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Franz Josef's Time Machine



Images of Modernity in the Era of Mechanical Photoreproduction

Marija Dalbello

An exponential increase in the speed of production and distribution of printed material and new and more aggressive uses of documentary illustration revolutionized the printing trade in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. How that increase may have changed the logistics of perception is captured, in the extravagant idiom of Italian Futurism, by the title of Filippo Tommaso Marinetti's "The Torture of St. Unique by Speed and Simultaneity" (1923). Walter Benjamin commented in 1936 on the destruction of the aura of authenticity as plurality of copies substituted for unique artifacts.[1] The process that changed the experience of reality through technologies of production is related to the "modernity" that emerged with the Enlightenment.[2] According to Stuart Hall, "What is quintessentially 'modern' is not so much any one period or any particular form of social organization so much as the fact that a society becomes seized with and pervaded by this idea of ceaseless development, progress, and dynamic change; by the restless forward movement of time and history; by what some theorists call the compression of time and space."[3]

I wish to thank the two anonymous reviewers for their insightful comments, and Jonathan Rose for his helpful editorial suggestions.

While enjoying the expansion of knowledge driven by the engines of technology, societies simultaneously experience a sense of loss as identity and community are threatened by social transformation, and a religious worldview is supplanted by a secular and materialist culture.[4]

This essay is a historical case study focusing on the formation of modernity as expressed in print and from the point of view of the central European book trade. It focuses on a publishing house in an industrial region of the Habsburg Empire at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. The culture of early modernism that characterized fin de siècle Vienna and the provinces of the empire was pervaded by a sense of crisis. Ambivalent attitudes surrounding modernity in the empire sharpened with a concurrent radical reorganization of thought and meaning.[5] That crisis climaxed with the destruction of the traditional cultural order, marked by the death of Emperor Franz Josef in 1916 and the dissolution of the empire in 1918.

The Context: The Book Trade in the Habsburg Realm

> His Imperial and Royal Apostolic Majesty, The Head of Our Armies, Emperor and King Franz Josef I, ordained the publisher of the *Croatian Military Almanac* with the Cross of the Order of Franz Josef. On 8 September 1905, His Imperial and Royal Apostolic Majesty, Emperor and King Franz Josef, dignified by his supreme visit the premises of the firm J. Steinbrener in Winterberg and presented the owner of the firm with the award.
>
> —*Davor 1908*

This notice was included with an advertisement for a Croatian military almanac, *Davor,* one of a number of almanacs produced by the J. Steinbrener firm. J. Steinbrener held royal privilege for the production of a wide range of Catholic devotional literature in addition to almanacs and religious paraphernalia. Established in 1855, the firm was active throughout Franz Josef's reign (1848–1916) and into the late 1930s.[6] Its modes of production and distribution reflected the latest technological advances in the printing trade. In its scope of publication, iconography, and marketing, this publisher reinforced the values of the existing Habsburg political infrastructure. Thus it was caught in the contradictions of an archaic political system.

The Habsburg realm was an ambivalent society that maintained a curious combination of conservatism and progressiveness, balancing the forces of unity and diversity. That society, "part aristocratic, Catholic, and aesthetic, part bourgeois, legalist, and rationalist,"[7] was torn between traditionalism

and the values of social progress. Ever since the sixteenth century, this society had stood apart from the rest of Europe, distinct in cultural, social, and economic terms. As a political formation resulting from contractual and legal association, rather than from conquest or colonization, it could maintain relative stability through balancing the forces of autonomous government and the power of the monarchy. Overall, the Habsburg dynasty successfully ruled an ethnically and linguistically diverse area with strong local and national traditions. At the time of its dissolution in 1918, this megastate was one of the largest political and population blocs in Europe, with more than fifty million people from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds.

The boundaries of the book trade in the empire were curiously complex. They encompassed overlapping distribution networks. The book trade was regulated through a system of official censorship throughout the nineteenth century. Royal privilege affected the channels for the production and distribution of schoolbooks and some other mass-produced items. Literacy was concentrated in urban areas; in some rural areas at the turn of the century illiteracy was more than 70 percent.[8] Where there was literacy, it was not uncommonly in several languages. The dominance of German as the language of the army and bureaucracy in many cases hampered the rise of literacy and publishing economies of scale in native languages.

Obviously, a national approach to the study of print culture will not work for the Austrian Empire, which had no united national book trade in a single print language. Instead, we must map the boundaries of various and overlapping book trades. These analytical tools allow us to delineate the nature of publishing in a culturally compact area unified by monarchic ideals and religious culture, in which language was a means of proliferating, recycling, and reshaping myths.

Industrialized Publishing in a Single Multilingual Market

Because literacy was limited, and because the Habsburg realm encompassed an area without a common language or dialect spanning all regions and classes, images were used with great sophistication for shaping public opinion. Starting with the emperor Maximilian's successful promulgation of the Habsburg myth in the fifteenth century, the dynasty used print technology for propaganda, combining word and visual messages to reach its often illiterate subjects.[9] Publishing material consisting almost entirely of graphics was not uncommon and led to the commercial success of Jan Steinbrener.

The publisher's central office was located in Vimperk (or Winterberg), an industrialized part of the southern Bohemia region, near the Austrian-German political border and the German-Czech linguistic border.[10] The firm advertised itself as the Continent's largest producer of artistic bindings for prayer books and the largest publisher of prayer books in German, Hungarian, Czech, Slovak, Slovenian, Croatian, Polish, Italian, Ukrainian (Ruthenian), French, English, Spanish, and Portuguese.[11] The trade routes by which these materials were distributed encompassed a network far beyond the boundaries of the empire, with warehouses in Vienna, Budapest, Strasbourg, Milan, and Dublin, according to an advertisement (see Fig. 1) from 1899–1900. The scope of operation and the distribution network clearly indicate that this was a large-scale publishing concern. An analysis of Steinbrener imprints in the Czech National Library[12] has shown that this distribution network was in fact much larger than the advertisement suggests: this publisher supplied a market ranging from Manila to New York.[13]

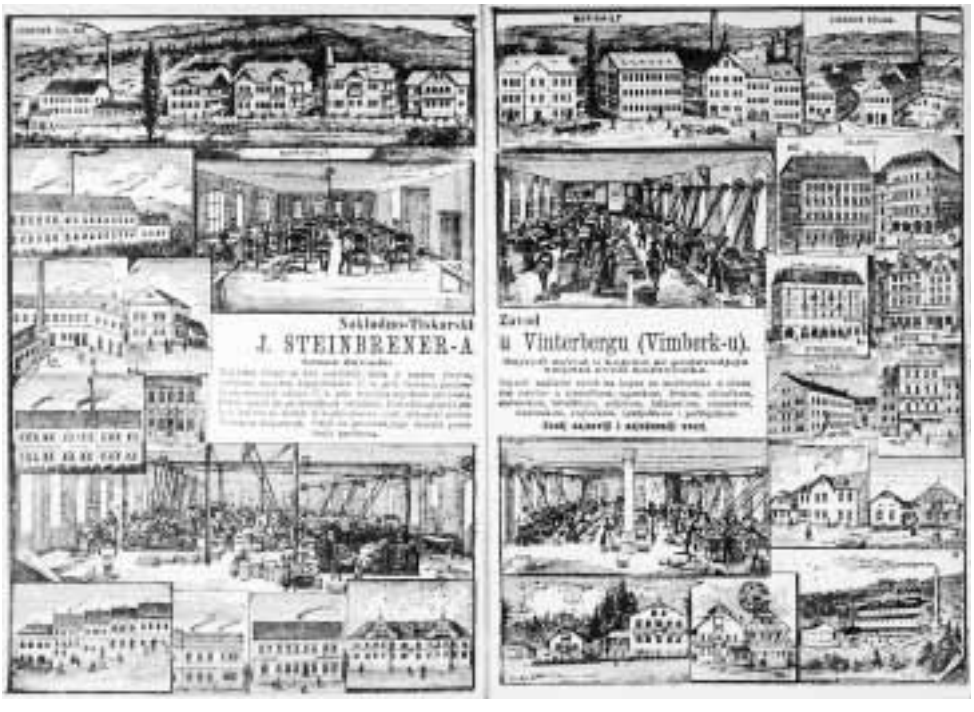


Figure 1. From *Davor 1900*. Advertisement for J. Steinbrener. By permission of the National and University Library of Croatia.

Steinbrener issued prayer books and devotional works; children's illustrated books, including some coloring books; and almanacs.[14] The firm was particularly known for almanacs, having perfected formula publishing to achieve economies of scale. An analysis of a sample of works issued by J. Steinbrener is presented in Table 1. In the 1930s, it underwent restructuring as it changed its name and purpose.[15] The firm was transferred to public ownership in 1945–46, becoming Národna správa J. Steinbrener. It resurfaced again under the old name of J. Steinbrener in the 1990s and continues to publish popular mystery and detective fiction.

Although half the works issued by J. Steinbrener were in German and Czech, books in twenty-one languages were represented on its list. Mostly these consisted of works in Spanish, Slovak, and Hungarian, plus at least a dozen Polish, Portuguese, Italian, Dutch, English, and French editions (see Table 2).[16] Many editions were available in several languages simultaneously, and many of the works in the sample had gone through several editions. According to an advertisement from 1899–1900 (see Fig. 1), 450 works in different languages were in print at that time. Almanacs composed a quarter of this sample of Steinbrener editions (or 196 of 855). In other sources, the almanacs were listed as a primary production line from 1874, first for the local market in Czech, Moravian, and Slovak lands. Prayer books, another strongly represented genre, were issued from 1870.[17] The sample indicates that they were aimed at a complex market network ranging from Marian shrines in Mexico, Poland, and France,[18] to outlets for books devoted to particular saints.[19] Books were also created for use in missionary work (for example, prayer books in Dutch aimed for distribution in the Dutch colonies). Specific reading audiences, including children, young adults, women, the elderly, and the infirm, were also targeted with specialized prayer books. Illustrated children's books and coloring books,

Table 1. Titles published by J. Steinbrener, 1900–2001 (N = 855, the number of titles retrieved from the catalogue of the Czech National Library)

Period	Titles	Percent
1900–1925	155	18.1
1926–1930	327	38.2
1931–1940	296	34.6
1941–1950	71	8.3
1951–1992	0	0
1993–2001	6	0.7
Total	855	99.9

Note: Many almanacs issued between 1900 and 1925 are counted as one item (as a set) because they were bound together.

Table 2. Titles issued by J. Steinbrener, 1900–2001, by language (N = 842, the number of titles in the Czech National Library for which this information was available)

Period	Titles	Percent
Albanian	1	0.1
Arabic	1	0.1
Arabic and Persian	1	0.1
Catalan	6	0.7
Croatian	8	0.9
Czech	182	21.6
Dutch	13	1.5
English	12	1.4
French	9	1.1
German	231	27.4
Hungarian	60	7.1
Italian	23	2.7
Latin	1	0.1
Latin and Catalan	1	0.1
Lithuanian	2	0.2
Polish	34	4.0
Portuguese	27	3.2
Slovak	99	11.8
Slovenian	2	0.2
Spanish	121	14.3
Swedish	1	0.1
Wendish	1	0.1
Other	6	0.7
Total	842	99.5

songbooks, devotional works, herb atlases, and an edition of the Koran in Arabic and Persian were among its other offerings.

Formula Publishing in a Niche Market

J. Steinbrener perfected publishing by formula, a system not uncommon for popular almanacs. The firm's almanacs became synonymous with a certain style.[20] Almanacs were not as linguistically diversified as the prayer books, as shown in Table 3. They were aimed at a more compact market in central and eastern Europe. Vimperk was the place of publication for most of the titles (173 out of 191), with others, according to the imprint, issued from Budapest, Warsaw, Vienna, New York, and Chicago. The last two

Table 3. Almanacs issued by J. Steinbrener, 1900–2001, by date (N = 187 almanac titles for which this information was available, out of 855 in the sample retrieved from the Czech National Library catalogue)

Language	Titles
German	55
Czech	54
Slovak	37
Hungarian	25
Polish	16
Total	187

point to overseas trade routes, which makes sense when one considers the levels of emigration from Austria-Hungary on the eve and in the aftermath of World War I.

Almanacs in German were issued from 1874,[21] while a number of Czech almanacs originated in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, as shown in Table 4. The sample also shows that the era of almanac publishing ended by the mid-1920s (see Table 5). At that time, many of these almanacs were in their fiftieth year.

Table 4. Beginning years for almanacs issued by J. Steinbrener, 1900–2001 (N = 46 almanacs with designation of seriality)

Date of Inception	Number of Titles	Language
1874	12	German
1875	7	German
1880	3	German
1882	3	German
1883	1	Czech
1884	2	Czech
1886	3	Czech
1887	6	German
1890	1	German
1891	1	German
1893	2	Czech
1895	1	Hungarian
1896	1	Hungarian
1898	1	German
1905	2	Slovak
Total	46	

Note: The dates of inception are inferred by counting back to the first issue.

Table 5. Almanacs issued by J. Steinbrener, 1900–2001, by date (N = 196 almanac titles out of 855 in the sample retrieved from the Czech National Library catalogue)

Period	Titles
1900–1925	63
1926	51
1927	54
1928	13
1935	1
1938	1
1946	6
1947	5
1996	2
Total	196

The Steinbrener line of Croatian almanacs seems to have flourished between 1898 and 1916.[22] All seven titles started around the same time: they included several Catholic almanacs, a military almanac, and three general almanacs (Table 6). Each title was packaged for an explicit audience, conforming to a clearly defined focus. Humorous, popular, and sensational material; military information; the cult of Mary; and colored illustration represented distinctive production lines, some more extravagant and lavish than others but all heavily illustrated.

Table 6. The J. Steinbrener Croatian line of almanacs

Titles in Croatian	Titles in English	Dates
Novi katolički koledar	New Catholic almanac	1898–1910?
Veliki Marijin koledar za katolički puk	Large Mary's almanac for Catholics	1898–1912?
Mali Marijin koledar za katolički puk	Small Mary's almanac for Catholics	1899–1909?
Davor. Hrvatski vojnički koledar	Davor. Croatian military almanac	1899–1913?
Novi šaljivi slikovni koledar	New illustrated humorous almanac	1898–1908?
Šareni svjetski koledar	Multicolored world almanac	1900–1916?
Veliki ilustrovani zabavni koledar	Great illustrated entertaining almanac	1900–1912?

The implied readers are addressed in the iconography of the cover and its wording (see Fig. 2), with a subtitle that reads: for priests, public servants, artists, merchants, artisans, town-dwellers and peasants (za svećenike, činovnike, umjetnike, trgovce, obrtnike, gradjane i seljake in Croatian), indicating an audience that crossed social classes. The model of reading in the cover art shows a reading circle with the ubiquitous landscape painting that marks a petit-bourgeois social milieu (see Fig. 3). The Croatian titles are direct translations of their counterparts in German, Czech, and Polish (see Fig. 4).[23] These almanacs were evidently mass produced for the languages spoken in the Habsburg Empire, using a systematic translation operation. The Croatian almanacs reveal that texts and images were recycled for various editions. It is likely that several variant titles aimed at a particular language market were assembled at once[24] and that plates were revised for editions in other languages.[25] The humorous and sensational material found in these almanacs was easily recycled for different languages and certainly offset the costs of production. A good balance between local and general content also ensured that the same material could be easily reused.[26]

According to one source, the output of almanacs by J. Steinbrener in 1880 was 222,000, with more than two million by 1890, and more than eight million by 1900. By 1910, production increased to ten million. By 1930, more than thirty-four million almanacs were launched annually into the market that ranged from North, Central, and South America to Egypt, Indochina, and New Zealand.[27] The Croatian military almanac *Davor* had been distributed to conscripts in the Habsburg army.[28] Internal evidence indicates that Steinbrener editions could be obtained from local bookstores,[29] some of which also handled overseas distribution.[30]

Expansive Modernity, Defensive Tradition

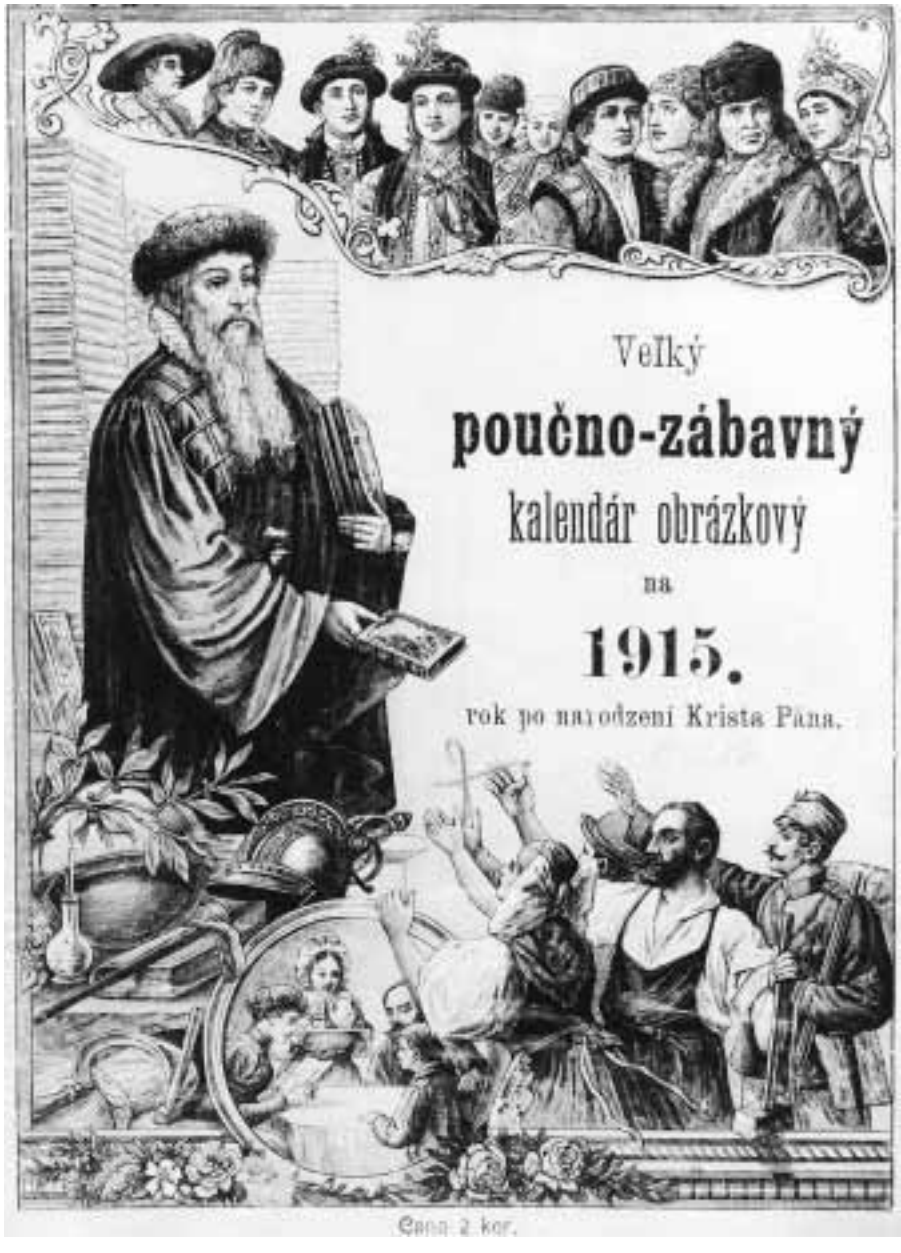
Images are key for understanding the appeal and success of the J. Steinbrener almanacs in the popular market. The stock images used in Croatian almanacs were recirculated in a broader context of distribution represented by almanacs in Czech, Slovak, Polish, and German. This iconography reflected the ironies of modernity in the closing years of an old regime: representations of war technology, inventions, travel, and world geography. Alternate realities, utopian visions in the best tabloid tradition, were adapted for circulation in popular print. Meanwhile, the unifying ethos for the images is distinctly central European: the Baroque code of honor and the ideals of the empire. The technologies of war, electricity, and magnetism reflected the expansive aspects of modernity; the traditions of the old regime, religion, and local knowledge represented its stabilizing aspects.



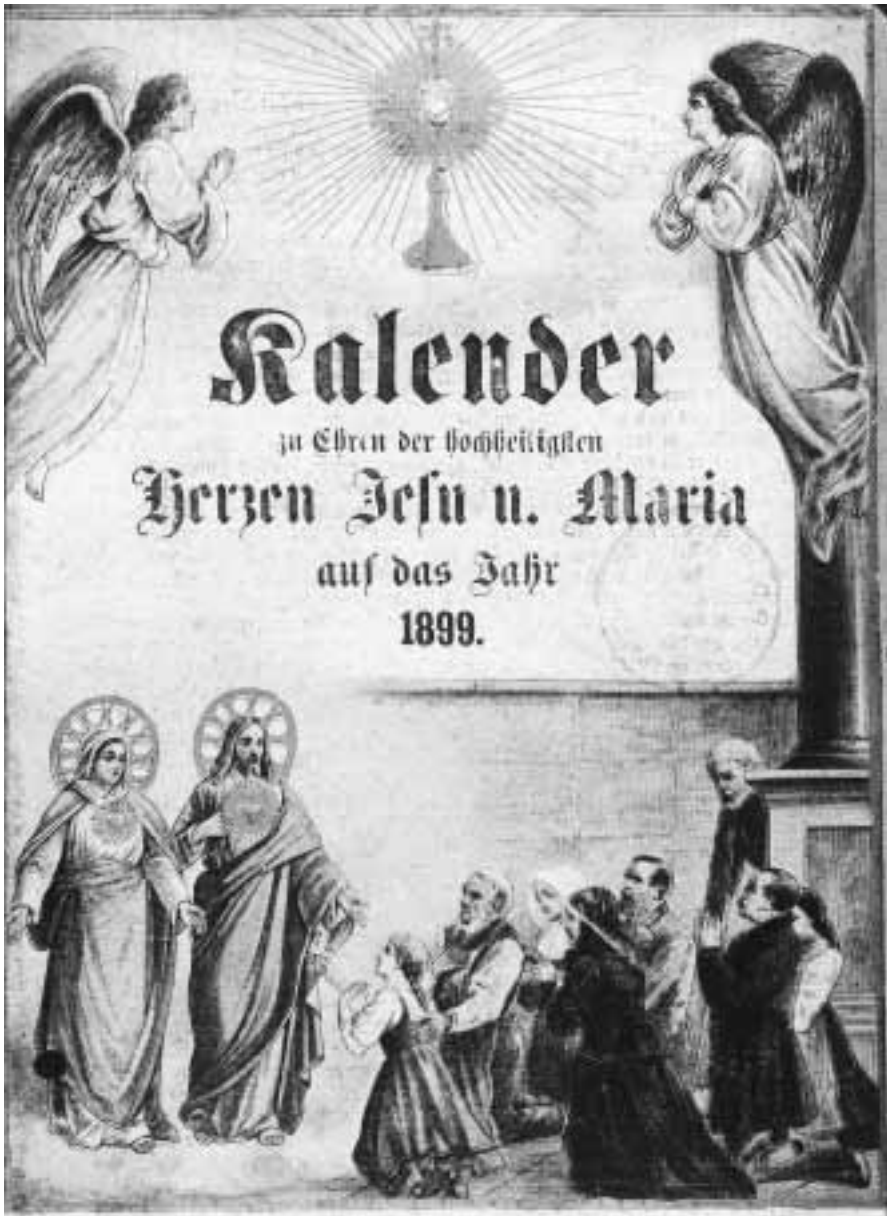
Figure 2. From *Veliki ilustrovani zabavni koledar 1901*. Front cover. By permission of the National and University Library of Croatia.



Figure 3. From *Šareni svjetski koledar 1916*. Front cover. By permission of the National and University Library of Croatia.



Figures 4a–d. Cover art from Czech, German, Polish, and Hungarian almanac series published by J. Steinbrener. By permission of the National Library of the Czech Republic.

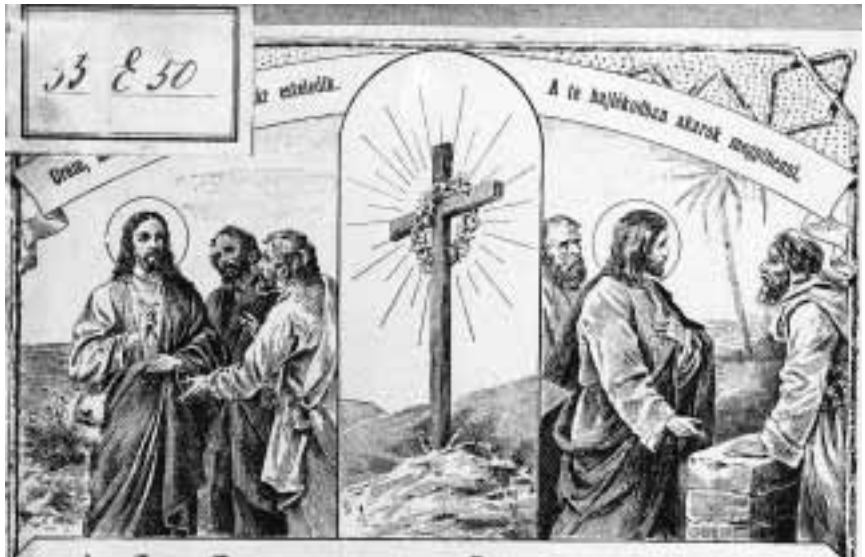


Große Ausgabe. Preis 40 kr. = 80 Heller.

55 F 23.
1928.


Illustrowany
kalendarz
Wszechświatowy
na rok Pański
1928.

53 E 50



A kedves öregkor naptára

az

1901. évre.



Ára: 90 fillér.

As I. F. Clarke notes, industrialization, mass literacy, and conscription transformed attitudes toward war in the era preceding World War I.[31] Lt. Col. G. T. Chesney's *Battle of Dorking*—a short story about an imaginary invasion of England by Germany, published in 1871 in *Blackwood's Magazine* and read from Canada to New Zealand—initiated a discourse of war-to-come as a vehicle for political debate. Arguments for "new political alliances, changes in the organization and equipment of armies, technological innovations in naval vessels, or schemes for colonial expansion" were presented in this form.[32] Imaginary wars were featured in propaganda materials issued by all the European powers. *Davor,* Steinbrener's Croatian military almanac,[33] distributed to recruits and veterans of Austria-Hungary's many wars,[34] built into this publishing tradition. This almanac specialized in the depiction of battles, state-of-the-art weapons technology, and strategic analyses of various military powers in past wars and in ongoing conflicts. Other almanacs also engaged in these speculations, parodying war in ludicrous imaginary battles.

The "winged infantry" engaging "winged cavalry," both presumably propelled by one of the unspecified energy sources of the future (see Fig. 5), is an image recurring in several almanacs from the end of the nineteenth century.[35] A series of illustrations for an article accompanying the analysis of future warfare was published a decade later.[36] One of them depicts armored infantry as it repels military aircraft (Fig. 6). Illustrations of amphibious combat (Fig. 7), the use of "war kites" equipped with photographic cameras (Fig. 8), and a gruesome yet sanitized spectacle of the disposal of humanity (Fig. 9) are found in the same series. How ironic to consider this battle of the future from the privileged historical perspective of today, looking in retrospect at two wars behind us.

Notably, all these portray wars purely as encounters of technology at the boundaries of possibility. These images define an industrial warfare, a display of technological innovation. Piled-up bodies are only a convenient metaphor for nature and humanity. The warring sides are not identified or labeled. Overreaching technology overwhelms irrelevant humanity in a century-old equivalent of a video game fantasy. This is rational warfare, a war of the world of things instead of the human world. The degree to which these publications are saturated with such images points to a society seized by the optimism of modernity and glorification of technology. Naval vessels, aircraft, kites, and sanitized battlefields are secular symbols of progress in the context of war technology.

Thus, even provincial publications in a baroque empire were saturated with images of futuristic technology. In a vignette from an almanac for 1908, "A View of the Future: Across the Mountains and the Seas" (Fig. 10), the reader's imagination is stimulated with the possibilities of travel by air, rail, and even "personal mail" that would deliver you to the destination of your



Figure 5. From *Novi šaljivi slikovni koledar 1901*, plate facing title page: "A battle of the future. Five hundred meters above the earth, winged foot soldiers, supported by a single aerial battery, repel an attack of winged cavalry." By permission of the National and University Library of Croatia.

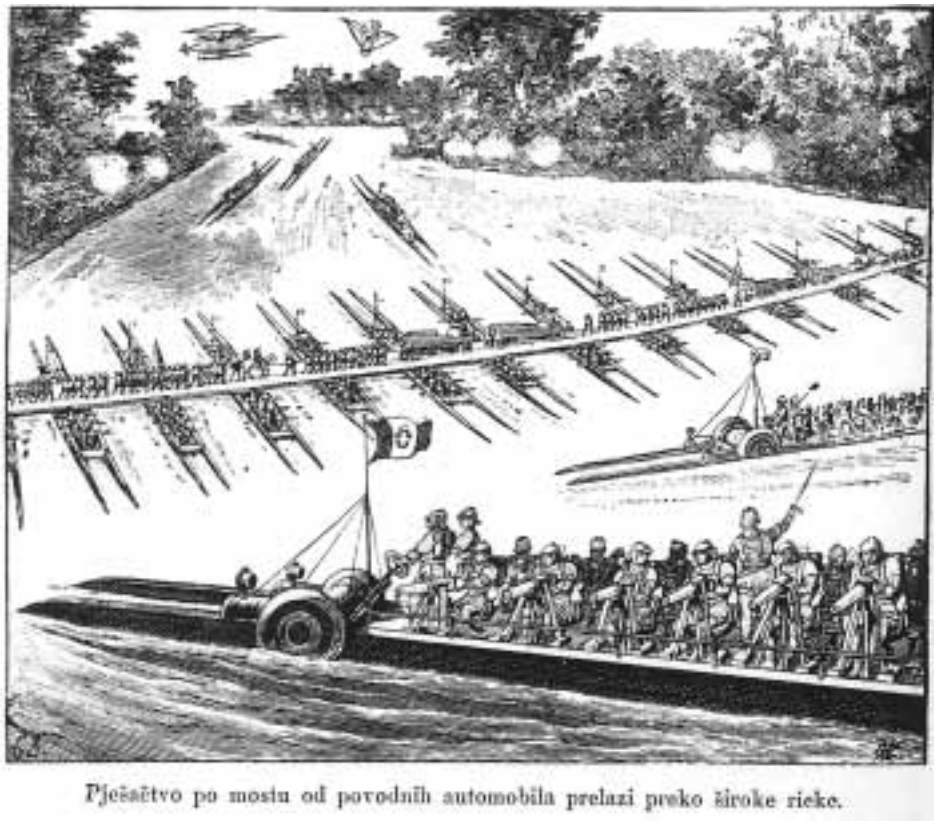


Oklopljeno pješačtvo u boju sa zračnim ratnim brodovima.

Figure 6. From *Šareni svjetski koledar 1910*, p. 108: "Armored infantry fighting off war aircraft." By permission of the National and University Library of Croatia.

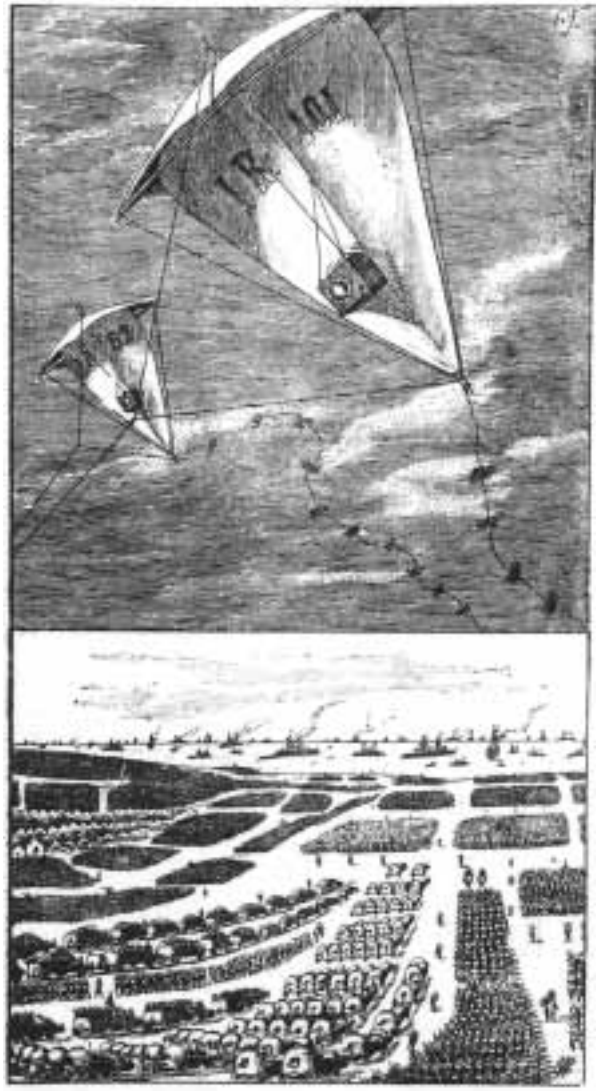
choice. "Air is no longer inaccessible! An aerial omnibus takes you across the continents and the seas! Fastest and most comfortable ride to all parts of the world."[37] The first rigid aircraft that struck the popular imagination was invented by Ferdinand Count von Zeppelin in 1900, and *HMS Titanic* took its fateful voyage in 1912: at that time, the tragic consequences of overreaching technology had not yet been experienced.

Imagining technology as a means of access to an ever-expanding world was tied to an actual interest in that faraway world among the readers of these almanacs. Shipping companies advertised overseas passage to America, especially between 1901 and 1908. This was a period of high emigration from Austria-Hungary, the causes of which were partly economic and partly



Pješaštvo po mostu od povodnih automobila prelazi preko široke rieke.

Figure 7. From *Šareni svjetski koledar 1910,* p. 108: "Infantry crosses a wide river on a bridge made of underwater cars." By permission of the National and University Library of Croatia.



Ratni zmajevi, snabdjeveni automatičkim fotografičkim aparatima u zraku.

Figure 8. From *Šareni svjetski koledar 1910,* p. 109: "War kites, equipped with automatic photocameras, floating in the air." By permission of the National and University Library of Croatia.

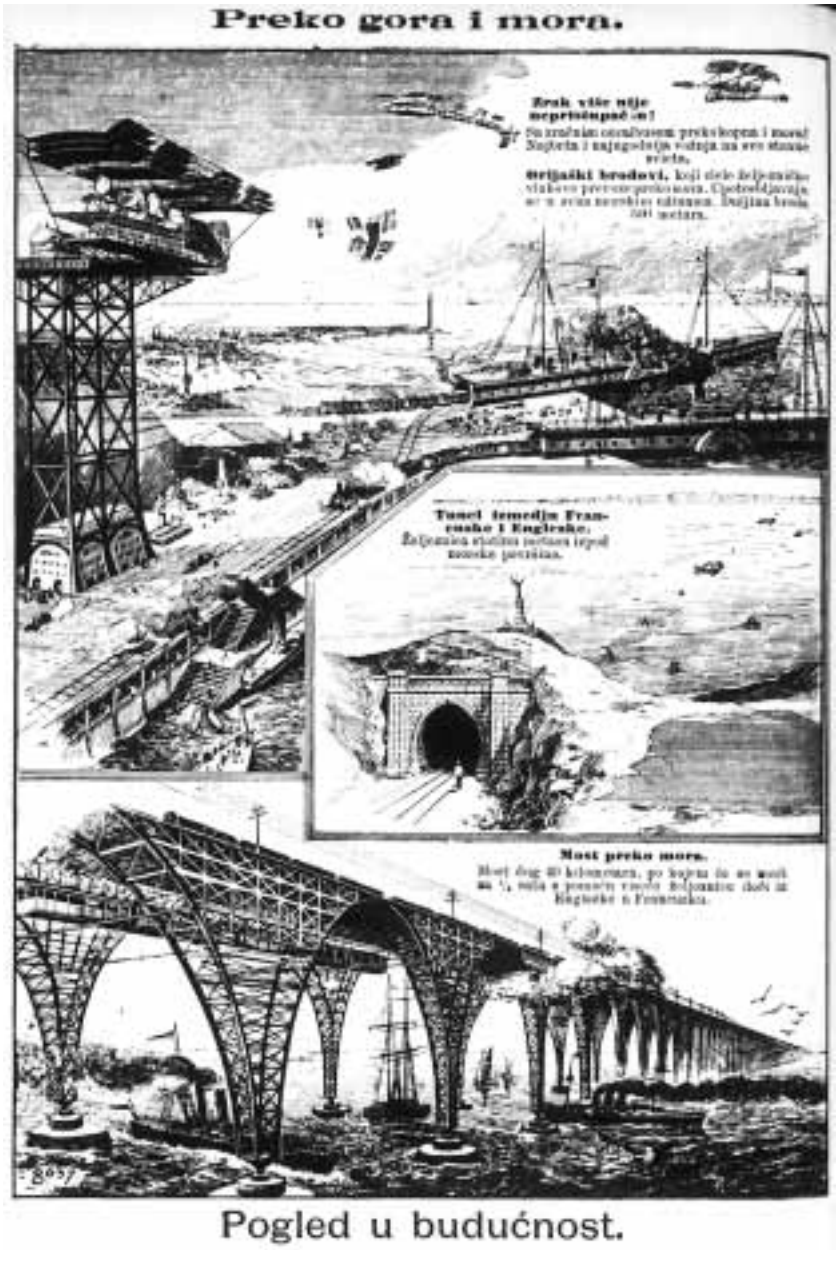
ideological and certainly reflect a desire to evade conscription for Austria-Hungary's imperial wars.

Almanacs have traditionally been repositories of popular knowledge, offering compendiums of curious and unusual facts, or discursive pieces about the wonders of the world. Almanacs shape and order knowledge for the great mass of people, presenting visual lists of objects, activities, nouns, and verbs for analysis, comparison, differentiation, and decision.[38] The Steinbrener almanacs used visual lists and pictograms to analyze the relative military strength of world powers, their export/import ratios, their relative wealth, emigration statistics, and currency conversions. Often these diagrams presented the world as a unit divisible by nation.



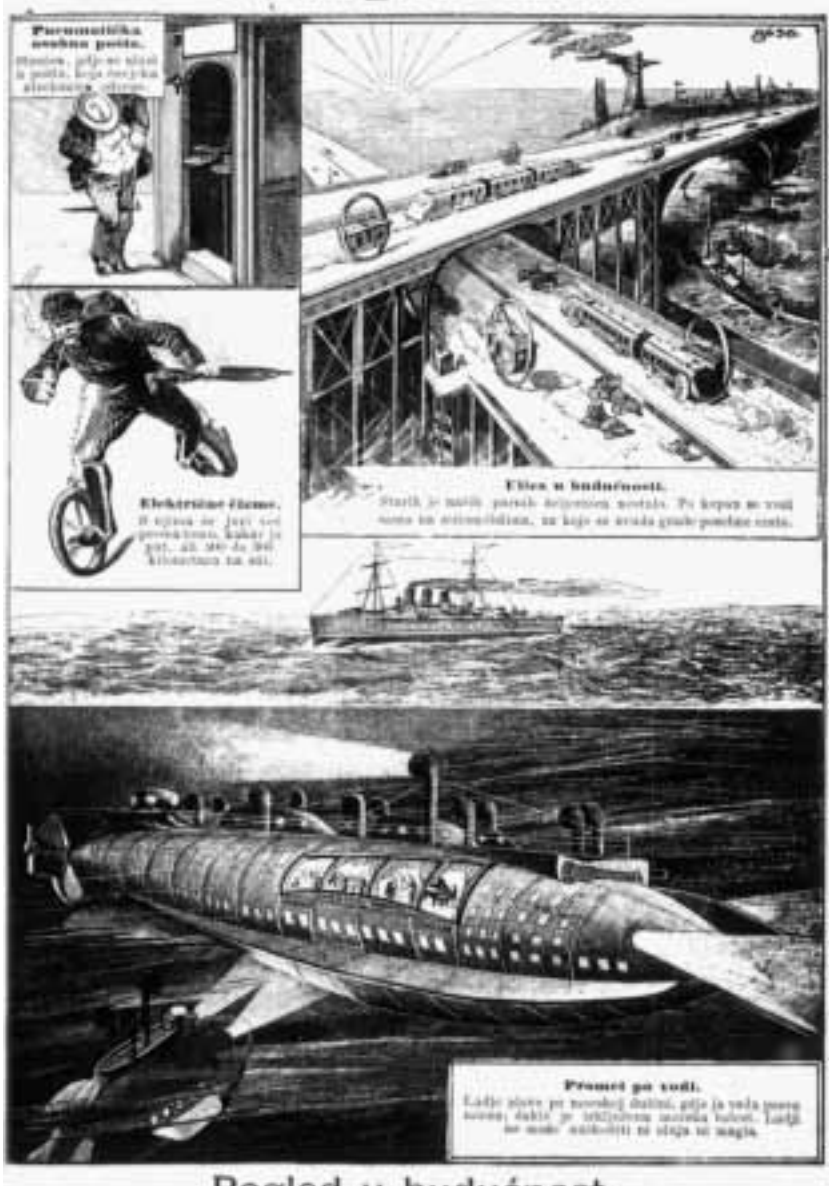
Lješine, koje su se naslagale u cijele bregove, poljevaju se osobitom tekućinom i zapaljuju, a bojište se u isto doba razkužuje.

Figure 9. From *Šareni svjetski koledar 1910,* p. 107: "Dead bodies, piled up as high as mountains, are covered with special liquid and burned, as the battleground is disinfected." By permission of the National and University Library of Croatia.



Figures 10a and b. From *Šareni svjetski koledar 1908*, plates between pp. 112 and 113. "A view into the future: Across the mountains and the seas." By permission of the National and University Library of Croatia.

Preko gora i mora.



Pogled u budućnost.

One typical example is the plate in which the "Languages of the World" are personified by stereotypical images of their speakers (Fig. 11). Giant English, Indian, and Mandarin Chinese figures symbolically dominate the world in a pictogram showing the relative size of linguistic communities. A diagram titled "Population Growth by Country" presents incremental population growth from 1880 to 1920, using the same technique (Fig. 12). A Russian giant looms largest in the 1880s, with an American, German, and Austria-Hungarian half its size. By 1900, the ratios have changed. The row of babies is a representation of an inference based on current growth (the almanac was published in 1901), with the American newborn twice the size of the Russian baby and with Japanese, German, and Austro-Hungarian newborns progressively diminishing. Based on this extrapolation, in the population projection for 1920 the American has grown up and is now shoulder-height to the Russian. Such diagrams could be intuitively understood even by someone with a limited notion of statistical method. While the first summarizes data descriptively, the second leads to inferential conclusions about probabilities.



Figure 11. From *Šareni svjetski koledar 1903*, plate facing p. 88: "Languages of the world." By permission of the National and University Library of Croatia.

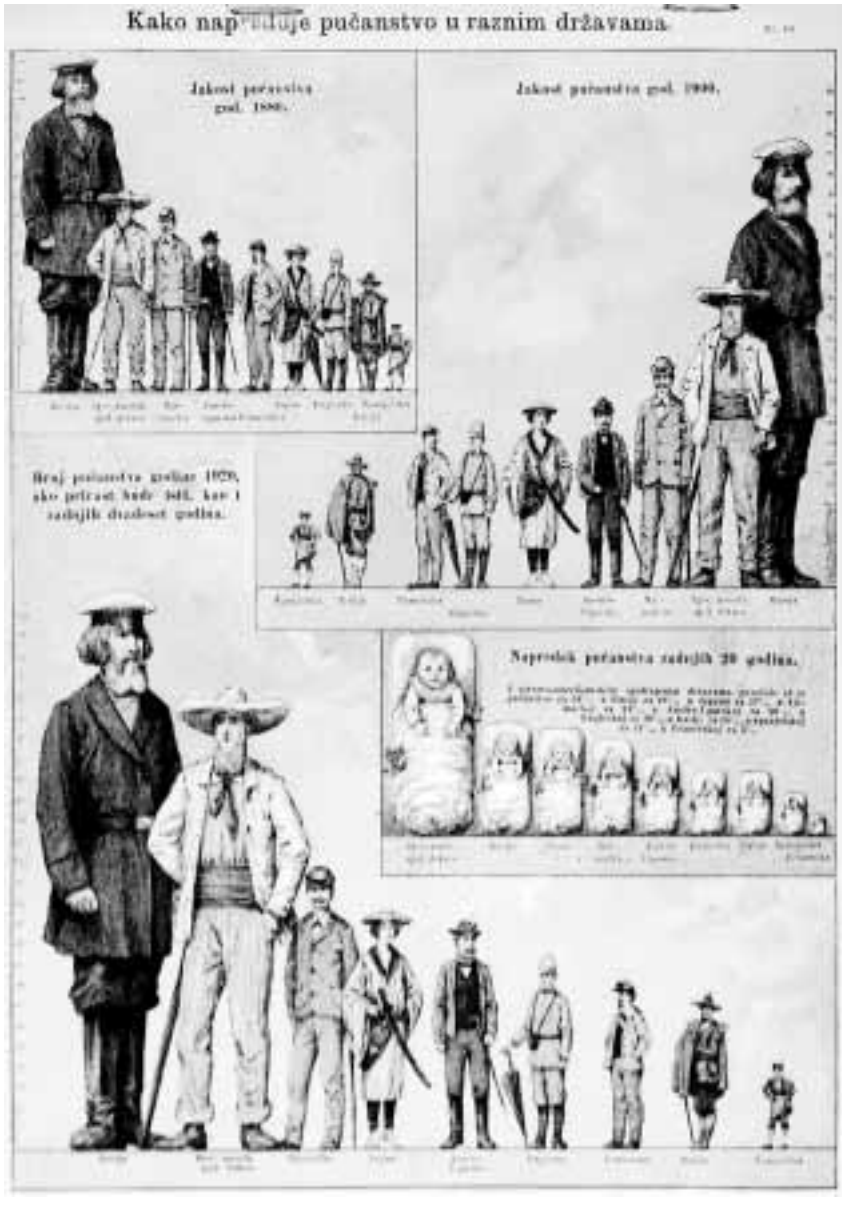


Figure 12. From *Šareni svjetski koledar 1902*, plate facing p. [2]: "Population growth by country." By permission of the National and University Library of Croatia.

In a typical contradiction of modernity, these pictograms translate scientific information about the world into stereotypes of the Other. The rationality of information presented in the diagrams is belied by a structure that reduces humanity to a set of cartoons. In an article published in 1915, the causes of World War I are attributed to nations endowed with emotional purpose.[39] According to that text, "hating Russians," "English jealousy," and "French vindictiveness," rather than a struggle for power and resources, fuel the war machine. The irrationality of the rhetoric jars with the rationality of the argument. What was obviously meant as wartime propaganda is also symptomatic of modernity's contradictions. These almanacs reveal strong group boundaries and the imposition of cultural categories on potentially boundless knowledge about a limitless world.

Along with offering new ways of presenting information (particularly statistics), the almanacs are replete with minutiae about imperial wars, European royalty, the wonders of the world, and what they present as strange customs of people in faraway places. If information about the larger world is presented as bizarre, unfamiliar, and unnatural, it is related to the total context of the almanacs, which was never far from an oral and folk tradition. Elizabeth Bird has shown in her analysis of supermarket tabloids that the popular end of the literacy spectrum is always close to the folk level, and at that level, the Other is always bizarre, because it belongs to the anomalous category of an unknown world.[40] That side of popular literature represents the stabilizing, regressive, localizing aspects inherent in the process of social transformation known as modernity. Within that paradoxical space, faith in and distrust of the unknown are intertwined, invoking the contradictions in the experience of modernity rather than resolving them. These almanacs offer an insight into a world politically conservative and traditional, yet overtaken with the raptures of modernity.

In the process of reinscribing the world within the cognitive map of the known, the tendency to be traditional, religious, and nostalgic is a stabilizing aspect of modernity.[41] The almanacs reveal traditionalism anchored in what some call "baroque sensibility": the moral basis of the political process and the idea of the political self, and an emphasis on the decorative and ceremonial aspects of political life.[42] A perception of reality that shifts between the monumental past and the instantaneous present is best represented in the perception and conceptualization of time and space.

The decompression of time in a period of rapid change is accomplished by re-creating the present in terms of a meaningful historical narrative. That story is outlined through the usual almanac conventions: the lists of battles, ruling houses, and chronologies. These texts segment and sequence time in terms of cultural categories. They appeal to a sense of an ordered

world in which weights and measures are standardized and life is normalized through the calendar.

Another technique by which temporal perception is maintained is through texts invoking commemorative time. Such texts position the present in the context of past events. A text in *Davor,* titled "1804–1904," marks a number of anniversaries of the Habsburg Empire, including the battle of Aspern and Esslingen, at which the Habsburg army defeated Napoleon.[43] Among royal and imperial anniversaries, those that celebrate Franz Josephine rule are by far the most numerous. Annual reviews of events are also found in many of these almanacs. Battles are used as defining milestones in building historical time. Time is commemorated and monumentalized in the calendar portion, in the foldout plates, and in the textual portions of the almanacs.

History is invented around the present, and time defined as the progressive sequence of events within a day, a year, a century, or a millennium. In a foldout plate titled "What Will the New Millennium Bring to Humanity?" issued in an almanac from the turn of the century (Fig. 13), Mary is shown at the center, surrounded by what appear to be speech scrolls. These scrolls are an allegory of Catholic faith as a bonding force, represented in mythical supplicatory moments, with Saint Stephen, Jan Sobieski, Pope Pius V, Maria Theresa, and Ferdinand III all praying for Mary's protection. The occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1878, following the Congress of Berlin, when the Austrian forces were given a mandate to fill the vacuum left by the withdrawing Ottomans, is commemorated in the typical fashion of these almanacs in *Davor* for 1903 (Fig. 14). The course of events that would put Sarajevo on the map after the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand was the fulfillment of the "wars of the future" fantasy and the cause of the downfall of an empire that had outlived its usefulness.

Depictions of war in these almanacs are not entirely secular. They often take the form of narratives (many of them pictorial) that feature a heroic defense in battle of the flag of the empire. They employ rhetoric more appropriate to the time of the Napoleonic Wars than to conflicts at the end of the nineteenth century. A man single-handedly repels a whole squadron, clutching a flag or a drum while those around him are falling wounded (Fig. 15). This jars with the anonymity of the depictions of the battles of the future. These stories belong to the category of invented pasts,[44] tributes not to unknown soldiers but to individual heroes corresponding to the ethnic patchwork of the empire.

In a typical story (Fig. 16), true to the tradition of Victorian melodrama, a dying hero recognizes his compatriot, another Croatian soldier in the Austrian army, in the midst of raging warfare, surrounded by stereotypical figures of natives and European colonizers. This moment is captured as



Figure 13. From *Mali Marijin koledar za katolički puk 1900*, plate facing title page: "Memory-page [commemorating] the transition into the new century. What will the new millennium bring to humankind?" By permission of the National and University Library of Croatia.



Figure 14. From *Davor 1903:* "Memory-page [commemorating] the occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. [For] Imperial and Royal Forces." By permission of the National and University Library of Croatia.



Figure 15. *Vojenský přítel 1903*. Front cover. By permission of the National Library of the Czech Republic.

blissful togetherness in the heart of darkness. In many almanac stories, and especially in *Davor,* soldiers under the Habsburg flag are fighting Prussians, they are fighting Piedmontese, they are part of the European contingent suppressing the Boxer Rebellion. They are shown suppressing nameless and numberless uprisings, defeating the nameless and faceless rebels. News from wars in which the empire was not involved is also included in these almanacs, such as the Boer War and various Balkan wars. (At that time, the Balkans was a faraway place for readers of these almanacs. The political geography into which Croatians are fitted today was completely unfamiliar to readers a hundred years ago, when "the Balkans" began south of the imperial border.)

If flag stories and death scenes are melodramatic, they are also central narratives of stabilization; they "decompress" the time and space of modernity's progress. The narratives maintained a sense of identity conceived as



Figure 16. From *Veliki ilustrovani zabavni koledar 1901,* p. 52: "'Thank you, my friend!' said in Croatian the wounded officer. 'Are you also Croatian?'" By permission of the National and University Library of Croatia.

loyalty to the empire. Local content is included, even gossip, but the overwhelming emphasis is on heroic sacrifice in imperial wars. This landscape is not national or local, and the boundaries are not delineated in terms of a monolingual nation-state but a multinational and multilingual empire.

The illustrations used a variety of engraving techniques, including those based on photogalvanographic methods characteristic of Viennese printing since the mid-nineteenth century.[45] The fact that photoengravings were used is not as significant as the photographic vision that they conveyed. Perhaps surprisingly, these publications did not aim at the realism associated with photography today. These photographs do not convey the instantaneous; they do not record the moment in documentary fashion; they are not about capturing speed. Rather, they are often indistinguishable from engravings modeled on paintings or other prototypes where the artist has full control of representation. For the most part, these photographs fit within an established iconography of representational clichés, with full frontal medallion portraits by far the most common. Very rarely are truly documentary images found in these almanacs. Photographic representation may claim authority and immediacy, but through the intervention of production methods by which it is contained within an established iconographic tradition, an image that seems documentary becomes fictionalized. Through the process of transposing a photographic image onto a photoetched surface, a contrived quality is added: the images become exaggerated, decorative, mythical, monumentalized, and open for abstraction. They shift the boundary between the documentary and the imagined.

The rhetorical effect of this ambiguity is powerful because photography naturally claims a higher level of realism. This much is obvious in the composite group portrait of the House of Habsburg (Fig. 17). In this image, the narrative context and unifying metaphor is provided by the space of a salon in which the faces are pasted together through photomontage. A list of names under the image identifies the members of the royal family. Through the use of photocomposite, common in tabloid journalism, the boundary between the representational and the real is blurred.

Implications for Book History: Researching Boundary Cultures

Book history is often approached through the perspectives of national book trades, treating established print languages as coterminous with national cultures. The material examined here demonstrates a model of publishing that emerged in an area unified by monarchic ideals and religious culture,

where language was not a dividing force but rather a force in multiplying, recycling, and reshaping a myth. The paradigm that uses language as the prime determinant presents obvious difficulties in studying book trades in central Europe and other multilingual regions. Therefore, mapping the boundaries of various book trades is the first step toward a realization of how many parallel trades can emerge on the margins of genres, geopolitical entities, and reading realms.[46] The study of book history in central Europe calls for a multiplicity of approaches:

- Studying the effects of multilingual (sometimes multiscript) publishing and multilingual audiences on the growth of particular book trades.
- Examining the politics of literacy, including the role of traditional intellectuals in using literacy to build national identity, or the effects of censorship (Venetian, Habsburg, Communist) within a particular cultural realm.
- Establishing the continuity in particular national book trades through the Habsburg, Communist, and post-Communist eras.
- Examining the effects of emigration and internal migrations within the area of the book trade.



Figure 17. *Šareni svjetski koledar 1907*. "Our emperor and king and the members of the ruling dynasty." By permission of the National and University Library of Croatia.

- Exploring the boundaries of diversity, cultural and linguistic translation, and reception of works.
- Identifying publishing models that evolved as a combination of patronage and purely commercial interests.

The fragmentation of central European book histories could be turned into an opportunity to apply comprehensive and comparative approaches, using cultural areas rather than linguistic parameters. Such studies could focus on problems and issues relevant to particular national histories. In this case study, the contradictions of modernity and tradition as represented in print, and the ambivalent attitudes surrounding modernity in the Habsburg Empire on the eve of its dissolution, provided such a focus. This essay has used almanacs to show how a particular society experienced the expansion of knowledge driven by the engines of progress, technology, and speed, and how it dealt with a loss of identity and community in the process of social transformation.

Notes

1. Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations,* ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken, 1969), 217–51. The essay was originally published in 1936.

2. Stuart Hall, ed., *Modernity: An Introduction to Modern Societies* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), 21.

3. Ibid., 17. The theorists of modernity to which Hall refers are Anthony Giddens and David Harvey. See David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989); and Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Introduction of the Theory of Structuration* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984).

4. Hall, *Modernity,* 6.

5. Ibid., xxix.

6. There are several histories of the firm marking its successive anniversaries, including the following:

1855–1930: Gedenkblätter: Gewidmet von der Firma J. Steinbrener in Winterberg aus Anla ihres 75 jährigen Bestees (Winterberg: J. Steinbrener, 1930).

1875–1925: Gedenkblätter, gewidmet von der Firma J. Steinbrenner in Winterberg aus Anlaß des 50 jährigen Bestehens ihres Kalender-Verlages (Winterberg: J. Steinbrenner, 1925).

Emléklapok felajánlja a Steinbrener Ker. János cég Winterbergben: 75-éves fennállása alkalmából, 1855–1930 (Winterberg: J. Steinbrener, 1930).

Hrabe, F., ed., *Gottgesegnete Siebzig: Zueignung anlässlich des 70. Geburtstages des Grossindustriellen Rupert Steinbrener sen. in Winterberg am 26. März 1936* (Winterberg: Steinbrener, 1936).

Hrabe, F., ed., *Johann Steinbrener: Seine Werke in aller Welt* (Winterberg: J. Steinbrener, 1930).

Hrabe, F., ed. *Johann Steinbrener, der Begründer der Buchindustrie in Winterberg.*

Gedenkschrift, herausgegeben anlässlich der Hundertjahrfeier am 17. Juli 1935 (Winterberg: J. Steinbrener, 1936).

Steinbrener, Jan. *J. Steinbrener ve Vimperku 75 let: 1855–1930: Památné listy* (Ve Vimperku: J. Steinbrener, 1930).

7. Carl E. Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York: Vintage, 1981), xxviii.

8. Carlo M. Cipolla, in *Literacy and Development in the West* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969), 89, notes that illiteracy in Dalmatia was more than 73 percent. According to the same source, as late as 1850, about half the adult population in Europe could neither read nor write (55, 114). His data clearly show pockets across Europe with a wide range of literacy levels. With the educational reforms of the mid-nineteenth century, the situation changed in many European countries. Still, these findings have to be taken with caution. It is safer to assume that present research on literacy has not yet provided solid figures for the Habsburg monarchy. As one of the reviewers of this paper notes, "Why, for example, the large editions of prayer books, if hardly anybody could read in Catholic lands?"

9. Andrew Wheatcroft, *The Habsburgs: Embodying Empire* (London: Viking, 1995), 96.

10. Today, it is in the Czech Republic, in Jihočeský; Kraj (or the southern Czech region).

11. The advertisement displaying the company's assets appeared in several Croatian almanacs issued in 1899–1901, *Davor 1900* and *Veliki ilustrovani zabavni koledar 1901*. In addition to publishing and bookselling, J. Steinbrener was involved in the production of art prints. It also had factories for the production of binding equipment and brass objects, a steam factory for the production of cellulose, a photographic atelier, an atelier for bone and ivory objects, a painting atelier, and a division for decorative gilt objects. The advertisement also shows the processes of printing, folding, and binding (with women workers in some of these images), and paper mills. The wind- and steam-powered machinery visually encapsulates the scale of this operation.

12. The catalogue of the Czech National Library was used to retrieve a base sample of 855 works issued by J. Steinbrener firm. (The catalogue has limited coverage for pre-1900 materials.) This method of statistical breakdown has limited usefulness; and so do library catalogues as research tools. Here statistics are used inductively, to indicate trends rather than define absolute numbers.

13. The global distribution of Catholic institutions was crucial in enabling the distribution of artifacts advertised by Steinbrener. It also allowed a publisher operating from a relatively obscure location to reach a mass market.

14. The low rate of preservation for these ephemeral works means that the sample reflects only a fraction of all that was produced. Overall, preservation rates tend to be lower for earlier material.

15. It was renamed Rupert Steinbrener and published in partnerships with Antiqua Druckerei (Prague), J. Otto u. Ruzicka (Pardubitz) and Národna správa.

16. The sample does not reveal any works in Ukrainian (Ruthenian).

17. Kádoch František, *Sto let knihtiskárny ve Vimperku* (Vimperk: Stráž. Tisk. Závody, 1972), 14.

18. They included special editions obviously offered for sale at pilgrimage sites in Lourdes, Guadalupe, and Çzestochowa, the famous Madonna shrines.

19. Notably, to those devoted to the cults of Saint Theresa and Saint Judas Thaddeus.

20. Many of them were called "Steinbrenerovsky" (or Steinbrenerian).

21. Steinbrener started out with a *Universal-Kalender.* The terms *almanac* and *calendar* (*Kalender* in German) are interchangeable in this context. In Croatian, the term *kalendar* is commonly used to denote an almanac, making the distinction explicit. An almanac is an annual accompanied by a calendar, as distinct from a yearbook, a gazetteer, a city directory,

or a literary collection that gives an overview of the annual production of a literary movement. *Almanah,* or *almanak,* was once exchangeable with *kalendar* in Croatian, to indicate an almanac with a calendar.

22. The preserved issues found in the National and University Library in Croatia would indicate that their life span was shorter than of their German, Czech, and Slovak counterparts, which were still on the market in the 1920s.

23. Even a cursory comparison of titles in the sample from the Czech National Library with these Croatian titles shows a direct correspondence. *Šareni* means "multicolored" in Croatian, probably an awkward attempt to express in a single word "colored and illustrated," for which there is no adequate term in Croatian language. It is a literal translation of the German word *bunt*.

24. Bibliographical evidence includes binder's marks in the bottom left corner of some gatherings ("Hr.," with a number added), probably an abbreviation denoting a "hrvatski," or Croatian edition that served as an instruction for binders.

25. The designations "Hr." or "Hrvat." (both abbreviations for *hrvatski,* or Croatian) are found in the bottom margin of all advertising pages. The binder's note in the issue for 1910 reads "Hr. Mali Marijin koledar . . . ," indicating that the plate would be included in either *Veliki Marijin koledar* or *Mali Marijin koledar za katolički puk*. The same is found in *Davor,* which means that the firm recycled plates, but also used the same advertisements for all editions distributed in the Croatian market. For example, a folded plate on pp. 1–2 of *Mali Marijin koledar za katolički puk 1909* (which was meant to be cut out and serve as a poster) is marked in the bottom margin as "Hr. Veliki Marijin kol." (*Veliki Marijin koledar* is another almanac in the series that has as its central theme the adoration of Saint Mary, all issues of which were produced by J. Steinbrener).

26. Local content includes gossipy social news originating from a women's club in Zagreb ("Družtvo za kuhăcko umieće" in the issue for 1907, 45); civil lists for Croatia, Slavonia, and Dalmatia; and a list of fairs. A feature article, "Hrvatski spomenici" (Croatian monuments), on Croatian monumental sculpture in Zagreb (*Šareni svjetski koledar 1905,* 57–62) is typical of the localization strategy. In the military almanacs, the fallen heroes are often Croatians.

27. František, *Sto let knihtiskárny ve Vimperku,* 14–15. The figures quoted in the *Oesterreichisch-Ungarische Buchhaendler-Correspondenz: Frestnummer anlaesslich des 50 jaehrigen Bestehens, 1860–1910* ([Vienna, 1910], 1:20, 2:11) vary from the ones reported by František.

28. This was noted in the editorial prologues.

29. For example, Franjo X. Hribar's bookstore in Zagreb (later L. Hartman/St. Kugli).

30. An advertisement in *Mali Marijin koledar 1907* gives instructions for placing orders from different parts of the world from the bookstore of Gjuro Trpinac in Zagreb, listing titles in a catalogue insert. An advertisement in *Šareni svjetski koledar 1914* includes instructions for those wishing to place an order from America.

31. I. F. Clarke, *Voices Prophesying War: Future Wars 1763–3749,* 2d ed. (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 18.

32. Ibid., 1.

33. Steinbrener also published a military almanac in German, *Der Soldatenfreund: Kalender für das Jahr 1928,* and a title in Czech, *Vojenský přítel,* without year of publication but probably issued around the early 1900s.

34. In *Davor 1908,* 1, the publisher indicates that "many thousands" of the almanac were sent to recruits in military barracks.

35. *Novi šaljivi slikovni koledar 1901* (Winterberg, Zagreb, and New York: J. Steinbrener, 1900), plate facing title page.

36. *Šareni svjetski koledar 1910* (Zagreb, Winterberg, and New York: J. Steinbrener, 1909), 105–12.

37. *Šareni svjetski koledar 1908* (Winterberg, Zagreb, and New York: J. Steinbrener, 1907), plates between pp. 112 and 113.

38. Edward R. Tufte, *Envisioning Information* (Cheshire, Conn.: Graphics Press, 1983), 105.

39. *Šareni svjetski kalendar 1916,* 119.

40. Elizabeth S. Bird, *For Enquiring Minds: A Cultural Study of Supermarket Tabloids* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992), 9, 77–78.

41. Ibid., 129.

42. Josip Horvat, *Politička povijest Hrvatske,* 2d ed. (Zagreb: August Cesarec, 1990), 2:19.

43. *Davor 1904,* 1.

44. Eric Hobsbawm, and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

45. Philip Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), 270. These processes include photoengraving, photolithography, photogravure, and colored collotype. Extensive description is also found in Anton Durstmueller d.J. and Norbert Frank, *500 Jahre Druck in Oesterreich: Die Entwicklungsgeschichte der graphischen Gewerbe von den Anfaengen bis zur Gegenwart* (Wien: Hauptverband der Graphischen Unternehmungen Oesterreichs, 1885–88), vol. 2.

46. This should be attributed to Bill Bell, with whom I discussed the implications of such research in July 2000. Also helpful was a discussion with Miha Kovač, in July 2000, about the problems faced by scholars studying fragmented book trades, notably Croatian and Slovenian, that evolved within several linguistic and political infrastructures.

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