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Croatian Historiography of World War I

– How to win a war by losing it?

The research on World War I in Croatian historiography was analysed in the first part of this paper in the context of extreme twists and turns of dominant narratives and public paradigms in Croatia in the period from 1918 to 2015. In accordance with these changes, approaches to the research on the topic were changing also. Thus, four main periods in Croatian historiography, coinciding with the changes of the state frameworks that Croatia was a part of, can be determined: 1918-1941 (Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes/Yugoslavia), 1941-1945 (Independent State of Croatia), 1945-1991 (Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia/Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) and the period after 1991 (Republic of Croatia). In the second part of the paper, trends in research on World War I in Croatian historiography during the past hundred years were compared with the dominant trends in Western European historiographies (England, France and Germany). They showed great similarities, but no direct influence of foreign historiographies on Croatian could be confirmed. Therefore, a thesis was posited that these similarities have largely been the result of general social circumstances in Europe.

Historiography always reflects the moment in which it is created, because the politics of history, which is dominant in a specific society and at a specific moment, inevitably impact its development. Therefore, when speaking of Croatian, Slovenian, Serbian, Hungarian, German, American or any

other historiography, we can expect that their interpretations of certain events will differ or there will be differences in the dominant topics of research. In other words, even though historiography is a science in the strict, modern sense of the word, given the differences in interpretations between various traditions – both between states and within a single state in the course of its history – one cannot expect its complete uniformity. With that in mind, it should be noted that Croatian historiography from WWI to the 1990s and the proclamation of the Republic of Croatia, perhaps with the exception of the period during WWII and the historiography of the Independent State of Croatia (1941-1945), cannot be regarded as an independent one because it was a part of Yugoslav historiography, either during the first (1918-1941) or the second Yugoslavia (1945-1991). Each of these changes of the state framework facilitated a radical change of the dominant national narrative, which changed not only the approach to the research on topics related to WWI, but also the inclusion or exclusion of those subjects in particular periods in history.

Accordingly, we can determine four main periods in the Croatian historiography of WWI which correspond to the changes of the socio-political frameworks and the changes of dominant narratives (Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes/Yugoslavia 1918-1941; Independent State of Croatia 1941-1945; Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia/Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia 1945-1991; Republic of Croatia 1991 –). However, it has to be noted that the quality of papers and studies on WWI, as well as on any other topic, must not be automatically belittled simply because of the impact of the dominant narratives despite their totalitarian and authoritarian character throughout most of the 20th century. In general, they represent studies on topics of real interest and most of them were prepared according to the standards of the time, based on archival sources. The impact of the dominant ideologies on historiography was reflected mainly in the selection of topics in which historians were interested – which is what Bogumil Hrabak, a Serbian historian, noticed as

early as in 1964.¹ As a result, World War I as a topic of research in Croatian historiography was neglected to a certain extent for a long time, particularly topics on participation of Croats in Austro-Hungarian army. That is why the second part of the title of this paper reads “How to win a war by losing it?” – for after the analysis of Croatian historiography of World War I a relatively unusual question can be asked: “Were the Croats winners or losers?”. It is a result of the fact that the outcome of the First World War has been interpreted in Croatia as a victory practically since 1918, despite the fact that the Croats, at least the great majority of them, fought on the losing side.

In the context of the dominant narratives in both the first and the second Yugoslavia, it was not clear what the research on pro-Habsburg actions of Croats during the war would ideologically legitimize. As a consequence, the topic was avoided in Croatian historiography. Greater attention was given to these topics after 1991. However, by stressing the importance of the formation of the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs in October 1918 – which later became a part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes – the Croats remained, in a way, victorious in the interpretations of WWI. So, along with the classic question of who is to blame for the outbreak of WWI, in Croatia the question of ‘who won’ can be asked as well. This is confirmed by the analysis of all four main periods of Croatian historiography of the First World War.

The main goal of this paper is to analyse Croatian historiography of World War I in the context of extreme twists and turns of dominant narratives from 1918 until today (2015). In the context of these strong changes, Croatian historical experience provides an extremely interesting case study in the research on the relationship of historiography to the topic of World War I. The second goal is to analyse the influence of dominant Western European historiographical trends on

¹ Bogumil Hrabak, “Austro-ugarski zarobljenici u Srbiji 1914–1915. godine i prilikom povlačenja kroz Albaniju”, *Zbornik Historijskog instituta Slavonije* 1 (1964), no. 2: 107.

Croatian historiography regarding the study of the First World War, or at least the compatibility between the Croatian and Western European historiographies in this matter. For that purpose, I used the classification made by British historian Jay Winter and French historian Antoine Prost who, despite differences in historiographical schools and traditions, managed to identify three generations of historians of the Great War in French, English and German historiography.²

Given the totalitarian and authoritarian nature of the states Croatia was a part of until 1991, the influence of public paradigms on historiography was much stronger than in Western European democracies. As a result, the choice of research topics in Croatian historiography was in a way self-censored – unlike the historiographical trends in democratic societies in which, despite the existence of the dominant narrative, authors more freely chose research subjects that were not in accordance with that. Papers published in Croatia had to be in accordance with the public paradigms and the dominant national and historiographical narratives in practically every aspect. The differences between the national and foreign historiographies came to the fore particularly during the second half of the 20th century. Thus, a widespread claim that World War I is overshadowed by World War II in historiographies in general is even more valid in the case of Croatian historiography. This trend became even more pronounced at the end of the century due to the strong interest of Croatian historians in the *Homeland war* (1991-1995) topics, which emerged almost immediately after the war had ended and which in turn decreased the popularity of the First World War as a research topic even further.³

A direct impact of Western European historiographies on Croatian historiography cannot be detected. Nevertheless, the two share some general characteristics. Similarities regarding

² Jay Winter and Antoine Prost, *The Great War in History: Debates and Controversies, 1914 to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005)

³ Filip Hameršak, *Tamna strana Marsa: hrvatska autobiografija i Prvi svjetski rat* (Zagreb: Naklada Ljevak, 2013), 177.

the dominant choice of research topics in specific periods of time during the past hundred years are obvious. Those, however, are more a consequence of general social circumstances in Europe during this period, than the direct influence of Western historiographies on Croatian historiography. That is evident from the differences in interpretations of certain events (about which more will be said later).

Periodization of Croatian Historiography of World War I

Croatian Historiography of World War I from 1918 to 1941

The most important consequence of WWI on the South Slavic territories was the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the formation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (the Kingdom of Yugoslavia from 1929). Consequently, the war and its interpretation were of great importance for the new state during the entire time of its existence (1918-1941). That importance was additionally emphasized because of the great sacrifices that the Kingdom of Serbia suffered throughout the war, the participation of South Slavs from the Monarchy in the Austro-Hungarian army complicating the situation even further. That was one of the main reasons why the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes/Yugoslavia was widely perceived as the enlarged Kingdom of Serbia within which the Croats were subordinated to the Serbs.⁴

In this period, historiography focused on the creation of the state after the war and its justification. Thus, the topics of research were mainly related to the political aspect of the Kingdom's foundation.⁵ At the same time, the Austro-Hungarian

⁴ John Paul Newman, „Croats and Croatia in the wake of the Great war“, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 24 (2014): 165-181.

⁵ See: Branko Lazarević, *Jugoslovenski dokumenti – pregled narodnog pokreta u domovini i inostranstvu za vreme Svetskog rata* (Zagreb, 1919); Ferdo Šišić, *Dokumenti o postanku Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca 1914.–1919.* (Zagreb, 1920); Ferdo Šišić, *Jadransko pitanje na Konferenciji mira u Parizu* (Zagreb, Matica Hrvatska, 1920); Milovan Grba, *Gledišta austro-ugarskih generala i državnika na pitanje o aneksiji Srbije, Crne Gore i Albanije*

Monarchy was often labelled as a “prison of nations”, which was automatically reflected in the view historiography had on all topics related to it, including the participation of the Croats in the Austro-Hungarian army, as well as the political efforts of the pro-Habsburg Croatian politicians during the war. Those topics were neglected, unlike research on the pro-Yugoslav and anti-Habsburg Croats. Special attention was given to the actions of the Yugoslav Committee which led the volunteer movement for the Serbian army among the South Slav diaspora. As the key people in the Yugoslav Committee were Croats, the publication of studies, monographs and memoirs on this and similar issues served the purpose of spreading the idea of the unified Yugoslavia and the Yugoslav national paradigm. This enabled the Croats to be included among the war victors, although in reality only a part of the Croatian political elite could be considered victors.⁶

te o riješenju (!) jugoslavenskog problema (Zagreb, 1920); Milada Paulová, *Jugoslavenski odbor* (Zagreb, 1925); Franko Potočnjak, *Kobne smjernice naše politike spram Italije* (Zagreb, 1925); Pero Slijepčević, *Naši dobrovoljci u Svetskom ratu* (Zagreb: Nova Europa, 1925); Hinko Hinković, *Iz velikog doba. Moj rad i moji doživljaji za vrijeme Svjetskog rata* (Zagreb, 1927); Bogumil Vošnjak, *U borbi za ujedinjenu narodnu državu* (Ljubljana: Tiskovna zadruga; Beograd: Izdavačka knjižara Gece Kona; Zagreb: Izdavačka knjižara Z. i V. Vasića, 1928); Alfons Hribar, *Jugoslavensko-talijanski odnosi (Od sarajevske tragedije do Društva naroda)* (Zagreb, 1928); Stanoje Stanojević, ed., *Narodna enciklopedija srpsko-hrvatsko-slovenačka*, vol. 1-4 (Zagreb: Bibliografski zavod: 1926–1929); Filip Lukas, *Hrvatsko pitanje i Londonski ugovor* (Zagreb: Tisak Tipografija, 1937); Petar Jelavić, ed., *Hrvati u borbama za oslobođenje sjevernih krajeva Jugoslavije: Međumurja, Prekomurja, Koruške i Štajerske* (Zagreb: Izdanje Udruženja ratnih dobrovoljaca Međumurja, Prekomurja, Koruške i Štajerske, 1940).

⁶ See: Ivo Jelavić, *Iz pregažene Srbije* (Sarajevo, 1919); Petar Grgec, *Jugoslavenski argonauti. Istinita slika iz talijanskoga ropstva* (Zagreb, 1919); Marcel Kolin, *Jugosloveni u Južnoj Americi u radu za svoj narod* (Zagreb, 1920); Dane Hranilović, *Iz zapisaka jugoslavenskog dobrovoljca* (Zagreb: Tisak i naklada knjižare Kr. sveučilišta i Jugoslavenske akademije St. Kugli, 1922); Lujo Lovrić, *Suzna jesen* (Zagreb, 1922); Lujo Lovrić, *Kroz snijegove i magle* (Zagreb, 1923); Ante Kovač, *Impresije iz jedne epohe. Kroz zemlje i gradove* (Zagreb: Komisiona naklada Hrvatskog štamparskog zavoda, 1923); Franko Potočnjak, *Iz emigracije*, vol. 1-4 (Zagreb, 1919-1926); Paulová, *Jugoslavenski odbor*; Slijepčević, *Naši dobrovoljci*; Hinković, *Iz velikog doba*; Oskar Tartaglia, *Veležadnik. Moje uspomene iz borbe protiv crno-žutog orla* (Zagreb–Split: C.

Croatian Historiography of World War I from 1941 to 1945

The second period of Croatian historiography was the one during World War II, after the dissolution of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1941. On part of its territory, the Independent State of Croatia was formed, an ally of Nazi Germany and fascist Italy. Consequently, both the dominant historical narrative and the perception of World War I in historiography changed completely. Due to the war, and unlike in the previous period, special importance was given to the Croatian military heritage, including the First World War. However, as the historiography of the Independent State of Croatia developed only for a short period of time and in war circumstances, the total number of papers dedicated to the First World War was quite low. In this context it is interesting to note that the Isonzo/Soča Front was an undesirable topic until 1943 due to the alliance with Italy.⁷ In short, this series of battles continued to be neglected by historiographers. Even in the interwar period, it was of secondary importance, particularly in comparison with the war path of the Serbian army – not only because the Isonzo Front was not a part of the war for the unification of Yugoslavia, but also because of the complicated relations between the Kingdom of SCS/Yugoslavia and the Kingdom of Italy during the whole interwar period.

Albrecht, 1928.) Slavko S. Diklić, *Putničke bilješke jugoslovenskog ratnog dobrovoljca. Od Dobrudže do Soluna preko Dalekog istoka* (Osijek, 1932); Joso Defrančeski, *C. i kr. ratni logori 1914– 1918.* (Osijek: A. Rott, 1937); Jovan Korda, *Odesa–Arhangelsk–Solun. Iz života ratnih dobrovoljaca* (Osijek, 1937).

⁷ See: Ljudmil Hauptmann, “Povijest Austrije” in *Hrvatska enciklopedija*, vol. 1, ed. Mate Ujević (Zagreb: Tipografija, 1941), 779-780.; Slavko Pavičić, *Hrvatska vojna i ratna poviest i Prvi svjetski rat* (Zagreb: Hrvatska knjiga, 1943); Slavko Pavičić i Franjo Perše, “Hrvati u Prvom svjetskom ratu” in *Naša domovina*, vol. 1, ed. Filip Lukas (Zagreb: Izdanje Glavnog ustaškog stana, 1943), 199.-200.; Slavko Pavičić, *Jugozapadno (talijansko) bojište u Prvom svjetskom ratu*, vol. 1 (Zagreb, 1944); Vilim Bačić, *Poviest Prvog svjetskog rata na Jadranu*, vol. 1 (Zagreb: Hrvatski izdavački bibliografski zavod, 1945); Slavko Pavičić, “Domobranstvo” in *Hrvatska enciklopedija*, vol. 5 ed. Mate Ujević (Zagreb: Tipografija, 1945), 192.-193.

Croatian Historiography of World War I from 1945 to 1990

After the Second World War, Croatia became part of the Socialist Yugoslavia. Again, the change of the state framework meant the introduction of a completely new public paradigm and dominant historical and national narrative which was reflected in the stance of the historiography on the World War I topics. In general, these topics were rather neglected, especially in comparison with the Second World War. Because the latter resulted in the creation of the second Yugoslavia, the works on WWII served as confirmation of the new system. World War I was just a step toward this ultimate goal. But, regardless of its secondary importance, a totalitarian socialist state could not allow research on such an important historical event to develop in opposition to the dominant ideology. Thus, the influence of the dominant narrative on WWI research remained strong.

One of the main determinants that shaped the socialist narrative of the socialist Yugoslavia was anti-imperialism. Accordingly, colonialism and imperial expansion were considered to be the main causes of World War I. The Monarchy was thus automatically viewed negatively, while any kind of Yugoslav-like solution was favoured.⁸ Consequently, the participation of the Croats in the Austro-Hungarian army was overshadowed by the pro-Yugoslav oriented compatriots once more, just like during the interwar period. Actually, this tendency became even stronger after WWII due to the association of the Croatian military tradition with the World War II experience and the army of the Independent State of Croatia which was, according to the public paradigm, one of the main enemies of the newly formed socialist state.⁹ The emphasis in research on the First World War was again on the activities of the Yugoslav Committee and its volunteer movement. At the same time, interest in the research on topics like mutinies within the Austro-Hungarian army and the phenomenon of “Green Cadre” grew, all of which helped the

⁸ See: Tomislav Markus, „Demonizacija Habsburške monarhije kao metoda historijskih istraživanja“, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, 26 (1992), no. 1: 81-98.

⁹ Hameršak, *Tamna strana Marsa*, 180

inclusion of the Croats among the war victors.¹⁰ Basically, the narrative created in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes/ Yugoslavia was largely retained in socialism, but with a strong note of communism. Therefore, special attention was given to the research on volunteers from the Russian captivity who were spreading communism among the South Slavs as part of the revolutionary movement after 1917.¹¹

¹⁰ See: Bogdan Krizman, "Građa o nemirima u Hrvatskoj na kraju g. 1918.", *Historijski zbornik*, 10 (1957), no. 1-4: 111-129.; Benjamin Stulli, "Prilozi građi o ustanku mornara u Boki Kotorskoj 1.-3. februara 1918.", *Arhivski vjesnik*, 1 (1958), no. 1: 174-248.; Dinko Foretić, "Antiaustrijski pokreti u ratnoj mornarici u Šibeniku 1917/1918.", *Radovi Filozofskoga fakulteta u Zadru*, 6 (1964-1967), 195-214.; Benjamin Stulli, "Prilozi građi za historiju revolucionarnog pokreta mornara na našoj obali 1918. god.", *Arhivski vjesnik*, 9 (1966), no. 9: 7-109.; Vaso Bogdanov, ed., *Jugoslavenski odbor u Londonu u povodu 50-godišnjice osnivanja* (Zagreb; Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, 1966); Benjamin Stulli, "Revolucionarni pokreti i pobune u austrougarskoj mornarici tijekom 1917. i 1918.", *Jugoslavenski istorijski časopis*, 6 (1967), no. 1-4: 46-63.; Benjamin Stulli, "Novi prilozi građi za historiju revolucionarnog pokreta mornara na našoj obali 1917-1918.", *Arhivski vjesnik*, 10 (1967), no. 10: 1-51.; Bogdan Krizman, "Predaja austrougarskog ratnog brodovlja u Puli 1918. godine", *Vojnoistorijski glasnik*, 18 (1967), no. 2: 239-266.; Ivan Čizmić, "Dobrovoljački pokret jugoslavenskih iseljenika u SAD u Prvom svjetskom ratu", *Historijski zbornik*, 23-24 (1970-1971): 21-43.; Bogumil Hrabak, "Pojava tzv. disidentskog pokreta među Jugoslovenima u Rusiji 1917. godine", *Zbornik Historijskog instituta Slavonije*, 13 (1976): 1-114.; Dragoslav Janković, "O odnosima Jugoslavenskog odbora sa srpskom vladom u 1916. god.", *Historijski zbornik*, 29-30 (1976-1977): 455-468.; Bogumil Hrabak, "Konceptije federativne i konfederativne Jugoslavije među Jugoslovenima u Rusiji (od aprila 1916. do aprila 1918. godine)", *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, 21 (1989), no. 1-3: 1-28.

¹¹ Drago Škorić, "Uloga povratnika iz ruskog zarobljeništva u razvoju događaja u Hrvatskoj potkraj godine 1918." *Starine JAZU*, 46 (1956), 7-21.; Ferdo Čulinović, *Odjeci Oktobra u jugoslavenskim krajevima* (Zagreb: 27 srpanj, 1957); Josip Vidmar, "Prilozi građi za povijest 1917-1918 (s osobitim osvrtom na razvoj radničkog pokreta i odjeke Oktobarske revolucije kod nas)", *Arhivski vjesnik*, 1 (1958), no. 1: 11-173.; Dragovan Šepić, "Oktobarska revolucija i jugoslavensko pitanje u Austro-Ugarskoj 1917/18", *Historijski zbornik*, 11-12 (1958-1959): 7-47.; Bogumil Hrabak, "Dolazak organizovanih povratnika iz Sovjetske Rusije u Jugoslaviju 1918-1919. g.", *Zbornik Historijskog instituta Slavonije*, 4 (1966): 239-282.; Ivan Očak, *U borbi za ideje Oktobra. Jugoslavenski povratnici iz Sovjetske Rusije (1918-1921)* (Zagreb: Stvarnost, 1976); Ivan Očak, *Jugoslavenski oktobarci. Likovi i sudbine* (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1979)

The biggest change from the interwar historiography was made regarding the aftermath of World War I and the question of the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Its legality and legitimacy was problematized, i.e. the nature of the unification of the Kingdom of Serbia with the State of Slovenians, Croats and Serbs in the context of its neglect of the Geneva and Corfu Declarations was brought into question.¹² That could not have been discussed during the interwar period. However, in socialism it was still not possible to argue that the Monarchy could have survival chances, not even in a renewed, tripartite form. Additionally, the Monarchy was often criticized, according to the socialist background of the dominant narrative not only because of the unresolved national issue of South Slavs who were a part of it, but also because of the class issue.¹³

It should be also mentioned, as Filip Hameršak noted, that the participation of Josip Broz Tito in the Austro-Hungarian army during the Great War represented an additional hindrance regarding the research on World War I topics.¹⁴ Tito was the absolute ruler of Yugoslavia, to the point that his influence on social life turned into a proper cult of personality. Articulation of his participation in the war, particularly in the Serbian campaign, was contrary to the publicly proclaimed national idea of unified Yugoslavia, so this topic became something of a taboo. As a consequence, all the other topics related to World War I became quite unpopular, too. Hameršak detected one more negative circumstance regarding the research on the

¹² See: Bogdan Krizman, „Ženevska konferencija o ujedinjenju 1918 godine“, *Istorijski glasnik*, 3-4 (1958), no. 1-2: 3-31.; Ferdo Čulinović, *Jugoslavija između dva rata*, vol. 1 (Zagreb: Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, 1961); Ferdo Čulinović, *Dokumenti o Jugoslaviji* (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1968); Bogdan Krizman, *Raspad Austro-Ugarske i stvaranje jugoslavenske države* (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1977); Ferdo Čulinović, *Državnopravni razvitak Jugoslavije* (Zagreb: Pravni fakultet, 1981); Bogdan Krizman, *Hrvatska u prvom svjetskom ratu: Hrvatsko-srpski politički odnosi* (Zagreb: Globus, 1989); Neda Engelsfeld, *Prvi parlament Kraljevstva Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca* (Zagreb: Globus, Pravni fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, Centar za stručno usavršavanje i suradnju s udruženim radom, 1989)

¹³ Hameršak, *Tamna strana Marsa*, 183.

¹⁴ Hameršak, *Tamna strana Marsa*, 187.

role the Croats played in the First World War: the fact that the analysis of the war as well as other topics on military history was to a great extent left to the *Vojnoistorijski institut* [Military History Institute] in Belgrade which was not too interested in the research on the Austro-Hungarian army and focused mainly on the successes of the Serbian army. Therefore, some of the most significant studies in this period were written by the Croatian diaspora where research on World War I as well as on other topics was continued on a significantly different basis than in Yugoslavia, often using a diametrically opposed approach.¹⁵

Croatian Historiography of World War I after 1991

The introduction of democracy in Croatia in the 1990s was followed by the reinterpretation of numerous historical topics in its historiography due to the earlier socialist approach. At the same time, a radical change of public paradigm resulted in strong interest in more recent history, like the Second World War and events from the period of socialist Yugoslavia, because such research was previously under the extremely strong influence of socialist narrative. Accordingly, the research on World War I was overshadowed again, only this time it was even further exacerbated by the strong interest in research on the *Homeland War* and topics from the most recent past.

So, immediately after the breakup of Yugoslavia, there were no significant changes in terms of the popularity of the research on First World War, which lasted practically until the last few years. In recent years, interest in the study of World War I has grown strongly, but there is still no systematic analysis of the entire Croatian territory during the war. Many scientific works have been published, studies, proceedings, memoirs, diaries and a number of monographs, from which Filip Hameršak's monograph „*Tamna strana Marsa – Hrvatska autobiografija i Prvi svjetski rat*“ [Dark Side of Mars – Croatian Autobiography and World War I] has to be singled out due to its significance and complexity.

¹⁵ Hameršak, *Tamna strana Marsa*, 181.

Unlike before, in the papers published after 1991 great attention was given to prominent pro-Habsburg oriented individuals¹⁶, distinguished military commanders in the Austro-Hungarian army¹⁷ and Croatian units¹⁸ within it. However, the most common topics became local and regional ones as forms of micro-historic studies.¹⁹ More memoirs and diaries of

¹⁶ Ivan Bulić, „Ivan Skerlec Lomnički 1913.–1917. kraljevski komesar i hrvatski ban“ (PhD diss. Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences University of Zagreb, 2011); Ivan Bulić, „Miroslav Krleža o Hrvatskoj u Prvome svjetskom ratu. Između kronike i interpretacije“, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, 39 (2007), no. 3: 687-704.; Andrej Čebotarev, „Prvi svjetski rat u očima grofa Stjepana Erdödyja“, *Gazophylacium*, 2 (1995), no. 1-2: 33-58.

¹⁷ Ornata Tadin, „Osobni fond generala Stjepana Sarkotića – analitički inventar“, *Arhivski vjesnik*, 37 (1994): 221-262.; Nikola Batušić, „Ratni dnevnik Branka Gavelle“ in *Krležini dani u Osijeku 2002.*, ed. Branko Hećimović (Osijek: Hrvatsko narodno kazalište u Osijeku, 2003), 132-157.; Milan Pojić, *Vojskovođa Svetozar Borojević 1856–1920* (Zagreb: Hrvatski državni arhiv, 2006); Drago Roksandić, *Svetozar Borojević od Bojne (1856–1920) – lav ili lisica sa Soče?* (Zagreb: Vijeće srpske nacionalne manjine grada Zagreba, 2007); Branko Stapar-Agramer, „Neki nepoznati detalji i dopune o feldmaršalu Svetozaru Borojeviću, barunu od Bojne“, *Petrinjski zbornik*, 10 (2008): 184-185.; Dinko Čutura, „Stjepan Sarkotić. Časnik, strateg i političar“ (PhD diss. Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences University of Zagreb, 2012)

¹⁸ Ivan Balta, „Zapisi o osječkim vojnim jedinicama u Prvom svjetskom ratu“, *Analiz Zavoda za znanstveni i umjetnički rad u Osijeku*, 17 (2001): 67-89.; Dinko Čutura, „Hrvatske postrojbe u Prvom svjetskom ratu i vojni raspad Austro-Ugarske“ (MA thesis, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences University of Zagreb, 2003); Željko Pleskolt, ed., *Ratni dnevnik C. K. Varaždinske pješačke pukovnije br. 16. 26. srpnja 1914.–29. siječnja 1915.* (Bjelovar: Državni arhiv u Bjelovaru, 2004); Željko Pleskolt, ed., *Ratni dnevnik C. K. Varaždinske pješačke pukovnije br. 16. 30. siječnja 1915.–23. lipnja 1918.* (Bjelovar: Državni arhiv u Bjelovaru, 2004); Ivan Balta, „Slavonija i slavonske vojne jedinice u Prvome svjetskom ratu“, *Polemos*, 8 (2005), no. 15-16: 205-219.; Ivan Balta, „Vojne jedinice iz Hrvatske (Slavonije) u I. svjetskom ratu“ in *Dani Franje Tuđmana*, vol. 1, ed. Nenad Piskač (Veliko Trgovišće: Općina Veliko Trgovišće, 2008); Katarina Pcedić, Davor Mandić, ed., *Za cara i domovinu 1914–1918.* (Pula: Povijesni muzej Istre, 2008); Filip Novosel, „Hrvatskoslavonske postrojbe u sastavu austrougarske vojske za vrijeme Prvog svjetskog rata“, *Scrinia Slavonica*, 10 (2010): 267-289.; Jelena Borošak Marijanović, *„Dadoh zlato za željezo“ 1914.–1918. Hrvatska u vrijeme Prvog svjetskog rata* (Zagreb: Hrvatski povijesni muzej, 2011); Mladen Houška, *XII. zagrebački korpus u I. svjetskom ratu* (Sveti Ivan Zelina: Muzej Sveti Ivan Zelina, 2014)

¹⁹ Due to their large number it is not possible to cite all, so as an example see: Damir Agičić, „Civil Croatia on the Eve of the First World War (The Echo of the Assassination and Ultimatum)“, *Povijesni prilozi*, 14 (1995): 301-317.; Vijoleta

common soldiers were analysed and published in comparison with previous periods, too.²⁰ Also, a number of papers were written on the structure and work of the state apparatus in war circumstances²¹ and the Austro-Hungarian army in general, with an emphasis on the navy. The navy was of special importance to Croatia, located on the Eastern Adriatic coast, and Croats constituted a great part of the Monarchy's navy.²²

Herman Kaurić, „Funkcioniranje zdravstvene službe u Požeškoj županiji tijekom Prvog svjetskog rata. Primjer Kraljevske zemaljske bolnice u Pakracu“ (MA thesis, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences University of Zagreb, 2002); Ante Bralić, „Zadar u doba Prvog svjetskog rata“ (PhD diss. University of Zadar, 2005); Vijoleta Herman Kaurić, „Za naše junake... Rad dobrotvornih humanitarnih društava u gradu Zagrebu 1914.-1918.“ (PhD diss. Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences University of Zagreb, 2007); Hrvoje Čapo, *Povijest Požege i njezina stanovništva od 1910. do 1921.* (Jastrebarsko: Naklada Slap, 2009); Andrej Bader, *Zaboravljeni egzodus 1915.-1918.* (Medulin: Denona, 2009); Nikola Anušić, „U sjeni Velikog rata: utjecaj pandemije španjolske gripe (1918/1919) na sociodemografske promjene u sjevernoj Hrvatskoj“ (PhD diss. Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences University of Zagreb, 2011); Davor Mandić, *Istra u vihoru Velikog rata–sudbina evakuiraca 1914.-1918.* (Pula–Zagreb: Povijesni i pomorski muzej Istre–Grafički zavod Hrvatske, 2013); Željko Pleskolt and Mladen Medar, ed., *Bjelovar u Velikom ratu: 1914-1918.* (Bjelovar: Gradski muzej Bjelovar, 2014); Branko Ostajmer, *Đakovo i Đakovština u Prvom svjetskom ratu: 1914.-1918.* (Đakovo: Muzej Đakovštine, 2014); Filip Škiljan, *Prvi svjetski rat u Dalmaciji: (1914.-1918.)* (Split: Vijeće srpske nacionalne manjine Splitsko-dalmatinske županije – Vijeće srpske nacionalne manjine Dubrovačko-neretvanske županije, 2014); Stjepan Damjanović, ed., *Varaždin i sjeverozapadna Hrvatska u Velikom ratu 1914.-1918.* (Varaždin: Hrvatska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, 2014)

²⁰ Meri Kunčić and Zoran Ladić, “Prilog životopisu Milana Japunčića”, *Biobibliographica*, vol. 1, ed. Trpimir Macan (Zagreb: Leksikografski zavod Miroslav Krleža, 2003), 69-90.; Frane Dubravčić, *Živ sam i dobro mi je. Uspomene iz Prvog svjetskog rata 1914.-1918.* (Otočac: Katedra Čakavskog sabora pokrajine Gacke, 2002); Hameršak, *Tamna strana Marsa*; Branimir Knežević, *Gledanje u viđeno: ratovanje u Srbiji 1914. godine* (Strmec Samoborski: Fortuna, 2014); Pero Blašković, *Sa Bošnjacima u svjetskom ratu* (Strmec Samoborski: Fortuna, 2014); Juraj Oršić-Slavetički, *Na konju i u rovu* (Strmec Samoborski: Fortuna, 2014)

²¹ Ivan Bulić, „Vojna cenzura u Trojednoj kraljevini Hrvatskoj, Slavoniji i Dalmaciji za vrijeme Prvog svjetskoga rata“ (MA thesis, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences University of Zagreb, 2007)

²² Davor Mandić and Marijan Orlić, *Austrougarski bojni brod klase “Tegetthoff” “Szent Istvan”* (Pula: Povijesni muzej, 1998); Dieter Winkler et al., *Carska i kraljevska mornarica u Puli* (Pula: Sveučilišna knjižnica-Društvo Viribus Unitis, 1999); Stjepan Lozo, *Alexander Kircher. Portreti brodova* (Split:

All these issues were quite unpopular and much neglected in both the first and the second Yugoslavia due to the Yugoslavian national paradigm that both states shared. On the other hand, in this last period of Croatian historiography of the First World War, the interest in research on the volunteer movement for the Serbian army among the Croats dropped considerably – as did in research on pro-Yugoslav oriented individuals and groups in general.²³

However, it is important to note that the Croats basically remained victors in these interpretations for, as has been particularly emphasized, they managed to form the State of Slovenians, Croats and Serbs before the unification with the Kingdom of Serbia. The year 1918 has often been researched as an epochal moment because it represented the accession of Croatia to the South Slavic state – an experience which marked the 20th century as a rather traumatic period for Croatia, and an experience that is still reflected in everyday social and political relations.²⁴ In a way, it resulted in a kind of self-victimization,

Hrvatski pomorski muzej, 2000); Zvonimir Freivogel, *Austrougarski bojni brodovi I. svjetskog rata* (Rijeka: Adamić-Digital point, 2003); Dario Petković, *Ratna mornarica Austro-ugarske Monarhije. Brodovi u K. u. K. Kriegsmarine s prijelaza 19. u 20. stoljeće do kraja Prvog svjetskog rata* (Pula: C.A.S.H., 2004.; Bruno Dobrić, ed., *Mornarička knjižnica (K. u. K. Marinebibliothek) i austrijska/austrougarska mornarica u Puli* (Pula: Sveučilišna knjižnica, 2005); Bojan Pešl, *More i brodovi Johanna Seitsa* (Split, Hrvatski pomorski muzej, 2005); Zvonimir Freivogel, *Austrougarske podmornice u I. svjetskom ratu* (Rijeka: Adamić-Digital point, 2007); Zvonimir Freivogel, *Austrougarska vojska u Prvome svjetskom ratu* (Zagreb: Despot infinitus, 2014)

²³ Ivan Hrštic, "Dnevnik Ivana Čovića – prilog istraživanju dobrovoljačkog pokreta među Hrvatima u SAD-u u vrijeme Prvog svjetskog rata", *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, 42 (2010), no. 1: 157-177.; Ivan Hrštic, "Položaj dobrovoljaca iz iseljeničtva u srbijanskoj vojsci prema dokumentima iz ostavštine dr. Ante Trumbića", *Društvena istraživanja*, 21 (2012), no. 1: 239-258.

²⁴ Ljubo Boban, "Kada je i kako nastala Država Slovenaca Hrvata i Srba", *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest*, 26 (1993): 187-198; Hodimir Sirotković, "O nastanku, organizaciji, državno-pravnim pitanjima i sukcesiji Države SHS", *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest*, 26 (1993): 199-208.; Mira Kolar Dimitrijević, "Gospodarsko-socijalni rad Narodne vlade Narodnog vijeća Države SHS 1918. god.", *Radovi zavoda za hrvatsku povijest*, 26 (1993): 209-218.; Branka Boban, "Stjepan Radić i Država Slovenaca, Hrvata i Srba", *Radovi zavoda za hrvatsku povijest*, 26 (1993): 219-236.; Hrvoje Matković, "Svetozar Pribičević u danima

the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes often being perceived as a fatal mistake or an anti-Croatian conspiracy. Linked to this myth are issues on the necessity of Croatia becoming a part of the Yugoslav state, as well as speculations on other possible scenarios after the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. However, as the role of historiography is not to ask what could have been, speculations such as these will not be discussed in this paper.

Croatian historiography of World War I in comparison with Western European historiographies

Regarding the comparison between trends in the Croatian historiography of World War I with the Western-European historiographical trends, as it was already noted, I used the analysis of Jay Winter and Antoine Prost who argue that three different generations interpreted the war within “three historiographical configurations”.²⁵ These authors identified 1935, 1965 and 1992 as milestone years. According to them, the first generation of World War I historians dominated in historiography up to the 1960s. They call those historians the Generation of 1935 because that was the year *the first public encounter of French and German historians* who dealt with World War I topics was organized. According to Winter and Prost, a common characteristic of historians of this generation was that they interpreted the war and everything that preceded

postojanja Države Slovenaca, Hrvata i Srba“, *Radovi zavoda za hrvatsku povijest*, 26 (1993): 237-248.; Ante Sekulić, „Hrvati iz južnougarskih područja od 1918. do 1920.“, *Radovi zavoda za hrvatsku povijest*, 26 (1993): 249-254.; Petar Strčić, „Funkcioniranje Države Slovenaca, Hrvata i Srba na primjeru otoka Krka“, *Radovi zavoda za hrvatsku povijest*, 26 (1993): 255-262.; Franko Mirošević, „Prilike u južnoj Dalmaciji za vrijeme postojanja Države Slovenaca, Hrvata i Srba“, *Radovi zavoda za hrvatsku povijest*, 26 (1993): 263-268.; Marina Štambuk-Škalić, *Narodno vijeće Slovenaca Hrvata i Srba u Zagrebu 1918.-1919.* (Zagreb: Hrvatski državni arhiv, 2008); Zlatko Matijević, ed., *Godina 1918. Prethodnice, zbivanja, posljedice* (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2010); Željko Holjevac, ed., *1918. u hrvatskoj povijesti* (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 2012)

²⁵ Winter and Prost, *The Great War*, 31.

it as the culmination of 19th century international policies. The concept of “nation” was of vital importance to them, and war events were reduced to individuals and their decisions. Accordingly, the role of diplomats, generals and politicians was (over)emphasized, while practically no attention was given to “ordinary” people, soldiers or civilians. The key issue for this generation of historians was “war guilt”, all of which resulted in papers employing a top-down approach, focusing on political and military history. Social history as well as economy, micro-history and everyday history topics were to a great extent neglected.²⁶

The second generation of historians of WWI changed this. Winter and Prost call them the Generation of 1965 because they think that the year 1965 is a symbol of the change of generations. Winter and Prost argue that, due to the traumatic impact of World War II, not only this generation of historians’ perception of WWI, but also the perception of war in general has changed. It was no longer seen as a strictly military conflict but as a total war which included civilians, women, children, etc. Meanwhile, due to the rapid development at all levels of education, interest in historical research as well as the number of historians grew considerably. Consequently, the style of historical works changed, too, for it had to adapt to a wider audience and market, which was in turn reflected in the choice of research topics. It should also be noted that at the time, the strong impact of Marxism on historians was noticeable across Europe. Accordingly, as studies on experiences of common soldiers and civilians, unlike previously, became more and more frequent, a bottom-up research started to evolve. Class conflict and social stratification as well as the impact of social groups as *collective actors* (soldiers, workers, and civilians) became important topics, with an emphasis on social unrest and the socialist revolution at the end of the war. It was all a consequence of a general world state of affairs after the Second World War, strongly marked by the Cold War and the struggle

²⁶ Winter and Prost, *The Great War*, 200-202.

for decolonization, which showed that the real power lies in society itself and not in the hands of individuals. Instead of war guilt, the key issues in Western European historiographies became aims and origins of war.²⁷

The third generation of World War I historians was named by Winter and Prost the Generation of 1992 because that was the year when the Museum of the Great War in Peronne was opened and the influential scientific conference on “war and cultures” was held. However, the key event in the creation of this generation was the fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Soviet Bloc. At the same time, a type of smooth transition happened among historians from labour movement history to social and cultural history of war as well as to micro-history. It must be noted, however, that those branches of historiography already existed at the time, so no actual change of generations occurred. The main result was a reduction of the impact of Marxism on historiographies. Accordingly, studies on the role of collective actors and the economy have become scarce and historians started to avoid making conclusions on the level of entire societies. Simultaneously, the interest in research on everyday life has grown. Key issues relate to cultures, while key topics have become “outcome of the” and its influence on the interwar period as well as its role in the outbreak of the Second World War.²⁸

That said, it has to be clear that, considering these generations and historical configurations, it is not possible to talk about exclusivity and absolute dominance of one type of research over others. It is a matter of general characteristics and emphasis. In the first configuration, the emphasis was on military and diplomatic history. In the second period, it was on social history, while in the third, it was on cultural and micro-history. However, all these branches of historiography were present in each generation.²⁹

²⁷ Winter and Prost, *The Great War*, 202-203.

²⁸ Winter and Prost, *The Great War*, 203-205.

²⁹ Prost and Winter also recognized dominant trends within each branch of historiography and in each one of the three periods, but it is not possible to

These dominant trends can be recognized, to a certain extent, in Croatian historiography as well. However, because the total number of papers on the Great War is rather small, it is relatively difficult to identify the trends. In that sense, each paper can be indicative. During the interwar years, the dominant topic of research was related to the formation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and the role of prominent politicians in that process. Like in other European countries and in accordance with the first generation of historians of WWI, immediately after WWI a relatively large number of documents were published in the Kingdom as well in an attempt to justify the national role in the war and influence the non-resolved issues after the war.³⁰ As for the war itself, the focus was, primarily on the actions of the Yugoslav Committee and the volunteer movement among the Croatian emigrants for the Serbian army. During the Second World War, in the historiography of the Independent State of Croatia, there were no significant changes in the methodological approaches to the study of the Great War despite the complete ideological change. Due to the short duration of the state and the war circumstances, however, the number of papers in general was small, which makes reaching any significant conclusions difficult.

In the socialist Yugoslavia, immediately after the Second World War research on political ideas and national issues continued to dominate the historiography like they did during the interwar period.³¹ However, in line with the main Western European trends and the second generation of Western European

comment on this further in this paper.

³⁰ See: Lazarević, *Jugoslovenski dokumenti*; Šišić, *Dokumenti*; Grba, *Gledišta austro-ugarskih generala*; Lukas, *Hrvatsko pitanje*

³¹ See for example: Ferdo Čulinović, *1918. na Jadranu* (Zagreb: Glas rada, 1951); Ante Mandić, *Fragments za historiju ujedinjenja* (Zagreb: Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, 1956); Bogdan Krizman and Dragoslav Janković, *Građa o stvaranju jugoslovenske države (1. I–20. XII 1918)*, vol. 1-2 (Beograd, 1964); Josip Horvat, *Prvi svjetski rat* (Zagreb: Stvarnost, 1967); Dragovan Šepić, *Italija, saveznici i jugoslavensko pitanje 1914–1918*. (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1970); Krizman, *Raspad Austro-Ugarske*; Krizman, *Hrvatska u prvom svjetskom ratu*; Vladimir Kapun, *Međimurje 1918*. (Čakovec: Zrinski, 1982); Vijoleta Herman Kaurić, „Bibliografija radova o Prvom svjetskom ratu

historians who were under the strong influence of Marxism, the interest in research on social unrest and the spread of revolutionary ideas at the end of the war grew significantly. Actually, considering that Yugoslavia was a socialist state, this change happened even faster than in Western Europe. While the change in Yugoslavia came “from above”, under the impact of the dominant political narrative, in democracies it came largely “from below”, as a historiographical trend. So, a number of papers on topics such as the spread of socialist ideas, especially among Yugoslav volunteers and prisoners in Russia, mutinies in the Austro-Hungarian army and navy, desertion (Green Cadre), etc. appeared.³² Also, significant interest was shown in the research on economic issues, but such studies focused mainly on individual cases on the local or regional level as case-studies, lacking a broader synthesis of the economic development of the entire Croatian territory.³³

objavljenim u historijskim časopisima u razdoblju 1945-1998 godine“, *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest*, 32-33 (1999-2000): 491-498.

³² See footnotes no. 12 and 13

³³ See for example: Igor Karaman, „Privredni položaj Slavonije u Habsburškoj monarhiji pod nagodbenim sistemom (1868.-1918.)“, *Zbornik Hrvatskog instituta Slavonije*, 4 (1966): 283-374.; Zoltan Sárközi, „Prilog historiji južnoslavenskih putujućih poljoprivrednih radnika (1805.-1914.)“, *Historijski zbornik*, 18 (1967): 239-243.; Mira Kolar Dimitrijević, „Križa taninske industrije u Hrvatskoj i položaj radništva“, *Zbornik Hrvatskog instituta Slavonije*, 6 (1968): 39-60.; Mira Kolar Dimitrijević, „Osvrt na slavonski dio izložbe ‚Počeci industrije i radničkog pokreta u Hrvatskoj 1848-1919. god.‘“, *Zbornik Hrvatskog instituta Slavonije*, 7-8 (1970): 533-535.; Igor Karaman, „Dva priloga pitanju agrarnih odnosa na području Hrvatske u kasnofeudalnom i kapitalističkom razdoblju (do 1918.)“, *Historijski zbornik*, 25-26 (1972-1973.): 377-385.; Dragiša Jović, „Izkaz poduzeća u Hrvatskoj i Slavoniji pred kraj I. svjetskog rata koja su otpadala pod nadzor kraljevskog zemaljskog obrtnog nadzornika (I. dio)“, *Zbornik Hrvatskog instituta Slavonije*, 10 (1973.): 243-297.; Dragiša Jović, „Izkaz poduzeća u Hrvatskoj i Slavoniji pred kraj I. svjetskog rata koja su otpadala pod nadzor kraljevskog zemaljskog obrtnog nadzornika (II. dio)“, *Zbornik Hrvatskog instituta Slavonije*, 11 (1974.): 183-224.; Rene Lovrenčić, „Ekonomska problematika u Supilovom ‚Novom listu‘ 1906-1914“, *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest*, 6 (1974): 129-272.; Tereza Ganza-Aras, „Pokušaji kapitalističke preobrazbe sela i zadružni pokret u austrijskoj Dalmaciji od razdoblja liberalizma do 1918. god.“, *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest*, 19 (1986): 133-178.; Igor Karaman, „Razvoj stanovništva i privrede u urbanom sustavu grada Rijeke od revolucije 1848/49 do raspada Habsburške monarhije

However, unlike in the Western European historiographies, in Croatian historiography political history continued to dominate the research on World War I. This continued even during the 1990s due to the extreme turn of the dominant narrative in Croatia – the latter in accordance with the previously mentioned need for the reinterpretation of some historical topics in relation to the socialist historiography. In the case of World War I, this need resulted in the stronger emphasis on issues regarding the process of the dissolution of Austria-Hungary and the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, particularly the creation of the State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs. Therefore, the emphasis on social, cultural and micro-history which is in accordance with the third generation of Western European historians of World War I could be noted in Croatian historiography only in recent years.³⁴ It is interesting that even now mainly younger historians are dealing with these issues, while the older generation of historians is still primarily interested in politics, especially in the very beginning of the war and its aftermath.³⁵ Also, a group of the older generation historians has continued to be engaged with economic issues.³⁶

1918. god.“, *Historijski zbornik*, 34 (1986): 79-130.; Bernard Stulli, „Varaždinska regija u željezničkom sustavu Hrvatske (1825-1918)“, *Historijski zbornik*, 34 (1986): 1-78.

³⁴ See footnotes no. 24 i 27

³⁵ Hameršak, *Tamna strana Marsa* 190-191.

³⁶ See for example: Mira Kolar Dimitrijević, „Utjecaj Prvog svjetskog rata na kretanje stanovništva i stočarstva na području Hrvatske i Slavonije“, *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest*, 24 (1991): 41-56.; Mira Kolar Dimitrijević, „Hrvatsko-slavonsko gospodarsko društvo kao središnja zadruga (1907-1925)“, *Povijesni prilozi*, 11 (1992): 252-290.; Mira Kolar Dimitrijević, „Presjek kroz rad Zagrebačke pivovare d.d. do 1945.“, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, 24 (1992), no. 2: 149-168.; Mira Kolar Dimitrijević, „Zagrebačka tvornica kavinih proizvoda Franck d.d. do 1945. god.“, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, 24 (1992), no. 2: 169-192.; Kolar Dimitrijević, „Gospodarsko-socijalni rad“, 209-218.; Mira Kolar Dimitrijević, „O zagrebačkom gospodarstveniku Vjekoslavu Heinzelu 1871-1934“, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, 26 (1994), no. 2: 257-276.; Mira Kolar Dimitrijević, „O osnutku i radu zagrebačke burze do 1945. god.“, *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest*, 28 (1995): 190-211.; Zdenka Šimončić Bobetko, „Mijena strukture podiobe zemljišnih gospodarstava u Hrvatskoj 1895-1931. god.“, *Povijesni prilozi*, 12 (1993): 229-282.

To sum up, after comparing the Western European historiographical trends and Croatian historiography on World War I, it can be concluded that they were relatively compatible. However, it has to be highlighted (again) that the total number of papers in Croatian historiography is quite modest and it is difficult to posit final and irrefutable conclusions because the border between different historiographical configurations is sometimes blurred. This is consistent with the observation made by Winter and Prost that this is primarily a question of emphasis. When the number of papers is small, it is difficult to differentiate “generations”. Nevertheless, certain differences between the “generations” can be found even in Croatian historiography, and they were principally in line with those in Germany, France and the United Kingdom. Therefore, we can speak about the compatibility between research trends on World War I in Croatia and Western Europe, but does that imply a direct influence of foreign historiographies on the national one, or was it more a result of the general social circumstances in Europe?

This issue remains open and subject to dispute. However, in reference to the initial thesis and based on thorough analysis of the Croatian historiography of World War I, it can be concluded that it was largely a result of wider social circumstances. Research on topics which were opposed to the dominant narrative in totalitarian and authoritarian states, as was the case with the pre-1990s Croatia, was not possible – the mere attempt to do such a research could have serious consequences. Unlike in Croatia, the rise of totalitarian and authoritarian regimes all over Europe from 1918 to 1945 as well as the influence of Marxism on Western European historiographies after 1945 enabled the previously noted similarity in dominant trends regarding the research topics. However, in the Western European historiographies topics in opposition to the dominant narrative were also researched. Therefore, it is difficult to speak about the direct influence of Western European historiographies on Croatian historiography. On a symbolical level, this can

be proven by the fact that citations of foreign literature were very rare in Croatian historiographical studies of World War I, although the knowledge of Croatian historians about general trends should not be underestimated. However, given the most recent research results on World War I in Croatian historiography, particularly among younger authors, as well as an increase in the availability of historiographical studies from all over the world through modern media, a growth of the mutual influence between historiographies can be predicted, which should ensure a gradual reduction of the impact of narratives and public paradigms on their future development.

Conclusion

The analysis of the Croatian historiography of the First World War in the context of extreme twists and turns of dominant narratives showed that these have been primarily reflected in the choice of topics that have been studied by historians. Considering that the Croats fought on the losing side, which was opposite to the interpretation of WWI in the dominant narrative in both the first and the second Yugoslavia, their engagement during the war was not a particularly popular topic up to the 1990s. However, even after 1991 and the formation of the Republic of Croatia, this topic remained relatively neglected due to the renewed interest in the Second World War. In the meantime, yet another war broke out in Croatia which attracted much attention also. Thus, the widespread claim of Western European historiographies that there was less interest in World War I compared to World War II is even more valid in the case of Croatia.

This comparison leads us to the second part of the paper and the conclusion, where the question of the impact of general historiographical trends on tendencies in Croatian historiography, or at least the question of the compatibility between Croatian and Western European historiographies,

was raised. Regarding the study of the First World War, it is evident that the changes in dominant trends in Croatian historiography were at some point compatible with the changes in Western European historiographies. I believe that this compatibility has been more a result of general circumstances than of the influence of foreign historiographical trends on Croatian historiography. However, even this limited knowledge about similarities between trends is important, for Croatian historiography has usually been compared only to other historiographies of the former Yugoslavia, especially to the Serbian – and it should be noted that interpretations of certain topics in these historiographies are often quite contradictory. Comparing Croatian and Serbian historiography exclusively, a broader context is often missing – which is why the impression of their isolation and distance from the dominant world and European trends has been further emphasized.