

Outward State
Transborder Nation Building and Serb Consuls in Ottoman Macedonia (1887-1912)

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The paper examines the late-nineteenth-century consulates of Ottoman Europe as transborder sites of nation building. By rethinking consulates as productive fields of sociolegal action, I showcase how purportedly insignificant diplomatic agents wielded enormous power to draw and redefine state policy, cultural boundaries, and the contours of modern sovereignty. The work's case studies focus on Serbia's consuls in the Ottoman provincial towns of Manastır/Bitola, Priştine, Selanik/Salonika, and Üsküp/Skopje. I trace Serb consular officials as they infiltrated Ottoman legal circuits and weaponized international law to stabilize the porous boundaries of the Serb national body *from without*. Working across state borders, Serb consuls labored to incorporate new members of the nation – the dormant “Old Serbs” of Macedonia – and devise covert “national” policies in the fields of civil law, subjecthood, education, public health, policing, and trade. I argue that such attempts to counter Ottoman imperial consolidation in the region reinforced Serb nation building at home and revised the young state's program of territorial expansion. The efforts to forge legal and emotional ties between nationally indifferent locals and the consulates electrified geopolitical dilemmas of small statehood in the age of empires. As consuls enticed and coerced Ottoman subjects into a new “imagined community,” their few successes and myriad blunders informed ongoing debates in the mother country about the criteria of national belonging and the uneasy relationship between the incipient Serb state and nation.

By treating a small state's consuls as autonomous forces of identity formation, the paper structures a new analytical model that may prove useful in other historical settings. Moving from *nationalist idealism* to *disenchantment*, then *discursive violence*, and, finally, to *state-sponsored violence*, Serb consuls failed to instill national consciousness in a culturally and linguistically proximate population. Ultimately, Serb consuls concluded that a nation could not be manufactured without a state. This realization paved the way to the interstate conflagrations of the Balkan Wars

(1912-1913). Growing frustrations reminded Serb nationalist missionaries of what their bureaucratic forebears in autonomous Ottoman Serbia had learned a generation before: states produced desired subjects via bureaucratic expansion spanning decades and by force, with “swords and fire.”¹

Vladislav Lilić is a scholar of Eurasian empires whose research focuses on the social and legal histories of statecraft, diplomacy, and identity building in the nineteenth-century Balkans. He received a doctorate in Modern European History from Vanderbilt University. His first book (under tentative agreement with Cambridge University Press), *Empire of States: Law and Interpolity Order in Ottoman Europe, c. 1830-1878*, traces how a wide array of elite and nonelite historical actors used the law to remake the regional imperial order. Lilić’s work in Austrian, Bulgarian, German, Montenegrin, North Macedonian, Serbian, and Turkish archives has been supported by research fellowships from the American Institute for Southeast European Studies, Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies, the Central European History Society, and the Social Science Research Council. As a teacher, Lilić focuses on modern Europe, especially the entwined questions of imperialism, nationalism, and international law. He is also a regular podcast host on the New Books Network.

¹ Državni arhiv Srbije, KB, PPO, 1905, r. 26, Konsul Stanojević Ministru, Bitolj, October 16/29, 1905.

**Bureaucrat-Diplomats:
Habsburg Consuls in the Balkans and the World,
ca. 1840s–1920s**

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Abstract

My proposed paper will draw on my ongoing PhD project, which explores the Habsburg consular service as a diplomatic bureaucracy. Tracing the transnational entanglements of a European empire through its diplomatic actors and the institutional practices in which they engaged, my research addresses recent social and cultural approaches to studying diplomacy and public administration in order to work towards a global (micro)history of late-Habsburg diplomacy. In doing so, it privileges administrative sources such as the varied documents found in the consuls' personnel files over their better-known political reports and brings new questions—including from histories of emotion, gender, and material culture—to the study of Habsburg consulship and the foreign-policy bureaucracy as a whole.

In four chapters, my analysis examines the spread and intensification of Habsburg consular activity across the decades in concrete local situations. I follow the careers of several dozen officials from their initial postings in the Ottoman Balkans—the traditional focus region of Habsburg expansionist ambition—to their new emergent roles across the oceans, where consuls were tasked with managing migrations, commercial relations, colonialist ventures, and much more. Overall, the project aims to contribute to the ongoing revaluation of the Habsburg Empire as having been anything but an “anachronism”. Instead, it sees it as a vibrant, uniquely diverse polity among other empires and nation states—which, in competing and cooperating with each other, shaped a rapidly modernising world, and employed consuls as their most active agents abroad.

Paper Proposal

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Emperor Franz, Metternich and the Duke of Reichstadt, 1811-1832: Legacies of Napoleonic Europe in France and Austria

On 20 March 1811 Marie Louise (from the House of Habsburg) gave birth to Napoleon Bonaparte's only legitimate son. At the age of three, after the defeat of his father and a very short time as Emperor of France, the child was taken in by his grandfather, Emperor Franz of Austria, and brought to Vienna. Marie Louise was placed at the head of the Duchy of Parma, eventually cultivating a new family, far from Vienna.

Napoleon's son posed a delicate, difficult dilemma for Emperor Franz and his Chancellor Metternich. As a Bonaparte and a Habsburg, he had strong yet ambiguous connections with France, the Habsburg lands and, indeed, much of Europe. While he was brought up as part of the Austrian Habsburg family, with the requisite education and military positions, he had the potential to become a focal point for passionate Bonapartists and Revolutionaries.

The aim of this paper is to investigate the inter-relationships, discussions and plans of Franz and Metternich concerning the Duke of Reichstadt. Franz, in the absence of both parents, was reputed to have a caring, loving relationship with the youth. Bu contrast, Metternich, who took overall responsibility for the youth's education, was cool towards the Duke. How did they envisage the Duke's future? How could the Bonaparte heir be integrated into the post-Napoleonic landscape?

Through this case study, the paper will also make wider reflections on important questions of legitimacy, stability, decision-making, mentality and ideology in post-Napoleonic Austria. Particular attention will be given to crucial moments such as the 1822 Bonapartist conspiracy and the 1830 revolutions when the Duke's role and position were openly debated.