

HUNGARIANS IN OSIJEK FROM 1895 TO 1918 – A TIME OF ORGANIZATION AND DEMONSTRATION

SUMMARY

This article presents for the first time the circumstances and causes that led to the establishment of the Association of Hungarians in Osijek (hungarian: Eszéki magyarok egyesülete/társaság) at the end of the 19th century. Based on Hungarian and Croatian archival sources, literature and contemporary periodicals in both countries, the aim of this article is to show, to the extent that the sources allow, the activities of the Association of Hungarians in Osijek and the view and attitude of the Osijek public towards them on the one hand, and on the other hand the Hungarian perspective (reflected through periodicals of the time) on the attitude of the Croatian public both towards the aforementioned society and towards Osijek's Hungarians as a whole in the aforementioned period. The Association of Hungarians in Osijek was founded as a reaction of Osijek's Hungarians to the theater affair that took place in August 1895, when the performance of visiting Hungarian actors in the Osijek theater was met with relatively large demonstrations by Croatian youth. Although the process of founding the Association of Hungarians in Osijek began immediately after the theater affair, the Croatian government delayed the approval of its foundation for political reasons, citing bureaucratic reasons.

As a result of the above, the Association was founded only in 1897. Judging by the available sources, literature and periodicals, it was not particularly intrusive in the public life of the city of Osijek; its activities mostly remained within the Association itself. It is also essential for the understanding of the Association that it operated outside the framework of the Julian Society and actions, that is, it was exclusively the result of the self-organization of the Osijek's Hungarians. Since the Association's archive is almost completely lost, its activities can only be traced on the basis of Hungarian and Croatian periodicals, which reported on it relatively concisely and rarely. The most common activities undertaken by the Association were celebrating Hungarian national holidays on March 15 and August 20, organizing guest lectures and socializing in the Hungarian Casino, typical of the middle and upper class of society in Central Europe at the turn of the century.

Keywords: Hungarian minority, Hungarians in Osijek, Association of Hungarians in Osijek, Hungarian Casino, Society of Osijek's Hungarians.