

**DAMIR STANIĆ**

*Department for Older and Military Archival Records  
Croatian State Archives, Zagreb*

UDK 355.48(497.5)“16“(091)  
355.11(430 =163.42)“16“(091)

## **Recruiting for the “Foreign War”: New Sources on the Participation of Croatian Soldiers in the Thirty Years’ War**

*The Thirty Years’ War was a great European conflict that was mostly waged in Central Europe i.e. on the territory of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. However, with the entry of the surrounding states the conflict expanded to the Kingdom of Hungary, the Kingdom of France, United Provinces, northern Italy and even to the colonies of the belligerent sides. Croatian soldiers played a rather important role in the conflict, and their participation was long remembered after the War. Even though Croatian soldiers are often mentioned in various works regarding the War, Croatian historiography still has not researched this subject properly. In order to contribute to this complex and intriguing subject, I will address the question of recruitment and origins of soldiers coming from the Croatian and Slavonian territories (including the Slavonian and Croatian Border) who participated in the War.*

**Key words:** 17th Century, Thirty Years’ War, Croatia, Slavonia, Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, Catholics, Protestants, Croatian regiments, Croats, Border, recruitment, soldiers

## Introduction

The participation of soldiers from Croatian territories in the Thirty Years' War is still rather poorly researched within the Croatian historiography.<sup>1</sup> There are very few scientific papers regarding this subject and quite a lot of myths circulating in real and, especially, virtual space.<sup>2</sup> The question of the origin of Croatian soldiers, as well as the officers, their biographies and war activity, their socio-political status and service within the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia/Kingdom of Hungary, the number of recruited or mobilised soldiers from the Croatian territories, the national structure of the Croatian units and the issue of probably overemphasized accusations of atrocities thrown at 'Croats' make only few of the topics still not properly illuminated or completely unresearched within domestic historiography. Hence, it is still unknown what sort of political, social, economic, demographic and other consequences occurred as the result of the Thirty Years' War in the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia – part of Lands of the Crown of Saint Stephen with a Habsburg king as a ruler.

On the other-hand, international publications often do address the question of various aspects of Croatian participation in the war, but the Croats are very rarely the main subject of analysis. Nevertheless, one must draw attention to the works of German historian Michael Weise who in recent years published a number of interesting and valuable articles about Croatian soldiers in certain German lands during the War.<sup>3</sup>

- 1 The conflict began after the so-called Defenestration of Prague on May 23<sup>rd</sup> 1618, which is, for instance, shown in the: The Metropolitan Library of the Archdiocese of Zagreb reference number 9322, (further MLAZ), *Theatrum Europaeum*, vol. I, Frankfurt am Main, 1635, 18. Still, all three of Emperor's representatives, von Martiniz and von Slavata, as well as the scribe Fabricius, survived the fall of some 20 meters, because they fell in the town moat full of rubbish which broke their fall. Subsequent Catholic interpretations and propaganda credited this miracle to divine intervention putting them down safely to earth. Erich Zöllner, Therese Schüssel, *Povijest Austrije*, Zagreb 1997, 149. The literature about the War is vast so I will refer to some basic and recent works and address to the literature within: Richard, Bonney, *The Thirty Years' War 1618–1648*, Oxford 2002; Cicely Veronica Wedgwood, *The Thirty Years War*, New York 2005; Hellferich Tryntje, *The Thirty Years War. A Documentary History*, Indianapolis 2009; Peter H. Wilson, *Europe's Tragedy. A History of the Thirty Years War*, Cambridge 2011; Geoff Mortimer, *Origins of the Thirty Years' War and the Revolt in Bohemia, 1618*, Hampshire, 2015; Herfried Münkler, *Der Dreißigjährige Krieg. Europäische Katastrophe, Deutsches Trauma 1618-1648*, Berlin 2018; Katrin Keller – Martin Scheutz (ed.), *Die Habsburgermonarchie und der Dreißigjährige Krieg*, Vienna 2020.
- 2 Basic literature is still 19th Century article by Ivan Kukuljević Sakcinski "Borba Hrvatah u tridesetoljetnom ratu", *Arhiv za povjestnicu jugoslavensku*, 12, 1875, 1-47; then a book on the same subject by Hungarian historian, Aladar Ballagi, *Wallenstein's Kroatische Arkebusiere 1623-1626*, Budapest 1884, as well as book of Ernest Bauer, *Hrvati u tridesetogodišnjem ratu*, Zagreb 1941. Latley, young Croatian historian Filip Hren wrote a master's thesis about the role of Croatian-Slavonian Estates within the context of Thirty Years War, Filip Hren, *Hrvatski staleži i Vojna krajina u Tridesetogodišnjem ratu*, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences University of Zagreb, Zagreb 2017.
- 3 Michael Weise, "Adlige Kroatenobristen als Militärunternehmer. Fallstudien aus dem Dreißigjährigen Krieg", in: *Decorum und Mammon im Widerstreit? Adeliges Wirtschaftshandeln zwischen Standesprofilen, Profitstreben und ökonomischer Notwendigkeit*, ed. Annette C. Cremer – Alexander Jendorff,

Also, it has to be emphasised that archival sources in Croatian archives regarding Croatian soldiers in the War are surprisingly scarce, or at least still not found. There are several reasons for this – the lack of systematic preservation of records produced by the Croatian-Slavonian Estates in this period, the specific status of those involved in the War, the fact that the war operations on territory of Croatian-Slavonian Kingdom were almost non-existent, the loss of (family) archives and the deliberate discarding of archival material through time – to name a few. All this makes the research more complex because a systematic analysis of the topic demands research in various archives and other cultural and scientific institutions across Europe. The Croatian troops were present on all the battlefields of Europe – from Baltic to Bavaria, from northern Italy to the present-day Netherlands, from Hungary to north-east France, even the suburbs of Paris, so one must consult archival records kept in the institutions in Austria, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Hungary, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, France etc.

Fortunately, Inner Austrian Estates (Carinthian and in particular Carniolan and Styrian ones) as well as central military institutions in Vienna and Graz preserved numerous sources on the Croatian and Slavonian Border, but also on the Croatian-Slavonian Kingdom in general, which one must research when analysing this subject. Although there is no space to address this issue extensively, one must conclude that, regarding the importance and protraction of the War, the battles in the Empire were not mentioned as frequently as one might assume in the registries of Aulic War Council in Graz. Nevertheless, one does find interesting entries in registries, as for instance that commanders on the Croatian and Slavonian Border were instructed to hold *Te Deum Laudamus* and to fire shots on the Border in honour of Imperial army's conquest of Magdeburg in 1631 and the victory over the Sweds at Lützen 1632.<sup>4</sup> Another *Te Deum Laudamus* and celebratory shooting were issued on the Borders after the Imperial victory at Nördlingen in 1634 and the French defeat at Diedenhofen in 1639.<sup>5</sup>

---

Heidelberg 2022, 297–325; Ibid., “Mobilität, Geschwindigkeit und Gewalt – die kroatischen Reiter in Brandenburg und Sachsen”, in: *Halb Europa in Brandenburg. Der Dreißigjährige Krieg und seine Folgen*, ed. Matthias Asche – Marco Kollenberg – Antje Zeiger, Berlin 2020, 80–94; Ibid., “Die kaiserlichen Kroaten im Dreißigjährigen Krieg”, in: *Vor 400 Jahren. Der Dreißigjährige Krieg*, ed. Robert Rebitsch – Lothar Höbelt – Erwin A. Schmidl, Innsbruck 2019, 107–115; Ibid., “Gewaltprofis und Kriegsprofiteure. Kroatische Söldner als Gewaltunternehmer im Dreißigjährigen Krieg”, *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht*, 68, 5/6, 2017, 278–291; Ibid., “Grausame Opfer? Kroatische Söldner und ihre unterschiedlichen Rollen im Dreißigjährigen Krieg”, in: *Zwischen Tätern und Opfern. Gewaltbeziehungen und Gewaltgemeinschaften*, ed. Philipp Batelka – Michael Weise – Stephanie Zehnle, Göttingen 2017, 127–148.

4 Croatian State Archives (further CSA), Collection of copies on paper, Croatia et Vindica, Croatia (further Croatia), HR-HDA-913, microfilm D-1946, 1631, June, No. 6. Also, CSA, Collection of copies on paper, Croatia et Vindica, Vindica (further Vindica), HR-HDA-913, microfilm D-2013, 1632, December, No. 2. Although the documentation of the Aulic War Council in Graz was heavily discarded in the 19th century, the protocols and indices survived and can give us an insight into the correspondence between central institutions and border administration.

5 CSA, Vindica, D-2014, 1634, September, No. 2; CSA, Croatia, microfilm D-1948, 1639, June, No.

Therefore, in this paper I will address the question of numbers, recruitment and origins of soldiers coming from Croatian territories – the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia and the Slavonian and Croatian Border. As Alphons von Wrede in his book presented detailed information on Croatian regiments and area of their activities, I will primarily focus on the aforementioned topics.<sup>6</sup> I will also refrain from addressing the wider context of the War, which is generally well known and investigated.

### On Numbers in General

One of the major issues regarding Croatian soldiers in the War is the question of numbers. Croatian contingent increased from, presumably, several hundred soldiers at the very beginning of the War, to around 20.000 in the 1630s.<sup>7</sup> However, it is unlikely that such a force could have been mustered solely from the Croatian-Slavonian Kingdom, including the Slavonian and Croatian Border, which at that time had an area of around 17.000 km<sup>2</sup> and were described as “remnants of the remnants” of Croatia and Slavonia.<sup>8</sup> For instance, Hrvoje Petrić estimates that at the beginning of 17th century on the Slavonian Border there was around 16.000, and in the county of Križevci 12.350 men – in total around 28.000 people.<sup>9</sup> Marko Balaško estimates that in the same period entire Slavonian Kingdom had circa 100.000 inhabitants.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, even within this reduced territory large areas were depopulated. Obviously, as the War continued there was a large influx of foreign soldiers into Croatian ranks, and by the 1630s the term “Croat” often referred primarily to the type of unit(s) which conducted war in a certain manner, and not so much to their ethnic or geographical background, even though the core of such regiments was undoubtedly Croatian.

Yet, thousands did participate in the war, and the main reason lies much more in a social context than the geographical or demographical one. Namely, on the Croatian

6 For Croatian regiments see: Alphons von Wrede, *Geschichte der K. und K. Wehrmacht*, vol. 3/2, Vienna 1901, 749-784.

7 The highest number of Croatian regiments was in 1636 when there were 19 regiments on the battlefield. As one Croatian regiment numbered 500-1.000 men, there was maximum around 19.000-20.000 horsemen in the Imperial service. However, the number of Croatian regiments soon declined, to 8 in 1639, and to 4-5 regiment in the 1640s. Vladimir Brnardić, *Imperial Armies of the Thirty Years War (2): Cavalry*, Oxford 2010, 38; Wrede, *Geschichte*, vol. 3/1, Beilage 1. Kukuljević in his pioneer work claimed that around 15.000-30.000 Croatian soldiers participated in the Thirty Years War. Sakcinski, “*Borba Hrvatah*”, 2.

8 Nada Klaić, “Ostaci ostataka” Hrvatske i Slavonije u XVI stoljeću (od mohačke bitke do seljačke bune 1573. G.), *Arhivski vjesnik*, vol. 16, Nr. 1, 1973, 255.

9 Hrvoje Petrić, *Pogranična društva i okoliš: Varaždinski generalat i Križevačka županija u 17. stoljeću*, Samobor-Zagreb 2012, 258.

10 Marko Balaško, *Popis domaćinstva iz 1598. godine kao izvor za socio-ekonomsku povijest Slavonskog Kraljevstva*, master's thesis, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences University of Zagreb, Zagreb 2022, 9.

territories lived a population adept to constant war and skirmishes. The primary activity that defined Croatian-Slavonian society during the late Middle Ages and Early Modern Period was indeed – war with the Ottomans. Here still existed enough military experienced men to be drafted in their thousands. Although heavily depopulated by constant warfare during the previous two centuries, part of population, primary in the borderland, was replaced by newcomers. For instance, up to first decades of the 18th century, there was up to 2.000 paid soldiers on Croatian and Slavonian border each and there was also several thousands unpaid soldiers on every border section. In the time of peril just Vlachs on the Slavonian border had to levy 6.000-7.000 men.<sup>11</sup> To *Grenzlers* from Slavonian and Croatian Border primary obligation was to serve against the Ottomans, but when needed, also against other foes.<sup>12</sup> Among unpaid soldiers large portion were horsemen, who, unfortunately, were not included in the border pay rolls so we don't know their exact numbers. Still, the numbers had to be high, because even in the 1730's out of 7.000 unpaid *Grenzer* on the Croatian border 2.500 were horsemen.<sup>13</sup> In the “civil” Croatia lived even more people, many of them also adept to warfare. Large portion of Croatian soldiers who served in Croatian units undoubtedly had their origins in the “civil” part of the Land. Hence, Croatian lands were full of experienced and capable soldiers able to serve in what Gašpar Starešinić, a border officer and a commander in one Croatian regiment during the Thirty Years' War, called in one source “a Foreign War”. Mobilisation and recruitment thus occurred in both parts, so called “civil” and border area and it was massive.

### Beginning of the Conflict and the 1620s

During the first years of the conflict the survival of the Habsburg dynasty, both as Emperors and as Kings of Hungary and Bohemia was seriously jeopardized. The Thirty Years' War was a continuation of the Uskok War (1615 – 1617), hence many later distinguished

11 Karl Kaser, *Slobodan seljak i vojnik: Rana krajiška društva (1545 – 1754)*, I, Zagreb 1997, 109. Until the 18th century, on the Croatian border there were around 2.000 paid soldiers. Sanja Lazanin – Nataša Štefanec, “Habsburg Military Conscription and Changing Realities of the Triplex Confinium (16th-18th Centuries)”, in: *Constructing Border Societies. International Project Conference Papers 2*, ed. Drago Roksanđić – Nataša Štefanec, Budapest 2000, 95. The same was on the Slavonian border, where in 1630 there was total of 1.703 paid men. In the Croatian border in 1657 there were 1.784 paid soldiers. Radoslav Lopašić, *Karlovac: poviest i mjestopis grada i okolice*, Zagreb 1879, 218. For 1630 data see Nataša Štefanec, “Demographic Changes on the Habsburg-Ottoman Border in Slavonia (c. 1570-1640)”, in: *Das Osmanische Reich und die Habsburger Monarchie in der Neuzeit*, ed. Marlene Kurz – Martin Scheutz – Karl Vocelka – Thomas Winkelbauer, Vienna – München 2005, 551-578. The Vlachs on the Slavonian border received in 1630 a set of privileges called *Statuta Valachorum*, which regulated their status, administration and military duties. The *Statuta* obliged Vlachs to muster, when commanded, a fully equipped force of at least 6.000-7.000 men within two-three hours. *Statuta Valachorum: prilozi za kritičko izdanje*, ed. Zrinka Blažević, Zagreb 1999, 40-43.

12 Lazanin – Štefanec, “Habsburg Military Conscription”, 97, footnote 10.

13 Ibid. 102.

imperial commanders only continued to wage war for the Habsburgs on new battlefields. Traditionally, Croatian nobility had an obligation to levy their own men, and the Kingdom financed several hundred infantry soldiers (*haramias*) for their own defense. Next to the regular unit of the Ban (*vicereus*, viceroy), an insurrection or mass mobilization could occur on the order of the Croatian Diet (*Sabor*), which could amass to couple of thousand men. The insurrection was during the War few times, always related to Hungarian uprising – Bethlen’s in the 1620s and Rakoczy’s in the 1640s. This army was obliged to serve within the borders of Kingdom, yet, the ban, as the viceroy, had an obligation to cooperate closely with Croatian and Slavonian border commanders.<sup>14</sup>

In 1619, in the 1620s and the 1640s regular and insurrection military units from the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia participated in battles against the Hungarian rebels, the latter being Ottoman allies. In the same manner as these units, the *Grenzers* from the Slavonian and Croatian border massively participated in conflicts within their specific border-institutional framework. They fought *en masse* against the Hungarian insurgents in the 1620s, primary around Styrian border with Hungary. However, when, mainly from the 1620s, Croatian soldiers, from both “civil” and border territories, ventured to fight in European theatres of war, they went into service as a sort of hired men. Further research is needed in order to establish whether we can consider them mercenaries or not.

Even though during 1620s Croatian territories were threatened by the possible incursion of Bethlen and Ottoman forces,<sup>15</sup> the Croatian-Slavonian estates proved to be whole-heartedly faithful to the ruling dynasty and declined an offer to create a pact with Bethlen. Nevertheless, despite the lack of serious conflicts with the Ottomans, in the border-area during the 1620s and 1630s numerous small skirmishes occurred. Especially frequent were Ottoman incursion in the Slavonian border in the year 1622/1623. Although the central Habsburg authorities prevented big scale retaliations in order to preserve peace, local commanders had a duty to defend the border. For instance, Juraj Mandić, a vicecaptain of Koprivnica wrote on the October 23<sup>th</sup> 1620 that Bethlen intended to winter on the territory of the Zrinski family in Međimurje or, if not possible, on the territory of the pasha of Kanizsa. Bethlen and the Ottoman forces planned, if the rivers Mura and Drava would freeze in the winter time, to make incursions into Slavonia. But the plans altered, because Bethlen was instructed by pasha to arrange his winter accommodation with the vesier of Buda, and to leave only 40 men in Kaniža during the winter. Nevertheless, vicecaptain of Koprivnica complained that the Ottomans kidnaped three children from Koprivnica, and some more from Sigetec, while he has to endure shame until “his men come back from the war”. He emphasized that when his men return, “God willing”, he will take his revenge in every way possible.<sup>16</sup>

14 For instance, CSA, Vindica, microfilm D-2010, 1620, October, No. 40.

15 For Bethlen see Géza Pálffy – Alan Campbell, “Crisis in the Habsburg Monarchy and Hungary, 1619–1622: The Hungarian Estates and Gábor Bethlen”, *The Hungarian Historical Review*, Vol. 2, No. 4, 2013, 733-760. The entire volume is dedicated to various aspects of Bethlen’s rule as the Prince of Transylvania.

16 Radoslav Lopašić, *Spomenici Hrvatske krajine*, book 2, Zagreb 1885, dok. LXV, 99-100.

The Thirty Years’ War made the anti-Ottoman defence effort even more complex and demanding. Likewise, when in 1626 famous Protestant commander Ernst Mansfeld was withdrawing with his 1.000 horsemen and 2.000-3.000 allied Ottoman troops from Hungary towards Venetian territories, via Bosnia, because of the fear that they would attack Hungarian and other border forts, an order was issued to commanders of the Slavonian and Croatian border to be extremely careful and to prepare for defence.<sup>17</sup>

Despite the everlasting Ottoman threat, Croatian units participated in the Thirty Years’ War from the first conflicts in Bohemia. Already in first months of 1619 an imperial order was issued for recruitment of soldiers in Flanders, Lorraine, Italy, *dem Alten Reich* as well as in Hungary and Croatia.<sup>18</sup> The later famous commander of the Croatian units Joan Hector Lodovico Isolano was then just a captain of a company of Croatian harquebusiers under the command of Heinrich Duval, Graf de Dampierre, in Lower Austria.<sup>19</sup> Along Isolano and his horsemen, the Croatian infantry also served under Johann Jacob von Gallenberg, Hanibal Arneri and Nikolaus de la Nave, who for instance, recruited 500 infantrymen, but also 100 horsemen.<sup>20</sup> Johann Jacob Gallenberg offered in January 1619 his services to *Haus Oesterreich*, and a certain *recepisse* was issued to him by count Bucquoy. It seems that Gallenberg was promoted to the ranks of the captain (*hauptmanschafft*).<sup>21</sup> Croats were mentioned in June 1619 at the Battle of Sablat near Češke Budejovice and they also participated in the victory over the rebels at Lackenbach in Burgenland at the end of September 1619.<sup>22</sup>

As the primary threat for the Kingdom of Croatia and Slavonia were rebellious Hungarians, at the end of September 1619 ban Nikola Frankopan Tržački, prompted by Bethlen’s success and his intent to ally with the Bohemians, summoned the Croatian-Slavonian estates to discuss the situation at the Diet (*Sabor*).<sup>23</sup> When Bethlen entered Pozsony mid October and called upon the general Hungarian Diet, the Croatian-Slavonian Diet declared loyalty to the Habsburg dynasty and ordered that an insurrection army has to rally on November 1<sup>st</sup> at Šemovec in the north of the Kingdom. All nobility was obliged to enlist one infantryman equipped with a hand gun *per sessionem* and one horseman from

17 CSA, Croatica, box 7, fascicle 15, Graz, November 17<sup>th</sup> 1626, 590. For the problem of Ottoman occupation of series of abandoned fortifications between opposing empires next to the Croatian border from 1620s to 1640s see: Damir Stanić, “Osmansko zaposjedanje napuštenih utvrda uz Hrvatsku i Primorsku krajinu 1620-ih – 1640-ih”, *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest*, br. 53/2, 2022, 69-105.

18 Weise, “Grausame Opfer?”, 132-133.

19 Weise, “Die kaiserlichen Kroaten”, 111.

20 Wrede, *Geschichte*, 751. Joan Hector Lodovico Isolano (1584/1586 – March 1640). Isolano is probably the most known Croatian commander in the Thirty Years’ War, in which he participated from the very beginning until his death in 1640. For an image of Isolano see: Croatian State Archives (further CSA), Engraving collection, HR-HDA-903, reference number 2674, reference number 1054. For biographical data see Kukuljević Sakcinski, “Borba Hrvatah”, 4-6; Bauer, *Hrvati*, 30-34.

21 CSA, Croatica, microfilm D-1941, 1619, February, No. 6.

22 Hren, *Hrvatski staleži*, 72. For Sablat see Bauer, *Hrvati*, 37; Wrede, *Geschichte*, 10; Ballagi, *Wallenstein’s Kroatische*, 6; Weise, “Die kaiserlichen Kroaten”, 111.

23 Radoslav Lopašić, “Spomenici Tržačkih Frankopana”, *Starine*, 25, 1892, 223-224.

four *sessionem*. The armalists and the nobility who owned only one plot of land (*fumus, sessio*) had to participate personally.<sup>24</sup> Because of the refusal to participate in the general Hungarian Diet, Behtlen threatened the Croatian-Slavonian estates with Ottoman attack, which forced ban Frankopan Tržaćki to ask a ruler to help with 2.000-3.000 men.<sup>25</sup>

When referring to *Grenzer* participation in conflicts against Bethlen's forces, it seems that at the beginning several hundred men were recruited from the Slavonian border (sometimes from the Croatian border), and sent primarily into Styria. As the safety situation for the Habsburg's deteriorated, mass participation of *Grenzer* from the Slavonian border occurred. For instance, in November 1619, the commander of the Slavonian border Sigismund Friedrich Trauttmansdorff raised at least 50 companies of horsemen to be used against the Hungarian rebels.<sup>26</sup> The following month 100 horsemen were sent to Hartberg in Styria.<sup>27</sup>

The Estates of Inner Austria also raised men on the Slavonian border for defense against the Hungarian foes. At the beginning of December 1619 Carniolan Estates mustered two companies of horsemen and one unit of infantry, altogether 500 men. It was noted that this recruitment had to be conducted without damaging the border budget.<sup>28</sup> Carniolan Estates mustered in December 1619 a force of 150 horsemen under the command of *Rittmeister* Franz Sauer.<sup>29</sup> They were instructed to ride to Fürstenfeld in Styria, and their *beglittungs Commisar* was determined.<sup>30</sup> But, at that time in Carniola certain military preparations were also conducted regarding Venetians<sup>31</sup> At the same time Carinthian Estates had to settle the expense for 300 infantry and 100 horsemen, so it points to even higher numbers of mustered men, although it is still not clear whether the Carinthian's were involved in Sauer's recruitment, or did they finance a separate group of soldiers.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, it can be concluded that infantry and cavalry were recruited in hundreds at the Slavonian, and probably Croatian border, venturing to the adjacent Styrian borderlands. There is one entry in protocol of Vindica series within the Aulic War Council in Graz that refers to recruitment of soldiers in 1619, but is rather vague and unprecise. This recruitment was probably executed on Slavonian border, since it was registreted in Vindica series of the aforementioned Council. There is an input from June 1619 which demonstrates that a *permission* was issued in *Graf Reinbald von Colalto Obristen namen* for soldiers to be enlisted in Graz.<sup>33</sup>

24 Rudolf Horvat, *Povijest Hrvatske I. Od najstarijeg doba do g. 1657.*, Zagreb 1924, 330; *Acta comitialia Regni Croatiae, Dalmatiae et Slavoniae: knjiga peta: od godine 1609. do godine 1630. s dodatkom od god. 1570. do god. 1628.* (further: HSS), ed. Ferdo Šišić, Zagreb 1918, 235-236.

25 Lopašić, "Spomenici Tržaćkih", 225-226.

26 CSA, Vindica, microfilm D-2009, 1619, November, No. 6.

27 CSA, Croatica, microfilm D-1941, 1619, December, No. 25.

28 *Ibid.*, No. 27, 28, 29.

29 *Ibid.*, No. 9.

30 *Ibid.*, No. 25.

31 *Ibid.*, No. 23.

32 *Ibid.*, No. 29.

33 *Ibid.*, June, No. 32.



By summer of 1620 Slavonian *Grenzer* were already recruited *en masse*. In June 1620 an order was issued for recruiting 400 *Grenzer* and sending them to a camp on the river Danube. The following month a mass mobilisation occurred. Aleksa Ivić claimed that there was up to 5.000 men recruited – in first wave 3.000 and in the second wave 2.000 men. He also claimed that a large contingent of 2.000 soldiers under the command of Trauttmansdorff was immediately sent to the battlefields, while the rest followed some time later.<sup>34</sup> The sources do not mention 5.000 recruited men, yet they do say that 3.000 men were recruited, and that Trauttmansdorff commanded the force of 2.000 men. So, it seems that he commanded 2.000 out of 3.000 recruited soldiers from Slavonian border and not 5.000 altogether.<sup>35</sup> Trauttmansdorff was, apparently, the senior commander responsible for the defence of Styria, as in August 1620 Emperor stated that the *Land Defension* of Styria was under Trauttmansdorff command, and that, respectively, Styrian estates recruited some horsemen and 3.000 Vlachs.<sup>36</sup> Again the number of recruited Vlachs on the Slavonian border is 3.000, not 5.000. As the Styrian estates organised, administrated and financed the Slavonian border, it was natural that they used the *Grenzer* for defence of their land. One other source indicates that Trauttmansdorff also commanded Styrian mobilised army (*Aufbot*).<sup>37</sup> That would certainly be expected if he was at that point supreme commander in Styria. Also, it is not surprising that he was at that time appointed commander, concerning his Styrian origins and status, his position in border hierarchy and his consequent military experience. Trauttmansdorff even asked for the title of “*Velt Obrist*”, but it seems that, at least at that point, his request was not accepted because the Aulic War Council in Graz answered that that kind of title was “*bey der Registratur nicht zufinden*”.<sup>38</sup> Sources furthermore show that in July 1620 there were 300 Croatian horsemen stationed in Mannersdorf am Leithagebirge in Lower Austria.<sup>39</sup>

In August 1620 representatives of endangered Inner Austrian Estates attended the Croatian-Slavonian Diet to discuss the issue of common defence against the Ottomans and Bethlen. There was even talk about some kind of (defensive) *confederation*, offered by the Croatian-Slavonian estates. Their long and common struggle against the Ottomans as well as their common defensive interest against the Hungarian rebels was invoked. After the Diet in Zagreb, six Croatian representatives were to travel to Graz for further talks.<sup>40</sup> Yet, this interesting proposition needs to be further researched. To

34 Aleksa Ivić, “Migracije Srba u Slavoniju tokom 16., 17. i 18. stoleća”, *Srpski etnografski zbornik*, Beograd 1916, 31-32. CSA, Vindica, microfilm D-2010, 1620, August, No. 20.

35 Ibid., No. 9-10.

36 Ibid., No. 19-20.

37 Ibid., No. 39.

38 Ibid., No. 39.

39 Österreichisches Staatarchiv, Kriegsarchiv, Feldakten, Alte Feldakten, (further At-OeStA, KA, FA, AFA), karton 48, 1620 7 11.

40 For instance, Archives of the Republic of Slovenia, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, SI AS 2, (Further ARS, DSK) box 145, fascicle 92, Graz, September 2<sup>nd</sup> 1620, 1r-1v, 178-179; Ibid. Zagreb, August 28<sup>th</sup> 1620, 1r-4r, 198-207; Graz, September 23<sup>rd</sup> 1620, 1r-2r, 270-273; Kukljević claims that an alliance was concluded with preservation of “old rights and privileges”. Kukuljević Sakcinski “Borba Hrvatah”, 6.

confront the Bethlen's threat, the Diet also decided that if the Ban assesses that an insurrection is needed, from every *fumus* not one, but two infantryman with hand guns had to be mustered.<sup>41</sup> After Bethlen's force marched all the way into Styria, in September 1620, the following month an insurrection was gathered on the borders of the Croatian-Slavonian Kingdom, in Šemovec. Despite the growing peril, the Croatian-Slavonian Estates decided not to send their troops to ruler's aid. Since commander of the Slavonian border Trauttmansdorff already departed with *entire border* troops under his command to Styria, sending additional troops from the Croatian-Slavonian Kingdom would be a great risk, leaving the homeland unprotected – they argued.<sup>42</sup>

In September 1620 another decree was issued by the Aulic War Council in Graz to Styrian estates ordering them to recruit 800 haramias instead of German soldiers (*Teutschen Fändls*).<sup>43</sup> Perhaps they decided to employ haramias (domestic Croatian and Slavonian infantry) because they were less expensive than German soldiers or/and because they were seen as more effective against their Hungarian counterparts. It seems that these units were not used outside of Inner Austrian lands, except perhaps in the Hungary, with Emperor's permission. For instance, in October 1621 Styrian Estates waited for one such Emperor's resolution on deployment of two cavalry companies and three infantry units outside their land, probably in Hungary.<sup>44</sup> These units were often disbanded after the signing of peace treaties or after decrease of hostilities.<sup>45</sup>

By October 1620 Bethlen's force threatened Pressburg, so Habsburg commander count Dampierre, urged Trauttmansdorff to immediately send 400 horsemen and 500 infantrymen.<sup>46</sup> He did so, but later faced certain difficulties, because the Styrian mobilized men (*Aufbot*) did not want to march outside the boundaries of their country.<sup>47</sup> It was also not uncommon for recruited men to be disbanded, as the soldiers sometimes revolted because they did not received their wages, as was the case in November 1620 with two infantry and one cavalry unit.<sup>48</sup> In December 1620 another 400 haramias recruited by the Carniolan estates were to be disbanded.<sup>49</sup>

Kukuljević stated that around that time *Grenzer* troops were gathered in Radkersburg in Styria under general *Štadler*<sup>50</sup>, and that a hundred haramias were to be sta-

41 Šišić, *HSS*, 282-283.

42 Croatian State Archives, Diet of Kingdoms of Dalmatia, Croatia and Slavonia, HR-HDA-1, Protocol 2, (Further CSA, Diet) 1601-1635, 160-161. For Styria see Wilson, *Europe's Tragedy*, 307. Also, Juraj Rattkay, *Spomen na kraljeve i banove Kraljevstva Dalmacije, Hrvatske i Slavonije*, Zagreb 2001, 249; Šišić, *HSS*, 286.

43 CSA, Vindica, microfilm D-2010, 1620, September, No. 12.

44 *Ibid.*, 1621, October, No. 2.

45 Their commanders were Bartholome Khevenhüller, Adam Neuhauß, Ernst Paradeiser. CSA, Croatica, microfilm D-1941, 1621, November, No. 14-15.

46 CSA, Vindica, microfilm D-2010, 1620, October, No. 4.

47 *Ibid.*, No. 23, 47.

48 *Ibid.*, November, No.16, 17.

49 *Ibid.*, December, No. 8.

50 Probably baron Gottfried Stadel, then commander of the Croatian Border.

tioned on river Drava under the command of Stjepan Gereczy, while Vuk Mrnjavčić was appointed vicecaptain of all haramias.<sup>51</sup> Also, in October 1620 Juraj Zrinski and Christoff Banffy also combined their units with Trauttmansdorff forces, under supreme command of count Dampierre, for fight against Bethlen in Hungary.<sup>52</sup> *Grenzer* from the Croatian border also participated in campaigns against the Hungarians, but it seems in more modest numbers. In October 1620 Commander of the Croatian border had to send 100 harquebusiers, 50 hussars and 100 haramias as reinforcement.<sup>53</sup> *Grenzer* from Senior captaincy of Senj participated in struggle against Bethlen in Austrian lands, probably even in Bohemia, as in 1620 they were together with Cossacks in Wien.<sup>54</sup> In August 1621, well known and respected voivode and nobleman from Senj, Vicko Hreljanović recruited men for operations against Bethlen in Styria.<sup>55</sup> This recruitment was mentioned along with the specific recruitment of infantry and cavalry by the Carinthian estates as well as general recruitment by the Carinthian, Carniolan and the estates of Gorizia, so it was obviously connected. Carniolan Estates mustered a force for a period of three months.<sup>56</sup> In the beginning of 1622 Hreljanović again recruited some 300 men from Senj (and probably surroundings) and lead them to Austria.<sup>57</sup>

Furthermore, soldiers from Croatian-Slavonian territories then also served in the imperial ranks in Bohemia. Even though we still do not know precisely which units were involved, Croatian soldiers took part in the decisive imperial victory against the Protestant's at the Battle of White Mountain near Prague in November 1620.<sup>58</sup> It seems that 500 Croatian infantry and 100 horsemen participated in that battle.<sup>59</sup> Also, it is claimed that they conducted an attack on Transylvanian units, night before the battle.<sup>60</sup>

In July 1621, before the peace treaty was concluded in Nikolsburg, count Juraj Zrinski suffered a defeat by Ferenc Batthyány's forces in Lower Austria, while Croatian noblemen Vuk Erdödy, Juraj Vrnovečki and Ivan Patačić were captured.<sup>61</sup> In 1621 there also occurred the only direct conflict of the Thirty Years' War on the Croatian territory, related to the aforementioned Batthyány family. Namely, The Ban's (viceroys) army laid

51 Kukuljević Sakcinski “Borba Hrvatah”, 7.

52 CSA, Vindica, microfilm D-2010, 1620, October, No. 2.

53 Ibid., Nr. 32

54 One source shows that 1.600 ‘people from Senj and Croatia’ joined the army of 2.000 Cossacks in or around Vienna, which caused great concern among the domestic population. MŁAZ, *Theatrum Europaeum*, vol. I, 388.

55 CSA, Vindica, microfilm D-2010, 1621, August, No. 25, *Zue Werbung des Zengerischen Kriegsvolckh die 550 fden bestelten haubtman Herglianouich alsobald zuestellen*. Ibid., No. 53.

56 CSA, Croatica, microfilm D-1941, 1621, September, Nr. 1, 5.

57 Ibid., microfilm D-1943, 1622, between March and June, No. 7.

58 In an engraving showing the outline of the line-up of the imperial and protestant army at the Battle of White Mountain, the last row of the Imperial army comprises a formation of 1.000 Croatian and Hungarian horsemen. According to available sources, Hanibal Arneri and Nikolaus de la Nave commanded some Croatian units. MŁAZ, *Theatrum Europaeum*, vol. I, 461, 463.

59 Wrede, *Geschichte*, 3/2, 751.

60 Brnardić, *Imperial Armies*, 42.

61 Horvat, *Povijest Hrvatske*, 335; Šišić, HSS, 296.-298.

siege and captured the fortress of Greben on the eastern slopes of Ivanščica hill in then Slavonia, more precisely, on the estate of Count Ferenc Batthyány, a supporter of Gábor Bethlen. The Croatian historian Juraj Rattkay states that ban Nikola Frankopan of Tržac: ‘... received the order from the Emperor to capture by means of force and weapons Batthyány’s Greben fortress’ because it was said that ‘Batthyány will capture the crossing over Drava and transport the bandits across the river, little by little, so that they could from their fortress headquarters attack and ravage the entire Slavonia, perturb it with their offensive weapons with the intention to capture it.’<sup>62</sup> Ban’s forces indeed captured the fortress, but it was soon returned to the possession of the Batthyány family.

Sources show that Vuk Frankopan Tržaćki, then still temporary commander of the Croatian Border, received in September 1621 an order to wait in standby.<sup>63</sup> Count Juraj Zrinski was at the end of 1621 stationed with 500 horsemen on the “Austrian Border”.<sup>64</sup>

After the rebellion in Bohemia was crushed, the Spanish-Habsburg units broke into the German estates of the defeated Elector Palatine and short-lived Bohemian king Frederick V. The Spanish army under the command of Don Gonzalo de Córdoba and the army of the Catholic League under the command of Johann Tserclaes, Count of Tilly, seized Frederick’s estates from 1620 to 1622 – defeating the Protestant army at the Battle of Wimpfen in May 1622 and then at the Battle of Höchst in June 1622.<sup>65</sup> By the end of the year they captured Heidelberg and Mannheim. The Croatian units were particularly prominent during the capture of Heidelberg when they swam over the river Neckar and attacked the suburbs.<sup>66</sup>

### Service in the Empire

From the beginning of 1620s intense recruitment of Croatian soldiers for campaigns in the Empire began. Of course, the circumstances and the nature of recruitment of Croatian soldiers for service outside the Hungarian Kingdom and adjacent Inner Austrian borderlands were quite different. They were recruited all over Croatian territories on the basis of imperial patents issued to nobles and officers of local and foreign origin, or, sometimes, patents issued by rulers and dignitaries as the duke of Bavaria, archbishop of Salzburg, or Inner Austrian estates.<sup>67</sup> In 1622 archbishop of Salzburg issued *Werbungs Patent* to

62 Rattkay, *Spomen*, 249.

63 CSA, *Vindica*, microfilm D-2010, 1621, September, No. 6, 7.

64 Ar-OeSTA, KA, FA, AFA, karton 49, 1621 12 03.

65 MLAZ, *Theatrum Europaeum*, vol. I, 725; Kukuljević Sakcinski “Borba Hrvatah”, 8; Bauer, *Hrvati*, 43.

66 There exist a drawing of the capture of Heidelberg on September 16<sup>th</sup> 1622, during which Croats were particularly distinguished, swimming on their horses across the Neckar River and invading the city. The castle of Heidelberg was captured few days later. MLAZ, *Theatrum Europaeum*, vol. I, 739. Also, Kukuljević Sakcinski “Borba Hrvatah”, 8; Bauer, *Hrvati*, 44-45.

67 On recruitment see Herbert Langer, *The Thirty Years War*, New York 1990, 92-96; Bauer, *Hrvati*, 10-11.

certain *Rittmeister* for 200 horsemen.<sup>68</sup> Also in 1633 Albrecht von Wallenstein asked for and received Emperor’s permission to recruit soldiers all over Croatian territories, and an order was sent to Aulic War Council in Graz to assist his recruiters in every way possible.<sup>69</sup>

Bavarians and the Archbishop of Salzburg also recruited men in Croatian territories. In February 1622 Duke of Bavaria issued a patent to *Rittmeister* Hanß Rueprecht von Pfilberg for recruitment of 100 harquebusiers in *Crabaten*.<sup>70</sup> The same month another patent for recruitment of 100 horsemen was issued by the Archbishop of Salzburg.<sup>71</sup> In April 1622 some hussar companies were recruited by the Duke of Bavaria.<sup>72</sup> In June 1622 another 300 men were to be recruited by Bavarians. These men were at least partially “Croats” that fought in the ranks of Catholic League and imperial army in the Palatinate in 1622. The Bavarians continued to recruit in Croatian territories up to spring of 1645 when in the Slavonian border two cavalry companies were recruited, and several more awaited recruitment. After reaching Bavaria, they had to march onwards.<sup>73</sup> The Spanish also recruited men in the Croatian and Maritime Border, and even in *ganz Dalmatien* as in 1647, even though it seems that the later recruitment failed.<sup>74</sup> Venetians also recruited men on the Croatian Border when the war with the Ottomans broke out in the 1640s. Not all recruitments were massive, sometimes fewer men were mustered. Cornet Hans Carl from Gallas Regiment received in May 1640 the patent for *abfuhrung* of 25 horsemen.<sup>75</sup>

During the 1620s more and more Croatian soldiers served in the Empire. In 1622, the Croatian-Slavonian Diet decided that all noblemen had to raise their men for imperial cause.<sup>76</sup> But, already in 1623, the Diet pleaded with the ruler not to send the *Grenzer* to wage war outside the country.<sup>77</sup> The security situation was rather complex, with the permanent Ottoman threat, danger of Hungarian uprisings and the great European war looming in the background.

Peter H. Wilson states that by 1624 around 4.000 soldiers from the borderlands of the Hungarian Kingdom served in the imperial ranks.<sup>78</sup> In August 1626 there were 2.400 Croatian horsemen in Wallenstein’s camp in Ascherleben. These troops were already under command of Isolano, count Juraj Zrinski and Peter Gall. Zrinski’s 1.200 horsemen were under command of Zrinski himself and notable Croatian nobleman Franjo Orehovečki – each of them had 600 men.<sup>79</sup> It seems that Zrinski recruited his

68 CSA, Croatica, microfilm D-1943, 1622, February, No. 18.

69 CSA, Vindica, microfilm D-2013, 1633, January, No. 8.

70 CSA, Croatica, microfilm D-1943, 1622, February, No. 9.

71 Ibid., No. 18.

72 CSA, Vindica, microfilm D-2010, 1622, April, No. 1.

73 CSA, Croatica, box 8, fascicle 19, 1645, 854, 1043.

74 Ibid., microfilm D-1950, 1647, March, No. 1.

75 Ibid., microfilm D-1948, 1640, May, No. 1.

76 Kukuljević Sakcinski, “Borba Hrvatah”, 8; Bauer, *Hrvati*, 43.

77 CSA, Dieta, Protocol 2, 1601- 1635, 220-221.

78 Wilson, *Europe’s Tragedy*, 103.

79 Ballagi, *Wallenstein’s Kroatische*, 20; Wrede, *Geschichte*, 755.-756; Bauer, *Hrvati*, 27.

men in Međimurje, Croatian region which was then part of Zala County in Hungary, while Orehovečki recruited around Zagreb.<sup>80</sup>

Certain provision lists from that period demonstrate the amount of supplies that was issued on a daily basis to Zrinski's and Isolano's troops on the battlefields. For instance, on August 21<sup>st</sup> 1626 in *Gelasberg*, Zrinski's seven companies were provisioned as follows: 700 pieces of bread, 10 barrels of beer, 2 cattle for slaughter, 15 sheep and 25 buckets of oat. The same day six Isolano's companies received 600 pieces of bread, 10 barrels of beer, 2 cattle for slaughter, 12 sheep and 20 buckets of oat. The following day in the town of Janer, Zrinski's men received 770 pieces of bread, 10 barrels of beer, 2 cattle for slaughter, 18 sheep, 50 buckets of oat and 2 barrels of wine. The same day Isolano's men received 660 pieces of bread, 10 barrels of beer, 2 cattle for slaughter, 15 sheep, 50 buckets of oat and 2 barrels of wine.<sup>81</sup> And these troops were just a part of a larger imperial force, whose provision demanded huge amount of supplies.<sup>82</sup>

After the Habsburg-Catholic side successfully intervened against the insurgents in the Kingdom of Bohemia and on German territory, the Protestant side appeared to be defeated. But in 1625 Danish king Christian IV joined the war on the Protestant side. Supported by England and the United Provinces, as well as the Catholic France and joined by the rebelled German rulers, he started the second, so-called Danish Phase of the Thirty Years' War (1625 – 1629). At that time the imperial side found itself under pressure from the Danes and their allies in the Empire, as well as from Gábor Bethlen's new insurrection in Hungary. Since the army of the Catholic League under the command of then quite old Count Tilly was unable to cope with this new threat, the Emperor Ferdinand II engaged the services of Albrecht von Wallenstein (Waldstein), a Bohemian nobleman and a very capable military entrepreneur to raise additional army, which Wallenstein did very skilfully and swiftly. He joined the Catholic army with 50.000 men. Croatian troops under the command of Isolano, Count Juraj Zrinski and Peter Gall were part of Wallenstein's army. On June 27<sup>th</sup> 1625 Wallenstein named Isolano the *Obrist* of 600 Croatian horsemen, and permitted him to recruit several hundred more. By August, Isolano was with 433 horsemen on his way to Eger where he was to join Wallenstein. On November 25<sup>th</sup> Isolano received another order to recruit 1.500 Croatians. Commander of this newly recruited cavalry unit was Peter Gall. It seems that a quite a number of Hungarians were part of these units.<sup>83</sup> It was the first regular Croatian regiment formed during the war.<sup>84</sup>

80 Bauer, *Hrvati*, 49.

81 At-OeStA, KA, FA, AFA, karton 50, 1626 13 2, No. 6 and No. 7.

82 About the general status of Croatian soldiers, their conduct of War and the issues of wages and supply see Weise, "Die kaiserlichen Kroaten", 107–115; Ibid., "Gewaltprofis", 278–291.

83 Bauer, *Hrvati*, 48-49. *Obrist* Peter Gall died from wounds suffered during the Battle of Lutter in August 1626. Wrede, *Geschichte*, 755.

84 Weise, "Die kaiserlichen Kroaten", 112. For the problem of classification of regular and irregular units see the aforementioned article.

Croatian units distinguished themselves at the Battle of Dessau Bridge in April 1626 when Wallenstein’s army defeated the protestant army of Count Ernst von Mansfeld and they also took part in the Battle of Lutter in August 1626 which was again won by the imperial side.<sup>85</sup> In the years up to the Danish capitulation in 1629 Croatian units participated in combats in which the imperial army along with the army of the Catholic League drove out the Danes from Silesia and afterwards captured Mecklenberg, Holstein and Schleswig. Gábor Bethlen, the prince of Transylvania, revolted against the Habsburgs for the last time in 1626; hence the Croatian nobility was again massively engaged on the Hungarian battlefield. Already at the beginning of 1626 ban Juraj Zrinski went to the Hungarian battlefield with 1.000 men. Rattkay writes that ‘... Zrinski accepted the chance with the greatest of yearnings and did not allow himself to be kept by his own estates or the Kingdom, but instead, after assembling the most hand-picked troop of the Illyrian name he rushed to fight battles of the greatest importance, as he was drawn by his fate.’<sup>86</sup> However, Zrinski was also defeated at the Battle of Körmend, where Ivan Malagrudić perished and Gašpar and Žigmund Orehovečki, Juraj Patačić and Stjepan Orgovan were captured. With Zrinski at that time were also Vuk Erdödy, Franjo Orehovečki, Juraj Dovolić, Žigmund Eörsi, Vladislav Mikulić and Ivan Patačić. Franjo Orehovečki commanded 500 and the others 100 soldiers.<sup>87</sup> The inevitable Isolano and his Croatian units also participated in conflicts in Hungary. After this conflict was resolved with the peace treaty signed in Pressburg on December 30<sup>th</sup> 1626, Croatian soldiers continued to fight for the imperial side on the German soil. In December 1627 the imperial army captured Wolffenbüttel, the well-fortified town in Lower Saxony after a dam was built on the Oker River, which made it possible to flood the town and force it to surrender. One engraving also shows *Obrist* Isolano’s Croatian camp.<sup>88</sup>

### Composition of Regiments

As previously emphasised, the total number of Croatian soldiers participating in various phases of the Thirty Years’ War has not yet been precisely determined. Although the recruitment of Croatian soldiers was undoubtedly massive, the number of around 20.000 soldiers from Croatian territories in the imperial army during the 1630s seem rather unrealistic. Such a large estimation is the consequence of including among the ‘Croats’ soldiers of different origins that had a similar appearance – Hungarians, Poles, Cossacks etc., as well as of (massive) recruitment of soldiers of various other

85 For the battle of Dessau Bridge see MLAZ, *Theatrum Europaeum*, vol. I, 1027; Kukuljević Sakcinski, “Borba Hrvatah”, 9; Bauer, *Hrvati*, 47-48, Wrede, *Geschichte*, 754.

86 Rattkay, *Spomen*, 254.

87 Kukuljević Sakcinski, “Borba Hrvatah”, 10.

88 MLAZ, *Theatrum Europaeum*, vol. I, 1110.

descent into Croatian troops. The term ‘Croatian cavalry’ rather quickly became the generic term that referred to light cavalry comprised not only of Croats, but also Germans, Hungarians, Poles, Cossacks etc. Skirmishing, devastations, obstructing the supply lines, gathering informations and going on patrol behind the enemy lines, starting conflicts or their operative termination, those were their primary tasks, which they perfected in the borderlands against the Ottomans. Hence, we can say that methods and principles of border warfare moved with great success from the fringes of then Christian-ruled Europe to its core area.<sup>89</sup> And that is why they were deliberately aimed at, by their opponents. It is very important to emphasize the fact that Swedes excluded the Croatian soldiers from military *Regulament*, even though Swedes were then at the forefront of European military legislation. Nevertheless, Croats were the only group of soldiers to whom, at first, they did not apply *ius in bello* standards, and the only soldiers that for instance were not taken in captivity but were to be immediately executed. Michael Weise gives one vivid example of the consequences of their unenviable position. Namely, on July 18<sup>th</sup> 1632 French dragoons in Swedish service executed in the town of Windsheim all the Croats that they had previously captured.<sup>90</sup> Even though the ruler’s orders were not always followed, and captured Croatian soldiers were sometimes not immediately eliminated, their future was still grim. Such was the case with a group of Croatian soldiers that the Swedes captured after a victory at Zedenik in 1631 – they were sent to work in the copper mines in Sweden which was basically a death sentence.<sup>91</sup> However, their lives were indeed sometimes spared. For instance, after the conquest of Frankfurt an der Oder in April 1631 Swedes captured 300 Croatian soldiers from *Obrist* Peter Losy regiment and decided to spare their lives.<sup>92</sup> By 1640s this hostile Swedish attitude already changed, and Croatian prisoners were regularly exchanged and they were treated more favorably. Nevertheless, the animosity towards the Croats is vividly indicated by the fact that Swedes had special Finnish units whose primary purpose was to combat Croats.<sup>93</sup> The Finnish horsemen from the northern borderlands of Europe, with similar tactics and equipment, were used to hunt down Croatian units, conducting the so called “*Hunt for Croats*” (*Kroatenjagd*).<sup>94</sup>

Still, contemporaries were, at least in principle, aware of the heterogenous composition of Croatian regiments. In the well-known work of Englishman Philip Vincent, *The Lamentations of Germany* (London, 1638) which demonised the Catholic side to

89 For Croatian soldiers see Filip Hren, “Od Siska do Tridesetogodišnjeg rata – “mali rat” u Europi”, in: *Sisačka bitka 1593.-2018.*, ed. Hrvoje Kekez – Stipica Grgić – Valentina Janković, Sisak 2019, 53-73.

90 Weise, “Grausame Opfer?”, 142. Kukuljević had already stated that Swedes were very cruelly towards the Croats - “whom they captured, they immediatly killed, whereas, they spared the lives of the Germans”, Kukuljević Sakcinski, “Borba Hrvatah”, 15.

91 MŁAZ, *Theatrum Europaeum*, vol. 2, Frankfurt am Main, 1679, 349.

92 Weise, “Mobilität”, 86.

93 Weise, “Grausame Opfer?”, 127-128. In this paper Weise examines one rather neglected issue concerning the Croats – their role (also) as the victims int he War.

94 *Ibid.*, 143.



the utmost, among which barbarism and savagery of ‘Croats’ were particularly emphasized, it was stated that a large number of ‘Croats’ were not at all of Croatian descent. Vincent states that ‘one tenth is not from that country (so Croatia), but are a mixture of various foreign nations, without a God, without a religion and they only look human from the outside, even that being rare.’<sup>95</sup> There is one example that shows how diverse those units could have been, and how complex and interesting soldiers’ lives could have become during the dramatic war period. In 1637, regarding some accusation of espionage on the Ottoman border, a certain Johann Georgius Kraw was examined. He was around 20 years old, peasant’s son born in the vicinity of Wismar (Mecklenburg-West Pomerania, on the Baltic sea) familiar with German and Italian language. He and his family were subjects of certain nobleman whose name he apparently did not know. The Thirty Years’ War utterly changed their lives. Namely, Kraw’s parents either fled or were expelled from their house by Croatian soldiers, but he, a boy of merely five, remained in the house. The Croatians soldiers had then taken him along to imperial *Armada*. He was at first assigned with two horses to the baggage, but as some musketeers took the horses, he ended up under *Obrist* Coronini, where he served for two years as a stable boy to a horseman named Heinrich. He then fell in Swedish captivity and served in Swedish ranks for three years. After numerous adventures he ended up in Mantua in Italy where he heard that the count Schwarzenberg (commander of the Slavonian Border) is recruiting soldiers in Graz. He went to Graz but as the horsemen were already gone, he stayed there for two months, until one lieutenant came into “Guldenen Stern” inn and enlisted him. Finally, he was captured by Bánffy’s hayduks in the vicinity of Limbach in Burgenland.<sup>96</sup> This interesting source demonstrates how ethnically heterogeneous Croatian units were, and how diverse soldiers experience during the war could have been. Furthermore, for instance, in 1635 soldiers from Württemberg, Bohemia and Alsace were a part of Croatian regiments.<sup>97</sup>

The lists of exchanged prisoners of war also show how diverse Croatian units have been. For instance, at the beginning of July 1643 certain Philipp Carentzky from the Rajković Regiment, Hannß Schultz and Lorentz Crabath (Croat) from the Mirko Marković Regiment, and Steffan Faldatsch from the Földvary Regiment were exchanged. Some ten days later another prisoners exchange occurred in which Michael Wentzell and Istock Klein from the Mirković Regiment and from Földvary regiment seven soldiers with German names and surnames were exchanged. All nine men were registrated as “Croats”. There are more similar examples, and among those exchanged from the Mirković Regiment there was only one genuine Croat – Mihael Balečić (Michael Balletschitz).<sup>98</sup> Nevertheless, it must be emphasised that in Croatian regiments a core was still made up of soldiers coming from Croatian territories.

95 Phillip Vincent, *The lamentations of Germany*, London 1638, 18.

96 CSA, Croatica, box 7, fascicle 17, 1637, 544-549.

97 Weise, “Gewaltprofis”, 281.

98 At-OeStA, KA, FA, AFA, karton 116, 1643 7 3; 1643 7 12.

The transformation of the term “Croat” from referring to soldiers coming from the Croatian territories to a type of military unit is clearly shown in one list of imperial and Bavarian troops from 1632 where the units were registered according to service branches. The soldiers are listed as horsemen, infantrymen, Croats and dragoons. Every Croatian commander is listed, along with the number of companies he had at his disposal, and it should be particularly noted that ‘Croats’ also encompassed Hungarians and Poles. Among the Croats there was Isolano with 10 companies, Corps with 10 companies, Losy with 10 companies, Przychovsky with 10 companies, Forgach with 8 companies, Revay with 5 companies along with 19 companies of Hungarians and 5 companies of Poles.<sup>99</sup>

### Conflicts, Contracts and Terms of Service in Early 1630s

These types of regiments also participated in the important, so-called First Battle of Breitenfeld on September 17<sup>th</sup> 1631, where the imperial army came into conflict with the joint Swedish-Saxon forces. Even though initially the imperial army successfully attacked the enemy's right, Saxon flank, the experienced and well trained Swedish army managed to fight back and destroy the left flank and afterwards the centre of the imperial army, which turned the tide of the battle to their advantage. On the right imperial flank there were five regiments of Croatian horsemen under the command of *Obrist* Isolano; the latter joined by *Obrists* Zaradetsky and Forgatsch. During the initial success against the Saxon units, Croatian horsemen captured the Saxon camp, forcing the Duke of Saxony to hastily retreat.<sup>100</sup> Here is how the Saxon Musketeer Melchior Fröhner described his experience with Croats in this battle regarding the loss of one war banner: ‘The banner-bearer held his banner in one hand and cried for help a lot. It was impossible to find out if he was shot. The officers asked of them to preserve their posts, yet they themselves ran away. Some Croat got hold of the banner, tore it off and put it around his body.’<sup>101</sup> After the defeat at Breitenfeld the enemy soldiers supposedly sang the following lampoon to Count Tilly: ‘Run, Tilly, run! You lost your Croats. We showed these rascals a thing or two. Run, Tilly, run!’<sup>102</sup> After the battle the Swedish army captured the northern provinces of the Empire and opened the route to march south.<sup>103</sup>

---

99 Ibid., karton 69, 1632 13 ad81. For instance, beginning July 1634 an order was issued to *Obrist* Libinzky, commander of three companies of Poles, to march with his men and some Croats that were stationed together, towards Abensberg where his superiors had to inform him where to join general Isolano's Croatian forces. Ibid., karton 75, 1634 7 31.

100 Kukuljević Sakcinski, “Borba Hrvatah”, 18.

101 Bauer, *Hrvati*, 143, No. XXXIV.

102 Ibid., No. XXXVII.

103 On the battle and participation of Croats, Ibid., 64-72.

On the January 2<sup>nd</sup> 1632 *Obrist* Isolano was named commander of “all Imperial horsemen of the Croatian nation and a light horsemen” with a rank of a general.<sup>104</sup> According to one source, sometime in the beginning of 1632 there were 3.970 Croatian horsemen in imperial ranks. This is probably just a part of Croatian units that were earlier engaged, the ones that remained in service during the winter months when the fighting generally decreased. At that moment, Isolano, general of the Croats and a light cavalry, had 846 men, *Obrist* Forgatsch had 700 men under his command, *Obrist* Corps 720, *Obrist* Przychovsky 395, *Obrist* Revay 275, *Obrist* Lengel 307, *Obrist* Blašković (*Plaßkhouiz*) 124, *Obrist* Batthyány 296, *Obrist* Kuniardo 125 and *Obrist* Arneri 182 men.<sup>105</sup> It seems that in March 1632, when the Catholic armies were supposed to rally in Upper Pfalz, there were two Croatian cavalry companies in imperial ranks and four cavalry companies in Bavarian rank.<sup>106</sup> But that was just a fraction of all Croatian soldiers at that time present in the Catholic armies.

In imperial ranks in 1632 there were altogether 184 companies, around 9.000-10.000 Croatian horsemen, and there was probably a certain number of infantrymen too.<sup>107</sup> It seems that in the beginning of the Thirty Years’ War, Croatian soldiers served primarily as infantrymen, but after the light cavalry proved its value during fights with Bethlen forces in early 1620s, around the year 1623 a change occurred, and from then onwards majority of Croatian soldiers served as horsemen.<sup>108</sup> Still, Matthias Gallas claimed even in mid 1637 that he had in his ranks 900 Croatian horsemen and around 3.000 Croatian infantrymen.<sup>109</sup> Therefore, this question still has to be addressed properly.

Croats were, however, best known as horsemen. For instance, at the end of 1623 some contracts regarding the recruitment of Croatian harquebusiers were arranged. Namely, in October 1623 *Rittmeister* Filip Luković was appointed by Ferdinand II as a *Capitan* of one company i.e. 100 Croatian harquebusiers. He had to levy the men and as soon as possible bring them to the battlefield. He vowed to fulfil his obligation and duties to the best of his possibilities and the way it befits a *Captain*, as well as accept certain procedures regarding the prisoners of war.<sup>110</sup> The same document was issued and the same duties were arranged with *Rittmeister* Georg Farschnig.<sup>111</sup> Five days latter, one such *revers* was signed with Emerich Schkal.<sup>112</sup> And in Vienna on December 14<sup>th</sup> exactly the same *revers* was signed by Ferenc Horuatt (Horvat, *Croat*).<sup>113</sup> Wrede states

104 Weise, “Die kaiserlichen Kroaten”, 113; At-OeStA, KA, FA, AFA, karton 59, 1632 2 130, 5r.

105 Ibid., karton 57, 1631 12 X 178. Blašković was earlier a commander of Wallenstein’s personal guard.

106 At-OeStA, KA, FA, AFA, karton 60, 1632 3 ad27.

107 Kukuljević Sakcinski, “Borba Hrvatah”, 28.

108 Weise, “Mobilität”, 81.

109 Ibid., 92.

110 AT-OeStA, KA, FA, AFA, karton 49, 1623 10 1, 1r-1v.

111 Ibid., 1623 10 2, 1r-1v.

112 Ibid., 1623 10 3, 1r-1v.

113 Ibid., 1623 102 1, 1r-1v.

that these companies were merged on January 30<sup>th</sup> 1624 and put under the command of *Obrist* Nikola Frankopan Tržaćki. He also states that they were disbanded already in June 1624.<sup>114</sup>

On July 22<sup>nd</sup> 1631 a *Convention* was arranged with *Obrist* Luka Hrastovački regarding the recruitment of 600 Croatian horsemen. Emperor Ferdinand II stressed in the document that perilous times demanded recruitment of a number of cavalry and infantry units, so he appointed Hrastovački, an experienced and trusted soldier, as an *Obrist* over 600 Croatian horsemen. The *Convention* precisely specified their duties, obligations and conditions of their service. All men had to be adequately armed and equipped, as befits the Croatian harquebusiers. It was stated that they had to have *gueten seiden Währen vnd Stöchnen*, as well as *ainem Langen Archibusier Rohr, vnd Khurzen Feuer Püxen*. Altogether, six such companies had to be mustered and, besides Hrastovački, another five experienced *Rittmeister* had to be appointed. They were in service for three months after the *Musterung*, and afterwards, as long as they were needed. They all had to respect the hierarchy, from the Emperor and his commanders downwards, they were obliged to follow orders and serve against enemies in fields and in garrisons, depending on the circumstances. Concerning the salary each harquebusier was entitled to 12 reinish gulden.<sup>115</sup> Furthermore, in every company of 100 horsemen they received the following monthly salary extra (*übersold*): Captain 150, Lieutenant 60, Ensign 40, Sergeant (*wachtmaister*) 20, Trumpeteer 12, Quartiermaster sergeant (*furier*) 12 and two Corporals 6 reinish gulden each, in summa 306 reinish gulden. The units had to be mustered once a month, and if the wages were late they were obliged to be patient and conduct themselves as honourable soldiers. They were also obliged to pay for their food and the fodder for their horses when in quarters, and before and after the *Musterung* they most certainly were not allowed to inflict any damage to *Landt, noch die vnderthanen*. The officers and soldiers alike had to be always present and not to venture about without the approval (*licenz*). It was forbidden for them to join “other armies”, and regarding the military rules they were to follow *gewöhnlichen Teutschen Reütter Articulß brieff*.<sup>116</sup>

An identical contract (*Convention*) was arranged on February 12<sup>th</sup> 1632 with general Isolano, but the numbers were different because Isolano was to recruit 2.000 Croatian harquebusiers. As remarked on the first page, this contract served as a model for the contract with *Obrist* Paulo Orossy on March 16<sup>th</sup> 1632 for recruitment of 1.000 Croatian horsemen, as well as for an arrangement signed on January 2<sup>nd</sup> 1635 with *Obrist* Nicolao Mili Dragi for mustering of 1.000 *Croaten*.<sup>117</sup> Also, the same contract was arranged with a number of other commanders of Croatian harquebusiers. First

114 Wrede, *Geschichte*, 753.

115 Besides this amount, the *Obrist* received an amount of 1.200 reinish gulden *für sich, dem Obrist Leutenantie, Wachtmaister, Quartiermaister, Prouiandtmaister, Caplan, Schreiber, Prouosen, vnd desen Leüthen, Trometer Hörpaucher, Koch, wögen die Er zuhalten schluldig sein soll, vnd alle andere des Obristen vorten Monatlichen 600 pfahrt*. AT-OeSta, KA, FA, AFA, karton 55, 1631 7 8 ½, 1r-4r.

116 Ibid.

117 Ibid., karton 59, 1632 2 130, 1r-4v.

on April 12<sup>th</sup> 1632 it was arranged with *Obrist* Peter Losy, *Obrist* Marcus Corps and *Obrist* Ferenc Batthyány for recruitment of 1.000 Croatian harquebusier each, as well as with *Obrist* Lovro Blašković (*Laurentio Blaskowitz*) for recruitment of 500 Croatian harquebusiers. Then on May 1<sup>th</sup> 1632 a same contract was arranged with *Obrist* Luka Hrastovački, *Obrist* Veit Dornberg, *Obrist* Petar Keglević and *Obrist* Daniel Beygott for recruitment of 1.000 horsemen. On April 5<sup>th</sup> 1632 arrangement was signed with *Obrist* Peter Forgach for recruitment of 1.000 Croatian horsemen, on April 15<sup>th</sup> 1634 with Ludwig von Perewost for 1.000 Croatian horsemen and on January 1<sup>th</sup> with *Obrist* Nicola Földvary for recruitment of six companies of Croatian horsemen.<sup>118</sup>

### The Great Recruitment of 1632 to mid 1630s and the Battles Fought

Even though the soldiers in these regiments were not exclusively from Croatia, in 1632 Croatian-Slavonian Diet protested against recruitment done by *Obrist* Luka Hrastovački, because, as said, thousand were already fighting outside the country which was ravished by last-years hunger and endangered by the Ottomans and the Hungarians.<sup>119</sup> The ruler ordered that the conscription nevertheless must continue, but he did promise to send a “special envoy” to Istanbul with task of securing “absolute peace” between “the Croats and the Turks”. Ferdinand II also requested that a list of all “unjust incursions and enslavement of Ottoman subjects” done by the soldiers from the Habsburg side be sent to him.<sup>120</sup> General Isolano very swiftly recruited additional 6.000 men and in May that same year *Obrist* Daniel Beygott along with border officer Gašpar Starešinić, assembled another company on Croatian borderlands.<sup>121</sup> In August that year, *Obrist* Hrastovački amassed a force of 3.000 men on the Slavonian territory.<sup>122</sup> He recruited common *Grenzer*, but also their judges and voivodes. Local commanders feared that the entire border would be emptied because *Grenzer* joined *en masse*, even though paid soldiers who venture to war, were to lose their positions.<sup>123</sup> The fact that Hrastovački recruited not only Vlachs is visible from the Slavonian border commander Schwarzenberg’s statement that Hrastovački “*vndergebne Gränizer sonderlich Wallachen hauffenweiss an sich ziehet*”.<sup>124</sup> For instance, Ivan Juraj Smoilović recruited 21 unpaid Vlachs in Captaincy of Križ and was titled as *Rittmeister*. Interesting aspect of this recruitment is the fact that an order

118 Ibid., karton 61, 1632 4 215, 1r-5r.

119 CSA, Dieta, Protocol 2, 295-297; Josip Buturac – Mirko Stanislavljević – Ranko Sučić – Vesna Šojat – Bartol Zmajić (ed.), *Zaključci brvatskog Sabora*, vol. I, 1631 – 1693, (further ZHS), Zagreb 1958, 17. Bauer claims that during the War, Hrastovački was stripped of his *Obrist* rank because of looting that his men performed. Bauer, *Hrvati*, 28.

120 Tadija Smičiklas, *Povijest brvatska*, Zagreb 1879, 141.

121 Kukuljević Sakcinski, “*Borba Hrvatah*”, 20.

122 CSA, Vindica, microfilm D-2013, 1632, August, No. 17.

123 Ivić, “*Migracije*”, 57-58. CSA, Vindica, microfilm D-2013, 1632, August, No. 12.

124 Ivić, “*Migracije*”, 59.

was issued to Schwarzenberg not to disturb *Smoilovich's* recruitment.<sup>125</sup> Smoilović was a *Rittmeister* in Dornbergs regiment and had problems with deserters in his ranks.<sup>126</sup> Commander of the Slavonian border objected extensive recruitment, complaining that the Border is in great peril because only weak garrisons in the forts remained in service. He even asked for a permit to make a couple of raids into the Ottoman territory to bring more Vlachs into the Slavonian border and to replace those who departed to war.<sup>127</sup> Hrastovački had, according to Schwarzenberg, patent for recruitment of 300 horsemen, but he recruited all types of *Grenzer*, especially Vlachs.<sup>128</sup>

As Schwarzenberg feared, when the Ottomans realized that the *Grenzer* were recruited *en masse*, they began raiding the Border in such a manner that the representatives of Vlachs living between rivers Sava and Drava pleaded in October 1632 to the Aulic War Council in Graz to put an end to recruitment and departure of men.<sup>129</sup> We can also conclude that this recruitment was not limited to Slavonian border, because Croatian count Petar Keglević also served, and his *Obrist Leutnant* was Gašpar Frankopan Tržaćki, son of Vuk Frankopan Tržaćki who was a long term commander of the Croatian border (1626-1652).<sup>130</sup> So, recruitment occurred on Croatian “civil” as well as border areas.

Croatian-Slavonian estates were also worried about this massive departure of soldiers. So, Croatian-Slavonian Diet decided in October 1632 to send special envoy, Gabriel Crnkovečki to the Emperor with a task to convince the ruler to put an end to recruitment on Croatian-Slavonian soil.<sup>131</sup> The Bishop of Zagreb also intervened, and even the palatine of Hungary Nicolas Esterházy tried to dissuade the Emperor, but in vain.<sup>132</sup>

There are some interesting sources that indicate that among Croatian soldiers under Isolano's command in 1632 there were also the soldiers commanded by Veit Dornberg who were in September that year stationed or even recruited in the *Tullmeinnerischen* jurisdiction i.e. the area of Tolmin in Görz/Gorička, present-day Slovenia. The Carinthian Estates complained that they were causing problems which threatened to interrupt trading activities. Carinthians appealed to the Emperor to dislocate Dornberg's men to imperial camp(s) before the vintage starts.<sup>133</sup> Emperor indeed ordered them to march towards imperial camp(s) via Hungary, and although Dornberg intended to follow command, as the march route was not specified he asked for more detailed itinerary. We can certainly conclude that Dornberg's men were part of recruited Croatian troops because general Isolano had sent him a letter ordering him to hurry without hesitation to “*kay*.”

125 CSA, Vindica, microfilm D-2013, 1632, October, No. 1; Ibid. December, No. 5.

126 Ibid., November, No. 3; Ibid., December, No. 1.

127 Ivić, “*Migracije*”, 58.

128 Ibid., 59.

129 CSA, Vindica, microfilm D-2013, 1632, October, No. 10.

130 Damir Stanić, *Who were those “Terrible Croats”*, Exhibition Catalogue, Štrigova 2018, 56-57; CSA, Vindica, D-2013, 1632, December, No. 15.

131 Bauer, *Hrvati*, 83.

132 ZHS, 18.-20; Hren, *Hrvatski staleži*, 36.

133 CSA, Croatia, microfilm D-1946, 1632, September, No. 1.

*Veldtleger*”.<sup>134</sup> Dornberg replied that he will hurry with his cavalry, but he also requested that the Emperor issue an order to the authorities of Carniola, Styria and Carinthia to organize quarters for them. Indeed, the Estates of Carniola appointed “*Conuoi Commisarien*” for that task.<sup>135</sup> It seems that Dornberg intended to go through Styria but Aulic War Council in Graz ordered him to pass through Slavonian and Hungarian territories, and to bypass Styria. Yet, he did venture through Styria because in October 1632 he was with his four cavalry companies in Ptuj.<sup>136</sup> Nevertheless, by August 1633, Emperor ordered that all men recruited in Croatia, Slavonia and Hungary must pass through Hungary onwards and not through Inner Austrian lands. The Styrians thanked the ruler for this resolution.<sup>137</sup> Still, the passage of recruited soldiers via Inner Austria continued, as was the case with Isolano’s and Beygott’s horsemen in September 1633.<sup>138</sup>

These troops most likely participated in the famous battle of Lützen which took place in November 1632. In one of the most well-known battles of the Thirty Years’ War, the clash of enemy armies under command of the Swedish King Gustav II Adolph and an imperial commander Albrecht von Wallenstein occurred. The decisive conflict took place on November 16<sup>th</sup> in the vicinity of the city of Leipzig, in very harsh conditions, under the thick autumn fog.<sup>139</sup> In Austrian State Archives in Vienna there is a list of imperial troops which contains a list of 20 Croatian companies that participated in the battle. The source includes the names of commanders as well as the names of places where they were stationed prior to the battle. So, we know that general Isolano’s troops were at the rear-guard and that four companies under count Petar Keglević were stationed in Meissen, three companies under Šafarić were stationed in Freyberg, and further two in Nossen. *Obrists* Daniel Beygott and Marcus Corps were stationed in Leipzig i.e. Eilenburg.<sup>140</sup>

---

134 Ibid.

135 Ibid.

136 CSA, Vindica, microfilm D-2013, 1632, October, No. 7. Some Dornberg’s horsemen were still/again in Tolmin in March 1633 and locals complained against *Muettwillige Reütterey*. Dornberg was instructed to refrain from all activities and when the *Werbungs Termin* passes immediately march to his assigned *musterplaz*. Ibid., 1633, March, No. 4. So, it was probably one of Dornbergs recruitment areas.

137 CSA, Vindica, D-2013, 1633, August, No. 14.

138 Ibid., September, No. 4.

139 On the battle see Kukuljević Sakcinski, “Borba Hrvatah”, 22-24; Bauer, *Hrvati*, 84-96. Brnardić, *Imperial Armies*, 42-43.

140 AT-OeSta, KA, FA, AFA, karton 66, 1632-11-ad 94, fol 4-5. Croatian soldiers were also singled out as main protagonists of the destruction and massacre of population in the prosperous Saxon city of Magdeburg in May 1631. In this monstrous act, which took the lives of as many as 20.000 people, the Croatian troops were just a part of the cca 20.000 soldiers on the Catholic side. In a contemporary report regarding the attack on Magdeburg which count Pappenheim sent to the Emperor, it is stated that after a two hour long battle the fortification were breached and his cavalry entered the city, first, *Rittmeister* Šafarić with one company of Croats, then *Obrist* Coronini and Don Balthasara with his men as well as von Bongartes regiment of cuirassiers. We still do not have any biographical information on Šafarić, except that he participated in the battle of Lützen the following year. Ibid., karton 55, 1631 8 15. Also, Kukuljević Sakcinski, “Borba Hrvatah”, 16.

As Wallenstein did not expect Gustav II Adolph to attack in such unfavourable weather conditions, he sent a part of his forces under the command of count Pappenheim towards Halle, himself intending to withdraw towards Leipzig. But the Swedish king decided to surprise the imperial army – however, the element of the complete surprise failed, because on November 15<sup>th</sup> Swedish army ran into the imperial/Croatian rearguard on the Rippach River and lost its element of surprise, as well as precious time. Namely, several Croatian companies under the command of Rudolf Colloredo were supposed to accompany one imperial unit from their position when suddenly they noticed Swedish troops. When the Swedish advance party attacked Croatian soldiers, they decided to fight, thus enabling Colloredo to withdraw towards the main body of the army. Thirty Croatian companies under the command of Isolano participated in these conflicts and, in the end, they were pushed back from their positions outnumbered by the Swedish army. The Croats lost several tenths of men and one flag.<sup>141</sup> On the eve of battle Croatian troops on the battlefield were under the command of Wallenstein, as well as part of count Pappenheim's army that rushed from Halle back to Lützen. Under the direct Wallenstein command were general Isolano with 250 horsemen, *Obrist* Daniel Beygott with 100 horsemen, *Obrist* Marcus Corps with 200 horsemen and *Obrist* Paul Révay with 250 horsemen. Under Pappenheim's command were Croatian troops of *Obrist* count Franz Batthyány with 200 horsemen, *Obrist* Paul Orossy with 450 horsemen and *Obrist* Nicolas Forgach with 100 horsemen.<sup>142</sup> The sources indicate that count and *Obrist* Petar Keglević also took part in the battle with four Croatian companies.<sup>143</sup> In the hand-written sketch of the *Ordre de bataille* we can see that the Croatian horsemen were positioned on both wings of the imperial army, on the left and the right flank.<sup>144</sup> The attack by Swedish army made the right imperial flank to withdraw, whereas the left imperial flank with the Croatian troops under Isolano successfully resisted the attacks of Bernard, the Duke of Weimar. At one point two larger Croatian detachments from the right wing broke through the enemy's right flank to Swedish baggage and ammunition cart, even dispersing some cavalry units before they were pushed back by Swedish reinforcements. In the heat of the battle king Gustav II Adolph himself perished, and when the battle entered its critical phase for the imperial side, Pappenheim arriving from Halle appeared on the battlefield. His force instantly attacked the Swedish army, but he himself was mortally wounded during the charge. The intense battle continued until the evening and during the night Wallenstein withdrew from the battlefield. Still, even though the imperial army withdrew, Wallenstein, himself also wounded, left on the battlefield part of Croatian troops under general Isolano in order to save cannons and luggage.<sup>145</sup>

141 For instance, Richard Brzezinski, *Lützen 1632. Climax of the Thirty Years War*, Oxford 2001, 34-38.; Lars Ericson Wolke, *Gustavus Adolphus, Sweden and the Thirty Years War*, Yorkshire – Philadelphia 2022, 139.

142 Brzezinski, *Lutzen*, 25-26.

143 AT-OeStA, KA, FA, AFA, karton 66, 1632 11 ad No. 94, 1r-2r.

144 *Ibid.*, karton 67, 1632-11- ad129 b.

145 For the line-up of the armies of the belligerent sides at the battle of Lützen see CSA, Engraving Collection, reference number 81; Stanić, *Who were*, 30.



While the battles raged in the Empire, another round of massive recruitment occurred in the Croatian territory. As the recruitment did not stop, the Croatian-Slavonian Diet again protested against such practice in 1633, 1634 and 1636.<sup>146</sup> In the imperial ranks after the assassination of Wallenstein in 1634, among 60.000 men there were 184 Croatian cavalry units under the command of general Isolano. Although new troops under the command of count Andrija Palffy soon arrived from Croatia, it appears that the numbers settled, at least regarding horsemen. In the beginning of May 1634 among 18.000 imperial horsemen there were again 184 Croatian cavalry units that were moving towards Upper Palatinate.<sup>147</sup> It seems that numbers remained similar until the end of the war. Infantry units also participated, although at the current state of research we can only provide incomplete and very scarce information. For instance, *Theatrum Europaeum* states that at the beginning of May 1634 there were ‘great many Croats’ among 28.000 imperial infantry.<sup>148</sup>

Furthermore, sources show that there were still issues with recruitment, because soldiers, even the distinguished ones, sometimes deserted or at least neglected their duties. For instance, in April 1633 an order was to be issued for the arrest and punishment of lieutenant Martin Mogorić and runaway horsemen, *welche sich vnnnder Rudolphen Paradeyser vnd den von Purkhstall befunden*.<sup>149</sup> They were a part of Beygott’s regiment. It looks like the action against Mogorić and others was not effective because still in November 1633 there was an appeal for arrest of all the runaway horsemen, especially Martin Mogorić and *others*.<sup>150</sup> We do not know what followed or if they were punished, but in 1642 Martin Mogorić was a lieutenant in Ogulin.<sup>151</sup> Beygott’s regiment was not the only regiment that had a problem with the *aussgerissnen soldaten*, but the Rajković’s regiment as well. So, an order was issued for comprehension of certain departed soldiers, which are referred to as *Raykowizischen außgerisßnen Reütter vnnd Soldaten*.<sup>152</sup>

Croatian troops also participated in another famous conflict of the War – the Battle of Nördlingen between the imperial-Spanish and protestant army comprised of Swedish and troops of their German protestant allies, which took place on September 6<sup>th</sup> 1634 in Bavaria.<sup>153</sup> The battle, which basically came down to repeated attempts of the Swedish army and their allies to capture the hill above the town where the imperial army was stationed, ended with a heavy defeat for the protestant side. Before the battle one part of Croatian troops under the command of inevitable Isolano was ordered to slow down the Swedish army at a nearby pass. Still, since the Swedish army feigned the withdrawal manoeuvre and then suddenly appeared at an unexpected place,

146 ZHS, 21-22, 42, 66-67; Kukuljević Sakcinski, “Borba Hrvatah”, 35.

147 Stanić, *Who were*, 37.

148 Ibid.

149 CSA, Croatica, microfilm D-1946, 1633, April, No. 4.

150 Ibid., November, No. 1.

151 Ibid., box 8, fascicle 18, July 8<sup>th</sup> 1642, 708.

152 Ibid., microfilm D-1946, 1633, November, No. 1, 2.

153 On the battle see Bauer, *Hrvati*, 106-107.

Croats were blamed for not providing accurate information on their movements. Croatian troops under the command of Johann von Werth and general Isolano still manage to distinguish themselves during the battle. As the Swedes did not succeed in driving the imperial infantry from their positions, mostly due to the decisiveness of Spanish troops, they endeavoured to send several strong detachments from the right flank towards the town itself. This Swedish manoeuvre, however, was prevented by Croatian detachments under the command of Johann von Werth, managing to drive them back after the second conflict. When the Swedish right flank finally yielded, the imperial cavalry started their pursuit and soon entire Swedish battle formation started to fall apart. The mobile and swift Croatian cavalry detachments mercilessly pursued the dispelled enemy, inflicting great losses in men and equipment. Croatian units under the command of general Isolano and *Obrist* Forgach captured numerous carts, around 300 banners and 1.200 horses. After the battle general Isolano was elevated to the title of count.<sup>154</sup> In one unsigned copy of detailed report on the battle of Nördlingen sent to the Emperor himself, the author stated that the enemy suffered a heavy defeat and lost around 300 banners and the majority of luggage. It also stated that during the pursuit the enemy horsemen fell from the horses in large numbers, even pleading for mercy at their knees with their hands high up to young Croatian recruits.<sup>155</sup>

After heavy defeat at Nördlingen the German Protestant rulers signed in 1635 a peace treaty with the Emperor, which put the Swedish army in a very difficult position. Just when it seemed that the Catholics would prevail, the old Habsburg foe, the Kingdom of France, joined the war on the protestant side. In May 1635 they declared war on Kingdom of Spain and in August 1636 to the Holy Roman Empire of German Nation as well. The Croatian units once again served under various commanders – the imperial army leaders Johann von Werth and Ottavio Piccolomini, as well as in the Spanish army under the command of Cardinal Infanto Ferdinand. They waged war in the north-east France, where in 1636 the joint imperial-Spanish army reached Paris, only to be driven back after heavy fighting that same year. This is how French soldier Henri de Campion described one conflict with the Croats: ‘During the day each side withdraws its army, and since our trenches were then in quite a good shape to be able to stop the enemy cavalry, our army, convinced it will be able to withdraw, was no longer afraid to be compromised and hence went out for a conflict, which our enemies did not refuse, particularly Croats, who very much enjoyed this exercise. Our people had also grown to like it and I think that flintlocks broke their silence at least twenty thousand times and that barely thirty men were killed, if that.’<sup>156</sup>

Count Isolano waged successful war in Picardy and Champagne, gaining victories over French general Montbason and Monstervine. Besides Isolano, the Croatian

---

154 *Ibid.*, 32.

155 For battle see, AT-OeStA, KA, FA, AFA, karton 76, 1634 9 17II.

156 Vladimir Brnardić, *Military History*, 76, 2017, 13.

troops were commanded by count Ferenc Batthyány, Nicolas Forgach, Marcus Corps and Menhard. The regiments commanded by Obrist's Forgach, Corps and Menhard distinguished themselves during the seizure of a small town of Héricourt near Montbeliard/Mömpelgard at present-day French-Swiss border. Also, circa 1.500 Croats and Hungarians were a part of general Gallas' imperial army that invaded Burgundy from the Rhine. When the imperial-Spanish units were forced to retreat from the French territory, Croatian troops were again at the rear, assigned to stop French attacks. In this phase of the War, among the Croatian troops were large numbers of Polish units whose line of activities was similar. These horsemen from the borders with the Ottoman Empire had a task to ravage French areas, and as one source states, that if one wants to ravage far and wide across France and cause fear, one should engage 6.000 Poles and at least 3.000 Croats.<sup>157</sup>

From this period of War, namely from 1635, there are two partial lists of Croatian soldiers, which offer a rare opportunity to find names and surnames of soldiers of Croatian origins in the War. First list is of one unnamed regiment in which certain Croats are mentioned. Some of them are listed by first names only: Luka, Božo, Martin, Januš, Jure, Ivan, Vinko, Donat, Jurica, Janko, Gašpar while others only by surnames – Belošić (*Welloschitz*), Miletić (*Milleditz*), Kordinić (*Cordinitz*), Benković (*Bencowitz*), Bošnjak (*Vofsnackh*) i Jurić (*Juritz*). Two soldiers are written down with their full names – Ivan Budsić (*Iban Budzitsch*) and Andrija Vlah (*Andreas Vollackh*).<sup>158</sup> Unfortunately, we do not know which regiment was in question and where did they operate, but there is no doubt that they were of Croatian descent. The other list is a registry of men serving in the company under the command of *Obrist* Hieronymus Arneri, written down in Italian. There are around 60 men inscribed, but we can presume that the general number was much higher. In the registry we find Lovro Marković, Pave Golubić, Adam Popović, Petar and Andrija Poznanović, several men with the surname Capeleto and

<sup>157</sup> See Bauer, *Hrvati*, 112-117. By the 1630s Croatian units had such reputation that the enemy armies also started to engage them. They are mentioned in the French service as early as 1632 and in the summer of 1635 three Croatian regiments were formed - D'Espanan, de Sirot and La Meilleraye, and then two more – the regiment Raab and the regiment Wumberg. The first cavalry regiment with the 'royal' title (Royal-Cravattes) was assembled in 1643 under the command of Obrist Johann Balthazar. At the Battle of Rocroi in 1643 Croatian detachments were part of both belligerent armies! The Croatian regiments Raab and Shack fought on the French side, whereas on the Spanish side there was the Croatian Regiment Nagy Istvan. Vladimir Brnardić – Monika Bračička Šajatović – Filip Hren – Tanja Kocković-Zaborski – Ana Kolonić – Hans-Jügen Schröter – Damir Stanić, *Hrvati - ljudi iza mita. Janko Šajatović Krabat i hrvatske garde u Europi*, Exhibition Catalogue, Zagreb 2020, 88; 93. A small detachment of the Croatian cavalry participated in the surprise attack of the imperial-Bavarian army on the French-Weimar winter camp at Tuttlingen on November 24<sup>th</sup> 1643. The imperial advance party contingent, in which there was also one detachment of Croats under the command of *Obrist* Georg von Truckmüller, used snow for a silent attack, took the enemy by surprise and completely defeated him. One Croatian *Rittmeister* with 130 horsemen captured over 800 horses and about the same number of men during the pursuit for the captured enemy. MLAZ, *Theatrum Europaeum*, vol. IV, Frankfurt am Main, 1644, 191.

<sup>158</sup> AT-OeStA, KA, FA, AFA, karton 2514, 1635 Nachtrag 1.

some with the surname Croat.<sup>159</sup> On both documents there is a remark that the lists were a part of Piccolomini's *Acten*, so it seems that these men were under the supreme command of Octavio Piccolomini.<sup>160</sup>

In late 1636 and beginning of 1637 count Schwarzenberg conducted another massive recruitment in Croatian territories. He asked the Aulic War Council in Graz to give permission to Gašpar Frankopan Tržački to go to War as his *Obrist Leütenant*.<sup>161</sup> By May, Schwarzenberg and *Obrist* Gäller were getting ready to depart with their conscripted men.<sup>162</sup> The third regiment was that of count Petar Keglević. Around 3.000 Croats (*Crabattischen Pferdt*) were mustered and once again it was emphasized that the border officers, who albeit with permission, join Schwarzenberg would lose their positions and salaries.<sup>163</sup> From these soldiers three regiments were formed, Red, Blue and Green.<sup>164</sup> In one contemporary publication from 1637, which describes the retreat of the Swedish commander Johan Banér from Torgau, it is stated that in pursuit of the Swedish army participated *general-leutnant* Count Gallas with 3.000 Croats, Saxon commander Taube with four cavalry regiments and *Obrist* Daniel Beygott with his Croats. The imperial army attacked the Swedish rearguard during which 1.000 horses perished and/or were captured.<sup>165</sup> Kukuljević states that in 1638 *Grenzer* from Senior captaincy of Žumberak and Slunj received order to enlist from every house one horseman or infantryman on their own expense.<sup>166</sup> There is a list of troops made in Prag on December 30<sup>th</sup> 1639 that shows the state of infantry and cavalry in that moment. Among the *Cavallerie* there are also Croatian regiments i.e. regiments of *Obrist* Losy, *Obrist* Földvary and *Obrist* Rajković (*Rekowitz*). At that point in time Losy had 350 men with good horses (*Wohlberittene*), 280 men with not so good horses (*übelberittene*) and 60 men outside the ranks (*außencommandierte*). Földvary had 400 men with good horses (*Wohlberittene*), 250 men with not so good horses (*übelberittene*), while Rajković had 260 men with good horses (*Wohlberittene*), 42 men with not so good horses (*übelberittene*), 140 infantry! (*zu Fuß*), 40 men in captivity and 60 men out of ranks (*außencommandierte*).<sup>167</sup> One should once again emphasize that Rajković had infantrymen in his regiment!

159 Ibid., 1635 Nachtrag 2.

160 About Arneri's regiment see: Wrede, *Geschichte*, 770.

161 CSA, Croatica, microfilm D-1947, 1937, February, No. 2.

162 Ibid., May, 1637, No. 4.

163 Ibid., March, No. 4. Also, CSA, Vindica, D-2014, 1936, September, No. 1.

164 For Croatian regiments see: Wrede, *Geschichte*, 773.

165 AT-OeStA, KA, FA, AFA, karton 99, 1637 13 4.

166 Kukuljević Sakcinski, "Borba Hrvatah", 40.

167 AT-OeStA, KA, FA, AFA, karton 104, 1639 12 16, 2r. *Obrist* Rajković died in confrontation at Zeitz in 1644.

### Service in the 1640s

Croatian regiments continued to operate on European theatre of war, so they also participated in the heavy defeat of the imperial army in the so-called Second Battle of Breitenfeld in 1642. Around 14 Croatian ‘squadrons’ were stationed on the right and left flank under the command of generals Gonzaga, Bruay and Soje.<sup>168</sup> In the years that followed, extensive recruitment was done on the Slavonian and Croatian border as well. Count Schwarzenberg recruited another 1.000 *Grenzer* on the Slavonian border in September 1643.<sup>169</sup>

The situation was additionally complicated in 1644 when György I. Rakoczy, prince of Transylvania, rebelled against the Emperor, soon capturing the whole of Upper Hungary. Even though the Croatian-Slavonian Diet declared in August 1644 that in case of an attack from Transylvanians an insurrection had to be proclaimed, the Estates also cautiously rejected the rulers request to levy 1.000 horsemen.<sup>170</sup> Hans Albrecht Herberstein, the Senior captain (*Oberhauptman*) of Senj was ordered in March 1644 to prepare half of his men in case their services will be needed against Rakoczy’s men in Hungary. Herberstein however did not consider this action prudent because, as he argued, it would leave the Border emptied in a situation when ground and naval Ottoman attack was expected. The Aulic War Council in Graz instructed Vuk Frankopan Tržački, the commander of the Croatian border, to carefully monitor the situation, but not to give the Ottomans any excuse for hostility.<sup>171</sup>

Croatian troops did participate in these conflicts and in 1646 a large military force under ban Ivan Drašković waged war in Hungary. Count Nikola Zrinski participated with 300 soldiers and he was named ‘the general of all Croats’.<sup>172</sup> Count Peter Zrinski, Senior Captain of Žumberak and Slunj joined the imperial army in Bohemia the following year with six companies. Emperor’s patent allowed count Petar Zrinski to assemble 1.200 Croatian horsemen and ordered secular and church authorities and military commanders to be at his disposal for this urgent recruitment. Zrinski was also permitted to recruit soldiers anywhere “on land or water”, that is over the entire Croatian and most certainly adjacent border area.<sup>173</sup> Zrinski assembled 1.000 Croatian horsemen, whereas the rest of the soldiers were prior in the companies of his brother Nikola. According to Ferenc Véggh, Zrinski recruited 600 horsemen at his own expense while the other four companies within his regiment were financed by the King/Emperor. Two companies of his brother Nikola were also added to his command so the number had risen to 1.200 horsemen. Véggh also states that Peter Zrinski actu-

168 Bauer, *Hrvati*, 118-127.

169 Ivić, “*Migracije*”, 73.

170 ZHS, 123-124.

171 CSA, Croatia, microfilm D-1949, 1644, March, No. 3, 4.

172 MLAZ, *Theatrum Europaeum*, vol. 5, Frankfurt am Main, 1649, 158.

173 AT-OeStA, KA, FA, AFA, karton 125, 1647 13 ad2 C.

ally received the title of the Senior captain (*Oberhauptman*) of Žumberak and Slunj on condition that he himself participate in the War as a commander of light cavalry regiment that he would raise himself. Vegh also states that Peter offered to participate in the conflict in 1644 but his offer was then declined.<sup>174</sup>

Peter's units became particularly distinguished at Česke Budějovice in 1647, when a small Swedish detachment nearly captured Emperor Ferdinand III while he was sleeping. In the words of Juraj Rattkay they would have done exactly that if: '... some Croatian veterans did not come rushing, placed nearby on guard duty, because they were disturbed by the resulting commotion. And with their native bravery and daring they quickly perplexed and suppressed the enemy who was already preparing his triumph over the Emperor. While they were holding back the enemy, the latter filled with unspeakable fear; Lebenstein came rushing with another detachment of imperial corps predestined for defence. Joining forces with Croats, he completely defeated Wrangler and his comrades, while only few managed to escape...'<sup>175</sup>

In April 1647 Emperor's permission was issued to Croatian *Obrist* Marko Lubetić Capilet to strengthen his life guards unit to 100 horsemen and to recruit additional 400 horsemen. It is interesting that he was given permission to choose a place somewhere on the territory of Carniola and/or towards Maritime Border (a part of Croatian Border or basically a territory of the *Oberhauptmannschaft* of Senj) to assemble recruited soldiers. This example also shows that the recruitment in the Croatian territories was complex, recurrent and widespread. The soldiers, despite their ethnoconfessional and geographical differences and their personal identities were always regarded as "Croatian soldiers" – soldiers coming from Croatian territories and/or waging war in Croatian manner.<sup>176</sup>

\*\*\*

I will conclude with some newly found information on the career of distinguished border commander Gašpar Starešinić, who not only recruited soldiers on Croatian territories in 1630's but personally participated in the Thirty Years' War. In summer of 1632 Starešinić, who had a long history in the service on the Croatian Border (Slunj, Brinje, Otočac, Karlovac), was transferred to the renowned Karlovac harquebusier unit where he was named lieutenant with four horses under his command.<sup>177</sup> Even though in the protocols it is recorded that he was a part of the Karlovac harquebusier unit when he started recruiting for Beygott's regiment, he himself in one of his appeals claimed that he began recruiting after leaving his post as captain of Otočac.<sup>178</sup> Whether

174 Ferenc Vég, "A Hungarian-Croatian Aristocrat from a new Perspective: Military Career of Péter Zrinyi/Petar Zrinski", in: *Specimina Nova Pars Prima. Sectio Mediaevalis X. Dissertationes historiae collectae per Cathedrum Historiae Medii Aevi Modernorumque Temporum Universitatis Quinqueecclesiensis* ed. Gergely Kiss – Gábor Barabás, Pécs 2019, 145-146.

175 Rattkay, *Spomen*, 283.

176 AT-OeStA, KA, FA, AFA, karton 125, 1647 13 3.

177 CSA, Croatica, microfilm D-1946, 1632, August, No. 10.

178 ARS, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, karton 244, fascicle 143, November 23<sup>rd</sup> 1635, 1r, 215.

he joined Beygott’s regiment from the position of captain in Otočac or from the post of lieutenant in Karlovac harquebusier unit, needs to be further researched. As he began recruiting men for Beygott’s regiment, he became *obristen wachmeister vber ein Regiment zu pfardt vnder dem herrn Obristen Paygott*, and served in “Foreign War” (*in draussigen Kbrrieg*). He was under Beygot’s command until 1635, when he asked for another position in the Karlovac harquebusier unit.<sup>179</sup> The interesting fact is that in 1632 he already served for 30 years, almost an entire lifespan by the standards of early modern Europe. However, it was not uncommon to find mature men in the Croatian and Hungarian military service, as the soldiers from this area served up until old age. One source even tells us how Swedish soldiers during the Thirty Years’ War observed how many older men served in Hungarian ranks, mocking them by saying “if they were heroes, they would not live so long”.<sup>180</sup> The same was present in the Croatian territories. We can only presume that Starešinić was a part of Beygott’s 100 men at the battle of Lützen, as sources clearly show that in August 1632 he was indeed marching through Inner Austrian Lands towards German territories.<sup>181</sup> The recruitment for Beygott’s regiment continued, and in January 1633 Beygott informed “*den Herrn Präsidenten*” that he intends to issue *Werbungs Patenten* to his subordinate officers and order the commander of Senior captaincy of Žumberak and Slunj to put his men under his command.<sup>182</sup> The recruitment continued at least until March.<sup>183</sup> It seems that later recruitment was conducted by the likes of Gabriel Šafšić (*Gabriell Schaffschitsch*) *Rittmeister* in Beygott’s regiment who complained to the Emperor about certain distinguished Croatian *Grenzer* who departed from the regiment, as well as some other problems with recruiting. After that an order was released not to obstruct Šafšić’s recruitment.<sup>184</sup> He is mentioned, regarding some disobedient soldiers, as *Obristwachtmaister* in Beygotts regiment also in January 1634.<sup>185</sup>

By September 1635 Starešinić was already at home and when *fendrich* in German unit in Karlovac Adam Gall planned to resign his position, on November 23<sup>th</sup> 1635 Starešinić addressed his hand-written supplication to representatives of the Carniolan estates for this post in Karlovac. In his appeal Starešnić emphasized that he “served on the Croatian and Maritime Border since his youth”. He pleaded on the basis on his long service and merits that he be taken into consideration.<sup>186</sup> His request was answered positively so he was a member of harquebusier unit in Karlovac until his death, which occurred by March 1639. His last harquebusier position in Karlovac, with a pay of 12

179 *Obrist* Daniel Beygott fell captive to the Saxons in May 1634 after the battle of Liegnitz. Croatian officer Stjepan Petrović was killed during the flight. Weise, “Mobilität”, 89.

180 Ballagi, *Wallenstein’s Kroatische*, 26-27.

181 CSA, Vindica, microfilm D-2013, 1632, August, No. 6.

182 CSA, Croatica, microfilm D-1946, 1633, January, No. 2.

183 CSA, Vindica, microfilm D-2013, 1633, March, No. 4.

184 CSA, Croatica, microfilm D-1946, 1933, April, No. 4.

185 CSA, Vindica, microfilm D-2014, 1634, Januar, No 5.

186 ARS, Deželni stanovi za Kranjsko, box 244, fascicle 143, November 23<sup>rd</sup> 1635, 1r, 215.

reinisch gulden a month, was then given to another seasoned *obristwachtmeister* Ivan Jakov Muretić.<sup>187</sup> Available sources do not bring information on Starešinić's activities in the Thirty Years' War and he himself mentioned his service in only one petition, albeit very briefly – *served in the Foreign War*. The phrase is indicative – the Foreign War. Was it for local population anything more than the foreign War? It remains to be investigated.

### Conclusion

Recruiting of Croatian soldiers for the Thirty Years' War was massive and recurring. Croatian units participated in the War from the beginning to the end of the conflict, and they came from entire Croatian and Slavonian territory, including the Croatian and Slavonian border. Even though we still can not precisely conclude how many soldiers from aforementioned areas served on European battlefields, sources show that it was in their thousands. The number of Croatian regiments was also high because many soldiers of different origins were included in their ranks. With time, the term "Croat" altered in meaning and referred primarily to units that waged war in a certain manner, and not so much to people coming from certain territory i.e. Croatian lands. Even though Croatian units were full of foreigners, their core was always Croatian. For a time being, it seems that the majority of soldiers, especially in the 1620s and 1630s, came from the Slavonian territory, but this conclusion has to be further verified. The recruitment was done in a very complex context with the everglooming Ottoman threat and the danger of Hungarian rebels in the 1620s and 1640s. The recruitment continued all the way until the end of War, and different international actors also enlisted 'Croatian' units in their armies – Bavarians, Austrians, Spanish, even the French. This widespread recruitment caused problems regarding defence against the Ottomans, and was often criticised by Croatian-Slavonian Estates as well as border commanders. Because Croatian units waged war in a border-like manner (raids, skirmishes, pillaging), which had very negative consequences for local population, opponents were very hostile towards them, especially the Swedes who initially expelled them from their *ius in bello* and had special Finnish units to the Croats. Although this paper sheds light on the participation of Croatian soldiers in the Thirty Years' War, the consequence of the War on Croatian and Slavonian lands and the Croatian-Slavonian Border system requires further research.

---

187 CSA, Croatia, microfilm D-1948, 1939, March, No. 1.



SAŽETAK

**Regrutacija za “strani rat”:  
Novi izvori o sudjelovanju hrvatskih vojnika u Tridesetogodišnjem ratu**

Autor se bavi temom regrutacije odnosno sudjelovanjem vojnika s hrvatskog prostora u Tridesetogodišnjem ratu 1618-1648. Iako su hrvatski vojnici imali zapaženu ulogu u jednom od najvažnijih sukoba europske povijesti, ova je tema u domaćoj historiografiji i dalje vrlo slabo istražena. U međunarodnoj historiografskoj produkciji često se navode podaci o vojnom djelovanju hrvatskih postrojbi diljem europskog kontinenta, ali ipak su rijetko hrvatske postrojbe u primarnom fokusu znanstvenih istraživanja. U ovom je članku, na temelju izvora iz Hrvatskog državnog arhiva, Arhiva Republike Slovenije i Austrijskog državnog arhiva, analizirana problematika regrutacije i porijekla hrvatskih vojnika koji su sudjelovali u Tridesetogodišnjem ratu. Budući da se radi o vrlo kompleksnoj temi koja zahtjeva sustavnu analizu na paneuropskoj razini, ovaj se rad treba promatrati kao prilog i poticaj za daljnja istraživanja.

**Cljučne riječi:** 17. stoljeće, Tridesetogodišnji rat, Hrvatska, Slavonija, Sveto Rimsko Carstvo Njemačke Narodnosti, katolici, protestanti, hrvatske pukovnije, Hrvati, krajina/pograničje, novačenje, vojnici