Competing nationalisms

The Race of Slobodan Milošević and the Serbian Orthodox Church

for the Serbian Nation

By

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Abstract

The importance of the religious factor in the disintegration process of Yugoslavia is not subject to debate. However, there is no consensus in the relevant literature about the relationship between church and state in Serbia during the 1990s. There are sources that present Milošević and the Serbian Orthodox Church as allies, and others that emphasize the hostile nature of this relationship.

This thesis intends to offer a new perspective on the topic by arguing that two competing nationalisms existed side by side on Serbian inhabited territories in the 1990s: a religious nationalism represented by the Serbian Orthodox Church and a secular nationalism represented by the Milošević-regime. Both of these nationalisms claimed to represent Serbian national interests. However, they both understood national interests differently. They offered two competing alternatives of national existence, on the one hand a „theodemocracy" led by believers of the Orthodox faith, protecting Serbian interests under the guidance of an ethnic church, and on the other hand a secular, homogenous Greater Serbia free from the internal Catholic and Islam threats, and also limiting the big ambitions of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Even though Milošević was a non-believer, he realized that it is Orthodoxy along which the mobilization of the population for his cause was easiest. The church also tried to instrumentalize Milošević for its own goals, hoping that it would benefit from a politician that finally stood up for Serbian interests.

These two parallel but rival nationalisms strengthened each other, but also competed for control over the Serbian nation.

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[1] In sub-titles 2.1.1. – 2.1.4., I use the exact titles Brubaker uses: Rogers Brubaker, Religion and Nationalism: Four Approaches, *Nations and Nationalism* 18: 1 (2012).

1. Introduction

On April 19 2013, after ten rounds of negotiations led by the European Union, Serbia and Kosovo finally came to an agreement regarding the normalization of their relationship. As a reaction, the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church issued a communiqué, in which it denounced the agreement, calling it a „surrender" of Serbia's „centuries-old most important territory in spiritual and historical terms". The communiqué also called upon the Serbian people not to „recognize the tyranny of force and injustice but to consider Kosovo and Metohija always as their country for all times and at the same time not denying that it is also the land of those ethnic Albanians who have been living there together with Serbs for centuries".[2]

It seems that the religious factor and the Serbian Orthodox Church itself is and has always played a very important role in the Serbian national question. Religious differences also tend to be regarded as one of the central causes leading up to the disintegration of Yugoslavia. Primordialist approaches consider religion as a principal element constituting "ancient hatreds" among the different ethnic groups of Yugoslavia, while modernist approaches emphasize how religious elements were used in top-down efforts to construct the nation. Religion and nationalism are widely interconnected phenomena in the region and therefore no account of the disintegration process of Yugoslavia leaves this topic unattended.

However, there is no consensus in the relevant literature about the nature of the relationship between church and state in Serbia during the 1990s. A large part of the literature depicts the

[2] Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church. "Communiqué. Addressing the state of Serbia and the Serbian people regarding the signing of the agreement in Brussels", Serbian Orthodox Church. http://www.spc.rs/eng/communique_holy_synod_bishops_serbian_orthodox_church_0 (accessed May 20, 2013).

relationship between the Milošević-regime and the Serbian Orthodox Church as a partnership, serving and reinforcing each other.[3] Other sources emphasize the hostile nature of this relationship.[4] In many works on the topic a changing relationship from cooperation to conflict between church and state is described.[5]

This thesis intends to offer a new perspective on the topic firstly by arguing that two competing nationalisms existed side by side on Serbian inhabited territories during the researched period: a religious nationalism represented by the Serbian Orthodox Church and a secular nationalism represented by the Milošević-regime. Both of these nationalisms claimed to represent Serbian national interests. However, they both understood national interests differently. This is why religious and secular nationalism reinforced each other but were rivals at the same time. Secondly, a new perspective will be brought in by placing state-church relations in Serbia in the 1990s into a general analytical framework of relations between religion and nationalism.

In the first, theoretical part of the thesis I will examine the literature of relations between religion and nationalism and religion and ethnicity. I will use Rogers Brubaker's *Religion and Nationalism: four approaches* article as a starting point, as I have not found a more profound and logical categorization of approaches concerning the relation in question. Brubaker describes four categories through which analyses of the relationship between religion and nationalism is possible: (i) „religion and nationalism as analogous phenomena", (ii) „religion

[3] E.g. Branimir Anzulović, *Heavenly Serbia. From Myth to Genocide (*New York: New York University Press, 1999); Ivan Iveković, "Nationalism and the Political Use and Abuse of Religion: The Politicization of Orthodoxy, Catholicism and Islam in Yugoslav Successor States", *Social Compass* 49:4 (2002).

[4] E.g. Radmila Radić, "The Church and the 'Serbian Question'" in *The Road to War in Serbia. Trauma and Catharsis* ed. Nebojša Popov (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2000).

[5] E.g. Vjekoslav Perica, *Balkan Idols. Religion and Nationalism in Yugoslav States,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Sabrina P. Ramet, *Balkan Babel. The Disintegration of Yugoslavia from the Death of Tito to the Fall of Milošević* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2002); Nicolas Miletitch, "L'église orthodoxe serbe", *Politique étrangère* 61:1 (1996).

as a cause or explanation of nationalism", (iii) "religion as imbricated or intertwined with nationalism", (iv) „religious nationalism as a distinctive kind of nationalism".[6] Brubaker's article also served as a primary source of my literature review, as it is not only a valuable analysis but also a compilation of the most important literature about the topic. In the first part of the thesis I endeavored to reexamine the suggested literature according to my own understanding of Brubaker's categories and to support Brubaker's arguments by complementing his literature with other sources, especially those that concern the topic in the Yugoslav setting.

In the second part of the thesis I attempt to describe the development of relations between church and state in Serbia during the disintegration process of Yugoslavia, up to 1995. As the story would be far from complete without a more perspectivical, historical background, I will arbitrarily highlight and explain those historic moments and myths without which the examined relationship would be difficult to understand.

The second part of the thesis will basically argue that the narratives of the Serbian Orthodox Church set the ground for the nationalist turn in the end of the 1980s in Serbia. As ethnic tensions were taboo topics of the party ideology of "brotherhood and unity", the political regime neither acknowledged nor interfered with the ethnically-related conflicts until the end of the 1980s. Thus, during this decade the church was the only institution that overtly stood up to represent the interests of the Serbian nation.

Concerning the actual period in question, the 1990s, first I will attempt to give a factual account of how the political sphere understood and used or abused religion and vice versa. Following this factual account, I will separately describe the aims and claims of the two competing nationalisms and finally define those areas where the interests of the religious and secular nationalisms met and where they diverged.

[6] Rogers Brubaker "Religion and Nationalism: Four Approaches." *Nations and Nationalism* 18: 1 (2012): 4.

As for common grounds, both state and church claimed to represent Serbian national interests, which meant that both actors shared certain principles and strategies. One of these was the common enemy, as both state and church regarded the Catholic and Muslim population of Yugoslavia as the potential threat to Serbian national existence. Another common ground was the politics of victimization. The narrative of victimization discarded the partisan rhetoric emphasizing brotherhood and unity, and instead stressed the periods of history when Serbs fell victim to adversary ethnic groups or ideologies. The moral superiority of the suppressed was emphasized by both church and party ideologists and it was used to legitimate efforts to recreate a Serbian „empire", an endeavour embraced by both church and state, although different in its scope and means. Finally, territorial ambitions also provided a common platform, as the defence of Serbian interests under the circumstances of war only seemed possible by extending or preserving Serbian sovereignty over all Serbian inhabited territories. If the church meant only spiritual or also territorial sovereignty is one of the questions that the thesis would like to answer.

Apart from the above common characteristics state and church both envisioned completely different systems for the Serbianhood to live in. The Orthodox clergy envisioned a theodemocratic society governed by religious scholars and politicians who practice their religion, with the Orthodox Church playing the role of the central national institution. On the other hand it is very unlikely that Slobodan Milošević thought of anything similar. He was not driven by religion morally, but he realized how to abuse religion and religious myths in order to mobilize masses and to amass political power. But what he envisioned was an ethnically clean Serbia, free from the dominance of any authority apart from his own.

The conclusion of the thesis will go back to Rogers Brubaker's typology of relations between religion and nationalism and try to place the Serbian case study in this context.

This thesis will come to the conclusion that two separate nationalisms existed on Serbian inhabited territories in the 1990s: a secular and a religious one. These two rival but parallel processes strengthened each other but also competed for power and influence over society and for control over the Serbian nation.

As far as the methodology of the thesis is concerned, it is primarily based on secondary literature, although - when available - I endeavored to use primary sources as well. I conducted a five-day field trip in Belgrade in the course of which I carried out interviews with Serbian experts on state-church relations.[7] It was also my intention to do research in the archives of the Patriarchate in Belgrade, but due to time constraints and lack of information, I only learned upon arrival that access to the archives can only be granted by the Holy Synod, and the process usually takes up to two months. Therefore, I only had access to the library of the Patriarchate.

I also feel the need here to draw the attention to the topic-specific constraints that my interviewees talked about. Radmila Radić, the researcher of the Institute for the Recent History of Serbia, one of the most renowned experts on state-church relations emphasized the fact that the archives of the Federal Ministry of Religious Affairs (*Savezno Ministarstvo Vera*) responsible for the relationship with the religious communities at the time of Milošević are still missing.[8] Therefore, we do not have the official documentation about the content of the relations between church and state from the state's side. Živica Tucić, analyst of religious affairs also argued similarly when he drew my attention to the fact that many relevant events were not adequately documented and most things evolved through personal conversations.[9] The role of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the disintegration process of Yugoslavia is a topic

[7] Initially I planned to conduct interviews with Orthodox clergyman at the Patriarchate in Belgrade but I did not find anyone at the time of my field trip who was available for or willing to give an interview.

[8] Radmila Radić, Interview by author (Serbia, Belgrade, Institut za Noviju Istoriju Srbije, 13. April 2011).

[9] Živica Tucić, Interview by author (Serbia, Belgrade, 14. April 2011).

that only people and researchers outside the Serbian Orthodox Church want to disclose and understand. Most clergyman, especially those who were in one way or another involved in the conflict do not talk about this sensitive topic.[10] The topic therefore still offers many unanswered questions and room for further research.

[10] Tucić, interview.

2. Religion and nationalism – a theoretical background

The nature of the relationship between nationalism and religion is subject to debate. Nationalism can be understood both as a secular and as a religious phenomenon and our understanding of it also influences our thinking about tendencies of secularization and desecularization. In this part of the thesis I will present the four possible approaches Brubaker uses to analyze the relationship between nationalism and religion. Then, I will discuss the theory of secularization and its criticism and close the chapter by presenting the theoretical background the literature on state-church relations in the context of Yugoslavia in the researched period offers.

2.1. Rogers Brubaker's four approaches of studying the relationship between religion and nationalism

Rogers Brubaker's 2012 article, titled *Religion and nationalism: four approaches,* constructs an analytical system to alleviate the study of the vast amount of literature written on the relationship between nationalism and religion. In the article Brubaker emphasizes that the four categories he sets up are not mutually exclusive. His categories are different ways to approach the topic, and therefore any of them could be used to analyze a single case study.[11]

In this part of the thesis I set out from the literature Brubaker suggests in his article, but I analyze this literature according to my own understanding of Brubaker's typology, and highlight those authors and arguments that relate most to my case study. Of course, I also complement the literature used by Brubaker with other sources, especially those that examine the relationship between religion and nationalism in the Yugoslav context.

[11] Brubaker, "Religion and Nationalism", 15.

2.1.1. „Religion and nationalism as analogous phenomena"[12]

The first approach Brubaker examines includes those arguments that either draw a parallel between nationalism and religion or describe the two as identical phenomena, that is, nationalism as a kind of religion.

Brubaker features the writings of Carlton Hayes, according to whom nationalism is in many ways similar to religion. Firstly, both religion and nationalism have a god. The god of nationalism can be a tangible patron, or patron saint but it can also be the abstract idea of the fatherland or *patrie.*[13] Secondly, religion and nationalism both build upon emotional and imaginatory elements, as Hayes puts it: „The imagination builds an unseen world around the eternal past and the everlasting future of one's nationality".[14] Thirdly, both nationalism and religion are social phenomena whose „public rites [are] performed in the name and for the salvation of the community".[15] Furthermore, both are connected to a chosen people, both possess a mission, both use a sophisticated symbolism, have holy days, sacred places, a mythology, that is not necessarily and most of the „believers" do not expect to be based on historical evidence, both are driven by a „collective faith" and demonise traitors.[16] Hayes therefore argues that even though nationalism is secular in its aims, it draws so much from historic religion that it can be regarded as a modern religion, with his words the „religion of modern secularism".[17] Hayes appeals to the „man's religious sense"[18], which, in my understanding means a natural human receptivity to an organizing order that exists above the

[12] Ibid. 3.
[13] Carlton J. H. Hayes, *Nationalism: A religion* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1960), 164.
[14] Ibid., 164.
[15] Ibid., 165.
[16] Ibid., 165-167.
[17] Ibid., 176.
[18] Ibid., 176.

zone of influence of human beings. But parallels between religion and nationalism can also be argued by the fact that nationalism first emerged in traditionally Christian cultures.[19]

The above receptivity to religion in the sense of an order makes it possible that even those who condemn historic religion might find a substitute for the latter in nationalism.[20] Because of the fact that both religion and nationalism are specimens of the same category, they are potential rivals. As nationalism does not tolerate rival religions, it is either hostile to historic religions such as Christianity (Hayes comes up with the example of the Soviet Union) or subjugates churches to a secondary role.[21] Although briefly, but Hayes also refers to the fact that religions tend to be less hostile, even welcoming to nationalism than vice versa. This phenomenon many times results in an interesting symbiosis between religious faith (in this case religion is meant in the historical sense) and „nationalist worship".[22] Hayes gives the example of Judaism, which for many is understood as a religion, for others as nationalism, or the mixture of the two.[23] That is, Hayes does not only discuss parallels between religion and nationalism, but also about the syncretism of the two and he gives further examples such as the usage of national flags in churches and religious ceremonies commemorating national heroes.[24] However, Hayes also draws the attention to an essential difference between religion – or more specifically Christianity – and nationalism. In the end, Christianity always appeals to the universality of mankind, whereas nationalism always has particular interests, claims and missions.[25]

Another representative of the view that sees religion and nationalism as analogous phenomena is Mark Juergensmeyer. According to him, both religion and secular nationalism are part of a

[19] Ibid., 165.
[20] Ibid., 176.
[21] Ibid., 177.
[22] Ibid., 177.
[23] Ibid., 177.
[24] Ibid., 178.
[25] Ibid., 181.

broader category, they are both „ideologies of order". [26] In Juergensmeyer's definition, „secular nationalism, as an ideology of order, locates an individual within the universe. It ties him or her to a larger collectivity associated with a particular place and a particular history".[27] Religion also relates to the broader concept of order as it also is an organizing principle which has the force to hold together communities. Very similarly to the argument of Hayes, as they both belong to the same category, they are rivals: they both claim themselves to be the „ultimate authority". [28] And this authority, in Juergensmeyer's view, only characterizes religion and secular nationalism, as it includes „the right to give moral sanction for life-and-death decisions, including the right to kill". [29]

Anthony D. Smith also draws a parallel between religion and nationalism by defining nationalism as „political religion",[30] a potential rival of historic religions. The nation thus forms a „sacred communion of citizens" which is based on collective faith.[31] However, Smith specifies that we are facing a two-faced phenomenon: the „politicization of religion" and the „messianization of politics"[32] are parallel processes developing at the same time. The former happens when traditional religion gets a political load. He gives the example of the elevation of religious historical figures to national heroes and bestowing sites of religious heritage with national connotation.[33] We can talk about the „messianization of politics" when „the nation and its leaders are exalted and endowed with religious charisma". [34] However, the messianization of politics is not only about endowing otherwise secular leaders with

[26] Mark Juergensmeyer, "The Global Rise of Religious Nationalism", *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 64 : 3 (2000): 265.
[27] Ibid., 266.
[28] Ibid., 267.
[29] Ibid., 267.
[30] Anthony D. Smith, "The 'Sacred' Dimension of Nationalism", *Millenium – Journal of International Studies* 29 (2000): 792.
[31] Ibid., 792.
[32] Ibid., 799.
[33] Ibid., 799.
[34] Ibid., 799.

superhuman, otherworldly characteristics but also about sacralizing the history of the nation and creating and respecting the holy days of this new, secular faith, such as ANZAC Day, Bastille Day or Independence Day.[35]

Smith offers a three-level system for the analysis of the relations between national identity and religion. The first one I would call the religious saturation of the official political sphere. Here Smith delineates a „secular-religious spectrum" one of the end points of which is secular nationalism and the other religious nationalism. He gives two extreme examples, Kemalism, with its aim to completely banish religion from public and government affairs and those Muslim states whose legal systems are based on the religious law of sharia. In between these two endpoints all other systems can be placed.[36] The second is the popular level, in case of which the influence of religion on the population of a given country is to be measured.[37]

The third level, - the one that Smith emphasizes most - measures the „sacred properties of the nation".[38] This factor tells the most about the interaction of religion and nationalism and also the most about Smith's view about this relationship. Smith points out that these sacred properties can even be traced in otherwise secular countries, that is, he argues that symbolisms and rituals of the secular domain draw from the religious sphere. Even in those countries where church and state are radically separated, national practices are built on the religious. He gives saluting the flag, national missions, originally religious holidays in national costume as examples.[39] According to Smith, these „sacred properties" together with common ancestry make up the two principal and unavoidable prerequisites of a nation.[40]

[35] Ibid., 799.
[36] Ibid., 800.
[37] Ibid., 801.
[38] Ibid., 802.
[39] Ibid., 802.
[40] Ibid., 803.

Smith distinguishes four kinds of "sacred properties". The first one is „ethnic election",[41] which means that the given community sees itself as a „chosen people". Smith divides "ethnic election" into two sub-categories, the first of which is „missionary" chosenness, when the given people claims to have been chosen by a deity for a certain mission. The other one is „covenantal" chosenness, in the case of which there is an agreement or promise that the people will achieve certain benefits if it respects an initial promise.[42]

The second "sacred property" is „sacred territory". Smith points out that the physical land inhabited by a given group of people is sacralized over time, and the land itself becomes part of the national history. He connects the sacralization of territory with the concept of the „territorialisation of memory" by which a specific history is projected over a given territory.[43] Thirdly among sacred properties, Smith defines „ethno-history" ,[44] which is made up from „communal narrative traditions" (of which ethnic mythology is also part) rather than historiography. He also points out that ethno-histories always possess one or more periods of climax, or the golden ages of the *ethnie*, which highlight the morality of the nation.[45] The fourth sacred property is „national sacrifice", the remembering of those heroes that sacrificed their lives for the nation. This national sacrifice is the basis for the „cult of the glorious dead" which strengthens the national mission and projects their heroism into the future.[46]

Based on these sacred properties, Smith disputes the validity of modernist claims which describe nationalism as an invented phenomenon. Therefore, according to Smith, nationalism is not a new phenomenon, but an actual offspring of religions.[47] In this line of thinking, secularization does not entail the demise of religion, rather its re-emergence in a renewed

[41] Ibid., 804.
[42] Ibid., 804.
[43] Ibid., 806.
[44] Ibid., 807.
[45] Ibid., 807.
[46] Ibid., 808-9.
[47] Ibid., 810.

form of political religion. Thus, even though or because of political religion and historic religions have very similar social functions, they are potential rivals.[48]

According to Smith, the effect of religion on the nation in the form of the sacred properties is essential for the „longevity of nations", whereas classical factors that make up nationhood, such as territory, common ethnicity and culture, are only „important but unsatisfactory building blocks to the modern nation". [49]

Concerning this first category which regards religion and nationalism as „analogous phenomena", Brubaker suggests that probably the reason why religion and nationalism share so many characteristics is not that nationalism is a derivative of religion, rather than both religion and nationalism derive from „more general social structures and processes".[50] In my understanding, this is what Hayes (religion and nationalism as social orders) and Juergensmeyer (religion and nationalism as sub-categories of authority over life and death questions) suggest as well. Brubaker identifies three such structures or processes to which both nationalism (or ethnicity) and religion relate: (i) identification (ii) social organization (iii) framing claims.[51]

Firstly, both religion and nationalism are forms of identification, systems according to which one might define himself, his community and social boundaries.[52] Secondly, nationalism, ethnicity and religion are all not only factors along which people identify, but also systems that organize people's lives and create organizational and social cohesions. Here Brubaker highlights the importance of endogamy in making both ethnic and religious communities

[48] Ibid., 811.
[49] Anthony D. Smith, *Chosen Peoples* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 255; Anthony D. Smith, *The Cultural Foundations of Nations. Hierarchy, Covenant, and Republic (*Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008).
[50] Brubaker, "Religion and Nationalism", 4.
[51] Ibid., 4.
[52] Ibid., 4.

homogenous and preventing „their dissolution through assimilation".[53] The third element along which religion and nationalism can be examined as analogous phenomena according to Brubaker is that they are both systems that form the 'agenda' of claim-making, let them be political, economic or cultural claims made in the interest of a given community.[54]

2.1.2. „Religion as a cause or explanation of nationalism"[55]

As Brubaker explains, these approaches try to give an explanation to certain elements of nationalism by highlighting certain aspects of a related religion. What connects these arguments is the fact that they defy those views that look upon nationalism as an antithesis of religion.[56]

Maybe the best example of this line of thinking is represented by Benedict Anderson, who also sees religion as an explanation "out of which – as well as against which"[57] nationalism came into being. Anderson is seeking an explanation to the question of why it is possible, that an "imagined community", as he defines the nation, is able to mobilise as many emotions as it does. His answer lies in the cultural roots of nationalism: unlike any other "ism"-s, nationalism, just as religion, gives a central place to the concept of continuity, life and death. In spite of the fact that the Enlightenment deprived religion of its central role, the human need for thinking about questions of continuity under a structural frame remained. It was nation that filled the place of religion in this sense.[58] Another line of argument of Anderson is that "the coalition between Protestantism and print-capitalism"[59] brought about mass literacy, which could gradually be used for political and national purposes.

[53] Ibid., 5.
[54] Ibid., 5.
[55] Ibid., 5.
[56] Ibid., 6.
[57] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 12.
[58] Ibid., 9-12.
[59] Ibid., 40.

According to Brubaker, the confessionalization process of Reformation brought with it the territorialisation of churches which later could serve as "a model for (and often a component of) national cultural homogeneity".[60] Similarly, as far as Eastern Christianity is concerned, the nationalisation of Christianity resulted in the creation of autocephalous churches, which Brubaker calls the "etatisation of religion".[61]

2.1.3. "Religion as imbricated or intertwined with nationalism"[62]

This approach, according to Brubaker, looks at religion as part of nationalism.

I would like to begin this topic by examining an argument made by Émile Durkheim. Durkheim talks about a deep dichotomy and antagonism between the sacred and the profane.[63] However, in his view, in spite of this antagonism and mutual exclusivity, the sacred world tends to "spread itself into this same profane world which it excludes elsewhere". Durkheim ascribes this phenomenon to the „extraordinary contagiousness of the sacred character."[64] The reason why the sacred world is so contagious is that divinity is "a symbolization of the social",[65] which in my understanding means that human beings have an intrinsical, collective sensibility and pretension for the 'sacred', which, according to Durkheim, they themselves construct. This can be an interesting explanation to the intertwining of religion and nationalism as well.

Brubaker examines two kinds of intertwinings between religion and nationalism. The first is "the coincidence of religious and national boundaries".[66] Under this category, Brubaker lists Jewish nationalism as well as the Yugoslav case, where not language, but religion works as

[60] Brubaker, "Religion and Nationalism", 8.
[61] Ibid., 11.
[62] Ibid., 8.
[63] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (London: George Allan & Unwin Ltd., 1915), 317.
[64] Ibid., 318.
[65] Roger Friedland, "Money, Sex, and God: The Erotic Logic of Religious Nationalism", *Sociological Theory* 20: 3 (2002): 389.
[66] Brubaker, "Religion and Nationalism", 9.

the primary basis of national identification.[67] The second kind of intertwining is when religion makes up one of the contents of nationalism by providing essential "myths, metaphors and symbols" to the nation.[68]Anthony D. Smith's "sacred properties" could actually be fitted into this category as well.

However, Brubaker argues that the mere fact that nationalism uses religion in its discourse does not in itself tell much about the nature of the relationship between religion and nationalism. He argues that we have to differentiate actually religious from "religiously tinged language".[69] He finds that the use of religion in nationalist discourse does not necessarily suggest any intertwining or real, in-debth embeddedness of religion into nationalism: religious language can be used as a simple metaphor.[70] The important question Brubaker poses here is about where the boundary is between actually religious, as opposed to "religiously tinged" discourse. However, he leaves this question unanswered, but suggests that it is also up to the recipient side, that is the public, how a religious or religiously tinged discourse is understood: as a mere metaphor or as actual religious language.[71]

Nevertheless, it is not only nationalism that might use religious language, but the other way round, too. Therefore, the "nationalist inflection of religious discourse"[72] is also important to study.

When it comes to the intertwining of nationalism and religion, it is essential to examine Eastern Orthodoxy in detail, as church and state are historically interlaced in Orthodoxy.

The theological name of the relationship between church and state in the Orthodox realm is '*symphonia*' and its origins can be traced back to the Byzantine Empire. *Symphonia* means an equal and close relationship between church and state, the ultimate aim of the two being

[67] Ibid., 9.
[68] Ibid., 9.
[69] Ibid., 10.
[70] Ibid., 10.
[71] Ibid.,11.
[72] Ibid., 11.

identical: promoting "the welfare of their subjects" by "imitating the kingdom of God". [73] The so-called Epanagoge of the ninth century further strengthens this claim by comparing the relationship of priesthood and temporal authority to that of body and soul.[74]

Symphonia of course does not mean that the tasks of the two players are the same. The state is embedded into the political realm and guarantees the nation's "survival within a system of states and the projection of its power in international politics", whereas the church provides for the spiritual guidance of its subjects.[75] However, survival can be connected to religion, and spiritual guidance might include political claims. Therefore, Lucian Leustean draws the attention to the fact that the exact boundary between church and state is rather blurred in Eastern Orthodoxy, and therefore the church may take on political roles and the political sphere might take on religious roles pretty often.[76] The political role of the church is further strengthened by the fact that the origin of the theory of *symphonia* can be traced back to ancient Greece, "where religion was understood as the cultic life of the polis".[77] Therefore, in the Eastern Orthodox realm religion was always looked upon as an intrinsically public and not private phenomenon.

Thus, the nationalistic inclination of Eastern Orthodoxy can be explained by the historical and religious background. In Serbia this phenomenon is further strengthened by the fact that the founder of a powerful Serbian state was the father of Saint Sava, who managed to gain autocephality to the Church of Serbia from the Patriarch of Constantinople in 1217. [78] Therefore in the 13th-century history of Serbia church and state are intertwined on a family

[73] Lucian N. Leustean, "Orthodoxy and Political Myths in Balkan National Identities", *National Identities* 10:4 (2008): 422.
[74] Petros Vassiliadis, "Orthodox Christianity" in *God's Rule. The Politics of World Religions,* ed. Jacob Neusner (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2003), 99.
[75] Leustean, "Orthodoxy and Political Myths", 422.
[76] Ibid., 423.
[77] Vassiliadis, "Orthodox Christianity", 93.
[78] Popović, Radomir V., *Serbian Orthodox Church in History* (Novi Sad: Artprint. 2005), 24.

basis as well. After all, it is no surprise that in the Serbian case a sacred dimension is attributed to politics and world leaders are often "seen by the Church as chosen by God".[79]

It is also worth examining the effect of religion on national myths. Sticking to the Serbian example, I examine the myth that Lucian Leustean calls "the nation as a divine manifestation".[80] A central piece of Serbian epic poetry, the so-called Kosovo cycle contains several allusions to the "nation as having divine qualities".[81] Michael A. Sells traces back the history of the Kosovo myth and draws the attention to the fact that it did not play a central role in national mythology until the 19th century.[82] It was the key figure of Serbian romanticism, Vuk Karadžić who started to fill the folk literature with biblical content in the historical context of a series of Serbian revolts against the Ottoman yoke. In the epic poems collected by Vuk Karadžić, the analogy between Prince Lazar and Christ is obvious.[83] For example in the poem called the 'Prince's supper', the scene of the Last Supper is depicted.[84] This tendency of "Christological imagery" was further strengthened later in the nineteenth century, and especially by Petar Petrović Njegoš's drama, The Mountain Wreath.[85] "The references to the Slavic Muslims as 'Turkifiers' (Poturice) or as 'Turks' crystallizes the view that by converting to Islam from Christianity, the Muslims had changed their racial identity and joined the race of Turks who killed the Christ-Prince Lazar".[86]

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[79] Leustean, "Orthodoxy and Political Myths", 425.
[80] Ibid., 425-431.
[81] Ibid., 427.
[82] Michael A. Sells, *The bridge betrayed: religion and genocide in Bosnia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 37-39.
[83] Ibid., 37-39; Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood. Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism (*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 132.
[84] Srpska književna zadruga, "Kosovski ciklus. Srpske narodne poezije", Projekat Rastko, http://www.rastko.rs/knjizevnost/usmena/kosovski-ciklus.html#_Toc473119799 (accessed May 2, 2013).
[85] Petar Petrović Njegoš, *The Mountain Wreath. Unabridged Internet Edition* [First Serbian Edition: Wien, 1847], Projekat Rastko. http://www.rastko.rs/knjizevnost/umetnicka/njegos/mountain_wreath.html (accessed May 20, 2013).
[86] Sells, *The bridge betrayed*, 41.

Pål Kolstø also engages in examining Serbian national myths, and the effect of religion on national myths is salient here as well.[87] For example, "the antemurale myth", according to which, with the words of Kolstø "[…] some Orthodox peoples, such as the Serbs, may find themselves in the peculiar situation of considering themselves the last bastion, *antemurale*, in relation to the Islamic world, while in relation to another imaginary wall, one erected by Catholic peoples further north, they will be on the outside, and part of the forces of chaos the wall exists to protect against".[88] The *antemurale* myth is also connected to a discourse of victimization, which most often blames the nation's history and geographical position for its failures. The "myth of *martyrium*"[89] is also central to the Serbian national identity in which the lost battles and glorified heroes contribute to the divine quality of the nation.

2.1.4. "Religious nationalism as a distinctive kind of nationalism"[90]

According to this approach, religious nationalism presupposes a "distinctively religious content"[91] of nationalism, which has to be much more than using religious metaphors for political purposes. We can talk about religious nationalism when "major claims are made about ordering and regulating public life in a manner conforming with religious principles".[92] This is also what Roger Friedland suggest when he says that religious nationalism endeavours to politicize sacred content. However, this process also works the other way round, as religious nationalists tend to "transform the territoriality of their nation from sovereign into sacred space".[93]

[87] Pål Kolstø, "Assessing the Role of Historical Myths in Modern Society" in *Myths and Boundaries in South-Eastern Europe* ed. Pål Kolstø (London: Hurst & Company, 2005).
[88] Ibid., 25.
[89] Ibid., 26.
[90] Brubaker, „Religion and Nationalism", 12.
[91] Ibid., 13.
[92] Ibid., 13.
[93] Friedland, "Money, Sex, and God", 383.

Friedland argues that religious nationalism tends to emerge in those places where religiosity is general and the state does not exercise direct control over religion and where it is given a certain amount of autonomy, such as in Iran or Israel.[94]

Religious nationalism and secular nationalism are regarded as two sub-categories of nationalism within this approach, and actually these two sub-categories are in many ways analogous: Friedland argues that both religion and state are models of order and authority. [95] He suggests that nationalism is "a form of representation", but the content and criteria of this representation is not predefined. [96] Therefore, religious nationalism is a distinct kind of nationalism in which the representation is organized around religious content.[97]

However, religious nationalism uses existing states for its purposes, creating new content, making "religion the basis for the nation's collective identity and the source of its ultimate values and purpose on this earth". [98] Friedland supports this idea with the fact that even religions with a transnational vision accept national borders and primarily focus on establishing a given religious order on the basis of nation-states. Here Friedland gives the example of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda, an organisation which in spite of having a transnational vision can be financially connected to nation-states and its actual purpose is to create "Islamic national states". [99]

2.2. Secularization and desecularization as a context of examining the relationship between religion and nationalism

The modernist thought, on which the secularization thesis is based, has squeezed out religion both from the international and national politics, into a private, periferialised role.

[94] Ibid., 386.
[95] Ibid., 390.
[96] Ibid., 387.
[97] Ibid., 387.
[98] Ibid., 388.
[99] Ibid., 388.

According to the secularization thesis, following the Enlightenment, the separation of religion from politics has become one of the criteria for modernity. Nathaniel Berman distinguishes two separate meanings or understandings of secularization. The first one is "a separation between the secular and the religious domains and the 'retreat of religion as the dominant sphere' of society". The second one is „the translation and 'transfer' of religious contents into secular form on both the ideological and institutional planes".[100]

Over time, the secularization thesis has received much criticism. Therefore, many scholars have tried to add exceptions to the rule to keep the thesis valid. Such an exception is formulated by Wallis and Bruce, according to whom religion is in retreat, with the exception of two scenarios: „cultural defense" and „cultural transition", where cultural defence is a situation where culture is challenged by an outside influence whereas cultural transition is connected to social transition.[101]

Many other authors reject the validity of the secularization thesis as a whole, arguing that secularization is not normative to modernity. José Casanova suggests that desecularization does not contradict our understanding of modernity, as secularization is not essential to modernity.[102] In fact, the deprivatization of religion is taking place, as a result of which religion re-emerges from the private into the public sphere.[103] The deprivatization thesis is central in José Casanova's works, in which he describes the process that started in the 1980s as a response to secularization, in the course of which religion not only enters the public sphere but also takes up political claims.[104]

[100] Nathaniel Berman, "'The Sacred Conspiracy': Religion, Nationalism, and the Crisis of Internationalism", *Leiden Journal of International Law* 25 (2012): 15.
[101] Roy Wallis and Steeve Bruce, "Secularization: The Orthodox Model" in *Religion and Modernization* ed. Steeve Bruce (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 17.
[102] José Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994).
[103] Vassiliadis, "Orthodox Christianity", 101.
[104] Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World*.

Geertz also suggests that religion and nationalism cannot be separated as they are in the secularization thesis. According to him, religious and secular power are two sides of the same coin.[105] Geertz suggests that political leaders „justify their existence and order their actions in terms of a collection of stories, ceremonies, insignia, formalities and appurtenances that they have either inherited, or, in more revolutionary situations, invented".[106] The analogy between religious and secular is stronger in case of traditional monarchies, where in many cases an entire religion or religion-like set of ceremonies, symbols and beliefs are built around the monarch. However, the analogy can also be traced in non-monarchical forms of political organizations in the form of „limousines and conferences" and the creation of an „aura of being not merely important but in some odd fashion connected with the way the world is built".[107]

Carl Schmitt represents the same line of thinking in his saying that „[a]ll significant concepts of the modern theory of the state are secularized theological concepts" both in their structure and content.[108]

Talal Asad also argues that nationalism is in many ways founded on religious bases. However, in his understanding this does not mean that nationalism is a kind of religion nor that it is only religion on the bases of which nationalism is built.[109] Asad argues that the reason why theories of secularization are no longer valid is that politics and religion are much more intertwined than it was originally thought.[110] Even though religion and state are separated by law in Western countries, in practice their intercourse is still present: „ […] objects, sites,

[105] Clifford Geertz, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), 124.
[106] Ibid., 124.
[107] Ibid., 124.
[108] Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology. Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).
[109] Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular. Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 194.
[110] Ibid., 200-201.

practices, words, representations – even the minds and bodies of worshipers – cannot be confined within the exclusive space of what secularists name 'religion'".[111]

2.3. Religion and nationalism in the literature on Serbia in the 1980s and 1990s

When it comes to the positioning of Serbia in the 1980s – 1990s in the context of the theory of relations between nationalism and religion, the picture in the existing literature is rather vague. In fact, the role of religion has been central to works written on the disintegration of Yugoslavia. There exist many interpretations to this role, ranging from those that regard the Yugoslav wars as religious wars[112] to those that claim that religion was a mere „ethnic name tag".[113] The fact that religion was important – in one or another form – in the disintegration process of Yugoslavia is not subject to debate. However, as I have already pointed out, there are many different understandings about the relationship between the Milošević-regime and the Serbian Orthodox Church.

The traditionally strong bond between church and state in the Serbian Orthodox world led to many analysts depicting this relationship as a partnership, presenting the church as a natural ally of secular nationalism. Therefore, a large part of the literature on the role of religion in Serbia in the 1980s and 1990s does not distinguish the nationalism represented by the church from the nationalism of the political regime. For example, Branimir Anzulović points out that the church is "the main repository of Serbian nationalism"[114] and - blurring any difference between the aims of Slobodan Milošević and the church - presents these two actors as allies.

[111] Ibid., 200-201.
[112] For example Sells, *The bridge betrayed.*
[113] Peter F. Sugar, *Nationalism and Religion in the Balkans Since the 19th Century* (The Donald W. Treadgold Papers. Washington: The Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington, 1996), 35.
[114] Anzulović, *Heavenly Serbia,* 119.

Ivo Iveković follows suit, and only starts talking about a break between Milošević and the Serbian Orthodox Church after Milošević 's relationship worsened with the Bosnian Serbs.[115] According to Sells, Serbian national identity is traditionally based on the idea of Christoslavism that „portrays Slavic Muslims as Christ killers and race traitors"[116] and this has been the focal point not only of many crucial literary personalities such as Petar Petrović Njegoš[117], but also most Serbian political leaders. Sells presents Slobodan Milošević as if he was driven by a traditional ethno-religious mythology, rather than using religion and religious myths to amass political power. The above authors seem to ignore the fact that in many cases political decisions might have been motivated not by religious principles but mere political opportunism.

Another part of the literature gives a more nuanced picture and suggests that this relationship was much more complex than a mere partnership. Perica[118] and Ramet[119] emphasize that churches in the Balkans are just as much political institutions as religious ones. Still, Ramet also talks about a "Church-state rapprochement" during the Milošević era, without going into thorough details about the tensions that burdened this relationship.[120] Perica points out that the reason why we cannot look upon the Yugoslav wars as religious wars is that churches also had their political agenda, and they were also competing for political power: they wanted to secure their place as "leading national institutions".[121] Jovan Byford describes the Serbian Orthodox Church's own political and national agenda. He argues that church leaders of the

[115] Iveković, "Nationalism and the Political Use and Abuse of Religion".
[116] Sells, *The bridge betrayed*, 27.
[117] Petar Petrović Njegoš (1813-1851) was prince of Montenegro and the Metropolitan of Cetinje. He was also a philosopher and poet, his poem 'The mountain wreath', is one of the central elements of the Serbian epic poetry and national mythology. The poem is about an allegedly historical event, in the course of which a group of Slavs converted to Islam, regarded as traitors were massacred.
[118] Perica, *Balkan Idols.*
[119] Ramet, *Balkan Babel.*
[120] Ibid.
[121] Perica, *Balkan Idols*, 130.

1980s built their program on the views of a theological school of the 1920s, coined by the influential theologian Nikolaj Velimirović. The principal aim of this school was to establish a society governed by religious scholars.[122]

Miletitch[123] also characterizes the Serbian Orthodox Church as an autonomous political force and describes in details its many autonomous attempts –appeals, memoranda, etc. - trying to serve the Serbian national interest. Buchenau suggests that the church had its own national agenda when he states that the anti-westerner current of the Serbian Orthodox Church „produced a new quality of nationalism by describing Serbian national history as a pursuit of holiness".[124]

At the same time, other scholars such as Miletitch,[125] Čolović, [126] Cohen[127] and Iveković[128] point out how political „marketing operations" use religion, religious symbols and myths in order to transfer the sacredness of religion to the nation. Their argument fits Gentile's description of the sacralization of politics. According to Gentile, all political establishments may make use of traditional religions and religious myths, but only the "political religions" of totalitarian regimes "may enter into conflict with traditional religions because it [the totalitarian regime] claims the primary role in defining the meaning and purpose of the existence of a certain collectivity and aims to subordinate the traditional religion to its own

[122] Jovan Byford, *Denial and Repression of Antisemitism. Post-Communist Remembrance of the Serbian Bishop Nikolaj Velimirović* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2008), 40-41.
[123] Miletitch, "L'église orthodoxe serbe".
[124] Klaus Buchenau, "Orthodox Values and Modern Necessities: Serbian Orthodox Clergy and Laypeople on Democracy and Human Rights, Transition and Globalization" in *Civic and Uncivic Values. Serbia in the Post-Milošević Era* ed. Ola Listhaug, Sabrina P. Ramet and Dragana Dulić (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2011), 117.
[125] Miletitch, "L'église orthodoxe serbe".
[126] Ivan Čolović, "Nationalism as a Religion: Examples from Contemporary Serbia" in *Civic and Uncivic Values. Serbia in the post-Milosević Era* ed. Ola Listhaug, Sabrina P. Ramet and Dragana Dulić (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2011).
[127] Lenard J. Cohen, "'Serpent in the Bosom': Slobodan Milošević and Serbian Nationalism" in *State-society relations in Yugoslavia, 1945-1992*, ed. Melissa Bokovoy, Jill Irvine and Carol Lilly (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997).
[128] Iveković, "Nationalism and the Political Use and Abuse of Religion".

aspirations".[129] And this is exactly what we see in Serbia during the 1990s: a political regime abusing religious symbols and myths but at the same time carefully trying to keep the national church on the periphery.

A completely different approach is represented on the nature of church-state relations by those works that come from the representatives and the hierarchy of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Irinej Dobrijević, who is currently the Bishop of Australia and New Zealand for the Serbian Orthodox Church is a very good example to this. He depicts the Serbian Orthodox Church as a messenger of peace and stability and denies the relevance of religion to the disintegration process of the 1990s, arguing that it was a civil war. In this understanding, the civil war was the consequence of the communist era, as communism attempted to „strip the soul of the Orthodox Serb, the Croatian Catholic and the Bosnian or Albanian Muslim".[130] According to this view, official religions were not only innocent but were the victims of the wars incited by communist politicians. Very similarly, Dimitrije Kalezić, the former dean of the Orthodox Theological Faculty in Belgrade argues that during the breakup of Yugoslavia, the Orthodox church – in line with the teachings of the Bible – never "gave encouragement in word, let alone a blessing to anyone's wrong-doing or to any form of evil, neither Serbian, nor others".[131]

In order to understand the nature of the relationship in question, it is also important to see that the church was deeply divided in its stance towards the political regime and more generally the national question. However, many authors completely ignore the manyfold cleavages within the church. For example Anzulović makes false homogenizations by presenting the

[129] Emilio Gentile, *Politics as Religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 16.
[130] Irinej Dobrijević, "The Role of the Serbian Orthodox Church in National Self-Determination and Regional Integration", *Serbian Studies: Journal of the North American Society for Serbian Studies* 15:1 (2001): 105.
[131] Dimitrije Kalezić, "The Serbian Orthodox Church's View of the Role of Religion in the War in Bosnia & Herzegovina" in *Religion and the War in Bosnia* ed. Paul Mojzes, (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 188.

entire Serbian Orthodox Church as „ardent nationalists and inciters of xenophobia".[132] However, recent literature, such as a piece by Klaus Buchenau is much more explicit on different currents within the church. According to the author the two main currents are the moderates and the anti-westerners. The church was dominated by the moderates during communism, who were willing to cooperate with the political establishment. However, starting from the 1980s, the anti-westerner current started to dominate, which regarded not only capitalism but also communism as a Western idea that willfully aimed to destroy Serbian values.[133] In spite of the fact that this distinction appears in some publications, it always seems to me that categories such as anti-westerner vs. moderate are constructed by the outside observer and do not necessary reflect the inside realities of the Serbian Orthodox Church. However, as the Serbian church is not a transparent institution we can only guess about its inner fractions.

On the whole, state-church relations in Serbia during the disintegration process of Yugoslavia still constitute a highly debated topic. The nature of state-church relations has been described both as partnership and as rivalry, and the existing literature fails to give a thorough explanation about the different intra-church currents and their stance toward Slobodan Milošević and the Serbian national question.

[132] Anzulović, *Heavenly Serbia. From Myth to Genocide,* 177.
[133] Buchenau, "Orthodox Values and Modern Necessities", 118.

3. Competing Nationalisms – the Milošević-regime and the Serbian Orthodox Church

The strong bond between religion and nationalism and ethnicity is generally recognized in the case of the ex-Yugoslav region. However, as described in the introduction, there are many contradicting views in the academic literature about the nature of the relationship between the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Milošević regime, just as there are many contradicting view about the relationship between religion and nationalism in general. It would be far too ambitious to thrive to do justice among these contradictions in this thesis. Therefore, my aim is to give a factual account of state-church relations in Serbia during the Milošević-regime and then to present the similarities and differences between the religious nationalism represented by the church and the secular nationalism represented by the Milošević-regime. In order to do that, it is indispensable to give a brief account on the historical relations between the Serbian nation and the Orthodox religion, without which no account on the 1990s would be complete.

3.1. State-church relations on Serbian inhabited territories in three historically important contexts

3.1.1. Ottoman rule

The strong bond between religious and secular power dates back to 1217, when the autonomous Church of Serbia was established by the youngest son of Stefan Nemanja, Saint Sava, the brother of the first Serbian king. The independency meant the exemption of Serbian bishoprics from the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Ohrid.[134]

[134] Full independency, or autocephaly from the Greek Orthodox Church was achieved in 1346. Noel Malcolm, *Kosovo. A short history* (London: Pan Books, 2002), 44-45, 48.

Mylonas characterises the foundation of the Serbian Church as the „sacralisation of the Serbian national identity",[135] followed and strengthened by the canonization of Serbian rulers,[136] investing them with "sacred properties".[137] This way the earthly power of the Nemanja dynasty was connected with a "heavenly kingdom",[138] serving as a basis for the consolidation and legitimacy of the dynasty.

The close connection between church and state was not an exceptional phenomenon in the Byzantine world. There – as pointed out in the introduction - church and state traditionally complemented each other in the state of *symphonia*, in which church and state coexisted in an equal and mutually indispensable manner.

However, as the medieval Serbian state disintegrated after the lost battle of Kosovo in 1389, and a 500-year Ottoman occupation followed, only the church remained as an institutional safeguard of the Orthodox population. In the absence of a state, the church even filled some quasi-political purposes during the Ottoman rule. The Serbian Patriarch was empowered with competencies that otherwise would have been practiced by secular statespeople. Such competencies were collecting the Sultan's taxes, practicing inheritance rights, and having legal power in certain issues.[139] At the same time, monasteries were the centers of artistic, educational, scholastic life and even functioned as hospitals.

Still, the Serbian church did not manage to mobilize the masses for religious worship because religion traditionally did not play an important role in the private lives of Serbs. A Serbian historian, Čedomil Mijatović gives the following account on Serbs' religiousness:

[135] Christos Mylonas, *Serbian Orthodox Fundamentals. The Quest for an Eternal Identity* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2003), xii.
[136] According to Anzulović, the Serbian Orthodox Church has 59 national saints, out of which 26 are members of ruling families. Anzulović, *Heavenly Serbia,* 24.
[137] Tim Judah, *The Serbs. History, Myth and the Destruction of Yugoslavia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 20.
[138] Anzulović, *Heavenly Serbia. From Myth to Genocide.*
[139] Popović, *Serbian Orthodox Church in History*, 56.

> „The religious sentiment of the Servians[140] is neither deep nor warm. Their churches are generally empty, except on very great Church festivals, and on political festivals. The Servians of our day consider the Church as a political institution, in some mysterious manner connected with the existence of the nation. They do not allow anyone to attack her, nor to compromise her, although, when she is not attacked, they neglect her".[141]

It was in fact not religious worship, but religious affiliation that made the church very important, as it served as the primary means of ethnic differentiation in the region. Therefore, Orthodox religion constituted the main marker of one's public identity without infiltrating too much into the private sphere.

The Serbian Church was able to keep its relative autonomy from the Ottoman state in return for paying annual taxes. Another reason for its more or less undisturbed functioning was the relative isolation of church centres in mountainous areas.[142]

According to Radomir Popović, the era of the Ottoman rule brought about the most ideal-typical materialization of the theory of *symphonia*.[143] However, this harmony quickly broke when the autocephality of the patriarchate of Peć was abolished in 1766 and it was placed under the jurisdiction of the Orthodox Church of Constantinople. Until the restoration of the diocese of Peć to the Serbian Orthodox Church in 1920, it was mainly bishops of Greek origins who led the Patriarchate. These so-called Greek Phanariots cared little about Serbian interests and neglected religious education which had long-term effects on Serbian Orthodox clergy. However, when Serbian church autonomy was recognized again in 1831, the Phanariots were brushed aside. In 1879 the Serbian church was granted autocephaly again.[144]

It is important to observe here that a large part of the literature on the Ottoman era argues that during the Ottoman occupation it was the Serbian Church that preserved the Serbian national

[140] Original spelling taken over from Malcolm.
[141] Quoted by Malcolm, *Kosovo. A short history,* 13-14.
[142] Popović, *Serbian Orthodox Church in History,* 63.
[143] Ibid.,48.
[144] Ibid.,72.

identity.[145] However, I would like to draw the attention to Kitromilides's argument, who says that at this time the basis of differentiation between groups was religion and not nationality or *ethnie*. Therefore, religion was the sole and most important force of cohesion and identity marker up until the effects of Enlightenment started to show their signs in the region.[146] It was the Enlightenment that brought about the „gradual constructing of the nations by the states",[147] in the course of which national myths were born. As religion offers more distinct basis of differentiation than linguistics, national myths were created along religious lines. It was the territory of myths where popular and religious traditions met and developed into the founding pillar of Serbian national identity. As Matija Becković, a famous Serbian writer and poet put it: „Myths are our religion".[148] The myth – centred around a metaphysical construction rather than a piece of land – held the promise throughout history for the Serbs that the Serbian empire would one day resurrect.

3.1.2. Kingdom of Yugoslavia

In 1920 the Patriarchate of Peć was reestablished and therefore the authority of the Serbian church was extended over the territory of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.[149] Nevertheless, the Serbian Orthodox Church had to face serious problems, such as secularization, social marginalization and Yugoslavism, an idea that won over many of its congregations. The religious affinity and religious infrastructure of the traditionally Orthodox regions was far weaker than that of the other two main religions of the Kingdom of Serbs,

[145] E.g. Mitja Velikonja, "Religious Separation & Political Intolerance in Bosnia-Herzegovina", *Eastern European Studies*, 20 (2003): 73.; Mehrdad Kia, *Daily Life in the Ottoman Empire* (Greenwood: Abc-Clio, 2011), 115.
[146] Paschalis M. Kitromilides, "'Imagined Communities' and the Origins of the National Question in the Balkans", *European History Quarterly* 19 (1989): 178.
[147] Ibid., 159.
[148] Anzulović, *Heavenly Serbia. From Myth to Genocide*, 113.
[149] Popović, *Serbian Orthodox Church in History*, 90.; Maria Falina, "Svetosavlje: A case-study in the Nationalization/Politicization of Religion" CEU, Department of History www.hist.ceu.hu/conferences/graceh/abstracts/falina_maria.pdf (accessed 4 April 2013).

Croats and Slovenes: Catholicism and Islam. In fact, this tendency continued throughout the 20th century.

Starting from the 1920s a new theological school emerged with the aim to reconcile church and state, to regain its alleged medieval role as the ultimate guardian of national identity and to „overcome the gap between church and the Serbian intelligentsia" which by then was „very much alienated from its religious roots and flirt[ed] with Western patterns of philosophical and political thinking".[150] This theological school introduced the idea of '*Svetosavlje*', the aim of which was reviving the tradition of Saint Sava and *symphonia* and to create a society governed by Saint Sava's principles, where church, state and nation are one.[151] The founder of this school was the influential theologian Nikolaj Velimirović. Byford gives the following account of Velimirović's conception:

„In Velimirović's interpretation of Serbia's national history […] Saint Sava was not just the founder of the autocephalous Serbian Orthodox Church, but also the father of the Serbian nation and the embodiment of the medieval Serbian Christian state. Consequently, Velimirović interpreted the legacy of the first Serbian archbishop as […] the foundation of a unique 'evangelical nationalism' and a specific theory of government. In the writings of Velimirović and other nationalist theologians in the 1930s, 'Svetosavlje' was elevated to the status of a unifying principle that seamlessly binds together the church, the nation, and the state into an 'organic', 'undividable' whole".[152]

3.1.3. Tito-regime

However, Velimirović's Svetosavlje remained in the background for another fifty years. From 1945 churches were pushed to the periphery of society. The civic religion of the Tito regime was based on the concept of brotherhood and unity (*bratstvo i jedinstvo*) and the equality of the constituent nations and republics of Yugoslavia. The persecution of nationalism

[150] Geert Van Dartel, "The Nations and Churches in Yugoslavia", *Religion, State and Society* 20: 3-4 (1992): 282.
[151] Dartel, "The Nations and Churches in Yugoslavia", 282; Anzulović, *Heavenly Serbia*.
[152] Byford, *Denial and Repression of Antisemitism*, 40-41.

"demonopolized" the churches.[153] The social and economic demonopolization hit hard the Serbian Orthodox Church, where – as we have already seen – religion was a constitutive element of one's public identity. The Yugoslav idea also contributed to eroding the perception of Orthodoxy as the fundament of Serbian identity.

During the Tito-regime, the Serbian Orthodox Church was deprived of its historical role by the law. The State Commission for Religious Affairs was founded in October 1945. According to the founding decree, the State Commission for Religious Affairs „investigates all questions with regard to the external life of religious communities, their interrelations and the position of churches towards state and national authorities […] The organs of religious communities and organs of national authorities are obliged to give the necessary information and data upon request of the Commission".[154] Thus a supervising organ was born and thereby the church was rendered to a subordinate role to the regime by law.

Religion was exiled into the private sphere. According to the 1974 Constitution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, „[r]eligious confession is free and belongs to the private sphere. Religious communities are separated from the state and are free to exercise religious affairs and religious ceremonies. […] The abuse of religion and religious activities with political goal are unconstitutional".[155] This constitutional act had serious consequences regarding the status of the church in society.

[153] Mirko Blagojević, "Desecularization of contemporary Serbian society", *Religion in Eastern Europe*, 28: 1 (2008): 40.

[154] Gordana Živković, "Društveni i politički položaj crkve i verskih zajednica (raskid s komunističkim diskontinuitetom)" in *Srbija 2000-2006. Država, društvo, privreda,* ed. Miša Đurković (Beograd: Institut za Evropske Studije, 2007), 111.

[155] "Ustav Socijalisticke Federativne Republike Jugoslavije (1974)", Vikizvornik. http://sr.wikisource.org/wiki/Устав_Социјалистичке_Федеративне_Републике_Југославије_(1974) (accessed April 9, 2013). It is another question how much the freedom „to excercise religious affairs and religious ceremonies" was respected. According to Gordana Živković, religious services were many times banned in practice. (Živković, "Društveni i politički položaj crkve", 111.) According to Radomir Popović, during the communist times, 1180 buildings in the possession of the Serbian Orthodox Church as well as 70.000 hectars of land were confiscated. (Popović, *Serbian Orthodox Church in History*, 94.)

During this period churches were repressed and harassed as long as they represented a nationalist threat to the regime.[156] The Serbian Orthodox Church did not challenge the regime and accepted its restricted role, strictly exiled into the private sphere.[157] In fact, the moderate wing of the Orthodox Church and the political establishment built up a mutually useful symbiosis. The church did not contest the power of the regime and in exchange religious infrastructure was financed by the state. The state found its ways to promote the church as a principal element in Serbia's national liberation, thus the Serbian Orthodox Church also had its place in the Titoist worldview. This compromise and the approach most clergyman followed by giving up religious interests for the sake of state subsidies contributed to the quick secularization of society.[158]

In the Tito-era priest associations, such as the Federation of Associations of Orthodox Clergymen of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia were founded. This Federation, founded in 1949, was instrumental in drawing certain clergyman into state politics and mobilizing them for political aims. However, the Serbian Orthodox Church officially never recognized the Federation.[159]

The deal between the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Tito-regime had long-term consequences on Serbian religious patterns: beyond absolute tendencies of secularization that affected all confessions in the country, the relative backwardness of the Serbian Orthodox Church in terms of religious infrastructure and number of believers compared to the two other big confessions increased. Even if statistical data from this period are not always reliable, they all show the same tendency: according to a survey in 1985 with a sample of 4800 employed

[156] Sabrina P. Ramet, *Nihil Obstat: Religion, Politics and Social Change in East-Central Europe and Russia* (London: Duke Univerity Press, 1998), 148.
[157] Blagojević, "Desecularization of contemporary Serbian society", 40.
[158] Buchenau, "Orthodox Values and Modern Necessities", 118.
[159] Denis Bećirović, "Komunistička vlast i Srpska pravoslavna crkva u Bosni i Hercegovini (1945-1955) - pritisci, napadi, hapšenja i suđenja" *Tokovi istorije* 3 (2010): 83; Ramet, *Balkan Babel*, 107.

inhabitants throughout Yugoslavia, the ratio of people practising their religion was lowest in Serbia and Montenegro (11 and 10 percent), compared to 44 percent in Kosovo and 33 percent in Croatia.[160] However, in the end, socialism as an effort of modernisation and secularisation remained incomplete: it did not manage to create „identities and systems of meaning which are sacralised by agencies other than the institution of religion".[161]

3.2. Religious and church revival in the 1980s

When the centripetal forces began to tear apart Yugoslavia, religions offered ready-made categories of nationhood, serving as the basis for ethnic consciousness. In Sabrina P. Ramet's words, in this region „religion provided a defining factor in ethnic differentiation, perhaps even the single most important factor".[162] Forty years of „atheization" was followed by a „re-traditionalisation" of society from the 1980s.[163] During the process of disintegration the idea of *Svetosavlje* resuscitated, providing a sense of unity and a justification for moral superiority for Serbs scattered in different republics of Yugoslavia. This was a historical momentum for the church, as suddenly huge masses were receptive to religious rhetoric. The ideas of Velimirović were endorsed by numerous outstanding members of the Orthodox hierarchy, such as Justin Popović (Archimandrite[164], Orthodox theologian and philosopher), Amfilohije Radović (Metropolitan of Montenegro from 1991), Atanasije Jevtić (theologian, Bishop of Banat dioceses from 1991, Bishop of Zahumlje and Herzegovina dioceses from 1992),

[160] Anzulović, *Heavenly Serbia,* 26.
[161] Mylonas, *Serbian Orthodox Fundamentals,* 8.
[162] Sabrina P. Ramet, *Religion and Nationalism in Soviet and East European Politics* (Durham: Duke Univerity Press, 1985), 311.
[163] Blagojević, "Desecularization of contemporary Serbian society", 39.
[164] Superior abbot, head of a group of monasteries.

Artemije Radosavljević (Bishop of Raš and Prizren Dioceses from 1991) and Irinej Bulović (Bishop of Bačka dioceses).[165]

In 1981 massive demonstrations started in Kosovo, first demanding the status of republic for the province and later full independence. These events marked the beginning of the two-decade-long history of disintegration of Yugoslavia, and served as a basis for the revival of the Serbian Orthodox Church. During the 1980s the deepening Kosovo crisis was a central topic of Yugoslav media and public interest. Massive crowds of Serbs left the province, while certain groups called for the regime leadership in Belgrade to address the ethnic clashes.

In 1982, twenty-one Serb orthodox clergymen, led by Archimandrite Atanasije Jevtić addressed a document entitled 'Appeal for the Protection of the Serbian Population and their Sacred Monuments in Kosovo' to federal and Serbian state authorities, with the aim to „protect the spiritual and biological being of the Serbian people in Kosovo and Metohija".[166] The document drew the attention to the grievances of the Orthodox clergy and the Serbian population in Kosovo, argued that Albanians wanted to create there an ethnically homogenous state, and that „a planned genocide has been carried out against the Serbian people in Kosovo".[167] However, as ethnic tensions were taboo topics of the communist-party ideology of brotherhood and unity, the regime neither acknowledged, nor interfered with the conflict. Thus the church was the only institution that overtly stood up and represented the interests of the Serbian minority in Kosovo. As Mylonas put it, the church served as the „language for the articulation of common grievances and views not catered for within established political conventions".[168] The whole decade was marked by church events and jubilees mobilising masses of people. In 1982, the church published a chronicle of atrocities committed against

[165] Byford, *Denial and Repression of Antisemitism*, 40-41; Radić, *The Church and the 'Serbian Question'*, 251.
[166] Quoted by Radić, *The Church and the 'Serbian Question'*, 249.
[167] Quoted by Perica, *Balkan Idols*, 124.
[168] Mylonas, *Serbian Orthodox Fundamentals*, 8.

Serbians in Kosovo since 1968, and in 1987 it made public an atlas of the Serbian heritage in Kosovo.[169]

The revival of the church was not suppressed by the regime, as the 1980s saw an expansion in religious liberties, when church activities with ethnic overtones were still condemned, but participants were no longer harassed.[170] This liberalization of state policy towards churches led to the Serbian Orthodox Church exchanging the patriotic narrative of Yugoslavism to the celebration of "ethnic heritages",[171] such as the Jasenovac myth.

Jasenovac was a concentration and extermination camp 100 km south of Zagreb, established by the Ustasha and operating during the existence of the Independent State of Croatia from 1941 to 1945. Approximately (though this number differs depending on the sources) six hundred thousand people were murdered here, mostly Serbs, Jews, Romas and other enemies of the regime. During the Tito-era the site of the Jasenovac concentration camp was a symbol of partisan unity and martyrdom, whereas in the 1980s the Jasenovac story was revived as a Serbian national myth, symbolising the suffering of the Serbians in the hand of the pro-Axis, Ustasha-ruled Independent State of Croatia during the Second World War. In 1984, 20,000 people gathered to celebrate the consecration of St. John the Baptist Church in Jasenovac.[172] In 1990, church leaders organised the exhumation and reburial of mass graves of the Second World War,[173] and drew parallels between Auschwitz and Jasenovac, Jerusalem and Kosovo. Thus the old myth of Kosovo was completed with the modern myth of Jasenovac, both symbolising the martyrdom of Serbs on the hands of its two greatest enemies – Muslims and Croats. The Kosovo myth returned to the centre of popular interests, and its two main morals

[169] Perica, *Balkan Idols*, 124, 127.
[170] Ibid., 133; Vjekoslav Perica, "The Sanctification of Enmity: Churches and the construction of founding myths of Serbia and Croatia" in *Myths and Boundaries in South-Eastern Europe*, ed. Pål Kolstø, (London: Hurst & Company, 2005), 150.
[171] Perica, "The Sanctification of Enmity", 150.
[172] Perica, *Balkan Idols*, 148-149.
[173] Miletitch, "L'église orthodoxe serbe", 192.

– the "leitmotif" of betrayal and the promise of the resurrection of the Serbian empire – were central topics of both secular and church writings.[174]

The process of church revival culminated in the 600th anniversary of the Kosovo battle on St. Vitus Day, 28th June 1989. The church prepared for this event by a year-long series of festivals, where the relics of Prince Lazar were transported throughout the Serbian populated regions of the country. The relics were welcomed by masses of believers throughout their journey.[175] On 28 June 1989, the daily national newspaper Politika was dedicated to the Kosovo issue, and the subtitle of the editorial was the following: „The Serbian people has glorified and still glorifies its heroes and recognizes its traitors".[176]

Consequently, in the 1980s two parallel processes took place in Serbian society, both leading to a strengthened role of the Serbian Orthodox Church. On the one hand, the crisis of the Yugoslav idea resulted in a bottom-up process when people returned to religion, the primary indicator of their national identity.[177] Actually this aspect supports Rogers Brubaker's argument about the Yugoslav version of the "return of the repressed" view on nationalism. Brubaker argues that because of the fact that the violence between the constituting nationalities during the Second World War was made a taboo during the communist periods, there was no chance for the society to face its past to heal the wounds. As there was no public discussion, these past wounds erupted when the Tito regime collapsed.[178]

[174] Olga Zirojević, "Kosovo in the Collective Memory" in *The Road to War in Serbia. Trauma and Catharsis,* ed. Nebojša Popov (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2000), 207.
[175] Perica, *Balkan Idols,*: 128; Radić, *The Church and the 'Serbian Question'*, 254.
[176] Zirojević, "Kosovo in the Collective Memory", 207.
[177] Though return to religion or desecularization is also a relative phenomenon. Buchenau describes the account of a Russian monk in the 1990s in Serbia, in which he expresses his disappointment about the Serbs being „rather secular and westernized" and because of „lax discipline in shortened liturgies, believers unwilling to kiss his hand, and smoking priests". (Buchenau, "Orthodox Values and Modern Necessities", 135.)
[178] Rogers Brubaker, "Myths and Misconceptions in the Study of Nationalism" in *The State of the Nation: Ernest Gellner and the Theory of Nationalism* ed. John Hall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 288.

On the other hand, parallel with the above bottom-up process, a top-down process also took place, where the church saw its opportunity and tried to mobilize the masses to prepare its return as a "leading national institution". Moreover, it also added to the credibility of the church that – unlike the political regime that disappointed many - it did not only represent transitory interests, but claimed its reference point to rest in „God's eternal truth".[179]

The return to religiosity was a natural reaction of the individuals under the circumstances of a vacuum of identities and it was further assisted by the fact that the church offered itself as the only authentic and continuous protector and depository of Serbian national identity since the Middle Ages.

In the mid-1980s, 21 percent of the respondents considered the Serbian Orthodox Church as „the most trustworthy national institution" in the Serbian capital,[180] and in 1993 the ratio of Orthodox believers who practised their religion amounted to 42 percent compared to only 25 in 1975.[181] But these changes do not seem to have been the result of a deep spiritual enlightenment of the people or a real turning point in the overall patterns of secularisation. In all probability they were the outcome of natural human reactions to an identity vacuum and an increased activity of clerics who saw the time as the right moment to grasp a new role allowing them to influence socio-political changes.

3.3. The relationship between Slobodan Milošević and the Serbian Orthodox Church

The role of the church as the only guardian of Serbian national identity was soon contested as Slobodan Milošević came to power and discarded the party ideology of brotherhood and unity, and introduced a policy of Greater Serbian nationalism that would determine the history of the country for the next one and a half decades.

[179] Buchenau, "Orthodox Values and Modern Necessities", 113.
[180] Perica, *Balkan Idols*, 129.
[181] Miletitch, "L'église orthodoxe serbe", 191.

3.3.1. The stance of the Serbian Orthodox Church towards Milošević

When Milošević assumed power, the church was supportive in its stance towards him. Most clerics saw him as a long-awaited person who would stand up for Serbian national interests.[182] According to Radmila Radić, the main reason behind the church's support for Milošević was that it hoped that it would get the necessary financial and doctrinal means to come back to the forefront of the society as a "leading national institution".[183]

In 1989 the Proposal of the Serbian Church-National Program recognized „certain merits and commitment of the new Serbian leadership to the solution of the Serbian question".[184] Still, the document called for the return of the confiscated church property and its recognition according to its „historic role as a leading national institution".[185] In June 1989, at the celebration of the 600th anniversary of the battle of Kosovo, the incumbent patriarch German observed the following: „The present changes in the attitude of the Serbian [political] leadership toward the Serbian Church and its people […] is the beginning of good cooperation, that will benefit everybody".[186]

Nevertheless, the optimism of the church towards the Milošević-regime quickly dissipated. As soon as the church reckoned that the new regime also refused to guarantee a leading role for it, it started to criticize Milošević for denying the church its rightful place in society and for leading the country towards disintegration.[187] In December 1990, before the first multi-party parliamentary elections in Serbia, the Bishops' Assembly issued an anti-Milošević statement declaring the following: „We are convinced that the Serbian people will be capable of

[182] Tucić, interview; Perica, *Balkan Idols, 143*.
[183] Radić, interview.
[184] Quoted by Anzulović, *Heavenly Serbia.*, 121.
[185] Perica, *Balkan Idols*, 130.
[186] Quoted by Lenard J. Cohen, "Bosnia's 'Tribal Gods': The Role of Religion in Nationalist Politics" in *Religion and the War in Bosnia*, ed. Paul Mojzes (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 56.
[187] Radić, *The Church and the 'Serbian Question'*, 258-260.

recognizing and electing candidates sincerely faithful to God and to the nation, in contrast to those, who make big promises behind which they hide their quest for power and selfish interests". [188] The Pravoslavlje church newspaper launched a more explicit attack and demanded all Serbs to reject "neo-Bolshevism […] dishonesty, brainwashing and media-terror".[189]

The Memorandum of the Holy Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church issued by the Serbian Patriarchate in May 1992 condemned and distanced itself from the ruling party.[190] In this statement the Holy Assembly of Bishops criticized the Milošević regime for not assuring „equal rights for a democratic dialogue in society" and for failing to „heal the consequences of the civil and fratricidal war". Again, they also criticized the regime for not assuring the church its historic place in the Serbian society that belonged to it for centuries and called for the boycott of elections.[191]

The church also condemned Milošević for retaining communist symbols, his unwillingness to financially help religious institutions and to reintroduce obligatory religious education in state schools.[192] In order to secure the future of the Serbian nation against any destructive undertaking on behalf of the party leadership, the Bishops' Assembly issued a document in January 1992 which decided that „no pact – neither with the Serbian authorities, who have the mandate to represent the whole of the Serbian people, nor with the institutions of the Yugoslav Federation, nor with the command structure of the Yugoslav army – can bind the

[188] Quoted by Perica, *Balkan Idols,* 144.
[189] Quoted by Perica, *Balkan Idols,* 144.
[190] Chuck Sudetić, "Serbian Church Assails Belgrade" *The New York Times*, May 29, 1992.
[191] David Steele, "Religion as a Fount of Ethnic Hostility or an Agent of Reconciliation?" in *Religion and War* ed. Dušan Janjić (Belgrade: European Movement in Serbia, 1992), 165-166; Radić, *The Church and the 'Serbian Question',* 263; Sudetić, "Serbian Church Assails Belgrade".
[192] Ramet, *Nihil Obstat,* 166.

Serbian people as a whole without the approval and the blessing of its spiritual Mother, the Serbian Orthodox Church".[193]

3.3.2. Milošević's stance towards religion and the Serbian Orthodox Church

On the other hand Milošević and his circles were not as dismissive towards the church. Dragan Dragojlović, Milošević's minister for religious affairs suggested that during a state visit to the Hilandar Monastery in 1991 Milošević lived through a „moving spiritual experience".[194] However, it is highly unlikely that he was moved by anything connected to church or religion. An account of his visit covers that during his stay in Hilandar the monks withdrew to their cells and the prior not wishing to meet him left the monastery. Milošević was totally unconcerned about religious treasures of the monastery and untouched by the holiest place of Serbian Orthodox Church.[195]

Slobodan Milošević was a communist and an atheist. Although his father was an Orthodox priest by education, there was nothing in Milošević's career that would have referred to a religious background.[196] His wife, Mira Marković, was an offspring of one of Serbia's most prominent communist families, whose hard-line Marxist views played an important role in Milošević's political thinking and career.[197] They never attended religious holiday celebrations and never showed any signs of having any kind of affiliation to religion.[198]

Still, Milošević's „conversion" in the Hilandar Monastery might have been a revelation, but not a spiritual one, rather a rational recognition of how religious sentiments can be used to mobilize masses and to amass political power. We can say that Milošević was very pragmatic

[193] Quoted by Radić, *The Church and the 'Serbian Question'*, 263.
[194] Perica, *Balkan Idols*, 129.
[195] Slavoljub Djukić, *Milošević and Marković: A Lust for Power* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 38-39.
[196] Tucić, interview.
[197] Louis Sell, *Slobodan Milošević and the Destruction of Yugoslavia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 11, 176-178.
[198] Ristić, interview.

about the church's role in the conflict. In spite of all the criticism that he got from the part of the church, he was very well aware of the fact that (i) the Serbian Orthodox Church cannot exist without the financial support of the Serbian state, (ii) due to the historical bonds between religion and the Serbian nation, his and the church's agenda contained several common interests which would serve his goals and prevent the church from carrying out a frontal attack on the regime.

Therefore, instead of criticising the church, the Milošević-regime publicly recognized its role and merits. Contrary to contesting the church's role in the Serbian national identity during the Tito era, the Serbian press, such as Politika, hailed the Orthodox Church as being „the spiritual basis for and the most essential component of the national identity".[199] According to Ramet, the Orthodox Church was given serious financial support, the proof of which is the mass reconstruction of historical religious sites, the building of many new monasteries (especially in Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina) and the continuation of the building of the colossal Cathedral of Saint Sava in Belgrade.[200]

3.3.3. The role of the Serbian Orthodox Church in war mobilization

It is very hard to judge the attitude of the Serbian Orthodox Church towards the break-up of Yugoslavia, as the evidence we have is contradicting. Before the outbreak of the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Patriarch Pavle met separate delegations of the Croatian Catholic Church and the Islamic Religious Community, and together condemned hostilities and called for peace.[201] In November 1992 a joint Catholic-Orthodox-Muslim „Appeal for Peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina" was signed as well.[202] In June 1992 Patriarch Pavle led a peace march in Belgrade, where more than 10,000 people participated and protested against Milošević and

[199] Quoted by Ramet, *Balkan Babel*, 113.
[200] Ibid., 257.
[201] Radić, "The Church and the 'Serbian Question'", 261-262.
[202] Steele, "Religion as a Fount of Ethnic Hostility", 164; Radić, "The Church and the 'Serbian Question'", 261-262.

his policies.[203] Pavle also called for the cessation of hostilities several times,[204] and emphasized that he refused "not only the Greater, but even the smallest Serbia, if creating it means committing a crime".[205] It was in fact not only Pavle who spoke out against violence and hatred between religious groups, but certain other individuals from the Orthodox clergy as well.[206]

However, parallel with these peaceful ambitions, voices within the church that accepted violence in defence of Serbian national interests also abounded. Most clergyman identified so strongly with the Serbian cause, that they could not imagine a peaceful solution without the satisfaction of Serbian interests. The war was depicted by most clergyman as a war of defence, and what justified this argument was the genocide committed against Serbs in the Second World War and the possibility of a repeated massacre against the Serbian nation. In October 1991, a document of the Holy Synod declared that „the Serbian state and the Serbian people must protect them [Serbs living on the territory of Croatia] with all legitimate means, including also the armed defence of Serbian lives and of all Serbian provinces".[207] In 2005, a video recording from the 1990s appeared in the Serbian press, showing an Orthodox priest blessing members of the so-called Scorpions paramilitary force. The same recording also shows the Scorpions killing civilian Muslims.[208] In 1995, Patriarch Pavle celebrated a mess at

[203] Dartel, "The Nations and Churches in Yugoslavia", 285.
[204] David Steele, "Christianity in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo: From Ethnic Captive to Reconciling Agent" in *Faith-Based Diplomacy. Trumping Realpolitik*, ed. Douglas Johnston (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 126; Radmila Radić, "Serbian Orthodox Church and the War in Bosnia and Herzegovina" in *Religion and the War in Bosnia*, ed. Paul Mojzes (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 178.
[205] Mirko Đorđević, "Patriarch Pavle's Umbrella" in *Kišobran Patrijarha Pavle – kritika palanačkog uma* ed. Mirko Đorđević (Belgrade: Peščanik, 2010), 229.
[206] Steele, "Christianity in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo", 137.
[207] Peter Palmer, "The Churches and the Conflict in Former Yugoslavia" in *Religion and Intrenational Relations*, ed. K. R. Dark (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 94.
[208] Patrick Moore, „Serbia and Montenegro/Bosnia: A Video Shocks Serbia", *Radio Free Europe*, 9 June 2005. http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1059192.html (accessed May 20, 2013); Keith Doubt, "Scapegoating and the Simulation of Mechanical Solidarity in Former

the renaming ceremony of Foča to Srbinje, a town in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where masses were massacred by Serbian military and paramilitary forces between 1992 and 1994.[209]

It is very hard to come to a conclusion about the church's or, let alone, Patriarch Pavle's role in the conflict. There are certain sources, such as the writings of Mirko Đorđević, that depict Patriarch Pavle himself as someone, who "did not quite know how to act".[210] Đorđević does not contest the good intentions of the patriarch, and he suggests that the patriarch was manipulated by other members of the Orthodox clergy to take some crucial decisions that had destructive consequences.[211] Thus, he suggests that the intentions of the patriarch were not bad, but he was not able to withstand the influence of his fellow clergyman. This is in fact also what Živica Tucić suggests when he says that Patriarch Pavle was a person who did not watch TV or read newspapers. According to him, the patriarch was easy to manipulate and it is possible that other clergyman filling important ranks in the church hierarchy made use of his weakness.[212] Tucić also draws the attention to the fact that on Serbian lands mostly those young people entered institutions of religious education who came from poor families and were not admitted to other schools or had no other chance to get an education. Moreover, a significant part of clergyman came from Bosnia and Herzegovina, where – because of the fact that there Ottoman rule lasted longer – intolerance towards people of other religion was more common.[213] It is hard to judge if these views either consciously or unconsciously serve to explain or decrease the responsibility of either the patriarch or the church as a whole in the conflict of the 1990s. However, regarding the historical cleavages within the Serbian Orthodox Church, it is also possible that serious disagreements existed with regard to the

Yugoslavia: 'Ethnic Cleansing' and the Serbian Orthodox Church", *Humanity and Society* 31 (2007).

[209] Đorđević, "Patriarch Pavle's Umbrella", 229.

[210] Ibid., 228.

[211] Ibid., 228.

[212] Tucić, interview.

[213] Tucić, interview.

approach or actions the church finally took. It is also important to emphasize that the structure of the Serbian Orthodox Church, in which the patriarch is only primus inter pares, and bishops are given a relatively large autonomy, also made it possible for certain clergyman to act independently from the Patriarchate.[214] However, as up until today there is no evidence that those clergyman who clearly represented pro-war views would have been dismissed or criticized by the church, it is difficult to confute the responsibility of the Serbian Orthodox Church as an institution.

Nevertheless, an inescapable religious identification accompanied the war and despite the fact that the church criticised Milošević, the secular nationalism of the state and the religious nationalism of the church grew together and served each other, influencing masses of people who had nothing to do with religion before. Religious practices were thus revitalized: national TV channels broadcast programmes on Orthodox liturgy and theology to satisfy the growing interest in church affairs, and long-forgotten religious holidays were again celebrated by the masses.

3.3.4. Republika Srpska and the Serbian Orthodox Church

Interestingly, the issue that lets us conclude the most on the real territorial and spiritual ambitions of the Serbian Orthodox Church is its relationship towards the leadership of the Republika Srpska as opposed to Belgrade.

One of the main areas of hostility that the church manifested in relation to the Belgrade leadership was the insufficient degree of attention of Serbian authorities towards the Serbs in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Orthodox clergy was increasingly explicit in expressing its support for the political autonomy of the Serbs living outside the administrative boundaries of Serbia. The church found a partner in Radovan Karadžić, the president of Republika Srpska, who – in a more explicit way than Milošević did – played the religious trump card: he adopted

[214] Radić, interview.

Orthodoxy as a quasi state-religion, involved the church in the parliamentary decision-making process, officially recognized it as a "leading national institution" and introduced religious instruction in the educational curriculum.[215] From the church's viewpoint, Radovan Karadžić emerged as an idealistic politician during the Bosnian war, a „true Orthodox leader committed to the construction of a theocratic society".[216] In January 1992, Metropolitan Amfilohije described the Bosnian Serb community as „the last redoubt of unsullied holiness, of untroubled and unpolluted truth".[217]

There were in fact substantial differences in the stance of Radovan Karadžić to the church compared to that of Slobodan Milošević. Firstly, - at least based on what he told press agencies – Karadžić had real religious sentiments. In an interview published in Svetigora, the Orthodox religious magazine of Montenegro he said the following:

„And God probably brought us freedom because he taught us what to do, and the Holy Spirit whispered to us what we should say, of which I am personally convinced because frequently I went to the gatherings without a prepared concept – actually this is so always with the exception of three-four important historical gatherings – and I always went according to the Gospel 'Do not worry what you will say. The Spirit alone will tell you what should be said'".[218]

The sole fact that such words were given place in an official church magazine prove that the Serbian Orthodox Church did not have the slightest reservation against his person or his actions. In another interview „Karadžić added that all he does he "does with thinking of God".[219] Karadzic's anti-communist stance was also sympathetic to the church, as he publicly

[215] Perica, *Balkan Idols,* 162; Miletitch, "L'église orthodoxe serbe", 196; Radić, "The Church and the 'Serbian Question'", 267-268; Tucić, interview.
[216] Buchenau, "Orthodox Values and Modern Necessities"; 118; Cohen, "Bosnia's 'Tribal Gods'", 71.
[217] Quoted by Ramet, *Balkan Babel,* 255.
[218] Quoted by Paul Mojzes, "The Camouflaged Role of Religion in the War in Bosnia and Herzegovina" in *Religion and the War in Bosnia,* ed. Paul Mojzes (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 88.
[219] Recounted by Radić, "Serbian Orthodox Church and the War", 177.

argued that communism was something that only Serbia took seriously, whereas the rival republics only used it as a façade for their own religious mobilisations.[220]

From 1993, the policy of Milošević towards the Bosnian Serbs changed substantially. As a result of the Croatian-Bosniac compromise and the general condemnation of the „United States of Serbia" programme of the Republika Srpska by the international community, Milošević decided to back out from the conflict and pressurise the Bosnian Serb leadership to accept the peace plans of the international community. However, Karadžić was unwilling to give up the Serbian cause and to make any compromise. Under these circumstances the Serbian Orthodox Church remained the only supporter of the Republika Srpska, and the Orthodox hierarchy along with Patriarch Pavle made regular visits to Pale to meet Bosnian Serb leaders.[221] The church supported the Bosnian Serb territorial interests all the way through. In May 1993, Metropolitan Jovan allegedly declared that "the Holy Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church gave support to the efforts of the Bosnian Serbs to obtain their own state".[222] The church also supported the Bosnian Serbs in their rejection of the Vance-Owen peace plan in 1993, which would have divided Bosnia and Herzegovina into ten regions endowed with a certain degree of autonomy. Metropolitan Amfilohije commented the rejection of the Vance-Owen plan by the Bosnian Serb Assembly the following way: "Having revived in yourself the faith in God's justice, you renewed St. Lazar's loyalty to the people and rised the dignity of the Serb people".[223] The document titled "The Appeal to the Serb People and World Public" issued by the Serbian Orthodox Church in the summer of 1994 went even further by "calling the entire Serb people to defend the age-old rights and liberties of their own vital interests, necessary for the physical and spiritual survival and endurance on

[220] Quoted by Mojzes, "The Camouflaged Role of Religion", 87.
[221] Paul Hockenos, "Letter from Belgrade", *New Statesman & Society* 8: 361 (1995): 10.
[222] Steele, "Christianity in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo", 135.
[223] Ibid., 135.

land of the fathers and grandfathers". [224] Furthermore, in October 1994 Patriarch Pavle called for the cessation of hostilities, but at the same time observed that Bosnian Serbs must be "guaranteed the right of self-determination, namely a confederation with Yugoslavia'". [225]

Before Milošević departed to Dayton in October 1995, he managed to enforce a document signed by the leadership of the Republika Srpska and Patriarch Pavle that allowed him to negotiate on behalf of the self-proclaimed entity. The signing of the document by the patriarch was regarded by certain circles of church hierarchy as a betrayal of Serbian interests. After heated debates, the Holy Synod finally decided to invalidate Pavle's earlier signature in December 1995, and later condemned the peace accords of Dayton and Milošević for presenting the peace treaty „as a victory of justice, while it is a defeat without precedent for the Serbian people".[226] The synod allegedly also argued that Pavle should resign for having signed the document.[227]

All the above actually means that the church criticised Milošević for not going far enough to protect the Serbian national interests, that is, for not being radical enough.

3.4. Competing nationalisms

As we have already seen, it was the Serbian Orthodox Church that first appeared as the defender of Serbian national interests at the beginning of the 1980s. However, with the rise of Milošević at the end of the decade, the church lost its position as the only institution representing the Serbian cause, as Milošević also „elevated himself to the designated defender of the pride, national dignity and moral convictions of Serbianhood",[228] and used the promise of a new Serbian empire to mobilize Serbs. The aims of the two agents of nationalism were

[224] Quoted by Radić, "Serbian Orthodox Church and the War", 179.
[225] Quoted by Radić, "Serbian Orthodox Church and the War", 180.
[226] Quoted by Miletitch, "L'église orthodoxe serbe", 197; Palmer, "The Churches and the Conflict", 95-96; Radić, "Serbian Orthodox Church and the War", 182.
[227] Cohen, "Bosnia's 'Tribal Gods'", 73.
[228] Mylonas, *Serbian Orthodox Fundamentals*, 126.

very similar, but it is important to see the differences as well. First I will separately discuss the nature and aims of the two competing nationalisms in the period in question, and continue by summarizing the similarities and differences.

3.4.1. The bases of religious nationalism represented by the Serbian Orthodox Church

The aim of the religious nationalism of the Serbian Orthodox Church was to become a "leading national institution", the depository of national unity, and to realize an ideal society where Orthodoxy is the state religion, the government is composed of politicians practising their religion and where religion, as the basis of national ideology is an integral part of national education:

„Certain conditions […] must be met in order for Serbs to restore their Serbian state. If the highest government representatives are not Orthodox, that is, if they maintain no spiritual ties with the Serbian Orthodox Church, do not attend religious service, […] and if they refuse to cross themselves, then they cannot be legitimate Serbian representatives. While they may rule Serbia, the Serbian people cannot accept them as their own".[229]

This idea also appeared in the Proposal of Serbian Church-National Program published in 1989, calling for a „truly Christian Europe, with a genuine and creative theodemocracy instead of a formal, arid, Western democracy".[230]

As far as territorial aims are concerned, the church implicitly expressed its conceptions about the territorial arrangement of Serbian-inhabited territories after a possible break-up. The picture of divided Serbian-inhabited regions was a nightmare for the church, especially in the context of a nationalist Croatia that by then revived several symbols of the Ustasha rule.

In the second half of the 1980s, some voices among the Orthodox clergy called for an explicit territorial division according to religious affiliation. In 1987, Patriarch Germanus said that „Serbia and the Serbian Orthodox Church were waiting for a national leader capable of

[229] Quoted by Radić, *The Church and the 'Serbian Question'*, 266.
[230] Quoted by Perica, *Balkan Idols,* 131.

defending Serbian interests and if necessary, accomplishing partition of the country".[231] The Proposal of the Serbian Church-National Program - similarly to the Academy Memorandum examined in the following part of the thesis - argued that in the last 50 years „Serbia had to endure economic subordination, underdevelopment, partitions, and political inferiority in the socialist Yugoslavia",[232] and demanded guarantees for the rights of Serbs living outside Serbia.

The Memorandum of the Holy Assembly of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church issued by the Serbian Patriarchate in May 1992 called for the unity of Serbian lands and people,[233] and expressed that „the Church in the Serbian lands, by her very nature, cannot be identified with any kind of boundaries. She is concerned for her entire people".[234]

In April 1992, Metropolitan Amfilohije expressed his support to finally create „a United States of Serbia" where all Serbian people would be united.[235] In the letter that he wrote to Lord Carrington, the Chairman of the European Union Peace Conference on Yugoslavia, Patriarch Pavle explained that genocide was threatening Serbs for the second time: „It is time it was understood that the victims of genocide and their previous and perhaps future executioners cannot live together any longer. After the Second World War nobody forced the Jews to live with Germans in the same state".[236]

[231] Ibid., 143.
[232] Quoted by Anzulović, *Heavenly Serbia,* 121.
[233] Steele, "Religion as a Fount of Ethnic Hostility", 166; Sudetić, "Serbian Church Assails Belgrade". The Memorandum also emphasized that a „just solution of the national rights and existential problems of all people with whom the Serbs live" was necessary (Sudetić, "Serbian Church Assails Belgrade").
[234] Quoted by Dobrijević, "The Role of the Serbian Orthodox Church", 110.
[235] Radić, "The Church and the 'Serbian Question'", 263; Sabrina P. Ramet, *The Three Yugoslavias. State-Building and Legitimation, 1918-2005* (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2006), 501.
[236] Dartel, "The Nations and Churches in Yugoslavia", 284; Miletitch, "L'église orthodoxe serbe", 195.

3.4.2. The bases of secular nationalism represented by the Milošević -regime

The aims of the regime can be best illustrated by the Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences. This document, the work of a group of Serbian intelligentsia on „Current Social Questions in Yugoslavia, 1986", [237] was first condemned by the Yugoslav leadership for questioning party ideology and the legacy of Tito. However, with the nationalist turn in the end of the 1980s, Milošević endorsed this document and used it as a blueprint for his programme.

Such as certain church statements, the document explained that genocide was taking place in Kosovo, while in Croatia „discrimination, the subtle and effective politics of assimilation and national inequality" were pursued.[238] According to the Memorandum, Serbia had been abused by its neighbours and Serbs were discriminated culturally, economically and politically in the federation. Serbs had sacrificed most for the creation of Yugoslavia and, among other things, they were „subject to physical annihilation" during the Second World War. Despite all their sacrifices they were accused of „being "oppressors," "unitarists," "centralists,"". As a result, the document argued that Serbia had the right to „return to its own historical roots", and declared that „the establishment of the Serbian people's complete national and cultural integrity, regardless of which republic or province they might be living in, is their historical and democratic right".[239] These elements were also central to official party policy. Similarly to that of the church, the main party narrative was that Serbia was forced into war by the other nationalities, who betrayed the idea of Yugoslavia. As Obradović put it, „the collective fear of

[237] "Grupa Akademika Srpske Akademije Nauka i Umetnosti o Aktuelnim Drustvenim Pitanjima u Jugoslaviji 1986. Godine" http://www.scribd.com/doc/2838406/Memorandum-SANU (accessed April 1, 2013).
[238] Ibid.
[239] Ibid.

change and an uncertain future was transformed into nationalistic and political hysteria",[240] in which every means to protect Serbian unity were justifiable.

3.4.3. Common grounds and competing aims

After all, there seems to be much common ground for religious and secular nationalism in Serbia. The number one accordance is the two common enemies representing a potential threat to Serbian national existence. The northern (mainly Croatian) enemy from the religious point of view represented a threat that for centuries questioned Orthodox ideals and culture, and in the Orthodox imaginarium was seen as a bridgehead of Rome with the long-term ambition to extend its jurisdiction to the Orthodox-populated territories of the Balkan peninsula. In the secular nationalist rhetoric the northern threat was a symbol of ethnic nationalism and selfish egoism for giving up Titoist ideology, thus triggering the break-up, where all other events were just consequences of the initial betrayal.

The other common enemy were the Bosniacs and Albanians (or more generally Islam). The alleged aim of the Albanians – to quote the words of Atanasije Jevtić - was „the extermination of the Serbian people in Kosovo and Metohija".[241] In the secular nationalist interpretation the demographic power of the Albanians living in Yugoslavia represented the threat, fearing that an irreversible change in the ethnic structure would overturn the status quo, leaving Serbs in a minority in the historical Serbian heartland.

Unfortunately these concerns of self-preservation were gradually converted into hatred and later actions against rival groups and religions. Even if the church denied to be politicized, when it called for peace and for a just solution, it always called for options that represented the interests of the Serbian people. Just solutions – both for church and state - included the

[240] Marija Obradović, "The Ruling Party" in *The Road to War in Serbia. Trauma and Catharsis* ed. Nebojša Popov (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2000), 427.
[241] Quoted by Radić, "The Church and the 'Serbian Question'", 249.

aspiration to return to an ideal state, but in both cases the etalons they wanted to return to were man-made myths rather than historical truths.

Territorial ambitions and the thought that Serbs have the right to live in one state also represented a common ground. Milošević 's Greater Serbian goals are not subject to debate. During the war Patriarch Pavle once pointed out: "I do not want Greater and not even the smallest Serbia if its price is crime".[242] Still, as we have seen above, he and other clergyman also issued several statements which were not far from Milošević 's Greater Serbian ideas in their content.

Victimization and the reduction of all problems leading to the break-up to the discrimination of Serbs in Yugoslavia was another common element of church and state rhetoric. Both church statements and Milošević claimed that Serbs were not aggressors but victims - both historically and in the conflicts of the 1990s. The narrative of victimization discarded the partisan rhetoric, emphasizing brotherhood and unity, and instead stressed the periods of history when Serbs fell victim to adversary ethnic groups or ideologies. Serbian intelligentsia representing the country as a victim of the dissolution of Yugoslavia (Dobrica Ćosić, Vojislav Šešelj, Vuk Drašković) was endorsed by the party administration parallel with the consolidation of the power of Milošević. This victimization theory created the basis of the „myth of *martyrium*", where „the nation is presented as the perennial target of discrimination and persecution".[243] The moral superiority of the suppressed was emphasized by both church and party ideologists while – as Anthony D. Smith points out - „the collective appropriation of antiquity" and "the shared memories of the Golden Age"[244] were used to legitimate efforts

[242] Ivan Šarčević, "Glas jedne druge Srbije. Razgovor sa profesorom Mirko Đorđevićem" http://www.svjetlorijeci.ba/arhiva/html/2003/11-2003/revija/razgovor.html (accessed 4th January 2010).
[243] Kolstø, "Assessing the Role of Historical Myths", 19-20.
[244] Anthony D. Smith, "The 'Golden Age' and National Renewal" in *Myths & Nationhood*, ed. Geoffey Hosking and George Schöpflin (London: Hurst & Company, 1997), 39.

to recreate a Serbian „empire", an endeavour embraced by both church and state, although different in its scope and means.

Myths constituted a common ground as well. Even though the rhetoric of Milošević was secular in its character, it reached back to religious motives. Myths were adopted by Milošević as the simplest means of expressing "distinctiveness and creating boundary",[245] as fundamental instruments for ethnic mobilisation.

In spite of all these shared elements, the relationship between the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Milošević-regime was far from being a partnership. They offered two competing alternatives of national existence, on the one hand a „theodemocracy" led by believers of the Orthodox faith, protecting Serbian interests under the guidance of an ethnic church, and on the other hand a secular, homogenous Greater Serbia free from the internal Catholic and Islam threats, and also limiting the big ambitions of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Milošević wished to achieve this ideal state by using religious rhetoric, whereas the church wanted to keep the momentum of ethnic mobilisation for itself and seize the chance to transform Serbian society into a state of *Svetosavlje*. These two rival parallel processes strengthened each other, but also competed for power and influence over society and for control over the Serbian nation.

[245] George Schöpflin, "The functions of myth and a taxonomy of myths" in *Myths & Nationhood*, ed. Geoffrey Hosking and George Schöpflin (London: Hurst & Company, 1997), 22.

4. Conclusion

As it was pointed out earlier in the thesis, there are many different ways to approach the relationship between nationalism and religion. In this concluding part, I return to Brubaker's four approaches, with the intention to place the case of Serbia in the 1990s in Brubaker's analytical framework.

The first approach Brubaker offers – religion and nationalism being analogous phenomena – is not the most suitable analytical category in the Serbian case. The reason is that the Greater Serbian nationalism represented by Slobodan Milošević cannot be regarded as a "religion of modern secularism"[246] per se. As I argued before, according to Hayes, nationalism in the secular sense creates sacred places, holy days, a distinct symbolism and mythology.[247] In other words it takes over the technical requirements of established religions and fills it with its own content. It creates a modern religion of secular nationalism, using the prerequisites of historical religions. Anthony D. Smith also argues similarly when he says that political religions base themselves on "sacred properties of the nation".[248] However, in the Serbian case the Milošević-regime did not create its own "sacred properties", a distinct symbolism, mythology etc., but took over and used that of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Therefore, we cannot talk about an analogy between religion and Milošević's nationalism, because the latter cannot be separated from Orthodox religion.

Juergensmeyer's argument that religion and nationalism are analogous because they are both "ideologies of order"[249] is more valid for the Serbian case. In line with his view, in Serbia both the Orthodox Church and the Milošević-regime offered different conceptions of order,

[246] Hayes, *Nationalism*, 176.
[247] Hayes, *Nationalism*, 165-167.
[248] Smith, "The 'Sacred' Dimensions of Nationalism", 802.
[249] Juergensmeyer, „The Global Rise of Religious Nationalism", 265.

and regarded themselves as the "ultimate authority".[250] This is what made them rivals, even though they used each other for the sake of temporary goals.

Although Brubaker regards "religion as a cause or explanation of nationalism"[251] and "religion as imbricated or intertwined with nationalism"[252] as two distinct approaches, I think the two cannot be separated in the Serbian case: the historical intertwining of state and church explains the relationship between religion and nationalism in the researched period. As I discussed in the theoretical background, the concept of *symphonia*, in which church and state are equal and indispensable partners, is a principle that explains the intertwining of church and state, religion and nationalism. In fact, in the church's understanding, this intertwining is the condition for the survival of the Serbian nation. This historical intertwining also elucidates why national and religious myths and symbols are inseparable in Serbia.

Here it is necessary to reflect on Rogers Brubaker's argument, according to which the usage of "religiously tinged language"[253] does not necessarily signal a real embeddedness of religion (in the sense of a real personal belief) into secular nationalism, as religion can be used as a metaphor. This argument is very valid in the Serbian case, where in the 1990s religious programs on TV and allusions related to the Serbian Orthodox Church from the the part of the political regime did not serve the promotion of religion or church. Rather – as Brubaker points out – religion was used as a metaphor – a metaphor for being Serbian.

Brubaker's fourth approach, which regards "religious nationalism as a distinctive kind of nationalism"[254] has been central to my argument throughout the thesis. Brubaker argues that religious nationalism is different from "religiously tinged language", as the claims of religious

[250] Juergensmeyer, „The Global Rise of Religious Nationalism", 267.
[251] Brubaker, „Religion and Nationalism", 5.
[252] Brubaker, „Religion and Nationalism", 8.
[253] Brubaker, „Religion and Nationalism", 10.
[254] Brubaker, „Religion and Nationalism", 12.

nationalism are based on theological principles of an established religion.[255] This is exactly the case in Serbia, where next to the secular nationalism that used religion as a metaphor of being Serbian, a religious nationalism also existed. This religious nationalism was represented by the Serbian Orthodox Church.

In Serbia both religious and secular nationalism had its own agenda. These agendas were principally about protecting and representing Serbian interests. However, the interests of Serbianhood were understood differently by the two nationalisms. For the religious nationalism represented by the Serbian Orthodox Church, the ideal social order was based on the church's return as a "leading national institution". In the church's understanding, the theory and state of *symphonia*, in which church and state are equally important partners guarantees most the Serbian national interests. The secular nationalism represented by the Milošević-regime also represented Serbian national interests and ideologized its expansionist ambitions by creating a narrative about the repression of Serbian national interests during the Tito-era as well as the aggressive and destructive nationalistic agendas of other nationalities. The ideal social order represented by secular nationalism was a Greater Serbia, in which all Serbian inhabited territories are unified and is free from the threat represented by Catolicism and Islam. A substantial difference between the religious and secular nationalism was that the former was represented by an autocephalous Orthodox church, which naturally means that it had a stronger ideological background and a more coherent notion about the past and future of the community that it represented. Even though the secular nationalism did not explicitly define the ideal social order it wanted to create once its territorial aims were fulfilled, it is very unlikely that Milošević would have liked to guarantee a leading role for the Serbian Orthodox Church. In my understanding his ambition to amass power was even stronger than his Greater Serbian goals.

[255] Brubaker, „Religion and Nationalism", 13.

These two nationalisms existed side by side in the 1990s. In fact, it was religious nationalism that first came to the forefront in the beginning of the 1980s and broke the socialist narrative of brotherhood and unity, which denied the existence of particular nationalisms. The Serbian Orthodox Church, by drawing the attention to grievances of the Serbian community in Kosovo and Bosnia, was the first institution to stand up for alleged Serbian national interests. With its activity and mobilization of the population throughout the 1980s, it set the ground for the Milošević-regime. Even though Milošević was a communist and non-believer, he realized that religion being the primary marker of identity in the region, it is Orthodoxy along which the mobilization of the population for his cause was easiest. We can say that the Milošević-regime instrumentalized religion. However, the church also tried to instrumentalize Milošević, hoping that it would benefit from a politician that finally stood up for Serbian interests.

Although they instrumentalized each other, religious and secular nationalism were rivals. Therefore, the Serbian Orthodox Church should not be condemned for collaborating with the Milošević-regime. If the church is to blame for something, it is for its own nationalistic claims, which, in my view, together with the Milošević-regime, make the church responsible for the violent disintegration process of Yugoslavia.

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