

CROATIAN-SLOVENIAN RELATIONS IN POLITICS, 1848-1914: EXAMPLES OF MUTUAL TIES

Stjepan MATKOVIĆ*

The events of 1848 showed that the Croats and Slovenes had individual national identities and fully-formed views on the integration of their own ethnic territories. At the same time, both peoples, each in their own way, aspired to come closer in order to protect themselves from the looming hegemonic forces within the ethnically diverse Habsburg Monarchy and outside of it. Although the Slovenian political movement, with its platform of Unified Slovenia, did not stand out in 1848 in the eyes of Croatian politicians, already then it showed that there were circumstances that pointed to the idea of reciprocity. Despite the emphasis placed on specific forms of national identity, events which demonstrated that Croats and Slovenes were too weak to secure individual independence stressed the need for ties. So the author attempted to present an account of Croatian-Slovenian relations from 1848 to 1914. He took into consideration relations between groups and individuals who could be considered as a kind of national leaders, as well as relations between other groups and individuals in Croatian and Slovenian territories during the same period of time (e. g., Croatian-Slovenian relations in Istria).

In European history, the year 1848 is designated as a watershed in the formation of modern national communities and civil society. Revolutionary trends opened the floodgates for national movements in many countries in the Old Continent. These movements for a general national awakening signified the growth of a new collective awareness which emerged parallel to ideas grounded in the liberal understanding of civil and political rights. The resonance of revolutionary waves was inevitably felt in politically, economically and socially fragmented Central Europe. The events of 1848 showed that

* Stjepan Matković, Ph. D., Croatian Institute of History, Zagreb, Croatia

the Croats and Slovenes had individual national identities and fully-formed views on the integration of their own ethnic territories. Personal political identity was a consequence of separate historical development and contemporary awareness of individuality. At the same time, both peoples, each in their own way, aspired to come closer in order to protect themselves from the looming hegemonic forces within the ethnically diverse Habsburg Monarchy and outside of it. Although the Slovenian political movement, with its platform of Unified Slovenia, did not stand out in 1848 in the eyes of Croatian politicians, already then it showed that there were circumstances that pointed to the idea of reciprocity. Despite the emphasis placed on specific forms of national identity, events which demonstrated that the Croats and Slovenes were too weak to secure individual independence stressed the need for ties. The frequently extolled idea of Slavic reciprocity and the motif of strengthening individual positions through the idea of Austro-Slavism, which implied a federal reorganization of the Habsburg Monarchy, necessarily prompted the search for allies against the Hungarians, and among the latter the Slovenes would play a special role in the Croatian example. This would be reflected on the Slovenian side by their relationship with the German alliance and their aspirations for Austria's independence in relation to the Frankfurt Parliament, which would lead to cooperation with the Croats. During 1848, the Croatian state parliament, the Sabor, chaired by the viceroy, or *ban*, Josip Jelačić, sought the unification of the Triune Kingdom with Serbian Vojvodina and Lower Steiermark, Carinthia, Carniola, Istria and Gorizia (Gorica), which were defined as "the remaining South Slavic provinces of the Austrian Monarchy," which implied the severance of constitutional relations with the Hungarians and entry into a union with Austria, and this in turn meant gathering the Croats and Slovenes into a single state.¹ On the Slovenian side, a political alliance with the Croats was advocated in particular by the Klagenfurt priest Matija Majar and the representative of the Slovenia Society in Steiermark, Štefan Kočevar, but this proposal was not accepted by all members of the Slovenian national movement.²

The period of neo-absolutism temporarily halted the progress of national movements throughout the Monarchy. The abolishment of the constitutional order did not, however, signal the death knell of efforts to raise national awareness, which is demonstrated by the fact that in 1853 Petar Kozler published the 'map of the Slovenian state' – *Zemljovid slovenskih dežel* – in which he demarcated the Slovenian borders with neighboring peoples. On the Croatian side, several personalities appeared, such as Ante Starčević, as the first to unambiguously reject the broad South Slavic framework, Eugen Kvaternik,

¹ Velimir Deželić, "Slovinci za sjedinjenje s Hrvatskom god. 1848.," *Vjesnik Kr. hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinskog Zemaljskog arkiva*, vol. XII, (Zagreb, 1910), pp. 54-60 and Tomislav Markus, *Hrvatski politički pokret 1848.-1849.* (Zagreb, 2000), p. 124.

² At the session of the Croatian Sabor of 9 June, Kočevar said: "Our greatest desire is to unite, but when the time is right, when the national spirit emerges and gains strength". See: *Hrvatski državni sabor*, vol. 1, Josip Kolanović, ed. (Zagreb, 2001), p. 413.

who traveled to Russia and internationalized certain aspects of the national question in the Habsburg Monarchy, Franjo Rački, who became a respected historian with political ambitions, and Josip Juraj Strossmayer, who launched his career as the successful bishop in Đakovo, which helped him propagate the idea of Yugoslavism that would find its place in both Croatian and Slovenian politics.³ During the neo-absolutist period there could be no talk of creating any form of state union, rather greater attention would be accorded to seeking closer ties in the field of culture and deepening mutual trust.

Until the collapse of the Dual Monarchy, the key to understanding Croatian-Slovenian relations is their geographic proximity, their common destiny in lands ruled by the Habsburg dynasty and their mutual aspiration to join forces to resist the encroachment of larger nations: Germans, Hungarians and Italians. This mutual attraction was additionally spurred in cases when the actions of the imperial authorities were unanimously assessed as barriers to their own national development.

The Austro-Hungarian Agreement (1867) and the subsequent Hungarian-Croatian Agreement (1868) permanently fixed trends within the Monarchy until its collapse. As opposed to the Slovenian lands, which despite their partition were entirely in the Austrian half of the Monarchy, the Croatian lands were divided between its Cisleithan and Transleithan sections. The Croatian position was additionally complicated by the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878. The large number of Bosnian and Herzegovinian Croats and the postulates of Croatian politics, which were largely dictated by the principles of the historical statehood right (and religious bonds), ensured that there was a systematic interest in Bosnia and Herzegovina. That this territory was vital in the discourse on the organization of the Monarchy is shown by the example of the newspaper *Slovenec*, which, on the eve of the occupation, proposed that Bosnia and Herzegovina be merged with the Croatian and Slovenian lands into Illyria, which would extend from Beljak to Trebinje, and from Osijek to Kotor.⁴

The Croats had a better constitutional position than the Slovenes, given the sub-dualist content of the Hungarian-Croatian Agreement which recognized limited independence for Croatia. According to this Agreement, the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia were a separate "political nation," with a specific territory, autonomously governed affairs and governing bodies, with the Croatian as the official language.⁵ Furthermore, on the Croatian side, constant references were made to their own constitutional tradition – the Croatian right to state-

³ Petar Korunić, *Jugoslavenska ideologija u hrvatskoj i slovenskoj politici: hrvatsko-slovenski politički odnosi 1848-1870*. (Zagreb, 1986).

⁴ Vasilij Melik, *Slovinci in avstrijska država 1848-1918*, in: *Grafenauerjev zbornik*, V. Rajšp, ed. (Ljubljana, 1996), p. 524.

⁵ For the text of the Compromise, see: T. Cipek-S. Matković, *Programatski dokumenti hrvatskih političkih stranaka i skupina 1842.-1914*. (Zagreb, 2006), pp. 689-698.

hood as the foundation of uninterrupted Croatian statehood since the Early Middle Ages – on which basis aspirations could be expressed for the creation of a modern Croatian state, but with the central role of the Kingdom of Croatia in the solution to any contemporary national question in the “Slavic South.” Most politicians deliberated in the context of the centuries-long Hungarian-Croatian state union, within which satisfaction of broader state autonomy was sought. The factor of historical legitimism was particularly prominent in the Habsburg Monarchy, within which there were established divisions between nations with independent political histories and those without. Therefore, until the end of the nineteenth century, the primary political forces in Croatia regularly highlighted the act of the Croatian diet of landed estates in Cetin (1527), which elected Ferdinand I Habsburg as Croatian king to fill the vacant throne, as an argument backing defense of the statehood right. The other major constitutional decision of the aristocratic diet was the Croatian Pragmatic Sanction (1712). It recognized a woman from the Habsburg dynasty, which reigned over the Austrian lands, as the Croatian ruler. The Sabor’s decision to have the Triune Kingdom ruled by the female line “which shall have not only Austria, but also the provinces of Steiermark, Carinthia and Carniola” (*qui uidelicet non modo Austriae, sed provinciarum etiam Styriae, Carinthiae, et Carnioliae possessionem habebit*) would be particularly significant to Croatian relations with the Slovenes. Views of the validity of these decisions would be subject to various interpretations, ranging from the claim that these were portentous acts which were highly relevant to contemporary politics, to the opinion that these were pre-modern documents that were worthless in the new context.

The subordination of the Croats and Slovenes in the dualist system, administrative disunity and fear of domination by more powerful neighbors crucially influenced the intensity of relations between these two peoples. In other words, dualism contributed to the avoidance of mutual conflicts, directing one people to the other. During the Agreement period, the absolute majority of public activists advocated the elimination of any sources of discord and accentuated common features. The arc of cooperation extended from the search for a solution within the framework of the existing constitutional situation to the formation of a new state unit within the Monarchy.

Political parties played the key role in defining mutual relations from the restoration of constitutionality in the 1860s onward. The members of the National Party and the Party of the (State) Right made a particular contribution to the Croatian political scene. Both parties encouraged ties with Slovenes, but each in its own way and in compliance with the specific aspects of its own political ideologies and their evolution. Regardless of party affiliation, a series of meetings and gestures by national elites indicated an atmosphere of mutual friendship. Moreover, it may be noted that there were even political concepts (Austro-Slavism, federalism, Yugoslavism, Trialism, neo-Slavism) which, each in its own way, encouraged the idea of closer ties in the search for a new ter-

ritorial demarcation in the Monarchy and the accordance of greater national rights to the Croats, Slovenes and other Slavic peoples. On the other hand, the usually governing Unionists (the members of the National-Constitutional, later National Party, pejoratively called the “Magyarones”) adhered to the letter of the Agreement and, thus, the state union between Hungary and Civil Croatia in the form of a real union, so that any calls for closer ties between the Croats and Slovenes were seen as anti-constitutional agitation and, after 1868, as an attack on the dualist structure which was, in their view, a guarantor of satisfactory autonomy in alliance with the Hungarians.

Since the 1860s, the primary role in the creation of an alliance was played by the (liberal) National Party (called the Independent National Party from the 1880s onward; its members were called *obzoraši* after the main Croatian newspaper, *Obzor* – Horizon). Its most prominent figures, the influential Đakovo Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer and Canon Franjo Rački, advocated the closest possible cooperation with the Slovenes to jointly resist centralization policies and to push for the federalization of the Monarchy. The Yugoslav political concept of the National Party was not entirely immutable, for it was adapted to changing political circumstances and it depended on alignment of interests with political representatives from Slovenia and Serbia. At the same time, it did not neglect certain historical arguments, so that when the work of the restored Sabor resumed in 1861, a submission was compiled according to which the totality of the Triune Kingdom included Metlika (in southeast Slovenia) and part of Steiermark, although in later periods the party did not reiterate this claim. The ideally conceived union would be an alliance between a unified Croatia and a unified Slovenia. Whether a matter of attaining greater political autonomy inside the Habsburg Monarchy or establishing a separate state union of South Slav peoples, the National Party doubtlessly endorsed ties with the Slovenians in a broader context, to which a series of their initiatives to create bonds of “Austrian Yugoslavism” testify. The Academy of Arts and Science, with its seat in Zagreb, opened in 1867, was called Yugoslav, which was a neutral name in the interest of gathering Croatian, Serbian, Slovenian and Bulgarian intellectuals as a condition for the more comprehensive unification of these peoples, and Slovenian representatives became its members. Rački propagated the cult of Sts. Cyril and Methodius as the “Slavic apostles,” who brought together the South Slavs and unified until then divided Christians. Strossmayer, for example, financially supported the Slovenian Matica (the central literary and cultural organization) and the Society of St. Hermagoras (Sveti Mohor), while in return his Slovenian associates attended the commemoration of the three-hundredth anniversary of the death of Nikola Šubić Zrinski (1866) and the fiftieth anniversary of the bishop’s ordination (1888). For their part, the members of Croatia’s National Party attended ceremonial gatherings and meetings of their Slovenian counterparts, which served as public declarations of mutual ties. Besides philanthropy and celebrations of anniversaries, cooperation also included political activities which yielded a series of proposals for

the resolution of constitutional matters. Not long after the establishment dualism, Josip Miškatović, one of the leaders of the National Party, advocated a political alliance between a unified Slovenia and the Triune Kingdom that would be established inside Hungary. A joint meeting in Sisak and a conference in Ljubljana demonstrated the frailty of Miškatović's proposal under dualist conditions and in relations with the Monarchy's Serbs as the third factor of Yugoslav integration. Attempts for more substantial ties also opened debate on the need to depend exclusively on their own resources within their own borders. Among the members of the National Party, the prevailing view was that they had to continue to negotiate toward common objectives, while in the view of contemporary Croatian historiography, "the idea of unity of South Slavs inside and outside the Monarchy remained a significant factor." A step further was the first point in the platform proposed from the ranks of the National Party (1874), which mentioned a new political alliance with federal features: "The ultimate objective of the common nation-oriented aspirations and efforts of the Croats, Serbs, Bulgarians and Slovenians is their unification into a free and independent Yugoslav national and state union."⁶ During the reign of Ivan Mažuranić as ban (1873-1880), not much was said about an alliance with the Slovenes. The principal problems of Croatian politics during his reign were, besides the modernization of society, the reintegration of the Military Frontier and the formulation of a position with reference to the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the beginning of the 1890s, during the reign of Károly Khuen-Héderváry as ban (1883-1903), mutual cooperation was revived, for the members of the Croatian opposition were once more compelled to seek allies in an atmosphere of domination by an autocratic system. In particular, ties were fostered with Ivan Hribar, a liberal and the mayor of Ljubljana, who supported the idea of promoting economic and cultural ties between the Slovenes and Croats on their way to a "common future."⁷ The subsequent actions of the Independent National Party led toward coalescence of the Croatian opposition, which entailed a merger with the Rightists. This idea was openly endorsed by the liberal newspaper *Slovenski narod* (Slovenian Nation) in the expectation that the idea of unity between the Croats and Slovenes would thereby be reinforced.

A separate chapter pertains to the relationship of the Party of the Right with the Slovenes. From the very beginning, upon their appearance in the Sabor in 1861, the adherents of the Rightist ideology advocated the idea of an independent Croatian state based on the legitimacy derived from the Croatian

⁶ T. Cipek – S. Matković, *Programatski dokumenti hrvatskih političkih stranaka i skupina 1842.-1914.* (Zagreb, 2006), p. 260.

⁷ On this, see the abundant correspondence between Hribar and various Croats in: Ivan Hribar, *Moji spomini*, vol. I (Ljubljana, 1928) and his personal papers in the National and University Library in Ljubljana, held in the Manuscripts Section under the heading "Zapuščina Ivana Hribarja" (Ivan Hribar Papers).

right to statehood, which was at odds with the Slovenian political stance based on natural rights. The contradictions were apparent in this case. Eugen Kvaternik, one of the co-founders of the Party of the Right, referred to the Slovenes – in line with his view of history – as “mountain Croats,” “Alpine Croats,” or “Noric Croats.”⁸ Although the first term was long used in the Rightist vocabulary, and also in the rhetoric of their opponents who wanted to underscore this negation of a “fraternal” people, time would show that it was not an obstacle to mutual cooperation, particularly between the Rightists and individual Slovenian politicians. Ante Starčević, the other co-founder of the Rightist party, set forth from the view that the Slovenes could not withstand the pressure of the Italians and Germans, and that for them the best thing would be to voluntarily tie their fate to Croatia on the basis of the historical statehood right. He explained the rationale for gathering around Croatia by noting the higher developmental stage of the Slovenian economy and the many virtues of the Slovenes that could be validated even more in a Croatian state as conceived by the Rightists. Despite such views, which underscored the advantages of merging the Slovenian lands with the Croatian state, the Rightist ideology did not entirely repel the Slovenians from the Croats. Rački’s assessment that the Rightists “hate the Serbs and Slovenes,” while the National Party advocated solidarity, was not entirely accurate. At the end of the nineteenth century, some Slovenian politicians adjusted their stance toward the Rightist concept based on the Croatian statehood right. The Party of the Right became the numerically strongest political group among the opposition ranks and it demonstrated its value in the process of integrating the Croatian people, extending its influence to Dalmatia, Istria, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. During the 1890s, ties with the Rightists were formed by Ivan Tavčar, who showed his affinity for cooperation by attending the unveiling ceremony for the monument to Ivan Gundulić in Dubrovnik and the laying of the cornerstone for the Starčević Hall in Zagreb, where he held a speech lauding the Croatian statehood right.

The first codified platform of the Rightists, drafted on June 26, 1894, which resulted from an attempted cooperation agreement with the Independent National Party to form a united opposition, highlighted in its first point, which deals with a description of the territorial extent grounded in historical and natural rights, that “all due support will be given to the efforts of our Slovenian brothers to have the Slovenian lands gathered by this state body.”⁹ This Platform, which the Rightists advocated until Austria-Hungary’s collapse, clearly indicated that they had to join forces to combat the negative impact of dualism, but also that in principle they expected the Slovenes to join the Croatian kingdom. Prior to its adoption, the Platform was subject to long deliberations between the leaders of the Independent National Party and the Party of the

⁸ Ljerka Kuntić, “Slovenija u političkom programu Stranke prava do 1871,” *Jadranski zbornik* 3/1958 (Rijeka-Pula), p. 115.

⁹ Stjepan Matković, *Čista stranka prava 1895.-1903.* (Zagreb, 2001), pp. 39-44.

Right. The former party stressed the need for the Slovenes to make their own decision “wherein we certainly shall not manage to prove that those provinces do not belong to the territory of that people who call themselves by the political name of the Croatian nation, or that they ever were the territory of the Croatian kingdom.” This view was based on the fact that official historians never included “Steiermark, Carinthia, Carniola, some parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina” even in the virtual territory of the Kingdom of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia. The Rightists could cite Starčević’s position, which he stated earlier (1883) in the article “Slovenes and Serbs”: “Let us be clear. When one speaks of the unification of the Croatian provinces, this does not mean subjugation of one by the other, but rather the consolidation of them all, so that they are under a single ruler, under a single government and under a single constitutional legal order. But it is all the same whether the government and parliament are in Split or in Ljubljana or anywhere else.”¹⁰ In the end, the representatives of the Independent National Party acceded to the inclusion of the Slovenes in the joint agreement with the Rightists.

After the Party of the Right split into the ‘Core’ Party of the Right (its adherents called the *domovinaši* – ‘Homelanders’) and the Pure Party of the Right (*frankovci*, or ‘Frankists’) in 1895, tensions arose on the Croatian political scene, which in no way discouraged the idea of coming closer. Some of the ‘Homelanders,’ who soon fused with the Independent National Party, proceeded in a direction closer to the latter party. Their parliamentary address in 1897 encouraged integration as a move toward the creation of a “stronger state attribute in the Monarchy’s south.” Already in the next year the main convention of the Party of the Right was held in Trsat, at which, in the presence of some Slovenian politicians led by Janez Krek, rhetoric about “fraternal feelings” and the values of the Croatian statehood right could once more be heard. On this occasion, the assertion on the even-handed unification of Slovenes with Croats was confirmed, based on the principle that they were the same people with due respect for the justified desires of the Slovenian section. This Croatian-Slovenian collaboration led to deliberations in the Hungarian parliament, at which the Trsat gathering was characterized as an expression of “Slavic federalism” with the objective of eradicating the Monarchy’s dualist concept. The same trend continued at the onset of the twentieth century. The Croatian Party of the Right (HSP), established in 1903, which was a component of the Croato-Serbian Coalition, continued to cite the Platform of 1894, in which it saw the basis for harmonious action with their Slovenian “brothers.” The HSP particularly endorsed the concept of folk culture as a crucial component of educational policy. For this party, this meant “tighter bonds with the Slovenes, Serbs and Bulgarians.” In this vein, there were demands to establish a department for the Slovenian language and culture at the University of Zagreb.

¹⁰ See: “Slovinci i Srbi,” in: Blaž Jurišić, ed., *Ante Starčević. Izabrani spisi* (Zagreb, 1943), pp. 246-250.

However, when the HSP opted for the 'new course' policies formulated by Dalmatian politicians of liberal-Rightist orientation, the Slovenian side was no longer included in this conception, which was meant to alter established relations through a critique of German policies in an effort to seek firmer support among the Hungarian opposition in order to secure unification of Dalmatia with Civil Croatia as a part of the Hungarian half of the Monarchy. The failure to invite Slovenian representatives to the meeting in Rijeka, at which the Resolution was adopted which opened the door to the formation of the Croato-Serbian Coalition, signified a break in the traditionally good relations between the former 'domovinaši' and 'obzoraši' with the Slovenian People's Party (SLS), who saw the Rijeka Resolution as blow to political reciprocity, and they were particularly dismayed by the agreement between advocates of the new course and Italian politicians, which they saw as a betrayal of their own interests in the Austrian Seaboard to the benefit of the Italians.

The development of relations with the Slovenians was different in the case of the Pure Party of the Right, which was led by the attorney Josip Frank. This party's members adhered to the Platform of 1894, but for a long time they saw the liberal Ivan Tavčar as an ideal partner, while they were more critical of the conservative Šusteršič. It was only with the emergence of the "new course" and the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina that changes occurred which opened the way for stronger ties between the Frankists and the Slovenian People's Party. Integration via the trialist idea came to the fore, as this was supposed to solve the national problems of the Croats and Slovenes with the patronage of the heir to the throne, Francis Ferdinand, through the organization of a third unit in the Monarchy's south. Slovenian and Croatian politicians maintained that the South Slav question was the key to the Habsburg Monarchy's fate, which would be soluble once the throne changed hands. This is why they both called for the survival and reorganization of the Monarchy. In this they expressed their loyalty to the ruling dynasty, seeing in it the key to improving their status. It was precisely this dynastic patriotism which drew the Rightists and the Slovenian People's Party together. At the same time, for Slovenian politicians the Croatian statehood right was vital as a legal device, for they interpreted it such that the Slovenian lands could be tied to Croatian territory. Certain politicians not affiliated with any party, such as Nikola Zvonimir Bjelovučić of Dubrovnik, were also proponents of the trialist idea. They believed that the dynasty could satisfy Croats and Slovenes. Bjelovučić published a brochure on 'trialism and the Croatian state' (*Trijalizam i hrvatska država*, Dubrovnik 1911), in which he conceived of the third unit as the Croatian state which would encompass all Croatian and Slovenian states with its capital in Zagreb, while a year later he published an article on the "achievement of trialism." In it, he put forward the proposal on the unification of "all Yugoslavs" into a single body consisting of "1) The Triune Kingdom with all of its severed components: Rijeka, Međimurje and Serbian Vojvodina, Bačka

and Banat, 2) Bosnia and Herzegovina, 3) Istria, and 4) Slovenia.” According to him, Slovenia would include Carniola, the southern, Slovenian part of Steiermark, the southern, Slovenian part of Carinthia, Gorizia, Trieste, the north-western part of Istria and the Slovenians in western Hungary, stressing that the “Slovenes in Slovenia would continue to have their own language and schools, just as the Croats and Serbs in the Croatian lands.” Bjelovučić’s outline foresaw a special status for the ports of Trieste and Rijeka.

The Starčević Party of the Right, which emerged after a schism in the Frankist party, maintained the Platform of 1894 with minor additions.¹¹ The new situation in 1909 led to the inclusion of Žumberak and Marindol as parts of the ancient Croatian kingdom. In principle, this party did not back down from the struggle of the Croats and Slovenes for common ideals based on the Croatian statehood right, which was reflected in their support for obstruction in the Reichsrat (Imperial Council). Only during the First World War did this party accept the principle of “national unity” which also implied political bonds with the Serbs, first within the Monarchy, and later on its ruins. It passed a similar course as the Slovenian People’s Party, which similarly supported the maintenance of the Habsburg Monarchy, only to change its stance in 1917 and assume one of the key roles in the creation of the common state of all South Slav peoples.

The peak of Rightist cooperation with Slovenian politicians ensued in the latter half of 1911, when the Pan-Rightist Party was formed under the leadership of Mile Starčević. Slovenian representatives were supposed to be given a prominent role in this regard. Thus, the Supreme Leadership of the Party of the Right was joined by the Carniolan chief official Ivan Šušteršič, and Janez Krek, Janko Brejc and others.¹² They actually operated as a Croatian-Slovenian executive committee, when the ideal of unification and independence of the Croatian-Slovenian lands rooted in the Rightist platform was intended to obviate the option of creating ties with Serbian politicians. At a meeting in Opatija (1913) it was stressed that: “After the armed victory of the Balkan allies, there shall remain the pressing need to gather all Croats and Slovenes in the strongest possible phalanx, to tighten our ranks and, with forces joined, continue the struggle to exercise the Croatian statehood right and the unify our people on this basis.”¹³ However, such arrangements never came to fruition, as the Pan-Rightist Party fell apart due to disputes within the Croatian ranks.

Croatian-Slovenian cooperation was also visible with reference to Bosnia and Herzegovina. It came to the fore in the activities of those Slovenes gathered

¹¹ T. Cipek – S. Matković, op. cit., p. 603.

¹² For more on the political ties between the Croats and Slovenes, see: Andrej Rahten, *Savezništva i diobe : razvoj slovensko-hrvatskih političkih odnosa u Habsburškoj Monarhiji 1848.-1918.* (Zagreb, 2008).

¹³ T. Cipek – S. Matković, op. c., p. 669.

around the Vrhbosna (Sarajevo) Archbishop Josip Stadler. Outstanding among them were the future Ljubljana Bishop Antun Bonaventura Jeglič, Canon Karlo Cankar, and the Jesuit Ljudevit Dostal. Dostal stood out in particular with his plan to colonize Slovenes in vacant lands in Bosnia in order to increase the number of minority Catholics and thereby bolster their economic power.¹⁴ It was also here that the concept of cooperation between Šusteršič, as the main representative of the Slovenes and Croats in the Reichsrat, and the Rightists, who had become deeply rooted in Bosnia and Herzegovina, came to the fore. Both sides asserted that unification of all South Slav lands inside the Monarchy would strike a political balance with its Hungarian and Austrian sections. In the Reichsrat, Šusteršič stressed that historical facts speak in favor of the Croatian right to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Such statements pleased the Rightists, and opened the doors even wider to cooperation between the relevant political representatives of the Croats and Slovenes. The re-opening of the question of organization of the Monarchy's south together with the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the objective of creating a South Slav state unit, suited the Slovenian side.

The turn of the nineteenth into the twentieth century was marked by the appearance of new ideological currents on the political scene of the entire Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, within which no satisfactory solutions to the national question were pending; moreover, the latter became a burning problem that could not be resolved. Social progress and the ensuing debate on the introduction of universal suffrage spurred the establishment of new parties and political groups, which had an impact on the intensity of Slovenian-Croatian relations. Despite the renewed content of old, and the appearance of new, ideologies, the direction of Croatian-Slovenian cooperation was not altered. Moreover, the ideas of social democracy, Christian socialism and modern liberalism proffered new forms of cooperation, which could even serve as agitation against opponents in their own countries. The primary feature of this time was the connected worldviews of the representatives of the two peoples, imbued with the continued calls for the necessity of an alliance to solve the national question inside or outside of the Monarchy. An example of solidarity includes the great popular unrest which broke out throughout Civil Croatia in 1903 to oppose the reign of Ban Khuen-Héderváry. On this occasion, even the Slovenian delegates in Vienna condemned the repressive measures taken against the demonstrators, while in Zagreb, upon the arrival of Slovenian teachers, the public shouted: "Long live our Slovenian brothers! Fraternal unity! Long live Croatia!" Protest rallies were held in Slovenian cities to voice support for the Croatian side in the struggle against their subordinate status in the union with the Hungarians, and also to express the aspiration for mutual support in resistance against the Monarchy's leading nations.

¹⁴ Zoran Grijak, "Doprinos Ljudevita Dostala razvoju hrvatsko-slovenske suradnje u Bosni i Hercegovini u austrougarskom razdoblju," in: *Anali za istrske in mediteranske študije*, Series Historia et Sociologia, 12 (Koper, 2002), pp. 51-62.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, views began to surface in some political circles according to which the Habsburg Monarchy was no longer a source of peace and prosperity, and that national disputes could not be solved therein. Until then, it was stressed that all particular interests must comply with the Monarchy's interests, so that political struggle focused on reform of the internal constitutional structure. However, a new generation of politicians radicalized their views and their objective became to eliminate the Monarchy. Croats and Slovenes would also cooperate in this task, seeing a solution to their problems in the creation of an alliance with the Kingdom of Serbia.

The Christian social idea appeared among the Slovenes and Croats in the 1890s, although its successes would be more apparent in the case of the former. The concept of creating Catholic political organizations was a response to the affirmation of liberal civil society by those who held traditional Catholic beliefs. The successes of the Catholic movement were more notable among the Slovenes. The latter held the First Slovenian Catholic Congress (Ljubljana, 1892) earlier, which then became the basis for the emergence of the Catholic National Party.¹⁵ From the very beginning, and as a result of the political situation in Cisleithania, the party aspired to initiate joint action with the Croats, and this cooperation was also spurred by the ties between the liberal National Progressive Party with the local German magnates. On the Croatian side there were attempts to implement a similar organizational formula. The example of the Croatian Labor Coalition and the later case of the group around the newspaper *Hrvatstvo* ('Croatiansim') showed that the concept of a party with an exclusively Christian-social orientation did not have a chance among the traditional parties which had respected clergymen in their ranks. Therefore, the Croatian Catholic Movement was launched, while the Catholic National Party turned to cooperation with a portion of the "*domovinaš*" Rightists.¹⁶ The Croatian Catholic Movement created numerous organizations which were supposed to restore Catholic principles to public life. The First Croatian Catholic Meeting (1900) was also attended by Ljubljana Bishop Anton Bonaventura Jeglič. The Christian-social concept stressed first and foremost work in the social and economic fields. Here a major role was played by Janez Krek, who managed to attract many members of the Croatian Catholic Movement by holding courses on the organization of Catholic socio-economic cooperatives which had already taken deep root in the Slovenian lands. Bishop Antun Mahnič on the island of Krk played a distinguished role in the promotion of Slovenian influences rooted in a Catholic foundation. Prior to coming to Krk, he launched the newspaper *Rimski Katolik* ('Roman Catholic'), while in Croatia he established the influential journal *Hrvatska Straža* ('Croatian Sentinel'). On the eve of the First World War (1912), he launched the newspaper *Riječke*

¹⁵ Andrej Rahten, Pokušaji stvaranja hrvatsko-slovenske katoličke političke organizacije, in: Z. Matijević, ed., *Hrvatski katolički pokret* (Zagreb, 2002), pp. 373-381.

¹⁶ Jure Krišto, *Hrvatski katolički pokret 1903-1945* (Zagreb, 2004), pp. 15-30.

novine ('Rijeka News') in Rijeka, which promoted the ideas of the Croatian Catholic Movement. The members of this group advocated the idea of national unity among all South Slavs, and with reference to relations with the Slovenes, they emphasized the necessity of political cooperation. The Second Croatian Meeting and the Fourth Slovenian Catholic Meeting held in Ljubljana (1913) both highlighted these ties.

The idea of reciprocity was also present among the social democrats who, based on electoral results, were not a major political factor on either side. The labor movement with social democratic orientation began to grow simultaneously in Slovenia and Croatia during the 1870s. Despite administrative divisions, both groups came to accept the Hainfeld Program of Austrian social democracy, which highlighted the importance of the international class struggle. The early history of organized social democracy saw mutual cooperation at the level of visits and joint conferences and solidarity in the face of repression by the regime provoked by socialist agitation. The leader of the Social Democratic Party of Croatia and Slavonia (est. 1894), Vitomir Korać, particularly stressed the close ties with Etbin Kristan, his counterpart from the Yugoslav Social Democratic Party (est. 1896), which was the predecessor of the Slovenian socialist movement. Both parties maintained that the way to the creation of a socialist society should come with the merger of the Serbs, Croats, Slovenes and Bulgarians into a single nation. They rejected the trialist idea as little more than a delusion. Korać wrote a considerable number of criticisms aimed at the Slovenian side, particularly during the First World War. In his view, the Slovenian socialists were opportunists who, at those moments that decided the fate of Austria-Hungary, waited "for the situation to clear so that they could proceed safely, when all was said and done." In other words, he criticized their hesitation in opting to advocate a Yugoslav state on the ruins of the Dual Monarchy.

The Croatian Popular Peasant Party of Stjepan Radić, a new group on the Croatian political scene (est. 1904), continued with the tradition of calling for Croatian-Slovenian reciprocity. Its inaugural program, in that section on "national politics," stressed that the "Slovenes and Croats are so close to each other, that they are actually one nation with the Croats, which must work in harmony toward a common future." The neo-Austro-Slavism of Stjepan Radić implied an alliance of all Slavic nations, and this was detailed in the plan for a Danubian Federation of states and nations, wherein a Croatian-Serbian-Slovenian state had to be organized within the Monarchy.¹⁷ Later Radić established firm ties with the Pan-Slovenian People's Party, in which the peasantry was very well represented, while in a speech delivered in Ljubljana (1909) during the establishment of this party, he declared: "You Slovenes derive your strength from that flame burning before the altar (...) You were the first in the Slavic

¹⁷ Stjepan Matković, "Viđenje Stjepana Radića o preobražaju Habsburške monarhije 1905.-1906.," *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* 25/1993, no. 1: 125-143.

world to place a peasant on your throne, you were the first to make peasants the most important factor in politics (...) We shall be with you and for you (...) you perceived that our future lies within our peasantry, and you set this idea as an eternal foundation when you hitched the cross to the plow." Even so, Radić soon rejected the notion of creating ties with the representatives of political Catholicism, thereby severing ties with the SLS.

The Croatian Progressive Party advocated "greater educational and economic ties with the Slovenes and Bulgarians," explaining that this would create the basis for rejecting the territorial pretensions of any foreign power. The overriding view among these progressives was that ideals should not be sought in the past, but rather in the concept of national unity. Its sister party in Dalmatia, the Croatian Popular Progressive Party, under the leadership of Josip Smodlaka, distinguished between Croatian relations with the Serbs and Slovenes. In the first case, the Croats and Serbs were one people, one blood and one language, while in the latter cases the Slovenes were "cousins" with whom the Croats must become better acquainted, establishing cooperation and mutual assistance. Once the "progressives" joined the Croato-Serbian Coalition, interest in the Slovenia dwindled, as they attempted to solve Croatian political problems by opportunistic means within the scope of the Hungarian-Croatian Agreement.

During the commissariat of Ban Slavko Cuvaj and during the Balkan Wars, a new political current appeared. The Nationalist Youth propagated an integral Yugoslav idea, according to which the central place in political projections must be assumed by the Croats and Serbs as a single nation which must meld into a unified Yugoslav nation over time. They mentioned the Slovenes much more rarely in their statements, but the latter were seen as a component of the unified Yugoslav nation "from Skoplje to Ljubljana."

A particular example of Croatian-Slovenian cooperation proceeded in Istria, where joint efforts were invested to overcome the dominance of the Italian side. Owing to the limited franchise, Italian representatives dominated local political life, and they were also predominant in economic and cultural life. Because of this, the Italian side imposed a political doctrine wherein the superior Italian majority confronted the inferior Slavic minority which wanted to curtail the national historical character of Istria, even though the Croats and Slovenes accounted for a demographic majority. Therefore, from the standpoint of establishing equality, the core task was to overcome the subordinate position of the Croats and Slovenes, while the situation imposed the parallel development of two national movements connected under the idea of South Slav ("Slavonic") integration within which the Croatian and Slovenian nations were politically formed. The Rightist ideology made inroads during the 1880s, but it adapted to the Istrian milieu, so that there was something of a synthesis of the platforms of the National Party and the Rightists without any deeper rifts in the continuity of Croatian-Slovenian relations.

An expression of the need for joint action was the formation of the Croatian-Slovenian Club in the Istrian territorial diet (Sabor) in 1884.¹⁸ The club brought together the political representatives of the two peoples in their efforts to strike a balance with the Italians, and it was an extension of the Croatian-Slovenian National Party, which was a necessary organization to secure the best results in the elections to the territorial diet. The 'Edinost' (Unity) Political Society, seated in Trieste, the Political Society for Croats and Slovenes in Pazin (1902) and the emergence of various types of cooperatives and educational institutions, all contributed to the breadth of the reciprocity movement, and they were solid indicators of cooperation which rested on the formation of elites and the organization of both peoples in the political, economic and cultural sense. The language question was particularly prominent, and the objective was to secure the equality of the Croatian and Slovenian languages in all pores of public life, especially in the Istrian diet, where the exclusivity of the Italian language was in effect. The Austrian government was lobbied jointly, and open complaints were directed at the former, which it was allowing a system of Italianization that was "suppressing the Croats and Slovenes." This was not just a matter of promoting high politics, for the greatest efforts were dedicated to the "enhancement of spiritual and material benefits," which meant a different distribution of provincial resources that would not favor the western part of Istria, with its Italian majority, and the construction of elementary and vocational schools, the improvement of roads, the development of commerce and trades, the repeal of the effects of the 'Wine Clause,' the restriction of fishing rights for Italian fishers in a trade agreement with Italy, the organization of peasant cooperatives, the provision of inexpensive loans and the establishment of cultural institutions.

A particular model of cooperation was put into effect in the Reichsrat in Vienna. One of the principal aims of both peoples was to achieve national equality in relation to the domination of the Germans and Italians where this concerned the representation of mutual interests in Istria, the Northern Littoral and Dalmatia, but also in the field of state-level affairs in the Austrian section in which the Slovenes and Croats were very negligibly represented. From the beginning there was no solidarity due to the divisions into different ideological camps, and each side concentrated on satisfying its own interests. The beginnings of closer ties were associated with the work of Hohenwart's club (1870s), which gathered Catholic conservatives who potentially favored the federalization of the Monarchy from among the ranks of the Germans, Czechs, Poles, Croats and Slovenes. Although this club dissipated, it left a trace, for later only conservative Austro-German politicians, mostly from the nobility, exhibited any affinity for the trialist ideas which could have satisfied the Croats and Slovenes. During 1892, the Croatian-Slovenian parliamentary group was

¹⁸ Vjekoslav Bratulić, "Zapisnici sjednica „Hrvatsko-slovenskog kluba“ zastupnika u Istarskom saboru," *Vjesnik Historijskog arhiva u Rijeci i Pazinu* XI-XII/1966-67: 121-199.

formed in the interest of common “defense of national equality,” and “greater consideration of economic development in the provinces they represent.”¹⁹ This conservatively oriented club was conceived at a broader level, envisaging ties in a “parliamentary league of Austrian Slavs” that would advocate the interests of the ten million Austrian Slavs. After the elections to the Reichsrat, clubs under various names were formed in the coming period which gathered the political representatives of the Croats and Slovenes. The objectives were always to achieve greater national rights within the scope of the Monarchy. The abortive hopes in winning the support of influential Austrian Christian Social Party under the leadership of Karl Lueger, particularly where this concerned the Cisleithan territories, reinforced the need for cooperation between Croatian and Slovenian politicians. This course of events made it possible for Ivan Šusteršič to eventually become the principal representative of both peoples in Vienna. Later, due to rejection of the obstruction in the parliamentary struggle, he withdrew from the lead position in the Croatian-Slovenian Club, which during the First World War led to changes in the political strategy of the main representatives of both peoples.

Croatian-Slovenian relations could also be followed abroad, among the transoceanic emigrant communities, particularly in the United States and South America. With time, besides various mutual assistance societies, they also created émigré political groups which were apprised of circumstances in their homeland and which promoted programs for the freedom of their peoples. Even here, divisions emerged between those who stressed autonomy within the Dual Monarchy and those who aspired for the national unity of the Slovenes, Croats and Serbs in the form of a Yugoslav state. These divisions became particularly apparent during the First World War, when, after the United States entered the war, most opted to support the activities of the Yugoslav Committee, the collapse of Austria-Hungary and the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

Despite the favorable atmosphere in mutual relations, one cannot overlook the fact that disputes did arise even in the post-Agreement period. Most often such deliberations concerned the demarcation of borders between Civil Croatia and Carniola in Žumberak and several other areas.²⁰ This was a problem which had originated in earlier historical periods, when it was debated by the nobility of the Kingdom of Croatia and the Duchies of Carniola and Steiermark. Attempts were later made to settle this open dispute by a special commission established by parliamentary bodies to determine the border. Such

¹⁹ Vjekoslav Bratulić, “Hrvatski zastupnici u Istarskom saboru i Carevinskom vijeću devedesetih godina XIX. stoljeća i suradnja južnoslavenskih naroda,” *Jadranski zbornik* III/1958 (Rijeka-Pula), pp. 135-202.

²⁰ On this, see Marko Zajc, *Gdje slovensko prestaje, a hrvatsko počinje. Slovensko-hrvatska granica u XIX. i početkom XX. stoljeća* (Zagreb, 2008), 41 f.

disputes did not greatly damage relations, to which the above-described intensity of Croatian-Slovenian relations testifies.

The assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand, the heir to the Habsburg throne, detonated an already explosive international situation dominated by the European great powers with their own particular and diverging interests. With the outbreak of the First World War, the South Slav question entered a new, final phase which, thanks to the course of the war, the fears of Italian nationalist pretensions, dissatisfaction with the dualist structure and the demeanor of most political elites reflected in the activities of the Yugoslav Committee and the National Council of the Slovenes, Croats and Serbs, ended with the entry of the Croatian and Slovenian lands into an alliance with the Kingdom of Serbia. The adherents of the Croatian Catholic Movement, in cooperation with the Slovenian politicians Anton Korošec and Janez E. Krek, also contributed to this outcome.²¹ The creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes opened a new page in the struggle for Croatian and Slovenian national rights within an equally multinational monarchical union, but with a different ethnic composition and tradition. The insertion of the Croatian and Slovenian name into the name of the new state did not satisfy the interests of the two national communities, so that the interwar period also saw the formation of frequent alliances.

The first examples of cooperation discussed above show that there were disputes among the Slovenes and Croats, but that a high degree of mutual respect – a consequence of their proximity and their co-existence in the Habsburg Monarchy, but mostly due to their common cause in the face of larger nations – nonetheless predominated. From 1848 until the collapse of the “Black and Gold” Monarchy, various forms of political ties were sought. Cooperation naturally grew in the Austrian half of the Monarchy, where the Slovenes and the Croats from Istria and Dalmatia lived together, even though relations between the Slovenes and Croats in the Transleithan half indicated occasional mutual interests. Discussions of whether cooperation had to be based on natural or historical principles were not crucial, because the subordination of both sides dictated cooperation. The ideological bonds were unusually strong. Many examples demonstrate this: liberals, Christian democrats/Christian socialists, social democrats or Yugoslav integralists very rapidly found common ground. History after 1918 would further show that these ideological ties remained rather strong.

²¹ Jure Krišto, *Hrvatski katolički pokret 1903.-1945.* (Zagreb, 2004), p. 117 and Zlatko Matijević, *U sjeni dvaju orlova. Prilozi crkveno-nacionalnoj povijesti Hrvata u prvim desetljećima 20. stoljeća* (Zagreb, 2005), pp. 15-44.

Kroatisch-slowenische Verhältnisse in Politik 1848-1914: Beispiele gegenseitiger Verbindungen

Zusammenfassung

Die Geschehnisse des Jahres 1848 zeigten, dass Kroaten und Slowenen individuelle nationale Identitäten und vollständig formierte Ansichten über die Integration ihrer eigenen ethnischen Territorien hatten. Zur gleichen Zeit bemühten sich beide Völker, jedes von ihnen auf eigene Weise, sich zueinander zu nähern, um sich von hegemonischen Mächten außerhalb und innerhalb der ethnisch verschiedenen Habsburgermonarchie zu wahren. Obwohl, nach der Meinung von kroatischen Politikern, slowenische politische Bewegung mit ihrem Programm des vereinigten Sloweniens an den Ereignissen des Jahres 1848 nicht teilnahm, zeigte sie schon damals, dass es gewisse Umstände gab, die auf die Idee der Reziprozität zielten. Trotz der auf verschiedene Formen der nationalen Identität gesetzten Betonungen zeigten bestimmte Ereignisse, dass Kroaten und Slowenen zu schwach waren, um ihre individuelle Unabhängigkeit alleine zu sichern und dass sie auf gegenseitige Zusammenarbeit angewiesen sind. In diesem Artikel versucht der Autor, eine Übersicht der kroatisch-slowenischen Beziehungen zwischen 1848 und 1914 zu geben. Er untersuchte sowohl Verhältnisse zwischen Gruppen und Einzelnen, die man wohl als nationale Führer betrachten kann, als auch Beziehungen zwischen anderen Individuen bzw. Gruppen auf dem kroatischen und slowenischen Territorium in der genannten Zeit (z.B. kroatisch-slowenische Verhältnisse in Istrien).