

## THE “HYBRIDS” AND THE RE-ORDERING OF ISTRIA, 1870–1914

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**ABSTRACT**

*This article deals with the political strategies related to the diagnosis of a culturally diverse and hybrid Istria. Discussions about hybridity first appeared in the circles of Austrian and Italian experts from the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. There, the hybridity discourse was part of a re-ordering of the monarchy after the revolution of 1848. The exploration of Istrian cultural hybridity by imperial science is a very good example of how scientific categories in the sense of classifying the population could create social realities. The greatest credit for this was due to the state, science and its institutions. However, apart from these elite circles, regional and local actors in Istria also participated in the negotiation of identity and also used the categorization and classification of the population to achieve their political goals. The archive material and newspapers consulted show that Istrian hybridity was also a guideline for political action at the local level.*

*Keywords: hybridity, Istria, Kastav/Castua, nationalism, regionalism, indifference, threatened order, assimilation*

## GLI “IBRIDI” E IL RIORDINO DELL’ISTRIA, 1870–1914

**SINTESI**

*L’articolo analizza alcune strategie politiche legate agli studi scientifici di diversità e ibridismo culturale in Istria. Le discussioni sull’ibridismo apparvero per la prima volta in circoli di esperti austriaci e italiani a partire dalla metà del XIX secolo, e facevano parte del processo di riorganizzazione della Monarchia asburgica dopo la rivoluzione del 1848. Il dibattito sull’ibridismo culturale in Istria da parte della scienza imperiale può essere considerato un chiaro esempio di come le categorie utilizzate per le classificazioni scientifiche della popolazione crearono nuove realtà sociali. In questo processo, lo Stato, la scienza e le loro istituzioni giocarono un ruolo centrale. Tuttavia, oltre a questi circoli elitari, anche gli attori regionali e locali parteciparono attivamente a processi di negoziazione dell’identità in Istria: anch’essi utilizzarono delle categorie scientifiche di classificazione della popolazione per raggiungere i loro obiettivi politici. Il materiale d’archivio e i giornali consultati dimostrano che la categoria dell’ibridismo in Istria fu una linea guida seguita anche nell’azione politica a livello locale.*

*Parole chiave: ibridismo, Istria, Kastav/Castua, nazionalismo, regionalismo, indifferenza, ordine minacciato, assimilazione*

INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

The Margravate of Istria (1849–1918) was one of the Habsburg crown lands characterized by a great heterogeneity in cultural and ethnic terms. Around the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the linguistic and ethnic diversity of Istria had repeatedly been described by Austrian ethnographers – especially Karl Freiherr von Czoernig<sup>2</sup> – since the middle of the century and by Italian intellectuals from Istria – such as Bernardo Benussi – from the 1870s. Czoernig and other Austrian scientists regarded Istria as an exception due to its newly discovered diversity and “mixture” of peoples (Czoernig, 1857, VIII). Then the term “hybridism” came from the scientific context as a term for the observation and description of linguistic-ethnic peculiarities in Istria (Johler, 2012). Especially the ethnographically not clearly classifiable people were considered as “hybrids.”

Parallel to the scientific negotiations on the affiliation and ethnographic development of “hybrids,” the Austrian government introduced modern structures of the state and its order and was an active player in ethnic production. After the greatest threat to the monarchy from the revolution of 1848/49, the Habsburg government sought to establish control over territories and peoples, triggering processes of ethnic inclusion and exclusion on the local levels.<sup>3</sup> At the latest then, the colloquial language surveys carried out every ten years since 1880 provided evidence of diversity. It became clear that there were numerous shades

1 This paper gives an introduction into the project G03 “Istria as ‘Experimental Station’ - Hybridity as (Threatened) Order,” which is part of the DFG (German Research Foundation) funded Collaborative Research Center 923 “Threatened Orders” at the Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen.

2 Czoernig, Karl Freiherr von: *Ethnographie der oesterreichischen Monarchie*, Wien 1857, VIII–IX.

3 The project G03 “Istria as ‘Experimental Station’ - Hybridity as (Threatened) Order” provides a new insight into the process of re-ordering the monarchy that took place between 1848 and 1914, based on the analytical model of “Threatened Orders” (Frie & Meier, 2014; Frie & Nieswand, 2017). Orders are conceptualized as arrangements of elements that are related to each other in a certain way and that structure social groups or even whole societies. The orders are threatened when agents become convinced that their options for action are uncertain, when behavior and routines are called into question, when agents feel they cannot rely on each other, and when agents manage to establish a threat discourse. Thus threat communication is a self-alarming from within the order and points to a concrete source of threat (Frie & Nieswand, 2017, 7). Successful self-alarming is followed by an open-ended process of re-ordering: actors endeavour to redesign their order which has gone off the rails and can thus be thematized and changed. Therefore, at the moment of threat the order becomes visible and at the same time it is changed. The revolution of 1848 certainly triggered the threat discourses at the state, regional and local levels. The real threat to absolutism by the nationalists and liberals preceded the general re-ordering of the social, political and cultural, i.e. the social transformation of the entire monarchy. However, the revolution also released fears and emotions down to the smallest communities and shaped further threat discourses which in the case of the local agents in Istria were also oriented towards the “hybrids.” The “Threatened Orders” model helps to sort out the complex events and changes in Istria and, by analyzing the threat communication related to hybridity and its effects, makes it possible to understand the political strategies and spheres of action of the actors. One of the central questions of the project is how macro-level strategies to gain knowledge and control over peoples have been implemented and promoted at the local level of Istrian communities.

and nuances between the supposedly pure ethnic groups in Istria (Brix, 1982). Slavs and Italians as the complex cultural realities could not be reduced to a few linguistic and political categories.

In the background of the elitist debate on hybridism, there was also a discussion on hybridity and diversity at the local level. The Croatian, Slovenian and Italian nationalists began to identify the culturally and nationally unclassifiable persons who were not visible as members of the respective peoples. They described them as assimilated, apolitical, indifferent or as side-switchers. From the 1870s onwards, the Croatian national actors in Istria understood the "hybrid" character of the peninsula as a threat to their own national mobilization. Soon they even found new terms to describe and defame the "hybrids". Already in its first editions, the political organ of the Croatian national actors *Naša Sloga* generated the image of the "hybrid" members of their allegedly own Slavic tribe. Depending on the regional idioms and contexts, the terms *Potalijančenjaci*, *Talijanaši* or *Talijomani*, which all meant something like "Italianized," could be observed in the political language. The Croatian national actors used the term *Šarenjaci* (*colorful*) to refer partly to *side-switchers*<sup>4</sup> and partly to people of ambiguous ethnic origin. Thus the terms, especially *Šarenjaci*, can be located as synonyms of the term hybridity. In the period between 1870 and the First World War, the Croatian national actors understood "hybrids" in Istria as a threat to national group formation and instrumentalized the threat of assimilation, which alluded to the concept of hybridity, for the national mobilization.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, at the same time there were also people who joined the so-called 'Istrian' movement with the aim of resisting nationalism and national unification. This article pays special attention to the 'Istrians' movement which was put together by precisely those people who the nationalists called *Šarenjaci* or "hybrids."

In the 1870s and 1880s, the Croatian national leaders from Istria saw the future of the whole monarchy only in the guarantee of a far-reaching equality of peoples. In fact, the monarchy tried to strengthen the rights of the individual peoples with its 'multiculturalism policy' in order to put a stop to the separatist nationalism that destabilized the entire monarchy. However, Article 19 of the Basic Law of 1867<sup>6</sup> promoted even greater difference and the formation of collective national identities. The Slavs in Istria regularly recorded that state laws were not implemented at the

4 Side-switchers were also popular objects of attack for national actors in other parts of the monarchy. See Zahra, 2010, 103, 107.

5 This essay focuses mainly on the Croatian and Slavic negotiation of hybridity. For the Italian perspective, see e.g. the essay by F. Toncich in this volume.

6 Basic Law of 21.12.1867 on the General Rights of Nationals in the Kingdoms and Länder represented in the Council of the Realm, Art.19: All the ethnic entities of the empire enjoy equal rights, and each ethnic entity has an inviolable right to the preservation and fostering of its nationality and language. The state recognizes the equal rights of all current languages in schools, administration and public life. In countries populated by more than one ethnic entity, public places of learning should be so organised that, without making the learning of a second national language compulsory, each member of an ethnic entity should have adequate opportunity to receive education in his/her own language.

local level.<sup>7</sup> As a result, their confidence in the power of state structures waned and they believed they were exposed to the arbitrariness of the ruling Italian party in the Istrian parliament (*Sabor*). They also believed that the existing transitional situation of unstable legal security undermined the monarchy and threatened its existence. At the beginning of the 1870s, the primary goal of the national leaders on the Croatian and Slovenian sides was the establishment of an order of equal cultural expression. This, let us call it 'order of the cultural' postulated by the state policy of multiculturalism, never actually had a real chance of success. By insisting on their implementation and continued existence, the Slovenes and Croats simultaneously attacked the established power relations and the political and, above all, economic superiority of the Italians in Istria. Equal cultural rights would have meant equal access for the Slavs to grammar schools, universities, the state government, trade networks and resources in general. The resulting socioeconomic conflicts, for example when the Italian administrations sabotaged the establishment of Croatian schools, faked election decisions or blocked investments in agriculture, were interpreted by the national actors in the sense of a national struggle. The formation of national borders was linked to the development of social and economic borders (D'Alessio, 2006a, 16). From this point of view all individuals and groups who were not on the side of the respective national leaders were accused of being renegades and traitors. The nationality struggle endangered by the traitors from the "own" ranks became a powerful narrative.

Research on national mobilization in Eastern, Central and Southeastern Europe has already pointed to the failures of national actors in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and drawn attention to the perspective of "indifferents" and "hybrids" in the processes of national demarcation (Zahra, 2010; Zahra, 2008; Judson, 2006; King, 2002; Ballinger, 2002). This article on Istrian hybridity in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was inspired by the research that focused on the topics and concepts of indifference, coexistence/*convivenza* and a long term purity-hybridity-dialectic. Tara Zahra, for example, drew the picture of Bohemia's nationalizing multicultural societies between 1900 and 1948 by setting the thematic anchor in the education of children and young people. In particular, she used the analysis category of "indifferent" or even national hermaphrodites and recorded the manifold strategies and manipulations of political actors throughout their transformation in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Zahra, 2008). She undertakes a historicization of national indifference and pursues the thesis of the persistence of national indifference into the 20<sup>th</sup> century and its influence on mass politics (Zahra, 2010). This article was also inspired by works, which stressed the fluidity of ethnic borders and identities in Istria. Vanni D'Alessio therefore used the term "shifting" instead of "crossing" to describe the movement between different ethnic positions and "identifications" (D'Alessio, 2006a, 18).

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7 For example: „Hrvatski sabor i Hrvati izvan kraljevine“ [The Croatian parliament and the Croats outside the Kingdom], *Naša Sloga*, 1.8.1871; „Istarski sabor“ [The Istrian parliament], *Naša Sloga*, 16.11.1871.

The history of Istria in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was particularly prominent in the 1980s. At that time, the Croatian and Italian artists and intellectuals spread ideas about a perpetual multi-ethnic hybrid Istria.<sup>8</sup> The regional historiography was focused in particular on acculturation concepts in order to explain the linguistic and social diversity of Istria at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, Miroslav Bertoša, in his long-term perspective on the Central Istrian village of Gologorica, concluded that there were "waves of acculturation" in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>9</sup> He thus addressed those negotiations of fluid ethnic and national identities that took place throughout Istria, especially from the 1870s onwards. The fact that Istrian hybridity had already been empirically described by Austrian ethnographers in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, had fallen into oblivion with the fall of the Habsburg Monarchy (Johler, 2012, 3, 9–21). Nevertheless, the Istrian literary and scientific works published from the 1980s onwards, against the background of threatening nationalism in the Yugoslav republics, were aimed at emphasizing the coexistence of Italians, Croats and Slovenes in Istria and its imperial legacies (Cocco, 2010, 7, 18, 21–22). As in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, discussing hybridity proved to be a symptom of the threatened order, here in the penultimate decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century especially as a symptom of the threatened coexistence between Italians, Slovenes and Croats in Istria.

Bertoša referred to this coexistence of Roman and Slavic population groups since the Middle Ages with the term *convivenza*. Thus, he interpreted the work of the first great national 'reawakener' of Istria, Bishop Juraj Dobrila, which was indeed directed towards the equilibrium and cultural equality of the Italians and Slavs in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as a striving for the 'acculturation equilibrium' (Bertoša 1985, 173–174). Bertoša understood the socio-anthropological characteristics of Istria as an oscillation between ethnocentric forces and the forces of coexistence. The reality of Istrian cultural mixtures can be read in his conclusions as a centuries-long mutual influencing of the ethnic groups without one culture having ever been able to achieve the complete acculturation or assimilation of another culture (Bertoša, 1985, 100, 156, 167–168).

Nevertheless, if culture is understood as a hybrid entity that is processual, constructivist and praxeological as well as always characterized by overlaps, mixtures, and transfers (Johler, 2012, 2), such acculturation arguments become unsuitable. Another interesting way would be not to just describe Istria as a region with two, three or many different coexisting and struggling cultures but to follow the local discussions on hybridity in order to show how hybridity has been used as a resource and guiding principle for political action. Therefore, it can be shown how the negotiations of hybridity in the 19<sup>th</sup> century led to alternative concepts of order in Istria.

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8 In the late 1980s, Istrian regionalism and a "hybrid", political, Istrian identity arose around the movement 'Istrijanstvo' and the corresponding identity 'Istrijan/ka'. Continuing to the 'Istrijanstvo' in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, see Kappus, 2006.

9 To the chapter on Gologorica see Bertoša, 1985, 177–253, esp. 225, 228.

The article focuses on the reflection of actors at the local level, on the hybridity of the Istrian population and on the potential of these reflections for policy making. The first section describes how the “hybrids” were invented in Istria and declared a threat to national integration. The second section describes the Slavic national movements in Istria as hybrid movements, assuming a deep-rooted diversity consciousness among the Istrian inhabitants. The third and fourth sections focus on the “hybrid” so-called ‘Istrian’ movement in eastern Istria which, at the turn of the century, was an alternative to Croatian nationalism and a consciously culturally heterogeneous and explicitly regional movement. These ‘Istrians’ as “heroes of multicultural fantasies” (Zahra, 2010, 114) are exemplary for the investigation of the strategies of inclusion and exclusion on the basis of hybridity and not purism of any kind. Finally, the article attempts to classify this movement in the traditions of regionalism in the Adriatic region. The sources used in this essay come mainly from L’Archivio di Stato di Trieste – mainly administrative files and correspondence—and have not been used so far. This applies in particular to the given example of “hybrid” group formation. In addition, the first Croatian national newspaper in Istria, *Naša Sloga* (1870–1915), is cited as an important source because it establishes the threat discourse on hybridity and at the same time provides a source for tracking down the reflections of its authors. Due to the scope of the article, the following explanations concentrate mainly on the Croatian actors, but other perspectives that will be published in future publications will also be dealt with within the framework of the entire project.<sup>10</sup>

## THE THREAT DIAGNOSIS

Istrian diversity was a reality observed in languages, customs and traditions. Austrian ethnographers used the term “hybridism” (*Hibridismus*) for Istria, in particular, to describe the amalgamations, intermixtures and manifold cultural transfers (Nikočević, 2008, 68–70). Here the concept of “hybridism” was first intertwined with positive images of a multicultural Austria and included hopes of overcoming the national polarization that had already begun. The vision of a hybrid ‘Austrian national’ was a pillar of the concept that was inspired by Istrian conditions and the “hybrid” Istro-Romanians, who were ethnographically exemplarily recorded there (Johler, 2019). In the scientific ethnographic and statistical discourses, “hybridism”<sup>11</sup> functioned as an inclusion model for the maintenance of the monarchy. On the other hand, under the term *ibridismo*, Italian intellectuals

<sup>10</sup> See footnote 1.

<sup>11</sup> In this study the term hybridity is used exclusively as a source term. In a broader context, the term hybridity was subject to an enormous change in meaning: from the hubris of ancient demigods and medieval ‘noble bastards’ in the sense of crossing biological and social borders to the ‘infertility discourse’ in the colonial racial context, to today’s pop-cultural exploitation and commodification of hybridity. For a critical examination of the concept see Ha (2015).

understood the mergers of the various Slavic ethnic groups.<sup>12</sup> In the beginning, promising ideas about the assimilation of the Slavs to the Italian 'cultural nation' were connected with "hybridism" because, in Italian circles, the "hybrids" were regarded as easily assimilable. However, Croatian and Slovenian national leaders, from the 1870s onwards, constantly undermined the expectations of the Italian elite for the spontaneous assimilation of the '*popoli senza storia*'<sup>13</sup> into the Italian cultural nation (Bertoša, 1985, 105–107, 148–160). For the Slavs, who increasingly nationalized, the ethnographically produced cultural "nuances" and "mixes"<sup>14</sup> in Istria were the reasons for emotionalized discussions and conflicts.

In 1871, the first Istrian-Croatian People's Assembly (*Tabor*) took place near Kastav/Castua<sup>15</sup>, a small town in the region of Liburnija/Liburnia on the eastern border of Istria, with the participation of almost 8,000–10,000 people.<sup>16</sup> The great echo of the meeting was also heard outside of Istria and celebrated as a milestone in the national 'revival' of the Slavs in Istria. The organizers explicitly addressed their message on national unification to all Slavs of Istria, namely Croats and Slovenes. The *Tabor* took place on the border between the two crownlands (Istria and Carniola), the announcement said, and spoke of Slovenes and Croats as brothers with one body and one soul (Naša Sloga, 1.6.1871). Before that, on the

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- 12 For the knowledge on Istrian diversity in the scientific and administrative Italian circles - see Toncich (in print).
- 13 For the Italian author Bernardo Benussi, who was widely acclaimed in Italian circles, the Slavs in Istria were history-less and had no claim to national realization. This view was also supported by the Italian delegate at the Austrian Constituent Assembly and historian De Franceschi, who in 1848 described the Slavs as incapable of nation-building. De Franceschi underlined a dichotomy between the urban Italians, who spoke the "language of civilized people" and the rural, barbaric Slavs with "non-culture". The historians Vanni D'Alessio and Marta Verginella (Verginella, 2006) have in their works refuted the "long-continued paradigm" about the persistence of the dichotomy between "Italian" cities and "Slavic" countryside. Verginella, for example, rejected the paradigm according to which the national conflicts between the Slavic and Italian populations were considered conflicts between the urban and the rural. D'Alessio pointed out, for example, the strong formation of an urban middle class among Croats during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (D'Alessio, 2006b, 135–137, 150–151; Verginella, 2017, 461, 469).
- 14 Karl von Czoernig recorded thirteen "ethnographic nuances" and countless mixes. See Czoernig, 1857, VIII–IX.
- 15 For simplicity's sake, the toponyms are used in all known spellings, regardless of the predominant national affiliation or language of the population.
- 16 Discussions were planned on Southslavian unity, the introduction of the Croatian language in administration and schools, developments in maritime affairs and other matters. Naša Sloga, 1.4.1871; Two items on the *Tabor* agenda were banned by the regional government in the run-up to the meeting. They affected the sovereignty of Istria as the Habsburg crownland and touched on the questions of Italian political and economic supremacy on the peninsula. Slavic cultural unification was an undesirable topic of negotiation. The regional government also banned the organizers from mobilizing against the association of Istria with Trieste/Triest/Trst and Gorica, which had been brought into the discussion by the Italian side. A. Rubeša, a Croatian member of the Istrian parliament and mayor of Kastav/Castua, opened and led the 'People's Assembly.' There were also speakers for the introduction of Croatian as a teaching language and the official language of the school director, E. Jelušić, for the development of the maritime system, M. Dr. Derenčin, and on the economic backwardness of East Istria by the landowners and by the deputies in the Istrian parliament, F. Marot. Naša Sloga, 16.5.1871, 1.6.1871; See for the speech of Jelušić, Naša Sloga, 1.6.1871, 16.6.1871; Marot also distinguished himself at parliament meetings (demand of agricultural and elementary schools), Naša Sloga, 1.11.1871.

Istrian peninsula a Slovenian *Tabor* was held in Kubed/Covedo in 1870 and this mass mobilization practice, which was actually taken over from Bohemia, was supposed to be the starting point for similar political meetings in Istria (Šetić, 2005, 48).<sup>17</sup>

In Kastav/Castua, Croatian politicians and members of the Istrian diet spoke mainly about the burning issue of languages. In particular, the culturally heterogeneous rural population in Istria in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was still mostly illiterate and a standardized language did not exist. Nationalism was the strongest engine of literacy. The already mentioned Basic Law of 1867 had a secondary consequence for the ethnicization of the law because not group and every individual had the right to legally assert their cultural interests. The demand for free use of one's own language generated inclusion and exclusion processes right down to the individual communities. For example, the determination of the language of instruction was regulated by the school councils, which were specifically designated for this purpose, according to ethnic proportion (Stourzh, 2011, 291–292). Language was the medium and resource of national group formation. Thus, highly politicized discourses went hand in hand with the language question.

In their work, the Croatian actors of national 'revival' faced seemingly insurmountable difficulties of national integration. The Slavs, most of whom lived in rural regions, did not always vote for Slovenian or Croatian political representatives. Their children went to Italian-language classes, spoke a Slavic-Italian language mixture, and refused the discussions about Istria's ties with Croatia. Examples of such national indifference of the Istrian population are numerous and can be traced in political writings of national activists. Apart from that, not all supposedly Croats agreed to blame the Italians for the poor national integration of Croatian farmers. For example, according to a newspaper article, a reader from the region Liburnija/Liburnia claimed that it was not Italianization, but the economic weakness of Istria that led Slavs and Italians to become beggars (Naša Sloga, 1.10.1870). Here the accusation of assimilation to Italianity, which the nationalists blamed for the grievances in the region, led to defensive reactions. In another example, two mostly Slavic Istrian towns from the region of Liburnija/Liburnia: Volosko/Volosca and Lovran/Laurana, spoke out against participating in the Kastav/Castua *Tabor* and openly opposed the negotiating points (Naša Sloga, 1.6.1871).<sup>18</sup> At the following municipal election in Kastav/Castua in 1872, besides the mayor F. Marot, several *šarenjaci*,<sup>19</sup> (the term that nationalists used to describe people of ambiguous political orientation), also moved into the municipal council (Naša Sloga, 1.5.1872). Here the nationalists addressed a specific behavior that could not be explained by Italian assimilation. At least since

17 Tabori in Dolina followed in 1878, Brezovica/Bresovizza in 1883, and Lindar/Lindaro in 1885.

18 Among them were Frane Gajanić-Osojnak, who was probably considered *talijanaš* and one of the mayors of the area, Mate Puž (Tometić), because he refused to sign a protocol during Tabor. "In a bundle!" Prava Naša Sloga, 22.12.1900.

19 Literally: colorful, variegated.



the municipal elections in Kastav/Castua it had become obvious that those people in Kastav/Castua and elsewhere could not simply be neutralized. Among the elected *Šarenjaci* were also those who had spread prophecies of tax increases and extended military obligations in the event of the annexation of Istria to Croatia.<sup>20</sup>

The opposition of the population to nationalizing activities also included subversive actions and boycotts of elections. In the municipality of Buzet/Pingente people, who were considered Croats by the nationalists, doubted the results of the local elections of 1872, in which the Croats achieved very good results. The *Narodnjaci* (supporters of the Croatian People's Party) were said to have achieved success against the Italians with illegal advertising (Naša Sloga, 1.12.1872). In Žminj/Gimino, on 9 February 1873, a group of supposedly Slavic people disguised as priests, allegedly provoked the Croats after a mass (Naša Sloga, 1.4.1873). Furthermore, the *Šarenjaci* did not want to attend the visit of the Pazin/Pisino/Mitterburg region by the Slavic representative of rural Istria elected in 1873 in the Vienna Imperial Council, Dinko Vitezić.<sup>21</sup> The rejection of nationalism also meant the rejection of its proponents, the clergy and the church. The *Šarenjaci* were soon placed in the Croatian national newspaper *Naša Sloga* (Our Unity), also in contrast to the church.<sup>22</sup> The *Šarenjaci* warned that through the nationalist work of the clergy *Pazinščina* (Pazin/Pisino/Mitterburg region) would turn to the crownland of Carniola.<sup>23</sup> Especially from Pazin/Pisino/Mitterburg, there were accusations by the *Šarenjaci* against the clergymen, during the municipal elections of 1875.<sup>24</sup>

The integration of the Slavs into the Italian culture increasingly took place through vertical mobility due to the diversification of modern occupational fields. The Croatian national actors blamed the Italianization through Italian language of instruction, the Italian political counter agitation and the political indifference of the Slavs because of their illiteracy. The purchase of Slavic votes further reinforced the asymmetry of power between the Slavic and Italian factions. All these threats to Croatian national integration, diagnosed by the national actors, can be attributed to a common characteristic - the cultural "hybridity" of their "own" population. At this point in history, Istria was the object of transformation from a culturally hybrid region to a region with clear ethnic categories. The implementation of classifying policies and thus the creation of multiculturalism on the part of the government was still in the process. The discussions that emerged in the 1870s at the local level, about indifference and ambiguity, corresponded to a struggle for one's own identity, whereby "being mixed" seemed to be a logical explanation for the political deviations. The newspaper reports on the Kastav/Castua People's Assembly, for example, dealt with the *Šarenjaci* as traitors who were not aware of their origins.<sup>25</sup> The term

20 "Franina i Jurina", Naša Sloga, 16.5.1872.

21 Letters from the Pazin/Pisino/Mitterburg region, Naša Sloga, 1.6.1874.

22 "A little of everything," Naša Sloga, 1.2.1874.

23 Letters from Pazin/Pisino/Mitterburg, Naša Sloga, 1.3.1874.

24 Letters from the Pazin/Pisino/Mitterburg region, Naša Sloga, 16.12.1875.

25 "Franina i Jurina," Naša Sloga, 16.5.1872.

Šarenjaci shaped the discussion about the problems of national unification for the next decades. "Our foxes, [...] which poison the poor people like evil snakes,"<sup>26</sup> wrote the *Naša Sloga* about them.

The diagnosis of the threat posed by the "hybrids" was accompanied by a tightening of political language. The founding of the Croatian national newspaper *Naša Sloga* already reflected this diagnosis in its first editions and the establishment of the newspaper can be seen as a political strategy to achieve national integration. The expansion of Croatian and Slovenian reading houses (*čitaonice*) since 1866, to spread national awareness and gain influence in rural circles, was another pillar in the national struggle. Yet only the newspaper managed to channel the existing threat diagnosis about Italianization and indifference and to bundle them into a broad-based threat communication about the "hybrids." The way in which the term *Šarenjaci* was constructed by Croatian national actors and disseminated to describe people and groups that were politically difficult to mobilize testified to a mature strategy and tactics.<sup>27</sup>

#### THE HYBRID SLAVIC NATIONAL MOVEMENT(S)

From the mid-1870s onwards, the problems of national integration triggered an intensified debate among national leaders on all sides over ethnic affiliations in Istria. In the statements against the concepts of the Istrian-Italian intellectuals, who emphasized the fragmented nature of the Slavs in Istria, the reflections and knowledge of the Croatian national leaders about the ethnic and the national character of Istria were recorded. First and foremost, the Italian historian and teacher in Koper/Capodistria, Bernardo Benussi (1846–1929), regularly provoked outrage among Croatian and Slovenian actors. In 1874, for the first time for a wider public, the Istrian-Croatian intellectuals wrote about their views on the ethnic and linguistic diversity of Istria. They defended the diversity of Slavic groups in languages, customs and ethnicities and emphasized the extremely small difference between the groups. At that moment, in their understanding of nationality, they incorporated all Istrian inhabitants of Slavic origin, including the Istro-Romanians and supposedly linguistically mixed population groups. Benussi, on the other hand, emphasized the differences in order to emphasize the hybridity and lack of "compactness" of the Slavs of Istria and thus to locate the Italians as "compact" and "authentic" people.<sup>28</sup>

The Croatian national leaders, however, only rejected the concept of linguistic or cultural hybridity if it endangered the Slav-Italian demarcation. At the same

26 "Conversation between Zvana and Kata in Kaštelir," *Naša Sloga*, 9.6.1892.

27 For a broader study of the naming and framing of "hybrids" see Simon, 2019, 65–75.

28 Benussi, Bernardo: *Saggio d'una Geografia dell'Istria*, compilato ad uso della studiosa gioventù da Bernardo Dr. Benussi, 1874. Quoted from: *Naša Sloga* 16.9.1874, 1.10.1874, 1.12.1874, 16.1.1875, 16.2.1875, 16.3.1875, 1.4.1875.

time, they promoted the Croatian-Slovenian “spaces in between” and expressed an increasing need for a Slavic anti-Italian group formation. Although they understood Croatian and Slovenian people as separated ethnic and national groups, they never negated their belonging to a culturally hybrid community of the Slavs and therefore their inclusionistic national integration. In Istria (as well as in Croatia-Slavonia, Carniola and probably some other neighboring multicultural regions), the early national emancipations since the 1830s had gone along with the idea of the South Slavic unity and Illyrismus. Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer (1815–1905), among others, brought the South Slavic idea to Istria via his, or the church, networks with Bishop Juraj Dobrila (1812–1882) situated in Pazin/Pisino/Mitterburg.<sup>29</sup> Later, *Naša Sloga* explicitly claimed the rights of the *Slavjani*, for example, before the 1870 local elections (*Naša Sloga*, 16.6.1870). The first edition of *Naša Sloga* stated that the maintenance and extension of Istrian autonomy and self-government were clear and “righteous wishes of the Slavs of Istria” (*pravedne želje slavjana istarskih*) (*Naša Sloga*, 1.6.1870). “The world will see what the Slavic Istrian spirit can do!”<sup>30</sup> The contributions from the Slovenian language were adapted to the Croatian language and thus made accessible to the readership (*Naša Sloga*, 1.1.1871).<sup>31</sup>

Croatian and Slovenian national revival in Istria was originally a hybrid movement, rooted in a commitment to a Slavic and supra-regional unity. In the Kastav/Castua *Tabor*, the Slovenes and Croats from Croatia-Slavonia were called brothers who had the same interests. The *Tabor* was an assembly for the rights of the Slavs, a hybrid event that simultaneously promoted the annexation of Istria to the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia, reflecting the hybridity of political positions (*Naša Sloga*, 16.4.1871). It culminated in the foundation of the Slovenian-Croatian association *Edinost*, whose newspaper of the same name, from 1876, was explicitly aimed at Croats and Slovenes from Trieste/Triest/Trst and Istria.<sup>32</sup> It can be assumed that the positively connoted imperial discourse on diversity had also been the foundation for a more collaborative and less confrontational national work between Croatian and Slovenian in Istria. Thus, it was possible for Croats and Slovenes to send joint representatives to the Vienna Imperial Council in 1907 (Marelič, 2014, 67).

29 The column in the form of a dialogue between e.g. the border guards from the Croatian Military Frontier “Gjoko and Marko” in the *Naša Sloga* corresponded in content to the orientation of Strossmayer’s Croatian People’s Party and its networking with Bishop Juraj Dobrila in Istria.

30 From a poem in *Naša Sloga*, 16.2.1873.

31 However, further gradations can also be identified between the used terms *Slovenci*, *Slovinci*, *Slavjani* or *Slaveni*. By *Slovenci*, the Croatian and Slovenian political actors in Istria actually understood the Slovenes in and around Trieste/Triest/Trst. The ethnonym *Slovinci* meant the Slavs of a certain area of Western Istria and not East Istrian inhabitants. See Blagonić, 2013, 22–23.

32 The first Slovenian political association *Edinost* for the Trieste/Triest/Trst region was founded at the end of 1874/beginning of 1875 and had about 300 members at its first plenary meeting. The journal was published in Koper from 1876. *Naša Sloga*, 16.2.1875. More about Croatian-Slovenian political work at the turn of the century in Klaić, 2014.

The demands for cultural equality were greatly dependent on the discourses from Bohemia, Dalmatia and Croatia-Slavonia. The first Croatian and Slovenian national actors in Istria often came from these regions, from where they brought specific contents and issues such as the threat of assimilation. In this respect, early and hybrid Slavic nationalism in Istria was ideally closely linked to the conflicts in other multicultural parts of the monarchy. *Naša Sloga* brought a political column on the Slav-German tensions in the monarchy in each issue in the first years of her appearance on the title page, in which the demands for equal rights for the Slavs and Germans were in the foreground. The notion of "Slavic language"<sup>33</sup> (*slavinski jezik*) (*Naša Sloga*, 16.8.1870) in Istria, referred to the antagonism between the German and Slavic peoples of Cisleithania and thus to belonging to the larger Slavic population. The success or victory of the Croatian People's Party in the elections in Croatia-Slavonia in 1871, similar to the announced introduction of Croatian as the official language in Dalmatia in 1871, also fired hopes for equal rights for the Croatian and Slovenian languages in Istria.<sup>34</sup>

#### THE "HYBRIDS" ARE ACTING

In the last two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a new phase of national integration of Croats in Istria began. Not only the balance in an 'order of the cultural' but also the ideal of an independent Croatian state and the supra-regional networking with its explicitly "own" nation outside Istria, was at the forefront in the minds of the respective national actors. In addition, the policy of the "Croatian Party of Rights" (*Hrvatska stranka prava*) of Ante Starčević, which claimed Croatian unity and independence, found its way into Istria. Matko Laginja, a Croatian member of the Istrian diet, spoke out in favor of granting individual peoples the right to associations under the Habsburg House. "Istria is inseparable from other countries of the Habsburg crown but the individual Austrian countries must decide on their own order and interests," wrote Laginja. Furthermore, he was „neither an enemy of the Italians, nor of the Germans, but an enemy of the Jewish traitors and the renegades of his own people."<sup>35</sup> The "hybrids" continued to be the target of the nationalists.

The union of Croats and Slovenes gained even more importance in particular as a contrast to the Italian party. Especially the inner Istria around the city of Pazin/Pisino/Mitterburg was strongly influenced and changed by the national strategies. The local population was forced to choose between either the Italian or

33 All translations from Croatian in the text are by the author.

34 *Naša Sloga*, 16.6.1871. – *Naša Sloga*, 1.6.1870–1.4.1871. – The (supposedly) Croatian-born governor of Dalmatia, Baron of Rodić, did not enjoy great popularity among the local farmers because he did not drive the reform and instead learned Italian. *Naša Sloga*, 16.5.1871.

35 Matko Laginja to the peasants of the districts of Pula/Pola, Poreč/Parenzo and Koper/Capodistria, Pula, 11.2.1891. AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 138/1891.

the Croatian group (D'Alessio, 2006a, 17). A parallel society, as the writer Mate Balota (Mijo Mirković) attested for the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, originated right here in the 1880s (Balota, 1950, 20). The Italian upper class could no longer rely on Italian majorities. The mobilization of Croatian and Slovenian voters finally brought significant successes, reducing the gaps between Slavic and Italian identifications. The supporters of the Italian party regularly disturbed the holding of elections in the rural communities, in which the Slavs were in the majority, provoking protests and interpellations of Slavic representatives.<sup>36</sup> The people of Istria perpetually saw the image of the central administration damaged due to their inability to uphold the electoral laws.

Around this time in Kastav/Castua a lawyer from Dalmatia, Ivan Krstić, organized a new, explicitly Istrian and thus regional movement<sup>37</sup> on a supraethnic basis. The political work of Ivan Krstić (also Giovanni or Johannes Krstić) can be explained on the one hand by his local commitment to the so-called 'Istrian' movement and on the other hand by his journalistic work.<sup>38</sup> In 1892, Krstić settled in Matulji/Mattuglie in the local community of Kastav/Castua and opened a wine wholesale business there. Only two years later, the local administration in Kastav/Castua tried to find ways to expel Krstić from the community. He represented those who were "Italianized" and called *Šarenjaci*. The competent court in Volosko/Volosca inquired, for the first time in December 1894, at the Volosko/Volosca district about the offences and convictions against Krstić. These were insults to officials, tax fraud in Rijeka and his poor morals.<sup>39</sup> Kastav/Castua was the birthplace of Matko Laginja and priest Vjekoslav Spinčić, both outstanding Croatian national leaders and parliamentarians in Istria. The fact that Krstić criticized these two and insulted them, quickly polarized the east coast of Istria and the Liburnija/Liburnia region. In order to punish Krstić for lies, the Kastav/

36 There are numerous examples of electoral fraud, ballot buying and related conflicts involving the 'Italianized'. Here, for example, is a detailed complaint of the Croatian party for the election of the delegates from the rural municipalities for the Reichsrat in the constituency Vodnjan/Dignano on 22.5.1885 with data on involved persons. The demand for cancellation of the election of G. B. De Franceschi was addressed to the House of Representatives. Archivio di Stato di Trieste/Triest/Trst (AST), Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 138/1891, Vodnjan/Dignano, 1.9.1885.

37 Misleadingly, "istarski" or "Istran" (spatial affiliation for people or things originated from the Istrian peninsula) and "istrijski" or "Istrijani" (political affiliation) are equated in English and have the same name: "Istrian." The reader has to keep this in mind when reading about the "Istrian movement," i.e. the political movement of Ivan Krstić. For reasons of differentiation the political "Istrijanstvo" and the corresponding identity are placed in simple quotation marks in the text ('Istrians'/'Istrian').

38 Krstić collaborated with the Italian liberals. He celebrated publicly, for example, together with the mayor of Pula, Lodovico Rizzi, who was elected by the eastern rural communities, and with Felice Bennati, who won in the fifth curia, the immense successes of his or rather Italian-liberal politics in the imperial council elections of 1900/01. What brought Krstić the support of the Italian liberals in particular was his vehement refusal to accept the idea of the Croatian „historical right of statehood“ being extended to Istria. "Victory is assured," Prava Naša Sloga, 22.12.1900.

39 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901/1901 District in Volosko/Volosca to the court in Volosko/Volosca, 14.2.1895, signed Fabiani.

Castua municipal administration even decided in June 1896 to have its minutes of meetings, decisions etc. printed in the *Naša Sloga* to “prevent the people from being divided by slander and the spread of lies.”<sup>40</sup>

*Naša Sloga* fought the ‘Istrian’ movement with all the means of a newspaper. In addition to the accusing reports and accusing correspondences, the newspaper also published stagings of conversations so that Krstić’s positions were all the more clearly emphasized. It should become clear that Spinčić, in contrast to Krstić, did not rule out a simultaneity of ‘Croatian’ and ‘Slavic.’ In the 1890s, *Naša Sloga* reached all classes and occupational groups due to the growing Slavic middle class and was no longer oriented towards the farmers as in the 1870s. Nevertheless, its language remained simple and the content was characterized by complexity reduction. *Naša Sloga* staged talks, for example, between Ivan Defar and Ivan Krstić, and between the inhabitants of Kršan/Chersano and Rukavac (Šetić, 2005, 102) with the aim of educating the population and winning them over to the national side. In an invented dialogue, *Naša Sloga* let Krstić say that the ‘Istrians’ were Slavs and not Croats (*Naša Sloga*, 25.3.1897).

Krstić apparently enjoyed great influence among the population of Liburnija/Liburnia and in the places along the border of the crownland up to today’s Slovenia.<sup>41</sup> The events before, during and after the 1897 elections, showed to the Imperial Council what uncertainties Krstić’s political work had brought into the stronghold of Croatian nationalism. Krstić held election meetings, e.g. on 21 March 1897 in Matulji/Mattuglie, thus influencing the election to the IV. curia.<sup>42</sup> In March 1897, the municipal administration in Kastav/Castua meticulously persecuted numerous, but in sum rather harmless, disturbances of unrest such as insults and threats to individual politicians and influential national actors and reported them in part to the court and the district team in Volosko/Volosca. Assaults on the part of Krstić’s supporters occurred in particular against some recruits.<sup>43</sup> Elected representatives from the V. curia in Jelšane/Elsane were attacked in March 1897 by Krstić’s supporters in Jušići near Matulji/Mattuglie.<sup>44</sup>

Against it, Krstić’s supporters raised serious reproaches against the “Croats.” These would have threatened the ‘Istrians’ and it led to shootings, in which some ‘Istrians’ were seriously injured.<sup>45</sup> Apparently there were also arrests of Krstić’s supporters, for example, before the elections in Rukavac in February 1897.<sup>46</sup> The municipality leader even ordered the earlier evening closure of the taverns in the

40 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901/1901. Report on the meeting of the municipal council in Kastav/Castua, 4.2.1896 and 23.3.1896. Krstić’s criticism of the conditions of the municipality were not out of the air as the internal minutes of the meeting finally showed.

41 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901/1901 Minutes of the meeting in Kastav/Castua, 26.6.1897.

42 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901/1901 Minutes of the meeting in Kastav/Castua, 26.6.1897.

43 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901/1901 Minutes of the meeting in Kastav/Castua, 26.6.1897.

44 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901/1901 Minutes of the meeting in Kastav/Castua, 26.6.1897.

45 “In a bundle!” Prava Naša Sloga, 22.12.1900.

46 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901. Minutes of the meeting in Kastav/Castua, 26.6.1897.

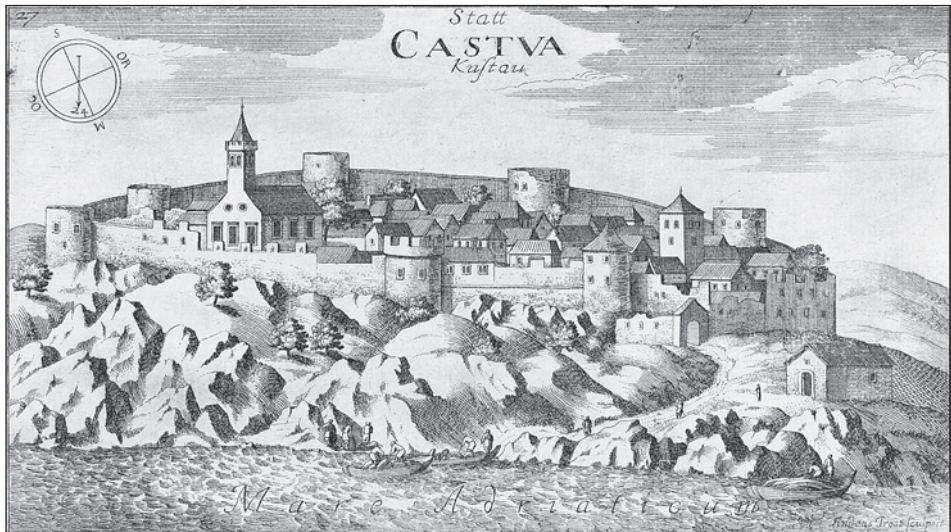


Fig. 1: Kastav / Castua, 1679, by Janez Vajkard Valvasor (Wikimedia Commons).

western parts of the Kastav/Castua municipality at 9 p.m. because of the threat to public peace and order, emanating from Krstić's supporters.<sup>47</sup>

In February 1897, in Matulji/Mattuglie, the followers of Krstić independently elected a new mayor from the ranks of the 'Istrians' without the knowledge of the Kastav/Castua community administration.<sup>48</sup> The community administration in Kastav/Castua opposed the election and thus provoked local protests.<sup>49</sup> In the election fever of 1897, Krstić gathered several hundred followers and led this group to Volosko/Volosca accompanied by 'Krstić's music.' When the human train was prevented from entering the city, Krstić led it through the other villages, where he held speeches and let the music play. The music was an expression of the protest against the Catholic Church because these events took place during Lent, when music games were forbidden by the church.<sup>50</sup>

In April 1897, the Kastav/Castua municipal council asked Ivan Krstić to leave the municipality. However, for the district court, Krstić was a regular taxpayer and not allowed to be expelled. Two months later, a special Kastav/Castua municipal committee brought a new decision on the basis of new allegations and asked Krstić for a personal statement. Krstić was alleged to have refused to comment.

47 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901. Report on the meeting of the municipal council in Kastav/Castua, 20.3.1897; *ibid.*, Minutes of the municipal council meeting in Kastav/Castua, 26.6.1897.

48 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901 Minutes of the meeting in Kastav/Castua, 26.6.1897.

49 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901 Report on the meeting of the municipal council in Kastav/Castua, 20.3.1897; *ibid.* Minutes of the community meeting in Kastav/Castua, 26.6.1897.

50 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901 Minutes of the meeting in Kastav/Castua, 26.6.1897.

In any case, the head of the municipality even reported this to the Ministry of the Interior in Vienna.<sup>51</sup>

By a decision of 26 June 1897, the Kastav/Castua municipal committee brought new evidence of Krstić's immorality and again requested the expulsion of Ivan Krstić from the district administration in Volosko/Volosca.<sup>52</sup> Krstić had founded his own newspaper in 1896, the *Prava Naša Sloga* (Our True Unity), which mocked the nationalist *Naša Sloga* (Our Unity) and not only with its "unmistakable" name. Krstić also denounced some municipality council members for corruption, which made him a prime enemy of the emerging national order at the local and regional levels.<sup>53</sup>

A detailed summary, prepared by the municipal committee, showed a very active opposition role of Krstić towards the Croatian nationalists. He was very critical of the Croatian political actors in the municipality and the district. Employment, wages, dismissals, waste of community revenue, community donations, debt relief, "scandalous" election financing and secret disbursements to prominent national leaders were among the contents of his criticism.<sup>54</sup> He succeeded in getting the parliamentary committee in Poreč/Parenzo to take a close look at the municipality council in Kastav/Castua. In the *Prava Naša Sloga* he accused the deputy Spinčić of incitement of the people because he forced them to become Croats.<sup>55</sup> The local administration of Kastav/Castua was regularly put on the defensive because of the *Prava Naša Sloga*. Krstić's accusations were exaggerated but in the matter he touched on the realities of a community on the nationalism course, whose representatives mobilized and tried to find resources.<sup>56</sup>

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- 51 Convolute on the litigation in the case Krstić against Kastav/Castua and Volosko/Volosca between 1896 and 1901 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901, here municipal administration Kastav/Castua to the Ministry of the Interior, 1.12.1897 or *ibid.*, municipal representation in Kastav/Castua to the district council in Volosko/Volosca, signed. Jelušić, 17.10.1901.
- 52 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901 Minutes of the meeting of the municipal committee of Kastav/Castua, 26.6.1897; *ibid.*, municipal administration of Kastav/Castua to the Ministry of the Interior, 1.12.1897. The municipal committee included the chairman Kazimir Jelušić, Mate Kundić, Anton Lučić Garsoni, Luka Medvedić, Frane Monjac, Mate Trinajstić, Vinko Blečić, Ljudevit Sušan, Josip Afrić and Vjekoslav Kinkela. Vinko Marjanović took the minutes. It was said that Krstić insulted Frane Ferlan, Ludoviko Jelušić and some others. AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901 Minutes of the meeting in Kastav/Castua, 26.6.1897; *Ibid.* Kastav/Castua municipal administration to the Ministry of the Interior, 1.12.1897.
- 53 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901 Minutes of the meeting in Kastav/Castua, 26.6.1897.
- 54 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901 Minutes of the Kastav/Castua municipal meeting, 26.6.1897. In the eleventh edition of *Prava Naša Sloga*, Krstić criticized a payment made by a municipality populated by Istro-Romanians to the lawyer Dr. Stanger. Unfortunately, the community meeting made no note of any further details.
- 55 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901 Minutes of the meeting in Kastav/Castua, 26.6.1897. The twelfth edition of *Prava Naša Sloga* was quoted here; *Ibid.* Report on the meeting of the municipal council in Kastav/Castua, 29.9.1896.
- 56 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901. In fact, the municipality books of Kastav/Castua, including minutes of the meetings of the community committees, inventories and above all the financial books, had not been kept properly since 1894. Some officials and municipal officials therefore were accused of serious misconduct by Krstić.



The Croatian nationalists tried to stop Krstić's growing influence among the population, in vain. Croatian parliamentarians, such as Spinčić, urged the district council in Volosko/Volosca and apparently also the governor in Trieste/Triest/Trst, Teodoro de Rinaldini (1890–1897), against Krstić.<sup>57</sup> The district team in Volosko/Volosca rejected many applications of the Kastav/Castua municipality for the deportation of Ivan Krstić, several times.<sup>58</sup> The head of the Kastav/Castua municipality, Jelušić, repeatedly informed the Ministry of the Interior in Vienna and the governor's office in Trieste/Triest/Trst. The reception note in Vienna was that Dr. Krstić was considered an "Italian agitator."<sup>59</sup>

On 15 August 1898, Krstić tried to convene a People's Assembly of the *Narodno-istarska stranka*<sup>60</sup> (Istrian People's Party) in Matulji/Mattuglie. This nascent party explicitly addressed all classes, especially peasants and workers. The party leader of the Slovenian socialist party, Etbin Kristan,<sup>61</sup> was to take part in the meeting but there is no evidence that he actually did.<sup>62</sup> The district administration had approved the event subject to conditions, but apparently the police banned it in the last hours before it was due to begin. Since there had been no time for the cancellation before, the people had already gathered. The number of people present amounted to several thousands and probably exceeded the expectations of the police, so that they began to block access to the venue. The gathered people refused to leave the square without a corresponding appeal from Krstić, which the latter did not want to make. Although the assembly had failed, it had mobilized thousands of people for the 'Istrian' movement.<sup>63</sup>

On 19 September 1901, the governor's office in Trieste/Triest/Trst again rejected the appointment of the Kastav/Castua municipal council.<sup>64</sup> On 1 October 1901 however, the Ministry of the Interior asked the governor in Trieste/Triest/

57 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901 Minutes of the Kastav/Castua municipal meeting with reference to the 13th edition of *Prava Naša Sloga*, 26.6.1897.

58 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901. District team in Volosko/Volosca to the municipal administration in Kastav/Castua concerning rejection of the opposition, 16.11.1897; Ibid. Municipal head in Kastav/Castua, Jelušić, to the governor's office in Trieste/Triest/Trst, 26.8.1898.

59 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901 Kastav/Castua municipal administration to the Ministry of the Interior, 1.12.1897; *ibid.* Minutes of the meeting in Kastav/Castua, 19.8.1898.

60 In the tabular overview of the election results in the general electoral class for Istria in 1901 the governor's office in Trieste/Triest/Trst noted that there was an "Istrian party of Dr. Krstić" in the political district of Volosco. AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901, 1/2, 4 Election results in the general electoral class for Istria 1901; It was also said that it was "remarkable" that in the "municipalities of Moschienizze (6 electors) and Veprinaz (4 electors) and in Rukavaz (6 electors) in the municipality of Kastua, the Slavic-Italian and Istrian-Italian Party won". Afterwards, the reference was added that the party of Dr. Krstić was linked to the Italian party. *Ibid.*, Election results in the electoral class of the rural communities in 1901.

61 The Slovenian socialists even supported the Italian liberals in Istria in some cases. The support for Krstić should be seen in the context of flexible and opportune political cooperation. For more information on socialism in Istria and Etbin Kristan's concept of nationality, see Cataruzza, 2011, e.g. 72–85.

62 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901 Minutes of the meeting in Kastav/Castua, 19.8.1898.

63 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901 Minutes of the meeting in Kastav/Castua, 19.8.1898.

64 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901 Minutes of the local meeting Kastav/Castua, 9.10.1901; *ibid.*, 213 commemorative bitface to the governor in Trieste/Triest/Trst, 24.10.1899.

Trst to immediately give a “report on the matter of the interpellation of the deputies, Dr Ferri and comrades, concerning an expulsion from the municipality of Castua to the Ministry of the Interior.”<sup>65</sup> Meanwhile, on 17 October 1901, the local administration of Kastav/Castua again complained that the district council in Volosko/Volosca had been delaying the clarification of the case for three years. The Kastav municipality demanded that the Ministry of the Interior intervene in the proceedings. Articles from the newspaper *Prava Naša Sloga* would prove the moral distortions of Krstić and its harmful influence on public order in the community, it was said. Krstić would operate no trade and then there would be no legal basis for his remaining in the municipality.<sup>66</sup> Finally, on 29 November 1901, the Ministry of the Interior rejected the recourse and the expulsion of Krstić.<sup>67</sup>

The political work of Ivan Krstić was strongly connected to socioeconomic conflicts of the region. Since 1896, the local representatives of Kastav/Castua had urged the governor in Trieste/Triest/Trst against the division of the municipality.<sup>68</sup> At the center of the dispute was the Lužina municipal forest, over which the inhabitants of Breza/Bresa claimed ownership.<sup>69</sup> In other places, where solidarity had been established, such as Bregi/Bregghi, Rukavac/Ruccavazzo and Kučeli/Cuceli, which also claimed municipal property, unrest broke out in the spring of 1897, which led to the deposition of the mayors there, by the municipal administration in Kastav/Castua.<sup>70</sup> Krstić was one of those who strongly interfered with the plans for the division of the community.<sup>71</sup> The dispute over Lužina reached all political and judicial instances between Kastav/Castua and Trieste/Triest/Trst and even the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Finance in Vienna in 1896.<sup>72</sup> The Istrian parliament finally decided on the division of the municipality, and the municipal representatives from Kastav/Castua were again on the defensive. Not only could they not achieve Krstić’s expulsion, but economically important community territories threatened to split off.

65 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidenziali 236/1901 Letter from the Ministry of the Interior to the Trieste/Triest/Trst Governor, 1.10.1901.

66 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidenziali 236/1901 Local government in Kastav/Castua to the district team in Volosko/Volosca, 17.10.1901.

67 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidenziali 236/1901 Letter from the Ministry of the Interior to the Trieste/Triest/Trst governor, 29.11.1901.

68 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidenziali 213/1899 Commemorative bitface to the governor in Trieste/Triest/Trst, 24.10.1899.

69 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidenziali 236/1901 Report on the meeting of the municipal council in Kastav/Castua, 29.9.1896 and 1.–2.12.1896.

70 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidenziali 236/1901 Minutes of the Kastav/Castua municipal meeting, 26.6.1897; *ibid.*, Report of the Kastav/Castua municipal meeting, 1.–2.12.1896 and 20.3.1897.

71 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidenziali 236/1901 Minutes of the meeting in Kastav/Castua, 26.6.1897; In issues 24 and 29 of *Prava Naša Sloga*, Krstić encouraged the residents to stand up for the division of the municipality.

72 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidenziali 236/1901 Minutes of the meeting in Kastav/Castua, 26.6.1897. The plaintiff Fran Matetić from Breza/Bresa was also mentioned in this context.

In July 1899, the Kastav/Castua municipal representatives sent a memorandum to the Ministry of the Interior in Vienna with the wish that the law on the division of the Kastav/Castua municipality, passed by the Istrian parliament, should not be submitted to the highest body for signature. The division had already been striven for by the Italians for twenty years and recently also by other enemies, it said.<sup>73</sup> In fact, as early as 1875, some places refused to pay the fees for the use of the forest they considered their property.<sup>74</sup>

### THE ISTRIJANI

Ivan Krstić managed to gain political influence in East Istria around the turn of the century. The Croatian nationalists suspected that the district leader in Volosko/Volosca and the governor in Trieste/Triest/Trst were protecting Krstić but they could not prove that.<sup>75</sup> Despite all complaints, Krstić remained in Kastav/Castua and expanded his oppositional work. The 'Istrians' already had imagined Istria as an antinationalistic regional entity within the imperial order and rejected the new policy of the supporters of the Croatian Party of Rights. The protagonists of the 'Istrian' movement continued to express their loyalty to the Crown and explicitly described themselves as "Istrian Slavs."<sup>76</sup>

*Oh! Jesus [...] Following your teaching, we will take care of our concerns and respect the foreign, love our neighbors as ourselves, live in peace and have love for everyone, remaining what we have been, true Istrian Slavs!*<sup>77</sup>

The 'Istrian' program of Krstić was inclusive. He respected the confession of each individual as a Croat but – in contrast to Spinčić and Laginja – did not want any union with Croatia. Istrian Slavs and Croats enjoyed more freedom than Croats in the Kingdom of Croatia, he stressed. In contrast to Croatia, they founded reading houses in Istria, sang Croatian national songs and printed their national press.<sup>78</sup> "Istrian suffering does not become Croatian bread," headlined *Prava Naša Sloga*, to emphasize that Istrian social problems would not be solved by joining Croatia.<sup>79</sup> The focus of Krstić's work was on regional affiliation and a re-ordering of Istria in the sense of a return to old circumstances thirty years ago, when, as he said, the population lived together peacefully.<sup>80</sup>

73 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 213/1899 Commemorative bitface to the governor in Trieste/Triest/Trst, 24.10.1899.

74 "Kastav/Castua municipal property," *Naša Sloga*, 16.1.1875.

75 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901 Minutes of the meeting in Kastav/Castua, 19.8.1898.

76 AST, Luogotenenza, Atti presidiali 236/1901 Minutes of the meeting in Kastav/Castua, 26.6.1897.

77 "Confiscated!" *Prava Naša Sloga*, 22.12.1900.

78 "Istrian suffering does not become Croatian bread," *Prava Naša Sloga*, 22.12.1900.

79 "Istrian suffering does not become Croatian bread," *Prava Naša Sloga*, 22.12.1900.

80 "In a bundle!" *Prava Naša Sloga*, 22.12.1900.

Not the faith, but the clergy and the Roman Catholic Church were the targets of his attack.<sup>81</sup> Many of the leading Croatian nationalists were priests. Thirty years ago in Istria, there was no knowledge about the unfortunate Croatian politics of priests and others, he wrote.<sup>82</sup>

*Seriously brothers, this was a great incomparable time when the world's savior was born, without differences in nationality and without differences in names! We who grew up yesterday, oh how sweet and happy we remember the distant days of our childhood and innocent happiness! [...] At that time it was not thought of what nationality the people were, but it was sung for peace for all people! And today?*<sup>83</sup>

In the pre-Christmas period of 1900, Krstić put the prehistory of multicultural Istria, now created as such by imperial and nationalistic policies, into the focus of his work. Since 1880, population surveys have favored the further consolidation of national identities on the basis of colloquial languages and have reduced the "spaces in-between" so vehemently defended by Krstić. Krstić criticized the colloquial language surveys, for example, citing the Christmas story, when he compared the journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem in order to "fulfil the general duty of population survey" (*podlože obćenitij dužnosti popiševanja pučanstva*) with the current situation in Istria.<sup>84</sup>

The Reich Council elections of 1900/01 again caused confrontations between Krstić and the nationalists. Laginja and Spinčić sowed hatred among the population, so did Krstić (*Prava Naša Sloga*, 22.12.1900). As in previous elections since the 1870s, the national *Naša Sloga* threatened to expose voters, who did not vote for Croats.<sup>85</sup> The Croats fought "for naked existence, for existence or non-existence," according to Spinčić.<sup>86</sup> At the last elections of the Reich Council in Cisleithania, according to the various curia, the supporters of Krstić achieved a huge success while Matko Laginja lost his seat in the Reich Council (Klaić, 2014, 38). The victory against the Croats in Istria was secured, it was said in the *Prava Naša Sloga*.<sup>87</sup> Krstić supported the Italian liberals in protest against the Croatization of Istria referring to the Croats' own regional and Slavic identity in Istria.

81 "Christmas!" *Prava Naša Sloga*, 22.12.1900.

82 "In a bundle!" *Prava Naša Sloga*, 22.12.1900.

83 "Christmas!" *Prava Naša Sloga*, 22.12.1900.

84 "Christmas!" *Prava Naša Sloga*, 22.12.1900.

85 "In a bundle!" *Prava Naša Sloga*, 22.12.1900.

86 "Istrian suffering does not become Croatian bread," *Prava Naša Sloga*, 22.12.1900.

87 "Victory is assured," *Prava Naša Sloga*, 22.12.1900; As in 1891, the Croatian-Slovenian People's Party lost its mandate in the curia of the rural communities of western Istria. In the east of Istria, Spinčić was able to win the mandate of the rural communities. The Croatian-Slovenian People's Party suffered a defeat with only one place won, while the Italian liberals won four out of five places for the Imperial Council, especially through the votes of the 'Istrians.'

*I am a Slav, I will remain a Slav, and I will die with the Istrians! My heart is filled with joy precisely for me as the representative of Liburnia, because I know that I have contributed to the beautiful and lovely Liburnia saving the honourable name of our mother, Istria.*<sup>88</sup>

In response to Krstić's agitation, between 1900 and 1904, the political journal *Narodni List* (People's Gazette) was published in Opatija, specially set up to combat the 'Istrians'. The newspaper published in Volosko/Volosca, first by Ivan Pošćić and then by Viktor Car Emin, was intended to create a balance between the 'Istrian' movement and the Croatian nationalists.<sup>89</sup> A total of 42 issues were published up to October 1904.

The Istrian idea of Ivan Krstić, did not tolerate any *diferenci nacijona*. It was an offer to "all those born in Istria, regardless of nationality."<sup>90</sup> He imagined the regional 'Istrian' order as a unity of Italians, Slavs and all others born in Istria. He drew a sharp line between the 'Istrians,' who spoke Italian, came from Istria and were true Austrians, and between the national Italians. After the Triple Alliance from 1882, between Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy, the Italian prime minister Crispi dissolved the irredentist association *Associazione pro l'Italia Irredenta* and diminished the Italian irredentism in Istria. From Krstić's point of view, there was no danger on the part of the liberal Istrian Italians, well aware of the work of the legal *Lega Nazionale*, an association that clearly promoted Italian national interests at the expense of the Slavic in Istria. He said that the 'Istrian' Italians in Pula defended Istria from the Italian attacks from Italy and were loyal to the monarchy.<sup>91</sup> He also drew historical evidence of Croatia's hostility towards Austria.<sup>92</sup>

In general, Krstić's loyalty to the crown was the anchor of his 'Istrian' policy, which explicitly advocated a return to the old Istrian order as it existed before 1870.<sup>93</sup> The 'Istrian' policy served as a bridge to restore peace between the Slavs and Italians. The policy of the 'Istrians' is for the "holy Austrian cause" because "our party is not Italian, but national Istrian."<sup>94</sup>

The Istrian Italians supported Ivan Krstić because he met their ideas about a hybrid and dispersed Slavicism and negated a Croatian or Slovenian nation on the Istrian peninsula. The Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Finance in Vienna were informed about the confrontations of the national Croats, Italians and 'Istrians' in Liburnija/Liburnia and at the level of the crownland and apparently

88 "Victory is assured," *Prava Naša Sloga*, 22.12.1900.

89 "In a bundle," *Prava Naša Sloga*, 22.12.1900. The *Narodni List*, written in the popular Chakavian (*Čakavski*) dialect, gathered the above-mentioned publishers as well as R. Katalanić Jeretov, V. Nazor, E. Kumičić, M. Nikolić, V. Rubeša and J. Hranilović. Krstić called it a "stinky paper" which is meaningless and only writes about him.

90 "In a bundle!" *Prava Naša Sloga*, 22.12.1900.

91 "In a bundle!" *Prava Naša Sloga*, 22.12.1900.

92 "In a bundle!" *Prava Naša Sloga*, 22.12.1900.

93 "Istrian suffering does not become Croatian bread," *Prava Naša Sloga*, 22.12.1900.

94 Letter by Nino Percich Rožin, Volosko/Volosca, 16.12.1900, *Prava Naša Sloga*, 22.12.1900.

took the side of the Italian liberals and Krstić. The national actors of the Croats and Slovenes, who clearly articulated their wishes for the unification of Istria with other Slavic countries in the 1890s,<sup>95</sup> could hardly hope for support in Vienna. With the introduction of direct elections and the abolition of the right to vote in curia, the Croatian-Slovenian People's Party was finally able to assert itself in 1907 in Istria with a victory over the Italians (Šetić, 2005, 72–74). The 'Istrian' movement was neutralized with the death of its protagonist. Ivan Krstić died under unexplained circumstances, probably in 1906, in a mental hospital in Rijeka (Šetić, 2005, 51, 69, 72, 102, 425).<sup>96</sup> The ideas of Ivan Krstić did not expire with his death but for a while influenced the local conflicts and political strategies in Eastern Istria.<sup>97</sup>

Krstić stood for a regional order and can be compared with the Dalmatian, Dubrovnik, Rijeka/Fiume and Trieste/Triest/Trst regionalists. Josip Vrandečić notes for these regional movements that between the rejection of Austrian centralism and Croatian "annexationism" the "love for an idealized Italy" arose and was embodied in the regional currents (Vrandečić, 2003, 81). The regionalists of these regions came from a bourgeois environment of the Mediterranean type, which cultivated the concept of cities as self-governing units in the struggle for independence against other states (Vrandečić, 2003, 69).

Krstić's regionalism was preceded by the Italian-Istrian regionalism. Some Italian intellectuals had demanded an autonomous Trieste/Triest/Trst around the middle of the century. The historian, archaeologist and lawyer Pietro Kandler (1804–1872) advocated an autonomy for Trieste/Triest/Trst within the Habsburg Monarchy, which is why he was also opposed by irredentist circles. He gathered regionalists and autonomists around his magazine, *L'Istria* (1845–1852), and thus was undoubtedly a pioneer of the regionalist currents in the 19<sup>th</sup> century there (Bertoša, 1985, 110–113). Kandler stood like no other for a "moderate antislav" and (isolated from his colleagues) advocate of the free development of "Slavic culture" (Bertoša, 1985, 105–107, 158–160). The Croatian nationalists observed these ideas, never developing sympathies for possible slavophile statements of the Italians. This was also the case when the newspaper *Il Cittadino*, published in Trieste/Triest/Trst under the editorship of an Istrian Italian in 1874, spoke out in favor of Italian-Slavic cooperation and common opposition to the sons of other countries that took advantage of their dispute.<sup>98</sup>

95 E.g. «Association,» *Naša Sloga*, 10.3.1898.

96 Only a few authors have considered Ivan Krstić and referred their interpretations of the events in Liburnija/Liburnia only to the articles of *Naša Sloga*. Ideological premises of his politics remained in the dark. No sources were cited on the circumstances of his death either. E.g. Trogrlić, Stipan: "Istrijanski pokret" Ivana Krstića [The "Istrian Movement" of Ivan Krstić]. In: *Istarska danica*, 2003, 156–159.

97 HR-DAR-26, 2/10 the head of the municipality of Zamet, Rubeša, to the mayor of Kastav, Zamet, 22.10.1906. In this case, for example, it was about the construction or extension of the church of the Holy Cross (*Sv. Križ*); HR-DAR-26, 4/35 from the report on the meeting of the municipal council Kastav of 11.6.1900 it becomes clear that Krstić was involved in the case.

98 Letters from Pazin/Pisino/Mitterburg, *Naša Sloga*, 16.12.1874.

It can be assumed that regionalism for Krstić was, similar to Kandler, a logical continuation of monarchical politics. The historical right of statehood of the individual countries represented by the Vienna Imperial Council, which was even granted a certain degree of sovereignty, was indeed in tension with imperial centralism. However, it was precisely in strengthening the regions with their parliaments that one hoped for the containment of nationalism and supra-regional national networking (Vrandečić, 2003, 78). From 1861, the constitution provided for a federalism with the subjectivity and legitimacy of the individual countries which was also rooted in the politics of the bourgeois and national movements (Vrandečić, 2003, 78–79). The regional and autonomous currents on the Adriatic Sea, emerged in the footsteps of Austrian classicism during the Metternich restoration and referred to centuries-old municipalism with the Habsburgs and ancient Mediterranean Rome. Their emphatically a-national, multicultural and conservative world of ideas was based on the Habsburg sympathies for the legacy of the Holy Roman Empire. As a supranational and integrative power understood in this way, the monarchy was increasingly shaken after the revolution (Vrandečić, 2003, 79). The ancient Mediterranean heritage scared off the actors of the national revival; politically only small currents remained loyal to it.

Nikola Tommaseo's Dalmatian regionalism, which presumptively served as a model for the 'Istrian' movement, also stood for better relations with Vienna as the guarantor of independence from Croatia (Vrandečić, 2003, 81). Tommaseo's policy was based on the assumption of an ethnic-cultural Slavo-Dalmatianism (*slavo-dalmatinstvo*), which was founded on the *convivenza* and continued throughout the country (Vrandečić, 2003, 72, 75).<sup>99</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The article illustrated the emergence of diversity and hybridity discourses about Istria - first in the imperial centers around the mid of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and second in local Istria from the 1870s. It proceeds from the concept of hybridity used in early Austrian ethnography in relation to Istria, a source concept that alludes to the complexity of socio-cultural conditions. In the article, the term "hybrids" was used to describe those people, who stood outside the emerging linguistic, cultural, political and ethnic categories and were perceived as such by their contemporaries. The text is mainly focused on the Croatian-Istrian perspective. In the 1870s, the Croatian national actors established a narrative about the Istrian hybridity as a threat to the Istrian order, which was considered as based on equal cultural rights promoted by the government. They invented the term "Šarenjaci" to blame and defame those who were nationally indifferent, somehow culturally "mixed," assimilated or opportunistic people. Through the observation of various negotiations on hybridity by local Croatian national actors, so in the

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99 In Rijeka, autonomism was pro-Hungarian until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

newspaper "Naša Sloga," the article showed how hybridity was extremely rooted in political ideas and strategies. The awareness of diversity and hybridity of the Istrian population seemed to produce inclusivistic, and not exclusivistic, political strategies. Thus, the actors used the concept of hybridism to describe social reality and, on the other hand, as one of the leading principles to express their political visions. The reflections of the politicians, experts and intellectuals on hybridity revealed several imaginations and visions of the Istrian order: Istria as an order of cultural equality, as a regional entity, as a South Slavic order or as part of an autonomous national Croatia. The threat discourse on hybridity serves here as a lens through which Istrian realities and policies can be analyzed. The essay could show, to some extent, that the national movement of Croats in Istria was generally a hybrid and inclusive movement.

The article also highlighted an interesting phenomenon of the mobilization of anti-nationalistic individuals in the eastern parts of Istria. It is very impressive that the practical dimension of hybridity can be studied here. Scientific categories create identities and groups, and these people can become active actors. The 'Istrian' movement brought together "hybrid" Istrians and enabled them to exert political influence at local and regional level. With an extremely active local commitment and their own newspaper, the 'Istrians' unsettled the Croatian national actors and repeatedly urged them to reflect on the Istrian order. The ideological roots of 'Istrian' politics probably lay in the regionalist tendencies of the bordering regions, but they will have to be examined comprehensively in future studies. In addition, the Istrian example shows an extremely active negotiation of affiliations at the local level. Here, the 'illiterate' and "unlettered" peasant population, excluded by the Austrian and Italian elites merely as "historically dispossessed masses," did indeed take part in the negotiation of their identity. This points to specific constellations of power "from below". Local actors from Istria's peasant and small-town milieu conducted fierce negotiations on hybridity with their own order reflections and strategies from the 1870s onwards.



## »HIBRIDI« IN REORGANIZACIJA ISTRE, 1870–1914

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## POVZETEK

Članek prikazuje pojav raznolikosti in hibridnih diskurzov o Istri – najprej v cesarskih središčih sredi 19. stoletja in nato v lokalni Istri v 1870-ih. Izhaja iz koncepta hibridnosti, ki je bil v zgodnji avstrijski etnografiji uporabljen pri obravnavi Istre, izvornega koncepta, ki aludira na kompleksnost družbeno-kulturnih razmer. V članku je izraz »hibridi« uporabljen za označevanje tistih ljudi, ki so živeli zunaj nastajajočih jezikovnih, kulturnih, političnih in etničnih kategorij in so jih kot take dojemali njihovi sodobniki. Besedilo se osredotoča predvsem na hrvaško-istrsko perspektivo. V 1870-ih so hrvaški nacionalni akterji vzpostavili naracijo o istrski hibridnosti kot grožnji istrskemu redu, za katerega je veljalo, da temelji na enakih kulturnih pravicah, ki jih spodbuja vlada. Izumili so izraz „Šarenjaci“, da bi krivili in obrekovali tiste, ki so bili narodno indiferentni, nekako kulturno „mešani“, asimilirani ali oportunistični posamezniki. Članek je z opazovanjem različnih pogledov na hibridnost lokalnih hrvaških akterjev, tudi v časopisih, kot je *Naša Sloga*, pokazal, kako je bila hibridnost izjemno zakoreninjena v političnih idejah in strategijah. Ob zavedanju raznolikosti in hibridnosti istrskega prebivalstva se je zdelo, da ustvarjajo vključujoče in ne izključujoče politične strategije. Zato so akterji uporabili koncept hibridnosti, da bi opisali družbeno resničnost, in ga, po drugi strani, uporabili kot eno od vodilnih načel za izražanje svojih političnih vizij. Refleksije politikov, strokovnjakov in intelektualcev o hibridnosti so razkrile več imaginarijev in vizij istrskega reda: Istra kot red kulturne enakosti, kot regionalna entiteta, kot južnoslovanski red ali kot del avtonomne nacionalne Hrvaške. Grožnja diskurza o hibridnosti tu služi kot prizma, skozi katero je mogoče analizirati istrske realnosti in politike. Članek bi lahko do neke mere pokazal, da je bilo nacionalno gibanje Hrvatov v Istri na splošno hibridno in vključujoče gibanje. Članek je izpostavil tudi zanimiv pojav mobilizacije protinacionalističnih posameznikov v vzhodnih delih Istre. Zelo impresivno je, da lahko tukaj preučimo praktično dimenzijo hibridnosti. Znanstvene kategorije ustvarjajo identitete in skupine in ti ljudje lahko postanejo aktivni akterji. „Istrijansko“ gibanje je združilo „hibridne“ Istrijane in jim omogočilo politični vpliv na lokalni in regionalni ravni. Z izredno dejavno lokalno zavzetostjo in lastnim časopisom so „Istrijani“ vznemirili hrvaške nacionalne akterje in jih večkrat pozvali, naj razmislijo o istrskem redu. Ideološke korenine „istrijanske“ politike verjetno ležijo v regionalističnih težnjah obmejnih regij, vendar jih bo treba v prihodnjih študijah še temeljito preučiti. Poleg tega istrski primer kaže na izredno aktivno pogajanje o pripadnostih na lokalni ravni. Tu je „nepismeno“

*kmečko prebivalstvo, ki ga avstrijska in italijanska elita označujeta za „ljudstvo brez zgodovine“, dejansko sodelovalo pri pogajanjih o svoji identiteti. To kaže na specifična razmerja moči „od spodaj“. Lokalni akterji iz istrskega kmečkega in mestnega okolja so od 1870 dalje nadaljevali z ostrimi pogajaji o hibridnosti z lastnimi razmisleki in strategijami.*

*Ključne besede: hibridnost, Istra, Kastav/Kastua, nacionalizem, regionalizem, indiferentnost, ogroženi red, asimilacija*

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