

# German Newspaper Publishing in Osijek: From 1848 until 1945

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## SUMMARY

*This paper provides a historical overview of German newspapers published in Osijek. In the period between the liberation from the Turks and the end of World War Two, almost half of Osijek's population were Germans, which enabled them to play a significant role in all aspects of city life, and newspaper publishing was no exception. A review of German newspapers published in Osijek revealed that they differed in content, publication frequency and longevity. After reading and reviewing both scholarly and scientific literature, it was concluded that most facts about the newspapers were not completely, but partially preserved in a non-chronological order. Newspaper publishers operated in difficult circumstances and frequently changed editors and owners. However, today, we can claim, that German newspapers published in Osijek were vital, diverse in form and important to (educated) readers and their needs and habits. The newspapers were similar to magazines and covered all facets of life, including politics, science, economy, art and culture. Such newspapers*

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*covered everything their readership might find interesting, and many Croats contributed to those German newspapers as associates.*

*This paper is based on the review of research and scholarly and scientific papers. The intention was to follow the logical and chronological structure of German newspapers.*

**Keywords:** newspaper publishing, German language, Osijek, cultural history, 1848-1945

## **Introduction**

Since liberation from the Turkish rule and until WW2, the Germans in Osijek (and most of its surroundings) constituted almost a half of the population (Geiger, 1991:329), which inevitably led to them having a major role in all segments of the city life including the development of newspaper publishing. A great insight in social and cultural life of Osijek citizens can be gained from the German language newspapers which differed in content, frequency and longevity. Nevertheless, they all had an important impact on the life of Osijek citizens. Unfortunately, a lot of data about the journals has not been preserved, and some of them have survived only partially. Additional problems are the chronological inconsistencies of the data, and the publishers themselves who frequently changed editors and owners (Levak, 2013:248).

## **The beginnings of German newspaper publishing in Osijek**

Knowing that the first secular publisher in Osijek dates to 1775 when Martin Divald purchased the Franciscan printers, it is easy to calculate that newspaper publishing in Slavonia lagged behind other parts of Croatia. More than three decades had passed from the first Zagreb papers (*Ephemerides Zagradiense*, 1771) to 1813 when Friedrich Christian Zink (the guardian of the underage Martin Alojzije Divald) asked for the permission for a German weekly paper *Wochenschrift fuer Esseck alle Staende in Esseck und der umligenden gegend* (Weekly Journal for all Classes in Osijek and the Surroundings). In spite of him listing all the objective circumstances which had led him in that direction (in Slavonia there was no such type of paper which would serve the community by informing the citizens about different decisions, and useful, educational and entertaining contributions, and economy and employment rather than politics), his request was turned down, just as the one submitted in 1835, by Martin Alojzije Divald, for *Wochenblatt von und fuer Esseck* (Weekly Paper on

and for Osijek). The same was the fate of the request by A. E. Neuwirth to publish *Slawonische allgemeine Zeitung* (General Slavonian Newspaper) two years later (Fruk, 1998:79-80).

It was not only the requests to publish German language papers that were rejected – requests for publishing Croatian papers were also turned down, all with the explanation by the Royal Council (*Kraljevsko namjesničko vijeće*) that Osijek and its surroundings already had/received enough journals in the requisite languages (Vinaj, 2002:171). Of course, that was not true: regardless of the number of papers received there was no single one with the news from the city and its surroundings, whether political, business or cultural — the need for which grew as fast as the city itself.

## **German newspaper publishing in Osijek from its beginnings to WW1**

Between the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Osijek becomes the biggest and most developed business center — only second to Zagreb. That is probably also the time when it reaches its social and cultural peak (Fruk, 2000:129; Živaković-Kerže, 1996:14). That development was instrumental to newspaper publishing. In that period Osijek had more than 30 papers in Croatian or German. Their frequency and longevity varied, and only a part of them are preserved and accessible today (Vinaj, 1998:3).

The first German language newspaper, whose program of action was declared on April 21, 1848, was published under the name *Der Volksredner fuer Vaterland, Freiheit und Gesetz, fuer Kunst, Gewerbe und Wissenschaft* (Popular Speaker for Homeland, Freedom and Law, for Art, Trade and Science). The first regular issue of that newspaper came out on June 5, and the paper was printed by printer Carl Dragutin Divald. It used to come out twice a week, Monday and Thursday, in the so called „magazine style”. The editor was an ex-actor Emanuel Dornau. Without any literary tendencies, he was openly pro-Hungarian aiming at well-to-do German speaking citizens in Tvrđa and Donji Grad (Vinaj, 2002:171). Because of its orientation, *Der Volksredner* was a failed political manifesto, without much resonance with the readers. Nevertheless, this paper has an important place in the history of Osijek journalism (Fruk, 1998:79) and the local history because, besides different news, we can read from them about the relations, debates and struggles between the pro-Hungarians and the Illyrians (Laszowski, 1923 cited in Vinaj, 2002:171-172). The last, 17<sup>th</sup>, issue of the paper was published on August 19, 1848. (Levak, 2013:256). In the subsequent 16 years no papers were published in Osijek, until January 3, 1864,

when Dragutin Carl Lehman, having purchased the print from the Divald family, starts publishing a commercial paper titled *Esseker Lokalblatt und Landbote. Belletristische Wochenschrift fuer Kunst, Industrie, Handel, Gewerbe and Landwirtschaft* (Osijek Local Newspaper and Courier. Weekly Fiction Paper on Art, Industry, Trade and Agriculture). The paper was published twice a week, it had correspondents from Vienna and Budapest, it had a rich ad section advertising local produce and services, as well as those from the whole Monarchy. The most interesting section was The Notices following the daily events in Osijek (fairs, theatres, balls, train timetables, even the instructions to clear the snow...). Besides the advertising and official notices sections, each issue carried the timely Editorial, regular sections Feuilleton (Feature), Wochenchronick (Weekly Chronicle), Geschaeftsberichte (Business Reports), Esseker Bummeler (Osijek Walker – edited by Geza Berger – an ironic and sharp commentary on everyday life of the citizens) and others (Vinaj, 2002:172). The chief editor Geza Berger states that the purpose of the paper is not spreading the city gossip but, instead, „increasing the people’s education, triggering the ability for the sublimely beautiful” (Obad, 1989:20). As early as in the second year (issue 53 of July 3, 1864), the paper becomes more official, changes the concept and the subtitle: *Organ fuer amtliche Verordnungen, Kunst, Industrie, Handel, Gewerbe, Landwirtschaft und Unterhaltung* (Paper for Official Regulations, Art, Industry, Trade, Agriculture and Entertainment). The first and responsible editor was Carl Lehman who, however, made no impact on the paper, whereas the real mover and shaker and the most productive author was Hans Wawerka. He devoted his whole life to journalism and published numerous contributions of questionable quality, because they were written with very specific objectives and for entertaining the readership (Obad, 1989:32).

One of the most read columns was that of Eseker Bummeler (Osijek Walker) which was a kind of a „humorously critical chronicle of the everyday life”. In the funny, sharp and pointed anecdotes, the readers could recognise their fellow citizens (Vinaj, 2002:172). Those contributions well depicted the provincial and spiritual atmosphere of the small city of Osijek (Obad, 1989:21).

It is important to observe that this paper was socially engaged and attempted to implement progressive ideas (Obad, 1989:20). It was also a kind of initiator of the public discourse: in its well-read column Offener Sprechsaal (Open Conference Room) it published the letters from individuals and institutions related to then current events in the city, which were then responded to by the referenced people (Obad, 1989:21).

This German language newspaper lasted five years (according to some even six) and was the first local-to-Osijek newspaper which today reveals the life and the

„breathing” of the city. Being the first, it had some beginners’ weaknesses but was genuinely locally focused, and dealt with the themes attractive to the locals. It was oriented towards the culture and its issues, and nurtured a serious „essay concept with a few but well-founded and generalising contributions” (Obad, 1989:32) which made it more akin to a magazine than a newspaper. The last issue of the paper was published on December 12, 1869.

On July 18 (or 19), 1868 a new paper was first issued: *Die Drau: Organ fuer Politik and Wirtschaft* (The Drava: Politics and Economy Paper) with Gustav Wagner and Jakob Frank being the publishers, owners and editors. The paper was started as the voice of unionist Slavonic aristocracy, to trigger the parliament discussion about Croatian-Hungarian Settlement and to assist the approval of the Settlement’s (Horvat, 2003:202). The paper was also the starting point for Josip Frank, who later became the founder of the The Pure Party of Rights (*Čista stranka prava*). Besides those pragmatic goals there was a long-term one: locally shaping the pro-Hungarian thinking. During its first year, the newspaper had only four pages containing the news from politics, business, banking as well as the current news relevant to the social and cultural life in the city and beyond. Besides the usual columns, Politische Rundschau (Political Review), Journalschau (Magazine Review), Neuigkeiten (News), Slavonischer Landwirth (Slavonian Farmer), Geschaefts-Ausweis (Business Pass) and Gemeinderatsitzung (The Local Council Meeting), this paper reported from the Vienna’s stock-exchange, Osijek Savings Bank, as well as meteorological data and river levels. Several years later, the volume doubles with new columns. An increase in reporters’ alertness is also noticeable: regular reporting from Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the wars at the time, events nearby and far away, serialised novels or poems written by Osijek people... An interesting column also appears: Offener Sprechsaal where citizens publish their own articles and advertisements; the editors decline any responsibility for the contents thereof. In the 80’ the advertisements take more and more space in the paper, so the issue of December 21, 1884 had just three pages of edited text and nine pages of advertisements. In the 90’s the page headers start having the paper title, location, date and page number. New typesetting is being introduced instead of hard-to-read gothic letters. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the columns with biggest longevity are: Volkswirtschaftliches (Economics), Feuilleton (Feature), Literarisches (Literary), Local Nachrichten (Local News), Theater (Theatre), Provinz Chronic (Province Chronicle) ...

It is important to say that since May 18, 1885, 19 issues titled *Osječki list: pučki organ za narodno-gospodarstvenu politiku, pouku i zabavu* (Osijek Paper: Folk Paper on National and Economic Policy, Education and Entertainment) were (supposedly) published, as an attachment to *Die Drau* paper, in the Croatian language edited by

Julije Pfeiffer. Even in later years there were some news and attachments in Croatian (Mlikota, 2011:86). During the Ban (Viceroy) Ivan Mažuranić governance *Die Drau* papers used to be banned and even confiscated (during 1876, out of 60 issues as many as 41 were confiscated) because of problems with the State Attorney General. Until 1907 the paper was issued three times a week (Wednesday, Friday and Sunday). This paper was also printed by Lehman's printers using gothic script, without pagination or data about issuing frequency.

From 1907 onwards *Die Drau* was a daily paper. A year later it starts with photos, illustrations and cartoons. As of 1909, next to the German city name Esseg, the Croatian name Osijek starts to appear in brackets. In 1914 the German name disappears! Also, *Die Drau* was politically (pro-Hungarian) (Malbaša, 1978:31) and market oriented (Levak, 2013:262) which had nothing in common with other newspapers of the time, least of which the motive. Nevertheless, they were competitors and did not tolerate each other. The other two German magazines published at the time — *Esseker Lokalblatt und Landbote* (Osijek Local Paper and Courier) and *Esseker allgemeine illustrierte Zeitung* (Osijek General Illustrated Newspaper) nurtured literary and journalistic form, while *Die Drau* was a modern political newspaper whose pages also included news from politics, economy, culture, social events, stock market reports, weather conditions and advertisements (Levak, 2013:262-263).

The original *Die Drau* ceases publishing in 1929, but it is being talked about again in 1932, in somewhat different form, when mentioning the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its publication. The paper gets taken over by the *Die Drau* consortium, headed by Bela Frank (the owner of the new printers). The subtitle is changed to *Unabhaengiges Tagblatt* (Independent Daily Paper). It is being published daily (except Sundays and holidays), and using Latin script. The reason for the second start is the disappointment with the economic and political situation in the country, that brought Osijek closer to being a rural rather than urban area.

There is no certain data, but it would appear that *Die Drau* finally ceases in 1938<sup>1</sup>. Zlata Živaković-Kerže mentions, in the book "S tradicionalnih na nove puteve", that *Die Drau* survived as long as 61 years by changing editors, printers and owners. No matter which language it was published in, no other Osijek paper achieved such longevity (Živaković-Kerže, 1999:96). *Die Drau* with its specific characteristics was a real Slavonian paper and, in spite of being very locally focused, it had never been a victim of local passions, including the relationship with the Serbs. This is extra evidence that this paper did not follow Khuen's policy of stirring up inter-national intolerance (Obad, 1989:36). Through the passage of time, *Die Drau* grew to be the leading Slavonian paper. Frequently it generated interest in the Capital, primarily because of its pro-Hungarian orientation. During

the Ivan Mažuranić governance, the paper lost its common importance and its editors used to end up in prisons. There is a possibility that it was because of their pro-Hungarian orientation, but also because Josip Frank, one of the editors and owners, “attacked Mažuranić completely personally and without meaning. When Mažuranić was succeeded by Pejačević, *Die Drau* stopped attacking the government and started attacking the opposition because of the principles it defended under Mažuranić” (Horvat, 2003:221).

During the Ban (Viceroy) Count Károly Khuen-Héderváry governance it blossomed again and became a proper pro-regime paper. Its humorous editor and reporter Julius Pfeifer had the Ban’s (Viceroy) personal backing; therefore, he had first-hand knowledge about the things which would happen and reported important information even before the Capital’s papers. Because of its orientation, *Die Drau* was involved in a lasting and very sharp disagreement with the Croatian opposition, thereby frequently ending up in the centre of media attention, also being punished and censored. The paper was so firm in its orientation that, even after Khuen’s departure in 1903, it declined to accept his (and their) defeat (Obad, 2014:20).

However, setting the political orientation aside, the paper very consistently fought for all forms of culture. Today, without its detailed and competent portraits of cultural events, it would be hard to picture how Osijek transitioned from a rather unappealing trade town into a modern city open to all artistic manifestations (Obad, 2014:20).



Figure 1 *Die Drau*, front page  
Source: Museum of Slavonia (Osijek), Newspaper Collection

On January 19, 1869 another German language newspaper

was launched: *Esseker Allgemeine Illustrierte Zeitung* (Osijek General Illustrated Newspaper) (Fruk, 1998:82) the editor of which was also Carl Lehman. The paper was being issued “every eight days” which in practice meant weekly. Although only 27 issues were published, the paper has a special place in the history of Croatian journalism because it was the first illustrated magazine not only in Osijek but also in Croatia<sup>2</sup>. The first two pages with exotic photos were published in Leipzig, and the rest in Osijek. The magazine mimicked German magazines with respect to the amount of the news about the culture, published novels in tomes, ethnographical and other columns, but it was very much tied to the local environment (it published local news, even the translations of the poems and articles with Slavonia as a theme). The competitors called it a failed section of the Leipzig magazine, but the interest in photography was stronger than criticism. To be able to accurately estimate the value of this paper it is necessary to know three facts. First, until *Esseker Allgemeine Illustrierte Zeitung* appeared, other magazines had only occasional illustrations. Second, the illustrated *Dom i svijet* (Home and World) appeared almost two decades later in Zagreb; and the third, Lehman bought the illustrations abroad and their quality was superb (Malbaša, 1978:31).



Figure 2 *Esseker Allgemeine Illustrierte Zeitung*, front page

Source: Museum of Slavonia (Osijek), Newspaper Collection

The same year of the birth of *Esseker Allgemeine Illustrierte Zeitung*, another paper appeared: *Slavonia Fruher der Syrmier Bote* (Slavonian Dawn of the Syrmium Courier), the owner, publisher and responsible editor was J. F. Wawerka. In fact, this paper was started a year earlier, on August 30, 1868 in Vukovar, in the press of



Ignjat (Vatroslav) Mederšicki, under another title — *Der Sirmier Bote* (Syrmium Courier), but the state of the economy made him move to Osijek. It happened, that four German language papers existed in Osijek simultaneously, but only briefly, from March 11 to May 27, 1869. This indicates the level of journalism (in Osijek). Sadly, *Slavonia* lasted only slightly more than two months (Fruk, 1997:31).

*Esseker Tagblatt: Organ fuer Volksinteressen* (Osijek Daily Paper: Public Interests Newspaper) is the first daily paper in Osijek, being published every day of the week except for Mondays. Its publication started in 1874, the responsible editor was N. B. Biedersfeld, and the printer was Carl Sandor. Although the editorial column of every paper wrote about its difficulties, the desire was not to deal with the politics but with the economy. *Esseker Tagblatt* thought that hard-working businessmen and real traders, industrial growth, education... contributed more to the country because those were the confirmations of civic motif (Fruk, 1998:82).

The columns in the paper were Original Korrespondenzen (Original Correspondence), Rundschau (Overview), Tagesneugkeiten (Daily News), Briefkasten der Redaktion (Readers' Letters), Volkswirtschaft (National Economy), Feuilleton (Feature)... (Fruk, 2000:130-137). It is clear that in those years the offering of papers was bigger than the demand; this paper managed to survive only a month, from July 1 to July 30, 1875, i.e. only 26 issues were published, none of which have been preserved.

*Esseker Zeitung: Organ fuer Politik Volkswirtschaft und Unterhaltung* (Osijek Newspaper: Paper for Politics, National Economy and Entertainment) was the opposition paper which brought together the media and ideological opponents of *Die Drau* newspaper. In the available resources there are numerous contradictions regarding the start of publishing, and considering that the portal of the National and University Library in Zagreb, *Old Croatian Newspapers*, states that only the first issue has been described, and that it was published in 1874, we will assume that is correct. The newspaper was being issued for five years, on Sundays and Tuesdays, until October 2, 1879. The owner was I. V. Hamann, and it was printed by Dragutin Sandor (who specifically bought the presses to be able to print an opposition paper). The paper had an attachment every Sunday: *Illustrierte beletristische sonntags Beilage der Esseker Zeitung* (Illustrated Sunday Fiction Attachment to the Osijek Newspaper); also there was a serialized novel *Zwei Spieler* (Two Players) attached (Vinaj, 1998:18).

Figure 3 *Esseker Zeitung*, front page

Source: Museum of Slavonia (Osijek), Newspaper Collection



October 1, 1885 sees the start of *Slavonische Presse* (*Slavonian Papers*). The paper was being issued three times a week (Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday), and its publisher and printer was Dragutin Carl Laubner. *Slavonische Presse* was a modern media edited, for the first four years, by Victor Hahn; and then by Carl Benda, the man who wrote superbly and whose impact on the paper made it well known. Benda nurtured the theatre and literary criticism. He is

best known for his spoofs about the life in Osijek and the title of which mimicked Berger's *City Walks*. In a humorous manner he described the cultural and ordinary events in the city life, and made satirical comments on societal anomalies as well; even today they help us gain a picture of the life of the city and its inhabitants (Obad, 1989:50). As of 1893, the paper becomes a political diary which preserves, for the history, important events and a turbulent period of the city. It is important to mention that despite being published in the German language, it was rather pro-Croatian. As of March 1, 1920 it becomes a weekly publication with a reduced extent; and after the departure of Carl Benda to *Die Drau* (July, 1920) the editing is taken over by Stjepan Freuenheim, who was not very much liked because of his rather sharp tongue. Through the society development and strengthening of the city political scene, papers aligned to political parties start to appear, even in the Croatian language, and *Slavonische Presse* had to adjust: political news become the top stories, it becomes important to be first with a story, so the reporters had to go onto the streets. As Croatian language newspapers started to appear, the printing and selling of *Slavonische Presse* weakened (Vinaj, 2002:174); we are led to believe that it most probably ceased by 1929. Without knowing the exact longevity, the paper did last for a long time which confirms its quality. *Slavonische Presse* was a modern

paper with the feeling for real news.

It was a three-column paper in Gothic script which, to start with, had the following sections: Feuilleton (Feature), Politische Nachrichten (Political News), Tagesneuigkeiten (Daily News), Telegraphisches Depeschen (Telegraphic Dispatch), Theater (Theatre), Kunst und Literatur (Art and Literature), Geschaefts Zeitung (Business Newspaper) and Vom Tage (Daily). Later, new sections appear: Offener Sprechsaal (Open Conference Room), for advertisements and citizens' thank-you letters; and Zuschriften (Replies) where one was able to present his/her opinions about the published texts etc.

Just like in *Die Drau*, the sections disappear and new ones are being created, but we concluded that the ones with the biggest longevity were the political (Politische Ueberblick), economics (Volkswirtschaftliches) and the daily news (Tagesneuigkeiten), so the sections were created around their content (Selthofer, Jošavac, 2012:131-133). *Slavonische Presse* also published feuilletons, theatre critiques as well as parts of stories. Another thing about this paper is that it was among the first ones to advocate the introduction of telephony and motivate the potential subscribers. Osijek got its telephone network in 1894, and on May 31 of the same year *Slavonische Presse* published the complete list of 77 subscribers (Belt, 2007:157-158). The paper had a relatively low circulation, and its extent rarely went beyond the city boundaries. As it did not have the longevity of *Die Drau*, today it is considered to have been the second most important German language paper tied, by the content, to the city and the surrounding area.

Figure 4 *Slavonische Presse*, front page

Source: Museum of Slavonia (Osijek), Newspaper Collection

At the beginning of the 20th century the key characteristic of journalistic style is the reporting-political approach, and many new maga-



zines appeared. This led to a decrease in the significance of the German language and a reduction in the number of German language papers. On September 5, 1907 the Osijek workers started their own paper, the political weekly *Volksrecht: Organ der Sozialdemokratischen Partai* (Popular Law: Paper of the Social-Democratic Party). There they demanded eight-hour workdays, the protection of workers, political equality of the Croatian proletariat and universal voting rights, similar to the ones existing in Hungary. The chief editor was Slavko Henč, and his offices were at 26 St. Rok Street (Pejić, 2010:42).

It was published on Thursdays and the first 14 issues (some claim 12) were printed in Zagreb, and thereafter by the Leopold Friedmann printers in Osijek. *Volksrecht* played an important part in raising the class awareness and the education of workers of the numerous German population in Osijek and Slavonia. The paper was being published until WW1 when it was terminated by the Decree of the Ban (Viceroy). Only a small number of copies have been preserved. It was restarted on December 23 of the same year, but then it lasted for a very short while (Vinaj, 1998:28).

### **Between two Wars (from 1918 to 1941)**

*Organisierter Arbeiter: Organ der unabhaengigen Gewerkschaftszentrale Jugoslawiens* (Organized Worker: the Voice of the Independent Trade Union Headquarters of Yugoslavia) had a short life, probably having started and ceased in the same year – 1928. Only three issues were published before the editors and distributors were arrested. The editor was Pavao Štark and the publisher was Ferdinand Kitter. It was being marketed as a revolutionary paper, dedicated to the working class and its struggle; it directly addressed German workers, peasants and day labourers (Fruk, 1997:29-34).

*Der Abend* (Evening Paper) was an independent newspaper started in 1929 and, in a way, it was the successor of *Die Drau*. It was edited by Lavoslav Selinger, and when it ceased the year after, Osijek was left without German language dailies. *Der Abend* shared the destiny of *Slavonische Presse*: with the appearance of Croatian language papers its scope was getting smaller and smaller, and the number of subscribers and readers lesser and lesser (Vinaj, 2002:174). Adding to that the beginnings of national organization, such a destiny could have been predicted. Everything left of the German language papers was re-directed to smaller and smaller readership.

*Slawonischer Volksbote: Wochenblatt der Deutschen in der Savebanschaft und Baranja* (Slavonian Courier: Weekly Newspaper of the Germans in the Saveban-

schaft and Baranja) started on September 6, 1936 in Osijek. It was published weekly and, according to German resources, until December 25, 1941 (Slawonischer Volksbote). The Croatian resources claim it was October 17, 1944 instead (Vinaj, 2003:29). This is discussed in the next section because it was more important for that period.

### **German newspaper publishing in the Independent State of Croatia: from 1941 to 1945**

From the 1942 list of newspapers it can be seen that the Independent State of Croatia (ISC, Croatian: *Nezavisna država Hrvatska* (NDH), had 140 papers, of which 8 dailies, 25 weeklies in Zagreb and 17 in the provinces (Novak, 2007:156).

After the dissolution of ISC the majority of published copies were lost and it is very hard to access comprehensive and verified information about the papers; and the same was the case with other relevant data. It is possible that the big majority of those papers were of poor quality and short longevity (quality was proportional to longevity), but for researching into Osijek cultural history they are very important.

Contrary to the partisan papers, which were well researched after WW2, the ISC periodicals (in spite of numerous titles) appeared to be non-existent for our researchers. Putting aside the historical context, as well as the value of cultural situation in ISC, we must emphasize: “The new circumstances, after April 10, 1941, meant that the journalistic liveliness in Zagreb ceased, and almost all existing dailies and weeklies were stopped, whilst the new ones were government controlled and aligned to the goals of its propaganda agenda” (Sorokin, 2004:46).

Although the German language newspaper publishing had been well developed until WW2, the creation of ISC shaped the new, much more favorable conditions, therefore publishing German periodicals blossomed in the Osijek area, and the new titles appeared. There are several reasons for that. Firstly, ISC was a part of Third Reich joint forces. Secondly, significant German military and police forces were stationed in Osijek. Therefore, there was a bigger influx of everything German. Thirdly, German ethnic minority was numerous, well organized and had a special legal status, making it different from other minorities. This gave significant importance to the German language newspaper publishing.

In the following sections of this paper, two groups of contemporary German publishing will be listed based on varying criteria.

## **Newspaper publishing and periodicals of the German ethnic minority (Deutsche Volksgruppe in Kroatien)**

This group was governed by the Office for journalism and propaganda of the German ethnic minority (Presse und Propagandaamt der Volksgruppenführung der Deutschen Volksgruppe in Kroatien) headquartered in Osijek and headed by Andreas Nikolaus Stötzer. The minority developed an extensive operation because the Office means were significant, including own printing machines and the publishers Druckerei und Verlag der Deutschen Volksgruppe in Kroatien, founded on April 12, 1941. Their publications, books, magazines, papers, etc. were printed there. By the mid-1942 the printers had some 50 employees and were situated at 26 Desatičina Street (Jareb, 2000:142-143).

Considering that the headquarters of the German ethnic minority were in Osijek, that is where the biggest number of German language papers were published (but not all of them). Here we shall mention just a few. *Slavonischer Volksbote* (Slavonian Courier) (Jareb, 2000:144-145) was the main and official informative-political weekly of the German ethnic minority. The paper was started between the two wars, in 1936, with the subtitle *Wochenblatt der Deutschen in der Savebanschaft und Baranja*. In 1941 the subtitle is changed to *Heimatblatt der Deutschen in Kroatien* (Homeland Journal of the Germans in Croatia), and later to *Grenzwacht* (Frontier Guard). It ceases on October 17, 1944, after being published every Friday, and towards the end even daily. The publisher was Branimir Altgayer, and the editor Andreas Nikolaus Stötzer. The main editorial was devoted to national and international news, and it had columns such as Volk an der Grenze (People on the Frontier) discussing the work and life of the German ethnic minority in ISC. The Front und Heimat (Front and Homeland) reported on contribution and participation of ethnic minority members in the war events, with a list of dead soldiers and civilians. Aus dem Seidlungsgebiet (From the Settlement Area) had the news from small places, whilst Essegger Nachrichten (Osijek News) reported from Osijek. Aus dem Wirtschaftsleben (From the Business Life) was about the business. The most important role of this weekly were the numerous contributions, some of which existed as free-standing papers. One of them was *Jugend an der Arbeit* (Youth at Work) that was the only one reporting about the German youth activities. Another was *Der schaffende Deutsche* (The Creative German) (published bi-weekly) which wrote about the position of German workers, their work and social rights and the role in business life. Also, there was *Deutsche Wirtschaft im Unabhengigen Staate Kroatien* (German Economy in the Independent State of Croatia) (writing about the business issues of the German ethnic minority, as well as about the interaction with Croatian factors and with Germany<sup>3</sup>) (Jareb, 2000:145).

*Neue Zeit: Bilderzeitschrift für die deutsche Familie in Kroatien* (New Time: Picture Magazine for the German Family in Croatia) was the main informational and entertainment weekly of the German ethnic minority. It was published between 1940 and 1944 in Osijek. It contained war reports but also the cultural and business events. The chief editor (and in 1941 the publisher) was Andreas Nikolaus Stötzer, and the owner and publisher was Propagandaamt der Volksgruppenführung der Deutschen Volksgruppe in Kroatien. Besides *Grenzwacht*, this paper was the most important and most wide-spread paper dedicated to the German ethnic minority in this area. To start with, it was published every two months and later weekly ... until it ceased in 1944. (Jareb, 2000:146).

*Unsere Schule: Fachschrift der deutschen Erzieherchaft im Unabhängigen Staate Kroatien* (Our School: Specialized Publication of the German Education in the Independent State of Croatia) was a monthly professional paper that was being published in Osijek from 1942 to mid-1944, the editor of which was Friedrich Kühbauch, and the publishers (to start with) Amt für Schulwesen and (later) Landesverwaltung der Deutschen Lehrerbundes in Kroatien (Jareb, 2000:147).

*Volk am Pflug* (People at the Plow) is a magazine published every two weeks (to start with), and then weekly (from the issue 14. in the summer of 1944.). At the beginning of publishing, it was an attachment to *Grenzwacht*, but later, for a short while, it became independent. Apart from entertaining content it was specifically addressing the German peasantry. The last issue came out on October 6, 1944. Considering that the peasantry constituted the majority of the German language minority, the paper probably had a bigger circulation than the others. It was one of their four most prominent papers (Jareb, 2000:147).

*Deutsche Volksgruppe im Unabhängigen Staate Kroatien. Deutsche Frauenschaft. Allgemeine Frauengemeinschaft. Schulungsblätter* (German Ethnic Minority in the Independent State of Croatia. German Women. General Women's Community. Training Sheets) was a monthly magazine of the women group in the German ethnic minority. It dealt with the education and organization, and it came with numerous useful pieces of advice for the social and practical life and work of German women. It was published until mid-1944. For a significant period of publication, it was dominated by the practical news for the practical women, whereas towards the end it turns to politics. The magazine was published by the German ethnic minority in ISC, which was a subgroup of the Deutsche Frauenschaft and Allgemeine Frauengemeinschaft which nurtured the German and universal cultural values. The publishing started in Zagreb but, as the German ethnic minority headquarters moved to Osijek, so did the publishing. It was printed in Druckerei und Verlag der Deutschen Volksgruppe in Kroatien, apparently very modestly but it was well organised (con-

sidering that by 1944 the whole of Slavonia became the war-field) (Kolar-Dimitrijević, 2003:318).

*Die Fanfare: Zeitung der Deutschen Jugend in Kroatien* (The Fanfare: Newspaper of the German Youth in Croatia) was very wide-spread and popular, illustrated political-informative bi-monthly, targeting German youth. It was published in Osijek as of January 15, 1942. All contents, without exception, were aligned with the age of the target group. The chief editor was Josef Gutpelet, and *Die Fanfare* was one of the four most prominent German papers of that period (Jareb, 2000:149).

*Die Gemeinschaft, Schulungsblatt für die Ortsgruppen der Deutschen Volksgruppe in Kroatien* (The Community, Training Sheet for the Local German Communities in Croatia) was a specialized, official monthly publication, also being published in Osijek. It was aiming at a narrow group of field officials. It dealt with education and organization of the local groups of German ethnic minority. There is only scant information about this publication, except that the editor was Tony Jaeger (Jareb, 2000:149-150).

*Junge Tat, Schulungsblätter der Deutschen Jugend im Unabhängigen Staate Kroatien* (Youths' Deed, Training Sheets for the German Youth in the Independent State of Croatia) was another specialized monthly published in Osijek, the aim of which was the education of and advice to the officials and the members of the mentioned group of German youth in ISC. There is not much data about this magazine, except that we know that issue 6 was published on March 1, 1942. *Soldatenbrief* (Soldier's Letter), a youth paper, was started in Osijek in 1943. The editor was Helga Brendl, and the publisher was Landesjugendführung der Deutschen Jugend in Kroatien. Its specificity was that youth and children contributed to the magazine, coming from German ethnic minority in ISC but also from Germany (Jareb, 2000:150).

*Verordnungsblatt der Volksgruppenführung der Deutschen Volksgruppe im Unabhängigen Staate Kroatien* (Ordinance Bulletin of the Germans' National Leadership in the Independent State of Croatia) was a monthly magazine first published in Zagreb, but we tied it to Osijek. Its publisher and editor was Branimir Altgayer, the leader of the German ethnic minority, and the publication was their official voice governing the life of the German minority. It was started in May 1941, and was being published until 1944. It became one of the main resources for research (Jareb, 2000:151).

Other, less important papers, bulletins and calendars in German language for the members of the German ethnic minority in ISC in Osijek area (and Slavonia) were: *Deutsche Pressebriefe aus Kroatien* (German Press Letters from Croatia), *Der Junge Kreis: Organ der Landesjugendführung für Kulturelles Schaffen* (Young Circle: the



Voice of the State Youth Leadership for Cultural Creation), *Landesbefehl der deutschen Jugend in Kroatien* (Instructions for the German Youth in Croatia), *Jahrbuch der Deutschen im Unabhängigen Staate Kroatien* (Yearbook of the Germans in the Independent State of Croatia), *Volk am Pflug: Taschenkalender* (People at Plow: Pocket Calendar), *Vormerk-Kalender* (Reservation Calendar)... (Jareb, 2000:151-153).

## Conclusion

The history of Germans living in our areas is still marked by the legacy of Adolf Hitler. Even today, they talk more about their exodus after WW2, rather than about everything else, including the good things they did for this city and the surrounding area. Without faked modesty, there and then Germans started a number of things and their influence left a deep mark — this is known to all who have scratched under the surface of their own history and own culture. The German language was the language of culture, the “second mother tongue”, the language of communication and cultural events.

Until the publication of the first Croatian language paper in Osijek, *Branislav*, in 1878, which not only appeared late but, was also not particularly successful, some of the mentioned publications reached their maturity and some already ceased to exist. Unfortunately, even the deserving ones have not been researched, to the extent to which the city of publication deserves. German newspaper publishing in the city was both vital and had a rich form and managed to shape itself into a custom and the need of (educated) readers.

Today we can say that those papers followed almost all aspects of life: politics, business, culture, everyday things, not only of the local community but also beyond it. They are distinctly precious for the research of Croatian publishing, cultural, political and business history. They were of magazine form and dealt with politics, science, arts and culture and gave their readers what they were interested in. Numerous Croats were their contributors.

Regarding the relationship between (all) German language papers and the local population, our culture, inter-national issues and the Slavic ideas, it must be said that their ultimate goal was never one of Germanisation, nor of Hungarisation. It could be said that they worked towards the cultural self-awareness of Croats. Throughout the period being addressed here, each of those German publications had its readership, a circle of people they reached out to and who, by their decision which publication to read, expressed their political orientation. Those were times when newspapers were important, when they were the “internet” and

could be trusted more than the majority of publications (and Internet, of course) today.

Nowadays Osijek has only one paper. Whether it reflects the spirit of the city or not, this article is not the place to consider this. Neither are the questions of the consequences of that spirit; nevertheless, it is a fact that at one point the city had as many as four papers (in the German language) and that it probably peaked in its business, cultural and political power – this does indicate something.

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## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> In the article written by Marina Vinaj (VGD 2002, p. 172), *Die Drau* ceases on August 1, 1932.
  - <sup>2</sup> The first illustrated magazine in Croatian language was *Dom i svijet* and it was first published in 1888.
  - <sup>3</sup> Although they are mentioned in references as additions to *Slavonischer Volksbote/Grenzwacht*, in the National and University Library in Zagreb they were catalogued as separate papers.
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# Njemačko novinstvo na području Osijeka: od 1848. do 1945. godine

## SAŽETAK

*U radu se prikazuje razvoj novinstva na njemačkom jeziku u gradu Osijeku. Činjenica da su još od vremena oslobođenja grada od Turaka pa do kraja Drugog svjetskog rata Nijemci u Osijeku (i dobrom dijelu njegove okolice) činili skoro polovinu stanovništva neminovno je odredila njihovu značajnu ulogu u svim segmentima gradskog života, a samim time i u razvoju novinstva. Uvidom u osječke njemačke novine, razvidno je kako su one bile različite sadržajem, tempom izlaženja i dužinom trajanja. Pomnim iščitavanjem i uvidom u literaturu došlo se do spoznaje kako većina podataka o novinama/listovima nije u cijelosti sačuvana, već je sačuvana samo djelomično, i to najčešće bez kronološkog slijeda. Također, otežavajuća okolnost je i problem tiskara koje su tiskale i izdavale dotične publikacije, a koje su često mijenjale urednike i vlasnike. No, ono što danas možemo reći je da je njemačko novinstvo u gradu bilo i vitalno i bogato formom te da je uspjelo od sebe stvoriti duhovnu naviku i potrebu (obrazovanog) čitateljstva. Sve su novine bile magazinskog tipa i pratile su skoro sva područja života — obuhvaćale su politiku, znanost, gospodarstvo, umjetnost, kulturu. Pružale su čitateljima sve ono za što su bili zainteresirani, a brojni su Hrvati također bili i njihovi suradnici.*

*Rad se temelji na pregledu istraživanja i objavljenih stručnih i znanstvenih radova čija se logička i kronološka podjela njemačkog novinstva najvećim dijelom nastojala slijediti.*

Ključne riječi: novinstvo, njemački jezik, Osijek, kulturna povijest, 1848.-1945.