

## CROATIAN COUPLE DANCES FROM 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY TILL THE PRESENT DAY: THE WALTZ AND SALONSKO KOLO

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### Abstract

In placing the dance events and dance entertainments in the social context of 19<sup>th</sup> century Zagreb, Croatia, we will present their role and influence on Zagreb social life over a period of major political turmoil. During the period of Croatian national revival, the Illyrian movement (1830-1848), dance halls became one of the very important places where the Illyrians gathered and one of the factors in promoting their ideas. The frequency in organising and holding dance socials was primarily linked with long-term efforts to seek out and make relevant appropriate dance venues. We will first introduce dance venues and then trace the arrival of the waltz into Croatian ballrooms. In doing so, we couldn't help but compare it with the appearance of the domestic urban couple dance *salonsko kolo*, which sprang as a patriotic reply to the charming waltz. In order to express resistance to the imposed foreign influences, dance entertainments proclaimed and promoted national colours, national fashion, and patriotic verses and it was in this aura that the Croatian or Slavonic *kolo*-dance was born. In the text we trace the arrival, spreading, coexistence at balls, and the survival of the waltz and *salonsko kolo* until today.

### Zagreb Dance Venues

While dances from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century were noted only in passing or were briefly mentioned, largely in the chronicles describing Zagreb life and customs, the daily newspapers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century have ample interesting information about dance events. *Narodne novine*<sup>1</sup>, and its literar supplement *Danica*<sup>2</sup> in particular, had a host of reports on the time, place and occasion underlying the holding of a particular dance along with reports in which one could read about the number of persons present at the dance, the order and protocol of the dances on the programme, and even the atmosphere that ruled at the dance venues.

With the strengthening of the noble and aristocratic families at the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, written traces indicate that Zagreb danced largely in the noble Upper Town aristocratic mansions, in the homes of the Zagreb nobility. Franjo Bučar, the historian, described the everyday life and customs of old Zagreb, listing by name the nobles who organised home entertainment and dances in their homes (cf. Milčec, 1989:16). Countess Maria Erdödy, the wife of Viceregent Ludvig Erdödy, organised masked balls at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Premrl, 1974:139). Information in Adam Krčelić's *Annuae* chronicle shows that the first Carnival dances and masked balls were arranged

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1-*Narodne novine* [National Newspaper] was started in Zagreb in 1835 under the title *Novine horvatske* [Croatian Newspaper], from 1836 to 1843 the title was *Ilirske narodne novine* [Illyrian National Newspaper], while from 1843, because the Illyrian name was banned, it became *Narodne novine*. It still comes out today as the Official Gazette of the Republic of Croatia ([S.n.] 1997:160). 2-*Danica* was a literary paper with cultural and educational aims; it started to come out in 1835 as a weekly supplement to *Novine horvatske*. The "horvatsko, slavonska, dalmatinska" attribute and/or "Illyrian" was changed in 1836, 1843, and 1948. It was a medium of linguistic standardisation and culturo-political integration. It came out in Zagreb from 1835 to 1849, in 1853, and from 1862 to 1967 ([S.n.] 1996:234).

by Countess Tereza Batthyány as early as in 1754. Since dance entertainments were a novelty in the social and entertainment life of Zagreb at that time, they were met by various opposition, criticism and condemnation. Krčelić characterised those first dances as “a temple of lust” and nest of promiscuity. Describing the “living pictures”, which were an integral part of 18<sup>th</sup> century dance events, he criticised “the debauchery and lasciviousness in which a man frolicked with the women, so that his legs were between the legs of the woman, with one leg between the legs of one woman, and the other between the legs of another” (Krčelić, 1952:129-130). However, dance entertainment quickly became the fashion and the place where the ruling Zagreb classes spent their social life. The chronicler Dragutin Hirc noted that, wanting to be “distinguished, everyone yearned [to be] at a dance ball or in the theatre” (Hirc, 1987:100).

At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and during the 19<sup>th</sup>, the Croatian lands were disunited territorially<sup>3</sup> and under the great political and thus inevitable social influence of Budim, Vienna and Prague. On the other hand, young intellectuals for their part, educated at European universities, spread the influence of the Slavic lands and their common political ideas.<sup>4</sup> The age of the Croatian national revival, the Illyrian movement (1830-1848), was a period of the awakening of national consciousness, rejection of the foreign and promoting of the domestic language, customs, music, song, and thus also – dance. During those years in Zagreb, the Illyrians tried to ensure that the ‘national spirit’ took hold in the everyday festive life of Zagreb. Even previously, the popular dance evenings and balls had been slightly changing their musical and dance content. Along with the ‘European’ social dances, ‘national’ dances were being included more frequently (Franković, 1984:169-174).

Up until the Illyrian Movement, when the estates were brought together more in opposition to foreign influences, the dance entertainments were largely detached, that is, held separately for the citizenry and for the nobility. The citizenry visited their own ‘*purgar dances*’<sup>5</sup> that were held in taverns and cafés. From records on payment of community tariffs for those events, we learned that several ‘balls’ with hundreds of visitors were held at various taverns during only one Carnival season around the year 1780. It is mentioned that such events were held in taverns on the central Lower Town square, Harmica<sup>6</sup> (Karaman and Kampuš, 1994:146). There were several inns on the southern side of Zagreb’s Harmica, where “they ate and drank day and night, danced, sang, to the music of a bass and tweedle *gusle*, and make a lot of noise” (Hirc, 1987:138). In his Autobiography, Krešić writes that when organising Carnival dances, “the aristocracy in Zagreb held its entertainment exclusively for themselves at smallish venues, while the citizenry did so at the newly-built shooting range, in a small hall or unimpressive lateral rooms without sufficient comfort” (Krešić, 1898:69). The Zagreb café proprietor, Pley, stood out as an organiser of Carnival celebrations, arranging dances for the nobility and for the citizenry. In 1786, he hired the great hall of the Vojković

3-Today’s Croatia was part of the Hapsburg Monarchy at that time with divided administration. The Banate of Croatia was under the administration of the Croatian Sabor, or Parliament, the Military Borderland or Krajina under the direct authority of the Court Military Council in Vienna, while Dalmatia and Istria were administered by the Viennese Court.

4-Attainment of economic (by abolishment of the feudal order) and political autonomy within the Habsburg Monarchy (by the restoration of authority to the national institutions and support for the use of the native Croatian language).

5-People originally from Zagreb are called Purgeri.

6-Today, Ban Josip Jelačić Square, Zagreb’s central square.

mansion (at Matoš Street 9)<sup>7</sup> for 'refined dances', and the City Council hall for entertainments for the citizenry. During that season, Pley held 30 events that were visited by some two and a half thousand guests (Karaman and Kampuš, 1994:146).

Dances in Zagreb were largely organised at the time of Carnival. The social life of the citizens of Zagreb at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century – apart from during special and/or Carnival periods – took place largely within the domestic, home atmosphere, within the circle of family and friends. The months of Carnival were fairly cold so that organisation of dances required the appropriate enclosed venue for dancing. In other words, no appropriate public venues existed at which the people of Zagreb could meet, chat and enjoy themselves in their free time (Ladović, 1974:127). At the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a start was made on solving the problem of space for both citizens of Zagreb and the theatre companies that were active in Zagreb from 1780 and 1860, which were encountering the same problem (Batušić, 1974:108).

When the Clasiſsa Convent<sup>8</sup> passed to the city administration after the disbanding of the Order of St Clare (1782), the first public theatre auditorium in Zagreb was set up there for holding dances and productions of theatre shows (Cindrić, 1969:26-27). When Count Ante Pejačević had a large mansion built in 1796, he included a dance hall along with a stage and auditorium (Premerl, 1974:139). After Count Pejačević's death, Count Antun Amadé de Varkonyi<sup>9</sup> became the new owner of the theatre in 1807.<sup>10</sup> Count Amadé gave the theatre its name, while Maksimilijan Vrhovac<sup>11</sup> put up the necessary money (Cindrić, 1969:35). Dance entertainments and theatre productions performed by the travelling German companies were held in that hall until the beginning of the 1830s (Karaman and Kampuš, 1994:180). However, the Amadé Theatre became unsuitable for the more ambitious theatre undertakings and too small for large dances.

From resources won by chance in the lottery, the Zagreb merchant Kristofor Stanković made a cash gift to Zagreb for erecting the first permanent theatre building. With the building of the theatre on St Mark's Square, Zagreb received its first public dance hall, while a few years later (in 1837) when the shooting gallery at Tuškanac was built, the 'Zagreb Marksmen Society' brought together the 'patriotic' public at brilliant dances held there (Premerl, 1974:139). The Society arranged brilliant dances so that the Shooting Range and/or the social hall beside it, soon became the hub of the social life of the Zagreb of that time, and was to remain so for decades (Ladović, 1974:127-128). As the middle-class society became economically and politically stronger, especially with the appearance of Illyrianists on Zagreb's social scene, social life became significantly intensified. The growing middle-class stratum that was looking for entertainment took over the organisation of social life and prompted and sought ways for building newer and larger public venues where entertainments and dances could be organised.

In 1846, the Illyrians bought the mansion<sup>12</sup> and converted it into the National Hall. Meetings were held and dances arranged in the main hall, the Dance Hall that gave its name to the entire

7-All the streets mentioned and those that will be referred to later in the text are situated in the centre of Zagreb, Croatia's capital. Zagreb's streets and squares are specified so that dance venues can be traced.

8-In Opatička Street (the City of Zagreb Museum today).

9-Antun Amadé de Varkonyi (1757-1835), royal chamberlain and Great County Prefect of Zagreb.

10-At Demetrova Street.

11-Bishop of Zagreb (1787-1827).

12-Mansion had been built a few years previously (in 1838) at Opatička Street 18 (now the Institute of the

building. Various Revivalist and cultural activities and social organisations were located at the National Hall, so that it became the focal point of the cultural, entertainment and political life of Zagreb (Karaman and Kampuš, 1994:182).

For its part, the Hungarian Society bought the abovementioned house with a 'dance hall' (at Demetrova) in 1845, as a counter-balance to the Illyrian National Hall. That building was called the Casino and dance evenings were held there regularly. The Casino and the Shooting Range became rivals of sorts in organising larger and more attractive dance evenings, particularly during the time of the Croatian national revival.

Twofold attitudes of Zagreb public prevailed. There was awareness of Illyrian ideas and the efforts of the Illyrians to promote the national – from language, mode of attire, national colours – but Zagreb society was still inclined at that time to the already traditional, foreign, largely Viennese fashion and the Viennese school even in certain minor aspects of manners that were not in keeping with the national spirit, but were present and thus accepted. However, resistance and even hostility to what was Hungarian and Austrian was clearly manifested in Zagreb. The Shooting Range and the *Casino*, as representatives of national convictions, on the one hand, and pro-Hungarian stances on the other, were at the forefront in expressing mutual hostility and competitiveness in preparing and organising dances.

### Croatian National Revival and Dance Balls in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

The appearance of social dance in Europe was linked with the growth of the larger European cities and conditioned by the development of trade and crafts. Social and/or city dances made their way to Zagreb from the European cities, leaving their first known traces during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, while they changed in form and significance during the 19<sup>th</sup>. Popular social dances like *minuet* and *co-tillon*, because of the numerous complex forms and steps, give way to simpler and merrier dances of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The *waltz*, *polka*, *gallop*, *quadrille* and *mazurka* were danced at social balls.

Already mentioned literary magazine *Danica Ilirska* published reports about balls and dance events, which we will be using further in the text to write about what was danced and to describe how, in 19<sup>th</sup> century and during the Illyrian movement, couple dances which originated from folk dances (domestic peasant dances) intertwined with foreign couple dances which arrived in Zagreb dance halls.

We would single out the waltz as the most dominant and most interesting 19<sup>th</sup> century dance. It was performed as a social, national and stage dance. It can be found in all the dance programmes preserved at the Museum of the City of Zagreb.<sup>13</sup> Although it was the most popular and well-loved dance, it was constantly subject to criticism since, apart from the overly bold, for that time, physical closeness of the dance partners, its non-Slavic origins were held against it.<sup>14</sup> Particularly during the Illyrian period, "the Viennese waltz also had its German, that is, hostile affirmation"

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Croatian Academy of Sciences and Art) by the architect Bartol Felbinger who was the most important domestic architect in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and leading representative of Classicist architecture in Zagreb and continental Croatia

13-The Zagreb City Museum is now home to more than two hundred different examples of the dance programmes. The oldest example is of lawyers' ball and dates from 1838. The last one is dance programme with list of dances from the journalists' ball from 1935 (Premerl, 1974:141).

14-About the pervasive popularity of the waltz as well as the waltz crossing the boundaries of acceptable behaviour see Knowles (2009).

(Kassowitz-Cvijić, 1927. 20. 2.). “[T]here was a fervent struggle against the seductive Viennese waltz, which our ladies defended with persistent pleas and melancholic sighs”, so a resourceful Count Jurica Oršić ordered Croatian melodies to be performed in  $\frac{3}{4}$  time and thus “patriotism was pleased, and the waltz was still played” (Premerl, 1974:140).

In the old papers giving news about dance, we found an article in *Danica* from 1840 by an unknown author who describes the Carnival in Zagreb. He notes “all new waltzes and *kalops*, this year composed in unusually big numbers by domestic composers, full of folk Illyrian tunes, and accepted with excitement by our folk” ([S.n.] 1840:43). In his article “This Year’s Carnival in Zagreb”, Vukotinović wrote that there were entertainments at the Casino and certain private houses, however, he did not attend them since he did not want to visit places “where patriotism disappears” (Vukotinović 1843, No. 9). At the same time, he gave prominence to the role of the Zagreb Marksmen Society, whose balls were “the most important, they had significance, significance that was clear to everyone, that this ball was being held in Zagreb, in a land where the Slavs live”. He emphasized that the folk circle dance *narodno kolo* which slowly became a part of the Zagreb dance repertoire “was performed every time and, apart from that, the hall was decked out in national colours, the notices were in the national language everywhere, various national melodies were played, and the ladies and girls, the men and the youths, competed in speaking in the national language only” (Vukotinović, 1843, No. 9).

Since the structure of the circle dance, which connected the dancers and thus included individuals into the community, perfectly suited the patriotic ideology of the Illyrians about the unity of Slavic peoples, *narodno kolo* became the dance symbol of the unity of South-Slav peoples (Sremac, 1988:143). *Narodno kolo*, which later became known as *salonsko kolo*, emphasized the *cultural identity* of the Croatians in opposition to the other popular social dances of 19<sup>th</sup> century like the waltz and polka (Dunin, 1988:110). Thus certain dance figures or only some of their steps from the folk circle dance, performed by peasants in villages during village festivities, slowly entered Zagreb ballrooms as a part of the dance repertoire at the Illyrian masked balls (Franković, 1977:15; [S.n.] 1840:43).<sup>15</sup> Still, it’s highly unlikely middle-class society would have accepted *narodno kolo* in its original choreographic and musical form so it is no wonder that the choreographed round dance appeared (Sremac, 1988:143). Therefore, *kolo* cannot be called folk dance, but salon dance with figures partly based on Slavonian folk dance (Dunin 1988:110). *Kolo*, which was accepted with joy and open arms, only few could dance. “Our folk dance *kolo*, which almost went into oblivion, was performed with cheerfulness and joy” ([S.n.] 1840:51-52). *Narodno kolo* was performed at a ball in Zagreb in 1840 by an unknown society “wearing folk costumes who were led into the ballroom by the pipers” ([S.n.] 1840:43, No.11).

This marks the beginning of the merging of couple dances based on folk dances with foreign couple dances and their coexistence till the present day, at rural parties and urban balls.

A short article, issued in *Danica* during Carnival time on 27 January 1842, mentions a ball entitled ‘folks evening ball’ held in Zagreb. Vukotinović criticizes the title “folk party” and wonders

15-We don’t know exactly which circle dance it is about, we can only trust the articles in *Danica* that it is about a folk circle dance additionally accompanied by the presence of the pipers (Sremac 1988:143).

16-In the text entitled On Folklore, Maja Bošković-Stulli says that Vukotinović surprisingly maturely noticed the relevant characteristics of folklore at the Illyrian folk balls, and what the adjective folk means and denotes for him (Bošković-Stulli, 1971:169).

what is folk there.<sup>16</sup> He explains that folk is something that rules in the folk and those are customs, folk costumes and the language. However, at this “European ball the costumes are European, customs as well, which we all know under the term *etiquette*” (Vukotinović, 1842:23). Still, *kolo* attracted the most attention, introduced into salon for the first time, according to Vukotinović. Marko Bogunović, who choreographed *kolo* (Kuhač, 1904:30), called it *slavonsko kolo*, but since young Illyrians wanted the Croatian circle dance, he also choreographed *hrvatsko kolo*. The music for both choreographies was composed by Vatroslav Lisinski<sup>17</sup> (Kuhač 1904:30; Sremac 1988:144).

Apart from *narodno kolo*, *hrvatsko* and *slavonsko kolo*, the term *dvoransko kolo* became a general term for the aforementioned dances. Later, *salonsko kolo* is also quite often in use or just *kolo*, which later remained on the dance repertoire in the Croatian cities until the Second World War (Sremac, 1988:144). By using *dvoransko kolo*, Kuhač “precisely indicated its specific character in accordance with the established rules for that kind of dance”, also emphasising the difference between *narodno kolo* and its interpretation for balls in middle-class and aristocratic circles (Hrbud-Popović 1990:199) and calls it “finer than folk, but still such that folk people could in that elegant circle dance recognise characters, which they could perform in their simple circle dance” (Kuhač, 1893:6). In the written texts from that time we learn very little about the very structure of *kolo*. We also know it’s about a couple dance where different dance figures are performed. The number of dance figures and couples differ depending on the source, naming mostly seven dance figures for *slavonsko kolo* and six for *hrvatsko kolo* (compare Hrbud-Popović, 1990).

Apart from *narodno kolo* there were also *cotillon*, *quadrille* and *polka* which were danced once or twice at every ball, but at Carnival in 1843 the *waltz* was the most popular. As a great patriot, Vukotinović is surprised and finds the answer in the simplicity of the waltz: “though the waltz being vulgar, simple, without changes, a man, who is a great friend of changes, likes it the most. It might be because it causes not many worries and requires just a little bit of attention. When a man holds his partner tight and starts turning recklessly, just as they turn once, they can turn ten times or a hundred times... and people like those *sinecures*, the more comfortable they are, the more liked they are” (Vukotinović, 1843:36). Despite being concise and written by a journalist, it is probably the first description of the waltz in Croatia.

Dragutin Rakovac’s memoirs reveal a very interesting letter by Stjepan Pejaković, who mentions a Slavic ball in Vienna at Carnival, on 4 February 1844. Pejaković says he didn’t manage to bring the Illyrian musicians so it was questionable how our *kolo* would be performed. But, Mr. Brić saved the day; he danced *kolo* in Zagreb and knew the necessary figures. He taught eight Illyrians and eight Slavic girls to dance *kolo* for this occasion. He also selected the music from folk songs and gave it to the orchestra. So our *kolo* was performed by eight couples twice that evening though it was announced only once on the repertoire, next to all-pervasive *polka* and *waltz*. It was interesting to notice that there were more than 400 guests at the ball and when *kolo* was played, only eight newly taught couples danced, whereas the other dances were performed by about a hundred couples (Laszowski and Deželić, 1922:302-303).

In order for the dance balls to develop and function well, as it is the crucial element of all parties, it was necessary to have professional dance teachers and dance schools. Therefore,

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17-Vatroslav Lisinski (1819 - 1854) was the first Croatian professional musician who also laid the groundwork for the national movement in Croatia, especially opera, solo-music piece, orchestral and choir music.

a dance teacher Alojzije Deperis arrived from Trieste with the intention to teach “both domestic and foreign dances” (Sremac, 2001:45). Albert Dragoner, a “Horvat Varaždinec”<sup>18</sup> [a Croatian from Varaždin] became known somewhat later with his advertisement in which he emphasised his sound knowledge of all European and national dances (*Narodne novine* 1847).

However, Pietro Coronelli, an Italian ballet master, is considered to be the first permanent dance teacher; he came to Zagreb in 1859 at the invitation of Baron Ambroz Vranyczany to undertake the teaching of his daughter Klotilda. Coronelli soon expanded his activities and, apart from his work in the theatre, gave lessons to the public both in group courses and privately. Coronelli’s “advertisement for teaching of dance” came out in *Pozor* in 1860. He played an active part in the teaching and affirmation of social dances right up until his death in 1902, when his daughter Elvira continued to teach dance with the help of her sister Bianca (Sremac, 1988:144-145).

It can reasonably be assumed that it was precisely the dance teachers who arrived in Zagreb from European cities who were the main and decisive factor in the dissemination of the European dances, which also became fully adopted in Zagreb.<sup>19</sup>

“There is a piece of information from 1847. A gala ball was held on the occasion of the gala opening of Zagreb ballroom at *Narodni dom* in February 1847, where *kolo* “was followed by the usual European dances” ([S.n.] 1847:28). The anonymous author of the text says if we cannot have only domestic dances at balls, it would be good if “we had domestic folk music for the European dances” and thus compensate for the lack of domestic dances. Though there were many articles written in *Danica* for years about pieces of music for waltzes and polkas by domestic authors, which gave a patriotic mark to popular European dances, it was more likely that at the balls those dances were performed with the original music by foreign composers. At the end of the discussion about dance, the author asks a question which reveals a bit about the influence and merging of urban and rural dances that took people of that time by surprise: “who could imagine several years ago, that our *kolo* would be introduced to elegant balls!” ([S.n.] 1847:28). The next article on the Slavic ball held in Vienna also in February 1847, which hosted Czechs, Croatians, French, Germans, Russians and very few Poles, was written by Bogdan Kuretić. He also suggests *kolo* and the accompanying music should adjust to balls better, so they can, like *polka*, become popular across Europe (Kuretić, 1847:36)

The Zagreb City Museum’s collection of dance programmes contains a fan from the lawyers’ ball, which took place on 12 February 1848. The fan has eight wings and each wing has one dance written on each side. “The beautiful fans (*Fächer*) for ladies were elegantly embroidered with names of dances on each side, keeping the list of dances before and after midnight” ([S.n.] 1848a:32). Thus we learn about the dance repertoire of the lawyers’ ball: *horvatsko kolo*, *polka*, *quadrille*, *walzer*, *kolo slavonsko*, *polka*, *mazurka* (Premerl, 1974:143). *Danica* reports about the ball saying that the prominent place was reserved for “folk dances” and there were four of them: “*kolo horvatsko*, *kolo slavonsko*, *polka* and *mazurka*”, that they “express in the clearest way the

18-Varaždin is a city not far from Zagreb.

19-The dissemination and popularity of the *kolo*-dance was also contributed to by the booklet in pocket-book format, written by an unknown author, which was sold under the dual language title *Kolo hervatsko-Das kroatische Kolo* (*Narodne novine* 1848, 9. 02, No. 12). The booklet was probably the first in a series of several descriptions of the *kolo*-dance that were published later. Kuhač utilised this booklet in compiling his description of the *Courtiers Kolo* that he published in a paper that came out in *Vienac* in 1872 (Kuhač-Koch, 1872).

importance of nobleness of those who call those dances the domestic ones" ([S.n.] 1848a:32). So polka, waltz and quadrille are on the opposite side of three Slavic folk dances performed at balls for ladies and gentleman in Zagreb.

"In all three dances, *horvatsko*, *slavonsko kolo* and *mazurka* one line of Slavic connection can be seen. The centre of it is *slavonsko kolo*, and it seems, if an Illyrian Slavonic man opened his arms, he could use his right hand to dance *mazurka* with a Pole, and *kolo* with his Illyrian Croatian brother. ... Seen as one, these three dances are like a piece of art by one big artist. *Slavonsko kolo* brings the theme and allegro, *horvatsko kolo* adaggio, and *mazur* vivace brillante and finale" (ibid.).

At the ball, which took place at the beginning of March 1848, there were more than 1200 guests. Apart from the citizens of Zagreb, there were also ladies and gentlemen from Varaždin, Križevci, Jastrebarsko, Koprivnica and Petrinja. The ball was very cheerful and lasted till the morning light. Clergy, soldiers and nobility enjoyed it in an equal manner. "The ball started as usual, with *kolo horvatsko* which alternated several times with *kolo slavonsko*" ([S.n.] 1848b:48). Other dances are not mentioned in the article by their name, but again we have a proof which clearly shows that *horvatsko* and *slavonsko kolo* were performed alternatively several times at the most visited ball at that time. *Kolo horvatsko* and *kolo slavonsko* became inevitable at many balls in Zagreb, across Croatia, but also, for example, in Vienna at Slavic balls where they had an equal status of a social couple dance as the waltz, polka and mazurka.

### Further Reverberations and Comparisons

Kuhač has very interesting, worthwhile and contemporary contemplations on dance at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, though his initial intention was not to do research and write about dance but about music.<sup>20</sup> He writes about the breakthrough of urban couple dances into the tradition and about their perfect harmony with the beginning of the emancipation of women.

"In modern waltzes and polkas each part has two motifs, not just two different melodious motifs but also two different rhythmical motifs, one for a male dancer, the other for a female dancer. This new structure perfectly matches the present spirit of the times in which every woman seeks emancipation and wants to think with her own head, speak her own mind and act independently. In the past women willingly agreed with their husbands, gladly confirmed what their husbands said, but even if they have repeated their husbands' big or small words, the meaning remained the same. It's different with our *kolo*, which doesn't represent the conversation between two persons, but the conversation of the whole society where there are no distinctions. If someone in that society says something clever, it is repeated literally by men and women, the young and the old. A composer has to see all that and bear it in his mind" (Kuhač, 1893:108).

In about 1910, the waltz was still the most noticeable dance at balls. At an average European ball, every fifth dance would be reserved for polka, quadrille or mazurka and the rest were waltzes (Sremac, 1988:147). In her article on masked balls in Zagreb at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Aleksandra Muraj points out the fact that simpler couple dances like the waltz, polka and mazurka dominated, but the Croatian circle dances were performed as well (Muraj, 2004:212).

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20-"I didn't see all the dances, I noted down music only for some of them, but the ones I saw, I described them as much as I could, being an amateur in that field" (Kuhač, 1893:320).

We will go back for a moment to *horvatsko* and *slavonsko kolo*. After publishing a detailed choreographic description of the ballroom *slavonsko kolo* in *Vienac* in 1872, which undoubtedly encouraged the spreading and preservation of *kolo*, Kuhač stopped dealing with it altogether. *Horvatsko kolo* doesn't appear in articles under that name anymore, and neither does *Slavonsko kolo*. At the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, we come across *hrvatsko salonsko kolo* which survived until WWII. It was described by Pietro Ortolani (1936) after watching the performance in Dubrovnik on St. Vlaho's Day. In his description we can learn that *kolo* was rarely performed and gradually started sinking into oblivion. According to all the available information, Sremac concludes that after the Illyrian movement, *horvatsko kolo* was completely forgotten, whereas *slavonsko kolo* changed its name into *hrvatsko salonsko kolo* and gradually lost its national symbolism. But it continued to live at balls until WWII when it faced the same fate (Sremac, 2001:49). Unlike *kolo*, the ever popular and charming waltz successfully resisted the ravages of time and all political upheavals, penetrated into all social layers and is still danced today.

It is interesting how those two *kolos* from urban ballrooms couldn't survive in their newly choreographed form and slowly fell into obscurity in Croatia. Moreover, they didn't even manage to go beyond city limits, into the rural tradition. However, because of their original purpose, expressing the national identity, they were successfully taught and danced in Chile among the Croatian expatriates. In 1917 in Antofagasta teacher Roič taught his fellow Croatians how to dance in times when it was important to express Croatian/Slavic identity against the Austrian identity, and also in 1941 during the Nazi invasion. Apart from 1917 and 1941, *salonsko kolo* wasn't danced in Chile until the 1950s when Roič taught the second and the third generation of the Croatian expatriates. Among them, *salonsko kolo* was the expression of their national identity. It became particularly prominent during political turmoil in their ancestors' homeland (Dunin, 1988:122). Andriy Nahachewsky wrote about the concept of the second existence of folk dance and he mentioned the examples of *salonsko kolo* and the Croatian expatriates in Chile. The first existence of *salonsko kolo* has its roots in Slavonian folk dances and salon quadrilles. Then, as the second existence, there is Bogunović's choreography of *salonsko kolo*, which is further described in more detail and written down by Kuhač. Finally, during political turmoil in Croatia (in 1917 and 1941), in Chile Roič teaches the Croatian expatriates that same *salonsko kolo*. In that period in Croatia *salonsko kolo* began to be danced less and less. So, *salonsko kolo* in all the above-mentioned examples promoted predominantly national character, which was consciously accentuated in every performance. In the 1980s, in performances entitled *Davi Ćiro*, Nahachewsky notices the return of *salonsko kolo* to the first existence of folklore among the Croatian expatriates. He believes the context of performing *Davi Ćiro* is the most similar to the context of the first existence because dancers are not interested anymore in authenticity and originality of dance, but it became a part of their everyday social life (Nahachewsky, 2000:137-140). According to Ivancich Dunin, *Davi Ćiro* had never been performed spontaneously as a part of social dance life, but the choreography was learnt and meant to be performed exclusively on stage.<sup>21</sup> Despite the fact that at that time dancers in South America probably didn't care much about authenticity and originality of the choreography, since it was performed exclusively on stage, it's hard to talk about its so called first existence. During the Homeland War<sup>22</sup>

21-From the conversation with Elsie Ivancich Dunin.

22-The Homeland war or The Croatian War of Independence was fought from 1991 to 1995.

*salonsko kolo* again becomes the symbol of national identity among expatriates and is performed with that intention on purpose. So, according to Nahachewsky, it goes again into the second existence (Nahachewsky, 2000:137-140).<sup>23</sup>

Ruyter describes how Dick Crum<sup>24</sup>, who thirty years earlier learnt one version of the choreography for *dvoransko kolo* from Cornelli's daughter, used Kuhac's notes to reconstruct the choreography and put it on stage at the University of California in 1984. It was performed by his students and the members of the International Folklore Society. By using the Croatian *dvoransko kolo*, Ruyter showed the transfer of tradition from its homeland to the American soil, and its independent development and life among the Croatian diaspora and the lovers of Balkan dance (Ruyter, 2008:247).

*Salonsko kolo* can be compared to the Czechs' national dance, *Ceská beseda*. Despite the fact that polka is considered the Czechs' national dance, *Ceská beseda* was first introduced to the society and danced in 1862. The term *Ceská beseda* was the common label of cities' gatherings of Czech nationalistic circles in 19<sup>th</sup> century, parallel with the Illiric movement in Croatia. Despite being composed of figures from folk dance, it belongs exclusively to ballroom dances. From the very beginning it was learned and performed at balls in cities. The choreography for *Ceská beseda* remained in practice until the present day, unlike *salonsko kolo*. It is performed only on special occasions and has exclusively an official (stage) performance character. Today, the educated Czech population is aware of the origin of this choreographed dance. Teachers at schools teach children to dance *Ceská beseda* as an extracurricular activity. Sometimes at a Graduation Ball, secondary school students bid their farewell to school by performing *Ceská beseda*. Once or twice a year, at dance schools where ballroom dances are taught, when schools have an end of year performance and the audience can see what students have learnt, older and more experienced dancers from a dance club dance *Ceská beseda*. Despite *Ceská beseda* not being an official part of the programme, it is performed before the end of year performance. How big its national character was can be seen from the fact that all communities of the Czech minority across Croatia were gathered in societies called *Ceská beseda*. Czech minorities, in their communities across the globe, learn and perform *Ceská beseda*. Thus, they affirm their national identity as well.<sup>25</sup> In the 1850s the Hungarians also choreographed their national dance called *palotaš*. It is about a couple dance with six figures based on folk dance. Nowadays it is performed only on stage.<sup>26</sup>

It is important to point out that the Croatian *salonsko kolo* was created in 1842, twenty years before a similar Czech choreography, and fifteen years before the Hungarian version of their choreographed national dance. Comparative analysis of those dances will be left to some future research.

Unlike the choreographed national dances such as *salonsko kolo*, the waltz and polka which have their roots in folk dance and which were also adapted to city ballrooms, in their new form very successfully returned to their national tradition and not just to the one they originated

23-In 1999 in Zagreb, according to Coronelli's interpretation and Kuhac's music, "Dr. Ivan Ivančan", Zagreb folklore company, introduces the Croatian *salonsko kolo* into their repertoire (Sremac, 2001:49).

24-An American choreographer, researcher and dancer who rendered the traditional Balkans' dances popular on the American soil.

25-We thank Daniela Stavélova for the information about *Ceská beseda*.

26-We thank László Felföldi for this information.

from. They live successfully in the context of ballroom dances at balls. In other words, they are going back to their 'first existence'

### Conclusion

Undoubtedly, the *waltz* and *polka* are dances that successfully resisted the passage of time, surviving all repertoire and structural changes in the development of ballroom dancing in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. They concurrently belonged to both urban and rural dance repertoire. Sremac reckons that they owe such popularity and resistance to the structure of dance elements, which are firmly rooted in the Croatian dance tradition and practice. For example, polka steps can be found in many Croatian dances, whereas the *waltz* continued *mazurka* tradition and the tradition of other simple triple meter dances. The simplicity and choice of the appropriate accompanying music have greatly contributed to easy learning and spreading of the *waltz* and *polka* (Sremac 1988:152). Therefore, the waltz and polka as phenomena even in Croatia cannot be explained simply, and certainly, we cannot pinpoint the exact time when they began to be danced on certain locations, but we can say when they began to be danced as the *waltz* and *polka*. Already in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the rural tradition the *waltz* and *polka* were put on trial, at least for stage performances organized by *Seljačka sloga*. The definition of folk culture, the authority of knowledge about it and its presentation outside the local community belonged to *Seljačka sloga* at that time, the society that organized different performances and folklore festivals. Since Sloga's perception of folk culture was based on traditional, domestic, Croatian and rural (Ceribašić, 2003:75) the principle on the performance of the domestic dance repertoire was specified. Likewise, the principle of performing exclusively Croatian and rural dance was strictly obeyed, so at festivals it was forbidden to perform foreign and middle-class dances like *polka*, the waltz, *čardaš* and so on. Despite big, important and strictly controlled festivals obeying those rules, certain groups at festivals of less importance managed to introduce a part of foreign local practice so they danced polka and the Hungarian *čardaš* (Ceribašić, 2003:144).

Thus, popular social dances of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, despite various prohibitions and criticism, found their dancers in cities and villages and continued to be danced until the present day. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the waltz was replaced by many new and modern dances, but it is continuously learnt in different ballroom dance schools across Europe, and is still danced on formal occasions mostly by senior couples. It also lived on in rural areas where it was accepted at the time when its popularity reached its peak, and today it is danced as folk dance ([S.n.] 1998:362).

If you ask someone today if they know what the waltz and polka are, they will definitely give an affirmative answer. They might not know how to dance them, but when they hear the first strokes of music, the body moves by itself and either dances the waltz or polka, with only a few mistakes. Both dances originate from folk dance, then in the 19<sup>th</sup> century urban dances became popular and returned back into tradition and not just to the one they stemmed from. Today in Croatia polka is much more widespread than the waltz in folk tradition, and the waltz is still considered an elegant dance. The waltz today has a place of honor at almost every Croatian wedding. The opening dance of newlyweds, which will take them into a new life, is usually the waltz (Vitez, 2003:191). It's interesting to mention that various generations can dance the waltz and polka, they appear on the repertoire at parties mostly of the middle-aged and elderly, or at mixed parties like weddings.

At Graduation Balls, there are also the first attempts to dance the waltz. We find it interesting to emphasise the fact that at Graduation Balls in the Czech Republic, high-school graduates sometimes dance other dances apart from the waltz, e.g. disco dances, and also perform *češka beseda* which they particularly practice for that occasion. On the other hand, at the Croatian Graduation Balls, young people never perform *salonsko kolo*.

In 2005 on New Year's Day, inspired by the traditional New Year's Eve concert in Vienna, the second New Year's Eve concert at Croatian National Theatre (HNK) took place. It was entitled *Valceri, polke i druge špelancije* and conducted by Siniša Leopold. As the title of the concert has it, popular ballroom dances like the waltz and polka came to a prominent position, followed by interpreted Croatian folk dances, marches, some classical evergreens and similar. Apart from Croatian Radiotelevision String orchestra and visiting soloists, ballet dancers from HNK, folk dancers from *Lado* ensemble, and modern and ballroom dancers performed as well. Since the New Year's Eve concert in HNK was visited by many people (tickets were sold out and a great number of people watched it live on TV), it continued to be held on every New Year's Day, with the intention to become traditional as well. We can again watch ballroom couple dances at social cultural gatherings. Those are waltzes and polkas together with couple dances from our tradition adopted particularly for that kind of performance.

Mirko Ramovš, who writes about the waltz in Slovenia, often asks a popular question: What does the waltz have so that it can become and remain one of the favourite dances of different social groups and generations? Before and after the arrival of the waltz different dances were performed, and many of them aren't danced anymore or they are completely forgotten, but the waltz is still alive. It didn't lose its initial charm, and its structure didn't change either. Ramovš sees its longevity in its musical part and  $\frac{3}{4}$  time, which causes joy, pleasure and positive energy among dancers and the audience respectively. Moreover, in order to dance the waltz it's not necessary to have exceptional dance skills. It's possible to learn it quickly because it doesn't have figures, which require hours to be learnt. It's also possible to simplify the step even more, and, at the same time, not to lose the characteristic impression of moving like waves. At first the close embrace of dancers was the cause of much criticism and lack of acceptance, but later the very same embrace was probably the cause of its spreading and popularity until the present day (Ramovš, 2003:47).

The example of almost every Croatian wedding shows that couple dances in our alienated and odd times still have their numerous lovers, and that we will probably see the waltz tirelessly turning on the dance floor and resisting fashion trends and social turmoil.

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