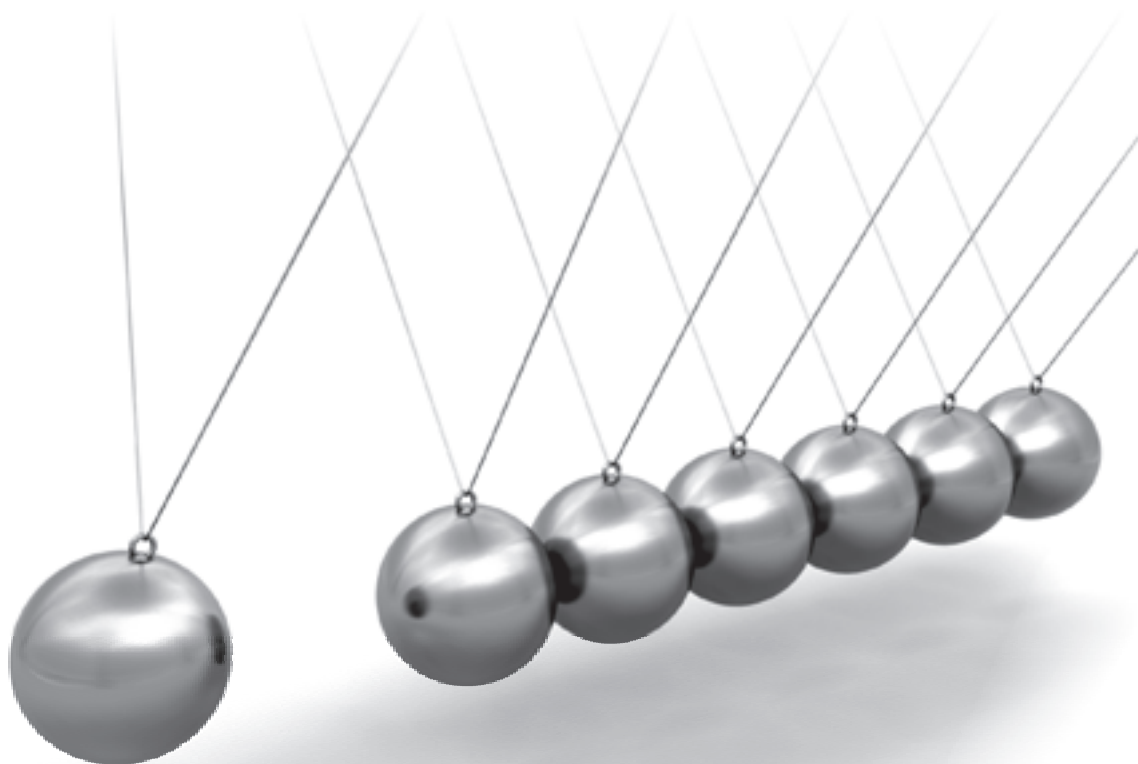


Culture of Remembrance, Visuality, and Crisis in the Balkans (17th-20th Century)

Edited by Nenad Makuljević



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INTRODUCTION

Understanding complex relations between different political, social, cultural, and religious events, and the development and functions of visual culture, is at the forefront of the modern and contextual history of art. The present global crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic brought up the question of how visual culture changes in a crisis, and what role does it play. This edited collection, written by authors pertinent to the circle of historians of the art of the early modern period from the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, is an attempt at answering that question.

The collection *CULTURE OF REMEMBRANCE, VISUALITY, AND CRISIS IN THE BALKANS (17TH-20TH CENTURY)* is devoted to understanding the relationship between crises and visual culture in the early modern and modern periods in the Balkans. Natural disasters, communicable diseases, and wartime crises have marked the social and cultural history of the Balkans. Crises in the Balkans encumbered this geographical region, and not only in the past. This is precisely why this region is most relevant for studies of the relationship between crises and visual culture.

The authors of this collection of papers shed light on numerous examples of the relationship between crises and visual culture from the Balkan region, along with those from the Bay of Kotor and southern Hungary, between the late 17th century and WWI. Research has shown that visual culture was influenced by infectious diseases such as the plague and cholera, natural disasters such as earthquakes, and numerous wars. At the same time, visual culture suffered the direct consequences of the crises in question, but also helped overcome them, commemorate them, and even manipulate them.

The collection resulted from a scientific project by the Faculty of Philosophy. We owe a debt of gratitude to our reviewers, Milan Ristović, Ljiljana Stošić, and Radomir Popović.

Saša Brajović*

EPIDEMICS IN EARLY MODERN EUROPEAN CULTURE: THE CASE OF THE BAY OF KOTOR DURING THE VENETIAN AND AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT

Abstract: This study discusses structural changes in European societies between the 14th and the 20th century caused by major epidemics of plague and cholera, which had an impact on official institutions, societal norms, segments of public and private life, devotional practices, sacral and urban topography, and other areas of visual culture. This paper is focused on the Bay of Kotor (Montenegro) governed by the Republic of Venice from 1420 to 1797, and the Austrian Empire from 1797 to 1805, and from 1815 to 1918. This study analyzes health institutions, pious manifestations, verbal and visual images created to defend against epidemics or as an expression of gratitude for its passing. Selected representations indicate the similarity of pious practices, forms of behavior and images during crises, over a long period of time. Some of them express a denial of the crisis, in order to create an ideal picture of political stability.

Keywords: epidemics, the Bay of Kotor, the Republic of Venice, Austrian Monarchy, visual culture

The Plague

It is commonly recognized that the history of Europe between the 14th and the 18th century could be portrayed as the history of the plague. The dreaded disease shaped private and public life, attitudes toward notions of the soul, body, and death, religion and devotional practices, economic and political life, literature, music, sacral and urban topography, as well as artistic production.

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Everything Giovanni Boccaccio wrote in his essential sociological, psychological, and cultural analysis of the plague's impact in "The First Day" (Introduction) of *The Decameron* from 1348 was also true of the cities on the Montenegrin coast, and especially of the Bay of Kotor. Boccaccio records that the plague is brought on by the "Wrath of God" (as claimed also many centuries earlier by Homer in the first book of *The Iliad*), and neither reason nor any undertaken measure, nor counsel on health protection and prayer was of any effect. Some retreated into isolation, others relished in debauchery and mocked everything. The plague destroyed families and society, for people ran from one another, even parents from their children. New customs replaced old ones, especially when it came to treating the deceased body: the sick died alone, without mourning and rituals, and their bodies were thrown into hastily dug collective pits (Boccaccio, 1998, pp. 6–23). The repercussions of these attitudes towards death beware far-reaching: it was only at the end of the 18th century that these practices were replaced by establishing new cemeteries and creating the custom of visiting the graves by the relatives of the deceased (Ariés, 1974, pp. 64–68).

Boccaccio writes that there were not enough people left to work the land and take care of the cattle, hence famine ensued. The palaces were deserted, violence was present everywhere, and "the authority of the laws, both human and divine, was all in a manner dissolved and fallen into decay." Numerous sources confirm that the pestilence provoked serious economic crises: maritime economy, trade, agriculture, construction work dwindled. This was followed by an inevitable social transformation: feudalism suffered a great blow in some parts of Europe, which caused the middle class to rise, allowing for greater social mobility of the rich merchants (Herlihy, 1997).

The plague was a constant threat to public health on the territory of present-day Montenegro, from the last decades of the 14th to the first decades of the 19th century. It was recorded in Budva and Ulcinj in 1390. In Kotor, judging by indirectly associated documents, it was already active in the second half of the 14th century. Documents testifying of outbreaks of the plague in that city with a strongly developed maritime economy: 1400, 1422, 1427–1430, 1435, 1457, 1503, and 1572 (Bazala, 1962). The victim of the disease of 1422 was Kotor's bishop Raimund de Viterbo. Bishop Marino Contareno writes that in July of 1435 the city was deserted due to the raging plague, except for only 17 people that stayed inside the city walls. Testimonies of how strong the fear of *morbo grande* was can be found in wills, especially in those bequeathed by women. After losing her son, daughter-in-law, and grandchildren, Petruša Branković called the

confessor Trifun Bizanti to record her last will since she could not find the public notary. Her will was dictated in a hurry and without signatures of witnesses, who refused to come into the contagious house (Блехова Челебић, 2002, p. 38).

Along with the epidemic in 1503, the Ottoman-Venetian war (1499–1503) raged on, as well as the great famine, all of which resulted in 400 death cases in Kotor only in June. On the heels of the epidemic in 1572 came the consequences of the War of Cyprus (1570–1573). In January that year, the epidemic entered the city together with 500 soldiers from a Venetian warship. It lasted for six months and took more than 3500 lives (Milošević, 2003). Citizens of Kotor complained that they had lost everything “but the bare walls of our bare houses” (Stanojević, 1975, p. 60).

Epidemics of the Bubonic plague led to a new attitude towards health, which became a political category. They provoked the establishment of sanitary services, increased control of people and goods, and the establishment of *lazzaretti*, places that served for isolating the sick and those waiting for the biblical 40 days of quarantine to be over. The new health service, *Provveditori della sanità*, was established in 1434, during the regimen of Paolo Contarini, the Venetian governor of Kotor. Not long after that, by the decision of the Small and Secret Council, *Magistrato alla sanità* was also founded, whose members, the city’s noblemen, were in charge of controlling the quarantine, ships, passengers, and goods (Katić, 1958; Милошевић, 1959; Мијушковић, 1963). During the 16th century, one *lazzareto* in Kotor was active outside the city walls, at the mouth of the river Škurda, and another in the neighboring village of Dobrota.

High awareness of natural surroundings as well as the rising need for physical protection, present in Florence and Venice (Benvenuto, 1995; Cohn, 2010), was strong in Kotor as well. In relation to that, the spring of drinking water on Puč (*fons Pucius/Puteus*) was tended to with care, and after its contamination, people used boats to fetch clean water outside the city. *Provveditori della sanità* banned burials within the city walls, which provoked the revolt of wealthy citizens (Čremošnik, 1921–1922, p. 148).

Noble families fled from the dangerous city life and *morte cruda*, finding shelters in the surrounding lands and residences, or isolating themselves on ships or the island of Stradioti (Saint Gabriel) near Tivat (Stjerčević & Kovijanić, 1957, pp. 13–14; Мијушковић & Ковијанић, 1964, pp. 82–83). The island was mentioned in *Bove d’Oro*, a chronicle written by the Benedictine monk and nobleman Timotej Cizila in 1624, as a place where people found safety in times of wars or epidemics, as happened “in the year of our Lord 1623, in times of the plague in Kotor, when people fled from the city infected with this most horrible contagion, with

the help of the more than honorable guards of Kotor nobles, citizens, and the Italian army” (Џизила, 1996, p. 95).

The plague epidemic gave rise to empathy and care for the sick and the poor, which could be understood as an element of the wide-spreading democratic process. On the other hand, archival records indicate that city services identified the poor as carriers of contagion (Pullan, 1992; Henderson, 1992). A similar attitude was recorded in Kotor, especially according to the case presented in front of the Venetian *Signoria*. On August 27, 1454, the citizens of Kotor pleaded to open up the island of Stradioti, which once belonged to the municipality, to the free use of all people fleeing the plague (Čremošnik, 1921–1922, pp. 172–178).

In each plague epidemic, the “culprits” for its occurrence and effects were identified and castigated. Prostitutes were especially targeted and publicly humiliated. The most severely persecuted were Jewish people, accused of deliberately sowing the plague and poisoning the waters (Cantor, 2001, pp. 147–168). Epidemics accelerated the development of the ghetto (the first was founded in Venice in 1516, soon after the devastating epidemic of 1510). Anti-Semitism “was not created by the plague, but the plague gave anti-Semites a murderous excuse” (Kenny, 2021, p. 87). State authorities, proverbially dedicated to maintaining order, tolerated occasional ghetto raids, murders, and robberies.

The detection of culprits was also present on the Montenegrin coast. Andrija Zmajević, the Archbishop of Bar, writes about the plague outbreak that struck his diocese in 1673 and states that the pestilence was brought upon them by “the new *beg*, the ruler of Albania,” causing the death of 60 persons. That “scourge of God,” according to Zmajević, was sent by the Lord to the cities that “did great evil in Puglia and to the Holy Father Pope on Earth” (referring to the attacks of the Ottoman pirates on the opposite coast of the Adriatic Sea). “Those infidels” (the Muslims) died, while their neighbors (Christians) “escaped the pestilence” (Змајевих, 1996, pp. 514–515).

During the epidemic, women accused of being witches were brought to trials in front of the Venetian *Provveditore* in Kotor. Thus, in 1708, several children fell ill in the town of Risan, apparently from the so-called “Red wind,” once a deadly bacterial infection erysipelas. Accused of causing the disease, Stane Perova, an herbalist from the neighboring village, was punished, and Bojana Sredanova admitted she was a witch (Шеровић, 1958).

During the 17th century, the measures for protection against epidemics in Europe became stricter and more effective (Henderson, 2019). Similar occurrences could be traced in the Bay of Kotor in the 17th and 18th

century. From 1697, when the cities in the north of the Bay were returned to the Venetian Republic, ships and crews had to pass all prescribed medical examinations in the *lazzaretti* of Herceg Novi. All ships that wanted to enter the inner Bay could do so only if accompanied by a state ship and examined by its sanitary team (Zloković, 1982; Lalošević, 2017).

However, despite all the measures, the plague persistently penetrated the Venetian towns on the Montenegrin coast in 1613, 1622–1623, 1647–1648, and especially in 1690, the so-called *la peste della serve*, one of the greatest epidemics (Gelcich, 1882, p. 62; Jeremić & Tadić, 1938; Bazala, 1962; Kralj-Brassard, 2016). Its destructive power on the east coast of the Adriatic was particularly felt due to hunger, the fatalities brought on by the Morean War (1684–1699), and the long-lasting effects of the 1667 earthquake. In the autumn of 1690, it was the cause of death of many, especially in the village of Orahovac by Perast, which belonged to the Ottoman part of Boka (Hrabak, 1989).

The plague struck in the 18th as well as in the first decades of the 19th century. In 1818, it attacked the villages above Kotor, in Montenegro. An Austrian military doctor serving in Dubrovnik, Alberto Muzarelli, was sent to the Bay of Kotor and Montenegro to report on health issues due to a planned visit of the Austrian Emperor Franz I. He testified on the difficult situation in impoverished households (Priatelj, 1961).

Infectious disease was not the only problem. Following the fall of the Venetian Republic and the Peace of Campo Formio in 1797, Boka became a part of the Austrian Empire which strove, already during its first administration of 1797–1805, to deconstruct the centuries-long communal organization based on urban statutes and privileges and to create a centralized and bureaucratic state system. Napoleon's wars and taxes imposed by the French administration – contribution, requisition, labor on roads and fortifications, ban on tobacco planting, and by the end of 1810 forced recruitment into the army, brought about a deep economic crisis (Zloković, 1962). As a result of the state bankruptcy of Austria, it escalated in 1815 when the rich inhabitants of Boka, who had purchased state bonds, lost great fortunes. The maritime economy came to a halt.

Still, during the brief interludes between outbreaks of infectious disease and other crises, spirits were revived and creativity inspired. Behind many architectural and artistic undertakings stood business and charity organizations, called *scuole* in the Venetian domain. Their existence in Boka was recorded as early as the 13th century – the oldest being the *fraternitas S. Crucis* founded in Kotor in 1298, and described as *flagelantium*. Church and city authorities encouraged processions of flagellants, who expressed collective penitence by public self-flagellation, together with other

forms of mass religious enthusiasm (Martin, 1988; Henderson, 1978). But, after the first wave of the Black Death, these fraternities dedicated themselves to charitable activities. Members of the *Fraternitas S. Crucis* were both nobles and citizens, as well as women. In 1372, the fraternity also raised the *Hospitale pauperum sancte Crucis* next to its church of the Holy Cross (Stjepčević, 1938, pp. 60–61). Other fraternities in Boka were also devoted to the founding of churches and charitable institutions and, thus, to the collective good and wellbeing.

The reputation of fraternities – acquired, among other means, by the burials they provided for their members and their respective families – grew, riding on the wave of the great Catholic Reform, which began with the Tridentine council (1545–1563). The status of protector against the plague acquired blessed Osanna of Cattaro (Ozana Kotorska, 1493–1565, beatified in 1934), visionary, anchoress, and a Dominican tertiary.

In the Vita of the Beata from Kotor, the Dominican Serafino Razzi points out the significant role she played in the troubling times of pestilence. Although Razzi notes that it was *una certa mortalità infermità* that lasted long and had no cure, one can ascertain that he was referring to the plague, which, as Razzi himself notes, was raging in Dubrovnik in 1533 (Razzi, 1593, pp. 36–37). The Beata Osanna prayed to the Lord and, “to receive a better answer,” to her patron saint, St Vincent Ferrer. One morning, in the first light of day, with devoted prayer and many shed tears, “she rose in ecstasy, out of any sense.” She saw St Vincent and heard him tell her to quiet down, wipe her tears, for her prayers had been answered. Thereby “stopped this vicious ailment and nobody died of it anymore,” while the citizens of Kotor offered praise to the Lord. Osanna’s powerful visions inspired action – prayers, processions, reconciliations, forgiveness, which lifted the spirit and allayed the feeling of helplessness (Brajović, 2013).

The fear of death encouraged the strengthening of *devotio moderna*. It was mostly enacted by the mendicant religious orders, especially the Franciscans, who gained a great reputation during the times of the plague for staying in the cities and treating the sick. Their sermons, church buildings and pertaining decorations, the various forms of devotion, to a large extent determined the spiritual life, culture and mentality of the Bay of Kotor (Brajović, 2006, pp. 133–58; Живковић, 2010, pp. 62–76).

The plague invigorated the Franciscan devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, an emblematic figure of protection and mercy. It inspired the development of Marian teachings, especially the Immaculate Conception. Within the framework of broader theological and social changes, the plague contributed to the transformation of the central image of Christianity – the image of the Virgin and Child.

Although the plague inspired the depictions of decomposed bodies, skeletons, images of *danse macabre* which united people of all ages and social strata, the ghostly emaciation of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse, the triumph of death, the art produced in times of epidemics exceeded the grim macabre flavor (Huizinga, 1996, pp. 294–328; Cohn, 1997). The image of Madonna that expresses the dialectic of birth, suffering, death, and eternal life, has been colored with touching tenderness and beauty since the times of the plague.

Although there is no direct proof of the association between the most venerate miraculous image in the Bay o Kotor, *Our Lady of the Reef* (Gospa od Škrpjela), the work of painter Lovro Dobričević from Kotor from the middle of the 15th century (Ђурић, 1967; Brajović, 2000; Prijatelj Pavičić, 2013, pp. 126–137), and the plague, one can ascertain that its creation and veneration were speeded by the outbreaks of pestilence. According to local chronicles and sermons, this disease never attacked Perast, unlike the nearby town of Kotor. Immediately after the devastating earthquake of 1667, a sermon written celebrates the icon for protecting the city from “the plague, earthquakes, and the enemy” (NAP, XII/5; Brajović, 2015).

Based on the inscriptions, we know of ex-vote being laid before the icon. The church in front of Perast, itself a votive offering to the Blessed Virgin Mary, holds one of the most exceptional treasures of votive gifts in the Mediterranean. However, pirate and Turkish raids of the sanctuary in 1624 and 1654, have taken away many of its hundreds of silver plaques. Among the remaining ones, laid out in the manner of a frieze lining the lateral walls of the church and the organs in the choir (Pazzi, 2007), it is difficult to identify those directly testifying of the plague. The so-called “anatomic” votives, displaying human body parts, are fashioned in a schematized manner which further impedes their identification.

The plague encouraged the creation of new iconographic models, such as *Madonna della Misericordia*, *Pietà*, *Sacra conversazione*. The image of the Virgin with the Child is especially effective when saints, the protectors from the plague, appear next to them: the noble Sebastian, St Anthony of Padua, St Bernardino of Siena, St Christopher, St Spyridon (Стошић, 29–50), St Vincent Ferrer and, most frequently, St Rocco.

Built into the passageway of the main city gate of Kotor, the Sea Gate, there is a relief with the figures of the Virgin and Child, St Tryphon with a model of the city and St Bernardino of Siena with the monogram of Jesus Christ, originally planned for the Franciscan monastery (Стојановић-Максимовић, 1956) (Fig. 1). In the context of constant war threats, and particularly those caused by the Turkish siege of Kotor in 1539, the aftermath of which saw the construction of the very *Porta marina* in question,



Fig. 1: Madonna with Child, St Tryphon and St Bernardino of Siena, stone, beginning of the 16th century, Porta marina, Kotor

city authorities decided to place the relief inside this gate. Whatsmore, the figure of St Bernardino, a celebrated Franciscan author and sermon giver, gives the relief a prophylactic role. His monogram is carved, as a symbol of protection, by the entrances to many sacral as well as secular structures in the Bay of Kotor. That is why the great holy patron against the plague is involved in *sacra conversazione* with the Virgin and Christ, as images of *porta paradisi*, as well as with St Tryphon, the protector of Kotor.

St Bernardino is assigned the same role on the marble altar *pala* created in 1654 by fra Desiderio for the church of the Holy Spirit in Kotor (Fig. 2). Together with St Francis, he kneels before Virgin Mary presented in the form of the Immaculate Conception. On the crescent Moon is an inscription *Opus fratris Desiderii a Cattaro Anno Do(mi)ni MDCLIII*, and underneath it says *Regina Sanctissimi stellarii. Ora pro nobis* (Luković, 2000, p. 51; Prijatelj, 1972). Next to the church founded in 1350, the Franciscans raised a *domo hospitalis S. Spiritus*. The Franciscans of the Venetian province of St Anthony of Padua, who inherited this church in 1640, also took care of the poor and the sick by establishing a kitchen. It is for that reason that St Francis and St Bernardino, apart from the fundamental roles they play in strengthening the Franciscan order and Marian



Fig. 2: Desiderie da Cattaro, The Virgin Mary with Child, St Francis and St Bernardino, marble, 1654, The Cathedral of St Tryphon, Kotor

theology, take an active part and exercise power in the protection of the faithful against the plague. Thus, this *sacra conversazione* in relief forms a longstanding cult (Брајовић, 2007).

While St Sebastian's wounds were a metaphor of the plague, those of St Rocco were rather real, prompting artists to realistically represent an ulcer on his leg. As St Rocco retreated into the woods to spare loved ones from the infection, his self-isolation was highlighted by authorities as a model of quarantine. There was a church of Saints Sebastian and Rocco in Kotor, renovated in 1501 by the efforts of the *provveditore* Sebastiano Contareno, as well as the fraternity of the same name. The archival records of 1574 mention *hospitale s. Rochi* (Stjepčević, 1938, p. 61). In Lastva, on the property of the aristocratic family Bucchia from Kotor in front of which there was a quarantine, a chapel of St Rocco was built in 1551. A church dedicated to the same titular was constructed in its place in 1901. Giorgio Palavičini (Georgius Pallavicinus), a descendant of a respectable family from Perast, naval captain and scrivener of Scuola di San Gior-



Fig. 3: St Rocco, painted wood, 17th century,
The Cathedral of St Tryphon, Kotor

gio e Trifone in Venice, during the *tempore pestilentiae* in 1631 offered a votive gift. It was a picture of Maddona with St Rocco and St Sebastian, with the sea and the view of Perast in the background (Luković, 1957). A marble figure of the saint, a votive gift from the seaman Ivan Marinović, a work of the Venetian sculptor Francesco Gai was placed on the main altar of the church of Our Lady of the Reef in 1783. The picture of St Roco, attributed to Francesco Fontebasso, found its place on the nearby side altar (Priatelj, 1971). A large polychrome wooden figure of St Roco is preserved in the cathedral of St Tryphon in Kotor (Fig. 3). Apart from the fact that it had previously been kept in Perast, very little is otherwise known about this object. Judging by the robust body and the naturalistically rendered wound on the thigh, this sculpture was produced in the 17th century, most probably in Venice. It can be assumed that it had been commissioned in gratitude to the saint for having stopped the spread of the pestilence.



Fig. 4: Plan of cemetery in Škaljari, Episcopal Archives Kotor

The plague influenced the fashioning of the sacral and urban topography of European cities. There is no place in the western and central Mediterranean without churches dedicated to anti-pest protectors, nor one that does not have its Our Lady of Salvation. An unattainable role model was the Venetian Santa Maria della Salute, erected as a sign of gratitude for the end of the plague in 1630 (Mason-Rinaldi, 1979). Gospa od Zdravlja of Kotor, first mentioned in 1518 as *Madonna de riposo*, with a bell tower and open porch, was placed in the middle of the fortresses on the hill of San Giovanni, facing the sea, and watching over the city (Belan, 2017).

The construction of votive churches in the Bay of Kotor was marked by complex urban and maritime rituals. The votive procession of Our Lady of Perast was fashioned following examples of Venetian ceremonies and was celebrated on May 15. Even though the primary function of the ritual was the remembrance of the great victory over the Turks in 1654, in this complex and elaborate conglomerate of liturgical and pious practices a prophylactic role was also included (Brajović, 2006, pp. 266–294).

The plague influenced the development of the first arranged city cemeteries. To prevent the spread of epidemics, on November 5, 1818, the Austrian government banned burial in churches. The construction of the Kotor cemetery in Škaljari started in 1820. It was accelerated due to the epidemic in 1824 and was completed according to a design by Marko Benzon (Lupis, 2001). According to his project, the church of St Michael

was built in 1856 on the southern, Catholic part of the cemetery. In the north, Orthodox area, the Church of the Intercession of the Mother of God was built in 1846. A Jewish cemetery was formed on a small plot (5 x 7.5 m) between the Orthodox and the Catholic parcels (Fig. 4). The contract with the *Fabbriceria della Chiesa Cathedrale di Cattaro* on the formal handing over of a part of the Catholic cemetery was signed by prominent Mayer Finzi, Maurizio Mandel, and Giacomo Tolentino in June 1858. The funeral area was registered in June 1884 as the property of the Kotor Jewish community (Raičević, 2014; Novaković & Kušević, 2021, pp. 7–25). The Jewish cemetery in Kotor was actively used until 1904.

Cholera

In addition to wars, famines, cold winters, earthquakes, there were diseases like malaria, typhus, syphilis, smallpox, dysentery, besides the plague. On top of that, cholera emerged during the 19th century in Europe. Although it mostly destroyed the poor, at times it entered courts, becoming the undoing of several famous people. It contributed to the emergence of rebellions of the oppressed urban population and the great revolutions. It influenced the development of science and the course of the second industrial revolution (Evans, 1995).

As was the case with outbreaks of all other types of infectious disease in Boka, epidemics of cholera were also accompanied by various other troubles, particularly those related to the economy. The Austrian steamship company Lloyd, founded in 1833, held a privileged position in the business of transporting people and goods and enjoyed significant subventions. The private capital of the citizens of Boka was not sufficient for investments into shipyards and mechanized ports. Many had to leave Boka, moving with them also their ships and their companies (Martinović, 1972). The Bay became a fortified war port of Austria, which only further stifled the maritime economy. Documents from 1847 and 1848 testify of grain shortages (Radulović, 1957). In the mid-19th century, Boka was also affected by the ban of wood export to the rebelling Italian regions.

Known also as “the Asian illness,” cholera sometimes arrived in Dalmatia and the Bay of Kotor by way of passengers and goods from ships from Russia and Istanbul, but mostly from Trieste, the largest harbor in the Austrian Empire. Although strict sanitary measures of the Monarchy were enforced through the local port authority in Rose, and, as of 1850, in Meljine (Herceg Novi), the spread of cholera could not be stopped. Even with all the freight ships subjected to sanitary and tax control, steamships

of the Lloyd company, commuting between Trieste and Kotor had been excluded from any inspection.

Colera asiatico was the most severe in 1855 and 1867. In the epidemic of July and August 1855, patient zero was known – a sailor from Muo, who arrived on the ship of Captain Marko Luković from Trieste, and whose family became ill 12 days later, followed by the infection of the entire village. Despite the quarantine measures, cholera entered Kotor on July 3 through a doctor who traveled to Muo every day to treat patients. The doctor first infected the owner of *Caffe Svizzero* and an officer, but soon over 200 people were sick, 66 of whom died. Cholera was transferred to the village of Špiljari, above Kotor, then Kamenare, and soon, Herceg Novi. The citizens of Kotor collected donations for the victims (Cerineo, 1856, pp. 36–44).

Letters from the priest and catechist of the high school in Kotor, Vuk Popović, addressed to Vuk Karadžić testify that the situation in the Bay of Kotor was challenging. In a letter from October 28, 1855 (according to the Julian calendar), Popović writes that the outbreak of cholera started on August 22 and that 42 people died in Muo, 98 in Kotor, 39 in Risan, and 40 in Herceg Novi and its surroundings. The situation was the worst in mid-September. More than 600 people fled from Kotor. Popović, like Boccaccio once, writes: “Brother fled from brother, husband from wife, and wife from husband, and if it weren’t for the paid army that watched over the sick and carried the dead to the cemetery, they would decompose on their very beds if left to the relatives. The priests did not want to approach their parishioners for anything, let alone manage their bodies and chant over them.” Cholera had brought life to a halt, “nobody was keen neither on thinking nor working on anything, everyone was expecting death, like a lamb taken to slaughter” (Popović, 1999, pp. 275–279).

The veneration of the Madonna icons was especially prominent during the epidemic of 1855. Thus, Our Lady of the Reef was once more considered responsible for freeing the city from the “heavy whip of God’s wrath, the plague of cholera” which raged throughout Boka, while only three deaths were recorded in Perast (Vulović, 1887, p. 52). The citizens of Kotor organized processions with the image of Our Lady of Salvation, moving through the entire city, symbolically chasing away the pestilence.

The epidemic of 1867 was even worse. This is attested by Mr. Senković, the Kotor correspondent of *Napredak*, a political paper published by Serbs from southern Hungary, who sent “a letter from hell,” and admitted to his editor, Đorđe Popović Daničar, that he “was very scared of cholera” and that it seems to him “most horrible to die of cholera” (*Napredak*, No 53, 1867, p. 1).



Fig. 5: Ex-voto, gilt 1867, The church of the Nativity of the B. V. Mary, Prčanj

During this time, there was a strong surge in the cult of the miraculous icon Madonna di Perzagno. The icon, the origins of which remain wrapped in legend, was painted most probably in the second half of the 14th century. It was a constant source of miracle-making and healing, it protected from the plague and provided rain, and was a particularly successful defender from cholera. In 1867, inspired by the parrish priest Niko Lazzari, the citizens decided on making a feast on July 9 in memory of the beneficial agencies of the icon and offered it a golden heart (Luković, 1937, p. 150). This heart was inscribed with the following words: “To the Miraculous Virgin from the People of Prčanj on the day of July 9, 1867, protected from the plague disease” (Fig. 5).

At the time of cholera, the fraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary was founded in the church of the Holy Spirit in Kotor. The cholera of 1867 left a specific mark on the relief altarpiece in the church, already mentioned. Beneath the Virgin’s right hand is a ring from which a chain is hung with a large silver gilded heart bearing the inscription: *Catharenses liberati morbo asiatico Deiparae A. D. 1867*. In the context of the above-described, one can understand the relief “of the citizens of Kotor saved from cholera through the intervention of the Virgin in the year of the



Fig. 6: Rudolph von Alt, View from Dobrota toward Muo, water colour 1841, from: *Jakob and Rudolf von Alt. At His Majesty's Service*, Eds. Schröder, A. K., Sternath, M. L. Albertina, Vienna, 2010.

Lord 1867.” They offered their votive gift to the holy image around which a cult had formed two centuries earlier, during the outbreak of the plague.

There are no direct visual testimonies of the cholera epidemic in the Bay of Kotor. Neither are there any of the economic crisis, the resistance against Austrian law on obligatory military service, and the popular uprisings of 1848, 1869, and 1882 in Grbalj and Krivošije. In the pictorial “cosmos” of landscape sceneries and depictions of architectural ensembles commissioned by Emperor Ferdinand – an album envisaged to express the plurality of various nationalities and cultures harmoniously united under one well-ordered empire (Telesko, 2010) – there are watercolors painted by Rudolf von Alt in 1841, representing the Bay of Kotor as an ideal corner of the Empire (Brajović, 2014). The watercolors are faithful topographical presentations, but it is through their Biedermeier *stimmung* – the magnificent scenic beauties of the Bay, blissful landscapes, calm stability of nature, unadulterated by the weight of urbanization and industrialization of nature, far away from economic crisis and revolutions – that the attitude of the Habsburg monarchy towards the Mediterranean and the Orient shines through (Fig. 6). The same visual strategies of self-re-



Fig. 7: Frédéric Sorrieu, View of the city of Kotor (from a photograph by Charles Yriarte), *Il Giro del mondo* Volume VI, Issue 15, September 13, 1877

flection can also be seen on illustrations published in the Trieste *Illustriertes Familienbuch des Osterreichischen Lloyds*, a highly upheld magazine first published in 1850, which promoted coexistence between the different ethnic groups. The vedutas showing Kotor display its fortification and its waterfront, as, for example, on the lithograph by the French artist Frédéric Sorrieu, made after the sketches of Charles Yriarte dating from 1874. It was published on September 13, 1877, in the illustrated journal *Il Giro del mondo* vol. VI/15 (Fig. 7).

These examples show that the mechanisms of institutional and individual actions and reaction, acceptance as well as rejection, despite a major change in context, were similar to those today amid the Coronavirus epidemic. The new epidemic has made us, perhaps for the first time, truly aware and compassionate towards them.

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ЭПИДЕМИЈЕ У НОВОВЕКОВНОЈ ЕВРОПСКОЈ КУЛТУРИ: СЛУЧАЈ БОКЕ КОТОРСКЕ ЗА ВРЕМЕ МЛЕТАЧКЕ И АУСТРИЈСКЕ УПРАВЕ

Апстракт: У раду се разматрају структуралне промене у институцијама, манифестацијама побожности, сегментима јавног и приватног живота, сакралној и урбаној топографији и другим видовима визуелне културе, које су у европском друштву од 14. до 20. века изазвале епидемије, нарочито куге и колере. Рад је усредсређен на област Боке Которске у саставу Млетачке републике од 1420. до 1797. и Аустријске монархије од 1797. до 1805. и од 1815. до 1918. године. Пажња је усмерена на здравствене институције, побожне манифестације, вербалне и визуелне слике стваране ради одбране од заразе и захвалности што су прошле. Изабране визуелне представе указују на сродност побожних пракси и облика понашања током криза, у дугом временском периоду. Многе од њих изражавају и порицање кризе, ради креирања идеалне слике политичке стабилности.

Кључне речи: епидемије, Бока Которска, Млетачка република, Аустријска монархија, визуелна култура

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THE 1667 EARTHQUAKE IN THE BAY OF KOTOR: A HISTORY OF RESILIENCE

Abstract: When it comes to writing the (art) history of a crisis, anonymous and undocumented acts of reparation and reshaping of visual culture could often be analyzed as equally important documents as those that belong to the sphere of art production. During the 1667 earthquake in Kotor, dozens of silver body-part reliquaries were severely damaged. Those objects were “healed” with uneven patches of material, often crudely nailed to the injured surface, usually by the application of the silver votive plaques. At the same time, a great number of ex-votos in the Bay represented images of injured human limbs, cured by the grace of various holy persons. By interpreting a rather eloquent interaction between the two kinds of silver artifacts and by slightly widening the methodological scope of art history, the lack of visual evidence on the 17th-century earthquake in Kotor can be overcome.

Keywords: earthquake, early modern body, reliquaries, ex-voto

The 1667 Kotor Earthquake

A major earthquake struck on April 6, 1667, severely affecting a large area of the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea. Several towns in contemporary Croatia and Montenegro were severely ruined, Dubrovnik and Kotor being especially damaged. During the time of the accident, these coastal areas were divided between three important European states: the Republic of Venice, the Republic of Ragusa, and the Ottoman Empire. Kotor belonged to “Serenissima” and was administered by “Provveditore Straordinario,” a middle-ranking governor who was appointed by the Senate of Venice.

Paola Albini’s findings show that on the day of the earthquake, the microseismic intensity in Kotor reached 8 Int EMS 98. (Albini, 2015, p.90) A

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powerful strike strongly affected the citizens of the Venetian town. During the previous earthquake in 1608, governor Morosini remarked upon the shared feelings of helplessness: "There is indeed nothing that can frighten people more than these whips, because in all other events, be it war, plague, famine or something else, the prudence and authority of people are very valuable, but they have no power in this" (Gligor, 1965, p.363, translated by author). The later shaking of the earth in 1667 was proof of his words. Of the slightly less than 1300 inhabitants of the city, almost 300 lost their lives. Many churches and monasteries, private households, municipal buildings, and military structures were either severely impaired or entirely collapsed. Approximately two-thirds of the town's buildings were ruined. The earthquake struck between 8.30 am and 9 am (14.00 Italian style), and lasted between 15 and 30 minutes, depending on the testimony of the witnesses. (Novak, 1972, pp. 43–50) Some accounts compared the event duration to that of reciting various prayers – a Credo (five times), an Ave Maria (less than ten times), or the Lord's Prayer (fifteen times). (Albini, 2015, p. 53) People were bewildered by the power and the wrath of God.

Most emotional were testimonies of those who nearly lost their lives. In Kotor, Provveditore Loredan reported to the Venetian government shortly after the accident, while in the neighboring town of Perast abbot Andrija Zmajević wrote a poetic epistle, describing his misfortune. (Milošević, 1983, p.96; Zmajević, 1976, pp.41–59) Both men were injured and buried under the ruins before being rescued by their neighbors. Historical sources remained silent about the physical and emotional suffering of many other anonymous laymen, women, and children in the aftermath of the earthquake. On the other hand, records thoroughly describe the damage endured by the town walls, the castle, and municipal buildings. It was of primary importance to restore those very structures before the Ottoman enemies attacked the weakened town. (Novak, 1971, pp.5–37) Thus, naturally, the engineers' and officers' attention was dedicated to the reparation of military buildings, leaving, at least for the time being, the damage caused on ecclesiastical structures to be taken care of by the Church.

Saint Tryphon's cathedral suffered extensive damage. The large frontal part of the façade was completely ruined, its bell towers collapsed. (Milošević, 1983, p.94) Both church authorities and common laymen collected money for the reparation of the sacred place, but, due to other expenses, were not entirely successful in that endeavor. A decision was made to redirect the money used for young nobles' scholarships at the Padua University, which in the next ten years would be used for the cathedral restoration. (Milošević, 1983, p.95) Several decades after the earthquake the people from Kotor made creative efforts to rebuild the most important parts of their injured world.

The (Art) History of the Earthquake

In the words of Albini, a historian of seismology would be faced with a great challenge if they were to translate pieces of narratives and points of view into a consistent scientific scenario. (Albini, 2015, pp. v, vi) Testimonies used for that kind of reconstruction and historical sources on natural disasters know to be rather anecdotal and imprecise. An earthquake lasted 15 minutes or 30 minutes, depending on the point of view and, quite often, the level of witnesses' suffering during the strike. Eyewitnesses from past epochs, just like contemporary ones, did not care about historical objectivity or academic truth. Instead, due to the strong traumatic response or varying political interests, observers wrote their letters and other documents in a manner that should be critically examined by today's researchers. As for visual material, the situation is hardly different. Usually, an art historian must read between the lines, or observe between the cracks which such a natural hazard could leave behind. Visual culture in times of crisis, at least in the case of Venetian Kotor, rarely directly depicts clear and well-rounded information on the event. Not one among several hundreds of silver votive plaques in the Bay of Kotor portrays the Great 1667 earthquake, nor does any oil painting or sculpture contain a visual representation of ruined buildings, children hurt, or men frightened on that infamous April 6. Efforts were clearly directed toward rebuilding, repairing, and restoring the damaged city, rather than favoring and recording visual information for the inquisitive future generations of historians. On the other hand, acts of reparation and consequences of these creative efforts could be equally eloquent documents for the history of crisis management. People healed after traumatic events concurrently with the damaged objects of art and devotion. Therefore, the history of art creation or art production in those turbulent times could be equated with the story of resilience, present in usually undocumented efforts of reparation and reshaping of the existed and damaged visual material.

Despite the unfortunate lack of easily-read and informative ex-votos in the Bay, many of them depict images of hurt limbs, cured by the power of the Virgin Mary or various saints. (Pazzi, 2007; Brguljan & Koprčina & Pejaković-Vujošević, 2014) The 17th century, as it seems, witnessed the gradual and increased occurrence of tiny silver shapes of arms and legs that surround or stand in front of a holy person on the surface of a votive plaque. Explaining their presence only as a result of the earthquake would probably be a far-fetching claim of a wishful art historian. However, the way that 17th-century inhabitants of the Bay were visually fashioning their healing could be rather valuable information for understanding the history of this crisis. (Ulčar, 2020, pp.313–331) At the same time, similarly



Fig. 1: Silver votive plates, Our Lady of the Reef, Perast, XVII century (source: Pazzi, P. (2007). *Gli ex-voto d'argento del Santuario della Madonna dello Scarpello nelle Bocche di Cattaro. Venezia.*)

vague but persistent evidence of the earthquake was present in numerous churches of Kotor, today gathered in the town's cathedral. Different kinds of silver limbs were also evidently very injured in the earth-shaking of 1667. (Stjepčević, 1938) Dozens of arm and leg-shaped reliquaries in the Cathedral and neighboring churches in town bear testament to past damage and reparation. At times, it is apparent that the silver parts of the holy limbs were "healed" by the presence of uneven patches of material, often crudely nailed to the injured surface. What is important in these anonymous efforts is the application of the very ex-voto plaques that served as a kind of "skin transplantation" material in cases when reliquaries were considerably damaged.

Therefore, the lack of visual evidence about the 17th-century earthquake in Kotor could be hypothetically overcome, if we stretch our methodological scope enough to include such vague indications as processes of reparation, reshaping, or resilience. On top of that, the comparative material of votive tablets and anthropomorphic reliquaries is too eloquent to be easily dismissed. Both are made of silver, depicting human limbs, containing the image of the holy person as the mediator in the healing process. The body of the common layperson in the Bay of Kotor and the body of the saint suffered similar kinds of injuries and were, accordingly, healed in a similar manner. Despite the usually wrongly ascribed flavor of animism as a "primitive" approach in treating the lived or artificial body in the past, (Bird-David, 1999, pp.67–91) the employed visual and psychological mechanisms were everything but simple and easily comprehensible for us today. Just like the previously mentioned challenges that historians of seismology endure, it is necessary that the art historian translates the rather complex processes of visualization and materialization of resilience in the early modern period.

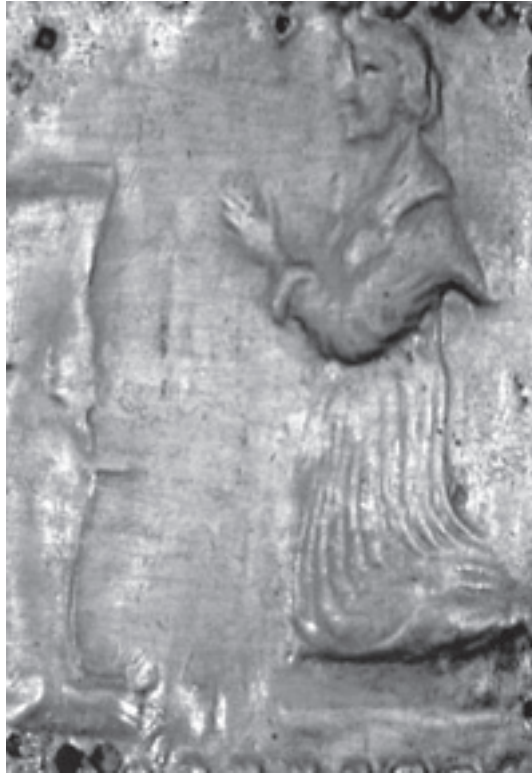


Fig. 2: Silver votive plate, Our Lady of the Reef, Perast, XVII century
(source: Pazzi, P. (2007). *Gli ex-voto d'argento del Santuario della Madonna dello Scarpello nelle Bocche di Cattaro. Venezia.*)

Ex-Votos and Reliquaries

In a modestly crafted tiny votive plaque three simple shapes unfold the story of sickness and health. (Fig. 1) In the lower right angle, an anonymous man is praying on his knees, his hands folded around rosary beads. In the center of the scene is an enlarged object of his prayers – a hurt leg, cut off above the knee in the thigh area. Lastly, in the upper left part of the tile, the Virgin Mary with the Child is seated on a cloud, listening to the prayers of men. (Brajović, 2006; Brajović, 2000) A man is silently asking for divine help to cure his hurt limb. This rather short story could also be read differently – beginning in the upper left angle, slowly descending to the central image of the leg, and ending in the even lower figure of a praying man. In this case, the narrative is slightly changed. Virgin Mary helped the healing of the sick leg, and now a man



Fig. 3: Silver votive plate, Our Lady of the Reef, Perast, XVII century
(source: Pazzi, P. (2007). *Gli ex-voto d'argento del Santuario della Madonna dello Scarpello nelle Bocche di Cattaro. Venezia.*)

is expressing his gratitude for her heavenly aid. (Jacobs, 2013) No matter what direction the narrative goes – anticipating or memorizing the needed healing – this simple visual mechanism of depicting the fragmented injured body is replicated on dozens of similar silver surfaces. Sometimes a woman is kneeling in front of a gigantic leg (Fig. 2), other times two legs, represented as mirroring images, surround the Virgin Mary, and at times the story is reduced only to the shape of the limb, without persons praying or receiving the prayers. Seen as a whole – a vibrant group of silver shapes on the church walls – three important elements are easily distinguished: a praying figure, a holy person, and a body part. In one curious example, the figure of the Virgin Mary is represented in the upper part of the silver foot, thus, somewhat oddly, depicting the body part as a container of a holy person. (Fig. 3) Votive plaques also vary in artistic quality, distinguished only by the level of

anatomical plausibility of represented figures and limbs, a point rather irrelevant for the present analysis.

A similar tri-partite iconographical structure is present in another class of devotional objects in the Bay. A great number of body part reliquaries in Saint Tryphon's cathedral were damaged when the earthquake ruined parts of the walls that surrounded them. Some 40 years later their whole architectural and sculptural surroundings changed when the noble family Boliza donated money for the renovation, and when soon after that Venetian sculptor Francesco Cabianca gave a baroque appearance to the small chapel. (Milošević, 1955–1956, pp. 29–37) Their efforts were well documented, and today we know details such as the amount of the donated money, dates of executions, and names of the Cabianca's workshop members that helped the ambitious endeavor. We are also somewhat familiar with the working process, the terracotta models for marble reliefs, even with the fact that the chief sculptor played the forbidden cards games with the local priest. (Milošević, 2003, p. 267) On the other hand, we know nothing about anonymous efforts to repair broken reliquaries in the chapel or in the neighboring churches – a project that was evidently widespread and rather ambitious. Instead of written records, we are faced with visual testimonies of sometimes crudely hammered nails, wrinkly silver surfaces, and patches of material used for covering the bruises and wounds on their meticulously made thin silver skin. Despite that, when inspected in their context, these efforts followed an inner logic that connects them with the creative potential of the period, more eloquently presented in the production of new objects such as ex-votos or other devotional artifacts.

The present state of some body-part reliquaries probably still carries traces of the 1667 damage. Possible further ruining, even that which occurred in their liturgical and processional use, certainly contributed to the picture we face today. However, from the repetitive presence of similar additions on their surfaces, we can at least hypothetically conclude that there was a moment in their past that provoked this major damage and, consequently, the need for joined efforts of reparation. The Cathedral and the reliquary chapel suffered such considerable damage during the very earthquake of 1667.

The most damaged body parts were, evidently, the medieval reliquaries. Early modern examples, purchased during the second half of the 17th and throughout the 18th century, remained unhurt, with very few exceptions that bear minor impairments. The most striking difference between medieval and early modern anthropomorphic reliquaries was the level of



Fig. 4: Leg-shaped reliquary, XIV-XV century, Leg shaped reliquary, XVII century, Relic Chapel, St. Tryphon's Cathedral, Kotor (photos by Stevan Kordić)

naturalism and verisimilitude in the artistic treatment of the body. (Fig. 4) Examples originating from the 14th century usually imply lavishly ornate silver limbs – legs are enclosed inside the shoe, with the overall impression of armored and decorated equipment protecting a tiny bone hidden inside. On the other hand, the containers of the 17th and 18th centuries bear a striking resemblance with the ordinary human arm or leg. Muscles and veins, instead of jewels and decorated ribbons, conveyed the message of holiness to believers. (Ulčar, 2017, pp. 67–86)

After the earthquake, this simple way of differentiation was somewhat blurred. Few naturalistically shaped reliquaries, almost certainly made during the early modern period, were given additions that belonged to a medieval period. A leg with quite visible naturalistic features, for instance, was (re)decorated with medieval ornate ribbons, bearing on its surface rather large and irregular nails, as witnesses of their post-medieval remodeling. (Fig. 5) Such attempts could seem intrusive to contemporary art historians. Those anonymous “artisans,” being hastened by the destructive earthquake or not, completely “confused” the medieval with the early modern aesthetic. So much that nowadays it could be difficult to discern between methodologically essential categories and boxes of different epochs. However, cynicism aside, there could be a reason beyond the so-called economic or ignorant necessity that led people after 1667



Fig. 5: Arm-shaped reliquary, XVI-XVII century, Relic Chapel, St. Tryphon's Cathedral, Kotor (photo by Stevan Kordić)

to renew the body part reliquaries in such a specific manner. Seen in the context of reliquaries production and veneration, implementations of older, usually medieval, additions on newer artifacts was everything but rare. (Cambier, 2014, pp. 26–43) In that way, a particular kind of composite object was created, carrying an important power contained in medieval *spolia*. It was a common way of empowerment, rather than intrusion or further damaging, as could be wrongly concluded by a contemporary observer, an admirer of order and historical clarity. Therefore, if made after the earthquake, such changes could have been perceived as beneficial for healing the bruised silver skin of an important saint. Medieval ornaments, applied on an early modern naturalistically fashioned reliquary were, thus, not only physically but also symbolically essential for their further agency.

Even more remarkable was the addition of votive plaques on body part reliquaries. Again, they were medieval reliquaries that endured the most damage, and the examples of silver ex-votos could be found only on



Fig. 6: Bottom of the arm-shaped reliquary (15th) with ex voto (17th century), Saint Tryphon's cathedral, Kotor(photo by Stevan Kordić)

these sets of objects in Kotor. Most often, tiny silver surfaces with votive figures could be found on the top or bottom of reliquaries, depending on the shape of the arm or leg that they embodied. Those small areas were usually not visible to the observers. In one curious case, two votive plaques were applied to the very “skin surface” of the leg, which brings us back to the curious case of a foot-shaped votive gift containing the image of a holy person. In this case, similarly, a body part (leg-shaped reliquary) contains images of a holy person and a praying figure. (Ulčar, 2017, pp.67–86)

Tiny round spots on top of the leg-shaped or the bottom of the arm-shaped reliquaries were very fragile areas. Contemporary evidence implies that these particular surfaces were the most damaged parts of these objects. This is especially true in the case of silver arms, as that spot served both as a foundation and pedestal which allowed the vertical posture of the object. During the Middle Ages these surfaces, although invisible to observers, were meticulously decorated with images of Christ, *arma Christi*, figures of saints, coat of arms, or inscriptions about a donor or artisan. Later, during the early modern period, their decoration became rather modest. Simple plain silver covers were only occasionally engraved with Christ's monogram or other barely visible decoration, at least in the examples treasured in the Bay of Kotor. However, when the damage provoked by the 17th-century earthquake devastated those very spots on medieval reliquaries, their repair went beyond simple replacement with plain



Fig. 7: Leg-shaped reliquary (15th century) with ex voto (17th century), Saint Tryphon's cathedral, Kotor(photo by Stevan KordiĆ)

round silver plates. Instead, parts of votive plaques were cut and reshaped to fit the empty round spaces. Furthermore, the remodeling was quite carefully conducted, so that figures of holy persons occupied a central part of the patches.

A medieval arm-shaped reliquary was, therefore, repaired with the help of an early modern silver votive plaque that represents the figure of the Virgin Mary on a cloud in the center of a round surface and another, smaller, figure of Saint Spyridon on her right. (Fig. 6) Virgin Mary's arms are slightly raised, pointing in another direction, and implying her role as Mediatrix. Part of the tiled floor is visible, but the figure of a praying man or woman is left out. In another, also medieval, example of a leg-shaped reliquary a round space at the top is covered with an image of the seated figure of the Virgin Mary, carrying the Christ Child, who is holding a sphere in his left hand. (Fig. 7) The third example of the re-used votive gift depicts a praying figure of a man that faces the Virgin Mary



Fig. 8: Arm-shaped reliquary (15th century) with ex voto (18th century), Saint Tryphon's cathedral, Kotor (photo by Stevan Kordić)

with the Child, turning his back to the figure of Saint Oswald, represented on the other side of a patch. (Fig. 8) A man with his hair combed in the 18th-century fashion folding his arms in prayer, kneeling in front of Mary, although when the tile was cut to change its square shape into the round one, the lower part of his body was left out of the picture. The three silver surfaces portray figures that were made with a varying level of artistic quality. In two out of three examples they are rather unskillfully executed. However, it was the presence of a powerful holy person that mattered in the process of reparation, so again the further discussion on stylistic features is futile for the present argument.

The presence of the Virgin Mary in every example is striking, although understandable when seen in the context of shared beliefs and devotional hierarchy in the Bay of Kotor. (Brajović, 2006) Marian iconography was present in almost every aspect of private and official devotional practices in the Bay. Saint Spyridon and Saint Oswald of Northumbria



Fig. 9: Leg-shaped reliquary (15th century) with ex voto (17th/18th century), Saint Tryphon's cathedral, Kotor (photo by Stevan Kordić)

were certainly not that famous, although their role in helping the sick and injured was considerable during the 17th and 18th centuries. (Della Stua, 1769) The three holy figures were chosen – one may imply – for their role as mediators and ever-present helpers in dangerous and turbulent times.

The fourth example is somewhat different. (Fig. 9 and 10) The knightly-armored medieval leg reliquary is today still heavily bruised and damaged. The large hole is visible at the place where the upper part of the leg meets the foot. The thin silver cover is wrinkled and dark bruises cover most of the object's surface. The front side of the silver foot is repaired with a small plaque that, due to the further damaging, today reveals only the lower part of the saint's body, dressed in the military garment, with the scripser in his right hand. Taking into account contemporary iconography in the Bay, a mysterious figure may portray, once more, Saint Oswald of Northumbria, a famous king, present in a couple of other ex-votos used



Fig. 10: Leg-shaped reliquary (15th century) with ex voto (17th/18th century), Saint Tryphon's cathedral, Kotor (photo by Stevan Kordić)

as patches for the broken reliquaries. On the other side, just above the heel, another votive plaque is attached. This time, the whole votive tablet is used as a cover for the severely cracked skin of the leg reliquary. It depicts a kneeling figure of a man with similar iconography as in previously mentioned examples. His head is bowed in prayer, his hands folded around rosary beads. The scene is framed with tiny silver stars, making the addition even more visible to the observer.

The Layman's Body, the Holy Body, and Body Parts

The iconographies of the aforementioned votive gifts and reliquaries (seen as a composite whole with their votive additions) are strikingly similar. In both cases, three main elements are repeatedly present – a holy

person (the Virgin Mary or a saint), an anonymous praying figure, and the body part (leg or arm-shaped engraving on the votive plaques or three-dimensional relic container). Minor variations imply that in some cases one of the elements could have been excluded or rejoined to another. When it comes to votive gifts variations were more flexible. The most narrative example containing all three figures could have been reduced to a representation of a praying person with a leg, a holy person with a leg, or only the leg. These reductions did not change the story of gratitude and healing, despite the somewhat diminished visual vocabulary. In the case of composite reliquaries the similar additions and reductions existed, although every example contained an image of a limb (embodied in the very object) and, as it seems, the presence of a holy person. A praying figure is present in two out of four presented medieval reliquaries. Apparently, this particular iconography was rather significant in the process of reparation.

The years following the 1667 earthquake were obviously economically challenging for the Bay of Kotor. The emergent efforts to restore ruined buildings, especially households and military structures, are mentioned throughout all of the archival documents. (Albini, 2015, pp.71–76) In that sense, reparation of reliquaries and other liturgical equipment may seem of secondary importance, and, accordingly, the use of existent objects, such as *ex-votos*, could suggest a rather rational economic measure, more than some creative endeavor. However, similar conclusions belong more to our (post)capitalistic mindset than to an early modern way of thinking about sacred artifacts. Treasure in Saint Tryphon's relic chapel was for centuries considered the most important part of Kotor's community. In poetry and sermons, reliquaries are regarded as an especially powerful holy army, ready to protect the city from all kinds of enemies. (Kokoljić, 1996, pp. 163, 208, 355) They were carefully treasured behind the massive iron grid, locked with three keys, and presented only on special occasions. When damaged in the earthquake, holy limbs required not only physical reparation but empowerment to secure their further agency. They should have been healed, rather than simply patched or repaired.

On the other hand, in the moment of the earthquake churches in the Bay abounded in silver. Considering the number of objects made from this material, it is not plausible to explain the use of votive plaques only as a prudent step in necessary financial savings. Even if that was the case in the turbulent post-earthquake crisis, it was a rather undemanding move to erase the content of the plaques, before attaching them to the silver reliquaries. However, the anonymous artisans decided to carefully reshape *ex-votos* in a manner that presents their most crucial iconographical elements. Evidently, it was also symbolically important to conjoin silver body parts with images of holy persons and praying figures.

One explanation of this curious remodeling is quite animistic in its nature. If silver reliquaries were considered lively participants in an early modern everyday reality, then they required healing after the injuries caused by the earthquake. The more interesting question is: how was that particular type of healing conducted during the 17th and 18th centuries? Together with their special status as holy protectors, reliquaries were at times treated as human bodies. They were adorned with jewelry, sometimes dressed in precious clothes, washed with water, and presented to society on special days (a birthday of a saint, for example). (Cizila, NAP R XVI, p.56) Therefore, it is not surprising that their healing was conducted in resemblance with the already confirmed manner of caring for “ordinary” human bodies. Votive plaques were, more than any other object, testimonies of successful healings. Consequently, it was their very presence that could seem crucial in undertaking such an important task as curing the holy body. Furthermore, the iconography of the Virgin Mary or other patron saints were the most useful addition to that challenging task, already used during the Middle Ages in a similar manner. The presence of anonymous praying figures could seem more ambiguous, although quite convincing if seen as an element in replication of the basic votive mechanisms.

Ex-votos changed their status in the process, becoming the source of protection, rather than only a testimony of it. Reliquaries were once birthplaces of powerful agency and, very often, of healing men and women that prayed in front of them. Answered prayers were after that materialized as silver votive plaques. After the severe damage and collapse of everyday life in the earthquake, the direction of giving and receiving was slightly changed. Ex-votos became powerful elements of further healing of holy bodies. The chain of acquiring and radiating holy power was, somewhat logically, continued. Tripartite iconographical structure of the holy, “ordinary” and the fragmented body was perfectly useful and eloquent in such an endeavor. Reliquaries continued their vibrant life in Kotor in the following few centuries, silently bearing evidence of healing on their silver skin. Dozens of them carry later additions, proving that the methodological tools of art historians should at least be flexible enough to recognize the ever-changing and dynamic life of an (art) object.

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ЗЕМЉОТРЕС У БОКИ КОТОРСКОЈ 1667. ГОДИНЕ: ИСТОРИЈА ОТПОРНОСТИ

Апстракт: Када је реч о писању историје кризе једног доба често је анонимно и недокументовано деловање појединаца у процесима обнављања и преобличавања једнако важан извор информација као и анализа уметничке продукције. Током земљотреса 1667. године у Котору, десетине сребрних реликвијара у облику делова тела било је оштећено. Ови предмети су, потом, бивали „излечени“ апликацијом неравних и грубо исечених комада сребра, најчешће коришћењем сребрних заветних плочица. У исто то време, велики број вотивних дарова у црквама Боке Которске садржи визуелни приказ повређених удова људског тела, излечених милошћу различитих светих личности, приказаних на њиховим површинама. Интерпретацијом визуелне размене између ове две врсте сребрних артефаката, као и проширењем методолошког оквира историје уметности, недостатак визуелног материјала о земљотресу из 17. века може бити успешно превазиђен.

Кључне речи: земљотрес, рано модерно тело, реликвијари, заветни дарови

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DESTRUCTION, TRANSFORMATION, AND FRAGMENTATION OF SERBIAN AND BALKAN VISUAL CULTURE AT THE END OF THE 17TH AND THE FIRST HALF OF THE 18TH CENTURY

Abstract: This study examines the consequences of wartime crises that erupted between 1683 and 1739 on Serbian and Balkan visual culture. It draws attention to the processes of destruction of churches and monasteries, translation of relics and treasures, as well as the process of fragmentation and the emergence of polycentricity in Serbian visual culture. The Great Habsburg-Ottoman war of 1683–1699 (the Great Turkish War) led to the pillaging and damaging of the most important Serbian monasteries, such as the Patriarchate of Peć Monastery, Ravanica, and Mileševa. In a flight from the Ottoman army, people hid away the most important valuables, with the Ravanica monks even fleeing over to the Austrian territory with the relics of Prince Lazar. One of the most far-reaching consequences of wartime crises was the new geography of Serbian visual culture. Under different political systems and cultural models, the Habsburg and the Ottoman one, Serbian visual culture acquired diverse forms and contextual functions.

Keywords: destruction, Austrian-Turkish wars, migrations, relics, Balkan visual culture

The late 17th and the early 18th century witnessed major armed conflicts which led to profound and long-term consequences for all aspects of the Serbian and Balkan society and culture. Between 1683 and 1699, the Great Habsburg-Ottoman war was fought in which many people were

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killed, and a portion of the Christian population had to flee the land. One of the best-known events of this war, which received special attention in Serbian historiography, was the Great Migration of the Serbs, wherein the Patriarch of Peć, Arsenije III Čarnojević, together with a part of the clergy and the people, migrated to the territories which were under the control of the Habsburg Monarchy in 1690 (Veselinović 1993, pp. 491–572). The Treaty of Karlowitz secured an end to this conflict in 1699, and as early as 1717, Austria conquered and assumed control of the region of northern Serbia, which was confirmed by the 1718 Treaty of Passarowitz. The period 1737–1739 saw the beginning of another Habsburg-Ottoman conflict. The Patriarch of Peć, Arsenije IV Jovanović Šakabenta, openly sided with the Austrians. The 1739 defeat of the Austrian army led to a new exodus of Serbs: the Patriarch, together with a part of the populace, moved to Habsburg Monarchy territories in 1740. (Veselinović, 1986a, pp. 106–162; Tričković, 2013). Simultaneously with these wars, the Ottoman–Venetian wars, the Morean War, and the Second Morean War were waged too, fought along the Dalmatian coastline as well (Veselinović, 1986, pp. 7–13).

Art historians have mainly considered these dramatic events from viewpoints that analyzed the stylistic transformation of Serbian visual culture. The 1690 move from the Ottoman to the Habsburg Empire is taken as the moment of baroquization, i.e. the commencement of modernization and Europeanisation of Serbian art (Medaković, 1980, pp. 8–15). Geographical migrations of the Patriarch and some members of the church were thus also construed as chronological frames of reference, so 1690 started to be seen as the year the Modern period began in Serbian art. At the same time, the visual culture which had developed since the late 17th century in the regions under Ottoman rule, albeit systematically studied (Stošić, 2006), remained marginalized in the historiography of 18th-century Serbian art, because it was outside “the dominant” Baroque trends and belonged to the so-called traditional course (Medaković, 1980; Timotijević, 1996). The zograph (icon painting) practice in the Ottoman Balkans found itself in a sort of an “empty” stylistic-historiographic spot – the so-called “post-post-Byzantine” space (Makuljević, 2019, pp. 11–24).

On the other hand, research on artistic practices prevalent between 1690 and 1740, as well as historical insight into social, political, and cultural events, point out all the logical inaccuracies in these claims. The Migration of 1690 did not mean an immediate transformation of Serbian visual culture on Habsburg soil or an end to “the growth” of artistic practices in the Ottoman Balkans. As was noted, major stylistic changes to icon-painting in the Habsburg Monarchy did not take place until the 1740s (Medaković, 1980, pp. 16–36; Timotijević, 1996, pp. 72–93; Stošić, 2006, pp. 89–191), and major works on the decoration of the most impor-

tant monastic complexes, such as that of Hilandar, were carried out in the Ottoman Balkans (Rakić, 2008; Makuljević, 2013, pp. 167–175).

Wartime crises in the late 17th and the first half of the 18th century had complex consequences on Serbian and Balkan visual culture, which do not boil down to a modernization, i.e. the baroquization of the artistic production. Here we shall point out three important aspects which contribute to a deeper insight into the condition and the consequences of wartime crises on Serbian and Balkan visual culture of this period, namely destruction, the translation of relics and treasures, as well as the fragmentation and creation of a new cultural horizon.¹

Destruction

The wars waged in the central Balkans in the late 17th and the early decades of the 18th century brought about great destruction. Destruction of visual structures constitutes a negative but important element of cultural history. Destroying, pillaging, damaging... led to a violent end to cultural life and a loss of a part of the cultural and artistic capital. Acts of destruction introduce discontinuity into every kind of cultural activity. Alongside natural disasters, wartime devastation is the most common source of destruction.

The history of Serbian and Balkan culture has been marked by numerous destructive processes. The Balkans are precisely the area which was often a witness to major armed conflicts and constitutes one of European so-called “charged sites,” places burdened with wars, devastation, dramatic political and religious-cultural change (Nicolai, 2012, pp. 1070–1072; Makuljević, 2012, pp. 1126–1128). The likelihood is high that some of the most massive historical acts of destruction in the Balkans took place in the course of the late 14th-century and 15th-century Ottoman conquests, so they marked the end of the medieval era and the beginning of the Early Modern era. The Great Habsburg-Ottoman war of 1683–1699 prompted a new wave of violence, wherein Orthodox churches were being pulled down and pillaged (Veselinović, 1993, pp. 543–546).² Descriptions of wartime events coming from the quills of participants and eyewitnesses alike show all the tragedy of these events. One of the best-known accounts of the devastation was provided by Atanasije Daskal Srbin (Schoolmas-

1 Each of the three mentioned aspects is presented and analyzed using a limited number of examples.

2 The most comprehensive overview of demolished churches has been written by Rajko Veselinović: Veselinović 1993, 543–546. “

ter Atanasije the Serbian) who described the adverse circumstances that befell the people and the church over the course of the 1690 Ottoman incursion. He describes the plight of the Serbian population and underscores the sorry state of the Orthodox churches: "Even the grand imperial monasteries and the beautiful churches frescoed in gold are derelict. And the holy tables and sacred altars – upon which bloodless offerings were once being made – are now a place where beasts, wild and impure, breed." (Trifunović, 1990, pp. 26–27). This is a poetic and rhetorical testimony to the extent of the damage Orthodox churches sustained. Once adorned with "gold," the devastated and desolate churches became places frequented by wild and impure beasts. The substantial levels of devastation are also attested by Ottoman sources, as demonstrated in the work of Abdullah bin Ibrahim – Ūskūdari, an eyewitness to the 1690 burning of Belgrade (Katić, 2018, pp. 79–94).

The battleground of the Habsburg-Ottoman war also defined the topography of destruction. The Ottoman campaign against Vienna and the Habsburg territory led to widespread devastation, affecting a vast swathe of land between Central Europe and the central Balkans. Sources have it that in the course of battles many cities, such as Skopje, Belgrade, Smederevo, Sarajevo, and Sremski Karlovci, were set on fire and demolished. In the northern regions, in the first years of war, the Slavonian Monastery of Orahovica was plundered of its valuables and set alight (Kučeković, 2007, p. 27); in addition, the monasteries of Grabovac and Krušedol were looted too (Veselinović 1993, 543; Timotijević, 2008a, pp. 38–39).

In the chaos of war, and the unstable circumstances in the Ottoman Empire in the war years, one of the most important monasteries was plundered – the Patriarchate of Peć Monastery, the seat of the Patriarch of Peć, who ruled "the Serbs and the Bulgarians" and who was in charge of the Orthodox populace living between the Adriatic coast and the Rila Mountains, as well as between the northern borders of the Ottoman Empire and the Macedonian lands. The Patriarchate of Peć Monastery was repeatedly plundered and rendered devoid of "any adornment that once graced it," and it is stated that Tatars once wintered there, even bringing their horses inside the church (Trifunović, 1990, pp. 52–53). The Patriarchate's assets were severely jeopardized, with certain Ottoman beys/feudal lords even trying to take complete control of it after 1690 (Tričković, 2013, pp. 255–257). Existing information on the state of the Patriarchate prior to Patriarch Mojsije Rajović's 1720 restoration of it attests that all the doors had been broken down, all the glass smashed, and the walls damaged. (Tričković, 2013, pp. 376–377). Together with the Patriarchate, the Dečani

Monastery also sustained damage in 1690, which is when Gashi Pasha charged at it, plundered it, and took hegoumenos Zaharije prisoner, who died not long thereafter, having been tortured. According to a written account, two years later the Dečani Monastery was looted and taken control of by the Tatars, who even stayed in it for five years. (Šakota, 1984, p. 59).

Around 1688–1690, in an invasion by the Ottoman troops, many other monasteries were also plundered and rendered desolate. The Sopoćani Monastery was relinquished then, its residences burned down, and the katholikon's lead roof covering taken down (Zirojević, 1984, p. 186). The Rača Monastery, situated by the river Drina, was burned down in 1688, and in 1690 its monks, renowned for their literary work, moved to Habsburg Monarchy territory during the Great Migration (Zirojević, 1984, p. 175). The Dormition of the Theotokos Monastery near Smederevo was rendered desolate over the course of the war fought between 1688–1690. The Hopovo Monastery was raided too (Veselinović, 1993, p. 544). As per the available sources, the Studenica Monastery was pillaged as well. Accounts of the event have it that it was “wrecked” and pillaged, and its books carried off and sold away (Šakota, 1988, p. 66). Sometime in 1688 the Mileševa Monastery was looted and devastated, along with its metochion of Kostica, while the numerous plundered items were being sold around by the Ottomans (Milosavljević, 2020, pp. 44–45). For instance, Dubrovnik merchant Nikola Bošković bought two relics – a piece of the Cross and a hand of Saint Sava (Milosavljević, 2020, pp. 238–239).

During the Great Habsburg-Ottoman war the Ravanica Monastery and its monks found themselves in a terrible predicament; the structure sustained a lot of damage. The brethren fled before the Ottomans, rendering the monastery desolate (Kašić, 1981, pp. 148–149). Schoolmaster Stefan Ravaničanin described the abandoned monastery of Ravanica after the monks had left in 1690: “...and so I found it vacant, in a state of severe ruin, and (so) overgrown with trees that one could not even make out where its door was. The narthex had been razed to the ground, and huge trees were sprawling around the very katholikon” (Trifunović, 1990, p. 42).

A new wave of destruction of Orthodox churches and monasteries was sparked in 1739 when the Austrian-Turkish war was nearing its end. The katholikon of the Šudikova Monastery, on the right bank of the river Lim, was burned down in 1739 (Zirojević, 1984, p. 206). The Slanci Monastery was abandoned in 1739 (Zirojević, 1984, p. 186). The Vinča Monastery in the vicinity of Belgrade was devastated in 1740. (Zirojević, 1984, p. 78). The Rakovica Monastery was relinquished in 1739, while the Manasija Monastery was taken control of by the Ottoman troops after 1739. (Zirojević, 1984, p. 176).

During the Venetian-Ottoman wars, some Orthodox monasteries along the Adriatic coastline were also left in a state of ruin. The Venetians devastated the Tvrdoš Monastery in their skirmishes with the Ottomans (Veselinović, 1993, p. 546).

The said examples of demolished and plundered monasteries are illustrative of a major destructive wave that struck Serbian churches and monasteries. Along with many well-known monasteries, many parish churches sustained damage as well. With people fleeing from the Balkan Ottoman regions to those belonging to the Habsburg Monarchy, many churches were permanently abandoned and consequently fell into ruin.

The Salvage and Translation of Relics and Treasures

An important element of sacred culture involves reverence and safeguarding of relics and ecclesiastical treasures. Whenever the safety of relics was compromised, they were translated to a more secure location. The great respect that people had for these relics led them to translate these objects elsewhere during turbulent periods and change their location. Objects from treasures were also spirited away, but whenever they could not be carried, they simply got hidden. During the wars of the late 17th and the first half of the 18th century, relics, icons, and other objects held in treasures were stowed away before the Ottoman troops would arrive. At times, the operations to salvage relics and treasures lasted only temporarily, until the immediate danger would pass.

Relics of saints were also spirited away in the face of the Ottoman army incursions. The relics of Saint Theodore Tyron were temporarily taken from the Syrmian monastery of Hopovo to the other bank of the Sava River and hidden away at the Radovašnica Monastery near Šabac (Trifunović, 1990, p. 51).

One of the best-documented examples of hiding and transferring relics is the translation of Holy Prince Lazar's relics. During the Great Migration of 1690, the monks from the Ravanica Monastery set off to Austria-Hungary with Holy Prince Lazar's relics. Having traveled for forty days, they reached Buda, where Patriarch Arsenije, the bishops, monks, priests, and numerous other Serbian refugees had gathered. They originally settled in Szentendre, where they erected a small wooden church in which they laid the Holy Prince Lazar's relics to rest. Seven years later, the Ravanica monks moved to Fruška Gora and populated the dilapidated monastery of Vrdnik. They restored this monastery and named it Ravanica, after their mother monastery. In addition, they consecrated the Vrdnik

church as well as the Ravanica katholikon to the Ascension of Jesus Christ, and the monastery was called Vrdnik-Ravanica or the Syrmian Ravanica (Trifunović, 1990, p. 42; Kašić, 1981, pp. 149–153).

Along with the relics, the Ravanica monks also took with them the most important charters that regulated the status and rights of the monastery, as well as numerous treasury items and liturgical books. Prince Lazar's 1381 charter to the monastery of Ravanica must have been listed among the most important documents. Making use of the monastery's legal documents, they sought help from the Habsburg Emperor Leopold in 1892, Russian emperors Peter and Ivan in 1893, Wallachian voivode John Șerban in 1687, and other rulers. In an audience with the Russian emperor Peter, they presented him with icons depicting the Ascension and Prince Lazar, but it remains unknown whether these had pertained to the old Ravanica treasury and whether they had been translated from Serbia (Kašić, 1981, 143–163).

In the post-war period, in 1717, when the northern regions of Serbia were under Habsburg rule, "daskal" Stefan took it upon himself to restore the Monastery of Ravanica. However, a new war, waged between 1737 and 1739, and the return of the Ottomans prompted the brethren who were restoring Ravanica to flee again. This time around, an account survived listing the transferred treasury items. The monks brought along a "chalice, silver and gilded and encrusted with gemstones, a small cross adorned with silver, with a small foot, a diskos, an asterisk, a small spoon, a smallish censer, ... and four icon-lamps, all silver," liturgical vestments – phelonia, epitachelions and a sticharion, as well as liturgical books of Russian provenance (Kašić, 1981, pp. 157–158).

The example of the Ravanica monks and the translation of Holy Prince Lazar's relics indicate that what took place back then was not only the Migration, the translation of relics and treasury items, but also a symbolic translation of the monastery to another geographical area. The monks of Ravanica did not assimilate into one of the existing Orthodox monastic communities of the Habsburg Empire, but they founded a new Ravanica using Prince Lazar's relics and the old founding charter. Reverence for Prince Lazar's relics and the keeping of the memory of the parent monastery alive did not stop in the new social-political context.

The relics of Emperor Uroš were also translated to Habsburg Monarchy territory. They used to be found in the monastery (church) of the Dormition of the Theotokos in Nerodimlje. Monk Hristifor translated them thence to the Jazak Monastery on May 11, 1705, together with the manuscript detailing the divine service and containing the vita of Holy Emperor Uroš. The relics were then temporarily deposited in the mon-

asteries of Vrdnik and Krušedol, only to find themselves in Jazak again starting from 1731, where they have become the most important relic of the monastery (Pavlović, 1965, p. 114).

The relics of Stefan the First-Crowned have been repeatedly translated while the armed conflicts lasted. They used to be found in the Sopoćani Monastery whence they were translated to the Crna Reka Monastery in 1687. Finally, on October 20, 1696, they were translated to the Studenica Monastery (Pavlović, 1965, p. 54; Šakota, 1988, p. 67).

The Vinča Monastery near Belgrade used to house a wonderworking icon of the Theotokos, dubbed the Theotokos of Vinča. The icon, a copy of the Theotokos of Vladimir, was brought there from Kiev by monk Pajsije (the Greek) in 1727. During the 1739 Ottoman surge, the icon was translated to the Bezdin Monastery, and renamed the Theotokos of Bezdin. The icon received a prominent spot in the religious-political program of Patriarch Arsenije IV Jovanović Šakabenta, who took it from Bezdin and transferred it to Sremski Karlovci. After a court ruling, the icon was returned to Bezdin, but its copy had been made, which was transferred in 1781 from the bishop's palace chapel to the Cathedral Church of Sremski Karlovci (Timotijević, 2002, pp. 311–344).

Fleeing from the Ottoman army, monks and priests also took with them the most valuable treasury items. The likelihood is high that a significant portion of the treasury items was also carried in 1690 by none other than Patriarch Arsenije III Čarnojević. The claim is that on that occasion he transferred the preserved portion of the treasury items from the Patriarchate of Peć.

One of the examples which shows the lengths people were prepared to go in order to preserve various monastic valuables is the story about the removal of the Mileševa Monastery treasury items to safety (Milosavljević, 2020: pp. 73–79). In 1688, the Mileševa monks, together with monks from other Polimlje monasteries, began their flight. It seems that their group later decided to split to the four corners of the Earth, because the Mileševa monks were encountered in Bosnia, Herzegovina, Piva, and the Bay of Kotor. The largest group, headed by hegoumenos Dositej, reached Slavonia, settling in the monastery of Pakra. Groups of monks carrying parts of the monastery's library and treasury reached the monasteries of Gomionica, Piva, Tvrdoš, and Savina.

Treasury items from Mileševa found themselves at Pakra, Orahovica, Lepavina, and other Slavonian Orthodox monasteries. The epitaphion of the Moldavian voivode Alexandru IV Lăpușeanu, housed at the Pakra Monastery, classifies among these items (Milosavljević, 2020, pp. 91–95), along with numerous crosses, censers, and reliquaries (Milosavljević,

2020, pp. 73–79; 91–95). It is assumed that the Mileševa monastery relics have been translated to the Savina monastery (Milosavljević, 2020, pp. 246–257).

The Habsburg troops also sometimes took Orthodox icons and other “war trophies” out of Serbia. In Smederevo, at the katholikon of the Dormition of the Theotokos Monastery, there used to be located a copy of the wonderworking Theotokos of Vladimir icon. Pavle Nestorović Dejak having conquered the city in 1688 found this icon, which had been hidden. Finding a preserved icon in the ruins of the monastery was experienced as its miraculous re-appearance, which was construed as a sign of a blessing on the Christian victory. In Belgrade, the icon was handed to Maximilian II Emanuel, Prince-Elector of Bavaria, in order for it to be escorted by the military to Vienna, and thence to Munich, with a fitting ceremony. Later, the icon was placed at the Lehel Monastery, where it was venerated as the Theotokos of Bavaria (Timotijević, 2008, pp. 57–87). Together with the wonderworking icon, Maximilian II Emanuel also took other objects to their new destinations, such as the great cross, which probably used to belong to an iconostasis in Belgrade (the Ružica Church), or Sremski Karlovci (Timotijević, 2008, pp. 57–87).

Fragmentation, Polycentricity, and New Cultural Horizons

Changes to the cultural horizon, a fragmentation of its kind, and the polycentricity of Serbian visual culture list among the most significant consequences of wartime crises of the late 17th and the first half of the 18th century. In the period between the 1557 restoration of the Patriarchate of Peć and 1690, Serbian Orthodox visual culture was primarily created within a unique system, in a region controlled by the Ottoman state administration (Petković, 1965; Šuput, 1984). Wars and migrations changed that and led to the emergence of a novel, polycentric religious and cultural horizon.³

Wartime events led to a fragmentation and a unique spatial “scatteredness” of the cultural life of Orthodox Serbs. Approximate geographic coordinates of Serbian culture lay between the Hilandar Monastery on

3 The new state of Serbian and Balkan visual culture of the wartime periods of the late 17th century and the early decades of the 18th century has been noted in older (existing) literature, but scholars have failed to notice the emergence of polycentricity. Visual culture was studied from stylistic positions, so the existence of two artistic practices was repeatedly underlined – the “advanced,” Baroque one, and the “backward,” zographic one: Medaković 1980.

Mount Athos and Komárno, in the south of present-day Slovakia, as well as between Trieste and Timișoara (Medaković, 1980; Stošić, 2006). Living conditions of Orthodox believers were not identical and differed depending on local circumstances. Destruction of churches and monasteries and monks having to flee with relics and treasures were things that primarily happened in war-stricken areas. It thus happened that in one area churches would get demolished, while at the same time in others these structures would get frescoed and decorated (Petković, 1993, pp. 420–424). Certain monasteries were repeatedly ruined and plundered, but some survived again and again. Even the monasteries situated in one and the same area might have shared different fates.

The 1690 move of Patriarch Arsenije III Čarnojević and a part of the clergy and people to regions under Habsburg rule led to additional divisions in the church organization and cultural life. One part of the Serbian Orthodox population found itself under Habsburg rule, while the other remained under Ottoman rule. At the same time, some Serbian communities in the Adriatic hinterland were also under Venetian rule. This is when new Serbian religious-cultural centers were established in the Habsburg Monarchy, along with a new parochial network formed in the newly-established Military Frontier which got populated by Orthodox Serbian troops. At the same time, ecclesiastical diarchy ensued. Arsenije III Čarnojević worked on maintaining the faith of his flock, and the establishment of a proper church organization on Habsburg soil, where new churches were being erected and furnished. Simultaneously, in areas under Ottoman control the newly-appointed Patriarch Kalinik I and his heirs intensively worked on restoring religious life in war-torn areas of the Patriarchate of Peć (Slijepčević, 1991, pp. 347–351; Samardžić, 1986, pp. 531–538; Veselinović, 1993, pp. 552–564).

The fragmentation process was completed in 1739 in the wake of the Ottoman-Habsburg war, which is when Patriarch Arsenije IV Jovanović Šakabenta, together with a part of the clergy and the common people, fled to Habsburg land. This is when the once homogenous Serbian church organization became completely disbanded. Patriarch Arsenije IV refused to recognize the newly-appointed Patriarch of Peć, Joanikije Karadža (Tričković, 2013, p. 453). The consequence of the ecclesiastical events unfolding this way was the now independent operation of the Metropolitanate of Krušedol-Karlovci on Habsburg land, a metropolitanate that worked as a unifying force for the whole Orthodox population. Ecclesiastical reforms were put in place within the Metropolitanate, and a religious-cultural program was adapted to the living conditions in the Habsburg Monarchy. In Ottoman-ruled areas, the Patriarchate of Peć lasted for another three decades, only to be abolished in 1766 and annexed to the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Neither the fragmentation nor the polycentricity of religious life led to a diversification of models of Orthodox visual culture, especially in icon-painting, in areas under Habsburg and Ottoman control, until as late as 1739. Sacred visual culture was dominated by a specific cultural model based on the Balkan Orthodox experience, and to a considerable extent founded and shaped in Athonite centers. Churches that were being frescoed at this point in time, such as Vračevšnica, Drača, and even Bođani, essentially followed “the zographos” model in icon-painting (Stošić, 2006, pp. 92–116). It wasn’t until after 1739, which saw an end to major Habsburg-Ottoman conflicts and a stabilization of their state borders, that an icon-painting reform was instituted in the Metropolitanate of Karlovci. Sometime in 1743, Balkan zographoi, the “ill-educated religious painters” (“neuki bogomazi”) were banned from working, in favor of a change in the icon-painting model, which was based on the Kiev (Ukrainian) model of Russian icon-painting, a move that was meant to prevent conversion to the Uniate Church and Catholicization of the Orthodox population (Timotijević, 1996, pp. 31–32). Different religious policies were implemented in the regions under Ottoman rule and the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. The difference between the two church organizations is attested by an epistle by the learned Greek theologian Eugenios Boulgaris, which he wrote to the Hungarian Serbs, in which they are warned of the danger from Catholic propaganda and a potential loss of their Orthodox faith (Boškov, 1975, pp. 102–114; Podskalsky, 1988, p. 346).

Despite the differences among the dominant models of visual culture of the Orthodox population in the Habsburg and Ottoman monarchies, and under the Venetian Republic, there also existed strong ties among them, which contributed to the cultural and artistic exchange. All this created a new, polycentric cultural horizon, which contributed to the hybridity of Serbian and Balkan visual practices. Depending on different local circumstances, numerous micro-situations were created. The already fragmented Serbian and Orthodox visual culture was thus additionally fragmented within the dominant cultural models on Habsburg or Ottoman soil.

Cultural influences and connections between the Orthodox believers in the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires were mutual, and they created specific cultural networks (Makuljević, 2017, pp. 54–64). Alongside those of Serbian saints, other saintly cults were spreading from central Balkan regions too and were fostered in Habsburg lands as well. One of the best-known was the cult of Saint Naum, held in special reverence by the Aromanian community (Davidov, 1990, pp. 165–176). Zographic ateliers operated in the Habsburg area even in the latter half of the 18th century, as attested by the wall painting in Ráckeve (Srpski Kovin) and the Monastery

of Grabovac (Davidov, 1990, pp. 177–188). At the same time, refugee hierarchs and believers living in the Habsburg Monarchy sent out various gifts to churches and monasteries under Ottoman rule. In 1743 Patriarch Arsenije IV Jovanović Šakabenta commissioned a shroud for the relics coffin of Saint Stefan of Dečani held at the Dečani Monastery (Šakota, 1984, p. 60). The Bishop of Vršac, Jovan Georgijević, a one-time monk at Dečani, sent numerous gifts to the Dečani Monastery. Among other things, he presented the monastery with numerous books, the parekklesion consecrated to Saint Stefan of Dečani, illustrated by painter Nikola Nešković, along with one reliquary coffin in 1763. (Šakota, 1984, pp. 62; 202). Certain Orthodox churches in the Ottoman Empire, such as the Old Orthodox Church in Sarajevo, were furnished with numerous imports from the Habsburg Monarchy and the Adriatic seaboard. Sarajevo merchants bought and donated icons and other ecclesiastical items. One of the best-known ones is “the Miletić train,” a piece of Viennese Baroque embroidered fabric that served to “dress”/cover the iconostasis, which was presented by merchant Jova Miletić (Skarić, 1928).

The extent of the complexity of ties that existed among Orthodox Christians in the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires is best showcased in the example of Hristifor Žefarović, whose “appearance” on the cultural-artistic scene was a sign of the turbulence of the times. Žefarović was born in the vicinity of Dojran, receiving his painterly education in Balkan ateliers. He arrived in Belgrade around the 1730s, when it was under Austrian rule, and quickly became the leading Orthodox painter in the Metropolitanate of Belgrade-Karlovci (Davidov, 2006, pp. 105–125). Žefarović executed the wall painting in the Monastery of Bođani between 1735 and 1737, owing to which there was an overlap there between the Balkan icon-painting model and Western European painterly solutions (Timotijević, 1996, pp. 72–73; Stošić, 2006, pp. 106–116; Stošić, 2011, pp. 23–93). Upon completion of his work on frescoing the Bođani Monastery, he devoted most of his time to religious engravings and printmaking (Davidov, 2006, pp. 127–157). He made print icons for Orthodox commissioning parties on both sides of the Ottoman-Habsburg border (Gratziou, 1993/94, pp. 93–105). Žefarović is the author of one of the most important Serbian books of the 18th century, *Stematography*, whose illustrations of South Slavic heraldry and South Slavic saints became one of the leading iconographic models in Serbian and Balkan visual culture of the 18th and 19th centuries (Davidov, 2011).

Along the Adriatic seaboard, there existed special cultural ties with the southern Balkan regions. Icons and icon-painters that arrived from Greek regions participated in the furnishing of Orthodox churches in Dalmatia. The Mediterranean-Balkan borders were in fact porous, so the

Dimitrijević-Rafajlović zographic ateliers of Risan, on Venetian Republic soil, painted numerous icons too for churches situated on Ottoman land (Medaković 1980, pp. 68–71).

The crisis of 1683–1740 had seismic repercussions on the cultural life in the Balkans. Numerous sacred and profane structures were destroyed, many relics and treasures were moved, and there was fragmentation and the creation of a novel cultural horizon. One of the most significant repercussions of the crisis was the creation of a polycentric cultural situation and the formation of a new geography of Serbian visual culture. Under different cultural models (Habsburg-Central European, Ottoman-Balkan, and the Mediterranean), Serbian visual culture assumed different forms and acquired special characteristics.

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Ненад Макуљевић*

ДЕСТРУКЦИЈА, ТРАНСФОРМАЦИНА И ФРАГМЕНТАЦИЈА СРПСКЕ И БАЛКАНСКЕ ВИЗУЕЛНЕ КУЛТУРЕ КРАЈЕМ 17. И У ПРВОЈ ПОЛОВИНИ 18. ВЕКА

Апстракт: Крај 17. и прву половину 18. века обележили су велики ратни сукоби који су оставили значајне и дуготрајне последице на све аспекте српског и балканског друштва и културе. Ратне кризе између 1683. и 1739. имале су великог утицаја на српску и балканску визуелну културу. Овде истичемо три важна аспекта која доприносе пуном увиду у стање и последице ратних криза на српску и балканску визуелну културу у овом периоду, а то су деструкција, премештање реликвија и ризница, као и фрагментизација и креирање новог културног хоризонта.

Велики аустријско-турски рат 1683–1699 довео је до пљачкања и оштећивања најзначајнијих српских манастира попут Пећке патријаршије, Раванице и Милешеве. У бекству пред османском војском склањане су најважније драгоцености, а монаси Раванице су пребегли на аустријску територију са моштима кнеза Лазара.

Ратна дешавања довела су до фрагментизације, полицентричности и специфичне просторне “разуђености” културног живота православних Срба. Оквирне географске тачке српске културе простирале су се од манастира Хиландара на Светој гори до Коморана, на југу данашње Словачке, и од Трста до Темишвара. Услови живота православних верника нису били истоветни и веома су се разликовали у зависности од локалних околности и доминантних културних модела. То је све довело до полицентричности и различитих форми и контекстуалне функције српске визуелне културе.

Кључне речи: деструкција, аустријско-турски ратови, миграције, реликвије, балканска визуелна култура

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SAINTS AND CRISES: THE CULT OF ST STEPHEN THE FIRST-CROWNED IN KOČINA KRAJINA (1788–1791) AND THE WARTIME OF SERBIAN REVOLUTION (1804–1815)

Abstract: The history of the relics and the cult of St Stephen the First-Crowned, especially the one from the late 18th and early 19th century, shows how crises can bring about the development of a cult and visual culture that accompanies these processes. Carefully guarded during the wars, from Kočina Krajina up to the Serbian Revolution, the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned shared an unfortunate fate with the people and its army. By building the old church-folk tradition with new legends about St Stephen the First-Crowned and his relics, the insurgents gradually created a symbol of freedom and the renewal of Serbian statehood out of the first Serbian king. After the final liberation from the Turks, his relics became the most important national relics of the state. Visual culture had its place in all of these developments of his cult.

Keywords: crisis, relics, St Stephen the First-Crowned, Kočina Krajina, Serbian Revolution

One of the characteristics of early modern Balkan visual culture is the cult of saints. Reverence for a saint's cult was not a novelty, so the older practices continued and further developed during the early modern period. Most importantly, people paid respect to cults of saints in times of great events and crises, such as illnesses, natural catastrophes, and wartime. In turn, different types of crises can also affect the creation, questioning, or development of existing cults (Greene, 2010). Orthodox Christians, especially Serbs in the territory of the Ottoman Empire, paid great respect to

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saints belonging to the Serbian medieval ruling dynasty of Nemanjićs and the monasteries that were the guarding places of their relics. Thus, the relics and the cult of the first Serbian crowned king, St Stephen the First-Crowned, occupy an essential part of Serbian early modern history.

The formation and the establishment of the cult of St Stephen the First-Crowned as the first Serbian royal saint started in the 13th century after Sava Nemanjić (Saint Sava) exposed St Stephen's relics and ceremonially translated them from the Studenica to the Žiča Monastery (Popović, 2013, pp. 578–579; Pavlović, 1965, p. 52). Considering that the Žiča Monastery had been planned to represent the crowning church for all future Serbian kings, the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned were supposed to play an important role in legitimizing the rule of all upcoming Serbian rulers. This idea of St Sava enabled Serbia under the Nemanjić dynasty to adopt the practices common for medieval European monarchies (Popović, 2013, p. 579). Associating the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned with the most respectable Christian relics kept in the Žiča Monastery was also important, and had an effect on forming the cult of St Stephen the First-Crowned in the Middle Ages (Popović, 2006, p. 245; Popović, 2013, pp. 578–579). Throughout history, the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned had been translated 17 times (Pavlović, 1964, p. 65). From the Žiča Monastery, they had been translated to the Sopoćani Monastery, where they were buried in the ground after the battle of Kosovo in the 15th century for safety reasons, until the miraculous “appearance in a dream” of the prior of the Sopoćani Monastery, so they were dug out in 1629 (Pavlović, 1965, pp. 51–53, 56). Soon after being dug out in the 17th century, the previously established cult was enhanced with new church songs (Pavlović, 1965, pp. 53, 56). For safety reasons, during the wartime crises in Turkey, the relics were translated in 1687 from the Sopoćani Monastery to the Crna Reka Monastery (Pavlović, 1965, p. 54; Šakota, 2019, p. 53). A significant moment was their translation to the Studenica Monastery on October 12th, 1696 (Šakota, 2019, p. 57). The Studenica Monastery continuously had a good reputation within the old Serbian Great Lavra in the period of the Ottoman rule and it had been a significant cultural and spiritual center of the Orthodox population, especially in the Serbian ethical area (Šakota, 2019, pp. 43–77). By translating the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned from the Monastery of Crna Reka to the Studenica Monastery, Studenica became even more significant as an important place of the cult and the center of pilgrimage. Due to its treasure and the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned, the Studenica Monastery had a reputation in the wider Christian community, which was confirmed through the gifts and help it continued to receive from Russia and Walachia (Šakota, 2019, pp. 44–47, 49–52, 55–57, 58, 70–71). By bringing the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned to the Studenica Monastery, the church, and national

tradition strengthened, both of which had cultivated the cult of St Stephen the First-Crowned as the symbol of the glorified past and former Serbian statehood (Vinaver, 1954, pp.103–120; Ljušić, 1994). During the Austrian-Turkish and Russo-Turkish wars in the 18th century, the Studenica Monastery with its surroundings represented a significant military and strategic place. Since the Serbs had been involved in the wars on the side of either Austria or Russia, the monastery had been attacked by the Turkish army and there had been a constant fear regarding the safety of the relics of the first Serbian crowned king (Šakota, 2019, pp. 53–54; Stanojević, 2004, pp. 41–47). The constant exposure of the monastery to Turkish vengeance was anticipated with fear of destroying the remains of the first Serbian crowned king and thus taking away one of the greatest objects that reminded of the former autonomy and supported liberation (Pavlović, 1964, p. 65; Vasilić, 1956, p. 45). For these reasons, during the wars for the final liberation from the Turkish rule by the end of the 18th and early 19th century – the Kočina Krajina rebellion (1788–1791), the First Serbian and Second Serbian Uprising (1804–1815), the relics of the first Serbian crowned king St Stephen the First-Crowned had been translated from the Studenica Monastery on several occasions since it was in the war area. The relics had the same destiny as the people and rebel army, which all brought about a true connection between the relics, the cult, and the crisis circumstances. This is precisely when, in the time of crisis, the cult of St Stephen the First-Crowned as the first Serbian crowned king rose, and his relics became one of the most important national relics.

The Relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned in the Period of the Kočina Krajina Rebellion (1788–1791)

The last Austro-Turkish war in the period 1788–1791 brought hope of liberation among the Serbs, so their massive participation on the Austrian side transformed into a national uprising. This war was named the Kočina Krajina rebellion after the leader of Serbian volunteers, Koča Anđelković. The Serbs in this war were organized into volunteering squads – the *Freikorps*, which were under the command of Austrian generals (Pantelić, 1930; Merenik, 2004, pp. 27; Stanojević, 2004, pp. 45–47). In both this and the previous wars that took place in the 18th century, the people from Studenica took part on the Austrian side (Vasilić, 1957, p. 24; Milićević, 1867, p. 74; Vukićević, 1907, p.76; Kašić, 1986, p. 29). Having found out about their cooperation with the Austrian army, the Turks prepared the attack on the Studenica Monastery (Vasilić, 1957, p. 24; Vukićević, 1907, p. 76). The Metropolitan of Raška, Joanikije, warned the Archimandrite of Studenica, Vasilije Radosavljević, about the Turkish intentions. Vasilije

left the Studenica Monastery on January 6, 1790, together with the monks accompanied by the Freikorps, carrying the part of the monastery treasury and the relics of the St Stephen the First-Crowned (Vukićević, 1907, p. 76; Milićević, 1867, p. 75; Šakota, 2019, p. 77). On January 7 the Turks attacked the Studenica Monastery, burned it, and stole the remaining monastery valuables. After the demolition of the Studenica Monastery during the Migrations in 1690, this was the greatest devastation of the monastery and its treasury (Vasilić, 1957, p. 24). According to one of the most prominent participants in the First Serbian Uprising Petar Jokić, among the Freikorps accompanying the relics of the Saint King was Đorđe Petrović – Karađorđe, the later leader of the First Serbian Uprising (Jokić, 1980, p. 157). Immediately before receiving this most honored position to accompany the relics, Karađorđe had a reputation of a hero among both the Serbs and the Turks, which he demonstrated in battles led by captain Radič Petrović (Pantelić, 1980, p. 84). A magnificent accomplishment of his was the murder of the Turk Lomigora in the battle of Požega, who was held impossible to be killed with the usual lead bullet. Karađorđe murdered him with a bullet made of silver, brass, and lead buttons from his shirt (Đurić, 1980, p. 20). The Turkish army was demoralized after the death of their leader and Karađorđe became a great hero (Đurić, 1980, p. 20). This role of the prominent hero in the battles against the Turks brought him the responsibility for the relics of the King Saint during the refugee exodus through the war area. Karađorđe's role in this translation of the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned was of the utmost importance for the sequence of legends later, during the First Serbian Uprising. These legends connected him with the King Saint and played a great part in the formation of his ruling ideology (Pavlović, 1964, p. 65). The relics of the King Saint were brought to Karanovac, staying there eight days, just to be translated to Jagodina on January 17, 1790 (Vukićević, 1907, p. 76; Milićević, 1867, p. 75). The relics were ceremonially attended in Jagodina by 10,000 soldiers guided by the leader of the Freikores, officer Mihailo Mihaljević (Vukićević, 1907, p. 76). On this occasion, fifty cannons were fired in honor of the King Saint, and convicts with death sentences were granted amnesty (Milićević, 1867, p. 75; Šakota, 2019, p. 78). The relics were then carried from Jagodina to Smederevo with the additional Mihaljević's convoy of 500 soldiers. From there, they were carried over Grocka to Belgrade, which was held to be safe due to it being under Austrian rule since 1789 (Milićević, 1867, p. 75; Šakota, 2019, p. 78). We know that Karađorđe brought the relics safely to Belgrade, but we do not know how long he had stayed there and when he was returned to his command (Vukićević, 1907, p. 76). The ceremonial arrival of the relics was organized in Belgrade on February 1, 1790, by the Metropolitan Dionisije and the clergy, after which the relics were placed in the Church of the Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel (an Old Orthodox



Fig. 1: Belt with silver buckles, a gift from Ilija, and Toma from Klisarnica in 1790. (source: Šakota, M. (2019). *Studenička riznica*. Beograd.)

Church) in front of the iconostasis (Radosavljević, 2007, p. 179; Milićević, 1867, p. 75; Rakić, 1815, p. 14; Šakota, 2019, p. 78). The Metropolitan Dionisije ensured the relics to be guarded by the chosen monks eligible for the duty, and to the Archimandrite of the Studenica Monastery, Vasilije, he gave the golden cross as a gift (Rakić, 1815, p. 14; Radosavljević, 2007, p. 179). The relics were kept safe in Belgrade until the Turks entered the city again, so the monks of Studenica, worried for their safety, hit the road again on September 10, 1790, retreated to Austrian territory, to the Vojljovica Monastery near Pančevo, carrying the relics with them (Milićević, 1867, p. 75; Rakić, 1814, p. 14–15; Veselić, 1957, p. 24; Šakota, 2019, p. 79; Makuljević, 2006, p. 60). The Metropolitan Dionisije organized a holy accompaniment of the King Saint's relics from Belgrade to Banat in 1791, where the Serbian people received them with celebration and litany, cannon fire, and bell ringing (Rakić, 1815, pp. 15–16; Radosavljević, 2007, p. 179). Wherever the relics had passed at the time, amid the warfare and general insecurity, contemporaries such as the Hieromonks of Studenica, Vićentije Velimirović, and Vićentije Rakić, witnessed their holy reception by the army, clergy, and the people (Rakić, 1815, pp. 13–14, 16; Milićević, 1867, p. 75). The mere fact that 500 soldiers led by Mihaljević followed the relics of the King Saint from Jagodina to Smederevo stands as proof of the great respect and significance of the relics of the first Serbian crowned king among the Serbs. Although the translation of the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned was performed out of necessity, provoked by the war crisis, it also represented a certain emulation of medieval translations of relics that were done as part of the celebration, with litanies, psalms, people gathering, celebrating, and giving contributions to the relics (Popović, 2006, p. 245). Following the earlier tradition, the relics were given contributions on a smaller scale out of personal devotion, motivated by different needs, faith in their holiness, protection, and help in times of war (Vasilić, 1956, pp. 46–47; Vasilić, 1957, p. 24). Thus, among gifts were silver buckles (paftas) donated by Ilija and Toma from Klisarnica in 1790 (Fig. 1) and a nacre artophorion made by a man called Rista Ristić (Vasilić, 1957, p. 24).

Although in 1789 and 1790 Belgrade, Šabac, Valjevo, Požarevac, Karanovac, and Kruševac were liberated, the events in Europe led to the war ending unfavorably for the Serbs. Due to the pact between England and



Fig. 2: Silver reliquary of Dragić Radosavljević, 1792.
(source: Šakota, M. (2019). *Studenička riznica*. Beograd.)

Prussia, and the alliance made between Turkey and Prussia, Austria was forced to sign a peace treaty with Turkey and left Serbia to the Turks again by the articles of the Treaty of Sistova in 1791. The disappointment among the Serbs was humongous (Merenik, 2004, p. 27). The Treaty of Sistova guaranteed the general amnesty of the Serbs for taking part in the war on the Austrian side, which should have led to a peaceful life under Ottoman rule. The legal acts brought in 1793, 1794, and 1796 contributed to this and defined the principality's autonomy (Pantelić, 1927; Merenik, 2004, p. 28). Re-establishing the state of peace on the territory of the Pashalik of Belgrade and the Sanjak of Novi Pazar enabled the renovation of the Studenica Monastery and return of the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned from exile. Immediately after signing the Treaty, the monks from Studenica and the people, especially those of the Nahiyah of Studenica, wanted to have the relics returned, but this was also the wish of the Turks who saw this as a possibility of calming the people down (Vasilić, 1957, p. 24; Stojančević, 1988, p. 537; Kašić, 1986, p. 29; Vukićević, 1907, pp. 346, 382). The presence of the relics in Studenica was for all a symbol of calming the crisis. Thus the Metropolitan of Raška, Joanikije, asked for permission to have the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned retrieved from the territory of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci (Austria) to Studenica in his letter sent from Novi Pazar to Sremski Karlovci to the Metropolitan Stevan Stratimirović, on September 12, 1791. He regarded the Studenica Monastery as an ancient royal Serbian Lavra and believed it would be neglected if the relics were not returned (Vukićević, 1907, p. 382; Kašić, 1986, p. 29). The return of the relics had practical and ideological aspects. After the wars in the 17th and 18th centuries, together with the last Austro-Turkish war, many old Serbian monasteries were left abandoned and ruined, such as Đurđevi Stupovi, Sopoćani, Banjska, Pavlica, Gradac, Pridvorica (Stojančević, 1988, p. 537). Along with Dečani and

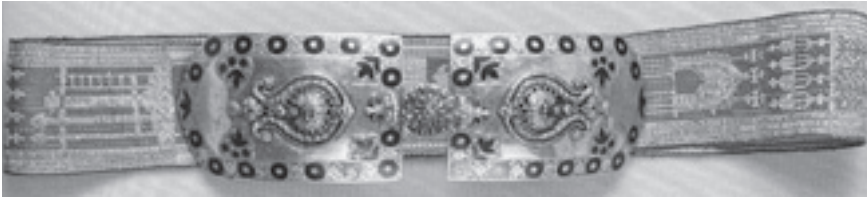


Fig. 3: Jerusalem belt from 1783 with gilded buckles as a gift from Jovanka Hadži Nikolinica from 1793. (source: Šakota, M. (2019). *Studenička riznica*. Beograd.)

the Patriarchate of Peć, the Studenica Monastery had the pilgrims, the valuables, and great reputation among Orthodox Christians, especially Serbs from all Serbian areas under Ottoman rule, owing to the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned and valuable monastery treasury (Stojančević, 1988, pp. 536–537). In both the Pashalik of Belgrade and Sanjak of Novi Pazar, it was the biggest pilgrimage center and the only functional (“pojušči”) monastery of all the medieval monasteries (Stojančević, 1988, p. 537). Without the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned, its income and reputation would have surely declined. The monastic connections with faraway Russia established in the earlier centuries under the Ottoman rule, together with the abundant support of the monks from this country also had a great impact on the Studenica Monastery’s image in a wider political and national plan for the liberation from the Turkish rule (Stojančević, 1988, p. 536). By having the ferman (a royal decree) of the sultan for the renovation, together with other permits of the Turkish authorities, the Studenica Monastery regained all the rights it had had before the war (Stojančević, 1988, p. 537; Vasilčić, 1957, p. 25). The monastery’s renovation started in 1798 and lasted until the end of 1799 (Kašić, 1986, p. 29, Šakota, 2019, pp. 80–83). The translation of the relics back to Studenica over Pančevo started on December 1, 1791, and ended on February 5 the next year (Vasilčić, 1957, p. 25; Šakota, 1988, pp. 74–76). On their way to the Studenica Monastery, the relics were held for some time in the Rajinovac Monastery near Grocka (Radosavljević, 2007, p. 381; Milićević, 1867, p. 16; Veselić, 1867, p. 14, Rakić, 1815, p. 16). The monastery was renovated due to the accommodation of the relics. The arrival of the King Saint’s relics to the monastery and its renovation by the monks of Studenica with a local prince, Stefan Dimitar Stefanović, were all memorized as events of enormous importance (Radosavljević, 2007, p. 381; Veselić, 1867, p. 14).

Upon their return to the Studenica Monastery, the relics received contributions from the people. A man named Dragić Radosavljević brought as a gift a silver reliquary in 1792 (Fig. 2); Jovanka Hadži Nikolinica gave gilded buckles in 1793 (Fig. 3), and the same gifts came from a wom-

an named Anda, while Petar and Rista contributed a belt with buckles. Ana and Nikola Milošević brought the asterisk as a gift, and Agna from Ljevković brought an embroidered epimanikia (Vasilić, 1957, p. 25). In the period of the monastery's renovation, Serbs from Sarajevo sent plenty of gifts. Most prominent among them was a tradesman family of Hadži Jovo Vuković, which financed the renovation of the residences in the Studenica Monastery and the building of the fountain (Stojančević, 1988, p. 536–537; Kašić, 1986, p. 25; Šakota, 2019, p. 83). From the late 1799 and by the beginning of 1806, the Studenica Monastery was again established as the center of the spiritual and social life of Serbs in Turkey, especially in the Sanjak of Novi Pazar (Stojančević, 1988, p. 537). It remained like that when the First Serbian Uprising started in the Pashalik of Belgrade in 1804.

The reasons for the translation of relics from the war area during the Kočina Krajina rebellion were the fear of Turkish revenge and the possible destruction of relics of the first Serbian king, which would take away the memory of former autonomy and the hope for freedom. Sharing the same warfare destiny with the people, the relics had direct contact with the people and its army fighting for freedom on the Austrian side – these were, in times of Kočina Krajina, the frames which represented an essential base for confirming the cult of St Stephen the First-Crowned during the First Serbian Uprising and using it for national and political purposes. It was during the Serbian Revolution that the relics became of the utmost importance and the patron saint for Serbian insurgents and the rebel state.

The Cult and the Relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned during the Wartime Period of the Serbian Revolution (1804–1815)

After a short period of peace, starting from 1801, a new wave of terrors and a new crisis emerged. The return of janissaries and dahijas to the Pashalik of Belgrade, the murder of Hadži-Mustafa Pasha, and the usurping of the legal empire rule, the ending of the principality's autonomy, and the slaughter of the Serbian princes (*knez*) provoked a fierce resistance among the Serbian population. The circumstances brought to the indispensable organized defense of the Serbs in the Pashalik of Belgrade in 1804, which evolved into the First Serbian Uprising (1804–1813) (Merenik, 2004, p. 28; Stanojević, 2004, pp. 49–70; Ljušić, 2008, pp. 63–67).

In starting the Serbian revolution, a vital ideological frame for it was the tradition of the old Serbian state. At the beginning of the Uprising, the insurgents had not taken into consideration the question of reforming the old Serbian state (Ljušić, 1994, p. 38; Vinaver, 1954, p. 107). However, the success in the battles against the Turks and banishing them from the Pashalik of Belgrade, increased the self-assurance and the territorial claims within the insurgents, and renewed the medieval tradition of the independent state (Ljušić, 1994, pp. 24–25, 38–41, 46; Vinaver, 1954, pp. 108–115). Thus, the first Serbian crowned king, St Stephen the First-Crowned, became the medieval symbol of the Uprising. His relics were at the Studenica Monastery at the time when the Uprising started (Ljušić, 1994, pp. 24–25, 38–41, 46).

At its mere beginning, a legend spread – one that connected Karađorđe Petrović, the leader of the Uprising, with the King Saint. The legend spoke of a dream in which St Stephen the First-Crowned talked to Karađorđe encouraging him to start an uprising against the Turks, thereby making him the future leader (Pavlović, 1964, p. 65; Đurić, 1880, p. 8; Ljušić, 2018, p. 279–280). Upon beginning the Uprising, the legend was spread by Janićije Đurić, a prominent figure of the Uprising, Karađorđe's friend and a clerk (Đurić, 1880, p. 8–9). The legend of Karađorđe's dream and some unusual forces of nature – “sky circumstances” (nebeske pri-like) that were taking place years before the Uprising above the Pashalik of Belgrade – all these were believed to be a sign from the saints that the time for liberation had come (Pantelić, 1954, p. 89–101). The direct, personal experience that Karađorđe had with the relics of the King Saint, while he was a part of their convoy during the Kočina Krajina rebellion, and the dream, were both the bases for a personal and ideological connection with St Stephen the First-Crowned. This is confirmed by a visual shaping of Karađorđe's military flags, which could be related to the prophecy dream. The flags were made somewhat around the start of the Uprising. The first flag, which has not been preserved, was made by the painter Stefan Gavrilović in 1804, as written on the flag (Ljušić, 2018, p. 280–281; Samardžić, 1983, p. 38). Together with the representation of a two-headed crowned eagle with the lily and the portrait of St Archangel Gabriel wearing the military uniform, there was also writing on the flag taken from the 9th and 10th line of the eighth chapter of the Book of Isaiah, who emphasized the battle for freedom in the name of Christianity (Vukićević, 1912, pp. 2; 268; Ljušić, 2018, p. 280; Samardžić, 1983, p. 38; Petrović, 1954, pp. 142–143). Another flag of Karađorđe connected to the legend of the dream contained a portrait of St Stephen the First-Crowned (Samardžić, 1983, p. 39; Ljušić, 2018, p. 284; Perović, 1954, pp. 143–145).

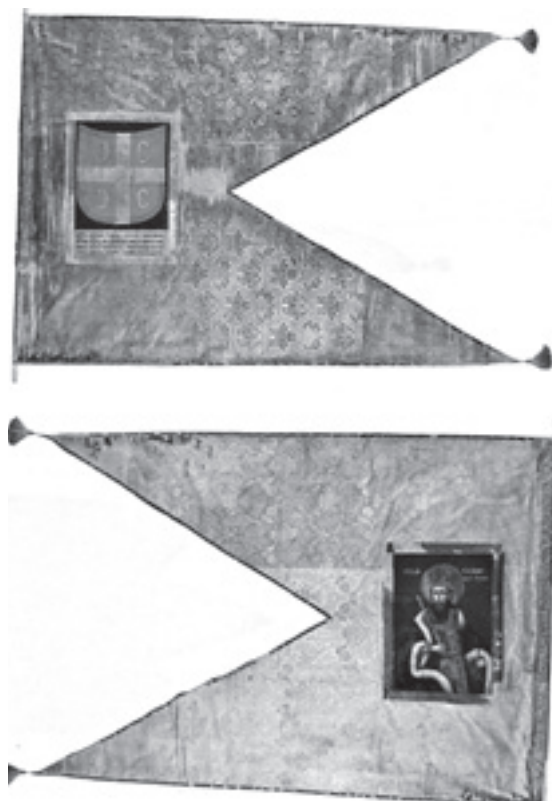


Fig. 4: The Flag of leader Karadjordje Petrovic with the image of St. Stefan the First-Crowned and Serbian coat of arms, 1804.
(source: Historical Museum of Serbia)

The flag was made of blue and pale-yellow brocade, with two feathers and tassels (Fig. 4). The front side of the flag was light-blue, red, and golden, and its back side was yellow. On the yellow side of the flag, there was a painting of the icon of St Stephen the First-Crowned signed as the Serbian king (Fig. 5). On the other side of the flag, there was a painting of a golden Serbian cross against a red background, and below it was the text of Džefarović's *Stemmatografia* interpreting the Serbian coat of arms (Samardžić, 1983, p. 39; Ljušić, 2018, p. 284). Owing to its stylistic similarities with the flag of St Archangel Gabriel, this flag is also considered to be a work of Stefan Gavrilović and dates back to 1804. It is believed that the flag was sewn and embroidered by a famous embroideresses from Karlovci (Ljušić, 2018, p. 284; Petrović, 1954, p. 142). Making flags with the saints' portraits followed an older practice rooted in Christian flags – *khorugv* or banners (Solunac Jović, 2004, pp. 160–165; Samardžić, 1983, pp.



Fig. 5: The Flag of leader Karadjordje Petrovic, detail with the image of St. Stephen the First-Crowned, 1804.(source: Ljušić, R. (2018). *Vojvode i vojvodski barjaci. Vojno uređenje ustaničke Srbije (1804–1815)*. Beograd.)

37–38; Stošić, 2006, pp. 184–185). These flags were supposed to embolden insurgents with patriotism and protect them (Solunac Jović, 2004, p. 165). The heraldic marks, portraits of the saints and suitable texts on these two flags, bore testament to the beginnings of Serbian statehood, God's support and protection. The symbols that the creator of the flag had used pointed to the battle that helped recover Serbian medieval statehood and to Vožd Karađorđe as a fighter for the Christian faith and the legal heir of St Stephen the First-Crowned (Ljušić, 2018, pp. 280, 284). In general, the rebels' flags contained numerous symbols of the state of Nemanjićs (Ljušić, 1994, p. 39; Petrović, 1954, pp. 140–156). Along with the belief in the legend of the dream and the flag of St Stephen the First-Crowned, the insurgents represented themselves as legitimate heirs of old Serbian lands (Pavlović, 1964, p. 65; Vinaver, 1954, pp. 11–15). If we add to this the preparation for Karađorđe's coronation later on, and getting on Holy

anointing oil from Russia it is justifiable to suppose that the coronation would be similar to that of St Stephen the First-Crowned. (Ljušić, 1994, p. 39; Ljušić, 2018, p. 285).

The priests and the monks that took part in the Uprising felt that a new government was about to arise, one which would be regarded as the heir of the state of Nemanjićs. Gerasim Georgijević, a former monk from the Studenica Monastery, later the Episcopate in Šabac, in his work *Significant Events of Modern Serbian History* describes the Uprising as the renewal of the idea of courage (*čojstvo*) displayed at the Kosovo field and an idea of the return of the lost state (Georgijević, 1838, pp. 14–16). That is why the clergy and the monks asked for medieval privileges for their monasteries, having anticipated upcoming changes. They also asked for the affirmation of the manors and privileges, and in this process, the great role was that of tradition, monastery treasures, the relics, and their reputation (Pavlović, 1964, p. 65; Vinaver, 1954, pp. 109–110). In these ideological processes during the First Serbian Uprising, a vital role was played the destiny of the Studenica Monastery and the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned, since the monastery with these relics had been the most crucial spiritual, cultural, and pilgrimage center in the warfare area. The Nahiyah of Studenica and Studenica itself were liberated in 1806 and became an important military stronghold, from which the insurgents forced the Turkish army toward Novi Pazar (Stojančević, 1988, pp. 538–539; Šakota, 2019, pp. 84–86). The monks of the Studenica Monastery took an active part in the Uprising, especially the Archimandrite Melen-tije Nikšić. (Kašić, 1986, p. 30; Marković, 2019, p. 252; Durković-Jakšić, 1986, pp. 276–279). The insurgents were in contact with the monastery, the monastery's brotherhood, and the relics all the time (Kašić, 1986, p. 30; Stojančević, 1988, pp. 543–544). At the beginning of March 1806, being the chief of the liberated Nahiyah of Studenica and a part of the Sanjak of Novi Pazar, captain Radič Petrović sent a ship, a prize of war, as a gift to the King Saint and Studenica (Stojančević, 1988, p. 540, Vasilić, 1957, p. 25; Durković-Jakšić, 1986, p. 277).

The liberated part of the Sanjak of Novi Pazar together with Studenica and the Nahiyah of Studenica were not under Serbian rule for long. In the battles for Novi Pazar, the Serbian army was defeated by Sulejman Pasha Skopljak, who came from the Eyalet of Bosnia to help the Turkish army. The rebel army under the control of Radič Petrović was defeated near Studenica. The monastery was under a great threat since the Turks knew that Radič was situated in it and that the Archimandrite of the monastery was one of the leaders of the countrymen from the Nahiyah of Studenica in the Uprising (Stojančević, 1988, p. 541). Having seen the sufferings in the

nearby villages and within the population caused by the Turkish revenge, the monks of Studenica fled the monastery on March 30, 1806, carrying the movable valuables and the relics of the King Saint (Stojančević, 1988, p. 541; Georgijević, 1838, pp. 17–18). At Demeronja, on March 30, 1806, prince Milić Lučić and priest Nikola Kostić wrote about the state of affairs in the front near Studenica and informed about the state of the Studenica Monastery. They confirmed that the Turks had made a demand through their messenger that the people of Studenica bow to the Turkish rule, and that they had threatened to destroy the monastery completely if the saint was not returned (Perović, 1977, p. 172–173; Georgijević, 1838, p. 542). Since the monks of Studenica defied to obey, the great ravage and burning down of the monastery took place a day after the brotherhood fled the monastery, taking the relics with them (Perović, 1977, p. 173¹). Gerasim Georgijević, a monk from Studenica and a witness of the events, stated that being in the refugee exodus on the mountain of Đakovica, he could see along with other people the ravage and burning of the monastery (Georgijević, 1838, pp. 18–20; Šakota, 2019, p. 86). Carrying the relics along the Ibar River and across Morava, the brotherhood from Studenica came with the rest of the refugees to Šumadija five days later, where they settled in the Vračevšnica Monastery (Georgijević, 1838, pp. 21–22; Rakić, 1815, pp. 17–18; Stojančević, 1988, pp. 542, 546–548; Šakota, 2019, p. 87; Radosavljević, 2007, p. 264; Ljušić, 1994, p. 39; Pavlović, 1964, p. 65; Čeliković, 1998, p. 90). Here was the main seat of the Soviets, the leaders of the Uprising, and thus the relics were guarded by the rebel army as the vital relics of the country (Makuljević, 2006, p. 60). The relics stayed at the Vračevšnica Monastery until the end of the First Serbian Uprising in 1813.

The translation of St Stephen the First-Crowned's relics to rebel territory in 1806 contributed to the popularization of his cult among the insurgents (Ljušić, 1004, p. 39). During the time that the relics of the King Saint were at the Vračevšnica Monastery, some significant events happened here related to the political destiny of the rebel state. The physical presence of the relics in these events, their connection with the actual events, symbolized the saint's protection of the insurgents and their state. In the Vračevšnica Monastery on September 17, 1810, a meeting was held between Karađorđe and the duke from Rudnik Milan Obrenović, the Archimandrite Spiridon Filipović, and Dositej Obradović, to reach an agreement upon future political and military actions (Čeliković, 1998, p. 90). From there the Archimandrite of the Studenica Monastery, Melentije Nikšić, went to Russia in 1811 as the rebel emissary, successfully com-

1 The correction of the dating from the earlier literature is given in the explanations on page 173.



Fig. 6: The Gospel, a gift from the Russian Tsar Alexander 1811, with a chained cover from 1813. (source: Šakota, M. (2019). *Studenička riznica*. Beograd.)

pleting the political mission for the insurgents and bringing back gifts for the Studenica Monastery (Pavlović, 1964, p. 65; Vasilić, 1957, p. 26; Stojančević, 1988, p. 547). Among these gifts was a pectoral cross of Alexander the Emperor and the Evangelie from Kyiv chained later in 1813. (Fig. 6) (Šakota, 2019, p. 90). One of the most significant assemblies was held in the Vračevšnica Monastery “at the King Saint” on August 15/27 in 1812 on a holiday – the Dormition of the Mother of God (Golubica, 1843–1844, pp. 210–211; Veselić, 1867, p. 24; Ristić, 1955, pp. 132–133; Pavlović, 1964, p. 66; Ljušić, 1994, p. 39; Stojančević, 1988, p. 546). Here, close to the “King Saint,” Karađorđe checked on the army and performed a military exercise (Ljušić, 2018, p. 285). Then the members of the Assembly in front of Karađorđe and the Russian emissary, count Ivelić, swore over the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned to stay loyal to the Russian tzar and accepted the articles of the Treaty of Bucharest. Making an

oath over relics had a long tradition and the strength of an unbreakable promise. (Pavlović, 1964, p. 66; Vinaver, 1954, p. 117; Čeliković, 1998, pp. 90–91; Šakota, 2019, p. 90).

During the time that the relics of the King Saint had stayed at the Vračevšnica Monastery, the insurgents took care of the material state of the brotherhood of Studenica and brought the gifts to the relics and the Studenica Monastery. At the fraternity of Studenica's appeal, Karađorđe lent them the land to mow at Kalipolje as long as the fraternity would stay at the Vračevšnica Monastery (Stojančević, 1988, p. 548). He made a document in Topola on July 14, 1807. This document enabled the monks of Studenica settled in the Vračevšnica Monastery to take crops from villages near Studenica "that were serving the King Saint," in order to support themselves (Vinaver, 1954, pp. 109–110; Pavlović, 1964, p. 90; Kašić, 1986, p. 30; Šakota, 2019, p. 87). During his visit to Studenica in 1808, he also made some contributions (Stojančević, 1988, p. 548; Milićević, 1867, p. 76). Along with Karađorđe's name and the names of his sons Aleksije and Aleksandar and his wife Jelena, other contributors to the Studenica Monastery and the relics of the King Saint were other rebel leaders and their kin – Milan, Miloš, and Jovan Obrenović, the home of Lazar Mutap, the home of Antonije Pljakić and Stanoje Glavaš, as well as Vujica Vulićević and his brother Milivoj (Milićević, 1867, p. 76; Durković-Jakšić, 1986, p. 280). In 1810 it was noted that the hieromonk Maksim renovated the silver kivot for the relics in the Vračevšnica Monastery (Vasilić, 1957, pp. 26–27).

After signing the Treaty of Bucharest between Russia, the protector of the insurgents, and Turkey on May 28, 1812, the general situation in Serbia rapidly aggravated, which gradually led to the outbreak of the Uprising in 1813. As it was nearing its end, two pieces of news circulated on the battlefield in 1813 – one allegedly spoke of the death of Vožd Karađorđe and the other claimed that the kivot with the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned was creaking. The latter was interpreted as a clear sign of God's mercy leaving the insurgents and the doom of Serbia (Protić, 1880, p. 308; Pavlović, 1964, p. 67; Ljušić, 1994, pp. 39, 46; Vinaver, 1954, p. 118). These pieces of news demoralized the Serbian army at the battlefields (Pavlović, 1964, p. 67). Even during these unfortunate times, on March 23, 1813, a man from Studenica made an asterisk and thus enriched the treasury of the Studenica Monastery (Šakota, 2019, p. 90). By realizing that the defeat of the insurgents was inevitable, the monks from Studenica ran away to Austria on September 21, 1813, carrying the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned to the Fenek Monastery near Zemun (Georgijević, 1838, pp. 26–39; Rakić, 1815, pp. 18–20). The whole translation had been arranged

in advance with the Austrian authorities and permitted by the Metropolitan of Karlovci, Stevan Stratimirović (Šakota, 2019, p. 91). In the Fenek Monastery, the relics were met with ceremony (Rakić, 1815, pp. 19–20). The general crisis was additionally aggravated by the fact that Karađorđe had left Serbia on October 3, 1813, followed by most of the leaders of the Uprising (Zlatković, 2011, p. 247). As usual, there were descriptions of the horrible Turkish misdeeds that ensued (Ljušić, 1994, p. 67; Stanojević, 2004, pp. 68–69; Zlatković, 2011, pp. 250–252). Besides Karađorđe and other uprising leaders, around 120,000 people fled to Austria, and around 20,000 people fled to Walachia, leaving Serbia almost depopulated. The few remaining Serbs who stayed had hidden, and with several rebel leaders, there was Miloš Obrenović, the leader-to-be of the Second Serbian Uprising (Zlatković, 2011, p. 249).

In the Austrian territory, the people who emigrated were mostly put into quarantine. It was mandatory to stay in quarantine for 21 days in the Austrian territory for all passengers from Serbia to prevent the spread of the plague brought by the Turkish army from Asia (Stanojević, 2004, p. 68). Due to the great number of refugees, there were regular quarantines in Zemun and Pančevo, but there were also temporary ones in Srem and Banat (Ljušić, 2005, p. 434). Worn down by the famine, and with unfavorable weather conditions, many died in the quarantines (Ljušić, 2005, p. 434; Stanojević, 2004, p. 69). The Fenek Monastery was a place where a part of the Serbian emigration had been quarantined. Among them were Karađorđe and the monks from Studenica carrying the relics of the King Saint. Karađorđe had been quarantined in the Fenek Monastery for security reasons on October 5, 1813, while his family stayed in quarantine in Zemun (Šakota, 1986, pp. 272–273; Ljušić, 2005, p. 432). It was during this period of the highest crisis and Turkish terror in Serbia that the rebel leaders gathered in the Austrian territory in Fenek, having with them the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned. This is why Fenek became the center of Serbian emigrants. Although it had constantly been under the supervision of the Austrian authorities, the emigrants in Fenek held the political meetings under the excuse that they went there to bow to the King Saint (Pavlović, 1964, p. 64; Ljušić, 2005, p. 433; Šakota, 2019, p. 94). As some of the contemporaries had witnessed, here in Fenek Karađorđe went through a serious personal crisis due to all that had happened (Ljušić, 2005, pp. 432–434). At this time of public, political, and the Vožd's personal crisis, his wife Jelena sent a mantle as a gift for the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned (Šakota, 1986, pp. 271–274). The mantle was given, as the writing on itself says, in memory of their daughter Poleksija and her dead children (Fig. 7). It was made by Elena, the wife of the superior Vožd Master Georgije Petrović, in 1813 (Šakota, 1986, p. 271). Karađorđe and Jelena's

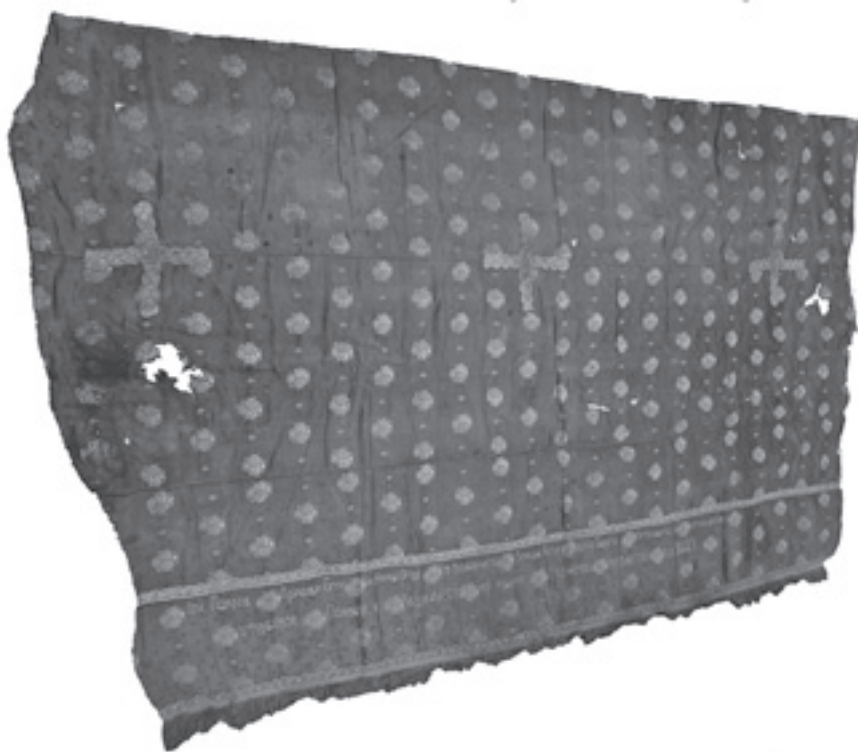


Fig. 7: Mantle for the relics of St. Stephen the First-Crowned, gift by Jelena Karadjordjevic, 1813. (photo by Milica Mirković, Study project of the Treasury of the Studenica Monastery – National Museum Kraljevo, Studenica Monastery)

daughter died right after her children in 1812 and was buried at a church in Topola. During the downfall of the First Serbian Uprising, Jelena made this mantle as a gift to the King Saint out of personal motives, worried for the fate of her family and crushed with pain as a mother. Apart from having the primarily eschatological and soteriological function, giving the mantle could be interpreted in the ruling ideology context. The evidence of this could be found in the name of the contributor on it, who is to be memorized as the wife of the supreme Vožd and Master. Having been made hastily in times of general crisis, the mantle was artistically simple. It was made of silk, embroidered with a silky thread and bordered with golden lace and fringes (Vasilić, 1956, p. 48). It is believed that Jelena made it in the quarantine in Zemun and that she most probably brought it to Fenek between October 26 and 31, 1813, while visiting her husband (Šakota, 1986, p. 274).

While the rebel leaders in the Austrian territory were trying to solve the political status of the Serbian people, and Karađorđe was planning his departure to Russia, the Turkish terror in Serbia partially ceased due to the situation in Europe. After Napoleon's defeat in Leipzig in 1813 and the victory of the Allies, Turkey was forced to pay more attention to Russia and the articles of the Treaty of Bucharest, especially those regarding the Serbs. After this, the Turks granted amnesty to Serbs and started calling out the remaining rebel leaders to give in. This was a period of short-term peace (Stanojević, 2004, p. 69). During the first weeks of 1814, Sulejman Pasha Skopljak, who distinguished himself in putting down the First Serbian Uprising, started the terror all over again in the Pashalik of Belgrade (Stanojević, 2004, p. 69). As a reaction to his actions, the Hadži-Prodan's rebellion broke out (September 27 – December 30, 1814), followed by the Second Serbian Uprising in 1815 under the leadership of prince Miloš Obrenović (Ljušić, 1994, pp. 67–70; Stanojević, 2004, pp. 69–75).

Prince Miloš Obrenović intervened at the beginning of the Second Serbian Uprising in 1815 that the monks of Studenica return the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned to Serbia to boost the morale of the people (Šakota, 2019, pp. 95–96). This shows the ideological importance of having the relics of the first Serbian crowned king present in the Serbian territory since they were a symbol of mitigating the crisis and God's protection. During their stay at Fenek, the people of Studenica followed what had been happening in Serbia regarding the warfare and political events, so right after the end of the Second Serbian Uprising, they wanted to make a return (Georgijević, 1838, p. 39; Stojančević, 1988, p. 549). Since the Studenica Monastery had stayed out of Serbian territory until the Hatt-i-humayun (Hatišerif) of 1833 and was devastated and ruined, the monks of Studenica settled in the Kalenić Monastery along with the relics of St Stephen the First Crowned (Stojančević, 1988, pp. 549–551; Durković-Jakšić, 1986, p. 283; Šakota, 2019, p. 96). Kalenić was not an accidental choice, since it was highly revered among the people and was an important meeting point during the time of the uprisings (Kanic, 1985, p. 631). The relics of the King Saint were ceremonially brought to the monastery on December 28, 1815, and placed in front of the iconostasis (Georgijević, 1838, pp. 70–72; Stojančević, 1988, p. 549; Makuljević, 2006, p. 61). Thus, the Kalenić Monastery became one of the most important monasteries in Serbia, and its façade engraving spoke about bringing back the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned (Milićević, 1867, p. 48). The need to make this engraving is clear proof of the significance of translating the relics and celebrating the memory of one of the most notable events in Serbian life of that time (Makuljević, 2006, p. 61). Having the relics on the Serbian territory again symbolically meant that the crisis had settled, although politi-

cally the situation was still uncertain until the Hatt-i-humayun (Hatişerif) in 1830 and 1833 when Serbia finally received the status of the Principality under the patronage of the Ottoman Empire, inner autonomy, and defined boundaries (Stanojević, 2004, pp. 76–81; Ljušić, 2004, pp. 2–45).

When the kivot with the relics was placed in the Kalenić Monastery, many people came bearing gifts to bow to the King Saint (Vasilić, 1957, p. 29). Prince Miloš had insisted on renovating the Studenica Monastery since 1824, for he saw the translation of the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned from Kalenić to Studenica as an essential segment of the ruling, statehood, and national ideology (Durković-Jakšić, 1986, pp. 283–288). Their translation was supposed to symbolize the renewal of the Serbian state. In this context, along with other contributions to the monastery, prince Miloš brought the mantle for the kivot of the King Saint made in Belgrade by Konstantin Stojanović in 1831. It was made of brocade, spliced with silver and gold, bordered with black velvet and golden fringes (Vasilić, 1956, pp. 29, 48).

After Serbia annexed the territory with Studenica in 1833, the final return of the relics of St Stephen the First-Crowned became possible. Their translation from Kalenić to Studenica was organized in 1839 as a celebration that lasted for several days and had a state, religious and national character (Durković-Jakšić, 1986, pp. 302–304). The kivot with the relics was placed in front of the iconostasis of the Church of the Holy Virgin in Studenica. This is where the relics of the first Serbian King Saint gained the status of the most important cult of saints and key national relics throughout the whole 19th century, and all modern Serbian rulers came to bow to them (Makuljević, 2006, p. 61).

This dynamic modern history of the relics and the cult of St Stephen the First-Crowned as explained here, reveals to us the effects of crises on the complex development of the cult and the visual culture that accompanies these processes.

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Ана Костић*

**СВЕТИТЕЉИ И КРИЗЕ:
КУЛТ СТЕФАНА ПРВОВЕНЧАНОГ ЗА ВРЕМЕ
КОЧИНЕ КРАЈИНЕ (1788–1791) И РАТНОГ ПЕРИОДА
СРПСКЕ РЕВОЛУЦИЈЕ (1804–1815)**

Апстракт: Нововековна историја моштију и култа Стефана Првовенчаног, посебно с краја 18. и почетка 19. века показује како кризе могу условити и управљати развојем култа и визуелном културом која ове процесе прати. Брижљиво чуване и склањане током ратних дешавања, од Кочине Крајине (1788–1791), па кроз ратни период Српске револуције (1804–1815) мошти Стефана Првовенчаног су делиле худу судбину са народом и војском поставши тако један од важних актера актуелних политичких дешавања. Надограђујући стару црквено-народну традицију новим легендама о Св. Стефану Првовенчаном и његовим моштима за време Првог српског устанка постепено се ствара од првог српског крунисаног краља симбол слободе и обнове српске државности. У то време ће мошти Стефана Првовенчаног попримити статус светитеља заштитника српких устаника и патрона устаничке државе. Његове мошти током ратних криза бивају симбол божје подршке за намере устаника у формирању слободне државе, те њихово измештање са устаничке територије симболички најављује продубљивање кризе – пропаст, док њихово поновно присуство симболише смиривање ситуације и повраћај божанксе благодати над српским народом. Зато је њихова судбина током ратова била од велике иделошке важности за устанике. По коначном ослобођењу од Турака мошти Св. Стефана Првовенчаног постају најзначајнија национална реликвија земље, оставши то кроз читав 19. век.

Кључне речи: криза, мошти, Свети Стефан Првовенчани, Кочина крајина, Српска револуција

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FOLK WORLDVIEW, THEORIES, ART: THE CONCEPT OF *VILA* AS THE CAUSE OF SUFFERING

Abstract: Guided by the idea of saying something about society from the standpoint of art theory, this paper deals with the aesthetics of life in Serbia and what forms its basis. Serbian *folk creations* as written down by Vuk Karadžić were used as sources. The focus is on the *vila* which is the central and supreme concept of the songs. The ways in which the *Vila* is visualized in arts are considered on selected examples from the history of Serbian art of the 19th century. The *vila* was depicted as an iconographic motif in the service of the nation until the appearance of professional art criticism and theory in the early 20th century, which opposed the instrumentalization of art. This development is examined by taking into account two different European views of Serbian mythical understanding of the world, one positive from the early 19th century and one negative from the late 20th century.

Keywords: national art, Serbia, theory of art, iconography

From time to time, art historians wonder – especially in times of crisis (be it an epidemic, pandemic, natural disaster, accidents, or war) – how does their profession benefit society, compared to disciplines dealing with issues of safety, health, nutrition, living space, construction, wealth, production, transport, and other topics of great importance to man. They solve this dilemma mainly by cooperating with professionals from the mentioned fields, offering them the results of their research of the arts. Another option is for art history to use its methods and procedures to study other phenomena. If it aims to study social or public life, art history could approach it as a work of art, and learn something about that which

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shaped it – the community, the society, the nation. It could be said that there is something like the *aesthetics of life*, at least in an environment that has expressions in its language such as “живети леџо” (adv.), or “живот је леџ” (adj.) – to “live beautifully,” or “life is beautiful.” To make such an attempt with regards to Serbian culture, one needs to go back to the early 19th century, the time of Vuk Stefanović Karadžić, who started describing the collective mind of Serbian people at a historical moment when it became aware of its identity and aspired to independence.

Vuk collected and published works of oral folk literature in the Serbian language: short stories (1821), poetry (Vuk 1814, 1815, 1823–24), oral tradition (sayings, riddles, charms, tongue twisters, etc). At the same time, he compiled the dictionary (Vuk, 1818, 1852) and the grammar of the Serbian language (1818; German edition 1824) and also reformed its alphabet. He also wrote the geographical description of Serbia (Vuk, 1827). Vuk's publications as a whole are referred to as *Vuk's Records*. The importance of these records is not only in the language standardization but also in that they reveal the complete spiritual and material culture of the Serbian people of that time. For example, his *Dictionary* is, practically, an encyclopedia that contains not only explanations of words in the linguistic sense, but also the scientific and humanistic sense, encompassing terms from history, theology, beliefs, customs, and various public activities. It is still the subject of study in many scientific disciplines (cf. Belić & Bralić, 2018), including art history (Đorđević, 1976).

Vuk's records were created with the intention of being immediately presented to other European nations, from which came the first incentives and encouragement for that work, as well as help to process the collected material in terms of contemporary science. They were immediately well-received, as an expression of a nation fighting for independence but even more so as a good, fresh, original work and a depiction of the nation's spiritual identity. Serbian folk poetry was translated into German by Therese Albertine Luise von Jakob (Talvj, 1825/26) who continued to renew, supplement and correct her translations in the following decades. Under her influence as a German translator, translations of Serbian folk poetry into English (Bowring, 1827) and French (Voigt, 1834) appeared.

Vuk's endeavor to record the oral tradition of Serbs enabled not only its linguistic study and literary evaluation but also the preservation of its content, in which the very basis of Serbian identity was recorded. Therefore, what Serbian poetry describes, means, and symbolizes immediately became the subject of study and interpretation. One opinion stands out by bringing to the fore an interesting and perhaps essential phenomenon in Serbian folklore. After getting acquainted with Serbian culture through

folk poetry, Goethe remarked in his notes on literature that a being hovered over the Serbs, determining their destiny:

Over everyone, however, there is a kind of unreasonable deity. There is an irresistible Destiny residing in the wilderness, inhabiting mountains and forests, giving prophecies and commanding through sound and voice, called *Wila*, comparable to the owl, but sometimes also appearing in female form, praised in the most beautiful way as a huntress, finally, even valid as the collector of clouds, but generally from times immemorial – like so-called Destiny in general, which one must not question – more damaging than beneficial (Goethe 1825).¹

This interpretation is based on Goethe's interest in the creative forces of the individual and the people as a whole, expressed through ideas of the supernatural. To comprehend the aesthetic category of Genius, a basic concept of Romanticism, he associated it with non-rational, demonic inspiration (Nicholls, 2006). The concept of demon, known from the times of Plato, became a force of darkness in Christianity, but in Antiquity, it was evil as well as a good spirit, a guardian spirit, and Goethe was inclined to this concept of daemon. In this context, Goethe's interpretation is significant, since it refers to the very essence of Serbian identity.

Everything that Goethe saw in folk poetry was also present in other Serbian *mind-creations* preserved in *Vuk's Records*.² They contain – though in a rudimentary form – folk philosophy, science, and creative practice, passed down from generation to generation; *folk beliefs* with their ontology, gnoseology, ethics, and aesthetics; *folk poetry* and *tales* as a form of creation but also as a rich testimony to the national creativity of previous epochs; *folk sayings* analogous to scientific formulations; *folk customs* as a form of practice that regulate social relations, health, farm field jobs, education, and everything else that is of vital importance to the community.

In all these aspects of folk culture, the *vila* (вила in Serbian) is present as the embodiment of principles of reality, the framework for human action, and the rules or ways in which he should behave. It has its own

1 "Über alle jedoch und überall herrscht eine Art von unvernünftiger Gottheit. Durchaus waltet ein unwiderstehlich Schicksalswesen, in der Einöde hausend, Berg und Wälder bewohnend, durch Ton und Stimme Weissagung und Befehl erteilend, *Wila* genannt, der Eule vergleichbar, aber auch manchmal in Frauengestalt erscheinend, als Jägerin höchst schön gepriesen, endlich sogar als Wolkensammlerin geltend, im allgemeinen aber von den ältesten Zeiten her – wie überhaupt alles sogenannte Schicksal, das man nicht zur Rede stellen darf – mehr schadend als wohlthätig." (Goethe 1825: 331)

2 Under the obvious influence of Goethe, Gerhard (1828) translated and published more Serbian popular literature (poems and tales), under the title that contained the word *Wila*.

identity and differs from similar creatures in other cultures, although it certainly has a lot in common with them, as well as a possible common origin. Because of its peculiarities, the term *Wila*, or *Vila*,³ is not the same as *Nixe*, *Nixin*, *Fee*, *Nymphe*, *Bergfee*, *Bergnymphe* (German); nor is it *fairy*, *fay*, *pixie*, *spirit*, *sprite*, *elf*, *nymphe*, *fury*, or *fee* (French) or *undina* (Italian, cf. Šarović 2013). According to Vuk Karadžić (Vuk, 1818, pp. 69–70) this is

Вила, f. die Wile (eine Art Nymphe), *Vila* (nympha). *Vilas* live on large mountains and rocks surrounding water. All *Vilas* are young, beautiful, dressed in a white thin dress, and with long hair that goes down her back and chest. The *Vilas* will do no harm to anyone until someone insults them (by stepping on their wheel, dinner, or other), and when someone insults them, then they punish him in different ways: they shoot him with an arrow, in the leg or arm, in both legs or both hands, or the heart, so the person dies immediately.

A man shot by a *Vila* is called *виленик*:

(...) if she healed him herself by bandaging his wounds with her clothes and if he called her *godsister*; she gives this man herbs, called *вилино сиџио*, so no one can deceive him, or lie to him, and which provides that his wife gives birth to good sons, heroes, and beautiful daughters (Vuk, 1852, p. 62).

According to folk legends, a *vila* is a supernatural being that decides about the future of the newborns, interferes in human life, protects heroes, and gives help to young girls in their love affairs. *Avila* often takes the form of a beautiful girl, but its appearance generally varies, depending on its activities, the place, etc. Therefore, it is possible to make a classification of *vilas* in popular beliefs, even a hierarchy in the world of *vilas* (Đorđević, 1953) that includes the existence of a being considered their male pet, who is mad, furious or possessed.

In the *Serbian Dictionary* (Vuk, 1852), there are several adjectives describing some good traits as transferred from the *vilas*: dance, man, or horse could be *вилени*, *виленски*, *вилован*, *виловит*,⁴ *виловски*, meaning vibrant, vivid, or energetic but possibly in some connection with *vilas*. The dictionary also mentions some uncommon, mystical, or extraordinary places, plant species or beings (often connected with watery or moist places) that got their names after *Vilas*, like whirlpool (*viliman*), the parasitic plant *vila's hair*; *vila's onion*; the magical herb *vila's sieve*,⁵ a mushroom called

3 It is often translated into English as *fairy*, although the translation loses its precision; on the other hand, by translating *fairy* into Serbian as *vila*, Serbian culture loses the clarity of this concept.

4 Serbian poet Branko Radičević (1824–1853) used that word in his well-known poem “Students’ Farewell” (1844; printed in Vienna 1847).

5 *Carlina Acaulis* (cf. Ristić&Kangrga 1928).

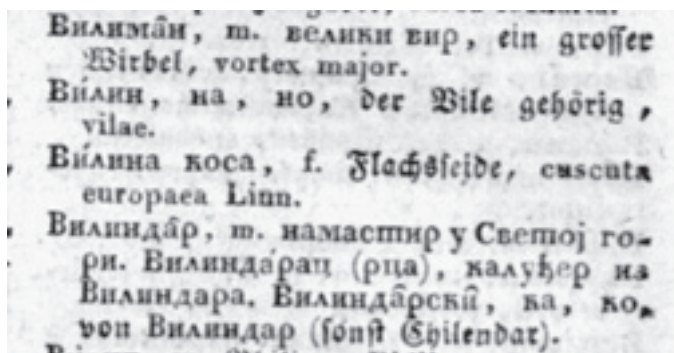


Fig. 1: *Srpski rječnik* (=Serbian Dictionary), 1818, col.70, detail.

vilovnjača; the insect *vila's horse* (dragonfly) and toponyms like *Vilina Vodi-ca* (*vila's water*) or *Vilindar* i.e. the Chilandar monastery (Fig. 1).

According to Serbian folk poetry, *vilas* hinder people in various ways. They set physical borders: by cutting off someone's arm or leg, they charge him for crossing water or some natural boundary; they also defend pristine nature. *Vilas* put limits to human powers: when someone builds, the *Vila* destroys during the night what the builders have made during the day.⁶ The one who sings is in danger. In the poem "Marko and the *Vila*," as Miloš sings, *Vila* sings along, but since he has a better voice than she does – he dies after she shoots an arrow to his throat and another to his heart. (Fig. 2) Or, in the wonderful translation by Therese von Jakob that preserves the meaning of the words as well as the original metrics of the folk poem:

*Da vernimmt's die Wila Rawijojla,
Zweigesang beginnet sie mit Milosch.
Milosch sang, erwidernd sang die Wila,
Schöner sang der kaiserliche Milosch,
Schönre Stimme hatt er als die Wila.
Auf sprang sie im Waldgebirge Mirotsch,
Nahm den Bogen und zwei weiße Pfeile,
Einen schleudert sie in Miloschs Kehle
Und den andern ihm ins Heldenherze.*

Even the sudden departure of an ultimate hero from this world is also connected with *vilas*. In the poem "Death of Kraleovich Marko" (cf. Bow-

6 Што мајстори за дан га саграде / то све вила за ноћ обаљује (Đurić ed. 1958); Was am Tage aufgebaut die Meister / Alles reißet nächtlich ein die Wila. (Talvj 1825); Whatsoe'er at eve had raised the workmen / Did the Vila raze ere down of morning. (Bowring 1827).

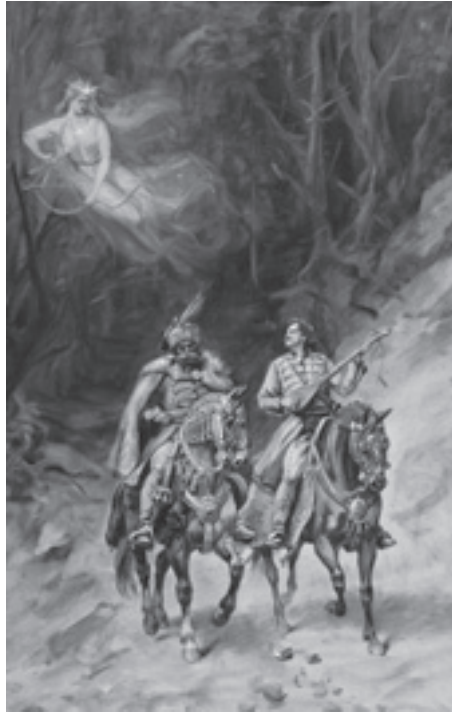


Fig. 2: Paja Jovanović: *Miloš, Marko i Vila*, 1898, tempera on cardboard, 32x53cm

ring, 1927) it is a *vila* that informs Marko that time is up.⁷ Since he does not believe her, she instructs him to the place where he can see his “death-day written on the water.”⁸ Immediately after doing so, he starts to prepare his own funeral. The immortality of any man is made impossible due to *vilas* (Čajkanović, 1973).

Tragedies caused by love – bloody conflicts between brothers over a beautiful girl, ending with murders and suicides, for example – are described in folk poetry as insidious activity of *vilas*, who both tempt young men and punish them for not resisting the temptation. In several folk ballads, after such a tragedy occurs, it turns out that the young beauty who caused the conflict was a *vila*. In some way, she sets the moral boundaries, reminding that goodness is more valuable than beauty (Jeremić, 1989, pp. 125–130).

7 Lo! the Vila from Urvin's mountain / Call'd aloud unto the princely Marko: / “Brother, listen – listen princely Marko / Knowst thou why thy faithful Sharatz stumbled? / Know that he was mourning for his master; / Know that ye ere long must be divided.” (Bowring 1827)

8 As translated by Bowring, 1827.

In everyday life, “*Fair as the mountain Vila*, is the highest compliment to a Servian(!) lady – *Swift as the Vila*, is the most eloquent eulogium on a Servian steed” (Bowring, 1827, p. xxxviii). However, a *vila* envies a beautiful girl and – kills her, as depicted in the folk poem “*Vila and a Girl*.” Therefore, people say that any extremely beautiful girl is susceptible to the envy of *vilas* and being placed under their spell; hence, people try to “spoil such girls, so that they would be less beautiful than *vilas*,” as said by Vuk in a note to the poem “*Wedding of Nesijević Jovo*” (Jeremić, 1989, p. 131). This is the point where even real life was shaped following the will of *vilas*. Now, *that* deserves comment.

Contemporary research confirms that folk poems, despite some variations, have specific *sujet models* (Detelić, 1992, 1996; Delić, 2009); the existence of these models proves the intention of the folk creator(s) and indicates the existence of collective opinion – mythically or psychologically based – expressed through these poems (Ajdačić, 2001). The folk thought contained in these poems expresses a particular worldview, a sum of experiences from real life, and attempts to interpret them. More specifically, certain events depicted in folk poetry can be read from a cognitive, ethical, or aesthetic point of view (such as Jeremić, 1989); of course, ultimately we learn nothing about *vilas*, but about the attitude of a community that uses this concept to explain its reality and to regulate people’s behavior.

The description of *vilas*’ activities is, in folklore, not only connected with the understanding of beauty, but also with the comprehension of the relation between the material and immaterial world. Basically, it is the idea that a material being can in many aspects be more perfect than an ideal being. Viewed from the standpoint of art theory, this attitude – that matter could surpass idealities – has no parallel in Western culture. Material things can be constantly improved, but they will never reach the ideal. According to idealistic theories, art can rise above physical reality by choosing and combining its perfect parts but, being of a material nature, it cannot quite reach the world of ideas (cf. Mengs, 1762). Positivist theories put creativity (cities, the arts, fashion, everyday life) in its social, historical, artistic, or cultural surroundings, expecting it to complement nature (Taine, 1865). Materialist theories consider artifacts in terms of material, purpose, and manufacturing technique, concluding that they have their own development (Semper, 1861). On the other hand, deterministic late idealism sees the material as an obstacle to the realization of the supra-individual *artistic will* (Riegl, 1901). Relativistic theories openly consider artifacts less valuable, since they depend on material, function, and construction (Janson, 1962). None of them see any possibility of mixing matter and idea, transition or conversion of matter into an idea. Of course,

this could be a problem of their conceptual system, which initially divides the world into matter and ideas. In Serbian folk *mind-creations*, however, it is possible to achieve an ideal (in any field of life) but since this causes a reaction and danger, it is necessary to either *give up* in time, or to be *courageous and aggressive* enough to realize it, or – as we say today: to become one of *them* (Čajkanović, 1973, concluded of kinship ties between *vilas* and several Serbian heroes). But, what happens when the ideal is reached? We see that in the poem “The Hero Shot the *Vila*”: she offered him heroic happiness, money, and a wife “more beautiful than a *vila*,” but since he already has it all, the hero did as stated in the title.

As arts actively participated in the construction of national identity (cf. Makuljević, 2006) it received this mythical air and understanding of reality through the process of visualizing the *vila*. There are at least two different approaches to this process – in one, the *vila* is shown as a participant of a scene taken from some of the folk *mind-creations* (mostly folk poetry) and in the other, *vila* is used in the formation of the visual language of “national icons,” based on national iconography and folk aesthetics.

An example of the first process can be seen in Paja Jovanović’s paintings. In the sketch *Miloš, Marko and the Vila* (1898), he illustrates the folk poem “Marko Kraljević and the *Vila*” showing the moment when an angry *vila* named Ravioila is preparing to shoot Miloš who is singing: she is hovering over two heroes, she has a bow and (just one?) arrow in her hands, she is frowning, her gaze is angry, the threat is obvious. Miloš is in a subordinate position and looks up towards the *vila*, while Marko does not notice anything. It is a recognizable scene that immediately calls to mind the songs it is from.

An example of the construction of a visual language can be seen in the national “icon” (i.e. the image of the national hero), the poet Branko Radičević. The cultural and historical context of the creation of his visual representation in 1878 and factography are well known (Trajkov, 2011), but attention should also be paid to the presence of the *vila* and folk aesthetics in this painting (Fig. 3). The poet is depicted in a civilian suit of the time. But the painter put *gusle* into his hands, a national musical instrument used to accompany the singing of Serbian epic folk poems, in order to show the national character of his poetry, as well as its continuity with the old times. Branko’s gaze is raised to the *vila* on the left side of the painting. She is above the poet in every sense, and this is shown in several ways: physically, she is standing above him, looking down at him or looking above him; while holding a wreath above the poet’s head, she



Fig. 3: Mauković, *Branko i Vila*, illustration, *Srpska zora*, 2, Vienna 1879, p. 22.

is condescendingly approving what he is doing. The wreath in *vila*'s hand reminds of the verses from *The Mountain Wreath* by Njegoš (1847).⁹ The poet's gaze confirms his awareness of the *vila*'s presence and her significance; he is aware of his own position. From the point of view of visual perception (cf. Arnheim, 2004), it is interesting that the composition conveys declining energy, which affects how the observer will experience the scene: Branko's poem does not rise to higher spheres, but slows down or stops by colliding with the descending line, which goes from the upper left to the lower right of the image. At this point, we are witnessing not only the shaping of the iconographic motif of the *vila*, but also the visual expression of folk aesthetics.

9 "Viles will vie for many centuries / to weave you wreaths and garlands worthy of you" *The Mountain Wreath*, 1847, verses 2337–2338. (In some English translations, the word *vile* is wrongly confused with *muses*.) The same verses were used in Serbian by art historian Gabriel Millet, dedicating his book to the Serbian people after the First World War: "Vile će [se] grabiti u vjekove / da vam vjence dostojne sapletu." (Millet 1919: 5)



Fig. 4: *Bosanska Vila* (=Bosnian Vila), 1885, cover page logo.

The shaping of the iconographic solution can be observed through the development of the logo of *Bosanska vila*, a magazine for entertainment, education, and literature, launched in Sarajevo at the end of 1885.¹⁰ In its first version, a young *vila* is hovering above the city, covering it protectively, and holding a torch in her hand; from 1890 she is shown as a more loosely dressed girl holding the *gusle* instrument, and from 1895 it is a winged *vila* with an old *guslar* (the player of *gusle*) sitting under her feet, who also became an iconographic motif of national art. (Fig. 4)

The iconographic motif of the *vila* also appears in some public monuments and tombstones, for example, those by the sculptor Đorđe Jovanović. In his work, *vila* became an element of national iconography as did the *guslar* (Anić, 1991, p. 43).

At first, Jovanović's relief named *Branko and the Vila* (Anić, 1991, p.36, ill. 152), created in Paris in 1893, shows an unusual solution: The *vila* is the one looking up towards Branko's bust, while he is looking over her head. But in his *Monument to the Heroes of the Kosovo Battle 1389* (Kruševac 1904) the central group, at the very top of the monument, represents Boško Jugović and *Vila*, who is holding the Serbian flag while the wounded Jugović is stumbling; in her other hand, the *vila* is holding a wreath of leaves above his head (Anić, 1991, p. 27, il. 5; Jovanović, 2007, p. 11). (Fig. 5) At the bottom of the monument, a *gusle* player represents

10 Before that, the weekly *Vila*, a magazine for entertainment, literature and science, was published in Belgrade from 1865 to 1868, but without an illustration in the logo.



Fig. 4: Đorđe Jovanović: *Monument to the Heros from Kosovo*, Kruševac, 1904, detail.

national tradition and a female figure, the personification of *Serbia*, is wearing a wreath of leaves on her head and holding a sword. The *vila* was probably also present in the model of *Janko Veselinović's tombstone* (modeled in 1906) as a female with her hair falling on her shoulders and representing his poem "The Field Flowers" (Anon., 1906, p. 192). However, the *Živojin Mišić's tombstone* (1921) contains a female figure in the form of a *vila*, which probably represents *Serbia*, placed below the soldier's bust and glorifying him (cf. Anić, 1991, il. 18).

Both approaches – illustrating folk philosophy, and creating an iconographic motif – preserved and transmitted the same message about the relationship between the material world and the world of ideas. The reaction to this tradition appeared suddenly in Serbian art theory and criticism at the beginning of the 20th century, following the question: What do we intend to bring to Europe – the stylized *vila Ravioila* in folks sandals¹¹? (Crnjanski, 1919) From the cultural context, it can be concluded

11 In fact, less than one hundred years later, it happened, in the fashion industry.

that this was a resistance to the aesthetics hidden under the representation of the *vila*, and not just a request for iconographic change. In this sense, one can understand the statements that Serbian folk poetry stood *above* art and that in time, artists would come whose works would *surpass* the beauty of folk poetry (Nikolajević, 1915). All this was part of a national discussion among critics and theorists about what is or should be Serbian national art (therefore, a part of national identity) in the early 20th century. This discussion produced at least two big issues. The first one was: what happens when cultures meet – is it possible to preserve tradition (and identity) when entering Europe; or does connecting with Europe inevitably lead to the loss of national identity. The other was: how should we react in this regard – should we give up on tradition to enter the European cultural circle; or should we stay away from Europe to save the nation (cf. Protić, 1981, pp. 23–111).

The modernist critique of national art of that time was directed against its notion that art is a visualization of ideology and simultaneously against its provincialism, lack of artistic ambition and courage, or other forms of escaping from freedom. This reaction to (late) Romanticism was a critique of some bad habits that had become part of the tradition, and at the same time tended towards universalism and internationalism. (But moderns also revealed their ignorance of the principles of communication with Europe set by Vuk Karadžić.)

What can be noticed in connection with *folk aesthetics*, is that it remained present throughout the whole 20th century. Looking back, it is said that during the 20th century the world's leading artists, like Picasso or Matisse, were always appreciated in Serbia, but they “did not become an incentive” and that from the beginning of the century there has been (social and economic) underdevelopment and, accordingly, the “fatality of determinism” with the tendency for art to be a “visual translation” of ideological, political or ethical, private, social or state goals; that Serbian artists adhere to Serbian, Belgrade, and patriarchal frameworks, because Europeanism makes the artist “lonely, almost exiled”; that Serbian artists rarely go beyond the existing framework to get in dialogue with the world and rather choose to modestly follow other people's achievements (Protić, 1993) – one could say: escaping from freedom. Despite a certain optimism expressed about Serbs in European civilization, this statement was published the same year and the same decade that indicated that *vila-aesthetics* still shaped social life: the notorious *nineties*.

The beauty of material things, the prosperity of individuals, the progress of the whole society, etc., have – in the mythical mind – one highest or ultimate end beyond which one cannot go without causing some in-

evitable disaster or at least some unfortunate event. This is like a “ceiling,” which puts a limit to any kind of activity and is not to be broken through. Therefore, the development of the Serbian society oscillated between disaster and a modest level of advance. When the way of life “threatens” to be “too good,” the self-restraining mechanism of people reacts. If one can make some practical conclusion out of this experience, it would be that: 1) any crisis will get worse when it seems to be nearing its end; 2) problems will occur, or should be expected, or will be *produced*, when it seems that the period of prosperity is arriving.

Or, as the course of history has eventually transposed Goethe’s words into the concepts of a German 20th-century journalist:

(...) on the one hand, assertiveness and sacrifice, on the other self-centeredness, self-pity, and ruthlessness. A people with a history that has always been present as a myth, but brings in itself the danger of irrational political acting. A people full of internal tensions between an open-minded European mindset and a Balkan blood-and-soil provincialism (Libal, 1996, p. 15).¹²

In times to come, Serbs will overcome such a rigid, self-restraining, and sometimes even self-destructive comprehension of reality and life but, as it is shown here, this issue is in the domain of culture. Since this rigid comprehension has its socio-historical origins, as well as roots in characterology, it will take time to overcome it. Finally, the question of the content of national art and its relation to myths remains.¹³

This is, in short, how art history and theory could comment on society.

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- 12 (...) auf der einen Seite Durchsetzungskraft und Opferbereitschaft, auf der anderen Selbstbezogenheit, Selbstmitleid und Rücksichtslosigkeit. Ein Volk mit einer Geschichte, die als Mythos immer präsent ist, aber die Gefahr irrationalen politischen Handelns in sich birgt. Ein Volk voller interner Spannungen zwischen europäisch-aufgeschlossener Geisteshaltung und einem balkanischen Blut-und-Boden-Provinzialismus.
- 13 As for the motif of the *vila* in the visual culture, by the beginning of the 20th century, it was transformed into a tourist advertisement for Villa(sic!) Raviolja somewhere in the mountains of Serbia.

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НАРОДНИ ПОГЛЕД НА СВЕТ, ЕСТЕТИКА, УМЕТНОСТ: ПРЕДСТАВЕ О ВИЛИ КАО ИЗВОРУ СВИХ КРИЗА

Апстракт: Упознавши српску културу посредством народне поезије, Гете је почетком 19. века приметио да над Србима лебди вила, као биће које одређује њихову судбину. Из народне поезије и других умотворина види се да народ сматра да је вила та која отежава, ограничава или тешко кажњава слободу кретања, испољавање емоција, разне облике креативности (укључујући изградњу, певање) па и сам добар изглед; отуда и одређени модели рестриктивног понашања у свакодневном животу. У основи је идеја да материјално биће, човек, може бити савршенији од виле као нематеријалног бића идеалних особина, али да се тиме изазива њен бес и освета који стварају страх од слободе.

Гледано са становишта теорије, овакав став нема паралеле у западној култури: материјална дела могу стално бити побољшавана али никада неће достићи идеал.

Овај митски дух народних умотворина пренет је, током процеса визуелизовања виле, у ликовну уметност, која је тиме активно учествовала у очувању националног идентитета. Постоје бар два различита приступа том визуелизовању током 19. века, један је илустровање народних умотворина (углавном народне поезије), други је формирање визуелног језика “националне иконографије”.

Почетком 20. века, модернистичка критика националне уметности усмерена је против схватања да је уметност визуелизација идеологије, наступајући против провинцијализма, недостатка уметничке амбиције и храбрости или других облика бекства од слободе и отварајући расправу о националној уметности. Иако постепено напушта уметност, митско поимање стварности остаје присутно у свакодневном животу.

До краја 20. века, Европа је изгубила благонаклоност према национално романтичарској “вилиној естетици” те је препознала практично исте моделе понашања као и Гете, али их је приписала, не вилама, него онима који се држе митске слике стварности.

Кључне речи: национална уметност, Србија, теорија уметности, иконографија

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ORIENTALISM, NATIONALISM, AND THE BALKANS: THE IMAGE OF THE MONTENEGRIN WOMAN

Abstract: Montenegro was one of the Balkan regions that attracted foreign travel writers during the 19th century, as well as artists who created many visual images of Montenegrins. Within this production, images of Montenegrin women made a significant part, mainly represented in terms of idealized female beauty, traditionalism, and especially of combativeness, but also as victims of wartime events. Mostly inspired by support to the Balkan Christians and their struggle, these images of Montenegrin women functioned as a part of the broader notions about the Balkans as the European “otherness.” Simultaneously, the very same images of Montenegrin women circulated within the Serbian public with altered meaning, becoming incorporated into the discourse of nationalism and female patriotism.

Keywords: Montenegro, the Balkans, image of woman, orientalism, nationalism

The discourse on the Balkans as the European otherness has been extensively explored in studies that mainly considered written material and textual representations. The range of offered ideas about the representation of the Balkans has been expanded by studies of visual images, viewed as active producers of discourse. The visual imagery of the Balkans is reconsidered through notions that constructed it as cultural otherness, associated with the primitive, violent, and uncivilized, employing essentialist logic which perceived the Balkans as backward. Despite the discussion that the term Orientalism is not entirely relevant to such representations of the Balkans (Todorova, 2006, pp. 5–36, 47–76), it can still be argued that they are mainly based on the rhetoric of Orientalization. Particularly

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in the 19th century when the Balkans were marked by Ottoman rule and the wars against it, visual images of the Balkans were highly charged with Orientalizing notions. However, this understanding of Balkan images can also be expanded, taking into account that many of them had cultural influence within societies at the Balkans. A number of the images created primarily for the Western market were met with positive reception among the local public, where they circulated transposed into the prism of national self-images (Makuljević, 2015). With this in mind, one can examine the adaptability of images to different discourses, such as Orientalism and nationalism, as well as the conditions that brought about their multiple meanings.

In visual representations of the Balkans, a paradigmatic example is related to Montenegro. The growing Western interest in the Balkans in the 19th century included Montenegro, which became one of the places attractive to travelers and explorers who left numerous written records (Marjanović, 2007; Šistek, 2009; Preston, 2009; Krivokapić & Diamond 2017, pp. 14–58). How Western visitors perceived Montenegro is inextricable from the perception of the Balkans as a whole, replete with generalizations and essentialism. Along these lines, Montenegro was mainly regarded as an inaccessible area, wild, cruel, with mountain people depicted with a combination of attributes like “primitive” and “traditional.” Through written accounts, several key elements emerge, mostly in the repeated characterization of Montenegrins as a tribe of rough highlanders, warrior-spirited and extremely traditional, whose heroic allure is emphasized by the fact that they never surrendered to the Ottomans.

A special place in literary narratives on Montenegro was given to the descriptions of womenfolk (Nelević, 2011), ranging from their physical appearance to their way of life within the strict patriarchal hierarchy, which was often commented as extremely harsh for a woman or sometimes affirmatively with regards to its “traditional” value which is increasingly being lost in modern societies. It was precisely the woman of Montenegro who became an almost dominant motif in numerous visual representations of this region. The Montenegrin woman was often the main and only protagonist in the works of foreign artists, put on display for the visual pleasure of a potential observer as the representative of an exotic and strange world. At the same time, in Serbian culture, the woman of Montenegro occupied an important symbolic place in the emerging national ideology, as the synonym for ideal female patriotism. In such an ideological framework, images of Montenegrin women by foreign artists were very well accepted and popularized, as representations that suited the ideas on gender roles and nation-building. In that sense, these gen-

dered images are postulated as one of the examples for questioning the intersection of Orientalism and nationalism, considering the social settings that impose the contexts of images as well as their cultural relevance.

The Montenegrin Beauties of Čermák

Among the artists who dealt with Montenegro, the Czech painter Jaroslav Čermák stands out. Bound mostly to Paris by his career, Čermák rose to considerable fame in Europe precisely for his depiction of scenes from Montenegro and Herzegovina, which he had visited on several occasions (Macan, 1961; Šistek, 2009, pp. 43–58). The first encounter is connected to his 1858 voyage to Dalmatia, from where he brought a myriad of props in the form of traditional garments and weapons, which he subsequently used in his works. Then, in 1862, Čermák took up residence in the vicinity of Dubrovnik for three years, from where he embarked on tours of nearby regions, creating paintings inspired by these parts. In Montenegro, the artist's visit left its mark in the form of several portraits he had created there, among which are portraits of the members of the Prince's family. One of the curiosities from this period is that Čermák was awarded by Montenegrin Prince Nikola I Petrović, probably because he had taken part in one of the battles Montenegrins fought against the Turks.

The motifs from these parts of the Balkans would become central to Čermák's oeuvre. Slavophil ideas and the support to Balkan Christians sparked Čermák's interest and led him to the thematization of Montenegro. His oeuvre was thus mostly interpreted along romanticist and patriotic lines, especially concerning the then-dominant Czech Slavophil discourse in which Montenegro represented the embodiment of the ideals of Slavism and the fight for freedom (Šistek, 2009, pp. 43–45). However, it seems that Čermák's work carries more complex layers of meaning and it warrants further consideration of its visual vocabulary, especially in line with the Western projections about the Balkans.

Depictions of women were the ones that occupied the central place in Čermák's visual representation of Montenegro. As the protagonists of most paintings, women are the key feature of Čermák's imagery of this world, which he thematically varied in several variants. One of the versions was portraits of an idealized young woman, a selected model, which was – with minor variations – repeated several times throughout the series of paintings. One of the main features of Čermák's female portraits was the typification of a character with black hair and dark eyes – as one critic stated, he was indeed designated as “the painter of the Montene-



Fig. 1: Jaroslav Čermák,
Černohorská krásky (*Montenegrin Beauty*),
1860–65.



Fig. 2: Jaroslav Čermák, *Černohorská madona / Černohorka s dítětem*
(*Montenegrin Madonna / Montenegrin Woman with Child*), 1865.

grins with rough mustaches and beautiful girls with hair as black as crow's wing" (Claretie, 1876, p. 149). What complemented this almost emblematic character of a Montenegrin woman were folk costumes and heavy jewelry, as a point of reference that ethnographically specifies the origin of the anonymous woman portrayed. In that, the painter freely used various materials, as in other compositions where he brings a mix of Montenegrin and Herzegovinian attires, aiming for the reality-effect in the final result. Incidentally, it is often the case that Čermák's paintings in their later life frequently varied in terms of names where both variants – the Montenegrin or the Herzegovinian – are simultaneously present, following the common practice of not differentiating much between these close and connected areas.

A similarly conceived female character also appears in Čermák's idyllic depictions of the mother with child. As an everyday scene, it has been repeated in many works, where Čermák varied similar female figures, giving them a very characteristic Madonna-like undertone (Šistek, 2009, p. 48). Such a feature is especially noticeable in scenes of the mother with her child where an animal is introduced as well, which not only invokes



Fig. 3: Jaroslav Čermák, *Hercegovka napájící koně* (*Herzegovian girl waters the horses*), 1873.

the idyllic moment of connection with nature but also refers to the iconography of scenes such as *Madonna of the Sparrow* or *Madonna with the Lamb*. The motif of female beauty in dream-like scenery Čermák also promoted in paintings such as *Herzegovinian Girl Waters the Horses*, which had no relation to the reality of these parts. The scene is constructed almost like a mythological vision of an indigenous maiden as the ultimate creation of the artist's imagination, in a fusion of the symbols of virgin wilderness and natural purity epitomized in the white horse.

For the European audience and in Paris Salons, Čermák's Montenegrin women fitted greatly into the corpus of Orientalist painting, which was then at the height of its popularity. They projected ideas typical for the discourse of 19th-century Orientalist art and Orientalized representations of "non-Western" women (Nochlin, 1983; Thornton, 1994; Lewis, 1996; DelPlato, 2002). Čermák's creations are dominated by women of Montenegro transposed into the idyllic realm of an imaginary world, a world of which these women became the only visual signifiers. The repeated idealized figure of a young woman, with a typified physiognomy and attractive features, in rich and extravagant garments of a mixed or invented origin, was not a mere idealized image of some "folk-type". It comprised the terms of female beauty, desirability, and exoticism, becoming a visual representation of a world which was a primitive, dangerous, and exotic destination to the Western public – comments such as "superb and barbarian countries" and "the country with rough customs, with martial traits" are just a few examples that appeared as an explanation of the homeland of Čermák's Montenegrin women (Proth, 1878, p. 173; de Ber-



Fig. 4: Jaroslav Čermák, *Razzia de bachi-bouzouchs dans un village chrétien de l'Herzégovine* (Abduction by Bashi-bazouks in a Christian Village in Herzegovina), 1861.

nard, 1860, p. 185). The imagination of these “non-Western” women was additionally ensured by keeping women exclusively in the role of a virgin or young mother almost as a rule, without the presence of a man or being in a more complex social relationship. In addition, the Montenegrin beauties depicted with accentuated traditionalism could as well bear meanings associated with female virtue and morality, “purity” untouched by the dangers of modernity, which, all together, ensured the exoticization of this feminine imagery and its commercial success.

Čermák achieved considerable exhibition success also with paintings such as *Abduction by Bashi-bazouks in a Christian Village in Herzegovina* or *Spoils of War (Herzegovina, 1862)*, which even more explicitly bear the features of the Orientalizing views. Thematizing wartime events, Čermák in both works used typical Orientalist motif, focused on the abduction of women for harems and sexualized female victims. This motif marked the visual representation of the Balkans in general – from the 1821 uprising in Greece and the subsequent war events in the Balkans, numerous works were focused on the woman as the symbolic marker of suffering and martyrdom, eroticized and sexualized in many respects, simultaneously projecting the image of Turks as barbarians “of uncontrolled passions”



Fig. 5: Jaroslav Čermák, *Jeunes Herzégoviniennes capturées par les Bachi-bouzuks* (Young Herzegovinian Captives by Bashibazouks), 1877.

(Athanassoglou-Kallmyer, 1989; Schick, 2007). Čermák repeated the topic of women's abduction in a series of works (Ćirović, 2015, pp. 178–181), among which one scene, *Montenegrin Woman in a Harem*, was created as a kind of an epilogue to the abduction narrative. Using the popular Orientalist theme, Čermák depicted the harem as a luxury place filled with women sex slaves in idleness, which repeated stereotypical projections of the harem in the Western imagination. In the harem scenery, the abduct-



Fig. 6: Jaroslav Čermák, *Černohorky v harému* (Montenegrin woman in a harem), 1877.

ed woman in Montenegrin costume was represented as an isolated figure, in contrast to the other slaves amusing themselves. Her figure, brimming with morality and chastity, fully clothed unlike others, provided the space for empathy with the sad fate of the captive woman, simultaneously enabling safe pleasure in gazing at the imagined and forbidden harem world.

The Montenegrin Women Warriors

One of the frequently occurring themes in narratives about the people of Montenegro was the impression of a rigid patriarchal system. In many of the 19th-century travelogues, commentaries were repeatedly made on the social setting in which women were not only subordinate to men but also in charge of most of the hard physical labor, while men were dedicated only to the roles of warriors. On the other hand, what especially stood out in written accounts was the uncommon bravery of Montenegrin women and their participation in warfare. Pavel Rovinsky (1897) recorded that women “constantly followed the army, bringing their husbands, fathers, and brothers ammunition and food, and simultaneously carrying away the wounded from the battlefield and tending to the injured” (p. 235), evidencing that many of these women were wounded and killed on the very same battlefield. William Denton (1877) repeats similar remarks, noting the heroism of the Montenegrin woman immortalized in national poems, as the one “who has not only hurried to and fro with food for her husband engaged in the thick of the fight, but has stood by his side through the long day of conflict, has loaded his rifle, has borne his banner in the field, and has even aided him, with a sword in hand, in defending their common country” (p. 86). In her travel accounts of Montenegro, Winifred Gordon (1918) brings almost identical descriptions:

In war it is the women who are the transport of the army. It is these splendid wives and mothers, who trudge for days on foot behind the soldiers, laden with provisions and ammunition, right into the firing-line, where they are often killed or wounded. A well-known Montenegrin, Dr. Grgic, told me that, during the fighting this winter, the women would walk a three days' tramp, bringing food to their men; see them a brief hour and trudge back again, repeating this all the time during every kind of winter weather. And their loads often weighed 40 lbs.! Brave, enduring and helpful as the Spartan mothers of old (...) (p. 281).

Alongside descriptions of participation in wars, women's behavior was often portrayed as the warrior valor expressed in motherhood and raising sons as fearless warriors, as well as in denial of fear and emotions on the occasions of seeing men off to war. Such a form of female militancy



Fig. 7: Vasily Dmitrievich Polenov, *The Herzegovinian on lookout*, 1876.



Fig. 8: Vlaho Bukovac, *Episode de la guerre du Monténégro (An Episode from the Montenegrin War)*, 1878.

should be seen in the light of the general narrative about Montenegrins, where prevails the image of Montenegrins as a “tribe of highlanders” that resisted the Ottoman enemies owing to the belligerence of its spirit, while their social setting was very rough and patriarchal. In such a framework, the role of women in Montenegro was not extraordinary as it reproduced the same social values. Although their militancy transcended gender norms and seemed like a certain intrusion into the masculine zone of war, it nonetheless did not presuppose independent fighting. Female combativeness was solely at the service of support to the male action and thus stayed in the zone of patriarchal hierarchy. As such, the militancy of Montenegrin women could suit and be negotiated both in visual works and literary ones, as a personification of the Spartan spirit, i.e. female courage that defies setbacks.

Belligerence as the dominant motif in the narratives on women of Montenegro found its place in the visual images, where it negotiated with femininity in a specific way. Its explicit thematization can be seen in several paintings, where the key feature is a warrior-like female figure with arms in her hands. *An Episode from the Montenegrin War* is the title of a painting by Vlaho Bukovac, with which the Croatian artist debuted at the

Paris Salon in 1878 (Kružić Uchytil, 2005, pp. 22–23). The visual thematization of the war was done by Bukovac with a picture of a young woman in a rocky setting, resolutely holding the knife in hand. A similar scene is made by Russian artist Vasily Dmitrievich Polenov. During his stay in Paris in 1876, Polenov painted *The Herzegovinian on the Lookout*, a female figure in a rocky landscape, with a pistol in her hand and saber in her belt (Kopšicer, 2010, p. 152). The same female model and similar costume can be found in his previously made portrait *The Montenegrin Girl*. Both paintings were exhibited in the 1876 Academy of Arts Exhibition in St Petersburg, perceived as portraits of “two Montenegrin” as we can see from the notes on the exhibition made by the editor Fedor Chizhov (Saharova, 1964, p. 210).

The paintings by Bukovac and Polenov can be taken as examples that bear a complex set of meanings, entwining the notions of femininity, militancy, and wartime dangers. The depiction of a female warrior is generally a representation of challenging meanings, where the mixing of femininity and belligerence brings a problematizing aspect by coupling terms that are utterly contradictory according to gender conventions (Nochlin, 1999, pp. 35–57). However, the paintings by Polenov and Bukovac are in fact creations that effectively resolved the problem of the warrior woman by reducing their threatening potential. Although both female figures bear arms like warriors, the weapons in their hands are the only combat attribute of the portrayed women. The whole attitude and appearance of the figures lack the self-esteem of a strong warrior, while the emphasis is placed on idealized beauty and femininity. A dose of decisiveness is hinted in their slightly frowning faces, but pointing more to a state of endangerment and being forced to defend than to combative aggressiveness. Both armed women are visualized as ambivalence between warrior defense and vulnerability, presented in a form that did not provoke the expected norms of femininity, nor did it intrude into the masculine zone of warriorhood. Both of these Balkan female warriors are confined to conventional femininity which legitimized the narrativization of the armed woman. In the end, they are not the embodiment of a violent attribute, but an image emotionally charged by warnings about the threat from the aggressor whose presence is only suggested. As a representation of the wars in the Balkans, they provided the audience with secured space both for empathizing and enjoying the appearances of attractive armed women in exotic costumes, endangered and without the male savior.

The Montenegrin woman with a saber was also a theme in the work of the Czech artist Josef Huttary, but in a considerably more explicit version of a warrior. As a student of Jaroslav Čermák, Huttary also found his inspiration in the people of Montenegro, which he even toured with



Fig. 9: Josef Huttary, *Černohorská Judyta* (*Montenegrin Judith*), 1886.



Fig. 10: Théodore Valerio, *The Warrior mother*, 1850s

Čermák in 1862 (Šistek, 2009, pp. 46, 57). His depiction entitled *Montenegrin Judith* was published in 1886 in the Czech magazine *Zlatá Praha*, as a picture paired with the eponymous poem by Eliška Krásnohorská (1886), a woman author from the Czech circle of writers interested in Montenegro. Accompanied thematically by verses from the poem, Huttary's depiction brings a figure of a Montenegrin woman holding a saber and a severed head of her Turkish enemy. Along with the title, the whole composition refers undoubtedly to the iconography of Judith with Holofernes' head, a popular art theme suitable for a conceptual parallel. The meanings of Judith in art as the *exemplum* of heroism, fight against tyranny, female virtue that defies the male lust, provided a basis for the visualization of the heroine of the contemporary age (Renate, 2001). Huttary thus offered his variant of the Montenegrin woman as an active soldier, capable of murder, lending it symbolic and heroic legitimacy for the act of cruel revenge through reference to Judith.

In the corpus of images of Montenegrin female warriors, several of them coupled this theme with motherhood and child protection. Among numerous depictions from his 1850s voyage around Montenegro, French artist Théodore Valerio also created a scene with a woman who equipped with arms fulfills her guard duty by a cradle. The scene in fact referred to



Fig. 11: Richard Linderum,
Die Wacht der Montenegrinerin
(*Montenegrin woman on watch*), 1886.



Fig. 12: Jaroslav Čermák,
Femme monténégrine
(*Montenegrin woman*), 1860.

a custom in Montenegro that required men to leave their weapons with one of the older women before entering a church, as explained in Charles Yriarte's (1878, p. 443) travelogue in which Valerio's prints served as illustrations. Valerio also created this scene as an oil on canvas, where he emphasized the central motif of the monumentalized figure of the mother with weapons, after which this painting is currently named *The Warrior Mother*.¹⁶ A similar subject of an armed young mother also appears in the work by German artist Richard Linderum. Entitled *Montenegrin Woman on Watch*, his picture was published 1886 in the Leipzig magazine *Die Gartenlaube*. In addition, it was accompanied by the dedicated poem by Frida Schanz (1886), which significantly determined the whole reception of the image. The verses emphasize the suffering of the woman who in solitude and on the verge of losing courage invokes her absent husband. This provided the picture with a justification for the female arming, introducing the notion of the absent male protector and the loneliness of a woman jeopardized by a dangerous enemy. The same notion can also be found in the perception of one of Jaroslav Čermák's Montenegrin mothers.

16 Valerio's painting under title *The Warrior Mother* appeared at the Bonhams' London auction in 2006: <https://www.bonhams.com/auctions/14216/lot/102/> (accessed 5 March 2021).

The picture reproduced in 1860 in *Le monde illustré*, brought a portrayal of a mother and a sleeping child, next to whom are the weapons hung on the wall suggesting the war setting. The caption accompanying the picture in the newsmagazine offered a clarification of this scene with the “gracious” and “melancholy” young Montenegrin woman – that she had been depicted in the moment of contemplating about her absent husband and the dangers that await (de Bernard, 1860).

The Montenegrin Heroines and Nation

Many of the images of Montenegrin women for the European audience were also known to the Serbian public, mostly through reproductions in national magazines. Here they were received in a considerably different cultural context. In line with the idea of Montenegrins as part of the Serbian people, these images gained a new layer of meaning, congruent to national self-images. From the second half of the 19th century, the narrative about the Montenegrin woman gathered momentum in the patriotic-national discourse, in which she became the symbolical embodiment of female patriotism. In Montenegro itself, the idealization of women in national discourse can be traced in literary works, in which women’s bravery and combat support were celebrated. An example of such national heroizing of women can be found in the first literary magazine of Montenegro, entitled *Crnogorka* (*The Montenegrin Woman*), whose printing began in 1871 with the hymn dedicated to the Montenegrin woman on its cover. In his poem *Poputnica “Crnogorki”* (*Marching-Hymn to “Montenegrin woman”*) the founder of the publication Jovan Sundečić immortalized the Spartan character of the Montenegrin woman, depicting her as the one who has mastery of the knife and loads soldiers’ rifles, summing her role with the words – “both a homemaker at her home and a heroine in times of trouble” (Sundečić, 1871). In the same magazine, Sundečić also published the prose piece *Crnogorke junakinje* (*Montenegrin Heroines*), bringing stories about individual heroines who had distinguished themselves in warfare against the Turks (Nikčević, 2010, p. 347). The motif of women in war also found its place in the oeuvre of Montenegrin Prince Nikola I Petrović. His play *Balkanska carica* (*The Balkan Czarina*) begins with a poem dedicated to Montenegrin women. Verses of the poem immortalize their patriotic merits and glorify the unselfish help and self-sacrifice of Montenegrin women in battles (Petrović, 1886, pp. 1–6).

The same image of female war heroism is also outlined in the works by Serbian writers about life in Montenegro, such as Milorad Medaković (1860), Arsa Pajević (1891), or Ljubomir Nenadović (1889). Their writings

included descriptions of Montenegrin women, which mostly praised their patriotism and courage, devotion to their homes and homeland, mainly seen in the light of selfless support to their men in combat. Arsa Pajević (1891) sums his testimonies about wartime female support, stating about the Montenegrin woman character: “The Montenegrin woman wages war like a man, ready to cut off Turkish heads, she can endure anything a hero can, even things some men are not capable of” (pp. 448–449). There is also a comment in Medaković’s (1860) notes about the motherhood of Montenegrin women, highlighted in the patriotic desire to raise a son to be a hero:

Lulling him, she sings to him heroic songs, she nurses him with heroic milk, she fills his heart with what encourages his heroic force; she teaches him how to tie weapons around the waist, how to aim at his oppressors, how to avenge his father and brother and seek vengeance for his old folk... (pp. 19–20).

Envisioned in terms of female militancy, but that which only serves as a supplement to male warriorhood, the image of the Montenegrin woman had the capacity to be established as the ideal of female heroism through patriotic poetry and prose works. In visual arts, the Montenegrin woman was also represented in the terms of combative patriotism, like in the works of Serbian painters Đura Jakšić and Đorđe Krstić, especially in times of war against the Ottomans (Makuljević, 2006, p. 119; Ćirović, 2015, p. 176). In this symbiosis of patriotism and womanhood, the pictures of Montenegrin women by foreign artists were also popularized in the Serbian press, appropriated into the national discourse of female sacrifice. The most favored were works by Jaroslav Čermák, celebrated as a painter of national importance, next to which were works by other artists. The pictures published in the periodicals were frequently accompanied by texts that gave them the desired meaning and nationalized context. For instance, a series of portrayals of Montenegrin life by Théodore Valerio was published in 1880 in the yearbook *Orao: veliki ilustrovani kalendar* (*Eagle: The Great Illustrated Calendar*), where they also served as suitable illustrations next to Arsa Pajević’s (1880) article about Montenegrin women. Next year, the same yearbook published pictures of Montenegrin women by Jaroslav Čermák and Théodore Valerio, accompanied with a textual note on Montenegro as the “nest of heroes” (*Orao*, 1881, pp. 127–128), as well as the patriotic short story *Majka Crnogorka* (*The Montenegrin Mother*) by Tomo Krstov Popović (1881).

Some images in Serbian periodicals were followed by literary descriptions oriented solely to female heroism and patriotism, unlike those from foreign newspapers. This was the case with the above-mentioned picture



Fig. 13: Jaroslav Čermák, *Crnogorka na straži* (Montenegrin woman on watch), 1874.

by Richard Linderum *A Montenegrin Woman on Watch* which also appeared in 1887 in the Serbian magazine *Nemanja*. Unlike the poem in the German newspaper which associated the same picture with the narrative of female victimhood and solitude, here it was accompanied by an article that celebrated the patriotic motherhood of Montenegrin women. The caption explained the picture with a story about a mother who puts her son to sleep with poems about Montenegrin heroism. She is thinking about her husband who is fighting on the battlefield, finding solace in the fact that she has a son who would avenge him. She fearlessly holds a rifle, prepared to “fire a bullet into the chest of the five-century-old enemy, if he dared to disturb her at her home” (*Nemanja* 1887, pp. 90–91).

A similar literary narrative accompanied a painting by Jaroslav Čermák entitled *A Montenegrin Woman on Watch*, published in 1874 in the illustrated magazine *Srbadija*. It is an image of an armed woman who is keeping watch in front of a rock shelter in which a man is sleeping while holding a child. Together with a commendatory part about the combat valor of Montenegrin women, the accompanying text in the magazine explained the portrayal as a moving scene with a wounded fighter on his deathbed, who is saying goodbye to his son. Instead of complaining, his wife is waiting for the Turkish bully with a rifle to kill him (*Srbadija*, 1874,



Fig. 14: Jaroslav Čermák, *Crnogorka* (Montenegrin woman), 1876.

pp. 29, 44). The same magazine *Srbadija* published in 1876 a portrait of a Montenegrin woman by Jaroslav Čermák, which just like other images provoked the patriotic sentiment. It was used as an illustration for the article about Montenegrin women, which not only praised their beauty but also ascribed to them moral qualities and patriotism, expressed in raising heroes and bravely seeing men off to war (*Srbadija*, 1876, pp. 29, 32).

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The images of Montenegrin women are paradigmatic examples of visual constructions that found their utilization in different cultural settings. Artists of Slavic, as well as those of French or German origins, whose interest in the Balkans was variously motivated, were the creators of visual representations with a similar Orientalizing effect in the aftermath. Shared elements can be found in the thematization of women as the main representative of an entire world. Created with an emphasis on beauty and attractiveness, in roles of virgins and young mothers with clear traits of traditionalism, the Montenegrin women were put on display for visual pleasure, kept within the vision that suited the Western imagination about this

little known Balkan people. Even the specific theme of the woman with arms, which was based on actual war events, was translated into an idealized construct that accented the conventional female beauty, combined with vulnerability and defensiveness. Their visual rhetoric provided the space for the allusions such as female solitude, endangerment, and, finally, the absence of a male savior, the ideas which could effectively play a role within imagination about the Orientalized world of the Balkans, where beautiful women are threatened by a dangerous and lusty enemy. Female endangerment found its other expression in the topics like the abduction for the harem, such as on Čermák's paintings with female captives, where the eroticization of the victim took its explicit form, and where, unlike the images of armed women, the enemy is manifested physically.

Same visual images of Montenegrin women were also popularized in the Serbian public, but appropriated into the national discourse of female self-sacrifice. Published in the press together with texts that gave them intended meanings, the images of Montenegrin women effectively operated in narratives on national identity. Projected as stellar examples of female patriotism, selflessness, and love for the homeland, these gendered images transcended from the Western Orientalizing view into a nationalized context. Based on the idea of female beauty, traditionalism, as well as subordination to the male action, their visual rhetoric was suitable in both discourses, in the Orientalist and the national one, so migration of their meaning was utterly unproblematic and compatible with different ideological concepts.

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Ирена Ћировић*

ОРИЈЕНТАЛИЗАМ, НАЦИОНАЛИЗАМ И БАЛКАН: СЛИКА ЦРНОГОРСКЕ ЖЕНЕ

Апстракт: Као и други делови Балкана, Црна Гора је током 19. века привлачила бројне путописце, као и стране уметнике који су стварали визуелне представе о њој и начину живота у овим пределима. У оквиру те визуелне продукције знатан део чиниле су слике Црногорки, углавном креиране у терминима идеализоване женске лепоте, традиционалности, као и ратничке борбености, али и у улогама жртви у ратним околностима. Углавном инспирисане подршком балканским хришћанима и њиховој борби, настале слике Црногорки функционисале су у склопу ширих навода о Балкану виђеном у слици европске „другости“. Исте ове слике истовремено су циркулисале и у српској јавности, али са национализованим значењима и уклопљене у дискурс о женском патриотизму.

Кључне речи: Црна Гора, Балкан, слика жене, оријентализам, национализам

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THE CONQUERED LAND: REPRESENTATIONS OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA IN *KRIEGS-BILDER-SKIZZEN AUS DEM BOSNISCH-HERZEGOWINISCHEN OCCUPATIONS-FELDZUGE 1878.*

Abstract: This paper deals with representations of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the publication *Kriegs-Bilder-Skizzen aus dem Bosnisch-Herzegowinischen Occupations-Feldzuge 1878*, analyzing illustrations based on photographs captured during the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1878. The paper analyzes the arrangement of the illustrations in the publication and their depictions of the Bosnian landscape aimed at a contemporary Austro-Hungarian audience. By extension, the paper explores representational issues surrounding the Bosnian crisis, namely the Austro-Hungarian gaze on the Bosnian territory, culture, and population, and its influence on the political and social reality of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Key-words: Bosnia and Herzegovina, The Austro-Hungarian Empire, Illustrations, War, Landscape

The publication *Kriegs-Bilder-Skizzen aus dem Bosnisch-Herzegowinischen Occupations-Feldzuge 1878*.¹ compiles sketches that trace the route of the Austro-Hungarian army during the occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This set of illustrations was intended for intimate readings by Austro-Hungarian citizens, and was simultaneously representative of the construction of identity created by the occupier's gaze and designed to elicit an identification with the occupied territory among Austro-Hungarian citizens.

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1 Österreichische Nationalbibliothek. Retrieved March, 2021. <https://onb.digital/result/11334EF5>

The publication was supported by the Imperial and Royal Technical Military Academy and issued by J. Löwy in 1879. It was created by Carl Balog von Mankobüch (Buda, 1848 – Pécs, 1920), first lieutenant in the reserve of the 37th infantry regiment of Archduke Josef, and was dedicated to his comrades. The publication represents scenes from the daily life of this military formation among the natural and cultural landscapes of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Balog von Mankobüch was awarded the Order of the Iron Crown, Second Class in 1914. Throughout his lifetime he pursued artistic interests, mainly poetry, painting, and illustrations created for diverse publications, ranging from children's books to sketches of the war (Balogh, 1996).

Nevertheless, the sketches in *Kriegs-Bilder-Skizzen* cannot be attributed exclusively to Balog von Mankobüch, as they are based on a set of photographs signed with the name "J. Löwy". Due to an inscription "k.k. Hof-Photograph" it is plausible to assume that the name refers to Josef Löwy (Pressburg, 1834 – Vienna, 1902), a notable Viennese lithographer, photographer, and publisher. In 1856, he opened a studio that would become one of the most respected companies in Vienna. For his works (mainly portraits and landscapes) he used mostly collotype, autotype, and photogravure techniques (Burgenkron & Maier, 1971, pp. 296–297). As one of the pioneers of the collotype high-speed press in Austria, Löwy became a member of the Photographer Association in Vienna in 1864. Alongside Oscar Kramer, Gustav Jägermayer, György Klösz, and Michaela Frankenstein, he participated in the World Exhibition in Vienna in 1873 and recorded photographs of the event (Pemsel, 1989). Due to his reputation within Viennese photography circles, he soon gained the title of court photographer. Preserved photographs of Bosnia and Herzegovina taken by Löwy in 1878 prove his presence during the first post-invasion months.

Kriegs-Bilder-Skizzen consists of illustrations that are equal in size, with text reserved only for captions. Among the 28 illustrations in *Kriegs-Bilder-Skizzen*, only five do not refer to particular places: the representations of *Insurgent chief Hadschy Loja* (*Hadži Lojo*), *Abandoned Turkish residential house*, *Bosnian-Turkish field wagon*, *Imperial officers' field kitchen*, and *Imperial canopy-shelter*. The majority of the illustrations in the publication depict the cultural and natural landscape of Bosnia visited by the Austro-Hungarian forces.² The front page introduces the reader/spectator to some of the most historically significant settlements on the route: Brod, Sarajevo, Višegrad, and the Lim River. The publication also provides illustrations of Derventa, Doboj, Maglaj, Vrandug near Zenica, Mokro, Mountain Romanja, Odžak, and Rogatica. Apart from Bosnian towns and settlements, the sketches focus on the natural landscapes of the Romanja Mountain, the Rakitnica Canyon near Rogatica, and the Lim River near Strnica, Ducović, and Rudo.

2 *Austro-Hungarian Army Engagement Calendar – Occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina 1878*. Retrieved April, 2021. <http://www.austro-hungarian-army.co.uk/cal1878.htm>

The publication's landscape illustrations can be grouped into three sub-categories: mainly-urban, mainly-natural, and scenes where both urban and natural motifs are present with an emphasis on Bosnian and Austro-Hungarian ethnicity and culture. The majority of the illustrations fall into the last category, compiling depictions of Bosnian towns and settlements alongside depictions of everyday life of Bosnian people and the Austro-Hungarian army set in nature. The mainly-urban landscapes represent *veduta*-sketches and cityscapes that, apart from residential zones, incorporate cultural monuments, such as fortresses in Maglaj, Doboj, and Vranduk, mosques in Maglaj and Višegrad, and the bridge over Drina in Višegrad. Some illustrations, however, focus on cultural monuments partly isolated from their surroundings (the mosque on the square in Sarajevo, the Turkish cemetery in Sarajevo, and the mosque on the main street in Višegrad). The sequence of illustrations creates a map-like structure that depicts the most important landscapes on the route of the occupational forces. As paintings began to be experienced cartographically around the beginning of the 19th century, landscape representations came to be considered a form of mapmaking (Elkins & DeLue, 2010, p. 129). This type of map-like structure was produced by a selective gaze that searched for "significant forms" in actual nature (Cosgrove, 1998, p. XXI).

In spite of being naturalistically represented, the view of the cultural monuments is obscured by local houses and the activities of local people. In fact, their presence is merely suggested by architectural details such as minarets. This lack of cultural monuments, as well as the emphasis on daily life, national costumes, and peasantry, such as wagons and huts, suggests that the Bosnian territory was presented through a prism of oversimplified traditionalism and underdevelopment regardless of the reforms that shaped the culture of living and the visual culture in Bosnia and Herzegovina after 1850 (Makuljević, 2011). Thus, the spectator is introduced to a biased interpretation of Bosnian culture, that generated a Bosnian "otherness" – suggested by the "pastoral" and "simplified" representation of the land (Mitchell, 1998, pp. 455–572). Bosnian "otherness" is framed and staged in the sketches through the chosen motifs and their frequency. This question of "framing" (or representational selection) often occupied intellectuals visiting Bosnia during the 19th century (Abadžić-Hodžić, 2016, pp. 11–18), who tended to create and disseminate a perceived "character" of the territory through the projection of an *ethnographic topography*. The selection of motifs and framing in the book aimed to propagate a specific interpretation of the Bosnian land and its people in visual terms rather than to provide a documentary report. This approach to the visual representation of the occupied Bosnian territory remained a long-term project – an institutional program of inventing a narrative about the "Ori-

ental” Bosnia and Herzegovina (Makuljević, 2013, p. 78). Published during the year following the invasion, the arrangement of the illustrations in *Kriegs-Bilder-Skizzen* helped establish a new interpretation of the political and cultural “reality” of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

None of the original photographs of the represented landscape are preserved, but other collections of Löwy’s records of Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1878 have been found.³ Due to a desirable authenticity and accuracy, illustrations based on photographic originals became widely popular during the 19th century. While the power of looking through the camera obscura was regarded as superior to the human eye (Mauer, 2013, p. 99), the illustrative potential of “re-designs” enabled further renditions of the “atmosphere” (D’Arcy Wood, 2001, pp. 186–194). Both photography and illustrations, however, depended on a human gaze. A “visual order” (a fixed point of view, perspective, and a sense of depth and composition) were principles of landscape photography and illustration, derived from the tradition of landscape painting in Western art history. “The laws of perspective” could evoke a sense of familiarity with the once unknown (“other,” “mysterious”) landscape (Mitchell, 1998, p. 467).

The composition and framing of the illustrations in *Kriegs-Bilder-Skizzen* imply a “detached observer” (photographer/illustrator) that is invisible to the captured/depicted people (who are occupied with their affairs: horse riding, marching, cooking, working in the field, etc.). This framing provides a distance between the artist/spectator and the object and furthermore creates an illusion of “the whole scene” (Barromi-Perlman, 2020, p. 565). Apart from the undifferentiated physiognomies (both Austro-Hungarian and Bosnian, who are distinguished only by their garments and activities), the lack of individualization is, more so in the illustrations than in the photographs, a product of the distance to the depicted scenes and the high-angle that obscured the depicted figures in the shadows. Tall hills, spacious fields, towns, and rivers create a hierarchy between the landscape and its inhabitants, reducing proportionally the size of the latter.

Some of Löwy’s preserved photographs depict the same places that are represented in the publication. Their comparison reveals a certain idealization (“design”) in the illustrative material. For example, the photography of Vranduk near Zenica (Figure 1) depicts the same place (though from a different perspective) as one of the illustrations in the book (Figure 2). However, the illustration diverts from the actual land-

3 Photographs are digitally documented by “Albertina” and Austrian Centre for Digital Humanities and Cultural Heritage. Retrieved March, 21.

<https://sammlungenonline.albertina.at/?query=Inventarnummer=%5BFoto2000/112/20%5D&showtype=record#/query/094188f4-590a-4f2f-bc05-3914355dac7a>



Fig. 1: *Occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary in 1878: Vranduk near Zenica (canton Zenica-Doboj), Josef Löwy, 1878.*
Albertina. Retrieved March, 2021.

<https://sammlungenonline.albertina.at/?query=Inventarnummer=%5BFoto2000/112/20%5D&showtype=record#/query/094188f4-590a-4f2f-bc05-3914355dac7a>



Fig. 2: *Fortress in Vranduk, Kriegs-Bilder-Skizzen aus dem Bosnisch-Herzegowinischen Occupations-Feldzuge 1878, J. Löwy, C. Balog von Mankobück 1878–1879.* Österreichische Nationalbibliothek. Retrieved March, 2021.

<https://onb.digital/result/11334EF5>



Fig. 3: *Rakitnica canyon near Rogatica, Kriegs-Bilder-Skizzen aus dem Bosnisch-Herzegowinischen Occupations-Feldzuge 1878, J. Löwy, C. Balog von Mankobüch 1878-1879.* Österreichische Nationalbibliothek. Retrieved March, 2021.
<https://onb.digital/result/11334EF5>

scape, draping the stripped, rocky landscape in trees and bushes. The actual landscape, with its craggy slope, disappeared in the idealized representation of the recently conquered land. Further comparisons between the photographs and the illustrations demonstrate a certain simplification of the Bosnian heritage. The Ottoman-Balkan-style residences captured in some photographs are clearly substituted in the illustrations for old-fashioned wooden huts and houses. Rather than through artistic interventions, a sublime atmosphere is indicated by the choice of the depicted landscape. The sketch of the Rakitnica Canyon near Rogatica (Figure 3) provides a steep scenery suggesting a dramatic atmosphere which is underscored, through an inscription, by a reference to the historical narrative of Hadži Loja's arrest in this "impassable" piece of nature. The arrangement of these sublime and pastoral landscapes is quoting a past that was significant to the occupiers, resting on criteria of "social spatializing." It provides an understanding of the past within a concrete geographical location shaping – "a sense of history by not telling a single grand narrative," but rather "under the auspices of visibility" (Mauer, 2013, pp. 117–118; 136).



Fig. 4: *Hadschy Loja, Kriegs-Bilder-Skizzen aus dem Bosnisch-Herzegowinischen Occupations-Feldzuge 1878, J. Löwy, C. Balog von Mankobück 1878-1979.*
Österreichische Nationalbibliothek. Retrieved March, 2021.
<https://onb.digital/result/11334EF5>

Another example of the “perceived” character of the land is seen in one of the non-landscape illustrations, the sketch of *Insurgent chief Hadschy Loja* (*Hadži Loja*). Here we see the wounded insurgent leader Hadži Loja, born Salih Vilajetović (1834–1887, Mekka), completely detached from the surrounding landscape (Figure 4). During the occupation, Loja was one of the most prominent leaders of the insurgent forces, which comprised Bosnian Muslims as well as other religious groups and which caused significant and unexpected losses to the Austro-Hungarian army. In spite of being depicted wounded on a stretcher, this is not an image of the battlefield. Furthermore, the illustration is inspired by a story of Loja accidentally being wounded by his own gun. Like in other illustrations from that time he is represented in a generalized “Bosnian” fashion with a long beard, Ottoman cloak, fur, and a turban. Without significant individualization, the portrait of Loja does not deviate from the stereotypical representation of a “Bosnian Muslim” cultivated in Austro-Hungarian media, a representation that lacked facial distinctions and used a generalized “Ottoman” physiognomy and anatomical features to depict Muslims from Bosnia and Herzegovina. During his hospitalization, illustrations of Loja appeared in the

Austro-Hungarian press in a similar fashion with the wounded Bosnian leader being depicted without individual characteristics.⁴

This kind of generalized representation was not uncommon in Austro-Hungarian media. A publication like the Viennese *Illustriertes Wiener Extrablatt* daily provided a wide range of war-illustrations from Bosnia in 1878 ranging from maps, battle scenes, and celebrations of victory to portraits of renowned Austro-Hungarian leaders⁵ and representations of the local people and land. The imagery of leisure culture (such as traditional Bosnian coffee houses), physiognomies, and generalized Bosnian Muslim-fashion was widely popular in *Illustriertes Wiener Extrablatt*, as were ethnic depictions of the Roma population.⁶ Guardhouses, residences, and mosques were represented as well, while Orthodox churches were sometimes described as “Greek-Oriental.”⁷ The perceived character of the occupied territory was further expressed through historical scenes and “morally-declined” figures, such as executions of “Bosnian spies” or “Bosnian thieves” in traditional garments.⁸

By the end of 1878, these scenes were accompanied by references to the modernization that was achieved in Bosnia upon the arrival of the Austro-Hungarian forces, like depictions of the first locomotive in Bosnia and representations of Austro-Hungarian institutions.⁹ Landscapes and cityscapes were isolated, but were also used as backgrounds incorporated into these scenes. The heterogeneity of the illustrations in the Austro-Hungarian media was meant to provoke a public response to the war (Damjanović, 2017, pp. 199–214; Wilke, 2005, pp. 83–104), to create an interest in the conquered land, provide “information” about its culture and people, and invoke a sense of national pride and cohesion within the Austro-Hungarian population. Furthermore, the illustrations were designed to evoke a sense of pathos in relation to those who lost their beloved on the battlefield, through depictions of sorrowful families and tearful wives with young children lamenting their deceased husbands.¹⁰

4 Illustrations in: *Illustriertes Wiener Extrablatt* (1878) 7(263; 265; 297), p. 1. Retrieved April, 2021.

https://books.google.de/books/about/Illustriertes_Wiener_Extrablatt.html?id=UUREGwizUuUC&redir_esc=y

5 See maps in: *Ibid*, 7(208; 257; 263; 268; 270; 285), p. 1. Portraits: *Ibid*, 7(243; 244/2), p. 1. Fighting scenes and celebrations: *Ibid*, 7(248; 220; 251), p. 1. About Julius Löwy, reporter from Bosnia and Herzegovina and editor of *Illustriertes Wiener Extrablatt*: Burgenkron & Maier, 1971, p. 297.

6 See: *Illustriertes Wiener Extrablatt* (1878), 7(263; 265; 277; 328), p. 1.

7 See: *Ibid*, 7(250; 254; 321), p. 1.

8 See: *Ibid*, 7(258; 330), p. 1.

9 See: *Ibid*, 7(322; 354), p. 1.

10 See: *Ibid*, 7(266), p. 1.

In *Kriegs-Bilder-Skizzen* this pathos is not visually explicit but rather implicitly suggested. On the front page, it is noted that the book is intended to support the army foundation established by Major F. Jaitner for the benefit of the families of the mobilized reservists who lost their lives to injuries and illnesses on the battlefields in 1878. During the occasional battles that occurred almost three months after the arrival of the Austro-Hungarian army on July 29, 1878, the Austro-Hungarian forces faced an unexpected loss of 5000 soldiers (Slipičević, 1954; Milojković-Đurić, 2002; Medlicott, 1963, pp. 26–29; Donia, 2021, pp. 135–145; Preshlenova, 2021, pp. 128–135). That the book was published in support of Major F. Jaitner's army foundation resonated with a broader sentiment within the Austro-Hungarian Empire – the experience of collective loss that required an emotional response and an active sympathy with the victims of the war. The lack of textual descriptions in the publication contributes to the rhetorical value of the landscapes that appear as silent carriers of memories and collective experiences. The particular landscape thus becomes associated with a specific historical moment.

For the sake of the dignified memory of the victims of the war and the sympathy with their families, illustrations of death and disease are not included in *Kriegs-Bilder-Skizzen*. However, it is plausible to assume that the inscription on the front page had potential to disturb Austro-Hungarian readers who were overwhelmed by reports of Bosnian health issues. During the occupation months, the Bosnian healthcare system was not sufficiently equipped to provide treatment for Austro-Hungarian soldiers who were facing syphilis, cholera, variola, typhus, and dysentery (Masić, 2018, pp. 374–388; Jolić, 2015, pp. 187–213). References to deaths caused by illnesses in the book act as a tribute to the dead, but also as an annunciation of the forthcoming Austro-Hungarian bio-policy that sought to improve the healthcare infrastructure of Bosnia – a policy that was deemed necessary for the establishment of Austro-Hungarian businesses in the territory. In spite of being global threats during the 19th century, acute infectious diseases such as the plague, cholera, and variola were, in public discourse, associated only with marginalized groups, thus producing “enemy images” of “Eastern peoples” (Duraković, 2016, pp. 79–80) and by extension to a so-called “polygamic moral decay” in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Diseases such as osteomalacia and progressed endemic syphilis were, during the Austro-Hungarian sanitary mission, described as “national epidemics” of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Volkskrankheit*), or as “Muslim diseases” in Austro-Hungarian medical records (Fuchs, 2008, pp. 72–79; Fuchs, 2016, pp. 68–72). Interestingly, syphilis remained an issue even after the Annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908.¹¹

11 See: *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Pharmacie* (1913), 51 (35), p. 422. Retrieved April, 2021. <https://anno.onb.ac.at/ozp.htm>.

This bio-policy was part of a larger official Austro-Hungarian “civilizing mission” that was partly fueled and justified by the representational production and utilization of stereotypes about the local society in Bosnia (Milojković-Đurić, 2002, pp. 80–112; Zişan Furat, 2012, pp. 63–84; Reynolds-Cordileone, 2015, pp. 29–50; Volarić, 2019, pp. 183–198; Lovrenović, 2016, pp. 1–4). These helped enable the interpretation of the insurgent resistance primarily as a sign of religious fanaticism on the part of the local Muslims (Damjanović, 2017, pp. 200). Contrary to original orientalist discourse, that considers the Orient as a fixed structure and a unified zone, it is more fruitful to talk about multiple “Orients” when it comes to the Austro-Hungarian perspective on Bosnia and Herzegovina (Said, 1978; Hall, 1997; pp. 234–240; Chakravorty-Spivak, 1999; Bhabha, 1994; Todorova, 1997; Fleming, 2000, pp. 1218–1233). From the Austro-Hungarian perspective, Bosnia represented both a difference and a sameness, it was simultaneously a “distant Orient” and an Orient that was “close to home.” This dichotomy resulted in a picture of so-called “bad Orientals” (Ottoman Muslims) and “good Orientals” (“Islamized Slavs” and other religions) respectively, which was significantly linked to the land: it depended on the geographical proximity of the occupied land, establishing what was considered a zone of “shared experiences” (Heiss, Feichtinger, 2013, pp. 148–150). This “frontier Orientalism” (Gingrich, 2015, pp. 60–66) affected the interpretation of the border zone between the two Empires, regarding Bosnia as a “space of transition” – a zone of simultaneous exclusion of those who were, from an Austro-Hungarian point of view, considered to be “beyond civilization” and inclusion of “those who could be civilized.”

The Austro-Hungarian Empire cultivated a self-image of being a state that could peacefully encompass a broad variety of religions and nationalities by conceiving of the Bosnian land as a zone of possibility where they could vicariously exhibit and demonstrate their ability to establish “order” between different religious groups, through an idea of the heterogeneous population belonging to the same *soil* (Zisan Furat, 2012, pp. 63–64). By treating Bosnian peoples as religious units rather than politically informed communities, the Austro-Hungarian “enlightenment administration” echoed the rhetoric of “new Imperialism” and used Bosnia as “a model of colonial rule for other European great powers” (Reynolds-Cordileone, 2015, pp. 29–31).

While the Austro-Hungarian Empire viewed themselves as liberating southern Slavs from “the Orient,” they simultaneously enjoyed the remnants of Ottoman material culture in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In tandem with operating within the Bosnian territory (as a mission of “progress” based on Austro-Hungarian laws and technologies), the “civi-

lizing mission” was fed back into the Austro-Hungarian consciousness through media, museum exhibitions, bazaars, performances portraying Bosnian troops, “Bosnian peddlers,” etc. Thus, this “Otherness,” this Orient “close to home,” became entirely familiar and visible, resulting in a “pride” among Austro-Hungarian citizens “in the good work being done in Bosnia” (Reynolds-Cordileone, 2015, p. 48; Reynolds-Cordileone, 2010, 171–187).

The illustrations in *Kriegs-Bilder-Skizzen* were designed to provide information about the recently conquered land and to launch a narrative about the Bosnian crisis. In spite of the absence of war images, the publication served as a memorial of the war-time, that was designed to evoke the collective past and call to emotional participation and stimulate the active response, manifested through the Austro-Hungarian “civilizing mission.”

Every landscape is a place of distinct coexisting trajectories – time, people, and identities (Massey, 2005, pp. 64–71) – and as such *Kriegs-Bilder-Skizzen* interprets the landscape of Bosnia as a collision of historical dynamism, natural fixity, and “orientalist” fantasy. Based on collective memories (war, diseases, loss, and triumph), this landscape acted as *medium* rather than a *genre* (Mitchell, 2002, pp. 1–5). It is more than merely a background to history, it is a zone of human activity, experience, and discourse.

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Катарина Јовић*

ПОКОРЕНА ЗЕМЉА: ПРЕДСТАВЕ БОСНЕ И ХЕРЦЕГОВИНЕ У *KRIEGS-BILDER-SKIZZEN AUS DEM BOSNISCH- HERZEGOWINISCHEN OCCUPATIONS-FELDZUGE 1878.*

Апстракт: Публикација *Kriegs-Bilder-Skizzen aus dem Bosnisch-Herzegowinischen Occupations-Feldzuge* 1878. намијењена је Аустро-Угарској јавности и представља амбијент Босне и Херцеговине из ракуса окупатора. Илустровани су културни и природни пејзажи Босне и Херцеговине који указују на својства крајолика и маршруту Аустро-Угарске војске. Премда засноване на фотографском веризму, илустрације су одабране и уређене у складу са односом окупатора према „заузетој” земљи и сопственом идентитету, сугеришући на колективно искуство и памћење унутар Двојне Монархије.

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Босански простор посматра се кроз призму „оближње другости” која подстиче „цивилизаторску мисију” Аустро-Угарске администрације, са одјеком на политичку, економску, културну и статусну стварност Босне и Херцеговине.

Илустрације одликује посредност и суздржаност. Упркос називу, публикација не нуди представе сукоба, смрти и болести, већ суптилно на њих подсјећа. Недостатак приказа сукоба и људске патње у „скицама рата” указује на дубља значења представљене земље. Босански простор у компилацији *Kriegs-Bilder-Skizzen* истиче се као нешто више од представе или жанра – као збирка сјећања која позива на емоционални, контемплативни и активни одговор.

Кључне ријечи: Босна и Херцеговина, Аустро-Угарска, илустрације, рат, пејзаж

Vuk Dautović*

ARTIFICATION OF MEMORY: “TRENCH ART” AND REMEMBERING SERBIAN SOLDIERS FROM THE GREAT WAR

Abstract: Objects made from war *matériel*, munition shells and arms whose primary military function is transformed by the act of artification emerged as a phenomenon in European visual culture during and after WW1. These objects, belonging to the category of Trench Art, are visual cultural testimonies of the Great War. The character of these objects, hybrid in many ways, positions them between decorative and folk art. Serving a distinctly memorial or commemorative function, these objects are intertwined with the context of war, and through different strategies of artification they become new objects of secondary use holding great value as items and documents of visual culture. In Serbia, numerous museums and private collections hold objects of remembrance of WW1, but these remain largely understudied and, in many cases, have not been analyzed methodologically. Trench Art objects have an important place in sacral public spaces as military markers connected with memories of fallen soldiers. With the intention of systematizing the above-mentioned objects of war visual culture, we will interpret them in a wider European context, pointing to the process of their transformation from primary war *matériel* to becoming a bearer of new, complex meanings through artistic intervention. A great number of material objects of Trench Art belong to the study of the history of art and visual culture. Attesting to the materiality of the period, the character of these objects varies greatly and is defined by the personal relationships to the Great War of the Serbian soldiers and civilians who crafted them. Additionally, the objects hold a public symbolic function in expressing certain aspects of social ideology in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

Keywords: Great War, Trench Art, artification, Memory, Serbia.

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World War One was the first large-scale conflict to take place during the era of industrialization, and this period was also one in which visual culture played an important role (Saunders 2004).¹ Visual culture, a powerful tool for propaganda and communication, was also the product of the social context of the time. Besides being a global conflict, WW1 gave rise to visual culture phenomena which unified the experiences of those who participated in it (Saunders 2001: 476–488). The war, which entailed strategic trench warfare and the use of explosives, gave rise to numerous objects crafted using available war materials by soldiers, civilians, and prisoners of war. Military waste became a new artistic medium, transformed by the artification process to become a bearer of new meanings. At the same time, these objects remained connected to the context in which they were produced, as war and the remembrance of fallen soldiers became the primary themes of Trench Art (Saunders 2003; Saunders 2009: 37–55).

Works of Trench Art are displayed in numerous museums and private collections in Serbia but these tend to be inadequately classified, as is also the case in other European countries (Saunders 2000: 44). An attitude of ambivalence towards their artistic value determines their liminal space in many collections where they are classified, for instance, as memorabilia, realia, or as the personal belongings of prominent individuals. At present, there is no consensus on the unifying standardized terminology that defines these objects as Trench Art. Every classification requires well-defined criteria, thus it is necessary here to provide a clear definition of Trench Art (*Grabenarbeit*): “Any item made by soldiers, prisoners of war, and civilians, from war *matériel* directly, or any other material, as long as it and they are associated temporally and/or spatially with armed conflict or its consequences (Saunders 2000: 45; Saunders 2003).”

It is equally important to provide a clear periodization for objects which could be considered items of Trench Art, and to divide them into multiple categories according to their date and place of production. The first group of objects, which displays the greatest variety of forms, refers to objects made between 1914 and 1919 by soldiers on the frontline or rear areas. Generally speaking, this is the smallest category as the manufacture of these objects was restricted to the period of war and demobilization. Typical objects in this category include: cigarette lighters made from bullets, matchbox cases made from scrap brass or steel, letter openers made from bullets and scrap materials, tobacco boxes and cigarette cases, pens made from bullet cartridge cases, finger rings made from aluminum or

1 This article is devoted to the eternal memory of our beloved great grandfather Živan Smiljanić, a soldier of the Serbian cavalry in the Balkan Wars and the Great War, Bearer of the Commemorative Medal of the Great Serbian Retreat.

brass, miscellaneous personal items decorated with, or made from, bullets or shell fragments, and decorated artillery shell cases (Saunders 2000: 47–49).

The second chronological group refers to Trench Art objects made by a thriving and developed civilian cottage industry. Between 1919 and 1939 artificial objects were most commonly made using metal shells. Using expended metal shells to make Trench Art was technically illegal because these were not considered scrap material. Officially, they belonged to armies and governments who, wherever possible, collected and re-filled them. Trench Art objects were offered as memorabilia and souvenirs and sold to former Allied and German soldiers during the war, and also to war widows, pilgrims, and battlefield tourists between 1919 and 1939. Typical items in this large group are brass shell cases, sometimes shaped and ornamentally decorated, engraved with the name of a battle or inscriptions such as “Souvenir of the Great War,” letter openers, ashtrays made from or decorated with shell cases and bullet cartridges, bullet-crucifixes made of cartridges with Christ figures, decorated shell cases often mounted on a tripod with bullets of varying origin. The nature of these items was mainly ornamental rather than functional (Saunders 2000: 49–52).

The third group refers to objects also made during the period from 1919 to 1939, mainly after the Armistice, and manufactured by various companies connected to the army. These Trench Art objects were fashioned as souvenirs from the “raw” unworked materials of war brought back by returning service personnel. Produced for professional soldiers and offered in stores, these items personalized the soldiers’ memorabilia through distinctive designs. More elaborate than items in the previous category, the forms of these objects were sometimes referred to as “Mounted War Trophies” and functioned as visual reminders of wartime experiences. Typical examples in this category are clocks made from shells and bullets, lamps and candlesticks from the same material, and inkwells shaped from grenades or shrapnel. The manufacture of this type of object ceased by the beginning of the Second World War (Saunders 2000: 52–54).

Objects which fit the three above-mentioned categories and were made by soldiers during the war can be found in Serbia. Trench Art objects belonging to the first category were predominantly produced during the Great Retreat and evacuation to Corfu, as well as on the Salonica Front and in the context of other well-known battles. These objects frequently have personal utilitarian uses, such as different types of drinking cups, tobacco boxes, matchboxes, and other types of dishes. Men’s rings and other types of memorabilia were also produced in large numbers. After WWI the various objects and souvenirs made out of war material were predomi-

nantly crafted by civilians. The most common objects were decoratively carved metal cannon shells. Close to the third above-mentioned category of Trench Art objects are church polyeleos produced in the Military Technical Institute in Kragujevac.

Trench Art Objects and Private Memory

Objects of everyday military life produced during the Great War and memorabilia produced after its ending played an important role in shaping and nationalizing the private sphere (Makuljević 2006: 239–253). Kept in various museum collections, objects dating back to WW1 were treated and categorized in different ways and featured in permanent and temporary exhibitions. This type of material object can also be found in private homes, where it performs a memorial function highlighting the involvement of the householder's ancestors in the Great War. Lastly, many objects of this time, presented without any context, can be found at flea markets – both physical and online – as objects to be traded and collected. More recently, various online platforms have been created by professionals and descendants of those who participated in the war with the aim of digitalizing preserved materials and ancestral memories of the Great War.² Instead of systematizing and presenting these collections, we will focus our attention on the phenomenon and characteristics of Trench Art in the Serbian context.

According to the periodization proposed above, wartime objects holding a utilitarian function, including memorabilia such as rings and vases made from munition shells, constitute the first group. The majority of these objects, according to the history of Serbian warfare, appeared following the Great Retreat and then on the Salonica front and other battlefields. The collection at the Užice National Museum includes diverse objects of Trench Art made by soldiers from villages in the Zlatibor region in the period between 1916–18. They were fashioned out of materials available on the battlefield at the time, using simple tools and techniques. The decorative repertoire of these objects consists of motifs of folk art: geometric ornaments and organic motifs such as flowers and leaves, grapevines and images of plums. A central motif that appears on many objects is the Serbian national coat of arms. The majority of these objects feature engraved memorial inscriptions which, aside from names of indi-

2 See: Смолчић Макуљевић, С. (2014), *Први светски рат у његовом правном фотодокументу*, Београд.
<https://prvisvetiskirat.rs/>; <http://славнимпрецима.срб/> [Accessed on April 20, 2021]



Fig. 1: Two drinking cups made by soldiers on the Salonica front: „Memory from the European War 1912–1918“, National Museum of Valjevo collection.

viduals and the place and year of their production, also include phrases like “memory of the European war”. Out of a total of twenty-two objects which have been preserved in the museum, a few of them were especially well executed, suggesting that they are probably the work of professional craftsmen mobilized to participate in the war (Macura 1992: 283–287).

Among objects of note in the Užice museum are several small drinking cups of different shapes, including one cup with a handle, which are all engraved in the above-mentioned way (Macura 1992: 284–285). There are also two vessels of this kind in the National Museum of Valjevo, with accompanying inscriptions that identify them as war memorabilia (fig. 1).³ Besides drinking vessels, many other items were produced: trays and wooden cutlery with the inscription “Memory from Corfu,” stored at the Užice museum, a soldier’s canteen box, also at the same museum, produced in June 1917 and decorated with motifs of plums and grapevines, flower vases, an anchor, a snake and an image of a girl holding a cup and pitcher (Macura 1992: 285). In addition to metal, wood was frequently used in the manufacture of cigarette holders, wind instruments such as *frula* and *dvojnica*, and faith-related objects such as crosses or wooden models used to decorate ceremonial bread for the Orthodox feast called *slava* (Macura 1992: 286–287). Ashtrays, aluminum cigarette cases, and matchboxes, like the one from the museum in Valjevo (fig. 2),⁴ were also produced, as were letter knives and pen holders fashioned using simply molded metal. An

3 <https://kultura.rs/objekat/3268062-aluminijumska-%C4%8Da%C5%A1a-elipsasta-g;> Inventory no. 8–663–9690; [https://kultura.rs/objekat/3268063-aluminijumska-%C4%8Da%C5%A1a-gravirana-;](https://kultura.rs/objekat/3268063-aluminijumska-%C4%8Da%C5%A1a-gravirana-) Inventory no. 8–663–9691 [Accessed on April 20, 2021].

4 <https://kultura.rs/objekat/3268064-aluminijumski-dr%C5%BEa%C4%8D-za-kutiju-%C5%A1i;> Inventory no. 8–663–9692 [Accessed on April 20, 2021].



Fig. 2: Metal matchbox case, memorabilia from the Great War, National Museum of Valjevo collection.

example of this is the tulip-shaped penholder, also from the collection of the Valjevo museum.⁵ Among objects with a utilitarian function were frames for soldiers' mirrors, the backs of which were richly decorated and engraved with inscriptions (Macura 1992: 286). According to contemporaries like Archibald Reiss, Serbian soldiers were decorating objects already in their possession or making items they did not have due to war shortages. Reiss noted that soldiers "amicably converse with their officers and show them the little pieces which they have made in the trenches." He further noted that sitting in "molehills" for a long time demanded doing something which would banish gloomy thoughts (Rajs 1928: 194).⁶

In addition to military identity tags and bracelets fashioned out of various metals, soldiers often produced rings using artillery shells (Macura 1992: 287). These personal memorial objects sometimes made use of coins. An example of this is the ring with the engraved text "Memory from Salonica 1916"⁷ made by Dimitrije Hadži-Mihajlović, a participant in the Great War, using a silver *dinar* coin with the image of King Petar.⁸ Another similar object is the ring of Živko Nikolić with the engraved in-

5 <https://kultura.rs/objekat/3268065-aluminijumski-dr%C5%BEa%C4%8D-za-pero--pe>; Inventory no. 8-663-9693 [Accessed on April 20, 2021].

6 Ljubica Macura refers to this source.

7 „A.D.M. Uspomena iz Soluna 1916.“

8 <http://славнимпрецима.срб/Галерија?page=51>; Dimitrije Hadži-Mihajlović (1879–1923), učesnik Velikog rata; [Accessed on April 1, 2021].



Fig. 3: Men's ring „Memory to Salonica 1916“, made by soldier Dimitrije Hadži Mihailović (left); handcrafted ring of an empty bullet shell „Memory from Corfu 1916“, made by soldier Živko Nikolić, (right).

scription “Ž.N., memory from Corfu, 1917,”⁹ which he personally fashioned out of empty bullet shells (fig. 3).¹⁰

Decorated cannon shells represent the most common type of Trench Art in the Balkan region. According to the memoirs of Archibald Reiss, Serbian soldiers on the Salonica front decorated cannon shells, which they would then fill with flowers and place on tables in the army canteen whenever officers were expecting to receive prominent guests (Rajs 1928: 213–214). Objects of this kind can be found in numerous museum foundations, as well as in private ownership, and as objects to be traded and collected. Cannon shells were also used during the war, and afterward, as a kind of commemorative item, just as previously described. Aside from the national coat of arms and inscriptions with the place and date of production, cannon shells could also be decorated with official initials of Serbian kings and personal memorial inscriptions. It was not uncommon for materials such as the cannon shells to feature images with a totally profane origin without any reference to war, like the shell from the museum of Valjevo (fig. 4).¹¹

Interwar visual culture was characterized by jubilee memorabilia which connected participants in the Great War to one another. In 1923, soldiers of the Šumadija Division gifted Dragutin Pokorni, the conductor and kapellmeister of the King's Guard Orchestra, a candle holder created in Kragujevac (fig. 5).¹² The candle holder has a triangular base and three

9 “ŽN, usp. sa Krfa 1916. g.”

10 <https://prvisvetskirat.rs/licnosti/ucesnici-ratova/nikolic-zivko/> [Accessed on April 1, 2021].

11 <https://kultura.rs/objekat/3268066-vazna-od-topovske-%C4%8Daure-ukra%C5%A1e; ИHB. бр. 8–663–9694> [Accessed on April 20, 2021].

12 <https://kultura.rs/objekat/2448808-sve%C4%87njak-sa-posvetom-muzi%C4%8Dara-%C5%A1u; Historical Museum of Serbia, Inv. no. 1–22–3114>, [Accessed on April 20, 2021].



Fig. 4: Left: decorated cannon shell from the National Museum of Valjevo collection. Right: cannon shell vase with King Peter's monogram.

tiers, topped with a cylindrical recipient for a candle. The three levels of the candle holder rest on bullets which act as columns and prop them up, while the base features an image of a lyre dedicated to the famous conductor and hero of the Great War. Purposefully manufactured, these memorabilia represent complex objects which ensure social memory for exceptional individuals who could articulate their private space, emphasizing the military aspects of their identity.

In WW1, women volunteers, nurses taking care of the wounded, and food producers were considered national heroes. At the same time, virtually the entire female part of the population was taking care of children and waiting for their sons, brothers, and husbands to return from war (Mladenović 2007: 769–795). Objects made by Serbian women, such as embroidered textiles decorated with war motifs, belonged to the visual culture of the Great War. The textile collection of the Užice museum features an embroidered handkerchief with a textual inscription which memorializes, in an almost apotropaic form of incantation, one woman's hopes and expectations of her loved one's return from the military front (Ristović 1992: 294).

After the Balkan war and WW1, which lasted from 1912 until 1918 with almost no respite, Trench Art and memorabilia of Serbian soldiers emerged as a means of remembering their participation in these wars. In the interwar period, the past war was depicted as a heroic epoch and an



Fig. 5: Candleholder with dedication from 1923 of soldier-musicians of the Šumadija division gifted to the composer Dragutin Pokorni, Serbian Historical Museum collection.

occasion for creating different strategies of active personal and social remembering. Material objects in the possession of individuals were, aside from serving a decorative function, a testament to their participation in the Great War. They represented a sort of private memory and also highlighted their personal militaristic and heroic identity. Objects of the same kind were also a way of materializing the private memory of those who did not survive the war, and of coloring their absence with heroic dignity. Material objects of Trench Art greatly contributed to the character of wider manifestations of visual culture in the interwar period. As such, their private-public role should be more attentively studied.

Trench Art in the Service of Sacralization of Fallen Heroes' Remembrance

Since society and material culture influence one another, it is worth considering the role of Trench Art in the culture of public remembrance of the participation of Serbian soldiers in the Great War. Spaces of collective memory of fallen soldiers were almost always Orthodox churches built as memorial ossuaries or sepulchers of fallen soldiers. Orthodox churches as final resting places of fallen heroes were spaces of public-private remembrance, articulated through different artistic and symbolic strategies

(Obrenović 2013: 321–347; Manojlović Pintar 2014: 212–215). Trench Art is a more present and visually significant manifestation than previously acknowledged in the discourse of Serbian public remembrance of WW1. The most representative aspects of material culture of this kind are the massive church polyelaioi chandeliers, or Horos, installed in church naves, made entirely using army weapons, munition, and other materials. Memorial churches also house vases made out of cannon shells intended for the display of flowers. Specific polyelaioi chandeliers made using army materials can be found in numerous memorial churches and ossuaries like the Ružica church on Kalemengdan, the Church of the Holy Assumption of Christ in the village of Krupanj, the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the village of Pecka, the Church of St George in the village of Bela Crkva near Krupanj, and the St Nedelya Church in Desimirovac. One of the most significant church chandeliers of this kind was produced especially for the Temple to the Glory near Skopje.

Aside from such hanging chandeliers, different types of standing candelabra, intended for the lighting of wax candles or oil lamps in front of the iconostasis, were also produced. A monument to the heroes fallen at the Battle of Cer in the village of Tekeris features, at its base, an oil lamp holder made using three Berdan II M1870 rifles with bayonets, as well as a military helmet positioned above them. (Bogdanovic 2018: 467, 470).

When considering this type of church lighting, which is undoubtedly an example of Trench Art as well as a material object of church visual culture, it is important to emphasize its symbolic meaning. Horos with polyelaioi is usually installed above the nave in the underdome space of the Orthodox church as a massive hanging construction used for the purpose of illuminating the church. The use of artistically shaped candle holders, oil lamps, polyelaioi, and horos in the church space has been linked from the earliest Christian times to the symbol of light as it is interpreted within the Christian tradition (Boyd 1998: 169–174). Horos evokes the image of a starry night, as the candles on it flicker like stars, while the circle of the polyelaioi is like the sky above which, in the dome, Christ the Pantocrator was usually visible. Similar to the illuminated horos, the tall wax candles positioned in front of the iconostasis signify the pillar of fire which led the Israeli people through the desert. The light of the flames on candle holders which have many branches reminds believers of the fire of the burning bush. Furthermore, the oil candle lamp, circular in form, symbolizes the flaming chariot in which the prophet Elijah was corporally elevated to the sky. (Venijamin 2014: 40–41). Horos with burning candles and oil candle lamps, situated inside the sacral space of the church, symbolically resembles the image of heavenly Jerusalem in glory (Radojković 1977: 87). The name “polyelaioi,” referring to the chandeliers, derives from a monastic

church service during which psalms are chanted. During the chanting of the polyelaos psalms all of the candles are lit reminding us of the many graces which God has bestowed on mankind (Hadži Teofilo 1895: 47–48).

This symbolic meaning of the church polyelaos is wholly in accordance with the sacralized concept of remembering fallen heroes and martyrs of the fatherland, faith, and nation. The ways they are celebrated, through designated days for state ceremonies, created a specific national heorthology (Timotijević 2012: 69–78). Church chandeliers and standing candelabras visually resemble the eternal glory of fallen warriors, simultaneously acting as a guarantee for their liturgical remembrance and memory. This also was in accordance with the intention of the Serbian Orthodox church to Christianize the cults of fallen warriors who, under the strong influence of the nationalization of remembering, acquired qualities reminiscent of ancient ways of celebrating dead heroes which were deeply rooted in pagan antiquity (Borožan 2015: 458–459). Aside from unprecedented destruction, WW1 brought about a need for the institutionalization of national remembrance which resulted in the construction of the cult of the fallen warrior who has given his life for the fatherland. That process was especially visible in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, established by a process of unification following victory in the Great War (Manojlović Pintar 2014: 115–142, 221–235).

During the 1920s and in the service of establishing new state-building traditions and celebrating fallen heroes, numerous memorial churches were built in the shape of monumental ossuaries as a way of materializing memory. In the southern regions of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the most significant construction project was the Temple to the Glory built on the grounds of the military cemetery in Skopje. It was erected in the Byzantine style according to the designs of Konstantin Homenko and consecrated solemnly at the Feast of the Holy Spirit in 1934. A program of frescoes executed by Russian artists was conceptualized as a contemporary reminiscence of the medieval Serbian fresco painting. The ideators of this sacral space were meticulous in their designs for the interior of the church, which was a memorial topoi of the fallen heroes as well as of the Karađorđević dynasty, unified by the idea of *integral Yugoslavism*. The chandelier and especially the artficated candelabras crafted according to the idea and sketches of lieutenant colonel Radosavljević, contributed greatly to the memorial's dynastic and militaristic character (Kadijević 1997: 166; Borožan 2015: 444–466).

An article published in the Pravda newspaper on the consecration day in May 1934 gives us greater insight into these items of Trench Art in the Temple to the Glory. The article describes lieutenant colonel of the infan-

try regiment Dragomir Radosavljević, the director of the Military-Technical Institute in Kragujevac, as the individual in charge of the sketches and execution of the objects in question.¹³ The iconographical description of the chandelier and candelabras help us to formulate a clear idea about the items' visual characteristics and the public's emotional and cognitive reaction, which supplement other, preserved specimens of church chandeliers within the same field of verbo-visual culture. Emphasizing in particular the chandelier and candle holders as the most exceptional and interesting decorative items in the Temple to the Glory, the *Pravda* article brings us an authentic key of their iconographical interpretation: "The most symbolic interior decorations of the Temple to the Glory are, without a doubt, one unusual church chandelier and two candle holders crafted by the director of the Military-Technical Institute in Kragujevac, Mr. Dragomir Radosavljević, lieutenant colonel of the infantry regiment. These are real masterpieces that display the originality of thought of their creator. The polyelaos hanging in the middle of the Temple was built from weapons and munition used by the Allied powers during the last war. With his masterfully crafted work, Mr. Radosavljević succeeded in symbolically representing all the greatness of the victory of Serb and other Allied armies in the last war, and in communicating the greatness of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia built on these successes (*Pravda* 1934: 12).

"A column built from cannon shells of all calibers runs through the middle axis of the chandelier. The origin of the top shell is an Austrian coastal cannon, caliber 210 mm. Engraved on the shell is a Yugoslavian crown that points towards the entrance of the church and, on the opposing side, towards the altar, since the Serbian crown played an exceptional role in the war. The crown symbolizes the creation of Yugoslavia upon the wreckage of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy (our crowns on top of the used shells of the Austrian cannon). Arranged along the underside of the shell are the bullets of our gunshots, which represent our soldiers who protect Yugoslavia. The column is made up of several cannon shells of increasing width, where each segment fits into another one. At the end of the column is a Serbian rapid-fire cannon bullet, at the tip of which hangs a French airplane bomb, ready to fall at any moment. This emphasizes the friendship between Yugoslavia and France as nations that will always selflessly defend one another. Inside the polyelaos, six rifles belonging to the Allied powers are positioned all around, pointing upwards towards the candles. In the middle are crossed sabers. The rifles reach the tips of the top row of candles, which rest on various kinds of bombs belonging to the Allies and which have been arranged in a circular fashion. This is a means of representing the flame of exaltation for freedom which was first lit by the Serbian Orthodox Church, and which

13 The Institute also produced the church candelabras and standing candle holders in the Ružica Church on Kalemegdan.

helped Allied troops to break the usurpers of freedom. Rifle and machine-gun bullets and shells belonging to the Allied powers are arranged in rows all along the middle axis of the chandelier. Bullets of mixed origin are combined here, representing the permanent ties and inseparability of the Allies. Chains fashioned from bullets are positioned vertically in an arch formation. On the wider, bottom part of the chandelier are three iron bars that cross over each other. These symbolize our national unity, around which is a solid steel hoop – the inseparable Yugoslavia (Pravda 1934: 12)."

This description should be interpreted in light of the concept of *integral Yugoslavism* as the official cultural and political state ideology born out of the negation of ethno-national particularisms of the three constitutional ethnicities of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and which emphasized, conversely, a hybrid Yugoslavian national identity (Dimić 1996: 285–328). The interpretation was, at the same time, in accordance with the public politics of the idealization of war allies (Manojlović Pintar 2014: 171–174). The verbal description of the polyelaos inside the Temple to the Glory became a paradigmatic image of the fight for freedom and the notion of Yugoslavism, as was also the case with its replicas which can be found in the aforementioned memorial military mausoleum churches. Through spatialisation of complex statal Ephemeral spectacles in Serbian Orthodox churches, fallen soldiers were nationalized as the heroes who built the nation while being sacralized by the Serbian Orthodox Church, which intended to emphasize their religious and ethnic identity (Lajbenšperger 2009: 191–199). Candelabras crafted using war material and made in the Military-Technical Institute in Kragujevac, are the conceptual design of lieutenant colonel Dragomir Radosavljević, who would have certainly been familiar with Trench Art. They are also a reflection of complex state politics which militarized the church liturgical space in a very sophisticated way, keeping in mind all the complex theological meanings of the polyelaos.

The text published on the occasion of the consecration of the Temple to the Glory in Skopje offers us a description of two standing candelabras intended to be placed in front of the iconostasis, adjacent to the Royal Door: "In addition to this polyelaos, lieutenant colonel Mr. Radosavljević also made two candle holders, which are both interesting and symbolic, as decorations for the Temple to the Glory. These candle holders are also made from cannon shells of various calibers, with bases constructed using three cannon bullets. A portrait of the late King Peter is engraved on the central shell of the right chandelier, close to the entrance of the church. An image of field marshal Putnik is engraved to the right of the image of the king, and to the left is field marshal Stepa Stepanović. In the middle of the shell below the first one is a portrait of the French field mar-



Fig. 6: Pair of polyelaios chandeliers from the Ružica church, Belgrade.

shal Franchet d'Espèrey. To his left is a representation of the field marshal Živojin Mišić, and on the right is an engraved image of field marshal Petar Bojović. On the shells of the candelabra positioned on the opposite side are the image of HRH King Alexander I and his associates on the territory belonging to the Third Army: Mr. Milan Nedić, the commander of the army, Radovan Obradović, the general of the division, and others. In short, the polyelaios and candelabras made by Mr. Radosavljević for the Temple to the Glory are the most beautiful and most interesting decorative items in this church (Pravda 1934: 12).” The candelabras in question, through their chronotopical unity, emphasize and memorialize the images of two Serbian rulers alongside commanders of the Serbian army in times of war and peace, symbolically portraying them as those who are lighting the way for the nation from the past into the future. Standing candelabras of this type, made using cannon shells, are also kept in a church located in the village Krupanj dedicated to the Assumption of God thus we can assume that, like the polyelaios, they were made by the same Military-Technical Institute.

The above-described way of furnishing military memorial churches, by supplying them with objects designed according to the conventions of Trench Art, was utilized in the renovation of the Ružica Church on the Kalemegdan fortress in Belgrade. This temple served as a garrison church for the military crew in the fortress from the end of the 1870s until the bombing of Belgrade in 1915 when it was badly damaged, losing its bell tower and the apsidal side of the church. The Military-Technical Insti-

tute in Kragujevac made two large polyelaioi for this temple, as well as two metal relief icons, all made using war materials. The chandeliers were made using cannon shells, sabers, bayonets, and rifle and gun munition (fig. 6). The first bronze icon, depicting the birth of the Holy Virgin, was placed over the side entrance of the church, while the second icon, representing St George, was positioned over the portal at the entrance to the bell tower. In addition, the Institute in Kragujevac produced two statues of warriors, one from the medieval period of Emperor Dušan, and another depicting soldiers who fought in the Balkan Wars, which are located in front of the side entrance of the church. The sculptures of soldiers were made according to a blueprint drawn up by the architect Krasnov, and cast from leftover war material pointing to the military character of the church. Two large chandeliers, which are preserved in the Ružica Church, are frequently described as unique examples of their kind (Božović 2010: 18–19). In reality, however, they belong to a group of polyelaioi produced in the Military-Technical Institute in Kragujevac with the intention to mark the church space as military-memorial in character.

An inscription about the renovation of the Ružica Church impressed on the marble board above the entrance reminds us that this military church was furnished and decorated for the eternal peace and memory of the souls of “Serbian heroes fallen on the battlefield for the glory and pride of the Great and United Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes,” emphasizing the notion of Yugoslavism in the church space once again (Božović 2010: 21). In terms of the interpretation of the function of this church, as well as its affiliation with other military memorials, it is worth noting that there is a memorial ossuary to the soldier-defenders of Belgrade near the church, by the Jakšić tower, which represent a symbolic unity with the Ružica Church. The ossuary was built in 1937 after the reconstruction of the Jakšić tower and during the construction of the church of St Petka, and in it are stored the mortal remains of Serbian fighters killed in battles in and around Belgrade in the war of 1914–1918 (Obrenović 2013: 234–236; Manojlović Pintar 2014: 213–214). Alongside a metal laurel wreath which hangs on its iron gate, the ossuary is marked with a cross made from two cannon barrels, which could also be considered objects of Trench Art.

Dedicated to the Holy Assumption of God, the memorial church and ossuary of warriors fallen at Mačkov Kamen and other nearby battles was erected in the village of Krupanj in 1932. The interior was furnished with different objects which could be characterized as Trench Art (fig. 7). The church was built according to the ideas of architect Momir Korunović, while the fresco decorations and iconostasis were painted by Živorad Nastasijević in 1930–31. Inside the church, under the dome of the nave,



Fig. 7: Polyelaion and candelabras in front of the iconostasis made of war material, memorial church in Krupanj.

there is a polyelaion made entirely from war materials and trophies, including bayonets, sabers, hand grenades, and various shotgun shells. The two standing candelabras positioned in front of the Royal Doors were also constructed using war materials and donated to the church by members of the Sokol Society in Belgrade (Đurđev 1997: 99–117; Lajbenšperger 2009; Obrenović 2013: 155–157).

The Church of the Ascension of the Holy Virgin in the village of Pecka, with its memorial ossuary of the warriors of the second Morava division, was consecrated on October 17, 1934. This church too was built according to the designs of architect Momir Korunović, on the site of an old military cemetery where members of the second Morava division killed on the Rožanj and other battlefields were buried. Sepulchers where around 400 fallen warriors were buried are situated inside the church, on its north and south sides. A bell tower was erected on the southwestern side, under which lies a crypt holding the bones of some 200 warriors translated from the village of Pričevići and Stava (Ćirić 2006: 90; Obrenović 2013:



Fig. 8: Trench Art chandelier
from the memorial church in the village Pecka.

251–252). A huge chandelier made entirely of war materials hangs inside the temple, consisting of a central axis built using cannon shells of various calibers. Three circular light-bearing fixtures hang from the chandelier, at the top of which is a decorative spherical construction made using firearm shells. The polyelaos makes use of military sabers and numerous shells of various sizes and calibers. The lower part of the chandelier consists of “flowers” fashioned from hand grenades surrounded by shells (fig. 8). The object in question is entirely typologically similar to those found in the Ružica Church in Belgrade and the church in Krupanj.

Notable decorations at the Memorial Monument of Russian Glory at the New Cemetery in Belgrade include a candle holder made out of three Russian Berdan rifles and munition, located in the crypt. There is also a polyelaos made out of Cossack sabers *Кубанское казачье войско* presumed to have been produced in the Military-Technical Institute in Kragujevac (Bogdanović 2018: 250–251, 260).

The likeness of all the aforementioned church candelabras, the similar construction of their central axes made out of cannon shells, as well as the use of sabers, bayonets, and chains made from firearm shells which are, in every example, transformed into spherical decorations at the top of the polyelaioi, all point to their having a shared creator. The hanging church chandeliers and standing candelabras in the Ružica Church, just like the grand polyelaioi and standing candelabras in the Temple to the Glory in Skopje, were produced in the Military-Technical Institute in Kragujevac. The available historical data identifies lieutenant colonel Dragomir Radosavljević as the author of the designs, which were then executed by the craftsmen of the Kragujevac institute. Colonel lieutenant Radosavljević can be considered the first known Serbian designer of Trench Art objects, which have a complex public memorial function. Aside from emphasizing the military character of memory of the fallen warriors through the symbolism of light which it embodies, the church polyelaioi acquired the Christian eschatological sense of redemption and hope in future salvation.

The practice of using military material like cannon shells for building a mobile altar for church services on the open battlefield has been documented among the French army during the Great War (Saunders 2002: 27). Bullet shells of firearms are also used as material in the construction of Crucifixions intended to be complex objects of memory connecting victims and their descendants to sites of wartime suffering (Saunders 2000: 56–57). In rethinking the purpose of these items it is worth noting that objects such as the Crucifixions clearly Christianize military sacrifices, ascribing to them a deeper social and religious context.

One item in the permanent exhibition of the Jewish Museum in Vienna is a ceremonial *Hanukkah* lamp made entirely of firearm and rifle shells and other munitions. This ceremonial candle-holder, taking the form of a menorah with nine branches, is the work of a member of the Sarajevo Sephardic Jewish community mobilized to participate in the Great War as a soldier in the Austro-Hungarian army (Rechter 2001; Penslar 2013: 166–194). The symbolic meaning of light, also connected with the feast of *Hanukkah* and the narrative of the miracle which took place in the Temple of Jerusalem after the victory of the Israelis against the Hellenistic army, is merged with the individual desire for the survival of Jewish participants in the Great War. Strategies of private remembering of WWI by members of Jewish communities were based on the same concept of the sacralization of victims, as well as in hope of a miracle salvation. Another example exists in the Serbian Jewish community, in which the process of artistic articulation of the monument to Jewish soldiers fallen in wars between 1912 and 1918, situated at the Sephardic cemetery in Belgrade, adopted a symbolic image of weapons which visually tied the memorial entity with the

Great War. Weapons such as a rifle with a bayonet, military sabers, and the *šajkača*, a Serbian military hat, as well as stone cannon grenades, appear as iconographical elements of this memorial, giving the mausoleum a distinctly militaristic character (Dautović 2013: 46–54).

The category of Trench Art emerged as a distinct phenomenon in visual culture after the Great War, with which it is most commonly associated. The creation of objects with a practical and decorative purpose during the war reflected a simple need to restore order and was a means of escapism in a time of crisis. This phenomenon, like many others similar to it which are visually connected with periods of trauma, appear unsettling as they link victims and perpetrators (Hellinger 2003). Remaining understudied and on the margins of scientific attention, their cathartic potential was lacking. Preserved objects testify to the continuity of life, the need for aestheticization of reality and the creation of a permanent memory of intense emotional war experiences. The objects created during the war became, after its ending, a reminder to survivors of these experiences. Memorabilia made using war material also kept the memory of the deceased alive, as well as the reason for their tragic departure, because wars justify absence. Private memory and the use of Trench Art objects carries numerous meanings, without draining their symbolic potential. This is especially evident in church chandeliers, which connect fallen heroes with divine light, and visually embody the collectivity of sacrifice for the fatherland. These complex installations made using military materials with their sacral and memorial function are a unique phenomenon in the recent culture of remembrance and in church art. Terminological clarity and precision offered by the term “Trench Art” when applied to manifestations of a national visual culture, facilitates to a great extent a methodological approach in the study of numerous unpublished and understudied objects in the domain of war materiality.

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АРТИФИЦИРАЊЕ СЕЋАЊА: „РОВОВСКА УМЕТНОСТ“ И ПАМЋЕЊЕ СРПСКИХ ВОЈНИКА ИЗ ВЕЛИКОГ РАТА

Апстракт: Током и након Првог светског рата као појава у визуелној култури Европе јављају се предмети начињени од ратног материјала, чаура и оружја чија примарна милитарна намена уметничким чином бива преиначена. Овакви предмети обухваћени термином „рововска уметност“ сведочанства су визуелне културе епохе Великог рата. Карактер ових предмета по много чему хибридан смешта их између примењене и народне уметности, меморијске и комеморативне функције, везујући их непосредно за ратно окружење, али и различите стратегије артифицирања којима постају нови објекти драгоцени за визуелну културу. У бројним музејским и приватним колекцијама на подручју Србије налазе се методолошки нераспознати предмети сећања на Први светски рат. Објекти рововске уметности имају значајно место и у сакралном јавном простору као милитарни маркери повезани са меморијом на пале ратнике попут полијелеја израђиваних у крагујевачком Војно-техничком заводу за бројне спомен цркве из међуратног периода. Ове сложене инсталације од милитарног материјала, сакралне и меморијске

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намене, јединствена су појава у новијој култури сећања колико и црквеној уметности. Настојећи да поменуте артефакте ратне визуелне културе систематизујемо, тумачићемо их унутар ширег европског контекста указујући на процес трансформације од почетног ратног материјала који уметничком интервенцијом постје предмет нових сложених значења. Предмети рововске уметности као артифицирани објекти припадају проучавањима историје уметности и визуелне културе. Сведочећи о материјалности епохе ови објекти варирају од личног односа који су српски војници и цивили обликујући их исказивали спрам Великог рата до њихове симболичке јавне употребе и рефлексије одређених аспеката друштвене идеологије Краљевине Југославије.

Кључне речи: Велики рат, рововска уметност, артифицирани предмети, сећање, Србија

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The past of the Balkans spanning from the 17th to the 20th centuries, seen from the viewpoints of cultural memory, visibility, and identity in the eight papers comprising this collection, is a methodologically innovative, theoretically well-founded and modern approach to the study of the past. Apart from wartime crises, no less grave were the crises precipitated by natural disasters, epidemics of communicable diseases, permanent fear of hunger, supernatural powers, the Other..., which altogether impacted the creation of the “imaginary” picture of the Balkans in the eyes of the Europeans as a territory encumbered with perpetual conflict and unsettledness.

Radomir Popović (excerpted from his review)

The collection of papers entitled *Culture of Remembrance, Visibility and Crisis in the Balkans: 17th–20th Century* is comprised of a corpus of eight studies whose topics, from different angles, shed more light on the specific features of visual culture in times of crisis in Serbia and the Balkans between the mid-17th century and the early 20th century. The changes to visibility in times of crisis are summed up and their key features revealed ... which boil down to three basic dominant characteristics: destruction, transformation, and fragmentation.

Ljiljana Stošić (excerpted from her review)

With its diversity of themes, its methodological solutions, and reliably researched and presented results, the collection is a significant contribution to the study of the relationship between cultural memory, visual culture, and the influence exerted on societies and their beliefs by dramatic historical processes and natural disasters, including epidemics.

Milan Ristović (excerpted from his review)

