

Interwar Perspectives on Liberalism in Central Europe:
the Czech, Austrian and Slovene national liberal heirs, 1918-1934

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ABSTRACT

In which spheres, in which manners and to what extent did liberalism survive or even continue to develop in the interwar Czech, Austrian and Slovene contexts? How did it manifest itself? Beginning from this general question, the dissertation concentrates on party politics as one of the possible perspectives for studying liberalism. It scrutinizes the political trajectories and ideological transformations of political parties in the interwar Czech lands, Austria and Slovene part of Yugoslavia, that are treated under the joint term “national liberal heirs.” The parties under scrutiny are the Czechoslovak National Democracy (*Československá národní demokracie*), the Austrian Greater German People's Party (*Grossdeutsche Volkspartei*) and the Slovene sections of the Yugoslav Democratic (*Jugoslovanska demokratska stranka*), Independent Democratic (*Samostojna demokratska stranka*) and Yugoslav National Parties (*Jugoslovanska nacionalna stranka*). These parties all inherited the national liberal tradition in terms of organization, social base, their rootedness in specific milieus and belonging to specific political “camps.” Their genealogically liberal background, however, did not necessarily imply commitment to the national liberal ideology of their predecessors or conscious identification with liberalism, which they often explicitly rejected.

The basic aim is setting up a common horizon for studying the discussed type of political party. Most importantly the dissertation discusses the degrees and types of nationalism espoused by the observed parties, their socio-economic views and paragon, their cultural politics and the relationships toward liberal democracy on one and alternative political models on the other side. By addressing these problems, it shows how national liberal party traditions continued moving along their pre-WWI trajectory that had been leading towards radicalization of the nationalist component at the expense of the liberal one. Lacking clear ideological fundamentals, facing disorientation, coupled by eroding social bases, the parties under scrutiny were furthermore particularly susceptible to flirtation with new ideological currents, some of them radically illiberal, and adoption of some of their discursive elements. Generally, they however remained within the frame of representative democratic order. The disorientation also reflected in the attempts to (re-)define their positions as nationalist, conservative or – as it was most often the case - vaguely defined “democratic” parties. In its concluding chapter the dissertation also tackles the various meanings associated with the term “liberalism” in political languages of the studied contexts, as these reflected in the contemporary debates. In this way it opens up further possible perspectives of studying liberalism beyond the narrow frame of party politics.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ČsND – *Československá národní demokracie* (Czechoslovak National Democracy)

GdVP – *Grossdeutsche Volkspartei* (Greater German People's Party)

JDS – *Jugoslovanska demokratska stranka* (Yugoslav Democratic Party)

JNS – *Jugoslovenska nacionalna stranka* (Yugoslav National Party)

NNS – *Narodno-napredna stranka* (National Progressive Party)

SDS – *Samostojna demokratska stranka* (Independent Democratic Party)

SKS – *Samostojna kmetijska stranka* (Independent Agrarian Party)

SLS – *Slovenska ljudska stranka* (Slovene People's Party)

INTRODUCTION

Discussing liberalism within the contextual framework of interwar Central Europe reveals itself as an intriguing task that may result in more questions being opened than answers provided.

Firstly, the terms “liberalism” and “liberal” as such are marked by profound conceptual broadness and multi-layeredness, being applicable to a wide range of typologically diverse historical phenomena. Secondly, one might well pose a question, whether anything that might be referred to as “liberalism” played a significant or indeed even a visible marginal role in the politics of the interwar Central European countries and Austrian successor states in particular.

Above all, the challenge is connected to the specificities of the era and region. The First World War, marking an important turning point in terms of diminishing strength of liberal political parties throughout Europe, also presented an end-point to a longer-reaching process of gradual semantic change specifically characteristic for political languages of Central Europe. In German lands for instance, liberalism as political concept underwent what Jörn Leonhard referred to as “gradual displacement”¹, which in his view led to “semantic devaluation”² of the term. As a political party label it by 1918 came to designate quite diverse, sometimes ideologically opposed political currents. Simultaneously, we may

¹ “Schleichende Deplazierung”, what could perhaps also be translated as “gradual *misplacement*”. - Jörn Leonhard, “Semantische Deplazierung und Entwertung : Deutsche Deutungen von ‘liberal’ und ‘liberalismus’ nach 1850 im europäischen Vergleich,” *Geschichte und Gesellschaft, Zeitschrift für Historische Sozialwissenschaft*, No. 29 (2003): pp. 5-39; p. 21.

² “Semantische Entwertung” - Ibid.

also observe its gradual vanishing as party name, with most of the “liberal” parties in the region employing other labels, for instance “democratic,” when referring to their orientations.

The interwar period may furthermore be described as generally unfriendly to liberal ideas of political and social order with the prevailing political and intellectual currents heading into various collectivist directions (solidarist, corporatist and socialist). Central European politics of the era was particularly marked by antiliberal tendencies and overall anti-individualist atmosphere with all the countries in the region, except for Czechoslovakia, ruled by some form of dictatorial or authoritarian rule at certain times. Furthermore, the advance of aggressive ideologies and movements such as bolshevism, fascism and National Socialism, competing to destroy the existing social and political order, and establishment of respective regimes in the vicinity, highly impacted the political atmosphere. The Great Depression that ensued in 1929 and prolonged itself into mid-1930s catalyzed these developments.

As the title points out, there are various possible *perspectives*, from which liberalism may be approached and studied or different ways in which it may be conceptualized. This topic is to be more thoroughly tackled in the Chapter 1. At this point it is enough to point out that this dissertation will lay focus on one of these perspectives. Standing at the crossroads of classical political history and history of ideas, its subject-matter forms only a small part of that what may be conceptualized as liberalism within the studied contexts. Omitting broader conceptions that stand outside the strictly political realm, “cultural liberalism” for instance, it will largely limit itself to party politics and approach the problem of liberalism from the perspective of party traditions.

The central subjects of this dissertation are three representatives of a specific type of political party, distinctive for the early 20th century (post-)Habsburg framework, for which I employ the term “national liberal heirs.” This term refers to parties that had a liberal genealogical background but were in one or another way departing from the political traditions of national liberalism in which they rooted. The aim is to scrutinize and compare three examples of such parties from interwar Austria, the Czech lands and Slovene part of Yugoslavia. Stemming from a common pre-WWI multi-national political framework of the old Austria or Cisleithania, the selected lands shared many commonalities in terms of political cultures and traditions. After 1918, they found themselves within new, separate and profoundly *national* – or to a degree still *nationalizing* - political entities.

The parties under scrutiny are: the Czechoslovak National Democracy (*Československá národní demokracie*); the Austrian Greater German People's Party (*Grossdeutsche Volkspartei*); and the part of Slovene politics that referred to itself primarily as “progressive” and whose core group was represented in the Slovene sections of the Yugoslav Democratic (*Jugoslovanska demokratska stranka*), Independent Democratic (*Samostojna demokratska stranka*) and Yugoslav National Parties (*Jugoslovanska nacionalna stranka*). These parties all inherited the national liberal tradition in terms of organization, social base, their rootedness in specific milieus and belonging to specific political “camps.” Their genealogically liberal background, however, did not necessarily imply commitment to the national liberal ideology of their predecessors or conscious identification with liberalism, which they often explicitly rejected.

Considering the specificities of the studied contexts, party politics may seem to represent the sphere in which one would least likely successfully search for liberalism. Many would

argue that the political parties that are subjects of this dissertation were not representatives of liberalism at all. Which is a legitimate objection since they also revealed traits that are more commonly associated with other ideologies. All of them for instance at certain points expressed sympathies for some of the movements of the radical right. And last but not least, all of them in at least some way at times voiced explicit criticism against liberalism.

And this is precisely the reason why such a quest is particularly interesting. While the literature on liberalism during the long 19th century, especially for the Austro-German context, abounds,³ there is a stark contrast to the interwar, for which the focused studies on liberalism are pretty scarce. The existing ones limit themselves more or less to the national political frameworks of particular countries or to the individual political parties. Furthermore, while there is again plenty of literature dealing with the dissolution and vanishing of liberalism in the Weimar Germany, this may not be said for the three countries under scrutiny. With some exceptions the majority of the existing literature either focuses solely on the parties' political act without putting it into perspective of liberalism (or any other ideology for that matter) or does this without explicitly problematizing it. The parties that I focus on have furthermore not been yet extensively studied in an international comparative perspective and within a broader common Central European framework. Since

³ To mention just a few examples: Ivan Zoltan Denes (ed.), *Liberty and the search for identity* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2006); Dieter Langewiesche, *Liberalism in Germany* (Princeton (NJ): Princeton University Press, 2000); James J. Sheehan, *German Liberalism in the 19th Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978); Lothar Gall, *Bürgertum und bürgerlich liberale Bewegung in Mitteleuropa seit dem 18. Jahrhundert*, (*Historische Zeitschrift. Sonderhefte*, Bd. 17) (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1997); Georg Franz-Willing, *Liberalismus. Die deutschliberale Bewegung in der habsburgischen Monarchie* (Munich: Callwey Verlag, 1955); Lothar Höbelt, *Kornblume und Kaiseradler. Die deutschfreiheitlichen Parteien Altösterreichs 1882–1918* (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1993); Harry Ritter, "Austro-German Liberalism and the Modern Liberal Tradition," *German Studies Review*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (May, 1984): pp. 227-248; Pieter M. Judson, *Exclusive revolutionaries: liberal politics, social experience, and national identity in the Austrian Empire, 1848-1914* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996); Jonathan Kwan, *Liberalism and the Habsburg Monarchy, 1861-1895* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Maciej Janowski. *Polish liberal thought before 1918* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2004).

treatment of these parties as liberal has been done primarily on the basis of their genealogical background, it is reasonable to ask how much of liberal residue might have been left in their ideology and in which sense, if any, they may still be treated as liberal parties. In order to tackle these questions, I have closely looked into party programs and manifestos, party propaganda and press, as well as various non-partisan intellectual and political journals that stood “close” to the parties under scrutiny or engaged in critique against them from explicitly liberal standpoints.

As it will be shown in the Chapter 2 which will provide the pre-history of the subjects, some of the crucial breaks away from liberal heritage took place already in the late 19th century. The national liberal traditions all to certain extent took a nationalist turn with the national element in national liberalism overshadowing the liberal one and thereby also changing its own character. Building on that assumption, the dissertation will ask whether this process continued into the interwar and how did this manifest in each of the three studied cases.

The primary aim of this dissertation is to set up a basic common horizon for studying the discussed type of political party from which their ideological orientations, political courses, policies and stances, discourses and rhetoric may be analyzed and compared. This will be done in Chapter 3, which will offer a general presentation of the studied subjects in order to provide a broader contextual framework, needed for better understanding of the specific problems, tackled in the Chapters 4 and 5. The latter will be problem-oriented and shall concentrate on specific ideological aspects, especially as they reflected through the discussed parties discourses regarding specific issues of nationality politics, economic politics and models of social and political order.

Chapter 4 will focus on the nationalist conceptions and rhetoric of the three studied political parties and ask whether it was still possible to talk about liberal nationalism in their case. As such it directly tackles the intertwining of liberalism and nationalism among the national liberal heirs and the dynamic between the two ideological currents that had comprised the two main aspects or “faces” of the national liberal ideology. Chapter 5: *Limited government vs. „New Order“* shall focus on the problem of defining the relationship between politics and economy, state and society and the boundaries of government action. It explores in which way and to what degree the general crisis of liberalism (political and economic) reflected in the social and economic models and paragon, advocated by the political parties under scrutiny

Throughout the dissertation references will be made to intellectuals and journals that engaged in dialogue with or critique against the mentioned parties and their changing political courses. This is important not only because it places the parties under scrutiny into the broader perspective of contemporary intellectual dynamics, but also because some of these intellectuals identified as liberals. The discussed aspect will step into the foreground in the Chapter 6 which will turn to the general problems of political semantics and focus on broader contemporary debates concerning liberalism with the aim of discerning some of the possible meanings that term could have in the studied context.

1. Conceptualizing Liberalism – Approaches of Understanding and Levels of Usage

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the concept of liberalism, various possible ways of approaching it and the manners in which it will be employed in my analysis. Most importantly, it will tell us why this concept is so important for this dissertation. Through discussing approaches to liberalism and the modes of understanding and employing that concept, this chapter will delineate the conceptual apparatus and the main methodological approaches. Due to the broadness and abstract nature of the topic, it may also be read as an independent essay. It is at the same time however indispensable for the sake of clear usage of terms.

1. 1. Three Perspectives for Approaching Liberalism

Liberalism and even more the adjective “liberal” have been throughout their history and in different places employed in numerous ways to denote all kinds of phenomena, not necessarily limited to the realm of politics. And even if we limit ourselves to the political sphere, liberalism can be contemplated on different levels and conceptualized from numerous perspectives. We may discern three basic perspectives of studying liberalism or “levels”¹ of conceptualizing it. These are the philosophical one, the one of world views and

¹ Another possible term that does not imply hierarchies would be “fields.” Since however the three discussed perspectives are among other defined also by the degree of universality and abstractness, I decided to stick to the term “levels.”

ideologies, and the one of real politics and political actors. Differing primarily in terms of the degree of generality and abstraction, these three perspectives at the same time correspond to the manners in which liberalism has been approached by specific scholarly disciplines - respectively political philosophy, history of ideas, and political history and political science.

First and foremost, liberalism may be contemplated as a political philosophy. More precisely, it represents a group of philosophical schools which are usually perceived as beginning with the thought of John Locke, culminating during the 18th century with Enlightenment philosophers such as Montesquieu, Hume, Kant and Adam Smith, and continuing on through the next century up to John Stuart Mill and further. Throughout its evolution, liberal political philosophy has encountered many challenges and adopted different approaches in trying to provide answers to problems introduced by political and social realities. Due to diversity and lack of uniformity among different liberalisms, various ‘schools’ have emerged, building their arguments on diverse moral suppositions, touching upon different questions and providing different answers. Nevertheless this assortment is still somehow connected. Liberalism in all its historical and contemporary variations has been committed to certain fundamental values and principles, albeit they may have been interpreted very differently or derived from various reasons. It could be argued that common ideals, embraced by all strands of liberal political philosophy, include liberty, equality, tolerance and furthermore the principles of rule of law, limited government, neutral state, autonomous civil society, market economy and individual property.

Apart from the political philosophy, liberalism may be also conceptualized in terms of a broader and even less unified set of *Weltanschauungen*, world views uniting individual

ethical stances, common human ideals, as well as political views². These can be perceived and interpreted as having certain philosophical foundations, but are also very receptive to influences, emanating from concrete circumstances of space and time. Liberalism treated on this level reveals itself “as a complex and mutating set of beliefs (...) in which universal aspirations jostle against the furtherance of particular preferences and differences”³. For instance, a specific liberal world view, not necessarily attached either to political philosophy or to the narrower liberal political doctrines and independent of partisan adherence, was highly distinctive for the educated middle classes in 19th and early 20th century German and broader Central European space.

As Thomas Mann put it in 1918 in his *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen*, being an apolitical person⁴ belonging to middle-class culture and being nationally minded, he was liberal in terms of “liberality” and not “liberalism”:

“If I am a liberal, then I am one in the sense of liberality [*Liberalität*] and not of liberalism [*Liberalismus*]. For I am unpolitical, national, but unpolitically-minded [*unpolitisch gesinnt*], like the Germans of the bürgerlich culture, and like those of the Romanticism, who knew no other political demands than the highly national one [*die hochnationale*] for *Kaiser and Reich*.”⁵

“Liberality” as a prepolitical notion standing for “unprejudiced, generous, free-minded thinking and acting”⁶ corresponded to what was in Central Europe commonly also referred

² Jörn Leonhard, *Liberalismus : zur historischen Semantik eines europäischen Deutungsmusters* (München: Oldenbourg, 2001), pp. 548-549.

³ Michal Freedon, “Foreword” in Ivan Zoltan Denes ed., *Liberty and the search for identity* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2006), pp. ix-xi, p. xi.

⁴ This claim needs to be taken *cum grano salis*, since, as the quote itself shows, the “apolitical” stance of Wilhelmine intellectuals actually implied a clearly *political* devotion to monarchy and to nationalism, which was as political as that of the Social Democrats, whom they accused of “politicizing.”

⁵ Thomas Mann, *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen* (1918) (Frankfurt a.M.: 1956), p. 108; Quoted from: Leonhard, *Liberalismus*, 552.

⁶ Rudolf Vierhaus, “Liberalismus” in: *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe : historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, Vol.3 H-Me, 4. Auflage, Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, Reinhart Koselleck eds. (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1992), p. 742.

to as free-mindedness (*Freisinn, svobodomiselnost*) and implied primarily a rationalist attitude based on ideas of the enlightenment and longing for emancipation from religious and other dogma. What strikes however in Mann's quote is the close association of "liberality" to "national" orientation. This is not surprising, since in the Central European context liberalism as it evolved through the 19th century was strongly intertwined with nationalism to a degree where the adjectives "liberal" and "national" could almost be used interchangeably.⁷

This specific variant of liberalism for which we shall employ the term "national liberalism," represents an instance of political *ideology*. It may thus be used as a common designator for a number of related ideologies and movements, distinctive for the 19th century Central, as well as Southern and Southeastern Europe, distinguished by an almost inseparable association between liberalism and nationalism.

Ideology, another theoretical term that we employ, is not identical to the *Weltanschauung*. Both stem from socio-cultural contexts and operate at the same mid-level between philosophy and phenomena of practical political life. However, while the latter extend well above the boundaries of political and can also be more open and eclectic in terms of employing political concepts, ideologies are narrowly political and concerned with producing and controlling political language for political purposes. As Michael Freeden argues, ideologies, as opposed to world-views, are "products *designed* for consumption (...) They are important communal resources, and their social role directs us to the ways in which they operate on individuals and groups who are close to central positions of

⁷ Cf. Maciej Janowski, "Wavering Friendship: liberal and national ideas in nineteenth century East-Central Europe," *Ab Imperio*, No. 3-4 (2000), p. 80.

decision-making in a polity.”⁸ They relate to both political theory and political practice and connect them.⁹

The approaches for studying ideology, developed by Freeden are particularly interesting because they transcend the usual boundaries of history of ideas and nicely link some of its approaches to the perspective of real politics. In particular, his treatment of the dynamic relationship between various core and peripheral concepts that form the morphological structures of ideologies are of relevance to this project. In contrast to those concepts that form the ideological core, the peripheral concepts are not by themselves of central importance to a particular ideology (or could even be almost absent from its framework). They may, however, nevertheless come to act as such inside certain spatially and temporally determined contexts in which close semantic interplay between them and the core concept(s) emerges.¹⁰ In the case of the liberal ideological family with “liberty” as its primary core concept, one of such “peripheral concepts”, especially distinctive for the 19th and early 20th century Central Europe, was the “nation.” For this study, the relationship between *liberty* as the core concept in all particular liberal ideologies¹¹ and *nation* as a peripheral, yet – in case of national liberalism – very crucial concept, is relevant.

⁸ Michael Freeden, “Concepts, ideology and political theory,” in Carsten Dutt (ed.), *Herausforderungen der Begriffsgeschichte* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2003), p. 61.

⁹ Cf. Michael Freeden, *Liberal Languages. Ideological Imaginations and Twentieth-Century Progressive Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), p. 236.

¹⁰ Cf. Freeden, Concepts, 58 and Michael Freeden, *Ideologies and political theory: a conceptual approach* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 79-81.

¹¹ Most theories of liberalism agree that liberty, however conceptualized, plays the role of a central concept and common fundament in all liberalisms. Cf. for instance Jean Césaire, “Der Liberalismus und die Liberalismen. Versuch einer Synthese,” in *Liberalismus, 3. erweiterte Auflage*. Lothar Gall ed. (Königstein: Athenäum, 1985), p. 140: „...das Freiheitsideal. Genau das ist in allen Erscheinungsformen des Liberalismus enthalten [...] Immanenz, Individualismus und als gemeinsame Leidenschaft die Freiheit – dies sind die magnetischen Pole und zugleich die Berührungspunkte aller Elemente der liberalen Tradition.“

Most importantly, in epistemological terms the study of ideologies provides a link between the perspective of world views and the one of practical politics, as well as between political ideas and political discourses. This is very relevant for the last of the three main perspectives, which concerns political realities and political labels employed in daily political discourses. Last but not least, “liberalism” also designates a large and heterogeneous group of political traditions, presenting itself therefore as a common denominator for certain historical actors in real politics – movements, parties, personalities and such. On this level, as it is usually treated by political history, “liberalism” reveals itself above all as *label* for constantly changing political agents – forces acting inside dynamic and mutually different political environments of various states and nations. On the level of political realities, distinguished and determined primarily by the principle of political struggle, “liberalism” is therefore to be treated as a phenomenon, essentially dependent on its temporal and spatial locations. Since the regional, national and cultural contexts and the specific political languages that have developed within them play the crucial role here, the content of political notions appears to be almost entirely contingent. As an element of discourse - most often as political label - liberalism thus has multiple associated and constantly changing meanings with no pre-determined content.

A consequence is not merely the variety of established usages, as for instance the great difference in the common usage of term “liberalism” between the American and continental European political environments. When approached from this perspective “liberalism” may also often be associated with features that are clearly illiberal in the sense that they would be perceived as such and not admitted as “liberal” when approached from one of the other two discussed perspectives – for instance the study of ideologies. Only

when approached from this perspective or employed on this level may “liberalism” be treated as referring to “an aggressive German nationalism in conjunction with an open anti-Semitism,”¹² as in the case of political language of interwar Austria.

Most importantly, when liberalism is being approached from this perspective, the common aim is not to evaluate whether certain phenomenon, for instance a political party, represented an instance of “liberalism” or not, as judged against some ideal standard. It is not about discerning liberal from non-liberal ideologies. It is not about searching for “liberals” among politicians in the given context through studying their writings and speeches, but much more about following the political behavior of (small or large “I”) “liberals” without employing any pre-determined standards for qualifying as “liberal.” Much more the main problem is what, within a given specific context and within a given political language, it meant to be “liberal.”

The most important question thereby is to try to understand how and on what grounds the liberal label has been applied to specific political personalities, groups, parties and partisan traditions and by whom. Sometimes political parties may present themselves as being liberal. In other cases they might not use or even outright reject that label, but are still being called “liberal” by the contemporary public. Or they may be given the liberal label only later by the historians or political scientists.

Historians on the other hand may – depending on the origins of the liberal label – either develop their questions basing on the political labels as they emerged and were being used

¹² Cf. Anton Pelinka, „Die politische Theorie des Liberalismus“ in *Innsbrucker historische Studien. Der deutsche und österreichische Liberalismus. Geschichts- und politikwissenschaftliche Perspektiven im Vergleich*, H. Reinalter and H. Klüeting eds. (Innsbruck: StudienVerlag, 2010), pp. 15-27, p. 26.

inside the given context and try to understand what “liberal” meant within that context. or apply the liberal label regardless of its actual presence or absence within the given context (including usage by the subjects to whom it is being applied). Such application, which requires additional explanation and justification, may again be based, either on ideological grounds – that is, the subject's ideological affinity to liberalism - or liberal genealogical background – that is, rootedness in the liberal partisan traditions. All these considerations appear especially relevant in the case of interwar Central Europe and the narrower post-Cisleithanean framework, where the self-identification as “liberal” was quite a rare occurrence in the political life. There were certain differences between the three national cases and some minor exceptions, but, as a rule, political parties and other organizations tended to avoid calling themselves liberal.

The three above delineated perspectives or “levels” - the philosophical one, the one of world views and ideologies, and the one of real politics and political discourses - are theoretically and practically irreducible to each other, but at the same time usually act as intertwined and sometimes appear partly indiscernible. Political philosophies provide grounds and legitimacy for political programs and practices. On the other hand, political realities challenge political philosophy as new problems arise. As mentioned, ‘the middle ground’ of hardly definable world views connects both fields – particularly in the form of political ideologies. Concepts, contemplated and sometimes created by philosophers through the course of time, begin to be coined inside ideologies, which act as “specific configurations of concepts”¹³, being “in a continuous state of flux and reconfiguration”¹⁴

¹³ Freeden, *Concepts*, 52.

¹⁴ Freeden, *Foreword*, ix.

and appearing “as ‘lived’ traditions of political thought”¹⁵. Carriers of ideologies on the other hand are political actors – parties and other kinds of movements. They may explicitly embrace a particular ideology, for instance liberalism – or merely claim to do so. Conversely, they may also not label themselves as liberals or even explicitly reject that label. Yet, an analysis of their ideology – employing the second of the previously discussed three perspectives -may reveal them as representatives of a specific ‘home-grown’ tradition of liberal ideology.

What is important here is to strive to understand the reasons behind the application of the liberal label and to take into the account all the mentioned perspectives, at the same time discerning between them as much as possible. Conversely, this demands a degree of reflection when applying the liberal label.

1. 2. How Liberalism is Approached in this Dissertation

The analysis of liberalism in this dissertation begins on the last of the discussed “levels.” Representing the pillar concept in my project, “liberalism”, is treated in my work primarily on the level of political realities and as a *political label* denoting agents in constantly changing political environments, being part of respective political languages and having a highly contingent content. Understood as such it has a dual significance, serving both as the basis of selecting the subjects of my analysis and at the same time serving as a point of critique.

¹⁵ Freeden, *Ideologies*, 52.

To give a brief illustration – during my undergraduate years, while studying the political parties of what Slovene historiography has been commonly referring to as “the liberal camp,” certain issues caught my attention. Particularly, I became attentive towards the use of the label “liberal” in a manner which seemed problematic to me as far as the interwar era was concerned. The “liberals” themselves quite rarely referred to themselves by using this label. Their political camp moreover also encompassed an agrarian party, a national socialist party, as well as radical nationalist groups such as ORJUNA (Organization of Yugoslav Nationalists), giving a picture of ideological heterogeneity with the presence of clearly illiberal elements. This logically led to questions such as “what exactly, if anything at all, was particularly liberal about these ‘liberals’?” or, more precisely, “What exactly was it that made these ‘liberals’ liberal?”

After examining the cases of similar parties from other former Austrian lands and in broader Central Europe, I recognized analogous patterns with similar kinds of questions springing up. The initial idea to “objectively” evaluate or “measure” the “liberality” or “illiberality” of these “dubious liberals” in a linear, static way that would begin on the level of philosophical principles and gradually “descend” to the “profane” level of political reality was however at a certain point exchanged for a more humble and at the same time fruitful approach of trying to understand why the liberal label was applied to them in the first place by either the historiographers or the contemporary public – *or by both*.

Common to all the cases is that they represented parties that stemmed from the 19th century liberal traditions but were not necessarily liberal in the stricter ideological sense. They all inherited the national liberal tradition in terms of organization, social base, their rootedness in specific milieus and belonging to specific political “camps.” Their genealogically liberal

background, however, did not necessarily imply commitment to the national liberal ideology of their predecessors or conscious identification with liberalism, which they often explicitly rejected. I therefore chose to refer to them as “national liberal heirs,” a term designating a specific type of political party, distinctive for the early 20th century (post-)Habsburg framework. These parties had a genealogically “liberal” background, but had often in one or another way departed from the 19th century liberal political traditions in which they were rooted.

This dissertation is thus devoted to a specific type of political party, distinctive for the studied era and region. Its aim is to look into three representative cases of such political party, trace parallels and entanglements between them and point out the differences. It begins by examining their positions within their national political landscapes, their relationships towards other political parties within those landscapes and their inner structure. This is however only the beginning as the ambition is not to remain within the classical confines of history of political parties, but to scrutinize them from the specific point of view of liberalism. Thereby we have to keep in mind both the third and the second of the previously discussed perspectives (ideology, real politics) – and the combination of both. The Chapters 4, 5 and 6 therefore focus on the specific ideological aspects central to these parties, and to discourses that crucially marked them.

The dissertation therefore aims to begin at the third of the previously discussed perspectives of approaching liberalism and then expand the approach by combining it with the second. The central subjects are political parties, yet the way in which these are being scrutinized also includes the perspective of ideas. The underlying assumption is that the observed parties stemmed out of the national liberal traditions and the questions are framed

in regard to the aim of excavating continuities and understanding mutations within the broader context. The notion “liberalism” on more normative levels of its use and understanding – both as an ideological pattern and as a political philosophical canon – can thus not be completely left out.

This does not mean however that the aim is to judge from a normative position whether parties under scrutiny were liberal or not, or to “prove” or “disprove” the validity of the liberal label where it has been given to them by the researchers of political history. At least this is not the main aim. However, taking into account the reasons for which they have been treated as liberal, we aim to proceed from this understanding and analyze them in light of some possible conceptions of liberalism. The parties under scrutiny are thus being discussed specifically from the point of view of the concept of liberalism as “that semantic field in which the political understandings of people who regard themselves as liberals, or whom others regard as liberals, may be investigated.”¹⁶ Precisely for this reason, the discussion will not be entirely limited to parties and politicians and will at certain points include intellectuals who stood close to the parties or engaged in dialogue with or critique against them from explicitly liberal positions.

We may thus neither speak about one hypothesis that is to be proven, corrected or falsified in this dissertation, nor about one principal question to which an equivocal answer would be sought. Much more, the goal is to open up a discussion about liberalism within the interwar framework of former Cisleithania. A discussion asking: *in which spheres, in which manners and to what extent did liberalism survive or even continue to develop within the discussed context? How did it manifest itself?* I am entering this discussion from one

¹⁶ Freeden, Liberal, 20.

of the possible starting points, that of the political parties, whereby I focus on the “national liberal heirs” as only one of the possible perspectives of the above stated problem.

The primary aim is thus to follow the trajectories of Slovene, German Austrian and Czech national liberal heirs during the interwar years and to trace the ideological currents which influenced them. In doing that, special attention is given to all aspects that had links to liberalism – be it “liberal residue” from the pre-WWI era, references to modern currents of liberal political thought, or these parties’ own perceptions of liberalism and the meanings that they attached to it. The goal is to trace possible surviving liberal elements, as well as to understand the ideological mutations and to reveal the entanglements, the similarities as well as the differences between the three national cases in these respects.

In doing this, I do not follow a single methodology. This would perhaps make the study seem more clear and consistent, yet narrow down its range in terms of richness of content. Instead, I rather combine a range of approaches. The two main ways in which I approach the subjects are the already mentioned search for the remaining liberal elements (liberal “residue” and continuities of the national liberal traditions and their pre-WWI developmental patterns) on the one hand, and an a-historical “liberal minimum” for the interwar context on the other.

The search for continuities is primarily the matter of the 4th Chapter which deals with the nationality politics and the types and degrees of nationalism. Since I am dealing with heirs to the national liberal traditions, which had already from the last quarter of the 19th century onwards “mutated” with the national element overshadowing the liberal one and changing its own character (see Chapter 2), the first set of questions will build on this assumption

and address the continuation of this process into the interwar period: did it proceed further in the same direction and how far in the case of each party?

The second set of questions, that will stand in the foreground of the Chapter 5, builds on the assumption of the interwar period as the era of general crisis of liberalism (political and economic) and the region-specific radicalization of politics (including totalitarian experiments in its vicinity). The central question will be to what degree this reflected in the case of national liberal heirs - how far did the departure from the basic liberal assumptions regarding the relationship between the state and society go in each of the three cases? What was the studied parties' attitudes toward representative democracy on the one and alternative models of political order on the other side?

A question that presents itself is “Do I have a model of liberalism?” It would be an exaggeration if I answered affirmatively. As said, the ambition is not to compare living historical matter to some ideal standard in order to determine its “liberality” or “illiberality.” However, despite not disposing with a worked-out model of how liberalism was supposed to look—nor wishing to develop it - the analysis nevertheless follows certain patterns that enable it to critically assess the application of the liberal label to concrete parties. In addition to the historical approach of identifying the continuities and “excavating” the liberal “residue,” it employs another, a-historical one, which comes close to a kind of universal “liberal minimum”, albeit a very general and merely negatively defined one. This means that its purpose is more delimiting what *liberalism is not* or what *liberalism cannot be*, than offering a positive definition. What falls within this negatively-

defined framework may also be termed as moderate, “centrist” politics or as Wolfgang Mantl puts it:

“The inexhaustible meaning of liberalism lies in its ‘middle position,’ in its distance against the extremes of the right and the left provenance, the excessive social garantism, against fundamentalists, but also against anarchy and anomy, against all those opponents that had during this century been confronting it with the wish to annihilate it in order to get the human person under control [*um dadurch die menschliche Person in den Griff zu bekommen*].”¹⁷

This “liberal minimum” is a-historical in the sense of being aprioristic and general. Yet, it is to some extent mustered for the concrete circumstances of interwar Central Europe. Inside that context it is meant to roughly delimit the type of politics that were moderate and “centrist”. In this way it creates a threshold that is broad enough to leave the field open for a wide variety of political positions, prone to the various political trends of the time, yet staying within the broad frames of representative order and limited government. These positions might, taking into account the context-dependent specificities, include demands towards increasing the power of the state, while at the same time continuing to stress the value of individual freedom and initiative. They might include ideas of strengthening the executive, especially as a temporary measure in times of crisis, but may not amount to a complete rejection of parliamentarism. They might contain calls for far-reaching government interventions into economy - not however to the extent that would mean an overall nationalization or socialization. They might even amount to flirtation with various forms of domestic (para-)fascism, but without identifying with its ideology or adopting its political tactics.

¹⁷ Wolfgang Mantl, “Liberalismus und Antiliberalismus in Österreich. Eine Spurensuche,” in *Liberalismus. Interpretationen und Perspektiven*, Emil Brix, Wolfgang Mantl eds. (Vienna: Böhlau, 1996), p. 48.

If nothing else, such liberal minimum excludes exclusivistic variants of integral nationalism on a racist basis (including racial anti-Semitism); intolerance in the form of appeals for elimination of any group of citizens, be it on racial, ethnic, religious, world view or class basis; absence of any consideration for limiting the sphere of legitimate government action; direct and uninhibited rejection of constitutionalism, parliamentarism and market economy. Without delving into individual theories of totalitarianism (or questioning the validity of that term), it may be said that in the interwar, being both the birth time of totalitarianism and the era of its culmination under Stalin and Hitler, liberalism's "defining other"¹⁸ may be located exactly in the totalitarian projects of designing a "new man" with the help of an omnipotent State unbound by legal rules and abolition of boundaries between the state and the society through aggressive politicization of the private sphere.

It is precisely the special concern of finding the proper legal limits for state power and its sphere of legitimate activity that I see as the distinguishing feature of otherwise mutually highly diverse liberalisms of various times and places. Regardless of how broadly or narrowly the preferred limits might be set in a particular liberal ideology, where they are supposed to stand and on which particular aspects of human activities they might focus - question of limits is always there and no liberalism argues for unbridled governmental power. While not engaging in a "Freedonian" analysis of the studied political subjects – my "liberal minimum" being more modest and less strict than his¹⁹ - I at certain points also

¹⁸ Cf. Pelinka, *Die politische*, 27.

As the "defining other" of liberalism Pelinka lists conservatism for the 19th century, totalitarianisms for the first half of the 20th century and nationalism for the current era,

¹⁹ Cf. Michael Freedon, "European Liberalisms. An Essay in Comparative Political Thought," *European Journal of Political Theory*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (2008): p. 14:

find it pertinent to ask, whether liberty continued to represent the core ideological concept at all in the studied cases of interwar national liberal heirs.

The aim of this study is also to connect the subjects of political history with some of the questions and approaches, distinctive for the intellectual history and history of concepts. While present throughout the dissertation, this ambition will particularly step into the foreground in the Chapter 6, which will connect the threads from the previous chapters and specifically tackle the various meanings associated with the term “liberalism” in political languages of the studied contexts. Most importantly, it will reach beyond the frame of party politics by more closely looking at the resonances of the changing party courses and adjoining debates among the politically engaged intellectuals that identified as liberals. In this way some of the most generally distinctive patterns of understanding and usage of the concept “liberalism” in the three studied contexts will be brought into light. The manners in which the words “liberalism” and “liberal” along with related political labels functioned in the daily political discourses will thus be linked to some of the meanings that manifested in contemporary intellectual debates.

“The mere presence of some liberal themes is not necessarily sufficient for an ideology to be termed liberal. [...]The occurrence of illiberal themes within a liberal ideology is not always sufficient to exclude it from the family of liberalisms.”

The previously discussed “liberal minimum” moreover serves primarily for orientation and only secondarily to make normative judgments.

2. National Liberals and their Heirs - Developmental Patterns in Central European Liberal Party Traditions, 1867-1918

This chapter follows patterns of the late 19th century developments of liberalism in Central European party politics that might be perceived as region-specific, especially in contrast to their “western” liberal counterparts. This overview covers the years between 1867 up to the First World War – briefly touching upon the state of affairs at its aftermath – and focuses primarily on the German, Czech and Slovene speaking lands of the Cisleithanean half of the Dual Monarchy. Some attention is devoted also to the German Empire, as the 19th century developments of liberal politics in Germany were to a large extent paradigmatic for the broader Central European region. To a lesser extent, the Polish and Hungarian contexts will be discussed as well.

My main aim is to demonstrate how the national liberal traditions through the last quarter of the 19th century and further underwent certain far-reaching transformations - structural as well as ideological. These transformations included shifts that might be considered as illiberal or, in certain cases, even outright anti-liberal. Most importantly, a peculiar trajectory is pointed out, which was to a certain degree common and was marked by a profoundly nationalist turn that occurred during the elapsing years of the 19th century. The general overview thus aims to illustrate the interesting and quite complex interplay between ideologies, organized political movements and political languages within the context of rapidly changing political cultures of the late 19th century Central Europe. In doing this, I also additionally explain the term “national liberal heirs.”

2. 1. The Central European National liberalisms

In terms of both ideologies and political party traditions it may be argued that in the Central European lands a distinct type of liberalism, peculiar to this region evolved through the 19th century. For much of this period “the word ‘national’ acted as more or less synonymous with ‘liberal’” and “the term ‘national’ alone was sufficient to arouse suspicions of liberal associations.”¹ To an extent this applies to Southeast European countries as well, in many of which “national liberals” also played visible if not central roles, but with rather different, region-specific characteristics, which to a considerable extent distinguished them from their Central European counterparts.²

In Central Europe the national “revivals” and unifications of the long 19th century were projects, in which liberals performed the key role. Liberty as the liberals’ core political ideal was perceived also - and sometimes even primarily – as “liberty for the nation”, that is national emancipation and unification, nations sometimes being perceived as “collective individuals.”³ Important to stress is also that the “nation” in question did not entail only the idea of a community of citizens, belonging to the same polity and being equal before the law, but very often and above all stood for a community of people (in the romantic

¹ Maciej Janowski, "Wavering Friendship: liberal and national ideas in nineteenth century East-Central Europe," *Ab Imperio*, No. 3-4 (2000): pp. 69-90, p. 80.

² Stemming from different political cultures, the liberalisms of Southeast European lands had different ideological foundations, often, as was the case in Serbia and Bulgaria, sharing many traits with what in Western and Central Europe would be more commonly referred to as “radicalism”. Perhaps the most striking difference was the high degree of “socially constructivistic” outlooks, which were characteristic for both the profoundly “elitist”, anti-democratic brand of Romanian national liberalism as also for the rather “populist” and democratic Bulgarian and Serbian liberals. See: Diana Mishkova, “The Interesting Anomaly of Balkan Liberalism,” in: *Liberty and the Search for Identity. Imperial Heritages and Liberal Nationalisms in a Comparative Perspective*, Ivan Zoltan Denes ed. (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2006), pp. 399-456.

³ Janowski, Wavering, 79.

nationalist sense as *Volk*), united through common language and culture. While it may be said that the political conception of nation was important for most of the 19th century liberalisms, regardless of region, we may equally argue that in the Central, Eastern, Southeastern and parts of Southern Europe the absence of nation states, along with ethno-cultural conception of nation, distinctively marked the liberal movements and their specific national(-ist) character.

Similar observations could pertain to the related liberal ideas and principles such as citizenship, limited government, free trade, self-determination, reason, progress, individualism, civilization, civil society, with which “nationalism occasionally coalesced (...) or nested within,”⁴ at some other points also resisting at least some of them.⁵ The struggle for constitutional order, civil liberties and equality before the law went hand in hand with projects of nation building, based on notions of cultural or ethnic nation (often at the same time joined by arguments, based on historical rights). Different socio-cultural contexts and the absence of nation states (up to 1867 in Hungary, 1871 in Germany and up to 1918 elsewhere) also impacted the emergence of political configurations and landscapes, different to those of Western Europe.⁶

During the 19th and early 20th century Central Europe, liberalism as a political force, visibly arising and becoming an increasingly important political factor after the uprisings of 1848, was especially marked by a strong, indeed almost inseparable connection with nationalism.

⁴ Michal Freeden, “Foreword” in Ivan Zoltan Denes ed., *Liberty and the search for identity* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2006), pp. ix-xi, p. x.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ This also affected the characteristics of the relation between liberals and conservatives. (Ivan Zoltan Denes, “Liberalism and Nationalism: An Ambiguous Relationship” in Ivan Zoltan Denes (Ed.), *Liberty and the search for identity* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2006), pp. 1-17; p. 6-7.)

One could therefore speak about traditions of “national liberalism” as a common designation for a number of related ideologies and movements, distinctive for Central Europe, of which the German “National Liberal Party” can serve as a prime example. Due to the initial lack of “competition” in this “field” from the side of conservatives and Catholics, the mid-19th century liberal parties were throughout “national” and nationally based, which was distinctive for Prussian, Austrian, as well as South German lands.⁷ A close relationship between liberalism and nationalism thus evolved⁸, albeit an uneasy one, as proven for instance by the case of National Liberals, having to “sacrifice” many of their earlier liberal demands for the sake of the German unification under Prussian leadership.

National liberals perceived themselves as the main driving force of modernization, which strongly coincided with their nation-building projects. Being “the national party constructing modern national culture and identity”⁹, they also strove to create a modern middle-class civil society and to reach the western (primarily British) levels of economic development within their own national contexts. Indeed, a general impression that one might get is that for the Central European national liberals the category of “state” occupied at least an equally, if not more, central place as “liberty” did.¹⁰ The very understandings of the latter were, especially in the German lands, notably marked by the Hegelian conception of freedom as self-realization of the individual, possible only within the framework of the State.¹¹ It should furthermore be emphasized that the liberal *Rechtsstaat* (with accent on

⁷ Lothar Gall, “Einführung” in *Liberalismus im 19. Jahrhundert, Deutschland im europäischen Vergleich*, Dieter Langewiesche ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988), pp. 23-27, p. 26.

⁸ Denes, *Liberalism*, 6.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹⁰ Janowski, *Wavering*, 70.

¹¹ On the Hegelian idea of freedom see: Pierre Hassner, “Georg W. F. Hegel” in *History of Political Philosophy*, Third Edition, L. Strauss and J. Cropsey eds. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), pp. 732-760, esp. p. 733 and 736.

Staat!) although originally meant to have a government-limiting role, by no means necessarily implied the idea of “minimal state,”¹² also being distinct from the broader concept of the rule of law.

As nationalists and modernizers, the national liberals were often statist, centralist, and opponents of free trade, therefore proponents of economic protectionism. At the same time, however, they usually advocated relatively free economic order inside their countries, marked by a relative absence of state interference. Strengthening of the national economy was perceived as a very important part and necessary step towards consolidation of the nation and general modernizing efforts. This could sometimes lead to adoption of neo-mercantilist economic doctrines, such as the ones of Friedrich List¹³. Even more importantly, the traditions of the “enlightened absolutism” of Joseph II and Frederick the Great were commonly “invoked by the liberals as their own.”¹⁴

Nation state, often, though not always, being the central goal of the nationalists, was at the same time also perceived as a means of modernization, and therefore attributed a peculiarly powerful role.¹⁵ In the case of Catholic lands, a distinct feature of national liberalism was moreover a strong secularist orientation, as it was believed that the powerful, supranational

¹² Cf. Wolfgang Mantl, “Liberalismus und Antiliberalismus in Österreich. Eine Spurensuche,” in *Liberalismus. Interpretationen und Perspektiven*, Emil Brix, Wolfgang Mantl eds. (Vienna: Böhlau, 1996), pp. 20, 24-25.

¹³ See: Roman Szporluk, *Communism and nationalism: Karl Marx versus Friedrich List* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

During the “seven fat years” (*Die sieben fetten Jahre*) between 1866 and 1873 the Austrian German *Verfassungspartei* pursued a free trade policy. After the *Börsenkrach* of 1873, however, they swiftly turned to various protectionist measures and did so without much hesitation. (Cf. Friedrich Gottas, “Liberale in Österreich und Ungarn – Versuch einer Gegenüberstellung,” in *Das Parteienwesen Österreich-Ungarns*, Gábor Erdödy ed., (Budapest: Akadémiai kiadó, 1987), pp. 47-70, pp. 58-60.

¹⁴ Janowski, *Wavering*, 71.

¹⁵ Cf. Freedon, Foreword, x: It needs to be added that the “state” in question did not necessarily imply a completely independent nation state, what is best demonstrated exactly by the case of Cisleithanian national liberalism.

‘universalist’ institution presented a danger for the primacy of the national idea and an obstacle to social modernization.¹⁶ This corresponded to a possible way of differentiating between two main groups of liberal parties – the “northern” one, struggling mainly with conservatives on socioeconomic issues and the “southern”, defined primarily by opposition to Catholicism on the grounds of culture and *Weltanschauung*.¹⁷

Particularly in a multi-national state such as the Habsburg monarchy, the evolution of liberal politics went hand in hand with national movements. One could therefore speak about a number of national liberal traditions, of which the German one was the first to appear and, due to the economically and culturally stronger position of Germandom at that time, initially also the strongest one. In Hungary, liberalism also took roots early, but in a specific form of “gentry liberalism”. Due to the lack of nationally-minded middle classes, a special ideology developed within the liberally oriented nobility, foremost the landed gentry, which assumed the role of the “tiers état” or “le juste milieu”.¹⁸ Such type of liberalism was distinctive for all the three main rivaling parties of post-1867. From 1875 on, a major part of Hungarian politics, including both the party of Ferenc Deak, as well as the one of Kalman Tisza, was united in a single ruling party, which gave itself the name Liberal Party.¹⁹ Due to restricted franchise and with help of gerrymandering, the Hungarian

¹⁶ Cf. Lothar Höbelt, “Die deutschnationalen und liberalen Gruppierungen in Cisleithanien: von den Vereinigten Linken zum Nationalverband,” In *Das Parteienwesen Österreich-Ungarns*, Gábor Erdődy ed. (Budapest: Akadémiai kiadó, 1987), pp. 77-90, p. 87: “Primäres Kriterium für den österreichischen Liberalismus war immer schon mehr der Antiklerikalismus französischer Prägung als der vielgeschmähte Manchesterliberalismus englischer Provenienz gewesen.”

¹⁷ Cf. Lothar Höbelt, “Die deutschfreiheitlichen Österreichs. Bürgerliche Politik unter den Bedingungen eines katholischen Vielvölkerstaats” in *Liberalismus im 19. Jahrhundert, Deutschland im europäischen Vergleich*, Dieter Langewiesche ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988), pp. 161-171, p. 161, 167.

¹⁸ Miklos Szábo, “The Liberalism of the Hungarian Nobility” in Ivan Zoltan Denes ed., *Liberty and the search for identity* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2006), pp. 195-237, p. 201-202.

¹⁹ István Diószegi, “Die Liberalen am Steuer. Der Ausbau des bürgerlichen Staatssystems in Ungarn im letzten Drittel des 19. Jahrhunderts” in *Liberalismus im 19. Jahrhundert, Deutschland im europäischen*

liberals enjoyed a safe majority until the end of the century.²⁰ A similar kind of gentry liberalism developed among Poles as well.²¹

The Czech liberals followed the German ones swiftly, although it may at the same time be argued that their evolution reached its peak when Austrian German liberalism was already in decline.²² The Slovenes, however, residing in economically less developed areas and having a less diversified society, dominated by peasants and lower-middle classes²³, entered the political stage a bit later. Initially their national movement acted as unified with the more conservative wing dominating the more liberally-minded and nationally demanding side. A completely independent liberal party backed by a narrow but growing stratum of a nationally-minded entrepreneurial class which had previously been absent²⁴ appeared only in the 1890's.

The Austro-German liberals for instance were not simply *die Liberalen*, but *Deutschliberale*, whereas the Czech and Slovene ones initially simply took the name of the “National Party.” Nationalism and liberalism were thus connected intrinsically. During the larger part of the 19th century, this nationalism did not imply hostile attitudes towards other nationalities and could, due to its relatively inclusive and tolerant character, be considered

Vergleich, Dieter Langewiesche ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988), pp. 484-499, pp. 492-493.

²⁰ Gary B. Cohen, “Nationalist Politics and the Dynamics of State and Civil Society in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1867-1914,” *Central European History*, vol.40, no. 2 (2007): pp. 241-278, p. 255

²¹ Cf. Maciej Janowski, “Marginal or Central? The Place of the Liberal Tradition in Nineteenth-Century Polish History” in Ivan Zoltan Denes ed., *Liberty and the search for identity* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2006), pp. 239-272, p. 250; and Szábo, *The Liberalism*, 204.

²² Cf. Hans Lemberg, “Das Erbe des Liberalismus in der ČSR und die National Demokratische Partei” in *Die Erste Tschechoslowakische Republik als Multinationaler Parteienstaat*, Karl Bosl ed. , (Munich: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag, 1979), pp. 59-78, p. 76.

²³ Cohen, *Nationalist*, 248.

²⁴ Peter Vodopivec, *O gospodarskih in socialnih nazorih na Slovenskem v 19. stoletju* (Ljubljana: INZ, 2006), pp. 14-15.

as a liberal one. Particularly, the 1860's nationality politics of the Austrian German liberals - that after the December constitution of 1867 referred to themselves as *Verfassungstreue* - was largely distinguished by a position of an educated, "enlightened", and forward-looking elite, the door into which, at least theoretically, was not barred to anyone. To them, being liberal to a large extent meant being German. And vice versa - it was the culture and *Bildung* that one possessed and not ethnic roots which enabled membership in the German liberal "community".

Important to point out in this regard is that the German-speaking Jews were not merely perceived as belonging to the German nation but were represented in quite high numbers in the national liberal movement. A very good example was certainly Adolf Fischhof, a German Liberal Austrian politician, publicist and writer of Jewish origin. He was a German nationalist, an Austrian patriot and a determined advocate of cultural and language rights for all the nationalities of the Habsburg Empire.²⁵ In contrast to many of his liberal contemporaries from the *Verfassungspartei* (Constitutional Party of which he himself was never a member) he also spoke against merging with the German Empire, defending the idea of Austria as a *Nationalitätenstaat* (nationalities state or multinational state, as opposed to a *Nationalstaat*), founded and guided by a higher ethical ideal of justice and securing all of its nationalities with same rights and dignity.²⁶

Following the 1848 call of František Palacký, the Czech National Party (*Národní strana*), despite being displeased by the Austro-Hungarian settlement, remained loyal to the united

²⁵ Cf. Ian Reifowitz, "Threads Intertwined: German National Egoism and Liberalism in Adolf Fischhof's Vision for Austria," *Nationalities Papers*, vol. 29, No 3 (2001): pp. 441-458, pp. 441-444.

²⁶ Cf. Adolf Fischhof, *Oesterreich und die Bürgschaften seines Bestandes*, Zweite Auflage (Wien: Wallishausser'sche Buchhandlung, 1870), pp. 7-8, 51-52.

constitutional Austria as a guarantee for a free cultural as well as political development of its Slavic nations. And it is important to stress already at this point that none of the Austrian national liberal movements advocated full-blown separatism or complete abandonment of the Habsburg framework. As it will be demonstrated later, even their *fin-de-siècle* heirs, being far more pronouncedly and exclusively nationalist did not – with the exception of a few more radical factions - aim at destroying Austria. The universally valid distinction between national movements as such and aspirations for independent nation states²⁷ thus deserves an especially careful consideration in the case of old Austria.

The national liberalisms of the other Austrian ethnic groups modeled themselves partly on the German example, at the same time being in an increasing conflict with it. The German liberal *Weltanschauung*, however universalistic, inclusive and “cosmopolitan” it may have been, could, when observed from a different angle – the one of aspiring national movements of Austrian Slavs for instance – give an impression of paternalist if not outright hegemonic attitudes. Moreover, the national movements of Austrian Slavs, including those that may without much hesitation be labeled as national liberal such as both the “Old” and the “Young Czechs”, as well as the “Young Slovenes”, commonly avoided or even rejected the “liberal” label, as in their perception it bore a strong German connotation.²⁸

This conflict also had a very practical significance, since the Austrian post-*Ausgleich* electoral order was formed in a manner in which German liberals had a majority in the Imperial Council, although the German speakers represented only roughly one third of the Cisleithanian population. The ruling German liberals were therefore clinging to centralism,

²⁷ Cf. Janowski, *Wavering*, 78.

²⁸ Cf. Lemberg, *Das Erbe*, 62.

which enabled them to stay in power for the time being. Generally speaking, they perceived the national aspirations of Austrian Slavs as backward-looking and in conflict with the principles of liberalism, therefore representing a danger for the German urban liberal culture.²⁹

Despite the at least ostensibly conflicting inner logic of national liberalism - that is the sometimes uneasy relationship between the “national” and the “liberal” components - the ideas and political culture espoused by the discussed national liberal movements still possessed a considerable degree of unity. Albeit differing from one another - especially in regard to the social power and status of the proponents of particular national liberalisms – and perhaps not disposing with a fully coherent ideological complex, they had a general character that could be deemed as fairly “liberal.” Liberal in terms of the universalistic nature of their national ideals³⁰, the relatively cosmopolitan character of the culture they represented and fostered, their modernizing aims and belief in cultural and economic progress through education and gradual social reform, the relatively high degree of cultural, religious and national tolerance, their secularist orientation, and – last but not least – their strict adherence to the principles of constitutionalism, *Rechtsstaat* and equality before the law.

Moreover, until the 1870's the national liberal groupings of the Austrian peoples were united also in terms of organization. Not only that the liberal movements of particular nationalities were not yet splintered, but also the *Verfassungspartei* was still open to non-

²⁹ In the 1860s, a joint front began forming in opposition to the German liberals, composed of representatives of Slavic nationalities, including liberals, and German conservatives. A decade later these forces united in Eduard Taaffe's *Iron Ring* coalition.

³⁰ Cf. Janowski, 71 and 78.

Germans without demanding from them to completely denounce their heritage, especially if it was framed in terms of regional (crownland) culture and not nation. Particularly in the cases such as the Slovene one, where the unified national movement was dominated by conservatives, identifying as “liberal” could often mean identifying with the “German party” as well.³¹

The 1867 constitution, which was not a success merely for the centralist German liberals (not to mention the significance of 1867 for the Hungarian ones) but may – in view of the civic as well as national rights that it instituted - in a certain sense be regarded as a step forward for liberals of all the national variants, making liberalism in the Habsburg Monarchy victorious. At the same time, however, it soon began its slow decline, undergoing numerous processes in the decades to follow, which made it become both less united and less liberal. These processes may be summed up as follows: a) Diminishing trust in liberal economic ideas, due to the long economic crisis following the 1873 *Börsenkrach*, as well as a general reaction against individualism³²; b) Disorientation connected primarily with the inability to cope with the ongoing political developments moving towards mass politics (resulting also in higher representation for non-German nationalities, as well as

³¹ This could sometimes bring forward grave personal dilemmas. Very illustrative of this is for instance the case of Dragotin Dežman (Karl Deschmann), who initially acted as one of the protagonists of the Slovene national “revival” but due to his adherence to German high culture and liberal values later ended up in the German camp, condemned by Slovene nationalists as a “renegade”. Vincenc Ferer Klun, another Slovene Patriot, switched to the German Constitutional camp due to his opposition to the 1868 Concordat and what he saw as intertwining of Slovene politics in Carniola with the Catholic church. (Vodopivec, O gospodarskih, 49.)

³² Cf. Robert Hoffmann, „Gab es schönerianisches Milieu? Versuch einer Kollektivbiographie von Mitgliedern des 'Vereins der Salzburger Studenten in Wien',“ in *Bürgertum in der Habsburgermonarchie*, Ernst Bruckmüller ed. (Vienna/Cologne: Böhlau 1990), pp. 275-298, p. 277.

strata of population that did not share the liberal *Weltanschauung*³³; c) Ideological diffusion and transformation, connected with competition, influence and the eventual takeover by radical currents within the movement and resulting in continuous loss of liberal identity, usually in favor of a more pronouncedly nationalist one; d) Disintegration and a series of splits within the liberal movements; e) Mostly unsuccessful attempts to transform in terms of organization from *Honoratiorenparteien* to modern, mass political parties.

2. 2. Late 19th Century Reconfigurations, the “Nationalist Turn” and the Heirs of National Liberalism

During the last quarter of the 19th century the evolution of national liberal political traditions was increasingly influenced by ever more powerful radical democratic, nationalist and socialist ideological currents, as well as general political and social developments leading on one side to a society to becoming increasingly marked by class divisions, and on the other towards mass politics. Already for being the ruling parties in the German Empire, and up to 1879 in the Austrian half of the Habsburg monarchy as well (the period of *Hochliberalismus*), the liberals had to accept many compromises. Even more, organized liberalism had to adapt to changing conditions of political life and unfolding political realities. Political participation broadened and mobilization intensified enormously up to the introduction of universal suffrage for men in 1907. At first, liberals tried to resist the change, for instance the leaders of *Verfassungspartei*, aware of the dangers “from below” coming from the nationalist masses that were threatening the

³³ Cf. Albert Fuchs, *Geistige Strömungen in Österreich 1867-1918* (Vienna: Löcker Verlag, 1984), p.10.

continuation of their power. They thus saw their “best defense” in “the maintenance of the restricted suffrage system”³⁴, based on separate curiae, electoral census and partly indirect representation.

The first visible division that emerged during the 1870’s could, roughly speaking, be labelled as the one between “left” and “right” liberalism. This development was most far-reaching in the German Empire, where it resulted in the formation of completely separate and mutually competing parties, whereby it was the “left” that distanced itself from Bismarck and the increasing role of his governments in economic matters, including social legislation.³⁵ In Austria, where the split was initially less drastic, “right” denoted a moderately conservative³⁶ and rather elitist approach to politics, whereas “left” implied more democratic and more sharply nationalist tendencies and demands.³⁷ Such splits took place in 1871 in the Austrian German case when a more pronouncedly nationally oriented³⁸ Progressive Club (*Fortschrittsklub*) formed itself on the left wing of *Verfassungspartei*, and 1874 in the Czech one, as the Young Czechs fully seceded from the Old Czech National Party, forming their own “National Free-minded Party” (*Národní strana svobodomyšlná*). The actual reasons for the formal separation into two parties were mostly of practical

³⁴ Carl E. Schorske, *Fin de Siecle Vienna. Politics and Culture* (New York, Vintage Book, 1981), p. 125.

³⁵ Cf. Dieter Langewiesche, “Liberalismus und Bürgertum in Europa“ in *Bürgertum im 19. Jahrhundert*, Jürgen Kocka ed. (München: DTV, 1988), pp. 360-394, p. 374-375.

³⁶ Gottas, *Liberale*, 66.

³⁷ Cf. Harm-Hinrich Brandt, “Liberalismus in Österreich zwischen Revolution und Großer Depression” in *Liberalismus im 19. Jahrhundert, Deutschland im europäischen Vergleich*, Dieter Langewiesche ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988), pp. 136-160, p.154.

³⁸ Klaus Berchtold, “Grundlinien der Entwicklung der politischen Parteien in Österreich seit 1867,“ in *Österreichische Parteiprogramme 1868-1966*, Klaus Berchtold ed. (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1967), pp. 11-108, p. 73.

political nature though with both parties continuing to represent “complementary parts” of the same movement.³⁹

Particularly in Austria and most significantly among its Germans, the conservative and elitist political stance of the *Altliberalen* faced increasing criticism by the more radical younger generations, which triggered a gradual but persistent “nationalist turn” that would reach its peak by *fin-de-siècle* and profoundly change the character of Austrian (post-)liberalism. The relationship between the “liberal” and “national” components of national liberalism began to change from the 1870’s on, with the “national” coming to visibly prevail over the “liberal” by 1900. Nationalism was gaining in strength and intensity and was also adopting new integral and radical forms, including even those based on racist ideas. Examples from the German Empire also reveal a gradual decline (although not an extinction) of liberal, moderate and relatively tolerant kinds of nationalism in favor of more aggressive forms – in the extreme case for instance even those based on racist notions⁴⁰. Especially during the years between 1890 and 1914 the national liberal synthesis got “attacked and subverted”⁴¹ in the everyday politics of Germany, with the majority of liberals compromising their ideals “by embracing a fervent and often intolerant nationalism, militarism and governmental paternalism.”⁴² Among the Austro-German liberals by 1895 the question was not anymore “whether or to what degree nationalism

³⁹ Bruce M. Garver, *The Young Czech Party 1874 - 1901 and the emergence of a multi-party system* (New Haven, Conn. [u.a.] : Yale Univ. Press, 1978), pp. 79-80, 82.

⁴⁰ Cf. Eric Kurlander, “The Rise of Völkisch-Nationalism and the Decline of German Liberalism: A Comparison of Liberal Political Cultures in Schleswig-Holstein and Silesia 1912–1924,” *European Review of History* 9(1) (2002): 23-36, p. 28.

⁴¹ Zoltan Michael Szaz, “The Ideological Precursors of National Socialism,” *The Western Political Quarterly*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (Dec., 1963): pp. 924-945, p. 932.

⁴² Bruce B. Frye, “The German Democratic Party 1918-1930,” *The Western Political Quarterly*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (1963): 167-179, p. 167.

would influence politics [...] but rather which vision of nationalism would determine policy."⁴³

The period between the 1880s and about 1910 marks “a clear watershed in the history of national movements and ideas”⁴⁴ during which a new, illiberal nationalist ideology entered the Central European political stage, rejecting liberalism and “accusing it of cosmopolitanism, egoism, materialism and neglect of national issues”⁴⁵ Radical, exclusive, plebeian, anti-modernist and aggressive new nationalism certainly manifested itself in its “purest” forms in the case of movements such as Austrian Pan-Germans, Polish National Democrats and - to a slightly lesser extent and a bit later- Czech State-Right Radicals.⁴⁶ “Old liberalism” and “new nationalism” (terminology suggested by Maciej Janowski), thereby found themselves in a complex interplay in which the national liberals tried to adapt to the new circumstances, by stressing, among other things, “more and more the national element of their programme.”⁴⁷ An important difference between the discussed “nationalist transformation” of national liberalisms in Austria and that in the German Empire, was however that in the latter case this was also closely connected to accommodating with the illiberal imperial regime. In Austria, the increasingly radical nationalisms had an opposite tendency. “The functional change of nationalism” from an ideology of the “left” towards one of the “right,” as Heinrich August Winkler has termed the process that had taken place in Germany during the late 1870’s and in which the

⁴³ Pieter M. Judson. *Exclusive revolutionaries: liberal politics, social experience, and national identity in the Austrian Empire, 1848-1914* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), p. 253.

⁴⁴ Janowski, *Wavering*, 82.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 84.

⁴⁶ Cohen, *Nationalist*, 267.

⁴⁷ Janowski, *Wavering*, 84.

nationalism of the National Liberals lost its emancipatory character,⁴⁸ thus did not apply to Austria.

Pieter Judson⁴⁹ argued that the radical nationalist turn, taken by a considerable part of Austrian German (post-)liberalism represented the application of German liberal principles to the fullest degree and not their betrayal. Regardless of whether one agrees with this position or not, it is, however, undeniable that the last quarter of 19th century brought radical concussions of social and political life which led to weakened liberal ideology, transformation of liberal politics and its partial disintegration. Moreover, within the scope relevant to this paper, concussions of this kind did not affect merely the German liberal movement but others as well. The Czechs and the Slovenes may not have had “a Schönerer” or “a Dmowski” within their ranks, but that did not mean, however, that *Volksgemeinschaft* type ideals of social organization of a Slavic brand⁵⁰ or exclusionary and aggressive stances towards the national other (most often the German or the Jew)⁵¹ were absent. Last but not least, the new style of politics, marked by mass mobilization and rhetoric that aimed primarily at emotions rather than reason from 1880s came to distinguish an ever growing part of Cisleithanean politics regardless of nationality.⁵²

⁴⁸ Heinrich August Winkler, *Liberalismus und Antiliberalismus. Studien zur politischen Sozialgeschichte des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979), p. 36, 49, 51.

⁴⁹ See: Judson, Exclusive.

⁵⁰ See for instance: Peter Vodopivec, “Ruski ‘mir’, južnoslovanska zadruga in slovenski liberalci,” *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino*. Yr. 46, No. 1 (2006): pp. 65-78.

⁵¹ Similarly as in the Alpine lands, there were virtually no Jews living in Slovene-speaking Austrian lands. Nevertheless did “anti-Semitic attitudes” distinguish the Slovene liberal camp from its beginnings in the 1860’s all the way into the interwar. (Cf. Jurij Perovšek, “Vprašanje idejnega, političnega, socialnega in narodnega sobivanja v liberalni politični misli in praksi med leti 1891-1941,” *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino*, yr. 51, nr. 1 (2011): pp. 93-126. p. 102 and Marko Zajc, “Jud kot Nemec, liberalec, kapitalist : o slovenskem antisemitizmu v zadnjih desetletjih habsburške monarhije” in *Slovenski Judje : zgodovina in holokavst : pregled raziskovalnih tematik*. I. Šumi, et al eds. (Maribor: Center judovske kulturne dediščine Sinagoga, 2012), pp. 108-117.)

⁵² Trencsényi and co-authors also deem this process to be “to a certain extent symptomatic of the ambiguity of the entire liberal project in East Central Europe, as it applied to societies that were very far from being modern and bourgeois and thus necessitated the legitimization of the liberal paradigm by reference to archaic

“Old liberalism” and “new nationalism” may also be treated as representing two ideal types. The majority of the actual cases in Cisleithanean politics were of a “mixed” nature, the tendency indeed moving from inclusiveness towards exclusiveness, from modernist towards anti-modernist perspectives, from universalism towards particularism, from a gentlemanly towards a street discourse and from elitism towards mass politics. Especially in the last point the new nationalists did not “break with the old liberal heritage” with the “metamorphosis” being gradual and “the new national ideology” taking much from the old.⁵³ The new nationalists mostly retained the basic liberal mottos (such as freedom and progress) but less of a liberal spirit. The most visible result on the level of party politics was that the national liberal spectrum became very fragmented, a development that (particularly in the Austrian German case) preceded the major electoral reforms of 1897 and 1907.⁵⁴

The space between the “old liberal” *Verfassungstreuer Großgrundbesitz* (Constitutionalist Big Landowners) and the racially nationalist Pan-Germans was wide, nuanced and included various factions, whereby it is hardly possible to draw a clear line where liberalism ended and anti-liberal nationalism began. One possible dividing line, marking the end to the “old consensus of liberal and national ideas” is the “attitude towards the Jewish question”⁵⁵, namely the absence or presence of anti-Semitic stances and rhetoric. The famous *Linz Program* of 1882, expressing radical democratic, nationalist and (semi-

communitarian traditions.” – Balázs Trencsényi, Maciej Janowski, Mónik Baár, Michal Kopeček, *A History of Modern Political Thought in East Central Europe: Volume I: Negotiating Modernity in the ‘Long Nineteenth Century’* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 369

⁵³ Janowski, *Wavering*, 83.

⁵⁴ Höbelt, *Die Deutschfreiheitlichen*, 166.

⁵⁵ Janowski, *Wavering*, 84.

)socialist⁵⁶ leanings of the younger generation of liberals, some of which later became Social Democrats while others became radical nationalists, did not originally contain anti-Semitic principles. The threshold was passed only in 1885 when the twelfth point was added by Schönerer.⁵⁷

Georg von Schönerer with his fervent racially based anti-Semitism and violent political style can hardly be considered a liberal in any possible sense of this word. With moderate, although already more integralist nationalists such as Julius Derschatta or Otto Steinwender⁵⁸, though, the case is more complex. And similar considerations may also be valid for Karel Kramář⁵⁹ in the Czech or Ivan Hribar⁶⁰ in the Slovene case. What is clear is that in all the discussed national cases a persistent tendency towards integral nationalism may be observed. It also impacted the national liberals such as the Young Czechs who were trying “to retain old constituencies, capture new support, and compete with radical nationalists, agrarians, and social democrats for votes from within their own language groups.”⁶¹ Even in Hungary, where the extremely limited franchise enabled the liberals to remain firmly in power, the policy of the liberal party became increasingly nationalist by

⁵⁶ Peter Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany & Austria*, Revised Edition (London: Peter Halban Publishers Ltd, 1988), p. 145.

⁵⁷ The twelfth point stated: “The removal of Jewish influence from all sections of public life is indispensable for carrying the reforms aimed at” (Pulzer, *The Rise*, 147.)

⁵⁸ The stance of *Deutschnationale Vereinigung* – a radically national faction founded by Steinwender in 1887 after secession from the nationalist *Deutscher Klub* – on the Jewish question was “Neither anti-Semitism nor resistance to it will be adopted as parts of the programme; the matter is left to the individual conscience of members”. The party was not “united on the anti-Semitic issue” and “the Jewish question was, in Steinwender’s words, ‘by no means the most urgent.’” (Pulzer, *The Rise*, 150.)

On the other hand, the program of national liberal *United Left* from 1885 still explicitly rejected anti-Semitism, whereas the one of the re-united *United German Left* in 1891 was silent on this issue. (Ibid., 151.)

⁵⁹ See: Jan Bilek and Luboš Velek (eds.), *Karel Kramář (1860-1937), Život a dílo* (Prague: MU AV ČR, 2009).

⁶⁰ See: Igor Grdina et al., *Hribarjev zbornik* (Ljubljana: ZRC SAZU, 2010).

⁶¹ Cohen, *Nationalist*, 267.

the end of the 19th century, being marked by the suppression and magyarization of national minorities.

In Polish politics, the transition “from the nationalism of the left to the nationalism of the right”⁶² happened as well during the last three decades of the 19th century although the liberals still perceived themselves as the “guardians of the national idea.”⁶³ In Galicia liberalism survived only in its western part.⁶⁴ The network of voluntary associations was to a large extent taken over by the National Democrats with their ideology of “national egoism”. Similar processes occurred throughout Cisleithania, being however more gradual and having more ambiguous results. Outside of Viennese politics, particularly in the provincial associational life of the Alpine lands and Bohemia, it is possible to discern a rather general pattern of inheritance between old liberalism and new nationalism with many nuances and a high degree of merging between the two.⁶⁵ As Judson has shown, it was the “concept of *Nationalbesitzstand*” that “firmly linked German nationalist identity in Austria to a bourgeois liberal ideological heritage.”⁶⁶

Another indicator of transforming liberal politics was the emergence of new notions, some of which had in the early 19th century acted as synonyms to “liberal,”⁶⁷ but during its second half began to partly replace that label. In a more diversified political landscape of

⁶² See: Heinrich August Winkler, “Vom linken zum rechten Nationalismus. Der deutsche Liberalismus in der Krise von 1878/79,” *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, Yr. 4., Vol 1: *Liberalismus im aufsteigenden Industriestaat* (1978): pp. 5-28.

⁶³ Janowski, *Marginal*, 262.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 261.

⁶⁵ Höbelt, *Die Deutschfreiheitlichen*, 166; Garver, *The Young Czech*, 116; Harry Ritter, „Austro-German Liberalism and the Modern Liberal Tradition,” *German Studies Review*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (May, 1984): pp. 227-248, p. 240 and Judson, *Exclusive*, 255.

⁶⁶ Judson, *Exclusive*, 250.

⁶⁷ This was certainly the case with the usage of the term free-mindedness (*Freisinnigkeit*) in the early 19th century German context – See: Jörn Leonhard, *Liberalismus : zur historischen Semantik eines europäischen Deutungsmusters* (München: Oldenbourg, 2001), p. 203, 364, 373, 450.

unified Germany, this to a larger extent corresponded to the division between left and right liberalism.⁶⁸ Whereas the latter, represented by the National Liberal Party retained the liberal name, labels such as “progressive” (*fortschrittlich*) and “free-minded” (*freisinnig*) were appropriated by the left. Serving primarily to establish distance against the political opportunism of National Liberals, they were at the same time meant to refer to more principled liberal positions and to aspects of liberalism that were believed to having formed its “primeval” essence but later becoming neglected, especially the basic emancipatory tendency.⁶⁹ The term “liberalism” was becoming increasingly unpopular and similar patterns may be observed in other Central European lands also.

Both the “progressive” (*napreden*) and the “free-minded” (*svobodomiselni*) labels were adopted by Slovene liberals, who in 1894 founded their own political organization – the National Party for Carniola (*Narodna stranka za Kranjsko*), renamed the National-progressive Party (*Narodno-napredna stranka*) in 1905. The same was distinctive for the Czech lands as the label of “free-minded” was also in the official name of the Young Czech Party (*Národní strana svobodomyšlná*). The “progressive” label was adopted by the Radical Progressive Party (*Strana radikálněpokroková*) and later by Masaryk’s Czech Progressive Party (*Česká strana pokroková*). In the Austrian German context, in addition to the latter (*fortschrittlich*) designations such as “German freedom” (*deutschfreiheitlich*) and “German national” (*deutschnational*) were most prevalent. In Hungary the Liberal Party bore the name of *Szabadelvű Párt*, which could be translated as “Free-minded Party”.

⁶⁸ Jürgen R. Winkler, *Sozialstruktur, politische Traditionen und Liberalismus, Eine empirische Längsschnittstudie zur Wahlenentwicklung in Deutschland 1871-1933*, *Schriften des Zentralinstituts für sozialwissenschaftliche Forschung der Freien Universität Berlin*, Band 75 (Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1995), p. 63.

⁶⁹ Rudolf Vierhaus, “Liberalismus” in: *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe : historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, Vol.3 H-Me, 4. Auflage, Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, Reinhart Koselleck eds. (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1992), pp. 741-785, pp. 743-744, 781.

The post-1905 liberals in the Russian partition of Poland referred to themselves as “Progressive Democrats.”⁷⁰

All this coincided with splits in organized liberalism, as well as adoption of certain originally liberal principles by parties, stemming from other traditions. Broadening of the franchise after the electoral reforms of 1882 and 1897 (not to mention the one of 1907) and diversification of political life in the last decades of the 19th century introduced new types of parties, whose characterization did not correspond to the simple dichotomy between conservative and liberal. Moreover, the national liberals encountered ever growing problems with their central claim of representing the entire “nation”⁷¹. They were very reluctant to abandon the idea of national unity and renounce their status of “the national party”, despite these claims getting ever more constantly refuted by the political reality increasingly marked by class-based and other types of interest politics.

On the one hand it could be argued that by the end of the 19th century the notion of liberalism within the realm of real politics got “reduced to the party of modernity.”⁷² As they found themselves in changing political environments, the parties and factions stemming from national liberal traditions began adopting various courses. Some of them took conservative positions, thus clinging to the selected liberal ideals assumed to have been already achieved. On the other hand the old opposition between “liberal” and “radical”⁷³ also began to lose its early and mid-19th century meaning, especially in regard

⁷⁰ Janowski, *Marginal*, 261.

⁷¹ Cf. 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. 1. Období 1861 – 1938*, Jiří Malíř ed. (Brno : Doplněk, 2005), pp. 17-58, p. 19.

⁷² Denes, *Liberalism*, 1.

⁷³ The notion “radical” itself started to gradually disappear after 1850 as a special party label only to reappear in a different form after 1900 and especially 1918, carrying more specific meanings like “radical right” (or

to the left or, generally speaking, younger liberalism, which had already been leaning in a “Jacobin” direction. Proponents of that wing, particularly those claiming to represent the newly enfranchised lower middle strata, often began to flirt with socialist or radical nationalist ideological currents (sometimes turning hostile towards modernity), which contributed to the already begun fragmentation of liberalism as a political force. From the turn of the century onwards, in terms of party politics it is therefore perhaps more feasible to talk about “heirs of liberalism” distinguished by a fuzzy ideological mix, combining (or at least allowing for the coexistence of) elements of “petty bourgeois” radicalism, non-Marxist socialism and integral nationalism with some remaining liberal residue. The German People’s Party in the Austrian Alpine lands, the State Rights Radicals in the Czech lands, and the National Radical Youth - the inner opposition to the Slovene liberal leadership - are some good examples of this trend.

From a normative ideological point of view it could perhaps even be legitimate to say that the liberals ceased to be national by the end of the 19th century.⁷⁴ From the perspective of party traditions, however, it is equally true that parties continued to exist, inheriting the tradition of national liberalism in terms of organization, social base, rootedness in specific milieus, as well as a form of diluted ideology. They also continued to be labeled as such by the broader public and their political opponents, although some of them might have retained even less of a liberal spirit and culture than parties founded on a different ideological basis. When discussing the Austrian German case, it may, of course be

“left”) and “radical nationalist”. See: Peter Wende, “Radikalismus” in: *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe : historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, Vol.5: Pro-Soz., 4. Auflage, Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, Reinhart Koselleck eds. (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1992), pp. 113- 133, p. 131-133.

⁷⁴ Cf. Denes, *Liberalism*, 2.

perfectly legitimate to treat all the mass movements that arose during the 1880's - the Christian Socials, the Social Democrats, and the "new" German nationalists, also known as the "three groups of the German democratic movement"⁷⁵ – as the inheritors of the national liberal traditions. However, the former two movements adopted a profoundly new and well-defined ideological basis (Catholic social teaching, Marxism) and connected themselves with the already existing non-liberal political currents (Catholic conservatism, the labor movement). The German nationalists, on the other hand, mostly retained the basic liberal mottos (freedom, progress), thereby putting more stress on the national component, radicalizing it and changing their political style. In 1908 most of these factions, except for the "extreme poles" of remaining Viennese liberals of Jewish heritage and the Schönererians, allied themselves in the *Nationalverband der Deutschfreiheitlichen Abgeordneten*.⁷⁶

2. 3. Structural Changes, New Manners of Political Organization and Political Camps

Developing the famous ideal-typical method, Max Weber devoted substantial attention also to the topic of political parties and was first to establish the general distinction between "parties of notables", "honorific parties" (*Honoratiorenparteien*) or elite-based parties on one side and modern "mass parties" on the other. The former party type, "distinguished by

⁷⁵ "die in den achtziger Jahren gespaltenen drei Gruppen der Deutschdemokratischen Bewegung" (Karl Bosl, "Gesellschaft und Politische Parteien in der Donaumonarchie und in den Nachfolgestaaten" in *Die Erste Tschechoslowakische Republik als multinationaler Parteienstaat*, Karl Bosl ed. (Munich: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag, 1979), pp. 7-21, p. 14.)

⁷⁶ Höbelt, *Die deutschnationalen*, 86 and Pulzer, *The Rise*, 142. The inclination of liberals and nationalists "to split was rivaled only by their desire to coalesce again, and in 1910 they were, as they had been in 1867, once more one party- though the father is unlikely to have known his own child." (Ibid.)

a particular pattern of restricted representation, limited to socially elevated group, which, on the grounds of exercising important social functions, claims the right to speak for the people as a whole”⁷⁷ were gradually disappearing (and had to disappear in Weber’s view!)⁷⁸, making place for the newly developing type of mass parties that were to become dominant in parliamentary life. These were associated with the development of mass democracy (the democratic party “machine”), modern bureaucracy and the process of “spiritual proletarianization”⁷⁹. The distinguishing marks of the mass parties as contrasted to the parties of notables were “highest unity of leadership and strongest discipline”⁸⁰. The transition from the one type to the other was not sudden⁸¹ but slow and gradual and parties close to either of them co-existed within the same political landscapes. In contrast to the honorific parties “characteristic in particular of traditional liberalism”⁸², the mass party ideal type was to a large degree based on the real life example of Social Democracy.⁸³ The former type was founded on and oriented towards world-view, whereas the latter was led by professional politicians.⁸⁴

Another feature of *fin-de-siècle* political life in Central Europe were the so-called political “camps” (*Lager, tabori*). They united political parties and their increasingly mobilized

⁷⁷ Wolfgang J. Mommsen, *The Political and Social Theory of Max Weber* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989), p. 125.

⁷⁸ Regina F. Titunik, “Democracy, Domination and Legitimacy in Max Weber’s Political Thought” in in *Max Weber’s ‘Economy and Society’, A Critical Companion*, Charles Camic, Philip S. Gorski and David M. Trubek eds. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), pp. 143-163, p. 154.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Max Weber, *Gesammelte Politische Schriften* (München: 1921), p. 423; Quoted from: J. P. Mayer, *Max Weber and German Politics, A Study in Political Sociology*, 2nd revised and enlarged edition (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1955), p. 114.

⁸¹ Mayer, Max Weber, 82.

⁸² Mommsen, *The Political*, 14.

⁸³ See: Georges Haupt, “Model Party: the Role and Influence of German Social-Democracy in South-East Europe” in Haupt, Georges, Peter Fawcett, and Eric Hobsbawm. *Aspects of International Socialism, 1871-1914: Essays by Georges Haupt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 48-80.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 100.

broader following, together with field organizations, as well as various officially non-partisan associations. The three principal camps could include the Catholic conservatives (i.e., the camp of political Catholicism), the Marxists (i.e., the Social Democratic), and an ideologically less defined group, usually falling under such labels as “liberal,” “progressive,” or “free-minded” though often reduced to simply “national.” Political camps could also be closely tied to specific social and cultural milieus, which was specifically distinctive for the latter camp, whose parties represented the most direct heirs to the 19th century national liberal traditions. While straddling away from liberalism ideologically – or at least losing a distinctly liberal character - a rather general pattern of continuity and inheritance between the old national liberals and their *fin-de-siècle* as well as interwar heirs took place particularly in the sphere of voluntary associations. Officially “non-political” organizations such as *Sokol* in the Slovene lands⁸⁵, German *Turnvereine*, “national defense associations” such as *Schulverein* as well as academic associations such as *Burschenschaften*, distinctive for late Habsburg era Austria, were in reality mostly closely connected to political parties, all having originally “liberal” roots. Furthermore, “the persistence of the association as a model for public participation [...] guaranteed the survival of much of the liberal tradition, its modes of community decision-making and its distinctive internal hierarchies, well into the age of mass politics.”⁸⁶

Often divided into a number of parties on both ideological and professional or social grounds,⁸⁷ the *fin-de-siècle* camp of national liberal heirs could include factions ranging

⁸⁵ In the Czech context, *Sokol* remained closer to its originally intended “all-national” and non-partisan character and was by no means a sole domain of the National Democratic party, although its long-time leader Josef Scheiner indeed counted among the founding members of National Democracy. Yet, the Social Democrats and Catholics already before WWI had formed their own gymnastic associations, and a considerable part *Sokol* leadership stood close to the National Socialists.

⁸⁶ Judson, *Exclusive*, 265.

⁸⁷ Cf. Cohen, *Nationalism*, 266.

ideologically from moderate secular conservatism to non-Marxist brands of socialism. Since these traced their roots back to 19th century national liberalism, the appeal to the national idea served as the sole strong unifying link, central ideological concept, and main point of identification. Additionally, anticlericalism and usually some aversion towards Marxist ideas of class struggle represented important common denominators. By 1918, the liberal camp was thus defined largely not by what it was (ideologically committed to liberalism), but by what it was not (non-Catholic, non-Marxist, etc.). Genealogically, the parties of the camp of national liberal heirs were liberal; ideologically, however, they had already been departing for decades from the traditions in which they rooted. Their remaining liberality or illiberality thereby varied between the nations, lands, local contexts, and particular parties, depending on the particular political circumstances, as did the degree and nature of their nationalism.

Further social diversification and continuous development of interest politics gave way to yet another division taking place at the turn of the century as the agrarian and national socialist or national labor currents emerged within the broader national liberal spectrum⁸⁸ and afterwards attempted to emancipate themselves from the national liberal heirs. At least in the Czech case they succeeded completely, making the discussed tri-partite division into camps obsolete by forming their own independent movements. The German Agrarians on the other hand remained connected with other “national” parties, whereas in Slovene politics the discussed process commenced only after 1918 and never reached its conclusion.

⁸⁸ Cf. Detlef Brandes, “Die Tschechoslowakischen National-Sozialisten,” in *Die Erste Tschechoslowakische Republik als multinationaler Parteienstaat*, Karl Bosl ed. (Munich: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag, 1979), pp. 101-153 and Pieter M. Judson, *Guardians of the nation: activists on the language frontiers of imperial Austria* (Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press, 2006), p. 69.

Throughout the second half of the 19th century, political conditions and institutional arrangements were undergoing a gradual but steady process of transformation towards a system, distinguished by the participation of broad popular masses. The exact dynamics, the course and pace of this process, varied from country to country but nevertheless the direction was the same so that by the end of the century “politics in a new key” (Carl E. Schorske) were already a matter of fact and an ever more determining factor in Central European political life. Gradual transformation of party systems towards ones based on bureaucratic organization posed a problem to traditional liberal – as well as conservative – parties striving to transform into mass or popular parties in order to survive in the new circumstances. Such attempts could also contribute to considerable ideological changes and mutations, sometimes bringing about major digressions from 19th century liberalism. The discussed structural transformations along with new ideological currents had far-reaching consequences and could, in turn, impact the transformation of the very meanings and functions of the political term “liberal”.

2. 4. After the Great War

The experience of the World War, echoes of the revolution in Russia and dissolution of the centuries-old Habsburg framework brought not only temporary instability (which was handled quite masterfully by the governing elites of the newly established states) but also the final victory of mass politics and democratic principle as the norm of political life. This however did not mean a triumph of liberalism as well. On the contrary: the victory of democracy was in many regards also being perceived as victory over the “elitist” liberalism

of the pre-war honorific parties. Moreover, the crucial liberal reforms took place already within the political framework of old Austria, with the 1918 “revolutions” primarily being “democratic”, “social” and, most importantly, “national.”

The previously discussed “nationalist turn” of the Central European national liberals and their political heirs reached its peak by the turn of the century and continued to develop further into the interwar period. With democracy becoming the institutionalized norm of political life, again new self-designations and party names were put into the foreground by the political forces that may be treated as heirs to the national liberal traditions. Their still mostly unsuccessful endeavors to create mass parties were often conducted under the firm of “democracy” or “national democracy”. This was well reflected in the cases of the Slovene national liberal heirs who in 1918 united in the Yugoslav Democratic Party (*Jugoslovanska demokratska stranka*), the left liberal German Democratic Party (*Deutsche Demokratische Partei*), as well as the Hungarian National Democrats (*Nemzeti Demokrata Párt*). In Austria, the marginal *Bürgerlich-demokratische Partei*, uniting the few remaining Viennese liberals, was overshadowed by the prime representative of the Austrian “third camp” - the heterogeneous but pronouncedly anti-Semitic Greater German People’s Party (*Grossdeutsche Volkspartei*), whose key founding group were the Viennese National Democrats (*Nationaldemokraten*). In the Czech lands, the Czechoslovak National Democrats (*Československá národní demokracie*) acted as the most direct heirs to the Young Czechs⁸⁹, as well as the State Rights Progressives, thereby also uniting some members of the former Progressive and Old Czech Parties. All in all, it can be claimed that

⁸⁹ Cf. Lemberg, *Das Erbe*, 68.

in most of the cases the national component continued to be increasingly stressed over the liberal one, which was quite often explicitly rejected by the parties in question.

In the party politics it was common - with few notable exceptions - that even the political parties and circles that had otherwise to some extent continued to consciously cultivate the liberal heritage, generally avoided to identify with it. Which brings Central Europe in certain contrast to both lands to the Southeast (Romania, Bulgaria) and the West (Italy and Great Britain for instance), where liberal label continued to represent one of the key options for political self-identification. Again, within the Central European context, the post-Habsburg framework proves to be specific in terms of general animosity towards liberalism. In political life of Germany, there were still two notable political parties that continued to consciously cultivate the liberal heritage and associated themselves with the liberal label, while in the three lands under scrutiny there were none.

3. The National Liberal Heirs of the Interwar Central Europe – Approaching the Region-Specific Type of Political Party

The interwar period may be described as an era quite unfriendly to liberal ideas of political and social order. Generally speaking, the prevailing political tendencies and sympathies across Europe were oriented towards various collectivist (solidarist, corporatist or socialist) solutions, which were leading away from a free-market economic order and limited government. Even more, a general decline was distinctive for liberalism as an organized movement with liberal parties throughout the continent experiencing loss of popular support, disintegrating and – in some cases – even disappearing. Developments of this kind took place even in the 'birth country' of liberalism – Great Britain, where the Liberal Party, formerly a major political player, experienced a massive erosion of electoral support and a number of internal splits. In Central Europe, where liberal political traditions had by the beginning of the 20th century been largely overshadowed by nationalism as the stronger partner in the “common enterprise,” the interwar years were particularly marked by antiliberal tendencies and overall anti-individualist atmosphere. Important to note in this regard is also that all the countries in the region, except for Czechoslovakia, at a certain point came to be ruled by some form of dictatorial or authoritarian rule. And even in Czechoslovakia, liberal democratic order was secured only by means of permanent alliance between the five (later eight) main political parties, unusually strong informal power of the president's office and – closely allied – Ministry of Foreign Affairs.¹

¹ See: Andrea Orzoff, *Battle for the Castle, The Myth of Czechoslovakia in Europe 1914-1948* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

A revival of liberal conceptions of political and economic order in practical politics that to various extents commenced after the post-war instability had ceased did not signify a full rehabilitation of the old liberal creed. Most importantly: this revival was quite brief. The advance of aggressive ideologies and movements, competing to destroy the existing social and political order, that found roots and sprang within the region or in its close vicinity, such as bolshevism, fascism and National Socialism, began to increasingly impact the political atmosphere. The Great Depression that ensued in 1929 and prolonged itself into mid-1930s catalyzed these developments.

3. 1. The “Camp,” the “Party” and the Relationship between the Two

The manners in which the national historiographies have employed the liberal label and discussed “liberalism” in the interwar reveal certain common traits, which also stand among the main criteria in the selection of the subjects for this study. In all the three cases it has been predominantly the party tradition and genealogical background that defined “liberals” in the party politics, and less an actual ideological commitment to liberalism. So the main fixed point that justifies the liberal label in case of parties such as Czechoslovak National Democracy, Greater German People's Party or the Yugoslav Democratic Party is their **liberal genealogical background**, that is rootedness in the 19th century national liberal traditions. They stemmed from these traditions by what could be termed as “genealogical ascendancy”, ideologically however they have to varying degrees already straddled away from the national liberal ideology of their predecessors, as well as any other kind of liberalism in the stricter sense of that word.

As already pointed out in the previous chapter, one of the distinctive patterns of continuity and inheritance between the old national liberals and their *fin-de-siecle* as well as interwar heirs took place in the associational life. Various voluntary, officially non-partisan associations, characteristic for the late Habsburg era Austria and tracing their origins back to the national revival movements were in reality mostly closely connected to political parties. It was their framework, where the gradual transitions from national liberalism to illiberal nationalism had most clearly taken place and in where pressures were being built that in turn determined the changing courses of political parties.

The latter was especially distinctive for the Austrian case, especially in the case of gymnastic (*Turnvereine*), as well as academic associations (*Burschenschaften*) that had liberal roots but in Austria (as opposed to Germany) by 1918 mostly adopted an unambiguously illiberal outlook. As it will be more thoroughly discussed in the Chapter 4, a particularly important segment in associational life was also formed by various “national defense organizations” that had been founded during the late Habsburg era but continued their life into the interwar. In the context of a multi-national empire in which nationalists of various nationalities had competed for political power, funds, territory and people’s souls their mission was to secure the “national property” and nationalize the broader masses. In the Austrian case these included *Deutsche Schulverein*, *Südmark*, *Hilfsverein für Deutschböhmen und die Sudetenländer*.

Which brings us to the second distinguishing feature that was common for the Slovene and Austrian cases: **positioning within the specific political landscapes** and delimitation towards the other political blocs. Or – in other words – belonging to specific “political camps.” The key-distinction of both, the Slovene and the Austrian political landscapes was

a tri-partite division into such camps, although the power relationships and lines of confrontation between them were partly different. In both cases the three camps included the camp of political Catholicism, the Marxist or “worker parties” camp and a third, ideologically less clear-cut group. This camp, whose ideological character was defined to a larger extent through delimitation towards the other two than by own clear ideological basis, was formed around the national liberal heirs.

Particularly in the Austrian but to a lesser extent also in the Slovene case, a notable difference between the camps of national liberal heirs and the Catholic and Marxist ones was the circumstance that they were to a major extent formed around non-partisan associations that were independent from or at least not entirely subordinated to the political parties. The relationship between the party (-ies) and the field organizations was more complex and multidirectional. As opposed to the Catholic and Marxist² camps with their top-down organizations, spreading from the party leaderships (in the Catholic case also the Church leadership), the mode in which these camps were formed were to a large extent bottom-up. Party leaderships thereby often functioned as (or were at least potentially under threat to become) “high commands without an army.”³ The general mood within the camp was influenced and sometimes even set by the voluntary associations, as for instance in 1926 when the initiative for forming a “unity front” between all the “national” parties in

² This applies to Austria, where Social Democracy represented a “model” of a centrally controlled and bureaucratically organized party apparatus with subordinated network of field organizations, but much less to Slovenia, where the Marxist camp was internally fragmented and marked by constant struggle between the reformist Socialists (themselves splitting into a number of groups) and the Communist Party. Moreover, especially during the 1930s when also the socialists were officially not operating as a party, it was the framework of the powerful social democratic trade unions, where their political activity continued.

³ Adam Wandruszka, “Deutschliberale und deutschnationale Strömungen“ in *Das geistige Leben Wiens in der Zwischenkriegszeit*, Norbert Leser ed. (Vienna: Österreichische Bundesverlag, 1981), p. 31 and Adam Wandruszka, “Österreichs politische Struktur, Die Entwicklung der Parteien und politischen Bewegungen” in: Benedikt, Heinrich, *Die Geschichte der Republik Österreich* (Vienna: 1955), p. 385.

Austria came from *Turnerbund*.⁴ The loyalty of these organizations' memberships to any of the parties was also by no means secured when the electoral day came.⁵ In the Austrian case this was most clearly shown during 1932-33 when the bulk of votes moved from the Greater German People's Party to the National Socialist German Workers' Party. In Slovenia, similarly, *Sokol*, a 42.000-strong force in the late 1930s⁶ did not represent a field organization, vertically subordinated to any of the "progressive" parties, despite a high degree of intertwinement between its leadership and that of the parties. Only during the 1930s under the circumstances of an undemocratic regime a clear attempt of subordinating the entire camp to a single party took place, which however resulted in substantial erosion of followers and emergence of visible dissident groups. The latter ultimately developed also within *Sokol*, placing themselves in opposition towards the Yugoslav National Party and especially its integral Yugoslavism.

In the Austrian case, the Marxist and Catholic camps, formed around two big parties and in a top down manner, reached high degrees of inner integration and self-sufficiency, making it possible to treat them also as two "pillars" (in the sense of Dutch *zuilen*) that together held the Austrian "national roof."⁷ This category may however only hardly be

⁴ Isabella Ackerl, *Die Großdeutsche Volkspartei 1920-34* (Vienna: I. Ackerl, 1967), p. 205.

⁵ Johanna Gehmacher, *Völkische Frauenbewegung. Deutschnationale und nationalsozialistische Geschlechterpolitik in Österreich* (Wien: Döcker, 1997), p. 30.

⁶ In the late 1930s circumstances of complete political hegemony of the Catholic camp in Slovenia, *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 land. - *Spominski zbornik Slovenije*, ed. J. Lavrič et.al., (Ljubljana: Jubilej, 1939), p. 216.

⁷ Thomas Dostal, *Aspekte deutschnationaler Politik in Österreich : zu einer Geschichte der Großdeutschen Volkspartei 1920 – 1934*, Diploma thesis (Vienna: T. Dostal, 1994), p. 16; Rudolf Steininger, *Polarisierung und Integration. Eine Vergleichende Untersuchung der strukturellen Versäulung der Gesellschaft in den Niederlanden und in Österreich* (Meisenheim am Glan: Hain, 1975), p. 347.

The concepts of "pillar" and "pillarization" originate from the Dutch political context (*zuilen*, *verzuiling*), referring to a far-reaching and clear cut division and segregation of society along the lines of world view and party affiliation. Such society is composed of "pillars," formed around the major political parties, that are characterized by an almost autarchic closedness, forming "separate universes" of various organizations, in

applied to the third camp. Particularly among the university students it indeed formed its own “Ghetto civilization.”⁸ Yet, taken as a whole it lacked the inner organizational unity, “vertical integration” of various non-political organizations and their subordination to the political party and a clear and solid ideological basis, that could enable the formation of a distinct and closed social milieu.⁹ Most importantly, as opposed to the other two camps it was not formed around one party but was fragmented into a number of parties. And, as we shall see, even the Greater German People’s Party as its strongest political organization was in reality marked by a high degree of inner heterogeneity. Strictly speaking, the Austrian political landscape may thus be treated as containing three camps, out of which only two however also acted as pillars, with the non-Marxist and non-Catholic parties being “grounded” between the two pillarized parties.¹⁰

The political landscape of the Austrian First Republic was thus marked by division into three camps which was however a highly uneven one. Taken together, the Catholic (Christian Social) and the Marxist (Social Democratic) camps comprised around 80 percent of the electorate. Consequently, the political competition on the state level took place primarily between these two main blocs. The third camp, most often referred to by the joint banner “national,” was however not only less ideologically and organizationally defined but also substantially weaker in terms of electoral support.

which all the social and substantial parts of their adherents’ private lives take place, as well as by latter’s stable loyalty to the party.

For more on *verzuiling* see: Harry Post, *Pillarization: An Analysis of Dutch and Belgian Society* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1989). For the Austrian context see: Steininger, *Polarisierung*.

⁸ Friedrich Heer, “Kultur und Politik in der Ersten Republik“ in *Das geistige Leben Wiens in der Zwischenkriegszeit*, Norbert Leser ed. (Vienna: Österreichische Bundesverlag, 1981), pp. 307-308.

⁹ Cf. Dostal, *Aspekte*, 18-19.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 19, 23.

Of the three contexts under scrutiny, the concept of pillarization may be meaningfully applied only to the Austrian one.

For most of the period under scrutiny the Austrian governments were led by the Catholic conservative *Christian Social Party*, a predominantly rural party composed of various populist conservative strains, ranging from a centrist and pro-democratic to a right authoritarian wing. The common denominators, uniting these groups more or less, were political Catholicism, social conservatism and a relatively positive attitude towards independent Austrian state identity, based on its imperial heritage. Its dominant role was contested by the Social Democracy, which enjoyed only a slightly lower electoral support through 1920s and even ranked first in the 1919 and 1930 elections. As the second strongest party in Austria, the Social Democrats controlled numerous important municipal governments, especially that of the “Red Vienna.” With Christian Socials reluctant to form joint coalitions and the Social Democrats too weak to form governments alone, the “national” parties – primarily the Greater Germans – were decisive for forming

governments in the Austrian interwar “2 ½ limping (*hinkend*) party system.”¹¹ This made them a powerful factor despite their rather low electoral results.

Index 1: Results of parliamentary elections in the First Austrian Republic

	Christian Socials	Nationalist and liberal parties	Social Democrats	Others ¹²
1919 (Constituent Assembly) ¹³	35.94%	20.72%	40.76%	2.58%
1920 ¹⁴	42.27%	18.16%	35.88%	3.69%
1923 ¹⁵	45.01% ¹⁶	13.33%	39.60%	2.06%
1927 ¹⁷	48.20% Unity List (Christian Socials, Greater Germans and National Socialists (Schulze group))	7.51% (other nationalist and liberal parties)	42.31%	1.98%
1930 ¹⁸	35.65%	16.00%	41.14%	7.21% ¹⁹

Despite the analogous division into three camps there were also important differences between the interwar Austrian and Slovene political landscapes. These differences stemmed from different relations of power between the three camps and reflected in partly

¹¹ *Lexikon zur Geschichte der Parteien in Europa* (Stuttgart: Kröner, 1981), p. 442.

¹² Party of Socialist and Democratic Czechoslovaks (in 1919 and 1920), Jewish National Party and various Jewish lists (in 1919, 1920, 1923, 1927 and 1930), Communists (in 1920, 1923, 1927 and 1930), Party of Carinthian Slovenes (in 1923 and 1927), *Heimatblock* (in 1930) and others.

¹³ *Die Wahlen für die konstituierende Nationalversammlung* (Vienna: Statistische Zentralkommission, 1919), p. 39.

¹⁴ Rodney Stiefbold et al (eds.), *Wahlen und Parteien in Österreich*, Vol. III (Vienna: Österreichische Bundesverlag, 1966), pp. 56-57.

¹⁵ *Nationalratswahl vom 21. Oktober 1923* – accessible at http://www.bmi.gv.at/412/Nationalratswahlen/files/NRW_1923.pdf (accessed 10/02/2017)

¹⁶ The percentage is calculated on the basis of the results in all the federal lands where Christian Socials ran alone (44.05%). The remaining 0.96% that we added to stands for the one third of the vote gained by the Carinthian Unity List (a joint list of Greater Germans, Landbund and Christian Socials in Carinthia, which gained 6 mandates and distributed them evenly among the partners).

¹⁷ *Nationalratswahl vom 24. April 1927* – accessible at http://www.bmi.gv.at/412/Nationalratswahlen/files/NRW_1927.pdf (accessed 10/02/2017)

¹⁸ *Nationalratswahlen vom 9. November 1930* (Vienna: Bundesamt für Statistik, 1931), p. 9.

¹⁹ 6.2 percent to *Heimatblock* and the remaining one percent to others.

different lines of political confrontation thereby affecting also the external position and inner characteristics of the camp of national liberal heirs.

As opposed to the Austrian one with its mighty Social Democracy the Slovene political landscape was marked by an almost hegemonic position of political Catholicism and a fairly weak and internally fragmented Marxist camp. The political camp which united the Slovene non-Catholic and non-Marxist political forces and was most commonly referred to as “progressive” by its adherents was consequently not the “third” in terms of power but the “second”. Its strength however lagged well behind the Catholic camp which 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 lidová*), and even more to the Austrian Christian Socials.²⁰ 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,²¹ it was especially successful in establishing its power in the countryside via a successful network

²⁰ 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* 37/4 2010, pp. 193-212; Egon Pelikan, *Akomodacija ideologije političnega katolicizma na Slovenskem*, (Maribor: 1997).

²¹ All in all Slovene interwar peasant population stood at roughly 60 percent. (Jasna Fischer et al (ed.), *Slovenska novejša zgodovina: od programa Zedinjena Slovenija do mednarodnega priznanja Republike Slovenije*, I (Ljubljana: INZ, 2005), p. 441.)

of Christian social peasant co-operatives. Its power in the interwar period even increased and its electoral support stood at roughly 60 percent from 1923 on.

Index 2: Electoral results of 1920s parliamentary elections in Slovene part of Yugoslavia²²

	Catholic conservatives	Progressives	Marxists	Others ²³
1920 (Constituent Assembly)	37.26%	32.53%	28.96%	1.23%
1923	60.46% (60.96%) ²⁴	19.34%	10.65%	9.545% (9.05%)
1925	56.32%	25.35% (23.13%) ²⁵	6.72%	11.61% (13.82%)
1927	59.94%	23.83%	10.15%	6.08%

The Marxist camp during the 1920s experienced fragmentation into a number of group. Its electoral support swiftly eroded through the decade, despite the very promising results in 1920.

The Catholic electoral successes were however particularly conditioned by the new dimension of Slovene internal political struggle that had begun after 1918 and expressed

²² Summarized on the basis of: Bojan Balkovec, "Rezultati parlamentarnih volitev v Sloveniji" in *Slovenska kronika XX. Stoletja*, vol.1: 1900-1941, Marjan Drnovšek and Drago Bajt eds. (Ljubljana: Nova Revija, 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 (until August 1921). Afterwards it was divided between Ljubljana and Maribor departments (*oblast*), the latter also including a small part of Croat territory. The latter district is thereby not included in the above results.

For the interwar elections and their results in see also: Bojan Balkovec, "*Vsi na noge, vsi na plan, da bo zmaga čim sijajnejša*": volilna teorija in praksa v prvi jugoslovanski državi (Ljubljana: Zveza zgodovinskih društev Slovenije, 2011).

²³ In addition to parties and lists representing regional interests (for instance "Transmura List" which gained 1.23% of votes in 1920), Stjepan Radić's "Croatian Peasants' Party" (gained 8.77% in 1925) and German national minority lists are listed under this category. (Ibid.)

²⁴ 879 (0.49%) votes went to "National People's Party", a conservative party led by pre-1918 Slovene People's Party leader Ivan Šušteršič. Since the main aim of the party was to counter Slovene People's Party, thereby also mildly criticizing 'clericalism', it is listed under the category of "other".

²⁵ 4139 (1.78%) votes went to "Slovene Republican Party of Peasants and Workers", led by Slovene 'Masarykian realist' Dragotin Lončar. Due to the Slovene realists' intellectual origins and the party's positioning outside the Marxist and Catholic camps, it can conditionally be treated as part of progressive camp.

itself as conflict between the demands for Slovene autonomy and Yugoslav nationalism. 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 with the majority of Slovenes. Especially after the 1921 centralist constitution was adopted with help of Slovene progressive votes, the Slovene People's Party managed to present itself as the main defender of Slovene national individuality, thus further increasing its already superior capacity for popular mobilization.

In both the Slovene and the Austrian case anticlericalism and antimarxism represented two important political dividing lines that at the same time delimited the borders of the camp of the national liberal heirs. Yet, the relative prominence of these two dividing lines differed notably between the two contexts. In the Slovene the dominant position of the Catholic camp within politics and society resulted in the main political division running along the lines of anti-clericalism. Catholics and progressives, both resenting the weaker Marxists,²⁶ engaged in a bitter *Kulturkampf*,²⁷ labeling each other “clericals” and “liberals”. This conflict, which had already before WWI been most severe in Carniola, decisively

²⁶ It should be mentioned that in especially after 1935 progressives and socialists began collaborating against the far stronger Catholic camp.

²⁷ As opposed to the *Kulturkampf* in Germany under Bismarck, the one among Slovenes did not signify merely the conflict between the secularist State and the Catholic Church but referred to a struggle between two political orientations “for culture as such, for a leading position in culture.” The latter was being claimed by both the Catholics and their secularist opponents, who consequently both claimed the exclusive right to steer the national movement in a “proper” direction. Most importantly, the Slovene cultural struggle lasted longer and was more total than in majority of other cases. – Cf. Ervin Dolenc, *Kulturni boj: Slovenska kulturna politika v Kraljevini SHS 1919-1929* (Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 1996), p. 95 and Janko Prunk, “Kulturni boj v slovenskem političnem življenju – brez konca in kraja” in *Kulturni boj na Slovenskem včeraj, danes, jutri*, B. Senegačnik ed. (Ljubljana: Družina, 2006), pp. 19-45, p. 19. Also see: Igor Grdina, “Kulturni boj,” in *Kulturni boj na Slovenskem včeraj, danes, jutri*, B. Senegačnik ed. (Ljubljana: Družina, 2006), pp. 47-54.

marked the interwar political struggles.²⁸ 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. 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,²⁹ the “clerical : liberal” split to some extent also adopted the form of an urban : rural division.

In Austria on the other hand political Catholicism may not be treated as a hegemonic political factor. Due to the same reasons the dynamic of the political struggle in the First Austrian Republic was to a considerably higher extent marked by the division between Marxist and *bürgerlich* political forces. In the most general perspective the political landscape was thus distinguished primarily by the division between the “red” (Social Democratic) Vienna and the “black” (Christian Social) or “*kornblumenblau*” (nationalist) countryside.³⁰ This is not to underestimate the importance of anti-clericalism as political

²⁸ Cf. Peter 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*, J. Pirjevec, J. Pleterski eds. (Ljubljana: SAZU, 2007), p. 33.

Also see: Jurij Perovšek, “Politične in narodnostne razmere na Kranjskem v začetku 20. Stoletja” in *Sto let Zavoda sv. Stanislava*, F. Dolinar ed. (Ljubljana: Družina, 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*, R. Kannonier, H. Konrad eds. (Vienna: Verlag für Gesellschaftskritik 1995), pp. 169-181.

²⁹ Cf. Vodopivec, O slovenskih, 26.

³⁰ Ernst Hanisch, *Österreichische Geschichte 1890-1990, Der lange Schatten des Staates* (Vienna: Wirtschaftsverlag Ueberreuter, 1994), p. 127.

factor and mobilizing force. Yet, the brunt of it was being carried by the Social Democrats, whereas in case of the Greater Germans and the national camp it was largely overshadowed by anti-Marxism which decisively marked their political behavior and determined their long-lasting cooperation with the Christian Socials in governments. Only in the countryside and on the local levels distinguished by “the daily frictions between the priest and the teacher for social prestige”³¹ anti-clericalism continued to act as an important factor.

Political Catholicism was present in all the three contexts under scrutiny. Yet, its position of power and overall prominence varied highly. In the Czech context it was represented only through one out of a number of political parties. This party had a solid following and established position, but at the same time could not aspire to hold leading role in coalitions, not to say determine the overall political configurations – as it was the case in both Austria and Slovenia. The element of anti-clericalism among the secularist political groups for that reason played a much more prominent role in those two contexts than in the Czech one, where it had a merely symbolical meaning.³² Anti-clerical rhetoric was, especially during the early years of the republic, highly distinctive for the Czech secularist parties - from Communists on the left to the National Democrats on the right – with the latter having

³¹ Ibid., 122.

³² For more on the topic see: Michal Pehr, Jaroslav Šebek, *Československo a Svatý stolec. Od nepřátelství ke spolupráci (1918-1928). I. Úvodní studie* (Prague: MU AV ČR, 2012); Miloš Trapl, “Začlenění římskokatolické církve do české společnosti po roce 1918“ in *Československo 1918-1938. Osudy demokracie ve střední Evropě. I. díl*, 1. vyd. J. Valenta, J. Harna, E. Voráček eds.. (Prague: Historický ústav AV ČR, 1999), pp. 141-147; Miloš Trapl, “Náboženství a politika“ in *Společnost v přerodu, Češi ve 20. století. Sborník referátů z cyklické konference Demokracie 2000*, 1. vyd. (Prague: Masarykův ústav AV ČR, 2001), pp. 135-143; František X. Halas, “Sekularizace v Evropě a vztah mezi náboženstvím a společností v první československé republice“ in *Společnost v přerodu, Češi ve 20. století. Sborník referátů z cyklické konference Demokracie 2000*, 1. vyd. (Prague: Masarykův ústav AV ČR, 2001), pp. 117-134.

“struggle against clericalism” written among the programmatic goals.³³ Its prominence was however incomparably lower, since political Catholicism simply did not represent such an important political force (especially not in Bohemia) and thus no political force defined its position primarily in opposition to it.

Yet again, solely in the Slovene case, the leading position of the Catholic party was an unquestionable one. Its dominant position to a large extent determined the overall dynamics of Slovene politics, largely defining the standpoints of the opposing camps as well. Moreover, the main Catholic opponent in the Slovene case was not a highly organized, disciplined and unified Social Democracy as in the Austrian, but an internally fragmented, ideologically heterogeneous and loosely defined “progressive” camp, composed of various parties and intrapartisan factions.

The dominant position of political Catholicism and its influence in society reflected also in the political language. One of the instances was the usage of adjective “liberal,” which the Catholics used for their political opponents, particularly the national liberal heirs. The far strongest Slovene People's Party regularly used it to label its secularist opponents, whereby it possessed “wider” and “narrower” meanings.

In line with the late 19th century appeal for an “intellectual separation” (*ločitev duhov*), by one of the founding fathers of Slovene political Catholicism bishop Anton Mahnič, who warned against “godless liberalism” every non-Catholic world view could in principle qualify as “liberal.” Thus from the Catholic perspective even a Communist could receive

³³ Cf. Michal Pehr, “K politickému programu Kramářových národních demokratů” in: *Karel Kramář (1860-1937): život a dílo*, J. Bílek, L. Velek eds. (Prague: Masarykův ústav a Archiv AV ČR, v.v.i, 2009), p. 525.

a liberal label. It was however the usage in narrower sense that was most common in political discourse, being also distinctive among the social democrats and the communists. In this narrower sense, “liberals” were primarily adherents of the political camp which was neither Catholic nor Marxist and - within that camp - primarily the followers of the party of national liberal heirs, originating mostly from the urban or small town milieus and representing mainly the propertied and more educated strata of Slovene population. While these preferred the label “progressive” as means for self-identification, they were commonly addressed as “liberals” by the opposing “clericals.” The exclusively pejorative usage of the label “liberal” on part of the Catholics however also influenced the broader political language where it had established itself as a neutral term.

In both the pejorative and the broader “neutral” senses the label thus largely pertained to the social position, cultural orientation and the world view of the Slovene middle classes, “old” and “new”, as well as the members of the very narrow economic elite – thus the epithets “liberal gentry” (*liberalna gospoda*) and “liberal tailcoaters” (*liberalni frakarji*). To certain extent this paralleled the usage in the western provincial towns of Austria, whereby however the usage was more one-sided and the reception on part of the referent a much more reserved one.

The Slovene progressives’ political profile in general was to a high degree determined by the more clearly defined ideological standpoints of the opposing camp,³⁴ their own being the ideologically least defined and most heterogeneous of the three. Although being

³⁴ Cf. Vodopivec, O slovenskih, 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: Jurij Perovšek, “Vprašanje idejnega, političnega, socialnega in narodnega sobivanja v liberalni politični misli in praksi med leti 1891-1941,” *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino*, vol. 51, no. 1 (2011): pp. 96-97.

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*).³⁵ In contrast to the other two, the progressive camp lacked clear and definite ideological foundations (Catholic social teaching, Marxism).

Most importantly, it was formed around the parties that clearly represented the heirs to the national liberal traditions. Since these throughout the interwar period formed the nucleus and the most influential group within the “progressive” camp may the latter rightfully be referred to as the “camp of national liberal heirs.” In 1918 it was shortly united politically in a single party - the “Yugoslav Democratic Party” (*Jugoslovanska demokratska stranka* - *JDS*). 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 was the “Independent Agrarian Party” (*Samostojna kmetijska stranka* – *SKS*), founded by rural progressives. The second, originating from the “national” trade unions as well as circles of disappointed former social democrats, was the “National Socialist Party” (*Narodno socialistična stranka*). Still, the core group of progressives, gathered around Gregor Žerjav and Albert Kramer was represented by the Slovene parts of all-state Democratic Party (up to 1924), the Independent Democratic Party (1924-1929), later joining the Yugoslav National Party (1932-1941). In 1926 the national socialist trade organizations merged with those of the Independent Democratic Party, effectively ending

³⁵ Vasilij Melik, “Slovenski liberalni tabor in njegovo razpadanje,” *Prispevki za zgodovino delavskega gibanja*, vol. 1-2/yr. 22 (1982): p. 19.

the independent existence of the National Socialist Party³⁶ which in 1928 also formally joined the Independent Democrats. During the 1930s the camp was politically re-united within the Yugoslav National Party.

Index 3: Proportions of votes between the parties inside the progressive camp³⁷

	Yugoslav Democratic Party, (1920, 1923) Independent Democratic Party (1925, 1927)	Independent Agrarian Party (1920,1923, 1925) Slovene Peasants' Party (1927)	National Socialist Party	Others³⁸
1920 (Constituent Assembly)	23.87%	64.12%	12.01%	-
1923	42.46%	31.93%	11.29%	14.32%
1925	54.72%	28.51%	8.86% ³⁹	7.99%
1927	65,01% ⁴⁰	23.44%	-	11.55%

On similar social and cultural grounds – and not only due to the genealogical background of its parties – the Austrian political camp most commonly labelled by historiography the “German nationalist camp” (*Lager der Deutschnationalen*), “national camp” (*das nationale Lager*) or simply “the third camp” (*das dritte Lager*) has also been occasionally referred to as the “middle classes camp” (*bürgerliches Lager*)⁴¹ or “national liberal camp” (*national-liberales Lager*).⁴² Adam Wandruszka, who thoroughly studied the tri-partite

³⁶ Melita Pivec, “Programi političnih strank in statistika volitev” in *Slovenci v desetletju 1918-1928: Zbornik razprav iz kulturne, gospodarske in politične zgodovine*, J. Mal ed. (Ljubljana:1928), p. 367.

³⁷ Summarized on basis of: Balkovec, Rezultati.

³⁸ Under this section independent regional and local lists, as well as the National Radical Party, are listed.

³⁹ National Socialists collaborated with liberal ‘elders’ (members of National Radical Party) and Yugoslav Democratic Party (Davidović) in 1925. (Balkovec, Rezultati.)

⁴⁰ Independent Democratic Party achieved 65% in 1927 together with the National Socialist Party as its electoral ally. The latter officially dissolved itself to merge with SDS in 1928.

⁴¹ Krzysztof Glass, Barbara Serloth, *Das Selbstverständnis des österreichischen Liberalismus* (Wien/Poznań: Österreichische Gesellschaft für Mitteleuropäische Studien/Humanior, 1997), p. 160.

⁴² Ibid., 183..

division and postulated it as a permanent feature of Austrian political landscape from the late Habsburg times into the post-WWII Second Republic, labeling it the “naturally or divinely ordained tri-partite division of Austria” (*natur- oder gottgewollten Dreiteilung Österreichs*),⁴³ referred to the political groups that formed the Greater German People's Party as “national liberal.”⁴⁴

The main representative of the Austrian national camp, comprising political parties that were neither “red” nor “black” and shared a basic German nationalist outlook, the Greater German People's Party in 1920 loosely united 17 German nationalist and national liberal groupings. Yet, an important difference to the Slovene case was that the position of the Greater German People's Party as the main national liberal heir was a contested one. Although the party understood itself as the leading force within the “national camp,” its actual position pretty much resembled that of a “high command without an army,”⁴⁵ which among other also reflected in numerous unsuccessful attempts of creating a “unity front” with the other nationalist parties. The most important among the latter was the *Landbund*,⁴⁶ an independent agrarian party, standing on the “conservative wing of the national camp,”⁴⁷ mostly acting as an ally to the Greater Germans but having its own special agenda and quite

⁴³ Wandruszka, *Österreichs*, 291.

⁴⁴ Wandruszka, *Deutschliberale*, 29.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 31.

⁴⁶ On *Landbund* see: Robert Kriechbaum, “Der Landbund. Historische Entwicklungslinien einer deutschnationalen Milieupartei in der Ersten Republik“ in *Brennpunkt Europa. Festschrift für Helmut Rumpler zum 65. Geburtstag*, Ulfried Burz et al(Eds.) (Klagenfurt: Carinthia 2000), pp. 519-534; Günther R. Burkert, “Der Landbund für Österreich“ in *Handbuch des politischen Systems Österreichs, Erste Republik 1918-1933*, Talos, Dachs, Hanisch, Staudinger (eds.) (Vienna: Manzsche Verlags- und Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1995), pp. 207-217; Adam Wandruszka, “Der ‘Landbund für Österreich’“ in *Europäische Bauernparteien im 20. Jahrhundert*, H. Gollwitzer ed. (Stuttgart: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 1977).; Angela Feldmann, *Landbund für Österreich. Ideologie- Organisation – Politik*, Phil. Diss. (Vienna: A. Feldmann, 1967).

⁴⁷ Lothar Höbelt, “Die Parteien des nationalen Lagers in der ersten Republik,” *Carinthia* (1989): p.363.

often representing the stronger partner in electoral alliances at the regional or local levels.⁴⁸ The electoral strength of Greater Germans on the national level was truly the highest in their camp throughout 1920s but was at the same time eroding – a process which radically accelerated after 1930 and the swift rise of the third, previously marginal force within the national camp: the National Socialists.⁴⁹ In 1933 whole party organizations stepped over to NSDAP, while the broader supporting base had been switching support already for some years. We may thus conclude that the “attractive power” of the GdVP within the broader national camp was considerably lower than that of the Slovene national liberal heirs within the progressive camp.

Index 4-6: Proportions of votes between nationalist and liberal parties in Austria

1919 (Constituent Assembly)⁵⁰

Nationalists/National liberals (future GdVP)	Agrarian parties (incl. later GdVP)	National Socialists	Viennese liberal parties
60.58%	23.59%	3.79%	12.06%

1920⁵¹

Greater German People's Party	Agrarian parties	National Socialists	Viennese liberal parties
70.52%	15.28%	5.02%	8.74%

1930⁵²

National Economic Bloc ⁵³ and Landbund	Landbund ⁵⁴	National Socialists (NSDAP)	Democratic Centrist Party
72.56%	7.37%	18.75%	1.12%

⁴⁸ The upper hand of Landbund among the parties of the national camp was particularly clear in the southern lands of Carinthia and Styria.

⁴⁹ On the Austrian National Socialists of all strains see: Gerhard Botz, “Die österreichischen NSDAP-Mitglieder” in *Die Nationalsozialisten*, R. Mann ed. (Stuttgart: 1980); Rudolf Brandstötter, *Dr. Walther Riehl und die nationalsozialistische Bewegung in Österreich*, Phil. Diss (Vienna: R. Brandstötter, 1970).

⁵⁰ Die Wahlen, 39.

⁵¹ Stiefbold, Wahlen, 56-57.

⁵² Nationalratswahlen 1930, 9.

⁵³ Electoral bloc, in which Greater Germans represented the strongest party.

⁵⁴ In Salzburg and in Upper Austria Landbund ran alone.

Similarly as in Slovene lands, it was primarily the Catholic party, the “clericals” or the “blacks” that called their opponents “liberals” in Austria. The Greater Germans were thus sometimes accused by the Christian Socials of being “spurs of the old liberalism” (*Ausläufer des alten Liberalismus*) and representatives of “one sided capitalism.”⁵⁵ In the provincial or local levels, where the two parties competed against each other and where their differences in the field of cultural politics could thus enter the foreground, the rhetoric could reach quite strong levels of sharpness. The Christian Socials in Vorarlberg would thus for instance, while commenting on the cultural political section of the Greater German program, label the Greater German orientation as “anti-semitically disguised Jewish liberalism” (*antisemitisch verkappten Judenliberalismus*), predicting that it was soon going to “put antisemitism into the junk room and again join Jewish liberalism.”⁵⁶

The range of pejorative usage of the liberal label by the Austrian Christian Socials was however not limited only to the Greater Germans and the *Landbund* but could apply even to the National Socialists. In spring of 1933, after the Nazi takeover of power in Germany, when the strength of Austrian National Socialists was alarmingly rising and when provincial organizations of the Greater German People's Party had one after another been joining the NSDAP, the Christian Social *Reichspost* accompanied the events with the following remarks, which clearly reveal how negative was the ranking of liberalism in the vocabulary of political Catholicism:

“So the Greater German People's Party will soon be gone from the public life of Austria. The end is not very laudable. Whether the National Socialists will be very happy about the gain that stands before them or has already been bestowed on them, remains to be seen. The character of the party as the *Sammelpartei der 'Freiheitlichen'* – the liberals,

⁵⁵ Österreichisches Staatsarchiv / Archiv der Republik [AT-OeStA/AdR], BKA BKA-I Parteiarchive GDVP: Großdeutsche Volkspartei, K. 31 / R I – 8: Unsigned letter to Dr. August Schachermayer (5. April 1928).

⁵⁶ *Vorarlberger Volksblatt*, 2. 10. 1920; Quoted from: Bernd Vogel, *Die Blauen der Zwischenkriegszeit: die Grossdeutsche Volkspartei in Vorarlberg* (Regensburg: Roderer, 2007), p. 210.

the German nationals, the radicals and the greater Germans – shall clearly appear even more than it had earlier and make judgment about the Austrian National Socialism for the Catholic population of Austria easier.”⁵⁷

The quote reflects the broadness of possible meanings attached to the term “liberal” and the related political label *freiheitlich* in the interwar Austrian political language – a topic to be more thoroughly discussed in the Chapter 6. At this point this is however important to point out for two reasons: firstly, it reveals the continuous association of national liberal heirs and the national camp as a whole with the label “liberal” in the discourse of political Catholicism, which however also had a wider influence on language; secondly, it points at the negative character (in the formal logical sense of the word) of that liberal label, as it was being applied to the entirety of the “third camp” - that is everything that was neither “red” nor “black.”

As such this camp also contained a prominent national socialist current, which developed a profoundly different ideological character and political style than its Czech and Slovene counterparts. Relatively weak and split into a number of factions during 1920s, among them also the Hitlerite one, it swiftly rose in terms of popular support and following after 1930 in the wake of Hitler's rise to power in Germany. This circumstance makes labeling of the entire “third” camp as “national-liberal” or even “liberal,” even if such a designation were based only on genealogical ascendancy or public discourse, highly questionable.

⁵⁷ “Das Ende der Großdeutschen Volkspartei. Uebertritt zum Hakenkreuz,” *Reichspost*, 3.5.1933: “So wird die Großdeutsche Volkspartei aus dem öffentlichen Leben Oesterreichs in Bälde verschwunden sein. Das Ende ist nicht sehr rühmlich. Ob die Nationalsozialisten über den Zuwachs der ihnen bevorsteht oder bereits zuteil geworden ist, sehr glücklich sein werden, steht dahin. Der Charakter der Partei als Sammelpartei der 'Freiheitlichen' – der Liberalen, der Deutschnationalen, der Radikalen und der Großdeutschen – wird noch mehr als bisher in Erscheinung treten und der katholischen Bevölkerung das Urteil über den österreichischen Nationalsozialismus erleichtern.“

A glance at the composition of both the Slovene “progressive” and Austrian “national” camp however also reveals a common trait – that is negatively (in a formal logical sense) defined ideological demarcation from other political blocs (non-Catholic, non-Marxist), along with a lack of a clear and definite ideological foundations apart from an emphasized “national” orientation. For the Austrian case, the negative definition of the national camp has also been pointed out by Höbelt⁵⁸ He thereby also made a conjunction between this broader definition of the third camp and the notion of *freiheitliches Bürgertum*.⁵⁹ This is however only partly valid, as the latter also included the small Viennese liberal parties such as Civic Democratic Party.

It is namely highly questionable whether the Viennese liberals may be treated as parts of the same political camp with the Greater Germans, not to say National Socialists or would it perhaps be more plausible to treat them as standing outside or beside the tri-partite camp structure of Austrian politics. There were indeed quite a few commonalities as well as points of intersection with the parties of the “national” camp, which did not amount merely to the usage of the label *freiheitlich* and the associated secularist and anti-clerical orientations but also included a resolute German nationalist standing. In addition to that, there was also anti-Marxism and - last but not least – a degree of personal transfer. In 1919 a group from Civic Democratic Party around Ernst Hampel departed and joined the Greater Germans.

It was however no coincidence that the mentioned secessionist group included none of the politicians with Jewish background, otherwise highly represented in the Civic Democratic

⁵⁸ “Eher schon läßt sich das ‘nationale Lager’ ex negativo definieren – als Residualkategorie, die all jene umfaßte, die ihre politischen Überzeugungen weder aus den Lehren der katholischen Kirche ableiteten noch von einem besonderen proletarischen Klassenbewußtsein erfüllt waren.” – Höbelt, Die Parteien, 359.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 360.

Party. Exactly the resolute anti-Semitic stance of the Greater Germans, common for the entirety of the “third camp”, in advance prevented any serious cooperation with the “Jewish” liberal parties, at the same time also making the occasionally employed term “national liberal camp” terminologically suspect. Regardless of terminological questions, as well as criticism against the “three camp thesis” itself in some of the Austrian history writing⁶⁰ and limitations that it received during the 1970s⁶¹, tackling the question of separation of the German national from the liberal spectrum thus presents itself as an “urgent desideratum”⁶² for the Austrian historiography.

Index 7: Proportions of national vote between the parties of the national camp and Viennese liberal parties.⁶³

	Nationalist and liberal parties together	National camp	Liberal parties
1919 (Constituent Assembly)	20.72%	18.36%	2.36%
1920	18.16%	16.69%	1.47%
1923	13.33%	12.76%	0.57%
1930	16.00%	15.82%	0.18%

The “negative definiton” (non-Clerical, non-Marxist) is thus, albeit otherwise being the most clear-cut in that landscape, not the sole, overarching momentum to be used in locating liberalism in the party politics of Austria. In contrast to the Slovene case, where such

⁶⁰ Hermann Fritzl, Martin Uitz, “Kritische Anmerkungen zur sogenannten Lagertheorie,” *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft*, vol. 4 (1975): pp. 325-332; Florian Wenninger, “Der Faschist als Alien” in *“Unrecht im Sinne des Rechtsstaates”, Die Steiermark im Austrofaschismus*, W. Anzenberger, H. Halbreiner eds. (Graz: CLIO, 2014), pp. 47-68.

⁶¹ Kriechbaum, *Der Landbund*, 519.

⁶² Hanisch, *Österreichische*, 120-121.

⁶³ Die Wahlen, 39; Stiefbold, *Wahlen*, 56-57; Nationalratswahl 1923; Nationalratswahlen, 9.

distinctions are not so easy to be drawn, the “anti-Semitic standpoint” cut a relatively clear divide among the national liberal heirs and – more fundamentally – between the liberals and integral nationalists.

A distinctive feature of the “liberal”, “national” or simply “third” camps, common for both Austria and Slovenia, was thus the division into a number of parties and factions, based on both ideological and professional or social grounds. Both, the Austrian “national” and the Slovene “progressive” camps, as they were most commonly called, also included an agrarian party, a national socialist one, as well as radical nationalist groupings and organizations. In both, the Slovene and the Austrian case, the common denominators of these otherwise internally heterogeneous camps were anti-clericalism, an aversion towards Marxism and above all the emphasized “national” orientation. These common traits also represent a clear parallel with the Czechoslovak National Democrats.

In terms of power the Slovene “progressive” and Austrian “(German-) national” camps ranked as the “second” and the “third” respectively. In the Czech context – if we limit the perspective to the “Czechoslovak” parties and neglect the ones of the national minorities - the part of the political landscape that comprised the non-Catholic and non-Marxist political parties was undoubtedly the “first.” In the politically more diversified Czech context a “third camp” in the Austrian or Slovene sense however did not exist. The non-Marxist and non-Catholic parties were more numerous, espousing various political leanings. Most importantly, the Agrarian (*Československá strana agrární*, from 1922 *Republikánská strana zemědělského a malorolnického lidu*) and National Socialist Parties (*Československá strana socialistická*, from 1926 *Československá strana národně*

socialistická) counted among the major political players, being much stronger in terms of popular support than the National Democrats as the most direct national liberal heirs.

Index 8: Proportions of votes between the Czech Marxist, Catholic and non-Marxist/non-Catholic parties in the Czech lands⁶⁴

	Non-Catholic and Non-Marxist Parties		Marxist Parties	Catholic Parties
	TOTAL	Only ČsND	TOTAL	TOTAL
1920 ⁶⁵	50.49%	11.97%	35.17%	14.34%
1925 ⁶⁶	50.68%	6.72%	31.87%	17.45%
1929 ⁶⁷	50.97%	6.42%	34.08%	14.95% ⁶⁸
1935 ⁶⁹	55.88%	9.09% ⁷⁰	31.21%	12.91%

The latter were considerably weaker in terms of electoral performance and – most importantly – could not claim a leading position among the non-Marxist and non-Catholic parties. It is true that even in 1919 the National Democrats still considered the Agrarians and National Socialists as members of the same party family that had split from the Young Czech Party at the turn of the century.⁷¹ Yet, their relation to the mentioned parties was a

⁶⁴ The figures apply to results in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia, excluding the parties of national minorities. It needs to be noted that they include the results of the Communist Party, which also received a non-negligible amount of German votes.

⁶⁵ *Výsledky voleb do PS NS v roce 1920 na území České republiky* (Office Czech Statistical, 2008), accessible at:

<https://www.czso.cz/documents/10180/20536128/422008k08.pdf/> (accessed 10/02/2017)

⁶⁶ *Výsledky voleb do PS NS v roce 1925 na území České republiky* (Office Czech Statistical, 2008), accessible at:

<https://www.czso.cz/documents/10180/20536128/422008k010.pdf/> (accessed 10/02/2017)

⁶⁷ *Výsledky voleb do PS NS v roce 1929 na území České republiky* (Office Czech Statistical, 2008), accessible at:

<https://www.czso.cz/documents/10180/20536128/422008k012.pdf/> (accessed 10/02/2017)

⁶⁸ The figure includes 0.53 percent acquired by Hlinkas' Slovak People's Party.

⁶⁹ *Výsledky voleb do PS NS v roce 1935 na území České republiky* (Office Czech Statistical, 2008), accessible at:

<https://www.czso.cz/documents/10180/20536128/422008k014.pdf/> (accessed 10/02/2017)

⁷⁰ In 1935 National Democratic Party ran on a joint ticket together with two radical nationalist parties.

⁷¹ See the introduction to the political program of the Czechoslovak National Democracy, where also the Agrarians and National Socialists are listed among the strains that had left the framework of the Young Czechs, resulting in “fragmented political life.” The mission of the National Democracy was to re-unite and simplify this fragmented political life. While these two parties are mentioned along with those that have already “re-united” within ČsND, no mention was made of the Catholic and Social Democratic parties. - *Program československé národní demokracie, schválený valným sjezdem strany dne 25. března 1919*

markedly weaker one than in the Slovene case where the national liberal heirs continued to have considerable influence over the agrarian and national socialist currents, regardless of their own relatively low electoral figures, as well as occasional times of fierce mutual political competition. If the category “camp” has any value for the Czech case at all, we may thus at best speak about five (and not merely three) principal Czech camps, of which the National Democratic party alone united what Jiří Malíř termed as the “national liberal camp.”⁷²

The relative strength of that section of political landscape which was neither Catholic nor Marxist thus varied between the three contexts under scrutiny. So did also the degree of its internal connectedness. In the Czech case the forces, belonging to this section altogether held the majority of votes, yet they did not form a joint camp but rather represented mutually competing political camps. In contrast to the other two contexts there was no “camp” in the Czech case but only a “party” that represented a clear genealogical heir to the national liberal traditions.

In Austria on the other hand there was a clear tri-partite division into camps. The camp that was neither Catholic nor Marxist and which may only conditionally be jointly treated as

(Prague: Tiskový odbor československé národní demokracie, 1919), p. 1.

⁷² 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, J. Malíř, P. Marek eds, (Brno; 2005), pp. 31-44.

the camp of national liberal heirs, was however only third in power and substantially weaker than the other two. Despite their anticlerical orientation, the main two parties of that camp moreover at least on the national level had a clear preference for the Christian Socials over the Social Democrats. In Slovenia, on the other hand, the non-clerical and non-Marxist section of the political landscape ranked as the second in terms of power, forming a political camp in which the national liberal heirs occupied a dominant position and was defined primarily by its opposition towards the strongest Slovene People's Party. Conversely, due to its rural character the urban liberal traditions in Slovenia were substantially weaker than in Austria (primarily Vienna) and the Czech lands.

3. 2. Three Types of Liberalism in the Interwar Party Politics

As regards the possible conceptualizations of liberalism in the three political contexts under scrutiny, three general types of political parties may be discerned:

- a) Parties that consciously cultivated the liberal heritage, expressing predominantly positive attitudes towards it, which may thus rightfully be named *liberal parties*.
- b) Parties that stemmed from the traditions of national liberalism, but were ideologically and otherwise departing and distancing themselves from them, sometimes explicitly denouncing liberalism - the genealogical heirs of liberalism or the *national liberal heirs*
- c) Parties that had, due to the lack of a major liberal party or other political factors, inherited parts of liberally oriented electorate - *The functional heirs of liberalism*.

As it has been shown in the previous chapter, the space for liberalism in the party politics of Austria already by the beginning of the 20th century became increasingly narrow. Due to far-reaching structural transformations connected to the advent of mass politics, a paradigm change and diffusion that took place on the level of ideology, it is therefore perhaps more feasible to employ the term *national liberal heirs* for the mainstream of parties that inherited the national liberal tradition in terms of organization, social base, their rootedness in specific milieus, as well as a form of diluted ideology. Yet, profound differences existed among parties that inherited the liberal traditions, whereby a minor part of them still consciously cultivated the liberal heritage and proudly identified with it and may thus rightfully still be given the title of liberal parties. Common feature of these parties was that they stood on the margin of political landscape and were fairly weak. Furthermore, they were most distinctive for the German-speaking populations in which the radicalization of the nationalist mainstream also brought about a more clear cut separation from the liberal remnants, which in turn also reflected in separate party organizations. As already indicated in the previous chapter, the element of anti-Semitism played a very prominent role in this differentiation.

Cases of “proper” liberal parties were thus the Civic Democratic Party (*Bürgerlich-demokratische Partei*) in Austria and its sister- and daughter- parties (Democratic Party (*Demokratische Partei*), Civic Labor Party (*Bürgerliche Arbeitspartei*), Civic Democratic Labor Party (*Bürgerliche-demokratische Arbeitspartei*), Democratic Center Party (*Demokratische Mittelpartei*), Middle Class People’s Party (*Mittelständische Volkspartei*), Economic Party (*Wirtschaftspartei*) etc.) – all of them limited to Vienna and fairly weak.

Only there, they could still gather 4.59 percent of votes in 1920 (26.54 in the Inner City).⁷³ Through the following decade their electoral support diminished in the capital city as well. Furthermore, the German Democratic Freedom Party in Bohemia and Moravia, also represented a clear example of this party type. Among Czechs and Slovenes the diversification between explicitly anti-liberal national liberal heirs and their marginalized liberal counterparts was not that clear cut. Especially for the Slovene case it is thus impossible to discern the examples of the latter within the broader framework of the former. In the Czech case, on the other hand, we may discover a political party that longed after reviving and modernizing liberalism by combining it with elements of socialism. It undoubtedly represented an organizational heir to national liberalism, being formed around the Moravian wing of the National Democratic Party (which, roughly speaking, represented a successor to the former Moravian People's Progressive Party). Yet, it presents a specific case, as it – in contrast to the previously listed German parties – did not attach itself to the national liberal heritage and its past achievements. On the contrary, it more or less ignored or even rejected this heritage, striving to develop a new type of liberalism, based on the contemporary English model. It is thus questionable whether the National Party of Labor (*Národní strana práce*) may be treated as a national liberal heir (b), whereas it without doubt represented an example of a liberal party (a). As we shall see in the chapter on the liberalism debates the echoes of British “New Liberalism” were present in the Austrian context as well. Yet, they were extremely marginal in the sphere of Viennese liberal party politics, where more conservative liberal orientation of Max Friedmann and Count Ottokar Czernin soon prevailed.

⁷³ *Neue Freie Presse*, 18. 10. 1920.

All the listed parties were without doubt representatives of liberalism in party politics, whereby it is however highly questionable whether they may be treated as part of the same political camp with the mainstream national liberal heirs (in the Austrian case) or under the category of national liberal heirs (this pertains especially to the National party of Labor). In the cases of the previously mentioned German liberal parties from Austria and Czechoslovakia the categories (a) (liberal parties) and (b) (national liberal heirs) overlap, as they not only descended from the national liberal traditions but also proudly acknowledged that fact. The involvement in the inheritance of national liberal traditions was unquestionable in the cases of Viennese or Prague German liberals, whereby their continuously strong attachment to the liberal heritage (including the word itself) makes it questionable whether it would not be more appropriate to refer to them simply as “liberals” and reserve the classification as “national liberal heirs” for their more distant anti-Semitic cousins.

Along liberal parties proper and those that represented genealogical heirs to national liberalism – with the two categories partly overlapping – there was however also a third type of “liberalism” present in the party politics. In the era of general decline of liberal parties and/or increasingly nationalist or conservative orientations of those that had previously adhered to the liberal traditions, parts of electorate that identified with liberal values and principles sometimes began to tactically offer support to one (or more) of the major options that had remained on the political market. These were parties that had different, non-liberal ideological platforms but had however through the course of time incorporated some of the liberal elements or had otherwise appeared attractive to the

liberally minded electorate. For that reason the parties of this kind may be called *functional heirs* to liberalism.

A prime example of a functional liberal heir in the Austrian case was Social Democracy. Especially from the late 1920s, an increasing part of formerly liberal votes migrated to the Social Democrats, who had not only inherited the cultural political traditions of liberalism,⁷⁴ but also began to represent a guardian of certain basic tenets of liberal political order in the specific circumstances of the general authoritarian turn that had been occurring in the Austrian politics at that time. The leadership of the “German Democratic Students” (*Deutschdemokratische Hochschülerversammlung*) in 1930 for instance issued a proclamation of support for the Social Democrats whom they designated as “nowadays unfortunately the only party that offers a secure protection against the fascist and monarchist threats.”⁷⁵ On one hand anti-clericalism prevented the liberally minded “*freiheitliches Bürgertum*” to lend support to the Christian Socials. On the other, the pronounced antisemitism of the Greater Germans acted as the main obstacle for joining forces with them. The remaining options for the more conservative and economically liberal section of liberal voters thus became the agrarian *Landbund* and from the beginning of the 1930s on also the *Heimatblock*.

In Czechoslovakia the status of the principal functional liberal heir undoubtedly went to the National Socialist Party. Especially after the dissolution of the left-liberal National

⁷⁴ Wolfgang Mantl, “Liberalismus und Antiliberalismus in Österreich. Eine Spurensuche“ in *Liberalismus. Interpretationen und Perspektiven*. Emil Brix, Wolfgang Mantl eds. (Vienna: Böhlau, 1996), p. 38.

See also: Albert Fuchs, *Geistige Strömungen in Österreich 1867-1918* (Vienna: Löcker Verlag, 1984.), p. 10: “*Liberale Ideologie bestand in dem oest. Geistesleben fort. Und überlebte politischer Liberalismus [...] Sie wurde in Zeitungen und politischen Schriften propagiert, oft auch in sozialdemokratischen.*”

⁷⁵ “Die deutschdemokratischen Studenten für die sozialdemokratischen Kandidaten,” *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, 29.10.1930.

Party of Labor and the subsequent accession of its leadership to the National Socialists, the latter largely adopted the function of a “refuge for Czech liberals.”⁷⁶

In the Slovene context where being “liberal” largely went in hand with being anti-clerical and anti-Marxist and where the section of the society that traditionally represented liberal votes was relatively small and compact, it is harder to locate or discuss functional heirs of liberalism. Only conditionally we may treat as such a part of rural anti-clerical electorate that after being disappointed with the Independent Agrarian Party and Democratic Party turned their support to Stjepan Radić’s Croatian Peasant Party. On the other hand, also the Popular Radical Party, an essentially Serbian party with a conservative and nationalist orientation, may be treated as a “refuge” for a part of the more affluent and older liberal electorate, especially in Ljubljana, after the 1924 merger of liberal “elders” with that party. Still, the large majority of traditionally liberal voters continued to vote for the Democratic and later Independent Democratic Parties.

Whereas unambiguously liberal parties represented only a marginal political force and while liberalism’s functional heirs represent a special topic that may hardly be approached from the perspective of liberalism, was the great bulk of what we may treat as liberalism in the party politics of the interwar post-Cisleithanean lands represented by the parties of the type b) (national liberal heirs). The crucial common distinction of liberalism in party politics was thus in all the three cases the genealogically liberal background which however did not necessarily imply commitment to liberal ideology or conscious identification with liberalism. Absence or presence of the latter and its extents varied from case to case and will be thoroughly discussed in the Chapter 6.

⁷⁶ Havránek, *Liberalismus*, 277.

For this reason, I propose the term “national liberal heirs” as a designation for a specific type of political party, distinctive for the early 20th century (post-)Habsburg framework. In the frame of this study the examples of such parties were the Czechoslovak National Democracy, the Greater German People’s Party in Austria and the part of Slovene political landscape that identified as “progressive” and was represented by the Slovene parts of Yugoslav Democratic, Independent Democratic and Yugoslav National Parties. Furthermore, also the German National Party in Czechoslovakia could be discussed with help of this category.

The National Socialist and Agrarianist parties, on the other hand, may only conditionally be treated as national liberal heirs, as they represented a later offshoot from the already transforming national liberalism. Especially in the Czech case, where these parties formed camps of their own, not merely independent from but also much stronger than the National Democrats, it would be unreasonable to put them under the category.

This brings us to some of the “**auxiliary criteria**” that I have been using in selecting my subjects. I refer to them as “auxiliary” because they provide no substantial link to liberalism. They however represent various characteristics common to all the three national cases. In the Austrian and Slovene ones these features also partly distinguish the national liberal heirs proper from the other factions in their respective political camps. Moreover, they stand in certain causal relationship with the fact that these parties represented the heirs to the 19th century national liberal traditions. To shortly list them, these common features are: a) Unsuccessful transformation into mass or at least popular parties, which made them essentially remain *Honoratiorenparteien*, that is parties of notables, loosely composed of various regionally, ideologically, socially and generationally based groupings; b) Resulting

ideological heterogeneity and eclecticism: the political orientations, represented by various partisan factions and wings, ranged from secular conservatism to moderate non-Marxist socialism. The sole common denominators were anti-clericalism, aversion towards Marxism and above all the emphasized “national” orientation, which represented the distinctive common ground, strongest unifying link and the main point of ideological identification; c) Pronounced earmarks of a “bourgeois” or “middle class” party - although some of them may have strived to get rid of that “stigma” – and strong attachment to specific cultural and social milieus, which could generally be described as predominantly urban and middle class.

The listed characteristics were distinctive for all the principal national liberal heirs in all the three cases under scrutiny and even for the small Viennese liberal parties. Due to their smallness and localization we may not talk about diverse factions, groupings and wings in the same way as in the case of Greater Germans, or Czechoslovak National Democrats for that matter. Nevertheless, the very fact that the Viennese liberals never succeeded in forming a unified party and that even the largest of these small parties – the Civic Democratic Party – at least during its founding moments had its “left” and “right” wings, speaks in favor of attributing the feature b) also to the Viennese liberals. Especially, since at least their leading representatives proudly and vocally stressed their German national orientation, despite all the insults and accusations raised against them on part of the self-proclaimed “Aryan” parties of the national camp.

For related reasons the selection of the Greater German People's Party as the central subject of study might also appear problematic. In spite of the questionable “liberal credentials” of the Greater Germans however, this choice is justified precisely through the very

comparison between the three post-Habsburg national cases. In the other two the division between the “nationalist mainstream” and “liberal remains” did not become so clear-cut as in the Austrian. While, as far as the party spectrum was concerned, these two currents became increasingly separated with the latter almost completely marginalized, the Slovene and the Czech national liberal heirs espoused a combination of both aspects without openly renouncing any of them. Acknowledging the possible misgivings I chose the Greater German People’s Party on the basis of the tri-partite division of the political landscape and the (partial) continuity of the pre-WWI *Nationalverband*. Whereas the small liberal parties were marginal and almost entirely limited to Vienna, GdVP operated throughout the Austrian territory, inheriting the regional national liberal traditions. Observed from this perspective and within a joint context with the Czech and Slovene national liberal heirs the choice thus appears not only legitimate but also the most potentially fruitful in terms of new knowledge gained through the comparison.

3. 3. Czechoslovak National Democracy - from the State-building Party of Intelligentsia towards a Party of the Right Margin

3. 3. 1. From the Czech State Rights Democracy to Czechoslovak National Democracy

The Czechoslovak National Democracy was founded in March 1919 on the basis of its predecessor, the Czech State Rights Democracy. The latter party, having been founded in February of 1918, had united the non-socialist Czech parties during the closing act of the Habsburg Monarchy. The original idea, which had emerged in 1915 already and was revived in 1917 after the leading Czech politicians had been released from prison,

envisaged a unified Czech party (similarly as Kukovec's idea in the Slovene case)⁷⁷. This did not come true. Yet, four parties of national liberal heirs - the National Free-minded Party (The Young Czechs), Czech State Rights Progressive Party, Moravian People's Progressive Party and the larger part of the Czech Progressive Party (Realists) merged, being later joined also by the remains of the old liberals (Old Czechs).⁷⁸ The uniting factor of these otherwise heterogeneous parties were their non-socialist orientation and urban social base, their past involvement in the anti-Austrian resistance and the idea of independent Czech state, which stood as the central objective.⁷⁹

The party, led by the then Prime Minister and former Young Czech leader Karel Kramář and dubbed by its prominent member and Minister of Trade in the first Czechoslovak government Adolf Stranský as “the child of Czech freedom” had quite a promising beginning. Although it held only 46 out of 256 seats in the temporary Revolutionary National Assembly, based on the 1911 electoral results, it at the same time comprised the majority of Czech intellectual elite, “the flower of intelligence of all the estates”⁸⁰ as the party itself put it. As such it had influence that far exceeded its parliamentary representation⁸¹ which itself was quite substantial, if compared to the later numbers. The members included sounding names such as Přemysl Šamal, the president's chancellor Josef

⁷⁷ See subchapter 3.5.

⁷⁸ Cf. Zdeněk Sládek, “Československá národní demokracie” in *Politické strany: vývoj politických stran a hnutí v českých zemích a Československu 1861 - 2004*, I, J. Malíř, P. Marek eds, (Brno; 2005), p. 593; Josef Tomeš, “Nacionalismus a demokracie. Úskalí české nacionální strany v meziválečném Československu” in *Agrárníci, národní demokraté a lidovci ve druhém poločase první Československé republiky*, Eva Broková, Josef Tomeš, Michal Pehr eds. (Prague: MU AV ČR, 2008), p. 132.

⁷⁹ Cf. Jana Čechurová, “Krystalizace národní demokracie ve 20. letech” in *Československo 1918-1938. Osudy demokracie ve střední Evropě*, 1. vyd, J. Valenta, J. Harna, E. Voráček eds. (Praha: Historický ústav AV ČR Praha, 1999), p. 245; Jana Čechurová, “Sociální programy politické reprezentace českých buržoazních kruhů po vzniku Československa” in *Pocta profesoru Zdeňku Jindrovi*, 1. vyd., D. Jančík ed. (Prague: Karolinum, 2004), p. 118.

⁸⁰ “Po naší přehlídce,” *Národní listy*, 27. 3. 1919.

⁸¹ Sládek, *Československá*, 594; Čechurová, *Krystalizace*, 245.

Schieszl, another chief member of the President's office, the *Sokol* leader Josef Scheiner, historian Kamil Krofta, professor and former rector Bohumil Němec, executive manager of *Živnostenská* bank and the president of the Union of Czech Banks Jaroslav Preiss, journalists Karel and Josef Čapek, three former or contemporary University rectors and many other highly educated or otherwise prominent individuals, including visible artists such as Viktor Dyk and Božena Viková-Kunětická.⁸² Moreover, constitutional experts from the national democratic ranks (members or supporters) such as Bohumil Baxa, Jiří Hoetzel, František Weyr stood at the very beginning of Czechoslovak constitutionalism and were, apart from Švehla, most important for framing the constitution in a parliamentarist and not presidentialist way (as Masaryk would have wanted).⁸³ To use the expression of Jana Čechurová, the party, acting as the “first representation of the [Czech] right” was composed of the “true intellectual elite of the nation.”⁸⁴

In the first Czechoslovak government (November 1918 – July 1919) the National Democracy held the posts of Prime Minister (Karel Kramář), Minister of Trade (Adolf Stránský) and Finance (Alois Rašín). The achievements of Kramář's cabinet were quite impressive and included – in Rotschild's words: “establishment of favorable frontiers; the maintenance of public order amidst the chaos of the other successor states; the avoidance of inflation (which likewise was lacerating the country's neighbors) through vigorous deflationary and control measures; the passage of land-reform legislation for gradual

⁸² Jana Čechurová, *Česká politická pravice. Mezi převratem a krizí* (Prague: 1999), p. 20; Sládek, *Československá*, 594.

⁸³ Ladislav Mrklas, “Karel Kramář a národní demokracie – tvůrci I kritici provorepublikové demokracie” in J. Bílek and L. Velek (eds.), *Karel Kramář (1860-1937), Život a dílo* (Prague: Masarykův ústav a Archiv AV ČR, v.v.i., 2009), pp. 499-500.

⁸⁴ Jana Čechurová, “České politické elity po vzniku Československa” in *Společnost v přerodu, Češi ve 20. Století, Sborník referátů z cyklické konference Demokracie*, V. Doubek ed. (Prague: Masarykův ústav AV ČR, 2001), p. 226.

implementation; the “Chechization” of public administration”⁸⁵ As regards the image of the party these achievements were however somewhat overshadowed by Kramář’s trip to Paris peace conference where he attempted to influence the allied leaders to militarily intervene in Russia. His idealistic mission was not successful, resulting in damaged reputation of the Czechoslovak delegation, which also marked the beginnings of the later animosity between the Foreign Minister Beneš and the National Democrats. At the same time, during the nine months of his absence, Kramář left the business of administering the state to the Minister of Interior Švehla, losing popularity and authority at home as well.

The first year of party’s existence at the beginning of the First Czechoslovak Republic also marked the highpoint of its influence and political power.⁸⁶ Very soon however ČsND lost its initial prestige and prominence. Its scope and appeal by 1920 narrowed down both in ideological and social terms. Signs of inner discord also appeared very soon, coming to mark the party throughout the time of its existence, distinguished by continuous frictions between various groups and “wings,” as well as splits and secessions of visible groups.

Most importantly, while continuing to include many important representatives of Czech intellectual life it nevertheless lost the initial character of party of Czech intelligentsia, as by April 1920 considerable part of its MP’s, more than a quarter, left either the club or the party (or both).⁸⁷ A large majority of the first parliamentary club were namely experienced politicians and important notables from the pre-war period whose material existence did not depend on their parliamentary mandate. As such these “educated and self-confident

⁸⁵ Joseph Rothschild, *East Central Europe between the Wars* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1974), p. 101.

⁸⁶ Hugh Agnew, *The Czechs and the Lands of the Bohemian Crown* (Stanford: Hoover Press, 2004), p. 181.

⁸⁷ Cf. Čechurová, Česká, 21, 32.

men put more weight on own views than on the party discipline.”⁸⁸ Simultaneously, the social composition of representatives also changed, more clearly reflecting the actual electoral base as it had established itself by 1920. By then the Czechoslovak National Democracy “crystallized” as a party of Czech middle and upper classes or, in other words, *bourgeoisie*.⁸⁹

At the same time, the party’s power declined also numerically. As opposed to 46 members (almost a fifth) in the Revolutionary National Assembly it had only 19 out of 285 MP’s in the Chamber of Deputies (lower house of the Czechoslovak parliament) after the 1920 elections in which it gained 6.2 percent of votes. After Kramář had stepped down it also never again had a Prime Minister. Nevertheless, the National Democrats continued to represent an important factor in the Czechoslovak political life, being up until 1934 represented in government cabinets and acting as one of the original and permanent five members of *pětka*. As such their political influence far exceeded the percentage of votes casted for them.

3. 3. 2. The Party Program and General Ideological Profile

The political program of the Czechoslovak National Democracy, officially presented and published at the founding congress in March 1919⁹⁰ was a result of a longer development. Representing the officially valid party program until 1935 it was a product of compromise

⁸⁸ Ibid., 21.

⁸⁹ Čechurová, České politické, 226. Čechurová, Česká, 32.

⁹⁰ *Program československé národní demokracie, schválený valným sjezdem strany dne 25. března 1919* (Prague: Tiskový odbor československé národní demokracie, 1919).

between various groups within the party. In particular, the economic part was a matter of continuous dispute and negotiations.

The ČsND program proclaimed the party to be “a national party, an all-national party, a democratic and progressive party.”⁹¹ Particularly the second of these labels deserves a closer look. The all-national self-understanding essentially implied a claim to represent the entirety of the “nation,” regardless of differences such as class, profession, economic and social position, locality and similar:

“Today estates are nothing, classes are nothing, political parties are nothing, everything is the nation, its success, its future (...) In our party may equally be united a schooled man of free profession, a worker or a factory owner, a craftsman or a merchant and a peasant or a crofter [*chalupník*]”⁹²

The ČsND founding congress in a telegram to the foreign minister Beneš wrote the following:

“We are a political party that does not want to know partisanship, where it is about the interest of the whole and all its classes. And because of this we certainly have the right to greet You on the day of our first congress in the free homeland, greet You and thank You in the name of the entire liberated Czechoslovak nation.”⁹³

As such the all-national orientation meant a negation of interest-based party politics that had at least since the introduction of universal male suffrage in 1907 determined the shapes of the Czech political landscape.⁹⁴ At the same time it also implied the claim to represent

⁹¹ Program ČsND, 3.

⁹² Ibid., 2.

⁹³ Ibid., IV.

⁹⁴ Čechurová, *Krystalizace*, 245. Čechurová rightfully asks in this regard whether the case of ČsND in this regard was “that it was ahead of the time, corresponding to the model of Western democracies, or that it was an heir to 19th century when the Young Czech party [...] represented a broad social spectrum of society.” (Ibid., 246)

The former understanding was distinctive for the National Democrats themselves. Resolution of the third party general congress in 1925 thus stated to “persist on the all-national character of the party” being convicted that the existence of political parties only insofar their differences concerned ideas and principles and stemmed from “the perspective of nation and the state and global perspective, as it is the case in the

a “state-building” force having special place among parties as a “firm, strong, mighty party” that the “independent Czech state” needed in order for its “state-building idea” to be preserved and further developed.⁹⁵ This aspiration toward standing above the classes and “estates” as an all-national “meta-party”⁹⁶ brought the party major problems in competing with other parties such as Agrarians or the National Socialists, while also contributing to internal disagreements.⁹⁷ The latter were only partly bridged through the mediation by the charismatic president Karel Kramář, cherished as the leader of the domestic resistance against Austria and given the title of “national leader [*vůdce národa*] by his party.⁹⁸ His leadership role was largely symbolic and representational. Party policy was being decided primarily by Rašín and after his 1923 assassination various power circles that fought for decisive influence in the party.

Kramář treated the nation as the basic framework of any kind of political activity, as well as the basis of social life.⁹⁹ In his understanding however the “productive” middle classes or the “bourgeoisie” represented the active factor within the nation, the politically-able part of the population, which in this sense also came to represent the interests of the entirety of the nation. According to Winkler¹⁰⁰ Kramář’s concept of democracy actually combined

developed Western democracies.” (Archiv Národního muzea [CZ-ANM], NAD 159 Antonin Hajn, K. 130, 3671 Usnesení třetího valného sjezdu strany 1925.)

⁹⁵ *Vytrvat, pracovat a bude-li třeba, i bojovat! Řeč člena Národního shromáždění K. St. Sokola, pronesená 25. března 1919 na prvním valném sjezdu Československé národní demokracie.*

(Prague: Tiskový odbor Československé národní demokracie, 1919), p. 3.

⁹⁶ Hans Lemberg, “Das Erbe des Liberalismus in der ČSR und die National Demokratische Partei” in *Die Erste Tschechoslowakische Republik als Multinationaler Parteienstaat*, Karl Bosl ed. (Munich: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag, 1979), p. 69.

⁹⁷ Cf. Čechurová, *Krystalizace*, 246.

⁹⁸ Lemberg, *Das Erbe*, 70.

⁹⁹ Jan Dobeš, “Karel Kramář mezi nacionalismem, liberalismem a fašismem,” in J. Bílek and L. Velek (eds.), *Karel Kramář (1860-1937), Život a dílo* (Prague: Masarykův ústav a Archiv AV ČR, v.v.i., 2009), p. 683.

On this basis Dobeš argues against labelling Kramář as a liberal. (Ibid.)

¹⁰⁰ Martina Winkler, *Karel Kramář (1860–1937). Selbstbild, Fremdwahrnehmungen und Modernisierungsverständnis eines tschechischen Politikers* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2002), p. 291.

two conceptions of nation – the organic-romantic and the bourgeois-liberal one. On the one hand the nation was a collectivity with its own “will” and “interests”. On the other, it was composed of more or less autonomous individuals. At the same time Kramář and the National Democrats firmly defended parliamentarism, constitutionalism and civic liberties.¹⁰¹ Comparing Kramář’s views to those of Masaryk’s it may be said that for both of them “nation” and “democracy” represented the central political principles. The crucial difference being only that Masaryk put the latter first and former second, whereas for Kramář nation occupied the primary place.¹⁰²

Kramář as the leader of the pre-war neo-Slavic movement above all emphasized the Slavic orientation of the party which was to determine the Czechoslovak foreign policy (as opposed to Masaryk’s more Western-oriented approach). Up until his death he never abandoned the hope for collapse of the Bolshevik regime and resurrection of a “powerful” and “democratic Russia” that was to lead the Slavic nations. The demand for a “Slavic” foreign policy was also contained in the party program, which stated that Czechoslovakia was “the milestone towards the Germanic world and its imperialist expansiveness towards the east.”¹⁰³ In domestic affairs it above all demanded for Czechoslovakia to be “a national, Czech state”¹⁰⁴ in which the “Czech and its branch Slovak respectively must be designated as the state language in order for the national character of the state to fully come to expression.”¹⁰⁵ At the same time full language rights for national minorities in school and public offices were demanded.¹⁰⁶ Considerable attention was given to the fields culture and

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Ibid., 293.

¹⁰³ Program ČsND, 8.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 4.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 13.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 14.

education, to which one out of the three sections of the party program was devoted.¹⁰⁷ This special attention corresponded to the fact that at least initially ČsND was a party of intellectuals, professors and scholars.¹⁰⁸

The economic part of the program deserves special attention. First foundations for the economic and social orientation had been laid by Jaroslav Preiss,¹⁰⁹ the *Živnostenská Bank* chairman and one of the most important personalities of the Czech business elite. In an expose, held when the Young Czech party was officially dissolved in October 1917 he announced that social reforms were going to be needed after the war, concerning land, ownership of natural resources and the field of social policy. Simultaneously Preiss criticized the contemporary “socialist fashion,” stating that “nothing may substitute the will and activity of an individual and that an efficient national economy may be built only on the basis of private property.”¹¹⁰

Before the founding congress in March 1919 where the ČsND program was officially proclaimed, the disagreements within the party ranks concerned exactly the economic and social part of the program, where there were two competing proposals. The first, drafted by Prague professor Jan Koloušek was more conservative in nature, also enjoying the support of Alois Rašín.¹¹¹ In the end however the other, “more modern and leftist”¹¹² one, written by Karel Engliš, economist and rector of the University of Brno, won the support

¹⁰⁷ See: Ibid., 16-31.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Čechurová, Sociální, 120.

¹⁰⁹ On Jaroslav Preiss see: Pavel Kosatik, *Bankéř první republiky. Život dr. Jaroslava Preisse* (Prague: Nakladatelství Motto, 1996); Gregory F. Campbell, “The Castle, Jaroslav Preiss, and the Živnostenská Bank,” *Bohemia*, vol. 15 (1974): pp. 231–253.

¹¹⁰ Čechurová, Česká, 14.

¹¹¹ Čechurová, Sociální, 120.

¹¹² Ibid.

of majority in the party. Particularly the younger generation of National Democrats were in favor of it.¹¹³

Engliš's economic program was partly a product of the "revolutionary *Zeitgeist*" of the immediate post-war era.¹¹⁴ Centered around the notion of "economic democracy" it pointed critique both against socialism and liberalism. The latter was criticized as based on egoism and the former for its utopianism. Economic democracy extended the meaning of democracy from "formal equality of people before the law and the equality of political rights" to "the right of each man to life and cultural and material development" which "society" had the duty to secure and realize.¹¹⁵ As such it combined preservation of the basic tenets of market economy with demands for "more just distribution," social insurances and more active state role in all of the strategically important sectors of economy (forests, mines, railways, heavy industry).¹¹⁶

While the party continuously cultivated its basic "national" orientation and even further sharpened its nationalism so that it became accused of "chauvinism" by president Masaryk and his circle, such determination and consistency did not apply to the economic part of its program. From the very beginning with ČsND in charge of the Ministry of Finance, Engliš's radical reform plan was not being carried out. The economic course of the first Czechoslovak government had to largely conform to the recommendations of the Union of Industrialists and even more the Union of Czech Banks under the presidency of Preiss, which secured the crucial means for the government to function.¹¹⁷ It may be argued that

¹¹³ Čechurová, *Krystalizace*, 246.

¹¹⁴ Lemberg, *Das Erbe*, 68.

¹¹⁵ Program ČsND, 32.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Čechurová, *Sociální*, 121.

¹¹⁷ Čechurová, *Česká*, 18-19.

the practical economic orientation of National Democrats had from the outset been to a considerably larger extent determined by Preiss (together with Rašín as the “executor”)¹¹⁸ than Engliš. The positions that the party advocated throughout the interwar more or less corresponded to the guidelines that Preiss had given in his already mentioned 1917 speech. The continuous informal influence that he had on the party course, despite his retreat from active politics in 1919, must thereby also not be underestimated.

Under Rašín’s direction, the economic policy above all aimed at consolidating the new national economy and securing it stability, pursuing an energetic, yet realistic course that was wary of economic and social experiments. Most importantly, when all the neighboring states were suffering from heavy inflation Rašín succeeded in creating a solid and stable currency for the young republic. His deflationary measures resulted in higher unemployment, causing considerable animosity against him among socialists. Yet, it would be wrong to claim that the propertied strata were less burdened by his policy than the workers.¹¹⁹ The party furthermore actively supported introduction of various social insurances. The radical measures aimed at economic and social stabilization however did not in any way head towards socialization envisaged in Engliš’s program. Moreover, out of all the Czech parties during 1918-20 it was solely the National Democrats that unwaveringly defended the principle of inviolability of private property.¹²⁰ Its persistent demands to dismantle the remaining elements of the war economy brought it into conflict

¹¹⁸ Rašín and Preiss were also close friends and co-workers, the former being a member of the Živnobanka supervisory board, as well as its legal representative. (Ibid., 116)

¹¹⁹ Čechurová, Česká, 17-18.

These measures included compulsory loan of savings in money or gold to the state, as well as high taxation of profits.

¹²⁰ Čechurová, Sociální, 118.

with the Social Democrats and Czech Socialists.¹²¹ During his second term as Minister of Finance, when he managed to insulate Czechoslovakia from the wave of inflation that tormented the neighboring Austria, Germany and Poland at the cost of being hated by many who lost employment¹²² Rašín was in 1923 assassinated by a young man, claiming to be an anarchist.

ČsND thus in its actual policies largely ignored the more radical demands and programmatic points from its economic program. This had also already from the outset provoked criticism against the leadership by left-leaning groups within the party, particularly the party youth, then largely composed of the former realist youth, and the so-called Moravian wing of the party to which Engliš himself belonged.¹²³ As nationalist and conservative elements gradually gained forehand the party leadership at the second party congress in 1922 also explicitly distanced itself from the program – albeit not discarding it- stating that some of its fundamentals needed to be re-evaluated.¹²⁴ The congress was thus marked by anti-socialist rhetoric and acknowledgement of “renewed liberalism.”¹²⁵ As Sís commented in his speech at the third party congress in Brno, aimed at neutralizing the Moravian opposition, after the overthrow when the socialist parties had been under the influence of the Russian revolution the situation also impacted the course of non-socialist parties. Soon afterwards the time had come for a “move towards the right” and even all the way towards “reaction.”¹²⁶

¹²¹ Čechurová, Česká, 19.

¹²² Rothschild, East Central, 106-107

¹²³ Čechurová, Sociální, 121.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ H., “Náš druhý sjezd,” *Národní listy*, 25. 3. 1922.

¹²⁶ František Sís, *Za národní a demokratickou republiku* (Prague: Sekretariat Čs.N.D., 1925).

Čechurová argues that the National Democrats pursued an economic policy which aimed at “restoring economic liberalism”¹²⁷ and “bowed to a liberal understanding of society.”¹²⁸ In line with this she labelled them as economic liberals and as a “liberal Czech party that was publicly perceived above all as a representative of *bourgeois* ranks and a herald of radical nationalism.”¹²⁹ In other literature it also received the title of “a Czech conservative nationalist party” (Sládek),¹³⁰ the “concentration of the right nationalist current of the Czech politics” (Štěpánek),¹³¹ a “liberal coalition party [*Sammlungspartei*]” that “counted among the most distinctive conservative factors of the ČSR.” (Lemberg)¹³² It was ranked as “radical conservative right that stood on the border of the right pole of political spectrum,” its political orientation being “elitist conservative traditionalism” (Rataj)¹³³ or “nationalistic to the point of being chauvinistic, panslavist, conservative and anticlerical” (Rotschild).¹³⁴ All these are attempts of “objective” classification and definition that rest each on a slightly different set of criteria and focus on various particular facets of the party’s orientation and public image. Regardless of their preciseness and validity it however needs to be pointed out that the party did not consider itself to be a representative of conservatism (a generally unpopular political label in the Czech context, associated with feudal aristocracy), nor of liberalism. Above all it understood itself as a representative of Czech (Czechoslovak) nationalism and a sincerely democratic party. It openly opposed all

¹²⁷ Čechurová, Česká, 28.

¹²⁸ Čechurová, Sociální, 121.

¹²⁹ Čechurová, Krystalizace, 248.

¹³⁰ Sládek, Československá, 613.

¹³¹ Petr Štěpánek, “Integrálně nacionální koncepce Československé národní demokracie po vzniku ČSR.” *Moderní dějiny*, vol. 15 (2007): p. 101.

¹³² Lemberg, Das Erbe, 65, 69.

¹³³ Jan Rataj, “Národní demokracie jako alternativní zakladatelské koncepce československé demokracie” in Karel Kramář (1860-1937): život a dílo, J. Bílek, L. Velek eds. (Prague: Masarykův ústav a Archiv AV ČR, v.v.i, 2009), p. , 517, 514.

¹³⁴ Rothschild, East Central, 95.

kinds of socialism, was often critical of liberalism, also claiming to be a “progressive” and a “centrist”¹³⁵ party.¹³⁶ A contemporary critical observer and (by then already former) ČsND member Josef Schieszl in 1920 noted that it was an internally diverse party that “united in itself a part of ‘absolute’ conservatism with indisputably progressive elements, above all from progressive intelligentsia.”¹³⁷

3. 3. 3. The Social Base

Initially, as the Czech State Rights Democracy was being founded Kramář himself envisaged it as a middle-class party of merchants and “middle bourgeoisie [*středních měšťanských vrstev*].”¹³⁸ At the time of party foundation this idea was often brought up in correspondence between Kramář, Rašín and the chief editor of *Národní listy* Sís. In the end however the concept of an “all-national” party was adopted, claiming to transcend class and other divisions and appeal to all the sections of society. This self-image was afterwards being continuously fostered and pronounced in official party documents, manifestos, proclamations, as well as by Kramář himself.

The National Democrats did invest non-negligible efforts towards the aim to become a true *Volkspartei*, creating special organizations for various class and professional groups – for instance *Národní rolnická jednota* (National Peasant Union) for the peasants and

¹³⁵ Čechurová, *Krystalizace*, 249.

¹³⁶ Cf. Stanley Winters, “Passionate Patriots: Czechoslovak National Democracy in the 1920s,” *East Central Europe/L'Europe du Centre-Est*, vol. 18, nr. 1 (1991), p. 55: “From the moment of its founding in March 1919, the Czechoslovak National Democratic party propagated several ideals that taken together differentiated it from Czechoslovakia's other major political parties between the world wars: integral nationalism, free enterprise, strict separation of church and state, and opposition to socialism.”

¹³⁷ Josef Schieszl, “Potřeba strany konservativní,” *Služba*, Yr. I (1920).

¹³⁸ Čechurová, *Česká*, 13.

Národní odborové sdružení (National Association of Trade Unions) for the workers. These efforts however met only limited success with the National Democratic electoral base remaining largely limited to the urban middle and upper classes, chiefly in Bohemia and only with negligible support among the non-Czechs. Most importantly, the initial great hopes and ambitions to rally the support of wide sections of Czech population and remain a major player – if not the strongest party – were thwarted when faced with the reality of electoral results.

Even if the all-national claim were put aside and narrowed down to the middle and upper classes or *Bürgertum*, this could only hardly secure unity and concord. Indeed, maintaining a broad middle-class constituency proved to be a hard task, as the diverging interests within this diverse section of population reflected also in disunity within the party. Under the circumstances of the interwar Czech society such aim brought ČsND into “pat position”¹³⁹ Public employees’ demands clashed with those of entrepreneurs and landlords. Shopkeepers, artisans and other small entrepreneurs had different aims than the bigger players. Then, there were diverse and often conflicting interests between particular branches of industry, as well as between the city and the province. The party that wished to bring all these diverging tendencies under a common denominator and transcend them in the name of national solidarity, thereby also aiming to attract “nationally” oriented labor and peasants, faced a serious challenge.¹⁴⁰

ČsND failed in securing overwhelming support of any of the mentioned sections of the middle classes. As mentioned already the initial character of the “party of intelligentsia”

¹³⁹ Cf. Čechurová, *Sociální*, 118.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. Čechurová, *Krystalizace*, 245.

soon waned and only the more nationalistically inclined intellectuals remained firmly under its umbrella. The public employees, particularly teachers, had at the outset comprised the most numerous section of ČsND voters and members,¹⁴¹ remaining highly represented throughout the interwar. Yet, the erosion of this group began already in 1919 due to discontent with Rašín's policy of saving and afterwards never completely ceased. After the Czech Socialists (National Socialists) had re-framed their positions towards center in 1919, beginning to cater to the lower middle classes, the National Democrats had to compete with them for Czech public employees' votes.¹⁴² As ČsND in turn began actively attracting the support of small entrepreneurs,¹⁴³ it also soon suffered a blow. A special Artisans' and Merchants' Middle Class Party (*Československá živnostensko-obchodnická strana středostavovská*)¹⁴⁴ was founded which, particularly in the 1925 election, took away many votes.

To some extent the National Democrats succeeded in maintaining a degree of convergence between the opposing interests. Nevertheless, these efforts often proved rather futile when faced with the electoral results with the party moreover facing continuous internal discord. It could not profile itself as the main representative of the Czech middle classes either – this role being gradually taken by the agrarians who became not only “the largest and pivotal Czechoslovak party” but also “a general political ‘holding company’ for middle-class interests at large.”¹⁴⁵ By 1925 the electoral support stabilized at 4 percent, whereby

¹⁴¹ Čechurová, *Česká*, 22.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁴³ See: Edgar Emil, *Živnostníci, seberme se!* (Prague: ČsND, 1919) – a propaganda brochure published by the ČsND in support of the strike of small merchants and artisans, proclaimed in 1919 and aimed against state regulation of their activities.

¹⁴⁴ See: Pavel Marek, *Československá živnostensko-obchodnická strana středostavovská v politickém systému ČSR v letech 1918-1938* (Olomouc: Vydavatelství Univerzity Palackého, 1995).

¹⁴⁵ Rothschild, *East Central*, 97.

the slightly better results in 1929 and 1935 were largely due to coalitions with smaller Ruthenian and Slovak parties (in 1929) and with the Czech radical right (in 1935). The all-national claim retained little real basis and the National Democrats in practice soon revealed themselves primarily as defenders of wealthier urban interests.¹⁴⁶ Last but not least the influence of the Czech big business, particularly the Central Union of Czechoslovak Industrialists and above all the *Živnostenská banka*¹⁴⁷ on the economic course should not be overlooked. For that reason ČsND was being increasingly associated with an image of a “capitalist” party, something that it had from the beginning struggled to avoid.¹⁴⁸ This image was particularly strengthened after 1929/30 when the so-called “industrialist” or “pragmatic wing” prevailed. During the 1930s the party was moreover financially dependent on the *Živnostenská banka*.¹⁴⁹

Divergence of interests within the party and its electorate was however retained throughout the period under scrutiny, albeit more or less narrowed down to the representation of Czech industry on the one and the still non-negligible part of public officials that voted National Democracy on the other.¹⁵⁰ In addition there were also a rather small group of nationally oriented workers and larger peasants that supported it. Especially the National Association of Trade Unions had a small but non-negligible membership (especially when paralleled

¹⁴⁶ Lee Blackwood, “Czech and Polish National Democracy at the Dawn of Independent Statehood, 1918-1919,” *East European Politics and Societies*, vol. 4 (1990): p. 481.

¹⁴⁷ Antonín Klimek, “Strany a stranictví v meziválečném Československu” in *Společnost v přerodu, Češi ve 20. století. Sborník referátů z cyklické konference Demokracie 2000*, 1. vyd., V. Doubek ed. (Prague: MU AV ČR, 2001), p. 29.

The interests of parts of the export-oriented industrial capital were often contrary to the ones of Živnobanka. For that reason, parts of industrialists moved closer to Agrarians. (Ibid.)

¹⁴⁸ Principles for the future economic program of the party, laid out in 1918 at the very beginning stressed that the Czech State Rights Democracy was “not a capitalist party.” – CZ-ANM NAD 298 Alois Rašín, K. 14, 776.

¹⁴⁹ Lemberg, *Das Erbe*, 73.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. Ibid., 69, 77.

to the ČsND electoral figures). Standing at 30000 in 1934 and amounting to 43000 if counting in the railway workers and those in electricity enterprises who had organizations of their own it was still ten times smaller than that of the Social Democratic unions.¹⁵¹ Yet, if we compare these figures to the ČsND electoral results they show that the party had a share of support among the workers. Before the 1920 elections ČsND also began turning towards the countryside, attempting to attract larger agrarian landowners. The cooperation with a group of secessionists from the agrarian party (*Rolnická jednota* around Rudolf Bergmann), however above all caused a conflict with the agrarians.¹⁵² A rural breakthrough did not succeed.

The ČsND stronghold were primarily cities and towns of Bohemia and Prague in particular. In Moravia it was considerably weaker, especially after 1925 when the large part of Moravian section seceded. Outside the Czech lands the support was limited mainly to the resident Czech public officials and minor groups of native intelligentsia. While the overall results in national elections stood at 4-6% they amounted to over 10% in the Czech-speaking cities and up to a third of all votes in the national capital.¹⁵³ While the post of the Prague mayor was in the National Socialist hands throughout the period under scrutiny, the National Democrats continuously provided vice-mayors. In the 1923 municipal elections they even attained 23 seats out of 100, becoming the largest group in the City Council.

¹⁵¹ Jiří Pokorný, “Josef Hudec a Národní sdružení odborových organizací“ in Karel Kramář (1860-1937): život a dílo, J. Bílek, L. Velek eds. (Prague: MU AV ČR, 2009), p., 545-546.

¹⁵² Čechurová, Česká, 29.

¹⁵³ Lemberg, Das Erbe, 71.

In July of 1934, the membership figures stood at 76198 in Bohemia, 31354 in Moravia and Silesia, 28326 in Slovakia and a couple of hundreds in Subcarpathian Ruthenia.¹⁵⁴ Altogether these figures amounted to around one third of the whole party electorate.

3. 3. 4. Groups and Wings within the Party

Czechoslovak National Democracy in 1919 united in one party what Jiří Maliř termed as the “national liberal camp” representing “the most fragmented and internally divided socially-moral milieu of Czech society”¹⁵⁵ Indeed, as Sládek argues the new party was composed of “political orientations that would at the best will hardly find a common cause.”¹⁵⁶ As we shall see, the divisions were not conditioned merely by political differences but also positions of power and prestige held by particular members, which they brought into the new party from their old ones.

The Czechoslovak National Democracy was not diverse only in terms of its founding groups. This initial variety, only partly linked to regionally, socially and ideologically based differences, was soon joined and to an extent superseded by new divisions, conditioned by the economic, social and political developments in Czechoslovakia, reflecting in new cleavages or transformed old ones. Running along the lines of ideology, diverging economic interests and social backgrounds, generational and regionally-based differences, these cleavages found fertile soil for development in a party such as ČsND. A necessary result of its all-national claim was not merely openness but an actual obligation toward addressing various social strata, professional groups and sections of population,

¹⁵⁴ Michal Pehr, “K politickému programu Kramářových národních demokratů” in Karel Kramář (1860-1937): život a dílo, J. Bílek, L. Velek eds. (Prague: MU AV ČR, 2009), p. 528.

¹⁵⁵ Mrklas, “Karel Kramář, 493.

¹⁵⁶ Sládek, Československá, 595.

even though these were not equally represented among members and supporters. On the other hand, the relative internal freedom of dissent and debate, made it possible for these differences to express themselves in a highly evident and direct manner. In retrospect, this was colorfully described by František Ježek, one of the leading National Democrats who wrote in his memoirs:

„It [the Czechoslovak National Democracy] was a national, a democratic and a liberal party. It was so liberal, that one could more or less do there whatever he pleased. The liberal freedom allowed for that. And so next to the left wing ‘anarchists’ [*petrolejníků*] from *Demokratický střed* you find the youth that in their outer parades emulated the fascists though otherwise clashed with them and only wanted to lure voters from them by using their outer forms. You find there also the historicizing state-rightists, who, through their persistent loyalty to the idea of the historical Czech state, were the only group in the history of Czech politics that – despite living within it – did not acknowledge Austria at all and naturally also never recognized the USSR. There was also a group of liberal industrialists, entrepreneurs, merchants and artisans, which was substantially apolitical and loyal only to the liberal economic program. There were also three intellectual groups with their newspapers *Demokratický střed*, *Národní myšlenka* and *Modrá revue*... There was the staid group of Prague City hall workers, led by the Deputy Mayor Dr. Alois Štůl, there was the strong *Národní odborové sdružení* (national trade associations), led by the former Social Democratic MP Josef Hudec, ... there were the rural counties, peaceful, liberal and bourgeois but in overall consensus working in local government together most often with the socialist parties, and on the other side the Greater Prague organization, more radical in its membership but its representatives in the City Hall closely collaborating with the socialist parties... Although liberalism conceded this party to publicly propagate opinions that were often completely contradictory, in one issue the party was unanimous - in deep respect towards the person of dr. Karel Kramář, whose authority eventually (perhaps after prolonged struggles and protests) acquiesced. And equally, there were no differences among any of the groups regarding the national matters.”¹⁵⁷

The quoted passage reveals the extent of heterogeneity that existed within the party, which was ideologically bound together more or less through its basic “national” orientation.” The symbolic and mediating role of Kramář also played a crucial role in enabling the party to maintain an external appearance of inner unity. The inner diversity, as described by

¹⁵⁷ Pehr, K politickému program, 520.

Ježek was not so broad and pronounced during all the stages of the party's history, with the freedom of dissent not being so perfect that it would preclude secessions of whole wings of the party and also expulsions of particular members. Especially due to the latter fact the party gradually became internally less diverse, although it must be stressed that it retained a pluralist character up until its end. The case of the moderate, pro-Castle *Demokratický střed* group demonstrates how the party framework secured an atmosphere of tolerance towards marginal groups within its ranks that fostered views largely, incompatible to those of the stronger groups that formed the party policy.

The formal party organization (central supreme council, central, land, district, local organizations) did not correspond to the actual relationships of power within the party in which a number of political currents have united. It was thus wings, cliques and circles that determined the policies through fighting for positions within the party apparatus elected party organs.¹⁵⁸ The role of Kramář, who served as the party president until his death in 1937, was largely symbolic and representational. After having stepped down as Prime Minister Kramář never again accepted a position in the cabinet (only ministerial posts were being offered to him but not that of the Prime Minister), remaining only a parliament member, known for passionate and rhetorically impeccable speeches. Whereas during the 1920s Kramář still managed to exercise some control over the party course and mediate between competing factions, he during the 1930s could not keep them in check anymore,

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 596.

becoming “a toy in their hands.”¹⁵⁹ Until the end however he remained the symbol of the party around whom a personality cult was being created.¹⁶⁰

The central National Democratic newspaper was the Prague-based *Národní listy* that had been published since 1861 and counted among the most widely read Czech newspapers. Edited by František Sís, it represented the central press organ through which Kramář and other leading party members regularly voiced their opinions. Also important was the formerly Old Czech *Národní politika*. The former Moravian People’s Progressives around Adolf and Jaroslav Stránský that formed the relatively autonomous Moravian wing of the party had their own press organ – the Brno-based *Lidové noviny*. In addition to that, the party published a number of regional and local newspapers, including the Bratislava *Národný Denník* as well as an official party organs *Národní demokracie* and *Demokrat*.

From the point of view of the original groups that had in 1919 united into ČsND two main currents within the party remained distinctive throughout the interwar era and largely determined its course – the Young Czechs (Kramář, Rašín, Sís) and the State Rights Progressives (Antonín Hajn, Antonín Kalina, Karel Stanislav Sokol, Viktor Dyk).¹⁶¹ While it may be said that the former were dominant, the latter nevertheless succeeded in securing themselves and maintaining a relatively independent position.¹⁶²

First five years were characterized by inner discontent among realists and other left-leaning forces against the Young Czech mainstream and the course that the party had been taking under Rašín’s leadership. It resulted in groups of visible intellectuals leaving the party. In

¹⁵⁹ Sládek, *Československá*, 614.

¹⁶⁰ A testimony to that is also the volume of memorial and other literature devoted to Kramář. See for instance: Vladimír Sís, *Karel Kramář. Život a dílo, Skizza* (Prague: 1930); Karel Kramář, *HLAS, který nebyl umlčen* (Prague: Národní nakladatelství A. Pokorný v Praze, 1939).

¹⁶¹ Tomeš, *Nacionalismus*, 133.

¹⁶² Čechurová, *Česká*, 33.

1923 the ideological differentiation within the party ranks proceeded further.¹⁶³ The tension between the Bohemian and Moravian parts of the party stepped into the foreground, partly intertwined with the left-right division within the party ranks. After the secession of major part of the Moravian wing and founding of the National Party of Labor, the internal divides concentrated around the conflict between the so-called pragmatic and idealist wings, both of them representing the “right” – first in the economic, and latter in the nationalist sense. This conflict again partly intertwined with the conflict between the leadership (then in the hands of “pragmatic wing”) and the young generation.

The rest of the founding groups either soon lost their original distinctiveness – such was the case of the former Old Czechs - or by the mid-1920s mostly left the party. This was connected to the discord that had begun developing within the party from the outset and was again closely connected to the mentioned dominance of the former Young Czechs in alliance with the State Rights Progressives.¹⁶⁴ With some generalization it may be said that the main dividing line up until 1925 ran between the dominant two groups on the one and the Realists and Moravian People’s Progressives on the other.¹⁶⁵ The matter of dispute was above all the worsening relationship of the party leadership and Kramář in particular towards Masaryk, Beneš and the Castle group, which the Moravian wing and the Realists strove to milden and divert the party away from attacking the president. The further principal disagreements concerned the increasingly prominent radical nationalism, particularly the rhetoric pointed against the national minorities, the negligence of the party towards the social aspects of its program and the problem of internal democracy.

¹⁶³ Cf. *Ibid.*, 44.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. Čechurová, *Krystalizace*, 246.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Tomeš, *Nacionalismus*, 187.

Radical nationalist circles were gaining increasing prominence within the party, led by Viktor Dyk, František Hlavaček and professor František Mareš. Their influence was boosted especially after the “purge” in the National Democratic Young Generation in 1921 after which the leadership was gradually taken over by the young nationalists (Vlastimil Klima, Ladislav Rašín, Pollak, Renner). Although more pragmatic, the moderate nationalists such as Kramář and Sís more or less endorsed the radicalism of the youth. Moreover, they themselves steered the party into a more pronouncedly nationalist direction.

Another such issue were the demands for social reform written in the National Democratic economic program that were not being pursued. The opposition against the party leadership laid more stress on the social questions. Particularly the firm defense of principles contained in Engliš’s program gained a symbolical meaning and along with the other controversial issues (attitude towards *Hrad*, nationalist rhetoric) came to define the “left” within ČsND.¹⁶⁶ Last but not least the questions of internal democracy, decentralization and communication within the party divided especially the leadership in Prague and the Moravian wing. Conflicts erupted also regarding *Národní listy* which had originally represented a broad and open forum for a wide spectrum of views.

First group that began *en masse* leaving the party were the former Realists who had in the nationalist fervor during and immediately after the anti-Austrian resistance joined forces with the national liberal heirs. Prominent MP’s in the Revolutionary National Assembly such as Schieszl, Šamal and Herben one after another left the party and by mid 1920s the majority of Realists found their way “back” to the Castle. Notable members of this group

¹⁶⁶ Cf. Čechurová, *Krystalizace*, 246.

that remained National Democrats, occupying important posts in the party on the other hand included František Ježek and Josef Matoušek.

In generational terms the Czechoslovak National Democracy was a relatively “old” party, at least looking at the age of its leaders, this being quite a common pattern for the interwar Czech parties that maintained older charismatic figures as nominal leaders in order to secure votes.¹⁶⁷ Kramár in the National Democratic and Klofáč in the National Socialist case represented two good examples. Although the National Democrats boasted that they were „the only party that has rid itself of those elements that did not behave honorably during the war,“ and permitted only four former Young Czechs to enter the constituent assembly,¹⁶⁸ the leading positions continued to be held by prominent pre-war politicians. There was very little transfer of power to the younger generations, which was moreover slow and resulted in a number of protests on part of the party youth.

The “first” Young Generation of Czechoslovak National Democracy (*Mláda generace ČsND*) during the early 1920s formed the core of the oppositional “National Democratic left.”¹⁶⁹ Its leaders, most notably J. Werstadt (1888-1970), mostly came from the pre-war *Masarykova realistická mládež*.¹⁷⁰ Proclaiming themselves as “progressives” within a party that had largely been turning into a “conservative” direction, they criticized the latter course, centering their demands on realization of Engliš’s program that had remained a dead letter.¹⁷¹ In 1921 the entire leadership was changed and taken over by the young radical nationalists.

¹⁶⁷ Čechurová, “České politické, 227.

¹⁶⁸ Blackwood, Czech, 485.

¹⁶⁹ Sládek, Československá, 597.

¹⁷⁰ Čechurová, Sociální, 121.

¹⁷¹ CZ-ANM NAD 159 Antonín Hajn, K. 130 (Československá národní demokracie) 3644 Projev Mladé generace ČND k taktice strany a způsobu, jimž píše Národní listy (26. 7. 1919); Josef Fischer, “Co chce mladá

In geographical terms the main division during the early years of ČsND ran between its Bohemian and Moravian sections (Slovakia, not to say Subcarpathian Ruthenia, were still pretty irrelevant to the party at that point). To be more precise the conflict emerged between the centralizing tendencies of the Prague leadership, dominated by the former Young Czech and State Rights Progressive elements and the largely autonomous Moravian regional leadership in Brno. The so-called Moravian wing, composed of former People's Progressives around Adolf and Jaroslav Stránský had its own supreme council for Moravia and own newspaper *Lidové noviny* owned by the Stránský family.¹⁷² Particularly from the point of view of the nationalist right it represented represented the “most distinctive expositure of the *Hrad* within the party.”¹⁷³

The quarrel between the party leadership in Prague and the Moravian wing fully erupted in 1924-25. Apart from diverging views on the course that party had been taking towards the Castle, the nationalist rhetoric, and Rašín's economic course along with alienation of parts of middle classes,¹⁷⁴ the main subject of dispute had been the autonomy of Moravian wing that the central party leadership strove to abolish.¹⁷⁵

After prolonged conflict in 1925 the large majority of the Moravian wing headed by Adolf and Jaroslav Stránský and including Engliš seceded from the party and founded the

generace národně-demokratická,“ *Lidové noviny*, 10. 6. 1920; “Několik úsudků o projevu 'Národně-demokratické veřejnosti,“ *Zitřek, List Mladé generace*, yr. II., Nr. 31, 20. 5. 1920; Jos. Schieszl, “Třídění duchů,“ *Zitřek, List Mladé generace*, yr. II., Nr. 31, 20. 5. 1920.

¹⁷² Sládek, *Československá*, 596.

¹⁷³ Tomeš, *Nacionalismus*, 134.

¹⁷⁴ See for instance: The critique of the party leadership in the proposal of the Moravian-Silesian Supreme Council to the second party congress in 1922 in CZ-ANM NAD 159 Antonín Hajn, K. 130, 3660, Čsl. národní demokracie – II. valný sjezd strany v březnu 1922: “National Democratic Party with its program is destined to be a positive and state party, to mediate between class and estate extremes, to be the center of the Czech parliament. In reality it has evolved into a party of extreme right of our parliament and into party of political negation and opposition, equally powerless as unrealistic.”

¹⁷⁵ Čechurová, *Krystalizace*, 248.

National Party of Labor (*Národní strana práce*). The new party comprised the majority of the former Moravian People's Progressives with a notable exception of Hodáč. In addition its members and supporters included many prominent intellectuals such as Ferdinand Peroutka and Čapek brothers. It had a general image of a party of (leftist) intellectuals – in words of Vlastimil Klíma representing a “party of socialist *bourgeoisie*.”¹⁷⁶ Financially and otherwise supported by the Castle, it acted as an unofficial representation of Masaryk's circle in party politics. Although it successfully overtook a considerable part of ČsND voters in Moravia and Silesia,¹⁷⁷ its political performance was not very successful. In 1929 it ended its independent existence, merging with the National Socialist Party.

The 1925 split signified the end of the “seven years of crystallization” for ČsND, which in turn, “completely profiled itself as a platform for anti-castle politics and national right.”¹⁷⁸ After the 1925 split ČsND lost much of its support in Moravia, landing at 4 percent at the elections in the same year. The structure of party membership became more uniform with no serious contenders to the mainstream party line determined by the former Young Czechs and State Rights Progressives. Which however did not imply a complete end to the internal diversity and pluralism. Not only that certain important individuals from the realist and Moravian groups had remained in the party. The control over the party policy became a matter of competition between the two main wings that had formed among the most influential party members, competing also for influence over the aging Kramář. These two wings were not “the Prague leadership” and the “opposition,” the “Young Czechs” versus the “non-Young Czechs” or, in most simple terms, “the right” versus “the left” anymore.

¹⁷⁶ Vlastimil Klíma, “Kapitola o politické hypochondrii,” *Narodni myšlenka*, Yr. 3, Nr. 1 (Oct. 1925), p. 15.

¹⁷⁷ Andrea Orzoff, *Battle for the Castle, The Myth of Czechoslovakia in Europe 1914-1948* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 100.

¹⁷⁸ Tomeš, *Nacionalismus*, 134.

Instead, they became more explicitly associated with economic interests, that they represented on the one and specifically defined by the practical approach to politics and political strategy that they advocated on the other side. Generally speaking they represented the two basic types of political orientation that may be understood under the term "right" which however have little in common and are often politically opposed to each other.

The dividing lines were also re-configured. While adherence to Engliš's economic program (officially still in effect) was not a serious issue anymore, it was now the radical nationalists that held the frontline against economic liberalism in the party. Composed of nationalist intelligentsia and particularly popular among the party youth the "nationalist" or so-called "idealist wing" strove to push forward the interests of public employees that still formed a considerable portion of the National Democratic electorate. At the same time it fostered an uncompromising Czech nationalism and held a confrontational stance towards the *Hrad*. The leading representatives of the nationalist wing were Dyk, who played the role of its doyen which had given the radical nationalists intellectual respectability,¹⁷⁹ Hlavaček, Hajn, Němec, Klima and the younger Rašín. While standing quite close to it, Sís may not be counted among its members.

As its name tells, the "industrialist" or "pragmatic wing" represented the interests of industrial capital, at the same time advocating a pragmatic policy approach. The latter concerned above all the relationship with the President and the Castle Group, treatment of the national minorities and co-operation with the German "activist" parties that for the first time entered the governing coalition in 1926. Due to the interests of the Czech industry in economic exchange with the USSR it also attempted to milden the uncompromisingly

¹⁷⁹ Winters, *Passionate*, 63.

hostile approach towards the Bolshevik state. The pragmatic wing was led by the general secretary (between 1928 and 1934 also vice-president) of Union of Czechoslovak Industry (*Ústřední svaz čs. Průmyslu*) and former Moravian People's Progressive František Xaver Hodáč¹⁸⁰ and supported by Preiss and *Živnobanka* circle. Other notable representatives included Matoušek, Bohdan Bečka, Jan Dvořáček and the former Old Czech Ladislav Novák.

Until the end of the 1920s the nationalists (Hlaváček, Hajn, Mareš, Sís) held the party leadership, while governmental posts had already from the middle of the decade been occupied exclusively by the members of the pragmatic wing. In this way the party maintained its “dual” character, distinguished on the one hand by conflict and rhetorical militancy and on the other by constructive work in broad governmental coalitions. In 1930 however also the party leadership was taken over by the industrialist wing under Hodáč.

In addition to the dominant two wings that competed over the party leadership a number of smaller circles continued to exist within the party, being critical of the leadership but not wishing to secede. These circles voiced their views through intellectual journals around which they had formed. Two of these - *Demokratický střed* and *Národní myšlenka* – also corresponded to the mutually farthest positions on what could be termed as the “left” and the “right” margin respectively. As such these two circles symbolically delimited the boundaries of the mid- and late 1920s Czech democratic right.¹⁸¹

Národní myšlenka was founded in 1923 and was edited by the five main leaders of the Young Generation – Vlastimil Klíma, František Polák, Jan Renner, František Toušek and

¹⁸⁰ Hodáč was credited for turning the industrial union into a mighty representative of industry, which covered all the industrial branches under its umbrella and in this way organized a “unified front of all industry against agrarian expansion and labor organizations.” - Čechurová, Česká, 58.

¹⁸¹ Cf. Čechurová, Krystalizace, 248.

Jan Ebert along with Ladislav Rašín.¹⁸² Voicing the views of younger nationalists that had proclaimed Dyk as their chief inspirer, the journal appeared monthly with a subscript “Revue českého nacionalismu” with the aim to steer ČsND into a more resolutely nationalist direction. Klíma later remembered that the main aim had been to work towards developing Czech nationalism from “nationalism of an unfree nation” to “nationalism of a free and independent nation.”¹⁸³

The writing was distinguished by integral nationalism, resolutely demanding for the “national character” of the Czechoslovak state to be secured and against giving concessions to the national minorities. It ferociously attacked the cosmopolitan ideas of Masaryk, Beneš’s foreign policy, Marxism and nationally “dull” elements in the party such as the *Demokratický střed* circle. It may at the same time be assumed that the radical rhetoric of the leading members of the *Národní myšlenka* circle above all served as a platform for young ambitious men such as Rašín the younger to independently stand up to their predecessors.¹⁸⁴ Some of the authors however also expressed admiration for Mussolini’s regime and for the contemporary French far right.

Demokratický střed circle on the other hand acted as the “last expositure” of the *Hrad* in the Czechoslovak National Democracy, whose members had not left the party simply because they could not find an acceptable alternative within the existing political spectrum.¹⁸⁵ From 1923 it united foremostly some of the former realists that had remained in the party but wished to develop a platform for an independent discussion and

¹⁸² CZ-ANM NAD 214 Vlastimil Klíma, k. 3, inv. č. 14, manuscript “Cestou k nacionalismu národa svobodného”

¹⁸³ CZ-ANM, NAD 214 Vlastimil Klíma, K. 3, inv. č. 13, “Hrst vzpomínek na politiku mezi dvěma válkami”

¹⁸⁴ Čechurová, Česká, 46.

¹⁸⁵ Čechurová, Krystalizace, 248.

“confrontation of ideas in political, economic or social matters (...) without narrow party limitations and thus also without hostility towards its presumed or real opponents and enemies.”¹⁸⁶ Opposed to politics of confrontation and radical nationalist rhetoric *Demokratický střed* wanted to bring moderation to the party course. An important binding element of the circle was also membership in the Prague masonic lodges,¹⁸⁷ which may also explain the fact that the first editorial of the first issue was written by Sís, himself a freemason and an important link between the party and the Castle (despite his own, often radical rhetoric).

All in all, the circle was composed mainly of successful and educated middle-aged men with considerable influence in the party: Jan Dvořáček (economist, worked at foreign ministry, *Živnobanka*), František Fousek (journalist, *Národní listy*), Jan Hochman (among other administered Kramar’s property), Zdeněk Chytil (attorney from Prague), Otto Placht, historians Karel Stloukal, Kamil Krofta, Josef Matoušek, Bedřich Mendl, Zdeněk Kalista, chief editor of *Národní listy* Karel Hoch, redactor Jan Soukenka and Václav Havel sr., an entrepreneur.¹⁸⁸ Despite the formal and informal influence of its individual members, the circle as a whole never managed to gain considerable weight in deciding the party course with their ideas remaining more or less on theoretical level. Commonly accused as agents of the Castle within ČsND,¹⁸⁹ there perhaps were some grounds to such accusations.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁶ Čechurová, Česká, 44.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid, 45.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 44-45.

¹⁹⁰ See: Archiv Kanceláře prezidenta republiky (Prague), T 635/21 - Neprotokolování Zpravodajství (1929-1933), T 1007/28 – Note from 2.11.1928 referring to the discussion between Masaryk’s chief chancellor and former National Democrat Šamal and Hochmann regarding possibility of a regular remuneration for the *Demokratický střed* editor.

Lastly the *Modrá revue* journal, being published from 1932 onwards united a group of moderate nationalist intellectuals that stood close to the party leadership. It was supported by prominent National Democratic politicians such as Matoušek and Ježek.

3. 3. 5. Relationships with the Other Political Parties

As opposed to the Slovene and Austrian cases where the tri-partite division into camps also largely determined the main inter-party relationships, the more complicated political landscape of the interwar Czech lands also resulted in more complex and multi-faceted relations between the particular political parties. First of all presence of a whole spectrum of German parties needs to be taken into account. As regards their attitudes towards the Czechoslovak state and strategies of functioning within its framework they were divided into two main groups - the “activist” and the “negativist” one. And even if we limit the perspective to the Czech parties alone, we may find a broad spectrum of political parties distinguished by a variety of professional, class and ideological markers.

After switching to opposition in July 1919 and remaining there throughout the socialist-dominated Tusar cabinet, the National Democrats returned into the government in Autumn. During the period under scrutiny (until 1934) the National Democrats took part in more or less broad governing coalitions, until 1929 led by the agrarian leader Švehla. First, until 1926 these were formed along national lines, basically comprising “state-building,” “Czechoslovak” parties. Afterwards the economic and social factor prevailed with the forming of the first “Gentlemen’s coalition” (*pánska koalice*) between Czech and German non-socialist parties during the second half of the 1920s. After this coalition fell apart, mixed ones, combining both factors, prevailed.

The National Democrats acted as one of the pillars of the political establishment of the First Czechoslovak Republic and its stability. Holding important and responsible ministerial posts such as Finance, Industry and Trade they co-created the policies of Czechoslovak governments, co-operating in cabinets, formed by a wide variety of parties – from Social Democrats to the Catholics (and, after 1926 German activist parties). It was also one of the original five parties, forming the informal *pětka*, which decided on all the main questions of the government course, as well as parliamentary agenda. As such ČsND represented an integral part of the political system of the First Czechoslovak Republic.

When observing the role that ČsND played within the Czechoslovak political framework and its position between it one thus needs to be differentiate between the often very aggressive and unconstructive rhetoric by some of the visible ČsND members, including Kramář himself and the practical co-operation of National Democrats in governments. They both equally defined the place and role of the ČsND in the Czechoslovak interwar political arena. A good example was the conduct of the Czechoslovak National Democrats after the formation of the Gentlemen Coalition. The initial combative rhetoric, promising nothing less than “revolution” if the “Germans” joined the government (“Němci do vlády, my do revoluce!”) was quite soon toned down and exchanged for joining the only coalition in the First Czechoslovak Republic that was a purely non-socialist one.¹⁹¹

Both in terms of policies they advocated and ideological principles that they held the National Democrats were above all opposed to the socialist parties (Communists, Social Democrats as well as National Socialists). Their declared anti-clerical positions also placed them ideologically against political Catholicism, although they collaborated with the

¹⁹¹ Cf. Čechurová, Česká, 50.

Czechoslovak People's Party quite well towards certain common political goals – for instance the late 1920s administrative reform which divided the country into four lands. The relationship with the latter party was quite complex, whereby the relations were generally “warmer” in Bohemia, while the former Moravian “People's Progressives” kept more of its pre-WWI anti-clericalism.¹⁹² Their uncompromising nationalist orientation naturally placed them in conflict with German parties, both activist and negativist, whereby theirs and the latter's radical nationalism directly clashed. Due to their Czech-centric and officially Czechoslovakist orientation, the National Democrats were also mostly at odds with the Slovak Lud'aks.

The relationship with the Agrarians, the relatively strongest party in Czechoslovakia, was more complicated and foremostly a competitive one.¹⁹³ On the one hand the ČsND's defense of urban interests brought it in direct opposition to the agrarians on many particular issues (agrarian protectionism, grain monopoly). On the other hand the two parties also competed for the same broad middle class constituency, whereby it was the agrarians that mostly held the upper hand. Clear opposition of interests distinguished the relationship to the *Živnostenská strana*, which was supported by the Agrarians as a counterweight against the National Democrats.¹⁹⁴ The struggle for votes reflected in strong mutual accusations of deceit and electoral betrayal.¹⁹⁵

In Slovakia and Subcarpathian Ruthenia, ČsND closely collaborated with some of the minor political forces, forming joint electoral coalitions and co-opting some of their

¹⁹² Miloš Trapl, *Political Catholicism and the Czechoslovak People's Party in Czechoslovakia, 1918-1938* (Boulder: Social Science Monographs, 1995), p. 17.

¹⁹³ Cf. Čechurová, Česká, 28.

¹⁹⁴ Mrklas, “Karel Kramář, 498.

¹⁹⁵ From the National Democratic side see for instance: V. Lounský, *Těžké poškození živnostnictva tak zvanou živnostenskou stranou* (Prague: 1931).

members into the parliamentary club and – in some cases – the party. In case of Slovakia, this was the Slovak National Party, the oldest Slovak political force, which had however been marginalized especially after the Catholics around Hlinka had left it to form a party of their own, its electoral appeal being largely limited to Slovak Lutheran intelligentsia. From the beginning the co-operation was very close with representatives of the SNS, which was then said to have “the same principles and program,”¹⁹⁶ being present also at the ČsND founding congress. The two parties co-operated in elections. After 1929 SNS however ended the co-operation, joining the Slovak Autonomist Club.¹⁹⁷ Notable member that remained with the National Democrats was Milan Ivanka.

As regards the Subcarpathian Ruthenia, the ČsND pursued cooperation with groups such as Autonomous Agrarian Union (*Avtonomnyj zemleděl'českij sojuz*), Russian National Union (*Russkoje narodnoje objediněnie*) and Russian People's Party. The main criterion for selection of allies in that province was the persuasion – in line with Kramář's pan-Slavism – that the Ruthenian population represented a branch of the Russian nation.¹⁹⁸

A topic that needs to be addressed separately is the long-lasting conflict between the National Democratic Party and the Castle. Although this aspect was prominent, it may not be simply reduced to a clash between two powerful personalities – Kramář and Masaryk. It concerned a variety of issues and diverging views and involved other notable National Democrats such as Dyk, Hlavaček and members of the Young Generation on the one and Beneš and a number of Castle supporters on the other side. It consumed considerable

¹⁹⁶ Program ČsND, I.

¹⁹⁷ For more on the relationship between ČsND and SNS see: Jaroslava Rogulova, “The Czechoslovak National Democratic Party in the Politics of the Slovak National Party 1919-1932 (Československa narodnodemokraticka strana v politike Slovenskej narodnej strany v rokoch 1919 - 1932),” *Historický časopis (Historical Journal), Professional journal about Slovak and worlds history*, vol. 57, nr. 1 (2009): pp. 87-110.

¹⁹⁸ Sládek, *Československá*, 597.

amounts of time and energy both on the parliamentary floor and on the newspaper pages, whereby *Národní listy* and other National Democratic press became instruments for launching attacks on Masaryk and Beneš. The latter on the other hand utilized a wide variety of printed press, including the German-language and foreign one, to respond or retaliate.

First of all the quarrel was indeed a battle of prestige between two statesmen who both claimed the title of the “father of the nation.” Stemming partly from Kramář bitterness after losing the position of Prime Minister it was closely associated with a wider dispute regarding the question of who held the main credit for Czechoslovak independence – the domestic resistance around Kramář or the one abroad under Masaryk. Then there were important ideological differences regarding the conception of the Czechoslovak state, nationality and nationalism and approach towards the minorities (primarily Germans). During and after the 1926 Gajda affair – to be discussed more in detail at a later point – it also concerned the attitude towards the Czech fascist movement which the president strongly condemned. Here, especially Dyk, having the credentials of being a Czech independentist already before the World War, engaged in open polemics against Masaryk.¹⁹⁹ While the National Democrats accused Masaryk of lenience towards Germans and the aim of transforming Czechoslovakia into a “nationalities state” (as opposed to nation state) or even “New Switzerland,” the president labelled them as intolerant and “chauvinists.”

The young nationalists from the ČsND Young Generations focused their critique particularly on the arbitrary and one-sided actions by the members of President’s office

¹⁹⁹ Winters, *Passionate*, 63. See: Viktor Dyk, *Ad usum pana presidentia Republiky* (1929).

and Beneš which they saw as intrusion into affairs of the elected governments.²⁰⁰ They at least to some extent also rightfully criticized what they saw as the development of Masaryk's personality cult²⁰¹ which Kramář labelled as "monarchist republic."²⁰²

The most ferocious attacks from the ČsND side however were directed against the Foreign Minister Beneš, especially his young age, his special standing with Masaryk and his ambition to succeed him as president.²⁰³ An important matter of conflict was also his (and *Hrad's*) foreign policy, particularly the question of officially recognizing the Bolshevik regime in Russia, against which the National Democrats firmly protested. After the pragmatic wing had come in charge of the party leadership the anti-*Hrad* rhetoric was mildened, Hodáč's tactical position being "for Masaryk – against Beneš."²⁰⁴

3. 3. 6. 1930's – The Road to *Národní sjědnocení*

Between 1929 and 1931 the pragmatic wing gradually took over the party leadership. The takeover began with appointment of Matoušek as Minister of Trade in 1929, continued with conflict between Hodáč and Sís in 1930 after which the latter permanently retreated from politics, and was crowned by deposition of Hlavaček as the party General Secretary in 1931.²⁰⁵ In that same very year also Viktor Dyk, the symbolic leader of the nationalist wing, passed away.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 61.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 63.

Klíma noted that while more than hundred monuments had been erected to honor Masaryk, not a single one had been built to poet Jan Neruda. (See: Klíma, Hrst, 279)

²⁰² CZ-ANM NAD 228, K. 63, 1881, "Ideál národního státu nad spory stran!"

²⁰³ Winters, *Passionate*, 64.

²⁰⁴ CZ-AUTGM, Fond Edvard Beneš – I. (1918-1938), K. 51 Mapa Inv. č. 215, sign. R 129/7 R 129/7 Národně demokratická strana 1919-1930, Report on the National Democratic assembly, 9. 1. 1930.

²⁰⁵ Čechurová, *Česká*, 48, 58-59.

The “pragmatic wing” united primarily technocrats²⁰⁶ and was formed around Hodáč who was appointed the party vice-president, becoming a de-facto leading figure beside the aging Kramář. The new configuration of power in the party also reflected in its orientation and particularly so in the economic policy. Generally speaking the rhetoric was continuously marked by nationalist overtones, whereas the actual positions regarding economy were mostly in favor of business interests and in many respects quite liberal. Overall, the hegemony of industrialist wing concluded the transformation from an “all-national” party oriented towards middle classes “in the broadest sense of the word”²⁰⁷ closer towards a conservative party of large capital.

One of the results of this development was that the party became increasingly marginalized,²⁰⁸ which reflected in substantial internal conflict and in continuous erosion of party membership, most significantly small entrepreneurs, public officials and employees whose interests diverged from those of large industrialists and bankers.²⁰⁹ The group around František Ježek, an important party member representing state employees, seriously criticized Hodáč, accusing him of alienating the middle and working classes.²¹⁰ Josef Hudec, the leader of National Association of Trade Unions was even expelled from his own organization and afterwards left the party, after a major disagreement with Hodáč. The latter erupted after Hudec had signed a memorandum demanding nationalization of mines, thereby referring to the 1919 party program but violating the 1933 resolution against

²⁰⁶ Cf. Jakub Rákosník, „Karel Kramář, Národní demokracie a otázky sociální politiky vmeziválečném Československu“ in Karel Kramář (1860-1937): život a dílo, J. Bílek, L. Velek eds. (Prague: MU AV ČR, 2009), p. 561.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 560.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 561.

²⁰⁹ Cf. Sládek, Československá, 613.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

nationalization.²¹¹ The moderate democratic faction around the journal *Demokratický střed* had been pushed aside as well.

The nationalist internal opposition had however survived, retaining considerable prominence in the party, resulting in constant internal discord. In particular the Young Generation leaders from the circle of *Národní myšlenka* stepped in the foreground, voicing heavy criticism of Hodáč's leadership. An open conflict erupted in late 1932 after which the ČsND leadership attempted to purge the party youth, appointing new leaders, loyal to them. The old leadership around Klíma and Ladislav Rašín however declined to step down, resulting in a split within the ranks of *Mladá generace*, which for a couple of months had two supreme councils and two official newspapers.²¹² The conflict at the end resolved in a compromise with Rašín being co-opted into the ČsND leadership at the party congress in Bratislava in May 1933. Seats within the highest party organs were divided among representatives of particular wings. Some of the more principled dissenters on the other hand continued opposing the party leadership, organizing themselves under the banner of "Radical National Democracy."

During the first half of the 1930s the Czechoslovak National Democratic Party continued to take part in the broad coalitions with other "state-building" parties in which they held the Ministry of Industry and Trade, which was throughout the period led by Josef Matoušek. The most crucial moment for the National Democratic economic policy came when they switched to opposition in February 1934, after the government had decided to support Karel Engliš's devaluation of the Crown. This was a step that National Democracy, committed to the heritage of Alois Rašín and the principle of solid currency that had

²¹¹ Pokorný, Josef Hudec, 548.

²¹² More on that in: CZ-ANM NAD 214 Vlastimil Klíma, K. 5, 57.

provided Czechoslovakia with international prestige during the economically unstable times after the First World War, could not tolerate.

After the National Democrats left the government in 1934, the previously discussed internal discord again reached critical levels. Various factions proposed different kinds of strategies for developing a new image for the party and put forward new ideas for social and economic rearrangements. On the all-party level, this process resulted in the attempt to mobilize a broader electoral base and unify various strains of the Czech right by entering a coalition with the radical nationalist National League, led by the National Socialist dissident Stříbrný (*Národní ligá*) and National Front (*Národní front*) led by former National Democrat, turned pro-fascist Mareš. The move signified a clear step to the right and, as a consequence, many prominent members with moderate views, such as Jan Kapras for instance,²¹³ left the party.

In his memoirs, Vlastimil Klíma noted that *Národní sjědnocení* had foremostly been the initiative of Preiss and Hodáč, a “cardinal mistake” in his own opinion, that had stemmed from fear of Nazi Germany’s might and impression that democratic politics was unable to successfully counter it.²¹⁴ Documents of the Czechoslovak President’s Office from 1934 on the other hand indicate that both Preiss and Hodáč along with his circle were quite sceptical about joining forces with the radical right.²¹⁵ In the end, however, “the pragmatic wing” went along with forming the new alliance, playing active part in it and changing their official rhetoric accordingly. Kramář justified the creation of the new political force with the need for defending the Czechoslovak national state. “The efforts to unite the

²¹³ On Kapras’s reasons see: CZ-ANM NAD 203 , Jan Kapras, K. 100, 4861.

²¹⁴ Dr. Vlastimil Klíma, „K všeobecným dejinám národní demokracie v míru a v odboji,“ p. 16.

²¹⁵ Archiv Kanceláře prezidenta republiky (Prague), T 635/21 - Mapa II. (1927-1935): T 189/34 (14. 2. 1934), T 177/34c (15. 2. 1934), T 969/34 (13. 11. 1934), T 120/35 (1. 2. 1935), T 148/35 (7. 2. 1935).

national forces in the grave situation” were not a privilege of Czechoslovaks, as they were also “the basis of miraculous successes of Hitler and Mussolini” and “that, what we may find likeable in both movements, even though this nationalism of theirs has gone against us.” In hard situations such as the present one it was natural for “popular movement” to return to “the traditional idea of the state, to the ‘ancien regime’ if we may say so.” In the Czechoslovak case the latter was entirely justified as “our nationalism” had always been “truly social” and free of “capitalist cold-heartedness or even greed.”²¹⁶

3. 4. Greater German People's Party - Josephinism Meets Schönererianism

3. 4. 1. Parties of the National Camp at the End of the First World War and the Founding of the Greater German People's Party

The end of the World War and the events that unfolded thereafter caught the leading national liberal heirs in Austria unprepared. It first reflected in disorientation within their ranks and resulted in an internal crisis of the national camp that was in turn only partially bridged via internal reconfigurations and leadership change. Of all the three political camps the national was the most severely affected, being irrevocably deposed from the rank of “formerly dominant ‘first’ to the so-called ‘third camp’.”²¹⁷ Among the main causes for this was the loss of previously principal nationalist and national liberal strongholds in the Czech lands.²¹⁸ Additional factors that soon reflected in the lower electoral performance

²¹⁶ Karel Kramář, “Národní sjednocení,” *Národní listy*, 4. 11. 1934.

²¹⁷ Lothar Höbelt, “Deutschnationale, Nationaldemokraten, Großdeutsche, Bauernpartei. Das nationale Lager 1918 bis 1922” in *Niederösterreich 1918 bis 1922*. Studien und Forschungen 39 (St. Pölten: 2007), p. 101.

²¹⁸ Höbelt, *Die Parteien*, 364.

were also the newly introduced proportional electoral order and female suffrage. In the German-speaking Alpine provinces, the dominant position of the Christian Socials and Social Democrats as the two main political blocs or “pillars” had to a large extent developed already during the last two decades of the monarchy. After the war it consolidated itself further as a constant and determining factor in the politics of the First Austrian Republic.

During the ending stage of the Great War, the mainstream of the German nationalist forces aligned themselves within the Association of the German National Parties (*Verband der Deutschnationalen Parteien*; January 1918), which was comprised of five main parties: The German Agrarian Party, German Radical Party, German National Union (*Deutschnationale Vereinigung*), German Center and the German Workers’ Party.²¹⁹ In the course of the war the German nationalist MP’s largely supported the government policies and up until the very end counted on the possibility for a Greater German solution in the “old sense” – that is a federation with both Germany and the non-German parts of the Habsburg Monarchy.²²⁰ During the first session of the Provisional National Assembly for German Austria on October, 21st 1918, the German nationalist doyen Otto Steinwender speaking in the name of all the nationalist parties, thus expressed their commitment to the constitutional monarchy and in favor of arranging the relationship of German Austria towards the German Empire and the other nations “through free self-determination (*in freier Selbstbestimmung*).²²¹

²¹⁹ Ackerl, *Die Großdeutsche*, 27-28.

²²⁰ Wandruszka, *Österreichs*, 383.

²²¹ *Ibid.*

Due to the rapidly unfolding political changes the latter stance however very soon proved detrimental to the future political prospects for Steinwender and the majority of other nationalist politicians of the “old guard.” The disorientation during the crucial moments immediately before the war end costed them highly, providing ammunition for the Social Democratic critique.²²² Moreover, during the war years with parliament defunct a competitive relationship between the elected politicians and the leaders of various nationalist associations developed, while simultaneous alienation of the politicians from their electorate had been taking place, particularly due to difficulties in food provision.²²³ In consequence, the general pattern in the political re-consolidation of the national camp during 1918-19 was that the “*Vereinsmeier*” such as the chairman of the *Deutsche Schulverein* August von Wotawa stepped into the foreground.²²⁴ With few exceptions the old political leadership of the national liberal heirs thus stepped aside.

In many places, new and old factions of more radical leanings came to the foreground. Across the provinces, new united regional *deutschfreiheitlich* parties were being founded for each land, mostly constituted on the basis of German People’s Unions (*deutsche Volksvereine*). In some of them the leading roles were adopted by former Schönererians such as Sepp Straffner in Innsbruck.²²⁵ In Vienna, a new party by the name of National

²²² For example see *Deutschnationale Reden und Taten*, Vienna: Vorwärts, 1920:

“Als im Jahre 1918 der Habsburgerstaat zusammenbrach und alle anderen Nationen des alten Österreich wußten, was sie zu tun hatten – ihr nationales Selbstbestimmungsrecht auszuüben – da waren die Vertreter des deutschen Bürgertums ratlos und ziellos, dieselben Vertreter des deutschen Bürgertums, die durch Jahrzehnte hindurch immer wieder behauptet hatten, sie allein wußten es, die Interessen des deutschen Volkes in Österreich treu und gut zu vertreten. Diese Bächter der nationalen Gesinnung, die Deutschnationalen, wußten nicht, was anzufangen. Erst die verlästerte Sozialdemokratie mußte ihnen zeigen, was nötig war: *ationale Selbstbesinnung und Selbstbestimmung der Deutschen in Österreich ohne Rücksicht auf die Interessen der Habsburger.*”

²²³ Höbelt, *Die Parteien*, 362.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*

²²⁵ Cf. *Ibid* and Höbelt, *Deutschnationale*, 101.

Democrats (*Nationaldemokraten*) was formed, endeavoring for an inner reform of the national camp and to steer it towards the “left.”

Another factor of weakness was the overall fragmentation of the nationalist and national liberal party spectrum. A feature distinctive long before the World War already, it manifested itself again well during the elections to the Constituent Assembly in February 1919. Some of the “old” forces from the Habsburg era were still present and it was the German Radicals led by Karl Hermann Wolf (1862-1941)²²⁶ who gave the initiative for a common electoral platform for all the nationalist forces. The German-*völkisch* Main Electoral Committee (*Deutschvölkischer Hauptwahlausschuß*) as the platform was called, connected some of the more radical older groups such as Pan-Germans and German Radicals with the newly constituted regional parties that had unified the national liberal heirs within individual federal lands.²²⁷ Ideologically, all these groups were lacking a clear

²²⁶ German Radicals were a group that had at the beginning of the century seceded from the Schönererians and originally acted under the name *Freialldeutsche*. They pursued a more pragmatic course, especially regarding the ruling dynasty.

²²⁷ The parties that joined the *Deutschvölkischer Hauptwahlausschuß* were: *Alldeutscher Verein für die Ostmark* (Schönererians under the leadership of Josef Ursin), *Deutschnationaler Verein für Österreich* (former German Radical party under the leadership of Wolff along with other nationalist groupings of Lower Austria), *Deutscher Volksbund* (strong Viennese nationalist organization with almost 40000 members led by Leopold Waber), *Deutschfreiheitliche Partei Tirols* (leaders Erler, Straffner), *Demokratische Ständevereinigung* (Salzburg), *Deutschdemokratische Partei Kärntens* (leaders Fritz Dörflinger, Hans Angerer), *Deutschdemokratische Partei für die Steiermark* (leader Adolf Fizia), *Deutsche Volkspartei* (Upper Austria), as well as various smaller parties and non-partisan organizations of the national camp. These included *Schutzverband deutscher Kriegsteilnehmer*, *Reichsverband der deutschen Arbeitnehmervereinigungen Österreichs*, *Deutscher Frauenbund*, *Deutscher Burschenbund*, *Deutschsoziale Partei*, *Völkisch-soziale Partei* and *Deutscher Volksrat für Wien und Niederösterreich*. (Johannes Hawlik, *Die politischen Parteien Deutschösterreichs bei der Wahl zur konsituierenden Nationalversammlung 1919*, phil. Diss (Vienna: J. Hawlik, 1971), pp. 264-274.)

The creation of a common platform did not bring about dissolution of the individual parties which continued to be independent. The common platform essentially revolved around building common electoral committees in individual electoral districts in order to prevent cases of nationalist candidates running against each other. Where the latter nevertheless occurred, the loss of votes was minimized through coupling of lists. The *Hauptwahlausschuss* lacked organization, a central bureau, a central press organ, as well as an uniting idea. (Dostal, *Aspekte*, 63; Hawlik, *Die politischen Parteien*, 279.)

orientation, their common basis being a resolute and uncompromised demand for *Anschluss* to Germany.²²⁸

The parties that ran on the common ticket continued to be *Honoratiorenpartien*. The actual *Honoratioren* however changed: they were not individuals anymore, whose high social standing and influence had brought them a parliamentary seat, but chairmen of the most important associations and heads of strong professional organizations.²²⁹ In this way local electoral committees were built. As the lists of candidates were being made, with few exceptions, the “old guard” of experienced politicians that had served as members in the Austrian imperial parliament, were pushed aside to make place for “new men” that were supposed to make “new German politics.”²³⁰ In Vienna and Lower Austria, where “old players” such as Leopold Waber (1875-1945), Hans Schürff (1875-1939), Rudolf Wedra (1863-1932), K. H. Wolf and Josef Ursin (1863-1932) still occupied leading positions, this was less the case than in the rest of the country.

What remained outside the *Deutschvölkischer Hauptwahlausschuss* ticket were majority of the agrarian parties that, with exception of those in Tirol and Lower Austria, ran separate lists, the Viennese liberals (*Bürgerlich-demokratische Partei*, *Demokratische Partei*), who were from the outset prevented from aligning with the nationalists due to the latter’s anti-Semitism,²³¹ as well as the previously mentioned, newly founded National Democratic Party.

²²⁸ Cf. Hawlik, *Die politischen Parteien*, 256.

²²⁹ Cf. *Ibid.*, 277.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 320.

²³¹ The Civic Democrats criticized the nationalist parties for what they saw as a lack of economic program and stressed that nationalist parties represented an anachronism in a nationally-homogenous state. The nationalists on the other hand rejected the liberals as “Jews,” which was within the context also largely synonymous to “war profiteers.” (Hawlik, *Die politischen Parteien*, 317, 319)

The National Democrats emerged in Vienna, where the fragmentation of that section of political landscape which was neither “red” nor “black” was especially profound and clear-cut. Compared to the federal lands, this section was also relatively weak, as the major part of the Viennese middle-class or *bürgerlich* strata had been since the days of Lueger standing firmly behind the Christian Social Party. National Democrats were formed in late October 1918 from a faction of former German Radicals and a group of dissidents from the urban Christian Socials.²³² Along came also some of the former Pan-Germans. The new party was united by stern critique of the “old parties” that were in the National Democrats’ view not “acting on principles” but based on “tactical considerations of political life”²³³ and the ambition to reform the German nationalist politics and become the leading force within the camp.²³⁴

The National Democrats profiled themselves as “the left wing of the national camp”²³⁵ or “a political group standing far to the left [*weit links stehende politische Gruppe*]” occupying “a middle position between the Social Democrats and the *bürgerlich* parties.”²³⁶ As such they were largely perceived as an “inner opposition” among the established German nationalist circles.²³⁷ Most importantly, they had – despite still being in process of building a party organization as the 1919 elections were approaching – an important advantage to the rest of the national liberal heirs. First of all, as a new political force they had not been compromised by collaborating with the imperial governments and were very prone to proudly stress that fact and use it to their benefit. Being furthermore advocates of

²³² Höbelt, *Die Parteien*, 362.

²³³ Hawlik, *Die politischen Parteien*, 341.

²³⁴ Cf. *Ibid.*, 347

²³⁵ Höbelt, *Deutschnationale*, 105.

²³⁶ Hawlik, *Die politischen Parteien*, 359.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, 362-363.

republican form of government from the very beginning and announcing that their purpose was “meeting the requirements of the new era through fundamental reform in political and economic areas”²³⁸ they were able to develop an image of opponents of the Habsburgs and resolute republicans.²³⁹ In their pre-electoral propaganda they thus accused all the parties except themselves and the Social Democrats of harboring “quite a contingent of monarchists” within their ranks,²⁴⁰ emphasizing that collaboration with the old German nationalists was possible only on tactical grounds.²⁴¹ Building on the widespread discontent among nationalist circles, they succeeded in creating party organizations in most of the Viennese districts by January 1919. The ambition was to spread all over the federal territory, which however succeeded only in Lower Austria, Upper Austria and German-speaking parts of Bohemia.²⁴²

The National Democrats were predominantly a party of the “new” middle-classes or – in more generalizing terms – a “Viennese *Bemtenpartei*,”²⁴³ a party of civil servants and public employees. The structure of the central board, more than a third of which was composed of academics, along with many high school teachers however also revealed a party of intellectuals. Among the top candidates people of liberal professions such as professors, lawyers and journalists formed a majority²⁴⁴ and included August von Wotawa, the long-standing *Schulverein* leader, Rudolf Zarboch, Viktor Mittermann and Cornelia

²³⁸ *Aufruf des nationaldemokratischen Volksvereins*, quoted from Hawlik, *Die politischen Parteien*, 340.

The same manifesto stressed that the “new order “may only be carried out only on the basis of a republic, annexed to Germany.” - Ibid.

²³⁹ Höbelt, *Deutschnationale*, 104.

²⁴⁰ Otto Wagner, “Plattform für die Wahlen,” *Wiener Mittag*, 31. 12. 1918.

²⁴¹ Hawlik, *Die politischen Parteien*, 263.

²⁴² Ibid., 361, 363.

²⁴³ Lothar Höbelt, “Vom ersten zum dritten Lager: Großdeutsche und Landbund in der Ersten Republik“ in *Österreich. 90 Jahre Republik. Beitragsband zur Ausstellung im Parlament*. Stefan Karner ed. (Vienna: 2008) p. 82.

²⁴⁴ Hawlik, *Die politischen Parteien*, 385, 387.

Benndorf, all of them high school teachers or directors, Felix Frank, a lawyer, and Otto Conrad, an economist.²⁴⁵ As mentioned already, the party had an ambitious goal to reform the national camp from within, an enterprise that the National Democrats wished to pursue from an “elitist” starting point and in an “instructional” manner. The professors and other intellectuals that had founded the party thus did not aim to build a mass movement but to act as educators to all the groups in the national camp and eventually the whole nation.²⁴⁶ Characteristic for the self-styled “leftist” stance of the National Democrats was a pronounced “social” and “anti-capitalist” orientation that together with other issues such as republic and *Anschluss* brought them quite close to the Social Democrats – a fact that they openly emphasized. As the National Democratic leader Hermann Kandler stressed they “approached the Social Democratic program very closely” and it was in many ways only the “internationalist character” of the latter that separated them from the Social Democrats.²⁴⁷ Stressing that they “belonged neither to the *bürgerlich* nor to the socialist parties”²⁴⁸ they however clearly distanced themselves from the class character, the internationalist tenets, as well as parts of the economic program of Social Democracy. Due to the strong anti-Semitic orientation they also rejected it for its Jewish leadership.²⁴⁹ During the pre-election time the “old” German nationalists, running on the *Deutschvölkischer Hauptwahlausschuss* platform, pointed their propaganda primarily

²⁴⁵ Among the prominent members were also public official trade unionist Otto Lutz, journalists Anton Schalk and Viktor Lischka, industrialist August Westen, as well as later *Wehrmacht* general and Plenipotentiary General in the Independent State of Croatia, Edmund Glaise von Horstenau.

²⁴⁶ Cf. *Ibid.*, 369, 386-387.

²⁴⁷ “*Wir müssen uns darüber klar sein, daß wir uns sehr stark dem sozialdemokratischen Programm nähern. Von der Sozialdemokratie trennt uns vielfach nur deren internationaler Charakter.*” (GDVP, K. 62, Nationaldemokratischer Volksverein, Beratungen 25. 10. 1918; *Wiener Mittag*, 24. 12. 1918)

²⁴⁸ Otto Conrad, “Die Stellung der Nationaldemokratie zum Klassenkampf,” *Nationaldemokratische Flugschriften*, Nr. 8, (1919): 2.

²⁴⁹ Cf. Hawlik, *Die politischen Parteien*, 398.

against the Social Democrats, being also quite favorable towards collaboration with the Christian Socials.²⁵⁰ The National Democrats on the other hand strongly opposed any cooperation with the Christian Social Party and set this as a condition for any electoral alliance. In the similar vein, the National Democrats prevented any cooperation between the more moderate (less anti-Semitic) Viennese nationalists and the Civic Democratic Party. In this way the far weaker party exercised profound influence over the performance of the larger partner²⁵¹ – a relationship that further developed after the elections and lasted until late 1920s in the inner dynamic of the Greater German People's Party.

The final electoral results reflected the weakened position of the national camp within the political landscape of the new republic. Whereas in the Provisory National Assembly, formed on the basis of the 1911 elections and still including the Bohemian lands there were still 102 nationalist and national liberal representatives (opposed to 65 Christian Socials and 38 Social Democrats), the number after the 1919 elections sank to 26 (27 with one Civic Democrat included), as opposed to 72 Social Democrats and 69 Christian Socials. For the following three years the nationalist minority stood in opposition against the “Black-Red” coalition of the two major parties.

After the elections the elected nationalist representatives (including the agrarians) created a unified club – *Großdeutsche Vereinigung*, founded on a “national, *freiheitlich* and anti-Semitic basis.”²⁵² The president became the former mayor of Linz and long-time Upper Austrian member of parliament Franz Dinghofer, while among the board members there was also Schönerer.²⁵³ At the same time the Wolf's German National Association for

²⁵⁰ Ibid., 257, 329-331.

²⁵¹ Ibid., 310.

²⁵² Dostal, *Aspekte*, 63.

²⁵³ Ackerl, *Die Großdeutsche*, 42.

Austria (*Deutschnationaler Verein für Österreich*) succeeded in attracting the remaining Pan-Germans under Ursin and Leopold Waber's German People's Union (*Deutscher Volksbund*), forming the German National Party (*Deutsche Nationalpartei*) which was officially founded at the beginning of 1920.²⁵⁴ In June of the same year, the newspapers *Ostdeutsche Rundschau* (Wolfian) and *Alldeutsches Tagblatt* (Schönererian) merged into a new party press organ *Wiener Deutsche Tageszeitung*, later renamed *Deutschösterreichische Tageszeitung*.

It is worth noting in this connection that the Civic Democrats, weakened and internally split after electoral failure (the party succeeded in gaining only one seat), entered negotiations with the German National Association. In the end of May 1919, a unification agreement was made, according to which twelve Civic Democrats were to be co-opted into the board of the future German National Party. The merger however failed, as the Civic Democrats rejected Wolf as leader, which caused disagreements also within the German National Association itself. Wolf was nevertheless confirmed as the leader with a tight majority and only Ernst Hampel remained as board member, while the other eleven Civic Democrats decided to give up their seats.²⁵⁵

²⁵⁴ Höbelt, *Deutschnationale*, 110; Karl Jung, "Die Großdeutsche Volkspartei" in *Deutscher Geist in Österreich. Ein Handbuch des völkischen Lebens der Ostmark*. Karl Wache ed. (Dornbirn: 1933), p 173. Initially, the Pan-Germans rejected the label *Deutschnational*, while the former German Radicals rejected *Großdeutsch*.

²⁵⁵ Höbelt, *Deutschnationale*, 109.

Volkszeitung published the following news on June, the 4th 1919:

"Wir erhalten folgende Zuschrift: Die Bürgerlich-demokratische Partei plant den Zusammenschluß aller freiheitlichen und nationalen Parteigruppen Deutschösterreichs und hat zu diesem Zwecke ihre frühere Organisation umgestaltet, um unter Wahrung der kulturellen sozialpolitischen Grundsätze der Mehrheit der Partei als 'deutsche Arbeitsgemeinschaft' ein Zusammengehen mit der Hauptorganisation, nämlich dem Deutschnationalen Verein für Österreich zu ermöglichen. Es ist die Absicht der Partei, auch mit der noch außerhalb stehenden national-freiheitlichen Gruppen gleichfalls zu einem Einvernehmen zu gelangen."

- AT-OeStA/AdR BKA BKA-I Parteiarchive GDVP: Großdeutsche Volkspartei, K. 38, RI-21 Liberale Parteipolitik 1919.

On the 12th of May 1920 the German National Party, along with the other nationalist parties from all over Austria, including the agrarians, national socialists and National Democrats, held a meeting in Vienna with the aim of creating a unified party. While the major part of the agrarians and national socialists expressed reservations and opted to remain outside, the other parties agreed on forming a common committee with the task of creating a common program and carrying out the unification. Although the National Democrats had not succeeded in gaining a single parliamentary mandate was their influence in the new political project evident and unambiguous as they were assigned two seats in the nine-member committee.²⁵⁶ The National Democratic party headquarters in Vienna began to serve as the committee office, which made the role of National Democrats central also in the technical and administrative sense.²⁵⁷

The degree of National Democratic influence, disproportionate to the party's electoral success, may on one hand be attributed to the fact that in Vienna the more conservative part of middle classes which did not vote for the Christian Socials was itself split along the question of antisemitism. On the other hand, the national liberal heirs of the Alpine lands held mistrust and resentment towards the "old leading clique" around Wolf and others that had served already in the imperial parliament and mostly originated from Bohemia. Both of these circumstances played well for the National Democrats as the new, non-compromised force in the capital, who managed to use them to their benefit.²⁵⁸ As we shall

²⁵⁶ The committee members were: Otto Conrad and Felix Frank (National Democrats), Seyfert (German National Party), Max Pauly (*Freiheits- und Ordnungspartei Oberösterreichs*), Heinrich von Clessin (*Deutschfreiheitliche Partei Salzburgs*), Sepp Straffner (*Deutschfreiheitliche Partei Tirols*), Hans Angerer (*Deutschdemokratische Partei Kärntens*), Uto von Melzer (*Großdeutsche Volkspartei Steiermarks*) and Heinrich Petrasch (*Großdeutsche Vereinigung für Niederösterreich*).

²⁵⁷ Dostal, *Aspekte*, 63-65.

²⁵⁸ Höbelt, *Deutschnationale*, 113.

see later on, their influence proved even more evident when a common political program needed to be written.

The new electoral legislation, adopted in July 1920 forbade coupling of lists and was generally framed in favor of the two big parties that operated throughout the federal territory. This put additional pressure on the fragmented national camp to create a united party and catalyzed the process of unification, which was therefore in many regards “an order of the day.”²⁵⁹ Most importantly, it was a “top-down” process in which the party was formed from the parliamentary club, while the supporting basis belonged to a number of organizations that to a larger extent cultivated their own political life.²⁶⁰ A relatively important role in the founding of the new party was performed also by its later “Reich” German “brother parties” – the national liberal German People’s Party (*Deutsche Volkspartei*) and the national conservative German National People’s Party (*Deutschnationale Volkspartei*). Especially the former provided considerable funds during the founding stage.²⁶¹ Along with the Greater German People’s Party and German National Party from Czechoslovakia, the mentioned two parties formed the Working Community of German Members of Parliament (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft deutscher Parlamentarier*) as the joint forum for German nationalist MP’s from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia.²⁶² On the 7th of September 1920 the official founding of the Greater German People’s Party took place in Salzburg. The new party, active in all of the Austrian federal territory, was created through the merger of the following parties:

²⁵⁹ Dostal, *Aspekte*, 64.

²⁶⁰ Wandruszka, *Österreichs*, 385.

²⁶¹ Ackerl, *Die Großdeutsche*, 128.

²⁶² Fritz Mayrhofer, “Franz Dinghofer – Leben und Wirken (1873 bis 1956)” in *Historisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Linz*, 1969 (Linz: Archiv der Stadt Linz, 1970), p 135.

German National Party (German Radicals, Schönererians, German People's Union),
 National Democratic Party,
 Greater German Association for Vienna and Lower Austria (*Großdeutsche Vereinigung für Wien und Niederösterreich*),
 German Democratic Party for Carinthia (*Deutschdemokratische Partei für Kärnten*),
 Freedom- and Order Party for Upper Austria (*Freiheits- und Ordnungspartei für Oberösterreich*),
 Upper Austrian Peasants' Association (*Oberösterreichischer Bauernverein*),
 Greater German People's Party in Styria (*Großdeutsche Volkspartei in der Steiermark*),
Deutschfreiheitliche Partei in Salzburg,
Deutschfreiheitliche Partei für Tirol,
 Greater German Party in Vorarlberg (*Großdeutsche Partei in Vorarlberg*).²⁶³

Hermann Kandl, a National Democrat was elected as the first chairman, while the agrarian leader from Innviertel Felix Bichl and Tirolian *Deutschfreiheitlicher* and former Pan-German Sepp Straffner were selected as his deputies.²⁶⁴ Leader of the Greater German parliamentary club continued to be Dinghofer. The “top-down” manner in which the *deutschfreiheitliche* regional parties and other founding groups had unified into the Greater German People's Party was completely in fashion of the 19th century parties of notables (*Honoratiorenparteien*) and largely lent this character to the new party as a whole, a “stamp of birth” that it carried throughout the time of its existence and development.²⁶⁵ The single

²⁶³ Ackerl, *Die Großdeutsche*, 46-47; Dostal, *Aspekte* 67.

²⁶⁴ Höbelt, *Deutschnationale*, 113.

²⁶⁵ Maurice Duvergier, *Die politischen Parteien* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1959), p. 13; Dostal, *Aspekte*, 69.

composing part that had from before possessed some apparatus were the National Democrats who thus also served as the organizational basis for the new party.²⁶⁶

What remained outside the party that aimed to unite all the “national” and *freiheitlich* forces on basis of ideology and regardless of class-based or professional interests, were the German-Austrian Peasants' Party (*Deutschösterreichische Bauernpartei*) founded in June 1920 by Styrian and Carinthian agrarians (*Steirische Bauernpartei, Kärntner Bauernbund*), as well as the German National Socialist Workers' Party (*Deutsche Nationalsozialistische Arbeiterpartei*). Initially the nationalist agrarians in most of the federal lands still remained under the Greater German umbrella. By 1922 however, when *Landbund* was formed, the major part of agrarian parties and groups joined it. Although GdVP continued to perceive itself as representing the entire national camp, its constant efforts to form a “national unity front” (*nationale Einheitsfront*) brought no lasting success.

3. 4. 2. The Party Program and General Ideological Profile

The negotiations regarding the party program and other conditions on which the merger was supposed to take place ran primarily between the National Democrats on one and the German National Party on the other side, whereby the main dividing point were the social and economic principles. The former advocated extensive intrusions into private property and economic relations, insisting also on the dictum that the new party was not going to be a “*bürgerlich*” one, towards all of which the older nationalists were highly skeptical. In the end the National Democrats succeeded in breaking through with the majority of their proposals. Only in the question of party name the “old forces” achieved a victory, as

²⁶⁶ Ackerl, *Die Großdeutsche*, 79.

especially the agrarian sections disliked the adjective “democratic”, associating it with socialism and the “Jewry”.²⁶⁷ Nevertheless: even in this matter the National Democrats received a concession, as the new partisan association *Großdeutscher Volksbund* in Lower Austria carried a subtitle *Nationaldemokratischer Volksverein*.²⁶⁸

Programmatic lines, mostly written by a small group of National Democrats around Otto Conrad, Felix Frank, August von Wotawa and Hermann Kandl²⁶⁹ were confirmed by the leaderships of all regional parties in the beginning of August.²⁷⁰ They were officially published as the party program entitled Guidelines for German Politics (*Richtlinien Deutscher Politik*) during the founding congress in Salzburg in September 1920 – thus the unofficial name *Salzburger Programm*. The program was centered around critique of liberalism, Marxism and – to a lesser extent – clericalism. It stated that the party stood “on the ground of national democracy and free state constitution [*auf dem Boden der nationalen Demokratie und der freistaatlichen Verfassung*].”²⁷¹

The two central ideological postulates were *Anschluss* to Germany as the fundamental and ultimate goal of the party and the idea of *Volksgemeinschaft*, a social model and at the same time programmatic guideline for approaching practical policy questions in spirit of (ethno-) national unity, reconciliation and nivelization of various economic interests, as well as cultural advancement of the national whole. Religion was credited with its cultural significance, but the mundane goals of the Church and its internationalism rejected. The educational system was entrusted to the state.

²⁶⁷ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 39, Nationaldemokratische Parteileitung, 28. 7. 1920.

²⁶⁸ Höbelt, *Deutschnationale*, 112.

²⁶⁹ Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 48.

²⁷⁰ Dostal, *Aspekte*, 64.

²⁷¹ *Richtlinien deutscher Politik* (Salzburg: 1920) in Klaus Berchtold (ed.), *Österreichische Parteiprogramme 1868-1966* (Vienna: 1967), p. 447.

The principal and central goal of the party was to prepare Austria for annexation to Germany and ultimately carry it out. *Anschluß* was at the time also the preference of other main parties in Austria, above all the Social Democrats. Yet, in the Greater German political program it was assigned such a central position and a character of a goal, so fundamental that it essentially determined the party orientation and policy. Not only was it the “immovable guiding star of our foreign policy [*unverrückbare Leitstern unserer Außenpolitik*]” that was to be pursued independently of the international relations, as well as internal political order and circumstances in Germany.²⁷² The goal of *Anschluß* also determined the internal policy which was to be subordinated to it, the first necessary preparatory steps being alignment of the legal, economic and administrative order of Austria to the one in Germany.²⁷³

The idea of *Volksgemeinschaft* was based on a resolute critique of both liberalism , understood as individualism, and Social Democracy, which claimed to offer “a cure” but was in practice nothing else but “a child of individualism”.²⁷⁴ It stood for an (ethnically founded) national community of “work,” “duties” and “culture” and had in Austrian politics been first coined by the National Democrats, although arguably stemming already from the Ferdinand Tönnies’ distinction between *Gesellschaft* and *Gemeinschaft*,²⁷⁵ with an added pronounced *völkisch* tinge. Essentially, it represented a vaguely defined social and national ideal that offered an alternative to the social reality marked by atomism, class

²⁷² Richtlinien, 446.

²⁷³ Ibid., 449.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 440.

²⁷⁵ The notion *Volksgemeinschaft* had first appeared in a programmatic text by Viktor Lischka and was then adopted by Otto Conrad, the chief national democratic ideologue in the economic field. (Cf. Dostal, Aspekte 91; AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 33, R-I/12).

conflict and opposition between various professional interests. At the same time it had a strong ethno-nationalist underpinning.

The Greater German criticism was not raised merely against Marxism and Social Democracy, which were even given credit for recognizing the injustice and deficiencies of the present economic order (yet, proposing the wrong solutions). Politics that would one-sidedly represent the interests of the *bürgerlich* sections of society were equally rejected. Instead, the Greater Germans declared to pursue all-national politics, “which offer space for all parts of the working people”²⁷⁶ and to be “no class-based party, neither in the *bürgerlich* nor in the social democratic sense.”²⁷⁷ Political parties, founded to represent the interests of specific classes or professional groups, were thus subject to stern criticism and perceived as harmful to the national community. Such parties, being distinctive for “formal democracy” revolving around party politics, could not pursue “genuine popular politics” and “genuine democracy.” With their *Volksgemeinschaft* ideal the Greater Germans thus aspired (and claimed) to be an all-national party, representing the entirety of the nation, regardless of diverse groups within it.²⁷⁸

It must also be noted that the Greater German program included an entire section devoted to the “Jewish question”, while the party statute permitted membership only to “Aryans.” Anti-Semitic discourses of various intensities and nuances were quite customary in the Austrian political context. Yet, as it will be more thoroughly discussed in the Chapter 4, in

²⁷⁶ Richtlinien, 445.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., 443. This formulation clearly revealed the decisive influence that the National Democrats had on the drafting of the Greater German program. Later on and especially after 1930 with the National Democrats’ position weakening was this self-positioning being pronounced less and less to be finally completely omitted.

²⁷⁸ Cf. Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 313-314.

the Greater German case, anti-Semitism was racially based and formed an important part of the *Volksgemeinschaft* ideology.

The Greater German possessed a detailed and well worked-out political program, particularly the sections dealing with economic, financial, welfare and social policies. Yet, the actual diversity of interests represented within the party (and yet wider variety of social groups that the party claimed to represent), along with their position within the political landscape, made them essentially a party of compromise. This could and was often seen as lukewarmness and unprincipledness, which was not merely the often raised criticism in the national camp that also drew water on the mill of the *Heimwehr* and afterwards the National Socialists, but also a subject of mockery by the Social Democrats.²⁷⁹

3. 4. 3. Support Base, Membership, Organization and Groups within the Party

Its proclaimed all-national character notwithstanding the Greater German People's Party possessed a rather limited electoral and support base, which was comprised primarily of parts of urban middle classes. While the major part of industrial workers in Austria supported the Social Democrats – and a minor part the Christian Social Party – was the level of support for the national camp among the workers fairly low. And even in there it was primarily the National Socialists and less the GdVP that catered to workers' interests.

The Greater German *Deutscher Arbeiterbund* unsuccessfully competed with the National

²⁷⁹ See for instance A. D., "Die Großdeutschen im Spiegel ihrer Parteiprogramme," *Tagblatt* (Linz), 24. 4. 1926:

„Unter den bestehenden Parteien sind die Großdeutschen, die sich so nennen, seitdem sie klein geworden sind, unstreitig die an Wählern ärmste Partei. Aber eines haben sie vor uns voraus, das muß ihnen der Neid lassen: Sie sind auch die namen- und programm-reichste Partei.“

Socialist trade unions and professional associations.²⁸⁰ The peasantry on the other hand primarily lent support to the Christian Social Party or the Landbund.

What remained was the (*freiheitliches*) *Bürgertum*²⁸¹ or the broadly-conceived urban middle classes as the traditional social base of the national liberals. This was however also the section of the Austrian population that had been undergoing a process of intensive fragmentation, which partly reflected also in the divided allegiance to various political parties. Whereas the workers largely voted “red” and the peasants predominantly “black”, the same could not be said for the relationship between the *Bürgertum* and the “*kornblumenblau*.” Political allegiances varied according to the inner social subdivisions of this broad group, as well as geographical, generational and other factors.

The economic elites such as large industrialists and landowners mostly maintained a “neutral façade”²⁸² and pleaded for unity of non-Marxist forces, while in reality their support largely went to Christian Socials. It was a rather general pattern after 1918 that almost all of those political representatives of big business, which had previously been *freiheitlich*, switched to the Christian Social side.²⁸³ In the broad perspective the businessmen and entrepreneurs in the eastern part of the country almost exclusively supported the Christian Socials, while in the West the Greater Germans to some extent continued to represent business interests. Only in Vorarlberg however the Greater German People’s Party continued to act as the main representative of industry.²⁸⁴

²⁸⁰ Christian Klösch, “Das ‘nationale Lager’ in Niederösterreich 1918-1938 und 1945-1996“ in *Niederösterreich im 20. Jahrhundert, Band. 1: Politik*, Stefan Eminger and Ernst Langthaler Eds. (Vienna: Böhlau, 2008), p. 572.

²⁸¹ Cf. Höbelt, *Vom ersten*, 82.

²⁸² Höbelt, *Die Parteien*, 366.

²⁸³ See: *Ibid.*

Examples of previously *freiheitlich* politicians that became Christian Socials included Ernst von Streeruwitz and Viktor Wutte both Styrian German Democrats until 1919 and 1920 respectively.

²⁸⁴ Höbelt, *Deutschnationale*, 124.

The backbone of the Greater Germans were thus the middle classes, whereby also important distinctions existed. In Vienna for instance the majority of middle classes supported Christian Socials, while a considerable part, particularly in the inner city voted for the Civic Democrats and other small liberal parties. The Greater German strongholds were the small to mid-sized provincial cities and towns, particularly in the western and southern parts of the country (Tirol, Vorarlberg, Salzburg, Carinthia, etc.), in many of which the Greater Germans in the interwar continued to occupy the positions of mayor.²⁸⁵ The opposing interests within the middle classes, primarily between the “old” and the “new,” reflected in constant tensions within the party and consequentially its constant search for balance and compromise between the diverging interests. Outside Vienna the old middle classes (craftsmen, merchants and other men of independent means) remained the “pillars of Greater German electoral potential.”²⁸⁶ The first party chairman Hermann Kandl, a jeweler by profession, for instance came from this social stratum.

The far most important social group were however the “new” middle classes of public and private employees. Particularly crucial clientele were the public officials, the *Beamten*, whose share among voters amounted to around 70%.²⁸⁷ One of the things that the Austrian republic had inherited from the Habsburg Monarchy was a large bureaucratic apparatus, employing an army of public servants, a large proportion of which became redundant in the new circumstances. Greater Germans were the only party in Austrian parliament that

²⁸⁵ Höbelt, Vom ersten, 82.

²⁸⁶ Höbelt, Die Parteien, 366.

In Lower Austria, for instance, the latter comprised around one quarter of membership. - Klösch, Das 'nationale Lager', 569.

²⁸⁷ Ackerl, Die Grossdeutsche, 170; Wandruszka, Österreichs, 384; Höbelt, Deutschnationale, 122.

openly stood for public officials' interests,²⁸⁸ often "bleeding"²⁸⁹ for them and in 1932 even ending the ten years long close cooperation with the Christian Socials on the national level. The new middle classes were also overwhelmingly represented in the party membership. In Vienna for instance the percentage of public employees stood at 28.5% and of private employees at 19.4% in 1929.²⁹⁰ In the countryside all across Austria the teachers were especially important, at the same time constituting ¼ of the Greater German parliamentary club in 1927 and already a half three years later.²⁹¹ Their importance was reflected already in the party program, in which the teachers were devoted special attention and were designated as "one of the most important mediators of culture" while "economic and social uplift [*Hebung*]" was demanded for them.²⁹² Last but not least, a number of prominent GdVP representatives including two of the chairmen - August von Wotawa (1923-1930) and Hermann Foppa (1932-34) – originated from teachers' ranks.

The dependence on the public servants' support proved to be a constraint for GdVP, which was still considered a "standard middle classes party" by its clientele but could not bring the diverging interests under one common denominator. While the Social Democrats and the Christian Socials were able to adopt clear positions, the Greater Germans were constantly under danger of sitting between the chairs. A good example was the question of rent control, a matter in which the demands of house owners and those of public employees and pensioners were diametrically opposed.²⁹³

²⁸⁸ Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 178.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 367.

²⁹⁰ Klösch, *Das 'nationale Lager'*, 570.

²⁹¹ Höbelt, *Die Parteien*, 368.

²⁹² *Richtlinien*, 455; *Dostal, Aspekte* 100.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, 366-367.

Compared to the two “big players” the degree of organization of the Greater German People’s Party was rudimentary and incomplete. Being a loosely bound *Sammelpartei* that was a *Volkspartei* only in its name the GdVP could not establish a firm and centralized party organization and continued to act as a coalition of relatively small, mostly regionally-based parties that again acted primarily as mouthpieces for relatively small groups of provincial notables. As a consequence the functioning of the party and the framing of its policies were conditioned by the co-existence of a number of centers of power, the official party leadership (*Reichsparteileitung*) being only one of them.

It is also important to note that the Greater Germans never managed to establish a prominent and widely read partisan daily newspaper. This was largely due to the traditionally hostile attitude towards “commercial” journalism by the German nationalist circles for whom only the “ideological press” (*Gesinnungspresse*) was acceptable.²⁹⁴ Only during the years 1923-1927 the party was able to publish its own weekly *Deutsche Zeit* and was otherwise dependent on party-close newspapers that however possessed only a limited appeal, compared to the “commercial” press such as *Neue Freie Presse*. These newspapers that stood close to the party and de facto acted as its organs included provincial ones, published in land capitals such as *Tagespost* (Linz), *Salzburger Volkspost*, *Grazer Tagblatt*, *Freie Stimmen* (Carinthia), *Innsbrucker Nachrichten* and the more important Viennese *Deutschösterreichische Tageszeitung* (until 1923 the primary mouthpiece of the party) and *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten* (1925-1930, partly also after 1930).

Although GdVP did not reach the membership figures of the two main parties, it still amounted to around 100000 in mid-twenties, which represented approximately a quarter

²⁹⁴ Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 107.

of its electorate.²⁹⁵ In Vienna, Lower Austria and Upper Austria the membership and electoral figures came closer, as the percentage of votes cast was relatively low compared to other regions while membership figures were the far highest there, amounting to three quarters of all members.²⁹⁶ Important to note also is that in Lower Austria, the 21.2% of members in 1929 were women.²⁹⁷ Vienna, Lower Austria and Upper Austria were at the same time the lands in which the large majority of Austrian public officials were concentrated. On that ground we may conclude that GdVP largely functioned as a “members party” in these lands – especially in case of the National Democrats in Lower Austria and Vienna - and as a traditional party of notables in the rest of Austria. The electoral base in those lands did not lie in the membership of the party itself but in the non-political organizations and voluntary associations of the third camp. The latter however were not always particularly “obedient” towards the party, supposed to represent them. Internally, the Greater German People’s Party was heterogeneous and ideologically diverse. It was furthermore divided on geographical, organizational, social and partly also generational grounds. The divisions ran along the lines of: public employees versus entrepreneurial interests (the main social cleavage); parliamentary club versus the federal leadership (*Reichsparteileitung*), composed mainly of non-parliamentarians and more directly linked to the non-partisan associations of the national camp (organizational division); federal leadership versus land organizations and – similarly – Vienna versus the province, as well as National Democrats versus the “old forces.” As mentioned already, distance was present also between GdVP and its (potential) electorate, active primarily in

²⁹⁵ Ibid., 96.

²⁹⁶ Ibid., 97.

²⁹⁷ Paul Weis, *Die Organisation der Großdeutschen Volkspartei 1920-1934*, Diploma thesis (Vienna: P. Weis, 1994), p. 49.

associational life and not in the party itself. In this regard the generational aspect was prominent, revealing itself primarily through the increasing indifference towards the party on part of the younger German nationalists and their massive flow into National Socialist ranks during the early 1930s. While the GdVP leading representatives mostly belonged to the 1870s generation no generational change took place within the party ranks during the 14 years of its existence.

First notable conflicts within the party involved the “older” parliamentary politicians on the one and representatives of the nationalist associations on the other side.²⁹⁸ The first group was represented by the leader of the Greater German parliamentary club Franz Dinghofer, while the leading personalities of the latter were Hermann Kandl and August von Wotawa that also served as the party chairmen during 1920-23 and 1923-30 respectively. Since both were also National Democratic leaders the frictions between parliamentary club and the party leadership, dominated by *Vereinsmeier*, partly also overlapped with the tensions between the “old” parties and the National Democrats.

The latter division was however not so simple with the “old forces” themselves being divided on various levels and by no means forming a unified bloc. Even though all of them were conservative in programmatic terms compared to the National Democrats, their stances regarding concrete political questions and strategy were diverse, putting some of them further to the radical side than the National Democrats. Whereas the parliamentary club, composed mainly of regional notables and experienced politicians such as Dinghofer, Schürff, Waber, Clessin and Angerer, tended to be more pragmatic, was the radical

²⁹⁸ Dostal, *Aspekte*, 69.

opposition concentrated mainly around still influential former German Radicals and Pan-Germans (Wolf, Ursin).

After the 1923 federal election which had resulted in considerable losses for GdVP an internal crisis commenced. The losses were largely a result of the unpopular austerity measures in which the Greater Germans had been taking part as members of the governing coalition and which especially affected their core constituency of public employees. Major unrest had however begun already after the signing of Geneva agreement in October 1922 which gave Austria a long-term loan of 650 million of Golden Crowns that enabled it economic recovery and survival but at the same time forbade merger with Germany for the duration of the loan (20 years). Leading critics of the Greater German support for Geneva agreement and chancellor Seipel's economic policy were radical nationalists around Wolf.²⁹⁹

Accusing the party leadership of being responsible for the electoral losses, the group around Wolf revived the *Verein der Deutschnationalen*, expressing the belief that "the Greater German unity party" was going to be a lasting factor only when "thoroughly permeated by the German national idea."³⁰⁰ They rejected what they saw as too close cooperation with the Christian Socials, the supposed neglect of the "racially anti-Semitic standpoint" and the fact that a nationalist defense organization in the manner of the Social Democratic *Republikanischer Schutzbund* had not yet been founded. At the same time they demanded closer cooperation with the *Alldeutscher Verband* in Germany and efforts for reaching an agreement with the National Socialists.³⁰¹

²⁹⁹ Cf. Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 168.

³⁰⁰ *Der Verein der Deutschnationalen*, manuscript (Vienna: 1923). Cited from Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 169.

³⁰¹ Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 169-170.

In October 1923 the *Verein der Deutschnationalen* published a protest call, signed by Wolf, in which the party leadership was fiercely attacked.³⁰² One of the accusations concerned the friendly relationship between GdVP and the liberal German People's Party, which was at the time already cooperating with the Social Democrats in Reichstag and the grand coalition.³⁰³ The Greater German leadership reacted swiftly, announcing that membership in GdVP and the *Verein* were incompatible.³⁰⁴ A deepening conflict within the party ranks followed, which was however largely limited to Vienna and Lower Austria. Among other the Wolf's group attempted to attract Ursin's Pan-Germans but without success.³⁰⁵ On October 30th the German National board of trustees decided to establish the German National People's Party in Austria (*Deutschnationale Volkspartei in Österreich*), as an Austrian counterpart to the German national conservative party. The party took part in the 1924 local elections in Lower Austria with the slogan "Against the Greater Germans jointly with National Socialists and the Landbund"³⁰⁶, achieving low results. In Autumn of 1925 it dissolved and joined the National Socialists.³⁰⁷

The second major dispute within the Greater German People's Party took place in 1928 resulting in Dinghofer's demission as Minister of Justice and his overall retreat from active politics. The leader of the parliamentary club had already before been targeted by the more radical circles due to his pragmatism, politics of compromise and moderation and resolute support for close collaboration with the Christian Socials. Especially his involvement in all the unpopular governmental decisions and policies, be it of "national" or of "social"

³⁰² "Aufruf des 'Vereines der Deutschnationalen'," *Deutsch-österreichische Tageszeitung*, 25. 10. 1923.

³⁰³ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁴ *Deutsch-österreichische Tageszeitung*, 26. 10. 1923.

³⁰⁵ Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 175.

³⁰⁶ "Geschichte der Bestrebungen nach Herstellung einer nationalen Einheitsfront," undated manuscript, (Vienna: 1926/1927?); cited from Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 204.

³⁰⁷ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 50, R-I-73 Deutschnationale Parteipolitik 1921-1924.

character, made him a perfect scapegoat. His gentlemanly appearance and style along with the fact that he often published articles in the “Jewish-liberal” *Neue Freie Presse* just added to his unpopularity in the more radical and plebeian circles.

In 1928 this culminated in an open conflict between Wotawa and Dinghofer, which ostensibly came as a result of Dinghofer’s decision as Minister of Justice not to extradict Béla Kun to Hungary despite the opposite court ruling. The affair however acted just as the last pretext for Dinghofer’s party colleagues to topple him.³⁰⁸ Despite being backed by chancellor Seipel, Dinghofer’s decision unleashed an uproar in the ranks of his own party and fierce attacks on his person by the nationalist press.³⁰⁹ Chairman Wotawa used the opportunity, accusing Dinghofer of ignoring “political imponderabilia”³¹⁰ and calling for his demission. Only the Greater German organizations in Vorarlberg and Dinghofer’s native Upper Austria³¹¹ proclaimed support for his actions. After being recalled from his minister post in July, Dinghofer also revoked his parliamentary mandate in November of the same year.

During the late 1920s the National Democrats as the initially most influential group within GdVP also gradually lost their leading position, being pushed aside in favor of provincial middle class notables. Until 1930 they continuously held the post of party chairman, which was afterwards taken over by the Upper Austrian lawyer Schürff, who was in 1932 succeeded by Hermann Foppa, a high school teacher by profession and also from Upper Austria. Most importantly, the diminishing influence of the National Democrats reflected

³⁰⁸ Mayrhofer, Franz Dinghofer, 130.

³⁰⁹ See for instance: *Deutschösterreichische Tageszeitung*, 28. 6. 1928.

³¹⁰ *Tages-Post* (Linz), 1. 7. 1928: “Dr. Dinghofer ist zweifellos ein Opfer der Unterschätzung dessen, was man die Imponderabilien der Politik nennen muß.”

³¹¹ *Oberösterreichische Tageszeitung*, 5. 7. 1928; Mayrhofer, Franz Dinghofer 129.

in a revision of the political program, made in 1930,³¹² that omitted exactly those passages on economic and social views that had most clearly carried the National Democratic stamp. All this was furthermore connected also to the new images of “middle class” and “national conservative party” that GdVP began to cultivate during 1931-33, as opposed to the National Democratic rejection of “*bürgerlich* class politics.”

3. 4. 4. Electoral Performance, Policies and Relationship to the other Political Parties

While receiving substantially fewer votes than the two large parties, GdVP was however the strongest force within the national camp up until 1932-33, when it was swiftly overtaken and virtually annihilated by the National Socialists. Ranking as third in most of the elections it however possessed an importance that by far exceeded the percent of votes that it usually received. The Christian Socials needed its support in order to be able to form governments and for that reason the Greater Germans served as junior partners in all the coalitions between 1922 and 1931, exercising more influence on policy-making than their electoral strength would have hinted.

Its power had been gradually eroding already before most of its electorate and a major part of members passed over to the Nazis. The first to withdraw support was big business, which occurred already during 1918-20. The party still gathered 12.3% of votes in the 1920 national elections. Another setback however came in 1923 when the party achieved only 7.2%, which reflected both the discontent and consequential withdrawal of support by a part of the Greater German core supporting group – the public employees, as well as

³¹² AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 26, Parteiprogramm 1930.

transfer of rural votes to the *Landbund*. In 1927 GdVP ran on a common list with the Christian Socials, gaining two more parliamentary mandates than in 1923. In 1930 the Greater German Party for the last time succeeded to be elected into parliament as part of the broader *Nationaler Wirtschaftsblock* ticket that united the non-Marxist and non-Clerical political forces and enjoyed support by large sections of the business community. The actual aggregate levels of support for the GdVP in reality however stood at roughly 5% at the beginning of 1930s.³¹³

Distinctive for the Greater German relationship toward the other political forces of the First Republic was on one hand a stance of clear rejection toward Social Democracy and an uneasy, yet long-lasting alliance with the Christian Social Party. While in theory GdVP rejected any kind of “class-based” politics and also espoused a resolute “anti-clerical” position, the anti-Marxist aspect of their political orientation prevented any serious cooperation with the Social Democrats. The dynamic that soon came to prevail in 1920s Austrian politics was the one of Austromarxism versus “anti-marxist” or *bürgerlich* political forces. The fact that the major part of the Greater German organizations, especially the provincial ones, shared with the National Democrats neither their “closeness” to Social Democracy nor their opposition towards the label of a *bürgerlich* party, positioned GdVP firmly into the latter group. Perhaps even more than the Social Democratic “internationalist character” or “Jewish leadership.” Most importantly, it was the pragmatism of the party leadership and particularly parliamentary club that determined the actual political course and especially economic policy. With urgent tasks such as economic recovery at hand, the

³¹³ Höbelt, *Die Parteien*, 375.

party handled “social” (as well as “national”) issues in a cautious and conservative manner largely unburdened by the theoretical considerations contained in their program. When practical decisions had to be made, this became completely clear.

The readiness to join forces with political Catholicism was not universal either. The National Democrats were initially against, clinging to their “anti-classist” postulate and consequential rejection of a unified front against Social Democrats (*bürgerliche Einheitsfront*).³¹⁴ Moreover, they even considered negotiating with the Social Democrats after the red-black coalition had collapsed in 1920. The idea was however swiftly overturned by Dinghofer and other Upper Austrian Greater Germans.³¹⁵

Upper Austrians also performed the crucial role in forming the coalition with the Christian Socials.³¹⁶ The decision fell in May of 1922 during the party convention in Graz with 307 votes versus 58.³¹⁷ The coalition agreement was based on exclusion of all those questions in which the two parties had been programmatically opposed – primarily the relationship between the Church and the state. Greater Germans managed to secure themselves free maneuver space in the polemic about marriage reform and were guaranteed complete liberty in their relations to Germany. The latter particularly pertained to the contacts with competent German bodies in the fields of trade and foreign policy, but also gave GdVP free hand in its propaganda for the *Anschluss*.³¹⁸ In this way, the so-called *Bürgerblock* had been created that ruled Austria throughout the 1920s. Greater Germans held the position of Vice-Chancellor (Felix Frank, later Dinghofer), Minister of Interior (Frank), Minister of

³¹⁴ Cf. Höbelt, *Deutschantionale*, 118.

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 119.

Sceptical attitudes against close cooperation were not limited to the National Democrats but also distinctive for the former German Radicals. (Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 169-170.)

³¹⁶ Höbelt, *Deutschantionale*, 121.

³¹⁷ Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 146.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 147-148; Hanisch, *Österreichische Geschichte*, 126.

Justice (Waber, later Frank, afterwards Dinghofer, followed in 1928 by Slama), Minister of Trade (Emil Kraft, later Schürff). They also secured themselves the important post of the ambassador in Berlin.

On the national level, Christian Socials and Greater Germans collaborated in quite an exemplary manner, pushing aside the ideological differences in favor of the common enterprise of preventing the Social Democracy from ascending to power. More or less supported by the *Landbund* this alliance lasted without major interruptions until 1931. In order to take part in governing the state, GdVP had to pay the price of often having to take responsibility for policies that went against the interests of its own clientele.³¹⁹ This was most clearly the case when dismantling of the oversized bureaucratic apparatus from the times of the monarchy had to be accomplished. On the other hand they also had to push aside or at least milden their ideological “core topics” such as anti-clericalism, anti-Semitism,³²⁰ the questions of *Anschluss* and support for the German minorities in the neighboring countries.³²¹ The image of a centrist party of moderation of compromise that the party had earned in this way however did not contribute to its popularity within its own camp.”³²²

The commonality of interests between the two partners was clearest in Vienna,³²³ where the Greater Germans were not an important force and thus did not present any serious internal competition within the local anti-Marxist opposition. Due to the Social Democratic dominance in the politics of the Austrian capital the Greater German also strongly opposed

³¹⁹ Klösch, *Das 'nationale Lager'*, 569.

³²⁰ This by all means did not mean that anti-Semitic discourse as such was gone, as the Christian Socials themselves had quite a tradition in this regard, dating back to Karl Lueger. For more on this problem see Ch. 6.

³²¹ Klösch, *Das 'nationale Lager'*, 569.

³²² Cf. Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 156.

³²³ *Ibid.*, 180.

the privileged position of Vienna, especially the financial benefits connected to its status of a separate land.³²⁴

In the provinces the cooperation was not always that idyllic. Yet, the strength of the Social Democracy again revealed itself as the crucial factor that determined the level of cooperation between the two parties. Where it was weak, the two competed, while in Carinthia the Christian Socials and the “Nationals” (*Landbund* and the Greater Germans) permanently formed a common electoral bloc with latter as the stronger partner.

After 1925 disagreements arose, particularly in the field of foreign policy. The idea of “Danube Federation” that would economically bind the former Habsburg territories had gained consideration in some of the Christian Social circles, going directly against the Greater German efforts for *Anschluss*.³²⁵ There were furthermore other permanent latent conflicts such as the insoluble “*Beamtenfrage*”, the question of depoliticisation of the armed forces, as well as cultural matters.³²⁶ In spite of all of that, the cooperation between the two parties even deepened and culminated in forming a common list (*Einheitsliste*) for the 1927 elections, along with some minor political groupings from the national camp (National Socialists of the Riehl and Schulze factions). The decisive motive for the common enterprise was again the Marxist “threat.” After the “July revolts” of 1927,³²⁷ the negative attitudes towards the Social Democrats strengthened further, contributing to the broad endorsement of the *Heimwehr* among the Greater Germans. The electoral paroles

³²⁴ See for instance: “Minister a. D. Schürff über das parlamentarische Herbstprogramm,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 17. 8. 1930.

³²⁵ Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 183-184.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, 226.

³²⁷ July revolts in Vienna included clashes between the mostly socially democratic oriented protesters and the police, resulting in numerous casualties, during which fire was set to the Palace of Justice.

reflected this, being pointed primarily against “Social Democracy and its bolshevism”³²⁸ and appealing to the “productive sections of the society” supposedly threatened by them. While the decision to join forces with the “Blacks” caused major discontent in the “national” circles, especially in the countryside and some of the provincial party organizations (most notably the Tyrolean Greater Germans), it was strongly supported by the business circles.³²⁹ The party leadership justified it by pointing out that the parties of the Unity List were “economically rectified [*wirtschaftlich gleichgerichtet*],”³³⁰ that the Greater Germans acquired more leverage in decision-making than had they stood for election separately,³³¹ assuring that the party itself and its political orientation were not going to change.³³² GdVP indeed gained two more parliamentary mandates than after the previous elections, amounting to 12 seats out of 85 won by the Unity List. Yet, the often raised accusation among supporters was that it became “a party of Seipel’s grace,”³³³ threatened to “drown” in the stronger Christian Social Party. In 1929 the unresolved problem of public officials and differences in approaching cultural questions brought Seipel’s government – and with it also the common Unity List – to an end.

Within the narrower framework of the national camp, the Greater Germans claimed a leading role. Until 1932 they indeed managed to retain the position of the strongest force, which was however not an undisputed one. On the federal level, they took the majority of the votes, while in the rural districts and also some of the federal lands (Bürgenland,

³²⁸ *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 10. 4. 1927.

³²⁹ Cf. Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 210-212, 228.

³³⁰ *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 10. 4. 1927.

³³¹ August Wotawa, “Die Großdeutschen und die Einheitsliste,” *Deutsche Zeit*, 18. 3. 1927.

³³² *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 4. 3. 1927.

³³³ Mayrhofer, Franz Dinghofer, 131.

Carinthia and Styria for instance) *Landbund* had a stronger position. In spite of its proclaimed “all-national” orientation different attitudes were present within the GdVP ranks regarding the existence of an independent agrarian political organization. While the National Democrats firmly rejected it and all its special aspirations from the perspective of *Volksgemeinschaft*, the older forces proved to be more flexible in this regard. The German National Party for instance was from the outset open toward a special agrarian political organization that would stand for peasant interests and cooperate with the Greater German People's Party in the manner of “march separately, strike united [*getrennt marschieren, vereint schlagen*].”³³⁴

The Greater Germans thus generally pushed for electoral alliances and coalitions with the agrarians, whereas these often tended to resist these attempts due to their clear socio-cultural and economic placement.³³⁵ GdVP strove to strengthen its position in the countryside, whereas *Landbund* was not particularly eager to lose its own established grounds to the “brother party.” Coalitions between the two parties nevertheless permanently succeeded in Carinthia, where *Landbund* was in a stronger position (antimarxist electoral bloc that also included the Christian Socials). From 1927 *Landbund* also took part in governments, whereas during 1930-32 it formed a common bloc with Greater Germans on the national level (*Nationaler Wirtschaftsblock und Landbund*).

The far weaker and internally split National Socialists presented no competition to the Greater Germans during the 1920s. The relationship with the DNSAP was very good until 1923 when Walther Riehl was deposed as its leader. Afterwards the National Socialists,

³³⁴ Höbelt, *Deutschnationale*, 116.

³³⁵ Robert Kriechbaum, “Der Landbund. Historische Entwicklungslinien einer deutschnationalen Milieupartei in der Ersten Republik“ in *Brennpunkt Europa. Festschrift für Helmut Rumpler zum 65. Geburtstag*. Ulfried Burz et al Eds. (Klagenfurt: 2000), p. 519.

among other also urged by Hitler, adopted a confrontational approach, rejecting electoral cooperation.³³⁶ Riehl's group, now operating under the name *Deutschsozialer Verein* continued to closely cooperate with the Greater Germans and in 1925 practically merged with them by signing a cartel agreement.³³⁷ The Schulz group of National Socialists also gradually re-approached GdVP, joining the *Einheitsliste* for the 1927 federal elections. The Hitlerite movement (NSDAP –Ö) on the other hand remained hostile towards the other nationalist parties, including GdVP, spreading negative propaganda against them. Despite the uneasy relationship with the Hitlerites, GdVP cultivated contacts with them. In 1928 these became institutionalized via “Common Council” that discussed common problems.³³⁸ After 1931 the Austrian Nazi party swiftly rose and completely overshadowed the GdVP, which unsuccessfully tried to counter the national socialist offensive by targeting more moderate nationalist voters.

As mentioned already, the Greater Germans throughout the 1920s devoted major efforts toward negotiating a “national unity front” (*nationale Einheitsfront*) with *Landbund* and the National Socialists. As far as this aim implied acknowledgement of separate “national” agrarian and labor parties, it went against the Greater German programmatic self-image of an “all-national party” and was thus seen with some suspicion by the National Democrats. Yet, it presented a possibility to concentrate the forces of the third camp under Greater German leadership and thus primarily strengthen the position of GdVP. It was therefore no coincidence that unity front was advocated primarily by the latter, while particularly the

³³⁶ Cf. Klösch, *Das 'nationale Lager'*, 572 and Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 165.

In 1923 Hitler himself intervened against cooperation for the elections and suggested abstinence.

³³⁷ Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 204.

³³⁸ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 42, RI-17-102, Verhandlungsschrift über die Sitzung des gemeinsamen Ausschusses am 20. April 1928, 5 Uhr nachmittags im Parlament; Dostal, *Aspekte* 77-78.

Landbund was highly reserved toward it. The first Greater German initiative for the 1923 election shattered with no major success with either the agrarians or the National Socialists.³³⁹

In 1926 another initiative came, this time emerging in the framework of nationalist voluntary associations. The demand was raised on the occasion of the great gymnastic gathering (*Turnerfest*) in Vienna, followed by a conference in which representatives of GdVP, *Landbund*, National Socialists, *Turnerbund* and *Alldeutsche Verband* discussed cooperation for the coming elections and possibilities of a unity front.³⁴⁰ GdVP did not theoretically exclude the option of creating a unified party, the principal aim being however to form a common front for the elections. The National Socialists were open toward such an arrangement, while the *Landbund*, was considerably more skeptical, stressing the specific agrarian standpoints from which they were bound to approach economic issues.³⁴¹ The irony was that during the 1926 negotiations precisely *Landbund* advocated a broader “*bürgerlich*” or “anti-marxist” front that would have included the Christian Socials, instead of a merely “national” unity front, favored by the Greater Germans and National Socialists. In the end however, after the enterprise of national unity front had shattered, it was the latter that formed a common electoral bloc with the Catholics, while the *Landbund* stayed outside.³⁴²

In October 1930 GdVP entered a broader electoral alliance, formed under the former chancellor and Viennese chief of police Johann Schober that united a wide spectrum of

³³⁹ Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 206-207.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 205.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 207-208.

³⁴² *Ibid.*, 208-210.

non-clerical non-Marxist groups on the common platform of economy and civility (*bürgerlichkeit*), aiming at the “army of non-voters” that “opt for *bürgerlich* but do not wish to vote christian-social.”³⁴³ Named “National Economic Bloc and Landbund” (*Nationaler Wirtschaftsblock und Landbund*) or shortly *Schoberblock* it also included the agrarians as separate partners, arising from the need for a “together-binding centrist party [*zusammenfassende Mittelpartei*]”, “an economic *Sammelpartei*” that would unite the “variety of this truly anti-Marxist economic pool [*die Sammlung dieses wirklich antimarxistischen Wirtschaftsbeckens*].”³⁴⁴

Schober had already from earlier enjoyed high reputation in the nationalist circles,³⁴⁵ himself standing close to the national camp. In the words of Adam Wandruszka, he embodied “in almost ideal way the type of a Francisco-Josephine public servant.”³⁴⁶ As an “apolitical”, that is non-partisan person, he was also acceptable for the entrepreneurial circles, among which the initial impulse for creating a coalition under his leadership had originated.³⁴⁷ These initiators also included the Viennese liberals assembled in the Democratic Centrist Party (*Demokratische Mittelpartei*),³⁴⁸ who, however, were ultimately not admitted to the alliance. The Greater German People’s Party, which adopted the role of the far strongest partner within it, occupying 9 out of the 19 seats it gained in the 1930

³⁴³ G. I., Strafella – Wahlen. Das Ende der achtjährigen Einheitsfront, *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 28. 9. 1930.

³⁴⁴ Ibid.

³⁴⁵ Cf. Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 138 and *Deutschösterreichische Tageszeitung*, 14. 7. 1921.

³⁴⁶ Wandruszka, *Österreichs*, 394.

³⁴⁷ Schober himself retrospectively explained in his speech to the Lower Austrian Business Association, how it was the “economy“ that “demanded“ from him “to assume the leadership of those circles that did not want to hear about the big parties anymore and demanded exclusively economic politics.“ - “Dr Schober über seinen Rücktritt - Gegen Parteipolitik und für Wirtschaftspolitik,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 1. 2. 1932.

³⁴⁸ Die demokratische Mittelpartei und die Blockbildung, *Neue Freie Presse*, 9.10.1930.

elections³⁴⁹ rejected to enter any kind of coalition with the “Jews.” *Schoberblock* nevertheless received strong support of the Viennese liberal press.³⁵⁰

As the name of the coalition reveals, economic questions occupied the central focus. It was supposed to unite centrist, moderate political forces for the sake of preventing “the class struggle from the left” and the “clerical-fascist power struggle from the right.”³⁵¹ As such *Schoberblock* arguably offered a potential for a liberal political force, which was however from the outset prevented by the Greater German anti-Semitism. At the same time, its stance toward political Catholicism and the (semi-) fascist *Heimatblock* was not as clearly rejective as the one towards Social Democracy.³⁵² Schober himself stated that “any compromise” between himself and the latter was “out of question.”³⁵³ As expressed in the following statements the actual basic platform, uniting the various groups, was antimarxism:

„The electoral community 'National Economic Bloc and Landbund' wishes to unite the state-affirming population in the battle against all the subversive [*volkszersetzend*] efforts, among whom Marxism is primarily to be counted .“³⁵⁴

³⁴⁹ 9 were occupied by GdVP, 9 by Landbund and one by Schober himself.

³⁵⁰ Cf. *So geht es nicht weiter!*, *Neue Freie Presse*, 6. 10. 1930; Der Wahlblock der Mittelparteien, *Neue Freie Presse*, 7. 10. 1930; Dr. Schobers Rechenschaftsbericht, *Neue Freie Presse*, 9. 10. 1930.

³⁵¹ *Nationaler Wirtschaftsblock und Landbund, Wahlaufuf*, 6. 11. 1930, p. 1. Cited from: Kriechbaum, Der Landbund, 529.

³⁵² The Social Democratic *Arbeiterzeitung* published a very interesting commentary on the (lost) potential of the *Schoberblock* to represent a truly centrist party:

„Der Schober-Block hätte eine wahre Partei der Mitte sein können. Eine Partei, die es sich vorbehalten hätte, je nach den Umständen, je nach dem Gegenstand, über den jeweils im Parlament zu entscheiden ist, mit den Sozialdemokraten gegen die Christlich-sozialen oder mit den Christlich-sozialen gegen die Sozialdemokraten eine Mehrheit bilden. So hätte der Schober-Block als eine Partei der Borgeoisdemokratie mit den Sozialdemokraten die demokratische Verfassung gegen den Fascismus und mit den Christlich-sozialen die Klasseninteressen der Bourgeoisie gegen die Partei der Arbeiter und Angestellten vertreten können.“ - *Arbeiterzeitung*, 4. 11. 1930.

³⁵³ „Jeder Kompromiß zwischen mir und den Sozialdemokraten ist ausgeschlossen.“ Schober’s speech in Wels, October 1930; Quoted from: Hannes Rosenkranz, *Die demokratischen Mittelparteien in der Zwischenkriegszeit (Erste Republik)*, Diploma thesis (Vienna: H. Rosenkranz, 1998), p. 101.

³⁵⁴ AVA, Zeitungsausschnittsarchiv der großdeutschen Volkspartei, *Die Wahlgemeinschaft*, typewritten manuscript, undated (apparently Vienna: 1930) – quoted from Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 259.

„All voters who wish to support its anti-Marxist construction- and economic program are asked to cast their vote for this block. Nobody is required to deny his political views because of that.“³⁵⁵

The Greater German People's Party – whose parliamentary club after the elections was almost identical to the one of National the Economic Bloc (without *Landbund*) – continued to maintain an independent status as a party, which expressed itself most clearly during the Ender government crisis in May and June 1931. The Greater Germans left the coalition due to their opposition to the saving measures enacted by the government that included cutting the 13th salary for the public servants, while the National Economic Bloc along with the vice-chancellor Schober nominally remained part of the governing coalition.

Regardless of all the previous disagreements with the stronger coalition partner, as well as all internal tensions, power struggles and muscle-flexing between various groups it was the so-called *Beamtenfrage* that brought the cooperation with Christian Socials to an end. This had occurred at no earlier point and for no other reason – not even when the National Democrats succeeded in removing Dinghofer. An additional fact, pointing out the centrality of public officials for the GdVP, is that it on the other hand left the coalition precisely when the National Democrats had already been pushed aside and the party leadership taken over by the Upper Austrians, generally more friendly towards the Christian Socials.

Greater Germans briefly re-entered the coalition but soon left it again. In January 1932 chancellor Buresch decided to accept a French loan package under the condition to renounce any attempts to join Germany, which practically implied the deposition of the

³⁵⁵ Der Wahlblock der Mittelparteien, *Neue Freie Presse*, 7. 10. 1930.

foreign minister Schober and an effective halt to his project of establishing a customs union with Germany.³⁵⁶

3. 4. 5. Reinvention as a “National Conservative Party,” Alliance with the National Socialists and the End of the Greater German People’s Party

The party entered the new decade with a revised program,³⁵⁷ reflecting changed positions on specific issues related to the issues of private property and capital. This was linked to the new image that the party began to cultivate at that time. In contrast to its previous rhetoric that stressed the anti-class position of the party, which saw itself neither as a working class party nor a “middle class” (*bürgerlich*) one, GdVP began to profile itself primarily as a middle-class party, “a party of productive middle class [*die Partei des schaffenden Mittelstandes*]”³⁵⁸ representing the part of the population that “were from time immemorial the chief carriers of economy and culture”³⁵⁹ and “bearer of national feeling and thought.”³⁶⁰ The changed internal power relationships with the Viennese National Democrats such as Wotawa and Kandl pushed aside in favor of provincial middle class notables and, as well as the increased competition with National Socialists within the

³⁵⁶ Dieter Stiefel, *Die Große Krise in einem kleinen Land: österreichische Finanz- und Wirtschaftspolitik 1929-1938* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1988), pp. 175-176.

³⁵⁷ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 26, Parteiprogramm 1930.

³⁵⁸ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 25, L-II Propagandamaterial Gemeinderatswahlen 1932 Wien, „Handel- und Gewerbetreibende!“ (leaflet).

³⁵⁹ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 35, Verhandlungsschrift über die Sitzung der Reichsfürsorgeverwaltung, 17.Juli 1932.

³⁶⁰ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 26, Parteiprogramm 1930.

national camp brought forward the increased identification with the broadly conceived “middle class.”

From late 1931 onwards GdVP also began to increasingly characterize itself as a “national-conservative” party. This happened in the context of ever stronger competition within the national camp in which the Greater Germans had been increasingly losing grounds to the National Socialists. In order to survive this battle the party needed to secure its own political space, however marginal. In other words: being pressured to adopt a more radically nationalist stance, it at the same time also needed to offer a clear alternative to the National Socialists by appealing to the sensibilities of that part of nationalist electorate that was repulsed by the National Socialist social populism.³⁶¹ Announcing a need for an “Austrian Harzburg” GdVP turned towards the German DNVP.³⁶² After the December 1931 *Reichsparteitag*, when Hermann Foppa had taken over the leadership, the party thus began to consciously cultivate an image of a “national conservative” party (despite occasional opposition from the former leader Wotawa, who also continued to reject the term “*bürgerlich*”³⁶³).

In 1932 the National Socialists (NSDAP), previously a completely marginal political party in Austria, achieved major successes on the local and land elections, thereby virtually annihilating the Greater German People’s Party by capturing most of its electoral base. The Nazis took votes from other parties as well, particularly *Heimatblock*, yet only in case

³⁶¹ Cf. Kampf gegen das System Dolfuß, *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 12. 12. 1932:

“Die Großdeutsche Volkspartei bekämpft die wirtschaftszerstörenden Ziele der Sozialdemokraten, aber auch die überhebliche Demagogie und die wirtschaftspolitischen Verirrungen der Nationalsozialisten.”

³⁶² This was partly influenced by Hugenberg’s initiative to organize the nationalist forces in Austria which were not a part of NSDAP, as a counterweight against latter. (Höbelt, *Die Parteien*, 379.)

³⁶³ Cf. August Wotawa in *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 2. 10. 1932.

of GdVP was the transfer an unambiguous and close to total. Particularly the radicalized younger nationalist generation began *en masse* lending support to the National Socialists. The electoral defeats in 1932 were swiftly followed by a massive flux of membership from GdVP to NSDAP, that affected particularly but not solely the younger and lower-ranking cadres. As the party leadership discussed the situation in May of 1932, resolving not to dissolve the party, the majority of the local councilors and other elected representatives had already been passing over to the Nazis, regardless of this resolution.³⁶⁴ These were soon being followed by entire land organizations as in the case of Vorarlberg GdVP which in May 1933 officially recommended its members to join NSDAP, arguing that it stood for “the main demands of the Greater German People’s Party, especially the will for *Anschluss* and anti-Semitism.”³⁶⁵ Estimates done by the Viennese *Bundespolizeidirektion* indicate that by early 1933 around 70 percent of Greater German membership switched over.³⁶⁶ The Greater German People’s Party was by that time thus practically falling apart, being “imperceptibly absorbed” by the NSDAP.³⁶⁷

The concluding phase of the disintegration of GdVP took place simultaneously and was to an extent accelerated through the dismantling of Austrian democracy by the Chancellor Dolfuß. The Greater German People’s Party, by then largely reduced to its federal leadership and parliamentary club (and thus becoming “a high command without an army” in the fullest meaning), performed its last notable political act by attempting to prevent the takeover of power by the executive. On March 15th 1933, thirteen days after the government had dissolved the parliament, Sepp Straffner, one of the three presidents of the

³⁶⁴ Carsten, *Die Vorläufer*, 203.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁶ Klösch, *Das 'nationale Lager'*, 572; Weis, *Die Organisation*, 191.

³⁶⁷ Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche* 289.

Nationalrat, attempted to re-assemble the parliament in order to push for a self-dissolution of the parliament which would in turn force new elections. The government prevented this forcefully by evoking the 1917 emergency enabling act³⁶⁸ After that GdVP continued to push for new elections and pleaded for return to the constitutional order. Greater German *Bundesrat* member Klimman protested the newly instituted government measures by calling them “a ridiculous and at the same time criminal operetta dictatorship [*eine lächerliche und zugleich verbrecherische Operettendiktatur*].”³⁶⁹

GdVP thus put itself down in history as the defender of Austrian democracy at the moment of its abolishment. As it will be however shown in Chapter 5, their motives for doing so were to a large extent conditioned by their anti-government stance and only to a limited degree stemmed from a sincere democratic orientation. The Greater German correctly evaluated the introduction of Dolfuß’ dictatorship as a direct reaction to the political developments in Germany.³⁷⁰ Their own reactions to these were however diametrically opposed: if the Christian Social leadership feared the advance of National Socialism in Germany, the Greater Germans perceived it in a largely positive light. While *Landbund* remained in the governing coalition, GdVP joined an alliance (*Kampfgemeinschaft*) with NSDAP in May 1933.

After *Großdeutsche Front* had been founded in April, comprised of the National Socialists, Styrian Heimatschutz, Carinthian Heimwehr and some other nationalist groups, followed soon by German Union of Employees (*Deutsche Angestelltengewerkschaft*), GdVP on May

³⁶⁸ After the police arrived to dissolve the session, handing Dolfuß' order to Straffner, the latter filed a report against the chancellor on the basis of 76. paragraph of the Criminal law (public violence).

³⁶⁹ Die Großdeutschen und die Krise, Flugblatt zu den Ereignissen d. 4. März 1933, AVA, Zeitungsausschnittsarchiv der großdeutschen Volkspartei.

³⁷⁰ Foppa commented during assembly of party trustees in Linz: “*Der Entschluß der christlich-sozialen Partei, das jetzige Regime aufzurichten, ist auf den Ausgang der deutschen Reichtagswahlen zurückzuführen*” (*Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 23. 3. 1933.)

15th officially joined it.³⁷¹ Once again, the close union of public employees and GdVP played a prominent role in the latter's crucial political decisions.

The alliance virtually subordinated the GdVP to the National Socialist objectives.³⁷² With both the NSDAP and Styrian Heimatschutz becoming illegal in June, the Greater German notables once again momentarily gained a degree of prominence, yet running risk of becoming merely a legal "representation" for the illegal National Socialists.³⁷³ During 1933-34 they were thus involved in attempts to reach an agreement between the government and the Nazi-dominated nationalist opposition. These attempts harbored an ambition to once again become the leading party of their camp and were being sabotaged by the radical wing of National Socialists.³⁷⁴ Among other they included negotiations with *Landbund*, then still part of the governing coalition, and the government itself with the idea of forming a new cabinet in which Christian Socials would share power with the "national" forces.

Most, importantly, the Greater German leaders invested their efforts into pushing for new elections. Their last political act took place when in May of 1934 the government attempted to legitimize the new constitution by putting it in front of the parliament (now already

³⁷¹ Ibid., 298-299.

Out of the 43 members of GdVP leadership only 7 voted against the decision. Ernst Hampel and Hans Schürff abstained. - Wandruszka, *Deutschliberale*, 30-31.

³⁷² The most telling points of the agreement signed by Foppa and Zarboch for the Greater- German side were the first: "*Das Abkommen bezweckt nicht die Erhaltung der organisatorischen Form der großdeutschen Volkspartei an sich, sondern die Verwertung der von ihr besetzten Machtpositionen und öffentlichen Stellen im Sinne der Kampfgemeinschaft*", the second: "*Es steht dem Übertritt von Anhängern der großdeutschen Volkspartei zur NSDAP nichts im Wege. Derartige Übertritte werden jedoch nicht verlautbart.*" and the third, which stated that the duty of GdVP was to achieve new elections and consequential victory for the "national movement"(Franz Langoth, *Kampf um Österreich, Erinnerungen eines Politikers* (Wels: 1952), p. 101; Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 299-300).

³⁷³ Cf. Höbelt, *Die Parteien*, 380.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

missing its Social Democratic members). Foppa and Hampel as the only Greater German deputies present first rejected the vote on the new constitution, as the two-third majority was not present. In the end they however voted against it, which marked the last parliamentary act by GdVP, after which the party practically ceased to exist.³⁷⁵

It was never banned by the state authorities as had been the case with the Social Democrats, but silently dissolved itself, partly continuing its life in the framework of nationalist cultural associations.³⁷⁶ A major part of the membership had already moved to the National Socialists, followed by a part of the party leadership (Foppa, Langoth, Zarboch). Some of the leading members (for instance Viktor Militschinsky) were later active as functionaries in the Austrian *Ständestaat* regime and its party organization *Vaterländische Front*, while the majority became politically inactive. Two notable exceptions to this pattern were Hans Prodingner (interestingly a former member of DNSAP) and Viktor Mittermann (who had already in 1932 switched to the Christian Social Party), that actively worked against the spread of National Socialism in Austria and both paid for it by dying in Nazi concentration camps later.

In April of 1936 the Directorate General for Public Security (*Generaldirektion für die öffentliche Sicherheit*) could note that „the former Greater German Party who had almost entirely lost its members to the national socialist movement, was condemned to complete inactivity.“³⁷⁷

³⁷⁵ Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 310.

³⁷⁶ Jung, *Die Großdeutsche*, 173-226; Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 311.

³⁷⁷ Carsten, *Die Vorläufer*, 203.

3. 5. Anti-clericalism and Yugoslav Nationalism – Interwar Slovene “Progressives”

3. 5. 1. The Parties of the Slovene Progressive Camp, 1918-21 - Concentration in the Yugoslav Democratic Party and Subsequent Fragmentation

The roots of the Slovene progressive camp may be traced back to the nationally oriented literary, intellectual and political circles of the first half of 19th century, followed by the “Young Slovenes” (*Mladoslavenci*) in the second half, and - in the strict partisan sense - to the founding of the “National Party for Carniola” (*Narodna stranka za Kranjsko*) in 1894. This party was renamed to “National Progressive Party” (*Narodno napredna stranka – NNS*) in 1905.

After parliamentary life had been restored in Austria in 1917, Slovene MP's in Vienna assembled in the Yugoslav Club put forward the May Declaration, demanding unification of all the South Slavic lands of the Dual Monarchy in a single political unit. In this way the Monarchy would have been transformed from a “dualist” into a “trialist” one (with a potentially higher number of sovereign entities under the Habsburg Crown). The declaration and the broad popular movement that followed was largely the work of the Catholic All-Slovene People's Party, which held all but one of the Slovene parliamentary mandates. With Ljubljana -based leadership of the National Progressive Party under Ivan Tavčar being largely passive during the time, the progressives joined the Declaration Movement with a slight delay at the initiative of the younger group, formed around Gregor Žerjav.

During the first half of the 1918 however, an initiative to create a unified progressive party for all the Slovene lands, as the Catholics had done already in 1909, was put into motion.

The idea was first put forward by the leader of the National Party for Styria Vekoslav Kukovec, who however at first envisaged a joint political party that would encompass all the existing Slovene parties transcending all the ideological differences.³⁷⁸ The idea was rejected by the leadership of the National Progressive Party in Ljubljana, who argued for an “all-Slovene progressive democratic party” that would have stood “in firm coalition [...] for our self-determination” with the All-Slovene People’s Party.³⁷⁹ .

In June 1918 the National Progressive Party merged with other similarly oriented political organizations from other Slovene lands - the “National Party for Styria” and “Progressive Party for Görz and Gradisca” to form the joint “Yugoslav Democratic Party” (*Jugoslovanska demokratska stranka* - *JDS*). For a short time at the end of the WWI the Slovene progressive camp was therefore united in a single party under the leadership of Ivan Tavčar, lawyer, literary writer and at the time also the mayor of Ljubljana.

In the first Slovene National Government, which was formed on October 31st 1918 and operated until the end of January 1919, Yugoslav Democratic Party held five out of twelve departments. After the founding of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croat and Slovenes it connected with the “Serb-Croat Coalition” under Svetozar Pribičević and some other Yugoslav nationalist and liberal groupings from the former Habsburg lands in February 1919. Soon thereafter the State-building Democratic Party as the new coalition was called, aligned further with the “National Liberals”, “Progressives” and “Independent Radicals” from the former Kingdom of Serbia in May of the same year.³⁸⁰ This way the first all-state party in

³⁷⁸ Jurij Perovšek, “Ustanovitev Jugoslovanske demokratske stranke leta 1918,” *Studia Historica Slovenica*, vol. 4, No-2-3 (2004): pp. 478-479.

³⁷⁹ *Slovenski narod*, 31. 12. 1917.

³⁸⁰ Jurij Perovšek, *Liberalizem in vprašanje slovenstva : nacionalna politika liberalnega tabora v letih 1918-1929* (Ljubljana: Modrijan, 1996.), pp. 129-130.

the newly founded Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was formed. Bearing the same name as its Slovene predecessor, the Democratic Party, led by the Serbian liberal politician Ljuba Davidović,³⁸¹ became the strongest political force in the country, as well as the most vocal and principled proponent of the Yugoslav national idea. The Democrats were namely the only party that put the Yugoslav state-building idea and the project of unifying the Yugoslav nation through overcoming the historical and other differences as its basic platform. At the same time it was also the only party that already in 1920 operated throughout the state territory.³⁸²

The unity of Slovene progressives however did not last long, as two new parties were founded in 1919. The “Independent Agrarian Party” (*Samostojna kmetijska stranka – SKS*), led by a wealthy landowner Ivan Pucelj, was originally founded by rural followers of JDS to weaken support for SLS among the peasantry but soon adopted its own, essentially agrarianist course.³⁸³ At the 1920 elections to the Constituent Assembly the party achieved impressive results, ranking second among Slovene parties and achieving three times more votes in Slovenia than the Yugoslav Democratic Party. After that its electoral appeal however sharply diminished, primarily due to its vote in favor of the centralist 1921 constitution.

Originating partly from the progressive “national” trade unions as well as circles of disappointed former social democrats, the “National Socialist Party” (*Narodno socialistična stranka – NSS*), strove to pursue a gradual path towards a distinctly Yugoslav

³⁸¹ Davidović was selected as president for the sake of maintain the electoral base in the lands of the former Serbian kingdom. In the former Habsburg lands, Svetozar Pribičević exercised decisive influence as the leading figure of the party.

³⁸² For more on the Democratic Party see: Desimir Tošić, “Demokratska stranka 1920-1941,” *The History of the 20th Century (Istorija 20. Veka)*, no. 1/2006: pp. 193-203.

³⁸³ Cf. Perovšek, *Liberalizem*, 115-116.

type of socialism³⁸⁴. Following the example of the Czech National Socialists, their Slovene counterparts attacked Marxism and internationalism, as well as economic liberalism, whose main representative they saw in the ‘bourgeois’ JDS.³⁸⁵ As opposed to the Democrats and Agrarians, the National Socialists demanded cultural autonomy for each of the “tribes” and federal administrative organization.

The process of diversification within the broader national liberal spectrum that occurred at the turn of the century in the Czech as well as Austrian German politics³⁸⁶ and also led to the development of entirely independent movements, “emancipated” from their national liberal “mother party” and outgrowing its power, took place in Slovene lands only during 1919-20³⁸⁷ and never reached its conclusion. In contrast to the Czech politics where Agrarians and National Socialists developed their independent political currents, forming political camps of their own, 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. By the 1930s they moreover again found themselves within the same party with the national liberal heirs.

³⁸⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, 117.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 118.

³⁸⁶ Cf. Detlef Brandes, “Die Tschechoslowakischen National-Sozialisten“ in *Die Erste Tschechoslowakische Republik als multinationaler Parteienstaat*, K. Bosl ed. (München: Oldenbourg, 1979), pp. 101-153; and Pieter M. Judson, *Guardians of the nation: activists on the language frontiers of imperial Austria* (Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press, 2006), p. 69.

³⁸⁷ It must be mentioned that the first serious attempt of this kind took place already during 1911-12, when Fran Radešček organized National social movement in the Slovene lands, placing it in opposition towards Social Democracy, Christian Social movement as well as the national liberals, who were trying to submerge it. Despite quite promising beginnings, the project of establishing an independent movement did not succeed. After the war, Radešček himself, now adherent of the Catholic camp, did not participate in the newly founded National Socialist Party led by Ivan Deržič.

See: Irena Gantar Godina, “Prisilno izseljenstvo političnega agitatorja Frana Radeščka 1911-1912,” *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino*, vol. 47, No.2 (2007): pp. 43-62.

The 1920 elections into Constituent Assembly brought impressive results for the progressive camp taken as a whole, which was predominantly the credit of Independent Agrarian Party that managed to gather more than 21% of Slovene vote.³⁸⁸ Democratic Party however, being victorious on the all-state level, attained only modest results in Slovenia (7.7%).³⁸⁹ Nevertheless, due to their membership in the victorious party and closeness to the ruling circles, the progressives were given some of the key posts in Slovene administration.

3. 5. 2. Programmatic Orientation and General Ideological Profile

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. 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.³⁹⁰ 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 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

³⁸⁸ Pivec, Programi, 372.

³⁸⁹ Ibid.

³⁹⁰ Cf. Perovšek, Vprašanje, 96 (quotes from *Slovenski Narod*, 14.9.1892, 15.9.1892.)

science, art, literature, in policy implementation, in public administration, in legal and social ordinances.”³⁹¹

The all-state Democratic Party was represented in the Slovene progressive press as an essentially centrist party and moreover the most important agent of state building, as well as a necessary safeguard against all instabilities and extremes.³⁹² Rhetorically asking “Who is a Democrat?” the daily *Jutro* answered:

“...all those that sincerely believe in our state, to become rich and mighty, all those that want to give it such an order that will put away any fears of its disintegration [...] all those that opine, that burdens and duties should be even, all those who see in clericalism the intellectual death of Slovenes, all those that do not succumb to the phantoms of communism and that realize that in agrarian Yugoslavia socialism is not a feasible economic doctrine, all those that wish, that no [particular] estate or class develops itself at the cost of others.”³⁹³

Conforming to the general pattern of the pre-war national liberal parties of Austria such as the Young Czechs for instance,³⁹⁴ 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”³⁹⁵ in its entirety. Already from the early 1920s on the progressives also often referred to themselves as adherents of “nationalism”³⁹⁶ – a self-designation that became a prevalent one during the

³⁹¹ Program Jugoslovanske demokratske stranke (June 1918), in: *Programi političnih strank, organizacij in združenj na Slovenskem v času Kraljevine SHS (1918-1929)*, J. Perovšek ed. (Ljubljana: Arhivsko društvo Slovenije, 1998) p. 23.

During the JDS founding assembly Vladimir 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: Perovšek, *Liberalizem*, 35.))

³⁹² “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.)

“With its program and its solid power has Democratic Party held in balance both the reactionaries on extreme right and demagogues on extreme left, as well as tribal separatists and tribal hegemonists.” (Ibid.)

³⁹³ *Jutro*, 23. 10. 1920.

³⁹⁴ Cf. Malíř, *Systém*, 19.

³⁹⁵ Cf. Program ČsND, 1-4; and Program JDS 23.

³⁹⁶ See for instance a 1921 article in *Slovenski narod* entitled “Nationalism without detours” (“Nacionalizem brez ovinkov,” *Slovenski narod*, 25. 9. 1921).

1930s. Connected to this was also the claim to represent and appeal to all the “estates” within the nation.

By “nationality” the Slovene progressives gathered in the Yugoslav Democratic Party already in June 1918 meant primarily the “Yugoslav” and not merely “Slovene” nationality anymore. Moreover, the “younger” group of national radicals around Žerjav and Kramer had begun to embrace the idea of a unitary Yugoslav nation already after they had joined the National Progressive Party in 1909. Not yet in the leadership position in 1918 but already prominent, they later assumed the central role in progressive politics, at the same time representing the most faithful and determined proponents of Yugoslav nationalism³⁹⁷ in Slovene lands.

In contrast to the Slovene People’s Party, which advocated political autonomy for Slovenes, progressives from the very beginning adopted a Yugoslav unitarist outlook and argued for a centralist state, as the best means for its implementation. As opposed to the Catholics and Social Democrats they also did not declare themselves republicans, from the outset readily accepting monarchic form of government under the Karageorgevich dynasty. After the unification both the Yugoslav Democratic and Independent Agrarian Parties (but not the National Socialists) voted in favor of the centralist 1921 *Vidovdan* (The day of St. Vitus) constitution, and advocated the then official idea of Yugoslavs as a “three-named nation”. According to the latter conception, Yugoslavs were one nation composed of three “tribes”, which should undergo a process of amalgamation, thereby gradually overcoming all the historically caused differences among them.³⁹⁸

³⁹⁷ Yugoslav nationalism is to be thoroughly discussed in the Chapter 4.

³⁹⁸ For more on projects of cultural amalgamation of Yugoslavs see: Andrew Baruch Wachtel, *Making a nation, breaking a nation: literature and cultural politics in Yugoslavia* (Stanford (CA): Stanford University Press, 1998).

As pointed out already, pronounced “anti-clerical” orientation was another decisive distinguishing mark of the progressive camp, common for all of its generations, groups and parties. The opposition against political Catholicism to a large extent determined the positive content of progressive ideological standpoints, partly conditioning the persistence and doctrinaire rigidity of their Yugoslav nationalist orientation as well. As we shall see in the Chapter 4 the latter was by no means merely a matter of tactics in the sense of being derivative of anti-clericalism, but a matter of sincere persuasion. Nevertheless, we may however say that the position of anti-clericalism was even more fundamental. It had largely defined progressive politics from the outset, far earlier than its main proponents adopted Yugoslavist positions. Moreover, it continued to define the entire camp, regardless of all the internal differences, throughout the interwar.

The 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 liberal allies achieved the inclusion of a “*kanzelparagraf*”, banning priests from political work, into the 1921 constitution.³⁹⁹ Especially worried were the progressives about the Church’s interference within the educational system. Believing in modern, enlightened education with strong national ingredient and coining the phrases of “progress” and “free-mindedness” representatives of progressive camp warned against “authoritarian world views, which, building on dogmatic fundaments, claim to be primarily entitled to discover truth (...) be they founded on basic dogma of religious or political nature.”⁴⁰⁰

³⁹⁹ For more on that see: Jurij Perovšek, “Slovenska politika in uvedba kancelparagrafa v prvi jugoslovanski državi” in: *Jugoslavija v času : devetdeset let od nastanka prve jugoslovanske države*, B. Balkovec, ed. (Ljubljana: Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete, 2009), pp.. 105-118.

⁴⁰⁰ “Naša misel” in: *Petnajst let J.N.A.D. »Jadrana«* (Ljubljana: 1937), p. 14.

Advocating free spiritual development of the youth and unhindered scientific and intellectual progress they perceived ‘clericalism’ and also the Church supporting it as “anachronisms.”⁴⁰¹

They also 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.”⁴⁰²

The substantially higher levels of secularity beyond doubt counted among the main reasons behind the Slovene progressives’ infatuation with Czechs and Czech society that dated back to the Austrian era. During the interwar this relationship did not fade away but on the contrary, in many ways strengthened further with the Žerjav-Kramer group of former national radicals cultivating especially strong links to Czechoslovakia. For them it acted as a political paragon or a “lighthouse”, an important source of inspiration to be consciously imitated. 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, strong economic bonds as well as important intellectual influences.

These lines, written by leading members of Yugoslav Progressive Academic Society “Adriatic” were pointed also against Marxism: “Above all turns JNAD Jadran against the materialistic world view, which denies the spirit, as the original source and moving force in human history, forming it out of the matter.” (Ibid.)

⁴⁰¹ *Jutro*, 20. 2. 1924.

⁴⁰² *Jutro*, 2. 2. 1924.

Ivan Hribar, being the main representative of Neo-Slavism in Slovene lands before the First World War and closely collaborating with Karel Kramář,⁴⁰³ between 1919 and 1921 also acted as the first ambassador of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes to Czechoslovakia. Gregor Žerjav during the First World War had secret contacts with the Czech National Council in Paris and cooperated with the *maffie* (K. Kramář, Přemysl Šámal, Bedřich Štěpanek),⁴⁰⁴ whereas Albert Kramer, was sent to Prague in 1931 as an extraordinary envoy of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia to the Czechoslovak republic.⁴⁰⁵

Having close personal connections to Czechoslovakia (among other also his wife was Czech), Kramer also acted as the president of the Ljubljana branch of the Yugoslav-Czechoslovak League (*Jugoslovansko-češkoslovaška liga*), which was interestingly located in *Kazino*, a building that in the interwar Ljubljana served as the progressives' semi-formal headquarters.⁴⁰⁶ Yugoslav-Czechoslovak League, officialy being a non-partisan organization, actually had an overwhelmingly "progressive" membership,⁴⁰⁷ whereas the progressive daily *Jutro*, of all the Slovene newspapers devoted the far most attention to the Czech affairs.⁴⁰⁸

Intellectually, the central role model and source of inspiration for the Slovene progressive politicians was beyond any doubt the Czechoslovak president Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰³ See: Irena Gantar Godina, *Neoslavizem in Slovenci* (Ljubljana: Znanstveni inštitut Filozofske fakultete, 1994), especially pp. 40, 91-95, 111-114, 119-130, 157-158.

⁴⁰⁴ Janko Prunk, "Gregor Žerjav" in: *Slovenski biografski leksikon*, 15: *Zdolšek-Žvanut*, J. Munda et al eds. (Ljubljana SAZU, 1991), pp. 956-959.

⁴⁰⁵ Jurij Perovšek, O demokraciji in jugoslovanstvu. Slovenski liberalizem v Kraljevini SHS/Jugoslaviji (Ljubljana: INZ, 2013), pp. 214-216.

⁴⁰⁶ Cf. Jerca Vodušek Starič, *Slovenski špijoni in SOE : 1938-1942* (Ljubljana: J. Vodušek, 2002), pp. 12-13, 115.

⁴⁰⁷ Marjeta Keršič-Svetel, *Česko-slovenski stiki med svetovnima vojnama* (Ljubljana: Zveza zgodovinskih društev Slovenije, 1996), pp. 61-62.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁴⁰⁹ 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 Slováci*, V. Doubek, L. Hládky, R. Vlček eds. (Prague: MU AV ČR, 2013), p. 264.

During the interwar period the former national radical leaders around Gregor Žerjav and Albert Kramer continued to declare Masaryk as their role model, praising him as “the most distinctive representative of democratic idea” and “a man that with an iron consistency implemented the extreme consequences of his democratic orientation.”⁴¹⁰ At the same time it must be said that their political performance – taking place in the context of the often turbulent conditions of Yugoslav politics, as well as the persistent internal Slovene power struggle with the Catholics – at many points deviated substantially from the political principles and practice put forward by the Czechoslovak president. Among other the progressive politicians, often tending to subordinate democratic principles to the current political needs, served as important pillars to the undemocratic regime during the years 1931-1935, for which they received major criticism from parts of intelligentsia within their camp.⁴¹¹ Moreover, as it will be more thoroughly demonstrated later, the tendency towards integral nationalist conceptions made them in this regard closer to Karel Kramář and his National Democrats, for whom otherwise *Jutro* wrote on the occasion of his death that he had not understood “the deep intellectual shift (...) in the nation’s soul” after the World War and that his political course did not correspond to the “common state and national policy.”⁴¹²

Another common feature of all the progressive strains was devotedness to constitutional order, civic achievements of the French revolution and general European political

⁴¹⁰ Masaryk je umrl, *Jutro*, 15.9.1937.

Also see: Albert Kramer, “Prezident Masaryk,” *Jutro*, 7.3.1931; Albert Kramer, “Osemdesetletnica prezidenta T. G. Masaryka,” *Jutro*, 7. 3. 1930.

⁴¹¹ See for instance: Observator [Fran Zwitter], “Bankrot slovenskega liberalizma,” *Sodobnost*, vol. 3, No. 7-8 (1935).

⁴¹² Dr. Karel Kramář, *Jutro*, 27.5.1937.

developments of the 18th and 19th centuries.⁴¹³ In socio-economic terms, the programmatic points of the Yugoslav Democratic Party and those that succeeded it were rather general and undefined – a topic to be more thoroughly discussed in the Chapter 5. Generally speaking, the progressives' social and economic views were quite far from economic liberalism and bore marks of national solidarism,⁴¹⁴ along with demands for modern social legislation. At the same time however, it may be said that economic and social issues mostly did not stand in the foreground of their political engagement, being largely overshadowed by nationality politics on the one and the cultural and political struggle against “clericalism” on the other. We may thus conclude that the two principal denominators of the Slovene progressives during the interwar period were on the one hand Yugoslav nationalism, which acted as their main political card and on the other anti-clericalism, that had largely defined the progressive camp already before the Great War and continued to do so throughout the period under scrutiny.

3. 5. 3. Social Base, Membership, Organization and Groups within the Party

Taken together, the parties of the progressive camp found followers and supporters among people coming from all social strata and belonging to various professional groups. Nevertheless, to a certain extent predominantly ‘bourgeois’ character could be ascribed to the progressive camp which comprised the major part of economic and intellectual elites, as well as most of the people of liberal professions and small entrepreneurs.⁴¹⁵ This was

⁴¹³ Cf. Ervin Dolenc, “Slovenski intelektualci in njihove delitve” in *Slovenska trideseta leta: simpozij*, Peter Vodopivec, Joža Mahnič eds. (Ljubljana: Slovenska matica, 1997), p. 199.

⁴¹⁴ In February of 1923 *Jutro* described the Democratic Party as “the leading champion for national harmony.” (*Jutro*, 18. 2. 1923)

⁴¹⁵ Three years after the introduction of universal suffrage in 1907, to which National Progressive Party was opposed, the party leader, lawyer and writer Ivan Tavčar boasted about one quarter of votes at the same time

particularly distinctive for the Yugoslav Democratic Party after the agrarian and national socialist factions had split away from it, and afterwards the Independent Democratic Party. In their case we may indeed speak of largely urban middle class parties.

This “bourgeois” background was something that they even quite often openly emphasized, especially the older generation and Tavčar in particular.⁴¹⁶ These two parties were also supported by the very thin layer of Slovene economic elite, with which they were closely connected personally and financially. In this regard, the name of Avgust Praprotnik (1891-1942) needs to be mentioned. Arguably the most important personality in the economic life of the interwar Slovene lands, he was active in banking (president of *Jadranska banka*, vice-president of *Slavonska banka*) and industry (president of Union of Industrial Corporations in Belgrade and Union of Industrialists in Ljubljana; board member in many major industrial and mining companies), also serving as the president of the Ljubljana Grand Fair (*Velesojem*). At the same time he was a person of great influence over progressive politics and particularly press, being a close associate of Albert Kramer, Milko Brezigar and other progressives of the younger generation. Important economic institutions and companies that were closely connected to the progressive camp furthermore included the Chamber for Industry and Trade in Ljubljana, Ljubljana Credit Bank, Union of Slovene Co-operatives. Credit Institute for Commerce and Industry and Trbovlje Coal-mining Company.

representing three quarters of tax revenues. - Vasilij Melik, “Slovenski liberalni tabor in njegovo razpadanje,” *Prispevki za zgodovino delavskega gibanja*, vol. 1-2/yr. 22 (1982): p. 23.

⁴¹⁶ Tavčar among other even opposed JDS’s all-national platform, open to all the classes and “estates” and instead argued for an openly *bürgerlich* image. – Marko Žuraj, *Med regionalizmom in jugoslovanstvom, “Liberalizem” na Štajerskem med letoma 1918 in 1923* (Maribor: ZRI dr. Franca Kovačiča, 2010), p. 71 (Fn. 304).

The Styrian progressive leader Kukovec thus stated that the Slovene middle classes had always been “the carrier of the national idea” (“K položaju v Sloveniji,” *Slovenski narod*, 18. 12. 1919). Also see: “Postanek narodno-napredne stranke,” *Jutro*, 28. 8. 1921.

Compared to the Austrian and even more the Czech, the interwar Slovene society was relatively undifferentiated, still having a peasant majority that stood at around 60 percent. The middle classes alone were less internally differentiated with the interests of the propertied strata and employees on the other side more intertwined or at least not yet clearly opposed. Both groups were strongly represented among the progressive voters. With the People's Party controlling the majority of the rural electorate, in the countryside the support was mostly limited to the wealthier peasant strata and non-agrarian occupations such as lawyers and teachers. Especially the latter represented one of the most loyal, as well as ideologically determined groups of supporters that worked for the progressive cause more on the basis of sincere persuasion than material interest.⁴¹⁷ Special attention towards teachers along with recognition of their loyalty and sacrifices to progressive politics were continuously emphasized in the progressive press.⁴¹⁸

Among industrial workers the progressive trade union National Professional Association (*Narodna strokovna zveza*) was weak compared to the socialist and Catholic ones.

In general, the progressives at the beginning of the 1920s still represented the political current that could claim to be supported by and represent the bulk of Slovene intelligentsia. This however changed through the interwar, conditioned partly by the spread of higher education (in 1919 university was founded in Ljubljana), development of layman Catholic and Marxist intelligentsia, as well as the fact that the persistent Yugoslav unitarist course of the progressives pushed away increasing numbers of intellectuals that by their social and intellectual origins otherwise gravitated towards the progressive camp.

⁴¹⁷ Cf. Melik, Slovenski, 20.

⁴¹⁸ See for instance: A. G., "Odkrit učiteljski odgovor." *Slovenski narod*, 15. 10. 1921; "Napredna fronta in učiteljstvo." *Jutro*, 9. 1. 1923.

The strongholds of the Yugoslav Democratic and afterwards the Independent Democratic Parties were the cities and towns, particularly the “progressive Ljubljana” a phrase commonly employed in the progressive press.⁴¹⁹ The leading position in most of the urban settings continued into the interwar with most of the cities and towns having progressive mayors and council majorities. The contrast between the town and the countryside may be well seen if we for instance look at the results of the 1921 municipal elections in the Novo mesto district. While overall Slovene People’s Party was the winner with 227 municipal council seats (out of 442), followed by the Independent Agrarian Party with 190, the Yugoslav Democratic Party won only 13. All 13 were however gained in the town of Novo mesto, where they comprised the majority in the 24-member council.⁴²⁰

A detailed insight into the town elections, their dynamic and results also reveals that the party, despite having a formal apparatus on all administrative levels, in its strongholds where its candidates received the majority of votes, functioned as an old-style party of notables. Mayors of progressive-dominated towns such as Novo mesto or Kranj, nominally members of the Democratic, afterwards Independent Democratic and later Yugoslav National Party participated in elections with their own lists and not on the party ticket. These lists, often containing also some agrarian or national socialist candidates, in turn provided a majority of JDS (SDS) members in the town councils. The local progressive notables often published their own newspapers such as *Nova doba* (published in Celje by Ernest Kalan), *Večernik* (published in Maribor by Adolf Ribnikar). Regardless of their

⁴¹⁹ See for instance: “Sedemdesetletnica Ivana Hribarja,” *Jutro*, 18. 9. 1921: “Had there been no progressive Ljubljana, there would probably be no more progressive thought among the Slovenes. Had there been no progressive Ljubljana, there might as well have been no fighters for liberation and unification.”

⁴²⁰ Jakob Polenšek, “Občinske volitve v Novem mestu med obema vojnama,” accessible at: <http://kultura.novomesto.si/si/revija-rast/?id=5085> (accessed 8. 7. 2017). Together with the agrarians (7) and national socialists (2) progressives had a complete hegemony in the Novo mesto municipal council, with only the two remaining seats occupied by the People’s Party.

numerical and electoral strength the progressives' power rested on influential and widely-read press (*Jutro*, *Slovenski narod*, *Domovina* and a number of local newspapers) their wealth, entrenched positions in economy and various chambers and connections in industrialist and financial circles. On the other hand the progressive politicians could also exercise some influence on the broad masses through the mass organization *Sokol*. The latter continued to represent the strongest gymnastic association during the interwar despite competition by the Catholic *Orel* and socialist *Svoboda*, at the same time carrying a distinctly "progressive" and Yugoslav nationalist earmark. Due to all the listed factors, the progressives retained a degree of political power even after 1935 when complete hegemony of the Catholic camp was established.

Despite the common struggle against the Slovene People's Party, the basic "national" orientation and rhetorical appeal to "progressive" and democratic values, strong elements of cleavage and resulting distinct courses of development could be observed in the progressive camp at the end of the World War I, as different specific groupings evolved and became visible. This can at least partly be attributed to differences in social and cultural milieus from which these groupings originated or which they claimed to represent. The same applies also to the distinct professional interests, being voiced through progressive politics. In certain instances views and interests of these groups mutually concurred and in some other not. The fragmentation of progressive politics into a number of parties was to a certain extent a result of such differences, most importantly the one between the urban-based middle class progressive core and its rural following. In the context of the countryside another divide could be discerned between educated and half-educated groups like teachers and lawyers and the propertied strata of rural progressive supporters. Motives

for political engagement or support for certain parties were at least partly different between these two groups, with the latter more concerned about specific economic issues of countryside and mostly supporting the agrarians during the 1920s.

Inner heterogeneity was something that the progressives sometimes openly admitted and even emphasized as a virtue, despite all its practical setbacks in political struggle. The following excerpt from the progressive daily newspaper *Jutro* demonstrates that quite well:

“In progressive parties there is by all the nature of the free-thinking man, more potential for splitting [*netiva za cepljenje*] and it is true that it is so much easier to maintain discipline if the adherents are, so to say ‘simple.’ The fact that the progressives are not a herd has from the very beginning been dangerous for the political power of their party.”⁴²¹

An article giving credit to the progressive politician Ivan Hribar for his long-lasting work pointed out specific hardship a progressive leader may have faced as opposed to the “clerical” or socialist ones:

“Much easier is the work of the clerical commander whom the masses obey without demanding anything, and the socialist that lures the worker with an unrealistic promise. Here however critical intelligentsia, everyone judging alone and condemning without longer considerations.”⁴²²

Among other, generational divisions profoundly marked the interwar progressive camp as three important generational circles actively forming the Slovene (post)liberal politics can roughly be defined. The first and the oldest group were the “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).

⁴²¹ *Jutro*, 26. 11. 1920.

⁴²² “70-letnica Hribarja,” *Jutro*, 18. 9. 1921.

This was the generation of politicians that had set up the National Progressive Party and led it through the Austrian era. Their support base rested primarily among the well-to-do ‘*Burghers*’ of Ljubljana,⁴²³ particularly merchants.⁴²⁴ Until 1923 this group controlled *Slovenski narod*, the Slovene daily newspaper with the longest tradition (published between 1868 and 1945), having a role comparable to the Czech *Národní listy*.

Between 1918 and 1922 the “elders” officially still held the leading posts in the Yugoslav Democratic Party but already had to share power with the circle of “youths” (*mladini*). The “youths” were gathered around Gregor Žerjav (1882-1929) and Albert Kramer (1882-1943), as the leading figures and most frequent Slovene “progressive” ministers in the interwar Yugoslav governments. 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. In contrast to the “elders” who occasionally used it, the younger generation more or less abandoned the liberal label, associating it with “sterile German liberalism.”⁴²⁵ “Liberalism” in their view entered a state of “decadence” already before the World War. When on the occasion of death of the progressive “elder” leader Ivan Tavčar an article appeared in their daily newspaper *Jutro*⁴²⁶ in order to mourn, bid farewell and praise the memory of the dead politician, it in fact 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’ – at the beginning of

⁴²³ Perovšek, *Liberalizem*, 245.

⁴²⁴ See for instance: “Sestanek trgovcev in obrtnikov v Kazini,” *Slovenski narod*, 8. 11. 1922.

⁴²⁵ Umrli Ivan Tavčar, *Jutro*, 20.2. 1923.

⁴²⁶ *Jutro* (Morning) was published between 1920 and 1945. Originally founded as a party paper for the „younger” wing it by mid-1920’s became the leading progressive newspaper, thereby also having the highest circulation among all of the Slovene newspapers. From 1923 all of the progressive press, including *Slovenski narod*, was concentrated and published by “Jutro Consortium” (*Konzorcij Jutra*) and “Progressive Press Co-operative” (*Zadruga napredni tisk*).

20th century leaders of “national radical students” movement – provided a much necessary “shift towards the left”.⁴²⁷

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 university and high school students represented an “inner opposition” in the progressive camp that pushed for a radical reform in political, cultural and economic spheres in order to attain their main goal of “solving the Slovene national question.”⁴²⁸ They criticized the liberal leaders as well as Slovene politicians and intellectuals in general for being indolent, lacking a true program and ignoring the existing circumstances. Influenced by Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk’s idea of “small work” (*drobná práce*) among the broad popular masses and adopting the slogan “From the Nation to the Nation” (“*Iz naroda za narod*”), probably inspired by Václav Jaroslav Klobuč⁴²⁹ the national radicals organized a number of lectures and traveling libraries to educate the people in national spirit and contribute to the “all-round emancipation” of Slovene nation.⁴³⁰ In their newspaper, edited by Žerjav and Kramer, national radicals – the future progressive “youths” – already in 1905 stated that the youth did “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.”⁴³¹

Between 1918 and 1922 the youths gradually strengthened their positions and took over the party leadership. Already in 1920 they began publishing their own newspaper *Jutro*,

⁴²⁷ Umrl Ivan Tavčar, *Jutro*, 20.2. 1923.

⁴²⁸ Godina, T. G. Masaryk., 80.

⁴²⁹ Godina, Let us learn, 275.

⁴³⁰ Cf. Irena Gantar Godina, “Narodno radikalno dijaštvo,” *Zgodovinski časopis*, nr. 36 (1982): p. 220.

⁴³¹ *Omladina*, vol. 1, no. 11 (1905) - Quoted from: Zvonko Bergant, *Slovenski klasični liberalizem, idejno-politični značaj slovenskega liberalizma v letih 1891-1921* (Ljubljana: Nova revija, 2000), pp.138-139.

which soon became not only the leading progressive newspaper but also the most widely read newspaper in the Slovene part of Yugoslavia. Their position further strengthened after Tavčar in 1921 relinquished his presidency of the Slovene section of the Democratic Party due to heavy illness, being succeeded by the less charismatic Styrian progressive leader Kukovec. In 1922 the “youths” secured themselves and their newspaper solid financial backing, which they however achieved through questionable channels, being accused of embezzlement. The result was the so-called “*Jadranska banka* affair” in which the president of the bank Praprotnik himself was involved. The affair among also caused the growing antagonism between the ‘elders’ and the ‘youths’ to erupt into an open conflict, which resulted in former seceding from the Democratic Party.

The ‘youths’ dominance after the split was swiftly secured everywhere, except for Ljubljana as the “old liberals” main stronghold. In particular the Styrian section of the JDS⁴³² under Kukovec sided with Žerjav’s circle, which was closely connected to their dispute with the Ljubljana-based ‘elders’ regarding the administrative division of Slovenia. The Styrian progressives were in favor of Maribor having its own jurisdiction while *Slovenski narod* and Hribar as the Land Administrator of Slovenia in particular, argued against dividing the Slovene lands.⁴³³ In Ljubljana, the ‘elders’ continued to represent serious competition to the JDS. The conflict and the split that followed in the end costed the progressives’ victory at the 1922 city elections. Running separately, they lost, despite

⁴³² Until 1923 when Slovenia was administratively divided into two jurisdictions JDS formally maintained a unified party organization for entire Slovenia (which was again established after 1932). On the informal level the Slovene part continued to act jointly also after that year. On the other hand the Carniolan and Lower Styrian subsections had had some informal autonomy already before 1923 and continued to do so after 1932. Kukovec himself later landed in opposition to the dominant Kramer-Žerjav circle due to his disagreement with the uncompromising anti-clerical course of the JDS/SDS. Leaving the party in 1924, he then ended up on the same “oppositional” side with the ‘elders.’ (See: Chapter 6).

⁴³³ Žuraj, *Med regionalizmom*, 162-167, 170-171, 178-181.

– if taken together – their lists jointly attained an absolute majority. The majoritarian electoral system which they had themselves earlier instituted gave the majority of council seats to the relative victor – a joint list of Catholics, Communists and Socialists.⁴³⁴

After leaving, the elders, led by Ravnihar, briefly awakened the old National Progressive Party but experienced a fiasco at the 1923 elections, subsequently merging with the Serbian “Popular Radical Party” in the following year. The Popular Radicals had been present in Slovenia already from before, having a tiny following among Serbophile intelligentsia (Niko Županić, Ivan Sajovic). Now, it came to form the marginal section of the urban political representation of the progressive camp. After leaving the Democratic party the circle of progressive “elders” ceased to possess any notable prominence in politics, although some of them (Ravnihar, Hribar) never completely left the political stage. The youths had already during 1918-22 swiftly managed to establish themselves as the leading group, a position that they continued to occupy up until the end of Slovene party politics after the 1941 collapse of Yugoslavia.

By 1924 the ‘youths’ moreover also succeeded in almost monopolizing the progressive press in their hands by taking over *Slovenski narod*, after Tavčar’s heirs had sold its shares. Afterwards all the central progressive press, including *Slovenski narod*, was concentrated and published by “Jutro Consortium” (*Konzorcij Jutra*) and “Progressive Press Co-operative” (*Zadruga napredni tisk*). The elders, along with the agrarians and the national socialists, began publishing “National Daily” (*Narodni dnevnik*), which however never even approached the appeal of *Jutro*. The fact that it however acted as a common mouthpiece for the three political groupings that otherwise in many issues occupied

⁴³⁴ See: Vasilij Melik, “Protoliberalno občinsko vodstvo v Ljubljani 1921-1923,” *Arhivi*, vol. 26, no. 1 (2003): pp. 129-131.

opposing positions, suggests that they perceived themselves as members of the same political camp within which they jointly stood as an opposition against the dominant force. The second political organization after JDS, in which the core Slovene progressive politicians of the Žerjav-Kramer circle participated was the Independent Democratic Party (*Samostojna demokratska stranka* - SDS, 1924-1929).⁴³⁵ It came into being as a result of a dispute that occurred on the all-state party level between Davidović and the leader of Democrats in the former Habsburg lands Pribičević. Davidović began searching for a settlement between Serbs and Croats and adopted a new course, leading away from strict Yugoslav national unitarism. After that the unitarist wing of the party, including all of the Slovene politicians, seceded and formed the Independent Democratic Party under the leadership of Pribičević. The new party was limited more or less to the former Habsburg lands, where it was supported mainly by the Serbs, as well as by the majority of Slovene progressive voters. SDS, comprising the younger generation of Slovene progressives thus became the main representative of that camp. If the SDS seceded from the Democratic party as its “unitarist wing” the Slovene progressives occupied such position within the new party. During 1927-29, when Pribičević began aligning with the Croat Peasant’s Party of Stjepan Radić, forming the Peasant-Democratic Coalition and searching for a settlement of the Serb-Croat problem that would be acceptable for the both sides, the Slovene part of the Independent Democratic Party remained sternly Yugoslavist in its orientation.

At this point the name of Ivan Pucelj (1879-1945), the 1920’s leader of Independent Agrarian (later Slovene Peasants’) Party, should also be mentioned as one of the most prominent progressives. Although not a member of the progressive ‘youths’ circle, Pucelj

⁴³⁵ On the Independent Democratic Party see: Hrvoje Matković, *Svetozar Pribičević i Samostalna demokratska stranka do šestojanuarske diktature* (Zagreb: Institute of Croatian History, 1972).

during 1930s, when progressive politicians were united in Yugoslav National Party, stood as the second most important figure next to Kramer.

In addition to ‘elders’ and ‘youths’, another generation of progressives, bringing fresh spirit and new ideas stepped forward only in the second half of thirties. These were the youngest progressives or - as they most commonly referred to themselves – Yugoslav nationalists, belonging to a generation, which grew up and were educated in Yugoslavia and did not possess memories of the old Habsburg Empire. Gathered around 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 the Yugoslav National Party in Slovene lands, determined to strengthen the party with “fresh fighting spirit, more dynamics and more populism [*ljudskost*]”.⁴³⁶ Their development as an independent political group was in the end hindered by the beginning of the Second World War.

3. 5. 4. Cooperation in Governments and Relations with the Other Political Parties

As members of the all-state Democratic, Independent Democratic and Yugoslav National Parties progressives took part in a number of Yugoslav cabinets, usually in coalition governments with the Serbian Popular Radical Party, some of them led by Nikola Pašić. The ministries that they held were Industry and Commerce (Kramer, 1919-20; Kukovec 1921; Mohorič 1932), Social Policy (Kukovec 1920-21; Pucelj 1932-34; Novak 1934; Marušič 1934-35), Forestry and Mining (Žerjav, 1924-25) and Construction (Kramer,

⁴³⁶ Jože Rus, “Naša pota, gledanja in težnje” in *Omladina Jugoslovenske nacionalne stranke: Banovinska skupščina 12. septembra 1937 v Ljubljani* (Ljubljana: OJNS, 1937), p. 14.

1931-32). During the years 1932-34 Kramer also acted as the permanent deputy to the Prime Minister.⁴³⁷ The latter years also marked the highpoint of their power both in Slovene lands and on the all-state framework, to be more thoroughly discussed in the section on the Yugoslav National Party.

Progressives were represented in five out of six Land Governments for Slovenia (1919-21), having a majority in three of them⁴³⁸ with Gregor Žerjav acting as vice-president of the first in 1919 and the president of the second one (November 1919 – February 1920) and Vilko Baltič presiding the last one (1921). Regional Administration for Slovenia that followed after the adoption of the constitution and operated between 1921 and 1923 was chaired by Ivan Hribar. Between 1923 and 1929 Slovenia was divided between two provinces (*oblast*). For most of the time between 1924 and 1927 (when Slovene People's Party entered the government) these were administered by the government-appointed Grand Mayors from Yugoslav, respectively Independent Democratic Party (Vilko Baltič, Miroslav Ploj, Otmar Pirkmajer).⁴³⁹ After 1929 the Slovene part of Yugoslavia was again united within a single province (*Banovina* of Drava), whose administration was between 1931 and 1935 in the hands of progressives, being chaired by Drago Marušič and Dinko Puc. Due to the undemocratic circumstances the Yugoslav National Party during that time also acquired control in the majority of rural municipalities.

It may be said that representation of progressives in governing bodies and executive functions far exceeded their levels of support in Slovenia. Although forming only parts of

⁴³⁷ Perovšek, O demokraciji, 217.

⁴³⁸ Jurij Perovšek, "Organizacijska slika liberalnega tabora v letih 1891-1941," *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino*, vol. 57, no. 1 (2017); accessible at: <http://ojs.inz.si/pnz/article/view/223> (accessed 10/06/2017).

⁴³⁹ Ibid.

all-state parties the Slovene sections of the Democratic and Independent Democratic parties occupied distinct positions within the narrower Slovene political landscape where they represented the clearest and most outspoken (if not always strongest in terms of votes) opponents to the Slovene People's Party. Cooperation in all-state parties which was both a matter of persuasion, connected to their Yugoslavist orientations, and of tactic, enabled them to continue to represent a force that could challenge the Catholic hegemony in Slovenia, despite the latter's far higher electoral support. In this way the pre-WWI struggle between 'liberals' and 'clericals' could carry on into the interwar and – as opposed to the Czech, as well as Austrian contexts – represent the central point of intra-Slovene political conflict. The new dimension that entered the political stage in 1918, expressing itself in the conflict between the demands for Slovene autonomy and Yugoslav nationalism, only added up to this already existing division.

Especially for the core group of national liberal heirs, assembled in the Democratic (later Independent Democratic) Party, both the 'youths' and the 'elders,' it may be said that their stance towards political Catholicism and its party was an irreconcilable one throughout the period under scrutiny. 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"⁴⁴⁰ and even as "Catholic bolsheviks."⁴⁴¹ In their struggle against the stronger force of political Catholicism, the Yugoslav Democratic and Independent Agrarian Parties even adopted conservative and undemocratic positions on women's suffrage.⁴⁴² In line with the common

⁴⁴⁰ *Jutro*, 16. 3. 1924

⁴⁴¹ *Jutro*, 6. 6. 1924.

⁴⁴² Jurij 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*, J. Pirjevec, J. Pleterški eds. (Ljubljana: SAZU, 2007), pp. 121-122.

practice of referring to the Czech examples the agrarian newspaper *Kmetijski list* commented on 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 asked what would the result in Slovenia have been since “the consequences were such in the Czech lands where the women are relatively mature and progressive politically.”⁴⁴³

When political Catholicism, designated also as “the greatest evil for free cultural development of any nation,”⁴⁴⁴ got into power and de-facto ruled Slovene part of Yugoslavia after 1935, progressives spoke about “spoilt reactionaries practicing medieval methods”⁴⁴⁵. In those times, perceived as critical by the liberal 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.”⁴⁴⁶ While being at certain occasions ready to join forces with some of the socialist groups, they at no point during the period under scrutiny collaborated with SLS. The progressives’ main political adversary was thus the Slovene People’s Party.

During the 1920s progressives were also more or less disinclined from collaborating in any ways with the Marxist parties. This especially applied to the Communists, against whom Tavčar in particular directed fiercely combative rhetoric that could hardly be matched even by that of the Catholics.⁴⁴⁷ During the mid-1920s Independent Democratic Party also

⁴⁴³ “Ženska volilna pravica na Češkem,” *Kmetijski list*, 20.5.1920.

⁴⁴⁴ Rus, Naša pota, 14.

⁴⁴⁵ Andrej Uršič, “Naš čas, program Jugoslovenske nacionalne stranke in njena mladina” in *Omladina Jugoslovenske nacionalne stranke: Banovinska skupščina 12. septembra 1937 v Ljubljani* (Ljubljana: OJNS, 1937), p. 18.

⁴⁴⁶ “Zaključek Živkovičevega obiska v Sloveniji,” *Jutro*, 10. 6. 1937.

⁴⁴⁷ Jurij Perovšek, “Idejni, družbeni in narodnopolitični nazori Ivana Tavčarja po ustanovitvi Jugoslovanske demokratske stranke leta 1918” in *Melikov zbornik: Slovenci v zgodovini in njihovi srednjeevropski sosedje*, Vincenc Rajšp ed. (Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, 2001), pp. 899-900.

actively supported the armed militancy of ORJUNA (Organization of Yugoslav Nationalists) which physically battled the Communists. As regards the various social democratic and socialist factions (after 1921 the Yugoslav Social Democratic Party fell apart into a number of factions, most important of which was the Socialist Party of Yugoslavia), it may be said that the levels of sympathies were comparably higher as in case of ‘clericals’ and Communists. After 1935, when the Catholic camp had acquired complete hegemony in Slovenia, the progressives and socialists began increasingly cooperating.

The Yugoslav Democratic and Independent Democratic Parties also had competitors within their own camp with whom they fostered an ambivalent and changing relationship that ranged from open hostility to patronizing attitudes. The Agrarians were at the outset instrumental in challenging the Catholic hegemony in the countryside and could from their perspective rightfully be treated as “the liberal branch office in the countryside.”⁴⁴⁸ On the other hand they largely overtook the rural progressive voters and effectively limited the (Independent) Democrats to the urban settings. There the National Socialists represented a serious competing force that sometimes, as for instance in Maribor in 1921,⁴⁴⁹ achieved higher results. As seen already from the Index 2 in the subchapter 3.1. , however, the core group of national liberal heirs through 1920s gradually re-gained primacy in the progressive camp also in terms of electoral support.

The latter was continuously being claimed by the (Independent) Democrats, who, commonly being referred to as “liberals” in the public discourse, perceived themselves as the primary – if not the only – political representative of the “progressive public.” In his

⁴⁴⁸ Janko Prunk, “Politične koncepcije slovenskega meščanstva v stari Jugoslaviji,” *Prispevki za zgodovino delavskega gibanja*, vol. 22, no 1-2 (1982): p. 119.

⁴⁴⁹ “Rezultati občinskih volitev,” *Tabor*, 26. 4. 1921.

1920 “Appeal to the progressives in the countryside” Žerjav for instance particularly turned towards “supporters of the factions that have escaped from our party.” The “work” of those parties had “been fulfilled” and it was now time to “return their strength to JDS which was and remains the leader of all the struggle towards consolidation of our state and for annihilation of clericalism.”⁴⁵⁰

The end of Žerjav’s statement again points at the pronounced “anti-clerical” orientation as the continuous distinguishing mark of the entire progressive camp, common for all of its generations, groups and parties, regardless of differences. Both the National Socialists (during early 1920s) and Agrarians (from 1926 after they had reformed into Slovene Peasants’ Party) for instance at certain point directly confronted the core progressives’ Yugoslav unitarism by embracing Slovene individuality. Yet, in spite of certain nuances and disagreements regarding the methods and relentlessness of the anti-clerical struggle, they never abandoned that basic political axiom, which represented the permanent and decisive binding factor.

By the end of 1920s the progressive political forces became increasingly organizationally connected again. The National Socialists formally merged with the Independent Democrats in 1928, whereas the Slovene Peasants’ Party, despite diametrically opposed views on the nationality question, after 1927 cooperated with them within the framework of the Peasant-Democratic Coalition.⁴⁵¹ After the end of parliamentary life in Yugoslavia following the 1929 royal *coup d’etat* this collaboration deepened, also bringing about increasing convergence in terms of nationality politics.⁴⁵² This gradual approximation, taking place

⁴⁵⁰ Gregor Žerjav, “Poziv naprednjakom na deželi,” *Slovenski narod*, 27. 11. 1920.

⁴⁵¹ Perovšek, Organizacijska.

⁴⁵² Cf. Anka Vidovič Miklavčič, *Mladina med nacionalizmom in katolicizmom* (Ljubljana: ŠOU, 1994), pp. 13-14.

first through cultural associations and printed press, paved the way for joint political performance in the Yugoslav National Party.

3. 5. 5. The Yugoslav National Party

In the morning hours of January the 6th 1929, the eve of the Orthodox Christmas holiday, a royal *coup d'etat* took place in Belgrade. King Alexander I. abolished the constitution, dismissed the last elected parliament, ordered disbandment of all the political parties and assumed full power, thereby ruling by decree. In his proclamation entitled “To my Dear Nation! To all the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes!” he addressed his people “as a ruler and son of this country” informing them that “the hour has come, when, between the people and the king there can not be and ought not be an intermediary.”⁴⁵³ Thus effectively a personal dictatorship was instituted in Yugoslavia,⁴⁵⁴ which was to be commonly referred to as the “January the 6th dictatorship” (*Šestojanuarska diktatura*). It came as a response to a great internal turmoil,⁴⁵⁵ the severity of which had persuaded the King that the only way out was temporary abolishment of parliamentary democracy along with a forceful integration of Yugoslavs into a single nation.

The regime thus instituted integral Yugoslav nationalism as the official state ideology, aiming to implement it in a swift and forceful manner and treating the unity of Yugoslav ‘tribes’ and homogeneity of the ‘Yugoslav nation’ as an already given fact. Apart from the

⁴⁵³ Malbone W. Graham, Jr., “The ‘Dictatorship’ in Yugoslavia,” *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (May 1929): pp. 449-459, p. 456.

⁴⁵⁴ Until 1929 the official name of the Yugoslav state was “Kingdom of the Serbs, the Croats and the Slovenes,” although “Yugoslavia” had been widely used already earlier. After establishing dictatorship Alexander renamed the country also officially.

⁴⁵⁵ 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.

repressive measures of the royal regime, the compulsory manner of national unification and consolidation acted as one of the main reasons for it becoming unpopular during early 1930's in all parts of the country and among all of its ethnic groups.⁴⁵⁶ Already during 1930 opposition started building up, composed of the 'hard' one gathered around Maček and Pribičević,⁴⁵⁷ as well as a more moderate one, represented by some of the leading Serbian radical and democratic politicians⁴⁵⁸, the Slovene People's Party and Mehmed Spaho's Yugoslav Moslem Organization.

During the first phase of the 6th of January regime between 1929 and 1931, when the King and his government ruled alone, while parliament had been abolished, the Slovene progressives lost all options for direct political engagement. They were not represented in government and - with the parliament dissolved and all political party activity forbidden - their voice became limited to the printed press that stood under their control. Since the writing had to strictly follow the official line, the newspapers *Jutro* and *Slovenski narod* mainly provided summaries on the governmental activities without any critical commentary added. In 1931 the situation changed drastically however as they re-entered the political stage, becoming an important pillar of the regime and reaching the high point of their political power and influence on both Yugoslav and Slovene levels.

⁴⁵⁶ Dejan Djokić, "(Dis)integrating Yugoslavia: King Alexander and Interwar Yugoslavism" in *Yugoslavism, Histories of a Failed Idea 1918-1992*, Dejan Djokić ed. (London: C. Hurst & Co, 2003), pp. 151-152.

⁴⁵⁷ 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: Prosveta 1953).

⁴⁵⁸ Branko Petranović, *Istorija Jugoslavije 1918-1988*. Vol. 1: *Kraljevina Jugoslavija 1914-1941* (History of Yugoslavia 1918-1988. Vol. 1: Kingdom of Yugoslavia 1914-1941) (Belgrade: Nolit, 1988), p. 184.

Realizing that more than two years of direct dictatorship did not produce the wanted results and at the same time not wanting to simply revert back to parliamentary democracy⁴⁵⁹, King Alexander in September of 1931 decided to “legalize” his rule.⁴⁶⁰ Thus an octroated constitution was decreed by the monarch, declaring Yugoslavia a “constitutional and hereditary monarchy” – but not a parliamentary one. The constitution did not bring about a return to liberal democracy,⁴⁶¹ nor did the elections held in October of 1931 in which only the government list led by General Petar Živković could participate. Persecution of dissenters continued and was especially fierce after series of *punctuations* (declarations demanding democratization and an end to centralist order) were issued by opposition parties in 1932. After the elections an all-state party was founded on the basis of the new parliamentary club. First it was given the name Yugoslav Radical Peasant Democracy (*Jugoslovenska radikalna seljačka demokratija - JRSD*) – simply the aggregate of names of the three most popular pre-1929 parties. In July 1933 it was re-constituted as Yugoslav National Party (*Jugoslovenska nacionalna stranka – JNS*).⁴⁶² JNS afterwards acted as the party destined to fulfill the King’s will (“the principles of January the 6th”) on the parliamentary floor by pursuing strict integral Yugoslavist course. Up until 1935 it represented the only legal political organization.⁴⁶³

⁴⁵⁹ Cf. Stevan K. Pavlowitch, *Yugoslavia* (London: Ernest Benn Ltd., 1971), p. 80.

⁴⁶⁰ Iván Tibor Berend, *Decades of crisis: Central and Eastern Europe before World War II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), p. 328.

⁴⁶¹ Executive power was concentrated with the king, who was given power to appoint and dismiss the prime minister and other ministers. Article 116 dubbed “the small constitution” gave him the right to rule by decree without paying regard to constitutional and legal prescriptions in case of extraordinary circumstances. - Petranović, *Istorija*, 200.

⁴⁶² For more on JRSD and JNS see: Milica S. Bodrožić, “Obrazovanje Jugoslovenske radikalno-seljačke demokratije: (decembar 1931. – jul 1933. godine); počeci Jugoslovenske nacionalne stranke,” *Istorijski glasnik* vol. 2-3 (1964): pp. 39-96; Milica S. Bodrožić, “Socijalni oslonci režima Jugoslovenske nacionalne stranke,” *Zbornik Matice srpske za istoriju* vol. 44 (1991): pp. 121-142.

⁴⁶³ See: Jovo Bakić, *Ideologije jugoslovenstva između srpskog i hrvatskog nacionalizma 1918-1941* (Zrenjanin: GNB ‘Žarko Zrenjanin’, 2004), pp. 404-405.

The central elements of the JNS ideological platform were clearly pointed out by its prominent Croat member Juraj Demetrović at the 1933 congress: “Basic idea, the Yugoslav national idea and Yugoslav nation state; the second basic idea – national solidarity and social justice; and thirdly – the idea of peasant politics.”⁴⁶⁴ The party program stated that “Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, living on continuous territory as 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”⁴⁶⁵. Therefore the “Yugoslav national unity” was seen as an “undisputed and natural fact”.⁴⁶⁶

Yugoslav National Party united a wide variety of politicians from all parts of the country that had formerly belonged to various political parties. The two numerically strongest groups were the dissidents from the former Serbian Popular Radical Party, which included the JNS president Nikola Uzunović,⁴⁶⁷ and the Democratic Party dissidents.⁴⁶⁸ Furthermore – there was also a prominent group of former Independent Democrats, more precisely its unitarist wing represented by Albert Kramer, Juraj Demetrović and Jovan Banjanin, a small group of dissidents from the Croatian Peasants Party, as well as the leading Slovene agrarians.⁴⁶⁹

In Slovenia the membership in the new regime party more or less completely coincided with adherence to the progressive political camp. The leading progressives from the former

⁴⁶⁴ *Jugoslovenska nacionalna stranka (prvi zemaljski kongres, Beograd 1933)* (Belgrade: Sekretariat JNS, 1933), p. 39.

⁴⁶⁵ *Slovenska novejša zgodovina: od programa Zedinjena Slovenija do mednarodnega priznanja Republike Slovenije : 1848-1992*, Vol. 1: 1848-1945, Fischer, Jasna et al eds. (Ljubljana: Mladinska Knjiga, Inštitut za novejšo zgodovino, 2005), p. 333.

⁴⁶⁶ “Načela in smernice Jugoslovenske nacionalne stranke,” *Slovenski narod*, Jul 21 1933.

⁴⁶⁷ Further former Popular Radicals included Milan Srškić and Božidar Maksimović.

⁴⁶⁸ Former Democrats included Vojislav Marinković, Kosta Kumanudi and Grga Budislav Andjelinović.

⁴⁶⁹ For the composition of the parliamentary club see: Bodrožić, *Obrazovanje*, 45-46.

SDS, along with the leading agrarians, as well as some of the “elders”, joined it, together forming a strong and influential group. Kramer became the party Secretary General, while both Pucelj and himself also served as vice-presidents. A number of progressives were co-opted into the supreme council. Kramer and Pucelj as de-facto leaders of the Slovene section moreover occupied important positions in the government. Both held various ministries, while the former during the years 1932-34 also served as the permanent deputy to the Prime Minister.⁴⁷⁰ In this way, the progressives came to represent one of the main pillars of the regime and its exclusive outpost in Slovenia, where they established full political dominance.

Conditioned by special political circumstances, the Slovene progressive camp again found itself united under the roof of a single political organization. The concentration was based on an important practical aim. While the aims of the Alexander I. labeled also as the “Unifier”, were largely in accordance with Slovene progressives’ Yugoslav nationalist ideology⁴⁷¹, the foundation of a single regime party coincided well with their common goal of crushing the power of political Catholicism in Slovene lands once and for all. The two main common denominators of the interwar Slovene progressives – anti-clericalism and Yugoslav nationalism – were thus reflected in the clearest way possible. *Jutro* in 1935 openly admitted that JNS was not “a party in the old sense of this word” being “founded as means for the implementation of the new state policy instigated by the manifesto of January 1929 and confirmed by the constitution of September 3rd 1931.”⁴⁷² The “attacks of the irreconcilable clericalism” against JNS were thus pointed directly against the “national

⁴⁷⁰ Perovšek, *O demokraciji*, 217.

⁴⁷¹ Cf. *Ibid.*, 135.

⁴⁷² “JNS in volitve,” *Jutro*, 19. 2. 1935.

front, [...] organized political army of all positively Yugoslav oriented elements, which enthusiastically guards and defends the basics of the King's manifesto among the Slovenes.”⁴⁷³

The elimination of the Catholic camp as political factor did not succeed, despite the concentration of all administrative power in Drava Province⁴⁷⁴ 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 Slovene People's Party.⁴⁷⁵ JNS, holding power on all levels from the state to the local one and disposing with both police and gendarmes, as well as field organizations – most notably *Sokol*, *Narodna odbrana* (National Defense) and *Jadranska straža* (Adriatic Guard)⁴⁷⁶—initiated a campaign of intimidation for the 1933 local elections, which however did not bring the wanted results. Likewise, “decreed Yugoslavism” did not manage to gain ground anywhere in Yugoslavia, remaining “an empty ideological flourish which was not permeated by processes of political conciliation, economic unification, natural exchange of cultural ideas.”⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷³ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁴ Drava Province (or *Banovina*) encompassed the entire Slovene part of Yugoslavia.

⁴⁷⁵ 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: Modrijan, 2007).

⁴⁷⁶ Bodrožić, *Socijalni*, 122-130.

Sokol organizations were in 1929 nationalized and unified as *Sokol of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia*. With the motto “One nation, one state, one Sokol” and self-descriptions such as “a knightly association in which physically sound, morally and intellectually strong and nationally conscious citizens of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia are being brought up,” “a watchful guardian of the great national heritage,” “leader of the integral unity of the Yugoslav nation,” “the focal point of the national idea and spirit,” or “the national idea embodied” Sokol was given a new function of an all-national organization with the goal of integrating “all the strata of population, regardless of tribe, religion and estate, age, sex and occupation.” Physical education in Sokol style was introduced in schools, with close cooperation being put into force also between the Sokol and the military. – Ibid, and *Program i statuti Jugoslovenske nacionalne stranke* (Belgrade: Gen. Sekretarijat JNS, 1933), p. 11.

⁴⁷⁷ Petranović, *Istorija*, 203.

Early 1930s at the same time also marked the time of an increased differentiation within the progressive camp. Due to their discontent with politicians' involvement in the undemocratic regime, as well as opposition to the integral Yugoslavism, many prominent intellectuals began to demonstratively withdraw their support.⁴⁷⁸ Notable groups of - mostly leftist - dissidents began appearing, the most important of which began publishing its own journal *Sodobnost* (Present) in 1933. The resulting rift between the party and an increasing member of intellectuals that had previously supported it gradually deepened through the 1930s, leading to erosion of followers and fragmentation of the camp.

Soon after King Alexander was assassinated, the tables turned, as new governmental party “Yugoslav Radical Union” (*Jugoslovenska radikalna zajednica – JRZ*), which included Slovene Catholic conservatives, was formed and took power in 1935. JNS was now in opposition and its power quickly eroded. 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 in 1936 that the Slovene future was going to belong to either Catholicism or to communism but certainly not to the Yugoslav National Party.⁴⁷⁹

3. 6. Concluding Remarks

Behind the all-encompassing, yet rather vague and general programmatic declarations of the parties under scrutiny stood a broad internal ideological heterogeneity and division into various factions and wings. In organizational terms already, they were actually *Sammelparteien* into which a number of related but also ideologically, socially, regionally

⁴⁷⁸ Cf. Dolenc, Slovenski, 199.

⁴⁷⁹ “Kje je sovražnik?,” *Slovenec*, 26. 7. 1936. (Quoted from: Perovšek, Idejni, 541.)

and generationally diverse parties or groupings had united during 1918-20. These divisions to an extent persisted within the common party frameworks, thereby partly transforming or attaching themselves to new ones that developed later and reflected new, primarily social and generational cleavages.

All the internal heterogeneity and discord notwithstanding, it was the basic “national” orientation which bound the otherwise diverse factions. As we shall see in the next chapter, such pronounced appeal to the national idea also implied different levels and types of nationalism that again varied highly between parties, as well as between specific wings within them. The studied parties furthermore claimed an “all-national character” and to represent the principal (or only) bearers of the national idea - that is of representing primarily “the nation.”⁴⁸⁰ Such a political positioning essentially contained a claim to stand above the divisions of class, profession, wealth and region that existed within particular national bodies. All the three parties stressed their democratic orientation, showing however certain reservations towards “Western” “formal democracy”. This was especially distinctive for the Greater Germans and the Czechoslovak National Democrats and to a lesser degree and at a later point for the Slovene progressives. Especially was this feature prominent in the case of Czechoslovak National Democracy and its leader Karel Kramář, whose figure was intentionally being cultivated as “leader of the nation.”⁴⁸¹

There were no central leading figures of the Kramář type in the Austrian and Slovene cases. The primarily regionally-based variety of its founding parties, none of which possessed a truly dominant position within the new coalition and even less a personality of such a national prominence, by default prevented the Greater German People’s Party from having

⁴⁸⁰ Cf. Program ČsND, 1-4; and Program JDS, 23.

⁴⁸¹ Lemberg, *Das Erbe*, 70.

such a leadership figure. Even long-time chairmen and leading speakers on the national level such as Wotawa or Dinghofer were easily replaceable and it was primarily the regional notables that professed durable influence at the regional or local levels. Slovene progressives represented an in-between case. There were undisputed leadership figures, which however - especially after the long-time national liberal leader Tavčar retreated from active politics in 1921 – were not even from afar comparable to Kramář. Lacking his charisma, appeal and influence, being considerably younger and having developed a less authoritative political approach, Žerjav and Kramer never even attempted to emulate the style of a “national leader.”

As all the parties under scrutiny expressed critique both towards capitalism and socialism, they also generally understood and advertised themselves as moderate “parties of the middle.” In the Austrian case, being a *Mittelpartei*, meant primarily standing between the “black” and the “red,”⁴⁸² offering an alternative to the both big political blocs and a potential mediating force between them. In the Slovene and even more perhaps in the Czech case standing “in the middle” however also included a normative dimension, implying a self-understanding as a moderate party of “proper measure” destined to steer the course of national politics. Centrist self-positioning was, particularly in the Czech and Slovene cases also joined by self-representation as “state-building parties.” The “all-national” platform, the firm declaration of loyalty to democracy and the associated principle of “national solidarity,” as well as the self-understanding as a moderate political

⁴⁸² “Eine Mittelpartei zwischen Schwarz und Rot,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 13. 3. 1929: „Die Großdeutsche Volkspartei geht mit vollem Bewußtsein an dem Ausbau einer über den gegenwärtigen Parteirahmen hinausgehenden nationalen und freiheitlichen Mittelpartei in dem vom freiheitlichen Bauern bis zum nationalen Arbeiter alle Platz finden sollen, die weder bei den Marxisten noch bei den Klerikalen ihre wirtschaftliche und politisch-kulturelle Vertretung erwarten.“

force, thus came together in the consciously cultivated image of being the most important agent of state building.

The all-national claim implied the aim to approach all the sections of the population, whereby none of them were successful with their constituencies continuing to be limited to the wealthier and educated strata and above all not succeeding in attracting the masses of industrial workers, smaller peasants and rural poor. In all the cases, the least so in the Slovene, there were on the other hand also tensions between the “capitalist” – the financial and industrialist elite – and the middle-class interests.

In the post-WWI circumstances the traditional electoral base furthermore tended to shrink, transform, fragment and partly pass support to other parties as in the case of major part of Austrian economical elites which supported the Christian Socials. The “old” middle classes of “men of independent means” as the principal pool of support for the liberal parties and their descendants were approaching a status of “endangered species” in the circumstances of postwar crisis and inflation. These losses were only to some extent compensated through new votes coming from a substantial part of the growing “new” middle classes of public and private employees, which in turn became one of the principal targets of the post-liberal parties’ political agitation. Also due to the unsuccessful mass mobilization and changing configurations in the party landscape there was a constant tension present – particularly and most notably in the case of Greater German People’s Party – between the initial “all-national” platform and tendencies to more explicitly pronounce the “middle class” party profile.

Specifically important to note here was the peculiar importance of public employees for all of the studied parties, which was far most notable for the Greater German People’s Party.

Generally speaking, was this section of society from the higher state officials on one and rural state employees such as teachers on the other side particularly highly represented among both membership and following in all the three cases. To some degree we may also treat all the studied parties as “parties of intelligentsia”, although this varied highly between the Czech and Slovene cases, where such a label holds firmly at least for the immediate post-WWI years, and the Austrian one, where it is only conditionally valid.

In terms of the urban:rural division the parties under scrutiny were primarily attached to urban milieus. In the Czech context this meant primarily Prague,⁴⁸³ followed by larger Bohemian towns, whereas the Greater Germans found little support in the “red” Vienna, being strongest in the mid-sized provincial cities and towns, particularly in the western and southern parts of the country (Tirol, Vorarlberg, Salzburg, Carinthia, etc.). The Slovene national liberal heirs in the Yugoslav Democratic and Independent Democratic Parties equally found their support primarily in Ljubljana and various small towns.

To briefly sum up, the main common features that distinguished the political parties, qualifying to be put under the category of “national liberal heirs” as we have delineated it in the previous arguments, were as follows:

- a) National liberal genealogical background
- b) Negatively defined ideological demarcation from other political blocs (non-Catholic, non-Marxist) and – in Austrian and Slovene cases – belonging to respective political camps.
- c) Unsuccessful efforts to develop into mass or popular parties.
- d) Ideological eclecticism and internal heterogeneity.

⁴⁸³ Lemberg, *Das Erbe*, 71.

- e) “Bourgeois” earmark and attachment to urban and/or small town milieus.
- f) Pronounced “national” orientation and a claim of representing the entirety of the given nation, regardless of class-, professional and other interest-based differences (“all-national” self-image).

4. Nationalist Conceptions and Rhetoric – Continuities and Change

“We have been noticing also, that a systematic struggle is being led against nationalism. But the national democracy must never abandon its national program, since it stands and falls with it.” (František Lukavský, 1929)¹

As shown in the previous chapter, one of the crucial common characteristics of the national liberal heirs was their pronounced “national” orientation, which acted as a distinctive common ground, the strongest unifying link and the main point of ideological identification for the otherwise internally fragmented political parties. All the three parties under scrutiny proudly emphasized that they were putting “nation” and “national politics” above everything else.

Bearing this in mind, the afore lying chapter explores the specifics of the studied parties’ nationalist orientations and ideologies. In the first part it investigates their nationality politics, more precisely how the national liberal heirs accommodated their national ideologies to the frameworks of post-WWI states. In the second it proceeds with an analysis of their nationalist discourses and rhetoric in order to discern the types of nationalism reflected through them. Taken together, the chapter tackles the question of continuity of pre-WWI national liberal nationality politics under the new political conditions of the interwar era.

¹ František Lukavský, “Politika kulturní a národní” in *Desíletí Československé národní demokracie, Publikace k pražskému sjezdu strany 13. a 14. dubna 1929* (Prague: Tiskový odbor čl. národní demokracie, 1929), p. 46.

In terms of continuity three main aspects will be of interest to us: a) “liberal residue,” that are the possible enduring elements of 19th century liberal nationalism; b) continuities of the pre-WWI, post *fin-de-siecle* nationality politics and discourses and their accommodations to the new political realities; c) possible continuity of the general pre-war trajectory of the “national liberal heirs” in terms of the strengthening of the nationalist component at the cost of the liberal one. Parallel to these considerations and in connection with them the questions regarding novel elements, stemming from contemporary ideological currents and possible turning points in terms of both ideology and practices will be discussed. In light of all the listed questions, the three cases will be compared at certain points, whereby the primary aim will be to discern the parallels between them.

The first part will deal with ideologies of national integration – Yugoslavism, Czechoslovakism and Greater German nationalism. The former two, representing state building ideologies, attached to the newly created states of Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, will be treated jointly. Focus will lie on the specific types of Yugoslavism and Czechoslovakism that the Slovene progressives and Czechoslovak National Democrats adopted and fostered. Due to the centrality of Yugoslavism for the Slovene progressives and their contemporary political image, their case will act as the primary reference. For associated reasons, the treatment of Czechoslovakism will at certain points transcend the Czech framework to include the Slovak Czechoslovakists.

Greater German nationalism, expressing itself as an essentially state-negating ideology within the context of the Austrian republic, will be analyzed separately. In addition to pointing out the particular features of each case, along with an attempt to provide partial explanations for them, the main aim of the subchapter will be to shed light on the parallels

between the three nationalist projects. I namely argue that, as ideologies of national integration that owed their emergence to the post-Versailles framework, they to a large extent belonged to the same “story.” This was so not only due to the geo-political circumstances alone, but also the manners in which the national liberal heirs accommodated their nationality politics to these new circumstances.

The second part will focus on the nationalist rhetoric of the three parties and aim at discerning the types of nationalism as reflected through their discourses. This will be done primarily through scrutinizing the manners in which the studied parties conceptualized the nation and in which they treated the “national other” (national minorities) within their states. Special attention, relevant especially for the Austrian case study, will be paid to the problem of anti-Semitism. The main aim will be to point out both the continuities of the pre-WWI nationality politics, particularly the “competitive nationalism,” and the novel elements, conditioned by the post-war dynamics. The latter will in the end lead us to questions regarding the attitudes and relationships of the studied parties towards radical nationalist movements and ideologies of the time.

4. 1. Yugoslavism, Czechoslovakism, Greater German Nationalism

4. 1. 1. Czechoslovakism and Yugoslavism as State-building Ideologies

The new states of Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, which were founded on the ashes of the Habsburg Empire, were both conceived as nation states. This was in spite of their complex multi-ethnic composition that included major national “minorities” that did not belong to

the “state nation” and also the fact that they – at least during their early years – in many ways functioned as “little empires.”² In order to consolidate themselves as nation states and carry out the project of nationalizing their citizenry they needed national ideologies that would have acted as integrative factors for the conglomerates of diverse regional, religious, (ethno-)national identities and distinct historical experiences and legal traditions. In the circumstances of the Versailles order the need for such integrative ideologies or “state ideas” centered around the postulate “one state – one nation” was especially conditioned by two main factors. First of all, the Western Allies treated the newly-founded, largely multi-ethnic states as “nations.” Secondly, and even more importantly, the model of a “stable” nation state appeared as the most feasible option in the general geopolitical constellations of post-WWI (East) Central Europe.

Both countries were surrounded by neighbors that had vested interests in parts of their territories, justifying their claims with either ethnographically- or historically-based arguments (or both). Together with Romania, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia also formed the *Little Entente* acting in close alliance with France as a bulwark against revisionist attempt by the countries defeated in the Great War. Especially in the Czechoslovak case, the latter had sizeable and compactly settled minorities that moreover populated strips of Czechoslovak territory that bordered their own and could thus be easily (re-)annexed if circumstances allowed for that (which happened in 1938-39). This provided additional reasons for the efforts to consolidate the new states as unitary nation states in which the state nation would form a safe majority of population. Specific groups forming these projected state nations – defined linguistically/ethnically, historically/regionally or

² Pieter M. Judson, *The Habsburg Empire, A New History* (Cambridge (Mass.): Belknap Press, 2016), p. 451.

religiously – found themselves in different positions within the new contexts. As a consequence, they also had different stakes in the new state nations, in turn developing different attitudes towards the nation-building projects.

In the case of Yugoslavia, the need for a unifying national idea was an even more pressing one since any kind of federal arrangement, which would have been based on individual nationalities, was evidently impractical as it would have led to conflicts. This particularly applied to the “core” Yugoslav territory where Serbo-Croatian language was spoken - lands, which nowadays comprise Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro. These were lands of three different religions and a number of different dialects and regional identities, borders between which however did not correspond to the religious (and later national) divisions. These differences also did not correspond to the historical political divisions in case of Croats and Serbs that based their nation-building projects on historical state rights as well.

Any attempt to draw clear ethnic borders would have immediately lead to conflict between Serbs and Croats. Moreover, a territorial division between Serb and Croat lands, even if possible, would not have solved the question of Bosnian Moslems living scattered throughout the already “contested” Bosnia and Herzegovina (and Sanjak of Novi Pazar). In addition to the two main national identities, based on historical state rights but at the same time being in practice almost inseparable from religious confession, and radiating from the two centers (Belgrade and Zagreb), there was also a number of regional identities (Dalmatian, Bosnian, Herzegovinian,...) that in some cases competed with the national ones and in others complemented them. A special case was Montenegro where Serb

national consciousness was combined with special Montenegrin state tradition and historical memory.

There had been quite successful attempts to unite the previously mentioned dialects into one language, which culminated in the 1850 agreement which based the Serbo-Croatian language on Shtokavian dialect (literary tradition of central Croatia was Kajkavian before that). But this did not apply to Slovene lands, where a different language was spoken, and where the national idea was based on natural rights exclusively and thus evolved jointly with development of a distinct Slovene literary language. During the first decade of the 20th century the idea of “trialism” - that is transforming the Habsburg Monarchy into three political units, with the third one uniting the southern Slavs - became prominent in Slovene politics, Catholic and progressive alike. It represented only an idea of a political union and did not include aspirations for building up a new cultural nation, growing mainly out of Slovene politicians' belief that Slovenes could not withstand the German pressure by themselves. Connection with other Southern Slavs – perceived as related but distinct - seemed a convenient solution to the rising German nationalist threat.³

Among Slovene university and high school students, on the other hand, movements emerged, which moved into direction of a Yugoslav national idea in its fuller sense. The already discussed “national radicals”, among other also sought cultural cooperation and reconciliation among all Southern Slavs inside and outside Austria-Hungary. They brought in the notion of a distinct Yugoslav identity, as in their own words Slovenes were first Yugoslavs and secondly Slavs.⁴ Their leaders Žerjav and Kramer also began embracing

³ The 1909 resolution by the Yugoslav Social Democratic Party, accepting the idea of one common language for all the South Slavs, represented a partial exception in this matter.

⁴ Irena Gantar Godina, “Narodno radikalno dijaštvo,” *Zgodovinski časopis* vol. 36 (1982): p. 220.

the idea of unitary Yugoslav nation, already after joining the National Progressive Party in 1909.⁵ During the First World War they had connections with the émigré “Yugoslav Committee”, which signed the Corfu Declaration of 1917, paving way for the creation of Yugoslav statehood. Another notable Slovene progressive, Bogumil Vošnjak was a member of this same committee.⁶

The mainstream of Slovene politics remained oriented towards Austria until 1918, demanding a trialist reform. After it had become clear however that this did not represent a realistic possibility and with the Empire approaching its collapse, the perspective changed. The option of joining forces with the other Southern Slavs – now possibly including also those outside the Habsburg framework – became even more relevant, indeed the only realistic one if the Slovenes were to survive as a nation. Especially the Italian claims to substantial parts of Slovene and Croat populated territories in accordance to the 1915 Treaty of London underlined the need for aligning with Croats and Serbs, possibly also with the backing of Serbian Kingdom as one of the victors of the Great War.

In the Czech case, the politicians, before the war mostly focused on securing the “historic lands” of the Crown of St. Wenceslas for the Czech nation, re-oriented towards Czechoslovakism in 1917-18, principally for practical geopolitical reasons. Most of the

Especially from 1909 on were the ideas of Neo-Slavism, previously also present among the national radicals, completely overshadowed by the Yugoslav idea. (Irena Gantar Godina, “Novoslovanska ideja in Slovenci,” *Zgodovinski časopis*, vol. 43 (1989): p.. 530.)

⁵ It is important to mention that another movement, called “Rebirth” (*Preporod*), was formed among high school students on the eve of WWI. It functioned partly as a secret society (although it also published newspapers) and had clear goals – destruction of Austria-Hungary and unification of South Slavic lands with Serbia, Montenegro and eventually Bulgaria. They also embraced the notion of one Yugoslav nation. Many of them fought and died as volunteers in Serbian army in the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913, as well as in WWI. In contrast to the National Radical Youth, members of this movement did not have prominent roles in politics later, though.

⁶ The Corfu declaration was signed in 1917 by the representatives of Serbian government and Yugoslav Committee, led by Ante Trumbić and comprising émigré politicians from Southern Slavic parts of Habsburg monarchy. It already included the notion of One Yugoslav nation, composed of three tribes.

Czech parties, adhering to the doctrine of Czech historical state rights, up until late in the war did not yet demand political unification with the Slovaks, however cultivating strong cultural ties with them.⁷ In 1913 solely the Czech Progressive Party (realists) briefly mentioned Slovaks in its program with Masaryk being one of the few open “Czechoslovakists” that referred to 2 million Slovaks who belonged to Czechs “according to nationality.”⁸ Leading the “external resistance” to Austria on the *Entente* side Masaryk continued to develop a Czechoslovakist position during the war, also in order to strengthen the position of Czechs in the eyes of the Allies.⁹ Most importantly the inclusion of Slovakia into the framework of the new nation was necessary in order for the Czech state not to be encircled by hostile nations. Within the post-1919 borders, inclusion of Slovaks into the state nation was equally necessary in order to secure a two-third majority in the state.

On the Slovak side, Milan Rastislav Štefánik, a close associate of Masaryk in the external resistance against Austria-Hungary, in the 1917 Kiev Declaration wrote that “The Czechs and Slovaks, being aware that they are closely related in terms of life interests, culture and especially in blood, want to develop into a unitary, politically indivisible and free nation.”¹⁰ For Karel Kramář, on the other hand, the guiding star was the idea of a great Slavic Empire under the auspices of Russia. One of its component parts would have been a territorially enlarged Czech Kingdom which would among others have included Slovakia. His concept gradually changed through the course of the war and at its aftermath, whereby any

⁷ Cf. Jan Galandauer, “Čechoslovakismus v proměnách času. Od národotvorné tendence k integrační ideologii,” *Historie a vojenství*, vol. 47, nr. 2 (1998): p. 36-39.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 37-38, 41.

⁹ As such Masaryk wartime czechoslovakism was not consistent – he himself distinguished between Czechs and Slovaks but out of pragmatic considerations needed to justify the project of the Czechoslovak state in front of the entente statesmen saying that “Slovaks were Czechs” (*Ibid.*, 43)

¹⁰ Elisabeth Bakke, *Doomed to Failure?: The Czechoslovak Nation Project and the Slovak Autonomist Reaction 1918 – 38* (Oslo: Univesity of Oslo, 1999),p. 298.

“Czechoslovakist” considerations continued to be subordinated to the broader “Slavic” conception.¹¹ The employment of terms such as “Czechoslovak nation” and “Czechoslovak language,” as Miloš Tomčík¹² argues, by Masaryk, Kramář, Beneš and Štefánik, was however probably primarily strategical and conditioned by the efforts to gain international recognition for Czechoslovakia. Internally - and in contrast to Yugoslavia (after 1929) - the prevailing practice in Czechoslovakia was to refer to “Czechs and Slovaks” and not “Czechoslovaks” in official affairs.¹³

In 1918, rhetoric about “Yugoslav nation” pervaded the entire Slovene politics. Despite the commonly shared enthusiasm for the future political community, major differences in views regarding the forms, means and dynamics of Yugoslav unification, as well as important nuances in understanding the idea of a Yugoslav nation existed from the very beginning. All Slovene political forces favored unification, thereby having different views on how the future political community should look like and what form of administrative order it should 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 a 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

¹¹ Galandauer, *Čechoslovakismus*, 42.

Kramář's 1914 conception of the Czech Kingdom included southwestern part of the Prussian Silesia (Kladsko), Lusatia and Upper Hungary all the way to *Visegrád*.

¹² Miloš Tomčík, “Masarykov podiel na aktivizácii slovenskej literatúry 19. a 20. storočia” in *T.G. Masaryk a Slovensko* (Prague: Masarykova Společnost, 1991), p.51–52.

¹³ Peter Haslinger, *Nation und Territorium im tschechischen Diskurs 1880-1938* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2010), p. 329.

of “three tribes”; d) a fully-fledged integral Yugoslavism, acknowledging the existence of a single ethnically and culturally homogenous Yugoslav nation.¹⁴ 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.”¹⁵ Common to all Czechoslovakist conceptions was the notion of one “Czechoslovak nation,” whereby it is

¹⁴ For more on Yugoslavism see: Jurij Perovšek, “Jugoslawentum und nationale Homogenisierungen,” *Studia Historica Slovenica*, vol. 8, nr. 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*, vol. 25, nr. 3 (1997), pp. 387-406; Dejan Djokić (ed.), *Yugoslavism, Histories of a Failed Idea 1918-1992* (London: C. Hurst & Co, 2003); Ivo Banac, *The National Question in Yugoslavia: Origins, History, Politics*, (Ithaca (N.Y.): Cornell University Press, 1988); Andrew Baruch Wachtel, *Making a nation, breaking a nation: literature and cultural politics in Yugoslavia* (Stanford (CA): Stanford University Press, 1998); Pieter Troch, “Yugoslavism between the world wars: indecisive nation building,” *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. 38, Iss. 2, (2010), pp. 227-244; Connie Robinson, “Yugoslavism in the Early Twentieth Century” in *New Perspectives on Yugoslavia. Key Issues and Controversies*, D. Djokić and J. Ker-Lindsay eds. (London: Routledge, 2011), pp. 10-26; Marko Bulatović, “Struggling with Yugoslavism: Dilemmas of Interwar Serb Political Thought” in *Ideologies and National Identities. The Case of Twentieth-Century Southeastern Europe*, J. R. Lampe and M. Mazower eds. (Budapest: CEU Press, 2004).

¹⁵ Galandauer, *Čechoslovakismus*, 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*, J. Opat, J. Tichý eds. (Prague: Ústav T. G. Masaryka, 1993), p. 70-72; Jan Rychlík, *Češi a Slováci ve 20. století: spolupráce a konflikty 1914-1992*, (Prague: Vyšehrad, 2012); Niklas Perzi, “Die Metamorphosen des Tschechoslowakismus und Edvard Beneš” in *Edvard Beneš und die tschechoslowakische Aussenpolitik 1918-1948*, A. Suppan, E. Vyslonzil eds. (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2002), p. 147-153; Elisabeth Bakke, “The making of Czechoslovakism in the First Republic” in *Loyalitäten im polyethnischen, multikonfessionellen Staat: Die Erste Tschechoslowakische Republik 1918–1938*, M. S. Wessel ed. (Munich: Bohemia, 2004); Elisabeth Bakke, “Czechoslovakism in Slovak history” in *Slovakia in history*, M. Teich, D. Kováč, M. D. Brown eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 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 Déřera” in *Dr. Ivan Déřer, politik, právnik a publicista* (Bratislava: 2010), pp. 315-330; Josef Harna, “Idea národa československého na stránkách týdeníku Přítomnost,” *Moderní dějiny*, vol. 17, nr. 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*, J. Opat, J. Tichý eds. (Prague: Ústav T. G. Masaryka, 1993), p. 78-85; Anna Magdolenová, “Čechoslovakizmus a autonomizmus v prvej Č-SR,” *Historický zborník*, vol. 10, nr. 1 (2000), pp. 55-68; Jaroslav Kučera, “Edvard Beneš und die Nationalitätenpolitik der Ersten Tschechoslowakischen Republik” in *Edvard Beneš und die tschechoslowakische Aussenpolitik 1918-1948* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2002), pp. 121-140.

disputed whether the official Czechoslovakism was essentially political or ethnic.¹⁶ The Czech public largely saw the new state as Czech, where what had previously been “Czech” simply turned into “Czechoslovak,”¹⁷ Czechoslovakism above all enabling the construction of a two-third majority for “the state-building nation.”¹⁸ Mainly for this reason “the state founding narrative” that had been developed by 1920 remained limited to its basic tenets and never developed further “into an integrative all-national discourse.”¹⁹ In the case of Slovak Czechoslovakists, the differences between positions were more pronounced.²⁰

While for the Czech politicians, considering the previously discussed geo-political reasons, the choice was a simpler one with in-depth reflections on the actual forms of the Czechoslovak nation more or less absent, the Slovene situation to some extent paralleled the one in Slovakia. There all the parties supported the unification, whereby most of them were in favor of retaining and developing a separate Slovak national identity within the common state with the Czechs. The 1918 Pittsburgh agreement and Declaration of Turčiansky Svätý Martin both called for an autonomous position of Slovakia in the unified state. Czechoslovakia however became a centralized state with one official Czechoslovak state nation and factual hegemony of its Czech part. The latter reflected not merely in continuous numeric and economic superiority of Czechs but also in migration of Czech officials and other public employees to Slovakia, which resulted in resentment among the younger educated Slovaks.

¹⁶ For the latter position see: Jaroslav Kučera, “Politický či přirozený národ? K pojetí národa v československém právním řádu meziválečného období,” *Český časopis historický* vol. 99 (2001), pp. 548–568. For the opposite view see: Eva Broková, “Politický nebo etnický národ,” *Český časopis historický* vol.100, nr. 2 (2002), pp. 379-394.

¹⁷ Lukáš Novotný, Michal Stehlík, Andrej Tóth, *Národnostní menšiny v Československu 1918-1938. Od státu národního ke státu národnostnímu?*, (Prague: Univerzita Karlova, 2012), p. 22, 24.

¹⁸ Cf. Galandauer, *Čechoslovakismus*, 41.

¹⁹ Haslinger, *Nation*, 337.

²⁰ Cf. Rychlík, *Češi*, 132.

This gave way to a new wave of Slovak autonomism and particularism and brought about a lasting polarization between “autonomists” and “Czechoslovakists” within the Slovak political elite.²¹ The dividing line was the choice between securing the Slovak nation's individuality and independent development or treating it only as a “tribe” or “branch” of the Czechoslovak nation which should moreover strive to adjust to the more culturally and economically advanced Czech “branch.” Similar to the Yugoslavists in Slovenia, Czechoslovakists in Slovakia soon joined all-state “Czechoslovak” parties, while the main autonomist force remained an explicitly “Slovak” party. In both cases this was the party of political Catholicism that moreover bore an almost identical name – Slovene/Slovak People’s Party.²² This party from the 1925 elections on clearly represented the strongest political force in Slovakia, although still attaining slightly lower percentages of votes than its Slovenian counterpart.²³ On the Czechoslovakist side, however, it was the Agrarians (until the mid-1930s) and perhaps even more the Social Democrats – and not the National Democrats or National Socialists - that adopted the role most similar to the one that the Slovene branches of JDS and SDS played in terms of the nationality politics.²⁴

Conditioned primarily by substantially different positions that the Czechs and Slovenes occupied within the newly-founded states, the adherents of integrative national ideologies among them framed these differently. Moreover, the political groups that had stemmed

²¹ Cf. Haslinger, *Nation*, 325.

²² On the 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* “ 53/2 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.

²³ In 1925 H'SLS gathered 52.1 and in 1929 40.8 percent of Slovak votes. (Volby do poslanecké sněmovny v listopadu 1925 (Praha : Státní úřad statistický, 1926), p. 19; Volby do poslanecké sněmovny v říjnu 1929 (Praha : Státní úřad statistický, 1930), p. 9, 21)).

²⁴ See: Krajčovičová, *Politické strany*, 318-320.

from the traditions of national liberalism again re-framed their nationalist ideologies in various ways. While the progressives in Slovenia represented the main political force that stood for Yugoslavism and included the most persistent and principled champions of the Yugoslav national idea, this may hardly be said for the National Democrats and Czechoslovakism. Despite formally adhering to the idea of the Czechoslovak nation, their orientation was, especially in the early years, relatively Czech-centric. In contrast to the Slovene progressives that largely defined their political profile by advocating Yugoslav nationalism and presenting themselves as its most loyal adherents, the position of Czechoslovak National Democrats in this regard may to some extent be paralleled to the “compromised Yugoslavism”²⁵ of the Serbian National Radical Party. In the Czech context the most consistently and unconditionally Czechoslovakist positions may be attributed to the Castle group, particularly Beneš, the Social Democrats and the National Socialists (particularly after Beneš joined them)²⁶ and less to the National Democrats. Whereas Masaryk and Beneš saw Czechoslovakism “as an enlightened, gentler Czech nationalism,”²⁷ Kramář and the National Democrats advocated for the continuation of the Czech nationalism now in the form of a “nationalism of a free nation,” referring to Czechoslovakia as a “renewed state.”²⁸ The keynote speaker at the founding congress of ČsND, its vice-president and editor-in-chief of *Národní listy* František Šis spoke about the political mission of the party, stating:

"For us has this state been created and it is the only state that we know and administer. We therefore insist on its Czechness as the fundamental condition of state life. (...)

²⁵ Troch, *Yugoslavism*, 230.

²⁶ Bakke, *Doomed*, 278.

²⁷ Andrea Orzoff, *Battle for the Castle, The Myth of Czechoslovakia in Europe 1914-1948* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), p 98.

²⁸ Cf. for instance František Mareš in “III. Sjezd Českoslov. národní demokracie v Brně,” *Národní listy*, 3. 5. 1925.

As regards the linguistic question we of course begin from the principle that Czechoslovak state is the Czech national state [českým státem národním], that this is the state that we alone had founded and for that reason we demand for the Czech to be the state language.”²⁹

Exclusive references to Czechness abounded also in the party program (which at some points mentioned the Slovak “branch”) and in speeches of party leaders.³⁰ The role and position of the Slovak “branch” in this “renewed” Czech state was not explicitly problematized.

The relations in Yugoslavia were however profoundly more complex. There, Serbia as the Yugoslav “Piedmont” represented the unquestionable center of political power, with Serbs within and without the former Kingdom also forming the relative majority in the country. Economically and culturally, however, the most advanced part of the country by far was Slovenia, which otherwise accounted only for 8.5% of population. Taking into account its exposed northwestern position it may also be argued that it “needed” Yugoslavia the most. In 1918 Slovene 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.³¹ A declaration, signed by “progressive” intellectuals and artists that appeared in *Slovenski narod* on November, 23rd 1918³² demanded “closest possible unification with the Serbs” without delay in order to prevent dismemberment of Slovene territory. Such a firm and rash demand was very much understandable in light of

²⁹ *Politické poslání Československé národní demokracie. Řeč člena Národního shromáždění a chefredaktora »Národních Listů« Fr. Síse. Pronesena na ustavujícím sjezdu Československé národní demokracie dne 24. března 1919* (Prague: Tiskový odbor Československé národní demokracie, 1919), p. 6, 13.

³⁰ For instance see: *Program československé národní demokracie, schválený valným sjezdem strany dne 25. března 1919* (Prague: Tiskový odbor československé národní demokracie, 1919), p. 16, 19; “Dr. Karel Kramář v Klatovech,” *Šumavan*, 24. 4. 1920; Jaroslav Stránský in “Sjezd Československé národní demokracie,” *Národní listy*, 27. 3. 1922.

³¹ Jurij Perovšek, *Liberalizem in vprašanje slovenstva : nacionalna politika liberalnega tabora v letih 1918-1929* (Ljubljana: Modrijan, 1996.), pp. 80-83.

³² “Izjava duševnih delavcev,” *Slovenski narod*, 23. 11. 1918.

the critical circumstances in which Italian military was already at the doorstep of Ljubljana. Yet, the declaration also stated that “the principal goal” was “a strong, externally and internally unitary [*enovita*] and richly developed state of the entire Yugoslav nation.” This was “the first, vital need, *suprema lex*, to which all the considerations must unconditionally yield.”³³ Their position on the Yugoslav state and nation, expressed in these sentences, continued to mark the progressives’ national orientation throughout the interwar period. After the unification the Democratic and the Independent Agrarian parties supported the centralist state 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 Vošnjak during a session of the Constitutional Board. The governmental proposal stated that the official language be Serbo-Croatian with an additional clause for the Slovene part where the “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.³⁴ In practice this meant that Slovene was used as the official language in Slovenia, while the rest of the country, as well as the government and central administration used Serbo-Croatian.³⁵

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Jurij Perovšek, “Bogumil Vošnjak in ‘srbsko-hrvaško-slovenski’ jezik” in *Kronika XX. Stoletja*, vol.1: 1900-1941, Marjan Drnovšek and Drago Bajt eds. (Ljubljana: Nova Revija, 1997), p. 257..

³⁵ Vošnjak's intervention nevertheless had an unforeseen consequence, formally enabling the agrarian leader Pucelj, then already a Slovene autonomist, who moreover strictly spoke Slovene in the parliament, to demand in 1928 for all the protocols to be written in Cyrillic and Latin script as well as in Slovene language.

The Czechoslovak constitution, after long debates during which the Slovak representatives had mostly suggested different solutions, indicated the “Czechoslovak language” as the official one.³⁶ In practice this instituted a Czech-Slovak linguistic dualism, which meant that in the Czech lands the Czech and in Slovakia the Slovak language was in official use, a practice which was also formally stipulated in the Law on Language.³⁷ The positions of ČsND on this matter were indicative of their Czech-centric orientation. The 1919 political program for instance stated that

„As regards the question of language it is essential to proceed from the fact that the Czechoslovak state is a national state, founded by the Czech nation and that thus (...) Czech and its branch Slovak respectively must be designated as the state language in order for the national character of the state to be expressed fully.”³⁸

Later, as the Slovak dissatisfaction with the political and administrative order of Czechoslovakia became clear, Kramář recognized the importance of the “Slovak problem” and the necessity of accommodating at least some of their demands. As the party, with some limited success, strove to establish itself in Slovakia as well, its official statements ceased to label Slovak as a “branch” of Czech and began referring to it as an independent language. Yet, this did not imply any kind of recognition of Slovak national individuality that could act as basis for autonomist claims and special privileges for Slovakia. The National Democratic “compromised Czechoslovakism” acknowledged that the “Czechoslovak unity” was instrumental for maintaining the “national character of the Czechoslovak republic.”³⁹ Its practical nature reflected well when Kramář, responding to German claims that the 6 million Czechs in Czechoslovakia did not form the majority,

³⁶ Jan Rychlík, “Ústava ČSR z roku 1920 – historické souvislosti” in *Československá ústava 1920 Devadesát let poté*, Marek Loužek ed. (Prague: CEP, 2010), 55-56.

³⁷ Ibid., 56.

³⁸ Program ČsND, 13.

³⁹ Vojtěch Holeček, “Bratislava nár. demokratická,” *Národní listy*, 27. 5. 1933.

responded that “the rights of state language” applied both to the Czech and the Slovak languages, concluding: “And this are these 9 million, this is the majority.”⁴⁰ In the equally straightforward manner and employing the same type of practical argument, he also confronted the Slovak autonomists. Pointing to the discussed German claims about Czech “minority” dominating over the rest, he instructed them that by regarding themselves “as a separate and oppressed nation” they had under the circumstances been threatening “the independence of our nation.”⁴¹

In case of Slovene progressives the reasons and motives for their determined Yugoslav 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 in such a case it would have become a “papal province”⁴². 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.⁴³ They followed examples of western European state nations, particularly France. The 1921

⁴⁰ “Dr. Kramář o Němcích,” *Národní listy*, 17. 3. 1926.

⁴¹ Kramář, 5. schůze poslanecké sněmovny N.S.R.Č. dne 19. prosince 1925 (p. 140), in *Národní shromáždění republiky Československé 1925-1929 Poslanecká sněmovna, Stenoprotokoly*, accessible at: <http://www.psp.cz/eknih/1925ns/ps/stenprot/005schuz/s005001.htm> (Accessed 03/30/2017).

⁴² Perovšek, *Liberalizem*, 254

⁴³ This resembled the position of the Czechoslovak National Democrats regarding the Czechoslovak unity. (Cf. Jaroslava Rogul'ová, “The Czechoslovak National Democratic Party in the Politics of the Slovak National Party, 1919-1932,” *Historický časopis* 2011 (Supplement), p. 68.)

Democratic Party program stated that any kind of special status for any part of the state was perceived as contrary to democratic order.⁴⁴ 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.⁴⁵ Similarly the most notable Slovak ČsND member Milan Ivanka argued in 1929 that in Germany and Italy there were “whole areas belonging to the same nation but having so diverse dialects that one tribe [*kmen*] does not understand the other at all” whereas in Czechoslovakia there were no such differences.⁴⁶ The autonomist rhetoric of H’SLS and the Slovak National Party on the other hand disregarded the “political and state law consequences” of Slovak autonomy which would have been “the beginning of atomization and disintegration of the state.”⁴⁷

Last but not least, among the Slovene progressives and particularly the group of former “national radicals” around Žerjav and Kramer there was also a sincere belief, that integration into the 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.”⁴⁸ The following passage from Žerjav’s speech at the party assembly in Ljubljana

⁴⁴ “Iz programa vsedrŹavne 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)*, Jurij Perovšek ed. (Ljubljana: Arhivsko društvo Slovenije, 1998), p. 46.

⁴⁵ Perovšek, *Liberalizem*, 60.

⁴⁶ “Pozdravný projev dra Milana Ivanka,” *Národní listy*, 16. 4. 1929 – supplement to the nr. 105: “Čtvrtý sjezd čsl. národní demokracie”

⁴⁷ Dr. Milan Ivanka, “Autonómia Slovenska,” *Modra Revue*, Yr. 2 Nr. 1, 15. 1. 1933.

⁴⁸ Jurij Perovšek, *O demokraciji in jugoslovanstvu, Slovenski liberalizem v Kraljevini SHS/Jugoslaviji* (Ljubljana: INZ, 2013), p. 122.

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 an inseparable Yugoslav whole, to unite all the creative forces among Slovenes for this action – this is what Slovene democracy longs for. This way the problem of small nation would be solved in a favorable way for the Slovenes.”⁴⁹

The 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 Peasant-Democratic Coalition. Its Slovene wing however continued to oppose federalist restructuring of Yugoslavia and creation of national autonomies.⁵⁰

Problem of a “small nation” was a pressing one in the Czech context as well and similarly provided grounds to Beneš for justifying his determined Czechoslovakist position.⁵¹

Among the National Democrats it is however hard to trace such all-encompassing and far-

⁴⁹ Jugoslovenska demokracija na pohodu; Veličastni zbor zaupnikov JDS v Ljubljani, *Jutro*, 5. 2. 1924.

⁵⁰ An exception within the progressive camp 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, 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 kmetška stranka*), it stepped into direct confrontation with the core progressives’ views by embracing ideas of Slovene national individuality. The National Socialists were by then entirely weakened and - all the programmatic differences notwithstanding - in 1928 merged with the Independent Democratic Party.

⁵¹ Cf. Jaroslav Kučera, “Koncepce národního státu Čechů a Slováků a jeho realita v životě první republiky” in *Československo 1918-1938, Osudy demokracie*, vol. 2, Valenta, Voráček, Harna eds. (Prague: Historický ústav, 1999), p. 606.

reaching expressions of Czechoslovakism. Furthermore, positions varied highly between various factions within the party with *Národní myšlenka* circle being unrepentantly Czech-centric – as visible already in the journal’s subtitle “Revue of Czech Nationalism”⁵² – and *Demokratický střed* on the other hand advocating a distinctively Czechoslovakist concept of gradual amalgamation.⁵³ *Modra Revue* occupied a more moderate and nuanced position that stressed the “duality of the nation of Czechs and Slovaks” and the special needs Slovakia had due to its different history.⁵⁴

An example, more analogous to the Slovene case may be found if we turn the perspective from the Czech lands to Slovakia and examine the positions of the already mentioned Milan Ivanka, a prominent Slovak representative of the National Democracy. In contrast to his Czech colleagues and similar to the other important Slovak supporters of the 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 firmly rejecting Slovak autonomism.⁵⁵ In contrast to the Slovene progressives, however, Ivanka expressed understanding for the latter and openly discussed the reasons for its emergence, criticizing the ignorance of Czech officials about Slovak culture and other specificities. In an article entitled “Slovak Autonomy” (*Autonómia Slovenska*), which appeared in 1933 in *Modra Revue*⁵⁶ he pointed out that Slovakia was “culturally, geographically and also in terms of climate a different land than Moravia and Bohemia. Laws and regulations that are good for Bohemia and Moravia can create much evil in Slovakia and vice versa.” For this reason he

⁵² For a Czech-hegemonistic position also see: R. B. Mácha, “K otázce 'českoslovenství'”, *Národní myšlenka*, vol. VI.(1928-1929), No. 1, p. 20.

⁵³ “Do boje za demokracii řádu a činu,” *Demokratický střed*, yr. 11, no. 12-14 (23. 3. 1934): p. 1-9.

⁵⁴ “Pro stát národní síly a práce,” *Modrá revue*, yr. 3, nr. 6, 3. 4. 1934.

⁵⁵ Cf. Rychlík, Češi, 133.

⁵⁶ Dr. Milan Ivanka, “Autonómia Slovenska,” *Modra Revue*, Yr. 2 Nr. 1, 15. 1. 1933.

stressed that it was “above all necessary that the administrators of the republic: the ministers, the MP’s, the ministry officials should set themselves a task, not only to know but also to understand Slovakia.”⁵⁷

Whereas initially “Czechness” and “Czechoslovakness” acted almost as synonyms in the National Democratic discourse, with the Slovak language being treated as a “branch” of Czech, this changed by the mid-1920s. In contrast to the previous ones the 1925 ČsND congress was marked by the language of Czechoslovakism with previously common references to Czech nationalism and Czechoslovakia as “Czech state” almost entirely absent. Now, the “Czechoslovak national character of the state”⁵⁸ was being stressed along with “welfare of the Czechoslovak nation” as the “first ideal.”⁵⁹ The new articulation of the party’s national orientation was beyond doubt connected to its expansion to Slovakia on the one side, and increased sensitivity for the “Slovak problem” as a result of rise of Slovak autonomism on the other. While already during the early 1920 Kramář stood out among the Czech political leaders by actively engaging in the parliamentary discussions on the “Slovak question”⁶⁰ he in 1926 reached out to the Slovak politicians, suggesting that they acknowledge a unitary Czechoslovak nation in return for a broad land autonomy for Slovakia.⁶¹ For his engagement he was later given credit even by Peroutka.⁶²

Národní listy began occasionally publishing articles in Slovak, as the departure away from the earlier exclusive Czechness also signified a pronounced consideration for the

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ CZ-ANM NAD 159: Antonín Hajn, K. 130, 3671 Usnesení třetího valného sjezdu strany 1925.

⁵⁹ “III. Sjezd Českoslov. národní demokracie v Brně,” *Národní listy*, 3. 5. 1925.

⁶⁰ Haslinger, *Nation*, 332-333.

⁶¹ Karel Kramář, “Do nového roku,” *Národní listy*, 1. 1. 1926. (Quoted from Haslinger, *Nation*, 352)

⁶² Ferdinand Peroutka, “Jen toužebné přání,” *Přítomnost*, Vol. 4, Nr. 34, 29. 8. 1929: “Truly, we quite often disagree with Dr. Kramář, but we admit that he is being right that the Slovak question should in order of importance be placed also ahead of the German question.”

specificities of the Slovak “branch” or “tribe.” The declaration on the cultural and educational program, adopted at the 1925 congress thus stressed the need for educating “the Czechoslovak nation, especially its Slovak branch” with simultaneous “preservation of all the tribal [*kmenových*] characteristics.”⁶³ In 1933 the party held its congress in Bratislava, making it into a “mighty manifestation of Czechoslovak brotherhood, Czechoslovak community and unity, and of Czechoslovak nationalism”⁶⁴, whose manifesto stated:

“The development of a nation is not full if its homeland is not free. An expression of a free homeland is a free state. We congregated in order to proclaim on the border of the state, on the Slovak soil, that we shall defend the indivisibility of Czechs and Slovaks as members of a single Czechoslovak nation, the independence of our state and the integrity of the Czechoslovak borders.”⁶⁵

Increased sensitivity for the special Slovak circumstances and needs however did not imply support for Slovak autonomy or even federalization of Czechoslovakia. In administrative regard, the National Democrats continued to be centralists, although they opposed the strictly centralist administrative order instituted by the 1920 constitution which was based on counties. Pointing towards Slovak discontent they demanded the re-introduction of historic lands as the main administrative units,⁶⁶ justifying it among other things in terms of accommodating the Slovak specifics, also not hesitating to employ the word “autonomy.”⁶⁷ The National Democrats thus strongly supported the administrative reform

⁶³ “Usnesení III. sjezdu Čsl. národní demokracie,” *Národní listy*, 5. 5. 1925.

⁶⁴ “Sjezd národní demokracie v Bratislavě zahájen,” *Národní listy*, 27. 5. 1933.

⁶⁵ “Služba národu jest nejvyšším příkazem. Manifest V. valného sjezdu Čsl. národní demokracie v Bratislavě,” *Národní listy*, 30. 5. 1933.

⁶⁶ For instance see: Dr. Karel Kramář, „Otázka župního zřízení a zemská autonomie,” *Národní listy*, 3. 1. 1926; “Čsl. národní demokracie pro řešení slovenského problému,” *Národní listy*, 17. 1. 1926.

⁶⁷ Antonín Hajn on Slovakia and Carpathian Rus’, *Národní listy* – supplement: “Sjezd Československé národní demokracie, 28. 3. 1922; Karel Kramář, “Do nového roku,” *Národní listy*, 1. 1. 1926.

The main motivation behind the ČsND support for the reform was however that in this way the Czech dominance over the German minority was better secured. (Bakke, *Doomed*, 464, 512).

of 1927/28 which abolished the counties and divided Czechoslovakia into four lands – Bohemia, Moravia with Silesia, Slovakia and Subcarpathian Ruthenia. The reform was by no means a step towards federalization, but much more a further centralization under a Czech-national earmark, where Slovakia and Subcarpathian Ruthenia “simulated territorial-autonomous solutions” without putting into question the political primacy of Prague where all the legislative power remained.⁶⁸

Moreover, the administrative order based on lands was also essentially Czechoslovakist. The “autonomy” that the National Democrats spoke about was conceived as “reasonable autonomy of the land”⁶⁹ within a firmly Czechoslovakist framework that precluded “any attempt of instituting some kind of dualism”⁷⁰ Similar as Styrian progressives in 1922 justified the division of Slovenia into two jurisdictions, roughly corresponding to former Carniola and Lower Styria (with part of the Carinthia and Transmura region) on Yugoslavist grounds,⁷¹ the National Democrats supported the partial re-introduction of historical lands as administrative units stressing their economic and cultural specificities. Slovakia was thereby treated on the same level as Moravia (and not “Czech lands” for instance), in much the same way as the Styrian progressive Lipold put the Styrian and Slovene identities into an equivalent relationships towards the Yugoslav one.⁷² As mentioned already Kramář in 1926 conditioned the broad regional autonomy for Slovakia with embracing the common nation.⁷³ Not rejecting autonomy per se, Ivanka stressed that

⁶⁸ Haslinger, *Nation*, 358, 339.

⁶⁹ “Řeč dra Karla Kramáře o základech ideové a politické koncepce čsl. národní demokracie,” *Národní listy*, 16. 4. 1929 – supplement to the nr. 105: “Čtvrtý sjezd čsl. národní demokracie.”

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Marko Žuraj, *Med regionalizmom in jugoslovanstvom, “Liberalizem” na Štajerskem med letoma 1918 in 1923* (Maribor: ZRI dr. Franca Kovačiča, 2010), p. 162, 164, 167.

For the broader context see the subchapter 3.5.

⁷² Franjo Lipold, “Vitez Kaltenegger in naši avtonomisti,” *Jutro*, 8. 10. 1922.

⁷³ Karel Kramář, “Do nového roku,” *Národní listy*, 1. 1. 1926.

in such extent as demanded by “certain impatient Slovaks”⁷⁴ or “*Hlinkovci* and *národnári* on the 28. and 29. of December 1932 in Trenčín” it “would imply the beginning of an end for the Czechoslovak republic.”⁷⁵

The development of Slovene progressives’ Yugoslavism took a slightly different turn in the same period, conditioned primarily by the introduction of the 6th of January regime in 1929. Now (re-)united in the Yugoslav National Party, progressives began embracing the idea of integral Yugoslavism that abandoned even the notion of three “tribes”⁷⁶ during the 1930s. After losing power in 1935 the progressives radicalized this position even further. In the “Pohorje Declaration”, written by Kramer and other prominent members of JNS, they announced that Serbs, Croats and Slovenes “comprised one nation in an ethnic sense.”⁷⁷ It stated that the only way out of the political and economic crisis of the time was by implementing a “pure and sincere national policy, proclaimed as the basis of all our national and state life by the king Unifier.”⁷⁸ The progressives adopted the role of heralds of the King Alexander’s Yugoslavist vision, a position to which they continued to cling until the very end of the First Yugoslavia.

⁷⁴ Posl. dr. Milan Ivanka, “Za jednotu československú,” *Národní listy*, 26. 5. 1933.

⁷⁵ Dr. Milan Ivanka, “Autonómia Slovenska,” *Modra Revue*, Yr. 2 Nr. 1, 15. 1. 1933.

⁷⁶ 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.” (Branko Petranović, *Istorija Jugoslavije 1918-1988*. Vol. 1: *Kraljevina Jugoslavija 1914-1941* (Beograd: Nolit, 1988), 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. (Dejan Djokić, “(Dis)integrating Yugoslavia: King Alexander and Interwar Yugoslavism” in *Yugoslavism, Histories of a Failed Idea 1918-1992*, Dejan Djokić ed. (London: C. Hurst & Co, 2003), pp. 151-152.)

⁷⁷ *Slovenska novejša zgodovina: od programa Zedinjena Slovenija do mednarodnega priznanja Republike Slovenije : 1848-1992*, Vol. 1: 1848-1945, Jasna Fischer et al eds. (Ljubljana: Mladinska Knjiga, Inštitut za novejšo zgodovino, 2005), p. 370.

⁷⁸ Darko Friš “Banovinska konferenca Jugoslovanske nacionalne stranke leta 1937 v Ljubljani”, *Zgodovinski časopis*, Yr. 59, Vol. 1-2 (2005): p. 132.

The uncompromising integral Yugoslavism, as it was being implemented under the 6th of January regime and officially adhered to by the progressive politicians, became a major source of dissent and target of critique not only among Catholics but also notable parts of intelligentsia within own camp. Most notably, Josip Vidmar in his brochure *Kulturni problem slovenstva* (The Cultural Problem of Slovenehood)⁷⁹ gave a stern critique of progressive nationality politics, exposing the “tragic” of the free-minded Slovene intelligentsia caught between the “Slovene-Catholic” and “anti-Slovene – free-minded” political blocs. His critique expectedly encountered a fierce reaction in progressive press, sparking a polemic that led to a clear cut division between Slovene-minded intellectuals and those that continued to be loyal to the progressive Yugoslavism.⁸⁰

Everyone that publicly disagreed with the official integral Yugoslavist outlook, most notably the Catholic conservatives, were labeled by the progressive-controlled press as “only-Slovenes” (*samoslovinci*), “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.”⁸¹

⁷⁹ Josip Vidmar, *Kulturni problem slovenstva* (Ljubljana: Tiskovna zadruga, 1932).

⁸⁰ Cf. Ervin Dolenc, “Med slovenstvom in jugoslovanstvom: Borko in kulturna politika med dvema svetovnima vojnama” in *Borkov zbornik*, M. Jesenšek and V. Vrbnjak eds. (Maribor, Slavistično društvo Maribor, 1996), p. 388.

For more on the 1932 polemic see: Lilijana Trampuž, “Polemika o narodu v slovenskem tisku leta 1932” in *Evropski vplivi na slovensko družbo*, N. Troha, M. Šorn, B. Balkovec eds. (Ljubljana: Zveza zgodovinskih društev Slovenije, 2008), pp. 281-293.

⁸¹ Ljubljana punctations (*ljubljske punktacije*), also known as the “Slovene declaration,” were written in 1932 by leading representatives of SLS. They expressed criticism against the undemocratic regime in

“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.”⁸²

Pucelj uttered these words as a representative of an undemocratic regime, which stands in sharp contrast to the reactions of the Slovak Czechoslovakist and ČsND member Ivanka to the Slovak autonomist declaration that was published in the same year as the Ljubljana punctuations. The 1933 statement by Jaromir Špaček, however, who regarded "our Slovak branch as a part of our unitary nation," bears much more resemblance in tone to Pucelj:

"Anyone who insults the Czechs in Slovakia, who spreads the insensible and uncultured idea of the total dissimilarity of the two branches of our nation, is committing treason in the true sense of the word, not only to this state, but also to his own Slovak nation."⁸³

Integrative national ideas as vehicles for social modernization

The 1920s Yugoslavist vision of Slovene progressives could be interpreted as an “occidental” 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.”⁸⁴ As consistent followers of the Yugoslav national idea, believing in the gradual

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.

⁸² Dolenjska v taboru vsedržavne stranke, *Jutro*, 1. 5. 1933.

⁸³ Bakke, *Doomed*, 294-295.

⁸⁴ *Jutro*, 10. 9. 1927 (Quoted from: Perovšek, *Liberalizem*, 272.).

creation of a 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 the 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.”⁸⁵ This way a “genuine modern civilization” could be created.⁸⁶ Žerjav, speaking in favor of “ideas and culture of the West”, argued that “there have been no historical examples of the 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”.⁸⁷

This perspective changed slightly during 1930s when Slovene progressive politicians collaborated in the all-state Yugoslav National Party. 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.”⁸⁸ Such a shift may of course be explained by the changed political situation at that time. The official ideology was quite Serb-centered and Slovene progressives as proponents of the regime had to embrace it in order to maintain their positions. The question of whether they really shifted their views is hardly answerable, since most of their energy during the 1930s was directed at fighting domestic opponents - political Catholicism and the leftists - with their rhetoric framed accordingly.

⁸⁵ *Domovina*, 6. 12. 1928 (Quoted from: *ibid.*, p. 263.).

⁸⁶ *Jutro*, 12. 11. 1927 (Quoted from: *ibid.*).

⁸⁷ *Jutro*, 7. 4. 1928 (Quoted from: *ibid.*).

⁸⁸ Ob obletnici prevrata, *Jutro*, 29. 10. 1931.

While in the case of Yugoslavia the relative positions of its different parts – especially Slovenia and Serbia – varied in particular respects (numerical, political, economic, cultural strength), this relationship was entirely clear-cut in the case of Czech lands and Slovakia or the Czechoslovak “West” and “East.” Similar to the Slovene progressives in the 1920s – but from the opposite position – Milan Ivanka understood Czechoslovakism as a modernizing and civilizing project which aimed at bringing Slovakia (and Subcarpathian Ruthenia) to the levels of economic and cultural development of Bohemia and Moravia.⁸⁹ Backwardness acted as principal reasons for him to reject autonomy for Slovakia, as “neither politically, nor nationally ripe,” which would endanger “its freedom” and for which “above all our Hungarian enemies” had been waiting.⁹⁰ Such argument about “immaturity” was common among both Czech and Slovak Czechoslovakists.⁹¹ The political aspect was strongly emphasized with cultural and economic advancement acting as necessary means for “attaching Slovakia to democratic Bohemia and Moravia and detaching it for all eternity from the aristocratic Hungary.”⁹² Yet, similar to the Slovene case, the aspect of fighting domestic political opponents was also clearly present and associated primarily to anticlericalism: “Should Slovak remain backward, he will never think progressively as the progressive Czech does and forever will there in Slovakia live communism together with clericalism.”⁹³ In the already mentioned article “*Autonómia Slovenska*” Ivanka thus argued that Hlinka and his party had begun to voice the autonomist idea primarily due to their “fear of a liberal spirit, coming from the historic lands to

⁸⁹ Posl. dr. Milan Ivanka, “Za jednotu československú,” *Národní listy*, 26. 5. 1933.

⁹⁰ “Dr. Milan Ivanka o autonomii Slovenska a Pittsburské dohodě,” *Národní listy*, 15. 9. 1925.

⁹¹ Haslinger, *Nation*, 336.

⁹² Dr. Milan Ivanka, “Autonómia Slovenska,” *Modra Revue*, Yr. 2 Nr. 1, 15. 1. 1933.

⁹³ “Pozdravný projev dra Milana Ivanky,” *Národní listy*, 16. 4. 1929 – supplement to the nr. 105: “Čtvrtý sjezd čsl. národní demokracie.”

Slovakia,” stemming from the fact that they stood “primarily for ecclesiastical, more correctly said, clerical interests.”⁹⁴

This brings forward a clear parallel to the Slovene progressives’ persistent adherence to unitarism (as well as its further radicalization during 1930s) which was also conditioned by their struggle against the stronger Catholic party. Moreover, similar to the case of Ivanka, these tactical considerations 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 received autonomy the ‘clerical’ “beast which has gotten its teeth into Slovene tribe”⁹⁵ would win the political power as well. Such a development would have led to a “bishops’ government”⁹⁶ with all the administrative powers and public security under “the command of bishops and politicizing clergy”⁹⁷, which 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.”⁹⁸

The Yugoslav nationalist orientation and anti-clerical attitudes were thus mutually intertwined, not being merely an (ineffective) tool in fighting the strongest political party. It could therefore be argued that in their efforts for progress and modernization, as the progressives understood these concepts, the Yugoslav nation building project and anti-clericalism represented connected and interdependent endeavors. In the case of

⁹⁴ Dr. Milan Ivanka, “Autonómia Slovenska,” *Modra Revue*, Yr. 2 Nr. 1, 15. 1. 1933.

⁹⁵ *Jutro*, 1. 7. 1924. (Quoted from: Perovšek, *Liberalizem*, 253-254.)

⁹⁶ *Domovina*, 25. 3. 1926. (Quoted from: *ibid.*, p. 254.)

⁹⁷ *Jutro*, 23. 1. 1926 (Quoted from: *ibid.*).

⁹⁸ *Jutro*, 6. 2. 1923.

Czechoslovak National Democrats, the configuration between these elements was in many ways different – yet in their Slovak section, the “progressive”/“liberal” element in the sense of anticlericalism played a central role as much as it did in Slovenia.

For numerous reasons, already listed in this subchapter, creating a comparison of progressives’ Yugoslavism to the Czechoslovakist conceptions in the Czech lands poses many problems. The reasons behind the demands for national integration were to an extent similar in both Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, whereas the positions of the Czech part in Czechoslovakia and the Slovene part in Yugoslavia were due to a number of factors incomparably different. In terms of economic and cultural development, they are well comparable, whereas the political position of Slovenes within the new state was closer to that of the Slovaks.

The integral Yugoslavist orientation of the Slovene progressives could be paralleled to that of the Czechoslovak National Democrats only to the extent that the latter, in contrast to Masaryk and his circle who perceived Czechoslovaks solely as a political nation,⁹⁹ regarded them as a nation in the ethnic sense.¹⁰⁰ Both also included a notable modernizing aspect. The perspective of the National Democrats, an essentially Czech party, was, however, deeply Czech-centric, considering Czechoslovakia to be a Czech state¹⁰¹ and the

⁹⁹ Cf. Jaroslav Opat, “Poselství Masarykova českoslovenství. Poznámky k jednomu problému československých dějin” in *T. G. Masaryk a československá státnost. XIII. Letní škola historie. Sborník textů a přednášek* (Prague: Porta linguarum, 2001), p. 14; Rychlík, *Teorie*, 71; and Galandauer, *Čechoslovakismus*, 43. For a different perspective regarding the official Czechoslovakism and particularly the Masaryk’s views, claiming that they implied gradual assimilation of Slovaks see: Magdolenová, *Čechoslovakismus*, 57.

¹⁰⁰ Rychlík, *Teorie*, 71.

¹⁰¹ Novotný, *Národnostní menšiny*, 24.

Slovak language simply a “branch” of the Czech.¹⁰² For that reason it is, despite the geographical limitations of this dissertation, reasonable to include the perspective of Slovak ČsND. Milan Ivanka, a prominent Slovak representative of the National Democratic Party in contrast to his Czech colleagues treated Czech and Slovaks as two distinct but equal parts of the same nation, at the same time rejecting Slovak autonomism.¹⁰³

4. 1. 2. Greater German nationalism as a State-negating Ideology

“The basic idea of our Greater German politics should be called: *Großdeutschland* our goal, *Alldeutschland* our hope.”
(Dr. Seidler at the second GdVP convention in Vienna, June 1921)¹⁰⁴

The Austrian Republic, originally called German Austria, was a state that none of the Austrian German political camps had longed for. It represented a relatively small core remnant of the dissolved multi-national empire, still bearing its name and containing its capital city, but at the same time being an essentially mono-national political unit, since a great majority of its population perceived themselves as German. Generally loyal to the Habsburg framework before the war, there was however no attachment to it left among the main parties after the Empire and the dynasty had been gone. The self-determination of nations as propagated by the American president Woodrow Wilson and its practical implementation in the evolving post-war geopolitical reality called for unification with

¹⁰² Michal Pehr, “K politickému programu Kramářových národních demokratů,” in: *Karel Kramář (1860-1937): život a dílo*, J. Bilek, L. Velek eds. (Prague: Masarykův ústav a Archiv AV ČR, v.v.i, 2009), p. p. 524-525.

¹⁰³ Cf. Rychlík, Češi, 133.

¹⁰⁴ *Die Verhandlungen des zweiten Reichsparteitages der Grossdeutschen Volkspartei. Wien, Saal der Bäcker-genossenschaft, 27. und 28. Juni 1921* (Wien: Verlag der Grossdeutschen Volkspartei, 1921): p. 37.

Germany. The very proclamation of the Republic of German Austria on November 12th 1918 thus included the statement that it was to form “a part of the German Republic.” Its first chancellor, the Social Democrat Karl Renner solemnly declared on the same occasion: “*Wir sind eines Stammes, wir sind ein Volk!*”, accompanied by a standing ovation by the entire National Assembly.¹⁰⁵

As the peace treaty of St. Germain forbade the unification, the Austrian “*Republik auf Zeit*” remained on its own for an indefinite period, at the same time lacking secure prospects for independent economic survival. The post-war economic crisis was partly bridged with help of foreign loans, while coalition governments under the chancellor Seipel managed to consolidate the state. Perceiving itself as a German, but yet distinct - essentially Catholic - state and moreover partly clinging to the memory of its imperial past, the First Austrian Republic was however confronted with a problem of establishing a secure and stable identity as a state nation throughout the duration of its existence. While sections of the Christian Social Party developed a partially positive attitude towards an independent Austrian state identity as the “second German state”, intertwined with some elements of Habsburg nostalgia, the Social Democrats and the Greater Germans (along with the rest of the national camp) were firmly against it.

With all this taken into account, the question arising is what made the national orientation of the GdVP particular? After all, the longing for unification with Germany was not its exclusive domain. Nor did this apply to the lack of a firm devotion to the independent Austrian statehood. Secondly, and more importantly – how did the Greater Germans frame

¹⁰⁵ Kurt Bauer, “‘Heil Deutschösterreich!’ Das deutschnationale Lager zu Beginn der Ersten Republik” in *...der Rest ist Österreich, Das Werden der Ersten Republik* vol. 1, H. Konrad, W. Maderthaner eds. (Vienna: Carel Gerold’s Sohn Verlagsbuchhandlung, 2008), p. 270.

the relationship between Austrianness and Germanness and how did they understand the former? What kind of role, however temporary, did they appoint to the Austrian state as a given political reality? What kind of destiny was assigned to Austrian identity within the wider German community? And what form would the longed-for *Anschluss* adopt when the moment of its practical feasibility came?

The foregoing chapter aims to explore the above listed questions. Since it aims to discuss the basic contours of the nationalist ideology of the Greater German People's Party, I have decided not to employ the designation "pan-Germanism" but instead use the term "Greater German nationalism". The former may namely be either too narrow or too broad to cover the subject. In the strict sense "pan-Germanism" designates the orientation of the "Pan-German Movement" or Schönererians. These were indeed represented within the ranks of GdVP, having a non-negligible influence on the course of the party. Yet, the internal heterogeneity of the Greater German People's Party precludes us from reducing its nationalism to the "pan-German" element. In the broader, less precise sense, however "pan-Germanism" has also been applied to all the main Austrian political actors, insofar as they all strove for unification with Germany.¹⁰⁶ Such a definition is too loose as it tells nothing specific about our subject. "Greater German nationalism" on the other hand points at common positions of the variety of nationalist groupings within GdVP – or compromises between them - as reflected in the speeches and writings of the leading party representatives.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Julia Thorpe, *Pan-Germanism and the Austrofascist State, 1933-38* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), p. 255: "Pan-Germanism was thus not an ideology of fringe dwellers, but the preferred cultural and political framework for constructing an Austrian national identity. It was broad enough to encompass, at various times, liberals, German-nationalists, Catholics, socialists and Nazis"

The centrality and unconditionality of Anschluss

The Greater Germans and their supporters treated the Austrian Republic as a “*Zwangsstaat*,”¹⁰⁷ a temporary political reality, forcefully imposed on the Austrian Germans by the victorious Allies. They labeled it as “an ephemeral, transient phenomenon in history” (Wotawa)¹⁰⁸ or “*Provisorium*” (Dinghofer)¹⁰⁹ that was created from purely geopolitical reasons as a buffer state.¹¹⁰ The clearest expression of their position towards Austrian statehood may be found in the opening speech to the 1921 party convention by the chairman Kandl. Referring to the various assurances of Austrian independence by the entente powers he pointed out that only GdVP had been saying “loud and clear” what also many other fellow Germans in other parties had been thinking:

„...that what is being called the guaranteed independence of our state is a hoax [*ein Schwindel*]. We are being guaranteed our independence solely against that country from which we do not wish to be independent at all...”¹¹¹

As already discussed, *Anschluss* or “unification of the two German national states, the big and the small one, the *Reich* and Austria, into one polity”¹¹² represented the central goal of the party, to which all other considerations were subordinated, including questions of political order.¹¹³ It may be argued that for Social Democracy social reform and the path towards socialism came first and unification with Germany only second, being partly

¹⁰⁷ “Nicht nur Finanzkrise,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 28. 5. 1931.

¹⁰⁸ AT-OeStA/AdR BKA BKA-I Parteiarchive GDVP Großdeutsche Volkspartei, K. 32, RI-12 8. Reichsparteitag vom 17.-19.06. 1927. Protokoll.

¹⁰⁹ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 32, RI-12 7. Reichsparteitag vom 05.-06.06. 1926. Referat Dr. Dinghofer.

¹¹⁰ Franz Dinghofer, “Aufwärts!,” *Deutschösterreichische Tageszeitung*, 24. 12. 1922.

¹¹¹ *Die Verhandlungen des zweiten Reichsparteitages der Grossdeutschen Volkspartei. Wien, Saal der Bäcker Genossenschaft, 27. und 28. Juni 1921* (Wien: Verlag der Grossdeutschen Volkspartei, 1921), p. 5.

¹¹² AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 32, RI-12 8. Reichsparteitag vom 17.-19.06. 1927. Protokoll. Sektionschef Enderes on “Anschluss und Angleichungsfragen.”

¹¹³ *Richtlinien deutscher Politik* (Salzburg: 1920) in Klaus Berchtold (ed.), *Österreichische Parteiprogramme 1868-1966* (Vienna: 1967), p. 446.

perceived merely as a means for realizing the former. In the case of GdVP, which accused the Social Democrats of “conditional love” towards the German national idea,¹¹⁴ *Anschluss* was primary, whereas democracy and republic were subordinated and partly acted as means for achieving the main goal. This clearly showed in 1933 when, considering the actual political regime in Germany, the Social Democrat leadership stopped propagating unification, while Greater Germans stepped into alliance with NSDAP. Very telling in this regard is also the fact that GdVP did not seem to have taken into consideration its further political role and the possible ideological positions it could occupy within the German political landscape, should the main objective of *Anschluss* have been achieved.¹¹⁵

In the long term, the only solution was inclusion into the “great German fatherland and economic area”¹¹⁶ – or, as Wotawa formulated it in 1930, entry of “all the Germans of Central Europe into [...] a great, united Reich, the third Reich.”¹¹⁷ Up until the moment in which this would present a realistic possibility, however, Austrian independence needed to be preserved and consolidated. In this regard, GdVP occupied the same position with the rest of the Austrian political elite, also justifying participation in governing coalitions with the Christian Socials as long-term effort for making the *Anschluss* possible by sparing “a part of the great German fatherland, the future Greater Germany from the horror.”¹¹⁸ As Dinghofer colorfully explained, this “in the present state of affairs” meant: “holding

¹¹⁴ “Wer ist wahrhaft national?,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 1.11.1930.

¹¹⁵ Cf. Isabella Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche Volkspartei 1920-1934* (Vienna: I. Ackerl, 1967), p. 314.

¹¹⁶ “Zehn Jahre nach Saint-Germain - Ein Aufruf der großdeutschen Volkspartei,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 8. 9. 1929.

¹¹⁷ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 34, RI-12 11. Reichsparteitag vom 20.-22.04. 1930, Protokoll.

During the 1930 party convention, the term „third Reich“ was being used also by some of the others GdVP representatives.

¹¹⁸ “Das Vaterland über die Partei,” *Deutsche Zeit*, Yr. 1, Nr. 57 (18. 12. 1923).

The article further complained that the party in return for “this truly *völkisch*, patriotic act” got “insulted and mocked” not solely by the “Jewish marxists” but also from those that perceived themselves “as “the most competent representatives of the ‘pure’ *völkisch* idea.”

together the state structure Austria [*Staatsgebilde Oesterreich*] imposed on us through a questionable treaty so long in the whirlpool of onrushing foreign policy aspirations until the right of self-determination of German people to national unification is taken into account.”¹¹⁹ Occupation or even dismemberment of Austria by foreign powers, Dinghofer argued, would also have meant an indefinite postponement of the possibility for Germans to achieve that “most sacred right.”¹²⁰

Insistence on the independent Austrian republic as the optimal temporary solution on the path towards German unification also included a strong anti-Habsburg restoration note. Republican form of government provided “security against a relapse into the *anti-national* dynastic interest politics of the *Habsburg-Lothringer*“ and thus a necessity “from the *national* interest standpoint.”¹²¹ Recurrent ideas about forming a “Danube Federation” that had been sounding an echo in entrepreneurial circles and in parts of the Christian Social Party were naturally strongly objected to by GdVP. The programmatic points adopted at the December 1931 all-state party rally included a rejection of “all plans to reinstate a “Danube Federation” or the Habsburgs.”¹²² The Tyrolian representative Sepp Straffner thereby stated that the party would have been prepared to “align itself with Death and Devil [*Tod und Teufel*] in order to prevent a Danube Federation and a [Habsburg] restoration.”¹²³

¹¹⁹ Franz Dinghofer, “Aufwärts!,” *Deutschösterreichische Tageszeitung*, 24. 12. 1922.

¹²⁰ Franz Dinghofer, “Zur Politik der Großdeutschen,” *Deutsche Zeit*, Yr. 1, Nr. 51 (27. 11. 1923).

¹²¹ “Fünf Jahre deutschösterreichische Republik,” *Deutsche Zeit*, Yr. 1, Nr. 46 (9. 11. 1923).

¹²² AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 35, Reichsparteitag 4-6 12 1931 – Protokoll; Das politische Sofortprogramm der Großdeutschen, *Neue Freie Presse*, 8. 12. 1931.

¹²³ Der Neue Kurs der Großdeutschen, *Wiener Sonn- und Montags- Zeitung*, 7. 12. 1931. On that also see Die Kampfziele der großdeutschen Bewegung, *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 23. 3. 1932: “Als völkische Partei is es daher unsre wichtigse Sendung, alle Versuche zu bekämpfen, die uns vom deutschen Muttervolk losreißen sollen; die Donauföderation soll uns wirtschaftlich, der Legitimismus politisch vom Deutschen Reich abschnüren. Die Balkanisierung Deutschösterreichs unter französischer Hegemonie ist das Ziel dieser Pläne.”

Greater Germans also pursued a strictly economically nationalist policy, demanding close economic cooperation and alignment with Germany. In a resolution adopted at the December 1931 all-state party rally, the party committed itself to oppose all proposals that would have boosted the presence of foreign, that is “non-German,” capital in Austria¹²⁴ and rejected a “French course” in foreign economic policy. This orientation would soon express itself in the practical politics in January 1932, when the chancellor Buresch and the Christian Social party decided to accept a French loan package under the condition of renouncing any attempts to join Germany, which practically implied the deposition of the foreign minister Schober and an effective halt to his project of customs union.¹²⁵ The statement of Greater German leader Hermann Foppa on this issue was categorical: “For us Greater Germans every begging of France means a political dependence on the West and a move away from the idea of Anschluss.”¹²⁶ The Greater German propaganda linked the supposed plans for a Danube Federation and reinstatement of the Hapsburgs to the aim of a “balkanization of German Austria under French hegemony” as their goal.¹²⁷ Not merely from “national” motives and jointly with the Social Democrats, as well as entrepreneurial circles, gathered around the journal *Österreichische Volkswirt*, GdVP strongly opposed the *Lausanne Protocol* signed by the Dolfuß government which brought the country a rather small loan in exchange for external control.¹²⁸ In the Greater German view, Austria turned into “a foreign colony.”¹²⁹ Their firm opposition to the “French course” made them

¹²⁴ Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 275.

¹²⁵ Dieter Stiefel, *Die Große Krise in einem kleinen Land: österreichische Finanz- und Wirtschaftspolitik 1929-1938* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1988), pp. 175-176.

¹²⁶ Erklärung des Abg. Foppa zur Regierungskrise, *Neue Freie Presse*, 30. 1. 1932.

¹²⁷ Die Kampfziele der großdeutschen Bewegung, *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 23. 3. 1932.

¹²⁸ Stiefel, *Die Große Krise*, 190.

¹²⁹ Verausländerung Oesterreichs, *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 29. 1. 1933.

permanently sever the long-time alliance with the Christian Socials and continued until the very end of their party in 1933/34.¹³⁰

Dinghofer and Wotawa on Anschluss and Austrianness

At the 1926 party convention Franz Dinghofer gave an extensive report,¹³¹ which included all the main contours of the Greater German nationalist politics: the centrality of *Anschluss* and the reasons behind it, the temporary need for retaining Austria, as well as some comments on the relationship between Austrianness and Germanness and the intended forms and dynamics of unification.

Invoking the principle of national self-determination the leader of Greater German MPs expressed deep belief in the inevitability of *Anschluss*, labelling it “the most sacred conviction.” At the same time he found it necessary to stress that “in accordance with the party line [*parteimässig*] every *Anschluss* to a German Reich of whatsoever kind” was acceptable.¹³²

The need was grounded in “historical, national and economic reasons,” the only possibility for “a lasting recovery of Austria” being “through establishment of a political, [...] s state community with the German Reich.”¹³³ With Germany and the “New Austria [*Neuösterreich*]” standing in “a historical and economic community of destiny

¹³⁰ See for instance: Die Absage des Nationalen Wirtschaftsblocks an Dr. Dolfuß, *Neue Freie Presse*, 19. 5. 1932; Hans Prodinger, Wie Lausanne ‚gemacht‘ wird. Hintergründe, Methoden und Praktiken, *WienerNeueste Nachrichten*, 23. 8. 1932; Kampf gegen das System Dolfuß, *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 12. 12. 1932; Für die österreichische Heimat und das Gesamtdeutschtum. Ein Aufruf der Großdeutschen Volkspartei, *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 24.6.1933

¹³¹ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 32, RI-12 7. Reichsparteitag vom 05.-06.06. 1926. Referat Dr. Dinghofer.

¹³² “*Es scheint mir aber notwendig zu sein, bei dieser Gelegenheit festzustellen, dass uns parteimässig ein jeder Anschluss an ein wie immer geartetes Deutsches Reich recht ist.*” - Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

[*Schicksalsgemeinschaft*])” their unification represented “a self-evident process of natural development” which was moreover a prerequisite for “peace and satisfaction of Europe.”¹³⁴ In concluding his report, Dinghofer emphasized that it was “utter madness [*Wahnwitz*]” to believe it was possible “to bend and humiliate for decades a nation of 70 million people, which marches in the first lines of modern culture” as there was “not so much force in the world and there shall never be.”¹³⁵

The necessity of inclusion into the German national state was not grounded merely in short and long-term economic survival and international stability, but was framed even more in terms of culture. An independent Austrian “buffer state” was in Dinghofer’s opinion not capable of guaranteeing Austrian Germans cultural progress or even survival. Rhetorically asking about the “survivability” of Austria and pointing out that that term may have meant different things to different people, he stated:

“I have repeatedly emphasized already, of course we are viable [*lebensfähig*], in case we wish to sink down to the cultural level of an Albania [*eines Albaniens*] or ultimately some Kaffir people [*irgendeines Kaffernvolkes*]. We are, however, not viable as German people and as German People on that cultural level on which we today stand and that we also wish to further maintain .”¹³⁶

Dinghofer, however, did not deny the significance of Austrian specificity and particular identity, referring to Austria as “our narrower homeland.”¹³⁷ Resolutely rejecting the

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid.: “Sowie das Deutsche Reich auf die Dauer nicht niedergehalten werden kann durch die Fesseln des erzwungenen Friedensvertrages, so wird auch Neuösterreich die Kette sprengen, welche ihm das heiligste Recht nimmt, das einem gebührt: das Recht der Selbstbestimmung. Der Deutsche taugt nun einmal nicht zum Knecht und Wahnwitz ist die Meinung, ein Volk von 70 Millionen Menschen, welches in der modernen Kultur in vorderster Linie marschiert, jahrzehntlang in Unfreiheit beugen und demütigen zu können. So viel Gewalt gibt es gar nicht in der Welt und wird es auch niemals geben, um dies dauernd zu vermögen.”

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Ibid; Also see: Hermann Kandl, “Zur Jahreswende 1922-1923,” *Deutschösterreichische Tageszeitung*, 31. 12. 1922: “Es gibt in Oesterreich keinen Deutschen mehr, der nicht überzeugt ist, daß schließlich und endlich das Schicksal unserer engeren Heimat und unseres deutschösterreichischen Stammes untrennbar mit dem des Brudervolkes und Bruderreiches verknüpft ist.”

Christian Social accusations of standing for a centralist “black-white-red Greater Germany under Prussian leadership” he stressed that the Greater Germans were “much too faithful sons” to the “narrower homeland” not to commit themselves primarily and “with all the strength” to its welfare.¹³⁸ Austrian “narrower homeland” was also the standpoint from which he approached the question of *Anschluss*. The latter was acceptable solely in the form of a “merger between equal, self-supporting partners.”¹³⁹ Such conception of *Anschluss* may be clearly distinguished from the form in which it was later actualized by the Nazis.

Austrianness thus had a place in the Greater German nationalist ideology which was not an ephemere one, designating a “tribe” [*Stamm*] of the German nation and the land that it occupied, both marked by a distinct history. Most importantly, Austrianness was not merely a historical contingency that was to disappear after the historically-conditioned political separation would have been eliminated through *Anschluss*. Already at the 1921 GdVP convention, way before the coalition with the Christian Socials, Dinghofer stated that the Austrians were “to remain Austrians naturally also in the framework of the German Reich.”¹⁴⁰ He assured that as no one had demanded that from Bavarians, people of Rhineland or of Württemberg, “nobody on Earth” was going to demand from Tyrolians, people of Salzburg or Carinthians to abandon their specificity. Moreover, he thereby

¹³⁸ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 32, RI-12 7. Reichsparteitag vom 05.-06.06. 1926. Referat Dr. Dinghofer.

¹³⁹ Ibid.: “Vollkommen verfehlt aber ist die Anschauung, die man auch hie und da hört, dass der Anschluss für Oesterreich gewissermassen eine Gnade seitens des Deutschen Reiches wäre. Eine derartige Auffassung müssen wir zurückweisen, eine derartige Auffassung der Anschlussfrage müssen wir ganz entschieden ablehnen. Ein Anschluss auf solcher Grundlage würde nicht unserer Selbstachtung und würde auch nicht unseren Interessen entsprechen. Nur ein Zusammenschluss gleichberechtigter, auf eigene Arbeit gestützter Partner kann für uns in Frage kommen und kein anderer.”

¹⁴⁰ *Die Verhandlungen des zweiten Reichsparteitages der Grossdeutschen Volkspartei*. Wien, Saal der Bäckergenossenschaft, 27. und 28. Juni 1921 (Vienna: Verlag der Grossdeutschen Volkspartei, 1921), p. 14.

explicitly referred not merely to the cultural but also to “our national” and “our ethnic [völkische] specificity,”¹⁴¹ declaring:

“...because we love our fatherland, we are Austrians, but we are German Austrians, we believe that we can preserve our uniqueness [*Eigenart*] within the framework of the German Reich and we shall also preserve it.”¹⁴²

Acknowledged and stressed were thus not being merely the specific Tyrolean, Carinthian and other regional identities, but also a common Austrian one, which was in the case of Dinghofer’s 1921 speech designated even as “national” (otherwise a very uncommon occurrence in the Greater German discourse). Most importantly the unique historical fate underlying Austrian specificity was not incompatible with but complementary to the German national community, within which it had its own distinct mission.

In this regard, a text by Wotawa, entitled “A new Austriandom? A serious Christmas contemplation”¹⁴³ and published 1929 in *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, is very revealing. While rejecting any kind of Austrian national identity the author at the same time spoke of the “special German mission” Austrians had “in the framework of the whole nation [*im Rahmen des Gesamtvolkes*] and the Central European space.” This mission, bringing some distant echoes of the old Austro-German liberal “civilizing mission,” consisted of “building bridges” in places where Austrians were “closer to the neighbors of the German people than the other German tribes.” As a “German tribe in a special position [*deutscher Stamm*

¹⁴¹ Ibid.: “Es wird auch kein Mensch in der Welt verlangen, daß wir vielleicht unsere kulturelle, unsere nationale oder unsere völkische Eigenart aufgeben sollen: geradeso wie das niemand von den Bayern, von den Rheinländern oder von den Württembergern verlangt, wird das auch niemand von den Tirolern, von den Salzburgern oder von den Kärntnern verlangen, welche auch auf ihre besondere Eigenart stolz sind.”

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Dr. August Wotawa, “Ein neues Oesterreichertum? Eine ernste Weihnachtsbetrachtung“, *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 25. 12. 1929 (special edition).

in besonderer Lage]" they were namely distinguished by distinct "abilities" acquired through distinct history.¹⁴⁴

All that Austrians had acquired through history, Wotawa stressed, should however be placed "at the service of the common cause" never for the sake of "separate Austrian, but always only to make German politics."¹⁴⁵ Criticizing the voices speaking about "Rennaisance of a new Austria," "Austrian idea" and "Austrian man" that had been finding echo among some of the "leading heads" from the Christian Social ranks, he rejected any kind of Austrianness outside Germanness or any kind of Austrian "state idea" developing separately or against the German national state. Whereas the "state idea" of the "old Habsburg Austria" was "to unite and to hold the nations [*Völker*] of the Danube region in service to the dynasty,"¹⁴⁶ the "increased state power, growing state disposition [*Staatsgesinnung*] and a more resolute state will" that the Austrian republic had succeeded in gaining by 1929 were all to be put exclusively "into the service of the *Anschluss* idea."¹⁴⁷ The true Austrian "state idea" should therefore have been understood essentially in terms of self-negation:

"'Deutschland, Deutschland über alles' is nowadays being sung where one is familiar with the true Austrian state idea of today, which the Austrian state governments are not in position to officially pronounce since they have to respect the 'treaties.' We have a secret, yet so clear Austrian state idea, well known throughout the world: it was already laid down in the constitution of 1918 and wishes for Austria as an independent state to disappear as quickly as possible."¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

Whereas Yugoslavism and Czechoslovakism may clearly be treated as ideologies of national integration aimed at consolidating the newly-founded states, the type of German nationalism to which GdVP adhered largely acted as a state-negating ideology towards the state of Austria. While Yugoslavists and Czechoslovakists were engaged in building state nations, the Greater German nationalism aimed at preventing any possibility for development of an Austrian state nation. Observed from this perspective, and especially if narrowly employing the term “nation” in the common Anglo-American understanding, one might get the impression that there was little commonality between the two or even that an essential difference existed between them. Yet, in reality both represented integrative national ideologies, equally anchored in the principle of national self-determination and political realities of Versailles Central Europe, distinguished by nation states. The Austrian Republic represented an irregularity within this system, which the Greater Germans wished to eliminate, in which they were – or at least wished to appear – the most consistent among the Austrian parties. Moreover, in a similar way as the Yugoslavist project at least to certain degree required negation of separate ethno-national identities of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Greater German nationalism negated separate Austrian state identity for the sake of German national integration.

The basic lines of argumentation for the latter paralleled those that Yugoslavists and Czechoslovakists were putting forward in favor of a unitary nation state, insofar they accentuated the need for a strong state, based on the principle “one state, one nation.” The Greater Germans and other proponents of German unification merely applied this same principle in the opposite direction – “one nation, one state.” Moreover, it may be argued

that in all the three cases – the Slovene, the Czech (as well as Slovak), and the Austrian the aspect of solving “the problem of a small nation” was to major degree present in the background, expressing itself in various manners, either explicitly or implicitly. The difference being merely that of aiming at integrating the already existent “small nation” into a larger national whole and preventing the very possibility for the “small nation” to develop.

The demand for German political unity was moreover being similarly justified for economic, cultural and historical reasons. These pointed both at the short- (economic survival) and long-term benefits (national survival and cultural advancement). Most importantly, just as the Slovene progressives believed that integration into Yugoslav nation was a new, necessary and higher developmental stage for the Slovenes, the Greater Germans deemed the unification of Austria and Germany to be a “self-evident process of natural development.”

In all three cases the aim was to “unite, what historical fate had divided.” For closely related reasons all three national ideologies contained a prominent anti-Habsburg note. A notable difference in the Austrian case however being that in contrast to the Yugoslavs and Czechoslovaks the “historical division” was of a quite recent date. The German nationalist did not need to search for the moment of national division far in the semi-mythical past but could easily locate it in the recent history – in the year 1806 when the Holy Roman Empire had been dissolved or even 1866 when the German Union collapsed.¹⁴⁹ In contrast to the Czech Battle of White Mountain, the moment of “national catastrophe” was moreover the

¹⁴⁹ Franz Dinghofer, “Aufwärts!,” *Deutschösterreichische Tageszeitung*, 24. 12. 1922.

year 1918 and the following “injustice” of the victors who exempted the Germans from the principle of national self-determination.

Interestingly, The Greater Germans employed the same category of tribe (*Stamm*) for Austrians as the Yugoslavists did for the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and Czechoslovakists for Czechs and Slovaks.¹⁵⁰ Amalgamation of “tribes” however did not play a prominent role, as Greater German nationalism not only allowed for, but to some extent affirmed regional diversity and historical particularities within the German nation community. In contrast to Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia that represented nation states, largely inspired by the French model, the vision of future common German state was based on different state traditions. Most importantly, the overcoming of historical divisions and particularisms did not imply “overcoming” or synthesizing the already developed national identities as in the Yugoslav and Czechoslovak cases.

The dynamic of (re-)uniting Austrians with the rest of the German community was however interestingly meant to be gradual, composed of knitting together “hundreds of thousands of threads” of “legal, cultural and economic nature,” as Greater German speaker Enderes argued in 1927.¹⁵¹ This position was not conditioned solely by political realities which were preventing *Anschluss* from happening, but was joined with the opinion that immediate unification in 1919 could have actually been detrimental “to the formation of a common German national consciousness [*auf die Bildung eines Gesamtdeutschen*

¹⁵⁰ Perhaps even more interesting is that the term *Stamm* (in the meaning of tribe) had been well established in German ethnographic discourse well before the WWI, from where it was possibly adopted also into the Yugoslavist and Czechoslovakist vocabularies. In that discourse Austrians would however have been treated as a part of Bavarian *Stamm* (possibly with some Slavic admixture) and not as a “tribe” of their own. The Greater German employment of the term “Austrian tribe” thus signifies an important transfer of meaning from an ethnic to a political (and partly cultural) basis, which again brings their mode of employment of the term closer to that of Yugoslavists.

¹⁵¹ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 32, RI-12 8. Reichsparteitag vom 17.-19.06. 1927. Protokoll. Sektionschef Enderes on “Anschluss und Angleichungsfragen.”

Volksbewusstseins].”¹⁵² Common German identity was thus, similar to the case of Yugoslav and Czechoslovak nation-building projects, partly perceived as something still to be attained and not an already given fact. The mission of GdVP, according to Wotawa had thus consisted of contributing to the “erection of a great German tribe [*Aufrichtung einen grossen deutschen Volksstammes*]” in Austria and advancing it “so far, that, as a member of the great whole German nation, it is once worthy to enter the ranks of the other German tribes within the great German Fatherland.”¹⁵³

Preparing the grounds for unification or carrying out the “national synthesis” beyond doubt consisted also of the internal political task of fighting domestic “particularisms.” All the differences (in terms of specific contents and contexts of particularisms) notwithstanding, it was the Catholics in both the Austrian and the Slovene – as well as Slovak - cases that acted as their main champions. Anti-clericalism thus also played a role in this regard and it was common to all the cases (including the Czech one) for national liberal heirs and other political opponents to link political Catholicism to the Habsburg legacy and accuse it of national lukewarmness. In the Austrian and Slovene cases this was also connected to the employment of terms such as *samoslovenci* (“only-Slovenes”) and *Auch-Deutshen* (“also-Germans”)¹⁵⁴ by the national liberal heirs. Maintaining the image of the firmest and

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 33, Protokoll Neunter ordentlicher Reichsparteitag der Grossdeutschen Volkspartei, Bregenz am 9. und 10. Juni 1928:

“In der Vergangenheit war die historische Mission Zweifellos, dass wir uns um die Erhaltung dieses österreichischen Staates, der wider unseren Willen geschaffen worden ist, bemüht haben, in der Ueberzeugung, damit zur Aufrichtung einen grossen deutschen Volksstammes beigetragen und ihn soweit aufwärts geführt zu haben, dass er als Glied des grossen ganzen deutschen Volkes einmal würdig ist, in die Reihen der anderen deutschen Stämme in dem grossen deutschen Vaterland zu treten.“

¹⁵⁴ For instance see: *Die Verhandlungen des zweiten Reichsparteitages der Grossdeutschen Volkspartei*. Wien, Saal der Bäckergerossenschaft, 27. und 28. Juni 1921 (Vienna: Verlag der Grossdeutschen Volkspartei, 1921), p. 33.

strictest adherence to the projects of national integration namely also represented one of the ways in which they could continuously claim to be the most “national” of all parties.

4. 2. The Nationalist Discourse

4. 2. 1. Objectivist Conceptions of Nationality

During the fourth general congress of the Czechoslovak National Democracy (Prague, April 1929), František Sís, the party vice-president and the chief redactor of *Národní listy*, held a programmatic speech in which he discussed the meaning of the nation:

“The nation rises above everything. The nation is forming its own liberated individuality. It is the synthesis of our national will, the incarnation of the national victory. It is the unity of thought, the unity of command. The being [*bytost*] of the nation is not an abstract thing: it is a real person, formed out of the heroic virtues of the national liberation and national revolution.”¹⁵⁵

The personification of the nation, the stress on its unity, indivisibility and at the same time its concreteness all reveal a discourse that indicates an integral type of nationalism, a characteristic clearly visible also in some of the speeches by Karel Kramář. In these the metaphor of nation as “organism” appeared quite commonly. Closely associated with the concept of “national solidarity” which we will thoroughly discuss in the Chapter 5, the organicist metaphor aimed primarily at pointing out the necessity of concord between various social interests, various “estates” within the national “body.” Kramář thus hoped for “a better future outlook” to gain grounds among the Czechs, which should realize that:

“the nation and the state are a living organism that can not completely withhold its particular parts to be struggling between each other so that they would sustain lasting damage and become incapable of exercising [their] function within that entire national organism.”¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁵ “Programová řeč Františka Síse, *Národní listy*, 16. 4. 1929 – supplement to the nr. 105.

¹⁵⁶ “Posl. dr. Kramář pro silný národní stat,” *Národní listy*, 11. 4 1923.

Kramář's use of the concept of "organism" when discussing the nation in order to plead for unity and warn against the destructive tendencies of class struggle to some extent resembled the manner in which his Slovene counterpart Ivan Tavčar addressed this subject. Tavčar applied the metaphor of a machine to the nation, arguing for harmonic organization and coordinated activity of all its parts, according to their "functions."¹⁵⁷ Although Kramář's "organism" and Tavčar's "machine" may also be seen as representing distinct or even partly opposing metaphors, the former being "warm" and the latter "cold,"¹⁵⁸ they both shared the underlying notion of subordination of an individual to the collectivity, its "purposes" or "goals." Apart from Tavčar's conception the frequency of this type of nationality discourse was considerably rare in the Slovene case. His successors Žerjav and Kramer did not employ these types of analogies when pleading for national unity, solidarity and social harmony.

On the other hand, references to the *Nation* or *Volk* as "organism," "body," or "personality" abounded in the writings that reflected the views common to the Austrian German nationalist camp.¹⁵⁹ Generally they also implied a similar type of hierarchical structure of this body as Tavčar did in his machine metaphor, where "each wheel and also every sheave" had "its special task assigned."¹⁶⁰ Following the argument proposed by Rudolf G. Ardelt, that however has only a limited validity for the particular case of the Greater German

¹⁵⁷ Ivan Tavčar, "Nekoliko pripomb h gospodarskemu programu JDS," *Slovenski narod*, 8. 7. 1918. Also see: Perovšek, O demokraciji, 40-41, 50.

¹⁵⁸ One possible interpretation would treat Kramář's metaphor as an example of conservative organicist thinking, while Tavčar's "mechanicist" metaphor would carry rationalistic, "scientistic" and thus "progressivist" connotations. The more "modernist" machine metaphor however also appears to have more totalitarian potential than the organicist one, as it excludes spontaneity.

¹⁵⁹ Rudolf G. Ardelt, *Zwischen Demokratie und Faschismus. Deutschnationales Gedankengut in Österreich 1919-1930* (Vienna-Salzburg: Geyer-Edition, 1972), p. 118.

¹⁶⁰ Ivan Tavčar, "Nekoliko pripomb h gospodarskemu programu JDS," *Slovenski narod*, 8. 7. 1918.

People's Party,¹⁶¹ the German nationalist treatment of the nation as an “organism” presented a worked-out representation of hierarchically-structured society and not merely a metaphor. As such it was supposed to serve as an ideology of legitimation suited to the needs of the (small) bourgeoisie.

For the Slovene and Czech cases this may only be claimed to a limited extent, as also in Kramář's rhetoric this remained on a rather undefined and vague level (which group represented which part of this “organism” and what would be the criteria to place an individual in any of these groups?) and was never connected to any kind of demands for institutional reform. Exception in this regard were the radical nationalists around the journal *Národní myšlenka*.

According to the definition by the chief ideologue of the nationalist wing, professor František Mareš, nation represented a “a self-aware, moral person, a person conscious of its identity in the current of historical events, an emotional, moral and ideological [*ideove*] community, residing in a common country, as a person aware of its responsibility towards the past and the history, building up the common cultural work [*společne dilo kulturni*].”¹⁶² Influenced by French nationalist theoreticians such as Henri Bergson, Maurice Barrés, Emile Boutroux and especially Ernest Renan¹⁶³ and basing his conception of nation on vitalist philosophy, Mareš treated the nation as an eternal and non-destructible immaterial force.¹⁶⁴ French influence at the same time served as basis for critique to *Modra Revue*,

¹⁶¹Ardelt largely employs radical examples in making claims about the entire national camp. Similar is characteristic for Štěpánek's discussion of Czechoslovak National Democracy, where more or less the examples from *Národní myšlenka* are pointed out. – See: Petr Štěpánek, “Integrálně nacionální koncepce Československé národní demokracie po vzniku ČSR,” *Moderní dějiny*, vol. 15 (2007): p. 107-109 and Jan Rataj, “Za svébytný národní stát,” *Historie a vojenství*, no. 1 (1994): pp. 101-130.

¹⁶² Prof. Dr. Zdeněk Malý, “Několik myšlenek k Marešově filosofii nacionalismu,” *Národní myšlenka*, yr. V., nr. 2 (1927-28): p. 45.

¹⁶³Cf. Štěpánek, *Integrálně*, 104.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 107.

where the radical nationalists were accused of importing an “alien form of nationalism.”¹⁶⁵ Common for the nationalist discourses of all three parties under scrutiny was however that the nation appeared as a fixed and objectively definable category, based on similar selections of nationality markers such as language, territory, history, common interests, “blood” or “race.”¹⁶⁶ Nations as collective individuals took precedence before individuals, from which differential treatment of the latter, according to their nationality could be derived. This reflected best in the treatment of national minorities, which will be thoroughly discussed at a later point.

In any case, the individual was not merely subordinated to the nation but was also to a large extent barred from the option of individual national self-determination. The membership in the national community was not treated as a matter of free decision and individual consciousness, but as a given, “natural” fact. The youth supplement of the Greater German *Deutsche Zeit* for instance stated:

“everything that is of the same blood, belongs together (...) What we are (...) we are, because we are born into the community of the *Volk*, and because parents, grandparents, and the farthest ancestors worked and lived for us. We are thereby obliged to take over the duties of this inheritance and to carry this legacy into the future: the legacy of an intellectual and bodily nature [*Erbgut geistiger und körperlicher Art*].”¹⁶⁷

This implied an “objective” conception of nationality. While this was a common trait of the nationality policies in the successor states of the Habsburg Empire, there were still notable differences in terms of individual parties’ rhetoric that revealed different levels and types of compulsion, national exclusivism and aggression towards the national “other.”

¹⁶⁵ Emanuel Krouský, “Vyasnění v národní demokracii,” *Modra Revue*, vol. 1, no. 10 (1. 6. 1933): p. 145.

¹⁶⁶ The 1921 Yugoslav Democratic Party program for instance stated in its first point that the “nation of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes” was considered to be one “by blood, common language, territory, feelings and living interests.” (Iz programa vsedr̀avne JDS, 44.)

¹⁶⁷ “Unsere Mütter und die Volksgemeinschaft,” *Wir Jungen*, 30. 4. 1926; Quoted from: Ardelt, Zwischen, 113.

Moreover, in particular cases, particular markers of nationality stood more in the foreground or acted as more fundamental. While in the Czech case, even for the radical nationalists such as Mareš, language acted as the “first cultural fundament of the nation,”¹⁶⁸ the elements of “blood” and “race” were also present, being far most pronounced in the Austrian case. There this was most clearly expressed through the differentiation between “true” Germans by birth and “false” Germans or “*Abstammungsdeutsche*” (Germans by origin) and “*Bekenntnisdeutsche*” (Germans by confession). The distinction primarily served the anti-Semitic cause, to be more thoroughly discussed later. At the same time, however, it generally expressed an objective conception of nationality, which was moreover based on inborn qualities – another topic that we shall more thoroughly discuss at a later point.

4. 2. 2. The National Other – the German and the Jew

“Germans in our lands at all represent nothing else than a dying-away caste, which has no roots in our land. We decimated them already with the overthrow, the second generation, which is going to grow up in new circumstances will be weaker every day, in terms of numbers and of inner resisting strength. It will die away by itself like an uprooted thistle.”¹⁶⁹

The above lines, revealing intolerant and almost straightforwardly hostile rhetoric pointed against the German minority, appeared in the editorial of *Jutro*, the main Slovene progressive daily newspaper. The level of aggressiveness, bringing resemblances to the contemporary anti-Slovene and anti-Croat discourse of the Italian fascists in the Julian

¹⁶⁸ Prof. Dr. Zdeněk Malý, “Několik myščenek k Marešově filosofii nacionalismu,” *Národní myšlenka*, yr. V., nr. 2 (1927-28): p. 45.

¹⁶⁹ *Jutro*, 4. 2. 1923.

March was pretty characteristic of the writing of the Slovene progressive press during the first half of the 1920s.

During the early 1920s the question of minority rights for the German speaking population¹⁷⁰ was very actual, especially regarding Lower Styria where most of the German schools had been closed after the First World War and much of the property belonging to German associations had been confiscated. During the last decades of the Habsburg monarchy, interethnic struggle had been quite severe in that region, which also influenced the post-war treatment of Germans by Slovene administrative authorities and political parties.¹⁷¹ The above lines in *Jutro* were written in 1923 when the German organizations of Lower Styria began to raise demands for the return of their property.¹⁷² While aggressive rhetoric towards certain groups, deemed as “foreign”, was distinctive in all three studied cases, they nevertheless stand out as an example of an extraordinarily direct and raw example.

¹⁷⁰ Germans represented one of the major national minorities of interwar Yugoslavia, most notably in the Banate. In Slovenia the main area of German settlement was the wooded, sparsely inhabited and economically undeveloped region of Kočevje (*Gottschee*), where German speaking peasants had been settled homogeneously from 14th century onwards. Apart from that German speakers also represented a mentionable minority living throughout Lower Styria (*Untersteiermark*) and Yugoslav chunk of Carinthia, most notably in cities and towns such as Maribor (*Marburg a.d. Drau*), Celje (*Cilli*) and Ptuj (*Pettau*). In contrast to the *Gottscheer* peasants these were predominantly communities of well-to-do townspeople. A very small but economically strong German community was also present in Ljubljana

According to the 1921 census approximately 41.500 Germans resided in Slovene part of Yugoslavia, which corresponded to 4% of the population. When census was made, different forms of pressure were conducted and the number of Germans was in reality higher (some estimates reached the number of 70.000). (Fischer, *Slovenska novejša*, 397-399.)

¹⁷¹ A slightly different picture of the Lower Styrian situation before the First World War has been presented by Pieter Judson (see: Pieter M. Judson, *Guardians of the nation: activists on the language frontiers of imperial Austria* (Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press, 2006)), which on the other hand has been criticized by the Slovene historian Janez Cvirn (Janez Cvirn, “Med nacionalizmom in nacionalno koeksistenco,” *Zgodovinski časopis*, vol. 62, nr. 1-2 (2009), p. 228-238.)

¹⁷² Greater German press regularly reported on the situation of the German minority in Lower Styria and in other parts of Yugoslavia, stressing the unfriendly circumstances in which it had to live. See for instance: Friedrich Lange, “Deutsches Leid in Südslawien,” *Deutsche Zeit*, Nr. 98 (28. 5. 1924); “Die Bedrückung der Deutschen im S.H.S.-Staate,” *Deutsche Zeit*, Nr. 123 (5. 9. 1924); “Die Slowenen und der deutsche Sprachunterricht,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 27. 4. 1927.

Commonly unfriendly rhetoric notwithstanding, all three parties under scrutiny formally recognized the existence of national minorities within the borders of their states. Some of their political programs included sections and passages that stipulated cultural and linguistic rights of minorities, while their official statements pointed out the necessity of fulfilling the obligations included in the post-WWI peace treaties. At the same time, however the actual day-to-day practice and rhetoric often deviated from the latter statements, sometimes even running counter to them. Generally speaking, the tendency was to interpret the minority rights as narrowly as possible or – in the case of Czechoslovak Germans – stress their status as foreign minorities in a nation state and not constitutive nations in a multi-national state. Most importantly the principle of minority rights was most commonly evoked for the sake of criticizing the treatment of their own minorities in other countries.

Although the Yugoslav Democratic Party program published in June 1918 did not even mention non-Yugoslav minorities and stated that all public officials should be “sons of the nation” and their language “solely the official language,”¹⁷³ the parties that descended from it after the Yugoslav state had been founded, included formal recognition of minority rights in their programs. The Yugoslav National Party program (1933) for instance stated “JNS recognizes for the members of national minorities all the rights based on the peace treaties, in particular the right to safeguard their language and their culture, asking them to co-operate as loyal citizens together with the Yugoslavs for the benefit of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.”¹⁷⁴ The same was true for the Czechoslovak National Democrats whose

¹⁷³ “Program Jugoslovanske demokratske stranke” in *Programi političnih strank, organizacij in združenj na Slovenskem v času Kraljevine SHS (1918-1929)*, Jurij Perovšek ed. (Ljubljana: Arhivsko društvo Slovenije, 1998), p., 24.

¹⁷⁴ Program i statuti JNS, 9.

program demanded full language rights for the national minorities in school and offices.¹⁷⁵

In contrast, the GdVP Salzburg program did not include a single reference to the national minorities. The 1930 revised version, on the other hand, added a short section under the title “Minorities”, which however had a different bent:

“As regards all the state institutions it is important to pay particular attention that they above all benefit the German compatriots [*den deutschen Volksgenossen*] and only secondarily the state-recognized non-German speaking and German-speaking minorities. The Jewish people are to be included in these minorities and granted minority rights. Our youth are to be taught about and warned against the danger of mixing and enforcing [*Vermischung und Durchsetzung*] of our state, cultural and social life with these aliens [*mit diesem Fremdvolk*].”¹⁷⁶

The minorities speaking languages other than German were only briefly mentioned in the passage, as the main aim was asserting that the Jews represented a non-German minority. This was in line with the general devotion of GdVP to the “Jewish question,” with linguistic minorities such as Slovenes in Carinthia (and Styria, where they were not officially recognized), Croats in Burgenland and Czechs in Vienna receiving considerably less (negative) attention.

Whereas the actual implementation of minority legislation for Slovenes in Carinthia was far from satisfactory, the Greater Germans boasted how well the Slovene and other minorities were protected in Austria. In his speech during the 1926 party convention Dinghofer pointed out that Slovenes in Carinthia enjoyed full and equal rights, being far better off than the German minorities in Yugoslavia and elsewhere, especially in South Tyrol. He designated the Carinthian case as a model for treatment of national minorities:

During the same period, *Jutro* designated the minority legislation to be “one of the most important achievements that the French revolution and the enlightened era of XIX. century had brought to the humanity.” (“Nove smeri v manjšinskem problemu,” *Jutro*, 24. 11. 1933.)

¹⁷⁵ Program ČsND, 14.

¹⁷⁶ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 26, RI-2-34,35 Parteiprogramm 1930.

“...precisely this Carinthian example shows us once again how incredibly objective and just we, the Germans are. I am convinced that our brothers and sisters, our kinsmen [*Stammesgenossen*] in Czechoslovakia, in Hungary, in Romania, in Poland, in Alsace, in Italy, in Yugoslavia, in short in all those states in which they today live scattered, would perceive themselves lucky, if they were treated as a minority like we treat the Carinthian Slovenes.”¹⁷⁷

Counterposing the examples of good treatment of national minorities in their “own” states with oppression of own kin under foreign rule, was a very common rhetorical tool, regularly employed in all three cases. Particularly the ČsND leaders liked to point out, that Czechoslovakia – which, compared to other countries, indeed in many ways represented a model for minority protection - was giving the minorities “more than the peace agreement grants to them.”¹⁷⁸ There were however also important nuances present. The Greater German leaders formally acknowledged the existence of a sizeable Slovene minority in Carinthia, using the term “*Slowenen*” and not “*Windische*” for Slovene-speakers, whom they attributed the status of “*Nation*.”¹⁷⁹ Slovene progressives were on the other hand dismissive of the German minority already at a verbal level, where they proved to be quite selective. While in 1920 Kukovec stated that it had to be considered whether Germans should be given the right to vote at all,¹⁸⁰ an ambiguous attitude is well illustrated in the following excerpts from *Jutro*, written during the hot debate about German cultural gathering, taking place in Celje in 1923:

“Germans, as far as they are autochthonous in Yugoslavia, can peacefully live among us and deserve that. They are equal and their safety is guaranteed, although they treated us differently under the Habsburgs. (...) We cannot, however, allow the Germans to participate in politics as a foreign body even in places, where they live scattered.”¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁷ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 32, RI-12 7. Reichsparteitag vom 05.-06.06. 1926, , Referat Dr. Dinghofer.

¹⁷⁸ “Dr. Karel Kramář o poměru Čechů k Němcům,” *Národní listy*, 12. 2. 1929.

¹⁷⁹ “Slowenische Volksschulen in Kärnten,” *Deutsche Zeit*, Yr. 1, Nr. 19, 29. 6. 1923; Ed. P. Danszky, “Heimat als Schicksal,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 22. 6. 1930.

¹⁸⁰ Žuraj, *Med regionalizmom*, 118.

¹⁸¹ *Jutro*, 3. 2. 1923. The editorial discussed the threat of German political organization in Styria, recalling the 1907 interethnic riots in Celje.

“This is not a declaration of war on an individual, who is of German nationality inside his household, his civil rights, but on all those who want to act as a group against the state nation.”¹⁸²

From this perspective the Slovene progressives represented no exception among interwar Central European national liberal heirs, for instance the Czechoslovak National Democrats, whose leader Karel Kramář argued against any reconciliatory attitudes towards the national minorities, as being a sign of weakness of the state nation.¹⁸³ Rhetoric, pointed against Germans was highly distinctive for the Czechoslovak National Democrats, appearing in public speeches of notable representatives and on the pages of *Národní listy* and other party press. Whereas in the Slovene progressive discourse, the Lower Styrian Germans were subject to partial denial of their national identity or – in other words – forceful inclusion under the Slovene/Yugoslav one, the National Democrats were however less confrontational. In contrast to the Slovene progressive journalists, their Czech counterparts admitted Germans - Hungarians and Poles as well - their special national identity within the borders of Czechoslovakia. With the absolute and relative numeric strength of Germans considerably higher and areas of compact settlement incomparably larger in the Czech lands, their rhetoric adopted significantly different forms than in the Slovene case. Less directly aggressive and acknowledging the existence of German minority and a certain degree of legitimacy of its demands, it aimed primarily at rejecting the possibility of granting territorial autonomy to the Germans and securing the “national character” of the Czechoslovak state. Any policy that aimed at accommodating the demands of the German minority, finding an agreement with them or giving them any additional concessions was

¹⁸² *Jutro*, 4. 2. 1923.

¹⁸³ Novotný, *Národnostní menšiny*, 26.

being labelled as “Germanophile” in the National Democratic discourse. Quite often the “present Germanophile policy” acted as a general label for the politics of the Czechoslovak governments.¹⁸⁴

While stressing the importance of minority legislation and pointing out that the “ideal of Czech politics” was “equality of man towards man, equality of nation towards nation,”¹⁸⁵ the National Democrats throughout the interwar firmly demanded that Czechoslovakia be a “national and Czech state” as František Šis formulated it at the founding congress in 1919.¹⁸⁶ This was a position, shared by all the strains in the Czechoslovak National Democracy, including the moderately nationalist ones, and implied that the minorities needed “to subordinate to our state” and “acknowledge that in this state the landlord [*domácím panem*] is (...) the Czech nation” as Adolf Stránský put it.¹⁸⁷ Being the master in the country could mean different things – from obtaining a symbolical acknowledgement from the minorities that the Czechs had founded and created the state and should thus feel at home throughout its territory (Stránský) to the uncompromising insistence on the principle that German politicians in government meant the end of the “national character” of the state, which was characteristic for the radical nationalists around Ladislav Rašín.

During the early years of the republic this position indeed practically meant exclusion of minorities from administering the state. It was largely due to ČsND demands that the

¹⁸⁴ Úspěchy germanofilské politiky v šestém roce naší republiky, “*Národní demokracie*, 3. 10. 1924; “Manifestační schůze proti germanofilství v naší politice,” *Národní demokracie*, 10. 10. 1924; “Němci u nás a Češi v Rakousku,” *Národní Politika*, 24. 12. 1922.

¹⁸⁵ *Politické posláni Československé národní demokracie. Řeč člena Národního shromáždění a chefredaktora »Národních Listů« Fr. Šise. Pronesena na ustavujícím sjezdu Československé národní demokracie dne 24. března 1919* (Prague: Tiskový odbor Československé národní demokracie, 1919), p. 6.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁸⁷ *Československá národní demokracie dítětem české svobody. Řeč ministra obchodu Dr. Ad. Stránského, na prvním valném sjezdu Československé národní demokracie, Pronesena dne 25. března 1919.* (Prague: Tiskový odbor Československé národní demokracie, 1919), p. 15.

national minorities were not represented in the postwar Revolutionary National Assembly and could not take part in drafting the Czechoslovak constitution.¹⁸⁸ Until 1926 ČsND stood in persistent opposition against any German party taking part in a governing coalition, employing the slogan “Germans into the government, we to the revolution!” After this happened the party leadership however swiftly accommodated to the new situation, especially since this was the first completely non-socialist cabinet. In numerous aspects, however, the Germans continued to be treated as “guests” in the Czechoslovak nation state in the National Democratic rhetoric. Autonomy for German-speaking areas, as demanded by the German political parties, was designated as actually meaning “autocracy over the nationally mixed areas.”¹⁸⁹

An important aspect of securing the state its “national character” and preventing it from turning into a “new Switzerland” was the firm insistence on “Czechoslovak” as the “state language” in the entire territory of Czechoslovakia.¹⁹⁰ The quarrel about the formulation that was to be put into the constitution, in which ČsND demanded that it be “state language” [*státní jazyk*] instead of “official language” [*oficiální jazyk*] (in the end, a compromise solution – “state, official language” – was used), also marked the beginning of long-lasting conflicts between the National Democrats and president Masaryk. The difference in formulation had both symbolic and real meanings, as the supporters of “state language” wanted to make “Czechoslovak” a compulsory subject in all schools, and demanded fluency from all public employees, including those in majority German- and Hungarian

¹⁸⁸ Stanley Winters, “Passionate Patriots: Czechoslovak National Democracy in the 1920s,” *East Central Europe/L'Europe du Centre-Est*, vol. 18, nr. 1 (1991), p. 57.

¹⁸⁹ “Německé volání po moci ve státě,” *Národní listy*, 25. 7. 1924.

¹⁹⁰ See: Program ČsND, 13: “As regards the question of language it is essential to proceed from the fact that the Czechoslovak state is a national state, founded by the Czech nation and that thus (...) Czech and its branch Slovak respectively must be designated as the state language in order for the national character of the state to fully come to expression”

areas.¹⁹¹ Moreover, and important to note, by insisting on the term “state language” the National Democrats basically emulated the demands that the German nationalists had been raising for the German to become the *Staatssprache* in the Austrian half of the Dual Monarchy before the WWI.

As Kramář pointed out, his party was “far away from wishing to denationalize the Germans in some kind of violent manner”, stressing that “such policy would be of a short breath and would run against our democratism and our national traditions” and concluding “We did not long for freedom in order to be able to commit violence against the Germans.”¹⁹² Emphasizing that it must be unconditionally demanded from the Germans not to oppress the Czech minority in the “Germanized territory,” he stated that the “quarrel” with the Germans was “only about the recently Germanized ones.”¹⁹³ At least in the areas of continuous settlement, the Germans were thus not condemned to “dying away as an uprooted thistle” like those of Lower Styria. Yet, as Kramář’s remark on the “recently germanized” may hint, the type of “forcefully inclusive” discourse, so characteristic for the Slovene case, was not completely absent from the Czech one. It expressed itself most clearly when the issues connected to the linguistic border, national indifference, fluid identities and ethnically mixed areas were addressed. The National Democratic MP and famous poet Božena Viková-Kunětická for instance discussed the problem of mixed, Czech-German marriages in the “germanized territory (*zněmčenem území*).”¹⁹⁴ Labelling these “a dangerous experiment” for “every race” which is fortunate “neither for family, nor

¹⁹¹ Bakke, *Doomed*, 238-239.

¹⁹² “Čtvrtý sjezd čsl. národní demokracie; Řeč dra Karla Kramáře o základech ideové a politické koncepce čsl. národní demokracie,” *Národní listy*, 16. 4. 1929.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁴ B. Viková-Kunětická, “Smíšená manželství,” *Národní listy*, 26. 7. 1922.

for the nation and in the end for the spiritual solemnity of man (*duchovní vážnost člověka*)” and from which “a large percent of diffident souls, indifferent hearts and depraved characters emerge”, she pleaded for their legal regulation.¹⁹⁵

It was generally characteristic for the nationalisms of all the three parties under scrutiny that they commonly acted in a “forcefully inclusive” manner, which expressed itself in a firm tendency to involuntary include as many members of national minorities into the dominant nation as possible.

A difference may be seen in the level of aggressiveness, which at first glance appears to be higher in the Slovene case. While the *Jutro* editorial compared the Germans’ future to the one of an “uprooted thistle,” coming close to a direct appeal for their denationalization it is hard to trace similar discourses in the Greater German press. Even the anti-Semitic discourse there mainly pointed at the “harmful Jewish influence” and “morality.” The main reason behind it was however that in the Slovene case the principal aim was assimilation, whereas in the Austrian it was exclusion.

While the Greater Germans and other racial anti-Semites treated the Jews as a separate nation, *a priori* expelling them from the German community regardless of their own national consciousness, the Slovene progressives equally denied the Lower Styrian German speakers their German identity for the sake of forcefully including them into the Slovene/Yugoslav nation. The progressive press thus labelled the latter as being “artificially bred by Austria”¹⁹⁶ and commonly employed the derogatory name

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.: “It seems grotesque, but still I say that the mixed marriages should be regulated by law.”

¹⁹⁶ *Jutro*, 4. 2. 1923.

nemškutar.¹⁹⁷ Determination of nationality and national consciousness were not treated as matters of personal decision and feelings. On the contrary and in line with the officially established practice¹⁹⁸ they were perceived as something resting on supposedly objective criteria which could be imposed from outside, for instance by the state, and – if needed – also forcefully:

“They want to place the pseudo-German [*nemškutarja*] of Celje in the same line with the Vojvodina Swabian or Gottscheer farmer (:..) This is exactly the error which we would want to pull out by the roots. In the former Lower Styria a couple of hundred Germans and a few more renegades live, *but the Germandom there we do not recognize to them*. Scattered immigrants, the real Germans are not numerous enough to be given rights of a minority, but to the pseudo-Germans we do not concede any right, they will have to realize that or bear the consequences. Germandom and therewith the German question is however non-existent here.”¹⁹⁹

The other side of the “forceful inclusiveness” towards national minorities was however also exclusivity towards those groups who were *a priori* barred from membership in the nation or which were to be expelled from it. This aspect was considerably less prominent in the Czech and the Slovene cases, as it was in the Austrian one, where it was closely associated with anti-Semitism as one of the corner stones of the German nationalist camp. There the distinction between “true” and “false” members of the nation, between Germans by descent whose Germanness was seen as an inborn quality and those who merely claimed to be German by their adherence (*Bekennntnis*) to the German national community, was articulated explicitly and utilized in practice to exclude the latter. While in the Czech case, even integral nationalist Ladislav Rašín allowed for a theoretical possibility of

¹⁹⁷ The word *nemškutar* (*Deutschtümler*) emerged during 19th century to denote people of Slovene ancestry who adopted German identity, embraced German culture or simply sided politically with the German liberal (constitutional) party. Its meaning could be roughly expressed in English as “pseudo-German” or “German imitator.”

¹⁹⁸ Objective criteria for determining nationality were not something specific for Yugoslavia, being highly distinctive for the Czechoslovak legislation as well. Cf. Novotný, *Národnostní menšiny*, 212.

¹⁹⁹ *Jutro*, 4. 2. 1923.

“Czechoslovaks of German language” (despite not seeing this as a realistic possibility),²⁰⁰ the above distinction excluded even persons of German language (but Jewish descent) from the German nation. This is not to say that the Czech or the Slovene national liberal heirs (or Czech and Slovene politicians and intellectuals in general) did not think in similar exclusionary terms – or were immune to anti-Semitism. As already pointed out, an objective conception of nationality and the tendency to treat the nation as a fixed category, based on recognizable markers, which some of them treated as “natural”, was generally common for the discussed context. Yet, the fact that a clear differentiation was pointed out precisely in Austria does not appear too surprising, if we observe the broader dynamic of the post-WWI national policies and relations.

The differentiation according to “objective” standards of ethnic or “racial” origin and descent, combined with practical anti-Semitism materialized itself most directly in the policy of granting citizenship that the young Austrian Republic introduced after WWI. Citizenship was in principle automatically granted not merely to those who had had their domicile on the territory of the republic before August 1914 but also to everybody that had afterwards migrated from any of the other former Cisleithanean crownlands, except for Dalmatia, Istria and Galicia.²⁰¹ The problem however arose in the case of more than 20000 “Eastern Jews,” mostly from Galicia and Bukowina which had during the war fled the advancing Russian forces or, in some other cases, escaped Polish pogroms after the war. Most of them had settled in Vienna where they, under the circumstances of the post-war

²⁰⁰ CZ-ANM, NAD 299 , Ladislav Rašin, K. 9, 318, General Congress 1929 - Rašin’s bookmarks to the resolution on inner policy.

²⁰¹ Hannelore Burger, *Heimatrecht und Staatsbürgerschaft österreichischer Juden Vom Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts bis in die Gegenwart* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2014), p. , 136.

shortages of food and basic necessities, became a convenient target for populist agitation, being collectively accused of war profiteering.²⁰²

The policy of the Greater German Minister of Internal Affairs Waber followed the principle that those applying for the Austrian citizenship were required to provide proof of belonging to the majority of population in terms of “race.”²⁰³ Which was impossible, since Austrian Administrative Court determined that for an individual race was “hereditary [*angestammte*], inherent [*ihm inhärente*], characteristic of a permanent nature [*Eigenart dauernden Charakters*], determined and characterized through physical and psychological moments; a condition attached to him, which can not be arbitrarily discarded and changed at will” and thus “something entirely independent from free decision of an individual and therefore [also entirely independent] from his confession [*von seinem Bekenntnisse*].”²⁰⁴ In practice, Waber’s policy was extended to cover all non-native Jews, including those from Bohemia for instance, and not merely Galician ones, while Felix Frank as vice-chancellor later ensured that the popular censuses included the questions on “race.”²⁰⁵ “*Wabersche Optionspraxis*” named after Minister Waber, which prevented the majority of “Eastern Jews” from obtaining Austrian citizenship afterwards often acted as a matter of pride to GdVP as “the first truly anti-Semitic act in the whole history of anti-Semitism,” invoked

²⁰² Francis L. Carsten, “Die Vorläufer des Nationalsozialismus“ in *Das geistige Leben Wiens in der Zwischenkriegszeit*, Norbert Leser ed. (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1981), p. 199.

²⁰³ “Option für die österreichische Staatsbürgerschaft,” *Reichspost*, 28. 7. 1921.

²⁰⁴ Gerald Stourzh, “Vier Fallstudien im Dienste der Spurensuche,” in *Liberalismus. Interpretationen und Perspektiven*, Emil Brix, Wolfgang Mantl eds. (Vienna: Böhlau, 1996), p. 56-57.

The court originally took the notion of “race” from the option provisions (Optionsbestimmungen) of the Saint-Germain treaty, where it appeared in the Anglo-American usage as largely synonymous to “ethnicity” or “ethnic belonging,” in turn interpreting it in a manner the possibility of individual choice of a given “race.”

²⁰⁵ Albert Lichtblau, “Jüdische Politik im “Roten Wien”: Das Wirken zionistischer Mandatare im Wiener Gemeinderat” in *Jahrbuch des Simon-Dubnow-Instituts / Simon Dubnow Institute Yearbook*, vol. X, Dan Diner ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011), p. 301; also see “Eine Erklärung des Vizekanzlers Dr. Frank,” *Neues Wiener Abendblatt*, 10. 2. 1923.)

especially when the party needed to defend itself from the more radical anti-Semites who accused it of being “*Judenfreundlich*.”²⁰⁶

Anti-Semitic sentiments and corresponding discourses were present among the Czechs and Slovenes as well, but only in the German (Austrian and to a lesser degree Bohemian) context did anti-Semitism occupy such a central and prominent position in political rhetoric. The anti-Semitic card had an extraordinarily high value in the Austrian political arena with virtually all political parties employing anti-Jewish statements. For the Greater Germans and to a large degree also the Christian Socials, anti-Semitism represented a central element of rhetoric. Whereas in the Czech and the Slovene context, parties only occasionally resorted to anti-Semitic rhetoric, which was mostly economically, religiously or culturally based, the Austrian Christian Socials and Greater Germans – as well as the latter and the National Socialists – indulged in a mutual competition for the title of a “proper” anti-Semite.²⁰⁷

Moreover, the tradition of racially-based anti-Semitism dating back to the days of Schönerer, was distinctive for the German nationalist camp, acting also as one of its distinguishing marks. The core assumption of the anti-Semitism of the German nationalists in Austria was namely the idea that the Jews represented a special nation.²⁰⁸ They were

²⁰⁶ Adam Wandruszka, “Österreichs politische Struktur, Die Entwicklung der Parteien und politischen Bewegungen” in: Benedikt, Heinrich, *Die Geschichte der Republik Österreich* (Vienna: 1955), p. 386; Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 138;

The Greater Germans had by then unsuccessfully proposed a number of similar bills. (See; Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 138.)

The Idea that Jews represented a special nation, the Zionists’ basic assumption, was by no means limited to anti-Semites. In latter’s context it however essentially marked the type of anti-Semitism espoused by GdVP

²⁰⁷ Even the Social Democrats, while being stigmatized as “Jewish party” in Christian Social and nationalist propaganda, themselves often resorted to anti-Semitic rhetoric in their anti-capitalist agitation. – Oliver Rathkolb, *Die paradoxe Republik. Österreich 1945 bis 2005* (Vienna: Paul Szolnay Verlag, 2005), p. 100.

²⁰⁸ Hawlik, *Die politischen*, 318-319.

thus treated as a “German-speaking minority” in Austria.²⁰⁹ Within the camp radical anti-Semitic groups were present, especially among the youth, which influenced the political rhetoric of the more moderate Greater German politicians as well. On the other hand they also had to react to the attacks by the Christian Socials who did not espouse racial anti-Semitism, yet employed the anti-Semitic discourse as a very powerful weapon for *Kulturkampf*. As the “blacks” accused the Greater Germans of being “closet Jewish liberals” or the National Democrats in 1919 of having been founded for the sake of “defending the Jewry,”²¹⁰ the latter responded that the Christian Social anti-Semitism was not a genuine one like theirs. They could base this claim on the fact that only theirs was “racially-based.”

The dynamics of the Austrian inner political struggle, more precisely the “internal” struggle on the anti-Marxist pole, make it plausible to think that the Greater German radically anti-Semitic rhetoric and their persistent efforts to establish themselves as the most genuinely anti-Semitic player was largely a consequence of this competition and thus more a matter of tactic than sincere persuasion. This might have indeed been the case with older-generation Greater German leaders such as Dinghofer who quite consistently abstained from any kind of anti-Semitic rhetoric in his speeches, rarely referring to the “Jewish question” and the corresponding part of the program. Yet, a number of facts indicate that this was not entirely the case and that the anti-Semitism of the GdVP was not merely a matter of rhetoric and an accommodation to the political atmosphere.

First of all it needs to be pointed out that an entire section in the Greater German party program was devoted to the so-called “*Judenfrage*.” There the anti-Semitic positions of the

²⁰⁹ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 26, RI-2-34,35 Parteiprogramm 1930.

²¹⁰ *Reichspost*, 24. 1. 1919.

party were not merely explicated but also theoretically worked-out. One way of understanding such amount of attention devoted to the “Jewish question” could again be that the very extent of the efforts, invested into proving the firmness of their anti-Semitic position, actually points toward the opposite. To some extent this holds insofar as we consider the internal dynamics within the national camp. The voluntary associations comprising it and especially the younger generation of nationalists had been firmly adhering to anti-Semitic principles. The Greater German politicians, claiming the leadership role in the Austrian German nationalist movement, found themselves under increasing pressure from more radical voices in the camp they were supposed to represent. Moreover, the political program itself may be seen as a compromise, a broad platform which was supposed to encompass the whole national camp including the radical anti-Semites within it and to which the moderates had agreed in order to satisfy the latter.

The radical nature of anti-Semitic views and their firm entrenchment and broad popularity among considerable parts of the Greater German electoral base, may however also act as an additional argument for not treating the anti-Semitic utterances as mere lip-service. Even though the leading political figures such as Dinghofer, Schürff, Clessin or Hampel did not devote much attention to the anti-Semitic agenda, some of their colleagues regularly appeared as speakers on anti-Semitic manifestations. Anti-Semitism also did not remain on the theoretical and rhetorical levels, but expressed itself in violent attacks against Jewish university students by members of nationalist *Burschenschaften*. Large anti-Jewish manifestations organized by *Antisemitenbund*²¹¹ and similar organizations, most notably

²¹¹ *Antisemitenbund* was a crown organization of anti-Semites that reached across party lines and included both adherents of German nationalism and political Catholicism among its members. Its founder was the Christian Social politician Anton Jerzabek. (Christian Pape, “Antisemitenbund (Österreich)” in *Handbuch des Antisemitismus*, vol. 5, Wolfgang Benz ed., (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012), pp. 33-34.)

the one in front of the Viennese City Hall in 1923, were accompanied by outbursts of violence against Jewish property. The Greater German press wrote about these events favorably.

Most importantly, the documents on Greater German internal debates indicate that anti-Semitic principles were subject to serious discussion by the party leaders and not limited to the Schönererian hard-liners such as Ursin, who had among other formed a 27-member “expert council for the Jewish question,”²¹² and during the second half of the 1920s Marie Schneider²¹³. Particularly the National Democrats as the chief ideologues of GdVP and a group with disproportionate influence within the party clearly revealed themselves as determined anti-Semites:

“... we do not want to have the confusion of a Jew with our people [*Vermengung eines Juden mit unserem Volke*]. We must take the standpoint of racial anti-Semitism. [...] We must be aware that a German *Volksgemeinschaft* is impossible without the softening [*das Weichen*] of the Jewish influence. [...] We must say to our compatriots [*Volksgenossen*]: You must have nothing to do with the foreigners, the foreigners destroy Your unity. We must write down on our flag the struggle against Jewishness as such [*das Judentum als Solches*] with all the clarity and sharpness. [...] Consequently, we must also make a clear commitment to anti-Semitism. If we do not do that, then we are done .”²¹⁴

The chief National Democratic economic theorist Otto Conrad justified his program in front of his party colleagues in largely anti-Semitic terms, at the same time warning against saying it publically. He thus stressed that the economic program should be written in the

²¹² *Die Verhandlungen des zweiten Reichsparteitages der Grossdeutschen Volkspartei. Wien, Saal der Bäcker-genossenschaft, 27. und 28. Juni 1921* (Vienna: Verlag der Grossdeutschen Volkspartei, 1921), p. 62.

²¹³ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 33, RI-12 9. Reichsparteitag vom 08.-10.06. 1928, Verhandlungsschrift über die Sitzung der Reichsparteileitung am 9. Juni 1928, 9 Uhr vorm.

Especially after Ursin’s retreat from active politics in 1924 less stress on the „Jewish question“ was being given during the party conventions, indicating a pragmatic re-orientation of the party towards practical questions, a fact to which Schneider persistently called attention.

²¹⁴ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 30, RI-12 Parteitag der Nationaldemokraten vom 26.-29. 06. 1920. Protokoll 1920. The quotes are from a remark by dr. Lindeck during the debate on scientific validity of the terms „race“ and “Aryans“, which will be more thoroughly discussed at a later point.

neutral language of objective economic arguments in order not to provide ammunition to political opponents. At the same time, he emphasized that the main aims and motivations behind his program were anti-Semitic:

“I can assure you that I have at each sentence in this chapter [...] which is directed against capital [...] asked myself, how do these proposed measures work against the Jewry; and I regard as the decisive criterion, as decisive proofstone for the correctness of an economic measure, that it is suitable for undermining the economic dominance of the Jewry. Then I have full confidence that this is a proper economic measure. All the measures that are being proposed in the section on the economic policy have been checked in this way [*sind daraufhin geprüft*] and I put my hand in fire, that none of these measures could in any way support the Jewish dominance.”²¹⁵

Only a brief glance through the titles in the Greater German gazette for Salzburg in 1921 shows the centrality of anti-Semitism, whereby “Jewishness” could serve as a reason for categorically rejecting virtually anything.²¹⁶ The International Women’s League for Peace and Freedom was for instance dismissed simply through pointing out that “the leadership of the League in Austria lies largely in Jewish hands and must, therefore, for this reason alone be combatted.”²¹⁷

Last but not least, the Greater German party statute included the so-called *Arierparagraph* excluding persons of Jewish descent from party membership,²¹⁸ which clearly speaks in favor of the seriousness of their anti-Semitic position. Even more so, the GdVP consequently followed the *Arierparagraph*, which also had important practical implications. In 1930 they thus blocked the admittance of the Democratic Center Party into

²¹⁵ Ibid., 221.

²¹⁶ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 29, Mapa RI-11b Landesparteileitung Salzburg, Mitteilungen.

²¹⁷ “Internationale Frauenliga für Frieden und Freiheit,” *Mitteilungen der Großdeutschen Volkspartei in Salzburg*, 1. Jahrgang, 3. Augustfolge (16. August 1921).

²¹⁸ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 29, 2. Parteitag der Grossdeutschen Volkspartei. Antrag der Reichsparteileitung. Grundgesetz der Grossdeutschen Volkspartei. Beschlossen vom Reichsparteitag am 28. Juni 1921: “Mitglied des Vereines kann jeder eigenberechtigte Deutsche ohne Unterschied des Geschlechtes werden. Juden sind demnach von der Mitgliedschaft ausgeschlossen.”

the *Nationaler Wirtschaftsblock*. They categorically rejected any cooperation with the “Jewish” Viennese liberals, justifying their stance with their program and the attitudes of their electorate.²¹⁹

The position of Viennese liberals stood in stark contrast to the Greater German exclusivism. The 1920 proclamation of the *Bürgerlich-demokratische Partei*²²⁰ called to all those that felt “German and free,” who were “resident on our soil and pledged allegiance to the German *Volk* [*die auf unserer Scholle sesshaft sind und sich zum deutschen Volke Bekennen*]. Stating that there should be no “citizens of first and second class in our *Volk*” it was accompanied by verses:

“Abandon all strife and all the quarreling,
Do not ask who the better German is,
Just make sure that everybody’s sole is burning,
And that everyone recognizes the need of the Nation.”²²¹

Tactic and rhetoric or sincere persuasion; based on a racist ideology or not, it was the ubiquity of the anti-Semitism in the Greater German political discourse that marked a distinction to the Czech and Slovene national liberal heirs which is impossible to ignore and which makes the Austrian case specific.

²¹⁹ “Die demokratische Mittelpartei und der nationale Wirtschaftsblock,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 14. 10. 1930. Also see: “Die Großdeutschen gegen die demokratischen Juden,” *Neues Wiener Journal*, 15. 10. 1930, where Heinrich Clessin pointed out the principal, as well as the tactical reasons for the decision. Demonstrating an ambivalent attitude towards the situation and bluntly speaking about “radical elements of our party”, he at the same time appealed towards consideration of the public opinion and sensitivities among the provincial voters.

²²⁰ “Der Wahlaufuf der bürgerlichen Arbeitspartei,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 26. 9. 1920.

²²¹ “*Laßt allen Hader und alle Zwist, / Fragt nicht, wer der bessere Deutsche ist, / Sorgt nur, daß einem jeden die Seele brennt, / Und ein jeder des Volkes Not erkennt.*” - Ibid.

Observing the Czech, the German Austrian and the Slovene cases parallelly, we may thus notice the application of the same basic principle, just turned into the opposite direction. While the exclusivist discourse, distinctive for the Greater German anti-Semitism was largely absent in the Slovene and Czech cases, the latter parties equally differentiated between those belonging to the nation by descent and those merely (falsely) claiming to belong to it, on the basis of supposedly objective criteria. Applying the distinction of *Abstammungsdeutschum* versus *Bekenntnisdeutschum* on the Lower Styrian German speakers or “mixed marriages” along the linguistic border in Bohemia they claimed that the great majority of these were in fact Slovene or Czech “renegades.” The objective conception of nationality, distinctive for all three cases, could thus express itself in two basic “modes” – either “forceful inclusivity”, aiming to acknowledge the minority status of as few people as possible, or on the other hand exclusiveness, cleansing the “foreign element” from the “national body. Although the two forms could co-exist within the same nationalist ideology, it may be argued that the inclusivist element was the prevalent one in the Slovene and, at least partly, the Czech cases, whereas in the Austrian case exclusivity dominated.

Behind this logic stood the objectivization of nation as a given, pre-determined, homogenous entity and nationality as an objectively determinable feature, independent of individual will and determination and containing essentialist implications. The exact content of this “essence,” the range of objective nationality markers and their character varied between cases, as did also the degree of their forcefulness in practice. Adherents of subjectivist conception of nationality treating nationality as an individual choice such as

Emanuel Rádl²²² in the Czech case were extremely rare in all of the three contexts under scrutiny. Being called “*němcomila*” and “pest of the nation” by the nationalists,²²³ his positions were rejected also by moderates such as Peroutka and Kamil Krofta.

Closely connected with the already discussed organicist and objectivist understanding of nation, was the implication of essentially undifferentiated unity with its own “will,” “goals” or at least “natural tendencies.” This was again not merely a consequence of the attenuated subordination of all the other considerations, for instance those based in class, to the national principle, characteristic for all the three parties under scrutiny, but had more far-reaching implications. Different nations thus not only had certain fixed traits that characterized and mutually distinguished them but also possessed tendencies that by their nature led into conflict with other nations with opposing natural tendencies.

The National Democratic ideology was centered around an objectified notion of nation, among other things resting on the assumption of the permanent struggle between Germans and Slavs. The Germans as a whole, including those who lived in Czechoslovakia, thus represented “pan-German goals” which stood in natural opposition to Slavic politics, whose chief carrier after the Bolshevik takeover of Russia became Czechoslovakia. A realistic and reasonable policy towards the Germans would thus in National Democratic opinion strive for co-existence, acknowledging under certain conditions even possibilities for cooperation, at the same time being fully aware that common goals were impossible.

²²² Cf. Emanuel Rádl, *Válka Čechů s Němci* (Prague: 1928).

For more on Rádl see: *Emanuel Rádl – vědec a filosof /Scientist and Philosopher. Proceedings of the conference 9. 2. - 12. 2. 2003*. T. Hermann, A. Markoš eds. (Prague: OIKOYMENH, 2004), esp.: Jiří Křest'an. “Politik a politický publicista Emanuel Rádl a ohlas jeho názorů v meziválečném Československu.” (pp. 634-646).

²²³ Křest'an, Politik, 638.

Only “naïve Germanophiles” could believe in the possibility of the latter, ignoring the fact that the Germans strove for domination and not equality,²²⁴ their protests against Czechoslovak policies being nothing less than “cries of the former lords.”²²⁵

Instances of this kind of understanding of the core of the Czech-German conflict abounded in the articles and speeches of Karel Kramář and other leading ČsND representatives.²²⁶ They largely constituted the paradigm for the National Democratic nationalist rhetoric in which the Germans, despite being acknowledged as a community living within the borders of Czechoslovakia and given credit for cultural, scientific and other contributions to the civilization, functioned as an adversary or at least a force against which constant vigilance needed to be professed. Acting as a welcome rhetorical tool for nationalist mobilization, such treatment of the German minority was not merely a matter of rhetoric, but revealed deeper understanding of relations between nations. In its purest and most radical form, this understanding reflected in the writings of younger radical nationalists gathered around the journal *Národní myšlenka*, who systematically developed it. Vlastimil Klima for instance wrote about “psychological antagonisms between nations” which had created “a certain fixed order” between them: “It is in the sense of this order, that between the Czechs and the Germans there is and there will be a continuous, fatal and natural animosity.”²²⁷

²²⁴ Vytrvat, pracovat a bude-li třeba, i bojovat! Řeč člena Národního shromáždění K. St. Sokola, pronesená 25. března 1919 na prvním valném sjezdu Československé národní demokracie. (Prague: Tiskový odbor Československé národní demokracie, 1919), p. 8; „Němci u nás a Češi v Rakousku“, *Národní Politika*, 24. 12. 1922.

²²⁵ „Němci u nás a Češi v Rakousku“, *Národní politika*, 24. 12. 1922.

²²⁶ For instance see: Ibid.; Dr. Karel Kramář, „My a Němci“, *Národní listy*, 8. 10. 1933.

²²⁷ Vlastimil Klima, Psychologické základy nepřátelství mezi národy, *Národní myšlenka*, yr. VI., nr. 2 (1928-29): p. 56.

Instead of the “fashion of pacifism” that had commenced after the war, promoting “eternal peace, which is supposed to be achieved through agreements and international economic cooperation,” Klima demanded that “truth should be told to the nation”:

“It is more useful, more realistic and especially more honest to point out to the nation the psychological antagonism between the Czechs and the Germans, which is the basis for the everlasting animosity between them. A sober consideration forces [us] to tell the grim fact that danger rests within the German national soul.”²²⁸

Similar views, expressed in somewhat cruder terms, could also be found in the case of Franjo Lipold, the leader of the Yugoslav Democratic Party Styrian section (later also the Independent Democratic and Yugoslav National parties) who denominated Germans as “our worst hereditary enemies” and “pseudo-Germans” as “degenerates of our nation”.²²⁹

4. 2. 3. Nationality Struggle Continued

Comparing the anti-German discourse from *Jutro* and the anti-Jewish discourse of the Greater Germans, we may notice similarities, as well as differences. Common to both was a generalized image of an “enemy,” a “foreign body” in the national organism that was moreover culturally adverse, at the same time being economically strong. To some extent the National Democratic discourse on Germans in the Czech case may also be paralleled to that. Especially in the economic aspect the commonalities were quite obvious, expressing themselves in the economically-based anti-German rhetoric in Lower Styria or on the “language borders” of Bohemia and Moravia and – on the other hand – also largely economically-grounded anti-Semitism of the gentile provincial middle classes of Austria.

²²⁸ Ibid., 57.

²²⁹ Borbenost demokracije – referat dr. F. Lipolda, Maribor, *Jutro*, 20. 2 1923.

Both groups thus acquired a role of a scapegoat, an abstract *Feindbild* employed for very concrete purposes of economic competition.

An area, in which the economically-based differential treatment of minorities reflected very clearly, at the same time also representing one of the central issues for all the three parties, was the question of public officials. Particularly in the Czech and Slovene cases, where a considerable share of pre-war posts were occupied by Germans, demands were being raised for nationalization of bureaucracy, which implied letting off a considerable number of employees that did not belong to the state nation. In Austria, representing the core area of the former Empire, including its capital, in which the great majority of public employees were German-speaking, the situation was different. There, the Greater German efforts concentrated on maintaining the numbers and salaries and not on the nationalization of the officialdom. At the same time, the high percentage of Jews among academics and in certain free professions, for instance doctors, gave way to resentment that among other things expressed itself in demands for *numerus clausus* at the Universities.

In the newly-founded states, claiming to be national ones, an increasingly important aspect of the economic struggle were the claims of the newly-appointed Czech and Slovene officials and other public employees. Mostly nationalist in outlook and yearning for public recognition, influence and prestige this group found itself in conflict with the economically strong German positions both in the predominantly German-speaking Sudetenland and in German language islands in the majority Slovene Lower Styria. At the same, time they were strongly represented in the parties under scrutiny, which reflected in the latter's anti-German rhetoric and special attention towards the situation of public officials in nationally-mixed or majority German areas.

National Democratic Member of Parliament Jaromir Špaček, argued for “swift and radical cleansing” of the Czechoslovak army “of the unreliable elements taken over from the Austrian times,” primarily the German and Hungarian officers. As the party newspaper *Národní demokracie* wrote in the commentary to his speech at least the army should have been “spared of Germanophile policy” in order not to “compromise the existence of the Czechoslovak state.” The latter’s “Czechoslovak national character,” Špaček argued, required that “its military, administrative, juridical, or any other kind of administration, must be in careful Czech and Slovak hands.”²³⁰ On the other hand, more moderate views were also voiced. *Národní listy* thus admitted in 1924 that “certain share in administering the state belongs to the German” for which however the German parties should fully commit themselves to the state, which they had not yet done.²³¹

An even more radical stand was expressed by judge and composer Anton Lajovic in *Slovenski narod*,²³² who argued that in the old Austria the German bureaucracy, especially in Styria and Carinthia had “formed entire artificially maintained German nests” that had grown even further by absorbing “nationally-halfhearted Slovenes” who “as pseudo-Germans [*nemškutarji*] formed the most disgusting apparition the world had seen.” Protesting the renewed appointment of certain German officials to visible positions, he argued that post-1918 replacements of German officials with Slovene ones were a “necessary consequence of the revolution” and only a “tiny redress of the previous injustice”:

“Henceforth, for the capacity to be appointed to some important, leading or generally good post the mere professional qualification of the person was therefore not relevant

²³⁰ Jaromir Špaček: „Pryč s německými a maďarskými důstojníky z armády!“, *Národní demokracie*, 18. 10. 1922.

²³¹ „Německé volání po moci ve státě“, *Národní listy*, 25. 7. 1924.

²³² Anton Lajovic, “Nemške uradnike v Slovenijo!”, *Slovenski narod*, 31. 10. 1920.

but primarily whether you were a Slovene or not. In this demand lies the essence of our revolution. [...] it was senseless to think in this respect about any kind of equality between Germans and Slovenes. Our elderly gentlemen have dragged such a notion of equality with themselves from the Austrian circumstances. That is Austrian mentality [...] Any kind of violation of this principle which stems from our revolution, means a repeated old injustice to our nation. [...] Our position towards a German as an official may nowadays in the interest of the nation and the state be no different than the following:

If a German, you are even as capable and even as diligent that you outweigh a hundred Slovenes, [still] to the leading post, an important or confident position in our country you do not belong. If you enter a competition for a good place with a Slovene, the good place is reserved for the Slovene.”²³³

Slovenski narod also published a critical response by I. Hilbert²³⁴ who found it necessary to “react in the interest of Slovene public officials and the Slovene intelligentsia in general” to the “awkward opinions” expressed in Lajovic’s article. Agreeing with the latter about necessary vigilance in appointing German officials he stressed that their national belonging should present no obstacle and that, beside professional qualification, only “loyalty toward the Yugoslav state idea” should be required. Categorically rejecting the idea that national identity should act as criterion for appointing officials, he commented;

“Should there be a tendency for this idea to be implemented in practice, it would foremost be Slovene officials who should protest, who luckily have far better qualifications than the 1 percent of German employees. If such an immoral practice established itself, this would mean a downfall of the state administration in Slovene lands. (...) It is not sentimentality, but it is merely the pride of a free citizen if I reject that which treaded us in the old Austria to find home in our state, There is more chauvinism and demagoguery among us than it is healthy, therefore away with them!”²³⁵

Both reluctance against and outright rejection of German officials was deeply connected to another basic feature of the nationalist orientation that all three parties espoused which basically meant a continuation of the pre-WWI policy of nationalist struggle and competition, as they had developed under the conditions of old Austria, in the new

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ I. Hilbert, “Nemške uradnike v Slovenijo?,” *Slovenski narod*, 5. 11. 1920.

²³⁵ Ibid.

circumstances of independent nation states. The continuation reflected primarily in the combative rhetoric and economic nationalism – in the Czech case for instance through the revival of the old nationalist slogan *svůj k svému*.²³⁶ The opinion that the key public positions should be occupied by the “sons of the nation” stemmed from the belief that only this can guarantee the security of the new states and not necessarily from any tendency to generally separate citizens into the “first” and “second class” ones.

As already mentioned, a common persuasion in the Czech and Slovene cases, stemming from the objectified notion of nationality, was that “the Germans” pursued their own national interests that ran against those of the state and represented German irredenta. As Lajovic himself explicitly stressed, this followed from the persuasion that the Germans continued to cultivate their “former German mentality according to which the German considered himself a partisan-enemy towards the Slovene”²³⁷ or, in other words, the old nationality struggle. To a large extent, this opinion was correct – the crucial aspect that the Slovene and Czech national liberal heirs tended to forget, however being that they were themselves also carriers of this same “old mentality” in the new circumstances, which could by no means be interpreted solely as a reaction to the German “irredenta.”

This may be seen in the already quoted article from *Národní listy* which demanded loyalty from the German parties and concluded that

“With all our willingness towards the Germans, with all the efforts for a healthy coexistence with them, we must not and shall not forget our painful, indeed terrible experience which we had acquired through the centuries of shared living with them in this land”²³⁸

²³⁶ Štěpánek, *Integrálně*, 124.

²³⁷ Anton Lajovic, “Němške uradnike v Slovenijo!?,” *Slovenski narod*, 31. 10. 1920.

²³⁸ „Německé volání po moci ve státě,“ *Národní listy*, 25. 7. 1924.

Cautiousness was thus needed, which pertained particularly to the nationally-mixed areas, which, according to the article, continued to represent “areas of free competition of all the population regardless of nationality, where only the living force of the nation and a just legal protection of all the people against any kind of oppression could decide.”²³⁹ While after the WWI “borderland [*pohraničí*]” became the established term for the predominantly German-speaking border strips of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia in both official use and political discourse,²⁴⁰ the National Democratic politicians and press continued to persistently employ the label “Germanized territories [*zněmčení území*],” common to the language of pre-war nationalist associations, engaging in a nationality struggle on the language border. Strengthening the positions of the Czech minorities in the majority-German areas counted among the top concerns. National Democrats commonly pointed to the hardships endured by the Czechs people at the “frontier” as a symptom of what they saw as growing “German arrogance” taking place in “an era of effete politics of various ‘statesmanlike’ germanophiles who yearn for ‘collaboration with the Germans’”²⁴¹

The Greater German People’s Party, being closely associated with the old nationalist voluntary associations such as *Deutscher Schulverein* and *Südmark* also engaged in a similar nationality struggle, particularly against the supposed “Czechization” in Lower Austria²⁴² and in Vienna. Due to Greater German demands, the 1922 coalition agreement

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Haslinger, Nation, 359.

²⁴¹ “Úspěchy germanofilské politiky v šestém roce naší republiky,” *Národní demokracie*, 3. 10. 1924.

²⁴² Christian Klösch, “Das ‘nationale Lager’ in Niederösterreich 1918-1938 und 1945-1996“ in *Niederösterreich im 20. Jahrhundert, Band. 1: Politik*, Stefan Eminger and Ernst Langthaler Eds. (Vienna: Böhlau, 2008), p. 567-568.

This struggle had already before the war been conducted by *Bund der Deutschen in Niederösterreich*, whose leader between 1910 and 1918 was Hans Schürff, the later GdVP chairman. During 1920s Lower Austrian

with the Christian Social Party included a commitment to protecting German minorities in neighboring countries and supporting their schools, while simultaneously limiting the spread of Czech ones in Austria.²⁴³ The national “defense associations” and their protests against what they understood as too generous state funding of minority schools received full support of the Greater German politicians and press.²⁴⁴ When the Greater German Hesse at the 1930 party convention elaborated on the efforts and conditions for unification of the “national forces” in Austria, he lay special stress on the importance of “national educational work [*völkische Erziehungsarbeit*],” carried out by the nationalist voluntary associations, stating that:

“This part of the national educational work, which I have allowed myself to shortly elaborate on, is not taken care of by the state today in Austria. That, what the state does in education is not to be underestimated in any way. As long as we have a state, which is not built on the basis of the *völkisch* idea, it is, however, natural, that, beside all the state educational work, also private work, arising from the *völkisch* life itself is given a very wide field. We have very valuable bodies [*Körperschaften*] for all those parts that I have earlier listed as parts of *völkisch* work.”²⁴⁵

The nationalist associations that Hesse spoke about – *Schutzvereine*, *Alldeutscher Verband*, *Turnerbund* – all had their roots in the old Austria, essentially continuing their old “national politics” from the multi-national empire in the new circumstances. A curious exception that conversely represented a novelty and an expression of interwar political dynamics but which Hesse intentionally included in his list of organizations was the

Land Assembly member Anton Zippe (1927-32 GdVP, 1932-33 NSDAP) was very active in efforts against the “slavization.”

²⁴³ Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 149.

²⁴⁴ “In der Tschechoslowakei – In Wien!,” *Deutsche Zeit*, Yr. 1, Nr. 15, 1. 6. 1923; Frithjof Melzer, “Der Sinn der Schutzbundarbeit,” *Deutsche Zeit*, Yr. 2, Nr. 101, 17. 6. 1924; Hans Schürff, “Durch deutsche Schutzarbeit zum nationalen Kampfgeist,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 8. 6. 1930.

²⁴⁵ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 34, RI-12 11. Reichsparteitag vom 20.-22.04. Protokoll. Hesse, “Die Zusammenfassung der Nationalen Kräfte in Oesterreich.”

Heimatschutzbewegung. What linked the latter to the formerly mentioned organizations was the aim of consolidating Germandom, a task which was not being carried out by the state, since it was not “founded on the basis of the *völkisch* idea.” The associations thus needed to step in.

This general continuity of “competitive nationalism” so distinctive for the political culture of old Austria and aimed at securing the “national property” was equally characteristic for all three cases. “Guardians of the Nation”²⁴⁶ of the pre-war era continued their activities, also bringing with them “almost unchanged horizons of perceptions and duties”²⁴⁷ from the multi-national imperial framework in which they had been founded. At the same time these organizations and especially their leading cadres continued to be closely aligned to the parties of national liberal heirs.²⁴⁸

The old, pre-WWI associations which were largely rooted in national liberal traditions, were in all three cases also joined by newly founded organizations. An example of these was the already mentioned *Heimatschutz* whom the Greater German Hesse listed along with other “national defense associations,” as well as ORJUNA and the Czech fascists. These movements, to be more thoroughly discussed at a later point, all represented movements of the radical right, marking the new type of militant nationalism. Their stated missions were at least initially similar to those of the older associations, but they were at the same time a product of the “new era” and its political dynamic. This reflected primarily in their style of work and manners of organization, but partly also in their ideologies. The

²⁴⁶ Judson, *Guardians*.

²⁴⁷ Haslinger, *Nation*, 360.

²⁴⁸ The connection was especially firm in case of Czechoslovak National Democracy whose members were overrepresented among the functionaries of defense organizations. – *Ibid.*, 371.

primary model, which all these movements to various degrees imitated, were the Italian Fascists.

The only major difference between the Austrian and the Czechoslovak – and Yugoslav – cases was that in the latter the aim of the nationalist associations, old and new, was consolidating the state and the dominant position of the state nation in it, while in the former it was preparing the grounds for the moment of its dissolution and unification with Germany. For the same reason their activities in Austria continued to take place in their “pure” form, independently from the state, whereas particularly in the Czech case the National Democrats continuously demanded that the state assume an active and leading role in the national struggle, thus transforming it into a state endeavor:

“Finally the state and public authority ought to act systematically towards the transfer of economic values into Czechoslovak hands so the political supremacy of the Czechoslovak population in the Czechoslovak republic will be finalized with a permanent and constantly expanding economic superiority.”²⁴⁹

The state itself now came to be perceived as the principal instrument for securing “victory” in the nationalist competition. Politically, the Czechs, as the state founders, were already victorious and could thus determine the extent of minority rights, ČsND argued. Now they should also become economic victors in order to secure their political dominance and protect Czech-speaking minorities in the “Germanized areas.” In line with this logic the main task of the government was not strengthening the economy of the country but the economy of the state nation – not to the benefit of all the citizenry but particularly the “Czechoslovaks.” This reflects a clearly integralist conception of nationalism, where the public administration is explicitly given the mission to act in favor of one nation, a logic

²⁴⁹ “Dr. Ing. Fr. Toušek o hospodářském a sociálním programu,” *Národní listy*, 16. 4. 1929 - supplement to the nr. 105: “Čtvrtý sjezd čsl. národní demokracie.”
CZ-ANM, NAD 299, Ladislav Rašín, K. 9, 318, General Congress 1929 – Economic-social resolution.

that was largely adopted by ČsND, although consistently and resolutely advocated only by its nationalist and youth wings.

As already mentioned, in the nationalists' view the state also became an instrument for rectifying the "historical injustice" or attaining the "restitution of the lost rights and positions" as the chief redactor of *Národní listy* and ČsND vice-president Sis put it.²⁵⁰ The principal method, which was also partly implemented, was land reform.

Nations as collective individuals clearly took precedence before individuals, from which differential treatment of the latter, according to their nationality could be derived. The Czechoslovak National Democrats, who generally defended the principle of equality of all the citizens, for instance, advocated unequal treatment in the case of land reform, which they understood in strictly nationalist terms:

"We perceive the land reform primarily to be a historical national deed. We advise against giving the land in the germanized and magyarized areas to the Germans or Magyars respectively. Should we strengthen in those places our national positions or create them where up to now there have been none, we may safely do that only by giving the land that once belonged to the Czech people back into the Czech hands."²⁵¹

The land should have therefore been distributed among reliable "Czech, respectively Slovak people." This unequal treatment was among other justified by the fact that "the Germans" as a group already held so much land, "that it would be for this reason unjust to add additional land to them."²⁵² The fact that some of these individual "Germans" may have otherwise, due to their social standing or other reasons, perfectly met the criteria for land grants was irrelevant in this line of argumentation. What counted was the "strengthening of the national positions" in the "renewed state."

²⁵⁰ František Sís, *Za národní a demokratickou republiku* (Prague: Sekretariat Čs.N.D., 1925).

²⁵¹ Posl. prof. dr. Lukavský, "Politická a kulturní činnost strany," *Národní listy*, 3. 5. 1925.

²⁵² Ibid.

A somewhat paradoxical aspect of this stance was that the National Democrats with all their stress on the “national” character of the Czechoslovak state in many ways acted as if they had still been pursuing a Czech nationalist policy within a “nationalities state.” In essence they pursued aims which they criticized the Germans for having pursued in the Austrian times, which they also openly admitted:

“On the linguistic rights it is thus us who are deciding, whereas in Austria we had to make compromises and fight for the rights of Czech language in the Germanized areas in Bohemia and Moravia. With the creation of the national state has this negotiation turned around: the state language is Czech and Slovak and linguistic concessions are being given to the Germans on the basis of minority agreements.”²⁵³

4. 2. 4. “Nation” versus “Humanity”

“Twentieth century is the apex of the development of nationalisms of individual nations towards the understanding of nation as a distinct indissoluble and indivisible unity, as a moral being with its own rights and own obligations. As a consequence, nationalism in the twentieth century signifies jealousy and also bellicosity of individual nations, not merely in economy, politics and civilization, but equally so in literature, art, philosophy, in the national culture therefore, a matter which flows from the depths of the national soul and character.”

Vlastimil Klima, “Psychological foundations of enmity between the nations” (1928)²⁵⁴

The National Democratic nationalism was subject to critique by President Masaryk and the left-leaning liberal intellectuals standing close to him, as being “conservative” and “anachronistic,” often also being referred to as “chauvinism.” This critique was connected to a series of polemics that took place between Masaryk and his allies on one side and

²⁵³ “Dr. Kramář v Hradci Králové,” *Národní listy*, 15. 9. 1925.

Also see: “Dějinná otázka,” *Národní listy*, 12. 2. 1929.

²⁵⁴ Vlastimil Klima, “Psychologické základy nepřátelství mezi národy,” *Národní myšlenka*, yr. VI., nr. 2 (1928-29): p. 55.

Kramář, Dyk, Mareš and other prominent ČsND members on the other, and were thoroughly discussed in the third chapter.

An interesting aspect of these disputes, as far as they concerned nationality politics and treatment of minorities, was that the both sides accused the other of not having “de-austrianized” itself. When Čapek criticized the nationalists, he labelled their position as negative, surrogate conservatism noting that “because they can not admit that they are missing Austria, they say, that they long for the old patriotic fervor that once thundered against Vienna.”²⁵⁵ Kramář, responding to the critiques about “anachronistic” character of post-war nationalism, on the other hand juxtaposed the latter against the “empty progressivism” of blindly following trends as a positively seen “backwardness” providing a “bridge to the new life of the nation and the state.”²⁵⁶

Ferdinand Peroutka even established a distinction between the “masarykian” and “pre-masarykian nationalism,”²⁵⁷ the former being constructive and oriented towards the future and the latter stuck in the past: “the future of the Czechoslovak state lies only within the new, democratic Europe. In order to completely integrate into it, it is necessary for pre-masarykian nationalism to die out. It counts nothing if this pre-masarykian nationalism sometimes covers itself with the most modern garment. In reality it is the voice of the past.” Those that still, after 10 years, did not understand Masaryk’s future oriented ideas, claiming that appeasement with the Germans undermined “the national self-esteem” and badly deriving their arguments from Nietzsche’s philosophy,²⁵⁸ were “the men” who formed “the

²⁵⁵ Karel Čapek, “O nacionalismu” in M. Znoj, J. Havranek, M. Sekera, M. (eds.), *Česky liberalismus* (Prague: Torst, 1995), p. 402.

²⁵⁶ Martina Winkler, *Karel Kramář (1860–1937). Selbstbild, Fremdwahrnehmungen und Modernisierungsverständnis eines tschechischen Politikers* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2002), pp. 375–376.

²⁵⁷ Ferdinand Peroutka, „Masarykovský a předmasarykovský nacionalismus,“ *Lidové noviny*, 9. 3. 1930.

²⁵⁸ “...a vubec jejich duchovní žaludek permanentně vydával na světlo boží vše, co špatně ztrávil s filosofie Nietzscheovy...” (Ibid.)

party of Masaryk's opponents." Peroutka labelled their type of nationalism "zoologic," being based on "no deeper idea than that: we are we."²⁵⁹ Interestingly, the National Democrats pointed the same kind of critique at Masaryk and other "naïve humanists" – namely that the stress on humanity and humanism as opposed to national egoism had been an unnecessary baggage, retained from the pre-WWI era.

Kramář's speech at the ČsND congress in 1922²⁶⁰ provides a perfect example of this criticism, which at the same time also reveals the basic tenets of the national democratic understanding of relations between nations and between the nation and broader humanity. Stating his "deep persuasion" that it was "our misfortune that the pre-war philosophy" had been "simply transferred into our post-war free state" on part "of a whole range of undoubtedly great men," Kramář argued that "humanism (...) to an undoubted extent (...) stemmed from suffering and awareness of small power." What was understandable and necessary under Austria, where it had to be counted "with German superiority", could "however not be the post-war philosophy." What had been inevitable under different circumstances before the war due to different relations of power was not suitable anymore:

"the post-war philosophy needs to be different and above all the politics must be different, because politics is not philosophy. (...) Politics is life, is struggle, and we must begin not from philosophy but out of practical experience. And here I ask you: can we approach our Germans with humanism? (...) We can do that only when we can presuppose an understanding of humanism in them. But I assure you that the Germans look upon our humanism as a weakness and naivete. (...) We do not wish to renounce humanism for all the magnificence and greatness that is within it (...) beyond doubt we remain loyal to the Czech humanism but we shall not make politics from it, as we do not make from religion! (...) our humanism is social justice, which, God knows, we have more than anyone else. In politics however we want and we will have our national state."²⁶¹

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ "Sjezd Československé národní demokracie," *Národní listy*, 27. 3. 1922.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

The disagreement between the “President Liberator” and the National Democrats (and other integral nationalists) also revealed underlying differences concerning philosophy of history. Whereas Masaryk placed the essence of Czechness into ideals of broader humankind and saw the pre-WWI nationality struggle only as temporary means on the long path of Czech history, that was not necessary anymore after the independent state had been founded, the National Democrats treated it as its prime mover. They merely reformed what they called “nationalism of an unfree nation” into “nationalism of a free nation,” thereby preserving the principle of nationality struggle as the basis. Primacy of the nation in their understanding of history was closely connected to the ethics of national solidarity. The nation acted as the medium of bridging individual and class egoism by maintaining an emotional bond between its members:

“If a man has to sacrifice something, he needs to be fond of something (...) I ask you: is it at all possible, to become enthused, and feel the way I feel the national idea, toward the idea of all-humanity [*všelidství*] and all-human humanism? With the best will, I think, never. We can not philosophize the reality away. Nations have been living their lives for millennia. Within each nation a special psychology has evolved, each nation has specific physiological characteristics. Between the nations so many antagonisms have piled up, that there is no abstract ideal which would be so powerful to defeat what millenarian history has created.”²⁶²

The antagonism between Czechs and Germans, being a product of a long historical development, was in this view a lasting, “natural” condition that could not be removed by human will. Thus, it was naïve to believe in possibility of dismissing it and bringing about Czech-German reconciliation. The struggle between nations could be made bearable – indeed it could be brought up to civilized standards, since violence was not compatible with the Czech national ideals²⁶³ – but it was impossible to eliminate. For that reason it

²⁶² “Posl. dr. Kramář pro silný národní stat,” *Národní listy*, 11. 4. 1923.

²⁶³ “Dr. Kramář v Hradci Králové,” *Národní listy*, 15. 9. 1925: “I am against violent politics against the Germans, as violence does not correspond to our national ideals.”

was an imperative for the Czechs/Czechoslovaks to maintain their dominant status in their national state. This was a position, widely shared by the ČsND leadership and most of the party.

In case of hardline nationalists such as Mareš, Dyk or the young generation (Klima, Ladislav Rašin), the discourse on irreconcilable conflicts between nations was even more consistently exclusivist and aggressive. Masaryk already in 1920 labelled their positions as “chauvinist”, Dyk in turn defending them as a necessary counterweight against what he termed as German chauvinism.²⁶⁴

Instances of similar discourse on nation and humanity (in favor of the former) were also present in the Austrian case, less connected to the minority questions and more purely ideological in nature. In addition to anti-socialist, it also had evident anti-clerical underpinnings. A perfect example of this was the speech by Professor Weinert at the conference on cultural and educational policy of the 1926 GdVP convention.²⁶⁵ Stressing that “our opponents” (i. e. Christian Socials and Social Democrats) were “both international” he explained the differences that should have distinguished the nationalist school program from the others. He rejected the confessional school on the grounds that it tended to converge youth of the same denomination regardless of their nationality:

“Here, we separate ourselves from the clerical school politicians like fire and water. We refuse to let the spirit of our youth be led across the national borders [*Volksgrenzen*] to other nations of the same denomination. [...] Our world view is a world view of microcosmos. The Christian Socials have the advantage of basing their goals on a macrocosmic conception [*eine makrokosmische Auffassung*]. We counterpose this view with ours of the national thought [*unsere des nationalen Denkens*] by saying that we do not believe in existence of humanity [*Bestand der Humanität*]; for us the past has been

²⁶⁴ Viktor Dyk, “Chauvinism?” *Národní listy*, 3. 1. 1920.

²⁶⁵ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 32, RI-12 7. Reichsparteitag vom 05.-06.06. 1926. Kultur- und Schulpolitische Tagung.

the teacher in the sense that the humanity never existed, does not exist and will never exist. On this wavering ground, on this mirage, we can not build the destiny of our *Volk*. We must have a firmer foundation and that can not be the belief in the existence of humanity [*Bestand der Menschheit*].”²⁶⁶

Likewise, as the National Democrats connected national feeling to the sentiment of love and the ethic of national solidarity, arguing that “the one who claims to be equally fond of all people in reality does not like anyone,”²⁶⁷ Weinert stated that “the national mindset [*die nationale Gesinnung*]“ was “a mindset of action [*eine Gesinnung der Tat*] and “the gospel that we preach [...] a gospel of love, that wishes to embrace all the estates of our *Volk*.”²⁶⁸ The similarity of both discourses, where national consciousness was meant to bridge the divisions within the nation, class-based divisions are evident.

On the other hand, a comprehensive debate that took place during the National Democratic (Viennese) convention, reveals a heterogeneity of views within the party ranks with some of the members openly embracing the idea of humanity or “nations’ community” (*Völkergemeinschaft*) as superior to the “national community” (*Volksgemeinschaft*). Yet, the opposing view clearly prevailed during that debate.²⁶⁹

While Weinert and some of the other Greater Germans²⁷⁰ in principle denied the idea of humanity any positive value or even rejected its very existence as a moral entity, was still not the case with the Czechoslovak National Democrats, whose view was rather that “the

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ CZ-ANM, NAD 214 Vlastimil Klima, K. 3, inv. č. 13, “Hrst vzpomínek na politiku mezi dvěma válkami.”

²⁶⁸ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 32, RI-12 7. Reichsparteitag vom 05.-06.06. 1926. Kultur- und Schulpolitische Tagung.

²⁶⁹ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 30, RI-12 Parteitag der Nationaldemokraten vom 26.-29. 06. 1920. Protokoll 1920.

²⁷⁰ See for instance: Robert Hohlbaum, “Menscheitsidee und Nationalismus,” *Deutsche Zeit*, Yr. 1, Nr. 1, 23. 2. 1923 and AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 31, RI-12 6. Reichsparteitag vom 21.-24.05. 1925. Tagung grossdeutscher Lehrer.

path toward humanity” inevitably led “through the nation.”²⁷¹ In the case of Slovene progressives on the other hand, the very juxtaposition of “nation” and “humanity” was absent from the political discourse during the period under scrutiny. Otherwise quite prone to employ aggressive rhetoric against Germans, the Slovene progressives namely understood and presented themselves as disciples of Masaryk and did not openly argue against his philosophy.

While it is true that the circle of Slovene realists, gathered around Dragotin Lončar, Anton Dermota and journal *Naši zapiski* (Our Notes) did not identify with the progressive camp and in 1907 mostly joined the Social-democratic Party,²⁷² the national radicals as the future progressive political leaders were also highly influenced by Masaryk's teachings. Apart from their program not being as theoretically worked out as the realist one, the differences were otherwise insignificant.²⁷³ With an important exception that in contrast to the realists, who saw no dispute between the principle of nationality and internationalism, the national radicals rejected cosmopolitanism and internationalism “for which they reproached the clericals and the socialists.”²⁷⁴

The integrally-nationalist discourse of this type, distinctive for the younger generation of ČsND, particularly the *Národní myšlenka* circle, explicitly appeared only later and in a lighter form among the youngest generation that stepped forward in the second half of the

²⁷¹ Posl. dr. Ant. Hajn, “O zahraniční politice,” *Národní listy*, 3. 5. 1925.

²⁷² 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 Slováci*, V. Doubek, L. Hládky, R. Vlček eds. (Prague: MU AV ČR, 2013), pp. 267-269, 272.

For more on the Slovene realists see: Irena Gantar Godina, *T. G. Masaryk in masarykovstvo na Slovenskem : 1895-1914* (Ljubljana: Slovenska Matica, 1987),

²⁷³ Godina, Let us learn, 275.

“Their central references were the ideas of Masaryk combined with Klofač’s more resolute demands” (Ibid.)

²⁷⁴ Cf. Ibid., p. 270, 275.

1930s. The integralist nature of their nationalist conception could clearly be seen in the 1937 manifesto of *JNAD Jadran* (Yugoslav Progressive Academic Society “Adriatic”), which was closely connected to the Yugoslav National Party:

“J.n.a.d. ‘Jadran’ is the bearer of national thought. Mankind does not form a homogenous whole in order to be able to directly realize its goals. It is divided along unique marks into self-enclosed natural units – *nations*, which are the most powerful cultural, social and political factors. Only in them and through them lives humanity. Alien and repulsive is therefore to J.n.a.d. ‘Jadran’ every cosmopolitanism and every internationalism.”²⁷⁵

4. 2. 5. Discourse of “Blood” and “Race”

The levels of aggressiveness towards other nations, treatment of minorities and the discourse regarding the relationship between nation and humanity, reveal a lot about the types and levels of nationalisms, to which the three parties under scrutiny adhered. All the differences and nuances in this regard notwithstanding it may be concluded that tenets of integral nationalism were clearly present in all the three cases, which is not too surprising. As shown in the second chapter, a general tendency towards integral nationalism and aggressive and exclusivist rhetoric had been distinctive for the trajectories of the national liberal traditions well before WWI. The selected examples merely show that this pattern continued into the interwar, being to some extent catalyzed by events connected to WWI and its aftermath, primarily foundation of the new nation states on the ashes of former empires.

Yet, as the example of the *Národní myšlenka* circle in the Czech case shows for instance, novel more contemporary types of radical nationalism also entered the stage. Or – as in the

²⁷⁵ “Naša misel” in *Petmajst let J.N.A.D. »Jadrana«* (Ljubljana: 1937), pp. 14-15.

case of racially-based anti-Semitism in Austria – older concepts, previously limited to the most radical fringe groups gained new grounds and a broader recognition.

Which brings forth the question whether – and to what extent - the nationalist ideologies of the national liberal heirs had been affected by the paradigm-change starting in the late 19th century, introducing the notions of “blood” and “race” into nationality discourse and sometimes leading the whole way to full-blown racially based nationalism. As discussed earlier, this shift marked a marginal but vocal and influential part of the post-Linz Program in German nationalism in Austria, as well as the Polish National Democrats. The majority of fin-de-siecle Central European national liberal heirs, including the Austrian German ones, however did not turn towards justifying their ideology in pseudo-biological terms, despite instances of employing elements of such vocabulary.

The question presenting itself thus concerns the degree of this turn. Especially since introduction and usage of certain notions does not necessarily imply that a real shift in ideology had taken place. Moreover, in the discussed context the mere presence of mentioned words can also be attributed to older elements of romantic nationalism and not to the introduction of biological categories. Also - sporadic use of terms such as “blood” and “race” and occasional treatment of nation as a “natural” or even “biological” unit could also be interpreted as rhetorical adjustment to the general political and intellectual atmosphere of interwar period. These features could only supplement the discourse without reflecting a worked-out program or even sincere persuasions. On the other hand, the presence of theoretically worked out conceptions of nationality that aligned it to biological categories or even practical policy considerations stemming from them may also indicate

that there was something more to it. Even more, since, as Marius Turda has shown,²⁷⁶ racist thinking and especially eugenics was quite commonplace among interwar intellectuals, being not at all limited to the (radical) right.

It may be said that the Austrian national camp as the electoral pool for the Greater German People's Party and the milieu in which various closely connected associations operated, was largely permeated with a racist ideology. The already mentioned nationalist student leader and GdVP member Körber, rejecting "*Bekenntnisdeutschtum*" (as opposed to "*Abstammungsdeutschtum*"), for instance argued that on such basis any Negro, Chinese or a Jew could identify as German, making Germandom "*vogelfrei*". "*Bekenntnisdeutschtum*" therefore stood in contradiction to "our Aryan-Germanic genotype [*Erbgute*], our Germanic-Christian cultural history and therefore any serious scientific conviction" – thus being "unhistorical, unscientific und insincere". There was no "Syrian-Semitic-Negroid *Bekenntnisdeutschtum*" but only "Aryan Germandom of blood [*arisches Blutsdeutschtum*]." ²⁷⁷ Similar alignment of the concept of nation to the one of race could also be seen in the explanation, given by Kurt Knoll in the introduction to Paul Molisch's account of the history of German national movement in Austria,²⁷⁸ which may be treated as generally representative of the national camp:²⁷⁹

"To us, the nation, that is the *Volk*, is the totality of humans mutually connected through a natural community [*Wesensartgemeinschaft*]. The common nature [*Wesensart*] emerges as the result of an ongoing development, which is rooted in the common race,

²⁷⁶ Marius Turda, *Modernism and Eugenics* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

For the Polish example of leftist eugenics see: Magdalena Gawin, "Progressivism and Eugenic Thinking in Poland, 1905-1939" in *Blood and Homeland: Eugenics and Racial Nationalism in Central and Southeast Europe, 1900-1940*, M. Turda and P. J. Weindling eds. (Budapest: CEU Press, 2007), pp. 167-183.

²⁷⁷ Robert Körber, "Eine deutsche Antwort dem preußischen 5er-Ausschuß; zugleich ein Mahnwort und Deutschlands akademische Jugend," *Kulturpolitische Schriftenreihe*, Nr. 5 (1928): p. 7-8; Quoted and summarized from Stourzh, *Vier Fallstudien*, 58.

²⁷⁸ Paul Molisch, *Geschichte der deutschnationalen Bewegung in Österreich von ihren Anfängen bis zum Zerfall der Monarchie* (Jena: G. Fischer, 1926).

²⁷⁹ Ardelt, *Zwischen*, 110.

in the common destiny and a common culture. In this sense is the natural community of people [*die Wesensgemeinschaft des Volkes*] simultaneously a racial community, a community of destiny and a cultural community.”²⁸⁰

In this definition, the criterion of culture occupied only a secondary position after the one of race and was perceived as something that developed from “immutable mental abilities [*unveränderlichen geistigen Anlagen*],”²⁸¹ rooted in race. Official guidelines and statutes of the “a-political” nationalist associations also included articles and passages that referred to race.²⁸² References to “race” and “blood” were meant quite literally. An article in *Bundesturnerzeitung* in 1925²⁸³ for instance argued that “a Nation [*Volk*], that takes in a great deal of foreign blood, gradually loses its very own essence [*ureigenes Wesen*] and extinguishes.” What the author saw as “perishable mixing process [*verderbliche Mischungsvorgang*]” had, particularly in big cities, in his opinion gone too far and amounted to nothing else than “national treachery, [done] through racial decomposition, through plain mixing of blood [*Volksverrat, bedingt durch Rassenzersetzung, durch wüste Blutmischung*].”

Whereas the pages of non-partisan nationalist journals such as *Bundesturnerzeitung* and *Grossdeutschland* abounded with references to race,²⁸⁴ this was not to the same extent distinctive for the official GdVP newspaper *Deutsche Zeit*. In general, the party rhetoric was in this regard substantially toned down as compared to the nationalist associations, particularly so in the case of parliamentary club. The business of managing the state

²⁸⁰ Kurt Knoll in Molisch, *Geschichte*, 11.

²⁸¹ *Ibid*, 13.

²⁸² The guidelines of *Turnerbund* included “selbstlose Liebe zum angestammten Volkstume, zu dem Volke, dem man nach Sprache, Gesittung und Rasse angehört.” (P.P.K., “Unsere Leitsätze,” *Bundesturnerzeitung*, 15. 5. 1920; Quoted from Ardelt, *Zwischen*, 126.)

²⁸³ Friedrich Rudolf Zenker, “Deutscher Turnerbund und deutsche Turnerschaft,” *Bundesturnerzeitung*, 1. 7. 1925; Quoted from: Ardelt, *Zwischen*, 128.

²⁸⁴ See: Ardelt, *Zwischen*, 53-108.

together with the Christian Socials as the stronger party demanded a different kind of language to the one needed to attract the support within their own political camp. Which opens up the question to what extent references to race reflected a genuine persuasion and to what extent they only served as rhetorical means to appeal to “the worst prejudice of their public” and attract votes.²⁸⁵ The opinions on this matter are divided,²⁸⁶ yet the fact persists that racist discourse was present also within GdVP, marking the party’s orientation on all levels.

Most clearly, racist conceptions reflected in the already discussed Greater German anti-Semitism, particularly the *Arierparagraph*. This type of regulation was commonplace in the voluntary associations of the national camp. Yet, the fact that GdVP had *Arierparagraph* in its statute, acting according to it in the political decision-making and even specifying it further at a later point to include “*Judenstammlinge*,”²⁸⁷ demonstrates the seriousness of its racially anti-Semitic position. Very telling in this regard was also the party program.²⁸⁸ In the Greater German *Volksgemeinschaft* model the notions “Nation”, “Volk” and “Rasse” acted as identical, whereby belonging to the “race” was not self-determinable.²⁸⁹ The inclusion of racist terminology into the party program, likewise as

²⁸⁵ Bruce F. Pauley, *Eine Geschichte des österreichischen Antisemitismus Von der Ausgrenzung zur Auslöschung*. (Vienna: Kremayr und Scheriau, 1993), p. 230.

²⁸⁶ See for instance: Bernd Vogel, *Die Blauen der Zwischenkriegszeit: die Grossdeutsche Volkspartei in Vorarlberg* (Regensburg: Roderer, 2007), p. 29: Vogel disagrees with Pauley pointing to the fact that the Greater German federal leadership created a special internal “Professional Committee for the Jewish Question” in 1921 that operated at least until February 1924.

²⁸⁷ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 26, RI-2-34,35 Parteiprogramm 1930.

²⁸⁸ Richtlinien, 481.

²⁸⁹ Cf. Isabella Ackerl, “Thesen zu Demokratieverständnis, parlamentarischer Haltung und nationaler Frage bei der Grossdeutschen Volkspartei“ in *Das Parteienwesen Österreichs und Ungarns in der Zwischenkriegszeit*, Anna M. Drabek, Richard G. Plaschka, Helmut Rumpler eds. (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1990), p. 153.

A leaflet of the Greater German youth organization *Deutscher Jugendbund “Volksgemeinschaft”* defined the *Volksgemeinschaft* as follows:

“So wie Eltern und Kinder eine Gemeinschaft: die Familie, bilden alle Angehörigen eines Volkes die Volksgemeinschaft. Wir verstehen darunter eine Kultur-, Arbeits- und Wehrgemeinschaft aller nach Rasse

the whole section dealing with the “Jewish Question,” presented a very notable peculiarity, marking a crucial difference to the other two parties under scrutiny. Notions of “race” and “blood” can thus hardly be treated as merely elements of rhetoric in the Austrian case. In light of this fact, which also marks a clear distinction compared to the Czechoslovak National Democracy or Slovene national liberal heirs, we may conclude that the type of nationalism it fostered was not of a liberal kind.

At the same time, it needs to be emphasized again at this point that *Richtlinien deutscher Politik* were a result of a compromise between various parties and factions that had united to form GdVP. These included the Schönererians as the most vocal proponents of racial anti-Semitism, whose leader Ursin was unequivocal on the matter:

“It is strange: while all of us, who are sitting here, know and nobody can deny that there is a decidedly Jewish race [*eine ausgesprochen jüdische Rasse*] and a decidedly German-Aryan race, the *Staatsamt für Inneres* says that the question of race is not resolved. The term race is fixed: Race is ‘a developed totality [*eine gewordene Gesamtheit*] of peoples [*Völkerstämmen*] with the same or at least very similar physical, mental and spiritual features [*körperlichen, geistigen und seelischen Eigenschaften*].”²⁹⁰

Yet, avowal of Schönerer and his legacy was not distinctive merely for his direct followers but also for the National Democrats as the party “chief ideologues.” At their party convention in June 1920, Kandl, the future GdVP chairman praised him highly, evoking

und Sprache zum deutschen Volke Gehörigen, ohne Rücksicht auf Stand und Religion (...) Juden und Judenstämme stehen selbstverständlich außerhalb der deutschen Volksgemeinschaft.“ (AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 32, RI-12 7. Reichsparteitag vom 05.-06.06. 1926, “Deutsche Mädchen und Burschen!” (Leaflet).)

²⁹⁰ *Die Verhandlungen des zweiten Reichsparteitages der Grossdeutschen Volkspartei. Wien, Saal der Bäcker-genossenschaft, 27. und 28. Juni 1921* (Vienna: Verlag der Grossdeutschen Volkspartei, 1921), p. 63. Praising Schönerer, “welcher nicht der Kündler eines oberflächlichen Radau- und Hepp Hepp-Antisemitismus, sondern der Begründer eines zielbewußten Rassenantisemitismus geworden ist” and his legacy, Ursin also denounced Lueger’s anti-Semitism as fake: “Dann kamen andere Antisemiten, Lueger mit seinen Leuten (...) Und wir wissen, daß dieser zu Übereinkommen immer bereite Taufwasserantisemitismus und dieses unechten Antihebräertum mehr geschadet, als genützt hat.” (Ibid., p. 61)

the racist slogan “Through purity towards unity.”²⁹¹ However, as the extensive discussion that took place during their 1920 convention shows, clear disagreements existed among the National Democrats regarding the appropriateness of the concepts of “race,” and “Aryan race” in particular. Particularly, the position of the later Austrian vice-chancellor and Minister of Justice Felix Frank stood out, who denied the term “race” scientific validity and also spoke against grounding anti-Semitism on a racial basis.²⁹² On the other hand racist thinking was widely present also among the provincial Greater German notables, including even those from the “liberal” Vorarlberg,²⁹³ and even more among the party youth.

Individual references to “race” and even “biology” were present also in the official discourse of the Czechoslovak National Democrats, including their founding documents - for instance when Karel Stanislav Sokol (1867-1922) spoke of the “biological law on the preservation of the genus”²⁹⁴ Yet, these discursive elements did in no way reflect a system of belief in which the notions of “race” and “blood” would have occupied a prominent position, nor did it imply that the nationalist ideology of the Czech national liberal heirs was racially-based. The same applies even to examples of ČsND representatives who were

²⁹¹ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 30, RI-12 Parteitag der Nationaldemokraten vom 26.-29. 06. 1920, Protokoll 1920: “Emporgekommen sind die nationalen Gedanken – und ich verbeuge mich immer gerne dankbar davor – geboren wurden sind und stark in den Herzen der Besten durch Georg Schönerer. (Lebhafte stürmische Heilrufe, anhaltender Beifall und Händeklatschen). Dieser Mann hat ein Schlagwort geprägt. Das als Panier gilt für alle, die es ehrlich meinen, das Wort: Durch Reinheit zur Einheit. Und nur auf diesem Wege sind auch wir Nationaldemokraten zu haben.“

²⁹² Ibid.,

Interestingly, it was precisely Frank who later as vice-chancellor achieved that the category of race was included into the popular census.

²⁹³ Cf. Vogel, Die Blauen, 27-28 and Bernd Vogel, *Deutschnationalismus in Vorarlberg. Die "Grünen" der Zwischenkriegszeit* (Regensburg: Röderer, 2015), p. 42.

²⁹⁴ Vytrvat, pracovat a bude-li třeba, i bojovat! Řeč člena Národního shromáždění K. St. Sokola, pronesená 25. března 1919 na prvním valném sjezdu Československé národní demokracie (Prague: Tiskový odbor Československé národní demokracie, 1919), p. 10.

more prone to employ the notion of “race” in their speeches, such as Viková-Kunětická, who on the same occasion referred to the “national and racial character” of the Czechs with which the governmental policies “had often not been in unison.”²⁹⁵ Such discourse notably differed from the one distinctive for liberals and moderate nationalists in general, including those within the National Democratic Party. Yet, it did not carry biological underpinnings. An exception in this regard was some of the contributors to *Národní myšlenka* who indeed engaged in racist discourse, partly basing their claims in biology. Odon Pára for instance argued in 1927 that

“The first proceeds of natural scientific knowledge about the nation is the conviction about its bloodline constitution [*pokrevní ústavě*], about the mutually fairly close propinquity and kinship [*příbuznosti a sourodosti*] of all its members [...] Modern research shows that the view about the usefulness of crossbreeding with alien blood is mistaken and that the genus is strengthened through internal breeding.”²⁹⁶

Unambiguously defining nationality as a biologically determined fact, Pára moreover derived political implications from it:

“Modern life to a major extent endangers the successful reproduction of the nation, especially of a nation less numerous and industrious. A sacred commandment for a creative national policy is therefore to build up the national being [*budovati bytost národní*] on this natural, prolific [*plemenné*] and energy-rich basis. Our constitution is a product of philosophical principles from the end of the [*předminulého století*] century before last and not of the similar modern thinking about a natural constitution. An implication of the natural law principles should be exactly the limitation of individualistic free-mindedness in favor of natural bloodline-based social formations [*přirozených společenských útvarů pokrevních*]. In that way we would arrive to the natural constitution of the nation in the parental, family, clan and kinship linkage, of male and female equal succession, as well as the linguistic and educational bondage forming a natural whole with these bloodline facts.”²⁹⁷

The openly biologist reasoning of Pára represented a radical example even for *Národní myšlenka*, where ideas and discourse reflecting a clearly integral type of nationalism,

²⁹⁵ “I. sjezd Československé národní demokracie. Třetí den,” *Národní listy*, 26. 3. 1919.

²⁹⁶ Odon Pára, “Základové národní politiky,” *Národní myšlenka*, Yr. V (1927-28), Nr. 6, p. 171.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

including references to “race” and “blood” often appeared also in other writers’ texts. Important to note is that, partly in contrast to the Greater Germans, *Národní myšlenka* represented an influential circle within the party itself, forming its right wing, and not merely a fringe group of radicals. Yet, within a pluralistic society as ČsND was, it still remained only a wing, influencing the mainstream party line and discourse only to a limited extent. This pertained to the racist ideas in particular.

Also by the mid-1930s when racially-based nationalism experienced a renewed impetus in Central Europe, the Czechoslovak National Democracy, despite flirtation with various radically nationalist movements did not adopt racist positions. The 1934 program published by the circle of National Democrats around the journal *Modrá revue*²⁹⁸ provides a solid testimony to that as it represented a “centrist” line within the party and was at the time also enjoying support of some of the most prominent members of the party leadership. Entitled “For the State of National Power and Work” (*Pro stát národní síly a práce*) and designating nationalism as “the driving force of progress” the manifesto stated:

“We understand the nation as a community of national language, soil, tradition and culture.

Drawing on this understanding, our nationalism rejects the racial theory of nation and the consequences that the racial nationalism derives from it.”²⁹⁹

Of all three cases under scrutiny, racist discourse was the least distinctive for the Slovene one. Individual references to “blood” and “race” were present, yet sporadic. The political program of Yugoslav Democratic Party adopted in 1921 clearly stated in its first point that the “nation of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes” was considered to be one also “by blood”, which was stressed in the first place, preceding the mention of a “common language, territory,

²⁹⁸ “Pro stát národní síly a práce,” *Modrá revue*, yr. 3, nr. 6, 3. 4. 1934, pp. 81-88.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 81.

feelings and living interests”.³⁰⁰ In the rhetoric of progressive politicians the appeal to these notions was fairly rare and certainly did not reveal any kind of “biologicistic” understanding of them and even less point towards a paradigmatic shift. This applied to both 1920s and the early 1930s. Recalling the Czechoslovak president Masaryk, *Jutro* clearly denounced racially-based nationalism.³⁰¹

Although the leading progressive politicians did not embrace any kind of racist nationalism, it should be mentioned that they supported *ORJUNA* (Organization of Yugoslav Nationalists), which in Slovene lands during the 1920’s represented a ‘field army’ for the Independent Democratic Party.³⁰² *ORJUNA*’s nationalist ideology was clearly racist, as it can be seen from its program:

“Out of all values given by our past, only those have value for the future, which were given by our nation as a specific race. (...) Doctrine of nationalism involves above all the cult of race and therefore subordinates all life functions of individual and nation to the creation of a special organism which is to execute the ethical mission of the nation.”³⁰³

“Internal work is intended first of all for members themselves and exists in bringing up a perfect Yugoslav type in the cultural, physical, ethical and socio-economic sense. (...) Our positive work should: (...) educate the national youth by physical and psychical preparation into a combative and ideal fighter, uncover particular energies from it [*the national youth*] and develop them into a racial Yugoslav type, which should prove itself in service as the function of the national organism.”³⁰⁴

³⁰⁰ Iz programa vsedržavne JDS, 44.

³⁰¹ “Masaryk o rasistični blaznosti,” *Jutro*, 4. 10. 1933.

³⁰² Cf. Perovšek, *Liberalizem*, 255.

³⁰³ “Program organizacije jugoslovenskih nacionalista” in *Programi političnih strank, organizacij in združenj na Slovenskem v času Kraljevine SHS (1918-1929)*, Jurij Perovšek ed. (Ljubljana: Arhivsko društvo Slovenije, 1998), p. 49.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

5. Limited Government vs. the “New Order”

5. 1. Social and Economic Views and Models 1918-30

In the cases of all the three studied parties the “all-national” platform, already discussed in the third chapter, was closely connected to the concept of “national solidarity.” This concept referred sometimes to a political goal and at other points to the standpoint from which economic and social issues were to be approached or the “spirit” in which policies were to be made. As we shall also see, the phrase itself was in some cases being commonly evoked while in others, other phrases were used. Nevertheless, I decided to apply it to all the three cases under scrutiny as an umbrella tag denoting a social and economic orientation centered around the notion of nation as a living community of interest in which and through which individuals and social groups pursue their economic and other goals. Instead of class struggle and opposition of professional and other particular interests, it prescribed co-operation between groups, alleviation of social differences and coordination of diverging particular interests for the sake of the common, “national” one. Among other things, national solidarity requires care and support for the economically weaker members of the national community, who are in turn required to be loyal and to relinquish class-based or other particular interests. In this sense national solidarity is pointed against both the “atomist” society of individuals pursuing their selfish goals and the tendencies towards classless, but also nationless society or the idea of international proletariat.

In more explicit terms, “national solidarity” represented one of the central ideological reference points and political catchwords in the economic and social spheres for both Czechoslovak National Democrats and Slovene “progressives.” In their cases, I argue, we may also speak about “solidarist” economic orientations. The Austrian Greater Germans employed a different vocabulary, yet their *Volksgemeinschaft* model and the rhetoric attached to it in many ways closely resembled the concept of national solidarity. Based on critique of both liberal individualism and socialist collectivism, the aims and implications were in many ways related and it is possible to treat *Volksgemeinschaft* as a subtype of national solidarity (in the broader sense of an umbrella term). Yet, as we shall see there were also important differences that separated *Volksgemeinschaft* from the national solidarist positions of the Czech and Slovene national liberal heirs. For that reason I shall differentiate between “national solidarity” in the narrower sense, pertaining to the latter cases, which shared more commonality and where the actual term was being employed, and the specific *Volksgemeinschaft* model of the Greater German People’s Party, which is to be treated separately.

“National solidarity” was also closely connected to “national democracy,” a term which the Czech national liberal heirs, as well as the ideologically most influential group within GdVP had in their names. In the Slovene case, where “democracy” (without the adjective “national”) was the main identificatory label during 1920s, “national democracy” appeared only in the early 1930s as part of the JNS rhetoric – simultaneously with the widespread use of the term “national solidarity”. National democracy however also had a deeper entrenched use in Poland, where it represented one of the principal political currents from the late 19th century on. Originally used as an *Ersatz*-label by the liberals, it had been since

then usurped by the radical, anti-liberal ethno-nationalist movement of Roman Dmowski (*Endecja*).

As Lee Blackwood has argued, quite a few common points existed between the Polish and the Czech National Democracy,¹ despite the clear differences between the two in terms of illiberality.² I would extend this argument to the Slovene and Austrian cases as well, and point out that the common point, clearly connecting both Polish and Czech National Democrats, as well as GdVP and Slovene progressives, was the endeavor to “subordinate social divisions to the principle of national solidarity.”³ As such national democracy represented an attempt to “synthesize the expansion of national consciousness and the concurrent growth of class consciousness” and to bridge the “potential tension” between the two.⁴ In the words of Karel Kramář, it stood as an opposite to the “pseudohumanist pseudodemocracy” being connected to “pure idealism, [...]social justice in the spirit of national solidarity, [...] non-aggression towards the others [...] as long as they do not threaten our interests.”⁵

In the afore lying Chapter I intend to provide a general overview of the social and economic orientations to which the parties under scrutiny adhered. Thereby I will focus on the already mentioned central concepts – “national solidarity” and *Volksgemeinschaft*. Before analyzing them closer, however, a closer look should be taken at the economic programs

¹ See: William Lee Blackwood, “Czech and Polish National Democracy at the Dawn of Independent Statehood, 1918-1919,” *East European Politics and Societies*, vol. 4, no. 3 (1990): pp. 469-488.

² Most importantly, in the Czech case it was “subsumed by a party which proved unwilling to depart radically from the course established by its liberal antecedents.” (Ibid., 488.)

³ Ibid., 469.

⁴ Ibid., 469-470.

⁵ Karel Kramář, “Úvahy, myšlenky a hesla” in *Odkaz a pravda Dr. Karla Kramáře*, V Sís ed. (Prague: Národní nakladatelství Antonín Pokorný, 1939), pp. 18, 26-36, 103.

that the Czech, Austrian and Slovene national heirs developed immediately at the end of the WWI, as well as the theories that had stood behind them.

5. 1. 1. The 1918-20 Programmatic Texts – National Socializations

- “The main source of evil does not lie in private ownership but above all in its unjust distribution.”

Program of the Czechoslovak National Democracy (1919), p. 38.

The post-war instability and the radical impacts of the Great War on the economy and economic thinking clearly reflected in the political programs of the three parties under scrutiny, created during 1918-20. All of them included demands that before the war would have seemed pretty radical and quite unlikely for parties of moderate orientations and liberal origins. The immediate post-war years, on the one hand marked by social turmoil and on the other “full of apocalyptic expectations and millenarian hopes, and radical efforts at social reconstruction”⁶ signified a considerable “move to the left” of the entire political spectrum. Most importantly, the end of the war marked the final victory of mass politics and democratic principle as the norm of political life. Concept of democracy had furthermore not only become the central political catchword but was also extended into the economic sphere. At the same time, particularly in the newly-founded “nation states,” the principle of popular sovereignty was inextricably associated to the principle of national self-determination.

The fact that the 1918 “revolutions” in Central Europe were primarily “national” is particularly relevant for understanding the 1918-20 economic programs of the national

⁶ Guenther Roth, “The Near-Death of Liberal Capitalism: Perceptions from the Weber to the Polanyi Brothers,” *Politics and Society*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (June 2003): pp. 273-274.

liberal heirs. Looking at their demands, two main tendencies in economic and social field may be discerned in all the three cases. Appearing as largely interrelated, we can label them as the “nationalizing” and the “socializing” one. Far reaching “social” demands, opening up a fundamentally broader field of governmental activity in economic affairs, were namely combined with agendas of a thorough “nationalization” of economy. As discussed in the previous chapter already, members of the “state nation” were to be given preferential treatment in the process of economic reform with economic “democratization” largely acting as a synonym to economic “nationalization.” It was foremostly the socio-economic sphere where “national liberalism” had openly declared and executed its full transformation into “national democracy.”

The program of the Yugoslav Democratic Party, written already during the summer of 1918 demanded among other things the nationalization of vital infrastructure and large industry.⁷ The “entire economy” should “subordinate to the interest of the whole (society).”⁸ Its economic part was largely based on the ideas of the economist Milko Brezigar contained in his *Outline of Slovenian National Economy*⁹ that was published in the same year. Brezigar based his treatise on the principle of national self-determination. Equality between nations in his view presupposed economic independence of each nation. A “radical nationalization of large industry and commerce”¹⁰ was thus required for Slovenes, who had hitherto been only “national in the cultural and ethical [...] sense of the word,” to become an “economic nation.”¹¹

⁷ “Program Jugoslovanske demokratske stranke” (Ljubljana: 1918) in *Programi političnih strank, organizacij in združenj na Slovenskem v času Kraljevine SHS (1918-1929)*, Jurij Perovšek ed. (Ljubljana: Arhivsko društvo Slovenije, 1998), p., 26.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Milko Brezigar, *Osnutek slovenskega narodnega gospodarstva* (Celje: Omladina, 1918).

¹⁰ Ibid., 20

¹¹ Ibid., 14.

The Slovene progressive leader Tavčar commented on the JDS program, pointing out that nationalization was meant purely in the sense of national emancipation :

“The main thing is to understand what JDS understands under nationalization [*nacijonaliziranjem*] of property? Do we intend to eliminate private ownership and nationalize [*podržaviti*] the property? Do we wish to adhere to Proudhon or maybe Lenin and Trotsky? Do we wish to imitate the Prussian confiscations of Polish land, or to restore the old times, when Sulla, Mark Antonius and their later imitators seized the land of their political opponents? No, our party does not want all this. It however says that we should purposefully and consistently strive for the most important economic resources in our country to become our national property, the property of our man, that our nation shall not be only subject of exploitation for the others. ‘Nationalization of property’ is therefore in this sense a fully legitimate aim of our economic aspirations, it is a prerequisite for our economic independence, it is the theorem, ‘On own land, own lord’ transferred into the economic field.”¹²

In the case of the economic and social program of the Czechoslovak National Democrats, written by the economist Karel Engliš, the wording was more neutral and less overtly nationalist. It was centered around the notion of “economic democracy” (*hospodářská demokracie*),¹³ which extended the meaning of democracy from “formal equality of people before the law and the equality of political rights” to “the right of each man to life and cultural and material development,” which “society” had the duty to secure and realize.¹⁴ Czechoslovak National Democracy thus stood for “socialization of large property” such as forests, natural springs, railways and iron works, “which may be well managed by the society.”¹⁵ Workers were to participate in sharing the profits.¹⁶ An explicit demand for “nationalization” pertained to the land, which was to “belong to those who till it.”¹⁷ Large agricultural estates, many of them owned by non-Czech magnates, were to be divided for

¹² Ivan Tavčar, “Nekoliko pripomb h gospodarskemu programu JDS,” *Slovenski narod*, 8. 7. 1918.

¹³ *Program československé národní demokracie, schválený valným sjezdem strany dne 25. března 1919* (Prague: Tiskový odbor československé národní demokracie, 1919), p. 32.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid., 39.

¹⁶ Ibid., 44.

¹⁷ Ibid., 40.

the sake of enhancing productivity, social empowerment of the middle classes and the “interest of national politics.”¹⁸

In contrast to the JDS and ČsND programs the Greater German *Richtlinien* did not include explicit demands for expropriation of large industry, railways and similar. This may again at least to some extent be explained with basically nationalist motives and the fact that most of the industry and land had already been in “German” hands. Especially so since in some other regards the language of the Greater German program was far most “anti-capitalist” of among the three. In the field of industrial policy the central aim was to fight against “*Überfremdung*” through foreign capital and secure a firm connection to the German industrial capital, for which only *Anschluss* posed as “a satisfactory solution.”¹⁹ As regards the financial capital, which was to a notable extent in “Jewish” hands, the Greater German program on the other hand advocated a markedly different position. There, “the public authority” had “to intervene” in order to prevent the harmful management of the national savings by the banks and insurance companies.²⁰ The author of the economic part of the GdVP program Otto Conrad stressed the necessity of state-guided policy of capital investments.²¹ The focus on the financial capital and its control over the most influential

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ *Richtlinien deutscher Politik* (Salzburg: 1920) in Klaus Berchtold (ed.), *Österreichische Parteiprogramme 1868-1966* (Vienna: 1967), p. 464.

²⁰ Ibid., 462.

²¹ Conrad expressed the distinction between industrial and financial capital and the need for at least partial state control over the latter as follows: “*Die Sache steht meiner Ansicht nach so: Es ist streng zu unterscheiden zwischen demjenigen, der selbst neues Kapital bildet, durch Ersparung, aus Einkommen, Erwerb, Geschäftsgewinn, und demjenigen, der fremde Kapitalien sammelt und verwertet, also solche Kapitalien, auf deren Eigenverwertung der Schöpfer des Kapitals verzichtet hat. [...] Die Volkswirtschaft hat das höchste Interesse an einer richtigen Verwendung ihrer Ersparnisse. [...] Ist dem aber so, dann muß auch der Staat als Wahrer des volkswirtschaftlichen Interesses berechtigt sein, dafür vorzusorgen, daß wenigstens ein Teil des neu gebildeten Kapitals für jene wichtigen Anlagezwecke gesichert werde.*” (Otto Conrad, *Volkswirtschaftspolitik oder Erwerbspolitik? - Zwei Vorträge von Dr. Otto Conrad* (Vienna: Verlag des Deutschen Klubs, 1919), p. 35.

newspapers in the end boiled down to an anti-Semitic critique of the “individualist Jewish mindset,” from which the Greater German anti-capitalist critique was inseparable.

It must be pointed out, however, that programmatically all the three parties stood firmly on the principle of private property and strongly stressed its importance and that of free individual economic initiative for the general progress. Tavčar for instance felt the need to assure the supporters that the party had not been turning towards socialism and accentuate that it by no means demanded “abolition of private property.” Admitting that the program was “pretty radical (though by no means ‘bolshevik’)” in words, he stated that it was “in fact quite meek.” He stressed that its creators had, despite “all the determination [...] not lost the firm grounds of reality under the feet and [...] concluded something that would have been [...] perhaps merely an echo of the momentary mood, springing from the conditions of the time.”²²

And even the chief economic thinker behind the Greater German program Otto Conrad, all his anti-capitalist rhetoric notwithstanding, in his argumentation never left the confines of “private-capitalist order.”²³ All the three programs located the problem in the distribution or, particularly in the Greater German case, sources of ownership and wealth, proposing various kinds of “correctives” to the “harmful excrescences” or “anomalies” of the market economy. While maintaining that “self-responsibility should remain the moral organizatory principle of society” and that free initiative should continue to foster productivity, the ČsND program emphasized that “the main source of evil” was “not in private ownership but above all in its unjust distribution.”²⁴

²² Ivan Tavčar, “Nekoliko pripomb h gospodarskemu programu JDS,” *Slovenski narod*, 8. 7. 1918.

²³ Conrad, *Volkswirtschaft*, 35.

²⁴ Program ČsND, 37-38.

Instead of demanding nationalizations, as their Czech and Slovene counterparts, the Greater Germans laid stress on the governmental activity in the field of distribution of goods, proposing taxation as the main means for rectifying the “injustice inherent to our economic order.” The state was assigned the role of the “defender of a just distribution of income,” which was to be fulfilled through a systematic income policy and principally via “just” taxation²⁵ consisting of a “close organic connection between income tax, the property and capital gains tax and inheritance tax.”²⁶

“Taxation equals in its nature and effect a socialization of income and *Erwerb*. Through taxation that leaves the individual what he needs, but which also turns over to the community, what is necessary for the promotion of the common good, the idea of *Volksgemeinschaft* is much better secured and generally implemented than it would be through socialization of individual branches of industry. [...] In this way a rapprochement between economic individualism and socialism is possible. Socialization through taxation namely enforces the interests of the whole without eliminating the driving forces of the personal side of covering the needs [*die Triebfedern der persönlichen Seite der Bedarfsdeckung*], the self-responsibility, the longing for economic independence and economic advancement.”²⁷

The ČsND program also foresaw a system of taxation that would „correct the discrepancies and shifts in property, especially those that emerged during the war.”²⁸ While the 1918 JDS program made no references to taxes, the 1920 guidelines of the all-state Democratic Party demanded progressive taxation²⁹ in favor of which the party regularly spoke. Yet, in none of these two cases taxation played such a central role as in the Greater German program. Another notable specificity regarding taxation was that particularly in the Austrian, as well as in the Slovene case,³⁰ its declared function was to bring about “just” results.

²⁵ See: Richtlinien, 442-443, 470.

²⁶ Ibid., 476-477.

²⁷ Ibid., 477.

²⁸ Program ČsND, 39.

²⁹ “Načrt programa Demokratske stranke,” *Nova Doba*, 28. 2. 1920.

³⁰ Democratic Party derived its demand for progressive scale “foremost out of moral grounds and the reason of justice, more than out of financial reasons.” (Ibid.)

A peculiar difference between the three programs may be spotted in the field of social policy and legislation - especially when taking into account the simultaneous emphasis that the Greater Germans laid on state-led (re-)distribution via taxation. While both the Czech and the Slovene programs included fairly extensive guidelines in this regard, which authorized the state to pursue an active social policy,³¹ the Greater German demands were considerably more modest. Most importantly, the *Richtlinien* laid main emphasis on voluntary solidarity, self-help and private provision of welfare.³² “Welfare policy” and “social policy” were sharply separated, the former being primarily a matter of private initiative and self-help, the latter of governmental coercion.³³ The section on social policy was pretty modest compared to the one on welfare policy and dealt exclusively with workers, their position towards employers and the means to regulate their mutual relationship in a way that would “correspond to the German essence” and divert the workers from the “false teaching [*Irrlehre*] of socialism.”³⁴

In all the three programs and the underlying economic treatises emphasis was given to the problem of managing the distribution (and not merely to the production) of goods. The experience and continuing echoes of the war economy and rationing were clearly present. Only in the Greater German case however the government was assigned an active and decisive role in guiding the distribution which had to be made both more efficient and more “just.” The ČsND program defined the “social problem of economy [*sociální problém hospodářský*]” as “the problem of dividing, in a just manner, the burdens and fruits of

³¹ Program JDS, 27; Program ČsND, 44.

³² *Richtlinien*, 457.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Richtlinien*, 474-475.

society's labor [*práce společnosti*] without harm to the productivity and cultural progress.”³⁵ While there the guideline of the economic policy was harmonizing or finding a proper measure between the “principle of productivity” (maximizing production) and “social principle” (just distribution),³⁶ the GdVP *Richtlinien* on the other hand postulated “covering needs [*Bedarfsdeckung*]” as the fundamental purpose of national economy.³⁷

Otto Conrad, the author of the Greater German economic program, namely saw the main flaws of the pre-war liberal economic order in the insufficient and “primitive” organization of distribution of goods and the lack of government-guided investment policy. While in the field of production the “private capitalist order” was capable of producing the wanted results, the problem arose in the case of “unproductive” commerce, where huge amounts of capital and energy were being “wasted” in competing for customers. Taking inspiration from the war economy, he pleaded against the return to the pre-war unbound economy and particularly free trade (international as well as internal). Labelling the pre-war economic policy as “politics of gain [*Erwerbspolitik*],” which had primarily served the capitalist interests (and particularly the Jews), he instead proposed “consumers’ politics [*Konsumentenpolitik*]” as the proper national economic policy. This brings some interesting resemblance to the 1928 British Liberals’ Yellow Book³⁸ in which “the notion of man as producer was replaced by that of consumer.”³⁹ In contrast to the latter, Conrad’s “consumers’ politics,” its basic demand being “I want to purchase cheap and well,” (as

³⁵ Program ČsND, 33.

³⁶ Ibid., 32.

³⁷ Richtlinien, 460.

³⁸ *Britain’s Industrial Future* (London: Ernest Benn, 1928).

According to Michael Freeden, the Yellow Book incorporated “state interventionism decisively” into the ideology of British liberals “as no document had ever done before.” - Michael Freeden, *Liberalism Divided: A Study in British Political Thought 1914-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 118.

³⁹ Freeden, *Liberalism Divided*, 113.

opposed to “I want to earn” as the basic demand of the “politics of gain”),⁴⁰ however also implied openness towards the abolition of competition in selling goods and a “certain socialization of commerce.”⁴¹

Conrad’s animosity towards trade found no match in the Czech and the Slovene cases. While the chief creator of the Slovene progressives’ economic guidelines Milko Brezigar advocated price regulation for the basic life essentials and high taxation of luxuries,⁴² he held a generally very positive stance towards commerce, demanding that market mechanisms should be introduced into areas, where they had not yet been sufficiently present (for instance agriculture). On the same grounds he strongly opposed consumers’ associations, which Conrad treated as a model for distributing goods.

Moreover, as we have already seen in the case of taxation the Greater German program to a notable extent based its arguments and demands on moral grounds pointing at questions of justice. Despite being also present in the other two cases, this aspect was less prominent there, with argumentation for both the market order, as well as its regulation and social “correctives” primarily resting on the grounds of efficiency and practicality. This difference was however most prominent in the treatment of capital gains and market order in general. Conrad’s unfavorable opinion of trade was namely only one aspect of the generally profoundly anti-capitalist mindset that pervaded the *Volksgemeinschaft* ideal, as it was delineated in the GdVP program, marking a notable difference to the other two cases.

While the JDS program expressed merely the intent “to change the social structure of society by transferring political power into the hands of broad masses via full

⁴⁰ Conrad, *Volkswirtschaft*, 42.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁴² Brezigar, *Osnutek*, 24-25.

democratization of administration and judiciary system,”⁴³ the social and economic guidelines contained in the GdVP program, in terms of its anti-capitalist overtones, in certain ways resembled the program of the pre-war German Workers’ Party (predecessor of the National Socialists).⁴⁴ This above all reflected in the treatment of interest, deemed as “undeserved and therefore unfair, but necessary”⁴⁵ and the passages referring to and morally condemning “unearned income [*arbeitsloses Einkommen*]” and “effortless profits [*müheleose Gewinne*]” that did not conform to “the principle of service and return [*Prinzip von Leistung und Gegenleistung*].”⁴⁶ This was closely connected to the criticism raised against the large financial banks and their “harmful” management of the national savings, as well as associated anti-Semitic motives, based on pseudo-psychological grounds. At the same time it needs to be pointed out that the sharp anti-capitalist rhetoric in the Greater German program was present largely due to the National Democrats’ insistence, being a matter of controversy already as the program was being put together. Particularly the fact that the section “*Aufgaben der Einkommenspolitik*” had to undergo a thorough examination three times before being approved, as well as the adjoining debate,⁴⁷ testify to this.

The ČsND program also contained similar morally-based discourse, stating that the party wished for the republic to be “social and socially just”⁴⁸ and very harshly referring to “unearned income:”

⁴³ Program JDS, 26.

⁴⁴ See: Francis L. Carsten, “Die Vorläufer des Nationalsozialismus” in *Das geistige Leben Wiens in der Zwischenkriegszeit*, Norbert Leser ed. (Vienna: 1981), p. 197.

⁴⁵ “*Er ist unverdient und daher ungerecht, aber notwendig*” (Richtlinien, 471.)

Also see the original Conrad’s formulation in Otto Conrad, “Die Stellung der Nationaldemokratie zum Klassenkampf,” *Nationaldemokratische Flugschriften* Nr. 8 (1919), p. 3 (in AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 28, RI-1): “*Der Zins ist ungerecht und daher ein Übel. Er ist aber ein notwendiges Übel, welches zwar gemildert, nicht aber gänzlich beseitigt werden kann.*”

⁴⁶ Richtlinien, 442-443.

⁴⁷ See: AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 33, Protokoll 1920.

⁴⁸ Program ČsND, 47.

„Exclusion of unearned income naturally implies duty to work. A social parasite thus also counts as an enemy of the homeland.”⁴⁹

Yet, the crucial difference was that the above passage containing similar rhetoric to the *Richtlinien* came only at the very end of the programme, whereas in the Greater German case the rethoric about justness and desert pervaded the entire text. Based on Engliš's writings on political economy it may furthermore be argued that in comparison to Otto Conrad, who condemned trade and differentiated between “productive” and “unproductive labor,” it was to a larger extent solely a matter of rhetoric. Equally as in the case of social legislation and progressive taxation, Engliš justified the market order primarily in practical (utilitarian) and not in moral terms.⁵⁰

The least “anti-capitalist” in style and language were the Yugoslav Democratic Party program and Brezigar’s Outline. The otherwise quite radical nationalizing demands were grounded in purely and straightforwardly nationalist terms and Brezigar strictly spoke about “German-Jewish” capitalists and capital⁵¹ when pointing at the “foe.” While observing that “all signs” indicated “that the current individualistic economic system” was going to have to make place “in numerous points to the socialization of the national economy,”⁵² his economic program was clearly the most commercially oriented out of the three in its prescriptions and most firmly pointing out the benefits of private enterprise. Moreover, while the ČsND program criticized individualism and the GdVP one came close to condemning it, Brezigar labelled Slovenes to be “a nation of gifted individualists.”⁵³ In

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Antonie Doležalová, *Rašín, Engliš a ti druzí. Československé státní rozpočty v letech 1918-1938* (Prague: Nakladatelství Oeconomica, 2007), pp. 53-55.

⁵¹ Cf. Brezigar, *Osnutek*, 14, 21, 148.

⁵² Ibid., 24.

⁵³ Ibid, 14.

the ČsND program individualism was defined as “based on egoism,”⁵⁴ which was quite similar to the Greater German rejection of individualism, understood as “Everybody should ruthlessly pursue their personal advantage.”⁵⁵

In both cases “individualism” was also equated to “liberalism,” on whose critique both programs largely rested. The Greater German *Volksgemeinschaft* was based on a resolute critique of both liberalism, understood as individualism, and Social Democracy, which claimed to offer “a cure” but was in practice nothing but “a child of individualism”.⁵⁶ Equally, the ČsND program and Engliš’s “economic democracy” revolved around explicit critique of liberalism and socialism, to which a special section within the program was devoted.⁵⁷ Brezigar, while speaking favorably of individualism, also rejected “economic liberalism,” which had in his view benefitted the strong - “the German-Jewish bourgeoisie” – while “economically killing” the Slovenes.⁵⁸ In the Slovene progressive press, socialism was being equally dismissed as an ideology that “aimed at taking over the legacy of liberalism,” being “no more than merely a correction of its flaws,” but itself “delivering no solution.”⁵⁹

5. 1. 2. Czechoslovak National Democracy and Slovene Progressives - “National Solidarity”

Critique and rejection of both economic liberalism and socialism stood in the basis of the social and economic orientations of Czechoslovak National Democrats and Slovene

⁵⁴ See: Program ČsND, “III. Liberalism (individualism),” 33.

⁵⁵ Richtlinien, 439.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 440.

⁵⁷ See: Program ČsND, Point “B. Critique of liberalism and socialism,” pp. 33-37.

⁵⁸ Brezigar, Osnutek, 13.

⁵⁹ *Jutro*, 1. 5. 1921.

progressives. Both parties advocated a certain type of “middle way” between the two, whereby they remained loyal to the principle of private property and basic elements of the market economy. The “balance” between the mentioned two critiques was slightly different and also changed through the decade. Soon, a shift away from the radical socializing demands written in party programs began to occur which led to the adoption of more moderate positions. In both cases this was connected to the calming of the post-war attitude of discontent, to the stabilization of new states and economies, as well as to the changing power relations within the parties under scrutiny.

The general pattern that may be observed and will also be discussed in this subchapter was a partial turn towards more economically liberal positions and a simultaneous transfer of focus of critique to socialism. As we shall see, however, the manner, dynamic and extent of this shift differed considerably between the Czech and Slovene cases. In both of them nationalism continued to provide the main justificatory grounds. But especially in the Czech case a further shift in rhetoric was evident whereby the socialization demands were being pushed into the background with “social” considerations being increasingly justified through “national” ones. The principal expression of this was the concept that by 1921 clearly stepped into the foreground: “national solidarity.” In both cases, albeit at different points and to various extents, the latter became the central catchword in the economic and social policy.

Stemming partly already from the pre-war “competition” between nationalists of various Habsburg nationalities and further associated with the experience of Great War and the “solidarity” between the members of the nation during that time, “national solidarity” was on the one hand a nationalist concept. On the other hand, as far as it combined basic

centeredness on the nation and the economic progress of the national whole with an “internally” liberal economic arrangements, it may be treated as a “national liberal” one as well.

At the same time “national solidarity” also represented a concept of economic orientation that reflected a model of a mixed economy. From this perspective the echoes of the French solidarist legacy may not be overlooked. Influenced by the development of the new science of sociology and forming an ideological movement under the name “solidarism,”⁶⁰ the French late 19th and turn of the century liberal reformers believed that the state intervention was becoming more essential for securing individual liberty and promoting justice in the increasingly complex modern societies.⁶¹ While in the Greater German case direct French influences are hardly traceable, both Slovene and Czech national liberal heirs in many ways treated the French Third Republic as a model. The appeal to the “ideals of the French Revolution” also played a role. The creators and proponents of solidarism - Fouillée, Marion, Durkheim, Bouglé, Duguit and particularly the statesman Léon Bourgeois – had namely “redefined republican fraternity as ‘solidarity,’ which they thought was a more modern and sociologically based notion.”⁶² While Bourgeois himself wrote that “the doctrine of solidarity” appeared “in the history of ideas, as the development of the philosophy of the eighteenth century and as the culmination of the social and political theory of the French Revolution,”⁶³ the Slovene daily *Jutro* 25 years later expressed commitment to the same ideals. In the 1st of May editorial, criticizing the idea of class

⁶⁰ Laurent Dobuzinskis, “Defenders of Liberal Individualism, Republican Virtues and Solidarity. The Forgotten Intellectual Founding Fathers of the French Third Republic,” *European Journal of Political Theory*, vol. 7 no. 3 (2008), p. 299.

⁶¹ K. Steven Vincent, “The Republican Moment(s) in Modern France,” *European Journal of Political Theory*, vol. 6, no. 2 (2007), p. 241.

⁶² Dobuzinskis, *Defenders*, 298-299.

⁶³ Léon Bourgeois, *Solidarité*, (Paris: A. Colin, 1896), p. 156.

struggle and instead proposing “spirit of cooperation, joy in work, and fair mutual consideration and social justice,” it aligned the latter to “the old motto of liberty, equality and fraternity” and praised the French Revolution for opening “the path of free-mindedness that brought the gigantic progress of humanity during the 19th century.”⁶⁴

An almost too perfect example of national solidaristic conception of the social order in which each section – i. e. each class and each professional group – had its specific function that it needed to fulfill for the sake of the national whole was given by Tavčar in his already discussed “machine metaphor.” In his comment to the JDS program, pointing out the all-national orientation of the party, which transcended classes, and that private property and enterprise needed to serve the national needs, he stated that his party aimed at attaining

“harmony in the name of totality, so that the life of a nation will be comparable to a large machine that works for the totality, in which every wheel, as well as every sheave is assigned with a special task, so that the machine stops, if you take out a wheel or even the smallest sheave. This harmony in political and economic life must be the first ideal but also the first goal of our Yugoslav Democratic Party.”⁶⁵

Now, let us take a look at the Resolution on Inner Politics, adopted at the 1929 general congress of the Czechoslovak National Democracy:

“Czechoslovak National Democracy proclaims the duty to subordinate the class and estate statism [*stavovství*] to the higher viewpoint of the national and state interest, it stands on the principle of solidarity of the entire national community which controls, mitigates, harmonizes the class and estate interests and in which every member, be it worker or capitalist, entrepreneur or employee, manual laborer, as well as intellectual, is a living individual component of the great organism that is the nation.”⁶⁶

⁶⁴ *Jutro*, 1. 5. 1921.

⁶⁵ Ivan Tavčar, “Nekoliko pripomb h gospodarskemu programu JDS,” *Slovenski narod*, 8. 7. 1918.

⁶⁶ CZ-ANM NAD 299 Ladislav Rašín, K. 9, 318, General congress 1929: Resolution on Inner Politics.

Similarities between the two texts cannot be missed. In both of them all the “basic ingredients” of national solidarity are included: negation of the class struggle and rejection of interest politics in general. Various particular interests are supposed to reconcile and subordinate themselves to the general interest. In the name of the latter, cooperation instead of competition between classes and professional groups should take place. The “general interest” in question was however that of the “nation”. Basic tenets of the market economy such as private property, private enterprise and market mechanism, while not being abandoned and substituted by state control, were declared to be put into the service of the nation, which served as the basis for framing and justifying the economic and social considerations. In the discourse of national solidarity the extent of permissible state intervention was not clearly defined. Essentially it however represented a demand for a mixed economy in which private initiative was to be channeled to serve the common good. The class differences were to be transcended in the name of the national community. Not in the sense of longing for a “classless society” but rather emphasizing the special function and value of each class or “estate” and striving for economic and cultural advancement of all and extending welfare to the weakest groups (modern labor legislation and social policy).

Striving for “harmony” between “classes” and “estates” as the great objective of the “national” economic politics was recurrently evoked in the speeches, manifestos and programmatic statements of both the Slovene and the Czech national liberal heirs. Despite not yet employing the term “national solidarity,” the 1918 JDS program argued in favor of equable increase in economic standard for all the strata of population and declared itself as standing for economically weaker citizens. At the same time it rejected “any kind of

politics, which would aim at one class to live at other classes' expense"⁶⁷ and particularly any "circumvention" of "estates" against one another.⁶⁸ In a similar vein František Sís spoke of the political mission of his party: "we stand against any kind of fragmentation into estates and classes, where one estate or one class would act combatively against another [...] We wish to solve the contested questions via the path of agreement and never via path of struggle of one class against the other."⁶⁹

The demand for solidarity and cooperation between the classes was closely connected to the progressives' understanding of democracy, which in their view could not be "pure", in case the "economically weaker strata" had "exclusive predominance".⁷⁰ In February of 1923 *Jutro* described the Democratic Party as "the leading champion for national harmony." It concluded that "only through mutual agreement of all the strata and with protection of the economically weaker from exploitation by the big capital is it possible that the national thought ceases to represent a simple phrase and that the Yugoslav nation becomes internally and externally a sturdy bearer of culture and progress."⁷¹ This was again connected to the self-positioning as the "party of the middle" with simultaneous critique of both Marxism and liberalism. *Jutro* thus spoke about "Manchester liberalism with obstinate individuals" on the one hand and "materialist socialism" with masses "not yet aware of their duties" on the other. Between them however, "modern democracy" had been

⁶⁷ Interestingly, Karel Kramář employed the exactly same formulation: "none of the classes should live at another's expense." ("Mladá generace manifestuje pro národní solidaritu, kulturní rozkvět národa a ideály Slovanstva," *Národní listy*, 10. 10. 1921.

⁶⁸ Program JDS, 23.

⁶⁹ *Politické posláni Československé národní demokracie. Řeč člena Národního shromáždění a chefredaktora »Národních Listů« Fr. Sise. Pronesena na ustavujícím sjezdu Československé národní demokracie dne 24. března 1919* (Prague: Tiskový odbor Československé národní demokracie, 1919), p. 6-7.

⁷⁰ Program JDS, 26.

⁷¹ *Jutro*, 18. 2. 1923..

“crystalizing” and “confidently stepping on the broad path of national harmony.”⁷² In a similar vein, Adolf Stránsky during the ČsND founding congress spoke that his party knew “no class interests [...] no difference between those who work and those who give work [...] between intellectual and physical work [...] between the superior and subordinate [...] between people in terms of their appraisal and evaluation, but we are all equal people, because we are democrats.”⁷³

While solving the social and economic questions on the basis of “social alignment of estate interests” was the guideline for both central political forces of the Slovene progressive camp – JDS and after 1924 SDS (with the same positions being advocated by the liberal “elders” as well)⁷⁴ - “national solidarity” also acted as one of the central focal points around which the standpoints of ČsND revolved. It represented the central and regularly employed catchword in the National Democratic official discourse throughout the period under scrutiny. The 1919 political program, written by Sís, closely linked it to the principles of democracy – “Democracy is civic and social solidarity.”⁷⁵ Along with related concepts such as “social harmony,” and “economic democracy” (*hospodářská demokracie*)⁷⁶ it acted as an antipode to the class struggle, expressing the firm opposition of the party to any kind of class- or “estate-“based politics. Claiming to represent and guard the interests of the national whole, the National Democrats proposed class solidarity and reconciliation of

⁷² *Jutro*, 22. 11. 1922.

⁷³ *Československá národní demokracie dítětem české svobody. Řeč ministra obchodu Dr. Ad. Stránského, na prvním valném sjezdu Československé národní demokracie, Pronesena dne 25. března 1919.* (Prague: Tiskový odbor Československé národní demokracie, 1919), pp. 6-7.

⁷⁴ Jurij Perovšek, *O demokraciji in jugoslovanstvu, Slovenski liberalizem v Kraljevini SHS/Jugoslaviji* (Ljubljana: INZ, 2013), p., 49.

⁷⁵ Program ČsND, 5-6. Interestingly, at that point the adjective “national” had not yet begun to stand as inseparable from solidarity with the preceding sentence in the program stating that “In democracy the nation and the people” were “two expressions for the same notion.”

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 32.

various interests in the “spirit of social justice.”⁷⁷ As Sokol emphasized at the founding congress, the mission of their party consisted of elevating “each Czech (...) to a higher level” and showing him that “above the personal, class interest (...) always stands and must stand the highest interest of the nation.”⁷⁸

Despite the declared all-national orientation and rejection of class-based politics, which were present from the outset, the very term “national solidarity” had initially not been present in either the Czech or the Slovene case. The 1919 ČsND program spoke about “social solidarity” but the central concept was “economic democracy.” In case of JDS, all the main “ingredients” were there, but the term itself was missing, appearing only in the 1920 Democratic Party program. It began to appear after 1920 and swiftly established itself in the ČsND discourse, whereas in the Slovene case it was employed less regularly and became the central catchword only during the JNS period.

What is interesting is that the discursive change came along with a certain general political shift, which again, being present in both cases, was considerably more prominent in the Czech one. There it clearly coincided with struggles and power shifts between groups within the party. With the post-war stabilization commencing, the radical socializing demands put forward by Engliš in his 1918 program began to be first put aside and afterwards also explicitly repudiated by the party leadership, which provoked internal discord and finally contributed to the 1925 split. Simultaneously, “economic democracy,” although not disappearing from the party vocabulary even after 1925, began to withdraw

⁷⁷ Ibid., 18.

⁷⁸ *Výtrvat, pracovat a bude-li třeba, i bojovat! Řeč člena Národního shromáždění K. St. Sokola, pronesená 25. března 1919 na prvním valném sjezdu Československé národní demokracie.* (Prague: Tiskový odbor Československé národní demokracie, 1919), p. 11.

as the central concept, making place for “national solidarity.” By the 1922 General Congress, the discussed shift was already entirely clear: The rhetoric of was pointed against socialism, collectivism against economic “experimentation” and “bound economy” and expressed “the deserved respect to the renewed liberalism that teaches not how to best tie everybody up but how to best enjoy freedom.”⁷⁹ Kramář labelled it as “a turn towards statesmanship,” admitting that, when the party had been founded and its program drafted, it did “not very much consider the reality” and “allowed to be provoked by the great global currents.” As a result the program included “things that were beyond doubt understandable in the then atmosphere, but which today in the hard circumstances of reality require undeniable corrections.”⁸⁰

The economic orientation of ČsND had crystallized in the early 1920s, marked by the departure from some of its initial programmatic statements, drafted by Engliš, and towards demands for “removal of unnecessary state interventions and regulations that had been provoked by the war and the post-war need, but have been an obstacle to the productional intensity and the education of citizenry towards independence.”⁸¹ The move towards more economically liberal positions also reflected in the discourse. Simultaneously, solidarism⁸² gained an obviously more nationalist bent with “national solidarity” becoming the sole formulation, as opposed to the previously used “social solidarity.” This was also connected

⁷⁹ H., “Náš druhý sjezd,” *Národní listy*, 25. 3. 1922.

⁸⁰ “Sjezd Československé národní demokracie,” *Národní listy*, 27. 3. 1922.

⁸¹ “Usnesení III. sjezdu Čsl. národní demokracie,” *Národní listy*, 5. 5. 1925

⁸² In his theoretical work Engliš counterposed the concept of “solidarist state” (*stát solidaristický*), defined as state in which “the individual is an object of [state] care”, to the one of individualistic state (*stát individualistický*). While actual states combined elements of both types, a “purely” solidarist state would require a dictatorship and imply large scale state ownership. Essential for democracy was that it maintained balance between both. - Karel Engliš, “Demokracie a státní působnost” (1933) in M. Znoj, J. Havranek, M. Sekera, M. (eds.), *Česky liberalismus* (Prague: Torst, 1995), p. 481, 483, 493-494 and Doležalová, Rašín, 52.

to a certain transfer of emphasis from the “civic” and “social” to “national.” It was not primarily “democracy” anymore which required “sincere care for all the strata of our nation” but “our nationalism” that “demanded” it.⁸³ For Kramář nationalism meant “consecration of the entire state life, not merely cultural and political, but all public, economic and social life.”⁸⁴ As such “the awakening of that national solidarity, that wonderful, noble nationalism with which we [*the Czechs*] lived during [...] the war” acted as a safeguard that “liberates us from the gravest consequences of egoism of the individuals and egoism of the classes.”⁸⁵ In Kramář’s view the national idea acted as “the only corrective” to unbridled mentality of competition and against “the will to entirely defeat the other.”⁸⁶

Most importantly, the previous two-sided principled critique of both liberalism and socialism had now clearly shifted against the latter. “Individualism,” previously equated to “liberalism” and perceived as “based on egoism,”⁸⁷ now began to be valorized positively, as the party began referring to a “healthy individualism that wishes to solve the social question through national solidarity, commitment and agreement of all the constituents of society.”⁸⁸ The latter was closely linked to idealism as opposed to the “materialistic” approach of the Marxist and other class- or profession-based parties. “The social problem of the future,” Kramář argued, lay not in the “destruction of private ownership and enterprise,” not in “collectivism,” but in “solidarity between all the productive forces of

⁸³ “Řeč dra Karla Kramáře o základech ideové a politické koncepce čsl. národní demokracie,” *Národní listy*, 16. 4. 1929 – supplement to the nr. 105: “Čtvrtý sjezd čsl. národní demokracie.”

⁸⁴ “Posl. dr. Kramář pro silný národní stat,” *Národní listy*, 11. 4. 1923.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Program ČsND, 33.

⁸⁸ *Národní listy*, 19. 11. 1921.

the nation, individualism, refined [*zušlechteny*] through idealism of national solidarity.”⁸⁹

The outcome of the struggle between “two global currents: idealist individualism and materialist socialism”⁹⁰ was also going to condition the survival of civilization and culture.

The decision for economic liberalism was clearly expressed in Sís’s 1929 statement on the party’s mission:

“Of the two basic ideas on which the social order is built, individualism and socialism, the party decides for individualism. Individualism considers self-responsibility to be the foundation of the whole social order. Self-responsibility propels people towards more work, towards greater productivity, towards greater creation of wealth, from which the entire nation draws benefit.”⁹¹

The shift towards more moderate positions including partial rehabilitation of the liberal economic conceptions, after the post-war instability had been overcome, was distinctive for Slovene progressives as well, albeit to a lesser degree. In their case already the initial programmatic standpoints were less marked by the rhetoric of socialization and were not pointed against individual initiative. “Individualism” was thus not in need of “rehabilitation” as it was the case with ČsND. On the other hand, the shift towards economically liberal positions and open critique of socialism was considerably less prominent. Equally as in the Czech case, the most radical demands that intruded into the property relations ceased being evoked. Socialization turned into a subject of critique, being treated as an “empty phrase,” and the importance of private enterprise was more overtly emphasized. The 1920 program outline, adopted by the Democratic Party, to which its Slovene part also adhered, still assigning the role of a “regulator and control of all the large economic branches” to the state in order to “limit the omnipotence of capitalism,”

⁸⁹ “Dr. Kramář o sučasném přerodu,” *Národní listy*, 20. 9. 1921.

⁹⁰ *Národní listy*, 19. 11. 1921.

⁹¹ F. Sís, “Naše cesta – naše poslání,” *Národní listy*, 14. 4. 1929.

laid emphasis on removing “everything that would disable the private initiative in its efforts towards development of economic life.”⁹² “Leaning on the principle of national solidarity” and employing diction very much reminiscent of the one of ČsND, the party pledged to devote its efforts towards “alleviating the class struggle and attaining harmonic cooperation of all classes on elevating and strengthening our nation.”⁹³

While the Democratic Party explicitly introduced the term “national solidarity” it must be stressed that it was not employed regularly by the Slovene progressive politicians and press during the 1920s. It was during the period of the split between the “elders” and the “youths” in 1922 when it was commonly evoked by the latter in order to point out their more “socially progressive” stance as opposed to the alleged “Manchester liberalism” of the “elders.” “Our progressive people” thus belonged to “the camp of that modern liberalism that had written down on its flag the principle of national solidarity,” which was “the most serious opponent of the old Manchester liberalism.”⁹⁴ Pointing out that the “stream of time” was forcing “everything to the left” – interestingly at the same point when the Czechoslovak National Democracy had already been struggling to prove the opposite – *Jutro* wrote that national solidarity allowed for “exercising every legitimate economic aspiration that does not infringe on the principle of economic and social justice.”⁹⁵

Another instance when the term was being used explicitly was in 1928, when the then completely powerless National Socialist Party officially merged with the Independent Democrats.⁹⁶ Worth noting is that during the 1920s the notion of national solidarity, when

⁹² “Načrt programa Demokratske stranke,” *Nova Doba*, 28. 2. 1920.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ *Jutro*, 8. 11. 1922.

⁹⁵ *Jutro*, 10. 11. 1922.

⁹⁶ “Združitev Narodno - socijalistične s Samostojno demokratsko stranko. Proglas načelstva NSS prijateljem in somišljenikom,” *Jutro*, 28. 2. 1928.

used explicitly, as a rule carried reasonably “leftist” connotations. Moreover, the Independent Democratic Party, wanting to position itself slightly to the left from the Democratic Party, from which it had seceded, adopted the concept of “economic democracy.” The “Principles of economic and social policy” adopted at the 1925 congress took over the formulation from the ČsND program - by then already largely abandoned by that party - almost word by word, as “the equal rights to material life and cultural progress.”⁹⁷

Both Czechoslovak National Democrats and Slovene progressives emphasized the advancement of all social strata and especially stressed the importance of “elevating” the absolute positions of lower and working classes as opposed to levelling economic differences. For that purpose they both recognized the need for modern social legislation and policy, whereby it may be said that the Czechoslovak National Democrats were more reserved in words but at the same time more active in policy making than their Slovene counterparts. In contrast to ČsND, which especially during Alois Rašín’s time as Minister of Finance actively formed the state economic policy, the positions of the Slovene progressives largely remained declarations and on the level of rhetoric. Even more so, since in their case the power struggle against political Catholicism on the one hand and nationality politics on the other overshadowed other considerations with the actual engagement in economic and social policy standing low on the priority scale. A degree of difference was present in terms of favoring progressive taxation and other mechanisms of

⁹⁷ “Načela privredne i socijalne politike,” *Riječ*, 1/3. I 1926, quoted from: Hrvoje Matković, *Svetozar Pribičević i Samostalna demokratska stranka do šestojanuarske diktature* (Zagreb: Institute of Croatian History, 1972), p. 113. Compare with ČsND program, p. 46:47: “Economic democracy acknowledges the equal moral personal value of each human being and equal right to life and cultural and material progress.”

redistribution. But generally both shared the conviction that “the problem of our era” was foremostly “baking enough bread,” whereas “more equitable distribution” may be discussed later, “when we will be full enough” as *Slovenski narod* wrote in 1924.⁹⁸

ČsND invested efforts in attracting industrial workers and other non-propertied strata to its program of national solidarity. In their treatment of the workers’ question they, in contrast to the Social Democrats and other Marxists, who laid main emphasis on the economic aspects, particularly stressed its cultural side. The solution of the “social question” thus lay primarily in the “cultural elevation” of the workers, who had always represented “a living interest of the party” which had not needed “to await pressure from the side of the workers” in order to pursue this cause. As Kramář pointed out, ČsND did not engage in latter due to some kind of fear of the workers but only because they were “the members of this nation, members of which we are as well.”⁹⁹ “Cultural elevation” thus at the same time implied nationalization which, in National Democrats’ view, had not been complete yet: “we go among the workers in order to nationalize them [...] above all to put at their hearts the idea that before everything, before all material interests, before all the internationals there is the nation, the state, the work for the nation and work for the national state.”¹⁰⁰

Slovene progressives largely shared this perspective with Tavčar noting that “proletariat” formed the majority “in no civilized country.”¹⁰¹ The younger group around Žerjav and Kramer pointed to Western examples, whereby Great Britain acted as the primary paragon.

When the first Labour government had been established there, *Jutro* wrote:

“Up until now England for long generations knew the rotation of two major parties in the government, the conservatives and the liberals. After two long centuries a third

⁹⁸ “Problem naše dobe,” *Slovenski narod*, 27. 4. 1924.

⁹⁹ “Dr. Kramář v Hradci Králové,” *Národní Listy*, 15. 9. 1925.

¹⁰⁰ František Sís, *Za národní a demokratickou republiku* (Prague: Sekretariat Čs.N.D., 1925), p. 17.

¹⁰¹ Ivan Tavčar, “Nekoliko pripomb h gospodarskemu programu JDS,” *Slovenski narod*, 8. 7. 1918.

party has now for the first time resolutely arisen and taken over the government. Beside the still living slogans of 'protective customs' and 'free trade' a new slogan 'work, bread, peace' has set foot. Let 'peace' hold true as slogan in state policy: Peace to Europe, assuring peace, elimination of war threat, balance; and peace at home, appeasement between capital and labor, *entry of the working classes into civic life*. Thus the final consequence of the French revolution is formulated: *Le Tiers Etat* are not only the middle classes, they are not followed by the 'fourth estate', nor by 'dictatorship of the proletariat', but the working people should get enbourgeoised [*naj se pomeščani*]. The leading slogan of new Macdonald's era is *democracy, a parliamentary democracy*. [...]

...As England led the development of Europe with her revolution, which took place long before the French one did, and as she led from the Magna Carta hither, in this way is she still leading today. She teaches us what is *common sense* - a common sense for the country and for the rights of all its citizens. This *common sense* permeates the inaugural statement of the socialist Macdonald, whose speech was followed by praise: You spoke, as if you had been a democrat or a member of the liberal party."¹⁰²

Progressives' devotion to democracy and to the "ideals of the French Revolution," which they commonly stressed, clearly radiates through the above quoted excerpt. Here we can however also observe a clear example of looking up towards England as an even more fundamental paragon. The endorsement of MacDonald and the Labour Party may also be read as an indirect endorsement of the Liberal Party and particularly the British "new liberalism" of Green, Hobhouse and Hobson. The acknowledgment of Labour's development into a "state-building" party, mature and responsible enough to pursue national politics, pointed out it was no less prudent as the Liberal Party had been. In the circumstances of the latter's decline and internal discord Labour could actually act as the new "liberal party."

The Slovene progressive "Youths'" alignment to "modern liberalism" and pejorative treatment of "the old Manchester liberalism" have already been mentioned. Generally, references to leftist models were pretty common in the Slovene case, as opposed to the

¹⁰² *Jutro*, 23. 1. 1924.

Czech, where the mainstream ČsND line even included direct critique of the British “new liberalism” and its importation to Czechoslovakia. Moreover, the ČsND leadership, as opposed to the Slovene progressives, favored the Conservative Party over Labor.¹⁰³ It was only the ČsND “left wing” (“Moravian wing” including Engliš and the first Young Generation) that mostly left the party by 1925, which followed and embraced some of the developments in the British New Liberalism and partial converging of (left and centrist) liberalism and Labour. Together with Peroutka’s circle, with whom some of them collaborated in the National Party of Labor, they acted as the main Czech representatives of “modern liberalism” in the contemporary British sense of the word. Within ČsND the circle around *Demokratický střed* journal also in many ways favorably followed the developments in British liberalism.

Making a general analysis and comparison of the Czech and Slovene cases in terms of scrutinizing both their discourse and advocated political positions from the viewpoint of liberalism (and anti-liberalism), we may observe some parallels as well as differences. Above all, we may observe a considerable degree of eclecticism in terms of ideological tenets, social models, economic demands and elements of discourse with seemingly incompatible elements co-existing and even complementing each other. Outlooks and attitudes that we may rightfully label “classically liberal” intertwined with echoes of the British “New Liberalism” and critiques and modifications of liberal individualism of an earlier date and closer origins, such as the German *Kathedersozialisten* and “Historical” economic school, as well as Masarykian critique of national liberalism. Last but not least,

¹⁰³ Karel Kramář, „Anglický národ, bolševictví a my!“, *Národní listy*, 1. 11. 1924.

Interestingly, the Slovene progressive *Slovenski narod* (by then already in the hands of the “youths”) published articles from *Národní listy* critical of MacDonald and the Labor. See: “Macdonald in socijalizmu,” *Slovenski narod*, 19. 9. 1924.

the development of the science of sociology and French solidarism as an associated political doctrine had found appraisal among the *fin-de-siecle* national liberal heirs such as Kramář, which left a lasting legacy that continued into the interwar. The framework within which all the listed ideological elements and influences operated, was however largely determined by the concepts of “nation” and “democracy” and the interplay between them. In both cases, albeit appearing in partly different mutual relationships and with changing relative importance of one versus another, they were crucial in establishing the paradigms of political discourse.

Particularly in the Czech case the “nation” came to act as the fundamental perspective from which the social and economic questions were being approached. Particularly from 1922 and increasingly after the 1925 split, the basically nationalist approach was being joined by emphasizing individualism and private enterprise. As far as it had not already transformed into something else - turning either into a profoundly conservative direction or crossing the last milestone that had separated it from a fully-fledged integral nationalism - this “national liberalism” in many ways found itself “in a blind alley,” being faced with changed political and social realities and trends, as well as internal splits. As it has been demonstrated in the previous chapter, this reflected most clearly in the nationality politics, where the parties persevered in continuing the pre-war nationality struggle. Transferred into the socio-economic domain this starting point articulated itself via the notion of “national solidarity.”

In terms of discourse a certain duality is observable with references to nation understood as “organism” or “machine” on the one hand and explicit praise of individualism on the other. As long as “organism” served merely as a metaphor for the national community as

a “moral supplement” to the otherwise “atomistic” modern “society,” the two elements may still be treated as being “able” to belong together. As we have seen in the previous chapter however, purely metaphorical character of references to “national organism” were not always the case. Still, those that employed such conceptions, despite having certain influence, never represented the dominant voices within their parties. As the intermediary ground between the micro-level of individuals and the macro-level of humanity, the “nation” acted as a medium for “taming” the “natural egoism” of individuals through “national solidarity,” which also provided the principal grounds for establishing the social legislation. As Kramář stated, all the National Democratic outlooks, especially those concerning social questions, stemmed from the “position of national solidarity,” which was something different than “solidarity of interests” that had “arisen from the liberal theory” and about which “Bastiat had spoken.”¹⁰⁴

In spite of partial revival of economically liberal rhetoric in the early 1920s, the socio-economic positions of both Czech and Slovene national liberal heirs were quite far from classical liberal ones. Which is unsurprising, as classical liberalism had already for a while been vanishing from the mainstream politics all across Europe. Unlike in the “West,” where it was partly superseded by “social liberalism,” the developmental patterns in Central Europe led towards more nationalism. The question that presents itself is how far did this process go in the cases under scrutiny and whether we may still speak about liberalism in the broader and less-normative sense of the term designating continuous adherence to the basic principles of the rule of law, constitutionalism and representative democracy.

¹⁰⁴ Řeč dr. Kramáře v zahraničním výboru, *Národní listy*, 22. 10. 1931.

During the 1920s neither the Slovene progressives nor the Czechoslovak National Democrats turned away from the liberal democratic order. Despite certain voices of critique against “formal democracy,” which were present especially among the integral nationalists within ČsND, none of the two parties abandoned the principles of the rule of law, equality before the law, equal civic and political liberties for all citizens, popular representation, pluralism and party system. All the differences notwithstanding we may thus still locate the solidarist orientations of ČsND and Slovene progressives within a broader defined liberal framework.

5. 1. 3. The Greater German *Volksgemeinschaft*

The Greater German idea of *Volksgemeinschaft* was based on a resolute critique of both liberalism, understood as individualism, and Social Democracy, which claimed to offer “a cure” but was in practice nothing else but “a child of individualism”.¹⁰⁵ It stood for an (ethnically founded) national community of “work,” “duties” and “culture” and had been first coined by the Viennese National Democrats to be later adopted by numerous political groups, including the National Socialists.¹⁰⁶ Essentially, it represented a vaguely defined social and national ideal that offered an alternative to the social reality marked by atomism, class conflict and opposition between various professional interests. As such it was related

¹⁰⁵ Richtlinien, 440.

¹⁰⁶ Wotawa proudly claimed: “...das Wort *Volksgemeinschaft* ist heute ein Programmpunkt geworden, den eigentlich keine der grossen Parteien des Deutschen Reiches, soweit sie nicht klassenkämpferisch eingestellt ist, unausgesprochen lassen kann. Es ist ein Wort geworden, das ich möchte fast sagen, zu einer abgebrauchten Münze geworden ist, das vielleicht schon heute missbräuchlich angewendet wird. Trotzdem können wir sagen, dieses Wort und dieser Gedanke ist ausgegangen von unserem Salzburger nationalen Programm und es wird nicht mehr verschwinden aus der nationalen Politik des Volkes.“ (AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 34, RI-12 11. Reichsparteitag vom 20.-22.04. 1930, Protokoll) For a similar claim also see AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 29, RI-11b Landesparteileitung Salzburg, Mitteilungen, „Der Volksgemeinschaftsgedanke in der Gemeindepolitik“.

to “national solidarity” in terms of aims and implications. Its strong ethno-nationalist underpinning and overarching character, encompassing all aspects of human life, however also distinguished it from the solidarist orientations of the Czech and Slovene national liberal heirs.

Above all, *Volksgemeinschaft* was pointed against the principle of class struggle, instead of which it proposed reconciliation and nivelization of various economic interests, “lucrative co-operation [*Einträgliche Zusammenwirken*]”, mutual support and *Aufhebung* of conflicts in an integral community of work. While it was said that the present still stood “under the sign of class struggle” with all the “ravages [*Verheerungen*] it had brought to the German people, the future was going to belong to the idea of *Volksgemeinschaft*.¹⁰⁷ The true purpose of economy in their view not being competition but “community of work” with the fundamental goal of “covering needs,”¹⁰⁸ the Greater Germans rejected individualism, understood as “Everybody should ruthlessly pursue their personal advantage”¹⁰⁹ and lying at the root of both liberalism and socialism:

“Liberalism made individualistic politics from the standpoint of entrepreneurs, the social democracy makes individualistic politics from the workers’ standpoint; that is the whole difference!”¹¹⁰

Both pursued what Otto Conrad termed “Erwerbspolitik” – as opposed to true “Volkswirtschaftspolitik” and were for the same reason equally “alien” to the “German essence.”

The Greater Germans did not strive to abolish the market economy or the existing property relations, yet proposed a reform program in which the supposed anomalies were pointed

¹⁰⁷ Richtlinien, 446.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 460.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 439.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 440.

out and supplemented by modifications in the vein of “social partnership.”¹¹¹ These opened up a “broader area of activity” for the government in all those fields “where the free economy fails”¹¹² and where “drastic measures for rectification of the injustice inherent to our economic order [*einschneidende Maßnahmen zur Behebung des unserer Wirtschaftsordnung anhaftenden Unrechtes*]” were required. Foremost the state was assigned the role of the “defender of a just distribution of income,” which was to be fulfilled through a systematic income policy and principally via “just” taxation.¹¹³

From the same motives stemmed the Greater German initiative to transform the *Bundesrat*, the second chamber of the Austrian parliament, into the “*Wirtschaftskammer*” which would serve as a “corporatist supplement”¹¹⁴ to the public representation and in which various economic branches would be represented. In the 1920 party program, this idea was still undeveloped. It was given a more concrete shape in the constitutional proposal that the Greater Germans developed through the 1920s and will be more thoroughly discussed in the third subchapter.

The *Volksgemeinschaft* ideal thus represented an attempt of overcoming the social conflicts and tensions while retaining private enterprise and basic tenets of market order in a “modified” form. In this sense it may be treated as an early example of a “third way” economic program closely related to “national solidarity.” Greater German Grailer directly referred to the latter in an 1924 in *Deutsche Zeit*, in which he described his vision of a good economic policy and on how the *Volksgemeinschaft* ideal was supposed to work in practice:

¹¹¹ Cf. Thomas Dostal, *Aspekte deutschnationaler Politik in Österreich : zu einer Geschichte der Großdeutschen Volkspartei 1920 – 1934*, Diploma thesis (Vienna: T. Dostal, 1994), p. 109.

¹¹² *Richtlinien*, 459, 477.

¹¹³ See: *Ibid.*, 442-443, 470.

¹¹⁴ Dostal, *Aspekte*, 109.

“By [the term] good economy I understand, however, not merely a policy of exclusive promotion of pure high finance interests, but a policy of promoting human values, the life- and cultural interests of the laboring groups of people through honest implementation of the theoretical *Volksgemeinschaft*-idea in the practical form of a corporeal [*leibhafter*] *Volksgemeinschaft*, which must be defined through the living consciousness of the national and social solidarity of the national whole [*durch das lebendige Bewußtsein nationaler und sozialer Solidarität des Volksganzen*].”¹¹⁵

The “practical *Volksgemeinschaft*” and “national and social solidarity” as its necessary component had to include a comprehensive social policy, which only “short-sighted reactionaries” failed to recognize. Most importantly, however, Grailer compared the life of a nation to the one of a family: “Who does not carry the family sense of the parents house [*den Familiensinn des Elternhauses*] into the neighborhood, into profession, into the municipality, the land and the *Reich*, contravenes the idea of practical *Volksgemeinschaft*.”¹¹⁶ This rhetorical transfer of the “warmth” and “intimacy” that rule within family into the whole nation, is particularly telling when compared to Tavčar’s machine metaphor and the “national organism” of the Czechoslovak National Democrats. While all three shared the basic demand for subordination of individuals to the “goals” and “purposes” of the national community, we may simultaneously observe a certain emotional gradation in terms of types of bonds that define them. While the “machine” appears as “cold” and “scientific” and the “organism” already somewhat “warmer,” the “family” poses as the most emotionally appealing and at the same time morally binding. In what other settings than within the circle of own kin, may the natural egoism of an individual be most effectively abolished and exchanged for sincere, “altruistic” co-operation?

¹¹⁵ Grailer, “Die sozialetische Bedingtheit des Deutschen Wiederaufstieges,” *Deutsche Zeit*, yr. 2, nr., 101, 17. 6. 1924.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

The discussed difference furthermore hints at the more all-encompassing character of *Volksgemeinschaft*. In contrast to the national solidarism of the kind that we saw in the Czech and Slovene cases it included a considerably more pronounced cultural aspect, distinguished by a strong ethno-nationalist underpinning. In addition to national solidarity and inseparable from it, it also promised cultural advancement of the national whole along the lines of the German *völkisch* uniqueness, cleansed of foreign influences. This was to be achieved among other things by means of a “national education” that would bring various social strata closer, imbuing them with the “national spirit.” It is true that all the three parties under scrutiny demanded for the school system to be entirely or at least predominantly in state hands, justifying this with “national education.” Both Czech and Slovene national liberal heirs also spoke about “cultural advancement” of the lower social echelons, which meant above all their nationalization. An interesting parallel to the Slovene case is also the fact that the Greater Germans spoke favorably of the first British PM from the Labour party MacDonald, labelling him “a convinced and unwavering nationalist.”¹¹⁷ Nevertheless, in the case of GdVP the aspect of nationalization was more strongly and extensively pronounced with common references to the “German spirit”, “German morality”, “German customs”, “German essence,” as well as warnings against elements that were “un-German.” Such discourse was largely missing in the other two cases. *Volksgemeinschaft* thus represented an all-encompassing social and national program and an integrating ideology. Taken together, the social and economic policies on the one hand

¹¹⁷ “Macdonald – ‘überzeugter und und unbeugsamer Nationalist’,” *Deutsche Zeit*, Yr. 2, Nr. 97, 23. 5. 1924. Also see the proceedings of the 1924 land party convention in Salzburg where it was stated: “*Labour party heißt nicht Arbeiterpartei, sondern Arbeitspartei und setzt sich aus allen Ständen zusammen. Es ist eine fortschrittliche Partei, welche sich hauptsächlich gegen den Konservatismus richtet.*” (AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 29, RI-11, Landesparteitag der Großdeutschen Volkspartei in Salzburg am 6. April 1924 in Hallein.)

and the national education on the other, were to integrate the working classes, majority of which had been “lured” by the promises of Marxism, into the “national community.” In its ethno-cultural dimension the *Volksgemeinschaft* included a demand for purity and return to the “true” German morals and customs that had been destroyed by liberalism. The harmful “foreign influences” reflected above all in the subversion of “culture” by “civilization” and by a forceful intrusion of a “chandler spirit [*Krämergeist*]” into all spheres of human activity, even art and science. Liberalism had also destroyed the older forms of organization of work such as guilds, without substituting them with “new forms” that would have acted as “appropriate to the German essence.”¹¹⁸

These alien influences needed to be removed in order to reinforce the national community, return the “joy of work [*Arbeitsfreude*] and spirit of cooperation to the German people. As the main culprit for these unhealthy developments, the “Jewish spirit” was pointed out, along with the demand for purifying the German national body from the Jewish element. These were not merely rhetorical tools, convenient for a political context in which anti-Semitic discourses of various intensities and nuances were more than customary. As we have seen in the previous chapter, the Greater German antisemitism was racially-based and formed an important part of the *Volksgemeinschaft* ideology. As the future Austrian vice-chancellor Frank stated in 1920 it stemmed from the “adherence to *Volksgemeinschaft*,” with “Jewishness” being “in almost all respects the negation of the idea of *Volksgemeinschaft*.”¹¹⁹ This aspect marked another important difference to the Czech and Slovene cases.

¹¹⁸ Richtlinien, 474.

¹¹⁹ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 30, RI-12 Parteitag der Nationaldemokraten vom 26.-29. 06. 1920, Protokoll 1920, Judenfrage.

Similarly to the other two cases, a shift away from the most radical programmatic positions took place in the first half of the 1920s. A general paradigm shift towards more economically liberal positions was first noticeable in the case of Christian Socials, whom the Greater Germans followed after entering the governing coalition.¹²⁰ Similarly to the Czech case, struggle against Marxism stepped into the foreground. These changes clearly reflected in the revised party program,¹²¹ with which GdVP entered the 1930s. Generally it differed from the *Richtlinien* primarily in length and form, being more condensed and simple, and not so much in terms of content. The significant changes in latter regard however pertained mainly to the sections on economy and social policy, whereby certain formulations distinctive for the old program, were omitted now. These included all the main “anti-capitalist” phraseology such as “unjust distribution of income,” “the principle of service and return [*Prinzip von Leistung und Gegenleistung*]” and “unearned income,” as well as the passage that rejected any kind of “*bürgerlich* class politics.” At the same time, the importance of economic competition was more pronouncedly stressed.¹²² At the same time the state was given a broader role in the field of social policy. The central ideological concept however continued to be *Volksgemeinschaft*, the commitment to which was continuously being re-affirmed up until 1933.

The explicit anti-liberal character of their *Volksgemeinschaft* ideal notwithstanding, the Greater Germans did not abandon constitutionalism, representative democracy, political pluralism and civic rights and liberties.¹²³ Already the guidelines, adopted by the

¹²⁰ Cf. Karl Bachinger, “Die Wirtschaftspolitik der österreichischen Parteien (1918–1932)” in *Das Parteienwesen Österreichs und Ungarns in der Zwischenkriegszeit*, A. M. Drabek, R. G. Plaschka, H. Rumpler eds. (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1990), p. 189, 195.

¹²¹ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 26, Parteiprogramm 1930.

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ Cf. Rudolf G. Aldert, *Zwischen Demokratie und Faschismus. Deutschnationales Gedankengut in Österreich 1919-1930* (Vienna – Salzburg: Geyer Edition, 1972), p. 139.

Großdeutsche Vereinigung in 1919 stood firmly in favor of the “republican Staatsform”, “constitution of the state on a democratic basis [*Aufbau des Staates auf demokratischer Grundlage*]” and separation of legislative and executive powers.¹²⁴ The same was true for the Salzburg Program, which stated that the party stood “on the ground of national democracy and free state constitution [*auf dem Boden der nationalen Demokratie und der freistaatlichen Verfassung*].”¹²⁵ The division of powers was to be secured and “any “blurring of the boundaries” between them seen as “unhealthy” due to the differences in “their nature and their tasks.”¹²⁶ The civic liberties were to be preserved and “freed from bureaucratic paternalism [*Bevormundung*]” characteristic for the old Austria. An exception was the freedom of the press, for which the Greater Germans allowed certain exceptional limitations in the interest of national community (bans on “*Schmutz- und Schundliteratur*”).¹²⁷ The persistence on basic tenets of representative democratic order and legality was even more distinctive for the practical political performance of the Greater German People’s Party.

The “national democracy” – as opposed to the barely “formal” “*Scheindemokratie*” that meant essentially the rule of parties and interest groups – however required more than formal rules and representative institutions. For that reason the Greater Germans put special emphasis on the possibilities of direct participation, such as popular petitions and referenda on the one hand and on the importance of “enlightening- and educational work [*Aufklärungs- und Erziehungsarbeit*]” for democratic citizenship on the other.¹²⁸ In the true vein of a

¹²⁴ Ibid., 146.

¹²⁵ Richtlinien, 447.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 449.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 450-451.

¹²⁸ Cf. Richtlinien, 447. Dostal, Aspekte, 113-114.

Beamtenpartei, rooted in the old Josephine heritage and embodying the ethos of *Hofratsliberalismus* (bureaucratic liberalism), the Greater Germans also espoused some mistrust toward elected representatives as opposed to the professional “servants of the state.”¹²⁹ They pointed out that the essence of democracy lay in the idea, “that it should be the means to appoint the best and most able to lead the polity regardless of privileges of birth, status or possession.”¹³⁰

These passages may be read both as preserving certain liberal ideological residue, or as already harboring seeds for an anti-liberal, authoritarian statism, very distinctive for the later political trends and developments in Austria. It may however also be argued that they simultaneously contained vestiges of both and that these should be treated as aspects of the same phenomenon. Especially the pronounced meritocratic aspect in their understanding of democracy can be linked to the mindset characteristic of the old Austrian *Beamtentum* and their self-perception of standing “above politics” and “serving the state.” As alien as this may be to the market and other limited-government-based understandings of liberalism, such an outlook was in line with a specific statist strain within the 19th century Austrian liberalism, which had its showcase representative in Schmerling but traced its roots back to the era of Joseph II.

The demands for national education may furthermore be interpreted as reflecting the value of *Bildung* and its meaning for the gradual political empowerment of broad popular masses. Along with the clearly expressed distrust towards mass- and interest-based politics, reflecting the mindset of the bygone *Honoratiorenpolitik*, this may be interpreted as

¹²⁹ Cf. Dostal, *Aspekte*, 114-115; Christian Klösch, “Das ‘nationale Lager’ in Niederösterreich 1918-1938 und 1945-1996“ in *Niederösterreich im 20. Jahrhundert, Band. 1: Politik*, Stefan Eminger and Ernst Langthaler Eds. (Vienna: Böhlau, 2008), p. 569.

¹³⁰ *Richtlinien.*, 447.

representing vestiges of the (national) liberal heritage. The “ideal type” of a popular representative based on the “common-good-oriented notable of the Frankfurt *Paulskirche*,”¹³¹ cultivated by the Greater Germans - and beyond doubt being of liberal origins – could however in the changed political circumstances and within a different general ideological framework also adopt a different function. As an element of the explicitly anti-liberal *Volksgemeinschaft* ideology and together with stern critique of Western “formal democracy” it could already provide some associations to the *Führerprinzip* or at least an enlightened “national elite,” not necessarily directly accountable to the citizenry, authorized to lead the “masses” along the proper “national” course.

As we have seen, the Greater German program and the underlying idea of *Volksgemeinschaft* did not fundamentally negate the parliamentary order and political pluralism. The program also explicitly stressed that “a complete elimination of the individual by no means lies in the concept of *Volksgemeinschaft*.”¹³² Liberal individualism was criticized, being perceived as one-sided and harmful to the common good. At the same time it was however being stressed that recognition of each person’s individuality and securing of a free sphere of action were indispensable for a functioning community. The Greater German rejection of liberal individualism thus did not amount to the demand for a complete subordination of an individual to the political community and even less was it statist in the sense that state authority would be empowered to coerce individuals into fixed social roles or prescribed activities. Primarily on the moral level they sought to establish a

¹³¹ Dostal, *Aspekte* 120.

¹³² *Richtlinien*, 450.

balance between free individual initiative and work for the community, which were seen as interdependent.

In this sense this may be read as a quite typical reformist approach, distinctive for the contemporary moderate politics in Europe or – in other words – “liberal critique of liberalism”, which incorporated certain “communitarian” elements and assigned the government indirect means for “juster” distribution of benefits and burdens (taxation), alleviating the social conflicts (economic chambers) and national education (state school system). All these were also clear parallels to the national solidarism. Yet in the case of GdVP this was partly overshadowed by the integrally nationalist and anti-Semitic components of their program, as well as clear elements of anti-modernist, anti-Western and anti-liberal discourse, gazing back into the mythical German past. The question whether these represented central aspects of genuine political orientation – and thus make the Greater German ideology essentially different to the previously mentioned reformism – or merely discursive tools dependent on the peculiarities of the specific political context in which they operated, remains open.

If we attempt to bring the various Greater German programmatic statements and proposals, along with their practical stances on the main issues of the Austrian political reality, to a common denominator and thus delineate the general ideological profile of the Greater German People’s Party, we may encounter a peculiar paradox. The ideological tenets, advocated by the Greater Germans, namely reveal a combination of some 19th century German liberal remnants, a firm acceptance of the democratic institutions of the Austrian First Republic, and at the same time explicit rejection of liberalism and “formal

democracy” via the *Volksgemeinschaft* ideology.¹³³ This may be interpreted as a “symptom” of an internally fragmented political party, that was founded under “the order of the day” in what was perceived as emergency situation and had eclecticism at the very bottom of its ideology.¹³⁴ Its intellectual tenets were moreover also a product of disorientation of a party, whose form of organization and modes of operation were stuck in the 19th century, but which strived to accommodate to mass politics and develop into a “people’s party.” As Isabella Ackerl has argued, they “were a result of a fusion of various national, antiliberal and moderately social ideas, taken from other party programs, perceived as good and desirable and thus accepted by everybody as a new and acceptable program.”¹³⁵

It is clear however, that in the Greater German *Volksgemeinschaft* ideology the basic liberal credo of the broadest possible sphere of individual liberty and the consequent question about permissible amount of governmental interference into that sphere was turned around, asking rather “how much liberty may be left to the individual without harming the purposes of the whole.”¹³⁶ Liberty was thus not the baseline principle anymore, whereby all its limitations would require justification, but a still important, yet secondary concept. The departure point in Greater Germans’ reasoning were not the inalienable rights of an individual or his natural liberty that would have preceded the existence of the state but the “protection of the state and its authority,”¹³⁷ which was entrusted with an “unequally broader field of activity [*ungleich weiteres Wirkungsfeld*].”

¹³³ Cf. *ibid.*, 98.

¹³⁴ Cf. Isabella Ackerl, *Die Großdeutsche Volkspartei 1920-34* (Vienna: I. Ackerl, 1967), p. 313.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ *Richtlinien*, 450.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 451.

5. 1. 4. The Relationships to the New Movements of the Radical Right

As it has already been mentioned in the previous chapter, the continuation of pre-war nationality policies of the three parties under scrutiny to a certain degree coalesced with their support for some of the newly-emerging radically nationalist movements. The old nationalist voluntary associations had namely been joined by new organizations, whose stated missions were at least in the initial stages similar. At the same time they were however products of the “new era” and its political dynamic. Distinguished by militaristic appearance and readiness to employ physical violence, the primary model which all these movements to various degrees imitated were the Italian Fascists. Originating as “defense organizations” they increasingly devoted their energies at fighting “internal enemies,” particularly the left, and in the Slovene case also the “clericals.” In Austria, the representative of this trend was *Heimatschutz*, in the Slovene part of Yugoslavia it was the Organization of Yugoslav Nationalists (ORJUNA), while in the Czech lands the organization even adopted the name of its Italian paragon. All the three parties under scrutiny to some extent endeavored to utilize these movements in fighting their political opponents.

Originally founded for purposes of national defense against Italian irredentism and to an extent rooting in in the tradition of similar associations from the pre-WWI era,¹³⁸ ORJUNA

¹³⁸ Boris Mlakar, “Radical Nationalism and Fascist Elements in Political Movements in Slovenia between the Two World Wars,” *Slovene Studies*, Yr. 31, Nr. 1 (2009): 3-19; p. 5.

foresaw use of physical force “if necessary”¹³⁹ in fulfilling its objectives, which it proved on numerous occasions.

While employing anti-Semitic rhetoric occasionally it however never engaged in assaults against Jews and their property.¹⁴⁰ In Slovenia the main targets of ORJUNA attacks were the Communists,¹⁴¹ the “clericals” and the Germans.

The relationship between ORJUNA and the (Independent) Democratic Party was however not entirely clear. An official connection between the two never existed despite the significant support by the party leader Pribičević, whom some contemporaries even mistook to be the organization’s founder, as well as open agitation for SDS on part of ORJUNA during election times.¹⁴² *Jutro* mostly wrote in favor of it, including its violent actions, yet never completely identifying with its ideological positions. The attitudes towards ORJUNA differed among politicians of the progressive camp and may be at best labelled as ambivalent. The Žerjav-Kramer group expressed support, yet maintaining certain distance from it, whereas Ivan Hribar, then acting as provincial governor for Slovenia initially refused to allow its organization in Slovenia.¹⁴³

During 1930s JNS also supported organizing of partly para-military movements such as *Narodna odbrana* (National Defense), which in their style and rhetoric to a certain degree

¹³⁹ “Program organizacije jugoslovenskih nacionalista” in *Programi političnih strank, organizacij in združenj na Slovenskem v času Kraljevine SHS (1918-1929)*, Jurij Perovšek ed. (Ljubljana: Arhivsko društvo Slovenije, 1998), p. 49.

¹⁴⁰ Mlakar, *Radical*, 7

¹⁴¹ On armed clashes between Orjuna and the Communists see: Marko Zajc, “ORJUNA in PAČ na poti v Trbovlje, K zgodovini fizičnega nasilja v političnem boju,” *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino*, vol. 54, no. 2 (2014): pp. 101-123.

¹⁴² Cf. Mlakar, *Radical*, 7.

¹⁴³ Hribar, finding himself under pressure from high-ranking state officials and physical threats by ORJUNA members, was eventually compelled to approved its statute. - Ivan Hribar, *Moji spomini*, Vol. 2 (Ljubljana: Slovenska matica, 1984), p. 456-458.

imitated the fascists.¹⁴⁴ On the other hand the leading progressive politicians continuously denounced both fascism and National Socialism.¹⁴⁵

In the Czech lands a number of smaller political groups developed during the early 1920s which explicitly took Italian fascism as their model, some of them even calling their orientation “fascist” (although their ideologies lacked certain elements that would qualify them as fascist and may thus, strictly speaking, rather be designated as fascistoid¹⁴⁶) Among them were *Červenobílí* (Red-Whites), a radical nationalist splinter group of ČsND, comprised mainly of academics, and *Národní hnutí* (National Movement), one of whose member was the National Democratic trade union leader Hudec. Enjoying strong initial support by the Czechoslovak Legions veterans,¹⁴⁷ members of these movements fought street battles with the Communists, Germans, sometimes also attacking Jewish property. In 1926 they merged into a political party *Národní obec fašistická*, led by General Radola Gajda.

During their formative years, up until 1925-26, the Czech fascists enjoyed the support of various parties of the right – including the National Democrats but particularly the National Socialists¹⁴⁸ - more precisely their anti-Castle wings. As Dobeš points out, Kramář's and the National Democrats' stance towards fascism was conditioned by three mutually intertwined moments: a) genuine sympathy for some of its aspects, primarily its energetic

¹⁴⁴ Janko Prunk, “Liberalni tabor med Ljubljano in Zagrebom” in *Slovenska trideseta leta: simpozij 1995*, Peter Vodopivec, Joža Mahnič eds. (Ljubljana: Slovenska matica, 1997), p. 72.

¹⁴⁵ Jurij Perovšek, “Idejni, socialnogospodarski in narodnopolitični nazori slovenskega meščanstva v času med svetovnima vojnama (1918-1941),” *Zgodovinski časopis*, Vol. 51, No. 4 (1997): pp. 536-537.

¹⁴⁶ Zdeněk Sládek, “Československá národní demokracie” in *Politické strany: vývoj politických stran a hnutí v českých zemích a Československu 1861 - 2004*, I, J. Malíř, P. Marek eds, (Brno; 2005), p. 601.

¹⁴⁷ Andrew C. Janos, *East Central Europe in the modern world: the politics of the borderlands*, (Stanford University Press, 2002), p. 170.

¹⁴⁸ Pavel Baloun, “Vznik českého fašismu (1921–1926),” *Historie – Otázky – Problémy*, Vol. 2 (2010), nr. 1.

and determined nationalism or “youthfulness” as Viktor Dyk put it in 1922¹⁴⁹; b) tactical considerations that on one hand aimed at strengthening the party by letting in “fresh blood,” on the other however took into account of the inner discord on the question of fascism; c) and last, but not least, the growing animosity between the ČsND leadership and the Castle.¹⁵⁰

ČsND, including the most vocal proponents of cooperation with the fascists, such as Hlavaček, never adopted their ideology or style. Above all they used fascism as a threat or “a stick with which to beat (...) enemies on the Left and in the Castle,”¹⁵¹ picturing it as an ultimate, extreme means for defending the national character of the state in case that was necessary. In 1924 the vice-president Sis for instance warned that:

“Should something be taken away from the national character of the republic, should an attempt come about of appointing Germans into the government and creating some kind of Switzerland, then a period of fascism would also set in among us.”¹⁵²

Czech fascists were heavy opponents of President Masaryk, which was another factor that put them at the side of Kramář and contributed to the deepening of the quarrel between him and the Castle. It culminated during the 1926 Gajda affair, when all the above listed moments of National Democratic attitudes towards the fascists expressed themselves fully. The legendary Legionaries’ leader was accused of preparing a coup, which resulted in his dismissal as Army Chief of Staff and forced to retire. Pressure by Masaryk played a crucial role, the main reasons behind it being Gajda’s declared sympathies with the fascists, whose leader he became soon thereafter. National Democrats stood on Gajda’s side, particularly

¹⁴⁹ Stanley Winters, “Passionate Patriots: Czechoslovak National Democracy in the 1920s,” *East Central Europe/L'Europe du Centre-Est*, vol. 18, nr. 1 (1991), p. 63.

¹⁵⁰ Jan Dobeš, “Karel Kramář mezi nacionalismem, liberalismem a fašismem,” in J. Bílek and L. Velek (eds.), *Karel Kramář (1860-1937), Život a dílo* (Prague: Masarykův ústav a Archiv AV ČR, v.v.i., 2009), p. 688-689.

¹⁵¹ Winters, *Passionate*, 67.

¹⁵² “Ukol nár demokracie: Rozhodný, nekompromisní nacionalismus.” *Národní demokracie*, 6. 6. 1924.

the Young Generation who proclaimed that their own ideas and those of the fascists were in concord.¹⁵³ At the same time the varying levels of support for Gajda within the party confirmed the existence of various factions and wings.¹⁵⁴

In an interview given to the editor of the German liberal *Prager Tagblatt*¹⁵⁵ Masaryk directly accused the National Democrats of creating and inciting Czech fascism, labelling it a symptom of “political disorientation of the bourgeoisie” and “pathological dregs of the crisis within national democracy.” Fascists themselves were thus “victims of the national democracy.”¹⁵⁶ Kramář wrote an angry response to the president’s accusations,¹⁵⁷ which became famous for being continuously misquoted by adversaries, including some later historians, who insinuated that he had written “thank God for fascism.”¹⁵⁸

Kramář’s attitude towards fascism may thus be at best described as ambivalent and multi-layered, whereby he never identified with fascist positions. Most importantly, he positively

¹⁵³ Dobeš, Karel Kramář, 687.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

Kramář was caught in between the anti-*Hrad* and moderate parts of the party. The first was represented by Hlavaček and Sis, who pointed out tactical reasons for supporting fascists and even incorporating parts of their program (Dobeš, Karel Kramář, 688)- warning him against steering the party course towards the center, which could have resulted in loss of a substantial part of membership to fascists (CZ-ANM NAD 228 Fond Kramář, K. 9, i. č. 294, Hlavaček to Kramar 1. 11. 1926 or 16. 5. 1927). From the side of moderates Jaroslav Preiss criticized the writing of party press, controlled by Sis, during the Gajda affair – suggesting Kramář that radical rhetoric had been taking away decent, cultured and educated members from the party (CZ-ANM, NAD 228, Fond Kramar, K. 15, i. č. 574, Preiss to Kramar 21. 8 and 3. 9. 1926.). Kramář responded to Preiss (Dobeš, Karel Kramář 688) that national democracy should not see itself as a fascist part – what is good about fascism it already had in its program, What is bad should never be included. The party should rather strive to attract “idealistic fascists” (Dobeš, Karel Kramář 688).

On Kramář and the fascists also see: Martina Winkler, *Karel Kramář (1860–1937). Selbstbild, Fremdwahrnehmungen und Modernisierungsverständnis eines tschechischen Politikers* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2002), pp. 327-340.

¹⁵⁵ *Prager Tagblatt*, 7. 9. 1926.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

Peroutka suggested that the fascists acted as “the praetorian guard against socialism,” (Peroutka, Budovani statu, V, 2794)

¹⁵⁷ Karel Kramář, “Moje odpověď,” *Národní listy*, 10. 9. 1926.

¹⁵⁸ In reality Kramář, denying the claim about “disorientation of the bourgeoisie,” remarked that if the latter was becoming decisive in national matters, demanding for everyone to “serve the state and the nation out of love for the liberated nation and not for the material benefits of parties or persons”, he could only say “Thank God!, even if this is called fascism.” In the next sentence of his speech he stressed that he could not agree with the undemocratic and hateful nature of actual fascism. – Ibid.

evaluated it for what he saw as idealistic nationalism, as long as it was a non-partisan movement. After the fascists had formed a party and decided to take part in elections he clearly distanced himself from them,¹⁵⁹ although still sometimes speaking of it in favorable tones.¹⁶⁰ Similarly, attitudes also changed among the radical nationalist National Democrats, including Dyk¹⁶¹ and the *Národní myšlenka* circle, whose member Klima designated fascism as “discrediting of nationalism.”¹⁶² Only Hlaváček continued to publicly express support for fascism.¹⁶³ During the early 1930s when the “pragmatic wing” prevailed, the official line of the party maintained that the fascist program was “simply unacceptable for our democratic nation.”¹⁶⁴ Nevertheless the founding of *Národní sjednocení* in 1934, which included Mareš’s *Národní front*, shows that for its tactical purposes also Hodáč was not reluctant to cooperate with the radical right.

In both the Czech and the Slovene cases, at least part of the national liberal heirs were prepared to cooperate with the newly-formed movements of the radical right that marked a new type of militant nationalism. They did so primarily because they perceived them as handy means for putting pressure on political opponents outside parliament, simultaneously maintaining distance towards their radical political goals and even more so their style.

¹⁵⁹ Dobeš, Karel Kramář, 689.

¹⁶⁰ In 1929 for instance he labelled fascists as “popular movement” with whom ČsND stood in a “friendly” relationship. (Jan Rataj, “Národní demokracie jako alternativní zakladatelské koncepce československé demokracie” in *Karel Kramář (1860-1937): život a dílo*, J. Bílek, L. Velek eds. (Prague: Masarykův ústav a Archiv AV ČR, v.v.i, 2009), p. 515.

¹⁶¹ Jana Čechurová, *Česká politická pravice. Mezi převratem a krizí* (Prague: 1999), p. 48.

¹⁶² *Národní myšlenka*, yr. IV., nr. 4 (1926-27), p. 99.

¹⁶³ Čechurová, Česká, 48.

¹⁶⁴ “Soustředění československých nacionalistů jest možno jen ve straně národně demokratické,” *Národ*, 27. 5. 1933.

In the Austrian case, a movement of this type was the already mentioned *Heimatschutz* (or *Heimwehr*), which can be clearly paralleled with ORJUNA and the Czech fascists to the extent that it served as a “counterweight” against socialist militancy. On these grounds it also enjoyed support by GdVP, which – equally as in the case of Czech fascists and ČsND – lasted up until a political party was formed on the basis of the movement. Yet, there were also significant differences that distinguish the case of Heimwehr both in terms of inner ideological character and its relationship towards GdVP. While ORJUNA in Slovenia was aligned exclusively to the Independent Democratic Party, and whereas the Czech fascists partly stemmed from radical factions that had originated within the National Democratic Party, the position of Heimwehr within Austrian political context was markedly more complex.

Heimatschutz (Home Defense) or *Heimwehr* (Home Guard) grew out of post-WWI border defense and anti-revolutionary militias similar to the German *Freikorps*. It operated as a loose coalition of more or less rural-based militias, marked by ideological heterogeneity, internal power struggles and regional divisions. Throughout the 1920s both Christian Socials and Greater Germans supported it as a bulwark against the Social Democratic *Republikanischer Schutzbund* (Republican Defense League), at the same time competing for influence within it. Some of the Heimwehr chapters indeed had a pan-German orientation – most notably in Styria – later mostly joining the National Socialists. Yet, the bulk of the movement was predominantly pro-Catholic, Habsburg-nostalgic and Austrian independentist,¹⁶⁵ its ideological character being to a larger extent “defensive” anti-Marxist

¹⁶⁵ Tim Kirk, “Fascism and Austrofascism”, (in: Günter Bischof, Anton Pelinka, Alexander Lassner (ed.), *The Dollfuss/Schuschnigg era in Austria : a reassessment*, (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 2003.), pp. 10-31.), p. 15.

and middle class than radical nationalist. In contrast to ORJUNA, it was not anti-clerical. By the end of the decade it was gradually gaining an increasingly fascist character, aligning itself with and receiving guidance and support from Fascist Italy. In 1930, the so called “Korneuburger Oath” was adopted, outlining a manifesto for Austrian “national regeneration” by means of destroying the parliamentary system, setting up an authoritarian system based on leadership principle and organized along corporatist lines, and unleashing of a “two-pronged attack on the ‘Marxist class-war’ and ‘liberal-capitalist economics’.”¹⁶⁶ At that point, a pro-fascist political party (*Heimatblock*) was founded on the *Heimwehr* platform, from which GdVP clearly distanced itself.

5. 2. Great Depression and Beyond – Economic and Political Policies and Views 1930-34

In the field of ideology the Great Depression among other also signified a crisis of liberalism: crisis of trust in liberal, unbound economy, as well as the political system of representative democracy. In Central and Southeastern Europe, i.e. in regions where liberalism, especially economic, had already earlier not enjoyed the best reputation, having only few outspoken advocates, this distrust reached particularly wide dimensions. This was furthermore partly conditioned by the extraordinary sharpness of the economic and social crisis as a consequence of semi-peripheral position.¹⁶⁷ As such the Great Depression occupied the focus of the (post-)liberal economic considerations, regardless of individual parties' earlier attitudes towards various aspects of liberalism.

¹⁶⁶ Martin Kitchen, *The coming of Austrian fascism*, (London : McGill-Queen's University Press, 1980.), p. 61.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Ivan T. Berend, *Decades of Crisis: Central and Eastern Europe Before World War II* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998), p., 259, 265.

This subchapter explores the impact that the Great Depression and the closely associated political processes had on the Czech, Austrian and Slovene national liberal heirs. The first part will show how the parties under scrutiny reacted to the economic crisis and what kinds of policies they advocated during its harshest years. This will be followed by a section which will look into discourse and ideological tenets of the three parties in the socio-economic field. The third part will focus on various debates that took place within parties and among intellectuals close to them and addressed possible modifications to the liberally democratic form of government. In particular, the “estate” and corporatist concepts will be discussed. The last subchapter will conclude the discussion by tackling the general question of continuous loyalty of the Czech, Austrian and Slovene national liberal heirs to the representative democratic order and limited government.

5. 2. 1. The Economic Crisis – Receptions, Reactions, Diagnoses

The World Economic Crisis entered Central Europe in 1930 and reached its peak a year later. It was deeper and longer-lasting than in the Western Europe.¹⁶⁸ Especially in predominantly agrarian countries such as Yugoslavia it expressed itself primarily as a crisis of agrarian exports, resulting in amassing peasant debt and rural unemployment.¹⁶⁹ In the more industrialized regions, particularly the Czech lands,¹⁷⁰ highly dependent on exports of goods, the depression lasted the longest in the region, while in Austria it was the central financial institutions that received the most vicious blow. It culminated in the collapse of

¹⁶⁸ Berend, *Decades*, 265.

¹⁶⁹ Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (London: Vintage, 1998), p. 115-116.

¹⁷⁰ The crisis in industry was particularly severe in Czechoslovakia, where during 1929-32 the industrial output sank by 36 percent (as opposed to 28 in France and 33 in Italy). – Mazower, *Dark*, 115.

the regionally important Viennese commercial bank *Creditanstalt* on May, 11th 1931,¹⁷¹ that consequently had to turn to Austrian government for a bailout. The fall of *Creditanstalt* had deep consequences not merely for Austrian but for all of the Habsburg successor states' economies, whose industrial sectors had been largely credited by the Viennese bank.¹⁷² Generally speaking, the governments' dealings with the crisis – in the observed three countries and broader – were at least up until 1933 cautious and conservative, clinging to the "market wisdoms of the past."¹⁷³ Their aims were mainly directed at saving by reducing public spending, against amassing debt, at securing a balanced budget and a solid currency and waiting for investors' confidence to return.¹⁷⁴ Initially they also persevered in maintaining the Gold Standard – or even striving to join it, as Yugoslavia succeeded in 1931 – which was however followed by its gradual abandonment during 1931-34 by most of the countries. Particular governments also mainly acted on their own, introducing various protectionist measures which in many ways deepened the crisis. Coordinated action between countries was achieved neither at the Stresa conference in 1932 nor by the 1933 World Monetary and Economic Conference in London.¹⁷⁵ Especially after 1933 the tendencies towards autarchy were also joined by increased government intervention with state guidance in economy gradually becoming a theoretically and practically acceptable solution and generally seen as a necessity.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷¹ See: Matthias Morys, "The Disintegration of the Gold Exchange Standard During the Great Depression —Déjà Vu for the Eurozone?," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 39. Jahrg., H. 2, *Economic Disintegration in the 20th Century* (April - Juni 2013): pp. 153-176, p. 163.

¹⁷² Cf. Alice Teichová, "Světová hospodářská krize (1929-1933) a nástupnické státy habsburské monarchie" in *Pocta profesoru Zdeňku Jindrovi*, 1. vyd. Acta Universitatis Carolinae, Philosophica et Historica (Prague: Karolinum, 2004), pp. 255-256.

¹⁷³ Mazower, Dark, 116.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, 114-115.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 116.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. Teichová, Světová, 257.

As the 1930s commenced, the Czech, the Austrian and the Slovene parties of national liberal heirs occupied substantially different positions within their respective political landscapes in terms of electoral support and real political power - most importantly access to decision-making on the state level. The general economic views with which they had entered that decade were however in many respects quite similar, as were also their strategies of reacting to the economic crisis in whose grasp all the three countries soon firmly landed. During the crisis, the explicit alignment of the parties, which had previously all emphasized their “all-national” character, to specific social classes, cultural milieus and professional groups became ever clearer. A partial exception was Yugoslavia, where the undemocratic regime prevented the diversification of parties along such lines (and for the larger part of the period also the very development of political parties as such).

The principal questions posed in this subchapter are: How did the parties in question react to the economic crisis and where did they locate its causes? Which economic measures did they advocate?

Perceptions of the Crisis

All the three parties under scrutiny acknowledged the deepening economic crisis as a serious shock for the global economic order, as well as a harbinger of radical political change. Continuing to perceive and proclaim themselves to be moderate political parties safeguarding the political order against instabilities and extremes of the “left” and the “right” they particularly warned against the danger of economic despair getting instrumentalized by radical or revolutionary movements.

Slovene progressive press designated “the contemporary crisis” as unprecedented in the

“economic and financial history”¹⁷⁷ and wrote about “worrisome days of World Economic Crisis”, marking “an era when economically wealthier and more developed states are being shaken in their fundamentals.” It also warned about the economic crisis as a possible tool to various “agitators in their aims to plant seeds of discontent among the people.”¹⁷⁸ At the same time *Jutro* argued that the “far-reaching process that is tormenting the world from the Chinese shores across the whole Asia and Europe all the way to the South American plains” demonstrated “the general connectedness of social interests” and the fact that “the times when a rich man could have been disinterested about the fates of other people” were bygone.¹⁷⁹ When reporting on the budget of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, over which he presided at the time, Albert Kramer in 1932 remarked that “it seems as if nothing is firm anymore in the global economic life. All the theories and economic principles upon which we have built in the previous times have begun to somehow shatter”¹⁸⁰

The Greater-German chairman Hermann Foppa made comments in a similar vein, stressing during his opening speech to the all-state party rally in December of 1931 that it should be clear to everyone that they lived in “an era of revolution.”¹⁸¹ A year later he also stressed that his party aimed “at all sections of the population who recognize the dangers of socialism from the right and from the left and do not want our people to be plunged into political and economic chaos.”¹⁸² The editors of *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten* connected the economic crisis to the domestic political circumstances after the collapse of *Creditanstalt* and what they saw as a broader “intellectual and moral crisis, which is to

¹⁷⁷ “Kriza in kapitalizem,” *Jutro* 20.10. 1931.

¹⁷⁸ “Gospodarsko delo v bodoči narodni skupščini,” *Jutro* 27. 10. 1931.

¹⁷⁹ “Božič v krizi,” *Jutro*, 24. 12. 1931.

¹⁸⁰ “Glavni problemi naše gospodarske politike,” *Jutro*, 9. 3. 1932.

¹⁸¹ GDVP, K. 35, Reichsparteitag 4-6 12 1931.

¹⁸² AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 35, Verhandlungsschrift über die Sitzung der Reichsparteileitung am 11. Dezember 1932.

bring lasting havoc,” and concluded that “since the existence of the forced state [*des Zwangstaates*] of Austria there have hardly been such moments of danger for the whole as right now.”¹⁸³

While the Slovene progressives believed that a changed approach towards economic questions was needed - which could eventually imply even certain re-adjustments of social relations – and whereas the Greater Germans recognized the far-reaching political and moral implications of the crisis, the Czechoslovak National Democratic vice-president Hodáč insisted even in 1933 that “those knowledgeable in economic history” knew “that this crisis is nothing special compared to the earlier ones.”¹⁸⁴ The party leader Kramář particularly warned against “economic mysticism.” The various “cures” - especially those proposed by the left – were in his view considerably more dangerous and ought to be “heavily defended” against, whereas the crisis itself did not represent “any kind of structural catastrophe” and did “not touch upon the foundations of our social order.”¹⁸⁵ As an article in *Národní listy* entitled “The End of Capitalism”¹⁸⁶ argued, the global crisis was primarily “a crisis of trust.” Various theories on overthrowing the existing social order were moreover deepening the mistrust in international financial relations. The author rhetorically asked:

„Are these theoreticians able to realize where the Western Civilization with all the intellectual and other progress would end up, if for instance the present great power and financial position of England and the United States collapsed? Would that not be a signal for hundreds of millions of Chinese, Japanese, Indians, as well as bolshevised Russians to storm the West, as it had been after the collapse of the Roman Empire?”¹⁸⁷

¹⁸³ “Nicht nur Finanzkrise,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 28. 5. 1931.

¹⁸⁴ CZ-NA, NAD 464 František Xaver Hodáč, K. 164, „Mladi přátelé“ (speech in Brno, 30.3.1933):

“These circumstances [of crisis] do not imply the destruction of all life and standards, they represent primarily the decline of what was unhealthy, the downfall of what has evolved over capacities, the decline of that which did not possess itself the capability of life.”

¹⁸⁵ “Řeč dr. Kramáře v zahraničním výboru,” *Národní listy*, 22. 10. 1931.

¹⁸⁶ Antonin Pimper, “Konec kapitalismu?,” *Národní listy*, 18. 10. 1931.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

Locating the Causes

Seeing the crisis primarily as crisis of trust, the Slovene progressives and Czech National Democrats initially attributed the “guilt” for it largely to economic protectionism. The Slovene daily *Jutro* commented already in November of 1929 that “protectionism pushed Europe back in terms of development for a decade, because the more this protectionism develops, the harder it will be for Europe to find its way out of this net of custom barriers that are and shall remain the biggest obstacle to the economic development.”¹⁸⁸ In 1931 it observed that protectionism was on the march again due to the crisis, but worsening it and making the “natural recovery of the economy” slower. It was even attributed the role of a primary cause for the crisis:

“No persuasion and no argument helps; The states are forcing each other into a new disaster, they are hermetically closing themselves and thus increasing the economic crisis, whose historically unprecedented severity is beyond doubt only a consequence of many years of intensified protectionist economic policy”¹⁸⁹

The National Democratic press similarly treated protectionism and autarchism as important causes for the crisis and its endurance.¹⁹⁰ K. Hoch, criticizing protectionism and arguing in favor of international cooperation instead proposed in *Národní listy* “a reasonable, productive nationalism which means solidarity and work.”¹⁹¹ As an alternative to coercive protectionist measures, another article in *Národní listy* suggested fostering the “healthy economic nationalism” as an individual citizen virtue on a voluntary basis: “It is necessary

¹⁸⁸ *Jutro*, 30. 11. 1929.

¹⁸⁹ *Jutro*, 28. 10. 1931.

¹⁹⁰ Vl. Klimecký “Nebezpečí z naší politiky soběstačnosti,” *Národní listy*, 8. 4. 1934.

¹⁹¹ Dr. K. Hoch, “Štěstí v koutku,” *Národní listy*, 25. 10. 1931.

to rise an urgent appeal to our consumers: 'Buy exclusively our products, which makes you help our industry and agriculture, which makes you help yourself as well!'"¹⁹²

The Austrian Greater Germans' attitude towards protectionism was considerably more favorable.¹⁹³ While the Slovene and the Czech national liberal heirs associated the causes for economic crisis with protectionism, the lack of fiscal responsibility and mutual trust between countries, the Greater Germans pointed primarily at the peace treaties of Versailles and Saint Germain. According to them it was the "peace dictates"¹⁹⁴ that above all caused the Austrian economic distress and, as the party leader Wotawa argued in 1930, "only the fulfillment of the national program, in addition to the defeat of the Marxist spirit [*Geist*], could permanently bring about an improvement of the social and economic conditions."¹⁹⁵ The project of customs union with Germany was thus treated as *conditio sine qua non* for a sustained economic recovery.¹⁹⁶ For the same very reason any attempt to treat Austria as a state, capable of independent survival, was being seen as "a straight treason against the people [*glatter Volksverrat*]" that could only bring the country further "into a politically and economically untenable position."¹⁹⁷

In the Austrian case, the critique of protectionism was thus limited only to specific problems and also changed through time, being especially linked to the growing

¹⁹² Prof. A. Eisner, "Krise a konsument" *Národní listy*, 13. 5. 1931.

¹⁹³ At a meeting of party executive committee in December 1931, Waber for instance established that: "The reason why economy [in Austria] is in such a sorry state, is located in the failed trade policy. In the past we have not protected our industrial and agricultural production sufficiently. In the business circles we have never found understanding with our demands, as their orientation was completely liberal." - AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 36, Verhandlungsschrift über die 2. Sitzung des Parteivorstandes am 17. Dezember 1931, 8 Uhr abends Parlament.

¹⁹⁴ "Die Kampfziele der großdeutschen Bewegung," *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 23. 3. 1932.

¹⁹⁵ "Präsident Wotawa über die Intrigen gegen Schober. Für die Erfüllung des nationalen Programms," *Neue Freie Presse*, 6. 6. 1930.

¹⁹⁶ "Die Großdeutschen fordern Volkswahl," *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 31. 8. 1931; "Für die österreichische Heimat und das Gesamtdeutschum. Ein Aufruf der Großdeutschen Volkspartei," *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 24. 6. 1933.

¹⁹⁷ "Die Großdeutschen fordern Volkswahl," *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 31. 8. 1931.

antagonism with the ruling Christian Socials, whom Hans Schürff accused of “partisan patronage economy [*parteimäßige Protektionswirtschaft*].”¹⁹⁸ As we shall see later, the otherwise negative views on protectionism were however particularly in the Austrian and the Slovene cases coupled with various protectionist policies in practice. If nothing else, the international economic reality and protectionist measures introduced by other countries forced them to practically renounce any principled positions in favor of free trade.

In the Slovene case this articulated itself particularly in the defense of domestic industry and labor against foreign competition. Despite detrimental effects of custom barriers for international trade and “interests of all the global economy,” *Jutro* concluded that in the given circumstances the Yugoslav imports policy, “one of the most liberal ones in Europe,” was bringing only “sacrifices on our part” and no “essential benefit.”¹⁹⁹ Kramer, speaking to the National Assembly, argued that “systematic implementation of the policy for protecting domestic labor” by various means, including custom barriers, was required for “economic, as well as cultural, social and financial reasons.” At the same time he concluded that the “question where the compromise boundary for demarcating the interests in protecting domestic industry” lay, was “very delicate and complicated.”²⁰⁰ Promoting direct links abroad for the sake of opening new markets while simultaneously investing efforts in protecting domestic labor and production was also the policy that Kramer implemented as Minister for Industry and Trade.²⁰¹ By 1934 the protectionist orientation of Slovene progressives became unambiguous, as the JNS delegates from Slovenia

¹⁹⁸ “Minister Schürff gegen die neue Regierung,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 1. 10. 1930.

¹⁹⁹ “Zaščita domačega dela, *Jutro*,” 24. 12. 1931.

²⁰⁰ “Glavni problemi naše gospodarske politike,” *Jutro*, 9. 3. 1932.

²⁰¹ Perovšek, O demokraciji, 220.

In this capacity Kramer also formed the basic guidelines of Yugoslav economic policy.

addressed a resolution to the party leadership, demanding “revision of employment for foreigners” and prohibition of employment in Yugoslavia “to all those who are not indispensable experts.”²⁰²

Practical Policy Approaches for Confronting the Crisis

In spite of to an extent varying perceptions about the meaning of crisis and its longer-term implications the immediate measures for battling the crisis proposed by the three parties did not include any demands for radical change. *Národní listy* associated the crisis with “delusion that did not correspond to the natural economic and social laws,” pointing out that it was “known from history that after every crisis comes a conjuncture and vice versa.”²⁰³ In the Austrian case the Salzburg GdVP representative Neumann similarly argued at the 1931 party convention that unless the party wished to be “economic revolutionaries like the Social Democrats and National Socialists” it must above all “cling to the given economic facts” and “care to develop this tradition of economic facts further in a natural way and in accord to the circumstances.”²⁰⁴

Ivan Pucelj on the other hand, claiming that the situation in other countries was even worse than in Yugoslavia, justified a cautious approach towards dealing with the crisis with the following words:

“Yet some say that it would be possible to bring about a better state of affairs by changing the regime. I ask only why do more experienced people than we Yugoslavs not do that? If they could alleviate their crisis by regime change, the English would certainly do that seven times, the Germans ten times and Americans twenty times. However, they are not doing that. When everything is shaking, the policy needs to be most stable and most firm

²⁰² “Najnujnejše gospodarske in socialne naloge,” *Jutro*, 6. 9. 1934.

²⁰³ Antonin Pimper, “Konec kapitalismu?“, *Národní listy*, 18. 10. 1931.

²⁰⁴ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP K. 35, Reichsparteitag 4-6 12 1931.

and, if you wish, also most conservative.”²⁰⁵

Within the Yugoslav context it needs also to be taken into account that the ruling party to some extent instrumentalized the economic crisis to further legitimize the undemocratic regime, instituted before the Great Depression had begun and for different reasons. Rhetoric and slogans, employed for overcoming the “tribal differences” between Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and the *political* crisis that had in 1928 brought the country to a standstill, now incorporated the notion of *economic* crisis. The latter to a large extent overtook the position of the political one as the central “villain.” At the same time the crisis came to serve as an additional argument in favor of “social solidarity” as the antipode to the “class struggle”, since the “community of destiny [*skupnost usode*]” between “the masses” and “the capital” had never before “appeared so blatantly,” dictating “constructive work of all social strata.”²⁰⁶ Within rhetoric the socio-economic and national considerations thereby became linked as an inseparable whole so that Kramer could claim that “the struggle for the employment of our workers, for their existential minimum and social protection” was “the national duty of every true Yugoslav.”²⁰⁷

Common approaches, distinctive for all the three national cases, were the demands for thrift and austerity, a balanced budget and a stable currency. The imperative of saving was especially pronounced in the rhetoric of the Czechoslovak National Democrats, whose leadership continued to loyally follow Alois Rašin's slogan “*prácovat a šetřit!*” (work and save!).²⁰⁸ The “virtue of saving” was for instance praised in a longer column in *Národní*

²⁰⁵ “Ministra Dr. Kramer in Pucelj o političnem položaju v državi in v Sloveniji,” *Jutro*, 7. 6. 1932.

²⁰⁶ “Glavni problemi naše gospodarske politike,” *Jutro*, 9. 3. 1932.

²⁰⁷ “Minister dr. Kramer o aktualnih javnih vprašanjih,” *Jutro*, 8. 5. 1934.

²⁰⁸ *Národní listy*, 11. 3. 1934.

listy, written by M. Sísová, entitled “The School of Thrift [*Škola spořivosti*]”²⁰⁹ Claiming that precisely the present era “should act as the most fertile ground for the new seed of this abandoned virtue” representing the time “in which we are learning that the nation's salvation is saving, thrift,”²¹⁰ the author counterposed France and Germany as examples of thrift on the one hand and wastefulness on the other:

“The petty-bourgeois spirit of France, which the Germans have derided so much, makes France the most powerful and richest country This petty-bourgeois spirit, whose most characteristic sign is to save a life annuity for oneself, to secure an independent life, gives France not only the security and peace of mind, but also brings along the welfare and with it the flourishing of culture and art. This petty-bourgeois spirit will also launch a new future, as the socialist collectivism is being unable to create a new order with a new prosperity, and as the time firmly rejects the possibility of a dictatorship of powerful individuals.”²¹¹

This example was also meant to pose a lesson for Czechoslovakia, which had ceased to represent “that *Rašinian* island”²¹² and begun to live above its means.

The demands for thrift also stood in the foreground in Slovenia, where the “three base points” for forming the 1931/32 budget of the Drava Province (*banovina*), as formulated in ban Marušič's inaugural speech, were to be “work, thrift, economy.”²¹³ Ministers Kramer and Pucelj, as well as various members of parliament expressed the same demands on numerous occasions.²¹⁴ The daily *Jutro* warned that also in Yugoslavia “wrong concepts” had “been spreading[...] about what is better in the national-economic perspective: save or

²⁰⁹ “Škola spořivosti,” *Národní listy*, 23. 10. 1931.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹¹ *Ibid.*

²¹² *Ibid.*

²¹³ Miroslav Stiplovšek, “Začetek delovanja banskega sveta Dravske banovine leta 1931” in *Melikov zbornik: Slovenci v zgodovini in njihovi srednjeevropski sosedje*, Vincenc Rajšp et al. (eds.) (Ljubljana: Založba ZRC, 2001), p. 955.

²¹⁴ See for instance: “Gospodarsko delo v bodoči Narodni skupščini,” *Jutro*, 27. 10. 1931; “Anglija nas uči,” *Jutro*, 30. 10. 1931; “Državni proračun,” *Jutro*, 7. 2. 1932; “Po proračunski razpravi,” *Jutro*, 12. 3. 1932; “Ministra Kramer in Pucelj o političnem položaju,” *Jutro*, 8. 11. 1932; Nar. posl. Ivan Mohorič, “Naše naloge,” *Jutro*, 24. 12. 1932; Minister Dr. Albert Kramer, “Naporno delo za lepše dni,” *Jutro*, 24. 12. 1932.

spend?”²¹⁵ Only implementation of the “principle of national thrift” the newspaper wrote, could bring about “a permanent balance in the state economy, the basic condition for economic recovery.”

In the Austrian case the demands for saving put forward by the leading representatives of GdVP and *Schoberblock*²¹⁶ were also joined by the demand for “measures to reduce the oppressive tax burdens”²¹⁷ At the same time the Greater Germans – in contrast to their Slovene and especially Czech counterparts – were not prepared to save funds by reducing the public employees' bonus salaries. It was actually the question of the 13th salary that made them leave the Ender government in June 1931 and contributed to the permanent end to the decade long cooperation with the Christian Socials in the following year. Such a saving program, termed by the Lower Austrian Greater German representative Zarboch as “*Katastrophenpolitik*,”²¹⁸ was from the Greater German perspective, “one-sided” and “unsocial.”²¹⁹ As Otto Lutz, Supreme Court senior official and a GdVP member, argued in his long discussion in *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, the planned reduction of salaries violated “two basic principles that no civic [*bürgerlich*] government” should have violated: the “Principle of stability of the salaries of civil servants” and the “Principle of equality of sacrifice [*Opfergleichheit*] for all citizens, which is valid in every civilized state

²¹⁵ ”Delo finančnega odbora,” *Jutro*, 4. 2. 1934.

²¹⁶ ”Wotawa über die Drangsalierung der Presse,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 1. 11. 1930; ”Riesenversammlung Dr. Schobers in Linz,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 7. 11. 1930; AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K, 10: Verband der Abgeordneten des Nationalen Wirtschaftsblocks. Protokoll über die 4. Sitzung am 27. XI. 1930 um 10 ½ Uhr vormittags; ”Die Kampfziele der großdeutschen Bewegung,” *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 23. 3. 1932.

²¹⁷ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K, 34, Reichsparteitag 20.-22. 4. 1930 - Politische Entschliessung.

Cf. also: ”Das politische Sofortprogramm der Großdeutschen,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 8. 12. 1931: ”Tax simplification; Reduction of the interest rate (...) cheaper, easier administration on the federal level, in the provinces and municipalities; (...) Restoration of the principle of inviolability of property in economic legislation, especially in case of tax and social laws.”

²¹⁸ ”Wieder Katastrophenpolitik?,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 19. 5. 1931.

²¹⁹ ”Gegen die Gehaltskürzung,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 3. 5. 1931.

[*Kulturstaat*] as a matter of course.”²²⁰ “A wise government” and “a parliament which is not merely a heap of interested parties” shall not push away those “that were in all times the most faithful servants of the state.”²²¹

The Greater German People's party continued to persistently protest against pay cuts for public employees, which largely characterized the party's 1931-32 political course,²²² consolidating further its image of a *Beamtenpartei* and bringing it in disagreement with the industrialist circles and Chambers of Commerce.²²³ The Czechoslovak National Democrats, albeit also a party of (higher) public servants itself, on the other hand made deliberate demands for saving in public administration.²²⁴ This reflected the hegemony of Hodáč's industrialist wing within the party which had largely steered it towards defending the interests of the big business, despite internal discord and protests by various groups, including the state employees represented by Ježek.²²⁵

The rationale of the Slovene section of JRSD-JNS during the same period was on the other hand reducing the public servants' salaries in order to maintain their numbers. Kramer

²²⁰ Dr. Otto Lutz, “Gleiche Lasten!”, *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 3. 5. 1931.

²²¹ *Ibid.*

²²² See for instance: “Nationale Politik in Oesterreich,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 11. 5. 1931; “Die Sanierung der Creditanstalt beschlossen,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 14. 5. 1931; “Entscheidende Tage,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 16. 5. 1931; “Beamtenopfer und Regierung,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 18. 5. 1931; “Nicht nur Finanzkrise,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 28. 5. 1931; “Rücktritt des Ministers Dr. Schürff,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 30. 5. 1931; AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 36, RI-13, Verhandlungsschrift über die Sitzung des Parteivorstandes am 2 Juni 1931 um 4 Uhr nachmittags im Parlament; AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 36, RI-13, Verhandlungsschrift über die Sitzung des Parteivorstandes am 17. Juni 1931 um 6 Uhr nachm. Parlament; Hans Schürff, “Nationale Politik in Oesterreich,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 19. 7. 1931; “Die Grossdeutschen drohen mit ihrem Austritt aus der Regierung,” *Der Wiener Tag*, 24. 9. 1931; “Das politische Sofortprogramm der Großdeutschen,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 8. 12. 1931; “Die Kampfziele der großdeutschen Bewegung,” *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 23. 3. 1932; “Die Großdeutschen gegen eine neuerliche Kürzung der Beamtengehälter,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 5. 4. 1932; “Die Absage des Nationalen Wirtschaftsblocks an Dr. Dolfuß,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 19. 5. 1932.

²²³ Cf. Dieter Stiefel, *Die Große Krise in einem kleinen Land: österreichische Finanz- und Wirtschaftspolitik 1929-1938* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1988), p. 80.

²²⁴ *Národní listy*, 20. 6. 1933.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*

thereby defended this position as a "Slovene policy," since Slovenes had been "especially strongly represented in our bureaucratic personnel." Emphasizing that as the representative of the city of Ljubljana, he had probably more "votes from the circles of public employees" than any other fellow MP, he also "victoriously" countered any further cuts.²²⁶

Another important issue for all the three discussed parties was maintaining the stability of the national currency. In Austria, where otherwise consensus between parties was a rare occurrence, a stable currency and a balanced budget represented the "basic consensus on economic policy," standing as the highest goal of governmental policies between 1923 and 1937²²⁷ with which the Greater Germans went along.²²⁸ In Yugoslavia, the continuous efforts to maintain the value of *dinar* (and to peg it to gold which succeeded in 1931) stood in center of the government policy and obviously received support from the progressive press.²²⁹

The issue of currency was however far most pronounced in the Czech case, where it is not an exaggeration to say that it represented the central topic of economic policy – or in the words of Karel Kramář - "*punctum saliens* of everything, the question of all questions (...) the key to our entire situation, not merely economic but also political."²³⁰ There the defense of stable currency was also connected to the firm insistence on the gold standard, seen as one of the crucial guarantees for continuous international prestige and confidence in Crown.²³¹ According to *Národní listy*, labeling the accumulation of gold reserves as

²²⁶ "Ministra Kramer in Pucelj o političnem položaju," *Jutro*, 8. 11. 1932.

²²⁷ Stiefel, *Die große Krise*, 211-212.

²²⁸ See for instance: "Wirtschaftsdebatte," *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 23. 10. 1931 and "Kampf gegen das System Dolfuß," *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 12. 12. 1932.

²²⁹ See for instance: "Naše državno gospodarstvo," *Jutro*, 5. 2. 1932; "Po proračunski razpravi," *Jutro*, 12. 3. 1932; "Ministra Dr. Kramer in Pucelj o političnem položaju v državi in v Sloveniji," *Jutro*, 7. 6. 1932.

²³⁰ "Řeč dr. Kramáře v zahraničním výboru," *Národní listy*, 22. 10. 1931.

²³¹ Cf. Zora P. Pryor, "Czechoslovak Fiscal Policies in the Great Depression," *The Economic History Review, New Series*, Vol. 32, No. 2 (May, 1979): pp. 228-240, p. 238.

“bowing to the golden calf,” as some “theoreticians” did, was a grave mistake, because only gold, acting as a “symbol of trust” in international financial and economic relations, could “ensure confidence.”²³²

The firm insistence on the solid base for Crown, expressed itself most resolutely in the spring of 1934, when the National Democrats switched to opposition after the Malypetr government had decided to support Engliš's plan for devaluing the national currency. This was a step that National Democracy, committed to the heritage of Alois Rašín and the principle of solid currency that had provided Czechoslovakia with international prestige during the economically unstable times after the First World War, could not tolerate. Kramář, Hodáč and other leaders argued that their firm defense of the stable money value was grounded in both purely economic and moral reasons, Kramář stating that it was inflation that had “paved way for Hitlerism and communism” in Germany.²³³ In their public proclamations,²³⁴ it was above all for the sake of the middle classes, “the people with stable but small income”²³⁵ and their savings that they opposed the devaluation. In an open letter to the Prime Minister, the party leadership wrote:

“It is about the entire nation and not merely some of its estates or classes. It is also about the middle strata (...) the strata that have, together with the others, been the powerful fundamental creator of the savings and the Czechoslovak national property. The Czechoslovak capital intended for production and labor is not concentrated in one pair of hands, but is capital managed in the form of savings of the broadest popular masses. This capital has been created through decades of saving on the basis of one of the major moral ingredients [*složky*] of every nation – in the effort to secure the family, secure the enterprises and the property. (...) It was these moral ingredients that gave us the power of resistance against Austria and founded the opinion of the

²³² Antonín Pimper, “Konec kapitalismu?“, *Národní listy*, 18. 10. 1931.

²³³ “Vzkaz Dr. Karla Kramáře,” *Národní listy*, 19. 2. 1934.

²³⁴ For instance see: “Proč odcházíme z vlády,” *Národní listy*, 15. 2. 1934; “Pevná měna pilířem republiky,” *Národní listy*, 17. 2. 1934; Karel Kramář, “V opozici,” *Národní listy*, 18. 2. 1934; Ladislav Rašín “Vědomí odpovědnosti,” *Národní listy*, 18. 2. 1934; “Nevzdáme se odkazu dr. Rašína,” *Národní listy*, 18. 2. 1934; “Vzkaz Dr. Karla Kramáře,” *Národní listy*, 19. 2. 1934; Karel Domin, “Devalvace a naše národní kultura,” *Národní listy*, 21. 2. 1934.

²³⁵ “Vzkaz Dr. Karla Kramáře,” *Národní listy*, 19. 2. 1934.

allies that we deserved our independence.”²³⁶

In the other two cases under scrutiny Gold Standard did not play such a central role. At least from 1933 it ceased to represent the key guarantee for international reputation and confidence in *dinar* for Slovene progressives. After golden basis had been abolished for dollar, *Jutro* thus wrote that the “illusion of the stable value of gold “ had been pushed aside by the “recognition which is old as the money itself, namely that we do not have a reliable and stable criterion of value.”²³⁷ In line with this view the state-directed modifications of asset ratio disparities in favor of debtors by means of currency devaluation were not seen as illegitimate.²³⁸ This also reflected in *Jutro*’s comments on the above discussed devaluation of Crown and the resulting crisis of the Czechoslovak government.²³⁹

5. 2. 2. Continuity and Change in Discourse and Ideology

During the hardest years of the economic crisis, the official discourse and ideas on social and economic order espoused by the subjects of this discussion remained in their substance roughly the same and did not differ substantially from those advocated during the 1920s. The central ideological tenet continued to be “national solidarity” - in the Greater German case *Volksgemeinschaft* - which was not joined by any profoundly new ideological

²³⁶ ”Proč odcházíme z vlády,” *Národní listy*, 15. 2. 1934.

²³⁷ ”Nejasen položaj po padcu dolarja,” *Jutro*, 23. 4. 1933.

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ ”Po devalvaciji češkoslovaške krone,” *Jutro*, 22. 2. 1934.

elements during 1930-33. Socializing and redistributionist demands of the early 1920s were thereby largely omitted from the programmatic documents and statements.

In the Czech case the continuous and explicit adherence to the ideal of national solidarity may well be seen in an article that appeared in *Národní listy* in March of 1934, responding to the fascist newspaper *Poledny list*.²⁴⁰ The latter had accused the National Democrats of an unprincipled stance of supporting the social democrats on some issues and agrarians on the others. The National Democratic Party responded that it easily accepted the full responsibility for its handling of specific political questions and added that “all the efforts” of the party were pointed “in one direction: towards nivelization of class and estate antagonisms, as the common interest of our state and its economic life had demanded.” ČsND simply could not accept for the economic questions to be solved either “through one-sided class interest of the social democrats” or “exclusively according to the estate interest of the republicans,” standing against “class and estate-based treatment of important economic and political questions.”²⁴¹

While less commonly employed during the 1920s, the notion of “national solidarity” was adopted by the Yugoslav National Party as the central catchword and programmatic point in its economic and social policy. It stood in the JNS program as the “second basic idea” after the Yugoslav national unity.²⁴² In his September 1932 report Kramer described this basic orientation as follows:

“our state policy is not estate-based, it is not an interest policy of one estate. Our

²⁴⁰ “Proti zájmům tříd a stavů zájem národa a státu!,” *Národní listy*, 23. 3. 1934.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Speech of Juraj Demetrović in *Jugoslovenska nacionalna stranka (prvi zemaljski kongres, Beograd 1933)* (Belgrade: Sekretariat JNS, 1933), p. 39.

See also: *Program i statuti Jugoslovenske nacionalne stranke* (Belgrade: Gen. Sekretarijat JNS, 1933), p. 11: “JNS can not support the idea that the interests of the various economic ranks [*privrednih redova*] are in irreconcilable conflict. One of the governing principles of its economic policy is reconciling economic interests of all ranks in the spirit of national solidarity.”

party program, which has also been adopted by the National Assembly and which the royal government is trying to implement, is a program of national solidarity, program of necessity, of harmony between interests of various estates and professional groups of our nation.”²⁴³

It must be by all means emphasized that within the context of the early 1930s Yugoslav politics the notions “national solidarity” and “social harmony” acted more as propaganda slogans than genuine programmatic points. They were namely part of the official rhetoric, which claimed that these goals had actually already been reached. This reflected well in the writing of *Jutro* that stated at the peak of the economic crisis:

“the idea of national community has penetrated deeply into all strata of the population (...) In this way have we now in Yugoslavia, in an era of great economic crises and major social turmoil, reached social peace and order and thus consolidated our inner affairs like hardly any other country in Europe. Without all the phrases and declamations about social equality the government with its positive and real efforts on improving the position of the economically weak classes has in a gradual and almost unnoticed manner enforced a regime of true social harmony.”²⁴⁴

Leading Slovene progressives’ public statements on economic policy were in line with the positions of their party. For that reason it is quite difficult to discern which parts of their declarations on the economic program and policy reflected genuine ideas and potential shifts from the positions held during the 1920s and which represented mere rhetoric adjustments to the current political situation. Even more so, since the JRSD and JNS economic and social programs were rather vague and did not include many clearly defined demands and positions. Nevertheless, particularly Kramer and Pucelj often added specific emphases on certain points in their speeches that pertained to social and economic needs and circumstances of Slovenia.

²⁴³ “Poročilo ministra doktorja Kramerja,” *Jutro*, 12. 9. 1932.

²⁴⁴ “V znamenju narodne sloge in gospodarske vzajemnosti,” *Jutro*, 18. 10. 1931.

An example of this was also solidarism. Not only that it was, as we had seen earlier, not a new concept for Slovene progressives, representing an important element of their orientation already during the 1920s era of parliamentary democracy. Under the JNS regime it also assumed a specific function being often employed to point out and defend specific Slovene economic interests. The general JRSD and JNS programmatic orientation namely laid central stress on the agrarian character of the country and consequent special need for peasant-oriented policy, emphasizing that the “Yugoslav nation” was “predominantly a nation of peasants”²⁴⁵ and that “the interests of the state, nation and democracy” demanded for it to remain such.²⁴⁶ The proclamations made by Kramer, Pucelj and other notable progressive politicians more or less followed this official line.²⁴⁷ At the same time – while resolutely pursuing an embetterment of the peasants’ situation (debt relief, implementation of the land reform²⁴⁸) – particularly Kramer was prone to stress that the peasants should not be favored “at the cost of other estates.”²⁴⁹ Speaking at a rally in Maribor in November 1932 he thus - after uttering the usual JRSD formula about special attention for peasant problems – added the following:

“Especially we, representatives from the Drava Province, hold this banner of national solidarity high, because we are aware that only with it we may attain success in our demand for the state policy to especially guard and support the interests of our narrower Slovene homeland, which is by its economic and social structure an agrarian-industrial-artisan land and thus attached to the protection of the state against the foreign competition.”²⁵⁰

²⁴⁵ “Načela in smernice Jugoslovenske nacionalne stranke,” *Slovenski narod*, 21. 7. 1933; *Program i statuti*, 11.

²⁴⁶ “Nova stranka ustanovljena,” *Jutro*, 16. 12. 1931.

²⁴⁷ “Minister dr. Kramer o nalogah in delu JRKD,” *Jutro*, 28. 9. 1932.

²⁴⁸ See: “Volilni shodi v gornjegrajskem srezu,” *Jutro*, 11. 10. 1933.

²⁴⁹ “Ministra Kramer in Pucelj o političnem položaju,” *Jutro*, 8. 11. 1932.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

It is thus possible to speak about a special “Slovene” economic policy of progressives, in which the notion of solidarity between “estates” attained a special meaning that above all served the social and economic needs and interests of Slovenia. Also *Jutro* commonly criticized those actions of the central government which were to the detriment of the Slovene economy, whose future it saw “only in industrialization.”²⁵¹ Kramer explicitly linked the conditions of its survival to “those elementary and most primitive interests” of “cities, artisan, industrial and labor circles, public and private employees,” whose consideration he demanded from the “peasant representatives of our nation.”²⁵²

Slovene progressives’ defense of non-agrarian branches of economy and particularly the interests of consumers may be paralleled with the continuing adherence of the Austrian Greater Germans to *Konsumentenpolitik*, which in practice implied guarding the interests of urban population, especially the middle classes. Particularly the policy of protecting the domestic agriculture, which was especially distinctive for the Dolfuß government, was resolutely criticized not only by GdVP but also by business circles, as well as the Social Democrats.²⁵³ Consumers’ interests were also stressed in the official statements of Viennese liberals, assembled in the Democratic Centrist Party, whereby their general rejection of all

²⁵¹ “Davčna praksa in bilanciranje,” *Jutro*, 15. 10. 1933.

The issue at stake were particularly taxes and duties. The newspaper assessed them as too high and harmful for development, pointing out that the Drava province was not being merely disproportionately taxed but also far disproportionately paying into the central budget due to the its higher tax discipline. – See: “K načrtom za povišanje poslovnega davka in trošarin,” *Jutro*, 7. 8. 1932; “Naša davčna praksa,” *Jutro*, 8. 10. 1933; “Davčna praksa in bilanciranje,” *Jutro*, 15. 10. 1933; “Delo finančnega odbora,” *Jutro*, 4. 2. 1934; “Proračun finančnega ministra odobren,” *Jutro*, 12. 3. 1934.

²⁵² “Poročilo ministra doktorja Kramerja,” *Jutro*, 12. 9. 1932.

²⁵³ Stiefel, *Die Grosse Krise*, 368.

monopolistic measures in agricultural policy was more resolute and clear than in the case of Greater German People's Party.²⁵⁴

A good example of the latter was the question of grain monopoly in July 1930, where the Greater Germans were initially in favor of it,²⁵⁵ despite serious internal disagreements on the issue.²⁵⁶ Later, after the GDVP had entered the National Economic Block, also their position turned against the monopoly.²⁵⁷ The issue of grain monopoly also posed as an important political question in both Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, whereby the positions of both parties were clearly oppositional. After being introduced in September of 1931, the state monopoly on internal grain trade was abolished by the new Minister of Trade and Industry Albert Kramer in March of 1932. In his speech, Kramer justified the new government policy with the demand of “economic justice” to “give our working people the cheapest bread possible,” claiming that it represented the “far most just compromise solution between the interests of particular affected provinces.”²⁵⁸ The latter again concerned Slovenia, in particular with *Jutro* additionally defending the new regulation by stressing that it “will bring much direct and indirect relief especially for Slovenia (...) which has been relatively most affected by the grain regime.”²⁵⁹

In the Czechoslovak debate, the National Democrats resolutely argued against the proposal of the agrarian-led Ministry of Agriculture to introduce the grain monopoly, stating that it

²⁵⁴ “Leitsätze der Demokratischen Mittelpartei,” *Neue Zeit*, 13. 3. 1930; “Der Wahlaufuf der demokratischen Mittelpartei,” *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 19. 10. 1930; “Der Wahlaufuf der demokratischen Mittelpartei,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 19. 10. 1930.

²⁵⁵ “Das Notopfer für die Landwirtschaft vor dem Finanzausschusse - Die Großdeutschen für das Getreidemonopol,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 10. 7. 1930.

²⁵⁶ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 36 Verhandlungsschrift über die gemeinsame Sitzung von Klub und Parteivorstand am 3. Juli 1930 um 10 Uhr Vorm. Parlament.

²⁵⁷ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 36, Verband der Abgeordneten des Nationalen Wirtschaftsblocks. Protokoll über die 26. Sitzung am 12. Februar 1931 um 10 Uhr 15 vormittags.

²⁵⁸ “Ukinjenje žitnega monopola,” *Jutro*, 10. 3. 1932.

²⁵⁹ “Borba za cenejši kruh,” *Jutro*, 25. 3. 1932.

did not represent “a necessity from the viewpoint of neither international nor domestic needs.”²⁶⁰ In addition to defending the consumers and warning against “upsetting the broadest parts of population” with expensive bread, they also put forward a more principled defence of their position, connecting it with the “idea of individual economic liberty.”²⁶¹

As we had seen in the previous section, the immediate reactions to the World Economic Crisis and proposed measures for battling it did not signify any further illiberal shifts in the economic outlooks of the discussed three parties. During 1930-33 we could in all the three cases observe a rather “conservative” approach towards dealing with the economic crisis that above all manifested itself in demands and efforts towards thrift and economy, a balanced budget and a stable currency. Most importantly, demands for any major state intervention in economic life were absent. Looking at the discourse, moreover, a slightly opposite trend may be observable in dealing with economic questions and conceptualizing the relationship between the government and the economy. The parties under scrutiny did not explicitly turn towards economic liberalism, mostly rejecting the associated terms as *Jutro* did in 1931 when it wrote that “any attempt to [...] return to the old slogan 'laissez fair...'” would have “resembled preparations for suicide.”²⁶² Despite that they have in certain matters (re-)introduced positions that might be treated as economically fairly liberal. Most importantly their rhetoric and discourse, especially during 1930-33, was distinguished by a firm defence of the principle of private property as the necessary basis

²⁶⁰ “Národní demokracie setrvává na svém odmítavém stanovisku k obilnímu monopolu,” *Národní listy*, 29. 5. 1931.

²⁶¹ *Národní listy*, 30. 9. 1931.

²⁶² “Ni monopola na socialno vprašanje!,” *Jutro*, 25. 4. 1931.

for any economic progress²⁶³ as well as by pronounced stress on the importance of individual liberty and initiative in the economic life. Up until 1933 state intervention was largely a taboo.

In Austria, the principled defense of private property and initiative was foremostly connected to fierce anti-socialist rhetoric directed against the dangers of both socialism from the “left” (Social Democracy) and the “right” (National Socialism).²⁶⁴ In 1932, especially the latter represented the main foe, being accused of having a “national-bolshevik economic program.”²⁶⁵ At the same time economically “liberal” rhetoric was being pointed against the government as well. The Greater Germans during the crisis years commented that their country found itself in “a certain type of state socialism” or that private persons and companies in Austria became “not only socialized but also completely devoid of rights.” They thus pleaded for the free market order and against governmental interference with prices, high taxation and cartel agreements.²⁶⁶ This kind of rhetoric became central in mid-1932, the time of the “climax of economically political coercive measures in combating the crisis”²⁶⁷ on the part of the Dolfuß government – and after the Greater Germans had already firmly landed in opposition. The July 1932 declaration of the party leadership concluded that the “liberty of the people active in economy as well as the intellectually creative ones needs to be reinstated.”²⁶⁸ In December of the same year it also issued the following proclamation:

²⁶³ Cf. Program I Statuti JNS, 12; CZ-NA, NAD 464 František Xaver Hodáč, K. 164, “Mladi přátelé” (speech in Brno, 30.3.1933); AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 26, Parteiprogramm 1930.

²⁶⁴ Cf. “Kampf gegen das System Dolfuß,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 12. 12. 1932: “The Greater German People's Party is fighting the economically destructive goals of the Social Democrats, but also the arrogant demagoguery and the economic policy aberrations of the National Socialists.”

²⁶⁵ “Der großdeutsche Parteiführer wird Nationalsozialist,” *Reichspost*, 17. 6. 1932.

²⁶⁶ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 35, Reichsparteitag 4-6 12 1931.

²⁶⁷ Stiefel, *Die große Krise*, 256.

²⁶⁸ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 35 Verhandlungsschrift, 17. Juli 1932.

“The state party leadership calls for the abandonment of all state socialist experiments and the realization of the constructive program, based on private economy and serving the national community.”²⁶⁹

In the Austrian case this type of discourse was beyond any doubt connected to the already discussed new course of the party which began to increasingly characterize itself as a “middle class party”, and from late 1931 onwards also a “national-conservative” one. Similar outlooks may be traced in the case of Czechoslovak National Democrats. Their pronounced defense of the private property principle, stable currency and an explicit rejection of the governmental economic intervention,²⁷⁰ may partly be explained by the fact that the industrialist wing prevailed and also that the 1919 economic program was written mainly by the more left-leaning economist Karel Engliš, who departed the party already in the mid-1920s.

Within the internally split Czechoslovak National Democratic Party the private property principle was however being defended also by the opposing factions. This may be seen from a lecture which Viktor Dyk the highest ideological authority for the integral nationalist wing, delivered shortly before his death in 1931. Stressing the importance of individual responsibility as a moral social principle, Dyk re-stated the ČsND programmatic point that the “principal root of evil” did not lie in “the private ownership, but above all in its unjust distribution,” adding that each citizen should have a chance to develop economically and culturally and be thus „treated as responsible for his own destiny.“²⁷¹

²⁶⁹ “Kampf gegen das System Dolfuß,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 12. 12. 1932.

Criticizing the way in which the Austrian state helped *Creditanstalt* the Carinthian representative Hans Prodinger commented in the National Assembly that: “The free economy should mean that the individual owner is liable for what he does with his whole fortune.” (“Wirtschaftsproblem Oesterreich,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 23. 10. 1931)

²⁷⁰ *Národní listy*, 28. 5. 1933, 20. 6. 1933.

²⁷¹ Viktor Dyk, *Československá národní demokracie. Cyklus přednášek „o ideologii českoslov. Politických stran“ VII.* (Praha: Tiskový odbor Usčs 1931), pp. 7-8.

At the same time it must be stressed that the Greater Germans, while firmly defending the principles of private property and entrepreneurial freedom, continued to strongly criticize the “existing forms of capitalism,” which they equated with “dictatorship of trusts, cartels and industrial banks.” While the pre-WWI order “may rightly be called democratic capitalism,”²⁷² the contemporary system was hostile to *Volksgemeinschaft* in the same way as “marxism with its will for the dictatorship of the proletariat and state capitalism” had been.²⁷³ The Czechoslovak National Democratic press judged the international issues, such as the Viennese *Creditanstalt*, in a similar vein, claiming that the state recapitalization of the bank constituted “an unconditional deviation from the liberalist system and water on the mill for socialists and state socialism.”²⁷⁴ The already discussed article by Antonin Pimper that appeared in October 1931 in *Národní listy* presents some further examples of this economically liberal outlook:

"We agree that modern democracy today and in the future can not do without social and other reforms which are a condition for global development. In some countries, for example in North America, the extreme and one-sided capitalism should not be exercised [*anymore*] in the future, forgetting the important social tasks and not taking into account that the social structure has been changing and that people of independent means have been in unstoppable decline. From this perspective, some of its own adherents had criticized liberalism already at the end of the 18th century but nevertheless - individualistic entrepreneurship has persevered up until now, proving itself, while many collectivist experiments of management have completely failed."²⁷⁵

The basic stress on “individualistic entrepreneurship” was however combined with the acknowledgement of a changing and increasingly complex social structure and associated “important social tasks,” revealing elements of reformed liberalism. Kramář, discussing

²⁷² "Die Nationale Mitte," *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 17. 5. 1931.

²⁷³ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 25, L-II Propagandamaterial Gemeinderatswahlen 1932 Wien, „Leset! Prüfet! Entscheidet! Unsere Kampfziele“ (leaflet).

²⁷⁴ Dr. F. Dřevo, “Jěště k sanaci rakouské Kreditky,” *Národní listy*, 17. 5. 1931.

²⁷⁵ Antonin Pimper, “Konec kapitalismu?“, *Národní listy*, 18. 10. 1931.

the proper role of the state in a speech to the Foreign Affairs Committee in October 1931, stated that, while being against the expansion of state-controlled economy and further “regulation of private entrepreneurship”, he did not “speak from the standpoint of the French liberals that perceive the state as the most terrible thing.”²⁷⁶ As regards his own social and economic political orientation, he “was and has remained to an extent statist-social.”²⁷⁷ It might be added that this was roughly the position on social matters that he had developed as a young politician in the last decade of 19th century and clung to it afterward until the end of his life. Originally, quite a “leftist” approach, his position came to be seen as a largely “conservative” after the Czechoslovak state was founded and “everything turned to the left.”

In the Slovene case, taking into account the narrow space for expressing genuine views on (domestic) economic policy, as well as quite vague official positions of the ruling party, explicit and resolute defense of free enterprise and market economy was the least characteristic. Simultaneously, however, and along with the already discussed scepticism against protectionism and autarchism, demands for any major economic intervention were largely absent until 1933. Even in 1934 Kramer warned that “linking economy to politics and the false thesis about autarchy” had created “a whole range of complications that had also caused tremendous harm to our country.”²⁷⁸

It is also worth mentioning that the progressive press published and positively evaluated thoughts of economists such as Ludwig von Mises²⁷⁹ and Georg Bernhard.²⁸⁰ These articles

²⁷⁶ “Řeč dr. Kramáře v zahraničním výboru,” *Národní listy*, 22. 10. 1931.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

²⁷⁸ “Minister Dr. Kramer o aktualnih javnih vprašanjih,” *Jutro*, 8. 5. 1934.

²⁷⁹ “Križa in kapitalizem,” *Jutro*, 20. 10. 1931.

²⁸⁰ Georg Bernhard, “Meje politike,” *Jutro*, 12. 5. 1931:

“The distinction between the national economy and the global economy, so popular nowadays does not in fact exist at all. All this are merely ancillary constructions of the frail human mind that must, for the sake of

discussed the crisis particularly from the point of view of the relationship between the state and economy, expressing profoundly liberal ideas that were not completely in line with the programmatic positions of the JRSD (and later JNS). Even more important to mention from the view of broader comparison is that the review of Mises' *Die Krise und der Kapitalismus* appeared in *Jutro* only three days after having been published in *Neue Freie Presse*,²⁸¹ while it appeared neither in the Greater German *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, nor in *Národní listy*. At the same time, however, *Jutro* also published texts by economic theoreticians that did not advocate free market economy – such as the famous representative of the German historical school Werner Sombart, who spoke about “inner transformation of capitalism.”²⁸² Inner pluralism of the progressive camp in economic matters reflected in the writing of its principal political newspaper.

Marxism and socialism were being equally criticized by all the parties under scrutiny. The central line of the Slovene progressive press was strictly anti-Marxist. Although expressing a degree of solidarity with the suppressed German and Austrian social democracy during 1933-34, *Jutro* at the same time argued that its decline had been inevitable.²⁸³ *Národní listy* criticized intellectuals that were enthused by the “communist utopia” and “the idea of absolute equality of people, work and the material results of that work.”²⁸⁴ It concluded

its thinking, invent categories that do not exist in nature. Laws that are normal for the economy of individual nations are valid within the larger framework for the world economy as well. (...) It would be of great significance to remove the already existing artificial interference with the normal evolution of European economy – namely the existing custom boundaries between individual countries.”

²⁸¹ “Die Krise und der Kapitalismus,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 17. 10. 1931.

²⁸² “Sombart o razvoju gospodarstva,” *Jutro*, 22. 3. 1931.

²⁸³ For instance see: “Pot navzdol,” *Jutro*, 23. 4. 1934.

An unambiguously anti-Marxist position pointed against the Second International was also advocated by the progressive trade union National Professional Union (*Narodna strokovna zveza*) – see: “Borbe narodnega delavstva,” *Jutro*, 15. 5. 1933. “Shod narodnega delavstva v Trbovljah,” *Jutro*, 17. 2. 1934. “Kongres narodnega delavstva,” *Jutro*, 9. 4. 1935.

²⁸⁴ “Z Pavlů Šavlové,” *Národní listy*, 22. 10. 1932.

that this idea, being "as old as the world itself" had been numerous times tried to be brought into life. Everybody, "who knows only a bit about the history of human civilization" however also knew how all of such attempts had "shattered, since in reality there is not and can not be any other equality than the one before law in a country that has its legislation in order, and before God for those who believe in him."²⁸⁵

An editorial in *Jutro* published on the tenth anniversary of Lenin's death similarly pointed out that "more than anytime before [...] a resolute will" was present, demanding "for the necessary social reforms to be carried out without Marxism and against it."²⁸⁶ "The contemporary anti-democratic and democratic movements in Europe" were "in spite of all the diversity of their positions, forms and objectives" united in persuasion that they had to "prevent the social disintegration" as it was being prepared by "the international of Moscow fanatics" through "exploiting of democratic liberties." The fierce anti-Marxist critique of *Jutro* was however joined by an explicit shift away from liberal understandings of private property. As the "most recent labor legislation in Italy and Germany" had been showing, the latter had been "increasingly developing into a social form," bound to "social responsibility." Although this did not imply "recognition of all that what the fascists of diverse sorts and versions in Europe" had been doing, the editorial argued, it was clear that the "era of unbridled individualism" was over.²⁸⁷

This was an example of a gradual discursive shift that became apparent especially from 1933 onwards, signifying a change in the political economic paradigm. It was particularly distinctive for the Slovene progressives where it reflected in the party rhetoric and official

²⁸⁵ Ibid.

²⁸⁶ "Za zemljo in lastnino," *Jutro*, 21. 1. 1934.

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

press that contained demands for large-scale public works, protection of domestic labor, as well as economic planning. A good example was the resolution adopted by the JNS delegates from the Drava Province in autumn of 1934, which stated among other that only “the impetus of organisatory work that should be carried out according to an economic plan for several years ahead” could bring “the satisfaction [...] back to the nation” and strengthen the state power.²⁸⁸ The new trend was also followed by the main progressive daily newspaper *Jutro*, which in 1935 wrote:

“It is naïve to expect that the new wave of economic prosperity will again recall the millions of unemployed into the mechanized, automatized and rationalized factories and that it will moreover provide work to the new millions of generations that are still growing up – on the basis of the primitive principles of the former free economy. In the vast majority of the countries measures have already been taken which put the national economy on the new footing: protective tariffs, state monopolies, corporative systems and authoritarian regimes are only various and differently escalated [*stopnjevane*] forms of the inevitable state interventionism against the chaotic development that accompanied the falsely [*pogrešno*] understood economic liberalism.”²⁸⁹

During the years 1933-35 new ideas about expanded involvement of the government in economy were irresistibly trickling into Central and Southeastern Europe, affecting the courses of governments. Especially in the predominantly agrarian countries of Southeast and East-Central Europe such as Yugoslavia, where the crisis had been fiercer and more far-reaching than in the more developed countries, a “genesis of etatism”²⁹⁰ commenced by the mid 1930s. Particularly the deep agrarian crisis, creating an impression of a complete malfunction of the market mechanisms, contributed to this development.²⁹¹ The governments thus began orienting themselves (mostly unsuccessfully) towards a guided

²⁸⁸ “Najnujnejše gospodarske in socialne naloge,” *Jutro*, 6. 9. 1934.

²⁸⁹ “Potrebe organizacije tehničnega dela,” *Jutro*, 2. 7. 1935.

²⁹⁰ John R. Lampe, *Balkans into Southeastern Europe* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 128.

²⁹¹ In the circumstances of deep agrarian crisis and drastic fall of prices the agricultural production ceased to function according to the usual mechanisms of supply and demand, reacting to the latter’s decline with hyperproduction. - Berend, *Decades*, 254–255.

agrarian policy which was supposed to turn the predominantly agrarian economies from the blind alley. This was joined by reinforced initiatives towards state-led industrialization and general technologic modernization which, albeit being present already before the crisis, within the new circumstances relied considerably less on the “natural” market forces.

In all the cases, including more developed economies such as Czechoslovakia, initiatives to bring the economic “chaos” under control and enforce a rational guidance of economic processes stepped into the foreground. Measures of the US president Roosevelt, the penetration of John Maynard Keynes' theories and economic recipes and – in closer vicinity – the Nazi economic policies resonated strongly in the Central European public sphere and politics. “Economic planning” soon became a standard part of political vocabulary. The new *Zeitgeist* was expressed well by *Misel in delo*, a newly founded Slovene journal, written by intellectuals that stood close to the Yugoslav National Party. In its third issue in 1934 it wrote:

“The claims of enlightened spirits sound straightforwardly like a command: namely that the origin of all the troubles lies in the liberal-capitalist principles of the past century which still form the basis of the economic order in spite of already being obsolete.”²⁹²

In a similar vein *Demokratický střed* wrote in the same year that as “marxist socialism” the “shallow liberalism” had also been “surpassed” despite remaining the “starting point” for most of the Czech parties including the National Democrats.²⁹³ The “problem for democrats” and “the great task” especially for the “young intelligentsia” lay in attaining a “synthesis of the democratic idea of liberty with the new orientations that are leading towards regulation of economic life.”²⁹⁴

²⁹² Fran Trček, “Kratek pregled slovenskega združništva,” *Misel in delo*, nr. 3 (1934): 32.

²⁹³ “Nic naplat...,” *Demokratický střed*, yr. 11, nr. 10 (9. 3. 1934).

²⁹⁴ “K Vyšší syntezě,” *Demokratický střed*, yr. 11, nr. 3 (19. 1. 1934).

In each of the cases under scrutiny the discussed gradual change in the political economic paradigm expressed itself in different ways, which was not solely a consequence of different developmental levels and economic structures of the three countries. Whereas the Slovene progressives represented the Yugoslav regime and took part in forming its policies, the Czechoslovak National Democrats and the Greater German People's Party stood in opposition within – at least in the case of Czechoslovakia – still functioning democracies. This also partly reflected in their positions towards the new paradigm and the corresponding rhetoric. ČsND for instance continuously opposed most kinds of government intervention, arguing against state regulation “in determining prices, but also tax system, social burdens, wages and entire productive investments of industry in general”²⁹⁵

As we shall see at a later point, substantial reform proposals were being voiced by various circles within the National Democratic party. The official party line however followed a more cautious approach, which may at least partly be attributed to the fact that the so-called “industrialist wing” prevailed in its leadership. Its main representative and the de-facto party leader Hodáč thus spoke of the need of “coordinating all the forces towards the improvement in economic affairs, where the state has influence over them”²⁹⁶ and not about extending this influence. Especially after the party had moved into opposition, it stood on firmly economically liberal positions in protesting the government policies. In particular, Hodáč protested the 1934 “enabling law” that gave the government wide powers for economic intervention without needing parliamentary approval.²⁹⁷ His comment on the

²⁹⁵ Cf. Otto Podpěra, “Hospodářství volné nebo vázané,” *Národní listy*, 25. 3. 1934.

²⁹⁶ “Pro hospodářskou obrodu, pro lepší zaměstnanost,” *Národní listy*, 12. 11. 1933.

²⁹⁷ Petr Kurssa, František Xaver Hodáč, Příspěvek k portrétu, MA thesis (Prague: Petr Kurssa, 1998), pp. 73-74.

harmful effects of economic interventionism in *Národní listy* reveals a language still completely liberal:

“Only free development of economic forces and exertion of moral forces of the nation may stop the current unfortunate decline. The policy of the recent time however aims toward suppressing and constraining the free development of these forces [...] Bound economy [*Vázané hospodářství*] does not mean protection of the weak, but stopping the development that leads towards higher production and multiplication of possibilities of work. It suppresses the private entrepreneurs and [...] supports the destructive interference of political partisanship [...] How can in such circumstances private economy develop?”²⁹⁸

While similarly liberal language was distinctive for the manifesto of the ČsND congress in May 1933,²⁹⁹ the Yugoslav National Party program adopted in the same year represented a clear programmatic shift away from economically liberal positions. *Jutro* accentuated that “JNS abandoned the obsolete liberal views on social and economic problems.”³⁰⁰ The party program clearly expressed demands for an increased governmental involvement in economic life, stressing that the state “could not limit itself merely to its legal function.”³⁰¹

Among other it stated:

“The party perceives our state also as a social unit and therefore accepts the principle of intervention by the state whole and the social community against the capitalist principle in case of disturbances in the general economic situation, and especially for the sake of protecting the essential social interests.”³⁰²

²⁹⁸ Dr. František Hodáč, “Na půli cesty?,” *Národní listy*, 22. 7. 1934. (Quoted from: Kurssa, František, 74).

²⁹⁹ “Služba národu jest nejvyšším příkazem. Manifest V. valného sjezdu Čsl. národní demokracie v Bratislavě,” *Národní listy*, 30. 5. 1933:

“State enterprise, political co-operativism [*politické družstevnictví*] and political management in financial institutions have failed. They swallowed billions of public money but have not given the people bread. Instead of a policy whose consequences are being revealed by hundreds of thousands of citizens on the public dole, we demand a policy that would support the development of private enterprise, bring back the confidence in honestly acquired property, restore the respect for productive work, re-open the road into the world for the Czechoslovak goods, build the international trade by enhancing the trade policy and act as the basis for the strength and stability of the Czechoslovak currency, which for us remains the unswerving principle.”

³⁰⁰ “Po kongresu JNS,” *Jutro*, 23. 7. 1933.

³⁰¹ Program i statuti JNS, 12.

³⁰² *Jutro*, 23. 7. 1933.

The demands were however not limited merely to the possibilities of state intervention in individual segments of economy, but also included more far-reaching ideas about “planned economy” and also “corporatist” re-arrangements of the national economy. The JNS program also included the following point:

“The party acknowledges the need for forming economic corporations and unions of interested strata, provided that the state, by the law of its supreme authority, exerts influence on their work and mutual relationships for the sake of social peace.”³⁰³

While expressing merely vague corporatist rhetoric and not a true program, this programmatic line nevertheless reflected the spirit of an age in which “authority,” “discipline,” “planning,” and “guidance” began taking over the place of “democracy,” “liberty” and “spontaneity.” Due to the structural instabilities of most states in the region, as well as under the influence of political developments in the vicinity (Germany, Italy, Soviet Union), the demands for economic planning and extending the state authority in the economic sphere were often being coupled with authoritarian concepts of political order. The interest in alternative, illiberal models of economic, social and political order ceased to be limited to movements that had already before the crisis striven towards radical change, and to a notable extent became characteristic for conservative and liberal circles as well. Corporatism and various “estate-“ based models posed as particularly attractive.

5. 2. 3. The Ideas of “New Order” - from Reformed Democracy to Corporatism

In the broader Central European region, corporatist ideas already had a decades long history. Only with the Great Depression, however, they experienced a broad political

³⁰³ Program i statuti JNS, 15. “Konstituiranje Jugoslovenske nacionalne stranke,” *Jutro*, 21. 7. 1933.

upswing. Albeit in most cases vaguely defined and articulated, they began to serve as a reference point to various political forces and orientations – Catholic, conservative, agrarianist, radical nationalist, fascist, as well as (neo-)liberal ones – in their search for a “third way” between the threat of revolutionary socialism on the one hand and the “surpassed” liberal order on the other. It needs to be emphasized thereby that the levels of sophistication of these corporatist conceptions varied highly. Comprehensive systems of ideas such as the one of Manoilescu in Romania³⁰⁴ or Spann’s in Austria were rather an exception than the rule, and even more so their adoption by the political parties. A quite typical pattern was that political movements, as well as some of the authoritarian regimes present in the region, incorporated certain corporatist elements in their conceptual apparatus. Beside such cases the ones were perhaps even more common, in which the flirtation with corporatist ideas remained on an exclusively rhetorical level with simultaneous insistence on the old socio-economic and particularly political order. Among the established political circles fear was present - not merely of revolutionary unrest from the “left” but also of extreme movements on the “right.” A commonly employed means for the latter’s “neutralization” was also the tendency to incorporate some of the elements of their rhetoric.

When discussing corporatist ideas and practices in the context of the interwar it is very important to differentiate between corporatist systems and institutions in the full sense and

³⁰⁴ Mihail Manoilescu (1891–1950) was an influential Romanian economist. Originally a liberal, he at the beginning of 1930s re-oriented towards corporatism. According to his doctrine the state was supposed to develop a sophisticated corporatist framework that would among other serve the project of a quick and systematic industrialization in which the rural masses would be forcefully re-oriented away from agriculture. - Lampe, Balkans, 127. Also see: Philippe Schmitter, “Reflections on Mihail Manoilescu and the National Consequences of Delayed Dependent Development on the Periphery of Western Europe” in *Social Change in Romania, 1860–1940. A Debate on Development in a European Nation*, ed. K. Jowitt (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, 1978 pp. 117–173.

various (pseudo-)corporatist elements. Equally, the difference between “estate idea” in general and the one of a “corporatist state” must be observed. While the Catholic version of the estate idea for instance primarily encouraged formation of estate organizations from below, Italian Fascists and their disciples advocated a top-down formation of corporations by the government. And thirdly, particularly within the discussed context one must distinguish between the quite widespread demands for reforming parliamentary democracy by introducing governmental bodies, specialized in economic matters, and enforcing corporatist institutions in the proper sense. Non-governmental corporative bodies such as professional chambers with compulsory membership were a well-established feature already before the WWI. Moreover, special representative bodies for economic matters were at least in theory not something new and were being discussed all across Europe. With a few exceptions, such as France, these ideas had not been implemented in practice.

In cases of both types of bodies, however, the crucial difference from proper corporatist institutions was their non-coercive nature. While professional chambers, even if membership in them was compulsory, did not form a part of the government apparatus, those special bodies for economic matters that did (or were planned to) form a part of legislative branch, were not meant to possess a law-making power, having a merely consultative role. Moreover, economic councils and similar consultative bodies were mostly not meant to be structured in a corporatist manner – as representation for various “estates” comprising both employers’ and employees’ - but as councils of experts. In order to speak about corporatist political institutions or system in the full sense they would however have needed to fulfill both criteria – have a corporatist structure and at the same time be part of government apparatus with at least a degree of direct decision-making

power. Another important distinction of a “fully” corporatist system was the compulsory character of the corporations. While corporatist systems were not fully implemented anywhere, we may speak about developed corporatist doctrines underlying the official state policies only in the cases of fascist Italy, Portuguese *Estado Novo* and, after 1933/34 the Austrian *Ständestaat*.

Especially after the economic crisis had commenced, references to “corporatist” and especially “estate-” (*Stände-*, *stanovski*, *stávovský*) re-arrangements became a very popular part of rhetoric, adopting the role of a very useful phrase for the “third way” politics, particularly (but not solely) on the right. Some elements, both rhetorical and substantial, that may be treated as “corporatist” in this broader sense were present also in the programmatic documents of all the three parties. The most notable example was the demand for a special chamber for representatives of economy as part of the legislative branch of the government. In this regard the agenda was the most far reaching in the Austrian case, where the Greater Germans had been pushing for an introduction of a Federal Economic Council (*Bundeswirtschaftsrat*) already since 1926.³⁰⁵ The conception introduced in 1930, demanding a “chamber of estates” (*Ständehaus*) to be placed next to the National Council³⁰⁶ came quite close to the corporatist solutions, championed later by the proponents of the *Ständestaat*.³⁰⁷

³⁰⁵ See: “Für die Umgestaltung des Parlamentarismus,” *Deutsche Zeit* 2. 7. 1926; “Der Bundeswirtschaftsrat,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 18. 9. 1929.

³⁰⁶ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 26, Parteiprogramm 1930. Also see: Dr August Wotawa, „Die Idee eines Ständerates,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 9. 1. 1930; Abg. Dr. Hampel über Koalition und Ständeverfassung, *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 12. 1. 1930; Großdeutsche Volkspartei – Länderkonferenz, *Volkszeitung*, 18. 1. 1930; Nationalrat Hampel über den Ständegedanken, *Deutschösterreichische Tageszeitung*, 21. 1. 1930; Abgeordneter Dr. Wotawa über Haag und über den Ständerat, *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 24. 1. 1930; Dr. Otto Conrad, „Vorschlag zur Errichtung eines Ständerates,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 7. 2. 1930.

³⁰⁷ Ackerl, *Die Großdeutsche*, 220.

Otto Conrad³⁰⁸ wrote a proposal for a “Council of Estates” (*Ständerat*) that would supplement the National Assembly in dealing with economic questions. The main argument was that many issues that were hard to push through the parliamentary procedure might have been better decided by a body whose members did not obtain their mandates through electoral battle. Conrad however reserved the supreme legislative power for the National Assembly. The Estates’ Council would have the power to draft its own legislation, whose passing would however depend on the condition that there was no objection against it in the other house. The National Assembly, reflecting the relationships of power in the population as expressed by the electoral results, would thus retain primacy in political legislation, as well as the final word in all legislation, including in the field of economy.³⁰⁹

In the cases of the Czechoslovak National Democrats and Slovene progressives programs and demands of this kind had been missing during the 1920s. However, corporatist rhetoric entered the ČsND discourse in 1929 already when František Sís, discussing the “shortcomings of democracy,” stated that the “corporatist state, the state of unitary national community” stood as the objective and as “our thesis” against the class-based politics.³¹⁰

The employment of the adjective “corporatist” was however not yet connected to any kind of substantial demands for corporatist re-arrangements, which continued to be absent throughout the period under scrutiny. The programmatic documents of the 1933 convention included the proposal for a representative body for economic matters, which was however meant to be of a purely consultative kind.³¹¹ The same applied to the law on the economic

³⁰⁸ Dr. Otto Conrad, “Vorschlag zur Errichtung eines Ständerates,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 7. 2. 1930.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

³¹⁰ “Programová řeč Františka Síse,” *Národní listy*, 16. 4. 1929 – supplement to the nr. 105.

³¹¹ *Národní listy*, 20. 6. 1933.

council proposed by Albert Kramer in 1932.³¹² In the Austrian case, on the other hand, the planned chambers and unions were meant to be of compulsory nature.³¹³ As from mid-1930 the Christian Socials and especially *Heimatblock* began putting forward more far-reaching ideas about reforming the representative democratic order and institutions in corporatist fashion, the Greater Germans largely ceased voicing their own.³¹⁴

As discussed already, the ČsND leadership maintained an explicitly cautious stance towards institutional reform and new economic models throughout 1931-34. The party was however highly divided internally with views being voiced that deviated notably from the official ones. František Ježek, who did not belong to the “industrialist wing” but to the group of moderate middle-class politicians, argued, in a series of articles, about the need for a “strong national state”³¹⁵ He saw one of the main deficiencies of the current state of affairs in the lack of economic and political planning: “Absence of planning is a mistake during normal times. During times of crisis and unemployment it is a catastrophe.”³¹⁶ In addition, he also warned against “negligence of the national politics, “expressing itself in too much generosity“ towards the national minorities, “restrictions of democracy“ as well

³¹² “Gospodarski svet,” *Jutro*, 4. 2. 1932; “Seja narodne skupščine,” *Jutro*, 5. 2. 1932; “Gospodarski svet pred narodno skupščino,” *Jutro*, 12. 2. 1932; “Zakon o gospodarskem svetu v narodni skupščini,” *Jutro*, 13. 2. 1932.

³¹³ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 26, Parteiprogramm 1930.

³¹⁴ Already in 1930 the Greater Germans voiced criticism against former chancellor Seipel’s proposals for a corporatist “Chamber of Estates,” above all arguing that their implementation would effectively curtail the representative democratic order. See: Dr August Wotawa, “Die Idee eines Ständerates,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 9. 1. 1930; Dr. A. Wotawa, “Dr. Seipels Vorschlag zur Wirtschaftskammer,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 9. 1. 1930; “Abg. Dr. Hampel über Koalition und Ständeverfassung,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 12. 1. 1930; “Die Großdeutschen gegen die Vorschläge Dr. Seipels,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 19. 1. 1930.

³¹⁵ “Pro silny národní stát,” *Národní listy*, 29. 3. 1933; “V těžkých dobách silná vláda,” *Národní listy*, 8.9.1933; “Pro nový politický režim,” *Národní listy*, 8.3.1934; “Bojujeme za silný národní stát!,” *Národní listy*, 10.5.1934.

³¹⁶ František Ježek, *Zápas o nové Československo* (Prague: 1935), p. 232.

as non-implementation of austerity measures and public administration reform.³¹⁷ In another article he also argued for a restructuring of the senate on a corporatist basis.³¹⁸ Demands for parliamentary reform that usually aimed at dissolving the Senate and turning it into a non-elected body abounded in the Czechoslovak interwar politics of the right, as well as the left,³¹⁹ and became increasingly vocal in the time of the economic crisis. Among others Peroutka published an article in *Přítomnost* (May 1934)³²⁰ in which he proposed transforming the senate into a “senate of experts,” composed of university professors, scientists and other experts appointed by the president (partly at his sole discretion and partly at the proposal of political parties). Peroutka’s and other similar proposals aimed primarily at securing a better balance in political decision-making by bringing in experts’ opinion, which pertained especially to the economic field. In this regard three main types of proposals may be distinguished. Apart from ideas of a general experts’ body such as Peroutka’s, the common model was a special legislative body, devoted specifically to the economic questions. There it again needs to be distinguished between the demands for an “economic parliament” composed of economic experts and ideas of a “corporatist parliament,” a body voicing the interests of various “estates” (usually via representatives of professional organizations).³²¹

³¹⁷ Ibid., 232-235.

³¹⁸ František Ježek, “Cesta z dnešní politické krise,” *Národní listy*, 27. 3. 1934.

³¹⁹ Cf. Michal Pehr, “Návrhy české pravice na reformu československého parlamentu v době první republiky” in *Parlament v čase změny. Případové studie z vývoje českého a československého parlamentarismu* (Prague : Filip Tomáš - Akropolis, 2011), p. 70.

³²⁰ František Peroutka, “O jednom ruzumném návrhu reformním,” *Přítomnost*, Yr. XI., No. 18 (2. 5. 1934: pp. 273-274. Also see “Senát odborníků,” *Národní osvobození*, 8. 5. 1934.

³²¹ Cf. Pehr, *Návrhy*, 54.

Two notable manifestos published in the early 1934 in the journals *Demokratický střed*³²² and *Modrá revue*³²³ both gained broader attention expressing resolute demands for social and economic reform, clearly distinguishable from the more conservative positions of the official party line. Claiming that liberalism had “been surpassed”³²⁴ and striving to “build a new social order, based on freedom of disciplined people and service to the socially just order,”³²⁵ the *Hrad*-friendly group around *Demokratický střed* denounced not only communism and fascism but also liberalism. They rejected it “for its lack of sense for community service and inability for purposeful, socially just organization of society” and also stated that the only “legitimate gain comes from labor.”³²⁶

The latter emphasis resembles somewhat the Greater German views and Otto Conrad’s political economy in particular. In its crucial aspects the *Demokratický střed* reform program indeed closely resembled the already discussed Conrad’s proposal from 1930. Its central part focused on parliamentary reform that would strictly separate economic matters from the “political” ones by abolishing the senate and turning it into an “Economic Chamber” composed of experts appointed by the president. In view of the authors, the democratic institutions, designed during times when economic questions had occupied only a tiny fraction of public concerns, were not fit to resolve economic matters “alien to them in their entire character.” An “independent economic administration,” exempted from the “jurisdiction of the parliamentary and all the other existing political institutions,” was thus required in order to master “the present economic anarchy.” Common to both

³²² “Do boje za demokracii řádu a činu,” *Demokratický střed*, yr. 11, nr. 12-14, 23. 3. 1934.

³²³ “Pro stát národní síly a práce,” *Modrá revue*, yr. 3, nr. 6, 3. 4. 1934.

³²⁴ “Ani liberalismus, ani komunismus, ani fašismus,” *Demokratický střed*, yr. 11, nr. 12-14, 23. 3. 1934.

³²⁵ “Do boje za demokracii řádu a činu,” *Demokratický střed*, yr. 11, nr. 12-14, 23. 3. 1934.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*

Demokratický střed and Conrad's reform proposals were the strict delimitation of competences between the elected, "political" house of parliament and the appointed, "economic" one, as well as that the final decision-making power was reserved for the former.

In the *Demokratický střed* program the government was moreover given a strong regulatory function in the economy and the right to "conduct, regulate and control" all the sections of economy "in regard to the common benefit" and systematically administer "the entire economic process" in line with "synthetic, concrete economic programs."³²⁷ "Supreme Economic Council" was foreseen as part of the executive and the need for "an economically educated and responsible bureaucracy" was expressed. The limits of the governmental role in economy were not clearly set. The program stressed however that it set "only a general principle of *the entire economy being subject to control and regulatory interventions* by the society" and that it recommended direct social control only for those large enterprises whose size or meaning made them fit for it, while leaving the major part of economy to the private initiative. Generally speaking, the program included some corporatist elements but at the same time rejected corporatist restructuring of the state:

"We leave to the further development and practical experience, whether individual economic and interest groups are to organize themselves into uniformly regulated *corporations*. We do not equate the corporative idea with the idea of a corporatist or estate-based state in which corporations or estates would assume political functions."³²⁸

This distinguished it from the "program of national revival,"³²⁹ created by the nationalist group gathered around *Modrá revue* that aimed at overcoming the "deficiencies of formal

³²⁷ "Chceme jednotný společenský řád," *Demokratický střed*, yr. 11, nr. 12-14, 23. 3. 1934.

³²⁸ Ibid. Cf. Also the categorical rejection of corporative state in: "K Vyšší syntezé," *Demokratický střed*, yr. 11, nr. 3, 19. 1. 1934.

³²⁹ "Pro stát národní síly a práce," *Modrá revue*, yr. 3, nr. 6, 3. 4. 1934.

democracy” and putting the “Czechoslovak national republic” under a purposeful administration by “a mighty popular government [...] flexible enough to swiftly adapt to the changing needs of the nation and the time.”³³⁰ Both programs foresaw the establishment of a presidential rule. In case of *Modrá revue*, however, the demand for the popularly elected president to be “given far higher supreme power than the one common to the existing constitution and political practice”³³¹ occupied a far more central position. It moreover also stressed that the government should be responsible solely to the president and not to the parliament.

Most importantly, while both programs demanded reform of the parliament that would enable separate treatment of political and economic affairs the *Modrá revue* one included evident and more far-reaching corporatist tendencies. It did not merely demand transforming the senate into the House of Labor (*Sněmovna práce*) but also prescribed a corporatist structure for it with members being elected within particular “central organizations, chambers and corporations.” While in the *Demokratický střed* program the authority of the Economic Chamber was limited strictly to economic issues, whereby its decisions required final confirmation on the part of the Political Chamber as “the highest organ of political (joint) sovereignty,”³³² the balance of power between both houses in the *Modrá revue* one was meant to be equal. Also the bills passed by the House of People (*Sněmovna lidu*) required approval by the other House. The program moreover foresaw the introduction and institutionalization of common professional organizations for employers and employees within which agreement should be reached.

³³⁰ Ibid.

³³¹ Ibid.

³³² “Nové hospodářské instituce,” *Demokratický střed*, yr. 11, nr. 12-14, 23. 3. 1934.

Furthermore, the *Modrá revue* program had a strong nationalist underpinning, “considering nationalism to be the moving force of the entire material and cultural progress of the nation.”³³³ Among other it demanded from the government to secure “by reasonable means” that “the fundamental branches of production” would be transferred “into the hands of the members of state nation”³³⁴ While the *Demokratický střed* program spoke principally of “society,” the central reference point of the *Modrá revue* one was “the nation,” with references to the former largely missing.

Whereas in the case of *Demokratický střed* we may speak about a program of “reformed democracy” which included some limited corporatist elements, the latter were more substantial and centrally-important in the *Modrá revue* program, which was moreover also distinguished by a degree of authoritarian tendencies. This difference notwithstanding, both programs remained within the confines of a constitutional and parliamentary order distinguished by the division of powers, albeit a “modified” one.

Apart from the proposals for institutional reform, another aspect worth looking into and contrasting between the two was the manner in which the concept of “liberty” was being employed, delimited and ranked in each of them. The *Demokratický střed* program quite thoroughly discussed the difference between three principal spheres of human activity in regard to the limits of permissible governmental interference or in terms of the relationship between liberty and (state) authority. While recognizing the need for “less external liberty and more authoritative decision-making” within the economic sphere and stating that in the political “liberty” had to stand “in balance with authority,” the sphere of culture was to

³³³ “Pro stát národní síly a práce,” *Modrá revue*, yr. 3, nr. 6, 3. 4. 1934.

³³⁴ Ibid.

remain “free.”³³⁵ As it will be discussed in Chapter 6, this differentiation largely corresponded to the distinction between various basic types or conceptions of liberalism within the studied context, stressing the fundamentality of the “intellectual” one.

“Liberty of disciplined people,” as one of the central aims, was defined as “the highest ideal of every cultured society [...] “the condition for a decent human life” and the condition for “society to attain the functional optimum within all its spheres.”³³⁶ Whereas the *Demokratický střed* program proclaimed to be striving towards “such social relations that would enable all the people a constantly fuller maturation towards intellectual freedom,” the *Modrá revue* one revolved around “Liberty, subordinated to the nation’s mission.” As it may be discerned from the following paragraph, the subordination of liberty to the higher “national” ends was being understood and justified quite similarly as it had been in the Greater German *Richtlinien*:

“Liberty is the fundamental and necessary prerequisite for the development of human beings. (...) Individual liberty continues to support the development, but needs to be subordinated to the higher common interest of the nation. This discipline [*ukázení*] and inclusion [*vrazení*] into the national whole must be carried out in a voluntary manner. The state, based on the nation’s will must however have the possibility to enforce this discipline and inclusion.”³³⁷

While *Demokratický střed* program was ignored by *Národní listy*,³³⁸ the one of *Modrá revue* was not,³³⁹ also encouraging favourable reactions on its economic part by prominent

³³⁵ “Do boje za demokracii řádu a činu,” *Demokratický střed*, yr. 11, nr. 12-14, 23. 3. 1934.

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ “Pro stát národní síly a práce,” *Modrá revue*, yr. 3, nr. 6, 3. 4. 1934

³³⁸ Its authors themselves positioned themselves outside ČsND, conceiving their initiative as independent from either “program or organization of any of the existing political parties,” and aiming to “organize an independent political orientation that will bring into life the ideas of young Czechoslovakia.” – “Demokracii řádu a činu je třeba uskutečnit,” *Demokratický střed*, yr. 11, nr. 15, 16. 4. 1934.

³³⁹ “Pro stát národní síly a práce *Národní listy*,” 4. 4. 1934.

Also see: Dr. Karel Kramář, “Poznámky k snahám o reformu,” *Národní listy*, 8. 4. 1934. While welcoming the reform plan, Kramář did not comment on the more substantial demands of institutional re-arrangements.

representatives of the National Democratic Party such as Josef Matoušek and František Ježek.³⁴⁰ Both of them agreed with the idea of separating the political and economic affairs and converting the Senate into the House of Labor, warning thereby against moving away from democracy and emulating “Italian or German nationalism” (Matoušek). Both programs were simultaneously criticized in *Přítomnost* for frivolity in proposing radical reform. The author thereby suggested fellow leftist intellectuals restraint and insistence on the existing political order, justifying this by claiming that the reform plans had generally been heading “right.”³⁴¹

As we have seen, while the Greater German reform proposals in the corporatist vein were of an earlier date and during the economic crisis became largely irrelevant, an insight into the Czech case in that same period reveals comprehensive and thoroughly worked-out programs of institutional reform - some of them with evident corporatist elements – along with corresponding debates. In the Slovene case developments of this type were slower and above all more modest.

This was among other connected also to the fact that the Yugoslav National Party was the governing party in an undemocratic regime that had been during 1931-34 only gradually loosening its grip not only over the parliamentary but also broader political and intellectual life. For the same very reasons the first half of the 1930s also signified a time of an accelerated differentiation between the political leaders or the “party” on the one hand and the “progressive” intelligentsia or the broader ideological camp on the other. Apart from latter’s displeasure with the undemocratic regime and integral Yugoslavism, differences in views to some degree also began to more sharply reflect in the economic and social fields.

³⁴⁰ “Diskuse o plánu Modré revue,” *Modrá revue*, yr. 3, nr. 7, 15. 4. 1934.

³⁴¹ Zdeněk Smetáček, “Ústavní reforma – ale pro koho?,” *Přítomnost*, yr. 11, nr. 15, 11. 4. 1934.

During 1933-34 these differences were not yet so explicitly articulated with serious debates opening up only during 1935. Most importantly, in case of the Slovene progressive journals discussions on corporatism and the question of political and economic reform in general remained largely on the level of statements, opinions and reflections. Comparing it to the Czech case we may speak about elements of debates at best. Thorough analyses, discussions and positive programs, distinctive for the Czech case, were missing.

As mentioned already, despite the fact that it was contained in the JNS program, “corporatism” advocated by that party – it is actually more proper to employ the term corporatist rhetoric or at best corporatist elements – did not form a complete and secluded system. This thesis may be substantiated by writing of *Jutro* which, almost one year after the mentioned programmatic demand for forming of corporations had been adopted, expressed skeptical attitudes towards the emerging “corporatist state” (*Ständestaat*) in Austria.³⁴² In the same year it also still argued that “under the impression of the ideas of planned economy the present era undervalues the meaning and value of the automatic balancing of forces in economic life.” This did not mean that “all the economic life” should have been left “to go its own way.” The state however should be allowed “to regulate and assist [...] only in the sense that the sharp edges and extremes are repelled and that the natural heling forces which the economy alone creates are supported and strengthened.”³⁴³

³⁴² “Avstrijski prvi maj,” *Jutro*, 3. 5. 1934: “Corporatist order currently finds itself in the most modest first beginnings. Practice will show whether the corporatist organization will be able to fulfill the popular masses’ aspirations to establish themselves well – the popular masses which are nowadays not that unconscious and politically uneducated to want to permanently stand on the side, obey the commands and bear the burdens, the imposing of which is outside their influence. Above all, however, it will need to turn out whether the corporatist framework is able to overcome the oppositions of interests between the entrepreneur and the worker, between labor and capital, because only in that case will it be possible to talk about the elimination of class differences and the end of class struggle.”

³⁴³ “Bilanca naše trgovine z inozemstvom,” *Jutro*, 11. 2. 1934.

For that reason it is worth to allow for the thesis that in the case of JNS “corporations” and “estates” – as well as “planned economy” - above all acted as phrases, expressing conformity to the general political currents and developments in the broader region and the all-European level.

This circumstance was also pointed out by the member of that party, Vinko Vrhunec, in his article entitled “Yugoslavia – A Corporatist State?” that appeared in 1935 in the progressive intellectual journal *Misel in delo*, sparking a debate on the pages of the following issues. Criticizing the contemporary “fashion of slogans and catchphrases,” Vrhunec wrote in the introduction:

“Articles in the daily press, speeches of politicians and economists and especially the coffee house debates abound with ‘planned economy’ and ‘corporatist state order.’ Nothing is more characteristic for the ideological superficiality of our times than the fact that we do not possess one single comprehensive expert-scientific discussion which would accurately designate the content of these concepts and discuss the possibilities of implementing these social systems within our political and economic circumstances.”³⁴⁴

“Planned economy” and “corporatist state order” in Vrhunec’s view thus acted rather as an expression of “mental comfort” in “contemporary political and economic hardships ” than products of serious political considerations and social analysis.³⁴⁵ In his text he however also introduced a very interesting characterization of the idea of corporatist state in which he saw above all the tendency to return into the era before the French Revolution. He understood it as an expression of doubts about the expediency of the “regime of liberty” which had in “its youthful phase” represented “the most brilliant stage of the civilizational progress” and under which progress went “irrepressibly forward [...] up until today.”

³⁴⁴ Dr. Vinko Vrhunec, “Jugoslavija – stanovska država,” *Misel in delo*, št. 4 (1935): 64.

³⁴⁵ Ibid., 64-65.

Although expressing a degree of understanding for those doubts, Vrhunec rejected the corporatist ideas. In a sarcastic tone he commented that the search for the new ideas “for rearranging the political and social order” led to the “scriptures on the corporatist state” being re-discovered “in the old archives.” Thereby he asked: “Why not shake off the dust and the smell of mustiness from it so that it may, slightly more modernly dressed, step in the place of the contemporary state, allegedly corrupt and impotent due to the degenerated democracy and parliamentarism?”³⁴⁶

He criticized the corporatist ideas for their vagueness and internal inconsistency, maintaining moreover that they merely functioned as political phrases that served as “cover for personal and party dictatorships.” Both the Italian, and the Austrian “corporatist state” testified to that. In particular he stressed that corporatism, when actually implemented, in fact meant “‘corporatisme autoritaire’, where we instinctively feel the emphasis on the adjective ‘authoritative.’”³⁴⁷ As such it enabled state intervention in economy and private initiative, “which always remain *movens* to the economic and commercial activity and progress.” Vrhunec thus warned that there was “only one step” between “corporism [*korporizem*]” and “etatism.”³⁴⁸

In the following two issues of *Misel in delo* an extensive discussion on the Italian corporatist state written by M. G. V.³⁴⁹ appeared. Apart from a detailed overview of the historical forms of corporatist order, their end in the “liberal” era and a thorough description of the Italian system of syndicates and corporations, it included statements that

³⁴⁶ Ibid., 64–65.

³⁴⁷ Ibid., 67.

³⁴⁸ Ibid.

³⁴⁹ Dr. M. G. V., “Korporacijska država v Italiji,” *Misel in delo*, št. 5 (1935).
Author’s identity has not been established.

may be read as direct objections to Vrhunec's main theses. The author argued that although "the elements that it employs are not original" being known "already from the time immemorial" the corporatist economy signified "the first original system of the anti-classist solution of the social question" and that the "fascist corporations" represented "by their role and through their spirit something completely new."³⁵⁰ Against the critique of corporatism as an instrument for establishing "dictatorship of one person or one party" M. G. V. argued:

"But we should thereby not lose sight [of the fact] that this dictatorship sets itself only one goal: the welfare of the nation and the power and the force of the state. This should be the purpose of all the systems of governments and all parties, which is however unfortunately not the case."³⁵¹

Acknowledging the problems of its practical implementation the author emphasized that corporatism was not to be rejected in theory, since in the circumstances when "visible and unidentified factors have been threatening to transform the economic crisis into a permanent state of affairs, the democratic order" had "no power anymore to handle the situation." For that reason either a "reform in the authoritative sense" was needed or democracy should be substituted by "a completely different system [...] in accordance with the nation's individuality." The question of whether corporatism represented the best solution and if its implementation was possible without simultaneously instituting a dictatorship was left open. In conclusion the author however stated categorically: "In one regard at least unanimity reigns: from the political, economic and social viewpoint liberal democracy is buried; and if that is so, there should be no objection against corporatism from that side."³⁵²

³⁵⁰ Ibid., 95–96.

³⁵¹ Dr. M. G. V., "Korporacijska država v Italiji," *Misel in delo*, št. 6 (1935): 123.

³⁵² Ibid.

The topic of the Italian fascist economic system was again tackled in one of the following issues by Branko Vrčon, an intellectual of the younger generation (in the second half of the 1930s a prominent representative of the Yugoslav National Party Youth). Emphasizing that “whoever” had thought that “Italian fascism as a social movement” had “developed its ‘social’ theory well through the thirteen years of its existence” was wrong,³⁵³ his arguments may be read as a direct response to M. G. V. that had treated fascism as a well worked-out system:

“In our lands there are still too many people that merely due to their superficial knowledge of fascism believe Italian fascism to be a secluded system in all the political, economic and social respects, which has already experienced its full realization in fascist Italy.”³⁵⁴

Whereas the texts in *Misel in delo* addressed the estate idea, corporatism and fascism from various angles, the authors in *Sodobnost* that may be counted as the left wing of the progressive camp clearly rejected it. In this regard Fran Zwitter should be mentioned, who assessed the experiments that were being carried out under the slogan of “corporatist state” as follows:

“In economy fascism promises to replace the liberal-capitalist society with a new social order; its ideology thereby stands partly under the influence of the pre-capitalist and partly socialist views, carrying the sounding labels of state of estates, corporatist state, subordination of individuals’ and social classes’ interests to the national whole. When it gains power, however, fascism does not in any way attempt to execute any kind of organization of economy, essentially different from capitalism, and serves everywhere only as a support to the existing social order.”³⁵⁵

³⁵³ Dr. B. Vrčon, “Fašizem in lastnina,” *Misel in delo*, št. 8/1935: 165.

³⁵⁴ Ibid., 166.

³⁵⁵ Observator [Fran Zwitter], “Nekaj misli k letu 1934,” *Sodobnost*, no. 1 (1935): 36.

Similar views were advocated by Boris Furlan, who strongly rejected the authoritarian and totalitarian state, which could be justified only if they secured the citizens “existence worthy of a human.” In his opinion they however in economic field advocated “more or less surreptitiously Manchester liberalism which the true free-mindedness [*svobodomiselstvo*] abandoned a long time ago.” - Boris Furlan, “Leta odločitve,” *Sodobnost*, no. 12 (1933): 558.

The variety of views on corporatism attests to the ideological heterogeneity within the Slovene progressive camp which was similarly broad as among the Czechoslovak National Democrats. At the same time the more modest extent of debates and absence of reform programs reflect lesser levels of development of these views – or at least of their expression. This was beyond doubt connected to the different political circumstances (full dictatorship until 1931 and curtailed parliamentarism afterwards, along with only gradually loosening censorship and control). The difference however also reveals the belated reception and particularly public unveiling of new social and political models in the Slovene case as compared to the Czech. Only in 1940 the younger generation of progressives, gathered in the Yugoslav National Party Youth, presented a comprehensive reform program, comparable to those that *Demokratický střed* and *Modrá revue* circles had published in 1934. Despite emerging within profoundly different international and internal political circumstances, the mentioned program in its basic lines closely resembled the two Czech ones and may in its essential demands, its terminology and in terms of treating democracy be particularly paralleled to the *Demokratický střed* one.

5. 3. Liberal Democracy – Principle or Convenience?

As pointed out already at an earlier point, the various demands for transforming the economy that had been emerging in interwar Europe were, especially under the influence of political developments in the vicinity (Germany, Italy, Soviet Union), often coupled also with ideas of changing the political regime. The shift away from representative democracy

and limited government and certain interest in alternative, illiberal models were thereby characteristic for conservative and liberal parties as well.

This opens up the question of loyalty of the parties under scrutiny towards liberal democracy. Already during the 1920s criticism of “formal democracy” could be traced in the Czech and the Austrian cases. The all-national self-understanding that these parties cultivated could also contain the idea that a group of “national leaders,” notables that had earned the status of national elite through their “national” political work or by virtue of their education and/or wealth, was able to lead and govern the nation in accordance with its true “will” and “needs.” This could on the one hand be seen as a continuation of the old approach of the national liberal *Honoratiorenparteien* to politics which however under the new political conditions of interwar contained certain novel implications. It furthermore also evokes reminiscences of the already mentioned Hegelian conception of freedom and the associated special role of civil servants, conceived as the “universal class” or a meritocratically-selected modern form of aristocracy.³⁵⁶ As we have seen in Chapter 5.1., however, one of the possible mutations in the era of mass politics and the framework of independent *nationalizing* states was also expressed in flirtation with and utilization of new movements of the radical right.

In the changed political circumstances of the early 1930s, marked by antiliberal tendencies leading away from the rule of law and limited government when all the countries in the region, except for Czechoslovakia were ruled by some form of dictatorial or authoritarian rule, this question becomes even more relevant. Even more since, the advance of fascism and National Socialism, as well as the continuation of the Soviet experiment under Stalin

³⁵⁶ Cf. Pierre Hassner, “Georg W. F. Hegel” in *History of Political Philosophy*, Third Edition, L. Strauss and J. Cropsey eds. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), p. 748, 751.

- all of them competing to destroy the existing social and political order - highly impacted the political atmosphere. Especially the facts that the Slovene progressives acted as a pillar of an undemocratic regime in Yugoslavia, that GdVP during 1933-34 largely “dissolved” itself in the Nazi movement, and also that the Czechoslovak National Democrats in late 1934 connected themselves with the radical nationalists, make this question relevant. On the other hand all the three parties continuously declared themselves to be democratic, whereby the Greater Germans also earned the historical title of the last defenders of parliamentary rule in the Austrian First Republic.

The Greater Germans that had already during 1920s expressed corporatist demands had “already for years” been convinced “that the western-democratic party state in which the parties are an end in itself” did not “correspond to the essence of the German people” and that thus “much more consideration of estates in the structure of the state” and the “selection of leaders according to ability and sincerity of their *völkisch* stance [*Gesinnung*]” were necessary.³⁵⁷ In the Czech case the critique of “formal” democracy was on the other hand closely associated with persistent opposition of the ČsND against the bound candidate lists which had effectively subordinated the Czechoslovak parliamentarism to the will of major political parties.

The other part of National Democratic rhetoric against “formal democracy” however stemmed from the personality cult of Kramář, whose figure was intentionally being cultivated as “leader of the nation.”³⁵⁸ While giving credit to fascism for bringing stability to Italy, Kramář at a party meeting in 1926 spoke that the National Democrats wanted

³⁵⁷ “Kein Hemwegergelöbnis der großdeutschen Mandatäre,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 14. 6. 1930.

³⁵⁸ Hans Lemberg, “Das Erbe des Liberalismus in der ČSR und die National Demokratische Partei” in *Die Erste Tschechoslowakische Republik als Multinationaler Parteienstaat*, Karl Bosl ed. (Munich: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag, 1979), p. 70.

“democracy, but only of the sort that subordinates itself to the ideas of the entire nation and that serves the state. [...] If the parliament injures the state, then it [the state] must proceed without it.”³⁵⁹

Hans Lemberg³⁶⁰ and, based on his assessment, Stanley Winters³⁶¹ assessed that ČsND's adherence to parliamentary democracy was conditional and that it retained loyalty towards it “so long as the system served the Czech nationalism and did not undermine the independence of the state.”³⁶² For the period under scrutiny, we may however without reservations state that the party, despite occasionally diverging rhetoric, not only remained loyal to but also contributed important part in forming and securing the Czechoslovak democracy. The variety of co-existing opinions and positions within its framework, which despite internal power struggles and occasional secessions and splits maintained tolerance for diversity, additionally testifies to that. At one of the most difficult times for democracy in the region, after the Nazis had gained power in Germany and Dollfuss abolished parliamentary rule in Austria, marking a challenge for stability of the Czechoslovak political order as well, *Modrá revue* wrote: “We are democrats, as we can not be anything else [...] Perhaps, democracy is a bad form of government, but it is out of all [that are available] the one that suits us best.”³⁶³

³⁵⁹ Remarks made on 27 June 1926, as quoted in Hans Lemberg, “Gefahrmoment für die demokratische Staatsform der Ersten tschechoslowakischen Republik” in *Die Krise des Parlamentarismus in Ostmitteleuropa zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen*, H. Volkmann ed. (Marburg-Lahn: J. G. Herder Institut, 1967), p. 115.

³⁶⁰ Hans Lemberg, “Die tschechischen Konservativen 1918-1938” in *Aktuelle Forschungsprobleme um die Erste Tschechoslowakische Republik*, K. Bosl ed. (Munich - Vienna: R. Oldenbourg, 1969), p. 129.

³⁶¹ Stanley Winters, “Passionate Patriots: Czechoslovak National Democracy in the 1920s.” *East Central Europe/L'Europe du Centre-Est*, vol. 18, no. 1 (1991): p. 55-56.

³⁶² Ibid.

³⁶³ Jaroslav Fischer, “Krise demokracie a co s ní souvisí,” *Modrá revue*, Yr. 2 Nr. 7, 15. 4. 1933.

In the Slovene case, on the other hand, flexibility of progressives' democratism was well documented by their participation in the 6th of January regime. While the Independent Democratic leader Pribičević was persecuted, imprisoned and had to emigrate due to his opposition to the royal dictatorship, the Slovene wing of his party joined and co-formed the politics of the regime of the Yugoslav National Party.

As noted already, the economic crisis was instrumentalized as an additional argument against the pre-1929 multi-partisan parliamentary democracy and a tool for legitimization of the regime of "suspended democracy." Therefore, the progressive daily press could claim that the political parties "in the European economic policy (...) brought democracy and parliamentarism to the level of complete absurdity" and that "also the West European nation during the current difficult times demonstrated that they are not mature enough for a true parliamentary system." "A healthy opinion" was thus gradually being asserted that the current regime shall be either followed by a "dictatorship of reason, prudence and discernment, performed by independent experts" or by "an economic chaos with the inevitable consequences of general misery."³⁶⁴ King Alexander I. was furthermore named "beyond doubt the most democratic ruler in Europe that may in his strivings for victory of the new democratic ideas be compared to the great president of the Czechoslovak republic Masaryk"³⁶⁵ and labelled "guardian of democracy"³⁶⁶ by prominent progressives.

The participation in Alexander's regime, all the possible best intentions notwithstanding, indeed puts the progressives into problematic light from a democratic point of view. Since its declared goals were merely to save the country from the political turmoil and not to

³⁶⁴ *Jutro*, 28. 10. 1931.

³⁶⁵ "Mogočen praznik narodnega delavstva," *Jutro*, 15. 5. 1933

³⁶⁶ Vladimir Ravnihar, "Kralj Aleksander, čuvar demokracije," *Jutro*, 19. 10. 1934.

institute authoritarian rule in the long term, it was not so problematic as such. If we however observe the progressives' dealing with opposition in Slovenia and the rhetoric that they employed against it, the picture changes. The speech by Pucelj pointed against "separatists" from the forbidden Slovene People's Party, already quoted in Chapter 4, gives a good illustration of how extreme the discourse of the Yugoslav National Party could be. In autumn of 1933 local elections took place in the Drava province, in which the ruling party employed various means of pressure, including acts of violence and intimidation, in order to secure itself victory.³⁶⁷ During the campaign another of Pucelj's speeches, broadcasted on the radio, labelled the elections as the "last reminder to the 'oppositionals' in the Drava province to abandon their separatist position and join the national all-state front."³⁶⁸ Those who were still not ready to do so and subordinate themselves to the "national, Yugoslav course" instituted after the royal coup, were threatened with consequences:

"Different ways have been tried in order for the old partisan passions and habits to be eliminated. Up until now people were being taught, advised and recruited the nice way. Four years have passed and anybody who has some wisdom and sense for the state, could have changed his mind and come to his senses [...] Now, obviously the time is coming when wisdom will have to be spread via more energetic measures, likewise as cane is needed for disobedient brats when no good word proves to be convincing enough. We do not need to imitate Mussolini or Dollfuss, but something needs to be nevertheless pointed out: that also in Italy and Germany people were being invited into the new regime for a while, then however an end was announced. Who had not joined, stayed out voluntarily and needs to be aware of all the consequences that are going to befall him."³⁶⁹

The same issue of *Jutro* in which Pucelj's radio speech was published also had slogan "Whoever is not with us, is against us!" printed on a visible spot,³⁷⁰ revealing an extremely

³⁶⁷ See: Jure Gašparič, *SLS pod kraljevo diktaturo* (Ljubljana: Modrijan, 2007), pp. 188-189, 197-201.

³⁶⁸ "Odločna beseda," *Jutro*, 14. 10. 1933.

³⁶⁹ Ibid.

³⁷⁰ *Jutro*, 14. 10. 1933, p. 4.

sharpened rhetoric pointed against any kind of dissent, which one would hardly expect to find in a liberal newspaper.

All this however still does not allow us to jump to the simple and unambiguous conclusion that the Slovene “progressives” generally abandoned the ideas of parliamentary order and representative democracy. Conditioned by the current political situation of curtailed parliamentarian order, they primarily spoke against partisanship, stressing the necessity of “national unity” during the time of economic crisis. Elimination of party pluralism was thereby seen as a temporary need.³⁷¹ Commitment to democracy continued to occupy a central place in the party programs of 1932 and 1933 and progressives did not cease to defend basic inalienable individual rights to life, personal liberty, freedom of mind and conscience and expression and equality before the law for all the citizens.³⁷² Most importantly, while acting undemocratically in inner politics the progressives still evaluated international political developments mainly from the viewpoints of liberal democracy. Among other the continuous treatment of the Czechoslovak president Masaryk as the primary model testifies that they did not substitute this basic outlook for any of the contemporary anti-liberal ideologies. *Jutro* thus commented in 1934:

“Parliamentary democracy has been abolished in large part of Europe, in other countries it is being subordinated to authoritative measures and again in others revisions of essential constitutional regulations are being seriously discussed. [...] In political life there are only few concepts that have stayed outside discussion. Too dangerous already is the phenomenon that in some places thousands and thousands of people enthusiastically manifest for the abolishment of those rights that our ancestors had to achieve through heavy fights, point after point, sacrifice after sacrifice.”³⁷³

³⁷¹ “Gospodarska kriza in volitve,” *Jutro*, 24. 10. 1931,

³⁷² “Na delo za novo vsedrjavno stranko!,” *Jutro*, 18. 12. 1931; “Poročilo g. ministra Jurija Demetroviča o glavnih programskih načelih stranke,” *Jutro*, 21. 7. 1933.

³⁷³ *Jutro*, 6. 9. 1934.

Totalitarian ideologies of “new order” were all alien both to the Slovene progressives and the Czechoslovak National Democrats. On the pages of *Jutro* National socialism was labelled as “social demagoguery” and “essentially unnatural compromise between Hitlerite radical socialism and reactionary feudal large capitalism.”³⁷⁴ In spite of expressing certain positive impressions with Nazism for its anti-clericalism,³⁷⁵ the progressive press generally demonstrated repulsion towards Nazi “fanatism” as the force behind “things that the German nation will be ashamed of when it again sobers up.”³⁷⁶

In the case of Greater Germans, the already discussed endorsement of the corporatist elements however did not signify sympathy towards Italian fascism. In a longer article on the “Italian-Fascist Corporatist State”³⁷⁷ Sepp Straffner argued that it was only “conditionally valid” to describe Italy as “corporatist state [*Ständestaat*].” Italy was “in reality a one-party state” with a bureaucratic character in which „estate organizations“ had no real power and were merely an auxilliary instrument for the actually ruling Great Fascist Council. He also commented on what should the position of „national and *freiheitlich* circles” on fascism have been:

“It will now be the task of the Austrian public to judge whether one can befriend himself with a system of this sort or not. In particular, the national and *freiheitlich* circles of the Austrian population will do well to carefully think this over, since in the framework of this system they would hardly continue to be able to exert any influence on the public affairs.”³⁷⁸

Particularly the last sentences in the quote deserve a closer look. The main consideration against fascism appeared not to be its undemocratic character as such but the practical fact

³⁷⁴ “Hitler in Italija,” *Jutro*, 1. 2. 1933.

³⁷⁵ For instance see: “Obletnica ‘tretje države’ v znaku kulturnega boja,” *Jutro*, 26. 1. 1934.

³⁷⁶ “Grmada v Berlinu,” *Jutro*, 11. 5. 1933.

³⁷⁷ Sepp Straffner, “Der italienisch-fascistische Ständestaat,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 18. 2. 1930.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

that in the current power relations in Austrian politics, “the national and *freiheitlich* circles” would as a minority party be completely pushed aside under such a system. As we shall see later, this also seems to be the central consideration that determined the course of the GdVP leadership when an actual dictatorship under the banner of *Ständestaat* was being established in Austria. At the same time their stance to some extent resembles the Slovene progressives’ preparedness to “suspend” their democratic principles for the sake of defeating the stronger Catholic camp.

Already in 1923 an article in the party weekly *Deutsche Zeit* openly stated that parliamentary democracy had above all provided convenient conditions for operating within the framework of the Austrian First Republic with its specific political configuration between the three camps:

“The democratic system gives the national circles the opportunity to co-determine the development of things and to unfold their many intellectual forces through positive labor, instead of having to exhaust them in vain criticism, what in the case of a clerical rightist regime [*bei einem klerikalen Rechtsregime*] – a different one would be hardly expectable in Austria – would certainly be the case.”³⁷⁹

It was the latter circumstance that made it necessary for “every truly nationally-minded German Austrian” to “put up with our present form of government” instead of combatting the “‘democratic fuss’ [*demokratische Getue*]” on every possible occasion. Any further discussion on the form of political order should be postponed to the point in time when “the united German people will give itself the form of government it needs.”³⁸⁰ When

³⁷⁹ I. , “Begriffsverwirrung oder was ist ,rechtsradikal?“, *Deutsche Zeit*, Yr. 1, Nr. 55, 11. 12. 1923.

³⁸⁰ Ibid.:

“Wir glauben daher, daß jeder wahrhaft national denkende Deutschösterreicher, anstatt bei jeder Gelegenheit gegen das ,demokratische Getue‘ zu Felde zu ziehen, sich ganz gut mit unserer gegenwärtigen Staatsform abfinden und jede weitere Erörterung auf den Zeitpunkt verschieben könnte, bis sich das geeinte deutsche Volk die Staatsform geben wird, die es eben braucht.“

Foppa took over as the party chairman in December 1931, he in his inaugural speech re-affirmed the party's commitment to parliamentary order, as well as internal democracy. He however grounded the need for continuation of the democratic course in the fact that the Austrian political circumstances precluded establishment of a "national dictatorship:"

"...as long as we are in conditions like here in Austria, which are very different from those outside in the German Reich, where we can not think about a national dictatorship, where we can not hope for a national dictatorship that would relieve us [*die uns ablöst*], we must continue resolutely and purposefully on the path that we have been taking since the first day of our formation – and even if the situation should appear so bleak for us. This is the only thought that I bring to expression before You today."³⁸¹

Foppa's words about hope of a "national dictatorship" referred to the Harzburg Front, to which GdVP looked up to at the time. Speaking at an internal meeting of the party leadership he however also admitted that "everyone in Austria, regardless of where the people stand" was "calling for a strong state authority" and that it was becoming ever clearer that "the complicated apparatus of the parliamentary system" did not enable the government to pursue its tasks.³⁸²

Another closely associated question, however concerns the positions of GdVP towards German National Socialism of the Hitlerite variety. Nazis were namely considered part of the same ideological camp and, despite internal competition and numerous diverging views, also shared certain tactical goals with the Greater Germans. Within the Austrian political landscape, both parties moreover represented minority views.

³⁸¹ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 35, Stenographisches Protokoll des 12. Ordentlichen Reichsparteitages der Grossdeutschen Volkspartei, Wien 4. bis 6. Dezember 1931.

³⁸² AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 35, Verhandlungsschrift über die Sitzung der Reichsparteileitung am 10. Jänner 1932.

At the same time Foppa however stressed again that in the given circumstances there was no proper alternative to the established parliamentary order in Austria and that the party should orientate itself accordingly.

The relationship of GdVP towards National Socialism reveals itself as ambiguous and multi-layered. On the one hand during 1932, as supporters were being taken away by the latter, the rhetoric and explicit antagonism were very sharp.³⁸³ On the other hand, as Hitler was appointed German chancellor Schürff greeted the formation of his cabinet, recognizing in it the fulfillment of the old GdVP goal of creating a “national *Einheitsfront*.”³⁸⁴ *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten* saw Hitler's appointment as the end of the government crisis and the path back to “normal constitutional life,”³⁸⁵ while labelling the dissolution of parliament along with Hitler's call for majority support an “expression of democracy.”³⁸⁶

While GdVP indeed famously stood in defense of Austrian democracy at the time of its dissolution, expressing last protests against illegitimate government actions on the parliamentary floor, it simultaneously entered an alliance with NSDAP, effectively subordinating itself to its goals. The key to the logic of the GdVP's conditional attitude towards democracy lay in the uncompromising loyalty to the fundamental political goal of *Anschluss*. Throughout its existence the party officially maintained a democratic image. Yet, at the same time it had been since the moment of its foundation on various occasions

³⁸³ For instance see: AT-OeStA/AdR, GdVP, K. 36, RI-13 – 393, 20 Juli 1932: Foppa, Rede Juli 1932; Viktor Miltschinsky, „Noch einmal: Großdeutsch oder nationalsozialistisch?“ *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 22. 4. 1932; August Wotawa, “Nationale Opposition,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 10. 1. 1932.

³⁸⁴ “Dr Schürff zur deutschen Regierungsbildung,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 3. 2. 1933:

“Die Betrauung der nationalen Parlamentsparteien des deutschen Reichstages mit der Führung der deutschen Reichsgeschäfte muß in allen deutschnationalen Kreisen Oesterreichs und im gesamten Auslandsdeutschum freudig begrüßt werden. Eine von nationalen Idealen geleitete deutsche Reichsregierung muß pflichtgemäß zur Stärkung des Deutschtums nicht bloß im Inland, sondern auch im Ausland beitragen. Hinter dieser nationalen Arbeit steht die weitüberwiegende Mehrheit des ganzen deutschen Volkes. Wir Großdeutschen begrüßen diese Zusammenfassung der nationalen Parteien in einer gemeinsamen Regierung um so mehr, als wir seit dem Bestande der Großdeutschen Volkspartei stets für ein Zusammenarbeiten aller deutschnationalen Parteien eingetreten sind und der nationalen Konzentrationsidee mit unserer ganzen Arbeit gedient haben.“

³⁸⁵ “Hitler zum Reichskanzler ernannt,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 31. 1. 1933.

³⁸⁶ “51 Prozent,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 4. 2. 1933.

and in various places openly stressing that all considerations, including those regarding political order, were subordinated to *Anschluss*. The *Richtlinien* for instance stated that the “threats and promises of the enemies of our *Volk*” were equally futile in deterring the Greater Germans from their “incessant and tenacious adherence to the idea of *Anschluss*” as would the “changes in the arrangement of political relations in the German Reich in any way possible [*nach welcher Richtung immer*]” have been.³⁸⁷

Similar declarations were being uttered by various prominent representatives including the “moderate” Dinghofer, who in 1924 pointed out that “our will for *Anschluss* shall never be influenced by [the question], who holds the government power in Germany or how the constitutional conditions are being shaped.”³⁸⁸ In 1926 in his report at the federal party convention he stated that “in accordance to the party line [*parteimässig*] every *Anschluss* to a German Reich of whatsoever kind” was acceptable.³⁸⁹ Similarly, Marie Schneider argued in 1928:

“I find it necessary that we continue to emphasize in the future that the political situation in Germany is entirely irrelevant to our conduct, that it does not matter to us how the relations outside in the Reich are being shaped, that we under all circumstances, at any time and under all [kinds of] relationships [*unter allen Verhältnissen*] warmly support the *Anschluss*.”³⁹⁰

Important to reiterate here is the fact that GdVP did not seem to have taken into consideration its further political role and the possible ideological positions it could occupy

³⁸⁷ *Richtlinien*, 446.

³⁸⁸ “Der großdeutsche Parteitag,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 3. 6. 1924:

“Unser Anschlußwille wird nie davon beeinflußt sein, wer in Deutschland die Regierungsgewalt in Händen hat oder wie sich die staatsrechtlichen Verhältnisse im Reiche gestalten.”

³⁸⁹ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 32, RI-12 7. Reichsparteitag vom 05.-06.06. 1926. Referat Dr. Dinghofer: “Es scheint mir aber notwendig zu sein, bei dieser Gelegenheit festzustellen, dass uns parteimässig ein jeder Anschluss an ein wie immer geartetes Deutsches Reich recht ist.”

³⁹⁰ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 33, Reichsparteitag 1928, Frau Schneider.

within the German political landscape, should the main objective of *Anschluss* have been achieved.³⁹¹

What is also completely clear is that the party leadership behind close doors expressed distrust in the framework of “Western formal democracy” deemed unable to end the economic and political crisis.³⁹² During 1933-34, while persistently opposing the acts of Dollfuss administration, they simultaneously publically demanded a “reformed renewal of parliament,” which they firmly associated with a firm connection to Germany.³⁹³ They themselves admitted that the fight against the Dollfuss dictatorship represented merely the continuation of the struggle against the Austrian government – which had itself been reacting to the developments in the *Reich*. Even in the last protest speech during the last session of the Austrian parliament in May 1934 Foppa emphasized that his party was not in principle against the “authoritarian principle.”³⁹⁴

Based on the listed facts, we may largely agree with Ackerl’s assessment that the Greater German protests against the abolishment of parliamentary life appeared at that time as “pure lip service.”³⁹⁵ The question concerning sincerity of the democratic orientation in the Austrian case appears as the far most delicate out of the three. While the party throughout its existence officially maintained a democratic image, it proved to be a dubious or at best a very conditional one.

³⁹¹ Cf. Ackerl, *Die Grossdeutsche*, 314.

³⁹² AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 35, Verhandlungsschrift 17.Juli 1932.

³⁹³ Isabella Ackerl, “Thesen zu Demokratieverständnis, parlamentarischer Haltung und nationaler Frage bei der Grossdeutschen Volkspartei” in *Das Parteienwesen Österreichs und Ungarns in der Zwischenkriegszeit*, A. M. Drabek, R. G. Plaschka, H. Rumpler eds. (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1990), pp. 252-253.

³⁹⁴ *Nationalrat - Stenographische Protokolle*, IV. GP, 1930-1934, 126. Sitzung 30. April 1934, Accessible at: <http://alex.onb.ac.at/spe.htm#SVI> (accessed 04/22/2017).

³⁹⁵ Ackerl, *Thesen*, 253.

6. The Place, the Function and Meanings of „Liberalism“ in the Contemporary Political Discourses and Debates

The foregoing chapter explores the various usages and understandings of the term “liberalism” in the three studied contexts, particularly the modes of its employment as a label in party politics. The latter are outlined in the first subchapter, which is followed by a discussion about various possible meanings of the notion “liberalism,” as they manifested through contemporary usages and debates. Also devoting some attention to the resonances of the party courses among the politically engaged intellectuals that identified as liberals, this discussion reaches beyond the frame of party politics. This is followed by a section that focuses on the related political labels such as progressive, free-minded and *freiheitlich*, common for the studied contexts, and their interplay with various meanings of liberalism. Most importantly, it shows how different functions of the label “liberal” and various understandings of the concept “liberalism” and its “essence” reflected through their usage. The last subchapter probes further, focusing primarily on conceptions of liberalism that emerged and were being developed among the politically engaged but non-party intellectuals. In this way it opens up further possible perspectives for studying liberalism beyond the narrow frame of party politics.

6. 1. “Liberalism” as Political Label – its Place and Function in Political Discourse

When the national liberal parties from various Slovene lands merged into the Yugoslav Democratic Party in the summer of 1918, the newspaper *Slovenski narod* counterposed “liberalism of the past” and “democracy of the future.”¹ The founding congress of the new party was pictured in the report as a battle between these two world views in which the “machine gun of the socialization of economy” had been “hitting mercilessly” against the “defensive cannon of capitalism, albeit in national attire.” The end result was however a compromise, “a form acceptable to the majority,” in which much had been “salvaged from the experiences of the past that the nation does not want to discard”, while “in all the rest the democratic breath [*dihljaj*] of the new era was clearly floating above us.”² Although “liberalism of the past” was not entirely left to the ash heap of history, the future clearly belonged to democracy as the new central political principle and slogan of the time.

The experience of the World War represented one of the crucial factors in this transition. As the land *Geschäftsführer* of the Greater German People’s Party in Salzburg Puschnigg remembered in his speech at the 1921 land congress,³ it had erased all the differences between the co-nationals, based on property and “estate”:

“In the military, the various classes and estates of the *Volk* came, after decades of segregation, into intimate touch again; outside, in front of the enemy all the social shrouds and disguises fell and the naked, bare human [*der nackte, bloße Mensch*] remained standing. Many a prejudice fell there, and the concept of human rights and human dignity, most vividly inculcated to the Germans [*den Deutschen am lebhaftesten eingeprägte*], was reborn.”⁴

¹ Po ustanovni skupščini, *Slovenski narod*, 9. 7. 1918.

² Ibid.

³ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 29, RI-11b Landesparteileitung Salzburg, Mitteilungen, *Mitteilungen der Großdeutschen Volkspartei in Salzburg*, 1. Jahrgang, 2. Und 3. Novemberfolge (15. November 1921).

⁴ Ibid.

In the hinterland, however, “stood [...] the threatening liberalism, that denied exactly that which had been gained outside as recognition [*der drohende Liberalismus, der gerade das verneinte, was draußen als Erkenntnis gewonnen wurde*]“. While many of the older *freiheitlich* politicians had still been standing under the “spell” of the old liberalism, the democratic and egalitarian war experience led the younger generation away from it. Youth, which had already before the war mostly been composed of “*Demokraten und verkappte Tyrannenstürzler*,” was now, fueled by “the experienced transformation”, turning in part towards socialism, “among the nationally conscious however almost exclusively towards the concept of *Volksgemeinschaft*.” This ultimately led to the creation of the Greater German People’s Party as a new political force that united those *freiheitlich* leaders of the older generation that had grasped the new era and “progressed with the experiences of the time,” with the democratic younger nationalists:

“In this way the Greater German People’s Party came to be. The Greater German Party is the national Young Austria [*das nationale Jungösterreich*], with the goal of Greater Germany, with the recognition of the *Volksgemeinschaft* and the associated social demands, with the rejection of the old free-mindedness in its liberalistic meaning [*des alten Freisinns in seiner liberalistischen Bedeutung*].”⁵

In Puschnigg’s speech we may clearly see the association of liberalism with the “old world” and its perception as a largely negative force of the Habsburg past. It is distinctive for all the three cases under scrutiny that the word “liberalism” was commonly employed to designate something, belonging to the foregone era – thus the expressions such as “old liberalism”, “pre-war liberalism”, ...”*K. u. K. Liberalismus*.”⁶ The opinion of Jiří Hejda, who discussed the “19th century that had begun in 1789 and ended in 1914” as the “century

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ “Der k. k. Liberalismus,” *Bohemia*, 9. 8. 1928.

of liberalism”⁷ was a widely held one in all the three contexts. This association with the “old world” however bore various overtones and contained different value judgments. It was omnipresent, not necessarily leading towards the outright rejection of liberalism but always implying a conscious distancing from its pre-WWI forms. In some of the cases it was connected to calls for its reform, in others to the claim that it had been transcended, in others again the aim was to categorically reject its heritage. The last was distinct especially for Austria and the first for the Czech context, although it must be noted that the 19th century association of “liberalism” with “Germandom” among the Slavs of former Austria was still well present in the interwar period.

All in all, liberalism represented a relatively obscure term in the interwar political life of former Cisleithanean lands and acted as a quite unpopular political label. A general characteristic of the time, also widely acknowledged by the contemporaries, was that explicit identifying with liberal ideas was something rather rare. As *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, a Viennese newspaper generally sympathetic to liberal standpoints, wrote in the 1920 introduction to Ludwig von Mises' “*Nation, Staat und Wirtschaft*”:

“Throughout all the chapters a fundamental commitment to the political and economic liberalism, to the ideas of the Enlightenment that have since 1789 gained political form, to the doctrines of free trade and individualistic economy, is being present. Such [kind of] commitment is not too often encountered nowadays.”⁸

Similarly, the famous Czech intellectual of the post-WWI “lost generation,” Ferdinand Peroutka noted in his groundbreaking 1923 text “Liberalism after the War” (*Liberalismus po válce*) how “liberals of all countries” could “easily agree about one thing: that liberalism

⁷ Jiří Hejda, “Žijeme hospodářsky v nové době,” *Přítomnost*, vol. VI., Nr. 6 (14. 2. 1929).

⁸ “Ein Anwalt der liberalen Wirtschaftslehren,” *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 8.3.1920.

after the war is without strength.”⁹ Consequential unpopularity of the noun “liberalism” and adjective “liberal” did however not signify their absence from the public discourse, where they continued to be present in various meanings and associations, carrying predominantly, but not exclusively, negative connotations. This difference reflected also in the actual modes of (conscious) disassociation from the label “liberalism” or its deliberate absence from political rhetoric. In some of the cases this reflected a genuine animosity towards liberal ideology, liberal political traditions and their heritage. In others this was not necessarily the case, whereas only the word “liberal” was, due to its unpopularity, substituted for other, less controversial labels.

Rare were the cases, such as when Count Czernin appealed to the “liberal middle classes”¹⁰ of Austria after the elections of 1920. Like the man himself, a Bohemian nobleman and former *K.u.K.* foreign minister, the formulation that he used acted as largely anachronistic in the political culture of the First Austrian Republic, appearing as a residue from a bygone era.

And it is no coincidence that the party, for which Czernin was speaking, represented a curious and politically marginal exception in a political context otherwise most hostile towards liberalism. It must furthermore be stressed that even that party did not have the word “liberal” in its name. Appearing under different names – Civic-Democratic Party (*Bürgerlich-demokratische Partei*), Civic Labor Party (*Bürgerliche Arbeitspartei*) and later Democratic Centrist Party (*Demokratische Mittelpartei*) – it was (along with even more

⁹ Ferdinand Peroutka, “Liberalismus po válce” (1923) in M. Znoj, J. Havranek, M. Sekera, M. (eds.), *Česky liberalismus* (Prague: Torst, 1995), pp. 406-415: p. 406.

¹⁰ Hannes Rosenkranz, *Die demokratischen Mittelparteien in der Zwischenkriegszeit (Erste Republik)*, Diplomarbeit (Vienna: H. Rosenkranz, 1998), pp. 49-50.

marginal organizations such as Democratic Party (*Demokratische Partei*), Middle-Class People's Party (*Mittelständische Volkspartei*), Economic Party (*Wirtschaftspartei*), Association of the Friends of Progress (*Verein der Fortschrittsfreunde*), The German Economic People's Association (*Der deutschwirtschaftliche Volksverein*), etc.), however, the only party in the political landscape of the Austrian First Republic that did not have any major reservations towards the liberal heritage, including the term "liberalism" itself, and did not explicitly reject it. Its self-proclaimed aim was to attract voters that were "democratic, *bürgerlich*, in the true sense of the word liberal," that represented "the voice of intellectual freedom, of economic reason and of social justice,"¹¹ and had been "been silenced [*mundtot gemacht worden*]" in the political landscape determined by the Black-Red struggle. These parties' electoral appeal was furthermore entirely limited to Vienna. The Greater German People's Party as the principal national liberal heir in Austria, which operated in all of its federal lands, however held an explicitly hostile stance towards liberalism. Cases of elder representatives, such as Hans Stöckler, chairman of the Land Union of State Pensioners in Vorarlberg, who explicitly spoke of the "greater German and liberal cause,"¹² were extremely rare. At the same time the Greater Germans took great care to dissociate themselves from any connections to liberalism, as for instance when Hans Schürff, belonging to the moderate, centrist wing of the party, asserted how the party was

¹¹ "Aufruf der bürgerlich-demokratischen Partei," *Neue Freie Presse*, 8. 5. 1927.

¹² AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 33, RI-12 9. Reichsparteitag vom 08.-10.06. 1928, Protokoll:

"...ich schon ein uraltes Mitglied der Grossdeutschen Volkspartei bin und es mir am Herzen gelegen ist, diejenigen Mitglieder des Pensionistenvereins, die in unseren Reihen stehen, die seinerzeit sogar treue Anhänger der grossdeutschen und der liberalen Sache gewesen sind, noch in unseren Reihen zu erhalten."

mistakenly being perceived in Germany to be a liberal one.¹³ Generally, the Greater Germans were more inclined to use the word in pejorative manners.

This was nothing surprising, taking into account the general unpopularity of the words “liberalism” and “liberal” and the degree of negative connotations that they carried in the political languages of the First Austrian Republic. In that context, the pejorative usage of these terms was perhaps the most distinctive and prevalent one among all the three cases under scrutiny. In the discourses of the parties all across the political spectrum, the word “liberalism” most often appeared as a *Schimpfwort*, “from which everybody had to distance himself in order to please the conformism of the ruling *Zeitgeist*.”¹⁴ This general animosity towards the liberal label was particularly distinctive for the national liberal heirs such as the Greater Germans. Yet – as we have seen earlier in the case of the small Viennese parties – it was again Austria, where minor political parties still existed, that consciously and proudly identified with liberalism. Especially when employed to label the latter kind of parties by the former, far stronger ones, the word “liberalism” primarily came to act as a derogatory term, a *Schimpfwort*, denoting a decadent, “anational” ideology of the past and often carrying anti-Semitic overtones (“*judenliberal*”).

The Slovene and Czech political contexts, while in general terms not so unambiguously hostile towards the liberal label, lacked political parties, however small, that would openly use it for self-identification. At the same time the attitudes towards liberalism and its heritage among the national liberal heirs were not outright hostile as in the case of the

¹³ “*Man hat un sim Reiche fälschlich als Liberale betrachtet.*” - See: AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 35, Verhandlungsschrift über die Sitzung der Reichsparteileitung am 11. Dezember 1932 um ½ Uhr vorm. im Parlament.

¹⁴ Wolfgang Mantl, “Liberalismus und Antiliberalismus in Österreich. Eine Spurensuche“ in *Liberalismus. Interpretationen und Perspektiven*. Emil Brix, Wolfgang Mantl eds. (Vienna: Böhlau, 1996), pp. 15-48, p., 39.

Greater Germans, but may rather be described as ambivalent and in some cases quite positive.

As we have seen in Chapter 3, the usage of the liberal label by the Slovene People's Party was exclusively pejorative. Since this party represented the far strongest force in the interwar Slovene politics, the manner in which it employed the liberal label also profoundly marked the broader political language. The words "liberalism" and "liberal" most often appeared in association to the genealogical origin of the political groups and to the social status and cultural orientation of their members and followers, and less to explicitly liberal ideas.

Although occasionally openly referring to themselves as "liberals", the part of Slovene population who were customarily being called by that name – primarily but not only by the proponents of political Catholicism – however preferred to use other labels. In line with the names of political parties with which they were affiliated, their preferred labels were "democratic"/"democrats" (Yugoslav Democratic Party, Independent Democratic Party) in the 1920s and "nationalist"/"nationalists" (Yugoslav National Party) during the 1930s. Throughout the studied period however, the prevalent term used for self-identification in their political camp which transcended the narrow frame of party politics, remained "progressive." When *Kasino*, the building that had formerly acted as the headquarters of Ljubljana German national liberals, was taken over by their Slovene counterparts, the latter's newspaper *Jutro* wrote that "the former 'Trutzburg' of the Carniolan Germans, the heart of Ljubljana's liberal Germandom" had been transferred "into the national hands of the progressive Yugoslav citizenry [*naprednega jugoslovanskega meščanstva*]." ¹⁵

¹⁵ *Jutro*, 25. 6. 1921.

The usage of liberal label in the Czech lands was more diversified and multilayered. Sometimes, albeit less often than in the Slovene context, it similarly referred to the genealogical heirs of liberalism. Yet, in the daily political discourse of the First Czechoslovak Republic, where “nation” and “democracy” functioned as the two central political notions, “liberalism” did not count among the terms that would often appear in the speeches of politicians or on the newspaper pages.¹⁶ In the party politics of the Czech lands, liberalism had at least since the last decades of the 19th century not been a popular self-identification. The founding of the Czechoslovak republic, its political ethos and constellation, despite in many ways revealing patterns that might justifiedly be treated as liberal - indeed the most liberal in the broader region - did not bring about any change in this regard. Paradoxically or not – it was exactly the political and economic arrangements of the First Czechoslovak Republic, coming perhaps closest to the liberal standards, that made liberalism so self-evident that the explicit references to it became unnecessary.¹⁷ On the other hand, among other things due to the pronounced animosity of the “President Liberator” Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk against the word “liberalism,” the unpopularity of the term in the daily politics continued to rise after 1918. While the value of the labels “liberalism” and “liberal” did not rank highly on the Czech political market, the word was on the other hand very much present in intellectual debates taking place on the pages of various journals, written and read by politically engaged intelligentsia.

Common for all the three contexts under scrutiny is that the frequency of actual

¹⁶ Jan Havránek, “Liberalismus za první republiky” in M. Znoj, J. Havranek, M. Sekera (eds.), *Česky liberalismus* (Prague: Torst, 1995), pp. 275-278; p. 275.

¹⁷ Ibid., 276-277.

identification with liberalism was considerably lower than that of the later applications of that term by historians. It was distinctive for all the three cases that the general political atmosphere was more favorable to other political terms with liberalism in the best case carrying a glare of “old-fashionedness” if not straightforward unpopularity. Related political labels, often used to “mask” and sometimes also to create a distance from liberalism included the “old”, pre-WWI ones such as “free-minded” (*svobodomyslný*, *freisinnig*, *svobodomiseln*), “progressive” (*pokrokov*, *fortschrittlich*, *napreden*), “freedom” (*freiheitlich*) and “national”, as well as “national democratic” and “democratic” that entered the stage in 1918. Out of the mentioned labels, the most prevalent one in the Slovene context was beyond doubt “progressive,” in the Austrian it was *freiheitlich*, whereas in the Czech “democratic” and “national-democratic” prevailed with “progressive” also being fairly common but less prominent. “National” and “nationalist” were equally highly distinctive for all the three cases, indicating both the traditional national orientation of liberal traditions in all the studied lands, as well as the strengthened status of the “national” component in the ideological positions of the national liberal heirs.

With “democracy” becoming the central political slogan after 1918, a similar pattern may be traced in all the three cases under scrutiny and broader, reflecting already in the names of political parties that carried the liberal legacy into the new era – for instance the German Democratic Party. Similarly to the German case, the (post-)liberal parties of the former Cisleithania also increasingly began to use the label “democratic” for their orientation. The new party labels were sometimes also a target of critique by political opponents or internal dissidents. The Slovene newspaper *Narodni dnevnik* that stood in opposition to the dominant Žerjav-Kramer group within the progressive camp, for instance wrote in 1924

that “all these new renamings such as national democratism, democratic socialism, social liberalism etc.” were to a larger extent “theoretical formulas of well-meaning intellectuals than expressions of a moving force of new political orientations. In short: trimmed forms without living substance.”¹⁸ The newspaper explained this with observation that “the once all-deciding [*vseodločujoče*] liberal parties” had turned into “either political branch offices of capitalist business or [...] theoretical debate clubs, high commands without obedient personnel.”¹⁹

6. 2. The Multifarious Meanings of “Liberalism”

Apart from pointing out the political powerlessness and fragmentation of organized liberalism, the last sentence in the previously quoted critical newspaper article also revealed the most commonly criticized and denounced meaning of liberalism. The aspect of liberalism that received the largest share of the criticism, rejection or outright animosity was the economic one. This was the type of liberalism that was being commonly and almost equivocally dismissed as “obsolete” and this was the image of “liberalism” that most often served as the basis for its demonization.

At the same time firm economically liberal positions, such as those of Ludwig von Mises, represented a rare and rather marginal occurrence in the contexts under scrutiny, which makes the amount of fierce attacks raised against them largely appear as fighting windmills. In the arena of party politics economic liberalism was indeed largely a bygone

¹⁸ “Prelom,” *Narodni dnevnik*, 4. 4. 1924.

¹⁹ Ibid.

ideology with which no major player wished to be associated. The widely condemned “Manchester liberalism” had been serving as a derogatory call-word at least since the 1873 economic crash, while beliefs in the beneficial effects of at least some degree of economic interventionism after the WWI experience became more firmly anchored among virtually all political currents than ever before.

The derogatory epithet “Manchester liberal” had since the 1870s been pretty much characteristic for all the three contexts and widespread across the political spectrum. It counted among those negative designations that were especially popular with political groups which the public commonly associated with liberalism, with interesting examples including the Greater German (and former National Socialist) Prodingers accusing a fellow MP from the pro-fascist Heimatblock of “*Manchesterliberalismus*,”²⁰ the same party labelling *Neue Freie Presse* and other liberal newspapers as “*Manchesterpresse*”²¹ or Slovene national liberal heirs of the younger generation using the word to attack their elder counterparts after the two groups had split in 1922. In the Czech case the social democratic newspaper *Pravo Lidu* was also quite prone to label Karel Kramář as “Manchester liberal” although he was ideologically quite far from classical liberalism both in the economic and political sense.²²

Particularly in the Slovene case the pejorative label was being widely employed by opposing groups of progressives during times of internal disputes. The example from the election period in 1922, immediately after the split between the “elders” and the “youths”, is quite telling. The “youths” tried to discredit the “elders” by means of phrases such as

²⁰ “Wirtschaftsproblem Oesterreich,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 23. 10. 1931.

²¹ Dr. Viktor Mittermann, “Verlegenheit auf der Linken,” *Deutsche Zeit*, 9. 4. 1926.

²² Jan Dobeš, “Karel Kramář mezi nacionalismem, liberalismem a fašismem,” in J. Bílek and L. Velek (eds.), *Karel Kramář (1860-1937), Život a dílo* (Prague: Masarykův ústav a Archiv AV ČR, v.v.i., 2009), p. 686.

“old liberals,” “reactionary remnants of the old Slovene liberalism,” “representatives of reactionary Slovene bourgeoisie that still sticks entirely in the liberal shackles from before the year 1880” and “pronounced representatives of the most reactionary and anti-social Manchester liberalism.”²³

When the national liberal heirs explicitly rejected to be called “liberals” they above all wanted to distance themselves from economic liberalism. As seen in the above quoted Slovene example, as well as in the case of early 1920s National Democratic Left, similar mode of rejecting “liberalism” also reflected in the internal struggles when oppositional groups within the party criticized the leadership for pursuing economic policies that were not “social” enough. In the Austrian case however the anti-Semitic moment was also strongly involved. A speaker at the 1920 congress of the Viennese National Democrats indicated the essential connection between “Jewishness” and economic liberalism. The struggle against the former was thus impossible without fighting the latter. Comparing the “Jewishness” with a tree, the speaker stated:

„We have to saw off the trunk. We can only do that if we fathom scientifically where the strength of Jewdom lies. And that is what Sombart has done in his work *Kapitalismus und Judentum*. We must make that, which gives the Jewdom strength, impossible: the private capitalism, the liberalism. [...] I can not possibly fight the Jews and simultaneously protect private capitalism on a large scale. The one or the other.“²⁴

On the other hand, as we have seen in the 5th chapter, even in the moments when political parties indeed turned towards ideas of free enterprise, they took great care not to employ the term “liberalism” or give any hint of its “return.” The Czechoslovak National

²³ *Jutro*, 24. 11. 1922; “Ljubljanski demokrati po volitvah,” *Jutro*, 4. 12. 1922; “Narodni socijalisti in demokrati,” *Jutro*, 19. 10 1922; *Jutro*, 29. 11. 1922.

²⁴ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 30, RI-12 Parteitag der Nationaldemokraten vom 26.-29. 06. 1920. Protokoll 1920.

Democrats, after having turned away from Engliš's economic program, thus preferred to use the term "individualism."²⁵ An excellent example of unambiguously (economically) liberal discourse, coupled by an explicit rejection of liberalism may be seen in the 1932 speech given by the Greater German land chairman for Vienna and Lower Austria Viktor Miltschinsky:

"Above all must we nowadays fight for the freedom of economy, for the freedom of the individual [*Freiheit der Persönlichkeit*]. Fight against our entire country being finally converted into one large supply house [*Versorgungshaus*] and our whole nation into a dull mass of supplied [*befürsorger*], spoon-fed [*gegängelter*], disinterested people. Thus, we however of course do not wish to talk about a return of the old unlimited and irresponsible *liberalism*. The times of liberalism are over once and for all."²⁶

Turning back to the distinction between "liberalism of the past" and "democracy of the future," with which we opened the chapter, it is impossible to miss the clear linkage of the former to economic liberalism or "capitalism."²⁷ Yet, in the same article "liberalism of the past" was not entirely brushed aside, revealing more than only recognition to liberalism for its past achievements – including those in the economic sphere. Debates from the same and slightly later periods also testify to the continuation of other dimensions of liberalism and corresponding conceptions that were not necessarily being perceived entirely obsolete, as had been the case with economic one. Perhaps the clearest example of this was the continuous identification of liberalism with anti-clericalism, as one of the meanings that had persevered into the interwar political languages of the three studied cases.

²⁵ F. Sís, "Naše cesta – naše poslání," *Národní listy*, 14. 4. 1929.

²⁶ "Die Haltung der Großdeutschen. Landesparteiobmann Dr. Miltschinsky über den Umbau der Partei," *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 9. 7. 1932.

²⁷ Po ustanovni skupščini, *Slovenski narod*, 9. 7. 1918.

Due to the high levels of secularity, as well as the lesser prominence of political Catholicism within the political landscape the latter was the least distinctive for the Czech context. This is not to say that anti-clericalism played no role in the Czech interwar political life. Particularly in the immediate postwar years and up to 1925 it had quite a strong symbolical meaning, primarily due to the historical association of the Roman Catholic Church with the Habsburg rule and the counter-reformation. Yet, in contrast to the other two cases under scrutiny, “clericalism” did not represent anything close to a determining factor in the internal political polarization.

On the other hand associations of liberalism with areligiosity persisted into the interwar era, partly under the influence of the meanings that President Masaryk had attributed to liberalism in his critique against it. The Czechoslovak president, perceived otherwise by some of his contemporaries, as well as some later researchers of intellectual history,²⁸ to be a liberal, denounced liberalism due to his own interpretation of the concept. This interpretation reduced it intellectually to a shallow, intellectually poor world view, lacking sense for authentic religious feeling; politically to the tradition of Czech national liberalism embodied by the Young Czech Party; and economically to the – by 1918 largely bygone – *laissez faire* economic politics and the common cliché of “Manchester liberalism.” Most importantly, the “liberals” in his view had never been able to comprehend the universal mission of the Czech history.²⁹

²⁸ See: Milan Znoj, “Depolitizace humanistické vize Evropy. Od Masaryka k volnému trhu” in *České vize Evropy? Manuál k naší evropské debatě*, P. Hlaváček ed. (Prague: Academia, 2014) and Milan Znoj, “The welfare state as a third way between capitalism and revolutionary socialism” in Z. Zudová-Lešková et. al., *Theory and Practice of the Welfare State in Europe in 20th Century* (Prague: Historický ústav, 2014).

²⁹ Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, *Svetova revoluce*, (Prague: 1925), p. 564: “he does not understand Palacky and does not understand our greatest writers, despite having their names constantly on the tongue. And he does not understand our history, also when he is himself a historian.”

Masaryk's animosity towards liberalism dated back to the 1890s and developed simultaneously with his own philosophical system, the theory of "humanist democracy." Although the latter incorporated more liberal values and ideas "than he ever admitted" Masaryk developed it simultaneously with his dispute against contemporary liberalism, which he rejected for what he saw as "the 'amoral practice' of utilitarianism and the narrow-minded rationalism."³⁰ In end effect, such liberalism implied religious indifference that lacked sense for true religious feeling, equated faith with an institution and confused lived religion with a sterile doctrine. "Our Czech liberal," wrote Masaryk, was "by rule a Catholic by certificate (*matrikovým katolikem*) and an illiterate in religious questions (...) unable to imagine religion beyond his church and its cult and teaching."³¹

In the Slovene and Austrian post-1918 political contexts, however, anti-clericalism by no means represented an issue that had been overcome and belonged to the past. In those two contexts "liberalism" commonly acted as a synonym for anti-clerical outlooks, sometimes also bearing anti-religious overtones. Important to note is that this was not only a consequence of the already discussed pejorative usage of the labels "liberalism" and "liberal" on the part of political Catholicism.

Moreover, when understood in this way, the liberal label, albeit controversial, was not always denounced by those to whom the Catholics and other political opponents attached it. Regardless of whether it was perceived primarily as *Schimpfwort* or if it was employed in other, more positive modes, a glance into the political language of the national liberal

³⁰ Cf. Otto Urban, "Czech Liberalism, 1848-1918" in Ivan Zoltan Denes ed., *Liberty and the search for identity* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2006), p 284.

"I am, and I used therefore to be an opponent of Liberalism in the form that it took after 1848; for me it is excessively rationalistic, and in religious questions too indifferent, too sterile" - *Masaryk on Thought and Life. Conversations with Karel Čapek* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1938), p. 114

³¹ Masaryk, Svetova, 564.

heirs reveals the same kind of semantic relationship between liberalism and anti-clericalism.

It is true that both Slovene progressives and even more the Austrian Greater Germans tended to firmly reject the liberal label when receiving it from the “clericals.” *Slovenski narod* for instance labelled the writing of Catholic *Slovenec*, which had referred to JDS as “the former liberal party,” as “distastefulness of the highest rank [*brezokusnost prve vrste*].”³² Similarly it responded to the writing of the Croatian *Obzor*:

“‘Obzor’ has its own pleasure. Whenever it talks about our party, it persistently calls it liberal, although it knows very well that there had not been and there is not any party that would carry that name in the Slovene lands.”³³

Preference for other political labels however did not preclude the national liberal heirs, both Slovene and Austrian, from appropriating the meaning of liberalism as it had established itself in public discourse under the influence of Catholic usage. Particularly for mutual conflicts they even accepted its function as *Schimpfwort* and used it in their own internal conflicts. In the Slovene case the usage was however sometimes also affirmative, based on the positive attachment of the liberal label to their own anti-clerical orientation. Alternatively, liberalism could also serve as a neutral, albeit also a fairly empty, descriptive term that was on rare occasions employed even by the “liberals” themselves. We may find a good example of this in the way Ivan Pucelj, member of the pre-WWI National Progressive Party and leader of the Independent Agrarian Party (est. 1919), remembered how he had become politically aware as a young boy during the 1890s. Returning for

³² “Huda jeza,” *Slovenski narod*, 13. 12. 1918.

³³ “‘Obzoru’ v album,” *Slovenski narod*, 31. 5. 1919.

Slovenski narod was also upset by the usage of liberal label in social democratic press - See: “Nekoliko več potrpežljivosti,” *Slovenski narod*, 5. 8. 1918.

holidays to his home village in lower Carniola from Ljubljana, where he had been attending lower *Gymnasium*, he witnessed “an unusual, straightforward sensational sermon” that the young, newly-arrived chaplain read in the church:

“Nothing about the gospel or sins and such and such things that we had been used to until then; I memorized only two words: liberals and clericals. The latter stood for the church, the heaven and the saints, the former against the faith, for the hell and against the priests.

(...)

We naturally discussed it like the older ones did. And we were afraid of the liberals, feeling sorry for them at the same time. But we did not understand anything yet, just pitied them and trembled for their souls. Finally we learned who they were. The Liberals are: dr. Tavčar, Ivan Hribar etc., and the clericals dr. Šušteršič etc. - Then we instantly resolved that we were in fact liberals and that respectively the chaplain had been saying something that was not true.”³⁴

In other cases liberalism, understood as synonymous to (crude) anti-clericalism, was treated negatively. Very interesting in this regard was the exchange of liberal epithet between the progressive ‘elders’ and ‘youths’ during their early and mid-1920s disputes along with its reception by the receiving side.

As we have already seen, immediately after the 1922 split the ‘youths’ attempted to discredit the ‘elders’ by referring to them as “Manchester liberals” and “conservative liberals.” A year and half later however a renewed dispute erupted between the two groups after the Styrian SDS leader Vekoslav Kukovec, previously siding with the ‘youths’, renounced the *Kulturkampf* and appealed for national concord instead of fruitless and destructive “liberal-clerical” fighting.³⁵ After being ignored by the press belonging to his own party, he published an explanation in *Narodni dnevnik* (National Daily), founded by

³⁴ Ivan Pucelj, “Troje spominov,” *Slovenski narod*, 28. 8. 1921.

³⁵ For more on Kukovec’s appeal and his split with the party see: Jurij Perovšek, “*Pium Desiderum* dr. Vekoslava Kukovca leta 1924,” *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino*, vol. 54, No. 2 (2014), pp. 79-99.

progressive “elders” after they had lost control of *Slovenski narod* in late 1923, and used by the entire progressive opposition (elders, agrarians, national socialists).

Kukovec’s appeal to “throw the struggle between clericalism and liberalism into the junk room” and for “competition about more serious principles in which only the progressive intelligentsia may end up victorious”³⁶ met an interesting response in *Slovenski narod*. Instead of renouncing the liberal label as one could have expected – particularly from the “youths” who had often taken pains to distance themselves from “liberalism” of the “elders” – the article entitled “Some Notice” (“*Malo poduka*”)³⁷ offered defense of liberalism along with an explanation on what the term meant in Slovenia. Explaining that the “somehow hackneyed catchword of our political life” 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 stressed that only such type of liberalism had been advocated in Slovene lands. It continued to be appropriate as “the only serious, factual and possible basis of cultural progress” representing “in the intellectual field the same as democratism and parliamentarism for the political life after long centuries of slavish subservience in feudal and absolutistic eras of Europe.”³⁸ At the same time the article did not deny liberalism’s crucial attachment to anti-clericalism and emphasized the necessity of the latter.

³⁶ Vekoslav Kukovec, “Kaj sem v Središču govoril, ko sem doživel prisrčne ovacije!,” *Narodni dnevnik*, 19. 8. 1924.

³⁷ *Malo poduka*, *Slovenski narod*, 23.8. 1924.

It must by all means be taken into account that the response was not published in *Jutro* but in *Slovenski narod*, which, despite standing under the control of the “youths,” continued to cater to older readership.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

Narodni dnevnik responded with the article “On Liberalism”³⁹, which stated that the debate had not been about “liberalism as psychological or better said intellectual love of freedom” at all but “about the [kind of] political liberalism” which was “strictly partisan” and had “fallen to the level of mere eternal opposition to the clerical party. [...] liberalism that automatically says white, if clericalism says black.” The article admitted that “clericalism exists” and that “heavy and strenuous battles” still had to be fought against it. It however rejected anti-clericalism as demagogical political tactic, aimed at polarizing the nation and quieting the opposition within own camp:

“...against clericalism it is possible to win only with genuine free-mindedness and not old liberalism. Above all it has to be made sure that it shall not be decreed in a top-down manner how the progressives must and may think. The principle of free-mindedness needs to be put in practice fully or else, clericalism will advance as [it has done] until now. How many best efforts, how many beautiful thoughts have been killed only due to the non-free-mindedness [*nesvobodomiselstva*] of the liberals.”⁴⁰

“The tragedy of the progressive and free-minded Slovenes,” the article continued, had been that all the political power became concentrated “in the hands of the people” to whom “genuine free-mindedness” was “alien,” who “knew no liberality.” “Their liberalism” had therefore “turned into common cliquery.”⁴¹ Another article in *Narodni dnevnik* furthermore claimed that the continuous dominance of these people hampered “all those numerous progressives that have been pushed out from the progressive party because they were free-minded.”⁴²

³⁹ “O liberalizmu,” *Narodni dnevnik*, 24. 8. 1924.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² “Ne gre tako naprej,” *Narodni dnevnik*, 31. 8. 1924.

The quoted material brings us to the two related political terms “free-mindedness” and “progressiveness” that were present in the political discourse of Slovene national liberal heirs, were commonly used by them for self-identification and stood in a close semantic relationship to “liberalism” – sometimes overlapping in meaning and in other cases used to establish certain distance towards it. These labels and their interplay will receive a more thorough focus later. At this point it should only be pointed out that, as it was often the case, the term “liberalism” pertained to the party, while the more basic “liberality” (as synonymous to “free-mindedness”)⁴³ was contrasted against it as a positive intellectual orientation. In contrast to the narrow, partisan “liberalism”, “liberality” was pointed out as necessary basis for renewed concentration of the fragmented progressive camp.

In the case of the Czechoslovak National Democrats the journal *Demokraticky střed* appealed to the same kind of liberality in terms of openness, intellectual broadness, pluralism and free space, allowing for co-existence of various opinions and orientations,⁴⁴ when trying to keep the quarreling wings together before the 1925 split. This was also the type of liberality that František Ježek spoke of in his memoirs as he wrote that the Czechoslovak National Democracy was “a national, democratic and liberal party. It was so liberal, that one could more or less do there whatever he pleased. The liberal freedom allowed for that.”⁴⁵ To which we may nevertheless add that, although ČsND maintained quite a remarkable degree of internal diversity until the end, it nevertheless proved to be a

⁴³ As prepolitical concept “liberality” designates “unprejudiced, generous, free-minded thinking and acting.” - Rudolf Vierhaus, “Liberalismus” in: *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe : historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*, Vol.3 H-Me, 4. Auflage, Otto Brunner, Werner Conze, Reinhart Koselleck eds. (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1992), p. 742.

⁴⁴ Cf. “Co je národní demokracie?,” *Demokraticky střed*, Yr. II, Nr. 31 (21.5.1925).

⁴⁵ Michal Pehr, “K politickému programu Kramářových národních demokratů,” in: *Karel Kramář (1860-1937): život a dílo*, J. Bílek, L. Velek eds. (Prague: Masarykův ústav a Archiv AV ČR, v.v.i, 2009), p. 520.

too narrow framework for a range of groups and individuals that were leaving it precisely for the lack of liberality.

What the Slovene progressive oppositionals saw as crude anti-clericalism and *Kulturkampf*, “as it had been performed in France in the 1890s or by Germans in the midst of the Los von Rom movement” but had still been “in full motion on the shores of Ljubljana”⁴⁶, continued to be subject of critique by *Narodni dnevnik*. As regards the meaning and value attributed to the term “liberalism,” a peculiar change however took place. In 1926 a commentator, while criticizing the anti-clerical campaigning of the Žerjav-Kramer group, counterposed “gentlemanly liberalism” against the latter’s “extremely intransigent progressiveness.”⁴⁷ “True enlightened and experienced liberalism,” he argued could not be and shall not be defeated by “all the encyclicals and pastoral letters.” Giving credit to the Slovene clergy for their cultural and social efforts, he stated that “reckoning with this clique of Don Quijote desperados” was not only the “matter of the Bishop and SLS” but also the “duty of that independent intelligentsia” which had not “lost its measure for judging fairness, justice and truth in the political struggle.”⁴⁸

What strikes is the changed function of the term liberalism. As opposed to its function in the previous criticisms raised against the mainstream progressives, “Gentlemanly liberalism” now posed as a positive alternative to the crude, intolerant “progressiveness.” As something that transcends, not ignites the *Kulturkampf*. On the one hand we may treat this simply as contingency.

⁴⁶ F. G., “Don Quijote v Sloveniji,” *Narodni dnevnik*, 16. 3. 1926.
Ljubljana is a small river that flows through Ljubljana.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

During the same years after 1925 *Jutro* and *Slovenski narod* largely avoided discussing liberalism or employing the very term. Taking into account the youths' defense of liberalism during the 1924 dispute, as well as their earlier pejorative usage of the same term, this shows how the two groups had employed in their discourse the opposition between "liberalism" on the one hand and "progressiveness" and "free-mindedness" on the other completely at will and according to the needs of the mutual political struggle. On the other hand there is a case for pointing this contingency out. It namely presents one of the rare cases of positive evaluation and appreciation of liberalism, which is particularly specific since it is put into a direct opposition against the otherwise exclusively positive "progressiveness."

The main thing that we may discern from these examples is however that, regardless whether it was about affirming the anti-clerical political course in liberal language or pointing critique at the national liberal heirs for taking it (and thereby either labeling them as "liberals" or directing criticism from the position of "liberalism"), "liberalism" and anti-clericalism were always firmly connected in political language of both their adherents and enemies. Looking back at the case of Ivan Pucelj's youthhood memory, we may see that "liberalism" in the sense of anti-clericalism acted as an integral element of the contemporary public discourse, which did not always carry negative connotations (or was at least not essentially pejorative). As such it could also act as a neutral, albeit also a fairly empty, descriptive term. A testimony to the latter was the usage of the label "liberals" by the Slovene progressives when referring to the Austrian Greater Germans.⁴⁹ Even more: similarly to the Austrian Christian Socials (yet, from a profoundly anti-Clerical position)

⁴⁹ See for instance: "Avstrijske zmede," *Jutro*, 16. 11. 1933.

the leftist dissidents from the progressive camp in 1934 commented on the rise of National Socialism in Austria due to the revolt against the clerical dictatorship by referring to its followers as liberals:

“In many crownlands, such as in Styria, Carinthia, Salzburg and Tirol they [the National Socialists] have a strong majority. The fear against the governmental methods has been almost forcing into their camp people who do not actually belong among them by their psychology, people that are in their essence liberal, but again too soaked in bourgeois prejudice to go with the Marxists.”⁵⁰

The differences within the relationship liberalism : anti-clericalism between various usages thus concerned merely nuances. Most notably nuances between the “positive” anti-clericalism in the sense of protesting the abuse of faith for political purposes, based on “liberalism” understood as “liberality” or “free-mindedness”; and a more narrow, aggressive and partisan anti-clericalism as a tool for “liberalism” in the narrow sense of a political party.

As we have seen, the issue of anti-clericalism was very prominent in the Austrian case as well, being distinctive for all the groups of the “third camp.” The semantic relationship with “liberalism” was however different, which was closely connected to the fact that identification with that label was substantially more unpopular than in the Slovene case. On the other hand, anti-clericalism itself, although important, was also not that central for the Greater Germans as it was for the Slovene progressives. In contrast to the latter, whose main battle line ran against the “clericals,” the Greater Germans needed to cooperate with the party of political Catholicism against an even bigger enemy – Austromarxism. Expressing itself primarily in considerably more moderate anti-clerical rhetoric, this also

⁵⁰ “Avstrijski pregled,” *Sodobnost*, Yr. 2 , Nr. 6-8 (1934).

reflected in a slightly different semantic relationship between “liberalism” and anti-clericalism.

From this perspective a look into the speech on cultural politics by Felix Frank, held during the 1920 party convention of the National Democrats⁵¹ (shortly before the Greater German People’s Party was founded), is instructive. Similarly to Kukovec slightly later in the Slovene case, Frank also warned against a too narrow and uncompromising anti-clerical course in Austria. Discussing the ways of approaching the peasant population, observing their sensibilities and avoiding alienating them, he stressed the need for a considerate, yet principled approach towards religion. He distinguished anti-clericalism in terms of struggle against “abuse of religion for worldly purposes” from its more aggressive forms that ascended towards anti-religious hate which he associated with liberalism: “ I would just like to mention that liberalism has combatted clericalism by being hostile to religion, by wanting to get rid of clericalism at its root [*dass er den Klerikalismus in seiner Wurzel treffen wollte*].“⁵² In contrast to that he stood “on the standpoint that religion is a cultural factor and should be recognized as such.“ This was followed by an interesting statement:

“It is self-evident that the manner of combatting clericalism as it had been brought by liberalism - derision of faith, pouring fire and brimstone on the Religion [*Begeiferung der Religion*], interpreting piety as a sign of lower intelligence – is all mainly due to the influence of Jewdom.“⁵³

What we may discern from this statement is a distinction between legitimate anti-clericalism on the one hand and anti-religious “liberalism” on the other. Furthermore, its hatred towards religion and religiousness may in line with this kind of reasoning also lead

⁵¹ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 30, RI-12 Parteitag der Nationaldemokraten vom 26.-29. 06. 1920, “Kulturpolitik” (Dr. Frank).

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

to the conclusion that liberalism too was seen as “anti-cultural,” in the last instance “anti-popular” or “anti-national” (in terms of *volksfeindlich*). This was indeed the image of liberalism, largely held among the Greater Germans, expressing itself through various derogatory usages. In any way, it is no coincidence that we find a clear anti-Semitic element in the same statement. It has already been shown in Chapter 4 how anti-Semitic element pervaded the Greater German nationalism. This same ideological element - here however in the form of a common religiously anti-Semitic topos that the Jews deride Christianity and thus corrupt the Christian souls - also crucially marked the Greater German understanding of liberalism.

As we have seen, the common derogatory use of the terms “liberalism” and “liberal” among the Slovene and Czech national liberal heirs in most cases concerned the economic and sometimes also the political aspect. We have already seen how in the Austrian case anti-Semitism intertwined with anti-liberalism in the economic sphere. However, the pejorative associations, intertwined with anti-Semitic outlooks, reached further and encompassed some of the intellectual and cultural aspects as well. We may thus without exaggeration say that the anti-Semitic element crucially determined the meanings attributed to “liberalism” by the interwar Austrian German nationalists, as well as their exclusively pejorative usage of the term and resolute efforts not to be in any way associated with it. At the same time the anti-Semitic standpoint – more precisely its presence or absence in the ideology – also constituted a clear-cut distinction against those, more marginal national liberal heirs that did positively identify with the labels “liberalism” and “liberal.” Specific for the Austrian case was the “racial-ideological” epithet “Jewish liberal” (*judenliberal*, *jüdisch.-liberal*), which was widely used in the German nationalist circles. The Greater

Germans frequently branded the small Viennese liberal parties with this label, they used it to characterize the orientation of *Neue Freie Presse*,⁵⁴ but also engaged in mutual accusation of being *Judenliberal* with the National Socialists.⁵⁵

Among the main targets of this pejorative usage were also the small Viennese liberal parties. They however made no effort to renounce their liberal heritage; on the contrary, they affirmed it. Being subject to verbal attacks on part of the Greater Germans, who were quite prone to call them *Judenliberal*, the Civic Labor Party for instance in 1923 resolutely responded to the accusations of representing a “Jewish party” by stating that they were “a truly liberal a-Semitic party [*eine wirklich liberale asemitische Partei*].”⁵⁶ Count Czernin, the party spokesman at that time, commented that the coming elections were to decide whether Austria was going to have a liberal party in parliament or not, saying that the Christian Socials were “no liberal party”, as were also not the Greater Germans who were “neither conservative nor liberal but first of all outstandingly lacking ideas [*hervorragend gedankenarm*].”⁵⁷ The Viennese liberals’ defense of liberal heritage was resolute and unambiguous, as for instance reflected in the 1930 speech by the Democratic Centrist Party leader Heinrich Klang:

„The Democratic Centrist Part starts from a liberal world view and seeks to solve the problems of the present age from this viewpoint, but without the doctrinaire clinging to abstract dogma alien to life. It is convinced that only the return to this world view may bring about the satisfaction to our country.”⁵⁸

⁵⁴ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 29, RI-11, „Unerhörte Beschimpfung der Großdeutschen Volkspartei!“, *Sonderausgabe der Großdeutschen Volkspartei in Salzburg*, 23. Dezember 1929.

⁵⁵ Cf. “Politische Gaukler- Die Großdeutsche Volkspartei mit dem Janusgesicht – Judenliberal, regierungstreu oder – antisemitisch?,” *Deutsche Arbeiter-Presse*, 5. 9. 1925; “Glossen,” *Deutsche Zeit*, 89, 18. 4. 1924.

⁵⁶ “Marianne Hainisch und Ottokar Czernin über die Bedeutung der Wahlen,” *Neue Freie Presse* (evening edition), 17. 10. 1923.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ *Neue Freie Presse*, 8. 11. 1930.

A resolute defense of liberalism was also expressed in the electoral proclamation of his party in the same year. Pointing out the main tenets of the party's liberal orientation, the list also included a principled rejection of anti-Semitism:

“Mockingly, they call us the old liberals, the remnants of the past. And yet! In our camp stand all those who stand *on the principle of private economy* [*auf dem Boden der Privatwirtschaft*], who combine the cultural achievement of the nationally-emancipating [*des völkerbefreienden*] liberalism with the social progress of the present; all who reject the *nationally-destructive aspirations of the class and race struggle* [*die volkszersetzenden Bestrebungen des Klassen- und Rassenkampfes*].⁵⁹

After the negotiations on admitting Democratic Center Party into the National Economic Block (Schoberblock) had shattered due to the Greater German clinging to *Arierparagraph*, the liberal-friendly *Neues Wiener Tagblatt* accompanied it with a caustic commentary:

“So, let us not beat about the bush, but call the things by the right name. The Greater Germans have rejected the communion with the Democratic Centrist Party and its involvement in the Schober-Block, not because it is a *Mittelpartei* and not because it is democratic, but because many *bürgerlich* people of Mosaic faith, or, as the Greater Germans say, of Jewish race, belong to this party.”⁶⁰

While containing an implicit condemnation of anti-Semitism, the article above all pointed out its direct political consequences from a liberal point of view. Stressing that it was not going to delve into theorizing about anti-Semitism and the plight of Jewry through history, it pointed out that the main question concerned the “middle classes’ cause [*die Sache des Bürgertums*].“ Namely – “if and to what extent” was the Greater Germans’ need to prove their “loyalty to racial anti-Semitism” a couple of weeks before the elections going to harm

⁵⁹ “Der Wahlaufuf der demokratischen Mittelpartei,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 19. 10. 1930.

⁶⁰ “Der Judenpunkt,” *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 16. 10. 1930.

it. Observing that GdVP apparently also did not want Jewish votes, it sarcastically asked:

“Is it an advantage for the *bürgerlich* cause, not only to annoy and deter a broad electoral stratum, but also to almost inevitably push the talents, that are to be found within these circles and want to employ their knowledge, their experience, their rhetorical skill and their temperament in public life, into the Social Democratic camp?”⁶¹

The article pointed out the grave truth that the Social Democracy had been providing an uneasy refuge for increasing number of liberally-minded urban middle class voters, which was also due to the intolerant Greater German nationalism. “The political unreasonableness [*Unverstand*] of the Greater Germans” and their “intransigent attitude”⁶², as the DMP chairman Klang put it, and the “discord [*Zerfahrenheit*] in the middle-classes camp” as its consequence made Social Democrats “the laughing third” and Christian Socials “the second laughing third.”⁶³

The small Viennese liberal parties, as well as the German Democratic Freedom Party (*Deutsche Demokratische Freiheitspartei*) in the Czech lands, represented the only cases in which a continuous explicit and unambiguous identification with liberalism was combined also with the positive attachment to the pre-WWI national liberal heritage and commonly evoked memory of the 1848 revolutions. Austria represented an exceptional case in this regard and a very curious one. On the one hand it was the only political landscape that still included a group of parties that so openly and unambiguously identified with liberalism (apart from the Czech context where it was however again solely the *German* liberals who used the label.) On the other hand, it may well be argued that the discussed parties represented a very marginal exception in their political context.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Heinrich Klang, “Wir haben eine Ohrfeige erhalten,” *Neues Wiener Journal*, 15. 10. 1930.

⁶³ “Der Judenpunkt,” *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 16. 10. 1930.

Interestingly, it was precisely Vienna - the place in which liberalism had during the last quarter of the 19th century first “vanished” and “dissolved” into the three streams of the “German democratic movement”⁶⁴ (German nationalism, social democracy and Christian social movement)– where after 1918 its last remnants nevertheless got preserved. The process, described in the second chapter, that had taken place in the provincial towns of the Austrian Alpine lands and through which liberal traditions had gradually turned towards illiberal nationalism, in the end left the only remaining space for liberalism in the capital city, however marginal it was.

The continuity of organized liberalism in the Austrian capital however also shows that, in terms of positive meanings attached to it, liberalism could also designate something more than mere anti-clericalism. Already the quoted debate on the pages of Slovene newspapers hinted at that. In the case of Viennese liberals we may however see a clear positive attachment to the pre-WWI traditions of national liberalism and particularly to the memory of 1848. And in doing so they were not the only ones within the studied context. Similarly as the Civic Democratic Party claimed to represent the voice of descendants of those who “80 years ago on this ground enforced civil rights in a bloody battle [*auf diesem Boden in blutigem Kampfe die Bürgerrecht erzwungen*]”⁶⁵ (and were in the present party system being “muzzled”), the oppositional Slovene progressive “elders” alluded to the same events in their agitation before the 1925 elections:

“Just remember the constitutional battles that the leaders of the progressives had fought and won. The Austrian constitution was not a Slovene ideal, yet – being born in the stormy era of the year 1848 it was the work of liberals that had been dying on the barricades for the citizens’ liberty. The civic liberty was the starting point of our

⁶⁴ Karl Bosl, “Gesellschaft und Politische Parteien in der Donaumonarchie und in den Nachfolgestaaten” in *Die Erste Tschechoslowakische Republik als multinationaler Parteienstaat*, Karl Bosl ed. (Munich: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag, 1979), p. 14.

⁶⁵ “Ein Aufruf der bürgerlich-demokratischen Partei,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 5. 4. 1928.

national liberty and the constitutional battles had therefore been an introduction into our national liberty.”⁶⁶

In addition to the direct alignment to 1848 and tribute to the 19th century constitutional achievements, the passage also shows a continuous existence of political thinking and discourse in which liberalism and nationalism did not represent alien and mutually exclusive concepts but on the contrary formed an inseparable whole. In other words – it shows that in the mid-1920s there was still space left for national liberal positions. Another good example of such discourse are words written during the time of collapse of the old Austria by Gustav Stolper, one of the founders of Civic Democratic Party and co-editor of the economic journal *Österreichische Volkswirt*:

“The clearing of Germany [*Die Reinigung Deutschlands*] shall not stop at the black and yellow border posts; the new old German spirit, the spirit of democracy, the spirit of the year 1848, the spirit of *Paulskirche* and of the Kremsier Parliament must also again become the the spirit of the German people in Austria.”⁶⁷

Stolper’s case shows how nationalism and Greater German orientation were not a monopoly of anti-Semites but could still be well compatible with political orientation of outspoken liberals.

In the Czech context, the general unpopularity of the labels “liberalism” and “liberal” in party politics precluded such explicit identifications. Yet, on the other hand, in contrast to the case of Austrian Greater Germans, the mainstream national liberal heirs did not outright denounce liberalism either and in general appreciated the pre-war liberal heritage and held it high. Cases such as the one of Jindřich Šebesta, who referred to himself as “liberal, who has experienced the decline of Czech liberalism through all the changes of the former

⁶⁶ “Skrinjica naše sramote,” *Narodni dnevnik*, 6. 2. 1925.

⁶⁷ Gustav Stolper, “Deutschösterreich,” *Der Österreichische Volkswirt*, 26. 10. 1918.

National free-minded party, from its highest power when it was the leading Czech political party, all the way to the sad contemporary end,”⁶⁸ were however quite rare. Formerly a journalist for *Národní listy*, Šebesta criticized the Czechoslovak National Democracy and Kramář in particular for what he saw as “insincerity and demagoguery”⁶⁹ and betrayal of liberal and democratic ideals that had in the end amounted to “fascisation.”⁷⁰ National Democrats that had in his view undergone a transition from a “free-minded” to a “conservative, in the end reactionary party,”⁷¹ were also “not sincerely national,” the “nation” for them being “the upper ten thousand” and all the rest only “material for serving the interests of this ‘nation.’”⁷²

If we look at the Czechoslovak National Democrats themselves, the attitudes towards liberalism and the liberal label within their party could be best described as ambivalent, although at the same time not nearly as negative as in the case of Austrian Greater Germans. The official attitude of the Czechoslovak National Democracy towards liberalism was a critical one and the party never used it to describe its positions in the official documents. Its program was, similarly to the one of the Greater German People's Party, centered around explicit critique of both socialism and liberalism⁷³, which was equated with individualism and defined as “based on egoism.”⁷⁴

The actual attitudes towards liberalism were not exclusively negative, however, as it was

⁶⁸ Jindřich Šebesta, *Nár. Demokratická zrada starých ideálů národních, demokratických i svobodomyšlných. Snůšk materiálu pro úvahy Dra. Kramáře ve sporu o mravné a nemravné metody politické.* (1929), p. 3.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 23.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 7, 10.

⁷¹ Ibid., 9.

⁷² Ibid., 22.

⁷³ See: *Program československé národní demokracie, schválený valným sjezdem strany dne 25. března 1919* (Prague: Tiskový odbor československé národní demokracie, 1919), Point “B. Critique of liberalism and socialism,” pp. 33-37.

⁷⁴ See: Ibid., “III. Liberalism (individualism),” 33.

well reflected already in the telegram that the party leader Kramář sent from Paris in March 1919 and was read at the founding congress of the Czechoslovak National Democrats. The line stating that the new party united all, “who fight for our freedom against all sorts of weakness or any lack of character, that is against any kind of false interpretation of liberalism that would be dangerous for our future”⁷⁵ reveals clearly that it was not liberalism as such but its “false interpretations” that Kramář had warned against. At least this implied that he believed that there were some recipients for whom “true liberalism” still represented a cherished value. It was also not very unusual for the national democrats to speak favorably of liberalism such as when the prominent party member Josef Matoušek labelled the then de-facto party leader Hodáč as “a liberal in the national economic regard”⁷⁶ or that the term appeared on the pages of the main national democratic newspaper *Národní listy* in a very positive light:

“But liberalism, we repeat, has not been 'made up' [*vymyšlen*] but is an expression of the fundamental possibilities of man, oriented towards life and future. It may thus lose followers, but cannot lose its mission.”⁷⁷

In the Slovene and Czech cases “liberalism of the past” and “democracy of the future” acted as partly opposing but still closely connected concepts, revealing “liberalism” to be something partly obsolete, yet still revered. In the case of Austrian Greater Germans on the other hand the divorce from liberalism was more clear-cut. One of the very few examples

⁷⁵ Ibid., XV.

⁷⁶ Dr. J. Matoušek, “K jubileu dr. Fr. Hodáče,” *Národní listy*, 20. 8. 1933:

“he remains a liberal in the national-economic regard, (*Zůstává sice národnohospodářským liberálem*), but is flexible enough to allow in certain situations in certain circumstances for an intervention of the state or public corporations in the economic life.”

⁷⁷ “Lidé odcházejí, liberalismus žije,” *Národní listy*, 23. 11. 1928.

when liberal roots were acknowledged and still given historical credit are the following concluding lines written by Viktor Mittermann in the official party's weekly *Deutsche Zeit*:

“Liberalism has fulfilled its mission; it may enjoy the well-deserved retirement; eternally young like the nation itself, steps the national movement, proven through the *Salzburger Programm* as the political embodiment of the philosophical German idealism, on the battlefield.”⁷⁸

As it may clearly be seen from these same lines, Mittermann's article at the same time expressed a resolute dissociation of modern German nationalism of the Greater German People's Party from the old liberalism. As such it serves as a good showcase of the manner in which the Greater German leaders evaluated and treated liberalism and national liberal heritage. The text indeed gave some (comparably modest) credit to the liberalism's past achievements. Yet, it also clearly pointed out not only that whatever may have been left of it was a decadent, a-national ideology promoted by “the lodge and the Jewry,” but also that this was the case already before the Great War. The Greater German People's Party on the other hand represented a crucial bulwark against any attempts to continue instrumentalizing German nationalism for liberal or other alien ends:

“This is where the work of the Greater German People's Party began. It not only gathered the *völkisch* party splinters into a mechanical unity; In her Salzburg Program it drew up the sources of that strength, which is necessary to overcome the remnants of that grim late-liberal sentiment [*jener griesgrämigen spätliberalen Stimmung*] that had since the nineties distorted the fresh face of the national movement and would have gladly made it an instrument for the famous ‘free-minded *Bürgertum*,’ of which the *Schmock* dreams to this day. In one word: it was and [still] is the longing dream of all the left-wing spirits [*der Sehnsuchtstraum aller Linksgeister*] from Manchester liberals all the way to the radical Marxist, to utilize the German national movement and to integrate the national party into the leftist system [*Linkssystem*], in order to dominate over the conservative part of the people of German Austria with its [nationalist] support and under the leadership of the Lodge and the Jewry.”⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Dr. Viktor Mittermann, “Verlegenheit auf der Linken.” *Deutsche Zeit*, 9. 4. 1926.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

Mittermann's writing also reveals traits that remind of various "Third way" politics of the time, which had been emerging and developing mostly in conservative circles across Europe. Most notable example, relevant for Central Europe, were the German "conservative revolutionaries." Attempts and claims to pursue an economic course that was said to be neither capitalist nor socialist were, as also shown in the 5th chapter, of course something very common for the studied context and not at all limited to conservative variants of "Third way." Yet – Mittermann did not only explicitly refer to the "conservative part of German Austrian people." In a manner quite distinctive of conservative critics of modernity, he put "Manchester liberals" and "Marxists" into the same "leftist" camp. Beside the party's racially anti-Semitic position (see Ch. 4), its views on liberal democracy (see Ch. 5) and the fact that it resolutely rejected any associations to liberalism, this might be treated as another reason to treat GdVP solely as party of liberal heirs but not as a liberal party.

It is on the other hand true that Mittermann's text reflects one ideological tendency in GdVP which was by no means the only one. His association of the party with "conservative part" of the population and implicit positioning to the right appears even more striking, taking into account that at the time radical nationalism was not yet necessarily being considered a "rightist" ideology, especially not by many of its adherents. Also within GdVP there had been voices that warned against associating the party with right wing politics and burden it "with the odium of the reactionary [*mit dem Odium des Reaktionären*]." ⁸⁰ As we have seen in Chapter 3 the tendency represented by Mittermann actually prevailed after 1931,

⁸⁰ I. "Begriffsverwirrung oder was ist 'rechtsradikal?', " *Deutsche Zeit*, Yr. 1., Nr. 55, 11. 12. 1923.

when the party leadership proclaimed the party to be “national-conservative.” The reinvention of the party image coincided with the previously main self-identification *freiheitlich* being pushed aside. Not everybody was content with this new image, however, and many – most notably the former chairman Wotawa – continued to employ the label *freiheitlich*.

This brings us to the political label *freiheitlich*, which had from the late 19th century on acted as the most common *Ersatz*-term for liberalism among the German Austrians. The next section will attempt to outline the semantic relationship between *freiheitlich* and *liberal* and how the Greater German negative attitudes towards liberalism also reflected through their employment of the former term.

6. 3. Related Political Labels and the Centrality of Cultural and Intellectual Aspects

The label *freiheitlich* as it appeared in the interwar Austrian political language had multifarious meanings, being employed by proponents of different, sometimes opposing political orientations, which also reflected in its complex relationship to the notion of liberalism. One of the meanings - distinctive especially by its usage by the agrarians - was identical to “independent,” expressing both the desire to freely dispose with one’s own land and yield, as well as independent standing towards the large parties (i.e. Christian Socials and Social Democrats).⁸¹ Most commonly, however, it came to designate non-clerical and

⁸¹ Johannes Hawlik, *Die politischen Parteien Deutschösterreichs bei der Wahl zur konsituierenden Nationalversammlung 1919*, phil. Diss (Vienna: J. Hawlik, 1971), p. 404, 411-412.

anticlerical political forces and aspects of cultural politics - “*freiheitliche Themen*”⁸² such as non-confessional school, civic unions and the right to divorce, free science – i.e. issues in which nationalists, liberals and Social Democrats shared similar stances.⁸³ While the latter held positions in cultural politics that were *freiheitlich* in this general sense, they however did not use the label to signify their general political orientation. Nor would the self-proclaimed *freiheitliche*, stressing their own individuality and independence towards large parties and dogmatic world-views, admit it to them.⁸⁴ When Democratic Centrist Party was founded in 1929 through the merger of Civic Democratic and Middle-Class People’s Party (*Mittelständische Volkspartei*) in order to create a “strong organization” for “the truly *freiheitlich* minded [*die wirklich freiheitlich gesinnten*]” the party leader Klang made the following reference to the Social Democracy:

“A party that forces those minded otherwise out of the factories, that threatens with dictatorship, [such a party] we can not recognize as a *freiheitlich* party, even if she stands for the old liberal demands in the questions of *Kulturkampf*.”⁸⁵

The field for employing the label *freiheitlich* for political self-identification was however still considerably extensive and the range of meanings comparably broad and fluid. It covered the entirety of what has been discussed in Chapter 3 as the “third camp” of Austrian politics. That is: all the non-clerical and non-marxist political groups – including its agrarian (particularly in Carinthia), as well as labor sections. The German Workers Party

⁸² Ernst Hanisch, *Österreichische Geschichte 1890-1990. Der lange Schatten des Staates. Österreichische Gesellschaftsgeschichte im 20. Jahrhundert* (Vienna: Carl Ueberreuter GmbH, 1994), p. 121.

⁸³ For more on the topic see: Ulrike Harmat, *Ehe auf Widerruf?: der Konflikt um Eherecht in Österreich 1918-1938* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1999).

⁸⁴ And even when the Social Democrats pointed out their *freiheitlich* positions, as in the case of 1927 elections (the Greater Germans and Christian Socials ran on a joint list which made more sense for their common opponents to appeal to the *freiheitlich* oriented voters), the Greater Germans denied them the right to use that label. See for instance: August Wotawa, “Die europäische Bedeutung des Wahlausganges,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 17. 4. 1927.

⁸⁵ “Gründender Parteitag der demokratischen Mittelpartei,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 22. 1. 1929.

(*Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*) as the direct predecessor of National Socialists thus in its 1913 program also identified as *freiheitlich*,⁸⁶ which reflected the previously mentioned primary meaning as “independent” (non-Catholic, non-Marxist).

Especially important however was the conjunction *freiheitliches Bürgertum* – a commonly evoked phrase in the political and journalistic discourse of the Austrian First Republic, which linked the otherwise mutually hostile Greater Germans on one and Viennese liberals on the other. Both groups used the phrase in a positive manner. Both appealed to the “freedom loving middle classes” as their constituency and both identified with the label “*freiheitlich*”. Both were labeled as such also by the main liberal newspaper *Neue Freie Presse*.⁸⁷ Last but not least, the label was also used by the German liberals in Czechoslovakia.⁸⁸

The usage of the label *freiheitlich* however slightly varied in terms of meanings and connotations it carried and especially the relationship in which it stood towards “liberalism.” This first of all reflected in different word combinations that political groups preferred when referring to their political positions. While the Greater Germans commonly added the prefix “national-” (*national-freiheitlich*)⁸⁹, the Viennese liberals often used the

⁸⁶ „Wir sind eine freiheitliche völkische Partei, die mit aller Schärfe bekämpft die rückschrittlichen Bestrebungen, die mittelalterlichen, kirchlichen und kapitalistischen Vorrechte und jeden fremdvölkischen Einfluß, vor allem den überwuchernden Einfluss des jüdischen Geistes auf allen Gebieten des öffentlichen Lebens.“

(Quoted from: Reinhold Gärtner and Günther Pallaver, “Liberale Parteien im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert” in *Innsbrucker historische Studien. Der deutsche und österreichische Liberalismus. Geschichts- und politikwissenschaftliche Perspektiven im Vergleich*, H. Reinalter and H. Klüeting (eds.) (Innsbruck: StudienVerlag, 2010), p. 165.)

⁸⁷ For instance see: “Die großdeutsche Volkspartei,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 8. 8. 1920; “Einigung der deutschfreiheitlichen Parteien in Wien für die Wahlen,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 9. 9. 1920; “Die demokratische Liste,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 20. 3. 1927.

⁸⁸ For instance see: „National und freiheitlich,“ *Bohemia*, 12. 5. 1933.

⁸⁹ Cf. for instance AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 29, RI-11, Letter from Emmerich Sabatin (Parteileitung Salzburg) to the Greater German Central Board in Vienna (11. 1. 1928) in which the author explicitly refers to „national-freiheitliche Gesinnungsrichtung.“

term “*bürgerlich-freiheitlich*,”⁹⁰ both groups however being comfortable with the label “*deutschfreiheitlich*”. The use of different prefixes expressed different emphases that the parties in question put in order to describe their orientations, political positions, target groups, at the same time also telling something about the manners in which they understood the very term *freiheitlich*.

The Greater Germans not only stressed their basic “national” orientation by adding the appropriate prefix but also employed the word *freiheitlich* in such way that it functioned as means of distancing themselves from liberalism while still retaining certain traditionally liberal stances in the cultural sphere (“*freiheitliche Weltanschauung*”). In this general sense *Freiheitlichkeit* may largely be reduced to (moderate) anti-clericalism, with which it was anyway generally closely connected - although at the same time not being synonymous with the more radically anti-clerical (and sometimes atheist) *Freidenkertum* and *Freisinn*. In the case of Viennese liberals the word on the other hand functioned largely as an *Ersatz*-term for “liberal.” The two modes of employment might seem similar at the first glance, yet the crucial difference was that the Greater Germans at the same time explicitly renounced liberalism, while the Viennese liberals still proudly identified with it, although they – for practical political reasons at least – more often used the more publicly agreeable label *freiheitlich*.

For Viennese liberals *freiheitlich* and “liberal” thus had more or less the same content. When Marianne Hainisch, the mother of Austrian president Michael Hainisch, founder of the Austrian women’s movement and a prominent member of the Civic Democratic Party, addressed her constituency before the 1923 elections, she closely linked the heritage of

⁹⁰ Cf. For instance “Selbstständiges Vorgehen der bürgerlich-demokratischen Partei,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 26.3.1927; “Ein Aufruf der demokratischen Mittelpartei,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 23. 4. 1932.

1848, *freiheitliches Bürgertum* and the mission of her party:

“If I nevertheless ask you not to vote Christian Social, it is because I am an old forty-eighter [*weil ich eine alte Achtundvierzigerin bin*], because I know that it was then the *Bürgertum* that fought for freedom on the barricades. Neither the Social Democrats nor the Christian Socials are the ones that have reproduced the freedom of the year 1848 [*welche die Freiheit des Jahres 1848 fortgepflanzt haben*]. The *freiheitliche[s] Bürgertum* from that time celebrates its resurrection in the Civic-Democratic Labor Party.”⁹¹

The Greater Germans on the other hand used the word *freiheitlich* in order to describe their position in cultural matters, while at the same time distancing themselves from any kind of liberalism. Positive attachment to the 1848 liberals as seen in the above quote only very rarely found its place on the pages of the Greater German press. If it did happen it did so in the provincial newspapers such as Tyrolean *Alpenland*⁹² and always emphasized the “national” aspects of the revolution. An interesting example of an indirect, yet clear alignment to 1848 may however be found in an 1927 article in *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, aiming to show how the Social Democrats were internationalists and thus un-German and at the same time responding to their accusations of being reactionary:

“What should it mean, if Dr. Deutsch [an important Social Democratic leader] among other claims that the descendants of those Viennese citizens, who fought on the barricades of the 1848 revolution under the black-red-golden flags against the Habsburg absolutism and for the democratic Greater Germany, nowadays stand in the camp of the reaction?!”⁹³

A very good illustration of the perception of *Freiheitlichkeit* within the German nationalist camp was given in the article entitled “The Merger of the *deutschfreiheitlich* Parties in Austria” (*Der Zusammenschluß der deutschfreiheitlichen Parteien in Österreich*),

⁹¹ “Marianne Hainisch und Ottokar Czernin über die Bedeutung der Wahlen,” *Neue Freie Presse* (evening edition), 17. 10. 1923.

⁹² *Alpenland*, 3. 6. 1926.

⁹³ “Sozialdemokratische Anschlußpolitik,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 19. 4. 1927.

published in 1919.⁹⁴ The text addressed the constant problem of the split within the ranks of the *deutschfreiheitlich* movement that dated back to the time when “the old liberal Party” had collapsed and the “freedom-loving German citizenry” (*freiheitliche deutsche Bürgertum*) of Austria consequently disintegrated into two main currents – the “civic – progressive” (*bürgerlich-fortschrittliche*) one and the “one of German ethnically minded” (*die der deutschvölkisch gesinnten*). The former had “taken up the legacy of the old liberalism under heightened influence of Jewry,” while the latter “rejected any kind of national and political community with the Jewry, perceived and recognized as a foreign people, elevating the defensive struggle against the encroachments and usurpations of anti-German [*deutschfeindlichen*] nationalities into its political program.”⁹⁵

In this narrative the “progressive” wing thus continued the liberal legacy, which was inevitably connected to accepting “Jewish influence” and patronage by the “all-Jewish Viennese press, characterized by a very special kind of unprincipledness” (*der durch ganz besondere Gesinnungslosigkeit ausgezeichneten alljüdischen Presse Wiens*).⁹⁶ The attitude towards „the Jewry“, the element of antisemitism and – respectively – the presence or absence of the “racial standpoint” (*Rassenstandpunkt*) thus marked the crucial distinction between the two “groups” (from the point of view of adherents of the second one). German *völkisch* nationalism, on the other hand, stemmed out of the old liberalism, but left behind its legacy, marked by assimilationism and substituted it with racially based ethnic exclusivism.

Which brings us back to the already discussed crucial distinguishing function of anti-

⁹⁴ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 38, RI-21 Liberale Parteipolitik 1919, “Der Zusammenschluß der deutschfreiheitlichen Parteien in Österreich,” *Michel* (Graz), 13. 4. 1919.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

Semitism in the Austrian case. Given that we allow for the quoted narrative to be treated as exemplary for the political semantics of the German nationalist camp, it is easy to discern the relationship and distinctions between “liberalism” and *Freiheitlichkeit* in their vocabulary, with the latter representing a broader, less defined term that did not imply either the presence or absence of the “*Rassenstandpunkt*.” Being “liberal” on the other hand was to a large extent defined by its absence – both for those who identified as such and rejected “the aspirations of race struggle that are destroying the nation [*volkszersetzenden Bestrebungen des [...] Rassenkampfes*]”⁹⁷ and their anti-Semitic foes that used the word in a strictly pejorative manner. Even more so since at the same time both of these largely identified as *freiheitlich*. We can thus conclude that in the political landscape of the Austrian First Republic, it was possible to be *freiheitlich*, without at the same time identifying as “liberal,” whereas one could not be “liberal” without also qualifying as *freiheitlich*. The presence of “liberalism” was thereby conditioned by the absence of “*Rassenstandpunkt*.” This was also the way in which the National Socialists understood the matter.⁹⁸ As their case well demonstrates it was completely possible to be at the same time *freiheitlich* and anti-Semitic.⁹⁹

The label *freiheitlich* that would translate to *svobodnjaški* in Slovene and *svobodný* in Czech was absent from the Slovene and Czech political languages. The two political

⁹⁷ “Der Wahlaufuf der demokratischen Mittelpartei,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 19. 10. 1931.

⁹⁸ See for instance: “Das Einbekenntnis zum Mord und die Freunde der Mörder,” *Der Abend*, 13. 7. 1923. When questioning the position of the Greater Germans who had at the time been negotiating for an electoral alliance with the National Socialists, the newspaper put forward the following interesting qualification: “Wir wissen aus enwandfreier Quelle, daß Herr Doktor Frank, der heute als Vertreter der Großdeutschen das Amt des Vizekanzlers inne hat, sich vor einiger Zeit mit dem Gedanken getragen hat, in Verbindung mit einigen Mitgliedern der christlichsozialen Partei eine neue bürgerliche Partei zu gründen, die weder den Rassenstandpunkt noch den Antisemitenstandpunkt in ihr Programm aufnehmen sollte. Die Christlichsozialen, die dabei hätten mittun sollen, sind jene Gruppe von Geschäftspolitikern, die diesen Liberalismus schon heute in den Verwaltungsräten der Banken und Aktiengesellschaften betätigen.” (Ibid.)

⁹⁹ See footnote 88.

contexts however possessed a similar term “free-minded” (*svobodomyslný*, *svobodomisel*) that translates into German as *freisinnig*. *Freisinn* and *Freisinnigkeit* were quite distinctive for the late Habsburg-era political languages but had almost entirely disappeared from them after the World War. In the First Austrian Republic it was extremely rare and – when it appeared – more or less identical to “liberal” in both its pejorative and positive meanings. In cases of the latter usages it also acted as roughly synonymous with “*freiheitlich*.” Especially characteristic in this regard was the term “*Wiener Freisinn*,” employed by the Viennese liberal press to designate the small liberal parties and their constituencies. As rumors arose in autumn of 1921 about a possible merger between the Civic Democratic Labor Party and the smaller left-liberal Democratic Party, *Neue Freie Presse* devoted a longer article to this.¹⁰⁰ The newspaper stressed the necessity of the merger of “free-minded parties” that would have brought about the much-needed political concentration of Viennese *Bürgertum* or “*die Freiheitlichen*,” praising the importance of the “*Wiener Freisinn*” as the section of electorate which paid the major proportion of taxes but was not represented in the parliament:

„*Wiener Freisinn*, that is nothing more and nothing less than the destiny of the entire state. It is the question whether Austria should be governed democratically or according to the principle of representation of estates.“¹⁰¹

In the German nationalist camp, *Freisinn*, like “liberalism”, was commonly associated with “Jewishness” and “Jewish morality.”¹⁰² The Greater German People’s Party thus spoke in

¹⁰⁰ “Die Krise des Wiener Freisinns,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 29. 11. 1921.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² “Ohne, daß es die nichtjüdischen Wirtsvölker ahnen, saugen sie die semitische ‘Moral’, semitische Denkungsart auf. Der verderbte (‘unmoralische’) Arier ist ein Erzeugnis dieser Tätigkeit; deshalb von dieser Seite die große Duldsamkeit gegenüber der jüdischen Gefahr. Man nennt dies ‘freisinnig’” (P.P.K., “Unsere Leitsätze,” *Bundesturnzeitung*, 15. 5. 1920; Quoted from Rudolf G. Ardelt, *Zwischen Demokratie und Faschismus. Deutschnationales Gedankengut in Österreich 1919-1930* (Vienna-Salzburg: Geyer-Edition, 1972), p. 82.)

favor of “discarding the old free-mindedness in its liberalistic meaning.”¹⁰³ Nevertheless the Greater Germans, including some of the most radical elements within the party,¹⁰⁴ still occasionally employed the term in a non-pejorative manner. This was especially distinctive during their participation in the broader “middle class” coalition formed under Schober (*Nationaler Wirtschaftsblock*, 1930-32).¹⁰⁵ All in all, however, the employment of the label *freisinning* in the Greater German discourse was considerably rare. Where it did appear, it usually functioned similarly to *freiheitlich*, whereby their mutual semantic relationship resembled the one between *freiheitlich* and *liberal*.

In the Czech and Slovene contexts the “free-minded” label was slightly less rare than in the Austrian one, albeit still not very common and by the 1930s gradually vanishing. Whereas the Czech national liberal heirs, including former members of the “National Free-minded Party” (official name of the Young Czech party), largely abstained from employing the label after 1918, it was still occasionally used among the Slovene national liberal heirs, who sometimes used it to designate their political position. Most often it was employed in a way that pointed toward a world view and not a political movement or orientation, “free-minded world view” (*svobodomiselni svetovni nazor*) being a commonly used phrase. On the other hand, nobody spoke of the “free-minded party” or “free minded politics” as it was

¹⁰³ AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 29, RI-11b Landesparteileitung Salzburg - Mitteilungen, *Mitteilungen der Großdeutschen Volkspartei in Salzburg*, 1. Jahrgang, 2. Und 3. Novemberfolge (15. November 1921).

¹⁰⁴ The Schönererian leader Ursin for instance opened a meeting of nationalist representatives in Vienna in May 1920 with the following words: “Wir sind großdeutsch gesinnt, wir alle sind Antisemiten, freisinnig und sozial gesinnt.” (Thomas Dostal, *Aspekte deutschnationaler Politik in Österreich : zu einer Geschichte der Großdeutschen Volkspartei 1920 – 1934*, Diploma thesis (Vienna: T. Dostal, 1994), p. 65)

Also see: “Vor den Wahlen in Kärnten,” *Deutsches Volksblatt*. 17. 6. 1921, where appeals were being made to “*deutscher Freisinn*.”

¹⁰⁵ See for instance: AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 35, *Stenographisches Protokoll des 12. Ordentlichen Reichsparteitages der Grossdeutschen Volkspartei, Wien 4. bis 6. Dezember 1931*.

Greater German Straffner in his political report positively evaluated the performance of the non-partisan Schober government (1929-30) attributing to it “inclination towards *Freisinn*” and towards the “national course” that caused the “clericals” to refuse to join forces with Schober for the 1930 elections.

the case with the label “progressive.”

As shown in the earlier discussed debate between *Narodni dnevnik* and *Slovenski narod*, “free-mindedness” or “free-minded world view” referred primarily to freedom of thought and freedom of science, designating a world view that was liberated from ecclesiastical and other dogma. It thus allowed for pluralism of values and ideas or, as *Slovenski narod* wrote in 1920:

“free-mindedness is critical, philosophic, it does not recognize any authorities; in political, social and economic respect it knows only the *law*, set by the whole of the citizenry, before which all people are equal, including the Church dignitaries. It thus acknowledges the social sentiment and is therefore social.”¹⁰⁶

As opposed to crude anti-clericalism as a partisan tactic, free-mindedness was meant to imply not merely secularity and demands for non-interference of Church in educational and other civil matters, but a generally “critical” approach in thinking and acting.¹⁰⁷

To those who identified as liberals, “free-mindedness” signified the intellectual aspect of their liberal orientation or, more generally, liberalism in intellectual and cultural sense – as opposed to economic for instance. For those who avoided the use of liberal label – often due to its primary association with economically liberal positions - it largely acted as an *Ersatz*-term for these same aspects.¹⁰⁸ Free-mindedness in the latter sense also came close to what in the Austrian context mainly fell under the label *freiheitlich*, albeit being less

¹⁰⁶ “Mi gremo na plan!,” *Slovenski narod*, 7. 7. 1920.

¹⁰⁷ “It needs to be done away with old liberalism and put it into the junk room among old junk. Let however genuine free-mindedness and genuine progressiveness live, which has it written on its banner: Let criticism live. And which is so strong that also stands the critique.” - “O liberalizmu,” *Narodni dnevnik*, 24. 8. 1924.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. *Jutro*, 13. 10. 1921:

“The culture that the JDS [Yugoslav Democratic Party] is spreading among the people is free-minded. In this sense our party is an heir to liberalism, [that had been] fertilized by social ethics. We do not wish for ‘cultural wars,’ but demand that any kind of patronage of the Church over the scientific and educational work be prevented.”

limited to the sphere of cultural politics and encompassing all aspects of intellectual life.¹⁰⁹ Most importantly – in contrast to the loosely defined *Freiheitlichkeit*, commonly employed to establish certain distance from liberalism, it was quite often meant to point precisely at what was believed to have formed the latter's pure and "primeval" essence, containing a call for return to the original liberal principles. In pejorative usage it could however also refer to crude and intolerant type of liberal anti-clericalism of the kind that Frank spoke.

Referred to as *Freidenkertum* in the German-speaking space, this radical type of anti-clericalism, which in many aspects came close to general hostility against religion, was also present in interwar Austria. Expressing itself primarily in the frame of organizations such as *Freie Schule* (Free School), the movement was politically closely associated with the Social Democracy.¹¹⁰ While the official GdVP position firmly rejected any association with *Freidenkertum* – as opposed to *Freiheitlichkeit* – as for instance chairman Wotawa did at the 1929 party convention,¹¹¹ prominent provincial Greater Germans such as Angerer in Carinthia held key positions in *Freie Schule*.

The narrower and more radically anti-religious type of "free-mindedness" was

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Henrik Tuma, "Liberalizem," *Sodobnost* 1935, p. 205:

"Connected to the notion of liberalism is the notion of free-mindedness, which stresses the psychological moment, i. e. the freedom of human thought, particularly freedom from intellectual suzerainty of church and religion. Historically, the free-mindedness as a reaction against intellectual tyranny had appeared first, and only out of it did liberalism develop."

¹¹⁰ Karl-Reinhart Trauner, *Die Los-von-Rom-Bewegung. Gesellschaftspolitische und kirchliche Strömung in der ausgehenden Habsburgermonarchie* (Szentendre: Peter Tillinger, 1999), p. 633.

¹¹¹ „es beliebt den Christlichsozialen manchmal auszusprechen, dass wir eine liberale Partei, dass wir eine Freidenker-Partei sind und dass wir, weiss Gott was alles an schönen Worten hören müssen, weil wir in diesem [freiheitlichen] Punkte ihnen nicht zu Willen sind. Nun, wer den Geist unserer Zeit und den Atem unserer Zeit hört und spürt, der wird sich sagen, mit einem leichtfertigen, oberflächlichen Freidenkertum, mit irgendeiner Auffassung, die man so gerne als die Auffassung gewisser liberaler Blätter auch bezeichnen kann, uns zu identifizieren, hat niemand ein Recht und niemand ein Grund. Wir wissen sehr gut, dass die Zivilisation, die uns heute namentlich in den Grossenstädten umgibt, eine Zivilisation vielfach mit innerer Leere, mit ödem Geiste ist.“ (AT-OeStA/AdR, GDVP, K. 34, RI-12 10. Reichsparteitag vom 03.-05.05. 1929, Protokoll, p. 101-102.)

characteristic for a very small part of Slovene (post-)liberals,¹¹² being more common for the Czech context, where it existed under the term *volnomyšlenkářství*. Derived from the atheist and anti-clerical Freethinkers' organization *Volná myšlenka* (Free Thought), which had however reached its zenith already before the World War, it represented exactly the image of liberalism that Masaryk held and criticized.¹¹³

A peculiar trait of the Czech interwar political vocabulary, resulting from the changing 'effective range' of political labels and the interplay between them, was that *volnomyšlenkářství* after 1918 became closely associated with the label "progressive." The latter had represented an established term in the Czech political language, designating an important late 19th century intellectual movement, out of which a number of political parties had stemmed.¹¹⁴ As an inner opposition to the Young Czech Party, the "progressive" intelligentsia in the two decades after 1880s formed a number of strains and founded a handful of political parties that had the word "progressive" in their official names.¹¹⁵ Some of them ultimately ended up back in the Young Czech ranks, while others gathered around Masaryk, forming the political representation of the realist intellectual movement.

After the war, the vaguely defined progressiveness on the one hand became a characteristic, widely claimed by a major part of the political spectrum, whereas none of the major

¹¹² Vasilij Melik, "Slovenski liberalni tabor in njegovo razpadanje," *Prispevki za zgodovino delavskega gibanja*, vol. 1-2/yr. 22 (1982): p. 19.

¹¹³ Cf. Havránek, *Liberalismus*, 275.

¹¹⁴ For more on the Czech progressives see: Martin Kučera, "Nástin vývoje českého pokrokářství," *Střed*, 2/2009: 9-22.

¹¹⁵ Progressive parties included the original "Czech Radical Progressive Party," whose member included Hajn, Preiss and Rašín. A State Rights Radical faction around the latter seceded in 1899 and founded the "Czech State Rights Party." The two factions reunited in 1908 to form the "Czech State Rights Progressive Party." Realists, originally called "Czech People's Party" renamed themselves to "Czech Progressive Party" in 1906. After 1918 part of them continued an independent political life as "Czechoslovak Progressive Party." In Moravia, the "Moravian Progressive Party" was founded in 1907 after the progressive youth split with liberal People's Party. The two factions reunited in 1909 as "People's Progressive Party."

political parties continued to have the word “progressive” in their names. There however still existed a quite obscure and marginal intellectual movement and a political party that continued to carry the progressive label throughout the interwar period. Gathered around the journals *Volná myšlenka* and *Kritika*, the Czech self-styled “progressives” claimed to continue the traditions of the pre-WWI progressive movement, however to a large extent concentrating on the old struggle against the Catholic church and clericalism. In the highly secularized interwar Czech context such orientations was a largely anachronistic one and for that reason it was subject to criticism by the left-leaning intellectuals of the Peroutka’s circle, who characterized the “progressives” in the following manner:

„It is necessary to point out who exactly is a progressive. It is a Czech *species* [česká *species*], based primarily on the historical memories. Its main content is the conviction about the necessity of fighting the Catholic church.“¹¹⁶

While in the Czech context progressiveness represented a feature claimed by the major part of the political spectrum, yet very rarely a primary label of self-identification, it became very rare in the political language of Austria after 1918. Largely absent from the political vocabulary of the liberals and their heirs, where it had before the war acted as an important label for self-identification,¹¹⁷ its usage continued only in the Marxist camp.

The notion still possessed some appeal in the Czech interwar political language, which however by no means matched the one it had in the Slovene one. If we disregard the already mentioned marginal “progressive” *Freethinkers*, it represented only a secondary political identification which was moreover claimed by most of the political parties as one of the basic features of their orientation. As such, progressive self-identification was almost

¹¹⁶ Ferdinand Peroutka, “Kapitola o pokrokářství,” *Přítomnost*, Vol. III, Nr. 21 (3. 6. 1926).

¹¹⁷ On *Fortschrittlichkeit* among Austrian Germans - and its end - see: Lothar Höbelt, “Die Deutsche Fortschrittspartei im alten Österreich (1896-1918),” *Etudes Danubiennes*, 20 (2004): pp. 111-120.

omnipresent across the political spectrum, at the same time having quite a vague meaning. To a large extent, “progressiveness” acted as a necessary requirement to belong to the Czech interwar political mainstream. The majority of Czech political forces therefore understood themselves as “progressive” and nominally the larger part of the Czech political landscape qualified as such. At the same time none of the main parties had the word “progressive” in their names and rather treated it as an obvious feature of their political orientation.

Although often labelled as conservative in historiography as well as by the contemporaries, the Czechoslovak National Democracy for instance defined itself as “a national party, an all-national party, a democratic and a progressive party,”¹¹⁸ whereby being “progressive” meant “awakening the people and spreading the culture.”¹¹⁹ The party leader Kramář furthermore called for joint action of “the national and progressive democracy” on the occasion of the 1920 Czechoslovak elections.¹²⁰ The definition of “progressiveness” offered in the National Democratic program seemed quite complementary to the earlier discussed idea of “free-mindedness” or to a general notion of (intellectual and cultural) liberalism:

“For the nation, progress means intellectual liberty. Positive progressive work strives to bring into life the rights of men – that is the freedom of conscience, life, person, word, the freedom of association and assembly, freedom of the arts and the press.”¹²¹

As such it was closely connected to anti-clericalism, sometimes acting almost as a synonym to it:

“The progressive element forms a fundamental part of our program. It has been evolving from the spirit of our history and is the result of intellectual liberty that

¹¹⁸ Program ČsND, 3.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 6.

¹²⁰ *Národní listy*, 11. 3. 1920.

¹²¹ Program ČsND, 6.

complements the political liberty (...) It signifies a duty to oppose the cultural reaction and clericalism, that is abuse of faith for other purposes than spiritual and moral ones.”¹²²

Being almost universally accepted, claimed by most of the political parties and groups and consequently having a wide range of application and potential meanings, the “progressive” label was at the same time also a contested one. National Socialists would thus deny it to the National Democrats, stating that “it was impossible within the Czechoslovak political circumstances for a party to be “progressive” and “non-socialist” at the same time.¹²³ Also within the National Democratic Party, the early 1920s youth wing (that by the mid-twenties departed the party) employed the progressive label to define their own position towards the party leadership, whom they accused of moving into a conservative direction.¹²⁴

Generally, as inner differentiation within the party developed in the course of 1920s, the “progressive” label tended to be claimed by or reserved for the inner opposition that developed on the national democratic left. The group of intellectuals, gathered around the journal *Demokratický střed*, who adopted a reconciliatory stance towards Masaryk and the Castle and protested against the radical nationalist tendencies within the party, understood the role of their journal as an expression “of efforts to gather the younger, genuinely progressive individuals within the national democracy.”¹²⁵ The progressive self-identification was cultivated also by the Moravian wing of the National Democratic Party, led by Adolf and Jaroslav Stranský, and comprised largely the pre-WWI “People's

¹²² CZ-ANM, NAD 299, Ladislav Rašín, K. 9, 318: General Congress 1929 – Resolution on the internal policy.

Also see: František Sís, *Za národní a demokratickou republiku*. (Prague: Sekretariat Čs.N.D., 1925), p. 12-13; F. Sís, “Brněnský sjezd,” *Národní listy*, 5. 5. 1925; “Usnesení III. sjezdu Čsl. národní demokracie,” *Národní listy*, 5. 5. 1925; “Programová řeč Františka Sise,” *Národní listy*, 16. 4. 1929 – supplement to the nr. 105: “Čtvrtý sjezd čsl. národní demokracie.

¹²³ *České Slovo*, 17. 5. 1920.

¹²⁴ See: Josef Fischer, “Co chce mladá generace národně-demokratická,” *Lidové Noviny*, 10. 6. 1920.

¹²⁵ Zdeněk Chytil “Do šestého ročníku,” *Demokratický střed*, Yr. VI, Nr. 1 (5. 10. 1928): p. 1.

Progressive Party.”

In the interwar Slovene context, on the other hand, the adjective and the noun “progressive” (*napreden, naprednjak*) had a substantially more definite referent, designating one of the three principal ideological orientations. This had been so already since early 1890s, when the Slovene national liberals began to formally organize themselves and adopted the progressive self-identification as more a suitable one than the liberal, which they associated with German nationalists.¹²⁶ It is true that in Slovenia, “progressiveness” in the most general sense was, as in Austria, claimed also by the Social Democrats and Communists. Yet, as a political label it had a more definite subject and consequentially a stronger discursive impact, since declaring one's orientation as “progressive” put the speaker or referent into a distinct “progressive” political camp.

The older generation of Slovene progressives, who had originally introduced the progressive label into the Slovene political language but between 1922 and 1931 acted independently and stood on the political margin, understood “progressiveness” as a “child” of liberalism.¹²⁷ “Free-mindedness” was understood as one of the prerequisites for being progressive - “a progressive is always free-minded and thus a progressive always stands in favor of the freedom of thought.”¹²⁸ When in 1925 their newspaper *Narodni dnevnik* (National Daily) published its “principles” (interestingly, in order to notify the Police Directorate about its program), their eighth point stated:

¹²⁶ Giving credit to liberalism's past achievements and to main liberal political principles, Danilo Majaron argued in 1891 that the German liberals had already “turned their back to the liberal principles.” For that reason “no true liberal” would wish to share the name with those “false liberals.” (“Narodno napredna stranka,” *Slovenski narod*, 6. 6. 1891; Quoted from: Jurij Perovšek, “Organizacijsko-politična slika liberalnega tabora v letih 1891-1941,” *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino*, vol. 57, no. 1 (2017), p. 32).

¹²⁷ “Prvoboriteljica napredne misli,” *Narodni dnevnik*, 10. 11. 1924:

“It is beyond doubt that parliamentarism forms the basic demand of the progressive idea, being the exact historical achievement of liberalism, the father of progressive thought.”

¹²⁸ Ibid.

“*Narodni dnevnik* is furthermore a progressive journal. We however do not understand progressiveness in terms of the petty, purely local quarrel from the time of the last century when all the political work consisted of the fight between the 'liberals' and the 'clericals,' but in the sense of a genuine progressiveness which nowadays fights as resolutely for the social protection of the weakest, as once liberalism had struggled for the civil liberties and freedom of the press and speech.”¹²⁹

In a very similar manner, Josef Schieszl, a former member of the pre-WWI “Czech Progressive Party,” until 1920 also a National Democrat and an official in the Czechoslovak president's office, noted in 1925, that “progressiveness” was “nothing else than corrected liberalism, fertilized [*oplodněný*] with the principles of democratism and socialism.”¹³⁰

This was the conception of “progress” and “progressivity” that had after 1918 taken the place of a dominant paradigm in the Czechoslovak public space and more or less corresponded to the president's Masaryk's understanding of these notions. Before the Great War, a plurality of conceptions of modernity and progress distinguished the Czech intellectual discourse, where Kramář's understanding of these terms had equal weight as the one of Masaryk. After the war however, Masaryk's conception, implying that progress was “heading to the left,” meaning towards more democracy in all spheres of human life (including economy) became hegemonic, leaving little space for “competitors.”¹³¹ This in turn led Kramář to largely abandon the notion of progress, removing it more or less from his rhetoric, and adopt “traditionalist” positions, from which he pointed critique against “empty progressivism” (in the sense of blindly following trends).¹³²

¹²⁹ Josip Hacin, “Vloga na policijo mesto uvodnika,” *Narodni dnevnik*, 29. 1. 1925.

¹³⁰ Dr. Josef Schieszl, „Pokrokovost a pokrokáři,” *Naše doba*, Yr. XXXIII., Nr. 1 (15. 10. 1925).

Schieszl however noted that this was the historical definition of progressiveness pertaining to the late 19th century progressives, whereas it was highly questionable what would be properly called “progressive” in the post-war context.

¹³¹ Martina Winkler, *Karel Kramář (1860–1937). Selbstbild, Fremdwahrnehmungen und Modernisierungsverständnis eines tschechischen Politikers* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2002), p. 376-377.

¹³² Cf. Ibid, 375-377.

Stemming from this paradigm was also a specific understanding of liberalism as a “mediator between the old and the new.” As Ferdinand Peroutka stated in his 1926 polemic “What is Liberalism?” (*Co jest liberalismus?*)¹³³, in which he argued against F. X. Šalda, liberalism’s task was “to honestly mediate between the old and the new world.”¹³⁴ Its idea “could be best expressed” as “what the English call balance of powers,” based on the doubt that any “power” alone may be right. The “powers” Peroutka had in mind were “progressiveness” and “conservativeness”, which had to be “held in a just balance.”¹³⁵ The text also explicitly referred to Kramář, who belonged “with all his intellectual force [...] to the old world”, was “hindering such mediation” with the new one and could thus not qualify as a liberal.¹³⁶

6. 4. Beyond the Frame of Party Politics – “Social Liberalism”

In spite of the generally observable decline of liberalism in party politics in all the three cases under scrutiny, there were however also voices that foresaw future for liberalism. Instead of treating it merely as “liberalism of the past,” they emphasized a distinction between the “old” and the “modern liberalism.” They conceived the latter – not in sense of economic liberalism or continuation of old national liberal traditions (including the anti-clerical defining moment) - but most often in the form of “new” or “social liberalism.” These were mostly intellectuals that were non-partisan or - if formally members of political

¹³³ Ferdinand Peroutka, “Co jest liberalismus?,” *Přítomnost*, Yr. III, Nr. 18 (13. 5. 1926), Nr. 20 (27. 5. 1926).

¹³⁴ Ferdinand Peroutka, “Co jest liberalismus?,” *Přítomnost*, Yr. III, Nr. 18 (13. 5. 1926).

¹³⁵ Ferdinand Peroutka, “Co jest liberalismus?,” *Přítomnost*, Yr. III, Nr. 20 (27. 5. 1926).

¹³⁶ Ferdinand Peroutka, “Co jest liberalismus?,” *Přítomnost*, Yr. III, Nr. 18 (13. 5. 1926).

parties - did not hold important political functions. Their hopes for liberalism's renewal were commonly joined with critique of political parties that had inherited liberal heritage, as well as the older forms of liberal ideology. Essential to note is that, while aiming to develop new, modernized forms of liberalism, they were at the same time mostly reaching back to the basic conception of intellectual liberalism in order to justify their critique. Peroutka for instance identified his own brand of liberalism as an "intellectual," not "economic theory,"¹³⁷ which brings us back to the already discussed topics of "intellectual liberalism" and "liberality."

On the Christmas day of 1920 a longer discussion was published on the pages of *Neue Freie Presse*, written by Lujo Brentano under the title "The Future of Liberalism" (*Die Zukunft des Liberalismus*).¹³⁸ The author opened his article by pointing to the case of England. Arguing that it was "its ability to adapt to changing circumstances" that made it "great", he rhetorically asked: "What has made liberalism great?". Then he proceeded with a historical survey of liberal achievements in battling absolutism and "special class privileges," emphasizing the aspect of emancipating individual creative forces and all-round development of personality. Initially, that meant primarily removing the formal obstacles for the gifted and industrious to succeed. Which however did not secure full personal development and "participation in cultural goods of humanity" for "all that did not count among those above the average [*alle, die nicht zu den Ueberdurchschnittlichen gehören*]." The early, "purely negating" conception of liberalism thus gradually turned

¹³⁷ Ferdinand Peroutka, "Jsme ještě liberály," *Přítomnost*, Yr. IX, Nr. 16 (20. 4. 1932).

¹³⁸ Lujo Brentano, "Die Zukunft des Liberalismus," *Neue Freie Presse*, 25. 12. 1920.

against its own “true principles” with “liberals” taking over the place of the old privileged classes.¹³⁹

This brought about a situation in which only socialism “still pursued the old ethical ideal of the liberals, except that it seeks to approach it through other ways, more appropriate to the needs of the masses.”¹⁴⁰ The fact that the socialists soon betrayed the ideal of securing liberty and equality to everyone and instead began fighting for particular interests, made the “question about the future of liberalism” relevant, whereby Brentano provided a clear answer:

“If liberalism wants a future, it must remind itself of its old ethical ideas: only they have the traction. It must defend them against violence from the right and from the left. Both are enemies of the free development of personality of each individual. Only positive organization for the realization of freedom can bring us this. Freedom in all that, what it means, made clear to the men [*den Menschen klargemacht*] will be eternally able to inflame the hearts and win them over for that party, which openly and sincerely puts it [the freedom] on its banner and is willing to implement it in all its consequences.”¹⁴¹

In order to “turn back to its old ethical ideal” of securing “everybody, without exception, the highest development of their personality and corresponding access to the cultural goods”, the renewed liberalism had to align itself with socialism. There had always been and were going to be “theoretical differences” between the two; yet- both shared the practical goal of “abolishing the need”, which may be reached only “through positive organization for the realization of liberty.”

Brentano’s text presents a perfect example that contained all the essential ingredients of ideas that were emerging within the studied contexts, aiming to revive liberalism in a

¹³⁹ The editors of *Neue Freie Presse* accompanied this statement with the following remark: „Diese Ansicht des hochgeehrten Verfassers vermögen wir nicht zu teilen.“ (Ibid.)

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

modernized form of social liberalism (whether they referred to it using the latter formulation or not). In essence this meant a recourse to the old “free-mindedness” or “liberality” and the intellectual-ethical aspect of individualism, emphasizing the great importance of education (*Bildung*) for the all-round emancipation of an individual and simultaneously rejecting economic liberalism and often demanding an alliance or cooperation with the moderate socialists. The idea of *Bildung* as the crucial means for achieving individual intellectual emancipation and general social progress, traditionally very prominent in German and broader Central European liberalism, thus received a new affirmation and an adjustment to the changed social circumstances.

Out of the three contexts under scrutiny it was arguably the Czech context where this type of ideas were being discussed the farthest and systematically worked out. This applies in particular to the circle of left-leaning intellectuals around the journal *Přítomnost*, edited by Peroutka. Their liberalism was the “New Liberalism” of the English brand that consciously distanced itself both from the classical liberal mistrust against state interference (commonly expressed through the stereotypical phrase *laissez-faire*),¹⁴² as well as towards the home grown political traditions of national liberalism. Similarly to Brentano, who had stressed the importance of being able “to adapt to changing circumstances” for liberalism’s survival and development, Peroutka compared liberalism to a “family, in which there are a grandfather, father and a son.”¹⁴³ In line with the already discussed prevalent post-1918 conception of unidirectional progress and his idea of liberalism as a “mediator” between

¹⁴² See for instance: F. Munk, “Konec laissez faire,” *Přítomnost*, Yr. IV, Nr. 17 (5. 5. 1927) referring to John Maynard Keynes’ “The End of Laissez-faire” and stating “the ancient principle laissez faire [...] has long time ago been abandoned by the modern liberalism.”

¹⁴³ Ferdinand Peroutka, “Jsme ještě liberály,” *Přítomnost*, Yr. IX, Nr. 16 (20. 4. 1932).

“the old and the new world,”¹⁴⁴ Peroutka argued that all those who thought liberalism was “dead” due to the general advent of socialist ideas were wrong, being acquainted “only with the grandfather” or “with the father at best.”¹⁴⁵ Stressing in 1932 how he had often asked himself, whether he was “still a liberal” in spite of his increasing belief “in the organization, economic plan, in the expansion of state influence, need be socialization,” he shook off these doubts by pointing out that “our liberalism” had not been “an economic theory but an intellectual one.”¹⁴⁶

Peroutka's socially liberal conception was thus clearly based on the more basic notion of intellectual liberalism - “Liberalism is not a theory of ownership. It is a theory of character.”¹⁴⁷ As he himself admitted, his views had by 1932 been coming very close to the socialist ones in terms of practical solutions. In this regard parallels may be pointed out with the writings in the Slovene *Sodobnost*, a journal that a group of dissenting intellectuals from the left wing of the Slovene progressive camp began publishing in 1933 and carried almost the same name as Peroutka's own.¹⁴⁸ From the very beginning *Sodobnost* was open to distinctively socialist views, including the Marxist ones, whereby explicitly liberal voices were also present, as for instance Lojze Ude, who – defending both intellectual liberalism and political democracy – wrote:

“Something else is of course the doctrine that the economic activities of each human are his own private matter and the teaching that the state should not interfere in the economy. But this individualistic economic and political liberalism and the capitalist economic order built on it are the main (but not the sole) causes for economic anarchy and social misery. This liberalism is socially harmful, it needs to be attacked and

¹⁴⁴ Ferdinand Peroutka, “Co jest liberalismus?,” *Přítomnost*, Yr. III, Nr. 18 (13. 5. 1926).

¹⁴⁵ Ferdinand Peroutka, “Jsme ještě liberály,” *Přítomnost*, Yr. IX, Nr. 16 (20. 4. 1932).

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ferdinand Peroutka, “Jsme ještě liberály,” *Přítomnost*, Yr. IX, Nr. 18 (4. 5. 1932).

¹⁴⁸ *Sodobnost* is the Slovene word for the noun “present,” while *Přítomnost* may mean both “present” and “presence.”

replaced by a better order. Whoever thus attacks economic and political liberalism should remain at that and leave intellectual liberalism [...] in peace.”¹⁴⁹

Increasing acceptance of collectivist solutions that culminated during the time of the Great Depression may be seen as a logical development of Peroutka’s general conception of liberalism as a mediator between “old” and “new.” Moreover, his earlier texts on the matter had already demonstrated the same inclination. His 1926 text “Liberals and the Golden Calf” (*Liberálové a zlaté tele*)¹⁵⁰ for instance focused on critique of capitalism – “the modern Golem” - simultaneously dismissing a variety of “false” liberalisms. The cases that Peroutka pointed out as examples of “false liberals” included the Czechoslovak National Democracy and Kramář in particular,¹⁵¹ German National Liberals, as well as the “liberalism of *Neue Freie Presse*.”

It was precisely these types of liberalism that Masaryk had had in mind in his rejection of what he perceived as “liberalism.” And it was precisely the way in which he had employed the term “liberalism” where Peroutka’s circle, standing politically very close to the president and the *Hrad*, disagreed with Masaryk. In their view, his critique, being legitimate and valid otherwise, in reality aimed at “false liberalism.” Or, as Peroutka put it: “Masaryk, despite rejecting liberalism, has himself always been a liberal in the English sense. His realism and liberalism – proper liberalism of course – are two names for the same thing.”¹⁵² Similarly, the newspaper *Tribuna* (edited by Peroutka) judged that although Masaryk had “caused a wound to the theory of liberalism,” being “theoretically [...] an

¹⁴⁹ Lojze Ude, “O liberalizmu in demokraciji,” *Sodobnost*, št. 1-2 (1934): 28.

¹⁵⁰ Ferdinand Peroutka, “Liberálové a zlaté tele,” *Přítomnost*, Vol. III, Nr. 22 (10. 6. 1926).

¹⁵¹ Kramář was specifically criticized by Peroutka for “denying existence” of capitalism. - Ibid.

In “Liberalismus po válce” Peroutka wrote that Kramář, if confronted by “a true English liberal of our age,” would beyond doubt proclaim the latter to be “a defeatist, a second Kerensky, infected by the Bolshevik plague” – Ibid., 408.

¹⁵² Ferdinand Peroutka, “Liberálové a zlaté tele,” *Přítomnost*, Vol. III, Nr. 22 (10. 6. 1926).

extreme opponent of the liberal idea”, in the post-war circumstances “the differences between pre-war realism and today’s attempts of neoliberalism” were “almost insignificant.”¹⁵³ In this connection Peroutka also directly alluded to the British liberal paragon: “It is no coincidence that the Hobhouse’s book on liberalism was published [...] by a realist publishing house, in the frame of realist program and that it was translated by Masaryk’s son.”¹⁵⁴

Only in the Czech case may we thus locate established groups of politically engaged and publicly influential intellectuals that consciously and persistently referred to the ideas that they had been developing as “liberal” or themselves as “liberals.” And this pertains even more to the so-called “new liberals,” i.e. liberals that modelled themselves primarily after the contemporary British liberalism and who tended to dissociate the term “liberalism” from the local national liberal traditions.

This is not to say that such cases were completely absent in the other two studied contexts. Echoes of the British “New Liberalism” were also present there. Especially the ideas of Hobhouse, whose “Liberalism” was quite extensively discussed. *Jutro* gave the Slovene translation a very positive review, recognizing the long-term importance of the book and pointing out that “Manchester liberalism, the one against whom all the defiant criticism from the middle of the previous century” had been pointed, “already long ago gave place to a different, so-called social liberalism, which creates and serves the great idea, immortal and fertile.”¹⁵⁵ Similarly, *Slovenski narod* established already in 1919 that, although “the idea of old liberalism”, which had had “the major share in the current economic and social

¹⁵³ “Neco o liberalizmu,” *Tribuna*, 16. 1. 1925. The article stated that even in regard to the pre-war Masaryk’s positions it was questionable whether to count him among “real socialists” or “left liberals.”

¹⁵⁴ Peroutka, *Liberalismus po válce*, 408.

¹⁵⁵ “V. Hobhouse: Liberalizem,” *Jutro*, 15. 10. 1922.

development of humanity”, had begun to decay, the path “beyond old liberalism” was passing over “into new liberalism, modern liberalism, democratism.”¹⁵⁶

Generally speaking, attempts of social liberal thought – we may rather speak of attempts than fully-developed discussions – took place mostly on the pages of dissident newspapers and journals – *Narodni dnevnik* during 1920s¹⁵⁷ and in particular *Sodobnost* during the 1930s.

In Austria, the beginnings of social liberal thought, influenced by both the English Fabians and German *Kathedersozialisten* dated to the pre-war years. The circle of Austrian “*Fabier*” around the later federal president Michael Hainisch encompassed a number of personalities, including politicians such as the later leader of the Democratic Party Julius Ofner and the Democratic Centrist Party leader Klang. By 1918, however, they were already on the wane, despite formal continuity in the framework of the Association for Social Policy (*Verein für Sozialpolitik*), presided by Hainisch. Social liberal orientation may also be attributed to the newspapers, published by Maximilian Schreier, another member of the Democratic Party - *Der Morgen*, *Der Tag* and *Die Stunde*.

Most importantly, the “new liberalism” was mostly a matter of intellectuals and their journals and much less of political parties. In their case it is possible to speak merely of “echoes” and “elements” but not of the explicit adoption of such orientation, not to say its systematic development. It was again only the Czech case where we may speak about a case of such political party and it was the party that included Čapek and Peroutka in its

¹⁵⁶ Josip Mihelčič, “Lesna produkcija, industrija, trgovina in eksport,” *Slovenski narod*, 12. 3. 1919.

¹⁵⁷ See for instance: Spectator, “Dva nazora,” *Narodni dnevnik*, 25. 10. 1926. The articles included a proto-Keynesian critique of conservative economic circles “not yet having been woken out from the Smith’s and Ricardo’s hypnosis” and pointed out that the much needed confrontation between “the two outlooks” had not even begun in Yugoslavia.

ranks, enjoying full support of *Přítomnost*. Important to add is that, despite being widely recognized as the party of liberal intelligentsia, the National Party of Labor (*Národní strana práce*) did not use the label “liberal” to designate its political orientation. Its usage in the case of Peroutka's circle was limited to theoretical discussions and treatises that took place on the pages of *Přítomnost*, while for real politics they preferred to employ labels that fared better on the Czech political market.

The National Party of Labor thus not only labelled itself with terms “democratic”, “national” and “progressive”, taken over from its “mother party” and generally tended to describe its position as “centrist” - but it also quite soon came to explicitly identify as a “socialist party.”¹⁵⁸ In its programmatic documents and manifestos it employed the word “liberalism” solely when discussing the economic aspect of its politics – there the National Party of Labor spoke about “modern liberalism,” which was said to be compatible with “modern socialism.”¹⁵⁹ On the other hand, views influenced by social liberalism were being voiced also in *Národní listy*, in particular through writings of F. Fousek, who wrote in favor of “new liberalism” thereby referring to John Maynard Keynes.¹⁶⁰ Similarly as in case of Slovene *Jutro*, this demonstrates a degree of openness and plurality of that National Democratic newspaper, which gave space to views that deviated from the official party line.

¹⁵⁸ “Nová ‘demokratická a socialistická strana,’ *Národní osvobození*, 7. 4. 1926.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. “Lide československý!,” *Národní práce*, Yr. 1, Nr. 1, 16. 9. 1925 and “Programové prohlášení Národní strany práce,” *Lidové noviny*, 16.9.1925.

¹⁶⁰ F. Fousek, “Liberalismus našich dnů,” *Národní listy*, 14. 4. 1929
Also see: F. Fousek, “Obnova individualismů,” *Národní listy*, 4. 11. 1920.

Apart from the unambiguously leftist projects of reforming liberalism, being conceived beyond the narrow frame of party politics, there were however also other voices, which saw the future of liberalism in a slightly different way. Here we do not have in mind the extensive theoretical work done by the economists of the Austrian school, most notably Ludwig von Mises, which, apart from delivering important economical insights in the longer-term contributed to the revival of classical liberal tradition in political philosophy. Yet, although Mises also voiced contemporary critique against the previously discussed social liberalism and even acted as an economic advisor to chancellor Seipel, the contemporary appeal of the thinkers of the Austrian school stayed largely within the confines of academia, without having much direct public echo, not to say political impact. What we do have in mind are thus again intellectuals that were either members of political parties or were actively engaged in contemporary public debates (or both). Again, most notable cases may be found within the Czech context. Apart from examples of direct and firm critique pointed against “new liberalism” for its friendliness towards socialism, as for instance by Klima in *Národní myšlenka*,¹⁶¹ there were authors that wrote affirmatively on the reform of liberalism but saw its future place in the center or on the right side of the political spectrum. While their texts contained undisputable elements of social liberal thought and some of them also took England as contemporary model, they, in contrast to Peroutka, did not demand for liberalism to go with the socialists but rather against them. Very interesting in this regard are the texts from *Demokratický střed*, which during the same years when Peroutka wrote most of his discussions on the same matter, commented on the contemporary developments and prospects of liberalism. Stemming from a similar

¹⁶¹ Vlastimil Klima, “Politika t. zv. nového liberalismu,” *Národní myšlenka*, yr. II, nr. 9 (June 1925).

basic assumption regarding relativity and temporal conditioning of what was to be understood as “conservative” and “progressive” as well as liberalisms’ “mediating” role,¹⁶² they however arrived at profoundly different conclusions. Looking from the opposite angle as Peroutka did, they stressed that “a liberal of the future”, while not attaching himself to the “old,” was not going to “allow to be decreed the new.”¹⁶³ Instead of emphasizing closeness to socialism they in contrast deemed the opposition between liberalism and conservatism obsolete.¹⁶⁴ Liberal ideas were not only being increasingly adopted by conservative parties – as was the case in England¹⁶⁵ – or liberal and conservative politics coming increasingly close to each other, as in Germany,¹⁶⁶ the authors of *Demokratický střed* observed. In their view the two main forces in contemporary politics were the “socialist” and the “non-socialist (conservative)” one.¹⁶⁷ And since furthermore “liberalism and socialism” did not “belong together,”¹⁶⁸ liberalism’s role was to provide the “positive idea” that the conservative force had lacked.¹⁶⁹ This “positive idea” was however not simply the “old liberalism,” but a “new,” reformed one.¹⁷⁰

As regards the Czechoslovak political landscape, the authors in *Demokratický střed* however judged that no party was “fully conservative”, with most of them combining “conservative and liberal tendencies.” The party that “in terms of traditions and views of the majority of its followers” acted as “the representative of liberalism” was “the national

¹⁶² Jan Soukenka, “Budoucnost liberalismu,” *Demokratický střed*, yr. II, nr. 6 (20. 10. 1924).

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Rudolf Procházka, “K otázce budoucnosti liberalismu,” *Demokratický střed*, yr. II, nr. 7 (27. 10. 1924).

¹⁶⁵ Jan Soukenka, “Budoucnost liberalismu,” *Demokratický střed*, yr. II, nr. 6 (20. 10. 1924).

¹⁶⁶ Jan Soukenka, “Liberalism v Německu,” *Demokratický střed*, yr. II, nr. 33 (4. 6. 1925).

¹⁶⁷ Jan Soukenka, “Co liberalism dnes znamená,” *Demokratický střed*, yr. II, nr. 16 (5. 2. 1925).

¹⁶⁸ Rudolf Procházka, “K otázce budoucnosti liberalismu,” *Demokratický střed*, yr. II, nr. 7 (27. 10. 1924).

¹⁶⁹ Jan Soukenka, “Co liberalism dnes znamená,” *Demokratický střed*, yr. II, nr. 16 (5. 2. 1925).

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

democracy.”¹⁷¹ The major share of articles discussing liberalism was published in 1925 during the time of increasing tensions within ČsND. *Demokratický střed* attempted to act appeasingly and influence the opposing factions to prevent the internal split, which afterwards nevertheless happened. An article from that time, expressing the journal’s vision of National Democracy, stated that as “the only Czechoslovak liberal and national party” it could be “neither radically-social” nor “national-conservative” but a “great liberal party of the great nation,” which was open to diverse opinions, yet whose programmatic principles may be accepted by “all that accept the national and liberal principles and democratic methods.”¹⁷²

A similar expression of hope for revival of liberalism along with an expression of belief in its inevitability may be found in the article that Richard Charmatz published in *Neue Freie Presse* before the 1927 Austrian elections.¹⁷³ Sensing that the time was critical for the constitutional democracy and expressing critique against the social democracy and fascism, he called for the defense of “popular rule” and “constitutional arrangements.” This “fathers’ legacy” could be saved and passed to the “coming generations” only with help of revived liberalism:

“The democracy needs liberalism today, the time is calling for him [liberalism]. And he will come, will be resurrected, rejuvenated and fueled [*befeuert*]. It had once been his mistake to rest on his laurels, not to move on. But one can learn from mistakes, the mistakes do not have to be repeated.”¹⁷⁴

Acknowledging the past “mistakes” of liberalism, which was unwilling to reform itself in order to fit into mass politics and changed social relations, Charmatz saw the need for a

¹⁷¹ Jan Soukenka, “Budoucnost liberalismu,” *Demokratický střed*, yr. II, nr. 6 (20. 10. 1924).

¹⁷² “Co je národní demokracie?,” *Demokratický střed*, Yr. II, Nr. 31 (21.5.1925).

¹⁷³ Richard Charmatz, “Die Erneuerung der Politik. Zukunftsaufgaben des Liberalismus,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 24. 4. 1927.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

new liberalism that could act as the “saving ideal [*rettende Ideal*]“ after which “our sick era and with it our sick land“ had been “thirsting.“ His fierce critique of Social Democracy at the same time left no doubt which side had his support at the coming elections and where he, despite any possible misgivings, saw more potential for liberalism’s revival or at least less immediate danger for it:

“Flushed by the currents of Bolshevism and Fascism and pervaded by the social-democratic class politics from within, Austria needs more than ever the creating gift and preserving power [*Erhaltungskraft*] of liberalism, a liberalism of today, a liberalism of tomorrow.“¹⁷⁵

In the Austrian context, various kinds of liberal ideas were – apart from daily newspapers such as *Neue Freie Presse* or *Neues Wiener Tagblatt* – also being voiced through the journal *Österreichische Volkswirt*. Although primarily an economic journal *Volkswirt* at the same time also published articles dealing with broader political topics. It could be said that it represented one of the main, if not central mouthpiece for liberal views during the First Austrian Republic, in which treatises of liberal economists were published next to comments by some of the remaining party politicians that identified as liberals. The name of Gustav Stolper must not be left out in this context. An economist by profession, he co-edited the *Volkswirt* together with Walther Federn until his departure to Germany in 1925. Stolper was one of the main initiators of the *Bürgerlich-demokratische Partei* in 1919. Although he retreated from party politics after the party's electoral demise in the same year, he continued to engage in political matters.

The Austrian specificity in contrast to the Czech and the Slovene cases was that within

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

Worth noting thereby is that, before the WWI, Charmatz was a vocal proponent of the idea of co-operation between liberals and social democrats.

those, otherwise relatively marginal and limited circles that publicly identified as “liberals”, there was more tendency to align with the conservative forces or even explicitly move to the right. A very good example was Max Friedmann, labelled as “one of the last political heirs of the old liberals“ by *Die Stunde*.¹⁷⁶ Elected into parliament 1919 as the only *Bürgerlich-demokratische Partei* representative, he endorsed the Heimwehr program before the 1930 elections.¹⁷⁷ Despite his partially Jewish background, he in 1933 endorsed the manner in which the National Socialists in Germany were persecuting Marxism.¹⁷⁸

On the other side there were liberals that appealed to concentration of conservative and liberal forces in countering Nazism. In his defense of liberalism, published in *Österreichische Volkswirt*, Aurel Kolnai pointed out the crucial bond between conservatism and liberalism at the moment when Western values, the “Christian substance of the West”, were being under attack by “national fascism.”¹⁷⁹ National Socialism in Kolnai’s view represented a threat against “the liberal idea in its ultimate and general contents, which already directly reflect the Christian meaning of society and vouch the possibility for a Christian distance towards the worldly powers.” In this sense the “liberal liberties and conservative moderation and refinement of the exercise of power [*liberale Freiheitsrechte und konservative Mäßigung und Vornehmheit der Machtausübung*]” represented two sides of the same coin. The question of the time was therefore not “whether liberalism can be conservatively tamed and vaulted [*ob der Liberalismus konservativ gebändigt und überwölbt werden kann*]” but rather “whether its most everlasting and

¹⁷⁶ “Politische Wandlungsfähigkeit,” *Die Stunde*, 8. 5. 1930.

¹⁷⁷ Max Friedmann, “Unser Wirtschaftsprogramm. Der einzige Weg zur Sanierung,” *Neues Wiener Journal*, 7. 5. 1930.

¹⁷⁸ “Das deutsche Beispiel. Energische Maßnahmen können auch Oesterreich vom Marxismus befreien,” *Neues Wiener Journal*, 23. 3. 1933.

¹⁷⁹ Aurel Kolnai, “Der Sinn des Liberalismus,” *Der Österreichische Volkswirt*, yr. 25 Nr. 52 (23. 9. 1933).

precious content may be conserved with conservative help.“ On the other hand, if “a conservative camp” was to stand up in Germany or anywhere else against fascism, it could do that no other way “than in the name of freedom.”¹⁸⁰

With the threat of National Socialism prevailing over all other considerations, many of the *Restliberalen* - in contrast to the Greater Germans - ended up as at least reluctant supporters of the arbitrary actions by the Dolfuß government. For that they received condemnation from the nationalist press. In an article entitled “Where do the liberals remain?”¹⁸¹, *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten* targeted the liberal press for not protesting against the unconstitutional governmental measures. Noting that when “the ‘popular liberties’ [*Freiheitsrechte des Volkes*]” were being attacked so directly to bring about a state of affairs that “except for the war years, had been overcome sixty years ago,” liberalism should also have felt attacked, the article concluded:

“We are making this note, not to complain about it, but to show in what a miserable condition the last remnants of liberalism are at the moment. That is perhaps still too little said: There are no liberals anymore. Only a few newspapers that tremble before confiscation.”¹⁸²

6. 5. Concluding Remarks

Already the mid-1920s debate between the Slovene progressives, as well as the general usage of the various *Ersatz*-labels among both the Czech and the Slovene national liberal heirs, have hinted at the centrality of the intellectual aspect of liberalism, in terms of “liberality.” Sometimes referred to with other terms, such as “free-mindedness” or

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ “Wo bleiben die Liberalen?,” *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, 11. 3. 1933.

¹⁸² Ibid.

“progressiveness,” it formed the basis shared by all of the discussed politicians and intellectuals in the Slovene and Czech cases, regardless of whether they called themselves “liberal” or not and whether they cultivated a positive attachment to the national liberal traditions or not. Thus, we may say that among the national liberal heirs in those two cases, a generally positive attachment to such conception of liberalism had persisted, despite their preference for other political labels and explicit distancing from economic and to some extent also from political aspects of liberalism. The same can be said for the broader, liberally-minded intelligentsia. Even Masaryk in his anti-liberal critique explicitly aimed at economic and political liberalism, while admitting that liberalism’s origins lay in “free thought.”¹⁸³

This however was not the case in Austria, where vilification of liberalism was most pronounced and where the whole political spectrum – including the bulk of the national liberal heirs - renounced any kind of association with liberalism. Except for the vaguely defined *Freiheitlichkeit*, more or less limited to the questions of cultural politics, the Greater German People’s Party as the main national liberal heir explicitly rejected the liberal heritage. At the same time, Austria (as well as the Germans in the Czech lands) also represents a curious exception, where small political parties could be found which unambiguously identified as liberal. And in contrast to their Czech and Slovene counterparts, they did so in the political and in a large extent also in the economic sense.

The avoidance in using the liberal label for self-identification was universal, yet the levels of attachment to the liberal heritage differed. This also reflected in the content and usage

¹⁸³ “Liberalism as is now understood is usually only a political and economic programme, but that is not enough. Liberalism had its origin as ‘free thought’ in the first place against creeds and churches, in the second against political servitude.” – Masaryk on thought, 131-132.

of the discussed *Ersatz*-labels. Originally mostly translations of the liberal one, the semantic gap between them and the concept of “liberalism” grew increasingly wide by 1918, which particularly reflected in the case of label “*freiheitlich*”. Whereas it may be said that “free-mindedness” and “progressiveness” aimed at what was perceived as “pure” and “essential” for liberalism or basic “liberality,” even after the liberal label had begun to carry various negative connotations, *Freiheitlichkeit* as a more loose term could be – and was often – employed in order to establish certain distance towards these same “essential elements” of liberalism. In Greater German perspective the former two terms were closely associated with all those elements that had defined old liberalism and were “Jewish” – economic individualism (*Manchestertum*), intolerance towards the established religion (*Freidenkertum*) and a false national consciousness (*Bekennntnisdeuschtum*). Identifying as *freiheitlich* enabled them to distance themselves from all this, yet maintain a traditionally liberal position in some of the cultural questions.

The ambiguous attitudes towards liberalism, various ways of understanding that concept as well as the instances of “liberal critique” raised against the national liberal heirs, shown in this chapter, also bring some additional light to the findings of the previous chapters – and vice-versa. When pursuing practical policies that we may treat as economically liberal. the national liberal heirs put great efforts not to be in turn called “liberal.” And, conversely, the critique of such economic policies was often being raised from outspokenly liberal positions. The older meanings of “liberalism” were being partly superseded, but also intertwined with the newer ones, often causing confusion. On the one hand there was the equivocal rejection of the *laissez-faire* (an economic conception that had already long been buried). On the other hand, however, even the novel socio-economic concepts, being

boastfully advertised as the ultimate departures from liberalism, in reality still contained considerable amount of liberal elements. Last but not least, the deeply entrenched close association between the “liberal” and “national” orientations, along with the radicalization of the latter, among other also resulted in the critique against the “liberals” (Masaryk).

As we could see through the dissertation, it is however possible to speak about liberalism in party politics of the three studied contexts only with certain reservations. The Chapters 4 and 5 demonstrated how the political parties that had inherited the liberal traditions in many aspects deviated not only from the liberal philosophical principles but also from contemporary liberal standards (as delineated through “liberal minimum” in the Chapter 1). At the same time clear continuities with the pre-war national liberal nationality politics may be discerned, which in the new frameworks of nation states however adopted a partly different character, where “national defense” could more easily transform into national oppression. In line with the pre-WWI developmental patterns the parties of national liberal heirs also more or less continued moving along the trajectories leading towards radicalization of the nationalist component at the expense of the liberal one. Lacking clear ideological fundamentals, facing disorientation, coupled by eroding social bases they were furthermore particularly susceptible to flirtation with new ideological currents, some of them radically illiberal, and adoption of some of their discursive elements. Generally, they however remained within the frame of representative democratic order.

Some of the differences between cases were profound. Whereas in case of Czechoslovak National Democrats and Slovene progressives we may speak about liberalism in the broader sense of moderate, centrist politics, this is far less easy in the case of Greater Germans. This is not only due to their racial anti-Semitism, but also the general animosity

towards liberalism which also concerned deeper theoretical principles. While they beyond doubt represented liberal heirs, it is highly questionable whether we may legitimately treat them as “liberals.” A feature however connected the national liberal heirs in all the three cases with their pre-WWI predecessors – namely inner heterogeneity and relatively high degree of pluralism, allowing for co-existence of various elements and factions. Again, this varied between the cases, often also being perceived as more of a burden than a virtue, resulting in splits and secessions. Moreover, while latter represented nothing new for the national liberal heirs, the trajectory of the national liberal tradition appeared largely as turning into a blind alley in all the three cases under scrutiny. Neither the increased pronouncement of the “national” orientation, nor the attempts of re-defining positions, most commonly as vaguely defined “democratic” parties, prevented disorientation and a continuous loss of a clear ideological character. These observations are of course partial and relevant particularly from the point of view of a *longue durée* evolution of liberal traditions.

A question that would however remain open even if we were to conclude that it would be better not to treat the national liberal heirs as representatives of liberalism proper is whether they could in turn be placed in any other ideological family – for instance the conservative one. The latter option seems questionable not only in case of Slovene progressives, but even in the one of Greater Germans up until 1930-31.

While it may be argued that in the party politics of the three lands under scrutiny liberalism, if not gradually vanishing, was beyond doubt not developing, it was however being revived and newly re-substantiated outside that sphere. Concepts of liberalism’s renewal were being developed among non-partisan or dissenting intelligentsia, being voiced also – but

not solely - as critique of conservative stances, narrow interest politics and exclusivist nationalism of the national liberal heirs. Important to note thereby is also that these developments were not limited to one side of the political spectrum ("left" or "right"). Liberalism thus beyond doubt continued to have a marginal but nonetheless visible role in political life of the region in which other universalist ideologies had a powerful sway. While from the perspective of party politics this presence was quite limited, it may prove very fruitful to further search for it in the spheres beyond it.

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