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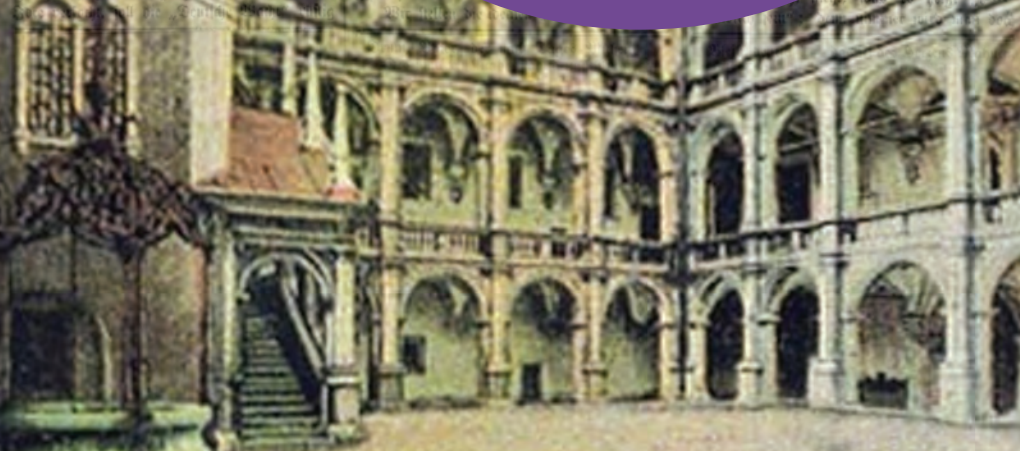
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für Recht und Freiheit und für die
materiellen Interessen der Bevölkerung. Verwe
genannt und durch unabhängigen Organ, mit
des im Ausland und in der Heimat die nationale

29 ZBIRKA
RAZPOZNAVANJA
RECOGNITIONES

Filip Čuček

SVOJI K SVOJIM

Na poti k dokončni
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Spodnjem Štajerskem
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POVZETEK

SVOJI K SVOJIM

Obdobje na prelomu 18. in 19. stoletja nacionalne identitete ni poznalo. Identiteta prebivalstva je bila še globoko v 19. stoletje največ deželna, med kmečkim prebivalstvom pa celo povsem lokalno obarvana. Spodnještajerski Slovan je sicer vedel, da ni Nемеc, toda občutka povezanosti s koroškimi ali kranjskimi Slovani ni čutil. Na drugi strani je bil spodnještajerski meščan (ne glede na izvor) v prvi vrsti Štajerc in lokalpatriot in je (brez kakršnekoli nacionalne identitete) govoril po vsakdanji potrebi nemško in slovensko.

Tradicionalna deželna pripadnost (in občutek pripadnosti določenemu jeziku) sta že relativno zgodaj spodbudila znanstveno-raziskovalno vneto intelektualcev, da se deželni »domači« jeziki (in prebivalstvo, ki jih je govorilo) klasificirajo in postavijo na nove (znanstvene) temelje (sprva na Kranjskem). Ne glede na problem standardizacije jezika so številna dela, ki so temeljila na »najnovejših znanstvenih dognanjih«, hitro pripeljala do ugotovitve sorodnosti kranjskega slovanskega dialektala s koroškim in štajerskim. Perspektiva se je iz (južno)slovanskega okvira počasi ožila na slovanske dialekte v Notranji Avstriji.

Te ugotovitve so imele velik vpliv na potek »jezikovnega« gibanja v predmarčnem obdobju, kljub temu pa niso bistveno spreminjale identitete širših slojev. Za uspešno kulturno posredovanje nadregionalne »slovenske« ideje je bilo bolj pomembno naraščanje elementarne pismenosti (predvsem nedeljske »ponavljalne« šole). Toda napredek šolstva in pismenosti sam po sebi ni krepil zavesti o narodni skupnosti, saj so bili učbeniki nenetni in napisani v več različnih pisavah in tudi jezikovnih variantah. Pogledi na kulturno združevanje notranjeavstrijskih dežel so prišli do polnega izraza ob standardizaciji »slovenskega« knjižnega jezika. A pozivi piscev, da je treba preseči jezikovno razdrobljenost in se končno poenotiti o knjižnem standardu in enotni pisavi, vse do konca predmarčnega obdobja niso prinesli uspeha. Literarna produkcija je še naprej izhajala v različnih pisavah in regionalnih jezikovnih značilnostih, ki niso bile splošno razumljive. Pri večini intelektualcev je bila še vedno močno iz-

ražena deželna in (na drugi strani) širša (južno)slovanska identiteta. Najpomembnejši korak k preseganju jezikovnega partikularizma in h krepitvi naddeželne identitete pa so gotovo storile Bleiweisove Novice, saj so hitro dobile »vseslovensko« podobo in kot središčna točka »narodne« komunikacije pred revolucijo oblikovale vse elemente modernega nacionalnega mišljenja na »narodni« zgodovini.

Medtem je politična demokratizacija (ustava in parlament) leta 1848 zajela tudi avstrijsko cesarstvo, revolucija pa je prinesla prve zametke nacionalnega čustvovanja. A sredi maja 1848 (v Mariboru in Celju) ustanovljeno Društvo za posredovanje med slovansko in nemško narodnostjo je odločno nasprotovalo tako programu zedinjene Slovenije kot velikonemškimi težnjami na škodo Avstrije. Tisti, ki so opozarjali na nevarnost razpada Avstrije in se zavzemali za program zedinjene Slovenije, so bili razglašeni za prenapeteže in celo rusofile. Meščanstvo se je večinoma opredelilo za Frankfurt, med podporniki frankfurtskih volitev pa so bili tudi mnogi pripadniki »slovenskih vrst«, ki se jim je zdela pripadnost notranjeavstrijskih dežel k Nemčiji že iz tradicije nekaj povsem razumljivega.

Del »slovenske« elite pa je ubiral drugačno taktiko. Potem ko se je celovski stolni kaplan Matija Majar Ziljski zavzel za posebno samoupravno notranjeavstrijsko enoto z lastnim predstavništvom, se je tudi spodnještajerskim »slovenskim« krogom zazdelo, da bi se ta ideja lahko realizirala v praksi. Slovenska inteligenca, delujoča v Gradcu, je sredi aprila ustanovila društvo Slovenija, ki je usmerjalo spodnještajersko slovensko politiko (medtem je tudi dunajska Slovenija zahtevala, »da se politiško razkropljeni narod Slovincov na Kranjskim, Štajerskim, Primorskim in Koroškim, kakor jeden narod v eno kraljestvo z imenom Slovenija zedini«). Kmalu se je (predvsem na podeželju) pojavilo tudi protifrankfurtsko razpoloženje, na drugi strani pa je tudi podpisovanje peticij za zedinjeno Slovenijo imelo slab uspeh, saj je zajelo le del izobraženstva in študentov, med kmečkim prebivalstvom pa zanj ni bilo pravega posluha. Tudi na dežel-

nozborski ravni je bil deželni patriotizem še zmeraj močnejši od nastajajoče moderne nacionalne zavesti.

Eno pomembnejših pridobitev marčne revolucije so vsekakor predstavljale moderne občine (najnižja stopnja lokalne samouprave). A čeprav so dobile ogromne pristojnosti, se je kmalu pokazalo, da je bila le-ta povsem nerealno zastavljena. Obseg občinskih nalog je bil namreč v nesorazmerju z materialnimi zmožnostmi občin. V času neoabsolutizma jih niso ukinili, ponovno pa so zaživele po obnovi ustavnega življenja, ko se je Avstrija znova oprijela parlamentarnega državnega ustroja. Občinski odbori so predstavljali t. i. »šolo demokracije«, saj so se morali odborniki naučiti delovati v korist skupnosti. Na osnovi davčnega in inteligenčnega cenzusa temelječa »ljudska predstavništva« so vplivala tudi na oblikovanje deželnih in državnih predstavništev (deželni zbori, po letu 1873 državni zbor). Občine so bile vseskozi pomemben sestavni del političnega sistema; bile so institucije, ki so bile usmerjene k reševanju problemov, bolj pragmatične in manj ideološke, kot je bilo značilno za deželne zборе in državni zbor. Znotraj (širše) lokalne samouprave pa so bili na Štajerskem (še na Češkem in v Galiciji) vzpostavljeni še okrajni zastopi. V njihovo pristojnost so načelno spadale vse občine okraja (z izjemo tistih z lastnim statutom, ki so bile v lastnih (občinskih) zadevah podrejene neposredno deželnemu zboru, v zadevah prenesenega delokroga (s strani države) pa namestništvu). Iz ostalih zadev okrajnega zastopa pa statutarne občine vseeno niso bile izvzete.

Kljub temu da je bil avstrijski parlamentarizem vezan na omejeni volilni sistem, ki je zagotavljal politično participacijo po izobrazbi in po plačanem davku, je bila avstrijska demokracija povsem sodobna »ustanova«. Z društvenim in zborovalnim pravom, liberalizacijo tiska, volilnimi reformami in s širjenjem volilne pravice je v politično življenje monarhije vstopal vedno večji del prebivalstva. Vzporedno s tem je tekel tudi proces nacionalizacije prebivalstva, ki je (še do nedavnega) živelo v »harmoničnem sožitju«. Toda nacionalizem in demokratizacija, v

drugi polovici 19. stoletja med seboj tesno povezana in prepletena procesa, sta se »prijemala« le počasi.

Po obnovi ustavnega življenja se je tudi na Spodnjem Štajerskem razmahnilo živahno politično življenje (ob nemški stranki se je postopoma oblikovala slovenska (narodna) stranka). Znotraj obeh nacionalno-političnih polov je bila sprva dejavna zgolj peščica ljudi. Na podeželju se mobilizacija prebivalstva (seveda s strani »elite«) za eno ali drugo stran še niti ni dobro pričela. Politika še ni poznala moderne politične »infrastrukture« (oziroma klasičnega strankarstva), politiki so delovali po načelu pripadnosti določenim političnim vizijam. Oblikovanje političnih taborov je sprožilo tudi nacionalno diferenciacijo. Nacionalizem (sprva prisoten v ozkih intelektualnih krogih) se je postopoma, toda vztrajno širil med prebivalstvom in ga ločeval po novem nacionalnem ključu. Nemštvo (ustavoverci) se je definiralo kot sistem napredka in svobode, slovenstvo pa je postajalo sinonim za nazadnjaštvo, klerikalizem in ultramontanizem. V tem kontekstu se je velika večina spodnještajerskih meščanov opredelila za nemštvo in ne za slovenstvo. Velika zavzetost predvsem na (večinoma slovensko govorečem) podeželju pa se je slovenski strani kmalu obrestovala, saj jim je tam uspelo (skorajda brez težav) postaviti temelje mobilizacije (oziroma procesa (slovenskega) nacionalnega oblikovanja) prebivalstva.

Medtem je leta 1867 sprejeta decembrska ustava uvajala moderne demokratične trende in dokončno omogočila normalno parlamentarno politično delovanje. Prišlo je do okrepitve modernizacijskih procesov. Dokončna sprememba družbenega sistema v predstavniki parlamentarizem in ostala (moderna) infrastruktura (izgradnja železniškega omrežja, (skromna) kapitalistična proizvodnja, razvoj trgovine, svoboda tiska, zborovalno in društveno pravo, še posebej pa obvezno osnovno šolstvo po letu 1869) so bile »novosti«, ki so v ustavni dobi postale gibalo nacionalnega razvoja in pospešile proces nacionalnega oblikovanja (tudi) na Spodnjem Štajerskem. A ne glede na začetni nacionalni spopad je treba poudariti, da nacionalna koe-

ksistenca v vsakdanjem življenju konec šestdesetih in v začetku sedemdesetih let 19. stoletja še vedno ni bila docela porušena.

Kljub složnemu nastopanju na taborih se je razdor v slovenskih vrstah poglobljajal zaradi različne politične taktike, še bolj kot to pa zaradi svetovnonazorskih trenj. Okrepljeni konservativni duh se je kazal z ustanavljanjem katoliških političnih in tiskovnih društev. Spodnještajerska liberalna stran se je na deželnozborskih volitvah leta 1870 sicer podredila zahtevam katoliškega tabora, ki je v zameno za sodelovanje v narodni politiki zahteval obrambo pravic katoliške Cerkve. Konservativna struja se je opazno okrepila v Mariboru. Idejnopolitični razkol je kulminiral na državnozborskih volitvah leta 1873 in deželnozborskih volitvah leta 1874, ko je konservativna struja gradila značaj sloge na cerkveno-političnih stališčih, medtem ko so se liberalci posvečali zgolj vprašanjem narodne politike. Toda sredi sedemdesetih let so se strasti umirile, zaradi hudega nemško-liberalnega pritiska pa se je bila štajerska slovenska stran prisiljena vrniti na pota slogaške politike.

S Taaffejevo vlado je nastopil ugoden čas za prodor nacionalne ideologije v vse pore javnega (in zasebnega) življenja. Prednacionalno »sožitje« je seveda postalo preteklost, nacionalna mobilizacija prebivalstva pa je pospešeno ubirala svojo pot. Na Spodnjem Štajerskem so nova razmerja moči v državnem zboru povzročila hitro zaostrovanje nacionalnih odnosov med Nemci in Slovenci. Jezikovno vprašanje je hitro prišlo v ospredje slovenske politike. Nemci so odločno nasprotovali (po njihovem) »slovenizaciji« srednjih šol in javnih zavodov. Toda pri tem niso bili več deležni vladne pomoči iz Auersperg-Lasserjevih časov. Slovenska politika je prav zaradi tega počasi, toda vztrajno napredovala. Svoje sile so Slovenci skoncentrirali zlasti pred Celjem, kjer se je po prihodu odvetnika Josipa Serneca konec sedemdesetih let slovenska stran opazno krepila.

Ob vse močnejši slovenski stranki je postajala vse ostrejša tudi nemška nacionalna agitacija, ki je prihajala (predvsem) iz Maribora in Celja. Toda če so bili mariborski Nemci ob razde-

ljenosti v tri stranke v nacionalni politiki neorganizirani, je bolj enotno celjsko nemštvo ob kreptitvi slovenstva poseglo po radikalnejših metodah (geslo »Proč od Dunaja«, ker da od njega ne morejo ničesar pričakovati, so podprli tudi mariborski Nemci). Ponovno so se oprijeli ideologije štajercijanstva, ki je s poudarjanjem sloge med nemškim in slovenskim elementom (ter posledično regionalne zavesti) poskušalo ustaviti napredujoče slovensko nacionalno gibanje. Prave politične manifestacije so si »privoščili« ob odkritjih spomenika Jožefu II. v spodnještajerskih mestih in trgih (jeseni 1882 in spomladi 1883). Tudi obisk cesarja Franca Jožefa (sredi leta 1883) so skušali izkoristiti v svojo prid in si prizadevali prikazati Spodnjo Štajersko kot popolnoma nemško deželo. A kljub temu je Slovenskemu političnemu društvu, ustanovljenemu leta 1882 v Mariboru, uspelo ustaviti poskuse spodnještajerskih Nemcev, da bi se trajneje zasidrali na slovenskem podeželju. Sredi osemdesetih let se je bilo prebivalstvo (predvsem) v mešanih okrajih (ne glede na socialni položaj in družbeni status) prisiljeno nacionalno opredeliti. Center spodnještajerske politike se je oblikoval v Celju, kjer so (zaradi dobrega položaja) Slovenci skoncentrirali svoje moči, zaradi tega pa je v ospredje vedno bolj prihajalo tudi celjsko nemštvo.

Slovenska stran je poleg »napadov« na okrajne zastope začela načrtno nastopati na občinskih volitvah (v občinah, ki so imele sicer večinsko slovensko prebivalstvo, a nemške občinske svete). V središču »napadov« se je znašla strateško pomembna celjska okoliška občina, ki je kot nekakšen obroč oklepala »nemško« Celje. Kljub pritisku nemške strani je kot zmagovalka izšla slovenska stran, saj je dobila volitve v odločilnem drugem razredu, posledično pa večino v občinskem zastopu. Slovenska stranka je skušala prodreti tudi v samo mesto, kar pa ji ni uspelo. Zato se je skoncentrirala na institucije v neposredni bližini mesta ob Savinji, kljub temu pa ji je uspelo konec julija 1889 v Celju odpreti Južnoštajersko hranilnico, ki je predstavljala prelomnico na poti h gospodarski emancipaciji Slovencev. Po sokolskem društvu, ki je leta 1890 postalo eno izmed središč družabnega in

narodnega življenja v mestu, so celjski Slovenci dobili še koncesijo za Zvezno tiskarno, ki je maja 1891 pričela izdajati slovenski časopis Domovina. Vse to je še bolj zaostriło nacionalne odnose v mestu, na drugi strani pa sprožilo homogenizacijo (nemške in slovenske) nacionalne politike na Spodnjem Štajerskem. Zaradi silovite nemške »obrambe« so Slovenci nastopali vseskozi slogaško, strankarski boji so bili potisnjeni v ozadje. Od devetdesetih let naprej je bil glavni cilj občine načrtno in vsestransko zaviranje slovenskega napredka v mestu. Vsa paleta zaviralnih ukrepov celjske mestne občine je prišla najbolj do izraza ob gradnji celjskega Narodnega doma (1891–97).

V devetdesetih letih je na Slovenskem nacionalizem dokončno definiral prebivalstvo po nacionalnem (na Kranjskem tudi po ideološkem) ključu. Slovensko opredeljeno prebivalstvo je bolj ali manj »osvojilo« idejo povezanosti z enako mislečim prebivalstvom ostalih »slovenskih« dežel. Nacionalna (slovenska) mobilizacija prebivalstva je bila tako več kot uspešna, medtem ko je nemška stran ostala »ujeta« za mestne oziroma nekatere trške »zidove« (seveda se je tudi sama nemško-nacionalno opredelila). Nacionalni odnosi so se na Spodnjem Štajerskem povsem zaostriili. Ustanovitev slovenskih vzporednic na celjski gimnaziji leta 1895, otvoritev Narodnega doma v Celju ali obisk čeških visokošolcev v mestu avgusta 1899 – vse to je povzročalo velike nemške manifestacije. Nemško-slovenska nasprotja so odslej obstajala na vsakem koraku, Slovenci pa so celjskim Nemcem povzročali vse več skrbi (moč slovenske stranke se je lepo pokazala na državnozborskih volitvah leta 1901, ko je v mestni kuriji (le-ta je bila sicer vseskozi v nemških rokah) Ivan Dečko za zmagovalcem Josefom Pommerjem zaostal le za 83 glasov).

Po uvedbi splošne volilne pravice leta 1907 so bile posamezne dežele v državnem zboru še vedno neenakomerno zastopane. Slovenci so dobili 24 poslancev, kar je sicer ustrezalo deležu slovenskega prebivalstva v Avstriji, vendar pa poslanski sedeži niso bili enakomerno porazdeljeni po deželah (razen na Kranjskem so bili povsod drugod nesorazmerno zastopani). Na drugi strani

deželni zbori v skladu z reformno politiko državnega zbora splošne volilne pravice nikjer niso uvedli. Z zamudo je bila uvedena zgolj splošna kurija. Na občinski ravni pa so skušali marsikje uskladiti novi volilni sistem z obstoječimi občinskimi volilnimi razredi, toda ti poskusi so se končali neuspešno.

Medtem se je spodnještajerska slovenska slogaška politika že vse od druge polovice devetdesetih let počasi krhala. Če se je v Celju krepila liberalna »meščanska« struja, pa so se pod vplivom politične diferenciacije na Kranjskem v Mariboru vse bolj uveljavljali katoliški politiki mlajše generacije in svojo aktivnost usmerjali na podeželje. Dokončen razdor so prinesle nadomestne državnozbornske volitve leta 1906, ko sta se v splošni kuriji spopadla liberalec Ivan Rebek in katoliški kandidat Anton Korošec, ne da bi se ozirala na svarila Jura Hrašovca o enotni slogaški politiki. Januarja 1907 sta bili tako oblikovani stranki obeh blokov (»celjska« Narodna stranka pod vodstvom odvetnika Vekoslava Kukovca, »mariborska« Slovenska kmečka zveza pod vodstvom duhovnika Antona Korošca).

Nemška politika je po prelomu stoletja vso svojo dejavnost usmerila v štajersko Podravje in se postopoma umikala s celjskega območja, ki je bilo zanjo praktično izgubljeno. Pri tem je delovala vse bolj enotno, bolj ali manj podpirala Nemško ljudsko stranko in se na vso moč oprijela nemških nacionalnih društev. Pred prvo svetovno vojno je Südmark svoje kolonizacijsko delo usmeril zlasti na Šentilj v Slovenskih goricah z okolico. Slovenska politika je opozarjala na načrtne akcije nemške strani, ki si je že leta prizadevala priključiti kraje med Mariborom in Šentiljem ter ustvariti neke vrste »nemški most« do največje spodnještajerske nemške »trdnjave«.

Kot zadnji »poskus ustavitve« (sicer že končanega) slovenskega nacionalnega procesa je spodnještajersko nemštvo v letih pred vojno uporabilo še preverjeno metodo štajercijanstva (podobno so storili že konec šestdesetih in na začetku osemdesetih let 19. stoletja). S časopisom Štajerc, ki je bil glasilo t. i. stranke Štajerc-Partei (od januarja 1907 formalno organizirana kot

Napredna zveza), so poskušali pod krinko gospodarskih koristi mobilizirati slovensko prebivalstvo za nemštvo. Časopis, pisan v slovenščini, je pod idejnim vodstvom ptujskega župana Josefa Orniga od leta 1900 do leta 1918 izhajal na Ptuju.

Spodnještajerski Nemci so želeli vojno izkoristiti za utrditev nemškega gospostva v Cislajtaciji, toda razplet dogodkov je šel v drugo smer. Ko je mariborski občinski odbor 30. oktobra 1918, dan po nastanku Države SHS, razglasil Maribor z okolico kot sestavni del avstrijske države, je Rudolf Maister 1. novembra zvečer prevzel vojaško poveljstvo v mestu (in na celotnem Spodnjem Štajerskem), v noči na 23. november razorožil nemško varnostno stražo (Schutzwehr), konec meseca pa s svojimi borci zasedel črto Dravska dolina–Špilje–Radgona. To demarkacijsko črto mu je uspelo zadržati do konca bojev sredi februarja 1919, ko je bila med štajersko deželno vlado v Gradcu in Narodno vlado v Ljubljani podpisana Mariborska pogodba, ki je začasno nemško-jugoslovansko mejo določila na doseženi demarkacijski liniji. Dokončna meja med Avstrijo in Kraljevino SHS se je reševala na saintgermainski mirovni konferenci leta 1919. Tam je bilo določeno, da Maribor (in ostala Spodnja Štajerska) brez plebiscita pripade Kraljevini SHS, mirovna pogodba pa je kot mejo med novonastalima državama upoštevala Maistrovo razmejitev iz konca leta 1918.

Po razpadu monarhije se je spodnještajersko nemštvo znašlo na udaru novih oblasti. Mnogi Nemci, ki so bili aktivno vključeni v narodnopolitično konfrontacijo, so že na začetku novembra 1918 zapustili novo državo. Sledili so jim najvišji državni uradniki, kmalu pa še drugi javni uslužbenci, ki so po odslovitvi iz službe in izgubi službenih stanovanj čez noč ostali brez eksistence. Drug za drugim so padali tudi nemški ulični napisi in izveski nad trgovinami, gostilnami, obrtnimi delavnicami, zdravniškimi ordinacijami, odvetniškimi in notarskimi pisarnami in drugimi lokali. V vsega nekaj mesecih, do februarja 1919, je bila sodna, upravna in šolska oblast na Spodnjem Štajerskem povsem poslovenjena.



SUMMARY

EACH TO THEIR OWN

At the turn of the 19th century the concept of national identity was still unknown. For a long time after the beginning of the 19th century the identity of the population remained tied to provinces at the most, while among the peasant population it was even completely local. The Slavs from Lower Styria may have been aware that they were not German, but they did not feel any connections with the Carinthian or Carniolan Slavs. On the other hand the Lower Styrian bourgeoisie were (regardless of their origins) primarily Styrian and local patriotic, and they spoke both German and Slovenian, according to their everyday needs and without any national identity.

Relatively early the traditional provincial adherence (and the feeling of adherence to a certain language) encouraged the scientific and research zeal of intellectuals to classify the provincial, »native« languages (and the populations that spoke them) and to establish new (scientific) foundations (initially in Carniola). Regardless of the problem of the standardisation of languages, many works, which were based on the »newest scientific findings«, quickly led to the establishment of similarities between Carniolan, Carinthian and Styrian Slovenian dialects. From the (South) Slavic framework the perspective gradually focused on the Slavic dialects of Inner Austria.

These findings had a significant influence on the development of the »linguistic« movement in the pre-March period, but they nevertheless did not alter the identity of the wider strata significantly. The successful cultural transmission of the transregional »Slovenian« idea depended more on the increase in elementary literacy (especially due to the Sunday »refresher« schools). However, the progress of education and literacy in itself did not strengthen the awareness about the national community, as the textbooks were very diverse, written in various alphabets as well as language variants. The outlooks on the cultural integration of the Inner-Austrian provinces came to full fruition when the »Slovenian« literary language was standardised. However, the appeals of the authors that linguistic disparity should

be overcome and that an agreement on the literary standards and single alphabet should finally be reached remained unsuccessful until the very end of the pre-March period. The literary production still involved various alphabets and regional linguistic characteristics that were not generally comprehensible. Most intellectuals still exhibited a strong provincial and, on the other hand, a wider (South) Slavic identity. The most important step towards overcoming the linguistic particularities and strengthening the trans-provincial identity was definitely Bleiweis's *Novice* (News) publication, which soon attained an »all-Slovenian« image. As the central point of the »national« communication before the revolution this publication shaped all the elements of the modern national attitude towards the »national« history.

Meanwhile, in 1848 political democratisation (Constitution and Parliament) also engulfed the Austrian Empire, and the revolution resulted in the first elements of the national sentiment as well. However, the *Društvo za posredovanje med slovansko in nemško narodnostjo* society (Society for the Intermediation between the Slovenian and German Nations) was as resolutely opposed to the United Slovenia programme as it was against the Greater German aspirations to the detriment of Austria. Those who emphasised the danger of the dissolution of Austria and argued for the United Slovenia programme were seen as radicals or even Russophiles. Most of the bourgeoisie supported Frankfurt, and many adherents of the »Slovenian ranks« were also among the supporters of the Frankfurt elections, as they saw the adherence of the Inner-Austrian provinces to Germany as something completely understandable already on the basis of tradition.

Meanwhile, a part of the »Slovenian« elite opted for different tactics. After the Klagenfurt cathedral curate Matija Majar Ziljski argued for a distinct Inner Austrian self-management unit with its own representation, the Lower Styrian »Slovenian« circles also started to believe that this idea could be realised in practice. The Slovenian intelligentsia, operating in Graz, estab-

lished the Slovenija (Slovenia) society in the middle of April in order to steer the Lower Styrian Slovenian politics (at the same time the Vienna Slovenia started demanding that »...the politically-fragmented nation of Slovenians in Carniola, Styria, Slovenian Littoral and Carinthia should be unified within a single kingdom named Slovenia«). Soon the anti-Frankfurt sentiments started emerging (especially in the rural regions). On the other hand the signing of the petitions for United Slovenia was unsuccessful, as it only included a part of the intelligentsia and students, while the peasant population did not think much of it. Even at the Provincial Assembly level, provincial patriotism was still stronger than the nascent modern national awareness.

Modern municipalities (the most basic level of the local self-management) by all means represented one of the more important acquisitions of the March Revolution. However, regardless of the fact that municipalities acquired enormous powers, it soon turned out that this was completely unrealistic. As it was, the scope of the municipal tasks was completely disproportionate to the material capabilities of the municipalities. During the neo-absolutist period they were not abolished, and they started operating again after the restoration of the constitutional life, when Austria once again resorted to the parliamentary state system. The municipal committees represented the so-called »school of democracy«, as the members of the committees had to learn how to act in favour of the community. The »people's representations«, based on the tax and intelligentsia census, also influenced the formation of the provincial and state representations (Provincial Assemblies, after 1873 the National Assembly). Throughout this time municipalities were an important integral part of the political system. They were institutions focused on problemsolving, more pragmatic than ideological, which was characteristic of the Provincial Assemblies and the National Assembly. Within the (wider) local self-management, in Styria (as well as in the Czech lands and Galicia), district representations were also established. In principle all the municipalities

within a district were under their jurisdiction, with the exception of those who had their own statute and answered, with regard to their own (municipal) matters, directly to the Provincial Assembly, while in the matters of the delegated sphere of work (on the part of the state) they answered to the provincial representation. The statutory municipalities were nevertheless not excluded from the other matters of the district representation.

Despite the fact that Austrian parliamentarism depended on a limited electoral system, which ensured the political participation on the basis of education and taxes paid, the Austrian democracy was a completely modern »institution«. With the legislation on societies and assemblies, liberalisation of the press, electoral reforms and expansion of the voting rights, an increasingly larger percentage of the population joined the political life of the Monarchy. Simultaneously with these processes, the process of the nationalisation of the population, which had (until recently) »coexisted harmoniously«, also took place. However, nationalism and democratisation – the closely connected and intertwined processes that took place in the second half of the 19th century – were slow to »gain ground«.

After the restoration of the constitutional life a diverse political life also developed in Lower Styria (a Slovenian national party gradually formed apart from the German one). Initially merely a handful of people were active on either side of the national and political spectrum. In the rural areas the mobilisation of the population (by the »elite«, of course) for either of the two sides had not even begun properly. The politics did not yet possess the modern political »infrastructure« (or classic political parties) and the politicians operated according to the principle of the adherence to certain political visions. The formation of political camps also gave rise to national differentiation. Nationalism (initially present in limited intellectual circles) gradually but persistently spread among the population, separating it in accordance with the new national category. Germans (supporters of the Constitution) defined themselves as a system of prog-

ress and freedom, while Slovenians became synonymous of reactionism, clericalism and ultramontaniam. In this context the vast majority of Lower Styrian bourgeoisie identified with the Germans, not Slovenians. However, the zeal present especially in the (mostly Slovenian-speaking) rural regions soon paid off for the Slovenian side, as there it succeeded (almost without any difficulties) to set the foundations for the mobilisation (or the process of the Slovenian national formation) of the population.

Meanwhile the December Constitution, adopted in 1867, introduced modern democratic trends and finally allowed for normal parliamentary political activities. The modernisation processes strengthened. The final change of the social system to representative parliamentarism and the rest of the (modern) infrastructure – construction of the railroad network, (modest) capitalist production, development of trade, freedom of press, legislation governing the associations and societies, and especially the obligatory primary education after 1869 – were the »novelties« that became the driving force of the national development in the constitutional period and encouraged the process of national formation (also) in Lower Styria. However, regardless of the national conflict that was initiated we have to underline that the national coexistence in the everyday life was nevertheless not completely in ruins at the end of the 1860s and in the beginning of the 1870s.

Despite the harmonious appearance at camps the division of the Slovenian ranks deepened due to the differences in the political tactics, but even more so due to conflicts of the world views. The strengthened conservative spirit manifested itself in the establishment of Catholic political and publication societies. At the 1870 Provincial Assembly elections the Lower Styrian liberal side subordinated itself to the demands of the Catholic camp, which, in exchange for the cooperation in the national politics, demanded that the rights of the Catholic Church be defended. In Maribor the conservative wing became notably stronger. The ideological-political rift culminated at the 1873

National Assembly elections and at the 1874 Provincial Assembly elections, when the conservative wing built the unification character on the ecclesiastical-political viewpoints while the liberals focused merely on the issues of the national politics. However, in the middle of the 1870s the passions were appeased as the Styrian-Slovenian side was forced to return to the unification political line due to the severe German liberal pressure.

Taaffe's government brought about favourable conditions for the breakthrough of the national ideology into every aspect of the public (and private) life. Of course, the pre-national »harmony« became a thing of the past, while the national mobilisation of the population grew increasingly stronger. In Lower Styria the new balances of power in the National Assembly resulted in the rapidly increasing national tensions between Germans and Slovenians. The issue of language quickly ended up at the forefront of the Slovenian politics. The Germans resolutely opposed what was, according to them, the »Slovenisation« of secondary schools and public institutions. However, in their efforts they no longer received the government assistance that they had enjoyed in the times of Auersperg-Lasser. Precisely for this reason the Slovenian politics advanced slowly but tenaciously. The Slovenians concentrated their forces especially in the city of Celje, where the Slovenian side became notably stronger after the arrival of the lawyer Josip Sernek at the end of the 1870s.

The increasingly stronger Slovenian party was accompanied by the increasingly severe German national agitation, stemming (mostly) from Maribor and Celje. However, if the national politics of the Maribor Germans was disorganised in light of their division into three parties, the more unified Celje Germans responded to the increasingly resolute Slovenianism by resorting to the more radical methods (the motto »away from Vienna«, implying that they could not expect anything from Vienna, was supported by the Maribor Germans as well). Once again they resorted to the ideology of Styrianism, trying to put

a stop to the advancing Slovenian national movement by emphasising the harmony between the German and Slovenian elements (and, consequently, the regional awareness). On the occasion of the unveiling of the monument dedicated to Joseph II they organised full-blown political manifestations in the Lower Styrian cities and towns (in the autumn of 1882 and spring of 1883). They also tried to take advantage of the Emperor Franz Joseph's visit (in the middle of 1883) and attempted to make Lower Styria look as a completely German province. Nevertheless, the Slovenian Political Society, established in Maribor in 1882, managed to put a stop to the attempts of the Lower Styrian Germans to gain any permanent foothold in the Slovenian rural regions. In the middle of the 1880s the population was forced to identify itself in terms of nationality, especially in the nationally-mixed districts (regardless of social position and status). The centre of the Lower Styrian politics established itself in Celje, where Slovenians consolidated their powers (due to their favourable position there), and therefore the Celje Germans kept coming to the forefront more and more.

Apart from »invading« the district representations, the Slovenian side started appearing methodically at municipal elections (in the municipalities where the majority of the population was Slovenian, while the municipal councils were controlled by Germans). The strategically important municipality surrounding the city of Celje, which enclosed the »German« Celje like a sort of a ring, became the focus of these »invasions«. In spite of the pressure from the German side, the Slovenian side was victorious: it won the elections in the decisive second class and consequently the majority in the municipal representation. The Slovenian side attempted to take over the city itself, yet failed to do so. Therefore it focused on the institutions in the immediate surroundings of this city by the river Savinja, and at the end of July 1889 it managed to establish the Južnoštajerska hranilnica (South Styrian Savings Bank), which represented a turning point on the path towards the Slovenian economic emancipa-

tion. After the Sokol society, which became one of the centres of the social and national life in the city in 1890, the Celje Slovenians also received the permit to found the Zvezna tiskarna (Federal Printing House), which started to publish the Slovenian newspaper *Domovina* (Homeland) in May 1891. All of this even worsened the national relations in the city, but on the other hand it gave rise to the homogenisation (of the German and Slovenian) national politics in Lower Styria. Due to the forceful German »defence«, Slovenians put up a united front, while the conflicts between the parties were pushed into the background. Since the 1890s the main goal of the Celje municipality was to obstruct the Slovenian progress in the city methodically and in every aspect. The whole range of the restrictive measures of the municipality became most apparent during the construction of the *Narodni dom* (National Centre) in Celje (1891-97).

In the 1890s nationalism in Slovenia finally defined the population according to the national (and in Carniola also according to the ideological) category. The part of the population that identified itself as Slovenian more or less »adopted« the idea that it is connected with the similarly-thinking populations of the other »Slovenian« provinces. The (Slovenian) national mobilisation of the population was thus more than successful, while the German side remained »captive« within the »walls« of the cities and certain towns (naturally, it had also identified itself nationally as German). The relations between the nations in Lower Styria became extremely tense. The establishment of the Slovenian programmes at the Celje general secondary school in 1895, the opening of the National Centre in Celje and the visit of the Czech college students in Celje in August 1899 resulted in massive German protests. Thereafter the German-Slovenian oppositions were evident at every turn. Slovenians became the source of the ever increasing concern among the Celje Germans. The power of the Slovenian party became apparent at the 1901 National Assembly elections, when in the urban curia Ivan Dečko was only 83 votes behind the victor, Josef Pommer.

After the introduction of universal suffrage in 1907, the individual provinces were still disproportionately represented in the National Assembly. Slovenians obtained 24 seats, which corresponded to the percentage of the Slovenian population in Austria. However, the seats were not evenly distributed among the provinces (with the exception of Carniola, all other provinces were disproportionately represented). On the other hand, the Provincial Assemblies failed to introduce the universal suffrage in accordance with the reform politics of the National Assembly. Only the general curia was introduced, after some delay. However, many attempts were made to bring the new electoral system in line with the existing municipal electoral groups at the municipal level, but they were unsuccessful.

Meanwhile, ever since the second half of the 1890s the Lower Styrian Slovenian unification politics was gradually crumbling. While in Celje the liberal »bourgeois« wing was gaining strength, in Maribor the younger generation of Catholic politicians, headed by Anton Korošec, asserted themselves under the influence of the political differentiation in Carniola and focused their activities on the rural areas. The final separation took place at the time of the National Assembly by-elections of 1906, when the liberal Ivan Rebek and the Catholic candidate Anton Korošec opposed each other in the general curia with no regard to Juro Hrašovec's warnings about the joint unification policy. In January 1907 the parties of both blocs were thus formed (the »Celje« National Party led by the lawyer Vekoslav Kokovec and the »Maribor« Slovenian Peasant Union led by the priest Anton Korošec).

After the turn of the 20th century the German politics focused all of its activities on the Styrian basin of the river Drava and gradually retreated from the Celje area, which had practically been lost to it. Its actions were increasingly coordinated: it more or less supported the German People's Party and clung to the German national associations as hard as it could. Before World War I, Südmark focused its colonisation activities espe-

cially on Šentilj in the Slovenske gorice region and its surroundings. The Slovenian politics kept bringing the attention to the premeditated actions of the German side, which had strived to absorb the villages between Maribor and Šentilj for years in order to create a kind of a »German bridge« towards the largest Lower Styrian German »fortress«.

In the final »attempt at stopping« (what was otherwise the already completed) Slovenian national process, in the years before the war the Lower Styrian Germans resorted to the already proven method of Styrianism (they had used similar methods at the end of the 1860 and at the beginning of the 1880s). With the newspaper Štajerc (Styrian), a gazette of the so-called Štajerc-Partei (Styrian Party, after January 1907 formally organised as the Napredna zveza or Progressive Association), they wanted to mobilise the Slovenian population for the German cause under the guise of economic benefits. The newspaper, written in Slovenian, was published in Ptuj between 1900 and 1918 under the leadership of Josef Ornig, the Mayor of Ptuj.

The Lower Syrian Germans wanted to take advantage of the war and strengthen the German domination in Cisleithania, but the actual events took a different turn. When on 30 October 1918, a day after the establishment of the State of SHS, the Maribor municipal committee declared that Maribor and its surroundings were an integral part of the Austrian state, on the evening of 1 November Rudolf Maister took over the military command of the city (and the whole of Lower Styria). During the night between 22 and 23 November he disarmed the German Security Guard (Schutzwehr), and towards the end of the month he and his fighters occupied the line between the Drava river valley – Špilje – Radgona. Maister managed to hold this demarcation line until the end of the battle in the middle of February 1919, when the Syrian Provincial Government in Graz and the National Government in Ljubljana signed the Maribor Treaty, which set out the temporary German-Yugoslav border at the occupied demarcation line. The final border between Aus-

tria and the Kingdom of SHS was resolved at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. The resulting Treaty of St. Germain set out that Maribor (and the rest of Lower Styria) was to be annexed to the Kingdom of SHS without any referendums, and Maister's delimitation from the end of 1918 was taken into account as the border between the newly-created states.

After the dissolution of the Monarchy, the Lower Styrian Germans felt the pressure of the new authorities. Many Germans who had been actively involved in the national-political confrontation had already left the new state at the beginning of November 1918. They were followed by the highest state officials and soon thereafter also by the other public servants who had lost their jobs and their employer-provided apartments overnight. The German street signs and signboards over shops, taverns, workshops, medical facilities, legal and notary offices as well as other businesses started disappearing one after another. In just a few months – until February 1919 – the judicial, administrative and education authority in Lower Styria was completely Slovenianised.