

SLOVENIAN-CROATIAN BOUNDARY: BACKGROUNDS OF BOUNDARY-MAKING AND BOUNDARY-BREAKING IN ISTRIA REGARDING THE CONTEMPORARY BOUNDARY DISPUTE¹

HRVATSKO-SLOVENSKA GRANICA: POZADINA ODREĐIVANJA I MIJENJANJA GRANICA U ISTRI S OBZIROM NA SUVREMENE GRANIČNE PROBLEME¹

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Boundary-making in Istria is an old undertaking. It has actually never ceased, not even today. Istrian peninsula has thus undergone substantial boundary shifts during the last couple of centuries (especially after the Venetian demise in 1797). But Istria carries its worldwide fame also due to one of probably the harshest disputes on the post-war European grounds – the Trieste territory dispute. In author's perspective, this dispute is one of the four main corner-stones of the current Slovenian-Croatian boundary dispute. The remaining three include the Kozler's boundary around Dragonja (Rokava) River, the ungraspable notions of Austrian censuses in Istria, and the narratives of partisan settlements on military jurisdiction. However, there are other very important aspects which significantly shaped the development of the dispute, but we will focus at assessing the importance of the aforementioned ones. In this sense, the analysis of the effects of the outcome of the Trieste dispute and its implications to the contemporary interstate dispute is set forth. By unveiling its material and consequently its psychological effects upon the contemporary bilateral relations, its analyses simultaneously reveals backgrounds of never answered question, why Kozler's proposed linguistic boundary around Dragonja (Rokava) River turned out to become a boundary of national character. Though nowadays disputed, there is absolutely no chance for both involved parties to substantially draw away from once decisively drawn line of a layman. Despite the fierce battle of words in Slovenian public media on whether should the interstate boundary be placed on Mirna (Quieto) or Dragonja Rivers, it will be argued here that the actual choice of the Valley of Dragonja as a boundary is by all means Slovenian. The arguments are based on extensive analyses of cartographic materials, relevant literature, documents, and statistical data.

Key words: boundaries, boundary disputes, Trieste/Trieste/Trst, Dragonja/Dravogna, Mirna/Quieto, Slovenia, Croatia, Italy, North Adriatic, Istria

Određivanje granica u Istri je stari pothvat. Ustvari, nije prestao čak ni danas. U posljednjih nekoliko stoljeća granice na istarskom poluotoku doživjele su značajne promjene (posebice nakon propasti Mletačke Republike 1797. godine). No Istra je također zbog prijepora oko teritorija Trsta nadaleko poznata kao jedno od problematičnijih graničnih područja u Europi u poslijeratnom razdoblju. Prema mišljenju autora, ovaj problem je jedan od četiriju glavnih suvremenih graničnih problema između Slovenije i Hrvatske. Ostala tri su Kozlerova granica oko rijeke Dragonje (Rokave), nejasni pojmovi u austrijskim popisima u Istri, te priče o partizanskim naseljima pod vojnom upravom. No postoje i drugi važni aspekti koji su značajno utjecali na razvoj ovoga spora, ali u ovom radu pozornost će biti usmjerena na prije navedene probleme. U skladu s time analiziraju se učinci ishoda spora oko tršćanskog teritorija i njihov utjecaj na suvremene granične probleme. Upozoravanjem na materijalne i psihološke učinke ovoga spora na suvremene bilateralne odnose te njegovom

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analizom također se otkriva pozadina nikad odgovorenog pitanja – zašto je lingvistička granica oko Rijeke Dragonje (Rokave) koju je predložio Kozler postala granica od nacionalnog značenja. Iako je danas navedena granica često osporavana, teško je očekivati da će obje strane odustati od granice koju je jednom odredio laik. Unatoč snažnim prijemima u slovenskim javnim medijima vezanim uz pitanje treba li međudržavna granica biti na rijekama Mirni i Dragonji, u radu je utvrđeno da je izbor granice u dolini rijeke Dragonje zapravo slovenski. Argumenti se temelje na opsežnoj analizi kartografskih materijala, relevantne literature, dokumenata i statističkih podataka.

Ključne riječi: granice, granični sporovi, Trieste/Trieste/Trst, Dragonja/Dragogna, Mirna/Quieto, Slovenija, Hrvatska, sjeverni Jadran, Istra

Introduction

"It was a nice and sunny day. For the last time, an old Partisan commandant called Franc went to his battalion to collect the remaining men for a decisive attack on Trieste. His combat unit was 50-men strong. The battle-scarred heroes knew this was the final blow and the city was going to be liberated, and be Slovenian again. Trieste is ours! At last and for good! It was 6th of November 2009..." One would place such a novelistic overture rather in the period around the end of the World War Two. But he or she would be mistaken. A sketched scenario was authored by a Slovenian student of cinematography, Mr. Žiga Virc. Perhaps inspired by the recently issued book "Trieste is Ours" (PIRJEVEC, 2007) he filmed the half an hour short movie on the conquest of Trieste in 2009. The movie pictures an old former Partisan soldier who has constantly had those dreams of conquering Trieste once and for all. After decades of "living in another world", he decided one day to unite his comrades once again and go for a final stroke. His martyr's ambition was stopped by the regular Slovenian police squad, which he had eventually confused with the German enemies, and a fierce battle to the last man broke out.

The symptoms the movie implies, let alone the wondrous story, are important in our case and ought to be scrutinized. They are a translation or an echo of the "lost story" into the presence. Shooting a militant movie on an imaginary conquest of the city of Trieste in the 21st century – more than 60 years after the WWII – despite the expected

negative acceptance in Italy² is a clear evidence for that. Furthermore, it reveals the Slovenian trauma of the loss of Trieste in heads of rank and file as well as of those "in charge". This translation is manifold. First, it was translated into the story of an ongoing production and reproduction of the myth called Slovenian Trieste (cf. e.g. BABIČ, 1986: 58, 404), accompanied by the rivalling myth of the Slavic savages endangering the city of Trieste and Italy itself (cf. BALLINGER, 2003: 37–38), which persisted throughout the second half of the 20th century and well into the 21st. And second, it was gradually translated into the emerging Slovenian-Croatian dispute after the break-up of former Yugoslavia. This translation slowly encroached into Slovenian public opinion as both Slovenia and Croatia as independent states realized that they possess unsolved boundary issues that burden the bilateral relations between the two.

But the way the translation was operationalized is *mutatis mutandis* symptomatic from at least one more aspect. Namely, it was transformed to become the curtain-fire for the massive territorial (ethnographically speaking predominantly Slovenian) concessions to Italy. Bearing in mind that when settling the border between Italy and Yugoslavia in 1954, and more definitely by the Treaty of Osimo in 1975, Slovenia felt as the republic, which gave up the most of its population and territory in order to win the maximum for Yugoslavia in Istria since the delimitation between Italy and Yugoslavia roughly followed the principle of an "ethnic equilibrium". On the contrary, following an "ethnic principle" some

² On 5th of November 2009, one day before the film's official première (sic!), Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Franco Frattini, promptly responded in a same aggravating manner: "I am, frankly, astonished by the Slovenian Academy's decision to fund the film "Trieste è nostra" (Trieste is ours) and by the state television /.../ to broadcast it. By recalling the suffering and the experiences /.../ as a result of the horrible deeds of the Yugoslav dictator's

gangs, this film rubs fresh salt into wounds". Thus he supported a harsh response already made by Massimiliano Lacota of the rightist Union of the Istrians (Unione degli Istriani), one of the major optant organizations in Trieste inclined to the political Right (Ballinger, 2003, 42–43). (Source: http://www.siol.net/Kultura/Novice/2009/11/V_Italiji_novi_odzivi_na_film_Trst_je_nas.aspx. Accessed: 03.06.2011).

preceding local bilateral agreements (especially the interwar oral agreement of 1944)³ between the Slovenian and Croatian part were the Yugoslav territorial gains in Istria by its major part allocated to Croatia. Ten years after, Slovenia realized that the targeted western territories (Trieste, Gorizia, Slavia Veneta, Valcanale etc.) were not to be integrated into the new Yugoslavia. Facing this discrepancy, it became highly unsatisfied with the outcomes of the new delimitations with both Italy (as a Yugoslav republic) and Croatia respectively, but remained quiet⁴.

We mentioned that Trieste, here, played another important role. This time around the notion of Trieste figured as a metaphor for all the Slovene-speaking territory perceived to be ceded to Italy. Precisely this extension of its notion rendered "Trieste" a burning symbol of national sorrow⁵ and exploitable means for justification in times to come after the Slovenian independence.

These mythical extensions of "the lost Trieste"⁶, had germinated over the three post-war decades. Initially it had burst during the first Trieste Crisis⁷ in 1945, then by the second in 1953, and the very next year with the dissolution of the Free Territory of Trieste (FTT), to be partly exhausted by the definite loss according to the Treaty of Osimo in 1975. In a way, fortunately, the emerging Yugoslav political and economic crises following Josip Broz Tito's death and resulting in its dissolution have not preceded the treaties from Osimo. It was not until 1991 that the Trieste's symbolism was successfully

translated into the upcoming Slovenian-Croatian border dispute. By that time "the wound suffered by the Slovene nation" opened fully and wide (MIHELIC, 2007: 151, n. 90).

The former internal bilateral disagreements between Slovenia and Croatia on the boundary line in Istria around Dragonja River accompanied by the contemporary dispute on an access to the international maritime waters rose to international level. Here, the translation of the Trieste case took another swing, since it was used as a basis for Slovenian argument for the "historical debt" of Croatia. It is seen as Croatia should be thankful to Slovenia for being rewarded with the major part of Istria on the account of Slovenes (then Yugoslavs) left within the Italian state, or better "left behind", as a result of the so-called new ethnic equilibrium. Slovenia, accordingly, expects that Croatia settle its "moral bill"⁸ and allow for a "fair" solution of the boundary dispute. It has been henceforth maintained unquestionable that Slovenia does possess the access to the high seas, and that the four hamlets⁹ on Dragonja's left bank along with the lot, house, and property of Mr. Joško Joras¹⁰ do belong to Slovenia. Moreover, certain civic and political movements arose, which set territorial claims southwards to Mirna (Quiet) River or even as much as to the whole Istrian peninsula in order to render a just repartition that would compensate the territories lost to Italy¹¹. On top of it, some scientific argumentation became strained to the point when few researchers argued that the inclusion of the Slovene dominated coast between

³ The military agreement among the local Slovene and Croat Partisans from February 1944 is going to be addressed later on.

⁴ cf. Zwitter's and Ude's opinions cited in e.g. Mihelič, 2007: 88, 90-91, n. 51.

⁵ See especially the leading Slovenian historian B. Grafenauer and his thoughts of 1993 (cited in MIHELIC, 2007: 150-151).

⁶ The term is invented to counterpart the heavily pounding metaphor "Trst je naš" (i.e. Trieste is ours) (cf. PIRJEVEC, 2007).

⁷ Trieste Crisis could also be justifiably named as Trieste Crises for the continuous fights and tensions at the edge of an armed conflict (e.g. KACIN-WOHINC, PIRJEVEC, 2000: 109-112).

⁸ See also Grafenauer (1993) in Mihelič, 2007: 150. The question of morality was prominent even in the official politics, since Slovenia established the so-called "moral commission on Slovenian-Croatian boundary".

⁹ Four hamlets are Škrilje-Mlini, Veli Malin, Bužini, and Škodelin/Škudelin with some 60 predominantly Slovene inhabitants though of multilingual proficiency (e.g. JOSIPOVIČ, KRŽIŠNIK-BUKIČ, 2010: 89-90. The whole disputed territory

along the Dragonja River occupies about 113.79 hectares and is represented by a narrow strip with a perimeter of 13.68 km (author's estimates). This strip may roughly be divided in two portions: (1) western part along the saline of Sečovlje/Sicciole with 8.41 km in perimeter and 50.67 ha; (2) eastern part with 5.68 km in perimeter and 63.12 ha situated between the bridges at Sečovlje-Mlini and Dragonja-Škudelin, respectively.

¹⁰ In Slovenian public media, Joško Joras is renowned as a Slovenian fighter for the righteous border in Istria, while in Croatian media, he is portrayed as a Croatian menace. Nevertheless, he was the most prominent of all inhabitants of the "Left bank" of Dragonja, for his readiness for publicity and for his will to prove his rightfulness. He, namely, maintains that he is living on the indisputably Slovenian territory.

¹¹ Apart from other less numerous and obscured movements with similar programmatic starting points, there is one Slovenian parliamentary party (Slovene People's Party) claiming the same. Closely connected to SPP is the Institute 25th of June, which is led by the former SPP president, Mr. Marjan Podobnik (see e.g. KRNEL-UMEK, 2005).

Štivan (S. Giovanni) and Barkovlje (Barcola)¹² of the former Zone A of FTT would alone grant Slovenia the access to the high sea (e.g. KALC-HAFNER, 2005: 34–36).

It is, therefore, understandable that the boundaries set in the post-war period raised lots of problems for the populations involved, to begin only with the militarization and hostile propaganda along with the forced and pseudo-voluntary migration (after JOSIPOVIČ, 2006: 88–89). In addition, it is immensely difficult to handle the masses once they have had been shifted from one place to another in order to escape or to survive terror. It is very hard, though heavily needed, to deliver and to disseminate more meticulous explanations to prevent "the Furious" from avenging the scapegoat at hand, so easily found within all sorts of minorities, be it in the place of resettlement or in original places. Still, the elected state authorities, or putschist powers that be respectively, often driven by the same forces as nationalist movements in times of creating an independent state, cannot escape such developments. This holds true for both Slovenia and Croatia.

Hypothesis and methods

Being led by the awareness of such possible austerities, the author argues that specific geopolitical relationships and historical course of the events, including the creation of the buffer state of Free Territory of Trieste, either narrowed or prevented other possible solutions (i.e. different of those applied) as far as the internal delimitation between Slovenes and Croats in Istria is concerned. The role of contemporary psychological translation of the loss of Trieste for Slovenia over its stance towards Croatia is examined as well. It is furthermore argued that the diachronic perspective may often blur the view upon circumstances of a given historical issue, since this method hardly considers all the relevant events responsible for specific historical developments. In this way, the demographic situation in the Zone A of FTT was closely scrutinized in order to understand the quantitative extent of Slovenian demographic cession to Italy. Similarly, the area between Dragonja and Mirna Rivers was closely analysed from the point of view of official Austrian statistics

¹² Barkovlje (Barcola ital.) was one of the many Slovene-speaking villages at the doorstep of Trieste. As the city was growing it has spatially been swallowing these settlements

in order to question the rationalizations for then Slovenian official insisting on Dragonja River as an "ethnic" boundary between Slovenes and Croats of Istria. Finally, the author argues that a decade long international procrastination of solving the FTT knot rendered the existing temporary mutual delimitation between Slovenian and Croatian side irreversibly fixed and irreparable. Furthermore, the Slovenian historical deprivation of its western, nowadays Italian, territories drove Slovenia into *via facti* urging Croatia for giving up its territory. Hence, the issue of the lost Trieste reappropriately translated into the bilateral negotiations between Slovenia and Croatia lessened the opportunities to bilateral solution of the dispute, and terminally led into the need of an outer arbitration.

To answer this set of questions and to test the arguments set afore, the study involved methods spanning from the pure quantitative analyses of statistical and demographic data on Austrian censuses in the period 1880–1910 to cartographical methods of producing a set of thematic maps. Apart of the above-mentioned, the interpretational-hermeneutic methods of analysing historical cartographic materials, relevant literature, and documents were used.

Some historical backgrounds of Trieste crisis in relation to Slovenian-Croatian delimitation in Istria

To understand the contemporary dispute between Slovenia and Croatia we shall have to return to the period after the Italian capitulation in September 1943 and to the area of Trieste and northern Istria. Here, the history and the space are so condensed that we may speak of the specific "thickness of time-space compression", to intertwine and paraphrase both Saskia Sassen (e.g. 1999) and David Harvey (e.g. 1989). Thickness itself may be perceived in a number of meanings. With the thickness here, we refer to the numerous events happening so rapidly that their temporal density was ungraspable to both decision-makers and sheer populations involved. The time-space compression used in this text deviate from what was originally elaborated by Harvey's (e.g. 1989: 240) notion aiming at the "processes that so revolutionize the objective qualities of space and time that we are forced to alter [...] how we represent the world to ourselves". Instead, we apply

and rendering them into its mere suburbs with growing share of Italian-speakers (cf. e.g. MELIK, 1960: 110).

the apparatus to define the circumstances in which the space and time are revolutionary concentrated in a given place and time-frame, since in the case of wartime we are, rather expectedly, not dealing with something postmodern but more likely with some pre-modern phenomena. This idea might be closer to rephrased notion of time-space compression. Though she criticized it, Doreen Massey (1993) reformulated it and proposed the use of the "power-geometry" as more flexible and encompassing theoretical tool for grasping the relations between individuals, groups and their places. Though both theorems aim at understanding the contemporaneity of the world dynamics, both are equipped with the ability of assessing the historical events and are applicable to those.

To return to the case of FTT and the immediate aftermaths of WWII the pertinent idea of the "thickness of time-space compression" refers to the circumstances and events in times and places of the Trieste crises. Applying this dialectical apparatus here, bringing together the converging issues of ending the world war, of creating the FTT, along with the external, internal, and sub-divisional delimitation of FTT and the Zone B respectively, topped by the underlying ideological views on Slovenian and Croatian identities, may help us understand the evolution and the climax of the Slovenian-Croatian dispute, and, finally, its cession to the arbitration tribunal. As regards the contemporary boundary dispute, the whole historical thickness within a very small portion of ground may be epitomized in as little as a single person: for example in Joško Joras' fight for his right. This is, of course, exaggeration, but in minds of lay public, Joras is a personification of a man who would risk his life in order to prove his right. This symbolism was until recently a very important fuel for more nationalist options to gain additional votes on elections¹³. However, owing to abundant pertinent literature it is not the aim of

¹³ See footnote 10 and 11. The case of Joško Joras is interesting from another point of view. The worsening of bilateral relations in times before elections may be contributed to political appropriations of a single person. Misuse and victimization of Joras's cause met its counterpart in a shape of politicians. Namely, the president of Slovenian People's Party (SPP), Mr. Janez Podobnik, brother of Marjan Podobnik, was arrested by Croatian border police at the eve of 2004 elections in Slovenia. The tapping scandal of the same year when media reported that Croatian Prime Minister Sanader and the future Slovenian Prime Minister Janša allegedly organized provocations in Piran Bay in order for Slovenian Democratic Party to win the election. Political analysts commented then that SPP managed to enter the parliament by votes of the more militant population

this paper to go into depth of all broached issues. Instead, it will enlighten those initial and crucial coinciding chain-events, which contributed to the complexity of contemporary Slovenian-Croatian boundary dispute.

In mid- 20th century, the city of Trieste carried a world-wide fame not only due to its picturesque landscapes, variegated population, or colourful history but rather for its flourishing economy as for being the famous "k. u. k." port of the Hapsburg Empire. After the WWI Trieste retained its demographic potential but it also suffered the economic consequences of geopolitical changes at its eastern peripheries, so it gradually reoriented from transportation role to a whole range of industries. After the Italian capitulation in 1943 and after the Nazi defeat in 1945, the city's importance turned out to be of outmost interest for allying counterparts. Both, the Western Allies, especially the British, and Tito's Partisans saw the city at least as part of their ideological influential sphere if not as their dependencies, let alone the economic and transportation potential equipped with good connections with the hinterland. The former did so for their agreement with Stalin, and the latter for its potential geopolitical and economic power of the new socialist state. It was not unexpectedly, though, that the city was then proclaimed to be one of the three danger-spots of Southeastern Europe (e.g. SETON-WATSON, 1951: 347).

In the eyes of the Yugoslavs, especially the Slovenes, Trieste was seen as the major access to Adriatic Sea, and one of the future centres in both economic and political terms of the Slovene entity within the Yugoslav federation (cf. e.g. TROHA, 1999: 23). Moreover, Trieste was seen as the fair prize for more than two decades of Italian occupation and fascist terror in western Slovenian region of Primorska (The Littoral)¹⁴. Given that it was clear by 1947 that Venetian Slovenia (Slavia

thanks to the provocation at the Sečovelje/Plovanija border-crossing in 2004.

¹⁴ Primorska or "Littoral" is the western-most Slovene-speaking area. It is perceived as the territory lying westward of the former Rapallo boundary, between the Valcanale and Fiume on the east and Adriatic on the west. There is no firm evidence of defining it neither territorially nor ethnically. Though after the WWII, the Yugoslav newly incorporated territories formerly under Italian occupation were split between Slovenia and Croatia. While Slovenian part was called Slovensko Primorje (i.e. Slovenian Littoral), the Croatian part retained its historical name Istria since the name Hrvatsko Primorje (i.e. Croatian Littoral) was traditionally used for the Adriatic coast roughly between Rijeka/Fiume and Karlobag (e.g. BERTIĆ, 1987: 123; cf. also an interesting view of PAVIĆ, 2010).

Veneta / Slavia Furlana), Valcanale (Kanalska dolina), and Gorica (Gorizia) including Gradiška (Gradisca) with about 35,000, 2,000, and 28,000 Slovenes respectively (e.g. STRANJ, 1999: 230; cf. RUTAR, 1899: 59; DE COURTENAY, 1998: 50) would all remain under Italy. Thus only about one half (i.e. 60,000) of Italian Slovenes would eventually remain within the Yugoslav "Seventh Republic"¹⁵ (cf. e.g. DUKOVSKI, 2011). Furthermore, Trieste was an embodiment of the first anti-fascist movement in Europe well before the outbreak of the World War Two called the TIGR¹⁶ movement. Thus its firm material value blended with the symbolic and heavily contributed to its political meaning.

Prior to Italian occupation of Trieste and Primorska after the First World War and after the Rapallo Treaty was signed, Trieste was cultural, economic and political centre of the Littoral Slovenes. Apart from immigration to the city from its karstic hinterland, the Slovenes exercised strong historical ties with the city. Prior to the introduction of the Southern railway connecting Vienna with the Adriatic in 1857, the city of Trieste used to be of lesser importance. Since then, it had been growing rapidly. By the last Austrian census in 1910 the city itself reached 160,000 inhabitants¹⁷. Anticipating the outbreak of a great war aiming at redrawing the political map of Europe, the city already suffered alterations of census results in favour of Italian-speaking community. The Austrian census commission in Vienna eventually inspected the results. Those were consequently "repaired" although slightly tailored upon the Austrian wishes (cf. ROGLIĆ, 1946: 48). Yet, the situation was complicated since the city of Trieste built up its own administrative municipality comprised of the city proper, the suburbs, and the outskirts (see Tab. 1 and Fig. 1).

Adding some 12,000 Slovenes on the high plateau and surrounding villages which were included in the Zone A (cf. STRANJ, 1999: 330), the number of Slovene-speaking population in and around the city was about 70,000 (see Tab. 1 and Fig. 1). Henceforth, the census of 1910 provided the ground for later Slovene (and Yugoslav) demands over the city. The Slovenes dominated the major part of territory, while the Italians concentrated in the city core area (Fig.

1). As already mentioned, the city grew almost exclusively on the account of immigration, but the immigrants were predominantly Slovenes. The city's demography radically changed over the last century or so. From a small town around the hill of San Giusto, Trieste developed into a city stretching all the way to karstic piedmont. While the karstic high plateau of what later became the Trieste Province was exclusively inhabited by Slovenes, the Slovene-speaking areas gained ground in the suburbs at flysch foothills except in the sole city centre (cf. KALC-HAFNER ET AL., 2005). Emphasizing close interdependency between the city and its hinterland, some Slovenes already saw Trieste as their future capital city (cf. MELIK, 1960: 17–18). The outbreak of the First World War and the Italian seizure of both the city and the vast eastern territory "shattered the Slovenian dreams". Followed by the fascist oppression and violence during the Second World War, the region of Primorska saw the birth of strong antifascist movement, which evolved in massive admissions to the Partisan forces. After the Mussolini's capitulation and Hitler's demise, the Slovenes saw themselves already as the rulers of the city, notwithstanding about 40,000 Slovene emigrants escaping the fascist terror (e.g. STRANJ, 1999: 304). Nonetheless, the historical course of events was different.

There are several reasons why the city of Trieste, or what was later known as the Zone A of the Free Territory of Trieste (FTT), was ceded to Italy in the aftermath of the Trieste crisis. Initially, the Trieste was subject to fierce race between eastern and western allies, as to who would be the first to conquer the city following the turmoil after the withdrawal of German troops in April 1945 (cf. e.g. GLENNY, 1999: 533). Following his obsession to display the power of his Partisans and independence from Stalin, Tito invested every single resource available to be the first of the allies to enter the city. Despite the exhausting and time-consuming south-eastern route to the city of Trieste, he rushed his combatants through the rough karstic landscape of Istria, to eventually snatch the city right in front of the New Zealand troops which have been approaching the city from the western flatlands of the Padus River. Lacking

¹⁵ This "Seventh Republic" was intended to receive "the status of separate state in the Yugoslav federation." (underlined in BALLINGER: 83–84)

¹⁶ TIGR is an abbreviation for Trieste, Istria, Gorizia, Rijeka, the regions occupied by Italy after the World War One, and

alluding to the power of a tiger. This abbreviation reveals the quandary over the unifying name (cf. the note above).

¹⁷ Allgemeines Verzeichnis der Ortsgemeinden und Ortschaften Österreichs, Vienna, 1915.

Table 1 Colloquial languages in the city of Trieste according to the Austrian census of 1910

	Italian col. language		Slovene col. language		Other languages		TOTAL
City Proper	95,385	60.14%	19,684	12.41%	43,532	27.45%	158,601
Suburbs	22,691	38.11%	28,359	47.62%	8,497	14.27%	59,547
Outskirts/Plateau	538	6.00%	8,199	91.40%	233	2.60%	8,970
Total municipality	118,614	52.23%	56,242	24.76%	52,262	23.01%	227,118

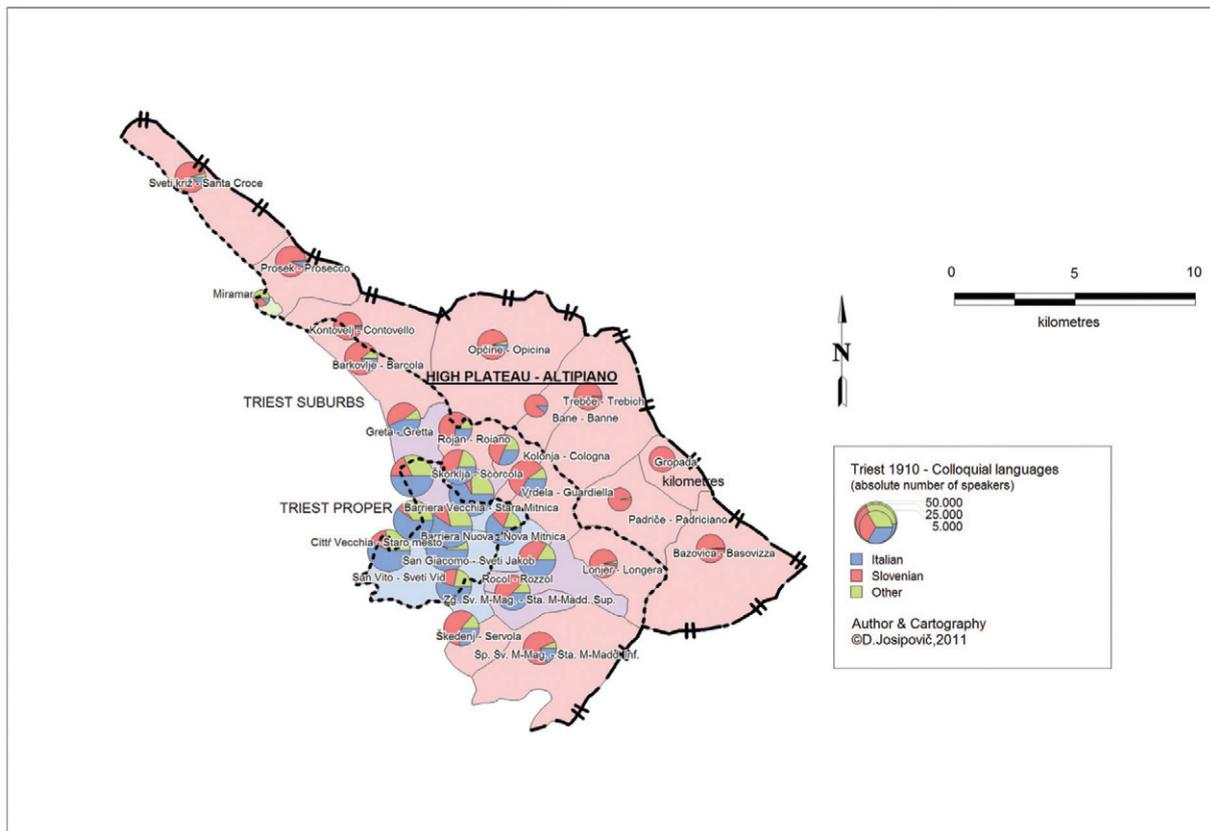


Figure 1 Colloquial languages in 1910, quantitative relationships, the city of Trieste and its quarters

Stalin's support, Tito was forced to relinquish this strategically very important "gates of North Adriatic" to the British about forty days after the conquest (TROHA, 1999: 24).

Why the Trieste territory dispute and the loss of Trieste was a failure for Socialist Yugoslavia? The answer is far from being simple. To some degree, we might exploit a crosscut explanation according to which the Western Allies feared Tito's control over the strategically important city as a potential risk for Stalin's intervention and establishment of a Soviet naval base (GLENNY, 1999: 533). In this

sense, Tito and his comrades never convincingly presented the counter-arguments, inasmuch as the latter were plausible to effect the Yalta negotiations in February 1945 and the "fifty-fifty" accord (GLENNY, 1999: 522-523). To be precise, the Soviet sway across the Eastern and Central Europe in the spring of 1945 dramatically changed the geopolitical balance in favour of the Soviets. Thus the proposed "fifty-fifty" solutions for Yugoslavia and Hungary never worked out. Instead, the Trieste issue became the geopolitical hot-spot which shined for decades to come.

Boundaries of FTT and delimitation between the zones A and B

The Free Territory of Trieste was crescent-shaped coastal buffer zone occupying the coast between the two firths, that of Timava/Timavo on northern extremity and that of Mirna/Quieto on the southern, respectively. It was divided by the so-called Morgan Line into two unequal halves. The smaller but densely populated Zone A with the city of Trieste, and the bigger though less populated Zone B (Fig. 2).

While there was a lot of discussion on the delimitation between the two zones, there was much less emphasis on the internal administrative (sub-) divisions. The division had changed despite the strong suggestions on keeping the administrative boundaries as they were prior to the war (MARIN, 1998). The so-called principle of untouchable administrative boundaries was first violated by the Allies themselves. Namely the Morgan Line, which was to divide the former zones A and B¹⁸, was drawn in a manner which uncompromisingly cut through the landscapes of former Görz/Goriška Land from the Upper Soča/Isonzo valley all the way to Valle Oltra on Muggia/Milje peninsula (cf. e.g. the title map in KACIN-WOHINZ, PIRJEVEC, 2000; e.g. BALINGER, 2003; Fig. 4, p. 87). In 1947, when The Free Territory of Trieste was established, the Morgan Line was used as its internal delimitation. Both Zone A and Zone B shrank to the coastal area between Timavo/Timav and Quietto/Mirna Rivers and thus preserving the Morgan Line as their common delineator.

The logic behind such a strange shaping of FTT was to provide a land corridor from Monfalcone/Tržič to Trieste and towards Italian-speaking area between Muggia/Milje and Cittanova/Novigrad (Fig. 2). Besides encompassing the railway line and the road between Trieste and Monfalcone, the corridor encapsulated almost entirely Slovene-speaking coastal area between San Giovanni/Štivan and Barcola/Barkovlje consisted of municipalities Duino-Aurisina/Devin-Nabrežina, Sgonico/Zgonik, and Rupinogrande/Repentabor. The eastern borders of those three municipalities have been reshaped to conform to the low karstic ridge between Medvedjak (475m) the Hill 323

(see Fig. 2). Thus they lost substantial parts of their former territories. Correspondingly, the city of Trieste retained its administrative division from the Hapsburg period throughout the fascist era until 1947 when the locality of Lipica with about 100 inhabitants was excluded of the Zone A and annexed directly to Slovenia or Yugoslavia respectively. Thus the Zone A boundary followed the aforementioned ridge from Medvedjak to Hill 667 (see Fig. 2). Both remaining municipalities to the south, Muggia/Milje and Dolina, were trimmed too. Municipality of Dolina was enlarged by Grozzana/Gročana, a former part of Klanec-Očisla Municipality, while being curtailed of Plavje/Plavia and Osp/Ospo. Similarly, the Municipality of Muggia/Milje was diminished by parts of Monti/Hribi, Valle Oltra/Valdoltra, and Škofije/Scoffie.

The Yugoslav and Slovenian side inclusively, was under enormous pressure in the period 1945-1954. The permanent crisis about the FTT slowly started to emerge. The preoccupation gradually transformed into an obsession with the Trieste question and Trieste itself. During the whole period of existence of FTT, the Yugoslav side tried out several proposition of redrawing the map of Trieste and its vicinity. As it slowly became unreasonable to expect the repossession of Trieste proper, the Yugoslavs (especially Slovenes) tried with other so-to-say "substitutional proposals". Among the latter, there was a proposed recollection of the Slovene dominated coast between S. Giovanni/Štivan and Barcola/Barkovlje in exchange for the Trieste proper and other Italian-speaking towns of the Zone B. This proposal was a direct proof of how strongly the Yugoslavs feared that the establishment of a land corridor between Monfalcone/Tržič and Trieste/Trst could have been only a rehearsal for a later inclusion of the whole FTT into the Italian Republic. Ana Kalc-Hafner (2005: 34–36), for instance, argues that Kardelj's and Bebler's interventions in 1951 and 1952 have proved Yugoslav interest particularly for the strip between Monfalcone/Tržič and Trieste/Trst as well as for the southeastern suburbs of Trieste, for example Škedenj/Servola and Žavlje/Aquilinia (ibid.). All these interventions were, accordingly, fruitless.

¹⁸ In years 1945 and 1946 the Allies have already demarcated the former Venezia Giulia (The Julian March) into three zones. While Zone C (approximately the Province of Udine/Viden) was put directly under the Italian jurisdiction, the eastern part of former Julian March was assigned to

Yugoslav occupational forces and transformed into the Zone B, and the central part was administered by the Western Allies as the Zone A. So by 1947 the Morgan's line within FTT was only a remnant of formerly much longer delimitation line.

From the aforesaid could, however, be deduced that the Slovenian component of the Yugoslav side had only wanted the ethnically Slovene inhabited access to the sea *per se* to approve the Slovenian historical ties to the sea¹⁹. Otherwise there would have been no valid explanation, why had the Yugoslav side offered a predominantly Italian-speaking town of Koper (Capodistria) in exchange for a tiny village of Aquilinia/Žavlje (cf. KALC-HAFNER, 2005: 34–36). Interests for other ways of compensations were not on the table. This might be the main clue for understanding, why has the Slovenian side released its interest from what was later become known as the Buje district in the Zone B. One could thus infer that the area of Buje/Buie was not Slovene enough to bother with and to raise questions about it.

In the meantime, the Yugoslav administered Istrian County (the whole Zone B) was transformed into Koper and Buje Districts with Dragonja River as its internal demarcation line (see Fig. 2). The reluctance of Slovenes to firmly intervene in the Zone B and its internal delimitation between the Croatian and Slovenian part could be on one hand ascribed to the ongoing dispute over Trieste proper. On the other hand, the Slovenian side perhaps considered the question of internal delimitation irrelevant as long as the Zone B is under the Yugoslav administration. For the Slovenian behaviour, though, there might be a third reason as well: knowing that the Slovenian administration of the northern part of Zone B (the Koper/Capodistria District) with the predominantly Italian-speaking coastal towns is still uncertain might have given rise to a kind of dissatisfaction when winning the war but not having the coast of *your own*. As proposed above, the interiorization of the so-called natural law in the political and diplomatic thought as far as the Slovenian side is concerned may render an answer or further understanding of the Slovenian stance towards the Croatian allies (JOSIPOVIČ, 2011). And there is one more reason: questioning the internal delimitation of the Zone

B might have endangered good relations between the Yugoslavs, as well as it might have been considered as too particularistic and sectarian for the leadership and for the Communist Party itself. The leading Slovene communists were therefore feared of being accused for jeopardising the "achievements of the socialist revolution" (cf. e.g. MIHELIČ, 2007: 97). The ill-amusement with the Trieste question, which had happened to be already assigned to the Italians, exhausted the Slovenian side in both energy and time. The Allies won the Trieste to Italy with a tactics of procrastination. Realizing the loss of Trieste and ceding one hundred thousand Slovene-speaking inhabitants to Italy, the Slovenian side threw the sponge of the Istrian internal delimitation up. After the dissolution of FTT in 1954 when Yugoslavia was finally rewarded with the former Zone B, the Slovenian side found itself deeply traumatized by losing Trieste but in the very same breath believing of gaining it back someday. Thus they paralleled the Italian experience of lost Istria and the exodus²⁰ (cf. BALLINGER, 2003: 61). The then contemporary question on Slovenian-Croatian delimitation stepped aside to the national mourning over Trieste.

Linguistic boundary in Istria – why Kozler's Dragogna/Dragogna?

Nevertheless, it should not be overlooked that the consequent years brought some corrections in the Istrian section of Slovenian-Croatian boundary, but still no-one raised the question of ethnic imbalance. Here, it has to be emphasized that the delimitation between the Koper and Buje Districts followed the Kozler's boundary along the Dragonja/Dragogna River. Let us only remind that in 1853 Kozler was the first to distinguish the Dragonja/Dragogna River as more or less clear boundary between Slovenes and Croats in Istria. Ever since then, no-one raised the question of reasonability of Kozler's

¹⁹ The Slovenian long-lasting struggle to grasp the sea is neatly wrapped into the subtitle of Pirjevec's (2007) book "Trieste is Ours: A struggle for Sea (1848-1954)".

²⁰ The numbers on the exodus from the Yugoslav controlled areas in the period between 1943 and 1955 vary strongly. According to some Italian sources, the numbers are as high as 350,000 (e.g. BALLINGER, 2003: 44). On the other end, there were numbers about 156,000. The latter figure relates, nevertheless, only to those who emigrated from what was administrated by Croatian side (e.g. MANIN, 2006, 86–87).

Taking into account the data of Italian organization for Assistance to Refugees and the research in Croatia, recent estimates, however, confirm the number of *esuli* at about 220,000–225,000 (ibid.). Still, within this number one has to distinguish a multi-ethnic composition, though the majority of *optants* were of Italian affiliation. Furthermore, one has to bear in mind that the numbers of refugees were highly disproportionate, as regards the area of origin. Hence, between 32,000 and 37,000 persons (15 %) have fled from the area controlled by the Slovenian side.

argument²¹. There were only a few more or less hushed or overheard voices about the Savudrija and Kaštel or about the boundary in Istria more generally (e.g. UDE, 1944 in MIHELIČ, 2007, supplement 15; ŠEPIĆ, 1943 in KRISTEN, 2006: 389–398). The speed of delimiting the Zone B among the Slovenian and Croatian sides was, not necessarily as expected, amazing compared to that of the Trieste territory. Here, it will be therefore examined, what were the actual reasons for such hastiness. Although the ethnic picture was far from being simple or unanimous, as we shall see, the decision was prompt and it cut like a knife. Namely, in February 1944, two Partisan commandants, the Slovene Milan Guček and the Croat Andrija Babić, set an agreement in Malija²², a small village above Piran/Pirano.

According to the unwritten agreement, the dividing line of operation zones between the Slovene and the Croat Partisan forces in Istria followed the Dragonja River to Topolovec, where the dividing line turned to the southeast beneath Pregara and above Štrped towards Vodice in Čičarija in north-eastern direction. "As far as the boundary is concerned," the commandant Guček ruminated in his memoirs, "the two of us have probably laid the course of future inter-republic boundary" (GUČEK, 1959: 198-202). When he was speaking to Babić, Partizan Guček used the following argument for such deliberation: "The boundary shall be there, where people speak *distinctly* Slovene" (GUČEK, 1959: 198; emphasis by D.J.). Guček adds that "there was no resistance from Andrija so we could have agreed easily" (ibid.). This is the most stunning evidence of the doctrine of purity and the natural law embedded in the political discourse of Slovene Partisan movement all the way from the 1848 March revolution as opposed to the Croatian historical law. This stance is a direct consequence of Kozler's deliberations on, why should the Dragonja River

represent the boundary between Slovenes and Croats. Guček, on the contrary, could have built his argument for instance on tactics, military strategy etc. in justifying the Dragonja River as a proper boundary between the two operational Partisan zones. But neither he nor anyone else has not done that, though Kozler had simultaneously claimed that he could have also been wrong since "there is a vast stretch of transitional area between Slovenes and Croats so one could have also drawn the line from Bakar (Buccari) to the Drava River" (KOZLER, 1854: 20)²³.

Evidence from the early (1880–1910) Austrian censuses – Dragonja/Dragogna or Mirna/Quieto?

To understand the development of ethnic affiliations in this border section and the long-term effect of Kozler's reflections we should be informed by the Austrian censuses of the period between 1880 and 1910. Detailed demographic and statistical analysis of the area between the rivers of Dragonja and Mirna on one hand, and Savudrija and Oprtalj (Portole) on the other hand, reveals that the ethnic structure, holistically speaking, is more favourable for Slovenes compared to Croats. The performed analysis includes 116 census measurements from the four official Austrian censuses in 1880, 1890, 1900 and 1910. Compared to Croats, the proportion and number of Slovenes were higher in more than half of the cases (60:39), and in 17 cases the result was undecided (source: AUSTRIAN CENSUSES OF THE AUSTRO-ILLYRIAN LITTORAL). In general, the Slovenes prevailed over the Croats in this, ironically speaking, "Mesopotamia Minor". Similar findings hold for the area of Buzet, where the statistical occurrence of Italianness does not obscure the relationships between Slovenes and Croats.

²¹ Kozler's "Zemljovid" was a kind of concretization of the 1848 Slovene national programme called "Zedinjena Slovenija" (i.e. Unified Slovenia). For more thorough discussion on Kozler's delimitation in Istria see Josipovič, 2011: 236-240.

²² Both Partisan commandants clearly had the credentials to mediate the mutual delimitation. There are some evidence according to which they followed the instructions of their superiors (e.g. GUČEK, 1959: 196–197; MIHELIČ, 2007: 86).

²³ In conversation with the Slovenian geographer Peter Repolusk in 2002, he maintained that Kozler intentionally did not finish his delimitation until the river mouth of Dragonja. Instead, he had drawn the delimiting line until about 10 km from the then coast in the Piran Bay. This

was confirmed by one of earlier versions of the famous Kozler's map "Zemljovid Slovenske dežele in pokrajin [The Map of Slovene Land and Provinces]" from 1853. In later reproductions of Kozler's map, editors forged it and "completed" the line until the sea and caused thence irreparable "side-effect" of ascribing someone the things he or she has never committed. Additional evidence which supports this argument is the fact that Kozler wrote that: "the boundary goes *from* Piran along the Dragonja River". He could only have meant *from* the border of Piran Municipality including Savudrija and Kaštel. Otherwise he would have used: "...from the Piran Bay...", or: "from the Adriatic Sea..." instead (emphases by D.J.).

Since in the pertinent literature the question on the prevalence of any (except the Italian) "ethnic element" were analytically completely overlooked, we carried out an extensive analysis of official Austrian statistical data along with cartographic representations. Since the question of newly acquired territory raised the question of its repartition and its political inclusion respectively, one should bear in mind that the Yugoslav (though multilateral) side has won the war and the pertinent territories of the Zone B. Following the paraphrased principle of *cuius natio, eius regio* it is completely illogical that the Yugoslav side never excluded Italians in its deliberations, unless we apply the framework of the time-space compression. Moreover, to produce higher numbers of the Yugoslavs in post-war mappings, it considered Slovenes and Croats (as well as other "Yugoslavs") as a monolith group (e.g. ROGLIČ, 1946). In this way, all the relationships in a field were blurred. In our analysis we removed that "third party" (i.e. Italians) to avoid the side effect of tri-partitioning. It was clear that the whole area were dominated by Italian speakers. But the question on preponderance of the "winning" Slovenes and Croats were never justifiably answered. Thus we produced four analytical maps, which (beside the absolute structure) show the relationship between Slovenes and Croats alone, and which were created according to the official census data on colloquial language from the period 1880-1910 (Fig. 3, 4, 5, and 6).

The studied area at the time consisted of 30 settlements divided into eight municipalities: Umag/Umago, Buje/Buie, Novigrad/Cittanova, Brtonigla/Črni-vrh/Verteneglio, Grožnjan/Grisignano, Oprtalj/Portole, and parts of Piran/Pirano (Savudrija/Salvore and Kaštel/Castevenera) and Buzet/Pinguente (Pregara) respectively.

According to the census of 1880, Slovene colloquial language dominated in the western part of the studied area (in Municipalities of Umag, Novigrad, Brtonigla, and in Savudrija and Kaštel, as well as in Pregara). While the Oprtalj was predominantly Croatian, Buje and Grožnjan were varied. Among 30 settlements, 15 (50 %)

were dominated by Slovene colloquial language and Croatian in 12, respectively. In the three (3) remaining settlements there were no population considered neither as Slovene nor as Croatian speakers (Fig. 3).

The 1890 census brought vast predominance of Slovene colloquial language in all municipalities or in as many as 22 settlements, with Pregara (a part of Buzet municipality) as the sole exception. Croatian language gained ground only in a few small settlements like Brda/Collalto or Čepič/Ceppi. Again, three settlements were without Slovene or Croatian speakers (Fig. 4).

After the climax of 1890, the number of Slovene speakers slowly started to diminish compared to the Croatian. Nevertheless, by 1900 it retained overall majority. Slovene speakers gained local majority in 14 settlements while the Croatian did so only in 12 settlements. At the occasion of this census (1900) the Slovene speakers dominated in Municipalities of Oprtalj, Brtonigla, Piran (i.e. in Savudrija and Kaštel) or prevailed in Municipalities of Grožnjan and Umag. According to this census, Croatian speakers dominated only in the Municipality of Buje (Fig. 5).

In 1910, the Croatian speaking population for the first and the last time before the WWI slightly surpassed the Slovene speakers (13 vs. 10 settlements). Considering the fact that there were no Slovene or Croatian speakers in as many as seven settlements (including Umag and Novigrad/Cittanova, two major coastal towns), one might stipulate that the Italian speaking settlements had already consolidated against the "Slavs" (Fig. 6).

To sum up the whole studied area between the two rivers, the Slovene speakers directly compared to the Croat speakers reached the following percentages: 56% in 1880; 81% in 1890; 54% in 1900; 43% in 1910 (see Tab. 2).

The results show that the area between the Dragonja and Mirna Rivers is indeed transitional and shifting in affiliations of its population. Thus it is not surprising that many authors designated that area as of "mixed" character (e.g. BERGHAUS, 1846; CZOERNIG, 1855 in JOSIPOVIČ, 2011). In

Table 2 Overall majority according to colloquial language in the area between Dragonja and Mirna according to Austrian censuses of 1880, 1890, 1900 and 1910

	1880	1890	1900	1910	1880-1910
Slovene-speaking population	56 %	81 %	54 %	43 %	58.5 %
Croatian-speaking population	44 %	19 %	46 %	57 %	41.5 %

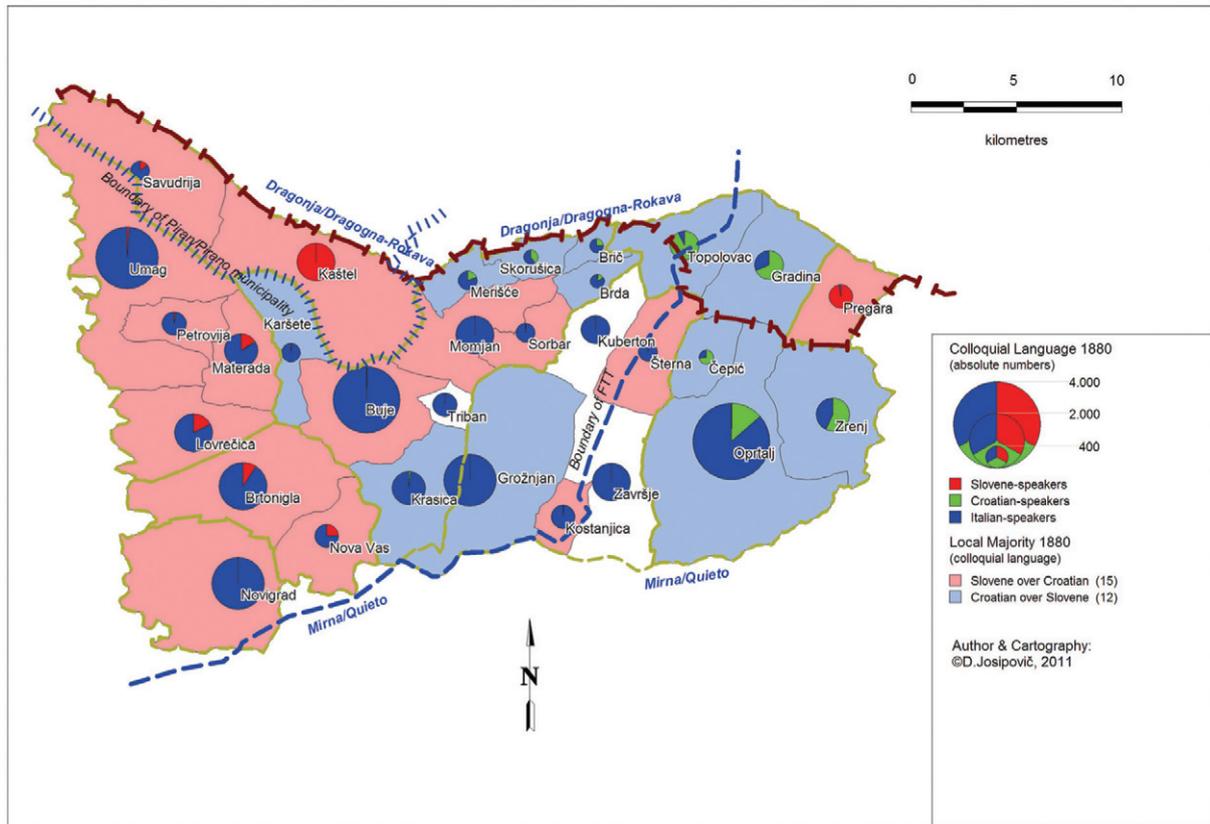


Figure 3 Local prevalence of Slovene or Croatian colloquial language (Census of 1880)

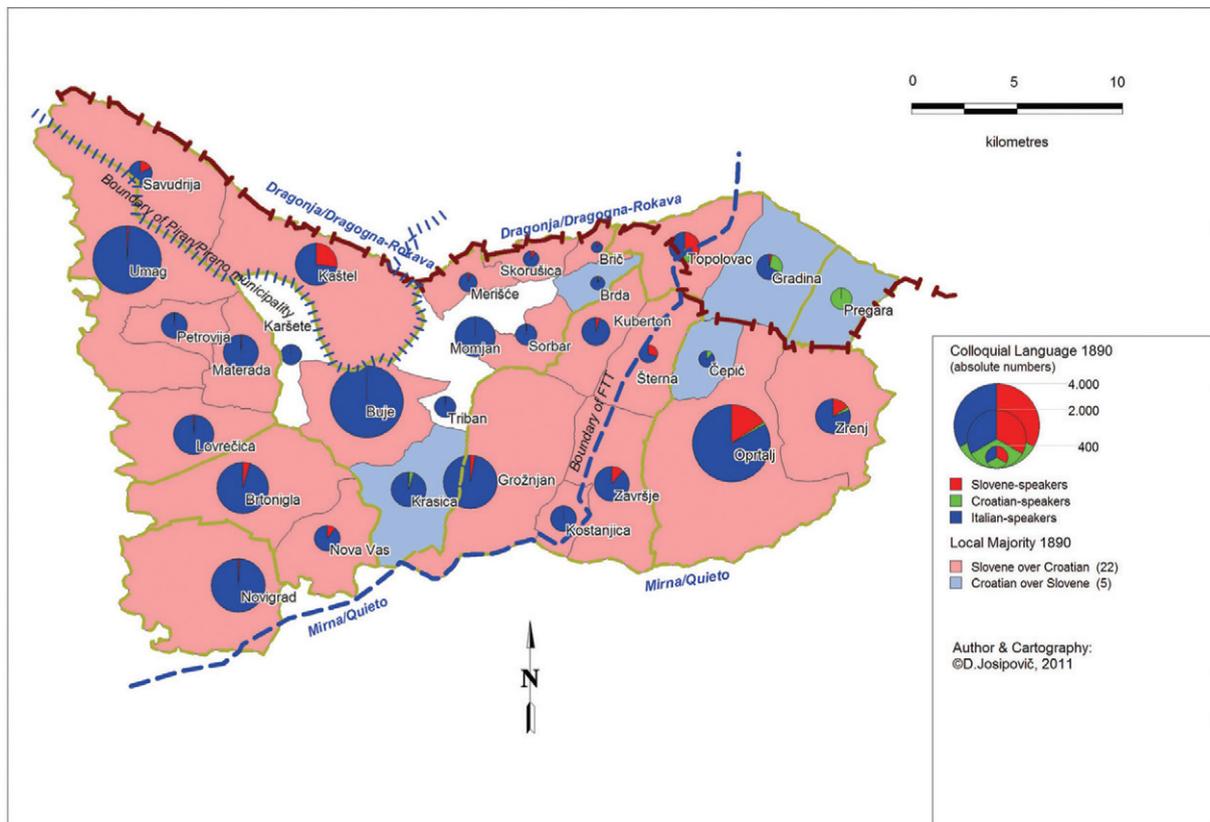


Figure 4 Local prevalence of Slovene or Croatian colloquial language (Census of 1890)

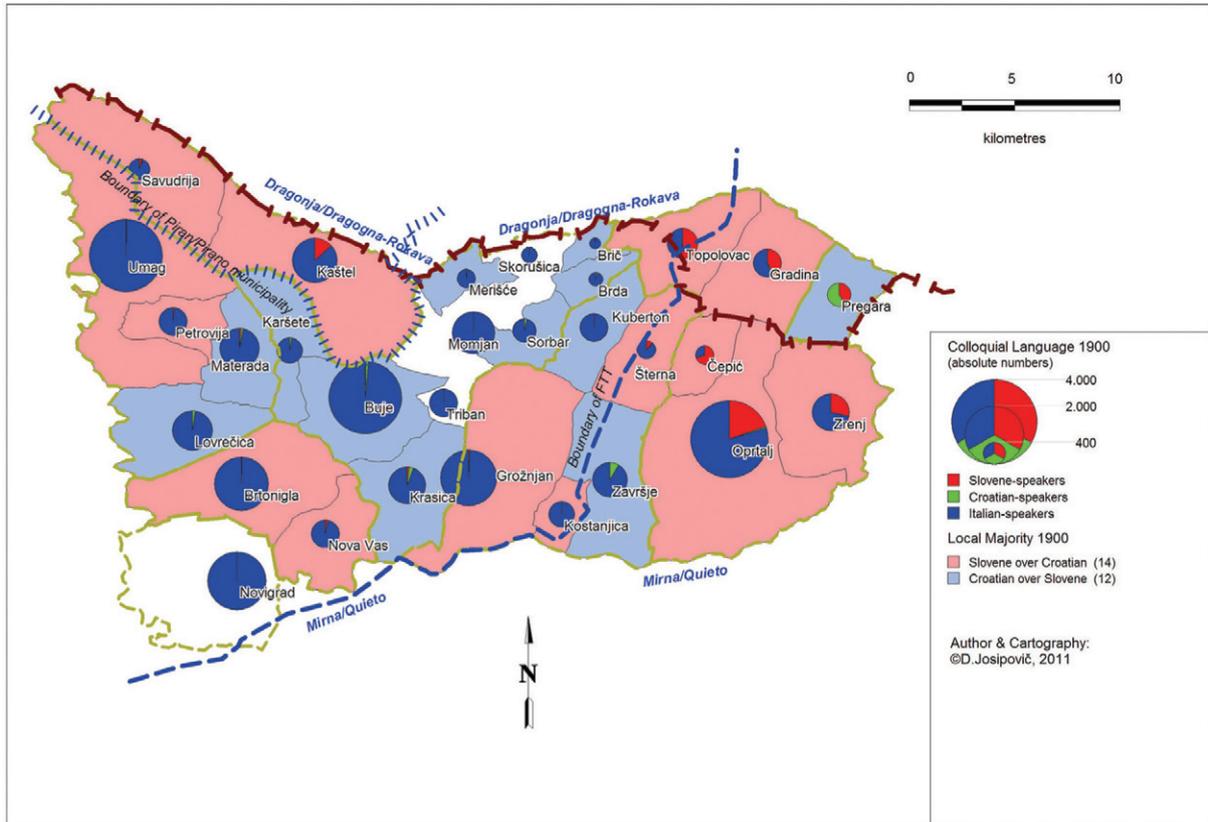


Figure 5 Local prevalence of Slovene or Croatian colloquial language (Census of 1900)

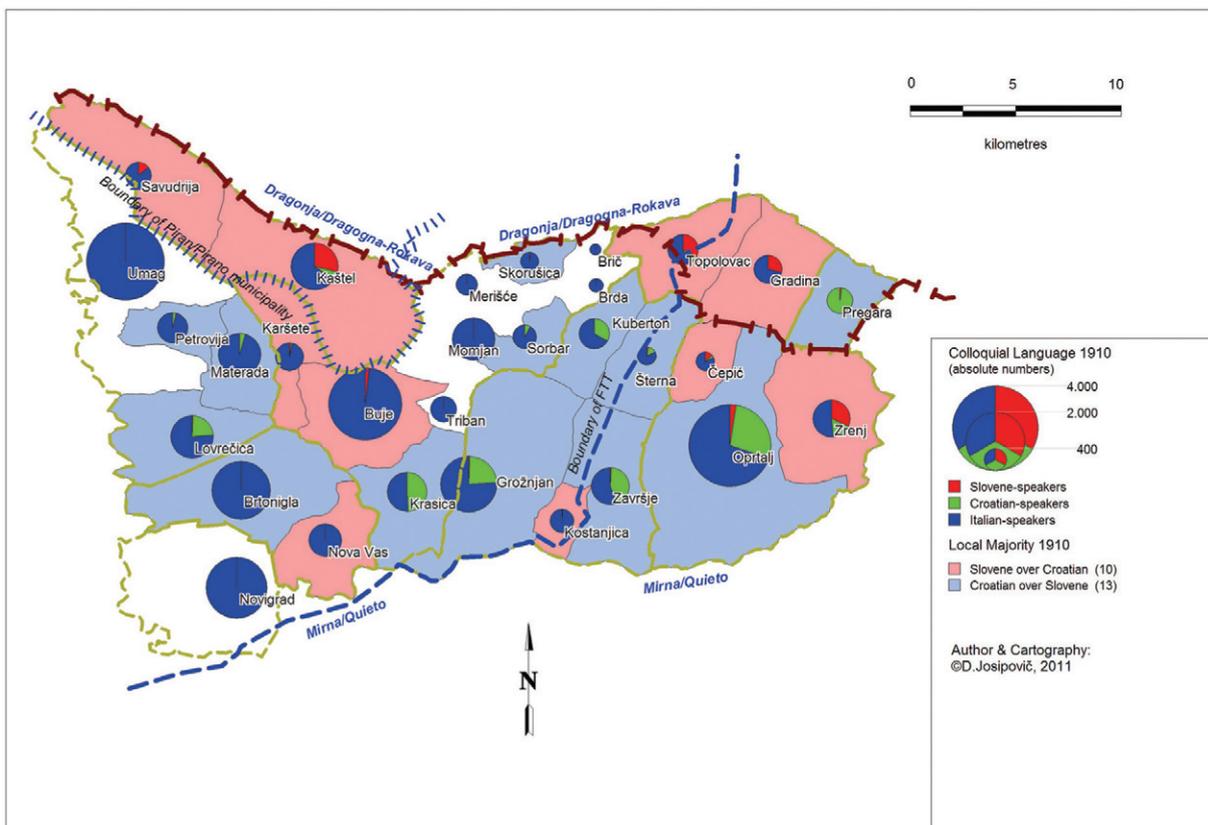


Figure 6 Local prevalence of Slovene or Croatian colloquial language (Census of 1910)

the same way the Šepić's argument from 1943 becomes much more justifiable. He maintained that the reasonable boundary between Slovenes and Croats in Istria should follow the course between Umag (Umago) and Klana (cf. ŠEPIĆ, 1943 in KRISTEN 2006: 393). Despite its legitimacy, the Šepić's proposal was rejected (ibid.). Instead of this on Croatian side, the Krnjević's proposal of boundary course roughly between Dragonja River and Šapjane was accepted. Not surprisingly, because Slovenian side already proposed very similar idea (see GUČEK, 1959). It is hard to answer the question why exactly did Slovenian side not revise this boundary course immediately after the war in 1945, or at least after 1947, when huge parts of Slovene speaking territories were already assigned to Italy. Though, as Bebler recalls, the Yugoslav leadership was occupied by preparation for the peace conference with Italy. Indeed, the Yugoslav side prepared thorough analyses together with thematic mapping already in 1945. However, one cannot overlook an important detail that the maps were prepared in Ljubljana for "two linguistic groups in various time-frames" (BEBLER, 1981: 155). Again, it is evident that the main preoccupation of Slovenian part of Yugoslav side was the western boundary with Trieste itself.

Methodologically speaking, the Austrian censuses had been applying a principle of the so-called spoken- or colloquial- language. It distinguished four major language groups in Istria and in the Austro-Illyrian Littoral respectively (i.e. German, Italian, Slovene, Croatian/Serbian, other). Hence, the analyzing of any aforementioned language combination was and is possible. On the other hand, it is also clear that colloquial language is something different than ethnicity, although they might be interrelated. According to these categories, it is absolutely clear that one cannot ascribe a personal statement on naming a given colloquial language as binding in terms of an ethnic affiliation, be it self-ascribed or not. In this sense it should be stressed that:

"In the time of conception of national ethnobiographies in 19th century, linguistic structure had played a key role as a factor *from outside* ascribed ethnicity. For example, Italianization as a result of Romanic dominance, in particular that of the north-west Istria, had given rise of ethnic and nominal transitions towards Italianness, which had been considered as social stratum breakthrough, and which could have resulted in improved socio-economic position of the individual. The rural Slavic population was easily equipped with Romanic-

sounding names, however, without simultaneously being neither more Italian nor more Slavic! As perhaps surprising is coincidence of southern border of the Slovenianness with Čakavian-Slovene in Buzeščina (Pinguente district). [...] I see precisely this factor as a relatively rationalized basis of ethnic self-affiliation or self-ascription, albeit unique and unrepeatable as in the case of population censuses. The fluctuations of ascribed affiliations should thus be understood only in the context of historical moment and under political-geographical and demographic conditions at that time." (JOSIPOVIČ, 2012)

Thus, it is understandable that in a given social and political setting people change their decisions as regards institutionally expressed belonging, though being convinced to belong to the "local sameness" (cf. KNEŽEVIČ-HOČEVAR, 1995). In case of Istria, many authors argued that the local teachers, preachers, and other distinguished personalities could decisively influence the ethnic or linguistic self-ascription (cf. BELTRAM, 1986: 105). But the comparative analyses of the Austrian censuses (1880–1910) and the census of Josip Roglič (1945), respectively, clearly show that the aforementioned process is overestimated. Besides, there were many changes after the WWII including the major population shifts as well as the shifting between the self-ascribed affiliations. As the analysis of the famous Roglič's census in Istria of 1945 shows:

"...there was a process of transition [from Slovenianness] to Croatianness in Kaštel and Savudrija, [but still] one may have noted a significant and stable number of Slovenes in Savudrija. Furthermore, transitions from Croatianness to Slovenianness may have been observed in wider area of Motovun and Buzet, but also in the eastern parts of the so-called High Istria. On the other hand, migration dynamics hasn't cover only one side of the future inter-republic border. As the population has grown on the Croatian side (especially the population ethnically affiliated as Croats), so it has been on the Slovenian side: the number of Slovenes has increased either at the expense of previously affiliated as Italians or due to higher fertility of rural population who had migrated to the emptied optants' property. Owing to the defeat of fascism and the denial of once attractive and dominant Italianness, the [post-war] ethnic turnover becomes completely understandable. Furthermore, the ethnic turnover may be produced by the very same people without the intervention of ethnically specific coefficients

of natural change or migration. According to the [Austrian] census results, the highest rate of fluctuation was registered particularly in the transitional zone between the Dragonja/Dragogna and Mirna/Quieto rivers." (JOSIPOVIČ, 2012)

Nevertheless, the developments after the dissolution of FTT in 1954 did not lead to any revision of Slovenian-Croatian internal boundary at all. One exception was the Gradin–Pregara area, which was officially annexed to Slovenia by federal decision in 1956 (JOSIPOVIČ, KRŽIŠNIK-BUKIĆ, 2010: 130–131).

In the coming decades, the political circumstances between Italy and Yugoslavia had normalized to the degree when the Osimo Treaties were ratified. Prior to this major event between Italy and Yugoslavia in 1975, there were introduced many other steps of political "warming" (e.g. border crossing arrangements etc.). By the time when Osimo Treaties turned into power the border between Italy and Yugoslavia was one of the good examples of border permeability in the Cold War era. Among many other issues, which cannot be described here more thoroughly, the Osimo Treaties²⁴ provided for much facilitation (minority right, cross-border cooperation, regional initiatives etc.) except the most important thing – changes of the boundary course.

Conclusion

As we have seen, the contemporary Slovenian-Croatian boundary dispute has a complex background and already a long beard. The cession of the dispute, which has culminated before couple of years with sea incidents in and near Piran Bay, to the arbitration tribunal may thus be a reasonable choice. Despite other, more convenient solutions it seemed that both countries have lost the patience needed for solving such an aggravating dispute on a bilateral basis. One might claim that both diplomacies burnt out under the burden either of psychological nature (i.e. too high expectations) or of a given political setting and finally failed to render the acceptable solution. After 15 or more years of negotiating, something like this could be expected. The majority of issues could have probably been easily solved, except one – that on

the maritime sector. The Slovenian aspirations for a territorial access to high seas make a Gordian knot with the Croatian claims that Croatia territorially borders Italy at the sea. Along with both countries' geopolitical, economic, and prestigious reasons, topped with the Slovenian trauma of unwanted outcomes of WWII and with perceived historical defeat over Trieste and its vicinity, together with Croatia heavily hit by the Homeland War and its consequences, the dispute eventually boiled over and been relinquished to an arbitration. Though, the dispute is far from being impossible to settle, bilaterally or otherwise. As Klemenčič and Topalović (2009: 319) state:

"As long as both sides are keen to keep initial position, mutually satisfactory solution is hard to find. In order to come closer to satisfactory solution, both sides should change the approach and cope with challenges. Croatia is challenged to act as a *good neighbour* and perceive Slovenia as *geographically disadvantaged state*. That approach from Croatian side would imply more flexibility and, ultimately, readiness to make concession when maritime delimitation is in question. On the other side Slovenia should decrease its aspirations because they seem to be beyond the framework provided by the UN LOS Convention in 1982."

It looks like the arbitration tribunal will have to take up these challenges and provide the binding solution, one way or another, in a process less burdened with the thickness of recent history in and around Istria. The quest for the suitable boundary course is an arduous task. It has to accommodate historical frustrations of both sides in disagreement. In a same way, it can produce the new frustrations if unsuccessful. Still, there are findings from the pertinent analysis, which enable us to re-experience the enormous difficulties from the post-war time of boundary-making in Istria. Despite the fact that the Slovenian side was never really satisfied with the inter-republic boundary in Istrian sector, it never officially raised the question on fairness of delimitation on Dragonja. It simply coped with the lost Trieste without being rewarded with at least a single (predominantly) Slovene-speaking settlement on the coast of Adriatic. The Slovenian striving at least for a strap of genuinely "Slovene" part of

²⁴ International treaties: Italy and Yugoslavia; Treaty on the delimitation of the frontier for the part not indicated as such in the Peace Treaty of 10th February 1947 (with

annexes, exchanges of letters and final act). Signed at Osimo, Ancona, on 10th November 1975.

Adriatic coast was deeply enrooted in rank and file all the way to the top political establishment. As the Slovene historian, politician, and editor, Dragotin Lončar (1921), would put it almost a century ago: "we were everything in one person at the time".

Macro-regional scale is also very important, as regards the boundary positioning in Istria. The lack of proper Slovenian political entity within the Hapsburg Empire forced the Slovenes to seek other common denominators. It was to be found in the "natural" law based on the spoken language. This fluid and highly arbitrary principle restrained possibilities of incorporating the populations considered as "bordering", which explains why the Slovenian ethno-centrism at the time did not "calculate" with the territory exchanges or compensations. From the diachronic perspective the latter would be highly expected since the then applied principle of ethnic equilibrium. Without being really aware of that, the Slovenian side rather relied on "purist", though broadly misunderstood, Kozler's map of Slovenian Land from 1853 and did not raise the question on revision of the Guček-Babić Partisan's military agreement from 1944. As the analysis of the Austrian census data (1880–1910) has shown, both sides could have agreed for other boundary course without raising the question on compensating the demographical imbalance between Italy and Yugoslavia. On the other hand, the specific geopolitical relationships and historical course of the events, including the creation of the buffer state of Free Territory of Trieste, rendered a tunnel vision and narrowed the array of possible solutions in delimitation between the Slovenes and the Croats. It appears that the Slovenian side within all the political confusion and the thick time-space compression, after 1945 in the Trieste area, did above all want only to have a direct way or, say, access to the sea – albeit a tight corridor at Žavljje/Aquilinia for instance – regardless of the access to the international waters since it was not at the scope at that time. Dreaming so long for the uniting within one "maternal" Yugoslav state, the question on an access to international seas was simply irrelevant for Slovenes.

The assumption that the initial Trieste international dispute between Italy and Yugoslavia and between the Allies has been translated into the contemporary dispute between Slovenia and Croatia is, as we have shown, by no means far-fetched. First, the area of the Slovenian-Croatian dispute was the part of the same unified territory as was Trieste itself. The internal delimitation in

FTT enabled the Yugoslav side to control larger portion (the Zone B) of the territory, however less populated compared to the Zone A including the city of Trieste. The Zone B was governed from Koper/Capodistria in the far north of the Zone. It was, therefore, logical to organize the Yugoslav operated "Istrian County" into two subsequent districts of Koper and Buje. The line of separation was the valley of Dragonja, partly because it was previously (from 1944) used for the military delimitation between Slovene and the Croatian Partisan troops. Only the dissolution of Koper's Istrian County in 1952 and reorganization into two districts gave way to separate governing of Koper District and Buje District respectively, which laid the foundations of what later became the republic boundary around Dragonja River. At the time it was by no means clear about the future status of the whole FTT. In this context, it is much more understandable why Slovenian side decided not to problematize Dragonja instead of insisting on Mirna or proposing other solutions. We have shown by statistical-demographic analysis that Slovenian side had had a good deal of evidence to propose another boundary course, but it had not done so.

And second, if it was somewhat logical that due to the international balance of power Yugoslavia could not won all the territories inhabited by the Slovene-speaking population western from the former Austro-Hungarian boundary towards Italy, then at least Trieste itself could have been proper satisfaction or compensation. Expectations of the Slovenian that Yugoslavia was in the position to gain the whole FTT turned out to be unrealistic. The dismissal of FTT and the whole boundary between Italy and Yugoslavia was finally ascertained in 1975 by the Osimo Treaties. After 1991 Slovenia and Croatia realized that the Istrian sector of the boundary is the most problematic since it is directly connected with the question of maritime delimitation of once Yugoslav territorial waters. Facing the possibility of losing the territorial junction to high seas, and symbolically traumatized by perceived heavy historical defeats, Slovenia opened up the question of "moral debt" of Croatia. The awareness of Croatian side certainly included that perspective, so both sides reached a very important Drnovšek-Račan agreement in 2001. The agreement failed to be ratified in Croatian Parliament and thus started the second decade of bilateral negotiations to come. In spite of a possible good will, neither of sides was ready to withdraw, for many reasons (local political

situation, prestige, power relations etc.), which eventually led to the compromise in a shape of the agreement on arbitration.

Given that both countries were inclined to react emotionally (i.e. triggered conflicts, official notes, attitudes at the questions of Yugoslav succession,

banking, nuclear power-plant etc.) for many different reasons, one cannot automatically rule out the psychological effects of traumatization (caused by the loss of Trieste for example), and the pertinent transmission of trauma.

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