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Conclusion
Competing claims to national identity

In a seminal work published in 1999, Misha Glenny attempted to plot the Balkan history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Glenny noted that in the 1830s Croatian nationalism began an oscillation between pan-Slavic, pro-Austrian and anti-Serb orientations. He concluded that this cleavage was the result of 'the multiple cultural and civilisational influences that had influenced the Croats over many centuries [which was] inevitably reflected in Croatian political nationalism'.[1] Glenny thus offered an instrumental account of Croatian national identity, agreeing with Gellner that nationalism creates nations where none exist.[2] He interpreted Croatian national identity as the product of an aggressive nationalism informed by the political interests of social elites. Many other writers, including Ivo Banac, Marcus Tanner and Mirjana Gross, agreed with Glenny about this.

The other prominent approach to Croatian national identity was unmodified primordialism. The encyclopedic work of Francis Eterovich and Christopher Spalatin, the nationalist histories of Ivo Perić and Simon Vladovich, and the cultural histories of Eduard Kale all traced an unbroken line of Croatian history into antiquity.[3] Here, instrumentalist arguments are inverted: nationalist movements are understood as reflecting national identity rather than vice-versa. Moreover, they use a broader understanding of the nation whereby most instances of group activity can provide evidence of the existence of a prior national or ethnic identity. Furthermore, the meaning of the identity signified by the word 'Croat' was thought to be continuous and essentially unchanging.

The 'great divide' in nationalism studies is therefore reproduced in studies about Croatia. Attempts to understand Croatian national identity have tended to articulate both modernism and primordialism in their most polemic forms. Those who consider Croatian national identity from a modernist perspective reproduce that approach in its most instrumental form. For example, David Campbell suggested that we should treat issues of nationalism and national

identity 'as questions of history violently deployed in the present for contemporary political goals'.[4] Campbell understood contemporary Croatian national identity as a tool deployed by the HDZ to secure particular political goals. This approach unwittingly colludes with one of the central myths of Franjoism: the idea that Tuđman/HDZ and the Croatian nation were one and the same. To argue that Croatian national identity was produced by political manipulation is to reject the possibility of alternative understandings and practices of national identity. It is to accept the Franjoist claim that the Croatian nation was a homogenous community of people that shared the President's beliefs.

On the other side of the 'great divide', primordialism was reproduced in its most basic guise. For primordialists, Croats were united through history by a shared statehood that dated back to the medieval kingdom. Simon Vladovich's historical narrative began by explaining the 'Pre-Croat history' of the 'Croatian lands' and then went on to show how the territory became 'Croatianised' in antiquity before revealing how that genealogy was maintained up to the present day. These writers insisted that it is possible to trace a continuous line of history between contemporary and ancient Croatia. For them, Croatian nationalism in the 1990s had much in common with earlier nationalist movements. This view, however, depends on a particular interpretation of history. The nationalist movement in the nineteenth century and subsequent Illyrian movement were mostly cultural and ecumenical movements, while the heart of Croatian politics was in its relations with Austria and Hungary. The agreements of 1526 and 1102 were crucial to supporting the line of continuity between past and present that was central to the historical statehood thesis. This view was reflected in the preamble to the new state's constitution, which traced a continuous line of Croatian nation-statehood from the medieval kingdoms to the present day. According to David McCrone, '[t]he time sequences are highlighted because they suggest a seamless continuity, even at those historical conjunctures which would seem to offer embarrassment, such as the fascist regime of the 1940s'.[5] Furthermore, the meaning of Croatian identity was taken to be unproblematic. There was little consideration of regional identity, for instance. The primordialist writers failed to note that until relatively recently there were Croats, Slavonians, Istrians and Dalmatians, with the Croats only being those who lived in the *Kajkavian* dialect area around Zagreb.

Rather than seeing it as either modern or ancient, either continuous or discontinuous, either homogenous or fragmented, the modern nation should be conceptualised as a social formation that operates at different levels of abstraction. National identity is framed in abstract terms, though in uniting a community of strangers the nation also has resonance in the *locale*. This resonance depends on the material aspects of the nation, principally the perpetuation of kinship-like ties in social practice. My argument is not that one level is more important than others but rather that national identity depends upon the interaction and interdependence of each level of abstraction (abstract frames, political entrepreneurs and social practice).

Modernist and primordialist approaches to national identity are incompatible and general in their outlook. They reduce complex processes of social formation to a few 'salient' factors. A modernist account of the formation of Croatian national identity can be rejected because national sentiments were evident a long time before industrialisation and modernisation. Moreover, prior to 1990 (with the exception of 1941–45) the state tended to be mobilised against the idea of Croatian national identity rather than fostering it in the way envisaged by Gellner, Hobsbawm and others. On the other hand, primordialism fails to account for regional diversity and assumes that expressions of national identity had comparable political salience and material resonance over time. The five themes discussed below offer an alternative way of thinking about national identity.

First, they show the relationship between abstract and material manifestations of national identity. Different groups offer competing definitions of national identity often to legitimise different political programmes. This is a two-way process, however. Not only is there a 'top-down' process of political entrepreneurs using abstract frames in order to legitimise particular acts by recourse to notions of common identity and purpose, there is also a 'bottom-up' process whereby interpretations of national identity that emerge from social practice come to inform the abstract frames themselves. The failure to appreciate this two-way process can be seen in primordialism's inability to account for radically different conceptions of what being Croatian means and modernism's inability to explain why the identity politics endorsed by various governments and imperial rulers were all ultimately rejected.

Second, these five themes show that the nation can have many different meanings in different times and places. Moreover, invocations of national identity need not signify the same thing. Ljudevit Gaj's 'Croatia' was very different from that of Ante Starčević. More recently, Franjo Tuđman's conception of what Croatian national identity meant was very different to that of many opposition parties and the dissident intellectuals. This was seen, for instance, in the debate about the relationship between Bosnian Croats and Croatia proper.

Finally, these five themes draw our attention to the importance of social practice. Although Anthony Smith recognised the significance of the subjective beliefs that underpin national identity, neither modernism nor primordialism adequately account for the importance of belief and memory in framing understandings of national identity. The latter in particular find it difficult to explain how, as a recent social construction, national identity came to take such a hold on the political imagination. Sometimes a state-sponsored understanding of national identity was not believed by sections of the target group because the understanding of the national experience being put forward was at variance with dominant understandings within that group. This disjuncture tended to result in either reinterpretations of national identity or the formulation of alternative transnational, non-national or regional identities.

Franjoism as a nationalising nationalism

Throughout the 1990s the HDZ government attempted to enforce a Franjoist understanding of Croatian national identity. It propagated what Rogers Brubaker labelled 'nationalising nationalism'. For Brubaker, 'nationalising nationalisms involve claims made in the name of a "core nation" or nationality defined in ethnocultural terms, and sharply distinguished from the citizenry as a whole. The core nation is understood as the legitimate 'owner' of the state, which is conceived as the state *of* and *for* the core nation.'[6] The HDZ departed from Brubaker's understanding of 'nationalising nationalism' inasmuch as it believed that the citizenry and the nation were one and the same. Nevertheless, it defined the Croatian state as the state of the Croatian nation and acted accordingly. In the economic field, Franjoism produced a set of policies that emphasised differences between Croatia's 'Western' economic traditions and 'Balkan'-style economies. A by-product of this, however, was the endemic corruption encapsulated by 'sweetheart loans'. Franjoism was most successful in the field of education because the state controlled virtually all the resources in that area. It was able to control carefully what was taught, who did the teaching and what resources they used. Thus the Franjoist message was passed on to Croatia's youth through the education system. Similarly, the HDZ was able to enforce its ideas about Croatian language by making its own form of language the language of the state and the media.

Stuart Hall argued that control of the past acts as a powerful source of legitimacy for those who attempt to create a new future for a particular group.[7] Through Franjoism, the abstract frames of the historical statehood thesis were reinterpreted through historical 'truths', images, symbols and rituals. However, Stuart Hall was wrong to imply that there is only one 'narrative' of national identity and history. Moreover, the instrumentalist assumption that the 'invented traditions' produced by Franjoism had an overwhelming resonance is also questionable. Articulating the past and co-opting contemporary social institutions is not always enough to produce the national identities and hoped-for political legitimisation. Perhaps the main reason for this is the pervasiveness of memory. It is well worth joining Tom Nairn in citing Conor Cruise O'Brien on this point:

> There is for all of us a twilit zone of time, stretching back for a generation or two before we were born, which never quite belongs to the rest of history. Our elders have talked their memories into our memories until we come to possess some sense of a continuity exceeding and traversing our own individual being. The degree in which we possess that sense of continuity, and the form it takes – national, religious or social – depends on our own imagination and on the personality, opinions and garrulity of our elder relatives. Children if they are imaginative have the power of incorporating into their own lives a significant span of time before their individual births.[8]

The perpetuation of individual memory in 1990s Croatia meant that the sharp break from self-management socialism to nationalist conservatism was disingenuous to many. The Franjoist insistence that Yugoslavia impoverished Croatia did not fit with many people's perception of economic realities in the 1980s and 1990s. The argument that *Dinamo* was a communist and Serbian name did not fit with Bad Blue Boys who could remember when *Dinamo* represented Croatia and waving a *Dinamo* flag was a synonym for flying the Croatian flag. The insistence that people must speak one way or another to be proper Croats also floundered when people were required to change the way they spoke. Issues of belief and memory have therefore been present throughout the last three chapters. There was a stark disjuncture between Franjoist claims and experiences of social practice. On the one hand, the state utilised mechanisms of normalisation to enforce its vision of national identity. However, the externalised imaginings of the nation (which provided the focus for Chapters 3 and 4) gain their resonance through processes of internalisation in social practice. Thus 'official nationalisms' cohabit 'with alternative senses of community and structures of feeling'.[9] In many instances in the 1990s, the national culture articulated by the HDZ and the popular culture experienced in the urban centres of Croatia were greatly at odds.

In its response to these challenges, Franjoism became disparate and confused. Despite all the evidence of their patriotism and their sacrifices during the 'Homeland War' (the Croatian name for the Yugoslav wars of succession, 1991–95), the Bad Blue Boys were derided as 'Yugo-nostalgics' and agents of foreign governments by the government. The Church leadership constantly refused to identify itself with the interests of one nation and began to use the moral authority ascribed to it by Tuđman to openly attack the HDZ. Because of the position that Franjoism awarded the Church, the HDZ was unable to counter the Church's accusations.

Re-traditionalisation and ruralisation

In the late 1980s Josip Županov introduced the concept of 're-traditionalisation'. The concept traces the emergence of a neo-conservative revolution. This revolution was predicated on the *locale* and sought to reorder human relationships at the kinship or face-to-face level. It attempted to replicate 'old' societal traditions that had been subjugated by communism. According to Županov, sections of Croatian society believed that 're-traditionalisation' was made necessary by the failure of the Yugoslav authorities to provide for the economic, social and spiritual needs of the people. Although it became clear that 'brotherhood-and-unity' and self-management socialism had failed, there was a distinct lack of credible alternatives and thus a tendency towards retrospection.

Writers such as Branka Baranović and organisations such as the OSI insisted that education reform was driven by the idea of 're-traditionalisation'. It was a

reaction to modernity and an attempt to root Croatian national identity in the pre-modern. Moreover, re-traditionalisation was directly related to Tuđman's interpretation of the historical statehood thesis. It was reflected particularly well in the conservative and Catholic women's groups that sprung up throughout Croatia shortly after the collapse of communism. The re-traditionalisation revolution also fed into the fascist Party of Rights (HSP) programme in the 1990s. Dobroslav Paraga, leader of the HSP, accused Tuđman of being a weak leader and a bad Croat because of his former links with the League of Communists: traditional Croats, we were told, never accepted communism or Yugoslavism.

Another concept used by liberal intellectuals to describe social changes in 1990s Croatia was 'ruralisation'.[10] Ognjen Čaldarović argued that this was a process that turned Croatia's urban centres into villages: parochial, anti-modern and extremist.[11] There was, he argued, a physical ruralisation of the cities. During the war there was migration from villages into cities and in particular a large migration of Bosnian Croats into Zagreb and Split. This migration produced social movements that sought to alter urban-cosmopolitan conceptions of national identity within Croatia's metropolitan centres. The presence of larger numbers of rural Croats in urban centres tended to exacerbate extreme ethnic nationalism. Rural Croats tended to support the nationalist agendas of the HDZ, HSP and conservative Catholic groups.

Ruralisation provoked responses in the urban centres, such as the Bad Blue Boys phenomena in Zagreb. According to Čaldarović, at the heart of the Bad Blue Boys' opposition to the regime was a desire to preserve Zagreb's regional identity from what they saw as a challenge from rural migrants. This, Čaldarović argued, meant attempting to preserve a liberal, European, cosmopolitan way of life in the face of the re-traditionalising conservatism of rurality. Indeed, Tom Nairn suggested that the Titoist project attempted to 'impose the values of the city' on South Slavic culture.[12] Ruralisation and re-traditionalisation therefore represented a rejection of Titoist urbanisation. They juxtaposed themselves to urban cosmopolitanism as a 'real' Croatian way of life juxtaposing itself against a way of life 'invented' by Tito's communism. The urban youth who rejected this ruralised form of national identity were portrayed as anything from degenerates and delinquents to 'Yugo-nostalgics'. The urban–rural divide was a central feature in differing accounts of Croatian national identity. There was an important cleavage, for instance, between the urban Church leadership who refused to embrace the HDZ and the rural clergy who openly supported the HDZ. The politics of ruralisation also crept into the language question with the attempt to ban the use of foreign shop names in cities.

The concepts of re-traditionalisation and ruralisation offer useful insights into the contests about the meaning of Croatian national identity in the 1990s. On the one hand they provide a rationale for Franjoist rhetoric and the policies it spawned, linked, as they were, to Tuđman's interpretation of the historical statehood thesis. However, they also show that the cleavages ran beyond the

usually cited conflicts between the HDZ and the generally more liberal opposition. There were also rural–urban divides in national identity. This cleavage was most acutely felt in relation to the Bosnian Croats, whose presence in Croatia's urban centres and policy elites aroused much dislike and suspicion.

Diverse sources of opposition

Opposition to Franjoism occurred in every place where there was a disjuncture between the Franjoist view of Croatian national identity and conceptions of identity that were internalised through social practice. The first and most obvious disjunctures were the competing national narratives articulated by political parties and dissident intellectuals. Opposition parties attacked Franjoism from a variety of angles: rightist and neo-fascist, liberal, centrist and socialist. The neo-fascists, for instance, accused the HDZ of misreading the true nature of Croatian national identity. The bulk of organised opposition to Franjoism, however, emerged from socialist and liberal political parties. It tended to accept the historical statehood thesis that formed the core of the Franjoist narrative. However, it used the frames the thesis provided to highlight the ways that Croatian national identity was historically linked with Central Europe. It accused Tuđman of Balkanising Croatia and called upon Croats to reclaim their true Central European identity and vote for liberal democratic change.

The most radical public challenges to the Franjoist understanding of national identity in the 1990s came from dissident intellectuals. Banac argued that in trying to be all things to all Croats, Franjoism failed to achieve its central goal and instead became distorted and incoherent.[13] He offered a counter-interpretation of the historical statehood thesis and suggested that concepts such as citizenship and diversity be brought to the fore. He accused Franjoism of offering a one-sided and decidedly limited account of Croatian political traditions.

The previous two chapters identified several areas in which Franjoism failed to have its narrative internalised in social practice. The opposition that this spawned came from an unlikely and diverse variety of social practices. The case that stood out was that of the Bad Blue Boys. Ardent nationalists, skinheads, volunteers for the Croatian army, the Bad Blue Boys nevertheless helped turn the national capital into an opposition power-base. Rejection of Franjoist language policies was widespread. What was described as a new form of 'super-Croatian' language, complete with neologisms and words not used since 1918, was imposed on schools, bureaucracies and the media. This was reinforced with the message that all good Croats should speak as the President did. Only a few actually changed the way they spoke, although most Croats did begin to label their language 'Croatian'. Moreover, the school curriculum was challenged by parents and organisations such as the OSI who wished to see a more balanced and less atavistic approach to the teaching of history and literature.

The groups and individuals that rejected Franjoism were very diverse. Generally speaking there were four types. First, those that rejected Franjoism on political grounds. These were generally either socialists or liberals who disputed the centrality of nationalism or neo-fascists who believed that Franjoism represented a weak form of Croatian nationalism. Second, those who felt that they had been adversely affected by an aspect of Franjoism. The main examples here are the Bad Blue Boys and the Istrians. Third, those individuals who questioned Franjoism on intellectual grounds. Finally, those individuals who silently re-interpreted their own national identity through social practice and the work they did, the language they spoke, the books they read and the company they kept.

Diverse grounds for opposition

The grounds for opposition were as diffuse as the sources. There were three central themes upon which opposition to Franjoism was based. First, the disjuncture between the rhetoric of Franjoism and experiences of social practice. Second, the internal incoherence of Franjoism itself. This meant that the third theme, the national identity propagated by Tuđman and the HDZ, was perceived by many to be exclusionary rather than inclusive.

There was often a disjuncture between what Franjoism said being Croatian was how and how many people experienced being Croatian in social practice. For instance, according to the state, in 1995 'the fundamental objectives of the economy and policy of transition consists in re-establishing the ties with some essential historical and civilisational trends that were broken by socialism'.[14] For many Croats, if the late 1990s economy reflected the 'civilisational and historical' Croatian economic tradition, Yugoslav economics seemed preferable. For many people, having a Croatian nation-state meant unemployment and a fall in living standards. For them, the economic habits learnt under a communist regime had to be retained. Such disjunctures permeated all six areas of social practice examined in Chapters 5 and 6.

The second key problem with Franjoism was its internal incoherence. By the time of his death, Tuđman was widely seen as an erratic authoritarian. There appeared to be little coherence to what he said or did. He decided that the EU was plotting to re-establish Yugoslavia and to force Croatia into another Balkan union. After the end of the war many critics had trouble distinguishing Tuđman's method of rule from that of Tito. Without a war to wage and a supreme national emergency to guard against, Franjoism became incoherent. Some observers suggested that this was because the Tuđman/HDZ project only had one aim: the achievement and preservation of Croatian sovereignty. Once this had been achieved, it became difficult to know precisely what Franjoism meant. As if to provide answers, Tuđman became more conservative, more radically 'Franjoist' and more dogmatic.

Finally, Franjoism began to exclude more and more people as the 1990s

wore on. Many of Tuđman's former constituents were alienated. Having been told that Croatia would begin to develop 'normal' politics after the war, many HDZ supporters found that nothing changed and that the President continued to wield the emergency powers he had given himself during the war. This prompted a widespread re-evaluation of national identity and a wholesale rejection of the Franjoist narrative, leading to the heavy defeats endured by the HDZ in the parliamentary and presidential elections of January 2000.

Overlapping and competing national identities

As the President of all Croats, Tuđman saw a people in his own mould. The Franjoist project attempted to give abstract ideas of national identity a meaning at less abstract levels. It failed because of the rhetorical and practical distance between the Franjoist abstraction and popular perceptions of identity that were embedded in social practice. Evidence of this contradiction was hidden during a war that had an, albeit temporary, homogenising effect on national identity. However, in post-war Croatia the contradictions of national identity were apparent everywhere.

The most obvious articulation of overlapping identity was the multi-national Istrian regional identity. Simultaneously, an Istrian could be Croatian, Italian and Slovenian. Istrian 'commonsense' dictated that there was no contradiction in this identity. Istrians moulded a distinct identity out of ambiguity. As a result, they had their patriotic credentials brought into question by being unfavourably compared to the Bosnian Croats, for example.

The issue of overlapping identities was also evident in the study of the Roman Catholic Church. Franjoism identified Croatia as the *antemurale christianitatis.* According to the HDZ, Croatia was defined by its association with the Roman Catholic Church. For centuries Croatia stood as the bulwark against Islamic and Orthodox Christian expansion into Western Europe. Thus, when Croatia went to war in 1991, 'the cross of Christ [stood] next to the Croatian flag'.[15] However, the Catholic Church views itself as a multinational and global institution. It would have been incongruous for the Vatican and the Church hierarchy in Croatia to insist that the Croatian nation was special and should be placed at the heart of the political programme at the expense of Bosnian and Serbian Catholics. For Cardinal Kuharić, the primary form of identity was religious faith. This meant that whereas Tuđman was only the President of all Croats, Kuharić had a responsibility to all Catholics in his flock, regardless of their nationality. Thus there was a contradiction at the intersection of religious identity and national identity as defined by Franjoism.

Nations often have different stories to tell.[16] There are many competing accounts of national identity that emerge from different political and intellectual perspectives and in the daily practices of national identity. National identity is therefore a site of political contestation. Identities overlap with each

other, with some being more important than others at different times. For example, if two individuals are watching a Croatian football league match between the two largest clubs in Croatia, the most important aspect of their identity may be whether they are from Split, Zagreb, or neither. If those same individuals are listening to a sermon in a Church, the most important question may be whether they adhere to the Catholicism of the Vatican and Zagreb hierarchy or whether they adhere to clericalist nationalism. When these two individuals go shopping, their behaviour and habits may be differentiated by the way that privatisation impacts upon them or whether or not one of them was a member of the HDZ or had an account with a collapsed bank. Each of these three scenarios can tell us something about the individual's national identity but the story may be overlapping and contradictory. For example, the first individual may have been a well-to-do member of the HDZ. However, he/she may have been a devout Catholic that followed the papal line on issues of human rights and forgiveness. That same person may be from Split, speak a regional dialect, and feel a deep sense of Dalmatian identity that often comes into conflict with the Franjoist view of national identity. Such are the conflicts of national identity within just one individual in only three areas of social life: football, faith and shopping.

Questioning the nation

Primordialism and modernism tend to portray the nation as a completed project. The nation as revealed here is somewhat different. Here, national identity is seen as an on-going project, or rather the product of many simultaneous on-going projects. Not only do specific national identities change through time, national identity is itself inconsistent. Most foreign commentators assumed that Croatian national identity was constructed by Franjoism in the 1990s. Most viewed it as a recent construction that had devastating consequences on the region. However, although nations are constituted at the most abstract level, they derive their salience by being embedded in social practice. By itself, the Franjoist claim that Croatia did not relinquish sovereignty to the Hungarians in 1102 was hardly likely to provoke action 890 years later. Indeed, standing by themselves, the claims made in the historical statehood thesis have no meaning in the contemporary context. The important question is how these ideas become salient and how they invoke people to act in certain ways. Both primordialism and modernism offer unsatisfactory answers to this question because they overlook the fact that many different social groups and institutions try to give salience to a particular view of national identity in order to invoke action in support of (or against) a particular political programme. There is therefore an on-going political struggle between different conceptions of national identity. This struggle draws not only on the bureaucratic power of the state but also on interpretations of cultural artefacts and ethnic legacies, non-state institutions

that might also cross national boundaries, class and economic status, and different experiences of place. Seeing national identity in this way makes it incongruous to view it as static and homogenous, or an end-result of prior social formations. Instead, it must be seen as on-going and fluctuating. Sometimes, between 1991 and 1993 for instance, the competition to provide national identity with meaning appeared to have been resolved. During this period it seemed possible to discern Croatian national identity. It was a Franjoist, conservative and Catholic identity that valourised particular periods of history and vilified sections of society. However, even when the internal Franjoist project was assisted by war and a constant threat to physical security, many people opposed this vision of national identity. Urban liberals and Istrians did not view their national identity in this way. For them, being Croatian had more to do with having a western European world view informed by interconnectedness with Italy and Austria than with a direct lineage to ancient kings.

Viewing national identity as an on-going project avoids teleological and tautological explanations. As well as being a product of competition between different institutions and groups, national identity is itself in constant competition with other forms of collective and individual consciousness. National identity is not always the most salient form of identity, even when the state is using all its power to pioneer a nationalising crusade. At the individual level, personal experience shapes identity. For example, an identity politics based on not being Serbian has little resonance if an individual happens to be married to a Serb or to have a Serbian work colleague. At another level, ideas about national identity constantly compete with other ideas and social institutions. This means that for some people, in some times and places, national identity may hold less resonance than other identities. At a macro level, this became apparent after 1995 where the immediacy of the threat to physical security receded and other – non-national – interests came to the fore of the political agenda. Quite rapidly, the symbols of millennial statehood used by Tuðman became symbols of derision. By 2000 Franjoist national identity had lost its ability to dictate people's political preferences. Predominant understandings of national identity began to emphasise economic, social and international issues, such as the desire to integrate into Western Europe.

The nation is embedded within social practice. While most primordialist and modernist writers agree with this view, they do not allow it to drive their analysis. Primodialists emphasise the importance of individual subjectivity and locate it in the transition from *ethnie* to nation. However, they do not extrapolate from this the idea that the nation can have as many meanings as there are subjects, nor do they address the contest between different accounts of national identity. Modernists reveal how such national meanings were constructed in modernity but fail to account for how those accounts of national identity come to have such resonance with subjects, to the extent that they became the core organisational principle for many modern societies while on other occasions failing to have such resonance. Analysis of national identity construction in the

modern era needs to focus on the contexts in which it takes place. National identity is not constructed on a *tabula rasa* and neither is its construction a one-way process.

There are many other forms of collective identity that operate somewhere between the individual and the nation. Catholics or Istrians also have a collective consciousness and this consciousness has a relationship with both individual subjectivity and national identity. While both these forms of collective consciousness operated within ideas of Croatian national identity they also reached out beyond national identity – Catholicism to the global Catholic Church and Istrians to their Italian and Slovene neighbours. Conceptions of national identity, therefore, are deeply embedded within a diverse array of social settings and individual and collective consciousness.

What, then, do the five themes discerned through the studies on Croatian national identity in the 1990s tell us about national identity in general? Any study that uses Paul James' ontology of 'abstract communities' must see the nation in two ways: ubiquitous and complex. National identity is a form of collective consciousness through which an individual comes to identify with a disembodied group. It is therefore constituted by two relationships. On the one hand, the disembodied group has to be identified. The individual has to know what it is that it is attached to. It is this relationship that primordialism and modernism tend to focus on. This is a relationship that locates the individual within a nation. On the other hand, however, it is important to ask how the nation becomes embodied in the individual through social practice. Traditional approaches tend to assume that the latter will always accompany the former in a way that is unproblematic. However, there is not always close collaboration between the two relationships. The process of embodiment often alters understandings of national identity, creating disputes about both its meaning and salience.

A new way of thinking about national identity is proposed here. This approach draws upon both primordialist and modernist thought but moves beyond them by viewing nation formation as an on-going project. From primordialism, the approach adopted here views national identity as deriving partly from subjective understandings of prior forms of identity and social formation. From modernism, we must appreciate the role of 'nationalising nationalism' and the significance of the socio-political and economic changes that accompanied nation formation. This points the study of nations and nationalism towards an analysis of the on-going competition between different accounts of national identity, resistance to those accounts and to the central role of national identity itself. This is the sort of 'bottom-up' analysis called for but not practised by Eric Hobsbawm. It views nation formation as neither natural, inevitable or complete. Instead, nation formation is an on-going process in which the salience of national identity ebbs and flows with the different meanings given to the nation and the social practices it induces.

Croatian national identity was an indeterminate site of political conflict. The HDZ government failed to inculcate its own vision of national identity

among the 'national body', despite being able to mobilise the full bureaucratic power of the state and despite the undoubted homogenising effect of the 1991–95 war. Alternative accounts of national identity flourished. This exposes the weaknesses of primordialist and modernist accounts of national identity and highlights two central points. The first is the two-way relationship between abstract frames, social practices and experiences of national identity. This relationship is further complicated by the interaction of national identity with other forms of collective identity such as regional or religious identity, which transcend state borders. The second is the idea that invocations of national identity do not always invoke the same thing. Croatian national identity may mean different things even in the same time and place. Calling it an ancient artefact or a recent construction is unhelpful because such accounts do not enable us to interpret the meaning and salience of national identity in a given time or place. National identity became so resonant in 1990s Croatia because it was embedded in social practice. Opposition to Franjoism sprang up wherever there was a disjuncture between abstract ideas of national identity and the actual experiences of national identity. Because of their 'top-down' focus, problems of memory and belief do not figure largely in primordialism and modernist accounts, which tend, as a result, to view national identities as fixed and stable.

There is a need for new approaches to national identity that appreciate its complexity and ubiquity and reject the traditional general theories that characterised the 'great divide'. Such approaches should take into account the problems that nationalists are not always believed by their constituents, that different groups within the nation may have different ideas about what the nation means and that these ideas may emerge from multinational collectivities such as the Catholic Church. New approaches should also take heed of Paul James' view that national identity is constituted at an intersection of different layers of abstraction, as failure to do so will continue to limit the explanatory power of 'nationalism studies'.

Notes

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2 E. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), pp. 48–9.
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4 D. Campbell, *National Deconstruction: Violence, Identity and Justice in Bosnia* (London: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), p. 86.
5 D. McCrone, *The Sociology of Nationalism* (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 50.
6 R. Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationalism and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 5.
7 S. Hall, 'Ethnicity: identity and difference', in G. Eley and R. G. Suny (eds), *Becoming National: A Reader* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 339–49.
8 T. Nairn, *Faces of Nationalism: Janus Revisited* (London: Verso, 1997), p. 15.

9   S. Radcliffe and S. Westwood, *Remaking the Nation: Place, Identity and Politics in Latin America* (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 14–15.
10 See J. Allcock, *Explaining Yugoslavia* (London: C. Hurst and Co., 2000).
11 Author's interview with Ognjen Čaldarović, Professor of Sociology at the University of Zagreb, 14 September 1999.
12 Nairn, *Faces of Nationalism*, p. 108.
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