

# The Ban Jelačić Trust for Disabled Soldiers and Their Families: Habsburg Dynastic Loyalty beyond National Boundaries, 1849–51

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## The General's Sabre

IT IS FITTING THAT A STORY ABOUT CHARITABLE DONATIONS and their provenance should begin with a gesture of gift giving. In 1849 a group of Habsburg subjects came together with the intention of raising money to purchase a gift for Josip Jelačić, general of the Habsburg army and Ban (Governor) of Civil Croatia. Jelačić was identified as one of the notional “saviors” of the Habsburg Empire, whose actions in the field had helped quell the revolutionary and military perils of the previous months. The proposed gift was a suitable symbol of imperial honor and military prowess: a ceremonial sabre designed especially for the Ban. Jelačić was apparently moved by the gesture but had a more practical idea: better to use the money raised for his gift to help those less fortunate (and less celebrated) than himself, it should be put toward a fund to support soldiers who had served in his units and militias and who had been injured in fighting—and also to the families of those that had been killed. To this end, a committee was already operating, based in Vienna, but collecting funds through the Ban’s Council (*Bansko Vijeće*) in Zagreb. This would become a mobilization of Habsburg society whose impetus rested on precisely the same values of dynastic loyalty and respect for the Habsburg military as the ceremonial sabre, except that many more people would have a chance to show their devotion and support to the “heroes” of 1848–49.

The substance of such dynastic loyalty has long been neglected in Habsburg historiography. Analysis of the Habsburg empire has until relatively recently been dominated by a narrative of what historian John Deak has termed “eternal decline.”<sup>1</sup> Generations of scholars have taken the monarchy’s collapse in 1918 as the starting point for an account of the long death of an empire whose polyglot composition and absence of a unifying national core rendered it increasingly

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<sup>1</sup>John Deak, *Forging a Multinational State: State Making in Imperial Austria from the Enlightenment to the First World War* (Stanford, 2015); see also, John Deak, “The Great War and the Forgotten Realm: The Habsburg Monarchy and the First World War,” *The Journal of Modern History* 86 (June 2014): 336–80.

anachronistic in the era of nationalism. Much authority for this interpretation came from the Hungarian liberal Oszkár Jászi, who, in his seminal *The Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy* (1929), published in the United States, set out in stark terms the ever-sharpening contradictions between the monarchy's centripetal (e.g., the dynasty, the army) and centrifugal forces (especially nationalism).<sup>2</sup> But recent scholarship has forced us to rethink the relationship between—and indeed the nature of—Jászi's opposing forces. Thus, the work of Laurence Cole and Daniel Unowsky has shown that dynastic loyalty in the late Habsburg period straddled categories that traditional scholarship has presented as mutually exclusive.<sup>3</sup> Rituals, symbols, and patriotic associations are shown to be hybridized factors of state and societal integration in the late Habsburg period, factors that blend national and imperial loyalties, civilian and military spheres, and various confessions. And Cole's recent monograph on military culture and popular patriotism uses the many military veterans' associations that sprang up throughout Cisleithania in the latter half of the nineteenth century to show how dynastic patriotism was situated both at a local or regional level (as opposed to emanating outward from Vienna) and how it transcended the supposedly hermetically sealed world of the Habsburg military.<sup>4</sup> Imperial space was in this way collapsed and diffused throughout the Habsburg lands and beyond its official institutions. Vienna could be symbolically closer than the local town or capital.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, Cole's latter point challenges traditional studies that have tended to see the Habsburg military as a parallel but separate sphere to the rest of Habsburg society (even if it was one whose institutional imprint could transport its officers beyond the otherwise all permeating category of national identity).<sup>6</sup>

The Revolutions of 1848–49, and especially the figure of Josip Jelačić, offer an opportunity to further explore these new approaches to Habsburg history. At first glance, the events of 1848–49 appear as a violent collision of many of the monarchy's putative centripetal and centrifugal forces: liberalism clashing with absolutism, nationalism with imperialism, the military with civilians (and armed militias), and the peripheries against the Habsburg center. This period readily fits into the Jászian interpretive framework and its language of polarized forces locked into a zero-sum struggle. But these dichotomies can be reconfigured considering the new discussions of late Habsburg society. Indeed, Pieter Judson has shown how grassroots responses to the turbulence of 1848–49 moved in a different rhythm and direction than understood in the traditional national and political narratives: "Most revolutionaries," he notes, "rejected neither the Austrian Empire nor even the rule of the Habsburgs."<sup>7</sup> And

<sup>2</sup>Oszkár Jászi, *The Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy* (Chicago, 1929).

<sup>3</sup>Laurence Cole and Daniel Unowsky, eds., *The Limits of Loyalty: Imperial Symbolism, Popular Allegiances, and State Patriotism in the Late Habsburg Monarchy* (New York, 2007).

<sup>4</sup>Laurence Cole, *Military Culture and Popular Patriotism in Late Imperial Austria* (Oxford, 2014); see also Laurence Cole, "Military Veterans and Popular Patriotism in Imperial Austria, 1870–1914," in *The Limits of Loyalty: Imperial Symbolism, Popular Allegiances, and State Patriotism in the Late Habsburg Monarchy*, eds. Laurence Cole and Daniel Unowsky (New York, 2007), 36–61. Rok Stergar has insightfully analyzed veteran associations in his article "National Indifference in the Heyday of Nationalist Mobilization? Ljubljana Military Veterans and the Language of Command," *Austria History Yearbook* 43 (2012): 45–58.

<sup>5</sup>This point is taken up by Pieter M. Judson, who notes how local disputants often looked beyond the confines of their own region or area and toward Vienna as a final arbiter. See *The Habsburg Empire: A New History* (Cambridge, MA, 2016), esp. 1–5.

<sup>6</sup>István Deák, *Beyond Nationalism: A Social and Political History of the Habsburg Officer Corps, 1848–1918* (New York, 1990).

<sup>7</sup>Judson, *The Habsburg Empire*, 156.

again, John Deak's study of the Habsburg bureaucracy shows that at a deeper level the story of 1848–49 is one of longer-term institutional continuity and progress rather than rupture.<sup>8</sup>

Jelačić embodies the ambiguities of the centripetal and centrifugal model. He was born in Petrovaradin, southern Bačka, at the time part of the Slavonian Military Frontier (today in Serbia), to a family steeped in the traditions of the Habsburg military (his father served as a lieutenant Field Marshall).<sup>9</sup> He attended the prestigious Theresian military academy in Vienna (upon recommendation of Emperor Francis I, to whom he was presented aged eight), excelled in his studies, and entered the army in 1819, rising to the rank of colonel (1841). As the revolutions began to stir in the Habsburg lands in the spring of 1848, Emperor Ferdinand reconvened the virtually defunct *Sabor* (Croat assembly) and nominated Jelačić as Ban, a nomination acclaimed by the Croat assembly shortly thereafter.<sup>10</sup>

Jelačić's career and his rise during the Revolutions of 1848–49 speak to the close convergence of South Slav and imperial interests amongst certain parts of Croat society in the first half of the nineteenth century. Jelačić was acceptable to the emperor and Vienna as a loyal soldier; he was also a figure of considerable authority within civil Croatia (which no doubt influenced the decision of the emperor's court); Jelačić was close to the Illyrian party of Ljudevit Gaj, a political group that had called for closer ties between South Slavs both within and possibly even beyond the empire's borders.<sup>11</sup> Jelačić thus embodied a variety of identifications in mid-nineteenth-century Habsburg society: an imperial loyalist, a soldier and a politician, an avatar of South Slav cultural reciprocity, and a champion of Croatian political nationalism. As Ban of Civil Croatia, he served as the Illyrian candidate, on a platform that overarched various South Slav particularisms and confessions (or at least attempted to do so); as a soldier-politician he breached the supposed divide between military and civilian spheres.

The Revolutions of 1848–49 and Jelačić's intervention in them solidified many of these identifications, even if it was not militarily or politically decisive, and even if it did not in the longer term yield many tangible results for Croats and for South Slavs. His willingness to enact imperial support on the battlefield, through the recruitment of local militias to fight against the rebellious Hungarians, cemented his reputation as a stalwart imperial soldier, both in the eyes of the army and the local South Slav populations. Soon after the revolutionary period of 1848–49 Jelačić became the subject of a burgeoning "military cult" of the kind identified by Laurence Cole in his study of the "Cisleithenian" territories of the Habsburg Empire.<sup>12</sup> South Slavs as far away as the Slovene inhabited parts of the monarchy wore "Jelačić broaches" as fashionable items that also paid homage to the Ban's heroic exploits during the revolutionary period.<sup>13</sup> There was a certain culmination to this process when a statue to Jelačić, designed by the Austrian sculptor Anton Dominik Fernkorn, was unveiled in Zagreb's main square (1866). The statue featured the Ban on horseback holding his sabre in front of him, facing due north, that is, toward the Hungarians.

<sup>8</sup>Deak, *Forging a Multinational State*, 65–98.

<sup>9</sup>For details of Jelačić's life, see Rudolf Horvat, *Ban Jelačić* (Zagreb, 1909), Andjelko Mijatović, *Ban Jelačić* (Zagreb, 1990), and in English, Ante Čuvalo, "Josip Jelačić—Ban of Croatia," *Review of Croatian History* 1 (2008): 13–27.

<sup>10</sup>See Tomislav Markus, ed., *Korespondencija bana Jelačića i Banskoga vijeća: 1848–1850* [Correspondence of Ban Jelačić and the Ban's Council 1848–1850] (Zagreb, 1998).

<sup>11</sup>See Jaroslav Šidak et al., *Hrvatski narodni preporod: ilirski pokret* [Croatian national revival: The Illyrian movement] (Zagreb, 1988), and in English, Elinor Murray Despalatović, *Ljudevit Gaj and the Illyrian Movement* (New York, 1975).

<sup>12</sup>Cole, *Military Culture*, esp. 63–65.

<sup>13</sup>With thanks to Irena Selišnik for this information.

As noted in the opening paragraph, in the wake of his military campaign Jelačić and his supporters initiated a mobilization of civil society to raise funds for the support of his soldiers that had been disabled in the recent fighting. Like Jelačić's military and political support, the philanthropic mobilization in the main part encompassed the various regions of the Habsburg South Slav lands, transcending political borders, regionalisms, religions, and "nations." The most intense period of this funding drive lasted about a year, that is, until the end of 1850, whereupon the "Ban Jelačić Trust for Disabled Veterans and Their Families" was established in Zagreb. In its first year, the funding committee was based in Vienna and was presided over by Metel Ožegović, an employee of the imperial government. But the respondents came in large part from the Habsburg South Slav lands, and the Trust would be based in Zagreb throughout its lifetime.

The Jelačić Trust serves as a small but significant example of the successful mobilization of Habsburg civilian society around a patriotic dynastic cause. Press reporting about the Trust was couched in terms that transcended confessional and regional divides in the Habsburg lands, thus mirroring Jelačić's attempts to unify these territories in his political and military project. But dynastic loyalty was present too, both in the Trust's considerable publicity in the Viennese press, and in the many positive responses to the Trust's presiding committee and its requests for financial support. These offers of support came from civilian and military sources, as well as from religious institutions (both Catholic and Orthodox Christian). Some were large, but many were very small, deriving from private individuals. This article shows that dynastic patriotism could at least partially move beyond religious, regional, and national affiliations, and that it could breach the division between military and civilian spheres in the empire. The responses to the committee's call, their volume and scale, and the patriotic language in which they are expressed show how, without coercion or entreaty, Habsburg society in the South Slav lands could spontaneously mobilize and coalesce around a charismatic figure such as Josip Jelačić, a symbol of both imperial and South Slav loyalty. It also shows the way in which Habsburg "peripheries" such as Zagreb could, in times of crisis, look directly to the imperial "center" (Vienna) as an important point of loyalty, thus expanding upon Judson's argument, cited previously, that local and regional actors felt directly connected to the imperial capital as the primary source of collective affiliation.

### The Origins of the Ban Jelačić Trust

The context for the establishment of the Ban Jelačić Trust was the spate of private or semiofficial charitable initiatives that appeared, largely spontaneously, after the fighting ended in 1849. Typically, these initiatives were associated with the most senior Habsburg commanders of the 1848–49 campaigns. Thus, along with the future Jelačić Trust, associations offering financial support for disabled veterans bore the names of field marshals Josef Radecký/Radetzky, Ludwig von Welden, Alfred von Windisch-Grätz, and General Julius Jacob von Haynau. In addition to this, regionally associated funds were organized in territories such as Bohemia and Tyrol, for the benefit of soldiers recruited from these lands.<sup>14</sup> Not all funding was voluntary, as in the case of the "disloyal" Hungarian town of Kőszeg, fined (by Field-Marshal

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<sup>14</sup>The Windisch-Grätz Fund highlighted its namesake's merits as a savior of the monarchy; donations went to disabled veterans from Bohemian regiments. See "Aufruf zu Beiträgen für die F. M. Fürst Windischgrätz-Invaliden Stiftung," *Wiener Zeitung*, 10 Apr. 1851, 8.

Welden) the sum of 50,000 forints, a punitive for the many “Croat Soldiers of the Krajina” who had been killed there in the recent fighting. The money was intended for the families (widows and orphans) of the deceased soldiers.<sup>15</sup>

The Jelačić Trust started life out of a philanthropic initiative in October 1849, apparently originating with Jelačić. In this initial phase, the plan was to establish a committee, based in Vienna, that would collect donations, largely from the Habsburg South Slav lands, that would in turn form the principle capital against which the Trust could offer loans to private individuals.<sup>16</sup> The first president of the committee was Metel Ožegović, a ministerial advisor of the imperial government, whose appointment was welcomed in a personal letter from Jelačić.<sup>17</sup> Aside from the president and vice-president, the committee was to be comprised of three civilians and three military members.<sup>18</sup> This balance, a reflection of Jelačić’s own position at the intersection of military and civilian spheres, was assiduously upheld, and it was carried over to the Trust’s presiding body from 1850 onward.<sup>19</sup> One of the first secretaries of the Trust was Petar Preradović, Jelačić’s ally, a fellow Illyrian, Habsburg general, Catholic convert (his parents had been Serbian Orthodox), and, like Jelačić, a product of the prestigious Theresian Military Academy.<sup>20</sup>

The committee members were mindful of the need to publicize their initiative in the press and to relevant parts of Habsburg society for it to be successful. To this end, a Croat language circular letter was sent out to the various parts of the Habsburg South Slav lands in October, bearing the letterhead of the Ban’s Council and addressed to “all regions of Croatia and Slavonia” (although, in fact, its reach extended beyond these territories). It opened with the lines: “The war for the capital and for the whole of the Austrian empire has ended fortunately but has resulted in many victims from our people [*narod*], of whom the most difficult to look upon are the seriously wounded, those who are returning from Italy and Hungary almost every day.”<sup>21</sup> The letter then announced that a sum of 12,000 “forints” had already been donated by three “women from our homeland”: countesses Šmideg-Šamaré, Drašković-Baćani, and Erdödy-Raimond.<sup>22</sup> The money raised was intended to aid disabled soldiers from the “Triune Kingdom”—a reference to the historic kingdom of medieval

<sup>15</sup>Državni arhiv u Zagrebu [State archives in Zagreb] (hereafter HR-DAZG), fond 785 “Zaklada bana Jelačića za nemoćne vojnike i njihove obitelji” [Ban Jelacic Foundation for Disabled Soldiers and Their Families], kutija 2, “Pravila Zaklade Jelačića-Bana” [Rules of the Jelačić-Ban Foundation].

<sup>16</sup>*Wiener Zeitung*, Abend Beilage, 10 Nov. 1849, 2.

<sup>17</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 3, 3293/293. For Ožegović’s biography, see Ernst Bauer “Ožegović von Barlabaševac und Bela, Metel, Freiherr,” in *Biographisches Lexikon zur Geschichte Südosteuropas*, vol. 3, eds. Mathias Bernath and Felix von Schroeder (Munich, 1979), 377–78, accessed 27 Apr. 2017, <http://www.bi lex.ios-regensburg.de/BioLexViewview.php?ID=1493>. See also Ivica Zvonar, “Korespondencija Metela Ožegovića u arhivu hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti u Zagrebu: nekoliko priloga za životopis” [Correspondence of Metel Ožegović in the archives of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zagreb], in *Zbornik Odsjeka za povijesne znanosti Zavoda za povijesne i društvene znanosti Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti* [Proceedings of the Department of Historical Research of the Institute for Historical and Social Research of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts] 31 (Dec. 2013), 231–46.

<sup>18</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 2, “Pravila Zaklade Jelačića-Bana.”

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup>Ante Stamać, “Preradović, Petar von,” in *Österreichisches Biographisches Lexikon 1815–1950*, vol. 8 (Vienna, 1983), 264–65.

<sup>21</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 2, “Okruženo pismo” [Circular letter].

<sup>22</sup>The question of currencies in the postrevolutionary period is rather complex. Hungarians tended to call the Habsburg gulden the “forint” (always singular). But in 1848 Hungary produced its own currency, the “kreuzer” (*Krajczár*) and the “ducat” (*Dukát*), and then also a paper currency known as the “pengő,” whilst the Croats too, introduced a new currency, a silver coinage known (confusingly) as the “forint.” It appears that the documents



Croatia, divided at that time, but whose unification had been one of the aims of Jelačić's governorship—and also from the “Serbian Vojvodina.”<sup>23</sup> The letter went on to implore charitable giving from all regions “whichever faith they may be,” and from “spiritual quarters ... especially from the side of the churches.”<sup>24</sup> Along with war widows and orphans, the wording of the letter was particularly sensitive to the problem of war disability, and those who were “forever broken” by the recent battles, who needed nothing more than the “innate charity and patriotism” of their fellow subjects.<sup>25</sup> The closing lines evoked Jelačić, stating that a positive response to this letter would be “for his noble heart the dearest monument and the most cherished gift of our love.”<sup>26</sup>

The patriotic language of the circular was duplicated in the Viennese press. Amongst the most prominent early supporters of the committee was Michael von Rambach, an editor of the official—and influential—gazette *Wiener Zeitung* and a great supporter of charitable and philanthropic groups in the capital. At the time of the formation of the committee in Vienna and Zagreb, Rambach was already involved in a large-scale donation campaign to support Hungarian subjects who had remained loyal to the monarchy in the revolution; he was also a committee member of the foundation for disabled veterans of Field-Marshal Windisch-Grätz's military campaign. Rambach offered to print news and announcements from the Jelačić committee free of charge in the pages of his newspaper.<sup>27</sup>

The countesses were thus also able to publish their request for funding in the most widely circulated Viennese daily newspaper, asking the capital's inhabitants and “the remainder of the united monarchy [*Gesammtmonarchie*] of Austria to donate to the Jelačić Fund for Invalid Warriors of the following Crownlands: Croatia, Slavonia, including the Military Frontier, and the Serbian Vojvodina.”<sup>28</sup> The organizers made it clear that support of the committee was also support of the postrevolutionary Habsburg state: “We do not only beg, we are convinced that all high-minded inhabitants of the Monarchy will support our heroic Ban.”<sup>29</sup> In another announcement they highlighted Jelačić's role as a Habsburg patriot by telling the readers of *Wiener Zeitung* that it was he and his soldiers who rescued the imperial capital: “The association is named after a man who is often called Vienna's savior.”<sup>30</sup> And indeed, Jelačić as savior of the empire was a recurrent theme both in the public promotion of the committee and in the letters that accompanied donations.<sup>31</sup>

More detail on the committee was supplied in a November 1849 article (a reprint of an article first published in the Zagreb-based *Agramer Zeitung*) that gave information about the formation of the committee and spoke of it as an initiative of patriotic Habsburg subjects, belonging to

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cited here and in the following text refer to this last, Croat “forint.” With thanks to Eric Beckett Weaver for this information.

<sup>23</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 2, “Okruženo pismo.”

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>“Jellacic Invalidenfonds Comite, Oeffentlicher Dank,” *Wiener Zeitung*, 19 May 1850, 8.

<sup>28</sup>“Aufruf,” *Wiener Zeitung*, 2 Sept. 1849, 2428.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>“Aufruf,” *Wiener Zeitung*, 12 Sept. 1849, 2508, but also in Gräfin Draskovic-Bathany, Gräfin Erdödy-Raimond, Gräfin Schmidegg-Chamare, “Aufruf,” *Oesterreichischer Soldatenfreund*, 3 Nov. 1849, 616; as well as Gräfin Draskovic-Bathany, Gräfin Erdödy-Raimond, and Gräfin Schmidegg-Chamare, “Aufruf,” *Der Oesterreichische Zuschauer. Zeitschrift für Kunst, Wissenschaft und geistiges Leben*, 2 Oct. 1849, 1807–8.

<sup>31</sup>As only one prominent example where the Trust thanked a donor for his support of the idea of the united monarchy (*Gesammtmonarchie*). Österreichisches Staatsarchiv/Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv, Nachlässe, AN Bach, Konv. Letters “W,” letter from the Jellacic Trust to Alexander von Bach, 18.1.1851.

different national groups, who were nevertheless united by a common aim, namely, to heal the wounds caused by the recent “civil war.” According to the article, this had in fact been a conflict in which “men of German and Slavic origin fought side by side regardless of their nationality,” something that was reflected also in the committee, wherein “harmony overcame national jealousy ... a good sign that in this association national quarrels do not exist and will not exist in the future.”<sup>32</sup> The newspaper went on to salute the committee’s goal of “unity and a peaceful answer to national chaos in a strong, free, and independent Austria. We must thank ... Metel Ožegović. He recognized the importance of supporting such an endeavor from the center of the united monarchy [*Gesammtmonarchie*], but thanks must also go to the women in Croatia who initially started [the committee, i.e., countesses Šmideg-Šamaré, Drašković-Baćani, and Erdödy-Raimond] ... Members of this association are and will be men who have dedicated their hearts to heroic warriors, as well as to the preservation of the unified Fatherland [*Gesammt-Vaterland*].”<sup>33</sup> The article mentioned support for the committee coming from other important figures, including Rambach, and Franjo Freiherr von Kulmer (who had been appointed in December 1848 as Minister for Croatia).<sup>34</sup>

Two days later the *Wiener Zeitung* reported on a meeting in Zagreb between a delegation of the committee, led by Metel Ožegović and Jelačić.<sup>35</sup> Ožegović highlighted to Jelačić the threats that revolution had posed to the Habsburg throne, to the monarchy, and to European order and society more generally. In these “sad times,” said Ožegović, the Ban had proved his love of the fatherland and his love for the Habsburg throne, which he had defended, along with all its “fraternal peoples” [*Brüdervölker Österreichs*]. Under Jelačić’s leadership, Ožegović went on, brave sons of the South Slav nation successfully defeated anarchy; they were now returning home “crippled,” it was the duty of grateful Austrian subjects to support them.<sup>36</sup> Jelačić reportedly accepted Ožegović’s praise, adding that in his work for the “salvation of the Fatherland” he was merely an instrument of “God’s own will.”<sup>37</sup> The newspaper concluded that “all patriots could see that at this moment the committee, in pursuit of its goal, knew no differences between nationalities.” It was also reported that the committee members hailed Jelačić as the “Pride of the undivided Fatherland [*Gesamtvaterland*].”<sup>38</sup>

The language of contemporary press articles—especially in Vienna—must be treated advisedly. These could be positive expressions of dynastic loyalty and national indifference on the part of the protagonists; but it must also be acknowledged that the newspapers were read and watched over carefully by Habsburg officials in this uncertain postrevolutionary period. Jelačić was thus rarely referred to as a “Croat,” but rather in terms of his heroic service as an imperial officer (e.g., “the pioneer for the unity of the Austrian state” [*Vorkämpfers der österreichischen Staatseinheit*]).<sup>39</sup> Viennese newspapers such as the *Wiener Zeitung* tended to highlight the supranational character of the committee’s work, a tendency duplicated in the public announcements of the committee. They emphasized Jelačić’s supposed role as savior of the Habsburg state, and usually mentioned his Croat identity only in relation to his political office as “Ban of Croatia.” Similarly, disabled veterans—the subject,

<sup>32</sup> *Wiener Zeitung*, Abend Beilage, 10 Nov. 1849, 2.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Wiener Zeitung*, 12 Nov. 1849, 1078.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> *Oesterreichische Volkszeitung*, 21 Mar. 1851, 267.

after all, of this funding campaign—were usually identified by the regions from whence they came (the Military Frontier, Dalmatia, and so on) rather than their identity as Croats or Serbs.<sup>40</sup>

### A Tale of Two Charities: The Rivalry with Paul Schulz's Foundation

The committee was not the only body using Jelačić's name to garner financial and material support for disabled veterans of the general's campaign, however, and Ožegović and his allies faced a rival in the form of ministerial civil servant Paul Schulz, who had formed a "Jelačić Foundation" and was also collecting money for disabled veterans as early as June 1849, that is, several months before the Trust started its work.<sup>41</sup> Schulz would later claim that it was he who first had the idea of using Jelačić's name as part of a charitable effort to raise funds for wounded soldiers. The *Wiener Zeitung*, reporting on the rivalry, described it as a race "to show gratitude towards Jelačić."<sup>42</sup>

Schulz and Ožegović had in fact met to discuss coordinating their efforts, with the latter informing the former that he intended to establish a trust that would support disabled veterans from the "South Slav regions of the empire." Schulz responded by pointing out that he had already begun such an initiative, one that was officially supported by the War Ministry in Vienna. Nevertheless, Schulz showed a willingness to support the committee, if he was acknowledged as the founder and "guiding spirit" [*spiritus rector*] of the project. He also offered to change the statutes of his foundation so that they extended to South Slavs from all parts of the empire (a notable broadening of remit: until then Ožegović had restricted his efforts to the *Graničari*: the soldiers of the Military Frontier). He also suggested that any donations collected be sent directly to the War Ministry, rather than elsewhere (the committee's donations were sent to Zagreb, see following text). Ožegović's sole concession at this meeting was the extension of his committee's funding efforts to include South Slavs from the Dalmatian territories of the monarchy. After failing to make the progress he had hoped with Ožegović, Schulz went directly to Jelačić, suggesting to him the idea of uniting the two associations (insisting once again that he, Schulz, was mentioned as founder). Jelačić did indeed respond, bypassing the matter of the future of the associations, but promising to award Schulz the Order of Franz Joseph (the highest civilian distinction in the empire at that time). Schulz double-checked this offer with the War Ministry, who explained that Jelačić did not have the authority to hand out such awards (he did not) and that Schulz should desist in his own efforts because "enough is already being done for the Croats [*sic*]." Schulz duly closed his operation.<sup>43</sup>

Schulz's initiative failed for several reasons. This was a struggle first and foremost about personalities and publicity rather than about political persuasion or national affiliation. So,

<sup>40</sup>There is a possible distinction here with private sources, autobiographies, or church records, that more often indicated the Croat identity of Jelačić's soldiers. Thus, for example, one parish near Vienna chronicled how "On October 9 [1848] Ban Jelačić arrived in Austria with his Croatian army to force down rebellious Vienna." See *Gedenkbuch der Pfarre Bernhardsthal veröffentlicht in der Reihe Beiträge zur Geschichte Bernhardthals und Umgebung*, 115, accessed 26 May 2017, <http://museumbernhardsthal.at/images/pdf/Gedenkbuch.pdf>.

<sup>41</sup>Schulz published an account of his foundation, in which he devoted much space to his rivalry with the committee. See Paul Schulz, *Die Jellacic-Stiftung. Pragmatische Geschichte ihrer Gründung, in Verbindung mit dem Revolutions-Zeitalter von 1789 bis 1850. Verfasst und zum Besten der Grenztruppen herausgegeben von Paul Schulz, k.k. Staatsbeamter und Gründer der Stiftung* (Vienna, 1851).

<sup>42</sup>"Aufruf," *Wiener Zeitung*, 2 Sept. 1849, 2428.

<sup>43</sup>Schulz, *Die Jellacic-Stiftung* (Vienna, 1851), 70–71.



despite initially having the better networks at the War Ministry, Schulz never gained the support and patronage of Jelačić. This and the support of the *Wiener Zeitung* for the Committee were decisive. Thus, Rambach's *Wiener Zeitung* came out in favor of the committee over Schulz, making the latter's efforts at promotion and collection of donations even more difficult. The newspaper claimed that the committee's real aim was broader than Schulz's because it was working toward "the foundation of a large Jelačić Fund that supports all invalids [i.e., throughout the South Slav lands of the monarchy]."<sup>44</sup> Schulz faced further problems when certain press outlets confused his foundation with Ožegović's committee, so, for example, the *Österreichische Zuschauer* asked their readers to support the "Jelačić Foundation" by sending money to Metel Ožegović.<sup>45</sup> The Trust used the press to criticize Schulz, imputing his efforts as being made "out of ignoble interests" [*aus einem nicht edlen Interesse*], namely, collecting money to advance his own reputation, rather than to help disabled soldiers.<sup>46</sup> The committee maintained that their efforts were exclusively in support of the "defenders of the fatherland."<sup>47</sup>

Schulz would complain of Rambach that not only did he refuse his foundation support, but he also wrote critically about it in his newspaper. Schulz reported this to the War Ministry, complaining that the *Wiener Zeitung* was supporting the Trust against his foundation even before it (the Trust) was officially sanctioned by the Emperor. He also mentioned how his own donors, among them officers of the *Graničar* [Military Border, or *Grenzer*] regiments, were complaining that their names and donations were still unpublished. (Interestingly, the bulk of donors mentioned here were Croats.<sup>48</sup>) Rambach's support was indeed an important reason why the Committee succeeded over Schulz's foundation. Schulz never achieved widespread recognition or acknowledgment in the Viennese press. Eventually, the Trust would gain the official support that had initially been bestowed upon Schulz's foundation (e.g., free printing of their materials by the Ministry of Finance).<sup>49</sup> Even the Ministry of War would switch from supporting Schulz to supporting the Trust.<sup>50</sup>

### Donors and Donations beyond National, Linguistic, Social, and Regional Boundaries

The initial struggle with Schulz and its swift conclusion in favor of the committee show the importance of publicity in the Viennese capital, and of having the right connections (e.g., with the press). But Vienna was only one side of the committee's equations: Its activities and its funding drive was also located in Zagreb. So, whilst the committee's initial headquarters and most important networks were based in Vienna, the bulk of the donations came from the Habsburg South Slav lands. These donations, from the end of 1849 and in the spring of 1850, were gathered by the military department of the Ban's Council (*Bansko Vijeće—Vojni Odsjek*).

Donors in their responses echoed the language of the original circular letter, expressing concern at the sacrifices of soldiers disabled whilst fighting for the empire, and acknowledging the prestige of Jelačić. The size and provenance of their contributions ranged

<sup>44</sup>*Wiener Zeitung*, Abend Beilage, 10 Nov. 1849, 2.

<sup>45</sup>*Der Österreichische Zuschauer. Zeitschrift für Kunst, Wissenschaft und geistiges Leben*, 10 Oct. 1849, 1864.

<sup>46</sup>"Jellacic Invalidenfonds Comite, Oeffentlicher Dank," *Wiener Zeitung*, 19 May 1850, 8.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup>Schulz, *Die Jellacic-Stiftung*, 70–71.

<sup>49</sup>*Wiener Zeitung*, Abend Beilage, 10 Nov. 1849, 2.

<sup>50</sup>"Jellacic Invalidenfonds Comite, Oeffentlicher Dank," *Wiener Zeitung*, 19 May 1850, 8.

from small amounts from private individuals through to large sums from institutions and wealthier benefactors, a trend that continued throughout the committee's funding drive. The response to the initial request was impressive, and until the end of 1849, the committee in Vienna collected monies and contributions from Zagreb that served as principle capital for the future trust. Contributions came not just from Civil Croatia (Jelačić's political stronghold), but also from the Military Frontier and the Vojvodina; they came from civilians, military quarters, and churches in those territories. Jelačić's mobilization thus straddled territories, nations, and religions, as well as the supposedly separate spheres of military and civilian society.

Examples of small-scale mobilizations are present in early responses to the circular letter. Thus, for example, in Zagreb and its environs, a series of small donations, ranging from twenty-two to ninety-six forints were contributed by teachers from local elementary schools and gymnasias, for a total sum of 295 forints.<sup>51</sup> Support for Jelačić is perhaps understandable so close to the source of his political and popular power in the capital of Civil (Banal) Croatia. But grassroots mobilization in aid of disabled veterans came from other quarters, too. In Ruma, for example, a town that bordered Serbia, had a large Orthodox population, and was an important center of the Serbian revolution in 1848–49, the district officer reported that a sum of 123 forints had been donated to the Ban's committee "in gratitude" from "residents" (*žitaljah*) of the town.<sup>52</sup> Common cause with the Serbian Orthodox revolutionaries was tacitly acknowledged in the committee's correspondences, which routinely referred to the territories of Bačka, Baranja, and the Banat as the "Serbian Vojvodina," the appellation used by the revolutionaries. This was a small figure, but evidence of cross-confessional support for Jelačić's display of dynastic loyalty, and of course the support for him as the Illyrian candidate amongst the Serbian population. So too was the contribution of 218 forints sent from the newly established Patriarchate (formerly the Metropolitanate) of Sremski Karlovci, the town in which the unification of Srem, Banat, Bačka, and Baranja into the "Serbian Vojvodina" had been announced, and whose church leaders had supported Jelačić as Ban of Civil Croatia. The letter that accompanied this donation was written in Serbian Cyrillic.<sup>53</sup> Jelačić seemed to acknowledge the symbolic significance of this display of interconfessional support for his Trust, and perhaps, also, the importance of religious piety in the collecting of funds for deceased soldiers of all faiths. From Vienna, he wrote a personal note of thanks to the "People of Karlovci" for their support for him and his soldiers (thanking in the same letter the countesses Šmideg and Drašković for their efforts on behalf of the trust).<sup>54</sup>

Larger sums still came from towns that bordered Hungary and whose residents perhaps felt a more immediate sense of threat and military sacrifice in the recent conflicts. Thus, from Varaždin, a town of the Military Frontier, was sent a large donation of 579 forints, and in Osijek (Esseg), another town with a mixed population, a local "patriotic society" held a "festive evening" of song and dance (in February 1850) in support of the committee, raising an impressive sum of 610 forints.<sup>55</sup> This money, "diligently collected," was offered modestly as a "small gift from [its] patriotic residents."<sup>56</sup> Public events such as the one in Osijek/Esseg were not an uncommon means of raising money for disabled veterans, it seems. Thus, in

<sup>51</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 2, "Bansko Vijeće Vojni Odsjek" [Ban's Council: Military Department], 1463/143.

<sup>52</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 2, "Bansko Vijeće Vojni Odsjek," 1478/158.

<sup>53</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 2, "Banska Vlada," 296/1850.

<sup>54</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 2, "Bansko Vijeće Vojni Odsjek," 1014/114.

<sup>55</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 2, "Bansko Vijeće Vojni Odsjek," 1479/159.

<sup>56</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 2, "Bansko Vijeće Vojni Odsjek," 2781/241.

August 1850, a musical society in Zagreb held an evening of “singing and music” at the city theater (which would later become the National Theatre) in Zagreb. This evening of festivities was held in honor not only of “the noble Ban” and his soldiers, but also in celebration of “His Highness, and our gracious Emperor and King Franz Joseph the First.” The evening raised 204 forints.<sup>57</sup> Dynastic patriotism was in this way not simply a matter of handing over money, it was also performed and celebrated at the local level.<sup>58</sup>

Soldiers still under arms, presumably veterans of the 1848–49 campaigns, were also, understandably, sympathetic to the committee’s efforts. So in May 1850 recruits serving in barracks collected 215 forints for the committee.<sup>59</sup> One retired cavalry captain, Josip Čenolavec, promised to pay ten forints from his pension every year in perpetuity to the committee for the benefit of his wounded comrades.<sup>60</sup> A similar concern with the longer-term financial needs of the disabled veterans was behind one of the largest private donations to the committee, made in the spring of 1850, by Nikola Vakamović, a captain from the coastal town of Bakar. He offered a sum of 1,000 forints for the support of disabled veterans of the recent campaign, to be paid incrementally over a period of ten years. Vakamović’s letter greeted Jelačić personally as the “father of the homeland” and spoke of the “many kinds” of victims of “our people” [*narod*] who made their sacrifices for “the freedom of the homeland.” “Many kinds” was an apparent reference to Vakamović’s awareness that sacrifice meant not only the soldiers who had died in the fighting, but also those who had been disabled, and, of course, the families of men wounded or killed. “Homeland” at first glance appears to be a distinction in terminology from the language of the Austrian press, which, as we have seen, also lauded Jelačić’s heroism and the sacrifice of his soldiers but tended to deploy terms such as “Unified Empire” or “Undivided Fatherland.” But on closer inspection Vakamović’s concept of homeland was not so parochial: It was, in fact, diffused across the empire, for Vakamović also spoke of victims who were not just “native” [*domorodci*] but who came from “all corners of the empire,” seemingly fusing the local concerns of support for South Slav veterans with the larger interests of the empire. Vakamović ended his letter by asking that his donation be paid over a period of ten years, hoping in this way that the Ban Jelačić Trust would become a pillar of support for disabled veterans and their families long into the future, because their support was a long-term commitment, but also because such a trust could serve as a patriotic monument to the sacrifice these men had made for empire and homeland during the conflict.<sup>61</sup> In this way, Vakamović seemingly anticipated the dynastic patriotism of the latter-nineteenth century.<sup>62</sup>

Jelačić took a personal interest and investment in the committee in its formative period, and he made personal donations whose value was related to prestige of the Ban’s office, as well as the Jelačić and his stature as a military hero. In March 1850, Jelačić requested that copies of a new edition of his own poetry collection first published in 1825 in German *Eine Stunde der Erinnerung* (A Moment of Remembrance) be printed for sale, the proceeds of which would be donated to the committee.<sup>63</sup> A total of 929 copies were distributed for this purpose, 500 of which were sent to Metel Ožegović to be sold in Vienna, with the remainder dispatched to

<sup>57</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 2, “Banska Vlada,” 149/1946.

<sup>58</sup>On this topic, see Daniel Unowsky, *The Pomp and Politics of Patriotism: Imperial Celebrations in Habsburg Austria, 1848–1916* (West Lafayette, 2005).

<sup>59</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 2, “Banska Vlada,” 101.

<sup>60</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 2, “Banska Vlada,” 1179–850.

<sup>61</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 2, “Bansko Vijeće Vojni Odsjek,” 11599/1839.

<sup>62</sup>As analyzed in Cole, *Military Culture*.

<sup>63</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 3, 3293/293.

various parts of Croatia-Slavonia and the Military Frontier.<sup>64</sup> The Ban's poetry was apparently a popular purchase, for the committee wrote to Jelačić in March 1850 requesting that more copies be supplied for sale on behalf of disabled soldiers.<sup>65</sup> And Metel Ožegović emulated Jelačić's personal donation: The first president of the committee donated lithographs of his own drawings for sale on behalf of the Trust, raising the considerable sum of 651 forints.<sup>66</sup> Word of the committee's work had transcended the boundaries of the empire's South Slav territories, for several copies of Ožegović's lithographs were sold for 185 forints to a buyer in Belgrade, a "Major Pradosavlević" who had heard of the committee in the press (*Narodne Novine*), evidence of the efficacy of the committee's publicity campaign.<sup>67</sup>

By June 1850, the committee could report back favorably on the monies it had gathered: 26,240 forints—a success that was attributed to the way in which the initiative had been promoted publicly, in the press (a practice that therefore needed to continue), and to the "native love" (*domorodna ljubav*) of the people who had contributed so far.<sup>68</sup> And the committee's ledger for August 1850 revealed the breadth of donations thus far, many coming from private citizens, often soldiers who had served in Jelačić's army, but also trustees such as Metal Ožegović, associations such as the Zagreb Musical Society, and many other quarters.<sup>69</sup> The committee expressed thanks to their donors in the pages of the *Wiener Zeitung*, claiming that with their generosity they had publicly shown their love and patriotism for the "Unified Fatherland" (*Gesamtvaterland*).<sup>70</sup> Jelačić contacted the committee in Vienna again in October 1850, almost exactly one year since the original circular letter calling for donations. He expressed satisfaction at the progress made by the committee in gathering funds for the Trust and congratulated them for money they had raised. He asked that arrangements be made to transfer the donations collected into a savings bank in Zagreb, so that the Trust would be ready to give out loans as soon as possible.<sup>71</sup>

The Trust was duly constituted, and began its work on 12 November 1850.<sup>72</sup> The central committee announced in a notice to the press that because it established itself at the end of 1849, it had raised a sum of 36,544 Croatian "forints" (by way of comparison, according to a report in 1850, the "Kaiser-Franz-Joseph Invalid Trust" in Graz looks on a capital of 40,318 gulden, a Tyrolian Trust took 81,000 gulden, and a trust from Upper Austria took 50,000 gulden).<sup>73</sup> Loans would now be available to people from "Croatia, Slavonia, Dalmatia, Croatia-Slavonia, the Serbian Military Frontier, and the Serbian Vojvodina" at a rate of 5 percent interest (five forints on every hundred forints loaned).<sup>74</sup> The first recorded loan request, for 6,000 forints, came from a guesthouse in Senj.<sup>75</sup> Thereafter, the existing records of the Jelačić Trust feature thousands of requests (and accompanying decisions) about loans

<sup>64</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 2, "Bansko Vijeće Vojni Odsjek," 1012/112.

<sup>65</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 3, 3299/299.

<sup>66</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 2, "Banska Vlada," 395/1850. HR-DAZG.785, kutija 3, 3286/286.

<sup>67</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 2, "Bansko Vijeće Vojni Odsjek," 1017/117.

<sup>68</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 3, 6075/475.

<sup>69</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 2, "Banska Vlada," 1541/1850.

<sup>70</sup>*Jellacic Invalidenfonds Comite, Oeffentlicher Dank, Wiener Zeitung*, 19 May 1850, 8.

<sup>71</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 3, 3456/1850

<sup>72</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 2, "Pravila Zaklade Jelačića-Bana."

<sup>73</sup>*Leipziger Zeitung*, 19 July 1851, 2. In Oct. 1851, a committee was founded received the state's license to organize a lottery (a state monopoly) to collect money for all five large disabled veteran associations. See Philipp Weil, *Wiener Jahrbuch für Zeitgeschichte, Kunst und Industrie, und Oesterreichische Walhalla* (Vienna, 1851), see entry for 19 Oct.

<sup>74</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 2, "1850," "Oglas."

<sup>75</sup>HR-DAZG.785, kutija 2, "1850," 4080/1830.

for personal capital, mortgages, and so on. In February 1851, the Trust was granted official status (*Landesfonds*, which meant, *inter alia*, it no longer had to pay postal charges).<sup>76</sup> It became a mainstay of Zagreb civil society, providing mortgages and loans to applicants and using the interest paid on these to provide financial support to the families of disabled veterans of the 1848–49 campaign. It continued to operate until long after the demise of the monarchy.<sup>77</sup>

## Conclusion

The formation of the Trust's funding committee in Vienna, the positive and spontaneous response to the Ban's request throughout the South Slav lands, and the successful establishment of the Trust from 1850 onward speak to the existence of a positive dynastic loyalty in the midst of a serious challenge to the monarchy's legitimacy. Josip Jelačić was a conduit for this display of dynastic and South Slav patriotism, but the correspondences of the committee from 1848–51 speak to the numerous and varied sources from which it sprang. As we have seen, financial support came from a range of classes and ethnic backgrounds—although with a strong showing of South Slavs (so much so that the initial intention to support war veterans from the Military Frontier was soon expanded to support all South Slavs who had served in the conflicts of 1848–49 under Jelačić).

Even so, the money may have fallen short of the sum required to provide social care to disabled veterans of Jelačić's campaign (a topic that warrants further research). In 1851 the *Leipziger Zeitung* reported that there were still 3,364 invalids, widows, and orphans who needed the support of the Jelačić Trust, and that since 1849 sufficient money had been collected to support just one hundred of them.<sup>78</sup> The article's aim, of course, was to highlight the need for more donations, hoping to appeal to Austrian subjects living in the German lands. Initial conclusions need to be treated with caution. The initiative was after all a trust, whose intention was to provide longer-term financial support to disabled veterans and their families through interest gained on loans to private individuals, and only in the longer term can these results be judged. We can say with certainty that the Trust lasted well into the future in Zagreb, surviving World War I and indeed the empire, a probable sign that it was doing something right. It mobilized diverse parts of the monarchy's South Slav provinces, it was discussed in the press, books about its activities were published, and in the short term the committee and the Trust contributed to the public discussion about the role and value of South Slav provinces and their inhabitants.

As already mentioned, Jelačić's historical legacy has been disputed terrain for more than 150 years, celebrated by some (e.g., in contemporary Croatia), reviled by others (historically, in Hungary), and consigned to the periphery by others still (in Austria and beyond). Croat historiography, wherein Jelačić looms largest, has lately interpreted the Ban as an important forerunner and combatant in the struggle for Croatian nationhood. But this is not how he was considered in the years immediately after the revolution: The organizers and donors of the

<sup>76</sup>Landesgesetz- und Regierungsblatt für das Kronland Tirol und Vorarlberg, X. Stück, 18.3.1851, Erlass des Handelsministeriums vom 3. Februar 1851 über die Portofreiheit der Commission zur Verwaltung des Ban Jelacic-Invalidenfondes in Agram, 41.

<sup>77</sup>A brief account of the Trust post-1918 activities are reported in "Zaklada bana grofa Josipa Jelačića" [Ban Josip Jelačić's Foundation], *Zaprešićki godišnjak* [Zaprešić Yearbook] 1 (1991), 77–86.

<sup>78</sup>*Leipziger Zeitung*, 19 July 1851, 2.



Trust, mainly South Slavs of various background, saw him as the savior of a unified empire that consisted of many different peoples. But because German-language historiography has not dealt with Jelačić at great length, enough interpretive space has been left open for different perspectives, allowing Jelačić to become an almost exclusively national symbol. It was not ever thus, and the example of the Jelačić Trust and its formation in 1849–51 shows how in its earliest stages, the Jelačić cult was born at the intersection of military and civilian spheres in Habsburg society, and came out of a largely spontaneous manifestation of dynastic loyalty and support.

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