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Croatia-Slavonia in the Year 1914 from a Cultural Perspective

Introduction

In the year 1914, when the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy entered World War I, Croatia-Slavonia was an autonomous province within the Lands of the Hungarian Crown, or the Hungarian part of the Habsburg Empire. This province was the political core of the 'Triune Kingdom.' However, the Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia-Dalmatia (this was the official name of the country) was not united. The provinces of Istria and Dalmatia with the city of Dubrovnik and the islands of the Eastern Adriatic were parts of the Austrian half of the Dual Monarchy. Međimurje and Southern Baranja, two parts of the present-day Republic of Croatia, belonged directly to Hungary, and the city and port of Rijeka or Fiume was organized as a special area (*corpus separatum*) under the Hungarian crown. In this vast Empire with more than fifty million people between the Alps and the Carpathian range, the small Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia, without the provinces of Istria and Dalmatia, had a population of 2.6 million. The capital city of Zagreb with its 74,703 inhabitants (according to the 1910 census¹) was a peripheral town in comparison to Vienna, the imperial centre which, at that time, had more than two million inhabitants. Birth rates were much higher than death rates, yet nearly 80 percent of the Croatian-Slavonian population lived in rural areas, with agricultural work as their primary or sole activity. While rural houses were usually wooden and single-storey, brick houses and low buildings existed only in a few small cities.

Although the development processes instigated by the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy at the beginning of the 20th century influenced the peripheral Croatian economy and society favourably, and the length of Croatian-Slavonian railroads reached nearly 2,000 kilometres, the average Croatian entrepreneur in the years before World War I was either a small artisan or a small industrialist who employed fewer than five workers. In contrast to the significant increase in the number of commercial and savings banks, many Croats left their home country for good in search of better living conditions, moving permanently to the United States and other overseas countries. While the news from Europe (for example, about movies and sports) arrived in waves into Croatia, not only jobs, but also leisure time became an integral part of people's lives. At the same time, new (economic) activities such as tourism in the maritime city of Opatija in Istria and elsewhere

¹ *Statistički atlas kraljevina Hrvatske i Slavonije 1875.–1915.* [Statistical Atlas of the Kingdoms of Croatia-Slavonia] (Zagreb: Kr. zemaljska tiskara, 1915), p. 2.

were leading the Croatian province slowly towards modernisation. Due to the fact that the official language in the autonomous province was Croatian and that education and culture in the period of dualism belonged under Croatian-Slavonian provincial autonomy, the Croatian national idea was spreading beyond the borders of the 'Triune Kingdom' (despite Hungary's supervision). Nevertheless, all the attempts concerning political unification of the Croatian lands within the Austro-Hungarian Empire were fruitless. During the Belle Époque, when the rate of literacy in the adult population of Croatia-Slavonia was scarcely more than that of illiteracy, the most important national institutions were established or moved into modern buildings in the capital city of Zagreb; for example, the Academy of Sciences and Arts (1867), Provincial Archives (1870), the Royal University of Franz Joseph I in Zagreb (1874), the National Theatre (1895), the Institute of Music (1895), the University Library (1913), and so on.

Before World War I, Austria-Hungary was a civilised and highly organised state, but Habsburg dualism represented a serious obstacle to Croatian national integration, especially to the unification of the Croatian lands. At the same time, the political and economic supremacy of the Hungarian elite over the Croatian one within the Lands of the Hungarian Crown created a favourable climate for frequent disagreements and the occasional eruption of political tensions, namely in anti-Hungarian riots in 1883 and 1903. This led to the rise in the number of those Croats who thought that the Croatian question could not be resolved within the Dual Monarchy and that Croatia should seek its future outside the Habsburg domination. In the context of the crisis of dualism at the beginning of the 20th century, there were some changes in Croatian politics: the appearance of the peasant movement led by the brothers Antun and Stjepan Radić, and the creation of the Croatian-Serbian Coalition as a form of cooperation between Croatian and Serbian politicians in Croatia-Slavonia.² Whereas the traditional loyalty of Croats to the Habsburg house was still alive, the policy of Archduke Franz Ferdinand raised in some people a hope in the reorganisation of the Empire into a triple Austro-Hungarian-Croatian state. Croatian oscillations became even more complex on the eve of the First World War. On one side, the bloody dynastic upheaval in the Kingdom of Serbia in 1903 and the Austro-Hungarian annexation of the former Ottoman province of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908 aggravated relations between Vienna and Belgrade. On the other hand, due to the influence of the military successes of the Serbs and Montenegrins in the Balkan Wars in 1912 and 1913, an idea significantly gained popularity in the Croatian public, especially among the young people. It was the idea of the unification of all South Slavs and the creation of the new Yugoslav state, which was first imagined by Croatian intellectuals and politicians during the second half of the 19th century.

² See Jaroslav ŠIDAK – Mirjana GROSS – Igor KARAMAN – Dragovan ŽEPIĆ, *Povijest hrvatskog naroda g. 1860–1914*. [A History of the Croatian Nation 1860–1914] (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1968), 211–234.

Until the present day, the First World War has not been a subject of close attention in Croatian historiography, although this war is a key factor for understanding Croatian history in the so-called ‘short’ 20th century.³ In fact, the Croatian-Serbian political relations, the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the creation of the Yugoslav state are relatively well researched.⁴ However, the fate of ordinary Croatian soldiers and officers in the Austro-Hungarian armed forces on the battlefields as well as economic, social and cultural life in Croatian lands at that time are fairly unknown today, despite the fact that there are significant archives in Zagreb, Vienna, Budapest, and elsewhere. In recent years, the situation has become somewhat better: a few books were printed about taking care of hungry children in the Croatian area during World War I, and about how the Great War was reflected in Croatian autobiography.⁵ Studies that have researched the reverberations of the assassination in Sarajevo in 1914, articles that reflected on the reactions of Croats and Serbs in Croatia on the eve of the war,⁶ publications on politician Stjepan Radić and field marshal Svetozar Borojević finally saw daylight,⁷ conference proceedings about the year 1918 as a turning point were edited,⁸ a few PhD theses were devoted to some aspects of life during the war,⁹ and museum exhibitions issued instructive catalogues.¹⁰ Recently, due to the initiative of a group of domestic historians of the

³ See Eric HOBBSBAWN, *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914–1991*, New York: Vintage Books, 1994.

⁴ See Bogdan KRIZMAN, *Hrvatska u Prvom svjetskom ratu. Hrvatsko-srpski politički odnosi* [Croatia in the First World War: Croatian-Serbian Political Relations] (Zagreb: Globus, 1989).

⁵ Mira KOLAR, *Zbrinjavanje gladne djece u Hrvatskoj za Prvoga svjetskog rata* [A Care of Hungry Children in Croatia During World War I] (Slavonski Brod: Hrvatski institut za povijest – Podružnica za povijest Slavonije, Srijema i Baranje, 2008); Filip Hameršak, *Tamna strana Marsa: Hrvatska autobiografija i Prvi svjetski rat* [The Dark Side of Mars: Croatian Autobiography and World War I] (Zagreb: Ljevak, 2013).

⁶ Damir AGIČIĆ, ‘Civil Croatia on the Eve of the First World War (The Echo of the Assassination and Ultimatum)’, *Povijesni prilozi*, 14 (1995): 301–317; Željko Karaula, ‘Sarajevski atentat – reakcije Hrvata i Srba u Kraljevini Hrvatskoj, Slavoniji i Dalmaciji’ [The Assassination at Sarajevo – Reactions of Croats and Serbs in the Kingdom of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia], *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest*, 43 (2011): 255–292.

⁷ Branka BOBAN, *Stjepan Radić u vrijeme Prvoga svjetskog rata* [Stjepan Radić at the Time of the First World War] (Zagreb: Alinea, 2006); Marino MANIN (ed.), *Feldmaršal Svetozar barun Borojević od Bojne (1856.–1920.). Zbornik radova* [Field Marshal Svetozar Baron Borojević of Bojna (1856–1920): Proceedings] (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2011).

⁸ Željko HOLJEVAČ (ed.), *1918. u hrvatskoj povijesti* [The Year 1918 in Croatian History] (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 2012); Zlatko Matijević (ed.), *Godina 1918. Prethodnice, zbivanja, posljedice* [The Year 1918: Predecessors, Events, Consequences] (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2010).

⁹ Vijoleta Herman KAURIĆ, *Za naše junake...: rad dobrotvornih humanitarnih društava u gradu Zagrebu 1914.–1918.* [For our Heroes...: Activities of the Charitable Humanitarian Associations in the City of Zagreb 1914–1918]. PhD Dissertation, Manuscript, Department of History, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, Zagreb, 2007.

¹⁰ Jelena Borošak MARIJANOVIĆ (ed.), *Dadob zlato za željezo. Prvi svjetski rat u zbirkama Hrvatskog povijesnog muzeja* [I Gave Gold for Iron: The First World War in the Collections of the Croatian History Museum] (Zagreb: Hrvatski povijesni muzej, 2011).

younger generation, the Croatian Committee for Celebrating the Centenary of the First World War has been founded. Based on archival sources and newspapers, particularly on unpublished documents of the Presidency of the Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Provincial Government (henceforth: provincial government) from the Croatian State Archives in Zagreb and on the remarkable observations about social and cultural life written down on the pages of the Zagreb newspaper *Ilustrovani list* (Illustrated Journal), this article is an attempt to present some findings about the history of Croatia-Slavonia in the fatal year 1914, predominantly from a cultural perspective.

The Last Waltz of the Beautiful Era

While huge parts of the Croatian lands were covered in snow and ice at the beginning of 1914, the students of the Zagreb painting school built a sphinx of snow in front of the Art Pavilion in the spirit of winter sports.¹¹ A school teacher and a sports writer Franjo Bučar had a prominent role in the popularisation of modern sport in the Croatian lands during the *Fin de Siècle*. He was awarded the French decoration 'Palme d'Officier d'Académie' in the first half of 1914.¹² At the same time, bilingual public signs in Zagreb, written in Hungarian and Croatian were replaced by those written only in Croatian. This was a result of the Croatian Parliament (*Sabor*) elections in December 1913 won by the Croatian-Serbian Coalition, although after heavy pressure at the time of the Austro-Hungarian annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina it had adjusted its behaviour to the demands of the official policy of Vienna and Budapest. Moreover, at the same time, the city council of Zagreb proposed, at one of its sessions, to warn all cinemas in the Croatian-Slavonian capital city that instead of showing movies in foreign languages they should show only movies with Croatian subtitles. In early 1914, a few notable works were performed in the National Theatre in Zagreb, such as the comic opera in three acts *Postolar od Delfta* (*The Shoemaker from Delft*) composed by Blagoje Bersa,¹³ while in the Croatian-Slavonian capital city an international graphic exhibition and traditional carnival parties were organised.

In January 1914, due to a travel scholarship given by the Literary Society in Belgrade (led by Serbian writer Branislav Nušić), a Croatian writer Ivo Vojnović from Dubrovnik was arrested by the 13th Corps Command of the Austro-Hungarian army in Zagreb. He was suspected of coming to Croatia-Slavonia with the intent

¹¹ *Ilustrovani list* [Illustrated Journal], vol. I, no. 6 (Zagreb, 7 February 1914).

¹² Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv [The Croatian State Archives], Kraljevski ministar hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinski u Budimpešti: Predsjednički spisi [The Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Ministry in Budapest: Presidential Records], box 46, no. 23.

¹³ A. M. WILLNER – J. WILHELM (i.e. Blagoje Bersa), *Postolar od Delfta* [The Shoemaker From Delft] (Zagreb: Nakladom akademske knjižare Gjure Trpica, 1914).

of giving a lecture on his work *Lazarevo vaskresenje* (*The Resurrection of Lazarus*), which was dedicated to the ‘Serbian mothers,’¹⁴ to spread Serbian propaganda. No measures were taken against him, however, since a police agent from Karlovac reported that Ivo had stayed there and read his dramas a month ago, without showing any tendentious political views. His younger brother Lujo, who was then in the diplomatic service of the Kingdom of Montenegro, had a somewhat different fate: he was expelled from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in early 1914.¹⁵ During this time, several Orthodox priests and professors of theology from Srijemski Karlovci and Bosanska Gradiška travelled without having any problems across the border crossing in Zemun to the city of Niš in Serbia to attend a celebration of the 1600th anniversary of the Edict of Milan. Moreover, in the border region of Sylvania (*Srijem*), which was then one of eight counties in Croatia-Slavonia, Serbian books and calendars were regularly disseminated.

On March 1, 1914, there was a celebration in Zagreb to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the birth of Petar Petrović Njegoš, a famous Montenegrin statesman and a poet from the first half of the 19th century. The celebration was successfully organised by the Serbian Academic Society ‘Njegoš,’ thus marking the 10th anniversary of their activity in the Croatian capital city.¹⁶ Nevertheless, only two weeks later, in contrast to these events, around 40 Italian students from the Revoltella Institute in Trieste ambushed their Croatian colleagues for having used the Croatian language publicly. The incident provoked anti-Italian protests in Croatia-Slavonia, including the one organised by the city council of Zagreb. Consequently, the young people who had been attacked were presented in the Croatian press as ‘the victims of Italian culture.’¹⁷ At the same time, the National Theatre in Zagreb successfully presented the work *Kletva* (*A Curse*), a historical drama in five acts, which was based on the novel of Croatian writers August Šenoa and Josip Eugen Tomić and adapted for the theatre by a journalist and a writer Marija Jurić Zagorka. She was an author of a series of novels, popular among a wider readership, in which she intertwines motifs such as the pursuit for happiness, the struggle of the oppressed against evil, and even romantic incidents. The theatre program became more high-brow, and more professional actors performed in the plays. Among them was Marija Ružička-Strozzi, one of the most prominent actresses and opera singers of the National Theatre at that time. In the first half of 1914, she was awarded the Golden Cross of Merit with Crown.¹⁸

¹⁴ Ivo VOJNOVIĆ, *Lazarevo vaskresenje* [The Lazarus Resurrection] (Dubrovnik: Izdanje knjižare J. Tošovića, 1914).

¹⁵ Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv [The Croatian State Archives], Predsjedništvo Kraljevske hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinske zemaljske vlade: Opći spisi [The Presidency of the Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Provincial Government: General Records], box 831, vol. 2, no. 157, 335.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, no. 1289.

¹⁷ *Ilustrovani list* [Illustrated Journal], vol. 1, no. 13 (Zagreb, 28 March 1914); *Novosti* [News], vol. 8, no. 83 (Zagreb, 24 March 1914).

¹⁸ Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv [The Croatian State Archives], Kraljevski ministar hrvatsko-slavons-

A famous writer, Antun Gustav Matoš died on 17 March 1914 in the Hospital of Sisters of Mercy in Zagreb from tuberculosis. He was the central figure of modernism in Croatian literature. He wrote poems, short stories, feuilletons, essays, and travelogues, as well as literary criticism. Under the influence of French symbolism, which he had met during his stay in Paris, Matoš successfully tied his pronounced patriotic themes with high aesthetic horizons from the European literatures, nurturing the cult of the regular form, the virtuosity of linguistic expressions and the union of sensations in his portrayal of landscapes. 'The sense of language and rhythm are refined, verse and stanza are becoming more regular, and completely new areas are conquered for the poetry'; this is how Croatian writer Ljubo Wiesner portrayed the current trend in poetry in the preface of the *Hrvatska mlada lirika* (*The Young Croatian Lyric*), a poetic anthology of Croatian modernism, which was published by the Croatian Writers' Association in Zagreb in June 1914.¹⁹ In the anthology which is shown in Figure 1 the following poets were represented: Ivo Andrić, Vladimir Čerina, Vilko Gabarić, Fran Galović, Karlo Häusler, Zvonko Milković, Stjepan Parmačević, Janko Polić Kamov, Nikola Polić, Augustin (Tin) Ujević, Milan Vrbanić and Ljubo Wiesner. The anthology is the last significant manifestation of Croatian modern literature, because in the same year, a young writer Miroslav Krleža started his work through the publication of two dramatic texts *Legenda* (*The Legend*) and *Maskerata* (*The Masquerade*). He was a representative of a new generation and the most influential Croatian writer of the 20th century. He wrote poems, dramas, stories, novels, short stories, essays, diaries, records and memoirs. In his almost endless opus, everything passed through the extraordinary power of imagination and suggestive credibility of the authentic art of words and sentences. As a very engaged intellectual of a highly creative scope and a 'volcanic personality' in dealing with the challenges of the modern world,²⁰ Krleža established a harmonious relationship of nuanced insights into general human problems with the dominant social preoccupations of his time and space.

With the arrival of spring in 1914, demonstrations were organised around Croatia-Slavonia against the Hungarian law on the expropriation of lands of private owners on the Croatian coast between Rijeka (Fiume) and Karlobag in favour of the Hungarian government. In this highly sensitive atmosphere, there was a student protest during the live performance of the drama *Petar Zrinjski* written by Eugen Kumičić in the National Theatre in Zagreb on 30 April 1914.²¹ It happened because on the same day in 1671 the Croatian noblemen Petar Zrinski and Fran Krsto Frankopan, leaders of

ko-dalmatinski u Budimpešti: Predsjednički spisi [The Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Ministry in Budapest: Presidential Records], box 46, no. 63.

¹⁹ *Hrvatska mlada lirika* [The Croatian Young Lyric] (Zagreb: Društvo hrvatskih književnika, 1914).

²⁰ Slobodan Prosperov NOVAK, *Povijest hrvatske književnosti: između Pešte, Beča i Beograda* [A History of Croatian Literature: Between Pest, Vienna and Belgrade], vol. 2 (Split: Marjan tisak, 2004), 231.

²¹ Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv [The Croatian State Archives], Predsjedništvo Kraljevske hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinske zemaljske vlade: Opći spisi [The Presidency of the Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Provincial Government: General Records], box 853, vol. 6-14, no. 1986.

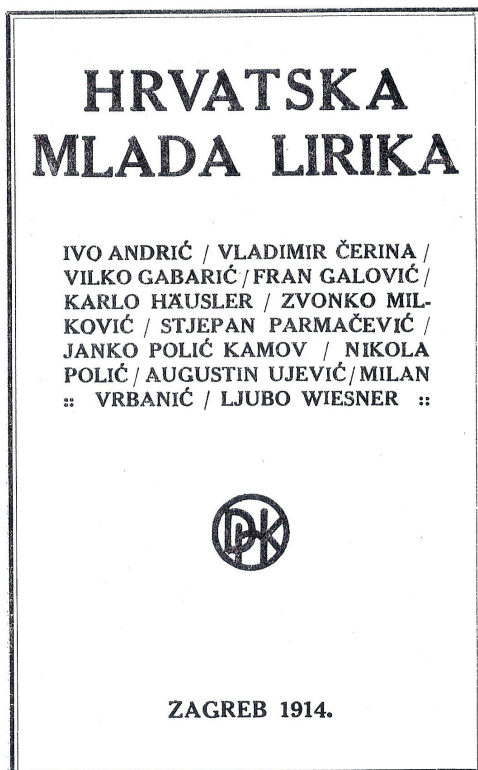


Figure 1: *The Young Croatian Lyric*

Slavonian provincial government in mid-May 1914 for the permission to photograph a manuscript of epic poems written by Count Nikola Zrinski (older brother of Count Petar Zrinski). Nevertheless, an evident patriotic mood, which influenced the behaviour of individuals, still had various impacts on the culture and social life of the Croatian territories. It was also experienced by the Croatian viceroy Ivan Skerlec when, around this time, he visited the city of Brod na Savi (today Slavonski Brod), where he was greeted at the train platform by the city representatives who were singing the Croatian national anthem. Moreover, he received some anonymous threats from the countryside and successfully managed to evade a secretly planned attempt of Jacob Schäffer to assassinate him in the National Theatre in Zagreb on 20 May 1914.²³

the Croatian aristocratic resistance to the absolutism and centralism of the Viennese court, were both executed at Wiener Neustadt. Requiems and commemoration anniversaries in memory of Count Petar Zrinski and marquess Fran Krsto Frankopan, whose cult had for decades been promoted by political radicals called *pravaši* (members of the Croatian Party of Rights), were held in these days in Zemun, Sušak, near Rijeka, Osijek and elsewhere. Furthermore, at the beginning of May 1914 the city council of Zagreb supported the idea of the exhumation and transfer of the bones of these great Croatian historical figures from their grave in Wiener Neustadt so that they could receive a proper funeral in Zagreb.²² (The idea was ultimately realised in 1919.) Indeed, these circumstances did not prevent the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest from asking the Croatian-

²² *Izveštaj gradskog poglavarstva o sveopćoj upravi slobodnog i kraljevskog glavnog grada Zagreba za godine 1913–1918*. [The Report of the City Authorities of the Free and Royal Capital City of Zagreb About General Administration in the Years 1913–1918] (Zagreb: Knjigotiskara braća Kralj, 1927), 18–19.

²³ Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv [The Croatian State Archives], Predsjedništvo Kraljevske hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinske zemaljske vlade: Opći spisi [The Presidency of the Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Provincial Government: General Records], box 854, vol. 6–14, no. 2941.

Different events and changes that came at that time were also reflected in religious communities in Croatia-Slavonia. Thus, in the few months after the Orthodox bishop Mihajlo Grujić, the administrator of the Upper Karlovac Eparchy, had died on 6 March 1914, the Hungarian Prime Minister István Tisza warned the provincial government in Zagreb about a planned trip of the Orthodox priest and a supposed Serbian agitator M. S. Božičković from the United States to Croatia-Slavonia, since Božičković was a nephew of the deceased bishop Grujić.²⁴ After the Catholic Archbishop Juraj Posilović, the head of the Croatian-Slavonian ecclesiastical province, had died in Zagreb on 26 April 1914, he was immediately succeeded by the present Archbishop Coadjutor Antun Bauer, and before a solemn requiem in the Zagreb cathedral, the vicar general Dominik Premuž held a speech in memory of the dead Archbishop. Two months later, the new Archbishop took the oath of allegiance to Archduke Joseph as the Palatine of Hungary in Budapest and had to pay for this act a fee of six ducats. In February 1914, the head of the Catholic bishopric of Senj, bishop Roko Vučić, gave a suggestion to replenish two positions in the local cathedral chapter with the professors of theology at the Episcopal Seminary in Senj, Ivan Starčević and Josip Frančičković, and they were appointed as new canons, the former as older and the latter as the younger one.²⁵

In early April 1914, a monument dedicated to the Croatian writer August Šenoa was erected at the Academic Square (today the Strossmayer Square) in Zagreb, in front of the Yugoslav (now Croatian) Academy of Sciences and Arts. The newspapers wrote that the monument had been erected without any ceremony and knowledge of the public.²⁶ In spring 1914, a few interesting exhibitions were opened in Zagreb: the anti-alcoholic exhibition, an international poster exhibition, the exhibition of paintings of the Croatian painter Joso Bužan in the Ullrich Salon, and others. The Association of the Croatian innkeepers pleaded against Sunday as a day for rest at a congress in Zagreb on 28 April 1914, regardless of the fact that only a few days later better working conditions were promoted at the workers' meetings during the May 1 celebration. During this time, while the domestic public were in awe of the skills of Croatian conductor Friderik Rukavina and Polish actress Stanisława Wysocka (guests of the National Theatre in Zagreb), young Croatian violinist Zlatko Baloković performed in Cairo and Italy with great success.²⁷

On June 8, 1914, a respected historian and retired university professor Tadija (Tade) Smičiklas died in Zagreb. He was the author of the first scientific synthesis of the Croatian history, titled *Poviest hrvatska* (History of Croatia), published in

²⁴ Ibid., box 798, vol. 1–3, no. 1344, box 854, vol. 6–14, no. 3726.

²⁵ Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv [The Croatian State Archives], Kraljevski ministar hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinski u Budimpešti: Predsjednički spisi [The Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Ministry in Budapest: Presidential Records], box 46, no. 79. Cfr. Zeljko Holjevac, 'Lika i Senj 1914. između mira i rata' [Lika and Senj in 1914 Between Peace and War], *Senjski zbornik*, vol. 41, Senj, 2014, 331–332.

²⁶ *Ilustrovani list* [Illustrated Journal], vol. 1, no. 16 (Zagreb, 18 April 1914).

²⁷ Ibid., no. 14 (Zagreb, 14 April 1914), no. 17 (Zagreb, 25 April 1914).

two volumes in Zagreb in 1879 and 1882. As a holder of prominent positions, first as the head of *Matica hrvatska* (Matrix Croatica) and a long-time president of the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts in Zagreb, he was awarded an honorary decoration 'for art and science' for his merits.²⁸ In memory of him, Petar Karlić wrote the book *Tade Smičiklas* and it was published in Zadar, the capital city of the province of Dalmatia. At the same time, other significant individuals received noble and other titles as well in recognition of their faithful services or special merits. Thus, in May 1914, the emperor Franz Joseph I awarded Ivan Bojničić, the director of the Provincial Archives in Zagreb, the title of the Hungarian court counsellor remitting the obligation to pay the corresponding fee.²⁹ Other people were awarded various Austro-Hungarian decorations or they were granted permits to carry foreign decorations, among which in Croatia-Slavonia the Serbian Order of St. Sava, the Montenegrin Danilo's Medal and the papal cross 'Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice' were particularly frequent.

While in mid-June 1914 churches held processions on the Feast of Corpus Christi and people celebrated children's day, the daily life of peasants in rural areas was only slightly better than that of their ancestors in the previous centuries. At the same time, the citizens from Zagreb as well as from a small number of other Croatian-Slavonian cities followed the fashion and read newspapers, went to cafés and on trips, went to theatre performances and concerts, showed interest in visiting circuses and playing raffles as well as appreciated occasional events organised by trade and sports associations, particularly by local associations of the Croatian Falcon that promoted the cult of power and the patriotic courage. According to a special permission, officers of the 13th Corps command of the Austro-Hungarian army in Zagreb could become members of the Croatian Mountaineering Association, whose head was Count Miroslav Kulmer at that time.³⁰ The Croatian Academic Support Society at the Royal University of Franz Joseph I in Zagreb, which was the official name of this university at that time, celebrated its 40th anniversary. The main ceremony was held in the hall of the university on 14 June 1914, and they also printed the memorial booklet for this purpose as shown in Figure 2. On the cosmopolitan wave of growing European environmentalism, the Society for the Beautification and Landscaping of the Plitvice Lakes with its headquarters in Zagreb sent a request to the Croatian Parliament on 17 June 1914 asking to prevent the construction of a hydro-electric plant powered by the water from the lakes (the request was accepted by the Parliament, and the idea of the construction of

²⁸ Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv [The Croatian State Archives], Kraljevski ministar hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinski u Budimpešti: Predsjednički spisi [The Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Ministry in Budapest: Presidential Records], box 49, no. 365.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, box 47, no. 123.

³⁰ Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv [The Croatian State Archives], Predsjedništvo Kraljevske hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinske zemaljske vlade: Opći spisi [The Presidency of the Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Provincial Government: General Records], box 853, vol. 6–14, no. 763.

the power plant was rejected).³¹ Serious social and cultural life, in addition to the daily journals and political newspapers like *Jutarnji list* (*Morning Journal*) or *Novosti* (*News*), were covered by certain specialised magazines such as *Dom i svijet* (*Home and World*) or *Hrvatska prosvjeta* (*Croatian Education*), but jokes and humour were not left out either, especially on the pages of the popular satirical weekly *Koprive* (*Nettles*).



Figure 2: Memorial booklet printed for the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Croatian Academic Support Society at the Royal University of Franz Joseph I in Zagreb

At the Crossroads of Peace and War

The assassination of the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, together with his wife Sophie Hohenberg by Gavrilo Princip, a Bosnian youth of Serbian nationality, in Sarajevo on 28 June 1914, strongly echoed in the Croatian press and provoked diverse reactions in the public.³² Political authorities and many associations sent their telegrams and condolences to the emperor Franz Joseph

³¹ Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv [The Croatian State Archives], Predsjedništvo Kraljevske hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinske zemaljske vlade: Opći spisi [The Presidency of the Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Provincial Government: General Records], box 854, vol. 6–14, no. 3556.

³² AGIČIĆ, 'Civil Croatia on the Eve of the First World War', 301–317; KARAULA, 'Sarajevski atentat' [The Assassination at Sarajevo], 255–292.

I, Catholic and Orthodox churches organised requiems and funeral masses, and a Stjepan Kokan from Hrastovica near Petrinja compiled a poetic lament on the tragic death of the Archduke. During the mourning period, all official documents were written on black-edged papers and all envelopes were sealed with wax and black labels. Anti-Serbian demonstrations (supporting the Habsburg house) erupted in some Croatian cities. In some areas, these even turned into attacks on Serbian private houses and property. After the assassination, local Croatian inhabitants of Dragačić near Karlovac thought that the Serbs – who then in Croatia-Slavonia made up a quarter of the total population – should have accepted that they were no more Serbs but Orthodox Croats.³³ Anti-Serbian hysteria, as shown in Figure 3, was particularly encouraged by the political radicals called *Frankovci*, i.e. the followers of the deceased leader of the Croatian Pure Party of Rights, Josip Frank, who also roused a storm at the first session of the Croatian Parliament after the Sarajevo assassination. The increased tensions in some areas, for example in Zemun and Osijek, soon led to the banning of any public events, due to the possibility of public attacks on Serbs and the fear of possible Serbian counter-demonstrations which would have, allegedly, included individuals and groups from Serbia. In early July 1914, a travelling actor, Rudolf Heister-Habeduš, was examined at the headquarters of the district of Krapina. He said that he had heard from a certain Ivan Endlicher, a Yugoslav nationalist youth leader in Sušak near Rijeka, about the preparation of the assassination of the Austro-Hungarian heir to the throne or another member of the ruling house, months ago. The head of the aforementioned district concluded that Heister-Habeduš, who had begged the provincial government for any job in the public sector two months ago, was nothing but an idle ‘Hochstapler’



Figure 3: A satirical comment on the Serbian loyalty to the Monarchy as seen by the *Frankovci*: ‘Vlach villain, are you not going to be a traitor!’

³³ Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv [The Croatian State Archives], Predsjedništvo Kraljevske hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinske zemaljske vlade: Opći spisi [The Presidency of the Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Provincial Government: General Records], box 854, vol. 6–14, no. 3810.

(an impostor) looking for attention, but – having been convinced that his testimony could be interesting – dispatched him urgently to Zagreb.³⁴ There was a clear enough sense of suspicion at the time that even ‘imposters’ were treated seriously.

Changing approaches to nationalities of others created a sense of anxiety among the people of Croatia-Slavonia in these days. Thus, a Serbian agent Dimitrije J. Olbin from Skopje disseminated Serbian Cyrillic leaflets among the Serbs in the Croatian regions even before the Sarajevo assassination, inviting them to emigrate to the areas that Serbia had conquered in the Balkan wars.³⁵ After the Sarajevo assassination, due to the wakening of the Serbian national thought and the Austro-Hungarian Empire’s growing distrust in their loyalty, the Serbs in the Croatian regions were put under scrutiny. A sandal-maker, Milivoj Popović from Zemun, was denounced to the police that he had removed the black flag raised in the city during the mourning period to commemorate the assassinated Archduke, and the administrative board of the district of Grubišno Polje reported that a local teacher Petar Stojanić from Veliki Grđevac had approved of the Sarajevo assassination.³⁶ When Đorđe Grujić, the manager of the bookstore Napredak (Progress) in Zemun was on the way to return the book *Historijska geografija kraljevine Bosne iz god. 1737* (The Historical Geography of the Kingdom of Bosnia from the Year 1737), which the Croatian historian and university professor Ferdo Šišić from Zagreb had lent to his Serbian colleague Stanoje Stanojević in Belgrade, he said at the border crossing that the Serbs had wished to rewrite this historical work because it was related to Bosnia, and Bosnia was important to Serbia.³⁷ But, at that time, there were Serbs and Croats as well – equally from the ranks of the ideologically divided Croatian intelligentsia or even from the broader strata of the population – individuals and groups who in the spirit of the idea of the imagined South Slavic unity or because of their particular sympathies for Serbia were either indifferent to the assassination of the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, or approved it. Thus, in the second half of July 1914, a small innkeeper and a saleswoman, Mica Kranjčević, from the municipality of Brlog near Otočac, was brought to the gendarmerie station in Otočac on suspicion of firing a gun in approval of the Sarajevo assassination.³⁸

The Exceptional Measures and the Impact of the Beginning of the War

The Austro-Hungarian declaration of war on Serbia on July 28, 1914, led to a series of exceptional measures, implemented by orders of the Croatian viceroy or decrees

³⁴ Ibid., box 797, vol. 1–1, no. 3579.

³⁵ Ibid., box 853, vol. 6–14, no. 124, 1806, 3543, 3628, 3894, 3998, 4019, 4448, 4526, 5414.

³⁶ Ibid., box 854, vol. 6–14, no. 3863, 3899.

³⁷ Ibid., no. 4125.

³⁸ Ibid., box 867, vol. 6–22, no. 4212. Cfr. HOLJEVAC, ‘Lika i Senj 1914. između mira i rata’ [Lika and Senj in 1914 Between Peace and War], 337.

of the Hungarian government: the appointment of governmental commissioners for all the counties and the capital city of Zagreb, the limitation of working hours for pubs and stores, the termination of issuing passports to military conscripts, the limitation of crossing the provincial borders, the surrendering of all private weapons and ammunition to the legal authorities, the control of post and telegraphic traffic, the ban of the establishment and activity of all the civil associations, the suspension of law on the right to assembly, putting a ban on certain newspapers and magazines and placing under police surveillance those that were not banned, the prohibition or revision of media coming from foreign countries, the establishment of the court martial in case of rebellion or robbery as shown in Figure 4, the abolition of the jury system and the extension of the jurisdiction of military courts over civilians in criminal cases, amongst others.³⁹ Zagreb citizens could read about the exceptional measures because they were posted in public places and they fought for the newspapers. Soon Zagreb journalists and actors, daily visitors to the city's cafes, became bored because in a few days they were left without the latest local or foreign newspapers.

The general mobilisation of the Austro-Hungarian armed forces was received well among the considerable number of Croats. Thus Zagreb citizens enthusiastically greeted with warm ovations the first mobilised soldiers, decorating them with flowers and Croatian symbols, and these went to the battlefield with a large Croatian red-white-blue flag at the head of the line.⁴⁰ A completely different mood was noted, for example, in the Lika-Krbava County, where the governmental commissioner Gjuro Horvat immediately after the declaration of the war demanded an urgent reinforcement of the local gendarmerie stations, having in mind that more than a half of the total population in that county was of Serbian nationality. He was

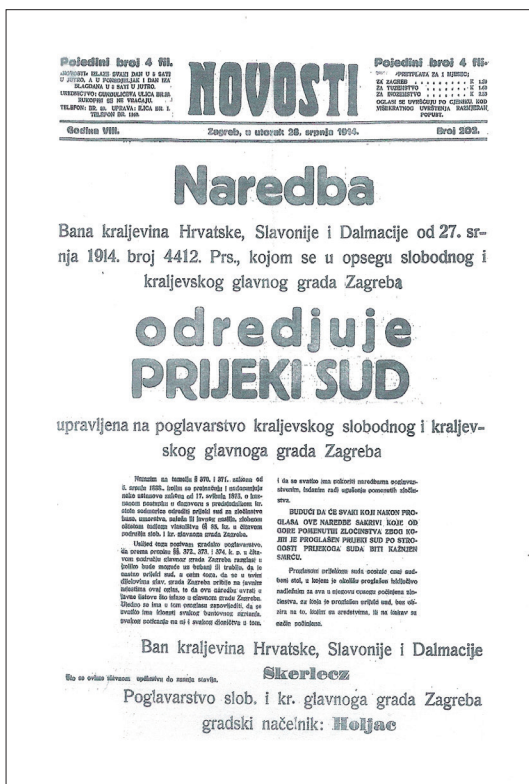


Figure 4: Viceroy's order of the establishment of the court martial in Zagreb

³⁹ *Jutarnji list* [Morning Journal], vol. 3, no. 728 (Zagreb, 27 July 1914); *Novosti* [News], vol. 8, no. 201 (Zagreb, 27 July 1914).

⁴⁰ *Ilustrovani list* [Illustrated Journal], vol. 1, no. 33 (Zagreb, 15 August 1914).

seriously concerned about the possible deterioration of public safety after the departure of the army units from Gospić and Otočac because of the apparent ‘grim displeasure’ of the local inhabitants and mobilised soldiers of the Serbian nationality who had torn down the Croatian flag in Otočac.⁴¹ Such incidents became evident elsewhere. The local Serbs from the village of Veliko Nabrđe near Đakovo attempted to prevent the departure of the military conscripts, and the local head of Serbian nationality in the village of Đulovac near Daruvar encouraged mobilised soldiers to disobey and to shoot at their officers who had sent them to war against the Serbs.⁴² About that time, Đuro Ćuruvija, a telegraphic superintendent in Koprivnica, said: ‘Our emperor is an idiot because he is now at war for those two that have been killed; it would be better if he had remained silent and then he would not be fighting.’⁴³ Shepherds from Petrinja sang a mocking song: ‘Serbian King Peter coffee takes, and Austrian Franz in soil down breaks.’⁴⁴

Convinced that they could expect an uprising of the irritated Serbian population in Croatia-Slavonia, the police authorities took a lot of preventative measures. Alleged or real disruptions of public order, displaying Serbian flags and other symbols, shouting slogans such as ‘Long live King Peter!’ or ‘Down with Germans, down with Austria!’,⁴⁵ searching for hidden private weapons and ammunition, coded light signals at night or denunciations for offences against the emperor were sufficient for the police to raid houses and flats and to arrest a few prominent Serbs. These and other repressive measures were perceived by the Serbian population as persecution. In October 1914, it was forbidden to hang the ‘Midsummer wreaths’ on the houses of the Orthodox population in the Požega County; Serbian signs in form of four Cyrillic letters ‘S’ on the towers of Orthodox churches had to be removed and Serbian flags had to be taken from individuals and local institutions in order to be destroyed. Moreover, the grand prefect and the governmental commissioner for the Požega County, Dragan Trnski, a month before he became mentally ill, proposed to the provincial government in Zagreb to close down the Serbian reading room in Pakrac explaining that this ‘reading room was a hotbed of the Great Serbian propaganda.’⁴⁶ In November 1914, in the house of Ilija Kukić from the village of Čaglić the police found a gramophone with songs of anti-dynastic content, and in Mitrovica they launched an investigation against individuals because they had made rebellious statements and spread Serbian

⁴¹ Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv [The Croatian State Archives], Predsjedništvo Kraljevske hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinske zemaljske vlade: Opći spisi [The Presidency of the Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Provincial Government: General Records], box 855, vol. 6–14, no. 4656, box 872, vol. 6–22, no. 4351. Cfr. Holjevac, ‘Lika i Senj 1914. između mira i rata’ [Lika and Senj in 1914 Between Peace and War], 337–338.

⁴² Ibid., box 871, vol. 6–22, no. 4272; box 872, vol. 6–22, no. 4351.

⁴³ Ibid., box 872, vol. 6–22, no. 4351.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid., box 876, vol. 6–22, no. 5381.

⁴⁶ Ibid., box 855, vol. 6–14, no. 7036.

calendars, whose subscribers were both local judges and students.⁴⁷ Although the purpose of all these measures was to try to prevent the expected rebellion among the Serbian population in Croatia-Slavonia, the behaviour of some individuals and groups of Serbian nationality coincided with specific charges against them. A woman from Brod na Savi, Milka Čučković, soon after the Sarajevo assassination said: 'It is righteous that the assassination was committed, if it were me, I would cut all Croats and Hungarians into pieces for the stew.'⁴⁸ After such a statement it was no wonder that in August 1914 the members of the Hungarian minority from the city of Daruvar and its surroundings submitted a memorandum to the provincial government in Zagreb seeking protection from the local Serbs, and that in December 1914 the villagers from Babina Gora near Daruvar even requested military assistance to protect them from the Serbs.⁴⁹

After the war in Croatia-Slavonia had begun, politically suspicious people and some foreigners, especially citizens from Serbia and other countries who were at war with Austria-Hungary, were imprisoned, forced to move to temporary places of residence across the Croatian-Slavonian territory or abroad. For example, they were escorted to Nezsider in Hungary (today Neusiedl am See in Austria), where they had to live and work under police surveillance. Thus, in early August 1914, a Serbian citizen and a military deserter Milan Stanković, who, at the outbreak of the war was receiving treatment in a sanatorium in Brestovac near Zagreb, was immediately arrested and detained in the Croatian capital city.⁵⁰ After the arrest of a Mitrovica teacher, Stevan Janošević from the village of Bolfan, to whom the district authorities in Koprivnica had issued a travel certificate, the border police begged the local authorities in Croatia-Slavonia to issue such certificates only to approved and reliable persons. At the same time, a series of disciplinary proceedings were launched against local leaders and their clerks for various professional errors and omissions, for example against Vaso Pavlica, a head of the district of Bjelovar, who in autumn of 1914 was accused of hiring unreliable and suspicious persons as clerks in the district office and of arbitrarily issuing the provisions that were not in accordance with the existing regulations.⁵¹

Various dignitaries in Croatia-Slavonia, holders of Serbian and Montenegrin decorations, rejected and returned these decorations to the provincial government in Zagreb after the outbreak of the war with Serbia and Montenegro, for example the Zagreb Mayor Janko Holjac, the president of the Chamber of Trades and Crafts in Zagreb Vjekoslav Heinzl, the court counsellor and the director of the Provincial

⁴⁷ Ibid., box 880, vol. 6–22, no. 7911, box 881, vol. 6–22, no. 8429.

⁴⁸ Ibid., box. 876, vol. 6–22, no. 5381. Cfr. Agičić, 'Civil Croatia on the Eve of the First World War', 309.

⁴⁹ Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv [The Croatian State Archives], Predsjedništvo Kraljevske hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinske zemaljske vlade: Opći spisi [The Presidency of the Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Provincial Government: General Records], box 871, vol. 6–22, no. 4272, box 881, vol. 6–22, no. 9396.

⁵⁰ Ibid., box 866, vol. 6–22, no. 4104.

⁵¹ Ibid., box 815, vol. 1–6, no. 8330, box 876, vol. 6–22, no. 5185.

Archives Ivan Bojničić, court counsellor and university professor Dragutin Gorjanović-Kramberger, and others. Interestingly, after the war had ended, some of them sought and got back previously rejected and returned decorations without any explanation or with an appropriate justification. Thus, for example, Ivan Bojničić, the director of the Provincial Archives in Zagreb, wrote in his letter to the Mayor of Zagreb on 12 September 1914 that he waived the Commander's Cross of the Order of St. Sava, which he had received from the Serbian King Aleksandar Obrenović for his scientific work 14 years ago, citing as a reason for such a decision explicitly only 'my loyal emotion' toward the Austria-Hungary. Four and a half years later, in the new Yugoslav state, Bojničić confirmed at the headquarters of the provincial government in Zagreb the readmission of the respective decoration explaining that 'at the beginning of the war, following a special order of the Viceroy, he had to return it.'⁵²

After the outbreak of the war some newspapers in Croatia-Slavonia ceased to exist, while some others were launched, for example *Ilustrovana ratna kronika* (*Illustrated War Chronicle*), but the military authorities censored the reports of the war correspondents. Thus, in August 1914, the Croatian press was not allowed to write almost anything about the German battle-cruisers Göben and Breslau in the Mediterranean Sea. In September 1914, the *Agramer Tagblatt* in Zagreb wrote about the advances of the German army in France and Belgium in a way that was considered disloyal. In the same month, the authorities intervened when the *Hrvatska obrana* (*Croatian Defence*) in Osijek reported on the involuntary evacuation of the Orthodox population who were forced out of the vacant settlements in south Sylvania and relocated to the Požega County.⁵³ The State Attorney in the service of the military censorship persecuted political suspects working for the media so that some journalists and editors were arrested and detained, for example, Krešimir Kovačić from the satirical weekly *Koprive*, or even mobilised and sent to the battlefield. At the same time, the authorities in Vienna and Budapest were interested in being in constant contact with at least one newspaper in Croatia-Slavonia for the purpose of dissemination of favourable news and views to the local public.⁵⁴ In autumn 1914, the imperial and royal authorities attempted to stop the news about the proclamation of the Russian Grand Duke Nikolay Nikolayevich Romanov with an invitation to the Austro-Hungarian Slavs to make revolt against the Monarchy. They also tried to prevent the news from neutral countries to spread, since they could have brought unfavourable views like the ones in the Italian magazine *Corriere della Sera* about the Austro-Hungarian army or similar. Moreover, the Commission for War Supervision in Budapest requested the suppression of news about the benefits

⁵² Ibid., box 837, vol. 5–3, no. 6268.

⁵³ Ibid., box 877, vol. 6–22, no. 6260, 6538.

⁵⁴ Ibid., no. 5429, box 871, vol. 6–22, no. 4289.

that the German and Austro-Hungarian railways had provided for transporting goods that were exported over German, Dutch, Italian and Romanian ports.⁵⁵

After the news about the destruction of railway bridges at Jasenovac and Dubica had proved to be untrue, measures were taken against the dissemination of false news which was consequently banned. The use of telephone and telegraph was limited, suspicious postmen were replaced by reliable persons and a permanent night-shift service was introduced in all post and telegraph offices, especially after finding an open postcard with a picture of a bomb at the post office in Virovitica.⁵⁶ The Sarajevo assassination and the outbreak of the First World War influenced changes in the names of streets and squares in some Croatian-Slavonian cities. Thus, the local municipal authorities in Virovitica and Bjelovar in July and September 1914 proposed that a street in each of these cities should bear the name of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand.⁵⁷ In November 1914, the grand prefect of the Sarmatian County, Mirko Hideghety, supported the initiative of the governmental commissioner for the city of Mitrovica to change the name of the square from 'Ćiro pl. Milekić' into 'Franz Joseph I Square', and the square 'Sv. Stevan' into 'Archduke Franz Ferdinand Square' in this city. At the same time, the city council in Osijek proposed that 'Zmaj Jovan Jovanović Street' in that city should be renamed the 'Archduke Franz Ferdinand Street'.⁵⁸

The outbreak of the war caused a lot of other changes in everyday life. Although some university professors, teachers, doctors, clerks and other public servants were exempt from conscription, many holders of intellectual and other occupations were regularly sent to the battlefields. Whereas during the war many civil associations were strictly monitored and their operation became extremely difficult due to the viceroy's ban, a certain number of such associations, despite this ban, requested and were granted the permission of the viceroy himself or local authorities to continue operating. According to recent studies, in Zagreb only during the war, at least 80 or possibly more civil associations were active, mainly those that were engaged in humanitarian and charitable activities.⁵⁹ In the fall of 1914, unreliable and suspicious innkeepers were not allowed to sell beverages and the political authorities were, for safety or other important reasons, authorised to close down the taprooms in question and inform the responsible financial directorate, which, in that case, initiated the procedure for the revocation of the licence to serve beverages.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ Ibid., box 834, vol. 3–3, no. 7162, box. 878, vol. 6–22, no. 6879, box 879, vol. 6–22, no. 7828.

⁵⁶ Ibid., box 867, vol. 6–22, no. 4212, box 871, vol. 6–22, no. 4268, box 872, vol. 6–22, no. 4421.

⁵⁷ Ibid., box 844, vol. 6–13, no. 6530, box 855, vol. 6–14, no. 4863.

⁵⁸ Ibid., box. 844, vol. 6–13, no. 8656, 8894.

⁵⁹ Vijoleta Herman Kaurić, 'Koliko je društava djelovalo u Zagrebu za vrijeme Prvoga svjetskog rata?' [The Number of Societies Operating in Zagreb During World War One], *Historijski zbornik*, 42/2 (2009): 427–463, especially 434–443.

⁶⁰ Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv [The Croatian State Archives], Predsjedništvo Kraljevske hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinske zemaljske vlade: Opći spisi [The Presidency of the Royal Croatian-Slavoni-

Growing Humanitarian Activities and Modified Religious Experiences

The arrival of the first wounded soldiers in Zagreb on 18 August 1914, i.e. on the day when the Croatian-Slavonian capital city was decorated and solemnly lightened up on the occasion of the emperor's birthday,⁶¹ stimulated the growth of humanitarian and charitable activities to help the wounded soldiers in hospitals and the families of the dead soldiers. At the invitation of the War Assistance Office on 15 August 1914 to provide aid to the families of the soldiers, the collection of alms and contributions for the women and children of soldiers was initiated. An important initiator of humanitarian activities, especially for the care and the protection of wounded and sick persons, was the Red Cross Society in the Kingdom of Croatia-Slavonia, which was a part of the Red Cross Society in the Lands of the Hungarian Crown. It is also worth mentioning the action for feeding the soldiers' children: The Croatian Association of Innkeepers in Zagreb provided the children with free lunch every day.⁶²

The Croatian aristocrats, citizens, workers and members of other social classes also got involved in humanitarian and charitable activities. For this reason, at the outbreak of the war, Count Miroslav Kulmer was appointed the lead organiser of the entire voluntary humanitarian activity in Croatia-Slavonia,⁶³ and Countess Valeria Oršić filed for a permit to collect alms for the families of the soldiers in the district of Stubica. In October 1914, the Archduke Franz Salvator, accompanied by viceroy Skerlec, visited the Society for the Nutrition of Families of Warriors in front of the Art Pavilion in Zagreb, where their headquarters were situated at that time. Even some ladies from the Zagreb middle class became nurses; for example, an opera singer Anka Horvat.⁶⁴ Children from the Children's Home, supervised by the Zagreb ladies, were knitting winter socks for soldiers on the battlefields and sorting hand-picked blackberry leaves for tea, while the youngest among them were entertained by preparing cotton-wool for war supplies. Even the workers in the engine room of the Hungarian State Railways in Zagreb were involved, during their free time from work, in the production of slippers, sticks, and crutches for the wounded soldiers.⁶⁵

The first wounded soldiers were welcomed at the railway stations by the members of the Red Cross with food and drinks, and citizens visited hospitals and other shelters offering them everything they had at hand. The recovering patients in the Red Cross hospital and other Zagreb hospitals regularly went for a walk, some

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an-Dalmatian Provincial Government: General Records], box. 855, vol. 6–14, no. 6896.

⁶¹ *Ilustrovani list* [Illustrated Journal], vol. 1, no. 34 (Zagreb, 22 August 1914), 35 (Zagreb, 29 August 1914).

⁶² *Ibid.*, no. 36 (Zagreb, 5 September 1914).

⁶³ Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv [The Croatian State Archives], Predsjedništvo Kraljevske hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinske zemaljske vlade: Opći spisi [The Presidency of the Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Provincial Government: General Records], box 875, vol. 6–22, no. 4641.

⁶⁴ *Ilustrovani list* [Illustrated Journal], vol. 1, no. 46 (Zagreb 14 November 1914).

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 44 (Zagreb, 31 October 1914), no. 48 (Zagreb, 28 November 1914).

of them even got married there, and the Zagreb military hospital also treated the Serbian prisoners. The graves of the soldiers, who had died on the battlefields or in the hospitals, were on 1 November 1914 at the Zagreb cemetery of Mirogoj lavishly lit by numerous candles placed there by the mourning citizens.⁶⁶ Moreover, the Zagreb crew soldiers erected in that part of the cemetery a large memorial cross with military symbols and big torches and decorated the graves of their deceased colleagues with flowers and greenery. Soon, a commission to organize voluntary military nursing services was established, together with the rules for collection, handling, and use of gifts in the form of objects, money and other valuables under the slogan 'gold for iron.'⁶⁷ A citizen who brought gold objects got an iron ring inscribed with the year of donation.

Due to the shortage of hospital space, many schools were transformed into hospitals, for example, the secondary and the vocational school in Zagreb as shown in Figure 5. Similar hospitals were opened as well in the school buildings in Sušak and Karlovac under the supervision of a Red Cross branch. Some female teachers were hired as volunteer nurses. Following the example of their peers in Zagreb, high school youth in Karlovac established in October 1914 a scout service that voluntarily performed auxiliary medical service at the local Red Cross.⁶⁸ In a hospital established in the building of the Zagreb school for the education of teachers in primary schools, nuns erected an altar, where they read mass to the wounded patients every Sunday. Until the end of 1914, military and other hospitals for taking care of the wounded patients in Karlovac were extended, and since the number of wounded soldiers was rapidly growing, they were placed in primary schools as well.

The Catholic Church in Croatia-Slavonia was the leading institution that represented the dominant religion; it had an important role in social integration and societal control. However, in the summer and autumn of 1914, it had to face changes due to the outbreak of the Great War. In July 1914, bishop Roko Vučić died in Senj, and the Holy See appointed Dionysus Nyaradi, the head of the Greek Catholic Seminary in Zagreb, the apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Križevci, to be the right hand of bishop Julius Drohobeczky there.⁶⁹ Thereafter, at the proposal of the Zagreb Archbishop Anton Bauer, canon Dominik Premuž became titular bishop of Belgrade and Smederevo, while priest Joseph Lang was ordained a bishop. After a solemn mass *alfresco*, in his speech at the procession

⁶⁶ Ibid., no. 45 (Zagreb, 7 November 1914).

⁶⁷ Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv [The Croatian State Archives], Predsjedništvo Kraljevske hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinske zemaljske vlade: Opći spisi [The Presidency of the Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Provincial Government: General Records], box. 872, vol. 6–22, no. 4495, box 873, vol. 6–22, no. 4495.

⁶⁸ *Ilustrovani list* [Illustrated Journal], vol. 1, no. 44 (Zagreb 31 October 1914).

⁶⁹ Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv [The Croatian State Archives], Predsjedništvo Kraljevske hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinske zemaljske vlade: Opći spisi [The Presidency of the Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Provincial Government: General Records], box 798, vol. 1–3, no. 2253, 3170, 3679.



Figure 5: Nurses in front of the Zagreb secondary and the vocational schools that had been transformed into hospitals for the wounded soldiers

held 'for the happy and imminent end of the war'⁷⁰ at the Shrine of Our Lady in Remete on 27 August 1914, that is, after the death of the Pope Pius X and before the election of the new Pope Benedict XV, the Archbishop Bauer talked about the war describing it as righteous because of the assassination in Sarajevo and explained it was God's punishment for human sins. At the same time, the Catholic clergy in Croatia-Slavonia was not only engaged in blessing the mobilised conscripts,

⁷⁰ *Ilustrovani list* [Illustrated Journal], vol. I, no. 36 (Zagreb 5 September 1914).

but they also provided spiritual care to the soldiers on the battlefields and offered comfort to the wounded in the hinterland. In the fall of 1914, these clerics were also involved in collecting alms for the poor widows and for the children of the dead soldiers: thus, the canons of the Zagreb Archdiocese gathered 25,000 crowns, and the Archbishop Bauer himself gave 20,000 crowns for that purpose.⁷¹

The Orthodox parish community in Petrinja was certainly not the only one in Croatia-Slavonia, which had expressed its loyalty to the ruler at the beginning of the war, but the authorities didn't think much of such expressions. Thus, in September 1914, the head of the district of Petrinja belittled the loyalty of the Orthodox priest Nikola Sedlar (from the village of Drljača), illustrating it with the fact that the priest had sent his children to school in Serbia and that it was not difficult to predict in what spirit these children as Austro-Hungarian citizens would be brought up.⁷² The war between Austria-Hungary and Serbia meant that any public display of the Orthodox Church flag, which was identical to the Serbian national one, was considered Serbian propaganda. Even the announcement of the death of Milan Mrkšić, the head of the district of Nova Gradiška, printed in early October 1914 on a leaflet in Cyrillic script, was met with hostility since it was perceived as a form of Serbian propaganda.⁷³ Being accused of not reporting military conscripts and of encouraging resistance among their parishioners, some Orthodox priests were arrested and detained at the beginning of the war and even later. Already in August 1914, the Orthodox bishop Miron Nikolić from Pakrac asked the provincial government in Zagreb to give him information about the arrested Orthodox priests so that he could decide on the appointment of their deputies. Two months later, he urged them again to speed up the procedures against the arrested Orthodox priests and to liberate the innocent ones.⁷⁴ Even the Catholic Military Vicariate from Zagreb intervened requesting information about the political behaviour of Orthodox priests explaining that some of them, if they had been found politically reliable, had to carry out pastoral service in the army, so that the initial pressure finally slackened. Finally, in the fall of 1914, the Orthodox clergy also collected alms for the poor widows and children of fallen soldiers. Thus, for example, the Pakrac Eparchy sent for this purpose 3100 crowns and 21 forints, which was collected from the believers in 45 parishes.⁷⁵

After the declaration of the war, anti-Semitic leaflets appeared in Grubišno Polje in the Bjelovar-Križevci County. These leaflets recommended the citizens where to buy and warned the traders that anyone who went hand in hand with the Jews was

⁷¹ Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv [The Croatian State Archives], Predsjedništvo Kraljevske hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinske zemaljske vlade: Opći spisi [The Presidency of the Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Provincial Government: General Records], box 876, vol. 6–22, no. 5429.

⁷² Ibid., box 867, vol. 6–22, no. 4212.

⁷³ Ibid., box 855, vol. 6–14, no. 7063.

⁷⁴ Ibid., box 867, vol. 6–22, no. 4212.

⁷⁵ Ibid., box 876, vol. 6–22, no. 5429.

considered a political suspect.⁷⁶ Despite the spread of these disturbing rumours, the authorities found Jewish fairness and loyalty beyond any doubt, but as different war ordeals left their stamp on all ethnic-confessional communities, this one was no exception. Soon the Jewish religious community in Križevci submitted a complaint to the provincial government in Zagreb against Šandor Mraović, the head of the district of Križevci, because the police violated the sanctity of the service and the dignity of the Jewish Day of Reconciliation on September 30, 1914. On that day 'armed city guards put the temple of God in Križevci under siege'; they were trying to catch Rudolf Neumann, a trader, landowner and a city councillor. Being able to defend himself with the help of his lawyer Alexander Horvat from Zagreb, Neumann submitted a complaint to the provincial government against the 'arbitrary and unfair' procedure of the head of the district of Križevci, asking that he should be held accountable for his actions.⁷⁷

Storm on the Front Line and Troubles at Home

At that time, the first engagements in the Balkans in August 1914 ended with a retreat of the Austro-Hungarian army from Serbia. At the beginning of September, the Serbian army penetrated Eastern Syrmia. People who were fleeing to Vukovar reported that the Serbs had captured Zemun and introduced their administration there, and this city welcomed them with speeches and girls in white at the formal ceremony.⁷⁸ Grippled by the war enthusiasm, a significant number of the Serbian inhabitants from Syrmia supported the Serbian army. Therefore, the command of the Austro-Hungarian Fifth Army requested the removal of all disloyal elements from their positions in the local communities, the suspension of municipal and Serbian religious autonomies, a rigorous monitoring of the officials of important public services, and the closure of all Orthodox monasteries. The municipalities in Syrmia were held responsible for all the damage made to the communications infrastructure and depots with army supplies and war material, and for the organisation of a protective division like the one in the neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁷⁹ When the Austro-Hungarian troops forced the Serbian army to retreat from Syrmia, some local Orthodox inhabitants were taken hostages, arrested or executed by being shot or hanged as traitors, and the others had to move to the Virovitica and Požega Counties in the Slavonian hinterland. As such, in Slatina alone (today Podravska Slatina) arrived more than 2,000 detained persons from Syrmia in November 1914.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Ibid., box 867, vol. 6–22, no. 4212.

⁷⁷ Ibid., box 815, vol. 1–6, no. 9500.

⁷⁸ Ibid., box 867, vol. 6–22, no. 4212.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid., box 870, vol. 6–22, no. 4212.

The Serbian army started to penetrate Sylvania by shelling Zemun and the Austro-Hungarian army responded by beginning their invasion of Serbia and bombing the Serbian capital city of Belgrade. During this time, the inhabitants of Zagreb enjoyed the last part of the swimming season at the river Sava following pre-war fashion trends, while people from the surrounding area were reading newspapers in order to know something about the troubles on the distant battlefields.⁸¹ After the strengthened Austro-Hungarian forces had begun to attack the Serbian defensive positions with guns and quick-firing rifles, the 25th Regiment of the 42nd Division of the Croatian Home Guard crossed the Drina river at Batar, which was painted three years later by Croatian painter Oton Iveković as shown in Figure 6. In the meantime, the Serbian civilian prisoners from the border villages in Serbia and the captured Serbian officers were taken to the military prison in Zagreb, and the first confiscated Serbian gun was exposed to the public in the Croatian capital city as a war trophy, imitating the expositions of Russian guns in Vienna and Budapest.⁸² The families of the fallen soldiers received notices of ‘the heroic deaths’ of their fathers and sons, even though they had certainly died a horrible death in close combat, face to face with the enemy. The newspapers were reporting about the most important war events, updating the lists of the dead, wounded and captured members of the Austro-Hungarian army. In this way, the public was notified that on 26 October 1914 the mobilised Croatian writer Fran Galović, whose poems had made their way into the modernist anthology *Hrvatska mlada lirika* (*The Young Croatian Lyric*) only for months before, was killed on the battlefield in Serbia⁸³.

While the Croatian soldiers in the Austro-Hungarian regiments fought heavily not only at the Drina river with the Serbs but also in the Carpathians with the Russians, the first news about the decline of the Russian offensive in Galicia and the Austro-Hungarian crossing of the Drina river was accompanied in Croatia-Slavonia by occasional demonstrations. Thus, in September 1914, the municipal council in Ilok prepared an evening procession through the town, and in Koprivnica, the captain of the town guard invited his fellow-citizens to decorate their houses with Croatian flags and put out the lights in their windows.⁸⁴ But, it was not the case elsewhere. After the gendarmerie unit from Sušak had to intervene in Trsat to interrupt unknown night-signalling by a lamp, in mid-October 1914, the city police in Rijeka intercepted recruits and conscripts of Croatian nationality decorated with Croatian signs because the city and the port of Rijeka did not officially belong to Croatia-Slavonia.

⁸¹ *Ilustrovani list* [Illustrated Journal], vol. 1, no. 38 (Zagreb, 19 September 1914), 39 (Zagreb, 26 September 1914).

⁸² *Ibid.*, no. 41 (Zagreb, 10 October 1914), 48 (Zagreb, 28 November 1914).

⁸³ *Ibid.*, no. 45 (Zagreb, 7 November 1914).

⁸⁴ Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv [The Croatian State Archives], Predsjedništvo Kraljevske hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinske zemaljske vlade: Opći spisi [The Presidency of the Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Provincial Government: General Records], box 877, vol. 6–22, no. 5751.



Figure 6: Oton Iveković: Crossing the Drina River at Batar

Although the battles fought during the autumn, except for those short ones in Syrmia, were far from Croatian-Slavonian territory, the storm in the front line provoked more and more troubles at home. Since the social and cultural life in the country had become very limited, it was possible to maintain only those entertainments that previously had received permission from the authorities and these were usually dedicated to the collection of offerings for the wounded in hospitals and the soldiers on the battlefields. The food was bought from peasants at low prices, but the population in the cities like Zagreb, where the first snow fell in the second half of November 1914,⁸⁵ was seriously affected by the shortage of food because the battlefields had to be supplied first. Despite the order of viceroy Skerlec in November 1914 on the regulation of production and transport of wheat and rye flour used for bread baking, the food prices increased, for example in Osijek and Sušak. Therefore, at the end of November 1914, the viceroy had to issue a new order, in which he established maximum prices for wheat and flour.⁸⁶

In the meantime, war propaganda became an everyday weapon in mobilisation. During the first months of the war, a series of poems was published, not only in newspapers and journals but also in separate booklets and posters, (see, for example, the poem 'Kralj Petar cvili,' 'King Peter whines,' as shown in Figure 7). It was the time of many poems written about the courage of the 'Croatian heroes' in combat 'for king and homeland' at the southern (Balkan) and northern (Galician) fronts. The real war

⁸⁵ *Ilustrovani list* [Illustrated Journal], vol. I, no. 48 (Zagreb, 28 November 1914).

⁸⁶ Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv [The Croatian State Archives], Predsjedništvo Kraljevske hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinske zemaljske vlade: Opći spisi [The Presidency of the Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Provincial Government: General Records], box 856, vol. 6–14, no. 9149, box. 874, vol. 6–22, no. 4516.

sounds in some poems about the bloody battlefields like the sighs of the wounded and the tears pouring over the graves of the fallen soldiers were overshadowed by wartime propaganda. Thus, everything written in the poem 'Pad Beograda' ('The Fall of Belgrade'), was in the service of celebrating the Austro-Hungarian seizing of the Serbian capital city on 2 December 1914, on the 66th anniversary of the accession of the emperor Franz Joseph I to the throne. The occupation of Belgrade was presented as God's punishment to the Serbian nation, because Serbia had relied on their allies and became belligerent, ignoring all Croatian attempts to help Serbs in the previous Balkan wars. The result was such that the Croatian soldiers from Karlovac were the first who entered the Serbian capital city and raised the Croatian flag on top of the royal palace.⁸⁷ On this occasion, public protests were organised in Zagreb, but the tide of war turned again and the Austro-Hungarian forces were expelled from Serbia.

Until the end of 1914, the governmental commissioner in Zagreb and the viceroy's advisor Zvonimir Žepić supported the proposal of the district authorities in Topusko to make a Serbian fiddle from the village of Bović an exhibit in the museum because of its artistic value. At the same time, the provincial government in Zagreb refused the request of the Criminal Museum of the Hungarian State Police in Budapest, who still at the beginning of the year had asked for some police items from Zemun.⁸⁸ On December 16, 1914, a prominent composer Ivan Zajc died in Zagreb. He was a founder of the Croatian



Figure 7: An example of war propaganda: the poem King Peter whines

⁸⁷ *Pad Beograda* [The Fall of Belgrade] (Osijek: Tisak i naklada Frankove tiskare, 1914.), 11–27.

⁸⁸ Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv [The Croatian State Archives], Predsjedništvo Kraljevske hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinske zemaljske vlade: Opći spisi [The Presidency of the Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Provincial Government: General Records], box 831, vol. 2, no. 8383, box 856, vol. 6–14, no. 8768.

opera and a pioneer in orchestral music in Croatian territories. At this time, a Josip Prašnikar from Zagreb made an allegorical composition in memory of the 1914 war. According to the press, the original painting was made in vibrant colours, depicting the armed nations of the Monarchy under the emperor Franz Joseph.⁸⁹ In the meantime, historian Ferdo Šišić published his book *Priručnik izvora hrvatske historije* (Sources Guide for the Croatian History), and a prominent philosopher Franjo Marković died. The Christmas of 1914 was marked by the efforts in Galicia and the retreat in Serbia, on one hand, and on the other, by sharing humanitarian aid as well as by announcing the call for paying the first war loan in Croatia-Slavonia. Since ordinary people had predominantly been sent to war, a peasant from Croatian-Slavonian countryside was furious enough to send an anonymous letter of complaint to the presidency of the provincial government in Zagreb: 'Let the gentlemen fight from their offices, and newspapers write about the victories, so that they don't feel this war on their skin.'⁹⁰

Conclusion

In conclusion, we can underline that the outbreak of World War I in 1914 had a serious impact on life in Croatia-Slavonia as an autonomous province within the Hungarian part of the Habsburg Empire. During the last months of the Beautiful Era, the main plays were performed in the capital city of Zagreb: the Croatian writer Antun Gustav Matoš died there in March 1914, and the *Hrvatska mlada lirika* (*The Young Croatian Lyric*), a poetic anthology of Croatian modernism, was published in the same city. In the same year, the Croatian writer of the new generation, Miroslav Krleža, started his work. Although Austria-Hungary was a civilised and highly organised state, Habsburg dualism represented a serious obstacle to Croatian national integration, especially to the unification of the politically divided Croatian lands. Therefore, the assassination in Sarajevo on 28 June 1914 caused a split reaction in the Croatian public: some people were sad and indignant, and others, not only the Serbs in Croatia-Slavonia but also some Croats, were indifferent or even joyful. The declaration of war against Serbia in July 1914 led to the implementation of the exceptional measures, persecution of the Serbs and other political suspects, the rejection of Serbian and Montenegrin decorations by their Croatian holders, the limited use of telegrams and telephone and other changes in everyday life and leisure, including growing humanitarian activities and modified religious practices. Some newspapers and journals ceased to exist, while some others were launched, but the military authorities censored the reports of the war correspondents. On the other hand, a series of Croatian poems was printed, acting as war propaganda 'for

⁸⁹ *Ilustrovani list* [Illustrated Journal], vol. 1, no. 51 (Zagreb, 19 December 1914).

⁹⁰ Zagreb, Hrvatski državni arhiv [The Croatian State Archives], Predsjedništvo Kraljevske hrvatsko-slavonsko-dalmatinske zemaljske vlade: Opći spisi [The Presidency of the Royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Provincial Government: General Records], box 881, vol. 6–22, no. 9448.

king and homeland,' for example, a poem that celebrated the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Belgrade on 2 December 1914 on the occasion of the 66th anniversary of the accession of the emperor Franz Joseph I to the throne. At the same time, public activities of civil associations in Croatia-Slavonia were held in harsh conditions, many schools were transformed into hospitals, war loans were introduced, and inhabitants participated in the collection of aid for the wounded in hospitals and for the soldiers on the battlefields.

Abstract

During the late 19th and the early 20th centuries, the modern world was created, and new tendencies left their traces on almost all areas of human creativity as well as in Croatia-Slavonia within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. This period of peace and prosperity known as La Belle Époque danced its last waltz in the Spring of 1914. Only a month after the assassination in Sarajevo on 28 June 1914, the First World War broke out. In Croatia-Slavonia exceptional measures were immediately put into effect, which prompted many changes in society, culture, everyday life, and leisure. The arrival of the first wounded soldiers launched growing humanitarian activities, and the new challenges had an effect on some religious experiences. In the Autumn of 1914, the stormy situation at the frontline influenced the growing troubles at home in various ways: while social and cultural life was limited, military authorities censored news and reports about the real situation on the battlefields and in the hinterland.

Keywords

Croatia, 1914, modernism, mobilisation, war, propaganda

Resümé

Az első világháború kitörésének súlyos következményei voltak Horvát-Szlavónország kulturális életére. Voltak újságok és folyóiratok, amelyek megszűntek, mások épp ekkor indultak útjukra. Horvát költemények sora jelent meg háborús propaganda céllal, hogy az uralkodót és a hazát éltessék, amint azt a Belgrád elfoglalását Ferenc József trónralépésének 66. évfordulója alkalmából íródott dicsőítő vers is tette. A civil egyesületek nyilvános tevékenységét korlátozták, sok iskolában kórházakat rendeztek be, háborús kölcsönöket bocsátottak ki, a lakosság pedig segélyeket gyűjtött a kórházakban fekvő sebesültek és a csatamezőkön küzdők számára.

Kulcsszavak

Horvátország, 1914, modernizmus, mozgósítás, háború, propaganda