

- VALENTIĆ, Mirko. *Rat protiv Hrvatske 1991.-1995.* Zagreb; Slavonski Brod: Hrvatski institut za povijest – Podružnica za povijest Slavonije, Srijema i Baranje; Hrvatski memorijalno-dokumentacijski centar Domovinskog rata, 2010.

## **POLJANAK, VUKOVIĆI, SMOLJANAC AND SERTIĆ POLJANA IN THE CROATIAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE**

The first victim of the Croatian War of Independence was killed in the Plitvice region on 31 March 1991, also known as “Plitvice Bloody Easter”. Titova Korenica was the centre of the Serbian rebellion in this part of Croatia. On 8 October 1991, the Yugoslav People’s Army and domestic rebel Serbs gathered in the Territorial Defense attacked and conquered Smoljanac. On that same day, a war crime took place in Sertić Poljana as did the first general attack on Poljanak. Afterwards, war crimes in that area became more frequent. During the shelling of the refugee camp Grabovac on 26 September 1991, three children were killed, including a three-month-old child, the youngest victim of the Croatian War of Independence. The mass crime in Vukovići took place on 7 November 1991, when a total of ten Croats were killed, eight of whom were civilians in Vukovići and two civilians in Poljanak. The local Plitvice territorials and members of the JNA special unit participated in the attack on Vukovići. Nine civilians were killed in Smoljanac from October to December 1991. The surviving inhabitants of the area of Poljanak, Vukovići, Sertić Poljana and Smoljanac eventually managed to escape to Bosnia. All the mentioned places were occupied, plundered, completely destroyed and burned. Operation Storm reinstated the constitutional and legal order of the Republic of Croatia in the occupied territory on 5 August 1995. This created the conditions for reconstruction, exhumation of victims and return of exiled.

**Key words:** Poljanak, Vukovići, Smoljanac, Sertić Poljana, Croatian War of Independence, Greater-Serbian aggression, victims, suffering