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Slovenian Sokols in the Early Austro-Hungarian Empire (1867–1879)

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Abstract

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In 1868, immediately after the Austro-Hungarian Empire was formed, Slovenes became more active politically and socially, despite the German cultural and economic strength and despite the fact that they were considered by some to be a people “without history.” In this sense, the Slovenian Sokols (Eng. Falcons) played an important role. Sokols were gymnastic associations created following the example of the first Sokol in Prague. Soon, political changes, the Habsburg repression and internal rifts led the Slovenian Sokols first to start cutting relations with Prague and later, to a rapid decline. The last remaining Sokol, in Ljubljana, came closer to the institutions and associations of other Southern Slavs, especially the Croats, while distancing itself from Austro-Slavism and early neo-Slavism, spread by the Prague Sokol.

In 1867, the first three Slovenian Sokols ceased their activities after just four or five years due to a domino effect beginning with the Južni Sokol in Ljubljana, one of the largest Slovenian associations. As the administrative centre of the Duchy of Carniola with 24 000 inhabitants, Ljubljana was becoming the political and cultural capital of all Slovenians. Sokol associations were present in Carniola, the only province of the Austrian Empire in which Slovenians made up an absolute majority, and maintained a relevant political influence. The Sokols were officially gymnastic associations, but their political objectives were much broader.

The word Sokol (Falcon) was chosen for the Prague location because it represented the yearning for freedom, for courage and agility felt by many Slavic peoples. Consistently all Sokols within the Habsburg Empire, especially the Czech, Slovenian and Polish branches, were based on the development of their own unique Slavic national identity and on solidarity among Slavic peoples.¹

1 BALIKIČ, Lucija – NEWMAN, John P. – POJAR, Vojtěch. Introduction: The Sokol Movement between State and Society in Interwar East-Central and Southeastern Europe. In *East Central Europe*, 2023, vol. 50, no. 2–3, pp. 143–154; LUTHAR, Oto (ed.) *The land between: A history of Slovenia*. Frankfurt : Peter Lang, 2013, pp. 302, 317; MELIK, Vasilij. Razmere na Slovenskem v dobi taborov. In *Savinjski Zbornik*, 1959, no. I, pp. 9–15; GRANDA, Stane. *A Brief History of Slovenia*. Gorizia : Goriška Mohorjeva družba, 2020, p. 233; IVETIC, Egidio. *Yugoslavia Dreamed: Yugoslavism of the origins*. Milan : Franco Angeli, 2012, p. 61; PAVLIN, Tomaž. Dajati pobudo, priložnost in navadpravičnim telesnim vajam. In *Sport*, 2013, no. 3/4, pp. 44–51; NOLTE, Claire. *The Sokol in the Czech Lands to 1914: Training for the Nation*. Houndmills; Basingstoke; Hampshire; New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2002, pp. 30, 31, 42, 51–53, 88, 92; NOLTE, Claire. All for one, one for all. In JUDSON,

The objective of the present article is to analyse Slovenian Sokols in the period immediately after 1867 (1868–1879), especially their role as a politicizing force among Slovenes.

The interest in this period is linked to the new life of Slovenian Sokols (1868–1870), made possible by new constitutional laws of Cisleithania after 1867 and to their later second crisis, originating from the policies of strongly centralized and Anti-Slavic governments in Vienna.

The choice of this period for analysis was also based on the fact that it is one of the least known phases of Slovenian Sokols, despite the many peculiarities and differences among them. Sokols spread among the bourgeoisie, but also among the popular strata via national enthusiasm with little or no political differentiation, following the Bohemian example yet firmly anchored in Carniola.

Later, however, Habsburg oppression sharpened deep divisions among Slovenian Sokols leaving only the Ljubljana location, which simultaneously strengthened cooperation with associations in Croatia. On the other side, the Austro-Slavism and early neo-Slavism spread by the Prague Sokol were becoming less relevant within Slovenian Sokols. What grew instead was the Illyrian movement, which involved other neighbouring South Slavic peoples and advocated a more concrete autonomy from Habsburg power based on the concept of trialism.

The present article is based on research conducted from books, journals and texts found online as well as on other documents, including photographs, from the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia in Ljubljana.

The Ljubljanski Sokol (1867–1868)

In September 1867 after the *Ausgleich*, the creation of the Austro-Hungarian Empire was now a *fait accompli*.² Janez Bleiweis (1808–1881), one of the promoters and a leading figure of the Južni Sokol (henceforth Južni) and of a big part of Slovenian cultural life in Ljubljana, suggested founding another Sokol in town. He represented the loyalist, moderate, pragmatic and more clerical political current of the Old Slovenes (Staroslovenci), a group initially threatened by the Young Slovenes (Mladoslovenci), representing a generation younger, more liberal, secular and radical generation, being similar to the movement of Young Czechs (Mladočeši) movement, which had inspired the leaders of the Prague Sokol. Bleiweis's idea came from his desire to consolidate the Slovenian national movement, which had become the political majority in Carniola and in Ljubljana, the capital, but was hindered by numerous weaknesses and an array of issues arising from the *Ausgleich* in 1867. While maintaining his influence on this movement, Bleiweis believed it useful to follow two guidelines. One consisted of the national and Austro-Slav ideals of the Prague Sokol beyond any contingent political differences. Indeed Slovenian patriots often saw the Bohe-

Pieter – ROZENBLIT, Marsha (eds.) *Constructing Nationalities in East Central Europe*. New York; Oxford : Berghahn, 2005, pp. 126–140.

2 BELLABARBA, Marco. *The Habsburg Empire*. Bologna : Il Mulino, 2015, pp. 152, 156, 157; LUTTHAR 2013, pp. 301, 303, 306–309, 311; AGNEW, Hugh. *The Czechs and the lands of the bohemian crown*. Stanford, California : Hoover Institution Press, 2004, p. 130.

mian Slavs, who lived in developed areas of the Empire, as a model to follow, being considered culturally, politically and economically more advanced.³ The second guideline entailed consisted of maintaining the best possible relations with the Habsburg authorities, and trying to forget the incidents that led to the closure of the Južni.

A part of the old members of the Južni set up a committee to fix the statute of the newly founded Ljubljansko telovadno društvo Sokol (Sokol Gymnastics Association of Ljubljana, henceforth Ljubljanski), already approved at the end of January 1868. Like the Južni, it was supported by the local *Čitalnica*—one of the largest Slovenian reading rooms, which aimed to develop a national consciousness among the bourgeoisie and among intellectuals—whose president was Bleiweis himself. At the time, the Ljubljanski was the only Sokol among southern Slavs of the Habsburg Empire.⁴ As president was elected Peter Grasselli (1841–1933), the former treasurer of the Južni and the editor of *Triglav*, as well as the future mayor of Ljubljana for a long period (1882–1896). Three men linked to Bleiweis became board advisors: his son Karel (1834–1909, secretary, involved in previous Slovenian Sokols), Etbin H. Costa (1832–1875, former president of the Južni and close colleague of Bleiweis) and Ivan Murnik (1839–1913, editor of the long-existing newspaper *Novice*, also by Bleiweis). The only board member with differing politics was liberal writer Fran Levstik (1831–1887), a leading exponent of the Young Slovenes.⁵

Facing difficult conditions in the newly formed Austro-Hungarian Empire, which already threatened the freedom and the spirit of solidarity among Slavic peoples, and inspired by the success of the Prague Sokol which was leading around fifty different Sokols, mostly in Bohemia, the Ljubljanski decided to invite the Prague Sokol to Carniola. However, the organization limited itself to

- 3 ŠTIH, Peter – SIMONITI, Vasko – VODOPIVEC, Peter. *A Slovenian history: Society-politics-culture*. Ljubljana : Inštitut za novejšo zgodovino, 2008, p. 301; KRANJEC, Gregor. Slovene clerical politics, cooperatives and the language question to 1914. In LAMPE, John R. – BRUNNBAUER, Ulf (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Balkan and Southeast European History*. London : Routledge, 2020, pp. 104–112; STERGAR, Rok. Jan Zdenek Vesely's year in Ljubljana. In MIKULEC, Jiří – POLIVKA, Miloslav (eds.) *Per saecula ad tempora nostra*. Praha : Historický ústav Akademie věd České republiky, 2007, pp. 720–723.
- 4 VODOPIVEC, Peter – BAVDEK, Srdan V. – LONČAR, Dragotin. Bleiweis vitez Trsteniški, Janez (1808–1881). In *Slovenska biografija*, 2013, <https://www.slovenska-biografija.si/oseba/sbi143644/> (last viewed on June 5, 2023); IVETIČ 2012, p. 72; NOLTE 2002, pp. 30, 31, 42, 51–53, 88, 92; GRANDA 2020, pp. 224, 232–234; MATIČ, Dragan. *Nemci v Ljubljani 1861–1918*. Ljubljana: Oddelek za zgodovino filozofske fakultete, 2002, pp. 64, 71; PAVLIN 2013, pp. 44–51; PODPEČNIK, Jože. All you need is a red shirt and cap, and you are a sokol! In *Science of gymnastic journal*, 2014, no. 3, pp. 61–85; KEBER, Katarina. Bleiweis vitez Trsteniški, Karel (1834–1909). In *Slovenska biografija*, 2019, <https://www.slovenska-biografija.si/oseba/sbi127608/> (last viewed on July 7, 2023); Arhiv Republike Slovenije (ARS), Ljubljana, Slovenija, fond (f.) SI AS 641/I/4/11, Poročilo Karla Bleiweisa o delu Sokola v Kranju; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/7/1 Osnutek pravil Telovadnega društva Sokol v Ljubljani; VALENČIČ, Vlado. Ljubljanski protinemški odmevi turnarskih dogodkov. In *Kronika*, 1962, no. 2, pp. 117–124.
- 5 PODPEČNIK 2014, pp. 61–70; URÉDNIŠTVO. Grasselli, Peter, vitez (1841–1933). In *Slovenska biografija*, 2013, <http://www.slovenska-biografija.si/oseba/sbi212753/#slovenski-biografski-leksikon> (last viewed on July 10, 2023); VALENČIČ 1962, pp. 117–124; HOLZ, Eva. Costa, Etbin Henrik (1832–1875). In *Slovenska biografija*, 2019, <https://www.slovenska-biografija.si/oseba/sbi161869/> (last viewed on 13 July 2023); ARS, f. SI AS 641/II/3/2, Telovadno Društvo v Ljubljani, Bleiweis dr. Karel vitez Trsteniški; PIRJEVEC, August. Murnik, Ivan (1839–1913). In *Slovenska biografija*, 2013, <https://www.slovenska-biografija.si/oseba/sbi381852> (last viewed on June 8, 2023); MELIK 1969, pp. 75–88; Anton. Levstik, Fran (1831–1887). In *Slovenska biografija*, 2013, <https://www.slovenska-biografija.si/oseba/sbi327676/> (last viewed on June 25, 2023).

sending written congratulations for the newly founded institution, similar to what had happened when the Južni was established.

Ideologist, theorist and president of the Prague Sokol Miroslav Tyrš (1832–1884), while hoping for a broader Slavic solidarity, was dedicated to his own nation, to the development of its Sokols and to the gymnastics that was practiced in them. He also supported a more liberal and Russophile policy. In addition, between Prague and Ljubljana both part of Cisleithania were about 450 kilometres.⁶

The first activities of the Ljubljanski echoed those of the Južni. The style of gymnastics as well as the trainers remained the same, even if the number of athletes (males only) was much fewer than in the early period of the Južni. New members were actually more interested in dance parties and get-togethers organized by their own society. Gymnastics remained inspired by the ideas of Prussian Friedrich L. Jahn (1778–1852), his disciples and by German speaking gymnastic associations, even if they maintained opposing national intentions. This gymnastics was militaristic, rough and placed an emphasis on precision in execution. Tyrš's ideas, some of which were new, were still not widespread.⁷

The Prague organization and other Sokols also essentially followed the same German model. This depended on the territorial presence of Germans, on the strength of their culture and on the absence of organic and original Slavic gymnastic theories and methodologies, but also on the success of German gymnastic associations (there were over 1 500, with a total of about 128 000 members), which represented one of the first national mass movements in Central Europe. In particular there were over 100 German gymnastic associations in Cisleithania, more than four times the total number of Sokols, which counted slightly more than 5 000 members⁸, almost all situated in Bohemia.

Even the uniform of the Ljubljanski's partners matched that of the Južni, which was identical to the one of the Prague Sokol, with the addition of a surka, a Croatian cape whose popularity increased after 1848 and which was also worn by Josip Jelačić, Ban of Croatia (1848–1859). The surka represented the Illyrian solidarity movement with the neighbouring Slavic peoples in the south, especially Croats. In contrast, the Garibaldi-inspired red shirt represented the ideals of freedom for all peoples and solidarity among those fighting for freedom, especially among Slavs, without any connection to religion.⁹

Like the Južni, the Ljubljanski also organized theatre performances and trips, though the latter in particular were monitored by police because they were spreading national awareness. The first day trip was organized near Ljubljana in a very tense climate, but without incident.

6 MELIK, Vasilij. Slovensko narodno gibanje za casa taborov. In *Zgodovinski časopis*, 1969, vol. 23, no. 1–2, pp. 75–88; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/7/4 Čestitka ob ponovni ustanovitvi sokolskega društva v Ljubljani; NOLTE 2002, pp. 53, 56–58, 74, 80, 82, 83, 92, 94, 95, 100.

7 PODPEČNIK 2014, pp. 61–70; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/7/5, Odgovor Viktorja Colloretta v zvezi z njegovo izvolitvijo za telovadnega učitelja; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/7/6, Odgovor Steve Mandiča v zvezi z njegovo izvolitvijo za telovadnega učitelja; STERGAR 2007, pp. 720–723; NOLTE 2002, pp. 17, 82, 86, 87.

8 NOLTE 2002, pp. 1, 14, 50, 86, 185; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/8/5, Peter Grasselli ponuja odboru v vezavo svoje izvide časopisa Turnzeitung; ATZMANNINGER, Günter – NEBENFÜHR, Elke. Die Geschichte des Turnens im deutschsprachigen Raum. In PATEK, Jiří – BARTA, Stanislav (eds.) *Feuerwehr und Turnerbewegung*. Pribyslav : CTIF, 2011, pp. 23–28.

9 PODPEČNIK 2014, pp. 61–70; NOLTE 2002, pp. 48, 49, 82, 95.

A few days earlier, the local German gymnastic association (henceforth Turnverein) had organized a gathering in a nearby Slovenian village in order to celebrate the German victory in local elections. Immediately after the Ljubljanski's day trip, the Germans asked the president of Carniola, Sigmund Conrad Edler von Eybesfeld (1821–1898), who was German and a trusted man of the Emperor to suppress Slovenian national life in general, including the Ljubljanski directly. Following the event, for the first time a Slovenian day trips was banned.

The two national groups increasingly lived in parallel societies: governmental centralism for the Germans, autonomist federalism—albeit diversified—for the Slovenes. In this context, differing economic and social conditions also played a relevant role; the Germans, or Slovenes who chose to speak German, lived in towns, were members of the bourgeoisie or of the upper middle-class and held virtually all the economic power, while the Slovenes were mostly peasants living in the countryside, mostly without any economic strength and with limited access to positions of power.¹⁰

In its first year, the Ljubljanski also participated in the first two Tabors, open-air gatherings promoted by Levstik, who followed the model of Czech Tabors, created in Bohemia in the same years. Such rallies saw extraordinary participation and brought a strong initiative to developing the Slovenian national awareness in a political context which still had no national parties and in strengthening the collaboration with other Slavic peoples, especially Croats and Czechs.

At the first Tabor (in Ljutomer, a town in the province of Styria, near the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia), which brought together around 7 000 people, the Ljubljanski was considered an important guest, as was the case for all gatherings it attended. At the second Tabor, in Žalec (also in Styria, but much closer to Ljubljana), the Ljubljanski was present among 15 000 people, including Croats and Czechs, in an Austroslav and Illyrian spirit. Quite relevant is the fact that both Bleiweis and Costa, who did not share the popular involvement of these Tabors or the radicalism of their requests, were absent from both Tabors. Regarding the third Tabor which brought together over 14 000 people in Šempas, near Gorica/Gorizia, in the province of the Austrian Littoral, the Ljubljanski did not attend but sent a message of good wishes based on the fundamental political principle of the Tabors: a united Slovenia loyal to the Habsburgs. This was a principle, however, that could not be accepted by the Viennese authority, because it implied the end of historical Austrian provinces. From that point on, the Ljubljanski took a more selective and local positions towards the Tabors, participating only if invited, only held in its home province (Carniola), and only if a speaker from the Bleiweis group was present. One

10 PODPEČNIK 2014, p. 84; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/7/7, Vabilo na večerno veselico; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/7/8, Dopis Ljubljanskega magistrata v zvezi z gledališkimi predstavami pri društvu Sokol; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/7/9, Vabilo na Večer in občni zbor Sokola v Ljubljani; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/7/11, Vabilo na izlet Ljubljanskega Sokola; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/7/12, Prepoved sokolskega izleta; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/7/20, Vabilo na sokolsko veselico; VALENČIČ 1962, pp. 117–124; MATIČ 2002, pp. 66, 73; BELLABARBA 2015, pp. 165, 166; LUTHAR 2013, pp. 314, 320, 322; SLODNJAK 2013; ŠTIH – SIMONITI – VODOPIVEC 2008, pp. 307, 310.

of the reasons for this posture lay also in the Ljubljanski's weak finances and a growing tension between Old and Young Slovenes.¹¹

In its first year of existence, the Ljubljanski contributed to the development of a Slovenian national awareness, involving thousands of people in Ljubljana and beyond in its activities, especially day trips and mass gatherings. Proudly displaying its own uniforms and flag, the Ljubljanski became a symbol of Slovenian national identity for the 20 000 to 22 000 people gathered at the first Tabors in southern Styria.

In particular, the uniform symbolized unity, equality and discipline among Slovenes, but also stood as a visible sign of the authority needed to defend and develop national awareness. However, the Ljubljanski never progressed into a militia at the orders of political groups, it simply remained a very influential political factor. At the same time, Bleiweis's group, which controlled the Ljubljanski and still ruled its own province (Carniola), gradually moved away from the Tabor movement in neighbouring provinces, which often shared liberal-democratic politics involving large numbers of Slovenes.¹²

The Growth of Slovenian Sokols (1869–1870)

In 1869, a period of political turmoil in Cisleithania, the Tabors continued to develop thanks to constitutional laws and the Viennese government of Eduard von Taaffe (1833–1895), who took an intermediate position between the liberal majority and the federalist party strongly supported by the crown.¹³

The Ljubljanski on the other side maintained its local and selective line, although it was invited to the Tabor of Sevnica in southern Styria and to the Slovenian-Croatian Tabor of Ormož, still based on liberal-democratic values. It attended only the spring Tabors of Kalec (Southern Carniola) and Vižmarje (very close to Ljubljana).

The first, with eight to nine thousand participants, was organized by an influential Old Slovene for the first time. In Kalec another Slovenian Sokol, the Ilirski Sokol (henceforth Ilirski), reappeared. It was based in what is today Ilirska Bistrica, an economically growing little town very close to the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia. It had been founded between 1866 and 1867 and its name showed Illyrian sympathies.

At the Tabor of Vižmarje, the commitment of the Old Slovenes of Carniola was even more direct, deciding to exploit the great attraction potential of Tabors for the first time. It was the new Ljubljana Society for the Defense

11 LUTHAR 2013, pp. 301, 302; ŠTIH – SIMONITI – VODOPIVEC 2008, pp. 300, 301, 304, 307–309; NOLTE 2002, pp. 31, 33; AGNEW 2004, p. 135; RATIZNOJNIK, Anton. Ljutomer Čitalnica v Ljutomeru 1868–1914. In *Kronika*, 2003, vol. 51, no. 1, pp. 61–78; KREŽE, Karmen. II. slovenski tabor v Žalcu, 6. september 1868. In *Kamra-digitalizirana kulturna dediščina slovenskih pokrajin*, 2020, <https://www.kamra.si/digitalne-zbirke/ii-slovenski-tabor-v-zalcu-6-september-1868/> (last viewed on June 12, 2023); ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/7/17, Vabilo na tabor v Žalcu 6. septembra 1868; zahvala sokolom za sodelovanje; MELIK 1969, pp. 75–88; IVETIC 2012, p. 72.; PODPEČNIK 2014, pp. 61–70; KOBLAR, France – MELIK Vasilij. Zarnik, Valentin (1837–1888). In *Slovenska biografija*, 2013, <https://www.slovenska-biografija.si/oseba/sbi857216/> (last viewed on 2 July 2023); RAJŠP Vinko. Glavni podatki o posameznih taborih. In RIBIČIĆ Mitja et al. (eds.) *Taborsko gibanje na Slovenskem*. Ljutomer; Ljubljana : Zavod za kulturo in izobraževanje in Narodni muzej, 1981, pp. 27–43.

12 PODPEČNIK 2014, p. 84; GRANDA 2020, p. 238.

13 BELLABARBA 2015, p. 16.

of National Rights Slovenija, directed by Bleiweis, which shouldered the main costs. However, Bleiweis also asked the Ljubljanski for financial help through his son Karel, the group's secretary and founder of the new Tabor, which saw an extraordinary turnout of 28 000 to 30 000 people, an absolute record.¹⁴

Meanwhile, Tyrš himself, leader of the Czech Sokols and one of the major Bohemian leaders though also close to the Young Czechs, exposed himself directly by organizing an enormous Tabor in Prague, a city of about 150 000 inhabitants (six times larger than Ljubljana).¹⁵

After the Tabor of Vižmarje, relations between those who felt Slovenian and those who felt German became increasingly difficult and tense, especially in and around Ljubljana, with clashes, injuries and two deaths after a day trip organized by the Turverein. Habsburg authorities prevented the Ljubljanski from demonstrating and organizing trips because of its political relevance as a national awareness tool. The authorities also hindered the creation of new Sokols in Carniola as well as in Styria (in Celje, a town with a German speaking majority) and in the Austrian Littoral (in the large port of Trst/Trieste, a city with an Italian speaking majority, but with a large number of Slovenes, who actually outnumbered the Slovenes living in Ljubljana). The committees promoting such new Sokols, supported by the Ljubljanski and by the enormous success of Tabors, were allowed to create new Sokols only one year later and only within Carniola.¹⁶

The Ljubljanski was also allowed to continue its social and national activities only in Ljubljana, where it was very popular, organizing music and costume parties, commemorations and funerals. Along with the trips, these activities were the main attraction for its members, who on one side wore the Sokol uniform, but on the other also did speak German and did not always show a strong national consciousness. Even within the Ljubljanski, national awareness developed slowly.¹⁷

The practice of gymnastics had essentially become almost non-existent involving only one in three members in the Czech Sokols. The German style of gymnastics was clearly not liked and Tyrš's ideas were not yet widespread. The only development was the first gymnastic terminology book in Slovenian by Levstik, who translated a German gymnastic book.¹⁸

14 ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/8/6 Vabilo na Sevniški tabor, 9. april 1869; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/8/18 Vabilo Ormoške čitalnice na tabor v Ormožu; MELIK 1959, pp. 9–15; LUTHAR 2013, p. 313; MATIČ 2002, p. 75; ČEČ, Dragica (ed.) *150 let tabora v Vižmarjih*. Ljubljana : Slovenska Matica, 2020; Vižmarski tabor. In *Društvo Blaž Potočnikova čitalnica Ljubljana*, <https://bpc.si/vizmarski-tabor-150-let/vizmarski-tabor/> (last viewed on 10 July 2023); RAJŠP 1981, pp. 27–43.

15 NOLTE 2002, pp. 30, 32–34, 84.

16 VALENČIČ 1962, pp. 117–124; MATIČ 2002, pp. 89, 97, 98, 105; ŠTIH – SIMONITI – VODOPIVEC 2008, pp. 297, 302; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/8/17, Obvestilo o organizaciji izleta v Dolsko; prepoved izleta; pritožba zoper prepoved; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/8/21, Prepoved sokolskega izleta v Cerknico; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/8/19, Priprave na ustanovitev sokolske podružnice v Postojni; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/8/7, Vabilo na glavno skupščino Južnega Sokola v Trstu; PODPEČNIK 2014, pp. 61–70; APIH, Elio. *Trieste*. Roma; Bari : Laterza, 1988, p. 55; KALC, Aleksej. Organizational forms of Slovenes in Trieste in the period of their social and national rise. In ROJC, Aleksander (ed.) *Trieste: artistic expression and the national question*. Trieste; Ljubljana : Glasbena matica-ZRC SAZU, 2014, pp. 41–66.

17 PODPEČNIK 2014, pp. 61–70; STERGAR 2007, pp. 720–723; MELIK 1959, pp. 9–15; ŠTIH – SIMONITI – VODOPIVEC 2008, pp. 294, 296; GRANDA 2020, p. 232; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/8/4, Vabilo na Sokolsko maškarado.

18 STERGAR 2007, pp. 720–723; NOLTE 2002, pp. 79, 88; PAVLIN, Tomaž. Nekaj dejstev iz zgodovine

The Ljubljanski received an invitation from the Prague Sokol to commemorate its first president, a patriot of secular and liberal ideas. However, the troop declined, given that the Bleiweis group had somewhat different political views. On the other hand, the Ljubljanski became interested in Czech Sokols, which built a rapidly developing informal network, especially in Bohemia, thanks to numerous Tabors.¹⁹ The differences between Czech and Slovenian Sokols were still present, mostly in terms of the number of members and of organizations.

In 1870, a new and more open attitude toward Slavs by the Emperor, who felt endangered by the expansionism of the German Empire and by the Prime Minister of Cisleithania, Alfred Potocki (1817–1889), made it possible to create four new Slovenian Sokols once more in Carniola.²⁰

At the beginning of 1870, the Gorenjski Sokol (henceforth Gorenjski) was created in Kranj (north of Ljubljana), the second major centre of the Carniolan political and cultural life. From 1864 to 1867, Kranj had already been the seat of a Sokol controlled by members of the Bleiweis family born in Kranj, but the Gorenjski chose a completely new uniform, with a blue shirt instead of a red one. Despite German pressure and the limited number of members (about 40), the association had more gymnasts than the Ljubljanski and was free to organize its first trips.

Three other Sokols were created as local divisions of the Ljubljanski, which demonstrated its influence even in places rather far from Ljubljana (50–70 kilometres). These sections were created in the small town of Vipava and in the village of Planina, close to each other and to the Austrian Littoral, and in the town of Postojna, a district capital, which had already hosted a Slovenian *Čitalnica*.²¹

The new Vienna policy made the further development of Tabors possible as their national, social and economic ideas fell within the frame of a solid Habsburg Empire. Until the end of 1870, Tabors gathered 145 000 to 165 000 people, as many as 10 to 15 percent of all Slovenes, thanks also to the contribution of members of the Catholic Church, which was close both to the Old and Young Slovenes.²²

In any event Sokol—Tabor relations remained difficult. Officially, it only materialized in the participation of the Ljubljanski with its sections (ca. 120 people) at the Tabor of Vipava, organized and directed by the Bleiweis' group, which brought together about 12 000 people.

sokolstva in 150 let sokolstva v Sloveniji (1863–2013). In ZELNIK, Damijana – GERLOVIČ, Dušan – ČUK, Ivan (eds.) *150 let sokolstva v Sloveniji (1863–2013)*. Ljubljana : Državni svet Republike Slovenije, 2014, no. 2, pp. 15–19; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/8/25, Nauk o telovadbi, II. del (vaje na orodjih), izdala Slovenska matica.

19 NOLTE 2002, pp. 31, 44–48, 52, 83, 84, 88; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/8/13, Povabilo odbora Praškega Sokola na spominsko slovesnost za pokojnim starosto Fügnerjem in odgovor Ljubljanskega Sokola; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/8/14, Pregled sokolskih enot češko-moravskih.

20 ŠTIH – SIMONITI – VODOPIVEC 2008, p. 303; LUTHAR 2013, p. 317.

21 ŽONTAR Josip. *Zgodovina mesta Kranja*. Ljubljana : Katoliško tiskovno društvo, 1939. pp. 253–260, 262; PODPEČNIK 2014, pp. 61–70; Deset let sokolskega življenja (podlistek). In *Gorenjec*, 1906, no. 7, p. 3; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/9/4, Ustanovitev podružnice Ljubljanskega Sokola (LS) v Planini pri Ajdovščini; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/9/12, Ustanovitev podružnice LS v Vipavi; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/9/8, Program slovesnosti ob izročitvi traku podružničnemu praporu v Postojni; PAVLETIČ, Bojan. *Sokoli Tržaškega Sokola*. Gorica : ZŠSD, 2004, p. 11.

22 BELLABARBA 2015, p. 135; IVETIČ 2012, p. 73; LUTHAR 2013, pp. 312–313; GRANDA 2020, pp. 229, 236–238; VALENCIČ 1962, pp. 117–124; MELIK 1959, pp. 9–15.

At the Tabor of Sežana, next to Trst/Trieste, among the 6 000 participants there were some groups in Sokol uniforms representing institutions never approved by the Habsburg authority: the Sokol of the Littoral (Primorski Sokol), made up of veterans Sokol of Trieste (Tržaški Sokol), and the Sokol of Rojan/Roiano (Rojanski Sokol, nowadays a neighbourhood of Trieste). Three members of those groups even opened the parade. The man in the centre had a red shirt on and the flag of the Rojanski Sokol, and those on either side wore blue shirts. All this confirmed the presence of the ideals of the Sokols also outside Carniola, especially in Trst/Trieste and its surroundings, but also the diversity of uniforms among Slovenian Sokols, whether approved by the authorities or not, including the same unofficial Sokol of Trieste, which took a blue shirt.

In this sense, the Ljubljanski failed to convince other Sokols to follow its example in continuity with the motherhouse, the Prague Sokol, which meant wearing the same uniforms with a red shirt. Nor did it have the economic strength to help aspiring members, especially young people, to buy their own uniforms. Becoming a member of the Ljubljanski could be expensive and often not affordable for many Slovenes, who were peasants living in the countryside.²³

In 1870, however, the Ljubljanski was permitted by Habsburg authorities to organize some parties and day trips, at times in areas of conflict between Slovenes and Germans.

Finally, to overcome the serious decline of gymnastics and to fight against the use of German terminology, the Ljubljanski hired Jan Zdeněk Veselý (1850–1890), one of the most well-known and passionate gymnasts of the Prague Sokol. In doing that, the Ljubljanski demonstrated its willingness to remain close to the Prague Sokol and to Tyrš, who cultivated Czech-led Pan-Slavic projects, albeit limited to gymnastics. However, it is not clear whether the arrival of Veselý was the result of a request by the Ljubljanski of the Prague Sokol, a proposal from the latter or more autonomously, of a tender issued and evaluated by the Ljubljanski itself.²⁴

In summary, between 1869 and 1870, the Ljubljanski, still controlled by the Bleiweis group, strengthened its contribution to the development of the national consciousness, also organizing some Tabor events for the first time, involving 45 000 to 50 000 people. It also succeeded in spreading new Sokol associations among Slovenes, although only in the province Carniola. In contrast, Slovenes in other provinces who were more involved in Tabors (often liberal democrats), were generally not involved in the Sokol movement due to the meagre

23 MELIK 1969, pp. 75–88; GRANDA 2020, p. 235; KIDRIČ Francè – KRALJ Franc. Grabrijan, Jurij (1800–1882). In *Slovenska biografija*, 2013, <https://www.slovenska-biografija.si/oseba/sbi211204/> (last viewed on June 23, 2023); RAJŠP 1981, pp. 27–43; PODPEČNIK 2014, pp. 61–70; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/9/11, Vabilo na tabor v Bistrici pri Pliberku; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/9/9, Povabilo na tabor v Vipavi; KALC 2014, pp. 41–66; MARUŠIČ, Branko. Relations between Italians and Slovenes in the Austrian Littoral in the 1860s. In *Archivio Storico Italiano*, 1979, vol. 137, no. 4, pp. 561–579.

24 ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/9/2, Kartonska broška s sokolske maškarade; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/9/16, Organizacija večerne zabave v korist postojnskim pogorelcem; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/9/6, Sokolski izlet v Dolsko; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/9/10, Dovoljenje za sokolski izlet v Vevče; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/9/13, Obvestilo o ureditvi glasbenega spremljanja na sokolskih izletih; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/9/14 Vabilo na sokolsko vajo okoli Rožnika; STERGAR 2007, pp. 720–723; NOLTE 2002, p. 98.

political weight of Slovenes²⁵ and the hostility of the authorities. However, in 1870 informal Sokol groups with uniforms and flags opened the Tabor of Sežana, next to the city of Trieste. Different Sokols did not always wear the same uniforms as the Ljubljanski, and thus as the Prague Sokol, which showed some political diversity within the movement.

An Unsuccessful Beginning (1871)

In 1871, the abovementioned Murnik, a Member of Parliament in Vienna belonging to the group of Bleiweis but also linked to the Young Slovenes, became president of the Ljubljanski. Also a former president, Grasselli, had recently joined the movement of the Young Slovenes while remaining in the Ljubljanski as vice-president. In the meantime, Bleiweis tried to keep the national movement together and to protect his group's dominant role in the political and cultural life of Carniola. He wanted the success of the Young Slovenes to be weakened, which occurred partially. Nevertheless, the Ljubljanski was slowly becoming closer to the Young Slovenes, a younger, nationally more active and less conservative movement.²⁶

Meanwhile, Veselý began to work with great determination and with the energy of about 80 members, and despite his national and Pan-Slavic ardour, maintained good relations both with the Italian gymnastic association in Trieste and with the local Turnverein. He introduced Tyrš's ideas to his gymnasts, including the newest recruits and the new ideal manifesto of the Sokols. Gymnastics, whose importance he claimed in and outside the Sokols, turned out to be more varied, methodologically based and taught in Slovenian.

Veselý also promoted women's gymnastics, though unsuccessfully, and wrote a new German-Slovenian gymnastic dictionary. Finally, using his own money, he founded the (unsuccessful) review *Južni Sokol* in which he underlined the importance of strenuous, military, martial and national gymnastics, far from gossip and from public life, following the German example and with the approval of Tyrš. This was done possibly in order to face a possible second Prussian invasion of Austria using militias from Slavic nations, an objective for which the Slovenian political elites were not prepared, however.²⁷

On the other hand, the Ljubljanski remained closely tied to day trips, parties, dances, shows, some gymnastic performances and a variety of entertainment, which were also important for the income of the precarious social budget.

25 MELIK 1959, pp. 9–15; ŠTIH – SIMONITI – VODOPIVEC 2008, pp. 303, 304; LUTHAR 2013, p. 317.

26 PODPEČNIK 2014, pp. 61–70; UREDNIŠTVO 2013; PIRJEVEC 2013; LUTHAR 2013, pp. 300, 302, 305, 309–315, 320; VODOPIVEC – BAVDEK – LONČAR 2013; MATIČ 2002, pp. 157, 159; VALENCIČ 1962, pp. 117–124; STERGAR 2007, pp. 720–723; PAVLIN 2013, pp. 44–51; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/10/27, Vabilo na Tomšičev pogreb v Maribor; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/10/39, Poučevanje telovadbe za člane Delavskega izobraževalnega društva.

27 ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/10/5, Pismo načelnika Ljubljanskega Sokola Jana Veselyija sokolskemu odboru v zvezi s pogoji telovadbe; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/10/35, Ponovna prošnja Ljubljanskega Sokola, da se prepusti sokolskemu telovadnemu učitelju poučevanje učiteljskih pripravnikov v telovadbi; STERGAR 2007, pp. 720–723; PAVLETIČ, Bojan. The long flight of the Tržaški Sokol 1869–1999. Trieste : Graphart, 1999, p. 33; BERKOPEC, Oton. Veselý, Jan Zdeněk (1850–1890). In *Slovenska biografija*, 2013, <https://www.slovenska-biografija.si/oseba/sbi779951/> (last viewed on May 8, 2023); NOLTE 2002, pp. 84, 91–98; PAVLIN 2013, pp. 44–51; IVETIČ 2012, p. 94.

Some members did not even recognize any growth of the national awareness to the extent that they spoke both Slovenian and German.

According to Veselý, the Ljubljanski members were only interested in wearing the uniform, especially the red shirt and due to this, the number of gymnasts shrank again. In addition, Veselý raged against another Sokol, the Gorenjski, for their lack of methodology, gymnastic knowledge, financial means, proper Sokol principles and for not using the red shirt. For Veselý and for the new vice president of the Ljubljanski, Grasselli, the red shirt was the political symbol of the liberal principles at the foundation of every Sokol.²⁸

Meanwhile, the Ljubljanski continued to develop the Slovenian national awareness, also establishing relations with some Slovenian reading rooms in Carniola, especially the *Čitalnica* in Ljubljana, which was very popular and always chaired by Bleiweis, and partially with the *Čitalnica* of Rojan/Roiano, next to the city of Trst/Trieste.²⁹

Like the Južni, the Ljubljanski started cultivating relations with other southern Slavs. The organization was invited to an event by the First Singing National Society of Belgrade and as a sign of political activism by the Young Slovenes, it was represented at the first Croatian Tabor in Kastav, near Rijeka/Fiume. In line with the ideals of Slavic brotherhood of the Sokol movement, the Ljubljanski was also invited by some new Czech Sokols, though as it was the case of the singing society of Belgrade, without any direct participation.³⁰

On the other side, the Ljubljanski continued to avoid any relation with German-speaking associations, mostly because of their increasing national radicalization.³¹

At the end of 1871, there were six Slovenian Sokols with a total of about 250 members. Growth had clearly slowed, although it had followed the same path of all other Sokols, especially in Czechia. In Cisleithania, the Sokols had even doubled the total number of German gymnastic associations, with more than 100 including 10 000 members.

28 ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/10/24, Vabilo na sokolski izlet v Medvode; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/10/33, Vabilo na sokolski izlet v Moravče; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/10/21, Zahteva Ljubljanske čitalnice za plačilo prostorov za sokolsko maškarado; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/10/22, Jan Vesely navaja pogoje, ki jih potrebuje za nemoteno delo telovadnega učitelja; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/10/18, Vabilo in zapisnik izrednega občnega zbora Ljubljanskega Sokola; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/10/40, Vabilo na sokolsko veselico v spomin rojstnemu dnevu Franceta Prešerna; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/10/14, Vabilo Beograjskega pevskega društva na koncert; PODPEČNIK 2014, pp. 61–70; STERGAR 2007, pp. 720–723; NOLTE 2002, p. 98.

29 ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/10/17, Vabilo k večerni veselici Narodne čitalnice v Ljubljani; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/10/21, Zahteva Ljubljanske čitalnice za plačilo prostorov za sokolsko maškarado; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/10/11, Vabilo na srečanje v Postojnski čitalnici; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/10/13, Vabilo in prošnja odbora idrijske čitalnice; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/10/16, Vabilo k besedi v Novomeški čitalnici; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/10/38, Vabilo na svečano izročitev slike Janeza Bleiweisa Ljubljanski čitalnici; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/10/19, Vabilo Narodne čitalnice v Rojanu.

30 PAAR 2011, p. 10; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/10/14, Vabilo Beograjskega pevskega društva na koncert; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/10/36, Vabila čeških telovadnih društev Sokol na posvetitve društvenih praporov; IVETIC 2012, pp. 125, 73, 84, 89, 94; MELIK 1969, pp. 75–88; ŠTIH – SIMONITI – VOĐOPIVEC 2008, pp. 301–302; STRČIČ, Petar. *Prvi tabor Hrvata Istre i Kvarnerskih otoka*. Rijeka: Izdavački centar Matice hrvatske, 1971, p. 59; RAJŠP 1981, pp. 27–43.

31 LUTHAR 2013, p. 314; NOLTE 2002, p. 33; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/10/31, Vabilo in zapisnik shoda Ljubljanskega Sokola (LS); ARS, f. DA AS 641/I/10/32, Sklep skupščine LS o prepovedi članstva v Gasilski brigadi Ljubljana.

At the same time, the Ilirski became independent from the Ljubljanski, and the Vipava branch asked the Ljubljanski to forgive its debt. The primacy of the Ljubljanski among Slovenian Sokols therefore regressed, in a period of growing closeness to the Young Slovenes and in the first year of Veselý's activity.³²

A change of leadership in 1871 for the Ljubljanski and the arrival of Veselý did not bring any increase in the number of Slovenian Sokols, nor in the number of gymnasts (formally all Sokols were gymnastic associations), nor any change in mentality. The Ljubljanski remained a bourgeois leisure and cultural association, relevant for Slovenian national promotion through its activities and through contacts with other Slovenian associations. It proved jealous of its own identity, rejecting externally imposed systemization and regimentation, even if derived from the ideas of the Prague Sokol. Conversely, the organization began to orient itself toward other southern Slavs, consistently with the ideas of both the Young and Old Slovenes.

The Decline (1872–1879)

At the beginning of 1872, being young, idealistic and rigid, Veselý resigned and left Ljubljana. The introduction of the national gymnastic model by Tyrš was unsuccessful not only in the Ljubljanski, but also in the Polish Sokol of Lwów (Ukr. Lviv) three years later.³³ However, the Ljubljanski and its gymnastic activities survived with a new president, Valentin Zarnik (1837–1888), a liberal and one of the main organizers of Tabors, who was very open towards other southern Slavs as well as Czechs. His election confirmed the decline of the influence of Bleiweis, who was an older figure yet still politically relevant in Carniola.

The Ljubljanski organized other gatherings, parties and day trips, but for the first time, these registered a limited attendance. The company even organized a day trip with the Gorenjski despite their blue shirts which was on the verge of a long-lasting crisis. The Ljubljanski stayed in contact with some reading rooms in Carniola, once again demonstrating its integration and influence in the Slovenian national movement, and was even invited by a Croatian association south of Zagreb. It also received many letters and invitations, without participation, from distant Bohemian Sokols.³⁴

32 NOLTE 2002, pp. 82, 88, 89; ATZMANNINGER – NEBENFÜHR 2011, pp. 23–28; ČELIGOJ, Vojko. Ob stoletnici obnove Ilirskega Sokola 1905–2005: Sokol mladi naša nada... In *Bistriški zapisi*, 2005, no. 6, pp. 55–58; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/10/15, Prošnja Vipavske podružnice za odpustitev dolga.

33 ARS, f. AS 641/I/11/3, Odpoved sokolskega načelnika Jana Z. Veselyija in odgovor odbora Ljubljanskega Sokola; STERGAR 2007, pp. 720–723; NOLTE 2002, pp. 98, 99; PAVLIN 2013, pp. 44–51.

34 STERGAR 2007, pp. 720–723; KOBLAR – MELIK 2013; MELIK 1959, pp. 9–15; RAJŠP 1981, pp. 27–43; VODOPIVEC – BAVDEK – LONČAR 2013; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/11/8, Sokolska maškarada; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/11/12, Vabilo na sokolski večer; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/11/28, Vabilo na sokolski večer; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/11/16, Sokolski izlet na Rožnik; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/11/19, Sokolski izlet v Litijo; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/11/22, Vabilo na sokolski izlet po Ljubljani; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/11/20, Sokolski izlet v Škofjo Loko; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/11/30, Vabilo na odprtje Narodne podnanoške čitalnice; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/11/24, Vabilo na svečanost posvetitve društvenega prapora v Petrinji (Hrvaška); PODPEČNIK 2014, pp. 61–70; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/11/9, Jan Laciny iz Plzna se prijavi na mesto telovadnega učitelja pri Ljubljanskem Sokolu; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/11/5, Letak za delnice in vabilo na maškarado Karlinskega Sokola; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/11/6, Dopis telovadnega društva Sokol iz Kolin (Češka).

In addition to the crisis of the Gorenjski, in 1872 the Ilirski was also confronted with deep difficulties, despite registering sixty members and having organized its first trip to Postojna. The Planina section of the Ljubljanski was about to close due to internal divisions and the behaviour of its managers, who did wear the red shirt uniform, but completely neglected gymnastics. Moreover, the Habsburg authority rejected the statute of a new Sokol in Ljutomer (Styria), where the first Slovenian Tabor had taken place with the participation of Zarnik.³⁵

The question of uniforms was becoming more and more problematic among Slovenian Sokols. While the Ljubljanski still wore and promoted the traditional red shirt, consistent with the political line of its president for the first time, the Ilirski preferred the blue one.³⁶

In the absence of other explanations, it is possible that the blue shirt symbolized a difference from the ideas of the Italian Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807–1882), expansionist, anti-Habsburg and secular, and an openness toward France, the traditional protector of the Pope, or toward the former Kingdom of Illyria (made up of a Slovenian majority), which featured the colour on its uniforms and symbols. Such a hypothesis is bolstered by the knowledge of growing disparities taking place between the Young and Old Slovenes, and between clericals and anti-clericals, especially after the end of the concordat between Vienna and the Catholic Church.³⁷

These differences, along with the new heavily centralist and anti-Slavic policy of the new Cisleithanian government and challenging economic times, were responsible for the serious crisis of Slovenian Sokols and a ban on organizing Tabors. This period accentuated the anti-Slavic restrictions already in place, which included threats against civil servants belonging to the Sokols, who feared the loss of their jobs.³⁸

From 1873 on, only the Ljubljanski remained active, without any of its divisions and without permission to participate in or organize public meetings or trips. As a result, the politicizing influence of the Slovenian Sokols and the impact of their events on the population diminished greatly.

One of the very few remaining activities was gymnastics, practiced by a small group of enthusiasts in a private house. Josip Hanuš (1852–1927), a young and brilliant student of Tyrš, animated by a fervent Pan-Slavic spirit, arrived from Prague to work in the new Slovenian Bank and became their new instructor. It is likely that Tyrš and his Czech-led Pan-Slavic gymnastics projects were behind the arrival of Hanuš. Some months later, Tyrš actually sent a friend of Hanuš to Lviv/Lwów as chief instructor at the request of the local Polish Sokol.³⁹

35 ČELIGOJ 2005, pp. 55–58; PODPEČNIK 2014, pp. 61–70; RATIZNOJNIK 2003, pp. 61–68; KOBLAR – MELIK 2013.

36 ČELIGOJ 2005, pp. 55–58.

37 ŠTIH – SIMONITI – VODOPIVEC 2008, p. 302; MELIK 1969, pp. 75–88; BELLABARBA 2015, p. 164; GRANDA 2020, pp. 229, 240.

38 NOLTE 2002, pp. 33, 34, 89, 101, 102; AGNEW 2004, p. 136; GRANDA 2020, pp. 236, 243, 244, 250, 253–255; PODPEČNIK 2014, pp. 61–70; BELLABARBA 2015, p. 162; LUTHAR 2013, p. 314.

39 PODPEČNIK 2014, pp. 61–70; PAVLIN 2013, pp. 44–51; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/12/6, Pogoji uporaba telovadnice v hiši g. Kavčiča; FRNTIČ, Franjo – VIDEK, Nevenka. Hanuš, Josip. In *Hrvatski biografski leksikon*, 2002, <https://hbl.lzmk.hr/clanak/hanus-josip> (last viewed on May 3, 2023);

In 1873, Zarnik's brief presidency of the Ljubljanski ended in bitter opposition to the Old Slovenes, including Bleiweis. His successor was Joseph Nolli (1841–1902), a moderate liberal and former board member. In a period of total opposition between different Slovenian elite groups, Nolli, who was not involved in politics, was able to present himself as an impartial candidate.⁴⁰

In 1874, the Ljubljanski regained some strength, although its activities remained confined to the indoors. Some celebrations, gatherings and charity events were organized, as well as the first shooting activities, which were typical elements of German national rites, they were also carried out in the well-known *Čitalnica* chaired by Bleiweis. Moreover, the Ljubljanski organized gymnastics for high schools, which was a relevant source of income and helped in developing the Slovenian national awareness among future adults, since Slovenian was not taught in those schools.⁴¹

But above all, the Ljubljanski began to develop more concrete relations with Croatian institutions and people. Continuing to support the federalist and Yugoslavist ideas of Croatian bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer (1815–1905), the Croatian Ban and the mayor of Zagreb, the Ljubljanski gave a contribution to the foundation of the Croatian University of Zagreb (1874).

At the same time, the first Croatian Sokol (Hrvatski sokol, henceforth Hrvatski) was about to be approved in Zagreb, a town slightly larger than Ljubljana, thanks to the contribution of two Slovenian intellectuals. The Ljubljanski was also present in Varaždin, a town in the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia close to the Slovenes of Styria, where a Croatian singing association was founded. This demonstrates the Ljubljanski's interest in music, which lasted for many years.⁴²

In 1875, the activities of the Ljubljanski were very limited to some indoor gymnastics and two meetings with the new Hrvatski, in which an important role was played by Slovene lawyer Josip Fon (1846–1899), a supporter of tighter relations between Slovenes and Croats. These two meetings coincided with the beginning of the anti-Turkish uprising in Herzegovina, which united the southern Slavs and reflected a twist in the Habsburg policy in the Balkans.

Kancelarija središnje uprave "Napretka." Josip Hanuš. In *Napredak - Hrvatski narodni kalendar*. Sarajevo, 1928, Digitalni Arhiv Infobiro Beta Mediacentar Sarajevo, <https://www.infobiro.ba/article/print/867380> (last viewed on June 30, 2023); NOLTE 2002, p. 99.

40 KOBLAR – MELIK 2013; LUTHAR 2013, pp. 315, 316; GRANDA 2020, pp. 243, 244; MATIČ 2002, pp. 105, 123, 160–162; MELIK 1969, pp. 75–88; MANTUANI, Josip – PIRJEVEC, August. Nolli Joseph (1841–1902). In *Slovenska Biografija*, 2013, <https://www.slovenska-biografija.si/os-eba/sbi388772/> (last viewed on May 20, 2023).

41 ŠTIH – SIMONITI – VODOPIVEC 2008, pp. 302, 303; ARS, f. SI AS 641/II/3/11, Nolli Josip, starosta Ljubljanskega Sokola 1874 – 1875; FRNTIČ – VIDEK 2002; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/12/5, Dovoljenje za sokolsko maškarado; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/12/16, Vabilo na sokolski večer; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/12/11, Vabilo na proslavo obletnice najdbe Karlovdorskega rokopisa; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/12/12, Dopis vodstva ljubljanske postaje v zvezi z denarjem, ki ga je Sokol namenil; MOSE, George L. *La nazionalizzazione delle masse*. Bologna : Il Mulino, 1975, pp. 213–217; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/12/7, Zahteva po podaljšanju streljanja v čitalnici do velike noči; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/12/18, Vabilo na sestanek Ljubljanskega Sokola zaradi streljanja; VODOPIVEC – BAVDEK – LONČAR 2013; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/12/20, Zahteva za povračilo stroškov gimnastike za dijake.

42 IVETIČ 2012, pp. 66, 81, 88, 115–118, 125, 129, 130; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/12/14, Proslava ustanovitve Hrvaške univerze Franca Jožefa I. v Zagrebu; PAAR 2011, pp. 11, 12, 21; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/12/22, Vabilo na izlet na Reko; PODPEČNIK 2014, p. 78; NEMEC NOVAK, Jasna. Sokolstvo in glasba. In ZELNIK – GERLOVIČ – ČUK 2014, pp. 21–30.

The first meeting between the Ljubljanski and the Hrvatski took place in Sisak, in the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia, with the presence of the local Croatian singing society, following the model of German national rites. Four years earlier in Sisak, liberal Slovenian writer Josip Jurčič (1844–1881) had led the *Südslawische Zeitung* newspaper. A second meeting was organized in Bled, Upper Carniola, despite the opposition of the German national government in Ljubljana. On the other hand, in the same period the Ljubljanski lost both their president and gymnastic manager, who did remain close to the association.⁴³

Meanwhile, the Czech Sokol movement was also facing a crisis, which was much less severe than that of the Slovenian Sokols though, thanks to the economic support by Slavic-speaking Czech elites. From 1871, the entire Sokol movement had lost about a third of its associations and members. On the contrary, in Cisleithania the German gymnastic associations continued their slow growth that had begun in 1869 and by the end of 1876, their number was almost two times the number of Sokols.⁴⁴

Moreover, the crisis of Sokols was linked to the end of the federalist Cisleithanian government, led by Karl von Hohenwart (1824–1899) in 1871, which was advocating a better future for the Czech lands. This political turn paralyzed the entire Czech national movement, which was growing more and more divided from within.⁴⁵ This situation also led the Ljubljanski to progressively orient itself toward other southern Slavs.

In 1876, all the activities of the Ljubljanski ceased except for indoor gymnastics. This might be connected with participation in activities in favour of other South Slavs fighting against the Turks. These activities were indirect, as it was the case of the lively committee of Ljubljana and of the *Čitalnica*, still chaired by Bleiweis, as well as direct, with some men joining the uprising in Bosnia and Herzegovina, such as socialist Miroslav Hubmajer (1851–1910) from Ljubljana who became a charismatic leader and Veselý himself from Prague.⁴⁶

During the following two years, the Ljubljanski still offered some indoor gymnastics and cooperated with some Croatian associations, with the perspective of a Croatian-based Yugoslav union, following the progressive evolution of Bosnia Herzegovina into a part of the Habsburg Empire.⁴⁷

43 DUGAČKI, Vladimir – FRNTIĆ Franjo. Fon, Josip. In *Hrvatski biografski leksikon*, 1998, <https://hbl.lzmk.hr/clanak.aspx?id=6170> (last viewed on June 21, 2023); JEZERNIK, Božidar. Methodological Piedmontism and the Re-writing of Early Yugoslav History. In *Radovi-Zavod za hrvatsku povijest*, 2021, Vol. 53, no. 2, pp. 107, 113; LUTHAR 2013, p. 325; MOSSE 1975, p. 198; PAAR 2011, p. 21; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/13/6, Pravila Zveze telovadnih društev hrvaških in slovenskih iz hrvaščine prevedel Josip Nolli; Kancelarija središnje uprave "Napretka." Josip Hanuš. In *Napredak - Hrvatski narodni kalendar*. Sarajevo, 1928, Digitalni Arhiv Infobiro Beta Mediacentar Sarajevo, <https://www.infobiro.ba/article/print/867380> (last viewed on June 30, 2023); ARS, f. SI AS 641/II/3/11, Nolli Josip, starosta Ljubljanskega Sokola 1874–1875; MANTUANI – PIRJEVEC 2013; FRNTIĆ – VIDEK 2002; GRAFENAUER, Ivan. Jurčič, Josip (1844–1881). In *Slovenska biografija*. 2013, <https://www.slovenska-biografija.si/oseba/sbi260454/> (last viewed on October 1, 2024).

44 NOLTE 2002, pp. 34, 36, 88–90, 102, 103, 105; ATZMANNINGER – NEBENFÜHR 2011, pp. 23–28.

45 NOLTE 2002, pp. 33, 101; AGNEW 2004, p. 136.

46 LUTHAR 2013, p. 325; JEZERNIK 2021, pp. 113–115, 118–120, 129, 130, 134, 135; BERKOPEC 2013.

47 ARS, f. SI AS 641/II/3/8, Kališnik Ivan, vodnik telovadcev pri Ljubljanskem Sokolu 30. 3. 1878 do 1883; IVETIĆ 2012, pp. 129, 130.

In 1877, the Ljubljanski returned to Varaždin for a Croatian national singing festival and met the Hrvatski and its president, the Slovene Fon. At that point, the Hrvatski already had more members than the Ljubljanski thanks to better political circumstances, even with the influence of a Hungarian central power.

A further meeting with the Hrvatski took place in Zagreb in 1878. The Ljubljanski took part in an international gymnastic competition with agreed judging criteria and live music for the first time. Also, the new Varaždin Sokol, the Prague Sokol and three other Croatian gymnastic clubs were present. The event was organized by the new gymnastic director of the Hrvatski, Bohemian František Hochmann (1850–1893), a friend of Hanuš, who was recovering from a negative experience in Lviv and had been recommended by the Prague Sokol.

After 16 years the Prague Sokol visited the South Slavic Sokols for the first time. This confirms its focus on Czech Sokols and the difficulty in realizing any Pan-Slavic intentions under a Czech lead. The Croatian, Slovenian, and Czech newspapers seized the opportunity to celebrate the great harmony between Slovenes and Croats, driven by lingering hopes of creating a southern Illyria in the wake of the Austrian occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

On the next day, however, the Ljubljanski, fearing dissolution by Habsburg authorities, did not adhere to the Union of Croatian and Slovenian gymnastic and firefighter societies project. A representative of the Ljubljanski, Hubmajer, a Panslavist and a Yugoslavist, asked the Croatian associations for help for the political survival of the Slovenian national movement after the last local elections. Despite a newfound political unity among Slovenians, in September 1877, the German centralist party won the elections for the council of Carniola, after 10 years of local Slovenian rule.⁴⁸

In 1879, Slovenian Sokols were represented only by the Ljubljanski, which had lost half of its members from the beginning of the Habsburg repression. It was only allowed to organize some gymnastic activities and trips without uniforms. The new presidency, chaired by Franjo Ravnihar, one of the most active leaders of the former Južni, decided to keep the historic red shirt, despite internal divisions and Habsburg prohibitions. Apart from the variety of reasons for its use, those advocating the red shirt never questioned loyalty to the Emperor, who was about to increase the weight of Slavs within the Empire.⁴⁹

From 1873 on, only the Ljubljanski went on developing the traditional national awareness of Slovenian Sokols, even if only in Ljubljana and with little success, with some help coming from the elder Bleiweis at the *Čitalnica*. Outside Ljubljana, on the other hand, with fewer and fewer members, the Ljubljanski

48 ARS, f. SI AS 641/II/2/6, Deputacija Ljubljanskega Sokola pri pevski slavnosti v Varaždinu; PAAR 2011, pp. 11, 22, 23; NOLTE 2002, pp. 33, 100; DUGAČKI – FRNTIČ 1998; ŠTIH – SIMONITI – VODOPIVEC 2008, pp. 303, 306; IVETIČ 2012, pp. 73, 129, 130; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/13/6, Pravila Zveze telovadnih društev hrvaških in slovenskih iz hrvaščine prevedel Josip Noll; JEZERNIK 2021, pp. 118, 120, 130; MATIČ 2002, pp. 105, 135, 179, 181, 187, 194; IVETIČ 2012, p. 73.

49 PODPEČNIK 2014, pp. 61–70; PAVLIN 2013, pp. 44–51; ARS, f. SI AS 641/II/3/12, Ravnihar Fran, starosta Ljubljanskega Sokola 1880–1882 in dolgoletni tajnik; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/13/7, Vabilo na ljudsko veselico v proslavo srebrne poroke cesarja Franca Jožefa I. in cesarice Elizabete; BELLABARBA 2015, p. 170; GRANDA 2020, pp. 230, 244.

strengthened its relations with many associations and with the very first Croatian Sokols, including the Zagreb Sokol, in the prospect of greater autonomy for Croats and Slovenes after the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

During a time of great difficulty for the Ljubljanski, some form of help had also come from the Prague Sokol and from Hanuš, a student of Tyrš.

Signs of a New Energy (1880)

From 1880 onwards, the situation slowly began to improve. The Ljubljanski was once more organizing entertainment and meetings, often including a national, cultural and musical collaboration with Croats. In a Pan-Slavic spirit, the organization built good relations with the *Čitalnica*, chaired by Bleiweis who was now considered the father of the Slovenian nation. Furthermore, it hosted some Croatian Sokols twice, in Ljubljana and in Upper Carniola, especially the Hrvatski, whose president was the Slovene Fon, with which it had already been in contact for six years. The Ljubljanski was also invited, again after 10 years, to the much larger Trst/Trieste, home to about 200 000 inhabitants, which was the town with the highest number of Slovenes, even if still a minority, and which had a strong South Slavic movement.⁵⁰

The situation for the Czech Sokols was improving too, with a growing number of associations (86) and members (almost 8 000).⁵¹

All these improvements were connected to a common political factor: the new government of Cisleithania led by von Taaffe and supported by the federalist, the conservative and the clerical parties as well as by the Czech-Slavic party, which was once again more present in the Parliament.

One of the main positive factors for the Slovenians of Carniola, the sole province that was to be soon recognized by the Habsburg authority as Slovenian, was the very lengthy political career (until 1892) of Andreas von Winkler (1825–1916), a balanced and prudent politician, who became the first provincial president of Carniola of Slovenian nationality to get appointed by the Emperor.⁵²

Regarding the Ljubljanski and the creation of new Slovenian Sokols, positive changes were to be seen only from 1882 onwards thanks to other factors, like a greater diffusion of the Slovenian national awareness and the electoral defeat of German liberals in Ljubljana and Carniola, which was a result of the newfound political unity among Slovenian parties. Other positive factors were the newfound energy of Tyrš and of Czech Sokols, also toward southern Slavs,

50 ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/14/10, Vabilo k besedi v spomin Valentina Vodnika; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/14/2, Dobrodelna prireditelj Ljubljanskega Sokola, Ljubljanske čitalnice in Dramatičnega društva v korist revnih Istranov; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/14/6, Vabilo na predplačilo zabavnika 'Hrvatski dom'; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/14/19, Vabilo in zapisnik seje za akademijo v korist revnim Istranom; JEZERNIK 2021, p. 130; LUTHAR 2013, pp. 317, 330; PODPEČNIK 2014, pp. 61–85; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/14/12, Prihod Zagrebškega Sokola na Bled; DUGAČKI – FRNTIČ 1998; PAVLETIČ 1999, p. 35; APIH 1988, p. 58; ARS, f. SI AS 641/I/14/9, Vabilo na dobrodelno prireditelj Slovenskega delavskega podpornega društva v Trstu; PAHOR, Milan. Slovenes and Croats from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy to the Italian Republic. In MURKOVIČ, DAMIR J.C. *Croatians in Trieste*. Trieste : Croatian Community, 2007, pp. 45–72; CATTARUZZA, Marina. *Trieste in the nineteenth century*. Udine: Del Bianco Editore, 1995, p. 143; KALC 2014, pp. 41–66.

51 NOLTE 2002, p. 104.

52 BELLABARBA 2015, p. 171; LUTHAR 2013, pp. 326, 327; AGNEW 2004, p. 137; KRANJEC, Silvio – MELIK, Vasilij. Winkler, Andrej, baron (1825–1916). In *Slovenska Biografija*, 2013, <https://www.slovenska-biografija.si/oseba/sbi841484/> (last viewed on July 20, 2023).

and support coming from the Hrvatski Sokol, from its president Fon and from the Slovenian and Slavic society Edinost from Trieste.⁵³

Conclusions

The revival of Slovenian Sokols was primarily due to Janez Bleiweis, a leading Slovenian politician of the time, and his group. They started all over again in Ljubljana, the spiritual capital of the Slovenes, to create the local Ljubljanski Sokol (1868).

The Ljubljanski immediately became one of the leading Slovenian national associations, organizing bourgeois leisure activities like gymnastics, its founding activity, but especially entertainment, fun events and day trips.

In its first 5 years, the organization contributed to the development of a still fragile and diverse Slovenian national consciousness, which was not yet structured into political parties. In fact, thousands of people from Ljubljana and Carniola were involved in its activities, especially the day trips that ended with large festivals.⁵⁴ The Ljubljanski also participated, with its own uniforms and flag, in some Tabors, with 65 to 72 000 people.

Such Tabors constituted the largest and most popular form of political mobilization of Slovenes in the Habsburg Empire. At the same time, the cautiously autonomist and socially conservative Bleiweis group, which held the majority both in Carniolan politics and within the Ljubljanski, prevented the latter from participating in the more liberal democratic Tabors, especially in neighbouring provinces.

However, for the first time the Ljubljanski succeeded in spreading Sokol associations among Slovenes, albeit only in Carniola and in an early form, despite the Habsburg prohibitions and conflicts with the German minority. Nevertheless, Slovenes in neighbouring provinces, some 700 000 people, remained isolated in their traditional divisions⁵⁵ and any attempts to officially create additional Sokols remained unsuccessful.

By 1871, a liberal democratic current began to prevail in the Ljubljanski and a new Bohemian chief instructor arrived, but this did not lead to a growth in the number of Slovenian Sokols, nor to a change in mentality. The Ljubljanski remained a bourgeois leisure association relevant for Slovenian national goals but hostile to external impositions, even indirect, from the Prague Sokol.

Moreover, the Ljubljanski failed to establish itself as a unifying authority for other Slovenian Sokols, not even able to convince other groups to use the same uniform with a red shirt (almost the same uniform as the one of the Prague Sokol). Some Slovenian Sokols wore a blue shirt, a possible symbol of a greater interest in other Slovenians and in their Croatian neighbours, with a weak Pan-Slavic spirit in general, and a possible symbol of closeness to the clergy. The Ljubljanski itself started a much more southern Slavic, but predominantly Illyrian, period.

53 PODPEČNIK 2014, pp. 70–85; ŠTIH – SIMONITI – VODOPIVEC 2008, p. 312; NOLTE 2002, pp. 33, 90, 104–107, 216; ARS, f. SI AS 641/II/2/8 Ljubljanski in Hrvaški Sokol v Zagrebu, 1882; DUGAČKI – FRNTIČ 1998; PAVLETIČ 1999, p. 37; KALC 2014, pp. 41–66.

54 PODPEČNIK 2014, p. 78.

55 IVETIČ 2012, pp. 71, 72; LUTHAR 2013, pp. 317, 326, 327; ŠTIH – SIMONITI – VODOPIVEC 2008, pp. 304, 305, 312.

By 1873, new political events among Slovenes and in Cisleitania led to the collapse of the Slovenian Sokols. Only the Ljubljanski survived, maintaining political influence only in Ljubljana. On the other side, it strengthened contacts with Croatian cultural associations, primarily with the Zagreb Sokol, hoping for a greater autonomy to be granted to Slovenes and Croats from the Habsburg authority after the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Some help for the Ljubljanski also probably came from the Prague Sokol and its leader Tyrš. In any event, relations between the Ljubljanski, the Prague Sokol and Tyrš were fragile overall considering their Austro-Slavism and Pan-Slavism were more ideological than practical and their relations were influenced by different ideas, contexts and interests.

From the early 1880s, thanks to political innovations favourable to Slovenians in Cisleithania and Carniola and despite many obstacles, Slovenian Sokols began a new phase of development, more solid and geographically wider, beyond the borders of Carniola.