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PAN-SLAVISM, ITS INTERPRETATIVE AMBIGUITIES AND CONFLICTING PRACTICES

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Among the beneficiaries of charity aid in the first post-First World War years in Yugoslavia, it is not unusual to find "Russian immigrants."[1] Even though the country was facing not only the economic difficulties shared by all the other European countries in the aftermath of the war but also specific internal tensions of different nature derived by the establishment of a new State, one of the priorities of philanthropic societies was to offer help to members of a foreign country, to Russians. The South-Slav state was not short of paupers, even not of its own refugees, like those "from Istria and Rijeka" (also mentioned in the quoted document), territories recently passed, or close to pass to the Kingdom of Italy. That means that although private charity associations had to take care of a very high number of people, a part of the energies and the resources was devoted to the Russian émigrés. Why did it happen? How to interpret it? And which implications could it have had? Was it an expression of pan-Slavism, i.e. of pan-Slavist solidarity? In other words, is this a good example of the reciprocal help and support which Slav societies have historically offered each other, as promoted by pan-Slavist principles? I think that the answer must be much more nuanced.

In the framework of a book which deals with Scandinavianism and Nordism in a comparative perspective, it can be useful to provide an analysis of another pan-movement like pan-Slavism. As it is shown by a growing body of scholarly research,[2] macro- and supra-nationalist movements in modern Europe were closely interconnected. Beyond their differences, all these supra-national ideologies and practices like pan-Scandinavianism, pan-Germanism, pan-Turanism, pan-Slavism and the other examined in this volume emerged in entangled ways, as reaction one to the other, reciprocally serving as inspiring models or fearsome competitors, in any case sharing words and ideas and making the here examined phenomena inherently relational and mutually conditioned.[3] Transnational transfers, alliances and also contrasts, like in the case of Scandinavianism and

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pan-Slavism,[4] gave shape to a variegated international landscape. The potentials of transnational history thus become evident by investigating historical phenomena like those this chapter, and this book, deals with, i.e. European pan-movements.[5]

This chapter aims at contributing to the comparative study of European pan-movements, focusing on the case of pan-Slavism. For the purposes of this work, we need to partly revise an established view of pan-Slavism, which has often been reduced to its political dimension and the state-building process in Central- and South-Eastern Europe. This attitude produced both celebrations and denigrations of pan-Slavism. This traditional approach also prejudiced the later public memories, as well as many historiographical interpretations of the various cultural and political phenomena linked to pan-Slavism, which could even lead, as we will see, to its negation. In other words, many scholars, influenced by a research agenda inspired by nation-state contexts and nationalist goals, revised the activities and works by famous pan-Slavists, interpreting them in national terms. Furthermore, the focus on the political dimension led to precise chronologies of the investigated phenomenon, which recognised, e.g. in First World War a radical turning point (and defeat) in the European history of pan-Slavism.

This contribution therefore has two main goals. The first one is to give back to pan-Slavism all its multidimensionality and integral ambiguities, and the second is to examine expressions of pan-Slavic ideas also including a grass root perspective. Concerning the multidimensionality, the aim is to counter the aforementioned anachronistic interpretations, framed exclusively in modern national terms, as well as those which uncritically celebrated it as a forerunner of later Slavic political unifying projects. Instead, the analysis will highlight the many, variegated and sometimes even conflicting interpretations elaborated by the historical actors during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In line with recent suggestions,[6] it is useful to look not only at the interpretations of pan-Slavism provided by contemporaries and by later scholars but also at what was said and written by the pan-Slavists themselves, looking for points of contact and divergences.

As brilliantly showed by some comparative historians, there have been several attempts at defining taxonomies of nationalism/pan-nationalism, identifying cultural pan-movements, political ones, secessionist, unifying, nationalist and supra-national ones, without neglecting their variegated historiographical interpretations.[7] Therefore, the question about pan-Slavism would be to which sub-category to ascribe it. Yet, as this chapter hopefully will show, pan-Slavism is a cultural and political tree with a lot of branches, and the fruits produced have been deeply different, depending on the place and on the time where/when they appeared. It is not possible to give one simple answer to that question, which requires to be qualified and adapted to each case study. As we will see, a first, relevant distinction was made between the pan-Slavist variants adopted by the Slav intellectuals of Central- and South-Eastern Europe in the nineteenth century, and those elaborated later in the Tsarist circles. At the same

time, it could happen that a pan-regional/-national rhetoric was embraced fostering at the same time a national agenda,[8] what was often the case when pan-Slavism is concerned. Furthermore, there were cultural projects which imagined communities alternative to the national ones, thus not necessarily claiming statehood. To further diversify the picture, the chapter will deal with the re-emergence of some pan-Slavist *topoi* in the twentieth century and precisely between the two world wars, like in the cases of the intricate forms and practices of pan-Slavist solidarity expressed by non-Russian Slav societies towards Russia and Russians, what implies the role of the Russian diaspora. The history of pan-Slavist motives and their political instrumentalisation can trace further episodes along the twentieth century, like in the case of Soviet pan-Slavism, or up to the fragile and tense relationships between Russia and Ukraine nowadays. All this makes the pan-Slav landscape deeply entangled and multi-layered, and an extremely contingent historical phenomenon.

Secondly, the chapter will examine some cases of concrete implications of the pan-Slavist rhetoric observing it not only from the classical point of view of the political and diplomatic history but also from a perspective "from below," which considers the *practices* of pan-Slavism, and the everyday life of common people. The chapter will offer some insights in terms of welfare policies, as well as public memories of First World War, including examples taken from Yugoslav school textbooks. The aim is to offer the possibility to the reader to have an insight into concrete cases of alliances as well as rivalries, which the idea of Slavic solidarity and reciprocity could provoke.

The chapter contributes to the research about pan-Slavism beyond nation-state teleological bias, as well as other kinds of simplistic interpretations. The contribution will illustrate the manifold meanings and concrete implications of some pan-Slavism-inspired initiatives, showing their potential in terms of both promoting supra-national cultures, as well as imperialist projects. Finally, the chapter will contribute to rewriting the chronology of the inter- and transnational developments of pan-Slavism in Europe, what certainly include breaks, but also less expected continuities.

Beyond the nation-states: Pan-Slavist variations of the theme

Inspired by German Romanticism and the texts on the Slavs written by Johan Gottfried Herder, and in general by the linguistic pan-Germanism represented by Arndt and Fichte, pan-Slavism "proclaimed the affinity of various people, in spite of differences of political citizenship and historical background, of civilization and religion, solely on the strength of an affinity of [Slavic] language."[9] These were the times when the *Volksgeist* was better to be detected in the language, the mother tongue, which should give voice to the motherland, the Nation. But in this case, like in other pan-movements in Europe, the attempt was to overcome cultural and even national differences, in order to reach a supra-national

dimension, testified by the alleged existence of a common (linguistic) Slavic community.

There had actually been a pre-modern chapter of this history, embodied by Juraj Križanić (c. 1618–83), a Catholic priest from today Croatia, whose life mission was to promote the union of the Catholic Church and the Christian Orthodox world, beginning with the Russian Orthodox Church. Apart from these confessional goals, Križanić deeply believed in the ethnic and cultural unity of the Slavic people as it is stated: "It is difficult to tell, when he writes 'our people,' whether he is referring to the Russians, to the Croats, or to some other Slavs."[10] His religious Ecumenism developed thus in a sort of pan-Slavist worldview, which he considered "a family of free peoples under Russian protection."[11] This is the reason why it has often been regarded as the precursor of the later, modern pan-Slavism.

Many Slav scholars produced impressive works based on oral poetry and philological research during the nineteenth century. Intellectuals like the Slovaks Ján Kollár (1793–1852), Pavel Josef Šafárik (1795–1861) and L'udovit Štúr (1815–56), the Czechs Joseph Dobrovský (1753–1829) and Josef Jungmann (1773–1847), the Slovene Jernej Kopitar (1780–1844) and the Serb Vuk Stefanović Karadžić (1787–1864) are only the most known actors of that vivid inter- and transnational cultural landscape. They laid the foundations for standardising their respective national languages, histories and cultures, but at the same time they also shaped the awareness of belonging to a broader Slavic consciousness and a common Slavic culture. The so-called Slavic idea arose, i.e. the idea that there was a commonality in cultural and spiritual terms, which called for mutual solidarity (termed as "reciprocity"), and which led the poets and scholars of those circles to theorise a broader "Slavicity," even though its interpretations, as we will better see in the next lines, could deeply differ.[12]

Among the most known historical episodes inspired by that cultural and political tradition in the first half of the nineteenth century is the Illyrian Movement, nurtured by a group of intellectuals from the Habsburg Croatia-Slavonia and Dalmatia, but with some adherents from the neighbouring regions, which promoted a common, multi-religious cultural identity among the South Slavs of the Monarchy.[13] The premise was the canonisation of a modern Croatian language and alphabet, an endeavour realised by Ljudevit Gaj, who published the first "Croatian-Slavic orthography" in 1830. The ideology of this intellectual movement, also called Illyrism, evolved in the second half of the nineteenth century into Yugoslavism, the idea of unifying the South Slavs in a common state. Needless to say, also this cultural and political aspiration, as well as pan-Slavism, was subject to numerous divergent interpretations up to 1918, when the first South-Slav state, the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, was established.[14]

An illustrious event which embodied – carrying it even in the name – a pan-Slavist inspiration was the first pan-Slav Congress held in Prague in 1848, where mainly Habsburg Slav intellectuals gathered to discuss a possible reform of the Empire, which should take more into consideration the political interests of its

Slav subjects. In the revolutionary context of that year, the Congress gathered illustrious literary scholars like the Slavophile Pavel Josef Šafárik, or renowned political activists like the anarchist Mikhail Bakunin (1814–76). Among the distinguished personalities of that assembly, the famous Czech historian and politician František Palacký (1798–1876) led the movement which aimed at applying to the Habsburg Empire a federalist approach, the so-called Austro-Slavism.[15] The fundamental idea of that cultural-political orientation was to promote the collaboration among the members of the Habsburg Slavic communities, in order to counterbalance the German-Austrian and Hungarian hegemonic tendencies.

As evident by these short considerations, and as acknowledged by the research, pan-Slavism originated in Central and South-Eastern Europe and did not emerge in Russia as a public movement before the late 1850s, i.e. until the defeat in the Crimean War.[16] Nonetheless, during the 1860s, the idea that Slavic people should politically act together, under the lead of Russia, became popular in the Tsarist intellectual circles, combining Slavophile inclinations with imperialist, i.e. anti-Ottoman, anti-Habsburg and anti-German aspirations of the Russian Empire. This is the reason why the second Slavic Congress took place in Moscow, in 1867, and became an arena for the articulation of a Russo-centric vision of the future of the Slavs, prescribing the necessity to unify into one state, clearly led by Russia.

As shown in detail by recent works, it is precisely in the period between the Crimean War (1853–56) and the Russo-Turkish War (1877–78) that the Russian foreign policy towards the Ottoman Balkans acquired a distinct pan-Slavic tone. Such new attitudes were not only elaborated – as stressed by early studies – in the "centre" of the empire, thanks to the contributions by pan-Slavic Russian philosophers and writers such as Nikolay Yakovlevich Danilevsky, Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky, Ivan Sergeyevich Aksakov and Rostislav Andreyevich Fadeyev, but also by institutional representatives of the Russian Empire in Istanbul, like the Ambassador Nikolay Pavlovich Ignatyev, and by institutions like the Slavic Benevolent Committee, an organisation with branches in Moscow (1858), St. Petersburg (1868), Kiev (1869) and Odessa (1870), which helped in spreading a Russian-centred pan-Slav atmosphere, in Russia as well as in the Ottoman Balkans.[17] Thanks to their increasing activities, this Committee promoted the education, both in their countries and in Russia, of Balkan Orthodox students. Furthermore, the Committees collected donations and supported the publishing of a Russian pan-Slavist press.

The activism of Russian, as well as some Central and South-Eastern intellectuals and politicians, gave an important contribution in shaping a new, pan-Slavist Russian imperial ideology in the Ottoman Balkans, which became clear through the military intervention of the Russian Empire on the occasion of the anti-Ottoman Bulgarian insurgence in 1875–78.[18]

Military and political alliance should not be confused with innocent fraternity. Very deep discrepancies characterised the view of the various pan-Slavists, especially Russians and non-Russians. Generally speaking, while Russia's

actions aimed at ending Ottoman rule and expanding the influence, if not the territory of the Tsarist Empire, some Central- and South-Eastern intellectuals regarded the pan-Slav reciprocity as a tool for granting each nation-building goals, thus causing internal frictions.[19] Furthermore, Russian pan-Slavism has always been associated with a clear sense of cultural superiority of the Russian culture. Balkan Orthodox Slavs were thus depicted by late nineteenth-century Russian pan-Slav activists both as the same and as different from the Russians.

This is particularly true for the multi-layered Ukrainian case. It was traditionally considered by Russian intellectuals and common opinion as an integral part of the Russian space, as a local, southern and bucolic variant of the Russian culture, the so-called common-Russian nationality (*obshcherusskiy narod*), which also included the White Russians. This is the reason why late-Tsarist authorities began to decidedly oppose the Ukrainian elite, when its members developed the idea of a different identity in Ukrainian, modern national terms.[20]

Yet, in this case, too, the national tensions, which represent the cultural long-term roots of present-day conflicts, should not hide the fact that even in this context, it is possible to detect pan-Slavist occurrences not only in form of an aggressive pan-Russism but also as genuine Ukrainian interpretations. The first and most authoritative representative of this approach was Nikolay Ivanovich Kostomorov (1817–85), an important Ukrainian-Russian historian and intellectual, who was particularly inspired by Polish Slavophilism, and who elaborated his own interpretation of the relationship between Ukrainians, Russians and the other Slavic people: Ukrainian identity and culture should be recognised as different, nonetheless as part of a broader, Slavic family. The future of the country should thus be envisioned in close, reciprocal and fraternal dialogue with the other Slavic brothers.[21]

A gender dimension can be added to the picture, e.g. considering the relations between Russians and the South-East European Orthodox Slavs. While the Russian self-perception was built on the idea of a powerful crusader, who fought for (and partly instead of) the Balkan Slavs, the latter were depicted as emasculated and feminised.[22] The Southern Slavs were thus subordinated to the Russian brothers not only because they were lacking political independence but also in deeper terms, being considered fragile and passive subjects, to be saved from a cruel foreign domination.

One first conclusion is that there has not been "one" nineteenth-century pan-Slavism, but rather several variations of it. Czech-Panslavism, Illyrian-Panslavism, Austro-slavism, Russian-Panslavism, etc.: the general idea of a Slavic cultural unity, and maybe the prospective to also foster a political union, has been interpreted in very different terms, depending on the geopolitical context, the historical moment and the main actors involved.[23]

Revisioning, condemning, celebrating

What is important to underline is that the standard works – written in the second half of the twentieth century by Western-based scholars – of this manifold

historical phenomenon are constantly occupied in emphasising its limited political impact, due to internal frictions. In the typical judgements about the topic, the intellectual tradition of several pan-Slavists' generations is reconstructed in detail, but stressing that "they had no impact whatsoever," and whereas the programme of the first ones was further elaborated by others, "it remained unreal too." The prism through which to read that manifold historical phenomenon is clearly that "it has failed to create a political or economic union," with strong analogies, it is said, with pan-Africanism and pan-Scandinavianism.[24] An established historical approach regarding this intellectual tradition, thus, consists in reducing it to the concrete political dimension, closely linking it with state-building processes. Having not been able to realise a pan-Slav State, pan-Slavism is sentenced, with some disdain, as a failed idea.

On the other hand, more recent research has stressed the necessity to look beyond the state-centred historiographical approach, because it is often misleading. The search for a Slavic unity must not necessarily be equated with the battle for a common Slavic state, and "in fact, nineteenth-century panslavs rarely had such political ambitions."[25] The problematic point of departure of many historical investigations for more than a century has been a nation-state point of view, which assumed that each intellectual spoke his/her "national" language, and strove for defending his/her national interests, embracing the Panslavist cause only in an opportunistic way, in order to promoting in truth national goals. In the public memories and in the scholarly traditions, it is possible to notice a tendency to anachronistically impose modern national interpretative standards onto historical actors and ideas, whose aim actually was to go beyond the single nations. There have been Slavic intellectuals who really posited a single Slavic nation speaking a single Slavic language. There have been in the long nineteenth-century history in Europe, even in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, people who imagined communities different from the national ones. An excellent example are those North-Adriatic intellectuals, who elaborated an "Adriatic Multi-Nationalism"[26] and other, regional forms of collective identification, also as alternatives to the national ones.[27] Similarly, pan-Slavists intellectuals in the nineteenth century were able to conceive the principle of the Slavic "literary reciprocity," i.e. the idea that the Slavs formed "ein grosses Volk" (one great people), who spoke "eine Sprache" (one language) with various "Mundarten" (dialects). They went beyond the dimension of the single Slav nations, and they did it without necessarily aiming at statehood.[28]

Many scholars, not to mention official memories, seem to be decisively reluctant to acknowledge the historical importance of pan-Slavism as a cultural and political phenomenon. Many interpretations are more inclined to read in national terms the cultural activism of those historical actors, even leading to selective omissions, mistranslations "and specious 'clarifications' that conceal or alter the meaning of key passages."[29]

An echo of this approach can be detected in school textbooks. The analysis of the representation of the Illyrian Movement in the post-socialist Croatian

history textbooks, for instance, revealed a process of increasing marginalisation towards a personality like Ljudevit Gaj, now accused of political short-sightedness and naivety. The Illyrian Movement, blamed to be "anational," underwent an interpretative process of strong Croatisation, mitigating, or even neglecting its South- and pan-Slav traits and reducing it to a national, Croatian movement.[30] These first post-socialist interpretations, which have been partly revised in some later textbooks, were not the first nationalist revisions of this kind, when one has in mind the history textbooks produced during the early 1940s, i.e. during the pro-Fascist and pro-Nazi regime of the Ustasha.[31] Therefore, there were not only many variants of pan-Slavism, but there have been also many variants of its nation/nationalist interpretations.

This is not to say that the instrumentalisation of pan-Slavism has known only the nationalist variant. A historical look at the whole twentieth century can detect also opposite interpretations of the same phenomenon. During the two Yugoslavias, for instance – i.e. during the first Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, later renamed Kingdom of Yugoslavia (1918–41), and during the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1945–92) – history textbooks stressed everything what had a "Yugoslavist" flavour and could contribute to give historical substance to the Yugoslav state. Every historical episode which could be presented as evidence of South-Slav solidarity got attention, like the cultural, political and even military collaborations between Slovenes, Croats and Serbs during the revolutions of 1848.[32] Personalities like the Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer (1815–95), Illyrist activist and founder, among other institutions, of the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts (1866), were presented in a positive light as the enlightened forerunners of the twentieth-century Yugoslav experiment. In general, the "Yugoslav idea (*jugoslovenska misao* or *ideja*)" was illustrated as the natural historical path which finally flew into the Yugoslav state(s), "where brothers of the same blood, after centuries, gathered together,"[33] thanks to a "spiritual union" which existed already before.[34]

In other parts of Eastern Europe, as well, during the twentieth century there have been new modern interpretations of pan-Slavism, sometimes trying to update and adapt it to the new geopolitical circumstances. The years after First World War were, in some regards, not ideal for the flourishing of such ideas, and "Pan-Slavism seemed even more dead than Pan-Germanism,"[35] with the (re) establishment of several Slav nation-states, partly in competition, what became evident through the reciprocal military aggressions between 1939 and 1941. Nonetheless, some attempts of political alliance were made, e.g. between the Polish and the Czech governments in exile, but they were overridden by the Soviet Union foreign policy, which resumed a quite traditional Great Russian imperialism, increasingly dressed with pan-Slav traits.

Rejecting the previous Marxist and Lenin's contempt towards a phenomenon which was interpreted as the manifestation of the reactionary late-Tsarist and bourgeois imperialism, Stalin himself increasingly appealed to Slav solidarity, already for legitimising the Soviet invasion of Poland in 1939, described as an

act of solidarity towards Belarusians and Ukrainians, to be emancipated from the Polish yoke. Especially after the German attack on the USSR in June 1941, the Soviet government made widely use of a pan-Slavist rhetoric, in order to mobilise Soviet citizens and other Slav people for the anti-fascist fight, what was also called by the old Bolshevik Yemelyan Mikhajlovich Yaroslavsky the "fight of Slavic nations against German fascism" (*borba slavyanskih narodov protiv germanskogo fashizma*).[36]

Under the coordination of Georgi Dimitrov, the Bulgarian General Secretary of the Comintern, several committees and conferences were organised, and the periodical *Slavyane* was established, in order to spread the Soviet pan-Slavist war propaganda. It drew upon classical pan-Slavist ideologemes, like the shared history, language, culture and the common spiritual nature, and even utilised in biologist terms, as when referring to the "blood kinship" (*krovnoe rodstvo*). This discourse recognised a historical continuation between Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union, stressing the long-term Russian/Soviet historical "mission," i.e. to help all the Slav brothers, even beyond the border of Russia/the USSR.[37]

This leads us to the post-1945 version of this new pan-Slavism under Russian/Soviet leadership, which included now a new ideological aspect, i.e. the Communist inspiration. Not only all the Slavs but especially all the Slav workers should unite. The centre of this new chapter in the history of pan-Slavism was initially Belgrade, and not Prague anymore. Yet, this was also destined to last not long: after the Tito-Stalin break in 1948 and the expulsion of Yugoslavia from the Cominform, the pan-Slav Communist rhetoric suffered of a relevant defection. The "all-Slav" rhetoric was abandoned and replaced partly by pan-Russism, and partly by the reference to the ethnically undetermined "socialist camp."[38] The "friendship of people," introduced in 1935, was the Soviet ideological principle regarding the nationalities issue. Even though not framed in pan-Slav terms, in some cases, e.g. the Russian-Ukrainian one, it could evoke known *topoi* of pan-Slavist tones, like that of the brotherhood and the "fraternal relations" between the Russian and the Ukrainian people, with all the ambiguities which characterise the modern history of Russian-Ukrainian relations, including the second half of the twentieth century.[39]

While this section has considered the issue of pan-Slavism through the perspective of governments and the members of the elite, it is also useful to have a look at examples of concrete effects of those discourses and theories in the everyday life of common people, as I try to do in the following section.

Pan-Slavism from below

The tormented Count Vronsky, in the epilogue of Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, decides to join the Russian volunteer movement, which sought to liberate the Southern Slavs from the "Ottoman yoke," as it was called. This should not surprise the reader of this chapter, as anyone familiar with pan-Slavism in all its

declinations. Pan-Slavism is not only a matter of theory: it also induced people to concretely act, even to fight and to die.

In order to deal not only with narrow groups of members of the elite, like Count Vronsky, this section will change the perspective, trying to have an insight into pan-Slavism "from below." As recalled by the incipit of this text, investigating the assistance to the poor in the first Yugoslav state it is possible to notice some cases of concrete implications of the pan-Slavist rhetoric in terms of welfare policies. Considering for instance "Prehrana" (Nourishment), one of the most relevant philanthropic associations in Zagreb and in Croatia,[40] then belonging to the newly established Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, it is interesting to carefully read the list – shortly mentioned at the beginning of the chapter – of the target groups of the association with regard to the first post-war years of activity, namely: "war widows and orphans, invalids and their families, poor school pupils and students, unemployed workers, refugees from Istria and Rijeka, Russian immigrants (school pupils, teachers and officers)" and others.[41] That means that a private association like Prehrana, whose main activity was to provide hot meals for the needy in urban areas, adopted a supra-confessional, supra-ethnic and supra-national approach (at least for some nationalities), including among its recipients not only the masses of poor people living in Zagreb and arriving from its countryside but also people coming from a farther place, a foreign country, the post-revolutionary Russia. The reasons are not explicitly illustrated in the documents of that charity association, but they are known, anchored in the Russophile pan-Slavism which has a long historical tradition in the Serbian culture.[42]

The Slavic brotherhood praised by so many authors and politicians had thus in Yugoslavia interesting and manifold repercussions: it not only helped the establishment of a South-Slav state, supporting the political collaboration between South Slavs, but it also nourished the relations between the Yugoslav governments and the Russian émigrés, even affecting the activities promoted by the civil society. This can be interpreted as an example of the mixed economy of welfare, when governmental and private actors closely collaborate to provide public services.[43] And even though Prehrana's spokespeople repeatedly maintained that the association's mission was not only to aid the association's members, or the members of a specific confessional community, rather *anyone* who was in need, it is not surprising that its activities were actually influenced by moral, gender and political considerations.[44]

The decisions taken in the first post-First World War years regarding the recipients of the philanthropic aid were not irrelevant ones: the people "in need" were in those times, to a different extent, the main part of the population. To share the limited resources among a vast audience meant inevitably to foster rivalries among the targeted groups. The hot food distributed in the soup kitchens was not unlimited, and the queues of waiting people were long. This led the association to a revision of its admission criteria during the interwar times. If we compare the already quoted list of target social groups, with the same list from the mid-1930s,

we can notice that the variegated folk of poor and unemployed (Yugoslav) people are now – in the mid of the effects of the Great Depression – the focus of the intervention. The Russian immigrants are not mentioned anymore, apart from four school pupils (on a total of 171).[45]

Slavic solidarity and reciprocity, as we already know from the previous sections, also produced rivalries. What we can add from the here adopted perspective is that also pan-Slavic *charity*, as every form of social assistance, produced competitions among its beneficiaries. Furthermore, the pan-Slavic "grass root" activism, similarly to the precarious relations in the realm of the high politics, could also change over time, revising its priorities. The dramatic social and economic crisis which affected Yugoslavia after 1929, as other European countries, pushed on the background war- and Russian civil war-related issues, giving more relevance to urgent internal socio-economic problems.

Yet, pan-Slavist liaisons could be further observed in Yugoslav society during the interwar period. When we take into consideration women voluntary associations, for instance, we can be faced with the gendered declination of pan-Slavism, claiming for a pan-Slavic sisterhood between all the different confessional and tribal segments of the Yugoslav population. The most active association in this field was the *Kolo srpskih sestara* (The Circle of Serbian Sisters), a clearly pro-Serbian and pro-Yugoslav voluntary women association, whose initiatives acquired in the 1930s also a pan-Slavic flavour.[46] The activism of this women organisation is another good example of the flexibility of the pan-Slavist concept. The patriotic *Kolo srpskih sestara* organised many pan-Slavic balls throughout the entire Yugoslavia, including the periphery along contested territories like that in the North-Eastern Adriatic, showing the possibility to intertwine Yugoslav patriotism, pan-Slavist internationalism and local irredentism.[47] The gender and precisely female dimension of some interwar pan-Slavist movement can be easily observed considering the Association Unity of Slavic Women, established in 1929 thanks to the commitment of women from Czechoslovakia, Poland, Yugoslavia and Russian émigré women. The association organised several international congresses, like those in Prague (1930, 1938), Warsaw (1931) and Belgrade (1933). The association was intended as the female counterpart and continuation of the pan-Slavist tradition inspired by Ján Kollár.[48]

In some cases, like the just mentioned *Kolo srpskih sestara*, the political orientations of the associations were clearly in dialogue with, if not an expression of, the governmental ones. Yet, looking from below at the manifold and widespread pan-Slavist attitudes in Yugoslavia, as well as in the rest of Central-East Europe, one of the reasons is that after the Russian civil war, many Russian communities emerged in these regions. These Russian refugees often got integrated in the local society, especially when – as it mostly was the case – the immigrant had a higher education, like the Russian and Ukrainian criminologists employed at the Criminological Institute of the Faculty of Law in Belgrade,[49] or the renown architects,[50] and many, many other Russian scholars, military officers and members of the clergy.[51]

Furthermore, the Russian presence in interwar Central-, South-East and Western Europe gave a contribution also to the commemorative culture of First World War. Actually, a high number of memorials for Russian victims were built not in the Soviet Union, which rather celebrated the Great Patriotic War, but in the rest of Europe, in the USA and in the European overseas territories.[52] In Czechoslovakia and in Yugoslavia such projects acquired distinctive pan-Slavist tones, used by all the involved parts. In both countries pan-/philo-Slavism played a relevant role in the discussions and later realisations of those war memorials, and in general terms "appeals to Slavic solidarity helped emigres argue for acceptance, assistance and sympathy."[53]

Even though this pattern of relationship cannot be generalised to all the Slavic countries – e.g. not including Poland because of the deep-rooted Polish-Russian animosity – the story of émigrés' communities in Central- and South-Eastern Europe allow to partly revise, again, historical judgements about the alleged completely political inefficacy of pan-Slavism during those interwar years. 1918 does not represent such a radical break, if observed through the prism of the post-revolution life of many Russian émigrés in several Slavic countries. Pan-Slavism, as we have seen from the previous two sections, was able to revive through many and variegated embodiments between the two world wars, during Second World War, and even afterwards.

Conclusions

The history of pan-Slavism does not end with the conclusion of the "short twentieth century." We could encounter Count Vronsky again in the South-Slav literature of the 1990s and later, this time transferring the Tolstoy's story in the context of the Yugoslav civil wars, in some cases celebrating Count Vronsky as a national hero, who fights against Croatians (not the Turks anymore) and for the interests of Serbia.[54] Furthermore, post-Soviet Russia turned to a renewed pan-Slavist rhetoric in imagining and practising its diplomatic role in the Balkans, especially during the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina.[55] Apart from political support expressed by a long series of journalists, intellectuals and members of the nationalist right wing of the *Duma*, several hundreds of volunteers came to fight in Bosnia for the Serbian side, also in the name of pan-Slavist values.[56] And also later, in 1999, in the context of the NATO bombing of Serbia, the speaker of the Russian parliament (*Duma*), Gennadiy Seleznyov, foresaw a "Russian-Serbian armed brotherhood," while appeals to a military help for the "Orthodox Slavic brothers" in Serbia were launched by high representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church,[57] to mention only a few examples. This pan-Orthodox Russian patronage is clearly welcomed by the ruling elite not only in Serbia but also in the Serbian Republic of Bosnia, where declarations of cultural proximity and spiritual brotherhood are frequent in the public discourses.

Similarly, it is opportune to mention the role of revived pan-Slavist ideas in the post-Soviet space, considering first of all the tense relationship between Russia

and Ukraine. Intertwined with Slavophile and anti-Western intellectual schools, as well as with the tradition of Russian Eurasianism,[58] the idea of a deep cultural and historical unity between Russians and Ukrainians has resurged. That kind of brotherhood was often interpreted by emphasising the belonging to the same kinship to the extent of denying the identity, at least in national terms, of the Ukrainian brother. This interpretative framework has been exploited to legitimise first the support of the so-called Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republic, then the military aggression against Ukraine.[59] Evidently, this somehow elusive idea is still able, like it was in the past, to find new, heterogeneous incarnations.

This sounds like a further confirmation of what this contribution has tried to show: the impossibility to reduce the historical phenomenon of pan-Slavism to an easily definable concept. It is a history, which shares many traits with the other pan-movements analysed in this volume. Pan-Slavism, too, is an intriguing cultural and political tradition exactly because of all its multidimensionality and integral ambiguities. As this analysis has tried to show, there are several reasons to avoid both nationalistic and celebrative interpretations considering the many, variegated and sometimes conflicting interpretations elaborated by the involved historical actors during the long nineteenth and the twentieth century.

Pan-Slavism, as well as other pan-movements in Europe, proved to be an inspiring and powerful cultural tool for generations of intellectuals, who were able to imagine transnational communities beyond the emerging borders of the nation-states. On the other hand, the history of pan-Slavism cannot be naively celebrated and idealised. Every cultural, political and social initiatives inspired by the idea of a Slavic solidarity immediately produced frictions and rivalries, and the pan-Slavist rhetoric has also been utilised to legitimate aggressive pan-nationalist claims, to the extent that it aimed at subjugating the (natural or elected) brother.

What is important, thus, is not to oversimplify this multi-coloured narrative and historical experience. Rather, it is necessary to get a dynamic and nuanced historical picture of the phenomenon, which has been, is being and certainly will be shaped and reshaped in the future, in many variegated forms.

Notes

1 E.g. Croatian State Archives (Državni Arhiv Zagreb-DAZ), fond 1092, Dobrotvorno društvo "Prehrana," box 4, *Glavna godišnja skupština* (*20th Annual meeting*), 1935, Secretary's Report, p. 3, with reference to 1919.
2 See Hemstad and Stadius' introduction to this volume.
3 Mishkova, Trencsényi, *European Regions and Boundaries*.
4 See Lerssen's and Egorov's contributions to this volume.
5 Haupt, Kocka, *Comparison and Transnational History*; Kaelble, "Comparative and Transnational History"; Körner, "Transnational History."
6 Maxwell, "Pan-Nationalism as a Category."
7 Leerssen, "Pan-Slavism"; Maxwell, "Pan-Nationalism as a Category," 5–11; see also Leerssen, and Hemstad and Stadius in this volume.
8 Mishkova, Trencsényi, "Introduction," 6.
9 Kohn, *Pan-Slavism*, ix.

10 Petrovich, "Juraj Križanić: A Precursor of Pan-Slavism," 86.
11 Petrovich, "Juraj Križanić: A Precursor of Pan-Slavism," 89.
12 Tamborra, *Panslavismo e solidarietà slava*; Troebst, "Slavizität"; Leerssen, "Pan-Slavism"; Karl, Skordos, "Pan-Slavism."
13 Kirchner Reill, *Nationalists Who Feared the Nation*, 63–78.
14 Ivetic, *Jugoslavia sognata*.
15 Moritsch, *Der Austroslavismus*.
16 Petrovich, *The Emergence of Russian Panslavism*; Karl, Skordos, "Pan-Slavism."
17 Gülseven, "Rethinking Russian Pan-Slavism in the Ottoman Balkans."
18 Heraclides-Dialla, "The Balkan crisis of 1875–78 and Russia."
19 Kohn, *Pan-Slavism*; Gülseven, "Rethinking Russian Pan-Slavism," 340.
20 Plokhy, *The Gates of Europe. A History of Ukraine*, 155–160.
21 Franco, "Ukraine as a 'Pan-Slavic Keystone'"; Plokhy, *The Gates of Europe. A History of Ukraine*, 158.
22 Vovchenko, "Gendering irredentism?."
23 Makowski, Hadler, *Approaches to Slavic Unity*.
24 Kohn, "The Impact of Pan-Slavism on Central Europe," 323–24.
25 Maxwell, "Effacing Panslavism," 634; Maxwell, "Pan-Nationalism as a Category."
26 Kirchner Reill, *Nationalists Who Feared the Nation*.
27 Clewing, *Staatlichkeit und nationale Identitätsbildung*.
28 Kollár, quoted in Maxwell, "Effacing Panslavism," 637.
29 Maxwell, "Effacing Panslavism," 633.
30 Petrungaro, *Riscrivere la storia*, 161–64.
31 Petrungaro, *Riscrivere la storia*, 159–60.
32 Petrungaro, *Riscrivere la storia*, 165–210, also for the next examples.
33 Srkulj, *Povijest novoga vijeka*, 414.
34 Jakić, *Povijest Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca*, 146.
35 Kohn, "The Impact of Pan-Slavism on Central Europe," 330.
36 Behrends, "Die 'sowjetische Rus' und ihre Brüder"; von Rauch, "Eine taktische Waffe: Der sowjetische Panslawismus."
37 Behrends, "Die 'sowjetische Rus' und ihre Brüder," 104–105; Fertacz, "Von Brüdern und Schwestern. Das *Allslawische Komitee* in Moskau."
38 Troebst, "Slavizität," 9.
39 Yekelchyk, *Ukraine: Birth of a Modern Nation*, ch. 9.
40 Petrungaro, "Soup Kitchens and Yugoslav Poor Relief."
41 DAZ, fond 1092, box 4, *Glavna godišnja skupština* (*20th Annual meeting*), 1935, Secretary's Report, p. 3 (with reference to 1919).
42 E.g. Mac Kenzie, *The Serbs and Russian Pan-Slavism*.
43 Katz-Sachße, *The Mixed Economy of Social Welfare*; Giomi-Petrungaro, *Voluntary Associations in Yugoslavia*; Giomi-Keren-Labbé, *Public and Private Welfare in Modern Europe*.
44 Petrungaro, "Soup Kitchens and Yugoslav Poor Relief."
45 DAZ, 1029, box 4, *22. Annual meeting*, 1937, p. 5 (with reference to 1936).
46 Giomi, *Making Muslim Women European*, 137–38.
47 Rolandi, "Women's Organizing in a Contested Borderland," 61.
48 Daskalova, "The Little Entente of Women," 23–24.
49 Janković, "Kriminalistički Institut Pravnog Fakulteta u Beogradu."
50 Stanojević, "Rad arhitekte Viktora Lukomskog."
51 Sibinović, *Ruska emigracija u srpskoj kulturi*; Putyatin, "Adaptatsiya rossijskoj emigratsii v Korolevstve SHS."
52 Cohen, "'Our Russian Passport': First World War Monuments."
53 Cohen, "'Our Russian Passport': First World War Monuments," 642.
54 Kuzmic, "Tolstoi's Count Vronsky in the Post-Yugoslav Imagination."
55 For an earlier reflection on this: Cohen, "Russia and the Balkans."
56 Levin, "Neopanslavism'"; Cozzi, *Wolves of Belgrade*.

57 Troebst, "Slavizität," 7–8.
58 Shlapentokh, *Russia between East and West*; Bassin, Glebov, Laruelle, *Between Europe and Asia*.
59 Machitidze, "Popular Imagery, Competing Narratives and Pan-Slavism"; Suslov "Geographical Metanarratives in Russia"; more in general: "Forum: The Ukrainian Crisis"; Plokhy, *The Gates of Europe. A History of Ukraine*, 347–53.

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