

Me

OSPREY
PUBLISHING

Axis Forces in Yugoslavia 1941–45



Thomas & K Mikulan • Illustrated by Darko Pavlovic

Axis Forces in Yugoslavia 1941–45



N Thomas & K Mikulan • Illustrated by Darko Pavlovic

Series editor Martin Windrow

First published in Great Britain in 1995 by
Osprey Publishing, Elms Court, Chapel Way,
Botley, Oxford OX2 9LP, United Kingdom.
Email: info@ospreypublishing.com

© 1995 Osprey Publishing Ltd.
Reprinted 1997, 1998, 2001

All rights reserved. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the Copyright Designs and Patents Act, 1988, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, electrical, chemical, mechanical, optical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner. Enquiries should be addressed to the Publishers.

ISBN 1 85532 473 3

Series Editor: MARTIN WINDROW
Filmset in Great Britain by Keypools Ltd
Printed in China through World Print Ltd.

FOR A CATALOGUE OF ALL BOOKS PUBLISHED BY OSPREY
MILITARY AND AVIATION PLEASE CONTACT:

The Marketing Manager, Osprey Direct UK,
PO Box 140, Wellingborough, Northants,
NN8 4ZA, United Kingdom.
Email: info@ospreydirect.co.uk

The Marketing Manager, Osprey Direct USA,
c/o Motorbooks International, PO Box 1, Osceola,
WI 54020-0001, USA.
Email: info@ospreydirectusa.com

www.ospreypublishing.com

Acknowledgements

This book would not have been possible without the generous assistance of many knowledgeable correspondents, friends and agencies. The author would like to thank Peter Abbott; Phillip Buss (MA); Josef Charita; Frano Glavina; Croatian State Archives, Zagreb; Mrs. Rhea Ivanuš (Chief Custodian), and Mrs. Bosa Komadina (Custodian) of the Croatian History Museum, Zagreb; Franjo Jančikić; Dr. Marc Landry; David Littlejohn; Stjepan Marcijuš; Stane Mrvič (Director), and Matija Žgajnar (Curator) of the Modern History Museum, Ljubljana; Antonio Muñoz; Staff of the National University Library, Zagreb; Josip M. Novak; Jan-Poul Petersen; Horia Vladimir Șerbănescu Frank Steff; Pierre C. T. Verheye; Sergei Vrišer; with special thanks to Henry L. de Zeng IV. Nigel Thomas would like to thank his family, Heather, Alexander and Dominick, for their patience and support. Krunoslav Mikulan would like to thank his parents, Zlata and Josip, for their support and encouragement.

Author's Note

This book is intended to expand on, and to correct, information contained in *Men-at-Arms 142 Partisan Warfare 1941-45*, to which readers are referred for extra detail. Any corrections or additional information would be welcomed, and may be addressed to the authors via the publisher's address.

Artist's note

Readers may care to note that the original paintings from which the colour plates in this book were prepared are available for private sale. All reproduction copyright whatsoever is retained by the publisher.

All enquiries should be addressed to:

Darko Pavlović
Mode cova 3
10090 Zagreb
Croatia

The publishers regret that they can enter into no correspondence upon this matter.

AXIS FORCES IN YUGOSLAVIA 1941-45

INTRODUCTION

On 1 December 1918, the 'Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes' was established, uniting the ex-Austro-Hungarian provinces of Slovenia, Croatia-Slavonia, Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina with the kingdoms of Serbia – including Macedonia, Vojvodina and Kosovo – and Montenegro. The Serbian King assumed the crown. In October 1929, his kingdom was renamed 'Yugoslavia'.

Yugoslavia had 16 million inhabitants in 1941. These comprised 6½ million Serbs, 3¾ million Croats, 1½ million Slovenes, 900,000 Macedonians, 800,000 Albanians, 800,000 Moslems, 400,000 Hungarians, 250,000 Germans, 400,000 Montenegrins and some 400,000 Czechs, Slovaks, Rumanians, Jews and Gypsies. Heavy-handed Serbian political control was especially resented by the Croats, and in October 1934 Croatian Fascists, the Ustasas (or Ustashe) had King Alexander assassinated in Marseilles during a state visit to France.

To prevent British forces in Greece threatening Italian troops in Albania and the Italian-German Army in North Africa, Adolf Hitler ordered Operation Marita, the invasion of Yugoslavia and Greece, on 27 March 1941. On 6 April, the German 2nd and 12th Armies (15 divisions, including five armoured), Italian 2nd and 9th Armies (23 divisions), and the Hungarian 4th, 5th and Mobile Corps (8 brigades) invaded Yugoslavia from Italy, Germany, Rumania, Bulgaria and Albania. Few of the Royal Yugoslav Army's 30 divisions actively resisted – most Croat and many Slovene units deserted to the invader – and after 11 days the Yugoslav High Command surrendered.

Hitler immediately dismembered the Yugoslav state. Germany annexed the central Slovene districts of Carinthia, Upper Carniola and Southern Styria. Italy annexed Western Slovenia, as Lubiana Province, and the Dalmatian coastal districts, occupied Montenegro and awarded Kosovo and Western Mac-

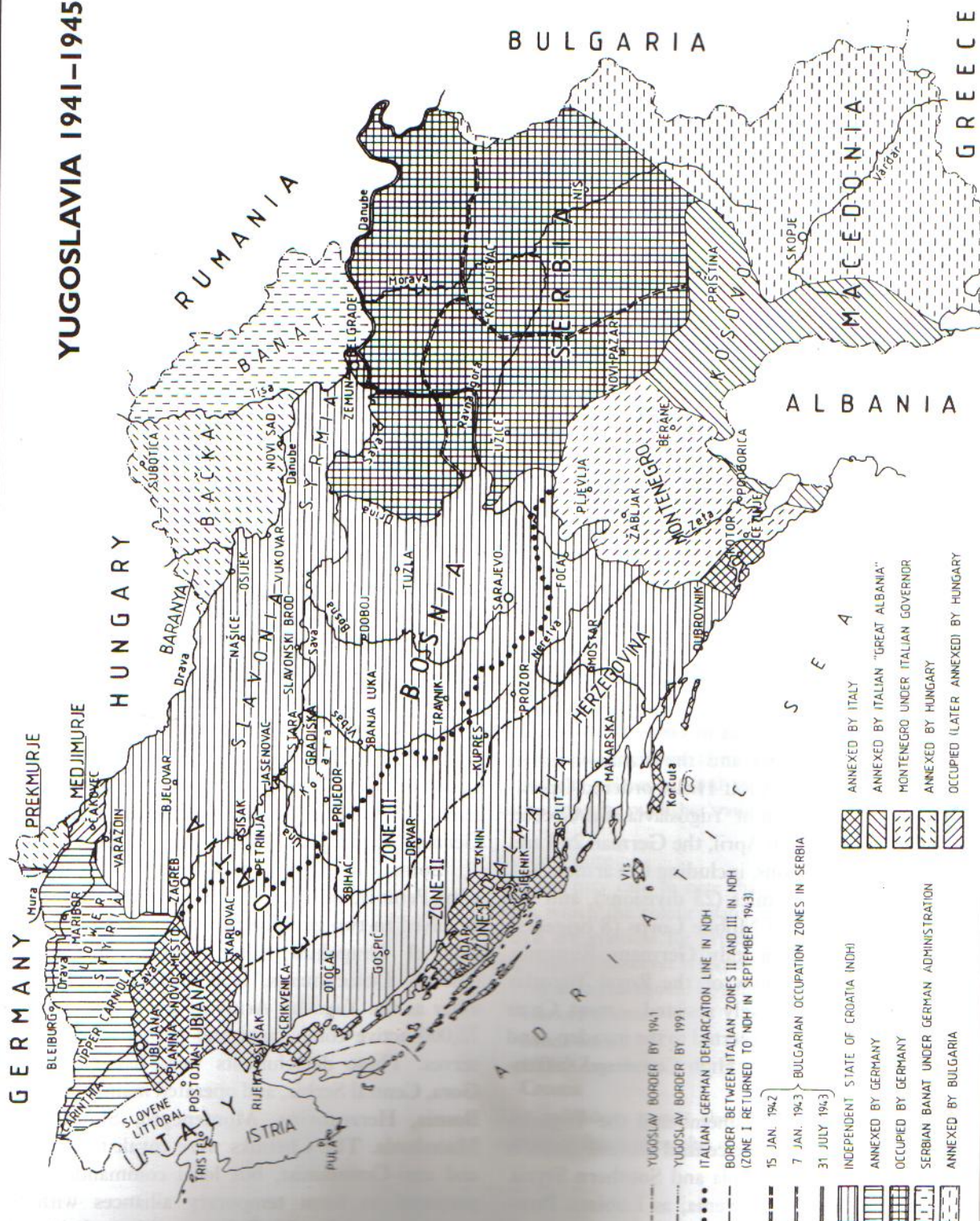


A German Rifle unit on campaign in Dalmatia, 1943. (Roba Archive via J. Charita)

edonia to its Albanian client-state. Hungary annexed the districts of Prekmurje, Medjimurje, Baranja and Bačka in Northern Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria annexed Eastern Serbian, Macedonia and, in January 1942, South-Eastern Serbia. Croatia-Slavonia, Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina formed the 'Independent State of Croatia'. Serbia, reduced to its 1912 borders, came under German military government, while the Banat region of Serbia was administered by the local German population.

Some Yugoslav troops escaped to Egypt to join King Petar II, but the principal resistance to the Axis devolved to two guerilla armies. In mid-April 1941, Colonel Dragoljub 'Draža' Mihailović formed Chetnik Detachments, later recognized by King Petar as the Yugoslav Army of the Homeland with 72,000 active combatants and perhaps 200,000 reserves. These detachments were based at Ravna Gora, Central Serbia, and operated mainly in Serbia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Montenegro, Slovenia and Macedonia. The Chetniks were royalist, pro-Allies and anti-Communist, but local commanders were prepared to form temporary alliances with the enemy, especially the Italians, against their arch-enemies, the Partisans.

YUGOSLAVIA 1941-1945



In June 1941, Josip 'Tito' Broz, a Croatian communist, established the Partisan Detachments, in November 1942 renamed the Yugoslav National Liberation Army. The struggle between Tito's Partisans and the Chetniks added civil war to bloody resistance to the Axis. Guerilla war and civil conflict, always vicious, reached new heights of horror in Yugoslavia.

Axis forces occupied the principal towns and patrolled the main road and rail links, abandoning the villages and countryside, with its craggy mountains, deep river-valleys and impenetrable forests, to the guerillas. Guerilla bands included men of all ages, women and even children, all driven from their homes. Dressed in makeshift uniforms, they avoided concentrations of superior enemy forces, picking off soldiers, policemen and collaborators, individually or in small groups. Axis forces responded by killing civilians or captured guerillas out of hand, burning villages suspected of harbouring or supplying the guerillas. The Germans executed 100 hostages for every German soldier killed.

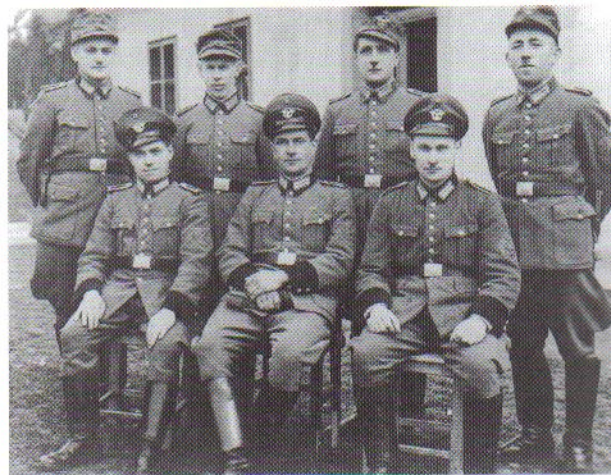
Axis Offensives

The 3¼-year guerilla war, from June 1941 to September 1944, was characterized by successive Axis drives against Partisan and sometimes Chetnik strongholds. Yugoslav historians call these 'Enemy Offensives One to Seven'.

In June 1941, Serbs in Eastern Herzegovina rose up against the new Croatian regime and, in July, a general uprising led by Communists and supported by the Chetniks broke out in Western Serbia. It soon spread to Montenegro and Western Bosnia.

In the First Enemy Offensive, of September to December 1941, the Germans and Italians recovered all this liberated territory. In November, Partisans and Chetniks had ceased to co-operate and turned on each other, Mihailović based on Ravna Gora mountain, Tito in Užice, Western Serbia.

On 15 January 1942, in the Second Enemy Offensive, 35,000 German and Croatian troops advanced through Eastern Bosnia, forcing Tito to retreat southwards to Foča, where he formed mobile 'Proletarian brigades', controlling Eastern Bosnia, Northern Herzegovina and Western Montenegro. In the Third Enemy Offensive, April to June 1942, German, Croatian, Italian and Chetnik forces attacked Foča, but Tito marched 200 miles north-



Six Wachtmeister (corporals) and one Oberwachtmeister (lance-sergeant, seated far left) of a German Police unit in Upper Carniola, Slovenia, wearing the Police grey-green field uniform with M1943 peaked field-cap or

the M1936 service-uniform with grey-green tunic with brown cuffs and collar, peaked cap with brown cap-band, and rank insignia modifications introduced late 1942. (Modern History Museum, Ljubljana)

westwards to Western Bosnia, where, in November, he established a liberated 'Titoland' based at Bihać, just south of the Kozara plateau where German and Croat forces had dislodged local Partisans in Operation *Kozara* the previous July.

On 15 January 1943, in the Fourth Enemy Offensive, Operation *Weiss I, II and III*, German, Croatian and Italian units overran 'Titoland'. But Tito broke through the weak Italian-Chetnik link in the encircling ring. He conducted an epic fighting retreat south-eastwards back across the Neretva, Drina and Lim rivers – capturing Prozor and Konjic but suffering 16,000 casualties – before reaching the safety of Žabljak, on Mount Durmitor, Western Montenegro, at the end of March. On 20 May, he was surrounded there by German, Italian and Bulgarian forces in the Fifth Enemy Offensive (Operation *Schwarz*), but slipped back to Eastern Bosnia with 3,000 men, leaving 13,000 dead. There he ordered his troops to disperse throughout Bosnia, Serbia and Croatia, and fan the flames of a general revolt.

The Italian Armistice of September 1943 netted Tito huge supplies of equipment, some Italian Partisan recruits and access to Allied bases in Italy to supply his army, now 200,000 strong. However, in the Sixth Enemy Offensive (Operation *Kugelblitz*), be-

ginning 2 December 1943, Axis troops captured Tuzla, Eastern Bosnia, and Bihać, Western Bosnia. In Operation *Herbstgewitter*, in December 1943, the Partisans lost their key supply base on Korčula island and, in Operation *Schneesturm*, Tito's HQ at Jajce. In January 1944, Tito escaped to Drvar, Central Bosnia, where, on 25 May 1944, he narrowly escaped capture by German paratroopers in Operation *Rösselsprung*, the Seventh, and last, Enemy Offensive. Now, in June 1944, strong Partisan forces headed into Serbia to meet the Soviet Red Army advancing through the Eastern Balkans. In Operation *Roeslein*, in July, the Germans prevented the Partisans reaching Northern Macedonia. Operation *Feuerwehr*, however, failed to stop their infiltration into Eastern Serbia and Operation *Ruebezahl* forced them back into Western Serbia. Finally, in Operation *Treubruch*, in September 1944, German forces checked an advance by the Partisans and Bulgarians, now allies, into Macedonia. At this stage, King Petar urged all patriotic Yugoslavs to support Tito.

Axis Defeat

On 29 September 1944, the Red Army entered Serbia and liberated Belgrade in October. Now guerilla war graduated to conventional war. The Germans, having retreated from Albania and Greece, abandoned Serbia, forming a defensive line on the Bosnian border. Finally, on 20 March 1945, the 800,000-strong Partisan army (redesignated the 'Yugoslav National Army') began a general offensive. On 15 May, a week after VE-Day, all Yugoslav territory had been retaken. Tito then took a terrible

revenge on thousands of Axis troops who, prevented by British 8th Army from seeking refuge in Southern Austria, surrendered to his forces.

Tito's charisma, brutal secret police and efficient communist organization, prevented nationalist conflicts erupting again in the post-war period, and it was not until June 1991, eleven years after his death, that Yugoslavia, always a fragile creation, began once more to disintegrate.

GERMANY

Ground Forces

In June 1941, Field-Marshal List of the German 12th Army, whose headquarters were in Athens, assigned Lieutenant-General Bader's 65 Corps to occupy Serbia and the German occupation zone of Croatia. Headquartered in Belgrade, Bader had four '15th Wave' infantry divisions – the 704, 714 and 717 in Serbia, and the 718 at Banja Luka, Bosnia, with five second-line *Landeschützen* battalions (447, 823, 923–5) guarding the Croatian section of the Vienna-Salonika railway vital for supplying to North Africa.

The 700-series divisions were smaller – only 8,000 men – less well-trained and well-equipped than front-line divisions. They contained two three-battalion regiments (instead of three); a three-battery artillery battalion (instead of a regiment); cycle-reconnaissance, engineer and signals companies (instead of battalions); and a few logistical and motorized services. Their personnel were too old for front-line duty and were intended for static occupation tasks. However, they provided the backbone of the German forces until late 1942.

In the First Offensive into Montenegro, Serbia, Herzegovina, Bosnia, September to December 1941, 704 and 714 were reinforced by the front-line 113 and 342 Infantry Divisions from France and Russia respectively, and the 125 Infantry Regiment from Salonika. 342 and 718 fought in the Second Offensive in Eastern Bosnia in January and February 1942. But in January, 113 left for the Russian Front, and in February, 342 and the Bulgarian 1st Army occupied South-Eastern Serbia to fill the vacuum.

On 1 March 1942, 65 Corps was redesignated

Three Chetniks pose with two German Customs officers, 1944. (Modern History Museum, Ljubljana)



Serbia Command (*Militärbefehlshaber Serbien*). For the Third Offensive in Eastern Bosnia, in April and May 1942, Bader formed Task-Force Bader (*Kampfgruppe Bader*) with 714, 718, Italian and Croatian forces. And in July, 714 fought in Western Bosnia in Operation *Kozara*.

By late 1942, guerilla activity was increasing steadily in Bosnia, but decreasing in Serbia. Accordingly in October, 'Croatia Command' (*Befehlshaber der deutschen Truppen in Kroatien*) was formed under Major-General Lueters at Slavonski Brod. In November, it was assigned 'Railway Security Staff Croatia' (*Deutscher Eisenbahnsicherungsstab Kroatien*, known from late 1943 as *Eisenbahnsicherungsstab 6*) supervising *Landeschützen* and German-Croatian police-battalions guarding the railways.

Unwilling to divert front-line units from Russia to Yugoslavia, the German High Command explored local sources of manpower. In August 1942, the 369th Infantry Division, the 'Devil's Division', was established as a Legionary Division with Croatian troops under a German cadre. It had two infantry regiments (369 and 370), an artillery regiment (369), anti-tank, reconnaissance, engineer and signals battalions. 369 Infantry Regiment and 1st Battalion, 369 Artillery Regiment, formed earlier in July 1941, served as the Croatian Legion in Russia. It was replaced in the Division by the 969 Infantry Regiment and 969 Artillery Battalion. These units adopted their predecessors' numbers when the Croatia Legion was destroyed at Stalingrad in December 1942. In January 1943 a second Legionary Division, the 373 'Tiger Division', was formed.

In October 1942, the 'Prinz Eugen' SS-Mountain Division joined Serbia Command. Led by the charismatic Lieutenant-General Arthur Phleps, it contained 19,000 ethnic Germans from Banat, Rumania and Croatia, illegally conscripted into the *Waffen-SS*. With two mountain infantry regiments; a mountain artillery regiment; reconnaissance, engineer and signals battalions, a company-strength battalion of French Hotchkiss H-38 light tanks and an attached *Luftwaffe* squadron of *Fieseler Storch* spotter aircraft, 'Prinz Eugen' was probably the toughest and most feared German division in Yugoslavia.

In December 1942, the 187 Reserve Division, with Austrian recruits undergoing basic training, arrived in Serbia. It had three infantry regiments,



'Prinz Eugen' SS troops advance behind a Hotchkiss tank of the Divisional Armoured

Company, 1943, wearing snow-smocks and coloured sleeve field-signs (Roba Archive via J. Charita)

artillery and engineer battalions, and signals and medical companies.

On 1 January 1943, 12th Army, whose headquarters had moved to Salonika, was redesignated 'Army Group E' (*Heeresgruppe E*), under *Luftwaffe* General Löhr. It then controlled Serbia Command (704 Division and the 1st Bulgarian Army) and Croatia Command (187 Reserve; 369, 373, 714, 717, 718 Infantry Divisions; and the 'Prinz Eugen' Division).

Most of Croatia Command fought in the Fourth Offensive in Western Bosnia, January to March 1943. Later, on 1 April 1943, 704, 714, 717 and 718 were revitalized with younger personnel and redesignated 104, 114, 117 and 118 *Jäger* (Rifle) Divisions. Trained for hilly terrain, they had two three-battalion rifle regiments; a three-battalion artillery regiment; reconnaissance, anti-tank, engineer and signals battalions. And in December 1943, 187 Reserve became the 42 Rifle Division.

For the Fifth Offensive in Herzegovina and Western Montenegro, in May and June 1943, 'Prinz Eugen', 118 and 369 were reinforced by the élite 1st Mountain Division in Army Group Reserve in Serbia, and the 4th Regiment of the Brandenburg Commando Division. In June 1943, 100 *Jäger* Division was assigned to Croatia Command and, in July, 28 Infantry Division joined Serbia Command before both were transferred to Albania.

The Allied landings in Sicily in July 1943 convinced the Germans of the imminent collapse of Italy, and so the German forces in Yugoslavia were strengthened to repel the expected Allied invasion of



Members of SS-Parachute Battalion 500 at Drvar, during Operation

Rösselsprung ('Knight's Move'), May 1944. (Roba Archive via J. Charita)

Dalmatia from the Italian coast. In August 1943, Army Group F, headquartered in Belgrade under Field-Marshal von Weichs, assumed command of all Axis forces in the Balkans with 2 Armoured Army (2. *Panzerarmee*) from the Russian Front; 'South-East Command' (*Militärbefehlshaber Südost*), formerly Serbia Command, now almost entirely Bulgarian; and Army Group E in Greece.

The 2 Armoured Army, with HQ at Kragujevac, Serbia, under Lieutenant-General Rendulić and paradoxically without any armoured divisions, was the main strike-force, with 15 Mountain Corps (114, 369, 373 and 'Prinz Eugen' Divisions) and 69 Reserve Corps (187 and 173 Reserve – formerly Croatia Command); 21 Mountain Corps (100, 118 *Jäger* and

297 Infantry Divisions) and, from September to November 1943, III (Germanic) SS Armoured Corps, with the German-Danish-Norwegian mechanized division, *Nordland*, and the Dutch *Nederland* Mechanized Brigade.

On 9 September 1943, the day of the Italian Armistice, Rendulić, with seven divisions (114, 118 *Jäger*; 297, 369, 373 Infantry; 187 Reserve and 'Prinz Eugen' Divisions), disarmed the Italian divisions in Croatia and Montenegro and secured the Adriatic coastline. Only 'Prinz Eugen' encountered serious resistance, at Split.

Meanwhile 2 Armoured Army continued its buildup. In October 1943, the 1st Cossack Division, formed in August from anti-Soviet Russians, arrived. With two mounted brigades, each with three mounted regiments, a mounted artillery battalion and logistical services, the cossacks had fought Soviet partisans in Russia and left a string of burned villages and terror-stricken peasants while with 69 Reserve Corps in Eastern Croatia. In November, V SS-Mountain Corps HQ and the 181, 264, 367 and 371 Infantry Divisions arrived to boost German strength.

V SS-Mountain Corps (118 *Jäger*; 181, 369 Infantry; 1 Mountain; 'Prinz Eugen' Divisions) fought in the Sixth Offensive in Bosnia in December 1943, with the Bosnian-Moslem 13th SS-Mountain Division *Handschar*. It had been formed in March 1943, and returned in January 1944 from Le Puy, Central France, to join the new 'Syrmia Command' (*Befehlshaber Syrmien*) in Eastern Croatia. Meanwhile, XV Mountain Corps, with 264 and 373 Infantry and 392 'Blue Division', the third Legionary Division, formed 17 August 1943, cleared Korčula Island in Dalmatia of Partisans.

Anxious to regain the tactical initiative, the Germans launched the Seventh, and last, Offensive in May 1944 in Western Bosnia. 202 Armoured Battalion, 92 Motorized Regiment, elements of the 'Brandenburg' and 1st Mountain Divisions, and Croatian units supported SS-Parachute Battalion 500's unsuccessful attempt to capture Tito at Drvar.

In August 1944, a reinforced Corps called Army

Croatian dictator Ante Pavelić visiting troops of a Croatian Legion Division, wearing German Army uniforms with the Croatian

chequerboard on the right upper arm (Croatian Legion in Russia, left arm), June 1944. (Croatian History Museum, Zagreb)



Section Serbia (*Armeeabteilung Serbien*) was formed from South-East Command with two Corps-status groups, to defend Serbia from the advancing Red Army. *Korpsgruppe Schneckenburger* (117 and Brandenburg Divisions, and 92 Infantry Brigade) defended Belgrade, surrendering on 27 October. *Korpsgruppe Müller* guarded the flank of General Lohr's 340,000-strong Army Group E in its epic 1,000-mile retreat from Greece through Macedonia into Bosnia where, in November 1944, it absorbed Army Section Serbia.

In December 1944, the 2 Armoured Army joined Army Group South in Southern Hungary, leaving Army Group F (abolished as a Staff in March 1945) with the four weak Corps of Army Group E to defend Northern Yugoslavia. These were 15 Mountain Corps (373 and 392 Infantry Divisions); 21 Mountain Corps (963, 966, 969 and 1017 Fortress Brigades); 34 Corps (41 Infantry and 117 *Jäger* Divisions) and 91 Corps (11 *Luftwaffe* Field, 297 Infantry, 104 *Jäger* and 'Prinz Eugen' Divisions; 967 Fortress Brigade). Fortress Brigades (*Festungs-Brigaden*) were Fortress Regiments manning static coastal fortifications in Greece, redesignated brigades in July 1944. Later, 69 Corps arrived, along with 15 Cossack Cavalry Corps (under Major-General von Pannwitz), formed in February 1945 from the 1st and 2nd Cossack Cavalry Divisions (formerly Brigades), 11 *Luftwaffe* Field and 22 Infantry Divisions.

Four other noteworthy Waffen-SS units served in Yugoslavia. The Ukrainian 14 Infantry Division fought briefly in Slovenia in March and April 1945. The Bosnian-Moslem 23 Mountain Division *Kama* was formed in June 1944 but disbanded in October in Southern Hungary. The Albanian 21 Mountain Division *Skanderbeg*, formed May 1944, served in October and November in Kosovo and Macedonia, and from December 1944 to May 1945 as a Regimental Task-Force with 'Prinz Eugen'. And the Commando Battalion 'SS-*Jagdverband Südost*', was based in Zagreb. It had seven companies, of which two – the *Serbien-Kroatien* and *Albanien* – operated in Croatia from January to February 1945.

On 20 March 1945, Tito's Yugoslav National Army launched an offensive against Army Group E. 15 Mountain Corps retreated up the coast until it was reinforced in Istria by 97 Corps (188, 237 and 392



Members of the 13th SS-Mountain Division Handschar, in German mountain infantry uniform with a scarlet (service-dress) or grey-

green (field uniform) fez with SS insignia, and the scimitar (Handschar) on the right collar-patch. January 1944. (J. Charita)

Infantry Divisions). Central Bosnia and Eastern Croatia held until 10 April, then the Army Group was in headlong retreat towards Southern Austria. Most units surrendered to the British in Austria on 15 May. The Cossacks were handed over to the Red Army by the British, and suffered imprisonment and death. 104 *Jäger*; 181, 297, 373 and 392 Infantry and 'Prinz Eugen' Divisions capitulated to Tito and were appallingly mistreated as prisoners-of-war – 50,000 lost their lives in captivity.

Air and Sea Forces

German Naval and Air Forces in Yugoslavia were modest. The Corps-level Staff 'Admiral Adria' (HQ Belgrade) controlled two brigade-status coastal units – *Seekommandant Norddalmatien* (HQ Šibenik) and

Seekommandant Süddalmatien (HQ Mostar) with three Naval Artillery and four Naval Infantry Battalions from September 1943 to December 1944.

In 1941, the Corps-level 'Air District XVII' (*Luftgaukommando XVII*), headquartered in Vienna, supervised training squadrons in Croatia and Serbia. From January 1943, the Army-Group status 'Air Force Command Southeast' (*Luftwaffenkommando Südost*) operated 20 *Flakdivision* and brigade-level 'Air Command Croatia' (*Fliegerführer Kroatien*), attacking 15 USAAF bombers from Italy. Most aircraft were destroyed in September 1944 in Operation Ratweek, leaving a few to defend Zagreb until May 1945.

German police units are covered under 'Croatia', 'Serbia', 'Montenegro' and 'Slovenia'.

ITALY

Ground Forces

The Italian High Command assigned 24 divisions and three coastal brigades to occupation duties in Yugoslavia.

The 2nd Army was headquartered in Sušak, Northern Dalmatia, from March 1942 to May 1943. Designated the Slovenia-Dalmatia Command (*Supersloda*), it was commanded by Acting General Ambrosio from April 1941. Acting General Roatta took over in February 1942 and Acting General Robotti in February 1943. *Supersloda* comprised 12 infantry, two mobile divisions and, from 1942, three coastal brigades. These were allocated to four corps (XI, V, XVIII and VI) covering Western Slovenia; the

coastal provinces of Zara (Zadar), Spalato (Split) and Cattaro (Kotor) – annexed by Italy as the Governorship of Dalmatia and the western half of the Independent State of Croatia, with Western Croatia proper, Western Bosnia, Dalmatia and Herzegovina. These regions, excluding Slovenia, were divided into three zones: the Annexed Zone – the Governorship; the Demilitarized Zone – a 40-mile wide coastal strip with Italian garrisons; and the Occupied Zone – a 40-mile strip adjacent to the German Occupation Zone, with Croatian and weak Italian garrisons.

The 9th Army was headquartered in Tirana, Albania, from July 1941 to May 1943. Designated the Albania Armed Forces Command (*Superalba*), it deployed two infantry divisions in Yugoslavia, in districts annexed to Albania. XIV Corps – with four infantry, one infantry (mountain) and three mountain (*Alpini*) divisions – garrisoned Montenegro. On 15 May 1943, the 9th Army, XIV Corps and 2nd Army's VI Corps were reorganized as 'Army Group East'.

An M1940 'binary' Infantry Division, 14,300 strong, had two three-battalion infantry regiments, one three-battalion artillery regiment, a mortar and an engineer battalion. Some divisions received, as a third infantry regiment, a Blackshirt Assault Legion, volunteers from the Fascist Voluntary Militia for National Security (MVSN), with two infantry battalions and a support company. An Infantry Division (Mountain), intended for hilly terrain, had extra pack-horse transport. A 7,750-strong Mobile (*Celere*) Division had two cavalry regiments, each with one machine-gun and four mounted squadrons, a three-battalion *Bersaglieri* cyclist regiment, a three-battalion artillery regiment, a 61-tank light-tank battalion and *Bersaglieri* motorcycle, anti-tank and engineer companies. A 13,000-strong Mountain Division had two three-battalion mountain regiments, a three-battalion artillery regiment, engineer battalion and anti-tank platoon. A Coastal Brigade had one coastal infantry regiment and supporting units.

Sixteen Independent Blackshirt Battalions (3, 4, 8, 16, 29, 33, 54, 58, 61, 71, 81, 85, 115, 144, 162,



A colonel (console) commanding the 98th MVSN Assault Legion, with fellow-officers, a German Police officer and lance-corporal

(Rottwachtmeister) and Slovene Village Guards, South-Eastern Slovenia, 1942. (Modern History Museum, Ljubljana)

215) operated in Yugoslavia and six (8, 16, 29, 71, 81, 85) were redesignated as elite M (Mussolini) Battalions for distinction in combat. There were also organic Army and Corps troops.

When concentrated in viable units, Italian troops were a match for the Partisans, but usually they were dispersed in isolated garrisons or escort columns vulnerable to attacks and ambushes. Occupation duty was unpopular, and the fragile morale plummeted in July 1943 with the Allied invasion of Sicily and the fall of Mussolini.

XI Corps, headquartered in Ljubljana, garrisoned Western Slovenia and Karlovac District in Northern Croatia with three infantry divisions – the 14th *Isonzo*; the 153rd *Macerata* from June 1942, replaced in May 1943 by the 57th *Lombardia*; and the 21st *Granatieri di Sardegna*, repatriated to Italy in September 1942 after replacement, in July, by the 22nd *Cacciatori delle Alpi*. They contained Partisan activity, especially after a successful campaign from July to November 1942.

The 1st Mobile Division *Eugenio di Savoia* operated in 2nd Army reserve in Karlovac, and from October 1941 on the Northern Dalmatian coast.

V Corps, headquartered in Crikvenica, garrisoned Northern Dalmatia, Western Croatia proper and Western Bosnia with three infantry divisions – the 13th *Re*; the 57th *Lombardia*, replaced in May 1943 by the 153rd *Macerata*; and, from February 1943, the 154th *Murge*; and the 14th Coastal Brigade. The 2nd Mobile Division *Emanuele Filiberto Testa di Ferro* returned to Italy in November 1941, after service with the Corps.

XVIII Corps, headquartered in Split, took over Central Dalmatia and Central Bosnia from the overstretched VI Corps in February 1942. It inherited three infantry divisions from VI Corps – the 12th *Sassari*, repatriated in April 1943; the 15th *Bergamo*; and, from November 1941 to July 1942, the 151st *Perugia*, the 158th *Zara*, formed in September 1942, and the 12th Coastal Brigade were added.

VI Corps, headquartered initially in Split and from February 1942 in Dubrovnik, garrisoned Southern Dalmatia and Herzegovina with three infantry divisions – the 32nd *Marche*; from August 1942, the 18th *Messina*; and from September 1941 to July 1942 the 22nd *Cacciatori delle Alpi* – plus the 5th Coastal Brigade.



An MVSN captain (centurione) of the 16th 'M' Battalion (left), compares notes with an official (Segretario federale) of the Italian National Fascist party (PNF) with a

member of the 2nd Grenadier Regiment, 21st Infantry Division, looking on. Slovenia, 1942. (Modern History Museum, Ljubljana)

In the First Offensive, September to December 1941, the *Marche* division reoccupied Eastern Herzegovina and the *Cacciatori delle Alpi* division fought in Eastern Bosnia in the Third Offensive (Italian codename *Trio*) from April to May 1942. Partisan pressure forced the evacuation of Zone 3 in late 1942. *Lombardi*, *Re*, *Sassari* and elements of the *Murge*, *Bergamo* and *Marche* fought in the Fourth Offensive, from January to March 1943.

XIV Corps, headquartered in Podgorica from December 1941 to June 1943, became 'Montenegro Command'. It controlled two mountain divisions – the 5th *Pusteria*, replaced in August 1942 by 1st *Taurinense* (previously in 2nd Army reserve); and, from March to December 1942, the 6th *Alpi Graie* – along with four Infantry Divisions – the 19th (Mountain) *Venezia*; the 48th *Taro*, replaced from July 1942 to August 1943 by the 151st *Perugia*; from July to September 1941, the 22nd *Cacciatori delle Alpi*; and from May 1942, the 23rd *Ferrara*. The 18th *Messina*, replaced in April 1942 by 155th *Emilia*, garrisoned Kotor for the 2nd Army under XIV Corps control.

The communist-led revolt of 13 July to 12 August 1941 was suppressed by the *Venezia*, *Messina*,

Pusteria, *Taro* and *Cacciatori delle Alpi* divisions, and all contained local attacks in the First Offensive in September to December 1941. The *Taurinense* and *Pusteria* divisions fought in Operation *Trio* in April 1942 and the *Ferrara*, *Venezia* and *Taurinense* divisions participated in the Fifth Offensive, in May and June 1943.

The 9th Army allocated the 38th Puglie division to Sector Z, the Kosovo Region of Serbia, and the 41st *Firenze* to the Debar and Struga Districts of Western Macedonia. Partisan activity there was minimal, allowing *Firenze*'s 127 Infantry Regiment to fight in the Fifth Offensive in Montenegro.

Italy Surrenders

On 8 September 1943, the Italians concluded an armistice with the Allies, leaving seventeen Italian divisions stranded in Yugoslavia. All divisional commanders refused to join the Germans. The *Taurinense* and *Venezia* divisions joined the Montenegrin Partisans as complete units. *Firenze* joined the Albanian Partisans. Other units surrendered to the Germans, to face imprisonment in Germany or summary execution. Others surrendered to the Croats or the Partisans, simply disintegrated, or reached Italy on foot via Trieste or by ship across the Adriatic.

Air and Sea Forces

Until September 1943, Dalmatia Maritime Command (*Maridalmazia*) controlled the Yugoslav coast with Zadar, Split, Ploče and Dubrovnik Naval Commands and Rijeka-Sušak Independent Command. Kotor Naval Command came under Albania Maritime Command.

Slovenia-Dalmatia Air-Force Command, head-

quartered in Mostar, controlled six Air-Force Wings and eleven squadrons. There were ten *Carabinieri* (Rural and Military Police) battalions; seven regimental-status Frontier Guard 'sectors' and eight Customs Guard battalions.

CROATIA

On 10 April 1941, the Ustasha underground leader in Croatia, Slavko Kvaternik, proclaimed the 'Independent State of Croatia' (*Nezavisna Država Hrvatska*, or NDH), and on the 16th Dr Ante Pavelić returned from exile in Italy as *Poglavnik* (Leader) of the new state.

Croatia, technically a kingdom under the absentee King Tomislav II, the Italian Duke of Spoleto, had 6.1 million inhabitants – 3.2 million Croats, 1.8 million Serbs, 700,000 Moslems, 100,000 Germans and 300,000 Czechs, Slovaks, Jews and Gypsies. The Government was strongly nationalistic/Roman Catholic, pro-Axis, anti-Serb, anti-semitic and anti-communist, yet the existence of Italian and German occupation-zones belied Croatia's independence. Furthermore the large Serb minority and many Croats rejected the Ustashe and turned to Tito, plunging the country into civil war.

On 16 April 1941, the 'Croatian Home Defence Force' (*Hrvatsko Domobranstvo*) was formed by Field-Marshal Kvaternik, with an Army, Navy, Air-Force, National Guard, Gendarmerie and Labour Service. In January 1943, the Force was redesignated the 'Croatian Armed Forces' (*Oružane snage NDH*), incorporating the Ustasha Army.

The Croatian Army

The Army (called the *Kopnena vojska*, and from January 1943, the *Domobranstvo*) was commanded, from August 1941, by Lieutenant-General August Marić as Chief of Staff. He was replaced in November by Lieutenant-General Vladimir Laxa. General Slavko Štancer was Army Inspector. There were 55,000 men organized in the old Yugoslav Divisional Districts, each district comprising three infantry regiments with two to three battalions each. *Sava* in



Newly promoted Croatian Army second lieutenants in parade-uniform, with two air-force officers far

right in Zagreb, 13 June 1941. (Croatian History Museum, Zagreb)



Left: Members of the Croatian NCO School, 1944, in summer uniforms, the gold collar-patch braid bars indicating NCO Candidates. (Croatian History Museum, Zagreb)



Right: A Croatian anti-aircraft artilleryman, wearing an ex-Yugoslav Army field tunic with Croatian collar-patches, air-force breast-badge and M1941 peaked field-cap. (Josip M. Novak)

Croatia proper and Dalmatia had 1 to 3 Infantry Regiments. *Osijek* in Slavonia had 4 to 6. *Bosna* in Southern Bosnia had 7 to 9; *Vrbaš* in Northern Bosnia had 10 to 12. And *Jadran* in Herzegovina had 13 to 15. There were also two artillery battalions with two batteries each, one medical, one labour and three replacement battalions per district. There was also the Zagreb Cavalry Regiment with two battalions and an independent cavalry battalion; an engineer regiment of three battalions; I–V Frontier Battalions on the Serbia–Montenegro border; a railway security and a signals battalion; and Motor Transport Battalions 1–2. From December 1941, ethnic Germans formed the 1st and 2nd Rifle Battalions and a local militia, absorbed into the ‘Prinz Eugen’ SS-Division in April 1943; and three railway Security Battalions (II–III), reformed as German–Croatian Police Volunteer Regiment 3 in December 1943.

The fledgling Army crushed the revolt by Serbs in Eastern Herzegovina in June, and fought in July in Eastern and Western Bosnia. They fought in Eastern Herzegovina again, when Croatia–Dalmatian and Slavonian battalions reinforced local units.

In November 1941, the Army reorganized into three Corps Regions, each with a Corps – I (Croatia proper, Northern Dalmatia); II (Slavonia, Northern Bosnia); III (Southern Bosnia, Herzegovina), each with two infantry divisions. A Division – with only 4,000 men, so really a Brigade – had 2–3 Infantry Regiments and 1–2 Artillery Battalions, all in Bosnia.

Mountain Division

Soon more units were formed. The most important was the 17,000-strong 1st Mountain Division, acti-

vated in April 1942 with four mountain brigades, each with a three-battalion mountain infantry regiment, a rifle battalion, a mountain artillery battery and support services. There were the *Banja Luka*, *Srijem* and *Tuzla* Independent Brigades, I Bicycle Battalion, I Assault Battalion, and 18 Railway Security Battalions under the German Railway Security Staff Croatia. Total Army strength was about 100,000.

The 4th and 5th Infantry Divisions fought in the Second Offensive in Eastern Bosnia in January 1942, and 1st–3rd Mountain Brigades in Operation *Kozara* in Western Bosnia in July. In October 1942, the 1st Mountain Division fought in Slavonia and, in early 1943, the 1st–3rd Mountain Brigades were in Western Bosnia for the Fourth Offensive. In October, Pavelić dismissed Kvaternik and appointed himself Armed Forces Commander, with Lieutenant-General Ivan Prpić as Army Chief of Staff.

On 1 May 1943, the six Divisions were reorganized into four mountain and four rifle brigades, an operation mostly completed in January 1944 (6th Division survived until December). A mountain brigade (*Gorski Sdrug*) had two mountain regiments (ex-Mountain Division brigades or divisional infantry regiments) and 1–2 Artillery Battalions. A rifle brigade (*Lovački Sdrug*) had two rifle regiments (ex-infantry regiments) and one or two artillery battalions. In February 1944, each Corps received a replacement brigade (*Doknadni Sdrug*) and in March 11 garrison brigades (*Posadni Sdrugovi*) were established from existing garrison and *Domdo* village militia battalions. In Autumn 1943, the Mobile Brigade (*Brzi Sdrug*) was formed from the Zagreb Cavalry Regiment, and I and II Bicycle Battalions. The 23



Italian and Croatian Army, and Ustasha officers, 1943, in Bosnia. The Ustasha officer standing fourth from the left is Major Rafael Boban, the notorious commander of Ustasha V Active Service Brigade. The

officer far right is a military chaplain (captain equivalent) with special collar-patches and sleeve rank rings. Moslem Imams wore a fez and different collar-patches. (Croatian History Museum, Zagreb)

Railway Security Battalions were organized in five sectors grouped in I Region (Sectors A–C) and II Region (Sectors D–E). There were also three labour regiments.

Armoured Units

Croatian Armoured Forces consisted of three Corps armoured-car battalions – I (Zagreb), II (Slavonski Brod) and III (Sarajevo). By 1943, these were attached to the appropriate Replacement Brigades. A 41-man Armoured Platoon formed in November 1941 and by 1943 Ustasha Active Service Brigades I–V had an army tank company in support, and the rifle and mountain brigades had support platoons of two light and three medium tanks. There were also Armoured Train Companies 1–3.

The 4th Rifle Brigade fought in the Fifth Offensive in May 1943 in Herzegovina. In September

BATTLE ORDER OF CROATIAN FORCES

Army (1 November 1941 - 30 April 1943)

I Corps (Sisak)

1 Inf. Div	1, 2, 11 Inf. Rgt, 1, 2 Art. Bn
2 Inf. Div	3, 12, 15 Inf. Rgt, 8, 10 Art. Bn
	Zagreb Cav. Rgt, 1 Bicycle Bn, 1, 3 Eng. Bn.

II Corps (vonskSlavonski Brod)

3 Inf. Div	4, 6 Inf. Rgt, 3, 4 Art. Bn.
4 Inf. Div	5, 8, 10 Inf. Rgt, 6, & 7 Art. Bn.
Banjaluka Bde	10 Inf. Rgt, 8 Art. & 1 Asst. Bn,
	2 Domdo Bns.
Srijem Bde	5 Front, 2, 4 Eng. Bn.

III Corps (Sarajevo)

5 Inf. , 5 Art. Div	7,9 Inf. Rgt, 5 Art. Bn
6 Inf. Div	13,14 Inf. Rgt, 9 Art. Bn. 1-4 Front. Bn.
1 Mtn. Div	1-4 Mtn. Bde, 1-18 Rail Sec. Bn.
	21 Domdo Bns.

Army (1 May 1943 - 20 November 1944)

I Corps (Zagreb)

1 Mtn. Bde	1rps (Zagreb)
1 Mtn. Bde	1, 5 Mtn. Rgt, 11/3, 6 Art. Bn.
3 Mtn. Bde	3, 11 Mtn. Rgt, 3/2 Art. Bn.
4 Mtn. Bde	4, 8 Mtn. Rgt, 1, 12 Art. Bn.
2 Rifle Bde	1, 10 Rfl. Rgt, 4, 8 Art. Bn
1 Garr. Bde	1-4 Bn
2 Garr. Bde	1-5 Bn
3 Garr. Bde	1-3 Bn
4 Garr. Bde	1-3 Bn
Zagreb Garr. Bde	1-3 Bn
1 Repl. Bde	Pokuplje, Kvarner, Velebit Reg.
	Commnd. Istrian Def. Rgt
Zenica Bde	1 Armd. Car Bn.

II Corps (Slavonski Brod)

1 Rfl. Bde	4, Rfl. Rgt ; 5, 16 Art. Bn
3 Rfl. Bde	5, 8 Rfl. Rgt; 7, 18 Art. B
4 Rfl. Bde	7, 13 Rfl. Rgt; 6/11, 22 Art. Bn
5 Garr. Bde	1-4 Bn
6 Garr. Bde	1-5 Bn
7 Garr. Bde	1-4 Bn
10 Garr. Bde	1-10 Bn
2 Repl, Srijem, Tuzla Bdes	2 Armd. Car Bn

III Corps (Sarajevo)

2 Mtn. Bde	2, 9/6 Mtn. Rgt; 9/13, 20 Art. Bn
8 Garr. Bde	1-5 Bn
9 Garr. Bde	1-6 Bn
3 Repl. Bde	3 Armd. Car Bn
Mob. Bde	1-3 Bn
Rail Sect.	A(4-7 Bn), B(1-3, 8-10 Bn),
	C(1-3, 18-9 Bn)
	D(14-7 Bn), E(1-4 Bn),
	Armd. Train Coy, 1-3 Lab. Rgt

Ustasha Army (1 June - 31 December 1943)

PTS

1 Bde	1,2 Rgt; Cav, Mob, Art, Gd,
2 Bde	Eng, 1,2 Repl. Bn
	2,3,14,21-3,28 Bn
	4,6,8,15-6,18-9,36,1 Rail Sec.
3 Bde	Bn, 2 Mtn. Batt
4 Bde	5,10-3,30,33,35,37 Bn
5 Bde	9,17,19,31-2,34 Bn, 4 Mtn Bn
	1,7,20,24-7 Bn, Eng. Coy, 1
	Mtn Bn
6 Bde	1-4 Bn
1 Comm. Bde	1-4 Bn
2 Comm. Bde	1-4 Bn
1 Def. Bde	Rgt, Mob. Bn, 3-5 Gd. Bns
2 Def. Bde	

1943, following the Italian Armistice, Croatian troops occupied Italian-annexed Dalmatia (Zone 1), establishing three regional commands to defend this territory and the Istrian Home-Defence Regiment at Sušak. There was also a *Zenica* Brigade. Lieutenant-General Fedor Dragoljov was Chief of Staff. He was succeeded in Autumn 1944 by Ustasha Colonel Tomislav Sertić. By late 1944, the performance of the Croatian Army, by then only 70,000 strong, had deteriorated sharply. Many recruits avoided enlistment. Others were creamed off into Ustasha Brigades or Croatian Legion Divisions, and whole units were deserting to the Partisans.

In November 1941, the Italians formed their own 'Motorized Croatian Legion' (*Legione Croata Autotrasportabile*), comparable to the German-sponsored Croatian Legion. It had 1,320 men in two infantry, one replacement and one artillery battalion,

and one mortar company. They were dressed in Italian Army uniforms with *fascies* collar-badges and a national armshield. In March 1942, the Legion joined Italian 8th Army in Russia, and was destroyed at Stalingrad in December 1942. It reformed in May 1943 at Lake Garda as the 2nd Legion, then disbanded in September, its personnel joining 373 and 392 Legion Divisions.

Ustasha Units

The Ustasha Army (*Ustaška Vojnica*) was established on 10 May 1941 from the Ustasha Penetration Detachment – 300 emigrés from the Fontenecchio and San Demetrio camps in Italy and the Yanka-Puzta camp in Hungary, formed in 1932 as the Ustasha Forces (*Ustaška vojska*) – and the Ustasha Detachments, which had sprung up in April 1941. On 27 May the Ustasha High Command was formed in

Ustasha Army (1 January - 20 November 1944)

PTS	1,2 Rgt; Mob, Armd, Art, Gd, Eng. Bn
1 Bde	2,24,29 Bn
2 Bde	6,15-6,18, Repl.Bn
3 Bde	5,10,13,30,33, Repl.Bn
4 Bde	9,19,20,31-2,34-5,Otacac Def. Bn
5 Bde	1,7,20,35 Bn
6 Bde	1-4, 26 Bn
7 Bde	1-6 Bn
8 Bde	1-4,6,8,11 Bn
9 Bde	1-5 Bn
10 Bde	1-6 Bn
11 Bde	1,3,4,6 Bn
12 Bde	14,23,25-6,29 Bn
13 Bde	6,16 Bn
14 Bde	1 Rail.Sec, Repl.Sec, Moslavac Rail.Sec.Bn
15 Bde	5-7 Bn
16 Bde	Brod,Derventa Garr.Bn; 2 Rail.Sec.Bn
17 Bde	Ogudin, Vrbovska, Susak, Rijecica, Ozalj, Karlovac Garr.Bn
18 Bde	Otacac, Brinje, Senj,Lovinac Garr.Bn
Zagreb Garr.Bde	1-4 Bn
Camp Def.Bde	1-4,Mob,Art.Bn

Croatian Armed Forces (21 November 1944 - 15 May 1945)

I Pog.Bodyg.Corps	
Pbd	1,2 Boddyg.Rgt; Repl.Rgt; Art,Cav,Mob,Eng,Gd Bn
1 Asst.Div	20-2 Inf Rgt; 20-1 Art Bn; Mob.Bn
5 Div	5 Ust, 11 Inf Bde; 2 Art.batts/April 1945 23-5 Inf.Asst.Rgt, Mob.Brig

II Corps	
2 Div	15,20, Ust, 20 Inf.Bde; 3 Eng.Repl.Bn
12 Div	3 Mtn, 12 Ustt Bde; 2 Eng.Repl.Bn; 3
Art.batts	
14 Div	14 Ust,19 Inf. Bde
17 Div	
18 Asst.Div (inc. 30 Asst.Rgt)	

III Corps	
3 Div	1 Rfl,2,13 Ust Bde; 7,18 Art.Bn
7 Mtn.Div	1,14 Mtn.Bde; 1,6 Art.Bn
8 Div	1,11 Ust, 18 Inf.Bde, 1 Art.batt
9 Mtn Div	2 Mtn, 9 Ust.Bde; 3 Art.batts

IV Corps	
4 Div	7 Rfl,8,19 Ust, 14 Inf Bde, 12 Art.Bn
6 Div	10 Ust, 15 Inf.Bde; 2 Art.batts
15 Div	16 Ust, 16 Inf.Bde

V Corps	
10 Div	10 Rfl, 7 Ust.Bde, 8 Art.Bn; 2 Art.batts
11 Div	4,18 Ust, 13 Inf.Bde, 1 Art.batt
13 Div	3,17 Ust, 12 Inf.Bde; 1 Art.Bn/April 1945, 28-9 Inf.Rgt; 5 Corps Recce.Bn; Ust.Repl.Bn; Ust.Eng.Bn; 1 Art.Bn
16 Repl.Div	21,23 Repl, 21 Ust.Repl.Bde, 4 Repl.batts; April 1945
16 Ust.Train.Repl.Div	Ust.Repl.Brig; Ust.Repl.Eng.Bn; Ust.Student Coy
1 Ust.Def.Bde	1-4 Inf,Gd,Mob,Art,Garr,3 Recruit bns;
Peopl.Upr.Corps	1 Peopl.Upr.Rgt Baranja, Vuka, Posavje Rgt Coy



Above: Ustasha emigrés return to Zagreb from Italy, April 1941. Note the distinctive field-cap and tricolour collar-patches. (Croatian History Museum, Zagreb)



A corporal of the Croatian Black Legion by the Drina River, Eastern Bosnia, October 1941. Note the black field-cap. (Croatian History Museum, Zagreb)

Zagreb, with Colonel Tomislav Sertić as Chief of Staff. From Autumn 1944 Colonel Ivica Herenčić took over. Colonel was the highest active Ustasha rank – the title *Krilnik*, held by Slavko Kvaternik and in 1944 by Ante Vokić, was more of an honorary rank. Total Ustasha strength grew from 15,000 in 1941 to 76,000 in December 1944. It was a volunteer force until 1942, when garrison battalions were conscripted.

Bodyguard Battalion

The élite Poglavnik Bodyguard Battalion (*Poglavnikova Tjelesna Bojna*, or PTB), under Colonel Ante Moškov, reported directly to Pavelić, and comprised one infantry and one mobile battalion. On 10 May 1942, it became a brigade (called the *Poglavnikov Tjelesni Sdrug*, or PTS) with guard, cavalry and mobile battalions, expanding in late 1943 to two regiments, seven battalions and one tank company. In January 1945, it became a Division (*Poglavnikova Tjelesna Divizija*), with almost all Croatian armour

concentrated in the Armoured Battalion (comprising two armoured, two infantry assault and one support company) and a Mobile Battalion (with one armoured, one motorized and one support company). The unit was based in Zagreb, conducting military operations north of the City.

Defensive Battalion

The Defensive Battalion, formed in 1941 by Colonel Vjekoslav 'Maks' Luburić, was part of his *Ustaška obrana* service, which organized the concentration camps. This itself was a part of the 15,000-strong Ustasha Control Service (UNS), the Croatian Gestapo/SD apparatus, under Lieutenant-Colonel Eugen 'Dido' Kvaternik, son of Slavko Kvaternik. In January 1942, the Battalion became a brigade (*1. Ustaški Obrambeni Sdrug*), and in summer a 2nd Brigade was established. It disbanded December 1943. From December 1943 to March 1945, the 1st Brigade was known as Camp Defence Brigade (LOS) before reverting to its original title. By 1944, it had 10,000 personnel, guarding the notorious Jasenovac and Stara Gradiska death-camps for Serbs, Jews, Gypsies and anti-fascist Croatians, and acting as an élite combat unit. In January 1945, 13,000 strong, it joined 18th Croatian Assault Division and in April became 30th Assault Regiment.

Ustasha Regiments

The 1st Ustasha Regiment was formed in September 1941 in Sarajevo by Major Jure Francetić for service in Eastern Bosnia. In December, then 1,500 strong, it was unofficially designated the Black Legion (*Crna Legija*) after adopting black uniforms. It had already become the most ruthless Croatian unit, killing Chetniks, Partisans and Serb civilians indiscriminately, eventually prompting German protests. Its four battalions fought in the First to Third Offensives and Operation *Kozara* in 1942, and its proudest hour was the defence of Kupres in August 1942, just before Francetić's transfer and the Legion's disbandment.

Active Battalions

The backbone of the Ustasha Army were the Ustasha Active Battalions (*Ustaške Djelatne Bojne*), each comprising 400–1,000 men. Battalions I–XII were formed in 1941. Battalions XIII–XXXVII and 27



Left to right: Eugen Kvaternik, Chief of the infamous Croatian UNS Security Service; Colonel Jure Francetić, Black

Legion commander; Mladen Lorković, Minister of Internal Affairs. 1942. (Croatian History Museum, Zagreb)



Ustasha junior officers of the Poglavnik Bodyguard Battalion, Sarajevo, March 1942, wearing the first

pattern Ustasha tunic introduced May 1941. (Croatian History Museum, Zagreb)

Preparatory Battalions (*Ustaške Pripremne Bojne*), numbered I–XXXIV with gaps – part-time guard units with older reservists and Ustasha Youth undergoing pre-military training – were formed in 1942. In late 1942, the 39 Active Battalions then constituted were formed into Active Service Brigades I–VI. Later 12 more – VII–XVIII – and the Zagreb Garrison Brigade were formed. Each brigade (*Ustaški Stajači Djelatni Sdrug*) had four to nine battalions and, usually, artillery support. By then there were 19 brigades with 89 battalions – 66 active, two replacement, one defensive, four railway security and 16 garrison. The garrison battalions (*Posadne Bojne*) were conscripts from the former Preparatory Battalions.

Railway Troops

The Ustasha Railway Troops (*Željeznička Vojnica*) were established in October 1941 for railway security duties. In 1942, the eight battalions were reorganized into Communications Brigades (*Prometni sdrugovi*) I and II, and in 1944 the remaining four battalions joined the Active Service Brigades.

German Units

In October 1941, the ethnic German community formed an Ustasha Active Unit (*Einsatzstaffel*), and by September 1942 there were four battalions – ‘Prinz Eugen’, ‘Ludwig von Baden’, ‘General Laudon’ and ‘Emanuel von Bayern’, wearing

Waffen-SS style uniforms and insignia, in action in Sirmia and Slavonia. In April 1943, they joined ‘Prinz Eugen’ SS-Division.

The Ustasha Army earned a reputation for fanatical bravery and brutality, but never matched the systematic savagery of the Partisan mass-executions. Captured Ustashes neither asked for, nor received, mercy.

On 21 November 1944, Croatian Army and Ustasha units were combined into the Croatian Armed Forces (*Hrvatske Oružane Snage*), in order to create a more effective fighting machine. Pavelić was Supreme Commander, assisted by Army General Gjuro Gjurić, with Ustasha Colonel Sertić as Chief of Staff.

New Units

The army’s 19 mountain, rifle and garrison brigades were reorganized into four mountain (1–4), three rifle (1, 7 and 10), ten infantry (11–20) and two replacement (21 and 23) brigades. The Ustasha Zagreb Garrison and 18 Active Service Brigades became one replacement (XXI) and 22 Ustasha brigades (I–XX, XXII–XXIII). All these units were grouped into 13 infantry, two mountain, two assault and one replacement Croatian Divisions (from 20 April 1945, Ustasha Divisions) and the Poglavnik Bodyguard Division. Each division, often only 5,000 strong, had one to three brigades (in March–April 1945, redesignated as regiments), one or two artillery

battalions and minimal support units. The Army Mobile Brigade became an Ustasha unit.

In January 1945, the Poglavnik Bodyguard Corps (*Poglavnikov Tjelesni Sbor*, or PTS) was formed from the Poglavnik Bodyguard Division, 1st Croatian Assault and 5th Croatian Division. From 5 February, this comprised the 1st Bodyguard Division – which from 5 March included the Ustasha Mobile Brigade – and the 1st and 5th Croatian Assault Divisions. In April 1945, Croatian Corps (from 20 April, Ustasha Corps) 2 to 5 were formed from the remaining 14 Divisions, leaving the replacement division in Zagreb.

From early 1945, the Croatian Divisions were allocated to various German Corps, and by March were holding the Southern Front. By 1 May, much reduced by casualties, they crowded into the Zagreb region. On the 6th, 200,000 troops and civilians retreated through Slovenia into Austria while Pavelić and his top officials fled abroad. At Bleiburg, the British forced the Croatians back, insisting they surrender to the Partisans. Some 20,000 escaped, leaving the rest to Tito's revenge. About 100,000 were shot or died from exhaustion on death-marches to camps in Banat.

Air and Sea Units

The small Croatian Navy (*Hrvatska Mornarica*) was commanded by Rear-Admiral Djuro Jakčin until late 1943. Commodore Edgar Angeli took over until 1944, and Rear-Admiral Nikola Steinfl commanded until May 1945. The three Naval Commands –

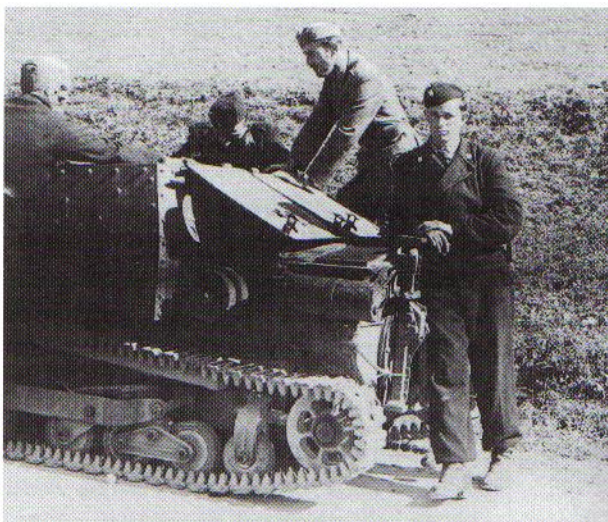
North Adriatic (based at Crikvenica, later Sušak), Central Adriatic (at Makarska, later Split) and South Adriatic (at Dubrovnik) undertook coastguard and customs duties until September 1943, when the Italian Armistice nullified the veto on Croatian sea-going forces. A river flotilla (based at Zemun) patrolled the Danube and Sava, and there was a Naval Infantry Battalion at Zemun, later Zagreb.

The Croatian Naval Legion, eventually about 1,000 strong, under Commander Andro Vrkljan and later Captain Stjepan Rumenović, served as the German 23rd Minesweeping Flotilla in Crimea, Black Sea and Sea of Azov. In 1943, a Coastal Artillery Battery was added. The Legion repatriated to Trieste in May 1944 as a torpedo-boat flotilla under German 11th Escort Flotilla. The Germans disbanded it in December 1944 to prevent defection to the Allies.

The Croatian Air Force (*Hrvatsko Zrakoplovstvo*), formed 12 April 1941, was 9,775 strong in 1943. It was commanded by Major General Vladimir Kren until 14 September 1943 and Colonel Adalbert Rogulja until 4 June 1944, when Kren took over again. The four airbases controlled seven Wings (*Skupina*), subdivided into squadrons (*Jato*). There were 19 squadrons in 1943, operating Italian, German and obsolete French aircraft. 1st Airbase (Zagreb) had 1st, 5th Bomber and 11th Fighter Wings; 2nd (Sarajevo) had 2nd Wing; 3rd (Mostar) had 3rd Wing; and 5th (Banja Luka) had 6th Wing.

From July 1941, the Croatian Air-Force Legion fought in Russia. The 4th Fighter Wing operated as 15th Squadron, 52nd *Luftwaffe* Fighter Group (15./J.G.52), scoring 263 kills over Ukraine up to July 1944, when it returned to Croatia. Then it absorbed the Pilot Training School, which had been redesignated in December 1943 1st Air Force Legion Fighter Wing. The 5th Bomber Wing fought as 10th Squadron, later 15th Squadron, 53rd *Luftwaffe* Bomber Group (10-15/K.G.53) over Leningrad until repatriation in December 1942.

The Air-Force Parachute Company, formed January 1942, became 1st Parachute Battalion (1.*Padobranska Lovačka Bojna*), fighting Partisans



AFV personnel attached to the Ustasha Black Legion, on the road from Gornji Vakuf to Jajce, Bosnia, summer 1942. Note the CV Fiat Ansaldo L38 tankette

and the German black M1935 AFV tunic worn by two of the soldiers. (Croatian History Museum, Zagreb)

Members of the Ustasha V Brigade, 27 February 1943, wearing ex-Yugoslav greenish-grey greatcoats, German M1916 and ex-Yugoslav French M1915 helmets, and the black 'Black Legion' field-caps. (Croatian History Museum, Zagreb)



Below: A Croatian Naval Lieutenant leads a squad of sailors, Dubrovnik 1943. Note the title 'Mornarica' on the cap-tallies. (National and University Library, Zagreb)



east of Zagreb under 1st Airbase. The Anti-Aircraft Artillery was divided into two regions – I (Zagreb) with 1, 2, 4 and 6 AA Wings, and II (Sarajevo) with 3, 5 and 7 Wings. From early 1943, the Croatian Flak Legion, mainly Moslem, provided anti-aircraft batteries for the *Luftwaffe*. The National Guard (*Narodna Zaštita*) was responsible for air-raid precautions.

The Labour Service

On 30 July 1941, the State Honorary Labour Service (*Država Časna Radna Služba* or DČRS) was formed on the German model under Labour Major-General E. Halla, to give Croatian citizens aged 19 to 25 one year's labour duties and pre-military training. In 1942, it was redesignated State Labour Service (DRS) under Labour Major-General Palčić, but by September 1943 there were still only 6,000 personnel

in labour companies on military fortification and air-raid clean-up duties. In January 1945, they were absorbed into the 18th Croatian Assault Division.

State Reserve Units

In Summer 1944, older armed forces reservists were formed into the independent People's Uprising Corps (*Pučko Ustaški Sbor*), with army or Ustasha officers, under Major-General Josip Metzger. There were four regiments – *Vuka*, *Baranja*, *Posavje* and *Livac-Zapolje*. The last joined the Camp Defensive Brigades in December 1944 as the 1st People's Uprising Regiment. The other units were disbanded in March 1945.

The various Croatian armed forces established village militias in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The army's Home Defence-Force Volunteers (*Domdo* units) eventually comprised 21 battalions. The Ustashes organized the Ustasha Militia (*Ustaška Milicija*) and Ustasha Peasants' Protection Force. The Gendarmerie had a 7,500-strong Moslem Militia (*Milicija*). And the German Army formed the South Dalmatian Legion. From 1943, the UNS organized a Serbian militia, the Serbian Self-Protection units (*Srpske Samozaštitne Pstrojbe*) in the Banija Region south of Zagreb.

There were also some semi-autonomous village militias, including the Husko Legion (*Huskinska Legija*). This comprised 3,000 men in 11 battalions in Western Bosnia under Husko Miljković. It was formed in Summer 1943, defecting to the Partisans in February 1944. Hadžiefendić's Legion (*Hadžiefendića Legija*) operated in several detachments in North-Eastern Bosnia.

Police Units

The Croatian Gendarmerie (*Hrvatsko Oružništvo*) was formed on 30 April 1941 as rural police under Major-General Milan Miesler, then Major-General Tartaglia, and from August 1942 Ustasha Colonel Viljko Pećnikar. By September 1943, there were 18,000 men in seven regiments – 1 (Zagreb), 2 (Split), 3 (Banja Luka), 4 (Sarajevo), 5 (Mostar), 6 (Knin), 7 (Zemun). These were divided into 23 companies (one per county plus one for Zagreb). The companies were subdivided into 142 district platoons, each with several posts. In early 1942, a three-battalion Combined Gendarmerie Regiment, in July redesignated Petrinja Brigade, was established for anti-partisan operations in Slavonia.

The Croatian Urban Police (*Redarstvena Straža*) was established in April 1941 with 5,000 personnel covering the 142 Districts. It was controlled by the Ministry of Interior's Public Order and Security Directorate (*Ravsigur*) until June 1942, when the Police joined the Ustasha Army, transferring back in January 1943.

No German police regiments operated in Croatia, but on 10 March 1943 a German-Croatian Police (*Deutsch-Kroatische Polizei*) was established by SS-Police Major-General Konstantin Kammerhofer, manned by German Police, ethnic Germans and Croatians, for internal security duties. It was deeply mistrusted by the Croatian authorities. By December 1944 there were 32,000 men in Police Volunteer Regiments 1–5 (with three battalions each) and independent Police Volunteer Regiments (Croatia) 1–15, twelve of which formed the Croatian Gendarmerie

Division in 1945. German Einsatzgruppe E (Action Group E) of the SS Security Service, with battalion-sized Commands 1–5, and other units, were included. The German Police also supervised a village militia, the *Ortswehr*, in Bosnia.

Following the military co-operation agreement of 11 January 1942 between the Italian 2nd Army and Trifunović-Birčanin, the Italian Zones' Chetnik Commander, most Chetniks, about 22,000 in all, joined the Italian Voluntary Anti-Communist Militia (MVAC), with Italian weapons and maroon-dyed uniforms. It was organized in battalions and companies and included some Croats and Moslems. Most Bosnian Chetniks in the German Zone signed one of



Above: A Croatian paratrooper corporal, already sporting the German infantry assault badge and two Croatian bravery medals, receives a third Medal, 1943. Note that the collar-patch rank wings are thinner and flatter than those in the German Air-Force. (Josip M. Novak)



Croatian paratroopers in 1943, showing a good range of uniforms and insignia. Note the parachute sleeve-badge. (Josip M. Novak)

three agreements with the Croatian authorities in May and June 1942. These 'legal' Chetniks fought the Partisans in the Third to Fifth Offensives, and in September 1943 reverted to their former 'illegal' status or joined the Germans.

The Croatian Forces, established to protect legitimate national aspirations for independence, were compromised by association with the Axis cause and an authoritarian Ustasha regime lacking widespread popular support. Their military defeat led to the Bleiburg massacres, and 46 more years of political discrimination until their independence was achieved again on 25 June 1991.

SERBIA

The German Military Command (*Befehlshaber Serbien*), established 25 April 1941, controlled four regimental-status Sub-Area Commands – *Feldkommandantur* 509 (based in Belgrade), 610 (Pančevo), 809 (Niš), 816 (Užice). Each had 1–3 battalion-status District Commands (*Kreiskommandanturen*) and a *Landesschützen* Garrison Battalion (562, 592, 920, 266 respectively, in 1941). On 13 August 1943, it was absorbed by South-East Military Command.

Serbian State Guard

Milan Aćimović's Serbian Administration, established 30 April 1941, was superseded on 29 August by General Milan Nedić's 'Government of National Salvation'. On 10 February 1942 Nedić expanded the ex-Yugoslav *Drinski* and *Dunavski* Gendarmerie Regiments into a 17,000-strong static security force, the Serbian State Guard (*Srpska Državna Straža*), under Colonel Jovan Trišić, and later Major-General Borivoje Jonić. It was deployed as Municipal Police (*Gradska Straža*), Rural Police (*Poljska Straža*), Village Guard (*Seljačka Straža*) and a 2,500-strong Frontier Guard (*Srpska Granična Straža*), organized in five regions (Belgrade, Kraljevo, Niš, Valjevo and Zaječar). Each region (*oblast*) had one battalion. Each region was divided into three districts. Each district (*Okrug*) had several companies. The Guard was royalist, pro-Chetnik and, despite desertions, initially performed creditably against the Partisans.

On 6 October 1944, 5,000 Guards, under Lieutenant-General Stefan Radovanović, joined the

Lieutenant Dušan Dojčinović, company commander in 4 Regiment, Serbian Volunteer Corps, 1943, wearing ex-Yugoslav uniform with two gold pips on a silver braid shoulder-board with dark-blue underlay and collar-patches. Chetniks wore Yugoslav uniforms, usually with peakless field-cap and M1939 cap insignia, and often bushy beards



Chetniks in Bosnia as 1st Serbian Assault Corps (*1. Srpski Udarni Korpus*), with 1st and 2nd Assault, and 3rd Frontier Guard Divisions. The Germans sent 3,000 to Austria as *Organization Todt* workers. The remaining 2,000 joined the Chetnik Šumadija Division in Slovenia under Lieutenant-General Miodrag Damjanović in March 1945 and surrendered to the British in Southern Austria in May.

Serbian Volunteer Command

On 15 September 1941, the conservative politician Dimitrije Ljotić formed a Serbian Volunteer Command from Chetniks and his Zbor Movement activists. It had twelve 120–150-strong detachments. In January 1943, it became the 7,000-strong Serbian Volunteer Corps (*Srpski Dobrovoljački Korpus*) with five 500-man battalions, expanding in early 1944 to five 1,200-man regiments (1–5) and a 500-man Artillery Battalion, under German tactical command but reporting to General Nedić. The pro-Chetnik, royalist Corps was admired by the Germans for its effective performance in combat. In October 1944, it retreated to Slovenia where, on 9 November it became, nominally, a Waffen-SS unit. On 30 March 1945, it joined the Chetnik Šumadija Division. The three regiments surrendering to the British in Austria in May were sent back to Tito; two others surrendering in Italy remained in the West.

The Russian Defence Corps

On 12 September 1941, the Independent Russian Corps – redesignated the Russian Defence Corps on 2 October – was formed from Russian Imperial Army



A 2nd lieutenant (Podporuchik) of the Russian Protection Corps' Artillery Battalion, wearing Imperial Russian insignia (sometimes with Yugoslav pips). These were worn from 12 September 1941 to 30 November 1942 concurrently with special Corps collar rank insignia. On 1 December 1942, German Army uniforms and insignia were adopted. (US National Archives)

veterans exiled to Serbia in 1921. Lieutenant-General Boris Alexandrovich Shteyfon took over command on 15 September 1941 and expanded the Corps to an 11,197-strong force in September 1944. It comprised one Cavalry Regiment – 1st Cossack Regiment *Generala Zborovskogo* – and four infantry regiments (2–5). The veterans were reinforced by younger emigrés and former Soviet POWs, and deployed by the Germans as factory guards. Later they fought against the Partisans. In September 1944, the Corps helped defend Belgrade against the advancing Soviet Army, before transferring to anti-Partisan duties in Bosnia. There, on 10 October, it became the Russian Corps in Serbia (*Russkiy Korpus v Serbii*). Colonel Anatoliy Ivanovich Rogozhin assumed command on 30 April 1945 and, in May, surrendered to the British, who allowed the pre-Soviet era emigrés to settle in the West.

Other Units

Nedić formed a Serbian labour service, the 'Reconstruction Service', claiming 16,000 members in 1942. In August 1941, Konstantin 'Kosta' Pećanac placed



his 8,000 Chetnik troops under German command as 'legalized Chetniks', followed in November by 2,000 Mihailović Chetniks. In February 1943, the Germans dismissed them, but in November concluded new agreements with Mihailović's 16,000 'loyal Chetniks'. Mihailović retreated in October 1944 to the Vučjak Mountain, Derventa, Northern Bosnia, with a 12,000-man force. It was destroyed by the Partisans near Kalinovik, Eastern Bosnia, in May 1945. Mihailović was captured near Višegrad in March 1946.

Banat military units were under German Police control. The 1,500-strong Banat State Guard (*Banater Staatsmache*), nicknamed the Black Police, was commanded by Colonel Ernest Pelikan, reporting to Franz Reit, the Police Commissioner. It was formed in February 1942 as municipal and rural police. The Auxiliary Police (*Hilfspolizei*) was formed September 1941 as a mobile anti-partisan force for Serbia. It comprised ten Battalions (1–10), 5,800 men organized in June 1944 into Police Volunteer Regiment (Serbia) 1–3, in German Police uniforms. Decimated in October–November 1944, the survivors joined the German-Croatian Police in Croatia.

In April 1941, the 6,000-strong SS-style German Force (*Deutsche Mannschaft*) was formed for village security. Six battalions were raised. Each Battalion (*Sturmabteilung*) had four to seven companies (*Stürme*). The Force, under Lieutenant Michael Reiser and from spring 1942 Captain Hein, defended the Banat in October 1944, before withdrawing to Croatia.

MONTENEGRO

Ground Forces

Anti-Partisan forces in Montenegro comprised the Greens – separatists wishing to restore the pre-1918 Kingdom; Whites – Nationalists wanting union or federation with Serbia; and the Chetniks.

In August 1941, the Italians formed separatist Voluntary Anti-Communist Militia (MVAC) companies, superseded, in January 1942, by Krsto

Serbian Volunteer Corps marching to the front, 1944, wearing Italian helmets, uniforms and webbing. (Jan-Poul Petersen)

Popović's Montenegrin Troops, renamed Katun Troops. In February 1942, Colonel Bajo Stanišić formed a Nationalist National Army of Montenegro and Herzegovina in six battalions with some Nationalist Chetnik battalions. Meanwhile, in October 1941, Mihailović appointed Major Djordjije Lašić as Montenegrin Chetnik Commander.

In July 1942, the Montenegrin National Troops were established as Italian auxiliaries, with the 1,700-strong separatist *Lovćen* Brigade, the 1,500-strong Nationalist *Zeta* Flying Detachment, and 1,500 Chetniks in the *Lim-Sandžak* Flying Detachment, leaving the new Chetnik Commander, Blažo Djukanović, with 17,300 Chetniks and 5,000 nationalists.

Some 4,000 Chetniks and Nationalists fought at the Neretva in the Fourth Offensive in February 1943, but in June the Germans and Italians disbanded almost all anti-partisan units.

In September, the Germans succeeded the Italians in Montenegro, establishing *Feldkommandantur* 1040. In November, they formed the 2,000-strong nationalist-separatist National Militia. In December, Major Jovo Djukanović reformed the Chetnik-nationalist-separatist Montenegrin National Troops. 7,000 strong, it was badly mauled by the Partisans in March 1944.

In June 1944, Lieutenant-Colonel Pavle Djurišić, perhaps the finest Yugoslav Chetnik leader, became Montenegrin Chetnik Commander, with 7,000 Chetniks under his command. He formed the 2nd Serbian (Montenegrin) Volunteer Corps – 5,650 men in 6th, 7th and 8th Volunteer Regiments. From August to December 1944, the Chetnik Sanjak Commander, Major Vojislav Lukačević, operated a breakaway Independent National Resistance Group, which attacked German units.

On 6 December 1944, Djurišić retreated with Chetniks, the Volunteer Corps and Montenegrin National Troops to Eastern Bosnia. These reformed in January 1945 as the 10,000-strong Chetnik 8th Montenegrin Army, with 1st, 5th, 8th and 9th (Herzegovina) Divisions. This force was defeated by Croatian Usthas near Banja Luka, and Djurišić was killed. The survivors formed a new separatist Montenegrin National Army, under Boško Agram. It reached Austria in May 1945, only to be handed back to the Partisans.

Police Units

Police duties were discharged from April 1941 by the ex-Yugoslav *Zeta* Gendarmerie Regiment, superseded in July 1942 by the 3,000-strong National Gendarmerie. The Germans formed a Banat-German Police Volunteer Battalion Montenegro in June 1944, and a Police Volunteer Battalion Sanjak in July.

In Sanjak, the border region between South-West Serbia and Northern Montenegro, the Italians formed a 3,000-strong anti-Partisan Moslem Militia, under Hoxha Patchariz, reformed in early 1944 as the Moslem Legion, under SS-Major Karl von Krempler.

BULGARIA AND MACEDONIA

Ground Units

In 1935, Bulgaria expanded its Armed Forces. By 1939, the Army (*Bulgarska Voyska*) had ten line infantry divisions (1–10), two Mobile (ex-Cavalry) Divisions (1–2) and a Mountain Brigade. There were also 24 Frontier Battalions, organized into regiments.

A 15,500-strong Infantry Division had three to four three-battalion infantry regiments, one three-battalion artillery regiment, a reconnaissance battalion (with one cyclist, one heavy machine-gun and two mounted companies), an anti-aircraft artillery battalion, a machine-gun battalion, an engineer battalion, a signals battalion, a labour battalion and logistical services. A Mobile Division had two mounted cavalry brigades, each with two five-squadron regiments, one two-battalion motorized infantry regiment, one artillery regiment (one motorized and one mounted battalion), an anti-aircraft artillery battery, a motorized engineer company, a signals company and logistical services. The Mountain Brigade was disbanded 1942 and reformed early 1943. It had two infantry regiments and a mountain artillery battalion.

The 1st Tank Company, formed in March 1935, became the Armoured Vehicle Battalion in April 1939 (with 1, 2 Tank Companies and a repair battalion). In early 1941, it became the Tank Group, with 1–4 Tank Companies. On 15 August 1941, it was



Bulgarian paratrooper NCOs and men are briefed by an officer, Macedonia, 1943. Note the Bulgarian-manufactured grenades and the German-style diving-eagle parachute qualification breast-badges (Varna Military Museum)

redesignated the Armoured Regiment and, on 1 October 1943, the Armoured Brigade. This had 4,226 men in an armoured regiment (with two armoured, one anti-tank and an anti-aircraft artillery battalion), a reconnaissance battalion with light tanks, a two-battalion motorized infantry regiment and an artillery regiment.

Organization

All divisions and brigades were grouped into four corps-sized Armies (I–IV Armiya). The 1st Army (based in Sofia) guarded Western Bulgaria with 1 and 7 Infantry and 1 Mobile Division and the Mountain Brigade; the 2nd Army (Plovdiv) guarded Southern Bulgaria with 2, 8 and 10 Infantry Divisions; the 3rd Army (Varna) guarded Eastern Bulgaria with 3, 4 Infantry Divisions, 2 Mobile Division; and the 4th Army (Pleven) guarded Northern Bulgaria with 5, 6 and 9 Infantry Divisions.

Germany forced the cession of Southern Dobrudja by Rumania on 21 August 1940 under the Treaty of Craiova, and on 1 March 1941 Bulgaria confirmed its Axis status by signing the Tripartite Pact. King Boris III avoided committing troops to the invasions of Greece and Yugoslavia, claiming that all battleworthy divisions were in 3rd Army guarding the German flank against Turkey, but German 12th Army was permitted to use Bulgaria as a springboard to attack Greece and Yugoslavia on 6 April 1941.

In 1941, four line (12 and 14–16) and four reserve (11, 13, 17 and 21) divisions were formed, in early 1943 six reserve (22–27) were added and, later, two more reserve (28–9) divisions were formed. Only the 12th Infantry Division (3rd Army, Southern Dobrudja) was a true line division. The other fifteen, including the locally recruited 14–16 Divisions, were units raised during the war for occupation duties. They drew cadres from line divisions whose numbers they usually carried as duplicates (for example, 11 and 21 from 1st Infantry Division). Lacking a metropolitan recruiting district or continuous existence, they were usually understrength in men and equipment. The High Command retained the best line divisions in Bulgaria proper.

Army Chiefs of Staff were Lieutenant-General Gheorgi Popov (from 1938), Nikola Hadzhi-Petrov (from 1940) and Konstantin Lukash (from December 1941).

On 19 April 1941, Bulgaria occupied Macedonia and some districts of Eastern Serbia, which, with Western Thrace and Eastern Greek Macedonia (the Aegean Province), were annexed by Bulgaria on 14 May.

The 1st Army (1, 7, 9, 11, 13 and 16 Infantry Divisions) garrisoned the Aegean Province. Its policy of forcible 'Bulgarianization' drove the Greek puppet government in Athens to consider mass evacuation of Greeks to German-occupied territory. In



German Units

- 1: Gefreiter, German Army, Eastern Herzegovina, May 1943
- 2: SS-Hauptsturmführer, Dalmatia, September 1943
- 3: Paratrooper, Western Bosnia, May 1944



Italian Units

1: Colonnello titolare, Eastern Montenegro, 1942

2: Vicecaposquadra, Slovenia, August 1942

3: Sergente-Maggiore, Western Croatia, September 1941



Croatian Army Units
1: General Zagreb, Croatia, February 1943
2: Poručnik, Bosnia, January 1944
3: Bojnik, Zagreb, February 1945



1: Razvodnik, Tuzla, Bosnia, December 1941
2: Stožerni Narednik, Western Bosnia, June 1943
3: Domobran, Eastern Bosnia, December 1943



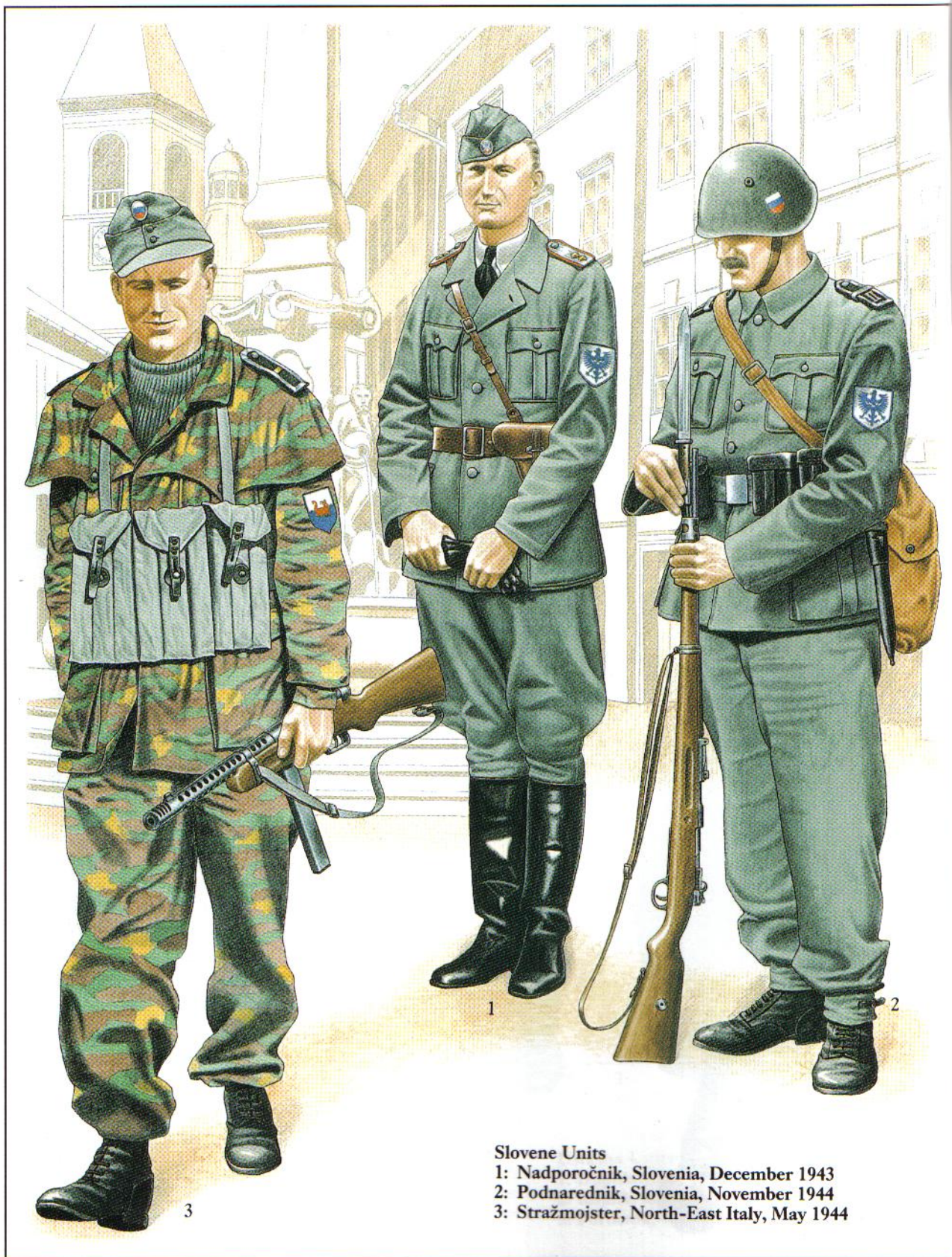
Croatian Naval/Artillery Units
1: Bojnik, Bosnia, October 1942
2: Narednik, Koprivnica, September 1943
3: Vodnik, Dubrovnik, February 1944



Ustasha Units
1: Dupukovnik, Croatia, 1942
2: Rojnik, Croatia, January 1944
3: Porucnik, Central Bosnia, March 1942



Bulgarian Units
1: Rotmistr, Macedonia, 1942
2: Podofitser, August 1943
3: Officer, Macedonia, 1943



Slovene Units

1: Nadporočnik, Slovenia, December 1943

2: Podnarednik, Slovenia, November 1944

3: Stražmojster, North-East Italy, May 1944

February 1942, the 1st Army transferred to Serbia, leaving 16th Infantry Division, bolstered by elements of 1st and 10th Infantry Divisions as an embryonic Aegean Command. In July 1943, the 7th Infantry Division was posted to Salonika under the German Salonika-Aegean Command. Later 2nd Corps (7, 26 and 28 Infantry Divisions) garrisoned Aegean Province against expected Allied landings, and in February 1944 it occupied Greek Western Macedonia.

The 5th Army, headquartered in Skopje, was formed to garrison Macedonia with the 14th Infantry Division in the North, the 15th in the South-West, the 4th Cavalry Brigade and later the 27th Infantry Division. The Macedonians had initially welcomed the Bulgarians as liberators from Serb oppression, but soon resented Bulgarian assimilation policies. Resulting partisan activity was ruthlessly suppressed and had virtually ceased until early 1943. Meanwhile the Italians, hoping to extend their Western Macedonia occupation zone into Bulgarian territory, in order to reach valuable mineral deposits, caused serious clashes between the Axis partners in August and October 1942.

On 15 January 1942 the 1st Army (7, 9 and 21 Infantry Divisions) transferred to South-East Serbia. Headquartered at Niš, under German Serbia Command, it replaced German divisions needed in Croatia and Russia. On 7 January 1943, it also occupied South-West Serbia. Savage pacification measures reduced Partisan activity appreciably. This allowed the 1st Army to return to Bulgaria in spring 1943, leaving 1st (Occupation) Corps, with five reserve divisions (22–5 and 27). On 31 July 1943, the corps garrisoned all of Serbia, with the exception of the North-West and Belgrade. From mid-1943, Partisan attacks reintensified and in May 1943 the 23rd Infantry Division moved into Northern Montenegro, blocking the Partisan escape-route to Serbia during the Fifth Offensive. In December 1943, the 24th Infantry Division moved to Eastern Bosnia for the Sixth Offensive.

King Boris died suddenly on 28 August 1943, having avoided Bulgarian involvement on the East-

ern Front. He had claimed his russophile troops would desert. He had also vetoed the 1942 German proposals for the formation of a Bulgarian SS-Legion, although a Regiment was established by émigrés in Germany in November 1944.

Bulgaria joins the Allies

On 10 September 1944, Bulgaria changed sides and declared war on Germany as an Allied Power. The Germans swiftly disarmed the 1st Occupation Corps, but 5th Army resisted tenaciously Operation *Treubruch*. Survivors of both armies retreated to Bulgaria, joining the new 450,000-strong Bulgarian National Armed Forces (*Bulgarska Narodna Armija*) under Lieutenant-General Ivan Marinov. On 8 October, the 1st and 4th Armies occupied Serb Macedonia with Partisan permission. The 2nd Army occupied South-Eastern Serbia. The 1st Army then swung north with the Soviet 3rd Ukrainian Front, through Eastern Yugoslavia and South-Western Hungary, and linked up with British 8th Army in Austria in May 1945. The 3rd Army remained on the Turkish frontier.



Bulgarian troops handling machine-gun ammunition, 1942. Note that the rank insignia of the Corporal far right consists of two yellow

shoulder-loops with central branch-colour stripes probably intended for fatigue uniforms. (Varna Military Museum)

SLOVENIA

Air, Sea and Police Units

The Bulgarian Navy (*Morski Voyski*) had Black Sea, Danube and Aegean (headquartered in Kavala, Greek Macedonia) fleets; four coastal artillery regiments (two in Greece, at Kavala and Alexandropolis) and a 630-man Naval Infantry Battalion, formed 1942, on the Aegean islands of Thassos (with two companies) and Samothraki (one company).

The 5,000-strong Air Force (*Vazdushni Voyski*), under Major-General Airanov, had eight wings. Each wing (*orlyak*) had three or four squadrons. Deployed on Black Sea coastal patrols, they formed a defence against USAAF bombers from August 1943. From April 1944, they were used against Partisans in Serb Macedonia. And they supported the 1st Army from October 1944. The Parachute Battalion, formed early 1943, fought in Serb Macedonia under the 5th Army and with the 1st Army from October 1944.

The Military Police (*Voenna Politsia*) also functioned as Security Police. It had a fearsome reputation. By July 1944, each army had an MP Battalion (1–5) attached to it.

The National Police (*Darjavna Politsia*) under Director Hristo Dragalov, then from October 1942 Anton Kozarov, deployed 4,000 uniformed personnel in Serbia and Serb Macedonia in two regional, three municipal and 21 district commands. There were motorized units and at least one combat battalion, at Skopje.

From August 1941, the National Police controlled Anti-Partisan Units (*Kontračete*) in Serb Macedonia. These had about 2,000 men, recruited from the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (VRMO). The units – each *Kontračeta* comprised about 30 men – were dispersed across the twelve Macedonian district commands: Bitola, Gevgelija, Kačanik, Kavadarci, Kočani, Kratovo, Prečevo, Prilep, Skopje, Skopska crna gora, and Veles. There were also Albanian units and units in Greek Macedonia, but virtually all were destroyed by Partisans in summer 1944.

Bulgaria also had a 24-battalion Labour Corps (*Trudovi voyski*) under Colonel Konstantin Avramov, for Jews and Bulgarians not liable for military service. From January 1941 to September 1944, there was a 200,000-strong *Brannik* ('Defender') compulsory Youth Organization.

Ground Forces

In April and May 1941, Slovenia – *Drava* Province – was divided amongst the Axis belligerents. Western Slovenia was annexed by Italy as Lubiana (Ljubljana) Province and an extended Fiume (Rijeka) Province. Central Slovenia was incorporated into the German Reich – Carinthia (*Kärnten*) and Upper Carniola (*Oberkrain*) joining Carinthia Province, Lower Styria (*Untersteiermark*) joining Styria. The Prekmurje District of Eastern Slovenia became Hungarian. There was also a substantial Slovene minority in the North-East Italian provinces of Gorizia and Trieste.

In April 1941, the *Drava* Governor, Dr Marko Natlačen of the Catholic Slovene People's Party, formed a National Committee for an independent Slovenia, and his Slovene Legion (*Slovenska Legija*) began disarming defeated Yugoslav Army units. Independence denied, the Legion continued in Western Slovenia as Italian auxiliaries.

In March 1942, the outlawed Slovene political parties formed the Slovene National Alliance with the Slovene Legion, 10,000 former University Student Guards (*Stražari*) and High School Fighters (*Borci*), organizations of the pre-war 'Catholic Action' movement. These were joined by the Sokol Legion (*Sokolska Legija*) – 1,000 Liberals and Socialists in the 'Sokol' gymnastic organization – and the 1,000-strong National Legion (*Narodna Legija*) made up of smaller parties. These legions considered themselves part of Mihailović's Chetniks and in September 1942 were largely absorbed into Voluntary Anti-Communist Militia (MVAC), leaving three to four hundred men organized in early 1943 as four Chetnik detachments unofficially named the Blue Guard (*Plava Garda*), operating in Eastern Lubiana Province under Major Karlo Novak.

On 6 August 1942 the Italians formed the MVAC in Slovenia – a thousand men under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Ernest Peterlin. These had originally been Village Guards (*Vaške Straže*), formed in May 1942 as a village protection force widely known as the White Guard (*Bela Garda*). The MVAC companies formed bore the name of the locality. By December 1942, there were 4,500 guards in 41 companies with 71 posts. By July 1943, 6,000 in



Members of the Slovene Legion of Death parade in Mokronog, in September 1942, wearing civilian clothes and Italian Army

uniform items, with ex-Yugoslav Czech M1934 and French M1915 steel helmets. (Modern History Museum, Ljubljana)

107 Posts. In February 1943, four élite mixed Italian-MVAC Special Battalions (*Posebni bataljon št. 1-4*) were formed.

In May 1942, Major Novak's Slovene Chetnik Detachment, formed July 1941, joined the MVAC as the 'Legion of Death' (*Legija Smrti*). It comprised initially 640, and by February 1943 1,687, mobile hot-pursuit troops in 11 companies. These were formed as the 1st Battalion (Vrnika), who were mainly Chetnik; and the 2nd (Gorjanci) and 3rd Battalion (Mokronog), ex-Slovene Legion and Sokol Legion, deployed around Ljubljana.

On 1 November 1942, a 210-strong MVAC Ljubljana Security Guard was formed as security police, but proved too zealous and was disbanded in January 1943.

In July 1943, the Slovene National Alliance decided to reorganize the MVAC into a 19-battalion Slovene National Army (*Slovenska Narodna Vojska*) to support anticipated Allied landings, but the plan was not completed. However in September, Captain Albin Cerkenik organized 60 White Chetniks and 1,600 MVAC troops into the 1st *Triglav* and 2nd *Krim* Mountain Brigades of the Chetnik Slovene Army.

Following the Italian Armistice on 8 September 1943, the Partisans launched a general offensive in Slovenia, smashing Cerkenik's brigades at Turjak Castle and most of the Blue Guard at Kočevje. The Partisans overran many MVAC garrisons, but failed to defeat the Legion of Death Battalions.

On 10 September 1943, German-occupied 'Ljubljana Province' joined the 'Adriatic Coastal

Area' (*Adriatisches Küstenland*) of North-East Italy. On 24 September the Governor, ex-Yugoslav army Lieutenant-General Leon Rupnik, formed the 'Slovene Defence Legion' (*Slovenska Domobranska Legija*) with three Battalions (1-3 *bataljon*) formed from 2,000 former MVAC troops. On 30 September, the Germans took it over as the Slovene Home Defence Force (*Slovensko Domobranstvo*) under German Police control, with Rupnik as nominal Commander-in-Chief and Colonel Franc Krener as tactical commander.

The Force comprised 63 infantry companies (1-7, 11-29, 31-48, 51-6, 61-3, 65-7, 71-2 and 111-5) - 43 as local garrisons, the others grouped into battalions. There were also engineers, signals, medical and labour companies, and four artillery batteries, with a fifth operating five armoured trains.

The battalions underwent many reorganizations. In October 1943, Battalions 1-5 were formed, with 4th Battalion as a Training Battalion. In December, compulsory military service was introduced. This brought the strength up to 10,500 men. The Battalions were reformed as seven combat groups (1-7 *Bojna Skupina*) and Training Groups 1 and 2.

On 25 February 1944, it reorganized again into four groups (*Skupine*) - the 1st Training Group (ex-1st Group); the 2nd Railway Security Group (ex-Groups 4 and 5); the 3rd Operational Group (ex-2, 6 and 7) including Assault Battalion *Kriz*; and 4th *Novo Mesto* Protection Group.

On 16 May 1944 the Force, now 12,000 strong, was divided into four Operational Zones, each recruiting an Assault Battalion (*Udarni bataljon*). On 5 July 1944, these were designated N (*Nord*) - 1st Battalion; W (*West*) - 2nd Battalion; M (*Mitte*) - 3rd Battalion, disbanded March 1945; and O (*Ost*) - 4th Battalion. The 5th Battalion was formed in August 1944; the 6th in March 1945. In December 1944, as desertions increased, German 14th and 17th Police Regiments contributed a company to each battalion (except the 2nd) and German officers took command.

Finally, on 28 March 1945 the Battalions were renumbered: 1 remaining as 1; 2 became 5; 4 became 2; 5 became 6; 6 became 10. By this time there was also a 12th Battalion.

A State Security Service (*Državna Varnostna Služba*) was formed on 29 October 1943 by Lovco



After the Italian Armistice in September 1943, Slovene Village Guards replaced their black MVAC berets with coloured triangle rank insignia and ex-Yugoslav uniforms dyed brown, grey-green Italian uniforms and leather equipment, with Yugoslav

Army grey-green field-caps (also worn by the Chetniks). The cap-badge was a cloth triangle with the Slovene colours, white, blue and red horizontal stripes, or a Chetnik silver metal skull and crossbones. (Modern History Museum, Ljubljana)

Hacin with a uniformed police force (*Policijski Zbor*) under Lieutenant Colonel Stanko Palčič. On 3 January 1944, a Railway Police was formed. And on 29 October 1944 a civilian Labour pool, the *Narodni Pionirji*, and a paramilitary Labour Service, the *Delovna Služba*, under German officers, were created.

In Styria, ethnic Germans not liable for *Wehrmacht* service joined the SA-*Wehrmannschaft* (SA-Defence Force) for static guard duties. By 1942 it claimed 105,000 members. Later a *Wehrmannschaftsregiment Untersteiermark* (Defence Regiment Lower Styria) was formed with the 1st to 5th Battalions as a mobile strike-force.



Carniolan Slovenes also joined the *Wehrmannschaft* and some enlisted in its *Selbstschutz* platoons. At least seven were formed, operating from May–Autumn 1942 under German Gendarmerie command. From 2 November 1942 to 20 April 1943, some Village Guards units were operational, but the most effective anti-partisan units were the five mobile Anti-Guerilla units (*Protibande*) – ‘Martin’, ‘Ludvig’, ‘Filip’, ‘Stefan’ and ‘Lux’. These were formed in July–August 1942 from ex-Yugoslav *Dravski* Regiment Gendarmes, volunteers and Partisan deserters. From July 1942, Slovenes were liable for German military service. Slovenes in Eastern Slovenia were liable for Hungarian Army conscription.

On 9 January 1944, 1,000 Slovenes in Upper Carniola formed a Home Defence Force (*Gorenjsko domobranstvo*) as a local guard force on the Western Slovene model. By May 1945 there were 2,600 men in about 46 Posts and a mobile assault company, headquartered at Kranj. Nominally commanded by Slavko Krek, later Franc Erpič, it was under the Gestapo control of Sergeant Erich Dichtl. The Black Hand (*Črna roka*), formed early 1944, tracked down, tortured and killed about 1,000 Partisans and their civilian sympathizers.

German Police Regiments 13, 14, 25 and 28 served from February 1944 in Upper Carniola.

On 12 November 1943, Colonel Anton Kokalj formed the Slovene National Security Corps (*Slovenski Narodni Varnostni Zbor* or SNVZ) from Slovenes in three North-East Italian Provinces. There were few volunteers. Many Slovenes conscripted into the Italian Army had been taken prisoner in North Africa and had joined the Royal Yugoslav Forces in Egypt. As a result, compulsory military service was introduced, but the desertion rate was so high, that the SNVZ never exceeded 2,000 men.

A Headquarters Reserve at Trieste and 16 Rifle Companies were formed. These were divided into posts to guard individual villages. These Companies were organized into the following Groups (*Skupine*): *Postojna* (Trieste Province); *Gorica* (Gorizia Province); *Ilirska Bistrica* and *Idria* (Rijeka Province). On

A Slovene Home Defence Force Company parades in Ljubljana in December 1943, wearing Italian

helmets, equipment, and distinctive greatcoats. (Modern History Museum, Ljubljana)

24 October 1944, these were reorganized as 1st to 4th Battalions of the 1st Slovene Coast Assault Regiment, with the 1st to 16th Companies allotted sequentially. SS-Major Georg Michalsen took over command in February 1945 when Kokalj was killed in action, and was himself succeeded in April 1945 by Major Janko Debeljak.

The SNVZ established three sub-units – the Urban Police (*Policija*), formed March 1944 and eventually comprising two security companies and five platoons: a Rural Police (*Orožniški Zbor*) formed February 1945; and the Reserve Defence Force (*Rezavna Deželna Brama*). This was formed in early 1945, under Major Šinkovec, to train SNVZ reservists.

On 3 May 1945, the Slovene National Alliance proclaimed Slovene independence, and on the 4th revived the Slovene National Army, which had been stillborn in July 1943. This time it had three Divisions – *Ljubljanska* (Slovene Home Defence Force), *Gorenjska* (Upper Carniola Home Defence Force) and *Primorska* (SNVZ). The commander was Major-General Krener. Most of *Primorska* surrendered to the British 8th Army near Gorizia on 3 May. On 7 May, *Ljubljanska* and *Gorenjska* retreated with the Germans and Croats into Southern Austria, only to be handed back to Tito's concentration-camps and firing-squads.

THE PLATES

A1: Gefreiter, 738 Jägerregiment, 118 Jägerdivision, German Army, Eastern Herzegovina, May 1943

The M1943 tunic differed from the M1935, being brownish-grey rather than greenish-grey. It had a brownish-grey collar, shoulder-straps and arm-badge backings (rather than dark blue-green), squared off pocket-flaps and no pleats. And there were six (not five) front buttons. Since 25 April 1940, NCO collar and shoulder-strap braid, shoulder-loops (here for an NCO Candidate) and chevrons were in matt-grey artificial silk, not aluminium braid. The plain mouse-grey silk collar-patches were introduced 9 May 1940. Special *Jäger* distinctions were adopted 2 October 1942. These comprised Mountain Troops' light-green branch-colour and peaked field-cap; oak-



Lieutenant-General Leon Rupnik, the only Slovene Home Defence Force General Officer, inspects troops of the Upper Carniola Home Defence Force, wearing German and Italian uniforms and equipment. Note the SS cap-badge. Behind Rupnik

are three Slovene Home Defence Force officers – Colonel Vizjak (wearing spectacles), Colonel Franc Krener, Force Commander, and a third officer – Polhov Gradec, Western Slovenia, 4 June 1944. (Modern History Museum, Ljubljana)

leaf cap-badge (here with unofficial branch-colour backing for Austrian units); and right arm-badge. This Lance-Corporal wears the Iron Cross 2nd Class ribbon, Signaller's arm-badge, and black wound-badge, signifying one or two wounds.

A2: SS-Hauptsturmführer, Armoured Battalion, SS-Freiwilligen-Gebirgs-Division 'Prinz Eugen', Waffen-SS, Split, Dalmatia, September 1943

This Captain wears the M1938 SS version of the Army M1935 black AFV uniform, distinguished by a straighter-cut front flap and shallower collar, but has omitted the usual officer's aluminium cord collar-piping. Against regulations he wears the M1938 NCO's field cap often favoured by officers. Rank is on Army shoulder-boards with 'Panzer pink' and 'SS-black' underlays, and the left collar-patch. 'Prinz Eugen' affiliation is indicated by the Odal Rune on the right collar-patch (theoretically SS runes were not permitted to the ethnic Germans), cuff-title and Mountain-Troops' arm-badge – the only German Armoured unit so entitled. Breast decorations comprise (clockwise) the Iron Cross 1st Class, a bronze commemoration badge for six months *Einsatzstaffel* service, runes indicating full SS membership and the M1939 tank battle badge. The unofficial Croatian armshield indicates past 'Einsatzstaffel' service.

A3: Paratrooper, SS-Fallschirmjägerbataillon 500, Waffen-SS, Drvar, Western Bosnia, May 1944

A member of the sole Waffen-SS parachute unit, this trooper wears Air-Force equipment – the M1937 paratrooper's helmet with Air-Force eagle decal, the M1941 camouflage smock still showing the Air-Force breast eagle and Air-Force parachute webbing. His SS membership is only revealed by the peakless field-cap for NCOs and Men (officers had aluminium wire badges and flap-piping) introduced November 1940.

B1: Colonnello titolare, 83 Infantry Regiment, 19 Infantry Division 'Venezia', Italian Army, Eastern Montenegro, 1942

The grey-green officers' field uniform, introduced 5 June 1940, adapted the M1934 uniform by substituting a plain collar (instead of coloured) and plain shoulder-straps (instead of pipings, braids and branch-badge). Branch-colour collar and cuff pipings were also omitted, only breeches piping remaining. Cuff rank-bars were of yellow rayon, and shorter. The M1942 peaked field-cap had a yellow infantry branch-badge, with regimental number, and the cloth rank-rectangle with yellow stars and braid. The smaller collar-patches indicate the division, as does the 'St. Mark of Venice' tradition breast-badge, introduced 6 November 1940. This replaced the divisional arm-shield, which was abolished July 1940. The Colonel's position as Regimental Commander (*titolare*) is indicated by scarlet underlay on cap and cuff insignia.

B2: Vicecaposquadra, 81 'M' Blackshirt Battalion, Italian Blackshirt Militia, 21 Infantry Division 'Granatieri di Sardegna', Novo Mesto, Slovenia, August 1942

MVSN troops wore the standard Army M1934 grey-green Other Ranks field uniform (also recommended for officers) with the *Bersaglieri* undress fez in black, or the M1933 helmet; black tie; and M1939 arm-

chevrons, modified 1940, silver for Junior NCOs, red for Privates. This Senior Lance-Corporal wears the black collar-patches (derived from *Arditi* assault troops in the First World War) with silver fasces and 'M' monogram, introduced 1941. He also wears M1934 webbing and the traditional Blackshirt dagger.

B3: Sergente-Maggiore, Motorcyclist Company, 11 Bersaglieri Regiment, 1 Mobile Division 'Eugenio di Savoia', Italian Army, Karlovac, Western Croatia, September 1941

The élite *Bersaglieri*, originally light infantry, then cyclist, motorcycle and lorried infantry, had worn the traditional dark-green cockerel feathers on headdress since 1936. Here they appear on the M1933 steel helmet. This soldier wears the black 'Motorcycle' helmet decal stencil, introduced in 1937 for members of Corps motorcycle companies. The greatcoat has no insignia, except the metal collar 'activity star', worn by all Italian Armed Forces personnel. Gold was worn by generals; silver metal by other officers; and aluminium by NCOs and men. Sleeve rank chevrons were introduced on 4 October 1939. They were gold for junior NCOs and red for privates. From 5 June 1940, they were in plain yellow or red rayon. Note the M91 *Moschetto* carbine.

C1: General, Croatian Army, Zagreb, Croatia, February 1943

Croatian Army uniforms, introduced 24 May 1941, show German influence. The officers' greenish-grey service tunic had a dark-brown collar with gold buttons for generals and greenish-grey buttons for other officers. They had a pattern of ornamental 'troplet' edging and a trefoil. The peaked-cap had a dark-brown band and branch-colour piping. The 1st Pattern cap-badges, worn May 1941 to November 1942, were a gold 'NHD' in an oval, above a tricolour cockade in a gold or silver wreath. Generals had a double gold knotted chin-cord. Field-Officers had the same in silver. Captains and Subalterns had a

(gold-Generals). Collar patch cloth: scarlet-Generals; scarlet, black, velvet inset – General Staff; light-red – Infantry, Mtn. Infantry, Railway Security; grass-green – Riflemen; dark-yellow – Cavalry; black (until Nov. 1943) – armour; bright-red – Artillery; dark-green – Eng./Signals; light-beige – Medical Officers; dark-brown – Medical orderlies. (13, 17) – braid worn May 1941–March 1942; (14–16, 18) – worn March 1942–January 1945.

Pts (1–3) and NCO's (4–7) wore white metal or bone badges and silver braid. Jnr officers (8–12) wore silver metal badges and silver piping. Field officers (13–15) gold metal, badges and silver braid. Generals (16–18) silver badges and gold braid. Field Marshal Kvaternik (19) wore gold braid leaves on silver braid. Officer's cap badges: First-pattern (20–1) gold metal above blue-white-red (centre) cockade with silver (gold-Generals) metal leaves. Second pattern (22–23) silver

THE CROATIAN ARMY (KOPNENA VOJSKA/DOMOBRANSTVO)

24 MAY 1941–12 JANUARY 1945



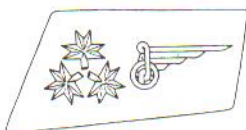
1. DOMOBRAN
(Private)



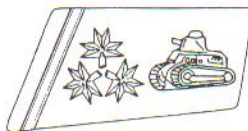
2. DESETNIK
(Lance-Corporal-Engineers)



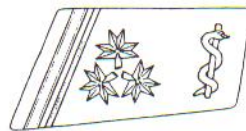
3. RAZVODNIK
(Corporal-Signals)



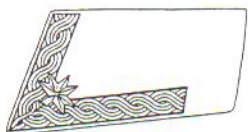
4. VODNIK
(Lance-Sergeant-Railway Security)



5. NAREDNIK
(Sergeant-Armour)



6. STOŽERNI NAREDNIK
(Warrant Officer II-Medical Corps)



7. June 1941 ČASTNIČKI NAMJESTNIK
(Warrant Officer I)



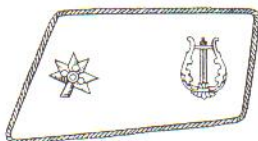
20. Cap-badge 1941-42



22. Cap-badge
1942-45



8. Sept 1941 ZASTAVNIK
(Junior 2nd Lieutenant)



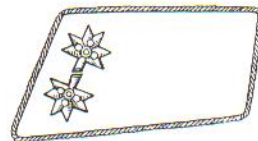
9. PORUČNIK
(2nd Lieutenant-Band)



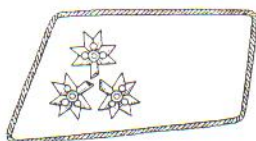
21. Cap-badge 1941-42



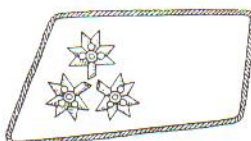
23. Cap-badge
1942-45



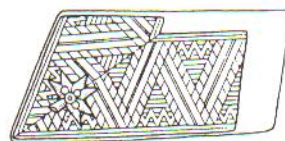
10. NADPORUČNIK
(Lieutenant)



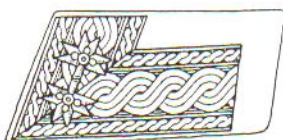
11. SATNIK
(Captain)



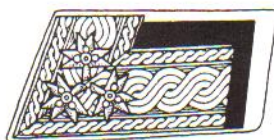
12. Sept 1941 NADSATNIK
(Senior Captain)



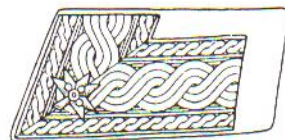
13. BOJNIK
(Major)



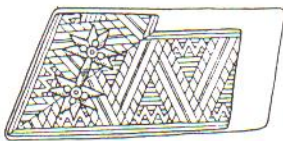
14. PODPUKOVNIK
(Lieutenant-Colonel)



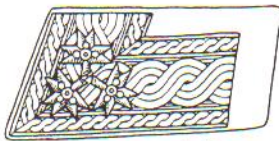
15. PUKOVNIK
(Colonel-General Staff)



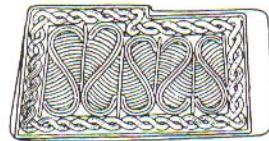
16. GENERAL
(Major-General)



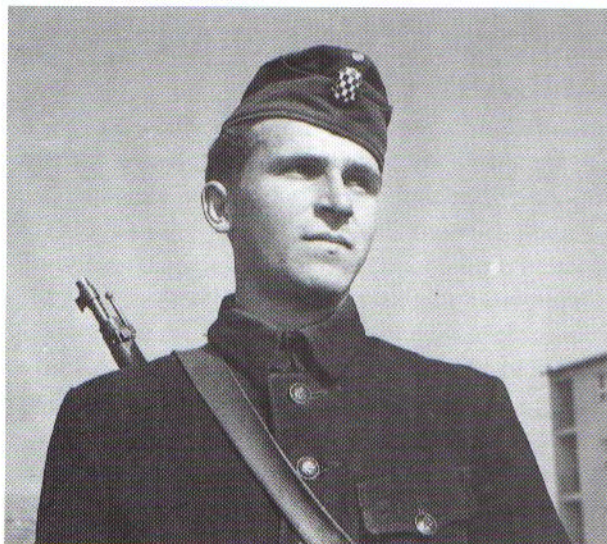
17. PODMARŠAL
Aug 1942 GENERAL-PORUČNIK
(Lieutenant-General)



18. GENERAL PJEŠAŠTVA,
TOPNIŠTVA, KONJANIŠTVA
(General of Infantry, Artillery, Cavalry)



19. VOJSKOVODJA
(Field-Marshal)



A Croatian urban police cadet, Zagreb, 1943. Police wore ex-Yugoslav uniforms and insignia from April 1941, changing in June 1942 to Ustasha

rank insignia, in December 1943 adopting new uniforms, probably with collar rank-insignia. (Croatian History Museum, Zagreb)

single silver knotted cord. The 2nd Pattern, worn November 1942 to January 1945, was a 'U' in a patterned square above 'NDH' in a wreathed oval, in gold braid or metal for generals, or silver metal for other officers. NCOs' peaked-caps, adopted 1943, omitted the oak wreath. Black trousers were worn for ceremonies. They had branch-colour piping. Generals had two wide scarlet stripes. In service, dress breeches and riding-boots were worn. Austrian-style collar-insignia commemorates the original *Hrvatsko Domobranstvo*, which was part of the Austro-Hungarian Army 1868–1918.

C2: Poručnik, Croatian Army Armoured Units, Bosnia, January 1944

From November 1943, AFV personnel wore an Air-Force style uniform and cap in black (grey in summer) with Air-Force shoulder-boards (see plates E1 and E2) with red piping and black underlay. Privates wore a silver tank on a black collar-patch with 2mm red patch piping. NCOs added 0.8cm silver collar braid (like Air-Force NCOs). Officers had 2mm

Collar-patches: (1, 2, 4, 5) red-white-blue cotton, worn red inwards, silver metal insignia; (6) red cloth, (7) red metal; large silver badge (shown) – NCO's & men, small-officers. (8–9) red metal, silver metal (badges). Cap-badge (3) silver metal. Arm (10–16) and cuff (17–25) rank (insignia – red

silver patch-piping and collar-piping. And generals had a gold patch and gold collar-piping. The black AFV helmet had a national shield on the right side. The peakless field-cap had a gilt 'NHD' in an oval, from November 1942 a bronze or aluminium 'NDH' in an oval.

C3: Bojnik, Croatian Infantry, Zagreb, February 1945

The January 1945 combined Army and Ustasha uniform comprised a modified German M1943 greenish-grey tunic with gold/silver plain or patterned buttons. Trefoils on intricately plaited shoulder-boards indicated officer rank, flat shoulder-boards NCO rank, and arm-chevrons privates. Branch-colour collar-patches had army, Ustasha or PTS badges. The peaked-cap had dark-red piping and dark-brown cap-band, with an 'AP' (*Ante Pavelić*) above oval Ustasha or army badges for officers. NCOs and men had 'AP' above 'U' and chequerboard or 'U' and grenade respectively. This insignia was also worn on the army peaked or Ustasha peakless field-cap. On the peaked-cap, generals had gold knotted cap-cords, field-officers dark-red and silver, captains and subalterns dark-red, senior NCOs black leather. Note the M1944 officers' sabre and the 'Armed-Forces' badges on the right breast – 'U' and chequerboard on the tricolour flag, equivalent to the German breast-eagle. Personnel of the 1, 5 and 18 Assault Divisions wore 'H', large Ustasha 'U' and 'D' on a tricolour flag on the left breast. Wartime shortages necessitated limited issue of this uniform so most troops retained the 1941 version.

D1: Razvodnik, 4 Infantry Regiment, 3 Infantry Division, Croatian Army, Tuzla, Bosnia, December 1941

At first, the Croatian Army wore greenish-grey Yugoslav uniforms, which often faded to a brownish colour. Dark-green collars and shoulder-straps, and fly-front buttons were added. These uniforms were worn until at least 1944, as were Italian M1934 and some German M1935 uniforms. Rank was indicated

braid spirals. Senior Capt. wore Capt.'s insignia shown (August 1942–44; otherwise Capt.'s insignia. 'Zbornik' (Lt.Gen.), 'Vojskovodja' (Gen.), 'Ratovolfja' (Field Marshal) existed 1 April, 1941–21 June 1941, but no insignia prescribed, and no officer held the rank.

THE USTASHA ARMY (USTAŠKA VOJNICA) APRIL 1941–12 JANUARY 1945



1. UV & PTB
1 April–21 June 1941



2. PTB
22 June 1941–
9 May 1942



3. Cap-badge



4. PTB officers
1942–1945



5. PTB NCOs & men
1942–1945



6. UV
22 June 1941–12 Jan 1945



7. PTS
10 May 1942–mid. 1944



8. PTS
mid. 1944–12 Jan 1945



9. Ustasha Railway
Troops

10. USTAŠA
22 June 1941 ČARKAR
Aug 1942 VOJNIČAR
(Private)

11. ROJNIK
22 June 1941 DOROJNIK
(Lance-Corporal)



12. RAZVODNIK
22 June 1941 ROJNIK
(Corporal)



13. VODNIK
22 June 1941 DOVODNIK
(Lance-Sergeant)



14. STRAŽARNIK
22 June 1941 VODNIK
(Sergeant)



15. ČAST NAMJESTNIK
Aug 1942 STOŽ VODNIK
(Warrant Officer II)



16. Aug 1942
ČASTNIČKI NAMJESTNIK
(Warrant Officer I)



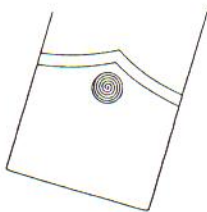
NCOs & men
(10–16)



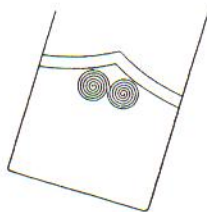
Officers
(17–25)



17. ZASTAVNIK
(Junior 2nd Lieutenant)



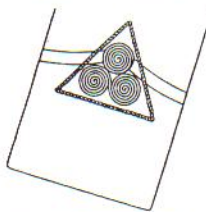
18. PORUČNIK
(2nd Lieutenant)



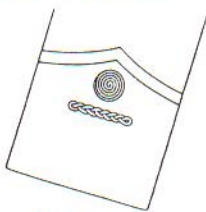
19. NADPORUČNIK
(Lieutenant)



20. SATNIK
(Captain)



21. Aug 1942 NADSATNIK
(Senior Captain)



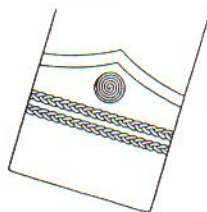
22. BOJNIK
(Major)



23. PODPUKOVNIK
Aug 1942 DOPUKOVNIK
(Lieutenant-Colonel)



24. PUKOVNIK
(Colonel)



25. KRILNIK
(Major-General)

on branch-colour collar-patches. Engineers, Signals, Railway Security, Medical Corps personnel and Bandsmen added special badges. Other ex-Yugoslav badges were worn unofficially. No unit badges or numerals were worn. Moslems wore a scarlet fez. Other troops wore the M1941 peaked field-cap, with the 1st pattern cap-badge – a gold ‘NHD’ in an oval – or 2nd pattern – a bronze or aluminium ‘NDH’ in an oval. Moslem personnel were represented throughout the armed forces but to forestall Moslem nationalism, they were not concentrated in separate units. Only the 1st–4th, 6th and 9th Infantry Regiments had significant proportions of Moslems.

D2: Stožerni Narednik, Croatian Artillery, Western Bosnia, June 1943

The greenish-grey M1941 field tunic, with a dark-green collar (dark-brown for generals) and dark-green shoulder-straps for NCOs and men, with plain greenish-grey buttons, was similar to the German Army M1935, but had distinctive pocket-pleats. As a veteran of the Croatian Legion 1941–2, this senior NCO wears a linden-leaf badge on the left side of the field-cap, although wearing it on the left breast-pocket was more normal. Members of Mountain Brigades wore Roman numerals I–IV between two Edelweiss flowers on the left side of the cap. From 1944, the German army M1943 uniform was issued. Ethnic German troops wore a white-wreathed swastika badge on the upper left sleeve. Gendarmerie wore dark-red collar-patches (lowest rank was *Oružnik*, equivalent to *Razvodnik*) and special gold, silver or grey aiguillettes. New dark-brown uniforms and rank insignia were introduced in 1944.

D3: Domobran, 7 Rifle Regt, 4 Rifle Brigade, Croatian Army, Eastern Bosnia, December 1943

Initially Croats wore ex-Yugoslav greenish-grey greatcoats, but the Croatian greenish-grey version was issued from mid-1941. Generals had a dark-brown collar with scarlet spearhead collar-patches

with a gold patterned button, and scarlet collar, cuff, pocket-flap and front edge piping. Officers wore the dark-brown service-dress and dark-green field-uniform collars with greenish-grey patterned buttons on branch-colour patches, and branch-colour pipings. NCOs and men had dark-green collars and shoulder-straps, branch-colour collar-patches without buttons, cuffs or pipings. There was no specific rank insignia. Rifle Brigade personnel wore an Edelweiss on a black triangle piped silver on the left upper sleeve. German M1935 and Italian M1933 helmets were worn; also ex-Yugoslav French M1915 ‘Adrian’ and Czech M1934 models.

E1: Bojnik, Croatian Air Force, Bosnia, October 1942

The grey-blue officer’s uniform had rank on German Air-Force-style branch-coloured collar-patches piped silver (gold for generals), a peakless field-cap or peaked service-cap with a silver ‘NHD’ in an oval over a silver eagle and half-wreath. Generals had double gold knotted peaked-cap chin-cords. Field-officers wore silver. Captains and subalterns had two intertwined plain silver cords. The Air-Force badge was worn above the right breast-pocket.

In November 1941, German-style shoulder-boards on branch-colour underlay were added. Field-Marshal Kvaternik wore collar-patch with gold eagle, wreath and chequerboard shield, gold-silver-gold knotted shoulder braids and crossed silver batons. General-Officers had 3–1 gold wings and wreath with 3–1 gold trefoils on gold-silver-gold knotted shoulder-braids. Field-Officers had 3–1 silver wings and wreath with 3–1 gold trefoils on silver knotted braids. Captains and subalterns had 3–0 silver wings above half-wreath with 4–0 gold trefoils on silver flat braids. A senior captain had captain’s collar insignia in gold. In November 1942, peaked-caps had a silver ‘U’ in a patterned square above a silver eagle above a wreathed ‘NHD’ in an oval. Field-cap insignia was as before. In December 1944, peaked-caps had a tricolour cockade with ‘AP’ monogram above a

(1–4) Tin cap-badges. The Warrant Officer wore a Men’s upper badge, officers’ lower badge. (5–7) Collar-patches for all officers and PTS NCOs & men. Utasha and Army NCOs & men wore a larger badge. Patch-colours: scarlet – Generals; dark-red – Infantry; yellow – Cavalry; black – Armour; light-red – Artillery; dark-green – Engineers; grey – Signals; brown – Medical & Veterinary Corps. (9) – Ptes.

grey-green strap. Ptes. (9–11) – dark-red chevron and white metal trefoil on upper sleeves. Jnr. NCOs (12–13) grey-green strap with dark-red edging and white metal trefoils, Snr. NCOs (14–16) yellow braid edging. Officers wore grey-green uniform straps with dark-red braid and silver (Snr. Capt. gold) metal trefoils (17–21), silver-dark-red braids, gold trefoils (22–4), gold braids, silver trefoils (25–7).

THE CROATIAN ARMED FORCES (HRVATSKE ORUŽANE SNAGE) 13 JANUARY 1945–15 MAY 1945



1. Ustasha and PTS
NCOs and men



2. Army
NCOs and men



3. Ustasha and
PTS officers



4. Army officers



5. PTS officers



6. Ustasha
officers



7. Army officers



8. VOJNIK (Army)/VOJNIČAR
(PTS & Ustasha) (Private)



Privates & Lance-Corporals
(8,10,11)



9. Privates &
Lance-Corporals



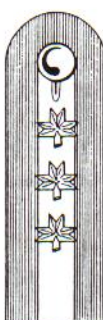
10. STRIELAC
(Senior Private)



11. DOROJNIK
(Lance-Corporal)



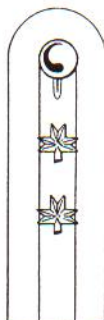
12. ROJNIK
(Corporal)



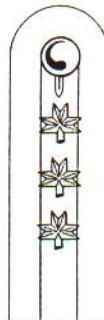
13. VODNIK
(Lance-Sergeant)



14. STRAŽNIK
(Sergeant)



15. STOŽERNI
STRAŽNIK
(Warrant Officer II)



16. ČASTNIČKI
NAMJESTNIK
(Warrant Officer I)



17. ZASTAVNIK
(Junior 2nd
Lieutenant)



18. PORUČNIK
(2nd Lieutenant)



19. NADPORUČNIK
(Lieutenant)



20. SATNIK
(Captain)



21. NADSATNIK
(Senior Captain)



22. BOJNIK
(Major)



23. DOPUKOVNIK
(Lieutenant-
Colonel)



24. PUKOVNIK
(Colonel)



25. GENERAL
(Major-
General)



26. GENERAL-
PORUČNIK
(Lieut.-General)



27. GENERAL-
PUKOVNIK
(General)

THE BULGARIAN ARMY (BULGARSKA VOYSKA) 1941-1945



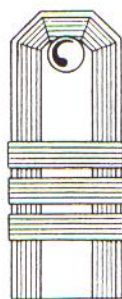
1. REDNIK
(Private)



2. EFREYTOR
(Lance-Corporal)



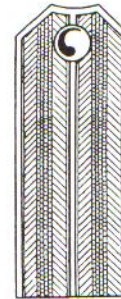
3. KANDIDAT
PODOFITSER
(Corporal)



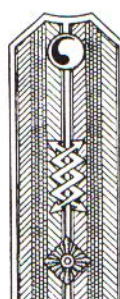
4. PODOFITSER
(Sergeant)



5. FELDFEBEL
(VACHMISTER - Cav.)
(Warrant Officer)



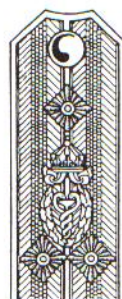
6. OFITSERSKI
KANDIDAT
(Junior 2nd Lieutenant)



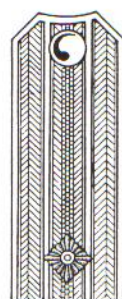
7. PODPORUCHIK
(2nd Lieutenant)
(Signals)



8. PORUCHIK
(Lieutenant)
(Cavalry)



9. KAPITAN
(ROTMISTER - Cav.)
(Captain - Medical Corps)



10. MAYOR
(Major)



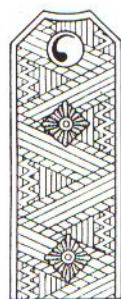
11. PODPOLKOVNIK
(Lieutenant-Colonel)



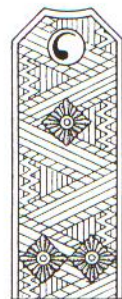
12. POLKOVNIK
(Colonel)



13. GENERAL-MAYOR
(Major-General)
(Air Force)



14. GENERAL-
LEYTENANT
(Lieutenant-General)



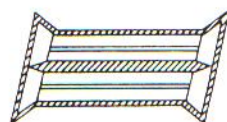
15. GENERAL
(General)



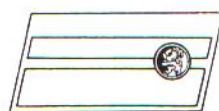
16. MARSHAL
NA BULGARIA
(Field-Marshal)



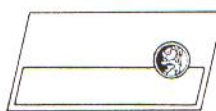
17. Generals (13-16)



18. Officers (7-12)



19. Junior 2nd Lieutenant (6)



20. NCOs (4-5)



21. Privates (1-3)

silver winged chequerboard. On field-caps, there was the winged chequerboard only. Finally in March 1945, army shoulder-straps were prescribed (see C3).

The branch-colours were: light-blue – flying and parachute troops; light-red – anti-aircraft artillery; dark-red – technical; brown – medical; and light-grey – auxiliaries. Pilots and radio-operators wore a German-style wreathed silver eagle badge on the left breast-pocket.

The National Guard wore a grey uniform with black facings, and air-force collar-patches with trefoils instead of wings.

E2: Narednik, 1st Parachute Company, Croatian Air Force, Koprivnica, September 1943

In May 1941, NCOs and men wore a grey-blue tunic with silver wings and braids on branch-colour collar-patches with a silver 'NDH' in oval on the peakless field-cap. From November 1941, they also wore German-style shoulder-straps with branch-colour piping and silver insignia. Senior NCOs and sergeants had 3-1 wings on the collar-patch with 0.8cm silver collar-braid, with 3-1 trefoils on the strap with silver braid encircling the strap. Lance-sergeants and privates had 3-0 wings – lance-sergeant had braid around strap edge, privates plain straps. In November 1942, silver 'NDH' in an oval appeared on the field-cap.

From 1942-3, paratroops wore ex-Yugoslav greenish-grey uniforms with army collar-insignia and a silver metal parachute on the left upper arm, and a wreathed diving eagle on the left breast-pocket. In 1943, camouflaged field uniforms were introduced. As a company sergeant major (*Stegovni Dočastnik*), this NCO wears German-style double cuff braids.

E3: Vodnik, South Adriatic Command, Croatian Navy, Dubrovnik, February 1944

In April 1941, Royal Yugoslav uniforms and rank insignia were worn. Officers adopted a tricolour cockade above a gold 'NDH' on a wreathed anchor

Other ranks' shoulder-straps (1-5) are uniform colour piped in branch-colour with yellow or white medium bars, gold or silver NCO braid edging, and a gold or silver wide bar. Gold or silver braid officers' straps (6-15) with branch-colour piping and centre stripes, silver or gold pips and branch-badge. Rank 16, intended for Tzar Boris for October 1943 (he died in August) had a gold strap piped red with silver

cap-badge. NCOs wore an anchor in an oval. Seamen had a gold 'NHD'. From November 1942, the 'NDH' appeared in an oval. In July 1941, new rank insignia appeared, with officers wearing a gold trefoil above rank rings. And in January 1944, all ranks adopted Croatian air-force-style shoulder-boards on navy-blue backing. Finally in December 1944, the officer's cockade was replaced by a 'U' on a chequerboard badge with 'wavy wings', also worn on the seaman's cap. Seamen also wore a navy-blue beret.

F1: Dopukovnik, Croatian Ustasha Army, Croatia, 1942

In May 1941, Ustasha troops adopted greenish-grey tunics and trousers or breeches with a distinctive peakless field-cap with an aluminium grenade and chequerboard within a 'U', and the pre-war tricolour rectangular collar patches changed to red with an aluminium 'U' and grenade. In December 1941, a yellowish-brown uniform was adopted, with a peaked-cap with a tricolour cockade with the 'AP' monogram (which was now added to the field-cap) above a wreathed 'U' and grenade in an oval. Officers wore red braid rank spirals and bars on both cuffs and the left side of the field-cap, NCOs and Men insignia on both upper sleeves only. Ex-Yugoslav Army, Croatian Army M1941, German Army M1943 and Italian M1940 uniforms were also worn, and occasionally locally produced versions.

In January 1945, the combined Army-Ustasha uniform was introduced, Ustasha officers retaining their cuff rank-insignia. Officers commanding Divisions or Corps were given dual army and Ustasha rank to compensate for the lack of Ustasha active General-Officer ranks – for example, *General-poručnik i Ustaški Pukovnik*.

F2: Rojnik, 2 Regiment, Poglavnik Bodyguard Brigade, Zagorje, Croatia, January 1944

The PTB wore standard Ustasha tricolour collar-patches, adding a large aluminium 'U' and grenade in June 1941. In February 1942 they adopted pent

insignia. Collar patches were branch-colour (Generals – red for Army, light-blue for Airforce) with gold or silver braids and buttons. Branch-colour: Infantry – red /gold; Cavalry – red & white/silver; Armour – red & yellow/silver; Artillery – black & red/gold; Gen. Staff – red & black, silver; Eng. & Signals – black & white/silver; Medical – black & dark blue/silver; Airforce – light-blue/gold.

angular patches with small badges for officers or large badges for NCOs and men. In May 1942, the PTS changed to a red metal pentangular patch, but old 'PTB Hands' kept their tricolour patches until May 1945.

In mid-1944, a red metal collar-patch with a 'U' in a patterned square was adopted for German M1943 uniforms. In December a new grey-blue uniform was introduced, with special shoulder-strap rank insignia. The design is unknown. PTS armoured personnel wore a black uniform with a tank-badge above the left breast-pocket. Note the *Zbrojovka* machine-gun.

F3: Poručnik, 1 Battalion, Black Legion, Croatian Ustasha Army, Han Pijesak, Central Bosnia, March 1942

Black Legion troops wore standard Ustasha insignia on a black tunic and field-cap, which they adopted January 1942. On their disbandment in August 1942, some men joined II Communications Brigade, but most retained their black uniforms and joined V Ustasha Active Service Brigade, which continued the name 'Black Legion' until May 1945.

G1: Rotmistr, 2 Cavalry Regiment, 4 Cavalry Brigade, Bulgarian 5 Army, Macedonia, 1942

Bulgarian officers wore the M1935 grey-green tunic, breeches and greatcoat, with dark-green collars, and peaked caps. Branch-colours were shown on the cap-band and cap-piping, underlays to the German-style

tunic collar-patches and the Russian-style overcoat collar-patches, breeches stripes, greatcoat cuff and collar-pipings, and shoulder-board pipings. The buttons carried a branch-badge. Labour Corps officers had special tunic collar-patches. Regimental monograms and numerals were omitted in wartime, and officers could wear field shoulder-boards of grey-green cloth, but branch-badges were retained. General-officers, regimental commanders and general-staff officers wore a double breeches-stripe. The distinctive M1936 helmet, with a national shield on the right side, replaced the German M1916, which was still encountered in reserve units. This Cavalry Officer, easily identifiable from his silver shoulder-boards, white pipings and cavalry-boots, carries a German M1908 9mm Parabellum pistol.

G2: Podofitser, 63 Infantry Regiment, 22 Infantry Division, 1 Occupation Corps, Bulgarian Army, Niš, August 1943

Bulgarian NCOs and men wore a tobacco-brown tunic and trousers, with a peaked service-cap with branch-colour cap-band and Russian-style cockade in white, green and red with gold Bulgarian lion, or peakless field-cap. The pre-war branch-colour shoulder-straps, with yellow/white unit numerals or monogram, were replaced by plain straps piped in branch-colour, and collar-patches lost their button. NCOs added gold/silver shoulder-strap and collar-braids. The field-cap (grey-green for officers) had a gilt Bulgarian lion on the front and tricolour national shield on the right side, and officers added rank-class braid stripes. Generals had one thick gold stripe. Field-officers had one thin one and one medium one in silver. Captains and subalterns had one single thin silver stripe. Armoured Corps wore the German black double-breasted tunic with a red collar-patch piped yellow and a silver skull and crossbones for officers and NCOs, black peaked field-cap and long trousers tucked into ankle-boots. Motorized Infantry wore a grey-green version. Labour Corps wore a black 'T' on an oval – striped horizontally white, green and red – on the left upper arm.



Croatian labour service troops in summer 1942 wearing German-style insignia, introduced 30 July 1941, replaced in 1942 by coloured shoulder-

strap bars, with new German RAD-style insignia adopted on 20 July 1944. (National and University Library, Zagreb)

G3: Officer, Parachute Battalion, Bulgarian Air Force, Macedonia, 1943

The Battalion wore Italian camouflage field-smocks over grey-blue field tunics and trousers. The field-cap had the silver metal air-force winged cockade, a national shield on the right side and silver rank-class braid. This officer carries the MP38 German *Schmeisser* sub-machine-gun and magazine pouches. The M1938 Air-Force uniform was grey-blue, with light-blue collar-patches and pipings and silver braid.

H1: Nadporočnik, 3 Assault Battalion, Slovene Home Defence Force, Ljubljana, Slovenia, August 1944

Officers wore a light grey-green tunic and breeches or trousers with riding-boots or ankle-boots. The Force badge, on the left upper arm, was a dark-blue eagle on a white shield edged dark-blue. General-officers (*Divizijski General* and *Brigadni General*) had 1-0 silver pips on German gold-silver-gold plaited shoulder-boards with red underlay piped in gold wire. Field-Officers (*Polkovnik*, *Podpolkovnik* and *Major*) had 3-1 silver pips on flat gold braid shoulder-boards piped red. Captains and subalterns and warrant officer IIs (*Stotnik*, *Nadporočnik*, *Poročnik* and *Štabni Narednik*) had 3-0 gold pips on flat silver braid boards piped red. There was no branch insignia. The peakless field-cap had the Slovene tricolour cockade, adding a white eagle to it in mid-1944.

The grey-green peaked cap had a silver eagle with outstretched wings. AFV crews had black overalls.

H2: Podnarednik, 2 Assault Battalion, Slovene Home Defence Force, Rakek, Slovenia, November 1944

NCOs and men wore a light grey-green tunic with peakless field-cap with tricolour cockade, or the Italian M1933 helmet with a national shield on the left side. NCOs (*Višji Narednik*, *Narednik*, *Podnarednik* and *Kaplar*) wore dark-green shoulder-boards completely edged in silver braid and 3-0 silver bars. Privates (*Domobranec*) had a plain strap. Roman battalion numerals were sometimes worn on the shoulder-boards and straps.

The Upper Carniola Home Defence Force regulations of 4 December 1944 prescribed German



Troops of the Upper Carniola Home Defence Force in Lesce, near Lake Bled, wearing German SIPO uniforms and

insignia introduced December 1944. (Modern History Museum, Ljubljana)

SIPO uniforms with an M1943 field-cap with a German eagle on the right side. The arm-badge was a dark-blue eagle on a red (left) and white (right) shield edged dark-blue. On the right cuff, 10cm wide braids indicated rank. Officers (*Poveljnik Centra Gorenjskega Domobranstva*, *Nacelnik* and *Namestnik Načelnika*) had 3-1 gold bars. NCOs (*Poveljnik Postojanke*, *Vodnik* and *Desetar*) 3-1 silver bars. The Assault Company ('*Udarna četa*') wore a silver skull on the left collar.

H3: Stražmojster, 8 Company, Postojna Group, Slovene National Security Corps, Postojna, North-East Italy, May 1944

The SNVZ wore Italian uniforms, Slovene Home Defence Force cap-cockades and helmet decals. They also sometimes wore Italian camouflage field-uniforms. The Force arm-badge was a red Illyrian galley on a white (upper) and waved dark-blue (lower) shield, piped dark-blue. Rank insignia and officers' rank titles (highest rank *Polkovnik*) were as the Home Defence Force, but NCOs and Men initially adopted translations of German Police titles – *Glavni Stražmojster*, *Stražmojster Vodnik*, *Nadstražmojster*, *Stražmojster*, *Krdelni stražmojster*, *Podstražmojster* (July 1944, *Nadstražar*), *Pripravnik* (July 1944, *Stražar*). They adopted Home Defence Force titles in October 1944 (*Nadstražar* and *Stražar* became *Stražar* – Private).

Notes sur les planches en couleur

A1 Tunique, col, épaulettes et doublure des badges de manche marron-gris, revers de poche carrés et pas de plis. Les écussons de col en soie unie gris souris furent introduits en avril 1940. A2 Ils s'agit de la version M1938 SS de l'uniforme AFV noir M1935, distingué par un revers avant plus drit et un col moins large mais pas de passepoil de col en galon d'aluminium pour les officiers. A3 Casque de parachutiste M1937, smock de camouflage M1941 et équipement en toile de parachutisme Air Force.

B1 Uniforme d'officier gris-vert avec col uni et épaulettes, seul le passepoil de la culotte reste. La casquette de campagne à visière M1942 portait un badge jaune de branche d'infanterie avec le numéro du régiment. B2 Uniforme gris-vert standard M1934 avec le fez de petite tenue 'Bersaglieri' en noir ou le casque M1933 et l'équipement en toile M1934. B3 Vert foncé traditionnel sur coiffure, manteau uni sans insignes sauf 'l'étoile d'activité' sur le col portée par tout le personnel italien.

C1 Tunique gris-vert, col marron foncé, casquette à visière avec passepoil de la couleur de la branche. Les généraux avaient une double mentonnière nouée dorée et deux larges rayures écarlates sur le pantalon de service pour indiquer leur rang. C2 Le personnel AVF portait un uniforme et une casquette de style Air Force gris-vert en été avec des épaulettes Air-Force au passepoil rouge et doublure noire. Le casque AVF noir portait l'écusson national du côté droit. C3 Tunique allemande gris-vert M1934 modifiée avec boutons dorés/argent unis ou à motifs. Épaulettes, chevrons sur manche indiquaient le rang, comme les insignes sur le badge de casquette.

D1 Jusqu'à 1944 au moins, l'uniforme yougoslave gris-vert était porté avec un col vert foncé ajouté et des épaulettes et des boutons sur la braguette. Les musulmans portaient un fez écarlate et les autres la casquette à visière M1941. D2 La tunique de combat M1941 se portait avec un col vert foncé et des boutons gris unis, assez similaire au M1935 de l'armée allemande mais avait des plis de poche distinctifs. D3 Initialement, les Croates portaient le manteau gris-vert ex-Yougoslave. On leur en distribua un qui leur était propre en mai 1941. Col et épaulettes vert foncé, écussons de col de branches sans boutons, pas de manchettes ni de passepoils. Il n'y avait pas d'insignes de rang spécifiques.

E1 L'uniforme gris-bleu des officiers portait le rang sur des écussons de col de style allemand portant la couleur de la branche et passepoils d'argent, une casquette de campagne sans visière ou une casquette de service avec visière avec un 'NHD' argent dans un ovale au dessus d'un aigle d'argent et d'une demicouronne. E2 Les NCO et les hommes portaient une tunique bleu-gris avec ailes et galons argent sur des écussons de col de la couleur des branches et un 'NHD' argent dans un ovale sur la casquette de campagne sans visière. Ils portaient aussi des épaulettes de style allemand avec un passepoil de la couleur de la branche et des insignes argent. E3 On portait les uniformes et insignes de rang royaux yougoslaves. Les officiers adoptèrent une cocarde tricolore au dessus d'un 'NHD' doré. Les marins portaient également un beret bleu marine.

F1 Tunique et pantalon ou culotte gris-vert avec casquette de campagne sans visière caractéristique portant une grenade aluminium et un échiquier dans un 'U', des écussons de col rectangulaires rouges avec le 'U' et la grenade aluminium. F2 Le PTB portait des écussons de col tricolores Utashi standard et ajouta un gros 'U' et une grenade aluminium en juin 1941. F3 Tunique et casquette de campagne noires avec insignes Utashi standard.

G1 Les officiers bulgares portaient la tunique, la culotte et le manteau gris-vert M1935 avec un col vert foncé et une casquette à visière. G2 Les NCO et hommes bulgares portaient une tunique et un pantalon tabac avec une casquette de service à visière portant une bande de la couleur de la branche et une cocarde de style russe en blanc, vert et rouge avec un lion bulgare doré, ou bien une casquette de campagne sans visière. G3 - Le bataillon portait des smocks de campagne italiens de camouflage par dessus une tunique et un pantalon de campagne gris-bleu. La casquette de campagne avait la cocarde ailée argentée des unités aériennes, un écusson national sur la droite et un galon argent de rang. L'uniforme M1938 de l'Air Force était gris bleu avec des écussons de col et passepoils bleu clair et un galon argent.

H1 Les officiers portaient une tunique et une culotte ou un pantalon gris-vert clair avec des bottes de cheval ou des bottines. Le badge Force, sur le bras gauche, était un aigle bleu foncé sur un écusson blanc bordé de bleu foncé. H2 Les NCO et les hommes portaient une tunique gris-vert clair avec une casquette de campagne sans visière et une cocarde tricolore ou bien le casque italien M1933 avec un écusson national sur la gauche. Quelquefois les numéros romains des bataillons étaient portés sur les épaulettes. H3 Les SNVZ portaient des uniformes italiens, des cordes de casquettes de la force défensive slovaque et des décalcomanies de casque. Ils portaient aussi quelquefois des uniformes de campagne de camouflage italiens.

Farbtafeln

A1 Bräunlich-grüner Waffenrock, Kragen, Schulterklappen und Unterlagen für das Ärmelabzeichen, abgeflachte Taschenkappen ohne Falten. Die charakteristischen, mausegrünen Kragenspiegel aus Seide wurden im April 1940 eingeführt. A2 Diese ist die M1938er SS-Version der schwarzen AFV-Uniform M1935 der Armee, die sich durch eine gerade geschnittene Frontleiste und einen kleineren Kragenspiegel auszeichnet, jedoch am Kragen nicht die aluminiumfarbene Kordeleneinfassung der Offiziere hat. A3 Fallschirmjägerhelm M1937, Tarnkittel M1941 und Fallschirmgürtzeug der Luftwaffe.

B1 Graugrüne Offiziersuniform mit einfachem Kragen und Schulterstücken, die die Vorstöße an den Breeches bleiben. Die Feldmütze mit Schirm M1942 hatte das gelbe Waffentagungsabzeichen der Infanterie mit dem Regimentsnummern. B2 Graugrüne Armee-Uniform M1934 in Standardausführung mit dem Aussehen des "Bersaglieri" in schwarz, beziehungsweise dem Helm M1933 und M1934-Gürtzeug. B3 Diese Figur trägt das traditionelle Dunkelgrün auf der Kopfbedeckung, dem einfarbigen Mantel ohne Abzeichen, abgesehen vom "Activity Star" am Kragen, den alle italienischen Militärangehörigen trugen.

C1 Grünlich-grauer Waffenrock, dunkelbrauner Kragen, Schirmmütze mit Vorstößen in der Waffenfarbe. Generäle hatten eine doppelte, verknüpfte Goldkordel am Kinn und zwei breite scharlachrote Streifen auf den Diensthemden, die den Rang bezeichneten. C2 Die Angehörigen der AFV trugen eine Uniform im Stil der Luftwaffe und im Sommer eine schwarz-graue Mütze mit den Schulterstücken der Luftwaffe mit roten Vorstößen und schwarzer Unterlage. Der schwarze AFV-Helm hatte ein Nationalschild auf der rechten Seite. C3 Modifizierter deutscher grünlich-grauer Waffenrock M1934 mit gold-silberfarbenen, einfachen beziehungsweise gemusterten Knöpfen. Schulterstücke, die Winkel an der Armbinde gaben wie das Mützenabzeichen den Rang an.

D1 Bis mindestens 1944 wurde die grünlich-graue jugoslawische Uniform mit zusätzlichem dunkelgrünen Kragen und Schulterklappen getragen sowie Knöpfen an der Vorderseite. Moslems trugen einen scharlachroten Fes, die anderen Truppen die Feldmütze mit Schirm M1941. D2 Der Feldwaffenrock M1941 wurde mit dunkelgrünem Kragen und einfachen grauen Knöpfen getragen und gleich weitgehend dem M1935 der deutschen Armee, hatte jedoch charakteristische Taschenkappen. D3 Anfangs trugen die Kroaten die ehemaligen jugoslawischen grünlich-grauen Mäntel, im Mai 1941 wurden ihnen eigene ausgegeben. Dunkelgrüne Kragen und Schulterklappen, Kragenspiegel der Waffengattung ohne Knöpfe, Manschetten oder Vorstöße. Es gab keine spezifischen Rangabzeichen.

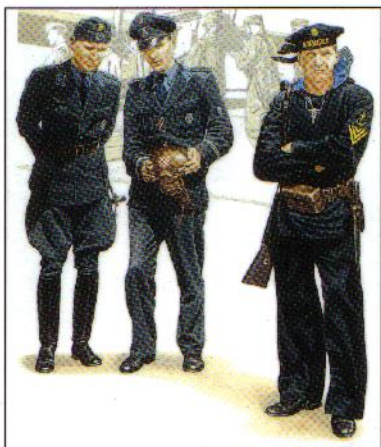
E1 Die grau-blaue Offiziersuniform zeigt auf den Kragenspiegeln in der Waffenfarbe mit silbernen Vorstößen im deutschen Stil den Rang an, eine Feldmütze ohne Schirm oder eine beschirmte Dienstmütze mit einem silbernen "NHD" in einem Oval über einem Silberader und einem Halbkranz. E2 Unteroffiziere und Gefreite trugen einen blau-grauen Waffenrock mit Flügeln und Litzen auf den Kragenspiegeln in der Waffenfarbe mit einem silbernen "NHD" in einem Oval auf der Feldmütze ohne Schirm. Außerdem trugen sie Schulterklappen im deutschen Stil und Vorstöße in der Waffenfarbe sowie silberne Abzeichen. E3 Man trug die königliche-jugoslawische Uniform und Rangabzeichen. Die Offiziere übernahmen eine dreifarbige Kokarde über einem goldenen "NHD". Matrosen trugen auch eine dunkelblaue Baret.

F1 Grünlich-grauer Waffenrock und Hosen beziehungsweise Breeches mit der charakteristischen Feldmütze ohne Schirm mit einer aluminiumfarbenen Granate und Schachbrett innerhalb eines "U", rote, rechteckige Kragenspiegel mit einem aluminiumfarbenen "U" und Granate. F2 Das PTB trug die standardmäßigen dreifarbigen Kragenspiegel der Utashi, denen im Juni 1941 ein großes Aluminium-"U" und eine Granate hinzugefügt wurde. F3 Schwarzer Waffenrock und Feldmütze mit den standardmäßigen Utashi-Abzeichen.

G1 Bulgarische Offiziere trugen den grau-grünen Waffenrock M1945, Breeches und Mäntel mit dunkelgrünen Kragen sowie Schirmmützen. G2 Bulgarische Unteroffiziere und Gefreite trugen einen tabakbraunen Waffenrock und Hosen und eine Dienstmütze mit Schirm und Mützenband in Waffenfarbe sowie einer Kikarde im russischen Stil in weiß, grün und rot mit einem goldenen bulgarischen Löwen, oder eine Feldmütze ohne Schirm. G3 Dieses Bataillon trug italienische Tarnfeldkittel über dem grau-blauen Feldwaffenrock und Hosen. Die Feldmütze wies die silberne Kikarde der Luftwaffe mit Flügeln aus Metall auf, eine Nationalschild auf der rechten Seite sowie silberne Ranglitzen. Die Luftwaffen-Uniform M1938 war grau-blau mit hellblauen Kragenspiegeln, Vorstößen und Silberlitze.

H1 Offiziere trugen einen hellgrau-grünen Waffenrock und Breeches oder Hosen mit Reitstiefeln oder Kurzstiefeln. Das Abzeichen der Streitkräfte auf dem linken Oberarm war ein dunkelblauer Adler auf einem dunkelblau eingefärbten weißen Feld. H2 Unteroffiziere und Gefreite trugen einen hellgrau-grünen Waffenrock und eine Feldmütze ohne Schirm mit einer dreifarbigen Kikarde, oder den italienischen Helm M1933 mit einem Nationalschild auf der linken Seite. Bataillonsnummern in römischen Ziffern wurden manchmal auf dem Schulterstücken und -klappen getragen. H3 Die SNVZ trug italienische Uniformen, die Mützen-Kokarde der Slowene Home Defence Force und Helmbabzeichen. Manchmal trugen sie auch italienische Felduniformen mit Tarnmuster.

The uniforms, equipment, history and organisation of the world's military forces, past and present.



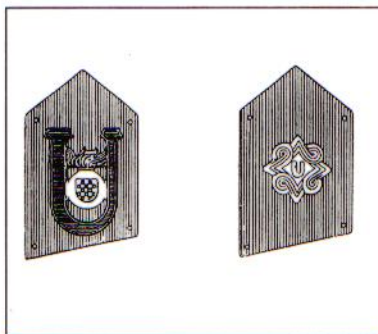
Full colour artwork



Photographs



Unrivalled detail



Illustrations

Axis Forces in Yugoslavia 1941–45

On 6 April, the German 2nd and 12th Armies, Italian 2nd and 9th Armies, and the Hungarian 4th, 5th and Mobile Corps invaded Yugoslavia. Few of the Royal Yugoslav Army's 30 divisions actively resisted, and after 11 days the Yugoslav High Command surrendered. In Croatia, a puppet state was installed. Axis forces quickly occupied the principal towns and patrolled the main road and rail links, but in the villages, countryside and mountains a vicious and complex guerrilla war was brewing. This title takes a close look at the German, Italian, Croatian, Serbian, Montenegrin, Bulgarian, Macedonian, and Slovenian units that fought for the Axis powers in Yugoslavia.

OSPREY
PUBLISHING

www.ospreypublishing.com

ISBN 1-85532-473-3



9 781855 324732

T459a
1995