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Proofreading and lecture: Danijela Milićević

Address: Danila Bojovića bb 81 400 Niksic, Montenegro;

E-mail: mjss@ucg.ac.me

www.mjss.ac.me

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Glavni i odgovorni urednik: Adnan Prekić

Urednici: Živko Andrijašević, Dragutin Papović, Ivan Tepavčević

Međunarodni uređivački odbor: John K. Cox, North Dakota State University, Fargo, UNITED STATES; Tvrtko Jakovina, University of Zagreb, Zagreb, CROATIA; Lidia Greco, University of Bari, Bari, ITALY; Helena Binti Muhamad Varkkey, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, MALAYSIA; Vít Hloušek, Masaryk University, Brno, CZECH REPUBLIC; Adrian Hatos, Universitatea „Babeş-Bolyai” Cluj, ROMANIA.

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Lektura i korektura: Danijela Milićević

Adresa: Danila Bojovića bb 81 400 Nikšić, Crna Gora;

E-mail: mjss@ac.me

www.mjss.ac.me

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Review**BOKA KOTORSKA AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 20th CENTURY**Ivan TEPAVČEVIĆ¹University of Montenegro, Faculty of Philosophy, Danila Bojovića bb, Nikšić,
Montenegro

e-mail: tepo40@com.me

ABSTRACT:

Structural specificities of a region such as Boka Kotorska, political, economic and cultural, exert influence on the overall behaviour of a given society. Research of traffic, economic activity, social, religious and ethnic structures, administrative, military and cultural-educational functions of Boka Kotorska in the early 20th century shows that significant changes occurred in all these areas because, along with traditional forms of transport, production and trade, and in addition to the inherited social structures, new ones have been created, of domestic and foreign origin, with a different way of production, thinking and living. Hence, the history of Boka at the beginning of the 20th century is, in fact, a history of conflict and clash between tradition and modernization. However, despite all the difficulties, Boka Kotorska has been changing and strengthening its ethnic, religious, social, cultural and political mosaic, and has become a vital center of civilization and cultural change in this part of the Balkans.

KEY WORDS:

Boka Kotorska; XX century; Modernization; Population; Economy.

¹ **IVAN TEPAVČEVIĆ:** (1982. Nikšić). At the Faculty of Philosophy, he enrolled in the history and geography studies at the Faculty of Philosophy. He enrolled at the Faculty of Philosophy, a postgraduate study course - History and passed the exams with the highest grade. He completed his master's degree in 2012 when he enrolled in doctoral studies.

SAŽETAK:

Specifičnosti strukture jednog podneblja, kakva je Boka Kotorska, političke, ekonomske i kulturne utiču i na cjelokupni karakter datog društva. Istraživanja saobraćaja, privredne aktivnosti, socijalne, vjerske i etničke strukture, administrativne, vojne i kulturno-prosvjetne funkcije Boke Kotorske početkom XX vijeka pokazala su da su se u svim tim oblastima dogodile značajne promjene, jer su, uz tradicionalne oblike saobraćaja, proizvodnje i trgovine, pored naslijeđenih društvenih struktura stvorene nove, domaćeg i stranog porijekla, s drukčijim načinom proizvodnje, mišljenja i života. Otuda je istorija Boke početkom XX vijeka, u stvari, istorija sučeljavanja i sukobljavanja tradicije i modernizacije. No, bez obzira na sve teškoće, Boka Kotorska se mijenjala i učvršćivala svoj etnički, vjerski, socijalni, kulturni i politički mozaik i postajala vitalno središte civi-lizacijskih i kulturnih promjena na ovom dijelu Balkana.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI:

Boka Kotorska; XX vijek; Modernizacija; Stanovništvo; Ekonomija.

Boka Kotorska is a region of perpetual interaction between various nations. Naturally, the centuries-old Austro-Hungarian presence has left its mark in language, clothing, music, habits, religion, and national sentiment, intertwined with the religious one. But beneath these foreign traces and influences, there always remained a domestic foundation. Over the course of the time, the spatial concept of Boka Kotorska went through many changes, and in the population censuses, it mostly referred to the administrative area of Kotor. Administratively, the Kotor area had regularly covered the whole inner region of the Boka Kotorska Bay, that is aquatorium with the coastal area, and the outer parts of the mountain slopes, as well as the Grbalj area with the Budva coast. During Austrian rule over Boka, it stretched from Sutorina in the northwest to Paštrovići in the south. In the 19th century, Boka Kotorska was the fourth district in Dalmatia, with its center in Kotor, divided into three areas (kotars): Kotor, Herceg Novi and Budva, with administrative and judicial authority (Nakićenović, 1999, 13).

(The north-western part of today's Boka consisted of the municipalities: Herceg Novi, Risan and Perast, whereas the south-eastern municipalities were: Kotor, Muo, Dobrota, Prčanj, Stoliv, Lastovo, Tivat, Krtole, Luštica and Grbalj. Budva municipality lies to the south of the Municipality of Grbalj, and the southernmost part of Boka is occupied by Paštrovići. Thus Boka with its 15 municipalities extends from Sutorina to Cmiljeva Ulica and Dubrava Dubovica, to the north-east of Spič. It falls under the political and judicial authority of Kotor. (Nakićenović, 1999, 13.)

It covered the area of 67,395 hectares. Sava Nakićenović states that Boka had two cities, Kotor and Budva, three towns: Herceg Novi, Risan and Perast, and 116 villages. There were 8 Orthodox monasteries in Boka, and also 8 Roman Catholic, 50 Orthodox parishes and chapels, 29 Roman Catholic, 210 Orthodox churches and 110 Roman Catholic ones. The border between Montenegro and Boka was regulated during the rule of Petar II Petrović Njegoš (1838-1841), while the border between Boka and Herzegovina had been regulated several times, and finally in 1905, all due to border disputes, which often happened because of the pasture and logging issues. For the local population, Boka most often referred to the area more closely connected with coastal life, or the activities related to the use of the gulf's aquatorium. In other words, Boka was being limited to the space characterized by the Adriatic-Mediterranean natural features and the cultural and civilization framework (Crkvenčić, 2006, 52).

This period abounds in political, economic and social change. Thus, for example, in early 20th century, the territory of the Municipality of Herceg Novi was smaller than today. Sutorina, Prijedor, Žvinje with Svrčuge and a part of Mokrine made up the coastal municipality, while Kruševica, Vrbanj and Sitnica belonged to the Trebinje municipality. It was not before the 1920s that the Herceg Novi municipality accepted Luštica and Sutorine (coastal municipality) to join, provided that they decide so. It is interesting that until 1928 the town bears the name Ercegnovi, soon to be changed to more correct Herceg Novi at the request of President Jerotije Petković (Radović, 1975, 255).

Administratively, the aforementioned Boka area largely coincides with the territory of the twelve municipalities within the three districts of the Kotor region, into which Boka had been administratively divided during all four Austrian population censuses, including the last one in 1910. All settlements from all municipalities of the District of Kotor and the Municipality of Luštica were included in the scope of these censuses, while only six coastal settlements (Baošići, Bijela, Đenovići, Jošica, Kumbor and Herceg Novi) were processed from the Municipality of Herceg Novi, and only two coastal settlements (Morinj and Risan) from the territory of the Municipality of Risan. However, along with these settlements, the areas of all parts of the settlements from the mentioned municipalities were included, some of these located on the slopes of the Boka mountain range. At the time of the last Austrian population census in 1910, there were a total of 22,823 inhabitants (Crkvenčić, 2006, 54).

The municipalities were independent in making decisions on road maintenance, supervised trade, monitored health institutions, took care of public order and peace, established and supported elementary schools. Thus, for example, the Municipality of Herceg Novi was managed by a Municipal Council with 36 councillors elected by the voters. Among these, the mayor and six presidents for the municipal administration were elected. The administration met twice a month during 1906, and every Thursday in the following years. The municipalities had partially independent decision-making bodies on issues related to the functioning of the municipalities themselves. Before the adoption of the legislation, amendments, taxes, or the like, municipal councillors did not simply accept the proposals of the National Committee from Zadar, but wanted to be informed about the issues, and only then to give their consent (Obad, 2009, 813).

The settlements were led by the governors with their assistants. They were

elected at village gatherings, and corroborated by the Municipal Council. Their jurisdiction included resolving conflicts between villagers, monitoring road construction, repairing schools, water supply and so on. We have an interesting example of Herceg Novi's village Kameno where the locals had offered a bid for ice extraction and sale. The money obtained was used for the needs of the village, primarily to fix the roads and waters. Also interesting were the budgets for individual places and settlements. According to 1907 data, in some of these (Baošići, Bijela, Kameno, Mokrine, Poda, Sasovići, Kumbor, Herceg Novi itself), (Nakićenović, 1999, 34) the revenues exceeded the expenditures (this was referred to as "pretičak"). The surplus of expenditures over revenues (referred to as "nedotičak") had been noted in settlements like Kruševice, Mojdež, Topla, Kuta.

During World War I, the Municipal Council meetings were conducted by military officials located in forts. We will mention the case of Herceg Novi governor Jefto Gojković, who resigned in 1917, allegedly due to illness, only to be re-elected after the liberation. Demographic changes were also noticeable, with the population of Boka growing from 20,000 to 30,000 inhabitants, as a consequence of war, that is, the arrival of army, workers and foreigners (Lalošević, 2013, 37).

During a long period of overcoming various foreign political influences, the ethnic structure of the population of Boka Kotorska changed considerably. These changes were mainly due to inflow of new inhabitants from the immediate hinterland, as well as to the gradual assimilation of the local population with the newcomers, alongside with the simultaneous emigration of autochthonous, domestic population. It should be emphasized that in the long development of the region and its population, various historical sources mention the immigration of mainly Orthodox population.

An extensive population merging, as regards religion and nationality, came at the time of the Austrian administration reign in the region, from 1814 to 1918. During this period, Boka became an important Austrian war port, so that in all its coastal settlements, an intricate infrastructure had been established for the needs of the navy (Radović, 1975, 253). This inevitably reflected in the forms of work and the local way of life, but also in the significant inflow of foreign population, especially those who participated in operating the mentioned infrastructure. Gradually, the composition of the population became very complex, as evident from 1910 census data. According to these, Boka had 83.3% of local population and 16.7% of foreign-

ers, while as many as one third of the total population spoke “foreign” languages. It is indisputable that the national composition of the population of Boka was very complex by the end of the Austrian administration period (Čučić, 2006, 79).

Economic conditions were quite unfavourable, so the people had been emigrating a lot. Cattle breeding did well, because the prices of the products had doubled. For the locals, fishing was of great economic significance, especially during this period, when the olive groves were dilapidated, and the vineyards were affected by peronospora. It is interesting to note that in 1910, the number of beehives in Boka was 4,161. On average, about 7 kilograms of honey and a kilogram of wax had been produced per hive, which means that about 29,000kg of honey and slightly over 4,000kg of wax had been produced in Boka. This represented a fair amount of production and brought in a profit that was not to be underestimated. Only the few rational, advanced beekeepers had benefited from this production (Nakićenović, 1999, 56).

At the end of the 19th century, Simo Matavulj wrote about Boka, in such a way that the spirit of Cetinje was present in every house in the region. By the end of the century, it was often spoken about what had been happening in Cetinje, as the distinguished people of Boka were respected at the Montenegrin court. This was quite expected since Montenegro was the closest focal point of the liberation movement. Boka’s connections with Montenegro were exceptionally intense throughout the 19th century. When in 1918 Boka had been annexed to Dalmatia, as had also been the case during Venetian and Austrian occupation, regional government had a session in Split. The people of Boka did not accept to be a part of Dalmatia, instead of their natural hinterland. There was no difference between the commitment of the Croatian coast – to Croatia and Montenegrin coast – to Montenegro. In 1919, the municipalities of Boka had sent a delegation to Belgrade in order to “return Boka to Montenegro” and this delegation included the representative of Herceg Novi, Krsto Porobić from Mojdež. While studying this period of the Municipal Administration work in Herceg Novi, Marija Crnić Pejović discovered documentation from the day which shows the authentic request of the municipalities of Boka: “The municipalities of Boka delegation, in the year 1919, submits an application in Belgrade requesting the annexation of Boka to Montenegro”. Independently, Boka’s socialists, in preparation for the Vukovar Congress SRPJk (1919), demanded to be connected with Montenegro, and not with Split, which the Congress (1920) approved. It was not until 1923 that this issue was fi-

nally resolved, when the official “Dalmatian messenger” of July 4th published the Ministerial Council decision to “add” Boka to the Region of Zeta.

Comprehensive censuses of Dalmatia, and thus of Boka Kotorska (which was a part of Dalmatia during the Austrian Administration) population were carried out as late as the second half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, that is, in 1880, 1890, 1900 and 1910. The results of these censuses were published at the level of settlements, municipalities, as well as judicial districts and administrative “kotars”. The censuses provide information on religious persuasions and spoken languages, but not on nationalities, now almost impossible to determine based on the available census data (Crkvenčić, 2006, 65).

Mirko Komnenović, one of Herceg Novi’s mayors, spoke about religious tolerance in Boka: “We in Boka Kotorska take pride in being a part of this country where the Roman Catholic and Orthodox populations live as harmoniously as it can be. In Boka, Orthodox monasteries gave away their land for the construction of Roman Catholic churches; in Boka, in the absence of an Orthodox priest, a Roman Catholic priest would baptize children according to the Orthodox ritual, and vice versa” (Nakićenović, 1999, 141).

A group of well-known and distinguished people from Boka had acquired a printing press, known as “Bokeljska štamparija” ever since 1908. From that year on, all newspapers and periodicals were being printed in Kotor, thus reviving printing in Boka. Among the publications at the time was the annual report from C. Kr. Great Kotor Gymnasium, regularly issued almost until the war. In addition to regular school reports and teaching programs, there were scientific and professional articles, mainly from the history of literature. The associates were mostly professors of the Gymnasium of Kotor. From 1899/1900, the program of C. K. Nautical School in Kotor was being printed. Maritime-related articles were published from time to time. Also, one of the publications issued in the observed period in Boka was the Report from the Private Female School in Kotor, published between 1909 and 1914.

The abundance of political events in the first decade of the 20th century, such as the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, internal affairs in Montenegro, inter-dynastic conflicts in Serbia and Montenegro, have influenced the publication of newspapers, via which the word and opinion of Boka would be heard. The first to appear was “Boka” on January 23, 1908, lasting until the next year. It is interest-

ing to note that the newspaper opposed the official Montenegrin authorities, and supported the “klubaši“. A couple of years later, Boka gets another newspaper – “Dnevni vjesnik”, which appears in the era of the Balkan wars. It was the first daily newspaper in Montenegro. In the period from October 9 until December 17, 1912, 101 issues were published. Occasionally, the newspaper would be printed twice a day. On March 3, 1912, the first youth newspaper “Proljeće” appeared in Kotor. However, it did not last long.

After the printing press procurement, a large illustrated calendar entitled “Boka” was being published from 1909 to 1914. It was printed in Kotor and portrayed photos of famous people and places. During six years of its publication, about 120 illustrations had been published. “Boka’s” associates were prominent authors from the Balkan Peninsula, such as: Aleksa Šantić Simo Matavulj, Ivo Ćipiko, Marko Car, Svetozar Ćorović. “Boka” also published old historical documents from the region.

Boka was a borderline Austrian province, an important military base neighbouring liberated Montenegro, whence the freedom influences radiated toward the Boka population. These influences would have repercussions on economic and social situation in Boka. First of all, for Austria-Hungary it was a valuable military-naval base. That is why it had been extensively fortified, in order to make it capable of both defense and attack in the event of any conflict. For military and strategic reasons, at the end of the 19th century, Austria undertook the construction of numerous fortifications, forts, military facilities, in order to protect its southern border. The largest, strongest and most modern coastal fortification in Boka was the Radišević Fort in Krtole. In this fort, the first electric bulb in Boka was lit, and the first elevator for vertical transport was installed (Lalošević, 2013, 43). By the beginning of the 20th century, for instance, the Luštica municipality had 1,203 inhabitants, including the army stationed at military facilities. Before the war, this municipality had substantial income from tobacco and silk.

In the period when road construction begins in Montenegro, we also note the beginning of building the first modern roads in Boka. In 1874, “measuring tests” for the Sutrina-Kotor road construction commence. The road had been completed in 1884. At the beginning of the 20th century, municipalities had decreed that each house must contribute to road construction and maintenance, either through work or financially (Višacki, 1988, 13). Usually, it was five workdays per every work-

capable male. During the Austrian rule, the construction of infrastructure, roads, bridges and water supply systems were primarily conditioned by military needs. At the same time, public works provided jobs for the poorest part of the population, thus somewhat improving living conditions, as wages were usually paid in grain. Soon the construction of the road Herceg Novi-Kamenari began. The road was being used by horse carriages, and a need arose for a company organizing regular traffic along this route. At the beginning of the century, Kamenari-based company "Bokeljski omnibus" was founded. The company was shortlived, lasting only one year, due to high maintenance costs, as well as an unregulated route (Zloković, 1969, 131).

In 1909, the first buses appeared on the same route. They were the property of Luigi Mison from Dubrovnik. The company lasted for one year only due to several reasons. It was far from any standards and comfort. There were frequent breakdowns, as well as accidents with injured passengers, resulting in the trust and interest of the people for this type of transportation being lost. During the Balkan Wars, omnibuses with horse-drawn carriages, owned by Niko Dončić from Gruž, were used on the route Herceg Novi-Kamenari.

In 1909, the first instruction manual on how to connect to the water supply system, as well as on the use and price of water, appears. It was not until World War I that the army connected water supply from Zelenika to the Meljine Military Hospital. Consideration was also given to the city structures hygiene, so in 1909 the number of workers maintaining urban sanitation had been increased (Their monthly salary ranged between 50 and 60 crowns). During World War I, more sanitation workers were required due to the increase in the number of inhabitants. At the beginning of the 20th century, for example, in Herceg Novi garbage was being dumped from the Citadel into the sea, and in 1904 the land of Jefto Gojković had been rented for the waste disposal purposes. As of 1906, the garbage had to be taken out of private houses. During the war, the waste from Herceg Novi was transported to Igalo. At the beginning of the century, the procurement of garbage trucks was also planned. In 1908, an instruction manual on periodic cleaning of chimneys appeared. As early as the 19th century, there was talk of building public toilets. This issue arose again in 1902 and 1911, and there are indications that the first public toilets at the time were built near the building of the former officer's home.

Significant medical institutions were certainly the maritime lazarets, which were used as preventive health stations. They quarantined ships coming from dis-

ease-stricken ports. Historically, Boka had four lazarets, the best equipped one in Meljine, built in 1729 (Crnić Pejović, 2009, 245). When the railway reached Zelenika, a part of this lazaret was destroyed. During the centuries of its rule over Boka Kotorska, Austria-Hungary took care of its own interests. Maintaining the existing and developing new health services was needed to preserve the health of the population. In October 1900, it had been decided that the Municipality of Herceg Novi required two doctors, due to being a dispersed settlement, as well as because of the railway construction work. The annual salary for the doctors was 1,600 crowns, and some also had regular income from the “sinner house” (the brothel where doctors, in accordance with the regulations at the time, performed regular inspections), then from the inspection of meat, and treatment of railway employees. Thus, the Donović family pharmacy worked in Herceg Novi from 1813 well into the 20th century, and there also was the Meljine Military Hospital pharmacy. In 1914, Josip Buzolić is mentioned in the documents as a dentist in Herceg Novi. There were periodic occurrences of cholera, which in 1911 reached epidemic proportions.

In 1901 it had been decided to purchase 1 pump, 50 water buckets, 2 ladders, 4 axes, 2 backpacks and some rope to equip the firefighting service. It would be another couple of decades until this issue got more attention.

In early 1901, a railroad was open for traffic, connecting the important ports of Dubrovnik (Dalmatia) and Zelenika (Boka Kotorska) with the Bosnian-Herzegovinian state railway. At Uskoplje-Zelenika station, the narrow track railway line Uskoplje-Zemaljska Granica (near Glavska)-Zelenika (Gabela-Zelenika railway) in total length of 78 km, was opened on July 16, 1901, at 11 o'clock. Trains took three and a half hours to cover this destination. The railway line had the following railway stations in Boka: Sutorina, Igalo, Herceg Novi (Castelnuovo), Savina, Zelenika. At the time, interesting ideas arose about the extension of the railway to Verige, and this was a matter of discussion in Zadar in 1909. In order to preserve the nature beauty, it had been requested that the railway track would not go along the coast, but “above the road from the upper side of the houses” (Veber, 2012, 12).

At the turn of the century, Boka was characterized by the fragmentation of land holdings, which, combined with the soil quality levels, caused constant poverty among the population of Boka. In the coastal area, crafts, trade, services, shipbuilding, as well as occupations needed by the army were developed. The first agricultural cooperation in Boka Kotorska was founded in Kamenari in 1902. In the

first half of 1904, agricultural cooperations were founded in Mokrine and Orahovci (Boka Kotorska). Also, Boka Savings Bank in Kotor and the Credit Union in Herceg Novi were founded. By 1914, the fishermen cooperation was established in Baošići, too. In this period, the Sokol clubs appear in 1911, five of them registered in Boka Kotorska (Risan, Kotor, Herceg Novi, Đenovići, Bijela). Next year in Kotor, Sokol flag was accepted and performances of Boka and Dubrovnik clubs were held. As of 1907, a new school curriculum had been implemented for a large number of schools in Boka, previously working according to the 1879 Teaching Basics.

By the beginning of the 20th century, the civil class was organized and able to form a political party. Composed largely of middle-class layers of society and intelligence, it also had support among rural population and small tradesmen. The party linked its national program to the Yugoslavian idea and advocated the South Slavs unification. This layer of society attempts to affirm itself politically and transform into a movement. However, it encounters a number of problems, first and foremost in colliding with the official Austrian politics. The representatives were South Slavic oriented, although there was also pan-Slavism. In their newsletter "To Boka", they strayed into extremes. On its pages, they glorified Francis Joseph, while on the other hand, they harshly described the circumstances in Boka during the annexation crisis. They wrote about the catastrophic state in the area, insufficient concern or denial of obligations that Austria took over after 1814. Views were expressed on investments in the economy, collapse of Boka Navy and numerous problems of the population.

Severe errors of all Vienna ministries for a hundred years were mentioned, emphasizing the pragmatic neglect of Vienna toward Boka. There was another movement in Boka, which was pro-Austrian-oriented. However, it did not have broad support among the people. Workers' associations were formed at the beginning of the century: in 1902, Herceg Novi Labour Society; in the same year the Croatian Labour Society "Sloga" in Prčanj; in 1912, the Croatian Labor Education Society "Mlada Hrvatska" in Kotor. After the war broke out, workers' organizations in the area ceased to exist.

After the settlement between Austria and Hungary in 1867, Lloyd became an Austrian Association. A couple of years later, more precisely in 1874, it was maintaining the longitudinal line to Kotor, with departures from Trieste and Rijeka. In that year, new ports in Boka, Risan and Herceg Novi, were reached. At the time, five settlements in Boka were connected by a regular steamboat connection (Kotor, Her-

ceg Novi, Risan, Perast and Meljine) (Botrić, 1970, 48). At the beginning of 1881, when Hungary founded the *Adria* International Trading Company, based in Rijeka, Lloyd also launched a fast, longitudinal line Trieste-Kotor. It reached 12 ports. This new line employed Lloyd's steamboats *Sultan*, *Nile* and *Istanbul*, and it took only 28 hours to travel from Kotor to Split, in comparison with 56 hours previously. The line Rijeka-Kotor remained in function. *Hungarian-Croatian Steamboat Company*, which appeared in 1893, maintained Rijeka-Kotor line on a weekly basis, with one fast and two freight lines. At the beginning of the 20th century, this company had four fast lines to Gruž or Kotor, where fast steamboats *Gödöllö*, *Pannonia*, *Salona* and *Hungaria* sailed at 12 to 16 miles an hour. The best steamboat of Austrian Lloyd on the Trieste-Kotor line in 1895 was *Graf Würmbrand*, made of steel, 73.5m long, 8.9m wide. In the early 1901, Lloyd still had all these lines. One year before World War I, it held ten lines on the Adriatic. After changes in Lloyd's schedule in 1908, the Hungarian-Croatian Steamboat Company had also made changes, so the travel from Rijeka to Kotor lasted 26 hours. There had already been an agreement between Lloyd and other steamboat companies (*Hungarian-Croatian Steamboat Society*, *Dubrovačka plovidba*, *Dalmatia*) that all steamboats would charge the same first class fare for circular tours around the Adriatic (Franetović, 1960, 347). Toward the end of 1891, naval captains from Dobrota, Josip Jozo Radoničić and his cousin Filip Vidov, established a local transport steamboat company "Bokeška plovidba", based in Kotor. Destinations were between Kotor and Herceg Novi, for the transport of passengers, goods and mail. This induced the development of ports and the establishment of postal stations. Steamboats *Kotor*, *Ercegnovi*, *Tivat* and *Risan* were used for local traffic in Boka Kotorska. During the war, in 1917, the ships were sold to *D. Tripković* company in Trieste. His company was the largest private enterprise in Austria-Hungary. An important year in the history of Boka is the 1889, the time of Navy Arsenal establishment in Tivat, greatly promoting craftsmanship.

(“To have a captain in one's own tribe was the greatest pride, similar to Montenegrins boasting with their dukes. Even to now days, throughout Boka, among the common folk, ‘Captain’ means something more than ‘Mister’, and it is not rare to hear the locals calling their priests, doctors, lawyers etc. – ‘captain-priest’, ‘captain-doctor’, etc.”)

The war had left a significant mark on the social life of this region. All men from Boka eligible for military service were mobilized and sent to fronts across Europe. While they were suffering the horrors of war, their families throughout Boka were in just as much trouble, facing starvation and other wartime terrors.

A monument to the fallen patriots of World War I was later erected in Savina. On February 1, 1918, the sailors of Boka began a violent rebellion, which was ruthlessly suppressed. About 800 sailors were arrested, and four of them were shot as the rebellion leaders. During the Balkan Wars and World War I, a number of people from Boka fought on the Montenegrin side. They travelled from as far as North and South America to help in the liberation struggle. During World War I, Austrian authorities in Boka were arresting, incarcerating and executing the people of Boka. Many cultural-educational and national associations were shut down and banned. Municipal administrations had to solve numerous wartime existential problems. Agricultural production declined due to the mobilization of the population, and most of the production was confiscated for military purposes. Taking care of war orphans, war invalids and diseases, was another big problem. In Španjola, on September 17, 1914, Austrian authorities executed Milan Srzentić and Filip Hadžija. This was the first court martial sentence in Boka in the year 1914. After the capitulation of the Montenegrin army, the volunteer battalion from Boka joined Serbian army in its retreat through Albania. By the end of World War I in 1918, the Austria-Hungary monarchy had dissolved, and Boka, as a part of Dalmatia, joined the new state formation – the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

Boka Kotorska social development can be viewed as a mosaic of several characteristic periods, leaving traces of their material and spiritual culture. One is certainly the beginning of the 20th century. Its complex development is due to the specific features of its shape and natural features of the area, as well as to the geopolitical position on the southern part of the eastern Adriatic coast, which had for a long time been exposed to political influences from the sea, as well as from the hinterland. Dominant and significant social actions and activities are recognized through collective forms of expression, individual effort and institutional engagement.

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