

Expert questionnaire on the memory of WWI



German soldiers exercise gymnastics at the Western Front
Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Kriegsarchiv, Bildersammlung

The Institute of Political History, an NGO and independent, not-for-profit research institute in Hungary, started a four-year project last year, with funding from the Citizens for Europe – European Active Memory program of the European Commission, in order to help develop, facilitate and strengthen the memory of WWI. The project is composed of a website (www.elsov.hu, www.elsovh.hu/english) and a series of events aimed at the larger public and the scholarly community. The intention of the institute is also to foster contacts and cooperation across Europe among organisations engaged in similar activities. The aim is to learn more about these processes in Europe, to facilitate discussion on topics of historiography and, first and foremost, on issues of memory, reflecting upon each other's experiences with remembrance and social memory. Beyond a mere overview and classification of the commemorations, we hope to collect and help to distribute good practices, innovative methods, enable the building of a network of institutions with compatible aims and projects, to develop a pool of committed organizations that can draw upon each other and build consortia for common projects and, last but not least, to help transmit new methods and knowledge into education. As a first step, we would like to ask you, as an expert in the field [...], to reflect upon three large topics: the commemorations on the 100th anniversary, the current historiography of WWI, and the methods to influence social memory of the war, with the help of a series of orientating

questions. We intend to publish the answers on our website and an evaluation of the answers in an issue of our journal *Múltunk*, and to use it to foster further cooperation.

Commemorations on the 100th anniversary

Few people would contest that WWI was a crucial event in the history of the modern world. After the long period of stability in Europe, it was the beginning of a new era and as such the starting point of social and political processes that are still reshaping Europe and the world. But the meaning and understanding of the war has changed in many senses since it ended, and societies today look at it differently than people did even a few decades ago. These changes not only give a taste of how our societies changed since WWI, but they also reproduce to a certain extent how social memory and the politics of memory have changed in Europe. Once a founding myth for a whole “New Europe” and the largest traumatic event in European history, WWI is overshadowed by later events which had a more lasting impact on European memory. Therefore, even if the anniversary brought attention to WWI, its role and place of the Great War in national and European memories is uncertain. It is not easy to see what it offers for societies nowadays in terms of identification, cohesion and mobilizing power.

How would you typologise the commemorations on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of WWI in your country and in Europe? How are official and unofficial practices related to each other and shaping the memory of WWI? What was novel in the commemorations and what remained solidly on the traditional ground? How much interest did the anniversary generate among the public? How was it manifested, what appealed the most to the public? How much did these commemorations bring transnational aspects of WWI and its memory to the fore? What could be the place of WWI in European memory?

Historiography

Since Jay Winter and Antoine Prost famously identified three generations of historians and historiography of the Great War, it has been common to situate scholarship in this framework. One of the most common observations is how national historiographies in Eastern Europe lagged behind the West in terms of the emergence of these generations, and after 1989 how easily they returned to interpretations which were already part of the national imagery of these states right after WWI. Nevertheless, the 100th anniversary not only brought about a new wave of interest in the events between 1914 and the early twenties, but it also contributed to the emergence of new trends and approaches to the war which are not necessarily easy to frame with the model of generations, and which show not only an interest in a more detailed understanding of how the war affected societies and people, but also in repositioning it in global history. The new focus on the Eastern front, the integration of the fate of empires into post-colonial histories, the growing attention to the non-state-organized violence as a determining feature of the post-WWI social and political landscape in Eastern Europe are only a few notable ones among these new approaches. Meanwhile, one can also speak of a revival of old tropes and interpretations, most notably in the discussion around responsibility and in the attempts to challenge what is seen as de-heroisation in national historiography.

What are the most important debates on the anniversary? How did discussions of international salience affect debates in your country? What are the significant new trends in research on WWI? What should the broader public expect in terms of new interpretations or new perspectives on the war? Do you think WWI needs a reconceptualization? If yes, in what sense? How would you position the actual national historiography in the history of a global WWI? What do you think would be desirable in this respect? Do you think there is a specific Eastern European

history of the war? How should we relate the Eastern part of the continent to Europe as a whole or the World in historiography?

Methods of dissemination, best practices, cooperation

Historians have enjoyed for a long time a quasi-monopoly of historical knowledge in the form of power over determining national historical canons. But other actors' contribution to the development of social memory, a genre usually summed up as public history, has gained traction and nowadays it is hard to underestimate its influence on the historical consciousness of European societies. Historiography, not the least due to its changing self-understanding following a series of epistemological revelations, is only one of many actors trying to influence the public. In this competition, traditional genres of historical writing have disadvantages, and to reach the public, even historians try to revert to new methods. However, our understanding of how social memory comes into being has changed profoundly, too. Alongside the generation of grand narratives, practitioners of memory (who actively engage in discovering, preserving and mobilizing memory) are keen to integrate individual, family, local and regional memories into broader social memory in a way that reflects the past and present diversity of societies. These processes are also part of what is usually referred to as European memory which was mainly based on the memory of the Holocaust, but since the accession of the Eastern European countries, it has also been a contested field. So far, it has mainly been the deviating memory of the Communist past which had to be integrated into European memory, but the anniversary of WWI can pose another challenge.

What are the most important books published recently in your country concerning WWI? What were the most notable scientific venues? What do you consider the best methods to reach the larger public with results of scholarly research on WWI? What topics are people the most interested in? How could

a more nuanced view of WWI be developed? What is the role of less traditional means of dissemination? In what respect do you think transnational cooperation is possible regarding the memory of WWI? How could you and/or your institution contribute to such an endeavour?

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ANSWER: *Speaking in terms of politics of memory, the Croatian case is – I dare say – among the more complex ones. Therefore, as very few contributions on the subject are available to the non-Croatian-speaking readers, I have taken the liberty to answer the questionnaire at large, in a single, continuous text.*

Not surprisingly, the events of WWII and its aftermath both marked not only by intense fighting and destruction on the territory of today's Croatia, but also by mass killings of civilians and surrendered combatants as well, have to a significant degree overshadowed the experiences of the more distant 1914-1918 conflict. Suppressed for decades by the ideological hegemony of the Communist Party lead by Josip Broz Tito (of ethnic Croat father and Slovene mother, which will reveal to be of some importance later in the text), the scholarly and public debate on these topics started only in the late 1980s, resulting in a whole new range of research in the 1990s and 2000s. Although it can be said that the area of common scholarly opinion on WWII is slowly but steadily broadening, as far as public discourse is concerned, it still remains a heated, omnipresent theme, significantly interwoven with contemporary left-right divisions of the political spectrum.

In that aspect, I think, several analogies could be drawn between Croatia and a number of Central or East European countries, but there is also a notable distinction stemming

from the fact that the rule of the Communist Party in the former Yugoslavia was to a higher degree of domestic origin, comparatively enjoying more legitimacy, and somewhat less dependent on direct repression, at least since the 1960s. As a result, neither its chequered legacy, nor its proponents were systematically subjected to lustration-like practices, and have therefore remained present in various fields of public activity.

Yet another important distinction is the impact of the 1991-1995 Croatian War of Independence. First of all, because of the »national reconciliation« policy, even those debates on WWII »crime and punishment« have been practically frozen until it was over. Secondly, as far as opposed views are concerned, discussions on some of its aspects tend to equal – if not surpass – those on the 1941-1945 period.

Within that context, it can hardly be a surprise that WWI has generally been getting only scratches of scholarly and media attention. But to get a wider picture of the politics of memory in Croatia, one should start the story all the way back in 1914.

Expectedly, at that time the vast majority of the Croatian political elite was not satisfied with the organization of the Habsburg Monarchy. In spite of the Triune Kingdom of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia being proclaimed on several occasions, it was a kind of virtual non-entity, as in reality no closer administrative ties existed between the Transleithanian Kingdoms of Croatia and Slavonia, and the Cisleithanian Kingdom of Dalmatia. Also, ethnic Croats did form the majority of population in Istria (belonging to Cisleithania) and a significant proportion of that in Bosnia and Herzegovina (under a dualistic condominium) which had been occupied in 1878 but annexed to the Monarchy only in 1908. Although among them the Kingdoms of Croatia and Slavonia enjoyed the highest degree of autonomy, in the final instance, all of these lands were governed from Vienna or Budapest without serious possibility of their representatives to influence crucial decisions. However, the dominant approach of the Croatian political elite was that of gradual reform »within the confines of the law« which entailed

cooperation with one of the interest groups within the Monarchy against the other.

The outright idea that the South Slav parts of the Monarchy should – and really could – depose the Habsburgs, secede (violently, if needed) and join the Kingdom of Serbia under the rule of the Karađorđević dynasty either just enlarging it, or forming a new state of Yugoslavia, was gaining more serious momentum only on the eve of WWI. Overtly or secretly sponsored by the official organs of Serbia, it was increasingly popular among younger intellectuals, but not evenly distributed according to particular land or ethnic groups; the Habsburg Serbs, especially those in Southern Hungary and Bosnia and Herzegovina, perceptually being more inclined to the simple enlargement of their already independent nation state.

Therefore, romantic ideas of unconditional South Slav unity, realistic concerns about the possible domination of Serbia, and loyalist perceptions of high treason were present simultaneously in Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian-Istrian-Bosnian-Herzegovinian societies of the day, interwoven either with some sort of modern nationalism, or a kind of traditional unquestioned allegiance to the King and Emperor.

Interethnic relations additionally deteriorated with the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand by the Bosnian Serb Gavrilo Princip, as he –if anybody – was perceived to be the figure that could restructure the Monarchy along the so-called tripartite lines, more favourable to a significant part of the Croatian political elite. In fact, contrary to the position of other »non-dualistic« peoples, since 1868 the autonomy of the Kingdoms of Croatia and Slavonia has already been to a degree reflected in the armed forces, namely in the status of a singular Domobranstvo (Honvédség, i.e. Home Guard) district coinciding with their territory. Although the uniform name of Royal Hungarian Home Guard had prevailed over the combined Hungarian-Croatian or even singular Croatian attribute, apart from Croatian being its official and command language, it had a different flag, a customized oath, and its commander was

prescribed to be of Croatian-Slavonian domicile. Although not much, this was more than pure symbolism, and was rather effectively used to corroborate the claims that serving in the army supports the Croatian national goals, bringing closer the reward of trialisation.

All in all, among the South Slav population of the Monarchy, the declaration of war on Serbia was seen as a just crusade as well as a brutal aggression against brotherly people. Be it either way (and other motives like strict discipline or personal sense of honour are also not to be underestimated), during Potiorek's campaigns of 1914, the core of his Balkan Army, consisting of South Slav soldiers (that is, the 13th, 15th and 16th corps, seated in Zagreb, Sarajevo and Dubrovnik, respectively), fought loyally. Of course, there were defections – its rate among ethnic Serbs was larger when compared to that among Croats – but not on a drastic scale. Impregnated with both real and fabricated stories of »barbarous« ways of waging war in the Balkans, on a number of occasions, the soldiers of Franz Joseph behaved in analogous manner, showing no mercy either to the surrendered enemy or to the civilians, which left a deep imprint on the memory of the Serbian population.

Initially, it seems, the South Slav soldiers of Austria-Hungary were not an exception, but after several weeks of closer contact, the instances of such brutal behaviour were reduced in number. Anyway, in the first half of 1915, the majority of South Slav units were transferred to the Russian or Italian front, and their participation in the 1915-1918 occupation of Serbia was of lesser consequence apart from that of several officers whose language skills and cultural versatility were needed by the military government.

Generally speaking, because of the »irredenta« and the language barrier, soldiers from today's territory of Croatia were more intensely and more durably motivated to fight on the Italian than on the Russian front. In fact, similarly to the Czech legion, thousands of South Slav prisoners of war joined the volunteers' units, formed as part of the Serbian army on the

territory of Russia. But there was also a difference – the majority of anti-Habsburg émigré South Slav politicians, since 1915 organized in a London-seated Yugoslav Committee, envisaged the end of the war to bring a creation of a new, possibly federal Yugoslav state, not just an enlargement of the Kingdom of Serbia. As a result, their relations with the Serbian government were strained, coming through several ups and downs until an uneasy compromise was reached in 1917. Up to that time, because of a perceived inequality, a large number of volunteers, mainly ethnic Croats and Slovenes, did resign, preferring to join the Russian army or even to return to the POW camps.

On the other hand, the Serbian army proper did also start several offensives in 1914, aimed at the Eastern regions of Slavonia and Bosnia. Although part of the ethnic Serbian population welcomed this as national liberation, a general uprising which was hoped for did not happen, and these exploits were soon repulsed. In fact, although large regions in the South Eastern part of the Habsburg Monarchy were considered to be »ancient Serb lands« by the pre-war Serbian textbooks, it was left rather unclear which ethnicities inhabit those lands, even more so in the light of their zealous fighting in the »Swabian army« of 1914 and after.

On that basis, the Yugoslav unification of 1918 – a conflict-laden process in itself, reaching a partial and short-term stabilization only in 1939 when Banovina Hrvatska was organized as an autonomous Croatian unit – had been mirrored by a highly dissonant politics of memory.

First of all, the official view promoted mostly by the King and the armed forces tended to look at WWI through the eyes of the old Kingdom of Serbia. Not surprisingly, practically all the regulations, titles, symbols and decorations were taken over from the Serbian army, including the calendar of historic battles. True, several thousand active or reserve South Slav Habsburg officers were admitted, but only up to the rank of major, those of higher ranks being strictly selected (the situation in the navy was somewhat different as pre-1918 Serbia was a

landlocked country). The blending was not a success, many of them quitting after a few years or at least feeling continuously neglected.

In that scope, as it seems, apart from several minor instances, during the 1918-1941 period no public memorial attention was given to those fallen in the ranks of Austria-Hungary, be it on the Serbian, Russian or Italian front. One of the exceptions concerns the activity of the war veteran's union Udruženje rezervnih oficira i ratnika. Including also a number of former Habsburg officers, it had taken part in the building of at least two ossuaries containing thousands of earthly remains of those killed on both sides, the one on the Gučevo mountain in the 1920s, and the other in the Zagreb Mirogoj cemetery in the 1930s. Furthermore, several local or religious communities on today's territory of Croatia did erect memorial plaques listing their fallen members in a politically neutral manner.

As far as private popular press and memoir literature is concerned, there was a significant production in the former Habsburg parts of the pre-1941 Yugoslavia. However, within the Croatian cultural circle, the WWI memoirs of anti-Habsburg agents as well as those of former Serbian (since 1917, Serbian, Croatian and Slovene) volunteers were overrepresented. Book-length apolitical or even implicitly Habsburg-loyalist memoirs did start to appear only in the 1930s, confining their recollections to the internally not so sensitive Russian or Italian front. The first implicitly loyalist account of a short-term personal experience on the Serbian front was published within a book in 1939 in Belgrade, not Zagreb. Although it did not enter into the question of war guilt and condemned the Austro-Hungarian treatment of Serbian civilians, its author Pero Blašković was severely attacked in the Serbian press. Most promisingly, several former anti-Habsburg ethnic Serb and Croat intellectuals had risen in his defence, stating it was high time to hear the other side representing hundreds of thousands of common people that had willingly or forcibly been fighting for the Central Powers.

WWI was treated in Croatian works of fiction along these lines, but in an even less polyphonic manner. There the domination of the renowned Miroslav Krleža was already established in the early 1920s. Belonging to the younger, radical pro-Yugoslav generation and owing much to his personal wartime experience (quitting the Ludoviceum military academy in 1913, it is still a dubious point if he had ever been to the trenches), in his novellas and dramas, Austria-Hungary was presented as an irreformable »prison of nations«, requiring the absurd human sacrifice of Croatian intellectuals, workers and peasants alike. Interestingly, Krleža's narrative dealt mainly with distant battlefields in the Carpathians, Galicia and Bukowina, but not with those of the Drina, Kolubara, Isonzo or Piave where it was easier to find rational motivation, at least for some time, and for part of the Croatian political spectrum.

To conclude, the public politics of the WWI memory of the first Yugoslavia did not (sufficiently) reflect the experiences of more than a half of its population, and the early signs of possible change were interrupted by the outbreak of WWII hostilities in 1941.

In 1941, the Axis-allied Independent State of Croatia was founded, naming its regular army Domobranstvo after the one founded in 1868. Apart from re-introducing its regulations, titles and symbols (not entirely, to be clear), the core of the new army consisted of former Habsburg officers, including those that were found inappropriate for or had declined service in the Yugoslav army (some of them would soon get into conflict with more radical members of the Ustasha militia). As a more symbolic gesture of continuity, the WWI decorations of Austria-Hungary were once again proclaimed suitable to be worn. Before the demise of that short-lived state, the special Croatian military museum and archive was founded, retrieving a great deal of WWI-related artefacts which have survived until our days, albeit within other institutions. Also, Slavko Pavičić, an amateur military historian, managed to publish two volumes treating the 1914-1918 Croatian units under Habsburg command

(because of the WWII alliance, the Italian front was bypassed in the 1943 volume), and Vili Bačić, a naval officer, the one on the Adriatic sea skirmishes. Finally, the 1941 memoirs of Mile Budak combined his opinion of Greater Serbian imperialism bearing a lion's share of the responsibility for the outbreak of the war with a sort of sympathy towards a common Serbian soldier.

The 1945 renewal of Yugoslavia turned the clock back in many aspects concerning WWI. First of all, a number of Domobranstvo officers were either summarily executed or imprisoned. Because of the aforementioned elements of continuity, the negative aura of the WWII-era Independent State of Croatia was extended to the WWI Domobranstvo, making it an additionally undesirable theme, always prone to be associated with real or putative Croatian nationalism. Secondly, doing military history in general was assigned to the Belgrade-seated Institute of Military History and the adjoined Military Press Institute, both under direct auspices of the federal Yugoslav army. WWII and the Communist-led »national liberation struggle« have been set as its research priorities, but a significant amount of energy was also dedicated to the WWI exploits of the Serbian army. The history of the Habsburg army, including its Southern Slav component, was treated mainly in the general-type reference works and overviews published by these institutions, e.g. the multivolume Military Encyclopaedia and Petar Tomac's *The First World War*. Although containing a rather limited amount of information, apart from unavoidable political one-sidedness, these texts, some of them commendable even today, were frequently more accurate than those published by the Zagreb-seated Lexicographic Institute founded and led by none other than Krleža. Interestingly, several among the most notable contributors of the Institute of Military History were also former Habsburg and WWII Domobranstvo officers, ethnic Croats as well as Serbs.

Otherwise, post-1945 Croatian academic historians did not practice standard military history of the WWI, focusing

instead on deserters, rebellions, anti-Habsburg politicians, the dubious 1918 Yugoslav unification, and the painful post-war delimitation with Italy (such themes had already been opened in the 1920s by Ferdo Šišić and Milada Paulová). Consequently, the experience of the Serbian army continued to be the central point of the WWI politics of memory in post-WWII Yugoslavia, duly appropriated by the new federal army; but it was again obvious that the Western parts of the country – as ever, fearing the unitaristic tendencies – did not share that view.

Within that scope, while several high-budget movies were filmed about WWI from the Serbian perspective, not even the Isonzo battles – generally judged to have been the righteous defence of ethnic Slovene and Croatian territory – were given adequate treatment. All in all, they were addressed by several independent Slovene and just one Croatian publicist (within a general WWI overview). Even the Croatian war memoir production was more narrow than before, producing only one apolitical (de facto loyalist) book of recollections written by a Catholic clergyman and edited by his fellow priest, in a low-key circulation. To clear things out, it seems that even as of today, directly pro-Habsburg or at least initially loyalist memoirs and diaries constitute the majority among the yet unpublished manuscripts.

As a result, contrary to the persistent Serbian victorious heroism, and similarly to the influence of Jaroslav Hašek's novel *The Good Soldier Švejk*, the representations of WWI in the Yugoslav Republic of Croatia were once again predominantly characterized by the seemingly unproblematic exploitation of Krleža's work, depicting the imposed futility of fighting over distant lands and for »foreign interests«. To my knowledge, there was just one minor exception, a popular article published in 1970, during the short-lived Croatian Spring reform movement; focusing on the 1868-1918 Domobranstvo, it reminded the readers about its use of the Croatian language, symbols, and the peacetime service near one's domicile, and was obviously meant as a critique of contemporary Yugoslav army practice.

Incidentally, collecting the whole catalogue of other charges, including espionage, the author, otherwise a historian, was soon sentenced to four years imprisonment.

In a way, contrary to Slovenia where gradually more differentiated attention started to be given to the WWI phase of national history, the sort-of Croatian silence continued during the 1970s and well into the 1980s. For instance, in a national history reference book published in 1980 in Zagreb, only the WWII Domobranstvo was given an entry, while WWI military history was treated mainly on the global scale, certainly even less »nationally« than in the aforementioned Belgrade-published Military Encyclopaedia.

In fact, the next turn will come from a part of the Serbian public in which the dismantling of Josip Broz Tito's personality cult (associated with the disputed 1974 constitutional framework) started soon after his death in 1980. Namely, Tito's official biographer Vladimir Dedijer admitted he had been advised years before not to mention Tito's fighting on the Serbian front in 1914, in order to evade evoking the aforementioned negative popular memories; and that Tito, while in Russian captivity, declined to join the Serbian volunteers. On that basis, as the years passed by, several radical Serbian authors devised a whole narrative about the centuries-long Croatian genocide against the Serbs, former Domobranstvo NCO Tito being allegedly one of its agents already in 1914, conveniently under the command of Major Stanzer, a future WWII Domobranstvo general, sentenced to death in 1945.

Among other late 1980s and early 1990s allegations, and through the ensuing armed conflict, the ones concerning Tito and WWI in general were not judged to be the most important ones by Croatian historians. However, after the introduction of political pluralism in 1990, a more pluralistic picture of the past started to be devised, switching the focus of attention to the loyal, pro-Habsburg, anti-Yugoslav and clerical ideological options. Notwithstanding the co-operative phases of Serbo-Croat relations, it was also noted that the contemporary conflict had

traits of historic continuity from the pre-1914 period. According to that, the prevailing 1918-1941 view that the WWI Entente Powers (with the exception of Italy) were good guys, while the Central Powers were bad guys (without any exception), which was only partially relativised by the post-1945 Marxist-Leninist introduction of »opposed imperialistic aims« (with the exception of Serbia), started to be more openly questioned, especially in the light of the territorial ambitions of the Kingdom of Serbia.

In a way, the traditional post-colonial type of view on the Habsburg Monarchy, with the Kingdom of Serbia and the Yugoslav Committee competing for the title of the most deserving national liberator (and for the optimal internal organisation of Yugoslavia), has by now been supplemented by a double one, regarding the results of the 1918 unification even more as a kind of colonization. Comparing their relative impact on the Croatian national identity, rule of law, economic growth, etc., historians have reached a variety of conclusions (some of them qualifying as Habsburg nostalgia), reaching consensus anywhere near only on the topic that in the chaotic circumstances of the downfall of Austria-Hungary, there was probably no other choice but to join Serbia on the best terms possible.

However, these new approaches were seldom expressed in rounded, groundbreaking monographs, opting instead for collected papers, scientific magazines, popular press and television. An analogous limited, yet more superficial revival of interest was shown in the WWI Domobranstvo and the Habsburg Common Army as well as the Navy, resulting primarily in a re-discovery of Pavičić's work, and only gradually in that of the Österreich-Ungarns letzter Krieg 1914-1918 series; meanwhile, the aforementioned Belgrade-published sources have for some time been cited less than they had deserved. In spite of the given context, no large-scale research has been undertaken in the Vienna and Budapest archives. Probably also as a consequence of the 1991-1995 wartime, the popular press and TV documentaries did accentuate the »fighting prowess« complex, albeit never completely abandoning Krleža's notion of

»Kanonenfuter«; there was also a tendency to overestimate the role of the WWI Domobranstvo.

More rounded accounts began to appear around 2000. In addition to the WWI diplomatic history by Livia Kardum, Professor of Political Science, the highly dedicated Zagreb-based amateur historian Lovro Galić has co-authored several books on the Isonzo front, but being published in Slovenia, these are still impossible to get in Croatian stores and libraries.

In comparison, during the decade prior to 2014, apart from several rather general-type collected papers and manuscript memoirs, probably the greatest breakthrough was made concerning local history, with a handful of PhD's on the everyday life, charity, healthcare, suspects and internees on the city and town level, followed by an even smaller number of PhD's on several Habsburg-loyalist personalities, and one on the memoirs and diaries of Croatian WWI military participants, using a »history from below« type of approach (some of these PhD's have later been converted to books). Also, already on the occasion of the 90th anniversary, some museums and archives presented their WWI artefacts, the most representative result being the Zagreb-seated Croatian History Museum's exhibition catalogue.

Out of local communities, it seems that the legacy of WWI has for a decade or so been rather well, if not entirely satisfactorily, publicly presented in the city of Pula, a former seat of the Habsburg admiralty and battle fleet, including the renowned naval cemetery, coastal fortresses and the von Trapp villa (named after Georg, the submarine ace and the Sound of Music head of family). Another case to be mentioned is the town of Karlovac which has held annual commemorations at one of the cemeteries on the Isonzo front for years, and even erected a memorial plaque on the spot in 2013.

On the other hand, until recently even the estimates of the WWI military death toll from today's territory of Croatia varied from 50 000 to twice or even three times as much, Wilhelm Winkler's initial statistics being for all intents and purposes

forgotten. At the moment, the conservative estimate revolves around 80 000 killed or otherwise deceased soldiers, but additional research is needed. Although duly protocolled during the war, the whereabouts of their final resting place were largely forgotten, even the easily accessible Isonzo front being a sort of terra incognita. Similarly, not even the dedicated WWI scholars knew about the aforementioned multinational Mirogoj ossuary, presuming it was solely a symbolic monument erected to the memory of the fallen soldiers of the Croatian-Slavonian domicile.

So, the stage in Croatia was set for the 100th anniversary roughly in that manner. Because as of late 2012 no information has been published on the plans concerning official state activities, a dozen or so of the WWI-related researchers, archivists, museologists, schoolteachers and freelance publicists began to meet informally but regularly in the Zagreb-seated Institute of Croatian History, initiating a much wider mailing list, coordinating their activities and trying to promote a general change of attitude towards WWI (http://1914-1918.com.hr/cilj_odbora/). Besides individual achievements and fruitful discussions, the group – presided by Vijoleta Herman Kaurić – published a 22-page anniversary draft-action plan; successfully initiated the printing of a memorial postage stamp; and made crucial contributions to an international conference, a 4-hour TV-documentary, a dedicated teachers' handbook and a national-level teachers' education seminary on WWI. In 2015, the group organized a pioneering 3-day minibus excursion to the Isonzo front, taking several hundred photographs to be presented in the popular press, websites and lectures. Following legal registration as The 1914-1918 Association, it planned to widen the range of its activities.

Obviously fostered by the common European Union policy, the first-ever Croatian State Committee for the Coordination of the WWI Anniversary Activities was founded in April 2013 under auspices of the Ministry of Culture (the incumbent minister of a centre-left-liberal government was Andrea Zlatar-Viočić, well-educated in Krleža's writings), soon to incorporate

three members of the 2012 informal group. Devoid of finances and authority, the Committee served according to its title, sometimes being asked for expert advice on selected issues (no session has been held since early 2015).

Out of singular events, the most intense media coverage was given to the Zagreb-held May 2014 EU National Institutes of Culture (EUNIC)-organized conference titled Commemorating 1914 – Exploring the War’s Legacy, hosting Christopher Clark and Frédéric Rousseau, among others. As the 1965 translation of the 1948 edition of Pierre Renouvin’s *La crise européenne et la Première guerre mondiale* has been the latest standard general work available in Croatian (also as a 2008 reissue), Clark’s approach to the question of war guilt resonated particularly well with the media’s need to further deconstruct the aforementioned dominant view of Central Powers-only warmongering politics (as informed, *The Sleepwalkers* are currently in the process of being translated to Croatian).

In fact, probably reflecting the reactions in the Bosnian and Serbian press, the most frequently posed question by Croatian news reporters in 2013 and 2014 was the one whether Gavrilo Princip had been a hero or a terrorist. To my knowledge, contrary to the pre-1990s schoolbook lessons, no interviewed Croatian historian answered simply that he was a hero, although some did try to historically contextualize these two notions. Perhaps this is both the crudest and the most obvious signal of the radical changes that went down in the sphere of public memory in the last twenty years.

An even more important event, although seemingly not so well publicized, was the first-ever Croatian central state commemoration of WWI. Starting in the early morning of 27 June, 2014 with laying wreaths at the most properly selected Mirogoj ossuary, it continued with a meeting at the Croatian State Archives building. In presence of a small ceremonial guard, the wreaths were laid down by the Minister of Defence and other dignitaries or their envoys. The President of the Republic, Ivo Josipović, had personally attended the meeting,

delivering a written speech. Predominantly of abstract humanist nature, the speech provoked almost no public reaction apart from negative comments in several right and centre-right wing media, saying it was improper of him to state that Alojzije Stepinac, the future Croatian Archbishop, had been fighting as a volunteer on the side of Serbia (strictly speaking, after falling into Italian captivity as a dutiful Habsburg officer, Stepinac did, incited by the members of the Yugoslav Committee, join the Serbian, Croatian and Slovene volunteers, as they were styled only in 1917, but too late to see the fighting).

Supposedly, the curious date of 27 June was chosen for the anniversary primarily in order not to collide with the Croatian President attending the 28 June finale of the Sarajevo Heart of Europe festivity, sponsored by Austria, Belgium, Great Britain, Italy, Germany, France and Spain. The festivity was officially described as »the European entry point in the WWI commemorations«, hoping also that »the message of peace coming from the heart of Europe will underline the intellectual and cultural importance and strength of the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the context of peace and reconstruction in Europe« (<http://www.sarajevosrceeuropa.org/about.html>).

As rumoured behind the scenes, divergences surpass the scope of this contribution; suffice to say that, paradoxically, in such a way of scheduling, an international manifestation abroad was symbolically prioritized over the first-ever national and domestic one. Surely, the Sarajevo assassination could reasonably be singled out as one of the most important events leading to the outbreak of hostilities, but WWI did not start until over a month later, and the initial goal was – as I understood – to commemorate its anniversary, not that of the assassinations.

Of course, the exact starting date is largely a matter of convention, depending on the number of great powers we need to have in either a formal or a factual state of war. Taking into account the proclaimed Pan-European stress on the suffering of ordinary people, my personal suggestion was therefore to allow more logical adjustments on the national level, parallel to the

common European date, if it existed at all. For instance, citizens of the Triune Kingdom of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia were certainly much more affected by the partial mobilization of Habsburg armed forces, by the declaration of war on Serbia, and – finally – by the first shots fired in anger. Alas, some of my more cautious colleagues warned me that deciding on any of these three dates would have a great chance of being interpreted as a rejoicing over the attack on Serbia. Be it true or not, the 2018 anniversary of armistice is due to pose similar questions, as 11 November meant little to the soldiers of Austria-Hungary stopping the fight a week before, or to the Croatian Parliament declaring secession already on the 29 October, 1918.

On the other hand, the Croatian Prime Minister Zoran Milanović attended only the 26 June, 2014 Ypres commemoration, organized on the margins of the regular European Council meeting. However, his earlier laconic comment on the founding of the Croatian State Committee for the Coordination of the WWI Anniversary Activities, stating that WWI was »one of these ancient wars we don't know if we had won or lost«, did get significant, albeit somewhat satirical media attention.

Obviously, even the commonly promoted de-heroized, victim-centred and future-oriented pacifist approach isn't completely devoid of conflict-prone political connotations, as even the selection of a particular date or place can hardly be considered trivial. In fact, the existence of this type of consensus is questionable, concerning the just cause and victory-related public manifestations in some of the former Entente countries. Perhaps a sustainable common European view could more easily be reached by promoting the bottom-up tolerance of different perspectives, not by insisting top-down on some kind of colourless peace-loving unity?

Illustratively, in Croatia, manifestations on the local community level appear to be less distanced, probably as a result of stronger grassroots-type cohesion elements and the more centre-right oriented authorities. Apart from that, the more intense participation of local 1991-1995 war

veterans' organizations attested to the existence of a kind of transgenerational solidarity, an element the state-level commemorations mainly lacked, presumably deciding not to have recourse to the narrative of the relative continuity of the Croatian statehood (or national identity and interests alike), including the pre-1918 autonomy of the Kingdoms of Croatia and Slavonia.

Within the field, the most notable efforts were made by the city of Zagreb anniversary committee, presided by the former Minister of Croatian Defenders (i. e. War of Independence Veterans) Ivica Pančić. Apart from sponsoring various activities, a memorial plaque was erected at the place of former Habsburg barracks, and initial but well-publicized visits were paid even to several cemeteries in Ukraine and France, where members of Zagreb-seated Habsburg units had been buried, some of the adjacent memorials still having the original Croatian transcriptions.

At the moment, as far as I know, no Croatian WWI-specialist is contributing to a major international research endeavour, and the majority of related projects are not financed by the Croatian Science Foundation but by the Croatian Ministry of Culture which has also devised an exhaustive list of events and media coverage (<http://www.min-kulture.hr/default.aspx?id=10197>). Consequently, in 2014-2015, there was practically no museum or archive that did not stage an exhibition (usually with a lavishly illustrated catalogue) on some aspect of WWI. Some archives have also sent dedicated »fishing expeditions« in order to finally get a clearer picture of 1914-1918-related funds stored in neighbouring countries, or ventured into the publication of manuscript war diaries. Because of their rarity, even some of the printed materials have been critically reissued; namely, several of the most interesting 1917-1939 war memoirs and a 1916 Domobranstvo-affiliated propaganda booklet, while both the Croatian State Archives and the National and University Library have offered a selection of digitalized wartime newspapers. The Ministry has also sponsored the Croatian branch of the Europeana 1914-1918 project, being well-received by the public.

Out of foreign scholarly works, the recent Croatian translations of Catherine Horel's *Soldaten zwischen nationalen Fronten – Die Auflösung der Militärgrenze und die Entwicklung der königlich-ungarischen Landwehr (Honvéd) in Kroatien-Slawonien 1868-1914*, Annika Mombauer's *The Origins of the First World War: Controversies and Consensus*, and David Stevenson's *1914-1918: the History of the First World War* are to be mentioned, expected to be soon followed by Manfred Rauchensteiner's *Der Tod des Doppeladlers* (Clark's *Sleepwalkers* was mentioned above). Among the current translations of works of art and ego-documents, probably those of Karl Kraus and Henry Barbusse are the best known.

In the field of more popular approach, the Croatian Military History magazine has been covering the most important events of WWI almost on a monthly basis, publishing also Zvonimir Freivogel's book on the 1914-1918 armed forces of Austria-Hungary, the first-ever book on the subject in the Croatian language. Also, in 2016, a conceptually interesting WWI lexicon is to be published, containing parallel views on the same topics by Croatian and Serbian historians.

To conclude, in my opinion, as far as the Croatian case was concerned, it was a good call to organize the anniversary primarily around the fact that tens of thousands of soldiers were killed, and around the tenet that they deserve much more memorial and scholarly attention. But the next step should take us towards a more systematic reconstruction of the 1914-1918 period in order to better understand both the initial motivation and the actual decision-making of various agents, from politicians or generals to ordinary soldiers and civilians, from the pre-war crisis to the post-war echoes. In that way, the putatively homogenous Croatian perspective will be further sub-divided into a variety of branches, sometimes even to the individual level, resulting in more realistic and less teleological pictures than those presented during the 20th century.

Analogously, the synthetic European perspective and its dynastical, national, ethnic or class-defined sub-perspectives

should also be a result of historians' work, not that of politicians' projections. Simply promoting victimization instead of heroization may well be just another sort of reductionism with similarly questionable results.

To achieve this distant, somewhat utopian goal, the transnational cooperation should to a degree follow the historic footsteps. Obviously, notwithstanding the location of cemeteries along the former frontlines, more raw materials on the Croatian perspective could be found in the archives of Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Rome, Moscow, Ljubljana or Sarajevo than in those of Dublin, Oslo or Madrid. On the other hand, many decisions made in London, Paris or Washington did have a far-reaching effect. Vice versa, being Habsburg subjects, thousands of émigré ethnic Croatians have been detained in various internment camps from Canada to Australia. Also, in spite of all the different trajectories, weapons, tactics and a number of other cultural or technological achievements did possess a sort of global uniformity, making e.g. the literature of the rising German Expressionism relevant to Croatian literary historians.

Another important way of cooperation concerns contemporary methodological tendencies. Ironically, the years of Croatian silence concerning WWI research could have a beneficial side-effect, as the pioneering military, social or cultural historians may easily skip decades of painful evolution in a particular field, modelling their approach on some of the widely acclaimed British, French or German groundworks. On the other hand, neither the standard high politics, strategy and diplomacy-centred research should be neglected because of the decades of one-sided or even biased presentations.

All in all, while as of now no singular all-round Croatian history groundwork has been produced within the scope of the 100th anniversary of WWI, the solid foundations have been laid. One cannot surely say whether the public interest will soon peter out, but I dare hope that at least the trend of its memorial marginalization has finally been reversed, to bring more substantial results in the following years.



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1. Commemorations on the 100th Anniversary

The 100th anniversary of the beginning of the First World War caused, without exaggeration, a media craze in Slovakia. The popular press, including the most-read daily and weekly newspapers, television and radio, were full of articles and shows about the First World War, especially during the summer months. The Slovak media had previously offered very limited coverage of the Great War, but the commemoration of World War I was already more common in other countries. Especially in Western Europe, public events commemorating the beginning and the end of World War I were regularly organized on the occasion of the 80th, 90th and 95th anniversaries of The Great War. In Slovakia, however, it seemed as if the media had only discovered the First World War in 2014. The impulses towards an intensive commemoration of this anniversary emerged mostly from abroad: from foreign news agencies, Slovak embassies abroad which were invited to participate in joint commemorations, or directly from within the structures of the European Union.

Remembering the outbreak of WWI, rather than its end, was a novelty in Slovakia and it was done with a certain awkwardness. Part of the professional as well as the general public – accustomed to celebrating or commemorating the end of World War I or the founding of the Czechoslovak Republic –

questioned whether we should celebrate the unleashing of the war instead of its ending. Such contradictory perceptions for the commemoration of the centenary of the Great War in 2014 have specific underlying reasons. One of them is that there was, up until now, little interest in the First World War amongst the public and within historiography, since – as confirmed by the recent investigations of how memory is created – the memory of the First World War was overshadowed by the memory of World War II. However, the main reason lies in the specific assessment of the importance of the First World War within the national narrative not only in Slovakia but in all Central European countries which were, before the war, part of the Habsburg Empire. The national narratives of the states that arose from the ruins of the Habsburg monarchy interpreted the war as a path towards the dissolution of the Habsburg multi-ethnic state and the founding of their own national state. For such an interpretation neither the end of the war, nor certainly the beginning of the war was important, but the emergence of their own distinct national state. This was also the case of Czechoslovakia and Hungary where evaluations of the end of the war greatly differed. In case of Hungary, the Treaty of Trianon, with its negative connotations rather than the end of the war is remembered, while in the historiography of Czechoslovakia the end of the war is somewhat concealed by a positive victorious end in the form of the founding of a national state of Czechs and Slovaks. Connected to that was a different perception of the chronology of the Great War where the most significant event was not the signing of the armistice on November 11, but the emergence of Czechoslovakia on October 28, 1918.

If we consider the typology of commemorations on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of WWI in Slovakia, we must state that in principle it is no different from other countries. Activities to commemorate the Great War can be characterised based on their organizers, their audience and the forms they took as the following types:

- *Official commemorative events* organized by government authorities in Slovakia and abroad: several foreign embassies of the Slovak Republic installed a special exhibition with the topic “the centenary of the war and Slovaks” organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and were engaged in several international events (exhibitions, lectures, international conferences) abroad. Similarly, foreign embassies in the Slovak Republic organized various commemorative events;
- *Scientific events and activities*: conferences, publications and discussions of social scientists, particularly historians, generally organized by national scientific research institutes and universities at home and abroad;
- *Events for teachers and students*: publications and lectures for students and teachers; for example, educational events for history teachers organized by the special institute of the Ministry of Education;
- *Popularizing and informational activities* for the general public varied the most in their form: in addition to articles, commemorative narrations and reports in the daily press and special editions of popular history magazines, there was a special series of debates and programmes created by the Slovak Radio. Public television also aired a number of new foreign documentaries. All commemorative exhibitions were popular with visitors. These included the two main state-organized exhibitions in Bratislava which provided special programs for children and young people, and exhibitions in local museums. Leading Slovak historians organized a lecture series about their latest research on the First World War, which was well attended and received media attention;
- *Art events* for the general public took the form of exhibitions (e.g. historical photographs), movie presentations, publishing of literary works (e.g. reprints of novels by the Slovak female-novelist Timrava) and the introduction of

- new dramatic plays (including the international drama project “1914”);
- *Electronic data projects* which created specialized databases with text and visual materials pertaining to the Great War. They were published on the internet on the Slovak portal *Slovakiana* (<https://www.slovakiana.sk/>) and on the web-site of the Slovak national library (<http://dikda.eu/category/1-svetova-vojna/>), both of them connected to the international project *Europeana* (<http://www.europeana.eu/portal/>);
 - The public were made more aware of the *local activities of NGOs* dealing, for example, with the revitalization of military cemeteries (the Military History Club in Eastern Slovakia was particularly active in the revitalization); Slovakia also hosted events of a Czech project called *Legion 100* which, among other activities, has organized the unconventional exhibition of a replica of the so called “legion train.”

“Media hysteria” drew attention to two important facts:

1. The public is interested in the Great War, but more in people’s private lives and everyday activities, often motivated by a desire to trace the fate of their ancestors in the war, than in the war’s political aspects.

2. Untapped sources of information about WWI still exist. They are predominantly held in private ownership, particularly in family archives. In 2014, there were efforts to collect war materials, initiated, for example, by museums and the Slovak National Library. Previously unknown materials, documents and physical objects were discovered on this occasion. This gave historians the opportunity to access many sources that are rarely preserved in the archives in Slovakia.

2. The current historiography of World War I

Over the last 15 years, the attention of Slovak historiography has moved from the area of political history to the social

and cultural history in the research of WWI. Since 1989, it has focused mainly on overcoming Marxist deformations of the interpretation of history. These included, for example, a reevaluation of the impact of the Russian Revolution (1917) and overcoming the misrepresentation of the importance of foreign resistance on the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy (legionaries and the founders of the Czechoslovak Republic – T.G. Masaryk, M.R. Štefánik and E. Beneš). Since the 1990s, the focus of research has shifted from topics of foreign resistance and politics to issues of the economic, social and cultural conditions in the hinterland during the war, to the issues of everyday life, the impact of the war on family, and to issues such as changes of loyalties due to the war. A synthesis of Slovak history during WWI (released in 2008) dealt with these aspects. Since then, research on the history of the war as an experience (the myth of war enthusiasm, changes in loyalty) has continued. The research into the issues of ethnic relations, anti-Semitism, the attitudes of different Churches towards the war, and the rendering of the war in arts has also continued, as does the issue of the radicalisation of the population and its impact on post-war circumstances. Works pertaining to shaping the memory of the First World War and to changes of the image of M.R. Štefánik were published; publications about different perceptions of Trianon in Hungarian and Slovak historiography and literature were written as well. This research is mainly carried out in the Institute of History of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. The institute's researchers have also published a popular edition of the sources from the period of WWI. The Institute of Military History specializes in the research of military issues and the foreign Czechoslovak Army (Legions). In addition, the Institute of Military History published, for example, a new monograph about prisoners of war in the territory of Slovakia and it participates in the Czech and Slovak project of an electronic database of the fallen and the database of the members of Czechoslovak foreign brigades.

In the investigation of the Great War, Slovak historians seek inspiration mainly from theoretical and methodological concepts from German, Anglo-Saxon, Austrian and Czech historiography, and of course from Hungarian colleagues. Co-operation with colleagues from these countries also takes place. An international conference organized by Roman Holec on 'stereotypes of the image of the enemy' as well as conferences abroad on 'war and media' or 'cultural and mental aspects of war' were interesting and methodologically beneficial. Christopher Clark's new interpretation of the causes of the outbreak of the war gained attention in Slovakia, too. Dušan Kováč responded to Clark's claims in his study where he disputes Clark's interpretations and highlights the need to weigh the sources of German provenance addressed to the Allies and neutral countries against those sent by Emperor Wilhelm II and German diplomats to Austria as their ally. Confronting these sources clearly confirms the interest of Germany in the unleashing of an armed conflict. Clark does not carry out such a balanced evaluation and his conclusions ultimately won him the support of German nationalists.

The research of Slovak historians on the impact of the First World War on society in the Austro-Hungarian Empire shows the specificity of Central and Eastern Europe in their nationalization of a multi-ethnic society and politics. It is not only different interpretations of the causes of the war, but especially different interpretations of the political consequences after the war in various national historiographies and the subsequent political solutions that should have an important place in the research of creating the memory of the Great War.

3. The methods used to influence a social memory of the war

After the fall of the communist regime, historians successfully proceeded to eliminate deformations of the Marxist interpretation of history. However, nationalism has proved to be at least as

strong a factor shaping historiography. The view of the war “from below”, from the position of an ordinary soldier or a civilian reveals new facets of the consequences of the war on society and on the individual, and opens up the possibility of forming the social memory of the war from an individual’s perspective. Especially in didactics, it is possible to use the outcomes of new research for the explanation of the war’s impact on everyday culture and way of life. In this sense, the selection of topics to cover, their assigned relevance, and their placement into a wider context all impact memory formation.

It is, however, clear that the impact of popular mass media is incomparably more significant in the short and the long run than even the highest-quality scientific or specialised literature. Modern technologies capable of reproducing historical written and especially visual sources, including historical film footage, are currently the most powerful means to attract interest and to form the memory of the war. Nevertheless, professional historians are still irreplaceable as they are able to place information into a wider context and critically interpret it. The frequent dilettantism of journalists and amateur “historians” presents the danger of the misinterpretation of historical materials strongly influenced by propaganda, thus resulting in a distorted evaluation and influence over the social memory. History teachers have an important role in enabling their students to develop thinking through a critical approach in analysing sources and fact-checking. In the current era of over-abundant information, journalists commonly publicize only scandalous and especially curious historical phenomena in order to attract more interest. This practice negatively affects the formation of historical memory. It is therefore important for historians to create and offer high-quality materials in forms which are attractive for the media in order to present a realistic picture of the war based on genuine knowledge of the past. This applies to the creation of both documentaries and artistic products with historical topics.

My own experience and that of my colleagues who were involved in a lecture series for the general public about the war

combined with the projection of historical visual documents and memoirs confirmed the high efficiency of traditional forms consisting of lectures and subsequent discussions. We have the same experience working with teachers. An individual's perspective appears to be attractive for the interpretation of phenomena associated with the First World War, especially in the form of examples of personal stories with which the audience can connect. Personal ties which are linked to the history of their own community, or to tracing the fate of their own family members, make the strongest motivation for the latest generation, too. New technologies and media offer a suitable means for interpreting these findings.

Interest in the individual's perspective may certainly be the consequence of an overly political interpretation of history within the past political regimes which ultimately led to a general lack of interest in so-called "great" history; though, as visible from the public's interest in everyday aspects of life and personal destinies during the war, the interest in the so-called "small" history of the region, communities, families and individuals is still present. In my mind, a high-quality research of the consequences of the war on a specific region, which highlights the problem of war and violence, terrorism, the issues of survival strategies in crisis situations, the problem of loyalty, questions of civic engagement and accountability, and similar phenomena, is a way of forming the social memory. War as a shared experience, as a precedent and a warning, as a crisis of humanity, as a temporary state with long-term consequences, may become a suitable interpretative framework when shaping a mutual "European memory" of the Great War.

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How would you typologise the commemorations on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of WWI in your country and in Europe?

One can distinguish or define the numerous commemorations organized on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of WWI in Europe and in Serbia according to the territorial and the organizational criteria as: international, national, regional, local and institutional. Also, they could be typologised according to the sources of funding as: state-budgeted, international funds and NGO-financed, or as the private initiatives invested and donated by individuals and smaller social groups. In that respect, numerous types of the artistic, cultural and academic/scholarly projects often combined different sources of financing.

One can speak of concentric circles of remembering which cover the official political ceremonies, local initiatives compliant with the state-established politics of memory, and the private rituals and mores often neglecting the wider official framework.

Thematically, they could be divided as those marking the assassination in Sarajevo, the beginning of the war, major battles and the most important – Armistice Day.

How are official and unofficial practices related to each other and shaping the memory of WWI?

Official practices represent crucial elements of the political activism and as such, they are creators of the specific systems of values in every society. Staging the past in the public space through various public ceremonies, commemorations, visualisations and materializations of the historical events, persons and phenomena epitomizes politics of memory and, thus, the contemporary political messages. However, the public space represents the field of dialogues, debates, often even of confrontations. It is the space where the official initiatives are in a constant communication with the private and individual grassroots ideas.

First acts and objects commemorating the war dead were the result of the personal and familiar mourning and bereavement. Their creators were the specific agents of memory whose initiatives inevitably formulated the basis on which all the later images of the past were constituted no matter if they were accepted, neglected, or denied. With the passage of time, the national framework erased personal memories, including the episodes of betrayal, desertion, war profiteering and treason. The heroic narrative which was created among the victorious states overshadowed the “unwanted” stories, while on the losing side, war memories were suppressed and covered with the stories of chivalry and “true friendship” of those who were defeated. The official interpretations were always wrapped in the national flags and colours, erasing personal memories.

However, the contemporary unofficial and local commemorations organized by the NGO sector primarily aimed to open new perspectives on the war. Commemorating the various national and religious groups of the war participants forgotten during the last decades has a potential to present the war in all its complexity and simultaneously to undermine totalising monolithic historical culture in the present.

What was novel in the commemorations and what remained solidly on the traditional ground?

The image of the war heroes was always the main symbol used to make sense of the war. The figure of the soldier was the crucial component of the collective identities during the whole century. Civilian victims were pushed aside and although their sufferings were noticed, they never became the central topic of the World War One commemorations. Also, the image of women in war was always present but at the margin of the public field.

Centennial commemorations recognized the victims of the punitive expeditions and those of the great epidemics as well as the stories of the “ordinary citizens” in the war. However, the symbolic meaning of the soldiers’ stories maintained its central position. Men marching in columns, struggling in the trenches and fighting in the partisan units who were wearing the national uniforms remained the most recognizable symbol of the 1914-1918 conflict.

The commemorations represented the important political events during 2014. In Europe, the central position was given to the commemoration organized at Liege, a few dozen kilometres from the place where German troops entered Belgian territory and started the war on August 5, 1914. It brought together heads of states from the European Union as well as heads of the participating nations and states outside the EU. As the participants at the commemoration stressed, the main goal of this specific commemoration was not only to pay tribute to the fallen, but also to promote the concept of political and historical reconciliation. Thus, it was aimed to further strengthen the international/transnational framework in contemporary European societies, and to promote the ideas of integrations as a way to overcome the heavy burden of the 20th century.

The central commemoration in Serbia was organized eleven days later at Tekeriš, in the Western part of the country, at the place where the first Serbian victory over the Austro-Hungarian army took place on August 15, 1914. It was organized in front of

the monument of the fallen soldiers which was renovated by the small local patriotic organization. At the commemoration were present prime ministers of Serbia and Republika Srpska (one of the two administrative entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina), church and diplomatic representatives in Serbia. Like on the previous occasions and commemorations, the pacifist messages were sent together with the proclamation that Serbian citizens will never go to war again. Simultaneously, the specific international position of Serbia – close political ally of Russia and candidate for the European Union – was underlined.

The 2014 anniversary in Serbia had a special meaning since it was organized without the wider Yugoslav framework. Serbia entered the First World War as an independent state, the main result of which on the territory of the Western Balkans was the formation of the Yugoslav Kingdom. Although during the 20th century numerous commemorations were organized in Serbia (as part of Yugoslavia and later as one of the Yugoslav socialist republics), the centennial anniversary marked the “new tradition” and the new historical narrative.

The historical discourse used during the existence of the Yugoslav state wrapped the WWI narrative in the liberating traditions of the south Slavic peoples, creating the specific historical continuum of the Yugoslav idea during the 20th century. It presented the war as an act of new state creation, thus giving new meaning to the hundreds of thousands of victims who fell during the war.

After 2006 when Montenegro as the last Yugoslav republic declared independence, Serbia started to create new national traditions connecting its present existence to the kingdom period that existed before 1918. This was used for positioning the contemporary state as the direct descendant of Serbia that entered the war in 1914. The anniversary was used to strengthen contemporary Serbian position by creating its desirable image in the past.

How much interest did the anniversary generate among the public?

The public interest in Serbia in WWI was high during 2013 and 2014. The intellectual circles were included on several levels: drama and theatre, fiction, historiography, state commemorations and the conservation of monuments. The public paid huge interest for the plays, publicists' works, and the history monographs and studies.

The main reason for the high interest could be found in the heated debates on war guilt provoked by the books *Sleepwalkers* by Christopher Clark and *The Russian Origins of the First World War* by Sean McMeekin, published in 2013. One can even claim that it is possible to trace two different perceptions of the academic debates in the official political circles. The first one was defined by the actions of the current Serbian President Tomislav Nikolić who insisted on making an accurate First World War celebration calendar. The main interest of the Presidency was to promote the image of Serbia as the first victim of the Austro-Hungarian and German aggression and as one of its biggest victors. On the other hand, the Serbian government and its Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić were only marginally included in the organization of the anniversary. Thus, the public was on the one hand expecting numerous official events and celebrations; and on the other hand, stayed without the explanation why many of them, although eagerly expected, never received wider political attention. The main goal of those debates was to retain the traditional narrative of the war guilt, fearing that the new interpretations could lead to historical and, consequently, political revisions which could blur the roles of the war participants.

Bearing this in mind, one can better understand why the most comprehensive and instructive public event organized in order to mark the 100th anniversary of the Sarajevo assassination and the beginning of WWI took place on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to be more precise, in Republika Srpska. It was organized in the newly created Andrić-town, or Stone-town,

the cultural/historical complex made according to the project of the world famous director Emir Kusturica, and financed by numerous institutions and the governments of Serbia and Republika Srpska. The town was solemnly opened on June 28, 2014 and dedicated to the only Yugoslav Nobel prize winner Ivo Andrić. The analysis of the whole ceremony is highly relevant for understanding the official Serbian viewpoint on the motives and causes of WWI. The program in Andrić-grad started with the opening of the church dedicated to Saint Lazar and Serbian martyrs, continued with the unveiling of the mosaic of Gavrilo Princip made in a socialist realist manner, and followed with the promotion of the book “Sarajevo Assassination – Return to the Documents” written by Dr Miroslav Perišić and published by the Andrić Institute from Andrić-grad and the Archives of Serbia from Belgrade. In the evening, Emir Kusturica staged the historical play in the streets of the invented town, which included surrealist elements, considered by the great number of critics as political kitsch.

In 2014, two theatrical plays also attracted huge interest from the public. The first one was “This Grave Is Too Small For Me” written by Biljana Srbljanović for Vienna’s Schauspielhaus; the other one was “The Dragon Killers” written by Milena Marković for the Yugoslav Drama Theatre in Belgrade. Although the public expected radically different standpoints and conclusions, both playwrights had a similar answer to the trivial but publicly often raised questions: was Gavrilo Princip a murder or a hero, was he a terrorist or an idealist? They refused to banalise the historical figures and their actions, and perceived Princip as a Yugoslav idealist (Srbljanović) and a social revolutionary (Marković).

How was it manifested, what appealed the most to the public?

The number of theatre spectators as well as readers of the historical books and the museum visitors reflected increased

interest in WWI. Also, the government financed several projects on the Serbian state-owned television which created the documentary serial “Serbia in the Great War” and a number of smaller serials dealing with topics such as public memory, war memorials, and private mourning which further developed public interest in the topic. Almost all the museums were actively included in the organization of the numerous exhibitions and round table discussions (among which the most important was “Serbia 1914” organized by the Historical Museum of Serbia in Belgrade). Local communities financed the organization of similar exhibitions in local museums. The central state archival institutions (The Archives of Serbia and the Archives of Yugoslavia) also exhibited their documents for the public. The paradigmatic example represents also one of the most important festivals of experimental theatre in Europe, BITEF, that was dedicated to the First World War in 2014.

Small associations organized numerous actions which included marches around Serbia virtually uniting the present generations with those who took part in WWI. Their main message was that Serbia couldn't be accused and marked as the war provoker.

How much did these commemorations bring transnational aspects of WWI and its memory to the fore?

The state and local manifestations, although including the representatives of the war allies of Serbia and contemporary political partners, were mostly aimed at influencing local population and internal politics. It was important to construct historical continuity between the present society and the one before the creation of Yugoslavia, and simultaneously to diminish the Yugoslav and socialist heritage. Connecting the contemporary situation with the period when Serbia was the independent state in the Balkans a century ago, the specific sense of empathy was supposed to be created among the citizens.

The wider international framework established in the work of several historians was marginal in the public commemorations.

What could be the place of WWI in European memory?

Suppressing the memory of the first military conflict which gained the epithet “Great” and then “First World” war could be the source of multiple problems and controversies. On the other hand, by presenting dubious questions and opening the space for public dialogue, contemporary societies are in a position to further deconstruct the still present mental boundaries between nations.

One century later remembering the war in the wider European framework must highlight the position of an ordinary citizen in the war, the role of women and the tragic position of children in it.

Also, a special space should be opened for the studies of the numerous anti-war reactions and those movements, groups and individuals that were promoting the political theories and practices aimed at opposing the ongoing militarisation of European societies before and during the war. Furthermore, the analysis of the green cadre and desertion in all the armies as well as the post-war socialist revolutions must be reopened in the academic and in the public fields.

The commemorations must include different local communities whose ancestors shared similar experiences although belonging to the different sides of the front. The numerous groups of (self-) organized people could lead spontaneous manifestations which would represent the new beginning in war commemorations. Thus, the commemorations of the events of the war should highlight and celebrate peace and those historical figures and movements that strongly opposed the war.

On the other hand, particular attention must be paid to the burden of the European imperialist, colonial and racist heritage which was one of the main causes of the First World War. From

the 21st century perspective and the conflicts in the Near and the Middle East, the contemporary European position must be discussed in the wider historical framework.

HISTORIOGRAPHY

What are the most important debates on the anniversary?

The revisionist interpretations of the Serbian role in the Sarajevo assassination and the question of Serbian and Russian responsibility for the beginning of the war were, by all means, the central topics during the last few years in Serbia. The majority of the texts dealt with the topic of the outbreak of WWI, concluding that the motives for the war lay among the Great Powers and their conflicting global positions during the “Age of Empire”, as Eric J. Hobsbawm called the period before 1914. In that respect, special attention was given to the understanding of Gavrilo Princip’s motives and to his political and ideological postulates.

The important part of this debate continued in 2015 with the question if the remains of Dragutin Dimitrijević Apis and his close collaborators should be returned to Serbia. Known as the organizer of the 1903 assassination of the Serbian king Milan Obrenović and Queen Draga, and as the main figure who supplied the Young Bosnians with the ideas and the ammunition, Apis was sentenced to death during WWI under the accusation that he was planning the assassination of the new Serbian regent Aleksandar Kradjordjević. The contemporary government of Serbia promoted the idea of transferring his remains to Serbia on several occasions. The public is still divided. According to some, Apis as conspirator cannot be promoted as the hero for future generations; while for others, he is the best representative of the most patriotic military circles who committed his life to the idea of the unification of all the Serbs.

How did discussions of international salience affect debates in your country?

The academic community was highly interested in the international debates and the new perspectives on World War One. Scholars from Serbia (Milan Ristović, Mile Bjelajac, Ljubinka Trgovčević, Božica Mladenović, Danilo Šarenac, Olga Manojlović Pintar and others) were active participants in numerous conferences and congresses with a wide range of new topics dealing with social history and the remembrance culture.

The majority of media opened thematic chapters dealing with questions of the First World War. Their focus stayed on the problems of political and diplomatic history and on the question of the war guilt. Special emphasis was put on Gavrilo Princip's historical role as a terrorist and the assassin, or as a national hero. Marking the German and the Austro-Hungarian aspirations toward the Balkans as the crucial initiator of the war, the majority of the Serbian public refused the interpretations which pointed at Russia as the main or at least an equal initiator of the war and at the Serbian government as its ally in that respect.

What are the significant new trends in research on WWI?

Social history and the culture of remembrance are in the focus of several researchers (mentioned in the previous answer). The role of the foreign medical missions in the Serbian army, the reports of foreign journalists and analysts from the Balkan front as well as the phenomenon of desertion from the Serbian army are also re-read and re-interpreted.

What should the broader public expect in terms of new interpretations or new perspectives on the war?

The opening of new perspectives on WWI and its new interpretations are active constituents of the contemporary society. Presenting the different groups of the war participants and their visions of the war opens numerous questions and consequently deconstructs the rigid political and historical

culture in the present. Avoiding discussing the war only through the victorious or martyr narratives further problematizes the phenomenon of war in general. This complex framework which was often missing from the Serbian interpretations and representations of the First World War only partly has changed during the 100th anniversary. However, no matter how modest, these changes opened the wider possibility for a new understanding of historical reconciliation after one century.

Do you think WWI needs a reconceptualization? If yes, in what sense?

Historical reinterpretations are the result of political revisions and concurrently their main accelerator. From the 21st century perspective, the deconstruction of the dominant Eurocentric view and of the “glorifying national narratives” of the WWI interpretations appears as inevitable.

Deeper analyses of economic history as well as new studies of colonial practices and their consequences will substantially supplement and enrich understanding of the causes of the war.

How would you position the actual national historiography in the history of a global WWI?

The national historiographies always “feel” responsibility towards their public, although history as a humanistic discipline is dedicated to “telling the truth” and not to proving the “sanctity” of the nation. When perceived as “national”, history loses the ability to be objective.

However, when driven by the objectivity imperative, national historiographies are in a position to thoroughly investigate numerous hidden episodes of the war on their territories, and by doing so, to open the possibility of further comparisons and evaluations.

What do you think would be desirable in this respect?

The most effective in this respect would be further continuation and widening of the international projects which will open new comparative perspectives. Shedding light on the still

unrecognized occurrences will uncover what was forgotten in each national narrative and provide the answer to the question why it was forgotten.

Do you think there is a specific Eastern European history of the war?

The fall of the Austro-Hungarian, Russian, German and the Ottoman Empires and the creation of the new European national and multinational states, as well as the formation of the Soviet Union as the first socialist state are certainly some of the most intriguing historical phenomena of the 20th century. The four European empires were all gravitating towards the Eastern and Southern parts of the continent – even when territorially detached and distant, while their successor and descendant states differed in many ways from their Western counterparts. Also, the experience of the social revolutionary movements in Germany and Hungary strongly influenced by the October Revolution deserves special attention.

All of the above leads to the conclusion that this topic should and must be analysed with special consideration, however, in the wider European and global contexts.

How should we relate the Eastern part of the continent to Europe as a whole or the World in historiography?

The studies of the processes of modernisation and of historical traditions cannot reach the comprehensive level without a comparative method which includes not only international comparisons between the respective East-European states and nations, but also with their Western counterparts that often represented their role models.

METHODS OF DISSEMINATION, BEST PRACTICES, COOPERATION

What are the most important books published recently in your country concerning WWI?

The most important historical books on the First World War in the Serbian language were written by Andrej Mitorvić back in 1984. Until now, this has been the most relevant historical analysis of the Serbian role in the First World War. His book was republished in 2014 together with Ljubodrag Dimić and Mira Radojević's "Serbia in the Great War 1914 – 1918, A Short History"; Miroslav Perišić's "Sarajevo Assassination – Return to the Documents", Mile Bjelajac's "1914 – 2014 Why Revision?", Miloš Ković's "Gavrilo Princip, Documents and Memories", Danilo Šarenac's "The Gun, Soldier and Memory, First World War and Serbia 1914-2009", and Olga Manojlović Pintar's "The Archaeology of Memory, Monuments and the Identities in Serbia 1918 – 1989".

Historiography was accompanied by a number of publicists and literary works among which one novel is holding the central position. "The Great War" by Aleksandar Gatalica was published in 2012. The book received the highest literary award in Serbia (Ninova nagrada) and gained huge attention since it shed the light on different groups of the war participants. The public was also interested in works on Gavrilo Princip which differ in quality: "Gavrilo Princip, 14 stories on Sarajevo assassination" written by Vladimir Pištalo, Saš Ćirić, Miljenko Jergović, Vladimir Kecmanović, Igor Marojević, Srđan Srdić, Dejan Stojiljković, Ivančica Đerić, Miroslav Toholj, Vule Žurić, Miloš Ilić, Jelena Rosić, Nele Karajlić, and Muharem Bazdulj. The novelist Vladimir Kecmanović wrote the book titled "Das ist Princip", while Professor Radoš Ljušić named his book "Gavrilo Princip, Essay on National Hero". In this context, one cannot neglect the excellent book of Jasminka Petrović written for children on Nadežda Petrović, one of the most important Serbian painters who died as a nurse in a military hospital during WWI.

What were the most notable scientific venues?

The Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts organized the International scholarly conference “The Serbs and the First World War 1914 – 1918” on 13-15 May, 2014. More than 60 historians from Serbia and eleven other countries of Europe took part in the conference.

Four months later, on 24 September, the Institute for the Strategic Researches and the Historical Institute in Belgrade organized the conference “The First World War, Serbia, Balkans and the Great Powers”.

The conference “The European Tragedy of 1914 and the Multipolar World of 2014: Lessons Learned” was organized in Belgrade by the Centre for International Relations and Sustainable Development on 30 May. It could be considered the most provocative one. The organizers succeeded in ensuring the participation of Christopher Clark, Margaret MacMillan, Hartmut Pogge von Strandmann, and numerous politicians and diplomats who discussed sensitive questions concerning the beginning of the First World War.

What do you consider the best methods to reach the larger public with results of scholarly research on WWI?

Televised debates and round table discussions as well as documentaries presented on national television still have high ratings. However, the new digital generations are searching for new forms and streams of communication which must include the Internet as the most important platform that attracts the youngest generations.

What topics are people the most interested in?

The new interpretations of the old topics are always attracting interest from the public. The symbolism of the war heroes and martyrs has a great epic potential. Also, the unknown war stories which combine the suppressed facts with those remembered in the public are opening new perspectives on the war and its participants.

How could a more nuanced view of WWI be developed?

The constant dialogue and the existence of international debates are the most important preconditions to further sensitise the European public. However, the opening of a new perspective which will step out of the national discourse would nuance the views on WWI even more. Inclusion of the class, gender and racial studies and analyses will substantially improve the existing understanding of the events and phenomena of the war.

What is the role of less traditional means of dissemination?

Unconventional means of dissemination are aimed at raising the interest in this respective topic among the groups who are not attracted to historical narratives and who are avoiding to contextualize the present they are living in with the past. In this way, the essential distinction and the distance from the past could be established. The heavy burden of the political and the ideological controversies could be overcome and new connections could be established.

In what respect do you think transnational cooperation is possible regarding the memory of WWI?

The transnational cooperation must include the organization of public commemorations and events which will connect specific social groups by retelling the stories of war heroism and sufferings on the fronts with the narratives on women in war, army deserters, and the numerous opponents of the war. Thus, it could join together groups that are experiencing multiple identities, blurring the domination of the national identity much more than insisting exclusively on the international cooperation through the traditional ways of war representations.

How could you and/or your institution contribute to such an endeavour?

The History Department of the Faculty of Philosophy and the Institute for the Recent History of Serbia are in a position to organize and run various projects dealing with researches in the fields of the social history of WWI and the memory culture

in the wider region of South-Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans. We could run seminars and programs and organize academic conferences in those fields, of course in cooperation with our colleagues from the region and Europe.



Liljana Dobrovšak

Ivo Pilar Institute for Social Sciences (Zagreb, Croatia)

Starting from last year, most European countries and their governments have invested considerable time and effort in commemorating the centenary of WWI. However, this is not the case in Croatia. While European countries have become involved in commemorating the centenary on a global level, in Croatia this has mostly taken place on the local level, albeit with some exceptions. Despite the fact that the Croatian government has, on the initiative of a group of enthusiasts, founded a Commission within the Croatian Ministry of Culture for commemorating the centenary of the war, this was exclusively tied to the events of 2014 and covered two international scientific conferences on the topic of WWI, the laying of a wreath on a monument dedicated to the victims of the war, the restoration of some monuments to the victims of the war, several concerts and theatre plays as well as the organization of a few exhibitions. The then-president of the Republic of Croatia took onto himself only the role of conference sponsor. He was present at one of the conferences, but not the other. A number of Croatian government officials participated in other European commemorations as delegates.

Most of the activities regarding the commemoration were performed by an informal group of scholars who have already founded the Initiative Committee for Commemorating the First World War Centenary in 2012. The Committee members include scholars from various institutions interested in the history of WWI. They also informally represent their institutions in the

Committee and initiate activities regarding the commemoration of WWI as well as independently participate in them. State institutions (the government, parliament, ministries, academy, etc.) participated in the commemorations only in 2014, while the topic of WWI has received little to no attention in 2015.

Thanks to the Initiative Committee, it is possible to find information on activities related to commemorating WWI on the Croatian Institute of History's website at <http://1914-1918.com.hr/>

Most of the activities related to the commemoration of the centenary have been the work of a small group of individuals who organize round table discussions, participate in international conferences, write articles for the daily press, or participate in TV programmes. There has been very little formal coverage of WWI-related exhibitions in the media and public lectures on the topic attract very few people. Public institutions in Croatia have also given very little attention to the matter.

Had it not been for the international influence on the organization of the WWI centenary, the anniversary would have gone by almost completely unnoticed in Croatia. The reason for this lies in the fact that the Croatian public and leading state institutions remain focused on the last year of WWI, when Croatia became part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia (Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes), rather than on Croatia in the war itself.

The situation regarding commemorations is similar – they remain almost unnoticed by the Croatian public. In 2014, state and city authorities participated in commemorating the anniversary of the Sarajevo Assassination and the outbreak of the war (June to August), while there have been almost no commemorations in 2015. This year, the embassies of the UK, France, Germany and Italy organized a commemoration of the fallen soldiers at the main cemetery in Zagreb on 11 November 2015, without any participation by the Croatian government authorities. This is a clear indicator of how WWI still exists in the memory of European countries, but has been almost completely forgotten in Croatia.

WWI was a pivotal event in shaping the course of 20th century history, not only being the first instance of total war to encompass such a huge part of the globe, but also paving the way for important processes such as the rise of totalitarianism, American involvement in Europe, the collapse of multinational empires, and the rise of nation states, WWII and the Cold War in Europe. The experiences of WWI also had an undeniable impact on non-military-related areas of activity such as art, literature, science, society, etc. It is therefore an event of the utmost significance for Europe on many levels and deserves a special place in the collective memory of Europeans.

Historiography

Since Jay Winter and Antoine Prost famously identified three generations of historians and historiography of the Great War, it has been common to situate scholarship in this framework. One of the most common observations is how national historiographies in Eastern Europe lagged behind the West in terms of the emergence of these generations, and after 1989 how easily they returned to interpretations which were already part of the national imagery of these states right after WWI. Nevertheless, the 100th anniversary not only brought about a new wave of interest in the events between 1914 and the early twenties, but it also contributed to the emergence of new trends and approaches to the war which are not necessarily easy to frame with the model of generations, and which show not only an interest in a more detailed understanding of how the war affected societies and people, but also in repositioning it in global history. The new focus on the Eastern front, the integration of the fate of empires into post-colonial histories, the growing attention to the non-state-organized violence as a determining feature of the post-WWI social and political landscape in Eastern Europe are only a few notable ones among these new approaches. Meanwhile, one can also speak of a revival of old

tropes and interpretations, most notably in the discussion around responsibility and in the attempts to challenge what is seen as de-heroisation in national historiography.

What are the most important debates on the anniversary? How did discussions of international salience affect debates in your country? What are the significant new trends in research on WWI? What should the broader public expect in terms of new interpretations or new perspectives on the war? Do you think WWI needs a reconceptualization? If yes, in what sense? How would you position the actual national historiography in the history of a global WWI? What do you think would be desirable in this respect? Do you think there is a specific Eastern European history of the war? How should we relate the Eastern part of the continent to Europe as a whole or the World in historiography?

Regarding the topics of WWI-related research, Croatian historiography has yet to take any concrete steps. Topics which have already been covered for a long time in European historiography remain almost completely untouched in Croatia. Croatian historiography has mostly focused on researching the circumstances in which Croatia entered into a new state (the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, later Yugoslavia), while giving little attention to the consequences of WWI in Croatia, which is to be expected since it had until recently been part of Yugoslav historiography and therefore the researched topics which aren't related to Croatian history. It should be stressed that Croatia entered the Kingdom of SHS as the defeated party and that emphasizing differences was unwelcome in this context. For example, more time was devoted to research the Salonika volunteers than the Isonzo Front. For this reason, numerous topics related to the history of WWI in Croatia remain unknown and unexplored, and there exists no influence of international debates on this topic, excepting the questions on who is to be held responsible for the war, and were "we" on the defeated or winning side. Speaking of fundamental topics, we can say that Croatia has yet to come up with a precise number of its people who died during the war, and neither has

it produced a register of names. This is but one example. In general, Croatian historiography of WWI is still in its infancy and will remain so due to lack of funds. However, the situation isn't all gloomy since there have recently been some changes regarding the choice of topics which have started to include everyday life during the war, the role of women, the functioning of the cities, healthcare, journalism, individuals, etc. There are no projects funded by state or international institutions in Croatia dedicated to research Croatia during WWI, and this represents an additional barrier to research.

Debates on WWI-related topics in Croatia remain on a very basic level, such as the question who is responsible for the war, who were the winners and losers, or whether Gavrilo Princip was an assassin or a freedom fighter. After the disintegration of Yugoslavia, the attitude towards Princip has changed since the former Yugoslav historiography considered him a liberator of the "Balkan people", while most people in Croatia now see him as a terrorist.

In order to gain better insight into WWI and perhaps come up with some new interpretations, there should be more collaboration between all European historians, unlike the conference in Sarajevo about the outbreak of the war which was boycotted by Serbian and French historians, or the conferences in Italy where no Croatian historians were even invited.

Despite first impressions to the contrary, I believe that there exists no separate history of WWI in Eastern and Western Europe, and this can be seen from the facts presented above. War is war, where everybody suffers and all are victims. Collaboration between European historiographies and historians will allow us to overcome these differences in viewpoints and approach WWI in a more objective manner, without blaming each other for the war or for who suffered more because of it.

Methods of dissemination, best practices, cooperation

Historians have enjoyed for a long time a quasi-monopoly of historical knowledge in the form of power over determining national historical canons. But other actors' contribution to the development of social memory, a genre usually summed up as public history, has gained traction and nowadays it is hard to underestimate its influence on the historical consciousness of European societies. Historiography, not the least due to its changing self-understanding following a series of epistemological revelations, is only one of many actors trying to influence the public. In this competition, traditional genres of historical writing have disadvantages, and to reach the public, even historians try to revert to new methods. However, our understanding of how social memory comes into being has changed profoundly, too. Alongside the generation of grand narratives, practitioners of memory (who actively engage in discovering, preserving and mobilizing memory) are keen to integrate individual, family, local and regional memories into broader social memory in a way that reflects the past and present diversity of societies. These processes are also part of what is usually referred to as European memory which was mainly based on the memory of the Holocaust, but since the accession of the Eastern European countries, it has also been a contested field. So far, it has mainly been the deviating memory of the Communist past which had to be integrated into European memory, but the anniversary of WWI can pose another challenge.

What are the most important books published recently in your country concerning WWI? What were the most notable scientific venues? What do you consider the best methods to reach the larger public with results of scholarly research on WWI? What topics are people the most interested in? How could a more nuanced view of the WWI be developed? What is the role of less traditional means of dissemination? In what respect do you think transnational cooperation is possible regarding

the memory of WWI? How could you and/or your institution contribute to such an endeavour?

Many articles and books on WWI-related topics have recently been published in Croatia. These include several translations, but these are focused on political history rather than topics from everyday life. The following translations have been published: David Stevenson 1914-1918; Annika Mombauer, *The Origins of the First World War*; François Bouloc, *Les profiteurs de guerre, 1914-1918*; Paul Lintier, *Avec une batterie de 75: ma piece*; David Mackenzie, *Apis: the Congenial Conspirator, the Life of Colonel Dragutin T. Dimitrijević*. Several diaries of WWI participants have been published, and more are being prepared and are expected to be published by 2018. As far as I know, a joint Lexicon by Croatian and Serbian historians on the First World War is being prepared, and is expected to be published by the end of this year. All of this is still insufficient for more detailed or deeper research since Croatian historiography lacks the relevant research in European archives. As I've mentioned before, there is no scientific project dedicated to WWI, and this has led to the research being halted.

Methods for raising public consciousness of WWI include various workshops (e.g. WWI kitchens), films, documentaries, conferences, round table discussions, visits to old battlefields (especially in foreign countries), mutual exchange of experiences and achievements, and cooperation between historians. It would be good to found a European association or society of scholars interested in WWI and create a mailing list through which information on WWI-related events would be disseminated. A public appeal could be launched for this purpose, or a letter sent to historical associations and universities as well as individual historians, requesting them to collaborate regarding the mentioned topic. There is currently little in the way of transnational cooperation other than on the "I know you, you know me" level. Most conferences still revolve around a small number of people, and this is something that should be changed.

One of the examples is this very questionnaire, which was initially sent to individuals for whom WWI is only a secondary interest while failing to reach the experts who weren't invited to your conferences even though our countries are neighbours. There still exists a lack of knowledge on the state of European historiographies regarding WWI and on which scholars are the best qualified experts on this topic.

To answer your question on how I, i.e. my institution can contribute to this project, I will simply answer that that depends on you. If you wish to collaborate with us or with me, we will gladly participate in projects and invite other scholars to collaborate. I am participating in activities regarding the commemoration of the centenary of the outbreak of WWI in Croatia, not only through writing papers and attending conferences, but also by organizing conferences. I participate in TV documentaries, write articles for internet portals, forward WWI-related news to my colleagues, etc. Collectively, we organize commemorations for the victims of the war and visit the relevant locations. We strive to influence state institutions to participate in these activities and draw up new projects. Your experience would be very welcome, but the extent of our potential cooperation depends on you.

Helmut Konrad

1. The commemoration of WWI was a huge cultural event in Austria. A number of museums organized exhibitions, series in newspapers, books, school projects, TV, etc. It was the largest commemoration in the history of our country. And it was significantly beyond political controversy, there was also no important gap between political, scientific and public memory.

It was no longer the discussion of “Kriegsschuld”, nor a feeling of “Schande” for Saint Germain. So Austria was part of the mainstream of commemoration in Western Europe, trying to come to a transnational perspective, especially with the Italian historiography.

2. The most important impact came from Jay Winter’s 3-volume “Cambridge History of the First World War” and the consequent transnational approach in most of the articles. I could contribute with “Drafting the Peace” and I am happy to be part of the international team. In Winter’s book, you can see the new conceptualization: no national approaches, not a simple military history but an opening in the direction of cultural history and memory, to understand the war as a cruel, transforming event. I had the feeling that Eastern Europe was not fully included in this new approach. I lectured on 3 different continents, but not in Eastern Europe. Jay Winter, taking part in 2014 in more than 50 conferences all over the world, had only one panel in Eastern Europe...

3. Books are written by Manfred Rauchensteiner, Christa Hämmerle (most importantly on the gender perspective) and the teams in Innsbruck and Graz. Countless articles, catalogues and textbooks are published.

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„ It is right to say perhaps, though with some exaggeration, that the cornerstones of historical thinking about WWI in Hungary were laid down in the interwar period. After the decades of Communism, our public debates on history seem to return to their basic ideological sources whose genesis is to be found in and after 1918, keeping in mind that the war of 1914 had a major catalytic effect.”

(András Joó: The Origins and Legacy of World War I.
An (Austro-)Hungarian Perspective)

„For a long time, the history of World War I has been interpreted in school history education primarily from the national perspective. This went hand in hand with representing it within the framework of sentimentality and war propaganda, patriotic certainties such as battle, glory, hallowed dead, great men and conventional romanticism. However, in case of history textbooks used in Slovakia since 1918 until the present, WWI has not been depicted solely by the language of grief, mourning and bereavement, but it has always included also a significant positive aspect: it has been depicted as a milestone in the historical development of the nation...”

(Slávka Otčenášová: “The Truth Wins”: Interpretations
of World War I in School History)