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BISHOP MIHO PUŠIĆ – MORALITY PRECEPTS AND TOURISM

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The paper addresses trends in tourism industry as regards the issue of indecent and problematic behaviours of guests on the Island of Hvar in the interwar period, with special focus on reactions of Miho Pušić, bishop of Diocese Brač-Hvar-Vis, and his opposition to relativization of morality considering consequential repercussions for island population.

KEY WORDS: *Island of Hvar, tourism, morality, interwar period, bishop Miho Pušić*

Introduction

The aim of this paper is to present how the tourism on the island of Hvar in the interwar period led to changes in everyday life and the reactions of the bishop Miho Pušić with regard to his reflections towards the local population. The main sources for this article were the archival documents from the Hvar Episcopal archive, which includes the bishop's correspondence, protests, pastoral and circular letters. Miho Pušić was appointed bishop of this Island Diocese in June 1926. At that time, the majority of the island's population was engaged in agricultural production, predominantly with the cultivation of wines, however, due to uncertain sales and low prices, which made it more difficult to survive, the farmers did additional work in burning limestone, growing medicinal plants, selling trees, etc. Modern fashion began to replace the traditional clothes from the everyday use. Simultaneously, religious life was maintained through established customs and devotions, but with an obvious penetration of liberal ideas into the previously traditional forms of life on the island.¹

¹ Mladen DOMAZET, *Isječci iz života - Stari Grad na otoku Hvaru (1914.-1941.)*, Stari Grad, 2016. (dalje: Mladen DOMAZET, *Isječci*), str. 9-11, 156-159. Mladen DOMAZET, *Jelsa u vrrtlogu općih procesa i lokal-*

At the same time, in the interwar period, tourism industry was showing a developing trend by extension of the existing hotel capacities or construction of new hotels, building beaches, making walking paths, printing marketing materials, etc. In other words, in the interwar period tourism industry was mostly concentrated in the town of Hvar as regards the hotel capacities, followed by Jelsa, with significant share of guests coming from the resorts of the Youth Travel Alliance from Belgrade (300 beds) and the Adriatic Guard Association (250 beds), and only one boarding house in Stari Grad (with no relevant changes in this period).² The amount of guest turnover dues paid in 1936 speaks mostly about the tourism trends on the Island of Hvar, with the smallest amount of 903 dinars of dues charged to Stari Grad, followed by Jelsa with the amount of 19 905 dinars, and the biggest charge for Hvar — 114 024 dinars.³ Also, Hvar was represented by major share of foreign guests with negligible share of Stari Grad — under 50 guests during summer season of 1935⁴, i.e. 484 guests spent their summer holidays in Stari Grad (47 of which were foreign), 2 156 guests in Jelsa (343 foreign) and 5 089 guests in Hvar (2 619 foreign).⁵

In 1927, in the beginning of his bishop service, in his pastoral letter and in his circular letter from 1928, Miho Pušić warned of the trends of everyday debauchery and immorality that come with tourism, as well as of the accompanying inversion (among worshippers) of justification of acts that were completely opposite to Christian principles. Bishop Pušić believed that such occurrences were disastrous, furthermore, he connected them with decline of »Christian virtues (self-effacement and chastity)«, and value system of youth. Furthermore, he pointed out that young people »only want fun and sports, material goods and possess an unquenchable thirst for enjoyment«. Hence, preservation of public morality was of crucial importance for bishop Pušić, but, he thought that many succumbed to »sinful tolerance«, negligence and carelessness in these matters.⁶

More so, bishop Pušić starts from the genesis of a problem, pointing out that »nakedness with no shame and human dignity« came mostly from foreigners on the beaches during summer season. Equally, he warned of blurring the border between good and evil, moral and immoral, at the same time emphasizing that relativization of morality should weaken the will for good and resistance towards evil, as a consequence. In other words, he thought that the society was changing more and more, going back to the level of pagan and immo-

nih inicijativa 1868. - 1941., Jelsa, 2021. (Mladen DOMAZET, Jelsa), str. 145, 247-251.

² The following hospitality facilities opened on the Island of Hvar: the Palace Hotel (1899), the Kovačić Hotel (1914), the Park Hotel (around 1925), the Slavija Hotel (1927), the Overland Hotel (1927). Boarding houses: the Palmižana Castle (1906), Dorottka, Kata Novak and Kursalon. Student Youth Colony from Zagreb, Customs Officers Resort and City Beach (1927). Hotels in Jelsa: Jadran (1911) and Barbarić, Kupalište Mína, resorts of the Youth Travel Alliance from Belgrade and the Adriatic Guard Association. Stari Grad: boarding houses Mosorska vila and Gradsko kupalište. Marinko PETRIĆ, *Hvarski turistički spomenar*, Hvar, 2018., pp. 29-73. Mladen DOMAZET, *Jelsa u vrtlogu općih procesa i lokalnih inicijativa 1868-1941*, Jelsa, 2021. (dalje: Mladen DOMAZET, *Jelsa*), pp. 88-93. Mladen DOMAZET, *Isječci iz života – Stari Grad na otoku Hvaru (1914-1941)*, Stari Grad, 2016. (dalje: Mladen DOMAZET, *Isječci*), pp. 32, 63.

³ Mladen DOMAZET, *Isječci*, pp. 34.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ See: Jugoslavenski turizam, iss. 5, Split 1936.

⁶ *Pastirsko pismo Mihe Pušića biskupa hvarsko-bračkog-viškog svećenstvu i vjernicima svoje biskupije*, Split, 1927., pp. 3-5. Jelsa Parish Archive, file No. 734/1928. Okružnica Biskupa Mihe Pušića, 20. IV. 1928., No. 734.

ral beliefs and acts, but, at the same time, he perceived the problem in a wider perspective, wondering how to get people back to their usual state taking into consideration far-fetched repercussions of moral decadence, unavoidably leading to spiritual fall of so many young souls, as bishop Pušić pointed out.⁷

1. Problematic and Immoral Behaviours of Guests

During the thirties of the 20th century, bishop Pušić frequently warned municipal authorities of indecently dressed guests that walked through the town, women with »bare shoulders«, men »only in pants and without shirts«. ⁸ Also, he spoke about guests who were »sunbathing in provocative and shameless bathing suits«, noting that they also entered the church in that same indecent attire, where from which they were thrown out.⁹ Such behaviours of the guests were becoming more and more frequent on a daily basis, therefore, during summer months, the bishop sent a letter to the Ban of Littoral Banovina, notifying the Ban of the scandalous costumes in public squares, coast and facilities. By that the bishop meant women's clothing with shorts and tops with a bare back. He enclosed four



photos to this letter, to serve as proof of the claims he had made. In fact, the dressing of tourist women was visibly different compared to the clothes of local women whose dresses were below the knee and had a closed neckline.¹⁰ At the same time, the appearance of nudists on the Islet of sv. Jeronima in front of Hvar and in the small port of Milna of Vrboska increased the tension related to debauchery of bathers.¹¹

⁷ *Pastirsko pismo Mihe Pušića biskupa hvarsko-bračkog-viškog svećenstvu i vjernicima svoje biskupije*, Split, 1927., pp. 3-5. Jelsa Parish Archive, file No. 734/1928.

⁸ Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 1863/1934.

⁹ Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 1279/1935.

¹⁰ Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 1467/1936.wor

¹¹ Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 1659/1936., 556/1940.

Photos that were enclosed to the letter of bishop Pušić sent to the Ban of Littoral Banovina in 1936. At the same time, municipal wardens repeatedly filed reports against female guests because of improper dressing in public places, for example, in 1937 Ivan Arbašanašić, municipal warden in Hvar, filed reports against two females that were dressed in »very short pants, with fully bared backs and half-bared chests« and found leaving the Jadran inn.¹² The Episcopal Ordinate sent a letter to the Municipal Government in 1939, stating that »nudity and reckless behaviour of quite a major share of guests has not decreased at all«, pointing out that some passengers disembark the steamer in bathing costumes.¹³ Municipal authorities, particularly those in Jelsa, mostly mind that guests take back home the most beautiful memories from this island place, thus indicating to the comfort and entertainment of guests, asking from local population to care about cleanness and tidiness of the place, be forthcoming towards the guests, sell wine at moderate prices... in short, to enable guests with undisturbed peace during their stay in the town.¹⁴ Nevertheless, obviously there was disturbing of peace by singing and music in Jelsa during night time (until 02:00 a.m.) and even the guests from the Jadran Hotel protested against such occurrences, moreover German citizen Antun Weber personally complained to the Municipality.¹⁵ Actually, the Municipality mostly reacted in the events of disturbing of peace during night and walking around in bathing costumes, or by publishing declarative advertisements, thus showing it was interested in preservation of public morality.¹⁶ The resorts of the Youth Travel Alliance from Belgrade and the Adriatic Guard Association in Jelsa, and Zagreb Students' Colony in Hvar played a prominent role in spread of public immorality; for instance in the town of Hvar dancing in skimpy clothes in coffee shops and public spaces, then night meetings in the coppice, on boats and Pakleni Otoci Archipelago until early dawn, excessive drinking are mentioned (allegedly the girls were

¹² Municipal warden Ivan Arbašanašić filed a report against nudity to the Hvar Municipal Government on 7 June 1937. The Hvar Episcopal Archive, Miho Domančić, Mayor of the Hvar Municipality to the District Government on 6 June 1938. The Hvar Episcopal Archive, M. Buzolić, wardens' commissioner and treasurer of the Hvar Municipality, filed a report against nudity to the Hvar Municipal Government on 7 June 1937. Hvar Episcopal Archive.

¹³ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 1592/1939. Pursuant to the Internal Self-Government Act, on 24 May 1936, the District Government issued an order, which prohibited walking through the Town of Hvar from the Franciscan Monastery to the Star of the Sea Church (Article 1) »dressed in bathing costume, pyjamas with bare back, shorts above the knee, and in any other attire leaving the body exposed more than the mentioned costumes«. The Article 2 emphasizes that it is »the duty of managers of hospitality facilities and tenants of private rooms to place this order in a visible place in their premises or apartments and to warn by mouth beach guests when they leave their facilities that such an order is in existence«. The offenders may be fined from »10 to 500 dinars and if the fine cannot be collected they can be sent to prison from one to ten days period«. The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 5488/1936.

¹⁴ Mladen DOMAZET, *Jelsa*, pp. 92.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 1819/1937. Among other things, the Hvar Municipality states »that this season too, the Municipal Government shall undertake the strictest measures and protection of morality and decency in our Croatian, honest and Christian Hvar. This Municipal Government too has a specific purpose not to allow tourism to destroy our morality and Christian spirit bequeathed to us by our great-grandfathers, but to keep this liveliness of our town, caused by intensive tourism turnover, within bounds of stable Christian morality. In order to efficiently implement protection measures, special delegates of the Tourist Board shall be delegated this year to take care of the execution and correct service of the prescribed regulations in this matter«. However, the condition with regard to behaviour of the guests during summer season did not improve not even in the years to come.

so intoxicated that they could not stand on their feet).¹⁷ The Hvar bishop spoke about the widespread trend of night ranting and cursing, saying that »the unbridled youth, when set free and without any supervision, knows no bounds with regard to behaviour«. ¹⁸

In Jelsa too, all sorts of indecent scenes were noted, from a student that walked for a few days »dressed in the costume of Eve in broad daylight on the terrace of primary school« to the members of the Youth Travel Alliance »looking for dirty nightly love in the town park and dancing almost naked on the beach«. ¹⁹ Therefore curate don Ivo Banacci protested at the office of the Adriatic Guard Association in Zagreb against immoral behaviour of their guests, and they replied that they would work on prevention of such occurrences in the Jelsa resort. ²⁰ In addition to that, the members of the Youth Travel Alliance were associated with the communist orientation, stating that they held »secret communist sessions« in Vrbanj, Vrboska and Stari Grad. ²¹ After the Youth Travel Alliance from Belgrade abandoned its Jelsa resort in 1938, Curate from Jelsa, don Ivo Banacci wrote in his letter to bishop Miho Pušić, inter alia, »The plague in the form of the members of the Youth Travel Alliance from Belgrade left, but the smashing Adriatic one has remained«. ²² Because of indecent behaviour in the resorts, the bishop requested to stop the lease of the school buildings and their use for mixed-gender accommodation of the members of the Youth Travel Alliance in future. ²³



¹⁷ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 1814/1933.

¹⁸ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 479-2/1941.

¹⁹ »The members of the Youth Travel Alliance from Belgrade looked for dirty nightly love in the town park and danced almost naked on the beach. As these young people came and left in large groups, they always threw contraceptives into the sea when leaving, so that rubber membranes, that men used to protect their sex organs with in order not to conceive a child (I do not know the exact term and until now I have had no idea such a thing existed), were floating all over the town port, scandalizing the public (it is a kind of overtly thin cellulose tube in the form of a male organ), and the town children, not knowing what they were, collected them and blew them up like balloons. Two times I myself asked the children to throw that dirty thing away.« Jelsa Parish Office to Episcopal Ordinariate, 12 December 1940, The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 556.

²⁰ Curate don Ivo Banacci protested to the Adriatic Guard Association Office in Zagreb because of bad behaviour of their guests, and they replied to him on 24 March 1940, saying, inter alia: »We assure you, our venerable Sir, that we undertake and shall continue to undertake all measures to prevent immorality among our guests«. The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 556/1940.

²¹ Ibid.

²² The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 1502/1938.

²³ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 1702/1938. 1502/1938.

The Liberation Monument that was erected in 1927 on the Hvar waterfront, and removed in 1941.

Postcard with tourist motif from the thirties of the 20th century

He could not put together these events during summer and traditional way of the island population life until that time, emphasizing that »wave of debauchery« and »unprecedented immorality spilled over in our countries, too«. ²⁴

On the other hand, inappropriate behaviours of tourists in Jelsa were reaching their culmination, scandalising the townspeople, for example a couple caught in broad daylight in the mausoleum in the local graveyard Gradini or floating of condoms/membranes in the local port, that children blew up as balloons. ²⁵



Bathers in the thirties of the 20th century in Stari Grad and Hvar (the Stari Grad Museum and the Hvar Heritage Museum)

The strongest reaction of local population as regards the behaviour of foreign guests and events during summer happened in Jelsa in 1932, when 79 locals signed a petition against »public immorality and ugly events that foreigners brought to our place«. In their petition they declared that they were not against foreigners, but they wanted them to respect their traditions and religious beliefs, emphasizing that »Jelsa is a small town, with residents of solely catholic denomination, majority of them really think that their faith is important, we want, we request that our religious traditions are respected, that they are not belittled by public acts and not scandalized during procession. We do not force anyone to go to church, but we ask that our religious persuasion is not demeaned and indirectly insulted. (...) We

²⁴ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 1359/1931. It is interesting that the first nudists in Hvar were mentioned as early as in 1777, when the Venetian Duke in Hvar, Antonio Balbi, in his decree from 11 September, outlawed various abuses, specifically under point 22, that »during summer some people swim in port completely naked, absolutely shamelessly, scandalizing the observers«. He strictly prohibited it; they were allowed to swim like that, he said, only in »unexposed places«, otherwise they have to wear underwear (*mutande*), »in order to avoid scandalizing people«. However, as was usual in the old times (1876), what men were allowed to do, women were not at all: thus girls from a respectable family Novak-”Bonaparte” and a daughter of doctor Samohod were attacked by young boys up to 14 years of age when they went swimming in Križna Luka (definitely well covered!) – by indecent gestures, stones and heavy words: *curba*, *putana*, *franzamera*. Joško KOVAČIĆ, »Hvarska kupališta«, Kruvenica iss. 21, Hvar, 2012., pp. 33-35.

²⁵ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 556/1940.

care about our Municipality. All Municipal governments in the last decades scrupulously paid attention to those traditions. We want and request to remain so in times ahead, without fear that restraint of lawlessness would be a violation of freedom.«²⁶ In addition to this, bishop Pušić frequently warned that immoral customs were imported and that we need to resist them fiercely, thus saving our youth from the plague of modern paganism.²⁷ In parallel, in his address to Municipal government, curate don Ivo Banacci pointed out that Jelsa is a catholic town with catholic tradition, at the same time emphasizing that foreigners during summer season behaved in a way that »publicly debase our homeland, scandalize our children and corrupt our youth«.²⁸ At the same time, curate don Ivo Banacci stated that »his conscience is clear, that he made and makes every possible sacrifice to remove that moral doom from the parish spirit«. He continued: »Unfortunately, all written and oral protests signed at the Municipality simply remain the voice of one crying. I do not want to go into how the members of the Municipal government themselves behave with those foreign women. Consequently, they would have to apply sanctions for morality violation to themselves, and how could they regulate things then (...). There were all sorts of disturbances, some I saw and met myself, as a signatory of this document, some were truly reported to me by others, but when these witnesses have to submit their names at the municipality, they all back away in order not to get on the wrong side either of mayor or secretary. The children see these gruesome scenes of foreign guests and thus their innocent hearts get poisoned and local morality pulse drops down notably. One of the clubs had nudists among those foreign guests, who were joined by some members of local intelligence.«²⁹ Three years later, don Ivan Kuničić stated: »Frequent complaints of the town curate, local educational societies and the Ordinariate brought no improvement, moreover, it can be said that things got more rampant«.³⁰ In his sermon, the curate in Bol on the island of Brač asked that »morality destroyers« be punished by nettle-flogging and throwing rotten eggs at them«.³¹

²⁶ Mladen DOMAZET, *Jelsa*, pp. 94-95.

²⁷ *Pastirsko pismo Mihe Pušića biskupa hvarsko-bračkog-viškog svećenstvu i vjernicima svoje biskupije*, Split, 1927., pp. 6-7.

²⁸ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 234/1938.

²⁹ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 1702/1938.

³⁰ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 479-2/1941.

³¹ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, Anonymous letter to the curate in Bol on the Island of Brač, dated 25 August 1938. »I can let you know that your sermon of yesterday could turn out costly. As a shepherd of a Christian community, you are the first in default of local laws. Do you think you do good when you persuade people who came to church to listen to preaching on brotherly tolerance and love, to rebel against "immorality" brought and spread by women guests by their "horrendously low-cut" dresses. You advise to flog by nettles and throw rotten eggs at all those, as you call them "morality destroyers". Indeed, very commendable for a curate! Don't you think that by doing this you cause more harm to the people, who are already in a bad state. Are all their granaries full of grain like yours? Has it ever occurred to you how much money is got by those as you call them "morality destroyers"? If Bol loses all foreign guests, you shall be the one to be thanked for. Most of all, we are surprised by the fact that you, who are thought of as an intelligent man, can do something like that. Do not be surprised if, in a week or two, a "complimentary" article about your measures against the "morality destroyers" would be published in several newspapers. What do you think the reception and explanation of the entire European public will look like with regard to your gesture?«

2. Reactions of Bishop Miho Pušić to Behaviour of Guests

Bishop Pušić asked from the Municipal Government to undertake concrete measures and use law enforcement measures to prevent such behaviour of guests, who were scandalizing local population, in his opinion.³² Furthermore, the bishop was sending letters in parallel to higher political instances, for example to the District Government in 1934³³, then to Ban of the Littoral Banovina, Josip Jablanović in 1937, namely, with a note saying that for some hosts »the main purpose is material interest«, that is, that they do not care for public morality.³⁴ Hence he pinned his hopes with regard to the issue of preservation of public morality on state authorities, at the same time emphasizing that the decay of morality results in spreading of various obscene ideas that ruin the foundations of human society.³⁵ He requested a radical solution from High Banovina Authorities of Croatia on 5 August 1940, in order to eliminate the evil that was not inherent to Croatian people, as pointed out by bishop Pušić. At the same time, he reminded that the church authorities asked of higher and local authorities to protect morality, but with no visible success. Moreover, he pointed out that Maček sent to all municipalities a special recommendation with regard to protection of morality last year, but it all remained just on paper, bishop Pušić concluded.³⁶ It should be added that bishop Pušić demanded from the preaching priests to harshly condemn immoral acts.³⁷ Additionally, he warned Christian girls and young men not to intentionally and madly hasten into moral degradation, that is, to avoid sinful opportunities and any encouragement to evil. With that in view, he asked curates for a more dedicated pastoral work, suggesting them to warn Christian parents, mothers in particular, more often in their sermons, and even in the confession box, about their heavy responsibility for education and supervision of their children.³⁸ Furthermore, bishop Pušić thought that honest people could never come out of youth with indulgent parents, it could only result in slavery to human consideration, religious negligence, secular spirit and, ultimately, alienation from faith.³⁹

Under the impression of these summer events, Pušić warned that »there is a danger of our Christian folk rising up in defence of honour and morality of this town«. ⁴⁰ Also, he warned lady churchgoers not to join processions or come to church unless they are decently dressed, specifically, sleeves up to elbows, at least, in stockings and not with their chests ba-

³² The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 1814/1933, 1467/1936, 1592/1939, 1659/1939, 1534/1940. At the same time, the bishop stated that »unfortunately all written and oral protests signed at the Municipality (the only institution that could repair the situation quickly) simply remain the voice of one crying«.

³³ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 1863/1934.

³⁴ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 970/1937. Public morality in this town stooped to the lowest level last year: the most disgusting nudity of some female guests was inconsiderately showing off not only at the beach, but all over the town as well, in the *piazza*, in front of hotels, at the steamer pier, everywhere, as I notified you by my letter on 11 August 1936, No. 1423 and delivered you photos of inconsiderate nudity as proof by the letter from 20 August 1936, No. 1467.

³⁵ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 1863/1934, 1467/1936.

³⁶ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 1534/1940.

³⁷ The Jelsa Parish Archive, file No. 734/1928.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 1279/1935.

⁴⁰ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 1863/1934.

red up.⁴¹ Further, he asked from the director of religious associations to strictly prohibit to all their members bathing with opposite sexes together, and to just exclude those members that do not obey. In the end, he invited believers to pray with the intention of preservation of »chastity, shyness, morality of our youth«.⁴²

However, the bishop's interventions yielded no desired results, hence, in 1941, Pušić summarized the interwar period, as follows, »notwithstanding regular warnings and protests, it could be said that things became worse out of spite, because rudeness passed all bounds in such a manner that the concept of morality, chastity and honesty started fading. He asked authorities for strict and precise instructions in that regard. He thought that our Croatian government would pay due attention to this issue, as soon as possible«.⁴³ In the end, bishop Pušić emphasized that true Christian love among people disappeared, in other words, that mutual distrust, coldness, greed for worldly goods, hate and revenge began its rule among them.⁴⁴

3. Curates' Perspective on Morality in Hvar Parishes

Reports on the state of morality in parishes, indicated how serious the bishop's warnings were, for example, it is pointed out that the morality among youth is on the decrease in Stari Grad,⁴⁵ that is, the trend of premarital sex is noticed more and more, which can be observed on the basis of the date of birth of the child and marriage of parents in the Register of Births, Marriages and Deaths. Furthermore, in the interwar period, the Baptismal Register in Stari Grad named nine out-of-wedlock children, with no names of fathers.⁴⁶ At the same time, priest don Ivan Kuničić reported that most married men neglect their Christian duties, or that local communists opposed the sacraments of confession and the first communion during weddings. On the other hand, there were talks about the »unbelievers« in the town and that they could not be reached in any way because of their hard-set attitudes.⁴⁷

Trends of the decline of religious spirit and morality are also visible in Poljica, Vrbanj, Pitve, Svirče, Vrisnik, Jelsa and Vrboška;⁴⁸ while on the other hand it was stated that morality is good in Selca, Sv. Nedjelja and Sućuraj (for example, there were no illegitimate children born), primarily due to, as stated by the curates, the fact that there were no foreigners, modern spirit and its obscene ideas in these settlements.⁴⁹ However, the situation in Bogomolje is extremely bad, with examples of concubinage and illegitimately

⁴¹ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 1626/1940.

⁴² The Jelsa Parish Archive, file No. 734/1928.

⁴³ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 902/1941.

⁴⁴ *Pastirsko pismo Mihe Pušića, Biskupa Hvarskog, Bračkog i Viškog Svećenstvu i vjernicima svoje biskupije za god. 1941.*, Hvar, 1941., pp. 8.

⁴⁵ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, Izvješće o moralnom stanju župa Dekanata Stari Grad, 7 May 1940.

⁴⁶ Mladen DOMAZET, *Excerpts from Life*, Stari Grad, 2016., pp. 109.

⁴⁷ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No 13 August 1927.

⁴⁸ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 1871/1928.

⁴⁹ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, Izvješće o moralnom stanju župa Dekanata Stari Grad, 7 May 1940, Report for Sućuraj Deanery on religious Morality State of Parishes, 5 May 1940, Report on Morality of Vis Deanery Parishes, 6 May 1940.

born children, furthermore, Parish Head spoke of tolerance for such occurrences, but, also pointing out that only few girls are married as virgins.⁵⁰ That said, it has to be pointed out that widely spread communism among island population is attributed to that context and »manifested in desire for unlimited enjoyment and destruction of the existing state, people are pretty much displeased with church and religious and moral truths preached by the Catholic Church«.⁵¹



Hvar with a view of Park Hotel and building of the Adriatic Guard Association resort in Jelsa

4. Bishop's Perspective on Immoral Occurrences

Bishop Pušić timely reacted on occurrences and events in his Diocese that he considered disagreeable and immoral. Speaking about far-reaching consequences under the pretence of flexibility and adjustment to tourist trends, he represented a voice of a shepherd crying for the protection of public morality. He did not step back from Christian principles, that is, he did not succumb to compromise and conformism when addressing political authorities, also he provided clear guidelines and encouraging initiatives to priests and worshippers considering all sorts of exposure during summer season.

Its is obvious from the bishop's documents that he constantly spoke of devastating effects of relativization of morality in society and accompanying perspective of growing indifference towards faith. Moreover, in the circumstances of the interwar period, bishop Pušić talked about increasing prevalence of religious negligence, secular spirit and alienation from faith, concluding that »man has become his own scale of morality, hence no wonder that dangerous selfishness and boundless hedonism in this world ruled over him. Failing to recognize anyone higher than himself, he wants to live it up on this Earth, to satisfy his messy addictions, which brought the rule of unprecedented rogue behaviour and debauchery in the sense of morality«.⁵²

In the end, the consequences of immorality for bishop Pušić were far more deeper and graver, manifesting themselves mostly through »adultery, divorce, white plague and abortions«, naturally, the bishop's sharpness could not but notice the intention of cumulative

⁵⁰ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, file No. 175/1939.

⁵¹ The Hvar Episcopal Archive, *Izvjješće o moralnom stanju župa viškog Dekanata*, 6 May 1940.

⁵² *Pastirsko pismo Mihe Pušića, Biskupa Hvarskog, Bračkog i Viškog Švećenstvu i vjernicima svoje biskupije za god. 1941.*, Hvar, 1941., pp. 8.

effects, exposing population to negative trends in the long run, thus visibly having effect on the transmission of island mentality, that is, dissolution of island traditional values and Christian way of life.

The bishop's engagement warns of growing trends of society demoralization above all else, and they take people back to the framework of pagan perceptions and actions if the excesses that were »done freely and with no scruples« are taken into account, according to his opinion.⁵³

We can add the bishop's intervention during setting up of the Liberation Monument in Hvar, in 1926/1927, to the bishop's engagement in preservation of public morality, since he thought the monument was indecent for encouraging the lowest of human instincts could be accompanied by his intervention.⁵⁴

Conclusion

In the interwar period, the population of the island of Hvar remained mostly agrarian, maintaining their traditional features in everyday life. On the other hand, due to its preserved ambience, the island's towns and settlements became suitable for the development of tourism. After Miho Pušić was appointed bishop of this Island Diocese in 1926, he complained and protested numerous times due to the behaviour of guests during the summer season, referring to »exposure to nudity without any shame or dignity« as well as to »open relationships«. In fact, bishop Pušić pointed out to changes that came with tourism, that he considered disastrous with regards to morality for the local population and Christian values. First, he dealt with the local authorities in order to suppress such occurrences, and then to the district government, Ban of Littoral Banovina and High Banovina Authorities of Croatia. At the same time, he demanded that the curates strongly condemn from the pulpits such immoral occurrences as he regularly indicated it in his pastoral and circular letters. Chronologically, his reactions extend to entire interwar period, that is from his appointment as a bishop to the beginning of World War II. This shows that such interventions were unsuccessful on the local as well as on the state level. Bishop Pušić also maintained that with the development of tourism, the island society was directly exposed to liberal ideas and relativization of Christian principles, i.e. that was returning to »pagan-immoral understanding and action«. Bishop's reactions to the free behaviour of foreigners during the summer probably contributed to a more decisive attitude of the Jelsa population when 76 fathers signed a petition against public immorality and ugly occurrences introduced by the foreigners to the local milieu, expressing worry for the future of their children. Finally, bishop Pušić warned of consequences of such immoral behaviour »adultery, divorce, the white plague and abortions«. In that sense, he also warned of the long-term consequences

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Dejanira Burmas DOMANČIĆ, »Spomenik oslobođenja«, *Prilozi povijesti otoka Hvara*, Vol. 12, No. 1, Hvar, 2014., pp. 263-277. »On the top of monument, there is a group of characters: female figure, Faria, riding a "dragon of Lepanto" and rising to embrace "the angel of freedom" in the form of a young man with wings, who breathes hope of new life into her«.

of the transmission of the island mentality and the dissolution of its previous traditional values and the Christian way of life.

SAŽETAK

BISKUP MIHO PUŠIĆ – MORALNE POSTAVKE I TURIZAM

Biskup Miho Pušić je u međuratnom razdoblju ukazivao na raskalašeno i nemoralno ponašanje gostiju tijekom ljetne sezone, smatrajući to pogubnim za lokalno stanovništvo u očuvanju tradicionalnih vrijednosti. Posebno ga je zabrinjavalo relativiziranje morala kod onih koji su opravdavali postupke i pojave koji su bili u potpunoj opreci s kršćanskim načelima. Štoviše, biskup Pušić naglašava kako su mnogi podlegli grešnoj toleranciji, nemarnosti i nesmotrenosti, zanemarujući svoju dužnost u čuvanju i zaštiti javnog morala. Odnosno, degradiranje morala sagledava kroz prizmu dugoročnih posljedica, što će dovesti do vjerskog nehaja i otuđenja od vjere, smatrajući ujedno kako će oslabiti narod u njegovoj gorljivosti za ideale. U tom pogledu ističe sklonosti mladog naraštaja, koji traži samo zabavu i sport, materijalna dobra i posjeduje neugasivu žeđ za uživanjem.

S obzirom na to da se nije mirio s pasivnim prilagođavanjem novonastalim okolnostima, biskup Pušić navodi kako se društvo u mnogočemu vraća nemoralnom poganskom djelovanju i shvaćanju, pozivajući civilne vlasti, ali i lokalno stanovništvo da stanu na kraj takvim sablaznima.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: otok Hvar, turizam, moral, međuratno razdoblje, biskup Miho Pušić