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*Illyria Unbound: Re-assessing the Illyrian Movement*

The Illyrian movement – the nineteenth-century cultural and political movement of South Slav reciprocity and autonomy - is often written off by historians of modern nationalism as a pipe dream of poets and intellectuals, one that had no resonance beyond a handful of literary gazettes in reading rooms and salons in Zagreb. That condescension is often typical of political or cultural movements that break the strict mold of modernization along national lines (as Alexander Maxwell has pointed out). Indeed, historians of Croatian nationhood tend to break the Illyrian movement down to those parts that can help explain the narrative of modernization and nationalization along a strictly Croatian path. In so doing, they ignore or elide many of the most important features of the Illyrian movement: its expansive appeal to non-Croat peoples and lands, its open-ended discourses on the borders, territory, and identity of the putative Illyrian community.

In this paper I want to present the Illyrian movement ‘unbound’ by these reductive interpretations. By presenting some of the lives, works, and (importantly) interactions of key figures in the Illyrian orbit, I want to show that historians should take Illyria seriously as a movement for cultural and political autonomy within Habsburg Central Europe that offered a realistic and compelling solution to many of the issues it addressed. And moreover, as a movement that was taken seriously by people of diverse backgrounds, far beyond the cultural and confessional boundaries into which the movement is typically confined and understood. My paper presents a varied set of perspectives on Illyria, looking at its friends and foes across a broad range of territories and communities, men and women of different social classes, different generations, poets, diarists, politicians, journalist, soldiers. By thinking about the Illyrian movement on its own terms – not the terms anachronistically set out by latter-day observers – I want to show how we can also dramatically re-think fundamental presumptions about identity, community, and autonomy in modern Central Europe.



## **Peasant Internationalism: Post-imperial state building and the making of the global welfare regime**

In 1936, Yugoslav economist Rudolf Bićanić remarked, “Few townsmen, few educated men, know how the people really live. They are versed in the economic problems of the Far East, but they never looked into the life of the peasant or suburban worker.” His reflections on the Yugoslav “Agrarian Question” underscored one of interwar Yugoslavia’s greatest state-building challenges: addressing rural poverty. Yet, the broader implications of how these challenges shaped international welfare policies and standards in health, agriculture, rural development, and law remain underexplored, particularly through a holistic analysis of these fields of transnational cooperation.

This paper introduces “peasant internationalism” – a new type of international cooperation – as a framework for understanding how Central-Eastern European technical experts from Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Romania influenced the League of Nations to address the socio-economic disparities caused by uneven industrialization and urbanization. In this paper, I will outline their visions of a decentralized and rural approach to modernization and globalization, referred to by Yugoslav experts as ‘the optimal industrialization of the countryside.’ This modernization paradigm developed during WWII at the Central and Eastern European Planning Board, reflected on the unique challenges of rural life in the region and earlier collaboration of Yugoslavia with India, Egypt, Iran, Turkey, and China during the 1920s and 1930s, challenging the industrially and urban-focused visions of socio-economic progress.

This paper, on the examples of interwar health cooperation and post-WWII reconstruction planning, argues that the region’s rural-centric and decentralized approach to modernization informed the birth of the international welfare regime. Peasant internationalism thus represents the first holistic attempt to address the root causes of poverty in all predominantly agricultural regions in the world, foreshadowing the challenges posed to liberal internationalism by the New International Economic Order and the Non-Aligned Movement in the 1960s and 1970s. By reframing the Yugoslav ‘Agrarian Question’ as a global issue, peasant internationalism places Central-Eastern Europe at the origin of welfare worldmaking.



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*International Suffrage event in Central Europe, connecting women from the region with the rest of the world: The case of the 1913 IWSA Congress in Budapest*  
(Abstract)

The proposed paper is connected to the history of progressive women's movements that started their activities in the time of the Habsburg Empire. The focus this time will be on one particular event as a case study that allows us the close examination of the main issues of women's emancipation in the region that time and the relations that existed among organisations.

In the year 1913 the IWSA held its seventh congress in Budapest. With the generous financial and moral support of the Mayor, István Bárczy, thousands of internationally acknowledged women activist were invited. Delegates arrived to the event from the neighbouring countries from East and Central Europe as well.

The archive documentary reserved at the Collection of Social Organisations of the Hungarian National Archive in Budapest serves as basic primary sources. The Preparatory Committee of the Association of Feminists (founded in Budapest in 1904) was responsible for organising the large meeting. The Committee was formed in 1911 two years before the congress itself. The invitations were partly built on already established connections with activists of women's organisations but they were seeking for new partners as well.

The paper focuses on the question how the delegates from Central and Eastern Europe were included in the program, how could the issues of this region became represented. By exploring these details the paper can contribute to the already explored knowledge about the networks of activists and organisations of the time and also the dynamics of these relation and how the ideas spread internationally, and how did Central European organizations and movements become related to progressive social ideals of the time.