

ORIGINS AND REFLECTIONS OF THE IDENTITIES OF CROATIAN NOBILITY DURING THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY IN THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT OF EARLY MODERN EUROPE¹

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Based on the results of current historiography, primary sources and memoirs of the contemporaries, this article deals with the topic of multiple identities of the Croatian nobility of Civil Croatia during the 18th century within the social and cultural discourse of the Early Modern European noble societies. Besides the nobility inherited from the ancestors, or ennoblement bestowed by the ruler, the author sees three major aspects of the traditional noble privileges – political, judicial and socio-economical – as the foundations of formation of the noble identities.

Using the examples of behavior in different situations in the lives of several members of the prominent Croatian noble families – Škrlec, Oršić, Čikulini, Vojković - Vojkffy, Sermage and Patačić – the author reflects about the multiple traditional roles and practices of nobles, based on their privileges, through which their identities were reflected in the 18th century social discourse.

The article addresses the identity of the nobility as political factor of their localities, as well as their sense of belonging to the highest social stratum based on their functions and significance in the service of the ruler, or as officials in the state or local government and administration. The article also deals with the changes that affected education, as well as with the adjustments noblemen undertook in different areas of their social discourse in order to adapt contemporary trends and changes especially in public services. In this context the traditional practices of social connections

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and the roles of nobles as clients and patrons continued to be the leading discourse of the Early Modern social order. Though submitted to multiple modifications in Early Modern period, military identity in the collective memory of the nobility still remained one of the distinctive markings of their separate privileged position and reflected through their military offices, education and behaviour.

The prerogative of landownership was in the 18th century still one of the badges of the noble status. Adapted to the modern practices and submitted to different strategies, the identity of the landowner reflected not only through material benefits, but also through political and judicial practices and prerogative. On the symbolic level the landed possession contributed to the formation and preservation of local identities and the affiliation of the nobles to their local community of peers. The estates were the bases of the identification of the members of the noble families as well as their connection to the ancestry and the duration of their kindred.

Finally, cultural identity of the nobility, as the leading social stratum of Early Modern Europe, reflected in their role as the leading consumer of the overall cultural production, which can be discerned from their culture of living, communication, appearance, behaviour, and also from cultural sponsorship and their own artistic expressions.

Key words: identity, Croatian nobility, 18th century, privileges, Early Modern Europe

“(...)Nekad se na svjetskoj sceni moramo pojaviti s mačem, a nekad s pameću, nekad s lukavošću, nekad s ludošću. Onaj koji nosi samo jednu masku i ne preobražava se u drugo, polako će upropastiti sebe.”²

Nikola Zrinski, *Hrabar poručnik*

Introduction

Taking into consideration the complexity of the notion, as well as the possibilities and diversities of various approaches to the research of the concept of *identity* in historiography, the aim of this paper is not to present a theoretical review of the recent scientific findings, but to attempt to perceive

² Cited from Sándor Bene, “Ideološke koncepcije o staleškoj državi zagrebačkoga kanonika”, in: Juraj Rattkay, *Spomen na kraljeve i banove Kraljevstava Dalmacije, Hrvatske i Slavonije*, 2nd edition (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest; Sveučilište u Zagrebu - Hrvatski studiji, 2016), p. 90. “(...) Sometimes we have to appear on the world scene with a sword, sometimes with our wit, sometimes with cunning, sometimes with madness. One who wears only one mask and never transforms into something else will slowly ruin himself.” (translated by V. Janković).

multiple identities of the Croatian nobility, their features and reflections within the framework of eighteenth century Europe.

Identity, defined as set of features which determine both the distinctiveness or common qualities regarding to other individuals or groups, consists also, as it is argued, of social roles, arises from the cultural and social context and historical changes, and reflects through relations with others. An individual, depending on his individual roles or on a sense of collective affiliations within his social and cultural context may at the same time be defined by several identities.³ The intention of this paper is to examine the frames that shaped the identities, both individual and collective, within the nobility as a distinctive social group in the central part of Civil Croatia (*Banska Hrvatska*) during the 18th century. The paper will discuss the rights and privileges – which derived from the noble status, gained through the act of ennoblement or inherited by birth – that divided the distinctive position of the nobility from the rest of the society and represented the foundations of the origin, formation and representation of their identities.

The studies and research of different identities of the Croatian social elites and nobility through history, increased in Croatian historiography in the last several decades.⁴ In order to address the earlier mentioned research topics, in

³ About social identity see “Identitet”, *Hrvatska enciklopedija (on-line)*, Leksikografski zavod “Miroslav Krleža”, accessed March 5, 2017. <http://www.enciklopedija.hr/Natuknica.aspx?ID=26909>. In his book about national identity Anthony D. Smith analyses the Sophocles’ drama *Oedipus* in the context of national and other identities. He argues that both collective and individual identities are represented and are in fact defined by different “social roles and cultural categories.” See Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (London: Penguin Books, 1991.), p. 3.

⁴ In recent Croatian historiography, several historians extensively dealt with the different aspects of identity, including the identities of the ruling elite, in the Croatian area from the Early Middle Ages until the Modern period. See for example the papers of Neven Budak, “Hrvatski identitet i ranosrednjovjekovno krajevstvo”, *Historijski zbornik* 52 (1999): 121-126; Neven Budak, “Hrvatski identitet između prošlosti i moderniteta”, in: *Hrvatski nacionalni identitet u globalizirajućem svijetu* (Zagreb: Pravni fakultet: Centar za demokraciju i pravo “Miko Tripalo”, 2010), pp. 3-12.; Neven Budak “Etničnost i povijest” in: *Etničnosti povijest*, ed. Emil Heršak (Zagreb: institut za migracije i narodnosti, Jesenski & Turk, Hrvatsko sociološko društvo: 1999), pp. 11- 24.; Neven Budak, *Hrvatska i Slavonija u ranome novom vijeku* (Zagreb: Leykam International, 2007). About the noble Zrinski family and the significant role their family estate and seat have had in the self-determination of their own family identity see Suzana Miljan, Damir Karbić, “Knezovi Zrinski u 14. i 15. stoljeću između staroga i novoga teritorijalnog identiteta”, in: *Susreti dviju kultura: obitelj Zrinski u hrvatskoj i mađarskoj povijesti*, eds. Sandor Bene, Zoran Ladić, Gabor Hausner (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 2012), pp. 15-43. Ivan Jurković wrote about the identity of Croatian noble families during the Ottoman invasion and also about the identity of the nobility in the Austrian part of Istria. See Ivan Jurković, “Osmanska ugroza, plementiti raseljenici i hrvatski identitet”, *Povijesni prilozi* 25 (2006), no. 31: 39-69.; Ivan Jurković, “Hrvatski identitet plemstva austrijskog dijela Istre krajem XV. i tijekom XVI. stoljeća”, in: *Identitet Istre – ishodišta i perspektive*, eds. Marino Manin, Ljiljana Dobrovšak, Gordan Črpić, Robrt Blagoni (Zagreb: Institut društvenih znanosti Ivo Pilar, 2006), pp. 47-65. About Croatian identity and the sense of identity among nobility in Croatian Diet during the Early Modern Period see Ivana Jukić, “Saborska skupina u tkanju hrvatskih identiteta: ranonovovjekovni doprinosi snaga hrvatske “kockice”: zahvaljujući komu?”

this paper the emphasis was on the results of current historiography and research of both European and Croatian nobility that deals with other topics as well. The studies are used of the overall condition of the Early Modern nobility in the Kingdom of Hungary-Croatia within the frames of the Habsburg Monarchy, considering their political importance and activities, their privileges and social capital, the issues regarding their legal position, and also their cultural influences, education and daily lives.⁵ The paper is also based on the writings

in: *Prilozi iz hrvatske historiografije. Zbornik radova sa znanstvenih kolokvija 2009. – 2011.*, ed. Zrinko Novosel (Zagreb: Hrvatski studiji Sveučilišta u Zagrebu; Društvo studenata povijesti “Ivan Lučić Lucius”, 2012), pp. 151-170. Regarding nobility and the institutions of the Early Modern Kingdom of Croatia, see also Mirko Valentić, “Nosioci hrvatskog imena, identiteta i državnopravnog kontinuiteta tijekom 17. i 18. stoljeća”, *Historijski zbornik* 52 (1999): 139-142. Cultural, ethnic and local identities through history were the topics of several studies and papers of Miroslav Bertoša. See Miroslav Bertoša, “Hrvatski identitet u ozračju ranoga novovjekovlja”, *Historijski zbornik* 52 (1999): 127-138 and Miroslav Bertoša, “U znaku plurala. Višebojni i višeslojni identitet istarski (Kroki ranoga novovjekovlja: XVI.-XVIII. stoljeća)”, in: *Identitet Istre – ishodišta i perspektive*, eds. Marino Manin, Ljiljana Dobrovšak, Gordan Črpić, Robert Blagoni (Zagreb: Institut društvenih znanosti Ivo Pilar, 2006), pp. 15-32. Within the framework of the formation of the Croatian political nation during the 19th century, Nikša Stančić wrote about the identity of social elites during the pre-national period. See Nikša Stančić, “Etničnost na hrvatskom prostoru u 19. stoljeću. Od etničke zajednice, plemićkog naroda i pokrajinskih partikularizama do hrvatske nacije” in: *Etničnosti povijest*, ed. Emil Heršak (Zagreb: institut za migracije i narodnosti, Jesenski & Turk, Hrvatsko sociološko društvo: 1999), pp. 117-140.; Nikša Stančić, “Hrvatski identitet kao razlika u Europi nacija 19. stoljeća”, *Historijski zbornik* 52 (1999): 143-147.; Nikša Stančić, “Između političkog nacionalizma i etnonacionalizma: od hrvatske staleške ‘nacije’ (*natio croatica*) do hrvatskoga ‘političkog naroda’”, in: *Nacija i nacionalizam*, eds. Tihomir Cipek, Josip Vrandečić (Zagreb: Alinea 2007), pp. 33-56.

About interpretation of the identity in historical research see in Marko Pijović, “Pristupi proučavanju identiteta u prošlosti”, *Historijska traganja* 8 (2011): 9-60. About new methodological approaches to the study of group identities in history, especially during the Early Middle Ages see Daniel Džino “Novi pristupi izučavanju ranog hrvatskog identiteta”, *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest* 41 (2009): 33-54. Regarding the subject of this paper, the scientific study of identity by Jordan Jelić is also very useful. See Jordan Jelić, *Identitet (znanstvena studija)* (Zagreb: D.S.M grafika, 1999).

Identity was a major theme of the *First Congress of Croatian Historians* held in Zagreb on December 9-10, 1999. The papers from the Congress were published, and some of them were listed above, in the Croatian scientific journal *Historijski zbornik*, volume 52 (1999.) The role and significance of the identities in historical flux were also discussed in Pula on May 28-30, 2015 by the participants of the second conference *Past, Present, Future: Identity in Flux*. The latest contribution to the topic focusing specifically on the national ideas and ethnicity in the Croatian area was the scientific colloquium *National Ideas and Ethnic Loyalties in Renaissance Croatia* held in Zagreb on February 24, 2017.

⁵ The emphasis was on the scientific findings of two authors – Nataša Štefanec and Ivana Horbec. See Nataša Štefanec, “Plemstvo” in: *U potrazi za mirom i blagostanjem. Hrvatske zemlje u 18. stoljeću*, ed. Lovorka Čoralić (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska 2013), pp. 91-110.; Nataša Štefanec, *Država ili ne. Ustroj Vojne krajine 1578. godine i hrvatsko-slavonski staleži u regionalnoj obrani i politici* (Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2011); Nataša Štefanec, “Velikaš hrvatskoga sjevera Petar Troillo Sermage” in: *Ljudi 18. stoljeća na hrvatskom prostoru. Od plemića i crkvenih dostojanstvenika do težaka i ribara*, eds. Lovorka Čoralić, Ivana Horbec, Maja Katušić, Vedran Klaužer, Filip Novosel i Ruža Radoš (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2016), pp. 37-49.; Ivana Horbec, “Političke

and research of the nobilities in different Early Modern European states, addressing the topics such as noble privileges, political power, wealth, identities and cultural hegemony.⁶ The specific cases of the identities of the Croatian nobility are portrayed by using 18th century primary sources from the family archives of several noble families⁷ and with the help of family memoirs and chonical records of the 18th century contemporaries – Baltazar Adam Krčelić and Adam Oršić.⁸

Further in the text, the focus will be on the political, judicial, social, and cultural privileges as the basis of the formation of the multifold Croatian nobility's identities during the Early Modern period. The second chapter will deal with mentioned privileges and the way in which they shaped different social roles and aspects of the identities of the nobility through their political prerogatives, loyalty to the ruling dynasty, civil and military services, education, social connections and landownership. The third chapter will focus on the identity of the nobility based on their cultural capital; their distinctiveness regarding others as well as affiliation to their own social group, reflected through the material markings of their status – housing, clothing and sponsorship, but also through their public behaviour, communication and their overall cultural production.

ustanove”, in: *U potrazi za mirom i blagostanjem. Hrvatske zemlje u 18. stoljeću*, ed. Lovorka Čoralić (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska 2013), pp. 27-52.; Ivana Horbec, “Habsburška Monarhija”, in: *U potrazi za mirom i blagostanjem. Hrvatske zemlje u 18. stoljeću*, ed. Lovorka Čoralić (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska 2013), pp. 407-437. And Ivana Horbec, “Učiti administraciju: školovanje javnih službenika u 18. stoljeću”, *Hrvatska i komparativna javna uprava* 9 (2009), no. 4: 1011-1055.

The writings of Martyn Rady and Ivan Beuc were used to address the issues regarding the overall legal position, rights and privileges of the nobility in the Kingdom of Hungary-Croatia. See Martyn Rady, *Customary Law in Hungary. Courts, Texts, and the Tripartitum* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015) and Ivan Beuc, *Povijest institucija državne vlasti Kraljevine Hrvatske, Slavonije i Dalmacije* (Zagreb: Pravni fakultet Zagreb; Centar za stručno usavršavanje i suradnju s udruženim radom, 1985).

⁶ See the writings of Jonathan Dewald, *The European Nobility 1400-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Nicolas Henshall, *The Zenith of European Monarchy and its elites. The politics of Culture 1650-1750* (Palgrave, MacMillan, 2010); Hamish. M. Scott and Christopher Storrs, “The Consolidation of Noble Power in Europe, c. 1600-1800” in: *The European Nobilities in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, vol. I. Western Europe*, ed. H. M. Scott (London and New York, Longmann, 1995), pp. 1-52.

⁷ The primary sources from the Vojković-Vojkffy, the Čikulini and the Sermage noble families are kept in Croatian State Archives. See Croatia (further on: HR) – Croatian State Archives (further on: HDA) – fund 726 – Josipović-Vojković family (further on: OJV) and Croatia (further on: HR) – Croatian State Archives (further on: HDA) – fund 706 – Čikulini-Sermage family (further on: OČS).

⁸ Baltazar Adam Krčelić, *Annae ili Historija 1748.-1767.*, transcription by Veljko Gortan (Zagreb: Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, 1952) and Adam Oršić, “Uspomene Adama grofa Oršića Slavetičkoga od godine 1725. do godine 1814.”, *Rod Oršića* (Zagreb: Hrvatski izdavačko bibliografski zavod, 1943).

Privileges and identities

“Privilege was fundamental to the nobles’ existence. It rendered visible the gap between them and the rest of society and by implication it demonstrated the importance of their contribution to society.”⁹ Although the privileges of the nobilities were specific and differ from one country to another, depending on the local political, economic and social circumstances, some of them were fundamentally in many ways characteristic to the nobility all over Europe and could be regarded as universal. Such were the privileges of active participation in representative assemblies, privileges concerning taxation, but also properties and feudal tributes, the right to bear arms and to use titles and specific sorts of clothing, and privileges concerning careers, or, more precisely, exclusive rights to hold certain political and military offices.¹⁰ Precisely the privileges such as these were the bases of superior social roles and qualities, and became the points on which the nobility, regardless of the stratification within their social group, built their individual and collective identities, the identities that surpassed national and state frameworks and made them an uniform, all-European phenomenon at the top of the social ladder.

The nobility had the right to political participation, which included the right to attend the representative bodies and assemblies, to elect or be elected, and also to hold various county, state and court offices. This made them the political elite of their provinces and states. Noblemen, no matter how poor or socially uninfluential, could sit in the representative assemblies of their provinces or counties, or choose deputies as their representatives in parliamentary sessions, and in that way “exercise political power”.¹¹

In the Kingdom of Hungary-Croatia (The Lands of the Crown of St. Stephen) the noble status, the “nobility by kindred” (*nobilitas gentilicia*) was hereditary; it was granted by the monarch and passed down from father to all his descendants.¹² Initially the noble status was bestowed together with landed properties but later on, especially during the eighteenth century, in many cases only through grants of arms (*litterae armales*).¹³

In the Kingdom of Hungary-Croatia (The Realm of Saint Stephen), as Nataša Štefanec wrote, the nobility had for centuries uniformly enjoyed all of

⁹ Dewald, *The European Nobility*, p. 28.

¹⁰ Compare to Dewald, *The European Nobility*, pp. 28-29, Scott and Storrs, “The Consolidation of the Noble Power”, pp. 10-11. See also Henshall, *The Zenith of the European Monarchy*, p. 5.

¹¹ Dewald, *The European Nobility*, p. 29.

¹² Compare with Beuc, *Povijest institucija*, p. 187. In addition to the nobility acquired by kindred, Beuc also distinguishes and describes nobility by Estate (rank), nobility by office, nobility by marital status and noble status based on territorial affiliation.

¹³ Štefanec, *Država ili ne*, p. 59. See also Josip Adamček, “Ekonomsko-društveni razvoj u Hrvatskoj i Slavoniji u 18. stoljeću”, in: *Društveni razvoj u Hrvatskoj od 16. do 20. stoljeća*, ed. Mirjana Gross (Zagreb: SNL, 1981.), pp. 60-61.

their rights and privileges and was unified, without a clear stratification within the noble estate.¹⁴ This was the advantage the nobility held in their dealings with the Habsburg kings because the monarchy was in principle elective, and therefore the kings had to be more compliant in their political dealings with the Hungarian and Croatian nobility, especially regarding their extensive privileges.¹⁵

However, there were differences within the nobility itself regarding privileges, including those of the political nature. The differences between the magnate (aristocratic) families – the higher nobility – and the rest of the noble community stemmed from the extended political, social and economic privileges which the former enjoyed.¹⁶

The members of magnate families bearing the titles of barons and counts, preceded by prelates and followed by the representatives of the lower county nobility together with the representatives of the free royal cities, constituted, as the *status and ordines* (Estates and Orders) of the Croatian Diet, the political elite of the Kingdom of Croatia. Those nobles who, as members of the Estates and Orders and therefore of the political and ruling elite, attended parliamentary sessions, also possessed certain prerogatives which were the result of their exclusive political position, different from that of the majority of Croatian nobility.¹⁷

Even though the Croatian nobility possessed a very modest political influence regarding the Habsburg Monarchy during the 18th century, it played an important political and social role within the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia by providing the frame for the political and administrative activities, especially the lower nobility in the county assemblies. The power of the Croatian Diet and the county assemblies was significantly reduced during the second half of the 18th century due to the political, administrative and financial reforms of the Empress Maria Theresia and especially of Joseph II.

The eighteenth century, especially its second half, was the time of internal transformations and further stratification of the nobility in the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia. This stratification was to a lesser extent the result of the advancement of members of already noble families to a higher rank, but mainly of the trend of promoting the so-called “new nobility”. This “mobility” between social classes had manifested itself by the growing numbers of the lower nobility, especially of the so-called *armalists*. The members of this stratum of the nobility

¹⁴ Štefanec, “Plemstvo”, 92.

¹⁵ Štefanec, *Država ili ne*, p. 61.

¹⁶ The members of the Croatian aristocratic families were wealthier; they have had larger estates and had the right to sit in the upper house of the Hungarian Parliament. They also had the exclusive right to occupy leading political positions such as the position of king’s advisor or the position of Croatian ban. See Štefanec, *Država ili ne*, p. 61. and Štefanec, “Plemstvo”, p. 92.

¹⁷ Beuc, *Povijest institucija*, p. 186.

acquired their position without the donation of the landed estate, through the grants of arms (*litterae armales*) issued by the monarch for faithfully performing military service or as a reward for meritorious state and administrative service.¹⁸ Some of the *armalists* had simply bought their grants of arms. These were often rich former citizens, entrepreneurs or traders, or even rich peasants whose newly acquired position in society was confirmed by the ennoblement.¹⁹ For the ruler, the issuing of these grants of arms was both financially and politically lucrative, because this practise poured funds into the royal treasury and, on the other hand, ensured the loyalty of this new nobility to the crown and to the ruling dynasty.²⁰

The second category of privileges that enabled the nobility's distinguished position within the early modern society was judicial. This category could, just as the political privileges, significantly vary among different European states, but it generally formed yet another framework that shaped the distinctive and privileged position of the nobility regarding the rest of the society.²¹

The Croatian nobility had the right to unrestricted personal freedom and judicial autonomy. The judicial privileges also included the right of a nobleman to an undisturbed private property. The king could not imprison a nobleman without the verdict of a competent court, except in special cases such as high treason or, for example, if a nobleman was caught committing a crime. The nobility was, by the virtue of their privilege, subject only to the legally crowned king and, up until the second half of the 17th century, members of the Hungarian and Croatian noble community had the legal prerogative to offer armed resistance (*ius resistendi*) to the king in case of violation of their privileges.²²

Other than these personal legal privileges, the nobility itself played an important and continuous role in administering justice.²³ In Croatia, noblemen could be elected by the county assemblies to perform the duties of county or district judges, as well as to serve as assessors at the Court of the Croatian ban (*Tabula Banalis Regnorum Dalmatiae, Croatiae et Slavoniae*).²⁴ Additionally, noblemen who owned a landed possession had the right to judge and administer

¹⁸ Beuc, *Povijest institucija*, p. 188. Besides the *armalists*, the majority of the Croatian lower nobility consisted of *jednoselci* (Lat. *nobilis unius sessionis*). Those were the noblemen who possessed only one serf settlement, or even those without any kind of estate or serfs, who possessed only their personal freedom or lived in special privileged noble districts.

¹⁹ Adamček, "Ekonomsko-društveni razvoj", pp. 60-61.

²⁰ Dewald, *The European Nobility*, pp. 26; Štefanec, "Plemstvo", p. 92.

²¹ Scott and Storrs, "The Consolidation of the Noble Power", p. 11

²² See Beuc, *Povijest institucija*, pp. 186-187. The privilege of *ius resistendi* stated in article 31 derived from the royal charter called *The Golden Bull of Andrew II of Hungary*, issued in 1222.

²³ Scott and Storrs, "The Consolidation of the Noble Power", p. 11

²⁴ Beuc, *Povijest institucija*, p. 186. *Tabula Banalis Regnorum Dalmatiae, Croatiae et Slavoniae* was the name of the Court of Croatian ban since 1723, when through reform of the judicial system it became a permanent judicial institution.

justice as landlords (*dominus terrestris*) to their serfs and tenants settled on their landed estates.²⁵

The third group of noble privileges was socio-economical. In Hungary and Croatia, royal and country taxes were collected from serfs and tenants settled on noblemen's estates. The *allodia* were not burdened by taxes or any kinds of levies, except the obligation of the noble levy (*insurrectio*).²⁶ The main obligation of a nobleman, owed in exchange for his privileged status, was his personal military participation in the defence of the Kingdom, the obligation to raise his personal noble corps or to equip, maintain or finance a certain number of horsemen and soldiers, depending on the size and value of his landed properties.²⁷

The noble privileges included the right to freely dispose with all produce grown on their estates. The economic privileges also included the exemption from customs on all yields produced on the noble *allodium*, provided that the noblemen themselves were not engaged in trade. It also included the exemption from paying tolls on bridges and roads.²⁸ Nobles who owned landed properties as landlords and seigneurs were also entitled to a number of various feudal tributes, such as revenues (tenants' and serfs' rents) both in money and in goods, as well as a certain number of workdays (labour service) by their tenants and serfs.²⁹

The privileges included the seigneurial income and a monopoly on the natural resources of a nobleman's estates, such as revenues from mines, for example, or a monopoly on the local fishing and hunting rights.³⁰

The identities of the European nobility, their distinguished and prominent position in the society, their political power and social status acquired through privileges and aimed both toward their own peers and toward other social groups, had to be visibly presented and publicly displayed. Thus the privileges of self-presentation had a very important social role in the visual identification of a family's or an individual's noble status. These social privileges included the rights to own, use and display the family's coat of arms and also for every nobleman to bear arms in civilian life. They also included a privileged position in public appearance during religious processions or secular ceremonies. Nobility had the exclusive right to high noble titles and the privilege to be addressed accordingly.³¹ These privileges of representation included also the right to wear

²⁵ Beuc, *Povijest institucija*, p. 187.

²⁶ Compare to Štefanec, *Država ili ne*, p. 59 and Beuc, *Povijest institucija*, pp.186-187.

²⁷ See Štefanec, *Država ili ne*, p. 60; Beuc, *Povijest institucija*, p. 169.

²⁸ Beuc, *Povijest institucija*, pp. 186-187.

²⁹ Beuc, *Povijest institucija*, pp.189-190; Scott and Storrs, "The Consolidation of the Noble Power", p. 13.

³⁰ Scott and Storrs, "The Consolidation of the Noble Power", p. 13.

³¹ Štefanec, *Država ili ne*, pp. 58; Scott and Storrs, "The Consolidation of the Noble Power", pp. 12-13.

special kinds and colours of clothes made of refined and expensive materials, and were even enforced through sumptuary legislation.³² The social privileges were also visible in the exclusive prerogatives of the nobility to hold state offices and public and military functions.

In the very core of the multifold identities of the nobility from the earliest periods of its formation laid landed property, personal relation, and service, especially military, to the ruler. The noble families since late 13th and through 14th centuries affiliated their nobility and family name not only to their ancestry and kindred (*genus*) they originated from and belonged to, but also to their family's lands, awarded by the ruler for faithful service and future loyalty.³³ Thus the landownership over the estate as marking of the personal bond between the ruler and the nobleman,³⁴ military heritage as well as loyal service to the monarch in the government bodies remained also one of the most distinguished identity marks of the noble status through later centuries.

One of multiple identities of noblemen in the 18th century, of those who owned estates, was the identity of the landlords with vast economic and legal prerogatives over their lands, tenants and surfs; even though the bond was not exclusive, especially due to the increase of the number of the new, landless nobility. Although during the course of the 17th and 18th centuries, as will be mentioned later in the paper, major changes occurred regarding the military role of the nobility in the Early Modern European monarchies, military identity of the nobility as warriors, continued to manifest itself on the battlefields all across the Europe as well as through military offices noblemen held. This identity was also visible in noblemen's education, training, behaviour and representation. Glory and bravery of the ancestors in the military service of the kings and dynasties were the virtues that gave legitimacy to the distinguished status of their progeny as well.

³² Such were, for example, the sumptuary regulations issued in 1695 by a committee of the Croatian Diet in order to prevent the wearing of lavish clothes by the commoners and people of lower social ranks and a subsequent increase of the prices of the commodities. See Emilij Laszowski, "Odredbe za hrvatsku s pogledom na odijevanje", in: *Stari i novi Zagreb*, ed. Emilij Laszowski, reprint (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 1994), pp. 232-233. About sumptuary legislation see also Scott and Storrs, "The Consolidation of the Noble Power", p. 12 and Dewald, *The European Nobility*, p. 28.

³³ In his book about customary law in Hungary on the basis of Werbóczy's *Tripartitum*, Martyn Rady argues that the shift of the defining characteristic of the nobility from their descent to the possession of landed estates, which occurred at the turn of the 14th century and caused the usage of the family property's toponym as their family name, changed the legal entitlement of nobles who started to refer to themselves as *possionati* to the disadvantage of those without any landed estates, whom they called *ignobiles* and *rustici*. This process rendered clear the gap between the nobles and all others. Rady, *Customary Law in Hungary*, p. 71.

³⁴ About landownership and personal bond of the nobleman towards the king see Rady, *Customary Law in Hungary*, pp. 67-73.

Noblemen were also identified as political factors of their localities and states. Only those within the noble status were *populous*, political nation, and had the right to exercise off the political rights. This alongside the landed property shaped their sense of affiliation to their localities, thus shaping their local identities. This sense of affiliation would in many cases surpass its boundaries making the noblemen in their roles as state, court or military officials with the sense of personal connection to the monarch, cosmopolitan members of the community of their peers all over Early Modern Europe. At the same time noblemen and noblewomen of the 18th century were also defined and valued through their family name, descendance and the antiquity of their kindred carefully noted in the genealogies and family trees, as well as through their families respectability, wealth, merits and significance. They could be well educated individuals with modern skills and refined taste in visual representation of their own status, but also the members of the lesser country nobility content only with their noble social position and modest ordinary lifestyles. As patrons and active participants in production and consummation of cultural contents they could also be clients in the service of those wealthier and more prestigious, in the 18th century society deeply intertwined with personal social ties and marital strategies.

Services, education and landownership – displaying of the identities

The reform interventions of the Habsburg monarchs in the political, social and economic spheres of the Monarchy had, as well as the contemporary European trends in politics, warfare, society, economy and culture, also affected and modified some aspects of the life of the nobility in the Civil Croatia during the 18th century.

Higher government and administrative offices within the Habsburg Monarchy and even within the Kingdom of Hungary-Croatia were as late as the 18th century still rather difficult to reach for the Croatian nobility. This situation was partially the result of the processes that affected the Croatian lands during the 16th century, when wars with the Ottomans irreversibly changed the fate of many Croatian noble families and the defence of the Kingdoms of Croatia and Slavonia exhausted the remaining noble families to the utmost degree. All of this drastically reduced the possibilities for stronger social promotion of the Croatian and Slavonian nobility at the time when Austrian, Bohemian and Hungarian nobles ascended the political and social scene of the Monarchy and of the Imperial Court. This also diminished their possibilities of maintaining a strong political influence within the borders of the Kingdom of Hungary-Croatia or at the Royal Court.³⁵ Only a few of the wealthiest Croatian and Slavonian noblemen mainly the members of Croatian magnate families,

³⁵ Štefanec, *Država ili ne*, pp. 67- 77, 87-88.

could afford the occasional trips to Vienna or Pressburg, which were then the centres of political and social power and offered the possibilities for further social and political ascendance and abundant opportunities for self-promotion.³⁶ The authority of the institutions of the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia, such as the Croatian Diet, and of the Croatian counties and county assemblies, were significant only in the local political decision-making and were not sufficiently influential to affect the policy of the Royal Court.

The position of the Croatian nobility changed with their adaptation to the new political, social and economic circumstances of the 18th century. Numerous reforms, better education of the Croatian nobility and the growing number of state offices enabled the increase their presence in the higher state offices, and executive government and public services. Some of the members of Croatian noble families became leading military elite and some also redefined their position as the landowning elite engaged in profitable trade and commercial businesses on their estates.

During the 18th century the administrative centres of the Monarchy with their general social and cultural climate and the possibilities of obtaining various offices, also ceremonial titles and military orders given by the monarch – even if they were just merely symbolic, attracted members of the noble families.³⁷ Titles such as courtier or the king's advisor were almost common, and numerous influential Croatian noblemen, both higher and lesser, bore it, although it often did not result in any material gains nor permanent participation in the Court or State policy.³⁸ Appointments to State or Court offices, if only of a symbolic nature, formed an integral part of the identities of certain noble families, affected their social position in their localities and assured their loyalty by committing and binding them to the House of Habsburg.

These appointments also emphasized the traditional understanding of the nobleman's service towards the king as a personal bond and relationship between him and his sovereign; this was a specific feature of his privileged position inherited from his ancestors. Ivana Horbec argues that during the Early Modern period the personal character of the ruler's authority gradually changed and the state emerged as the leading concept with the monarch as the embodiment of the state sovereignty and power in his dealings with the particular interests of the Estates.³⁹ But the practice and the sense of personal loyalty and service could still be seen in applications and letters addressed to the sovereigns themselves, sent by the members of Croatian noble families during the 18th century asking for favours, protection or offices in return for their

³⁶ Štefanec, *Država ili ne*, p. 91.

³⁷ Compare to Horbec, "Habsburška Monarhija", pp. 428-429.

³⁸ Štefanec, *Država ili ne*, pp. 91-92. The author refers to the 16th century, and points to the conclusions of Nada Klaić in, "Ostaci ostataka' Hrvatske i Slavonije u XVI. st. – od mohadžke bitke do seljačke bune 1573.", *Arhivski vijesnik* 16 (1973.): pp. 253-325.

³⁹ Compare to Horbec, "Političke ustanove", p 49.

loyalty. In August 1748 nobleman from the County of Zagreb named Kristofor Vojković (later in documents mostly Vojkffy) addressed his application for the office of the assessor of the Judicial Table of the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia (*Tabula Judiciaria*), which was then vacant, directly to the queen Maria Theresia (“Sacratissima Caesarea Regia Majestas Domina Domina naturaliter Clementissima”). Vojković began his application by recounting the famous history of his family during the anti-Ottoman wars in the 17th and 18th centuries in the service of the Empress’s forbears as rulers of the Kingdom of Hungary-Croatia. Vojković described in detail the military merits of his predecessors accomplished in the service of the House of Habsburg. At the end of the application, Vojković recounted his own military service as captain in the Banal Military Frontier during the recent war against Ottomans. Together with his brother Sigismund he also served as captain in the “national militia of Her Sacred Majesty’s Kingdom of Croatia” on battlefields across Bohemia and Silesia during the War of the Austrian Succession where, in order to display their devotion and highest service to Her Sacred Majesty, the two brothers did not hesitate to lay down their lives or spill their blood. He then entreated the Queen, whom he addressed as “Domina Domina mea clementissima”, to assign him to the requested office on account of the military merits of his family listed above.⁴⁰

The reforms that affected the institutions and the administrative apparatus within the Habsburg Monarchy and all across the Europe during the 17th and especially during the 18th century demanded a new type and a larger number of civil servants that possessed specific professional skills in public administration.⁴¹ This caused a new approach to education and specialization of knowledge and also the development of new educational institutions.⁴² University education was no longer considered a mark of the common people and of the “new” nobility, unlike during the earlier period.⁴³ Universities across

⁴⁰ HR-HDA-726-OJV, box 64, mark 1748. Vojković (...) *quavis sua nobilitaris compania pro homagiali devotione et pro altissimo Mattis Vra Sta servitio promovendo vitam et sanguinem offerre non dubitavimus.*

⁴¹ See for example Dewald, *The European Nobility*, pp. 36-40, 143-147; Henshall, *The Zenith of European Monarchy*, p. 23; Scott and Storrs, “The Consolidation of the Noble Power”, pp. 35, 40.

⁴² The Austrian, Hungarian and Croatian nobility during the 18th century could gain education, not only at universities across the Habsburg Monarchy but also at the newly established academies and high-educational professional institutions which provided practical education in numerous specific fields. Such was, for example, the noble academy *Theresianum (Collegium Nobilium Theresianum Societatis Jesu)* in Vienna, which provided education in practical skills such as modern languages, mathematics and physics for military and civilian purposes, techniques of military and civilian construction, economy, history, geography, law, modern philosophy and traditional noble skills such as horseback riding and dancing. In 1769 the *Political-cameral study centre (Studium politico-camerale)* was founded in Varaždin in Croatia to provide education in state administration and politics, trade and finances. See Horbec, “Habsburška Monarhija” pp. 431-434 and Horbec, “Učiti administraciju”: 1012-1014, 1024-1028.

⁴³ Štefanec, *Država ili ne*, p. 89; Dewald, *The European Nobility*, pp. 36-40, 143-145.

Europe increasingly accepted young noblemen whose families recognized the new trend in education, whose purpose was to provide better opportunities for their offspring in attaining state, court or military offices. The focus of these educational modernization was to enable professional training and to focus on specific administrative or military skills.⁴⁴ Thus the Croatian nobility also got actively involved in the processes which were already well established in other European countries.⁴⁵ In the second half of the 18th century, sons of both higher and lower noble families attended universities and attained specialization at high educational institutions and academies throughout the Monarchy, and become educated experts who would gain commissions in military and public state offices in the growing number of government institutions in the Kingdom of Hungary-Croatia. Education in law had become particularly attractive.⁴⁶

Baltazar Adam Krčelić, an 18th century Croatian historian, theologian and jurist close to the court circles of Queen Maria Theresia and appointed by her an assessor at the Judicial Table of Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia,⁴⁷ realized an increasing importance of good education, especially in law and administration. So he procured the juridical education for his two young protégés of lesser noble descent, brothers Nikola and Petar Škrlec, thus enabling them successful careers in civil service and for Nikola especially, prominent position in Court and Hungary-Croatian political circles of the second half of the 18th century.⁴⁸

The Grand Tour was a very important part of the high education of nobles, especially in the Early Modern European society,⁴⁹ in which many of the

⁴⁴ See for example Dewald, *The European Nobility*, pp. 144, 151-154 and Henshall, *The Zenith of European Monarchy*, 64.

⁴⁵ See Horbec, "Habsburška Monarhija" pp. 431-433 and Horbec, "Učiti administraciju", pp. 1016-1019, 1038-1039.

⁴⁶ Horbec, "Habsburška Monarhija", p. 433; Horbec, "Učiti administraciju", pp. 1038-1039. Teodora Shek Brnardić, "Intelektualni razvoj" in: *U potrazi za mirom i blagostanjem: Hrvatske zemlje u 18. stoljeću*, ed. Lovorka Čoralić (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 2013), 199.

⁴⁷ "Baltazar Adam Krčelić", *Hrvatski biografski leksikon (on-line)*, Leksikografski zavod "Miroslav Krleža", accessed on March 5, 2017. <http://hbl.lzmk.hr/clanak.aspx?id=10963>.

⁴⁸ Petar Škrlec was appointed prothonotary of the Kingdom of Croatia and adviser to the Queen. He had also served as an assessor of the Banal Court and territorial mayor (lat. *comes terrestris*) of the Noble District of Turopolje. See in Krčelić, *Annae*, pp. 444-445; Horbec, "Učiti administraciju", pp. 1039, 1045.

Nikola was a notary and later became an assessor of the Judicial Table of the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia. He was also the treasurer and later the Prothonotary of the Kingdom of Croatia. From 1767 on, he was a member of the Croatian Royal Council, where he was in charge of the administrative, economic and educational reforms. He was the advisor for the affairs of the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia to the Hungarian Regency Council and served as the chair of the Department of Schools and Studies of the said Kingdom. Until the end of his life he was mayor of the County of Zagreb. See in Nikola Škrlec Lomnički, *Hrvatska enciklopedija (on-line)*, Leksikografski zavod "Miroslav Krleža", accessed on March 5, 2017, <http://www.enciklopedija.hr/Natuknica.aspx?ID=59708>. See also Horbec, "Učiti administraciju", p. 1045.

⁴⁹ See Henshall, *The Zenith of European Monarchy*, p. 45; Štefanec, *Država ili ne*, p. 89.

social relations rested on a carefully constructed network of clients and patrons. Amongst other issues the student's travels enabled the expansion of the circle of acquaintances and the establishing of useful personal contacts. A very good example of the usefulness of a student's travels comes from the accounts of the life and education of Count Aleksandar Patačić, prominent member of the Croatian noble society during the first half of the 18th century who held a number of high offices in the Kingdom of Hungary-Croatia and at the Royal Court.⁵⁰ From his journal and a family history he wrote,⁵¹ we learn about his travels through the Austrian Netherlands and the Republic of the United Netherlands, and also about his trips to London and Paris. During Patačić's law studies in Louvain he established social connections and acquaintances with sons of prominent Austrian and German families. During his journey to England (London) he dined with the Duke of Kent, the Supreme Court prefect, and at Hampton Court he and his travel companions, were presented to the Crown Prince. During his stay in Paris, Patačić established friendships with several members of prominent European noble families and attended the Court of King Louis XV. Upon his return to Strasbourg he met his future wife Maria Katarina Freinfelst, whom he married a year later. His wife's sister was married to a secret advisor of the Prince Elector of the Palatinate, at whose court Patačić was also presented.⁵²

As shown above the clientele and social patronage were also very important and universal phenomenon of the Early Modern social discourse amongst all European nobilities. As desirable, "natural and appropriate"⁵³ means of vertical mobility, these networks of social and family connections and ties were the bases of social relations and visible in every aspect of the Early Modern noble societies especially in politics, in obtaining offices and prestige of both the individuals and their families.

With the help of his own respectable background (his father was a baron and counsellor to the Hungarian Royal Chancellery and his brother the archbishop of Kalocsa), his good education, his acquaintances with members of influential and prominent European families and his own family connections, Patačić was truly an example of how a nobleman could successfully put his studies to good use and create useful social networks which undoubtedly

⁵⁰ "Patačić, Aleksandar Antun Marija ", *Hrvatska enciklopedija (on-line)*, Leksikografski zavod "Miroslav Krleža", accessed March 5, 2017 <http://www.enciklopedija.hr/natuknica.aspx?id=46961>. About Aleksandar Patačić and the Patačić family, see also: Tomo Matić, "Rukopisi Aleksandra Patačića", *Rad Jugoslavenske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti*, vol. 8 (1955): 105-133; Josip Matasović, "Prilog genealogiji Patačića", *Narodna starina*, vol. 9 (1930), no. 24: 409-448.

⁵¹ The journal is titled *Diarium particulare actorum et vitae memorabilium baronis Alexandri Patachich* and a family history *Status familiae Patachich*. For details on these two manuscripts of Count Patačić, see Matić, "Rukopisi Aleksandra Patačića": 106-109.

⁵² Matić, "Rukopisi Aleksandra Patačića": 106-120.

⁵³ Henshall, *The Zenith of European Monarchy*, p. 22.

helped his own advancement in services and society. At the same time, Patačić's example shows that the practices and lifestyle of the high Croatian nobility in the first half of the 18th century was not different from the everyday practices of the nobility in other parts of Europe. One of the features of the identity of the Croatian nobility, just as with their Austrian, German or English peers, lied and was visible in their education, lifestyle and practices that surpassed national boundaries and were part of the universal noble lifestyle.

The majority of the nobility in Croatia was lower nobility, whose members were not holders of state or court offices, but had to content themselves with lesser local, public and military offices. They mostly supported themselves with the income (payment) that came with these offices, which supplemented the modest financial revenues from their estates. They were not inclined to travel, and seasonally travelled mostly to nearby towns or from one of their own or their relatives' estate to another. They lacked higher education or modern professional training and were not significantly involved with the state politics and decision-making.⁵⁴ Their identity was not cosmopolitan. It was defined, among other things, by the significance and the position of their families within the local communities of their peers, the decisions made, local offices gained and problems solved at the county assemblies and within the local government or judicial bodies.

During the 17th and 18th centuries military prerogative of the nobles gradually began to lose its importance in the European society, due to the professionalization of military service, modernization of warfare and transformations in lifestyle of the nobility,⁵⁵ but it still continued to be one of the basic features of the Early Modern nobility's identity. Such role of the Croatian noble families – as warriors and defenders of their landed estates and, subsequently, the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia – was particularly expressed during the Ottoman invasion in the 16th century, and the wars with the Ottoman Empire during the 17th.

As it is argued during the Early Modern period the nobility adopted the changes, they “redefined” their military role as the core of their identity and continued to serve as the “military elite”, by obtaining and occupying the higher rank and command positions, often as educated and trained experts.⁵⁶ Members of the Croatian noble families often held high-ranking commissions in the Banal Military Frontier. Military service was a means of promotion within the noble stratum and a means to improve one's social prestige and living conditions. In some cases especially during the 18th century, many officers without

⁵⁴ Compare to Štefanec, “Plemstvo”, pp. 93-94.

⁵⁵ Scott and Storrs, “The Consolidation of the Noble Power”, pp. 41-43; About military role of the nobility and its transformation during the 16th century see also Štefanec, *Država ili ne*, pp. 127-129.

⁵⁶ Scott and Storrs, “The Consolidation of the Noble Power”, pp. 41-46.

a noble title, particularly those from old army families who served in Military Frontier were raised to the peerage for their faithful service.⁵⁷

Young noblemen who did not have the opportunities to study and become officials, or those who by family arrangements could not be engaged in state or county affairs, would usually pursue a military⁵⁸ or church career after their formal education.

Such was the case of Count Adam Oršić and his two brothers, descendants of a notable Croatian high noble family. Oršić, while writing the history of his family, described the struggles between, on the one hand, his parents' wishes for him, as a first born son, to continue his studies and find employment in a state institution and, on the other hand, his own youthful ideas of leaving home and entering military service and thus follow in his fathers' footsteps. After ending his formal education, Oršić entered military service. First he served as an infantry lieutenant for three years in Prague, and then as a lieutenant on the Ottoman frontier in the Banat of Temesvár, where he lived very poorly. In Oradea he stayed for two years and was promoted to captain there. In the meantime, he was awarded the title of the King's Chamberlain, and upon his return to Croatia was commissioned to the First Banal Regiment. In total, Oršić served for twelve years, but after the War of the Bavarian Succession started in 1778, his father intervened with his superiors so that he wouldn't be sent to the battlefield. Oršić was disappointed and retired from military service. Afterwards, "he lived as it was expected of him"; he resided on his father's estates, married and actively attended county assemblies and Diets. Oršić's younger brother, who was also a military officer, "inherited" his brother's military rank and commission. The youngest Oršić brother entered the church and later become a prebendary and an abbot.⁵⁹

In addition to military skills, which noblemen, as officers, could demonstrate on battlefields across Europe, good connections and a generous donation of money to the royal treasury were also often necessary for obtaining higher ranks in the military. Besides that of the already mentioned Oršić, the military careers of Count Petar Troillo Sermage and the counts Sigismund and Kristofor Vojkffy are typical examples of the ways of advancement within the military during the middle of the 18th century. Letters which Sermage, as lieutenant colonel, sent from the battlefields of the Seven Year's War to his spouse Marija Ana Drašković reveal his constant attempts to gain the rank of colonel through the advocacy of his friends and the connections of his and his wife's influential relatives.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ See for example Vladimir Brnardić, "Hrvatska vojnička obitelj – Kneževići od Svete Helene", *Povijesni prilozi* vol. 26 (2007), no. 33: 289-309.

⁵⁸ Such were often the cases, for example, among the younger sons and brothers within the Early Modern noble families. See Scott and Storrs, "The Consolidation of the Noble Power", p. 45.

⁵⁹ For details about Oršić's family, see Oršić, *Rod Oršića*, pp. 57-61.

⁶⁰ Compare to: Alojz Jembrih, *Grof Sermage u zrcalu svojih pisama 1758*. (Zagreb: Multiart;

Unlike Sermage, Sigismund and Kristofor Vojkffy were born to a lower noble family of rather poor financial state. They were not highly educated and had very little opportunities for social advancement. They entered military service and became lower officers first in the Banal Regiment and later in the Banal Military Frontier. They owed much of their ascendance in society, prosperity and military ranks to lucrative marriages. Due to their own resourcefulness, family connections and money acquired by marriages – especially Sigismund, who was married twice, both times to rich elderly widows – they climbed the social scale and ascended from the lower ranks to the ranks of colonel and general. Moreover, thanks to their military efforts on the battlefields during the Seven Year's War and the generous amount of money Sigismund had loaned to the Royal Treasury to support the war effort, after the war Queen Maria Theresia elevated the brothers Vojkffy and their families to the rank of counts.⁶¹

The symbolic reflection of the image of warriors and knights was long perceived within the noble stratum, and publically presented not only through their military service and the obligation of noble feudal insurrection, but also through the nobility's social conduct and education. Count Oršić's curriculum for example, at the noble *convictorium* included some chivalric skills, such as courses in fencing and horseback riding,⁶² and the practices of duels of honour, especially in the Military Frontier, were also very common warlike form of behaviour.⁶³

One of the prominent visible features of their warrior code and military past was the noblemen's right to bear arms in civil life. In his *Diarium*, the aforementioned Aleksandar Patačić, then a young baron, makes an interesting statement about how the knightly noble behaviour was embodied in the right to bear arms; it was so because of the image that weapons held in the collective memory and in the awareness of one's noble heritage, but also in the perception and self-representation of the nobility. Just before his departure from Zagreb for Louvain, Patačić was gifted a large sum of money. Upon his arrival to Paris, he used this sum to purchase a silver sword fit for a noble and a walking cane with a golden hilt which, by his own words, was in accordance with his gender, noble status and family honour.⁶⁴ These items were visible symbols of

Udruga Pinta, 2000), pp. 53-97 and also Štefanec, "Velikaš hrvatskoga sjevera Petar Troilo Sermage," pp. 40-41.

⁶¹ Krčelić, *Annuae*, pp. 452-455. See also Valentina Janković, *Plemićka obitelj Vojković-Vojkffy i društveno-kulturni život Zagreba i okolice u 18. stoljeću* (unpublished doctoral thesis, Sveučilište u Zagrebu, 2013), pp. 89-116.

⁶² Oršić, *Rod Oršića*, p. 58.

⁶³ See Štefanec, *Država ili ne*, 130-137.

⁶⁴ "(...) nobilem gladium ex argenta et cannam cum nodulo aureo velut generi et aetati meae hac in occasione convenientia status et honoris signa." Cited according to Matić, "Rukopisi Aleksandra Patačića":107-108.

his noble descent and prosperity which would at the first glance confirm beyond any doubt the social status and the origin of the newcomer to the curious Parisian elite society.

One custom of the Polish-Lithuanian nobility also testifies about the significance of the weapons, to be exact, the swords as the symbols of their military descent and noble status. Namely, in order to be perceived as members of the privileged social rank, the poor Polish-Lithuanian noblemen with insufficient means to procure steel, would wear wooden swords on public occasions.⁶⁵

A material expression of this chivalrous and warlike identity of the nobility were also the collections of weapons of war, bought, inherited and often won as trophies across the Early Modern European battlefields, which were frequently inevitable parts of the decoration of noblemen's castles and palaces. The collections of weapons were usually publicly displayed on the walls of the palace halls in order to be visible to the guests and visitors. In the case of Croatian nobility, a lot of weapons in the collections of the noble families originated from the old battles and centuries-long conflicts with the Ottoman Empire.⁶⁶

The landed estates of noble families were one of the prominent foundations of the privileged position of the nobility since their beginnings, and along with the rural lifestyle were "widely seen as desirable badges of noble status"⁶⁷ especially by those of the nobility, in Croatia namely *armalists*, who owned only a small landed property, or did not owe any, and who invested a lot of their efforts to obtain or enlarge it. Although, especially since the mid-18th century on, the nobility increasingly performed various relatively well paid civil or military services, landed possession still ensured the economic base of the noble families and was one of the most important sources of their status, income and material wellbeing.⁶⁸ The importance of landed property to Croatian nobles

⁶⁵ Scott and Storrs, "The Consolidation of the Noble Power", p. 12.

⁶⁶ Except the collections of weapons preserved in museums and Early Modern castles, records about the collections of weapons of war and hunting weapons of the Croatian nobility can also be found in the inventory lists of their palaces and castles. For example, in the inventories from the year 1746 of the castles Konjščina and Oroslavje, owned by Count Ivan Franjo Čikulini. The inventory of the castle Konjščina is kept in the Croatian State Archive in the fund of the family Čikulini Sermage" HR-HDA-fund 706-OČS, box 48, no. 9.6, and the document is also published in Damir Hrelja, *Stari grad Konjščina* (Varaždin: Državni arhiv, 2013.), 150-195. The inventory of several of the Čikulini's estates and palaces, including the castle Oroslavje, is kept in the previously mentioned archive fund under the label HR-HDA-fund 706-OČS, box 23, no. 2.149. A transcript of the inventory is also published in the footnotes of Josip Matasović's book *Die Briefe des Grafen Sermage aus dem siebenjährigen Kriege*, (Zagreb 1923). About the weapons and other war equipment, see pp. 314-316.

⁶⁷ Scott and Storrs, "The Consolidation of the Noble Power", p. 20. About the material importance and symbolic meaning of the estates and landed properties amongst the European nobility, see also Dewald, *The European Nobility*, p. 65.

⁶⁸ Scott and Storrs, "The Consolidation of the Noble Power", p. 25; Dewald, *The European Nobility*, pp. 62-89.

reflected, among other, in the abundant quantity of legal documents kept in their family archives, which was produced as a result of numerous legal proceedings and property litigations related to inheritance and possessory rights over certain family estates.⁶⁹

The constant preoccupation of land-owning noble families was the careful management, and if possible, increase of their estates. Due to the increase of the *allodia* production, many of the noble families, including the most distinguished members of the aristocratic elite, were gaining additional revenue by selling the surplus from their estates. Some of the families, mostly aristocratic ones who possessed a larger capital, were involved in intermediary trade in wheat, which was especially profitable, or like Count Petar Sermage, invested in trading companies⁷⁰ and engaged in manufactural production on their estates.⁷¹ The Erdódy and Auersperg families, for instance, owned a mine called Rude on their Samobor estate during the 18th century, where they extracted copper.⁷² Some of the estates situated in the northern part of Civil Croatia were rich in thermal mineral water, so some of the noble families, namely the Vojkffy, the Oršić and the Erdódy, operated their own health-spas.⁷³ These practices rendered yet another aspect of the nobles landlord identity, the one of the landowning entrepreneur elite who adapted to the contemporary economic and market conditions.

⁶⁹ See, for instance, the already mentioned family funds in the Croatian State Archive, HR-HDA-fund 706-OČS, especially boxes 22-29, containing an abundance of documents from the long-term litigation of Baroness Julijana Sermage and her son Petar Troillo for the inheritance of the estates of Count Ivan Franjo Čikulini, or the legal disputes regarding the dowry between Julijana Sermage and Count Sigismund Vojkffy; see also, for instance, boxes 30-31, containing documents from the local county court regarding the relations on two neighbouring estates in Oroslavje between Count Kristofor Vojkffy and Countess Ana Marija Drašković Sermage. For numerous debentures for money loans and receipts for the debts paid off issued by Nikola Vojković, viccomes of the County of Zagreb, and the counts Sigismund and Kristofor Vojkffy, see fund HR- HDA-726- OJV, for example boxes 14, 28 and 64. For documents regarding litigation of Count Kristofor Vojkffy, see boxes 53 and 64.

⁷⁰ Štefanec, "Velikaš hrvatskoga sjevera Petar Troillo Sermage" 44.

⁷¹ Mira Kolar Dimitrijević, "Gospodarske reforme carice Marije Terezije na području cijele Hrvatske i Slavonije" in: *Povijest Hrvata. Od kraja 15. stoljeća do kraja Prvoga svjetskog rata*, druga knjiga, ed. Lovorka Čoralčić i Mirko Valentić (Zagreb: Školska knjiga, 2005), pp. 265-268.

⁷² Hrvoje Petrić, "Samobor i okolica u ranome novom vijeku" in: *Samobor: zemljopisno-povijesna monografija*, ed. Dragutin Feletar (Zagreb: Meridijani, 2011.), pp. 311-317.

⁷³ See the work of the physician and obstetrician in the County of Varaždin Ivan Krstitelj Lalangue, written in 1779, about the health-spas in Croatia and Slavonia: *Lalangue, Jean Baptiste, Joannis Baptistae Lalangue medicinae doctoris artis obstetriciae magistri; suae excellentiae Banalis una et incltyti comitatus Warasdinensi medici. Tractatus de aquis medicatis regnorum Croatiae et Sclavoniae etc. etc. Illiti Izpizavanye vrachtvenih vod horvatzkoga y slavonzkoga orzsaga y od nachina nye usivati za potrebochu lyudih*. Vu Zagrebu, Stampana po Ivanu Thomassu plem. od Trattnern, 1779. National and University Library in Zagreb, Collection of Manuscripts and Old Books (Zbirka rukopisa i starih knjiga), label R II D-8^o-10.

However, landed property, even as late as the 18th century, was not important and valued solely as a financial base or a source of an additional income.⁷⁴ The estate was just as well an important symbolic and material indicator of the separate, privileged position of their owners exercised through seigneurial rights over the lands, tenants and serfs, and mark of the noble status and landowner identity regarding their own peers. Awarded by the ruler along with the ennoblement, inherited from ancestors and increased over the course of time, the patrimonies of the noble families became the sources of their family name and identity; they rendered the sense of affiliation and the continuity of the noble kin.⁷⁵

Finally, to own land in a particular district, county or part of the Early Modern kingdom and to be considered indigenous was, together with the prerogatives of public and political participation, the basis for local and ethnic identity of the nobility. This was especially so for the lower nobility which tied their public and private dealings, family reputation and wellbeing closely to their estates and the local community of their peers.

The reflection of the noble identity in the culture of everyday life

Culture, cultural activities and strategies, production and consumption of cultural contents were all essential platforms for displaying and forming a specific cultural identity among the Early Modern noble elite. They were the result of the refinement of the noble privileges through education, the result of their material power as well as visible marks of their distinctiveness. But at the same time, they were also “a strong bonding agent”⁷⁶ of the noble elites within their own stratum across the Early Modern Europe.

This cultural identity of the noble elites, understood as the sum of knowledge, artistic inclinations, beliefs, social manners and customs⁷⁷ was

⁷⁴ Scott and Storrs argue, for example, that the patrimony and other sources of income amongst the European noble families “were valued principally for their ability to produce the income essential to maintain that lifestyle...”, Scott and Storrs, “The Consolidation of the Noble Power”, p. 25.

⁷⁵ About the bond between the nobility in the Lands of the Crown of St. Stephen’s and their landed possessions, see Rady, *Customary Law in Hungary*, especially chapters “King and Nobility” (pp. 65-83) and “The Nobleman and His Land” (pp. 85- 108).

⁷⁶ Henshall, *The Zenith of European Monarchy*, p. 28.

⁷⁷ In attempts to answer the question *what is culture?* Peter Burke had, in his study of cultural history, offered a broad anthropological definition of the term which was, according to Burke, accepted by the cultural historians and historical anthropologists of the new generation. He cited the English anthropologist Edward Taylor, who defined culture as “a complex whole that includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, virtue, law, customs and all the other abilities and habits that a man has acquired as a member of society”. Peter Burke, *Što je kulturna povijest?* (Zagreb: Antibarbarus, 2006.), pp. 39-40. (Translation by Valentina Janković).

most evidently seen in their daily lives, their social communication, family relations, entertainment, housing and their self-presentation and public appearance, but also in the richness of their spirit, talent and education. As patrons and sponsors of arts, the nobility have shaped the cultural scenery of Baroque and Neoclassical Europe and at the same time they were the active participants and producers of cultural contents, especially in literature.⁷⁸

In contrast to the previous periods, when highly educated professionals, theologians and humanists held the leading role in European culture, during the 17th and 18th centuries (according to Jonathan Dewald), a trend of aristocratic amateurism developed in culture. Just as with military service, the Early Modern nobility redefined their notion and relationship towards culture and their role within it. They took over some of the creativity and, instead of being merely followers, they become active participants within the changing cultural processes and often became artists themselves.⁷⁹

One of the distinguished representatives of such active cultural involvement among Croatian nobility, accompanied by his own artistic inclinations, was Count Ivan Franjo Čikulini, magnate of Hungary-Croatia, a prominent member of the public and cultural sphere in Central Croatia during the first half of the 18th century. He attained a degree in law at the University of Bologna and later occupied several court, judicial and military offices. Čikulini was also an artist, poet and a published author, sponsor of artists, musicians, students and artisans.

The count's talents and his artistic tendencies manifested themselves already in his student days. During his studies in philosophy and law, he dedicated three treatises to King Leopold I, and was in turn rewarded by the king with a golden chain. He was also a talented illustrator and copper engraver. One of his drawings apparently even reached the Austrian archduke Joseph, the future king Joseph I, who, received Čikulini's drawing with great enthusiasm and displayed his artwork in his chambers.⁸⁰

Croatian nobles distinguished themselves especially as benefactors and donors of sacral objects, participating thus in the shaping of the Croatian sacral Baroque art and architecture. They would, as both patrons and curators of individual parishes, churches, chapels and altars bequeathed the funds in their last wills or contract themselves the master builders and artists and carefully supervise decorating, furnishing and building of sacral objects.⁸¹ Count Čikulini,

⁷⁸ Henshall, *The Zenith of European Monarchy*, p. 28.; Dewald, *The European Nobility*, pp. 150-151; 157-162.

⁷⁹ Dewald, *The European Nobility*, pp. 150-151.

⁸⁰ Laszowski "Porodica Čikulini", *Zaprešićki godišnjak*, vol. 6 (1996.): 43-44.

⁸¹ See, for example, the paper about the patronage of the arts of the Croatian noblewoman Helena Patačić in Jelena Hotko, "Naručiteljska i donatorska djelatnost hrvatske plemkinje Helene Patačić", *Tkalčić* vol. 10 (2006.): 465-608. About the patronage of the arts of the noble

for example, was also distinguished benefactor and patron, he bequeathed family trust funds for the financial support and scholarships for poor youth,⁸² and during his lifetime had donated significant sums of money to the maintenance, embellishment and furnishing of several churches and monasteries.⁸³

Cultural patronage was a form of material representation of noblemen's and noblewomen's personal religious sentiments, as well as a confirmation of their religious identity and affiliation to the Catholic discourse of the Monarchy, dictated by the Habsburg dynasty. It was a statement of material possibilities, as well as a statement of the nobility's own importance and of their leading position in Early Modern Croatian society.

The nobility of northern and central Croatia did not, until the middle of the 18th century, usually live in cities, even though some of the greater noble families owned houses and smaller estates within the city limits and resided there occasionally. Entertainment, social discourse and everyday family life, especially of the Croatian lower nobility, remained connected to their country manors during the first half of the century.⁸⁴ Their identity, the connection to their ancestors and family lineage through their patrimony, and also their financial power, as previously argued, was largely based on their estates, so the nobility spent most of the year touring their possessions, manors and castles, with only occasional visits to towns.

One could therefore argue that one of the basic features of the identity of the Croatian nobility until the second half of the 18th century was a predominantly rural lifestyle. However, the rural identity slowly changed as the century advanced, in accordance with the contemporary changes in the growing number of noblemen employed in state and county offices and administrative bodies, establishing a modern state administration. This shifted the focus of the

family Vojković-Vojkffy, Nikola Vojković and his nephews, Counts Sigismund and Kristofor, see Janković, *Obitelj Vojković-Vojkffy*, pp. 184-190. Two of the most exemplary Baroque sacral complexes in northern Croatia, of which many of the noble families were patrons during the 18th century, are the Church of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the adjacent Pauline monastery in Lepoglava, and the Church of St Mary of the Snows in Belec. About the noble patrons of these sacral objects, see Kamilo Dočkal, *Povijest pavlinskog samostana Blažene Djevice Marije u Lepoglavi* (Zagreb: Glas koncila, 2014) especially pp. 261-421 and Vjekoslav Noršić, "Opis nove župne crkve Blažene Djevice Marije u Belcu godine 1758" in *Starine*, vol. 44 (1952): 7-24.

⁸² Count Čikulini left a trust fund of 3000 *forints* to the Ursuline Convictorium in Varaždin, in order for the Ursuline nuns to teach music to their young female students. See "Čikulini, Ivan Franjo", *Hrvatska enciklopedija (on-line)*, Leksikografski zavod "Miroslav Krleža", accessed March 5, 2017 <http://hbl.lzmk.hr/clanak.aspx?id=4049>.

⁸³ About the patronage of Count Čikulini see Emilij Laszowski, "Porodica Čikulini": 41-49; see also "Čikulini, Ivan Franjo", *Hrvatska enciklopedija (on-line)*; Stjepan Razum, "Povijest župe Konjščina Vjekoslava Noršića", *Tkalčić* vol. 10 (2006.): 397.-406. Ladislav Šaban, "Kako su gradili crkvu i orgulje u Mariji Gorici", *Kaj* vol. V (1972), no. 3-4: 24-43.

⁸⁴ Compare to the memoirs of Adam Oršić, *Rod Oršića*, p. 83.

noble families towards the urban centres, especially Zagreb and Varaždin, and contributed to the development of the urban life of the nobility. Consequently, it also increased the concentration of the social elite, especially the foreign nobility, in the cities, which enabled the development of a more diverse social life. This provided opportunities for new modes of entertainment and a direct contact with the modern trends in social relations.⁸⁵

The nobility's local identities became influenced by the contemporary changes and adapted to the new social circumstances and the trends of the modern societies. Especially magnate families started to considerably expand their urban houses or building new city palaces.⁸⁶ They spend more of their time in them, particularly in winter when an ample of entertainment events, such as public and private dances and theatre performances, would take place. *The Book of Citizens of the Free and Royal City of Zagreb from 1733 to 1799* contains records that during this period, alongside many members of the middle and lesser nobility, 18 members of greater noble families (barons and counts) enrolled as citizens of the city.⁸⁷

Lavishly decorated urban palaces, as well as the rebuilt or newly built country mansions and castles of the Croatian nobility, with their carefully cultivated gardens and landscaped parks, presented the image of social success, importance and refined taste of their owners.

Following the contemporary trends of the European noble society, Croatian noblewomen also actively contributed to the changes in the Croatian society. Though their options regarding education were limited, and they were deprived of the privileges of political participation and of any kind of public

⁸⁵ During the fourth and fifth decade of the 18th century, Countess Maria Stubenberg, wife of the deputy ban Ludovik Erdődy and (later) Countess Teresia Illeshazy, spouse of the deputy ban Adam Bathyany, started to organize balls, masquerade balls and theatre performances in which noblemen and noblewomen would even perform as actors. Baltazar Adam Krčelić was the first to describe this new type of entertainment in Croatia. See Krčelić, *Annae*, pp. 129, 342. According to count Oršić, these types of amusement, customary in Vienna and at the Imperial Court, were at that time unfamiliar to most of the indigenous Croatian nobility, except to those greater noblemen and their families who travelled and served as higher State and Court officials. Oršić recalled in his memoirs that during his youth, different customs in entertainment and social events prevailed in Croatia. In contrast to second half of the 18th century, centres of social events and festivities in the first half of the century were the nearby castles and country manors of noble families, and in winter, the nobility did not reside in the cities because there was no entertainment suitable for them there. Oršić, *Rod Oršića*, p. 83.

See also the works of Emilij Laszowski and Franjo Buntak about the elite balls in Zagreb at the middle of the 18th century in Emilij Laszowski, "Zagrebački javni plesovi u XVIII. vijeku" in *Stari i novi Zagreb* (Zagreb: Školska knjiga 1994), pp. 306-308 and Franjo Buntak, *Povijest Zagreba* (Zagreb: Nakladni zavod Matice hrvatske, 1996), pp. 491-492.

⁸⁶ Horbec, *Habsburška Monarhija*, p. 429.

⁸⁷ Zvezdana Sikirić, "Gradani Slobodnog i Kraljevskog Grada Zagreba prema Knjizi građana (1733-1799)", *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest* vol. 29 (1996): 121.

service, noblewomen possessed wide judicial and socio-economic privileges.⁸⁸ They also actively participated in cultural production and patronage, and in the forming of a new trend of intellectual socializing as promoters and organizers of social events. Their role was especially significant in matrimonial arrangements of both the lesser and the greater families through which the families and their members strived to improve their living conditions and ascend in society and offices. Marriage alliances were also the means of connecting the Croatian nobility with the noble families from other Early Modern states. This contributed to the heterogeneity of the highest stratum of the Croatian society and caused them to also identify with “the fraternity of the blue blood”⁸⁹ across Europe, sharing similar lifestyle, values, manners, education, social and political importance and cultural expression opposed to all the other social classes.

According to Dewald, in the 17th and 18th centuries Europe a series of new social institutions, such as scientific academies, universities, colleges and literary salons, created a new ideal of social superiority, which together with “urbanization and increasingly administrative character” of the nobles diminished the differences between them and other social groups.⁹⁰ This social superiority manifested itself in the prevalent practice of gallant behaviour, in the art of polite social conduct called gentility. The Enlightenment as cultural and intellectual movement of the 18th century undoubtedly contributed to the phenomenon. The “bookishness”⁹¹ was also compatible with the contemporary gallantry. Collecting books became widespread activity among intellectual elite,⁹² libraries and writing desks became important parts of every respectable nobleman’s and noblewoman’s household. The nobility embraced the modern trend. The new ideal of noble appearance was that of a well-educated gentleman (and gentlewoman) who had established themselves in the society through their own competences.⁹³

An example of a truly gallant cavalier in the 18th century Croatian noble society was already mentioned Petar Škrlec. According to Krčelić, his former protégé was a man of excellent education, who spoke several languages (Latin,

⁸⁸ See in Josipović-Vojković family fund the primary sources of Elizabeta Barbara Gereczy the second spouse of Nikola Vojković – especially her letters and documents both regarding legal provenance and regarding her activities in managing the families’ (Chernkoczy and Vojković) estates. HR-HDA-726-OJV, boxes 10-14 and 24-30. As a widow she was a tutor of her minor children and managed her family estates as landowner instead of her children. She represented herself and her children in litigations and legal matters. She could in her own name borrow and lend the money, or donate family funds to churches and monasteries of whom she was also a patroness and curator.

⁸⁹ Henshall, *The Zenith of the European Monarchy*, p. 45.

⁹⁰ Dewald, *The European Nobility*, p. 51.

⁹¹ Dewald, *The European Nobility*, p.153, 163.

⁹² Teodora Shek Brnardić, “Intelektualni razvoj” in: *U potrazi za mirom i blagostanjem: Hrvatske zemlje u 18. stoljeću*, ed. Lovorka Čoralić (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 2013), p. 210.

⁹³ Dewald, *The European Nobility*, pp. 51-52.

Hungarian, German, French and Italian). He was proficient in everyday communication and social intercourse, and corresponded with prominent people of his time. In addition, Škrlec, due to his education in law, held high administrative and state offices and wrote several learned treatises on political and legal issues. He was also a collector of books and old manuscripts. In his spare time, he would sing and compose music and poetry. He was fond of horses and was often seen hunting and gardening.⁹⁴

The regulations of the gallant written and spoken communication and social interaction, as they were described in contemporary modern French conversation manuals, prescribed strict rules of behaviour in different social situations.⁹⁵ Polite and gallant correspondence (often in Latin and towards the end of the 18th century more often in German, Italian and French) with influential and prominent people became, following the general European trend, also an imperative in the social spheres of the Croatian nobility. In this multilingual discourse Croatian vernacular, though his social influence was neglected, also was the language of everyday communication and literacy amongst the Croatian higher and lower noble elite.⁹⁶ Countess Julijana Sermage, mother of previously mentioned Petar Sermage, wrote notes regarding the management of her estates in Croatian; she also received and composed letters in Croatian and German.⁹⁷ Count Čikulini wrote both his letters and his poems in Latin and Croatian.⁹⁸ Countess Katarina Patačić had in 1781 compiled a collection of lyric poetry, which she had partially translated from Italian, called *Croatian Poems (Pesme horvatske)* and Countess Josipa Oršić Zichy, mother of Adam Oršić, translated (probably from German) and compiled the *Vračitelj betegujuće živine*, a sort of a veterinarian manual for treating livestock.⁹⁹

⁹⁴ Although, according to Dewald, the refined European court and urban nobility in the general discourse of the fashionable 17th and 18th noble society looked with contempt on activities such as hunting, breeding hunting dogs, and the insistence on genealogy and ancestors, considering such behaviour markings of a “boorish county squire.” Dewald, *The European Nobility*, p. 51.

⁹⁵ More about the French practices of gallant behaviour, and about the French manuals of gallant and courteous behaviour, see Josip Matasović, “Nekoji fragmenti historije 18. stoljeća”, *Narodna starina* 10 (1931), no. 25: 100-103 and Shek Brnardić, “Intelektualni razvoj”, p. 197.

⁹⁶ Hrobec, “Habsburška Monarhija”, pp. 434-435.

⁹⁷ See for example the documents in Čikulini Sermage family fund HR-HDA-706-OČS, box 23, no. 2174; no. 2180; no. 2182; box 24 no. 2197; box 40, no. 1.25; box 41, no. 1.61.

⁹⁸ See for example the correspondence between count Čikullini and Nikola Vojković during the 20's of the 18th century. HR-HDA-706-OČS, box 87, no. 1.31; no. 1.34-1.35; no. 1.48; no. 1.50; no.1.59; no.1.68; no. 1.71; no. 2.30. About published poems in Croatian, see “Čikulini, Ivan Franjo”, *Hrvatska enciklopedija (on line)*.

⁹⁹ Alojz Jembrih, *Pesme horvatske Katarine Patačić* (Donja Stubica: Kajkaviana; Zagreb: Nacionalna i sveučilišna biblioteka, 1991); Josipa Oršić, *Betegujuće sivine vracitel: to jeszt szuprot vszakojachkomu sivinskomu betegu hasznovita, vnogo puti probuvana, ter isztinszka znaidena vrachtva...* Vu Zagrebu, Stampana po Antonu Jandera, letto 1772. (Zagreb: Knjižnice grada Zagreba, 2009). Electronical edition of the original book published in 1772, accessed on March 5th 2017 <http://kgzdz.arhivpro.hr/?kdoc=301004428>.

These practices of Croatian language, as literary and the language of daily communication was another marker, alongside landed possessions and political prerogatives in the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia of the sense of affiliation of the nobility to the ethnicity and political nation of the Early Modern Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia.¹⁰⁰

The importance of gallantry and learned, sophisticated communication in French in public appearances can also be observed in letters and correspondence among the members of Croatian noble families. Trying to behave in accordance with the demands of sophisticated social rules of correspondence, members of the noble families would sometimes compose letters in which the addresses of the recipients were written in French and the contents were written in the Croatian vernacular. Important was the outward appearance, as well as leaving the impression of modern highly educated sender and the acceptance of the latest fashion in social communication. But once the letter reached its destination, be it a relative, a patron, or a neighbour, the message itself was often conveyed in the vernacular.¹⁰¹

Another indicator of the identity of the nobility was their public appearance, looks and clothing. A committee directed by Croatian Diet, had in 1695 brought a sumptuary regulation, likes of which were also common in other European countries at the time.¹⁰² According to the provisions of this sumptuary regulation, it seems that the exclusive right to wear luxurious types of clothing, made out of expensive fabrics, remained the specific prerogative of the nobility. The citizens and commoners had to dress in a more modest manner and the types and materials of their clothes were precisely specified by their

¹⁰⁰ This was obvious in 1790 at the session of the Hungarian Diet, where the delegates of Croatian Estates stated that, to Croatian nation it is all the same whether they are forced to German or Hungarian language and is it done by the king or the other Estates because to be forced to use someone else's language it is the sign of slavery. Compare to Horbec, "Habsburška Monarhija", p. 435.

¹⁰¹ See the correspondence of nobleman Nikola Vojković, former deputy mayor of the County of Zagreb and his wife Elizabeta Barbara from the first half of the 18th century in HR-HDA-726-OJV, box 28. For example, in August 1718 Bernard Orsich addressed his letter to "Madame Madame le Elizabetha Chernkoczy" (sign. 12. VIII. 1718.); in February 1744 Nikola Vojkovich wrote to "Anna Zebich née Miloss a Drussillovecz" (10. II.1744.); in September 1744, a "Monsieur Monsieur Vojkovic" received a letter on his estate in Rakitje, sent by Mato Chismo, manager of his estate in Stražeman (Slavonia) (sign. 28. III. 9. IX. 1741); in June 1744, the noble widow Rosina Szily also wrote to "Monsieur Monsieur le Nicolas Noble de Voikovich a Klokoch pour le psentament a Rakitje" (sign. 16. IV. 1742.). See also the letter sent to Julijana Sermage by the bishop of Zagreb Juraj Braniugh in August 1747 (HR-HDA-706-OČS, box 23, no. 2180): the address is in French, but the rest of the letter is in Croatian.

¹⁰² See, for example, the article by Katarina Nina Simončić "Prilog poznavanju povijesti odijevanja: zakoni protiv raskoši i njihov utjecaj," in: *Pažnja! Odjeća, umjetnost identitet: zbornik radova sa međunarodnog naučnog skupa 7. i 8. oktobar 2013* (Bihać: Tehnički faultet Univerziteta u Bihaću, 2014.), and also Raffaella Sarti, *Živjeti u kući. Stanovanje, prehrana i odijevanje u novovjekovnoj Europi (1500.-1800)* (Zagreb: Ibis grafika, 2006), pp. 230-234, 238-240.

social rank and occupation.¹⁰³ Prohibitions such as this, but also the prevailing customs in appearance, clothing, jewellery and hairstyle of the Early Modern society,¹⁰⁴ established visible difference between the nobility and the rest of the society confirming their superior virtues, refinement and living conditions thus becoming a general identity feature common and distinctive specifically regarding the noble social rank.

The issues of clothing and appearance as distinctive exterior marks of the noble status was as current and as equally important – at the end of the 17th century when the mentioned sumptuary regulation was brought, as it was at beginning of the 19th century, at the turn of the Modern period, when count Adam Oršić was writing his memoirs. Oršić testified that luxurious clothes, lavish hairstyles and jewellery, but also the need for public address and displaying of honours, was not reserved only for the nobility any more, but has spread to the lower ranks of society, making it hard to discern a nobleman or noblewoman from a citizen.¹⁰⁵

The aged count, as a member of an old aristocratic family, observed with displeasure these new-fangled social trends, and it seems that he was particularly concerned with the disappearance of differences between the social ranks, which was, among other things, externally manifested in public demeanour, addressing, clothing and appearance of his contemporaries.¹⁰⁶ In these trends at the beginning of the Modern Age, the aging count saw the destructive processes, the elements which eroded both the foundations of the social order he knew and identities of its social strata.

Conclusion

At the end of this paper, we can briefly return to its beginning – to the cited sentence from Nikola Zrinski's 17th century novel. Zrinski, in the middle of the 17th century, described the noblemen with their own self-awareness and the awareness of the affiliation to the highest social class, whose (self-) perception was shaped through multiple roles, practices and strategies which nobles applied both in their social discourse and private lives, as circumstances demanded in order to distinguish, adapt and prosper. Being a nobleman meant to present oneself through social roles, and to nurture lifestyle inherent in your

¹⁰³ Emilij Laszowski, "Odredbе za Hrvatsku s pogledom na odijevanje", p. 233.

¹⁰⁴ About the specific colours, cuts, materials and garments popular among the Croatian nobility at the turn of the 17th century, see also order forms and letters sent by Croatian noblewomen and noblemen to the Zagreb merchant and shopkeeper Hanns Leonhard Mülbacher in Josip Matasović, "Knez Lenard: kaptoloma zagrebačkoga kramar" *Narodna starina* 12 (1933), no. 32: 215-232.

¹⁰⁵ Oršić, *Rod Oršića*, pp. 84-85.

¹⁰⁶ Oršić, *Rod Oršića*, pp. 84-85.

status and privileges in order to be perceived by your peers and all the others as the member of this distinguished stratum. The cited sentence testifies also about the necessity and inevitability of the constant re-examination, re-interpretation and adaptation of the multiple noble identities and practices, in accordance with the constant flux of changes in the social, political and economic discourses they were the part of.

The basis of the noble rank was noble descent and privileges. From them derived the overall social, economic and cultural position of the nobility.

Through active participation in all the changes and processes of the contemporary 18th century social discourse, the Croatian nobility adapted their identities and possibilities deriving from their traditional prerogatives and rights under the Habsburg rulers. We see a Croatian nobleman as an educated individual, proficient in law in the growing state, court or local government administration, who could complement his income from land revenues with a state salary. We can see the political role of the nobles, as magnates in state and court politics, or as lesser nobles through their activity at the county assemblies where they participate in the local political decision-making or at the Diet of the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia where they as the political nation firmly stand to defend their traditional privileges regarding the royal authority. In the collective memory of the nobility in the 18th century still prevailed the sense of personal service and immediate relationship to the monarch as the privilege which contributed to their distinguished status.

The involvement of the Croatian nobility in the military service, as officers of the Civil Croatian and Military Frontier troops, was another redefinition of their ancient warrior and knightly identity reflected also in their education and behaviour. In all of their advancement through military and public service and promotions to higher ranks or functions, the patron-client relationship was a constant, as it intertwined bonds and interpersonal relations into an invisible social network, which spread all across the of the Early Modern society. The marital policy of the noble families also contributed to the spreading of social connections but, more importantly, it was crucial for the prosperity and influence of the noble families. It had also contributed, just as education, high political functions and scattered landed properties, to the internationalization and heterogeneous diversity of the Croatian high nobility. One of the most important, but not exclusive, identity played by every nobleman who owned a landed property, was his position as landowner and landlord to his subjects. The landed estate also was one of the primary features of the noble status and was important for the shaping of the identities of the Early Modern families – their material wealth, prosperity and local power, but also their sense of duration and affiliation to the noble kindred.

Finally, the most visible in material sense was the role of the nobility as patrons and sponsors of the Baroque cultural production. Inseparable from

this role was also the place of the noble social elite in the overall consumption of the cultural contents of the Baroque and Neoclassicist époque. These two roles were important in the shaping of the visage of the Early Modern Croatian urban and rural landscape as well as in the framing of the elite socialization through practices of gentility, promotion of entertainment and cultural activities.

The examples from lives of several members of Croatian noble families in the 18th century shows that their prerogatives, social practices and multiple identities in many ways coincided with the practices, identities and overall significance of their noble contemporaries across the Early Modern Europe.

Zusammenfassung

Herkunft und Reflexionen der Identitäten des kroatischen Adels im 18. Jahrhundert im gesellschaftlichen und kulturellen Kontext des frühneuzeitlichen Europas

In diesem Aufsatz werden mehrfache Identitäten der Mitglieder des kroatischen Adels in Banat Kroatien im 18. Jahrhundert im gesellschaftlichen und kulturellen Rahmen des frühneuzeitlichen Europas thematisiert. Neben dem Adelsstatus selbst betrachtet die Autorin drei Hauptaspekte traditioneller adeliger Privilegien – politische, rechtliche und sozio-ökonomische Privilegien – als Grundlagen der Bildung von mehrfachen Identitäten des Adels. Aufgrund bisheriger Resultate der Geschichtsschreibung, archivalischer Quellen und Aufzeichnungen von Zeitgenossen werden in diesem Aufsatz vielfache traditionelle Rollen und Praxen des kroatischen Adels erforscht, die auf seinen Privilegien als Reflexion seiner Identitäten im gesellschaftlichen Diskurs des Ungarisch-Kroatischen Königreichs aber auch des ganzen Europas im 18. Jahrhundert basieren. Im Fokus dieser Arbeit befinden sich die politische Identität der kroatischen Adelige, die auf verschiedenen Ämtern im Herrschers Dienste basierten Identitäten, dann ihre kriegerischen und landherrschaftlichen Identitäten, ihre kulturelle Identität und die auf der Zugehörigkeit zu bestimmten Adelsfamilien beruhende Identität. Im Aufsatz werden auch andere Identitäten des kroatischen Adels untersucht: die lokale Identität im Sinne seines Gefühls der Zugehörigkeit zu Lokalgemeinschaften sowie seine kosmopolitische Identität, die die Grenzen des Ungarisch-Kroatischen Königreichs überschritt und die kroatischen Adelige zu Mitgliedern der höchsten gesellschaftlichen Schicht des frühneuzeitlichen Europas machte.

Schlagwörter: Identität; kroatischer Adel; 18. Jahrhundert; adelige Privilegien; frühneuzeitliches Europa

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