

Archival Heritage of the Valpovo Estate

The complex interdisciplinary and inter-institution exhibition titled Valpovo Landowners Prandau-Normann in many ways originated from the archival fonds of the Valpovo Estate, which is kept in the State Archives in Osijek. What was once a compact and tangible wealth of spiritual and material assets of the Valpovo landowners is now a divergent heritage spread over multiple heritage institutions in Osijek and Valpovo, but also beyond, owned by private individuals. However, the documented trail of creation, acquisition, or use, the actual context for the existence of many exhibits from the holdings of specific institutions chosen for this exhibition, can be found in the documents kept at the archival fonds of the Valpovo Estate. This is confirmed by professional and scientific papers written on the basis of that archival fonds published so far, which cover the areas of history, art, sociology, and economy, but also popular publications, written from the perspective of the local history of Valpovo and the Valpovo region. This catalogue is one such recent witness of the archived roots of that heritage and almost all of the papers included in it refer to the sources from the mentioned archival fonds.

Archival Fonds of the Valpovo Estate

For the archival section of participation in this four facet exhibition, the State Archives in Osijek reveals a selection of documents and other recordings from its holdings that comprise the fonds HR-DAOS-476, Valpovo Estate. This estate, as the creator of the archival fonds of the Hilleprand von Prandau and von Normann-Ehrenfels families, existed and was active from 1721 to 1945, and the preserved materials created by its activities cover the period from 1727 to 1945. According to the published information, the fonds contains 1251 archival books, 2119 archival boxes, which is 275 linear metres of archival materials in total. Maps and designs, and coats of arms and diplomas should be added to that, because they are stored in a different set of archival books and boxes.¹

The condition and organisation of the fonds from the Valpovo Estate, especially regarding documents, has not been significantly changed, ever since it was formed and kept *in situ* in the archives of the Valpovo castle until the end of World War II, i.e. until the estate was confiscated

by the communist regime after the war, all through the period in which it was taken over and stored at the State Archives of Croatia, as it was called at the time, until it was stored and kept at the then-existing Historical Archives, the State Archives in Osijek today.² According to the information from the Book of Acquisitions, the materials were taken by the archives in multiple occasions.³ It is one of the rare archival fonds from which the materials, even though they are preserved only partially, vividly outline the organisation, administration, and activities of estates as part of a wider environment, as well as the life and work of the landowners and their subjects in Eastern Croatia, in the period from the beginning of the 18th century to 1945.

The archives of the Valpovo Estate, especially as the generator of materials related to matters of economy, was thoroughly investigated by Igor Karaman, first as part of the research for his doctoral dissertation,⁴ which he then adapted into a valuable book that provides a historical-economic analysis of the Valpovo Estate. This book is a model for a historical-economic overview of the development of a large, late-feudal estate and its transformation into a large capitalist property after serfdom was abolished in Croatia in 1848, as well as the rise, stagnation, and regression of the estate due to the wider economic environment in the Monarchy, in Europe, and in the world.⁵ The quality of archival research always depends on the knowledge about the archival fonds, its units, the original system of organisation and deposition of documents, as well as any subsequent factors that influenced their organisation. With that in mind, in the introductory part of his book, Karaman first described the Valpovo Estate as a property with a certain territory, settlements, population, relationships, and values.⁶ The administrative and organisational structure of the creator greatly affects the type of materials being created and the formation of the unit structure in the process of depositing archival materials. It is followed by the introduction of the landowning families, the members of which were the owners and inheritors of that estate over the period of 225 years, the families of barons Hilleprand von Prandau and counts von Norman-Ehrenfels.⁷ When they moved from Vienna to Valpovo, along with their other assets and valuables, they also carried over

the archival materials titled *Acta Viennensia*, and when the members of the family were getting married and when the estate changed ownership from family to family, they enriched those archives with the documents from the heritage of other families they were related to. Karaman's description of the Valpovo Estate and the structure of the archival materials in those archives is very important for this paper, because that description is the basis for all subsequent archival and research procedures regarding the materials from the Valpovo Estate.⁸ While he was working on that fonds, Karaman shared his discoveries about the materials, its structure and significance, with the professional community even before he published the mentioned book.⁹

Due to the regional nature of the archival fonds of the Valpovo Estate, the fonds were transferred from the holdings of the State Archives in Zagreb to the holdings of the Osijek archives, then the summary inventory of that fonds was written by Stjepan Sršan in 1977. That informational aid is still available to researchers and the employees of the archives, for the purpose of facilitating orientation in the fonds. For many years, it was necessary to conduct a thorough review of that fonds and create a more modern informational aid, this issue was brought up by archives employees who regularly search through the fonds for the clients and bring the ordered materials to the reading room of the archives, but by some of the researches as well. The structure of that inventory, its direct reliance on the register informational aids in the fonds itself, as well as some of its deficiencies, were also commented in papers published by some researchers.¹⁰ Karaman himself later mentioned the oldest inventory of that fonds again, for the first issue of the Glasnik arhiva Slavonije i Baranje.¹¹ Nevertheless, due to the dynamics of the priorities in organising and reviewing the fonds and collections in the Osijek archives, the opportunity to review the fonds of the Valpovo Estate and prepare a new summary inventory according to modern archival standards before the preparation of this complex exhibition project never presented itself.

The archival fonds of the Valpovo Estate only includes a part of the archival materials that were created during the life and activities of the noble families Hilleprand von Prandau and von Normann-Ehrenfels. Even though the nature and origin of that fonds places it in the group of personal and family fonds, only a small part of the recordings kept within contain the documents that would comprise an actual personal and/or family archival fonds, with personal documents, private correspondence, personal and family mementos, genealogies, personal and family notes, and similar. There are some of those recordings, but the recordings on property management and legal affairs, economic activity, and finances at the estate, later property, are mostly kept in the fonds. We do not need to repeat what was already published in several papers by other authors, and new discoveries and detailed explanations regarding the notices about the fonds, series, content, and significance of the materials will be possible only after a thorough revision and the creation of a new inventory. The

prerequisite for this work is long-term work planning, knowledge of Latin and German languages, particularly hand-written German Gothic script.

Archival heritage – selection for the Exhibition Valpovo Landowners Prandau-Normann

Written and illustrated traces that represent the archival heritage of the Valpovo Estate today include recordings on parchment, paper, and other materials, diplomas from rulers, accounts of various events, letters to loved ones, genealogical notes, lists of assets, contracts, receipts, and many other documents that were carefully stored and carefully protected in the archives of the estate. The total of 124 exhibits from that archival heritage were selected for the exhibition project Valpovo Landowners Prandau Normann, which are set in six thematic units within the newly refurbished space of the State Archives in Osijek: Landowners Symbolised by their Coat of Arms; Paper and Quill Through History; The Estate Theatre in Valpovo; Estate, Land, and People; Families, Individuals, Relationships, and Connections; Landowners and their Significance for the Wider Community. Aside from those exhibits and thematic units, some of the selected exhibits from the holdings of the State Archives in Osijek have been displayed in other partner institutions engaged in this project.¹² So the selection of hand-written maps and plans from the fonds of the Valpovo Estate is displayed in the exhibition at the Museum of Slavonia¹³ and the selection of the most significant construction projects is shown in the exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts¹⁴, while only two designs have been displayed in the exhibition at the State Archives in Osijek¹⁵. The appropriate pieces of furniture and equipment from the holdings of the Museum of Slavonia, the photographs of the theatre building in Valpovo from the holdings of the Valpovo Regional Museum, and the replicas of the portraits from the holdings of the Museum of Fine Arts were borrowed for the decoration of the space in the State Archives in Osijek, where this part of the exhibition will be held.

Landowners Symbolised by their Coat of Arms

The coats of arms from the fonds of the Valpovo Estate provide us with a glimpse of information from the long period of history in which the coats of arms of noble families were used as a symbol of recognition among those families. This catalogue devoted a paper by Silvija Lučevnjak to the topic of the coats of arms of the Valpovo landowners. It is necessary to point out that the coats of arms from the holdings of the Valpovo Estate are a distinct type of hand-made coats of arms with a funerary purpose, so they are funerary coats of arms known in German speaking lands as *Totenwappen*. Namely, the combined representations of the coat of arms and an inscription containing the appropriate information about specific individuals were used to convey the information about the death and the social status of the deceased. Due to its exceptional visual value and content, and the logical connection to the family genealogy, this part of

1 Sršan, S. Valpovačko vlastelinstvo (Obitelji Hilleprand von Prandau i grofova Normann-Ehrenfels) Valpovo. Sumarni inventar, 1977.

2 A Branch Office of the State Archives in Zagreb (archival storage) was founded in Osijek in 1947, which became an independent institution in 1957, and since 1997 it is active as regional archives under the current name, State Archives in Osijek.

3 Three acquisitions of the materials from that fonds are recorded in the Book of Acquisitions of the Osijek archives: no. 49 from 11 July 1949 (Arhinet no. 18/49), no. 320 from 28 September 1962 (Arhinet no. 14/62), and no. 347 from 2 March 1963 (Arhinet no. 3163).

4 Karaman, I. Razvitek uprave gospodarstva na vlastelinstvu Valpovo 1721-1945. Doktorski rad. Zagreb : vlast. nakl., 1959.

5 Karaman, I. Valpovačko vlastelinstvo : ekonomsko-historijska analiza. Zagreb : JAZU, 1962.

6 Cf. Karaman, 1962, p. 4-8.

7 Cf. Karaman, 1962, p. 9-12.

8 Cf. Karaman, 1962, p. 12-16.

9 Cf. Karaman, I. Središnje arhiva vlastelinstva Valpovo. Arhivski vjesnik, 2(1959), Osijek, p. 457-469. Downloaded from the URL: <https://hrcaak.srca.hr/131175/26/5/2018>

10 Cf. Perić, Lj. Valpovačka župna crkva i dvorska kapelica između 1722. i 1736. godine. Scrinia Slavonica 9(2009), Slavonski Brod, p. 99-124, here 99-101.

11 Cf. Karaman, I. Najstariji inventar Arhiva valpovačkog vlastelinstva baruna Hilleprand-Prandau iz 1789./1790. godine. Glasnik arhiva Slavonije i Baranje, (1991), Osijek, p. 97-117.

12 The exhibits were selected by Dražen Kušen, PhD, archives consultant, and Danijel Jelasić, PhD, senior archivist. The catalogue descriptions are signed by Danijel Jelasić, and the exhibition at the State Archives in Osijek is signed by Dražen Kušen.

13 Exhibition catalogue, State Archives in Osijek, catalogue units 1-12.

14 Exhibition catalogue, State Archives in Osijek, catalogue units 114-120, 122-123.

15 Exhibition catalogue, State Archives in Osijek, catalogue units 121 and 124.

the exhibition, in replica form, along with the basic information about the exhibit, the introductory legend and the genealogy panel, is practically set on the street, under the arcades of the eastern wing of the building of the State Archives in Osijek. In this way, it will be available to the visitors regardless of the working hours of the archives, because the space is also lit during the night. The exhibition also contains pedagogical materials of heraldic nature, and the archives is also offering heraldic workshops based of that part of the exhibition to the visitors.¹⁶ A much more abundant content of the collections of various heraldic materials owned by our noble families can be anticipated just on the basis of the preserved heraldic heritage in this archival fonds.

Paper and Quill Through History

The Valpovo landowners carefully kept the documents about their existence and activities in the estate archives, first in Vienna and later in Valpovo. The preserved trace of that care can be seen on the original inscriptions from the shelves that were located at the estate archives in Valpovo (*Tabellae*), which offer the titles of groups of documents with Latin names, which are also mentioned by Karaman in his study¹⁷, and they have also been given a special place in this exhibition. Recordings made using a quill, on parchment or paper, diplomas from rulers, accounts of events, correspondence with loved ones or important individuals, a list of addresses of significant title holders of the period, genealogical notes, lists of assets, contracts and other property-legal documents, receipts, and much more, found their place in the Valpovo estate archives, deposited as recordings in archival books, stacks of documents, or folders with maps, designs, or diplomas. From the selection of the correspondence in the exhibition, we would like to emphasize the Christmas and New Year greeting card from Antun Bačić to Baron Peter Anton, from 13 December 1756, (cat. no. 62, DAOS).

The Estate Theatre in Valpovo

The archival materials from the Valpovo Estate also include a documented trail for the construction of the oldest theatre building in continental Croatia, built by Joseph Ignaz Sigismund Baron Hillebrand von Prandau in 1809, at the tenant farm very near the castle in Valpovo.¹⁸ That is why the exhibition contains two documents related to the construction of the theatre, the contract with the master mason Anton Hartmann for the construction of the Valpovo theatre from 2 April 1809 (cat. no. 112, DAOS) and a Receipt for the Construction of the Valpovo Theatre from 31 December 1809 (cat. no. 113, DAOS). It is interesting to notice that Baron Josip Ignjat built the theatre relatively quickly after he moved from Vienna to Valpovo, and he apparently did it so he could bring some of the customs and social life that he maybe even missed from Vienna to Valpovo.

¹⁶ The pedagogic materials and the heraldic workshop are designed and run by the archival pedagogue Danijel Jelaš, PhD, senior archivist. The heraldic workshop, in which children of kindergarten age are offered the opportunity to create a coat of arms, is especially interesting.

¹⁷ Cf. Karaman, 1962, p. 14.

¹⁸ Cf. Perčić, Lj. *Kommetzij-Haus zu Valbo: priloge poznovanju kazališnog života u Valpovu od 1809. do 1823. godine u svjetlu arhivskog fonda obitelji Prandau i Normann, Osječki zbornik 28(2007)*, Osijek, p. 127-143.

Estate, Land, and People

Natural abundance, limited area, human potential, landowning and vassalage rights, regulated relationships, and peaceful cohabitation made the estate into a place where economic assets grew and society developed through history. As part of this exhibition unit, three thematic circles were formed from the selected exhibits: Conscriptioes – Lists from the Estate; Politica & Iuridica – Estate Administration and Judiciary; Oeconomica – Economy and Finances.

The thematic circle Conscriptioes – Lists from the Estate, displays a selection of lists from the estate, particularly according to villages and districts, and we would like to point out the Excerpt from the General List for Slavonia from 1698 with the Historical Description of the Valpovo Fort / *Conscriptio generalis diversorum Dominiorum Sclavoniae, cum quadam Chronologica Descriptione Arci Valpovensis*, from 10 May 1698 (cat. no. 46, DAOS), and the manuscript by Adolf Danhelovsky, the head forest keeper at the estate, for the monograph *Valpo und Dolnji-Miholjac* which was published in Vienna in 1885, under the title *Die Excellenz Gustav Hillebrand Freiherr von Prandau'schen Domänen Valpo und Dolnji-Miholjac in Slavonien*. [...] (cat. no. 47, DAOS). Another interesting exhibit is the unfinished hand-written translation of that monograph which was being prepared by dr. sc. Stjepan Sršan during the second half of the 20th century (cat. no. 48, DAOS).

The thematic circle Politica & Iuridica – Estate Administration and Judiciary, displays a selection of documents from the feudalism period, which faithfully demonstrate the part of the landowners' activities related to verified administrative and judiciary functions at the estate, which were transferred to state institutions after that period ended. We can point out the Proceedings of Economic Meetings / *Protocollum Ordinationum Sub Sessionibus Oeconomicis Valpovae* [...] from the period 1781–1784, which also contains an entry about the selection of local judges at the estate for 1784. The entry contains the list of confirmed and newly-selected judges according to settlements, as well as an interesting oath for judges, which is, unlike the rest of the proceedings, written in Croatian (cat. no. 75, DAOS).

The thematic circle Oeconomica – Economy and Finances, shows a selection from the largest section of the estate archives, which made the selection process more difficult. The authors who made the selection followed the principle that the number of exhibits from this section must not be higher when compared to the other thematic units of this exhibition, in order to achieve equilibrium in the representation of the full archival heritage of the landowning families. Among the documents detailing the granting of economic benefits and urbarial, financial, accounting, and other records, several very valuable documents should be pointed out, which are very illustrative in relation to the thematic circle. Those documents include the Urbarial Table of the Valpovo Estate from 24 December 1759 (cat. no. 93, DAOS), the Charter of Emperor Franjo I with the Guild Privileges to the Craftsmen of the Market Towns of Valpovo and Donji Miholjac, issued in Vienna in 4 August 1820, with a

pendent seal in a metal box (cat. no. 83, DAOS). Another interesting item is the List of Parade Horses from the Estate Stables, which can be dated to about 1880 (cat. no. 107, DAOS); also the Inventory of High-Quality Wines and Liqueurs at the Cellar of the Estate Castle, written on a printed form and dated to 1912 (cat. no. 108, DAOS).

Families, Individuals, Relationships, and Connections

In the feudal system, one's birth defines their position in society, and relationships and connections create conditions for the future. From family, through the relationship with other members of the estate, all the way to the status with the ruling house, all of this creates a silk woven net that keeps the family and its members on good terms with each other, but a weakness of some of the strands can cause a family or an individual to be ruined or to vanish. This unit of the exhibition has been divided into two thematic circles: Personal and Family Acquisitions first, followed by the circle titled In the Service of the Emperor and the Community – Political and Social Activities of the Landowners.

The thematic circle Personal and Family Acquisitions displays a selection of documents that speak about personal status, personal and family rights and benefits, and the family inheritance and its transfer, all the way until the estate, the rights, and the status were confiscated in post-war communist Yugoslavia. Within this thematic circle, the items that specifically stand out include the Fragment of the Document Used by Empress Maria Theresa to Confirm the Previous Rights Granted to Baron Peter Anton Hillebrand von Prandau by Emperor Charles VI (cat. no. 50, DAOS), then the Document from the Empress Maria Theresa on the Granting of Native Status to Baron Peter Anton Hillebrand von Prandau for the Czech Lands, issued in Vienna on 30 January 1751 (cat. no. 54, DAOS), with a wax pendent seal in a wooden box. The genealogical notes by the Valpovo landowners from the first half of the 20th century are also interesting (cat. no. 45, DAOS) or the List of the Schrottenthurn Estate / *Prospectud sed Guths Schrottenthurn* from 1756, now Stražišće near Kranj in Slovenia, which arrived to the family archives through marriage with the Vest family (cat. no. 60, DAOS). Another group of documents that should be pointed out is the one that speaks about the confiscation of the estate, Proceedings of the Handover of Confiscated Property of Valpovo Landowners from 13 November 1945 (cat. no. 56, DAOS), and the Rejection Notice for Countess Julianna von Normann-Ehrenfels for the Request to Use the Confiscated Castle in Valpovo, from 21 November 1946 (cat. no. 55, DAOS).

The thematic circle titled In the Service of the Emperor and the Community – Political and Social Activities of the Landowners displays a selection of documents that speak about the efforts by the Valpovo landowners to establish a relationship with the local and wider social context, and through that ensure the conditions for their momentary and future position in the society, often in the service of the empire and the community in which they lived. The exhibit that especially stands out among others is the Address of the Delegation of the I Osijek Election District to Baron Anton Gustav Hillebrand von Prandau Asking Him to Stay in His Position as a Representative in the Sabor (parliament), from 16 June 1874 (cat. no. 69, DAOS).

Landowners and their Significance for the Wider Community

In secular and religious circles, in Valpovo and the Valpovo region, in Osijek and Slavonia, in Zagreb and elsewhere in Croatia, in Vienna and all over the monarchy, the members of the Hillebrand von Prandau and von Normann-Ehrenfels families were active in all of those places, and received prominent positions and functions, offices and significance. Some traces of that significance were preserved in the honorary diplomas granted to some members of the family for their distinguished efforts in economic circles, in intellectual circles, in charity and social activities, and in music. The exhibits that stands out among others is the Diploma to Baron Anton Gustav Hillebrand von Prandau for winning the Grand Prix at the National General Exhibition in Budapest in 1885 (cat. no. 42, DAOS), then the Great Honorary Diploma to Baron Anton Gustav for participation at the mentioned exhibit (cat. no. 43, DAOS), and the Participation Diploma for the II Wine Exhibition and Fair in Zagreb 1929. (cat. no. 44, DAOS) As a document illustrating the high reach of participation of this landowning family in the social and music life of not only the Valpovo region and Slavonia, but also entire Croatia, the Diploma to Baron Anton Gustav for the honorary membership in the Croatian Music Institute in Zagreb, issued to him on 24 February 1864, is especially valuable. Namely, he was one of the founders and the first president of the Croatian Music Institute in Zagreb in the period 1827-1828. (cat. no. 29, DAOS)

Maps of the Valpovo Estate

The selection of hand-made maps of the Valpovo Estate from the holdings of the State Archives in Osijek and those kept at the holdings of the Museum of Slavonia were joined in a single unit, which is this exhibition, displayed at the Museum of Slavonia. The maps from the holdings of the archives mostly consist of estate plans outlining specific settlements and areas at the estate, watercourse and road regulation maps. Among those maps, the Plan of the Estate Allodium with the Menagerie / *Allodiatura Dominialis cum Vivario in Valpo* from 1786 (cat. no. 1, DAOS) is particularly interesting. Similar to the construction of the theatre in Valpovo relatively quickly after moving from Vienna to Valpovo, it appears that the organisation of the estate menagerie at the allodial land, shown at the displayed map, could be the imitation of the Viennese imperial menagerie *Tiergarten Schönbrunn* next to the imperial residence in Schönbrunn, which was established only about thirty years before, in 1752.

Construction Designs

Construction activities of the Valpovo landowners are documented in part by the preserved designs and partly by files and notes, mostly of bookkeeping nature. Starting from the first years after taking over the estate, all the way to the 20th century, the landowners provided the towns and villages at the estate with a significant number of more or less representative residential, economic, and religious buildings. The frequent reconstructions of the estate castle in Valpovo speak about the permanent effort to make their own living space as comfortable, pleasant, and representative as possible, according to the dominant

styles in the specific period. The exhibit we would like to point out is the Design by the Viennese Architect Adam Heinrich for the Road Entrance into the Valpovo Castle Complex from 1901 (cat. no. 116, DAOS), as a representative example of the neo-Baroque addition to the Valpovo castle. Among the designs for religious structures which were preserved and shown, we would like to point out the Design for the Construction of the Parish Church in Brodanci from 1794 (cat. no. 118, DAOS), as a characteristic example of religious architecture of Baroque Classicism at the Valpovo Estate. High-quality economic activities demand high-quality and modern economic structures. One of the examples of that is the Design for the Expansion of the Main Estate Warehouse from 1876 (cat. no. 122, DAOS). As an example of a public building intended for the inhabitants of the city, we should mention the Design for the Bathhouse in Valpovo from 1833, displayed in the exhibit at the State Archives in Osijek (cat. no. 124, DAOS).

Conclusion

The landowners of Valpovo managed their estate as owners in various historical stages over the period of over two centuries. Their intensive efforts, especially when they became permanent residents of Valpovo and personally took over the administration of their assets at the end of the 18th century, elevated the Valpovo region to an impressive level regarding the contemporary management of natural and human resources. This is confirmed by the records preserved at the State Archives in Osijek, at the archival fonds of the Valpovo Estate, and the value and significance of those materials were only known to the employees of the archives and interested researchers until now. Today, through the selection of the most valuable examples of various recordings from those holdings and the gathering of those examples in this great exhibition project, those recordings experienced a renaissance of their valuation and significance in the context of Croatian administrative, judiciary, economic, and cultural history.