

Croatian Interwar Cultural Memory and Disabled War Veterans

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In the contemporary international scholarly community cultural memory related to the First World War as a research field and subject area is extensively problematized and studied by social sciences and humanities. Based on the available surveyed scholarly production, it is evident that Croatian cultural memory of the First World War is an under-researched subject. This paper therefore presents preliminary findings of conducted qualitative sociological research into the development of the post-First World War cultural memory in Croatia in the interwar period. The research provides an insight into how Croatian disabled war veterans (de)constructed post-war cultural memory inside a newly formed multiethnic state of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (the Kingdom of Yugoslavia), and to which extent it was connected to national and ethnic. The discourse and discursive practices developed by Croatian disabled war veterans are analyzed in selected newspapers (*Nezavisnost*, *Hrvatski invalid*, *Ratni invalid*, *Vojni invalid*) published in the period 1920–1924. The article uses post-modernist sociological fallibilistic Foucauldian methodology of discourse analysis and Foucault's understanding of modernist societies, which is based on the research into how the language appropriates specific discourses developed by certain groups in addition to the prevalent discursive practices. Both methodology and theory are used to explain the findings in the framework of what Wolfgang Schivelbusch calls 'culture of defeat'. The research concludes that difficult post-war political, social and economic circumstances profoundly shaped the way in which the collective memory of the First World War was (de)constructed by post-war disabled veterans in Croatia and subsequently induced collective amnesia thus helping to create the culture of forgetting.

Keywords: cultural memory, disabled war veterans' discourse, discursive practices, culture of defeat, ethnic, national.

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Культурная память в Хорватии в межвоенный период и ветераны-инвалиды

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В современном международном научном сообществе представителями общественных и гуманитарных наук всесторонне обсуждается и исследуются различные аспекты культурной памяти, связанные с Первой мировой войной. Обзор опубликованных научных трудов свидетельствуют о недостаточной изученности этого явления. В настоящей статье представлены предварительные результаты квалитативного социологического исследования механизмов формирования культурной памяти в Хорватии между двумя мировыми войнами. Исследование дает представление о том, как хорватские ветераны войны, ставшие инвалидами в ходе боевых действий, (де)конструировали послевоенную культурную память в недавно образованном полиэтническом государстве сербов, хорватов и словенцев (Югославия), а также в какой степени она была связана с национальным и этническим. Анализ дискурса и дискурсивных практик хорватских ветеранов-инвалидов проводится на примере публикаций в отдельных газетах 1920–1924 гг. Постмодернистская фаллибилистическая стратегия фукодианского дискурс-анализа и понимания современных сообществ, формировавшаяся в рамках лингвистических апроприаций отдельных групп населения, а также господствовавших властных отношений, используется в статье для толкования последствий того, что В. Шивельбуш называет культурой поражения. В статье сделан вывод о решающем влиянии сложных послевоенных политических, социальных и экономических условий на процессы (де)конструкции послевоенной коллективной памяти ветеранами-инвалидами в Хорватии, приведшие впоследствии к коллективной амнезии и способствовавшие формированию культуры забвения.

Ключевые слова: культурная память, дискурсы, дискурсивные практики, ветераны-инвалиды, культура поражения, этническое, национальное.

The European and world historiography has developed a keen interest in scholarly research about the First World War cultural memory¹ in the 1980s and 1990s. The ensuing memory boom was instigated by research papers and publications about the military, diplomatic and political aspects of the First World War² as well as through reconstruction of the First World War memorial heritage and restoration of sites of memory³. Scientific field and subject areas of the First World War cultural memory were therefore problematised by social sciences and humanities, thus most prominently by historiography. Since the initial and ground-breaking theoretical efforts to conceptualize social phenomenon of collective memory by French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs and his countryman philosopher Paul Ricoeur, subsequent scholarly investigations have singled out works by German cultural

¹ The concept 'cultural memory' rests upon Halbwachs's understanding of collective memory and Ricoeur's deliberations on time and history, as well as his definition of interpretative theory of discourse.

² *Winter J., Prost A. The Great War in History. Debates and Controversies, 1914 to the Present.* Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, Sao Paulo, 2005. International Encyclopedia of the First World War. URL: <https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/project/about/> (accessed: 21.07.2020).

³ Such as Memorial Park Complex of the Heroes of the First World War in Moscow in 2005.

anthropologist Aleida Assman, English social anthropologist Paule Connerton, French historian Pierre Nora and American historian Jay Winter⁴.

However, in Croatia, according to Dobrovšak⁵, scholarly research about the First World War and Croatia's participation was mainly focused on the Yugoslav Committee's work and efforts of the South Slavic nations put into formation of "a new state"⁶. In doing so, none of the authors have examined the reasons behind the need to create a new state union. Since cultural memory about the First World War has not been nurtured and developed in Croatia, numerous subjects have been neglected or partially researched, such as cultural memory in relation to ethnic and national. However, apart from the extensive European and world historiography of the First World War, the historiography of Croatia's neighboring scholarly communities has produced important papers on the First World War cultural memory, while Croatia is significantly lagging behind⁷. Since cultural memory of the First World War in Croatia is non-existent, therefore the initial scope of the scholarly research should include systematic investigation of what was left and has survived the test of time inside various state regimes on Croatian territory. Thereby, the aim of this paper is to present from the perspective of Croatian post-war disabled veterans, how and in what way cultural memory of the First World War was (de)constructed in relation to the national and ethnic in Croatian interwar period. The following sections in the paper therefore provide, first of all, an overview of primary sources used to conduct a qualitative sociological research in addition to the methodological framework developed and the theory applied in post-modernist manner as "fallibilistic analytic strategy"⁸. Other sections then provide research findings based on the conceptual analysis and interpretations describing and defining the relationship identified between cultural memory and national and ethnic in interwar Croatia. Finally, in conclusion, the paper provides evidence as to how and in what way in the inter-war Kingdom of Yugoslavia⁹ the ethnic and national hampered the development of the post-war cultural memory in Croatia from the perspective of Croatian disabled war veterans.

The primary sources used to conduct qualitative sociological research include four newspapers published in the interwar period in Croatia: *Nezavisnost. Glasilo organizacije hrvatske zajednice za gradove Bjelovar, Križevac i okolicu*; *Hrvatski invalid. Glasilo hrvatskih invalida*; *Ratni invalid. Glasilo ratnih invalida na području Hrvatske, Slovenije, Dalmacije, Istre i Medjimurja*; and *Vojni invalid. Glasilo udruženja ratnih vojnih invalida*

⁴ For more information see: *Halbwachs M. On Collective Memory*. Chicago; London, 1992; *Ricoeur P. Time and Narrative*. Chicago; London, 1983; *Ricoeur P. Memory, History, Forgetting*. Chicago; London, 2000; *Assmann A., Conrad S. Memory in a Global Age. Discourses, Practices and Trajectories*. Houndmills; Basingstoke; Hampshire, 2010; *Connerton P. How societies remember*. Cambridge, 2010; *Connerton P. How Modernity Forgets*. New York, 2009; *Nora P. Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire // Representations. Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory*. 1989. No. 26. P.7–24; *Winter J. The Legacy of the Great War. Nine Years On*. London; Missouri, 2009.

⁵ *Dobrovšak Lj. Spomenici Židovima stradalim u Prvom svjetskom ratu na području sjeverne Hrvatske u kontekstu njihova međunarodna položaja // Historijski zbornik. God. LXX. 2017. Br. 2. P. 439–461.*

⁶ *Hamersak F. Tamna strana Marsa: Hrvatska autobiografija i Prvi svjetski rat*. Zagreb, 2013. P. 177–192; *Herman Kaurić V. Prvi svjetski rat u hrvatskoj historiografiji // Srijem u Prvom svjetskom ratu*. Vukovar, 2016. P. 21–44.

⁷ *Newman J. P. Croats and Croatia in the Wake of The Great War // Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*. 2014. Vol. 24. P. 166; *Herman Kaurić V. The First World War in Croatia — More or Less Known Facts // Review of Croatian History*. 2014. Vol. 10, iss. 1. P. 9–10.

⁸ *Seale C. The Quality of Qualitative Research*. London, 1999. P.73.

⁹ Further on referred to as the Kingdom.

*Kraljevine SHS Oblasnog odbora u Splitu*¹⁰. The selected newspapers published in the period 1920–1924 are analyzed to question the development of Croatian post-First World War cultural memory in relation to national and ethnic. However, in view of the limited scope of the article, the methodological framework and the theory used in the research enable only the presentation of the preliminary findings narrowly focusing on the text¹¹. The data was therefore collected and analyzed through application of the methodology of Foucauldian discourse analysis¹². Namely, the discourse and discursive practices developed by Croatian disabled war veterans in selected newspapers are in this paper considered to have created a unique “epistemic community”¹³ which provides an insight into how this population was living in the post-First World War Croatia and what issues they were concerned with. The target for this sociological study — Croatian disabled war veterans — has been selected because it was assumed that they would be, aside from the general Croatian population and Yugoslav government authorities, mostly interested in preserving the memory of the First World War and commemorating their dead comrades.

Therefore, in line with the Foucauldian notion of discourse¹⁴, the developed methodological framework in this paper is based on the critical analysis of disabled war veterans’ statements inside Croatian post-First World War discourse and veterans’ impact on the development of the Croatian cultural memory in the new Kingdom. Foucauldian discourse analysis is focused on what those types of statements do, rather than what lies beneath post-First World War “discourse”¹⁵ production in Croatia (namely the underlining subtext) as well as “why is it that certain statements emerged to the exclusion of all others and what function they serve”¹⁶. Thereby, the objective is to “explicate statements that function to place a discursive frame around a particular” disabled war veterans’ positions¹⁷. Namely, analyzed statements in selected newspapers are treated as war veterans’ social representations expressed in general discourse about the impact of the First World War on the Croatian society, thus producing performative effects socially constructing¹⁸ cultural memory in the Kingdom. The analyzed statements of war veterans therefore

¹⁰ Listed newspapers are available at the National and University Library in Zagreb.

¹¹ In that respect 10 publications were used as research sample: *Nezavisnost: Glasilo organizacije hrvatske zajednice za gradove Bjelovar, Križevac i okolicu*. 1922. No. 38; *Hrvatski invalid: Glasilo hrvatskih invalida*. 1924. No. 1, 2, 3, 23/24; *Ratni invalid: Glasilo ratnih invalida na području Hrvatske, Slovenije, Dalmacije, Istre i Medjimurja*. 1920. No. 1, 2; 1922. No. 17; *Vojni invalid: Glasilo udruženja ratnih vojnih invalida Kraljevine SHS Oblasnog odbora u Splitu*. 1922. No. 4.

¹² Since most of the contemporary scholars are nowadays familiar with Foucault’s works, this paper will not provide an overview of his methodological framework, as well as theoretical. However, readers are advised to consult a comprehensive introduction to Foucauldian discourse analysis methodology provided by P. Klos-Czerwińska (*Klos-Czerwińska P. Discourse: An Introduction to van Dijk, Foucault, and Bourdieu*. Wroslaw; Washington, 2015. P. 89–164).

¹³ *van Dijk T. A. A note on epistemics and discourse analysis // British Journal of Social Psychology*. 2012. Vol. 51. P. 478–485.

¹⁴ *Foucault M. The Order of Discourse // Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader*. Boston, London and Henley, 1981. P. 51–78.

¹⁵ Same is suggested by Croatian historian Filip Hameršak in his paper on how to study cultural history of the 1st WW in Croatia. *Hameršak F. Nacrt za pristup kulturnoj povijesti Prvog svjetskog rata iz hrvatske perspektive // Dani Hrvatskog kazališta: Građa i rasprave o hrvatskoj književnosti i kazalištu*. 2015. Vol. 41, iss. 1. P. 5–71.

¹⁶ *Graham L. J. The Product of Text and ‘Other’ Statements. Discourse analysis and the critical use of Foucault // Educational Philosophy and Theory*. 2011. Vol. 43, iss. 6. P. 667.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Berger P., Luckmann T. Socijalna konstrukcija zbilje. Rasprava o sociologiji znanja*. Zagreb, 1992.

“form rhetorical constructions that present a particular reading of social texts”, in this case — newspaper texts on the development of cultural memory in the post-First World War Croatian society and its relation to the national and ethnic¹⁹. This sociological research includes therefore critical analysis of all forms of signification (movement, behavior, performance, gestures, art, symbols and texts) produced inside Croatian war veterans’ discourse about its traumatized population in the aftermath of the First World War. It also demonstrates, on the one hand, how the use of particular purpose-built vocabulary related to the national and ethnic as a discursive technique has produced the meaning²⁰ present in their worldview of post-war Croatian traumatized communities. On the other hand, it indicates how newly established power/knowledge relations inside the post-First World War general discourse production in Croatia’s society prepared the ground for the cultural memory practice that derives from it²¹.

However, as indicated by Austin²², discourse is not just a description of social practice, but it is also a thing in itself; even though one has to acknowledge ambiguities and the power of words because those create concepts which constitute social reality. In that respect, concepts that are mediated through language (that informs about the real non-language world) therefore become powerful tools used by Croatian First World War disabled veterans to construct and deconstruct social reality of the post-war Croatia. Thereby, their discourse enables an analysis of the development of the cultural memory and its relation to national and ethnic resulting in improved understanding on the level of meaning and rules that constitute social action. Therefore, discourse is understood as a whole including language and non-language practices²³. In this way, the produced meanings by Croatian disabled war veterans that construct rationality of the social action inside their post-First World War discourse also provide frameworks of rules that govern their statements about national and ethnic which are then treated as good, correct, true and meaningful²⁴. It is important to note, however, that the social reality of the Croatian post-First World War cultural memory was not only the result of the produced discourse because the reality of new state regime in Croatia was created by various circumstances/events of non-discursive character (attitudes of the new state regime towards war veterans and laws/provisions)²⁵. Still, the discourse analyzed in this paper provides evidence as to how nation-

¹⁹ *Graham L. J.* The Product of Text... P.667.

²⁰ *van Dijk T. A.* The Discourse — Knowledge Interface // *Critical Discourse Analysis*. London, 2003. P.85–109.

²¹ *Foucault M.*: 1) *The Archeology of Knowledge and The Discourse on Language*. New York, 1972; 2) *Counter-Memory: The Philosophy of Difference // Language, Counter Memory, Practice. Selected Essays and Interviews*. Ithaka; New York, 1996. P.113–196.

²² *Austin J.* How to do things with words. The William James Lectures delivered at Harvard University in 1955. Oxford, 1962.

²³ The research method developed in this paper is built upon conceptual framework used to analyze discourse. See: *Cvikić S., Živić D., Bendra I.* An Image-Based Culture and Pseudo-Drama of ‘Refugeedom’ Inside Croatia’s Balkan Route Discourse // *Sudbina otvorenih granica. Zbornik radova sa znanstvenog skupa Globalizacija i regionalni identitet 2018*. Osijek, 2018. P.49.

²⁴ *Austin J.* How to do things with words. P.49.

²⁵ *Petrović Lj.*: 1) *Nevidljivi Geto, Invalidi u Kraljevini Jugoslaviji 1918–1941*. Beograd, 2007; 2) *Pravni i finansijski aspekt položaja ratnih invalida u Kraljevini Jugoslaviji 1921–1941. godine // Tokovi istorije*. 2001. Vol. 1–4. P.21–37; 3) *Diskriminacija invalida u jugoslavenskom društvu 1918–1941. godine. Oblici socijalne represije nad osobama sa invaliditetom // Tokovi istorije*. 2003. Vol. 1–3. P.21–37; 4) *Neuspeh politike zapošljavanja ratnih invalida u Kraljevini SHS/Jugoslaviji 1918–1941. Primer nelegalne društvene represije // Istorija 20. veka*. 2020. Vol. 1. P.47–60.

al and ethnic influenced the formation of Croatian cultural memory that was socially (de)constructed by the discourse of disabled war veterans about the post-First World War Croatian reality. Thereby, to overcome limitations of this paper and to provide a workable Foucauldian frame of reference, this article suggests three constitutive elements: description, recognition and classification to identify manifestations of power relations in the notions of “national and ethnic” Croatian war veterans’ discourse in the Kingdom’s cultural memory. This article regards such discourse as “management of possibilities and a question of government”²⁶. The overall theoretical interpretation of the preliminary research findings in this paper thus rests upon Foucault’s understanding of modernist societies and his conceptions of ‘power’²⁷, ‘governmentalism’²⁸, ‘securitization’²⁹, ‘discipline’ and ‘control’³⁰; while Wolfgang Schivelbusch’s notion of ‘culture of defeat’³¹ provides a framework to overall analysis and discussion of collected data on cultural memory in the post-First World War Croatia and its relation to national and ethnic.

Now, the first line of inquiry into the discourse of the post-First World War Croatian disabled war veterans’ about the development of their cultural memory during the interwar period has provided an insight into the content of the general discourse of their post-war issues inside the new state regime indicating that analyzed articles in selected newspapers show that there are four embedded discourses within the Croatian disabled war veterans’ discourse: 1) discourse of existential survival; 2) discourse of ethnicity and nationality; 3) discourse of war and trauma and 4) political and state regime discourse. Namely, in several articles the discourse of Serbian disabled war veterans³² is identified, and in only two articles³³, Croatian disabled war veteran’s discourse is related to issues of post-war commemorative practices and memory sites establishment. The second level of analysis of discursive practices of Croatian post-war disabled veterans enables to identify the conceptual frameworks which constitute their statements, thus developing purpose-built vocabularies that depict the power structure behind their social status in the society. There are four distinct conceptual frameworks evident in the analyzed discursive practices of Croatian post-war disabled veterans: 1) legal/normative, 2) political/state, 3) social/public, and 4) personal. The studied discourse has provided therefore an insight into the origins and the persistence of power dynamics behind discursive forms prevalent in the society of the new Kingdom, while the concept of power in this paper is perceived according to Foucault, as ever-present and self-perpetual of every social interaction and relation. The analysis of power relations embedded in the cultural memory of the Kingdom indicates that the national and ethnic in Croatian war veterans’ discourse

²⁶ In this paper ‘government’ as a concept is understood how Foucault defines it as power which structure the possible fields of action of others (*Foucault M. Power*. New York, 2000. P.341).

²⁷ *Ibid.* P.326–348.

²⁸ *Foucault M. Governmentality // Power*. New York, 2000. P.201–222.

²⁹ *Foucault M. The Risk of Security // Ibid.* P.365–381.

³⁰ *Zaharijević A., Cvejić I., Losoncz M. Engagin Foucault*. Vol. 1. Belgrade, 2015.

³¹ *Schivelbusch J. The Culture of Defeat. On National Trauma, Mourning, and Recovery*. New York, 2003. P.4.

³² *Mi i oni (Us and them) // Hrvatski invalid: Glasilo hrvatskih invalida*. Br. 23. i 24. Zagreb. 1. prosinca 1924. God. I. P.1–5.

³³ See, for example: *Blagoslov spomenika u Ivanovčanima // Nezavisnost: Glasilo organizacije hrvatske zajednice za gradove Bjelovar, Križevac i okolicu*. Br. 38. Bjelovar. 23. rujna 1922. God. XVI.

presented itself as a subtle power inside the imposed understanding of Yugoslavism³⁴. Namely, the national and ethnic as ever-present power in the inter-war period disciplined Croats through self-perpetuation of discursive rules (norms) which controlled that was internalized through words and images.

In particular, the development of the First World War cultural memory while the war was still raging all over the Europe was initiated with the idea to build memorials in honor of fallen heroes. In the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy already in 1915 “Alexander von Krobatin, the Minister of War,” based on the idea he took from Serbs, called for massive commemoration of fallen soldiers and building of war memorials³⁵. The implementation of such an idea was later proposed and designed by the Imperial-Royal Office for the Promotion of Trades in Vienna when in 1916 Austrian and German governments jointly established a traveling exhibition promoting artistically crafted tombs (in and out of the battlefields, and also in military cemeteries at home) as well as elaborate ceremonies organized for “brave soldiers”³⁶. Thereby, a movement which spread from Germany to Croatia was focused on building war memorials to fallen soldiers in honor and respect of their heroism³⁷. Initiated public debate that very same year about war memorials was to decide what kind of memorials should be built, how and where, and by whom³⁸. Divergent suggestions and recommendations proposed by two social circles — the army³⁹ and the civilians⁴⁰ — however, did not bring about any tangible results during the war despite the fact that the Land Committee for the Care of War Cemeteries and Graves was established in 1916 in addition to the special Department for War Graves of the Military Command in Zagreb, which took care of more than 500 war cemeteries in Croatia and Slavonia. Therefore, after the First World War maintenance of post-war military cemeteries was under the Kingdom’s authority thus regulated by the state law which stipulated also the care for enemy soldiers’ military cemeteries⁴¹. Even though, as indicated by Dobrovšak, the overall political circumstances and attitudes were not very conducive for building Croatian post-war war memorials and memory sites that commemorate fallen soldiers from the Austro-Hungarian side⁴², this could not have been prevented. On the one hand, the new regime was removing symbols of the previous monarchy from Croatia’s memorial sites

³⁴ In this paper the ideology behind Yugoslavism will not be discussed. For origins of the idea see: *Rački F.* Yugoslavism // *Discourses of Collective Identity in Central and Southeast Europe 1770–1945: Texts and Commentaries*. Vol. III/1. Budapest, 2013. P. 57–66. — This idea however was used and misused in the aftermath of the 1st WW by newly formed Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes / Kingdom of Yugoslavia. See: *Newman J. P.* Forging a United Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes — The legacy of the First World War and the ‘invalid question’ // *New Perspectives on Yugoslavia: key issues and controversies*. London, 2011. P. 46–61.

³⁵ *Barčot T.* Prešućeni rat — Korčulanski kotar u I. svjetskom ratu. Dubrovnik, 2015. P. 247.

³⁶ *Jezernik B.* Mesto brez spomina. Ljubljana, 2014. P. 332.

³⁷ U počast našim junacima, Ratnički grobovi i ratnički spomenici // *Ilustrovani list*. Br. 23, 3. lipnja 1916. P. 543–544.

³⁸ *Dobrovšak Lj.* Spomenici Židovima stradalim u Prvom svjetskom ratu na području sjeverne Hrvatske u kontekstu njihova međunarodna položaja // *Historijski zbornik*. God. LXX. 2017. Br. 2. P. 439–461.

³⁹ *Herman Kaurić V.* Za naše junake... Rad dobrotvornih humanitarnih društava u gradu Zagrebu 1914.–1918: PhD Diss. [s.l.], 2007. P. 195–196.

⁴⁰ Dižimo spomenike našim junacima // *Narodne novine*. Br. 91 (20. travnja 1916). P. 3.

⁴¹ *Marković A.* Čuvari sećanja: Memorijali Prvog svetskog rata na području Podunavskog okruga // *Zbornik radova naučnog skupa “Smederevski kraj 1918–1941”*. Smederevo, 2017. P. 211–234.

⁴² *Herman Kaurić V.* The First World War in Croatia... P. 7–22.

and war memorials⁴³, on the other hand, numerous memorials nonetheless stood the test of time despite “selective” state funding⁴⁴. However, selectivity and double standards had become a hallmark of the post-First World War cultural memory developed in the new Kingdom coming from the regime now united by the post-war state of winners (citizens of Serbia) and losers (Croatian, Slovenian, Serbian and Bosnian citizens of Austro-Hungary)⁴⁵. Thereby, becoming systematic in nature, the “legislative”⁴⁶ and state administration systems contributed greatly to the creation of divergent ways in which “constitutive nations”⁴⁷ of the Kingdom developed their post — First World War cultural memory. Turbulent political relations considerably influenced by the post-war economic and social crises, were not only marked by the newly established international world order and alliances. More importantly, they were shaped by “the tradition of compromises”⁴⁸ related to the circumstances and events during and after the First World War thus influencing the way in which war memories and emotions were collectively perceived, respected and developed by Serbs, Croats and Slovenes⁴⁹. Transgenerational transmission of trauma, collective and individual memory, commemoration practices and memory sites therefore had become products of different attitudes developed by the state regime towards constitutive nations under the umbrella of one great Yugoslav idea promoted by “the King Aleksandar”⁵⁰.

What the qualitative sociological research of the post-First World War disabled Croatian veterans’ discourse and discursive practices has brought about is new evidence as to how those circumstances under the new state regime shaped interwar Croatian First World War cultural memory in relation to national and ethnic under the unified Yugoslav idea of South Slavs. As indicated by Newman,⁵¹ after 1918, Croatia and the Kingdom itself

⁴³ *Marunčić T.* Proslava tisućgodišnjice hrvatskog kraljevstva 1925. godine i njezini odjeci u Hrvatskoj // Zbornik Dubrovačkih muzeja. 2012. Vol. 2. P. 235–250; *Kapetanić N.* Za cara i domovinu: Konavle u Prvom svjetskom ratu // Matica hrvatska Konavle. 2014. P. 33; Dubrovnik u Prvom svjetskom ratu 1914–1918. Katalog izložbe. Dubrovački muzeji. Dubrovnik, 2017. P. 72–73; *Kočevar S.* Za kralja i dom: Karlovac i Prvi svjetski rat. Katalog izložbe. Gradski muzej Karlovac. Karlovac, 2014. P. 124; *Urlić V.* U spomen 1914–1918. Makarsko primorje. Gradski muzej Makarska. Makarska, 2007. P. 10; *Škiljan F.* Prvi svjetski rat u Dalmaciji (1914–1918.). Split; Dubrovnik. 2014. P. 74.

⁴⁴ *Geiger V.* Uspomena živim i palim junacima — Zur Here der Toten und Lebenden Krieger, O spomen-panoima austro-ugarskim ratnicima iz Prvog svjetskog rata // Politički zatvorenik. 2014. Vol. 256. P. 12–13.

⁴⁵ *Jezernik B.* Mesto brez spomina. Ljubljana. 2014. P. 335–336; *Šarenac D.* Commemoration, Cult of the Fallen (South East Europe) // 1914–1918-online. International Encyclopedia of the First World War. URL: <https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/project/about/> (accessed: 21.07.2020).

⁴⁶ *Pavlović M.* Problemi izjednačenja zakona u Kraljevini Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca / Jugoslaviji // Zbornik PFZ. 2018. Vol. 68, iss. 3–4. P. 493–523.

⁴⁷ *Pintar Manojlović O.* Arheologija sećanja. Spomenici i identiteti u Srbiji 1918–1989. Beograd, 2014. P. 100.

⁴⁸ *Gabelica M.* Žrtve sukoba na Jelačićevom trgu 5. prosinca 1918. // Časopis za suvremenu povijest. 2005. Vol. 37, iss. 2. P. 467–477.

⁴⁹ *Đukić F., Pavelić M., Šaur S.* Hrvatska u Prvom svjetskom ratu — Bojišta, stradanja, društvo // *Essehst: časopis studenata povijesti i drugih društveno-humanističkih znanosti.* 2015. Vol. 7, iss. 7. P. 81–86; *Newman J. P.* Forging a United Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes — The legacy of the First World War and the ‘invalid question’ // *New Perspectives on Yugoslavia: key issues and controversies.* London, 2011. P. 46–61.

⁵⁰ *Ignjatović A.* From Constructed Memory to Imagined National Tradition: The Tomb of the Unknown Yugoslav Soldier (1934–38) // *The Slavonic and East European Review.* 2010. Vol. 88, iss. 4. P. 624–651.

⁵¹ *Newman J. P.* Croats and Croatia in the Wake of The Great War // *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society.* 2014. Vol. 24. P. 167.

“would become an unsuccessful experiment in liberal and democratic state-building” in line with what imported American “template for national determination” was supposed to achieve, thus rather unsuccessfully since its universalist claims were inapplicable in reality throughout Central and Eastern Europe. Stranded by the post-war European settlement in the territory of the Kingdom which was in theory organized and governed on modernist principle of national self-determination, Croatia was, nonetheless, in practice identified and treated unfavorably not only by the allies, but most importantly, by the new ruling Serbian monarchy. Thereby, the new Kingdom positioned itself along fault lines of the First World War, and across ethnic and national lines, labeling upfront its constituent nations not only as victors or losers. Namely, the regime had established a fault line of Yugoslav political unitarism streamlining Serbian, Croatian and Slovenes war veterans⁵² ethnicity and nationality⁵³. However, overpowered by the great sacrifices made by the Serbian nation and their army in the First World War and afterwards in creation of the state⁵⁴ Croatian nation, its war veterans, families of fallen soldiers and disabled were not only submerged in the culture of defeat but simultaneously confronted with Serbian “culture of victory”⁵⁵. Such schizophrenic nature of Croatia’s national integration into the Yugoslav’s culture, economic and socio-political life was therefore in the interwar Kingdom responsible for the formation of divergent sense of “citizenship”⁵⁶, ethnicity, and national identity among its citizens. Official recognition of Croats as a constituent nation of the interwar Kingdom, however, did not imply their full participation in the nation-state building process⁵⁷. Regardless of where they lived in the Kingdom, Serbs managed to retain and develop their sense of citizenship, ethnicity, and national identity⁵⁸ greatly supported by local authorities and state government. However, apart from being alienated, criminalized and marginalized, Croatian national identity, ethnicity and sense of citizenship in the new state was not developed and kept on a par with Serbian since Croatian national agenda in the political arena of competing interests was greatly fragmented under the pressure of aggressive assimilation policies justified by Aleksandar’s idea of Yugoslav unitarism — Yugoslavism⁵⁹. As indicated by the author of the article published in 1922, which reported about the Congress of Intellectuals and Workers (September 10) organized in Zagreb — an event considered at the time important for ‘the history of our country’ — the participants discussed the circumstances in the post-war Croatia emphasizing the difficulties of the process of the new nation-state building and the extent to which the repressive state regime inside the Kingdom was in essence undemocratic in providing freedom and

⁵² Šarenac D. Udruženje rezervnih oficira i ratnika 1919–1941 // Istorija XX veka. 2011. Vol. 1. P.27–38.

⁵³ Banac I. Nacionalno pitanje u Jugoslaviji. Porijeklo, Povijest, Politika. Zagreb, 1984.

⁵⁴ Mitrović A. Serbia’s Great War 1914–1918. Indiana, 2007.

⁵⁵ Horne J. Beyond Cultures of Victory and Cultures of Defeat? Inter-War Veterans’ Internationalism // The Great War and Veterans’ Internationalism. Houndsmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, 2013. P.207–222.

⁵⁶ There is however a legal background for such different notions of citizenship as indicated by Ivan Kosnica. Kosnica I. Citizenship in Croatia — Slavonia during the First World War // Journal of European history of Law. 2017. Vol. 1. P.58–65.

⁵⁷ Newman J.P. Yugoslavia in the Shadow of War. Veterans and the Limits of State Building 1903–1945. Cambridge, 2015.

⁵⁸ Šarenac D. Top, vojnik i sećanje. Prvi svjetski rat i Srbija 1914–2009. Beograd, 2014.

⁵⁹ Djokić D. (Dis)integrating Yugoslavia: King Alexander and Interwar Yugoslavism // Yugoslavism: Histories of a Failed Idea 1918–1992. London, 2003. P.139.

political liberties on equal terms to all constituent nations, namely to Croatian nation⁶⁰. He describes how '...this regime has reincarnated Pribičević's demon of irreconcilability, tribal hatred and destruction...selfish personal egoism' since this '...regime lives of force and power...' with '...anxiety and hatred of regime's proponents and thugs...' Then he continues saying that '...congress seeks.... affirmation of the facts...politics of peace and understanding...' since '...Croatian nation...today's Croatian Block...parties are proponents of the politics of peace and understanding...' which is '... established on the idea of the life of the nation...' Thereby, '...Croats...mental state...' was 'mentally intoxicated by the war...' and now is transferred into '...cool-headed sober thinking...' while '...the mental state of Serbs...' is in '...a state of sobriety...' The author states that the congress participants '...emphasize Yugoslavism...' and '...two distinctions when it comes to its understanding...' Participants perceive '...two political factors...two different strong traditions, namely, Serbs and Croats...' so 'the congress thereby acknowledges, maybe not formally, but in essence, as well in the content... two different nations or if you want two tribes...' However, '...the congress renounces integral Yugoslavism... the one wanted by Pribičević... and emphasizes the progressive evolutive Yugoslavism, namely, one that is as such created... this standpoint is correct since the concept of two political nations is a precondition for an agreement...' Thus, he points out that '...some congress participants... still talk about one nation called Yugoslavian... of which the two nations (tribes) are in fact based upon...' He states that participants criticize 'centralism' as an '...impossible system of rule...' and it is '...denounced by the congress...' since they think that '...the salvation is in decentralization...' and they are '...happy to say the same conclusions are reached by Serbs and other nations of this state...'⁶¹. Therefore, it is evident how the ethnic and national in the post-First World War Croatia was detrimental in construction and/or deconstruction of collective memory under the pressure of everyday survival of citizens inside the Kingdom.

So, the development of post-war cultural memory in Croatia, and inside the Kingdom, by the disabled war veterans was not their high priority since they were more concerned with their basic everyday survival under the new circumstances and state regime. Disappointed and disillusioned with the outcome of the First World War for Croatian nation, disabled Croatian war veterans epitomized the new culture of defeat present in the society which they themselves paradoxically helped to create. Addressing his fellow 'comrades' in the articles published in 1924⁶², the author points out three major lies that have sealed their destiny '...to the first lie we gave our strength and health on the battlefields of the mental house they call Europe...', '...for the second lie we have sacrificed our trust and faith in the society's social justice and in ourselves...' and '...to the third lie we gave our hope for the better, our faith in brotherhood, honesty and community ... our consolation that the victims of the first lie were not useless.'

Even though they desperately tried to rely on 'the support and strength of the Croatian nation', disabled war veterans, however, were left to their own devices, organized in

⁶⁰ From this point and onward translations of statements in newspapers texts are made by the author of this article.

⁶¹ Poslije kongresa // Nezavisnost: Glasilo organizacije hrvatske zajednice gradova Bjelovar, Križevac i okolicu. Br. 38. Bjelovar. 23. rujna 1922. God. XVI. P. 1.

⁶² Hrvatskim invalidima // Hrvatski invalid: Glasilo hrvatskih invalida. Br. 1. Zagreb. 8. ožujka 1924. God. I. P. 1.

fruitless associations and discriminated by their own comrades and the regime⁶³. Expected 'social security of disabled persons' that was to ensure war veterans' 'survival' under the state provisions and with the support of disabled war veterans' associations created more obstacles than solutions⁶⁴. Croatian disabled war veterans frequently expressed their deep disappointment and dissatisfaction with Croatian society, the regime, and veterans' associations since they were considered a burden⁶⁵. On the one hand, they were overwhelmed, on the individual level, with existential problems pertaining to their everyday life and reintegration into the society and a new state regime. On the other hand, on the group level, their efforts put into organization of associations that would ensure their protection of their own rights under the law (labor force, education, health and welfare system) were greatly hampered and limited by the new state regime provisions⁶⁶ and its bureaucratic implementation as well as due to their own internal interest-driven struggles⁶⁷. The author in the article 'Circumstances of the Disabled' outlines all those issues emphasizing how 'corruption' has spread from 'state authorities' into organizations of disabled war veterans, while limited financial allocations from the government have induced additional internal power struggles and struggle for resources inside and among organizations and members leading towards 1) interest-driven personal gains of those who were in power positions inside state institutions and bureaucracy closer to 'Belgrade' and 'Serbian Bismarck's fatherly care'; and 2) polarization inside Croatian organizations and antagonism between Zagreb's Executive Board and Central Committee in Belgrade⁶⁸.

Since their legal and social status in the Kingdom, on individual and group level, was defined and based on their ethnic and national belonging⁶⁹, this determined the way disabled Croatian war veterans were perceived and treated not only by the general population in Croatia and the Kingdom, but more importantly, by the central and local state authorities⁷⁰. Thereby, Croatian war veterans' perception of their ethnicity and nationality on the individual and group level was heterogenous since they had different understanding of their Croatian ethnicity and national belonging inside multi-national state-building process grounded in Yugoslavism. In the article 'Partition', the author interprets contemporary socio-political circumstances in the Kingdom from the point of view of Croatian disabled war veterans' stating that after the 'Vidovdan Constitution' Croatia has been di-

⁶³ Mi i oni (Us and them) // Hrvatski invalid: Glasilo hrvatskih invalida. Br. 23. i 24. Zagreb. 1. prosinca 1924. God. I. P. 1–5.

⁶⁴ Uredba o invalidskom pitanju (Disability Questions' Regulation) // Ratni invalid: Glasilo ratnih invalida na području Hrvatske, Slavonije, Dalmacije, Istre i Međimurja. Br. 1. Zagreb. 16. ožujka 1920. God. I. P. 1.

⁶⁵ Položaj naših invalid (The status of our disabled) // Vojni invalid: Glasilo udruženja ratnih invalida Kraljevine SHS Oblasnog odbora u Splitu. Br. 4. Split. 15. aprila 1922. God. I. P. 1; Dati... (To give...) // Ratni invalid: Glasilo ratnih invalida na području Hrvatske, Slavonije, Dalmacije, Istre i Međimurja. Br. 5. Zagreb. 15. svibnja 1920. God. I. P. 1.

⁶⁶ Such as: Uredba o privremenoj pomoći invalidima i porodicama naših ratnika. Službene novine Kraljevstva Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca. Br. 119, 2. juna 1920. God. II. P. 2. — The subsequent revised law on disabled war veterans was introduced in 1929.

⁶⁷ Invalidska škola. (School for disabled) // Ratni invalid: Glasilo ratnih invalida na području Hrvatske, Slavonije, Dalmacije, Istre i Međimurja. Br. 11. Zagreb. 3. listopada 1920. God. I. P. 1.

⁶⁸ Hrvatski invalid: Glasilo hrvatskih invalida. Br. 1. Zagreb. 8. ožujka 1924. God. I.

⁶⁹ Mi i oni (Us and them) // Hrvatski invalid: Glasilo hrvatskih invalida. Br. 23. i 24. Zagreb. 1. prosinca 1924. God. I. P. 1–5.

⁷⁰ Pravi invalid (True disabled) // Hrvatski invalid: Glasilo hrvatskih invalida. Broj 23. i 24. Zagreb. 1. prosinca 1924. God. I. P. 1.

vided having lost some of its territory, which he claims is 'negation of national unity' as this constitution is 'a product of distrust and dishonesty'. He states that 'Belgrade's regime has disputed its own convictions — 'that Serbs, Croats and Slovenes are one nation, thereby 'it must be clear to every Croat that joint working towards whatsoever direction with contemporary Belgrade's government and those who support it is impossible'. Then he continues saying that 'Belgrade's regime which dared to, in the name of unity, break down a thousand-year legacy of the Croatian national energy, ... (national energy) symbolized in its statehood, that has broken down every bridge of connection and blood-stained the memory of our generations that live as contemporary carriers of Croatian national consciousness in Croatian nation. With this violation every talk about brotherhood, unity soon has become obsolete and unnecessary'. Also, he says: 'we, the Croatian disabled, while we are sorry to see our nation in eternal, and now worse than ever, struggle for survival, we are also happy because in this struggle we see a proof that the natural task of Croatia is to continue the struggle building our Croatian national individuality in the group of other nations of human race. In this we see guarantees that the task of the Croatian national community is still not exhausted. And precisely we who were run down and destructed by the combat know and feel more than others that to live means to fight or at least to be able to fight'⁷¹.

The article 'Revision'⁷² calls on Croatian disabled war veterans to support 'Croatian political program' which requires revision of the Vidovdan Constitution based on following deliberations:

- 'the Croatian nation has undergone revision of its own opinion, held until now, about the unity, state community, Yugoslavism, and also about its status in this state, and about those who together with them make this state';
- 'with revision of its opinions, Croatian nation is convinced that its understanding of the unity is fundamentally different from Serbian...While interpreters of the Serbian understanding see in so-called unity just the means for Serbianization, Croatian nation has seen in the unity consequences of the Yugoslavian kinship in general';
- 'while the Serbian side's idea of unity was just a mere foundation for the implementation of the centralist state politics aspiring to dominate as somewhat more experienced and capable, the Croatian side's idea of unity was represented in the notion of the Yugoslavian national community based on the general joint future interests in the framework of other European nations...based on those realizations Croatian nation has lost the will and wish to continue to deal with such an idea leaving Serbs to realize over time which opinion is more right and capable of existing...';
- 'Croats... see in the representatives of the Serbian nation something different, something foreign, the Other (different) from their aspirations...';
- 'in this way the opinion came to revision with reference to the possibility of such a state union as it is today, and about the status held by Croatian nation in this state, and finally about whether Serbs have the right to claim their supremacy over other nations in this state and to which extent ... Today it is already no secret that this is what Serbs really want. Intoxicated by the fortunate outcome of the war,

⁷¹ Hrvatski invalid. Glasilo hrvatskih invalida. Br. 2. Zagreb. 12. ožujka 1924. God. I.

⁷² Ibid. Br. 3. Zagreb. 19. ožujka 1924. God. I.

misguided by their own ignorance and lack of knowledge of the facts, they hide themselves behind chauvinism contesting everything and acknowledging nothing which could have smeared the image of megalomaniac egotism of their chauvinism’;

- ‘Serbian intelligentsia has no doubts rendered Serbian tradition seemingly better...’⁷³;
- ‘the legend of political maturity and capabilities of the Serbian leaders’... ‘in the eyes of Croats’... ‘they are denying our Croatian past, Croatian name and statehood’ ... ‘their entire competence their competence comes from either deceiving others or retaining the old (state of affairs)’;
- ‘the right of the competent’ is ‘the right to supremacy’ in Belgrade;
- ‘Croatian nation has the task to self-liberate itself from the position it has put itself in due to its own credulity and to liberate Serbian nation from its own nightmare which restrains them from progress... and from its megalomaniac and persistent chauvinism, and to show them their real worth, thus enabling also itself and them and other nations of the sad Balkans to finally calmly work towards progress and cultural development’;
- ‘...improved and rounded Croatian nation will become good foundation for a state union’... ‘and future idealist Yugoslavism is going to be only then solid and permanent if it is based on strong foundations of rounded Croatianhood, Slovenianhood, Serbianhood and even Bulgarianhood’;
- ‘...Whoever wishes to be a Yugoslav, must know first of all what it means to be a Croat, because Croatianhood causes Yugoslavianhood, and it is not its consequence. A Croat thereby, because he is a Croat is Yugoslav, why then to create some imaginary new Yugoslavism as special nationality? ...He who ceases to be a Croat or Serb or Bulgarian is no longer a Yugoslav’;
- ‘Neither unified state, nor centralism, not even a state union are needed by the Yugoslavianhood. Bulgarian is a Yugoslav because he is a Bulgarian, and a Croat is not a Yugoslav because he is in a state union with Serbs and Slovenes, but because he is a Croat. This is the only basis upon which every Croat has to stand on having in front of his eyes that Yugoslavianhood is not and cannot be a label for one nation with four names, but label for kinship of four nations with mutual ancestry... unity of those nations, if it wants to be solid, permanent and above all just and equal... is possible only then, if the concept of Yugoslavianhood means ideological connection towards mutual progress and not towards political slavery followed by beatings, and for the benefit of the one.’

However, Split’s newspaper⁷⁴ provides insight into somewhat different discourse of Croatian disabled war veterans. Even though, similarly to their colleagues in the rest of Croatia and the Kingdom, Croatian disabled war veterans are dissatisfied with their status in the society and the way regimes have managed their existential problems⁷⁵ and inter-

⁷³ On Serbian perceived superiority over other Yugoslav nations and Serbian natural right to be a leader of the South Slavs see: Cvijić J. On national work // Discourses of Collective Identity in Central and Southeast Europe 1770–1945: Texts and Commentaries. Vol. III/1. Budapest, 2013. P. 227–233.

⁷⁴ Vojni invalid: Glasilo udruženja ratnih invalida Kraljevine SHS Oblasnog odbora u Splitu. Br. 4. Split, 15. Aprila 1922. God. I.

⁷⁵ Vojni invalid: Glasilo udruženja ratnih invalida Kraljevine SHS Oblasnog odbora u Splitu. Br. 4. Split, 15. Aprila 1922. God. I; Ibid. Br. 5. Split, 6. maja 1922. God. I; Ibid. Br. 1. Split, 1. februara 1922. God. I.

national affairs with Italy, they have different perception of Yugoslavism. Although they claim that they are the poorest disabled war veterans in the entire state⁷⁶ stuck in-between regime's bureaucratic silence/neglect and disputes of war veterans' associations, Croatian disabled war veterans in Dalmatia provide a very different self-perception of their identity in the Kingdom from their counterparts in the continental Croatia. In the article 'Our fathers of the nation'⁷⁷ they maintain the following:

- 'Beautiful is our broad, rich and unique Yugoslavia. Who loves its homeland more than us Yugoslavs from the blue Adriatic, from the beautiful shores of small Dalmatia? We daily sacrifice our children at the altar of the homeland, our innocent blood is daily spilled as a proof of our Yugoslav consciousness. But what have we witnessed? Our fathers of the state steering the state' wheel look as if they do not see it, as if they do not hear our painful cries, as if Dalmatia is not integral part of our Yugoslavia. <...> The people are upset, they do not understand the standing of the government in Belgrade which as a sovereign state based on the alliance with Italy withholds so much itself and degrades its authority. <...> Is our country really a sovereign state? Are our fathers of the state really our fathers? <...> However, Vidovdan Constitution constructs our State as a whole, which is divided into Districts. In this unique homeland of ours, the Government itself compromises the constitutionality of the state and destroys the unity with different laws pertaining to a particular province. All possible and impossible taxes are asked from us, while in Serbia there are no taxes on craftsmanship, there are no taxes for disabled, there is no income tax? Is this a unified State? <...> Does this injustice not tear apart our disabled chests; does not our Yugoslav patriotic heart hurt? Does it not bring to despair every honest Yugoslav who cares for the life of our dear small Yugoslavia, who cares for the harmony, justice, and equality of all three tribes of our state? Who is to be blamed for the dissatisfaction and deconsolidation of our state? Who is to be blamed for sabotaging it? Everybody knows who is to be blamed. Is it the collegiality of the Central Committee of the Serbian disabled towards us? Is this the way to implement harmony and unity of our organizations in the state, when they insist to bring about such unjust law on the disabled? Who is to be blamed for our disputes? Who is to be blamed for our division? Are only Croatian separatists to be blamed? Ney! You at the steering wheel of the state! Step aside from it, you, who were raised in Austrian and Serbian spirit! Withdraw for God's sake, if you love our unified homeland. Do not poison our Yugoslavian blue, red and white spheres, because you cannot readjust to this spirit...'

Therefore, the development of post-war Croatian cultural memory was neglected by disabled war veterans not only due to prioritized existential management of their everyday life, but more importantly, due to the institutional and public treatment they received from the state authorities based on perceived and real Austro-Hungarian loyalties, prior and during the war⁷⁸, and their ethnic and national belonging to the Croatian nation.

⁷⁶ Vojni invalid: Glasilo udruženja ratnih invalida Kraljevine SHS Oblasnog odbora u Splitu. Br. 1. Split, 1. februara 1922. God. I.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Huzjan V. Raspuštanje Hrvatskog domobranstva nakon završetka Prvog svjetskog rata // Časopis za suvremenu povijest. Godina 37. 2005. Vol. 2. P. 445–465; *Bjelajac M.*: 1) Vojska Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata

Hence, their contribution to the development of the First World War cultural memory in Croatia is marginal and fragmented.

How those circumstances in the new state regime shaped interwar Croatian First World War cultural memory in relation to national and ethnic under King Aleksandar's Yugoslavism is evident from the Croatian disabled war veterans' discursive practices. The identified power inequalities produced and reproduced by the post-war disabled veterans' discourse indicates who, in Croatian case, is included and/or excluded in embedded discourses (discourses that are in competition with each other); and where the hegemony, different power positions and relations of the developed discourse lies⁷⁹. The persistence of power dynamics behind discursive forms prevalent in the society of new Kingdom, thus has to do with political opinion makers (both in Croatia and Belgrade) since they were much like their international counterparts under enormous pressure to deliver workable and functional solutions to perceived unresolved war veterans' question posed by disabled Croatian war veterans. Socially constructed Yugoslavism imposed by the regime's interpretation of the South Slavs' unitarism brought about counterproductive treatment of the disabled war veterans and contributed to ethnically dispersed uncertainties of enforced Yugoslav statehood. This, however, has necessitated acute production of politically mediated occasions for ever increasing securitization, governmentalization, management and control of the Croatian nation in general⁸⁰. Therefore, conceptual and discursive categories that determined aspects of ethnicity and nationality required re-reification inside socially constructed dominant discourse by the regime on the question of the disabled in the Kingdom. To defy the culture of defeat disabled war veterans from Croatia have to seize the dominant discourse of Yugoslavism that surrounds and superimposes how post-war veterans are to speak and think about the connection between the national and ethnic in the Kingdom. Therefore, the conceptual framework of Croatian disabled war veterans' discourse is locked predominantly inside two embedded discourses of existential survival and political and state regime's discourse. The value-laden vocabulary of two embedded discourses (discourse of existential survival and political/state's discourse) enabled multifarious articulations of the notions of national and ethnic found in Croatian disabled war veterans' discourse. The wider dynamics of concepts therefore was (re)constructed to facilitate the regime's appropriations of the culture of defeat. Developed in such a way, it reclaimed the entire Croatian space and emphasized the disabled war veterans' inability to create their own post-First World War cultural memory.

Furthermore, the institutional framework behind those embedded discourses, however, plays the pivotal role in governmentalization and politization of life of the Croatian disabled veterans which paradoxically helps to constitute the regime's proliferation of utilitarian supremacy of the Serbian nation. Thereby, it renders ethnic and national in Croatia as existentially temporal and transitory issue in the process of the democratic nation-state building of the Kingdom.

Trying to find a workable solution to the general question of disabled war veterans, the government utilized repressive preemptive strategies to prevent possible and/or real threats to the regime posed by Croatian disabled war veterans. One of the strategies was

i Slovenaca 1918–1921. Beograd, 1988; 2) *Vojska Kraljevine SHS/Jugoslavije 1922–1935*. Beograd, 1994; 3) *Jugoslavensko iskustvo sa multietničkom armijom 1918–1991*. Beograd, 1999.

⁷⁹ Foucault M. *The Subject and Power*. New York, 2000. P. 326–348.

⁸⁰ Foucault M. *Governmentality* // *Ibid*. P. 201–222.

criminalization of the Croatian disabled war veterans whenever they voiced out dissatisfaction or, acted upon selective implementation of veterans' law provisions by local and/or national authorities. It is evident from the embedded discourse of war and trauma that local and national authorities had managed to selectively contain under the umbrella of Yugoslavism the dissatisfaction felt by Croatian disabled war veterans with respect to their status in the society. Therefore, the notions of ethnicity and nationality embedded in the discourse of Croatian disabled war veterans from Dalmatia were very different from those of their counterparts from continental Croatia. The ethnic and national components in the discourse of disabled war veterans from Dalmatia strengthened political agendas and policies of the regime thereby empowering the state's policy of aggressive securitization through assimilative power of Yugoslavism. Notions of ethnicity and nationality in the discourse of their counterparts from continental Croatia, however, were utilized to counteract the very subtle power of Yugoslavism by exporting veterans' unresolved issues to proponents of the Croatian political opposition. Thereby, the national and ethnic did serve to authorize anew the protracted Croatian national struggle with Serbian dominance and state power inside the new Kingdom. It could be argued then that the intrinsic working of induced heterogeneous understanding of Yugoslavism as ever-present power among Croatian disabled war veterans' discourse collides with the efforts of the regime to support veterans' institutional organization based on principles of brotherhood, unity, and equality.

However, the real and potential threat posed by the Croatian disabled war veterans evident in their discourse, is also a product of self-perpetuated discursive practices related to divergent notions of ethnic and national. Namely, language appropriations in such context had paradoxically provided enormous power of control to both corrupted authorities and to some members of the association of Yugoslav veterans. They had benefited greatly from veterans' disputes about the unresolved veterans' question — King Alexander's Yugoslavism.

Furthermore, the regime's responsibility towards its war veterans fixed their status in the normative/legal taxonomies of legislated dysfunctionality and partiality. It is evident from the embedded political and state's discourse that its value-laden vocabulary shaped Croatian disabled war veterans' discursive practices. At same time, these while practices were conceptually framed in such a way that was contrary to what was intended, and thus helped to justify securitization/criminalization of disabled war veterans' disability whenever they tried to challenge their maltreatment by the state system. Thereby, Croatian disabled war veterans are those who refuse to comply to normative efforts to exercise legitimate sovereignty of state power on their ethnicity and nationality since their newly founded heterogeneous identity is labeled and compartmentalized inside different notions of ethnic and national. Such normative compartmentalization is flattened by unitarist Yugoslavism inside generic logic of normalized post-war interstate relations, treating Croatia's culture of defeat in self-explanatory terms. However, this self-explanatory generic logics of Yugoslavism is a tool frequently used as well by Croatian disabled war veterans' discourse to abstract individual and fragmented events of displayed public dissatisfaction with their social standing and maltreatment by the regime. Its conceptual framework on ethnic and national thus bares striking resemblance to embedded political discourse, while discursive practices self-perpetuate power relations of selective notions of ethnic and national inside seemingly all-inclusive Yugoslavism.

In conclusion, it could be argued that all of this contributed first and foremost to an “epistemological impasse”⁸¹ and/or “epistemic crisis”⁸² since the subtle working of induced understanding of Yugoslavism as ever-present power disciplined Croatian inter-war disabled war veterans’ discourse through self-perpetuation of discursive rules (norms) endemically bound to ethnic and national. What could be inferred from the studied conceptual framework is its power to subjugate people to taxonomic/legislative and state mechanisms of control and surveillance where discourse of Croatian disabled war veterans paradoxically contributes to epistemic crisis related to ethnic and national under the umbrella of all-encompassing Yugoslavism. Therefore, their discursive practices deployed to humanize and emancipate disabled war veterans in the eyes of the public and politicians nonetheless contributed only to protraction of culture of defeat, while transition from victim to survivor status and creation of a resilient post-First World War cultural memory in Croatia was umbilically connected to the ethnic and national presenting themselves as a disruptive manifestation of Yugoslavism. Hence, the subsequent absence of the post-First World War cultural memory in Croatia.

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⁸¹ Roitman J. *Anti-Crisis*. Durham, 2013. P. 12–50.

⁸² Hass P. Introduction: Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination // International Organization. 1992. Vol. 46, iss. 1. P. 1–35.

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