

Continuing our survey of environmental history scholarship happening beyond the English language, this Notepad turns to Croatian, and a short overview of recent publications appearing in that language. Zagreb is also the location of the next ESEH conference from 28 June to 2 July, 2017. We are therefore appreciative that Hrvoje Petrić, a host of this meeting and ESEH regional representative of Croatia, offers us several paragraphs describing recent questions and issues taken up by his colleagues.

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Croatian Environmental History

Croatian environmental history is in the first stages of institutionalisation, which began in the early 2000s with research in the overlapping borderlands of the Habsburg Empire, the Ottoman Empire and the Venetian Republic, or the Triplex Confinium, which is the present territory of today's Republic of Croatia. This attention to borders means that the early modern period has been, and remains a favorite subject of environmental historians of Croatia. The annual journal *Ekonomska i ekohistorija* (Economic and environmental history) encourages the publication of new research in environmental history, with articles to date exploring disease and the environment, rivers, forests, hunting, mountains, and environmental movements in Croatia; one special issue has focused on history and sustainability with no particular attention to Croatia. Below I present three recent works of environmental history published in the Croatian language.

The Sava River in History: Proceedings of the scientific conference held in Slavonski Brod 18–19 October 2013, ed. Branko Ostajmer [*Rijeka Sava u povijesti: zbornik radova znanstvenog skupa održanog u Slavonskom Brodu 18.-19. listopada 2013.*, ur. Branko Ostajmer], (Slavonski Brod: Croatian Institute of History – Department of History of Slavonia, Srijem and Baranja, 2015, 603pp.)

There have already appeared numerous articles on Croatia's largest rivers, highlighting various aspects of their history. Most of the focus has been on the Drava River, primarily in the journals *Podravina* and *Ekonomska i ekohistorija*, but also in the water management journal, *Hrvatske vode*. Recently, these sources have also been exploring the Mura River. Although the Sava River has been the subject of several recent research projects, it had not yet found much attention in the literature, except from an earlier generation of scholars who issued such well-researched proceedings as *Navigation on the Danube and*

its tributaries [*Plovidba na Dunavu i njegovim pritokama*], published by the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (1983), and the 2009 Slovenian proceedings, *Beauty Bound in the Book: Sava and its Stories* [*Ukoričena ljepotica: Sava in njene zgodbe*]. Building on these earlier studies, it is praiseworthy that the Croatian Institute of History, Department of History of Slavonia, Srijem and Baranja, organised a symposium in 2013 in Slavonski Brod about various historical aspects of the Sava River, with the resulting papers being published in 2015 in the extensive collection, *The Sava River in History* [*Rijeka Sava u povijesti*], which includes 25 articles by authors based in all countries along the river. Here I describe three of its contributions that focus more specifically on the environment. In ‘The city on the river or next to it: medieval Zagreb and the Sava River’ [‘Grad na rijeci ili pored nje: srednjovjekovni Zagreb i rijeka Sava’], authors Marija Karbić and Bruno Škreblin analyse the geographic location of the medieval city of Zagreb on the river course. Beginning with the first mention of the river in the Zagreb archives, the authors explore river and city landscapes, river crossings, boating and fishing activities, as well as river’s role in defence. Another contribution, Zlata Živaković-Kerže’s ‘The man and the environment at the border: River Sava, drainage and life of in the Sava Valley in the 18th and 19th centuries’ [‘Čovjek i okoliš na granici: Sava, odvodnja i život posavskog stanovništva u 18. i 19. stoljeću’] presents the history of floods and flood protective measures in the 18th and 19th centuries. Given the recent massive flooding events of the river, this article is especially useful for reflecting on the coexistence of people and the river in modern times. Although chapters not detailed here touch on several other historical elements of the environment, I would like to point out that Branko Ostajmer’s ‘Sava as a threat: problems of population in Slavonia and Srijem lowlands alongside Sava River in light of the Croatian Parliament 1868–1918 debates’ [‘Sava kao prijetnja: tegobe stanovništva slavonske i srijemske Posavine u svjetlu rasprava u hrvatskom Saboru 1868–1918’], warns of massive flooding and inadequate river regulation in the context of recent debates of Croatia’s highest legislative bodies. Also noteworthy is Milan Gulić’s ‘The Sava River in Yugoslavia’s plans to expand the network of inland waterways’ [‘Rijeka Sava u jugoslavenskim planovima o proširenju mreže unutrašnjih plovnih puteva’], which utilises unexplored archival material to describe projects for constructing extensive canals and waterways, underlining the importance of the Sava River in the history of Croatia. Although these articles are only a sampling of the larger proceedings, they reflect a successful and insightful collection about a Central European river.

Another work deserving mention is by **Luka Jakopčić**: *Sealed Wilderness – Socioeconomic system of 18th century Slavonski Brod and Sava Valley* [*Divljina s pečatom. Socioekološki sustav brodske Posavine u 18.*], (Slavonski Brod: Croatian Institute of History – Department of History of Slavonia, Srijem and Baranja, 2016, 346pp.). This book explores the relationships between the

Sava River and its militaristic borderlands that evolved during the 18th century. The case study is the town of Slavonski Brod and its outskirts along the Sava River. Here one fully appreciates the value of a detailed understanding of particular historical periods, which allows for a thorough comparison of processes, continuity and discontinuity. Jakopčić demonstrates the importance of addressing the history of the pre-industrial environment. Following the introduction and an outline of the conceptual framework, the author examines the Sava River as a fundamental historical agency. In doing so, he views the river not only as the Ottoman-Habsburg border, but as a ribbon of wetlands arching east and west of Slavonski Brod. The central part of the book presents a detailed treatment of the socio-ecological system of Slavonski Brod and the Sava Valley from medieval times until the 18th century. One finds a successful linking of local and global contexts of different stages of the 18th century; a transdisciplinary orientation that includes history, geography, historical sociology, hydrology, biology and more; an analytical perspective of a particular eco-historic case; and, ultimately, an analytical comparison of historical themes with contemporary problems (for example, with the 2014 flood and the passivity of the modern Sava Valley). As a conclusion, Jakopčić reviews the project of understanding Slavonski Brod's modern sociological paradigm through the history of its river, detecting several spatial scenarios: military-bureaucratic; confessional (through ethno-cultural homogenisation and religion); and environmental anthropisation, intensification of agriculture, urbanisation (as by making streets wide and long), and hydro-technical works. This is a book that can be read from global and local perspectives, from the humanities and natural sciences, from this and that side of the national border. A special feature of the book is a systematic and contextualised use of cartographic sources, visual data, tables, charts, and the author's own contemporary, photos of the local community under focus.

Nikola Cik, in his *Ecohistory of Đurđevac and Virje in the second half of the 18th century* [*Ekohistorija Đurđevca i Virja u drugoj polovini 18. stoljeća*], (Samobor–Zagreb–Đurđevac: Meridijani, Društvo za hrvatsku ekonomsku povijest i ekohistoriju, Ogranak Matice hrvatske u Đurđevcu, 2016, 352pp.), presents the results of surveys of selected aspects of two settlements along the Croatian-Slavonian military border, Đurđevac and Virje, which lie in present-day northern Croatia. The book analyses the Drava River and its tributaries around Virje and Đurđevac, with their Aeolian and fluvial sands, the hillsides of Bilogora, and their associated forests. Subsequent chapters then outline political and demographic conditions in these areas during the second half of the 18th century. The main focus of the book details the types of settlements that developed largely from individual livestock quarters. In this early modern era, there was an abundance of forests with population growth on floodplains, which provided enormous quantities of agricultural land that were rapidly developed by farmers for satisfying a growing population. Such sites in the study

area are located between the right bank of Drava river and its sandy soils. The most suitable terrain for forest clearing and wood harvesting were well-drained lands, which were then used for cattle pastures and access routes to the Drava River. These arable places were further expanded by more deforestation creating temporary habitat for animals and people. Over time, these temporary dwellings were transformed into permanent settlements. The author also writes about his own experiences with this environment, mentioning various forms of collective consciousness and the environmental influences on the culture of the military border. Another section near the end of book exhibits the rich sources and excerpts upon which the author draws, which include taxpayer listings, family genealogies, demographic data about baptisms, marriages and deaths (derived from parish registers), census information about soldiers originating from Đurđevac, comparative tables of place names and related toponyms in the Drava River region, and a transcript and Croatian translation of the 1787 forest regulations. Among the annexes are five maps depicting the reconstruction of the watercourse, forest areas, regions with open sands, transport infrastructure, mills, shepherd's huts and other elements found in the landscape.

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