"Post-Liberalism", Anti-Clericalism And Yugoslav Nationalism. Slovene Progressive Political Camp in the Interwar Period and Contemporary Czech politics[1]

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Abstract: The article examines the Slovene "progressive" political parties, treated as the interwar heirs to the 19th century national liberal traditions, and puts forward references to similar parties from the Czech political context. It demonstrates how the dominant position of political Catholicism within the Slovene political landscape also largely determined the ideological profile and political behavior of the main opposing camp. Pronounced "anti-clerical" orientation was thus essential for Slovene (post-)liberals, marking an important difference to their counterparts in the more secularized Czech context. On the other hand the appeal to the national idea remained central for both the Slovene and the Czech interwar national liberal heirs. The specificities of progressives' national politics are discussed in the second section, where it is indicated that the complexities of their Yugoslavist course, being based not merely on pragmatic considerations, had mostly different underpinnings than the Czechoslovakist conceptions had in the Czech (post-)liberal politics.

Keywords: Political parties; Slovenia; Yugoslavia; Liberalism; Progressive camp; Nationalism; Yugoslavism

The political camp that identified primarily as "progressive" was one of the main component parts of the political landscape of the Slovene part of the Yugoslav kingdom. Traditionally referred to simply as "liberals" in Slovene

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historiography, the progressives' interwar political performance has perhaps been most commonly associated in Slovene historical memory with the project of building a Yugoslav nation.[2] This paper provides a general political profile of progressive camp in order to demonstrate how the Yugoslav nationalist orientation was intertwined with ideological struggle against political Catholicism as well as perspectives of modernization. The primary focus is devoted to the circle of Gregor Žerjav and Albert Kramer as the core group of the camp in the interwar period.

At the same time references are put forward in regard to the Czech political context. This is especially relevant when taking into account the long-lasting tradition of admiring and emulating the Czechs, their society, culture and politics by the Slovene elites. The "Czech model" thereby provided inspiration particularly and foremost to the liberal part of Slovene politics, what had been clearly expressed already in the 1868 appeal "Let us learn from the Czech-Slavs."[3] As the main reference point from the interwar Czech political spectrum, I have chosen the Czechoslovak National Democrats (Československá národní demokracie). Formed around the long time Czech national liberal leader Karel Kramář and divided into various "wings," this party represented the main heir of Czech liberalism in terms of organization,[4] uniting parties previously belonging to what Jiří Malíř has termed as the "national liberal camp."[5] In addition to their common origins in the political culture of the old Austria, the Slovene progressives and Czech National Democrats shared another common point. Within their respective political landscapes, they represented a specific political current and type of political party, distinctive for the early 20th century

2 Until 1929 the official name of the Yugoslav state was "Kingdom of the Serbs, the Croats and the Slovenes." "Yugoslavia" was however widely used already before that.

3 Cf. IRENA GANTAR GODINA, "Let us learn from the Czech-Slavs": Reception of Masaryk's Views among Slovenian Intelligentsia from 1895 to 1914, in: *T. G. Masaryk a Slované*, eds. V. Doubek, L. Hladký, R. Vlček, Prague 2013, p. 263. For the original reference see: JOSIP VOŠNJAK, Učimo se od Čeho-Slovanov, *Slovenski Narod* 11. 6. 1868. Also see: I. GANTAR GODINA, Slovenes and Czechs: an enduring friendship, *Slovene studies* 1–2/1995, pp. 95–112; JURE GAŠPARIČ et al. (ed.), *Češi a Slovinci v moderní době: politika, společnost, hospodářství, kultura*, Ljubljana – Prague 2010.

4 HANS LEMBERG, Das Erbe des Liberalismus in der ČSR und die National Demokratische Partei, in: *Die Erste Tschekoslowakische Republik als Multinationaler Parteienstaat*, ed. K. Bosl, Munich 1979, p. 68.

5 See: JIŘÍ MALÍŘ, Systém politických stran v českých zemích do roku 1918, in: *Politické strany: vývoj politických stran a hnutí v českých zemích a Československu 1861–2004*, I, eds. J. Malíř, P. Marek, Brno 2005, pp. 31-44.

Central Europe, for which I employ the term "national liberal heirs". Parties of this type possessed certain liberal background but were already from the turn of the century departing in various ways from the national liberal political traditions in which they rooted. The overview provided in the paper is – in addition to selected primary sources and periodical press – primarily based on the writings of Slovene historians from the last three decades, most notably Jurij Perovšek, who has done major work on the topic.[6]

Interwar Slovene political landscape and progressive camp

One might legitimately ask why the Slovene part is being treated separately from the rest of Yugoslavia, since Slovenia was not even an administrative unit. It needs to be stressed, that the substantial differences between the various former political units that had united into Yugoslavia continued into the interwar. Although Slovene politics became part of Yugoslav politics, the main characteristics as they had developed under Austria – particularly the division into political camps – remained the same. The All-Yugoslav politics affected them only to a limited degree.[7] Although the Slovene progressives after 1918 mostly joined all-state parties they retained their specificity within the internal Slovene context. A significant novelty was the division between Yugoslav unitarists and Slovene autonomists.[8]

The Slovene political landscape, as it had developed towards the end of the 19th century and thereafter, was marked by division into three so-called

6 In particular see: JURIJ PEROVŠEK, *O Demokraciji in jugoslovanstvu, Slovenski liberalizem v Kraljevini SHS/Jugoslaviji*, Ljubljana 2013 and *Liberalizem in vprašanje slovenstva: nacionalna politika liberalnega tabora v letih 1918–1929*, Ljubljana 1996.

7 On the general interwar Yugoslav context see: DEJAN DJOKIĆ, (Dis)integrating Yugoslavia: King Alexander and Interwar Yugoslavism, in: *Yugoslavism, Histories of a Failed Idea 1918–1992*, ed. D. Djokić, London 2003; BRANKO PETRANOVIĆ, *Istorija Jugoslavije 1918–1988*, Vol. I, Belgrade 1988; FERDO CULINOVIĆ, *Jugoslavija između dva rata*, Zagreb 1961; HRVOJE MATKOVIĆ, *Povijest Jugoslavije: (1918–1991–2003)*, Zagreb 2003; JOŽE PIRJEVEC, *Jugoslávie 1918–1992: vznik, vývoj a rozpad Karadjordjevićovy a Titovy Jugoslávie*, Prague 2000.

8 Cf. JANKO PLETERSKI, Politika naroda v krizi dužbe, države in idej, in: *Slovenska trideseta leta: simpozij 1995*, eds. P. Vodopivec, J. Mahnič, Ljubljana 1997, p. 47. For Slovenes in the first Yugoslavia see: J. PEROVŠEK, Die Slowenen in der Umbruchszeit und im neuen jugoslavischen Staat (1918–1929), in: *Region und Umbruch 1918: zur Geschichte alternativer Ordnungsversuche*, eds. H. Heppner, E. Staudinger Eduard, Frankfurt am Main 2001, pp. 69–85; PETER VODOPIVEC, Political traditions in Central Europe and in the Balkans (in the light of the experience of the first Yugoslavia), *Yoroppa kenkyuu* 5/2006, pp. 77–103.

political or ideological camps (*nazorski tabori*), which comprised similarly oriented political parties, intellectual circles within and close to them and their broader following, together with field organizations, as well as officially non-partisan associations. Such political structures represented a distinctive feature of the early 20th century politics in Central Europe, especially the Cisleithanian part of the Habsburg Empire. In the Slovene lands the three main camps were the Catholic conservatives, the "progressives" or "liberals" and the Marxist camp. Representing different ideological positions and partly also social groups, they engaged in continuous struggle. This was especially characteristic for the Catholics and progressives, that both resented the weaker Marxists,[9] at the same time engaging in a bitter *Kulturkampf*, labeling each other "clericals" and "liberals". This conflict, which had already before WWI been most severe in Carniola, decisively marked the interwar political struggles.[10] Even more so, since those parts of Slovene national territory, where liberal and social democratic traditions had been stronger, became part of Italy.

The political divisions that fueled the previously mentioned "cultural war" may roughly be described as running along the lines of social traditionalism versus modernization and the (renewed and reinforced) demands for active socio-political engagement of the Church versus secularist efforts.[11] At least initially, before separate political parties were founded in 1890s, the crucial divisions concerned primarily world views and strategic considerations

9 It should be mentioned that in especially after 1935 progressives and socialists began collaborating against the far stronger Catholic camp.

10 Cf. P. VODOPIVEC, O slovenskih političnih tradicijah v času nastanka Kraljevine SHS leta 1918, in: *Problemi demokracije na Slovenskem v letih 1918–1941: zbornik prispevkov na simpoziju 7. in 8. decembra 2006*, edd. J. Pirjevec, J. Pleterski, Ljubljana 2007, p. 33. Also see: J. PEROVŠEK, Politične in narodnostne razmere na Kranjskem v začetku 20. stoletja, in: *Sto let Zavoda sv. Stanislava*, ed. F. Dolinar, Ljubljana 2005, pp. 9–36; EGON PELIKAN, Laibach/Ljubljana: Kultur – Ideologie – Politik: Die „liberal-klerikale" Spaltung in Slowenien am Ende des 19. Jh. und ihre Folgen. in: *Urbane Leitkulturen 1890–1914*, eds. R Kannonier, H. Konrad, Vienna 1995, pp. 169–181.

11 To an extent the "cultural wars" were still based on the conservative: liberal dualism, dating back to the mid-19th century and expressed by the slogans "For the faith, the home and the Emperor" (*Za vero, dom, Cesarja!*) on the conservative and "for the nationhood, freedom and culture" (*za narodnost, svobodo in omiko*) on the liberal side. This had however from the 1890s on been shadowed by a more far-reaching "intellectual separation" (*ločitev duhov*), called for by one of the founding fathers of Slovene political Catholicism bishop Anton Mahnič, who warned against "godless liberalism". As we shall see later was this separation was quite readily accepted and further cultivated by the other side as well.

regarding the Slovene national movement and were to a lesser extent dependent on social differences and interest politics.[12] Nevertheless, since the progressives pointed their rhetoric primarily at the emerging middle classes, whereas the Catholic party successfully aimed to attract the support of the peasant masses,[13] the "clerical : liberal" split to some extent also adopted the form of an urban : rural division.

An important feature of the interwar Slovene political landscape, marking a striking difference to the Czech one and making it to some extent similar to the political configurations in Slovakia, was the leading position of political Catholicism. The Catholic camp was represented by a single political organization – the Slovene People's Party (*Slovenska ljudska stranka*, SLS). Its political orientation, embracing the ideals of Christian faith, traditionalism and social solidarity and adhering to the Catholic social doctrines could to some extent be paralleled to the Czechoslovak People's Party (Československá strana lidov*á*), and even more to the Austrian Christian Socials.[14] Since the introduction of universal male suffrage in 1907, Slovene People's Party had been the strongest Slovene political force. Primarily oriented towards the majority peasant population,[15] it was especially successful in establishing its power in the countryside via a successful network of Christian social peasant co-operatives. Its power increased even more in the interwar period and its electoral support stood at roughly 60 percent from 1923 on.

12 Cf. P. VODOPIVEC, O slovenskih političnih tradicijah, p. 26.

13 Cf. Ibid.

14 In its formative moments and up to the World War I., the Slovene political Catholicism indeed enjoyed a great degree of influence on part of its Austro-German counterpart. A large strain of Slovene Catholic conservatives, which gradually became the dominant one, commonly employed the label "Christian social." Moreover, even in the new political circumstances after the war the developments in Austrian and Slovene Catholic politics to a certain degree resembled each other. Similarly as in Austria the mainstream of Slovene People's Party represented strong proponents of democracy until the end of 1920s, but began drifting towards authoritarian corporatism in the following decade. See: ANDREJ RAHTEN, Die Lueger-Partei auf Slowenisch: die Entstehungsgeschichte des slowenischen politischen Katholizismus, *Zeitgeschichte* 4/2010, pp. 193–212; E. PELIKAN, *Akomodacija ideologije političnega katolicizma na Slovenskem*, Maribor 1997.

15 All in all Slovene interwar peasant population stood at roughly 60 percent. JASNA FISCHER et al (edd.), *Slovenska novejša zgodovina: od programa Zedinjena Slovenija do mednarodnega priznanja Republike Slovenije*, Vol. I, Ljubljana 2005, p. 441.

Index 1: *Results of the 1920s parliamentary elections in Slovene part of Yugoslavia*[16]

[%]	**Catholic camp (Slovene People's Party)**	**Parties of the Progressive camp**	**Parties of the Marxist camp**	**Others**
1920 (Constitutient Assembly)	37,265	32,53	28,96	1,23
1923	60,46	19,34	10,65	9,545
1925	56,32	25,35	6,72	11,61
1927	59,94	23,83	10,15	6,08

The next index shows the 1938 electoral results, where the picture was more blurry. Due to generally undemocratic circumstances and a heavily curtailed parliamentarian order they cannot be treated as being highly representative of popular attitudes.[17] Still, the 1938 elections are at least relevant to mention since 67.6 percent of voters attended them and representatives of all the three political camps participated.[18]

Index 2: *1938 electoral results in Slovene part of Yugoslavia*[19]

Governmental list (Milan Stojadinović)	**United Opposition list** (Vladko Maček)	Dimitrije Ljotić's list	
Catholic conservatives (Slovene People's Party as part of the Yugoslav Radical Union)	**Progressives** (Yugoslav National Party) **and Socialists** (Socialist Party of Yugoslavia)	**Popular Front/United Slovene Opposition** (dissident fringe leftist groups from all camps)	Slovene section of ZBOR movement
78,60 %	app. 14 %	app. 7 %	0,52 %

16 Summarized on the basis of: BOJAN BALKOVEC, Rezultati parlamentarnih volitev v Sloveniji, in: *Slovenska kronika XX. Stoletja*, I, eds. M. Drnovšek and D. Bajt, Ljubljana 1997, p. 329. At the time of the elections to the Constituent Assembly Slovene part of Yugoslavia was still united administratively under the Land Government for Slovenia. In 1922 it was divided between Ljubljana and Maribor departments (*oblast*), the latter also including a small part of Croat territory. For the interwar elections and their results see also: B. BALKOVEC, *"Vsi na noge, vsi na plan, da bo zmaga čim sijajnejša": volilna teorija in praksa v prvi jugoslovanski državi*, Ljubljana 2011.

17 During 1930s all religious, "tribal" (ethnic) and regional parties were banned and only parties and lists appointing candidates in all the electoral districts could participate. There was no secret ballot and voters, particularly in rural areas and public employees, could be subjected to different forms of pressure.

18 J. FISCHER et al (eds.), *Slovenska novejša zgodovina*, p. 390.

19 Summarized on the basis of: ibid. and ZDENKO ČEPIČ et al., *Ključne značilnosti slovenske politike v letih 1929-1955: znanstveno poročilo*, Ljubljana 1995, p. 24.

Marxist camp was the youngest of the three, the Yugoslav Social Democratic Party (*Jugoslovanska socialno-demokratska stranka*) being founded in 1896, and oriented mainly towards industrial workers. During the interwar the camp was marked by a constant struggle between the reformist Socialists (themselves splitting into a number of groups) and the Communist Party which, despite being banned in 1921, continued to operate from the underground. Especially due to the mentioned fragmentation and despite the very promising results at the 1920 elections its electoral support swiftly eroded afterwards.

As the numbers show, the parties of the progressive camp lagged behind the Catholics in terms of popular support as well. The progressives' "elitism", real or proverbial, connected to the lack of a broad social base, coupled by the major influence of the Catholic Church on the society and the better capacity for popular mobilization of the Slovene People's Party, resulted in a substantially weaker position. The new dimension of Slovene internal political struggle after 1918, expressing itself in the conflict between the demands for Slovene autonomy and Yugoslav nationalism, contributed further. In contrast to the Slovene People's Party, which advocated political autonomy for Slovenes, progressives (as well as Socialists) adopted a Yugoslav unitarist outlook and argued for a centralist state as the best means for its implementation, an option unpopular for the majority of Slovenes.

The importance of political Catholicism marked a crucial difference between the Slovene and the Czech lands. The considerably more industrialized and diversified Czech society and even more perhaps the high level of secularism distinguishing it are beyond doubt the main factors that may explain the incomparably lesser (although, especially in Moravia, not negligible) importance of political Catholicism. And the lack of these same traits, on the other hand, brings forward the case of Slovak politics, which in terms of relative hegemony of political Catholicism resembled the Slovene circumstances much more. Even more so since, both the Slovak and the Slovene People's Parties acted as the main political forces, demanding national autonomy.[20] Despite these commonalities, however, Slovene political landscape in contrast to the Slovak one also included a relatively strong national-secularist camp, which was at the same time not autonomist.

20 On relationship between Slovenes and Slovaks – and especially between the Catholic politicians – see: BOJAN GODEŠA, Jozef Tiso a Anton Korošec – vzťahy medzi Slovákmi a Slovincami, *Historický časopis* 2/2005, pp. 365–379; TONE KREGAR, *Med Tatrami in Triglavom: primerjave narodnega razvoja Slovencev in Slovakov in njihovi kulturno-politični stiki 1848–1938*, Celje 2007.

For the above listed reasons a pronounced "anti-clerical" orientation decisively marked the progressive camp, being common to all its generations, groups and parties. A rhetoric of this kind was, especially during the early years of the republic, also distinctive for the Czech secularist parties – from Communists on the left to the National Democrats on the right – with the latter having "struggle against clericalism" written among the programmatic goals.[21] Still one could hardly argue that any of these parties defined its position primarily in opposition to political Catholicism, as was the case with Slovene progressives. Whereas in the Czech context anti-clericalism and anti-Catholicism carried primarily symbolic meanings, it was power relationships and political struggle that primarily determined its function and significance in the Slovene case.

The Slovene progressives conceded the Roman Catholic religion a role of an important and positive moral force, recognizing it as an essential part of Slovene traditions. At the same time they persistently demanded complete separation between the Church and the state and together with their Serb allies achieved the inclusion of a "*kanzelparagraf*", banning priests from political work, into the 1921 constitution.[22] The Slovene People's Party was labeled as "the criminal clique who, acting for interests of clergy and its political and economic power, abuses the faith"[23] and even as "Catholic bolsheviks"[24] In their struggle against the stronger force of political Catholicism, the Yugoslav Democratic and Independent Agrarian Parties even adopted conservative and undemocratic positions on woman suffrage.[25]

The progressives' political profile in general was to a high degree determined by the more clearly defined ideological standpoints of the opposing camp,[26]

21 Cf. MICHAL PEHR, K politickému programu Kramářových národních demokratů, in: *Karel Kramář (1860–1937): život a dílo*, eds. J. Bílek, L. Velek, Prague 2009, p. 525.

22 For more on that see: J. PEROVŠEK, Slovenska politika in uvedba kancelparagrafa v prvi jugoslovanski državi, in: *Jugoslavija v času: devetdeset let od nastanka prve jugoslovanske države*, ed. B. Balkovec, Ljubljana 2009, pp. 105–118.

23 *Jutro* 16. 3. 1924

24 *Jutro* 6. 6. 1924.

25 J. PEROVŠEK, Liberalci, demokracija in volilni sistem 1918–1941, in: *Problemi demokracije na Slovenskem v letih 1918–1941: zbornik prispevkov na simpoziju 7. in 8. decembra 2006*, eds. J. Pirjevec, J. Pleterski, Ljubljana 2007, pp. 121–122. The agrarian newspaper *Kmetijski list* claimed about the 1920 elections in Czechoslovakia that "the voting rights for women in the Czech lands [...] at the last elections highly strengthened the clerical party", and rhetorically asking what would the result in Slovenia have been if "the consequences were such in the Czech lands where the women are relatively mature and progressive politically". Ženska volilna pravica na Češkem, *Kmetijski list* 20. 5. 1920.

their own being the ideologically least defined and most heterogeneous of the three. Although being commonly referred to as "liberal" in the contemporary public speech – especially by opponents - its proponents mostly preferred other names such as "progressive" (*napreden*), "national-progressive" (*narodno-napreden*), "national" or "free-minded" (*svobodomiseln*).[27] In contrast to the other two, the progressive camp lacked clear and definite ideological foundations (Catholic social teaching, Marxism) and united political positions ranging from secular conservatism to moderate non-Marxist socialism. In addition to anti-clericalism a common feature was devotedness to constitutional order, civic achievements of the French revolution and general European political developments of the 18th and 19th centuries.[28] The progressives' socio-economic views were quite far from economic liberalism and bore marks of national solidarism.[29] This was nothing unique for the (post)liberal political forces in Central Europe and broader, as classical liberalism had been vanishing everywhere from the mainstream politics. During 1930s they began to flirt with corporatist models of national economy,[30] which however never amounted to a complete and secluded system of ideas and could be interpreted as a mere rhetorical adjustment to the general political trends.

Progressive political parties found followers and supporters in all social strata and professional groups. Nevertheless, to a certain extent "bourgeois" character can be ascribed to the progressive camp, as it indeed attracted the major part of economic and intellectual elites, as well as most of the people of liberal professions and small entrepreneurs.[31] The progressive strongholds

26 Cf. P. VODOPIVEC, O slovenskih političnih tradicijah, p. 27. As an observer noted in 1919 majority of Slovene population politically positioned themselves above all in light of the dilemma „with the priest or against him." (Ibid., p. 30.) See also: J. PEROVŠEK, Vprašanje idejnega, političnega, socialnega in narodnega sobivanja v liberalni politični misli in praksi med leti 1891–1941, *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino* 1/2011, pp. 96–97.

27 VASILIJ MELIK, Slovenski liberalni tabor in njegovo razpadanje, *Prispevki za zgodovino delavskega gibanja* 1–2/1982, p. 19.

28 Cf. ERVIN DOLENC, Slovenski intelektualci in njihove delitve, in: *Slovenska trideseta leta: simpozij 1995*, edd. P. Vodopivec, J. Mahnič, Ljubljana 1997, p. 199.

29 In February of 1923 *Jutro* described the Democratic Party as "the leading champion for national harmony". *Jutro* 18. 2. 1923.

30 Cf. J. PEROVŠEK, Idejni, socialnogospodarski in narodnopolitični nazori slovenskega meščanstva v času med svetovnima vojnama (1918–1941), *Zgodovinski časopis* 4/1997, p. 537–538.

31 Three years after the introduction of universal suffrage in 1907, to which National Progressive Party was opposed, the party leader Tavčar boasted about one quarter of votes representing three quarters of tax revenues. V. MELIK, Slovenski liberalni tabor, p. 23.

were the cities, particularly Ljubljana, where their party managed to retain majority support even after 1907. In the countryside, the support was mostly limited to wealthier peasants and rural "petty bourgeoisie" (storekeepers, innkeepers, lawyers and teachers).[32] Among industrial workers the progressive trade unions were weak in comparison to the socialist and Catholic ones. As regards the urban-based Democratic and Independent Democratic Parties, their level of support can be paralleled to that of the Czechoslovak National Democrats, which attracted voters primarily in the (Czech) cities and received the far highest results (up to one third of the votes) in Prague.[33]

In the partisan sense the independent history of progressive political camp began with the founding of the "National Party for Carniola" (*Narodna stranka za Kranjsko*) in 1894. Renamed "National Progressive Party" (*Narodno napredna stranka*) in 1905 it in June 1918 merged with the "National Party for Styria" and "National Progressive Party for Görz and Gradisca" to form the "Yugoslav Democratic Party" (*Jugoslovanska demokratska stranka*, JDS). For a short time at the end of the WWI the progressive camp was thus united in a single party. JDS moreover swiftly connected first with the "Serb-Croat Coalition" and some other groupings from the former Habsburg lands in February 1919 and finally also with similarly oriented parties from the former Kingdom of Serbia in May of the same year.[34] This way the first all-state party in the newly founded Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was formed. Led by the Serbian politician Ljuba Davidović, the Democratic Party became the strongest political force in the country. In Slovene progressive press it was represented as an essentially centrist party, the most important agent of state building, as well as a necessary safeguard against all instabilities and extremes.[35] The unity however did not last long, as two new parties were founded in 1919. They at least partly rooted in the national liberal tradition, were labeled by Catholics and Marxists as "liberal," but adopted positions, different to those of the Democratic Party. First of them, the "Independent Agrarian Party" (*Samostojna kmetijska stranka*, SKS), led by Ivan Pucelj, was originally founded by rural members of JDS but soon adopted an essentially

32 Cf. J. PEROVŠEK, Socialni, politični in idejni značaj slovenskega liberalizma v letih 1894–1918, *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino* 1–2/1992, p. 5.

33 H. LEMBERG, Das Erbe, p. 71.

34 J. PEROVŠEK, *Liberalizem*, pp. 129–130.

35 "Political work of the Democratic Party has constantly been aimed towards hindering the dangerous extremes [...] incitement of the masses from below, [...] debauchery from above, reaction from the right and demagoguery from the left." *Jutro* 17. 1. 1923.

agrarianist course.[36] The second new party, originating from the "national" trade unions as well as circles of disappointed former social democrats, was the "National Socialist Party" (*Narodno socia*listična stranka), which strived for a gradual creation of a distinctly Yugoslav type of socialism.[37]

The process of diversification within the broader national liberal spectrum that occurred at the turn of the century in the Czech politics[38] and led to the development of movements, "emancipated" from their national liberal "mother party" and outgrowing its power, thus took place in the Slovene case only during 1919–1920[39] and never reached its conclusion. In contrast to the Czech politics where Agrarians and National Socialists formed their own political camps,[40] their Slovene counterparts continued to be considered as part of the "liberal camp" whose core was formed by the urban-based, middle-class descendants of the old national liberals. In the Czech lands the Agrarian and National Socialist Parties – in contrast to the National Democrats – counted among the major political players. In Slovene case such development was "aborted" and by 1930s both the former agrarians and national socialists again found themselves in the same party with the national liberal heirs. For this reason it is possible to claim that almost everything which was neither Catholic nor Marxist in the interwar Slovene politics was associated with the progressive camp.

The second political organization after JDS, in which the core progressives participated was the Independent Democratic Party (*Samostojna demokratska stranka*). The Democratic Party leader Davidović began steering his party away from strict Yugoslav national unitarism, which resulted in secession of the unitarist wing led by Svetozar Pribičević and Žerjav. They founded a new party, whose support was limited mainly to the Serbs in the former Habsburg lands, as well as the majority of Slovene progressive voters.

The Slovene (post)liberal politics in the interwar were actively formed by three important generational circles. The first and the oldest group were the

36 Cf . J. PEROVŠEK, *Liberalizem*, pp. 115–116.

37 Cf. J. PEROVŠEK, *Liberalizem*, p. 117.

38 Cf. DETLEF BRANDES, Die Tschekoslowakischen National-Sozialisten, in: *Die Erste Tschechoslowakische Republik als multinationaler Parteienstaat*, ed. K. Bosl, Munich 1979, pp. 101–153.

39 It must be mentioned that the first attempt of forming a national socialist movement after the Czech example took place already during 1911–1912. See: I. GANTAR GODINA, Prisilno izseljenstvo političnega agitatorja Frana Radeščka 1911–1912, *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino* 2/2007, pp. 43–62.

40 The interwar Czech political landscape could hardly be seen as being divided into three camps, but rather five. See the classification in: J. MALÍŘ (ed.), *Politické strany*.

"elders" (*starini*), comprising the pre-war prominent progressive political figures, most notably Ivan Tavčar (1851–1923), Ivan Hribar (1851–1941), Karel Triller (1862–1926) and Vladimir Ravnihar (1871–1954), and representing mainly the well-to-do "*Burghers*" of Ljubljana.[41] In 1918 they still held the leading posts but already had to share power with the circle of "youths" (*mladini*). In 1923 the "elders" departed the Democratic Party, briefly awakened the National Progressive Party but experienced a fiasco at the 1923 elections, joining the Serbian Popular Radical Party in 1924.

The "elders" sometimes still explicitly spoke about "liberalism" in terms of self-identification. Their newspaper *Slovenski narod* stated that it essentially meant "love for freedom in intellectual sense, love for internal freedom of thought and independence" and "a will for original life according to free laws of personal conscience." It was stressed that only such type of liberalism had been advocated in Slovene politics "and is still appropriate, because it represents the only serious, factual and possible basis of cultural progress" being "in the intellectual field the same as democratism and parliamentarism were for political life."[42]

The "youths" were led by Gregor Žerjav (1882–1929) and Albert Kramer (1882–1943), as the most frequent Slovene progressive ministers in the interwar Yugoslav governments. During the years 1932-34 Kramer also acted as the permanent deputy to the Prime Minister.[43] The group included many other local notables such as Otmar Pirkmajer, Franjo Lipold, Dinko Puc, Adolf Ribnikar, Milko Brezigar and Pavel Pestotnik to mention just a few. The "youths" more or less abandoned the liberal label, associating it with "sterile German liberalism."[44] In their view liberalism was "decadent" already before the war. When on the occasion of Tavčar's death their newspaper *Jutro*[45] published an article in order to bid farewell to the "elder" leader, it in fact

41 J. PEROVŠEK, *Liberalizem*, p. 245.

42 Malo poduka, *Slovenski narod* 23. 8. 1924. *Slovenski narod* (Slovene Nation) was the Slovene daily newspaper with the longest tradition, published between 1868 and 1945.

43 J. PEROVŠEK, *O demokraciji*, p. 217 At this point the name of Ivan Pucelj (1879–1945), the 1920s leader of Slovene Independent Agrarian Party, should also be mentioned. Although not a member of the "youths" circle, Pucelj during 1930s represented the second most prominent progressive figure next to Kramer.

44 Umrl Ivan Tavčar, *Jutro* 20. 2. 1923.

45 *Jutro* (Morning) was published between 1920 and 1945. By mid-1920s it became the leading progressive newspaper with the highest circulation of all the Slovene newspapers. During 1930s all the progressive press, including *Slovenski narod*, was concentrated and published by "Jutro Consortium" (*Konzorcij Jutra*) and "Progressive Press Co-operative" (*Zadruga napredni tisk*).

above all spoke about the youths' credits for "regeneration" of the progressive camp. Under Tavčar's leadership it supposedly suffered from abovementioned errors and the "youths" provided the much necessary "shift to the left."[46]

The Kramer-Žerjav group entered party politics in 1909, making their way there through the academic movement of "national radicals." During the first decade of the 20th century this group of students acted as an "inner opposition" in the progressive camp. They criticized its leaders as well as Slovene politicians in general for being indolent and lacking a true program. Influenced by Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk's idea of "small work" (*drobná práce*) and adopting the slogan "From the Nation to the Nation" ("*Iz naroda za narod*"), probably inspired by Václav Klofáč[47] the national radicals strived for the "all-round emancipation" of Slovene nation.[48] In their newspaper the future progressive "youths" already in 1905 stated that the youth "does not want to be liberal, but social-individualistic in a way of an individual seeing his own success in the happiness of the group and the group perceiving its own progress in the development of all good individual forces."[49]

It has already been indicated that the progressive camp represented what may be described as the most "Czech-friendly" section of Slovene politics. This was particularly distinctive already for Ivan Hribar, whereas links were further cultivated by the group around Žerjav and Kramer. For them Czechoslovakia and particularly the Czech society and politics posed as paragons and important sources of inspiration. This was not only due to the comparably high levels of economic, social and cultural development and the highly secular character of the Czech lands but also due to the deep personal connections, as well as important intellectual influences. Hribar, a close associate of Kramář in the pre-WWI Neo-Slavic movement,[50] also acted as the first Yugoslav ambassador to Czechoslovakia between 1919 and 1921. Žerjav during the war had contacts with the Czech National Council in Paris and cooperated with the *maffie*,[51] whereas Kramer was sent to Prague in 1931 by the Yugoslav government as an extraordinary envoy.[52]

46 Umrl Ivan Tavčar, *Jutro* 20. 2. 1923.

47 I. GANTAR GODINA, "Let us learn from the Czech-Slavs", p. 275.

48 Cf. I. GANTAR GODINA, Narodno radikalno dijaštvo, *Zgodovinski časopis* 36/1982, p. 220.

49 *Omladina* 11/1905; quoted from: ZVONKO BERGANT, *Slovenski klasični liberalizem, idejno-politični značaj slovenskega liberalizma v letih 1891–1921*, Ljubljana 2000, pp. 138–139.

50 See: I. GANTAR GODINA, *Neoslavizem in Slovenci*, Ljubljana 1994, especially pp. 40, 91–95, 111–114, 119–130, 157–158.

51 JANKO PRUNK, Gregor Žerjav, in: *Slovenski biografski leksikon*, 15*: Zdolšek-Žvanut*, eds. J. Munda et al, Ljubljana 1991, pp. 956–959.

Personally connected to Czechoslovakia (among other his wife was Czech), Kramer was also president of the Ljubljana branch of the Yugoslav-Czechoslovak League (Jugoslovansko-češkoslovaška liga), having its seat in the same building that served as the progressives' semi-formal headquarters.[53] The League, officially a non-partisan organization, in fact had an overwhelmingly "progressive" membership,[54] whereas *Jutro* of all the Slovene newspapers devoted far most attention to the Czech affairs.[55] Last but not least, the *Sokol* tradition, dating back to 1863, and tradition of progressive camp were completely intertwined. Both the Catholics and the Social Democrats had formed their own gymnastic organizations before World War I., whereas *Sokol* during the interwar period carried a distinctly "progressive" and Yugoslav nationalist earmark.

Intellectually, the most important link and source of inspiration was beyond any doubt Masaryk.[56] It is true that the circle of Slovene realists around the journal *Naši zapiski* (Our Notes) did not identify with the progressive camp and in 1907 mostly joined the social democrats.[57] As mentioned already, however, the ideas of national radicals were highly influenced by Masaryk as well, their 1905 program not being as theoretical as the realist one, but the differences being insignificant.[58] On the other hand the national radicals in contrast to the realists, who saw no dispute between the principle of nationality and internationalism, rejected cosmopolitanism and internationalism.[59] During the interwar period the "youths" continued to declare Masaryk as their role model, praising him as "the most distinctive representative of democratic idea" and "a man that with

52 J. PEROVŠEK, *O demokraciji*, pp. 214–216. On Slovene diplomats in Czechoslovakia see: BORUT KLABJAN, ‚Pražský Triglav': působení slovinských diplomatů v Praze v době mezi světovými válkami, in: *Slovinští diplomaté ve slovanském světě*, ed. E. Petrič, Ljubljana 2010, pp. 93–116, 255–283, 412–435.

53 Cf. JERCA VODUŠEK STARIČ, *Slovenski špijoni in SOE: 1938–1942*, Ljubljana 2002, pp. 12–13 and 115.

54 MARJETA KERŠIČ-SVETEL, *Česko-slovenski stiki med svetovnima vojnama*, Ljubljana 1996, pp. 61–62.

55 Ibid., p. 37.

56 Cf. I. GANTAR GODINA, "Let us learn from the Czech-Slavs", p. 264.

57 Cf. Ibid., pp. 267–269 and 272.

58 I. GANTAR GODINA, "Let us learn from the Czech-Slavs," p. 275; "Their central references were the ideas of Masaryk combined with Klofač's more resolute demands" (Ibid.); Also see: LADISLAV HLADKÝ, Slovinští národní radikálové a Masarykova idea drobné práce, *Slovanský přehled* 5/1991, pp. 371–383.

59 I. GANTAR GODINA, "Let us learn from the Czech-Slavs", pp. 270 and 275.

60 Masaryk je umrl, *Jutro* 15. 9. 1937. Also see: ALBERT KRAMER, Prezident Masaryk, *Jutro* 7. 3. 1931.

an iron consistency implemented the extreme consequences of his democratic orientation."[60] At the same time their political performance – taking place in the context of the often turbulent conditions of Yugoslav politics,[61] as well as the persistent internal Slovene power struggle – at many points deviated substantially from the political principles and practice put forward by the Czechoslovak president. Among other the progressive politicians, served in the undemocratic regime during the years 1931–1935, for which they received major criticism from intelligentsia within their camp.[62] Moreover, the tendency towards integral nationalism made them in this regard closer to Kramář and his National Democrats, although *Jutro* wrote that he had not understood "the deep intellectual shift […] in the nation's soul" after the war and that his political course did not correspond to the "common state and national policy."[63] It must also be noted that radical nationalist groups such as ORJUNA (Organization of Yugoslav Nationalists) found support in the (Independent) Democratic Party. In a quite similar manner as Kramař treated the Czech fascist movement,[64] the progressive leaders sometimes used such groups as "field troops," at the same never truly identifying with their ideas and continuously denouncing fascism.[65]

In the 1930s marked first by dictatorship and later by heavily curtailed parliamentarian order, the leading progressives from the former SDS, the leading agrarians, as well as some of the "elders", joined the "Yugoslav National Party" (*Jugoslovenska nacionalna stranka*, JNS). As the only permitted political organization until 1935,[66] it functioned as a tool for implementing the

61 The 1920s political life was marked by continuous discord between the political parties, unresolved national question, unfulfilled and conflicting regional interests and unstable governments. During less than eight years between June 1921 and January 1929 twenty cabinets were formed, most of them being led by the Serbian Popular Radicals, which represented primarily the political interests of 'old' Serbia.

62 See for instance: OBSERVATOR [FRAN ZWITTER], Bankrot slovenskega liberalizma, *Sodobnost* 7–8/1935.

63 Dr. Karel Kramář, *Jutro* 27. 5. 1937.

64 See: MARTINA WINKLER, *Karel Kramář (1860–1937). Selbstbild, Fremdwahrnehmungen und Modernisierungsverständnis eines tschechischen Politikers*, Munich 2002, pp. 327–340.

65 J. PEROVŠEK, Idejni, socialnogospodarski, s. 536–537. Similar was true for the Czechoslovak National Democracy , whose nationalism was inextricably linked to democracy; J. TOMEŠ, Nacionalismus a demokracie. Úskalí české nacionální strany v meziválečném Československu, in: A*grárníci, národní demokraté a lidovci ve druhém poločase první Československé republiky*, Eva Broklová, Josef Tomeš, Michal Pehr, Prague 2008, p. 147.

66 Yugoslav National Party evolved from a group of politicians, who stood on the governmental list in 1931. In the following year they formed a party, called Yugoslav Radical Peasant Democracy (*Jugoslovenska radikalna seljaćka demokratija,* JRSD), which in July of 1933 renamed itself into Yugoslav National Party. See: MILICA S. BODROŽIĆ, Obrazovanje Jugoslovenske radikalo-

policies of king Alexander I. Karageorgevich, who, following a great internal turmoil, decided to abolish democracy and try to forcefully "unite" Yugoslavs into a single nation.[67] Aims of the king, "the Unifier," were in accordance with Slovene progressives' Yugoslav nationalist ideology,[68] whereas the foundation of a single regime party coincided well with their goal of crushing the power of political Catholicism in the Slovene part of Yugoslavia once and for all. This did not succeed, despite the concentration of all administrative power in the Drava Province[69] in hands of progressives, dissolution of major Catholic political and cultural organizations, as well as various forms of political and economic pressure put upon followers of the officially dissolved SLS.[70] Soon after the King was assassinated in 1934, the tables turned, as new governmental party that included Slovene Catholic conservatives, was formed and took power in 1935. JNS was now in opposition and its power quickly eroded. Its Slovene part, led by Kramer and Pucelj, retained a comparatively low degree of political power due to their entrenched connections in industrial and financial circles, influential newspapers (*Jutro, Slovenski Narod, Domovina, Kmetski list*) and mass organizations - most importantly the *Sokol*.[71] Weakness of progressive camp in the second half of 1930s was well reflected in the self-confident attitude of their Catholic opponents whose main newspaper *Slovenec* argued

seljačke demokratije: (decembar 1931. – jul 1933. godine); počeci Jugoslovenske nacionalne stranke, *Istorijski glasnik* 2–3/1964, pp. 39–96; MILICA S. BODROŽIĆ, Socijalni oslonci režima Jugoslovenske nacionalne stranke, *Zbornik Matice srpske za istoriju* 44/1991, pp. 121–142.

67 On June 20th 1928 during a parliamentary session a Serbian Radical representative shot five Croatian deputies, including Croatian Peasant Party leader Radić. The incident sparked a severe political crisis which continued to deepen during the following months, bringing Yugoslav politics to a dead end. On January the 6th 1929 royal coup d'etat took place. King abolished the constitution, dismissed the parliament, ordered disbandment of all the political parties and assumed full power, thereby ruling by decree. In 1931, realizing that more than two years of direct dictatorship did not produce the wanted results, the monarch decreed an octroated constitution, handing the legislative power partly back to the parliament.

68 Cf. J. PEROVŠEK, *O demokraciji*, p. 135.

69 Drava Province (or *Banovina*) encompassed the entire Slovene part of Yugoslavia.

70 On the Catholic camp during progressive hegemony see: JURE GAŠPARIČ, *SLS pod kraljevo diktaturo: diktatura kralja Aleksandra in politika Slovenske ljudske stranke v letih 1929–1935*, Ljubljana 2007.

71 In the late 1930s circumstances of complete political hegemony of the Catholic camp, Sokol represented the most visible power symbol of the progressive camp and the front guard of the Yugoslav National Party with more than 25000 adult and 17,500 youth members and almost 100 Sokol houses all across the Drava Province. (*Spominski zbornik Slovenije*, ed. J. Lavrič et.al., Ljubljana 1939, p. 216)

in 1936 that the Slovene future was going to belong to either Catholicism or to communism but certainly not to the Yugoslav National Party.[72]

In addition to "elders" and "youths," another generation appeared in the second half of thirties. These were the young Yugoslav nationalists that grew up and were educated in Yugoslavia. Led by Jože Rus (1904–1992) and Andrej Uršič (1908–unknown) and emerging from academic societies such as *JNAD Jadran* (Yugoslav Progressive Academic Society "Adriatic"), they formed the youth wing of JNS (*Omladina Jugoslovenske nacionalne stranke*) in Slovene part of the state, determined to strengthen the party with "fresh fighting spirit, more dynamics and populism [*ljudskost*]."[73] By the end of the decade they managed to attain a certain level of independence and published a manifesto "Political, Economic and Social Principles."[74]

Yugoslav nationalism of the Slovene progressives

A distinctive common ground from the very beginnings in 1890s uniting all the groups in the progressive camp was the appeal to the national idea. Although the Catholics and even the Social Democrats strongly embraced Slovene national orientation as well, their politics still primarily rested on other ideological foundations. In case of progressives, however, the national orientation was emphasized particularly and represented the strongest unifying link, central ideological concept and main point of identification. Already in 1892, *Slovenski narod* stated that the "national principle" (in opposition to the religious one) represented the only proper basis for any public activity.[75] This position was also reflected in the 1918 program of Yugoslav Democratic Party, where the very first point proclaimed that:

> "J.D.S. is a national party. Apart from being community of language we perceive our nationality as a community of cultural and social particularities that the folk [*ljudstvo*] created through centuries. These particularities guarantee to our nation its moral and material existence and we therefore

72 Kje je sovražnik?, *Slovenec*, 26. 7. 1936; quoted from: J. PEROVŠEK, Idejni, socialnogospodarski, p. 541.

73 JOŽE RUS, Naša pota, gledanja in težnje, in: *Omladina Jugoslovenske nacionalne stranke: Banovinska skupščina 12. septembra 1937 v Ljubljani*, Ljubljana 1937, p. 14; Archive of the Republic of Slovenia (ARS), dislocated unit III, AS 1931: Republiški sekretariat za notranje zadeve Socialistične Republike Slovenije 1918–1982, t.e. 933, 600-19 OJNS.

74 *Politična, gospodarska in socialna načela*, Ljubljana 1940. ARS III, AS1931, 600-19 OJNS.

75 Cf. J. PEROVŠEK, Vprašanje idejnega, p. 96; quoted from *Slovenski Narod* 14. 9. 1892, 15. 9. 1892.

> demand that they be considered and fostered. To us nationality is a living creative power which must assert itself in all the public and private life: in family, in education, in common social upbringing, in science, art, literature, in policy implementation, in public administration, in legal and social ordinances."[76]

Conforming to the general pattern of the pre-war national liberal parties such as the Young Czechs for instance,[77] as well as their heirs such as the Czechoslovak National Democracy, the progressives' rhetoric continued to include the claim of being the "bearer of the national thought," that is of representing primarily "the nation."[78] By "nationality" the Yugoslav Democratic Party already in June 1918 meant primarily the "Yugoslav" and not merely "Slovene" nationality, whereas Žerjav and Kramer began to embrace the idea of a unitary Yugoslav nation already after they had joined the National Progressive Party in 1909.

In 1918 rhetoric about "Yugoslav nation" pervaded the entire Slovene politics. Despite the commonly shared enthusiasm for the future political community, there from the very beginning existed major differences in views regarding the forms, means and dynamics of Yugoslav unification, as well as important nuances in understanding the idea of Yugoslav nation. All Slovene political forces were favoring unification, thereby having different views on how the future political community should look like and what form of administrative order should it adopt (federation, centralized state). Their views also differed on the question of nationality – namely between at least partly retaining separate Slovene nationhood on one side and merging into a unitary Yugoslav nation on the other.

Conceptions of Yugoslav state and nation included: a) the idea of Yugoslavia as a multi-national state; b) the idea of Yugoslavs as a political nation, composed otherwise of three distinct cultural nations, entitled to further separate cultural development; c) a Yugoslav unitarist conception, framed as the idea of a "three-named nation" or one nation composed of "three

76 Program Jugoslovanske demokratske stranke (June 1918), in: *Programi političnih strank, organizacij in združenj na Slovenskem v času Kraljevine SHS (1918–1929)*, ed. J. Perovšek, Ljubljana 1998, p. 23. During the JDS founding assembly Ravnihar emphasized that for Yugoslav Democratic Party the nation was "everything" and that the "cultivation of nationality" was "the first and main task, to which everything else should be subordinated", *Domovina* 5. 7. 1918; quoted from: J. PEROVŠEK, *Liberalizem*, p. 35.

77 Cf. J. MALÍŘ, Systém politických stran, p. 19.

tribes"; d) a fully-fledged integral Yugoslavism, acknowledging the existence of a single ethnically and culturally homogenous Yugoslav nation.[79] This broad variety of positions resembled the similarly broad spectrum of conceptions of the Czechoslovak state and nation in contemporary Czechoslovakia, where solely the "Czechoslovakist" ones had different variants. These ranged from the "entirely unitarist conception with the demand for a cultural and linguistic unification to the view that a Czechoslovak nation with two literary languages was not a reality but a programmatic goal."[80] Common to all Czechoslovakist conceptions was the notion of one "Czechoslovak nation," whereby it is disputed whether the official Czechoslovakism was essentially

78 Cf. *Program československé národní demokracie*, Prague 1919. pp. 1–4; and Program Jugoslovanske demokratske stranke, p. 23.

79 For more on Yugoslavism see: J. PEROVŠEK, Jugoslawentum und nationale Homogenisier ungen, *Studia Historica Slovenica* 1/2008, pp. 101–120; ZDENKO ZLATAR, The building of Yugoslavia: The Yugoslav idea and the first common state of the South Slavs, *Nationalities Papers* 3/1997, pp. 387–406; DEJAN DJOKIĆ (ed.), *Yugoslavism, Histories of a Failed Idea 1918–1992,* London 2003; IVO BANAC, *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics*, Ithaca (N.Y.) 1988; ANDREW BARUCH WACHTEL, *Making a nation, breaking a nation: literature and cultural politics in Yugoslavia*, Stanford (CA) 1998.

80 JAN GALANDAUER, Čechoslovakismus v proměnách času. Od národotvorné tendence k integrační ideologii, *Historie a vojenství* 2/1998, p. 34. On various types and nuances of Czechoslovakism also see: JAN RYCHLÍK, Teorie a praxe jednotného československého národa a československého jazyka v I. republice, in: *Masarykova idea československé státnosti ve světle kritiky dějin: sborník příspěvků*, eds. J. Opat, J. Tichý, Prague 1993, pp. 70–72; J. RYCHLÍK, *Češi a Slováci ve 20. století: spolupráce a konflikty 1914–1992*, Prague 2012; NIKLAS PERZI, Die Metamorphosen des Tschechoslowakismus und Edvard Beneš, in: *Edvard Beneš und die tschechoslowakische Aussenpolitik 1918–1948*, Frankfurt am Main 2002, pp. 147–153; ELISABETH BAKKE, The making of Czechoslovakism in the First Republic, in: *Loyalitäten im polyethnischen, multikonfessionellen Staat: Die Erste Tschechoslowakische Republik 1918–1938*, ed. M. Schulze Wessel, Munich 2004; ELISABETH BAKKE, Czechoslovakism in Slovak history, in: *Slovakia in history*, edd. M. Teich, D. Kováč, M. D. Brown, Cambridge 2011; NATÁLIA KRAJČOVIČOVÁ, Politické strany a ich postoj k otázke jednoty českého a slovenského národa v prvom decéniu po vzniku ČSR s dôrazom na postoj JUDr. Ivana Dérera, in: *Dr. Ivan Dérer, politik, právnik a publicista*, Bratislava 2010, pp. 315–330; JOSEF HARNA, Idea národa československého na stránkách týdeníku Přítomnost, *Moderní dějiny* 1/2009, pp. 169–193; MILOŠ TOMČÍK, Antinómie čechoslovakizmu ako kultúrneho fenoménu po roku 1918, in: *Masarykova idea československé státnosti ve světle kritiky dějin: sborník příspěvků*, eds. J. Opat, J. Tichý, Prague 1993, pp. 78–85; ANNA MAGDOLENOVÁ, Čechoslovakizmus a autonomizmus v prvej Č-SR, *Historický zborník* 1/2000, pp. 55–68; JAROSLAV KUČERA, Edvard Beneš und die Nationalitätenpolitik der Ersten Tschekoslowakischen Republik, in: *Edvard Beneš und die tschechoslowakische Aussenpolitik 1918–1948*, Frankfurt am Main 2002, pp. 121–140.

political or ethnic.[81] The Czech public largely saw the new state as Czech, where what had previously been "Czech" simply turned into "Czechoslovak,"[82] Czechoslovakism above all enabling the construction of a two-third majority for "the state-building nation".[83] On the other hand, the differences between positions were more pronounced in the case of Slovak Czechoslovakists that, similarly as the Slovene ones, belonged mostly to all-state parties.[84]

Progressives pushed for a quick and unconditional unification with the Kingdom of Serbia, stating that the situation was urgent and one should gratefully accept what the Serbs were offering.[85] After the unification the Democratic and the Independent Agrarian parties supported the centralist organization, voting in favor of the 1921 constitution, and pursued the then official idea of Yugoslavs as a "three-named nation" composed of three "tribes". According to this conception, the three Yugoslav "tribes" should undergo a process of amalgamation, thereby gradually overcoming all the historically caused differences among them. One of the best examples of eagerness for a rash national unification was the intervention of the agrarian deputy Bogumil Vošnjak during a session of the Constitutional Board. The governmental proposal stated that official language be Serbo-Croatian with an additional clause for Slovene part where "Slovene dialect" was to be valid. Vošnjak protested and proposed "Serbo-Croato-Slovene" (*srbsko-hrvaško-slovenski*) as the official language. He was successful and the constitution included Vošnjak's formulation.[86]

Reasons and motives for unitarism were different and mutually intertwined. There were practical reasons, arising from progressives' relative political weakness. Fearing the hegemony of political Catholicism if Slovenia had gained autonomy, they argued that it would have become a "papal province"[87]

81 For the latter position see: J. KUČERA, Politický či přirozený národ? K pojetí národa v československém právním řádu meziválečného období, *Český časopis historický* 3/2001, pp. 548–568. For the opposite view see: EVA BROKLOVÁ, Politický nebo etnický národ, *Český časopis historický* 2/2002, pp. 379–394.

82 LUKÁŠ NOVOTNÝ, MICHAL STEHLÍK, ANDREJ TÓTH, *Národnostní menšiny v Československu 1918–1938. Od státu národního ke státu národnostnímu?*, Prague 2012, pp. 22 and 24.

83 Cf. J. GALANDAUER, Čechoslovakismus, p. 41.

84 Cf. J. RYCHLÍK, *Češi a Slováci*, p. 132. In Slovakia however it was the Agrarians (until the mid-1930s) and perhaps even more the Social Democrats that played a role most similar to the one that the Slovene branches of JDS and SDS played in terms of the nationality politics. See: N. KRAJČOVIČOVÁ, Politické strany, pp. 318–320.

85 J. PEROVŠEK, *Liberalizem*, pp. 80–83.

86 J. PEROVŠEK, Bogumil Vošnjak in "srbsko-hrvaško-slovenski" jezik, in: *Slovenska kronika XX. stoletja*, vol. I, eds. M. Drnovšek, D. Bajt, Ljubljana 1997, p. 257.

87 J. PEROVŠEK, *Liberalizem*, p. 254

in such case. Centralist organization of the kingdom moreover enabled progressives as members of all-state parties to partake in governments and control local matters as well. These considerations were joined by economic motives, as the entrepreneurs in the progressive camp saw opportunities in a unified market.

Among the principal reasons there was also a belief in the necessity of a strong state, which could in progressives' views be created only by means of national integration and centralized administration, a view shared by Czechoslovakists of all main brands.[88] They followed examples of western European state nations. Triller already in October 1918 referred to the French model, arguing that inhabitants of Bretagne and Gascoigne enjoyed the same administrative order, despite being in all aspects much more dissimilar than people from various Yugoslav lands.[89] As it was stressed in the 1921 Democratic Party program, any kind of special status for any part of the state was perceived as contrary to democratic order.[90]

Last but not least, there was also a sincere belief, especially in the younger generation, that integration into Yugoslav nation represented a new, necessary and higher developmental stage for the Slovene people. As Jurij Perovšek argues, they believed that founding of the Yugoslav state signified the time of the "great Yugoslav national synthesis," as a logical conclusion of the previously separate developments of the three "tribes."[91] The following passage from Žerjav's speech at the party assembly in Ljubljana on 3rd of February 1924, touching upon the Slovene national question and providing an answer to it, illustrates this quite well:

"To convert the Slovene part of the nation into Yugoslavness [*jugoslovenstvo*], [...] in order that we grow into inseparable Yugoslav whole, to unite all the creative forces among Slovenes for this action – this is what the Slovene democracy longs for. This way the problem of small nation would be solved in a favorable way for the Slovenes."[92]

88 This resembled the position of the Czechoslovak National Democrats regarding the Czechoslovak unity. Cf. JAROSLAVA ROGUĽOVÁ, The Czechoslovak National Democratic Party in the Politics of the Slovak National Party, 1919–1932, *Historický časopis* 2011 (Supplement), p. 68.

89 J. PEROVŠEK, *Liberalizem*, p. 60.

90 Iz programa vsedržavne Jugoslovanske demokratske stranke sprejetega na strankinem kongresu 30. in 31. oktobra 1921 v Beogradu, in: *Programi političnih strank, organizacij in združenj na Slovenskem v času Kraljevine SHS (1918–1929)*, ed. J. Perovšek, Ljubljana 1998, p. 46.

91 J. PEROVŠEK, *O demokraciji*, p. 122.

92 Jugoslovenska demokracija na pohodu; Veličastni zbor zaupnikov JDS v Ljubljani, *Jutro* 5. 2. 1924.

An exception in terms of nationality politics was the National Socialist Party. Despite employing the term "Yugoslav nation", it at the same time demanded cultural autonomy for each of the "tribes" and federal administrative organization. The Independent Agrarian Party, on the other hand, sided with the Democrats in voting for the centralist constitution of 1921. From 1924 on however, when Bogumil Vošnjak was excluded from the party,[93] it changed its orientation. During the years 1926–1929, after merging with the Republican Party of Peasants and Workers, led by Slovene "Masarykian" Dragotin Lončar and transforming into "Slovene Peasants' Party" (*Slovenska kmetska stranka*), it namely stepped into direct confrontation with the core progressives' views by embracing ideas of Slovene national individuality.[94] The National Socialists were by then entirely weakened and – all the programmatic differences notwithstanding – in 1928 merged with the Independent Democratic Party.

Progressive mainstream, assembled in SDS after 1924, followed the Yugoslav national idea strictly and persistently. They warned against the danger of hegemony of any of the three "tribes" including the Serbs, and thus criticized the ruling Serbian Popular Radical Party and its Greater-Serbian orientation, although they continued to share the devotion to centralist administrative order with it. Disillusioned with Yugoslav unitarism, the Independent Democratic leader Pribičević in 1927 abandoned pro-centralist positions and began connecting with autonomists from the Croatian Peasant Party, forming the Pesant-Democratic Coalition. Its Slovene wing however continued to oppose federalist restructuring of Yugoslavia and creation of national autonomies.[95]

The 1920s Yugoslavist vision of Slovene progressives could be interpreted as an "occidentalist" one. This reflected in their future visions for Yugoslavia, as for instance when they demanded that Ljubljana, the westernmost university city, should become "Yugoslav Heidelberg," most appropriate to represent the "educational center of Yugoslav youth".[96] As consistent followers of Yugoslav

93 J. PEROVŠEK, *O demokraciji*, p. 129.

94 It has to be noted that this was the time when Slovene People's Party was participating in the government coalitions and was not that energetically defending the Slovene right to national sovereignty. At the same time it needs to be stressed that the agrarian leader Pucelj strictly spoke Slovene in the Yugoslav parliament where Serbo-Croatian was otherwise the established language.

95 Due to his persistent opposition to the royal dictatorship Pribičević was persecuted and imprisoned and had to emigrate. Major part of his followers opposed the 1930s regimes and continued to informally collaborate with the Croatian opposition. Slovene progressives, joining the regime Yugoslav National Party, were a notable exception. For more see Pribičević's memoirs: SVETOZAR PRIBIČEVIĆ, *Diktatura Kralja Aleksandra*, Belgrade 1953.

96 *Jutro* 10. 9. 1927, quoted from: J. PEROVŠEK, *Liberalizem*, p. 272.

national idea, believing in gradual creation of Yugoslav nation, in which none of the "tribes" or parts would prevail over others, they criticized the strivings for Serbian hegemony thereby also pointing to backwardness of southeastern parts of the state. During late 1920s their press stressed that the former Habsburg lands were "on a higher level of civilization" and that Yugoslavia should become "a European country with European customs".[97] This way a "genuine modern civilization" could be created.[98] Žerjav, speaking in favor of "ideas and culture of the West", argued that "there have been no historical examples of Orient serving as an administrative or economic model to anyone" and that "the effort to push the more cultured west under the intellectual leadership of the east" was "unnatural".[99]

This perspective changed during 1930s when Slovene progressives, now (re-)united in the Yugoslav National Party, began embracing the idea of integral Yugoslavism that abandoned even the notion of three "tribes."[100] The JNS program from 1933 stated that "Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, living on continuous territory as a geographic and ethnographic whole […] form a uniform Yugoslav nation," distinguished by common "origins, language, lasting tendencies, equal historical fate and experience and a never extinct consciousness of community."[101] Therefore the "Yugoslav national unity" was seen as an "undisputed and natural fact."[102] New rhetoric, stressing a primarily Balkan-centered perspective came to the foreground and *Jutro* proclaimed that "it is clear now that our destiny cannot be resolved in Central Europe anymore but in the Balkans, where the natural and historical center and focal point of the new Yugoslav state nation lies."[103] Such a shift may of course be explained by the changed political situation at that time. During the early 1930s Slovene progressives cooperated in the

97 *Domovina* 6. 12. 1928, quoted from: ibid., p. 263.

98 *Jutro* 12. 11. 1927, quted from: ibid.

99 *Jutro* 7. 4. 1928, quoted from: ibid.

100 The regime of King Alexander switched the conception of a "three-named nation" for a fully-fledged integral Yugoslavism. All "tribal" symbols and even their names were forbidden. This "decreed Yugoslavism" did not manage to gain ground, remaining "an empty ideological flourish which was not permeated by processes of political conciliation, economic unification, natural exchange of cultural ideas". B. PETRANOVIĆ, *Istorija*, p. 203. The forceful manner of national integration was one of the main reasons for Yugoslavism becoming unpopular during early 1930's in all parts of the country and among all of its ethnic groups. D. DJOKIĆ, (Dis)Integrating, pp. 151–152.

101 *Program i statuti Jugoslovenske nacionalne stranke*, Belgrade 1933**, p.** 5.

102 Ibid. and Načela in smernice Jugoslovenske nacionalne stranke, *Slovenski narod* 21. 7. 1933.

103 Ob obletnici prevrata, *Jutro* 29. 10. 1931.

second Živković government and later in JRSD and JNS, which the regime used to provide a trapping of democratic legitimacy. The official ideology was quite Serb-centered at that time and Slovene progressives as proponents of the regime had to embrace it in order to retain their positions. The question, whether they really shifted their views, is hardly answerable, since most of their energy during 1930s was directed at fighting political Catholicism and the leftists with their rhetoric framed accordingly.

Everyone that publicly disagreed with the official integral Yugoslavist outlook, most notably the Catholic conservatives, could get labeled by the progressive-controlled press as "only-Slovenes" (*samoslovenci*), "tribally narrow-minded" or even "separatists" during the first half of 1930s when progressives represented the central regime in Slovenia and possessed complete administrative power. This sometimes reached the level of publicly tarnishing political adversaries as enemies of the state. A good example of this are the following lines from Pucelj's speech, taking place at a party rally, when he addressed the issue of legal and other measures taken against the authors of autonomist "Ljubljana punctations."[104]

> "Like a forbearing mother had the state looked upon its disobedient children, pardoning and exhorting them. But these children did not want to obey. […] Their punctations, for which many say that they are only declamations, were striking directly against the existence of the state and against everything the nation had won for itself. When, however, the state hits its pest, then the fun ends, then the reckoning arrives. And this reckoning is now here. […] In our own state we did not persecute our own people, we gave them time so that they could come to their senses. When, however, they did not want to do that, justice had to be done."[105]

After losing power in 1935 the progressives even radicalized their rhetoric. In "Pohorje Declaration", written by Kramer and other prominent members of JNS, they announced that Serbs, Croats and Slovenes "comprised one nation in ethnic sense."[106] It was stated that the only way out of political and

104 Ljubljana punctations (*ljubljanske punktacije*), also known as the "Slovene declaration", were written in 1932 by leading representatives of SLS. They expressed criticism against the undemocratic regime in Yugoslavia and solidarity with Croatian autonomists, containing a demand for federal rearrangement of Yugoslavia and creation of self-governing national entities. Regime reacted by organizing a trial, imprisoning or interning some of the supposed authors and confining the SLS leader Anton Korošec to the island of Hvar.

105 Dolenjska v taboru vsedržavne stranke, *Jutro* 1. 5. 1933.

106 J. FISCHER et al (eds.), *Slovenska novejša zgodovina*, p. 370.

economic crisis of the time was implementing "pure and sincere national policy, proclaimed as the basis of all our national and state life by the king Unifier."[107] In their struggle against the ruling Yugoslav Radical Union and its vague national policies, as well as then factually existing Catholic domination in Slovenia, progressive leaders sometimes employed militant tones. Kramer, for instance, concluded one of his speeches in Yugoslav senate in 1937, by referring to the followers of Yugoslav national idea as the "Yugoslav national army," warning the ruling circles thereby that this army had "its own ends and will never serve as an auxiliary force for anybody in this country".[108]

When political Catholicism, designated also as "the greatest evil for free cultural development of any nation,"[109] de-facto ruled the Slovene part of Yugoslavia after 1935, progressives spoke about "spoilt reactionaries practicing medieval methods".[110] In those times, perceived as critical by the progressive camp, it used to be stressed even more that Yugoslav national thought in Slovene context represented "also the only certain sanctuary for freedom and progress".[111] JNS Youth reproached SLS for usurping the role of sole representative of Slovene people at the same time bearing relatively little credit for its cultural and general progress. Uršič thereby argued in 1938 that Slovene culture would have been in a sad state, "had it been commanded by education and mentality of the parish clerks."[112]

The second half of 1930s was a time of increased tensions with the ruling "clericals" and widespread political violence, reaching over the levels of usual political struggle and expressing itself in bloody encounters between supporters of both camps. The culminating point of violence was reached on the occasion of JNS president, general Petar Živković's, tour through Drava Province in June 1937.[113] Riots erupted in Ljubljana, symbolically marked by a fight for Yugoslav national tricolor, which got "conquered" and tattered by

107 DARKO FRIŠ, Banovinska konferenca Jugoslovanske nacionalne stranke leta 1937 v Ljubljani, *Zgodovinski časopis* 1–2/2005, p. 132.

108 O političnih razmerah v Sloveniji, *Domovina* 1. 4. 1937.

109 J. RUS, Naša pota, p. 14.

110 ANDREJ URŠIČ, Naš čas, Program Jugoslovenske nacionalne stranke in njena mladina, in: *Omladina Jugoslovenske nacionalne stranke: Banovinska skupščina 12. septembra 1937 v Ljubljani*, Ljubljana 1937, p. 17. ARS III, AS 1931, 600-19 OJNS.

111 Zaključek Živkovićevega obiska v Sloveniji, *Jutro* 10. 6. 1937.

112 *Poročilo o drugi banovinski skupščini Omladine Jugoslovanske Nacionalne Stranke*, Ljubljana 1938. ARS III, AS1931, 600-19 OJNS.

113 Cf. DARKO FRIŠ, Turneja Petra Živkovića in vodstva Jugoslovanske nacionalne stranke po slovenskih krajih leta 1937, *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino* 1/2005, p. 63.

a mob bearing Slovene cockades before finally being wrested back by Yugoslav nationalists.[114] The act was labeled by JNS leaders as a deliberate attempt to damage the national symbol[115] and fights between members of *Sokol* and Slovene Boys (1930s successors of Catholic gymnastic society *Orel*) ensued all over Slovenia. A member of a Catholic academic society was murdered by JNS followers, followed by the burning-down of the *Sokol* pavilion in Ljubljana as a symbolical act of reprisal from the other side.

Various kinds of reasons and motives – political as well as social ones – may be pointed out in explaining the extent of political violence occurring in late 1930s Slovenia. The international, the Yugoslav as well as domestic atmosphere was electrified and the internal "liberal-clerical" and "Yugoslav nationalist-Slovene autonomist" quarrels represented only one aspect of it. It is however beyond doubt that the militant Yugoslav nationalist rhetoric additionally fuelled the erupting acts of aggression. Members of *Sokol* and the JNS Youth took an essential part during these battles and leaders of the latter expressed similar views on nationality issue as their party leadership:

> "Only corruption and cynicism of our Catholic press are able to call: protect Yugoslavia from Yugoslav nationalism and Yugoslav nationalists! Today it is not being spoken anymore about the Yugoslav nation but about nations of Yugoslavia, in the same manner as the Habsburgs spoke to their subject 'graceful nations'. In view of this crime against the Yugoslav idea, that is to say against our nation, our history and our future, the ones are right who claim that in nowadays Yugoslavia Yugoslav nationalists are not treated much differently than during times when they were the only bearers of the struggle for our liberation. […] The treason against Yugoslav idea, the most powerful uniting force for our nation, and against its bearers, has by itself triggered and incited all the disintegrating separatist tendencies."[116]

Progressives in the Yugoslav National Party clang to the Yugoslav national idea until the very end of the first Yugoslavia, at the same time however acknowledging in 1940 that the "organizational idea of Yugoslavia" was federative.[117] As demonstrated, the persistent adherence to unitarism as well as its further radicalization during 1930s was also conditioned by their struggle against the stronger SLS. On the other hand, these tactical considerations

114 D. FRIŠ, Banovinska konferenca, pp. 138–139 and Petar Živković v Sloveniji, *Jutro* 8. 6. 1937.
115 D. FRIŠ, Turneja, p. 63.
116 A. URŠIČ, Naš čas, p. 18.
117 Po starih metodah, *Jutro* 25.4.1940. Cf. J. PEROVŠEK, *O demokraciji*, p. 94.

coincided with the progressives' genuine secularist orientation and their "anti-clericalism" may also be interpreted as an integral part of their views on modernizing Slovene society. They believed that if Slovenia had received autonomy the 'clerical' "beast which has gotten its teeth into Slovene tribe"[118] would have won the political power as well. Such a development would have led to a "bishops' government"[119] with all the administrative powers and public security under "the command of bishops and politicizing clergy"[120], what certainly presented a lasting threat to the progressives' modernization perspectives:

> "Every political apprentice knows nowadays that 'autonomy of Slovenia' means clerical dictatorship in Ljubljana, Slovene centralism under the banner of the Pope, subjugation of our schools, teachers and all the intelligentsia under the curved stick and hopelessness that our peasant would ever get rid of clerical wardship."[121]

They even denied political Catholicism the national orientation, which they claimed as their own monopoly:

> "In senseless fear for cultural height of Slovenes and our literary language, many members of intelligentsia knowingly or unknowingly drew water on clerical mill. Fearing that our Slovene identity was going to be suppressed, many were taken in by the clericals who had been changing fronts overnight: earlier Austrians, at the time of overthrow Yugoslavs, for the election Slovenes, but in their hearts always the same cold Latins."[122]

The Yugoslav nationalist orientation and anti-clerical attitudes were thus mutually intertwined, not being merely an (ineffective) tool in fighting the strongest political party. I would therefore argue that efforts for progress and modernization, as the progressives understood them, their Yugoslav nation building project and their anti-clericalism represented connected and interdependent endeavors.

Creating a comparison of progressives' Yugoslavism to the Czechoslovakist conceptions in the Czech lands is not easy. The reasons behind the demands for national integration were to an extent similar in both Yugoslavia and

118 *Jutro* 1. 7. 1924, quoted from: J. PEROVŠEK, *Liberalizem*, pp. 253–254.
119 *Domovina*, 25. 3. 1926, quoted from: ibid., p. 254.
120 *Jutro* 23. 1. 1926, quoted from: ibid.
121 *Jutro* 6. 2. 1923.
122 *Jutro* 2. 2. 1924.

Czechoslovakia, whereas the positions of the Czech part in Czechoslovakia and Slovene part in Yugoslavia were due to a number of factors incomparably different. The integral Yugoslavist orientation of the Slovene progressives could be paralleled to the one of the Czechoslovak National Democrats only to the degree that the latter, in contrast to Masaryk and his circle who perceived Czechoslovaks solely as a political nation,[123] regarded them as a nation in the ethnic sense.[124] The perspective of the National Democrats, an essentially Czech party, was, however, deeply Czech-centric, considering Czechoslovakia to be a Czech state[125] and Slovak language simply a "branch" of the Czech.[126] Turning the perspective from the Czech lands to Slovakia, we may perhaps find a more similar case in the person of Milan Ivanka, a prominent Slovak representative of the National Democratic Party. In contrast to his Czech colleagues and similarly as the other important Slovak supporters of Czechoslovak national idea such as Ivan Dérer, Ivan Markovič and Pavel Blaho, he treated Czech and Slovaks as two distinct but equal parts of the same nation, at the same time rejecting Slovak autonomism.[127]

To briefly sum up, the two main denominators of Slovene progressives during the interwar period were (Yugoslav) nationalism and anti-clericalism. For this reason it is plausible to suggest that these two features, together with a never vanished basic belief in civic and political rights and the necessity of their protection by the state, corresponded to what "liberalism" and "progressivism" essentially meant in interwar Slovenia. The progressive camp was beyond doubt the most "Czech-friendly" section of Slovene politics, which was reflected in paragons, rhetoric as well as personal connections. The centrality of struggle against "clericalism," however marked an important difference between progressives and their counterparts in the more secularized Czech context. On the other hand the appeal to the national idea, as well as propensity toward integral nationalism distinguished both the Slovene and the Czech interwar national liberal heirs.

123 Cf. JAROSLAV OPAT, Poselství Masarykova československenství. Poznámky k jednomu problému česko-slovenských dějin, in: *T. G. Masaryk a československá státnost. XIII. Letní škola historie. Sborník textů a přednášek*, Prague 2001, p. 14; J. RYCHLÍK, Teorie a praxe, p. 71; and J. GALANDAUER, Čechoslovakismus, p. 43. For a different perspective regarding the official Czechoslovakism and particularly the Masaryk's views, claiming that they implied gradual assimilation of Slovaks see: A. MAGDOLENOVÁ, Čechoslovakizmus, p. 57.

124 J. RYCHLÍK, Teorie a praxe, p. 71.

125 L. NOVOTNÝ, *Národnostní menšiny*, p. 24;

126 M. PEHR, K politickému program, pp. 524–525.

127 Cf. J. RYCHLÍK, *Češi a Slováci*, p. 133.

Summary

"Post-Liberalism", Anti-Clericalism And Yugoslav Nationalism. Slovene Progressive Political Camp in the Interwar Period and Contemporary Czech politics

Oskar Mulej

The political landscape of Slovene lands as it developed by the World War I. was distinguished by the dominant position of political Catholicism. "Progressives" as the second most important political force lagged far behind in terms of popular support and the gap between the two even broadened during interwar. Moreover, the progressive camp faced disintegration after 1918, which was also not surmounted during 1930s despite the renewed but politically conditioned unity of all the major strains of progressive politics inside one party.

The core group of the progressive camp gathered around Gregor Žerjav and Albert Kramer united the most vocal advocates of Yugoslav national idea in Slovene part of Yugoslavia. The reasons ranged from practical considerations, connected to the persistent domestic struggle with the Catholic camp, to more substantial ones. These included belief in a necessity of a strong state, as well as a sincere persuasion that amalgamation into a unified Yugoslav nation represented a new, necessary and higher developmental stage for Slovenes. During the 1930s their Yugoslav nationalist radicalized further and included militant rhetoric.

The two main denominators of Slovene progressives during the interwar period continued to be nationalism and anti-clericalism. The centrality of struggle against "clericalism", marked an important difference between progressives and their counterparts in the more secularized Czech context. On the other hand the appeal to the national idea, as well as propensity toward integral nationalism distinguished both the Slovene and the Czech interwar national liberal heirs.