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PhD THESIS

THE CROATIAN – SERBIAN ETHNIC
CONTACT ZONE
POLITICAL AND HISTORICAL ASSESMENT

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I. INTRODUCTION, AIMS

The boundaries of ethnic groups, peoples, nations, states, territories of supremacy, cultures, religions (phenomena of human group formation) have never coincided in human history, but have always crossed, completed each other. These interactions between the mentioned borderlines (being aware that they were stretching out in a different way from the different point of views of different groups) have sometimes strengthened the other, and sometimes have worked against each other weakening the whole of the distancing categories. Apart from influencing each other it is also important that these categories show a really big inclination to changes in time and space, and the reason for this is that this process is influenced by a lot of factors.

In its interactions maybe one of the most complicated processes of the previously mentioned ones during human history (during written history probably in any case) began in the XVIIIth century with the formation of modern nations. We can still see this process of progress (?) and change nowadays, too in places where it has already started before creating some level and quality of the category of nation early, but also in those areas where so far another (a narrower or wider, but in any case a different) integrated activity set has meant the dominant group-forming force for the human groups (a tribe, a clan, a family, area, etc.). This is natural, since this activity (the creating of a group) is not even culture specific, but is the same age as life on Earth itself.

In this light, in our investigation of ethnic nature in time and space of the examined South-east Europe and one part of West-Balkans we are not looking for or picking out processes that work on their own or according to special rules. Instead, we are trying to reveal the narrow time and space cross-section of one specific phenomenon of human culture from the above mentioned processes from the perspective of the twentieth century. In a broader sense these territorial frames mean the West- Balkans, and in time approximately they make up 12-13 centuries preceding our days.

The starting point of the PhD thesis is the historical introduction, study, analysis of the mixing of the Croatian and Serbian ethnic areas. The topic demonstrated is a very 'fashionable' field and question which is historically and scientifically often approached from several different point of views and which has not lost its up-to-datedness up to our present days. For that very reason several works and scholarly publications, which are different in their approach and methodology (to say nothing of the national signs and simpathies), deal with this topic. This of course resulted in the abundance of sources and bibliography, but on the other hand, it also involved difficulties notably how this question could be demonstrated in a new way. Our intention is to gain emphasis from the special progress span of the area/s with mixed ethnicity, by emphasising the inner and outer features which are different compared to its/their environment, and not from the perspective of one of the ethnic groups which make up the topic (as opposed to one part of the bibliography treated and found).

By using ethnic-geographical, and historical-geographical methods we are going to examine that part of two people's, the Serbian and Croatian people's dwelling place where they have mixed and lived together for centuries.

Our primary aim in the research is to find out how the Serbian and Croatian ethnic groups have changed their actual territorial-power borderlines geographically and how this has changed to an ethnic and cultural contact zone, how this border-, contact zone has joined and isolated later compared to its environment, and what cycles, directions, eventual rules can be observed in these relationships.

In our opinion with the long-lasting, shared dwelling place of these two ethnic groups such a contact zone was formed, primarily in the areas near the Croatian core territories,

which 'periphery' can be sharply separated from the centre from an ethnic, political, state-geographical, administrative and many other points of view and has a different progress curve. On the other hand, this specific area ethnically, and regarding its difference of many other social features has created the basis for the ethnic contact zone nature to make an effect and to expand towards the core territory and in the right moment from the periphery towards the centres as well. We would like to outline the territorial and historical changes of these effects.

It is an important task for us to define the research in time and space, for this subject could be an inexhaustible theme of several essays, dissertations of similar content and depth in its entirety.

Territorial borders, zones

Since we are talking about contact zones, it is obvious that we are not looking for an area or areas which can be separated with clear natural and social borders, but for more or less defined common ethnic-cultural zones which often change their boundaries in space. Studying their social nature in our opinion this inclination to change is more powerful, since two or more ethnical, linguistic, religious, etc. influences in a historic time appear differently in their dominant or passive form creating a new social feature established always on the previous influence (think of position changes of power of the border regions, fast religious changes, the influence of appearing standard languages, etc.).

To us this contact zone means the mixed ethnic territories designated by the two ethnic groups (Serbian and Croatian), as well as those ethnically eventually not mixed zones which do not lie right by the border of their native country, but next to the area inhabited by the other ethnic group or groups or amid such territories forming an enclave on their town. The previous definition is true if state or any other ethnically more or less defined borders do not exist. Since, if state borders do exist, even the ethnic territory within the borders of a state which is not its own nation, but is in a direct (border) contact with it is regarded as a contact zone (e.g. the Serbians of East-Herzegovina). Especially, if this separation exists on the borderline for a long time.

Taking into consideration the previously said things the research area is mainly the Krajina in Croatia, i.e. the territory of the former military border-guard land/s on the Croatian-Bosnian border together with the Croatian territories where the number of Serbs was more significant (over 10%) even before the formation of the common Yugoslavia. Furthermore, the major part of Bosnia-Herzegovina, where during the long Ottoman period a special historical-ethnic segment of the ethnic contact zone formed and developed into a Croatian-Serbian-Bosnian (a religiously defined) context existing to this day. Also, certain parts of Voivodina, most of all Syrmia, certain western and northern parts of Bačka, the coastal parts of Monte Negro lying along Bar and the Bay of Kotor, and those stretching far into Croatian territories along Dubrovnik are also regarded as a kind of contact zone, although these territories are different in nature from those of the Krajina. Apart from this we are also going to mention historically the territories which are in a direct contact with the bordered ones. However, to understand the problem these are important territories from Hungary's point of view. These are the South-Transdanubian, Hungarian territories where Serbian and Croatian minorities can be found quite close to each other up to the present, from time to time in a direct interaction.

In our present research we do not intend to include the study of all of the contact zone territories we have formulated and tried to define here and which have appeared mosaic-like in some of their elements, for it would burst the frames not only of this research, but that of many similar ones. In this study we would like to analyse mainly Serbo-Croatian contact zone territories concerning the territory of Croatia. However, we are going to refer to all the defined

areas in the historical analysis in which we are going to introduce the formation processes of the contact zone.

Territory could be defined as the Balkan buffer zone of the eastern and western Christianity with a significant Islam insertion – the Bosnians of Bosnia. However, Islam as a religious, then later as a national factor, in our opinion, has partly developed because of its role as contact zone, buffer zone (A separate chapter is going to be dedicated to this topic because of the complexity of the Bosnia question).

The seemingly insurmountable problem, chasm, which has often been narrower recently, between the official historical and geographical (most of all political, historical-geographical) point of views, bibliographies, and official political viewpoints of the previously mentioned states should also be mentioned here, of course. Our opinion is not parallel with any scientific approach, since each contains excluding, rejecting, ethnocentric elements, as well as mythological elements motivated by political, power factors by which, in our opinion, the essence of any minority existence, ethnic contact zone cannot be explained.

The time-frame of the research and its questions

The fixing of the time-frame does not put up less questions than the defining of the territorial frame, however we are in a somewhat easier situation. In the historical analysis the VI-VIIth centuries serve as a basis, starting point because this is the generally accepted period of the Slavic groups', tribes' settlement to the Balkans. This probably does not need any further explanation because of its obviousness (the prehistoric researches preceding this do not closely concern the question outlined here).

We have a different situation regarding the backbone of our study which could be also called a case-study. In this we have tried to look for corner points acceptable by modern statistics and historical science, although these, especially because of the pliability of the statistical categories concerning these fields, have not always shown themselves devoid of problems.

The starting point of 1945 can be acceptable and regarded as an epochal ridge for more reasons. On one hand it ends a period which was caused by wartime population movements, and violent actions, quite often by external factors (German, Italian, Hungarian occupied territories and influences). Respectively, it means the beginning of an era (the formation of Tito's Yugoslavia in peace time) from which a lot of processes, which are considered important and studied by us, started. On the other hand, approaching from a statistical aspect, if not the permanence and comparability of the categories in the period after 1945, but its same political-social starting-point definitely accounts for the fixing of the starting-point. However, like every territorial process, and every process in time this one is also connected to the eras preceding it in time (in our case to the period between 1918 and 1941 of the royal Yugoslavia, as well as to certain phenomena of the World War) and can be regarded as their some kind of continuation. At the same time, one of the aims of our research is to show how this epoch-changing year of 1945, which is by the way very often used in literature too with the aim of dividing eras, can hold,

The other period-question is put up by the border meaning the end of our research. This is put to the period between 2002-2004, by when the political and social changes had already happened which, started an ethnical-social development standing on a new kind of basis after the Dayton-peace, amid new, even if sometimes seeming pliable political-social frames. The censuses which show the appearance of new trends take are held within the new political borders in these years (although still not everywhere, because of political reasons).

Of course, important events have been going on in this area and its close surroundings up to the present (basic, epoch-defining events which can be called historical, i.e. the declaration of Kososvo's independence). These can cause very important changes in the area

treated with priority by us (moreover, maybe it is not daring to say that all over the world, too). However, this can rather be regarded as an actual political question at the moment, the maturing and judgement of which from due distance will take years. The years 2002-2004, and the wartime events ended by them, as well as the events directly following the wartime actions, in our opinion, perfectly show the epoch-ending, and epoch-opening beginning which started after the breaking up of the Yugoslavia in another developmental stage considered to be a seemingly peaceful era at the moment. along new borders.

II. REASERCH METHODS, VIEWPOINTS

The cultural factors of the research

When the Serbian, Bosnian and Croatian differences and similarities are examined, we have to isolate the categories along which the three ethnic groups, peoples, nations are separated. These categories have been constantly changing, re-evaluating, widening, narrowing since the XIXth century, ever since we can talk about the appearance of the national awakening among the south-Slavs depending on what kind of political interest, political period (integrated or disintegrated) and historical moment gave them birth.

These delimitations are of help especially in the XIXth and the preceding centuries, and give us important features, dividing lines, but these cannot be substituted as a national category criterion. On the other hand, and we tried to put, the modern statistics and the two most important elements of the South-Balkan national self-defining, i.e. the religion, and the linguistic, linguistic-dialectical nature appearing as a complement of the category of the national commitment in those statistics in a chart in the following way (assignd to the present national categories):

Chart 1
The relationship of religious and linguistic features in the national self-defining

	Serbian	Croatian	Bosnian
Religion	Greek ortodox (pravoslav)	Roman Catholic Geek Catholic	Muslim (Crkva bosanska)
Language 1 – Dialect	Šhto, torlakian	Šhto, Čha Kaj	Šhto
Language 2 – 'jat' reflection	e-zǒ, ije-zǒ	e-zǒ, ije-zǒ, i-zǒ	ije-zǒ (i-zǒ)

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Of course, the religious and linguistic categories do not still give a reference devoid of problems. From the problems occurring here we would refer to the nature beyond religious confession, national supremacy of the linguistic dialects which evolved primarily in the areas of contact zone nature. However, this phenomenon is a good means to show how hard it is to draw the borders in certain situations, and how many scientific approaches there are.¹ The combined use of categories narrows each defining field, especially if we apply the given categories here in a specific geographical area at the same time. Thus, we can gain such a database which is not even the aim of this research (religious, ethnographic, linguistic mapping).

¹ Not to speak of some of the natures of the religious categories beyond the system outlined here, like the Greek Catholics, the dervishes, bekhtrasis, or historically seen even the Bosnians who were called bogumils in the Middle Ages. Of course, we are dealing with these questions, problems in detail in our study

The statistical data

In our introduction we have already mentioned the limits of the use of statistical methods in the comparison of periods characterized by different political features. We can find the solution for this problem, on one hand, by the initiation, comparison and simultaneous representation of more source information. These methods are being partly used. Since our aim is not to explore and introduce the total statistical and historical-statistical literature of the area researched by us, but to make use of the help which shows the tendency of development of these data (except for the period after 1945, of course). We are not going to be lost in the numbers of statistics. For the application of a statistical map description (national census, ethnical, regional census data), the data of regional ethnical statistics are going to be used, but only for the period after World War II, which is described in a more detailed way.

Hereby we would like to say a few words about the difficulties we have met in connection with the statistics.

In the researched area there are still state configurations today (all the three states, i.e. Serbia, Croatia, but especially Bosnia-Herzegovina could be listed here) which have developed a special, politically motivated relationship with the census and its result in the treating of national conflicts of the recent past. The best example for this is the case of Bosnia-Herzegovina where there has not been a census for 17 years, since 1991. However, there has been a war conflict which basically rearranged the territorial structure. Of course, especially the military and civil peacemaking missions, sponsored by international funds, have made significant steps towards getting acquainted with and mapping the new territorial structure evolved. These attempts, however, can by no means be called satisfactory, only of information value.

In the other two countries mentioned at the moment the problem is not caused by the lack of censuses, but the positive or negative motivatedness of certain national categories in these countries being beyond the proper limit. These questions, of course, could lead us to possibly think over all the data instead of rejecting them.

Territorial bordering and describing methods

In the demonstration of ethnic, national characters in space we have tried to give the most detailed description possible, yet adjusted to the format (it is not a map or atlas in character), and in the description of procedures to give map illustrations which serve the purpose. The major problem was caused by the permanent change of the political borders of our focus area. This caused troubles especially in terms of pointing out the research area primarily on the territories of state of the present Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in the chapters after 1945. Of course, the historical projections and analyses are always determined according to the given historical moment, era. For example, the interpretation of Yugoslavian statistics in the first part of the twentieth century is causing a really big problem, because they appear in the inner territorial partitioning which consider the historical borders of that time the least. In our opinion, the inner and external border changes are quite important elements not only of administrative geography, but ethnic geography, too.

Types of maps, describing methodology

Three kinds of maps are used in our study. The first type, which would be called a sketch-map, is being used in the description of historical processes, power, ethnical centre-periphery relationships. It is also considered to be justified because in times before the twentieth century the work of ethnic mapping would require such serious work which would distract our attention from the subject, and we should mainly deal with historical mapping and its methodology. That is why, we took the already existing historical maps as a basis in times

before the XXth century (in the first place the works by Károly Kocsis), by not considering their correction and improvement to be our task.

The other type of map used is used to demonstrate the territorial dispersion and proportion of each ethnic group. Since only one ethnic group's spatial position is described on these maps (with simple, surface – line maps), they are, similarly to the previous ones, black and white.

The third type of maps was made from the combination of Teleki's striped map and the simple surface line map. These coloured maps show the relationship between the majority ethnic groups and the largest minority group, in such a way, that the dominant colour means the majority, while the change-colour means the minority.

Perhaps the use of scale categories in this type needs some explaining. If the rate of majority ethnic groups is between 35% and 55% the 1:1 combination was likewise used. Of course, in this way a lot of different rates can be found under one marking. However, our aim is not to represent the precise ethnical proportions, but to demonstrate the degree of ethnical mixing. The colour-code of the largest minority was used as the change-colour of the majority ethnic group in such a case if it reached 15%. If neither of the minority ethnic groups each has reached it (only more minority ethnic groups in all) the colour-code of the other category (grey) was used as the change-colour of the majority ethnic group (between 35%-85%).

The Croatian and Serbian words *općina/opština*, which mean district, settlement community, were used as the smallest represented, described category of the map. This has partly made our job easier (since it can be described in a smaller format than the settlement). On the other hand, this dimension is suitable for the description of mezo- and macro-level processes. The process of change, transformation of these territorial structures (*općina*) has been observed in these describing methods. This transformation is the most remarkable in Croatia which has a county system, and in Bosnia-Herzegovina which is the most broken up regarding its public administration.

III: RESULTS

Geographical influences of the historical processes; main intersections

In our opinion, the Serbian and Croatian relations probably had already existed before the Balkan appearance of the two ethnically separable Slavic tribes. However, by the occupation of their south-eastern European dwelling place this relation has been considered of key importance up to the present, and from today's perspective has been significant especially since the XXth century for both (together with the Bosnian all the three) people.

The research described outlines well that the focus areas (according to the given guideline system) reacted similarly to certain social space processes, despite the fact that the population of that area, which was of different ethnic groups, religions, status, was a different participant of these processes.

We would like to highlight the following hot spots of the Serbian question in Croatia (within the Croatian-Serbian contact zone) which mean are very important in an ethnic, historical-geographical analysis.

We would like to emphasize the importance of the 'Vlah' question which serves as a basis for the formation of the contact zone. In our approach, we are trying to explain the 'Vlah' question along the Vlah-Serbian evolution, by the Vlachs' (romanized Balkan natives) continuous, mainly Orthodox religion and by their becoming Serbian in the XVIth and XVIIth

centuries. However, this is only considered to be a valid proposition only in our field of research.

Regarding the question of the borderland by describing the political, ethnical movements we can see how the military and religious (Orthodox) privileges of the Vlahs-Serbian by the political ambitions of the Habsburgs have become a real contact zone of our field of research. The special legal and social system of the borderland has shaped rather than divided the Croats and Serbs who live here. This can be seen in the historical and social processes described within the military systems which becomes visible in the national integrated graphs which start and develop in a different way, but several times run parallel. The arguments about law and order in the Middle Ages meant the first conflicts. However, the national being of these is disputed. We consider the confessional, religious clash of views from this period more important which were later wrongly endowed with a national look. One of the elements of this religious question is the trial of Greek-Catholicism (Uniat) which was not very successful in the contact zone, and the presence of this church is today invisible.

Our other focus area is Bosnia-Herzegovina which is also isolated territorially. This area (later state unit) is already in the beginning endowed with special mixture of east and west, orthodoxy and western Christianity, continental and mediterranean, isolating and integrating features. Today it is already known that the medieval Bosnia, which rather nearing to the Catholic west, and less to the Byzantine east, has a special developmental curve, in which one of the most characteristic, exciting and misunderstood element is the Bosnian (wrongly Bogumil) church. Although in our opinion this religious phenomenon did not play any role in the later national development of Bosnia-Herzegovina, but shows very well the transition and contact zone nature of the area. It again has a special developmental curve within the Ottoman Empire. As the result of the Islam's gaining ground here, the ideological and religious basis for the Bosnian and Muslim nation is formed mixed with regional self-consciousness and legal privileges. This privileged legal status applies first of all to the believers of the Islam, and less to the Pravoslav Church, while the legal aspects of the Catholics are a result of the privilegelessness. The Ottoman rule, which lasted for a long time, forms its borderlands which have a special, ethnical (Vlah-Serbian) character, too as a reflection of the already mentioned Croatian borderland. This will later have a strong influence on the contact zone in Croatia.

The influence of the most important historical-geographical periods on the formation of the contact zone and on the change of its ethnic composition:

Chart 2. The historical-geographical determining factors of the formation of the contact zone until the XV–XVIIIth centuries

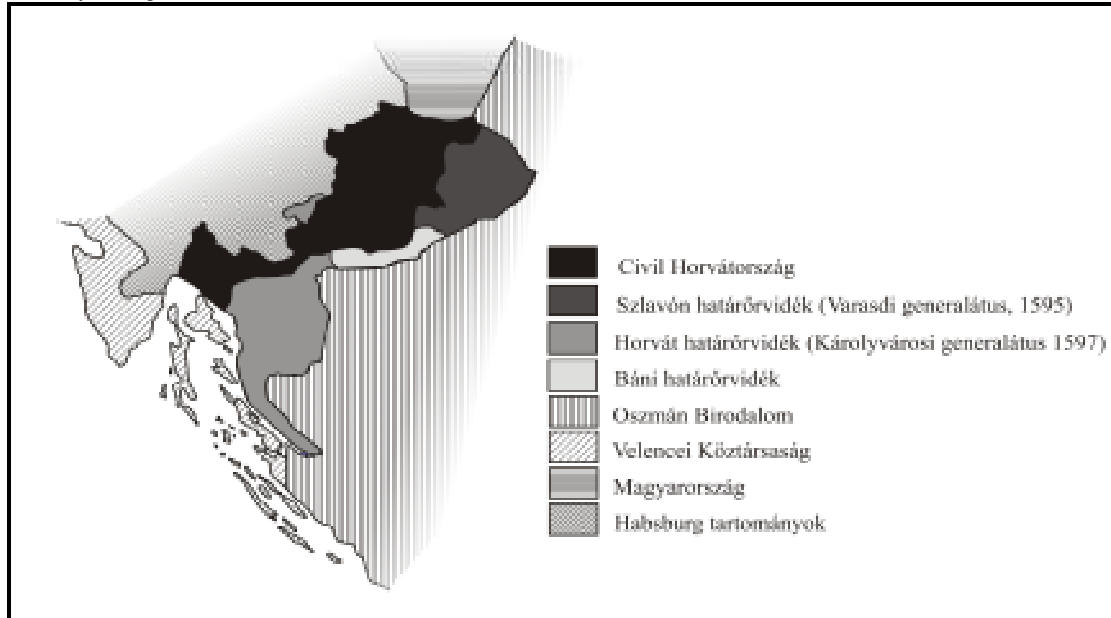
	Influence	Territorial appearance
Migrations: Serbian, Vlah immigrations, Croatian emigration.	The appearance of Vlachs, Serbians, narrowing of Croatian territories.	Bosznia-Herzegovina, Croatia.
New religious factors: Islam. The forming and spreading of the Pravoslav Church institutional system. Greek Catholic.	Bosnian national basis. The (last) period of the Vlachs' becoming Serbian. Serbians who are becoming more Croatian (Vlachs), decrease in the Serbian-Pravoslav denomination.	Bosnia-Herzegovina, Until the XVIIth century Slavonia, Dalmatia The whole of the area engaged in the research. Croatian borderland, Dalmatia.
Linguistic influences: increase of the new stokav dialect area.	The end of the Vlachs' linguistic Slavonicization.	The spread of the new stokav dialects on the former territories of the kaj, old što, and čakav dialects.
Political influences: Intesive border changes, development of the power politics structures.	Strengthening of the border defence function, development of the the privileged legal systems.	Borderland, Slavonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Edited by A. Végh 2008.

The multi-colouredness of the elements forming the social space structures are formed in this period which also determine the basis for the ethnical contact zone later on. We can see that the number and influence of the transitional structures which serve as a basis for the contact zone are very big. In the religious processes we should emphasize the wider territorial appearance of the processes not concerning the core areas in the contact zone (Greek Catholicism, Islam). Religious identity in this period (and in our territory, maybe in the whole of the Balkans up to the present) is primary.

Illustration 1
The territorial frames of the formation of the Serbian and Croatian contact zone
(Croatian areas at the turn of the XVIth and XVIIth century)

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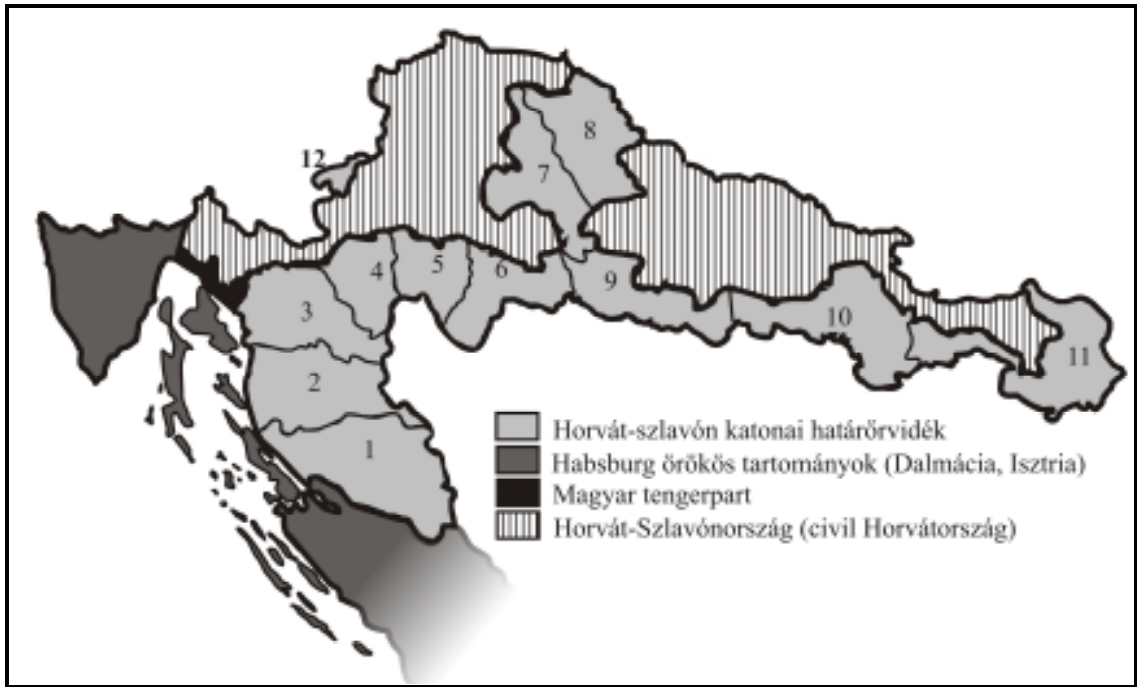
Chart 3. The historical-geographical determining factors of the structural consolidation of the contact zone until the XVIIIth and XIXth centuries

	Influence	Territorial appearance
Migrations: Serbian, German, Hungarian immigration. Economic emigration in large numbers.	Increase in the proportion of the immigrants. Decrease of the Serbian and Croatian elements.	Slavonia, borderland. Borderland, Dalmatia.
Új vallási tényezők: Formation of new religious centre in the area.	Instrumentalization of religious fights	Dalmatia. Sremski Karlovci – new centre of the Serbian mitropolita
Linguistic influences: Formation of standard languages, further gaining ground.	Spreading of the national idea based on the Serbian language.	The whole examined area.
Political influences: Appearance of the national political movements. Illirism as integrated identity. The structure of power politics changes only towards the end of the periods (Bosnia-Herzegovina).	Short episode of the French power politics. Ethnic polarization and integration at the same time. Strengthening of the Bosnian regionalism.	Dalmatia, the borderland south from the Sava. The whole examined area. Bosnia-Herzegovina.

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The transitional structures solidify, then later they transform significantly (the annihilation of borderlands, the development of the religious multi-colouredness of Bosnia), although not on the legal, social basis of the previous period. The modern national idea appears which then is trying to move forward along the described categories also in the transitional structures of the contact zone. However, its influence is different here than in the core areas (the ethnically homogeneous Serbia or some Croatian-Slavonian areas). The modern nationalism in these areas has to surmount geographical and social obstacles, and has to partly correspond to them which precisely derive from the contact zone nature. The politics bearing integrated identity appears.

Illustration 2
Croatian territories at the turn of the XVIIIth and XIXth century
(regiments are marked with numbers)



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Chart 4

The historical-geographical determining factors of the transformation of the contact zone at the beginning of the XXth century

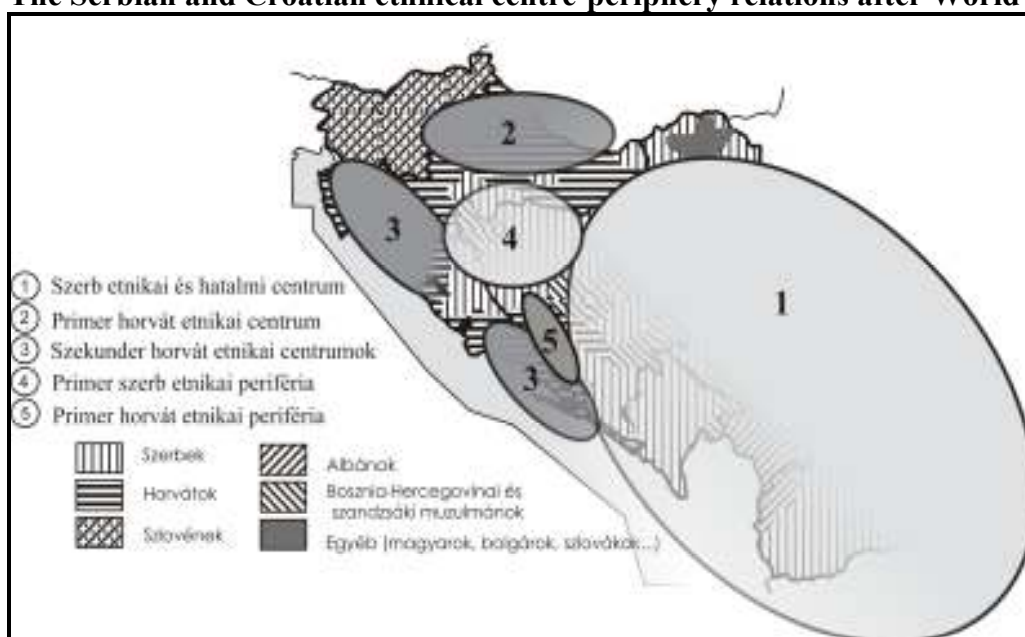
	Influence	Territorial appearance
Migrations: Strengthening of the economic emigration. Political settlements.	Small change in the territory of the Croatian and Serbian ethnic groups, decrease in the density of population on the peripheries. 'Solunasi', Serbian group.	The whole examined area, emphasizing Dalmatia. Slavonia, Baranya.
New religious factors	-	-
Linguistic influences:	The common language of the common state gains ground.	The whole examined area.
Political influences: unified unitarian state with the demand for a unified nation.	The appearance of Yugoslavian, as an ethnical element.	The whole examined area.

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The new, Yugoslavian factor appears in our focus area with two different social backgrounds. The first one as a continuation of the XIXth century, the second one with the integrated meaning of the new territorial unit which brings along its stronger ethnic influence, too, but this is also a political aim at the same time. The religious element is pushed in the background, and the linguistic one comes to the front, though their importance in the national self-defining lies still in the old religion. The new state configuration (Yugoslavia) gives birth to the gravest form of the national polarization which, by its root, is not characteristic of this contact zone. This could be paralleled to the fact that it is the first time since the formation of the contact zone that an external political force has appeared which is not the result of the inner development of the contact zone (even if it is not dominant regionally, it is dominant on state level). These tendencies do not push the direction of the contact zone towards an ethnical direction on a political ground (Democrat – Peasants' Party Coalition), but the result is again offered by the state level (Serbian – Croatian Settlement) and not by the regional level.

Illustration 3

The Serbian and Croatian ethnical centre-periphery relations after World War I



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Chart 5

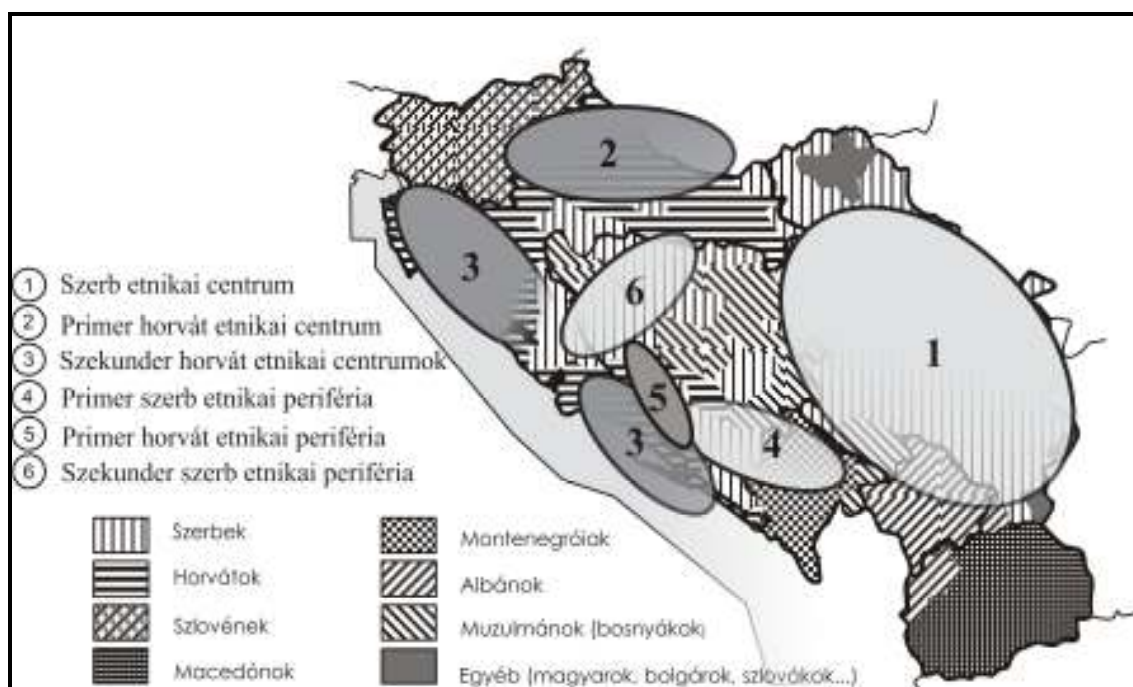
The system of the influences of World War II in the contact zone

	Influence	Territorial influence
<p>Migrations: pursuits, first genocide/s of minorities.</p> <p>Partisan terror, Croatian emigration at the end of the war.</p> <p>Floods of German refugees.</p>	<p>The Serbian and Bosnian-Muslim population becomes sparse.</p> <p>The Croatian element becomes sparse.</p> <p>The disappearing of the German ethnic group.</p>	<p>Borderland, south-west Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina.</p> <p>First of Eastern Herzegovina, Dalmatia</p> <p>Slavonia, Baranya.</p>
<p>New religious factors: the establishment of the Croatian Pravoslav Church.</p>	-	The whole examined area.
<p>Linguistic influences: the powerful central separation of the Croatian and Serbian standard languagea, the introduction of spelling based on word analysis in the Great-Croatian state.</p>	Of a small degree.	The whole examined area.
<p>Political influences: Disintegrating Yugoslavian political system, the formation of the Great-croatian state.</p> <p>The appearance and victory of the communist partisan movement.</p>	<p>Croatianization of the Muslims of Bosnia, with little efficiency.</p> <p>The representation of the national unity in the new political ideology, the basis for a new integral yugoslavism.</p>	The whole examined area.

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During World War II an entirely new element is infiltrating in the history of the contact zone on the part of both fighting parties, the genocide, i.e. the violent, total changing, homogenization of the ethnic space structure in a short time. After the end of the war these actions stopped, but they have been explored only unilaterally up to the present. The Yugoslavian power, which was organizing itself after war, already during the war used the ideology of Yugoslavism wrapped up in the internationalist unity on new grounds.

Illustration 4
The Serbian and Croatian ethnical centre-periphery relations after World War II



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The questions of the Croatian and Serbian contact zone within the socialist Yugoslavia 1945-1991

Periods:

1945 – 1952 active migrational period after the World War

1952 – 1991 slow (peacetime, passive) migrational period:

- the appearance of the 'new yugoslavism',
- the influences of the active foreign guest work (1960-1980),
- stabilization of the inner migrational trends (ethnic homogenization),
- the formation of new nations (Muslim, Bosnian).

Chart 6. The division of the most important ethnic groups of Croatia by censuses (given in %)

	1931 ²	1948	1953	1961	1971	1981	1991
Croatians	72,32	79,20	79,55	80,29	79,38	75,08	78,10
Serbiens	18,45	14,47	15,02	15,02	14,16	11,55	12,16
Muslims	0,11	0,03	0,41	0,07	0,42	0,52	0,91
Jugoslavians	-	-	-	0,37	1,90	8,24	2,22
Total of South-Slavs		93,70	94,98	95,75	95,86	95,39	94,19
Other		6,30	5,02	4,25	4,14	4,61	5,81

Edited by A. Végh 2008.

The slow decrease of the proportion of the Serbians affected especially the territories of the contact zone sensitively, since the social-economic development of these territories was lower. The common Yugoslavian state was not considering real regionalism, but majority nations which helped the migration and assimilation. Instead of the local (e.g. which considers the contact zones) solutions the state apparatus preferred the central solutions. The fear of national separatism did not favour the local initiations, especially if they were of national feature. The special solutions of the ethnic contact zones were only emphasized by the nationalist programmes which rule each other out, though they did not offer a solution to its problems (Croatian spring, SANU Memorandum 1986). However, the contact zone, which was formed before centuries, lived through this period without bigger and fast changes. Its unsolved problems, however, did not strengthen the classical contact role which became the political instrument of the centres with the crisis of 1990.

The situation and inner development of Bosnia-Herzegovina, even if with a delay, brought about the social developmental stage in which its biggest community could define itself as a recognized nation helyzete és belső. In this process to join the state territory and the nation is an entirely logical step, but it was kept back here by the multi-culturality by leaving open the answers which aim at finding a solution. By the formation and declaration of this nation a kind of slow territorial reorganization takes place paralelly, the primary cause of which is the already mentioned migration within the member republics. The Bosnian-Muslim majority is formed in the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

² The data from 1931 are estimates and counted data, since Croatia did not exist within these borders then, so staisitically we can only talk about estimated and counted figures.

The strong regional and religious identity of the Muslim Bosnians in Bosnia-Herzegovina, of which we have already talked about, did not evolve until the XXth century in such manner of the national integration than for example in the case of Croatian (Catholic) and Serbian (Orthodox) people. This process started parallelly with the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy partly with Benjamin Kállay's attempt to form a Bosnian nation. The necessary social factors for the further development of this process were not at disposal in the period of the royal Yugoslavia, since the entire territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina belonged mostly to the Serbian (and in a smaller part to the Croatian) power interest and territory of the ethnic zone (and the largest religious group was really the Orthodox in this period, see chart 7, and illustration 3).

A major change was brought about by the national-regionalizational politics of 'Tito's' Yugoslavia which was formed in 1945. This politics established the modern Muslim (later Bosnian) nation.

Chart 7
The ethnic composition and density of population of Bosnia and Herzegovina based on the censuses in the XXth century

	A népszámlálás éve								
	1910*	1921*	1931*	1948	1953	1961	1971	1981	1991
Muzulmán	606.306	587.316	718.079	788.403	-	842.248	1.4824.30	1.630.033	1.902.956
Horvát	395.021	417.645	547.949	614.123	654.915	711.665	772.491	758.140	760.852
Szerb	817.206	817.224	1.028.139	1.136.116	1264270	1.406.057	1.393.148	1.320.738	1.366.104
Jugoszláv	-	-	-	-	891250	275.883	43.796	32.6316	24.2682
Összlakosság	1.898.044	1.890.440	2.323.555	2.565.277	2.847.459	3.277.948	3.746.111	4.12.4256	4.377.033
Népsűrűség fő/km²	37,1	36,9	45,1	50,1	55,6	64,0	73,2	80,6	85,5

*-According to their religious belief (Muslim-Islam, Serbian-Pravoslav, Croatian-Catholic)
Source: Federalni statistički zavod, edited by A. Végh 2004

A very important ethnic change takes place in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the Yugoslavian period between 1945-1991, the elements of which are the following:

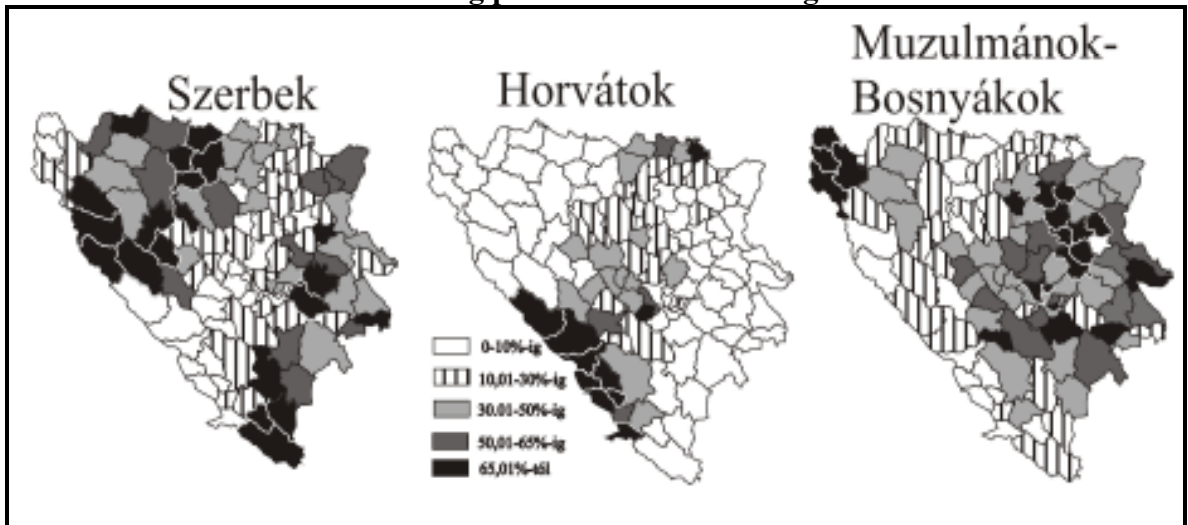
-The powerful migration of Serbians to Serbia, and the significant migration of Croatians to Croatia mainly for economic reasons.

-The strengthening of the Muslim-Bosnian national idea.

-As a result of the bigger natural growth and the smaller migrational inclination of the Muslim-Bosnian nation it becomes the largest Bosnian ethnic group.

In this period the Serbian-Croatian contact zone character of the area was a result of its role which appeared by the buffer zone character built by the Serbians and Croatians in Bosnai-Herzegovina whose number was decreasing continuously.

Illustration 5. Ethnic dwelling places in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1991

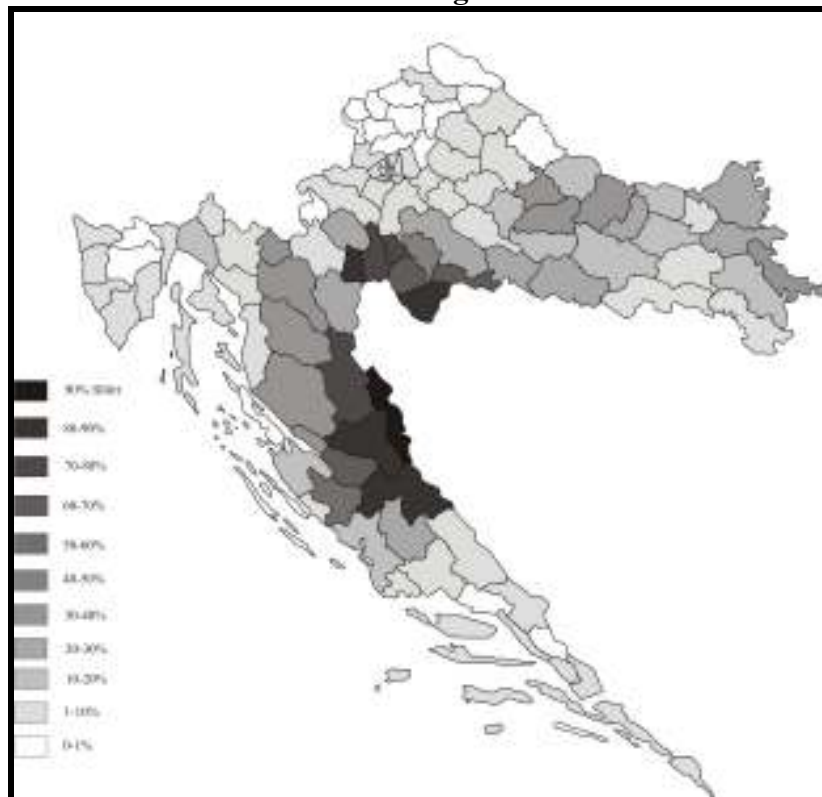


Edited by A. Végh 2008.

The breaking up of Yugoslavia and the quasi cessation of the contact zone on the territory of Croatia, the change of the ethnic dwelling places in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The census in 1991 still recorded the Serbian territorial arrangement in our focus area, the historical formation of which has been given in full details so far.

Illustration 6. Territorial arrangement of Serbs in Croatia

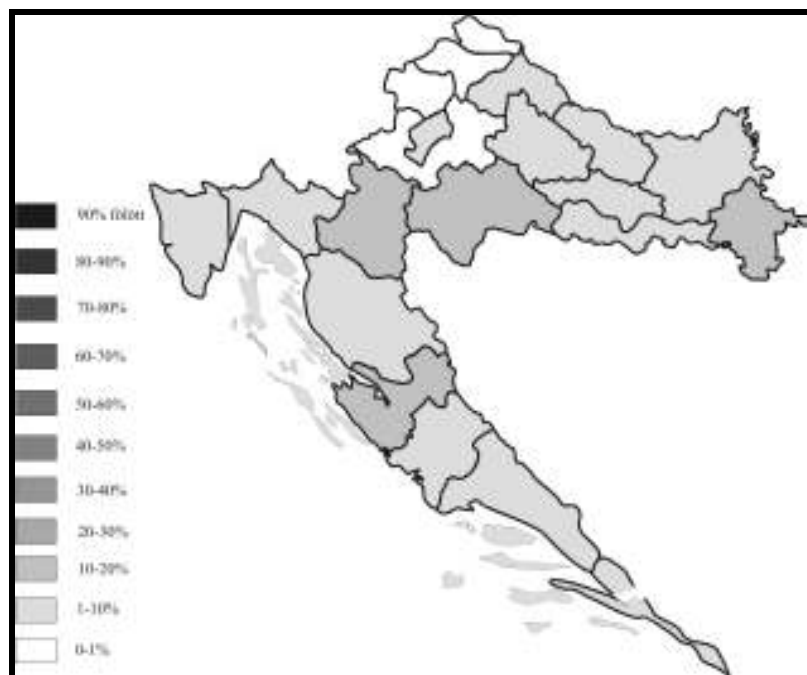


Edited by A. Végh 2008.

Although ethnicity was not the only reason for the breaking up of Yugoslavia, yet it played the most important role in human fates and social-geographical changes. A series of events similar to the genocides in World War II began on both sides in the Croatian-Serbian contact zone, most of all in the Krajina area which was controlled by the Serbs. As a result of these processes almost the whole Croatian population disappeared from the Serb-controlled SAO Krajina area. The number of Serbs also decreased significantly in the Croatian controlled areas.

The next big ethnic change was brought about by the integration of the Serb-controlled territories into Croatian state territory by the repeated acts of war. This process concerned the territories of the Krajina and West-Slavonia, from where the majority of the Serbs fled to the Serb-controlled territories of Bosnia-Herzegovina before and as a result of the Oluja and Bljesak military operations in the summer of 1995. This reintgration process on the territories along the Danube is not an event of war, but an agreement which took place according to the Erdut Settlement. Thus, the Serb part of the Danube became the only territory from where the Serbs did not flee in large numbers, and the majority of them preserved their homes before the war, though there was no significant migration almost until 2002, and only partly after that. The Serb ethnic proportion and dwelling places were formed as a result of that and were recorded by the Croatia census.

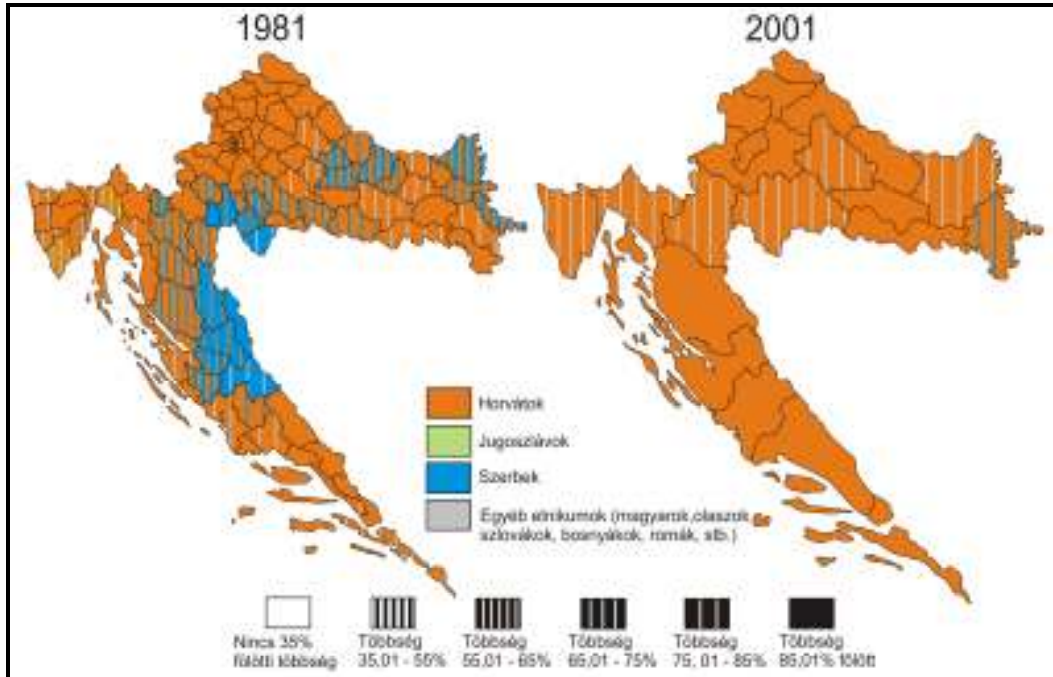
Illustration 7. The change in the numbers and proportion of Serbs as a result of the acts of war in 2001



Edited by A. Végh 2008.

The change in the contact zone can especially be observed if we compare the proportion of the ethnically mixed territories at the two dates. In part it is a result of the changes of the territorial structures, but most of all of the population exchange and ethnic cleansing taking place at the time of war.

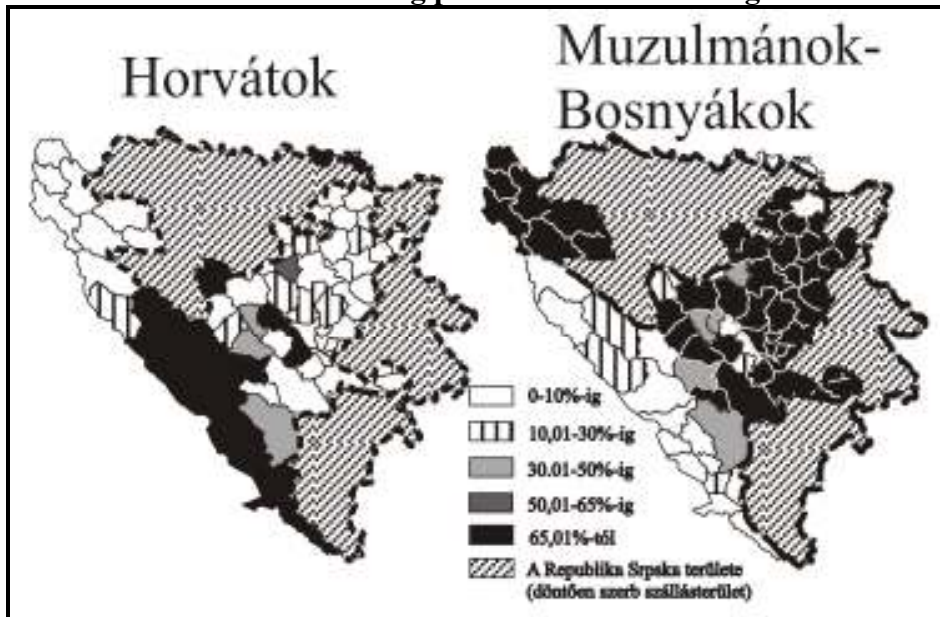
Illustration 8. The division and ethnic proportion of the territories with mixed population in Croatia in 1981



Edited by A. Végh 2008.

The change of the ethnic dwelling place created three ethnic zones which can be well distinguished from each other. The Serb territory is separated by political borders (of inner entity, achieved by means of war along the frontlines), while the other two along federal-administrative borders. These two territories are Republika Srpska and Federacija Bosne i Hercegovine.

Illustration 9. Ethnic dwelling places in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2003



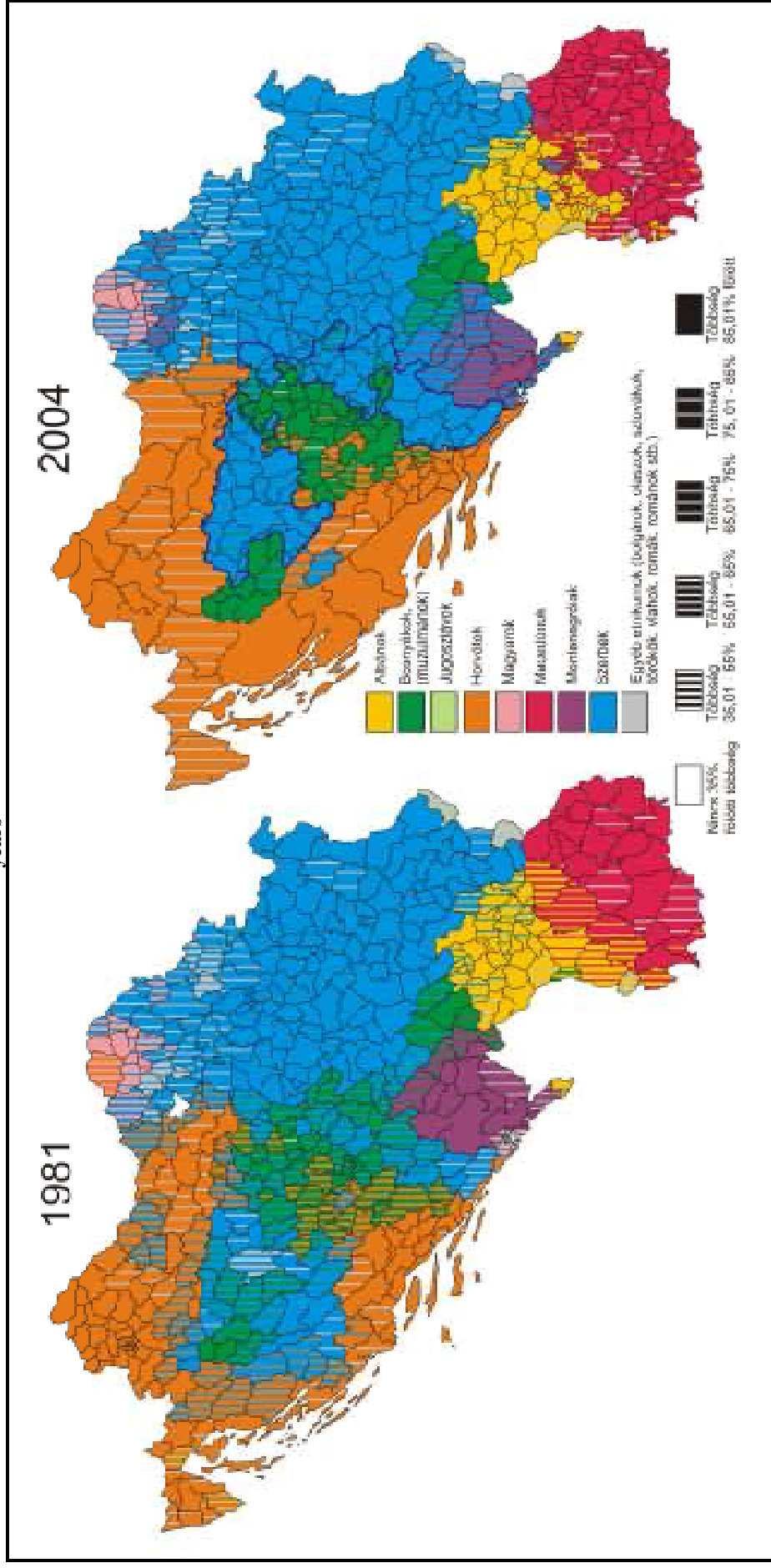
Edited by A. Végh 2008.

Not even the return of minorities which was supported by the Dayton-peace pact managed to ease this new territorial-ethnic structure created by war, only on certain local levels.

The biggest questions of the territorial structure are still left open, and it is of high importance how the relationship between the Croatian cantons in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, as well as the Muslim-Bosnian and Croatian relations are going to develop. Besides this, it is really exciting to see how the unity or diversity of the dual Serbian dwelling place appears (the eastern parts – along the Drina and East-Herzegovina, and the western parts – the Bosnian Krajina). Since the total isolation of the Bosnian Krajina, which is close to Zagreb as centre also in a natural way, from the Croatian territories from an economic point of view is not logical and is counterproductive. Also, the nearing can create a new common sphere of interest even if it is not an ethnic, but an economic one. like to a centre.

The processes described here were not isolated ethnic processes in the Croatian-Serbian contact zone, but parts of a bigger south-east European national evolution. The major part of the contact zone disappeared during this process (Kosovo, Bosnia.-Herzegovina, Voivodina), but at the same time new hot spots (Macedonia, Monte Negro) were created which make every ethnic geographical research timely on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. As the last part of our thesis we are going to compare the Croatian-Serbian contact zone to other similar special territories with mixed ethnicity. During the comparison a lot of parallels (of the dwelling place, migrational, administrative parallels) can be observed, by which the supposed higher structure seems to be justified.

Illustration 8. The division of territories with mixed population, their ethnic proportions and changes on the territory of the former Yugoslavia in the past 20 years



Edited by: A. Végh 2008.

IV. The further directions of the research

- The enlargement of the number and database of such ethnic maps which show the inner ethnic changes of the contact zone unambiguously.
- The enlargement, working up, analysis of further statistical database.
- Concentrated territorial case-studies on the territory of the contact zone, analysis of 'hot spots' with comparative feature.
- The question of Croatian and Serbian groups in Hungary and the study of ethnic zones of the hereby concerned territories.
 - The South-Transdanube as the Hungarian part of the Croatian-Serbian contact zone.
 - The territories along the Danube, Bácska and Maros in Hungary, as the southern historic extensions of the Croatian-Serbian contact zone.

Further study and comparison of the possible contact zones in the Balkans:

The Serbian-Albanian contact zone, the problem of Kosovo.

Analysis of the Serb-Montenegro question according to the contact zone.

The Gorans and Torbes, as participants of contacts of the Macedonian-Albanian ethnic territories.

The role of the Slavo-Macedonian question in the Greek-Macedonian conflict.

Contact zone study of the regional and local territories: Tetovo, Mostar, Kosovska Mitrovica, the valley of Preševo, Pirin Macedonia, the totrlak and sop question in East Serbia

The duality of the Albanian state and the geg-tosk tribes, the questions of the possibility of the research of Central Albania contact zone.

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