Unlike many works on the subject of national identity in Croatian historiography, *Nacija i nacionalizam u hrvatskoj povijesnoj tradiciji* ambitiously strives to provide a theoretically sensitive analysis of the history of Croatian national identity formation. This requires ridding Croatian historiography of its long-standing primordialist bias, and applying basic concepts and theories of nationalism. The contributions to the volume, which were presented at the Second Congress of Croatian Historians in 2004, and in particular the sophisticated introduction by distinguished political scientist and Croatian nationalism historian Tihomir Cipek, successfully challenge this approach. Along with Cipek's excellent introduction, this volume contains multi-dimensional analyses of the processes of national identity and national ideology construction in central Croatia, Dalmatia, and Istria from the beginning of the nineteenth through the early twentieth centuries.

The main characteristic of national identity construction in Croatia during the nineteenth century was its alternating use of historical (political) rights and the ethno-cultural principle as main arguments in defining national identity, or what the prominent Croatian historian Nikša Stančić describes as definitions that move “from state to the nation and the other way around” (50). The main reason for this was the autonomous status Croatia enjoyed within the Monarchy, based on the tradition of feudal state rights. As Stančić shows in his insightful contribution, a concise version of his larger study entitled *Hrvatska nacija i nacionalizam u 19. i 20. stoljeću* [Croatian Nation and Nationalism in the 19th and the 20th Centuries] (2002), early nineteenth century Croatian nationalists created the idea of “Yugoslavism.” The main tenets of this idea were: (1) the ethno-cultural similarity of the southern Slavs; and (2) the anticipation of a future single South Slav state nation. This concept was intended to counter the powerful rival processes of German and Hungarian national identity construction. Furthermore, Stančić shows how both mid-nineteenth century Croatian Yugoslavists, as well as those Croatians seeking independence, gradually embraced the concept of a politically defined Croatian nation after a clash with Serbia over a parallel development of a Serbian-centered Yugoslavist ideology. Most importantly, Stančić emphasizes the resemblance between the concept of a politically defined nation by Croatian political factions and similar ideas put forth by prominent contemporary Hungarian politicians József Eötvös, whose idea of a Hungarian “political nation” resembled the idea of a Croatian political nation developed by Croatian Yugoslavists, and Lajos Kossuth, whose ideas resembled ideas developed by Croatians in favor of independence. The transnational dimension of Stančić’s argument is particularly significant in light of Croatian historiography’s general failure to profoundly contextualize the Croatian process of national identity formation within a broader Central European framework. This is an especially unfortunate omission given the similarities between the Hungarian and Croatian national identity-building projects.

A similar approach to Stančić’s is recognizable in the contributions analyzing the Dalmatian and Istrian national identity processes, both of which were largely defined by the presence of the Italian historic-cultural legacy. The era of national awakening in Dalmatia began with attempts to reconcile Italian and Slavonic ethno-cultural identities under the ideology of “Slavo-Dalmatinism,” as analyzed by Josip Vrandečić from the University of Split. Vrandečić’s study on the political ideology of Italian linguist Niccolò Tommaseo, leading proponent of Slavo-Dalmatinism, reveals how Tommaseo’s ideology was constructed against the contemporaneous
development of Croatian national thought, Italian irredentism, and Austro-Slavism. Although the Slavo-Dalmatine idea failed in the late nineteenth century, the ethno-nationalization of the province (concluding with the deviation of Croatian, Italian and Serb national processes), nevertheless left a significant legacy on the Croatian nation-building process. A Slavo-Dalmatine concept of the inherent incompatibility of the Slavonic Dalmatian and the Croatian (allegedly Germanized, non-Slavonic) “national mentality” became increasingly influential during the revival of Yugoslavism in Dalmatia at the turn of the twentieth century. Ultimately, the Slavo-Dalmantine idea was appropriated by integralist Yugoslav nationalism, whose proponents were mostly previous advocates of a separate Croatian national identity, as has been convincingly argued by Ivo Banac in *The National Question in Yugoslavia* (1984). This appropriation by former Croatian nationalists-turned-advocates of Yugoslav integralism—the ideology that denies separate south Slavic national identities and instead promotes an integral Yugoslav nation founded on the allegedly historic Serb heroic mentality—has still not been fully recognized by the nationalist faction of Croatian historians, who continue to attribute the Dalmatian “integralist Yugoslav turn” to former advocates of Slavo-Dalmatinnism.

Elements in the development of a distinct Dalmatian identity that do not comfortably fit the Croatian national narrative are omitted in the subsequent contribution dealing with prominent turn of the twentieth century Dalmatian politician Juraj Biankini, whose career provides a scholarly model of the aforementioned “critical turn” from Croat-ism towards integral Yugoslav-ism. However, the following chapter by Aleksandar Jakir offers a structuralist explanation for this turn, focusing on the first half of the 20th century, a brief version of his primary arguments published earlier in his excellent monograph *Dalmatien zwischen den Weltkriegen* (1999). Jakir locates the origin of the Dalmatian “critical turn” in the political and intellectual elite’s belief in the capacity of Yugoslav integralism as a potential force of modernization, which was expected to release Croatia from its peripheral socio-economic backwardness and liberate it from political subordination to Austrian and Hungarian rule. Nevertheless, despite Jakir’s subtle structuralist analysis of Yugoslavism’s gradual loss of legitimacy during the interwar period due to its failure to drive the modernization of the province, the chapter would have benefitted from a stronger emphasis on the cultural and ideological dimensions of the “Dalmatian Turn,” particularly in the case of the twentieth century pro-Yugoslav right- and left-wing movements, both of which promoted hard-line integralism. Such an analysis would be particularly relevant given the fact that the idea of Yugoslav integralism represented a significant stream of political thought in the region until the breakdown of Yugoslavia in the 1990s. This long-term emphasis on integralism in Dalmatia produced serious cleavages in the twentieth century history of Croatian national identity formation.

Darko Dukovski recognizes similarly contested ideologies of identity in the case of Istria. Focusing on the interplay of processes of national identity formation in the rural Croatian hinterland and on the urbanized Italian coast, Dukovski eloquently highlights several aspects that challenge the established national narrative. One of his more interesting points is his argument that the establishment of the Italian Fascist interwar government in Istria led to the economic and social demise of both the Istrian Slavic and Italian populations. However, the most intriguing part of Dukovski’s study is his discussion of the divisions within the Istrian Italian anti-fascist movement during and immediately after World War II. These fractures were characterized by the clash between the adherents of a more nationalist stance and the Comintern’s “proletarian internationalism,” a divide ultimately bridged by the expulsion of approximately 200,000 Italians from Yugoslavia in 1947.