

ЛИЧНОСТ У САВРЕМЕНОМ СВЕТУ
ИДЕНТИТЕТ, ХЕТЕРОНОМИЈА И НАСИЉЕ
СЛУЧАЈ
КОСОВО И МЕТОХИЈА

ЛИЧНОСТ

у савременом свету

ИДЕНТИТЕТ, ХЕТЕРОНОМИЈА И НАСИЉЕ

СЛУЧАЈ

КОСОВО И МЕТОХИЈА



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ANTE PAVELIĆ AS A TYRANNICAL ARCHETYPE: PERSONALITY, HETERONOMY, AND THE MECHANISMS OF IDEOLOGICAL VIOLENCE***

Abstract: The focus of this paper was to analyze the personality of Ante Pavelić as a perfect example of a tyrant in the context of modern political history. The Author attempts to elaborate on the political motivation of Ante Pavelić, his origins, pathological personality, and his characteristics as a ruler over the Independent State of Croatia. Pavelić can be inferred to be both a product and the leader of a radically hierarchical and exclusionary ideological structure in which the individual loses all moral autonomy in favour of total submission to the ruling ideology. Through drawing parallels in speeches between Pavelić and Hitler the paper will highlight the mechanisms of ideological violence, such as the dehumanization of the “Other”, the creation of mass hysteria, and the institutionalization of fear. In conclusion, Pavelić was used as a case study of a 20th century tyrant and to serve as a warning of the ever-present dangers of heteronomous behaviour during times of ideological mobilisation.

Keywords: Ante Pavelić, Independent State of Croatia, Adolf Hitler, World War II, Holocaust.

INTRODUCTION

The figure of Ante Pavelić occupies a distinct and unsettling position in the history of twentieth-century European authoritarianism. For he was not merely the political leader of the Independent State of Croatia (Nezavisna Država

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Hrvatska – NDH in Croatian), but an ideological architect of a regime defined by radical violence, ethnic extermination, and sacralized nationalism (Griffin 1993: 176–177). Unlike Adolf Hitler, whose authority was anchored in the imperial and economic might of Germany, Pavelić operated within the structural confines of a state created and sustained by Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. It is precisely in this dissonance between ideological absolutism and political heteronomy that Pavelić emerges as a tyrannical archetype *sui generis*: a figure whose authority was at once derivative and transcendental, dependent yet messianic.

This study proposes to analyze Pavelić as a rhetorical and political construct within a broader fascist constellation. By comparing his public speeches and proclamations with those of Adolf Hitler, the paper seeks to identify common ideological motifs and divergences in style, tone, and symbolic logic. Special attention is given to themes deemed important to their regimes such as anti-communism, racial and religious purity, political violence as regenerative force, the cult of leadership, and the instrumentalization of women, family, and youth in service of a totalizing national identity (Yeomans 2013:196).

More than a study in comparative fascism, this paper attempts to locate the ways in which ideology becomes incarnate in speech: how language ceases to be descriptive and becomes performative and how it legitimizes, sanctifies, and ultimately commands violence. Pavelić's speeches, often overshadowed by the grand rhetoric of his more powerful allies, nonetheless reveal a complex interplay between mimicry and invention, between borrowed forms and local adaptations. Through a close reading of these texts, the aim is not only to map ideological affinities but to interrogate the deeper structures of tyranny itself as well as its rituals, its emotional registers, and its reliance on narrative to convert history into destiny.

This paper operates on the core hypothesis that Ante Pavelić consciously modeled his public image, rhetorical strategy, and ideological program on that of Adolf Hitler. While local specificities including: religious tradition, geopolitical vulnerability, and historical grievances shaped the expression of Ustaša ideology, Pavelić's speeches reveal striking formal and thematic parallels to Hitler's oratory: the personalization of state authority, the invocation of existential enemies, the mythic framing of national rebirth through sacrifice, and the aestheticization of violence as redemptive act. It is further hypothesized that these similarities were not coincidental, but rather reflect a deliberate emulation of Nazi forms, refracted through the lens of Croatian political Catholicism and ultranationalism. The comparison thus seeks to determine not merely influence, but structural mimicry as a mechanism of ideological legitimation.

Words, they say, can kill. Both mentally and sometimes even physically. When we discuss dictators and their ideological and political paths, we must carefully and thoroughly examine the wording of their speeches or articles. Not only is the wording significant. In the case of speeches, the intonation and music of the speech also have significance regarding the dictator's intention. This is, of course, in addition to the vocabulary, the use of specific terms

at the expense of others, and other essential elements. In this lecture, we will examine the speeches of NDH leader Ante Pavelić, comparing them to those of his great inspirator, Adolf Hitler. An impressive collection of speeches by the heads of the Nazi German government were conserved, and at the same time there are quite a few recordings of the speeches and articles of the Croatian Ustaša dictator, Ante Pavelić.

Listening to the speeches of these dictators immediately reveals a world of violent, aggressive, extreme, unprecedented statements, the use of explicit or implicit threats, deadly predictions, and a complete lack of self-censorship. The extreme nature, which is partly intended to inflame the audience, to take over their senses, to confuse and silence them intellectually, testifies to the personalities of the speakers and their political inclinations. A thorough study of the texts can reveal the mood, intentions, and thoughts of the dictators, and serve as a key to their personalities and character.

Pavelić also combined harsh militancy in his speeches and articles, and often pursued particularly extreme means of solving problems that the Croatian nation must confront and resolve decisively, without compromise or hesitation. Any alternative path, moderate or gradual, is resolutely rejected. This charismatic figure and his eclectic ideology was in large part the consequence of Pavelić's own possible behavioral pathologies, marginalization and feelings of inadequacy combined with the culturopathy of identity felt by many Croats (Romanenko 9–13). Similar circumstances of Hitler's own psychological profile and the general feeling of the German public led to the creation of Nazism. Albeit one should be wary of wildly throwing actual psychiatric diagnoses, he can be described as a charismatic and messianic figure with destructive and paranoid tendencies (Redlich 1998: 335–336).

THE IDEOLOGY OF ANTE PAVELIĆ: THE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF HIS SPEECHES

Pavelić founded the Ustaše in 1929 as a terrorist organization to destabilize Yugoslavia, orchestrating high-profile acts like the 1934 assassination of King Alexander I and bided his time to return to Croatia as a hero (Matković 2002: 12; Pavlowitch 2008: 1–5). The perfect opportunity arose in 1941, during the Axis invasion of Yugoslavia, when Pavelić proclaimed the Independent State of Croatia even before the formal end of the invasion on the, with Croatia at the time being under control of Germany and Italy (Pavlowitch 2008: 22–23). Skilled at political maneuvering, he built the Ustaše into a formidable force despite its small size, using propaganda and terror tactics (Miljan 2016: 13).

In his speeches, but also in his actions, Pavelić expresses complete identification with the dictator of dictators, Adolf Hitler. He also visits him several times in Berlin, with displays of flattery and blind worship. The worship of the German dictator testifies to Pavelić's taste and preferences as an extreme and cruel ideologue.

“Tell me who your friends are and I will tell you who you are,” so goes the old folk proverb. To understand Pavelić’s character and personality, we examined quotes from his speeches and articles, and the results speak for themselves. A careful comparison was made between the wording of Hitler’s speeches and those of the heads of the National Socialist government, as well as Pavelić’s speeches and messages, and the result indicates a remarkable similarity.

Firstly we will analyze the address Pavelić made right before the formation of the NDH. It was delivered from Italy via radio on the April 5 1941. This speech outlined the Ustaše’s ideological goals, including extreme nationalism, anti-Serb sentiment, and the creation of a “pure” Croatian state. Pavelić declared the NDH would be cleansed of “foreign elements”, a thinly veiled reference to Serbs, Jews, and others deemed undesirable by the Ustaše. He called for loyalty to the regime, praised the Ustaše’s revolutionary struggle, and promised a Croatia rooted in Catholic values and ethnic purity (Pavelić 1941: 5–6). But, unlike Hitler Pavelić didn’t consider Jews as the biggest and most immediate threat to the continued existence of the NDH but Serbs, though they were both exterminated en masse (Yeomans 2013: 15–16; Miljan 2016: 7). This speech contains two most important themes and that is seizing of power and national rebirth through eliminating the foreign element be they ideological or racial.

This reflects the genocidal policies that followed, including massacres and concentration camps like Jasenovac (Yeomans 2013: 18). Such a speech bears a striking resemblance to the ones delivered by Adolf Hitler on March 23 in the Reichstag. In this speech, delivered shortly after the Reichstag Fire, Hitler outlines his program for rebuilding the German nation, focusing on the eradication of Marxism and the establishment of a national community. He emphasizes the need to eliminate “undesirables” to achieve national unity and strength. The most harrowing passage considering the future massacres would be the following one: “To achieve and maintain the future stability of the Reich, its ‘internal enemies’ must be eliminated first, meaning those who would prevent any actual resurgence for the future” (Domarus 2007: 224–228).

The speech reflects Hitler’s commitment to purging German society of perceived threats, paralleling Pavelić’s call to cleanse Croatia of its enemies. Another speech, even more focused on racial enemies, is the one he made in the Berlin Sportplatz on January 30 1942. In this speech, Hitler speaks on the so called prophecy he made on January 30 1939 in which he warned the Jewry of what is to come in the near future. Three years later Hitler shows his utter contempt for Jews and announced their extermination in Europe. He also states that their complete destruction could have been prevented if only England and the international Jewry made peace with him. The following excerpts illustrate this well:

We are fully aware that this war can end either in the extermination of the Aryan peoples or in the disappearance of Jewry from Europe. I said as much before the German Reichstag on September 1, 1939. I wish to avoid making hasty prophecies, but this war will not end as the Jews imagine, namely, in the extermination

of the European-Aryan peoples; instead, the result of this war will be the annihilation of Jewry. For the first time, the old, truly Jewish rule of 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth' will obtain (Domarus 2007: 400–401).

Both Pavelić and Hitler utilized speeches to rally their nations around the ideals of national sovereignty and racial purity. Pavelić's address focuses on the creation of an independent Croatian state aligned with the Axis powers. At the same time, Hitler's speeches emphasize the purification of German society through the elimination of internal enemies and the promotion of racial unity. Despite differences in context and specific targets, the underlying themes of nationalistic fervor and ideological purification are evident in the rhetoric of both leaders.

From this it can be inferred that the principle of Blood and Soil was the cornerstone of both the ideologies of Hitler and Pavelić (Yeomans 2013: 38; Miljan 2016: 15). This principle became the leading and dominant force, decisive and fateful, for every individual in Germany and its occupied countries. It determined the fate of hundreds of thousands of Jews of Germany who, because of the racial laws of Reichsbürgergesetz as a part of the Nuremberg Laws, lost their citizenship and all their rights starting from 15 September, 1935. Later, the blood principle was crucial to the "racial" definition of the millions of Jews in the countries occupied by Nazi Germany (Domarus 2007: 382–383). The Nazi regime's ideology around "blood" was rooted in pseudoscientific racism, eugenics, and romantic nationalism, emphasizing the supposed superiority of the "Aryan" or "Nordic" race. Though Nazism gave significant leeway to Germans who didn't fit the "Nordic" racial ideal as long as they compensated with desirable character traits such as courage, loyalty and honour (Stellrecht 1943: 6).

The concept of "blood" was both literal (biological, tied to race and heredity) and symbolic (representing cultural and spiritual unity). Adolf Hitler argued that "blood mixture" with "inferior" races like Jews, whom they deemed an existential threat, caused the decline of civilizations. To Nazism it wasn't only important to conserve the race on the territory of Germany but to spread the Nordics far and wide. Hitler stated in a private conversation on May 12 1942:

I shall have no peace of mind until I have planted a seed of Nordic blood wherever the population stands in need of regeneration. If at the time of the migrations, while the great racial currents were exercising their influence, our people received so varied a share of attributes, these latter blossomed to their full value only because of the presence of the Nordic racial nucleus (Hitler 2000: 475).

He also stated in *Mein Kampf*: "Blood mixture and the resultant drop in the racial level is the sole cause of the dying out of old cultures" (Hitler 1943: 286). This belief led to policies like the Nuremberg Laws (1935), which included the Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor. This law banned marriages and sexual relations between Jews and "nationals of German

or kindred blood” labeling such acts as *Rassenschande* (“racial defilement” or “blood treason”). Violators faced imprisonment, and Jews could be sent to concentration camps (Domarus 2007: 382–384). Pavelić was clearly inspired by the Nuremberg Laws when creating his own version, even being stricter in its definition of individuals “tainted” by Jewish blood (Mataić 1941: 107–115). At the same time, he reserved the right to bestow the title of honorary Aryan on individuals as he saw fit, usually to enrich and protect his inner circle from persecution (Pavlowitch 2008: 31–32; Yeomans 2013: 14). In an interview for the *Giornale d’Italia* Pavelić claimed that Croats and Serbs were not related whatsoever and that they have more in common with Germans using Croatia’s Nazi policies as proof. To further endear himself to Hitler and to distance the Croats from Serbians and other Slavs Pavelić claimed that the Croats were not of Slavic but Gothic descent and thus Aryan (Vukcević 2012 42–43; Miljan 2016: 17–18).

Another part of the Ustaše ideology copied from the Nazis is the notion of Jewish control over all finances (Domarus 2007: 373). The false and imaginary claim that the Jews control the world economy in general and the German economy in particular, and suck the lifeblood of German society, steal, rob, exploit and deceive because of their inherent personality traits that are unable to be changed, and this claim is repeated in the speeches of the dictators. These traits cannot be improved or altered due to the blood component, which is inherent and unchangeable. The Nazis claimed that Jews controlled global finance and were responsible for Germany’s economic woes, including the hyperinflation of the 1920s and the Great Depression (Hitler 2000: 65–66).

This narrative was built on older antisemitic tropes, notably *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* (a 1903 forgery alleging a Jewish plot for world domination), which was widely circulated in Weimar Germany and cited by Hitler in *Mein Kampf*. He wrote: “The Bolshevization of Germany... is conceived only as a preliminary to the further extension of this Jewish tendency of world conquest” (Hitler 1943: 623).

This scapegoating was effective during the economic instability of the Weimar Republic, where hyperinflation and unemployment fueled resentment. Jews, making up less than 1% of Germany’s population in 1933, were falsely blamed for systemic failures (Griffin 1993: 317–318). One of many Hitler’s speeches that concern this subject is the one made on January 30 in the Reichstag. In this speech, Hitler accused Jews of being parasites on the German nation, turning Germans into “beggars in their own country”. He asserted that the Jews had “nothing of their own, except for ‘political and sanitary diseases’ and claimed that Europe could not achieve peace until the ‘Jewish question’ was resolved. Hitler emphasized the necessity of addressing this issue to prevent a crisis of ‘yet inconceivable proportions’” (Domarus 2007: 397–398).

Here will be cited some of the speeches and messages made by Ante Pavelić in his fight against “Jewish economic domination”. In his guidelines on spreading the Ustaša ideas amongst the bureaucracy on June 30 1941 Pavelić said:

You have companies, shops, you have Jewish companies and Jewish shops. The Jews cannot stay among us, the Croatian people; because all of the reasons known to you and because all of the misdeeds they have done to the Croatian people. Because of that their jobs, their shops cannot stay in their hands but relinquished to the State and the State will delegate the running of such businesses to Croatian sons (Pavelić 1941: 41).

A similar message can be heard in the speech to Osijek workers made on July 19, 1941:

What I can directly promise you is that in the Independent State of Croatia, as long as we are here, the capitalists will no longer exploit the worker. There will be capital, but it will serve the worker. Be sure that the same will happen to those other capitalists, who are not Jews, if they work as Jews in the Croatian state (Pavelić 1941: 59).

The single significant policy point on which Pavelić had a mind of his own was the subject of the relationship between the Church and the State. While Hitler evoked God and used Christianity as a talking point, he did so out of opportunism, for he was privately anti-Christian. During the later years of his reign, there was a gradual cooling in relations between Nazi Germany and Church organisations.

Hitler's relationship with Christianity was ambiguous and opportunistic. In early speeches, particularly during his rise to power, he frequently invoked God and divine providence to garner support from conservatives. However, his private writings and policy directions reveal a disdain for Christianity, especially its Jewish roots and emphasis on mercy, calling it in one conversation "a protest against natural law" and "systematically cultivating human failure" (Hitler 2000: 51). One of Hitler's public statements blending religion and ideology occurs in a speech at the Reichstag, March 23 1933:

The advantages in personnel policy which might result from compromises with atheist organizations do not come close to offsetting the results which would become apparent in the general destruction of basic moral values. The National Government perceives in the two Christian confessions the most important factors for the preservation of our Volkstum. It will respect any contracts concluded between these Churches and the Länder...The Government's concern lies in an honest coexistence between Church and State; the fight against a materialist Weltanschauung and for a genuine Volksgemeinschaft equally serves both the interests of the German nation and the welfare of our Christian faith (Domarus 2007: 279).

On the other hand, Pavelić adopted a different approach, elevating Catholicism as the core of Croatian national identity, aligning it with state ideology and utilizing it as a legitimizing force. Catholicism was not merely tolerated

but was state-affirmed (Griffin 1993: 177; Miljan 2016: 7). The Croatian archbishop Alojzije Stepinac in his letter to the pope from May 18 1943 depicts Croatia as a bulwark defending the West from the Eastern hordes of Orthodox Byzantism (Dedijer 1992: 186, 289, 329–330). Pavelić attempted to acquire legitimacy through reliance on church authority presenting his rule as not only a national but a religious rebirth. For that reason the mass conversions of Serbs, and Jews as well, under duress and threats of death are a grim testimony of the synthesis of religious fanaticism and political repression.

In his speech on the April 5 1941, just before the founding of the NDH, Pavelić says: “The time has come for our liberation, rise to defend your homeland and protect it from its enemies where we will establish freedom in our hose, in the Independent State of Croatia...where only God and the Croatian people will rule” (Pavelić 1941: 5–6). Nonetheless, this alliance was instrumental and cynical as the relations between the Catholic church and NDH were complex. Many Croatian Catholic clergy, including Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac, supported the regime to varying degrees, while the Vatican, maintained an official stance of ambiguity yet helped them covertly (Dedijer 1992: 138; Griffin 1993: 177). Both dictators used Christianity, but with radically different intentions and outcomes: Hitler as a stepping stone to replace it, Pavelić as a scaffolding to fortify his ultranationalist Catholic state.

Religion-wise, both Pavelić and Hitler held Islam in high esteem, considering it a strong, masculine, and practical religion. In one of Pavelić’s speeches dated April 23 1941, to the Muslims of the NDH he says that: “I learnt my first letters in a maktab (Islamic school) along with 30 other children, all of them Muslim except me. Now you will understand why I consider Bosnian Muslims my brothers” (Hitler 2000: 60; Yeomans 2013: 13). There was also a pragmatic reason to accept the Bosnian Muslims and that is to increase their support base as in the NDH with a population of 6.5 milion the Croats barely constituted more than half of the population and thus the 750000 Bosnian Muslims would prove very useful in cementing control as long as they are integrated and perceive themselves as Muslim Croats (Pavlowitch 2008: 31).

For Hitler, violence is not a political aberration but a moral necessity. It purges weakness, eliminates degeneracy, and establishes a racially ordered state. This is evident in his address made on August 27, 1933, at the Niederwald Monument commemorating a battle of the Franco–Prussian War (1870–1871). Here he stated: “Our will has made reality of what had to come about in Germany in order to preserve our Volk from final ruin. Today, those around us are talking about terror in Germany, about violence. That is neither terror nor violence; it is destiny. The whole of Germany is rising up!” (Domarus 2007: 163–164). Also in Pavelić’s ideology, violence is a means of national purification and internal strengthening of the state (Yeomans 2013:317). From the very beginning of the NDH’s existence, the Ustaša movement advocated for and carried out exterminatory violence against Serbs, Jews, and Roma (Miljan 2016: 13, 25). He also mentioned violence as a means of national liberation,

like in his speech on the April 14 1941. Here he said: “We can be sure that our independence is full and complete, thanks to the peoples resilience, and the Ustaša fighting and spilling blood achieved their own Croatian State, with the help of our great friends Hitler and Mussolini”. In an another speech made to one group of freedom fighters, he said on the April 17 1941: “I have made my goal of establishing the Independent State of Croatia taking blood for blood and head for head!” (Pavelić 1941: 7–8).

Another core tenet of both Pavelić’s and Hitler’s ideologies is the personality cult. Pavelić borrowed heavily from Fascist and Nazi models in constructing his own Poglavnik cult, particularly from Hitler’s Führer and Mussolini’s Duce. Ustaša propaganda referred to Pavelić not just as a head of state, but as a redeemer, father, and a prophet predestined to lead Croatia to greatness (Miljan 2016: 13). In a speech made on April 14 1941 he said: “Everyone will work for the Poglavnik and the Poglavnik will work for the people” (Pavelić 1941: 7). It is also apparent in the oath the Ustaše took: “I swear by God almighty and everything which is sacred to me, that I shall follow the Ustaša principles and will submit to its regulations and will unconditionally perform all decrees of Ustaša leadership, that I shall, every secret confined to me keep strictly to myself and never tell anyone anything. I swear that I shall fight within the Ustaša ranks for the achievement of the independent Croatian state and will do everything which the leadership decrees. If I am to violate this oath, I am to be, by the Ustaša regulations, punished by the death sentence. So help me God. Amen” (Jareb 2007: 122–123).

This is all very similar to Hitler’s own version of the personality cult. From the early 1930s onward, Hitler’s public image was carefully engineered as that of a messianic figure, destined to rescue Germany from humiliation, disorder, and decay (Griffin 1993: 157). Though his cult entered its heyday only after the Reichstag Fire Decree (1933) and Hindenburg’s death (1934), when Hitler merged the offices of Chancellor and President and proclaimed himself Führer und Reichskanzler (Shirer 1960: 229). One of the most illustrative examples of Hitlers cult and his concentration of power comes from a text worded by Hitler yet delivered by Göring on April 26, 1942 by which the Führer’s powers were expanded even further. Here it is stated:

There can be no doubt that, in the present time of war in which the German Volk struggle “to be or not to be”, the Führer must possess the right claimed by him to do all that serves the struggle for victory or contributes to it. Therefore, without being bound by existing regulations, in his capacity as the Führer of the nation, as supreme commander of the Wehrmacht, head of government, and supreme bearer of the executive power, as supreme law lord, and as leader of the party, the Führer must be able at all times to order every German... to fulfill his duties by all means and if he neglects these duties, the Führer must be able to assign him a suitable punishment following a conscientious examination, irrespective of so-called acquired rights, and, in particular, without initiating prescribed procedures, to relieve him of his office, rank, or position (Domarus 2007: 287–288).

Deeply tied and related to the personality cult is the practice of indoctrination of children which Hitler had mastered and Pavelić eagerly took note (Miljan 2016: 7–8). Of Hitler’s accomplishments in this field it is sufficient to mention the Hitlerjugend organisation and the prayers their members were supposed to say that were modeled on Christian prayers. One of those was: “Führer, my Führer, given me by God, protect and preserve my life for long. You saved Germany in time of need. I thank you for my daily bread. Be with me for a long time, do not leave me, Führer, my Führer, my faith, my light, Hail to my Führer!” (Lepage 2009: 87). Modeled after the Hitler Youth was the Ustaše Youth infamous for the brutality and zeal of its members even for the standards of the Ustaša regime (Yeomans 2013: 83). Here is an excerpt from a speech Pavelić addressed to the Croatian students which made a pledge of allegiance to him, April 25 1941: “Brothers and sister, my students! You all gave a pledge that you will give everything for the Croatian people and the Croatian state. That was what I expected. I counted on you doing that... Now tell me, are you ready to come with me and will you be ready for everything? (Yes we will!) That I believe, I am sure of it, and when the time comes I will join your ranks because you can always count on me. We will do anything for the Croatian people, the Independent State of Croatia. Long live the Croatian people! Long live the Independent State of Croatia!” (Pavelić 1941: 15–16).

Both Hitler and Pavelić made youth the centerpiece of their ideological revolutions. For Hitler, youth were to be racial weapons, cleansed of bourgeois softness and Christian pity (Lepage 2009: 83–86). For Pavelić, they were the instruments of national vengeance and youthful rebellion against the ailing concepts of democracy and Yugoslavism, shaped by Catholic morality and Ustaša brutality (Yeomans 2013: 89). In both regimes, education became a ritualized preparation for war and ideological obedience, and youth policy was the long-term guarantee of totalitarian continuity.

Nazism held women in high esteem but considered them subservient to men and relegated them usually to nothing more than the roles of bearing children and taking care of the house (Rupp 1977: 363). Pavelić’s vision of gender was even more religiously encoded, blending fascist patriarchy with Catholic doctrine. Inspired by Nazi policies, the NDH promoted the Croatian woman as the moral pillar and biological core of the reborn nation, in other words, a figure of sacrifice, chastity, and fertility (Bitunjac 2012: 244; Yeomans 2013: 144–146). Pavelić dedicated an article in the woman’s Ustaša magazine title *Ustaškinja* for the third issue released on the June 10 1942. Here he said:

You, mothers, shall give birth to healthy children, in them you should foster a healthy Croatian spirit, which shall be bound to our soil, and by working on said soil they will become just like you, honest, hardworking and diligent like you are so tomorrow or today they will not bring shame to your honour (Pavelić 1942: 9).

For Hitler and the Nazi regime, gender was biologically determined and entirely subordinated to the needs of the *Volksgemeinschaft*. Women were celebrated not for agency or public contribution, but for childbearing, loyalty, and obedience. Hitler inherited the old Imperial slogan *Kinder, Küche, Kirche* – Children, Kitchen, Church, modified simply by sidelining the Church.

On the September 8 1934 Hitler gave a speech at a convention of the NS *Frauenschaft* and here he stated:

The nature of woman has always acted throughout the ages as a supplement to the intellect of man... The catchword “women’s liberation” is merely a phrase invented by the Jewish intellect, and its contents are marked by the same spirit. The German woman will never need to emancipate herself in an age supportive of German life... However, these two worlds are never opposed to one another. They mutually complement each other, they belong together, just as man and wife belong together. We do not feel that it is right when a woman forces her way into a man’s world, in territory belonging to him; instead, we feel it is natural when both of these worlds remain divorced from one another. One of the worlds is home to the power of feelings, the power of the soul! The other is home to the power of recognition, the power of toughness, of resolution, and of fighting morale! In one case, this power requires the full willingness of the woman to devote her life to maintaining and nurturing this important sphere, and in the other case it requires the willingness of the man to safeguard life..Every child to which she gives birth is a battle that she wages in her Volk’s fateful question of to be or not to be. And hence both must mutually value and respect each other by recognizing that each part is accomplishing the task assigned to it by Nature and Providence (Domarus 2007: 476–477).

CONCLUSION

A comparative analysis of the public speeches of Adolf Hitler and Ante Pavelić reveals a convergence of ideological motifs, rhetorical structures, and mythic-national constructs, though profoundly shaped by differing geopolitical circumstances and political agency. At the heart of both leaders’ address lies a vision of the state as an organic and sacralized community under siege, a community whose survival demanded not only political loyalty but metaphysical devotion. In their speeches, one finds not the language of political pragmatism but that of prophecy, sacrifice, and redemption. The enemy whether communism, Jewry, Yugoslavism, or liberalism was not merely a physical threat, but an abomination to be purged for the sake of racial or national rebirth (Griffin 1993: 157).

If we compare the formulations and style of statements of Hitler and his group with the speeches of Pavelić and his group, there is a clear consistency in these statements and formulations, which do not change over time: the same vocabulary, the same militant style, the same level of verbal violence, over the years, both in Germany and in Croatia. Yet while Hitler’s rhetoric articulated

the confidence of an imperial power in ascendance, mobilizing mythic notions of Aryan destiny and global revisionism, Pavelić's language bore the marks of subaltern mimicry: messianic, but haunted by insecurity and the need for external legitimation. Pavelić positioned the NDH as the spiritual outpost of Western civilization, invoking Catholicism and martyrdom, where Hitler exalted more the Volk and racial hygiene. Both regimes politicized motherhood, youth, and education, projecting the child as a future warrior and the mother as a racial womb. Both made violence not a necessary evil but a redemptive tool. And both, perhaps most critically, cultivated the image of the leader as redeemer: infallible, paternal, and fused with the identity of the nation.

Despite these parallels of the two fundamentally broken countries and broken peoples, it is in the gap between Germany's hegemonic ambition and Croatia's status as a dependent Axis satellite that their rhetorical divergences become most visible. Hitler spoke to a mobilized industrial empire with continental aspirations; Pavelić spoke to a fractured homeland built on occupation and extermination. In comparing their speeches, one sees not merely ideological similarity but a tragic hierarchy of power where language, no matter how grandiose, could not alter the structural realities of dependency, nor the historical limits of borrowed sovereignty.

The legacy of Pavelić's reign survived the end of World War II in fringe movements in the diaspora for example in Argentina or Australia all under the guise of carrying on the battle against communism. Pavelić after his own escape to Argentina restarted developing a network of like minded individuals keen on liberating Croatia (Goñi 2002: 219–228). In the end, Pavelić fled to Spain, where he died on December 28, 1959, in Madrid, aged 70, from complications related to his injuries he suffered during the attempt on his life in Buenos Aires on April 10 1957. He was buried at San Isidro Cemetery in Madrid, where his grave remains to this day (Zander 2020: 362–363). Even though mostly marginalised, the Ustaše ideology would occasionally be reinvigorated by historical circumstance, especially during the Yugoslav Wars during the 1990s.

This is an ongoing process to this day in Croatia despite growing criticism from human rights groups. For example, Croatian singer Marko Perković Thompson, notorious for his brazen glorification of the Ustaša regime and use of the NDH "za dom spremni" slogan in the past will perform in Zagreb on the July 5 2025. and according to estimates it will be the biggest (non-free of charge) concert of all time at almost 500 000 tickets sold (Croatiaweek 2025). This serves as a somber reminder of the longevity and destructiveness of ideological heritage of totalitarian projects.

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АНТЕ ПАВЕЛИЋ КАО АРХЕТИП ТИРАНИНА: ЛИЧНОСТ, ХЕТЕРОНОМИЈА И МЕХАНИЗМИ ИДЕОЛОШКОГ НАСИЉА

Резиме

Овај рад бави се тематском и идеолошком анализом јавних говора Адолфа Хитлера и Анте Павелића, са циљем да се утврде кључне сличности и разлике у њиховом политичком и реторичком изразу. У фокусу анализе налазе се теме анти-бољшевизма, расне и верске чистоте, насиља као средства политичке регенерације, култа вође, улоге жене и породице унутар националног корпуса, као и питања спољне политике и међународног позиционирања. Рад полази од претпоставке да је Павелић, као лидер режима који је био у великој мери зависан од сила Осовине, у значајној мери идеолошки и реторички моделовао себе по угледу на Хитлера, користећи сличне обрасце у легитимизацији своје власти и репресивних политика.

Уочено је да оба лидера обликују говорни дискурс у функцији мобилизације маса путем сакрализације нације, митологизације историјске мисије и представе вође као месијанске фигуре. Говори оба лидера обилују дихотомијама које структурирају политичку стварност у оквирима апсолутног добра и зла, при чему се нација представља као угрожена али одабрана, док се политички непријатељи и мањине редукују на статус органског непријатеља којег је легитимно и морално истребити. Док Хитлер говори из позиције вође континенталне силе с амбицијом глобалног преуређења, Павелић делује у оквиру зависне и ограничене политичке структуре, што се одражава на његов стални напор да преко симболичког језика као што је константно алудирање на католичку веру, страдање и историјску угроженост конструише легитимитет и политичку самобитност НДХ.

Анализа указује да се, упркос различитим историјским околностима и нивоу реалне моћи, у њиховим говорима препознаје заједнички модел ауторитарне реторике, у којем нација постаје апсолутна вредност, насиље морална дужност, а вођа персонификовани носилац историјске правде. Упоредно читање ових говора омогућава боље разумевање механизма идеолошког насиља, као и начина на који се говор претвара у чин.

Кључне речи: Анте Павелић, Независна Држава Хрватска, Адолф Хитлер, Други светски рат, Холокауст.

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