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SISTORY
ZGODOVINA SLOVENIJE

the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are employed in the public sector has increased by 1.5 million, from 2.5 million in 1980 to 4 million in 1995. The public sector has also become an important employer of women, with 50% of public sector employees being women in 1995.

There are a number of reasons why the public sector has become an important employer of women. One reason is that the public sector has a high proportion of women in the workforce. This is due to a number of factors, including the fact that women are more likely than men to work in the public sector, and the fact that the public sector has a high proportion of women in the workforce.

Another reason why the public sector has become an important employer of women is that it provides a number of benefits that are attractive to women. These benefits include flexible working hours, which allow women to balance their work and family commitments, and a high level of job security, which is important for women who are responsible for the care of children.

Finally, the public sector has become an important employer of women because it provides a number of opportunities for women to advance their careers. This is due to the fact that the public sector has a high proportion of women in the workforce, and it provides a number of opportunities for women to take on leadership roles and to advance their careers.

Overall, the public sector has become an important employer of women in the UK. This is due to a number of factors, including the fact that women are more likely than men to work in the public sector, the fact that the public sector provides a number of benefits that are attractive to women, and the fact that the public sector provides a number of opportunities for women to advance their careers.

Conclusion

The public sector has become an important employer of women in the UK. This is due to a number of factors, including the fact that women are more likely than men to work in the public sector, the fact that the public sector provides a number of benefits that are attractive to women, and the fact that the public sector provides a number of opportunities for women to advance their careers.

Overall, the public sector has become an important employer of women in the UK. This is due to a number of factors, including the fact that women are more likely than men to work in the public sector, the fact that the public sector provides a number of benefits that are attractive to women, and the fact that the public sector provides a number of opportunities for women to advance their careers.

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Contributions to Contemporary History is one of the central Slovenian scientific historiographic journals, dedicated to publishing articles from the field of contemporary history (the 19th, 20th and 21st century).

It has been published regularly since 1960 by the Institute of Contemporary History, and until 1986 it was entitled Contributions to the History of the Workers' Movement.

The journal is published three times per year in Slovenian and in the following foreign languages: English, German, Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian, Italian, Slovak and Czech. The articles are all published with abstracts in English and Slovenian as well as summaries in English.

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Razprave – Articles

Economics, Nationalism and Politics in Central and South-Eastern Europe:

Introduction to the Thematic Section

Ekonomija, nacionalizem in politika v Srednji in Jugovzhodni Evropi: uvod v tematski sklop

Economic nationalism has long occupied a central place in the political, social and economic history of Central and South-Eastern Europe. In regions marked by late imperial rule, uneven industrialisation, multi-ethnic settlement and shifting state borders, the economy was rarely perceived as a neutral sphere governed solely by markets, contracts and prices. It was also a field in which communities imagined their future, defended their status, mobilised resources and measured the strength of national claims. Financial institutions, cooperatives, shops, factories, labour markets, credit relations and consumer choices could all acquire national meaning, helping define who belonged to a community, who could legitimately represent collective interests, and who was marked as foreign, dependent or suspect.

The significance of economic nationalism lay in its capacity to link everyday economic practices to broader nation-building projects. Before World War I, such practices often emerged below the level of the state, especially in imperial settings where national movements had not yet controlled public administration or economic policy. After 1918, some of these ambitions were incorporated into official policy, while others continued to operate through local institutions, administrative routines and public debate. Economic nationalism was thus both a programme and a language: a set of measures aimed at strengthening a national economy, and a vocabulary through which economic conflicts could be interpreted and politicised.

The articles in this thematic section approach economic nationalism not merely as tariffs, protectionism or state-led industrial policy, but as a flexible process that moves

between ideology and practice, law and everyday life, and national aspiration and economic necessity. It can stimulate institutional creativity and local mobilisation, but it can also produce exclusions, hierarchies and conflict. It can promote development while narrowing access to resources, and strengthen communities while hardening the boundaries between them.

This thematic section brings together four contributions that examine economic nationalism in Central and South-Eastern Europe through case studies of the late Habsburg province of Carniola and interwar Yugoslavia. The first article, the earliest chronologically, complements the workshop papers by extending the discussion of economic nationalism through the related concept of in-betweenness, thereby showing how the two perspectives illuminate the same historical processes. The remaining three articles were presented at the *WEast 2025 Ljubljana Workshop: Economics, Nationalism and Politics in Central, East and South-East Europe*, held on 19–20 June 2025 at the Institute of Contemporary History in Ljubljana. The workshop was organised as part of the postdoctoral project *Financial Networks in the Shadow of Economic Nationalism: A Comparative Study of the Territories of Slovenia and Vojvodina from 1867 to 1929* (Z6-50192) and the research programme *Economic, Social and Environmental History of Slovenia* (P6-0280), in cooperation with *WEast: The Eastern European Economic History Initiative* and with support from the *European Historical Economics Society* (EHES) and the *Slovenian Research and Innovation Agency* (ARIS).

Nataša Henig Mišičič's opening article examines the Carniolan Savings Bank in Ljubljana during the 1870s and 1880s. Rather than treating the savings bank as an institution with a fixed national identity, the article traces the gradual nationalisation of meaning around an organisation that presented itself as provincial, charitable and formally neutral. Debates over language, schooling, donations, lending and capital management transformed the savings bank into a contested site where economic authority, philanthropy and representation were reinterpreted through national categories. The article shows that economic nationalism not only created new national institutions but also redefined existing ones.

Ivan Smiljanič's contribution shifts the focus to entrepreneurial ambition and collapse. Through the case of Anton Kajfež, a Kočevje merchant, innkeeper, timber trader and landowner, the article reconstructs the social and political stakes of local economic power in the early twentieth century. Kajfež invested in industry, housing, and financial institutions, and supported Slovenian organisations in Kočevje, a town shaped by the presence of the Gottscheers, a local German-origin group. When his overextended business empire collapsed in 1928, the bankruptcy damaged local Slovenian institutions and was interpreted through competing national narratives, illustrating how economic nationalism could magnify both success and failure.

Oliver Pejič's article examines the administrative machinery of the interwar Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes by analysing craft and trade permit applications in the Maribor oblast between 1922 and 1929. It shows that economic nationalism

was embedded not only in public rhetoric but also in routine bureaucratic practice. Officials operated within a legal framework largely inherited from Austrian trade law (1883) while responding to confidential instructions from Belgrade that encouraged inquiries into applicants' nationality. Yet nationality itself could be understood through birth, conviction, language use, public behaviour or civic engagement. The article thus reveals the gap between nationalist expectation, administrative classification and policy implementation.

The final article by Neja Blaj Hribar asks who was counted as foreign in the labour market of the Drava Banovina in the 1930s. By comparing state regulations on work permits with Slovenian press discourse, the article shows that "foreignness" was neither purely legal nor purely social, as legislation defined foreigners by citizenship and permit requirements. Yet public discourse applied the language of foreignness more broadly, extending it to migrants from other Banovinas, rural newcomers, refugees and socially marginal workers. Economic nationalism in labour markets therefore operated through overlapping hierarchies of legal status, national origin, social position and mobility.

Taken together, the four articles span different sites and scales: a savings bank, a merchant's business network, licensing offices, and labour markets. They also draw on a range of evidence, from institutional records and newspaper polemics to administrative files, legal provisions, and public discourse. This range shows that economic nationalism did not operate in a single register. It was material, because it affected access to credit, permits, employment and markets; institutional, because it shaped the legitimacy of financial institutions, firms and administrative decisions; discursive, because economic conflicts were translated into national language; and social, because ordinary people encountered it in practical questions of work, trust, consumption and belonging. Together, the articles present economic nationalism as a multi-layered force produced through institutions, entrepreneurs, officials, workers, consumers and commentators. By tracing it through local archives, business failures, bureaucratic files and newspaper debates, they show how national economies were imagined and contested in everyday economic relations.

Nataša Henig Mišič

Nataša Henig Miščič*

Doing In-Between, Economic Nationalism, and the Carniolan Savings Bank in Ljubljana, 1870s–1880s

IZVLEČEK

PRAKSE VMESNOSTI, EKONOMSKI NACIONALIZEM IN KRANJSKA HRANILNICA V LJUBLJANI V 70. IN 80. LETIH 19. STOLETJA

Članek obravnava Kranjsko hranilnico v Ljubljani v sedemdesetih in osemdesetih letih 19. stoletja kot institucijo, ki je uporabljala prakse vmesnosti (*doing in-between*), in kot predmet ekonomskega nacionalizma. Pokaže, kako je hranilnica, sprva predstavljena kot javno koristna in formalno nevtralna ustanova, postopoma postala zaznana kot nemški finančni steber na Kranjskem. Analiza vloge vodilnih oseb, dobrodelnih prispevkov, jezikovnih praks ter političnih in medijskih razprav razkriva, da je ta »nemška« podoba posledica konkretnih strateških odločitev in praks (npr. kadrovanja, komunikacije, donacij), ki so hranilnico povezale z nemškimi političnimi in gospodarskimi interesi v času oblikovanja agend ekonomskega nacionalizma.

Ključne besede: Kranjska hranilnica, Ljubljana, Kranjska, ekonomski nacionalizem, vmesnost, slovensko-nemški odnosi

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ABSTRACT

The article analyses the Carniolan Savings Bank in Ljubljana during the 1870s and 1880s as an institution that practised “doing in-between” and as an object of economic nationalism. It shows how the Savings Bank, initially presented as a public-benefit and formally neutral institution, gradually came to be seen as a German financial pillar in Carniola. An analysis of the roles of key figures, charitable contributions, linguistic practices, and political and media debates reveals that this “German” image resulted from specific strategic decisions and practices (such as staffing, communication, and donations) that linked the Savings Bank to German political and economic interests during the development of economic nationalism agendas.

Keywords: Carniolan Savings Bank, Ljubljana, Carniola, economic nationalism, in-betweenness, Slovenian-German relations

Introduction

In the final decades before the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the Carniolan Savings Bank in Ljubljana became one of the most prominent economic symbols amid escalating Slovenian-German conflicts. Earlier research has examined the anti-German riots of September 1908 and the subsequent boycott and bank run, showing how the institution came to be publicly depicted as the “German financial pillar” of the Province of Carniola, despite its formally neutral status and the Board’s long-standing insistence on national indifference.¹ Comparative work on Carniola, Lower Styria, and Bács-Bodrog County has further shown how economic nationalism produced parallel financial networks and translated slogans such as “each to his own” into everyday practices of saving, borrowing, buying, and boycotting.² However, the process by which the Carniolan Savings Bank moved from a widely accepted institution in the Province of Carniola to a nationally contested symbol remains insufficiently explained.

Therefore, this article shifts focus from the boycott to the earlier decades when that interpretation became possible. It asks how an institution that presented itself as a public-benefit, formally non-national body could, by the 1880s, be regarded by contemporaries as a “German economic stronghold”. The answer proposed here is not that the Savings Bank possessed a stable national identity from the outset. Instead, the article argues that its later “German” image emerged from the tension between ambiguous institutional practices and the increasingly prescriptive logic of economic nationalism.

1 Nataša Henig Miščič, “Carniolan Savings Bank and Slovenian-German Relations in 1908 and 1909,” *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino* 60, No. 1 (2020): 47–70.

2 Nataša Henig Miščič, “Parallel Financial Institutions in Carniola, Lower Styria and Bács-Bodrog County during the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy (1867–1918),” *Srpske studije* 16, No. 16 (2025): 96–121.

In the 1870s and 1880s, the Carniolan Savings Bank operated at the intersection of older forms of provincial civic authority, mixed elite networks, and a political field being reorganised around national categories.

The study adopts a microhistorical and historical-anthropological perspective. Rather than treating the Savings Bank solely as a financial institution or as the passive object of national conflict, it analyses it as a site where elite biographies, institutional routines, public-benefit claims, and nationalising discourses intersect. The relevant sources necessarily shape the argument. Leadership lists and biographical data reveal the social and political positioning of the governing elite; annual accounts and donation records show how the bank defined public usefulness; and press and Assembly debates reveal how contemporaries interpreted the Savings Bank's activities in national terms. Read together, these sources enable the reconstruction of the changing relationship between in-between practice and economic-nationalist classification.

Concepts and Positioning in Historiography

The Carniolan Savings Bank has already attracted scholarly attention, particularly in relation to national conflict and economic modernisation. In his 2002 book, *Nemci v Ljubljani* (*Germans in Ljubljana*), Dragan Matić highlighted the efforts of the “Carniolan” Germans to defend their economic interests and institutions, especially the Carniolan Savings Bank.³ An article covering the period between 1908 and 1909 examined the bank run and boycott triggered by the September riots in Ljubljana. It showed how an institution long active in a predominantly Slovenian environment came to be seen by large sections of the Slovenian public as a “German” financial institution and a political symbol of German power in the Province of Carniola. The study further emphasised that the Savings Bank had never officially declared a national affiliation and that its Board pursued a strategy of formal indifference to attract the widest possible range of depositors. At the same time, Slovenian actors interpreted the allocation of charitable funds and the composition of the Savings Bank's leadership as evidence of a German bias.⁴ A subsequent comparative article on Carniola, Lower Styria, and Bács-Bodrog County placed the Carniolan Savings Bank within a broader landscape of savings banks, credit cooperatives, and joint-stock banks, in which economic nationalism played a central role. Building on the work of Helga Schultz and Rudolf Jaworski,⁵ the study showed how regional national movements translated political

3 Dragan Matić, *Nemci v Ljubljani: 1861–1918* (Ljubljana: Oddelek za zgodovino Filozofske fakultete, 2002), 439.

4 Henig Mišičič, “Carniolan Savings Bank and Slovenian-German Relations,” 54–56.

5 Helga Schultz, “Introduction: The Double Edged Sword of Economic Nationalism,” in Helga Schultz and Eduard Kubü, eds., *History and Culture of Economic Nationalism in East Central Europe* (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag GmbH, 2006), 9–25. Rudolf Jaworski, “Between Economic Interests and National-Cultural Self-Assertion: On Economic Nationalism in East-Central Europe before 1914,” in Helga Schultz and Eduard Kubü, eds., *History and Culture of Economic Nationalism in East Central Europe* (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag GmbH, 2006), 59–69. Henig Mišičič, “Parallel financial institutions,” 96–121.

demands into the founding and control of “their own” financial institutions, and how parallel institutions emerged as symbols of national emancipation or as safeguards against perceived foreign dominance. In the Slovenian case, this dynamic is evident in the establishment of the Ljubljana City Savings Bank and numerous Slovenian credit cooperatives, which served as counterparts to institutions under German leadership.⁶

This article builds on these approaches by combining the perspective of economic nationalism with the concept of in-betweenness developed for the Alps-Adriatic region. Schemmer and Schönberger have argued that many actors and institutions in the long nineteenth century operated “in-between” fixed categories such as nation and ethnicity. Their everyday practices often followed pragmatic, social, professional, or regional logics rather than clear national alignments. In-betweenness can therefore be understood not as simple indifference but as a mode of positioning produced by situations, networks, and practices that did not fit neatly into national binaries.⁷

Previous research on entrepreneurs in the region illustrates how this played out in practice. In a context where the slogan “each to his own” could mobilise boycotts and threaten businesses, many entrepreneurs adjusted how they publicly expressed their national identity. Some families and firms cultivated ambiguous or supranational profiles by avoiding overt political engagement and emphasising service quality; others treated business as inherently supranational; while the rest became divided along national lines. These examples are important because they show that in-betweenness was not a residue of pre-national society, but a strategy and practice formed under the pressure of nationalising markets.⁸

Economic nationalism is the opposing force: the effort to classify, mobilise, and regulate economic behaviour along national lines. It was a “double-edged sword” because it could serve elites and social groups as a strategy for mobilising resources, while also creating conflicts between economic pragmatism and national loyalty. In East-Central Europe, economic nationalism appeared not only in state policy but also in the national identification of savings banks, cooperatives, and commercial firms; in appeals to support “our own” institutions; and in practices such as boycotts, withdrawals, and the establishment of parallel financial organisations.⁹

The two perspectives are therefore complementary. Economic nationalism highlights the pressure to classify the Carniolan Savings Bank as either German or Slovenian and to align economic conduct with national loyalty. In-betweenness, by contrast, draws attention to the hybrid biographies of board members, overlapping networks linking German-liberal and Slovenian milieus, bilingual practices, and ambiguous patterns of credit and charity. The Savings Bank was thus both an object

6 Henig Mišičič, “Parallel financial institutions,” 99, 109–111.

7 Janine Schemmer and Klaus Schönberger, “Doing In-Between in the 19th Century in the Alps-Adriatic Region: Everyday Forms of Subjectivation Beyond Nationalising and Ethnicising Subjectation,” *Traditiones* 53, No. 3 (2024): 21–41.

8 Žarko Lazarević and Ivan Smiljanić, “Vmesna identiteta in podjetniki na Slovenskem v avstro-ogrski dobi,” *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino* 65, No. 2 (2025): 31–52.

9 Schultz, “Introduction,” 12. Jaworski, “Between Economic Interests,” 59, 66.

of economic-nationalist classification and a space in which older provincial, civic, and pragmatic practices continued to operate. The conflict between these two logics is the central analytical problem of this article.

This approach also requires caution when using national categories. Language, place of birth, surname, association membership, family self-identification, and political affiliation were all used by contemporaries as indicators of national belonging. However, none provides a precise or stable measure of identity. Rather than imposing fixed labels on individual office-holders, this article uses these indicators to reconstruct how contemporaries interpreted the Savings Bank's national positioning, as reflected in its leadership and beneficiaries. The aim is not to determine whether the Carniolan Savings Bank was "really" German, Slovenian, or neutral, but to show how its people and practices became subject to competing national interpretations.

Political and National Differentiation in the Province of Carniola

From the late 1860s onwards, the Province of Carniola underwent processes of political and national differentiation similar to those in other crown lands of Cisleithania. However, these were shaped by its particular social and linguistic structure. The province's population was predominantly Slovenian-speaking, while the proportion of Germans in Ljubljana and across Carniola as a whole remained modest compared with regions such as Lower Styria. Nevertheless, the German language and culture retained a traditionally prominent role in administration, education, and urban public life during the mid-nineteenth century.¹⁰

Political and national differentiation began in the 1860s and early 1870s, when electoral contests increasingly pitted supporters of the Slovenian national movement against several kinds of opponents: defenders of the existing predominance of the German language and culture, constitutional liberals who prioritised legal and political issues over national demands, and pragmatic actors who moved between these positions.¹¹ As Pieter M. Judson and Rogers Brubaker have shown, more broadly for the Habsburg Monarchy, this was a period in which language and ethnicity were unevenly and locally politicised.¹² In Carniola, this process gradually transformed municipal elections, associational life, schooling, and economic conduct into arenas of national competition.

10 Peter Vodopivec, *O gospodarskih in socialnih nazorih na Slovenskem v 19. stoletju* (Ljubljana: Inštitut za novejšo zgodovino, 2006), 169–70. Janez Cvirn, *Trdnjavski trikotnik. Politična orientacija Nemcev na Spodnjem Štajerskem (1861–1914)* (Maribor: Obzorja, 1997).

11 Vodopivec, *O gospodarskih*, 168–69. Andrej Pančur, "Nastanek političnih strank," in Jasna Fisher et al., eds., *Slovenska novejša zgodovina. Od programa Zedinjena Slovenija do mednarodnega priznanja Republike Slovenije: 1848–1992* (Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, Inštitut za novejšo zgodovino, 2005), 36.

12 Pieter M. Judson, *The Habsburg Empire. A New History* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2016). Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity Without Groups* (Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press, 2006).

By the end of the century, national movements increasingly prescribed everyday conduct in detail: which language to use, which associations to join, where to shop, where to save, and from whom to borrow. The anti-German demonstrations of 1903 and 1908, the boycott of the Carniolan Savings Bank, and the ensuing bank run were therefore not sudden eruptions, detached from earlier developments. They were the endpoint of a longer process in which ordinary economic practices became increasingly available for national interpretation and mobilisation.¹³

The 1880s marked a turning point. Slovenian politicians gained decisive influence in the Provincial Assembly and the Ljubljana City Council, enabling them to shape cultural and economic policies more directly.¹⁴ This political shift was accompanied by a growing emphasis on the economic dimension of national emancipation: savings banks, credit cooperatives, and later joint-stock banks became important instruments and symbols of national assertion.¹⁵ Municipal savings banks and credit cooperatives under Slovenian control were established as counterweights to institutions perceived as German-dominated, including the Carniolan Savings Bank in Ljubljana and municipal savings banks in towns in Lower Styria. German political actors responded by defending existing economic strongholds and presenting them as necessary supports for German cultural and political life in the Province of Carniola.¹⁶ The clearest example was the controversy over the Carniolan Savings Bank's reserve fund during the Assembly debates of 1884. Luka Svetec's proposal to place the reserve fund under provincial supervision directly challenged the Savings Bank's autonomy, arguing that a fund accumulated in Carniola and intended for public benefit should be accountable to provincial representation. German politicians rejected this claim and insisted that the Carniolan Savings Bank was not an organ of the Province but a private, association-based institution governed by its own statutes. In this defence, legal autonomy and political protection converged: shielding the Savings Bank from the Slovenian-majority Assembly also preserved one of the most important financial bases of the German-liberal milieu.¹⁷ The subsequent six-part defence in the *Laibacher Wochenblatt* in 1889 made the same point in a journalistic form, presenting the Savings Bank as solvent, philanthropic, legally secure, and beneficial even to Slovenian inhabitants.¹⁸ The Savings Bank thus began to shift from an in-between institution into a nationally contested economic stronghold precisely at the moment when control over public-benefit capital became a question of national representation.

13 Henig Mišičič, "Carniolan Savings Bank and Slovenian-German Relations," 51–54. Matić, *Nemci v Ljubljani*, 347–48.

14 Matić, *Nemci v Ljubljani*, 413–17.

15 Henig Mišičič, "Parallel financial institutions," 116–18.

16 Matić, *Nemci v Ljubljani*, 439. Henig Mišičič, "Parallel financial institutions," 110.

17 "Stenografični zapisnik četrte seje deželnega zbora kranjskega v Ljubljani," *Obravnave deželnega zbora kranjskega v Ljubljani*, 23 September 1884, 4, 53–56. "Stenografični zapisnik pete seje deželnega zbora kranjskega v Ljubljani," *Obravnave deželnega zbora kranjskega v Ljubljani*, 26 September 1884, 5, 70–72. "Stenografični zapisnik dvanajste seje deželnega zbora kranjskega v Ljubljani," *Obravnave deželnega zbora kranjskega v Ljubljani*, 16 October 1884, 12, 222–30. "Stenografični zapisnik trinajste seje deželnega zbora kranjskega v Ljubljani," *Obravnave deželnega zbora kranjskega v Ljubljani*, 17 October 1884, 13, 236.

18 "Krainische Sparkasse 1879 bis 1888," I, *Laibacher Wochenblatt*, 30 March 1889, No. 451, 1–2. "Krainische Sparkasse 1879 bis 1888," II, *Laibacher Wochenblatt*, 6 April 1889, No. 452, 1–2.

By the 1880s, the Province of Carniola was a complex case: a province with a Slovenian demographic majority and an increasingly Slovenian political leadership, yet with important economic institutions, including the oldest and largest Savings Bank, still associated with German-liberal elites and contested on that basis. The following sections examine how this tension developed before it became an open crisis. They first reconstruct the Savings Bank's leadership and organisational structure, then analyse its position around 1870, and finally show how political realignment in the 1880s transformed its public image into an issue of economic nationalism.

Leadership, Organisation, and the In-Between Position of the Carniolan Savings Bank

The first serious public allegations against the Carniolan Savings Bank arose during the construction of the *Realschule* school building. However, the institution's internal organisation and mode of operation appear to have remained largely unchanged throughout the 1870s.¹⁹ More sustained and politically charged accusations emerged only in the first half of the 1880s, particularly following interventions by the provincial representative Luka Svetec.²⁰ Against this background of relative institutional continuity and gradually increasing external criticism, the Savings Bank's internal structure and leadership in the 1870s can be examined as key to understanding its in-between "provincial" character during this earlier phase.

The organisational structure of the Carniolan Savings Bank reveals a clear hierarchy and a dense concentration of authority. The supreme body was the General Assembly of the Carniolan Savings Bank Association, composed of Association members with equal rights and duties. It approved the annual report and final accounts and decided to allocate part of the profits to charitable purposes. Day-to-day financial affairs were entrusted to the Board of Directors, while trustees oversaw the books and cash holdings. The president represented the Association and the Savings Bank in public, supervised compliance with the statutes, could suspend Board of Directors' resolutions, and, in urgent financial matters, was authorised to act alone and report retrospectively. Central management therefore consisted of a small group: the president, vice-president, directors, trustees, and the office manager, who linked the governing elite to the salaried staff and daily administration.²¹

19 "Stenografični zapisnik devete seje deženega zbora Ljubljanskega," *Obravnave deželnega zbora kranjskega v Ljubljani*, 10 January 1874, 9, 104–13.

20 "Stenografični zapisnik četrte seje deželnega zbora kranjskega v Ljubljani," 53–56. "Kranjska hranilnica", *Obrtnik*, 16 March 1884, 3.

21 SI ZAL LJU 362, f. 18, Interessenten Einlagsbuch der Sparkasse zu Laibach. Pravila in opravljeni red kranjske hranilnice v Ljubljani [1867]. Nataša Henig Mišičič, *Carniolan Savings Bank: Shaping Financial Landscape in Slovenian Territory* (Ljubljana: Inštitut za novejšo zgodovino, 2025), 74–76.

This organisational set-up concentrated decision-making power in a relatively small group of notables whose personal networks and political activities shaped the Savings Bank's operations. At the same time, the formal structure and procedures, especially the open composition of the General Assembly and the emphasis on statutory neutrality, supported the public image of the Carniolan Savings Bank as a non-ethnic institution that always worked in the best interests of the whole Province. However, an examination of the Savings Bank's membership and its governing bodies raises the question of how this "neutral position" was maintained. As a financial institution, the Savings Bank never publicly aligned itself with either national camp and consistently avoided any explicit national declaration.²² Nevertheless, many key office-holders, including presidents, vice-presidents, supervisors, directors, and the head of administration (office manager), were deeply involved in politics at the municipal, provincial, and even imperial levels. The resulting tension between the institution's proclaimed neutrality and the nationally and politically exposed biographies of its leading figures²³ was central to the Savings Bank's in-between character before the 1880s and a precondition for its later recoding as a "German financial pillar".

During the development of banking in Slovenian territories, the leading figures of the Carniolan Savings Bank were part of what Žarko Lazarević has described as the pioneering generation of bankers. They were not professional bankers detached from society, but multi-positioned notables whose authority rested on commerce, administration, politics, and civic service. Many entered banking through social or political networks and combined work in savings banks, credit cooperatives, or banks with other occupations.²⁴ The central figures of the Carniolan Savings Bank fit this pattern. Families such as the Luckmanns moved from trade into banking, while Josef Luckmann served as director for many years before becoming president from 1889 to 1904.²⁵ Alexander Dreö, president from 1880 to 1888, combined his role at the Savings Bank with leading positions at the Ljubljana Commercial Bank, the Styrian Discount Company, and the Commercial and Trade Chamber for Carniola. The bank's leadership was therefore embedded in a broader portfolio of entrepreneurial, associational, and political activities.²⁶

Two interrelated perspectives thus emerge. On the one hand, the Savings Bank was led by a small group of notables who managed its business, safeguarded its

22 Henig Miščič, *Carniolan Savings Bank*, 212–13.

23 The list of officeholders in 1868, 1877, 1883 and 1889 are gathered from: Gustav Leonhardt, *Compass. Kalender und Jahrbuch für Handel, Gewerbe und Industrie in Oesterreich* (Wien: Druck und Verlag von Carl Fromme, 1868), 183. Gustav Leonhardt, *Compass. Financielles Jahrbuch für Oesterreich-Ungarn* (Wien: Alfred Hölder, k. k. Hof- und Universitäts-Buchhändler, 1877), 317. *Rechnungs-Abschluss der krainischen Sparkasse des mit derselben vereinigten Pfandamtes und Creditvereines am Schlusse des Jahres 1883* (Laibach: Verlag der krainischen Sparkasse, 1884). *Rechnungs-Abschluss der krainischen Sparkasse des mit derselben vereinigten Pfandamtes und Creditvereines am Schlusse des Jahres 1889* (Laibach: Verlag der krainischen Sparkasse, 1890).

24 Žarko Lazarević, *Plasti prostora in časa. Iz gospodarske zgodovine Slovenije prve polovice 20. stoletja* (Ljubljana: Inštitut za novejšo zgodovino, 2009), 194–96.

25 Eva Holz, "Zgodovina družine Luckmann," *Kronika: časopis za slovensko krajevno zgodovino* 37, No. 3 (1898): 293–94.

26 "Alexander Dreö," *Laibacher Zeitung*, 27 December 1888, No. 296, 2546. Drago Potočnik, "Iz zgodovine slovenskih bank," *Kronika slovenskih mest* 4, No. 2 (1937): 117.

stability, and pursued careers in commerce, industry, the professions, and politics. On the other hand, its public image was that of a neutral financial institution open to all inhabitants of the Province of Carniola. This combination of politically exposed elite biographies and an institutionally neutral façade can be understood as a specific form of in-between practice. The Savings Bank's in-between practices and networks made later nationalist reinterpretation plausible, though not inevitable: they provided material that nationalist actors could reinterpret when political conflict required clearer institutional loyalties.

Carniolan Savings Bank around 1870

The preceding section reconstructed the internal organisation and leadership profile of the Carniolan Savings Bank. This section shifts the focus from the bank as an institution to the municipal-political milieu in which that leadership operated around 1870. The aim is not to repeat the list of office-holders,²⁷ but to explain why the same men could appear simultaneously as urban notables, provincial patriots, German-liberal politicians, and participants in a financial institution that still claimed to serve the Province of Carniola as a whole. Around 1870, the Savings Bank occupied a distinctive place within Ljubljana's political, social, and economic landscape. It was not yet perceived simply as a German financial institution, nor can it be described as nationally neutral in any straightforward sense. Rather, it stood at the intersection of provincial patriotism, urban notability, municipal politics, and emerging national antagonism. This section therefore approaches the Savings Bank through the concept of in-betweenness as a municipal and political practice: its personnel, public role, and social networks moved between older provincial loyalties and the nationalised political field that took clearer shape in the 1870s and especially in the 1880s.

The political context in which the Carniolan Savings Bank operated from the 1860s onwards was marked by the gradual intensification of national and political divisions in Ljubljana. At the beginning of the constitutional era, however, these differences remained fluid. The municipal elections of 30 January 1861, held under the February Patent, produced two electoral groupings, neither of which corresponded to the later, clearly opposed national camps. The *Prvi meščanski odbor* (First Citizens' Committee), founded on the initiative of the Society for Financial Assistance to Craftsmen and Artisans, especially its member Janez Nepomuk Horak, openly advocated Slovenian political goals. Its rival, the Central Committee group around Mihael Ambrož, was described as "colourless": it brought together both Slovenians and Germans and had not yet defined itself primarily along national lines.²⁸

The modest degree of political differentiation is evident in the municipal council candidate lists. Both groups compiled their lists based on preliminary elections, and

²⁷ Leonhardt, *Compass* (1868), 183.

²⁸ Matič, *Nemci v Ljubljani*, 11–12.

more than two-thirds of candidates appeared on both lists. In the second tax class, six councillors proposed by both groups were elected, including several men who later became leading members of the Carniolan Savings Bank Association: Johann Brolich, Anton Rack, Janez Poklukar, Karel Dežman, Johann Zhuber, and Anton Samassa. Additional councillors were elected from each list, including future Savings Bank leaders such as Vincenc Seunig. In the first tax class, seven joint candidates were successful, again including later Association members such as Lambert Luckmann, Nikolaus Recher, Andrej Malitsch, and Fidelis Terpinz. At the same time, additional councillors were selected from the Ambrož group's list, including Johann Mühleisen and Carl Holzer. In the early 1860s, many of the men who would later dominate the Savings Bank still operated across emerging political lines and could appear on both "Slovenian" and "colourless" lists.²⁹

By the late 1860s, this fluid situation had changed. In the 1867 municipal elections, German liberal candidates won ten of the twelve seats reserved for German representatives, forming a serious opposition. In the new municipal council, seventeen members belonged to the First Citizens' Committee and thirteen to the Central Committee. The latter group, soon known as the "thirteen" (*trinajsteri*), formed the core of organised German politics in Ljubljana under Karl Dežman's leadership. Many of them were active, or would become active, in the Carniolan Savings Bank: Leopold Bürger, Friedrich Kaltenegger, Ferdinand Mahr, Andreas Malitsch, Anton Pfeffer, Josef Suppan, Franz Supantschitsch, Nikolaus Recher, Vincenc Seunig, Wenzel Stedry, and others. Several were born in Carniola; others in Graz, Trieste, Bohemia, Tyrol, or Lower Austria; some, like Suppan, had Slovenian family roots despite later identifying with the German camp. The "thirteen" therefore embodied both the emerging German-liberal political project and the still-mixed biographical backgrounds of Ljubljana's elites.³⁰

The year 1870 marks a transitional moment in the history of the Carniolan Savings Bank. The Savings Bank's governing milieu was already closely aligned with the German-liberal municipal ascendancy that had emerged after the elections of 1867 and 1868. However, the institution itself still retained the language and structure of a provincial public-benefit association rather than those of a nationally defined organisation. Its authority rested on respectability, wealth, municipal influence, and claims to serve Carniola's economic development.³¹ In this sense, the Savings Bank's position was neither outside politics nor reducible to party politics. It functioned as a financial institution embedded within a civic elite whose members increasingly participated in national conflict. At the same time, the Savings Bank's formal self-presentation continued to emphasise utility, stability, and provincial service.

This intermediate position helps explain why the Savings Bank could later become the subject of competing national interpretations. From a Slovenian nationalist

29 Leonhardt, *Compass* (1868), 183. Henig Mišičič, *Carniolan Savings Bank*, 92–102. Matić, *Nemci v Ljubljani*, 45.

30 Leonhardt, *Compass* (1868), 183. Leonhardt, *Compass* (1877), 317. Matić, *Nemci v Ljubljani*, 45.

31 Richard Janeschitz, *Denkschrift über die Gründung und innere Einrichtung der Sparkasse in Laibach und der Ergebnisse ihrer 50 jährigen Wirksamkeit* (Laibach: Selbstverlag der Sparkasse, 1870), 47.

perspective in the 1880s, the same leadership networks could be read as evidence that the institution represented German economic power. From the perspective of its own office-holders, however, the Savings Bank could still be defended as a long-standing provincial institution whose legitimacy stemmed from prudent administration and public usefulness. The tension between these two readings was already present around 1870, but it had not yet crystallised into the explicit language of economic nationalism that became more pronounced in the following decade.³²

The leadership of the Carniolan Savings Bank was drawn from a relatively narrow circle of Association members who repeatedly held key positions over several decades. The most important point is not the full list of names, but the pattern they reveal. Presidents, vice-presidents, directors, trustees, and senior officials came from overlapping circles of merchants, industrialists, property owners, civil servants, jurists, educators, publishers, and municipal politicians. Figures such as Anton Samassa, Vinzenz Seunig, Heinrich Costa, Carl Holzer, Lambert Luckmann, Andreas Malitsch, Nikolaus Recher, Wenzel Stedry, Richard Janeschitz, Alexander Dreö, Josef Suppan, Leopold Bürger, Josef Luckmann, Ferdinand Mahr, Anton Pfeffer, Ottomar Bamberg, Albert Samassa,³³ and others illustrate how the Savings Bank's governing milieu combined economic capital, civic prestige, and political influence.

Socially and professionally, this group reflected the Association's broader profile. Merchants, wholesalers, and property owners stood alongside industrialists and factory owners, senior civil servants and jurists, technical and educational elites, and figures from the printing and publishing trade. Many held positions in the Savings Bank alongside mandates in the Ljubljana City Council, the Carniolan Provincial Assembly, professional chambers, and economic or cultural associations. Richard Janeschitz, as office manager, linked this elite circle to the salaried staff and the institution's daily operations. The bank was therefore governed not by an isolated financial caste but by a dense network of urban and provincial notables whose influence extended across politics, administration, commerce, and culture.

The sequence of presidencies illustrates the continuity of this milieu. Between 1866 and 1904, the bank was led by only four presidents: Anton Samassa (1866–1874), Vinzenz Seunig (1875–1879), Alexander Dreö (1880–1888), and Josef Luckmann (1889–1904).³⁴ Access to the presidency was usually preceded by years of service as a director, trustee, or vice president. Leadership thus rotated within a stable internal hierarchy rather than being seized suddenly by external political actors. This continuity is important for interpreting the Savings Bank around 1870: the institution was already linked to a socially coherent elite, but the national significance of that elite was still being defined.

32 Schultz, "Introduction," 12–14.

33 Leonhardt, *Compass* (1868), 183. Leonhardt, *Compass* (1877), 317. *Rechnungs-Abschluss* (1883). *Rechnungs-Abschluss* (1889).

34 SI ZAL LJU 362, f. 29, *Denkschrift über die Wirksamkeit der krainische Sparcasse während des dritten Vierte-Jahrhundertes ihres Bestandes 1870–1895* (Laibach: Im Selbstverlage der krainischen Sparcasse, 1895), 89–105. *Rechnungs Abschluss* (1904). *Rechnungs Abschluss* (1905).

The Samassa family offers a useful micro-case of this generational and political movement. Anton Samassa, president of the Savings Bank Association between 1866 and 1874,³⁵ embodied an older form of Carniolan civic patriotism. His authority was rooted in entrepreneurship, public respectability, and service to provincial economic development rather than in an explicit national programme. In this respect, he personified the elite position that made the Carniolan Savings Bank appear broadly provincial: socially powerful, culturally marked, and politically connected, yet not yet reducible to the later binary of German versus Slovenian institutions.³⁶ His son Albert Samassa, who inherited the bell foundry in 1866 and expanded it into one of the largest such enterprises in Austria, moved in many of the same municipal and economic circles. However, his public profile belonged to a different political moment. As a member of the Ljubljana municipal council between 1868 and 1875, during the period of German-liberal dominance, Albert emerged as a pronounced opponent of the Slovenian movement.³⁷

The contrast between father and son condenses the broader transformation analysed in this section. Within a single family and an entrepreneurial milieu, provincial patriotism could be rearticulated as a German-liberal national positioning. This was not a simple replacement of “neutrality” by “nationality”, but a gradual shift in the political meaning attached to the same social resources: property, municipal office, technical expertise, associational respectability, and proximity to the Savings Bank. The Samassa case therefore shows why the Savings Bank’s leadership cannot be understood solely through a fixed national label. Around 1870, the same family, business, and institutional networks could still carry overlapping meanings; by the 1880s, economic nationalism increasingly forced those meanings into a binary framework. The later reading of the Carniolan Savings Bank as a German financial stronghold thus drew on real continuities, but it also retrospectively simplified a more ambiguous provincial milieu.

The concept of in-betweenness is useful here because it shifts attention away from the question of whether the Carniolan Savings Bank was “really” German, Slovenian, or neutral. Instead, it asks how the institution operated within a field in which such categories were becoming more rigid but had not yet fully organised social life. In-betweenness was not simply a passive condition.³⁸ It was produced through practices such as cross-list candidacies, overlapping memberships, bilingual and mixed social backgrounds, provincial claims to public usefulness, and the circulation of the same individuals across municipal politics, economic associations, and financial administration.

In this sense, the Carniolan Savings Bank around 1870 can be understood as an institution of the provincial middle ground. Its leadership increasingly overlapped with

35 SI ZAL LJU 362, f. 29, *Denkschrift*, 100.

36 Silvo Kranjec, “Samassa,” in *Slovenska biografija* (Ljubljana: Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti, Znanstveno-raziskovalni center SAZU, 2013).

37 Matic, *Nemci v Ljubljani*, 23.

38 Janine Schemmer and Klaus Schönberger, “Doing In-Between in the 19th Century,” 22–25.

German-liberal politics, yet its legitimacy still depended on a broader civic vocabulary that claimed to serve Carniola as a whole. Its members included men whose biographies spanned linguistic, regional, and political boundaries.³⁹ Its social authority derived from precisely this ability to appear both particular and general: rooted in the urban elite yet speaking in the name of provincial welfare; politically connected yet formally non-party; increasingly nationalised yet not yet reducible to a single national camp.

A productive ambiguity therefore shaped the Carniolan Savings Bank's position around 1870. Its authority rested on the ability to combine several claims at once: it was rooted in Ljubljana's urban elite, yet spoke in the name of provincial welfare; it was closely connected to German-liberal municipal circles, yet presented itself as non-party and public-benefit; it relied on a socially narrow leadership, yet claimed legitimacy through service to Carniola as a whole.⁴⁰ This ambiguity remained workable as long as provincial patriotism, civic respectability, and political affiliation could coexist without requiring a single national label. What changed in the 1880s was not only the composition of political power but also the criteria by which institutions were judged. Once Slovenian politicians gained control of the Assembly and the Ljubljana municipality, questions of language, schooling, donations, credit, and public-benefit funds were increasingly framed in terms of national representation. The Savings Bank's older capacity to stand between categories then came under suspicion. Its refusal to define itself nationally could be read less as neutrality than as concealment; its philanthropy less as provincial service than as German-liberal authority exercised without representation. The following section therefore turns to the 1880s, when this narrowing of acceptable ambiguity transformed the Carniolan Savings Bank from an institution of the provincial middle ground into an object of economic-nationalist contestation.

Political Realignments, Economic Nationalism and the Changing Image of the Carniolan Savings Bank

In the early 1880s, the political landscape of the Province of Carniola and its capital, Ljubljana, underwent profound change. Slovenian politicians secured stable majorities in both the Provincial Assembly and the city council, while German politicians lost key positions. National questions now shaped almost every aspect of public life.⁴¹ In this new environment, financial institutions were no longer seen merely as instruments of provincial development but increasingly as symbols and tools of national power.⁴² The Carniolan Savings Bank, which had long presented itself as a neutral financial institution, became a central focus of this re-evaluation and, from the 1880s onwards, was more openly attacked in public debate.

39 Leonhardt, *Compass* (1868), 183. Leonhardt, *Compass* (1877), 317.

40 SI ZAL LJU 362, f. 29, *Denkschrift* 1895, 23–49.

41 Janez Cvirn, "Nemško gledanje na Slovence (1848–1914)," in Franc Rozman, ed., *Sosed v ogledalu sosed. Od 1848 do danes* (Ljubljana: Nacionalni komite za zgodovinske vede Republike Slovenije, 1995), 55–60.

42 Lazarevič, *Plasti prostora in časa*, 313.

From the late nineteenth century, both Slovenian and German nationalist discourses prescribed detailed norms for everyday conduct. In the Slovenian case, nationalist activists insisted that a true Slovenian was defined above all by language use and by visible daily displays of loyalty. These included maintaining Slovenian customs, displaying the national flag, joining Slovenian associations, choirs, and reading rooms, donating to “national” causes on family occasions, voting for the Slovenian party, and, crucially, strengthening “domestic capital” by buying only in Slovenian shops and enterprises. Comparable expectations emerged in German nationalist discourse, which, from the 1880s, emphasised ties uniting all Germans across class, promoted “pure language” and proper German culture, and called for the defence of ethnic purity against neighbouring groups. Such perspectives illustrate how nationalist elites sought to nationalise everyday practices across all spheres of life, including consumption, saving, and credit.⁴³

These detailed norms offer an important counterpoint to the more pragmatic and ambivalent practices observed at institutions such as the Carniolan Savings Bank. While nationalist actors demanded clear choices and exclusive loyalty to “our own” institutions, the Savings Bank continued to operate in a socially and nationally mixed environment, “doing in-between” in its everyday economic behaviour. This was evident not only in the composition of its leadership and clientele but also in its public communication. From 1867 onward, savings booklets and public announcements were issued in both Slovenian and German, while annual reports and notices appeared in Slovenian and German newspapers, including *Slovenec*⁴⁴ and *Laibacher Tagblatt*⁴⁵ in the 1870s, and *Slovenski narod*⁴⁶ and *Laibacher Wochenblatt*⁴⁷ in the 1880s. These bilingual and cross-press practices were concrete expressions of institutional in-betweenness: they enabled the bank to engage with the Province’s inhabitants across linguistic and political boundaries while maintaining a formally non-national public profile. At the same time, they became increasingly difficult to sustain as nationalist discourse demanded that economic institutions be classified as either Slovenian or German.⁴⁸ The Savings Bank’s leadership and clientele spanned the emerging national boundaries, and its formal self-presentation remained that of an institution serving provincial causes. This disjuncture between prescriptive nationalist discourse and institutional practice became increasingly visible and controversial once Slovenian politicians gained control of the provincial and municipal arenas.⁴⁹

43 Ana Cergol Paradiž and Irena Selišnik, “Soproke slovenske elite v Ljubljani in Trstu,” *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino* 58, No. 2 (2018): 63. Matić, *Nemci v Ljubljani*, 131.

44 “Kranjska hranilnica,” *Slovenec*, 24 February 1876, No. 23, 3.

45 “Die krainische Sparkasse,” *Laibacher Tagblatt*, 22 February 1870, No. 42, 3. “Krainsche Sparkasse,” *Laibacher Tagblatt*, 20 February 1874, No. 41, 3. “Krainsche Sparkasse,” *Laibacher Tagblatt*, 28 February 1879, No. 49, 3.

46 “Kranjska hranilnica,” *Slovenski narod*, 2 March 1882, No. 50, 3-4. “Kranjska hranilnica,” *Slovenski narod*, 14 March 1885, No. 60, 3. “Kranjska hranilnica,” *Slovenski narod*, 30 March 1889, No. 74, 5.

47 “Die Krainische Sparcasse,” *Laibacher Wochenblatt*, 4 March 1882, No. 81, 8. “Krainsche Sparcasse,” *Laibacher Wochenblatt*, 20 March 1886, No. 293, 4. “Jahres-Versammlung des Vereines der Krainische Sparcasse,” *Laibacher Wochenblatt*, 24 March 1888, No. 398, 3-4.

48 Žarko Lazarević, “Economy and Nationalism in Yugoslavia,” in Helga Schultz and Eduard Kubù, eds., *History and Culture of Economic Nationalism in East Central Europe* (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag GmbH, 2006), 266–67.

49 Matić, *Nemci v Ljubljani*, 237–57.

In this increasingly polarised environment, contemporaries increasingly classified the Carniolan Savings Bank by visible signs of political and social affiliation. Its leadership networks, donations, school policy, language practices, and connections to German-liberal municipal circles were all read as evidence that a formally non-national institution in fact served German interests. The same features that had earlier allowed the bank to operate across linguistic and political boundaries therefore became the basis for its public recoding as a German institution.

The detailed nationalist prescriptions for “proper” Slovenian and German behaviour extended directly into the economic sphere, where activists demanded that savings, credit, and everyday purchases be channelled through “our own” institutions. In Carniola, this meant calls to withdraw deposits from institutions perceived as German and to support Slovenian savings banks, credit cooperatives, and firms. The attacks on the Carniolan Savings Bank in the 1880s and the boycotts of 1908 and 1909 can therefore be understood as successive applications of the same logic. At the same time, the Savings Bank’s self-presentation as an institution serving the whole Province shows that it continued to navigate between national prescriptions and pragmatic economic practice. Its in-between stance, once a source of broad legitimacy, became increasingly vulnerable to economic-nationalist mobilisation.⁵⁰

The Carniolan Savings Bank from the Assembly Debates of 1884 to *Laibacher Wochenblatt*, 1889

The controversy over the Carniolan Savings Bank in the 1880s illustrates how a financial institution could become a focal point of national and political conflict in late Habsburg Carniola. In the Carniolan Provincial Assembly debates of 1884, Slovenian deputies, particularly Luka Svetec, sought to place the Savings Bank’s reserve fund under provincial supervision. Five years later, the *Laibacher Wochenblatt*, a newspaper aligned with German political interests in the Province, published a six-part defence of the institution titled “*Krainische Sparkasse 1879 bis 1888*.”⁵¹ These two episodes should be considered together. The 1884 debates illustrate the Slovenian effort to translate the Savings Bank’s public-benefit claims into provincial accountability; the 1889 newspaper series represents the German-liberal response, which defends the bank as prudent, philanthropic, legally autonomous, and beneficial even to its critics. Taken together, the evidence shows that the same institutional qualities – reserve capital, philanthropy, legal autonomy, and provincial mission – could be interpreted either as grounds for public supervision or as reasons to shield the bank from political interference.⁵²

⁵⁰ Henig Mišičič, “Carniolan Savings Bank and Slovenian-German Relations,” 51–54.

⁵¹ “Krainische Sparkasse 1879 bis 1888,” I. “Krainische Sparkasse 1879 bis 1888,” II. “Krainische Sparkasse 1879 bis 1888,” III, *Laibacher Wochenblatt*, 13. April 1889, No. 453, 1-2. “Krainische Sparkasse 1879 bis 1888,” IV, *Laibacher Wochenblatt*, 20 April 1889, 1-2. No. 454, 1-2. “Krainische Sparkasse 1879 bis 1888,” V, *Laibacher Wochenblatt*, 27. April 1889. “Krainische Sparkasse 1879 bis 1888,” VI, *Laibacher Wochenblatt*, 4 May 1889, 1-2.

⁵² “Stenografični zapisnik četrte seje deželnega zbora kranjskega v Ljubljani,” 53–56. “Stenografični zapisnik dvanajste

The dispute centred on the reserve fund of the Carniolan Savings Bank in Ljubljana. In his independent motion of 23 September 1884, Luka Svetec argued that the fund, estimated at around two million guildens, could not be treated as ordinary private property. The Savings Bank's rules prevented members of the Savings Bank Association from dividing profits among themselves and directed surplus resources towards charitable, public-benefit, local, and provincial purposes. For Svetec, this meant that the fund belonged morally and functionally to the Province of Carniola and its population, even if it remained formally administered by the Savings Bank. The Province therefore had both the right and the duty to supervise its use.⁵³

This argument reframed a financial and administrative issue as a question of provincial self-government. Svetec compared the reserve fund with other funds and foundations intended for public or provincial purposes, arguing that such resources should not remain beyond the reach of elected provincial representatives. His proposed law sought to give the Assembly and the provincial committee a role in monitoring and approving expenditures from the reserve fund, while formally maintaining existing state supervision. The proposal was thus presented not as confiscation but as a matter of accountability: the fund had been accumulated in the Province of Carniola, was intended for provincial public purposes, and should therefore be subject to provincial oversight.⁵⁴

Practical grievances gave this legal claim national and political force. Svetec criticised earlier uses of the fund, including support for flood victims outside the Province of Carniola and significant expenditure on a German-language school building (*Realschule*) in Ljubljana. He also objected to the exclusion of Slovenian national representatives from the Savings Bank's governing circles, even though, in his view, the fund had been built largely from the savings of the Slovenian population. The issue was therefore not only whether the Savings Bank used money for public purposes, but also who could legitimately define those purposes.⁵⁵

The October debates exposed this ambiguity and reframed it in terms of economic nationalism. Svetec and his supporters regarded the reserve fund's social purpose as decisive: if the reserve existed for charitable, local, and provincial aims, then elected provincial representatives should help determine whether those aims were properly served. German politicians rejected this conclusion. They maintained that the Carniolan Savings Bank, founded in 1820, was not an organ of the autonomous Province but a private, association-based institution governed by its own statutes and by the state legal framework for savings banks and associations. The conflict, therefore, went beyond a technical disagreement over legal competence. It concerned who had the authority to define the "public" in a nationally divided province. For Slovenian politicians, the public was increasingly identified with the Slovenian-majority provincial

seje deželnega zbora kranjskega v Ljubljani," 222–30. "Stenografični zapisnik trinajste seje deželnega zbora kranjskega v Ljubljani," 236.

53 "Stenografični zapisnik četrte seje deželnega zbora kranjskega v Ljubljani," 53–56.

54 Ibidem.

55 Ibid.

community and its elected representatives; for German politicians, public benefit could still be administered by an autonomous civic association whose legitimacy derived from law, property, expertise, and philanthropy. The reserve-fund dispute thus shows economic nationalism at work not only as a demand for Slovenian financial institutions, but also as a struggle to redefine existing public-benefit capital as a national resource whose control, distribution, and symbolic meaning should correspond to national representation.⁵⁶

This continuity is essential to understanding the German-language press intervention of 1889. By then, the issue had shifted from a formal legislative proposal to a broader public dispute over reputation, trust, and institutional legitimacy. The Slovenian critique was no longer presented solely as a motion for provincial supervision; it also took the form of accusations that the Savings Bank was German-controlled, that its philanthropy served exclusively German cultural interests, and that its resources were used without adequate regard for the Slovenian population. The question first posed in the Assembly, whether public-benefit funds could remain under private, self-selecting control, was thus restated in the press as a struggle over whether the Savings Bank represented disinterested civic philanthropy or national-political power.

The six-part article published in the *Laibacher Wochenblatt* in 1889 can therefore be read not as an isolated institutional report but as a delayed, systematic response to the conflict already apparent in 1884. Its author did not simply list assets, deposits, and benefactions. He reconstructed the Savings Bank's recent history to address the political accusation that a "German-dominated institution" controlled resources accumulated in the Province of Carniola while evading provincial or Slovenian oversight. The central aim was to demonstrate that the Carniolan Savings Bank was financially prudent, civically generous, and legally independent, and that these qualities justified its continued autonomy. The opening article emphasised the Savings Bank's solvency and careful management during the decade 1879–1888. It highlighted the growth of the reserve fund despite major write-offs for the *Realschule* and the Savings Bank building, the increase in annual donations from roughly 10,000 to around 30,000 gulden, and the maintenance of sufficient liquidity to repay deposits on demand. Falling interest rates and the reduction of mortgage loan interest to 4.5 per cent from 1887 were presented not as signs of weakness but as evidence of responsible management.⁵⁷

The second part of the article extended this defence from solvency to civic utility. It portrayed the Savings Bank as a supporter of urban improvement, education, welfare, culture, and social reform. The institution was linked to the beautification of Ljubljana, the Provincial Museum *Rudolfinum*, school construction, vocational education, workers' housing, the Elisabeth children's hospital, the relocation of the civil hospital, and the Philharmonic Society's *Tonhalle*. The defence of the German-language boys' school was particularly revealing. The article presented the school not

56 "Stenografični zapisnik dvanajste seje deželnega zbora kranjskega v Ljubljani," 222–30. "Stenografični zapisnik trinajste seje deželnega zbora kranjskega v Ljubljani," 236.

57 "Krainische Sparkasse 1879 bis 1888," I.

as an instrument of German national dominance but as a practical benefit even for Slovenian children wishing to learn German. Slovenian opposition was thus recast as nationalist obstruction to useful philanthropy.⁵⁸

The fifth and sixth sections of the article were the most ideologically sensitive, as they addressed the accusation that the Savings Bank managed “Slovenian money”. The author dismissed the nationalisation of money as conceptually absurd and empirically unsubstantiated, noting that the bank did not categorise depositors by nationality or social status. Deposit statistics were used to distinguish individual depositor claims from collective national ownership: deposits conferred rights to repayment and interest, not political control over reserves or donations. This directly countered the economic-nationalist effort to attribute collective national ownership to capital deposited in a formally non-national institution. The final section of the article developed this argument into a legal defence of the reserve fund, asserting that it belonged to the Savings Bank Association and that statutory changes could occur only through the Association’s own initiative and ministerial approval.⁵⁹

The relationship between the 1884 Assembly debates and the 1889 newspaper series becomes clearest when the Savings Bank’s philanthropy is viewed as a form of civic authority. Donations were not secondary to the conflict; they were among the main reasons the bank was politically significant. For Svetec, the Savings Bank’s public-benefit activity justified provincial supervision because donations, school subsidies, housing projects, and welfare contributions affected the common good of the Province of Carniola. For the author of the *Laibacher Wochenblatt*, however, the same philanthropy demonstrated the opposite: since the Savings Bank had acted prudently, generously, and competently, it deserved protection from political interference. Both sides agreed that the Savings Bank was not an ordinary commercial institution, but they disagreed about the consequences of that fact.

This disagreement reflected the changing political order in Carniola after Slovenian politicians gained a majority in the Assembly from 1883 onwards. Institutions established in an earlier provincial society, before the full crystallisation of Slovenian and German liberal political camps, were now being reinterpreted in the language of national representation. The name “Carniolan Savings Bank”, its territorial mission, and its philanthropic activities led Slovenian politicians to view it as a provincial institution in substance, even if not in law. German politicians, by contrast, defended the Savings Bank’s older legal form as a private association and treated Slovenian claims as attempts to politicise and nationalise a successful civic institution. Provincial supervision therefore meant both democratisation and nationalisation: it was a claim to elected public oversight, but also an effort to bring a contested economic resource under the authority of the Slovenian-majority political order.⁶⁰

58 “Krainische Sparkasse 1879 bis 1888,” II.

59 “Krainische Sparkasse 1879 bis 1888,” V. “Krainische Sparkasse 1879 bis 1888,” VI.

60 “Stenografični zapisnik dvanajste seje deželnega zbora kranjskega v Ljubljani,” 222–30. “Stenografični zapisnik trinajste seje deželnega zbora kranjskega v Ljubljani,” 236.

The rhetorical opposition between “public benefit” and “political interference” was therefore central to the German-liberal defence. The 1889 series of articles did not deny that the Savings Bank served the public. On the contrary, it offered numerous examples of public benefit: hospitals, museums, schools, housing, roads, cultural institutions, and welfare. However, this public service was presented as voluntary, philanthropic, and institutionally autonomous. The Savings Bank’s right to give was inseparable from its right to decide. To subject the reserve fund to the Assembly would, in this view, destroy the very independence that made such philanthropy possible.

Taken together, the 1884 Assembly debates and the 1889 *Laibacher Wochenblatt* series highlight a central tension in late nineteenth-century Carniolan politics. The Carniolan Savings Bank was at once a private financial institution, a major philanthropic actor, and a symbol of contested provincial authority. Slovenian politicians sought to turn the public-purpose language of the reserve fund into a claim for provincial supervision. German politicians and publicists, in turn, defended the Savings Bank’s legal autonomy and presented its philanthropy as evidence of responsible bourgeois stewardship.

The conflict was not merely about money. It concerned the relationship between property, public benefit, and representation. Could funds accumulated by a private institution but intended for public and provincial purposes remain under the control of a self-selecting association, or did their public function require supervision by the elected provincial body? Svetec answered the latter question affirmatively; the German-liberal defence of the Savings Bank answered it negatively. This disagreement explains why the reserve fund became such a powerful political symbol. It linked savings, charity, education, language, urban development, and national representation in a single institutional controversy.

The 1889 article series did more than defend the Carniolan Savings Bank’s financial record. It retrospectively justified the defensive stance already evident among German politicians in 1884. By portraying the bank as solvent, generous, legally secure, and beneficial even to Slovenians, the *Laibacher Wochenblatt* sought to counter the accusation that German influence over the institution amounted to national appropriation. Yet the intensity of the defence reveals how vulnerable the institution had become as a symbol. Its philanthropy could still be praised as public service, but in a nationalised political environment, it could also be read as power without representation. This phrase encapsulates the central transformation analysed in this section and in the article as a whole: the Carniolan Savings Bank’s intermediary authority, once rooted in provincial public benefit, became the very reason it could be reinterpreted as an object of economic-nationalist conflict.

Conclusion

This article examines how the Carniolan Savings Bank's later reputation as a pillar of German finance was established before the 1908 boycott and bank run. The bank did not simply shift from neutrality to nationalism, nor did it possess a fixed German identity from the outset. Its contested image stemmed from the tension between older forms of provincial civic authority and the increasingly prescriptive logic of economic nationalism. In the 1870s and 1880s, its public-benefit claims, bilingual communication, mixed leadership networks, and formal language of neutrality continued to sustain an intermediate institutional position, even as the political environment increasingly demanded clear Slovenian or German classification.

The Savings Bank's position around 1870 illustrates both the durability and the fragility of such in-betweenness. Its leadership belonged to Ljubljana's municipal and economic elite and increasingly overlapped with German-liberal politics, yet it still drew legitimacy from a broader provincial vocabulary of service, stability, and philanthropy. The Samassa example shows how the same entrepreneurial and civic resources could support older provincial patriotism in one generation and German-liberal national positioning in the next. This ambiguity enabled the bank's authority, but it also made later national recoding plausible.

The decisive change in the 1880s lay less in the Savings Bank's internal structure than in the criteria used to judge institutions. Once Slovenian politicians gained stronger positions in the Assembly and the Ljubljana municipality, questions of language, schooling, donations, credit, and reserve capital were increasingly viewed through the lens of national representation. Practices that had previously signalled provincial outreach or civic usefulness could now be interpreted as insufficiently loyal, strategically evasive, or as German-liberal authority exercised without representation.

The reserve-fund controversy of 1884 and the *Laibacher Wochenblatt* defence of 1889 make this transformation particularly clear. Svetec's proposal translated the Savings Bank's public-benefit language into a claim for provincial accountability, while German politicians and publicists defended legal autonomy, expertise, and voluntary philanthropy. Both sides accepted the Savings Bank's importance to the public; they disagreed over who had the authority to define that public and to control resources accumulated in its name. The conflict was therefore not merely administrative or financial but concerned the nationalisation of public benefit itself. The case of the Carniolan Savings Bank therefore shows that economic nationalism did not operate only through the creation of new national institutions, boycotts, or explicit national declarations. It also worked by reinterpreting existing institutions and recoding older civic and provincial forms of authority. The later crisis of 1908 was thus not a sudden rupture but the culmination of a process in which an institution of the provincial middle ground became increasingly difficult to defend as neutral.

By the late nineteenth century, the Carniolan Savings Bank had become more than a financial intermediary. It was a site where the meanings of 'Province', 'public

benefit', 'charity', 'ownership', and 'nation' were negotiated. Its history reveals how difficult it became in late Habsburg Carniola to sustain an institutional middle ground once economic behaviour was treated as a measure of collective loyalty. The Savings Bank's in-between position had once made it effective and legitimate; by the 1880s, the same position left it vulnerable.

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Nataša Henig Mišič

PRAKSE VMESNOSTI, EKONOMSKI NACIONALIZEM IN KRAJSKA HRANILNICA V LJUBLJANI V 70. IN 80. LETIH 19. STOLETJA

POVZETEK

Članek obravnava Kranjsko hranilnico v Ljubljani v sedemdesetih in osemdesetih letih 19. stoletja kot finančno institucijo, ki je svojo legitimnost utemeljevala z deželnim poslanstvom, javno koristjo in formalno nevtralnostjo, hkrati pa se je vse bolj pomikala na polje ekonomskega nacionalizma. Na podlagi analize vodstvenih mrež, dobrodelnih praks, jezikovne rabe, deželnozborskih razprav in časopisnih polemik pokaže, da hranilnica že od začetka ni imela jasno določene nacionalne identitete. Njena poznejša podoba »nemškega finančnega stebra« se je oblikovala postopoma, ko so se njene prakse vmesnosti, pravna avtonomija, dobrodelnost, finančna uspešnost in sklicevanje na korist celotne dežele Kranjske znašli v vse bolj nacionalno diferenciranem političnem okolju. Članek posebno pozornost namenja prehodu iz razmeroma prožnega provincialnega in mestnega okolja okoli leta 1870 v politično ostrejša osemdeseta leta, ko so se vprašanja jezika, šolstva, donacij, kreditiranja in upravljanja kapitala vse pogostejše razumela kot vprašanja nacionalne reprezentacije. Posebej pomemben je spor o rezervnem skladu leta 1884, v katerem so slovenski politiki javno koristni značaj hranilnice razumeli kot razlog in povod za vzpostavitev deželnega nadzora, pripadniki nemškega političnega tabora pa kot dokaz njene legitime avtonomije. Poznejša obramba hranilnice v časopisu *Laibacher Wochenblatt* leta 1889 dodatno razkrije, da dobrodelnost ni bila le izraz javne koristi, temveč tudi oblika družbene in politične avtoritete. Članek tako pokaže, da ekonomski nacionalizem ni deloval le z ustanavljanjem novih »narodnih« institucij in bojkoti, temveč tudi z reinterpretacijo že obstoječih ustanov, katerih javna korist, lastnina in dobrodelnost so postale predmet nasprotujočih si nacionalnih razlag. Primer Kranjske hranilnice zato prispeva k razumevanju, kako so se v pozni habsburški Kranjski preoblikovali pomeni dežele, javnosti, kapitala in narodne pripadnosti.

Ivan Smiljanić*

The Many Struggles of Anton Kajfež: The Rise and Fall of a Kočevje Merchant from Political and Economic Perspectives

IZVLEČEK

MNOGI BOJI ANTONA KAJFEŽA: VZPON IN PADEC KOČEVSKEGA TRGOVCA S POLITIČNE TER GOSPODARSKE PERSPEKTIVE

Prispevek predstavlja študijo primera podjetnika in veleposestnika Antona Kajfeža ter njegovih naslednikov, lastnikov enega največjih podjetij na Kočevskem in Dolenjskem tako pred prvo svetovno vojno kot v času med obema vojnoma. Podjetje se je ukvarjalo predvsem s trgovino z lesom in vinom ter postalo pomemben delničar številnih regionalnih podjetij in bank. Kajfež je bil pospeševalec lokalnega slovenskega gospodarstva in ga je s svojim bogastvom krepil z vrsto projektov, da bi v kočevskem gospodarstvu in politiki prehitel Kočevjarje, lokalno skupino nemškega porekla. S tem si je nakopal srd številnih poslovnih konkurentov, lastnih delavcev in političnih sovražnikov. Družina Kajfež je najemala velika posojila in ustvarjala primanjkljaj, tako da je morala leta 1928 razglasiti stečaj. Zaradi tesne povezanosti družbe Kajfež z bankami in podjetji je bil propad velik udarec za lokalno slovensko gospodarstvo. Kočevjarji so slavili propad podjetja in njegove negativne posledice za slovenske ustanove.

Ključne besede: Anton Kajfež, trgovina z lesom, slovensko gospodarstvo, stečaj, Kočevje, Kočevjarji, Kraljevina Srbov, Hrvatov in Slovencev

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a case study of the entrepreneur and landowner Anton Kajfež and his successors, owners of one of the largest companies in Kočevje and Lower Carniola before World War I and during the interwar period. The company focused primarily on the timber and wine trade and became a significant shareholder in many regional companies and banks. Kajfež promoted the local Slovenian economy and used his wealth to strengthen it through a series of projects aimed at surpassing the Gottscheers, a local group of German origin, in the Kočevje economy and politics. In doing so, he attracted the ire of many business competitors, his own workers, and political enemies. The Kajfež family took out large loans and created a deficit, leading to bankruptcy in 1928. Because of the close ties between the Kajfež company, banks, and businesses, the collapse was a major blow to the local Slovenian economy. The Gottscheers celebrated the company's demise and its negative impact on Slovenian institutions.

Keywords: Anton Kajfež, timber trade, Slovenian economy, bankruptcy, Kočevje, Gottscheers, Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes

The Life and Works of Anton Kajfež

Economic nationalism in the past has attracted a growing number of scholars in recent research.¹ It has been defined as an economic programme that tends to be more ideological than scientific, with its core aim being the promotion of the economic interests of a specific national group against competing groups or individuals.² It can appear both as a state-supported programme that uses protectionism as its main means, or at the level of an individual entrepreneur who decides not to conduct business with clients of a different ethnic background. From a purely economic point of view, such an approach is risky and self-limiting; it can provoke counter-reactions, boycotts, and financial collapse. Despite this, the tactic was common in 19th-century Europe, and many public initiatives feverishly called for boycotting the supposed “national enemies”. After World War I, its popularity waned, though it did not disappear entirely.

The period that offers the most extensive research materials on economic nationalism in the territory populated by Slovenians is the Austro-Hungarian Empire and its Slovenian-German national struggles, which regularly spilled into the economic

1 This paper is a reworked and expanded version of Ivan Smiljanić, “‘Erased from the Face of God’: Slovene Economic Nationalism in Press Reports on A. Kajfež & Co. in Kočevje,” *Historical Studies on Central Europe* 3, No. 1 (2023): 122–43.

2 Helga Schultz and Eduard Kubů, eds., *History and Culture of Economic Nationalism in East Central Europe* (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag GmbH, 2006). Stefan Berger and Thomas Fetzner, eds., *Nationalism and Economy: Explorations into a Neglected Relationship* (Budapest, New York: CEU Press, 2019). Andreas Pickel, ed., *Handbook of Economic Nationalism* (Cheltenham, Northampton: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2022).

sphere. However, interwar Yugoslavia can also provide attractive, if atypical, case studies that illustrate how economic struggles on a nationalist basis could continue despite a changed political situation. A vivid example from Slovenia's economic past is the case of Kajfež & Co., a large family company from Kočevje, founded by Anton Kajfež, whose collapse triggered a regional political and economic crisis. Apart from its political dimension, Kajfež's story brings to the fore multiple other relationships he had with his contemporaries, which were often conflictual. While the story of Kajfež & Co. can be interpreted as a standard example of a company that was a victim of economic nationalist struggles, it can also be read as a cautionary tale about treating economic nationalist background as the main reason for a business failure, even if the sources do not necessarily indicate such causality.

Anton Kajfež was born on 13 June 1875 in the village of Nova Sela in the Kostel region, south of Kočevje. He was the second of ten children and the first son of Jožef Kajfež (1835–1923) and Neža, née Pogorelec (1852–1936); eight of the children survived into adulthood. The Kajfež house was a meeting place for the local Slovenian and Croatian intelligentsia, and the relatively wealthy family was also known for supporting housewives and the poor.³ In 1902, the family took over the post office in nearby Banja Loka, where they were responsible for telegraph traffic and for the maintenance of mail wagons, horses, stables, and accommodation for postmen.⁴

Anton Kajfež began his business activities at a young age. According to his own account, he inherited a business that had been in his family since around 1858.⁵ He quickly gained a reputation as a shrewd entrepreneur who profited from every project he undertook. Despite his youth, he rose to prominence in Kočevje's economy as a landowner, wine merchant, and restaurateur (some rather questionable claims suggest he traded in wine as early as 1890, when he would have been 15 years old).⁶ His character is perhaps best illustrated by a story from the time the railway arrived in Kočevje in 1893, when he bet he could reach Kočevje before the train. "He won the bet, as he was indeed faster than the train, but he drove the horse so hard that it died of exhaustion. Kajfež had the horse taxidermied, and it was [...] exhibited in Kajfež's villa in Kočevje."⁷

At the beginning of the 20th century, Kajfež's company had branches in Ljubljana, Črnomelj, Nova Sela, and Vienna. Around 1908, he acquired the equipment from the Kočevje steam sawmill, which had burned down two years earlier. Kajfež had the sawmill rebuilt at a new location and installed the equipment there. In 1910, he built a three-storey building for the sawmill workers, which became known as the Skyscraper (*Nebotičnik*). The Kajfež family's influence in the Kočevje region grew further when

3 "Smrt plemenite žene," *Jutro*, 15 January 1936, 3.

4 Stanislav Južnič, *Dvig iz pragozda in zaton vanj: razvoj Kočevske in sosednjih dolin (Osilniška, Dragarska in Poljanska) (1498–2009)* = *From wildwoods and back: the development of Gottscheer Land and nearby valleys (Ossiuniz, Suchen, and Polland) (1498–2009)* (Kostel: self-published, 2009), 197, 202.

5 Anton Kajfež, "Iz Kočevja," *Slovenski narod*, 4 March 1908, 3.

6 Peter Šobar, "Razvoj delavskega razreda v Kočevju," in Herman Kotar et al., eds., *500 let mesta Kočevje 1471–1971* (Kočevje: Skupščina občine, [1971]), 79.

7 Karel Rustja, "Dolenjske železnice S," *Dolenjski list*, 27 January 1994, 14.

Anton's brother Josip (1881–1943), a postal worker, was elected mayor of Banja Loka in 1912.⁸

During this period, Anton married Marija Briški (1870–1921) from the village of Ajbelj, with whom he had four children: Marija (1900–1982), Anton Jr. (1901–1973), Milan (1903–1982), and Ivan (1905–1926). After his wife Marija's early death, Kajfež became attached to the bartender Frančiška (Francka) Legat (1904–1960),⁹ whom he married in 1925;¹⁰ they had a daughter, Majda. The following year, Kajfež's sickly youngest son, Ivan, died at the family villa in Opatija.¹¹

Kajfež's business continued to grow after the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in 1918. In August of that year, he expanded his company into the timber trade,¹² which became his main source of income. Timber was abundant in the Kočevje region, and Kajfež declared it the most important resource to be exploited to promote the local economy. In 1920, he was among the founders of the Timber Section of the Association of Industrialists (*Lesni odsek Zveze industrijcev*), which sought to ensure a fair distribution of work and profits and to prevent illegal or exploitative trade.¹³ The most ambitious plan to supply timber to a seaport involved constructing the Kočevje–Rijeka/Sušak railway. The idea had already been proposed in Austria-Hungary and became even more appealing after the establishment of the Rapallo border. Kajfež argued that the existing line via Karlovac was unsuitable because of excessive transport costs.¹⁴ In 1921, the Lower Carniolan Railway (*Dolenjske železnice*) company was established, and Kajfež became a member of the board of directors. He actively promoted the construction among Ljubljana's business circles¹⁵ and secured the support of the liberals, but complications over the railway route¹⁶ meant the idea was never realised.

Despite this setback, Kajfež achieved success with several other projects in Kočevje in the early 1920s. In July 1922, he and two partners founded the textile company Textilana. The beginnings were modest: the company was established in an abandoned warehouse in Kočevje,¹⁷ which Kajfež had purchased from the noble Auersperg family. When the Ministry of Trade and Industry approved registration in October 1923, the factory was expanded and restructured as a joint-stock company with a capital of 6 million dinars (of which Kajfež contributed just over a third)¹⁸

8 "Burne občinske volitve," *Slovenski narod*, 12 August 1912, 3.

9 Stanislav Južnič, "Razvoj kočevske čitalnice med letoma 1919–1941," *Knjižnica* 48, No. 3 (2004): 181.

10 "Himen," *Slovenec*, 31 July 1925, 3.

11 "Kočevje," *Jutro*, 17 October 1926, 20. "† Ivan Kajfež," *Ljudska samouprava*, 25 October 1926, 3.

12 "Razglas," *Laibacher Zeitung*, 22 August 1918, 1302.

13 A. Kajfež, "Naš les, I," *Slovenski narod*, 29 July 1920, 4.

14 A. Kajfež, "Neprilike naše lesne trgovine I," *Jutro*, 12 April 1924, 6.

15 "Železniška zveza Kočevje-Reka," *Slovenec*, 12 January 1921, 3–4. See also A. Kajfež, "Sušak in njegove težave," *Jutro*, 16 March 1926, 2.

16 A. Kajfež, "Železnica Kočevje-Brod Moravice," *Jugoslavija*, 20 October 1921, 2. "Konferenca delegatov o železniški mreži v Sloveniji," *Narodni dnevnik*, 7 December 1926, 3.

17 O. R., "65 let Tekstilne tovarne 'Tekstilana' Kočevje," *Kočevske novice*, 16 December 1986, 7.

18 France Kresal, "Tekstilana tovarna sukna v Kočevju 1921–1941," in Vinko Rakovič et al., eds., *Tekstilana Kočevje: 50 let* (Kočevje: Tekstilana, 1971), 15, 22.

to attract foreign capital. In addition to Kajfež, the company was managed by Josip Röthel, a Kočevje merchant and president of the local City Savings Bank (*Mestna hranilnica*).¹⁹ Later, Textilana acquired Czechoslovak capital, enabling the plant to expand and employ about 120 workers.²⁰ Apart from Textilana, the Mercantile Bank (*Merkantilna banka*) was Kajfež's most important economic project in Kočevje. He co-founded the bank and chaired the board of directors at the founding general assembly in March 1922, when it also opened its headquarters in Kočevje²¹ and later a branch in Ribnica. Throughout its existence, the bank remained relatively small, as its founding capital amounted to a modest 1,25 million dinars, later increased to 3 million dinars.²² Kajfež was the bank's president between 1922 and 1927. Since he owned the majority of shares, he was the main decision-maker, overruling any possible opposition.²³

In addition, Kajfež contributed to several other projects in the region. For example, he was head of the Kočevje Purchasing Cooperative (*Nakupovalna zadruga*), founded in 1923;²⁴ a partner in Carbonaria, a charcoal-export company (both formally established by the Mercantile Bank);²⁵ and a co-financier of the Kočevje student dormitory.²⁶ He also held positions in central financial institutions based in Ljubljana. He participated in the founding meeting of the Ljubljana Stock Exchange,²⁷ served on the board of directors of Slovenska Bank,²⁸ and was active in the Carniolan Savings Bank (*Kranjska hranilnica*). In 1922, he opened an inn in the same city.²⁹

During the post-war years, Kajfež's wine and timber trade company flourished, expanding its operations abroad by exporting timber to Italy, Spain, Egypt, South Africa, and other destinations.³⁰ Kajfež enjoyed a strong reputation among his customers. It is believed that his business empire was the largest in Lower Carniola at the time. Although he already owned estates around Kočevje, he also bought a large estate with a timber mill in Crni Lug near Delnice in Croatia in 1926 for 4 million dinars (perhaps as an investment, as some expected the Kočevje–Rijeka railway to run there). He managed the extensive company himself, with the help of officials, until 1925, when his sons, Anton Jr. and Milan, informally took over the business.

This is how Kajfež's life story might have been written in a standard biographical style if it ended at this point. However, this dry account of his life and work omits

19 "Preosnova tekstilne tovarne," *Trgovski list*, 8 November 1923, 3.

20 Kresal, "Tekstilana." Ivan Kordiš, "Od kašče do tovarne: Tekstilana Kočevje včeraj in nikoli več," in Ivan Kordiš, Žarko Lazarevič, Nina Vodopivec, and Sonja Ifko, *Od kašče do tovarne: Tekstilana Kočevje včeraj in nikoli več* (Kočevje: Pokrajinski muzej, 2024), 20–27.

21 "Merkantilna banka," *Radikal*, 25 March 1922, 2–3.

22 Žarko Lazarevič and Jože Prinčič, *Zgodovina slovenskega bančništva* (Ljubljana: Združenje bank Slovenije, 2000), 63.

23 "Kočevske težave in njih krivci," *Slovenski dom*, 8 July 1939, 3.

24 "Vpisi v trgovinski register," *Uradni list pokrajinske uprave za Slovenijo*, 6 August 1923, 480.

25 "Vpisi v trgovinski register," *Uradni list ljubljanske in mariborske oblasti*, 15 January 1924, 26.

26 "Dijaški dom v Kočevju," *Jutro*, 26 July 1925, 4.

27 "Ustanovni občni zbor Ljubljanske borze," *Slovenski narod*, 8 August 1923, 2.

28 "Vpisi v trgovinski register," *Uradni list pokrajinske uprave za Slovenijo*, 17 July 1923, 439.

29 "Otvoritev," *Jugoslavija*, 4 August 1922, 4. "Kakor čujemo," *Jutro*, 27 March 1927, 5.

30 "Konkurz veletvrdke A. Kajfež Kočevje," *Nova samouprava*, 15 March 1928, 3.

many details crucial to his story. These details add nuance and complexity to the otherwise simple narrative of a successful yet unremarkable entrepreneur; it is within these struggles that Kajfež's story becomes worth researching. His struggles will be explored through five relationships – the most significant oppositions in Kajfež's life, as far as they can be reconstructed from press reports, which remain the main available record of him.

The First Opposition: Kajfež the Merchant Versus the Competition

In a sense, the most “natural” opponents of Kajfež were other merchants – his competitors in the capitalist market. The earliest press attacks against him date to the early 20th century; from the outset, they portrayed Kajfež as an immoral exploiter, if not a fraudster. Today, it is virtually impossible to determine whether these accusations had any merit, but, notably, they were repeated frequently, indicating that this was a persistent, if not prevalent, opinion among his competitors about Kajfež.

In 1908, amid German-Slovenian tensions following the so-called September events – which triggered a Slovenian boycott of German shops, followed by a German reprisal – the newspaper *Deutsche Stimme* urged Kočevje residents to boycott shopping at Kajfež's stores, accusing him of business scams that enriched him at the expense of the poor. Naturally, Kajfež refuted these allegations as untrue. He stated that he had not arrived in Kočevje as a poor man, as his family company had existed for half a century, and that he was not involved in politics, so he conducted business indiscriminately with both Germans and Slovenians. He also claimed to support the local economy by having the equipment for his Viennese inn made in Kočevje. In conclusion, he advised the initiator of the boycott that “in the future you should inform yourself better about the economic situation in Kočevje, because such unfounded allegations harm your own brothers the most.”³¹ In another response, he said the newspapers had already published many lies about him and that he was growing tired of it. Nevertheless, he added confidently: “To all those who have organised a boycott against me, remember that I am a rock in the sea, and you are merely waves. The waves disperse, and the rock remains.”³²

Many of Kajfež's competitors did their best to avoid being confused with him, especially when they had a similar-sounding name. In 1921, Kajfež published a notice in the newspapers warning people not to confuse him with another Kočevje merchant with the same surname, with whom he had no family or business connections.³³ A few days later, the competitor announced in the press: “I have not engaged in any

³¹ Anton Kajfež, “Iz Kočevja,” *Slovenski narod*, 4 March 1908, 3.

³² A. Kajfež, “Poslano,” *Slovenski narod*, 29 December 1908, 4.

³³ A. Kajfež, “Opozoritev,” *Jugoslavija*, 8 July 1921, 4.

suspicious bargains nor made millions with war profiteering, and I am proud that my company is nothing like yours".³⁴

The question arises: what exactly did Kajfež's competitors and the general public believe he had been doing during World War I? What were his alleged "suspicious bargains" or "war profiteering millions" that he had supposedly acquired? The available sources do not offer firm conclusions, though they suggest he was believed to have acquired large quantities of grain at low prices at the end of the war through (semi-) illegal means.³⁵ He was also criticised for exploiting war conscripts, whom he allegedly abused to obtain military supplies.³⁶ Rumours also spread about the poor quality of his wares, such as watered-down wine, which he vehemently denied.³⁷

Interestingly, criticism of Kajfež as a greedy exploiter extended beyond business competitors, particularly during the heated debates over the Kočevje–Rijeka/Sušak railway. His stubborn insistence on his preferred route was seen as a transparent attempt to profit from his estates, which would need to be purchased for the railway. Kajfež's outbursts during public debates, when he could not convince the experts that his route was the best, were described as "the fierce wind of Kajfež, which begins to blow when his arguments run out".³⁸ An engineer who opposed Kajfež's plans stated:

Mr Kajfež, I felt compelled to point out the shortcomings of your route. Describing this as a 'meaningless quarrel, envy, deceiving the nation, teasing, ranting, and idle gossip' is a slight misunderstanding. I would also like to point out that you were mistaken about breadwinning. We are all breadwinners, including yourself, and, based on your proposed route, you still aim to be one, especially today. The only difference is that some of us work for the public and national good, while others focus solely on increasing their wealth. Of course, I do not blame you for this, and I wish you success, but only as long as the public interest is not harmed.³⁹

Kajfež was well aware of this opposition and felt he was being persecuted, particularly by Gottscheer merchants. At the outset of his business career, he claimed he was attacked solely because he was Slovenian, and that no one would care how much he sold or to whom if he were a German Jew⁴⁰ – an interesting proposition for its time, given that antisemitism was a normalised sentiment across Europe, including Austria-Hungary.

34 J. Kajfež, "Poslano," *Slovenec*, 12 July 1921, 4.

35 "Kajfež se je povrnili," *Lesni delavec*, 1 February 1924, 21.

36 "Vzorni mladi demokrat g. Anton Kajfež," *Zarja*, 25 November 1922, 3.

37 "Iz Kočevja," *Domoljub*, 2 June 1910, 350.

38 Odbor za zvezo dolenjskih železnic iz Kočevja in Črnomlja preko Severina ob Kupi z reško progo, "Poslano," *Kmetijski list*, 8 December 1921, 4.

39 Al. Hrovat, "Železnica Kočevje-Brod Moravice," *Kmetijski list*, 3 January 1921, 1.

40 Anton Kajfež, "Poslano," *Slovenski narod*, 17 August 1904, 4. "Dobro jim je dal po nosu," *Slovenec*, 20 August 1904, 3.

The Second Opposition: Kajfež the Capitalist Versus the Working Class

Another front that Kajfež opened early on was against his own workers. The press that supported him described him as a visionary who initiated the upswing of the Slovenian economy in Kočevje and claimed that the grateful working class “loved him like their father.”⁴¹ However, this sentiment was not shared by the socialist newspapers. In the first half of the 1920s, numerous criticisms of Kajfež’s behaviour towards the working class and – again – allegedly fraudulent business practices appeared. For the workers, the nationally mixed Kočevje elite was simply “an international mix that seeks only to exploit the poor local population,”⁴² and Kajfež, as part of it, was “a genuine Slovenian capitalist.”⁴³

Although he considered himself a democrat, Kajfež behaved in a distinctly hard-hearted manner towards his workers, the socialist press reported: “Kajfež is a man who does not regard workers as human beings. To him, workers are dead machines that do not register the constant blows, crude curses, and rude insults that, given the poor education of our people, can be expected from a drunken stable hand but certainly not from an employer who wishes to be respected as a millionaire in public life.”⁴⁴ Kajfež was said to have dismissed his burned-out and starving workers, who lived in extremely poor and unsanitary conditions,⁴⁵ in the middle of winter, sometimes slapping them and initiating legal proceedings against those he believed had insulted his honour.⁴⁶ Additionally, the wealthy entrepreneur apparently rejected any demand for a wage increase, even when employees worked 12 hours a day, because the workers already cost him too much money and that they were already “almost in heaven.”⁴⁷ He also expressed hostility towards socialism. According to the newspaper *Naprej*, “Mr Kajfež would have preferred to have gallows made for the socialists at his own expense.”⁴⁸

Because Kajfež was unpopular with the workers, rumours about his private life circulated. For instance, when he took over the inn in Ljubljana in 1922, it was rumoured that he had furnished it for a mistress and her female friends.⁴⁹ The worker press also drew attention to the (overly) close relations between Kajfež and the Slovenian associations in Kočevje, which were almost entirely dependent on the entrepreneur’s donations, and to the absolute devotion members were required to show to him and his family. When the representatives of the local Sokol (Falcon) gymnastics society alleg-

41 Lojze Zupanc, “Kočevska ob rojstvu Jugoslavije in danes ...,” in Pavel Karlin, ed., *Vodnikova pratika 1939* (Ljubljana: Vodnikova družba, 1939), 59.

42 “Kočevje,” *Naprej*, 12 December 1921, 2.

43 “Kajfež se je povrnili,” *Lesni delavec*, 1 February 1924, 21.

44 Ibid.

45 Lesni delavec, “Iz Kočevja,” *Delavec*, 26 June 1920, 3.

46 “Kočevje – Banjaloka,” *Naprej*, 17 February 1920, 2. “Kočevska republika,” *Delavec*, 12 March 1921, 2.

47 “Kočevje,” *Narodni socialist*, 26 July 1919, 3.

48 “Kočevje – Banjaloka,” *Naprej*, 17 February 1920, 2.

49 “Kajfež se je povrnili,” *Lesni delavec*, 1 February 1924, 21.

edly began to object to some of Kajfež's demands, "suddenly, his always wide-open wallet closed [...], and the Sokol's wings were broken".⁵⁰

In short, the worker press was outraged that someone like Kajfež held the lives of so many hardworking members of the proletariat in his hands: "Kajfež owes everything he has solely to the workers' labour, but that does not make him even a little ashamed to accuse them most unkindly of trying to take everything from him!" The reporter added, with some dark humour: "We find it very surprising that the district administration, especially the labour inspectorate, does not consider it worthwhile to investigate Kajfež's empire and to enforce at least some order in this regard. Perhaps an inquiry would also reveal that Kajfež has long been ripe for Studenec [a psychiatric hospital in Ljubljana]".⁵¹

The Third Opposition: Kajfež, the Liberal Politician, Versus his Political Opponents

Although Kajfež initially claimed he was not involved in politics, he did not maintain this stance. He was a staunch supporter of the Slovenian liberals. Since at least 1919, he had been a member of the local committee of the Yugoslav Democratic Party.⁵² While his exact role in the party is unclear, circumstances suggest that he associated with some of the top party members, who were, to some extent, his allies in his endeavours in Kočevje, particularly through supportive articles in the *Jutro* newspaper. The liberals' opponents criticised Kajfež for his political connections, mockingly calling him "an exemplary young democrat" who was also a multimillionaire, and referring to him as "a pearl of democracy" while listing his past transgressions.⁵³ Kajfež was also criticised for political agitation: apparently, he particularly disliked Ivan Pucelj, the leader of the peasant party, whom he considered his main adversary in the railroad affair.⁵⁴

What about Kajfež's potential political activities during the Austro-Hungarian era? His allegiance to the pre-1918 and post-1918 regimes is a complex issue. During World War I, he demonstrated loyalty to the Austrian authorities through symbolic and humanitarian gestures. He donated linden and maple wood for the statue of the giant Austrian eagle, which was placed on the facade of the Kočevje grammar school and into which nails were hammered during a military charity campaign.⁵⁵ He also

50 "Kočevje," *Jugoslavija*, 17 August 1919, 4.

51 "Kajfež se je povrnil," *Lesni delavec*, 1 February 1924, 21–22.

52 "Velik shod JDS. se je vršil dne 12. t. m. pri Beljanu v Kočevju," *Domovina*, 24 January 1919, 5–6.

53 "Vzorni mladi demokrat g. Anton Kajfež," *Zarja*, 25 November 1922, 3.

54 "Dobrepolje," *Kmetijski list*, 2 March 1923, 3.

55 *Jahresbericht des k. k. Staatsgymnasiums in Gottschee veröffentlicht am Schlusse des Schuljahres 1915–16 durch den Direktor Dr. Franz Riedl* (Gottschee: K. K. Staatsgymnasium, 1916), 5.

donated to war widows, orphans, and invalids.⁵⁶ Through newspaper advertisements, he offered assistance to refugees from the Gorizia region who had to leave their homes because of the opening of the Isonzo Front between Austria-Hungary and Italy. He made his houses, stables, and land available to the refugees, allowing them to bring livestock and take firewood for the winter at no cost. They were also offered work at one of his businesses.⁵⁷ He once sought a teacher who spoke Italian to teach a couple of boys,⁵⁸ presumably also from the Gorizia region. Although, as already mentioned, he managed to expand his business at the end of the war, he was forced to sell some of his belongings, including a pair of horses, due to a shortage of hay.⁵⁹

In 1918, Kajfež joyfully welcomed the establishment of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and was the first to raise the new national flag in Kočevje. He had a large barrel of wine brought into his yard and called out to the passing Slovenian miners: "Men, rejoice today! Let everyone who is Slovenian and sincerely welcomes the birth of our young country come here and drink to its health and happy future!"⁶⁰ Was this merely pragmatic opportunism, sincere humanitarianism, an outburst of true emotion after feigning Habsburg patriotism – or a bit of everything?

The Fourth Opposition: Kajfež the Nationalist Versus the Gottscheers

While Kajfež faced numerous enemies, his principal adversaries were certainly the members of the Gottscheer German community in Kočevje. Kajfež regarded himself as a staunch supporter of the Slovenian national cause, both in Austria-Hungary and in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Most of the projects he undertook aimed to strengthen the Slovenian community in Kočevje and the wider region. He was determined to wrest political and economic power from Gottscheer hands, and it seemed he was set to achieve his goal – at least for a while.

As is well known, the Kočevje region was a place of centuries-long cohabitation between Slavs – later Slovenians – and German immigrants known as Gottscheers. The Gottscheers, mostly workers, settled in the area in the 14th century. They mostly came from Carinthia at the initiative of the Ortenburg noble family, which owned vast forested estates because of the lack of Slavic inhabitants. Owing to their relatively compact settlement and the sparsely populated territory, the Gottscheers avoided assimilation into the Slavic environment, so that by the 19th century they had become the largest cohesive German community in Carniola. National tensions between Slovenians and Gottscheers intensified towards the end of the century. Although these struggles were most pronounced in Lower Styria, the phenomenon was also present in Carniola, with

⁵⁶ "Opfertage-Sammlung," *Gottscheer Bote*, 19 October 1916, 156.

⁵⁷ "Za goriške begunce," *Slovenec*, 13 September 1916, 5.

⁵⁸ "Išče se učiteljica," *Slovenec*, 30 September 1916, 9.

⁵⁹ "Radi pomanjkanja sena," *Slovenski narod*, 28 August 1917, 4.

⁶⁰ Zupanc, "Kočevska ob rojstvu Jugoslavije," 58.

the Kočevje region a major flashpoint. During this period, the Gottscheers benefited from their numerical superiority, as Slovenians in Kočevje and the surrounding area made up only a small share of the population. Political power was largely based on the economic development of the Gottscheers and the establishment of basic industries such as steam sawmills and glassworks, which the Slovenians could not compete with.⁶¹ In this context, Anton Kajfež's emergence in the economic life of Kočevje was a new development. He was among the first Slovenian industrialists to use his influence primarily to support the Slovenian side and their national struggle against the Germans.

As early as 1908, during the aforementioned Slovenian-German tensions, Kajfež responded to a report about a young German man who was visiting inns in Ljubljana and loudly criticising Slovenians as disloyal Austrian citizens. "I really do not like arguing with such young, inexperienced people, but when he started calling us apostates, as a loyal citizen, I could not resist telling him the truth," wrote Kajfež, pointing out that Gottscheers and their supporters were far more disloyal. "They accuse the Slovenians of apostasy, and the Germans in Kočevje are already making way for the 'Reich.'" At this point, Kajfež expressed more criticism of *Deutschtömler*s than of actual Gottscheers, arguing that true Germans were mostly peaceful. In this "pacifist" phase, Kajfež did not seek to have Gottscheers leave the region. Instead, he advocated peaceful coexistence: "One must live with the other, but each should keep his character to himself in peace."⁶²

In 1918, the situation changed dramatically. The Germans became a minority within the South Slavic monarchy and lost many of the privileges they had enjoyed under Austrian rule. Many emigrated abroad, so that by 1931, Slovenians, who had made up a fifth of the population in Kočevje according to the 1910 census, constituted two-thirds of the town's population.⁶³ Slovenian influence in the town was strengthened by the establishment of new institutions, largely funded by Kajfež's considerable capital. In 1919, Kajfež donated a plot of land for the construction of the Slovenian National Hall⁶⁴ and, in the same year, played an important role in founding the Kočevje Reading Society, which served as a counterweight to the German *Leseverein* society. Over time, he held several positions within the Reading Society, supplying it with fuel, wood, and furniture for its new headquarters in the Kočevje grammar school. As Kajfež emphasised, the equipment was intended "exclusively for national and non-partisan purposes and the development of the Slovenians of Kočevje."⁶⁵ Through skilful manoeuvring, the members of the Reading Society persuaded Kajfež to make even more generous donations. It was clear that the Reading Society's functioning depended largely on Kajfež's generosity. In return for his contributions, Kajfež was

61 Ivan Simonič, "Zgodovina mesta Kočevja in Kočevske," in Herman Kotar et al., eds., *500 let mesta Kočevje 1471–1971* (Kočevje: Skupščina občine, [1971]), 8–47.

62 A. Kajfež, "Poslano," 4.

63 Južnič, *Dvig iz pragozda*, 219.

64 "Pismo iz Kočevja," *Domovina*, 21 March 1919, 5. "V Kočevju," *Jugoslavija*, 5 August 1919, 4.

65 Južnič, "Razvoj kočevske čitalnice," 177.

appointed an honorary member of the society.⁶⁶ Through his financial influence, and that of his relatives (his brother Josip became a member of the Reading Society in 1925) and friends,⁶⁷ Kajfež remained its most important member.

In the years that followed, the system established by the Reading Society became a widespread *modus operandi*. Kajfež generously supported nearly every Slovenian society, industry, and financial institution in Kočevje. However, in return, he demanded not only respect, loyalty, and symbolic gifts, but also an unquestioned leadership role, with a touch of nepotism that involved appointing his family and friends – and, of course, himself – to key positions. After acquiring Czechoslovak capital, the board of the aforementioned Textilana company included Kajfež, his son Anton Jr., and Kajfež's influential friends from liberal political circles: Rihard Skubec, president of the Trbovlje Mining Company, and Avgust Praprotnik,⁶⁸ banker and vice-president of the Slavenska Bank in Zagreb. Since Kajfež insisted that money should not flow out of Kočevje, close ties between the City Savings Bank and the newly established Mercantile Bank were established early on. Thanks to his considerable influence, Kajfež ensured that, apart from himself, two of his brothers-in-law were appointed to the City Savings Bank's management: Ivan Salovic, lawyer and the mayor of Kočevje between 1924 and 1928, and the landowner Josip Ilc.⁶⁹ Due to Kajfež's considerable influence at the Mercantile Bank, the name "Kajfež Savings Bank" became established among locals.⁷⁰ Although Kajfež was influential in the municipality of Kočevje, he did not hold any official political office. In 1927, however, he was elected to the county board for the Kočevje judicial district.⁷¹

On the surface – and likely in Kajfež's honest belief as well – these actions were intended to strengthen Slovenian economic and, by extension, political influence in Kočevje, removing power from Gottscheer hands once and for all. It was one of the strongest economic nationalist movements in interwar Yugoslavia, notable for being led by a single man with his own capital. Kajfež systematically employed hundreds of Slovenian workers in his steam sawmill and wood industry, attempting to alter the area's demographic composition by recruiting migrant workers. Projects such as Textilana and Mercantile Bank were established to attract workers from Slovenian regions. "Our people can make a good living at home," he emphasised.⁷² Similar reasoning underpinned Kajfež's other economic ventures, such as the Timber Section of the Society of Industrialists in 1920:

66 Ibidem, 178.

67 Ibid., 180.

68 "Tekstilana, tvornica suknja d. d. v Kočevju," *Trgovski list*, 4 December 1923, 3.

69 "Propad dveh kočevskih denarnih zavodov pred sodiščem," *Slovenec*, 16 June 1937, 7. "Kočevske težave in njih krivci," *Slovenski dom*, 8 July 1939, 3.

70 "Propad dveh kočevskih denarnih zavodov pred sodiščem," *Slovenec*, 17 June 1937, 7. "Kočevske težave in njih krivci," *Slovenski dom*, 8 July 1939, 3.

71 "Volitve v okrajni odbor," *Slovenec*, 29 April 1927, 5.

72 A. Kajfež, "Naš les, I," 4.

As wood industrialists, we organised ourselves without forming a cartel. First of all, it is our responsibility to protect our businesses from the influx of foreigners who quickly recognised the value of our resources. In particular, we focused on exporting our industry's products directly, without the involvement of foreign companies, as was the case before the war, when several Italian and other companies reaped the largest profits from our land, while the locals were left with barely a gnawed bone.⁷³

Because of the sheer number of projects Kajfež undertook, sympathetic observers credited him with the boom in the region's Slovenian economy, which he, it seemed, had created with his own hands. There were a few attempts to curb his power, such as the 1922 affair involving the City Savings Bank, in which Kajfež's political enemies triggered a bank run,⁷⁴ but for a while nothing could topple him – until he decided to do it himself.

The Fifth Opposition: Kajfež Versus Himself

Kajfež, like his sons Anton Jr. and Milan, who took over most of the company's operations in the mid-1920s, had to take out large loans to run the enterprise, which had begun to collapse under its own weight from the early 1920s. In 1923, debts exceeded the company's assets for the first time. By 1926, the debt had reached almost 20 million dinars, with an additional two million in interest. The Kajfež family mainly borrowed from the Mercantile Bank, over which they naturally exerted significant influence. Although the management of the City Savings Bank in Kočevje decided in 1923 that it could not invest more than 3 million dinars in the Mercantile Bank, it broke this rule when Kajfež became influential in the Kočevje municipality and, in turn, in the Savings Bank. Ultimately, the bank received 7 million dinars from the Savings Bank, which it invested in Kajfež and his sons' business projects.⁷⁵ When the first cracks appeared in Kajfež's empire in the mid-1920s, members of the bank's board began to demand that Kajfež settle his debts. The situation worsened in 1927, when the Mercantile Bank encountered financial difficulties.⁷⁶ These were not yet caused by Kajfež's debts, but by the significant influence that the Zagreb-based Slavenska Bank exerted over the bank through the aforementioned Avgust Praprotnik. Slavenska Bank, which had been one of the strongest and most ambitious banks in the country for much of the 1920s, ran into serious problems due to errors in its internal operations, ultimately leading to its bankruptcy in 1927, to the dismay of Yugoslav business circles.⁷⁷ Along with it, many banks that depended on it also got into trouble,

73 Ibid.

74 "Kočevje," *Radikal*, 1 July 1922, 3. "Iz Kočevja," *Slovenski narod*, 18 July 1922, 3. "Kočevje," *Radikal*, 22 July 1922, 2.

75 "Propad dveh kočevskih denarnih zavodov pred sodiščem," *Slovenec*, 16 June 1937, 7.

76 "Proces o Kajfeževi imovini," *Slovenec*, 15 March 1932, 3.

77 Lojz Tršan, "Propad Slavenske banke – največji finančni šok med obema vojnama v Sloveniji," *Borec* 46, No. 529–31 (1994): 368–74.

including the Mercantile Bank. However, Slovenian newspapers tended to blame the Gottscheers' scheming against the bank as the main reason for its problems, since they were establishing their own Sparkasse during that period.⁷⁸

When problems arose in the timber trade in 1926 and 1927, the first doubts emerged about the liquidity of the Mercantile Bank; at that time, Kajfež owed it 14 million dinars. This was not yet considered a problem by the creditors, who estimated the value of Kajfež's company to be at least 25 million dinars. Mercantile Bank's largest creditors – mainly other banks – formed a consortium and reached an agreement with the bank's administration to liquidate the bank. This brought further attention to Kajfež's financial difficulties. Kajfež, who had not attended the bank's meetings for years, assured them that he was facing only temporary financial problems, although he already knew he would have to file for bankruptcy. Based on these assurances, the consortium decided that Kajfež's company should also be saved. To reorganise the company, the consortium planned to sell part of the entrepreneur's assets, close the unprofitable branches, and generate profits from the wine and timber trade to cover the debts. Matters became complicated because Kajfež demanded extremely high prices for his land, while his sons paid themselves 600,000 dinars from their father's fortune for their assistance with the work.⁷⁹ According to another account, at the end of 1927, the surprised creditors discovered that the information in the company's books was false.⁸⁰ The question of whether embezzlement had occurred was debated for a long time. Only a decade later did the main evidence of embezzlement surface, in the form of a letter that Josip Ilc allegedly wrote to one of Kajfež's sons on 7 December 1925, warning him to ensure that all efforts to "correct" the trade books would not be in vain.⁸¹ In any case, an unpleasant realisation came to light that had not previously been considered: Kajfež & Co. did not have enough assets to cover its debts.⁸²

Once the full extent of Kajfež's debts became known, events unfolded rapidly. In early 1928, outraged creditors petitioned the Novo Mesto District Court to declare Kajfež's company bankrupt, but the court rejected the petition. Bankruptcy proceedings began only after the Ljubljana District Court issued a decision on 24 February 1928.⁸³ Heated debates in the press pitted Kajfež's supporters against his opponents. The local Kočevje Slovenian newspaper *Nova samouprava* expressed support and claimed:

The bankruptcy of the large company A. Kajfež Kočevje has recently surprised the Slovenian, Croatian, and, in part, the Czech public. It also surprised the owner himself, who made significant personal sacrifices in August to ensure the complete security of several financial institutions, to keep his companies active and profitable for

78 "Kočevje," *Nova samouprava*, 15 February 1929, 3–4. "Kočevski Mestni zastop in sanacija Mestne hranilnice," *Nova samouprava*, 15 April 1929, 1–2. "Kočevske težave in njih krivci," *Slovenski dom*, 3 July 1939, 4. Peter Šobar, "Kočevska v boju za svobodo (3)," *Dolenjski list*, 17 June 1965, 6.

79 "Propad dveh kočevskih denarnih zavodov pred sodiščem," *Slovenec*, 17 June 1937, 7.

80 "Proces o Kajfeževi imovini," *Slovenec*, 15 March 1932, 3.

81 "Propad dveh kočevskih denarnih zavodov pred sodiščem," *Slovenec*, 17 June 1937, 7.

82 "Odmev kočevske gospodarske katastrofe," *Jutro*, 13 July 1939, 5.

83 "Konkurzni oklic," *Uradni list ljubljanske in mariborske oblasti*, 29 February 1928, 131.

about 10 million Dinars, without having to squander substantial assets or dismantle the well-established economic organisation that this company managed to build over its 70 years of existence in three parts of the world.⁸⁴

Similarly, the liberal newspaper *Jutro*, Kajfež's political ally and defender, and the conservative newspaper *Slovenec*, which sharply criticised Kajfež, debated for several days the legitimate reasons for (not) filing for bankruptcy. *Jutro* argued that the bankruptcy filing had a political background, as some creditors sought to destroy the company, even though this was not in their financial interest.⁸⁵ *Slovenec* countered that the Novo Mesto court refused to open bankruptcy proceedings because official data showed that Kajfež's company was liquid, but the newspaper claimed that the value of the company's assets (industrial facilities, houses, land, forests, fields, goods, movable assets, shares of Mercantile Bank and Textilana) was significantly overestimated.⁸⁶ Therefore, it argued, the company was in fact indebted. The newspaper also accused *Jutro* of relying on a court case that had not yet been concluded. At the same time, it stressed that it made no sense to speak of a political background, since the creditors, who unanimously approved the bankruptcy petition, belonged to various parties, including sympathisers of Kajfež. Therefore, the creditors were acting purely pragmatically, with the intention of preserving their claims, regardless of political considerations, and they were rightly concerned because Kajfež's debts exceeded his assets.⁸⁷ *Jutro* closed the debate by emphasising that, contrary to sensationalist reports, Kajfež's company did not face payment difficulties and that *Slovenec* was deliberately distorting the truth. The newspaper noted that the City Savings Bank in Kočevje had recently appointed a new *gerent* (head of the city administration), Avgust Bercieri, primarily to unite the creditors in filing for bankruptcy. The creditors were therefore "victims who want to be victims only by force, although there are ample opportunities for rescue".⁸⁸

In parallel with the first bankruptcy proceedings, a criminal investigation into Kajfež's responsibility for falsifying accounting records was launched in March 1928. As a result, Kajfež was forced to resign from most positions on the boards of local companies. He resigned from the Mercantile Bank's board of directors as early as December 1927,⁸⁹ from the Lower Carniolan Railway's board of directors in March 1928,⁹⁰ and from the Textilana board of directors in May. He had already been dismissed as a board member at the December 1927 meeting and received a substantial severance payment.⁹¹

84 "Konkurz veletrrdke A. Kajfež Kočevje," *Nova samouprava*, 15 March 1928, 3.

85 "K otvoritvi konkurza nad tvrdko Anton Kajfež v Kočevju," *Jutro*, 3 March 1928, 5.

86 "K otvoritvi konkurza A. Kajfež, Kočevje," *Slovenec*, 4 March 1928, 11.

87 "K otvoritvi konkurza A. Kajfež," *Slovenec*, 9 March 1928, 8.

88 "K otvoritvi konkurza A. Kajfež, Kočevje," *Jutro*, 13 March 1928, 5. See also: "Izmenjava gerenta pri mestni hranilnici kočevski," *Nova samouprava*, 15 March 1928, 3.

89 "Vpisi v trgovinski register," *Uradni list ljubljanske in mariborske oblasti*, 28 December 1927, 874. "Konkurz veletrrdke A. Kajfež Kočevje," *Nova samouprava*, 15 March 1928, 3.

90 "Vpisi v trgovinski register," *Uradni list ljubljanske in mariborske oblasti*, 3 April 1928, 224.

91 Kresal, "Tekstilana," 18.

Nevertheless, Kajfež remained unwilling to acknowledge his overindebtedness. His company appealed against the Ljubljana court's decision to initiate bankruptcy proceedings (in this, Kajfež was also supported by the City Savings Bank, which considered the initiation of bankruptcy a breach of contract between the consortium and Kajfež's company). The company's appeal to the highest judicial body, the Table of Seven (*Stol sedmorice*) in Zagreb, was successful, and the bankruptcy proceedings were terminated as unfounded on 16 April 1928.⁹² The company's creditors did not accept this and again applied to the court in Novo Mesto for bankruptcy. This time, the court agreed with them, and on 5 May, Kajfež's bankruptcy was reopened.⁹³ Only four days later, Kajfež officially resigned from managing his company, so that A. Kajfež & Co. was now officially managed by his sons, Anton Jr. and Milan.⁹⁴ Although the company managed to temporarily delay the bankruptcy proceedings with another appeal, the bankruptcy was finally and unequivocally initiated on 10 July 1928.⁹⁵ By the end of the same year, the bankruptcy administrator calculated that Kajfež's company had just under 10 million dinars in assets and 33 million in debts, meaning that creditors could at best receive less than 30% of their claims.⁹⁶ At the same time, the headquarters of A. Kajfež & Co. was moved to the coastal town of Sušak, the final stop of his never-built railway; only the branch remained in Kočevje.⁹⁷

The collapse of Kajfež's company in 1928 had significant consequences for Kočevje. Even at the outset of the affair, *Jutro* reported with concern: "The bankruptcy has caused a severe depression in the city and its surroundings, especially among the workers. When the factories come to a standstill, more than 120 people will be out of work in the wood industry alone."⁹⁸ With the demise of Kajfež's company, the main financier of the local Slovenian economy, Slovenian influence in Kočevje declined. Due to the close interconnection of all economic institutions in Kočevje, both the Mercantile Bank, already weakened by Slavenska Bank's bankruptcy, and the City Savings Bank were severely affected by Kajfež's collapse. The Slovenians of Kočevje admitted that "we have lost the large-scale industry in the town, which was our hope and pride" and that "the Slovenians in Kočevje are, in fact, just colonists again, almost worse off than before the war."⁹⁹ As Gottscheers repeatedly highlighted the severe economic consequences of the bankruptcy for Slovenians, especially in *Gottscheer Zeitung* and at rallies, Slovenians responded with a popular rally, at which Ivan Sajovic explained in detail to the assembled crowd the complex circumstances that led to the bankruptcy – blaming the Germans rather than himself or Kajfež, of course.¹⁰⁰

92 "Odprava konkurza," *Uradni list ljubljanske in mariborske oblasti*, 23 April 1928, 254. "Konkurz na trdiko A. Kajfež Kočevje," *Nova samouprava*, 15 April 1928, 2.

93 "Konkurzni oklic," *Uradni list ljubljanske in mariborske oblasti*, 19 May 1928, 337.

94 "Vpisi v trgovinski register," *Uradni list ljubljanske in mariborske oblasti*, 5 June 1928, 386.

95 "Konkurzni oklic," *Uradni list ljubljanske in mariborske oblasti*, 14 July 1928, 471.

96 "Proces o Kajfeževi imovini," *Slovenec*, 15 March 1932, 3.

97 "Vpisi v trgovinski register," *Uradni list ljubljanske in mariborske oblasti*, 3 January 1929, 8.

98 "K otvoritvi konkurza A. Kajfež, Kočevje," *Jutro*, 7 March 1928, 5.

99 "Konec največje slovenske trdke na Dolenjskem," *Nova samouprava*, 15 May 1929, 2.

100 "Javni ljudski shod o gospodarskih prilikah v Kočevju," *Nova samouprava*, 15 June 1928, 4–6.

Gottscheers, particularly their peasant party (*Gottscheer Bauernpartei*), celebrated the bankruptcy as a major victory over the Slovenian community. *Jutro* reported: "As for the political background of this bankruptcy, our informant tells us that only members of one party are enthusiastic about it, and they even express their joy in public places."¹⁰¹ While Gottscheers were not the main cause of Kajfež's collapse, they still acted as if they had delivered the final blow. This interpretation was readily adopted by Slovenians and promoted in numerous articles in the local newspaper *Nova samouprava*. "Our town will pay a damn high price for these infernal plans of a small clique in Kočevje who seek only their own advantage and do not consider themselves part of the community," a journalist wrote.¹⁰² The belief that Gottscheers, through clandestine activities and systematic agitation against Slovenian institutions, were chiefly responsible for the collapse – motivated by a desire to undermine the local Slovenian economy and, by extension, politics – became firmly established among both the Slovenians of Kočevje and the Gottscheers. The two national groups, which could not agree on anything, were for once in agreement, even though available documentation shows that their shared belief was, at least in part, inconsistent with the reality of the situation. Despite this apparent consensus on the causes of the bankruptcy, the most significant difference lay in how each group perceived the consequences, which remained fundamentally opposed.

Slovenians could not prevent new problems from arising, and in June 1928, the City Savings Bank, which had operated since 1882, stopped paying out savings deposits, largely because of its earlier involvement with the liquidated Mercantile Bank.¹⁰³ An even greater blow came in July, during the municipal elections, when German nationalist candidates won half the mandates in Kočevje and, with the support of members of the conservative Slovenian People's Party, took control of the municipality from the local Slovenian representatives of the Radical Party. *Nova samouprava* linked the defeat to the demoralising effects of the severely depressed Slovenian economy and portrayed it as the final act of the Gottscheers' devious plan:¹⁰⁴ "It is obvious that the Germans favour the destruction of Slovenian enterprises in Kočevje. Some are even so embittered that they want state offices to disappear as well, especially from the Kočevje grammar school [...]. So it is no wonder that the die-hard supporters' constant cry was: '*Die Firma Kajfež muss von Gottes Erdboden verschwinden!*' ["The Kajfež Company must be erased from the face of God!"]"¹⁰⁵

The Slovenian belief that the Gottscheers were the true masterminds behind the collapse benefited Kajfež to some extent, as accusations of falsifying trade books receded into the background. He increasingly appeared to be a victim of German machinations. Nevertheless, his reputation suffered further in September 1928 when his driver accidentally ran over and killed cyclist Franc Habič, the manager of the Karl

101 "K otvoritvi konkurza A. Kajfež, Kočevje," *Jutro*, 7 March 1928, 5.

102 Notus, "Križi in težave mesta Kočevje," *Nova samouprava*, 15 April 1929, 2.

103 "Hude reči," *Slovenec*, 22 June 1928, 5. "Propad dveh kočevskih denarnih zavodov pred sodiščem," *Slovenec*, 16 June 1937, 7.

104 "Vprašanje kočevskih Slovencev," *Nova samouprava*, 15 July 1928, 1–2.

105 "Konec največje slovenske trdke na Dolenjskem," *Nova samouprava*, 15 May 1929, 1.

Pollak leather factory in Ljubljana.¹⁰⁶ Kajfež's brother-in-law, Josip Ilc, attempted to mitigate the damage by stating that the car belonged to the bankruptcy estate and was no longer Kajfež's property, and that the bankruptcy trustee was legally and materially responsible for the damage caused.¹⁰⁷

In the spring and summer of 1929, Kajfež's property was sold at public auctions. The press criticised the alleged undervaluation of the property, particularly the timber, fuelling suspicions that the bankruptcy's initiators were secretly seeking financial gain.¹⁰⁸ In addition to the timber and forest properties, Kajfež's villa, with all its furnishings (including an extensive wine cellar), and his sawmill, with its entire inventory, were auctioned.¹⁰⁹ In July, the City Savings Bank, the de facto owner of the bankrupt estate, began converting the former Skyscraper into offices and workers' apartments. Finally, the municipality of Kočevje, then still under Gottscheer control, bought all the buildings for sale from the City Savings Bank, including the villa and the sawmill¹¹⁰ (which, however, was closed in 1931 due to the economic crisis that severely affected the timber industry). The Slovenian press interpreted the transaction with disappointment as "a Herostratian act from a national standpoint"¹¹¹ and a new defeat for the Slovenians of Kočevje. Some time later, the sawmill in Crni Lug and the Kajfež family villa in Opatija were also auctioned.¹¹²

At the end of October 1929, the Novo Mesto District Court began proceedings against Josip Ilc, the former authorised signatory of the Kajfež company, who was accused of falsifying commercial records. The prosecution alleged that Ilc sold the company's timber stock to various buyers in April 1928, when the company was already insolvent and on the verge of bankruptcy, thereby causing creditors damage of 571,000 dinars and attempting to delay payment.¹¹³ As Anton Kajfež Jr. testified in court, he and his brother Milan were unaware of these events. They worked at the company until the bankruptcy trustee dismissed them a month after the bankruptcy proceedings began.¹¹⁴

The proceedings were suspended and did not resume until March 1932, when the Kajfež brothers appeared before the judge as owners of Kajfež & Co. They were charged with fraudulent bankruptcy and fraud, and their father was also suspected but avoided trial based on a medical certificate.¹¹⁵ After the 61-page indictment was read, the brothers were interrogated¹¹⁶ and assured the court that they had in no way influenced the misrepresentation of the company's financial position. Then the director of the Trbovlje

106 "Dve hudi avtomobilski nesreči v Ljubljani," *Jutro*, 20 September 1928, 3.

107 "Kdo je zakrivil avtomobilsko nesrečo," *Jutro*, 22 September 1928, 4.

108 Notus, "Križi in težave mesta Kočevje," 2.

109 "Okrog 180 parcel na dražbi," *Slovenec*, 6 April 1929, 4.

110 "Kočevsko pismo," *Jutro*, 13 July 1929, 3.

111 "Konec največje slovenske tvrdke na Dolenjskem," *Nova samouprava*, 15 May 1929, 1.

112 Ludvik Grobelnik, "Ofertalna prodaja parne žage," *Jutro*, 29 January 1930, 7. Ludvik Grobelnik, "Dražba vile v Opatiji," *Jutro*, 7 August 1931, 5.

113 "Odmevi Kajfeževega konkurza," *Slovenec*, 26 October 1929, 2.

114 "Novomeški proces," *Slovenec*, 27 October 1929, 2.

115 "Proces o Kajfeževi imovini," *Slovenec*, 15 March 1932, 3.

116 "Velika sodna razprava v Novem mestu," *Jutro*, 15 March 1932, 2.

Mining Company, Rihard Skubec, was questioned. He testified that he considered Kajfež's loans at the Mercantile Bank excessive but did not believe the Kajfež family lived lavishly.¹¹⁷ The questioning of two court experts produced conflicting opinions on exactly when the company became insolvent.¹¹⁸ After a week-long discussion, the verdict was announced: the Kajfež brothers were acquitted. The court assumed – though the assumption is controversial – that the company was solvent at least until 1926, so there could be no question of criminal liability before that year, nor could it be proven that false entries were made in the trade books, since all the books have been preserved, or that the brothers induced their father to “cook” the books in any way.¹¹⁹

However, the court proceedings were not yet concluded. In 1936, the liquidation of the City Savings Bank began, during which angry creditors, in vain, demanded payment of their claims and punishment of those responsible for the disaster. Among the major creditors was the bankruptcy estate in Kajfež's second bankruptcy proceeding,¹²⁰ which finally concluded on 20 November 1936 with the distribution of available funds to creditors.¹²¹ In June 1937, a court hearing began regarding the collapse of the City Savings Bank and the Mercantile Bank. Both institutions were in liquidation and therefore in poor financial condition. At the end of Kajfež's bankruptcy, Mercantile Bank received only 960,000 dinars from the estate, despite having requested 16 million,¹²² while City Savings Bank, which had a debt of 26 million dinars, had only two to three million dinars remaining (even though its representatives insisted that investors would be fully repaid once the rehabilitation plan was implemented).¹²³ According to the liquidators of the City Savings Bank, the entire disaster stemmed from exceeding the limit on the amount of Savings Bank funds held at the Mercantile Bank, which, as noted, had risen from 3 to 7 million dinars under Kajfež's influence. The liquidators filed a lawsuit against four City Savings Bank employees (including Josip Ilc and Ivan Sajovic, but not Kajfež), seeking 1,5 million dinars.¹²⁴ The defendants argued that the bankruptcy of Kajfež's company could have been avoided, as its continued operation would eventually generate sufficient funds to pay all debts, but the plaintiffs insisted that it was extremely unprofitable.¹²⁵ In July 1939, the court ruled that the four had to pay compensation of 1,4 million dinars because they should have been aware that they were breaking regulations by investing excessively in the Mercantile Bank and were taking a great risk by tying all their capital to a single bank.¹²⁶

117 “Proces Kajfež v Novem mestu,” *Jutro*, 16 March 1932, 2.

118 “Kajfežev proces končan,” *Jutro*, 19 March 1932, 2.

119 “Oprostilna razsodba v Kajfeževem procesu,” *Jutro*, 22 March 1932, 2.

120 “Likvidacija kočevske hranilnice,” *Jutro*, 25 February 1936, 5.

121 “Odprava konkurza,” *Službeni list Kraljevske banske uprave Dravske banovine*, 28 November 1936, 569.

122 “Kdo bo plačal 26 milijonov? Resnica v zadevi Mestne hranilnice v Kočevju,” *Slovenski dom*, 24 April 1937, 3.

123 Mestna hranilnica v Kočevju, “Za vlagatelje kočevske Mestne hranilnice,” *Domoljub*, 12 October 1938, 6.

124 “Propad dveh kočevskih denarnih zavodov pred sodiščem,” *Slovenec*, 16 June 1937, 7. “Važna razsodba za vlagatelje kočevske ‘Mestne hranilnice,’” *Slovenski dom*, 16 September 1938, 3. “Važna razsodba za vlagatelje kočevske Mestne hranilnice,” *Slovenski dom*, 26 September 1938, 2.

125 “Propad dveh kočevskih denarnih zavodov pred sodiščem,” *Slovenec*, 17 June 1937, 7.

126 “Odmev kočevske gospodarske katastrofe,” *Jutro*, 4 June 1939, 2. “Kočevske težave in njih krivci,” *Slovenski dom*, 3 July 1939, 4.

The history of the Kajfež company officially ended on 21 April 1939, when it was removed from the commercial register for abandonment of trade.¹²⁷ The following month, a public auction of real estate owned by the town of Kočevje took place, including a large part of Kajfež's bankruptcy estate ("the entire city forest, meadows, arable land, gardens, building plots, the municipal hall, the former Kajfež sawmill with a large residential building, old mills with a turbine and water power, a city bath, and more"), appraised at 5,1 million dinars. The municipality, as mentioned above, had bought the property from the Kajfež bankruptcy estate in 1929, but had to take out a 4-million-dinar loan and did not repay it on time, so the property was re-auctioned. It was bought by the Ljubljana City Savings Bank (Mestna hranilnica ljubljanska), a Slovenian financial institution, for just over 3,2 million dinars.¹²⁸ Thus, after the collapse of the Kajfež company, the City Savings Bank and the Mercantile Bank, the last domino fell: the municipality of Kočevje. The destruction of the Kočevje network built by and around Kajfež was complete.

Conclusion

The period from 1927 onwards was difficult for the Slovenians of Kočevje. With the decline of Kajfež's company, both the entrepreneur's political influence in local affairs and the capital he used to finance almost all Slovenian institutions in the region disappeared. Kajfež's withdrawal coincided with the onset of the great economic crisis, resulting in mass unemployment among the local population and often leading to shortages and hunger. In addition, a fire destroyed the main Textilana building in 1935. The collapse was reflected in steeper prices for all services: electricity in Kočevje was the most expensive in the region, and water became so expensive that even the railway preferred to buy it in Ortnek, more than 20 kilometres north of Kočevje.¹²⁹ Contemporary accounts claimed that hardship led many to submit to the Gottscheers, who once again dominated the local economy: "For the Kočevje Slovenians, the days of unemployment, poverty, hunger and countless other woes have begun. In today's desperate times, this often destroys our people's sense of awareness and responsibility towards the nation to which the abandoned Kočevje Slovenians belong, so it is not at all strange if they willingly or unwillingly sink into the mire of systematic assimilation."¹³⁰ Multiple newspaper articles and exposés examined the complex events of the last decade, playing generals after the battle by explaining what should have been done rather than what actually happened, and tried to blame their opponents – whether Gottscheers or Slovenians of different political affiliations – for the disaster.¹³¹

127 "Izbrisale so se nastopne firme," *Službeni list Kraljevske banske uprave Dravske banovine*, 10 May 1939, 236.

128 "Premoženje mesta Kočevja je bilo na dražbi prodano za 3,225.000 din," *Slovenski dom*, 4 May 1939, 2. "Kočevske težave in njih krivci," *Slovenski dom*, 8 July 1939, 3.

129 "Propad dveh kočevskih denarnih zavodov pred sodiščem," *Slovenec*, 16 June 1937, 7.

130 Zupanc, "Kočevska ob rojstvu Jugoslavije," 59.

131 "Kočevske težave in njih krivci," *Slovenski dom*, 3 July 1939, 4. "Odmev kočevske gospodarske katastrofe," *Jutro*, 13 July 1939, 5.

Although Kajfež faced accusations of abuse and manipulation of the local community, nepotism, business fraud, exploitation of workers, war profiteering, and more, the image of a nationally progressive, father-figure entrepreneur who systematically and thoughtfully used his considerable capital for Slovenian economic progress – until the Gottscheers prevented him from doing so – persisted among the Kočevje Slovenians. Kajfež spent World War I in Ljubljana, working as an innkeeper at his own inn. In 1943, he even advertised his intention to purchase woodland on behalf of a prospective buyer.¹³² After the war, the new authorities expropriated Kajfež but allowed him to retain the Ljubljana inn.¹³³ He lived to see the Gottscheers leave the Kočevje region during the war and the expulsion of those who remained from Yugoslavia after the war. His views on these events are unknown. He died in February 1954 and was interred at Žale cemetery in Ljubljana. A brief obituary summarised his turbulent life with the simple description that the deceased was “a former innkeeper and merchant”.¹³⁴

Kajfež's life ended in obscurity, although he had been a well-known name in the newspapers decades earlier. His story is that of a merchant's rise and fall, best understood in the context of economic nationalism: he did everything in his power to strengthen the local Slovenian economy to overcome the Gottscheer influence, and in doing so, he could be unscrupulous, thereby attracting animosity from other merchants, his workers, and political opponents. His pursuit of the ideal of a Slovenianised Kočevje led to his downfall. While lengthy newspaper articles and analyses have been written about the main, or “true”, culprit behind his company's bankruptcy, it seems undeniable that overspending and borrowing money from financial institutions over which he had significant influence were important, if not crucial, factors. Although the Gottscheers were often blamed for his downfall – and they readily accepted this interpretation, wearing it as a badge of pride – their influence on the bankruptcy was perhaps not as significant as many believed. The same can be said of Kajfež's Slovenian political and economic opponents. Kajfež & Co. is therefore an unusual case of somewhat faux economic nationalism – a façade of it. While his contemporaries agreed that nationalist opposition was the reason for the company's destruction – at a time when the Austro-Hungarian era of such economic struggles was already long past – the economic nationalist framework does not automatically mean that the opposition was entirely to blame for the downfall. An entrepreneur can be perfectly capable of causing his own ruin.

132 “Gozd se kupi!,” *Domovina in Kmetiski list*, 19 August 1943, 8.

133 Južnič, *Dvig iz pragozda*, 198.

134 “Umrli so v Ljubljani,” *Ljudska pravica*, 14 February 1954, 7.

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**MNOGI BOJI ANTONA KAJFEŽA:
VZPON IN PADEC KOČEVSKEGA TRGOVCA S POLITIČNE
TER GOSPODARSKE PERSPEKTIVE**

POVZETEK

Članek obravnava primer kočevskega podjetnika Antona Kajfeža, aktivnega v prvi četrtini 20. stoletja. Kariero je ambiciozno začel kot trgovec z vinom in gostilničar, kasneje pa se je razširil na lesno trgovino. Svoje podjetje je razvil v eno največjih na Dolenjskem, sam pa je postal premožen veleposestnik. Pred prvo svetovno vojno in po njej je v Kočevju soorganiziral in financiral vrsto projektov, namenjenih političnemu in gospodarskemu napredku kraja, od novih industrijskih obratov in finančnih ustanov do nastanitve za delavstvo. Kot zagreti pripadnik slovenskega tabora si je z vsemi projekti prizadeval za slovenizacijo Kočevja in odvzem dolgoletne gospodarske ter politične prevlade iz rok Kočevarjev, ki so zaradi številčnosti in gospodarske razvitosti obvladovali Kočevsko.

Pri tem početju si je Kajfež nakopal številne nasprotnike. Kritizirali so ga poslovni konkurenti, ki so mu očitali malverzacije iz vojnega časa. Ostro ga je napadal delavski tisk, saj naj bi bil izrazito izkoriščevalski in krut do lastnih delavcev. Ker se je družil s slovenskimi liberalci, so mu očitali tudi izkoriščanje vezi in poznanstev z vplivnimi politiki. Kajfež je v Kočevju ustvaril gosto mrežo slovenskih ustanov, ki so bile odvisne od njegovega kapitala. Zaradi tega od njih ni zahteval le simbolnih izkazov lojalnosti, temveč je postal tudi nosilec številnih funkcij, tako kot njegovi družinski člani in vplivni prijatelji iz vrst kočevskega gospodarstva in politike.

Naraščajoči obseg in s tem nepreglednost Kajfeževega podjetja sta vodila do vse večjih posojil pri kočevskih finančnih ustanovah, kjer je podjetnik zaradi svojega vpliva lahko izposloval prekomerna posojila. V letih 1926 in 1927 je prišlo do prvih opaznejših razpok, pri čemer se je izkazalo, da je Kajfeževo podjetje globoko zadolženo, zato je šlo leta 1928 v stečaj. Temu je sledilo desetletje sodnih postopkov, med katerimi se je ugotavljalo, kdo je kriv za polom, ki je za seboj potegnil tudi tako rekoč celotno slovensko infrastrukturo v Kočevju in kočevske Slovence znova pahnil v Kočevarjem podrejeni položaj. Čeprav je zadolževanje družine Kajfež pri stečaju igralo pomembno vlogo, so se tako kočevski Slovenci kot Kočevjarji strinjali, da so polom povzročili Kočevjarji – Slovenci zato, da bi prevalili krivdo, Kočevjarji pa so si lastili zasluge za zmago v nacionalnem boju. Primer propada podjetja Kajfež & Co. je zato primer gospodarskega poloma s hudimi posledicami za celotno regijo, ki je na prvi pogled posledica bojev v okviru ekonomskega nacionalizma, četudi je šlo predvsem za primer slabega poslovanja.

Oliver Pejić*

“Foreign” Businesspeople and Economic Nationalism in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes: Cases from the Maribor Oblast (1922–1929)

IZVLEČEK

»INOZEMNI« PODJETNIKI IN EKONOMSKI NACIONALIZEM V KRALJEVINI SRBOV, HRVATOV IN SLOVENCEV: PRIMERI IZ MARIBORSKE OBLASTI (1922–1929)

Pričujoči prispevek obravnava vlogo ekonomskega nacionalizma v upravni praksi medvojne jugoslovanske države na primeru prošenj tujih državljanov za obrtna dovoljenja v Mariborski oblasti. Po kratkem pregledu relevantne zakonodaje in upravnih struktur se prispevek osredotoča tako na prisotnost nacionalističnega diskurza kot tudi na splošne omembe narodnosti v upravnem postopku. Raziskava ugotavlja, da je narodnostna pripadnost igrala pomembno diskurzivno vlogo v upravnem postopanju s tujimi državljani v medvojni jugoslovanski državi. Čeprav so uradniki narodnost razumeli tako v biološkem (»po rojstvu«) kot tudi v družbenem/ideološkem smislu (»po prepričanju«), so bili zainteresirani predvsem za njeno izražanje v obliki empirično preverljivih praks in vzorcev obnašanja. Raziskava obenem kaže, da se deklarativna pomembnost narodnosti v upravnem postopku

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ni dejansko odražala v praktičnih izidih posameznih prošenj. Ministrstvo za trgovino in industrijo v Beogradu je tako v imenu mednarodne vzajemnosti pogosto podeljevalo koncesije tudi kandidatom, ki so jih negativno ocenile lokalne oblasti.

Ključne besede: Kraljevina SHS, ekonomski nacionalizem, Jugoslavija, državljanstvo, Štajerska

ABSTRACT

The present paper discusses the role of economic nationalism in the interwar Yugoslav state's administrative practice by examining petitions for business permits filed by foreign citizens in the Maribor Oblast. After outlining the relevant legislation and administrative structures, the paper focuses on the presence of nationalist discourse as well as general references to nationality within the administrative process. The study shows that national belonging played an important discursive role in the administrative treatment of foreign businesspeople in the interwar Yugoslav state. While officials understood national belonging in both biological ("by birth") as well as social/ideological terms ("by conviction"), they were primarily interested in its manifestation as empirically verifiable practices and behaviours. All the while, the study shows that the declarative importance of nationhood did not translate into the practical outcomes of individual petitions. In the name of international reciprocity, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in Belgrade regularly awarded business licenses to candidates whose petitions were negatively assessed by the local authorities.

Keywords: Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, economic nationalism, Yugoslavia, citizenship, Styria

Introduction

The question of how economic policy should look like in a properly "national" state had been part of a wider dilemma faced by Central and Eastern European statesmen after dynastic authority in the region came to be abruptly replaced by national sovereignty in the wake of the Great War.¹ Like in so many other post-imperial nation-states that had made up the region's political map, economic policy in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was likewise importantly shaped by principles of economic

1 On the wider ramifications of this transition, see Natasha Wheatley, 'Central Europe as Ground Zero of the New International Order,' *Slavic Review* 78, No. 4 (2019): 900–11, <https://doi.org/10.1017/slr.2019.248>. Natasha Wheatley, *The Life and Death of States: Central Europe and the Transformation of Modern Sovereignty* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2023).

nationalism.² This discourse was particularly present in the state's former Habsburg provinces in the north. There, local economic elites were oftentimes aligned with German, Hungarian, or Italian nationalist projects, which had enjoyed local or, in the case of Hungary, state-level hegemony during the late Habsburg period.³ Since the new kingdom legitimized itself as a nation-state for the "triune" Serb, Croat and Slovene nation, there thus existed a strong expectation that the authorities should somehow support businesspeople who could claim membership in the state's titular nationality against their newly minoritized yet economically oftentimes dominant peers. In Klaus Richter's words, this was in effect a "project of national economic empowerment" intended to "enhance the economic agency of the core national group by taking it from those who had unfairly seized it".⁴

Despite public expectations (as well as anxieties) regarding a new "national" economic policy running high in the new Yugoslav state, practical economic policy did not ultimately lead to radical transformations in the perceived national makeup of the local economic sphere.⁵ Although a short period of "nostrification" had led to the seizure of assets belonging to foreign citizens in the early years of Yugoslav rule, state oversight could effectively be avoided by acquiring Yugoslav citizenship or establishing a majority "native" share in a company's ownership structure.⁶ While the authorities had

2 In this paper, the term "economic nationalism" is not used in its political-economic definition to refer to state-level protectionist economic policies. Instead, it refers to practices, behaviours and policies serving nationalist goals within the economic sphere. To borrow Torsten Lorenz's succinct definition, it entails "economic behavior intended to serve the unity, independence and strength of the nation, and which is determined by non-economic, political purposes". Torsten Lorenz, 'Introduction: Cooperatives in Ethnic Conflicts,' in Torsten Lorenz, ed., *Cooperatives in Ethnic Conflicts: Eastern Europe in the 19th and Early 20th Century*, Frankfurter Studien Zur Wirtschafts- Und Sozialgeschichte Ostmitteleuropas 15, European Social Science History Conference (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag GmbH, 2006), 9–10.

3 For a local case study on nationalist economic policy in Dualist Hungary, see Anders E. B. Blomqvist, *Economic Nationalizing in the Ethnic Borderlands of Hungary and Romania: Inclusion, Exclusion and Annihilation in Szatmár/Satu-Mare 1867–1944*, Stockholm Studies in History 101 (Stockholm: Stockholm University, 2014), 61–160. In Cisleithania, the pursuit of nationalist policy at the local level was most evident in the autonomous statutory towns, which fulfilled first-degree administrative responsibilities equivalent to that of district captaincies. Since their elected municipal councils often consisted of nationalists, the latter were able to use their administrative prerogatives to pursue nationalist goals at the local level. See Jeremy King, 'The Municipal and the National in the Bohemian Lands, 1848–1914,' in William Whyte, ed., *Nationalism and the Reshaping of Urban Communities in Europe, 1848–1914* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 107–08, https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230306516_2.

4 Klaus Richter, 'Economic Empowerment in Empires and Nation States: East Central Europe from the 19th Century to Today,' *Baltic Worlds* 14, No. 3 (2021): 8.

5 Surveys on the national identity of businessowners that were conducted in 1938/9 by the Chamber of Commerce, Trade and Industry in Ljubljana reveal the persistent prominence of "German" capital in interwar Yugoslav Slovenia's economy; particularly within the historic region of Styria. It is also worth noting that many of these businesses were owned by German-identifying Yugoslav citizens and had been operating continuously since the late Habsburg period. See Tone Zorn, 'Nemški trgovski obrati v Sloveniji v letih 1938/1939 (značaj in lastništvo),' *Kronika* 18, No. 2 (1970): 113–20. Tone Zorn, 'Nemški industrijski obrati v Sloveniji v letih 1938–1939,' *Kronika* 20, No. 1 (1972): 34–38.

6 On the character of "nostrification" in Yugoslav Slovenia, see France Kresal, 'Slovensko podjetništvo v industriji,' *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino* 34, No. 1 (1994): 57–74. Željko Oset, 'Nostrifikacija premoženja po prvi svetovni vojni s poudarkom na območju sodnega okraja Maribor,' in Željko Oset et al., eds., *Mesto in gospodarstvo: mariborsko gospodarstvo v 20. stoletju* (Maribor: Inštitut za novejšo zgodovino; Muzej narodne osvoboditve Maribor, 2010), 77–138. Željko Oset, 'Nadzor premoženja "tujerodcev" po prvi svetovni vojni na Ptujskem,' in Martin Šteiner, ed., *Ptuj v 20. stoletju: zbornik ob 125- letnici ptujskega muzeja* (Ptuj: Pokrajinski muzej Ptuj-Ormož, 2018). While a company was only considered native after more than ½ of its capital was in Yugoslav hands, it is interesting to

indeed initially intensely scrutinized the national loyalties of local businesspeople, the successful acquisition of Yugoslav citizenship ultimately protected ethnically minoritized businesspeople (*inorodci*) from formal discrimination on national grounds.⁷ All the while, the relative weight of nationhood within the petitioning process had been noticeably different for businesspeople who were so-called *inozemci*. Although the latter figured as legal foreigners by virtue of their citizenship, their presumed national belonging—an important asset in the new “national” world—was potentially subject to contestation.⁸ Whether understood in quasi-organicist (“by birth”) or subjectivist/behavioural terms (“by conviction”), nationhood remained a relevant administrative category, and it was also thoroughly scrutinized by the responsible authorities.

The ensuing interactions between foreign applicants for business licenses and the Yugoslav authorities produced administrative cases that offer valuable insights into the practical workings of economic nationalism in one of interwar Central and Eastern Europe’s post-imperial nation-states. The present paper addresses this phenomenon by analysing administrative cases involving foreign businesspeople applying for licenses in the Maribor Oblast throughout the 1920s. The study’s findings contribute to the growing scholarship on the “nationalism-economy nexus” in interwar Central and Europe in two ways.⁹ On the one hand, its source material provides a practical example of how the authorities in one of the region’s new “national” states attempted to administer nationhood as a quasi-objective and empirically verifiable category of belonging.¹⁰ At the same time, its insights into practical decision-making also reveal

note that interwar Romania pursued a more aggressive course. There, nostrification was considered complete when Romanian citizens owned two thirds of a company’s capital and occupied ¾ of its board of directors. See Blomqvist, *Economic Nationalizing*, 254.

- 7 Oliver Pejić, ‘Dometi i ograničenja pripadnosti državnom narodu u Kraljevini Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca: iskustva iz “prečanskih krajeva”’, in Natalija Dimić Lompar et al., eds., *Nova istraživanja jugoslovenske prošlosti: perspektive sa postjugoslovenskog prostora* (Beograd: Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, 2025), 168–74, <https://doi.org/10.31212/2025.nova.istrazivanja.pej.159-180>.
- 8 The post-war border settlements had left hundreds of thousands of Slovene-, Croat-, or Serb-identifying individuals outside the interwar Yugoslav state. At the same time, many of Yugoslavia’s residents also suddenly became legal foreigners as pertinency rights (*Heimatrecht*) became a temporary proxy for citizenship in the Habsburg Empire’s successor states. See Pejić, ‘Dometi i ograničenja,’ 164–65. For a case study on the role of pertinency in post-Habsburg Fiume/Rijeka, see Dominique Kirchner Reill et al., ‘Redefining Citizenship after Empire: The Rights to Welfare, to Work, and to Remain in a Post-Habsburg World,’ *The Journal of Modern History* 94, No. 2 (2022): 326–62, <https://doi.org/10.1086/719447>.
- 9 Stefan Berger and Thomas Fetzter, ‘Introduction,’ in Stefan Berger and Thomas Fetzter, eds., *Nationalism and the Economy: Explorations into a Neglected Relationship* (Budapest; New York: Central European University Press, 2019), 2, <https://doi.org/10.1515/9789633861998-002>.
- 10 In the (post-)Habsburg space, the administrative objectivization of national belonging saw its first practical implementation in late Habsburg Moravia and became a widespread phenomenon in the interwar period. See Börries Kuzmany, ‘Objectivising National Identity: The Introduction of National Registers in the Late Habsburg Empire,’ *Nations and Nationalism* 29, No. 3 (2023): 975–91, <https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12950>. Jeremy King, ‘Who Is Who? National Classification in Imperial Austria, 1867–1914,’ *The Journal of Modern History* 96, No. 2 (2024): 291–331, <https://doi.org/10.1086/730026>. For a representative case study on the objectivization of national belonging in interwar Czechoslovakia’s education system, see e.g. Tara Zahra, *Kidnapped Souls: National Indifference and the Battle for Children in the Bohemian Lands, 1900–1948* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2008).

the limits of nationalist economic policy in a polity that was characterized by ongoing state-building, regional fragmentation, and divergent elite interests.¹¹

After outlining the relevant legislation and instances of administrative authority, the paper analyses the presence and role of nationalist language within the administrative process while also assessing the practical relevance of nationalist argumentation in the outcomes of individual cases. While top-down instructions from Belgrade obliged the local authorities to routinely interrogate the national credentials of foreign businesspeople, the study shows that their practical relevance remained ambiguous. Although nationalist arguments remained discursively prominent and were heavily employed by both petitioners as well as administrators, the preserved cases indicate that “lacking” national credentials were often overlooked by the central authorities in Belgrade and likely did not play a critical role in determining the successes of individual petitions.

Obtaining a Business License in the Maribor Oblast: The Administrative Process

The Maribor Oblast had been one among two provincial-level administrative units that were newly established via the 1921 Vidovdan Constitution in the Yugoslav state's majority Slovene-speaking northern territories.¹² While its borders did not perfectly align with those of historic provinces, its core consisted of the southern, overwhelmingly Slovene-speaking portion of the former Habsburg Austrian crownland of Styria.¹³ The region was characterized by a majority Slovene-speaking countryside dotted with predominantly German-speaking urban settlements and had been notorious for the intensity of nationalist conflict between locally hegemonic German and advancing Slovene nationalism during the late Habsburg period.¹⁴ Unsurprisingly, nationalist

11 Select representative recent examples of case studies that examine the relationship between nationalism and economic actors in interwar Europe's world of nation-states include Blomqvist, *Economic Nationalizing*. Máté Rigó, *Capitalism in Chaos: How the Business Elites of Europe Prospered in the Era of the Great War* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2022). Paris Papamichos Chronakis, *The Business of Transition: Jewish and Greek Merchants of Salonica from Ottoman to Greek Rule*, Stanford Studies in Jewish History and Culture (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2024). Klaus Richter, 'Economic Nationalism, Minority Policies, and the 1930s in Lithuania and Latvia,' in Bradley D. Woodworth et al., eds., *Ethnic Relations in the Baltic Reconsidered*, (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press; Central European University Press, 2026), https://doi.org/10.5117/9789048570447_ch06.

12 Each oblast was headed by a provincial administrator with the title of *veliki župan*, who was directly appointed by the king.

13 The oblast's borders also included the Yugoslav part of the former Cisleithanian crownland of Carinthia, as well as the former Hungarian territories of Prekmurje/Muravidék and Medimurje/Muraköz (today in Croatia).

14 The focal points of German nationalism in Lower Styria were arguably the region's three autonomous towns of Marburg an der Drau/Maribor, Cilli/Celje, and Pettau/Ptuj. Their municipal councils, which were dominated by German nationalists until the end of Habsburg rule, pursued notoriously oppressive policies against the Slovene nationalist movement and its demands for linguistic equality. On the German-Slovene nationalist conflict in Lower Styria, see Janez Cvirn, *Das 'Festungsdreieck': zur politischen Orientierung der Deutschen in der Untersteiermark (1861–1914)*, *Forschungen zur geschichtlichen Landeskunde der Steiermark* 76 (Wien: LIT, 2016). Filip Čuček, *Svoji k svojim: na poti k dokončni nacionalni razmejitvi na Spodnjem Štajerskem v 19. stoletju*, *Zbirka Razpoznavanja*

concerns also remained relevant for local administrative policy within the framework of the new Yugoslav nation-state.

While the oblast was already formally established with the 1921 constitution, it should be noted that its institutions were activated with considerable delay. Provincial-level trade matters were still handled by the so-called Department of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in Ljubljana until the latter's disbandment in 1924. After that point, second-degree trade responsibilities passed to the oblast governments, which established special departments for handling economic matters. The oblast administrations remained active until the introduction of a royal dictatorship on 6 January 1929, after which they were replaced by new provincial-level administrative units called *banovine*. These two dates also constitute the basic chronological framework for the present study, which draws from the preserved archival materials of the Maribor Oblast's Department for Trade, Commerce and Industry.¹⁵

Until the introduction of a state-wide unified trade law in 1931, trade legislation in the interwar Yugoslav state was regulated according to inherited legal regimes. In the state's former Cisleithanian territories, the relevant legal framework had been the 1883 Austrian Trade Law (*Gewerbe-Ordnung/Obrtni red*). According to article 8, foreign citizens "are made equal with natives when it comes to starting and exercising a trade by proving formal reciprocity from the state to which they belong. Should reciprocity not be proven, they require a formal permit from the provincial political authorities."¹⁶ In almost every case discussed throughout this paper, administrators referred to article 8 as a formal justification for their decisions. While the 1930s do not fall within the scope of this paper, it is also worth noting that the 1931 Law on Businesses (*Zakon o radnjama*) regulated the legal status of foreign businesspeople in an almost identical manner.¹⁷

While inherited Austrian law thus functioned as the formal legal framework for handling foreign business license petitions throughout the period under investigation, administrative practice was also informed by a range of internal notices issued by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in Belgrade. A confidential ordinance that was issued in 1921 and served as a consistent reference point for provincial administrators throughout the period under investigation obliged them to submit every single foreign business petition for inspection to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in Belgrade.¹⁸ Although the ministry thus possessed de facto supreme decision-making

= Recognitiones 29 (Ljubljana: Inštitut za novejšo zgodovino, 2016). Martin Moll, *Kein Burgfrieden: der deutsch-slowenische Nationalitätenkonflikt in der Steiermark 1900–1918* (Innsbruck: Studien, 2007).

15 The present study limits its discussion to petitions filed in the Maribor Oblast because they have been preserved to a satisfactory level. While I have also consulted materials from the analogous department for the Ljubljana Oblast, it appears that almost no administrative cases involving foreign citizens have survived from this collection.

16 "39. Gesetz vom 15. März 1883, betreffend die Abänderung und Ergänzung der Gewerbeordnung," *Reichsgesetzblatt für die im Reichsrathe vertretenen Königreiche und Länder*, 29 March 1883, 115. Translation mine.

17 Article 7 of the law declared equal economic rights for foreign citizens if agreements on reciprocity exist between the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and their native state. Should such agreements not exist, decisions on an individual basis were to be made by the provincial administrator (*ban*) or, in cases provided by the law; the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. See *Zakon o radnjama* (Beograd: Državna štamparija Kraljevine Jugoslavije, 1931), 7–8.

18 The ordinance in question was "Pov. III br. 5," issued on 11 February 1921.

power, it apparently did not want to acknowledge this fact to the public; a 1927 notice from the ministry thus explicitly forbade provincial administrators from acknowledging the ministry's authority in their correspondence with petitioners. Instead of referring to the ministry's judgments as "decisions on the merits" (*meritorne odluke*), they were supposed to treat them as mere "internal professional instructions". Conversely, were the provincial governments inclined to reject a petition, they were instructed to justify their decisions on the grounds that the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes did not in fact recognize neither formal nor factual reciprocity with any other state.¹⁹

In 1926, a new internal ordinance from the Ministry introduced an important innovation that very much confirmed the formal relevance of nationhood as an operational category within the administrative process. From that point onwards, petitions were to be accompanied by opinions from the local chambers of commerce, as well as detailed police reports on a petitioner's personal, political, and – critically for this paper – national backgrounds.²⁰ Police reports were to be structured according to a detailed tabular questionnaire that spanned more than twenty questions. Aside from basic personal information, the questionnaire also asked for the following details:

[C]itizenship and nationality; have they filed a petition for acquiring our citizenship; are they of upstanding moral and political behaviour and possess a clean criminal record; if the foreigner is of our nationality, do they have loyal feelings towards the state; are they a communist or a member of some clandestine organization bent on undermining the legal order or the legally established government; are they in the service of some foreign state; can they be considered a strawman owner of a business; ... are they married; do they have children, and do they raise them in our national spirit or not; what schools do the children attend; what language is spoken within the family and at home; does the wife belong to our or some other nationality – specify the nationality?²¹

To speed up the processing of business license petitions, a 1927 ministerial notice that was addressed specifically towards provincial administrators from the former Habsburg parts of the country relegated decision-making to provincial administrators in cases where the foreign petitioner was "of Serbo-Croato-Slovene nationality". To this end, the administrator of the Maribor Oblast once again stressed to his subordinates the importance of "reliably establishing the nationality of foreign petitioners ... Several times, it will be necessary to check the petitioner's claims by means of confidential interrogations regarding their previous lives, public activities, as well as their national and political behaviour in general. If the petitioner has not yet asked for our citizenship, the reason why they have yet to do so must always be specified."²²

19 SIAS 84, t. e. 10, O br. 2022 1927, Ministry of Commerce and Industry to Ljubljana Oblast Provincial Administrator, br. 14782/III, 23 June 1927.

20 SIAS 84, t. e. 5, O br. 3102 1926, Ministry of Commerce and Industry to Ljubljana Oblast Provincial Administrator, br. 17.768/III, 2 November 1926.

21 Ibidem.

22 SIAS 91, t. e. 2, O br. 2851/1 1927, Maribor Oblast Administrator to Subordinates, 21 November 1927.

The final innovation to the administrative process throughout the period under investigation came in 1928, when provincial administrators were instructed that proof of reciprocity was no longer necessary for Italian citizens. According to the ministry's interpretation, an 1879 convention signed between Italy and Serbia had already established reciprocity, and a 1920 temporary law extended the validity of international agreements that Serbia had signed with Allied states before the Great War to the entire Yugoslav state.²³ Despite the existence of other similar international conventions, it is interesting to note that comparable privileges were not extended to citizens of any other state during this period. For example, a 1928 commercial signed between Yugoslavia and Germany stipulated that German citizens should have the same rights as "members of the nationality that enjoys the greatest privileges".²⁴ While some applicants explicitly referred to this agreement in their requests, the ministry in Belgrade instructed provincial administrators that they should deny formal reciprocity with Germany and handle all applications from non-Italian citizens according to established procedures.²⁵

Nationalist Discourse and Practical Decision-Making in the Petitioning Process

While nationalist discourse was not universally present in all the cases examined within this study, most of them indeed contained references to a given petitioner's nationality and/or national credentials. Even before the aforementioned 1926 ministerial notice standardized the administrative interrogation of nationhood in the form of a questionnaire, officials on various rungs of the administrative hierarchy would often reference the national belonging of petitioners in their internal correspondence. To cite one example, when forwarding Filip Schnabl's 1925 application for a mixed wares shop in the village of Frankolovo to the ministry in Belgrade, the provincial administrator described him as "an Austrian citizen, a Carinthian refugee, and a Slovene by nationality. He has also filed a petition for acceptance into our citizenship. Because Schnabl is reliable in national terms, it is recommended that his petition be resolved favourably."²⁶

Indeed, it was in fact typical for the authorities to bring up a petitioner's membership in the state's titular nationality as a formal argument for awarding them a business license. Ludovik Jaušnik, an Austrian citizen who had applied for a permit to sell

23 SI AS 91, t. e. 2, O br. 2760/1 1928, Notice from Ministry of Commerce and Industry, br. 24364/III, 3 November 1928.

24 SI AS 91, t. e. 2, O br. 2760/1 1928, Maribor Town Magistrate to Maribor Oblast Administrator, štev. 3100/287/29, 4 January 1929.

25 SI AS 91, t. e. 2, O br. 2760/1 1928, Maribor Oblast Administrator to Maribor Town Magistrate, O br. 582/1, 7 February 1929.

26 SI AS 91, t. e. 2, O br. 653/1 1925, Maribor Oblast Administrator to Ministry of Commerce and Industry, 18 March 2025.

timber and agricultural products in the village of Trate, did not gain a positive assessment from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Ljubljana due to the overabundance of similar merchants already working in this area.²⁷ However, the provincial administrator nevertheless recommended his case to the ministry, citing Jaušnik's Slovene nationality as well as repeated attempts to acquire Yugoslav citizenship.²⁸ In its reply, the ministry explicitly stated that the permit should be granted "because the petitioner is a Slovene".²⁹

Nationalist argumentation was even more present in a case involving the company "Seršen & Stegmüller", which developed a patented device for recording the contour of human feet and was applying for a commercial license in Maribor. According to the provincial administrator's assessment, Rudolf Stegmüller was "a Slovene by birth and conviction [*po rodu in mišljenju*], whose name is already reputable among Graz's Slovenes because he used to chair the local *Sokol* as well as the benefactory and educational organization *Domovina* ... Because the new industry would employ a considerable number of native workers and since all shareholders are conscious Slovenes, I believe that the petition should be fulfilled[.]"³⁰ While the authorities apparently treated national belonging as an empirically verifiable category that could reliably be determined by means of external investigation, it is hardly surprising that they also encountered claims regarding national belonging that appeared ambivalent or otherwise disputable. Viktor Ulc, an Austrian citizen and mechanic from the Carinthian town of Guštanj (today Ravne na Koroškem), had apparently claimed Slovene nationality in his petition. However, according to the provincial administrator, this claim "cannot be ascertained considering his mother's pertinency right, as well as the petitioner's behaviour during the Carinthian Plebiscite, when he was employed in German companies in Villach and Donawitz[.]"³¹ He ordered the gendarmerie to conduct confidential interrogations and determine whether the petitioner "publicly declares himself a Slovene".³²

Value judgments related to nationally sensitive practices also arise in the case of Julijana Seidling. Supposedly a native Slovene, she became a Czechoslovak citizen through marriage and was asking for a license to sell confectionary products in the town of Ptuj. The district head's report, which was structured according to the ministry's prescribed questionnaire, contained detailed information on the petitioner's

27 SI AS 91, t. e. 2, O br. 2527/1 1926, Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Ljubljana to Maribor Oblast Administrator, O br. 30 April 1927.

28 Furthermore, Jaušnik was no longer considered pertinent in his native municipality of Klein, and the question of local demand was likewise supposedly not relevant for free trades such as his. SI AS 91, t. e. 2, O br. 2527/1 1926, Maribor Oblast Administrator to Ministry of Commerce and Industry, 6 March 1927.

29 SI AS 91, t. e. 2, O br. 2527/1 1926, Ministry of Commerce and Industry to Maribor Oblast Administrator, 14 March 1928.

30 SI AS 91, t. e. 2, O br. 1679/1 1925, Maribor Oblast Administrator to Ministry of Commerce and Industry, 28 October 1926.

31 SI AS 91, t. e. 2, O br. 1006/8 1928, Maribor Oblast Administrator to Prevalje District Captain, 11 April 1928.

32 Ibid.

sociolinguistic practices.³³ While her husband was a Czechoslovak citizen and declared himself of Czech nationality [*narodnost*], the district captain was apparently not convinced and hypothesised that "this might be understood in the sense that he is a citizen of the Czechoslovak Republic".³⁴ In his conclusion, he opined that "since her husband has yet to ask for our citizenship and since she; a Slovene by birth; and he; supposedly a Czech by birth; raise their children in the German language, I cannot recommend a positive resolution to this petition".³⁵ All the while, it is worth noting that overtly critical assessments of people's national behaviour were rare among the preserved cases, and the authorities typically only advised against granting licenses due to lacking professional qualifications and/or lack of local demand for a given trade.

While none of the preserved cases contain the original petitions, some preserved appeals show that the petitioners themselves could likewise use nationalist arguments to justify their own cases. One particularly illustrative case involved France Šunko, an Austrian citizen who lived in Nova vas near Maribor and attempted to procure a butcher's license. After the ministry had mistakenly rejected his petition, he employed a lawyer and produced a lengthy appeal that not only contained model examples of nationalist discourse, but also revealed a rather typical life-story plagued by the troubles of citizenship acquisition in post-Habsburg Europe:

I have already been in Yugoslavia for 23 years and am a son of Slovene parents, whose pertinency right lies on occupied land. I, as well as my parents, have always been of Slovene conviction, and I have also been raised in a national spirit. However, since my father did not take care of his right of option, therefore I, too, remain an Austrian citizen. However, I have long ago filed a petition for our citizenship, but this petition has yet to be resolved. ... Since I am a Carinthian Slovene and have been living for 23 years in this country, to which I formally do not belong but am nonetheless [its] member ... in spirit and nationality, the provincial administrator should have taken this into account and granted my petition for a butcher's license; especially because I have long been a member of all our national associations.³⁶

By treating people's public as well as private practices (language usage, participation in voluntary associations, education, political behaviour etc.) as relevant indicators of their "true" national belonging, the authorities evidently operated with a definition of nationhood that was intuitively subjectivist and consciousness-based yet at the same time deductible from empirically verifiable practices.³⁷ In their parlance,

33 "The petitioner is married; she has a 7-year-old son, with whom his father and mother mostly speak German; in her confectionary and candle-making shop, where there are six Slovene workers, the petitioner mostly speaks Slovene, and her husband can just barely speak Slovene." SI AS 91, t. e. 2, O br. 2527 1928, Ptuj District Captain to Maribor Oblast Administrator, 11 June 1928.

34 Ibid.

35 Ibid.

36 SI AS 91, t. e. 2, O br. 900/2 1926, France Šunko to Maribor Oblast Administrator, 25 October 1926.

37 In his recent study on administrative practices in Cisleithanian provinces that had reached "national compromises", Bórris Kuzmany has called this administrative procedure the "objectivization of national identity". In his definition,

the latter form of national belonging was typically referred to as nationality “by conviction” [*po mišljenju/prepričanju*] and did not necessarily coincide with an individual’s nationality “by birth” [*po rodu/rojstvu*]. Ultimately, this dual understanding of nationhood allowed officials to describe Marija Mörtl, an innkeeper from Račje who had applied for a seamstress’s license, with the following seemingly pleonastic phrase – she was “a born Slovene, and of Slovene nationality as well”.³⁸

By and large, this “empirically verifiable” dimension of nationhood was also politically consequential and therefore held primary relevance in administrative proceedings. This bias is particularly evident in the 1928 case of Jakob Pauša/Pauscha, an Austrian citizen and cooper from Maribor. As per the previously mentioned 1927 provincial administrator’s notice, police authorities were supposed to conduct detailed examinations of a petitioner’s national behaviour to understand whether they truthfully belonged to the titular nationality. However, in Pauscha’s case, the police officially abandoned such inquiries because he was “a Slovene by birth but of German convictions [*nemškega mišljenja*]”.³⁹ He had “spent a longer period among Germans, which is proven by the attachments to his petition; has a German for a wife; and German is spoken in his family”.⁴⁰ Since he could not demand privileged treatment as a member of the titular nationality, additional inquiries in his case appeared redundant.

All the while, some cases also reveal the situational importance of an individual’s presumed biological nationality. When investigating the background of Arnošt Kohnstein, a leatherworker and furrier from Maribor, the authorities identified him as an “Israelite” of Czechoslovak citizenship and Czech nationality. While his Jewish religion evidently did not disqualify him from being categorized as a Czech in terms of his public national practices and private convictions, an official nevertheless found it necessary to underline his Jewish religion in a corresponding police report.⁴¹ Likewise, the perceived relevance of biological nationhood is revealed in some of the documentation produced by the petitioners themselves. In what seems to have been a pre-emptive safeguard against the administration’s potential antisemitism, a petition that lawyer Vekoslav Kukovec produced in the name of Hugo(n) Schmook, a Viennese businessman and owner of a timber impregnating company in Hoče, explicitly referred to the owner’s Roman Catholic birth certificate as evidence for his “of Aryan descent” – a fact that was also underlined by one of the officials.⁴²

On the one hand, the above cases demonstrate that national belonging had been treated as a valid category in the administrative process and that nationalist

“[t]he starting premise was that, although a person’s self-identification with a national group is a deeply subjective feeling, genuine self-identification will also display objective traits, such as speaking the group’s language or sharing its customs, whether in private or in public.” Kuzmany, ‘Objectivising National Identity,’ 987.

38 SI AS 91, t. e. 2, O br. 3014/1 1928, Pro domo note, s. d.

39 SI AS 91, t. e. 2, O br. 1293/1 1928, Maribor Right Bank District Captain to Maribor Oblast Administrator, 28 April 1928.

40 Ibid.

41 SI AS 91, t. e. 2, O br. 2250/1 1926, Maribor Police Commissioner to Maribor Right Bank District Captaincy, 11 January 1927.

42 SI AS 91, t. e. 2, O br. 531 1925, Hugo Schmook to Maribor Right Bank District Captaincy, 25 May 1925.

considerations were featured prominently in the formal arguments accompanying the assessments of applications. All the while, the question remains to what extent lacking national credentials could affect the practical outcome of individual petitions? It has already been mentioned that we only sporadically encounter cases of local officials explicitly advising against individual petitions on the grounds of questionable national behaviour.⁴³ However, even when their critiques were based on professional and/or economic arguments (e.g. lacking local demand for a given trade), the preserved cases show that the Ministry of Commerce and Industry often disregarded the advice of lower-ranking authorities and awarded business permits even to petitioners who were negatively evaluated by their subordinates.

Perhaps the most vivid example of this discrepancy is provided by the case of the Celje seamstress Josipina Recht. A Czechoslovak citizen of German nationality, she received negative assessments by every single responsible body ranging from the provincial administrator to the district captain; the local police authorities; the Chamber of Commerce, Trade and Industry in Ljubljana; as well as the local cooperative of tailors and seamstresses.⁴⁴ While the latter had accused Recht of illegal work and disloyal competition against native professionals, she apparently enjoyed the support of her local clientele and was able to produce a list of signatures from "Celje's ladies" that recommended her case.⁴⁵ In any case, the ministry in Belgrade approved her petition, and the provincial administrator was forced to grant her a permit on formal grounds of reciprocity.

It has already been mentioned that the Ministry of Commerce and Industry did not formally recognize the existence of reciprocity between Yugoslavia and other states. Although the consulted cases were preserved fragmentarily and do not allow for firm quantitative conclusions, they do contain some indirect evidence regarding trends within the ministry's informal decision-making patterns. According to one source, the latter had become overwhelmingly liberal by the late 1920s. In a 1928 internal note contained in the aforementioned case of Marija Mörtl, an official recorded that "[a]s it is evident in the cases regarding which the Min. of C. and I. expressed its opinions, foreigners should be consistently allowed to practice trades in our country".⁴⁶ While further research would be necessary to confirm this thesis, Belgrade's lax attitude towards foreign businesspeople could partially be understood as part of a wider policy of encouraging foreign investment in the interwar Yugoslav state. While provincial elites may have felt a heightened nationalist sensitivity towards increasing the presence of foreigners within the local economic sphere, the state's central elites had a vested financial interest in welcoming foreign capital and were also involved in a range of notorious corruption scandals involving foreign business interests.⁴⁷

43 See the cases of Viktor Ulc and Julijana Seidling.

44 SIAS 91, t. e. 2, O br. 2693/1 1927.

45 SIAS 91, t. e. 2, O br. 2693/1 1927, Pro domo note, s. d.

46 SIAS 91, t. e. 2, O br. 3014/1 1928, Pro domo note, s. d.

47 Sergije Dimitrijević, *Strani kapital u privredi bivše Jugoslavije* (Beograd: Nolit, 1958), 231–35. For a recent case study on corruption in the interwar Yugoslav state, see Klaus Buchenau, *From Grand Estates to Grand Corruption: The Battle over the Possessions of Prince Albert of Thurn and Taxis in Interwar Yugoslavia*, Balkan Studies Library 33 (Boston: Brill Schöningh, 2023).

Finally, a liberal approach towards reciprocity could also be explained by the desire to avoid international disputes as some rejected petitioners turned to their native states' consular services. Aside from the previously mentioned France Šunko, the only other preserved case where a petitioner suffered an initial rejection from the ministry was that of Ernest Dibelčar, a Czechoslovak citizen and tinsmith from Apače. Despite receiving positive assessments from the local authorities, the ministry had initially rejected his petition in 1925. Around a year later, Dibelčar filed a new (and this time successful) petition that was now accompanied by a letter from the Czechoslovak embassy in Belgrade. The latter not only emphasized his Czech nationality and long-term residence in Yugoslavia but also drew attention to the fact that the Czechoslovak authorities supposedly did not constrain Yugoslav businesspeople in any way and acted in the spirit of reciprocity.⁴⁸ Very similar arguments were made by the Swiss consul in Zagreb in a 1929 letter of recommendation for Fric Blumer, a Swiss citizen who worked as a taxi driver in Celje. Aside from listing Blumer's national, professional, as well as personal credentials, he claimed that there were pre-war legal agreements obliging Serbia and Switzerland to reciprocity in trade matters; that Yugoslav citizens experienced no barriers to exercising trades in Switzerland; and that the ministry in Belgrade had yet to decline a Swiss citizen's petition for a business license in Yugoslavia.⁴⁹

Conclusion

Across interwar Central and Eastern Europe's new world of nation-states, political elites had at their disposal a diverse yet ultimately limited array of legal political instruments and strategies with which they were able to pursue nationalist goals within the economic sphere. Using the interwar Yugoslav state's Maribor Oblast (1922–1929) as a case study, the present article has examined how business licenses for foreign citizens could have functioned as a potential sieve for restricting access to the local economy on national grounds. While its findings may be considered illustrative of economic nationalism's local manifestations in early Yugoslav Slovenia, different dynamics could be expected in other provinces given the pronounced internal heterogeneity of the interwar Yugoslav state. Future comparative research using materials from other oblasts as well as later time periods could thus offer productive insights into economic nationalism's regional specificities in relation to interwar Yugoslavia's diverse imperial legacies and local cultures.

In its overview of the relevant legislation, the article has shown that the manoeuvring space for concessions-based administrative exclusion had already been created by legislation inherited from the Habsburg period. All the while, subsequent ministerial

48 SI AS 91, t. e. 2, O br. 1285/8 1928, Czechoslovak Embassy in Belgrade to Minister of Commerce and Industry, 23 March 1926.

49 SI AS 91, t. e. 2, O br. 3106/1 1928, Swiss Consulate in Zagreb to Maribor Oblast Administrator, 4 January 1929.

ordinances throughout the 1920s elevated the relative importance of nationhood and national credentials within the petitioning process. In line with these confidential ordinances, provincial and local authorities were explicitly obliged to pay attention to a petitioner's national belonging; the latter was treated as a legitimate and empirically verifiable category, and the authorities also developed specific methodologies to enable its determination. While they operated with both organicist as well as subjectivist/sociological definitions of nationhood, the authorities were evidently primarily interested in the latter, to the extent that convictions-based national belonging manifested itself in tangible behaviour and was ultimately considered politically consequential.

Aside from tasking the authorities with policing people's national behaviour, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry's internal notices also produced an informal decision-making hierarchy that diverged from the inherited Austrian Trade Law. While provincial and district authorities as well as local chambers of commerce were obliged to provide assessments of people's petitions, the ministry in Belgrade was ultimately responsible for making final decisions in a petition's outcome. While officials on all rungs of the administrative hierarchy often employed nationalist arguments to support or critique individual cases, it remains questionable to what extent lacking national credentials could have affected a petition's practical success – the ministry routinely overlooked the negative opinions of local authorities and awarded permits to businesspeople whose requests were deemed unsuitable on professional and/or pragmatic/economic grounds. Whether this discrepancy in policy was perhaps a consequence of diverging interests between political elites within Yugoslavia's centre and peripheries or could be explained through different means remains a question to be explored in further research.

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Oliver Pejić

**»INOZEMNI« PODJETNIKI IN EKONOMSKI NACIONALIZEM
V KRALJEVINI SRBOV, HRVATOV IN SLOVENCEV:
PRIMERI IZ MARIBORSKE OBLASTI (1922–1929)**

POVZETEK

Pričujoči prispevek obravnava vlogo ekonomskega nacionalizma v upravni praksi medvojne jugoslovanske države na primeru prošenj tujih državljanov za obrtna dovoljenja v Mariborski oblasti. Prispevek sprva ponudi pregled relevantne zakonodaje in notranjih direktiv, ki so opredeljevale upravljanje s prošnjami tujih državljanov v obravnavanem obdobju. Medtem ko je nasledeni avstrijski obrtni zakon predstavljal osnovni zakonodajni okvir do leta 1931, so upravno prakso definirale predvsem številne zaupne okrožnice in dopisi, ki so prihajali z Ministrstva za trgovino in industrijo v Beogradu. Omenjeni dopisi so tudi nalagali velikim županstvom in njim podrejenim sreskim oblastem, da morajo natančno raziskovati narodnostno pripadnost kandidatov, ki so se potegovali za obrtna dovoljenja. Slednja je po ugotovitvah raziskave igrala pomembno diskurzivno vlogo v upravnem postopanju s tujimi državljani. Uradniki so narodnost razumeli tako v biološkem (»po rojstvu«) kot tudi v družbenem/ideološkem smislu (»po prepričanju«), a so bili občutno bolj zainteresirani za njeno sociološko dimenzijo – ta se je navsezadnje tudi odražala v oprijemljivih in policijsko izsledljivih praksah ter je nosila tudi politično težo. Raziskava končno kaže, da je imelo nacionalno profiliranje posameznikov kljub izraziti prisotnosti nacionalističnega diskurza v samem upravnem postopku le vprašljiv vpliv na izid posameznih prošenj. Kritične ocene lahko le redkoma pripišemo vprašljivemu nacionalnemu obnašanju kandidatov, ministrstvo za trgovino in industrijo pa je pogosto podeljevalo obrtna dovoljenja tudi tistim prosilcem, ki so prejeli izrazito negativne ocene s strani podrejenih oblasti. Nadaljnje raziskave bi bile potrebne za ugotavljanje motivov, ki so tičali za liberalno politiko beograjskega ministrstva, mogoče pa je predvidevati, da je bilo slednje predvsem zainteresirano za vzdrževanje meddržavne vzajemnosti in tujim vlagateljem prijaznega poslovnega okolja, pa čeprav je bila takšna politika navskriž z nacionalističnimi interesi na lokalni ravni.

Neja Blaj Hribar*

Who Counts as Foreign? Foreign Employment between Legislation and Public Discourse – the Case of the Drava Banovina

IZVLEČEK

KDO JE TUJEC? ZAPOSLOVANJE TUJCEV MED ZAKONODAJO IN DISKURZOM – PRIMER DRAVSKE BANOVINE

Članek obravnava zakonodajo in javni diskurz o zaposlovanju tujih delavcev v Dravski banovini v medvojnem obdobju. Predstavi osnovne značilnosti zakonodaje in na tej podlagi pokaže, kako so se oblikovale različne možnosti za različne skupine prosilcev za delovna dovoljenja. Analiziran je tudi diskurz o problematiki zaposlovanja tujcev in o tem, kdo je bil označen kot tujec. Na podlagi te analize ugotavlja, ali je pravna in diskurzivna kategorija »tujca« enotna, in če ne, na kakšen način se znotraj vsake od njiju oblikujejo razlike.

Ključne besede: zaposlovanje tujcev, zakonodaja, prva Jugoslavija, diskurz, tujost

ABSTRACT

The article examines the legislation and public discourse surrounding the employment of foreign workers in the Drava Banovina during the interwar period. It outlines the key characteristics of the relevant legislation and, on this basis, shows how various conditions shaped varying opportunities for different groups of applicants to obtain work permits. The article

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also analyses the discourse on foreign employment and on who was identified as a foreigner. Drawing on this analysis, it asks whether the legal and discursive category of the “foreigner” is uniform and, if not, in what ways differences emerge within each of them.

Keywords: foreign employment, legislation, first Yugoslavia, discourse, foreignness

The concept of economic nationalism is rooted in the nineteenth century and emerged alongside ideas aimed at protecting local labour and domestic economies. Economic nationalism can manifest as a state-backed policy of self-sufficiency, pursued through various measures – most notably protectionism.¹ Yet economic nationalism extended beyond tariffs and banking. The exclusion of immigrants and discrimination against ethnic minorities were also integral to the construction of a national economy.² This pushed states towards greater involvement in managing migration – not only at the borders but also in protecting domestic wages, working conditions, and social security.³

In this economic climate, foreign labour and capital were perceived as a problem. In this paper I examine the legislation and public discourse surrounding foreign workers, focusing on the Drava Banovina within interwar Yugoslavia. While the legislation discussed operates at the state level, the analysis of public discourse draws primarily on the Slovenian-language press. Although I focus on the 1930s, I also present prior legislation for clarity and coherence. It should be noted that the Drava Banovina is not an exceptional case. Its attitudes towards foreign labour were the product of an already developed economic nationalism, rooted in Slovenian national movements and shaped by the region's broader contemporary economic thought. Whether significant differences existed compared to other parts of Yugoslavia remains a question for further research. This paper treats it primarily as a case study within what appears to be a wider, shared discourse.

I also analyse who foreigners were, what defined them, and whether there was a hierarchy among them. I follow the theory of Sylvia Hahn, that

1 Ivan Smiljanić, “National Pride and Economic Prejudice: Some Effects of Economic Nationalism in the Slovene Rural Areas in Austria-Hungary,” *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino* 66, No. 1 (2026): 31–32, <https://doi.org/10.51663/pnz.66.1.02>.

2 Marvin Suesse, *The Nationalist Dilemma. A Global History of Economic Nationalism, 1776–Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023), 9.

3 Christoph Rass, “Temporary Labour Migration and State-Run Recruitment of Foreign Workers in Europe, 1919–1975: A New Migration Regime?,” *International Review of Social History* 57, No. S20 (2012): 195, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020859012000466>. For the impact of the rise of the welfare state on the distinction between citizens and foreigners, see Beate Althammer, ed., *Citizenship, Migration and Social Rights Historical Experiences from the 1870s to the 1970s* (London: Routledge, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003261261>.

“foreignness” (Fremdheit) is not a strictly established quality of individuals and groups, but rather a historically variable social and cultural construct which changes according to the political, economic, and social situation. That is, foreignness is produced by discourses of difference that distinguish between native and foreign between us and them.⁴

One factor that shapes perceptions of foreignness is legislation. Legal institutions such as citizenship create legal and societal differences. These inequalities can lead to mutual resentment, antipathy, or even xenophobic outbursts.⁵ As Sigrid Wadauer noted (on the subject of wanderers, but the consideration is nevertheless applicable to the issue at hand), although the state’s views and legislation are insufficient to understand the problem, legal definitions can have important implications.⁶

For this reason, given the connection between legislation and public discourse, I will attempt to answer the questions posed above from both perspectives. Other perspectives on how laws were implemented and how society treated foreigners in everyday life are not the focus of this paper. I will include the existing data and literature, but further research is urgently needed.

Legislation on Foreign Workers

The first joint regulation of foreign workers was included in the Labour Protection Act of 1922. It is revealing which law this provision was embedded in. In addition to the eight-hour workday, the right to a break, childcare for children, maternity leave, insurance, and other labour rights, the act included a paragraph stating that the employer must first obtain permission from the Ministry of Social Policy, which must first consult the local employment offices, to employ a foreigner. Permission from the Ministry was also required to recruit employees on behalf of foreign employers.⁷ Two years later, the Ministry added an ordinance to the law that defined more precisely how to apply for the permit. The local work inspection office issued permits for up to three months, while for longer periods, the Ministry had to issue them. It also acted as the second-instance authority, deciding on appeals.⁸ That same year, the Ministry issued a special ordinance stating that Russian refugees should be treated as local workers.⁹

4 Sylvia Hahn, “Inclusion and Exclusion of Migrants in the Multicultural Realm of the Habsburg ‘State of Many Peoples,’” *Histoire sociale / Social History* 33, No. 66 (2000): 309.

5 Ibidem, 324.

6 Sigrid Wadauer, “Establishing Distinctions: Unemployment versus Vagrancy in Austria from the Late Nineteenth Century to 1938,” *International Review of Social History* 56, No. 1 (2011): 42, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020859010000702>.

7 “Zakon o zaščiti delavcev,” *Uradni list pokrajinske uprave za Slovenijo*, No. 74, 13 July 1922, 485–92.

8 “Pravilnik o zaposlovanju inozemskih delavcev,” *Uradni list ljubljanske in mariborske oblasti*, No. 71, 2 August 1924, 425–26.

9 “Odločba, da je smatrati ruske begunce glede zaposlovanja na našem ozemlju za enake domačim delavcem,” *Uradni list ljubljanske in mariborske oblasti*, No. 93, 9 October 1924, 563.

Aleksandar R. Miletić's research shows that legislation in the early 1920s was used to expel as many foreign workers as possible. The First Yugoslavia had both formal and informal procedures, all aimed at restricting labour immigration based on labour needs and ethnicity. However, due to consular interventions, many of these decisions were reversed, as Yugoslavia feared retaliatory measures. The only firm stance was taken against Austrian citizens. Even those who had lived and worked in the territory of Yugoslavia for years were denied extended visas and work permits unless they applied for citizenship. In March 1925, the Austrian representative in Belgrade complained in official correspondence about the expulsion of their citizens and the tightening of labour regulations.¹⁰

In addition to other international regulations, this was probably one reason the Ministry issued the new ordinance at the end of that year. It introduced a new category: foreign workers who had begun working in the kingdom before the Labour Protection Act came into force. These workers had to submit a new request and provide firm evidence of their living and working circumstances to obtain a certificate confirming they were not subject to the Labour Protection Act. If granted, they were allowed to stay and work without having to make regular extension requests. However, this applied only if they remained with the same employer and did not leave the country for more than one month, unless the absence was work-related.¹¹ Another important exception was added: for the first time, a bilateral treaty of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (the Kingdom of SHS) with another country was mentioned. For foreign workers from countries with such a treaty, including a special agreement on the workforce, the law was obsolete.¹² This coincided with new bilateral trade and economic treaties that Yugoslavia began to sign with other countries. Previously, only those signed by the Kingdom of Serbia before the war were valid.¹³

New bilateral and multilateral agreements on migrant labour became increasingly common during the interwar period. States were no longer merely regulating the movement of people across borders – they also began acting as mediators in the international labour market.¹⁴ The International Labour Organisation (ILO) was established in 1919 as part of the League of Nations, and Yugoslavia joined the same year.¹⁵ The ILO also set standards and recommendations for the treatment of migrant workers, covering wages, social welfare, and, ideally, equal treatment with domestic workers, but these recommendations were not binding.¹⁶ Until 1935, Yugoslavia had

10 Aleksandar R. Miletić, "(Regular) immigration controls in the interwar (semi-)periphery? East-central- and southeast European policy patterns," in Kamil Ruszala, ed., *Refugees and Population Transfer Management in Europe, 1914–1920s* (London, New York: Routledge, 2024): 261, 273, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003472742>.

11 "Pravilnik o zaposlovanju inozemskih delavcev," *Uradni list ljubljanske in mariborske oblasti*, No. 108, 7 December 1925, 777.

12 Ibid.

13 France Kresal, "Avstrijski kapital v industriji stare Jugoslavije," *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino* 27, No. 1–2 (1987): 34.

14 Rass, "Temporary Labour Migration," 192.

15 Ratko Pešić, "International Labour Standards, and Yugoslav Legislation," *International Labour Review* 96, No. 5 (1967): 443.

16 Rass, "Temporary Labour Migration," 200–01.

signed four treaties (with Italy, Germany, Czechoslovakia and Romania) that included provisions on the workforce.¹⁷

Such agreements were primarily designed with receiving countries in mind, and Yugoslavia was not one of them. Nevertheless, as a country of origin, Yugoslavia had an interest in protecting its workers abroad. Within this framework, reciprocity became a key principle shaping the treatment of foreigners, including in broader legislation. For example, citizens, refugees, and foreigners were all eligible for unemployment support – though for the latter group, an additional condition applied: the benefit was available only if the worker's home country extended the same support to Yugoslav citizens abroad.¹⁸ However, as Marjeta Keršič-Svetel has shown, reciprocity in social insurance and welfare benefits was not consistently enforced in practice, posing a significant problem for foreign workers.¹⁹ Combined with the bureaucratic burden of obtaining and renewing work permits, this led many to pursue citizenship instead.²⁰

During the economic crisis, when many countries adopted more protectionist policies, Yugoslavia did the same. Yet a new law regarding foreign labour was passed after the crisis in 1935. The "Regulation on the Employment of Foreign Citizens" introduced stricter conditions for obtaining work permits and increased bureaucracy.²¹ The employer had to include, among other documents, a report from the local labour exchange on unemployed domestic workers in the relevant branch, as well as a list of foreign workers already employed. One of the conditions was that an employer who had received approval to hire foreign workers must, if possible, employ domestic workers or train them for these jobs. Reciprocity remained an important factor, but it also had a negative side. If the country of origin of the foreign workers limited the number of Yugoslav workers, Yugoslavia did the same for them, and if that country taxed Yugoslav workers there, Yugoslavia did so as well.

The regulation allowed applications only from employers for skilled workers, provided the local labour market permitted it or their skills were important to the country's economic progress, and for temporary workers who came to assemble or repair imported machines. Applications could also be granted to individuals: independent workers (who did not require a business licence under crafts or similar legislation), foreign citizens of Yugoslav nationality, foreigners who had lived in Yugoslavia before 1922, and other groups determined by the Ministry of National Health and Social Policy. The latter were named in the decree adopted a few months later and included Russian war-disabled persons, other Russian refugees, and foreign citizens of other

17 "Nova naredba o zaposlitvi tujcev," *Trgovski list*, 2 April 1935, 2.

18 "Uredba (Pravilnik) o organizaciji posredovanja dela, dajanja neposrednje podpore brezposelnim delavcem in dajanja cenenih posojil za zidanje delavskih stanovanj, in sicer v breme sredstev, nabranih na podstavi pooblastitve v členu 110. finančnega zakona za leto 1922./1923," *Uradni list ljubljanske in mariborske oblasti*, No. 127, 22 December 1927, 854.

19 Marjeta Keršič-Svetel, "Češko-slovenski stiki med svetovnima vojnima (2. del)," *Zgodovinski časopis* 49, No. 3 (1995): 429.

20 Ibid. See also Mira Kolar-Dimitrijević, "Statistički pregled stranih radnika i članova njihovih porodica u Jugoslaviji 1933. godine," *Časopis za suvremenu povijest* 4, No. 3 (1972): 124.

21 "Uredba o zaposlovanju tujih državljanov," *Službeni list kraljevske banske uprave Dravske banovine*, No. 36, 4 May 1934, 276–80.

nationalities with asylum and a valid work permit. The first group was exempt from all regulations. Other Russian refugees (if they had arrived in the country before the regulation) had the same advantages as foreign citizens of Yugoslav nationality (as detailed in this decree). This meant that they could obtain a permanent work permit and were not tied to one employer; in employee personnel lists, they were counted as nationals (but had to indicate their citizenship), yet they had to register every year with the local police office.²²

The Minister of National Health and Social Policy, Drago Marušič, explained that the purpose of the new regulation was to reduce the number of foreign workers, but exemptions remained that could not be overlooked. First, there were international contracts; Yugoslavia had to proceed with caution regarding foreign workers from countries where more Yugoslavians worked (with the option of retaliatory measures), and from friendly states such as the Little Entente. Even some companies had special permission to employ foreigners. Yet there were still some improvements: only skilled workers could apply for a work permit, there were sanctions for violations, and the decree foresaw equal treatment of domestic and foreign workers. Finally, the regulation itself allowed for the re-examination of all already issued work permits.²³

Who is considered a foreigner in legislation?

As outlined above, the legislation treats foreign citizens as foreigners. Before proceeding, it is worth briefly outlining how citizenship was acquired. The first Yugoslavia inherited six legal systems.²⁴ Before the peace treaties, it began excluding members of groups that did not fit the idea of a triune nation, thereby strengthening the link between ethnicity and citizenship.²⁵ The St Vitus' Day Constitution stipulated that public office was open to all native-born citizens, as well as naturalised Serbs, Croats and Slovenians, while other naturalised citizens were required to have ten years of continuous residency.²⁶

The citizenship decrees, adopted under the peace treaties of Saint-Germain and Trianon, granted citizenship rights to four groups. Citizenship was automatically granted to those who held pertinency (*domovinska pravica, Heimatrecht*) on 1 January 1910 in areas of the former dual monarchy that became part of the Kingdom of SHS. Citizenship could be sought by application by those who acquired pertinency in these areas after 1 January 1910; those who held pertinency in other parts of the former monarchy but had previously held it in areas that became part of the Kingdom; and

22 "Pravilnik za uporabo uredbe o zaposlovanju tujih državljanov," *Službeni list kraljevske banske uprave Dravske banovine*, No. 83, 16 October 1935, 783–98.

23 "Nova naredba o zaposlitvi tujcev," *Trgovski list*, 2 April 1935, 2.

24 Dmitar Tasić, "Serbia and Changes in the Concept of Citizenship in the Era of the First World War," *Studia Historica Slovenica* 21, No. 3 (2021): 706–07.

25 Ivan Kosnica, "Odnos državljanstva i nacionalne pripadnosti u Kraljevini SHS/Jugoslaviji," *Zbornik Pravnog fakulteta u Zagrebu* 68, No. 1 (2018): 68–69.

26 Tasić, "Serbia and Changes," 709.

those with pertinency elsewhere in Austria-Hungary who were of Serbian, Croatian, or Slovenian ethnolinguistic background.²⁷ Because the authorities wanted to process option applications first, the granting of naturalisations was suspended until 1924. After that, applications from South Slavs and other Slavs were processed first, followed by those from other groups.²⁸ The government did not adopt the new “Citizenship Law” until 1928. It stipulated that citizenship was hereditary and could be acquired through marriage, birth within the state’s territory (for children of unknown parents), or naturalisation. Although naturalisation was available to everyone, more lenient conditions were set for ethnolinguistically SHS populations; less stringent requirements also applied to Slavs and Russian refugees of Slavic origin who had already applied for citizenship before the law was passed but whose applications had not yet been decided.²⁹

Even from a legal perspective, under such laws, foreigners were not a uniform category. They created a hierarchy that enabled some to gain citizenship more quickly or to find employment more easily, with fewer bureaucratic obstacles. Depending on ethnicity or specific citizenship, one could be considered more or less “foreign”.

Discourse on Foreigners

On 9 August 1929, the *Slovenski narod* newspaper published a query for its readers: “How to Eliminate the Housing Misery, Unemployment, and the Industrial Crisis?” The newspaper reported that unemployment among both unqualified and qualified workers was rising, and that many factories and industrial enterprises were limiting their operations or were forced to cease them altogether. After a sombre view of the issue, there was a call for readers’ ideas on how to fix it. The only instruction was to consider the extreme population growth that affects all of the above subjects.³⁰ *Slovenski narod* published 21 answers by the end of the year, when they started a new query about the celibacy of the women clerks. The majority of respondents suggested accelerating housing construction, which would also help to reduce unemployment and alleviate the economic crisis. Among other suggestions, some raised the question of whether unemployment insurance should be enacted or whether the number of children among poor people should be limited. Others simply elaborated on their views regarding the causes of the problems. Some blamed unemployment on either too many or too few skilled (educated) workers, arguing that everyone wants to be a clerk or is simply lazy, while others saw the problem in underdeveloped industry and

27 “Uredba o pridobitvi in izgubi državljanstva kraljevine Srbov, Hrvatov in Slovencev z opcijo in prošnjo,” *Uradni list Deželne vlade za Slovenijo*, No. 174, 21 December 1920, 705–07. “Uredba o pridobitvi in izgubi državljanstva kraljevine Srbov, Hrvatov in Slovencev z opcijo in prošnjo,” *Uradni list deželne vlade za Slovenijo*, December 1921. For more details on citizenship after the war, see Kosnica, “Odnos državljanstva,” 72–73.

28 Kosnica, “Odnos državljanstva,” 72–73.

29 “Zakon o državljanstvu Kraljevine SHS,” *Uradni list ljubljanske in mariborske oblasti*, No. 109, 19 November 1928, 741–44.

30 “Kako odpravimo stanovanjsko bedo, brezposelnost in industrijsko krizo?,” *Slovenski narod*, 9 August 1929, 2.

low wages.³¹ One-third (seven) of all respondents mentioned the problem of foreign workers or foreign capital. Most listed this among several issues, but two devoted their entire letters to this topic. One complained that foreigners are taking better-paid jobs and are seen and presented as experts, yet they were sent abroad because they were not considered good enough in their own countries. They are employed simply because of their connections and, as foreigners, are placed above the domestic population.³² The second focused more on foreign capital. It presents foreign investors as the problem because they work for themselves and their own country, using Yugoslavia's resources for their own profit.³³ Between the lines, there are many comparisons with colonialism.

Yet not everyone agreed with this narrative. One of the respondents to the query believed that the foreign workforce is a minor problem, as their numbers are negligible. Moreover, without foreign capital, the situation would be even worse. They argued that the problem began after nationalisation: banks sold companies back to foreigners because local capital was deposited in banks rather than invested in industry.³⁴ One reader, nicknamed Lajik (layman), on the other hand, saw migration as a solution. They proposed that the whole of Europe, along with Russia, should devise a plan to relocate people across the continent from overpopulated to less-populated areas that still have sufficient natural resources to utilise. Yet they did not believe it was possible, since capitalism preferred a sedentary population.³⁵

The first two mentioned letters represented the general discourse, in its different forms and manifestations, on foreign workers and capital in Slovenian-language newspapers since the late 1920s, and this discourse persisted until the war. As in most other countries, xenophobia increased during the economic crisis.³⁶

Although legislation allowed work permits to be granted in cases of shortages of domestic workers, and during the 1930s only skilled workers could obtain permits, most newspapers argued that too many foreigners were employed and that there were enough local experts to replace them. They did not believe foreign workers were better trained, and if they were, that domestic workers should be trained rather than have the foreigners' work permits extended.³⁷

The other problem was the foreign capital invested in the companies and the people they brought with them. The press portrayed them as hostile to Yugoslavia, accused them of exploiting domestic workers and the country's resources, and of generally

31 "Kako odpravimo stanovanjsko bedo, brezposelnost in industrijsko krizo?" *Slovenski narod*, 17, 21, and 27 August; 2 and 7 September; 4 and 12 October 1929.

32 "Kako odpravimo stanovanjsko bedo, brezposelnost in industrijsko krizo?" *Slovenski narod*, 18 November 1929, 3.

33 "Kako odpravimo stanovanjsko bedo, brezposelnost in industrijsko krizo?" *Slovenski narod*, 3 September 1929, 2.

34 "Kako odpravimo stanovanjsko bedo, brezposelnost in industrijsko krizo?" *Slovenski narod*, 7 September 1929, 2.

35 "Kako odpravimo stanovanjsko bedo, brezposelnost in industrijsko krizo?" *Slovenski narod*, 4 October 1929, 2.

36 Marjan Drnovšek, "Velika gospodarska kriza in slovenski izseljenci," in Neven Borak and Žarko Lazarevič, eds., *Gospodarske krize in Slovenci* (Ljubljana: Inštitut za novejšo zgodovino and Zveza ekonomistov Slovenije, 1999), 123–24.

37 "Pri nas gospodarijo tujci," *Delavska pravica*, 26 September 1934, 3. "Tuji nameščenci," *Pohod*, 16 April 1935, 3. "Poglavje o 'strokovnjakih' in tujcih," *Večernik*, 24 April 1940, 4. Franjo Bulc, "Karteli," *Pohod*, 20 May 1933, 1. "O tujih strokovnjakih," *Prelom*, 19 April 1934, 2. "Brezposelni tehniki in naša industrijska podjetja," *Jutro*, 16 July 1932, 2.

treating foreigners better.³⁸ It also raised security concerns. Foreign companies could sabotage the economy and the country. During the second half of the 1930s, calls for caution grew as the international situation worsened, since foreigners and their capital could be the internal enemy in the event of war.³⁹ The *Ženski svet* newspaper also published an opinion that Holland's immediate capitulation was caused by the betrayal by the foreigners (Germans) already living there.⁴⁰ Foreigners were presented as enemies, "as leeches and parasites", feeding on the body of the nation. They were not seen as people who came to work in Yugoslavia, but rather as exploiters of Yugoslavia and its people, even during peacetime.

Several parts of the relevant legislation were criticised, but the most prominent complaint concerned its implementation. There were many calls to revise issued permits and to strengthen inspection controls, as many individuals were allegedly operating without permits.⁴¹ Allegations also came from the Chamber of Commerce.⁴² Less frequently, articles expressed concern about groups receiving special treatment. Foreigners who had come to the country before 1922 but had not accepted Yugoslav citizenship were seen as the most problematic.⁴³ Granting citizenship based on a work permit was also unacceptable.⁴⁴

The discourse of many newspapers suggests that insufficient legislation and "manipulative colonising foreigners" were not the only problems identified. The press often also blamed the public. Through (auto)stereotypes of Slovenian "serfdom", it was often highlighted that Slovenians bowed to foreigners. In 1940, the *Slovenski delavec* newspaper wrote that Slovenians endured this "shameful yoke" because they were "too soft and lenient".⁴⁵ Another writer commented that even the Chinese or Japanese could settle "here" without learning the language, because Slovenians were so "soft at heart and so lukewarm" that even workers would learn their language in just a few days, as they believed this demonstrated the highest level of culture.⁴⁶ The *Ženski svet* magazine even published an article on how to interact with foreigners. One piece of advice was always to try to speak Slovenian first, and only if that did not work, try something else. The idea was that Slovenians must first respect themselves so that foreigners will respect them too.⁴⁷ In economic terms, it was not just about pledging to buy only

38 "Tujci imajo prednost pred domačinom," *Trgovski list*, 25 October 1934, 2. "Nepotrebni tujci," *Slovenski delavec*, 24 May 1940, 1. "Tuji nameščenci," *Pohod*, 16 April 1935, 3. "Še vedno pereč problem," *Mariborski večernik* "Jutra", 7 May 1936, 2.

39 "Pri nas gospodarijo tujci," *Delavska pravica*, 26 September 1934, 3. "O tujih strokovnjakih," *Prelom*, 19 April 1934, 2. "Zdramite se ob dvanajsti uri," *Delavec*, 15 September 1938, 1. "Nepotrebni tujci," *Slovenski delavec*, 24 May 1940, 1.

40 "Najgrozovitejša vojna, kar jih je doživelo človeštvo," *Ženski svet* 18, No. 6 (1940): 139.

41 "Pri nas gospodarijo tujci," *Delavska pravica*, 26 September 1934, 3. "Proti zaposlovanju tujcev," *Mariborski večernik* "Jutra", 3 May 1933, 2. "Poglavje o 'strokovnjakih' in tujcih," *Večernik*, 24 April 1940, 4.

42 "Zaposlitev tujcev v našem gospodarstvu," *Obrtni vestnik*, 6 September 1940, 1.

43 "Pri nas gospodarijo tujci," *Delavska pravica*, 26 September 1934, 3. "Poglavje o parazitih na našem narodnem telesu," *Mariborski večernik* "Jutra", 6 May 1933, 1.

44 "Poglavje o 'strokovnjakih' in tujcih," *Večernik*, 24 April 1940, 4.

45 "Nepotrebni tujci," *Slovenski delavec*, 24 May 1940, 1.

46 "Narodna zavednost in naše delavstvo," *Pohod*, 10 September 1932

47 Pavla Hočevar, "Pokažimo se svetu," *Ženski svet* 17, No. 7/8 (1939): 158.

domestic goods, but also about criticising the mentality that the foreign is always better. The foremost example was *the Trgovski list* journal, which stated in 1934 that the public was also guilty of the legislation on foreign labour not being fully enforced because people continued to respect foreigners. The public “still cannot shake off its deference towards foreigners, especially those who work among us and are paid better here than any of our own people. And it is this deference that is to blame for the fact that every regulation regarding the employment of foreign workers is enforced extremely loosely – so loosely that, in practice, it carries no weight at all.”⁴⁸

Who is a foreigner?

Many of the articles are vague about which foreigners they refer to; they use terms such as “foreign blood” and “foreign origin”, though some elaborate further. Most are concerned with foreign citizens and nationality.⁴⁹ Others even specify exactly whom they have in mind: “With a few honourable exceptions, all the so-called ‘indispensable’ foreigners are Germans – whether they are Czechoslovak, Hungarian, Austrian, or German citizens. Among them, there are also a few Jews, who, of course, likewise do not understand our language.”⁵⁰ Germans, mostly German Austrians, were mentioned most frequently in the papers. They were portrayed as former rulers (in the Habsburg Empire) and as oppressors of the Slovenian nation. This perception of them as the “greatest national enemy” persisted in the discourse. Germans were ascribed the ambition to colonise Yugoslavia again, now through economic means.⁵¹

It was not only public discourse that supported restrictions on foreigners and their capital. In the early 1920s, the state also pursued an administrative effort to obstruct entry into the country and to facilitate the expulsion, mainly of ethnic groups such as Austrian Germans, Jews, Hungarians, and Germans.⁵² This coincided with the sequestration and nationalisation of companies, which did not bring the desired results. Austrian capital played an important role in the industry of the first Yugoslavia, especially in the Drava Banovina.⁵³ New nation-states were developing national economies, but they remained highly integrated into the economic systems of the former empires.

As mentioned earlier, the discourse about foreign workers, which sought to tighten regulations, was subordinated to the interests of the better-situated workforce and their capital. Their foreignness was linked to citizenship and/or ethnicity. The press largely reflected the voice of the elite, which judged much of public life – including immigrants and perceptions of foreignness – through the lens of national

48 “Tujci imajo prednost pred domačinom,” *Trgovski list*, 25 October 1934, 2.

49 “Nepotrebni tujci,” *Slovenski delavec*, 24 May 1940, 1. “Poglavje o parazitih na našem narodnem telesu,” *Mariborski večernik* “Jutra”, 6 May 1933, 1.

50 “Poglavje o parazitih na našem narodnem telesu,” *Mariborski večernik* “Jutra”, 6 May 1933, 1.

51 Ibid. “Zdramite se ob dvanajsti uri,” *Delavec*, 15 September 1938, 1.

52 Miletič, “(Regular) immigration controls,” 127.

53 For more details, see Kresal, “Avstrijski kapital,” 35–36. Žarko Lazarević, “Srednjeevropski gospodarski prostor do druge svetovne vojne,” *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino* 43, No. 2 (2003): 33–42.

ideology. This applies primarily at a declarative level and mostly to the “main national enemies”: Germans/Austrians and sometimes Jews. Yet we cannot overlook other newcomers who came to the Drava Banovina and were employed mostly in lower positions. Workers who came from other parts of the country, even from rural parts of the Banovina to its cities, as well as refugees and others, also represented a kind of foreignness. Hahn saw a close connection between migration and foreignness, yet the distance that produces foreignness cannot be measured geographically.⁵⁴ They were portrayed as newcomers taking jobs from locals, though only the lower-paid ones. More often than not, they too were exploited, which in turn affected the quality of employment for local workers.⁵⁵ In many ways, this discourse echoes calls to restrict women’s employment during the economic crisis, with women similarly framed as unfair competitors.⁵⁶ People from rural areas were advised to stay at home and work on agricultural development, which would benefit both rural and urban areas.⁵⁷ Refugees, regardless of their origins, were also often disliked, supposedly “stealing” jobs.⁵⁸

When we speak of “foreigner” as a term in public discourse, a wide spectrum of interpretations, understandings, and uses emerges. The perception of foreignness is shaped by multiple factors: legal status, the act of immigration itself, and exclusions based on ethnic, religious or other categorisations, including social position.

Conclusion

The state remained caught between its aspirations and the realities of economic needs and international obligations. Legislation tightened the conditions for work permits, while exceptions proliferated. Regarding the issuance of trade licences, Pejić wrote that the authorities remained largely legalistic, thereby satisfying neither the public nor the legislator.⁵⁹

54 Sylvia Hahn, “Migranten als Fremde – fremd als Migranten. Zuwanderung in Wien und Niederösterreich im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert,” in Ingrid Bauer, Josef Ehmer, and Sylvia Hahn, eds., *Walz – Migrationen – Besatzung. Historische Szenarien des Eignen und des Fremden* (Klagenfurt: Drava, 2002), 103.

55 “Pismo brezposelnega delavca,” *Jutro, ponedeljska izdaja*, 22 May 1939, 4. “Množice delavcev prihajajo v Ljubljano,” *Slovenski narod*, 19 April 1933, 2. “Vseučiliška Knjižnica,” *Velikonočna priloga ‘Glasa naroda’*, 11 April 1936, 4.

56 See Ana Cergol Paradiž, Matteo Perissinotto, and Irena Selišnik, “Women Clerks in Transition after World War I,” in Marta Verginella and Urška Strle, eds., *Women and Work in the North-Eastern Adriatic. Postwar Transitions* (Budapest, Vienna, New York: Central European University Press, 2025), 101–02.

57 “Kako odpravimo stanovanjsko bedo, brezposelnost in industrijsko krizo?,” *Slovenski narod*, 7 November 1929, 2.

58 Teja Krašovec, “Primorski priseljenci v Ljubljani med obema svetovnima vojnama,” Doctoral dissertation (Koper: Univerza na Primorskem, self-published, 2016), 37–39. Gregor Antoličič and Petra Svoljšak, “The others. Refugees seen from the Slovenian perspective of the First World War,” in Kamil Ruszala, ed., *Refugees and Population Transfer Management in Europe, 1914–1920s* (London, New York: Routledge, 2025), 102–27, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003472742>. Petra Kim Krasnič, “Ruska emigracija v Jugoslaviji med letoma 1918 in 1941,” Doctoral dissertation (Ljubljana: Univerza v Ljubljani, self-published, 2024).

59 Oliver Pejić, “Dometi i ograničenja pripadnosti državnom narodu u Kraljevini Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca: iskustva iz ‘prečanskih krajeva,’” in Natalija Dimić Lompar, Ognjen Tomić, and Nikola Koneski, eds., *Nova istraživanja jugoslovenske prošlosti: perspektive sa postjugoslovenskog prostora* (Beograd: Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije 2025), 173, <https://doi.org/10.31212/2025.nova.istrazivanja.pej.159-180>.

It was precisely these exceptions, based on citizenship, national or international treaties, or fear of retaliatory measures, that created differences in employment opportunities among various categories of foreigners. A second axis of differentiation was nationality: members of the SHS national enjoyed certain employment advantages over others. They also had an easier path to citizenship, even within the relatively technical first-decree process, which determined citizenship based on pertinency. Under the new law, certain advantages were extended to Slavs and Russian refugees of Slavic origin as well, thereby influencing employment opportunities.

In public discourse, foreignness is a far more fluid and elusive concept. The influence of legal definitions and assigned nationality is evident, yet foreignness was also tied to the very act of migration – a rural dweller seeking work in the city, a migrant from another Banovina, or a refugee could all be perceived as foreign, regardless of their nationality. Notably, the latter groups were more frequently associated with lower social strata, whereas foreigners, defined by citizenship and/or nationality, were more commonly linked in the discourse to better-qualified, higher-skilled positions.

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Neja Blaj Hribar

KDO JE TUJEC? ZAPOSLOVANJE TUJCEV MED ZAKONODAJO IN DISKURZOM – PRIMER DRAVSKE BANOVINE

POVZETEK

Prispevek obravnava vprašanje, kako je bila kategorija »tujca« pravno in diskurzivno oblikovana v kontekstu zaposlovanja v Dravski banovini v Kraljevini Jugoslaviji, s poudarkom na tridesetih letih. Z analizo državnih predpisov in slovenskega časopisja raziskuje, v kolikšni meri sta bili ti dve kategoriji notranje enotni ter kje in zakaj so se znotraj njiju pojavljale razlike. V medvojnem obdobju je zaposlovanje tujih delavcev postalo eno pomembnejših vprašanj, predvsem skozi prizmo ideje ekonomskega nacionalizma. Dravska banovina pri tem ni bila izjema, temveč predstavlja zgovoren primer državne zakonodaje, v kateri so se prepletali protekcionistične ideje gospodarske politike in pričakovanja javnosti ter na drugi strani realno gospodarsko stanje, mednarodne obveznosti in strah pred povračilnimi ukrepi drugih držav.

V zakonodaji so se po eni strani zaostrovale razmere za pridobitev delovnih dovoljenj, hkrati pa so se množile izjeme. Prav te so ustvarjale razlike v možnostih zaposlovanja različnih skupin tujih državljanov. Razlike so se pojavljale tudi med različnimi skupinami glede na možnosti pridobitve državljanstva. Pravna kategorija »tujca« torej ni bila enotna, oblikovala se je kot hierarhija, v kateri so državljanstvo, etnojezikovna pripadnost in mednarodna situacija določali, kako »tuj« je bil posameznik.

V javnem diskurzu je bila tujost še bolj fluidna in težko določljiva. Vpliv pravnih definicij in pripisane narodnosti je bil sicer razviden, a na tujost so vplivali tudi osebne percepcije, socialni status in sam akt migracije. Za tujca je lahko veljal podeželan, ki je v mestu iskal zaposlitev, priseljenec iz druge banovine ali begunec, ne glede na narodnost. Tudi diskurzivna kategorija »tujca« torej ni bila enotna, temveč notranje razslojena in odvisna od konteksta.

Business and Environmental History:

Introduction to the Thematic Section

Poslovna in okoljska zgodovina: uvod v tematski sklop

The economy appears to move through time at a leisurely pace of its own. Unlike the political landscape, which can shift overnight due to elections, revolutions, or other ruptures, the economy adapts to changing circumstances only gradually; it resembles a massive ship on an established course, capable of altering its trajectory only slowly and at considerable energy cost. The economy is thus profoundly shaped by the *longue durée*; consequently, it must remain attuned to all the factors that influence its functioning over the long term. In one way or another, no economic entity can ignore the spatial and temporal context in which it operates. Every entity must be acutely aware of its operating environment, as well as of what it extracts from it and what it gives back.

For a long time, and in many places, there was little regard for this balance; companies extracted water, timber, land, and labour to secure raw materials and energy for production, often “repaying” this by polluting air and contaminating water, groundwater, and soil – practices that, day after day and year after year, undermined the health of the local population. With the dawn of the modern era, calls for change grew louder, initially from individuals and eventually from entire organisations and government bodies, insisting that the status quo was no longer sustainable. Green and environmental movements began advocating for a cleaner environment, while legislative restrictions reined in corporate practices. Today, being “green” is fashionable, even if it often amounts to nothing more than empty rhetoric on paper, as we are reminded every few years by scandals involving supposedly eco-friendly manufacturers who manipulate data behind the scenes, prioritising the mathematical and financial logic of the free market over the environmental limits on pollution.

Within this historic development – perhaps portrayed in a somewhat pessimistic light – there are, of course, numerous examples that defy the rule. Every company has its own story and its evolving relationship with the environment in which it is situated. The historical evolution of the relationship between business and its environment

is a compelling yet relatively under-researched topic within both the European and broader contexts. An international workshop held at the Institute of Contemporary History in Ljubljana on October 23 and 24, 2025, the seventh in a series of workshops on the business history of Central and Eastern Europe organised under the auspices of the European Business History Association, sought to at least partially bridge this gap. Choosing the theme of historical links between business history and environmental history – the latter being a field the Institute's research group on economic, social, and environmental history has been intensively exploring in recent years – within the context of Central and Eastern Europe was a somewhat bold move. These are two relatively specialised research areas, and the intersection of their Venn diagram leaves only a handful of experts, even at a continental level. Nevertheless, the workshop was rich in innovative research topics, fresh methodologies, and vivid insights into both well-known subjects and virtually uncharted areas of research.

In this issue of *Contributions to Contemporary History*, we present three papers from that workshop covering diverse geographical and thematic areas. These papers demonstrate the various approaches to analysing the historical relationships between business entities and the environment. The first article focuses on the region closest to Slovenia – Austrian Styria – and examines specific companies that harnessed the abundant water resources of the hilly landscape for their production processes. Walter M. Iber and Christian Schmidt present case studies of three such companies, highlighting their centuries-long continuity spanning from the early modern period, or even the Middle Ages, to the present day. The authors seek to uncover the secrets behind this enduring continuity and corporate longevity, identifying a combination of factors: access to natural resources; a well-conceived business strategy (which sometimes necessitates radical changes to the company's core production function in response to evolving times); and, of course, a measure of good fortune. In the database of the oldest Styrian companies, more than one-fifth are involved in utilising water power. As Iber and Schmidt observe, this underscores the crucial importance of water, waterside locations, and water energy in establishing a business.

The second contribution does not exactly rummage through the dustbins of history; instead, it explores the history of waste dumps themselves. Recent research in environmental history has revealed that studying the history of waste and dumpsites can be highly illuminating, revealing what was discarded and how pre-modern societies, often wrongly assumed to have been virtually unfamiliar with the concept of trash, actually managed their refuse. Issues regarding dump locations, unpleasant odours, and the spread of disease have plagued many societies throughout history. Eduard Kubů and Barbora Štolleová present the history of waste in Prague during the 19th and 20th centuries, focusing specifically on remarkably early attempts to recycle organic waste by selling it as fertiliser to farmers in the city's fertile hinterland. This system persisted until the 1930s, longer than in many other parts of Europe, but it gradually declined and eventually ceased to operate due to factors such as the substantial increase in waste volume coupled with a drop in its utility, rising transport costs

to rural areas, and the greater availability of industrially produced fertilisers (which caused farmers to lose interest even if organic waste were offered for free).

The final contribution by Liliya Wedel, which extends the concept of Eastern Europe to its furthest geographical and semantic limits, examines the oil industry in Baku, Azerbaijan, during the era of Tsarist Russia. While the oil industry is often perceived as a relatively modern phenomenon, its roots lie deep in the 19th century; indeed, alongside the United States, Azerbaijan was a globally pivotal region for oil extraction. The author observes that the industry fundamentally shaped the local economy, while its extreme environmental impact necessitated regulation and intervention by local authorities. The complex negotiations, caught between the boom fuelled by oil profits and the adverse effects of extraction on the local community, reveal an early process that contains the seeds of a proto-ecological public debate, dating back to the reign of the Romanovs.

Styrian enterprises, Prague's refuse, and Baku oil offer a wide range of insights into the historical interplay between business structures and attitudes towards the environment. These insights confirm – as often happens when delving into the past – that the evolution of environmental awareness is not merely a phenomenon of recent decades but can be traced back to the more distant past, appearing in unexpected forms and places. Certain patterns of human behaviour appear to persist. To borrow a famous quote often – albeit erroneously – attributed to Mark Twain: history may not repeat itself, but it often rhymes.

Ivan Smiljanić

Walter M. Iber*, Christian G. Schmidt**

Hydropower and Entrepreneurship: Case Studies from Styria

IZVLEČEK

HIDROENERGIJA IN PODJETNIŠTVO: ŠTUDIJE PRIMEROV IZ ŠTAJERSKE

V članku je obravnavana vloga hidroenergije kot izhodišča in strateškega vira za razvoj in dolgoživost tradicionalnih podjetij na Štajerskem. Na podlagi treh študij primerov – podjetij Herbert Lugitsch u. Söhne Ges. mbH in E-Lugitsch Elektro GmbH, Zellstoff Pöls AG ter Mosdorfer GmbH – avtorja analizirata, kako so ta podjetja skozi desetletja dosegla uspeh z izkoriščanjem hidroenergije (pionirstvo, strateška diverzifikacija, nišno pozicioniranje/ diferenciacija, širjenje in sreča). Študija temelji na "graškem pristopu", ki združuje poslovno upravljanje (Malik, Chandler, Porter) in zgodovinske pristope, da bi osvetlila dejavnike, ki vplivajo na dolgoživost podjetništva. Ugotovitve kažejo, da so bili poleg vodnih virov za dolgoročni uspeh bistvenega pomena tudi podjetniška daljnovidnost, prilagodljivost, sprejemanje konkretnih strateških odločitev in včasih tudi čista sreča.

Ključne besede: hidroenergija, podjetništvo, Štajerska, poslovna zgodovina, graški pristop, dolgoživost podjetij

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ABSTRACT

This article examines hydropower as a starting point and strategic resource for the development and longevity of traditional enterprises in Styria. Drawing on three case studies – Herbert Lugitsch u. Söhne Ges. mbH and E-Lugitsch Elektro GmbH, Zellstoff Pöls AG, and Mosdorfer GmbH – the authors analyse how, over decades, these companies secured their success through hydropower (early-mover advantage, strategic diversification, niche positioning/differentiation, expansion, and luck). The study draws on the so-called “Graz approach”, which combines business management (Malik, Chandler, Porter) and historical approaches to illuminate the factors behind entrepreneurial longevity. The findings show that, in addition to water as a resource, entrepreneurial foresight, adaptability, specific strategic decision-making, and sometimes sheer luck were crucial for long-term success.

Keywords: hydropower, entrepreneurship, Styria, business history, Graz approach, corporate longevity

Introduction

The basic idea for this paper stems from a documentation project titled *Wurzeln für die Zukunft: Steirische Traditionsunternehmen als Standortfaktor und kulturelles Erbe* (*Roots for the Future: Styrian Traditional Companies as a Location Factor and Cultural Heritage*), conducted at the Institute of History, University of Graz. Specifically, it focuses on companies that are 100 years old or older and have therefore shaped Styria as a business region for many decades. They are documented in a database that will ultimately be accessible to the public and will contain information such as the year of foundation, ownership development, locations, product portfolio, and employee development throughout each company's history. In the end, around 300 companies will be included. The call for papers for the workshop *Business and the Natural Environment in the History of Central and Eastern Europe*¹ prompted us to search the database for companies in the hydropower sector. Given Austria's topography, especially in Styria, it is not surprising that many companies still operate in the energy supply sector today. What is more surprising, however, is the diversity of companies whose origins lie in hydropower (but which today, after various diversification steps, have only a marginal connection to hydropower or have moved away from it altogether). A look at our database shows that hydropower was, so to speak, the initial focus of around 70 companies, operating in the iron and steel, metalworking, and wood industries, as well as the paper and milling industries. As a natural resource,

1 Institute of Contemporary History, Ljubljana, 23 and 24 October 2025.

water was thus an essential prerequisite for Styria's development as a business region. Initially, this was not linked to any particular environmental awareness, but rather to pragmatism: hydropower was available, convenient, and advantageous, so it was used. It is only in recent decades that the "green" aspect has come into play, for example through the marketing of "clean electricity".

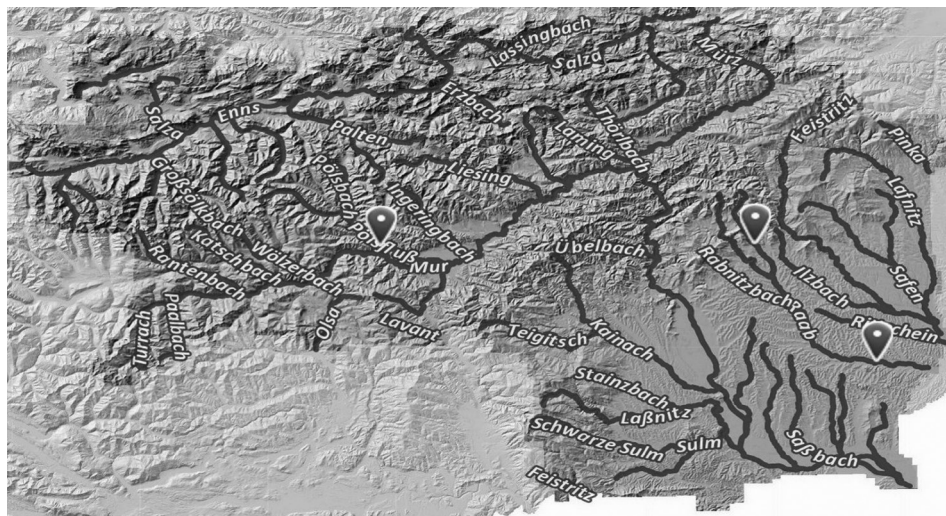
This paper aims to remain faithful to the approach used in research and teaching in Graz (the "Graz approach")² and to examine the reasons for the longevity of long-established traditional companies. Hence, the article is seen as a contribution to the growing field of corporate longevity studies. Applying the "Graz approach", four propositions can be derived. First, the availability of water as an energy source gave the companies under consideration a significant early-mover advantage. Second, hydropower shaped the preconditions for these companies' activities and created the foundational framework for the necessary strategic decisions, but it played a varying – sometimes greater, sometimes lesser – role in the course of each company's history. Third, the strategies underlying the longevity of the chosen enterprises include focus/niche positioning, differentiation, diversification and expansion. Fourth, at times, corporate survival can be attributed to nothing more than luck. In this paper, we will examine the proposed hypotheses through three selected case studies from the broad complex of "entrepreneurship and hydropower to longevity". The three case studies include:

- Herbert Lugitsch u. Söhne Ges. mbH and E-Lugitsch Elektro GmbH (on the river Raab),
- Zellstoff Pöls AG (on the Pöls river), and
- Mosdorfer GmbH (on the Weizbach; see Figure 1).

The enterprises were purposively selected from the approximately 70 hydropower-linked companies in the project's database to illustrate distinct pathways – focus/niche positioning and differentiation, diversification, and expansion – under changing ownership, all of which have contributed to their entrepreneurial longevity. This purposive sampling is intended to highlight variation rather than statistical representativeness. Thus, the findings should be interpreted as illustrative and hypothesis-generating rather than broadly generalisable without further systematic research.

2 For a summary of the Graz approach, see Walter M. Iber and Thomas Krautzer, "Geschichte als strategische Ressource," *Business History Monat* (November 2025): 50–54. For more on the concept, structure, and results of this approach, see Walter M. Iber, "Die Schuhfabrik Köflach und die Skischuhmarke Koflach – Aufstieg, Boom, Niedergang," in Walter M. Iber, Johannes Gießauf, Harald Knoll, and Peter Mauritsch, eds., *Sport, Prestige, Profit. Historische Betrachtungen zum Run auf Ruhm und Reichtum* (Baden-Baden: Academia, 2024), 235–64. See also the following theses: Romina Volkheimer, "Die Herbert Lugitsch u. Söhne Ges. mbH. Eine historische Betriebsanalyse" (Master's thesis, University of Graz, 2024). Markus Seunig, "Die Historie der Rucksackmarke 'Kamarg'. Unternehmensgeschichte im Spannungsfeld von wirtschaftlichen, gesellschaftlichen und politischen Wandlungsprozessen" (Master's thesis, University of Graz, 2024). Christian Schmidt, "Die Ankünder GmbH. Wirtschaftsentwicklung, Eigentümerstruktur und Werbekommunikation über 100 Jahre" (Master's thesis, University of Graz, 2024).

Figure 1: Company locations – Zellstoff Pöls in the northwest near the Pöls River, Mosdorfer in the east near the Weizbach, and Lugitsch in the southeast near the Raab River – as well as Styria's major rivers in general.



Source: *Digitaler Atlas GIS-Steiermark*

Water-driven Economic Branches in Styria

The region of Styria is 76 per cent mountainous, and 58 per cent of the total area is covered by forests (as shown in Figure 1).³ The mountainous topography and the Alpine climate in the northern and central parts – the south and southeast are subject to a more Pannonian climate – create an abundance of water: Styria is home to 6,675 flowing water bodies with a total length of 17,168 km.⁴ Similar figures apply to the entire territory of the Republic of Austria, which is why hydropower – especially since the end of World War I, when dozens of power plant projects were initiated due to the coal shortage – has played a central role in electricity production.⁵ The interplay of these environmental conditions – mountains, forests, and water – has shaped the region's economic structure. The economic branches essentially influenced by water and water power, which attained major significance in the Styrian economy, shall be examined.

3 Landesstatistik Steiermark, "Geografische Übersichten," accessed on 2 October 2025, <https://www.landesentwicklung.steiermark.at/cms/beitrag/11679864/141979459/>.

4 Das Land Steiermark Umwelt, "Oberflächengewässer," accessed on 2 October 2025, <https://www.umwelt.steiermark.at/cms/ziel/602965/DE/>.

5 Richard Hufschmied, "'Weißes Gold' in (Deutsch-)Österreich – Kontinuität und Wandel mit dem Epochenjahr 1918," in Oliver Rathkolb, Richard Hufschmied, Andreas Kuchler, and Hannes Leidinger, eds., *Wasserkraft. Elektrizität. Kraftwerksprojekte ab 1880 im Spannungsfeld* (Wien: Verlag Kremayr & Scheriau, 2012).

Corn mills and electricity

The use of water power to grind grain is one of the earliest applications of machinery in human history. Beginning in the regions along the Rhine, the Moselle, and the Danube, watermills had spread throughout Europe by the twelfth century. The first watermills in Styria appeared as early as the second half of the eleventh century, although their prevalence did not increase significantly until the thirteenth century. By the end of the sixteenth century, many grain mills had been converted into scythe hammers, trip hammers, and wire-drawing mills, which required less charcoal and water than ironworks and could therefore operate on rivers with lower water flow. Following Werner von Siemens's invention of the first practical electric generator in 1867, mills began to harness electricity for both power generation and to drive machinery.⁶ After 1880, the number of commercial mills declined sharply, primarily because of cheap grain imports from Hungary and the resulting reduction in grain cultivation in Styria. At the same time, large mechanised roller mills were established in the lowlands – especially in southern and south-eastern Styria – displacing smaller mills in the mountainous regions.⁷ From the 1890s onwards, larger mills also began supplying electricity to neighbouring enterprises or public grids. This diversification strategy ensured the survival of certain mills, which developed into large-scale operations,⁸ such as the Lugitsch family business in south-eastern Styria, which today is the largest electricity producer in the region and operates one of Austria's largest feed mills (see the case studies below).⁹

Papermaking

In the northern regions of the Alps, the first paper mills emerged towards the end of the 14th century. In Austria, the earliest documented mill was established in Lower Austria in 1469. The first Styrian paper mill was likewise founded in the 15th century, near the city of Graz¹⁰ – the Leuzendorf paper mill, which was purchased in 1793 by the printer and publisher Andreas Leykam and subsequently became the foundation of the largest paper manufactory in the Habsburg Monarchy – the later Leykam-Josefsthal AG.¹¹ The rise of book printing led to growing demand for paper, prompting the establishment of numerous new paper mills. As part of the modernisation measures initiated by Empress Maria Theresa from 1754 onward and carried on

6 Jon Mathieu, *The Alps. An Environmental History* (Cambridge, Medford: Polity Press, 2019), 117.

7 Bernhard Reismann and Johann Wiedner, "Wasser Treibt Mühlen und Hammerwerke," in Josef Riegler, ed., *Wasserwirtschaft in der Steiermark. Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Graz: Veröffentlichungen des Steiermärkischen Landesarchivs, 2015), 158.

8 Ibidem, 161.

9 Volkheimer, "Die Herbert Lugitsch u. Söhne Ges. mbH," 38.

10 Reismann and Wiedner, "Wasser treibt Mühlen und Hammerwerke," 175.

11 Franz Mathis, *Big Business in Österreich. Österreichische Großunternehmen in Kurzdarstellungen* (München: Oldenbourg, 1987), 186.

by her son Joseph II, paper production quadrupled by 1798. However, shortages of rags and labour, as well as water scarcity and the freezing of rivers in winter, hampered production.

Most newly founded paper mills were built along rivers, which provided both the necessary motive power and a timber supply via rafting. From the 1860s onward, paper began to be produced from wood fibres, and the abundance of forests in Styria became a decisive locational advantage for the expanding paper industry. In the following decades, numerous wood-grinding, cellulose, and pulp factories were established.¹² One enterprise that evolved from a paper mill into a paper factory during this period was Johann Koch's Pöls paper mill—today known as Zellstoff Pöls AG, the oldest paper producer in Styria (more on this below).¹³

Hammermills

It is believed that the first water-powered hammer in Styria was operated by the Benedictine Abbey of Admont at the end of the 12th century. However, the earliest documented water hammer dates to 1290 in the Enns Valley.¹⁴ Between 1180 and 1290, iron ore processing increasingly shifted from the mountains to the valleys' waterways, where water wheels powered bellows and forging hammers. By 1260, Styria's iron industry was beginning to take shape – likely driven by shortages of charcoal and labour, which necessitated establishing hammer mills away from the Erzberg, along the Mur-Mürz Furrow and in the Enns Valley. The production centres of Vordernberg and Innerberg (modern-day Eisenerz) became focal points of this industry. In the 16th century, many iron hammers were converted into scythe hammers. High demand for scythes in the agricultural regions of the East and Southeast drove this transformation. Scythe hammers required less water and could therefore be established along smaller, less water-rich rivers in the valleys. However, as industrialisation favoured the accumulation and expansion of larger factories, smaller hammer mills began to fall behind. By the 1830s, competition from the increasingly dominant English iron and steel production had intensified. In response, Archduke John of Austria advocated the consolidation of Styria's iron industry, a process realised only in 1881 with the founding of the Österreichisch-Alpine Montangesellschaft (Austrian Alpine Mining Company, ÖAMG).

From the 1850s onward, the expansion of the Southern Railway improved access to coal, and steam power gradually replaced water power. By 1900, water power had been almost entirely displaced as a primary energy source, with only small-scale operations continuing to rely on it. However, water power returned in a modified form:

12 Reismann and Wiedner, "Wasser treibt Mühlen und Hammerwerke," 175–78.

13 Thomas Krautzer, "Unternehmertum und Wasserkraft – Ein historischer Rückblick," *Business History Monat* (November 2024): 13.

14 Roman Sandgruber, *Ökonomie und Politik. Österreichische Wirtschaftsgeschichte vom Mittelalter bis zur Gegenwart* (Wien: Ueberreuter, 1995), 21.

water turbines were used to drive generators, producing electricity for iron and steelworks. In 1900, the ÖAMG constructed its own hydroelectric power plant for the Donawitz Steelworks on the Mur River to supply electricity for its operations.¹⁵ Small hammer mills could no longer compete in iron and steel production unless they occupied niche markets, as exemplified by Mosdorfer GmbH in Weiz, eastern Styria (more on this later in this paper).

Case Studies

Herbert Lugitsch u. Söhne Ges.mbH and E-Lugitsch Elektro GmbH

In 1909, the miller and sawmill operator Florian Lugitsch acquired the estate of the Löscher family in Gniebing, southeastern Styria, which comprised a grain and oil mill, agricultural land, and a small hydroelectric plant. Previously, he had operated a mill and sawmill in nearby Grasdorf, also in southeastern Styria. Recognising the river Raab's greater hydroelectric potential and the site's existing railway connection, he opted to purchase the Löscher mill. Lugitsch had already grasped electricity's transformative potential and, by 1913, had electrified the local railway station. Simultaneously, he secured early supply territories – and thus consumers for his self-generated power – by extending the network to the surrounding villages.¹⁶

In the final weeks of World War II, combat occurred directly at the mill: the bridge and weir of the hydroelectric plant were blown up, the mill building was damaged by shellfire, and inventory, including grain, had been removed. Nevertheless, the hydroelectric plant and the mill were hastily restored to operation. In the face of acute food shortages, the Lugitsch family was able to provide flour, meat products from sheep husbandry, and electric power for themselves and parts of the surrounding region. The high demand for the family enterprise's products¹⁷ during post-war reconstruction and the economic boom that began in the late 1940s¹⁸ propelled the business into rapid growth. Ten years later, the company began offering electrical installations, driven by the conviction that survival could not rely on electricity generation alone. Soon after, an electrical supply store was opened, initially focusing on selling electric motors to farmers and household appliances. To ensure the necessary voltage for motor operation, the distribution network was upgraded accordingly.

At the same time, the company entered the animal feed sector, building a feed mill for poultry and pigs. At the end of the 1960s, the family business suffered a serious setback when a batch of feed was found to be contaminated with toxins. The affected

15 Reismann and Wiedner, "Wasser treibt Mühlen und Hammerwerke," 178–82.

16 Volkheimer, "Die Herbert Lugitsch u. Söhne Ges. mbH.," 14–15.

17 Ibid., 16–24.

18 Felix Butschek, *Österreichische Wirtschaftsgeschichte. Von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart* (Wien, Köln, Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 2011), 292.

feed and raw materials had to be destroyed, and the facilities thoroughly cleaned, halting production for a month. The incident eroded trust, which customers exploited to demand significantly lower prices. In response, Lugitsch decided to take over the slaughtering and sale of poultry themselves. The crisis was thus turned to their advantage, as evidenced by the expansion that began in 1971. Five years later, Lugitsch acquired an old estate, on which a layer-hen facility for 35,000 birds was established. Simultaneously, the mill was fully automated, and the grinding rights of three other mills were acquired. In 1982, a second hydroelectric plant was constructed south of the original facility. This expansion-driven growth brought about structural transformation. Although the agricultural and electrical divisions were managed by different family members, the company's increased scale necessitated the formal separation of the enterprises. From 1984, Herbert Lugitsch managed the Herbert Lugitsch OHG (from 1989, Herbert Lugitsch u. Söhne Ges. mbH), overseeing meat and feed production (feed mill), while his brother Florian ran the Florian Lugitsch OHG (today E-Lugitsch Elektro GmbH), responsible for electricity generation, electrical installation, and trade.

The year 1991 marked a pivotal moment in the company's history, once again guided by strategic foresight and careful assessment. Austria's impending accession to the European Union heralded the abolition of the so-called mill quota system – a fixed allocation of grinding rights – effectively liberalising the market. Anticipating that this would displace small mills in favour of industrial-scale operations, Lugitsch made the strategic decision to discontinue grain milling.¹⁹ History proved him right: whereas in 1995 there were still some 300 grain mills in Styria, by 2024 only a handful remained.²⁰ The proceeds from the sale of the grain mill were reinvested – in the expansion of poultry processing and in the installation of the first pasteurisation plant in Europe within a feed mill. Investment momentum continued: in 1996, E-Lugitsch Elektro GmbH made its first investment in a photovoltaic system. In 1999, Herbert Lugitsch u. Söhne Ges. mbH acquired two feed mills and, once again, converted them into the first and, to this day, the most advanced organic feed mill in Europe. Steady investments in production facilities and structural expansion followed, generating further growth.

In 2001, Herbert Lugitsch u. Söhne Ges. mbH acquired a stake in an energy firm and took over an egg production operation. By 2004, E-Lugitsch Elektro GmbH had opened an electrical installation business in Croatia, marking the company's first step abroad. Subsequent acquisitions of two electrical installation and retail companies followed in 2008 and 2020. This long series of expansionary undertakings attests to the sustained success of the enterprises.²¹

19 Volkheimer, "Die Herbert Lugitsch u. Söhne Ges. mbH.," 24–27.

20 Andrea Rieger, "Er haucht der 400 Jahre alten Mühle in Deutschfeistritz neues Leben ein," *Kleine Zeitung*, 30 March 2024, accessed on 9 October 2025, <https://www.kleinezeitung.at/steiermark/graz/18320583/er-haucht-der-400-jahre-alten-muehle-in-deutschfeistritz-neues-leben>.

21 Volkheimer, "Die Herbert Lugitsch u. Söhne Ges. mbH.," 28–30.

Zellstoff Pöls AG

Zellstoff Pöls AG is the oldest paper mill in Styria and the largest producer of speciality pulp and speciality papers in Central Europe.²² The company's origins date back to 1700, when a paper mill commissioned by Prince Ferdinand von Schwarzenberg was completed on the Reifenstein estate – from then on, it was known as the “Reifensteiner paper mill”. Over the next three centuries, the mill frequently changed lessees, and only minimal investment was made in modernisation. As a result, following Empress Maria Theresa's 1749 patent liberalising the paper industry, the mill was unable to keep pace with other paper producers. Like its competitors, it suffered from a chronic shortage of the most essential raw materials – rags and tatters. Its survival was secured only by a supply contract with the Graz government offices for chancery paper. Between 1867 and 1870, operations ceased entirely. Only after Johann Koch acquired the mill was production brought up to contemporary technical standards and the facility transformed into a factory. The installation of steam boilers, a new waterwheel, and a water-supply pumping system, together with the transition from rags to wood as the primary raw material – a decisive locational advantage in the forest-rich province of Styria – enabled the Pöls paper factory to catch up with its competitors²³ and establish itself among the eight remaining paper producers in Styria.²⁴ In 1888, a fire destroyed the entire factory, yet the owner, Johann Koch, turned the catastrophe into an opportunity to modernise and even expand the facility. He shifted production towards durable, high-quality grades of paper – a product line that continues to this day. However, the heavy investment costs overstrained Koch's finances, and in 1901 he was forced to sell the mill to the Graz merchant David Stern, who, for similar reasons, sold it again just two years later to the Moravian industrialist Alfred Friedemann. Friedemann acquired numerous new machines, financing them almost entirely through debt. When the factory's sales declined, he was unable to meet his creditors' demands, and in 1910 ownership of the Pöls paper factory passed to the Styrian Escompte Bank.

During World War I, production came to a halt due to a shortage of labour until the firm Moritz Mauthner & Sohn took over operations in 1917. Once again, the new owner undertook substantial investments, including the construction of a cableway linking the factory to the railway loading station. Yet once more, a lack of capital led to failure, as the collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy eliminated a large portion of the company's market. The factory continued to operate at a loss.

A turning point came in 1921, when the North Italian industrialist Luigi Burgo purchased the struggling plant to supply pulp to his Italian paper mills. The Italian paper industry faced a shortage of domestic timber, while Styria's abundant forests ensured Pöls a stable market in Italy and thus its survival. Over the next six decades, the company prospered – thanks largely to the Burgo Group's investments in the

22 Krautzer, “Unternehmertum und Wasserkraft,” 13.

23 Brunner, *300 Jahre Papier*, 42–51.

24 Stefan Karner, *Die Steiermark im 20. Jahrhundert* (Graz: Leykam, 2005), 57.

1920s and 1930s and to capital infusion from the United States' European Recovery Program (ERP, also known as "the Marshall Plan") in the postwar period.²⁵ The "oil price shock", triggered by OPEC's restriction of oil production after the Yom Kippur War in 1973, marked the beginning of the so-called "corrugated business cycle" (*Wellblechkonjunktur*) in Austria²⁶ – high raw material prices and insufficient production capacity also weakened the Pöls paper factory. At the same time, the emerging environmental movement drew attention to the significant ecological impact of the paper industry, which was responsible for severe pollution due to high CO₂ and sulphur dioxide emissions, as well as the discharge of toxic acids and lignin into rivers.

With substantial financial support from the Republic of Austria, the State of Styria, and the nationalised industry (VOEST-Alpine) – largely prompted by the federal government under Chancellor Bruno Kreisky – construction of a sulphate pulp mill began in 1980, to markedly reduce these environmental burdens. Liquidity problems within the Cartiere Burgo Group increased the state's expenditure. Ultimately, the Italian management was replaced by Austrian executives, and the long-standing majority owner sold his shares to the national and Styrian governments. Construction costs for the sulphate pulp mill escalated, and technical difficulties during commissioning led to substantial corporate indebtedness. In 1984, the state industrial holding ÖIAG (Österreichische Industrie-Holding AG) acquired 90 per cent of the shares.

As part of the restructuring and rehabilitation of the entire nationalised industry, the Pöls pulp factory was sold in 1988 to the Carinthian multinational Frantschach AG. With the rise of the Green political movement, the severe environmental impacts of the paper industry became a focal point of public debate. The company invested in more environmentally friendly processes to enhance productivity. Major investments included installing a biological wastewater treatment plant, adopting gentler chemical pulping methods, and improving water treatment. By the mid-1990s, these measures proved effective: Pöls had established itself as a low-cost producer of heavy-duty and speciality papers in Europe.²⁷

In 2000, the next change of ownership occurred when the Austrian Heinzl Group acquired the Pöls pulp factory.²⁸ The acquisition was motivated by the site's specialisation in high-quality speciality and heavy papers, which the group sought to integrate into its portfolio. The strategic objective was to secure the location in the long term, achieved through investments to increase efficiency and productivity and to ensure a high level of energy self-sufficiency. Under the "Pöls 500+" project – referring to the production of over 500,000 tons of paper annually – a biomass power plant and a hydroelectric plant were constructed, raising the self-sufficiency rate to 90 per cent.

25 Wilhelm Pekari, "Die Zellstoff Pöls AG – eine historische Betriebsanalyse. Mit einem Schwerpunkt zwischen 1994 und 2006" (Master's thesis, University of Graz, 2008), 18–20.

26 Walter M. Iber and Thomas Krautzer, "Steiermark 1985–2008: Vom alten Industriegebiet zum modernen Wissensraum – eine Projektvorstellung," in Walter M. Iber and Thomas Krautzer, eds., *Wirtschaft und Region. Transformationsprozesse im internationalen Vergleich* (Wien: LIT Verlag, 2021), 36.

27 Pekari, "Die Zellstoff Pöls AG," 33–45.

28 Ferdinand Lacina et al., *Österreichische Industriegeschichte 1955 bis 2005. Die ergriffene Chance* (Wien: Verlag Carl Ueberreuter, 2005), 282.

Productivity improvements were further supported by the acquisition of a majority stake in a pulp mill in Paskow, Czech Republic,²⁹ and the installation of new paper machines in 2013 and 2019.³⁰

Under Heinzl Group management, the oldest paper mill in Styria consolidated after two turbulent decades and emerged as Central Europe's leading producer of speciality pulp.

Mosdorfer GmbH

Mosdorfer GmbH – the parent company of today's Knill Group – is a family enterprise based in Weiz, eastern Styria, with a history spanning more than 350 years. It has evolved from a blade smithy into an international corporation specialising in the production, installation, and maintenance of fittings for overhead transmission lines in the energy and railway sectors, as well as in electrical distribution cabinets.³¹ The group employs nearly 1,500 people worldwide.³² Around 150 people work at the company's site in Weiz, which dates back to the 15th century.³³

The oldest iron hammer forge on the Weizbach is documented from 1425, when the Krottendorfer family of smiths operated a blade forge there. Conditions for iron-working in the Weiz region were highly favourable: abundant forests provided charcoal, the local ore was of good quality, and the warm tributary feeding the Weizbach ensured ice-free water throughout the year. From 1577 onward, the blade smithy supplied the Styrian Estates with weapons to defend against Ottoman incursions.³⁴

In 1712, the Bavarian swordsmith Josef Mosdorfer acquired the forge, marking the beginning of the Mosdorfer-Knill family enterprise.³⁵ The fine reputation of Weiz blades soon attracted major orders from the imperial court in Vienna. During the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–1748) and the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), several cavalry regiments of the imperial army were equipped with sabres, while the infantry received bayonets and gun barrels.³⁶

In 1784, Anton Mosdorfer expanded the workshop by adding a scythe forge, convinced that manufacturing swords, bayonets, and barrels alone would not ensure the company's long-term survival. This foresight and decision to diversify proved remarkably astute in light of later developments in weapons technology. By 1800, the forge

29 Pekari, "Die Zellstoff Pöls AG," 33–49.

30 Heinzelpöls, "Geschichte," accessed on 9 October 2025, <https://www.heinzelpoels.com/ueber-uns/geschichte/>.

31 "Mosdorfer GmbH," in *Datenbank zu den Steirischen Traditionsunternehmen 100+* (forthcoming).

32 Wirtschaftscompass, "Knill Energy Holding GmbH," accessed on 12 October 2025, <https://app.wirtschaftscompass.at/WirtschaftsCompass/profile/company/5d124842-b01b-4893-94cf-c699f9806575>.

33 Wirtschaftscompass, "Mosdorfer GmbH," accessed on 12 October 2025, <https://app.wirtschaftscompass.at/WirtschaftsCompass/profile/company/d97411c0-8d17-4f9f-a760-a398e3a6f920>.

34 Waltraud Frohofer, *Knill. Chronik einer erfolgreichen Firmengruppe* (Weiz: Knill Holding GmbH, 2001), 21.

35 Ibid., 50.

36 Ibid., 63.

was producing more than 130,000 scythes annually, and scythe-making had become its principal business.³⁷

Balthasar Mosdorfer, representing the next generation, diversified further, establishing in 1833 a refining hammer forge to shape iron rods, bars, and sheets for further processing. In 1847, he built a second sickle hammer on the Weizbach, increasing production to over 200,000 scythes. In 1862, Mosdorfer acquired an old horseshoe forge and converted it into a flattening hammer mill, where metals were smoothed and formed for various uses.

From 1868 onwards, the Weizbach forges adopted the newly invented Bessemer process for steel production. This innovation enabled the direct forging of cast workpieces, for which Styrian iron – unlike that from the Rhineland and Westphalia – was particularly well suited.³⁸ Production costs fell considerably, and by 1870, 386,650 scythes were being forged and exported to Bohemia, Moravia, Germany, Hungary, and even America.³⁹

In 1890, the family enterprise was divided between the brothers Franz and Josef. Franz took over the large and tool hammer works, where anvils, ship anchors, and a range of forged tools, both large and small, were produced, while Josef managed the sickle factory. Following Franz's death in 1905, his branch of the business dissolved, whereas under Josef's successor, Moriz Mosdorfer, the scythe factory expanded significantly. In the 1920s and 1930s, Mosdorfer exported sickles and scythes to South America, the United States, and across Europe.

During World War II, Mosdorfer manufactured axes, sickles, and scythes for Austrian and German agriculture, employing prisoners of war as labourers. The immediate postwar years brought a short-lived boom: as agriculture revived, demand for scythes surged. Yet from 1948 onward, as mechanisation spread through farming, demand fell sharply. In this precarious period of transition, the company sought new strategies – producing knives, forks, pliers, hoes, harrows, and other tools. By 1950, Mosdorfer was even manufacturing machetes, which initially sold very successfully in Mexico and Argentina. However, in 1956, 40 per cent import duties were imposed, bringing the machete venture to an abrupt end.

Salvation, however, had already arrived in 1949. Despite lacking the necessary expertise and production capacity, Mosdorfer was awarded the contract to manufacture components for the high-voltage transmission lines of a section of the Kaprun hydroelectric power plant in Tyrol.⁴⁰ The engineer Friedrich Knill – husband of the company's heir, Herta Mosdorfer – who had led the company since 1938 and had acquired electrical engineering expertise through his work at the motor manufacturer ELIN in Weiz⁴¹ – was able to bring the project to a successful conclusion, marking

37 Ibid., 86–87.

38 Ibid., 134–36.

39 Ibid., 141.

40 Christian Knill, "Firmengruppe Knill-Mosdorfer. Eine historische Betriebsanalyse" (Master's thesis, University of Graz, 1998), 24–39.

41 Frohofer, *Knill*, 172.

the beginning of a completely new – and still ongoing – product focus. In 1956, the remaining stock of sickles, axes, and other inventory from the sickle forge was sold. From then on, the forge produced components for high-voltage transmission lines, which were delivered to Syria, India, Pakistan, Belgium, the United States, Germany, and Bulgaria. In the same year, Friedrich Knill became a partner in the company; from then on, the Knill family managed its operations.

By the 1970s, Gunther Knill had taken over the family business. He introduced new production methods and expanded the factory premises to meet rising order volumes. In 1982, a hot-dip galvanising facility was established, laying the foundation for a new business segment: galvanising services for third parties.

A strategic milestone was reached when Mosdorfer acquired a major competitor, the Vorarlberg-based company Lorünser, which had extensive expertise in producing fittings for overhead transmission lines. This acquisition marked the start of an expansion phase characterised by numerous takeovers and equity investments. The majority stake acquired in 1986 in a local bakery machinery manufacturer was motivated by a weak order situation, with diversification intended to offset the downturn.

Due to low-capacity utilisation, the company expanded into the United Kingdom by acquiring Lorünser's product representation there and selling products specifically developed for the British market. The following year, a sales office was opened in the Federal Republic of Germany. Another diversification step – one that proved successful – was the acquisition of an electrical engineering company in Vienna, specialising in cable and power distribution boxes. The company, renamed Elsta-Mosdorfer GmbH, marked the group's entry into the energy transmission sector.

Following these steps in market penetration, expansion and diversification, the production of labour-intensive electrical products was relocated to Slovakia, where a new plant was established. A year later, Knill-Holding GmbH, by then a fully fledged group, acquired two insolvent companies of the Assmann Group in south-western Styria, which manufactured plastic cable distribution boxes – until then, Mosdorfer had produced only metal boxes. The company also acquired the Swiss EA Elektroarmaturen AG in Schaffhausen to strengthen its market penetration in Switzerland.⁴² The group further increased its market share in the cable sector by acquiring the Lower Austrian company Rosendahl Maschinen GmbH – at the time the world's second-largest manufacturer of cable machinery – and the German firm Frisch Verseilmaschinen GmbH. In the cable and wire segment, the Knill Group continued its expansion strategy in 1998 and 1999 by acquiring five additional companies in England, France, Germany, and Poland.

The course remained firmly set on growth. To implement this strategy more effectively, the group was reorganised into a three-part holding structure: ETK (Electrical Engineering), KDS (Cable and Wire Systems) – which included the parent company Mosdorfer – and BTK (Bakery Technology), which was later integrated into the KDS

42 Knill, "Firmengruppe Knill-Mosdorfer," 41–45.

segment.⁴³ In 2008, the company joined the ranks of the world's leading suppliers of fittings for overhead transmission lines through the acquisition of the Italian specialist in vibration dampers, DAMP Srl., and the establishment of the subsidiary Mosdorfer India GmbH, marking its entry into the Indian market. The most recent acquisition in 2021 opened yet another sales market: the railway division of the German Pfisterer Group. Renamed Mosdorfer Rail, the subsidiary now produces line systems, insulators, and connectors for the rail and metro sectors.⁴⁴

Analysis

After this whirlwind journey through the histories of these three long-standing Styrian companies, the question arises: what accounts for their rise and enduring longevity? But first, let's look at an essential common thread. The entrepreneurial beginnings of all three companies were rooted in hydropower – in operating mills – and from there their activities gradually expanded and diversified: into blade and scythe forging, energy supply, electrical trade and installation, and eventually into cellulose production, and so on. Hydropower was, in other words, part of the very DNA of all these companies; it inspired entrepreneurial activity of many kinds. However, the fact remains that this – undoubtedly important – starting point alone was by no means enough to secure the long-term survival of the companies. Other factors were also needed, which will be analysed in the following.

To analyse the secrets of long-established traditional companies, i.e., the reasons for their longevity, the University of Graz uses a special “compass”. The model is called the “Graz approach”.⁴⁵ This approach closely links business history to strategic corporate management and examines the reasons behind the success or failure of business activities. Success is defined here as the strategic creation of future viability, that is, the longevity of a company.

The “Graz approach” comprises several theoretical components: first, elements of the “general management model”, developed by the Austrian manager and management theorist Fredmund Malik. Malik conceives of enterprises as organically evolving systems that, in the spirit of cybernetics, can be guided and regulated accordingly. Within such a dynamic and complex environment, the leader acts as the helmsman, shaping the strategy, structure, and culture of the organisation to fulfil its essential purpose: the sustained existence of the enterprise itself—rather than, as is often advocated in U.S. business philosophy, the pursuit of maximum profit in the shortest possible time.⁴⁶ Building on Malik's concept, the subject area of Economic and Social History at the University of Graz also applies additional theoretical frameworks to

⁴³ Froihofer, *Knill*, 216–19.

⁴⁴ Mosdorfer Knill Gruppe, “Unsere Meilensteine,” accessed on 17 October 2025, <https://www.mosdorfer.com/unsere-meilensteine/>.

⁴⁵ Walter M. Iber, “Die Schuhfabrik Köflach,” 247–48.

⁴⁶ Malik, *Management*, 117–19, 180–201.

the classification and analysis of corporate historical events and processes – namely, Michael Porter's theory of competitive strategy⁴⁷ and Alfred D. Chandler's concept of "structure follows strategy", introduced in his seminal 1962 work *Strategy and Structure*.⁴⁸ In addition, there are issues relating to corporate culture, which stem from Herbert Matis's categorisations⁴⁹ but are less relevant to this paper.

For reasons of space, the following analysis will focus exclusively on the strategic dimension, with particular attention to the role hydropower played in the rise of the companies under study and to the managerial decisions that led to their success – understood in this context as their longevity. Meanwhile, the term strategy is understood as "the determination of the basic long-term goals and objectives of an enterprise, and the adoption of courses of action and the allocation of resources necessary for carrying out these goals".⁵⁰ It should be noted at the outset that five main strategic directions can be identified based on the case studies: focus/niche positioning, diversification, expansion, differentiation and the advantage of the early mover. Furthermore, at some stages, success was simply a matter of sheer chance and luck.

The advantage of the early mover

It can first be stated in general terms that the foundation of entrepreneurial success in the early years of these companies rested on the energy source of water and the right – that is, the necessary licences – to use the water for the respective purpose, without which the respective business models would not have been viable and which gave all three of them a crucial advantage – the advantage of the first or early mover, as Porter suggests.⁵¹ Even as hydropower was increasingly displaced by coal, it re-emerged indirectly: in the case of the family-owned company Lugitsch, through electricity generation, which constitutes a "secure sales base" in the company's history.

Similarly, Zellstoff Pöls AG built a new hydropower plant in the 1990s to achieve a high degree of self-sufficiency in the energy-intensive paper production process, thereby keeping production costs low. For Zellstoff Pöls AG, the "advantage of the

47 Michael Porter defines three competitive strategies: overall cost leadership, differentiation and focus (in this paper also referred to as "niche positioning"). See Michael E. Porter, *Competitive Strategy: Techniques for Analyzing Industries and Competitors: With a new Introduction* (New York: Free Press, 1980), 34–41.

48 Alfred Chandler, *Strategy and Structure. Chapters in the History of the Industrial Enterprise* (Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1962), 7–14. The approach in Graz differs from Chandler's "structure follows strategy" understanding in one essential aspect. Unlike Chandler, it does not interpret this formula as a natural law in the sense of evolution, which long-lasting large corporations inevitably follow sooner or later. Instead, it views it as a proactive approach to achieving successful corporate management.

49 Herbert Matis, "'Corporate Identity' und 'Corporate Culture,'" in Alois Mosser, ed., *Corporate Identity und Geschichtsbewusstsein* (Wien: Veröffentlichungen der Österreichischen Gesellschaft für Unternehmensgeschichte, 1994), 75–111.

50 Chandler, *Strategy and Structure*, 13.

51 Michael Porter does not use this term specifically, but it emerges when considering his analyses of "the appropriate timing of entry" in the field of industry. Early commitment to supplying raw materials entails absolute cost advantages, and in the long run, accumulated experience can be used to attain technological and organisational advantages as well as high market penetration. See Porter, *Competitive Strategy*, 232–33.

early mover” is further reinforced by the long-term advantage of its location, specifically the early establishment and modernisation of the production site, which made the paper mill attractive to major investors. The long-term survival of Zellstoff Pöls is also attributable to the strategic decisions of the respective management teams. However, one must ask whether it is more appropriate to speak of continuity of the site rather than continuity of the company itself, especially in light of the comparatively frequent changes in ownership. In this context, it is important to emphasise that Lugitsch and Mosdorfer remained family-run businesses throughout their history. In contrast, Zellstoff Pöls was subject to constant changes in ownership from the very beginning.

In the case of Mosdorfer GmbH, hydropower no longer served directly as an energy source but rather as an “indirect” strategic turning point: the order to produce overhead line components for the Kaprun storage power plant marked the start of a strategic realignment⁵² that enabled the company to occupy a niche, which has since underpinned its remarkable growth.

Focus or niche positioning and differentiation

All three companies share the characteristic of consciously or unconsciously pursuing a strategy of achieving niche positioning throughout their histories. However, the significance of the concept of a “niche” varied with the temporal context. The founder of the Lugitsch family business, Florian Lugitsch, recognised the potential of electricity as early as 1909 and chose to enter the power supply sector – a true niche market at that time. In agriculture, the company occupied the organic segment early on, selling off milling rights in 1995 in anticipation of EU accession and, from 1999, becoming the first feed mill in Europe to produce organic animal feed.

Reifensteiner Paper Mill survived into the industrial age only by occupying a niche: supplying chancery paper to the Graz court. When transitioning from rags to wood pulp as the raw material for paper, the moderniser Johann Koch’s 1870 decision to specialise in solid board alongside pulp production created a market niche that remains central to the company today. In both areas, pulp and speciality paper, the company emphasises very high quality and customer-specific production. In this context, the company seeks to further distinguish itself within the niche market through differentiation.

Mosdorfer GmbH likewise occupied a niche market in its early years, enjoying the privilege of supplying high-quality blades, sabres, bayonets, and gun barrels to the Styrian Estates and, later, the imperial army. Its current core business – manufacturing overhead line fittings – exemplifies a niche strategy. Within this niche, Mosdorfer further diversified by integrating business areas closely aligned with its existing expertise, such as the construction of railway line systems.

52 At this point, it has to be emphasised that, as mentioned above, coincidence and good fortune, like in every aspect of life and history, sometimes play their roles in the history of enterprises as well.

Diversification⁵³

Diversification strategies are most pronounced in Lugitsch's history, somewhat less so at Mosdorfer, and virtually absent at Zellstoff Pöls, where diversification occurred only once, when Johann Koch decided to enter solid board production in 1870 (see above). Diversification is deeply rooted at Lugitsch; upon acquiring the mill and the power plant in 1909, the company already encompassed both agriculture and electricity. Both areas saw further diversification over time: in electricity, with entry into electrical installation and trade in the late 1950s; in agriculture, through feed production in the same decade and the 1971 decision to produce market chicken meat independently, thereby reducing dependence on trade. Lugitsch leveraged its experience in sales and poultry farming when acquiring an egg producer in 2001. The switch to organic feed and high-quality organic chicken production marked the final step of this vertical diversification strategy, covering the entire production process from feed to end product.

Mosdorfer's first diversification occurred in 1784, when Anton Mosdorfer anticipated the long-term decline of the armaments forge and began producing scythes (thereby serving both civilian and military demand). Under Balthasar Mosdorfer, further steps were taken, including the establishment of forges for various iron products such as anvils, ship anchors, rods, and pipes. During the post-World War II technological transformation in agriculture, the company attempted to sustain itself by producing a wide range of agricultural implements, including a rather peculiar episode involving the export of machetes. The breakthrough came almost by chance when Friedrich Knill successfully completed the Kaprun storage power plant order, leveraging his electrical engineering expertise and the company's collective blacksmithing know-how. The introduction of bakery machinery production in 1982 arose from concerns over poor order levels, yet the company remained anchored in its technological core, entering electricity distribution through the production of distribution cabinets.

53 A. Chandler uses the example of the DuPont Company's diversification attempts between 1902 and 1919 to illustrate how the company expanded into new chemical products and markets through diversification, and subsequently introduced a multidivisional structure to manage the resulting complexity. The key message is that diversification is an effective strategy for generating growth by expanding the business into new product areas and markets. At the same time, the organisation's structure must be adapted to accommodate the sale of different products in new markets. For Chandler, this ultimately means integrating a multidivisional structure. See Chandler, *Strategy and Structure*, 78–113. – F. Malik regards diversification as a risky strategy that, in his view, has rarely been successful in economic history. He advises small and medium-sized enterprises to avoid it altogether, as they generally lack the essential prerequisites – capital and management resources. He urges large companies to exercise caution as well, since he considers diversification to be the most difficult and risky undertaking, with the lowest probability of success. See Malik, *Management*, 200–01.

Expansion

Expansion strategies were particularly significant for Mosdorfer GmbH and Lugitsch, whereas Zellstoff Pöls served as an expansion vehicle within the corporate structure. Lugitsch built a regional electricity network as early as 1913, which was continually expanded. The electrical installation, electrical trade, and agricultural divisions grew through the acquisition of smaller regional companies. The opening of a branch in Croatia in 2004 was an exception.

Acquisition-driven expansion played no role in Zellstoff Pöls AG's history, as recurring liquidity issues periodically threatened the company's continuity. Growth occurred only through productivity gains, achieved through prior modernisation – particularly under Johann Koch (1870–1905) and, from the 1920s until the late 1970s, under Cartiere Burgo. The structural crisis of the 1980s was overcome only through substantial state support. The acquisition by Frantschach AG further stabilised the company. It was only when the Heinzel Group purchased the paper and pulp mill in 2000 that significant productivity-driven growth resumed, driven by cost-reducing investments in energy infrastructure and productivity-enhancing measures, such as the purchase of new paper machines.

Mosdorfer's productivity growth was already evident under Balthasar Mosdorfer, who significantly boosted scythe production by introducing the Bessemer process, enabling worldwide exports. Acquisition-driven expansion began only in 1985, with Gunther Knill's takeover of competitor Lorünser. From that point, the company pursued a consistent strategy of market share growth, primarily through the acquisition of competitors and technological leaders. The results of this expansion are impressive: 25 locations in Europe, three in Asia, two in the Americas, and one in Australia.

Conclusion

The fact that around 70 companies (more than 20 per cent) in the database of “centenarian” companies in Styria, described at the beginning, have a direct connection to hydropower in their history and, to a large extent, still do today speaks volumes: water, a natural resource, was and remains an essential building block in the development of the business location. The case studies of Lugitsch, Zellstoff Pöls, and Mosdorfer show that various strategies were responsible for the longevity of these companies, some of which moved away from hydropower, while others had nothing to do with it at all. Nevertheless, it should be noted that without the original idea of using hydropower economically, these traditional companies would most likely never have been founded. The companies presented as case studies show very different developments and orientations. What they all have in common, however, is that they repeatedly secured their competitiveness and thus their long-term survival by making pioneering strategic decisions at decisive historical crossroads. Many enjoyed the advantage of being pioneers,

at least regionally, particularly in the use of hydropower, which in turn reflected their keen business acumen. In the case of Zellstoff Pöls, as already mentioned, it was primarily the location and the early modernisation of the factory – and thus the “advantage of the early mover” – that proved decisive. Company leaders also demonstrated this business sense when guiding their companies through the various uncertainties of history and through economic and social transformations. They succeeded by tapping into niche markets and by pursuing diversification and differentiation – in steps that were (in retrospect) understandable, without straying too far from their original core competencies. Expansion was also an essential strategy, with Lugitsch and Mosdorfer actively pursuing it, while Zellstoff Pöls, which changed hands more frequently, profited primarily from its well-established location.

It was stated that questions about longevity were analysed using a specific approach (the “Graz approach”), which in turn draws on various models and theories.⁵⁴ As several studies and their findings show, this approach has proven itself to date. Nevertheless – and this is where the humanities aspect of our research comes to the fore – we must warn against slipping exclusively into a process- and model-based approach. Not all developments can be explained in this way. It is not uncommon for luck (usually the famous “fortune of the brave”) and fateful chains of events to underpin long-term entrepreneurial success (as shown by the example of Mosdorfer in the late 1940s).

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⁵⁴ See Iber and Krautzer, “Geschichte als strategische Ressource”. Walter M. Iber, “The Graz Approach” to Business History. Evidence from the Austrian Steel and Ski Industries (forthcoming).

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HIDROENERGIJA IN PODJETNIŠTVO: ŠTUDIJE PRIMEROV IZ ŠTAJERSKE

POVZETEK

V članku je obravnavana vloga, ki jo je imela hidroenergija pri ustanavljanju in dolgoživosti tradicionalnih podjetij na Štajerskem. Analizirani so bili trije primeri podjetij, katerih nastanek je tesno povezan z izkoriščanjem hidroenergije: Herbert Lugitsch u. Söhne Ges. mbH in E-Lugitsch Elektro GmbH, Zellstoff Pöls AG ter Mosdorfer GmbH.

Štajerska je zaradi topografskih in podnebnih razmer bogata z vodotoki, kar je že od srednjega veka naprej spodbujalo postavljanje vodnih mlinov in kladivnih drobilnikov, pozneje pa tudi ustanavljanje industrijskih podjetij. Hidroenergija je tako predstavljala odločilno lokacijsko prednost in je bila podlaga za ustanovitev številnih podjetij. Pomen hidroenergije se je sčasoma spremenil. Sprva je služila predvsem kot vir energije, pozneje pa je z elektrifikacijo in gradnjo hidroelektrarn postala strateški dejavnik za energetska samostojnost in zmanjšanje stroškov.

Študije primerov kažejo, da sama uporaba hidroenergije ni zadostovala za zagotavljanje dolgoročnega poslovnega uspeha. Preživetje in rast teh podjetij so v resnici omogočile strateške odločitve, kot so diverzifikacija, osredotočenost/nišno pozicioniranje, širjenje in diferenciacija. Podjetje Lugitsch se je na primer že zgodaj razširilo na področje proizvodnje in trgovanja z električno energijo, pozneje pa tudi na proizvodnjo krme in mesa, pri čemer se je osredotočilo na ekološke proizvode. Podjetje Zellstoff Pöls se je specializiralo za posebne visokokakovostne vrste papirja in vlagalo v sodobne, okolju prijazne proizvodne procese, pri čemer je bila lokacijska prednost odločilna skozi celotno zgodovino podjetja. Podjetje Mosdorfer se je iz kovačnice orožja razvilo v proizvajalca kos in kmetijske opreme, sčasoma pa je postalo mednarodni dobavitelj komponent za visokonapetostne vode in železniško tehnologijo.

Ob analizi zgodovine podjetij, ki so uporabljala »graški pristop«, postane jasno, da je bila za njihovo dolgoživost odločilna sposobnost prilagajanja spreminjajočim se tržnim razmeram (osredotočenost/nišno pozicioniranje, diferenciacija), odpiranja novih poslovnih področij (diverzifikacija) ter izkoriščanja tehnoloških inovacij. Pomembno vlogo je imela tudi prednost, da so bila ta podjetja »pionirji« – torej zgodnja uporaba hidroenergije in s tem povezane lokacijske prednosti. Treba je poudariti, da so poleg strateškega načrtovanja k temu prispevali tudi sreča in ugodna naključja (kot je na primer vstop podjetja Mosdorferjev v proizvodnjo komponent za elektrarno v Kaprunu). Študija kaže, da je trajnostni uspeh analiziranih podjetij temeljil na kombinaciji naravnih virov, podjetniške daljnovidnosti, strateške prožnosti in, v nekaterih primerih, naključja.

Eduard Kubů*, Barbora Štolleová**

Urban Solid Waste as Agricultural Fertiliser – a Viable Solution or a Relic of the Past? The Garbage Business in Prague from the 1880s to the 1930s

IZVLEČEK

TRDNI KOMUNALNI ODPADKI KOT KMETIJSKO GNOJILO –
IZVEDLJIVA REŠITEV ALI OSTANEK PRETEKLOSTI?
RAVNANJE Z ODPADKI V PRAGI
OD 80. LET 19. DO 30. LET 20. STOLETJA

Odnos med mesti in njihovim podeželskim zaledjem je že od srednjega veka večplasten in tesen ter predmet sistematične zgodovinske obravnave, čeprav predvsem z gospodarskega, družbenega in kulturnega vidika. Okoljski dejavniki so postali pomembni šele s procesom urbanizacije in nastankom sodobnih metropol. Metabolizem mesta – ravnanje z vsemi vrstami odpadkov – je izjemno aktualna tema, vendar se običajno obravnava predvsem z vidika mestne infrastrukture in njenega delovanja. Ta študija temelji na dejstvu, da so se trdni komunalni odpadki (ulični in gospodinjiski odpadki) v kmetijstvu pogosto uporabljali kot gnojilo. Tako je bilo tudi v Pragi, ki je večino svojih trdnih odpadkov odstranjevala tako, da jih je prodajala kmetom v okoliških vaseh, dokler se ta sistem v začetku tridesetih let 20. stoletja ni sesul. Študija preučuje spremembe odnosa med mestno upravo kot ponudnikom in

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kmeti kot kupci gnojila iz odpadkov v obdobju od osemdesetih let 19. stoletja do tridesetih let 20. stoletja. Raziskuje vzroke za prekinitev te tradicionalne funkcionalne povezave. V tem kontekstu so bili poleg higienskih in estetskih vidikov ključni naslednji dejavniki: bistveno povečanje količine odpadkov, ki je okoliške kmetijske površine niso zmogle absorbirati; stroški prevoza odpadkov; sestava odpadkov; ter napredek v kmetijski tehnologiji (agronomiji), povezan z večjo dostopnostjo industrijskih gnojil. Poleg prizadevanj za modernizacijo mesta so pri zmanjšanju uporabe praških mestnih odpadkov v osrednječeškem kmetijstvu pomembno vlogo odigrali tudi sami kmetje.

Ključne besede: ravnanje z odpadki, trdni odpadki, gnojila, kmetijstvo, Praga, 19. in 20. stoletje

ABSTRACT

The relationship between cities and their rural surroundings has been close and multi-layered since the Middle Ages. It has been systematically studied by historians, albeit primarily in economic, social, and cultural terms. The environmental factor did not come into play until the process of urbanisation and the emergence of modern metropolises. The city's metabolism – the management of all types of waste – is a highly topical issue, yet it is typically viewed primarily through the lens of urban infrastructure and its functioning. This study is based on the fact that solid urban waste (street sweepings, household waste) was often used in agriculture as a fertiliser. This was also the case in Prague, which disposed of most of its solid waste by selling it to peasants in the surrounding villages until the system collapsed in the early 1930s. The study examines the shift in the relationship between the city administration, as the supplier, and agricultural buyers of waste fertiliser, as the demand side, from the 1880s to the 1930s. It explores the causes of the decline of this traditional, functional connection. Crucial factors in this context – setting aside hygienic and aesthetic considerations – were the dramatic increase in waste volume, which contrasted with the limited absorption capacity of the surrounding agricultural areas, the costs of waste transport, waste composition, and advances in agricultural technology (agronomy) associated with the increased availability of industrial fertilisers. Alongside the city's modernisation efforts, farmers themselves played a significant role in the decline of the use of Prague's urban waste in agriculture in Central Bohemia.

Keywords: waste management, solid waste, fertiliser, agriculture, Prague, the 19th and 20th centuries

The management and disposal of urban waste became dramatically more significant with the development of urbanisation in the 19th century.¹ On a European and global scale, one encounters a wide variety of models for addressing this issue, which have evolved in response to geographical, environmental, socio-economic, technical and technological, as well as cultural conditions.

In London, as early as the late 18th and 19th centuries, a multi-tiered system of waste collection, landfill, and sorting was in operation, based on the division of labour and private enterprise, with the aim of selling and subsequently repurposing useful raw materials and resources. Solid waste was used, for example, in the production of bricks, glue, paper, or soap. A significant proportion of decomposing waste, including human and animal excreta, ash, and bones, was valued for its fertilising effects in agriculture.² The London system of solid waste management, in which dust-contractors entered into agreements with individual London parishes for street cleaning and the collection of household waste, was a lucrative business until around the mid-19th century. Subsequently, the system was replaced by a municipally organised system.³

Similar aspects of solid waste management can also be observed in Paris, which had a highly developed waste-sorting system. The scholarly literature discusses the traditional profession of the so-called *chiffonniers* – rag collectors – of whom there were reportedly more than 80,000 in the French capital before the introduction of bin-based waste collection in 1884.⁴ In 19th-century Vienna, waste was transported by horse-drawn carts by entrepreneurs known as *Mistbauern* to the outskirts of the city, where it was sorted for further use.⁵ In some cities, such as Munich, Budapest, and Amsterdam, large sorting plants were established to reuse waste.⁶ In addition to the methods already mentioned, it was also common to fill in uneven ground with waste.⁷ Berlin developed an innovative solution through a business entity – a public benefit cooperative. By systematically transporting Berlin's waste to a site approximately 20 km

1 Sabine Barles, "History of Waste Management and the Social and Cultural Representations of Waste," in *Environmental History* (Springer International Publishing, 2014), accessed on 7 June 2026, https://www.academia.edu/111648107/History_of_Waste_Management_and_the_Social_and_Cultural_Representations_of_Waste.

2 Costas A. Vellis, David C. Wilson and Christopher R. Cheeseman, "19th century London dust-yards: A case in closed-loop resource efficiency," *Waste management* 29, No. 4 (2009): 1282–90, accessed on 7 June 2026, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wasman.2008.10.018>. Henry Mayhew, *London Labour & the London Poor* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 193–97.

3 Ibidem.

4 Sabine Barles, "A metabolic approach to the city: nineteenth and twentieth century Paris," in Bill Luckin, Genevieve Massard-Guilbaud, and Dieter Scholl, eds., *Resources of the City: Contributions to an Environmental History of Modern Europe* (Ashgate, Aldershot: Routledge, 2005), 28–47. Sabine Barles, "Urban metabolism and river systems: an historical perspective – Paris and the Seine, 1790–1970," *Hydrology and Earth System Sciences Discussions* 11, No. 6 (2007), 1757–69, accessed on 7 June 2026, <https://doi.org/10.5194/hess-11-1757-2007>. Karen Humphreys, "Trash in fashion: Styling rags and refuse in nineteenth- and twentieth-century French culture," *French Cultural Studies* 28, No. 3 (2017), 314–25, accessed on 7 June 2026, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957155817710434>.

5 Peter Payer, "Die Colonialisierung der Stadt," *Technisches Museum Wien* (official website), accessed on 7 June 2026, https://www.technischesmuseum.at/museum/tmw-zine_-_unsere_stories/ki_zine/magazin_detail&j-cc-id=1652960990212&j-cc-node=magazineintrag&j-cc-name=hybrid-content.

6 Jiří Mašek, "Odstraňování a využití městských pevných odpadků a smetí," in Vladimír Teyssler, ed., *Triumf techniky. Sborník článků ze všech oborů technického vědění* (Praha: Borský a Šulc, 1928), 78.

7 Peter Payer, "Die Colonialisierung der Stadt".

away (Gross-Besten) and through long-term composting and ploughing, the soil there was to be cultivated for agricultural use.⁸ A sophisticated study of waste management in American cities, published by Martin Melosi, quantifies, among other things, the proportion of garbage, street sweepings and ash used in agriculture. In 1880, of 199 cities examined, garbage was used on farms as feed or fertiliser in 44 (22%), 12 (6%) used street sweepings in this way, and 12 (6%) used ash.⁹ Many towns (in the USA and elsewhere) used a combination of waste management approaches but have gradually moved towards incineration as the most advanced method of waste disposal. In the 19th century, waste incineration became widespread in England, where waste was highly combustible (thanks to the abundance of unburned ashes, the rubbish “burned itself”), and in American cities, where waste was burned behind houses within the city using simple incineration facilities.¹⁰

This study examines the management of urban solid waste, including street sweepings (horse and other manures, mud and dirt, organic market waste) and household waste (organic kitchen waste, ash), and its subsequent use as fertiliser in agricultural contexts within an emerging Central European metropolis: Prague and its suburbs. Our focus is not on the origins and development of this practice as realised through the market, nor, paradoxically, on its golden age in the 19th century,¹¹ but rather on its survival and gradual decline from the late 1880s to the 1930s, and on the factors behind this trend. The study is based on an analysis of the supply side (the volume of waste in Prague and the city’s motivations for offering waste to suburban agriculture). The focus of the text is on the demand side (peasants’ motivations for accepting or rejecting street sweepings and other waste as fertiliser), market organisation (mechanisms for transferring waste from the city to peasants) and the decline of this system.

From the perspective of waste management in Prague, the period under review was one of dynamic development – the issue of solid waste disposal in Prague was becoming increasingly urgent due to the significant growth in waste volumes. From the perspective of peasants, as traditional recipients of urban waste, this was a pivotal period marked by structural changes in the agricultural market and a protracted agricultural crisis, as well as by a shift in rural attitudes, reflecting their maturing and growing understanding of modernity. The research concludes in the early 1930s, when a waste incinerator was put into operation in Prague, marking a turning point in municipal waste management. The use of liquid waste, i.e. sewage, although it was

8 Mašek, “Odstraňování a využití městských pevných odpadků,” 78.

9 Martin V. Melosi, *Garbage in the Cities. Refuse, Reform, and the Environment* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005), 30–34. Martin V. Melosi, “Out of Sight, Out of Mind: The Environment and the Disposal of Municipal Refuse, 1860–1920,” *The Historian* 35, No. 4 (1973): 621–40, accessed on 7 June 2026, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6563.1973.tb00518.x>.

10 Vilém Kurz, ed., *Šetřte uhlím! Pojednání o různých druzích úsporného topení a výhodném zužitkování tepla. S dodatkem o spalování smetí a ochranných zařízení proti požáru* (Praha: F. Šimáček, 1900), 95–104.

11 Radka Stružková, “Odpady v 19. století v Praze jako příklad interakcí města a jeho okolí” (Master’s thesis, Charles University, Faculty of Social Sciences, 2015). Radka Stružková, “Odpady v 19. století v Praze,” *Pražský sborník historický XLIV* (Praha: Archiv hl. m. Prahy, Scriptorium 2016), 99–137.

also associated with extensive agricultural use during the period under review (e.g. the “Feka” fertiliser used in Prague’s vegetable farming), is not the subject of this study, as it constituted a separate management process distinct from solid waste.¹²

Urbanising Prague under Pressure from Waste

At the turn of the 19th century, Prague was among the cities experiencing rapid demographic growth. In 1888, official statistics recorded 284,586 inhabitants; by the turn of the century, the figure had risen to over 368,000, and by 1920 to almost half a million. In 1930, Prague’s population was estimated at 830,982. This growth reflected both rising population density and the city’s geographical expansion, as it gradually absorbed the neighbouring areas on both banks of the River Vltava. A sharp increase occurred in 1922, when so-called Greater Prague was formed by merging all Prague municipalities and the originally independent suburbs into a single administrative unit (see graph 1).

As the city expanded, the volume of waste – household waste, ash and street sweepings – rose steadily. An understanding of the amount of waste generated in Prague can be gained from a public tender for the years 1886–1888 for the collection of waste from the largest landfill at the time in Libeň, on the right bank of the Vltava. According to existing historical literature, as much as four-fifths of Prague’s solid waste was sent there.¹³ The tender estimated the annual waste volume at 13,809 m³ of household waste (including ash) and 382 cartloads of horse manure.¹⁴ This figure corresponds to the actual quantities of waste collected from this landfill during those years.¹⁵ The administrative report of the City of Prague states that in 1898, 25,627 cartloads of rubbish and ash were collected, which, when converted at a rate of 1 cart = 1.6 m³, amounted to 41,003 m³.¹⁶ Ludvík Čížek, a member of the City Building Council and professor of Czech Technical University in Prague, who conducted a survey on waste management in Czech towns, reported that Prague was already generating 70,000 m³

12 Eduard Zika, *Hlavní principy hospodárního řešení problému kanalisace měst, čištění splašků a zužitkování kalů* (Praha: self-published, 1913), 94–95. František Duchon, *Hnojařský slabikář. Stručná příručka o výživě, hnojivech a hnojení hospodářských zvířat* (Praha: Edvard Leschingr, 1929), 25. Jaroslav Jásek, Alena Vrbová, and Jan Palas, *Pražské kaly* (Praha: Scriptorium, 2009).

13 Stružková, “Odpady v 19. století v Praze jako příklad interakcí města a jeho okolí,” 46. Stružková, “Odpady v 19. století v Praze,” 115.

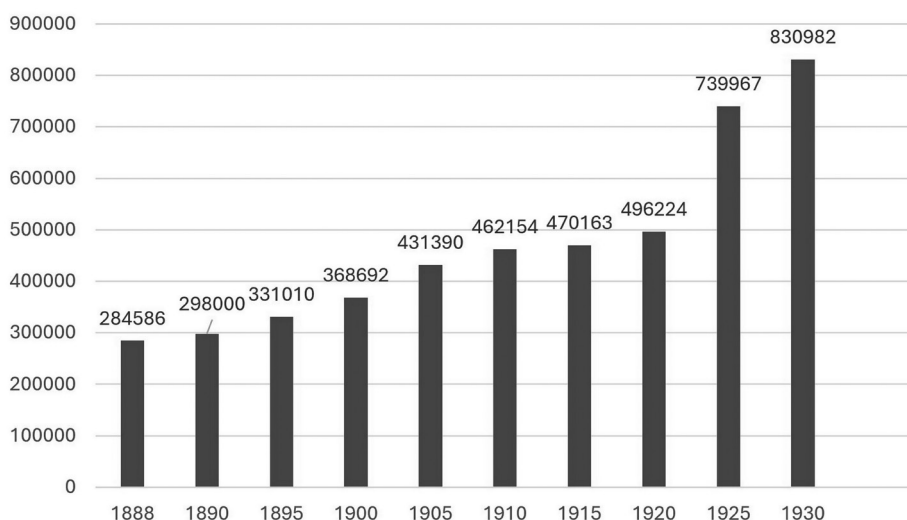
14 “Vyhlaška,” *Pražské hospodářské noviny*, Vol. 8, No. 17, 15 September 1885, 136.

15 Josef Stára, the owner of the estate in Radonice, leased 1/6 of the Libeň landfill (approx. 15 km from Radonice) between 1886 and 1888, which allegedly amounted to “about 2,300 m³”. In those years, he extracted 2,088 m³, 2,424 m³ and 1,962 m³. This allows the total volume of waste at the Libeň landfill to be calculated as 12,258 m³, 14,544 m³, and 11,772 m³. AHMP, MHMP I., Main Registry – Section B, records 1881–1890, ref. B 29/11, Tender announced by the City Council for the years 1886–1888 and Statement by the Municipal Economic Office in Prague dated 29 May 1889 regarding waste collection by Josef Stára.

16 *Administrativní zpráva královského hlavního města Prahy a spojených s městskou statistickou komisí obcí Karlína, Smíchova, Král. Vinohradů a Žižkova za rok 1898* (Praha: Statistická kommise král. hlav. města Prahy a spojených obcí, 1900), 257.

of solid waste annually in 1909.¹⁷ Following the establishment of Greater Prague in 1922, the figures rose sharply – for example, in 1925 it was 189,156,¹⁸ and in 1930 it was already 319,467 m³ of solid waste from households, ash and street sweepings.¹⁹ This represented 23 times more than the estimate from 1888 (see graph 2). The press in the 1920s repeatedly reported that Prague generated an average of almost 50 railway wagons (1 wagon = 10,000 kg) of waste per day.²⁰

Graph 1: Prague's population between 1888 and 1930 (selected years)



Note: Up to 1901, the figures include Prague I–VII, Karlín, Smíchov, Královské Vinohrady and Žižkov; from 1902, they also include Libeň; from 1905, they include Vršovice; and from 1921, they include the whole of Greater Prague.

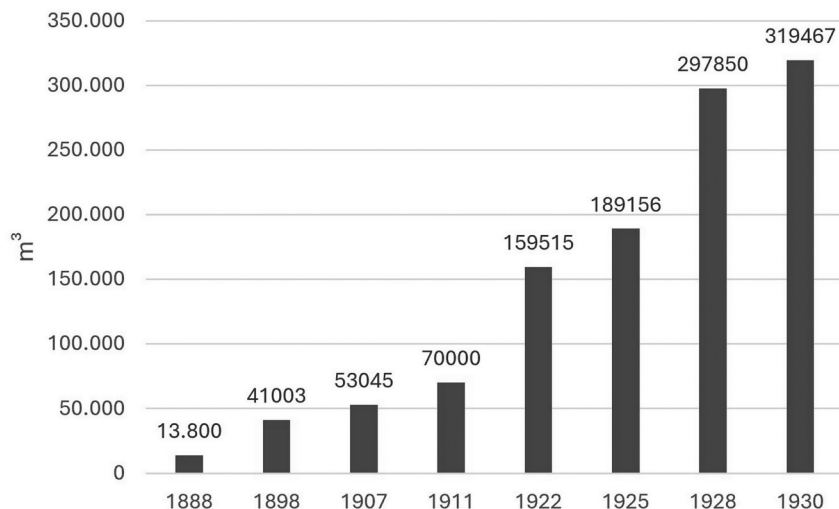
Source: *Statistická zpráva hlavního města Prahy za rok 1930–1933*, Vol. 50–53 (Praha: Statistický úřad hlavního města Prahy 1937), 76–77.

17 Ludvík Čížek, "Péče o čištění českých měst v království českém na počátku XX. století," in *Čtvrtý sjezd českých měst z království českého v královském hlavním městě Praze ve dnech 15.–17. října 1911* (Praha: publisher not identified, 1911), 192. AHMP, MHMP I., Department XVI – for markets, slaughterhouses, and city supplies, ref. no. d 12/15, box 89, Cleaning as part of the municipal technical agenda (handwritten lecture by Ludvík Čížek for the City Building Authority, estimated 1906).

18 *Statistická zpráva hlavního města Prahy za rok 1925*, Vol. 45 (Praha: Statistický úřad hlavního města Prahy, 1930), 107.

19 *Statistická zpráva hlavního města Prahy za léta 1930–1933*, Vol. 50–53 (Praha: Statistický úřad hlavního města Prahy, 1937), 248.

20 Jar. Veselý, "Technické problémy velkoměsta," *Národní listy*, Vol. 67, No. 142, 24 May 1927, 1–2.

Graph 2: Waste collected in Prague between 1888 and 1930 (in m³, selected years)

Note: Pre-WWI statistics report waste quantities in carts and wagons. For this chart, the data have been converted to m³ (one wagon is equivalent to six horse-drawn carts, and one cart is equivalent to 1.6 m³).

Source: compiled based on the official statistics of the City of Prague: *Administrativní zpráva královského hlavního města Prahy* (for years 1898, 1905–1907) and *Statistická zpráva hlavního města Prahy* (for years 1922, 1926–1929 a 1930–1933).

Throughout the period under review, the cleaning of the city and the collection and disposal of Prague's solid waste were the responsibility of the municipal administration. Costs as a percentage of the city's total expenditures were rising. In 1888, they amounted to just under 200,000 gulden (approx. 1.57% of city expenditures), and by the mid-1920s they had reached almost 22 million Czechoslovak crowns (3.64% of city expenditures).²¹ The task was overseen by the city administration, which operated through a network of so-called municipal yards.²² Until 1919, the city's cleaning was carried out manually, using primitive equipment and relying solely on horsepower.²³ The number of people involved in city cleaning (e.g. street sweepers with brooms, cart drivers, supervisors of street sweepers and landfills, day labourers collecting horse manure, rubbish sorters, pavement sprinklers) rose from 599 to 1,691 between 1889 and 1930.²⁴ After World War I, responsibility for city cleaning was transferred to the Building Department of the Prague City Hall, where the task was delegated to experts,

21 AHMP, MHMP I, Minutes of the City Administrative Bodies, inv. no. 533, City Council Meetings, July–August 1926 (Minutes of the 31st meeting held on 27 August 1926).

22 Pavel Bělina et al., *Dějiny Prahy II. Od sloučení pražských měst v roce 1784 do současnosti* (Praha, Litomyšl: Paseka, 1998), 190.

23 Veselý, "Technické problémy," 1–2.

24 *Administrativní zpráva královského hlavního města Prahy a spojených s městskou statistickou komisí obcí Karlína, Smíchova, Král. Vinohradů a Žižkova za léta 1887–1889* (Praha: Statistická komise král. hlav. města Prahy a spojených obcí, 1891), 65. *Statistická zpráva hlavního města Prahy za rok 1930–1933*, 248.

including technical engineers and hygienists.²⁵ This change marked the advent of new technical and organisational solutions – such as the introduction of new types of waste bins, dust-free waste loading and transfer, motorisation and mechanisation, and plans for the construction of an incinerator.²⁶

Approaches to the Disposal of Prague's Solid Waste

As in other European cities, solid waste management in Prague was a combination of several evolving approaches.

A traditional practice, long widely adopted in keeping with the motto “out of sight, out of mind”,²⁷ was dumping waste in all sorts of places – typically in less frequented corners of the city or beyond its boundaries. As part of the city's clean-up efforts, municipal landfills were established to collect waste. However, the city's growth gradually made it necessary to build additional landfills. For some time, the largest landfill was the one in Libeň; other large landfills were later established in Žižkov, Dejvice, Střešovice, and Vysočany. By the early 1920s, their number fluctuated around 22,²⁸ and they were so overcrowded that they posed a significant aesthetic and hygienic problem. A pressing issue in the public sphere was that, as Prague expanded, the landfills gradually found themselves within the city's built-up areas,²⁹ blocking new construction.³⁰ Suburban municipalities vehemently opposed the establishment of new ones, citing health risks.³¹ In 1926, the middle-class, intellectually oriented independent daily *Lidové noviny* wrote about the emergence and growth of dumps: “Over time, such a tip forms a small heap, then a pile, a mound, and eventually an entire mountain range, where mountain hiking could be boldly practised, were there a somewhat pleasant mountain atmosphere.”³² From 1923 onwards, Prague moved away from municipally managed rubbish tips. At the city's expense, all landfills were “cleared away and levelled”,³³ but this did not resolve the issue of unofficial dumps or the piling up of

25 Andělín Merta, “Vývoj pražské městské správy od roku 1922 do roku 1945,” in *Pražský sborník historický IX* (Praha: Orbis, 1975), 147–95. Jana Konvičná et al., “Pražské městské hospodářství v letech 1784–2000,” official site of Archiv hlavního města Prahy, accessed on 7 June 2026, <https://www.ahmp.cz/index.html?mid=46&wstyle=0&page=page/docs/vyvoj-prazske-samospravy-II-B.html>

26 “Svět za Jana Nerudy a dnes. Popelová záležitost,” *Světozor*, Vol. 41, No. 28, 11 July 1941, 330.

27 Melosi, “Out of Sight, Out of Mind,” 621–40.

28 AHMP, MHMP I., Minutes of the City Administrative Bodies, inv. no. 502, City Council Meetings, May–June 1926 (Minutes of the 19th meeting of the Prague City Council of 14 May 1926). “Technická hlídka,” *Národní listy*, Vol. 63, No. 253, 15. 9. 1923, 4. “K projektu stanice na spalování pevných odpadků v Praze,” *Národní listy*, 1927, Vol. 67, No. 146, 28 May 1927, 9–10.

29 “K projektu stanice na spalování pevných odpadků v Praze,” *Národní listy*, Vol. 67, No. 146, 28 May 1927, 9–10.

30 “Stanice na spalování popelu v Praze,” *Lidové noviny*, Vol. 32, No. 601, 30 November 1924, 5.

31 *Administrativní zpráva obce královského hlavního města Prahy a spojených s městskou statistickou komisí obcí sousedních Karlína, Smíchova, Král. Vinohradů a Žižkova za léta 1893 a 1894* (Praha: Statistická komise král. hlav. města Prahy a spojených obcí, 1896), 222–23.

32 “Spalovací stanice odpadků v Praze,” *Lidové noviny*, Vol. 34, No. 94, 21 February 1926, 6.

33 Vladimír Holeček, *Vývoj odstraňování pevných odpadků z domácností v Praze* (Vysočany: Spalovna odpadků ve Vysočanech, 1937), 3.

waste in densely populated neighbourhoods. The contemporary press mentions five actively operating rubbish dumps in Prague at the end of the period under review (the turn of the 1920s and 1930s).³⁴

In Prague, the filling in and levelling of uneven terrain, such as mines, sand pits, ravines, or other depressions, was relatively limited. Such sites were not available within inner Prague, whilst transport costs were a key problem for more remote areas. Even large-scale projects foundered on these issues. In the 1920s, for example, the City of Prague held negotiations with the Prague Ironworks Company regarding the back-filling of one of its ore mines in Nučice with Prague ash, but the estimated cost of over a million Kč (Czechoslovak crowns) to transport it to a site less than 30 km from the centre of Prague made the project economically unviable and therefore unfeasible.³⁵

Another option for dealing with Prague's waste, or at least part of it, was to repurpose it. During the period under review, Prague's waste collection system generally distinguished between street sweepings, household waste, ash and horse manure, which were mostly placed separately in designated areas at the landfills. Further sorting (aside from unorganised scavengers and poor picking through rubbish) took place only to a limited extent. This was because potentially usable materials were either disposed of at home (burned) or sold to door-to-door traders dealing in rags, bones, leather, etc.³⁶ Meanwhile, progressive, economically oriented Czech newspapers reflected with admiration on foreign advancements and approaches to waste sorting. For example, an article in the periodicals *Průmyslník* and *Rolník* described in detail the organisation of work at a London rubbish dump:

No sooner has such a rubbish heap reached a certain height and volume than it is surrounded by a whole host of men, women and children, all of whom are equipped with brooms, sieves, sacks, aprons, etc. And now the searching, sifting and separating of various items begins – in short, activity like that in an anthill – as a result of which the main heap quickly disappears, transforming into a series of small piles according to the type of items found in the large rubbish heap.³⁷

Waste sorting in Prague remained imperfect, haphazard, and poorly organised; one cannot speak of a system. In Prague, which had a strong and nearby agricultural hinterland (the so-called “golden strip of Bohemia” – the Elbe Valley, less than 30 km from the centre of Prague), one of the key methods of managing waste was its reuse as agricultural fertiliser.

34 Ibid., 5.

35 “Stanice na spalování popelu v Praze,” 5.

36 Kurz, *Seťte uhlím!*, 95–104. Bělina et al., *Dějiny Prahy II*, 191. Stružková, “Odpady v 19. století v Praze jako příklad interakcí města a jeho okolí,” 60–61.

37 “Obyčejné odpadky a průmysl,” *Průmyslník*, Vol. 5, 1883, No. 12, 206. “Jak průmysl anglický zužitkuje smetiště,” *Rolník*, Vol. 7, No. 14, 8 April 1877, 51. Barles, “History of Waste Management,” unpaginated.

For Prague, waste incineration was not an option during the period under review – the establishment of an incinerator was only beginning to be considered and discussed at the time. Although Prague had already been exploring new technical solutions in the first decade of the 20th century (and had been approached by foreign firms with offers and brochures),³⁸ negotiations only began to take a more concrete form in the mid-1920s. In 1926, Škoda Works in Plzeň, Czechoslovakia's largest engineering firm, approached the City of Prague with a project that was eventually implemented.³⁹ The incinerator in the industrial suburb of Vysočany began operations in 1934 and completely redefined Prague's existing waste management mechanisms.⁴⁰

Prague's Waste as Fertiliser

Fertilisation and the art of managing it are hallmarks of modern agriculture. In the 19th century, public education in the Bohemian lands focused on improving fertilisation in every respect, both in terms of quality and quantity. As early as the 1850s, the influential progressive Czech agricultural journal *Hospodářské noviny* recommended that farmers use other sources of plant nutrition alongside farmyard manure, namely so-called waste manure consisting not only of household waste but also of various waste collected in public spaces – such as dust and mud from roads, clay and sludge from clogged sewers, ash and building debris. Fertiliser produced in this way “was to be the peasant's pride”.⁴¹ Compost, in which the above-mentioned components were gathered, turned, and aerated several times a year over a period of 1–3 years,⁴² remained highly valued even after industrial fertilisers had come into use. However, industrial fertilisers were initially affordable only to larger farms. In peasant farming, they were still regarded as a “rare commodity” as late as the 1880s.⁴³ Even later, it was common on a single farm to combine, alternate, and mix different types of fertiliser, depending on the nature of the soil, the crops grown, and the availability and price of fertilisers.⁴⁴

38 AHMP, MHMP I., Department XVI – for markets, slaughterhouses and city supplies, ref. no. d 12/3 and d 12/15, box 89, collection of documents (pre-WWI).

39 AHMP, MHMP I., Minutes of the City Administrative Bodies, inv. no. 502, City Council Meetings, May–June 1926 (Minutes of the 19th meeting of the Prague City Council of 14 May 1926). A competing project was submitted by the Prague engineering firm Breitfeld-Daněk. “K otázce zřízení pražské stanice na spalování odpadků,” *Národní listy*, Vol. 67, No. 146, 28 May 1927, 10.

40 Vladimír Holeček, *Spalovací stanice odpadků s teplárnou a elektrárnou ve Vysočanech* (Praha: V. Holeček, 1932). Holeček, *Vývoj odstraňování pevných odpadků*, 5–11.

41 Josef Vetta, “Navedení, kterak si hospodář vypočísti může, mnoho-li k vyhnojení svých pozemků, dobytka držeti má. Dokončení,” *Hospodářské Noviny*, Vol. 6, No. 51, 405.

42 Josef Jettmar, *Rukojeť praktického hnojaření čili návod, jak má rolník upravovati různá hnojiva a jak jich upotřebiti ku zvětšení svých sklizní* (Praha: J. Otto, 1889), 25–26. Václav Vilikovský, *Zbožiznalství hospodářské a zemědělsko-průmyslové* (Praha: MZRC, 1923), 75–76. František Duchoň, *Hnojařský slabikář. Stručná příručka o výživě, hnojivech a hnojení hospodářských zvířat*, 3rd revised edition (Praha: Edvard Leschingr, 1929), 25.

43 Jan Janžura, “Dělejme komposty!,” *Rolnické listy hospodářského spolku politického okresu Sedlčanského*, Vol. 2, No. 6, June 1886, 71–72.

44 The described practice is documented by a survey conducted by the Czech Agricultural Council in 1901. A specific example is provided by the management of large estates in the immediate vicinity of Prague (Klecany, Přemyšleni and Brnky), each comprising 200–400 hectares of land: “The method of farm management is entirely modern and

Solid waste in Prague also provided a range of components suitable for composting. These included, first and foremost, horse manure, mud and dirt from the city streets – so-called street sweepings; followed by organic waste from marketplaces and household waste (organic kitchen waste, ash).⁴⁵ Manure from the winter covering of fountains, waterworks and water pipes, where it served as insulation against freezing, was also a potential source for agricultural use.⁴⁶ The most highly prized product was always horse manure, which was sold directly by municipal yards with stables and was also responsible for the high fertilising value of street sweepings. Household waste collected from individual homes at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries had a lower fertilising capacity.⁴⁷

The main advantage of compostable urban waste was its low cost and availability in large quantities. Presentations on the benefits of using urban waste increasingly drew on chemical analyses of its fertilising properties, intended to convince peasants of its effectiveness. Various data from different sources were used, but all shared the same final recommendation regarding the suitability of using solid urban waste in agriculture. Prague's waste, as a valuable fertiliser, was still being promoted in the Czech environment in the 1920s, with appropriate scientific backing. As early as 1925, *Venkov*, the official journal of the Government Agrarian Party, published an article referring to research in Switzerland, where the use of urban waste was reportedly, in some cases, "more effective than fertilisation with farmyard manure or artificial fertiliser"; the following uses were mentioned: peatland cultivation, sugar beet cultivation, and vegetable cultivation.⁴⁸

intensive. A herd of about 40 head of cattle allows for rational fertilisation with manure, amounting to about 500 q per hectare every four years. In addition, a considerable amount of artificial fertilisers is used, averaging 700–800 q of phosphate, 150–200 q of Chilean saltpetre and 400–500 q of kainite, not counting the sludge waste from the sugar factory (about 10,000 q) and Prague waste (about 5,000 q) for composting" – "Velkostatky Klecany, Přemýšlení a Brnky," *České listy hospodářské*, Vol. 9, No. 9, 1901, 333. *Výsledky šetření (agrární anketa) poměrů hospodářských i kulturních zemědělského obyvatelstva v království českém v letech 1898–1900. Z původních prací vyšetřujících komisářů* (Praha: Zemědělská rada pro království České, 1901), 830.

45 Karel Morava, *Hnojiva přirozená i umělá a prst' v zahradnictví* (Písek: Jan Hruška, 1906), 9–41.

46 AHMP, MHMP I., Main Registry – Section B, records 1881–1890, ref. B 29/11, collection of documents relating to public tenders for horse manure.

47 According to research in France, the fertilising capacity of urban waste was roughly half that of stable manure. Mašek, "Odstraňování a využití městských pevných odpadků," 77.

48 "Zužitkování městských odpadků v zemědělství," *Venkov*, Vol. 20, No. 18, 21 January 1925, 7. Adolf Ernest, "Přehled zemědělského pokroku. Výzkum – pokus – kontrola," *Venkov*, Vol. 19, No. 234, 4 October 1924, 10.

Mechanisms for Distributing Prague's Solid Waste to Agricultural Producers

The leasing of the municipal landfill or parts of it to large-scale buyers

In Prague during the second half of the 19th century, it was common to hold a publicly announced tender for the collection of horse manure, street sweepings and household waste. The tender procedure was based on the principle of the highest bids; in essence, it was an auction, aimed at large-scale buyers, and was usually issued for a period of two or three years. The signing of the contract was conditional upon the payment of a substantial deposit. As an example, the tender procedure for household waste and ash collected during street cleaning and house-to-house collection, as well as horse manure, for the years 1886–1888 was submitted in a sealed envelope with a deposit of 800 gulden (for street sweepings and household waste) or 150 gulden (for horse manure).⁴⁹ The customer collected the waste from municipal yards (horse manure) or from a designated collection point, typically a landfill (street sweepings and household waste). They were obliged to collect the contractually agreed quantity by the specified deadlines. This type of collection applied only to larger land users, who could collect waste regularly and in considerable quantities. However, a large-scale collector could also resell the waste to smaller farmers.⁵⁰ In the 1870s and 1880s, bulk waste customers from Libeň's largest landfill – where the vast majority of Prague's waste was sent – were usually located in its immediate vicinity. Sugar producer Friedrich Frey⁵¹ transported Prague's rubbish to Vysočany, 2.5 km away; landowners František Svoboda and Václav Nepomucký took rubbish to Střížkov, 4 km away; and Otakar Černín's estate was in Vinoř, 6 km away. The Radonice landowner Josef Stára travelled 12 km. Given the speed of a horse-drawn cart, which, depending on the terrain and load, reached 4–7 km/h, a total distance of 25–30 km could be covered in a single day. Moreover, this distance corresponds to the physical capabilities of a horse and its need for rest.

Small-scale waste sales

During the agricultural crisis of the 1880s, when there were not enough bidders in the tender process for household waste, sales channels were expanded to include small-scale purchases. Waste from the Libeň landfill was also sold “over the counter” by the cartload (a horse-drawn cart was the standard unit of collection, approx. 1.6 m³). This

49 “Oferta,” *Pražské hospodářské noviny*, Vol. 8, No. 17, 15 September 1885, 136. See also Stružková, “Odpady v 19. století v Praze,” 119–124.

50 “Zadušen smetím,” *Národní listy*, Vol. 49, No. 147, 29 May 1909, 3.

51 Stružková, “Odpady v 19. století v Praze,” 99–137.

allowed customers to take away even relatively small quantities of fertiliser, thereby expanding access to Prague's waste for small and medium-sized farmers. The seasonality of sales proved problematic. The vast majority of peasants sought fertiliser outside the peak periods of fieldwork (sowing, reaping, harvesting) and would only set out on the journey in suitable weather. However, waste continued to pile up at the landfill. Even small-scale sales were limited by the distance a horse-drawn cart could cover in a single day. A telling example of distance as a constraint is the initiative by representatives of 19 villages and two large estates on the right bank of the Vltava near Modřany, who requested the establishment of a new landfill to significantly shorten the journey from their villages to the Prague waste fertiliser. The proposed solution envisaged reducing the journey to the landfill from the original 12–14 km ("entailing immense difficulties, both financial and material") to 7–9 km, i.e. by almost half. The petition explained the necessity of fertiliser supplies, citing local soil conditions that were not particularly suitable for agriculture, as well as the "hardship faced by peasants" during the economic crisis.⁵²

Railway-organised waste sales

From 1888 onwards, in response to the accumulation of waste at municipal landfills, the City of Prague introduced a new method of disposal. This utilised the railway at preferential transport rates, with a minimum order volume of one railway wagon, i.e. 10,000 kg.⁵³ This opened up new sales channels to more distant destinations beyond the reach of horse-drawn carts.⁵⁴ Waste from the households and streets of Prague was transported to selected Prague railway stations, and from there mainly north of Prague, in all cases within a radius of approximately 40 km.⁵⁵ After payment to the City and subsequent rail distribution, farmers collected the waste individually with their own carts at the designated station. At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, approximately half of Prague's waste was distributed by rail.⁵⁶ Figures from 1910 indicate 1,768 wagons of waste on the north-western and northern Czech railways alone.⁵⁷ The introduction of urban waste collection using exchangeable bins (a full bin was exchanged for an empty one) after 1923 also facilitated rail transport, eliminating the

52 AHMP, MHMP I., Main Registry – Section B, records 1881–1890, ref. B 29/11, Petition of Modřany Peasants to the City Council of Prague dated 5 December 1887.

53 *Administrativní zpráva obce královského hlavního města Prahy a spojených s městskou statistickou komisí obcí sousedních Karlína, Smíchova, Král. Vinohradů a Žižkova za léta 1887–1889* (Praha: Statistická komise král. hlav. města Prahy a spojených obcí, 1891), 65–66. "Vyvážení uličních smetků z Prahy po drahách," *Věstník obecní král. hl. m. Prahy*, Vol. 12, No. 2, 25 January 1912, 59.

54 "Divné váhy," *Národní listy*, Vol. 28, No. 149, 30 May 1888, 3.

55 Documents mention railway connections towards Neratovice, towards Velvary and, to the east, towards Český Brod, "Divné váhy," 3.

56 The 1898 administrative report states that of the 25,627 carts of waste collected within inner Prague, approximately half were taken to the landfills and half directly to the railway stations. – *Administrativní zpráva královského hlavního města Prahy a spojených s městskou statistickou komisí obcí Karlína, Smíchova, Král. Vinohradů a Žižkova za rok 1898*, 257.

57 "Vyvážení uličních smetků z Prahy po drahách," 59.

need for landfills.⁵⁸ A prerequisite for the functioning of waste distribution by rail was the negotiation of favourable tariffs and charges with the State Railways/Ministry of Railways, for which the City of Prague fought a constant battle.⁵⁹

A peasant's membership in an agricultural cooperative

A distinct phase in the management of Prague's waste as fertiliser was the establishment of an agricultural cooperative – the Agricultural Cooperative for the Utilisation of Prague Waste in Jeneč. It was founded in 1926, on the initiative of peasants from Jeneč village (approximately 15 km west of Prague) and with the support of Agrarian Party senator Josef Sechtr. The cooperative's purpose was "to assist the farming activities of its members by procuring waste and supplying it to members, as well as to buy and sell all agricultural products and supplies."⁶⁰ According to the articles of association, purchasing waste was not only a right but also an obligation for members.⁶¹ The cooperative's area of operation was explicitly defined as the regions adjacent to the so-called Buštěhrad Railway towards Unhošť, west of Prague (Smíchov District, Unhošť District), whilst a narrow branch line had to be built to Jeneč, where the waste was transported. Similar to the regions to which the railway had been transporting Prague's waste since 1888, this was an area that was relatively successful agriculturally, with good soil conditions (black soil). At the constitutive general meeting, members subscribed to shares in accordance with the rule of one share per 3 hectares of land. The 50 members present subscribed to a total of 529 shares (which, applying the above equation, represents a total area of 1,587 hectares).⁶²

The cooperative initially signed a five-year contract with the City of Prague, with the option to extend, for the supply of street sweepings, ash and solid household waste "for use as fertiliser".⁶³ It took over the waste at the railway and subsequently arranged for its sale and collection by individual customers – members of the cooperative. Initially, a supply of 4,000–8,000 wagons per year was agreed (a ratio of 5 wagons of ash to 1 wagon of street sweepings). After a year of the cooperative's operation, the supply was expanded to "all waste".⁶⁴ It follows that the cooperative's membership base either expanded significantly, or (more likely) the cooperative began reselling waste to non-members as well.⁶⁵

58 Vl. Holeček, "Vývoj odstraňování pevných odpadků z domácností v Praze," *Plyn, voda a zdravotní technika* 17, No. 9 (1937): 430–32.

59 "Vyvážení uličních smetků z Prahy po drahách," *Věstník obecní král. hl. m. Prahy*, Vol. 12, No. 2, 25 January 1912, 59.

60 NA Prague, LO, box 315, Articles of Association of the Economic Cooperative for the Utilisation of Prague Waste, a registered limited liability company in Jeneč with its registered office in Hostouň (Prague: Rolnická Tiskárna, 1928).

61 Ibid.

62 SOA Prague, KSO Prague, ref. no. Dr XXXI 182, Minutes of the constitutive general meeting of the Agricultural Cooperative for the Utilisation of Prague Waste in Jeneč, held on 24 May 1926 in Dobrovíz.

63 "Zemědělcům v okolí Prahy," *Venkov*, Vol. 21, No. 232, 1 October 1926, 57.

64 AHMP, MHMP I., Minutes of the City Administrative Bodies, inv. no. 513, City Council Meetings, November–December 1927 (Minutes of the City Council meeting held on 4 November 1927).

65 Ibid. "Různé," *Věstník hlavního města Prahy*, Vol. 33, No. 17, 26 April 1926, 244. "Smlouva uzavřená s Hospodářským družstvem pro využití odpadků v Jeneči," *Věstník hlavního města Prahy*, Vol. 36, No. 15, 15 April 1929, 363.

Through the cooperative in Jeneč, the availability of waste fertiliser was extended to interested peasants on all sides of Prague, with preferential transport conditions. The City of Prague undertook to cover waste transport costs initially up to 20 km; later, the city's coverage was extended to 35 km, calculated from the outermost station in Prague.⁶⁶ When more than 1,000 wagons were collected, transport costs up to 50 km from Prague were covered.⁶⁷ Beyond this distance, transport costs proved a limiting factor. Thanks to the cooperative, the distribution radius for Prague's waste was extended by 10 kilometres compared with the previous period, but this proved short-lived. After considerable ups and downs (see below), the contract between the cooperative and the City of Prague was terminated in 1931. According to the press, farmers in Jeneč continued to collect waste from the Jeneč rubbish heap free of charge as late as 1932.⁶⁸

The Collapse of the Market for Prague Waste Used as Fertiliser and Its Causes

The primary objective of the original business plan put forward by the supplier, i.e. the City of Prague, was to address the urgent problem of reducing/disposing of the growing volume of waste for reasons of aesthetics (rubbish dumps "growing into veritable mountains") and hygiene. The elimination of health risks – groundwater pollution, rubbish dumps as breeding grounds for flies, microbes and rodents, which could be a potential source of disease and epidemics; odour and dust caused by the transport of open railway wagons carrying rubbish and ash – became increasingly significant, particularly after the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.⁶⁹ A striking example was the dysentery epidemic in Prague in 1922, the spread of which was linked to the Vysočany landfill and resulted in 200 people being infected and 8 deaths.⁷⁰

From an economic perspective, the city's interest in selling solid waste as fertiliser gradually declined. The widening gap between the rising costs of cleaning the city and the revenue generated from waste sales was becoming a problem. We have reliable data for the late 19th century indicating that the financial contribution from the sale of waste to the city budget covered approximately 10% of the costs of cleaning the city (e.g. in 1898, the costs of cleaning the city amounted to 244,963 gulden and revenue from the sale of household waste, including ash, amounted to 26,746 gulden).⁷¹

66 "Hnojivá hodnota pražských smetků," *Venkov*, Vol. 23, No. 97, 22 April 1928, 18–20.

67 Ibid.

68 "Zánik popelového pahorku u Jenče. Velkoměstské odpadky dobrým hnojivem," *Večerní České slovo*, Vol. 14, No. 169, 26 July 1932, 3.

69 Mašek, "Odstraňování a využití městských pevných odpadků," 77. H-n, "Spalovací stanice odpadků v Praze," *Lidové noviny*, Vol. 34, No. 94, 21 February 1926, 6.

70 Jaromír Nečas et al., *Praha přírodovědecká, lékařská a technická. Odborný průvodce k VI. sjezdu československých přírodovědců, lékařů a inženýrů v Praze 1928* (Praha: VI. sjezd čsl. přírodovědců, lékařů a inženýrů, 1928), 129.

71 *Administrativní zpráva královského hlavního města Prahy a spojených s městskou statistickou komisí obcí Karlína, Smíchova, Král. Vinohradů a Žižkova za rok 1898*, 257.

A decade later, in 1909, according to data from the technical engineer Čížek, the ratio of revenue costs had deteriorated (revenue from the sale of rubbish amounted to 35,783 gulden, i.e. 4.1% of costs).⁷² As the volume of solid waste steadily rose, the city was able to sell an ever-smaller proportion. Between 1901 and 1905 alone, the proportion of rubbish and ash sold fell from 88.3% to 64.4%, leading to their accumulation (see table 1). Nevertheless, the sum obtained from the sale of waste was still considered sufficiently substantial: “too significant to allow the city’s revenues to be reduced at the expense of modern methods of disposing of such waste through incineration and chemical processes”.⁷³

Table 1: Sale of Prague solid waste 1901–1905

Year	Total household waste and ash (kg)	Sold (kg)	Remaining (kg)	Remaining %
1901	44,147,334	38,974,321	5,173,013	11.7
1902	42,942,816	33,231,702	9,711,114	22.6
1903	42,283,080	30,134,608	12,148,472	28.7
1904	47,484,332	34,897,694	12,586,638	26.5
1905	49,900,032	32,142,971	17,757,061	35.6

Note: Percentages rounded to one decimal place.

Source: AHMP, MHMP I., Department XVI – for markets, slaughterhouses and city supplies, ref. no. d 12/15, box 89, Letter from Juliusz Pinkus, an expert in healthcare facilities, to the Prague City Council, dated 10 January 1907.

Following the creation of Greater Prague in 1922, the profits from the sale of solid waste were negligible within the city’s waste management. In 1925, Prague spent 21.78 million Kč on city cleaning, but the item in the city’s financial statements entitled “*Removal of solid waste by rail and to the tip*”, which included rubbish, horse manure and ash, recorded a profit of only 0.23 million Kč, i.e. a mere 1.1% of the city’s cleaning costs.⁷⁴ After 1926, when the Jeneč cooperative was established, the sale of urban waste to peasants was highly unprofitable – the costs of transport, together with a flat-rate fee paid to the cooperative, amounted to 3.2 million Kč in the financial statements.⁷⁵ The collection and disposal of solid waste, with its growing volume and stagnant (slightly volatile) demand, were logistically difficult to manage. The City of Prague was approaching a critical situation – waste management reliant on peasant collection was inevitably collapsing; health and other considerations, as well as public opinion,

72 Čížek, “Péče o čištění českých měst,” 190–93.

73 *Administrativní zpráva královského hlavního města Prahy za léta 1905, 1906, 1907*, part 1 (Praha: Statistická komise královského hlavního města Prahy, 1911), 632–33.

74 AHMP, MHMP I., Minutes of the City Administrative Bodies, inv. no. 533, City Council Meetings, July–August 1926 (Minutes of the 31st meeting held on 27 August 1926).

75 Holeček, *Vývoj odstraňování pevných odpadků*, 5.

did not allow a return to the original practice of landfills. Although plans for the construction of an incinerator had been in progress since 1926, a relatively long period of several years had to be bridged.

From an agricultural perspective – the demand side of the market – several key factors shaped the purchase of waste as fertiliser. In the 1920s, the tone of specialist treatises shifted (in line with both foreign and domestic experience), and they no longer rated waste fertiliser very highly. This marked a shift from original enthusiasm to, at the very least, reserved opinions. Attention was drawn to the risk of farm animals being injured by nails, shards and fragments, or of damage to agricultural machinery, which persisted because of imperfect sorting of solid waste. The composition, quality and quantity of household waste and street sweepings fluctuated – they were difficult to predict, varying by season and by city district (working-class districts, middle-class districts, and the affluent villa districts).⁷⁶ The fertilising potential of street sweepings declined as a result of the motorisation and electrification of urban transport, which replaced horse-drawn power, and the fertilising potential of household waste declined due to a reduction in the proportion of ash caused by the incipient transition of households to gas heating.⁷⁷ Whilst the use of waste fertilisers could lead to increased yields, it could also result in crop diseases (e.g. potato scab⁷⁸). Furthermore, fertilising with urban waste could only be beneficial for a limited time, “until the soil becomes saturated.”⁷⁹

Between the 1880s and the 1930s, peasants gradually stopped using Prague’s urban solid waste as fertiliser. As late as the 1870s and 1880s, demand for so-called waste fertiliser was so high that public tenders were issued, and small-scale farmers queued for hours with their carts outside the landfill to collect it. By the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, a well-developed rail transport system was in place, which the city used to stimulate demand in its immediate vicinity. As a result, demand remained sufficient, and peasants were willing to pay for the waste. By the 1920s, however, the situation had changed entirely. The peasants from Jeneč were unable to fulfil their ambitious business plan. The cooperative’s collaboration with the city did not develop as anticipated. The City of Prague, overwhelmed by waste, more than doubled the number of waste wagons sent to Jeneč (17,000 railway wagons in 1929), whilst at the same time, problems arose over payment for the promised free transport.⁸⁰ The cooperative tried to expand its client base through advertising, seeking customers who would purchase

76 “Komíny spalovací stanice začínají kouřit,” *Národní listy*, Vol. 73, No. 326, 28 November 1933, 2. Mašek, “Odstraňování a využití městských pevných odpadků,” 77. Kurz, *Šetřte uhlím!*, 102–03. “Hnojivá hodnota pražských smetků,” 18–20.

77 Bělina et al., *Dějiny Prahy II.*, 337.

78 Peasant F. Červený explains his experience with liming and explicitly warns against mixing ash and street sweepings into barn manure, as this causes scab on potatoes, i.e. their infection by a bacterial or fungal pathogen. “Well then, let us not begrudge a few crowns and buy pure powdered lime for fertilising, if possible without additives, and let us not buy the cheapest, yet worst-quality waste”. Fr. Červený, *Vápněte k jetelům!*, *Milotický hospodář, orgán českého Kravařska*, Vol. 49, No. 11–12, November–December 1938, 342–43.

79 Veselý, “Technické problémy,” 1–2.

80 Josef Sechtr, “Socialistické způsoby,” *Venkov*, Vol. 24, No. 69, 21 March 1929, 4.

waste fertiliser year-round,⁸¹ but demand for waste from peasants was insufficient. Positive trends in the prices of industrial fertilisers, which had already become standard in the interwar period, also worked against waste fertilisers.⁸² Sales were so low that by 1928 the cooperative in Jeneč was offering them for spreading and fertilisation free of charge, at a rate of up to 15 wagons a day.⁸³ Yet even this failed to increase interest in them. The dump in Jeneč grew unchecked, and the natural consequence was the cooperative's gradual decline. It is no exaggeration to say that the market for waste fertilisers had practically collapsed just before the incinerator was put into operation.

Conclusion

In Prague, the system for utilising solid waste in agriculture persisted for a surprisingly long time compared with other major European cities. It remained the core of waste disposal until the early 1930s. In the 1880s–1930s, when devising strategies for solid waste disposal, the city sought to streamline a practice that had proven itself over many decades, seeking tools to improve it (in the sense of expanding its territorial reach), rather than replacing it with a different system. Although Prague was familiar with modern methods of waste disposal by incineration (Brno, then the second-largest city in the Bohemian lands, had had its own incinerator as early as 1902), the fact that Prague was surrounded by highly productive agricultural land with a high capacity to absorb fertiliser delayed the city administration's decision to build an incinerator. The deteriorating quality of waste fertiliser and the increasing availability of substitutes reduced its appeal to peasants. Existing literature generally emphasises the hygienic, aesthetic and economic reasons that led cities to change their waste management practices when establishing modern waste disposal systems. From the perspective of the research presented in this study, we add that, in the case of Prague, the countryside itself played an active and significant role in the decline of the use of urban waste as fertiliser in rural areas.

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81 "Zemědělcům v okolí Prahy," *Venkov*, Vol. 22, No. 274, 19 November 1927, 12.

82 Prokop Jandek, "Proměna propagace umělých hnojiv v českých zemích/Československu v podmínkách kartelizace trhu 1890–1938," in Miloš Hořejš, Eduard Kubů, and Barbora Štolleová, eds., *Od počátků reklamy k modernímu marketingu. Průzkum trhu a odbytové strategie firem ve střední Evropě 19. a 20. století* (Praha: NTM, to be published in 2026).

83 "Advertisement," *Národní listy*, Vol. 68, No. 266, 25 September 1928, 8.

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Eduard Kubů, Barbora Štolleová

TRDNI KOMUNALNI ODPADKI KOT KMETIJSKO GNOJIL – IZVEDLJIVA REŠITEV ALI OSTANEK PRETEKLOSTI? RAVNANJE Z ODPADKI V PRAGI OD 80. LET 19. DO 30. LET 20. STOLETJA

POVZETEK

V obravnavanem obdobju – od 80. let 19. stoletja do 30. let 20. stoletja – je Praga izrazito rasla. Z njeno geografsko in demografsko širitvijo se je zelo povečala tudi količina trdnih odpadkov (gospodinjski odpadki, pepel in ulični odpadki). Za mestno upravo je bila to nujna težava, ki jo je bilo treba odpraviti z različnimi pristopi in inovativnimi rešitvami, vključno z organizacijo občinskih odlagališč odpadkov in rednega

odvoza odpadkov, njegovo motorizacijo in mehanizacijo, izravnavo terena, uvedbo zaprtih zabojnikov za odpadke ter pripravo projekta za gradnjo sežigalnice. V Pragi, ki je imela v bližini močno kmetijsko zaledje (tako imenovani »zlati pas Češke«), je bila ena od tradicionalnih in pomembnih metod ravnanja z odpadki njihova »ponovna uporaba« kot kmetijsko gnojilo. Še v sedemdesetih in osemdesetih letih 19. stoletja je bilo v Pragi običajno, da so za odvoz konjskega gnoja, uličnih odpadkov in gospodinskih odpadkov organizirali javne razpise, kmetje pa so bili pripravljeni s svojimi vozovi ure in ure čakati v vrsti pred odlagališči, da bi pobrali odpadke. Povpraševanje po odpadkih pa se je kljub temu začelo zmanjševati zaradi strukturnih sprememb na kmetijskem trgu, sprememb v miselnosti podeželskega prebivalstva (razumevanje modernosti), ter napredka v kemiji in uvedbe umetnih gnojil. Mesto Praga se je na ta trend sprva odzvalo z razširitvijo možnosti za nakupe manjših količin in z uvedbo nove prodajne metode, ki je izkoriščala železniške storitve s popustom na prevoz. S tem so se odprli novi trgi za gnojila iz odpadkov v bolj oddaljenih krajih, ki so bili zunaj dosega konjskih vozov. Povpraševanje je ostalo zadostno, kmetje pa so bili pripravljeni plačati za odpadke. Mestna uprava je odločitev o gradnji sežigalnice odložila, ker je bila Praga obkrožena z zelo rodovitnimi kmetijskimi površinami, ki so lahko absorbirala veliko količino gnojil. V dvajsetih letih 20. stoletja pa so se razmere precej spremenile. Gnojilo iz odpadkov je zaradi vse slabše kakovosti in vse večje dostopnosti njegovih nadomestkov postalo manj privlačno za kmete, medtem ko se je količina praških odpadkov še naprej povečevala. Ambiciozni projekt kmetijske zadruge v bližnji občini Jeneč, ki je v drugi polovici dvajsetih let 20. stoletja zbirala vse praške odpadke za nadaljnjo prodajo kmetijam v predmestju, se je končal s poslovnim neuspehom. Tako se je sistem izkoriščanja trdnih odpadkov v kmetijstvu, na katerem je v Pragi dolgo temeljilo ravnanje z odpadki, v začetku tridesetih let 20. stoletja sesul. Praga je nato prešla na sistem sežiganja odpadkov, vendar precej pozno v primerjavi z drugimi evropskimi prestolnicami. Študija dokazuje, da pri razvoju sodobnih sistemov za odstranjevanje odpadkov v Pragi niso imeli vloge le higienski, estetski in gospodarski dejavniki, temveč je bilo tudi samo podeželje pomemben dejavnik pri zmanjševanju uporabe mestnih odpadkov kot gnojila na podeželskih območjih.

Lilija Wedel*

Oil Rush in the Imperial Baku: Reciprocal Impacts between Industry, Environment, and Urbanisation

IZVLEČEK

NAFTNA MRZLICA V BAKUJU V ČASU RUSKEGA IMPERIJA: VZAJEMNI VPLIVI INDUSTRIJE, OKOLJA IN URBANIZACIJE

Članek obravnava hitro širitev naftne industrije v Bakuju in njegovi okolici v poznem obdobju Ruskega imperija ter njen vpliv na industrijski razvoj, spremembe v okolju in urbanizacijo. Na podlagi tedanjih časopisov, oglasov, poslovnih publikacij in strokovnih virov je naftni razcvet v Bakuju umeščen v širše razprave o industrializaciji Ruskega imperija in mejnikih izkoriščanja virov. Prispevek zagovarja trditev, da so pridobivanje, predelava in prevoz nafte ne le spodbudili gospodarsko rast in posodobitev infrastrukture, temveč so povzročili tudi znatne pritiske na okolje. Onesnaževanje, nevarnost požarov in logistične ovire so se izkazali za osrednje izzive, ki so oblikovali občinske politike, regulativne prakse in javno razpravo. Posebna pozornost je namenjena vlogi časopisov in strokovnih publikacij pri širjenju tehničnega znanja, opredeljevanju okoljske problematike in vplivanju na razprave o urbanističnem razvoju. Članek z združevanjem pristopov iz okoljske, podjetniške in urbane zgodovine pokaže, da je bila industrijska ekspanzija v Bakuju vzajemen proces, v katerem so se gospodarska rast, okoljske spremembe in upravljanje razvijali ob neprestanih medsebojnih vplivih. Primer Bakuja ponuja širši vpogled v delovanje gospodarstva v Ruskem imperiju, ki je temeljilo na izkoriščanju naravnih virov, ter v družbeno-ekološke posledice hitre industrializacije v poznem devetnajstem in zgodnjem dvajsetem stoletju.

Ključne besede: naftna industrija, Ruski imperij, Baku, okoljska zgodovina, urbanizacija, sistemi izkoriščanja virov

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the rapid expansion of the oil industry in and around Baku during the late Russian Empire and its effects on industrial development, environmental change, and urban transformation. Drawing on contemporary newspapers, advertisements, corporate publications, and technical sources, it situates the Baku oil boom within broader debates about imperial industrialisation and resource frontiers. The article argues that oil extraction, refining, and transport not only stimulated economic growth and infrastructural modernisation but also generated significant environmental pressures. Pollution, fire hazards, and logistical bottlenecks emerged as central challenges that shaped municipal policies, regulatory practices, and public debate. Particular attention is paid to the role of newspapers and professional publications in disseminating technical knowledge, framing environmental problems, and influencing discussions of urban development. By integrating approaches from environmental, business, and urban history, the article demonstrates that industrial expansion in Baku was a reciprocal process in which economic growth, environmental transformation, and governance evolved in constant interaction. The case of Baku offers broader insights into the functioning of imperial resource economies and the socio-ecological consequences of rapid industrialisation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Keywords: oil industry, Russian Empire, Baku, environmental history, urbanisation, resource regimes

Introduction: The Baku Oil Phenomenon in the Imperial Context

Recent scholarship has shown that industrial expansion in the distant regions of empires cannot be understood solely as economic growth. Rather, it must be conceptualised as a socio-ecological process in which resource extraction, technological innovation, state regulation, migration, and environmental transformation jointly produced new regimes of economy, labour, ecology, governance, and everyday life.¹

¹ See Corey Ross, *Ecology and Power in the Age of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), esp. 1–14. Brian C. Black, *Petrolia. The Landscape of America's First Oil Boom* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000). John R. McNeill, *Something New Under the Sun* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000), esp. chapter 3, S. Andreas Heinrich and Heiko Pleines, eds., *Challenges of the Caspian Resource Boom. Domestic Elites and Policy-Making* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). Jason W. Moore, *Capitalism in the Web of Life. Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital* (London: Verso, 2015), 111–40, 221–40. See also Judith Pallot and Denis J. B. Shaw, *Landscape and Settlement in Romanov Russia, 1613–1917* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990). Brent Hierman, “Colonial Legacies and Global Networks in Central Asia and the Caucasus,” in Zak Cope and Immanuel Ness, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Economic Imperialism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022), 635–54. Maya K. Peterson, *Pipe Dreams. Water and Empire in Central Asia's Aral Sea Basin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

Classic interpretations of nineteenth-century capitalism already emphasised the structural character of these transformations. Braudel conceptualised capitalism as a multilayered system grounded in material infrastructures and the long-term reshaping of economic space,² while Polanyi highlighted the tensions arising from the commodification of land and nature.³ These perspectives offer a useful framework for analysing the socio-ecological dynamics of industrial expansion in imperial borderlands.⁴ Recent approaches in global, imperial, and business history have further underscored the asymmetrical dynamics⁵ of economic transformation and the role of local actors, experts, and media in shaping industrial development and regulatory practices.

Building on these perspectives, this article examines how the rapid expansion of the Baku oil industry transformed not only production and investment patterns but also urban environments, public infrastructure, and debates about environmental risk. Rather than treating industrial growth and ecological change as separate developments, it analyses their reciprocal relationship and explores how economic actors, municipal authorities, experts, and the press responded to the challenges posed by the oil boom.

Historical Background and Industrial Expansion

The oil boom in and around Baku – one of the most important centres of the Russian Empire in the South Caucasus and often compared to the gold rush in Alaska⁶ – began in the 1870s,⁷ bringing large inflows of capital, technical innovations, and skilled workers. It stimulated diverse industrial sectors and new businesses, fostered

2 Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism 15th – 18th Century*, Vol. 1–3, trans. Siân Reynolds (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), esp. Vol. II, chapters 1–3. Hobsbawm, in turn, highlighted how the “long nineteenth century” witnessed the growing integration of “peripheral regions” into global circuits of industrial production, finance, and imperial power. – Eric Hobsbawm, *Das lange 19. Jahrhundert*, Bd. 2: *Das imperiale Zeitalter 1875–1914*, trans. Johann George Scheffner (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2017), 51–112; Bd. 3: *Die Blütezeit des Kapitals, 1848–1875*, trans. Udo Rennert (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2017), 78–79, 238–39, 256–57, 379.

3 Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2001 [1944]), chapters 6, 14, 15.

4 For the connections between politics and environmental economics, cf. the notes in Nicolas Breyfogle, “Toward an Environmental History of Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union,” in Nicolas Breyfogle, ed., *Eurasian Environments. Nature and Ecology in Imperial Russia and Soviet History* (Pittsburg: University of Pittsburg Press, Russian and East European Studies, 2018), 3–20.

5 See, e.g., Sven Beckert, *Capitalism. A Global History* (New York: Penguin Press, 2025). Akira Iriye and Jürgen Osterhammel, *Geschichte der Welt*, Bd. 5: 1870–1945. *Weltmärkte und Weltkriege* (München: Beck, 2018).

6 Cf. Jeronim Perović, *Rohstoffmacht Russland. Eine globale Energiegeschichte* (Köln: Böhlau, 2022), 24, 29, 35. Before 1900s, the US-American Standard Oil as a main deliver competed with Shell, Branobel, Rothschilds. See also Ljudmila A. Murav'yeva, “Ekonomicheskoe razvitiye Rossii vo vtoroi polovine XIX – nachale XX veka,” *International Accounting* 20, No. 21 (2017): 1271–86.

7 Whereas the mechanical extraction method was certified in 1847, the first (primitive) oil refinery was established by V. Kokorev, P. Gubonin, and Baron N. E. Tornau in 1859. Kerosene was produced for the first time in 1863 at the Javad Melikov plant, where refrigerators were first employed in the processing. For the developments before 1870s and prominent biographies in the oil history, see Miryusif Mirbabayev, *Concise History of Azerbaijani Oil* (Baku: Azerbaijan State Publishing House, 2008).

the establishment of multinational companies, and accelerated the development of urban infrastructure⁸ and a quasi-national bourgeoisie. At the same time, these transformations also led to social tensions, especially between ethnic groups in Baku, like Azeris and Armenians.⁹

By the end of the nineteenth century, the Tsarist Empire had surpassed the United States in oil production, largely owing to the rich resources discovered in and around Baku – then the principal oil centre of the Russian Empire in the South Caucasus.¹⁰

Table 1: Development of oil production in the Baku region, 1883–1913 (in thousands of poods)¹¹

Year	Amount of oil production / thousand pood (62,5 pood = 1 ton)
1883	60376
1884	90230
1886	123500
1890	240400
1892	296500
1896	408800
1900	603764
1901	671576
1903	467000
1910	499000
1913	449400

As Table 1 shows, oil production in the Baku region expanded at an extraordinary pace from the 1880s to the turn of the century. Output rose more than tenfold between 1883 and its peak in 1901, reflecting the combined effects of foreign investment, technological innovation, and expanding transport infrastructure. Although production declined after 1901, it remained at a very high level until the eve of World War I. This rapid growth not only consolidated Baku’s position within the global petroleum economy but also intensified pressures on urban infrastructure, public health, and the

8 See also Dominik Gutmeyr, “The Oil Boom and the Beginnings of Photography in Imperial Baku,” in Biljana Ristovska-Josifovska, ed., *Migration, Knowledge Exchange and Academic Cultures in Europe and the Black Sea Region until World War I* (Skopje: Institute of National History, 2021), 319–36.

9 Cf. Verena Dohrn, *The Kahans from Baku. A Family Saga*, trans. Uri Themal (Boston: Academich Studies Press, 2022), 98. For the first group, the Russian government was “a foreign regime,” whereas for the second group, it represented “the hope of gaining more freedom”.

10 Cf. Marius S. Vassiliou and Mir-Yusif Mir-Babayev, *US and Azerbaijani Oil in the Nineteenth Century. The Two Titans* (Lanham: Lexington, 2023). See also Daniel Yergin, *The Prize. The Epic Quest for Oil, Money and Power* (London: Simon & Schuster, 1991), chapter 3.

11 From “Baku i neft’. Period promyshlennoi neftedobychi,” in *Okno v Baku*, accessed on 10 October 2025, <https://www.window2baku.com/oil2.htm>.

local environment, thereby contributing to the challenges discussed in the following sections.

The development of Baku's oil industry unfolded through a series of key milestones that illustrate both rapid production growth and the establishment of local entrepreneurial networks.¹² The joint-stock company *Kavkaz i Merkurii* began transporting oil by ship, marking the start of a more organised industrial infrastructure. Mechanised drilling was introduced in Balakhani in the early 1870s. Infrastructure development accelerated with the construction of the first oil pipeline connecting Balakhani to the Nobel refinery in 1878, and the opening of Baku's first power station in 1880, which illuminated the docks, although kerosene lamps continued to light the city streets.

The expansion continued with major projects such as the Baku–Batumi pipeline (1896–1906), which spanned 833 kilometres and carried up to 900,000 tons annually, and the emergence of media specialised in oil, exemplified by the first periodical, *Neftyanoe delo*, published in 1899. By 1901, Baku accounted for roughly 51.4 per cent of global oil extraction or production. Technical innovation continued with the introduction of rotary drilling in 1911, but by 1913 the region hosted around 3,500 wells, and its share of global output had declined to 18.1 per cent.¹³ The outbreak of war and the closure of the Dardanelles Straits in 1914 effectively ended oil exports from Batumi, resulting in the loss of Western European and Near Eastern markets.

This chronology demonstrates how technological innovation, foreign and local capital, and infrastructure investment combined to transform Baku into a leading industrial centre, while also setting the stage for social, environmental, and urban transformations that characterised the city in the late imperial period.

At the same time, the concentration of oil production in a geographically limited area intensified environmental pressures and made the management of industrial risks an increasingly central concern for municipal authorities, engineers, and the local press.

Modern marketing strategies and print media accompanied industrial expansion and played an important mediating role. Newspapers reported on technological innovations, monitored environmental hazards, and disseminated practical advice and criticism. In doing so, they helped shape industrial practices, public debates, and urban development. In 1900, the Russian Empire accounted for 50.8 per cent of global oil production; by 1910 this figure had declined to roughly 20.4 per cent,¹⁴ driven by the depletion of mature oil fields, increasing global competition, market concentration by major firms such as *Branobel* and *Royal Dutch Shell*, logistical and technical con-

12 Cf. John P. McKay, "Entrepreneurship and the emergence of the Russian petroleum industry," *Research in economic history* 8 (1983): 47–91. See also John P. McKay, "Restructuring the Russian Petroleum Industry in the 1890s. Government Policy and the Market Forces," in Linda Edmondson and Peter Waldron, eds., *Economy and Society in Russia and the Soviet Union, 1860–1930. Essays for Olga Crisp* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1992), 85–106.

13 For more statistics prior to 1900, see e.g. Georgiy E. Startsev, *Bakinskaya neftyanaya promyshlennost': Istoriko-statisticheskii ocherk* (Baku: Tipografiya Aror, 1901), statistical section.

14 Quoted in "Neftyanoi otdel," *Kaspii*, 4 November 1911, 5.

straints, and the disruptive effects of the Russian Revolution of 1905, labour unrest, and interethnic conflicts in Baku (the Armenian-Azerbaijani massacre in 1905).

During his visits to Baku in 1859 and 1861, the Georgian writer and translator Ivan I. Evlakhov (1829–1888) observed that one could already sense the city's extraordinary future on the Absheron Peninsula in the Caspian region. He described a place endowed with a remarkable abundance of natural resources: a fine harbour and "eternal flames" on one side, and oil wells, salt deposits, sulphur, and diverse minerals on the other – conditions that, in his words, rendered Baku almost "a businessman" in itself.¹⁵

Yet these favourable circumstances were accompanied by significant risks. Geophysical hazards, including landslides and earthquakes, periodically disrupted transport routes – especially railways – as reported in local newspapers, thereby delaying production and distribution and causing financial losses.¹⁶

For many visitors, the industrial scale of Baku's oil fields provoked ambivalent or even negative impressions.¹⁷ Given the region's geophysical challenges, its distance from imperial centres such as Moscow and St Petersburg, and recurrent interethnic competition, one might have expected infrastructural stagnation. However, the press and advertising – by 1910 accounting for up to half of the content in some newspapers – painted a different picture. They reveal that major South Caucasian cities such as Baku and Tbilisi offered a striking variety of consumer goods and services and were increasingly perceived, both visually and culturally, as spaces that combined "oriental flair" with European modernity.¹⁸

The rapid expansion of the oil industry in imperial Baku – although oil had been known and exploited in the region since antiquity – was made possible by technological innovation,¹⁹ the extension of transport networks (above all, the Baku–Batumi railway, which was especially important for exports abroad), substantial foreign investment²⁰ – most prominently by the Nobel brothers²¹ from 1876 and the Rothschilds from 1883²² – and, not least, by the ambitions of local entrepreneurs such as M. Nagiev (1842–1919), Sh. Asadullaev (1840–1913) and G. Z. Tagiev (1838–1924, who founded the first oil company in Baku in 1872.²³ Above all, Tagiev's engagement with European cultural models was publicly visible in architecture, philanthropy, and edu-

15 Ivan I. Evlakhov, "Nedelya v Baku," *Kavkaz*, No. 98, 1861.

16 Cf. e.g. the announcement by the Transcaucasian Railway Administration in *Bakinskaya Izvestiya*, 1 March 1887, 1.

17 Cf. Lilija Wedel, "Erkundungs- und Abenteuerreisen durch Kaukasus und Zentralasien. Visualisierung und Rezeption des Ostens in den 1880er und 1920er Jahren," in *INDES. Zeitschrift für Politik und Gesellschaft* 13, 2/3 (2025): 48–54, here 52.

18 Cf. Lilija Wedel, "German Advertisements in the Late Russian Empire as a Reflection of Consumer Policies, Culture, and Communication," in Magdalena Eriksroed Burger, Heidi Hein-Kircher, and Julia Malitska, eds., *Consumption and Advertising in Eastern Europe and Russia in the Twentieth Century* (Cham: Palgrave, 2023), 55–81, here 70–71.

19 The development of new drilling technologies was driven by commercialisation and the growing demand for cost-effective energy sources, particularly for lighting. – Perovič, *Rohstoffmacht*, 25.

20 Cf. Perovič, *Rohstoffmacht*, 34. The new transport routes enhanced the attractiveness of investments and encouraged the activities of foreign entrepreneurs.

21 Nobel owned the first seaworthy oil tanker since 1878, tank wagons since 1881, and his own oil trading fleet.

22 By 1890, 42 percent of Baku's total oil exports were controlled by his company.

23 See also Eva-Maria Auch, *Öl und Wein am Kaukasus: deutsche Forschungsreisende, Kolonisten und Unternehmer im vorrevolutionären Aserbaidschan* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2001).

cational initiatives, exemplified by his residence and office building, now the National Museum of the History of Azerbaijan, as well as by his patronage of theatre culture and female education.

The interaction between foreign capital and local entrepreneurial elites thus created a hybrid economic environment in which imperial structures, transnational investment, and regional initiatives jointly shaped industrial modernisation and urban development.

Environmental Challenges, Regulatory Frameworks, and Industrial Responses

The rapid expansion of the oil industry in Baku quickly exposed the limits of existing regulatory frameworks. Environmental hazards, infrastructure bottlenecks, and intense competition forced imperial authorities, municipal institutions, and industrial actors to develop new forms of governance and coordination.

The first major attempts to establish a regulatory framework for the oil industry were made in 1871 and 1872, when two laws were enacted: *On Excise Taxes on Oil Wells and Oil Products* and *On the Sale of Oil Lands Held by Leaseholders to Private Individuals*. State-owned oil fields were leased for twenty-four months. Tenants were permitted to export the oil they discovered at prices of their own choosing, and net profits could reach approximately fourteen to fifteen per cent. In 1874, the first joint-stock company, the *Baku Oil Society*, was founded.

From the outset, however, intense competition characterised oil production and distribution at the regional level²⁴ – both between districts within the Baku Governorate and among local and foreign entrepreneurs. This asymmetry was particularly evident in the division of labour within the industry. Financially powerful firms such as *Branobel*, even without their own producing wells, could secure high profits by investing in refining, storage, and distribution networks, whereas many Azerbaijani entrepreneurs remained primarily focused on crude extraction.²⁵ This division of labour not only reflected differences in capital resources but also shaped the industry's technological and environmental organisation, as extraction, refining, and transport generated distinct risks and regulatory challenges.

Cooperation and communication among government agencies, municipal authorities, scientific circles, and business communities were nevertheless highly developed at both local and imperial levels. The newspaper *Bakinskiya Izvestiya*²⁶ (Baku News), an influential organ of the Russian oil industry, reported in November 1887 on a petition by owners of private tank wagons requesting state intervention with the railway

24 In 1910, a decision was taken in Baku to establish a separate trading association for petroleum products. – “Vechernyaya khronika,” *Kaspii*, 28 April 1910, 2–3. Also “Mestnaya khronika,” *Kaspii*, 14, 19 January 1911, 5.

25 A. M., “Neftyanoe delo,” *Kaspii*, 5 July 1881, 3.

26 From 1876 to 1886; since 1888 as *Bakinskii torgovo-promyshlennyj listok*.

board to increase hauling capacity. Industrialists complained that of the 5,000 wagons ordered, only 871 had been delivered. The matter was debated in the city council at the initiative of the local stock exchange committee, which in turn insisted that the railway administration was obliged to meet these demands – especially since the Ministry of Transport had authorised wagon construction.²⁷

Press coverage of such disputes played an important role in transforming logistical difficulties into public issues and in mobilising political pressure for infrastructural improvements.

Transport bottlenecks were among the principal structural constraints on Baku's oil industry. According to Kaspij, in July 1881, the main brake on production and distribution was a chronic shortage of rolling stock and transport capacity.²⁸ Its "Oil Business" column observed that, apart from the Nobel cooperative and a few large firms able to rely on private reserves, most factories in the Black City stood idle or operated at only half capacity.²⁹

Even in the 1910s, industrialists continued to seek logistical solutions in collaboration with railway officials. They inspected transport equipment at suppliers' plants and along entire routes to ensure that the right tanks were used for products such as kerosene and mazut (fuel oil).³⁰ Misuse was common: kerosene was sometimes poured into boilers designed for heavy fuel oil, rendering entire shipments unusable and causing substantial financial losses.³¹

Imperial authorities maintained close administrative control over oil extraction through concession policies, tariff regimes, and statistical reporting requirements.³² Under the Mining Law of 1872, drilling owners were required to submit annual statistical reports on all operations and development plans to the Mining Office and to notify officials immediately of any accidents.³³ Although the abolition of local production taxes in 1876 facilitated the establishment of new plants, contemporaries worried about distortions in competition and the growing concentration of capital.

These concerns became particularly evident in 1881, when the local branch of the Imperial Russian Technical Society debated³⁴ proposals to tax crude oil and waste residues – black or dark-green by-products – at one rouble per pood (approximately 16.38 kilograms), as suggested by the process engineer V. I. Ragozin.³⁵ He argued that,

27 "Baku, 8 noyabrya," *Bakinskiya Izvestiia*, 8 November 1887, 1–2.

28 A. M., "Neftyanoe delo," *Kaspij*, 5 July 1881, 3.

29 Large-scale exports were not anticipated; contemporaries nevertheless assumed that the situation would stabilise prices on the Russian market, as otherwise prices would have been bound to decline. – Ibidem.

30 "Neftyanoi otdel," *Kaspij*, 14 April 1910, 5.

31 Ibid.

32 Cf. Dohrn, *The Kahans*, 83. See also Timothy Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil* (London: Verso, 2011), esp. chapter 1–3, also 5.

33 Cited in *Bakinskiya Izvestiia*, 1 February 1887, 1–2.

34 Its primary medium (specialist publication) was *Trudy Bakinskogo otdeleniya Imperatorskogo russkogo tekhnicheskogo obshchestva* (Proceedings of the Baku Branch of the Imperial Russian Technical Society) (Baku: Tip. gazety Kaspiiskoe more, 1886–1914). The journal was published until 1917.

35 Experiments with oil since 1873 in N. Novgorod; in 1876, he moved to Balakhani (around Baku) and founded a lubricating oil plant; in 1878, he received an award at the exhibition in Paris.

in an era of mounting monopolisation and intensive resource exploitation, the state needed a careful fiscal strategy, particularly given the industry's potential contribution to the imperial budget. Oil revenues, he claimed, might eventually cover as much as one-third of state expenditures, equivalent to military spending. Other specialists questioned whether tax-free exports would intensify foreign competition, allowing overseas producers to benefit from Russian waste products by refining them into kerosene and lubricants in their own plants.³⁶

These debates illustrate how technical experts, industrialists, and state officials jointly discussed the economic and environmental consequences of large-scale oil extraction, treating waste products and pollution as fiscal and regulatory concerns.

New railway lines, Kaspij suggested, could help resolve these problems by channelling production directly into other industrial sectors.³⁷ Entrepreneurs themselves increasingly recognised – especially during the 1891 oil crisis – that only high-quality products could secure long-term competitiveness in international markets.³⁸

The discussions demonstrate that the rapid industrialisation of Baku's oil sector not only stimulated economic growth but also fostered new forms of coordination among industry, experts, and state authorities. Environmental risks, infrastructural constraints, and fiscal considerations thus became central to the emerging regulatory regime of the imperial oil frontier.

Technological Innovations, Knowledge Transfer, and Environmental Adaptation

Technological innovation in Baku's oil industry arose from the interplay of foreign investment, local environmental conditions, and imperial regulatory frameworks. The development and transfer of technical knowledge were therefore closely tied to the practical challenges of extraction, transport, and refining in a difficult natural environment.³⁹

In the last third of the 19th century, foreign entrepreneurs in the Tsarist Empire generally prospered under the trade privileges of 7 June 1860, which equated their rights with those of Russian citizens. Consequently, their marketing strategies were aligned with the same legal framework. Evidence from contemporary media shows that, for example, German migrants and settlers were particularly active as proprietors, operators, members of stock companies, agents, and distributors of foreign firms.⁴⁰ Notable examples include Gustav List (1835–1913), founder of a trading company and mechanical factory (machines and tools for agriculture and railways) in Baku in

³⁶ "Neftyanoe delo," *Kaspii*, 4 April 1881, 3–4.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Here a reference to Ragozin.

³⁹ Cf. Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy* and McNeill, *Something New Under the Sun*.

⁴⁰ See, for example, "An unsere Leser," *Kaukasische Post*, 18 June 1906, 1 and *Bakinskij spravocnyj kalendar' na 1897* (Baku: Aror, 1896), 22, 63–66.

1893, with branches for *Grusonwerk Buckau-Magdeburg* since 1890, and Rudolf Kaiser, “the sole representative of the English engineering plant Robey & Co., Lincoln, for Transcaucasia and Transcaspia”.⁴¹ These actors served as important intermediaries in the transfer of industrial technologies, managerial practices, and marketing strategies between Western regions and the oil fields of the South Caucasus.

Entrepreneurs faced considerable local challenges. As the German historian Dohrn has shown in her reconstruction of the Jewish Kahan family’s business history, “entrepreneurs first had to learn how to deal with the Baku oil, as it reached the surface with eruptive force”.⁴² Geophysical factors – including climatic and weather conditions – posed significant obstacles to extraction and logistics.⁴³ These conditions required constant technological adaptation and contributed to the experimental character of oil extraction in the region.

Transport of oil products to domestic markets, e.g., via the Volga–Don route or via Astrakhan and the Caspian Sea, was seasonally constrained. Before pipelines, transporting oil in barrels by cart to kerosene factories was highly unreliable because of weather conditions;⁴⁴ only with the introduction of pipelines did kerosene become widely accessible, even in rural areas (e.g., in 1870, 1 pood = 1.50 roubles; 1899–1901, 10–12 kopeks).⁴⁵ The introduction of pipelines therefore represented a decisive infrastructural innovation that transformed both the scale and the reliability of oil distribution.

Environmental concerns were already evident: water pollution⁴⁶ and drinking-water scarcity affected both the local population and small-scale producers. Many entrepreneurs appeared indifferent to these impacts, including workplace safety. Such incidents reveal the growing tension between rapid industrial expansion and the urban region’s environmental limits. The *Kaspj* newspaper repeatedly reported incidents, including one in which Br. Melikov and Juzbashev used unsuitable water during operations, endangering workers and machinery and ultimately leading to criminal charges against the owners.⁴⁷

Meanwhile, the government emphasised the rational use of oil – including maximising the efficiency of combustible materials⁴⁸ – and promoted oil fuel over wood and coal, relying on technicians and inventors to devise appropriate solutions.⁴⁹ A key objective was the rational use of energy resources, particularly the preservation of forest reserves while promoting oil as an alternative fuel.⁵⁰

41 *Kaspj*, 17 May 1895, 3.

42 Dohrn, *The Kahans*, 84.

43 Ibid.

44 Cf. i.a. Evgenij Markov, *Rossija v Srednei Azii, Očerki putestestviya po Zakavkaz’yu, Turkmenii, Bukhare, Samarkandskoi, Tashkentskoi i Ferganskoi oblastyam, Kaspiiskomu morju i Volge*, Vol. I. (S.-Peterburg: Tip. M. M. Stasjuleviča, 1901), 145–46.

45 Markov, *Rossija v Srednei Azii*, 146.

46 Evlakhov, “Nedelya”.

47 “Mestnye Izvestiya,” *Kaspj*, 5 July 1881, 2–3.

48 A. M., “Neftyanoe delo,” *Kaspj*, 22 July 1881, 2–3.

49 “Neftyanoe delo,” *Kaspj*, 19 July 1881, 2–3.

50 Ibid.

Technical knowledge and workforce skills were critical to production quality. Lubricating oil production,⁵¹ which requires precise thickness and the absence of odour, often failed due to insufficient expertise or managerial negligence. Owners sometimes rushed young specialists or employed unscrupulous operators, known as “*chevaliers d’industrie*”. By contrast, as the press noted, Western companies gradually achieved high-quality production through sustained experimentation, allowing even junior technicians to gain on-the-job experience.⁵² At the 1884 meeting of Russian oil industrialists, Ragozin proposed new distillation methods using petrol fumes. By 1886, regulations required the inspection and verification of new distillation stills to ensure operational efficiency.⁵³

Experts – including geologists, mining engineers, chemists, and lab technicians – and specialist publications played crucial roles in informing and supporting the oil industry.⁵⁴ These expert networks formed an important knowledge infrastructure that underpinned industrial expansion and facilitated the diffusion of technical innovations. For instance, the mining engineer N. A. Sokolovskii, head of the Geological and Technical Bureau in Baku, advised on drilling, oil-field estimates, and pipeline planning.⁵⁵ Even the chemist D. I. Mendeleev recommended, as early as 1863, that industrialists use pipelines to transport crude oil, thereby improving efficiency compared with barrels.⁵⁶ Mendeleev’s recommendation illustrates how scientific expertise contributed directly to the modernisation of industrial transport systems.

Large-scale companies, such as *Branobel*, could afford their own technical boards and chemical laboratories, enabling continuous plant improvement, high-quality production, and efficient management of pipelines and logistics. Their technological and organisational capabilities illustrate the advantages of vertically integrated companies in managing both production and environmental risks.

Technological innovation in Baku’s oil industry therefore arose from the interplay of environmental constraints, international knowledge networks, and imperial economic policies. The transfer of expertise and technical experimentation not only increased production efficiency but also reshaped the oil region’s environmental and infrastructural landscape.

51 Oil residue refining process using purification by acid and water rinse – a production process almost identical to that of of kerosene.

52 A. M., “Neftyanoe delo,” *Kaspii*, 10 July 1881, 3–4.

53 Cited from the announcement pursuant to the “Resolution of the Committee for the Allocation of Tank Cars,” *Bakinskiya Izvestiya*, 8 January 1887, 1.

54 Cf. e.g. announcement of a Mining Engineer N. A. Sokolovskii and advertisement for the technical book in *Bakinskiya Izvestiya*, 3 May 1887, 1, 8.

55 Ibid.

56 Markov, *Rossiya v Srednei Azii*, 162–63.

Urban Infrastructure and Social Transformation

The concentration of oil production in Baku's industrial district, known as the "Black City", profoundly reshaped the city's urban infrastructure. The proximity of refineries, storage facilities, and workshops spurred the construction of additional industrial installations and factories serving related sectors,⁵⁷ such as steam mills and mechanical workshops.⁵⁸ It likewise encouraged the expansion of transport lines and the erection of housing blocks for workers. Beyond this industrial zone, large-scale entrepreneurs from both local and foreign groups invested heavily in Baku's urban infrastructure, including tramways, water supply,⁵⁹ hotels, sites of consumption, street paving, electric lighting,⁶⁰ and waste disposal systems. Thus, oil capital contributed not only to industrial expansion but also to the modernisation of urban services and public infrastructure.

By contrast, as the *Kaspij* newspaper noted on 1 January 1913 in its review of the previous year, the city council had shown passivity and negligence in implementing planned projects and measures for sewerage, road paving, tramlines, the construction of covered markets, healthcare improvements, and the enhancement of living conditions on the city's outskirts; many of these initiatives remained largely unimplemented.⁶¹ Such criticisms highlight the tension between rapid industrial growth and the limited administrative capacity of municipal authorities.

Overall, Baku presented an ambivalent picture. On the one hand, oil production – into which other sectors, numerous workers, and new specialists were integrated – opened up new perspectives for economic development in other parts of the region as well. Together with other branches of industry and trade, oil industrialists contributed to the expansion of infrastructure in the countryside and in provincial district towns, for example, through the construction of industrial workshops, consumer cooperatives, and transport networks. Within these processes, even if not everywhere and not among all segments of the rural and provincial population, new interests, needs, patterns of behaviour, and working practices emerged that increasingly resembled those of urban environments. These developments indicate that the oil boom not only transformed Baku itself but also stimulated processes of economic and social change across the wider region.

Advertising and the expanding urban press played important roles in these processes of technological transfer and consumption,⁶² reflecting the arrival of technologi-

57 In 1897, there were 4.000 commercial and industrial enterprises in Baku. Bakinskii spravochnyi kalendar' na 1897 god, otd. Torgovli i promyshlennosti, 3. In 1903, in Government Baku – 2.460 factories and operations, 173 – in Baku. – *Obzor Bakinskoi gubernii za 1904 god. Prilozhenie ko vsepoddaneishemu otchetu* (Baku: Tip. Gubernskogo pravleniya, 1905), No. 3, Vedomost' o chisle fabrik i zavodov v Bakinskoi gubernii za 1904 god.

58 "Mestnye Izvestiya," *Kaspij*, 5 July 1881, 2.

59 As by Tagiev. Cf. e.g. Rudolf Gil' (Rustam K. Aleskerov), *Privet iz Baku (arkhivnye dokumenty skvoz' stoletiya)* (Baku: Nərgiz nəşriyyatı, 2014), 137–48, 183, 186–91.

60 As by *Branobel*. See also press and public opinion, e.g. in "Mestnye izvestiya," *Kaspii*, 5 August 1881, 1–2, here 2.

61 "Baku v 1912 godu," *Kaspii*, 1 January 1913, 5.

62 Cf. Wedel, "German Advertisements," 57.

cal progress and the growing public interest in it. In Baku, for instance, fire-protection systems were introduced by the aforementioned entrepreneur Gustav List. In 1863, he invented an extinguisher pump, and in 1893, he founded a trading company in the city, although his warehouses and stocks had already been established in 1880. His advertisements appeared daily on the front pages of local newspapers.⁶³ In a city where fires caused by oil operations were frequent, such technologies became an essential element of urban safety infrastructure.⁶⁴ He also made a substantial contribution to expanding the water supply.⁶⁵

Similarly, local Armenian and Jewish (as well as immigrant) entrepreneurs were active in trade, manufacturing, and the service sector – particularly in the oil industry, where they were mainly engaged in distribution and processing.⁶⁶ Their activities demonstrate the multiethnic character of Baku's entrepreneurial environment and the important role of minority communities in the trade, distribution, and service sectors linked to the oil economy.

Media, Marketing, and Public Discourse

Contemporary newspapers offer valuable insight into how the oil boom in Baku was perceived and debated in public discourse. According to the *Kaspij* newspaper, 1912 was a triumphant year in the history of Baku's oil industry. In its retrospective on 1 January, the paper noted that oil prices – having begun at a modest 22 kopeks – soon rose to 40 kopeks, a development that, it claimed, “even the bravest fantasists had never dreamed of”.⁶⁷ This economic success, however, did not translate into tangible gains for employees and workers in oil plants, who received neither wage increases nor improved social benefits, particularly in healthcare – except at large-scale enterprises such as *Branobel* and similar entities. This contrast illustrates the unequal distribution of the profits generated by the oil boom.

For years, the press had also criticised the high cost of living in Baku. While rising prices were often presented as a sign of urban growth, they were also interpreted as evidence that capital was concentrated primarily in the oil industry and related businesses, whereas essential housing problems affecting large parts of the population remained unresolved,⁶⁸ thereby limiting purchasing power.⁶⁹ The press thus framed

63 Exemplarily *Kaspij*, 3 July 1881, 1, 1 January 1884, 1, 24 June 1888, 1.

64 See e.g. “Khronika,” *Kaspii*, 6 January 1884, 1.

65 A long-term and expensive affair. Cf. Milli Azərbaycan Tarixi Muzeyi, File SMF 73/1: Şollarda və Bakıya çəkiləcək su kəmərinə tikilən tutma qurğularının qiymət cədvəli əlavə edilməklə bağlanan 1 sayılı kontrakt (müqavilə). Alman dilində 12 vərəq. Frankfurt-Mayn şəhərində yerləşən şirkət icra etmişdir, 1910-cu il [Wasserversorgung der Stadt Baku. Kontrakt No. 1. Verzeichnis C der kombinierten Preise für die Herstellung der Fassung in Schollar und der Zuleitung nach Baku. Frankfurt/M. 1910].

66 Cf. Dohrn, *The Kahans*, 88.

67 “Baku v 1912 godu,” *Kaspii*, 1 January 1913, 5.

68 Exemplarily *Kaspii*, 3 October 1896, 2.

69 “Politische Rundschau. Zur inneren Lage,” *Kaukasische Post*, 30 November 1908, 2–3. Cf. *Kaspii*, 23 April 1894, 3.

rising living costs as one of the social consequences of rapid industrialisation. During the 1900s, newspapers repeatedly denounced what they termed “metropolitan prices” – high costs for hotels, restaurants, and transport, such as omnibuses.⁷⁰ By the turn of the century, even specialists in oil companies earning a monthly salary of 100 roubles were reportedly forced to economise on basic necessities and prepare for contingencies such as serious illness.⁷¹ Even relatively well-paid employees earning around 100 roubles per month reportedly struggled to cover basic expenses.

Environmental Challenges and Industrial Transformation

Contemporaries were well aware that the rapid expansion of the oil industry placed significant environmental pressures on the landscapes around Baku. Drilling techniques and other industrial practices disrupted soil and rock formations, contributing to landslides and geological instability. Oil fountains and derricks polluted air and water and spread suffocating odours across wide areas; as observers noted, the atmosphere was saturated with petroleum fumes, and a single spark could trigger devastating explosions that hurled buildings, machinery, and people into the air. These environmental hazards were inherent in the technological processes of oil extraction and refining. Smoking was therefore prohibited, and from the early 1890s onward, lighting systems increasingly relied on electricity.⁷²

During his travels through Central Asia and the Caucasus in 1892, the Russian ethnographer and literary critic E. L. Markov (1835–1903) compared Balakhani – one of the largest oil settlements near Baku – to the Tower of Babel or to the underworld of Pluto (Greek Hades): a landscape of hundreds of smoking chimneys, “pipes of hell”, and omnipresent stench and filth.⁷³ Similar impressions were recorded in the press and in other contemporary accounts.⁷⁴ Such descriptions reveal how observers interpreted the oil landscape as a radically transformed industrial environment. Visitors to the Black City described rows of black-and-grey derricks, blockhouses, and tank wagons arranged “like an artillery park”, all enveloped in clouds of smoke.⁷⁵ Markov remarked that humans, animals, birds, and objects alike were quickly covered in soot, and that only the construction of tall chimneys channelling smoke into higher layers of the atmosphere prevented everything from being “smoked daily like a ham”⁷⁶ – an early attempt to mitigate the most visible effects of industrial pollution. Despite such technological adjustments, however, waters near the docks and coastlines remained

70 See e.g. Markov, *Rossiya v Srednei Azii*, 127.

71 *Kaspij*, 25 April 1894, 2.

72 See e.g. Markov, *Rossiya v Srednei Azii*, 131, 139.

73 Markov, *Rossiya v Srednei Azii*, 131–32. Thereby, their wages were very low, approx. 15 rubles. – Ibid., 139.

74 See e.g. A. M., “Zavodskie otbrosy i Chernyj gorodok,” *Kaspii*, 5 August 1881, 1–2, cf. *ibid.*, 7 August 1881, 2–3. Cf. “Kavkazskaya khronika,” *Kavkaz*, 1 February 1900, 2.

75 Markov, *Rossiya v Srednei Azii*, 142.

76 Ibid., 143.

covered with oily residues, contaminating the sea.⁷⁷ These conditions illustrate the extent to which Baku's industrial landscape extended into its maritime environment.

Waste disposal and the release of toxic substances at high concentrations constituted another major problem, posing not only environmental threats but also acute dangers to workers' lives in the "Black City".⁷⁸ Public debate often attributed these conditions to the incompleteness and ambiguity of Russian industrial legislation.⁷⁹ The press thus served as an important arena for articulating environmental concerns and discussing regulatory solutions.

Newspapers published extensive lists of proposed measures, including the allocation of separate plots in the lowest-lying parts of the "Black City" for waste storage; systematic street cleaning; filling potholes with fresh earth or sand; constructing discharge-pipe networks connecting plants to storage tanks; prohibiting the release of gases from condensers into the air during distillation, instead channelling them into boiler furnaces as practised in foreign factories; and, finally, imposing substantial fines on plant owners.⁸⁰

Safety regulations were another persistent point of contention. Repeated negligence led to fires that claimed human lives, reinforcing public calls for stricter oversight and more systematic industrial inspection.⁸¹

Logistics likewise had a pronounced environmental impact. Improper transportation in unsuitable tanks⁸² and pipeline ruptures – caused by insufficient ground coverage or the corrosive effects of *solonchak* soils – led to frequent leaks along transport routes.⁸³ These incidents demonstrate that environmental risks extended beyond the oil fields themselves to the wider transport infrastructure. In 1911, proposals were even advanced that would require oil companies to contribute to railway maintenance.⁸⁴

At the same time, the regulatory frameworks and preventive measures that had emerged at various levels – from imperial authorities and municipal administrations to industrial actors and the press – remained in flux and required continual adaptation to the rapidly expanding scale and technological complexity of oil production.

77 Cf. Markov, *Rossija v Srednei Azii*, 156.

78 A. M., "Zavodskie otbrosy i Chernyj gorodok," 1–2. Ibid., 7 August 1881, 2–3. Cf. "Kavkazskaya khronika," *Kavkaz*, 1 February 1900, 2. Cf. Markov, *Rossija v Srednej Azii*, 131–33, 160–61. Cf. "Baku, 26 sentyabrya 1881 goda," *Kaspii*, 27 September 1881, 1–2.

79 A. M., "Zavodskie otbrosy i Chernyj gorodok," 1.

80 Ibid., 2–3.

81 For example "Mestnye izvestija," *Kaspi*, 15 July 1881, 1; 26 August 1881, 1; 2 September 1881, 1.

82 "Neftyanoj otdel," *Kaspii*, 14 April 1910, 5.

83 Ibid., 2 April 1910, 6.

84 Ibid., 19 January 1911, 5.

Conclusion

The history of the oil industry in imperial Baku reveals a complex network of transnational connections, interethnic cooperation, and the emergence of local entrepreneurial groups across multiple sectors of production, trade, and urban services. Foreign investors, migrant specialists, imperial officials, and regional business networks interacted to shape an extractive economy that integrated the Caucasian and Caspian regions into global commodity circuits while simultaneously transforming local social hierarchies and urban space.

This article argues that media practices and marketing strategies were not merely ancillary to industrial growth but were central mechanisms through which oil capitalism operated. The press, advertisements, and technical journals circulated technological knowledge, framed environmental hazards and infrastructural deficits as public problems, and mobilised political pressure for regulatory intervention. In doing so, they contributed to the expansion of urban infrastructure – from fire protection and water supply to transport networks and housing – as well as to the proliferation of new companies, professional associations, and public institutions.

More broadly, the case of Baku shows that ecological disruption, infrastructural experimentation, and regulatory improvisation were constitutive elements of capitalist development or economic regimes in imperial borderlands, rather than peripheral side effects. Pollution, fire risk, and logistical bottlenecks became arenas where competing visions of modernity, responsibility, and authority were negotiated among industrialists, municipal administrations, imperial agencies, and urban publics.

From this perspective, the Baku oil frontier both corroborates and refines classic interpretations of nineteenth-century capitalism. Like other imperial resource frontiers identified in recent research, it functioned as an imperial resource area, with rapid integration into global markets underpinned by large capital inflows, migrant expertise, and supporting infrastructure. At the same time, echoing Braudel's emphasis on the material foundations of economic life, pipelines, railways, refineries, and urban utilities formed the durable infrastructural basis on which commercial strategies and financial power operated.

Yet the case of Baku also complicates these models by revealing how environmental disruption – pollution, fire hazards, water scarcity, and geological instability – actively shaped regulatory regimes, municipal politics, and technological innovation. Infrastructural experimentation thus appears not as an external constraint but as a dynamic force in the formation of imperial resource economies.

By placing the environment, expertise, media, and urban governance at the centre of analysis, this article contributes to a growing body of scholarship reconceptualising capitalism as a historically contingent and spatially uneven process in which imperial power, private enterprise, and natural landscapes were continually reconfigured. Comparative perspectives on other extractive regions in the Caucasus and Central Asia promise to illuminate further how distinct ecological regimes produced divergent trajectories of modernisation on the eve of World War I.

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Lilija Wedel

NAFTNA MRZLICA V BAKUJU V ČASU RUSKEGA IMPERIJA: VZAJEMNI VPLIVI INDUSTRIJE, OKOLJA IN URBANIZACIJE

POVZETEK

Članek obravnava hitro širitev naftne industrije v Bakuju in njegovi okolici v poznem obdobju Ruskega imperija ter analizira njen vzajemni vpliv na industrijski razvoj, spremembe v okolju in urbanizacijo. Z združevanjem pristopov iz zgodovine okolja, gospodarstva, urbanizma in medijev raziskuje, kako je naftni razcvet preoblikoval ne le vzorce proizvodnje in naložb, temveč tudi družbeno in ekološko pokrajino Južnega Kavkaza.

Na podlagi tedanjih časopisov, oglasov, strokovnih publikacij in korporativnih virov prispevek zagovarja trditev, da razvoja Bakujskega naftnega območja ni mogoče razumeti zgolj z vidika gospodarske rasti. Širitev dejavnosti pridobivanja, predelave in prevoza nafte je prinesla nove okoljske izzive, vključno z onesnaževanjem, nevarnostjo požarov in obremenitvijo infrastrukture, kar je spodbudilo sprejemanje regulativnih ukrepov, tehnološke inovacije in občinske ukrepe.

Posebna pozornost je namenjena vlogi tiska in strokovnih publikacij. Časopisi in strokovne revije so bili pomembni kanali za širjenje znanja, razpravo o okoljskih tveganjih in izražanje zahtev po izboljšavah infrastrukture. Medijski akterji so tako prispevali k oblikovanju javnih razprav o urbanističnem razvoju, regulaciji industrije in modernizaciji.

V članku je prikazano, da so se industrijska rast, okoljske spremembe in urbanizacija razvijale ob neprestanih medsebojnih vplivih. Namesto obravnavanja ekoloških motenj kot sekundarne posledice industrializacije so kot osrednji dejavnik razvoja Bakujskega naftnega gospodarstva poudarjeni okoljski izzivi. Primer Bakuja tako ponuja širši vpogled v dinamiko mejnikov izkoriščanja virov v Ruskem imperiju in v družbeno-ekološke posledice hitre industrializacije v poznem devetnajstem in zgodnjem dvajsetem stoletju.

Gabriele Mastrolillo*

Sacralisation and Monumentalisation of World War I in the Isonzo/Soča Region

IZVLEČEK

SAKRALIZACIJA IN MONUMENTALIZACIJA PRVE SVETOVNE VOJNE V POSOČJU

Članek obravnava monumentalizacijo prve svetovne vojne v Posočju (danes razdeljenem med Italijo in Slovenijo), ki so jo v medvojnem obdobju spodbujali italijanska vlada in lokalne oblasti. Po zmagi Italije v vojni sta liberalna država in zlasti Mussolinijev režim spodbujala kult patriotizma, ki je podpiral diktatorjeva prizadevanja, da bi fašizem predstavil kot legitimnega dediča te zmage. Ta ideološki okvir se je izrazil v gradnji treh večjih kostnic v Sredipolju, Oslavju in Kobaridu, pa tudi v spomenikih, posvečenih posameznim vojakom. Namen teh spomenikov je bil sakralizirati in monumentalizirati vojno in padle v njej, ki so bili prikazani kot »junaki« domovine. Članek vsebuje pregled najpomembnejših in najbolj značilnih spominskih obeležij ter se osredotoča na zgodovino gradnje nekaterih od njih, ki so bili izbrani kot študije primerov z analizo arhivske dokumentacije. Slednja izvira predvsem iz prefektur v Gorici in je bila delno predložena kabinetu predsedstva Sveta ministrov Kraljevine Italije.

Ključne besede: Posočje, prva svetovna vojna, kulturna dediščina vojne, fašizem

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the monumentalisation of World War I in the Isonzo/Soča region (today divided between Italy and Slovenia), promoted by the Italian government and local authorities during the interwar period. Following Italy's victory in the war, the liberal state – and even more emphatically Mussolini's regime – fostered a patriotic cult that supported the dictator's efforts to present Fascism as the rightful heir to that victory. This ideological framework found material expression in the construction of three major charnel houses at Redipuglia/Sredipolje, Oslavia/Oslavje, and Caporetto/Kobarid, as well as in monuments dedicated to individual soldiers. These memorials sought to both sacralise and monumentalise the war and its fallen, who were portrayed as "heroes" of the homeland. The article provides an overview of the most significant and emblematic memorial sites. It focuses on the construction histories of some of them – selected as case studies – by analysing archival documentation, primarily produced by the Prefecture of Gorizia and partially submitted to the Cabinet of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the Kingdom of Italy.

Keywords: Isonzo/Soča Region, World War I, cultural heritage of war, fascism

Introduction

World War I marked a turning point from the preceding era. For decades, it has been narrated as an epic and heroic adventure set in the Alpine landscape, and (at least until the 1960s) as proof of harmony and national unity.¹ It holds primary importance in Italian history because it enabled the young nation-state (founded only fifty-seven years before the end of the 'Great War') to acquire additional territories inhabited predominantly (in some cases almost entirely) by populations of Italian language and culture. Consequently, it gave concrete form to irredentist aspirations that had developed both in Italy and among Italians living in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy since the mid-nineteenth century.²

During the 1920s, liberal governments, and especially the Fascist regime, together with members of the local notability, promoted an extensive campaign to monumentalise the war, particularly along Italy's eastern border (or, to use a more neutral expression, the Upper Adriatic frontier). This process unfolded within the broader context of postwar reconstruction in that area, which had been profoundly shaped by the conflict.³ It had already begun during the final stages of the war but gained

1 Cf. Marco Mondini, *La guerra italiana. Partire, raccontare, tornare 1914–18* (Bologna: il Mulino, 2018), 9–10.

2 In the broader collection of literature, see especially the recent monographs by Roberto Spazzali, *Gli ultimi del Risorgimento. Democratici, garibaldini, mazziniani tra irredentismo e rivoluzione* (Milan: Ares, 2024) and Fabio Todero, *La patria alla frontiera. Storia dell'irredentismo adriatico* (Rome–Bari: Laterza, 2025).

3 Cf. Petra Svoljšak and Petra Kolenc, "Obnavljanje Goriške po prvi svetovni vojni in vloga arhitekta Maksa Fabianija," *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino* 63, No. 3 (2023): 10–30.

renewed momentum following the March on Rome, for obvious political reasons: Benito Mussolini appropriated the memory of the war to present Fascism as the direct heir to this victorious conflict. The Fascist leader thus instrumentalised World War I,⁴ turning it into an identity-forming and legitimising element of Fascism, a myth and a central component of the regime's rituals, and employing it to consolidate (and in some cases even to construct) Italian national consciousness in a newly acquired area such as the 'Venezia Giulia' (Julian March/Region).⁵ Not least, it served as a vehicle for the Italianisation of a region inhabited by Italians, Slovenians, and Croats. In this area as well, the processing of the great collective mourning became intertwined with its instrumentalisation, in a symbolic confrontation that played a crucial role in political struggle.⁶ To this end, the Fascist regime promoted a full-fledged mythologisation of the war by ordering the construction of charnel houses and 'sacred zones' and by endorsing requests to erect specific monuments in memory of specific fallen soldiers or units, to standardise the collective memory of the conflict and present the fallen as 'martyrs' of the homeland. This effort followed a precise programme for the monumentalisation of war sites, focusing especially on Gorizia/Gorica and its surroundings, as it is the main city of the Isonzo/Soča Region. This programme was drawn up in 1928 by General Giovanni Faracovi, Extraordinary Commissioner for Honours to the War Dead, whose central focus was the construction of a limited number of charnel houses to replace the numerous cemeteries along the front.⁷ This happened following the criteria "*di Perpetuità che vuol dire durata millenaria delle opere e altrettanto millenaria conservazione dei gloriosi Resti [...]* Individualità poiché ciascuna salma identificata avrà la sua tomba [...] Monumentalità in quanto si tratterà di monumenti severi e solenni"⁸ ("of Perpetuity, meaning the millennia-long duration of the works and the

4 See Fabio Todero, "War and Memory: The Fascist Instrumentalization of the Italian Front," in Oto Luthar, ed., *The Great War and Memory in Central and South-Eastern Europe* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2016), 123–36.

5 This denomination was coined in 1863 by the linguist Graziadio Isaia Ascoli from Gorizia to refer to the territory comprising the Isonzo/Soča Region, Trieste, the Karst, and Istria (at the time also known as the Austrian Littoral and later, at least partially, as the Slovenian Littoral). In this article, both the Italian and Slovenian versions of place names are provided when they first occur; thereafter, the version in the language of the country where the place is currently located is used. For places still divided between the two countries, the dual name is always used. However, in quotations from archival documents, the Italian version is retained, as this was the form used in the original documentation, since all this territory was under Italian rule.

6 Paolo Ferrari, "Dal culto dei caduti alle memorie della guerra," in Corrado Azzollini and Maria C. di Micco, eds., *1918–2018. I monumenti ai caduti della Grande Guerra in Friuli Venezia Giulia. Censimento in memoria* (Pasian di Prato: L'Orto della Cultura, 2018), 29, 31–33. Lorenzo Cadeddu, *Alla ricerca del Milite Ignoto. Aquileia, Redipuglia, Altare della patria, i luoghi della memoria e dell'identità italiana* (Udine: Gaspari, 2018), 46–50. To explore the connection between war memorials and the expression of mourning from a European perspective, see especially the chapter with the same name in Jay Winter, *Il lutto e la memoria. La Grande Guerra nella storia culturale europea* (Bologna: il Mulino, 1998), 117–57 [original edition *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995)].

7 Paolo Nicoloso, "Edificare ossari per costruire una memoria della Grande Guerra," in Lorenzo Cadeddu et al., eds., *La religione civile di un popolo. Carso, Redipuglia, Oslavia, il Cimitero degli Eroi di Aquileia* (Udine: Gaspari, 2020), 15. See also Paolo Nicoloso, *Mussolini architetto. Propaganda e paesaggio urbano nell'Italia fascista* (Turin: Einaudi, 2008). Gaetano Dato, *Redipuglia: il Sacrario e la memoria della Grande guerra. 1938–1993* (Trieste: IRSML FVG, 2014), 29–30. Hannah Malone, "The Republican legacy of Italy's Fascist ossuaries of the First World War," *Modern Italy* 2 (2019): 200, 202.

8 Quoted in Marco Mondini, *Andare per i luoghi della Grande Guerra* (Bologna: il Mulino, 2015), 122. See also Quinto Antonelli, *Cento anni di Grande guerra. Cerimonie, monumenti, memorie e contromemorie* (Rome: Donzelli, 2018),

equally millennia-long preservation of the glorious Remains [...] Individuality, since each identified body will have its own tomb [...] Monumentality, inasmuch as these will be severe and solemn monuments.”)

This article aims to examine the campaign of monumentalisation in a subregion of the Julian March, the Isonzo/Soča Region, today divided between Italy (the province of Gorizia) and Slovenia (Goriška). After providing an overview of this campaign and outlining the context in which the ‘sacred zones’ and the three charnel houses/ossuaries of this region were created, drawing on the literature produced on this topic,⁹ the article focuses on the histories of specific monuments, chosen as case studies, thanks to the analysis of unpublished contemporary archival sources preserved at the State Archive of Gorizia and the Italian Central State Archive (Rome).

Temples of a Civil Religion: “Sacred Zones”, Charnel Houses, and Remembrance Parks

In the immediate postwar period, the Supreme Command of the Royal Italian Army devised a ‘pilgrimage circuit’ to nurture a cult of the fallen. To this end, the identification of sites to be ‘sacralised’ and converted into museums across the five sectors of the Italo-Austrian front (Stelvio-Adige, Adige-Brenta, Grappa, Isonzo, and Carso) was promoted.¹⁰ The Commission of Sacred Zones, chaired by General Eugenio Barbarich, completed its work on 20 October 1922. Its final report formed the basis of Royal Decree-Law no. 1286/1922, which established four ‘monumental zones’: two for the defensive phase (Mount Grappa and Pasubio, in Veneto) and two for the offensive phase (San Michele and Sabotino/Sabotin, both near Gorizia). Specifically, the Sacred Zone of Mount Sabotino/Sabotin underwent monumentalisation, resulting in the construction of fourteen obelisks at Oslavia/Oslavje, Mount Calvario / Podgora, Mount San Marco, Mount San Gabriele, and Holy Mount (Monte Santo / Sveta Gora). Among these, the obelisk on Mount San Marco was particularly emblematic. After that area passed under Yugoslav jurisdiction following World War II, it was destroyed on 8 April 1949.¹¹

At the same time, the regime promoted a plan to construct Remembrance Parks and Avenues in line with directives from the Undersecretariat of Public Education,

244 and Marco Mantini, *Viaggio nell’Ade Carsica. Il Cimitero degli Invitti della Terza Armata sul colle S. Elia* (Udine: Gaspari, 2023), 56–57.

9 The topic has been examined in studies of political history (which have reconstructed – more or less in an extensive way – the campaign to monumentalise the war and the context in which it was carried out) and in those related to the history of architecture, as well as in ‘technical’ pamphlets (especially concerning the charnel houses) produced within the military context and in publications addressed to the tourist sector. For specific references, see the following notes.

10 Marco Mantini, *La Zona monumentale del monte San Michele. Carso 2014+: da teatro di guerra a paesaggio della memoria* (Udine: Gaspari, 2016), 27.

11 Cf. Marco Mantini, *La Zona monumentale del monte Sabotino. Storia e memoria della straordinaria fortezza sull’Isonzo* (Udine: Gaspari, 2021), 65–68, 80. Matic Batič, “‘Zones more Related to Immortal Splendor of Glory’: Italian War Memorials and Commemorative Practices in Venezia Giulia (1918–1922),” *Acta Histriae* 4 (2018): 1072–73.

Dario Lupi.¹² In the Isonzo/Soča Region, only one was built, in the centre of Gorizia, on a site of approximately two and a half hectares that had already served as a cemetery in the mid-nineteenth century. The project originated in 1923, when Enrico del Debbio proposed it to commemorate the Gorizian volunteers who deserted the Austro-Hungarian army to enlist in the Italian forces. The park is traversed by several paths along which busts honouring the Gorizian irredentists Giovanni Maniacco and Emilio Cravos, and the interventionist from Tuscany, Vittorio Locchi, are placed, as well as sculptures celebrating the Alpine Brigade “*Julia*” and the Infantry Brigade “*Lupi di Toscana*”. At the centre were a fountain and the remains of a chapel, built in 1929 and destroyed in August 1944 by Slovenian Nazi collaborators.¹³

The charnel houses built in Oslavia, Redipuglia/Sredipolje, and Caporetto/Kobarid, all inaugurated in 1938, were the flagship of the project to monumentalise and sacralise the war in the Isonzo/Soča Region. Their construction was not merely the result of a clear propagandistic plan¹⁴ but was also linked to practical and sanitary considerations: the construction of monumental funerary sites served to inter the countless bodies scattered across the 107 military cemeteries (49 of which were on the Karst) within three large, contained spaces,¹⁵ rather than in temporary burials, which hindered the full revival of productive activities in the territories – the Isonzo area and the Karst – where the Italian army suffered losses of approximately one million men.¹⁶ For this reason, following a decree-law approved on 29 January 1920, the task of collecting the fallen and arranging them in designated sites was entrusted to the Directorate-General of Military Health and to the Central Office for the Care and Honours of the War Dead, both under the Ministry of War.¹⁷ On 28 July 1928, Mussolini authorised the allocation of 50 million lire for the permanent arrangement of military burials. General Faracovi was therefore tasked with compiling the final programme for this arrangement.¹⁸

The first charnel house was built in Oslavia (a suburb of Gorizia), based on a design by the Pisan architect Ghino Venturi.¹⁹ It was intended to house the remains of soldiers from the Second Army, exhumed from pre-existing cemeteries along the mid-

12 Cf. Dato, *Redipuglia*, 28–29. Cf. also Giulia Albanese, “Mappare la memoria del fascismo,” in Giulia Albanese and Lucia Ceci, eds., *I luoghi del fascismo. Memoria, politica, rimozione* (Rome: Viella, 2022), 33–34.

13 “Parco della Rimembranza di Gorizia,” *Itinerari della Grande Guerra*, <https://www.turismofvg.it/parco-della-rimembranza-di-gorizia>. “Parco della Rimembranza,” *Walk of Peace*, <https://www.thewalkofpeace.com/it/locations/memory-park-parco-della-rimembranza/> (all the websites were last accessed on 29 January 2026).

14 Cf. Giuseppe Severini, “Gli elementi costitutivi di un popolo,” in Cadeddu et al., eds., *La religione civile di un popolo*, 11–12.

15 Cf. Mantini, *Viaggio nell’Ade Carsica*, 23.

16 Cf. Mondini, *Andare per i luoghi della Grande Guerra*, 110.

17 Cf. Fabio Todero, “‘Come gli eroi di Sparta’: il culto del volontario caduto e la memoria della Grande guerra nella Venezia Giulia (1918–1929),” in Fabio Todero and Luca G. Manenti, eds., “*Si scopron le tombe*”. *Ricordare, commemorare, evocare i caduti della Grande guerra* (Trieste: IRSML FVG, 2018), 110–12. Mondini, *La guerra italiana*, 350.

18 ACS, Segreteria Particolare del Duce (1922–1945), Carteggio ordinario, serie numerica (1922–1943), b. 1186, f. 509.602 “Cimiteri di guerra,” s.f. 509.602/4, note No. 2736 produced by the Cabinet of the Ministry of War, Rome, August 1928.

19 Cf. Nicoloso, *Edificare ossari per costruire una memoria della Grande Guerra*, 16.

dle courses of the Isonzo/Soča and Vipacco/Vipava rivers.²⁰ In this charnel house, the remains of 20,654 identified soldiers and 30,000 unknowns from the Collio/Goriška Brda, Gorizia, and the middle Isonzo/Soča areas are entombed. The structure occupies a triangular area and comprises four circular towers, including a central, classical-style tower housing a crypt containing the tombs of thirteen men who were awarded the Gold Medal of Military Valour. Among them are Generals Achille Papa, Ferruccio Trombi, and Alceo Catalocchino, who died, respectively, on the Bainsizza/Banjška Plateau on 5 October 1917, at Oslavia on 28 November 1915, and in the Natisone Valleys on 27 August 1917.²¹

The Italian historian Giorgio Rochat correctly pointed out the contrast between the anonymity of thousands of graves and the privileged role granted, even in burial, to generals who fell on the battlefield and, above all, to marshals who died in their beds and were buried at the centre of monuments dedicated to their armies.²² This is the case of the Redipuglia charnel house, where six generals (among them the head of the 3rd Army, Emanuele Filiberto of Savoy, Duke of Aosta) are entombed.²³ Redipuglia's charnel house stands out within this reconstruction for its significance, as it is not only the principal site of the Upper Adriatic but of all Italy. For this reason, the site has also been the main secular pilgrimage destination for those visiting World War I sites, also due to its proximity to the border, which enhances its symbolic significance as a place embodying the ultimate sacrifice of a soldier for his homeland.²⁴

Unlike Oslavia, the Redipuglia charnel house has a background: in 1921, on the nearby Sant'Elia Hill, the Cemetery of the *Invicti* of the 3rd Army was established. It was originally intended as an underground ossuary, but this plan was not realised, and it was decided to inter 30,000 bodies directly in the ground (divided into seven sectors, with the summit sector reserved for officers) along the slopes of the hill, within an area

20 Cf. Enrico Galante, *Il sacrario militare di Oslavia* (Gorizia: Libreria Paternolli, 1959), 5.

21 Cf. *Sacrari militari della 1ª guerra mondiale. Oslavia e S. Michele* (Rome: Ministero della Difesa. Commissariato Generale per le Onoranze ai Caduti in Guerra, 1991). Elvio Pederzoli, "Il sacrario di Oslavia," in Cadeddu et al., eds., *La religione civile di un popolo*, 195. "Sacrario Militare di Oslavia," *Caduti Grande Guerra*, <https://cadutigrandeguerra.net/index.php/features/sacrario-militare-di-oslavia>. "Ossario di Oslavia," *Itinerari della Grande Guerra*, <https://www.turismofvg.it/ossario-di-oslavia>. *Sacrari e cimiteri di guerra nelle Tre Venezie. Venezia Giulia e Friuli: Redipuglia, Aquileia, Fagare, Oslavia, Timau, Udine. Oltre frontiera. Caporetto, Fiume, Zara* (Rome: Olimpia, 1963), 34. *Sacrari militari della Prima Guerra Mondiale. Redipuglia Oslavia (ed altri sacrari del Friuli Venezia Giulia e d'oltre confine* (Rome, 1983), 47–49. Enzo Bologna and Elvio Pederzoli, *Guida ai Sacrari della Grande Guerra da Redipuglia a Bligny. 19 itinerari lungo il fronte italiano*, prefaced by Giuseppe Severini (Udine: Gaspari, 2010), 109–12. Paolo Nicoloso, *Architetture per un'identità italiana. Progetti e opere per fare gli italiani fascisti* (Udine: Gaspari, 2012), 92–94. Paolo Nicoloso, "Tra memorie e oblio: monumenti alle guerre mondiali sul confine orientale, 1920–2007," in Paolo Nicoloso, ed., *Le pietre della memoria. Monumenti sul confine orientale* (Udine: Gaspari, 2015), 25–28. Loredana Pin, "L'ossario di Oslavia di Venturi, 1930–1938," in Paolo Nicoloso, ed., *Le pietre della memoria. Monumenti sul confine orientale* (Udine: Gaspari, 2015), 113–28. Loredana Pin, "L'ossario di Oslavia di Venturi, 1930–1938," in Paolo Nicoloso, Luka Skansi, and Ferruccio Luppi, eds., *Gorizia – Nova Gorica, Architettura e urbanistica del Novecento. Arhitektura in urbanizem 20. stoletja* (Udine: Gaspari, 2024), 104–12. Antonelli, *Cento anni di Grande guerra*, 249–50.

22 Giorgio Rochat, "Il soldato italiano dal Carso a Redipuglia," in Diego Leoni and Camillo Zadra, eds., *La Grande Guerra. Esperienza, memoria, immagini* (Bologna: il Mulino, 1986), 614.

23 Cf. Cadeddu, *Alla ricerca del Milite Ignoto*, 51. Silvia Barisione, "The reception of World War I monuments. From the Ossari to the Case del Mitulato," in Kay B. Jones and Stephanie Pilat, eds., *The Routledge Companion to Italian Fascist Architecture. Reception and Legacy* (London – New York: Routledge, 2020), 346.

24 Fulvio Poli, "Il Sacrario di Redipuglia," in Cadeddu et al., eds., *La religione civile di un popolo*, 54.

of 96,000 m² enclosed by a one-and-a-half-kilometre-long fence. At the summit of the hill, a chapel surmounted by an obelisk was constructed. Four red crystal crosses, illuminated at night, were installed on the upper part of the obelisk, one on each side, while an electric beacon in the shape of a flame was placed at the very top.²⁵

As Marco Mantini wrote, the cemetery (which in the 1920s had been visited by approximately 100.000 people) complied with the principles of the Faracovi programme because it housed the remains of known soldiers in individual niches, had an imposing appearance, and was easily accessible due to its proximity to a major road and a railway station. For these reasons, it was inaugurated on 24 May 1923 in the presence of 4,000 war-disabled veterans and an additional 2,000 attendees, by high-ranking state officials, including Vittorio Emanuele III, Emanuele Filiberto, Duke of Aosta, and Mussolini, as well as public figures such as the nationalist writer Gabriele D'Annunzio.²⁶ During the 1920s, as the cemetery deteriorated due to poor maintenance, and as requested by Mussolini (who considered it insufficiently monumental), it was decided to completely transform the area by creating a new charnel house. Its construction (on Mount Sei Busi, in front of Sant'Elia Hill) was part of an ambitious architectural project encompassing 40 sites across various battlefields nationwide. Redipuglia became the flagship of this commemorative and propagandistic scheme. Under the direction of architect Giovanni Greppi and sculptor Giannino Castiglioni (the same team that projected the Caporetto and Monte Grappa charnel houses) and supervised by General Ugo Cei, who succeeded Faracovi as Extraordinary General Commissar for the Honours of the War Dead on 11 December 1935, the works to construct the Redipuglia charnel house were carried out.²⁷ Here, the remains of the 30,000 fallen, who had been interred at the Cemetery of the *Invicti* from 1921 to 1938, were relocated.²⁸

The Redipuglia war memorial was inaugurated on 19 September 1938, after ten years of work. Apart from the Duke of Aosta, five other officers are buried in this war memorial, each in a separate tomb before the 22 steps, which, in alphabetical order, contain the remains of 39,867 identified soldiers. The officers are Army Corps General

25 Cf. Mantini, *Viaggio nell'Ade Carsica*, 30–32. Gaetano Dato, "Lineamenti storiografici, memorie pubbliche e miti all'origine del Sacrario di Redipuglia. La fondazione di un tempio della nazione," *Acta Histriae* 3 (2014): 704.

26 Cf. Mantini, *Viaggio nell'Ade Carsica*, 47–49, 58–59, 82. Cf. also Fabio Todero, *Le metamorfosi della memoria. La Grande Guerra tra modernità e tradizione* (Udine: Del Bianco, 2002), 18. Todero, "Come gli eroi di Sparta," 115–16. Fabio Todero, "Politiche della memoria della Grande Guerra: il caso della Venezia Giulia," *Acta Histriae*, 3 (2010): 392. Fabio Todero, "Il culto del soldato caduto nella Venezia Giulia dalla Grande guerra al fascismo," in Anna M. Vinci, ed., *Regime fascista, nazione e periferie* (Udine: IFSML, 2010), 64–65. Dato, *Redipuglia*, 31–36. Lucio Fabi, *Redipuglia. Storia, memoria, arte e mito di un monumento che parla di pace* (San Dorligo della Valle: Lint, 2005), 8–12.

27 Cf. Todero, *Le metamorfosi della memoria*, 66–67. Fabi, *Redipuglia*, 18–21, 25. Nicoloso, "Edificare ossari per costruire una memoria della Grande Guerra," 16–17. Anna M. Fiore, "La monumentalizzazione dei luoghi teatro della Grande Guerra: il sacrario di Redipuglia di Giovanni Greppi e Giannino Castiglioni," *Annali di architettura* 15 (2003): 235, 239. Dato, "Lineamenti storiografici," 705. Daniele Pisani, "'Le schiere serrate degli invitti eroi.' Sui tardi sacrari fascisti della Grande Guerra," in Maria G. D'Amelio, ed., *Per non dimenticare. Sacrari del Novecento* (Roma: Palombi, 2019), 46. Mondini, *Andare per i luoghi della Grande Guerra*, 123.

28 Cf. Elvio Pederzoli, "Visitare il sacrario di Redipuglia," in Cadeddu et al., eds., *La religione civile di un popolo*, 192. Mondini, *La guerra italiana*, 354–55. Bologna, Pederzoli, *Guida ai Sacrari della Grande Guerra da Redipuglia a Bligny*, 113–14. Tadej Koren, *The Walk of Peace from the Alps to the Adriatic. A Guide along the Isonzo Front* (Kobarid: Ustanova Fundacija Poti miru v Posočju, 2015), 171.

Antonio Chinotto, Brigadier General Tommaso Monti, Lieutenant General Giuseppe Paolini, Lieutenant General Giovanni Prelli, and Major General Fulvio Riccieri. At the end of the steps, two large tombs, covered with bronze slabs, preserve the remains of 60,330 unknown soldiers. On the 22 steps that make up the charnel house, the names of the known fallen are inscribed, surmounted by the word ‘*Presente*’ (the response to roll call pronounced by the officers), which appears 8,000 times.²⁹

The third charnel house in the Julian March is that of Kobarid, which, unlike Oslavia and Redipuglia, was built on predominantly Slovenian territory to impose “*una memoria che – fatta salva la pietà dovuta ai caduti, indipendentemente alla loro nazionalità – non poteva che risultare estranea*”³⁰ (“a memory that could only be felt as unrelated, except for the sorrow owed to all who died, regardless of their nationality”). The municipality of Kobarid ceded, free of charge, the municipal area of Saint Anthony Hill designated for the construction of the charnel house to the Italian state.³¹ With the replacement of Faracovi by Cei, the project changed: initially, the charnel house was planned in the plain below, near the town centre. To make it more imposing, it was decided to locate it on Saint Anthony Hill, where a seventeenth-century church was incorporated into the new construction, built between 1935 and 1938. There, 7,014 soldiers (of whom 2,748 are unknown) who fell during the Battle of Kobarid, which took place from 24 October to 9 November 1917, are interred. The memorial (also designed by Castiglioni and Greppi) structurally resembles a fortress. It is accessible via a system of ramps leading to the church, which rests on three tiers of octagonal terraces. To reach it, one follows a winding road, along which the stations of the Via Crucis are placed.³²

29 Bologna and Pederzoli, *Guida ai Sacrari della Grande Guerra da Redipuglia a Bligny*, 115, 118. Fiore, “La monumentalizzazione dei luoghi teatro della Grande Guerra,” 238–42. “Sacrario di Redipuglia,” *Itinerari della Grande Guerra*, <https://www.turismofvg.it/sacrario-di-redipuglia>. “Sacrario Militare di Redipuglia,” <https://sacrioredipuglia.it/index.html>. Numbers in Patrizia Dogliani, “Redipuglia,” in Mario Isnenghi, ed., *I luoghi della memoria. Simboli e miti dell’Italia unita* (Rome–Bari: Laterza, 1996), 379. Cf. also Dato, “Lineamenti storiografici,” 705–06. Pietro Valle, “La terra resti terra, il monte resti monte: sacrari militari come percorsi ambientali,” in *Architettura della memoria e paesaggio. Sacrari di guerra come interventi ambientali. Monte Grappa, Redipuglia, Caporetto, Pocol* (Melfi: Libria, 2020), 22–30. Fabi, *Redipuglia*, 24. Pederzoli, “Visitare il sacrario di Redipuglia,” 193–94. Dato, *Redipuglia*, 39–43. Antonelli, *Cento anni di Grande guerra*, 254–55. *Sacrari e cimiteri di guerra nelle Tre Venezie*, 9–20. *Sacrari militari della Prima Guerra Mondiale*, 7–17. Barisione, “The reception of World War I monuments,” 350–51. Nicoloso, *Architetture per un’identità italiana*, 89–92, 94–96. Nicoloso, *Mussolini architetto*, 144–45. Anna M. Fiore, “Il sacrario di Redipuglia di Greppi e Castiglioni, 1936–1938,” in Nicoloso, ed., *Le pietre della memoria*, 133–48. Todero, “Come gli eroi di Sparta,” 113–15. Paolo Nicoloso, “Tra ossari di guerra e monumenti alla pace: politica e costruzione della memoria in Italia 1938–1952,” in D’Amelio, ed., *Per non dimenticare*, 51–53. Mondini, *Andare per i luoghi della Grande Guerra*, 124. Antonella Indrigo, “Il sacrario di Redipuglia (Gorizia). Paradigma del rapporto tra architettura e paesaggio,” in Ferruccio Canali, ed., “Monumenta Honoraria. Monumenti per la celebrazione,” monographic number of *Bollettino SSF* 28–29 (2019–2020): 166–74. Koren, *The Walk of Peace from the Alps to the Adriatic*, 169–81.

30 Cf. Todero, “Politiche della memoria della Grande Guerra,” 393.

31 ASGO, Archivio generale della Prefettura di Gorizia (1927–1962), b. 826, f. 2316, copy of the deliberation minutes, subject “Monumento-Ossario per i Caduti in guerra di Caporetto – Cessione allo Stato della Chiesetta eretta sul Colle di S. Antonio,” 15 June 1938. Cf. also *ibidem*, copy of the deliberation minutes, subject “Monumento-Ossario per i Caduti in guerra di Caporetto – Concessione allo Stato dell’area di sedime,” 1 June 1935.

32 Cf. Valle, “La terra resti terra, il monte resti monte,” 30–33. *Sacrari e cimiteri di guerra nelle Tre Venezie*, 37. *Sacrari militari della Prima Guerra Mondiale*, 91. Bologna, Pederzoli, *Guida ai Sacrari della Grande Guerra da Redipuglia a Bligny*, 104–05 (see *ibid.* for the numbers). Koren, *The Walk of Peace from the Alps to the Adriatic*, 45–47. “Sacrario Militare di Caporetto/Kobarid,” *Caduti Grande Guerra*, <https://cadutigrandeguerra.net/index.php/features/sacrario-militare-di-caporetto-kobarid>. “Ossario italiano di Kobarid (Caporetto),” *Walk of Peace*, <https://www.thewalkofpeace.com/it/locations/italian-chnel-house-kobarid/>.

Monuments in Memory of Specific Fallen Soldiers and Military Units – Some Case Studies

A vast number of smaller monuments, such as memorial stones, altars, and columns, are present in almost every town in this region. Among this multitude, the monument to the fallen on Mount Nero (in Slovenian 'Krn',³³ close to Kobarid), the one on the Holy Mount (Sveta Gora, near Gorizia), those concerning the "*Gialli del Podgora*" (also close to Gorizia), and the memorial stone related to Filippo Corridoni (near San Martino del Carso / Martinščina) stand out for the turbulent historical trajectories in which they were implicated, which resulted in the production of a wide range of institutional records.

In the first half of June 1922, a monument was erected on the summit (2,245 metres above sea level) of Mount Krn to commemorate the conquest of this peak in the Julian Alps, which took place on 15–16 June 1915 by the "*Exilles*" Battalion of the 3rd Alpini Regiment under the command of Colonel Donato Etna. Approximately 1,500 men took part in the operation.³⁴ The monument (erected by the *Associazione Nazionale Alpini*, ANA – Alpines National Association) consisted of a pyramid with a square base, approximately 4 metres in height and a base side of about 3 metres. It was built of stone, and at its peak, a wooden stake slightly over one metre tall was fixed, with a nail at its summit. The framework of a five-pointed-star-shaped floral crown was attached to the terminal stake.³⁵ On the night of 20–21 June 1922, the monument's central pyramid was severely damaged, and the bronze plaque depicting the victory was found on the ground, partially destroyed. According to Slovenian historiography, the damage was caused by lightning rather than by vandalism, as instead the Italian authorities believed.³⁶ Investigations by the Carabinieri Reali (CC.RR.) identified

33 It is interesting to note that the Italian name of that mountain is the result of an erroneous translation of the corresponding Slovenian name, confused with *črn* (meaning 'black'), whereas the toponym 'Krn' most likely shares the same pre-Roman root (*kar, 'rocky') as Karst (Cjars/Carso/Kras in Friulan/Italian/Slovenian), Karnien (Cjargne/Carnia/Karnija), and Krain (Craign/Carniola/Kranjska). Cf. Mauro Pascolini, "Paesaggi e luoghi di guerra: il piano paesaggistico regionale del Friuli Venezia Giulia, uno strumento di conoscenza e valorizzazione," in Luca Caburlotto and Silvio Stok, eds., *La toponomastica della Grande Guerra su fronte carnico isontino* (Pasian di Prado: L'Orto della Cultura, 2021), 39.

34 A.D., "Monte Nero," *Atlante dizionario della Grande Guerra a Trieste e nel Litorale*, <https://www.atlantegrandeguerra.it/portfolio/monte-nero/>. See also Orio Di Brazzano, *La Grande Guerra sulla Fronte Giulia (1915–17). Dalla conquista del Monte Nero a Caporetto* (Trento: Panorama, 2002), 70–71, 76–83, 85. Marco Mantini, *Andar per trincee da Tolmino a Caporetto lungo i percorsi della Grande Guerra tra Italia e Slovenia. Tra Caporetto, Kolovrat e il Monte Nero per scoprire un museo all'aperto ricco di memorie* (Udine: Gaspari, 2020), 114–16. Fabio Todero, *Terra irredenta, terra incognita. L'ora delle armi al confine orientale d'Italia. 1914–1918* (Rome–Bari: Laterza, 2023), 168–74. Damir Globočnik, *Likovno in simbolno. Kolektivni spomin slovenstva v likovni umetnosti* (Ljubljana: Slovenska matica, 2017), 391.

35 A.D., "Monte Nero." See also Orio Di Brazzano, *La Grande Guerra sulla Fronte Giulia (1915–17). Dalla conquista del Monte Nero a Caporetto* (Trento: Panorama, 2002), 70–71, 76–83, 85. Marco Mantini, *Andar per trincee da Tolmino a Caporetto lungo i percorsi della Grande Guerra tra Italia e Slovenia. Tra Caporetto, Kolovrat e il Monte Nero per scoprire un museo all'aperto ricco di memorie* (Udine: Gaspari, 2020), 114–16. Fabio Todero, *Terra irredenta, terra incognita. L'ora delle armi al confine orientale d'Italia. 1914–1918* (Rome–Bari: Laterza, 2023), 168–74. Globočnik, *Likovno in simbolno*, 391.

36 Cf. Globočnik, *Likovno in simbolno*, 391–92. I would like to thank the referee for suggesting that I consult this book to learn the Slovenian account of the damage to the monument on Mount Nero/Krn.

three members of a group they considered responsible for the politically motivated act of vandalism; they were boys aged 14 to 16 from the nearby locality of Dresenza/Drežnica,³⁷ who were found in possession of the monument's visitor sign-in book, a stamp, and other items. Consequently, the following night, the statue of the Slovenian musician Hrabroslav Volarič, located in the public garden of Kobarid's main square, was destroyed by unknown individuals, most likely from the local Fascist milieu. To prevent any potential incidents, the commander of the Tolmino/Tolmin Carabinieri company decided to concentrate 35 soldiers in Kobarid to support a company of 70 Alpines stationed there, to quell any possible unrest that might arise, particularly in light of the arrival of around seventy Fascists from Friuli, who – although generally welcomed positively by the Italian community – had nonetheless assured that they had come to peacefully protest against the vandalism carried out against the monument. In fact, they peacefully protested on the night of 22 June. The following evening, 150 Fascists arrived in Kobarid from Palmanova, Udine, and Treviso. Some of them set fire to the parish house and two private residences in Drežnica during the night, then escaped into the woods before law enforcement arrived. Around six o'clock the next morning, the Fascists ransacked the house of the parish priest of Staroselo, don Giovanni Iores, who was temporarily away, damaged the furniture, and took money and valuables.³⁸ The CC.RR. investigations were aimed not only at establishing the identity of those directly responsible for the violence but also at determining the potential co-responsibility of the leaders of the respective Fascist groups.³⁹

The vandalism against the monument on Mount Krn was publicly condemned by both the Gorizia section of the *Associazione Nazionale Combattenti* (ANC, National Combatants Association) and the clergy of Tolmin, Kobarid, and Plezzo/Bovec.⁴⁰

37 ASGO, Regio Commissariato Civile (1918–1926), b. 51, f. 322, handwritten note No. 884/Gab., sent by the civil commissioner of Tolmino, 23 June 1922.

38 Ibid., notes No. 369/3 and 369/21 from the commander of the Gorizia Division of the CC.RR. territorial legion of the Julian March, to the deputy general civil commissioner of Gorizia, respectively dated 22 June 1922 and 26 June 1922, subject "Incursione fascista in quel di Caporetto". Ibid., handwritten note No. 1201 Gab., classified as "riservata urgente", subject "Danneggiamento monumento Monte Nero," sent by the deputy civil commissioner to the *questore* of Gorizia, 23 June 1922. Ibid., note from the civil commissioner for the political district of Tolmin, No. 949/Gab., classified as confidential, sent to the general civil commissioner of Trieste and to the deputy general civil commissioner of Gorizia, 29 June 1922, subject "Relazione sulla agitazione conseguente al danneggiamento del monumento sul 'Monte Nero'". Cf. also Matic Batič, "Le Terre Redente si presentano a noi come vecchie terre italiane": Building *italianità* in the *Provincia di Gorizia* between the Two World Wars," in Borut Klabjan, ed., *Borderlands of Memory. Adriatic and Central European Perspectives* (Oxford, Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, New York, Wien: Peter Lang, 2019), 180–81. Batič, "Zones more Related to Immortal Splendor of Glory," 1077. Lavo Čermelj, *Life-and-Death Struggle of a National Minority (The Yugoslavs in Italy)* (Ljubljana, 1945), 51. Lavo Čermelj, *Sloveni e croati in Italia tra le due guerre* (Trieste: Editoriale Stampa Triestina, 1974), 241–42.

39 ASGO, Regio Commissariato Civile (1918–1926), b. 51, f. 322, note No. 369/34 sent by the commander of the Gorizia Division of the CC.RR. territorial legion of the Julian March, to the commander of the CC.RR. of Tolmino and in cc to that of the CC.RR. station in Trieste and to the divisions in Udine and Treviso as well as to the deputy general civil commissioner of Gorizia, 1 July 1922, subject "Per la denuncia dei colpevoli dei noti reati commessi in Caporetto, Dresenza e Staroselo nella notte dal 23 al 24 Giugno 1922".

40 Ibid., communication from the governing council of the Gorizia section of the National Association of Combatants, sent to the deputy general civil commissioner of Gorizia, 24 June 1922. Ibid., joint communication from the priests of the deaneries of Tolmino, Caporetto, and Plezzo, sent to the civil commissioner of Tolmino, 27 June 1922.

However, nothing similar (according to the available documentation) was done regarding the destruction of the statue of the Slovenian musician. On 16 July 1922, an 'expiatory' ceremony was organised by the Udine section of the ANA, consisting of an ascent of the mountain and the celebration of a Mass at the summit. In the afternoon, the ceremony continued in Kobarid, in the presence of delegates from various patriotic associations from Friuli and other parts of Italy, as well as Fascists.⁴¹

To prevent further acts of vandalism (which were likely, given the monument's remote location and the difficulty of guarding it), the civil commissioner for the political district of Tolmin proposed placing the monument under the effective supervision of the Boundary Delimitation Commission (based in Kobarid). The Commission would have been required to keep any news of further damage confidential, allowing the competent authorities to take the necessary measures to deal with any incident and, at the same time, to ensure an investigation into the cause of the damage. This latter proposal was prompted by the military authorities' immediate public announcement of the defacement, rather than informing the political authority. This had provoked the reprisals carried out by the fascists living in Kobarid against the monument to Volarič during the night of 22 June and had warned the action squads of Friuli and the entire Julian March.⁴²

In 1927, however, the Committee for the reconstruction of a monument on Mount Krn was established in Cividale del Friuli. It comprised the Cividale sections of the associations of the disabled, former combatants, and former Alpini, as well as the Union of Hikers.⁴³ The proposal put forward by this second committee was to erect a monumental hut⁴⁴ dedicated to Alberto Picco di Ulrico, a soldier who died during the battle to conquer the mountain on 16 June 1915. The honorary presidency of the committee was entrusted to Mussolini, while the vice-presidencies were held by the marshals of Italy, Generals Luigi Cadorna and Armando Diaz. The prefect of Udine, Agostino Iraci, and his counterpart from Gorizia, Anselmo Cassini, were appointed presidents, while Antonio Persoglia (president of the ANC and vice-president of the Cividale section of the ANA) and Cesare Blasigh (president of the Cividale Union of Hikers) were appointed vice-president and secretary, respectively. The construction of this hut, financed by the Ministry of Public Works, was completed in 1928, and its inauguration took place on 17 September of that year in the presence of Pier Silverio

41 Ibid., note No. 1006/Gab. sent by the civil commissioner for the political district of Tolmino, to the general civil commissioner of Trieste and his deputy of Gorizia, 10 July 1922, subject "Cerimonia di espiazione sul Monte Nero". Ibid., note No. 1017/Gab. sent by the civil commissioner for the political district of Tolmino, to the deputy general civil commissioner of Gorizia, 11 July 1922.

42 Ibid., note No. 1079/Gab. sent by the civil commissioner for the political district of Tolmino, to the deputy general civil commissioner of Gorizia, 19 July 1922, subject "Monumento sul Monte Nero".

43 ASGO, Archivio storico del Comune di Gorizia (1830–1927), b. 1321, f. "Monumenti e lapidi," letter sent by the members of the executive committee of the "Comitato per l'erezione di un Rifugio-Monumento agli Eroi del Monte Nero" to the mayor of Gorizia Giorgio Bombig, 14 May 1927.

44 ACS, Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri (PCM), Gabinetto, 1928–30, 14.4.711, f. "Cividale del Friuli – Erezione Rifugio Monumento agli eroi del Montenero," *Appunto per S.E. il capo del governo*, Rome, 1 July 1927. Ibid., letter sent by the members of the executive committee of the "Comitato per l'erezione di un Rifugio Monumento agli Eroi del Monte Nero" to Mussolini, Cividale del Friuli, 14 May 1927.

Leicht, the undersecretary of the Ministry of Public Education, on behalf of the government.⁴⁵ This was perhaps the only case of a World War I memorial conceived simultaneously as a hut (technically, a bivouac) for hikers. It was built approximately 100 metres from the summit, on the southern slope, at the end of the mule track from Drežnica, to a design by the architect Leone Morandini. Architecturally, it was in the classical style, with four pillars on the main façade topped by four bas-reliefs depicting eagles, surmounted by a massive architrave on which the dedication '*Victoribus esto*' ('sacred to the victors') was carved. It contained three rooms: the entrance, the dining room, and the dormitory. The dining room (illuminated by four windows) was furnished with a stove, tables, chairs, and benches; the dormitory (which contained a bifora) had 21 military-style cots.⁴⁶

As with the monument on Mount Krn, the monument on Podgora Mount, erected in memory of the fallen of the Casale Brigade (11th and 12th Infantry Regiments) – also known as the '*Gialli del Podgora*' – was built on the initiative of a sponsoring committee, established in 1926 in Turin. Its main organisers were Lieutenant Colonel Giuseppe Proteani (already aide-de-camp to the brigade in 1915–1916) and Commander Professor Pietro Gorgolini (a former soldier of the brigade), who served as president and general secretary of the committee, respectively. They delivered a series of lectures in the Marche and Romagna to publicise the initiative before travelling to Trieste and Gorizia to liaise with the commissioner of Gorizia and coordinate with the commander of the Casale Brigade, who was vice-president of the committee. To raise the necessary funds, subscriptions were collected in Casale, Forlì, Cesena, Macerata, and Gorizia. The mayors of these towns were members of the honorary committee, whose honorary presidency was offered to Mussolini.⁴⁷

Instead, in 1930, on the initiative of Captain Guido Slataper, a recipient of the Gold Medal of Military Valour and the rector of the Franciscan sanctuary of the Holy Mount, a sponsoring committee for the monument to the fallen of the Holy Mount was established in Gorizia. The peak had first been conquered by the Royal Italian Army in May 1917, by a unit led by Slataper. It was lost shortly thereafter but recaptured by the 8th Infantry Division on 25 August of the same year. The committee comprised the guardian father of the sanctuary's friars and Slataper, who served as the regional delegate for Friuli, Julian March, and Dalmatia of the *Associazione Nazionale Mutilati* (National Association of the Mutilated). To raise funds, a white metal commemorative plaque depicting the sanctuary was sold throughout Italy for 100 lire.

45 Ibid., note from the head of Cabinet of the Ministry of Finance to the secretary of the PCM, Rome, 25 January 1928. Ibid., note from the minister for the Public Works to the PCM, 1 February 1928. Ibid., letter sent by A. Persoglia on behalf of the executive committee of the "Comitato per l'erezione di un Rifugio Monumento agli Eroi del Monte Nero," Cividale del Friuli, 3 September 1928. Ibid., telegram No. 38943(2=V) sent by the minister of the Education Belluzzo to the PCM, Rome, 13 September 1928.

46 Ibid., *Progetto per l'erezione d'un Rifugio-Monumento agli eroi del Monte Nero*.

47 Ibid., 1926, 14.4.992, f. "Gorizia. Monumento ai fanti della Brigata Casale "Gialli Del Podgora," Communication from the Minister of Communications to Mussolini, Rome, 25 September 1926. Ibid., note from the prefect of Turin No. 1167/14–4, 10 April 1926. Ibid., letter written by G. Proteani to Mussolini, Turin, 20 March 1926.

Two years later, a second committee was established to oversee the construction of a commemorative obelisk dedicated to General Cascino and the fallen. This second committee – whose honorary presidency was entrusted to the Duke of Pistoia, commander of the 232nd Infantry Regiment that had fought on the Holy Mount, while the secretariat fell to General Paolo Tacoli – included Slataper; the guardian father of the sanctuary, Guglielmo Endrizzi; the prefect of Gorizia (president); the secretary of the Gorizia federation of the *Partito Nazionale Fascista* (PNF, National Fascist Party); and representatives of the national associations for combatants, the war-disabled and the wounded, war volunteers, and the families of the fallen.⁴⁸ The committee determined that the monument should meet certain aesthetic requirements: it had to have decorum, a simplicity of lines imposed by the harshness of the place and the austerity of the events commemorated, and be visible from a great distance.⁴⁹ To complete the monument (which was inaugurated on 24 May 1938⁵⁰ in the presence of the Minister of National Education, Giuseppe Bottai, on behalf of the government⁵¹), the Ministry of the Navy was requested to provide a decommissioned lighthouse to be placed atop the tower.⁵²

Last but not least, in 1933, near the Franche Trenches (*Trincea delle Franche*, in the territory of the municipality of Doberdò del Lago / Doberdob, near Gorizia), a cippus was erected in memory of Filippo Corridoni, an interventionist who fought on the Julian front during World War I and died there on 23 October 1915. As a personal friend of Mussolini, Corridoni prompted the Duce to promote the construction of the commemorative cippus, which the Duce attended at its inauguration on 24 May 1933.⁵³ The cippus combines symbols of labour and the combatants with emblems of the Fascist regime, such as the Italian eagle and the fasces.⁵⁴ Its construction was sponsored by the Provincial Union of Fascist Trade Unions of Industry of Gorizia, which

48 Ibid., 1937–39, 14.5.4569, f. “Gorizia – Monumento ai caduti in guerra sul Monte Santo,” *Appunto per S.E. il capo del governo*, 9 July 1934, Report from the general inspector of Public Security to the chief of police, Rome, 13 January 1934. Ibid., *Schema di contratto* signed by P. Tacoli (secretary of the committee) and E. Mazzoli, Gorizia, 7 May 1935. Ibid., P. Tacoli, *Relazione circa l'opera del comitato per l'erezione di un ricordo ai caduti del Monte Santo al 28 ottobre 1933/XI*. Ibid., untitled and undated note signed by G. Slataper and the general inspector Pietro De Filippis.

Ibid., *Appunto per S.E. il capo del governo*, 3 August 1932. Cf. anche ASGO, Archivio di Gabinetto della Prefettura di Gorizia (1927–1934), b. 53, f. 109, *Comitato per l'erezione del monumento ricordo ai caduti di Monte Santo*. Ibid., *Contratto*. Ibid., *Relazione circa l'opera del Comitato per l'erezione di un ricordo ai caduti del Monte Santo al 28 ottobre 1933/XI* signed by the secretary of the committee, General P. Tacoli.

49 ASGO, Archivio di Gabinetto della Prefettura di Gorizia (1927–1934), b. 53, f. 109, *Relazione della Commissione Esecutiva* signed by its president, General Tacoli, Gorizia, 24 July 1937.

50 ACS, PCM, Gabinetto, 1937–39, 14.5.4569, f. “Gorizia – Monumento ai caduti in guerra sul Monte Santo,” telegram No. 18274 sent by the undersecretary of state of the PCM to the minister of National Education, 20 May 1938.

51 Ibid., telegram No. 27387 sent by Bottai to the Cabinet of the PCM, 21 May 1938.

52 ASGO, Archivio di Gabinetto della Prefettura di Gorizia (1927–1934), b. 53, f. 109, s.fasc. “Monumento ai caduti di Montesanto,” unsigned letter sent to the rear admiral E. Somigli, head of staff of the Ministry of Navy, Gorizia, 6 April 1938.

53 ACS, PCM, Gabinetto, 1931–33, 14.4.9399, f. “Gorizia – Monumento-cippo dedicato alla memoria di Corridoni – Inaugurazione,” ciphered telegram No. 20867/2 sent by the prefect of Gorizia to the head of Cabinet of the PCM, 17 May 1933. Cf. anche Koren, *The Walk of Peace from the Alps to the Adriatic*, 167.

54 Lucio Fabi and Roberto Todero, *Andar per trincee sul Carso Triestino, Goriziano e Sloveno* (Trieste: Transalpina, 2004), 52–55.

launched a subscription to raise the necessary funds to realise the project, following the design by the sculptor Francesco Ellero of Latisana.⁵⁵

Conclusion

As stated above, the campaign to monumentalise World War I was promoted by the government and by members of the political and military establishment of the Isonzo/Soča Region not only to commemorate specific fallen soldiers and military operations that had taken place in that area, but also to glorify them and, through fascism, to exploit the emotion stirred by the memory of that recent tragedy to secure popular support; not coincidentally, these sites immediately became destinations for a “sacred pilgrimage”, encouraged by the regime itself.⁵⁶ For this reason, the charnel houses and World War I monuments in the Isonzo/Soča Region can be fully considered *lieux de mémoire* in the sense proposed by the French historian Pierre Nora: sites that evoke a specific historical event in collective memory, thereby consolidating particular narratives of the past.⁵⁷ In the case of the monuments discussed here, they evoke the image of a victorious Italy, which, from the post-World War II period onwards, served as an incentive to hold commemorations at the charnel houses that remained on Italian territory (Redipuglia and Oslavia), also in an attempt to forget – at least during these commemorations – the disastrous outcome of the other world war for Italy.⁵⁸ Even at the Kobarid charnel house, despite the area’s having come under Yugoslav jurisdiction, commemorations were held from the post-World War II period to the present day,⁵⁹ by prior agreement between Rome and Belgrade, especially on 2 November (All Souls’ Day), in the presence of Italian authorities such as the consul in Koper and the ambassador in Ljubljana, and, in some cases, also members of the Italian armed forces. Unlike the commemorations held at Redipuglia and Oslavia, those at the Kobarid charnel house were more modest, lacking a large popular turnout, sober, and depoliticised; this was also because, more generally, during the regime of Josip Broz ‘Tito’, the memory of World War I among the population of the Isonzo/

55 ACS, PCM, Gabinetto, 1931–33, 14.4.9399, f. “Gorizia – Monumento-cippo dedicato alla memoria di Corridoni – Inaugurazione,” *Appunto per S.E. capo del governo*, 12 maggio 1933; *ibid.*, note from the prefect of Gorizia to the Cabinet of the PCM, 2 May 1933.

56 Cf. Batič, “‘Zones more Related to Immortal Splendor of Glory.’” Petra Kavrečič, “‘Sacro pellegrinaggio.’ Visits to World War I Memorials on The Soča/Isonzo Front in the Interwar Period,” *Etnološka tribina* 47 (2017): 141–60. Petra Kavrečič, “Tourism and Fascism. Tourism Development on the Eastern Italian Border,” *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino* 60, No. 2 (2020): 99–119.

57 Cf. Batič, “‘Zones more Related to Immortal Splendor of Glory,’” 1066. Dato, “Lineamenti storiografici,” 696.

58 Concerning commemorations, see (in the case of Redipuglia, therefore as an example) Dato, *Redipuglia*, 63–140. See also Gaetano Dato, “La memoria della Grande guerra nei discorsi ufficiali presso il Sacrario di Redipuglia. Dalla ricostruzione al boom economico,” in Marco Mondini and Fabio Todero, eds., “La Grande guerra ai confini: italiani d’Austria e comunità di frontiera 1914–18,” *Qualestoria* 1–2 (2014): 155–74. Malone, “The Republican legacy of Italy’s Fascist ossuaries of the First World War,” 206–07.

59 See, as an example, Krsto Babić, “Omaggio ai caduti della Grande guerra. Il ricordo del passato è un dovere,” *La Voce del popolo*, 26 October 2024, <https://lavoce.hr/attualita/omaggio-ai-caduti-della-grande-guerra-il-ricordo-del-passato-e-un-dovere>.

Soča Region declined in favour of that of World War II – not merely for chronological reasons, but because the Marshal's regime emphasised it, portraying the second conflict as a war of liberation, redemption, and the founding of socialist Yugoslavia.⁶⁰

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60 On the latter point, see Jaka Repič, “Memorialization of the First World War in the Landscape of the Julian Alps,” *Folklore* 73 (2018): 41.

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Gabriele Mastrolillo

SAKRALIZACIJA IN MONUMENTALIZACIJA PRVE SVETOVNE VOJNE V POSOČJU

POVZETEK

Prva svetovna vojna je pomenila prelom s predhodnim obdobjem in ima pomembno mesto v italijanski zgodovini, saj je Kraljevini Italiji omogočila pridobitev dodatnih ozemelj z večinskim italijansko govorečim prebivalstvom in kulturo.

V dvajsetih letih 20. stoletja so liberalne vlade in zlasti fašistični režim skupaj z lokalnimi veljaki spodbujali obsežno kampanjo monumentaliziranja vojne, zlasti ob vzhodni meji Italije (ali, če uporabimo bolj nevtralen izraz, ob meji na Severnem Jadranu). Ta proces je potekal v širšem kontekstu poveljne obnove tega območja, ki ga je spopad močno zaznamoval. Začel se je že proti koncu vojne, vendar je po pohodu na Rim iz očitnih političnih razlogov dobil nov zagon: Benito Mussolini si je prilastil spomin na vojno, da bi fašizem predstavil kot neposrednega dediča tega zmagovitega spopada. Služil je tudi kot sredstvo za italijanizacijo regije, v kateri so živeli Italijani, Slovenci in Hrvati. Na tem območju se je predelovanje kolektivnega žalovanja torej prepletalo z njegovo instrumentalizacijo v simbolnem soočenju, ki je imelo ključno vlogo v političnem boju. Zato je fašistični režim spodbujal popolno mitologizacijo vojne z gradnjo kostnic, razglašanjem »svetih območij« in podpiranjem zahtev po postavljanju posebnih spomenikov padlim vojakom ali enotam, da bi tako poenotil kolektivni spomin na spopad in padle predstavil kot »mučenike« za domovino.

Namen tega članka je raziskati kampanjo monumentalizacije v Posočju, ki je bilo del Julijske krajine in si ga danes delita Italija (Pokrajina Gorica) in Slovenija (Goriška). Po pregledu te kampanje in opisu konteksta nastanka »svetih območij« in treh kostnic na tem območju, ki temelji na preučeni literaturi o tej temi, se članek osredotoča na zgodovino nekaterih spomenikov, izbranih kot študije primerov na podlagi analize neobjavljenih sodobnih arhivskih virov, shranjenih v Državnem arhivu v Gorici in italijanskem Osrednjem državnem arhivu v Rimu.

Filip Čuček*

Celju preti »neizogibna propast, ako ne bodo merodajni faktorji v dvanajsti uri uvideli, da je pomoč neizogibna in nad vse nujna.« Poplave in regulacije Savinje med obema svetovnima vojnama

IZVLEČEK

Prispevek analizira pogoste poplave Savinje v Celju in Savinjski dolini v medvojnem obdobju in iz tega izhajajoče protipoplavne ukrepe. Osredotoča se na preplet naravnih dejavnikov (hudourniški značaj reke, prodonosnost in vpliv pritokov) in družbenih okoliščin (regulacijski posegi, institucionalne omejitve in finančne zmožnosti države). Na podlagi arhivskega in časopisnega gradiva pokaže, da poplavna ogroženost ni bila zgolj posledica naravnih razmer, temveč tudi nepopolnih in tehnično ter organizacijsko omejenih regulacijskih ukrepov. Prispevek tako osvetli razkorak med ponavljajočimi se poplavnimi dogodki in omejeno učinkovitostjo vodnogospodarskih posegov.

Ključne besede: Savinja, Celje, Savinjska dolina, poplave, regulacije

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ABSTRACT

CELJE FACES AN "INEVITABLE COLLAPSE UNLESS THE RELEVANT AUTHORITIES FINALLY REALISE THAT HELP IS URGENTLY REQUIRED." FLOODING AND REGULATION OF THE RIVER SAVINJA DURING THE INTERWAR PERIOD

This contribution analyses the frequent flooding of the river Savinja in Celje and the Savinja Valley during the interwar period, as well as the resulting flood-control measures. It focuses on the interplay between natural factors (the river's torrential nature, sediment transport, and tributary influence) and social factors (regulatory interventions, institutional barriers, and the state's financial capacity). Based on archival and newspaper sources, the article demonstrates that the risk of flooding was not merely the result of natural conditions but also stemmed from incomplete, technically and organisationally limited regulatory measures. The paper thus highlights the gap between recurrent flood events and the limited effectiveness of water management interventions.

Keywords: Savinja, Celje, Savinja Valley, floods, river regulation

Uvod

Poplave sodijo med najpogostejše naravne ujme na Slovenskem in so v preteklosti pomembno vplivale na razvoj naselij, gospodarstva in infrastrukture. Med bolj izpostavljenimi območji je bila tudi Savinjska dolina s Celjem, kjer so se zaradi naravnogeografskih značilnosti in posegov v rečni prostor poplave pojavljale razmeroma pogosto.

Problematika poplav in urejanja Savinje je bila že deležna strokovne in zgodovinske obravnave (npr. Janko Orožen, Janez Cvirn, Bojana Aristovnik in Tatjana Kač, Blaž Pristovšek, Matija Zorn, Filip Čuček idr.),¹ ki je opozorila na pomen regulacijskih posegov in na njihovo pogosto omejeno učinkovitost. Obstoječa literatura o poplavah na Slovenskem poudarja predvsem hidrološke značilnosti alpskih in predalpskih rek ter razvoj regulacijskih ukrepov v 19. in 20. stoletju. Manj pozornosti je bilo name-

1 Prim. Bojana Aristovnik in Tatjana Kač, »Nezadržno čez bregove strug ... Poplave v Celju v 20. stoletju,« v: Bojana Aristovnik, ur., *Mesto v objemu voda: poplave v Celju v 20. stoletju* (Celje: Zgodovinski arhiv, 2005), 7–36. Marko Kolbezen, »Velike poplave in povodnji na Slovenskem II,« *Ujma* 6 (1993): 214–19. Janko Orožen, »Zgodovinski pregled regulacije Savinje in njenih pritokov,« *Kronika* 4, št. 1 (1956): 16–20. Janez Cvirn, »Velika povodenj v Celju,« *Kronika* 33, št. 1 (1985): 76–80. Blaž Pristovšek, »Regulacijski problemi Savinje,« *Kronika slovenskih mest* 1, št. 3 (1934): 217–21. Matija Zorn, »Poplave – stalnica v Spodnji Savinjski dolini,« *Kronika* 65, št. 3 (2017): 529–40. Filip Čuček, »Ako bi tekla Savinja ali Voglajna blizu Gradca, bili bi že davno z deželnim denarjem regulirani: reka Savinja, poplave in regulacije konec 19. stoletja,« *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino* 64, št. 1 (2024): 284–97.

njene lokalnim poplavnim režimom in njihovim institucionalnim kontekstom, zlasti v primeru Savinje v medvojnem obdobju.

Obstoječe raziskave so pokazale, da so bile regulacije vodotokov pogosto zasnovane predvsem z vidika vodonosnosti, medtem ko je bila vloga prodonosnosti in hudourniških pritokov podcenjena. Hkrati so bile izvedbe regulacijskih del neredko odvisne od finančnih in političnih zmožnosti države, kar je vplivalo na njihovo kakovost in vzdrževanje. Kljub tem spoznanjem pa ostaja vprašanje konkretnih razlogov za pogostost in obseg poplav v posameznih okoljih, kakršno je bilo Celje v medvojnem obdobju, še vedno premalo sistematično obravnavano.

Prispevek izhaja iz vprašanja, zakaj so se poplave Savinje v medvojnem obdobju kljub regulacijskim posegom ohranjale v podobni pogostosti in obsegu. S tem namenom analizira poplave Savinje v Celju in širši Savinjski dolini med obema svetovnima vojnama ter preučuje, kaj je bil vzrok, da so bile v tem obdobju tako pogoste in regulacijski ukrepi niso dosegli pričakovanih učinkov. Na podlagi arhivskih virov in časopisnega gradiva obravnava naravne dejavnike poplav, tehnične omejitve regulacijskih posegov ter institucionalne in politične okoliščine njihovega izvajanja. S tem presega kronološki prikaz poplavnih dogodkov in poskuša osvetliti kompleksno prepletenost naravnih in družbenih dejavnikov, ki so pogojevali poplavno ogroženost Celja v medvojnem obdobju, hkrati pa zapolnjuje vrzel v razumevanju razmerja med naravno dinamiko Savinje in učinkovitostjo medvojnih regulacijskih politik.

Konec prve svetovne vojne je prinesel razpad dvojne monarhije. Nova politična stvarnost je terjala pozornost na povsem drugih ravneh, zaradi česar je bila problematika regulacije celinskih vodá postavljena na obrobje, reke pa so morale počakati na boljše čase. Avstrijska (delna) regulacijska dela so bila na Savinji (večinoma gorvodno od Celja) sicer korektno opravljena,² toda že tedaj so se izkazala za precej jalova, po več letih nerednega vzdrževanja so namreč obrambni nasipi, jezovi in druge vodogradnje na več mestih popustili oziroma bili porušeni, tako da je reka nemoteno poplavljala in marsikoga spravljala v obup.³

Savinja sodi med izrazite alpske hudourniške reke, kjer so periodična razlivanja del naravnega rečnega režima. Ta naravna dinamika je bila dodatno okrepljena z intenzivnim vnosom proda iz hudourniških pritokov, kar je povzročalo postopno dvigovanje struge in zmanjševanje pretočne sposobnosti reke. Široka naplavna dolina je bila zato tradicionalno poplavno območje, kjer so se voda, kmetijska raba in poselitev ves čas prilagajale druga drugi. Poplave so bile razmeroma reden pojav, ki se je v določenih obdobjih še stopnjeval zaradi širjenja naselij in infrastrukture v neposredno bližino

2 Prim. Čuček, »Ako bi tekla Savinja ali Voglajna blizu Gradca, bili bi že davno z deželnim denarjem regulirani,« 284–97.

3 Splošno o poplavah in regulacijah prim. Blaž Komac, Karel Natek in Matija Zorn, *Geografski vidiki poplav v Sloveniji* (Ljubljana: Geografski inštitut Antona Melika ZRC SAZU, 2008). Mitja Brilly, Matjaž Mikoš in Mojca Šraj, *Vodne ujme: varstvo pred poplavami, erozijo in plazovi* (Ljubljana: Fakulteta za gradbeništvo in geodezijo, 1999). Eva Reberc, *Vodnogospodarski ukrepi varstva pred poplavami: projektna naloga* (Maribor: Fakulteta za gradbeništvo, 2012), 3–20. Robertina Kuzmič in Agata Suhadolnik, »Urejanje voda kot varstvo pred poplavami,« v: *Mišičev vodarski dan 16* (Maribor: [Vodnogospodarski biro Maribor], 2005), 65–71. Matjaž Mikoš, *Urejanje vodotokov: skripta* (Ljubljana: Fakulteta za gradbeništvo in geodezijo, 2000).

rečne struge. Posamezni vodnogospodarski ukrepi – predvsem lokalno utrjevanje bregov in krajše regulacije – niso bistveno spremenili osnovnega poplavnega značaja reke, temveč so le omejeno vplivali na najbolj izpostavljene odseke. Do prve polovice 20. stoletja se je ohranjal značilen vzorec: ponavljajoče se poplave na istih območjih, občasni lokalni posegi za zaščito infrastrukture in postopno, a še vedno fragmentarno prilagajanje človekove rabe prostora naravni dinamiki Savinje.⁴

Poplave in (ne)učinkovitost regulacij v dvajsetih letih 20. stoletja

Po letu 1918 so se poplave Savinje (nemoteno) nadaljevale v podobnem ritmu kot v stari Avstriji (le da je bila Jugoslavija za regulacije še manj »zainteresirana«).⁵ Junija 1919, pol leta po koncu vojne, je Savinja spet obilneje poplavila in v Celju segala tri metre nad normalo.⁶ Po nekaj letih »premora« je nato konec novembra 1923 po celotni Sloveniji zapadel precej visok sneg, »kateremu je na to sledil dež in toplo južno vreme. To je povzročilo silne povodnji in poplave v Sloveniji in na Hrvaškem, ki so povzročile škode za več milijonov dinarjev.«⁷ Posledice nove katastrofe so bile vidne povsod. »Izruvana drevesa, razdrte ceste in pota, podrti kozolci, odnešeni mostovi in brvi, blatne, s prodom in peskom zasute njive, z vodo pokriti travniki, ki izgledajo, kakor velika jezera – vse to je žalostna priča nesreče, ki je zadela te kraje.«⁸ Poleg »kranjskih« rek (Save, Krke, Ljubljanice), ki so »preplavile okolico, da je ponekod voda stala v višini več metrov«, je na Štajerskem »napravila največ škode Savinja, ki je tako narastla, da niti najstarejši ljudje tega ne pomnijo«.⁹ (Med večjimi rekami »je edino Drava ostala v svojem koritu. Sicer je močno narastla, toda v zadnjem trenutku je začela zopet padati in od naših obdravskih polj je bila nevarnost odstranjena.«¹⁰)

Poplave so predstavljale ponavljajoč se hidrološki vzorec, ki je ostajal razmerna nespremenjen. Po nekaj letih »zatišja« se je Savinjska dolina ponovno soočila s poplavno nevarnostjo, pri kateri ni bilo mogoče zanesljivo predvideti časa in kraja njenega izrazitejšega pojava. Po dobrih dveh desetletjih je območje znova prizadela katastrofalna poplava, pri čemer je bilo skoraj brez izjeme najbolj izpostavljeno Celje, kjer so se vode iz zgornjih delov doline stekale v t. i. celjski ovinek.

Tretjič v tem letu je nastopila za Celje in bližnjo celjsko kotlino katastrofa silovite poplavi, ki je dosegla tokrat višek, kakor že od leta 1901. nikoli. Ogromne snežne

4 Več gl. Komac, Natek in Zorn, *Geografski vidiki poplav v Sloveniji*, 96–110.

5 Kolbezen, »Velike poplave in povodnji na Slovenskem II,« 219.

6 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 259, f. 002/0011/00073, Regulacija Savinje – načrti iz leta 1929, Poplavna tabela.

7 »Strašne poplave v Sloveniji,« *Straža*, 3. 12. 1923, 3. – Ocene škod oziroma vsote, namenjene za regulacijo, zaradi med- in povojne inflacije seveda niso primerljive s tistimi pred vojno.

8 »Vodna katastrofa,« *Straža*, 5. 12. 1923, 2.

9 »Strašne poplave v Sloveniji,« *Straža*, 3. 12. 1923, 3.

10 »Vodna katastrofa,« *Straža*, 5. 12. 1923, 2.

plasti, izredno mehko južno vreme, vmes pa deževni nalivi zadnjih dni so povzročili v Celju tako strahovito hiter porast Savinje in vseh njenih pritokov Voglajne, Hudinje, Sušnice, Koprivnice, da je bilo mesto Celje en sam otoček sredi jezera vode, ki je preplavila državno cesto in vdrla v nižje ležeče hiše ob periferiji mesta in napolnila skladišča in kleti v mestu samem.

Mesto je bilo odrezano od okolice, pod vodo je bil celoten mestni park, voda je zalila številne ulice, od parnega kopališča mimo državne bolnišnice je bilo vse pod vodo. »Poplavljen je bil ves mestni okoliš, ki je eno samo nepregledno jezero, le tuintam so štrlele iz vode višje ležeče steze.«¹¹

Percepcija poplav v časopisnih virih razkriva tudi politično dimenzijo razumevanja naravnih nesreč, pri čemer se je odgovornost pogosto pripisovala državi in njenemu (ne)ukrepanju. Anonimni avtor članka v celjski *Novi dobi* tako ni mogel mimo dejstva, da je za poplave takšnih razsežnosti kriva nova oblast, ki za njihovo preprečevanje ni storila še nič. Avstrijske regulacije, ki so jih izvajali več desetletij, so bile precej neučinkovite in so zahtevale temeljito prenovo; dejansko bi jih bilo treba zastaviti povsem na novo, toda v prvih povojnih letih to seveda ni bilo mogoče. Kljub temu je menil, da so krute razmere »težka obsodba oblasti, ki še vedno odlaša z regulacijo Savinje. Dokler Savinja ni regulirana, je vse prizadevanje mestne občine za urejanje njenih pritokov pri Celju zaman, kar je v polni meri znova eklatantno pokazala ta povodenj.«¹²

Poplava leta 1923 je dala jasno vedeti, da je oblast primorana poskrbeti za celinske vode, sicer se bo morala preveč pogosto ukvarjati s pobesnelimi rekami, s poplavljenimi površinami in lastnino, ne nazadnje s prestrašenim in obubožanim prebivalstvom, ki je utrpelo največ škode. Po zadnji ujmi si sploh še ni dodobra opomoglo, ko se je že čez slabi dve leti mesto ob Savinji ponovno znašlo pod vodo. V začetku septembra 1925 je močno deževje povzročilo, da so začeli

Savinja in njeni pritoki strahovito hitro naraščati in prestopati obrežje. Lava, Glazija in ves svet ob Benjamin-Ipavčevi cesti je bil zopet celo jezero. Voda je poplavela tudi ves teren javne bolnice, kjer je nastopila nad pol metra visoko v kletih ter je v deročih strugah in silnih poplavih prizadejala težko škodo na vrtu in na zemljiščih bolnice. Zasula je vse jesenske pridelke ter razdirala gnojake.¹³

Razmere v Celju so se iz leta v leto slabšale. Poplava na Lavi in širše je bila že tretja v istem letu. Kot je ugotavljal celjski časniki, se je struga reke v mestu stalno zviševala zaradi novega proda, hkrati pa so svoje dodali še vsi pritoki, ki so se izlivali vanjo. Regulacija Savinje je bila sredi dvajsetih let tako več kot potrebna. »Vprašanje regulacije Savinje in njenih pritokov v Celju je za naše mesto in njega razvoj tako življensko bistveno, da se ne sme več udano čakati na tisti čas nekoč v prihodnosti, ko pride končno država z regulacijskim delom Savinje tudi do Celja in preko Celja.«¹⁴ Medtem

11 »Strahovita povodenj v Celju,« *Nova doba*, 1. 12. 1923, 3.

12 Ibidem.

13 »Nočemo utoniti!,« *Nova doba*, 10. 9. 1925, 1.

14 Ibid.

je posebna komisija »pregledala potoke Ložnico, Sušnico in Koprivnico in zaenkrat samo odredila, da morajo prizadeti posestniki obsekati vso šumo ob vodi in drevje, ki sega v vodo«. Ugotovila je, da je »dotoke Savinje na njenem levem bregu v območju mestne in okoliške občine težko in nevarno regulirati radi še večjih poplav, ki bi potem nastajale, kajti v prvi vrsti je treba regulirati Savinjo in s tem omogočiti reden odtok vode iz njenih pritokov«. ¹⁵

Potreba po nujni regulaciji se je pokazala že čez dobra dva meseca, ko je po večdnevnem deževju »narastla Savinja in njeni dotoki kakor Voglajna, Hudinja, Sušnica in Koprivnica tako močno, da je na 12. t. m. že v ranih urah postal vzhodni del mesta pod vodo«. Najbolj so narasli pritoki, Savinja nekoliko manj, a je vendarle dosegla »pri kapeli na Dolgempolju 150 cm višine«, medtem ko je »kazala višina vode pri železniškem mostu na Savinjskem nabrežju 5 cm manj kakor pa povodenj v letu 1923«. Najhuje so jo skupili prebivalci ob Hudinji in Voglajni, ki je bila »tokrat veliko večja kakor pa Savinja«. Voda pri mostovih ni mogla odtekat, zato »se je razlivala na okrok širše planjave[,] in če bi k sreči ne prenehalo deževati, bi v tem slučaju tudi voda lahko dosegla do sredine mesta in tako poplavela celo mesto«. ¹⁶ Celje in Savinjska dolina že dolgo nista pomnila takšne poplave. Najbolj je prizadelo mestne predele Gaberje, Ostrožno in Lava. Voda je prodrla celo v Westново tovarno, »kamor dosedaj še nikoli ni dospela«, ¹⁷ dotok vode pa je »v trenutku odrezal delavcem vrnitev k njihovim družinam in so morali prenočiti v tovarni«. ¹⁸

Po zimi in mrazu, ko so se bili mnogi Celjani primorani ukvarjati z osnovnimi življenjskimi vprašanji in so skušali prebroditi najhujše, sta pomlad in začetek leta 1926 glede vremenskih razmer gotovo prinesla določeno olajšanje. Toda precej nepričakovano (in za mesec neobičajno) je nova poplava prizadela celotno Spodnjo Štajersko v začetku julija, ko je najbolj trpelo Ptujsko polje. Bregove je deloma prestopila tudi Savinja z vsemi pritoki, ki so prizadeli celjske predele. »Sušnica je že razlila svoje vodne mase po okolici na Glaziji, ravno tako je tudi Koprivnica močno narasla in kaže, da bo tudi njena voda poplavela ob bregovih ležeča polja. Hudinja je pa dejansko napravila že veliko škodo, ker je poplavela vsa polja v okolici Trnovelj, Škofljice in Hudinje ter zaprla dohod do teh vasi.« Ker so bile »vse struge med Celjem in Pragerskim prenapolnjene, večinoma so pa vode že prestopile bregove in preplavile travnike, pa tudi žitna in druga polja«, ¹⁹ je bilo slutiti katastrofo. Zemlja je bila polna vode in je potrebovala nekaj časa, da se osuši. Toda še pred tem je čez dober mesec sledila nova huda ura. V začetku avgusta (8.) je obilno deževje povzročilo, da je voda hitro narasla in poplavela okolico. »Pri železniškem mostu je dosegla višino približno kakor leta 1901 in 1910. [...] Voglajna je bila nekoliko večja kakor v letu 1901, pri Zelenem travniku je dosegla v gostilniških prostorih 75 cm višine; pri hotelu Rebeuschegg je

15 »Celjska kronika,« *Nova doba*, 31. 10. 1925, 2.

16 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 257, f. 002/0011/00029, Poplava v Celju, Poročilo, 13. 11. 1925.

17 »Strahote zadnje poplave v Sloveniji,« *Slovenski gospodar*, 19. 11. 1925, 3.

18 »Povodenj,« *Slovenec*, 15. 11. 1925, 5.

19 »Nove poplave v Sloveniji,« *Slovenec*, 6. 7. 1926, 3.

dosegla do vhodnih vrat, ki vodijo v gostilno[,] in v Aškerčevi ulici pa do vhodnih vrat, ki vodijo v hotel.« Tudi v preostalih ulicah je zalivalo hiše in kleti.²⁰ Po cennitvi je »celokupna škoda po poplavi v območju občine celjske« znašala dobra dva milijona dinarjev.²¹ Po besedah domačinov je bila situacija še hujša kakor leto poprej, saj »poplava pomeni za Celje najhujšo katastrofo, katera ga je kdaj zadela«. ²² Da pa to ni bilo vse, je že čez dober mesec Celje zopet poplavilo. A na srečo tedaj večje škode ni bilo, »ker je narasla visoko le bolj Savinja nego pa drugi potoki«. Škodo so beležili »le« v mestnem parku, kjer je »voda razruvala pota in zasula zemljo s peskom«, in »na potu od Pallosovega travnika do Savinjskega dvorca«. ²³

Katastrofalne poplave so celjski mestni svet »prisilile«, da je ravnal v skladu s pristojnostmi in oblasti pozival, naj zadevo karseda hitro sanirajo, saj časa ni na pretek. Na podlagi posebne ankete o načinu in financiranju regulacije Savinje in pritokov²⁴ je mestni svet septembra 1926 sprejel sklep, ki je kot nujno izpostavljal regulacijo Savinje (in pritokov) med Levcem nad mestom in Pečovnikom pod njim. Stroka je leta 1927 priredila predvojne (avstrijske) regulacijske načrte in izdelala dve varianti v vrednosti cca 20 milijonov dinarjev, direkcija vod pa se je odločila za cenejšo varianto, ki je predvidevala zgraditev nasipov (dražja je temeljila na poglobitvi struge). ²⁵

Medtem je konec poletja znova poplavilo. Sredi septembra 1927 je padlo v nekaj urah toliko dežja, da so poplavalili vsi hudourniki in pritoki Savinje, ki je zaradi tega prestopila bregove in poplavila. V Zgornji Savinjski dolini je narasla do treh metrov in odnašala mostove. Ljudje so seveda s strahom pričakovali katastrofo. V Celju je reka zalila večji del parka, z vodo je prišlo veliko materiala, dreves, ki so ogrožala mostove, splave ipd. V Škofji vasi pri Celju je Hudinja uničila jez, z več strani pa so prihajala poročila o raznih manjših nezgodah. ²⁶

Prelom oblakov nad Novo Štifo in Vitanjem v jutro dne 12. t. m. in celodnevni nepretrgani močni naliv istega dne je povzročil na teritoriju celjskega okraja v padavinskem območju Savinje in Pake na eni ter Hudinje na drugi strani katastrofalno povodenj v tako zvani celjski jezerski kotlini. Po visoki vodi so najhujše prizadeta in poškodovana savinjska regulačna dela in obrambni nasipi na obeh obrežjih. Na Savinji je višina vodne gladine znašala 3 m nad normalo proti 2.75 m v lanskem letu, kar dokazuje, da je bila ta poplava Savinje najvišja, kar jih zaznamuje kronika. Vsled večletnega opuščanja potrebnih popravil na obrežnih škarpah je poplava napravila

20 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 257, f. 002/0011/00039, Poplava leta 1926 v Celju in prijave škode, Poročilo, 15. 8. 1926.

21 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 257, f. 002/0011/00039, Poplava leta 1926 v Celju in prijave škode, Škoda, povzročena po poplavi z dne 8. in 9. avgusta 1926 mestni občini celjski.

22 »Strašne poplave,« *Slovenski gospodar*, 12. 8. 1926, 3.

23 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 257, f. 002/0011/00042, Popis škode po poplavi od. 26.–28. sept. 1926, Poročilo, 8. 10. 1926.

24 Prim. »Regulacija Savinje,« *Nova doba*, 4. 9. 1926, 1.

25 Orožen, »Zgodovinski pregled,« 18–19. Prim. SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 262, f. 002/0011/00150, Regulacija Savinje in pritokov.

26 »Deževje in povodenj,« *Nova doba*, 13. 9. 1927, 2.

škodo na pokvarjenih regulacijskih delih ob zadnji poplavi okroglo 3.000.000 Din na vodnih komunikacijah. Pod vodo so bile skoro vse vasi od Letuša navzdol, zlasti pa še št. Peterska občina, deli občin Žalec, Griže, Petrovče, Celje-mesto in Celje okolica.

Visoka voda Hudinje je preplavila polja in travnike, odplavila pokošeno otavo in krompir ter v splošnem povzročila znatno škodo, obenem pa porušila jezove in mostove. Hkrati je poškodovala delne regulacije med Trnovljami (Škofja vas) in Spodnjo Hudinjo (Celje – okolica). Porušila je t. i. Westново škarko na desnem obrežju Spodnje Hudinje, na več mestih z gramozom zasula staro strugo in si ustvarila povsem novo pot.

Nastalo je vsled tega več ostrih ovinkov, ki bi bili lahko ob vsaki povodnji katastrofalni. [...] V splošnem je zadnja poplava pokazala, da je mogoče nadaljne nezgode odvrniti le s stalnim in velikopoteznim regularnim delom na Savinji in njenih pritokih. Vodne razmere v Savinjski dolini in v celjski okolici so se vsled zadnje poplave tako poslabšale, da bi vsaka nadaljna poplava v isti izmeri mogla postati katastrofalna ne le za številne posestnike zemljišč, temveč tudi za mesto Celje samo, kateremu je to pot uničila njegov divni park.²⁷

Zadnja poplava je odločevalce le »premaknila« do te mere, da so k zadevi pristopili skrajno resno. Poleg Savinje so se v regulacijskem načrtu znašli tudi vsi pritoki, ki so vse bolj ogrožali Celje. Hudinjo so denimo sklenili regulirati vse od Majdičevega mlina do izliva.

Potok Hudinja je v zadnjih letih mnogokrat izstopil iz svojih bregov, ter napravil občutno škodo posebno v občinah Škofja vas, Celje okolica in Celje mesto s poplavami in trganjem rodovitne zemlje. Položaj se je posebno poslabšal od meseca avgusta 1926 naprej, tako da so bili obrežni posestniki prisiljeni napraviti obrambne gradbe, ki pa so se izkazale kot nezadostne.

Poplave leta 1927 so dale interesantom povod, da so sklenili, da je treba »napraviti definitivno regulacijo Hudinje v označenem sektorju«. ²⁸ Aprila 1928 so bila dela že do polovice končana, ²⁹ osrednji problem pa je vsekakor predstavljala reka Savinja. Sredi leta 1928 je bila odobrena cenejša varianta regulacije reke. Toda nasprotovale so ji občine pod Celjem, predvsem Laško, ki je trdilo, da bo zaradi tega reka poplavljalna prav tam. A po podrobni analizi hidrotehničnega izvedenca, češ da je strah povsem odveč, ³⁰ so leta 1929 pričeli s sanacijo in zavarovali levi breg Savinje nad izlivom Voglajne, ob njem in pod njim. Medtem pa je mestni inženir Blaž Pristovšek načrt nadgradil;

27 »Posledice zadnje poplave Savinje in pritokov,« *Slovenec*, 22. 9. 1927, 3–4.

28 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 326, f. 002/022/004/00008, Regulacija.

29 »Mariborska oblastna skupščina na delu,« *Slovenski gospodar*, 5. 4. 1928, 1.

30 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 261, f. 002/0011/00120, Izjava hidrotehničnega izvedenca, 23. 1. 1929.

železnico naj bi prestavili na levi breg reke, težišče regulacije pa zaradi boljšega odtoka vode iz celjskega ovinka pomaknili proti Tremerjam. Tudi vabljeni strokovnjaki, ljubljanski profesor Ciril Žnidaršič in dunajski docent Karl Riediger, sta podprla njegovo zamisel.³¹ Žnidaršič je med drugim menil, da so bile pretekle regulacije nezadostne predvsem zato, ker se je »na bazi dolgoletnih opazovanj vodostajev ter meritev vodnih množin« upoštevala zgolj vodonosnost, na prodonosnost pa da se niso ozirali v enaki meri. V novejšem času, tako Žnidaršič, je bila prodonosnost ravno tako pomembna kot vodonosnost, s čimer je profesor nakazoval, da bi znale biti prihodnje regulacije precej uspešnejše kot stare avstrijske. A v isti sapi je ugotavljal, da »napredne države ustanavljajo dobro opremljene laboratorije, s katerimi je mogoča eksperimentalna rešitev raznovrstnih problemov hidrotehnike«, medtem ko Kraljevina SHS sredi leta 1929 česa takega pač ni premogla.³²

»Križa sistema« in pospešena regulacija v tridesetih letih 20. stoletja

Kljub delni sanaciji Savinje v Celju v mestu nekih večjih izboljšav ni bilo pričakovati, saj je prav nanos zmeraj novega proda dvigoval vodno gladino oziroma povzročal vedno nove poplave. To se je pokazalo že naslednjo jesen, ko so Slovenijo ponovno prizadele obilnejše poplave. Oktobra 1930 »so vsled neprestanega deževja močno narasle skoro vse reke in potoki v dravski banovini. Sava in Ljubljanka sta na nekaterih mestih prestopili bregove. Voda je poplavlila večje predele v Bohinju, pri Kamniku, na Sorškem polju, v ljubljanski okolici, Vevčah in Lazah. Sneg je pobelil Julijske, Savinjske Alpe in Pohorje.«³³ Na Štajerskem je zopet najbolj poplavlila Savinja, v zgornjem delu predvsem pri Nazarjah, kjer je precej poplavlila tudi Dreta (v »stranski« Šaleški dolini je poplavljal tudi Paka), pod Celjem pa predvsem med Rimskimi Toplicami in Zidanim Mostom.³⁴ Seveda tudi Celju ni bilo prizaneseno. Savinja je

narasla 3 metre nad normalo in se razlila, poplavlili so tudi pritoki Voglajna, Ložnica, Sušnica in Koprivnica. Voda je poplavlila mestni park, 'Otok', glazijo, Ljubljansko cesto do hotela Skoberne, Vrazov trg, Lavo, Benamina Ipavca in Gregorčičevo ulico, del Miklošičeve ulice, Dolgo polje, podvoz pri hotelu 'Pošti', Zavodno in del Brega. Savinja se je spremenila v divji veletok, ki se je zaganjal visoko v ograje mostov.

Mnogo hiš je bilo poplavljenih, voda je »preplavljala kleti in pritlična stanovanja. Mesto je bilo odrezano od okolice, edino zvezo je tvorila Mariborska cesta«. Voda

31 Orožen, »Zgodovinski pregled«, 19. Prim. SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t.e. 261, f. 002/0011/00120, Regulacija Savinje in pritokov 1928–1931.

32 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t.e. 325, f. 002/022/004/00003, Regulacija Savinje, Izvedeniško mnenje o projektu nameravane regulacije Savinje pri Celju.

33 »Velike poplave«, *Nova doba*, 13. 10. 1930, 2.

34 »Po novem naliivu vode naraščajo«, *Jugoslovan*, 14. 10. 1930, 5.

je na poplavljenih cestah, ulicah in poteh povzročila ogromno škode, ki je šla »v stotisoče. Zadnja velika poplava je nov dokaz, da bo treba čimprej pričeti z regulacijo Savinje, ki je za Celje prav življenske važnosti«. ³⁵

Kljub vsemu so pripravljala dela za regulacijo Savinje napredovala počasi. Izvedenih je bilo zgolj nekaj vzdrževalnih regulacijskih posegov na pritokih, ki so – za razliko od same Savinje, ki je bila kot pomembnejša vodna pot v državni pristojnosti – spadali pod upravo banovine. Konec leta 1930 so bili stroški za regulacijo Savinje (skupaj s pritoki) ocenjeni na dobrih 23 milijonov dinarjev. Regulacije Savinje si brez pritokov (in obratno) enostavno ni bilo mogoče zamišljati, saj je velik del poplav odpadel prav nanje (oziroma nanjo). Del Celjske kotline je bil nižji od nabrežij Savinje, zato je mestu pretila stalna nevarnost. »Od celega mestnega in ožjega okoliškega teritorija je pred poplavami zavarovan samo nekaj višje ležeči notranji del starega mesta.« Prav tako je bil zaradi visoke talne vode »ves okoliš mesta v jesenski, zimski in pomladni dobi vlažen in deloma zamočvirjen. Redno odvodnjavanje je vsled prenizke lege zemljišč nemogoče. Megla, katere se starejši prebivalci le redko spominjajo, je stalen gost in postaja čedalje neznosnejša. Po zidovju mnogih hiš sega vlaga do oken in višje. Posledice – bolehnost deca, nalezljive in druge bolezni.« Medtem je septembra 1931 zopet poplavalilo; po dvodnevem dežju je reka narasla približno tri metre nad normalo in poplavela Otok, Glazijo, Zavodno in večji del nabrežja. ³⁶ Hitro zatem so bile oktobra vendarle končane sondaže in terenske meritve, večletni projekt regulacije od Tremerij do Levškega mosta pa sprva ocenjen na 26 milijonov in pol dinarjev, ³⁷ kasneje pa znižan za tri milijone. ³⁸ Toda celoten projekt je bil predložen ministrstvu šele naslednjo jesen, saj je to medtem zahtevalo, da se projekt razširi tudi na že regulirani zgornji del Savinjske doline. ³⁹ Po novem je predlog z dodano regulacijo pritokov ⁴⁰ in rekonstrukcijo zgradb med Mozirjem in Celjem znašal dobrih 38 milijonov dinarjev. ⁴¹

Toda zopet je preteklo leto dni, ko so dolgotrajno pregovarjanje prekinile nove katastrofalne poplave. V začetku jeseni 1933 so silni nalivi povzročili, »da so vode v Sloveniji v petek in soboto katastrofalno narasle in poplaveli cele pokrajine«. Bregove je seveda prestopila tudi Savinja. Skoraj teden dni trajajoče neprekinjeno septembrsko deževje je povzročilo, da je pričela Savinja s pritoki »v petek 22. t. m. dopoldne nevarno naraščati, in voda je na nekaterih mestih prestopila bregove. V petek zvečer je bila Savinja že 2 1/2 metra nad normalo. V noči na soboto je skoro neprestano deževalo in v soboto 23. t. m. je nastopila katastrofa, ki prekaša po svojem obsegu in grozoti

35 »Velike poplave,« *Nova doba*, 13. 10. 1930, 2.

36 Aristovnik in Kač, »Nezadržno čez bregove strug,« 15–16.

37 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 262, f. 002/0011/00150, Regulacija Savinje in pritokov, Regulacija Savinje pri Celju.

38 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 261, f. 002/0011/00120, Regulacija Savinje od Levškega mosta do tremerskega polja – proračun izdatkov.

39 Orožen, »Zgodovinski pregled,« 19–20.

40 Prim. SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 262, f. 002/0011/00146, Regulacija pritokov Savinje, projekti, poročila, Tehnično poročilo.

41 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 262, f. 002/0011/00150, Regulacija Savinje in pritokov, Ministrstvu gradjevina, 12. 10. 1932.

vse poplave v zadnjih desetletjih.« Celje je bilo podobno otoku sredi nepreglednega morja, Savinja pa se je spremenila v besneč veletok, se združila z vsemi pritoki ter poplavlila skoraj polovico Celja in vso okolico.

Mesto je bilo popolnoma odrezano od okolice. Popoldne je poplava dosegla svoj maksimum. Vode so bile 4 metre nad normalo. Pod vodo so bili mestni park, Masarykovo nabrežje, pot od brvi pri parku do Grofije, mestna vrtnarija, ves 'Otok', Ljubljanska cesta do Mestne elektrarne, Glazija, Ipavčeva ulica, javna bolnica, Vrazov trg, Vodnikova ulica do Mestnega gledališča, Gregorčičeva, Miklošičeva, Strossmayerjeva, Levstikova, Frankopanska, Zrinjskega, Kersnikova, Oblakova ulica, del Kapucinske ulice pri Kapucinskem mostu, cesta na Bregu, vse ozemlje pri Sp. Lanovžu, Dolgo polje, Mariborska cesta, del Gaberja in Sp. Hudinje, Mestni mlin, del Cinkarne, Westnova tovarna, Celjska milarna, Kralja Petra cesta od Mariborske ceste do gostilne 'Pri jelenu', Aškerčeva ulica, Zavodna, Polule, Lisce, Lava, Ložnica, Babno, Medlog. Voda je napolnila vse kleti in vdrla v nešteta stanovanja, pisarne ter trgovine in obrtne lokale.

Prekinjene so bile številne cestne zveze in železniška povezava med Celjem in Žalcem, poplavljeni so bila skoraj vsa šolska poslopja. Voda je porušila nasipe na obeh bregovih Hudinje pri Majdičevem mlinu. Mestna elektrarna je izklopila električni tok, ker je pričela voda zalivati transformatorje, v mestni plinarni je voda dosegla retortne peči in onemogočila nadaljnje obratovanje. »Divje hrumeča Savinja je ves dan nosila s seboj hlode, debla, deske, poljske pridelke, posodo, utopljene prašičke, perutnino in druge stvari.« Voda je porušila brv pri parku, trčila v Kapucinski most, ki je nekaj kasneje klonil pod silnim pritiskom. Kaj kmalu je porušila tudi Grenadirjevo brv na Polulah, s čimer je bilo mesto povsem odrezano od Brega, Polul in Lisc, in brv pri izlivu Sušnice v Savinjo. Poplava ni prizanesla niti krajem gorvodno od Celja. Tam je voda uničila

del jezua pri Ljubnem, porušila polzelski jez, nasip ob Savinji pri St. Petru, pri Št. Pavlu pri Preboldu raztrgala obrežje Savinje na dveh mestih v dolžini 200 metrov, porušila ostanke levškega mostu in poplavlila Petrovče, Kasaze, Vrbje, Ložnico, Grajsko vas, Kapljo vas, Dolenjo vas, Latkovo vas, Zgornje in Spodnje Roje, braslovško okolico ter več krajev v Zgornji Savinjski dolini.

Pod vodo so bili tudi kraji Šmarjeta, Trnovlje, Škofja vas in Vojnik ter kraji proti vzhodu.

Pustošenje, ki ga je povzročila ogromna poplava, je nepopisno. Mnoge ceste in ulice so globoko izjedene, uničeno je pohištvo in podi v neštetih stanovanjih, blago v kletih ter trgovskih in obrtnih lokalih, porušena cela vrsta ograj in zidanih podstavkov. Zelo so prizadeti javna bolnica v Celju, veletrgovec g. Zangger, ki mu je voda pri rezervoarjih bencina odnesla mnogo sodov in veliko množino drv, trgovec g. Plavc na Vrazovem trgu, hotelir g. Rebeuschegg, gostilničar pri 'Zelenem travniku'

g. Reberšak in Westnova tovarna. Iz mnogih stavb v Celju, okolici in Savinjski dolini je voda odnesla pohištvo, posteljnino in živež, tako da so prebivalci ponekod rešili samo golo življenje.⁴²

Takšna katastrofa je bila za Celje precej pogubna. »Poplava v letu 1926 se je smatrala za eno največjih, ki so obiskale celjsko kotlino. Zadnja poplava, pri kateri je bila povprečna vodna gladina za cca 77 cm višja, je pa pokazala, da preti Celju neizogibna propast, ako ne bodo merodajni faktorji v dvanajsti uri uvideli, da je pomoč neizogibna in nad vse nujna.«⁴³ Regulacija Savinje in vseh celjskih pritokov je postala neodložljiva. »Regulacija je tem bolj nujna radi tega, ker je gornji del Savinje nad Celjem reguliran in prinaša vsled tega velike množine gramoza. Isti se tik pri Celju ustavlja, ter se vsled tega dno struge Savinje dviguje. To ima za posledico, da prestopa voda vedno česče bregove, ter povzroča ogromno škodo.« Resolucija celjske mestne občine je poudarjala, da ni bilo zadnjih 20 let storjeno praktično nič, da se prav tako ni vzdrževalo »gornjega dela Savinje, ki je že bil reguliran, tako da je tudi tam nastala milijonska škoda na že reguliranih delih, ter je posledica tega ta, da bo prišlo do Celja še več gramoza in da bodo poplave še večje.«⁴⁴ Škodo so povzročali tudi neregulirani pritoki v zgornjem delu Savinjske doline. Paka je denimo porušila »številne mline in žage, ki so kakor nasejani po ozki soteski«, spodkopala in razrušila »banovinsko cesto, mostove in vodne jezove na več mestih.«⁴⁵ »Trpel« je tudi Šoštanj, kjer »Paka pred svojim velikim ovinkom proti izlivu v Savinjo tudi tokrat mestu ni prizanesla.«⁴⁶ Poplavljala je Hudinja od Vojnika dolvodno, Savinja pa je prizadela tudi vso srednjo Savinjsko dolino (Žalec, Vrbje, Petrovče, Kasaze) in tudi območje dolvodno od Celja, saj je s seboj odnašala porušene mostove in preostali material. Od Zidanega Mosta navzgor je bil pogled »na oba bregova Savinje naravnost tožen. Po vsem polju leži neštevilno brun, hlodov, drevja in dračja, ostankov raznih mostov, deli pohištva, posode ter celi kupi buč in drugih poljskih sadežev.« V Laškem je reka dosegla »še neznano višino in poplavlila vso okolico«,⁴⁷ pustošila vrtove, kleti, stanovanja ter povzročila veliko škodo.⁴⁸ Skupaj je poplavelo slabih 40 km² površin. Reka je »opustošila skoro vse poljske pridelke, odnesla ogromne ploskve rodovitne zemlje, devastirala domove, porušila mnogo poslopij; zahtevala je več človeških žrtev, ugonobila je mnogo živine; uničila ceste in pota ter spravila marsikoga na beraško palico.«⁴⁹

Za katastrofe v Celju in okolici so bili eden pglavitnih vzrokov številni hudourniki, ki so v Savinjsko dolino (oziroma Savinjo) prinašali velike količine vode in

42 »Katastrofalne poplave v celjski kotlini in Savinjski dolini,« *Nova doba*, 25. 9. 1933, 1–2.

43 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 263, f. 002/0011/00157, Poplave in regulacija Savinje, Poročilo o katastrofalni poplavi v Celju dne 23. sept. 1933.

44 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 263, f. 002/0011/00158, Poplava v Celju od. 23.–24. 09. 1933, Resolucija, 28. 9. 1933.

45 »Na prizoriščih poplav in razdejanja,« *Jutro*, 26. 9. 1933, 3.

46 »Tudi Šoštanj je trpel,« *Jutro*, 27. 9. 1933, 2.

47 »Minister dr. Kramer v Celju in Savinjski dolini,« *Jutro*, 25. 9. 1933, 3.

48 »Razburljivi prizori v Laškem,« *Jutro*, 26. 9. 1933, 4.

49 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 316, f. 002/022/004/00006, Resolucija mestne občine celjske, 24. 10. 1933.

materiala. Stroka je menila, da bi bilo treba hudournike zgraditi, s čimer bi se zmanjšala vnos materiala v reko in njeno rapidno naraščanje.

Hudourniki, ki prinašajo v Savinjo ogromne množine peska, prod, kamnja in pri hudih nalivih tudi skalovja, lesa in štorovja i.t.d.[,] onemogočajo vsakršno normalizacijo ali stabilizacijo struge Savinje tako v gornji, kakor tudi v spodnji Savinjski dolini. [...] Plavljenje in splavarjenje lesa[,] ki se ju smatra navadno kot glavni vzrok povodnji v Savinjski dolini, niti od daleč ne povzročata in pospešujeta povodnji v toliki meri kakor hudourniki.

Poleg tega so bili bistven dejavnik poplav še »slabo grajeni, slabo situirani in nezadostno profilirani jezovi in mostovi ter slabo postavljena in pomanjkljivo zgrajena obalna zavarovanja, ki jih vsaka večja povodenj poruši in iz-za njih odnese material«. ⁵⁰ Ne nazadnje so poplave povzročali tudi povečano krčenje gozdov in številni požigi, zaradi česar ni bilo več naravne zaščite za taleči se sneg in material, ki je po hudournikih nemoteno potoval v doline. ⁵¹

Kot da to ni bilo dovolj, je v celjski kotlini poplavilo še sredi oktobra 1933, a k sreči pritoki takrat niso naraščali tako silovito kot septembra. Toda septembrska katastrofa je povzročila, da je bila »struga Savinje pri Celju zaradi zadnje poplave tako zasuta z ogromnimi novimi množinami gramoza, da mora že ob srednjem deževju nujno slediti poplava vsega ozemlja v celjski kotlini, ker je normalni odtok vode zaradi nako-pičenega gramoza nemogoč«. Prebivalstvo, ki si je po zadnji poplavi »komaj za silo uredilo poplavljenost stanovanj in klet«, je bilo obupano in »pričakuje, da oblast ne bo še dalje oklevala s pričetkom regulacije Savinje, ki je živlenski problem ohranitve Celja kot važnega gospodarskega in prometnega središča celjske kotline«. ⁵² Regulacija med Mozirjem in Celjem (1876–93) je sicer rešila inundacijsko ozemlje v kmetijske namene, toda zaradi padca reke in neizgrajenih pragov, ki bi padec ublažili, se je nad Celjem nabiral gramoz. »Posebno velike količine gramoza so se nakopičile nad in pod levškim mostom.« Prodne mase, ki so bile še leta 1902

pri Sv. Petru v dolžini treh kilometrov«, so že dosegle »konec regulacije /Kristinin dvor/ t. j. 8 km nižje. Premikajo se torej s povprečno hitrostjo 280 m v letu in je pričakovati, da dosežejo ustje Voglajne približno čez 10 let. Te prodne mase[,] nako-pičene nad Celjem[,] predstavljajo resno nevarnost za mesto in okolico, ker se bo dno Savinje od hipa, ko dospe val prod, začelo krepkeje dvigati, dokler ne doseže višino vala samega vsled premikanja teh prodnih mas in zasipavanja struge. ⁵³

50 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 326, f. 002/022/004/00006, Regulacija Savinje in pritokov, Ureditev Savinje in hudourniki, No. 6958/1, 17. 10. 1933.

51 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 264, f. 002/0011/00179, Komisija za proučitev vzrokov, ki pospešujejo razdiralno moč Savinje, 17. 2. 1934; t. e. 265, f. 002/011/00198, Razdiralna sila Savinje in pritokov, referat.

52 »Zopet katastrofalna poplava v celjski kotlini,« *Nova doba*, 13. 10. 1933, 2.

53 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 261, f. 002/0011/00120, Regulacija Savinje, tehnično poročilo.

Skoraj 2000 km² veliko območje Savinje in pritokov je letno dobilo več kot 1000 litrov padavin na m². Zgolj med katastrofo leta 1933 je v enem dnevu padlo več kot 100 litrov dežja na m². Največje poplave so bile praviloma jeseni, ko je Savinja pri Celju dosegla do 1400 m³ pretoka na sekundo, pod izlivom Voglajne celo 1700 m³. Glavno težavo je predstavljala regulacija Mozirje–Celje, zaradi katere je bil donos proda bistveno višji, posledično se je zvišala rečna struga, zaradi vsega naštetega pa se je voda precej lažje in hitreje razlivala od Levca naprej, kjer je bilo najbolj na udaru Celje. Kljub temu da so rešili več sto hektarjev obdelovalnih površin, se je problem vse od preloma stoletja stopnjeval.

V nadaljnjih 30 letih do danes so se razmere še mnogo poslabšale. Že pred vojno, posebno pa v letih visoke konjunktore po vojni, se je vršilo intenzivno izsekavanje gozdov v območju zgornje Savinje, Drete, Pake in Bolske. Mnogi manjši pritoki so se spremenili v deroče hudournike, ki prinašajo iz gorskih masivov pri vsakem naliveu cele sklade novega gramoza, s katerim se pospešeno zasipava rečno korito srednjega in spodnjega toka Savinje.⁵⁴

Zaradi velikih količin gramoza (40.000 m² sipin) nad Celjem je bilo sprva nujno očistiti strugo nad mestom. Inženir Pristovšek je sicer menil, da bi se

s čiščenjem struge nad Celjem začasno omejilo nadaljnje donašanje gramoza v Celje. Iz območja mesta bi pa voda odplavljala v strugi deponiran material v nizvodno ležeče dele rečišča pod Celjem. Tako bi nastala v območju Celja razbremenitev v času[,] ko še ne moremo pričakovati vidnih uspehov od začete regulacije pod Celjem. Preprečila bi se nevarnost, da se prestavi gramozni jez nizvodno od Levškega mosta v območje Celja, kjer bi doplavljen material še bolj zmanjšal že itak nezadosten pretočni profil in bi povzročil, da bi pri poplavah odtekal del Savinje preko 'Otoka' in 'Glazije' v mesto.

Toda težek gospodarski položaj je sredi tridesetih let precej onemogočal izvedbo že zastavljenega projekta, kaj šele njegove širitve.⁵⁵

Sreča v nesreči za samo mesto in širšo okolico je bila ta, da so se po nesreči leta 1933 oblasti le zganile. Novembra je ministrstvo prejelo nov predlog v višini dobrih 40 milijonov dinarjev; večina sredstev je bila mišljena za regulacijo Savinje, nekaj za regulacijo pritokov, nekaj pa za rekonstrukcijo obstoječih zgradb do Mozirja.⁵⁶ (Decembra je bil sicer izdelan še finančni načrt za slabih 55 milijonov, ki pa Beograda očitno ni

54 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 264, f. 002/0011/00175, Regulacija Savinje, načrti, Problem regulacije Savinje, julij 1934.

55 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 327, f. 002/022/004/00012, Občemu in upravnemu oddelku, štev. 1740/1934, 15. 10. 1934.

56 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 263, f. 002/0011/00158, Zapisniki sej mestnega sveta, izvlečki, Ministrstvu gradjevina, 12. 11. 1933.

»videl«. ⁵⁷) Ministrstvo je februarja 1934 odobrilo (nekoliko spremenjen) generalni projekt regulacije (regulacija Savinje in ustij pritokov med Letušem in Tremerjami v vrednosti slabih 30 milijonov dinarjev) ⁵⁸ in naročilo izdelavo podrobnih načrtov. ⁵⁹ (Proti takšni izvedbi je zopet protestiralo več krajev pod Celjem, predvsem Laško, ki je menilo, da je najbolje začeti s sanacijo čim nižje (po možnosti pri izlivu Savinje v Savo), sicer bo voda poplavljala dolvodno od Celja. ⁶⁰) Hidrotehnični izvedenec je sicer ponovno ugotavljal, da območje ni toliko ogroženo, da bi ga morali regulirati v celoti. ⁶¹ Toda smelega načrta je sredi novembra 1934 zmotila huda poplava. Potem ko je deževalo vso noč (z 11. na 12. november),

je začela Savinja v ponedeljek zjutraj rapidno naraščati. Voda je dosegla dopoldne 3.30 m nad normalo in je preprečila iztok vode iz potokov, ki so zaradi tega tudi narasli in prestopili bregove. Voda je zalila cesto v Liscah, mestni park, takozvani 'otok', del Ljubljanske ceste, Glazijo, del Ipavčeve ulice, javno bolnišnico, kjer je povzročila veliko škodo v kletih in skladiščih, Masarykovo nabrežje, ves predel v Zavodni pod Starim gradom, cesto v Polulah, železniški podvoz pri hotelu 'Pošti', kjer so uvedli promet s čolni, in del Dolgega polja.

Savinja je povzročila veliko poplavo tudi pri Žalcu, v Petrovčah in Laškem. V Celju in okolici je bilo mnogo pritličnih stanovanj in kleti pod vodo. Reka je ves dan nosila velike količine lesa in poljskih pridelkov. Poplava je zopet povzročila veliko škodo na poslopijih, cestah, vrtovih, poljih in travnikih. Številni otroci zaradi poplave niso mogli priti v šolo, zato so šole »ukinile pouk in poslale mladino domov«. ⁶²

Kakorkoli, konec leta 1934 so na pritokih v Celju (sprva na Sušnici in Koprivnici, nekoliko kasneje na Voglajni) le pričeli z delnimi regulacijskimi deli, ⁶³ aprila 1935 ⁶⁴ pa tudi na Savinji. Prvo »etapo« savinjske regulacije so opravili pod Tremerjami, do druge svetovne vojne pa so s petimi etapami prišli do Grenadirjeve brvi ⁶⁵ (za kaj več je ponovno zmanjkalo časa in financ). Tisti, ki so živeli ob Savinji in imeli ob njej svoje posestvo, so namreč leta in leta s strahom gledali, »kako jim ob vsakem večjem deževju voda odnaša rodovitno zemljo, kako jim krči njive in travnike. Kadarkoli je nastalo

57 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 263, f. 002/0011/00157, Regulacija Savinje in pritokov, rekapitulacija stroškov, Rekapitulacija stroškov za izvršitev regulacije Savinje in pritokov pri Celju in za izvršitev preureditve obstoječe regulacije nad Celjem, 21. 12. 1933.

58 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 263, f. 002/0011/00158, Zapisniki sej mestnega sveta, izvlečki, Odločba, 7. 8. 1934.

59 Orožen, »Zgodovinski pregled«, 20.

60 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 263, f. 002/0011/00158, Zapisniki sej mestnega sveta, izvlečki, Izjava mestne občine Laško, 21. 6. 1934.

61 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 263, f. 002/0011/00158, Zapisniki sej mestnega sveta, izvlečki, Izjava hidrotehničnega izvedenca, 23. 6. 1934.

62 »Celje in okolica«, *Nova doba*, 16. 11. 1934, 2. Prim. SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 264, f. 002/0011/00191, Povodenj 12/11–1934, Poročilo o povodnji, 15. 11. 1934.

63 SI_ZAC/0025, Občina Celje okolica 1850–1935, t. e. 22, f. XXII/79, Regulacija potoka Sušnica, Razglas, 16. 11. 1934; f. XXII/80, Regulacija Koprivnice, Razglas, 16. 11. 1934.

64 »Regulacija Savinje pod Celjem«, *Nova doba*, 12. 4. 1935, 1.

65 Orožen, »Zgodovinski pregled«, 20.

kakšno neurje, že je bil v strahu naš kmet, da mu Savinja odtrga zopet kos zemlje, da mu poplavi njegove s trdom in znojem obdelane njive.« Toda Celje se sredi tridesetih let ni ubadalo zgolj z vsakoletnimi poplavami, pač pa je kmečki vsakdan obremenjevala tudi huda gospodarska kriza, ko so bili »kmečki pridelki pod vsako ceno«, tako da je bila cena preživetja izredno visoka.⁶⁶ Da pa je bila mera polna, se je bilo mesto primorano spopadati še z vse večjo onesnaženostjo svoje glavne vodne žile, ki je ob poplavah resno grozila podtalnici, zajetjem pitne vode ipd.⁶⁷ Vsemu navkljub je bilo v drugi polovici tridesetih let »resnih« poplav le nekoliko manj kot prej. A kljub temu je v začetku maja 1938 močno deževje povzročilo, da je začela Savinja s pritoki hitro naraščati.

V teku včerajšnjega dneva je dosegla dva metra nad normalo in je poplavlila predel pri izlivu Sušnice in cesto pod drugim železniškim mostom. Naraslo vodovje je nosilo seboj velike množine lesa iz zgornje Savinjske doline. Tega lesa je bilo za več vagonov. Če se ne bo vreme izpremenilo, utegne nastati velika poplava, ki bi povzročila v Celju in celjski kotlini ogromno škodo.⁶⁸

Vendar je tokrat bolj poplavelo v Zgornji Savinjski dolini,⁶⁹ tako da Celje ni bilo prehudo prizadeto. Toda številne poplave pritokov so odgovorne vseeno prisilile, da so resneje razmislili o nadaljnji regulaciji Voglajne⁷⁰ (pa tudi Sušnice in Koprivnice).⁷¹

V začetku poletja 1939 se je pokazalo, da je dosedanja regulacija Voglajne /I. odsek/ veliko pomagala, nikakor pa ni zadostovala in je voda mnogobrojna najboljša polja naših občanov zalila. Letina je bila radi tega do mala uničena. Vzrok temu je skrajno neugoden dotok Hudinje v Voglajno, ki to reko direktno zapira. To stanje se od dne do dne poslabša, ker si dela Voglajna stalno novo strugo[,] tako da bo kmalu /če ne bo predrla in si naredila novo strugo, kar bi povzročilo mnogo škode/ popolnoma zapirala dotok Hudinje. Iz tega sledi, da se bodo pri prihodnji veliki vodi kljub spodnji regulaciji pokazale velike težkoče in bo kljub temu nastala za našo občino velika škoda.⁷²

Kljub analizam in pripravam pred drugo svetovno vojno do novih regulacijskih posegov na pritokih ni prišlo. Tudi regulacija Savinje je »prispela« zgolj do Grenadirjeve brvi, vojna pa je povzročila nekajletno cezuro v reševanju celinskih vodá. Povojno oblast je tako čakalo precej težko delo.

66 »Dopisi,« *Slovenski gospodar*, 6. 2. 1935, 7.

67 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 307, f. 002/0022/00530, Onesnaževanje Savinje – izboljšanje čistilnih naprav, Spomenica mestnega sveta celjskega glede na onesnaževanje Savinje, 9. 7. 1937.

68 »Iz Celja,« *Jutro*, 22. 5. 1938, 8.

69 »Vode se vračajo v struge,« *Jutro*, 24. 5. 1938, 3.

70 Prim. SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 326, f. 002/022/004/00010, Regulacija Voglajne.

71 »Žabje luže ob železni cesti in poplave Voglajne,« *Večernik*, 15. 11. 1940, 3. SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 266, f. 002/0011/00258, Regulacija Savinje in pritokov 1937–1940, Tehnično poročilo, 12. 5. 1939.

72 SI_ZAC/0024, Mestna občina Celje (1919–1941), t. e. 326, f. 002/022/004/00010, Regulacija Voglajne, 20. 3. 1940.

Zaključek

Pogostost in obseg poplav Savinje v Celju in širši Savinjski dolini v medvojnem obdobju nista bila posledica zgolj naravnih dejavnikov, temveč predvsem njihove prepletenosti s človeškimi posegi v prostor in institucionalnimi omejitvami pri urejanju vodotokov. Analiza kaže, da so k pogostim in obsežnim poplavam bistveno prispevali hudourniški pritoki, ki so v rečni sistem prinašali velike količine vode in predvsem proda, kar je povzročalo postopno dvigovanje struge Savinje. Regulacijski posegi iz predvojnega obdobja so bili zasnovani predvsem z vidika vodonosnosti, medtem ko je bila prodonosnost dolgo časa podcenjena, kar je zmanjšalo njihovo učinkovitost. Poleg tega so krčenje gozdov, neustrezno vzdrževanje obstoječih vodnih zgradb ter nepriprimerno dimenzionirani mostovi in jezovi dodatno povečevali poplavno ogroženost.

Regulacijski ukrepi v medvojnem obdobju niso dosegli pričakovanih rezultatov predvsem zaradi finančnih, tehničnih in političnih omejitev. Država je regulacijo Savinje obravnavala kot dolgotrajen in zahteven projekt, ki ga zaradi omejenih sredstev in drugih prioritet ni bilo mogoče sistematično izvajati. Posledično so se dela izvajala postopno, pogosto le delno in brez celostnega pristopa, ki bi upošteval celoten rečni sistem skupaj s pritoki.

Na podlagi obravnavanega gradiva lahko zaključimo, da so bile poplave v Celju v medvojnem obdobju rezultat kombinacije neugodnih naravnih razmer in neustreznega upravljanja vodnega prostora. Ta preplet je povzročil, da so ostajale stalnica, medtem ko so regulacijski posegi kljub posameznim izboljšavam le omejeno zmanjševali njihovo pogostost in obseg. Prispevek pokaže, da je bila poplavna ogroženost Savinje posledica spleta naravne hidrološke dinamike in institucionalnih omejitev vodnogospodarskih politik.

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Filip Čuček

**CELJE FACES AN “INEVITABLE COLLAPSE UNLESS
THE RELEVANT AUTHORITIES FINALLY REALISE
THAT HELP IS URGENTLY REQUIRED.”
FLOODING AND REGULATION OF THE RIVER SAVINJA
DURING THE INTERWAR PERIOD**

SUMMARY

In the period following the collapse of Austria-Hungary, flooding problems continued along the river Savinja, as the Austrian river regulation works had been only partially effective and insufficient in the long term. Due to inadequate maintenance, numerous embankments, dams, and other water structures gradually fell into disrepair or were destroyed, which meant that, under the new conditions, the river often reverted to its natural, flood-prone behaviour. In the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (or Yugoslavia), the situation also failed to improve significantly, as major river-regulation interventions were either postponed for several years or implemented only partially.

As early as 1919, the Savinja caused major flooding in Celje, with the water rising several metres above its normal level. In the years that followed, these weather conditions recurred on several occasions, including extreme rainfall, snowmelt, and rain combined with warm weather, causing widespread flooding throughout Slovenia. The floods in the early 1920s were particularly severe, especially in 1923, when several regions, including the Savinja Valley, were affected.

Due to its location along a river bend, Celje was particularly vulnerable, as waters from the upper part of the valley pooled and overflowed there. Floods occurred repeatedly at short intervals, especially in 1925 and 1926, when the city experienced several consecutive natural disasters. This caused escalating property damage, made daily life difficult for residents, and increased pressure on the authorities to begin systematically regulating the watercourses.

In the second half of the 1920s, more serious planning efforts to regulate the Savinja and its tributaries therefore began. Experts prepared several options, from which a more cost-effective solution, based primarily on constructing embankments, was selected, while the more extensive version also called for deepening the riverbed. Despite the initial efforts, it soon became clear that partial measures alone would not be sufficient, as the floods persisted in 1927 and 1928.

In the years that followed, regulatory measures were gradually introduced, including the stabilisation of riverbanks and the regulation of individual sections of the river and some of its tributaries. However, progress on the projects was slow, often due to

financial constraints and coordination challenges among various administrative bodies. Natural processes, particularly sediment deposition and the rise of the riverbed, continued to diminish the effectiveness of the measures implemented.

In 1933, the area once again experienced a series of severe floods, with major consequences for the wider Celje region. These disasters marked a turning point, prompting the authorities to take the question of comprehensive regulation more seriously. This was followed by new plans and increased funding for both the river Savinja and its tributaries.

From the mid-1930s onwards, river regulation efforts gained momentum. More extensive interventions on several sections of the river began, and the projects were gradually expanded to include Savinja's tributaries. Still, the work was divided into several phases and took place over several years, so it was not yet possible to provide comprehensive protection of the area quickly.

World War II then temporarily halted further planning and implementation of major water management projects. This left the issue of Savinja's comprehensive management unresolved, and in the postwar period, the planning and implementation of long-term solutions to reduce the flood risk in Celje and the Savinja Valley had to be tackled yet again.

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Med spominom in revizijo: druga svetovna vojna in vrednote (slovenske) družbe

IZVLEČEK

Članek obravnava dejstvo, da je v svetu zavedanje o pomenu zmage nad nacifašizmom v drugi svetovni vojni, ki vse bolj izgublja značaj »dobre vojne«, mnogo premalo upoštevano. Vsekakor takšno zanemarjanje, zapostavljanje in podcenjevanje pri obravnavi značaja, pomena in vloge druge svetovne vojne, ki je hkrati povezano tudi z njenim načrtnim razvrednotenjem in razgradnjo, za sodobni svet in aktualni trenutek predstavlja jedro težav. Te neposredno zadevajo v bistvo stvarnih izzivov, s katerimi se soočamo v Evropski uniji in nasploh v svetu pri ohranjanju demokracije in njenih vrednot, pa tudi povsem osnovnih univerzalnih civilizacijskih vrednot, ki človeško družbo določajo kot humano. Temu ob bok avtorji postavijo projekt Spomini še živijo kot prostor demokratičnega in medgeneracijskega dialoga in spontano obliko reminiscenčne terapije.

Ključne besede: druga svetovna vojna, družbeni procesi, vrednote, revizija, demokracija, Slovenija, Slovenci, projekt Spomini še živijo

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ABSTRACT

BETWEEN MEMORY AND REVISIONISM: WORLD WAR II AND THE VALUES OF (SLOVENIAN) SOCIETY

The article addresses the fact that, around the world, there is far too little recognition of the significance of the victory over Nazism and Fascism in World War II – a victory that is increasingly losing its status as a “good war.” By all means, such neglect, marginalisation, and underestimation of the nature, significance, and role of World War II, also stemming from its systematic devaluation and dismantling, constitute the core of the problems facing the modern world and the present moment. These problems are directly related to the ongoing challenges we face in the European Union and throughout the world in preserving democracy and its values, as well as the most fundamental universal civilisational values that define human society as humane. In this context, the authors present the project Spomini še živijo (Memories Live On) as a space for democratic and intergenerational dialogue and as a spontaneous form of reminiscence therapy.

Keywords: World War II, societal processes, values, revisionism, democracy, Slovenia, Slovenians, the Spomini še živijo (Memories Live On) project

V svetu, pa tudi v slovenski družbi, se vse bolj izgublja temeljna civilizacijska vrednostna orientacija. Po Hitlerjevem vzponu na oblast v Nemčiji v tridesetih letih prejšnjega stoletja se je prevladujoče stališče v krogu tistih, ki so se zavedali, kaj to pomeni za obstoj človeštva kot civilizirane družbe, izoblikovalo v geslo: »Fašizem, to je vojna!«

Pri rekonstrukciji sveta po letu 1945 sta bila antifašizem in uporništvo proti nacifašizmu vtkana v vizijo zmagovalcev druge svetovne vojne kot njen obvezni konstitutivni element pri oblikovanju nove svetovne ureditve. Zgodovinski fenomen antifašističnega uporništva je zaradi vloge med drugo svetovno vojno in prispevka k zmagi nad nacifašizmom s svojim ugledom predstavljal svojevrstno družbeno katarzično izhodišče in je bil, kot simbolni prelom s preteklostjo, pomemben dejavnik pri oblikovanju povojne vizije z vidika univerzalnih civilizacijskih vrednot, zlasti v moralno-etični in humani razsežnosti. Pri povojnem oblikovanju skupnega sistema vrednot je predstavljal najboljše zagotovilo za trajno uresničevanje skupne obveze: »Nikoli več!« (Do) danes je ta vizija skoraj popolnoma zbledela.

V današnji družbi na globalni ravni prevladuje pogled na preteklost, ki ima v jedru razlage zgodovinski spopad med (zahodno) demokracijo in totalitarizmi kot središčno točko za razumevanje (predvsem) dvajsetega stoletja. Če se najprej ozremo na takšno interpretacijo, ki je zaznamovana s totalitarno paradigmo, ugotovimo, da je njena velika težava metodološke narave. Gre za arbitrarno tezo, ki ni zgodovinarska,

ampak sociološka in izvira iz apriornega determinističnega izhodišča. Primerjava totalitarizmov je legitimna in potrebna, vendar ob takšni uporabi komparativne metode lahko izpadejo vzroki in posledice, če se ta vidik obravnava kot ključni oziroma celo edini kriterij za ovrednotenje preteklosti in se historični kontekst kot temeljni okvir, ki omogoča razumevanje poteka dogodkov in zgodovinskih procesov, ne upošteva dovolj dosledno. To nas privede v zgodovinsko protislovno položaje, kjer ni več jasno prepoznavne vzročno-posledične dinamike. Zagovorniki totalitarne paradigme se pogosto sklicujejo na Hannah Arendt kot teoretično utemeljiteljico koncepta o družbeni naravi totalitarizma,¹ pri čemer pa ona s svojimi raziskavami zagotovo ni imela namena prispevati k rehabilitaciji tistih političnih idej, strank, gibanj in oseb, ki so se v času druge svetovne vojne kompromitirale v boju proti zaveznikom in se na tak ali drugačen način družbeno diskvalificirale tudi z lastno soodgovornostjo za holokavst. Družbene spremembe, ki so nastale v okviru totalitarne paradigme po padcu Berlinskega zidu, so namreč omogočile, da so zagovorniki družbenopolitičnih konceptov iz tridesetih let prejšnjega stoletja – ravno na podlagi sklicevanja na prevladujoči globalni model – diskreditiranim ideološkim paradigmam povrnili družbeno legitimnost, čeprav se je po zmagi nad Hitlerjem zdelo, da so zaradi svoje participacije na strani sil osi v svetovnem spopadu upravičeno končale na smetišču zgodovine.

Dejstvo je, da je v svetu zavedanje o pomenu zmage nad nacifašizmom v drugi svetovni vojni, ki vse bolj izgublja značaj »dobre vojne«, kakor jo je pred leti označil eden njenih največjih poznavalcev, John Lukacs v knjigi *The Legacy of the Second World War*,² mnogo premalo upoštevano. Seveda Lukacs pri tem pripominja, da sicer nobena vojna ne more biti »dobra« in da obstajajo zgolj cilji neke vojne, ki so boljši od tistih v drugih vojnah. Hkrati pa opozarja, da je med številnimi narodi, zlasti v srednji in vzhodni Evropi, pa tudi v Italiji in na Japonskem, ki so se v svetovnem spopadu znašli med poraženci in so v tem smislu seveda logično imeli povsem drugačno izkušnjo, vendarle prišlo do izraza tudi drugačno razumevanje njenega pomena.³ Takšno temeljno delitev percepcije druge svetovne vojne v posameznih družbah deloma spreminja dejstvo, da je imela omenjena vojna zelo drugačne razsežnosti od prejšnjih. Značilnost druge svetovne vojne je namreč tudi ta, da ni šlo le za spopad med državami, temveč pogosto tudi za obsežne konflikte znotraj posameznih narodov in družbenih skupin, ki so potekali predvsem na podlagi ideoloških in političnih delitev. Leto 1945 sicer pomeni totalen poraz Hitlerjeve Nemčije, tako da nacistično gibanje ni imelo možnosti političnega preživetja, toda sodobni evropski, pa tudi globalni procesi političnih in ideoloških delitev znotraj številnih tedaj vojskujočih se držav in narodov, ki so lahko celo večje kot pred osemdesetimi leti, nam razkrivajo, da se percepcija druge svetovne vojne ne razlikuje zgolj med posameznimi državami oziroma narodi, pač pa da tudi znotraj posameznih družb obstaja zelo divergentno in celo diametralno nasprotno

1 Hannah Arendt, *Izvori totalitarizma* (Ljubljana: Študentska založba, 2003). Izvirnik *The Origins of Totalitarianism* je izšel leta 1951 (New York: Schocken).

2 John Lukacs, *The Legacy of the Second World War* (Yale University Press, 2010).

3 Ibidem, XI–XII.

razumevanje tega, kakšne so bile posledice druge svetovne vojne in kakšen položaj naj pripada njenemu pomenu v družbah posameznih narodov. Poleg tega sta konec hladne vojne in s tem povezana nekoliko kasnejša razširitev Evropske unije v vzhodno Evropo, kjer se je (tudi) v postkomunističnih družbah vzpostavil interpretativni pluralizem, odprla možnost za razmislek o vlogi in pomenu druge svetovne vojne s perspektive novih svetovnih razmerij po razpadu bipolarne ureditve, kjer naj bi bil (vsaj) v Evropski uniji eden od njenih ciljev tudi oblikovanje skupnega evropskega spomina.

Vsekakor takšni zanemarjanje, zapostavljanje in podcenjevanje v obravnavi značaja, pomena in vloge druge svetovne vojne tudi za sodobni svet in aktualni trenutek predstavljajo jedro težav, ki neposredno zadevajo v bistvo stvarnih izzivov, s katerimi se soočamo v Evropski uniji in nasploh v svetu pri ohranjanju demokracije in njenih vrednot, pa tudi povsem osnovnih univerzalnih civilizacijskih vrednot, ki človeško družbo določajo kot humano. Govorimo lahko o izgubi globalnega soglasja o temeljni vrednostni orientaciji.

Ključen prelom v razumevanju, ki je v svetu omogočilo prevlado družbenih procesov, ki se odmikajo od povojnega globalnega antifašističnega soglasja kot civilizacijskega jedra, je bil, kot že omenjeno, padec Berlinskega zidu leta 1989. Ta naj bi predstavljal podlago in argument za revizijo, ki bi v celoti in radikalno spremenila zgodovinsko oceno dvajsetega stoletja, s poudarkom na drugi svetovni vojni. Šlo naj bi za zgodovinsko rehabilitacijo antikomunističnega fenomena, vključno z njegovo kolaborantsko vlogo pri Hitlerjevem projektu, katerega vrhunec je bil holokavst, v vojni proti veliki zavezniški koaliciji, ter za rehabilitacijo njegove ideološke bližine z nacifašizmom, ki je bil v tridesetih letih dvajsetega stoletja podlaga za antidemokratsko opredelitev. Ta prelomna točka je svet premaknila iz bipolarne ureditve v smeri unipolarne perspektive, želje in ambicije. Konec bipolarne svetovne ureditve je bil trenutek, ko sta bila antifašizem in odpornišvo opuščena z razlago, da sta med vojno delovala izključno za cilje in interese komunizma. Druga vojna je bila v globalnem kontekstu umaknjena s položaja glavnega dogodka, podvržena načrtni razgradnji; njena vloga in pomen sta bila marginalizirana; postala je predmet interpretativnega prevrednotenja in razvrednotenja. Tedaj je bil opuščen tudi konsenz zavezniške koalicije o njenem pomenu. Še več, tedanji zgodovinski zmagovalci, kot so se sami poimenovali, so si za enega od ciljev zastavili tudi reinterpretacijo druge svetovne vojne, ki naj bi postala eden od temeljev za oblikovanje njihove vizije sveta. Ta vizija je težila k legitimiranju unipolarne sveta, kjer so zahodni svet, demokracija in civilizacija razglašeni za dokončno družbeno stanje brez alternative. Iz takšne percepcije se je pojavil navdih za stališče o koncu zgodovine, potem ko je Zahod zgodovinsko opravil z dvema totalitarizmoma dvajsetega stoletja.⁴ Zdelo se je, da zgodovinski prelom leta 1989 predstavlja simbolni konec dvajsetega stoletja, to pa je bila tudi podlaga za tezo

4 Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free press, 1992). Kasneje je avtor podal razlago, v kateri je relativiziral smisel prvotne teze (Francis Fukuyama (1952). Boštjan Furlan, Ožbej Peterle in Marko Balažic, ur., *Slovenija in pika!* (Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 2016), 68–76) in tudi iz razdalje na novo kritično umestil tezo (Francis Fukuyama, *Liberalizem in njegove tegobe* (Ljubljana: Beletina, 2025)).

o kratkem dvajsetem stoletju (1914–1991).⁵ Zagovorniki tega koncepta so si nadeli naziv zgodovinski zmagovalci nad totalitarizmi dvajsetega stoletja in si s takšno legitimacijo prilastili pravico, da predstavljajo dediščino celotne zahodne tradicije. To je delovalo v smeri razgradnje socialne kohezije ter povečevanja razlik in socialne neenakosti v zahodni družbi.⁶ Prevzem in uzurpacija celotne zahodne dediščine, katere imanentni »izum« je tudi demokracija, sprožita pomembno vprašanje: Ali bo Zahod ostal demokratičen in zvest svoji tradiciji? V nasprotnem primeru mu namreč grozi civilizacijsko nazadovanje.

V okviru takšnega idejnopolitičnega družbenega konteksta je prišlo do sprejetja Resolucije o evropski zavesti in totalitarizmu v Evropskem parlamentu aprila 2009. Na tej podlagi je bil dan, ko je bil podpisan sporazum med nacistično Nemčijo in Sovjetsko zvezo (23. avgusta 1939), razglašen za vseevropski dan spomina na žrtve vseh totalitarnih in avtoritarnih sistemov. Zadnja, 17. točka dokumenta je predsedniku Evropskega parlamenta naložila, »naj to resolucijo posreduje Svetu, Komisiji, parlamentom držav članic, vladam in parlamentom držav kandidatk, vladam in parlamentom držav, pridruženih Evropski uniji, ter vladam in parlamentom držav članic Sveta Evrope«.⁷ Tako ima koncept totalitarne paradigme kot interpretativni okvir za razumevanje preteklosti, ki je še vedno aktualen in prevladujoč, tudi institucionalno potrjen status znotraj Evropske unije. Slovenija je ena redkih, če ne celo edina država v Evropski uniji, kjer se je državni zbor z resolucijo zgolj seznanil.

Vsi omenjeni procesi razgradnje in razvrednotenja druge svetovne vojne na globalni ravni v zadnjih desetletjih po padcu Berlinskega zidu so privedli tudi do znatno spremenjenega pogleda na vlogo in položaj Slovencev in Slovenije med največjo človeško katastrofo. Vsekakor lahko ugotovimo, da se mora javnost po državni osamosvojitvi in vključitvi v evroatlantske integracije na področju obravnave preteklosti vseskozi soočati z izzivi, ki omejujejo uresničevanje kohezivnih procesov znotraj slovenske družbe. V mednarodnem okolju, zlasti v odnosu do sosednjih držav, pa ta vprašanja predstavljajo oviro za to, da bi se sicer dobri odnosi še poglobili in postali zares prisrčni.

Ko pogledamo v preteklost, ugotovimo, da je bila usoda, namenjena Slovincem v okviru nacistične politike – »služi enemu samemu glavnemu namenu: slovenski narod je treba izbrisati s površja zemlje« –, zapisana že 18. maja 1941 v poročilu *Tragedija slovenskega naroda*.⁸ Izstopajoč položaj je v primežu druge svetovne vojne, v času vse-spološne nepredstavljive tragedije in kataklizme, imela tudi tragična usoda Slovencev kot žrtev nacističnega nasilja, prepoznavna je postala celo v mednarodni javnosti. Že septembra 1941 je ugledni britanski poznavalec jugovzhodne Evrope, Robert W.

5 Eric Hobsbawm, *Čas skrajnosti. Svetovna zgodovina 1914–1991* (Ljubljana: Sophia, 2018). Izvirnik Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century 1914–1991. A History of the World, 1914–1991* (London, New York: Abacus, 1994).

6 Srečo Dragoš, »Boj za socialno državo je boj za staro pravdo!«, RTV SLO / MMC, pridobljeno 2. 6. 2026, <https://www.rtvsllo.si/slovenija/sreco-dragos-boj-za-socialno-drzavo-je-boj-za-staro-pravdo/780898>.

7 *Sprejeta besedila – Evropska zavest in totalitarizem – četrtek*, 2. april 2009, pridobljeno 2. 6. 2026, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-6-2009-0213_SL.html.

8 Kazimir Zakrajšek, *Ko smo šli v morje bridkosti* (Washington, D. C., 1942), 185–203.

Seton Watson, ko so v London prispele prve vesti o razmerah na Balkanu po Hitlerjevi agresiji na Jugoslavijo, ugotavljal, da gre v primeru nacistične politike do slovenskega prebivalstva za nasilje največjega nad najmanjšim narodom v Evropi.⁹ Sicer pa tragično usodo slovenskega prebivalstva morda najprepričljiveje potrjuje leta 1944 izdana študija z naslovom *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*, v kateri je poljski pravnik in lingvist judovskega rodu Raphael Lemkin skoval in utemeljil termin »genocid« kot novo pravno kategorijo – zločini proti človečnosti.¹⁰ V omenjeni knjigi je Lemkin zavzel stališče, da tedanja nacistična politika in praksa med drugo svetovno vojno odstopata od ravnanja, ki ga je mogoče obravnavati v okviru obstoječih mednarodnopravnih (haaških) konvencij, in ugotavljal, da imajo z njo nacisti genocidne namene. V tej na novo opredeljeni kategoriji zločinov nacističnega režima zoper človečnost je Slovence po ogroženosti postavil ob bok Judom, Poljakom in Rusom, prepričan, da nacistično nasilje nad njimi najbolj ustreza tistemu, kar je formuliral kot genocid.¹¹

Slovenska medvojna izkušnja, kot ugotavlja Gregor Krajnc v knjigi *Hoja s hudičem. Okupacija Slovenije in kolaboracija, 1941–1945*, je bila edinstvena predvsem zato, ker Slovenija sicer ni bila edino razkosano in okupirano evropsko ozemlje – podobno izkušnjo je doživela tudi Grčija –, bila pa je edina, ki je doživela še naslednji korak: priključitev k nacistični Nemčiji, fašistični Italiji in Horthyjevi Madžarski.¹² Državna pogodba, ki so jo leta 1942 sklenile države »naslednice« nekdanjega jugoslovanskega ozemlja, po kateri so si Nemčija, Italija, Madžarska, Neodvisna država Hrvaška in Bolgarija razdelile premoženje Kraljevine Jugoslavije, v nobeni obliki ne omenja Slovenije in Slovencev. V tem pogledu je bila v manj neugodnem položaju celo Srbija, katere »interese« je na konferenci zastopala Nemčija, ali pa na primer Črna gora, ki jo je zastopala Italija.¹³ Slovenskih »interesov« na omenjeni konferenci ni zastopal nihče in Slovenija kot geopolitični pojem na političnem zemljevidu nove Evrope, ki so jo ustvarjale sile osi, sploh ni obstajala. To je tudi na formalni, mednarodnopravni ravni potrjevalo iz ravnanja agresorjev razvidno dejstvo, da za Slovence kot narodnopolitični subjekt v okviru totalitarnega in rasističnega novega reda sil osi ni bilo prostora. Vsi zavojevalci so nameravali dolgoročno uničiti slovenski narod kot etnično enoto in uskladiti narodne meje z novimi državnimi mejami, čeprav so si zastavili različne časovne okvire ter uporabljali različne metode in oblike za uresničitev tega cilja.

Povojno slovensko zgodovino pisje se je že kmalu osredotočilo na obravnavo okupacijskih sistemov in politik na Slovenskem med letoma 1941 in 1945, kjer velja omeniti obsežni raziskovalni opus Toneta Ferencja, pa tudi Milana Ževarta in drugih,

9 »Poročilo Roberta W. Setona Watsona 28. septembra 1941,« *Nasprotniki NOB, 1. knjiga* (tipkopis).

10 Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation, Analysis of Government, Proposals for Redress* (New Jersey: The Lawbook Exchange, Ltd., 2008).

11 Po vojni si je kot inovator na področju mednarodnega prava Lemkin pridobil sloves ene osrednjih avtoritet pri povojni uveljavitvi novih pravnih norm za nasilje (predvsem) nacističnega režima, ki so služile kot navdih in vzor za opredelitev posebne oblike zločinov in utemeljitev nove mednarodnopravne kategorije, to je zločinov proti človečnosti v Konvenciji o preprečevanju in kaznovanju zločina genocida, ki jo je sprejela generalna skupščina OZN decembra 1948.

12 Gregor Krajnc, *Hoja s hudičem. Okupacija Slovenije in kolaboracija, 1941–1945* (Mengeš: Ciceron, 2014), 7–16.

13 »Sporazum o imovinsko-pravnem razrešenju bivše jugoslovanske države i o nekim drugim finansijskim pitanjima koja su s time u savezu,« *Medunarodni ugovori 1942*.

v zadnjem času pa opozoriti zlasti na knjigo Damijana Guština, *Za zapahi: prebivalstvo Slovenije v okupatorjevih zaporih 1941–1945*, kjer je na podlagi znanstvene verifikacije omenjena ugotovitev z začetka okupacije, da je v primeru zmage nacifašizma slovenski narod obsojen na smrt, povsem nedvoumno potrjena kot točna ocena.¹⁴ V novejšem času je tudi v mednarodnem okolju izšlo nekaj študij, ki potrjujejo, da je bila strateška zasnova nacistične politike na zasedenem slovenskem ozemlju izrazito dolgoročna in usmerjena zlasti na mladino.¹⁵ Tudi obsežna in sistematična monografija Alexe Stiller v dveh delih, *Völkische Politik. Praktiken der Exklusion und Inklusion in polnischen, französischen und slowenischen Annexionsgebieten 1939–1945*, s primerjavo nacistične politike in prakse na priključenih poljskih, francoskih in slovenskih ozemljih slovensko vojno izkušnjo umešča v širši evropski kontekst. S tem potrjuje temeljne namene in cilje nacističnih oblasti na Slovenskem,¹⁶ ki so zvesto izpolnjevale Hitlerjevo naročilo prihodnjim upraviteljem zasedenega ozemlja tik pred napadom na Jugoslavijo: »Naredite mi to deželo zopet nemško!« (»Machen Sie mir dieses Land wieder deutsch!«)

Kako razmerje med holokavstom in drugimi žrtvami nacizma obravnava izraelska država, je razvidno iz razlage, ki jo je pripravil Yad Vashem v sodelovanju s knesetom v publikaciji *Pogosto zastavljena vprašanja v zvezi s holokavstom*. V poglavju »Kdo so bile druge žrtve nacizma? V kakšni meri je bila njihova usoda podobna in v kakšni meri različna od usode Judov?« besedilo ponuja naslednjo razlago:

Bilo je veliko drugih ljudi in ljudstev, ki so se počutili kot žrtve nacističnega režima zaradi političnih, socialnih ali rasnih razlogov. [...] Številna ljudstva v Evropi, zlasti tista, ki so govorila slovanske jezike, so na podlagi nacistične rasne ideologije sodila med rasno manjvredna. V tem primeru rasna ideologija ni bila edina, ki je določala, kako so nacisti obravnavali posamezne etnične skupine; do izraza je prišla tudi real-politik. Kljub predpostavljani manjvrednosti so bili Slovaki, Hrvati, Bolgari in tudi nekateri Ukrajinci nacistični zavezniki. Kljub temu je bilo dva milijona ruskih vojni ujetnikov umorjenih z načrtnim stradanjem, težaškim delom in ustrelitvami – zaradi rasnih razlogov in sovraštva do komunizma. V temeljnem boju za preoblikovanje Evrope na rasnih in političnih temeljih so nacisti nameravali uničiti tudi Poljake kot nacijo. Nacistični načrti kljub temu niso imeli za cilj uničiti vseh prebivalcev Poljske. Poljski otroci, ki so bili videti »kot Nemci«, so bili prepeljani v Nemčijo; intelektualci in voditelji so bili umorjeni, da bi preprečili upiranje; preostali so bili zasuznjeni.¹⁷

Čeprav Slovenci niso izrecno omenjeni, velja zanje enaka ocena kot za Poljake. Tudi zanje lahko po tej klasifikaciji trdimo, da so sodili v kategorijo tistih »ljudstev v

14 Damijan Guštin, *Za zapahi: prebivalstvo Slovenije v okupatorjevih zaporih 1941–1945* (Ljubljana: Inštitut za novejšo zgodovino, 2006).

15 Gl. npr. Lisbeth Matzer, *Herrschaftssicherung im »Grenzland«*. *Nationalsozialistische Jugendmobilisierung in besetzten Slowenien (1941–1945)* (Paderborn, 2021).

16 Alexa Stiller, *Völkische Politik. Praktiken der Exklusion und Inklusion in polnischen, französischen und slowenischen Annexionsgebieten 1939–1945*, I in II (Göttingen, 2022).

17 Avraham Milgram in Robert Rozett, ur., *Der Holocaust. FAQs – Häufig gestellte Fragen. Deutsch/Englisch*. (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2012), 51–52.

Evropi [...], ki so govorila slovanske jezike«, in torej med tista, ki naj bi bila »rasno manjvredna na podlagi nacistične rasne ideologije«; prav tako lahko trdimo, da so jih nacisti »nameravali uničiti [...] kot nacijo«.¹⁸

Pogled, ki se je sčasoma izoblikoval v državi, ki je zrasla na ruševinah nacističnega rajha in šla po vojni skozi več različnih stopenj denacifikacije in popolne družbene preobrazbe, je predstavil zvezni predsednik Richard von Weizsäcker leta 1985 v govoru v bundestagu ob obeležitvi 40-letnice konca druge svetovne vojne. V govoru, ki velja za prelomnega v nemškem videnju vojne, je poudaril, da predstavlja zavezniška zmaga 8. maja 1945 sicer najnižjo točko za nemški narod, hkrati pa tudi dan osvoboditve od nečloveškega sistema nacistične nasilne vladavine; takšna načelna opredelitev je v nemški družbi še danes prevladujoča. V govoru se je Weizsäcker poklonil vsem žrtvam, na prvem mestu šestim milijonom Judov, nato pa vsem narodom, ki jih je vojna prizadela, predvsem številnim državljanom Sovjetske zveze in Poljske. Slovenci kot narod med žrtvami sicer nismo bili izrecno omenjeni, vsekakor pa smo se lahko brez težav prepoznali v omembi narodov, prizadetih zaradi vojne. Poleg tega se je slovensko ozemlje z njegovimi prebivalci lahko prepoznalo v naslednjih kategorijah žrtev: duševni bolniki, talci, žrtve odporiških gibanj v zasedenih državah, prisilni delavci, izgnanci itd.¹⁹

Trideset let kasneje, 8. maja 2015 ob 70-letnici konca vojne v Evropi, je v nemškem bundestagu spregovoril zgodovinar Heinrich August Winkler, ki je ponovil temeljne misli Weizsäckerja izpred treh desetletij, a istočasno še bolj v središče postavil holokavst in v sklepu nekako mimogrede omenil še nekatere druge žrtve nacizma, kot so Romi in Sinti, homoseksualci ter prisilni delavci.²⁰ V tem prikazu žrtev nacističnega terorja se lahko Slovenci in slovensko ozemlje identificiramo zgolj še kot prisilni delavci, kot žrtve holokavsta pa (predvsem) Judje v Prekmurju. Podlago za takšno novo selekcioniranje žrtev oziroma za njihovo izločitev s seznama žrtev nacizma je tlakoval tudi Winkler z obsežno monografijo, ki je izšla v dveh zvezkih: *Der Lange Weg nach Westen (Deutsche Geschichte vom »Dritten Reich« bis zur Wiedervereinigung*.²¹ V njej je v epskem slogu predstavil nemško zgodovino in razvil tezo, kako se je nemška družba po zaslugi uspešno opravljene povojne denacifikacije otresla zgodovinske stigme posebne poti (Sonderweg), katere vrh je predstavljala Hitlerjeva nacistična diktatura, ki je Nemčijo zgodovinsko ločevala od zahoda, sinonima za demokracijo, ter po združitvi Nemčij končno postala enakopraven in polnopraven član zahodne civilizacije. Bistvo takšnega razmisleka je bilo stališče, da je sodobna nemška družba dekontaminirana možnosti nacističnih recidivov in tako trdno usidrana v demokratične procese, da nemška država ni več dolžna nositi zgodovinskega bremena nacizma. Pri tem je edina izjema holokavst kot trajen spomin in opomin na zločinski nacistični režim.

18 Ibid.

19 *Ansprache des Bundespräsident Richard von Weizsäcker am 8. Mai 1985 im Plenarsaal des Deutschen Bundestages zum 40. Jahrestag des Zweiten Weltkrieges. Gedenkkonzert 70 Jahre Kriegsende. Justus Frantz, Philharmonie der Nationen* (2015).

20 Heinrich August Winkler, »Sich der Geschichte zu stellen, ist ein europäischer Imperativ. Dokumentation Gedenkstunde zum Ende des 2. Weltkrieges vor 70 Jahren,« *Das Parlament*, 11. 5. 2015/20–21, 2–4.

21 Heinrich August Winkler, *Der Lange Weg nach Westen, II., Deutsche Geschichte: Vom »Dritten Reich« bis zur Wiedervereinigung* (München: C. H. Beck, 2000).

Tudi pri sosedah, naslednicah držav, ki so zagrešile agresijo proti Jugoslaviji, so se v pogledih na drugo svetovno vojno uveljavile revizionistične teze, čeprav so bile po njej vse prisiljene sprejeti vrsto družbenih sprememb, da bi lahko bile sprejete v mednarodno skupnost kot enakopravne in vključene v mednarodne organizacije (OZN in druge), s čimer so nedvoumno dokazale diskontinuiteto z nacifašistično preteklostjo.

V novih okoliščinah je v skladu z ugotovitvijo, da je Berlinski zid »padel na obe strani«, prišlo tudi v zahodni Evropi do velikih družbenih sprememb, v katerih so bile v pogledih na drugo svetovno vojno in njeno razumevanje posebej izpostavljene države, ki so bile na strani poražencev ter so revizionizem uporabile kot orodje za izboljšanje svojega položaja z vidika lastne zgodovinske vloge. Med svetovnimi dejavniki pa je zlasti Katoliška cerkev kot institucija z globalnimi ambicijami v teh procesih prepoznala priložnost, da se z večjo legitimnostjo in avtoriteto vključi v preureditev sveta z vizijo, ki jo je poosebljal poljski papež.²² S prevlado totalitarne paradigme po padcu Berlinskega zidu so v spremenjeni optiki v ospredje stopili predvsem dogodki povsem ob koncu vojne.²³ Zanimivo je, da so bili najbolj zainteresirani za takšne spremembe v neposrednem sosedstvu Slovenije. Omeniti velja predvsem procese v Italiji, ki so bili zelo radikalni. Njihov povojni model je temeljil na vodilni vlogi krščanske demokracije in drugih demokratičnih strank, ki so vse izhajale iz antifašistične tradicije, medtem ko so bila vrata v vlado zaprta komunistom in fašistom. Ta model se je v začetku devetdesetih let izkazal za iztrošenega, nova politična stvarnost pa ni več dosledno upoštevala antifašističnega diskurza kot ločnice med demokracijo in filo/post/neofašizmom, zato je ta dimenzija prenehala veljati kot rubikon. V tem kontekstu je na italijanski strani prišlo tudi do zahtev po novem ovrednotenju slovensko-italijanskih (v tedanjem kontekstu jugoslovansko-italijanskih) odnosov v preteklosti. S tem namenom je bila leta 1993 ustanovljena Slovensko-italijanska zgodovinsko-kulturna komisija kot dvostransko strokovno telo, katerega naloga je bila celovita in objektivna preučitev politične in kulturne zgodovine odnosov med obema narodoma v obdobju 1880–1956. Komisija je svoje delo zaključila leta 2000 s skupnim poročilom *Slovensko-italijanski odnosi 1880–1956/I rapporti italo-sloveni 1880–1956/Slovene-Italian Relations 1880–1956*.²⁴ V nasprotju s skupno usklajenim okvirom razumevanja vzročno-posledične dinamike odnosov med narodoma, ki ga italijanska uradna politika vseskozi ignorira, so pri zahodnih sosedih določili nov državni praznik: *Giorno del Ricordo*, dan spomina na žrtve fojb in »eksodusa«.²⁵ Na severu, v Avstriji, dilema, ali je bila država prva

22 Robert A. Graham, *The Vatican and Communism during World War II, What Really Happened* (Ignatius Press, 1996). Avtor v uvodu zastopa mnenje, da je bil povojni globalni antifašistični konsenz, ki je obstajal kljub hladni vojni, »komunistična prevara, ki so ji nasledili tudi nekateri na Zahodu«.

23 Michael Sturm in Martin Langebach, »Das Kriegsende als Erinnerungsort der extremen Rechten«, *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 13. 4. 2015.

24 *Slovensko-italijanski odnosi 1880–1956: poročilo slovensko-italijanske zgodovinsko-kulturne komisije = I rapporti italo-sloveni 1880–1956: relazione della commissione storico-culturale italo-slovena = Slovene-Italian relations 1880–1956: report of the Slovene-Italian historical and cultural commission* (Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede, Založba FDV: Ministrstvo za zunanje in evropske zadeve Republike Slovenije, 2025), https://www.sistory.si/cdn/publikacije/44001-45000/44516/slo-ita-odnosi-1880-1956_2000.pdf.

25 Z zakonom, veljavnim od 30. 3. 2004, je bil določen Dan spomina, ki želi ohraniti in obnoviti spomin na tragedijo Italijanov in vseh žrtve fojb, eksodusa Istranov, Rečanov in Dalmatincev iz njihove domovine po drugi svetovni

žrtev nacizma ali pa je treba njene tedanje prebivalce obravnavati kot najbolj zagrizene privržence nacizma, še danes ni povsem razčiščena. Kljub temu se je tudi v znanstveni literaturi za izgon nemške manjšine uveljavil pojem genocid (*Völkermord*).²⁶

V Sloveniji se ne zgodi nič takega, kar se ne bi dogajalo drugje okoli nas. Dogaja pa se bolj specifično, predvsem v povezavi z drugo svetovno vojno in s tem, kako sta njena vloga in pomen umeščena v družbeni narativ. V današnjem času je podoba druge svetovne vojne še bolj izkristalizirana, še posebej v smislu izostrenega zgodovinsko-interpretativnega izkrivljanja.²⁷ Inventura po 35 letih kaže, da se optimistična pričakovanja, da bo z nastopom demokracije tudi konec politično motivirane obravnave preteklosti, niso v celoti uresničila. Ob razčiščevanju preteklosti osrednje vprašanje še vedno predstavlja zgodovinska interpretacija dogajanja med drugo svetovno vojno na Slovenskem, ki ostaja s svojimi učinki aktualna tudi danes. Pri zgodovinski presoji je obdobje med letoma 1941 in 1945 še vedno predmet najbolj protislovnih ocen, ki jih je sprožila revizija. V zgodovinopisju je revizija pogledov najobičajnejša stvar in sestavni del historičnega metodološkega instrumentarija. Dogaja se ves čas, saj vsaka generacija piše svojo zgodbo – vedno se odpirajo nove teme, nove perspektive, odkrivajo pa se tudi novi viri.²⁸ Leta 1990 je tudi v slovenski družbi obstajal konsenz, da je revizija potrebna. Po vojni je namreč prevladovalo pristransko prikazovanje obdobja okupacije na Slovenskem. Po letu 1990 se je zastavilo vprašanje, kako to podobo uravnovesiti z drugo, ki je imela enake značilnosti, vendar je nastala v emigraciji.²⁹ Zadnja tri desetletja in pol so v Sloveniji minila v znamenju interpretativnega spopada za pravo resnico o drugi svetovni vojni. Tisti, ki so želeli revizijo kot legitimen proces izkoristiti za zgodovinsko rehabilitacijo kolaboracije, niso privolili v znanstveno razpravo kot način, ki bi pripeljal do skupnega okvira celotnega medvojnega dogajanja. Njihovo stališče je bilo, da je prava resnica že znana in jo imajo seveda v posesti oni – treba jo je bilo samo implementirati v slovensko družbo. Sklicevali so se na to, da je bila njihova teza prej prepovedana, vse, kar se je razvilo v domovini, pa so vnaprej odklanjali kot rezultat režimske zgodovine, ki naj ne bi imela nikakršne znanstvene kredibilnosti.

Ambicija, da se prejšnja partizanska resnica nadomesti z novo emigrantsko resnico, je imela z vidika zgodovinopisja kot znanstvene discipline že v izhodišču pomembno pomanjkljivost.³⁰ Bila je namreč brez znanstvene verifikacije. V emigraciji je sicer

vojni v zapletenih okoliščinah ob vzhodni meji (*Governo Italiano – Presidenza del Consiglio – Il SeGiorno del ricordo*, pridobljeno 2. 6. 2026, <https://presidenza.governo.it/USG/GiornoRicordo/index.html>).

26 Arnold Suppan, *Hitler-Beneš-Tito. Konflikt, Krieg und Völkermord in Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa* (Wien: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2014).

27 Bojan Godeša, »Post-communist interpretations of the Second World War in Slovenia in comparison to those of other former Yugoslav nations,« *Slovene studies: Journal of the Society for Slovene Studies* 40, št. 1–2 (2018): 65–76.

28 Bojan Godeša, »Revizija in odpiranje novih obzorij-priložnost za 'drugačno' zgodovino?,« *Zgodovinski časopis* 63, št. 3/4 (2009): 440–58, pridobljeno 2. 6. 2026, <http://hdl.handle.net/11686/14987>, <http://www.dlib.si/details/URN:NBN:SI:DOC-0E0FW1KN>.

29 Bojan Godeša, »Social and cultural aspects of the historiography on Second World War in Slovenia,« v: Sabine Rutar in Rolf Wörsdorfer, ur., *Sozialgeschichte und soziale Bewegungen in Slowenien = Social history and social movements in Slovenia* (Essen: Klartext, 2009), 111–25, 199.

30 Bojan Godeša, »Enega mita ni mogoče zamenjati z drugim,« *Delo*, 27. 5. 2016, 21.

obstajala težnja, da bi svojim pogledom dali znanstveni pečat, vendar pri tem niso bili uspešni. Temeljna metodološka težava implementacije »emigrantske« verzije se je pokazala ob zahtevi po obnovitvi procesa proti ljubljanskemu škofu dr. Gregoriju Rožmanu z namenom sodne in tudi zgodovinske rehabilitacije,³¹ saj se je izkazalo, da zanjo ni nobene znanstvene podlage.³² Šele takrat so se začeli ukvarjati s tem, kar že načeloma predstavlja velik metodološki izziv za vsakogar, ki je soočen s situacijo, kako usklajevati vnaprejšnja pričakovanja naročnikov z znanstvenimi normami in standardi.³³

Tudi širši družbeni učinek je ravno nasproten deklariranemu v letu 1990. Takšen konceptualni pristop namreč ne pripomore k odpravi bremen preteklosti v slovenski družbi, temveč vnaša nove spore in pogloblja delitve. Vprašanja, ki na načelni ravni niso bila nikoli sporna, kot je denimo vprašanje pietete, bi lahko bila celoviteje urejena, če uresničevanje ne bi bilo pogosto pogojeno tudi z zahtevo po »ustrezni« konceptualno/interpretativni umestitvi.³⁴ Posebej protislovno deluje predvsem dejstvo, da se je konflikt v pogledu na preteklost v znatni meri razširil tudi na mlajše generacije, ki sicer niso neposredno obremenjene s travmami druge svetovne vojne.³⁵

Totalitarna paradigma je ob vzpostavitvi interpretativnega pluralizma v slovenski družbi konec osemdesetih let prejšnjega stoletja in ob začetkih prizadevanj za uravnoteženo predstavitev medvojnega obdobja predstavljala tudi izhodišče za tezo o »zmagoslavju premaganih«, s katero naj bi slovenski protikomunisti, ki so med vojno izbrali kolaboracijo z okupatorjem kot svojo politično opredelitev, postali dokončni zgodovinski moralni zmagovalci medvojnega notranjega spopada.³⁶

Dosedanja prizadevanja tako niso niti pripeljala do razčiščenja medvojne preteklosti – zaradi česar ta še nima enotne in enoznačne ocene – niti jim ni uspelo razrešiti ideoloških delitev. Vse bolj je jasno, da so družbeni razkol v pogledu na preteklost (predvsem na čas okupacije 1941–1945) pravzaprav poglobila. V sodobni slovenski družbi ni več konsenza niti o najelementarnejših dejstvih – o značaju druge svetovne vojne in zgodovinski vlogi posameznih akterjev. To je ostalo odprto: v okviru mentalnega vzorca revizije, ki se je uveljavil po padcu Berlinskega zidu s sloganom o

31 *Med sodbo sodišča in sodbo vesti. Dokumenti sodnega procesa proti škofu Gregoriju Rožmanu.* (Ljubljana: Družina, 2009).

32 Bojan Godeša, »O političnem delovanju ljubljanskega škofa dr. Gregorija Rožmana v prvih mesecih okupacije,« *Zgodovinski časopis* 67, št. 1–2 (2013): 152–70, pridobljeno 2. 6. 2026, <http://www.dlib.si/details/URN:NBN:SI:DOC-TYL2PF7G>. Bojan Godeša, »O škofovi odgovornosti,« *Mladina*, 31. 7. 2015, 29.

33 Prva zaokrožena podoba medvojnega dogajanja na Slovenskem z znanstvenimi ambicijami, ki se interpretativno spogleduje s pogledi, ki jih je zastopala slovenska politična emigracija, je izšla šele leta 2003. – Tamara Griesser-Pečar, *Das zerrissene Volk. Slowenien 1941–1946. Okkupation, Kollaboration, Bürgerkrieg, Revolution* (Wien, Köln, Graz: Böhlau Verlag, 2003); slovenski prevod *Razdvojeni narod. Slovenija 1941–1945. Okupacija, kolaboracija, državljanska vojna, revolucija* (Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 2004).

34 Bojan Godeša, »Reconciliation instead of History,« *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino* 56, št. 3 (2016): 101–17.

35 Bojan Godeša, »Izjava predsedstva SRS o narodni in državljanski umiritvi, 4. marec 1990, in Izjava Slovenske pokrajinske škofovske konference o narodni spravi, 13. 3. 1990 – 30 let pozneje,« v: Tadej Bajd, ur., *Slovenska sprava: zbornik s prispevki simpozija ob tridesetletnici pravne slovesnosti v Rogu in ob stoletnici rojstva nadškofa dr. Alojzija Šuštarja 24. junija 2020 na SAZU* (Ljubljana: Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti, 2021), 181–94.

36 *Slovenija 1941–1945. Zmagoslavje premaganih* (Ljubljana: Družina, 1995).

zmagoslavju premaganih, se zastavlja retorično vprašanje: Kdo je bil na pravi strani zgodovine, komu je dala prav zgodovina?³⁷

Utemeljevanje takšnih predstav o medvojnem dogajanju na Slovenskem poteka v okviru sintagme »brez resnice ni sprave«, ki je v bistvu zgolj evfemizem za shematska, ideološka in pristranska prizadevanja za rehabilitacijo med vojno poraženih in s kolaboracijo obremenjenih sil na Slovenskem ter hkratno stigmatizacijo in kriminalizacijo partizanstva.³⁸ Ravno ujetost v primež totalitarne paradigme je v znatni meri prispevala k temu, da slovensko zgodovinopisje še ni celovito odgovorilo na temeljne dileme druge svetovne vojne na Slovenskem, tako da to obdobje še vedno nima ne enoznačne ne dokončne podobe.³⁹ Sicer pa so sodobne obravnave medvojnega dogajanja na Slovenskem prepričljivo razkrile, da tudi v današnjih razmerah ni utemeljenih razlogov za rehabilitacijo s kolaboracijo obremenjenih političnih sil. Izkazalo se je namreč, da interpretacija zagovornikov medvojnega delovanja nasprotnikov partizanstva nima podlage v znanstveno preverljivih dejstvih.⁴⁰ Kar se tiče širšega družbenega konteksta, pa lahko zgolj ugotovimo, da takšen pristop pri razčiščevanju medvojne preteklosti nasprotja in ideološke delitve v slovenski družbi le še pogloblja. Očitno je torej, da se v slovenskem okolju koncept, ki svojo interpretacijo utemeljuje tudi s sklicevanjem na totalitarno paradigmo, ni izkazal kot ustrezna oblika reševanja problemov s preteklostjo. Težav namreč ni odpravil, temveč je zgolj ustvaril nove.⁴¹

V želji, da bi omogočili demokratični dialog generaciji, ki je drugo svetovno vojno neposredno doživela, je v DSO Fužine skupina treh stanovalk ob podpori delovnega terapevta zasnovala projekt z naslovom *Spomini še živijo*. Z njim so ponudili priložnost vsem sostanovalkam in sostanovalcem, da o vojni spregovorijo na podlagi lastnih izkušenj. Čeprav se je projekt začel skoraj osemdeset let po končani drugi svetovni vojni, leta 2022, poteka pod sloganom: »Nikoli več.« Glede na oddaljenost od konca vojne gre za spominska pričevanja oseb, ki so vojno doživljale skozi otroške oči. Gre za specifično perspektivo, v temelju še neobremenjeno z vzorci, ki jih narekuje prevladujoča družbena naracija, in zato pogosto močno odstopajočo od ustaljenih predstav. Prav to velja poudariti kot prednost in dodano vrednost, ki dopolnjuje naše poznavanje druge svetovne vojne. Nekateri pričevalci so svoje zgodbe delili takoj. Drugi so povedali, da jih nosijo v sebi že vse življenje, pa jih nikoli niso zares povedali, niti svojim otrokom.

37 Ibid.

38 Dieter Blumenwitz, *Okkupation und Revolution in Slowenien (1941–1946): Eine völkerrechtliche Untersuchung* (Wien-Köln-Graz: Böhlau Verlag, 2005); slovenski prevod *Okupacija in revolucija v Sloveniji (1941–1946): mednarodnopravna študija* (Celovec: Mohorjeva založba, 2005).

39 Bojan Godeša, »Slovenian historiography in the grip of reconciliation,« v: Oto Luthar in Heidemarie Uhl, ur., *The Memory of Guilt Revisited: The Slovenian Post-socialist Remembrance Landscape in Transition* 46, št. 2 (2019): 205–24, 295–96.

40 Bojan Godeša, *Čas odločitev. Katoliški tabor in začetek okupacije* (Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 2011).

41 Bojan Godeša, »Izjava predsedstva,« 181–94.

Matija Puškarić, delovni terapevt v DSO Fužine in član projektne skupine, je projekt *Spomini še živijo* poimenoval kar »prostor srečanja« oziroma »prostor srečevanj«. Ob tem je opisal velik pomen za poslušalce in pričevalce; pravi, da pri tem sodelovanju ne gre samo za to, da se ljudje fizično srečujejo, gre za srečanje s samim seboj, s svojimi spomini, tudi tistimi, ki so bili dolgo potlačeni. Gre za srečanje z vrstniki, s tistimi, ki so doživeli podobne zgodbe, podobne strahove in ki se lahko zares razumejo med seboj. In gre za srečanje z mlajšimi generacijami, mladimi in otroki, ki teh izkušenj nimajo, a jih morajo spoznati.

Ko so stanovalke in stanovalci DSO Fužine organizirali razstavo, je ta zelo hitro postala nov prostor srečevanj. Ob njej so se ustavljali tudi obiskovalci, se spominjali svoje mladosti in delili svoje zgodbe. Šlo je za spontano obliko reminiscenčne terapije, ki ni bila načrtovana kot taka, a je imela kljub temu močan terapevtski učinek.⁴²

Razstava je bila kasneje postavljena tudi izven doma, v šole in kulturne domove. Tam so bila organizirana srečanja z otroki z različnih osnovnih šol, ki so bila nekaj posebnega, predvsem so bili ganljivi odzivi mladih na zgodbe pripovedovalcev. Ker mlajše generacije z obdobjem druge svetovne vojne niso najboljše seznanjene, je eden od ključnih pomenov projekta tudi povezovanje generacij in opozarjanje na to, da mir ni samoumeven.

Razstavam je leta 2024 sledil nov prostor srečevanj. Osnovni projektni skupini se je pridružil Inštitut za novejšo zgodovino, ki je začel dokumentirati zgodbe stanovalcev fužinskega doma; te so izšle v zborniku *Spomini še živijo*. Leta 2026 je prostor srečevanj dobil še globlji in širši pomen, sledil je namreč še en zbornik, ki združuje zgodbe stanovalcev sedmih ljubljanskih domov oziroma enot za starejše: Bežigrad, Bokalci, Fužine, Kolezija, Šiška, Škofljica in Tabor. Ustvarjeno je bilo srečevališče, ki povezuje različne ljudi, različne zgodbe, širšo skupnost in različne generacije. Pripovedujemo. Poslušamo. In (se) poskušamo razumeti.

O uspešnosti projekta pričajo tudi odgovori na vprašanja, ki jih je po izidu zbornika *Spomini še živijo* 2 petim sodelujočim zastavila upokojena profesorica na Fakulteti za socialno delo, sodelavka projekta in pričevalka:

1. Ali je bilo za vas sodelovanje pri zbiranju spominov na vojno pomembno? Se vam zdi to smiselno?

Na to vprašanje so vse odgovorile pritrdilno. Zbiranje zgodb se jim zdi smiselno, ker se na ta način dogodki ohranijo, spomin nanje, ko je enkrat zapisan, pa ostane za vedno.

Tega bi moralo biti še več, saj tako mlajšim posredujemo svoje težke življenjske izkušnje. To je dragoceno gradivo za več generacij.

Ena od sogovornic obžaluje, ker je premalo povedala, šele po končanem snemanju se je spomnila še marsičesa, kar bi njeno doživetje bolj pojasnilo.

42 Npr. Astrid van Hülsen, *Zid molka. Oblike dela z osebami z demenco na primeru validacije in drugih novih teorij* (Logatec: Firis Imperl & Co, 2010).

2. Ste svojim otrokom in vnukom pripovedovali o svojih doživetjih iz časa vojne? Otrokom in vnukom, pa tudi drugim bližnjim sorodnikom, so vse sogovornice pogosto pripovedovale zgodbe iz vojnih časov, ni pa to vseh enako zanimalo. Nekateri od potomcev jih še zdaj večkrat sprašujejo, kaj se je takrat dogajalo.

Ena izmed njih je v mladosti sama pogosto hodila na obiske k nekdanji partizanki, da ji je pripovedovala o svojih preizkušnjah iz tistih let. Zato se zaveda pomena prenašanja izkušenj na mlajše generacije.

3. Kaj vam pomeni, da je vaša zgodba natisnjena? Ste ponosni na to?

Knjiga je zelo pomembna, je trajni dokument o dogodkih in tudi doživljanju sodelujočih, je nekaj trajnega, ki ostane za vedno. Tako se sporočila prenašajo naprej.

Ena od sogovornic pa ni bila zadovoljna, ker je njena zgodba v knjigi preveč okleščena, in pravi, da je povedala veliko več, kot je objavljeno.

Sklenemo lahko, da projekt *Spomini še živijo* in njemu podobni krepijo identiteto in povezanost, mladim generacijam omogočajo historično avtentičen vpogled v obdobje druge svetovne vojne, pomenijo pa tudi svojevrsten apel k miru ter pomemben prispevek k utrjevanju sožitja, strpnosti in nasploh demokratičnih vrednot, ki so v sodobnih družbah izpostavljene najrazličnejšim izzivom in celo neposrednemu zanikanju ter podvržene načrtni razgradnji njenih institucij. So dokument časa, ki mlajšim generacijam kličejo NIKOLI VEČ, hkrati pa jim nudijo iztočnico za razumevanje današnje stvarnosti in morda celo za modro, preudarno načrtovanje prihodnosti.

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Bojan Godeša, Vida Milošević Arnold, Matija Puškarić

BETWEEN MEMORY AND REVISIONISM: WORLD WAR II AND THE VALUES OF (SLOVENIAN) SOCIETY

SUMMARY

In contemporary historical interpretations – both in Slovenia and elsewhere in Europe and around the world – the role and significance of World War II, particularly the anti-fascist resistance, have been subject to systematic revisionism and devaluation. The authors emphasise that the Allied victory over Nazism and Fascism in World War II paved the way for a new world order, in which one of its symbolic foundations was the “never again” principle, embodied in the recognition of the anti-fascist resistance as a lasting value of the postwar world.

A critical analysis of the totalitarian paradigm concept, examining the past by comparing various forms of totalitarianism without taking into account the relevant historical context, forms the core of the discussion. After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, this interpretive model became the dominant global framework for interpreting the past. Its defining characteristic was the marginalisation of World War II as a pivotal event in contemporary historical memory and consciousness, and its re-evaluation by downplaying the significance of the anti-fascist resistance and by relativising collaboration with Nazism. This process has enabled the historical rehabilitation of political movements that were ideologically aligned with Nazism and Fascism and fought on the side of the Axis powers (the Tripartite Pact) during the war. In the European Union, this understanding of the past has been significantly shaped by the 2009 Resolution on European Consciousness and Totalitarianism, which consolidated the totalitarian paradigm concept as an interpretive framework at the institutional level. As World War II gradually loses its status as a “good war” (John Lukacs), the shared framework of values centred on democracy and humanism is eroding.

In the second part, the text examines the conditions in contemporary Slovenian society, which, while specific and unique, also reflect the broader European and global context. In Slovenia, fierce ideological disputes over the interpretation of the war-time period have persisted since 1990. Attempts to rehabilitate collaboration, pursued within the framework of the “national reconciliation” concept presented in 1990 by the (provincial) Slovenian Bishops’ Conference, lack any scientific basis. They merely deepen the divisions within Slovenian society and pass on an outdated ideological model to younger generations.

In the final part, the authors present the “Memories Live On” project, which focuses on collecting testimonies from older witnesses about World War II. The project fosters intergenerational dialogue and helps preserve memories of wartime experiences. The witnesses emphasise the importance of recording these stories, as doing so

helps preserve memories and serves as a reminder for future generations. The project contributes to understanding history, strengthening social cohesion and democratic values, and promoting a message of peace by emphasising the “no more war” warning. According to an occupational therapist participating in the project, it also serves as a spontaneous form of reminiscence therapy.

Mateja Režek*

Jugoslovanska neuvrščenost in globalni jug v osnovnošolskih učnih načrtih in učbenikih socialistične Slovenije

IZVLEČEK

Članek obravnava reprezentacije jugoslovanske neuvrščenosti in globalnega juga v osnovnošolskem izobraževanju v socialistični Sloveniji. Na podlagi sistematizirane analize slovenskih učnih načrtov in učbenikov za zgodovino in družbenomoralno vzgojo skozi celotno obdobje socialistične Jugoslavije raziskuje, kako so bile ideje neuvrščenosti in predstave o globalnem jugu vključene v obvezno izobraževanje in posredovane mladim generacijam. Čeprav sta temi v kurikulumu zavzemali razmeroma malo prostora, so učbeniške pripovedi izkazovale izrazito normativno koherentnost. Interpretacija povojnega sveta je temeljila na zavezanosti načelom OZN, zavračanju blokvske politike, obsodbi imperializma, kolonializma in neokolonializma ter poudarjanju miroljubne koeksistence, mednarodne solidarnosti in pravice narodov do samoodločbe, neodvisnosti in enakopravnosti. Jugoslavija je bila v učbenikih predstavljena kot vodilna zagovornica teh načel ter pobudnica in gonilna sila gibanja neuvrščenih. Ta diskurz je legitimiral zunanjepolitično usmeritev države in pri mladih generacijah spodbujal občutek pripadnosti globalnemu projektu onkraj delitev hladne vojne. Učbeniški prikazi globalnega juga so se osredotočali predvsem na protikolonialno emancipacijo ter jugoslovansko solidarnost z novonastalimi neodvisnimi državami in osvobodilnimi gibanji. Članek pokaže, da učbeniki niso zgolj posredovali znanja o neuvrščenosti in globalnem jugu, temveč so aktivno prispevali k institucionalizaciji in reprodukciji specifične vizije svetovne ureditve, mednarodne solidarnosti in vloge Jugoslavije v svetu.

Ključne besede: neuvrščenost, globalni jug, učbeniki, Slovenija, socialistična Jugoslavija

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ABSTRACT

YUGOSLAV NON-ALIGNMENT AND THE GLOBAL SOUTH IN PRIMARY SCHOOL CURRICULA AND TEXTBOOKS IN SOCIALIST SLOVENIA

This article examines representations of Yugoslav non-alignment and the Global South in socialist Slovenian primary education. Drawing on a systematic analysis of Slovenian curricula and textbooks for History and Social and Moral Education throughout the entire period of socialist Yugoslavia, it explores how the ideas of non-alignment and images of the Global South were incorporated into compulsory education and conveyed to younger generations. Although these topics occupied relatively limited space in the curriculum, textbook narratives displayed a striking degree of normative coherence. Interpretations of the post-war world were framed around the principles of the United Nations, the rejection of bloc politics, the condemnation of imperialism, colonialism, and neocolonialism, and the promotion of peaceful coexistence, international solidarity, and the rights of peoples to self-determination, independence, and equality. Yugoslavia was portrayed as a leading advocate of these values and as one of the principal architects of the Non-Aligned Movement. This discourse legitimised the country's foreign policy orientation while fostering among younger generations a sense of belonging to a global project that transcended Cold War divisions. The Global South was presented primarily through the lens of anticolonial emancipation and Yugoslav solidarity with newly independent states and liberation movements. The article argues that school textbooks did not merely transmit knowledge about non-alignment and the Global South but actively contributed to institutionalising and reproducing a particular vision of global order, international solidarity, and Yugoslavia's place in the world.

Keywords: non-alignment, Global South, school textbooks, Slovenia, socialist Yugoslavia

Uvod

Znanje in vrednote se oblikujejo, posredujejo in reproducirajo skozi različne družbene institucije in medije, med katerimi imajo učbeniki vse od vzpostavitve sodobnih šolskih sistemov posebno mesto. Za države predstavljajo eno ključnih orodij državljanske vzgoje in politične socializacije, za številne posameznike pa pogosto prve in včasih celo edine knjige, s katerimi se srečajo. Kot zgodovinski vir zato omogočajo vpogled v širše kulturne in politične strukture ter prevladujoče predstave nekega obdobja, hkrati pa razkrivajo procese, skozi katere se znanje in vrednote institucionalizirajo, legitimirajo in prenašajo na nove generacije.

Kot poudarja Michael W. Apple, šola ni nevtralen prostor prenosa znanja, temveč institucija, v kateri se določene oblike znanja, povezane s širšimi ideološkimi razmerji

in strukturami moči, vzpostavljajo kot legitimne in samoumevne.¹ Učbeniki in učni načrti nastajajo znotraj institucionalnih okvirov države, zato ne odražajo zgolj prevladujočih oblik znanja, ampak tudi vrednote, ki jih določena družba, zlasti njene politične in intelektualne elite, opredeljuje kot pomembne za prenos na mlajše generacije. Zaradi selektivnosti in zgoščenosti učbeniških vsebin se vanje vključene interpretacije zdijo še posebej legitimne in avtoritativne, čeprav so vselej rezultat izbire, izključevanja in prilagajanja. Učbeniki kot nosilci »kanoniziranega« znanja in normativnih vrednot tako ne prispevajo le k reprodukciji dominantnih interpretacij, temveč aktivno soustvarjajo predstave o družbeni stvarnosti. Če ob tem upoštevamo njihovo široko razširjenost in dejstvo, da, kot ugotavlja Simone Lässig, »nosijo pečat države«, postane njihov pomen v procesih politične socializacije še izrazitejši.²

Učbeniki seveda niso edini dejavniki oblikovanja identitet. Pri tem sodelujejo tudi množični mediji, spomeniki, muzeji in druge institucije spomina, kot tudi primarno družinsko okolje, vendar so učbeniki zaradi svoje institucionalne avtoritete in vpetosti v obvezno izobraževanje eden ključnih virov za raziskovanje načinov, kako države vzpostavljajo skupne vrednote in mladim generacijam posredujejo zaželeno interpretacije preteklosti, sedanjosti in prihodnosti. Posebej pomembni pri tem so učbeniki družboslovnih predmetov, ki ne posredujejo zgolj informacij o preteklosti in sodobni družbi, temveč ponujajo tudi avtoritativne interpretacije tega, kdo smo, komu pripadamo in kako razumemo razmerje med »nami« in »drugimi«. Takšen analitični pristop je posebej relevanten za preučevanje socialistične Jugoslavije, v kateri izobraževalni sistem ni sodeloval le pri oblikovanju socialistične politične kulture in jugoslovanske identitete, ampak tudi pri posredovanju specifičnih predstav o mednarodnem redu, globalni solidarnosti in vlogi Jugoslavije v svetu.

Ta raziskava se odmika od prevladujočih zunanjepolitičnih interpretacij jugoslovanske neuvrščenosti³ in pozornost preusmerja k množičnemu izobraževanju, s čimer se umešča v novejša zgodovinska prizadevanja za preučevanje jugoslovanskega neuvrščenega internacionalizma znotraj same Jugoslavije. Raziskave Nataše Kovačević in Nemanje Radonjića⁴ so prepričljivo pokazale, kako so se jugoslovanske neuvrščene pripovedi oblikovale in širile v intelektualnih in kulturnih sferah, ta študija pa nadgrajuje to perspektivo z vprašanjem, kako so dosegle najširše sloje. Pri tem v ospredje

1 Michael W. Apple, *Ideology and Curriculum* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

2 Simone Lässig, »Textbooks and Beyond: Educational Media in Context(s)«, *Journal of Educational Media, Memory, and Society* 1, št. 1 (2009): 2. Gl. tudi Stuart J. Foster in Keith A. Crawford, ur., *What Shall We Tell the Children?: International Perspectives on School History Textbooks* (Greenwich, CT: IAP, 2006). Suzanne De Castell, Allan Luke in Carmen Luke, »Beyond Criticism: The Authority of the School Textbook«, v: Suzanne De Castell, Allan Luke in Carmen Luke, ur., *Language, Authority and Criticism: Readings on the School Textbook* (London, New York: Falmer Press, 1989), 245–60.

3 Za širši pregled raziskav jugoslovanske neuvrščenosti gl. Paul Stubbs, »Yugocentrism and the Study of the Non-Aligned Movement: Towards a Decolonial Historiography«, *History in Flux* 3, št. 3 (2021): 133–55.

4 Nataša Kovačević, *Nonaligned Imagination: Yugoslavia, the Global South, and Literary Solidarities Beyond the Cold War Blocs* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2025). Nemanja Radonjić, *Slika Afrike u Jugoslaviji* (Beograd: Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, 2023). Nemanja Radonjić, »A Non-Aligned Continent: Africa in the Global Imaginary of the Socialist Yugoslavia«, v: Paul Stubbs, ur., *Socialist Yugoslavia and the Non-Aligned Movement: Social, Cultural, Political, and Economic Imaginaries* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2023), 302–28.

postavlja doslej povsem spregledan vidik: institucionalizacijo neuvrščenih pogledov na svet skozi obvezno osnovnošolsko izobraževanje, kar v Sloveniji še ni bilo deležno raziskovalne pozornosti in po dosedanjem vedenju tudi ne v drugih državah nekdanje Jugoslavije. Natančneje, članek analizira, kako so bila načela neuvrščenosti in predstave o globalnem jugu vključena v socialistični izobraževalni sistem ter posredovana mladim generacijam.

Raziskava se osredotoča na reprezentacije jugoslovanskega neuvrščenega internacionalizma in globalnega juga v slovenskih osnovnošolskih učbenikih zgodovine in družbenomoralne vzgoje skozi celotno obdobje socialistične Jugoslavije, pri čemer zajema tudi učne načrte. Učbenikov namreč ni mogoče ustrezno analizirati in kontekstualizirati brez upoštevanja kurikulumov, na kar so raziskovalci opozorili že pred več desetletji.⁵ Učni načrti določajo vsebinske in vrednotne okvire šolskega izobraževanja ter opredeljujejo, katere vsebine vključiti in katere izpustiti, kaj poudariti in kaj marginalizirati ali celo zamolčati. Na oblikovanje izobraževalnih vsebin pomembno vplivajo tudi avtorji učbenikov, enako ali celo pomembnejšo vlogo pri posredovanju znanja in vrednot mladim generacijam pa imajo učitelji, ki presojajo pomen učbeniških pripovedi, s čimer prispevajo bodisi k njihovemu potrjevanju ali preoblikovanju. Toda dimenzijo šolske prakse je bilo v okviru te raziskave mogoče osvetliti le deloma, predvsem na podlagi arhivskih dokumentov Zgodovinske komisije pri Centralnem komiteju Zveze komunistov Slovenije (CK ZKS),⁶ ki je delovala kot politična usmerjevalka zgodovinopisja in šolske zgodovine.

V nasprotju z razmeroma bogato produkcijo študij post-jugoslovanskih zgodovinskih učbenikov – ki pa le izjemoma vključujejo učne načrte in druge izobraževalne medije – ostajajo raziskave zgodovinskih učbenikov iz obdobja socialistične Jugoslavije, še vedno redke,⁷ medtem ko je pouk družbenomoralne vzgoje skoraj povsem prezrt.⁸ Dosedanje raziskave učbenikov so pokazale, da so antifašizem, narodnoosvobodilni boj (NOB), socialistična revolucija ter načelo bratstva in enotnosti tvorili osrednje stebre politične legitimnosti in jugoslovanske identitete, kot temeljni značilnosti jugoslovanskega socialističnega projekta pa sta se uveljavila delavsko samoupravljanje in neuvrščenost. S poudarkom na slednji članek raziskuje, kako so bile

5 Karl-Ernst Jeismann, »Internationale Schulbuchforschung: Aufgaben und Probleme,« *Internationale Schulbuchforschung* 1, št. 1 (1979): 7–22.

6 Arhiv Republike Slovenije, Centralni komitej Zveze komunistov Slovenije (SI AS 1589).

7 Mateja Režek, »The Ideologization of History Education and Textbooks in Slovenia (Yugoslavia) during Socialism, 1945–1990,« v: Gorana Ognjenović in Jasna Jozelić, ur., *Nationhood and Politicization of History in School Textbooks: Identity, the Curriculum and Educational Media* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 17–42. Snježana Koren, *Politika povijesti u Jugoslaviji (1945–1960): Komunistička partija Jugoslavije, nastava povijesti, historiografija* (Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2012). Stefano Petrungaro, *Pisati povijest iznova: hrvatski udžbenici povijesti 1918.–2004. godine* (Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2009). Dubravka Stojanović, *Prošlost dolazi: promene u tumačenjima prošlosti u srpskim udžbenicima istorije 1913–2021* (Beograd: Čigoja štampa, 2024). Wolfgang Höpken, »History Education and Yugoslav (Dis-) Integration,« v: Wolfgang Höpken, ur., *Öl ins Feuer? – Oil on Fire?: Schulbücher, ethnische Stereotypen und Gewalt in Südosteuropa – Textbooks, Ethnic Stereotypes and Violence in Southeastern Europe* (Hannover: Verlag Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1996), 99–124.

8 Gašper Mithans in Mateja Režek, »Shifting Paradigms: Religiosity and Atheization in Socialist Slovenia,« v: Eva Guigo-Patzelt, ur., *Communist Perspectives on Atheism in the Twentieth Century* (Abingdon, New York: Routledge, 2025), 105–21.

reprezentacije neuvrščenosti in globalnega juga vključene v učne načrte in predstavljene v šolskih učbenikih, kako se je Jugoslavija umeščala v te reprezentacije ter katere ideološke predpostavke so oblikovale učbeniške pripovedi.

Čeprav se raziskava osredotoča na slovenske učbenike in učne načrte, je njene ugotovitve mogoče vsaj v osnovnih potezih generalizirati tudi na širši jugoslovanski prostor. V Jugoslaviji so področja znanosti, kulture in izobraževanja sicer sodila v pristojnost posameznih republik, medtem ko so zvezne oblasti določale predvsem temeljne skupne usmeritve. Posledično je bilo v pristojnosti republik tudi oblikovanje učnih načrtov in učbenikov, zato jugoslovanski šolski sistem nikoli ni bil povsem enoten.⁹ Toda ključne ideološke premise izobraževalnega sistema so še vedno nastajale znotraj zveznih političnih struktur, predvsem Zveze komunistov Jugoslavije (ZKJ), zato analiza slovenskih učnih načrtov in učbenikov vsaj deloma ponuja vpogled tudi v širše jugoslovanske šolske narative o neuvrščenosti in globalnem jugu.

Neuvrščenost in globalni jug v zgodovinskih učbenikih

Zgodovina kot eno ključnih orodij legitimacije politične oblasti in kolektivne identitete je v socialistični Jugoslaviji zasedala pomembno mesto, njene temeljne interpretativne smernice pa so v veliki meri oblikovali najvišji partijski voditelji.¹⁰ Pomemben segment družbene preobrazbe je predstavljalo tudi šolstvo, zato je bila med prvimi nalogami na področju pouka zgodovine priprava novih šolskih učbenikov, usklajenih z ideološkimi in političnimi temelji socialistične države. Toda uresničitev tega cilja se je izkazala za zahtevnejšo od pričakovanj, saj so prvi zgodovinski učbeniki domačih avtorjev izšli šele sredi petdesetih let. Predvojni učbeniki so bili iz šol umaknjeni že leta 1945, nastalo vrzel pa so v prvih povojnih letih zapolnili prevodi sovjetskih učbenikov. Po razkolu med Sovjetsko zvezo in Jugoslavijo so tudi ti učbeniki postali politično in ideološko neustrezni, kar je spodbudilo intenzivna prizadevanja za pripravo domačih zgodovinskih učbenikov.

Prvi slovenski povojni učbenik novejši in sodobne zgodovine za nižje gimnazije oziroma osnovne šole je izšel leta 1956, v obdobju, ko je Jugoslavija že začela oblikovati svojo neblokovsko zunanjo politiko in razvijati koncept aktivne miroljubne koeksistence. Učbenik je zajemal obdobje od sredine 19. stoletja do prvih let po drugi svetovni vojni, pri čemer je bil najboljšežnejši del posvečen NOB, ki je zavzemala osrednje mesto v uradni zgodovinski naraciji socialistične Jugoslavije. Po svoji zasnovi je bil učbenik zgoščen, izrazito faktografsko strukturiran pregled politične zgodovine.

9 Več o razvoju slovenskega (in jugoslovanskega) šolstva Aleš Gabrič, *Sledi šolskega razvoja na Slovenskem* (Ljubljana: Pedagoški inštitut, 2009).

10 Več o politični instrumentalizaciji zgodovinopisja v socialistični Jugoslaviji Magdalena Najbar Agičić, *U skladu s marksizmom ili činjenicama?: hrvatska historiografija 1945–1960* (Zagreb: Ibis, 2013). Mateja Režek, »Usmerjena preteklost: mehanizmi ideološke in politične 'kontaminacije' zgodovinopisja v socialistični Sloveniji in Jugoslaviji (1945–1966)«, *Acta Histriae* 22, št. 4 (2014): 971–92.

Napisali so ga trije avtorji, poglavja o zgodovini 20. stoletja pa je prispeval Metod Mikuž, nosilec katedre za sodobno zgodovino na Filozofski fakulteti v Ljubljani. Mikuževa življenjska pot je bila nenavadna: pred vojno je deloval kot duhovnik, med vojno se je pridružil partizanom, po vojni pa je izstopil iz duhovniškega poklica in postal eden od utemeljiteljev raziskovanja sodobne zgodovine v Sloveniji. Arhivski dokumenti kažejo, da je partijsko vodstvo cenilo njegovo strokovno znanje, vendar ga ni štelo za doslednega zagovornika uradnih pogledov na zgodovinopisje.¹¹ Kljub temu je bil skoraj neizogibna izbira za pripravo učbenika, saj takrat v Sloveniji praktično ni bilo drugih zgodovinarjev, ki bi se sistematično ukvarjali s sodobno zgodovino.

Učni načrt za osnovne šole iz leta 1954 je vsebinam iz povojne zgodovine namenjal malo prostora, vendar je med izpostavljenimi temami prvič omenjal »boj za ohranitev in krepitev miru na svetu«.¹² Čeprav je bila tema obravnavana skopo, je njena umestitev v učni načrt pomenila pomemben premik, saj je nakazovala večjo vlogo, ki jo je zunanje-politična usmeritev Jugoslavije začela dobivati v šolskem zgodovinskem diskurzu.

Podobno skromen kot učni načrt je bil pri obravnavi tem iz povojne zgodovine tudi prvi osnovnošolski učbenik sodobne zgodovine. V kratkem poglavju o Organizaciji združenih narodov (OZN) je Mikuž predstavil njena temeljna načela, ki jih je brez podrobnejše razlage označil zgolj kot »velika in lepa«.¹³ Na koncu učbenika je bilo kratko poglavje z naslovom »Vloga Jugoslavije v boju za ohranitev miru na svetu«. Naslov je napovedoval obravnavo jugoslovanske zunanje politike in njene mednarodne dejavnosti, vendar se je besedilo dejansko omejevalo le na kratek opis notranje-politične ureditve države. Temu je sledilo drobno poglavje »Ugled Jugoslavije po svetu«, v katerem je Mikuž zapisal: »Brž ko sta zahodni in vzhodni blok začela snovati razne obrambne in druge bloke, je naša država dosledno zastopala neblokovsko politiko. Neprestano je poudarjala, da morejo tudi majhne države živeti mirno in se uspešno razvijati poleg velikih in mogočnih držav (koeksistenca). Poti maršala Tita v Anglijo, v nekatere balkanske države, v Indijo, v Egipt, v Francijo, v Sovjetsko zvezo samo dokazujejo, da je naša domovina zaradi svoje dosledne in miroljubne politike – pusti vsakemu narodu, naj živi po svoje, in sicer tako, kot je vseh delovnemu ljudstvu – država z velikim ugledom in močno priljubljena pri ljudskih množicah vsega sveta.«¹⁴ Čeprav je bila obravnavo jugoslovanske zunanje politike v tem učbeniku vsebinsko zelo omejena, je že razkrivala interpretativni okvir, ki je bil vse do konca osemdesetih let ena od narativnih stalnic v učbeniških prikazih sodobne zgodovine. Jugoslavija je bila v njih prikazana kot dosledna zagovornica neblokovske politike, miroljubne koeksistence in enakopravnosti narodov, njen mednarodni ugled pa kot neposredna posledica takšne politike.

11 Mateja Režek, »Nevidna cenzura zgodovinopisja v socializmu,« v: Mateja Režek, ur., *Cenzurirano: zgodovina cenzure na Slovenskem od 19. stoletja do danes* (Ljubljana: Nova revija, 2010), 225.

12 Učni načrt za nižje razrede gimnazij in višje razrede osnovnih šol (Ljubljana: Državna založba Slovenije, 1954), 39.

13 Ferdo Gestrin, Jože Hainz in Metod Mikuž, *Zgodovina za VIII. razred osnovne šole* (Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 1958), 175.

14 Ibidem, 214.

Podobno kot izbira Mikuža se morda na prvi pogled zdi presenetljiva tudi izbira avtorja naslednjega osnovnošolskega učbenika sodobne zgodovine, ki je izšel leta 1966. Napisal ga je France Škerl, zgodovinar z Inštituta za zgodovino delavskega gibanja v Ljubljani in nekdanji krščanski socialist, ki podobno kot Mikuž ni veljal za »partijskega zgodovinarja«. Nasprotno, njegovo znanstveno delo je Zgodovinska komisija CK ZKS leta 1962 celo kritizirala in mu očitala, da »daje zgrešeno predstavo o narodnoosvobodilnem gibanju«.¹⁵ Zakaj je bilo pisanje novega osnovnošolskega učbenika zaupano avtorju, ki ni užival nedvoumne politične podpore, iz pregledanih arhivskih dokumentov ni razvidno, najverjetneje pa so bili razlogi podobni kot pri izbiri Mikuža. Zaradi pomanjkanja strokovnjakov za sodobno zgodovino je bilo politično vodstvo prisiljeno iskati ravnotežje med politično zanesljivostjo in strokovno kompetentnostjo, saj je bilo strokovno avtoriteto mogoče nadzorovati tudi z uredniškimi in recenzijskimi mehanizmi.

Škerl je pri pisanju učbenika sledil učnim načrtom, ki so med ključnimi temami povojne zgodovine poleg notranjega razvoja socialistične Jugoslavije predvidevali obravnavo OZN, blokofske delitve sveta, dekolonizacije, neokolonializma ter načel miroljubne koeksistence in neuvrščenosti. Navodila v učnem načrtu iz leta 1966 so poudarjala tudi, da je treba izpostaviti »pozitivno vlogo naše dežele v boju za mir in miroljubno sožitje med narodi«.¹⁶

Poglavje o povojnem svetu je Škerl začel s predstavitevjo načel in delovanja OZN. Pri tem je opozoril tudi na njene omejitve zaradi nasprotujočih si interesov velesil, hkrati pa poudaril njen velik pomen: »Kljub vsemu pa [OZN] uživa velik ugled in podporo zlasti pri malih narodih in državah. Med njimi je tudi Jugoslavija, ki podpira delovanje organizacije združenih narodov v vseh njenih akcijah«.¹⁷ Škerlov način pripovedovanja je bil večinoma faktografski in pozitivističen, mestoma pa je prešel v izrazito retoričen slog. Dekolonizacijo je tako opisal kot proces, v katerem »so popokale imperialistične verige dolgi vrsti dežel, ki so prej ječale pod bičem kolonialnih gospodarjev«.¹⁸ Takšne metafore kažejo, da namen učbenika ni bil zgolj posredovanje informacij o svetovnih političnih procesih, temveč je sugeriral tudi način, kako naj bi jih učenci razumeli in presojali.

Škerl še ni uporabljal termina neuvrščenost, ampak izraza »tabor neodvisnih in svobodnih držav« in »neangažirane države«,¹⁹ kar kaže na prehodno obdobje v času nastanka učbenika, ko se terminologija gibanja neuvrščenih še ni povsem ustalila, njegove temeljne vsebinske značilnosti pa so bile že jasno opredeljene. Pozornost je namenil tudi miroljubnemu sožitju med državami z različnimi družbenopolitičnimi sistemi, pri čemer je poudaril: »Vsak narod mora imeti pravico do samoodločbe, neodvisnosti in svobode, da si izbere tako obliko in način gospodarskega, socialnega in

15 SI AS 1589, šk. 66, Seja zgodovinske komisije CK ZKS, 8. 2. 1962, 9–10.

16 »Predmetnik in učni načrt za osnovno šolo,« *Objave Republiškega sekretariata za prosveto in kulturo SRS XVII* (15. junij 1966): 41.

17 France Škerl, *Zgodovina za 8. razred osnovnih šol* (Ljubljana: Zavod za napredek šolstva SRS, 1966), 224.

18 Ibid., 244.

19 Ibid., 246–48.

kulturnega razvoja, kakršno si sam želi. Nihče se ne sme vmešavati v notranje zadeve drugega.«²⁰ Načela gibanja neuvrščenih so bila tako v učbeniku predstavljena tudi kot temeljna načela jugoslovanske zunanje politike.

V nadaljevanju je Škerl Jugoslavijo prikazal kot državo, ki »je imela med neangažiranimi državami vedno pomembno mesto« in je dosledno zagovarjala enakopravnost vseh narodov, ne glede na njihovo velikost ali stopnjo razvitosti, podpirala aktivno koezistenco in pomagala zatiranim narodom v njihovem boju za svobodo. Zaradi »jasne politike in trdnih stališč« naj bi Jugoslavija uživala velik mednarodni ugled, »čeprav ni velika ne po površini ne po številu prebivalstva«. Opozoril je tudi na pritiske, ki jim je bila država izpostavljena: »Včasih so jih delali na vzhodu, včasih na zahodu. Mimo vseh pa so rasli prijatelji, ki so se sami borili za svobodo in neodvisnost, za načela, za katera se je borila tudi Jugoslavija.«²¹ Na tem mestu se je prvič v slovenskih zgodovinskih učbenikih izrisala slika, ki je pozneje postala še izrazitejša: Jugoslavija kot neodvisna in načelna država, ki se upira pritiskom obeh hladnovojnih blokov, hkrati pa uživa široko podporo novonastalih držav globalnega juga.

V sklepnem poglavju je Škerl opozoril na izrazite razvojne neenakosti sodobnega sveta: »Na eni strani je veliko bogastvo, na drugi pa še večja revščina. Toda sočasno človeštvo žrtvuje za oboroževanje na tisoče milijard. Koliko šol bi lahko sezidali za tako velikanske vsote! [...] V interesu vseh ljudi je boj za ohranitev miru, da izginijo razlike med razvitimi in nerazvitimi narodi, med bogatimi in revnimi. Vojna ne sme biti več sredstvo za reševanje mednarodnih sporov.« Kritika razvojnih neenakosti se je na tem mestu povezovala s kritiko oboroževalne tekme, mir pa je bil opredeljen kot temeljni pogoj družbenega in gospodarskega napredka. Besedilo se je zaključilo z optimistično vizijo prihodnosti: »Če bodo narodi rešeni groženj z vojno, se bodo mogli mirno posvetiti svojim življenjskim problemom in si ustvariti boljše življenje. To bo življenje, ki sta ga pred sto leti z znanstvenimi deli napovedala Marx in Engels.«²² Zaključek je presegal raven zgodovinske razlage in prevzel izrazito normativno funkcijo: zgodovina ni delovala le kot razlaga preteklosti, temveč kot proces, ki bo ob odpravi vojn in razrednih nasprotij vodil v družbo miru, socialne pravičnosti in socializma.

Čeprav so politične oblasti in učni načrti pripisovali sodobni zgodovini izrazit vzgojni pomen, je bila šolska praksa pogosto drugačna. Sredi šestdesetih let je Zgodovinska komisija CK ZKS pripravila poročilo o pouku sodobne zgodovine v šolah, v katerem je med ključnimi problemi izpostavila nedosledno uresničevanje učnih načrtov in pomanjkanje ustreznih učnih gradiv kot tudi pomanjkljivo strokovno usposobljenost učiteljev. Avtorji poročila so ugotavljali, da so novi učni načrti sodobni zgodovini namenili več šolskih ur, vendar se številni učitelji spremembam niso prilagodili, pri čemer so opozorili tudi na pomanjkanje učinkovitega nadzora nad izvajanjem učnih načrtov.²³ Toda podobne kritične ocene so se ponavljale tudi v naslednjih letih.

20 Ibid., 247.

21 Ibid., 249–50.

22 Ibid., 252–53.

23 SIAS 1589, šk.167, Problematika pouka novejšje zgodovine, 23. 10. 1965; šk. 188, Nekateri problem pouka novejšje zgodovine na osnovnih in srednjih šolah, 10. 5. 1966.

Povojna zgodovina ni uspela prodreti v šolsko prakso v obsegu, ki so ga predvidevali učni načrti, kar je ostala značilnost pouka zgodovine v slovenskih šolah še dolgo po razpadu Jugoslavije.

Podobno kot izvajanje pouka sodobne zgodovine tudi Škerlov učbenik ni naletel na popolno politično odobravanje. Arhivski viri razlogov za nezadovoljstvo sicer ne razkrivajo podrobneje, iz dokumentov pa je razvidno, da je bil njegov učbenik ocenjen kot »vsekakor pretežak« in da v njem ni bil dovolj poudarjen »vzgojni moment pouka zgodovine«, ²⁴ kot je leta 1972 na seji Zgodovinske komisije CK ZKS povedal Branko Božič, dekan Pedagoške akademije v Ljubljani. Še zgovornejša je, da se je že v začetku sedemdesetih let začel pripravljati nov osnovnošolski učbenik sodobne zgodovine.

Sedemdeseta leta so pomenila vrhunec politične instrumentalizacije šolske zgodovine. Posodobljeni učni načrt za osnovne šole iz leta 1975 je med temeljnimi cilji pouka zgodovine določal oblikovanje marksističnega pogleda učencev na svet ter njihovo vzgojo v duhu socialističnega humanizma, internacionalizma in mednarodne solidarnosti delovnega ljudstva. ²⁵ Posebna pozornost je bila namenjena vlogi učiteljev zgodovine, zlasti pri poučevanju NOB in povojnega obdobja. Učitelj naj bi bil »dober strokovnjak – zgodovinar, ki pri pouku izhaja iz marksističnih idejnih temeljev, razen tega pa mora biti vsestransko pedagoško in politično razgledan. Nenehno mora spremljati zgodovinsko, teoretično-marksistično in politično literaturo in zasledovati poročila v sredstvih javnega obveščanja. Mora pa biti tudi družbeni delavec, ki s svojim zgledom vzgaja učence v skladu z ideologijo jugoslovanske socialistične samoupravne družbe.« ²⁶ Učni načrt je učitelje obenem opozarjal, naj snov razporedijo tako, da jim ob koncu šolskega leta ne bo zmanjkalo časa za sodobno zgodovino, saj naj bi bilo to »zaradi njene izredne aktualnosti nedopustno«. Še izraziteje se je ideološka usmeritev pokazala v navodilih za obravnavo povojnega obdobja: »Posebej poudarimo pomen socialistične Jugoslavije, ki je v boju proti hegemoniji in dogmatizmu v komunističnem gibanju postala najpomembnejša sila v boju za enakopravne odnose med socialističnimi državami in med državami in narodi drugod po svetu. Uspešen odpor Jugoslavije proti informbirojevskemu pritisku je dvignil njen ugled v svetu, tako da je postala vodilna sila med neuvrščenimi državami«. Njena mednarodna avtoriteta naj bi izhajala predvsem iz tega, »ker je doma uspešno gradila demokratično samoupravno socialistično družbo pod vodstvom Zveze komunistov Jugoslavije in tovariša Tita«. ²⁷ Učni načrt tako ni določal zgolj vsebinskih poudarkov pouka zgodovine, temveč je učiteljem predpisoval tudi razlagalni okvir, v katerem je bila jugoslovanska zunanja politika prikazana kot neposredna posledica notranjih uspehov samoupravnega socializma.

Leta 1973 je izšel nov osnovnošolski učbenik sodobne zgodovine, ki sta ga napisala že omenjeni Branko Božič in Tomaž Weber, predavatelj metodike pouka zgodovine na Pedagoški akademiji v Ljubljani. Z nekaj dopolnitvami in posodobitvami je ostal v veljavi vse do poznih osemdesetih let in doživel številne ponatise. V primerjavi

24 SIAS 1589, šk. 195, Posvetovanje zgodovinarjev–komunistov, 23. 6. 1972, 2.

25 *Osnovna šola: vsebina vzgojno-izobraževalnega dela* (Ljubljana: Zavod SRS za šolstvo, 1975), 24.

26 Ibid., 28–29.

27 Ibid., 33.

s predhodnima učbenikoma je bil nekoliko manj obremenjen s faktografskimi podrobnostmi, vendar je hkrati izrazil ideologiziral zgodovinsko pripoved, preteklost pa slikal v poenostavljenih, izrazito črno-belih interpretativnih shemah. Pregled povojne svetovne zgodovine je največ pozornosti namenil OZN, blokovski razdeljenosti sveta, širjenju socializma, dekolonizaciji in osvobodilnim gibanjem v državah globalnega juga. Ker je ta učbenik zaznamoval zgodovinsko izobraževanje številnih generacij slovenskih osnovnošolcev, predstavlja enega ključnih virov za analizo reprezentacij sodobne zgodovine v šolah.

Poglavje o povojni zgodovini se je začelo z orisom OZN in njene vloge pri ohranjanju svetovnega miru. V tem okviru je bila posebej izpostavljena Jugoslavija, ki naj bi bila »v OZN ena najbolj dejavnih držav« ter zaradi svoje dosledne podpore miru in »splošnemu napredku človeštva« uživala »nedeljeno spoštovanje in priznanje vseh včlanjenih držav«. ²⁸ Takšna interpretacija se je nadaljevala skozi celotno poglavje. Jugoslavija je bila predstavljena kot ena od glavnih akterk v mednarodnih odnosih, njena zunanja politika pa kot izraz moralne načelnosti in univerzalne zavezanosti miru. To je bilo razvidno tudi pri obravnavi vietnamske vojne, ki sta jo avtorja označila za »sramoto človeštva 20. stoletja«. Ob tem sta poudarila, da »strašno nasilje nad prebivalstvom, zločini, ki so večji od divjanja nacistov in fašistov med drugo svetovno vojno, vzbujajo grozo, gnev in odpor pri vseh svobodoljubnih narodih sveta«, med katerimi »doprinaša velik delež tudi Jugoslavija«. ²⁹ Takšne primerjave so ustvarjale izrazito moralizirajočo pripoved, obenem pa so služile kot sredstvo utrjevanja predstave o Jugoslaviji kot načelni, miroljubni in mednarodno upoštevanii državi.

Pregled zgodovine globalnega juga je zajel širok geografski prostor od Kitajske, Indokitajske in Indije prek Bližnjega vzhoda in severne Afrike do podsaharske oziroma »črne« Afrike, kot sta jo imenovala avtorja. Ne glede na regionalne razlike so bila osvobodilna gibanja prikazana kot enoten zgodovinski pojav in kot ključni nosilec svetovnega napredka, ki je odločilno prispeval k razgradnji kolonialnih imperijev. Avtorja sta zapisala, da so se v Afriki osvobodilna gibanja razmahnila zlasti po letu 1958: »V nekaj letih je bila osvojenjena večina črnega prebivalstva, le Južna Afrika, Angola, Mozambik in še nekatere so ostale v rokah belih rasistov«. Nadaljevala sta, da je Portugalska po padcu diktature priznala neodvisnost svojim afriškim kolonijam in da so »osvobodilna gibanja črnega prebivalstva tako dosegla nov pomemben uspeh. Rasistična režima v Rodeziji in Južnoafriški republiki pa sta zašla v novo krizo in še večjo mednarodno osamitev.« ³⁰ Prav v tem kontekstu se je v slovenskih učbenikih sodobne zgodovine prvič pojavil pojem rasizem, vendar je bil obravnavan le obrobno, kot spremljevalni pojav kolonializma in apartheida. Rasizem ni bil predstavljen kot širši družbeni sistem diskriminacije in neenakosti, temveč predvsem kot značilnost kolonialnega gospodstva, njegova odprava pa je bila prikazana kot sestavni del prot imperialističnega boja.

28 Branko Božič in Tomaž Weber, *Zgodovina za osmi razred* (Ljubljana: Državna založba Slovenije, 1976), 118.

29 Ibid., 124.

30 Ibid., 126–27.

V učbeniku je bil orisan tudi povojni razvoj Latinske Amerike, kjer se narodi »iz leta v leto borijo proti monopolom ameriškega kapitala in vplivu ZDA, ki so na tem delu zemeljske oble še posebej občutljive za svoje interese in koristi«. Posebej sta bila izpostavljena Kuba kot »trn v peti ameriškim imperialističnim krogom« in Čile, kjer so po vojaškem udaru »reakcionarne sile slavile zmago«.³¹ Tudi tukaj se je zgodovinska pripoved sukala okoli jasnega konflikta med imperialističnimi silami in osvobodilnimi gibanji, pri čemer so bile politične, gospodarske in družbene posebnosti posameznih držav potisnjene v ozadje. Poglavlje se je zaključilo z ugotovitvijo, da so osvobodilna gibanja bistveno preoblikovala mednarodne odnose, saj so začele nove države v OZN enotno nastopati »proti nasilju, vojnām, rasizmu, gospodarskim in drugim oblikam izkoriščanja« ter postavljati »zahteve za enakomeren razvoj vseh dežel, za gospodarsko pomoč nerazvitim, za odpravo vseh oblik kolonializma, za trajen mir v svetu«. Osrednje sporočilo poglavja je bilo povzeto v poudarjeni misli ob robu: »Vsi narodi sveta imajo pravico svobodno in človeku dostojno živeti in odločati o svoji usodi.«³² Dekolonizacija tako ni bila predstavljena le kot proces razpadanja evropskih imperijev, ampak kot del širše zgodovinske emancipacije človeštva, katere nosilka je bila poleg držav globalnega juga tudi Jugoslavija.

Zaključno poglavje je bilo posvečeno mednarodni vlogi Jugoslavije in njeni vlogi v gibanju neuvrščenih. V središče pripovedi je bil postavljen Tito, ki je »svoje sposobnosti velikega državnika usmeril predvsem v to, da je Jugoslavija navezala stike z mnogimi državami v Evropi, Aziji, Afriki in Ameriki. Njegovi obiski v Indiji, Burmi, Indoneziji, Egiptu in drugih državah so imeli izjemen odmev po vsem svetu, kajti Tito je bil glasnik miru, enakopravnosti in sožitja med narodi. Skupaj z voditelji teh držav je obsojal politiko sile, razdelitev sveta na dva bloka, hladno vojno in nesmiselno vojaško oboroževanje z atomskim in vodikovim orožjem.«³³ Omenjen je bil tudi njegov govor v Generalni skupščini OZN septembra 1960, v katerem se je zavzel za razorožitev in dekolonizacijo. Titovo zunanjepolitično delovanje ni bilo predstavljeno le kot uspešna državniška diplomacija, temveč kot eden ključnih dejavnikov globalnih prizadevanj za mir. Takšna reprezentacija je presegla raven zgodovinske razlage in postala sredstvo simbolne konstrukcije političnega voditelja, s katerim je učbenik utrjeval Titovo karizmo in moralno avtoriteto.

V prikazu gibanja neuvrščenih sta avtorja zapisala, da so »napori Jugoslavije in tovariša Tita za aktivno koeksistenco (sožitje) med narodi leta 1961 privedli do prve konference neuvrščenih držav v Beogradu«. Nadaljevala sta, da so se udeleženci konference odločno zavzeli za mir, ki ga ni mogoče doseči brez razorožitve in napredka »zaostalih dežel in narodov Azije, Afrike in južne Amerike«, ter sprejeli načelo, da je treba »podpirati gospodarski, socialni in kulturni razvoj zaostalih dežel«. Ob robu besedila je bilo dodatno poudarjeno sporočilo: »Neuvrščeni se povezujejo v skupnem nastopu zlasti v OZN.«³⁴ Kompleksni proces nastajanja gibanja neuvrščenih je bil v

31 Ibid., 127.

32 Ibid., 128.

33 Ibid., 140–41.

34 Ibid., 141.

tem poglavju skrčen na pripoved o Jugoslaviji in Titu kot njegovih ključnih pobudnikih in moralnih voditeljih. Obenem sta avtorja omenila vlogo Jugoslavije pri »prenašanju znanosti in tehnologije razvitih držav deželam v razvoju«, ³⁵ s čimer sta njeno mednarodno delovanje prikazala tudi kot pomemben prispevek k razvoju globalnega juga.

Ta interpretacija je dosegla vrhunec v sklepnem delu poglavja. Jugoslavija je bila predstavljena kot država, ki »na tribunah OZN« zagovarja »pravičen boj arabske republike in Palestincev« in si prizadeva »za priznanje številnih afriških držav, proti rasni diskriminaciji, zlasti pa za mir v Vietnamu«. Hkrati je bila prikazana kot »pomemben posrednik tudi med velikimi silami«, kar naj bi potrjevala Titova srečanja z voditelji Sovjetske zveze, Združenih držav Amerike, Velike Britanije, Francije in drugih držav. Poglavje se je zaključilo z ugotovitvijo, da je Jugoslavija »prispevala izredno pomemben delež v boju za mir, ki edini lahko reši človeštvo pred popolnim uničenjem«. ³⁶ S tem se je sklenil pripovedni lok, ki se je začel z OZN in končal z Jugoslavijo kot eno osrednjih nosilk svetovnega miru. Jugoslovanska zunanja politika je bila predstavljena kot univerzalni moralni projekt, Jugoslaviji pa je bilo pripisano posebno zgodovinsko in politično poslanstvo v sodobnem svetu.

V učbeniku je opazna tudi terminološka neenotnost pri poimenovanju držav globalnega juga. Zanje so se uporabljali različni izrazi, kot so »zaostale dežele«, »nerazvite dežele«, »manj razvite dežele« in »dežele v razvoju«. Toda teh terminoloških nedoslednosti ne gre razumeti kot izraza hierarhizacije sveta, temveč so odražale prehodno obdobje v razvoju terminologije, ki se je šele prilagajala hitro spreminjajoči se postkolonialni stvarnosti. Danes pomensko jasno razločeni izrazi takrat še niso bili povsem ustaljeni, vsaj ne v osnovnošolskih učbenikih, čeprav so že postajali predmet razprav v jugoslovanskih intelektualnih in političnih krogih. ³⁷

Slikovno gradivo je bilo v tem, kot tudi v drugih analiziranih učbenikih, razmeroma skromno. V povezavi z gibanjem neuvrščenih so se praviloma pojavljale fotografije srečanja Tita, Naserja in Nehruja na Brionih leta 1956 ali prve konference neuvrščenih v Beogradu leta 1961, medtem ko so dekolonizacijo in globalni jug ponazarjali prizori vojn, osvobodilnih gibanj in navdušenih množic ob osvoboditvi. Nasprotno so bile vizualne reprezentacije, ki bi prikazovale rasno raznolikost ali problematizirale rasna razmerja, povsem odsotne, z izjemo fotografije s podnapisom »Etiopska žena nese vodo za potrebe gospodinjstva« ³⁸ in podobe žalostnega afriškega otroka s podnapisom »Otroške oči obtožujejo in zapovedujejo«, ³⁹ obe objavljeni v učbeniku Božiča in Webra.

³⁵ Ibid., 142.

³⁶ Ibid., 143.

³⁷ Prim. Paul Stubbs, »Ausnahme oder Modell? Das sozialistische Jugoslawien, die Sozialpolitik und die Bewegung der Blockfreien Staaten während des Kalten Krieges«, *Jahrbuch für Historische Kommunismusforschung* (2024): 229–48.

³⁸ Božič in Weber, *Zgodovina za osmi razred*, 117.

³⁹ Ibid., 127.

Konstruiranje neuvrščenih vrednot v učbenikih družbenomoralne vzgoje

Moralna vzgoja je bila v slovenske osnovne šole uvedena leta 1952, po odpravi verouka v javnih šolah, v nasprotju s Slovenijo pa je večina drugih jugoslovanskih republik ni uvedla kot samostojni šolski predmet. Namenjena je bila učencem zadnjih dveh razredov osnovne šole, ki so se pri tem predmetu seznanjali z marksistično interpretacijo družbenih odnosov in zgodovinskega razvoja ter vrednotami, na katerih je temeljil jugoslovanski socializem. Zaradi pomanjkanja učiteljev, ki bi bili posebej usposobljeni za poučevanje moralne vzgoje, je bilo to praviloma zaupano učiteljem drugih družboslovnih in humanističnih predmetov, zlasti učiteljem zgodovine. Dodatno težavo je predstavljalo pomanjkanje učbenikov. Prvi slovenski učbenik za družbenomoralno vzgojo, kot se je predmet imenoval od leta 1972, je namreč izšel šele leta 1977, polnih petindvajset let po njegovi uvedbi. Do takrat so se učitelji opirali na splošne učne smernice in spremljajoča gradiva, ki so sčasoma postajala vse obsežnejša in didaktično bolj izpopolnjena ter postopoma prevzela vlogo učnih priročnikov.

V gradivih za pouk socialistične morale iz konca šestdesetih let so bila obravnavana različna vprašanja družbenih odnosov, med njimi »razvite dežele in dežele v razvoju«. Gradivo iz leta 1969 je razlike med njimi opredeljevalo kot še globlje od delitve na kapitalistični in socialistični svet. V ospredje je bila postavljena Jugoslavija – kot država, ki si prizadeva za razorožitev, odpravo kolonializma in miroljubno koekzistenco, »da se ustvari svet brez nasprotij«. Poleg tega naj bi bila med prvimi državami, ki se je postavila proti rasni diskriminaciji in izkoriščanju malih narodov, dokazala pa naj bi tudi, »da bloki niso zgodovinska nujnost in da blokovska delitev sveta nasprotuje interesom malih držav«, kar naj bi ji prineslo velik mednarodni ugled.⁴⁰ Ena od podtem v učnem gradivu sta bila tudi »rasizem in naš odnos do njega«, pri čemer sta bila kot primera izpostavljena položaj temnopoltih v Združenih državah Amerike in Južnoafriški republiki. Pouk naj bi temeljil na skupinskem pogovoru, ki naj bi ga dopolnjevali slikovno gradivo, odlomki iz zgodovinskih in literarnih del ter »črnske pesmi na magnetofonskem traku«. Učenci naj bi razpravljali o »odnosu belcev do ras v zgodovini«, o položaju »današnjih črncev« ter o tem, kako bi sami ravnali, če bi se znašli v njihovem položaju. Na ta način se je pri učencih spodbujalo empatijo in solidarnost ter oblikovanje »pravičnega odnosa do drugih ras in narodov«, ki naj bi bil »osnovan na priznavanju enakovrednosti, strpnosti in medsebojnega spoštovanja«.⁴¹

Solidarnost z zatiranimi narodi in rasami je bila vključena tudi v konkretne didaktične dejavnosti. Sledeč učnim gradivom iz leta 1973, naj bi učitelji na tablo napisali geslo »Vsi bratje sveta«, učenci pa pisali prosti spis z naslovom »Jaz, črnc«, s katerim naj bi se vživeli v izkušnjo rasne diskriminacije. Hkrati se je učence spodbujalo, naj položaj koloniziranih in rasno zatiranih narodov razumejo tudi skozi zgodovinsko

40 Marija Artač, *Gradivo za pouk temeljev socialistične morale* (Ljubljana: Zavod za šolstvo SRS, 1969), 78.

41 Ibid., 82.

izkušnjo Slovencev, ki so bili le nekaj desetletij prej izpostavljeni fašističnemu in nacističnemu nasilju.⁴² Morda je ob tem smiselno opozoriti, da je treba izraz »črnc« razumeti v zgodovinskem in jezikovnem kontekstu. Čeprav se v sodobni rabi vse bolj uveljavlja izraz »temnopolt«, je beseda »črnc« v leksikografskih virih še vedno opredeljena kot nevtralna oznaka, podobno kot izraz »belec«. Beseda »črnc« sama po sebi torej ni slabšalna, še manj pa je bila kot taka razumljena v preteklih desetletjih. Njena uporaba v analiziranih besedilih zatorej odraža standardne jezikovne konvencije.

Leta 1977 je izšel prvi učbenik družbenomoralne vzgoje za osmi razred osnovne šole. Napisala sta ga Vojan Rus, profesor filozofije na Filozofski fakulteti v Ljubljani, ter filozof in sociolog Jože Šter, poglavja, ki se nanašajo na vsebino te raziskave, pa je prispeval Rus. Učbenik je bil obsežen, izrazito besedilno zasnovan in opremljen z razmeroma skromnim slikovnim gradivom, besedila pa so dopolnjevala številna vprašanja za razmislek, ki so učence usmerjala k interpretaciji predstavljenih vsebin.

Med obravnavanimi temami so pomembno mesto zasedali sodobni družbeni in mednarodni odnosi. Poglavje »Nerazvite in razvite dežele« se je začelo z ugotovitvijo, da razvojna neenakost predstavlja najizrazitejšo razklanost sodobnega sveta. Rus je poudaril, da dve tretjini svetovnega prebivalstva živi »v precejšnji bedi«, razvojni prepad med »razvitim in nerazvitim svetom« pa je označil za »največjo sramoto vsega sodobnega človeštva«. Poudaril je, da se je po razpadu kolonialnih imperijev ta prepad ohranil in celo poglobil, čeprav »ves svet priznava, da je skupna naloga človeštva pomagati nerazvitim«. Krivdo za takšno stanje je pripisal »sebičnosti razvitih kapitalističnih držav«, ki bi »z lahkoto dale učinkovito pomoč nerazvitim deželam«, in to »brez večjih lastnih žrtev«, vendar svoja ogromna sredstva raje namenjajo za oboroževanje, od katerega »nimajo delovni ljudje teh dežel nobene koristi«, saj »orožja, vojni letal in tankov ni mogoče jesti in tudi ne proizvajajo nobenih novih dobrin«.⁴³ Kritika razvojne neenakosti se je tako prepletala z obsodbo oboroževalne tekme in kapitalističnih držav.

Rus je nadaljeval, da razvite kapitalistične države nosijo pomemben del odgovornosti za gospodarsko zaostalost držav globalnega juga, saj so svojo blaginjo zgradile tudi na njihovem izkoriščanju. Zapisal je, da so kolonialne sile bogastvo pridobivale z obdavčevanjem kolonij, izkoriščanjem njihovih naravnih virov in »zastonjske« delovne sile, le redko pa so vlagale v industrializacijo in modernizacijo kmetijstva. Posledično »nerazvite dežele niso same krive za svoje današnje gospodarske težave«, saj so »njihovo nerazvitost v precejšnji meri povzročile bogate kapitalistične države«. Temu je sledila eksplicitna kritika kapitalizma in kapitalističnih držav, ki »niso naredile dovolj, da bi popravile škodo, ki so jo prizadejale v preteklosti«. Njihova sebičnost naj bi bila neločljivo povezana s samo naravo kapitalizma: »Kapitalisti izkoriščajo druge ljudi in narode. Brez tega izkoriščanja kapitalizem ne bi bil kapitalizem.« Prav zato, ker ima vase vgrajeno izkoriščanje, je kapitalizem »tudi danes nesposoben, da

42 Izbrana poglavja za družbenomoralno vzgojo (Ljubljana: Zavod za šolstvo SR Slovenije, 1973), 68.

43 Vojan Rus in Jože Šter, *Družba in socialistična morala: učbenik družbenomoralne vzgoje za 8. razred* (Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 1977), 88–91.

bi ozdravil največjo družbeno bolezen našega časa: gospodarsko zaostalost in bedo nerazvitih dežel«, je zapisal Rus.⁴⁴

Kljub temu odgovornosti ni pripisal izključno zunanjim dejavnikom. Države globalnega juga bi namreč po njegovem mnenju lahko tudi same pospešile svoj razvoj, če bi odstranile domače izkoriščevalske elite in njihovo premoženje namenile gospodarskemu razvoju ter razrešile svoje notranje in meddržavne konflikte. Kot enega izmed dejavnikov razvojnih težav je omenil tudi hitro rast prebivalstva, pri čemer je opozoril, da se »gospodarsko šibki narodi večkrat tako hitro množe«, da gospodarstvo ne more slediti naraščajočim potrebam prebivalstva. Poglavlje je sklenil z ugotovitvijo, da bi se države globalnega juga lahko hitreje razvijale »po nekapitalistični in socialistični poti«, saj socializem »odstrani z oblasti domače bogatine in porabi njihova sredstva za gospodarski razvoj«. Obenem je poudaril, da niti »največja enotnost in požrtvovalnost« ne moreta odpraviti razvojnega zaostanka »čez noč«, temveč bodo za to potrebna »desetletja in desetletja«. ⁴⁵ Ta interpretacija razvojnih neenakosti je bila povsem usklajena z jugoslovanskim ideološkim diskurzom tistega časa. Kapitalizem in kolonializem sta veljala za temeljna vzroka svetovne neenakosti, medtem ko je bil socializem prikazan kot sistemska alternativa z veliko večjim razvojnim potencialom. Jugoslavija je bila v tem kontekstu umeščena zunaj kritike in kot socialistična država brez kolonialne preteklosti prikazana kot moralno legitimna partnerica držav globalnega juga.

V poglavju »Novi imperializem in vojna nevarnost« je Rus opisal neokolonializem kot »bolj prožno, manj vidno obliko podrejanja«. Med mehanizmi gospodarskega izkoriščanja je izpostavil »izvoz kapitala iz razvitih držav«, ki investirajo v gospodarske dejavnosti v »siromašnih deželah«, pri čemer kujejo velike dobičke na račun nizkih plač tamkajšnjih delavcev in visokih cen izdelkov na trgih razvitih držav. Njegova razlaga je odražala marksistično razumevanje neenakomernega razvoja ter odvisnostnega razmerja med razvitim centrom in podrejeno periferijo. V nadaljevanju je neokolonializem prikazal tudi kot obliko političnega podrejanja. Poudaril je, da razvite države s svojimi kapitalističnimi elitami z različnimi pritiski ter s podkupovanjem in podporo nazadnjaškim krogom v »nerazvitih državah« spodbujajo strmoglavljenje naprednih vlad ali pa izdatno podpirajo nazadnjaške režime, ki služijo njegovim interesom. Če gospodarska in politična sredstva ne zadostujejo, pa se zatečejo k uporabi vojaške sile. ⁴⁶ Kot največje grožnje sodobnemu človeštvu je opredelil vojne in blokovsko razdeljenost sveta, nevarnost vojn pa naj bi bila odpravljena šele tedaj, »ko bodo delovni ljudje bolj nadzorovali voditelje družbe«. K temu je dodal, da je »združeno odločanje delovnih ljudi že socialistično združevanje«, ter izpeljal sklep, da je »socialistična družba tudi najboljše zagotovilo trajnega miru in nove svetovne morale«. Miru tako ni opisal le kot dosežka mednarodnega sodelovanja, temveč tudi kot posledico socialistične družbene ureditve, pri čemer je izpostavil prizadevanja Jugoslavije za odpravo blokovske delitve sveta. ⁴⁷

44 Ibid., 92.

45 Ibid., 92–93.

46 Ibid., 94, 96.

47 Ibid., 97–98.

V poglavju »Socializem in sodobno človeštvo« je Rus opredelil socializem kot »nujen, da bi sedanji in bodoči človeški rodovi živeli lepše, bolj človeško«,⁴⁸ ter kot zgodovinsko neizogiben in moralno superioren razvojni cilj človeštva. V nadaljevanju je orisal socialistična gibanja v Aziji, Afriki in Latinski Ameriki. Ugotavljal je, da so za te dele sveta »posebno značilna velika in napredna delavska gibanja«, ki naj bi bila »zelo podobna antifašistični fronti v Jugoslaviji in Osvobodilni fronti v Sloveniji«. S takšno primerjavo je jugoslovansko narodnoosvobodilno in revolucionarno izkušnjo umestil v univerzalni model revolucionarnega in protikolonialnega boja ter jo legitimiral kot del širšega svetovnega procesa osvobajanja izpod imperializma. Nadaljeval je, da so narodnoosvobodilna in protiimperialistična gibanja po drugi svetovni vojni zrušila največje kapitalistične imperije, ter dodal, da lahko ljudske množice postopoma izgradijo tudi socializem, čeprav bo to »zelo težaven in zelo dolgotrajen« proces, »je pa možen«. Obenem je poudaril, da so osvobodilna gibanja v državah globalnega juga »pokazala, da so te množice tudi sposobne vladati, ne pa samo prenašati ukaze in bič kolonializma«. Ugotavljal je, da so se osvobodilna gibanja »z živo silo svojega duha in golih rok« bojevala proti imperializmu, ki ga je premagalo »vsako dovolj enotno in požrtvovalno« ljudsko gibanje, ter ob tem kot primere navedel oktobrsko in kitajsko revolucijo ter boje vietnamskih, jugoslovanskih, alžirskih, kubanskih, kamboških, laoških, indijskih, burmanskih, indonezijskih in drugih borcev za svobodo.⁴⁹ S tem je ustvaril sliko svetovnega revolucionarnega gibanja, jugoslovansko izkušnjo pa umestil ob bok največjim socialističnim in protikolonialnim revolucijam ter tako utrdil predstavo o Jugoslaviji kot pomembni akterki globalnih procesov dekolonizacije in socialistične preobrazbe. Obenem je opozoril tudi na nevarnost razrednih nasprotij in notranjih strankarskih sporov, ki slabijo ljudska gibanja, saj »vedno zrahljajo enotnost množic«. Poudaril je, da je »enotnost delovnih ljudi, ki jo ustvarjajo ljudska gibanja, zelo velika vrednost«, saj »pospešuje gospodarski razvoj, vključuje delovne ljudi v upravljanje in jih spreminja v gospodarje svojih dežel, zagotavlja pot v socializem. Tako deluje pri nas tudi SZDL.«⁵⁰ Na tem mestu je izkušnje držav globalnega juga neposredno povezal z jugoslovanskim političnim sistemom. Delovanje Socialistične zveze delovnega ljudstva (SZDL) je predstavil kot praktično uresničitev načela ljudske enotnosti in s tem jugoslovanske politične institucije prikazal kot zgleden model vključevanja delovnih ljudi v upravljanje družbe in države.

V poglavju o delavskih gibanjih je Rus ugotavljal, da so komunistične stranke najuspešnejši del delavskega gibanja v manj razvitih deželah, medtem ko naj bi bile socialistične stranke manj uspešne predvsem zato, ker so poskušale posnemati politične sisteme razvitih držav z večstrankarsko ureditvijo. Po njegovem mnenju namreč »boj med več političnimi strankami lahko razcepi množice« ter »onemogoči gospodarski napredek in izgradnjo socializma«. ⁵¹ Večstrankarski sistem je tako predstavil kot oviro družbenemu razvoju, politično enotnost pod vodstvom komunistične partije pa kot

48 Ibid., 103.

49 Ibid., 110, 112.

50 Ibid., 113.

51 Ibid., 114.

nujen pogoj uspešne socialistične preobrazbe. Tudi ta argument je odražal značilno jugoslovansko legitimacijsko strategijo, ki je odsotnost političnega pluralizma utemljevala z nujnostjo ohranjanja družbene enotnosti.

V poglavju o sporu med Jugoslavijo in Sovjetsko zvezo je Rus poudaril, da je ZKJ pod Titovim vodstvom »očuvala neodvisnost jugoslovanskih narodov«, jugoslovanski komunisti pa so »v spopadu s Stalinom oživili temeljne marksistične smernice« in jih nato tudi dosledno uresničevali. Po njegovih besedah je Jugoslavija pri izgradnji socializma dosegla pomembne uspehe in si pridobila »veliko prijateljev med naprednimi ljudmi vsega sveta«, njen samoupravni socializem pa naj bi postal »privlačen za mnoge dežele sveta«. ⁵² Spor z Informbirojem je bil tako predstavljen kot prelomni zgodovinski trenutek, ki Jugoslaviji ni zagotovil le politične neodvisnosti od Sovjetske zveze in možnosti za samostojen socialističen razvoj, temveč ji je omogočil tudi oblikovanje mednarodno privlačnega modela socializma. Čeprav Rus jugoslovanskega socializma nikoli ni eksplicitno postavil kot vzor, ki naj bi mu sledile države globalnega juga, bi lahko njegova argumentacija implicitno nakazovala tudi to interpretacijo.

V učbeniku je bil kot pomembna razsežnost mednarodnih odnosov izpostavljen tudi internacionalizem, pri čemer je avtor opredelil delavsko gibanje kot »hrbtenico mednarodnega sodelovanja«. ⁵³ Obsežni in za osnovnošolce izrazito zahtevni marksistični razlagi delavskega internacionalizma sta sledili poglavji o neuvrščenosti in OZN. Rus je prizadevanja gibanja neuvrščenih povezal s cilji mednarodnega delavskega gibanja in izpeljal sklep, da »je gibanje neuvrščenih držav podpora sodobnega socialističnega internacionalizma«. Zanimivo pa je, da v poglavju o neuvrščenosti skorajda ni omenil Jugoslavije, razen v kontekstu prve konference neuvrščenih v Beogradu leta 1961, ki jo je prikazal kot »veliko priznanje Jugoslaviji«. Obenem je poudaril, da noben blok in nobena druga organizacija, z izjemo OZN, ni povezovala več držav kot gibanje neuvrščenih. ⁵⁴ Prav zato po njegovih besedah te države niso bile več zgolj »nemočen predmet imperialističnih dežel«, temveč so postale »enakopravni dejavniki (subjekti) svetovne politike«. Neuvrščenost je opredelil kot »prizadevanje za življenjske potrebe vseh narodov sveta«, saj si je gibanje prizadevalo za mir, enakopravnost, sodelovanje med državami, zmanjševanje razvojnih razlik in za krepitev vloge OZN, na tej podlagi pa je izpeljal sklep, da je »neuvrščenost zato napredni, deloma pa že socialistični internacionalizem«. K temu je dodal, da so neuvrščene države, čeprav nimajo velike gospodarske in vojaške moči, »precejšnja moralna in politična moč v sodobnem svetu«. Zato naj bi neuvrščenost vse bolj podpirale tudi razvite države in celo države, vključene v vojaške bloke, saj »vsi pošteni in razumni ljudje – tudi v blokovskih državah – vidijo, da je neuvrščenost življenjskega pomena za vse človeštvo«. ⁵⁵

V poglavju o OZN je Rus predstavil njena temeljna načela in dosežke, pozornost pa je namenil tudi njenim omejitvam. Odgovornost za neuspehe OZN je pripisal predvsem egoizmu kapitalističnih držav, ki namenjajo premalo pomoči »nerazvitim deželam«,

⁵² Ibid., 119.

⁵³ Ibid., 131.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 140.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 142.

kar organizaciji onemogoča učinkovito uresničevanje njenih nalog, zato so »za stotine milijonov ljudi v nerazvitih deželah vse izjave OZN (o pravici do dela, do izobrazbe, do udeležbe in oblasti, do dostojne življenjske ravni) precej prazne besede«.⁵⁶

Že iz povzetka obsežnih Rusovih besedil je razvidno, da je ta učbenik po zahtevnosti močno presegal raven osnovnošolskega izobraževanja in je lahko služil kvečjemu kot strokovni priročnik za učitelje. Podobno so ugotavljali tudi avtorji učnega načrta iz leta 1983, ki so zapisali, da je učbenik sicer »izrednega pomena, vendar ne zadošča«, zato so učiteljem priporočili uporabo dodatnih didaktičnih gradiv, zlasti mladinske književnosti, revij, filmov, radijskih in televizijskih oddaj ter slikovnega materiala.⁵⁷ Učni načrt je predvideval, da bodo učenci ob konkretnih primerih iz preteklosti in sedanjosti razvijali vrednote svobode, integritete in suverenosti naroda. Poudarek naj bi bil na razvijanju patriotizma, neločljivo povezanem z internacionalizmom in prizadevanji za mir. Vsebine družbenomoralne vzgoje naj bi se povezovale tudi z drugimi šolskimi predmeti, predvsem z zgodovino in geografijo, ter z interesnimi dejavnostmi, med katerimi so bili posebej izpostavljeni klubi OZN ter zgodovinski, obrambni in marksistični krožki. Učiteljem je bilo hkrati priporočeno, naj upoštevajo smernice Unesca, »ki obvezujejo učitelje, da v okviru vseh predmetov in na vseh stopnjah seznanjajo učence s pojavi v svetu in z delovanjem OZN« ter jih »vzgajajo za razumevanje in sodelovanje med narodi in za ohranjanje miru v svetu«.⁵⁸ Poleg tega je Zavod za šolstvo organiziral tudi različna strokovna izobraževanja in izdajal priročnike za učitelje družboslovnih predmetov. Med njimi je bila tudi knjižica Bogdana Osolnika *Jugoslavija v gibanju neuvrščenih*,⁵⁹ ki pa je zajemala le politično-zgodovinski pregled nastanka in razvoja gibanja neuvrščenih.

Zadnji učbenik družbenomoralne vzgoje je izšel leta 1988, v času, ko so se že kazali znaki razkroja Jugoslavije, ki je z iztekanjem hladne vojne postopoma izgubljala tudi svoj geopolitični pomen, desetletja utemeljen na njeni aktivni vlogi v gibanju neuvrščenih. Učbenik sta napisala Jože Šter in Savin Jogan, pri čemer je poglavja, relevantna za to raziskavo, prispeval Šter. V primerjavi s predhodnim učbenikom je bil novi učbenik bistveno krajši in opremljen le z nekaj grafičnimi prikazi, brez slikovnega gradiva. Njegova zasnova je odražala težnjo po večji jedrnatosti in poenostavitvi vsebin, ne pa tudi po njihovi ideološki prenovi.

Poglavje »Nasprotja sodobnega sveta« je obravnavalo podobne tematske sklope kot predhodni učbenik, pri čemer je v veliki meri ohranjalo njegov ideološki okvir, čeprav so bile posamezne vsebine predstavljene v didaktično dostopnejši obliki. Besedilo je kritično obravnavalo imperializem, neokolonializem in blokovsko politiko, v okviru katere sta »veliki sili (ZDA in SZ) od svojih zaveznic v bloku pač vedno zahtevali, da pokorno in enoglasno trobijo v njun rog«.⁶⁰ Nasprotno je bilo gibanje

56 Ibid., 150.

57 *Predmetnik in učni načrt osnovne šole* (Ljubljana: Zavod SR Slovenije za šolstvo, 1983), 275.

58 Ibid., 270.

59 Bogdan Osolnik, *Jugoslavija v gibanju neuvrščenih* (Ljubljana: Zavod SR Slovenije za šolstvo, 1981).

60 Jože Šter in Savin Jogan, *Družba in socialistična morala: učbenik za 8. razred osnovne šole* (Ljubljana: Državna založba Slovenije, 1988), 56.

neuvrščenih predstavljeno kot »predvsem moralna skupnost« enakopravnih držav, ki se o skupnem delovanju dogovarjajo sporazumno in vse odločitve sprejemajo soglasno, pri njihovem uresničevanju pa jih zavezuje »moralna dolžnost, da se dana beseda tudi spoštuje«. ⁶¹ Takšna predstavitev je ohranjala idealizirano podobo gibanja neuvrščenih, čeprav je bilo to v času izida tega učbenika že močno obremenjeno z notranjimi protislovji, zlasti z oboroženimi spopadi med posameznimi članicami in njihovim približevanjem bodisi vzhodnemu bodisi zahodnemu bloku, ki so resno spodbijali temeljna načela neuvrščenosti. Razkorak med spreminjajočim se mednarodnim okoljem in njegovo učbeniško reprezentacijo razkriva vztrajnost ustaljenih interpretativnih vzorcev tudi v obdobju, ko so se njihovi politični in ideološki temelji že močno krhali.

Podobno kot njegov predhodnik je tudi ta učbenik opozarjal na globalne delitve med kapitalističnimi in socialističnimi državami, med zahodnim in vzhodnim blokom ter na »prepad med bogatim Severom in revnim Jugom«. ⁶² Edina opaznejša sprememba je bila terminološke narave, saj je delitev na »razvite« in »nerazvite« države zamenjala delitev na globalni sever in jug, vendar je ostajala umeščena v nespremenjeno interpretativno matrico. Še bolj povedno je, da je učbenik povsem prezrl spremembe v socialističnem svetu in mednarodnih odnosih, ki so napovedovale razpad bipolarne ureditve. Namesto refleksije teh procesov je zadnji učbenik družbenomoralne vzgoje ohranjal ustaljen ideološki okvir, ki je konec osemdesetih let izgubil že precej svoje pojasnjevalne moči.

Sklep

Sistematična analiza slovenskih osnovnošolskih učbenikov in učnih načrtov za zgodovino in družbenomoralno vzgojo razkriva izrazito stabilen interpretativni okvir, skozi katerega sta bila v obdobju socialistične Jugoslavije mladim generacijam predstavljena neuvrščenost in globalni jug. Učbeniške razlage sodobnega sveta so izhajale iz jasno opredeljenega nabora načel, pri čemer menjave avtorjev in nihanja v neposrednosti ideološkega jezika niso bistveno spreminjale normativnih poudarkov. Ti so temeljili na zavezanosti ustanovni listini OZN, kritiki blokofske delitve sveta, zavračanju imperializma, kolonializma in neokolonializma ter zagovarjanju mednarodne solidarnosti, miroljubne koeksistence in pravice narodov do samoodločbe, neodvisnosti in enakopravnosti. Slovenski osnovnošolci so povojni svet spoznavali skozi nasprotja med imperializmom in protikolonialnim osvobajanjem, blokofsko politiko in miroljubno koeksistenco ter hegemonijo velesil in enakopravnostjo narodov.

Znotraj tega razlagalnega okvira je Jugoslaviji pripadalo posebno mesto, njena neuvrščenost pa je predstavljala pomemben vir legitimacije jugoslovanskega

⁶¹ Ibid., 57.

⁶² Ibid., 58.

socialističnega projekta. Jugoslovanska zunanja politika je bila umeščena v širša prizadevanja za mir, družbeni napredek in pravičnejšo svetovno ureditev ter prikazana kot zgodovinsko utemeljen in moralno legitimen odgovor na izzive hladne vojne. Poudarjanje mednarodnega ugleda Jugoslavije, njene vodilne vloge v gibanju neuvrščenih in razvejane mreže partnerstev z državami globalnega juga je utrjevalo podobo države, katere mednarodni vpliv je daleč presegal njeno velikost ter gospodarsko in vojaško moč.

Reprezentacije globalnega juga so bile pretežno strukturirane skozi procese dekolonizacije, nacionalne emancipacije in protikolonialnega boja. Čeprav so bile države Azije in Afrike v učbenikih pogosto označene kot gospodarsko nerazvite in celo »zao-stale«, analiza ni razkrila eksplicitnega paternalističnega diskurza, ki bi Jugoslavijo postavljala za civilizacijski ali razvojni zgled državam globalnega juga. Nasprotno, predstavljena je bila kot njihova politična zaveznica in enakopravna partnerica. Za učbeniške pripovedi je bila značilna tudi skoraj popolna odsotnost rase in rasizma kot samostojnih analitičnih kategorij. Rasizem je bil praviloma obravnavan v povezavi s kolonializmom in apartheidom, ne pa kot širši zgodovinski in družbeni pojav, kar je mogoče razumeti kot specifično obliko »rasne slepote«, ki je v ospredje postavljala univerzalistični diskurz bratstva med narodi in enakosti vseh ljudi.

Raziskava je obenem razkrila neskladje med velikim simbolnim pomenom neuvrščenosti za jugoslovansko državno identiteto in razmeroma omejenim prostora, ki so ji ga namenjali zgodovinski učbeniki. Ta paradoks je še izrazitejši ob upoštevanju arhivskih virov, ki kažejo, da pouk zgodovine zaradi pomanjkanja časa pogosto ni dosegel povojnega obdobja. Raziskava zato osvetljuje predvsem uradni izobraževalni diskurz in predstave oblasti o zaželenih oblikah politične socializacije, ne pa nujno dejanske recepcije neuvrščenih vsebin v šolskem vsakdanu. Razmerje med normativnimi zahtevami učnih načrtov, učiteljskimi praksami in dejanskimi izkušnjami učencev tako ostaja odprto raziskovalno vprašanje, prav tako pa ostajajo predmet nadaljnjih raziskav analize učnih načrtov in učbenikov v drugih nekdanjih jugoslovanskih republikah, za katere primerljive študije še niso bile opravljene.

Kljub tem omejitvam je raziskava pokazala, da je bilo osnovnošolsko izobraževanje eden ključnih mehanizmov institucionalizacije in reprodukcije jugoslovanskega neuvrščenega internacionalizma. Učbeniki niso zgolj posredovali znanja o gibanju neuvrščenih in procesih dekolonizacije, temveč so s selektivno interpretacijo povojnega sveta oblikovali epistemološki in normativni horizont, znotraj katerega je bila jugoslovanska neuvrščenost predstavljena kot logičen, zgodovinsko utemeljen in moralno upravičen odgovor na izzive hladne vojne. Globalni jug je v tej pripovedi nastopal kot osrednji prostor potrjevanja jugoslovanske zunanjepolitične vizije, neuvrščenost pa kot organski podaljšek jugoslovanskega samoupravnega socializma.

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Mateja Režek

YUGOSLAV NON-ALIGNMENT AND THE GLOBAL SOUTH IN PRIMARY SCHOOL CURRICULA AND TEXTBOOKS IN SOCIALIST SLOVENIA

SUMMARY

This article examines representations of Yugoslav non-alignment and the Global South in Slovenian primary school curricula and textbooks for History and Social and Moral Education throughout the entire period of socialist Yugoslavia. It demonstrates that successive generations of pupils encountered the post-war world through a remarkably stable interpretative framework, despite changes in textbook authorship, pedagogical approaches, and the explicitness of ideological language. At its core was a coherent normative vision based on the principles of the UN Charter, opposition to imperialism, colonialism, and neo-colonialism, criticism of Cold War bloc politics, and support for peaceful coexistence, international solidarity, and the rights of nations to self-determination, independence, and equality.

Within this framework, Yugoslavia occupied a distinctive position. Textbooks consistently portrayed it as an active member of the United Nations, one of the founders and a leading force of the Non-Aligned Movement, and a committed advocate of decolonisation, the peaceful settlement of international disputes, and equality among nations. By emphasising Yugoslavia's international influence and extensive ties with countries of the Global South, textbook narratives projected the image of a state whose global significance exceeded its demographic, economic, and military weight. Yugoslav foreign policy was presented not simply as a pragmatic diplomatic strategy but as a historically grounded and morally justified alternative to the bipolar Cold War order. In this way, textbooks functioned as instruments of political socialisation, encouraging pupils to interpret international relations through a set of normative binaries: imperialism versus anticolonial liberation, bloc confrontation versus peaceful coexistence, and great-power hegemony versus the equality of nations.

Representations of the Global South were likewise framed through decolonisation, national emancipation, and anticolonial struggle. Although Asian and African countries were frequently described as economically underdeveloped or even "backward", the textbooks did not construct Yugoslavia as a civilisational or developmental model. Instead, they depicted it as a political ally and equal partner to countries of the Global South. At the same time, race and racism remained largely absent as independent analytical categories. References to racism appeared primarily in discussions of colonialism and apartheid rather than as broader historical or social phenomena. This

pattern can be interpreted as a form of “racial blindness”, whereby racial difference was subsumed within a universalist discourse emphasising the equality of nations and the brotherhood of all peoples.

The study also reveals a notable discrepancy between the centrality of non-alignment to Yugoslav state identity and the relatively limited attention it received in primary school textbooks. Archival evidence further suggests that history teaching often failed to reach the post-war period because of time constraints, thereby highlighting the gap between intended curricula and classroom practice. Consequently, the article illuminates primarily the official educational discourse and the authorities’ vision of desirable political socialisation rather than pupils’ actual learning experiences. The relationship between curricular prescriptions, teaching practices, and classroom reception therefore remains an important avenue for future research, as do analyses of curricula and textbooks in the other former Yugoslav republics, where, to the best of current knowledge, no equivalent studies have yet been undertaken.

Despite these limitations, the article demonstrates that primary education constituted an important mechanism for the institutionalisation and reproduction of Yugoslav non-aligned internationalism. Textbooks did more than simply transmit knowledge about the Non-Aligned Movement and decolonisation. Through their selective interpretation of the post-war world, they constructed the epistemological and normative framework within which Yugoslavia’s non-alignment appeared as a logical, historically grounded, and morally justified response to the challenges of the Cold War. Within this narrative, the Global South functioned as the principal arena in which Yugoslavia’s foreign policy vision was affirmed, while non-alignment was presented as an organic extension of Yugoslav self-management socialism.

Jurij Perovšek*

O oblikovanju slovenske (samo)zvesti in volje po nacionalni emancipaciji

IZVLEČEK

V monografiji Zgodovina slovenske politične misli Janko Prunk prikaže njen razvoj od pomladi narodov in revolucijskega časa leta 1848, ko je zaživela z zahtevo izobražencev, študentov in duhovnikov po Združeni Sloveniji (upravnopolitično združenem slovenskem ozemlju v habsburški monarhiji), do vzpostavitve samostojne in neodvisne Republike Slovenije leta 1991. Predstavi niz različnih zgodovinskih položajev, s katerimi je bila vpeta v čas, ki jo je rojeval in usmerjal, in jo razčleni po vseh njenih ideoloških, političnih, družbenih in socialnih značilnostih in podrobnostih. V pogledu na slovenski zgodovinski razvoj je tako jasno razvidno, da so Slovenci poleg kulturne in narodne misli, ki sta usmerjali in vodili slovenski narod na poti k nacionalni samozvesti in emancipaciji, oblikovali tudi politično misel. Zgodovinska podoba Slovencev je sedaj še preglednejša in jasnejša. Monografija prepoznavno prispeva k vedenju o nas samih in razumevanju razmer, ki so oblikovale slovenskega človeka v prejšnjih dobah in deloma tudi še v današnji.

Ključne besede: Janko Prunk, politična misel, Združena Slovenija, avstrijska doba, Kraljevina Srbov, Hrvatov in Slovencev/Jugoslavija, druga svetovna vojna, socialistična Jugoslavija, idejnopolitični monizem komunistične partije, Republika Slovenija

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ABSTRACT

ON THE FORMATION OF SLOVENIAN (SELF-)AWARENESS AND THE WILL FOR NATIONAL EMANCIPATION

In his monograph Zgodovina slovenske politične misli (The History of Slovenian Political Thought), Janko Prunk traces the development of Slovenian political thought from the Spring of Nations and the revolutionary period of 1848, when it came to life spurred by the demands from intellectuals, students, and clergy for a United Slovenia (an administratively and politically unified Slovenian territory within the Habsburg Monarchy), to the establishment of the sovereign and independent Republic of Slovenia in 1991. The author presents a series of historical contexts in which this development was embedded – a time that shaped and guided it – and analyses it in terms of all its ideological, political, and social characteristics and details. When considering Slovenia's historical progress, it is clear that, in addition to the cultural and national thought that guided the Slovenian people on their path to national self-awareness and emancipation, the Slovenians also developed their political thought. The historical image of Slovenians is now even clearer and more comprehensive. The monograph makes a significant contribution to our knowledge of ourselves and to our understanding of the circumstances that have shaped the Slovenian people in the past and, to some extent, continue to do so today.

Keywords: Janko Prunk, political thought, United Slovenia, the Austrian period, Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes/Yugoslavia, World War II, Socialist Yugoslavia, the Communist Party's ideological and political monism, Republic of Slovenia

1.

Sicer z zakasnitvijo, vendar nikakor prepozno, imamo lepo priložnost, da znova opozorimo na raziskovalno delo našega nekdanjega dolgoletnega inštitutskega kolega, zaslužnega profesorja ljubljanske univerze, dr. Janka Prunka. Poznamo ga po vrsti tehničnih študij, s katerimi je prebojno zaznamoval slovensko zgodovino in pisje in raziskovalno delo usmeril tudi v razvoj enega od ključnih narodno-identitetnih označevalcev – zgodovino slovenske politične misli. Tako je tudi naslovil svojo zadnjo študijo – *Zgodovina slovenske politične misli*.¹ Temu vprašanju je doslej že večkrat namenil pozornost,² zdaj pa je k slovenskemu zgodovinsko-političnemu prispeval zaokroženo poglabitev

1 Janko Prunk, *Zgodovina slovenske politične misli* (Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 2023).

2 Janko Prunk, *Slovenski narodni programi: narodni programi v slovenski politični misli od 1848 do 1945* (Ljubljana: Društvo 2000, 1986). Janko Prunk, *Nova slovenska samozavest: pogovori s slovenskimi političnimi prvaki* (Ljubljana: Lumi; Panatal, 1990). Janko Prunk, *Slovenski narodni vzpon: narodna politika (1768–1992)* (Državna založba Slovenije, 1992 (i. e. 1993)). Janko Prunk in Cirila Toplak, *Parlamentarna izkušnja Slovencev* (Ljubljana: Fakulteta

v narodovo presojanje politike in njenih zgodovinskih položajev od slovenskega političnega rojstva v revolucijskem letu 1848 do uresničitve slovenske države – Republike Slovenije (RS) leta 1991. Na to velja v zgodovinarskem razmišljanju posebej opozoriti. Zato sem se ob tej priložnosti odločil, da namesto običajne bolj ali manj kratke knjižne ocene ali poročila za rubriko »Razmišljanja in razpravljanja« pripravi daljšo predstavitev avtorjeve obravnave politične misli in tako prispevam k podrobnejšemu pregledu humanističnih raziskovalnih pridobitev v zadnjem času. Tu naj še enkrat spomnim na avtorjevi izjemno pomembni deli, ki sta pred *Zgodovino* poudarili njegovo zgodovinarsko podobo – *Racionalistična civilizacija: 1776–2000*³ in *Zgodovina Evrope v dobi racionalistične civilizacije 1775–2015*.⁴ V obeh je veliko znanja in pristne zgodovinarske misli in, kot sem že zapisal, bi ju na svoji knjižni polici moral imeti vsak, ki ga zanima domišljeno in celovito podprto zrenje na zadnjih 250 let evropske zgodovine.⁵

Janko Prunk je *Zgodovino slovenske politične misli* zasnoval tako, da je v pogledu na slovenski zgodovinski razvoj jasno razvidno, »da smo Slovenci imeli poleg kulturne in narodne misli, ki sta usmerjali in vodili slovenski narod na poti k nacionalni samozvesti in emancipaciji, tudi politično misel«.⁶ Kot vemo, je z zahtevo izobražencev, študentov in duhovnikov po Združeni Sloveniji zaživela v pomladi narodov in revolucijskem času leta 1848; druge vidike politične misli so ob tem razvijali slovenski poslanci, ki so jih tedaj izvolili v dunajski državni zbor. Avtor se pri presoji graditve slovenske politične misli ustavi ob izstopajočih predlogih, ki so jih podali ob posameznih vprašanjih. Pri vprašanju kmečke odveze sta se srečala predlog Matije Kavčiča, ki je odpravo podložništva povezal z nujnostjo odškodnine »grajščinam«, in predlog Antona Černeteta, ki je na podlagi načela svobode, enakopravnosti in bratstva zavračal odškodnino. (»Moj nasprotnik me je tlačil doslej na duhu in telesu in plenil imetje, jaz pa zahtevam, da mi to povrne.«⁷) Medtem ko je bil Kavčičev predlog z demokratičnega in socialnega stališča škodljiv, je bil Černetov radikalno demokratičen in je odražal duha jakobincev. Prunk opozarja, da je njegov predlog premalo znan in močno pobija tezo o slovenski ponižnosti in hlapčevstvu.⁸ Černetu je pritegnil Anton Gorjup. Državni zbor je izglasoval zemljiško odvezo z odškodnino. Proti njej je glasovala polovica slovenskih poslancev.

Prunk nato opozori na razpravo, ki je v državnem zboru potekala o narodnem vprašanju. V njej je med slovenskimi poslanci Kavčič zagovarjal bistveno naprednejši predlog, kot je bil tisti o zemljiški odvezi. Utemeljeval je razdelitev države po narodnostnem načelu in v njej oblikovanje »Slovenije« (slovenske Štajerske, Kranjske in Slovenskega primorja). A Avstrija je ostala do konca svojega obstoja razdeljena na dežele in je preprečevala slovensko narodno emancipacijo. Stališče nemških nacionalcev, ki so zaradi

za družbene vede, 2005). Janko Prunk in Marjetka Rangus, *Sto let življenja slovenskih političnih strank 1890–1990* (Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede, 2014).

3 Janko Prunk, *Racionalistična civilizacija: 1776–2000* (Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 2008).

4 Janko Prunk, *Zgodovina Evrope v dobi racionalistične civilizacije 1775–2015* (Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 2015).

5 Jurij Perovšek, »Janko Prunk – osemdesetletnik«, *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino* 62, št. 2 (2022): 208.

6 Prunk, *Zgodovina slovenske politične misli*, 8.

7 Ibidem, 28.

8 Ibid.

Trsta in poti do njega odklanjali vsako misel na federalizacijo države in ustanovitev Združene Slovenije, je v veliki meri pogojevalo oziroma določalo slovensko politiko vse do konca monarhije.

Slovenski poslanci so sodelovali tudi v razpravi o nosilcu oblasti v monarhiji. Pri tem vprašanju se, kot pravi avtor, niso izkazali.⁹ Podprli so načelo cesarjeve suverenosti, ki je zaprlo avstrijsko pot v ljudsko suverenost in pravo demokracijo. Slovenci v revolucionarnem letu 1848 niso dosegli Združene Slovenije, preostalo jim je le agitacijsko delo. Priznani pa sta jim bili etničnost in individualnost in vstopili so v politično življenje. V tem pogledu predstavlja leto 1848 enega od najpomembnejših prelomov v slovenski zgodovini.

2.

Slovensko narodnopolitično gibanje je po porazu revolucije v petdesetih letih onemogočil neoabsolutizem. Avtor lahko zgolj ugotovi, da se je slovensko narodno gibanje omejilo le na uspehe na kulturnem področju. Pomembna pa je bila akcija lavantinskega škofa Antona Martina Slomška, ki je dosegel, da so leta 1859 sedež škofije premestili iz koroškega Št. Andraža v Maribor. Močno so spremenili tudi ozemlje škofije. Lavantinska škofija je celovski odstopila svoje ozemlje na Koroškem, od graške pa je pridobila Slovenske gorice. »S tem je nekako zakoličila slovensko etnično mejo proti Nemcem na Štajerskem in mariborsko Podravje obvarovala pred germanizacijo.«¹⁰ Maribor je tedaj dobil svoje bogoslovje, ki je postalo eno od središč slovenskega narodnokulturnega razvoja in je v poznejših desetletjih vplivalo na utrjevanje slovenstva v mestu in okolici.

Sledila so narodnoemancipacijska prizadevanja v šestdesetih letih. Prinesla so narodno spomenico, ki so jo po februarjem patentu 1861 Slovenci izročili ministrskemu predsedniku Antonu Schmerlingu in v njej zahtevali jezikovno enakopravnost, spojitve slovenskih dežel v eno upravno telo (Schmerling nanjo ni odgovoril) in čitalniško narodno društveno življenje. Za emancipacijo je bila pomembna ustanovitev telovadne organizacije Južni Sokol leta 1863 v Ljubljani. Avtor opozori, da se je v teh letih prevladujoči konservativni staroslovenski politični zavesti, ki je bila izhodišče poznejših Mahničevih idejnopoličnih nazorov, upiral pisatelj Fran Levstik. Postajal je nekakšna vodeča osebnost slovenskega liberalizma.¹¹ Pomembno dejanje je bila ustanovitev kulturno-znanstvene ustanove Slovenska matica leta 1864, ki je bila, kljub medsebojnim trenjem, plod skupne odločitve staroslovencev in liberalnih mladoslovencev. Leto kasneje je slovenska politična misel iskala rešitev narodnega položaja v zamisli t.i. Notranje Avstrije, ki bi obsegala Štajersko, Koroško, Kranjsko, Gorico in Trst, a bi zajemala le 43 odstotkov slovenskega prebivalstva. Zamisel ni

9 Ibid., 35.

10 Ibid., 39.

11 Ibid., 43.

prodrli in tudi vladajoče elite v Avstriji niso razmišljale o njeni izpolnitvi. Jasno se je pokazalo, »da avstrijsko nemštvo ne bo nikoli dovolilo neke avtonomne združene Slovenije in da mora to slovensko ozemlje ostati v domeni nemštva ter biti na dolgi rok germanizirano«. ¹²

Z vzpostavitvijo dualizma leta 1867 so bili Slovenci ločeni od Hrvatov in povsem sami izpostavljeni nemškemu pritisku. Avtor predstavi oba pogleda na reševanje slovenskega vprašanja, ki sta nato trideset let predstavljala narodnopolitični usmeritvi obeh tedanjih idejnih taborov. Liberalci so njegovo rešitev na podlagi naravnega prava videli v Združeni Sloveniji in povezavi z drugimi jugoslovanskimi narodi (Josip Vošnjak), konservativci pa so vztrajali pri legitimizmu v Avstriji, upajoč, da se bo demokratizirala in sprejela načelo narodne avtonomije, ki bo k sebi pritegnila še druge Jugoslovane (Janez Bleiweis). Leta 1868 so na mladoslovenski (liberalni) strani ustanovili politični list *Slovenski narod*, ki se je v svojem programu osredinil na federalistične narodnopolitične zahteve in poudaril pomen vere in Cerkve. Dejstvo, da so pri tem pustili ob strani vse temeljne politične in socialne zahteve, ki so tedaj v Evropi in tudi v Avstriji določale liberalce, ne dokazuje, »da so bili slovenski politiki nerazgledani ali neozaveščeni, ampak so se zavedali goreče potrebe slovenske narodnopolitične emancipacije kot temeljnega pogoja narodnega obstoja in razvoja«. ¹³ *Slovenski narod* je podprl tudi povezovanje z drugimi jugoslovanskimi narodi. Oprl se je na leto dni starejšo Levstikovo zamisel o politični solidarnosti Slovencev in Jugoslovancev. Tu se srečamo z opozorilom, da je Levstik svojo zamisel povezal z malodušno digresijo, po kateri naj Slovenci sami zase v politiki nikoli ne bi nič pomenili. To je bil izraz strahotne politične eksistencialne stiske. Levstik je pozneje ni ponavljal v takšni obliki,

je pa živela v slovenskem narodu dolga leta in prevladovala nad samoslovensko politično samozadostnostjo ter v bistvu determinirala slovensko narodnopolitično gibanje in njegove odločitve. Samoslovensko samozavest je v slovenskem narodnopolitičnem gibanju močneje zaznati le v treh obdobjih v novejši slovenski zgodovini: prvič pri nekaterih slovenskih demokratičnih ljudskofrontnih silah v letih 1939–1940, potem pri istih z vso elementarno močjo v času narodnoosvobodilnega boja in nato še enkrat v letih 1986–1991, ko je vodila do samostojne slovenske države. ¹⁴

Na slovenski politični poti je ob pojavu *Slovenskega naroda* sočasno nastopilo tudi narodno gibanje, ki je še družno nastopalo za slovenski narodni program – Združeno Slovenijo. Gre za poznano taborsko gibanje, ljudska zborovanja na prostem, ki so jih pripravili v letih 1868–1871.

Taborske zahteve so bile tako splošno vseslovenske, da so se zanje mogli družiti mlado- in staroslovenci. Na taborih so sodelovali vsi družbeni sloji, kmetje,

12 Ibid., 44–45.

13 Ibid., 50.

14 Ibid.

meščanstvo, inteligenca in duhovništvo, zato taborske zahteve lahko veljajo za pravi množični narodni plebiscit. Takšna slovenska narodno politična enotnost je bila do neke mere dosežena le v deklaracijskem gibanju 1917–1918 in v letih 1990–1991.¹⁵

V času taborov se je leta 1870 v Ljubljani zbral še jugoslovanski kongres, ki so se ga udeležili slovenski in hrvaški politiki ter predstavnik vojvodinskih Srbov Laza Kostić. Izrekli so se za kulturno in jezikovno enotnost Slovencev, Hrvatov in Srbov v monarhiji. To stališče je »izviralo samo iz spoznanja, da naj bi s temi problemi ne zapletali kovanja politične enotnosti v boju proti nastopajočemu nemštvu.«¹⁶ Proti kongresu je nastopil politični voditelj vojvodinskih Srbov Svetozar Miletić, ki je odklanjal povezovanje slovenskega vprašanja z bojem Srbov in Hrvatov. Ugovarjal mu je Josip Jurčič. Ugotavljal je, da Miletić Slovence izključuje iz jugoslovanske zveze in sili Hrvate, naj Slovence prepustijo Nemcem.

Avtor preide na spor med mlado- in staroslovenci, ki se je razvnel po koncu taborskega gibanja. Imel je idejnopolitično ozadje, v programu Združene Slovenije pa med obema taboroma ni bilo bistvenih razlik. *Zgodovina slovenske politične misli* predstavi njun ideološko-politični značaj. Za mladoslovence avtor pravi, da njihov program ni bil posebej ideološko usmerjen. Celo izrecno je poudarjal moralno vrednost krščanstva in narodnobuditeljsko vlogo Cerkve. Na vprašanje, zakaj so staroslovenski konservativci, ki so se opirali na Katoliško cerkev, tako ostro nastopali proti liberalcem, odgovarja, da je bil razlog precej preprost. »Šlo jim je za obrambo svojega vodstvenega položaja v slovenskem narodu.«¹⁷ Pomembno je avtorjevo opozorilo, da se je slovenski konservativizem razlikoval od konservativizma v večini evropskih držav. Tam se je v boju s svobodnjaškim meščanstvom opiral na aristokratski fevdalni sloj, ki je kljub zmagi meščanske revolucije zadržal nekatere pomembne ključne položaje v družbi in državi: še precej zemljiške veleposesti in vodstvene položaje v državnem aparatu, v visoki administraciji, vojski in diplomaciji. Na Slovenskem takšnih temeljev ni imel, zato se je socialno naslonil na kmeta, ki je predstavljal večino slovenskega prebivalstva. Označevala ga je še ena značilnost: tudi ideološko se je precej razlikoval od klasičnega evropskega aristokratskega konservativizma. Popolnoma je sprejel idejni pogled Katoliške cerkve, ki se je sredi šestdesetih let oblikoval v vatikanski kuriji in leta 1864 dobil svoj izraz v encikliki papeža Pija IX. *Quanta cura* z njenim seznamom – *Syllabus* – osemdesetih »največjih in najpomembnejših zmot« sodobnega časa. Vsebovale so zavrnitev vseh idejnopolitičnih in kulturnih stvaritev razsvetljenstva (liberalizma), od poudarjanja razuma kot temelja vsega človekovega razmišljanja in odločanja, človekove svobodne volje in svobodnih odločitev do ločevanja Cerkve od države in pojmovanja Cerkve le kot civilne družbene organizacije. *Syllabus* je poudarjal pomen družine kot temelja družbe, svetosti zakonske zveze in nasprotoval enačenju pravic vseh veroizpovedi pred državno oblastjo. »S takšno ideologijo je *Syllabus* –

15 Ibid., 55.

16 Ibid., 57.

17 Ibid., 51.

oziroma njegova prilagoditev na slovensko družbo – vnesel hudo idejno in socialno razklanost, ki je obremenjevala slovensko družbo do konca druge svetovne vojne.«¹⁸

Po taborskem gibanju so na katoliški strani leta 1873 ustanovili svoj politični list *Slovenec*. Zagovarjal je konservativni legalistični program brez omembe temeljnih človekovih in državljanskih pravic, se potegoval za slovensko narodnost in Katoliško cerkev ter nastopal proti liberalizmu. To je bil, kot pravi Prunk, z nekaj dopolnili do srede devetdesetih let program slovenskih političnih katolikov. *Slovenčevo* obsojanje liberalizma je zavrnil *Slovenski narod*, ki je poudaril, da ta Cerkvi ni sovražen, in izrazil upanje, da bodo potomci doživeli čas, ko bosta liberalizem in krščanstvo složna v spravi med seboj. Prvotni slovenski liberalizem si je zaradi boja proti nemškemu pritisku prizadeval ohraniti narodnopolitično enotnost ob zavedanju, da je večina slovenskega naroda močno ukoreninjena v versko obarvani, krščanski tradiciji.

Slovenska politika je poznala tudi misel o slogi. Ta je zaustavila konflikte med obema strujama narodnega gibanja, ki so v sedemdesetih letih postajali vse pogostejši. Avtor pritrjuje uveljavljeni oceni, da je bilo slogaštvo, izraženo kot oblika upiranja nemštvu, bolj ali manj le premirje, saj gredo načela svojo pot.¹⁹ Obdržalo se je do začetka devetdesetih let. Večji del tega obdobja se je prekrival s Taaffejevo dobo, režimom ministrskega predsednika Eduarda Taaffeja v letih 1879–1893, ko so se Slovenci zadovoljili z »drobtinčarsko« politiko, malimi ugodnostmi, s katerimi je Taaffe nagrajeval tudi svoje slovenske podpornike. Vseeno pa so tedaj dosegli velik dvig kulturne ravni in splošne razvojne stopnje slovenskega naroda.

Zgodovina slovenske politične misli na Taaffejevo dobo pokaže še z enega vidika. V takratnem družbenem in idejnopolitičnem življenju je leta 1884 prišlo do Mahničevega ideološkega posega. Začel je boj za ločitev duhov in v znanem spisu *Dvanajst večerov* položil temelje agresivnemu katolištvu med Slovenci. Kot izrazit zastopnik katoliškega univerzalizma je konec osemdesetih let razširil idejni boj na vsa področja javnega življenja in spodbudil politični razkol med liberalizmom in političnim katolicizmom. Sistematične idejnopolitične, kulturno-prosvetne in socialnogospodarske smernice za delovanje katoličanov so pod njegovim vodstvom izdelali na I. slovenskem katoliškem shodu leta 1892.

Ker se politična misel prepleta s socialnogospodarskimi nazori, *Zgodovina* ponuja tudi vpogled v socialnogospodarski značaj političnih taborov. Označujočega so razvili v katoliškem, kjer so odločilno podporo dobili v socialnogospodarski akciji Janeza Evangelista Kreka. Avtor opozori na njegovo antropološko-sociološko študijo kmečkega položaja v *Črnih bukvah kmečkega stanu* leta 1895 in zadružno akcijo organiziranja kmečke samopomoči v obliki hranilnic in posojilnic. Kot socialno razgledan mislec je Krek ustanavljal tudi izobraževalna in socialna podporna društva za obrtnike in delavski stan. Avtor predstavi še Krekov *Socialni načrt slovenskih delavskih stanov* iz istega leta – moderen socialni načrt slovenske družbe, ki bi temeljil v svobodnem samoorganiziranju posameznih slojev na podlagi vzajemnosti in solidarnosti med stanovi ter

18 Ibid..

19 Ibid., 65.

pomoči države. Krekovo socialno družbeno delovanje je dalo katoliški politični stranki, ki je nastopila leta 1895, značaj resnično vseljidske stranke (morda ji je manjkalo še nekaj demokracije) in jo usposobilo za uspešno tekmovanje z domačimi nasprotniki, liberalci in socialnimi demokrati. Ti so se, tako kot liberalna in katoliška stran, strankarsko organizirali sredi devetdesetih let. Tristrankarstvo se je na Slovenskem ohranilo do konca avstrijske dobe, čeprav je v začetku 20. stoletja kazalo, da bi lahko prišlo do oblikovanja še dveh političnih subjektov. Avtor opozarja na intelektualni skupini masarykovcev in narodno-radikalne mladine, ki pa sta ostali brez družbenega in političnega zaledja za samostojno strankarsko akcijo. Politična misel prvih se je opirala na kritiko liberalizma, političnega katolicizma, socialne demokracije in marksizma, ki jo je podal češki filozof in politik Tomáš Masaryk. Prunk jo označi za nekakšen reformistični socializem z reformističnimi demokratičnimi kulturnoantropološkimi pogledi na družbo in socializem.²⁰ Masarykovci so v nacionalnem vprašanju zagovarjali narodno avtonomijo. Druga skupina je pripadala liberalnemu idejnemu krogu, zaznamovala pa sta jo nasprotovanje političnemu katolicizmu, ki je že prihajalo v protikatolištvo, in jugoslovanski unitaristični nacionalni program.

Narodni vsebini slovenske politične misli se nato *Zgodovina* posveti na njeni novi ravni, zamisli o oblikovanju tretje, jugoslovanske državnopravne enote v habsburški monarhiji. Trialistična ideja je v različnih oblikah rasla od konca 19. stoletja. S tem državnopravnim programom je katoliška stran prevzela vodstvo v narodni politiki. Narodno vprašanje je zaposlovalo tudi liberalno in socialnodemokratsko stran, ki pa o trializmu nista posebej govorili, tudi zaradi tega, ker je bil to med Slovenci program katoliške stranke. Za liberalne koncepte je bil značilen novoilirizem, poudarjanje kulturne enotnosti jugoslovanskih narodov, ki je najboljši temelj za njihovo politično združitev. Unitaristični koncept je v stališču o slovensko-hrvaški narodni enotnosti živel tudi v katoliškem taboru, h kateremu se je odkrito nagnil vodilni katoliški ideolog Aleš Ušeničnik. Jugoslovansko unitaristično smer je zagovarjalo tudi revolucionarno gibanje Preporod, ki je prvo med Slovenci izhajalo iz prepričanja, da je svoboda slovenskega naroda mogoča le na razvalinah habsburške monarhije, hkrati z združitvijo z drugimi jugoslovanskimi narodi. Unitarizem je prav tako zaznamoval socialno demokracijo, ob tem ko so nekateri njeni vidni pripadniki (Anton Dermota, Dragotin Lončar, Albin Prepeluh, Henrik Tuma) zavrnilo novoilirsko kulturno in jezikovno jugoslovanstvo. Kot vemo, je največji odmev imela Cankarjeva zavrnitev novoilirizma v njegovem predavanju Slovenci in Jugoslovani leta 1913. Podobno izkušnjo je isto leto doživela liberalna stran, ko se je v t. i. *Vedini* anketi o odnosu med slovenstvom in jugoslovanstvom večina njenih slovenskih udeležencev izrekla za ohranitev slovenskega knjižnega jezika. A slovenska politična misel je 20. stoletje začela s prepoznavno jugoslovansko unitaristično usmeritvijo.

Ob zgoraj povedanem avtor opozori še na druge tedanje programske poudarke v slovenski politiki. Ustavi se pri širšem liberalnem političnem in socialnem programu leta 1906, ki so ga utemeljili v nacionalizmu, demokratizmu, svobodomiselnosti in

20 Ibid., 91.

socialnih reformah (ponovili so temeljne liberalne vrednote v okviru meščanskega kapitalističnega sistema), in Krekovem prizadevanju za starostno kmečko zavarovanje leta 1909. Izhajalo je iz njegove podpore vladnemu predlogu zakona o splošnem socialnem zavarovanju. V državnem zboru ga niso sprejeli. Prunk opomni, da je misel o kmečkem zavarovanju v Sloveniji zamrla za več kot pol stoletja.

Krek je bil s svojim pomembnim, naprednim socialno zaščitnim angažiranjem za starostno zavarovanje kmetov daleč pred svojim časom. Zanimivo, da so mu za časa življenja nasprotovali liberalci iz socialno-gospodarskih razlogov, po zmagi revolucije pa tudi njena vodilna sila iz ideoloških razlogov, češ da je mali kmet zasebni lastnik in zato nasprotnik socializma. Trajalo je kar nekaj desetletij, da je jugoslovanski komunistični režim opustil takšno dogmatsko sektaško stališče.²¹

Avtor se še enkrat obrne k trializmu in spomni, da je nemška stran dosledno odklanjala vključitev Slovenije v jugoslovansko državnopravno enoto. To je pomenilo, da brez vojne in oslabitve nemštva v habsburški monarhiji in Evropi tudi mlajša generacija, kljub svojemu morebitnemu radikalizmu, ne bi imela možnosti, da bi slovenske dežele iztrgala iz nadoblasti in življenjske sfere nemštva. »Toda na kako veliko vseevropsko vojno ni računal nihče« – »a zgodilo se je prav to«.²²

Zdaj se Prunk posveti obdobju prve svetovne vojne. Opozori na slovenski avstrijski patriotizem na njenem začetku. Nato opiše pot slovenske politike do (trialistične) Majniške deklaracije leta 1917, njeno preseganje v odločitvi za izstop iz habsburške države in oblikovanje samostojne jugoslovanske skupnosti. Uresničila jo je slovenska samoodločba 29. oktobra 1918, ko so dotedanji habsburški Jugoslovani oblikovali Državo Slovencev, Hrvatov in Srbov (Država SHS). Ustavi se ob slovenski samostojnosti v Državi SHS in predstavi proces jugoslovanske državne združitve novembra 1918. V njem so se srečali sprva republikanski in federalistični koncept katoliške Slovenske ljudske stranke (SLS) in Jugoslovanske socialnodemokratske stranke, monarhistični in unitarnocentralistični načrt liberalne Jugoslovanske demokratske stranke, narodnoavtonomistična resolucija Kulturnega odseka Narodnega sveta in proti njej usmerjena unitarnocentralistična izjava liberalnih umetnikov in intelektualcev. Ne pozabi na opozorilo socialnega demokrata Antona Štebija, ki je svaril pred združitvijo s Srbijo, na kar je že septembra 1918 opozarjal tudi katoliški prvak v avstrijski dobi Ivan Šusteršič. Združitev Države SHS in Kraljevine Srbije v Kraljestvo Srbov, Hrvatov in Slovencev (od leta 1920 Kraljevina SHS) so v podreditvi centralističnemu načelu in sprejemu monarhije izvedli 1. decembra 1918. Avtor zapiše:

Začenjalo se je novo politično življenje Slovencev, mnogo bolj problematično, kot so si ga predstavljali od odhodu iz habsburške monarhije. To je bilo razumljivo, saj

21 Ibid., 113.

22 Ibid., 114–15.

so se srečali narodi različnih kultur, načinov življenja oz. civilizacijske opredelitve.²³ [...] Nekaj pa je moč ugotoviti: da so Slovenci Jugoslavijo sprejemali in ji bili zvesti, tako politiki kakor navadni državljani, čeprav ni izpolnila vseh njihovih sanj. Tudi zanje je bila narodna država in kljub vsemu 'minor malum', kot se je malo pred njenim koncem, pred okupacijo, izrazil slovenski narodni voditelj dr. Anton Korošec.²⁴

3.

Dobrih dvainsedemdeset let trajajočo jugoslovansko stopnjo v razvoju slovenskega naroda Prunk začne s poudarkom, da Srbi in dvor, ki so dominirali v novi jugoslovanski državi, niso ravnali modro in taktno. »Namesto da bi pustili avtonomijo dežel, ki so se združile s Srbijo, in tako ustvarili prepričanje enakopravnosti združenih bratskih narodov, sta v svoji zavesti zmagovalca uvedla centralistično državno obliko in odpravila vse avtonomne politične institucije pri nesrbskih narodih in jih podredila Beogradu.«²⁵ To je odrazila Vidovdanska ustava leta 1921, ki je uzakonila državni centralizem in jugoslovanski narodni unitarizem, po katerem naj bi bili Slovenci, Hrvati in Srbi le »plemena« enotnega, sicer troimenega, jugoslovanskega naroda. Ustava je sprožila oster boj med centralizmom in narodnoavtonomističnim oziroma federalističnim stališčem v državi. Narodnoavtonomistične zahteve je na Slovenskem najbolj izrazito zastopala SLS. V letih 1919–1920 je slovenska politična misel vodila do pojava novih strank – liberalne Slovenske kmetijske stranke in liberalne Narodno socialistične stranke ter revolucionarne komunistične organizacije; slednjo so leta 1921 izločili iz političnega sistema in je od tedaj delovala ilegalno.

Nikakor ni zmoten poudarek, da je slovensko družbo v prvi jugoslovanski skupnosti – Kraljestvu/Kraljevini SHS (od 1929 Kraljevini Jugoslaviji) – v ideološkem pogledu najmočneje zaznamovalo nasprotje med političnim katolicizmom in liberalizmom. Iz avstrijske dobe so ga prenesli v novo državo. Tu avtor ugotavlja, da je ideološko nasprotje »slovensko politiko v prvi Jugoslaviji prevevalo mnogo bolj kot v zrelih demokratičnih evropskih državah.«

Težko je kratko povedati, iz česa je izvirala takšna prevlada ideološkosti v slovenski politiki. Čeprav je ta šla skozi razsvetljensko civilizacijsko akcijo in meščansko revolucijo leta 1848, to na njej ni pustilo modernega in demokratičnega pečata kot v drugih sosednjih srednjeevropskih deželah. Najbrž je bila temu kriva skrajno nerazvita slovenska kmečka družba, ki se je prepočasi socialno spreminjala in je ohranjala svoj konservativni značaj, v katerem pa se je dobro počutila protimoderna sila – Katoliška cerkev. Tako je Katoliška cerkev, zlasti večina njene višje duhovščine, vztrajala pri pogledih protimodernizacijske okrožnice papeža Pija IX. Quanta cura z njenim

²³ Ibid., 147.

²⁴ Ibid., 148.

²⁵ Ibid., 149.

seznamom najhujših proticerkvenih zmot, Syllabus, iz leta 1864. Slovenski liberalci pa so nastopali proticerkveno, najhujši celo protikrščansko.²⁶

Obe meščanski stranki, katoliška in liberalna, sta bili odločni nasprotnici komunizma.

V dvajsetih letih – do kraljeve diktature leta 1929 – je slovensko politično misel dopolnila vrsta narodno- in idejnopolitičnih ter socialnogospodarskih poudarkov. Na polju narodnega vprašanja so izstopali Avtonomistična izjava slovenskih kulturnih delavcev leta 1921, ki je bila idejna podlaga širokemu slovenskemu avtonomističnemu gibanju, federalistični državnopravni načrt SLS, podan v znani brošuri *Sodite po delih!* leta 1923, federalistični program, ki ga je oblikovala Slovenska republikanska stranka Antona Novačana, federalizem pa so leta 1923 sprejeli tudi komunisti. Avtonomistično-federalistično stališče je ob najmočnejši politični stranki, SLS, živelo tudi v drugih delih slovenske politike, krajši čas celo v unitarnocentralističnem liberalnem taboru. Sicer je v njem vse obdobje kraljevine jugoslovanski unitarizem imel najmočnejšo oporo. Podpirali so ga tudi socialisti. Poleg Prepeluh-Lončarjeve avtonomistične akcije je avtonomizem vidno zagovarjal tudi narodno demokratični intelektualec Lojze Ude.

Zgodovina slovenske politične misli podaja odgovor na vprašanje, zakaj najmočnejša slovenska politična stranka in vodilna avtonomistična sila SLS ob večinskem slovenskem avtonomističnem razpoloženju ni radikalizirala svojih narodnopolitičnih zahtev. Avtor opozori, da so ji njeni nasprotniki, zlasti komunisti in po letu 1932 tudi krščanski socialisti, očitali skrajni oportunitizem, takšne ocene pa so v obdobju komunističnega sistema prešle tudi v zgodovinopisje.

Toda če danes pogledamo objektivni položaj Slovencev in njihovih meščanskih strank, lahko malo bolj razumemo njihovo obnašanje. Zunanjepolitično sta Slovence tudi po odhodu iz Avstrije ogrožala nemški in italijanski imperializem in vedeli so, da jim neke vrste narodno zaščito nudi le jugoslovanska država, zato je niso hoteli radikalno napadati in ogrožati, kot je to počel del hrvaške meščanske politike, ki si je zaradi boljšega geografskega položaja Hrvaške to lahko privoščil.²⁷

Vseeno pa se je SLS leta 1933 odločila za radikalno in odmevno Slovensko deklaracijo, ki je zahtevala združitev vseh razkosanih delov slovenskega naroda in federativni položaj Slovenije v jugoslovanski državi. Lahko se le strinjam s poudarkom, da je bila deklaracija zaradi vodilne vloge SLS »najpomembnejši slovenski narodnopolitični program med dvema vojnoma«. ²⁸ Če ostanemo pri katoliški strani, je treba povedati še to, da je v dvajsetih letih na 5. katoliškem shodu leta 1923 oblikovala tudi premišljen socialni program, ki pa je bil za delavsko krilo SLS, tega so obvladovali krščanski socialci (imenovati so se začeli tudi krščanski socialisti), še premalo radikalen. Krščanska

26 Ibid., 153.

27 Ibid., 152–53.

28 Ibid., 192.

duhovno prenoviteljska intelektualna generacija križarjev, ki se je lotevala tudi političnih in socialnih problemov, je nato vzpostavila radikalno odklonilen odnos do kapitalističnega sistema, podoben socialnodemokratskim pogledom. Med SLS in njenimi krščanskimi socialisti je prišlo do razhoda. Avtor opozori še na izstopajoči pojav v slovenskem komunističnem gibanju v letih 1922–1923, ko je njegovo tedanje vodstvo zagovarjalo povezovanje komunističnega proletariata z nekomunističnim. Prevladala je strogo revolucionarna komunistična smer, ki je to povezovanje obsodila in njegove pobudnike izključila iz svojih vrst.

4.

Trideseta leta, ki jim je politični okvir vzpostavila kraljeva diktatura, avtor razčleni skozi prestrukturiranje tedanjega slovenskega političnega življenja. Obravnava razmere v katoliškem taboru, ki jih je izražal idejni spopad uradnih katoliških krogov s krščanskimi socialisti. Ti so se že »premaknili na socialistično razredno stališče reformnega socialnodemokratskega tipa, s tem, da so ostali zvesti krščanskemu religioznemu etosu«.²⁹ V katoliškem političnem vodstvu je prevladala neokonservativna desnica, ki se je usmerila po neokonservativni korporativistični encikliki Pija XI. *Quadragesimo anno* iz leta 1931. *Zgodovina* se ustavi tudi pri misli politika in sociologa Andreja Gosarja in njegovi »tretji poti« družbenega reformizma, ki jo umešča med katoliški konservativni solidarizem in radikalni krščanski socializem.

Zaradi vztrajanja pri unitarističnem jugoslovanstvu in podpiranja režima diktature so od liberalne politike v prvi polovici tridesetih let začele odpadati posamezne narodnodemokratske in federalistično naravnane skupine (skupina ob glasilu *Slovenija*, skupina ob glasilu *Slovenska zemlja*). Odmevno kritiko liberalnega unitarizma je v znani knjižici *Kulturni problem slovenstva* leta 1932 podal tudi Josip Vidmar. O narodnemu vprašanju so svoje poudarke izrekli še komunisti in v ustanovnem manifestu Komunistične partije Slovenije (KPS) leta 1937 zahtevali federativno jugoslovansko zvezo. V slovenski politični misli jo je leta 1939 ponovno poudarila še *Slovenija* in zelo jasno krščanski socialisti, medtem ko jo je SLS v drugi polovici tridesetih let zaradi zavezanosti vladi, v kateri je sodelovala, in zunanje ogroženosti za dalj časa utišala. Po avtorjevi oceni so tedaj vsestranski slovenski narodni program oblikovali krščanski socialisti, ki so izjavili, da nočejo ideoloških bojev in ustvarjanja novih razlik, pač pa želijo doseči čim večje soglasje v gospodarskih, socialnih in političnih zadevah ter vzbuditi željo po resnični slovenski skupnosti. Zaradi zaostrenih ideoloških razmer ni prišlo niti do poskusa, da bi uresničili svoj program, ki so ga naslovili *Kaj hočemo?*. Tako so svoje narodnoemancipacijske in politične zahteve sočasno poimenovali tudi komunisti, ki so jih predstavili preko legalne Zveze delovnega ljudstva Slovenije. Avtor pojasnjuje, da so bile osredinjene na povsem aktualne konkretne politične potrebe slovenskega naroda, postavljene v izrazito komunistični interpretaciji. In če so bili

²⁹ Ibid., 200.

»slovenski komunisti, preprosto povedano klon ruskega boljševiškega komunizma«, ujeti v »voluntaristično predstavo o delavski komunistični revoluciji«, ³⁰ je na drugi strani tedanjega slovenskega ekstrema živel ultrakatolištvo kot nasprotni idejno-politični temelj. Hotelo je zmago katolištva na vseh področjih človekovega delovanja. Izražali sta ga študentska skupina pod vodstvom profesorja Teološke fakultete Lamberta Ehrlicha, zbrana ob glasilu *Straža v viharju*, in dijaška skupina pod vodstvom gimnazijskega profesorja Ernesta Tomca, zbrana ob glasilu *Mi mladi borci*. Slovenska družba je bila na predvečer druge svetovne vojne nevarno polarizirana.

5.

Prunk že pred obravnavo druge vojne na Slovenskem zapiše, da so Slovenci ob okupaciji leta 1941 in usodnem političnem razkosanju ostali

brez neke potrebne demokratične in akcijsko sposobne politične sile (razen med primorskimi Slovenci) [mišljena je primorska katoliška sredina, op. J. P.], ki bi organizirala protifašistični odpor. Mogočna SLS se je potegnila v škodljiv atentizem, njena konkurentka, slovenska liberalna stranka, pa se je vdala upanju na rešitev od jugoslovanske begunske vlade. S tem pa se je odprla pot za odporiško akcijo komunistične partije, ki pa je svoje aktivnosti od vsega začetka usmerjala tudi za svoje revolucionarne cilje, vzpostavitev sovjetske družbe na Slovenskem. Na Slovenskem pa ni bilo sile, ki bi bila tako močna, da bi se lahko učinkovito zoperstavila komunističnim revolucionarnim načrtom in dejanjem.³¹

Ko vojno obravnava, najprej opozori na programsko politična izhodišča Osvobodilne fronte (OF), ki so utemeljila njen narodnoosvobodilni in emancipacijski program, ekskluzivnost njegovega vodenja in razredni revolucionarni boj, ter na temeljna idejnopolitična vprašanja, ki jih je OF leta 1941 razčistila znotraj sebe in utrdila svojo organizacijo, izgubila pa prvotno demokratično naravo. Spomni tudi na izključitev Stare pravde iz OF leto dni kasneje. Predstavi še narodnoosvobodilne izjave OF nasprotujočih nekdanjih slovenskih vladajočih elit.

Državljanska vojna je bila bridka slovenska zgodovinska izkušnja. Avtor pojasnjuje, da je vanjo vodila intenzivna, ostra propagandna vojna, ki se je v začetku leta 1942 vnela med revolucionarno OF in protirevolucionarnimi ideologi. Na komunistični strani jo je napovedal politični sekretar OF, komunist Boris Kidrič, ki je februarja 1942 v *Delu*, glasilu Centralnega komiteja KPS, pokazal izrazito sovražen odnos do meščanstva – komunističnega razrednega sovražnika. To je bila »odkrita vojna napoved za razredni obračun že kar neposredno v teku narodnoosvobodilnega boja«. ³²

³⁰ Ibid., 215.

³¹ Ibid., 183.

³² Ibid., 240.

Tega so se dobro zavedali Ehrlichovi Stražarji, protikomunistični politični katoličani, zlasti mladi intelektualci desne avtoritarne usmeritve. Prav tako v februarju 1942 so se zavezali slovenstvu in njegovemu varovanju. Avtor opozori, da njihov program ni ome-njal nobene strategije ali sredstva, kako ga uresničiti. V njem tudi še ni bilo mogoče prebrati nobenega poziva za obračun s partizanskim gibanjem, za katerega so vedeli, da ga vodijo komunisti, in tudi ne za obračun z okupatorjem.³³ Zatem o vzrokih državljanske vojne navede oceno, ki so jo izoblikovali na posvetovanju Žrtve vojne in revolucije v državnem svetu leta 2004:

Zaradi vse očitnejšega komunističnega obvladovanja narodnoosvobodilnega odpora oz. boja se že leta 1941, zlasti pa od 1942, ko se v imenu tako imenovane revolucionarne justice, na katero sta pristala tudi Edvard Kocbek in Josip Rus, raz-raščajo partijsko vosovske likvidacije, hkrati pa se v imenu antikomunizma vzpo-redno razvija boj proti partizanskemu narodnoosvobodilnemu gibanju[, n]astane državljanska vojna [...]. Namerni in neposredni povzročitelji, s tem pa tudi glavni krivci državljanske vojne, tega nujnega pogoja komunistične revolucije, so komu-nisti. In ko ob koncu vojne prevzamejo oblast, z revolucijo ne prenehajo, marveč jo institucionalizirajo, obenem pa stopnjujejo. Temeljno revolucionarno dejanje po koncu vojne, se pravi, komunistično oblast utemeljujejoče dejanje, je zunajsodni pomor domobrancev, ki so jih vrnili Angleži.³⁴

To je tudi končna teža – tako Prunk – »slovenske tragedije druge svetovne vojne«.³⁵

Zgodovina slovenske politične misli še ostaja v letu 1942. V razmerah revolucionar-nega terorja je Lambert Ehrlich aprila 1942 na italijansko okupacijsko oblast naslovil spomenico, ki je bila pol kritika italijanskega fašističnega nasilja v Ljubljanski pokrajini in pol predlog za sodelovanje oborožene slovenske formacije z Italijani (»predlog za odkrito kolaboracijo«) za zatrtje komunističnega gibanja.³⁶ Po drugi strani je Lojze Ude, ki je spomenico ostro obsodil, KPS neuspešno pozval, naj opusti revolucionarni teror. Ob tem sta bili revolucionarna in protirevolucionarna stran živo dejavni v poli-tični publicistiki. Avtor predstavi *Slovenski zbornik*, ki ga je OF izdala maja 1942, in sočasno situacijsko oceno protirevolucionarnega tabora ter program ministra Mihe Kreka, pripadnika SLS v begunski vladi, iz decembra 1942, ki sta kazala na pripravlje-nost za sodelovanje z OF. KPS ni imela volje za tako sodelovanje. Novembra 1942 so pripravili enega najpomembnejših dokumentov revolucije, Položaj in vloga delavskega razreda v slovenskem narodnoosvobodilnem boju (NOB), ki so ga oblikovali ob usta-novitvi Delavske enotnosti, organizacije delavstva v NOB. Dokument je brez zadržkov govoril o delavskem vodstvu slovenske družbe, »kar je bil samo evfemizem za komu-nistično razredno družbo«.³⁷ Nastopi leto 1943, ko je komunistični revolucionarni

33 Ibid., 241–42.

34 Ibid., 243–44.

35 Ibid., 275.

36 Ibid., 246.

37 Ibid., 253–54.

projekt pospešila Dolomitska izjava, »usodna za nadaljnji razvoj OF, iz katerega je bil izgnan politični pluralizem. Tako je bila odprta nemotena pot za utrditev komunistične politične in ideološke nadvlade oziroma monizma.«³⁸ V izjavi so zapisali, da bodo komunistično družbo gradili na osnovah sovjetske družbe. Septembra 1943 se je s popolno zmago partizanske strani (Grčarice, Turjak) končala prva stopnja državljanske vojne. Prunk ob tem razmišlja, kako je lahko partizanska stran, ki je številčno le malenkostno presegala nasprotno, dosegla tak uspeh. Pristavi, da so se v obeh taborih borili popolnoma enaki in intenzivno motivirani Slovenci. »Partizanska premoč je, kot kaže, bila v njihovem poveljniškem kadru in v njihovi ustreznejši mobilni, operativni taktiki, počivajoči na gibljivih udarnih brigadah ter pripravljenosti vseh na borbo.«³⁹ Dvajsetega aprila 1944 je s prisego zvestobe domobrancev Adolfu Hitlerju na stadionu za Bežigradom v Ljubljani protirevolucionarna stran pod vodstvo Leona Rupnika stopila v odkrit kolaboracionistični odnos z nemškim okupatorjem.

Po kapitulaciji Italije 8. septembra 1943 je Vrhovni plenum OF 16. septembra sprejel zgodovinski sklep in razglasil priključitev Slovenskega primorja k združeni Sloveniji v Jugoslaviji. Odločil se je tudi izvesti volitve v novo slovensko narodno zastopstvo, ki so ga oblikovali oktobra 1943 v Kočevju. Avtor pravi, da »če pogledamo čisto stvarno, je bil Kočevski zbor delegatov zbor pripadnikov narodnoosvobodilnega gibanja in njegovih simpatizerjev. Toda tudi to je bilo pomembno narodno dejanje.«⁴⁰ Še vedno mu ostane

pomembno mesto v zgodovini slovenskega naroda na njegovi emancipacijski narodnoosvobodilni poti. Na nek način pomeni kar višek slovenskih narodnoosvobodilnih prizadevanj in uspehov v času narodnoosvobodilnega boja v drugi svetovni vojni. Na zboru se je neokrnjeno, brez vsakega tujega vpliva in vmešavanja, slovenski narod sam, oziroma vsaj njegov aktivno boreči se del, suvereno izrazil o svojih narodnih pravicah, perspektivah, o svojem narodnem predstavništvu in o svoji nameri vključiti se v novo demokratično in federativno Jugoslavijo.⁴¹

Politična misel odporniškega gibanja je nato na črnomaljskem zasedanju novoooblikovanega Slovenskega narodnoosvobodilnega sveta februarja 1944 še enkrat poudarila slovensko narodno suverenost v federativni Jugoslaviji, njegovi predstavniki (nekomunisti Josip Rus, Anton Kržišnik, Darko Černej) pa so v razpravi z delegacijo Protifašističnega sveta narodne osvoboditve Jugoslavije in Narodnega odbora osvoboditve Jugoslavije (NOOJ) v Kočevskem rogu aprila 1944 razmišljali o konceptu moderne večnacionalne federacije, ki bi zagotovila resnično trajno samoodločbo njenih narodov. A vodilna sila jugoslovanskega NOB, Komunistična partija Jugoslavije (KPJ), je »potegnila zasilno zavoro in se odločila uveljaviti federativni koncept,

38 Ibid., 255.

39 Ibid., 260.

40 Ibid., 263.

41 Ibid., 264–65.

kakršnega so vzpostavili boljševiki v Sovjetski zvezi«. ⁴² Avtor nadaljuje, da so jugoslovanski komunisti tudi pri nacionalnem vprašanju sledili boljševiškem vzorcu, ki mu je bila država, tudi večnarodna, samo instrument za doseg komunistične družbe in politične ureditve.

V tem času protirevolucionarni tabor ni oblikoval nobenega pomembnejšega programa ali prispevka za slovenski narodni program, tedanjo domobransko prisego pa moramo uvrstiti med klasične kolaboracionistične pojave. ⁴³ Politična misel protirevolucionarnega tabora je, zavedajoč se svoje nemoči, skušala vplivati na obstoječe razmere. Oktobra 1944 so ustanovili Slovenski narodni odbor (SNO), ki je podal narodno izjavo. Po svojih narodnih zahtevah in strukturi je bila močno podobna narodnim izjavam OF. ⁴⁴ Odbor je 3. maja 1945 pripravil sejo improviziranega slovenskega parlamenta, ki je razglasil slovensko narodno državo kot del federativne Kraljevine Jugoslavije. Avtor poudari, da razglas ni imel nikakršnega pomembnega političnega učinka, saj SNO ni razpolagal z nobeno omembe vredno vojsko, domobranci so še vedno nadzorovali Nemci, partizani so bili že poldrugo leto priznana zavezniška vojaška sila, NOOJ z Josipom Brozom Titom na čelu pa je bil mednarodno priznana vlada nove Jugoslavije. Zadnji relevantni slovenski narodni program v drugi svetovni vojni je podal Edvard Kardelj. Ob ustanovitvi Narodne vlade Slovenije, 5. maja 1945 v Ajdovščini, je dejal: »Nova Jugoslavija je prinesla resnično svobodo slovenskemu narodu in uresničenje zgodovinske težnje po osvoboditvi in združenju vseh njegovih delov.« ⁴⁵ Avtor obdobje druge vojne zaključí z besedami: Verjetno je bila v tistih dneh večina Slovencev iskreno srečnih zaradi konca vojne in prepričanih, da bo osvoboditev Slovenije do vseh njenih etničnih meja trajno ostala in da je NOB uresničila slovenski narodni program Zedinjeno Slovenijo. To razporedje pa je kalila nova komunistična oblast, ki se je sistematično kruto, s smrtjo, maščevala svojim političnim nasprotnikom, največ, več kot 15.000, takoj po koncu vojne vrnjenim domobrancem. S tem je bilo prizadetih veliko družin. ⁴⁶

6.

Zgodovina slovenske politične misli preide na čas po drugi svetovni vojni. Avtor ugotavlja, da so Slovenci poleg priborjene Združene Slovenije, okleščene na zahodu in na severu, s partizanskim protiokupatorskim bojem dosegli bistveno spremembo svojega narodnopolitičnega položaja – status močno avtonomne slovenske republike v jugoslovanski federaciji. Ob tem pozitivnem dosežku pa je treba upoštevati tudi negativno plat partizanskega boja, ki je pod vodstvom komunistične partije izpeljal komunistično revolucijo boljševiškega tipa. Ta je v življenje naroda po vojni vsiljevala

⁴² Ibid., 270.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 273.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 276.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 277.

monistični ideološkopolični in socialnoekonomski sistem. Režim je z represijo preprečeval vsako nasprotno politično opcijo. Z leti se je politična in policijska represija omilila in z rastočim gospodarstvom in življenjskim standardom je režim pridobil na svojo stran veliko večino delavskega razreda, pa tudi nekaj intelektualcev, idealistov in karieristov.

Prunk podrobno razčleni ideološki in politični sistem povojne Slovenije in Jugoslavije. Komunistična partija je svojo dominacijo po boljševiškem vzoru izkoristila na vseh področjih življenja. Vodilni ideolog in načrtovalec slovenskega in jugoslovanskega družbenopolitičnega in idejnega razvoja je bil Slovenec Edvard Kardelj. »Res so bili poleg njega še drugi komunisti iz drugih republik, zlasti iz Srbije, toda Kardeljev prispevek in z njim prispevek Slovencev je ostal z velikimi črkami zapisan v zgodovino jugoslovanskega socializma.«⁴⁷ Kardelj je to pokazal že kot glavni snovalec ustave Federativne ljudske republike Jugoslavije leta 1946, ki je odrazila boljševiški koncept revolucionarne države; boljševiki so ga *mutatis mutandi* sprejeli od prvih modernih revolucionarjev v evropski zgodovini, francoskih jakobincev, in so ga še izpopolnili v dolgo obstoječo obliko – diktaturo proletariata. Ustava je vsilila samo eno idejno monistično marksistično-leninistično mišljenje. Kardelj je uveljavil tudi načelo enotnosti zakonodajne in izvršilne oblasti, kar je bil največji korak komunističnega političnega sistema stran od demokracije. Tu avtor opozori, da so že razsvetljenski misleci uveljavili načelo tripartitnosti oblasti – zakonodajne, izvršilne in sodne. Leta 1947 so sprejeli ustavo Ljudske republike Slovenije, ki je zagotovila formalno in zakonsko pokritje za »absolutno totalitaristično vladavino KPS, njenega CK in politbiroja«.⁴⁸ Ustava je bila »temeljni okvir ustavnopolitičnega življenja slovenske republike do njene osamosvojitve leta 1991, čeprav je bila večkrat prilagojena spreminjajočim se političnim razmeram v jugoslovanski federaciji«.⁴⁹ Po sporu z Informbirojem leta 1948 so dve leti kasneje kot korektiv sovjetskemu ideološkemu in družbenopolitičnemu vzorcu uvedli delavsko samoupravljanje. V Jugoslaviji se je začela dolgoletna eshatologija, ki je načelno gradila na neposredni demokraciji delavskega razreda, čeprav mu v realni politiki partija nikoli ni zaupala odločilne idejne in politične vloge, ampak jo je namesto njega udejanjala sama. To je bila kopija Leninove iznajdbe vloge avantgarde namesto nerazvitega delavskega razreda, ki se je lahko udejanjala samo v zaostalih družbah. V bistvu je bil to korak v stran od Marxove teorije.⁵⁰

Avtor predstavi prvo kritiko obstoječega političnega sistema in njegovih družbenih razmer. Leta 1951 je prišla s strani enega od ustanoviteljev OF, krščanskega socialista Edvarda Kocbeka. V politično misel je vnesel očitek, da partija vzdržuje ozračje obsedenega stanja, ki ne dopušča nazorske svobode. Opozarjal je, da ljudske množice niso zgolj orodje zgodovine in predmet oblasti. Komunistom je očital, da ne razločujejo med vero in političnim katolicizmom (t. i. »klerikalizmom«) ter med katolištvom in t. i. »reakcijo«. Kocbek se je s partizansko »tovarišijo« razšel naslednje

47 Ibid., 286.

48 Ibid., 294.

49 Ibid., 292.

50 Ibid., 297.

leto, ko se je bil po ideološko-literarnih napadih na svojo novelistično zbirko *Strah in pogum* prisiljen umakniti iz političnega življenja. »Kocbekov problem je bil najpomembnejši dogodek, ki kaže, kako je slovenska partija krenila na pot ideološkega in političnega monizma in za mnogo let blokirala svobodo in pluralizem v humanističnih in družbenih znanostih na Slovenskem, huje kot npr. pri Hrvatih in Srbih.«⁵¹ In ko je v letih 1953–1954 eden od vodilnih jugoslovanskih komunistov, Milovan Đilas, stopil vstran od marksistično komunističnega idejnega ekskluzivizma in mesijanske vloge delavskega razreda, predlagal ukinitvev komunističnega partijskega monopola in dopustitev še ene, socialnodemokratske stranke ter se temeljno razšel z marksizmom-leninizmom, se ga je, nasprotno, izrazilo oklenil Edvard Kardelj. V ideološkem in političnem obračunu Zveze komunistov Jugoslavije (prej KPJ) z Đilasom je uporabil argumente najbolj ortodoksnih leninističnih komunistov, ki so jih ti izrekli v zavrnitvi socialne demokracije. V Sloveniji Đilasov nastop ni imel večjega odmeva. Njegovo izjemno libertarno in prodorno misel v razvoju socialistične družbe je enostavno zadušila mogočna senca Edvarda Kardelja. »Ta senca je potem skoraj popolnoma zavrla razvoj slovenske politične misli za skoraj celo desetletje.«⁵²

Ko je Kardelj v desetletju 1950–1960 vedril in oblačil na obnebu slovenske politične misli, je leta 1957 izšla druga izdaja njegovega *Razvoja slovenskega narodnega vprašanja*. K njej je napisal obsežno spremno besedo, poskus teoretičnega razmisleka o razvoju naroda v moderni socialistični dobi, v kateri naj bi komunistično delavsko gibanje narode demokratično pretopilo v občečloveško skupnost. Tu se je Kardelj »najbolj spotaknil«, saj so dolga desetletja po Kardeljevi napovedi narodi še vedno živi, komunistično gibanje pa je v našem delu sveta izginilo z odra zgodovine. Po avtorjevi oceni je bil Kardelj »površnega znanja, ki pa ga je znal skriti za voluntaristično utopično eshatologijo marksističnega socializma, ki bo prevrednotil vse človeške in družbene manifestacije, tudi narodno vprašanje. Sam je bil, vsaj videti je tako, resnično prepričan o svoji preroški voditeljski vlogi. Žal ali pa na srečo se takšni voluntaristični utopični projekti razmeroma hitro končajo.«⁵³

In v tem času je v slovenski politični prostor udarila Pučnikova kritika socialistične družbene stvarnosti in njenih ideoloških iluzij. Filozof (kasneje se je udeleževal predvsem kot sociolog) Jože Pučnik je ugotavljal, da sterilni ideološki monopolizem in ekskluzivni profesionalizem oblast oddaljujeta od ljudi in ustvarjata prepad med uradno ideologijo in njihovim miselnim svetom. Avtor spomni, da sta bili Pučnikova in Đilasova usoda enaki. Oba sta bila obsojena na daljše zaporne kazni, Pučnika so tudi pretepali. Postal je prvi komunistični disident v Sloveniji, ostal pa socialni demokrat bernsteinovske usmeritve.⁵⁴

Nadaljnji razvoj je potekal takole: v začetku šestdesetih let je Kardelj v Sloveniji vzpostavil popoln politični mir, nadzor in sterilnost. V letih 1961–1962 pa je prišlo do zavrnitve srbskega unitarističnega in centralističnega stališča, ki ga je v polemičnem

51 Ibid., 301–02.

52 Ibid., 305.

53 Ibid., 307.

54 Ibid., 310.

nastopu proti srbskemu pisatelju in politiku Dobrici Ćosiću izrazil literarni teoretik in nekdanji vodstveni član KPS Dušan Pirjevec. Leta 1963 je Kardelj pripravil novo jugoslovansko ustavo (tedaj Socialistične federativne republike Jugoslavije), po kateri je o vseh bistvenih vprašanjih jugoslovanske družbe še vedno odločala zveza komunistov (prej komunistična partija), skupaj s transmisijo – Socialistično zvezo delovnega ljudstva. Vse, kar se je na področju slovenske politične misli v tem času pisalo, je bilo komunistično, popolnoma v skladu s predstavo vodstva Zveze komunistov Slovenije (ZKS) in Edvarda Kardelja. Je pa konec šestdesetih in v začetku sedemdesetih let v slovenski narodni politiki prišlo do zanimivega pojava »partijskega liberalizma«, nastopa liberalne struje v ZKS, ki je na čelu s Stanetom Kavčičem Slovenijo skušala popeljati na novo pot razvoja, temelječega na modernih tehnoloških perspektivnih panogah. Avtor ob tem opozori, da sta »Kavčič in njegova vizija praktično in tudi deklarativno ostajala še vedno v orbiti samoupravnega socializma enostrankarskega političnega sistema«. ⁵⁵

ZKS je z »liberalizmom« v svojih vrstah obračunala. Po obračunu je Kardelj z novo jugoslovansko ustavo (1974) komunistični sistem nadgradil z modificirano samoupravno socialistično inačico in še enkrat uzakonil eno samo osišče jugoslovanske družbe, partijo, kar je preprečevalo, da bi se nasproti njej razvila še druga konkurenčna sila. Prunk dobro opaža, da je bil Kardelj prevzet od »svoj[ega] teoretsk[ega] talent[a] in teoretsk[e] voditeljsk[e] vlog[e]«. ⁵⁶ Če dodam, je tak odnos do Kardelja živel tudi v slovenskem političnem vrhu in partijski strukturi. Leta 1977 je napisal svoj labodji spev, voluntaristični ideološki esej *Smeri razvoja političnega sistema socialističnega samoupravljanja*, v katerem je »poskušal dati marksizmu-leninizmu čim bolj novo obliko, pa vendar ostati zvest tej utopistični doktrini«. O tem je govorila tedaj široko poudarjana formulacija: »Sreče človeku ne more dati država, niti sistem, niti politična stranka. Srečo si lahko človek ustvari samo sam.« Prunk dobro poudari, da je Kardelju tu »zmanjkalo poguma, da bi navedel še najpomembnejši element, ki tudi ne more človeku zagotoviti sreče – ideologijo, na kateri temelji vsa marksistična doktrina«. ⁵⁷

Slovenska politična misel je na prelomu šestdesetih v sedemdeseta leta dobila še eno razsežnost. Tedaj so o narodnemu vprašanju začeli razmišljati tudi nekomunisti, predvsem literati, literarni kritiki in drugi kulturni delavci, zbrani ob reviji *Problemi*. Najvidnejša med njimi, Dušan Pirjevec in Taras Kermauner, v svoji nihilistični filozofiji in kozmopolitizmu narodnemu vprašanju nista pripisovala nobene vrednosti več. Pripadnik tega kroga, Dimitrij Rupel, je kasneje izjavil, da je tedanji krog sodelavcev revije »plaval v neidentificirani plazmi do nacionalnega«. ⁵⁸ Nasprotno pa je Edvard Kocbek narodnost označil za »bitno stanje človeka, ki traja v vseh življenjskih položajih in razvojnih dobah in ga nobena družba ali izvendružbena sila ne more ukiniti brez škode za človeštvo«. ⁵⁹ Esaj, v katerem je to zapisal, je ostal v rokopisu in ga je po njegovi smrti objavila krščansko personalistična *Revija 2000*.

55 Ibid., 314–15.

56 Ibid., 317.

57 Ibid.

58 Ibid., 319.

59 Ibid., 320.

Zgodovina slovenske politične misli zajema tudi povojno politično misel zamejskih Slovencev. Za Slovence v Italiji njeno izhodišče postavi še v vojno, ko se je na Primorsko in v Istro razširila OF. Na razmere med tržaškimi Slovenci je nato vplival razkol leta 1946 na meščansko skupino in njej nasprotno OF. V Italiji so Slovenci strukturirali pluralistično politično življenje, ki ga je obremenjevala nestrpnost med obema idejnopolitičnima taboroma. V kasnejših letih je prišlo še do novih političnih razlik na obeh straneh. Pomembna je bila akcija demokratične strani – organiziranje kulturnih srečanj v Dragi, ki se nadaljujejo v današnji čas. – Tudi na avstrijskem Koroškem se je med vojno razširil NOB. Po vojni so se koroški Slovenci ne glede na svetovnonazorske razlike organizirali v OF, konec štiridesetih let pa sta se izoblikovali ločeni socialistično liberalna in krščansko demokratična stran. Ne glede na ideološke razlike sta pri narodnostnih vprašanjih tesno sodelovali. Pomembna manjšinska institucija je postal Znanstveni inštitut v Celovcu, ustanovljen leta 1971, ki prispeva pomembna znanstvena spoznanja tako levosredinskim kot konservativno usmerjenim pripadnikom manjšine v njihovih kulturnih in političnih akcijah. Družbena marginalizacija slovenske manjšine pa se nadaljuje. Slovenski jezik izginja ne samo iz dela javnosti, temveč tudi iz družin na južnem Koroškem.⁶⁰

V avtorjevem pogledu na razvoj povojne politične misli odločilno zarezo predstavlja smrt Edvarda Kardelja leta 1979. Tedaj se je »slovenskim marksistom porušil vir Hipokrene, po drugi strani pa so se nemarksisti otresli strahu pred Kardeljevo kritiko in sankcijami«. ⁶¹ V začetku osemdesetih let se je odprla pot do konstruktivne kritike socialističnega samoupravljanja in mednacionalnih odnosov v Jugoslaviji. Slovenska kulturna in širša javnost se je sredi osemdesetih let in v njihovi drugi polovici začela poudarjeno oglašati v obrambo slovenske kulture in suverenosti v dušeci jugoslovanski federaciji. *Revija 2000* je posebej obravnavala narodno vprašanje in pri tem sledila slovenskemu afirmativnem stališču s pravico do samoodločbe. Leta 1987 je liberalno in socialnodemokrasko usmerjena *Nova revija* v svoji znani 57. številki poudarila novo koncepcijo slovenstva, utemeljenega v ustreznih ustanovah suverenega slovenskega naroda. Avtor opozori, da so novo razvojno pot slovenskega naroda pokazali nekomunisti, večinoma protikomunisti, zbrani ob tej reviji. Leta 1989 so začeli nastajati prvi opozicijski politični subjekti, ki so na velikem ljudskem zborovanju na Kongresnem trgu v Ljubljani 8. maja oznanili skupno *Majniško deklaracijo 1989* –

izjemno domišljen in odlično formuliran tekst, ki je po eni strani odražal tedanje slovenske politične potrebe, bil pa je tudi tekst slovenske politične misli dolgotrajne veljave. Noben raziskovalec slovenske politične misli niti noben politično zainteresiran slovenski državljani ne more mimo njega. Uvrščen je prav v vrh, v antologijo slovenske politične misli, tako po svoji duhovni in politični plati kakor po učinku, ki ga je povzročil. Deklaracija je namreč vodila neposredno v demokratizacijo slovenskega političnega življenja in v narodno državno 'samostojnost in neodvisnost'. ⁶²

60 Ibid., 335–45.

61 Ibid., 322.

62 Ibid., 328.

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Obsežno presojo politične misli avtor nadaljuje s prikazom novega časa, ki je tekkel po novih zakonitostih – politični demokratizaciji, pluralizaciji, socialnem tržnem gospodarstvu in nacionalni emancipaciji. Leta 1990 so ustanovili Demos, zvezo nosilnih opozicijskih sil, ki si je za cilj zastavila vzpostavitev civilne družbe, vključno s pravno državo in pluralistično demokracijo ter nacionalno in gospodarsko suverenostjo. Ti zahtevi sta bili tudi najpomembnejša vsebina *Majniške deklaracije* 1989. Prunk oceni, da je bil Demosov program »politično najbolj demokratičen in humanističen po svoji antropološko-politični naravi ter najbolj vsestranski po svoji vsebini, saj se je dotikal vseh življenjskih področij. To mu daje posebno moralno politično težo v slovenski zgodovini.« Demos je bil zmagovalec volitev v slovensko skupščino istega leta – prvi demokratično izvoljen slovenski predstavniški in oblastni organ. Ob njegovem konstituiranju je predsednik skupščine France Bučar izjavil, da se s tem končuje državljanska vojna, ki je Slovence »lomila in hromila skoraj pol stoletja«. ⁶³ Tu avtor opozarja, da se je Demosu

uspel[o] vzdržati sprejetja lustracijskih zakonov in noben vidni partijski funkcionar ni bil odstavljen s politične ali gospodarske funkcije. Tudi vsi najbolj vneti marksistično usmerjeni in kompromitirani znanstveni in kulturni delavci so ostali v svojih službah. Demos je hotel ohraniti narodno enotnost za naloge, ki so bile pred njim. To pa je bila družbenopolitična tranzicija iz socialističnega sistema v demokratični politično pluralni sistem in vzpostavitev samostojne, neodvisne slovenske države. Nekaj se je sicer zatikalo pri družbenopolitični tranziciji, ki je le počasi dobivala realno vsebino. Bolje se je odvijala slovenska narodnopolitična osamosvojitev, ki jo je družno podpirala večina Slovencev in jo celo ubranila pred agresijo jugoslovanske srbske armade. ⁶⁴

Pot do nje je vodila prek, po avtorjevem poudarku, najmočnejšega nacionalnega pravnega dejanja, več kot 90-odstotno podprto voljo za samostojno in neodvisno Slovenijo, izglasovano na zgodovinskem vsenarodnem plebiscitu 23. decembra 1990, Temeljne ustavne listine o samostojnosti in neodvisnosti Republike Slovenije z Deklaracijo o neodvisnosti RS, ki ju je sprejel slovenski parlament 25. junija 1991, in razglasitve samostojnosti Republike Slovenije 26. junija 1991. Ubrani so jo v vojni za Slovenijo (od 27. junija do 7. julija 1991). Zaključni slovenski akt vzpostavitve slovenskega naroda kot moderne, samostojne in neodvisne nacije z Republiko Slovenijo pa je bilo sprejetje njene ustave 23. decembra 1991. Avtor jo z vidika antropološke zgodovine oceni po poglavju o temeljnih človeških pravicah in svoboščinah, ki najbolj razkriva njen značaj. Ugotavlja, da sledi vsem demokratičnim meščanskim evropskim ustavam, vsaj od leta 1848 dalje, in vsebuje vse ključne elemente slovenske politične

⁶³ Ibid., 322.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 333–34.

kulture, kot so se oblikovali ob vstopu v moderno politiko. S sprejetjem Ustave RS, ki jo vidi kot »*vrhunec* slovenske politične misli, ki zaključuje pomembno dobo razvoja slovenske družbe«, konča svoje obsežno in pregnantno delo.⁶⁵ A navedimo še eno avtorjevo misel. Opozorilo na dejstvo, »da je tudi mali narod, ki ima močno narodno zavest, dobro razvito gospodarstvo in nadzor nad svojim ozemljem, sposoben za samostojno narodno življenje in ga morajo večji sosedje sprejeti kot enakopravnega, mnogo bolj[,] kot bi ga sprejemali v federaciji, kjer bi mu po federativnem mehanizmu vsiljevali svojo nadvlado«.⁶⁶

Prunkova *Zgodovina slovenske politične misli* je pomemben prispevek k slovenskemu zgodovinopisju. Avtor je z njo še enkrat v širšem in podrobnejšem zajemu prikazal slovenski narodno- in idejnopolični razvoj v novejši zgodovini. Zaokrožil ga je z zgodovinskim narodnodržavnim uresničenjem – po svojem temeljnem nosilcu samoslovensko osamosvojitvijo –, kasnejši čas pa prepustil obravnavi nove narodno-zgodovinske stopnje, ki riše naslednje oblike slovenske politične misli. Politično misel, ki so jo Slovenci do nastanka RS oblikovali skozi niz različnih zgodovinskih položajev, je osmisli po vseh njenih značilnostih in podrobnostih in pokazal »na nezadostnost črno-belih interpretacij slovenske zgodovine«.⁶⁷ Predstavil jo je po njeni vpetosti v čas, ki jo je rojeval in usmerjal, in se posvetil njeni temeljiti razčlembi in razjasnitvi. Avtorjev pogled na razvoj slovenske politične misli nadgrajuje še vrsta pronicljivih opozoril, poudarkov in pojasnil, ki povedno prikazujejo njene ideološke, politične, družbene in socialne razsežnosti. Zgodovinska podoba Slovencev je sedaj še preglednejša in jasnejša. Dopolnjuje jo tudi slikovna predstavitev vseh njenih najpomembnejših snovalcev in dokumentov v letih 1848–1991. Z *Zgodovino slovenske politične misli*, temelječo na avtorjevi dolgoletni raziskovalni in spoznavni izkušnji ter moči, smo dobili delo, ki prepoznavno prispeva k vedenju o nas samih in razumevanju razmer, ki so oblikovale slovenskega človeka v prejšnjih dobah in deloma tudi še v današnji. To je tudi očitni pomen Prunkove *Zgodovine*.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 358.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 131.

⁶⁷ Janez Markeš, »Jezik, ki je rodil politično misel,« *Delo*, 29. 8. 2023, 17.

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Jurij Perovšek

ON THE FORMATION OF SLOVENIAN (SELF-)AWARENESS AND THE WILL FOR NATIONAL EMANCIPATION

SUMMARY

In his monograph *Zgodovina slovenske politične misli* (The History of Slovenian Political Thought (Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 2023)), Janko Prunk demonstrates that, in addition to the cultural and national thought that guided the Slovenian people on their path to national self-awareness and emancipation, the Slovenians also developed their political thought. It came to life during the Spring of Nations and the revolutionary period of 1848, spurred by the demands from intellectuals, students, and clergy for a United Slovenia (an administratively and politically unified Slovenian territory within the Habsburg Monarchy). In his analysis of its subsequent development, the author concludes that, after the revolution's defeat, the Slovenian nationalist

movement in the 1850s was stifled by neo-absolutism. The most that Slovenians could do was engage in cultural work. This was followed by national emancipation efforts in the 1860s. In 1868, the so-called Young Slovenians – the liberal wing – founded the political newspaper *Slovenski narod*, which, in terms of its platform, focused on federalist national-political demands and emphasised the importance of faith and the Church. At the same time, the so-called “*taborsko gibanje*” (a mass-gathering movement) began – open-air people’s rallies organised from 1868 to 1871. The movement campaigned for the Slovenian national programme: United Slovenia. The movement’s demands were so broadly all-Slovenian in nature that they were capable of uniting both the “Young Slovenians” and the conservative-minded “Old Slovenians”, who relied on support from the Catholic Church.

The author then focuses on the dispute between the Young and Old Slovenians, which arose after the end of the mass-gathering movement. The dispute had an ideological and political basis, though there were no significant differences between the two camps regarding the United Slovenia programme. According to the author, the Young Slovenians were not particularly ideologically motivated. They even explicitly emphasised the moral value of Christianity and the Church’s role in the national awakening. However, the opposing side’s resolute rejection of the Young Slovenians was rooted in a desire to defend its leading position in the Slovenian nation. In the ideological sense, the Old Slovenians drew on the encyclical of Pope Pius IX. With its list – the *Syllabus* of the eighty “greatest and most important errors” of modern times – *Quanta Cura* rejected all the ideological, political, and cultural developments of the Enlightenment, namely liberalism. In 1873, after the mass-gathering movement, the Catholic side also established its own political newspaper, *Slovenec*, which advocated a conservative, legalistic programme that made no mention of fundamental human and civil rights, championed Slovenian national identity and the Catholic Church, and opposed liberalism.

Slovenian politics also adopted the idea of unity. This put an end to the conflicts between the two factions of the national movement, which had been growing increasingly frequent in the 1870s. The author concurs with the established view that the so-called “*slogaštvo*” (Concord) – a tactical political alliance that manifested as a form of resistance against Germanism – was more or less just a truce, since principles follow their own course. This alliance endured until the early 1890s. Meanwhile, in 1884, Anton Mahnič, a professor of theology in Gorizia, intervened in ideological developments and laid the foundations for aggressive Catholicism among the Slovenians through his well-known work *Dvanajst večerov* (*Twelve Evenings*). Under his leadership, systematic ideological-political, cultural-educational, and socio-economic guidelines for the activities of Catholics were formulated at the First Slovenian Catholic Rally in 1892. The author concludes his account of the Austrian period with a description of Janez Evangelist Krek’s socio-economic work, through which he secured decisive political support for the Catholic Party by organising a cooperative movement to promote self-help among farmers. Alongside it, a social democratic party and a

liberal party were also formed in the 1890s. At the beginning of the 20th century, two intellectual groups also emerged: the Masarykists (advocating a form of reformist socialism) and the National Radical Youth, part of the liberal intellectual circle (characterised by its opposition to political Catholicism, which already veered towards anti-Catholicism, and by the Yugoslav unitarian national programme). Neither group formed an independent party. The author also highlights the central theme of national political thought before the outbreak of World War I: the plan for a third, Yugoslav state-legal entity within the Habsburg Monarchy. This was primarily the platform of the Catholic Party, but no actual state-legal changes occurred in the Monarchy. The Slovenian national programmes of that period were characterised by Yugoslav national unitarism, which prevailed across all three political camps.

In the centralised and unitarian Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes/Yugoslavia, the national question represented the central political problem. The author presents the division of Slovenian political thought into autonomist-federalist and unitarian-centralist camps. The strongest Slovenian political party – the Catholic Slovenian People's Party – was the leading autonomist-federalist force, while the most prominent advocates of centralism and unitarianism were found in the liberal and socialist camps. In ideological terms, Slovenian politics was most strongly shaped by the conflict between political Catholicism and liberalism – a legacy carried over from the Austrian era into the new state. Meanwhile, both bourgeois parties – the Catholics and the Liberals – were staunchly opposed to communism. The author emphasises that two extremes emerged in Slovenia prior to World War II. The communists – a clone of Russian Bolshevik communism, trapped in a voluntaristic vision of a workers' communist revolution – were on one side, while the other side was dominated by ultra-Catholicism as the opposing ideological and political foundation.

The author assesses the period of World War II by examining the initial political situation in Slovenia following the invasion of Yugoslavia in 1941. He points out that at that time, Slovenians were left without the necessary democratic and effective political force to organise anti-fascist resistance. This paved the way for the Communist Party's resistance movement, which from the outset had also directed its activities towards its revolutionary goals: the establishment of a soviet society in Slovenia. The author outlines the programme and political foundations of what was initially a pluralistic Liberation Front. These foundations underpinned the organisation's national liberation and emancipation programme and later enabled the exclusive communist takeover of its leadership in 1943. He also presents the statements on national liberation issued by the former Slovenian ruling elites that opposed the Liberation Front. In terms of their national demands and structure, they were very similar to the Liberation Front's national declarations.

The civil war was a bitter chapter in Slovenian history. The author attributes its causes to the Communist control of the national liberation resistance or struggle, to so-called revolutionary justice, and to the simultaneous fight against the Partisan movement in the name of anti-communism. The communists were the deliberate and

direct instigators of the civil war and thus its principal culprits. We should also note the author's finding that, with the Home Guard's oath of allegiance to Adolf Hitler at the Bežigrad Stadium in Ljubljana in 1944, the counterrevolutionary side entered into an overt collaborationist relationship with the German occupiers.

Regarding the period following World War II, the author finds that, in addition to the return of the Primorska (Littoral) region to Slovenia, the Slovenians achieved a significant change in their national political status through the Partisans' struggle against the occupying forces – namely, the status of a highly autonomous Slovenian republic within the Yugoslav Federation. However, alongside this positive achievement, we should also take into account the negative aspects of the Partisan struggle, which, under the leadership of the Communist Party, led to a Bolshevik-style communist revolution. After the war, the latter imposed a monistic ideological-political and socio-economic system on the nation. The author emphasises that, following the Bolshevik model, the Communist Party exploited its dominance across all areas of life. The leading ideologue and architect of Slovenian and Yugoslav socio-political and ideological development was Edvard Kardelj, a Slovenian. In 1948, workers' self-management was introduced as a corrective to the Soviet ideological and sociopolitical model, though with only one focal point in Slovenian and Yugoslav society – the Party – which prevented the emergence of any competing force to challenge it. The critics of the existing political system and its social conditions (e.g. Edvard Kocbek, Milovan Đilas, Jože Pučnik) were silenced and excluded from political and social life. During this period, the Slovenian minorities in the neighbouring countries developed a pluralist political landscape. The author underlines that Kardelj's death in 1979 paved the way for constructive criticism of socialist self-management and interethnic relations in Yugoslavia. In 1987, the liberal and social-democratic magazine *Nova revija*, in its famous 57th issue, highlighted a new concept of Slovenian identity, grounded in the appropriate institutions of the sovereign Slovenian nation. The new path of development for the Slovenian nation was charted by non-communists – mostly anti-communists – who contributed to this magazine. At a large public rally in Kongresni trg square in Ljubljana on 8 May 1989, the opposition's political groups announced the joint *May Declaration of 1989*, which led directly to the democratisation of Slovenian political life and to the nation's state sovereignty and independence. In 1990, the so-called Demos coalition was founded – an alliance of leading opposition forces striving to establish a civil society, including the rule of law, a pluralistic democracy, and Slovenian national and economic sovereignty. Demos won the Slovenian Assembly elections that same year and was the primary political force behind the movement for an autonomous and independent Slovenia. The author highlights the historical support this goal received at the nationwide plebiscite on 23 December 1990. The establishment of the Slovenian state and its proclamation took place on 25 and 26 June 1991. The establishment of a modern, sovereign, and independent nation culminated in the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia on 23 December 1991. From the perspective of anthropological history, the author evaluates it in light of

the chapter on fundamental human rights and freedoms, which best reveals its character. He notes that it follows all democratic bourgeois European constitutions, at least from 1848 onward, and contains all the crucial elements of Slovenian political culture as they took shape when the new state entered modern politics. The author regards the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia as the *pinnacle* of Slovenian political thought, marking the end of a vital era in the development of Slovenian society. By elaborating on the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, Janko Prunk concludes his extensive and incisive work. *The History of Slovenian Political Thought*, drawing on the author's many years of research and intellectual experience, is a significant contribution to Slovenian humanities. With this monograph, we have gained a contribution that significantly advances our knowledge of ourselves and our understanding of the circumstances that have shaped the Slovenian people in the past and, to some extent, continue to do so today.

the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are employed in the public sector has increased by 1.5 million, from 2.5 million in 1980 to 4 million in 1995. The public sector has become a major employer in the UK, and its growth has been a major factor in the overall growth of the economy.

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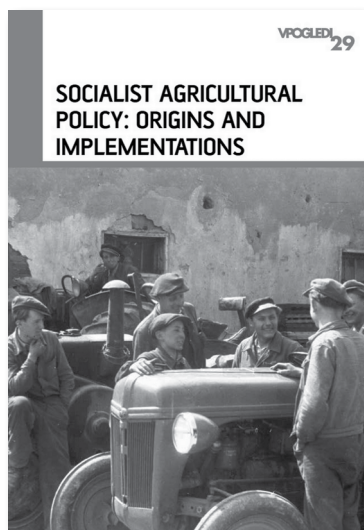
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Ocene in poročila – Reviews and Reports

Janja Sedlaček, ed., *Socialist Agricultural Policy: Origins and Implementation.*

Ljubljana: Institute of Contemporary History, 2025, 274 pp.



The history of socialist agriculture and, more generally, the lives of Central and Eastern European rural populations under socialism are not topics that the literature ignores. On the contrary, accounts of collectivisation in the region abound, and some of the most insightful works on Soviet history focus precisely on the turbulent relations between Soviet authorities and the rural population. Nevertheless, comparative and entangled approaches remain scarce, which is one reason why the volume *Socialist Agricultural Policy: Origins and Implementation*, edited by Janja Sedlaček, is a valuable contribution to the field.

Based on the 2023 Conference of Rural History in Cluj, the book opens with a brief introduction by Žarko Lazarević. It comprises eight chapters presenting case studies from the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Yugoslavia.

The volume is divided into four large sections. The first comprises two contributions by Stephan Merl on the history of socialist agricultural policies in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The first chapter focuses on the Soviet experience from the late 1920s until Stalin's death. Its primary claim is that Stalin's main drive was never the modernisation of the countryside, and that the Soviet leader's primary intention was instead to finance industrialisation, even in the face of clearly adverse results in the agricultural economy. In parallel, Merl engages in discussion with Lynne Viola concerning the characterisation of peasants' actions against Soviet power and contests the use of the concept of "resistance" to describe what, in his view, were desperate measures to survive the violence unleashed against them by the Soviet authorities. Merl's

second chapter is an extension of the first, with a broader focus on Eastern Europe after 1945. Drawing on evidence from Soviet, German, and Hungarian archives, as well as the secondary literature, this contribution examines agricultural policies in the USSR and Eastern European states from the postwar years to the end of socialism. By studying these two together, the author shows that the reception of Soviet guidelines for the countryside led to different forms of implementation across Eastern European countries. These diverging approaches, which resulted from the changing nature of relations between Eastern European communist parties throughout the second half of the 20th century and were shaped by local conditions and needs, also allow the author to critically assess Soviet policy and its limitations in light of alternative solutions to similar problems.

The following section of the book comprises two chapters, respectively dealing with Hungary and Czechoslovakia, and showing the manifold tensions and divergences that arose in the reception of socialist agricultural policies abroad after 1945. A chapter by Zsuzsanna Varga focuses on the reception, translation, and transformation of the Stalinist approach to socialist agriculture in Hungary, where successive changes from the late 1940s to the 1960s enabled the emergence of new and original forms of management and production in the countryside. The adoption of collectivisation in the late 1940s, reinforced by pressures arising from the Tito-Stalin split, led to negative outcomes, including resistance to joining collective farms and lower overall production. De-Stalinisation and Imre Nagy's ascent to the Hungarian Party leadership allowed a retreat from pressure to collectivise and a new boom in individual farming, which was interrupted by Rákosi's return to power. The arrival of Kadar led to significant liberalisation in the countryside, the abolition of compulsory deliveries, and a gradual return of market mechanisms in agricultural production; yet these changes were halted in the late 1950s by a third attempt at collectivisation, which met with resistance from Hungarian peasants. By the early 1960s, this led to the adoption of a more flexible and tolerant policy that accepted local initiatives diverging from the *kolhoz* model in the hope of increasing production, eventually expanding the autonomy of collective farms from the state, liberalising their internal functioning, and recognising household farms as an integral part of the system. By the late 1960s, the Hungarian socialist agricultural model had departed significantly from Soviet practices, a development made possible by Moscow's increased tolerance for divergences within the socialist bloc and by the Hungarian Workers' Party's need to secure its legitimacy after 1956.

In dialogue with Varga's chapter, Eduard Kubů and Jan Slaviček's contribution examines the singularities of the Czechoslovak case and reviews the evolution of socialist policies throughout the period of socialism in the Bohemian lands. Their contribution also sheds light on the plasticity of the reception of Soviet-style agricultural policy and its local implementation, a process also shaped by fluctuations in relations within the socialist bloc. The authors discuss the shift from a relatively tolerant approach to agriculture, with considerable room for small and medium-sized private ownership during the first months after the Communist takeover, to a more radical

approach after the Tito-Stalin split of June 1948, which aimed at the liquidation of private holdings and collectivisation, with poor results. Several years of fluctuation during the de-Stalinisation period eventually led to the adoption of novel policies aimed at making agriculture more efficient while narrowing the gap between the living standards of cooperative members and those of city workers. As the authors show, from then onwards the rural population in Czechoslovakia would enjoy rising living standards, eventually becoming one of the pillars of regime stability even during periods of political and social unrest, such as the late 1960s. Collectivised agriculture in the Bohemian territories would attain high levels of productivity and international integration, not least because the regime permitted enterprises to diversify and expand into other activities. Rural income would continue to grow until the very end of the socialist period, demonstrating the consistency and viability of agricultural policies developed by Czechoslovak authorities since the late 1950s, although often with utter disregard for the long-term impact of excessive chemical use, which allowed for increased productivity.

The third part of the book, dealing with forms of resistance and dysfunctions, opens with a contribution by Lev Centrih that sheds light on the local and micro-social dimensions of the failure of collectivisation in Slovenia. Focusing on the region of Ig around Ljubljana, Centrih draws on a variety of secondary sources and archival documents from Party and local authorities to reconstruct the manifold conflicts that plagued the implementation of collectivisation in an area deeply affected by political violence during World War II, and to trace the trajectories of cooperative members, showing their diverse and often opposing stances towards party authorities and collectivisation. A remarkable finding of this study is the extent to which, with only one exception (the peasant cooperative of Brest), class-based conflict among members of the cooperatives tended to be overshadowed by clashes of other sorts (religious, ideological, moral), showing how interpersonal tensions could beset the implementation of collectivisation as much as, or even more than, structural disparities in ownership.

The next piece, written by Márton László, examines attempts at collectivisation and anti-collectivisation movements during the early years of the Romanian communist regime, with a focus on the former Háromszék County in Transylvania. Drawing on both oral and archival sources, the author reconstructs the tactics used by the regime's officials to push peasants and landowners into cooperatives, ranging from simple social pressure and threats of expulsion from school for their children to hard labour and, eventually, physical mistreatment. The paper recounts many episodes of grassroots resistance against collectivisation in the towns, leading to clashes with the authorities, several fatalities, and numerous deportations.

The final section of the book, titled "Private and Collective", examines experiences of reform in the agricultural economies of Hungary and Slovenia, highlighting tensions between private and collective ownership. A chapter by Dániel Luka delves into the legislative process behind land reform throughout the 1950s and 1960s. This lengthy reform effort sought to align the evolving landscape of land use and distribution (also

discussed in Varga's chapter) with economic reform, culminating in the Land Act of 1967. Luka's analysis shows that the process largely coincided with the well-known fluctuations in Hungary's political landscape, with official approaches shifting from more repressive to more liberal phases and back over the years. However, somewhat unsurprisingly, the persisting goal was to reinforce common property ownership at the expense of private property.

Lastly, a chapter by Marta Rendla focuses on the reform of Slovenian agriculture in the early 1970s. The author begins by examining the initial approach of the Yugoslav regime to agrarian production and the rural population, which emphasised collective ownership, reinforced large agrarian combines, and contributed to a significant income gap between rural and non-rural populations; all of which eventually led to the decline of cooperatives and a general process of deagrarianisation. The official approach, however, changed in the late 1960s, when it became recognised that ensuring food security required the development of both agricultural ownership sectors. Consequently, technological modernisation, access to credit, farm specialisation, and education in advanced agricultural practices became equally accessible to private farmers, all with the support of the newly revitalised Agricultural Extension Service, which operated on three levels – republic, regional, and local – with the latter assigning a central role to cooperatives. By the end of the socialist period, and in line with official plans, Slovenia had achieved a high level of self-sufficiency in food production, around 82%, albeit with significant internal production imbalances.

Janja Sedlaček's volume offers a comprehensive overview of the development and implementation of agricultural policy in socialist Central and Eastern Europe throughout the second half of the 20th century. The authors effectively show the broad diversity of approaches that emerged among the leadership of European socialist countries during the Cold War, initially shaped by common guidelines emanating from Moscow but rapidly adapting to local circumstances and driven by the opening of possibilities following de-Stalinisation. The volume effectively shows the significant restrictions initially imposed on policymaking by the Soviet model, as well as the ultimate capacity of most Eastern European regimes to reinvent themselves in the face of repeated failures and to adopt novel, more flexible approaches and solutions to the agricultural question.

The volume is very well put together, with several lines of thought that link the contributions to one another and a shared interest in examining how the cooperative model was used to transform the countryside under socialism in Eastern European countries. On a more critical note, the reader notices that the chapters are sometimes uneven, with some offering rather general accounts of policymaking and others delving deeply into the national, regional, and local histories of Central and Eastern European societies. This imbalance notwithstanding, the volume stands out for its consistency and richness, offering readers an excellent review of debates on the history of socialist agriculture in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as a glimpse of the latest research in the field.

Agustín Cosovschi

Urška Purg, ur., **Denar in kriminal: tekma brez konca = Money and Crime: The Neverending Race.**

Ljubljana: Muzej in galerija MUZA, 2026, 220 str., ilustr.



V trenutku pisanja te recenzije je mogoče po Ljubljani in izven nje, pa tudi na spletu, naleteti na številne plakate in oglase, ki pozornost pritegujejo s tem, da že vnaprej pričakujejo nezainteresiranost naključnega mimoidočega oziroma internetnega popotnika in jo takoj obrnejo na glavo. »Spletni prevaranti nočejo, da nas obiščete«, preberemo na

uličnih panojih, medtem ko nas na spletu pričakata variaciji »Spletni prevaranti bi raje, da preskočite ta oglas« in »Spletni prevaranti računajo, da boste to vabilo vrgli v koš«. Za kaj gre? Kakšno skrivno znanje je v ozadju oglasov, ki namigujejo, da bomo s konzumacijo misterioznega promoviranega produkta bolj finančno pismeni in s tem varnejši na spletu? Natančnejši pogled pokaže, da je oglaševani »produkt« v resnici sveža razstava *Denar in kriminal* muzeja MUZA v osrčju Ljubljane, slavnostno odprta 31. marca 2026 in na ogled do 8. februarja 2027. Ambiciozno zastavljena razstava in spremljajoči zbornik povezujeta učenje o finančni varnosti tukaj in zdaj z ozadjem finančnega kriminala skozi zgodovino, zato sta zanimiva ne le za slehernika v digitalni dobi, ki se želi izogniti kakršnikoli prevari, ampak tudi za vsakogar, ki ga privlačijo bolj škandalozna poglavja finančne zgodovine.

Dvojezični, slovensko-angleški razstavni katalog obsega sedem poglavij, od katerih so tri razdeljena na posamezne članke, sklepni dve pa obsegata opombe ter seznam virov in literature. V uvodnih poglavjih nas nagovorita direktor muzeja Matko Mioč in kustosinja Urška Purg, ki poudarjata, da je MUZA zavezana k predstavljanju tematik, ki niso le oziranje v preteklost, temveč nosijo tudi koristne nauke za sedanjost. Finančni kriminal je kakopak fenomen, ki še ni bil uspešno pospravljen na smetišče zgodovine, pač pa se je iz ropanja bank in fotokopiranja bankovcev prevedel v bistveno kompleksnejše kibernetске prevare, zoper katere ni imun nihče. Razstava in katalog potemtakem črpata tako iz zgodovinskih naukov kot izkušenj sodobnosti, da obiskovalce in bralce seznanjata s preventivo – kurativa je vendarle vedno grenka pilula.

Prvi sklop prispevkov zadeva ponarejanje denarja in je najbolj zgodovinsko obarvan. Urška Purg nas v uvodnem prispevku seznanja z najzgodnejšimi oblikami ponarejanja. Karkoli je že bilo menjalno ali plačilno sredstvo določene civilizacije – od prvih novcev v Mali Aziji do kakavovih zrn v Mezoameriki –, ni trajalo dolgo, da so se pojavili tudi ponaredki. Že v Mezopotamiji je bil to problem, ki ga je moral upoštevati Hamurabijev zakonik in ga je tudi drakonsko sankcioniral. Alenka Miškec iz Numizmatičnega kabineta Narodnega muzeja Slovenije nadaljuje zgodovinski pregled ponarejanja denarja v naslednjih stoletjih. Vrsto let je bila najbolj priljubljena taktika

obrezovanje zlatih in srebrnih novcev – ostružek tu, košček tam in ob primešanju manjvrednih staljenih kovin v kalupu je nastal nov, lep, svetleč novec, ki pa je bil seveda ponaredek. Ko so se v moderni dobi pojavili bankovci, so tudi ti hitro postali predmet ponarejevalcev, pri čemer so se nekateri zadeve lotili kar s prostoročnim prerisovanjem zapletene motivike in upali na najboljše. Starogrške, rimske in srednjeveške kazni za ponarejanje so ostale stroge in so pogosto vključevale telesno kazen, kot je sekanje rok, pa tudi usmrnitev ni bila nemogoča. Ljubljanski malefični red iz leta 1514 je za ponarejevalca denarja predvidel celo grmado. Skozi stoletja so se kazni sčasoma omilile, vendar je v moderni dobi ponarejanje dobilo še neznane dimenzije, saj so države z množičnim ponarejanjem valute svojih sovražnic in preplavljanjem njihovih tržišč s ponaredki skušale destabilizirati tuja gospodarstva. Medvojna Kraljevina Srbov, Hrvatov in Slovencev oziroma Kraljevina Jugoslavija ni bila odporna proti takšnim napadom, saj je bila deležna priliva lažnih dinarskih bankovcev iz Madžarske, Italije in Turčije. Med drugo svetovno vojno je podoben pristop ubrala nacistična Nemčija, ki je tiskala angleške funte in ameriške dolarje, pa tudi socialistična Jugoslavija se je morala po vojni otepati lažnih bankovcev, ki so dotekali iz zahodnoevropskih držav. Samostojna Slovenija je imela s ponarejanjem prav tako nemalo težav, posebej pri slabo zaščitениh bonih, ki so bili v uporabi do jeseni 1992; inovativna je bila preprosta taktika, da se bonu za deset tolarjev prilepita še dve ničli, tako da je »zrastel« na bon za tisoč tolarjev, ki je bil podobnega zelenkastega odtenka. V najnovejšem času je ponarejanje evrskih bankovcev sicer prisotno, vendar je delež ponarejene evrske gotovine v obtoku po dosedanjih izsledkih sorazmerno majhen.

Urška Purg se v naslednjem poglavju osredotoči na študije primerov nekaterih najrazvpitejših slovenskih ponarejevalcev. Javnosti dobro znana je zgodba o kranjskem slikarju Leopoldu Layerju, ki je začel skupaj z družinskimi člani ponarejati bankovce za časa Ilirskih provinc. Prevara je bila odkrita, Leopold in njegov brat Valentin pa poslana v zapor. Slednji je v zaporu umrl, Leopold pa je bil po treh letih izpuščen. Kot trdi legenda, je v zahvalo za izpust iz zapora naslikal slovito brezjansko *Marijo Pomagaj*, vendar je slika najverjetneje nastala še pred ponarejevalsko afero. Layer je po prihodu iz zapora s freskami poslikal kapelo, v katero je nameščena slika. Drugi osumljenec je Jožef Prelesnik, enigmatična robinhoodovska figura iz dolenskih krajev s konca 19. stoletja, ki je denar ponarejal od mladosti pa tako rekoč do smrti. Uglajeni, lepo oblečeni Prelesnik, ki je moral večkrat v zapor in je iz njega tudi večkrat pobegnil, je številnim kmetom v finančni stiski ponaredil lepe vsote, zaradi česar je bil čaščena figura v osrednjeslovenskem prostoru, ki je kot arhetipski džentelmenski tat našla prostor tudi v slovenskem leposlovju – od Stritarja in Jurčiča do Trdine in Detele. Še ena zanimiva kartoteka zadeva Ivana Selana, ki je prihranke izgubil v stečaju Ljudske posojilnice, zato si je pomagal z risarskim talentom in je začel konec dvajsetih let 20. stoletja risati ter razpečevati dinarske bankovce. Ko je bil aretiran in poslan pred sodišče, je porota pokazala razumevanje in ga oprostila, toda ko je pregrešek ponovil leta 1932, se zaporu ni več izognil. Svoj talent je kasneje začel uporabljati v bolj legalne namene, tako da ga danes poznamo predvsem kot izjemnega samouka-mojstra kartografije, ki je zrisal

kopico zemljevidov slovenskega in jugoslovanskega prostora, od turističnih kart do vojaških specialk. Celotno ponarejevalsko združbo je sestavljala družina Potočnik – oče Gašper in njegovi sinovi, ki so tako rekoč tradicionalno ponarejali bankovce za časa Avstro-Ogrske in medvojne Jugoslavije. Družinski člani, posebej sin Jurij, so nizali afere, aretacije in pobege, vendar je romantizem, ki je obdajal predhodne ponarejevalce, do tedaj zbledel in javnost jih je obsojala kot pohlepneže. Jurijevo delo je nadaljeval Franc Rupnik, ki je Potočnikom pomagal pri tehničnem vidiku ponarejanja: izdelovanju klišejev, steklenih plošč in litografskih matric, zaradi česar je tudi sam moral večkrat pred sodišče in v zapor. Rupnik je sodeloval s še enim ponarejevalcem, Francem Majcnom, s katerim sta se – seveda – spoznala v mariborskem zaporu in še v poznih tridesetih letih 20. stoletja družno polnila časopisne stolpce črne kronike. Kajpada so ob naštetih primerih slovenski prostor pretresale tudi manjše afere ponarejevalcev osamelcev, ki pa niso ostale prisotne v javnem spominu. Nenavaden je primer iz notranjske vasi Žeje iz leta 1922, kjer je požar nepričakovano razkril tiskarno jugoslovanskih dinarjev v eni od domačij, mati pa je morala v zapor, ker so otroci zbežali čez lužo. Poglavje se zaključuje s še enim ženskim primerom, namreč zgodbo Terezije Aristoteles, soproge lesnega trgovca, ki je z izposojanjem denarja od mreže ljubljanskih mešetark leta 1874 zapadla v dolgove, zato je začela ponarejati menice. Sodni postopek, ki je sledil, je postal odmevna časopisna afeta, ki je prinesla obilo čudenja in zgražanja ljubljanskega življa nad obnašanjem v afero vpletenih žensk.

Sklepna članka sklopa se dotikata najnovejšega časa. Nataša Žener iz Nacionalnega forenzičnega laboratorija predstavlja postopek, skozi katerega gre odkrit primerek ponarejenega denarja. Ponaredki so v laboratoriju natančno analizirani, podatki pa deljeni v skupnih evropskih podatkovnih bazah. Našteti so tudi namigi, na katere podrobnosti je treba biti pozoren pri preverjanju pristnosti bankovca v svoji denarnici. Različne zanimivosti v povezavi s ponarejenimi evrskimi bankovci so našteje tudi v intervjuju s strokovnjakom za ponaredke iz Evropske centralne banke Martinom Mündom.

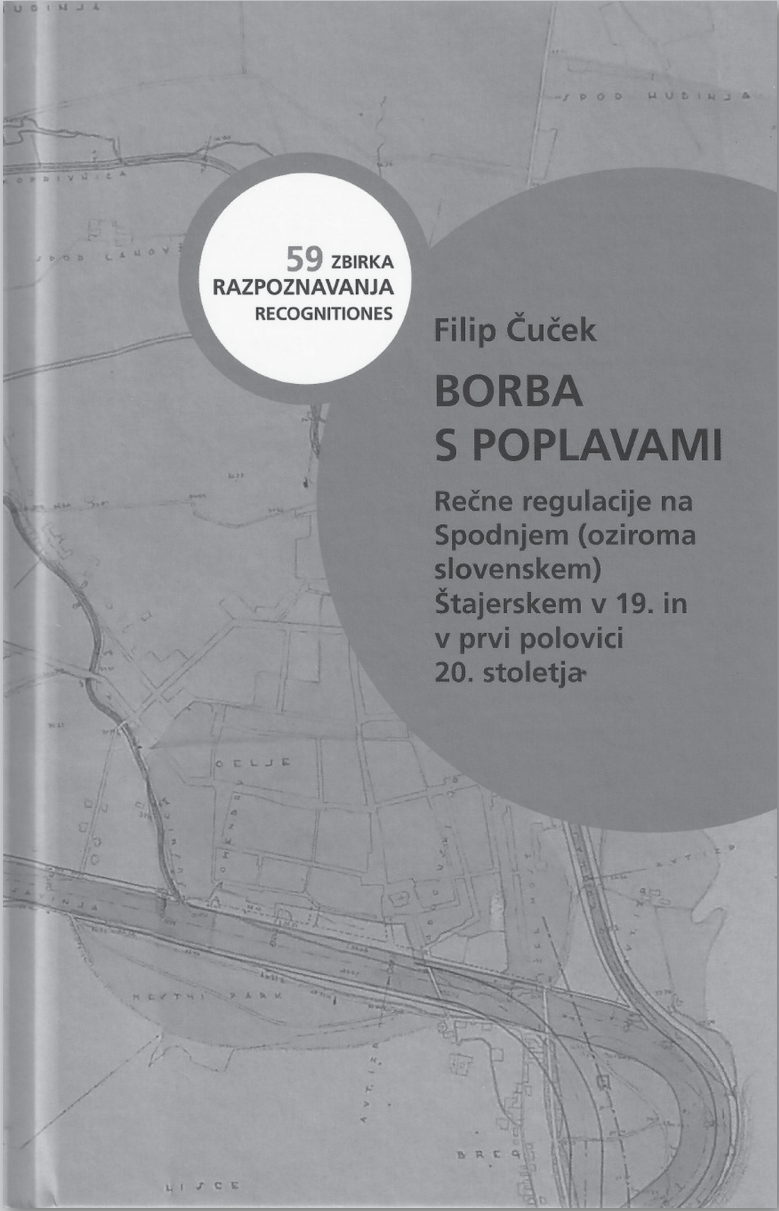
Naslednji sklop prispevkov tematizira rope, vlome v bankomate in prevare, povezane z njimi. Uvodno besedilo Urške Purg koncizno predstavlja zgodovino najvidnejših bančnih ropov v slovenski in širši zgodovini; večina se nas spomni drznega ropu trezorjev banke SKB leta 2005, le malo pa je znan nekoč sicer odmeven primer ropu carinske blagajne blizu tedaj italijanske Postojne iz leta 1926, ki se je razvil v uro trajajoč spopad med roparji in stražniki, v katerem so žrtve padle na obeh straneh. Tudi napadi na bankomate dandanes niso redek pojav, prav tako pa niso redki primeri prevare, s katero skušajo goljufi ukrasti denar ali podatke uporabnikov; ob vsaki uporabi je zato treba preveriti, ali na bankomatu niso pritrjeni sumljivi elektronski dodatki (skimming naprave), ki bi zbirali občutljive podatke. Špela Klarič iz Muzeja slovenske policije predstavlja delo tega malo znanega muzeja v sklopu policijskega izobraževalnega kompleksa v Tacnu, ki je javnosti v omejeni, nadzorovani obliki odprt od leta 1991 dalje. Muzej se osredotoča na predstavitev odmevnih kaznivih dejanj, vključno z bančnimi ropi in ponarejenim denarjem, ter metod njihovega odkrivanja in preiskovanja.

Damjan Končar iz banke NLB predstavlja načine, na katere banke poskrbijo za zaščito bankomatov, in našteva najpogostejše načine napadov nanje, medtem ko David Gracer z Generalne policijske uprave v obširnem prispevku analizira različne oblike zlorab plačilnih kartic in spletnih goljufij, vključno z nigerijsko prevaro in romantično goljufijo, ter našteva taktike za zaščito pred njimi.

Tretji in zadnji sklop prispevkov pokriva področje kiberkriminala. Jasmina Mešič in Gorazd Božič iz Nacionalnega odzivnega centra za kibernetisko varnost SI-CERT pišeta o najpogostejših spletnih prevarah, kot so ribarjenje za podatki (*phishing*), lažne spletne trgovine in kriptoprevare, ter o tem, kako se jim izogniti. Sklop, in zbornik, zaključuje razmislek Igorja Areha s Fakultete za varnostne vede Univerze v Mariboru o vprašanju, zakaj postanemo žrtve finančnih prevar, predvsem s psiholoških vidikov, in kako se je temu mogoče izogniti. Seveda pa zanesljivih rešitev ni; Areh prispevek – in s tem zbornik – zaključuje z besedami: »Iracionalni del človeške narave je bistveno močnejši kot njen racionalni del, zato se napakam ne moremo izogniti.« (str. 203)

Zbornik *Denar in kriminal = Money and Crime* v kombinaciji s spremljajočo razstavo nudi slikovit vpogled v zimzelene pojave ponarejanja, kraj in spletnih finančnih prevar v zgodovinskem prerezu in najaktualnejši sedanjosti. Prepletanje zgodb iz preteklosti z nasveti, kako biti in ostati varen na vesoljnem spletišču, predstavlja zanimiv poskus spajanja zgodovinopisne raziskave s kriminalistično-psihološko-svetovalno analizo aktualnega stanja, ki ga pri nas ne vidimo pogosto. Če se ob zborniku in na razstavi muzamo ob amaterskih primerkih ponarejenih bankovcev in se potihem sprašujemo, kako so lahko kogarkoli prepričali o svoji avtentičnosti, pa nam sklepna poglavja zbornika in zaključni del razstave nazorno pokažejo, da smo dandanes, če nismo opremljeni z ustreznim znanjem in zdravim razumom, zlahka podobno nebo-gljeni in naivni v svetu digitalnih financ. Oglaševanje je zato tokrat zaupanja vredno – spletni prevaranti nas res ne želijo na razstavi. Ponovimo: razstava je na ogled do 8. februarja 2027.

Ivan Smiljanić



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RAZPOZNAVANJA
RECOGNITIONES

Filip Čuček

BORBA S POPLAVAMI

Rečne regulacije na
Spodnjem (oziroma
slovenskem)
Štajerskem v 19. in
v prvi polovici
20. stoletja

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INŠTITUT
ZA NOVEJŠO ZGODOVINO