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Popular Protest Against Hungarian Symbols in Croatia (1883–1903). A Study in Visual History

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Abstract

The article investigates the visual dimension of popular protests in Habsburg Croatia at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, reconstructing the history of a precise pattern of popular protest, i.e. anti-Hungarian unrests. Furthermore, the article explores the relationships that peasant masses established with some key national symbols, namely the Hungarian and Croatian flag, showing the multiple and contested meaning assigned to them by the members of the elite and the peasants. Second, the article shows how popular reception of these visual symbols changed during the examined period. The main issues addressed are therefore the mass nationalization and politicization of rural population in these regions, raising some general questions related to the symbolic language of social conflict.

Keywords

Social protest; visual history; Habsburg Croatia; national symbols; mass nationalization; peasants' politicization

1. Introduction

Between the end of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century, several waves of popular disturbance occurred in Croatia, which at that time was part of the Hungarian half of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.¹ The approach used up to now for investigating these popular and predominantly peasant protests was somewhat 'logocentric', focused almost entirely on the 'verbal' context, on written and pronounced words, i.e. on what people said, wrote, and read². This article will try rather to raise some questions related to what people saw, what they did not see, what they wanted to or thought they saw. It is an approach that addresses the 'visual context' of popular unrest. More precisely, the article will deal with what were the main symbolic targets of these protests: the Hungarian national flag and bilingual Hungarian-Croatian public coats of arms. In short, the visual markers of Hungarian power. By doing so, I

aim to describe a recognizable pattern of popular protest, and to illustrate its emergence and its development through to its disappearance. Moreover, this approach permits us insights into the relationship between the peasant masses and the national and collective symbols. This will allow the consideration of two interrelated sub-issues: the emergence of a 'new style' of politics in these regions, especially its popular 'reception'; and the national visual symbols with which it was linked.

The comparison of several waves of popular turmoil will highlight patterns that are less visible when examined separately, as has largely been done up to now. Furthermore, the focus on the history of visual cultures in the examined region permits a meaningful exploration of the changes of nineteenth-century collective behaviours of the upper as well as the lower classes. The 'politicization of the masses' was intertwined with socio-economic issues, while nation-building processes were characterized by an increasing 'sacralization' of the nation. This perspective is indebted to several historiographical traditions and research fields linked to the cultural and visual aspects of social protest,³ the political 'apprenticeship' of popular classes to politics,⁴ the political imagery of the modern nation,⁵ the so-called 'pictorial turn' and visual studies.⁶ Drawing on this rich scholarship, I will offer a new interpretation of the examined popular disturbances.

Across the domains of visual studies and visual history, most case studies are based on investigations of visual sources. However, it may be opportune to stress at the outset, that the goal of visual studies 'is not the study of images'⁷. Rather, the research subject of visual history goes beyond the visual medium itself, and instead examines the visual 'culture' of a given society. Furthermore, it is not prosaic to emphasize that investigations in this field can also be grounded in non-visual sources. The developments in the field of 'oral history' can provide some useful methodological pointers in this regard. Based on the fruitful interrelations between (written) texts and (spoken) words, the goals in that research field were often not only to investigate 'oral sources', but also the 'orality', i.e. the 'oral cultures' of societies, and for this purpose written sources can represent a fully adequate research ground.⁸ The same applies to the field of visual history: the aim is not necessarily to deconstruct and analyze a specific visual source, but to investigate the 'visual dimension' of some historical events/processes; and this can also be done by relying exclusively upon written sources. This kind of approach is quite uncommon in the studies of Croatian history, as well as for South-Eastern Europe in general.⁹

As such, this article represents a novel contribution to an up-dated cultural and social history of popular protests in this region. It will deal with a chain of episodes that deserve a distinguished place in the social history of the Habsburg Empire regarding the effects on the regional/local level of, and the popular reactions to, the establishment of the Dual Monarchy in 1867.¹⁰ In particular, it will analyze the conflicting interpretations around some key national symbols, especially the Hungarian and Croatian flags, and how popular attitudes towards them changed throughout the examined period. Drawing on a rich literature mainly focused on the Austrian half of the Habsburg Empire,¹¹ this article will address the processes of nation-building and the beginning of mass politics in the Croatian regions.

Observing the popular disturbances of this period, and focusing on their visual dimension, I have two primary goals. First, I will show the difficulties faced by the several conflicting and overlapping nationalist projects of this region in developing a feeling of loyalty among the rural population for the respective nationalist cause. Peasants' reactions towards key visual symbols of state, national, and confessional collective identities, such as the Hungarian, Croatian, and the Serbian-Orthodox flags, were sometimes unexpected and ambiguous. As such, the article will indicate how multiple meanings could be assigned to the same visual sign, and the crucial role played by the urban-rural cleavages and by socio-economic factors, more than alleged national ones. The article will therefore provide some insights into the always difficult, contested, and dynamic processes feeding into the construction of nationalities in the examined area.¹² Second, this article aims at showing that the popular 'practices of looking' in the period under examination have progressively changed, i.e. how at the turn of the twentieth century peasants in Croatia modified the way that they understood and used the national symbols they were confronted with.¹³ A learning process can be observed, which tell us one (visual) aspect of the history of mass nationalization and mobilization in this region.

Comparing Croatian Popular Protests: From the 1850s to the 1870s

Two formal acts mark the reformulation of the power relations inside the Habsburg Empire and its Hungarian half, called Transleithania: the Austro-Hungarian *Ausgleich* (Compromise) of 1867, which established a dualist framework for the monarchy, and the later Croat-Hungarian *Nagodba* (Agreement) of 1868, after which Croatia theoretically enjoyed a good level of political autonomy, but which was de facto limited and controlled by the government in Budapest. What is generally not observed is that these intra-Habsburg arrangements also affected the nature of popular protest.

For a confirmation of this it is useful to look at the popular disorders in the pre-*Ausgleich* Croatian countryside. The 1850s and the first half of the 1860s were pervaded by rural disturbances, but they still had the form and content of a prevailing post-feudal character, dealing with the classical issues which shaped the relationships between former masters and former feudal servants. The abolition of feudal relationships in 1848 had left open a series of questions related first of all to the use of the 'common lands', i.e. forests, pastures, and rivers, as well as to the replacement of servitudes with taxes. Not only did the causes of the disorders have no anti-Hungarian imprinting, but neither did the forms and the symbolic targets: the peasants occupied the fields, collected woods where and when they considered it legitimate, refused to pay the new taxes and often assaulted former masters, tax collectors and the soldiers who accompanied them. The unrests were frequently aimed at protecting the copies, preserved in almost every village, of what was popularly considered the new 'sacred' document, i.e. the 'letter' with which the Ban, i.e. the Vice-Roy Josip Jelačić (1848–59) declared in 1848 the abolition of serfdom.¹⁴

We can find the first traces of anti-Hungarian tones in the uprising of 1871 which took place in the so-called Military Border, a military institution which was on the way to being abolished – this finally happened between 1873 and 1881. The revolt was led by Eugen Kvaternik, co-leader with Ante Starčević of the Party of (Croat State) Right (*Stranka prava*), whose main political goal was to fight for an independent Croatian state.¹⁵ The uprising lasted only a few

days, it was confined to a few villages, and it has to be intimately linked with the abolition of the Military Border. The issues the uprising embodied, as well as its strictly military organization, are quite specific, lacking the features of later popular unrests in Croatia. It is the big turmoil of 1883 that represented a significant change – and that therefore constitutes the first episode of our story.

First Episode: 1883

The first decade (1870s) of the relatively new political-institutional framework of Transleithania was characterized by the efforts made by Ban Ivan Mažuranić (1873–80), to implement several reforms in the country, improving its administration, judiciary, and education.¹⁶ But after this decade began a period, which some members of the Croatian elite as well as the lower strata perceived as a time of intensified subjugation of the country to the Magyar economic, cultural and national interests.¹⁷ Thus many of the decisions on economic policy taken in the Croatian diet in Zagreb, strongly influenced by the political elite in Budapest, were predominantly in favour of Magyar interests and of some local supporters.¹⁸ From the point of view of the peasants, the new, much hated taxes were the tangible effect of their ‘exploitation’ exercised by Hungarian rule, and its supporters in Croatia. In addition to the representatives in the Croatian diet, local voters were also counted among the supporters of these new economic policies. They were often accused, as we will see, of having ‘sold’ Croatian lands to the Magyars, for example during the election in 1881, when the ruling party, the People’s Party (*Narodna stranka*), won again, also thanks to a franchise and electoral rules which favoured the ruling elite. Moreover, the next two decades were characterized by processes of cultural assimilation, the so-called ‘Magyarization’ policy, including attempts to introduce Hungarian as the operative language for civil servants concerned with finance and for the personnel of the Croatian railways.

Within the context of these new socio-economic conditions, as well as the European-wide economic crisis of 1873–1895, the decision of the Hungarian Finance Director Antal Dávid to introduce bilingual (Croatian/Hungarian) coat of arms on all financial buildings in the spring of 1883 sparked wide protests. The opposition press and opposition parties fiercely reacted to this decision with high levels of criticism, seeking to exploit the incident in order to mobilize the population against Hungarian rule.¹⁹ This led first to protests in Zagreb, later spreading to smaller cities and throughout almost the entire Croatian countryside. If in the capital city the disorders had a more distinctly political connotation, in the countryside the peasants were moved mainly by social and economic reasons: the fear of new taxes, and a rooted resentment against the members of the political and economic elite, at the local level, too. This led to attacks against both buildings and persons representing what was perceived as a hostile public administration.²⁰

However, within this context a new element emerged in comparison with previous unrests: an anti-Hungarian feature of the peasant protest. The nationalist agitation of Starčević’s party may have played a role in the popular appearance of this anti-Hungarian feeling, although it would be rash to interpret it as the clear expression of a mature Croatian national consciousness. This is in contrast with some interpretations of these factors that have attributed a quite developed and clear national loyalty to the rural population with Pavličević

asserting: 'At that point [in 1883] the peasantry expressed for the first time its national consciousness', and 'The peasants considered themselves at that time as Croatians'.²¹ Rather, the peasant protest represented a reaction to the social and cultural developments of the previous decades, while those responsible for these developments began to be characterized by the – at this moment still generic – designation of 'Hungarians'.

Furthermore, a rumour took form during the demonstrations, and created a *master narrative*, which would reoccur in all of the following anti-Hungarian rural disturbances. According to the rumour, Hungarian flags and coats of arms had to be exhibited on churches or educational and municipal buildings in all rural villages, thanks to the collaboration of (bribed) local 'traitors'. This operation, so the rumour ran, would have catastrophic effects: the village would be 'sold' to Hungary, new taxes and other burdens would be introduced, and the poor lives of the peasants would deteriorate terribly.²²

This mix of suspicion towards the local leadership, distrust towards the national political elite in Zagreb, and fears related to the challenges of the new economic developments, were condensed and channelled towards some signs, namely the flag and the coat of arms, which became the symbolic target of popular discontent. Especially in some districts, 'There was almost no rioting village where the peasants did not shout against flags and coats of arms, unfailingly looking for them in schools, offices and churches.'²³ Villagers organized guards in order to protect the church towers, and the interactions with local officials, teachers, and priests led to violent incidents. Finally, the 'national movement' of 1883, as it is called in the historiography, was repressed by the army in September: forty-seven peasants lost their lives in the clashes and dozens of them were injured.²⁴ Following these events, Károly Khuen-Héderváry (1883–1903) was nominated as Croatia's Ban; he is known in the literature for his undemocratic, almost authoritarian, and overtly pro-Hungarian practice of governance.²⁵

The bilingual coats of arms of 1883 must be read as one of the efforts made by the Hungarian rulers and their local representatives to inscribe Hungarian symbols in the urban visual landscape of Croatia. The 'dualist' (i.e. post 1867) era in the Habsburg history of this region also showed a visual side. This meant that the developments at the political-institutional level were also visualized through symbols related to Hungarian rule, which began to be increasingly present in the main Croatian cities and even in the villages. Such measures were a further reason for popular discontent, and they ultimately led to widespread protests focused precisely on those Hungarian symbols.

The attempts made by the Hungarian authorities to integrate more deeply the Croatian regions into the economic and cultural framework of the lands of the Crown of St. Stephen helped to promote a form of popular resentment. In this regard, it seems that the relationship the peasants established with some symbols changed and evolved. Beside very concrete actions, they adopted a new symbolic language, well represented by the (visual) targets of the protest, and which differed in comparison with the past. But this point requires further inquiry. How did the peasants actually interpret these symbols? What meaning and function did they have in popular opinion and actions?

Given the central role of the putative visual targets of these protests, sparked precisely by the official measures and rumours regarding coat of arms and flags, at first sight it can be

surprising to notice that protesters sometimes had a hard time identifying what exactly they were fighting against. Invariably they were looking for Hungarian coats of arms with inscriptions in the Hungarian language. What they generally found were the so-called 'common' or 'state-coats of arms', with some Hungarian as well as Croatian national symbols, and with inscriptions only in Croatian. Rarely were the people involved in the revolts able to observe the fine distinctions which were made in the town of Nova Gradiška. In this case the explanation for the theft of the flag which had been flown on the local financial office was that the Magyar tricolour in that case did not have the common state coat of arms, and it was therefore considered not a state, but a national (Magyar) symbol.²⁶

However, what happened in Nova Gradiška, a middle-sized town with some educated people, cannot be generalized and extended to villages in the countryside. In the latter cases, people proved to be quite disoriented. It could happen, as in Hrastovica, that a group of villagers entered the church in search of the Hungarian coat of arms and, not finding it, attacked the statue of a saint (St. Florian), 'considering it a kind of coat of arms'.²⁷ Elsewhere, as in Dubrave and other villages, people could not distinguish the Croatian from the Hungarian signs, and in Gomirje people demolished official signs, even though they were in the Croatian language.²⁸ In short: what was to be an anti-Hungarian protest often took place at the expense of Croatian signs.

Some of the contemporaries blamed this popular behaviour on ignorance: 'the peasants had no idea that Croatia also has its own emblem.'²⁹ This could well have been the case, considering the high level of illiteracy of the rural population as well as the fact that the Croatian tricolour, first officially used only in 1848, had been forbidden between 1852 and 1860, which probably did not facilitate rural familiarity with it. Moreover, the Croatian coat of arms in the post 1867 period always officially appeared surmounted by the Crown of St. Stephen, which certainly did not help in distinguishing Croatian and Hungarian official symbols.³⁰

Nonetheless, to explain peasant attitudes as a sign of ignorance is a simplistic approach. Peasants' behaviour towards these symbols could also express a more complex position and a form, probably not fully rationalized and therefore not clearly formulated, of political statement. If one looks more closely at the events under examination, one can see that the peasants provide something like an 'interpretation' of the attacked symbols: 'People armed with sticks [...] removed the national [i.e. Croatian] coat of arms, because it is as it were a Hungarian coat of arms'.³¹ This is valid for all of the aggressions towards the 'common coats of arms', even if they had Croatian inscriptions, because they were attacked by crowds 'shouting that they were Hungarian ones'.³² Being official signs, independent from their precise content, they were defined as 'Hungarian', i.e. attacked as visual symbols of official power.

A clear evidence of this collective *j'accuse* shouted by the protesters towards everything which was connected with official rule are the attacks against the members of the local Croatian elite, who had the right to vote, and were making use of it to vote for the ruling party. For example, against one of these supporters of the People's Party the peasants shouted 'Let's kill him, because he's a traitor!'³³ These kinds of political statements do not seem to be very naïve;

on the contrary, they show that the villagers were becoming aware of the new Croatian political landscape and its structure at the local level.

Thus, a sort of assimilation between Croatian and Hungarian official signs had taken place, both recognized as symbols of a hostile and distant rule. The turmoil which had begun with a more overtly anti-Hungarian character, developed in some cases into broader social turmoil, directed against both foreign and domestic visual signs of state bureaucracy. Perhaps the peasants were unable to distinguish the signs properly, but perhaps they were not really interested in doing so. The decision to implement the bilingual coat of arms exposed a general popular discontent, which was linked to the burden of taxation, the effects of a long-term agrarian crisis, and the cultural and social gap with the members of the elite.

Second Episode: 1897

The second episode of our story took place fourteen years later, in 1897.³⁴ In May of that year the elections for the Croatian diet took place and were accompanied by peasant protests and severe incidents. The peasants, still excluded by the electoral system, tried to have their voice heard by the authorities and to express their discontent regarding the ruling elite, by supporting the candidates of the Croat opposition.³⁵ This was facilitated by an important novelty that promoted the mobilization and direct involvement of the masses in Croatian 'high politics'; it was only with the electoral campaign of 1897 that the 'peasant issue' appeared in the programmes and debates of the principal political parties (and a few years later in other political movements, such as political Catholicism).³⁶ As a result, the political elite in Zagreb opened itself to the countryside and extended its interests to include some socio-economic issues related to the peasantry.

These were more than solely theoretical reflections. These campaigning innovations also actually affected the practice of politics: for the first time in the political history of this country, the electoral campaign for the Croatian diet also took place in the countryside. The politicians from Zagreb took the train or buggy and went to the villages in order to run rallies. This brought with it new topics, new methods, new spaces (the tavern, the village square), and new languages. The commitment of the members of the opposition, who were almost all lawyers by profession, also continued after the turmoil of this year, when they defended the peasants in a number of subsequent court trials.³⁷ Moreover, a further important factor for the peasant mobilization was the role played by the Catholic lower clergy, the majority of which supported the Croat oppositional parties. Its active participation in the electoral campaign of 1897 is well documented, showing a high number of Catholic priests who made use of their position in rural society to influence the political orientations of their parishioners.³⁸ One of the peasant reactions to these novelties was to gather at the polling places, in an attempt to exercise pressure on those who had the right to vote, and in general to express their dissatisfaction with the socio-economic conditions of their lives.

Both before and during the electoral consultations, several incidents and clashes with the gendarmes took place. They continued later, when the government decided to negate the validity of some electoral results in favour of the opposition, a decision which some rural communities publicly contested. As with the disorders in 1883, these disturbances were widespread across the country, although the popular disturbances of 1897 were concentrated

exclusively in the countryside. Furthermore, many of them were focused only on one symbol, the Hungarian flag, and connected, once again, with a rumour. Similar to the stories circulating in 1883, the allegations spread in the countryside, becoming a dominant feature of the incidents which took place from August until October of that year. The wave of violent disorders in 1897 brought twenty fatalities and several dozens of injured among the peasants. As in 1883, the symbolic attacks of 1897 were accompanied by physical attacks upon members of the local elite, and three public officers were murdered. Ultimately the intervention of the army restored order.³⁹

The symbols of the Hungarian rule, then, played a crucial role at this time too. The kind of association between Hungarian and simply 'official' signs, which were observed in relation to the unrests in 1883, emerged even more clearly in the next wave of disorders in 1897. In this case too, there were many examples of the inability of the peasants to decipher the symbols. On one occasion, for example, the peasants of an Orthodox community in Croatia hunted for the Hungarian flag, but ended up picking the Serbian-ecclesiastical one, i.e. the flag of the Serbian Orthodox Church, which looks much like the three-coloured Serbian national flag, which in turn has the same colours (blue-white-red but in another order) as the Croatian national flag. Heavy hermeneutic dilemmas were very often raised in the moment when the rioters had the flag that they had 'discovered' in the church or in the church-tower in their hands. Some peasants actually confused it with the Croatian one. As one witness explained, most of the peasants 'do not know the precise order of the colours.'⁴⁰ The problem was serious, leading the peasants to issue statements without many nuances: 'I do not know *any flag*, because I am not educated.'⁴¹ This was not an isolated case: during several instances of unrest the intelligentsia of the village, i.e. the priest, his wife and the village's teacher, had to 'explain' – without great success – to the peasants which flag they had in front of them. A priest's wife asked a peasant: 'But do not you remember, Dmitri, that you carried it three years ago, when you went greeting the bishop?'⁴² But neither Dmitri, nor the crowd of suspicious and enraged peasants who surrounded him, did remember.⁴³

As was the case with the uncertainties displayed by peasants in 1883, this sort of *misunderstanding* cannot be simply read through the category of *error*, or simple mistakes to be attributed to illiteracy. Actually, the occasions when 'misunderstandings' take place can give us some insights into the differences between the *intentions*, i.e. how a (visual) message is conceived and 'broadcasted' by the elites, and the *effects*, i.e. how it is perceived and appropriated by the target groups.⁴⁴ Such cases are therefore precious for historical analysis because they introduce us to the dimension of the popular *reception* of a sign.

In the case under examination, there are many traces which lead to the conclusion that the peasants' behaviour was not the result of a naïve reaction, but of an interpretation of the actual political context. If we take into consideration that the clergy of the Serbo-Orthodox Church fully supported at that time the 'Hungarophile' government in Zagreb,⁴⁵ having confirmed it in the elections of that year, it is not surprising that the peasants proceeded with a sort of assimilation, considering the Serbo-ecclesiastical flag as 'Hungarian', that is to say hostile to rural population. Something analogous can also be said with relation to those Croat politicians who belonged to the ruling Hungarophile party (the People's Party) and to the central government in Zagreb. All of them were linked with or even belonged to a wide group

called the 'Magyarons' and named by the peasants simply the 'Magyars/ Hungarians'. They were perceived as the powerful *elite*, which was exploiting the rural population: 'at that point they [the villagers] surrounded the church [...] and they said that they didn't want neither the Hungarian flag, nor the Croatian one, because this has become Hungarian, and nor the so-called "Serbo-ecclesiastical", because this is Hungarian, too.'⁴⁶

When the Orthodox priest of a small village proposed to exhibit the Hungarian three-coloured flag in public in order to please a prominent member of the Hungarian government who was travelling through Croatia, he explained that 'this would please the sir, and it can't damage us'. But 'the parishioners, on the contrary, who had had their fill of the word "Hungarian" since the last elections for the Croat diet, they did not want to hear about this idea'.⁴⁷

Through such evidence, one can connect with a certain cultural and political gap that existed between the upper and the lower classes in Croatia at this time. This was also reflected in the multiple meanings assigned to some collective symbols, like the national and confessional flags, as reflected in the case under examination. The peasants had great difficulty in accepting some flags as 'their' flags, be they confessional, national, or those of the state. Even worse, sometimes they could not distinguish them at all.

The protests certainly had an anti-Hungarian character, but this does not automatically mean that the peasants had strong national identities. Rather, what can be maintained is that the uncertainty in recognizing the several national symbols reveals that the 'visual education of the masses' in national terms – often regarded as an important part of the modern 'nationalization of the masses' – was still at its beginning.

Such issues are intrinsically linked with nation-building processes and especially one aspect of them, which is of particular interest here: the advent of new 'civil religions', in Croatia as in other European countries at that time. Drawing on the most recent findings about these issues, I use the concept of 'civil religion' not to refer to the religious traits typical of totalitarian regimes, but more to the sacralization of politics, which may also include democratic regimes.⁴⁸ I am not seeking to explore here the secularization/nationalization of religion, nor the religious matrixes of modern nationalism.⁴⁹ Rather, I am using the concept of 'civil religion' in a diffuse and general way, being mainly interested in the developing aesthetics and sacralization of politics and the nation. The main concerns here are therefore the 'processes of politicization as well as the affirmation of the nation in the modern period through symbolic political imagery [...] shaping the grammar of the nation and mobilizing the élite and masses alike to the service of an abstract ideal: the nation.'⁵⁰ The political elites in Croatia made the first efforts to elaborate the new political liturgies linked with the processes of mass mobilization and of modern nation-building. That is why they had to prepare texts which can be understood as a form of 'laic catechisms', and which were charged with the task of giving instructions to the population about the meaning of the symbols, beginning with the national flags.

For example, in a long article published in a newspaper devoted to the popular classes and edited by members of the Party of Right, and therefore with a Croat nationalist connotation, it is explained that: 'One must have respect for the wish of the people, who from the beginning are against foreign flags. On the contrary, and to the delight of the people, one could fly the

Croatian flag, which is loved by the people and which is for it *like a relic*.⁵¹ The language of the sacred is transposed to the nation, which is sacralised and equipped with accessories defined as 'relics', which therefore require devout worship. The aim of such texts is to develop new sentiments of identity and loyalty, as we can read in a fictive dialogue published in the same newspaper: 'But do you know what this is, this flag? / It is the sign of the nation, its pride, its glory.'⁵²

Similar texts abounded in those years in the popular press in Croatia, both in Croatian as well as Serbian periodicals and popular publications.⁵³ It is not by chance that in those years Croatian and Serbian national flags were increasingly used for supporting electoral candidates and for sealing collective rites of passage such as weddings.⁵⁴ Especially in the first case, this reveals that members of the lower classes, without the right to vote, not only wanted to have their voices heard regarding some political issues, but also that they did so by using the flag as a tool of expression. In more general terms, this means that collective visual symbols like the national and confessional flags were being increasingly used in connection with modern political ideas and activities, including on-going nation-building processes. At the national as well as at the local level there was greater symbolic investment in the flags, which were intended to be vehicles of more clearly defined identities and loyalties.

But at the same time, as we have seen, not all of the collective behaviours, especially on occasion of popular protests, were 'normalized' in political and national terms; the rural population did not seem to simply follow the 'instructions' coming 'from above', reacting in the way that was expected by its elite. State symbols raised with the hope of spreading and displaying loyalty to the Hungarian Crown, encountered the opposite: disapproval and animosity. National and confessional symbols, which the elites considered evident markers of self-identification for the rural population, could also be disowned and/or re-interpreted in unpredicted ways.

The 'new style of politics' was taking its first steps, and one can notice its initial effects, but there is also evidence which demonstrates how peasants were not simply passive targets of the new policies. On the one hand, they delivered an 'active' reaction to the socio-political novelties of that time, providing their own interpretation of political symbols. On the other hand, they were sometimes unable to clearly recognize and deal with the modern political imagery. There was still a big space for indecision, indeterminacy, and ambiguity. However, by 1903 something had changed in this regard.

Third Episode: 1903

Popular sensibility towards Hungarian national symbols re-emerged even more clearly in 1903, during the second so-called 'national movement'. This time, following instructions coming from the Croatian central authorities, national Hungarian flags were prominently exhibited on the train stations of several towns and cities. Popular reactions, supported and in some cases promoted by local nationalist activists,⁵⁵ were massive and violent. The symbols as well as railway officers who embodied the 'foreign and oppressing rule' were attacked.⁵⁶ The incidents in Zaprrešić are emblematic: on the occasion of the Hungarian national holiday, the 11th of April, the officers of the local train station raised the Hungarian flag. Following this, a group of peasants gathered and moved towards the building, entered it, removed the flag,

poured oil on it and set it on fire. Finally, they destroyed all the Hungarian language signs. During the clashes with the gendarmes, several peasants were injured and one was killed.⁵⁷

In the subsequent months, the disorders extended to many other provinces, resulting in several casualties among the peasants. Notwithstanding these severe incidents, in August of that year, on the day of the King's birthday (11th of August), the government ordered that a Hungarian flag together with a Croatian flag be raised in all of the train stations in Croatia, leading to new wave of disorders and casualties among protesters.⁵⁸

In the framework of these disturbances it is also possible to encounter the isolated re-emergence of the rumour regarding the Hungarian flag and the socio-cultural-institutional effects in the case where it was raised in a rural village.⁵⁹ Although it is possible to find this master narrative of the 'dangerous flag on the church tower' some years later, e.g. in one isolated case in 1909, but not in regards to the Hungarian flag,⁶⁰ the long series of incidents in 1903 represented the last chapter of these anti-Hungarian popular disturbances.

In those first years of the new century the local nationalist movements were further developing their ideologies and activities. Members of the Croatian and Serbian middle class formulated their competing variants of national identity and their different political claims (which nonetheless produced not only conflicts, but also occasions of alliance), to be put in the framework of the political relationships within the monarchy and Transleithania in particular.⁶¹ Though the state of the research does not allow for a clear overview of the impact on the rural population of such developments, it can be assumed that, together with the better implementation of mandatory schooling,⁶² they influenced and increased peasants' awareness of the cultural, institutional and political landscape in Croatia.

What can be surely stated is that, with regard to popular interpretation of national symbols, there was no longer any great doubt in 1903. During the demonstrations which crossed the country, the symbolic targets were identified more clearly than in the past, and consensual meanings were attributed to the flags involved, respectively the Hungarian flag and the Croatian flag. As we have seen, the entire sequence of disturbances during this year was explicitly provoked by the decision of the authorities – renewed on more than one occasion – to exhibit the Hungarian flag on the train stations. In response, the collective protests typically included a collective rally of the local population, the removal of that flag, and often its burning in public. This is not to say that acts of generic vandalism were absent: on the contrary, the protests included destruction of public buildings, of private houses which belonged to representatives of the (Hungarophile) government, and even attacks on official signs with inscriptions not only in Hungarian, but also in other languages (i.e. Italian and German).⁶³ However, this time the incidents did not occur because people were unable to distinguish the different public signs. The Hungarian flag was clearly recognized and fiercely attacked, and by extension so were other objects which could be associated with the Hungarian rule, for example the portraits of the Ban and of the regional governor.⁶⁴

On the other hand, the popular relationship with the Croatian national flag was also seen to have evolved. In the case of the disorder in Glogovnica, for example, the peasants extracted a promise from the district's secretary first that he would not exhibit the Hungarian flag or the Hungarian coat of arms, and second that he would give them a Croatian flag, which happened

some days after. An articulated collective ritual then took place, which merged social, cultural, national and religious issues. The villagers approached the parish priest, who had already raised two Croatian flags on the church and on the bell tower. The procession first moved around the church, and then entered it, with the priest ahead. The flag was thereafter solemnly delivered into the hands of the priest, who gave a speech, blessed the flag, which he declared he would keep it and take care of. The whole ceremony was accompanied by prayers, liturgical songs, the music of the organ played by the local teacher. Finally, the flag was hidden in a secret place.⁶⁵

There were other similar cases. In Klemen people required the Croatian national flag to be raised on the church in order to be blessed, provoking the intervention of the authorities, and then heavy clashes with the gendarmes.⁶⁶ Elsewhere during this wave of disorders, one can encounter cases of 'self-taxation': peasants contributing their own money for the purchase of the flags.⁶⁷

Increasingly often the exhibition of the Croatian national flag was *required* by the people, linking it with (not only official/political, but also more private) rallies, as was the case for the funeral of Ivan Pasarić, a Croat peasant who died from injuries received during the incidents that year in Zaprešić. On this occasion, many peasants also wore national bands and cockades.⁶⁸ Small Croatian national flags entered the space of the school, where the children occasionally brought them.⁶⁹ Moreover, during popular protests, when villagers wished to demonstrate, they increasingly did so carrying the national Croatian banner.⁷⁰ If they did not have one at their disposal, they went to the public offices and demanded that the officers lend them the Croatian three-coloured, which was evidently becoming an indispensable gadget for popular demonstrations.⁷¹

A New Chapter of Popular Disturbances: Post 1903

To identify effectively the chronological range of the pattern of popular protests under examination, it is useful to explore the characteristics of the post 1903 popular disturbances.⁷² The next big turmoil, the so-called 'Green Cadre', which took place between August and December of 1918, had in fact a completely different character.⁷³ The popular discontent of the peasants, exacerbated by the war experience, matched the sentiments and expectations of deserters and former soldiers, who were determined to avoid being re-enlisted. Together they gave form to widespread and articulated disturbances, and attacked estate manors, merchants, as well as more political targets, including various local authorities and even churchmen. It is possible to find the last traces of the older protest's pattern, like in Kutina, where the riots began with the removal of Hungarian-language signs,⁷⁴ or in the frequent attacks on Jewish merchants, 'perceived by nationalist public opinion as one of the channels of Magyarization and Germanization'.⁷⁵ However, this must be inscribed in the general framework of these unrests, which took place while the Habsburg Monarchy was vanishing, and during the parallel establishment of the so-called National Council in Zagreb. The provisional government was at this time discussing the formation of the first Yugoslavia, which would arise from the unification of the former South-Slavic Habsburg provinces (the Slovene and Croat lands, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Vojvodina), the Kingdom of Serbia, and the Kingdom of Montenegro. In this new political context, the attacks against civil authorities, official

symbols, and the members of the administrative class quickly lost their specific anti-Hungarian components, and rather came to be connected to a more generic post-war attitude, and with an anti-bureaucratic and anti-urban stand, resembling traditional tensions between peasants and members of the educated classes.⁷⁶

Hungarian rule soon became a reference point of the past. The legacy of the perceived subjugation showed itself, but the actors targeted by the protests were new, namely the representatives of the emerging Yugoslav state. As one peasant petition put it: 'hitherto we were slaves of Magyardom, and now we are slaves precisely of those [gentlemen] who oppressed the people even worse than the Magyars.'⁷⁷ These disorders represent the first appearance of post-Habsburg protests, anchored in a new Yugoslav context. The content and symbolic targets of the peasant protests were promptly up-dated and lost their anti-Hungarian traits.

The same can be said for the subsequent wave of rural revolts, which took place in the autumn of 1920. The spark for this wave of revolts was represented by the first attempts made by the new Yugoslav Ministry of Defence, which had extended Serbia's military laws to include the entire territory of the state, to enforce the obligatory draft-animal registration. The Serbian practice also demanded the branding of the animals, which was a novelty in Croatia and provoked suspicions, fears of future requisitions, and forms of peasant resistance.⁷⁸ Though there were numerous armed clashes between the peasants on one side, and the army and the gendarmerie on the other (causing several dozen casualties), the incidents were not as widespread as in 1918, and were instead confined to the wider environs of Zagreb.

The form and content of these protests clearly confirmed the transformation of popular protest: this wave of turmoil, oriented predominantly towards the Serbian army and the public offices, expressed economic, class, cultural, and political tensions – all of them, now, neatly intra-Yugoslav issues. By this time the 'enemies' were not the Hungarian(ophile) authorities, but the Yugoslav/Serbian ones, and the acts of rebellion revolved around completely different concrete and symbolic goals.

Conclusions: The Popular 'Visual Apprenticeship' to Politics

What has emerged from this overview is a precise pattern of popular protest, which developed in late-Habsburg Croatia, and which could be called the 'anti-Hungarian popular protests'. These protests appeared at the beginning of the 1880s and lasted until the beginning of the new century. This article has sketched some general traits, adopting a socio-cultural perspective which encompassed each of the protests and focused on their visual dimensions. This kind of comparison helped in identifying some continuities, as well as changes. As I hope to have shown with this article, changes can primarily be found in the disorders of 1883 (when compared with the previous ones), and in 1903 (when compared with the successive ones).

Looking at the disorders and at their visual dimension, one can observe that what the peasants were 'looking for' when they protested changed over time. Peasants were initially assaulting the tax collectors, then Hungarian flag, and finally Serb/Yugoslav office(r)s. During these decades, the relationship between the 'state' and the peasants took very different (visualized) forms. While the relationship first materialized in the 1880s in the form of a flag on a train

station, it later appeared as a brand on an animal. Furthermore, by the beginning of the twentieth century the protesters were increasingly looking for the Croatian flag, now clearly recognized as a banner to be waved.

The difference with the disorders at the beginning of our story is striking, when we considered that at that time the flag, as far as it is known, did not appear at all, i.e. it was not used by the peasants: the protest was mainly verbal and what recurred in the sources is not the raising of flags, but (only) collective 'shouting' and 'singing'.⁷⁹ Moving from this situation to that of 1903, when the protesters acclaimed the flag and let it be blessed, one can see how a 'learning process', which also manifested itself in visual terms, took place. It seems that peasants became more accustomed to the modern political and party systems, and the nation-building processes had moved some steps further. During the first years of the twentieth century, peasants in Croatia were 'learning' to identify more clearly the different flags and eventually began to engage in political battles parading under, and in the name of, such symbols.

Studies like those published about Western Habsburg regions which investigate in an innovative way the processes of mass nationalization and mass mobilization in the late Habsburg period have not been written with regard to the Croatian case. Nationalism studies about Croatia have produced several historical overviews, but there is no study that accurately explores the developments of collective political, cultural and national forms of identifications among the rural population in the long nineteenth century.⁸⁰

This article has provided some elements for narrating this history, which took place before the period between the two world wars, i.e. the period which is generally recognized as the time in which modern forms of mass national consciousness became widespread in the Croatian territory.⁸¹ In fact, it seems that by the beginning of the twentieth century (but not before) the 'apprenticeship to politics' by the peasants, as well as the 'sacralization' of the nation, had taken some important steps forward. The 'immense chasm' between the peasantry and educated society, which could still be seen at the beginning of the 1880s,⁸² had begun to diminish, making space for an 'encounter' between urban and rural cultures, and for the later interwar advent of mass politics.

However it is important that the dynamics noted at the beginning of the twentieth century are not anticipated. As this article has shown, the rural population was still uncertain in interpreting, distinguishing, and dealing with official national symbols at the end of the nineteenth century. Following the several waves of popular protest examined, one can observe the development of a new visual culture among the rural population. What can be reliably maintained from the results of this article is that a 'visual apprenticeship' to politics had taken place at the turn of the twentieth century. Peasants had partly learned to better distinguish the national flags and had also partly begun to appropriate them, domesticating them for their political purposes. From the point of view offered by this article, in having lost some old traits and acquiring new ones, the popular reception of visual symbols proved to have transformed. The same symbols, which were approached with suspicion and uncertainty in the past, were later welcomed, even 'required' for mass mobilizations, and came to embody popular action.

Notes

¹ In the examined period the two provinces of Croatia-Slavonia formed the so-called 'Ban's Croatia' (Ban=Vice-Roy). For practical purposes, I will refer to it in this article shortly as 'Croatia'. Istria and Dalmatia belonged to the Austrian half of the empire, and they were therefore not involved by the facts analysed in this article.

² See the most relevant studies about the facts under examination: D. Pavličević, *Narodni pokret 1883. u Hrvatskoj* (Zagreb, 1980); S. Matković, 'Izbori za Hrvatski sabor 1897. godine: afirmacija Khuenove autokracije', *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, 29(3) (1997), pp. 469–89; A. Radenić, *Položaj i borba seljaštva u Sremu (od kraja XIX veka do 1914)*, (Beograd 1958); V. Bogdanov, *Hrvatski narodni pokret 1903/1904* (Zagreb, 1961).

³ Let us think to the works by Edward P. Thompson, Eric J. Hobsbawm, Natalie Zemon Davis. More on the cultural/visual aspects: J. Epstein, 'Understanding the Cap of Liberty: Symbolic Practice and Social Conflict in Early Nineteenth-century England', *Past and Present*, 122 (1989), pp. 75–118; L. Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley, CA, 1984); P.A. Pickering, 'Class Without Words: Symbolic Communication in the Chartist Movement', *Past and Present* 112(1986), pp. 144–62. More recently: A. Randall, *Riotous Assemblies: Popular Protest in Hanoverian England* (Oxford, 2006); K. Navickas, 'That sash will hang you: political clothing and adornment in England, 1780-1840', *Journal of British Studies*, 49(3) (2010), pp. 540–65; E. Berger, H.-G. Haupt (eds), *Popular Protest and Violence in 19th century Europe. Perspectives from Current Historiography*, Special Issue of *European Review of History*, 20(6) (2013), pp. 937–43.

⁴ M. Agulhon, *La République au village. Les populations du Var de la Révolution à la IIe République* (Paris, 1979, 2nd ed); *La politisation des campagnes au XIXe siècle. France, Italie, Espagne, Portugal* (Rome, 2000).

⁵ G.L. Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the Third Reich* (New York, 1975); E. Gentile, *Politics as Religion* (Princeton, NJ, 2006, or. ed. 2001).

⁶ P. Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images As Historical Evidence* (London, 2001); L. Jordanova, *The Look of the Past: Visual and Material Evidence in Historical Practice* (Cambridge, 2012).

⁷ M. Smith, 'Introduction: Visual Culture Studies: History, Theory, Practice', in Id. (ed.), *Visual Culture Studies. Interviews with Key Thinkers* (London, 2008), pp. 1–16, here p. 12.

⁸ J. Vansina, *Oral Tradition as History* (Madison, 1985); W.S.J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London, 1982); A. Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (Albany, NY, 1991); *Visual Culture*, 4 vol. (London, 2006).

⁹ K. Kaser, 'Der visuelle Turn in der Südosteuropaforschung: kommt er oder kommt er nicht? Ein Forschungsbericht', *Südost-Forschungen*, 72 (2013), pp. 198–242.

¹⁰ Popular protests in Croatian regions have generally not attracted scholars' attention in the histories of the Habsburg Monarchy: see for a recent example H. Rumpler, P. Urbanitsch (eds.), *Die Habsburgermonarchie 1848–1918*, Vol. 9: Soziale Strukturen (Wien, 2010). Neither in Croatian and Serbian historiographies there are studies which encompass all these events.

¹¹ K. Stauter-Halsted, *The Nation in the Village. The Genesis of Peasant National Identity in Austrian Poland, 1848–1914* (Ithaca, NY, 2001); J. King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans. A Local History of Bohemian Politics, 1848–1948* (Princeton, 2002); L. Cole, 'Für Gott, Kaiser und Vaterland'. *Nationale Identität der deutschsprachigen Bevölkerung Tirols, 1860–1914* (Frankfurt am Main, 2000); K. Struve, *Bauern und Nation in Galizien. Über Zugehörigkeit und soziale Emanzipation im 19. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen, 2005); P.M. Judson, *Guardians of the Nation. Activists on the Language Frontiers* (Cambridge, Ma, 2006); N.M. Wingfield, *Flag Wars and Stone Saints: How the Bohemian Lands Became Czech* (Cambridge, MA, 2007); T. Zahra, *Kidnapped Souls: National Indifference and the Battle for Children in the Bohemian Lands, 1900–1948* (Ithaca, NY, 2008).

¹² P.M. Judson, M.L. Rozenblit (eds.), *Constructing Nationalities in East Central Europe* (New York/Oxford, 2005); N.M. Wingfield (ed.), *Creating the "Other": Ethnic Conflict and Nationalism in Habsburg Central Europe* (New York-Oxford, 2003).

¹³ M. Sturken, L. Cartwright, *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture* (Oxford, 2001).

¹⁴ About peasant turmoil in the 1850s, see: M. Gross, *Počeci moderne Hrvatske. Neoapsolutizam u civilnoj Hrvatskoj i Slavoniji 1850–1860*. (Zagreb, 1985), pp. 196–204; in the 1860s: V. Krestić, 'Seljački nemiri u Hrvatskoj i Slavoniji šezdesetih godina XIX vijeka', in *Zbornik Historijskog Instituta Jugoslavenske Akademije*, 5 (1963), pp. 387–438; D. Pavličević, 'Seljačke bune i nemiri u središnjoj Hrvatskoj šezdesetih godina 19. stoljeća', *Historijski Zbornik*, 33–34 (1980–81), pp. 13–50.

¹⁵ M. Valentić, 'Ustanak u Vojnoj krajini 1871. godine', *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, 23(1–3) (1991), pp. 107–18.

¹⁶ M. Gross, A. Szabo, *Prema hrvatskome građanskom društvu. Društveni razvoj u civilnoj Hrvatskoj i Slavoniji šezdesetih i sedamdesetih godina 19. stoljeća* (Zagreb, 1992), pp. 415–18.

¹⁷ I am using the term Magyar (as Hungarians call themselves in their language) as a synonym for ethnic Hungarian nation. Nonetheless, in order to make the text more readable, I will restrict the use of this ethnonym to the cases where it is really necessary, i.e. for explaining some infra-Transleithanian dynamics, or for according the main text with a quotation; otherwise, I will prefer the most generalized use of the term 'Hungarian'.

¹⁸ For an overview of the economic relationships between the Croatian regions and Budapest, see: I. Karaman, *Hrvatska na pragu modernizacije, 1705-1918*. (Zagreb, 2000).

¹⁹ In a comparative perspective, about the role of the crowd in the cultural and political history of liberal Hungary, see: A. Freifeld, *Nationalism and the Crowd in Liberal Hungary, 1848-1914* (Baltimore, 2000).

²⁰ Pavličević, *Narodni pokret 1883*; M. Dobos, *The Croatian Peasant Uprising of 1883* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Columbia University, 1974).

²¹ Pavličević, *Narodni pokret 1883*, respectively p. 189 and p. 192.

²² As reported in: Pavličević, *Narodni pokret 1883*, p. 201.

²³ Pavličević, *Narodni pokret 1883*, p. 264.

²⁴ The consulted sources and literatures don't reveal that uniforms of the army and the gendarmerie were targeted as symbols of the Hungarian (mis)rule, although they were part of the Hungarian army since 1868. This could be partly due, apart the obvious reason that gendarmes and soldiers were armed, also to the fact that the Croatian military units, differently to the public administration, post offices and railroad services, were not subjected to strong Magyarization policies: the working and command language remained the Croatian. See C. Horel, *Soldaten zwischen nationalen Fronten. Die Auflösung der Militärgrenze und die Entwicklung der königlich-ungarischen Landwehr (Honvéd) in Kroatien-Slawonien 1868-1914* (Wien, 2009), pp. 203-6.

²⁵ M. Gross, *Hrvatski narod u razdoblju od g. 1883. do 1903.*, in J. Šidak, M. Gross, I. Karaman, D. Šepić, *Povijest hrvatskog naroda g. 1860.-1914*. (Zagreb, 1968), pp. 117-25.

²⁶ Pavličević, *Narodni pokret 1883*, pp. 148-49; Dobos, *The Croatian Peasant Uprising of 1883*, pp. 118-9.

²⁷ Newspaper report quoted in Pavličević, *Narodni pokret 1883*, p. 265, n. 32.

²⁸ Ivi, pp. 265, 303-4.

²⁹ Report of the head of a district, quoted in Ivi, p. 302.

³⁰ S. Mønnesland, *National Symbols in Multinational States: The Yugoslav Case* (Oslo, 2013), pp. 20-23.

³¹ Report based on a peasant's account, quoted in Pavličević, *Narodni pokret 1883*, p. 211.

³² Report of the head of a district, quoted in Ivi, pp. 303-4.

³³ Following the reconstruction of a newspaper article, quoted in Ivi, p. 304.

³⁴ One could mention an intermezzo, when a group of university students, in occasion of the visit of the King to Zagreb in October 1895, first attacked the Hungarian flag raised close to the railway station, and later solemnly burnt a facsimile of the Hungarian flag in the main city square. But this was not a 'popular' and even less 'peasant' protest, which this article deals with, rather the political action of young members of the Croatian political and cultural elite. See: S. Kent, 'State Ritual and Ritual Parody: Croatian Student Protest and the Faltering of Celebrity Monarchy at the End of the Nineteenth Century', in L. Cole, D. Unowsky (eds.), *The Limits of Loyalty: Imperial Symbolism, Popular Allegiances, and State Patriotism in the Late Habsburg Monarchy* (New York, 2007), pp. 162-77.

³⁵ Matković, 'Izbori za Hrvatski sabor 1897'; I. Jelić, *Krvavi bošnjački izbori. 22. svibnja 1897*. (Slavonski Brod-Bošnjaci, 1997).

³⁶ R. Lovrenčić, *Geneza politike "novog kursa"* (Zagreb, 1972), pp. 36-7, 68-9; M. Strecha, *Katoličko hrvatstvo. Počeci političkog katolicizma u banskoj Hrvatskoj (1897-1904.)* (Zagreb, 1997), ch. 1 and 2.

³⁷ Lovrenčić, *Geneza politike "novog kursa"*, pp. 56-59. Analogous developments have taken place in the same years in the proto-socialist movements, which adopted a new strategy aimed at founding small cells in the rural villages. M. Gross, 'Radnički pokret g. 1890-1902.', in *Povijest hrvatskog naroda*, pp. 197-207, here pp. 201-2; Radenić, *Položaj i borba seljaštva u Sremu*, p. 223.

³⁸ Matković, 'Izbori za Hrvatski sabor 1897'.

³⁹ For a fuller discussion of the unrests of this year see S. Petrunaro, *Pietre e fucili. La protesta sociale nelle campagne croate di fine Ottocento* (Rome, 2009).

⁴⁰ 'Nemiri u slunjskom kotaru', *Obzor*, 10 September 1897; the same can be read with reference to other disorders: *Narodne novine*, 10 January 1898, and 'Odjek plaščanskoga dogodjaja u Jesenicima', *Narodne novine*, 04.02.1898. *Obzor*, as well as *Hrvatsko pravo* which will be quoted later, were the two most important opposition newspapers, while *Narodne novine* was the organ of the government.

⁴¹ Trial deposition published in *Obzor*, 08 November 1897 (italics mine).

⁴² Ivi, 19 November 1897.

⁴³ For an analogous case: 'Nemiri u Plaškom', *Obzor*, 24.09.1897.

⁴⁴ Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, p. 181.

⁴⁵ N. Rumenjak, *Politička i društvena elita Srba u Hrvatskoj potkraj 19. stoljeća: uspon i pad Srpskoga Kluba* (Zagreb, 2005); N.J. Miller, *Between Nation and State: Serbian Politics in Croatia Before the First World War* (Pittsburgh, Pa, 1997), pp. 36–8.

⁴⁶ Following the reconstruction of a newspaper article: ‘Krvoproliće u Služinci’, *Hrvatsko pravo*, 01 September 1897 (italics mine).

⁴⁷ ‘Novinski glasovi o nemirima u Hrvatskoj’, *Obzor*, 21 October 1897.

⁴⁸ E. Gentile, ‘Political Religion: A Concept and its Critics – A Critical Survey’, *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, 6(1) (2005), pp. 19–32; M. Cattaruzza, ‘Introduction to the special issue of Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions: Political Religions as a Characteristic of the 20th Century’, *ivi*, pp. 1–18.

⁴⁹ M. Schulze Wessel (ed.), *Die Nationalisierung der Religion und die Sakralisierung der Nation im östlichen Europa* (Stuttgart, 2006); H. Stadtland, ‘Sakralisierte Nation und säkularisierte Religion: Beispiele aus dem Westen und Norden Europas’, in S. Rutar (ed.), *Beyond the Balkans. Towards an Inclusive History of Southeastern Europe* (Wien, 2014), pp. 181–98.

⁵⁰ A. Virmani, ‘National Symbols Under Colonial Domination: The Nationalization Of The Indian Flag, March-August 1923’, *Past and Present*, 164(1) (1999), pp. 169–97, here pp. 169–70.

⁵¹ ‘U oči sv. Petke izašla je ova naredba’, *Hrvat*, 05 November 1897 (italics mine).

⁵² ‘Razgovor Ive i Jove’, *Hrvat*, 06 October 1897.

⁵³ For an eloquent Serbian example see the front covers of the very widespread popular yearly magazine *Srbobran* for the years 1896 and 1897, which made extensively use of the Serbian national flag and its colours.

⁵⁴ I reported several examples in Petrungrar, *Pietre e fucili*, pp. 247–48.

⁵⁵ M. Kolar-Dimitrijević, ‘Stjepan Radić i kunovečka buna 1903. godine’, *Podravina*, 2(4) (2003), pp. 57–74.

⁵⁶ Bogdanov, *Hrvatski narodni pokret 1903/1904*; A. Szabo, ‘Uzroci i posljedice političkih demonstracija u Hrvatskoj 1903. godine’, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, 37(3) (2005), pp. 597–608.

⁵⁷ M. Schneider, ‘Događaji u Zaprešiću 1903. godine prema dokumentima, novinskim izvještajima i u sjećanju suvremenika’, *Historijski Pregled*, 4 (1954), pp. 36–46.

⁵⁸ A third and last stage of protests began in Autumn 1903 and lasted until May 1904, but the Hungarian flag didn’t play a major role any more. Bogdanov, *Hrvatski narodni pokret 1903/1904*, pp. 68–78.

⁵⁹ For example in Veliki Poganac and in Rovišće: *ivi*, pp. 49, 279; H. Petrić, ‘O seljačkom pokretu u Podravini 1903. godine: Kunovečka buna i ostala seljačka gibanja’, *Časopis za suvremenu povijest*, 37(3) (2005), pp. 653–64.

⁶⁰ F. Tomić, *Buna u Javornju 1909*. (unpublished article). I would like to thank the Author for having given to me the permission of using his work.

⁶¹ M. Gross, ‘Croatian National-Integrational Ideologies from the End of Illyrism to the Creation of Yugoslavia’, *Austrian History Yearbook*, 15–16 (1979–80), pp. 3–33; Ead., *Izvorno pravaštvo: ideologija, agitacija, pokret* (Zagreb, 2000); I. Banac, *The National Question in Yugoslavia. Origins, History, Politics* (Ithaca, 1984); Miller, *Between Nation and State*; H. Grandits, *Familie und sozialer Wandel im ländlichen Kroatien (18.-20. Jahrhundert)* (Wien et al., 2002); F. Tibor Zsuppán, ‘The Hungarian Political Scene’, and J. Pleterski, ‘The Southern Slav Question’, in M. Cornwall (ed.), *The Last Years of Austria-Hungary: A Multi-National Experiment in Early Twentieth-Century* (Exter, 2002), respectively pp. 97–118, 119–148; F. Veliz, *The Politics of Croatia-Slavonia 1903–1918. Nationalism, State Allegiance and the Changing International Order* (Wiesbaden, 2012).

⁶² C. Jelavich, *South Slav Nationalisms: Textbooks and Yugoslav Union before 1914* (Columbus, 1990).

⁶³ See for example Bogdanov, *Hrvatski narodni pokret 1903/1904*, pp. 32–3, 49, *passim*.

⁶⁴ *Ivi*, p. 51.

⁶⁵ The facts’ reconstruction is based on the accusation acts, published in: F. Horvatić, ‘O jednoj neobjavljenoj optužnici iz 1903. godine’, *Podravski zbornik*, 10 (1984), pp. 238–45.

⁶⁶ Bogdanov, *Hrvatski narodni pokret 1903/1904*, pp. 60–2.

⁶⁷ For example in Klemen: *ivi*, p. 271.

⁶⁸ *Ivi*, respectively pp. 63–64, 273, 83.

⁶⁹ As in Veliki Poganac: *ivi*, p. 49.

⁷⁰ As in Sušak: *ivi*, p. 31.

⁷¹ For examples in Farkaševac, or in Severin: *ivi*, p. 69.

⁷² I won’t deal with the protests against the regime of the Ban Pavle Rauch in 1908, because they were geographically quite circumscribed, having taken place mainly in Zagreb, and therefore lacking the mass and peasant character of the other ones here examined. See: M. Kolar-Dimitrijević, ‘Ban Pavle Rauch i Hrvatska u njegovo vrijeme’, *Povijesni prilozi*, 18 (1999), pp. 288–89.

⁷³ J.P. Newman, ‘Post-Imperial and Post-War Violence in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes 1917–1923’, *Contemporary European History*, 19, 3 (2010), pp. 249–65; I. Banac, ‘“Emperor Karl has become a Comitadji”: the Croatian Disturbances of Autumn 1918’, *Slavonic and East European Review*, 70(2) (1992), pp. 284–305; M. Biondich, *Stjepan Radić, the Croat Peasant Party, and the Politics of Mass Mobilization, 1904–1928* (Toronto,

2000), pp. 143–8; B. Krizman, 'Građa o nemirima u Hrvatskoj na kraju g. 1918.', *Historijski zbornik*, 10(1–4) (1957), pp. 111–29.

⁷⁴ Banac, 'Emperor Karl', p. 299. Having this specific riot being incited by local Serb and Croat intellectuals devoted to the Yugoslav 'unitarist' cause, the villagers also removed the Croatian flags.

⁷⁵ Ivi, p. 290.

⁷⁶ Newman, 'Post-Imperial and Post-War Violence', pp. 253–254; Banac, 'Emperor Karl', pp. 291–4; M. Cornwall, 'The Great War and the Yugoslav Grassroots: Popular mobilization in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1914–1918', in D. Jokić, J. Ker-Lindsay (eds.), *New Perspectives on Yugoslavia. Key Issues and Controversies*, (London, 2010), pp. 27–45.

⁷⁷ From a peasant petition quoted in Biondich, *Stjepan Radić*, p. 143.

⁷⁸ Banac, *The National Question*, pp. 248–60.

⁷⁹ For instance: Pavličević, *Narodni pokret 1883*, pp. 303–4.

⁸⁰ For a discussion of the literature in the field: S. Petrungraro, 'Il nation-building in Croazia. Gli studi recenti', *Memoria e ricerca*, 30(2) (2009), pp. 129–46.

⁸¹ Mirjana Gross, *O integraciji hrvatske nacije*, in Ead. (ed.), *Društveni razvoj u Hrvatskoj (od 16. stoljeća do početka 20. stoljeća)* (Zagreb, 1981), pp. 175–90; Biondich, *Stjepan Radić*; A. Jakir, *Dalmatien zwischen den Weltkriegen: agrarische und urbane Lebenswelt und das Scheitern der jugoslawischen Integration* (München, 1999), pp. 347–426.

⁸² Biondich, *Stjepan Radić*, p. 25.