

UDK: 94(497.5)-05 Rauch, P. "1908/1910"  
32(497.5)"1908/1910"  
929 Kršnjavi I.  
929 Seton-Watson, R. W.  
Izvorni znanstveni članak  
Received: July 2, 2010  
Accepted: September 17, 2010

## ISIDOR KRŠNJAVI AND ROBERT W. SETON- WATSON ON POLITICS IN CROATIA DURING THE REIGN OF BAN PAVAO RAUCH

Zlatko MATIJEVIĆ\*

The governing style of Ban Pavao Rauch was subject to much sharp criticism, not only among the opposition-oriented public in Civil Croatia but also from the respected British publicist and journalist Robert W. Seton-Watson (Scotus Viator). In the latter's opinion Rauch's reign as Croatia's ban was unconstitutional and served the complete subjugation of Civil Croatia to Hungarian interests. The Seton-Watson's writings prompted a response from Isidor Kršnjavi, a Frankist-Rightist who formulated well-reasoned refutations of the Briton's negative characterizations of political relations in the Croatia of the time.

"Scotus Viator ist ein Freund der habsburgischen Monarchie, er glaubt an ihre Zukunft und freut sich 'jubelnd' ihres Aufschwunges."

Dr. Isidor KRŠNJAVI

After the Austro-Hungarian Compromise was concluded in 1867, the until-then unified Habsburg Monarchy was divided into Austrian and Hungarian sections.<sup>1</sup> According to the newly-established constitutional structure, Dalmatia and the Croatian part of Istria, together with the Slovenian lands, became part of the Austrian half of the Monarchy, while Civil Croatia, together with Vojvodina, went to Hungary. The Croatian-Hungarian Compromise conclud-

\* Zlatko Matijević, Ph. D., Croatian Institute of History, Zagreb, Croatia

<sup>1</sup> See: A.J.P. Taylor, *Habsburška Monarhija 1809-1918* (Zagreb, 1990), pp. 161-173.

ed in 1868 implemented a sub-dualist correction to the dualist state structure. With its 70 articles, the Compromise was the fundamental law governing Croatian-Hungarian relations until 1918. Under it, arrangements were regulated for joint representation, joint action and joint governance were established for all spheres except domestic affairs, the judiciary, religion and public instruction, which were placed under the jurisdiction of the autonomous Territorial Government of Croatia and Slavonia (Civil Croatia). The Compromise made Civil Croatia subordinate to Hungary in two vital matters: 1) the *ban* (viceroy) was appointed at the proposal of the Hungarian minister president, and 2) the minister for Croatia and Slavonia was not accountable to the Croatian *Sabor* (territorial assembly) but to the joint parliament which sat in Budapest. Even though it was decreed that the official language in Civil Croatia was Croatian, and that Croatian and Hungarian were to be used equally in all common affairs, in practice this provision was frequently breached to the detriment of Croatian equality. In its financial provisions, the Compromise made Croatia entirely dependent on Hungary, because its budget was ratified by the Hungarian finance minister. The torturous question of the status of the city of Rijeka was resolved by the so-called "Rijeka scrap" to Hungary's benefit, which the *Sabor* never ratified.<sup>2</sup> Despite the numerous limitations which ensued from this Compromise, it nonetheless allowed for the modernization of Croatia's then already obsolete governing institutions by means of autonomous legislation.<sup>3</sup>

After the brief term of Dr. Aleksandar Rákodczáy (1848-1924) as ban, in early January 1908, the post of ban was assumed by Baron Pavao Rauch (1865-1933),<sup>4</sup> the son of Baron Levin Rauch (1819-1890), in whose term as ban the Croatian-Hungarian Compromise was concluded.<sup>5</sup> The arrival of the younger Rauch to the highest political office in Civil Croatia was linked directly to a decision made by the Austro-Hungarian Ministerial Council on December 1, 1907, which ordered, when circumstances allow, the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina to the Monarchy.<sup>6</sup> To implement these designs with the least pos-

<sup>2</sup> See: Vasilije Krestić, *Hrvatsko-ugarska nagodba* (Belgrade, 1969); Josip Šarinić, *Nagodbena Hrvatska. Postanak i osnove ustavne organizacije* (Zagreb, 1972); Dalibor Čepulo, "Odgovornost i položaj bana i članova Hrvatske zemaljske vlade 1868-1918. i ministarska odgovornost u Europi," *Zbornik Pravnog fakulteta u Zagrebu* 49/1999, no. 2: 229-274.

<sup>3</sup> See: D. Čepulo, "Hrvatsko-ugarska nagodba i reforme institucija vlasti u Hrvatskom saboru 1868.-1871.," *Zbornik Pravnog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Rijeci* (Rijeka, 2001), Suppl. no. 1: 117-148.

<sup>4</sup> For a balanced assessment of Rauch's term as ban, freed of the ideological constraints of Croatian historiography up to 1990, see: Mira Kolar-Dimitrijević, "Ban Pavle Rauch i Hrvatska u njegovo vrijeme," in her *Skrivene biografije nekih Nijemaca i Austrijanaca u Hrvatskoj 19. i 20. stoljeća* (Osijek, 2001), pp. 79-175.

<sup>5</sup> Josip Horvat, *Politička povijest Hrvatske*, Part One (Zagreb, 1989), p. 287.

<sup>6</sup> By decision of the Congress of Berlin (1878), the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy was accorded the right to occupy Bosnia-Herzegovina, which remained under the formal suzerainty of the Ottoman sultan (Ferdo Čulinović, *Državnopravna historija jugoslavenskih zemalja XIX. i XX. vijeka (Hrvatska, Slavonija i Dalmacija, Istra, Srpska Vojvodina, Slovenija, Bosna i Hercegovina te Država SHS)* (Zagreb, 1953), p 308; Zoran Grijak, *Politička djelatnost vrhbosanskog nadbiskupa*

sible internal political tension, a government had to be set up in Civil Croatia which would uphold the annexation plans.<sup>7</sup> Even before Rauch formally ascended to the ban's seat, in mid-December 1907 his predecessor dissolved the Croatian Sabor,<sup>8</sup> in which the Croato-Serbian Coalition held a majority.<sup>9</sup>

The ceremonies accompanying the arrival of Baron Rauch in Zagreb on January 16, 1908, were marred by a tumult of disapprobation staged by his political adversaries, who awaited him upon his departure from the main train station. This unpleasant episode for the ban set the tone for his entire reign (1908-1910).<sup>10</sup>

The elections for the new sitting of the Sabor were held on February 27 and 28, 1908. The Croato-Serbian Coalition won 56 seats and a very stable majority. The Starčević Party of the Right, which was headed by Josip Frank, won 24 seats.<sup>11</sup> The remaining party slates secured only modest results.<sup>12</sup> The greatest surprise of the elections was the complete failure of the Constitutional Party, backed by the authority of Baron Rauch as ban. Receiving only 2,021 votes, the party did not win a single seat in the Sabor.<sup>13</sup>

With its new composition, the Sabor convened on March 12, 1908. At its second session held on March 14, 1908, a royal rescript was read which adjourned the Sabor's work until further notice by the ruler.<sup>14</sup> The Sabor only began functioning again in mid-March 1910, after Rauch stepped down from his post as ban.

Rauch's governing style drew sharp criticism not only from the political opposition in Croatia, but also from the respected British publicist and journalist of Scottish origin, Robert W. Seton-Watson (1879-1951). Acknowledged as an expert on the political and ethnic situations in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy,<sup>15</sup> Seton-Watson felt prompted to critically comment on politi-

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*Josipa Stadlera* (Zagreb, 2001), pp. 421-454 (sub-chapter: "Vanjskopolitički aspekti aneksije Bosne i Hercegovine i položaj Austro-Ugarske Monarhije nakon aneksije").

<sup>7</sup> For more, see: Mirjana Gross, "Hrvatska uoči aneksije Bosne i Hercegovine," *Istorija XX veka*, ZR, III, (Belgrade, 1962), pp. 153-275.

<sup>8</sup> For the circumstances under which Ban Rákodczáy dissolved the Sabor, see: Ivo Perić, *Hrvatski državni sabor 1848.-2000., Drugi svezak: 1868.-1918.* (Zagreb, 2000), pp. 362-363.

<sup>9</sup> For more on the political domination of the Croato-Serbian Coalition in the Sabor, see: M. Gross, *Vladavina Hrvatsko-srpske koalicije 1906-1907* (Belgrade, 1960).

<sup>10</sup> J. Horvat, *Politička povijest Hrvatske*, p. 288.

<sup>11</sup> During 1908, the Starčević Party of the Right split into the Party of the Right (Frankists) and the Starčević Party of the Right (*Milinovci*, or "Milists"). The Frankists held 15 seats in the Sabor, and the 'Milists' 9 (I. Perić, *Hrvatski državni sabor*, p. 364).

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 364-365.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 365.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> In 1908, R. W. Seton-Watson published, under the pseudonym Scotus Viator, two brochures:

cal circumstances in Civil Croatia during Rauch's rule. In a 32-page booklet, published under his widely-known pseudonym Scotus Viator, he asserted that as a foreigner he could openly, if not "absolutely objectively," speak about the problems of Croato-Hungarian relations, for he could tell each side what he thought of their political actions without circumspection.<sup>16</sup> In his opinion, the solution to the Croatian conundrum had crystallized as the vital question of the entire Monarchy.<sup>17</sup> For he believed that the solution to this problem would simultaneously solve the two crucial problems of Austro-Hungarian politics: 1) the internal question of the Monarchy, i.e. the elimination of the dualist system and its replacement with a more appropriate federalist structure, and 2) the external question of the Monarchy, i.e. the unification of the "Croato-Serbian tribe" (*Rasse*) under the scepter of the Habsburg dynasty.<sup>18</sup> Without the slightest reluctance, this British intellectual claimed that "the Croats constitute the core of Balkan politics," and that in the Europe of that time, "they have strategic and political significance."<sup>19</sup> Thus, thanks to their geopolitical position, "the Croats tip the scales between Hungary and Austria, they are the element that whose friendship will be decisive in the impending struggle between the two halves of the dualist state."<sup>20</sup>

Even though he accorded great importance to the Croats in the context of preserving the Habsburg state, Seton-Watson failed to perceive them as an independent national entity, rather he saw them in the context of the "fateful external question" of the Monarchy as necessarily amalgamated with the Serbs: "The unity of the Croato-Serbian tribe [...] may only be attained in two ways: either with the help of Austria within the framework of the Monarchy or over Austria's opposition outside of the Monarchy."<sup>21</sup> Knowing that this assertion placed him in the perilous waters of international politics, Seton-Watson immediately excluded the possibility of the "unification of the Croato-Serbian tribe" outside of the Monarchy's borders: "The severance of the South Slavs under the Habsburg scepter would be conceivable only when Austrian military might suffers a debilitating defeat, after which the Monarchy's collapse would ensue. In other words: this could only happen after a general European war in which not one of the great powers could remain neutral."<sup>22</sup> According to Seton-Watson, the disappearance of the Monarchy from the European political map and the possible emergence of some kind of "independent South Slav

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*Die Zukunft Österreich-Ungarns und die Haltung der Grossmächte* (Leipzig/Vienna) and *Racial Problems in Hungary* (London).

<sup>16</sup> Scotus Viator, *Absolutismus in Kroatien*, (Vienna/Leipzig, 1909), p. 3.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* (All citations were originally written in German.)

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

state” would primarily benefit Tsarist Russia. For the Croats, such a turn of events would have disastrous consequences, for as he noted, as the politically and geographically westernmost of all Slavs, they would “sink in the swamp of Slavic Orthodoxy.”<sup>23</sup>

Referring to the international crisis which was provoked by the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Seton-Watson claimed that the former Ottoman province had become “an irrevocable possession of the Habsburg house,” and that the “focus of the South Slav question had shifted from Belgrade to Zagreb, from the Serbs to the Croats.”<sup>24</sup>

After thus sketching the geopolitical circumstances in Central Europe in the broadest strokes, Seton-Watson attempted to portray the situation in Civil Croatia in eight points. In the first seven points, he characterized Rauch’s rule as unconstitutional, serving the complete subjugation of Civil Croatia to Hungarian interests: 1) Ban Rauch’s rule was absolutist in form; 2) freedom of the press was frequently, and quite openly, curtailed; 3) the personal freedoms of individuals were not respected; 4) the ban was accountable for the violation of the autonomy of Zagreb’s University; 5) attempts were made to Magyarize parts of Croatia; 6) Croatia’s financial interests were neglected to Hungary’s benefit; and 7) the judiciary was employed as a means to achieve political aims.<sup>25</sup>

In the eighth point, Seton-Watson criticized in the fiercest terms the trial for high treason held in Zagreb against a group of Croatian citizens of Serbian nationality.<sup>26</sup> According to him, this trial most clearly illuminated not only the absolutist governing methods in Civil Croatia, but also the attempt to justify the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina before the public.<sup>27</sup>

The only political party in Civil Croatia which supported the indictment of this group of Serbs was the Party of the Right and its president, Josip Frank (1844-1911).<sup>28</sup> The accusations leveled by the pro-regime and Frankist press

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 8-13.

<sup>26</sup> Seton-Watson provided something of a summary of the indictment for the high treason trial as a supplement to his brochure, on pp. 31-32. For opposing views on the high treason trial, see: J. Horvat, *Politička povijest Hrvatske*, pp. 293-296; M. Gross, “Hrvatska uoči aneksije Bosne i Hercegovine”, pp. 192-208 and 223-240; Jaroslav Šidak, M. Gross, Igor Karaman and Dragovan Šepić, *Povijest hrvatskog naroda g. 1860-1914.*, pp. 245-248; Jere Jareb, *Pola stoljeća hrvatske politike. Povodom Mačekove autobiografije* (Buenos Aires, 1960/Zagreb, 1995), VIII; Dragutin Pavličević, *Povijest Hrvatske* (Zagreb, 2000), 302; M. Kolar-Dimitrijević, “Ban Pavle Rauch i Hrvatska u njegovo vrijeme”, pp. 97-105. See also Seton-Watson’s view of the high treason trial after its conclusion: *Die südslawische Frage im Habsburger Reiche* (Berlin, 1913), pp. 201-241 (in the chapter: “Die Annexion Bosniens und der agramer Hochverratsprozess”).

<sup>27</sup> S. Viator, *Absolutismus in Kroatien*, pp. 13-14.

<sup>28</sup> On J. Frank, see: Dubravko Jelčić, “Varijacija o Josipu Franku”, in his *Politika i sudbine* (Zagreb, 1995), pp. 64-66; Jure Krišto, “Kad pravaši pođu različitim putovima: Frano Supilo i

to the effect that the true traitors in Croatia were actually the leaders of the Croato-Serbian Coalition and not the Serbs brought to trial were characterized by Seton-Watson as extremely naive.<sup>29</sup> For him, the actual traitor was Ban Rauch himself, who suspended the Constitution and violated territorial laws to further the interests of ruling circles in Hungary.<sup>30</sup>

Comparing the Croato-Serbian Coalition and the Party of the Right (Frankists), Seton-Watson asserted that these two parties were as different as night and day: "The Party of the Right preaches hatred, while the Croato-Serbian Coalition advocates brotherhood; the Rightists exert all of their strength to divide the two tribes (Serbs and Croats), while the Coalition wants to reconcile and unite them."<sup>31</sup> In other words, Seton-Watson concluded, "the party (Frankists) which supports a ban like Baron Rauch is not only struggling against the constitution but also against the new generation, against the future of the country and against all of those (individuals and groups) whose ideals are fraternity and progress, and not tribal conflict (*Rassenkampf*) and backwardness."<sup>32</sup>

In concluding his sharp critique of political conditions in Croatia, for which, in his view, a "political clique" in Budapest bore the most responsibility,<sup>33</sup> Seton-Watson did not hesitate to offer his advice to the Austrian political elite: "Should Vienna finally become aware of its imperial mission, it shall discard the old slogan '*Divide et impera*' and uphold the unification of the Croato-Serbian tribe. Only with the help of Croatia and the peoples of Hungary can Vienna hope to clean out Augi's stalls in Budapest and reinforce the Austrian influence in the Northern Balkans utilizing its sympathy and interest. The problem of South Slav unity is the crucial question underlying all Balkan politics and the future of the Habsburg Monarchy hinges upon its solution."<sup>34</sup>

Seton-Watson did not have to wait long for a response to his criticism of political circumstances in Civil Croatia. The Croatian Faust personified in Dr. Isidor (Iso) Kršnjavi (1845-1927) enthusiastically sharpened his quill to point out the weaknesses in the Briton's criticisms. The two polemicists were not unfamiliar with each other.<sup>35</sup> In fact, Kršnjavi sent Seton-Watson a private letter

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Josip Frank o 'novom kursu,'" *Pravaška misao i politika*. Conference Proceedings, Jasna Turkalj, Zlatko Matijević and Stjepan Matković, eds. (Zagreb, 2007), pp. 143-165.; S. Matković, *Čista stranka prava 1895.-1903.* (Zagreb, 2001), p. 11 and *passim*.

<sup>29</sup> S. Viator, *Absolutismus in Kroatien*, p. 24.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>35</sup> According to Seton-Watson's diary entries, they met in Zagreb in May 1908 (*R. W. Seton-Watson i Jugoslaveni. Korespondencija 1906-1941, I/1906-1918* (Zagreb/London, 1976), p. 14).

in which he thanked him for the brochure and notified him that he would be writing a review.<sup>36</sup>

Kršnjavi did not doubt that Seton-Watson's brochure would be well-received by the Croato-Serbian Coalition, for it had purchased the entire print-run to be able to "distribute it to the world at large."<sup>37</sup>

Acknowledging Seton-Watson's "friendly mien" toward the Monarchy after the crisis provoked by the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kršnjavi could not resist from complaining to the learned journalist that he "wishes to tutor German Austrian statesmen and publicists, while in fact erroneously interpreting the actual state of affairs" in the Monarchy.<sup>38</sup>

Seton-Watson's idea of the merger of two independent states – the Kingdom of Serbia and the Principality of Montenegro – to Austria-Hungary in order to create the conditions for a trialist solution to the "South Slav question" within the borders of the Danubian Monarchy<sup>39</sup> was firmly rejected by Kršnjavi, who asserted that the Croatian lands should be united, for: "Then, in a unified Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia and Bosnia, the Croats would be a majority. By acquiring and merging two independent Serbian states to a Croatian group of lands, the Catholic Croats would become a minority."<sup>40</sup> Kršnjavi found particularly unpalatable Seton-Watson's idea that the leadership of the unified South Slavic lands, as "the third state in the Monarchy" be assumed by the Croato-Serbian Coalition, which he claimed had already "practically implemented the unification of the Serbs and Croats."<sup>41</sup> Kršnjavi maintained that the reason behind Seton-Watson's misconception was his unfamiliarity with the true nature of the Coalition and its leader Svetozar Pribičević (1875-1936),<sup>42</sup> who wanted something entirely different from what the Briton was proposing: "Pribičević and his adherents want nothing to do with the moving the focus from Belgrade to Zagreb; in the Sabor and in their own publications, they declared on numerous occasions that they view Belgrade as their

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

<sup>37</sup> [Isidor] Kršnjavi, *Scotus Viator über Kroatien.*, (Separatabdruck aus der "Österreichischen Rundschau", Band XXI., Heft 3.), (Wien u. Leipzig, [1909]), 1. Seton-Watson refuted this claim as entirely unfounded (S. Viator, "Politik und Zukunftsströme", *Agramer Tagblatt* 25/1910, no. 23, p. 1.)

<sup>38</sup> Kršnjavi, *Scotus Viator über Kroatien.*, p. 2.

<sup>39</sup> In speaking of trialism, it should be noted that this is a political idea which, depending on interpretation, called for the creation of a third, South Slav or Croatian constitutional unit inside the Monarchy. On the possible extent of trialism, see: M. Gross, "Hrvatska politika velikoavstrijskog kruga oko prijestolonasljednika Franje Ferdinanda," *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* 2/1970, no. 2: 9-74.

<sup>40</sup> Kršnjavi, *Scotus Viator über Kroatien.*, p. 3.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> For more on Pribičević, see: Hrvoje Matković, *Svetozar Pribičević ideolog – stranački vođa – emigrant* (Zagreb, 1995).

authority.”<sup>43</sup> Kršnjavi had no illusions about the Croats who were members of the Croato-Serbian Coalition: “As a result of the failed policies of the Viennese and Budapest governments, they have reached the point at which they have abandoned their Croatian nationality in favor of the idea of state independence inside a Greater Serbia.”<sup>44</sup>

Kršnjavi particularly referred to Seton-Watson’s writing on the Zagreb high treason trial. In his view, this part of the brochure<sup>45</sup> could not even be seriously discussed: “The hands are Esau’s, but the voice is that of Dr. Moses – Hinković,<sup>46</sup> that most clever and agile defender of the accused Serbs, who set into motion the entirety of the European Freemasonic press to terrorize Croatia’s judges during the trial and to influence their verdict.”<sup>47</sup>

Acknowledging that the actual course of the trial was not entirely taintless, Kršnjavi nonetheless insisted the “public prosecutor Milan Accurti (1863-1934) was up to the task,” gathering sufficient evidence for a well-founded judgment.<sup>48</sup> For Kršnjavi, there was no doubt that Seton-Watson’s assessment of the high treason trial was superficial and made on the basis of subjective impressions and misleading information.<sup>49</sup>

Kršnjavi was involved in the preparation of the high treason trial himself. On the floor of the Sabor, Mile Starčević (1862-1917), the president of the Starčević Party of the Right (‘Milists’), accused Kršnjavi of compiling the indictment against the Serbs for Accurti.<sup>50</sup> Kršnjavi calmly responded to his former party colleague’s grave accusation by declaring that he was “not the composer of the indictment,” rather he only offered several excerpts from two of his unpublished historiographic works, allowing the public prosecutor to make use of them at his own discretion. Accurti did indeed use several of Kršnjavi’s passages when compiling the indictment.<sup>51</sup>

Even though he maintained that defending Baron Rauch from Seton-Watson’s attacks was not his purpose, Kršnjavi resolutely opposed any criticism of the ban. Kršnjavi would not allow Rauch to be sullied with the particularly grave sin of being an “exponent of the Hungarian government,” particularly when such accusations were leveled by an allegedly “uninterested party”: “It is

<sup>43</sup> Kršnjavi, *Scotus Viator über Kroatien*, p. 3.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> See: S. Viator, *Absolutismus in Kroatien.*, pp. 13-27.

<sup>46</sup> Kršnjavi here refers to Hinko Hinković (1854-1929).

<sup>47</sup> Kršnjavi, *Scotus Viator über Kroatien.*, p. 5.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

<sup>50</sup> “Epilog,” *Agramer Tagblatt* 25/1910, no. 92, p. 1; J. Šidak et al., *Povijest hrvatskog naroda*, p. 246; M. Kolar, “Ban Pavle Rauch i Hrvatska u njegovo vrijeme”, p. 103.

<sup>51</sup> I. Kršnjavi, “Epilog,” *Agramer Tagblatt* 25/1910, no. 93, p. 2.

an indisputable fact that *every* ban appointed at the proposal of the Hungarian minister president and with his co-signature is an exponent of the Hungarian government.”<sup>52</sup> To highlight the absurdity of this accusation, Kršnjavi emphasized that the “Croato-Serbian Coalition had already governed and would gladly once more govern under such an exponent.”<sup>53</sup> In an allusion to the government of the Croato-Serbian Coalition during the reign of Teodor Pejačević (1855-1928) and Rákodczáy, Kršnjavi, not without a measure of cynicism, concluded that the Coalition would have even endorsed Rauch had he not come to Zagreb with an already appointed government.<sup>54</sup>

Kršnjavi refuted Seton-Watson’s vituperative portrayal of Rauch as a “traitor” due to his absolutist rule in Croatia by noting that “[t]his ‘traitor’ enjoys the full favor of his king.”<sup>55</sup>

Kršnjavi said the state of emergency in Croatia is the fault of the Croato-Serbian Coalition, whose policies were opposed by his Party of the Right (Frankists). The fact that Rauch and the Frankists collaborated in the struggle against the Croato-Serbian Coalition was not seen by Kršnjavi as signifying that he and his party colleagues had “fallen into the ban’s hands.” He explained that the Frankist cooperation with Rauch was due to tactical reasons in the struggle against a common political opponent. To back this assertion, Kršnjavi advised Seton-Watson consult his numerous friends in the British foreign ministry, to ask whether it was honorable to temporarily cooperate with political adversaries if there were valid grounds to do so. Kršnjavi did not doubt that Seton-Watson would have received a response that would have brought into question his claim that cooperation between Rauch and the Frankists was a case of “political cynicism.”<sup>56</sup>

In contrast to Seton-Watson’s suggestion that the dualist system be abolished as soon as possible and an appropriate federalist organization be introduced to the Monarchy, Kršnjavi much more tactically asserted that the Austro-Hungarian Compromise should not be viewed statically, for it could be used to create unity rather than divide people. As an ironclad Central European, Kršnjavi highlighted the platform of the Party of the Right (Frankists) and his belief that Croatia would play a vital role in the much-desired integration process of the Danubian zone which traditionally corresponded to the lands under the rule of the Habsburg dynasty.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Kršnjavi, *Scotus Viator über Kroatien.*, p. 7.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9. Even though at the onset of the twentieth century, Kršnjavi and the Frankists were alone in their stance that the Danubian Monarchy had to be preserved as the optimum frame-

Upon reading Kršnjavi's critique of his view of political circumstances in Civil Croatia, Seton-Watson could not hold back his journalistic impulse to make public his own response to Kršnjavi's comments. In a rather long article, Seton-Watson persisted in the opinions he had earlier expressed.<sup>58</sup>

Even though their political opinions diverged, these two brilliant European intellectuals maintained cordial relations even as they retained their separate political and philosophical orientations.

## **Isidor Kršnjavi und Robert W. Seton-Watson über Politik in Kroatien während der Herrschaft des Banus Pavao Rauch**

### **Zusammenfassung**

Die Herrschaftsform des Banus Pavao Rauch wurde nicht nur von oppositionell orientierter Öffentlichkeit in Zivilkroatien, sondern auch vom angesehenen brittanischen Publizisten und Journalisten Robert W. Seton-Watson (Scotus Viator) scharf kritisiert. Seiner Meinung nach war Herrschaft des kroatischen Banus Rauch unkonstitutionell und diente der vollen Unterwerfung Zivilkroatiens ungarischen Interessen. Seton-Watsons Schreiben rief schnelle Antwort von Isidor Kršnjavi, Mitglied der von Josip Frank geführten Rechtspartei, hervor. In seiner Schrift bestritt Kršnjavi die negative Charakterisierung der politischen Verhältnisse in Kroatien zu jener Zeit von Seite des Britten und zwar mit gut formulierten Argumenten.

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work for the achievement of Croatian national, cultural and economic aspirations, eight decades later, they received unexpected moral validation from a representative of the Marxist, pro-Yugoslav intelligentsia: "In the end, with reference to the status and perspectives of the Croats in the Monarchy, it would be worthwhile to point out two facts: first, being in the Habsburg Monarchy meant being inside the Central European civilizational sphere, but without any chance of achieving an autonomous and independent state, and second, it was precisely this position which ensured that the Croats were always ahead of all other South Slav lands in the process of creating a civil society, particularly in the fields of culture and the arts, education and science." (Dušan Bilandžić, *Hrvatska moderna povijest* (Zagreb, 1999), p. 40).

<sup>58</sup> S. Viator, "Politik und Zukunftsträume," *Agrarier Tagblatt* 25/1910, no. 23, pp. 1-2.