

THE ATTITUDE OF THE SLOVENE CATHOLIC CHURCH TO EMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA BEFORE 1914

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1. Introduction

The problem of emigration is in essence an existential question for each individual, yet the actions of individuals can only be understood if we understand the economic, social, cultural, religious, and other circumstances in their old and new worlds. Human beings as the center and epitome of all on earth is a well accepted Christian viewpoint. This has been stressed by Mirko Gogala,¹ who expanded this statement into the concept that emigrants should not be judged by the norms of the society (nation, country) they left or of the society to which they came. He sees the essence of emigration as lying in the formation of new relations between the individual and the new society (integration and assimilation). The role of the immigrant as an individual has undoubtedly been played down in Slovene studies of Slovene emigration. This phenomenon as a historic factor has been inadequately researched although it has significantly influenced the development of the Slovene nation, at least in the last hundred years. Additionally, interest in Slovene emigration was lacking even at the time of its occurrence, that is before 1914 and thereafter, and interest into research in this subject is still lacking today. In view of the small demographic, territorial and economic size of Slovenia, and its geopolitical exposure, we still know too little of the fate of Slovenes who went into the world in search of a better living and a larger 'piece of the pie.'² Emigration from Slovene territory removed various pieces of the mosaic which we call the Slovene state.³

¹ Mirko Gogala, "Integracija in asimilacija pri izseljencih," *Meddobje* (Buenos Aires: Slovenska kulturna akcija) 25/1 (1975) 24-39.

² *Zgodovina Slovencev* (Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 1979).

³ Janko Prunk, *Slovenski narodni vzpon. Narodna politika (1768-1992)* (Ljubljana: Državna založba Slovenije, 1992); Bogo Grafenauer, "Slovenski zgodovinski prostor in država," in *Slovenci in prihodnost* (Ljubljana: Nova revija, 1993) 167-187.

The mass emigration of Slovenes at the turn of the twentieth century, which was historically unprecedented, was brought to an end by the First World War and its later resumption was limited by the U.S. quota laws of 1921 and 1924. Neither before nor after had so many Slovenes left their country or remained abroad as in the last two decades before the First World War. According to demographers and historians some 250,000 to 300,000 people emigrated, the majority to the U.S.A. and some to South America, to Westphalia in Germany, to the German part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, to Egypt, and other countries.⁴ The Austrian constitution of 1867 permitted emigration freely except for men required for military service; this was the only official restriction for emigration for young men, yet many secretly fled to the U.S.A.. Austria showed no great interest in the problem of emigration and, with the exception of a few regulations dealing with emigration bureaus, had no laws governing departures or relations with its citizens living abroad. It was only the cataclysm of the imminent war which awoke Vienna — primarily the military circles — and drew attention to the issue of emigration.

I will limit myself to the relationship between the Church in Slovenia and the mass emigration of its faithful. The Church's relation to Slovenes abroad has been described by Bogdan Kolar;⁵ I will deal with the view of the Church towards the departures as well as to the phenomenon of emigration itself. The Church's interest lay not only in the religious and general aspects of the lives of the Slovene emigrants but also in their travels, the consequences to the families, and the new ideas brought back by

⁴ Marjan Drnovšek, *Pot slovenskih izseljencev na tuje. Od Ljubljane do Ellis Islanda – Otoka solza 1880–1924* (Ljubljana: Mladika, 1991). It is impossible to determine precisely the numbers of Slovene immigrants before 1914 because of numerous factors: the unreliability and incompleteness of statistical sources; the fact that emigrants are listed by country of origin and not by nationality; the large percentage of illegal departures; the repeated movements of the same persons to and from America (e.g. due to marriage, temporary loss of work in America, etc.). In the USA, the most reliable data are from the censuses. In 1910, 123,631 people of the first generation listed Slovene as their native tongue and 59,800 of the second generation. Ten years later, in 1920, the corresponding figures were 102,744 and 105,808 (Matjaž Klemenčič, "Slovenci v ameriški statistiki v 19. in v 20. stoletju," *Celovški zvon* 2/4 (September 1984) 29.

⁵ Bogdan Kolar, "Cerkev in Slovenci po svetu," *Zgodovina Cerkve na Slovenskem*. Pripravil Inštitut za zgodovino Cerkve pri Teološki fakulteti v Ljubljani (Ljubljana: Mohorjeva družba, 1991) 273–304.

these returning to their old environments. The Church saw young people as members of the flock, and all its activities were devoted to the care of their faith, the Slovene national consciousness, love of family (that is wife and children), the 'old country' both in the narrowest sense of the word (place of birth) and in its broadest (the Austro-Hungarian Empire). In the first part of this essay I will limit myself to the relationship of the Church to emigration found in the reports of the Slovene Catholic Congresses of 1892, 1900, and 1906 and the Slovene-Croatian Congress of 1913. Both churchmen and lay people spoke about the problem; the Congresses accepted resolutions on the relationship of both clergy and lay people to the emigration question. In the second part I examine some initiatives taken on the part of the Church leadership regarding emigration from Slovenia. In the third, I discuss the activities of the Raphael Society, a private organization founded to help Slovene emigrants.

2. Emigration and the Congresses

In the session on Social Affairs of the first Slovene Catholic Congress⁶ Fran Povše spoke about the difficulties of the peasants, but he did not mention emigration, only migration to cities and factories. He mentioned the U.S.A. in connection with the competitive price of its wheat on the European market, which had hurt the Slovene farmer. The poor social conditions of the peasants were described by Andrej Kalan and Gregor Einspieler. A warning of a similar state of affairs with respect to craftsmen and artisans was given by Jož ef Regali. All three, however, came to the conclusion that many people were choosing a more prosperous life in the U.S.A.. The lengthiest speaker, and the one with the most specific examples, was Josip Gabrijevčič who represented the absent Archbishop of Gorica. Poverty and a miserable life had, he said, emptied many villages and, as an illustration, he cited the Vipava valley where – in his opinion – at least half the people had left their homes. Their destinations were Trieste, Alexandria in Egypt (where girls and women worked as maids, cooks, and wet nurses), and the U.S.A.. As an illustration: according to the state

⁶ *Poročilo pripravljalnega odbora o I. slovenskem katoliškem shodu kateri se je vršil 1892. leta v Ljubljani* (Ljubljana, 1893). On Congresses in general, see Stane Granda, "Jeglič in slovenski katoliški shodi," *Jegličev simpozij v Rimu* (Celje: Slovenska teološka akademija v Rimu in Mohorjeva družba v Celju, 1991) 333–347. See also Fran Trdan, "Iz zgodovine slovenskih katoliških shodov," *Ave Maria* 21/10-12 (1929), 22/1-2 (1930).

government, about 2100 people had moved from Carniola to the U.S.A. and to a lesser extent to Brazil, that is, apart from the unknown number of men fleeing military service.⁷

The second Slovene Catholic Congress in 1900⁸ again spoke of the poor living conditions of the peasants and the competitiveness of United States wheat, but Fran Povše also mentioned the dangers emigration presented to the Slovene nation and he counseled emigrants not to forget their homes and to return to their homeland with their savings as soon as possible. Bishop Jakob Trobec from St. Cloud, Minnesota was also present at this Congress and he greeted those present in the name of all American Slovenes. In his speech, he described U.S. immigrant conditions but did not devote a single word to the departure of Slovenes to foreign countries. In the session on Christian Life Josip Pavlica was of the opinion — in view of Pope Leo's XIII letter on spiritual pastoral care among Italians abroad — that care for the preservation of an ethical and Christian life by emigrants was the duty of all Slovenes. This was accepted as a resolution by the Congress. In the spirit of Christian charity Viljem Schweitzer mentioned that the Church was not blind to emigration, which he called the "modern phenomenon of poverty." He was aware of the sharp increase in the number of Slovenes determined to find greater prosperity and a better life in the U.S.A.. He suggested the foundation of a Society to take care of the "souls and bodies of emigrants." He had in mind the model of the German Raphael Society and its efforts to care for emigrants while travelling. We may call this Congress resolution the seeds of the Slovene Raphael Society. As an illustration of the extent of the problem: according to official records, in 1900, 2,857 people left Carniola for the U.S.A..

The third Slovene Catholic Congress in 1906⁹ also devoted much of its attention to the social questions of the peasants. Among the speakers were Anton Korošec and the landowner Janez Sadnik. The latter spoke of the "wounds" of the peasants,

⁷ All statistical data on emigration from Carniola are taken from the unpublished doctoral dissertation of Marjan Drnovšek, *Izseljevanje iz širše ljubljanske okolice 1890–1914 (I. Doktorsko delo, II. Opombe in priloge)* Ljubljana: Univerza v Ljubljani, Filozofska fakulteta, Oddelek za zgodovino, 1993.

⁸ *Poročilo o II. slovenskem katoliškem shodu ki se je vršil leta 1900 v Ljubljani.* Ljubljana: 1901.

⁹ Evgen Lampe, ed. *III. slovenski katoliški shod v Ljubljani dne 26., 27. in 28. avg. 1906.* (Ljubljana, 1907).

listing first greediness and the damage caused by wild game, second overly large dowries, and third the emigration of young men to the U.S.A.. The priest Ivan Tul from Trieste spoke of pastoral care for emigrants, warning that they were not to fall into the clutches of swindlers who prophesied luck and prosperity in the U.S.A., for many emigrants had left, and many had become disillusioned with with foreign countries. To those departing, he recommended the Raphael Society, in view of its work with Catholic emigrants. This was the year in which 5,837 people legally left Carniola to cross the Atlantic.

The fourth Slovene-Croatian Congress in 1913,¹⁰ held in Ljubljana, devoted more words to the problems of emigration than had the previous three. This is not surprising as the years prior to the First World War witnessed the greatest public interest in these problems in Slovenia. Anton Ogrizek spoke in the session on Religious Life about concern for those moving from the countryside to the city and emigration in general. He proposed as a resolution that the infinite harm caused by emigration to religious and national aspects of life should be ascertained, and demanded that carefree and unnecessary migration and emigration be discouraged and even forbidden. However, most attention was paid to children's education in individual parishes or village schools. Each parish was to have its own "trustee," to be visited by all who intended leaving their birth place. This trustee was to provide frequent public warnings against departures and if someone did decide on such a course, they were to visit the parish priest or the counsellors. Where counsellors could not be found, their duties were to be taken over by the parish priest. He would be helped organizationally by the Slovene Christian Social Union (*Slovenska krščansko socialna zveza*), the Yugoslav Trade Union (*Jugoslovanska strokovna zveza*), and the Raphael Society (*Raphaelova družba*). In the subsequent discussion Archbishop Frančižek Sedej of Gorica hailed the speaker's conclusions saying that they were in keeping with Pius X's circular on emigrants. Bishop Andrej Karlin of the Trieste-Koper region supported the proposal in the spirit of the motto: *remain at home!* The priest Franc Gomilšček from Styria stressed that school education in Slovene national values was the cornerstone against later assimilation in an alien environment; in his opinion, loss of language was also linked to a loss of morality and faith. The chaplain Rakovec was in favor of forbidding agencies from

¹⁰ *Slovensko-hrvatski katoliški shod v Ljubljani 1913* (Ljubljana: 1913).

placing various advertisements in newspapers for emigration. A reporter on Slovenes abroad, Anton Zdešar, proposed the following resolution, that:

- a) All about to emigrate were to consult the Raphael Society before their departure to the U.S.A.;
- b) Before leaving their birthplace, they were to visit the parish priest for counsel and to obtain a letter of reference for the priest of their future place of residence;
- c) As the departure of a husband or father loosened or broke family ties, he suggested that husbands take their wives and, if possible, their children with them, or at least leave them in considerate care; where this was impossible, both parties were to maintain close ties through writing so that both could share all their joys and sorrows.

The participants, or at least the speakers, at the Congress were aware of the difficulties that their work would entail without the help of the government and of all Slovenes. Each individual was to do all in his power to dissuade emigration in his community, as an influential individual, and so on. Andrej Lavrič in his Report of the Raphael Society repeated some well-known facts resulting from emigration in the religious, judicial, national and economic spheres. Yet he was also convinced that it would be impossible to limit emigration, much less to stop it. The Raphael Society, therefore, was to aid emigrants during their travels and in their new homes. As an illustration: 4,243 people left Carniola in the first half of 1913 apart from those avoiding military service. The same year, Count Barbo spoke of the last-named problem to the Carniolan provincial parliament; he thought that the U.S.A. had at least one army corps of young Austrian men and 10,000 draftees from Carniola.¹¹

Did the Slovene Catholic Congresses devote enough attention to Slovene emigration and did their resolutions fulfill their aims? This was the question posed by Andrej Lavrič at the Slovene-Croatian Congress in 1913; he answered it himself by saying that emigrants and the Raphael Society only came into contact

¹¹ *Obravnave Deželnega zbora za Kranjsko*, 48. zvezek, II. del, XVII. seja, 3. in 4. oktobra 1913, 673.

casually and the generalized evil brought on by the growth of emigration demanded the abolition of emigration.

But the Congresses could not do more than debate the emigration question, call for an improvement of living conditions at home, and counsel those who were leaving. At the Congresses the Slovene Catholics discussed their activities and chose guidelines about Catholic private and official life in the religious, cultural, political, and social spheres. This was also true for the emigration problem. The greatest responsibility for those emigrating was placed on the shoulders of the priests in home parishes. Their main duties were to dissuade them from leaving and to offer aid to those who were fully decided. Sermons provided an opportunity for warnings. In the *Duhovni pastir* of 1909, Janez Kalan published a sample sermon commissioned by the Raphael Society.¹² He recommended in his notes that priest divide the sermon into two or more parts and supplement it with their own observations, thus forming a true "cycle" on the theme. The basic teachings of the sermon were:

- a) Don't leave home unnecessarily!
- b) If you must, put yourself under the protection of St. Raphael and the Raphael Society

He recommended that those wishing to leave visit their parish priest not only to say good-bye but to receive useful directives, arrange their documents, and to receive the holy sacraments. On their travels they were to take "good books," a newspaper, and a rosary. They were to watch their moral behavior and avoid swindlers. But he counseled all to read *Kažipot za izseljence* (see below) before their departure and to entrust themselves to the Raphael Society.

In 1904 the Ljubljana Bishop's Committee of the Austrian Society of St. Raphael (Ljubljanski škofijski odbor avstrijske družbe svetega Raphaela) had published *Kažipot za izseljence* (*A Guideline for Emigrants*).¹³ Other European nations too had published similar booklets with recommendations about travel from home to new locations. The Slovene *Kažipot* was a result of an investigation into the "lines" (itineraries) and ports. This was done by Miha Moškerc, the secretary of the Slovene Christian

¹² Janez Kalan, "Sv. Rafael in izseljevanje na tuje," *Duhovni pastir* (Ljubljana) 26/10 (1909) 513.

¹³ *Kažipot za izseljence*. Izdal in založil škofijski odbor Avstrijske družbe sv. Rafaela v varstvo katoliških izseljencev v Ljubljani (Ljubljana, 1904).

Social Union, who researched German conditions and harbors, and partly copied the words of the priest France Šušteršič from Joliet, Illinois in his *Poduk rojakom Slovencem, ki se hočejo naseliti v Ameriki*, published in 1903 by the Zveza slovenskih duhovnikov v Ameriki. The *Kažipot* was sent to all parish offices and the counsellors of the Raphael Society.

In comparison to the *Kažipot*, which contained practical advice on traveling, Šušteršič's work was lengthier and apart from general "advice" (for example, "Think well before you leave!" "Don't break your ties with your family!" "Don't forget your home and birth place!" and so on) also spoke in detail about Catholic life and Slovene settlements in the U.S.A.. He denied the opinion that moral life among emigrants in the U.S.A. was poor and in this connection mentioned the writings of the Bishop's Gazette in Ljubljana (*Škofijski list ljubljanske škofije*).¹⁴ He advised those leaving to visit their home priests and to contact the priest responsible for their religious life in their new settlements. This part of Šušteršič's work was extensively quoted by the priest Jurij Trunk in his *Amerika in Amerikanci*,¹⁵ a lengthy book with many pictures, photographs, and illustrations by the painter Ivan Vavpotič. A comparison of all three works reveals a common thread. All are didactic but they differ in content. The *Kažipot* is the most specific in its travel directions; for the other two speak more of the new country, that is the U.S.A. and its Slovene populations. The daily newspapers also provided information on living conditions overseas. Limiting our attention only to the Slovene newspapers in Slovenia, it can be stated that we find most warnings against emigration and instructions for those who had already decided in the Catholic press, and less in the liberal and socialdemocrat press. This demonstrates a greater interest in the emigration question in the ranks of the Catholic intellectuals, priests and laymen.

¹⁴ Although he does not cite the author or the article, he is undoubtedly thinking of bishop Anton B. Jeglič's "Poziv" (*Ljubljanski škofijski list*, Ljubljana, 1901, 100–101). In it, the bishop warns against the damnation of the bodies and souls of immigrants in North and South America and Egypt in Africa.

¹⁵ Jurij M. Trunk, *Amerika in Amerikanci*. (Celovec: published by the author, 1912).

3. Church Leaders' Statements

PREČASTITI DUHOVŠČINI IN VERNIKOM ILIRSKE CERKVENE POKRAJINE...

This was the heading of the pastoral bulletin written on St. Raphael's day, 24 October 1913, by Archbishop Frančižek Sedej of Gorica, Bishop Bonaventura Jeglič of Ljubljana, Bishop Andrej Karlin of Trieste and Koper, Bishop Anton Mahnič of Krk and Bishop Trifon of Poreč–Pula. In this bulletin they explained the attitude of their sees on emigration.¹⁶ In 1910 Bishop Ivan Napotnik of Maribor wrote a similar letter,¹⁷ and this topic was also studied at the bishops' synodin 1911.¹⁸ The report of the deacons' assembly in Ljubljana in April 1913¹⁹ demonstrated that Bishop Jeglič was preparing a special report for the synod, "De curo pro emigrantibus," and the outline of his report was discussed at this assembly, but the synod did not take place because of the start of the World War. These endeavors of the church leadership had several characteristics in common, shown most concisely in the pastoral letter of 24 October 1913.

As part of the Catholic Church, Slovenes were affiliated with the community at large and accepted the Vatican's guidelines in work with emigrants upon their departure and their arrival in new lands. Pope Pius X's missive (*motu proprio*) of 1912, "De catholicorum in exteris regiones emigratione," made a special bureau, a section of the consistorial congregation, responsible for the study and care for all things necessary to save the souls and to improve the lives of immigrants of the Roman Catholic faith. To obtain an overview of emigration, the consistorial congregation sent a questionnaire to all dioceses which among its questions included the following: the number, sex, etc., of the emigrants from individual parishes, the precise locations of their new communities, the length of time of their absence (permanent or temporary), the manner of their leaving (alone or in groups), the manner of leaving their homes (alone or as families), requests for a definition of their reasons for leaving, who provided aid (e.g. the Raphael Society), the moral and religious state of those returning,

¹⁶ *Ljubljanski škofijski list* 9 (1913), 137–142.

¹⁷ *Cerkveni zaukaznik za Lavantinsko škofijo* 300 (1910) ("Postni pastirski list in postna postava za leto 1910").

¹⁸ "De cura pro demigrantibus in terras longinquas," *Operationes et Constitutiones Synodi dioecesis Lavantinae, quam anno Domini 1911 ...* (Maribor, 1912) 798–805.

¹⁹ *Ljubljanski škofijski list* 6 (1913) 94–96.

and so forth.²⁰ The answers to these question were provided by parish priests who knew all those who had left for the U.S.A..

The bishops had special responsibilities to the emigrants from their dioceses. This was stressed in their communal pastoral letter of 1913:

“Dragi izseljenci! Dokler niste stalno izven naše cerkvene pokrajine kje naseljeni, dokler še mislite vrniti se v domovino, ste še zmerom naše ovčice in spadate pod našo nadpastirsko oskrbo.”²¹

Special episcopal pamphlets printed warnings against emigration, official orders of Church and national authorities, and guidelines for pastoral work in parishes before the parishioners' departure.²²

The pastoral letter [henceforward, the *Letter*] of 1913 could not ignore the fact that emigration was a natural phenomenon and that it would be foolish to prohibit it entirely or attempt to surpress it. Savings, and acquisition of new knowledge, self-sufficiency and manners, all spoke of justified and beneficial emigration. Yet this view took the return of the emigrants to their place of birth for granted. This is apparent in the *Letter* as well as in the expressions of opinion of the Catholic Congresses and the Catholic newspapers. This positive side of emigration was only mentioned in the *Letter* in a few sentences; the rest dealt with the negative aspects of the emigration process and of life in the U.S.A.. Other countries, with the exception of Egypt,²³ were mentioned only briefly. The greatest attention was given to life in the U.S.A., and its destructiveness of ethico-religious, economic, health, national, and family qualities. They substantiated this with concrete examples. In the lengthiest group of ethico-religious dangers, the bishops warned against the following: unscrupulous emigration agents; the influence of “new ideologies” and “false teachings;” “worshipping the golden God — the dollar;”

²⁰ Bogdan Kolar, “Cerkev in izseljenstvo v letih pred prvo svetovno vojno,” *Viri 3. Slovenski izseljenc* (Ljubljana: Arhivsko društvo Slovenije, 1990) 92–98.

²¹ *Ljubljanski škofijski list* 11 (1913), 141.

²² See Kazimir Zakrajšek, “Nadškof dr. Jeglič in slovensko izseljenstvo,” *Izseljenski vestnik* 10–11 (1939) 176–179.

²³ The influence of Archbishop Sedej of Gorica is apparent. He knew a great deal about the emigration of girls and women from the vicinity of Gorica to Alexandria. Also of interest is the fact that at the synod of 1911 the Bishop of Maribor, Ivan Napotnik, devoted a large part of his attention to the emigrants to Westphalia, as a large proportion of Styrians went there.

dissolute lives (drinking in saloons on Sundays, communal living in boarding houses, the influence of "American prostitution"); the influence of "red or red-leaning" newspapers (of twelve Slovene-American periodicals, only two were Roman Catholic, *Amerikanski Slovenec* and *Ave Maria*); the influence of non-Catholic schools; and mixed marriages. So they urged their readers: "Stay at home if it is not absolutely necessary!" and in particular they were opposed to emigration to the U.S.A.. To those who were determined to leave, they counseled: "protect yourselves from sin, turn to the Society of Raphael, and settle in a place with a Slovene parish." The spiritual shepherds were charged with the care of the emigrants, as these were exposed to greater danger than the faithful at home; the bishops advised against anybody leaving without money or necessary spiritual qualities; they recommended to the Raphael Society that emigrants take the sacraments before departure, and, in the case of a larger group that a mass be said with a sermon; that it keep in contact with the emigrants, and that it was to "heal the wounds caused by the alien land. Perhaps they are not such good Christians and Slovenes any more."²⁴ To ensure that these recommendations and directives did not simply remain on paper, at the end of the *Letter* the Bishops demanded of their clergy that:

- a) they propagate knowledge about the Raphael Society;
- b) they gather contributions for the support of this Society; and
- c) they instruct all who were capable of work among emigrants in the U.S.A. to express their interest by visiting their bishop.

4. The St. Raphael Society in Ljubljana

The Church founded the St. Raphael Societies to counsel the emigrants, provide information, organize help while travelling, and on arrival arrange contacts with the old home, carefully follow the course of emigration, and so forth. It functioned as a World Organization as their counsellors were available to all Catholic emigrants who traveled under its auspices.²⁵

²⁴ *Ljubljanski škofijski list* 11 (1913) 142.

²⁵ See Bogdan Kolar, "Družba svetega Rafaela do ustanovitve ljubljanske podružnice," *Dve domovini / Two Homelands 1. Razprave o izseljenstvu /*

Bishop Anton B. Jeglič of Ljubljana understood the difficulties of emigration among the Slovenes as his diocese had the highest number of all emigrants in Slovenia. In 1903, he had sent a professor of theology, Ivan Janežič, to the General Meeting of the St. Raphael Society of Vienna (founded in 1890) to discuss co-operation with the Ljubljana see. In December of the same year he called an Auxiliary Committee to form a Ljubljana bureau for aid and information to emigrants. The following year, 1904, he had published the previously mentioned *Kažipot*. The branch offices of the Raphael Society worked only in Ljubljana and Trieste before 1907.

Ivan Janežič was charged with founding a Slovene branch of the Raphael Society. To obtain an overview of the attendant circumstances, a questionnaire of fifteen questions was sent out in 1907 to several addresses in Slovenia and abroad.²⁶ The questions may be divided into groups; those concerned with the role of emigration agents (seven in number), those relating to departure (five), and one question each referring to the relationship with the public and emigrants' reception in New York. (The fifteenth question is not consistent with the rest of the questionnaire). The answers have not been fully researched yet, probably as a consequence of a lack of full information. The periodicals of the time also did not assign this questionnaire great importance, specifically not the Ljubljana daily *Slovenec*.

The Founding Congress of the Slovene Branch of the (Austrian) St. Raphael Society for the Preservation of Catholic Emigrants from Carniola, Carinthia, and the Austro-Illyrian Littoral took place on 11 November 1907 in Ljubljana. It was followed by the establishment of a Slovene organization in Trieste and Gorica in 1912. The question of the Slovene branch's autonomy from the Austrian organization has never been fully researched: it was at first named *Slovenska podružnica družbe sv. Raphaela*; Janez Evangelista Krek and Josip Gostinčar were its delegates to the Viennese central office in 1909, and also received financial aid from them.²⁷ The presidents of the Slovene branch

Migration Studies. Ljubljana: Inštitut za slovensko izseljenstvo ZRC SAZU, 1990) 107–119; Andrej Vovko, "The Myth of America and the Society of St. Raphael," *Slovene Studies* 13/1 (1991) 107–110.

²⁶ Andrej Vovko, "Nekaj utrinkov o Družbi sv. Rafaela in Ameriki," *Mohorjev koledar* 1992 (Celje, 1991) 42–44.

²⁷ E.g., 500 Austrian crowns in 1912.

before the First World War were Janez Evangelista Krek and Vladislav Pegan.

The Ljubljana branch of the Raphael Society, while working as a private institution, had the same duties as its sister organizations throughout the world. It was to protect the emigrants morally and materially, and to preserve their faith and the national consciousness of those in Slovenia. It called on mayors, the clergy, politicians, and other public figures to involve the problems of emigration in their own work, to warn people before departure, and to counsel individuals determined to leave to visit the Raphael Society. Moškerc (1907) stated that the Society's aim was to protect the interests of those determined to leave — never to provide an incentive to emigration (for which, indeed, some blamed the Society) and to eliminate conditions which forced people to emigrate. In actuality the Society could only help with advice.

Intensive work did not begin until January 1909; in 1908 the Society had only had to deal with four inquiries. From June 1911 to December 1912, 352 emigrants visited the office, and even more, 547, did so in the first six months of 1913. But these were still small numbers in comparison with the total number of Slovene emigrants travelling through Ljubljana. The Society also responded to written requests. In 1909, 54 letters were recorded in its work books, in 1911 it responded to 1770 written requests²⁸ and in the first half of 1913 it received 370 letters necessitating 118 answers.²⁹ The constant appeals in the newspapers explaining the purpose of the Raphael Society and the small number of voyages organized with its help demonstrate that it was not very successful, despite the aid of the Church. The Church charged its clergy in 1912 with the propagation of the Society's ideas among the public but despite its low membership dues (2 Austrian crowns per year) the response was poor and in 1911 the Society had only forty-five members.

It may be argued that the Ljubljana Raphael Society was most active in newspapers through its numerous warnings and directions. Its appeals were mainly published in Catholic newspapers. It is uncertain how all these directions and warnings influenced the departures and travels of the emigrants, but it may

²⁸ *Slovensko-hrvatski katoliški shod v Ljubljani 1913*, 63.

²⁹ "Družba sv. Rafaela v Ljubljani za naše izseljence," *Občinska uprava* 13 -14 (Ljubljana, Jul. 1913) 110-111.

be said — regardless of the complaints of the anti-Catholic press — that its social aims were very welcome to the emigrants, who were otherwise left entirely to their own ingenuity and depended on individual travel agencies. It should nevertheless be confirmed that the majority of Slovene emigrants travelled without the help of the Society. We can be convinced of this by the thoughts of, among others, Andrej Lavrič (see above), who in 1913 stated that the reports of the St. Raphael counsellors were “absolutely terrible.” The emigrants were usually not well prepared for the voyage, whether due to carelessness or lack of knowledge; they often fell into the clutches of agents or swindlers; some fell ill during the trip; others suffered various misfortunes,; and so forth. Young women in particular were at risk during the tedious voyage.³⁰ This indicates that the majority of emigrants did not avail themselves of the Society’s services. Juro Adlešič had already written in 1909 that its activities were not known enough among the population and that it was necessary to broaden and expand preventive care for the emigrants. He personally preferred the idea of discouraging emigration: “Emigration should be limited, wedged, dammed, for most often it is only the prejudices and great solicitations of the travel agents which drive our people abroad.”³¹ This was also the duty of the St. Raphael Society. At the Slovene-Croatian Catholic Congress of 1913, Andrej Lavrič summarized the opinions of the General Meeting, particularly regarding the charges that the Society had not achieved its aim because of the lack of interest among an indifferent public. In his view, publications in newspapers and the diocesan gazettes were unsuccessful; and the Society was in need of money. He called on the Slovene bishops to write a joint pastoral letter, or at least to do so for individual diocese, to show the dark and bright sides (“virtues”) of emigration.³²

The work of the Slovene Raphael Society was more or less confined to Carniola and it did not have any great influence on the remainder of the Slovene territory. There were, apart from this Society, numerous other organizations involved in the problems and in advising emigrants. All were under the influence of the

³⁰ *Slovensko-hrvatski katoliški shod v Ljubljani 1913*, 61.

³¹ Juro Adlešič, “Organizacija slovenskega izseljeništvā,” *Čas* 4/5 (1909) 182.

³² In their pastoral letter of October 24, 1913, (see note 16), the bishops of the Illyrian Ecclesiastical Region took into account the financial needs of the Raphael Society and also devoted most of their attention to descriptions of the negative aspects of emigration.

Church, and included the *Marijina družba*, the *Katoliška zveza za varstvo brez spremstva potujočih deklet*, the *Družba sv. Cirila in Metoda*, the *Slovenska krščansko socialna zveza*, and several others. Their activities were apparent throughout the Slovene lands.

5. Conclusion

Before 1914, as part of its pastoral care, the Roman Catholic Church in Slovenia paid great attention to emigration during the times of mass departures to the U.S.A. and other countries. It charged its spiritual shepherds with the care of emigrants and it counseled and warned the emigrants of the dangers abroad, particularly in the United States of America. The response of the Church leadership came relatively late; it was most intense in the years prior to the First World War, whereas mass Slovene emigration began in the 1880s. Nonetheless, the Church was still the first to react significantly to the phenomenon, and this is particularly true of its spiritual shepherds. Parish priests were among the first to call attention, at Catholic Congresses or in newspapers, to the departure of their parishioners and they gave particular warning of the consequences: the dissolution of families and the return of people with new ideas, different modes of dress and manner, all of which disturbed village life.

Until now, researchers have only studied in part the archival "questionnaire" from 1913.³³ Based on my reading of the answers of parish priests to the bishop of Maribor, I can say with assurance that the work of the Church can only be understood through the work of individual parishes, which depended on the endeavors of the parish priest and his ties to his parishioners. Only the letters show us the involvement of the priests, their understanding of the emigration process, as well as their concrete

³³ The archival material of the diocese of Maribor is kept in the Episcopal Archives in Maribor (*Actes emigrantium*, 1913); that of Ljubljana is kept in the Archiepiscopal Archives in Ljubljana. The material has in part been incorporated into the following articles: Kolar, "Cerkev in izseljenstvo;" Marjan Drnovšek, "Izseljevanje iz Poljanske doline do prve svetovne vojne," *Loški razgledi* (Škofja Loka: Muzejsko društvo v Škofji Loki) 37 (1990) 51–60; Marjan Drnovšek, "Izseljevanje z območja lavantinske škofije pred prvo svetovno vojno in odnos Cerkve do tega pojava," *Napotnikov simpozij* (1992: Roma). *Organizirala Slovenska teološka akademija v Rimu, septembra 1992.* (Celje: Mohorjeva družba, 1993) 197–214.

activities during the departures of their parishioners to the U.S.A. at the turn of the century.

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POVZETEK

KATOLIŠKA CERKEV IN IZSELJEVANJE SLOVENCEV V ZDRUŽENE DRŽAVE AMERIKE PRED LETOM 1914

V tem pregledu se dotikamo množičnega izseljevanja Slovencev v obdobju treh desetletij pred prvo svetovno vojno. V tem času je šlo za odtok predvsem v ZDA, manj v Vestfalijo, Egipt in drugam. Avstro-Ogrska ni ovirala odhajanja svojih državljanov, če so moški le zadostili svoji vojaški obveznosti, a tudi ni kazala zanimanja za njih varnost in zaščito na poti v tujino. Slovenska Cerkev je bila edina, ki je bolj prizadeto skrbela za odhajajoče, dasi tudi njeno pregovarjanje, naj ne zapuščajo domovine, ni imelo dosti uspeha. O izseljenstvu se je dosti govorilo na slovenskih katoliških shodih (1892, 1900, 1906) in na slovensko-hrvaškem shodu leta 1913, vendar so bili sklepi sprejeti na teh shodih le priporočila duhovnikom in vernikom. Za praktično pomoč je do neke mere skrbela družba sv. Rafaela, še zlasti po letu 1907, ko je bila ustanovljena njena podružnica v Ljubljani. Vendar ne Družba sv. Rafaela v Ljubljani, ne katoliška cerkev na Slovenskem nista mogli zaustaviti množičnega izselevanja v Ameriko. Vloga domačih župnikov po farah, ki so najbolj poznali ta proces, odvrčali ljudi od odhajanja v tujino, skrebeli za kontakte z njimi v Ameriki in za ohranjanje ločenih družin, je še premalo raziskana v slovenskem zgodovinopisju.