the 2005 planning documents, for instance, Jovičić explains that a core concept of the exhibition is "the affirmation of life and raising awareness of the significance and fragility of human life*, and the threats thereto from every totalitarian ideology* [emphasis added]."[59] Similarly, in a published defense of her conceptual design, Jovičić explains the ways in which her exhibition was designed to counter the anti-Croatian sentiments of Lukić and Miletić's 1988 permanent exhibition (see chapter 3, section 2.2), which she understood as little more than anti-Croat propaganda constructed at the height of inter-ethnic tension before the outbreak of war. According to her, the exhibition incited ethnic hatred as the "rhetoric about Ustaša crimes served to justify another ideology that was preparing a war against the Republic of Croatia [wherein] the victims of Jasenovac became mere instruments to generate and inspire the crimes that the Yugoslav People's Army committed during Croatia's Homeland War."[60]

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[57] See Nataša Jovičić, *Stalni postav Memorijalnog muzeja spomen-područje Jasenovac: muzeološka koncepcija* [*The Permanent Exhibition of the Memorial Museum of the Memorial Site Jasenovac: Museological Concept*], 2005, SPJ, 14.
[58] Ibid., 15.
[59] Ibid., 13.

Viewed through the lenses of post-Cold War revisionism, it seems clear therefore that Jovičić employed the politicized history of the previous two exhibitions in order to condemn more broadly the late socialist era in Yugoslavia as yet another form of totalitarianism. Considering that merely a year earlier in 2005 at the annual Jasenovac memorial commemoration Prime Minister Ivo Sanader described Serbian actions during the 1990s war as a "new type of fascism" and the war as the moment when "we strengthened our antifascist foundations while simultaneously condemning communist totalitarianism," the significance of Jovičić describing the 1988 exhibition as symptomatic of "another ideology" threatening Croatia should not be overlooked.[61] And while the methods she employed to this end pale in comparison to the bluntness of other post-socialist museum projects that equalize fascism and communism, Jovičić nonetheless envisioned Jasenovac in a similar fashion to how many European states today employ public memory of the Holocaust: as a stand in for all totalitarian horrors, including those crimes committed under communism.

Furthermore, Jovičić's choice to adopt Europeanized Holocaust practices has led to a rather damaging effect of ideologically whitewashing of the Ustaša movement. Much as the Holocaust has become a stand in for all totalitarian terror, in the contemporary Jasenovac exhibition, the Ustaše are used as little more than stand ins for fascist totalitarianism devoid of their Croatian particularities, and crucially, of their distinct hatred for Serbs. As such, the ambiguity of Jovičić's exhibition has done little to settle the contested politics of Jasenovac since it fails to deliver a clear message about the distinct Croatian roots of the Ustaša movement and the true extent of Serb suffering.

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[60] See Nataša Jovičić, "Jasenovac Memorial Museum's Permanent Exhibition - The Victim as an Individual," *Review of Croatian History* 2, no.1 (2006): 296.

[61] See Radonić, "Croatia — Exhibiting Memory," 361.

The issue begins with the Jovičić's decision to focus on individual victims above all else. According to Jovičić, the previous permanent exhibitions (1968, 1988) were employed primarily for ideological purposes such that "the victims were marginalized to the point at which they were rendered invisible and effectively non-existent. The victims were given no names, and the manner in which they were portrayed constituted renewed violence against them."[62] In order to remedy this, Jovičić argues, the exhibition should not engage with "the Jasenovac crimes from the perspective of the criminals—a perspective that solely emphasizes the mass of bones and blood," but rather "restore, as much as possible, the identity, personal significance, and dignity of each individual victim" and their "individual human tragedies."[63]

In practice, this focus on the individual means the 2006 exhibition repeats the errors of its 1968 predecessor, while doing little to correct the rhetoric of the 1988 exhibition. Namely, the question of Croatian culpability is entirely sidestepped while the particularities of the Ustaša movement—its anti-Serb racial ideology in particular—are marginalized in favor of a generalized depiction of the Ustaša movement as synonymous with German Nazism. For instance, in sections of the exhibition dedicated to individual victims, no information is provided about their nationality or religion. According to Jovičić, this choice was about avoiding "the kind of flat matrix" the Ustaše themselves employed and preserving the dignity of individuals:

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[62] See Nataša Jovičić, "Jasenovac Memorial Museum's Permanent Exhibition - The Victim as an Individual," *Review of Croatian History* 2, no.1 (2006): 296.
[63] See Jovičić, "Jasenovac Memorial Museum's Permanent Exhibition," 297.

> People were brought [to Jasenovac] and killed because they were Jews, Serbs, Roma, Croats who opposed the Ustaša regime, but those who were killed were not Jews, Serbs, Roma, Croats but rather persons, individuals. The crime was not abstract but rather concrete. The Serbianness or Jewishness of the victim were the motives for the crime but were only one characteristic of the victim, and not necessarily crucial in normal circumstances.[64]

The effect, of course, is that the racial categorizations employed by the Ustaše to justify killing the individual are absent, preventing the visitor from being able to distinguish the killings committed at Jasenovac from myriad other instances of violence in the region during the Second World War. This flattening of racially inspired genocide as comparable to all violence during war—even if done in good faith to restore the victims' dignity—therefore obstructs more than it informs when it comes to the specifics of Jasenovac.

This approach would not be nearly as problematic if Jovičić had coupled it with a nuanced historical conversation about the Ustaša movement and its particular hatred for ethnic Serbs. Instead, Jovičić describes the Ustaše as little more than puppets of the Nazi regime, leaving the uninformed visitor to assume the victims were predominantly Jewish. For example, the section of the exhibition committed to the rise of the Ustaše and the Independent State of Croatia stresses the state's "connection with Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy" such that the Ustaše arrived in power "completely reliant upon the policies of the German Third Reich" who then exerted "total influence over the state." Likewise, the few images related to the Ustaše and their racial ideology found in the exhibition consist of Ante Pavelić, leader of the Ustaša movement, shaking hands with Adolf Hitler alongside Ustaša propaganda against Jews in particular. Shockingly, the exhibition contains no equivalent images to depict the anti-Serb or anti-Roma elements of Ustaša racial ideology. Even more problematic, the exhibition describes Ustaša racial legislation as having merely "mirrored the accepted ideological determinants of

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[64] See Jovičić, *Stalni postav*, 16.

German Nazism and Italian Fascism with the intonations of Croatian national and social particularities.”[65] While it is true that Ustaša racial laws technically only targeted Jews and Roma, in practice, the racial legislation nonetheless marked the beginning of mass humiliation, abuse, and violence against the Serbian population. Thus, Jovčić’s framing of Ustaša racial legislation as equivalent to Nazi legislation against Jews, with only a vague reference to “national and social particularities,” does little service to the visitor’s understanding of the unique elements of Ustaše’s racial ideas.

Needless to say, Jovičić’s depiction of the Ustaše is wildly problematic when compared to the history of the movement and its racial ideology. Namely, her suggestion that the Ustaše merely aped Nazi practices, and that the Independent State of Croatia was under full German control, bears particular scrutiny. To the otherwise uninformed visitor, Jovičić’s description suggests that Ustaša racial ideology was concerned first and foremost with Jews, as in the case of Nazi Germany. As Rory Yeomans demonstrates, however, “it was the Serb ‘problem’ that the regime was keenest to solve and that it embarked on with the most brutality” as “the regime’s spokesmen and ideologues aggressively promoted the image of the Serbs as dangerous, alien, nomadic immigrants.”[66] And considering that Serbs made up roughly one third of the population of the Independent State of Croatia, Serbs were far and away the largest group targeted by Ustaša genocidal policies. For instance, at Jasenovac alone, Serbian victims totaled between 45,000 and 52,000, while Jewish and Roma victims totaled between 12,000 and 20,000, and 15,000 and

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[65] See Nataša Jovičić, *Scenarij novoga stalnog postava* [Scenery of the New Permanent Exhibition], 2005, SPJ, 7-10.

[66] See Rory Yeomans, *Visions of Annihilation: The Ustasha Regime and the Cultural Politics of Fascism, 1941–1945* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013), 15.

20,000, respectively.[67] Likewise, conservative estimates place the total number of Serbian victims throughout the Independent State of Croatia at 200,000, while others suggest as many as 500,000.[68] None of this is to say that Jews—and Roma, for that matter—were not systematically targeted and brutally murdered. But to force the Ustaša movement into the framework of Nazism misses a fundamental element of the movement: that it was a homegrown, Croatian ideology rooted in far-right Croatian nationalist politics that predated direct association with Nazism; and that the Serb question in particular was the primary driving force of the movement's racial ideology.[69]

Furthermore, Jovičić's suggestion that the Independent State of Croatia was little more than a Nazi puppet state obfuscates the high degree of the autonomy that the state possessed. As early as June 1941, for example, German Wehrmacht officials meeting with their Ustaša counterparts in Sarajevo complained that the Ustaše's chaotic methods against the Serbian population were fomenting rebellion and ultimately hindering their broader geopolitical interests.[70] More specifically when it comes to Jasenovac, the Ustaša regime had envisioned the use of death camps in their pursuit of a racially 'pure' Croatian state before even achieving statehood and their alliance with Nazi Germany. The 1946 testimony of Ljubo Miloš, an young official at Jasenovac, makes this clear as he "testified that plans for both the creation of a network of concentration camps and a campaign of extermination against the Serbs had been drawn up by Pavelić and the Ustaša leadership long before 1941."[71] Thus, the construction of

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[67] These numbers are drawn from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, whose numbers the Jasenovac Memorial Museum supports. See "Jasenovac," The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/jasenovac.

[68] See Yeomans, *Visions of Annihilation*, 18

[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid., 20.

[71] Ibid., 16.

Jasenovac and other satellite death camps must be understood as an independent decision made internally among the political elites of the Ustaša movement, and not, as Jovičić's exhibition suggests, the result of German control over the region.

With all this in mind, it seems clear that Jovičić's 2006 exhibition suffers from myriad problems when it comes to accurately depicting the historical reality of the Ustaša movement, the Independent State of Croatia, and the Jasenovac death camp. Much as the original 1968 exhibition framed the Independent State of Croatia as a puppet state to distance it from 'real' Yugoslavs and their values, the 2006 exhibition similarly frames the Independent State of Croatia as fundamentally foreign, and by consequence, deflects culpability for the Croatian nation as a whole. According to this narrative, foreign fascist ideology—as embodied by the joint image of Adolf Hitler and Ante Pavelić—was the cause of Jasenovac, and not, as is historically more accurate, the result of an extreme variant of Croatian nationalism. One need look no further than a legend currently found in the Jasenovac permanent exhibition to see how this language of foreignness and dependency works to absolve the Croatian nation from responsibility for the crimes committed at Jasenovac:

> The Independent State of Croatia (NDH) was set up after the April war in 1941 by Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, through the Ustaša movement, with Ante Pavelić at its head. … The NDH, apart from the area of Croatia, also covered Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Srijem, but in the Rome Agreements of May 1941 Fascist Italy was ceded a large part of the Eastern Adriatic coast and its immediate hinterland, whilst Horthy's Hungary annexed Međimurje and Baranya. Germany and Italy divided the territory of the NDH with the demarcation line of their occupied zones, and within the areas of their authority they gradually took over increasing power form the civil and military authorities of the NDH. *Therefore, it can be said that the NDH was not independent, nor a state, nor Croatian* (emphasis added).[72]

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[72] This text was recorded by the author during a visit to the exhibition in June 2019.

This legend must be read with a degree of nuance, of course. As Vjeran Pavlakovic demonstrates in his work on the rhetoric and discourse of commemoration politics in Croatia, language referring to the Independent State of Croatia as having lacked independence and a true Croatian character is often employed by the political left against right-wing revisionist groups who seek to rehabilitate the image of the Independent State of Croatia and the Ustaše. At a 2014 annual Jasenovac commemoration, for example, Prime Minister Zoran Milanović used similar language in order to discredit attempts by the political right to rehabilitate the Independent State of Croatia:

> [The Independent State of Croatia] was not independent, it was a state that functioned only as an instrument of force and repression. Was that Croatia? For me it is not. … I will say this here as the head of the Croatian government and as a Croat who knows, feels, and is conscious of what having their own state means to the Croatian people. The price one nation and one generation is willing to sacrifice for their state cannot be in opposition to all of the values of mankind. And that is the kind of state it was. And that is why so many Croats rebelled against it.[73]

It seems clear, therefore, that Jovičić intended the legend to counter attempts by the political right to cover up brutal nature of the Ustaša movement. Whatever the intention, however, the effect nonetheless is to reinforce the predominant discourse found throughout the exhibition: that the Ustaša movement represents a foreign ideology rooted in Nazism and Italian Fascism, and that the Independent State of Croatia, lacking any real independence, could not have possibly acted in the name of the Croat people or their nation. In conclusion, Jovičić's permanent exhibition suffers from flaws similar to those of its predecessors despite her attempts to de-politicize the museum and focus on the victims above all else. In particular, the symbolic and aesthetic standards of an increasingly universalized genre of Holocaust memorialization that conform to the European Union’s politics of reconciliation and unity amount to an ideological whitewashing of the Ustaša regime. As such, to the otherwise uninformed visitor, Jasenovac and the Ustaše function as little more than stand ins for Auschwitz and the Nazi regime in Croatia, devoid of the particular anti-Serb nature of the Ustaša movement, and thus relieving Croatia of direct responsibility for the legacy of Ustaša crimes.

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[73] See Vjeran Pavlakovic, "Contested Sites and Fragmented Narratives Jasenovac and Disruptions in Croatia's Commemorative Culture,“ in *Framing the Nation and Collective Identities: Political Rituals and Cultural Memory of the Twentieth-Century Traumas in Croatia*, ed. Vjeran Pavlakovic (London: Routledge 2019): 126.

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Taking into consideration the fate of Revolutionary Museums in general and the transformation of the Jasenovac Memorial Museum more specifically, I conclude that almost the entirety of twentieth century history—with one troubling and revealing exception—has been purged from Croatian historical museums. The deep—if quite problematic—historiography of the Workers’ Movement, the People’s Liberation Struggle, and the building of socialism developed during the socialist era has now become mostly irrelevant in museum spaces. Instead of committing to a process of critical reflection and reassessment of Revolutionary Museums’ collections and holdings, Croatian museum professionals have instead avoided it altogether. Those Revolutionary Museums that survived the collapse of communism have shifted their focus to cultural histories of their local regions, exhibiting local ethnographic, artistic, and archaeological topics while hardly touching political or military history at all.

In the case of the Jasenovac Memorial Museum, the socialist ideology that dominated its initial 1968 exhibition has now been replaced by EU-focused memory politics that seek to present Croatia as a repenting member of “New Europe.” According to this formulation, Croatia today bears equal guilt in the horrors of the Holocaust as the rest of Europe. Crucially, however, this same formulation manages to sidestep Croatia’s culpability for the crimes committed by the homegrown Ustaša movement, and the genocide committed against its Serbian population in particular. Perhaps most tellingly, Jasenovac today is no longer a part of Croatian primary school pedagogy. Instructors may choose to take students to the site but for the most part have opted to avoid it altogether. As such, a site that used to bring in tens of thousands of students a year in the socialist era in 2018 hosted only 15 Croatian student groups.

As of the time of this writing, therefore, Croatian museums have utterly failed to reevaluate their own 20th century past. The politicized nature of Revolutionary Museums meant they could never survive the death of their revolutionary state, socialist Yugoslavia. The complete lack of engagement with this era of Croatian history, however, remains a stain on the state of Croatian historical museums today and suggests a great deal about which aspects of contemporary history have been deemed appropriate in 21st century Croatia. To that end, I turn now to the legacy of the Homeland War (1991-1995) in Croatian museums.

5.3 Replacing the Revolution: The Homeland War in Croatian Museums since 1991

The collapse of communism in Croatia inevitably meant the collapse of Revolutionary Museums as their very purpose was tied to the project of socialist Yugoslavism. And yet, many of the methods and thematic concepts developed in Revolutionary Museums have since informed a new museological trend in Croatia: the musealization of the so-called Homeland War (1991-1995).[74] Just as the socialist-led People' Liberation Struggle served as a key foundational myth for the socialist Yugoslav state, so too has the Homeland War functioned as a heroic origin story for the modern Croatian nation state. Faced with a new state and an entirely new foundational mythology, it is not surprising therefore that Croatian museums replicated the methods developed for memorializing the People's Liberation Struggle to serve the new mythology of the Homeland War.

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[74] The term Homeland War is the popular term used within Croatia today to describe the Croatian experience during the Yugoslav civil war of 1991-1995. I have opted to use this term as it is the language consistently found in Croatian history museums. I do not use the term connote the morality or nature of the war, namely that the war was a war of noble defense forced upon Croatia by Serbian aggression.

In this section, I will demonstrate what this process has looked like, both contemporaneously during the war (1991-1995) and in the most recent decade (2010-2019). In particular, I will focus on methods and themes that have carried over from Revolutionary Museums, such as display methods and narrative tropes, and trace their evolution in the context of the Homeland War and post-socialist state building. Furthermore, I will demonstrate that just as Revolutionary Museums functioned as "temples of truth" meant to reinforce the dominant state building ideology of socialist-Yugoslavism, museum projects on the Homeland War in Croatia continue to replicate this model, presenting sacred and unquestionable "truths" to the visitor while providing little space for critical engagement or a multiplicity of voices.

5.3.1 Victim and Perpetrator: Croatia in the Homeland and Bosnian Wars

Given the importance and complicated nature of the Homeland War, some extended context is needed before delving into the museum projects under investigation. Under the leadership of Franjo Tuđman, military hostilities broke out between Croatia and Yugoslavia in June 1991, although violence between local communities, police, and militias preceded this as early as March 1991. By the time war broke out, Yugoslavia functioned as a *de facto* Serbian state under the leadership of Serbian nationalist Slobodan Milošević as both Slovenia and Croatia had left the Yugoslav League of Communists, while the leadership of the remaining republics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Macedonia were dominated by pro-Milošević communists. Thus, Yugoslavia's standing army, the Yugoslav People's Army, became synonymous with a Serbian army, while a number of ethnic Serb paramilitaries were supported and armed by Belgrade in both Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

During the first stage of the war between June 1991 and January 1992, Yugoslav People’s Army troops and Serbian paramilitaries captured large swaths of Croatian territories. Alongside military casualties, numerous war crimes against the Croatian civilian population occurred, mostly at the hands of Serbian paramilitaries but also by Yugoslav People’s Army soldiers. These events also saw the revival of Serbian Chetniks, a far-right nationalist movement from the Second World War who, much like the Croatian Ustaša movement, had long cast a shadow over the official socialist-era memories of the war. While a number of self-proclaimed Chetniks did in fact participate in the war, they by no means made up a significant amount of Yugoslav People’s Army or Serbian forces. Symbolically, however, Chetniks became emblematic of the Yugoslav People’s Army’s role in serving Milošević’s goals to annex much of Croatia in pursuit of a Greater Serbia, and thus served as a powerful rhetorical tool in wartime Croatian propaganda.

On January 2, 1992 an UN-sponsored ceasefire between Croatia and Yugoslavia went into effect. Simultaneously, war broke out in Bosnia and Herzegovina between predominantly Bosniak (Bosnian Muslim) and Serbian forces. With a temporary peace in place throughout Croatia proper, Croatian war interests turned towards Bosnia and Herzegovina. Throughout large swaths of Herzegovina, ethnic Croats made up the majority of the population, especially in the rural countryside. Thus, Herzegovina had long been a hotbed for Croatian nationalists, and the outbreak of war in Bosnia and Herzegovina served as a catalyst for their mobilization. Other Croats in Bosnia, however, were historically more inclined towards tolerance in a multi-ethnic society where they had lived side by side with Bosniak and Serb populations for centuries. The territories of Bosnia and Herzegovina therefore proved ample ground for conflict between Croats and Bosniaks, even as they had a common Serbian enemy. [75]

Croatia first began the war effort in Bosnia and Herzegovina through direct support of the Croatian Defense Council, an ethnically Croat paramilitary force in Herzegovina. Channeling arms and other supplies directly from Zagreb to the Croatian Defense Council, and installing pro-Tudjman leadership throughout western Herzegovina, Franjo Tuđman thus established a Croatian state presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the form of the Croatian Defense Council and a newly formed state, the Croatian Community of Herceg-Bosna, under the leadership of Mate Boban. While Tuđman worked in conjunction with the leadership of Bosnia and Herzegovina against the common Serb enemy in throughout 1992, his long term intention to incorporate Croat populated areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina into the Croatian state was well known. According to Tuđman, “Bosnia was an artificial creation of the Yugoslav state, with no historical legitimacy.” He actively encouraged “nation building” among ethnic Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina while opposing the creation of an independent unitary Bosnian state. Thus, when opportunities arose, Tuđman did not hesitate to support Bosnian Croat military actions against the Bosniak population.[76]

By April 1993, tensions between ethnic Croats and Bosniak forces rapidly devolved into violence. The first significant outburst came in the Lašva Valley as Croatian Defense Council troops under the guidance of Boban’s leadership engaged in a systematic campaign of ethnic cleansing against Bosniak civilians. Soon enough, violence between Croats and Bosniaks erupted throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, exacerbated by cyclical outbursts of communal violence, large waves of refugees, and Herzegovinian Croat nationalists traveling throughout Bosnia and

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[75] See Laura Silber and Allan Little, *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation* (New York: Penguin Books, 1997), 293.
[76] Ibid., 292.

Herzegovina to stoke the flames of war.[77] All told, by the time the conflict came to a close in February, 1994, Croat-Bosniak relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina—long known for its centuries long history of multi-ethnic tolerance and communal living—were effectively destroyed by the actions of Tuđman's central government in Zagreb and local Croat actors in Bosnia and Herzegovina proper.

Military hostilities began anew in Croatia between Croatian forces, the Yugoslav People's Army, and Serbian paramilitaries by early 1993. Most important for the conversation at hand, however, are two Croatian military operations that took place at the completion of the conflict, Operation Flash and Operation Storm in May and August of 1995 respectively. Amid UN-sponsored peace talks, Tuđman ordered a troop build-up along the front lines of Serb-held western Slavonia. On May 1st, under the pretext of communal violence against Croats in the Serb town of Okučani, Tuđman initiated Operation Flash, a rapid military operation in which Croat forces took much of western Slavonia in just thirty hours. Combined Serbian soldier and civilian deaths amounted to at least 188 in this three day span, while tens of thousands of Serbs fled in fear of reprisals.[78] Almost immediately, despite official appeals for Serbs in Slavonia to stay in Croatia as future citizens, Tuđman called for Croats from the diaspora to return to help repopulate this region with ethnic Croats.[79] After the success of Operation Flash, the Croatian military planned another operation to retake the remainder of Serb-held Slavonia (as well as areas in central and southern Croatia), Operation Storm, which began on August 4th, 1995. Similar to its predecessor, Operation Storm saw rapid successful military movements by Croatian troops into Serb-held regions, retaking virtually all Croatian territory by August 7th.

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[77] Ibid., 296-301.

[78] See Sabrina P. Ramet, *The Three Yugoslavias: State-Building and Legitimation, 1918-2005* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2006), 456.

[79] See Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, 356.

And much like Operation Flash, Operation Storm also caused a massive exodus of ethnic Serbs from eastern Croatia. At the city of Knin alone, a population of 35,000-40,000 people plummeted to roughly 550 people before Croatian forces arrived. In all, between 150,000 and 200,000 ethnic Serbs fled a region they had called home for centuries, while Croat troops "embarked on an officially sanctioned campaign of burning and looting" as well as indiscriminate killings of the few remaining Serb civilians, such as an elderly woman who was bound by fish net to a rubber tire and burnt alive.[80]

By the time the Homeland War came to a close in late 1995, the Croatian state and everyday Croats had simultaneously become victims and perpetrators. Massive atrocities took place against Croatian civilians at the hands of the Yugoslav People's Army and Serb paramilitaries, while Croats themselves engaged in ethnic cleansing, raping, looting, and extrajudicial killings in both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia proper. In terms of historical memory, however, the legacy of the Homeland War in Croatia has been overwhelmingly positive. Under the leadership of Franjo Tuđman until his death in 1999, and continued thereafter by two most prominent political parties, the Croatian Democratic Union and the Social Democratic Party of Croatia, the Homeland War has been shaped in official state memory as the most important foundation myth for the modern nation state. In particular, the memory of the war has hinged upon two key thematic tropes: that Croatia is a fundamentally peaceful and democratic nation that sought at all points to avoid war, and that the Homeland War was fundamentally a war of heroic defense brought on by an aggressive and barbaric Serbian neighbor. I will now turn to how this particular imagining of the war has been represented in Croatian museums from the early 1990s to the present day.

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[80] Ibid., 360.

5.3.2 Testimonies to the World: Exhibiting the Homeland War in the 1990s

The first wave of museum projects concerning the Homeland War developed in conjunction with the war itself. For instance, between 1991 and 1995, the Croatian History Museum sponsored traveling photo exhibitions intended to document the course of the war and bring attention to the crimes committed by Serbian forces against Croats.[81] These photo exhibitions served as the foundation for two war-time exhibitions in Zagreb and Koprivnica, as well as an exhibition in Zadar immediately following the end of the war in 1996, that serve as the basis for this section. These exhibitions mark the beginning of Croatian museums' engagement with the Homeland War, a process of idealizing and memorializing the war that continues to this day.

The museographical methods employed in these exhibitions are strikingly similar to practices used in Revolutionary Museums during the socialist era, suggesting a great deal of continuity in how Croatian museum professionals have engaged with the topic of war from the socialist era to present day. Two commonalities stand out in particular. First, the vast majority of exhibitions on the Homeland War employ a great deal of didactic legends and two-dimensional displays such as maps, documents, art, and photographs that closely resemble socialist-era displays on the Second World War. Little space is left for ambiguity as the legends explain to the visitor a fundamentally moral story of righteous Croatian defense, while the objects on display serve primarily to reinforce this singular narrative with little to no discussion about their complexities or nature. And secondly, these exhibitions constantly juxtapose the positive image of the heroic Croat patriot to a flattened and monolithic enemy—the Serb—whose barbarism and aggression poses an existential threat to the Croatian nation. This narrative structure closely resembles that found in socialist-era Revolutionary Museums that depict the Partisan struggle as an existential battle for peace, prosperity, and justice against the barbaric fascist aggressor (Images 5.3 and 5.4).

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[81] See Rhea Ivanuš, "Izložbena djelatnost Hrvatskog povijesnog muzeja i prezentacija fotografske zbirke domovsinskog rata" [Exhibition Activities of the Croatian History Museum and the Presentation of Photograph Collections on the Homeland War], *Informatica Museologica* 26, no. 1-4 (1995), 83-87.

Take for instance the exhibition held by the Croatian History Museum towards the end of the war in 1994, "How Croatia Armed Herself: Small Firearms in the Homeland War." The basic premise of the exhibition was to document the role of "small arms" in the war effort (i.e., non-military-grade manual firearms such as hunting rifles and pistols that were altered into semi-automatic and automatic arms). This premise was expanded, however, to document the great odds Croatia faced as the brunt of the Yugoslav People's Army fell upon Croatia, in turn depicting the war in heroic terms of the outnumbered, out-gunned Croat against the Serbian Goliath. Likewise, while the exhibition continually referred to the Croatian war effort as one dedicated to peace, democracy, and national emancipation, the image of a semi-automatic pistol at the top of each page of the catalog suggests a much more aggressive tone. This should not come as a surprise perhaps considering that the main sponsor of the exhibition was the Croatian Ministry of Defense.

Even more telling of the exhibition's tone is the introduction to the exhibition catalog by Jasna Tomičić where she responds to the "most common question" non-Croats have asked here throughout the course of the war: "how did this conflict come about?" Her published response reads as follows:

> Pushing back my indignation and sorrow, I patiently explain to them our past and the cause of aggression against our home. Referring to a map of Croatia, upon which black dots of ravaged cities, villages, and cultural monuments have accumulated, it becomes clear to them the goals of our attackers [the Serbs]. ... It becomes clear to them then that the unanimity of the Croatian people that supported democratic changes did not suit the Greater Serbia ideas. Quickly, from

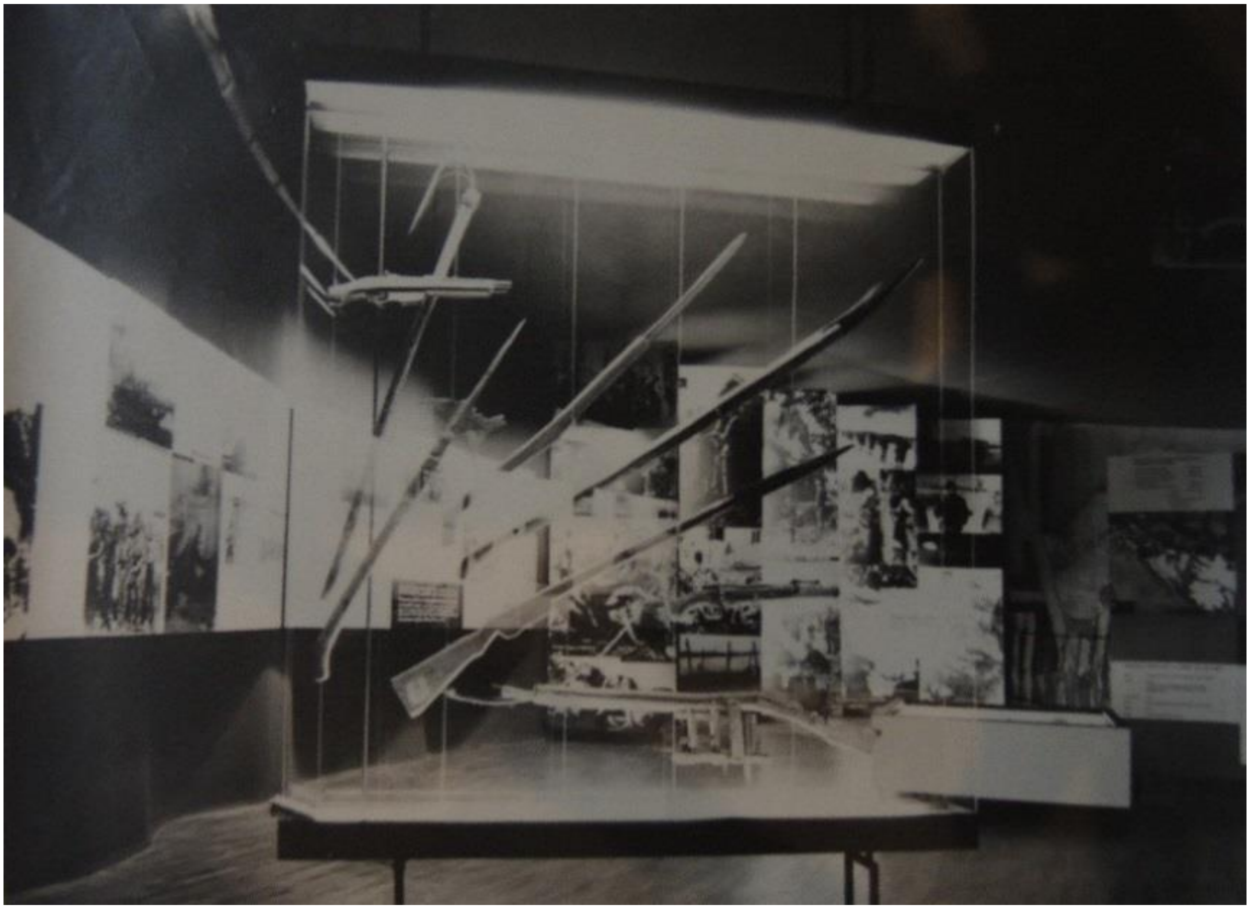

Image 5.3: Permanent exhibition of the Museum of the Revolution of the Peoples of Croatia, circa 1962. The image is property of the Croatian History Museum.

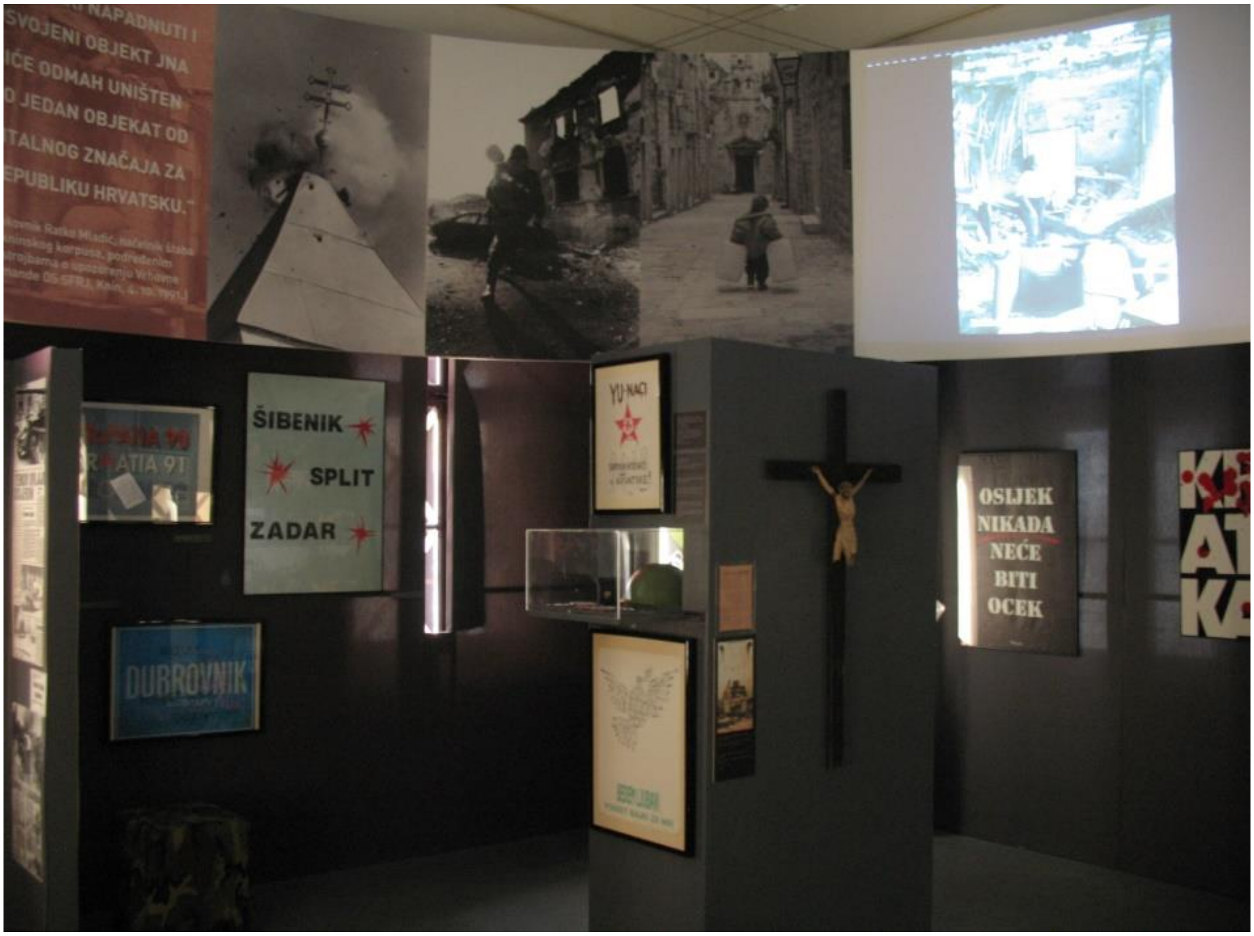
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Image 5.4: Temporary exhibition "The Homeland War" hosted by the Croatian History Museum, August 2012. The image is property of the author.

> air, from sea, from land, the 'People's Army' sowed death. Nevertheless—and certainly no one expected—the unarmed people stoop up against this force. The Croatian youth, sometimes armed with only hunting rifles and sometimes with nothing ... bravely moved in defense of their homes.[82]

Thus, according to Tomičić, the exhibition was organized to demonstrate the innovative spirit of "our brave defenders" as they altered these weapons into automatic grade weaponry and present to the visitor "the arms with which our people defended ourselves against the aggressor."[83]

Tellingly, the exhibition largely ignores how rapidly and successfully Croatia transformed its police force into a standing army and obtained military grade equipment between late 1990 and the first months of war in late 1991. True enough, in early 1990 the Yugoslav People's Army had completely disarmed the Croatian Territorial Defense organization, leaving Croatia with only 15,000 rifles, no heavy weapons, and only one armored vehicle. And yet, by December 1990 a new standing army was formed and armed under then Defense Minister, Martin Špegelj. Purging Croatian police forces of all ethnic Serbs, mobilizing tens of thousands of police reservists, organizing and setting up armed village patrols, and managing a robust operation of arms smuggling, Špegelj had built the foundation of a new Croatian standing army before the outbreak of actual war.[84] Furthermore, a series of events at the start of the war in September 1991 known as the Battle for the Barracks allowed for a rapid arming of the Croatian army. During this time, Croatian Territorial Defense forces surrounded Yugoslav People's Army outposts throughout Croatia and confiscated their arms and supplies, including twenty one M-84AB tanks confiscated at the Đuro Đaković factory, as well as a number of anti-aircraft and anti-tank weapons and significant artillery captured in Slavonski Brod.[85] Therefore, while

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[82] See Janko Jeličić and Jasna Tomičić, *Ćime se branila Hrvatska: ručno vatreno oružje* [*How Croatia Defended Herself: Small Firearms*] (Zagreb: Croatian History Museum 1994), 9.
[83] Ibid., 9.
[84] See Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, 107-110.
[85] See Ramet, *Three Yugoslavias*, 400.

Croatia certainly faced great odds in terms of forming and maintaining a well-armed army in the early phases of the war, the image that Tomičić provides of a war waged by Croatian peasants and youth armed with little more than hunting rifles and pistols is grossly misleading.

The exhibition also highlights one of the most common themes found in Homeland War exhibitions: that Croatia was a peace loving, democratic nation that only reluctantly engaged in a war of defense when it was forced upon them by Serbian aggression and territorial aspirations. While there is truth to this, as evidenced by Slobodan Milošević's pandering to those who dreamed of a territorially-expanded Greater Serbia and the arming and support of Serbian militias in Croatia by Belgrade, this language entirely ignores the numerous instance of provocation—and even outright aggression—by Croatian actors in the months leading up the outbreak of war in August 1991. One episode in particular demonstrates this well. In April 1991, Gojko Šušak, a hardline emigre nationalist and close associate of Franjo Tuđman, led a small group of men to the outskirts of Borovo Selo, a Serbian village on the outskirts of Vukovar near the Serbian border whose residents had recently barricaded the village in fear of oncoming conflict. Šušak's excursion was done in spite of protests from the regional police chief, Josip Reihl-Kir, who understood this would only further inflame regional tensions between Croats and Serbs. Once Šušak and his men arrived outside the village, they fired three missiles into the village in an entirely unprovoked episode of aggression. Šušak's actions set off a series of events, including an increased armed presence by Serbs in Borovo Selo, that culminated in the massacre of twelve Croat policemen on May 2nd, 1991. For his actions, Šušak was awarded by Franjo Tuđman the position of Minister of Defense in September 1991. Thus, it was the actions by a high-ranking Croatian official that set off a series of events that, perhaps more than other event in 1991, put “Croatia irrevocably on the path to open war.”[86]

Two traveling exhibitions put on by the Croatian History Museum further demonstrate this problematic depiction of the Homeland War. In particular, these two exhibitions demonstrate the tendency to paint the Homeland War as a war between culture and civility versus barbarism and wanton destruction. The 1994 exhibition “Lipik and Pakrac in the Homeland War” hosted in Koprivnica, for example, documented the wartime ruin of these two villages in the Požega-Slavonia county at the hands of Serbian forces. Notably, the authors Rhea Ivanuš and Boris Fabijanec delved into the rich cultural history of each village before describing their destruction. They portrayed Lipik, for example, as the site of a pristine natural hot spring going back to Roman times that after 1861 functioned as a resort for Austro-Hungarian nobility, “one of the most important European health spas” of the late 19th century. After this town of only 3,800 was bombarded by more than 30,000 bombs, however, 95% of the houses and 75% of the apartments were destroyed, while other vital institutions such as hospitals and schools were indiscriminately attacked. Thus, Lipik became “the embodiment of suffering in Croatia, having survived a Christ-like martyrdom” as “reserves from Serbia and local Chetniks … systematically destroyed the historical center and wreaked their callousness” on the village’s population.[87] Similarly, Ivanuš and Fabijanec describe Pakrac as a small but historically significant village, having served as a site for printing silver coins in the 14th century, as well as home to a number of precious buildings such as the baroque Janković palace. Due to its Serbian minority, however, Serbia claimed the city as part of Greater Serbia, making Pakrac “more or less like every Croatian city targeted by Serbian aggression." Under this false pretext, according to Ivanuš and Fabijanec, "the Chetniks together with members of the Yugoslav People's Army destroyed everything: hospitals, civil houses and buildings, schools, community housing, department stores, Catholic and Orthodox churches, and the train station."[88]

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[86] See Silber and Little, *Yugoslavia*, 140-142.

[87] See Rhea Ivanuš, *Lipik and Pakrac u domovinskom ratu* [*Lipik and Pakrac in the Homeland War*] (Zagreb: Croatian History Museum, 1994), 1.

Similarly, in 1996 the Croatian History Museum, in conjunction with the grocery company Podravka, put on a traveling exhibition at the coastal city of Zadar titled "Zadar Memento." Authored by the same Rhea Ivanuš who co-authored the Lipik and Pakrac exhibition, this exhibition similarly framed Zadar's experience during the Homeland War as a clash between civilization and barbarism. First, Ivanuš describes the long history of this "rebellious city" as a Croatian outpost against outside aggression, drawing continuity between the 1202 siege Crusaders with Venetian support, Axis bombing of the city during the Second World War, and the present day war waged upon the city by Serbian aggressors. As with these other events, the Homeland War represented yet another time in the city's long history when the population was forced "to organize in order to defend freedom and their beloved homeland" as "neither the medieval methods of siege, nor the systematic destruction [of modern warfare] discouraged the mortified citizens."[89] Ivanuš likewise described the wanton violence committed by Serb forces against the city's population as "the Serbian aggressor attacked [Zadar] for four years" aiming "to smash Croatia with murderous means, to subdue and to conquer." And perhaps most tellingly, Ivanuš specifically employed the language of civilization and barbarism, explaining that only through "persistence, bravery, and endurance in Zadar was Croatian identity protected" and "the battle between culture and barbarism" won.[90] It goes without saying that this description by Ivanuš hinged far more on emotionality than objectivity. And yet this trend is still remarkably prevalent in more recent Homeland War exhibitions.

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[88] Ibid., 2.

[89] See Rhea Ivanuš, *Zadarski Memento* [*Zadar Memento*] (Zagreb: Croatian History Museum, 1996), 2.

[90] Ibid., 1-5.

5.3.3 The New People's Liberation Struggle: Eternalizing the Legacy of the Homeland War since 2010

Perhaps the most striking recent example of exhibiting the Homeland War is the Croatian History Museum's 2011 exhibition, "The Homeland War." Although the exhibition took place twenty years after the outbreak of war, it maintained the same problematic themes of the aforementioned exhibitions from the 1990s with seemingly little critical reflection. Above all else, the exhibition was designed to project Croatia as a peaceful nation, continuously reinforcing the trope of Serbian aggression and juxtaposing it with images of Croatia's desire for peace. [91] The main exhibition space, for instance, began with a shrine-like enclave dedicated to Croatia's independence, centered upon a video of Franjo Tuđman declaring independence on June 25, 1991. The accompanying legend described how "peaceful democratic development [in Croatia] came face to face with Serbian aspirations for the creation of a centralized unitary state along the lines of the Greater Serbian programme, which became a threat to the remaining Yugoslav nations." This was then followed by a room dedicated to the siege of Vukovar where again the theme of Serbian aggression and Croatian victimhood was repeated alongside images of destruction and death. Later in the exhibition, an entire wall was dedicated to calls for peace during the war such as fliers and articles with the captions "Stop the War in Croatia," "Christmas in War Torn Croatia," and "Help Croatia Now," as well as an image of a child in soldier's garb making a peace sign with the caption, "My Father is a Croatian Soldier."

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[91] The following description of this exhibition is based upon extensive photos taken of the exhibition on August 2012 by the author of this dissertation.

As an exhibition dedicated to a military effort, the Homeland War exhibition also included a great deal of militaristic imagery. But just as with the 1994 exhibition, "How Croatia Defended Herself," the message surrounding these images and objects was one of noble defense, not of aggression. For example, the main room in which military garb and weaponry were displayed was preceded by two rooms dedicated to wartime destruction and Serbian aggression. In the first room, the visitor was forced to navigate through objects like barbed wire, press releases of civilian massacres, objects from burnt out homes, and a crucifix from a bombed church. Following this, they were funneled into a room mounted with images and objects from Serb paramilitaries and Chetniks. These objects were placed side by side with objects from Yugoslav People's Army soldiers, suggesting their interchangeability, while a poster was mounted on the wall displaying a swastika with Chetnik imagery inside a communist red star with caption of the linguistic pun, "Yu-Naci." The pun itself is based on the Croatian word for hero, *junak*, whose plural form is spelled *junaci*. By replacing "ju" with "Yu"—the pronunciation of which is the same in English and Croatian—the author of the poster thus inverted the idea of Yugoslav heroism to Yugoslav Nazism. Thus, by the time the visitor would have entered the hallway dedicated to Croatian soldiers, it would have been near impossible for an otherwise uninformed individual to see these soldiers as anything but admirably engaged in a battle of noble defense against a ruthless, fascist aggressor.

Not surprisingly, the exhibition failed to mention any of Croatia's own territorial aspirations or war crimes. For example, the entrance to the museum sits on a lower floor before leading the visitor to the main exhibition space. Upon entry to this lower floor, the visitor was bombarded with a series of wartime newspaper clippings and records of missing persons, all of which enclosed a portrait of Lieutenant General Ante Gotovina with the heading "Hero." At the time of this exhibition, Gotovina had already been indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) for war crimes and crimes against humanity and found guilty in April 2011. Although this verdict was reversed in November 2012, this reversal took place after the exhibition had already completed its scheduled life in October 2012. Therefore, the fact that the exhibition began this way tells us a great deal about the lack of critical reflection found throughout as the most prominent image the visitor would have seen upon entering was that a currently convicted war criminal labeled as a national hero.

The exhibition contained numerous other examples of its ideological bias, such as the display of military badges from the Croatian Defense Forces and Croatian Defense Council without any accompanying texts to provide much needed context. Both of these badges, for example, contained the phrase "*Za dom spremni*" ("For the homeland, we are ready"), the notorious slogan first made popular by the fascist Ustaša movement during the Second World War that in the context of 1990s Croatia became a rallying call for extreme Croatian ethno-nationalism. Furthermore, multiple members of both the Croatian Defense Forces and the Croatian Defense Council have been implicated in serious war crimes, the most egregious of which being the Ahmići Massacre in central Bosnia when Croatian Defense Forces soldiers killed as many as 120 Bosniak civilians. Through burnings and point-blank range executions that indiscriminately targeted individuals as young as three months old and as old as ninety-six years, this "well-planned" massacre was part of a larger operation to ethnically cleanse the Lašva Valley of Bosnian Muslims that "practically eliminated the Bosniaks from this area of Central Bosnia.[92] Nowhere in the exhibition were these paramilitaries engaged with critically as the only legend located near the display was one that described the general Croatian defense strategy.

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[92] See Paul Mojzes, *Balkan Genocides: Holocaust and Ethnic Cleansing in the Twentieth Century* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2011), 174.

A similar lack of critical reflection informed how the exhibition dealt with the two most notorious actions by the Croatian state during the war: the Bosnian offensive between 1992 and 1994, and Operation Storm in 1995. In the case of the Bosnian offensive, the exhibit contained one legend that only vaguely described the operation, insisting it was done in limited fashion with the sole aim to protect ethnic Croats in western and northern Bosnia and Herzegovina. This narrative completely ignored the reality of this operation, as evidenced by the aforementioned Ahmići massacre, as an operation designed to realize Tuđman's territorial aspirations to expand the borders of Croatia into northern and western Bosnia and Herzegovina where sizable ethnic Croat minorities lived. More egregiously, the exhibition dedicated its final hallway to Croatia's military operations in 1995 to retake territories in the eastern region of Slavonia. Under the title "liberation and peaceful reintegration," the room's main legend explains how Croatia had "the backing of the international community" to carry out the so-called Operation Storm in which Croatia's military, followed closely by paramilitary and police units, successfully retook Serb-held territories in Slavonia known as the Republic of Serbian Krajina. During this operation, multiple instances of war crimes and ethnic cleansing were committed as almost the entirety of the Serbian population in eastern Croatia was expelled. Between 100,000 and 300,000 ethnic Serbs were evacuated or forcibly removed, while roughly 350 were killed by military and paramilitary forces,[93] while thousands of homes were destroyed and looted. In all, Operation Storm represents both a moment of victory and a campaign of ethnic cleansing and war crimes whose complicated legacy necessitates a similarly complicated and nuanced approach. And yet, the exhibition committed merely one sentence to the darker side of Operation Storm, stating simply that "unfortunately, during and after the liberation of these territories, crimes against the Serbian population were committed."

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[93] Both of these figures are hotly disputed. I take the range of 100,000 - 300,000 based on the work of Ivo Goldstein and Paul Mojzes. See Ivo Goldstein. *Croatia: A History* (Montreal: McGill Queen's University Press, 2001), 253; see Mojzes, *Balkan Genocides*, 162. I take the figure of roughly 350 deaths from the ICTY's official count of 342.

The 2011 Homeland War exhibition therefore demonstrates that the same one-sided narrative of Croatian victimhood and noble defense first developed during the war years (1991-1995) has continued, seemingly uninterrupted, to the present day. There are multiple examples from the past decade throughout Croatia in the form of exhibitions, temporary and permanent, as well as entire museums dedicated to the Homeland War. The Dubrovnik Contemporary History Museum, for instance, held an exhibition on the city's experience during the Homeland War throughout 2011. While focusing on local particularities, the exhibition replicated the same problematic approach described in the aforementioned Homeland War exhibition at the Croatian History Museum, with the exhibition catalog starting as follows:

> The time of Serbian and Montenegrin aggression in 1991 on the Dubrovnik area deeply fixed in the minds of all those who survived and changed our lives forever. The consequences of its murderous and destructive components left an indelible trace in our psyche and our memory. Being omnipresent today, it is the subject of personal suffering, inquiries and interpretations, but is also an unavoidable topic of academic and professional expert investigations.
>
> Through the heroic defense of the town in 1991, Dubrovnik defenders defeated the aggressor decisively, both in a military and political way, writing with their courage the brightest pages of the rich Dubrovnik history. After the insane destructive attack on Dubrovnik and the attempt to conquer it, the world community couldn't close their eyes to the numerous war crimes and destructions, in which the senseless hatred towards Croatian people was demonstrated.[94]

As this quote demonstrates, the trope of Serbian aggression—and in this case the "insanity" of the attack in particular—informs the premise of the exhibition, leaving little room for alternative voices or critical reflection. By framing the joint Serbian and Montenegrin attack on Dubrovnik as fundamentally irrational, any conversation on the larger context of war, strategic interests in the Dalmatian coast, or later retaliations in the Herzegovina hinterland was effectively silenced.

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[94] See Mišo Đuraš and Varina Jurica Turk, *Dubrovnik u domovinskom ratu, 1991.-1995.* [*Dubrovnik in the Homeland War, 1991-1995*] (Dubrovnik: Dubrovnik Museum, 2011), 13.

This exhibition formed the basis for a permanent memorial site and museum at the Srđ Imperial Fort positioned in the hills overlooking the old city, the Museum of the Homeland War - Dubrovnik. Completed and opened to the public in 2016, the museum is considered a contemporary history museum, much as Revolutionary Museums were in the socialist era. Yet the museum's collections and exhibition are concerned solely with the events of Dubrovnik after 1990, making it essentially a war museum of the 1990s conflict. And much like its Revolutionary Museum forerunners, the Museum of the Homeland War - Dubrovnik relies primarily on two dimensional panels containing photographs, maps, and legends that frame original three dimensional objects such as artillery, shells, rifles, and military garb.[95]

Two other recent memorial museum projects, the Memorial Center of the Homeland War in Vukovar and the Museum of the Homeland War Karlovac-Turanj, demonstrate just how embedded the themes of Serbian aggression and noble Croatian defense remain in Croatian public history today. The Vukovar center, for instance, operates first and foremost as a memorial site dedicated to Croats who perished during the Homeland War. As such, the center manages multiple memorial monuments in the region that mark the sites of mass graves and massacres. More tellingly, the center's museum contains an entire room dedicated to soldiers who died during the Siege of Vukovar. Adopting many of the tropes central to modern Holocaust memorials, such as austere aesthetics and dark lighting, the names of victims mounted upon walls, and video testimonies, this room frames Croatian soldiers as first and foremost victims of Serbian atrocities. In similar fashion, the center focuses on the siege of Vukovar as emblematic of Serbian aggression. The exhibition hall titled "Memory of the Homeland War - the Battle for Vukovar," for instance, primarily displays weapons and military garb from the war alongside images from the siege. The content of these images—a combination of wartime destruction and noble soldiers—gives the hallway a clear tone of sacrifice and triumph that, in conjunction with the aforementioned memorial spaces, aligns to the broader trends found in Homeland War exhibits.[96]

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[95] See "Muzej domovinskog rata Dubrovnik," The Museum of the Homeland War Dubrovnik, https//mdrd.hr/.

The Museum of the Homeland War Karlovac-Turanj, opened on July 5, 2019, represents the most recent Croatian museum project dealing with the Homeland War. First initiated in 2007 by the Karlovac Municipal Museum under a newly founded department of contemporary history, this museum complex in Turanj just outside Karlovac contains an outdoor walking path that snakes through various military vehicles such as jets, mobile artillery, armored transports, and tanks, as well as a memorial museum housed in a former military building, the so-called "Hotel California." In terms of content, the museum closely resembles other projects on the Homeland War, including collections of military garbs, weaponry, images of war, maps, and veteran testimonies. And while at the moment of this writing, little information is available as to the exact content of the museum,[97] the tone surrounding its opening indicates the museum has not strayed from the predominant tropes surrounding Homeland War exhibits. The opening ceremony, for instance, was headed by Croatian President, Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović who reinforced the importance of Turanj in the defense of Croatia as a key site along the borders of "Greater Serbia." Stating emphatically that "Croatia was not broken here - rather, Turanj became the symbol of victory for Croatia," Grabar-Kitarović stressed the importance of bolstering the culture of remembrance surrounding the Homeland War as a central event in the founding of the modern Croatian state. Tomo Medved, Minister of Veteran Affairs, likewise emphasized the importance of this center for preserving the legacy of the Homeland War and the bravery of Croatian soldiers for future generations of youth.[98] Thus, the Turanj Homeland War museum appears remarkably similar to its problematic predecessors.

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[96] This analysis is based upon the museum's own virtual exhibition access through their website. See "Virtual Tour," Memorial Center of the Homeland War, http://360.mcdrvu.hr/.

[97] The Karlovac Municipal Museum website, for instance, contains only a few select images of the outdoor complex and sparse information on the founding of the institution. Likewise, the Official Tourism Website of Karlovac only provides a brief summary of the region's history in the Homeland War and the scope of the museum project. A more detailed account of the museum's inception can be found in Ružica Stjepanović, "Karlovački muzejski prostor za budućnost: rekonstrukcija 'Californije'" [A Karlovac Museum Space for the Future - The Reconstruction of the "Hotel California"], *Informatica Museologica* 44, no. 1-4 (2013): 69-74. However, at the time of that writing in 2013, little progress had been made on the actual museum complex. My analysis of this most recent Homeland War project is therefore limited and presents an opportunity for future research. See "Muzej domovinskog rata Karlovac - Turanj," The City Museum of Karlovac, http://www.gmk.hr/O%20nama/U%20sastavu%20muzeja/Muzej%20Domovinskog%20rata%20Karlovac%20%E2%80%93%20Turanj.

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Taken as a whole, museum projects concerning the Homeland War—be they temporary traveling exhibitions during the war itself or more recent museum complexes—reflect the ways in which today the legacy of the People's Liberation Struggle and socialist revolution during the Second World War has effectively been replaced by the Homeland War as the foundational event for the modern Croatian nation-state. Both in terms of museographical methods (the predominance of two-dimensional and heavily didactic displays accompanied by original military objects) and thematic concepts (war as a means for peace, justice, and national emancipation), Homeland War exhibits and museums reflect more an evolution of socialist-era museology than a clear break from it.

According to these exhibitions, the Homeland War represents Croatia's values as both a democratic and peaceful nation, as well as a nation of heroic defenders prepared to sacrifice everything to protect the nation. Reluctantly waging a war that was forced on them by aggressive and barbaric neighbors, the Serbs, ordinary Croats rose in defense of the nation and successfully ushered in a new age of Croatian independence and sovereignty. The reality of these events, as documented throughout this section, diverges significantly from this official narrative. Perhaps for this reason more than any else, therefore, Homeland War exhibits and museums must be understood as successors to socialist-era Revolutionary Museums that similarly serve the predominant national project of their day.

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[98] As quoted in Total Croatia News. See Iva Tatić, "Homeland War Museum Opened in Karlovac - Turanj," Total Croatia News, https://www.total-croatia-news.com/lifestyle/36983-homeland-war-museum.

5.4 Conclusion

By the conclusion of the Homeland War in late 1995, Croatian museums had more or less completed their transition to an ethno-national nation-state model. As I have shown in this chapter, this was an active process directly tied to Croatia's larger post-socialist transition as Croatian history museums were actively employed in the war effort, used to "re-discover" Croatia's suppressed national history, and institutionally re-worked to marginalize the history and legacy of socialism. In terms of museographical approaches, however, I have also explained the ways in which socialist-era practices continue to this day, whether in the role original objects play compared to two-dimensional didactic sources, or in the appropriation and inversion of socialist-era narrative tropes. Thus, while the socialist era has come to a close, and the revolutionary state has died, the legacy of socialist Yugoslav museology appears alive and well today.

Croatian history museums today remain crucially tied to the larger state- and nation-building projects led by Croatian politicians and public intellectuals, much as they were in the socialist era. But just as in the socialist era when this entailed a more complicated and layered process of history telling than simply ‘top-down’ instructions from the Party, the activities of Croatian history museums since 1989 result from multi-faceted processes negotiated between state actors, such as political sponsors and the Ministry of Culture, and the museum professionals who design and put on various exhibitions on Croatia’s past. As such, Croatian history museums today continue to function as both products and producers of national mythology in the ever-evolving tradition of Croatian nationalism.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This project began with a hunch: Croatian museums, as state-sponsored cultural institutions, must have been public mouthpieces for the socialist Yugoslav state, and therefore studying them would reveal the ways in which the socialist state projected its own legitimacy to the masses. Over the course of my research, this hunch turned out to be partially true. Certainly, in the case of contemporary history museums, there was little to no deviation from the Party line when it came to the history of the Workers' Movement, the People's Liberation Struggle, and the building of socialism. According to these museums, Croatia's multi-religious and multi-ethnic population rose up in unity against the barbarism of foreign fascism, bound by their common South Slavic heritage and deep-seated socialist values, and guided to liberation and prosperity by Tito and his vanguard communist party. The same can be said for memorial museums, as exemplified by the first permanent exhibition of the Jasenovac memorial museum in 1968 in which the history of a homegrown Croatian concentration camp was reimagined as both a site of collective Yugoslav suffering, as well as a celebration of Yugoslav Brotherhood and Unity and communist heroism.

And yet, even this example requires caution. Opened in 1988, the second permanent exhibition at Jasenovac clearly pushed the boundaries of Party-line discourse about the Second World War by drawing attention to the Ustaše's genocidal policies towards Croatia's Serb population, and by suggesting that the Croat nation itself bore responsibility for these atrocities. While this may be attributed simply to political context of the late socialist period in which nationalist tensions between Croats and Serbs in particular threatened to tear the country asunder, I believe it equally reflects a longer trend within Croatian museology and museum practice:

despite functioning under the confines of a socialist state, Croatian museum professionals always operated with a surprising degree of autonomy.

At the level of museological theory, for example, early thinkers such as Antun Bauer and Bože Težak freely developed a set of museological principles geared towards democratizing museum spaces into truly *public* institutions that served the interests and needs of the modern urban citizen. These practices continued throughout the socialist era, whether in the development of locally-oriented and community-based Native Place Museums, or the works of Tomislav Šola and Ivo Maroević who pushed Croatian museology to the forefront of international theory and practice. Developed in absence of any federal or republic bodies that dictated their research or practical goals, these theories and practices were never distinctly socialist, nor were they ever devoid of socialist principles and merely framed under the veil of socialist rhetoric. Instead, Croatian museologists developed their ideas organically within the parallel contexts of Yugoslav state socialism and postwar international museology. Precisely because international trends in postwar museology from the late-1960s onward rested upon the common principles of public engagement and the "supremacy of the visitor,"[41] there was little *actual* conflict between Western and Croatian museology. In fact, the main principles of early socialist era museology—namely, public access, community engagement, and the development of easily comprehensible exhibitions—were well ahead of those in Western museology that only implemented these ideas from the early-1970s on. Thus, developments in Croatian museology were rarely the products of an all-pervasive authoritarian state but rather the work of multiple highly engaged and deeply intellectual museum theorists and practitioners whose professional realities were genuinely transnational, continually and easily crossing the East versus West, communist versus capitalist divide.

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[41] See Sharon Macdonald, "Expanding Museum Studies: An Introduction," in *A Companion to Museum Studies*, ed. Sharon Macdonald (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 2.

When it came to Croatian history museums, the story muddies. Landing somewhere between the Party propaganda outlets that were revolutionary and memorial museums, on the one hand, and the largely independent academic discipline of museology on the other, Croatian history museums simultaneously reflected the discursive pressures inherent in a one-party socialist state *and* the relative freedom granted to producers of cultural knowledge in socialist Yugoslavia. Engaging with history from the early-modern period to the early 20th century, Croatian history museums did not face nearly the same pressure or oversight as revolutionary and memorial museums. This resulted in a variety of experiences in Croatian history museums. On one end of the spectrum, the Historical Museum of Croatia in Zagreb and the Museum of Peasant Uprisings in Gornja Stubica were clearly designed to reinforce the mythological foundations of socialist Yugoslavism, even if they operated with relative autonomy. Crafting narratives that expressed the proto-socialist and South Slavic values of the Croatian peasantry and national heroes, these two museums demonstrate the fullest extent to which Croatian history museums directly participated in the nationalization and state building processes of socialist Yugoslavia. At the same time, while I have critiqued exhibitions from each institution, I have also drawn attention to just how *reasonable* this myth making process was. The history of the territory of Croatia contains enough of the necessary building material to logically produce both a distinctly ethno-national story *and* a multi-national, multi-confessional story of the Croatian nation. As such, neither museum was forced to falsify Croatian history at a fundamental level.

On the other end of the spectrum, the experience of local history museums throughout Croatia, namely so-called Native Place Museums, demonstrate the great extent of autonomy granted to cultural producers at the local level. Subject to, at most, some level of supervision by larger regional museums—if not run entirely independently—Native Place Museums were theorized and implemented as genuinely local institutions designed first and foremost to engage with members of the local community, incorporate them into their day to day practices, and preserve the particularities of local heritage. With the exception of a seemingly mandatory section dedicated to the local history of the People's Liberation Struggle, Native Place Museums oriented themselves around generally apolitical—one might even argue, *innocent*—topics such as ethnographic dress, everyday life in the rural countryside, natural history, and significant local figures and events. Thus, Native Place Museums in practice were far removed from the more centralized examples of revolutionary and memorial museums, and in many ways, it is these distinctive institutions that most closely reflect the *actualization* of publicly-oriented Croatian museological theory.

The history of Croatian museology and history museums is therefore a complex one that embodies the complexities of the socialist Yugoslav state itself. As federal governmental powers were increasingly transferred to the republic level, a process that peaked in the 1974 constitution, the national aspirations of many Croats were closer to being realized than ever before. Croatian history museums reflected as much, as they acted mostly independent of federal oversight and were granted considerable room to develop a national program within the relatively loose structures of socialist Yugoslavism. And yet, the national mythology these museums helped produce was ultimately not strong enough to counter the growth of exclusionary and violent ethno-nationalism that resulted the bloodiest conflict on European soil since the Second World War. Similarly difficult to reconcile is the fact that Croatian history museums almost immediately altered their practices to reflect the new brand of Croat ethno-nationalism touted by

Franjo Tuđman. If, in fact, Croatian history museums were products and producers of an organic and genuine brand of Croat Yugoslavism, how is it that they so quickly abandoned it?

It seems the best answer to this question once again lies in the autonomous featuers of Croatian museum practice. When Jasna Tomičić took over as director of the Historical Museum of Croatia in 1986 and shifted its thematic forcus towards an ethno-national brand of Croatian nationalism, for example, there is no evidence that anyone at the republic or federal level objected. Likewise, when Dragoje Lukić and Antun Miletić redesigned the Jasenovac memorial museum to highlight the wartime genocide against Croatia's Serbs in 1988, museum professionals throughout Yugoslavia largely celebrated the exhibition, while the Croatian government itself did not condemn it.[42] Therefore, given the nationalist fervor that swept over Croatia on the eve of war—to say nothing of the war years themselves—it should not come as a surprise that individuals who had once subscribed to the Yugoslav ideal and directed their institutions accordingly would quickly reject Croat Yugoslavism in favor of an exclusionary brand of Croat nationalism. To put it simply, building Tito's Yugoslavia in Croatian history museums was just as organic a process as it was to bury that same vision of Yugoslavia since Croatian museum professionals have always operated within the changing contexts and shifting meanings of Croatian nationalism.

What I hope to have revealed more than anything in this project is the complex nature of cultural politics and actors on the ground. Rather than relying on an assumption of pervasive governmental pressure brought on by the socialist Yugoslav state, I have instead analyzed

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[42] Dušan Kojović from the Museum of the Revolution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, for example, praised the exhibition for drawing attention to the atrocities committed there, while only critiquing the small number of authentic objects on display. See Dušan Kojović, "Stalna postavka Memorijalnog muzeja Koncentracioni logor Jasenovac 1941.-1945" [The Permanent Exhibition of the Memorial Museum for the Concentration Camp Jasenovac 1941-1945], *Informatica Museologica* 19, no. 3-4 (1988): 105-106.

Croatian museums and museum professionals from their own perspectives and experiences in order to measure the extent to which state pressure was a part of their daily reality. Through this approach, I have found abundant evidence of a robust intellectual environment in which museum professionals participated in the growing international field of Museum Studies in the postwar context, theorizing and implementing core ideas of modern museology a full decade and a half before Western European museum professionals. Certainly, the state still mattered. The bulk of Croatian Museum Studies literature, for instance, was published in state sponsored outlets such as the academic journals *Muzeologija* and *Informatica Museologica*, while many Croatian museum professionals received their training at the state-sponsored University of Zagreb. Without state financial support for these sorts of academic endeavors, it is extremely unlikely that Croatia would have become a hub of modern museological theory. And yet, the presence of the state in the day to day function of museum professionals appears remarkably low. Museum professionals who proposed increased public engagement and developed new exhibitions digestible by the average working class citizen posed no threat to the socialist Yugoslav cause; in fact, they directly supported it. And perhaps for this reason more than any other, there was little need for direct state pressure at the level of museological theory since the interests of the socialist Yugoslav state and museum professionals overlapped rather organically.

When it came to the actual day to day functioning of history museums, I have found a spectrum of state involvement rather than a single trend. To put it simply, the Yugoslav state—at either the federal or republic level—intervened or exerted pressure when and where it saw fit, which as it turns out, was not all that often. The professionals who ran revolutionary and memorial museums were generally keen to toe the Party line when it came to contemporary twentieth century history. This naturally kept the need for state intervention quite low. Had there been more direct attempts to challenge the predominant socialist Yugoslav narrative of the 20th century, then I would have likely found a paper trail of when state authorities intervened. Rather, these museums operated in unison with socialist Yugoslav ideology in a virtually uninterrupted manner from their inception in the early 1950s to the late 1980s. When the state did deem it necessary or valuable to directly engage in a museum project, such as it did in the case of the Museum of the Peasant Uprisings in Gornja Stubica, a much clearer picture of federal and republic pressure to determine the form and function of history museums emerges. More commonly, however, the evidence suggests a general trend of state indifference towards everyday functioning and content of most history museums throughout Croatia so long as their local histories posed no threat the socialist Yugoslav idea. What therefore emerges from this spectrum of state pressure and intervention is a mosaic of Croatian history museums ranging from Party-line museums to genuinely local museums that, taken as a whole, embody the complexities of the Yugoslav state itself.

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