

BETWEEN REVOLUTION AND LEGITIMACY: THE CROATIAN POLITICAL MOVEMENT OF 1848-1849 AND THE FORMATION OF THE CROATIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY

Tomislav MARKUS*

I. Croatia in the revolutionary era, 1848-1849

On the eve of the revolutionary events of 1848, the Triune Kingdom of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia was 1848 territorially divided, economically backward and politically weak.¹ Only Civil Croatia, which consisted of the three central Croatian and Slavonian counties, had a very limited degree of autonomy, more akin to a province than a state. The Military Frontier, Istria and Dalmatia were subject to direct rule by Vienna and were entirely separate from Civil Croatia. The traditional danger of Habsburg centralism was augmented, as of the 1820s, by the even greater danger of burgeoning Hungarian nationalism, which aspired to transform Hungary into a unified Hungarian state with Hungarian as the official language. During the 1830s and 1840s, a new stratum of the national intelligentsia emerged among the Croats and, to a lesser extent, the Serbs, which resisted Hungarian policies, largely depending on normally concealed support from the Viennese court. The Hungarians had the support of certain groups and individuals inside the Triune Kingdom, from the petty nobility of Turopolje (south of Zagreb) to certain Slavonian magnates, but these remained relatively weak. The so-called Illyrian Movement attempted to

* Tomislav Markus, Ph D., Croatian Institute of History, Zagreb, Republic of Croatia

¹ Numerous historiographic works cover the events in Croatia immediately prior to 1848 and the Illyrian Movement: Jaroslav Šidak, *Studije iz hrvatske povijesti XIX stoljeća* (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1973); Petar Korunić, *Jugoslavizam i federalizam u hrvatskom nacionalnom preporodu 1835-1875* (Zagreb: Globus, 1989); Tomislav Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret 1848-1849. godine. Ustanove, ideje, ciljevi, politička kultura* (Zagreb: Dom i svijet, 2000); Nikša Stančić, *Hrvatska nacija i nacionalizam u 19. i 20. stoljeću* (Zagreb: Barbat, 2002); Vlasta Švoger, *Zagrebačko liberalno novinstvo 1848-1852. i stvaranje moderne Hrvatske* (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2007).

protect what remained of the political autonomy of Civil Croatia and implement limited modernizing reforms in the cultural and economic fields. The Illyrians advocated cultural bonds between the South Slav peoples, particularly those inside the Habsburg Monarchy, but politically they were restricted to the defense of the *jura municipalia*, which the Hungarians wanted to abolish. Civil Croatia was dominated by aristocratic privilege, the municipal organization of counties and Latin as the official language, all factors which impeded the rise of new national forces. The most notable bulletin of the Illyrian Movement was Ljudevit Gaj's *Novine horvatzke*, which was published under various names after 1835 and, after its first year of publication, in the Croatian Shtokavian language. At the end of 1847, the Croatian territorial parliament (*Sabor*) passed a decision to introduce the national language into public affairs, which the Croatian-Slavonian counties began to implement on their own despite the lack of sanction from the king.

Unrest broke out in Vienna in March 1848, followed by the downfall of the hated Chancellor Metternich, the symbol of the pre-March (*Vormärz*) era. The Hungarian elite took advantage of the Viennese court's weakness and forced major political concessions from the king, which gave Hungary the status of a *de facto* independent state, with departments handling foreign, military and financial affairs. According to the constitutional laws enacted by the Hungarian assembly in April 1848, the Slavonian counties were supposed to be directly merged with Hungary, while a narrower Croatia would only retain a veneer of autonomy. The commencement of the revolution inspired many national and political movements to make their own political, economic and cultural demands. Most often they sought the restoration or establishment of regional and provincial autonomy within the framework of ethnic borders or beyond, depending on the aspirations of individual national elites. In the case of the Croats, the basic demands from the initial period in March and April 1848 consisted of the restoration of the Triune Kingdom's territorial integrity and political autonomy, the introduction of the national language in public affairs, clerical and economic reforms, the creation of an autonomous government, the abolishment of serfdom and aristocratic privilege, freedom of the press, tax equality, etc.² Initially the most important demand was the annexation of Dalmatia and the Military Frontier to Civil Croatia, an aspiration expressed by many Croatian public personalities and politicians. However, there was an

² Iskra Iveljić, Josip Kolanović and Nikša Stančić, (eds.) *Hrvatski državni sabor 1* (Zagreb: Hrvatski državni arhiv, 2001): 74-90, 92-99, 115-118. There is much literature on the Croatian political movement of 1848-1849: J. Šidak, *Studije iz hrvatske povijesti za revolucije 1848-49* (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1979); Petar Korunić, *Jugoslavenska ideologija u hrvatskoj i slovenskoj politici. Hrvatsko-slovenski politički odnosi 1848-1870* (Zagreb: Globus, 1986); "Hrvatski nacionalni i politički program 1848/49. godine. Prilog Poznavanju porijekla hrvatske nacije i države Hrvatske," *Povijesni prilozi* 11, 1992:179-252; "Hrvatski nacionalni program i društvene promjene za revolucije 1848/49. godine," *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest* 31, 1998:9-39; "Osnovice građanskog društva u Hrvatskoj za revolucije 1848-49. godine," *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest* 32-33, 2001:69-104; T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*; V. Švooger, *Zagrebačko liberalno novinstvo*.

inadequate response in Dalmatia, dominated by an autonomist intelligentsia, and in the Military Frontier, controlled by the military bureaucracy. Among the activist journalists and writers (publicists), the most notably active was Bogoslav Šulek, an ethnic Slovak writer and journalist, who wrote numerous articles in which he called for the territorial integrity of the Triune Kingdom, reforms in the Military Frontier and the creation of an accountable domestic government. For Šulek, who expressed the opinions of the larger part of the Croatian politically-aware public, the basic problem was the unification of the Croatian lands into a single political unit with broad political autonomy within the framework of the Habsburg Monarchy. The incorporation of Dalmatia and the Military Frontier into Civil Croatia was particularly important in this context. With reference to the Military Frontier, Šulek did not seek its decommissioning, but he stressed the importance of dismantling the Germanized and bureaucratic system to the benefit of constitutional reforms.³ Many articles were published in Zagreb's newspapers in April and May 1848, most of which advocated preservation of the frontier system due to the tense political and military conditions, but with the implementation of much-needed reforms, particularly the introduction of constitutional and political freedoms. A minority of these articles called for the complete abolishment of the system as an anachronism and a mockery of civilization. All of the articles condemned the unconstitutional, bureaucratic and Germanizing system in the Military Frontier, and the arduous economic conditions endured by the population there. Some articles were actually polemics for or against the preservation of the Military Frontier system, but demands for the complete incorporation of the Military Frontier to Croatia proper were rare. Generally what was sought was the administrative attachment of the Military Frontier to Civil Croatia, i.e. the introduction of political freedoms in the Military Frontier and the jurisdiction of civilian institutions over its non-military population.⁴ On

³ T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*, 58-64. Greater detail on Zagreb's political newspapers in 1848-1850 can be found in: P. Korunić, *Jugoslavenska ideologija*; T. Markus, *Zagrebački politički listovi 1848.-1850. godine. Izabrani članci* (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2005):11-64; V. Švoger, *Zagrebačko liberalno novinstvo*.

⁴ T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*, 61-64. In April and May 1848, several districts from the Croatian and Slavonian Military Frontier released their demands in which they generally sought the introduction of political and civic freedoms, and Croatian as the official language, separation of military from civilian administration, the quickest possible convocation of the Sabor, the incorporation of Dalmatia into Croatia, independence from Hungarian authority, the organization of free military municipalities, economic reforms, etc. However, although the demand for Croatian territorial and national integration could not be achieved with the preservation of the Military Frontier, even if it were reformed and administratively integrated, its abolishment as a separate administrative and political unit was not sought because of the military and political threat to Croatia from Hungary, the impossibility of the immediate abolishment of a centuries-old socio-administrative structure and the significance of this frontier zone to the Eastern Question and the incorporation of the Military Frontier into Croatia proper, or, at a minimum, the introduction of political freedoms and constitutionality in it. Even so, as of January 1849, with clear indications of a looming Austrian reaction, the attacks by Zagreb newspapers against "military-bureaucratic despotism" and "Germanism" in the Military Frontier resumed with much greater intensity, culminating after the declaration of the imposed constitution.

March 25, 1848, the assembly of Zagreb citizens did not draft the “platform” of the Croatian Forty-eight, but the “People’s Demands” most clearly expressed some of the fundamental demands of the Croatian movement, from political autonomy and territorial unification, to economic and social reforms. In later periods, frequent demands, particularly widespread among the public, would include political ties with the Slovenian lands and Serbian Vojvodina, and the reorganization of the Habsburg Monarchy into a (con)federal state with broad privileges for individual lands.

The conflict with the new Hungarian government, which had formal legitimacy, quickly became the greatest problem for the Croatian political movement. The Croatian elite could, unlike previously, no longer count on the limited assistance of the Viennese court, which had temporarily lost all influence in the Transleithan lands, except in units of the imperial army to a certain degree. In Croatian circles, individual Hungarian attempts to achieve Hungarian-Croatian cooperation were rejected as hypocritical while the Hungarians were persecuting the members of other peoples in Transleithania. Many documents pertaining to the Croatian movement of the time condemned, much more than previously, Magyarization policies and the imposition of the Hungarian language upon the Slovaks, Romanians and Serbs. The achievement of national equality and the restoration of political ties between Transleithania and the Austrian provinces were sought. In much correspondence from the Croatian districts directed to the king, respect for Croatian autonomy and the preservation of its independence from the new Hungarian government were demanded.⁵ The Croatian political movement, and this was its basic difference in relation to the Hungarian movement, condemned Hungarian separatism from the beginning and stressed the desire to remain within the framework of the Habsburg Monarchy. The reason behind this was not blind legitimacy, but rather the conviction that the Triune Kingdom was too weak for independent political existence. However, even the demands for broad state autonomy, albeit considerably more modest than Hungarian pretensions, would prove too excessive for centralist circles in Vienna. The pressure exerted by Hungarian nationalism indicated the necessity of organizing the political leadership of the Croatian movement. Here the most important institution was the person of the *ban* (viceroy and military commander), for the Triune Kingdom did not have a ban at the time, but rather just the ban regent: Zagreb Bishop Juraj Haulik. Both the Croatian elite and the Viennese court had an interest in the ban being a military officer who could oppose Hungarian separatism. At a secret state conference held on March 21-23, 1848, a colonel from the Military Frontier, Josip Jelačić, was appointed ban. This complied with the wishes of many Croatian politicians, for Jelačić was already known for his support to the Illyrian Movement, and he was esteemed not only as an imperial officer but also

⁵ I. Iveljić, J. Kolanović and N. Stančić, *Hrvatski državni sabor*, 168-176, 178-180, 182-183, 200-203, 205-221, 258-267.

as a “man of the people.” After arriving in Croatia, Jelačić acted energetically: at the end of April 1848 he severed all official ties with the Hungarian government and refused to take orders from it; he proclaimed the abolishment of serfdom, declared the introduction of a court martial and removed the pro-Hungarian (“Magyarone”) elements from authority in Zagreb County. The Croatian public unanimously upheld Jelačić’s measures, seeing in them a defense of Croatian autonomy and the first steps toward achievement of basic national objectives. During March and April 1848, there were frequent attempts and proposals to find some *modus vivendi* with the Hungarians, but these rapidly gave way to an increasingly outright anti-Hungarian mood. Pro-Hungarian elements, adherents of the former “Croato-Ugric Party,” either emigrated, changed their political orientation or became politically passive.

In the course of April and May 1848, the most distinguished activists and politicians of the Croatian movement, Ljudevit Vukotinović, Ivan Mažuranić, Ivan Kukuljević, Bogoslav Šulek and others, refined the already established tenets of Croatian politics. They sought the preservation and enlargement of Croatian autonomy, a new alliance with Hungary based on political equality, an end to Magyarization and the establishment of national equality of all subject peoples in Hungary and so forth. As to the central issue – relations with Hungarians and the new Hungarian government – as of the latter half of April 1848, the proposals ranged from the severance of administrative ties to efforts to recognize national equality in the lands of the Hungarian crown, but without cutting off all political relations.⁶ Nonetheless, all were unanimous in rejecting Hungarian political separatism and national hegemony over other peoples. In Croatia, an ally was sought among the non-Hungarian peoples in Hungary, first and foremost the Serbs. In the Serbian areas of Banat, Bačka and (Eastern) Syrmia, a powerful Serbian national movement emerged in the spring of 1848, which put forth the demand for the creation of an autonomous political unit: Serbian Vojvod(ov)ina, which would encompass most of Syrmia. The territorial question of Syrmia was at the time a secondary concern in comparison to the need for cooperation against the Hungarians as a common enemy. A Croatian delegation attended the Serbian national assembly in Sremski Karlovci in mid-May 1848, while a Serbian delegation similarly attended the opening of the Croatian Sabor three weeks later in Zagreb. The Croatian public supported the aspirations of the Serbian movement for the creation of Vojvodina and the achievement of national equality, for then the Croats could also more easily achieve their aims. The Croatian and Serbian movements could not count on

⁶ In the brochure “Někoja glavna pitanja našeg vremena” (“Some of the Main Issues of Our Time”), Ljudevit Vukotinović called for the severance of administrative ties with the Hungarian government, albeit with the retention of the Croatian minister in it, while Ivan Mažuranić, in a contemporary brochure “Hèrvati Madjarom” (“The Croats to the Magyar”) proposed the maintenance of ties, but with the ending of Greater Hungarian policies and the recognition of Croatian independence and national equality. Both brochures were published in mid-April 1848, but soon *all* ties with the Hungarian government would be severed.

support from the Viennese court, particularly after the unrest in Vienna and the flight of the dynasty to Innsbruck. In the case of the Croats in particular, the Viennese court was playing a dual game, for it formally supported the Hungarian government and condemned Jelačić's anti-Hungarian actions, but it did nothing to assist the actual implementation of Hungarian intentions. This became particularly apparent in the summer of 1848, when Jelačić was formally dismissed from the post of ban, while he was treated as the Croatian ban in Innsbruck and negotiated with the chief of the Hungarian government in this capacity. At the time, the dynasty could not openly proceed against the Hungarian movement and clearly proclaim its commitment to the restoration of the Empire's unity.

In May 1848, the Ban's Conference, composed of respected individuals of Croatia's public life, drafted an instruction governing elections for the Sabor to which 192 deputies were elected based on indirect suffrage. Due to the relatively high electoral census, approximately 40,000 persons were entitled to vote, together with the virilists, who could attend by virtue of their function. The elections were held in the Military Frontier without the consent of the military authorities. Jelačić wanted to go to Innsbruck to justify himself before the king, but the more prominent members of the Ban's Conference demanded that he first convene the Sabor, which would make the most important decisions concerning political and other matters. The Sabor sat, due to Jelačić's departure for Innsbruck, in two separate periods, from June 5-12 and June 27-July 10, 1848. In the first session, the Sabor made its most important political decisions: the ratification of all of Jelačić's earlier decrees, the separation of the Triune Kingdom from Hungary and its unification with the Austrian constitutional provinces, the achievement of territorial integrity and an accountable government. Despite the desires of some deputies to preserve the alliance with Hungary, the vast majority of deputies supported sanctioning *de facto* severed ties and the political reorientation of the Triune Kingdom toward the Austrian provinces. A conclusion was also passed calling for the creation of a separate Croatian government or "state council" ("*dèržavno vieće*"). A political alliance between the Triune Kingdom and Serbian Vojvodina was also proclaimed, wherein the contested matter of Syrmia was ambiguously resolved. The desire for ties with the Slovenian provinces was also expressed.⁷ The Sabor issued a proclamation to the people of Dalmatia, calling on unification with Civil Croatia based on historical and ethnic bonds. The king was asked to cease deploying new frontier units outside of Croatia, for its defense – and this meant from the Hungarians – would be jeopardized.⁸

⁷ I. Iveljić, J. Kolanović and N. Stančić, *Hrvatski državni sabor*, 541-542, 544-545.

⁸ Croatian National Archives (hereinafter: HDA), Periodicals Collection (ZS) I., 1848., 131/59; *Saborske novine*, 20. VI. 1848/no. 7. On the Croatian Sabor, see: J. Šidak, *Studije iz hrvatske povijesti za revolucije 1848-49*; T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*; Ivo Perić, *Hrvatski državni sabor 1848-1867*. (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest/Dom i svijet, 2000); Stančić, N. 2001a. "Hrvatski "dèržavni sabor" 1848. na razmeđu epoha i sukobljenih legitimiteta" (I. Iveljić-J. Kolanović-N. Stančić, *Hrvatski državni sabor*) 29-63.

The Sabor acknowledge financial, military and foreign affairs as common to all lands in the Monarchy, but only within the framework of the constitutional and parliamentary order and with due respect accorded to Croatian political and state autonomy. It did not seek the reorganization of the Habsburg Monarchy into a federation of equal states and peoples on an Austro-Slav basis, but this idea did appear in the Zagreb press at the time, particularly in articles by Bogoslav Šulek.⁹ Even though the idea of reorganizing Austria had already been mentioned in the Zagreb press in early April 1848, it was only with Šulek's aforementioned articles printed in June of this same year that it was tied to the concept of Austro-Slavism and was given its first clear breakdown. As of June 1848, Austro-Slavism appeared with increasing frequency in the Zagreb press and quickly became, particularly as of autumn of that same year and onward, one of its most frequent and important concepts, based on a link between federal values, i.e. acknowledgement of common (foreign, military and financial) affairs, and confederal values, i.e. significant independence of each constituent state and its genuine, inalienable sovereignty. The Austro-Slav concept had originally emerged in the Czech milieu, but the wider Croatian public had several reasons to accept it and to later – on the basis of independence exercised through the Ban's Council – most consistently advocate it. This was a result, on the one hand, of the view that Croatia's prospects for complete independence were unrealistic, and, on the other, the rejection of Hungarian dominance and the unconstitutional pre-March system. Joining the Austrian provinces, with the preservation of broad internal independence, would make it easier to unite the Croatian lands, particularly Dalmatia, the Military Frontier and the eastern districts of Istria, which were under the direct rule of the Vienna government. It was also believed that joining the better-developed Austrian provinces would facilitate the more rapid cultural and economic modernization of Croatian society. In this regard, the restoration of the pre-March order and the victory of reaction were not deemed possible, but this was not crucial to the actual idea of Austro-Slavism. Namely, the Croatian public remained committed to it even during 1849, while the opposition press persisted even thereafter, when the renewal of reaction and the predominance of conservative forces in the Court and the Austrian government had already been factually established. Given the prevailing circumstances, the Zagreb press considered Austro-Slavism the only more or less acceptable concept which could be accepted by the nationalists of the small Slavic peoples in Austria, including the Croats. But the reality was

⁹ T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*, 129-130. The Croats has the status of a so-called historical people – which had its own state earlier – while the Austro-Slav concept was based, as with the Czech elite, largely on natural law. When expressing the narrower Croatian political aims, particularly in representations and memoranda to the ruler, the elements of both historic and natural law were employed, as was the case with the elites of other “historical peoples.” The same was attempted by the elites of those peoples, such as the Serbs, who had the status of a “non-historical people.” It would appear that there was a significant minority of deputies in the Croatian Sabor of 1848 which expressed apprehension over Croatia's merger with Austria due to the possible renewal of reaction.

different, for Polish nationalists were largely anti-Austrian, while the Slovene, Slovak and Serb nationalists generally limited their efforts to the creation of their own autonomous states within the framework of Austria or Hungary. Therefore, only the Czechs and Croats remained consistent advocates of the Austro-Slavism of 1848-1849.

The Croatian public believed that the Habsburg dynasty should be the principal factor in bringing the Austro-Slav concept to fruition, for most Austrian peoples were interested in the achievement of this end. Cooperation between the dynasty and the subjugated peoples of the Monarchy, the Slavs and Romanians, was supposed to break the resistance of the Germans and Hungarians and ensure the reorganization of Austria into a community of free and equal nations. It implied an essential change in the existing political, state, legal, social and cultural relations in the territory of Central and Southeast Europe and the development of new bonds of interest between the states and nations of the Danubian Basin. Noteworthy here is the essential difference in views between the Zagreb press and the official institutions of Croatian politics, such as the Sabor, Ban Jelačić and, later, the Ban's Council concerning Austro-Slavism and the related the federalization/confederalization of Austria. Already in the spring of 1848, Czech nationalists generally endorsed Austro-Slavism, for the official state institutions which conducted so-called real politics did not have, nor could distinguish between, a narrower national and broader platform. The situation in Croatia was different, as there were official state institutions, such as the Sabor, the ban, and later, the Ban's Council, associated with diplomatic concerns. The Zagreb newspapers, particularly *Novine dalmatinsko-hèrvatsko-slavonske* and, somewhat later, *Slavenski Jug* and *Südslawische Zeitung*, did the most to promote the Croats as the most persistent advocates, together with the Czechs, of Austro-Slavism in Austria in 1848-1849. Prior to the end of the revolution, Croatian writers could much more freely advocate Austro-Slavism than the Czechs, for the Austrian government did not have control over internal affairs in Croatia, and they did not cease promoting it even after the complete victory of the reaction, at the end of 1849 and early 1850. Zagreb newspapers were able to present the idea of Austro-Slavism, for they were not tied down by diplomatic concerns and did not have to consider what, in the view of the time, *could* be achieved, like the narrower Croatian national aims (limited independence and Croatia's territorial integrity), but rather what they *wished* to achieve, i.e. the Austro-Slav reorganization of Austria. The stance of Croatia's formal institutions was different, as they, first and foremost, had to take into account that politics is the art of the possible and, in this regard, promotes what could possibly be achieved rather than what was ideally desired. Thus the demands of Croatia's institutions – from the Sabor of 1848, through the Ban's Council and Ban Jelačić, to the Sabor's Grand Committee in 1849 – pertain almost exclusively to Croatia's narrower national objectives. Among the other demands, ties between Croatia and Serbian Vojvodina are generally mentioned, both because

it factually existed at the time of the civil war, and because of the difficulty of Vojvodina maintaining itself as a separate political entity in the long-term after the war. The most important demand of Croatian politics from the end of 1848, when the first contacts between the Ban's Council and the king since the close of the Sabor occurred, was the king's sanction of the Sabor's conclusions in which there is no mention of Austria's reorganization on the Austro-Slav basis. It is very possible that Austro-Slavism was the aspiration of almost all Croatian politicians, including Ban Jelačić, but in their *public* actions this was not generally observable. Indeed, this was only logical, since Croatian politics did not manage to achieve even its minimum aims, i.e. autonomy and Croatia's territorial integrity within the Monarchy. It was therefore pointless and doubly unrealistic to proffer demands for the Austro-Slav reorganization of Austria to the king and the Austrian government.

On June 12, 1848, the Sabor temporarily adjourned its session so that Ban Jelačić, heading a Sabor delegation, could go to the king in Innsbruck. Under pressure from the Hungarian government, the king issued manifestos whereby Jelačić was deposed from the ban's seat and the Croatian-Slavonian districts were called upon to obey the commands of General Hrabowski. However, these were diplomatic tactics on the part of the Viennese court, for in Innsbruck Jelačić was *de facto* received as the ban and the members of the imperial family expressed their support for Croatian matters. Even so, the king, under the Hungarian government's influence, treated the delegation as illegal and designated Archduke Johann as the mediator in Croatian-Hungarian negotiations. Even though the Sabor's requests were not accepted, the arrangement of negotiations indicated that the anti-ban manifestos were not applied against Jelačić and that they did not need to be taken seriously. Jelačić reinforced his position at the Court by sending a proclamation to the Military Frontier units in Italy, calling on them to preserve their fealty to the king and the ability of the Croats to defend their homeland without them.¹⁰ The Sabor's Steering Committee was active in Zagreb in the meantime under the chairmanship of Mirko Lentulaj, who attempted to stave off the growing Hungarian influence in Slavonia. The Committee maintained ties with the ban's commissioners, particularly Albert Nugent, and with the Serbian Executive Committee, also attempting to deploy armed assistance to the Serbs against Hrabowski. The anti-ban manifestos aroused great dissatisfaction, but they were treated as the intrigues of the Hungarian government and did not spark any anti-Austrian tendencies.

On June 29, 1848, the Sabor resumed its session, and at the beginning it accorded dictatorial authority to Jelačić for the needs of defending the country, which the ban would later abuse on a number of occasions, usually in the interest of the Viennese reaction. The Sabor accepted the mediation

¹⁰ Archives of the Croatian Academy of Arts and Science (AHAZU), Ban Jelačić Bequest (OBJ), III/H-3.

of Archduke Johann, but prior to the beginning of negotiations it sought the revocation of the anti-ban manifestos, the recognition of the legality of the Sabor, the removal of Hungarian military units from Slavonia, the initiation of negotiations with representatives of Dalmatia and the Hungarian Serbs (with negotiations held at a neutral location), and the cessation of persecution of the Hungarian Slavs.¹¹ In a remonstrance sent to the archduke, the Sabor stressed the untenability of Greater Hungarian policies, which were threatening the destruction of the Monarchy and negating the national rights of others, particularly the Slavic peoples.¹² The Sabor committee's proposal particularly insisted on the centralization of basic (foreign, military and financial) affairs within the framework of the central constitutional institutions in Vienna, the cessation of persecution of the non-Hungarian peoples and the independence of the Triune Kingdom and Serbian Vojvodina from the Hungarian government.¹³ However, the Sabor's deputies had little hope that the future negotiations would conclude successfully, as seen in the sharp anti-Hungarian proclamations assailing the Hungarian government and its policies which were issued to the people on July 6, 1848.¹⁴ The Sabor issued measures to implement economic and social reforms in the Military Frontier, jointly designated the "frontier constitution." Their objective was to ease the life of Frontier troops, abolish the worst feudal abuses, gradually introduce Croatian as the official language, etc.¹⁵ The majority of deputies, particularly those from the Frontier regiments, supported radical measures, i.e. the attachment of the Military Frontier to the Triune Kingdom, but given the difficult political circumstances, gradual changes were accepted. Most frontier deputies protested against the Sabor's reformism, deeming it insufficient to eliminate the great dissatisfaction in the Military Frontier over the old bureaucratic order, but with the exception of the brief insubordinate activities of Dimitrije Orej, they equanimously accepted the majority's decision.¹⁶ The Sabor issued a proclamation to the population of the Military Frontier, calling upon them to adhere to the ban's orders and not to give credence to Hungarian propaganda.¹⁷ In a remonstrance to the king, the Sabor emphasized the need for the constitutional restructuring of the Military Frontier and its reintegration with its mother country as soon as

¹¹ I. Iveljić, J. Kolanović and N. Stančić, *Hrvatski državni sabor*, 552-553. The Croatian-Hungarian negotiations were later held without any regard to the Sabor's demands.

¹² *Novine dalmatinsko-hèrvatsko-slavonske*, 6 July 1848, no. 70.

¹³ I. Iveljić, J. Kolanović and N. Stančić, *Hrvatski državni sabor*, 553-554.

¹⁴ HDA, ZS I., 1848/131-84.

¹⁵ I. Iveljić, J. Kolanović and N. Stančić, *Hrvatski državni sabor*: 555-570. On political circumstances in the Military Frontier, cf.: Mirko Valentić, *Vojna krajina i pitanje njezina sjedinjenja s Hrvatskom 1849-1881*. (Zagreb: Zavod za hrvatsku povijest, 1981); Alexander Buczynski, "Trojna zapovjedna podređenost Vojne krajine 1848. godine", in: M. Valentić, ed., *Hrvatska 1848. i 1849*. (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2001): 123-134.

¹⁶ HDA, Sabor Hrvatske, Slavonije i Dalmacije, box 2, 1848/11-2.

¹⁷ AHAZU, OBJ, III/H-4.

possible, and the need for its independence from the Hungarian government.¹⁸ The Sabor ratified Jelačić's decree on the abolishment of peasant levies, which granted unrestricted peasant rights to use of rural lands with damages paid to the nobility and clergy for the elimination of urban levies.¹⁹ Prior to the closure of its session, the Sabor issued a proclamation to the European peoples entitled "Manifesto of the Croatian-Slavonian People," in which it stressed that the basic aspiration of the Croats is to be a free people in a free Austrian empire. The fundamental condition for this was the removal of Hungarian and German hegemony over Slavic and other peoples and the achievement of political autonomy for each people in their ethnic territory. Given the European liberal public's sympathies for the Hungarians, the manifesto particularly condemned Greater Hungarian policies, which aroused the resistance of all other peoples, particularly the Croats, who were only defending their earlier autonomy. The manifesto briefly – and this is the only such instance in a formal document issued by any official Croatian institution – stresses the need for the reorganization of Austria into a pluralist alliance of states of equal peoples.²⁰ Due to the precarious political and military circumstances, the Sabor formally decided to adjourn and ceased its work on July 9, 1848, although it never again sat in the same convocation.

After the conclusion of the Sabor's sessions, Jelačić visited Slavonia in July 1848 and attempted to reinforce his authority as ban. However, he confronted many difficulties, from the strong Hungarian influence, particularly in the northern sections of Virovitica County, to the Serbian movement in Syrmia, which had replaced the previous county governing institutions with people's committees under the control of the Executive Committee. At the end of July 1848, negotiations were held in Vienna between Jelačić and Hungarian Prime Minister L. Batthyány, mediated by Archduke Johann. The talks ended without success, because the Hungarian side did not wish to accept joint affairs for the entire Monarchy, i.e. it did not wish to back down from the virtual independence of its country. The Hungarians also refused to accept the recognition of Serbian Vojvodina. In these negotiations, Jelačić abused his dictatorial authority the first time, as he passed over the remaining conditions put forth by the Sabor for these talks. In a proclamation to the Croatian public issued on August 6, 1848, Jelačić stressed that he had sought from the Hungarians the recognition of joint affairs, the recognition of Vojvodina and the unrestricted use of the Croatian language in communications with the Hungarian authorities.²¹ On the same day, Jelačić also announced the

¹⁸ National and University Library (NSK), Manuscript Collection (ZR), Flier/Brochure Collection (ZL), Hrvatski sabor II., R VIIIa B-2.

¹⁹ For more details on the peasant issue in Civil Croatia and Slavonia at that time, cf.: J. Šidak, *Studije iz hrvatske povijesti za revolucije 1848-49.*, 145-174.

²⁰ NSK, ZR, ZL, Razne stranke I (Various Parties), R VIIIa B-2.

²¹ AHAZU, OBJ, III/H-7.

“dispensations” for the Military Frontier, which were more specifically economic reforms, while the introduction of the national language as the official language and the administrative unification of the Military Frontier with Croatia proper were left for later sanction by the king.²² At the end of July 1848, a Croatian delegation visited Vienna, but the Austrian parliament refused to receive it, for it had come from another state, i.e. Hungary. The delegation addressed the Austrian people with a proclamation, “*Die Kroaten und Slawonier an die Völker Oesterreichs*” (basically a German translation of the Sabor’s “Manifesto”), in which Hungarian hegemonic policies were berated and the desire of the Croats to be a free people in a free Austrian empire was underscored.²³ At that time, a new political newspaper was launched in Zagreb under the name *Slavenski Jug*, which from the very beginning advocated the Austro-Slav reorganization of the Habsburg Monarchy, the equality of the Hungarian peoples, cooperation between the Croats and other Slavic and South Slav peoples, and the autonomy and territorial integrity of the Triune Kingdom inside the Monarchy. The Zagreb press expressed doubt in Croatian-Hungarian reconciliation prior to the talks between Jelačić and Batthyány in Vienna at the end of July 1848, and after their failure, for which the Hungarians were naturally blamed, anti-Hungarian texts only increased. The Hungarians were criticized, as before, for their aspiration to institute national hegemony over Transleithania, their violence against non-Hungarian peoples, particularly the Serbs (a Hungarian-Serbian war was already under way in Bačka and Banat), their efforts to politically subjugate Croatia, their separation from the Habsburg Monarchy and their mendacity in political negotiations.²⁴

During August 1848, Croatian-Hungarian relations continued to worsen, both due to Hungarian efforts to increase their influence in individual parts of Slavonia, and the increasingly fierce battles and brutality on the Hungarian-Serbian front. The Austrian victory in Northern Italy over Piedmont reinforced the imperial position and paved the way for Jelačić’s intervention against the Hungarian government. Jelačić reinforced the ban’s authority in Eastern Slavonia, except for the larger part of Syrmia, which was still under the control of the Serbian movement. In early September, the king voided the anti-ban manifestos and restored all of Jelačić authority. Jelačić received encouragement to initiate an intervention from circles close to the imperial court. The purpose of this intervention was the destruction of Hungarian independence and the restoration of the integrity of the Habsburg Monarchy. Such an intervention was primarily an interest of the Viennese court, but many – and not just among the Croats – believed it could be exploited to secure national equality. The intervention was supported by the Croatian public, seeing it as advantageous to

²² AHAZU, Ferdo Šišić Bequest, XIII B 231/342.

²³ NSK, ZR, ZL, Inozemni plakati (Foreign Posters), R VIIIa I-3. For more details on the Sabor’s delegation, see: J. Šidak, *Studije iz hrvatske povijesti za revolucije 1848-49*, 175-195.

²⁴ T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*, 176-179.

non-Hungarian peoples. In a proclamation to the people issued on September 7, 1848, Jelačić justified the intervention on the basis Hungary's insistence on political separatism, particularly from joint affairs for the entire Monarchy, and the rejection of national equality, particularly where this concerned Serbian demands.²⁵ At the end of August 1848, at Jelačić's behest, the deputy prefect of Zagreb County, Josip Bunjevac, occupied Rijeka, in which a pro-Hungarian orientation predominated at the time. Prior to departing for the war, Jelačić issued the regulation on organization of the Ban's Council, not as an informal government, but rather as an administrative institution answerable to him personally. The Ban's Council consisted of judicial, financial, domestic affairs, educational and military sections, and it also exercised administrative authority over the lower administrative agencies in the territory of Civil Croatia and Slavonia, with the exception of most of Sylvania, in which authority was factually exercised by the Serbian People's Executive Committee. The Ban's Council did not enjoy the status of an actual government, for it had to refer to the ban to resolve even the most trivial issue. However, later, during 1849, many Croats saw in it the basis upon which a genuine national government answerable to the Sabor should be formed.

Jelačić's crossing of the Drava River was lauded by the Croatian public, considering this an essential means to achieve their basic national aims.²⁶ However, this intervention was primarily in Austria's interest and it signified a great leap into the unknown. The exponents of Croatian politics had no guarantees, neither from the king nor the Austrian government, that the demands of the Croatian political movement, formulated by the Sabor, and especially autonomy and the Triune Kingdom's territorial integrity, would be conceded. As to the demand for national equality, it would be demonstrated that this could exist even under the conditions of an unconstitutional bureaucratic order, which represses all peoples equally. The demands for the Austro-Slav reorganization of the Monarchy often aired on the Croatian political scene appeared even less realistic. However, at the time it was generally felt that the most important matter was to remove the independent Hungarian government by armed intervention and restore the unity of the Monarchy. The tenacity of conservative forces in Austria around the dynasty and the imperial army, uninterested in the constitutional order and the acknowledgement of national aspirations, was underestimated. The military value of Jelačić's detachments was minor, for these were generally units of the second and third order, inadequately armed and only slightly better fed. Even with very light resistance mounted by the Hungarians, Jelačić could not break through to Budapest and, upon receiving news of a new revolution in Vienna, marched westward to the Austrian provinces. In his proclamations issued at the end of September 1848, the king condemned the separatism of Hungarian politics

²⁵ AHAZU, OBJ, III/B-42.

²⁶ T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*, 185-189.

and the persecution of the non-Hungarian peoples in Hungary, stressing the need for the restored unity of the Empire. At the end of October 1848, the king dissolved the Hungarian parliament, voided all of its unsanctioned conclusions and appointed Jelačić the royal commissioner and commander of the imperial troops in Hungary and Transylvania (Erdély). However, these provisions were never implemented, because the Hungarian parliament, even though truncated, continued its work, and Jelačić soon lost his post as commissioner.

Croatia's political life came to a standstill after Jelačić's march to war, for the public was entirely preoccupied by the military campaign. However, the new revolution in Vienna in 1848, which prompted the renewed flight of the imperial family, captured the attention of the Croatian public. The revolution was condemned as the result of political intrigues by German nationalists and Hungarian separatists, who did not recognize the principle of national equality and free development of all peoples in a unified Austria. The revolution was interpreted as a consequence of efforts to maintain German and Hungarian domination over the Slavic peoples in Austria and Hungary and as a diversion intended to confound Jelačić's occupation of Budapest. Even though the forceful suppression of the revolution, in which Jelačić's troops participated, was generally approved, individual shootings and the declaration of a state of emergency were criticized.²⁷ As a consequence of the Vienna Revolution, the ban regent Mirko Lentulaj issued an order to all districts to ban the return of pro-Hungarian émigrés, monitor all suspect individuals and introduce a court martial against all rebels.²⁸ A month later Ban Jelačić, in response to news of peasant unrest in Zagreb County, issued a proclamation to the peasants of Croatia and Slavonia, in which he reiterated the Sabor's decision on the abolishment of urban levies and use of rural lands.²⁹ The uncertain situation in the countryside also contributed to Jelačić's decision of October 1848 to initiate recruitment for the regular army, which was conducted slowly and with great difficulty.

During the Vienna Revolution, the threat of renewed Austrian reaction was not generally perceived among the Croatian public. This would change by November 1848. The king's proclamation to the peoples of the Hungarian crown issued on November 6, 1848, whereby the conservative general, Prince Windischgrätz, was appointed the supreme commander of the imperial and royal troops in Hungary, already created an unsavory impression among the Croatian public. This constituted a tacit annulment of the king's proclamation of October 1848, and Jelačić was stripped of his command as imperial general;

²⁷ J. Šidak, 1979:249-289; T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*, 192-198. The Zagreb press did not endorse the initiative of Zagreb County's Steering Committee which, prompted by the Vienna revolution, first sought from the Ban's Council the organization of a Slavic congress and then, in early November 1848, the deployment of a Croatian delegation to the Austrian parliament.

²⁸ HDA, Banska pisma (Ban's Correspondence), box CLII., 1848/104c.

²⁹ HDA, ZS I., 1848/131-68.

he had already become loathed among a part of the Slavic public due to the bombardment of Prague and the dissolution of the Slavic Congress in June 1848. Croatian writers stressed that Jelačić did not deserve such treatment and turned attention to the fact that the king's proclamation was not co-signed by the relevant minister, which was customary under constitutional procedure. Even more consternation was aroused by the appointment of a new government headed by Count Franz Stadion and Prince Felix Schwarzenberg, traditionally-minded politicians known for their conservatism. The new government, which was not parliamentary, rather appointed by the emperor at the proposal of court and military circles, set as its fundamental objective the restoration of the Monarchy's unity, which meant crushing the Hungarian revolution. Individual Croatian political activists warned that all members of the new government were ethnically German, with no knowledge of Slavic languages and generally proponents of a centralized order in which there was no place for Austro-Slav (con)federalism.³⁰ At this time, as before and after, Austro-Slavism remained one of the basic orientations in Croatian public opinion. Even so, a lone opinion did appear, written by an anonymous author, who believed that a quick collapse would be the best for Austria, because it could not be maintained solely on the basis of national conflicts. Within Austria, national problems could not be resolved, but only suppressed, and such an Austria would be a constant threat to European peace.³¹ Even though this article elicited a sharp response in Vienna, and Jelačić demanded the enactment of a press law, it passed without consequences.

In November 1848, Croatian politics at the official level did not respond to the first clear signs of growing Austrian reaction. In December 1848, the royal and imperial Austrian army's intervention against the independent Hungarian government began, and it was initially successful, for by January 1849 Budapest was taken without significant struggles, while the Hungarian army, then still poorly organized, crossed the Tisza. By the end of November 1848, there was a temporary abeyance in Croatia's negative mood toward official Austrian policies. This was influenced by Schwarzenberg's speech in the Austrian parliament, which included several pleasing turns of phrase on respect for constitutionality and parliamentarism, and changes on the throne, for it was believed that a new ruler would not be tied by pledges to preserve Hungarian domination, as well as individual minor concessions by the Court to the Croatian and Serbian movements, such as appointing Jelačić the administrator of Dalmatia and Rijeka, the appointment of Rajačić as patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church and General Stefan Šupljikac as the Serbian duke. While the

³⁰ T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*, 207-215.

³¹ T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*, 221-223. This article (under the headline "Obzor austrijski"), with an explicitly anti-Austrian tone, was an exception in the entirety of Zagreb's press during the revolutions of 1848-1849 and it cannot be interpreted as an expression of change in the basic standpoints of the paper in which it appeared, and particularly not the Croatian public in general.

Hungarian public and political circles refused to recognize the new ruler, for he was not crowned in the Hungarian parliament house, the Croatian public welcomed the change on the throne. The general belief was that the previous king was bound by oath to uphold Hungarian hegemony in the countries of Transleithania, while the new ruler would work unimpeded on the achievement of the national equality which was so pompously proclaimed by the Vienna government. This notion was tied to the idea of Austro-Slavism so favored by Zagreb's newspapers, for implementation of the principles of national equality in the lands of the Hungarian crown was perceived only as the beginning of the transformation of Austria in an Austro-Slav and "federalist" spirit.³² In this optimistic atmosphere, the idea once more emerged of sending Croatian delegates to the Austrian parliament, something advocated in particular by *Slavenski Jug*, but also, albeit somewhat more cautiously, by the remaining newspapers in Zagreb, in the belief that this act would strengthen the position of Slavic deputies in parliament, foment stronger ties between Croatia and the Austrian provinces, enhance the development of political life in Croatia and allow the Croats to determine the form of their ties with Austria on their own.³³ At that time, at the end of November 1848, a society was established in Zagreb, called "*Slavenska Lipa na slavenskom Jugu*" ("Slavic Linden in the Slavic South"), which gathered a number of distinguished personalities in the public life of Croatia and Slavonia: Bogoslav Šulek, Ivan Kukuljević, Dragutin Kušlan, Nikola Krestić, Maksim Prica, Slavoljub Vrbančić and others. The society, established along the lines of a similar Czech society, was committed to the Austro-Slav and federalist reorganization of the Monarchy, national equality, educational and economic development, political democratization and cooperation between the Croats and other Slavic and South Slav peoples.³⁴

The Croatian public saluted the change on the throne when Ferdinand was succeeded by Francis Joseph. It was believed that the new ruler, although he did not ascend to the throne constitutionally, could more easily achieve national equality in the countries of the Hungarian crown and aid the political consolidation and reorganization of the Monarchy. However, the Ban's Council, although it sympathized with the efforts to send deputies to the Austrian parliament, did not wish to become involved in risky political ventures, nor could it do so without Jelačić's consent. The official representatives of Croatian politics at the time felt that they first had to successfully conclude military operations in Hungary and only then begin resolving the principal and other issues. Nonetheless, the Ban's Council forwarded a memorandum to the king in late December 1848 in which it highlighted the criteria for linking the Triune

³² T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*, 227-234.

³³ T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*, 230-233.

³⁴ NSK, Pisma i zapisnici Slavenske Lipe (Letters and Minutes of Slavenska Lipa), R 6524/a-1. On the activities of the Croatian "Lipa," see: J. Šidak, *Studije iz hrvatske povijesti za revolucije 1848-49*, 291-321.

Kingdom to the Austrian provinces based on the conclusions of the Sabor of 1848. The independence of Austria from the German Confederation and the equality of peoples, as well as fulfillment of the political demands of the Croats and Vojvodina Serbs, were all stressed in the memorandum.³⁵ In Croatia, the public also welcomed the king's appointment of Jelačić as administrator of Dalmatia and Rijeka, which, although only formal in nature, was perceived as the way toward unification of the Croatian lands.

Croatia's political movement, formal institutions and public opinion supported the preservation of the Habsburg Monarchy based on joint affairs and central institutions, but solely and exclusively on the basis of respect for Croatia's state autonomy and territorial integrity. The new king and the Austrian government, however, attempted to restore not only the Empire's unity, but also implement a centralized structure which, as opposed to the pre-March system, would fully extend over the lands of Transleithania, including the Triune Kingdom. The Hungarian revolt was seen as a welcome excuse, for with it the Hungarian "gambled away" their historical rights. The other peoples of Transleithania were not even considered, because, like the Croats, they were too weak a political factor, or because, besides this weakness, they were "non-historical peoples" like the Serbs, Slovaks and Romanians. In a centralized empire, the official language of all governmental institutions, except for those in local municipalities, would be German, which in practice meant the extension of the German language to the lands of Transleithania, where until then Latin (earlier) or, more recently, Hungarian and Croatian had been used. This policy came to the fore quite early when, in December 1848, the Vienna government sent notification to the Ban's Council on the change on the throne and the manifesto of the new ruler only in the German language. A number of Croatian districts expressed bitterness over this act, and asked the Ban's Council to intervene with the king and seek protection of the Croatian nationality and language.³⁶ The ban regent, Lentulaj, asked the Croatian representative at the Court, Baron Kulmer, and the king to refrain from sending correspondence in German in the future, but rather to send and receive correspondence in Croatian in order to confirm in practice the equality of peoples.³⁷

In the first weeks of 1849, as military operations in Hungary proceeded successfully, an optimistic mood could still frequently be found among the Croatian public. The Zagreb press, including the newly-launched *Südslawische Zeitung*, wrote that the fundamental Croatian objectives had not yet been

³⁵ *Agramer Zeitung*, 2 Jan. 1849, no. 1.

³⁶ HDA, Ban's Council (BV), Steering Committee (UO), box III, 1848/787, 789, box IV, 1848/148, 357, 372, 373, 374.

³⁷ HDA, BV, UO, III, 1848/787, IV, 1849/7. This intervention yielded no great benefit, for the Austrian government continued to send occasional correspondence in German, and this, after September 1849, became the customary practice.

met, but that this could be expected in the future. Confidence was expressed in the work of the Austrian parliament, which was supposed to ensure constitutionality and national equality and ease the subsequent attachment of the Triune Kingdom to the Austrian provinces. The conviction was expressed that there can be no strengthening of unconstitutional forces and that the fundamental achievements of the revolution were secure.³⁸ However, it would soon become clear just how mistaken such assessments were. On the floor of the Austrian parliament, the Austrian government called for the central role of the king in adopting the constitution, counter to the principles of national sovereignty. This was an additional burden to this parliament's work, as it was torn by frequent national conflicts and linguistic difficulties, for many deputies did not have sound knowledge of German. In the occupied regions of Hungary, military commanders, with the approval of official circles in Vienna, appointed Hungarian conservatives as administrators, even in counties inhabited by non-Hungarian populations. These Hungarian conservatives were pro-Habsburg, but no less intolerant of other peoples and supportive of Hungarian supremacy over them. Besides the German correspondence from the Vienna government, Hungarian correspondence began to arrive in Croatia from individual Hungarian institutions. These were additional reasons for the even greater Croatian dissatisfaction with Austrian policies and grounds for a gradual move to the opposition. During January and February 1849, criticism of the Austrian government began to appear increasingly in Zagreb's newspapers, wherein its Germanizing, centralizing and, in individual areas of Hungary, pro-Hungarian policies were mostly emphasized. Increasing anxiety began to be expressed over the achievement of even the narrowest Croatian political aims, particularly state autonomy. The question of the Military Frontier had already become a subsidiary concern for the Croatian public earlier, hoping for the acceptance of the Sabor's conclusions. However, now criticism was increasingly aimed at the old bureaucratic and semi-feudal system, which was not significantly altered by Jelačić's "dispensations." All initiatives meant to send Croatian deputies to the Austrian parliament disappeared entirely.

In the final months of 1848, sporadic criticisms on official Austrian policies appeared in the Zagreb press, but these pertained less to the existing situation than to the general duplicity and unfairness of Austrian policies in the past, particularly toward the "ever loyal" Slavic peoples. Even though such charges were frequent in November 1848, they still did not represent the fundamental and long-term orientation of the Zagreb press, i.e. their opposition standpoint. The prevailing view was that the basic accomplishments of the revolution – constitutionality, parliamentarism, and press freedom – were secure and that the Slavic peoples now had to win the corresponding reorganization of the Monarchy to meet their interests, on Austro-Slav foundations if possible, and certainly full national equality with the Germans and the Hungarians. It is

³⁸ T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*, 245-248.

notable that *Slavenski Jug*, certainly the most radical of the Zagreb papers, was in fact the greatest and, actually, sole genuine advocate of sending Croatian deputies to Austria's parliament in December 1848. However, in January and February 1849, increasingly frequent denunciations of the Austrian government began to appear, with accusations of its reactionary and centralist orientation. In the political terminology of the Zagreb press, "centralism" indicated the efforts of the core in Vienna to transform the Habsburg Monarchy into a modern centralized state modeled after France, with an internal division into precincts or, at the broadest, provinces or crown lands, which would possess absolutely no internal self-government. The glue holding such a state together would be a subservient bureaucracy and military, with German as the official language – except for retention of the Italian language as official in Lombardy, Istria and Dalmatia. This centralized monarchy would, according to the views of official circles in Austria, facilitate a dominant position for Austria in the German Confederation and accord it the status of a European great power. Such efforts would not constitute a novelty for the inherited Austrian provinces, for this existed as the established political order even prior to the revolution. However, the lands of Transleithania, Croatia, Hungary and Transylvania, had traditional, if only limited, self-government and a separate language of government (Latin, or Hungarian and Croatian). The members of the Croatian political movement were particularly sensitive to such efforts, for they not only retained their loyalty to the dynasty and the Monarchy, they had also, according to a very widespread although somewhat exaggerated opinion, saved the state in the turbulent events of 1848. The centralist orientation of the government was not only irreconcilable with the primary objective of the Croatian movement since the onset of the revolution, i.e. the broadest possible internal independence of a territorially unified Croatia, but it also jeopardized even the limited self-government which Civil Croatia exercised prior to 1848. Great consternation was also aroused by the maintenance of the old system in the Military Frontier, dominated by the imperial bureaucracy, with German as the official languages and a lack of constitutionality and political liberties. Such a situation also held in the latter half of 1848, but at the time the Zagreb press avoided attacks on the still surviving Frontier system, hoping that, as often stressed, the victory of the Austro-Slav concept in the near future and the end of the war in Croatia's interest would result in the easy abolishment of "military despotism" in the Military Frontier and its incorporation into Croatia at large. The Croatian public's move to opposition was caused by certain other factors as well, such as the Vienna government's open support, announced on the floor of the Austrian parliament, for hereditary monarchism and monarchic "absolutism," against the "democratic" principle of national sovereignty. It thereby demonstrated not only its opposition to the strivings of individual national movements (including, to be sure, Croatia's) for the broadest possible national self-government and even limited independence, but also the intention of confronting the political freedoms that were the only palpable achievement of the revolution. Forcing the German language on non-German

lands in contacts with the highest administrative institutions, which included the Ban's Council in Croatia, and assisting Hungarian conservatives in those Hungarian areas occupied by the imperial army demonstrated, according to the justified conviction of the Zagreb press, that not even the publicly accepted principle of national equality was being respected. The Zagreb press responded particularly negatively to the favor bestowed upon Hungarian conservative magnates, which was interpreted as an expression of the government's reactionary orientation and ingratitude toward the Slavic peoples. Even the Vienna government's aspiration to retain Austria's dominant position in the German Confederation provoked the disapprobation of Zagreb's newspapers, for they believed that the Austro-Slav and federalist reorganization of Austria would leave its sufficiently strong domestically to obviate the need for outside support, particularly from Germany, because this could reinforce the desire of the German-speakers to dominate all other peoples. All of this brought about a radical sea change among the Croatian public, for it had become clear that not only were political freedoms and the idea of Austro-Slavism in peril, but also the minimum Croatian national program, i.e. Croatia's territorial integrity and limited independence. Under such circumstances, the attacks on official Austrian policies, with *Slavenski Jug* in the forefront, followed by other papers to a lesser extent, were no longer a sporadic and marginal phenomenon, but rather something essentially new, i.e. they indicated the Croatian public's gradual move toward opposition to the Vienna government.³⁹

The military successes in Hungary, when it appeared that the Hungarian revolution was at its last gasp, encouraged the emperor and military circles to compel the parliament to proclaim the imposed Constitution of March 1849. This act was justified by the national conflicts in parliament and the need for political unity in the Monarchy. According to the Constitution, the emperor was the center of political authority with key privileges, while parliament was sidelined, and the entire empire was divided into crown lands. Joint affairs not only included foreign, financial and military affairs, but other essential political and economic functions as well, insofar as they were not relegated to the provincial assemblies. According to this Constitution, the Monarchy was supposed to become a unitary empire in which there would no longer be any differentiation between the Austrian and Hungarian portions, even though the provincial borders were retained. The Triune Kingdom was also degraded to a crown land, which did not even comply with the limited provincial autonomy exercised prior to 1848, and particularly not with the broad state autonomy sought by the Croatian Sabor of 1848. Besides some formal promises, nothing specific was stated about the future status of Dalmatia, the Military Frontier and Serbian Vojvodina. The Croatian public bitterly condemned the Constitution, for it generally contradicted all of the fundamental aims of Croatian politics and even some of its positive aspects – proclamation of national equality,

³⁹ T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*, 249-26.

elimination of class inequality, abolishment of serfdom and so forth – were only deemed formal and ancillary. The basic complaints pertained to the disrespect for parliamentary procedure, and the fact that it paved the way for absolutism, imposed centralization and Germanization, ignored the political autonomy of individual regions (especially the Transleithan lands), etc. In some articles, it was acknowledged that the Constitution had positive aspects as well, particularly where this pertained to administrative and political modernization, but this could not compensate for its shortcomings from the standpoint of the Croatian movement's fundamental objectives.⁴⁰ The Ban's Council refused to promulgate the Constitution in the territory of Civil Croatia and Slavonia, and voided individual decisions based on its proclamation, such as the case of Bunjevac and Rijeka, but it could not prevent its proclamation in the territory of the Military Frontier. The failure of the Austrian army, which included Jelačić's detachments, were interpreted by the press in Zagreb as a consequence of the imposed Constitution, the failure to observe the principle of national equality, particularly the imposition of the German language and, in Hungary, the Hungarian magnates.⁴¹

There were many reasons for the Croatian public's displeasure with the Constitution, but most rested on the question of territorial integrity. According to it, the Military Frontier had to remain, as earlier, politically and administratively detached from Croatia proper, while the question of unification with Dalmatia was left for later negotiations which, as could be expected, remained an empty pledge. At this point, something more can be said about the question of territorial integrity in Croatian politics and among the politically-aware public during the revolution of 1848-1849. At the time, the level of Croatian national and territorial integration was still quite low, and specific regional traits were still very prominent. The Croatian name spread slowly in political circles, and it was often avoided due to fears that it would be associated with Croatia's three northwestern counties. In September 1848, Jelačić occupied Međimurje and appointed a ban regent, who attempted to implement the orders of the Ban's Council. He encountered great problems here, both due to the pro-Magyar mood of a portion of the intelligentsia, and due to the Austrian military authorities, which treated Međimurje as a part of Hungary, i.e. as an occupied territory. The remaining attempts of the Ban's Council to annex Međimurje to Croatia already during the war were unsuccessful. This goal was temporarily accomplished only at the end of 1849, but the territory was again lost in 1861. Official circles in Croatia treated Syrmia as a component of the Triune Kingdom, even though it was already under the control of the Serbian movement. The Sabor's conclusion on the cession of Syrmia to Vojvodina could not be carried forward, both due to the ambiguous political situation and the impossibility of linking Vojvodina with

⁴⁰ T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*, 269-278.

⁴¹ T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*, 278-285.

the Triune Kingdom. Ban Jelačić opposed changing the status of Međimurje and Syrmia as long as the war continued. The possibility of Baranja belonging to Civil Croatia was not even mentioned among the Croatian public at the time, although Jelačić, in a memorandum submitted to the king in April 1849, sought this territory for Croatia as compensation for Syrmia, which would be joined to Serbian Vojvodina. The sub-prefect of Zagreb, Josip Bunjevac, occupied Rijeka at the end of August 1848, whose administrative magistracy was pro-Hungarian, and he implemented a modicum of control until the end of the war. The most important territorial problems were associated with Dalmatia and the Military Frontier, which remained separate from Civil Croatia and Slavonia until the end of the war and even afterward. The need for their annexation, particularly the Military Frontier, was repeatedly stated in documents issued by official institutions and by the wider public. Dalmatia was much less present in the Zagreb press not only at the beginning of the revolution, but also later, which was due not only to its greater distance and much lower readership of Zagreb periodicals there, but also due to the great significance of the Military Frontier to the Croatian political movement, particularly for the military defense of Croatia's political independence from the Hungarian government. Not even official Croatian political institutions accorded significant attention to Dalmatia, except during the session of the Sabor, for it was focused on the defense of Croatia's statehood, primarily from the Hungarian movement and then, as of the end of 1848, from the forces of reaction in Vienna. Istria was very rarely mentioned by the Croatian public, and generally in several brief reports which emphasized its Croatian ethnic majority. Istria's eastern districts were an exception, as they were generally considered a part of the Croatian state in previous centuries, whose annexation was sought together with the Kvarner (Quarnero) islands already in the first Demands of the Croatian movement issued in March 1848.⁴²

Prior to the enactment of the Constitution there were no texts in the Zagreb press praising the old Croatian constitution, for Croatian writers, generally members of the bourgeois intelligentsia, were aware that this was a formulation of obsolete feudal-aristocratic municipal rights, which had to be rescinded as soon as possible and replaced with a modern civic order. Texts dealing with the need for modernization of Croatian society, particularly where this concerned public schooling and systematic popular education, were frequent. The development of legislative foundations during 1849 testify to the fact that awareness of the necessity of the most rapid possible modernization of Croatian society was dominant even in official Croatian political circles, even though official state institutions, particularly the Sabor of 1848, often functioned using the terminology of historical rights, particularly when addressing the king, due to the need for a legitimist approach. On the other hand, from the very beginning of the revolution, the merger of historical with natural rights was

⁴² For more details on these matters, see: T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*, 315-323.

present in the Zagreb press, although the references to natural rights became considerably more frequent until proclamation of the imposed Constitution. The reason for this is that the press was not directly involved in the actual achievement of political objectives, such as addressing the king. There was also the belief, especially during 1848, that the basic political achievements of the revolution were not threatened and the considerably more intense advocacy of concepts, like South Slav ties, meant expansion of the narrower and basic Croatian program, and which could not be justified by arguments steeped in historical rights. Even the social composition of the editorial boards and correspondents of Zagreb's newspapers favored the more frequent emphasis on natural rights, for this was a secular bourgeois intelligentsia, which was not significantly bound by the institutions and values of the old feudal order. The situation would change somewhat with the proclamation of the imposed Constitution, which was grounded on the assertion by the Vienna court and government that the Hungarians "gambled away" their historical rights with their revolution. This prompted Croatian writers to increasingly stress Croatia's state/historical rights and prove that the Croats could not have forsaken their historical rights, for not only did they refuse to join the Hungarian rebellion, they in fact made great sacrifices for the dynasty and the Monarchy. Articles calling for the modernization of Croatia's economy, schools and state institutions continued to appear, but now pleas for "Croatia's ancient constitution" and Croatia's historical state individuality began to appear with increasing frequency, especially in *Slavenski Jug*, which did not defend feudalism and the moribund aristocratic system, but rather the idea of centuries of continuity of Croatian statehood, particularly in comparison to the Austrian provinces. The historical right was, to be sure, a potent weapon in political struggles within the legitimist Habsburg Monarchy, which Croatian politics often exploited in combination with modern natural rights, although, ultimately, historical and legal arguments were not decisive, but rather the prevailing political and military power. Historical rights in both cases, in state institutions and in the Zagreb press, served as a means to more easily achieve Croatia's national objectives. They were, truth be told, directly derived from the feudal system and demonstrated the weakness of the new bourgeois factors in eliminating the system of legitimization of the Habsburg Monarchy. However, assuming the form of national or bourgeois historicism, it introduced new content to an old form, adapted to the needs of new times and Croatian nationalism. The enactment of the imposed Constitution was followed by the reappearance of defenses in the press, otherwise frequent prior to 1848 among Croatian political writers and activists, of the traditional autonomy of the Transleithan lands, although stripped of the desire for restoration of the Croato-Hungarian alliance, which was severed in April 1848. This was stressed based on the desire to warn of the potential and even, as it appeared at the time to Croatian writers, very likely disastrous consequences of the Austrian government's centralist policies. In the spring and summer of 1849, this view did not, however, predominate in any of the Zagreb-based periodicals, for the

still dominant demand called for the division of “Hungary” along national lines and ties between the Hungarian subject peoples on a “federal” basis with the Austrian lands based on the concepts of Austro-Slavism. It was only in the autumn of 1849 that a partial renewal of Hungaro-patriotism (frequent in Croatian politics prior to 1848) appeared, particularly in *Slavenski Jug*, whereby the constitutionality – no longer, to be sure, of the feudal-aristocratic type – of the Croatian crown lands was incomparably superior to the unconstitutionality of “absolutism” of the Austrian provinces. The idea of nationalism and a new civil society, present in the Zagreb press as well as in the activities of Croatian state institutions, also signified acceptance of the idea of “democracy” in the modern sense, i.e. the principle of national sovereignty, civil and religious equality, freedom of the press and association, parliamentarism, modern constitutionality, etc. “Democratic” ideas were advocated by the Zagreb press in particular, for these papers were edited by members of the middle class and the bourgeois intelligentsia. They signified aspirations for development of a modern civil society and civic institutions in the political, national, legal, economic, cultural, educational and other fields. Some Croatian political officials, particularly those politicians associated with the Court, such as Franjo Kulmer and Metel Ožegović, although nationally oriented, did not favorably view the inroads made by “democratic” concepts among the Croatian public, seeing them as excessive and radical.

Until spring 1849, there was no major polarization within the Croatian political movement. The Sabor’s representative before the Vienna government, Franjo Kulmer, criticized the “radical” writings of individual Zagreb newspapers, particularly *Slavenski Jug* and *Südslawische Zeitung*, in some letters written to Jelačić in late 1848 and early 1849. However, the strengthening of conservative forces and the rise of reaction in Austria spurred a part of the Croatian political scene and public to confront the altered situation and the impossibility of achieving even a major part of the Croatian national objectives. This group, associated with Kulmer and Metel Ožegović in Vienna, and the newspaper *Agramer Zeitung* in Croatia, believed that Croatian politics should not come into conflict with the Vienna government, rather it should seek a *modus vivendi* to achieve a minimum of a few objectives. The second group, associated with the remaining three Zagreb papers, opted for political confrontation and open criticism, although without acceptance of Hungarian separatism. In Croatia at that time there were no data on the activities of any organized anti-Austrian groups, even though there probably were individuals with such an orientation.⁴³ The national intolerance of the Hungarian movement barred any

⁴³ The editor of *Slavenski Jug*, Dragutin Kušlan, met with a Hungarian envoy in Belgrade in June 1849 to discuss the possibility of establishing an anti-Austrian coalition. However, this was a personal effort on his part, without backing by Croatian public opinion, including his paper, which he soon left without leaving any significant mark on the Croatian public. On this, see: T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*, 334-336.

manner of ties between Croatian and Hungarian politics. Official Croatian politics attempted to steer a middle course, i.e. without direct confrontation with the Austrian government, but without any intention of voluntarily conceding to centralizing policies. In April 1848 a delegation was sent to Vienna, consisting of Ivan Mažuranić, Ivan Kukuljević, Antun Vranyczany and Franjo Žigrović. It submitted a memorandum to the king from the Ban's Council and the Sabor's Grand Committee which sought the ratification of the Sabor's principal conclusions on state autonomy and Croatia's territorial integrity, but they accomplished nothing, besides some vague phrases and expressions of gratitude to the "ever faithful Croatian people." In March 1849, a memorandum was addressed to the king, condemning the pro-Hungarian policies of Prince Windischgrätz, the commander of Austrian troops in Hungary, and proposing, after the war's end, the dissolution of the adjourned Sabor and the convocation of a new one. Jelačić, according to some meager information, did not oppose the dissolution of the parliament and the imposed Constitution, but he nonetheless did not, until the end of July 1849, ask the Ban's Council to formally promulgate it. At that time, the spring of 1849, it was believed that the Sabor would have to deliberate on the Constitution.⁴⁴

Among the other events important to the Croatian political movement of 1848-1849, the work of the Sabor's committees should be mentioned, as during 1849 they drafted several legislative bills.⁴⁵ The Sabor was adjourned until further notice in July 1848, but it had appointed several committees, which were supposed to compile bills on individual issues which would be deliberated once the Sabor reconvened. Work on these bills commenced in January 1849, when it appeared that the Hungarian revolution had dissipated and the Sabor would quickly be reconvened. The bill on counties, drafted in January 1849 and submitted to the districts for consideration, stressed the need to preserve the counties as national institutions and a component of the constitutional tradition, as well as the need for their reform as institutions accountable to parliamentary government. The county assemblies were supposed to decide on the most important economic and social problems, the modernization of education, the maintenance of roads and other vital issues in their territories. The reformed counties were supposed to become the administrative foundation of the autonomous Croatian state and a vital driver of the modernization of Croatian society. The bill on the government, entitled "an article on the organization of the state council," was completed in late January 1849 and it was also sent to the districts for consideration. It stressed the need for the creation of an autonomous Croatian government, which would handle all affairs in the territory of the Triune Kingdom, except those, meaning military, foreign and financial affairs, which would be left to the central constitutional institutions, the Austrian government and parliament.

⁴⁴ T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*, 280-292.

⁴⁵ For more details on these, see: T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*, 292-315.

The government would be answerable to the Croatian Sabor. The bill on the Sabor, drafted in March 1849, left all autonomous affairs to the Sabor. The Sabor would be elected in a two-tier system, with the election of electors first in the wards, and then the election of parliamentary deputies in the districts. The institution of virilists would be discontinued, while an elector would represent the entire country. The Sabor bill foresaw, in contrast to the earlier situation, the existence of a bicameral legislature, with the division based on the property census. The Sabor's authority would be limited by the king's veto, but the king could not make any decisions concerning the Triune Kingdom without the Sabor's consent. The bill on the people's army, drafted in April 1849 and issued as a separate brochure, stressed the creation of the Croatian people's army as a separate component of the Austrian military. The people's army would be charged with defending Croatia's southern border and possibly become a significant factor in the resolution of the Eastern Question. The army bill reflected the growing mistrust in Croatian political circles of the policies of the Vienna government, for Croatia's autonomy was to be protected by all means, even those which contradicted acceptance of joint affairs. The bill on the Triune Kingdom's relationship with Austria, drafted in April 1849, was founded on the distinction between joint (military, foreign and financial) and autonomous affairs, but it said nothing of Austro-Slavism or the federalist reorganization of the Monarchy. The schooling bill was drafted by the end of August 1849, generally modeled after the Austrian schooling law, albeit adapted to Croatian circumstances. Its basic intention was to modernize Croatia's school system, from public primary schools, which were supposed to provide basic education, to the universities. Schooling was an autonomous Croatian concern, which was the responsibility of the Sabor and government. The bill stipulated the secular organization of schooling, wherein clerical institutions, above all the Catholic Church, would lose their until then crucial importance. Nothing came of the drafting of these bills, as the adjourned Sabor never again convened, although they demonstrated the Croatian political elite's commitment to building a modern civil society.

The Austrian government exercised no direct authority in Croatia and Slavonia during the revolution of 1848-1849. However, Vienna carefully monitored political changes, particularly the growing opposition mood, which could have theoretically led to stronger anti-Austrian tendencies. Already in December 1848, Jelačić asked the Ban's Council to exercise greater control over the "radical" writing of individual Zagreb papers by drafting a press law, and not long afterward he requested that one copy of all newspapers be sent to Vienna. At the time the Ban's Council, citing the difficult political circumstances, avoided enacting a press law, but this became possible in the spring of 1849. Jelačić briefly came to Zagreb in the spring of 1849 and ordered the Ban's Council Education Section to draft the "Interim Press Law." This "law" was actually the ban's decree, whereby Jelačić once more overstepped his dictatorial authority, affixing his signature as "ban and dictator" and stipulating a high

surety for newspapers and the possibility of criminal prosecution for legal violations and disturbances of public opinion. The decree was justified by the “unrestrained” and “wanton” writing of individual papers, especially *Slavenski Jug* and *Südslawische Zeitung*.⁴⁶ The Zagreb papers, except *Agramer Zeitung*, generally condemned the ban’s decree as an attempt to smother freedom of the press and ignore the deeper causes of dissatisfaction in Croatia, but they laid the blame squarely on the Education Section, concealing Jelačić’s central role.⁴⁷ The decree’s repressive provisions were not actually implemented in subsequent months, but all of the papers had to pay the stipulated surety. Jelačić later complained to the ban regent that the press “law” remained a dead letter, for the bulletins of the “revolutionary parties” – he meant the two most radical newspapers – continued to disseminate their propaganda unimpeded. Jelačić faulted the Zagreb press for its excessive criticism of the Austrian government and fanning of national and political intolerance, instead of “peaceful” advocacy of reforms.⁴⁸

During June and July 1849, political polarization in Croatia deepened, for Gaj’s *Narodne novine* abandoned the opposition course and increasingly adopted a pro-government stance, not greatly different from *Agramer Zeitung*. Bogoslav Šulek assumed the editorial post at *Slavenski Jug*, which, together with *Südslawische Zeitung*, continued in an opposition spirit, but in more muted tones than previously. During July and August 1849, the Croatian press was characterized by major polemics over the extension of the jurisdiction of central institutions in Vienna over Croatian affairs. These were ignited by the king’s patent on the resolution of the urbarial question in Croatia, in which the Sabor’s conclusions were entirely ignored, although Croatia’s state autonomy remained the key issue. The opposition press called for broad political autonomy in relation to Vienna and the rejection of all centralist measures put forth by the Vienna government, while the pro-government press deemed it more practical to cooperate with the government. Polarization also ensued after promulgation of the imposed Constitution in Croatia and Slavonia in August 1849, which the opposition press rejected as contrary to Croatia’s autonomy, while the pro-government press accepted it as a necessary evil. The opposition press defended the Ban’s Council as an autonomous Croatian government, stressing that, due to wartime circumstances, they could do nothing about social and economic reforms.⁴⁹

In May 1849, the fate of the Hungarian revolutionary movement was sealed due to the intervention of the Russian imperial army on behalf of

⁴⁶ NSK, ZR, ZL, Ban Jelačić, R VIIIa B-2.

⁴⁷ T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*, 336-346. Jelačić’s alleged “law” was never applied, and when a serious attempt was made to do so, in a lawsuit against *Slavenski Jug* filed in February 1850, all of its legal and substantive shortcomings became apparent.

⁴⁸ T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*, 344-346.

⁴⁹ T. Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret*, 346-373.

the Viennese court. Under these circumstances, the promulgation of the imposed Constitution in Croatia and Slavonia could no longer be postponed. At the end of July 1849, Jelačić formally endorsed its ratification, asking for a Croatian commission to be sent to Vienna to discuss the Sabor's conclusions with the government within the framework of the state constitution. In a public proclamation issued on July 28, 1849, Jelačić asserted that the imposed Constitution must be accepted, for it met all of Croatia's national demands. Jelačić sent copies of the Constitution to all districts and the Ban's Council with the request that they promulgate it as soon as possible. Initially the Ban's Council rejected the ban's request, calling on Croatian autonomy, but it soon had to concede. The Constitution was promulgated in Civil Croatia and Slavonia in September 1849. The protests carried in the opposition press were of little avail. Upon the conclusion of military operations, the organized Croatian political movement also dissipated. After the close of the war, Civil Croatia soon lost the broad political autonomy it had enjoyed during the revolution. The imposed Constitution was promulgated in September 1849, and in subsequent months the Ban's Council, like Ban Jelačić himself, became a transmitter for the Vienna government's orders. Although he attempted to safeguard certain Croatian achievements, Jelačić always gave in to pressure in the end, and sometimes he even led the way in suppressing the opposition mood. This was particularly reflected in the repressive measures initiated against the two remaining opposition papers, *Slavenski Jug* and *Südslawische Zeitung*, of which the first was banned at the ban's explicit order, while the second temporarily continued to be published, but with considerably toned-down criticism. These and other measures led to the almost complete loss of any popularity Jelačić had among the public, which particularly came to the fore during the ban's orchestrated arrival in Zagreb in June 1850. The Ban's Council could not resist the spread of centralization and Germanization, particularly through the Financial Directorate under the leadership of Vinzenz Kappel, even though attempts were made to preserve the Croatian language in correspondence with foreign institutions. In the summer of 1850, the Ban's Council was dissolved and its activities, now exclusively on behalf of the Vienna government's interests, were assumed by the Ban's Government. The Sabor was formally dissolved by royal rescript in April 1850, in which individual conclusions of the Sabor were ratified as long as they posed no threat to the centralization of the Monarchy. In the principal law governing the Military Frontier, enacted in May 1850, limited reforms were implemented, but the separation of the Military Frontier from Croatia proper, as well as German as the official language, were retained. During the 1850s, a centralist structure prevailed in the Monarchy with predominance of the German language, which would also be extended to Croatia, particularly by means of numerous resettled bureaucrats ("Bach's hussars"). This meant that the Croatian movement, although successful in contributing to the Monarchy's preservation, failed in all of its principal aspirations, particularly the achievement of broad state autonomy and territorial integrity. However, at this time, all of the fundamental

ideas and programs (Austro-Slavism, federal reorganization of the Monarchy, ties among the Slavic and South Slav peoples, narrower Croatian aims and the modernization of Croatian society) which would remain present in Croatian political and public life until 1918, were put forward.

II. The revolution of 1848-1849 and the question of the Croatian national identity

The key role in the Croatian political movement of 1848-1849 was played by elite with diverse social, economic and, to an extent, ethnic backgrounds. Most were Croats, but there was also a very numerous Serbian minority, which accounted for almost one half of the deputies in the Sabor in 1848. This elite was socially divided into members of the modern bourgeoisie, which generated almost all of the activist writers, and members of the older group of nobles, who had their origins in the feudal period but were uninterested in its perpetuation. The Croatian political elite tended toward the gradual dismantling of the still surviving feudal order and the development of a modern civil society based on a capitalist economy, parliamentary system and accountable government, press freedoms and other political liberties, greater political egalitarianism, and so forth. Its orientation was essentially liberal, but in the nineteenth-century sense with very strong hierarchical elements, particularly the exclusion of women and most of the population from political decision-making. In Croatia and Slavonia at the time, the peasantry accounted for a vast majority of the population, over four fifths, and except for a very narrow circle of the wealthiest, they had absolutely no political influence nor did they have an interest in national politics. The explicit hierarchism and the class stratification were abetted by very strong proto-feudal elements, which held very clear-cut conservative political views and placed loyalty to the Viennese court above all other considerations. This pertained to Ban Jelačić in particular, but also other distinguished individuals in Croatian politics of the time, such as Count Kulmer, who was appointed by the Sabor as its representative to the Court. There was a difference between the democratic orientation of a considerable sector of the Croatian public, particularly those gathered around the Zagreb press, and many distinguished "old school" politicians, who viewed the new egalitarian and democratic/liberal ideas with suspicion. The Croatian elite engaged in activities typical of a small nation attempting to achieve territorial integrity and limited autonomy within a multiethnic empire. This was then the sole realistic option, for it was shown that even a considerably stronger political movement, like that of the Hungarians, could not secure an independent state.

The political movement of 1848-1849 in Croatia and Slavonia was vital to the creation of the modern Croatian nation and the formation of modern Croatian nationalism. Like all other peoples, for the Croats nationalism was an

exceptionally modern phenomenon, associated with the creation of an urban/industrial (bourgeois) society, a capitalist economy, a politically-aware public, modern communications, literacy for the broad masses, etc. Nationalism entails strong tendencies for group homogenization and collective cohesion, often in opposition to a real or imagined external adversary. The national movement in Croatia and Slavonia in 1848-1849 exhibited all of the typical features of nationalism, from the nation-as-imagined-community to competition with other nationalisms in the struggle for control of a living space. Inter-human competition encompasses a fear of domination by others, and this was readily apparent in the Croatian movement of the time. The fear of German and/or Hungarian domination and the centralizing/Germanizing policies of Vienna constantly beset Croatian political and public activists, not just at that time, but before and after, until the collapse of the Monarchy. Attempts at political homogenization were made on this basis to retain or acquire control over the political territory of the Triune Kingdom. Croatian nationalism, like the nationalism of other small peoples in the Habsburg Monarchy, generally did not aspire to create an independent national state, rather only broad autonomy within the Monarchy. An independent Croatian state was advocated, after 1860, by individual politicians and public activists generally associated with the Party of the Right, but they remained marginal until the First World War. As in many other countries, modernizing processes in Croatia were not primarily the result of internal factors, such as increased population, as they were of external pressures. The political and social elite in the Triune Kingdom was compelled to initiate modernization due to fear of falling behind neighboring countries. Any country that rejected modernization soon became a colony and prey for more powerful neighboring peoples and states. These processes proceeded in the Croatian lands in a manner similar to other countries, but with some significantly specific aspects. During the course of the latter half of the nineteenth century, the domestic elite, often in conflict with the centers of power in Vienna and Budapest, implemented the spread of literacy, the development of educational, economic and other institutions and communications, established a market economy and attempted to bolster ties between individual provinces within the framework of a politically centralized system. However, modernization was constantly impeded from the outside, for external power centers, Vienna in the case of Istria and Dalmatia, Budapest in the case of Croatia and Slavonia after 1867, had no interest in an economically and politically stronger Triune Kingdom. An additional burden was the political and territorial separation of the Croatian lands, for the Military Frontier was incorporated into Civil Croatia only in the early 1880s, while Dalmatia and Istria remained in the Austrian portion of the Dual Monarchy until 1918.

In the revolution of 1848-1849, Zagreb unambiguously became a national-integrative center. Although not a large city by the standards of the time – in the mid-nineteenth century it had a population of roughly 13,000 – Zagreb was the political nucleus of the Croatian movement, in which the Sabor met

and all of the most important state institutions were located, from the ban to the Ban's Council. Provincial particularism was very powerful at the time, and quite marked in the Slavonian counties. Due to its specific social situation and political remoteness from Northern Croatia, the Croatian national movement only began to develop in Dalmatia in the 1860s. During the revolution, the foundations were laid for the formation of a modern civil urban/industrial society and, within it, the modern Croatian nation. Croatian public activists accepted all of the fundamental aspects and values of the modern civil society: public opinion, freedom of the press, a market economy, modern roads, a parliamentary system, modern political organization, social and economic reform, a standard literary language, a modern administrative system, an official (national) language, etc. The legislative bills drafted by the Sabor's committees testify to this in particular; although they remained a dead letter, they indicate the commitment of Croatia's political activists to the institutions and values of a civil society in the sense of nineteenth-century liberalism. Due to wartime circumstances and the shortness of time, this generally remained at the level of theory at the time, and only in later decades would it begin to be implemented in practice in cooperation but also in conflict with the integrative centers in Vienna and Budapest. Among the practical accomplishments, notable was the abolishment of serfdom in Civil Croatia and Slavonia, and the elimination of urban levies and the recognition of peasant possession of rural ploughlands in the former. Another major achievement was the introduction of the national (Shtokavian) language in all public and state institutions, from the Sabor and Ban's Council to county and city governments, whereby Latin finally ceased being the means of public communication. Alongside later changes, such as Vienna's revision of the urban issues and the imposition of limited Germanization in the 1850s, these remained permanent changes. During the revolution, all fundamental modernizing processes were theoretically accepted: the comprehensive reformation of Croatian society in the direction of civic modernization – which would later be achieved at varying rates and with many difficulties. As a result, traditional rural and regional communities, in which the peasantry was extremely dominant, were gradually integrated and mutually connected in the creation of civic institutions, urban centers and a capitalist economy. These processes, with all of their specifics, were basically quite similar to modernization in other European countries in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

During the revolution of 1848-1849, all of the fundamental political objectives and programs were formulated, and these would be fostered by various groups and parties in Croatian politics until the collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy. First and foremost among these was the territorial unification of the Croatian lands into a single political unit with broad state autonomy within the framework of the Habsburg Monarchy. This was the basic and minimum point of departure for all political groups, even though pragmatism could dictate considerable limitations to autonomy so conceived, more in

the direction of a province rather than statehood. The official institutions of Croatian politics, the Sabor, the ban, the Ban's Council, the Regency of the 1860s, the Ban's Government after 1868, and most counties, generally did not advocate the Austro-Slav concept, restricting themselves to the narrower Croatian aims. However, this concept was often present among the Croatian public and in the platforms of individual political parties. The reorganization of the Monarchy into a (con) federally bound group of countries and equal peoples was a maximum objective. The middle ground was often occupied by an aspiration occasionally present in official Croatian politics and considerably more often among the wider public, calling for ties with neighboring Slovene provinces in the west and the Serbs of Hungary in the east. Attempts at Slavic and South Slavic ties constituted a base for Croatian national interests, for the small Slavic peoples could not on their own resist the predominance of the two strongest peoples: the Germans and Hungarians. The Austro-Slav and South Slav concepts remained at the level of more or less unrealistic desires and in no way brought into question the process of constituting the modern Croatian nation. The Croatian national identity was at the time clearly formed both at the ideological level – particularly in relation to neighboring national movements – and at the practical level, in the beginnings of organized implementation of modernization.

The events at the time of the revolution of 1848-1849 also carried great significance for the Croats in international relations. The Croatian name, until then entirely unknown to the wider European public, was often mentioned in European periodicals and brochures of the time, although mostly in a negative context. The term "Croats" generally denoted Habsburg "Mamelukes," the servants of reaction and the suppressors of "progressive" revolutionary aspirations. Such negative stereotypes particularly influenced radical leftist intellectuals in later decades, such as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. However, the affirmation of the Croatian name, as a protagonist in the European community of peoples, was also a precondition for a positive image, which gradually emerged in the years prior to World War I, when the Croats had some well-known advocates among the European intelligentsia, such as Robert W. Seton-Watson. This was also enhanced by the foreign activities of certain distinguished Croatian national activists, from Eugen Kvaternik to Stjepan Radić.

Zwischen Revolution und Legitimität: die kroatische politische Bewegung 1848/1849 und die Bildung kroatischer nationaler Identität

Zusammenfassung

Geschehnisse zur Zeit der Revolution in den Jahren 1848/1849 hatten große Bedeutung für Kroaten auch in internationalen Beziehungen. Der kroatische Name, der in der breiteren europäischen Öffentlichkeit bis dann fast unbekannt war, wurde zu dieser Zeit oft in zeitgemäßer europäischer Periodik und in Broschüren genannt, obwohl meistens im negativen Kontext. Der Name "Kroate" wurde hauptsächlich mit dem Begriff "habsburgische Mamelucken" gleichgesetzt als Knechten von Reaktion und Unterdrücker fortschrittlicher revolutionärer Streben. Diese negativen Stereotype beeinflussten später Jahrzehnte lang besonders radikale links orientierte Intellektuelle wie z.B. Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels. Die Affirmation des kroatischen Namens als eines der Protagonisten in europäischer Nationengemeinschaft war aber auch notwendige Bedingung für ein positives Bild der Kroaten, das sich allmählich in den Jahren vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg bildete, als Kroaten auch einige bekannte Befürworter unter europäischen Intellektuellen hatten, wie es beispielsweise Robert W. Seton-Watson war. Zur Verschönerung dieses Bildes trugen auch die Aktivitäten einiger angesehenen kroatischen nationalen Aktivisten bei, von Eugen Kvaternik bis Stjepan Radić.

