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Redefining Ethnic Identity

Examples of Croatian Ethnic Communities in Chile and New South Wales

This article analyses ethnic identity on the example of Croatian ethnic communities in overseas countries, Chile and Australia, in the period from the beginning of the Homeland War and international recognition of Croatia until today. The object of this research is Croatian emigrant community and various social activities organized by Croatian organizations. The aim of this article is to discuss to what extent and on what levels is ethnic identity recognizable in Croatian ethnic communities in the two researched states, and in the same time, to establish their similarities and differences. The research is based on the relevant literature, prior researches, analyses of newspaper articles and information on Croatian emigrant communities found on the Internet as well as through interviews with members and representatives of different societies which are active in Croatian ethnic communities in the selected countries.

Key words: emigration, ethnic identity, Croatian emigrants, Croatian organizations, Croatian community, multiculturalism

Introduction

Emigration of Croats to overseas countries begun in the middle of the 19th century and continued during the 20th century. Even though, historically speaking, we can distinguish four major emi-

gration waves,¹ this article mostly deals with the last one, i.e. with the period of emigration which has started in the 1990ies and has continued until today and has been directed towards Australian state of New South Wales and towards Chile. The main aim and goal of this research is to discuss to what extent and on what levels is ethnic identity recognizable in Croatian ethnic communities in Chile and New South Wales, and whether there are similarities and differences in the type of activities organized by the existing Croatian organizations.

Emigration to overseas countries was happening under direct or indirect influence of unfavorable economic and political conditions in the home country, and emigration was directed towards politically more stable and economically more developed regions.

It is very difficult to determine what influences a decision of each individual to leave his/her home country, and which are the key reasons which motivate an individual to finally come to the decision to leave. Most of the theories of migration list numerous factors which cause migrations, and which can be mostly grouped into two groups. These are pull and push factors. Between the regions in which these two groups of factors are dominant, migration of population occurs. Push factors are of socio-economic (major economic crises, inability to feed one's own family, crises in vine growing, crisis of shipbuilding industry, surplus labor in agriculture, inability of cities and surrounding areas to hire the surplus labor from agriculture, general underdevelopment, small offer of jobs in one's own place of living, unsatisfying social conditions in local communities, etc.), but also of political nature (unacceptable political situation in the home country, activities of Communist Party of Yugoslavia and communist government in the former state, Yugoslav ideology, frequent wars, two World Wars, political crises of the late communist era and the Homeland War). Pull factors for the emigration of Croats to Australia and Chile were: secured jobs on the sugar cane plantations, in tobacco industry, vine growing, saltpeter mines, and, in the later periods of emigration, in building industry, catering industry, trade, computer business and transport industry. Hence, we can say that the reasons which caused the emigration of population during four major waves were partly socio-economic and partly political. Consequences of overseas migrations can be observable on the country (region) of emigration, immigration country, and on the migrant i.e. on migrants as a group. The country which is the source of emigration usually loses the most vital section of population, and this gradually leads to the changes in population structure generally, and they are, in the long run, reflected on the specific re-

¹ First wave: from the 1880ies until the First World War - emigration to overseas countries, caused by a combination of political and economic reasons; Second wave: after the Second World War - emigration caused by inadequate development and poverty of the country and the communist regime governing the former state; Third wave: 1960ies and 1970ies - instigated by the liberalization of state politics towards the so-called 'contemporary' labor migration to Western European countries, economic by nature, and caused by a bad state of the labor market in Croatia and increased demand on the Western European labor markets; Fourth wave: since 1990ies - forced emigration of a certain number of Croats from the larger territory of Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, caused by Serbian aggression (Akrap 2003; Čizmić, Živić 2005).

gions, countries and vice versa, while a migrant (emigrant) passes through different experiences on individual level, so as to satisfy his/her personal wishes, goals, needs and expectations.

Periods of emigration to Chile from the 19th century until today

Emigration of Croats to the countries of South America was documented as early as the middle of the 19th century, even though these were mostly individual cases, mostly seamen and sailors. The last two decades of the 19th century were marked by mass emigrations of Croats to North and South America, Chile including, from the Austrian county of Dalmatia, and especially Dalmatian islands. Those who immigrated to Chile were from the islands of Brač and Hvar and from the regions around Dubrovnik and Omiš. It is estimated (Mataić 1998; Antić 2003) that almost 80-90% of Croatians immigrants to Chile came from the island of Brač.

The Croats inhabited the south (Magallanes region) and north (Antofagasta and Tarapaca) of Chile. They lived in, the so-called, colonies, which differed in size and accommodated from a few dozens to a few thousand immigrants.

To the Magallanes region they came during the 1870ies and in larger numbers during the 1890ies. This region was inhabited because of the gold fields which were discovered in 1869 in the Rio de la Minas which is flowing through the town of Punta Arenas, where the first Croatian colony was founded.

The second Croatian immigration colony was founded in the little town of Porvenir on the island of Tierra del Fuego. The island was inhabited by Croatian immigrants during the 1870ies, and they lived and worked in small groups as gold diggers.

The Island of Tierra del Fuego was inhabited by large number of Croatian immigrants in the middle of the 1880ies. Their arrival was connected with the gold rush, but also with the activities of Julius Popper in this region.² After the gold rush was over, the immigrants gradually switched to other activities or abandoned the island. Those who stayed took on to cattle breeding.

In later periods, saltpeter industry attracted a larger number of immigrants to the warm regions on the north of Chile, to Iquique in Tarapaca region and Antofagasta

² J. Popper, a Romanian of Jewish origin, arrived to the Terra del Fuego in 1886 to conduct some research in geography and he was also interested in gold fields. He founded the Society for the Exploitation of Gold Fields in Buenos Aires, and established a field base in Terra del Fuego. In the first group of Croats, whom Popper brought from Buenos Aires to Terra del Fuego in 1887 was Matija Mihalić, who was born in the village of Pučišće on the island of Brač in 1864 (Antić 1991:273).

in the region of the same name. Croatian immigrants arrived to Antofagasta mostly by sailing through the Strait of Magellan or arrived to Buenos Aires and then used the overland route across the Andes.

Croatian colonies in these regions were gradually growing in size, because of the extraction and processing of saltpeter and Croats were the pioneers in the working out of saltpeter mines. They participated in all the jobs related to saltpeter: they were the factory owners, manual workers and clerks. The largest number of Croats in the north of Chile lived in the region of Antofagasta, and the best organized colony was situated in the town of the same name.

At the beginning, almost everybody engaged in trade. After that, they engaged in other jobs as well, so many of them invested money in the saltpeter industry as well as in the sulfur and crystallized salt mines.

Smaller number of immigrants came to the towns of Calama, Tocopilla and Chanaral at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. They mostly engaged in trade.

A smaller number of Croats also immigrated to the central part of Chile, to the towns of Valparaiso and Santiago.

Second important period of immigration was the period after the First World War when the USA introduced the so-called immigration quotas, so larger numbers of immigrants were aimed towards the countries of South America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile). Namely, in 1921, the USA passed a restrictive Immigration Law, which proposed an immigration quota of 3% of immigrants of certain nationality who already lived in the USA (according to the census from 1910). The Law became drastically stricter in 1924 when the immigration quota was lowered to 2% (according to 1890 census).

At the end of the 1920ies new colonies of Croatian immigrants were founded in the cities of Santiago, Concpcion, La Serena Ovalle, Vina del Mar and Valdivia. This was due to the re-emigration of Croatian immigrants inside Chile, which was the consequence of the political centralization of the government, economy and higher education in the capital of Santiago, and due to closing down of saltpeter factories after the discovery of artificial fertilizers (many Croatian immigrants lost their jobs, and Croatian businessmen were forced to close down the factories).

By the World War Two, significant immigration of Croats to Chile had stopped.

Besides economic emigration, which was characteristic of these two periods, political immigration was also present, mostly to Argentina, but a smaller number of Croats, the so-called political emigrants, arrived to Chile as well, after the Second World War. Croatian ethnic colonies in Chile still exist today and the biggest ones are in the towns of Punta Arenas, Porvenir, Iquique, Antofagasta and Santiago.

According to the estimates of the Chilean Foreign Office, there are around 150.000 of Chileans of Croatian origin in Chile today, which amounts to 1.5% of the total population of Chile. Insignificant number of Chilean Croats was born in Croatia,

which means that they belong to the first generation of immigrants. Today the name 'Chilean Croats' is mostly used for Croats in Chile, and this name specifies a special ethnic category of Chileans of Croatian origin.

Periods of emigration to New South Wales from the 19th century until today

It was assumed that the first Croats arrived to New South Wales around the year 1800, even though there were some indications of their arrival before the specified year. These were mostly sailors from the coastal regions of Croatia, who were working on the foreign ships. The name of A. Cumberbitch, a free immigrant, can be found on the 1800-1802 censuses of New South Wales (Tkalčević 1999). Another source stated that the first Croatian immigrants came to the settlement called Broken Hill in New South Wales before 1880 (Tkalčević 1999). Holjevac (1968) claimed that the first Croatian immigrants to New South Wales were Zuburić and Poldrugo. Marin Alagich (1988) pointed that in 1890 around 150 Croats lived in NSW in the settlement called Broken Hill. They were among the first settlers to open wine shops and to organize collective buying-off of milk, they engaged in vegetable growing and fishing. The period from 1890 to 1918 is considered to be the first major immigration wave, when a large group of Croats from the village of Račišće on the island of Korčula arrived to the western part of Australia. The reason for this immigration wave was phylloxera (vine pest) which struck the Dalmatian vineyards and 'chased' many vine growers to emigration (Colic-Peisker 2005).

More important wave of immigration towards New South Wales occurred in the period between 1918 and 1945. At the end of the World War One due to political changes and difficult economic situation in the home country, there was an intensive chain migration of Croats to Australia. Croats from all parts of Dalmatia, Herzegovina, Lika, Kordun, Banovina and Slavonija arrived. The generation of immigrants who arrived in the period from 1918 to 1930ies engaged in fishing, vine growing, growing vegetables and worked in the stone-pits and in building industry. Great economic crises of the 1930ies stopped the immigration of Croats to Australia, but continued again right after the Second World War (Colic-Peisker 2005). In the period after the Second World War the three largest Croatian immigration waves arrived to Australia. The first started in 1948 when many Croats who fought in the World War Two on the side of the Independent State of Croatia, immigrated to Australia from refugee camps in Austria, Italy and Germany. These were the so-called Displaced Persons, many Croats who, because of their anti-communist political orientation, were political refugees in the European prisoner camps before they boarded the ships to Australia (Colic-Peisker 2005). Even though the majority of Croats were highly educated, their qualifications were not recognized in Australia, and many doctors and other experts begun their Australian life as manual workers and women as domestic help. So, even though they lost their personal and professional status, which was their fate

in the 'new homeland', they remained morally strong and they initiated a struggle for the preservation of Croatian identity, by founding organizations and ethnic clubs. This was Croatian anti-communist immigration wave towards Australia, but also towards other countries which accepted political refugees (Radica 1992, Rojnica 1994, Colic-Peisker 2005). Ilija Šutalo (2004) further divided the immigrants into five different categories: economic immigrants, political immigrants, dissatisfied individuals, family reunions and refugees. They were coming from Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Srijem, Lika, Bačka, Boka Kotorska, and Eastern Slavonia.

The second wave of immigration of Croats towards New South Wales and other parts of Australia lasted from 1954 to 1960, when a generation of young Croats, even though they did not participate in the Second World War, decided to leave Croatia rather than to build their future under the communist regime, 'at home'. This was the wave of economic migration when Australia accepted and employed healthy and strong young people to work in industry (Colic-Peisker 2005). The largest immigration wave of Croats arrived to NSW between 1960 and 1973. They were mostly from Dalmatia, Dalmatinska Zagora, but also from other rural and urban regions of Croatia. This was also economic immigration, a part of the so-called 'mass-import' of labor force to Australia from southern Europe. Colic-Peisker (2005) pointed that men would arrive first, with the support of a cousin who arrived before them (chain migration), and after few years, their fiancés, wives or families would follow. They would mostly settle close to their compatriots and they frequently worked in the same companies which ensured linguistic, emotional and practical support. The members of this group of Croatian immigrants are mostly retired today, but still represent the most numerous group and they dominate the Croatian clubs and organizations, where on weekends they play bowls, cards, serve Croatian traditional food or sing songs by Croatian popular singers. The period between 1973 and 1990 can be characterized as a period in which there were no significant immigration waves of Croatian population to NSW and Australia in general. The new wave started after 1990 and is still going on. During this period a large number of Croats with university degrees and knowledge of English language arrived to NSW and Australia, in general. This immigration wave was instigated by economic, but also political crisis of the late communism in Croatia, and later by the war, economic situation and rapid growth of unemployment. The majority of new coming Croats managed to find jobs on the basis of their qualifications and, gradually, together with their children, they managed to change the image of Croatian community in Australia and to become more present in public and cultural life. Through its inclusion in the social mainstream of Australian everyday life, Croatian ethnic identity of Croatian immigrants has gradually spread over the multicultural society of the Australian continent.

Methodological and theoretical-terminological notes

This article discusses identity, or, more precisely, redefining of identity of Croatian ethnic communities in Chile and NSW. Here we understand ethnic identity as a type

of collective identity, and we place special emphasis on the process of ‘identification transition’. In other words, it is assumed that the Homeland War, i.e. the break up of the former Yugoslavia, influenced the process of redefining of ethnic identity of Croatian ethnic groups in Chile and in NSW. Since identification transition includes endogenous (internal) and exogenous (external) transition (Weinreich 1988), we are analyzing here apparent as well as latent forms of ethnic identity of Croatian ethnic groups in the two states.

Our aim was to answer the following questions: Did the Homeland War and the break up of Yugoslavia cause redefinition of ethnic identity of Croats in NSW and in Chile? In which way is ethnic identity now defined? Which are the characteristics of their ethnicity?

The analysis of collective/ethnic identity is inseparable from the analysis of the social world in which it is developed, so it was inevitable to include the time-space dimension.

We have selected two states on different continents (Australia, South America), where Croatian ethnic community lives, so as to discuss the possible similarities and differences in relation to their ethnic identity. Processes of overseas migrations from Croatia were taking place over a hundred-years long period of time, through different periods and types of migrations. It is a well known fact that different generations of immigrants live today in the two selected states, and that they emigrated from different state formations which Croatia was a part of (Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, Kingdom of Yugoslavia, SFRJ), and therefore, that they preserved different images, reminiscences and memories of their homeland. Their descendants have adopted culture and knowledge of their ethnic belonging mostly through family socialization, so it is assumed that the consciousness of Croatian immigrants of their own ethnic belonging, if it exists, mostly stems from a symbolic-mythical basis and can be described as symbolic ethnicity.

That is to say, in ethnic identification symbols are the key factors, because the symbols divide ‘us’ from ‘them’. They are the signals for those ‘outside’ and those inside a group. Symbols usually survive because they are a part of the mythical structure. Story telling can awake, among members of a certain group, a strong awareness of the ‘common destiny’ (Armstrong 1982: 6-9). In accordance to that, Armstrong described ethnic identity as a group of emotions and beliefs shared by members of an ethnic group which is shaped through myths and symbols (the so-called mythical-symbolic complex): ‘Myths, symbols and patterns of communication ‘constitute’ ethnic identity; myths, including mythomoteure³ embody systems of values and symbols during long periods of time.’ (1982:283).

³ This term was coined by Smith in his book *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, 1988, and signifies a motivating mythic force (according to the note from: Smith 2003:186).

The importance of symbolic-mythical complex for the survival of an ethnic group was observed by Smith, too, but, unlike Armstrong, he went a step further and pointed out that the 'ethnic core' is changeable; i.e. that the content of ethnic identity can change: 'To be Italian or Russian today is not the same as in 1980, or even less so in 1960, in the eyes of the members of that group or in the eyes of outsiders.' (1995:31).

Smith has emphasized the six main characteristics of an ethnic community: collective name, myth of common ancestry, collective historical memory, one or more distinctive elements of the common culture, connection to a specific 'homeland', feelings of solidarity between the members of the group (1998:40). According to him, the important factors in ethnic identification, besides common historical and cultural contents, are subjective components: myth on common ancestors, 'common historical memories', feelings of belonging to a certain country and closeness to it (even though separated from its homeland, an ethnic group can exist through the feelings of nostalgia and spiritual connectedness). Cohesion and self-awareness of the members of a community can increase or decrease, depending on the intensifying or lessening of the subjective meaning of each of these characteristics (comp. Smith 1998). Smith thinks that the collective cultural identity should be reconstructed from the historical, subjective and symbolic standpoint: 'Collective cultural identity is not about the uniqueness of cultural elements through several generations, but about the feelings of continuity shared by different generations of a specific cultural population unit, about their common memories of past events and periods of history, as well as about images each generation has on the collective destiny of that population unit and its culture' (1998:46).

This article is directed towards the analysis of ethnic organizations: forms of ethnic connectedness and ethnic identity of young people (the descendants of the immigrants), i.e. towards the reconstruction of tradition. The following concepts are used: ethnic organization, ethnic mobilization, ethnic initiation, ethnic markers, ethnic handicap, etc. Under 'ethnic organizations' we can include all the social institutions and gatherings of a specific ethnic group (clubs, political parties, associations). Ethnic mobilization refers to the activation of the members of a certain ethnic group (on ethnic basis) in order to achieve specific goals. Ethnic markers or traits are the characteristics of an ethnic group such as language, symbols, territory (comp. Heršak, ed., 1998:54-55). The term ethnic handicap is used to point to the non-existence of a specific ethnic marker which can, but does not have to, represent a difficulty in the realization of ethnicity (for example, not knowing the mother's tongue). Ethnic initiation is a symbolic-ritual passage from one identity to another (comp. Jenkins 1996:40-45).

When speaking about ethnic identity of the young people, we agree with Melucci's (1996/97:45) claim that ethnic identity loses its biological connotations, or, in other words, that its roots in cultural tradition are becoming weaker, and hence today it becomes a question of cultural choice, a reservoir from which individuals and groups can derive their identity. Even though the traditional roots of ethnicity are weaker

(assimilation, migration), ethnic identity is increasingly perceived as a criterion of identification which ensures the identity's continuity and history.

Under the project organized by the Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies from Zagreb, titled *Croatian Migrant Communities: Belonging and Multiculturalism*, headed by Dr Saša Božić, various research phases were conducted in both countries: field research, talks, interviews, written correspondence with the presidents of the ethnic organizations, etc. Numerous sources (from different scientific disciplines, such as history, sociology, political sciences, psychology, economy, geography), were used and analyzed to compare the processes of defining and redefining of ethnic identity among the older and younger generation of Croatian ethnic community on the different localities, in Australia and South America, i.e. in NSW and Chile, from the contemporary perspective.

Ethnic organizations: forms of ethnic union

Ethnic organizations have a task to promote common interests of an ethnic group, in formal and informal organizational forms. We usually place their activities in the context of the discussions on the processes of identification, assimilation, naturalization of specific ethnic groups. Processes of formation of different ethnic institutions, such as soccer clubs, folklore or lobbyist groups, are closely related to the needs of the ethnic group or with the need to overcome social isolation (Božić 1998:86).

So as to establish and strengthen societal borders towards the acceptance of 'others', the ethnic migrant community creates its own ethnic network of different institutional and non-institutional forms of collective activities for the reputation of its name, but also for the protection of its own status and interests.

The example of Chile

The formation of first Croatian migrant communities in Chile was documented at the end of the 19th century. Initially Croatian (Slavic) ethnic organizations⁴ had a social function – to provide protection for their members in case of illness or death. They existed under the national Croatian name⁵ for a short period of time, from the

⁴ First Croatian charity organizations carried Slavic or Austrian names: Slavic Charity Society 1894, Antofagasta; Slavic Charity Society 1896, Iquique; Austrian Society of Mutual Help 1896, Punta Arenas (comp. Antić 1991).

⁵ At the beginning of the 20th century there was a national reformation movement among the Croatian colonies in Chile, which was especially prominent in the south, in Punta Arenas. Many Croatian organizations were founded, such as: Croatian Library, 1899; Croatian Charity Society, 1900; Croatian Voluntary Fire Brigade, 1902; Croatian Tamburitza Society 'Tomislav', 1904; Croatian Sports Club 'Sokol', 1912; Croatian Woman, 1914, etc. in Punta Arenas or Croatian Assembly in the town of Taltal in 1903 (comp. Perić 2004).

beginning of the 20th century till 1914. Later they assumed cultural, economic and political function, but were called 'Yugoslav' societies.⁶ From the First World War onwards, ethnic organizations⁷ were 'pro-Yugoslav' and they mostly promoted the politics of the official Yugoslav authorities.

Since migration from Croatia to Chile stopped before the Second World War, and after the war, a very small number of political immigrants arrived, who remained isolated and excluded⁸ from the 'old Croatian migrant community', Croatian ethnic community did not renew itself with new members. On the other hand, the Chilean politics of integration (assimilation), through legal regulations and education system, shattered the 'strict ethnic boundaries', and hence due to increased numbers of mixed marriages⁹ and the time and distance that separated the community from the homeland, Croatian ethnic identity was diminishing, and reappearing in new, hybrid forms, and the boundaries of Croatian ethnic community inside the society became barely noticeable, of the changed structure, name and meaning.

During the Homeland War, we could find in Chile a group of 'Chilean Croats (Yugoslavs)', members of the third or fourth generation of immigrants, descendants of Croatian economic emigrants, who were Chilean citizens, but with a marked aware-

⁶ After the establishment of the State of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians (SHS) in 1918, all the societies in Chile changed their names to 'Yugoslav', and hence there existed: Yugoslav School, Yugoslav Hall, Yugoslav Woman, Yugoslav Organization, Yugoslav Matrix, etc.

⁷ Yugoslav Popular Defense was organized in Antofagasta in 1915 and in became the greatest moral and financial back-up to the Yugoslav Committee in London, and a group of rich businessmen from saltpeter industry occupied the leading positions, such as Baburizza and Lukinović. Its main tasks were: 'To provide support and participate in talks with the Executive Committees in the homeland, for the political and economic betterment of Yugoslav countries under the foreign occupation and improvement of social and economic conditions in Yugoslav societies throughout the Pacific.' (Jugoslavija, May 6, 1915) (comp. Antić 1987). YPD took the greatest burden in the promotion of liberation of Serbs, Slovenians and Croats from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and unification of Slovenian, Croatian and Serbian countries with Serbia and Crna Gora into one common state of Yugoslavia. Ljubo Leontić, who was invited by the Croatian Immigrant Youth to Antofagasta to organize an immigration movement, pointed that the connections between young people in Chile and the pre-War revolutionary youth were very intensive since the first assassinations which followed the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1908), and that these connections were further expanded and renewed during the war and that Croatian Immigrant press in Chile published articles by young associates writing from Rome, Geneva, Paris and London (1955).

⁸ Official Yugoslav authorities were using the immigrants' societies for their propaganda against the 'political emigrants', and hence the old Croatian immigrant communities (now pro-Yugoslav), made impossible any cooperation or contact with them.

⁹ According to the data by Vjera Zlatar Montan (2002) the greatest number of marriages with both spouses of Croatian origin was happened in Antofagasta in the period from 1909-1928, the period of the most intensive immigration. In that period, the Croats were rarely marrying the members of some other immigrant community and they often chose the partners of the same nationality. After 1928, larger numbers of Croats married the Chileans. They also chose their partners among other immigrant groups, such as Bolivians, Argentines and Italians, followed by Greeks, Spaniards and, less frequently, Germans, Uruguayans, Peruvians, Rumanians, Czechs, Serbs, Slovenians, Hungarians and Lebanese. After 1958, we have little data on the marriages of Croatian immigrants, whether with the members of the same or different ethnic group (descendants of Croatian immigrants were already Chilean citizens, and a small number of Croatian immigrants arrived after 1958).

ness of their ethnic origin. They occupied leading positions in the ethnic organizations of young people, were intellectuals, and had high reputation and socio-economic status. They created a new form of ethnicity, and allowed the members of other migrant groups to join their clubs and societies (in most cases, one parent belonged to another migrant community), which brought to the hybrid forms of ethnicity, which existed under the 'Yugoslav' name.

The process of redefinition of identity of Croatian ethnic community happened during the Homeland War and international recognition of the Republic of Croatia. It was manifested by a real flood of Croatian national symbols¹⁰ (which replaced Yugoslav ones), increased interest in 'seeking one's true origin' and in finding the meaning of one's own ethnicity. Ethnic transition from Yugoslav to Croatian ethnic identity was not unilinear.

Ethnic mobilization through political engagement of the members of ethnic group occurred through the processes of the 'raising awareness' of ethnic group by specific individuals,¹¹ who were also the members of the ethnic group (first generation). They prepared the members for ethnic initiation, which included the interpretation and gaining knowledge on the ethno-genesis of Croatian people, and the values and meaning of the Homeland War. Through the process of ethnic initiation many members of the ethnic group expressed high levels of solidarity with Croatian people in the homeland. Furthermore they also experienced ethnic handicap because they did not speak Croatian language, which was an important marker of ethnicity. During that period, there also occurred a kind of hyper-sensibility of Croatian ethnic community for what was going on in their homeland. A network of ethnic support committees was founded throughout Chile, under the name 'Pro Croacia', which had an activist role of informing the Chilean public through media (newspapers, television), about the war in Croatia and about the common and unique goal of Croatian people in homeland and in Chile, which is a free and independent Croatia. Through their political activities, but also through the reputation they had as an ethnic community in Chile, they not only contributed to the fact that Chile was the first South American country to recognize the independence of Croatia, but they also offered a constant support to Croatia by sending financial help, and evacuating and accepting war refugees.

¹⁰ Croatian flags, Croatian checker-board; Keys, shirts and cups with printed Croatian checker-board, etc.

¹¹ Specially active Croatian intellectuals in Chile: Asja Perasić, Drago Jakšić, Marta Gazzari, Davor Domitrović, Rudi Mijač, Vjera Zlatar Montac and others. Chilean journalists of Croatian origin were also especially active during the Homeland War in Croatia, in order to present the real truth, not only to Croats and their descendants living in Chile, but also to the Chilean public: 'When it all started (Homeland War in Croatia), Chilean journalists were confused. They did not understand what was going on. And first we had to explain to them that the Croats had a constitutional right, as well as other Republics of the former Yugoslavia, to secession. Then we explained that our Parliament was one of the oldest in the world... That is why our institute (Chilean-Croatian Cultural Institute) published a book with all the explanations and geographical maps. And step by step they started realizing what it was all about' (Hetrich 1996:46-47).

Today the ethnic unity of Chilean Croats can be observed in various social activities. Throughout Chile, a number of Croatian ethnic societies are active¹² in various ways – in folklore groups, sports competitions and choirs, and they preserve and represent a part of Croatian ethnic heritage. Partly due to the mixed marriages (Chileans with Croats) and partly due to the embeddedness of Croatian culture in Chilean everyday life, a number of Chileans who do not have Croatian ethnic origin, are members of Croatian societies and they want to participate in their activities and be part of the Croatian culture.

Today in Chile there are several Croatian ethnic societies of intellectuals, such as Chilean-Croatian Institute for Culture and Society of Intellectuals of Croatian Origin which give special incentive to ethnic consciousness, because they provide it with a respectable and significant place in the mosaic of multiple ethnic cultures of Chile. And these Chilean intellectuals of Croatian origin are the main initiators in organizing different activities and festivals such as Croatian language courses, literary and music evenings, exhibitions of Croatian art (paintings, photography), visits of Croatian scientists of Chilean universities etc.

Besides cultural and political forms, there are also economic forms of ethnic life, such as Chilean-Croatian Chamber of Economy and a group which is a part of the organization 'Merkosurci', which is called the 'Chileans of Croatian Heart', who are ready to actively involve in enabling the introduction of Croatian economy to Chile.

Some Croatian ethnic communities in Chile have their own web-pages,¹³ and hence the great distance between Chile and Croatia does not present such a big problem any more. Lack of knowledge of the mother tongue (Croatian ethnic community in Chile does not speak Croatian, but mostly Spanish language), can cause some difficulties in following information from Croatia, as well as in direct communication with cousins or with people from Croatia. Web-pages usually present the activities and the society's structure, information for the descendants in the form of legal advice related to obtaining Croatian citizenship, or advice on learning Croatian language. Croatian products are also usually promoted on these web-pages (cherry-brandy, walnut-brandy, CD-s with songs of Dalmatian harmony-singers, language learning CD-s, etc.), together with national cuisine (Croatian, Dalmatian cookbooks and old Dalmatian and Croatian specialties), cultural attractions (Bašćanska Stone Tablet, Zagreb Cathedral) and major Croatian cities (Split, Zagreb, Brač, Hvar, etc.).

Besides institutional forms of ethnic unity, there are also a number of non-institutionalized social activities. We should mention an interesting form of family-kin gath-

¹² In Antofagasta: *Croatian Society, Croatian Hawk, Distant Chords* and *Croatian Fire Brigade; Croatian Club* in Valledor; *Croatian Club* in Iquique and *Croatian House* in Arica. In Santiago: *Croatian Woman, Adriatic Fairy, Singing Society* Jadran, *Croatian Club, Society of Intellectuals of Croatian Origin, Croatian Immigrant Center*. The most active are the Croatian societies on the south of Chile. In the Magallenas region in Punta Arenas there are *Croatian Woman, Croatian Club Croatian Hawk* and *Croatian House* in Porvenir (comp. Perić 2003).

¹³ <http://www.hrvatski.cl>; <http://sociedadcroataantofagasta.cl>; <http://www.estudiocroata.cl>

ering where the members of few generations of immigrants with the same last name (for example, Kusanović), meet at a lunch or dinner. This is an example of ethnicity transmitted in transgenerational mode.

One of the specificities at the Croatian community in Chile is the fact that not a single Croatian parish was active in this regions, even though a significant number of Chileans of Croatian origin were priests, bishops or friars in the Chilean Catholic Church. This fact, together with amalgamation, has speeded up the process of abandoning the mother tongue. It is well known that the Croatian Catholic parishes in immigration were, in large number of cases, the main initiators of ethnic gathering and preservation of Croatian customs and language.

The example of New South Wales

The most important role in the formation of identity of Croatian ethnic community in New South Wales have Croatian organizations and numerous Croatian clubs. Out of seven Croatian clubs in Sydney, the most the most famous in Punchbowl. All the major social and cultural events of Croatian ethnic community in Sydney and New South Wales are organized in this club. Many concerts, lectures, weddings, exhibitions and other events were frequent in the club.¹⁴ Specifically important for the club are the younger members who frequently visit the Punchbowl because of, according to the club management, different social events and the possibility to hang out with other members of the younger generation of Croatian immigrants. We can conclude that the above mentioned club was specifically important in preservation of Croatian ethnic identity, and should be given credit for the organization of a number of cultural and social events. People who run the place and those who visit it for decades speak about socializing, business and immigrants' experiences. Hence Mr. Nikola Popović, the president of the Croatian society on Sydney, explained in an interview given for Australian and Croatian press that people socialize mostly during the weekends, but that everyday gatherings and entertainment are also not uncommon. Some immigrants claim that after renovation there are more people and more events in the Punchbowl and that the club is in many aspects a reflection of the potential and patriotism of Diaspora Croats, since this is the largest and the best equipped ethnic club in Australia.¹⁵ The role of Croatian ethnic societies, organizations and clubs in

¹⁴ After the first club was burnt down in a fire, on the initiative of Mirko Marijan, but also club management, it was decided that the old club should be demolished and that a new one should be built on the same site, which would become the main gathering place of Croatian immigrants. New building was opened in November 1998 in the presence of large number of Croats. The new building of the Croatian society Punchbowl made the whole Croatian community in Australia extremely proud, and became the site of all the community's major activities (Tkalčević 1999).

¹⁵ Next to the central premises, there is also a Croatian library in the club, as well as the rooms from which Croatian TV program is broadcasted, and where numerous other cultural and educational activities of Croatian ethnic community are organized which shows the need and intention of Croatian immigrants to preserve their identity in NSW.

NSW is structured around connecting Croatian immigrants for the purpose of long-term gathering, and exchange of different experiences from all interest groups. Special important is the support they provide for each other in all walks of life guided by the feelings of nostalgia towards the homeland, organization of joint celebrations of Croatian and Australian holidays, etc. During the research in NSW in 2003, we noticed that the communal gatherings and meetings inside the societies, organizations and clubs provide Croatian immigrants with a kind of psychological stability, influence the preservation and perseverance of ethnic identity, Croatian language, Croatian culture and customs. Simultaneously, the achieved unity of Croatian community enables Croatian immigrants an easy co-existence with other ethnic migrant communities in NSW.

According to the last census, there are around 60000 Croats in Sydney, who belong to different generations of immigrants and who are active in the existing clubs, societies and organizations. The forms of ethnic community are observable in the names of different organizations (for example Adriatic, Dalmatia, Karlovac, Istria, Bosnia, etc.) where the feelings of belonging to a certain region are emphasized next to the feelings of belonging to Croatian nation. These names reveal the emphasis and giving prominence to local identity. From the clubs which should be given credit for the preservation of Croatian ethnic migrant community in NSW, next to the Punchbowl, we should also mention the following: Croatian Club *Kralj Tomislav* situated in the Edensor Park and founded in 1972, Croatian Club *Jadran Hajduk* from St. John's Park, Croatian Club Dalmatia Sydney situated in Terry Hills district, Croatian Cultural Society *Bosna* from Luddenham, Croatian-Karlovac Society Sydney working in Punchbowl, Australian-Croatian Cultural and Educational Society *Braća Radić*, Istria Social and Sports Club Sydney Inc. At the same time, the Church organizations and Croatian Catholic missions should be also given credit for the preservation of ethnic identity of Croatian community in NSW. In Sydney there are: Croatian Catholic Center *Sv. Nikola Tavelić* situated in St. John's Park, Croatian Catholic Center *Sv. Ana* from Summer Hill and Croatian Catholic Centre *Gospa velikog hrvatskog zavjeta* from Blacktown. Economic cooperation and forms of Croatian ethnic unity in NSW are visible in various forms of economic and business mergers inside the Croatian community. In other words, the existing Croatian Business Phonebook for NSW and ACT includes more than twenty Croatian building companies, ten doctors, pharmacists, tailors, lawyers, musicians, photographers, security companies, tourist agencies, carrier companies, meat manufacturers, etc. who are offering their services to Croatian community in Croatian and English language. Together with different generations of Croatian immigrants, Croatian organizations and clubs in NSW are sometimes visited by the members of other ethnic migrant communities who, mostly as spouses or fiancées, want to be active in Croatian ethnic community.

The important role in the preservation of Croatian identity also played numerous educational institutions and organizations in NSW. Starting from the premise that language is not only a means of communication, but also an expression of identity, we come to the conclusion that through the preservation of Croatian language, the

ethnic identity of Croatian community in NSW, and in Australia generally, was also preserved. Croatia language in Australia, i.e. in Anglo-Saxon surroundings, is connected with family, emotions, patriotism and belonging to Croatia. Question: what does language mean for the formation of identity with the younger generation of Croatian immigrants?, can be explained by the following findings. Croatian language is learned and cherished on three levels: in Croatian elementary schools, in a high school - The Saturday School of Community Languages (SSCL) – which was founded in 1980 and now around 8000 high school students from 23 language communities of NSW participate in its program; and at the university level. Croatian language is taught at the Saturday Schools four hours per week, while learning Croatian language in parishes depends on the structure of each parish, but they are not obliged to organize language learning and the number of lectures per week is not prescribed (Source: Croatian Heritage Foundation - CHF). In the last ten years, university teaching of Croatian language has become significantly advanced, and the goal was, among other things, the preservation of Croatian ethnic identity.

University teaching of Croatian language in Australia begun in 1983. Croatian language was introduced to the University of Macquarie in Sydney,¹⁶ which thus became the first university outside Croatia where Croatian language was introduced as an independent university course. One of the people who were the most meritorious for the successful work of Study of Croatian Language at the University of Macquarie is the Professor Luka Budak. In positioning of Croatian Studies and recognition of Croatian language in Australia especially important were the Central Committee of Croatian Ethnic Schools in NSW and Free Croatian Radio on 2SER-FM. Through their support and lobbying they managed to attract more than 1500 students since 1983 and thus enhanced the interest in Croatian language and ethnic identity at the younger generation of Croats (mostly second generation). The link between language, culture and cultural and ethnic identity at the young people of the second and the third generation of immigrants is a constant wish among the members of the older generations of immigrants. During the last two decades, the program of Croatian studies has been changed and amended several times, according to the students' needs and in accordance with the changes in the organization of the University. From the beginning till today, Croatian studies have, from the three introductory courses in the first year grown to the whole-three year program offering sixteen courses. Together with undergraduate study, Croatian studies also offer graduate and postgraduate study on three levels: (BA Hons, MA I PhD) and from the year 2000, students can enroll in the unique programs Certificate in Croatian and Diploma in Croatian, as emphasized by the professor Luka Budak in the interview from 2003. Thanks to the support and excellent cooperation with the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports of the Republic of Croatia, we have established a link with the homeland in this respect; students of Croatian origin have excellent opportunity of

¹⁶ The web-page of the University of Macquarie and Croatian Studies: <http://www.mq.edu.au/MDLang/Slavonic/croatian>

studying in Croatia and the Center of Croatian studies has, independently and in co-operation with institutions from Croatia, published eight books. Especially important in the process of redefinition of Croatian ethnic identity in NSW was the Croatian Scientific Foundation for Australia and New Zealand. On the initiative of the Croatian language lecturers, Dr Petar Hill, Father Gracijan Buršić and Professor Luka Budak, and in cooperation with the Central Committee of Croatian Ethnic Schools in NSW, Croatian Catholic Center in Summer Hill, Croatian Club *Kralj Tomislav*, Croatian Society Sydney with the headquarters in the Punchbowl and Croatian Cultural Society *Bosna*, the Foundation was founded on August 28, 1984 with the aim to promote and ensure the continuity of Croatian studies and since 1994 it provides the financial support for the Centre of Croatian studies. The primary aim of the Centre of Croatian studies is to serve as a national provider of Croatian study programs for the whole Australia and to ensure the existence of the study program of Croatian language, culture, literature and history on the undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate level. Having in mind the development and preservation of ethnic identity of students of Croatian origin, since 1998 the Croatian studies have been organized as a research and educational center, and have created their research and teaching activities independently as well as initiated the publication of the journal *Croatian Studies Review*, which is the first Croatian-studies journal in English language in Australia.

Boris Škvorc (2005), one of the lecturers in Croatian studies, emphasized that there were many problems related to the preservation of Croatian ethnic identity and that, in the second generation of immigrants, the circle is practically closed. He gave the example of the meetings of teachers and young people organized for the promotion of Croatian language which were frequented only by teachers or of the annual assembly of the Foundation, an institution which takes care of Croatian language and its survival on the Australian continent, where it was difficult to reach a quorum of fifty people, while up to a thousand people regularly gather at the celebration of its anniversary on April 10 in Croatian Society in Sydney. This testimony is also an example which shows that not only the studies and promotion of Croatian language are important for the preservation of Croatian ethnic identity, but many other events, for example, gatherings, joint celebrations of important Croatian holidays, activities inside different interest groups, joint private or business partnerships inside Croatian clubs, etc.

Important factors in the preservation of Croatian ethnic identity in Australia are also Australian–Croatian media. There are two main groups: printed and electronic, i.e. newspapers and magazines which have been present in Australia for over a decade, and radio-programs.

In sometimes difficult conditions, the media and numerous Croatian weeklies have brought information and spread cultural, social and political ideas among Croats. From the beginning of the 20th century,¹⁷ many newspapers have been noting and

¹⁷ First Croatian newspapers (*Borba*, *Iskra*, *Naprijed* and *Sloboda*) were duplicated, in difficult conditions, on mimeographs and they reported on cultural, social and political events among Croats in Australia.

printing the most important events and happenings which were of the great significance for the Australian Croats. Through Croatian press, the Australian Croats have managed to preserve their most important asset: Croatian language.¹⁸ As part of the program of the special Australian state radio SBS, CRO2000 (once a week broadcasting radio-program in Croatian language) and television, which broadcast programs in the languages of the key ethnic groups in Australia, Australian Croats are better informed and they also have the possibility to be directly included into the program with their comments and suggestions. Owing to the efforts and involvement of the elder generations of Croatian immigrants and to intensive and persistent work of Croatian media workers, in the newspapers, radio and television, the total assimilation of the second and third generation of Australian Croats into Australian Anglo-Saxon society was partly avoided.

One of the ways of preserving Croatian ethnic identity in NSW are sports competitions. Special role here have soccer clubs, tournaments and soccer matches. In NSW there are two Croatian soccer clubs: Sydney United and Zagreb Hurtsville, which are active for several decades. Even though sports events are usually frequented by male population, in NSW soccer tournaments and matches are also visited by a significant number of women, who use the occasion to meet and socialize, but also as an opportunity to prepare and serve Croatian traditional dishes and specialties which are served after the match. During the 1990ies, Croatian soccer clubs have received a few unfair 'blows' from the Australian Soccer Federation. In other words, the media and some lobbying groups claimed that ethnic clubs thwart the development of soccer in Australia. David Hill, Australian state manager in the 199ies, started putting pressure on all the ethnic clubs through Australian Soccer Federation and media. His plan was to abolish all ethnic clubs, under the pretences that the soccer should be brought closer to the entire Australian population, even though in Australia only three sports are popular as far as the media and financing is concerned: rugby, Australian rugby and cricket, while soccer is the most popular amateur sports. One of his first moves was to change the name of the club. Even though many clubs protested, their protests did not bear any fruit, and hence the media had an excuse to put the additional pressure on the 'disobedient newcomers'. Due to the pressures from both sides, Croatia Sydney first changed its name to Sydney CSC 1992, but kept the official Croatian coat of arms on the jerseys, as a symbol of ethnic belonging. A year later,

¹⁸ Four weeklies are published in Australia today (*Hrvatski Vjesnik*, *Spremnost*, *Nova Hrvatska* and *The Croatian Herald*) which write about cultural, social and political events in Croatia. All four are autochthonous Croatian publications. The oldest one – *Spremnost* – is linked to a party, and the editorial policy in the first forty years of its existence (1952-1990) was based on the idea of the re-establishment of the Independent State of Croatia in its 'historical borders'. *Nova Hrvatska* – a Sydney weekly, is an important Croatian-Australian info magazine. *Hrvatski vjesnik* is published in Melbourne. Up to 1991 it was not ideologically defined, but it gave the opportunity for all the ideas and opinions on the forms of the state-creation to be expressed. During the 1990ies, they accepted the guidelines offered by the Croatian Democratic Union and today they still stand behind the idea of the 'unity of all Croats'. *The Croatian Herald* is considered to be the most important and the most politically correct magazine (they promote the idea of the unity of all Croatian organizations in different activities and interest groups) on Croatian language in Australia.

David Hill ordered a removal of all the ethnic symbols, flags, etc. Hence Sydney CSC changed its name to Sydney United 1993, and Croatian soccer players had to remove Croatian coat of arms and other symbols from their jerseys.¹⁹ This, by no means fair, example of a ban of wearing Croatian symbols on official sportsmen's suits and intolerance directed, in a way, against Croatian ethnic community is a disgrace for NSW and Australia which takes pride in its multiculturalism.

The process of redefining of ethnic identity in NSW has, in some clubs, started even before the Homeland War,²⁰ but reached its culmination after the establishment of the sovereign state of Croatia. Namely, because of the social and political safety, many Croats (even though they were exclusively pro-Croatia), were members of the clubs and organizations which in the first half of the 20th century, used the name 'Yugoslav', instead of 'Croatian'. Gradually, after the Second World War these immigrants initiated a change of the names of clubs and organizations from which they eliminated the adjective 'Yugoslav', and added 'Croatian', regional or local names. The reason was the situation in the home country. In the same time, after the World War two, many right-wing Croats immigrated to Australia, who could not fight off communism in Croatia and were thus considered unwelcome in their country. Because of their political beliefs, as supporters of Croatian statehood and Croatian national identity, they refused to join the existing clubs and organizations bearing Yugoslav names, and they founded their own organizations under Croatian names, so as to be able to achieve Croatian ethnic and national goals (Tkalčević 1999).

After the first free elections in Croatia and the establishment of the sovereign Croatian state, the political situation among the members of the Croatian community in Australia has changed significantly.²¹ Croatian immigrants started to emphasize their Croatian origin and Croatian ethnic symbols with pride and without fear, and many existing political organization decided to cease their work and all of their activities, because all their goals were achieved by the establishment of the Croatian state. In the same time, due to the changed circumstances in homeland, new parties and agendas appeared on the political scene in Australia. This is the period in which the branch of Croatian Democratic Union²² and, a bit later, of Croatian Party of Rights were founded in Australia, together with the branches of many county and regional institutions.

¹⁹ A worse change happened in 2004 when the Soccer Federation was closed due to debts and bad contacts signed by the ex-president David Hill. A new A-league was formed, under the auspices of the Australian multibillionaire Frank Lowy, and Sydney United was forever expelled from the premier league, which was organized on the franchise system, with strict rules. According to one of these rules, the soccer clubs cannot be linked in any way with ethnic clubs. Sydney United now plays in the NSWFL league, from which it started in 1958.

²⁰ In Australia even before the establishment of the sovereign state of Croatia, there were some organizations and clubs with regional Croatian names.

²¹ We are analyzing only the situation in NSW, because the analysis of other Australian states and territories would surpass the framework of this article.

²² Croatian Democratic Union, Branch Sydney, is situated in Edensor Park, and its current president is Radan Loza.

In NSW, Croatian ethnic community was united in giving support to the Croatian state during the Homeland War. All the existing clubs and organizations worked around the clock to raise financial and humanitarian aid to Croats in homeland, which was a proof of the strength of the Croatian ethnic identity on that continent. M. Tkalčević (1999) emphasized that the following Croatian societies were especially successful in these attempts: Croatian Society Sydney, Croatian Club Kralj Tomislav, Croatian Society Bosna St. Mary's, Croatian Club Dalmatia Sydney, Croatian Club Jadran-Hajduk, Australian Croatian Cultural and Educational Society Braća Radić, Croatian Soccer Club Croatia Sydney, Croatian Soccer Club Zagreb Hurtsville²³ and Croatian Club Istria. Croatian Women Charity was founded with the same goal and it raised humanitarian aid in NSW and shipped it over to Croats in homeland.

We can conclude that the organized forms of social, cultural, political and religious immigrant life inside Croatian community in NSW were based on Croatian ethnic identity. In the same time, through the organization of Croatian immigrant life and through cherishing Croatian ethnic identity inside Croatian ethnic community, the connection with the homeland and the region/place of birth is also preserved.

Ethnic identity of young people: reconstruction of tradition

The Example of Chile

It was already mentioned that the 'young Chileans' of Croatian origin belong the third, fourth and even fifth generation of immigrants. They are completely assimilated to Chilean society, the majority of them have never visited Croatia, but through their 'primordial' connection to the 'homeland of their grandfathers' they revive Croatian ethnicity and it becomes a key factor in determining their identity. Therefore it is not surprising that the young Chilean Croats, Pablo Sepulveda Rossa²⁴ and Andres Ambrus Perasić²⁵ revived old Croatian dances and songs. Hence the old Illyr-

²³ Immediately before the Homeland War, a few excellent players came to Croatia where they enlisted in Croatian army as volunteers. In the beginning of the Homeland War, the club raised over 100000 dollars for Croatia (Tkalčević 1999).

²⁴ A descendant of Croatian immigrants – hid great-grandfather was Nikola Rossa Sikarović from the Island of Vis and his great-grandmother was Dinka Cesareo Bozanić from the town of Komiža (on the same island). Most things about Croatia he learned from his 'dear aunt Vinka, his grandmother's sister, who sings Dalmatian songs like no one in the world. She never forgot her Komiža and when he was leaving for Croatia she gave him a list of people he had to visit'. In Antofagasta he founded an ensemble 'Biseri Jadrana' which dances folk dances from all over Croatia. He came to Croatia to learn Croatian language at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb and to participate in the School of Folklore in Crikvenica (Koščić, January 18 2002).

²⁵ He is the son of the Croatian immigrant – architect Asja Perasić - from Split and a Hungarian immigrant, from Santiago. He founded in Santiago a tamburitza choir, since he was visiting Dalmatia almost every year and gathered knowledge which he wanted to share with his colleagues and compatriots: 'In Chile I