

Valpovački vlastelini Prandau–Normann

VALPOVO LANDOWNERS
PRANDAU - NORMANN

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Ethnographic Donation of the Valpovo Landowners

The Ethnographic Department holds nine items, or dolls, donated to the Museum of Slavonia in 1915 or 1916 by Count Rudolf Joseph von Normann-Ehrenfels and his wife Julijana Edle von Vest.¹ They belong to a set of 24 dolls dressed in traditional clothes from the First World War, acquired at the doll exhibition held in 1915 for the benefit of the wounded in Osijek hospitals and then donated to the Museum.² According to the notes from museum records, their *intended purpose was to establish an ethnographic department of this museum.*³ Today, they are a part of the Collection of Dolls in Traditional Clothes, entered into the Registry of Cultural Goods of the Republic of Croatia in 2013. The dolls are large, with porcelain heads, and the rest of their body is made of wooden parts. The hair is natural, made by wigmakers, and in some cases, the hair is gathered in a complex traditional braid. The lists from old museum documents mostly describe them as dolls representing male or female farmers. They are clothed in traditional clothes from Slavonia or other parts of Croatia. To an extent, they can also be considered as important documents regarding traditional applied weaving techniques, various handmade and craftsmanship techniques, and the tailoring and wearing methods of traditional clothes. The female garb from Aljmaš with complex headgear is an excellent example (cat. no. 117, MSO), while the braid worn by young women (cat. no. 118, MSO) has unfortunately not been preserved, which would be an extraordinary example of hair styling methods in Aljmaš for us today. This part of non-material heritage was lost because in the 1990s we could not find anyone who could make it, or even describe it. In that town near Osijek, people stopped wearing traditional clothes as early as the beginning of the 20th century, and with its gradual disappearance from everyday use, the headgear was no longer being made and the knowledge was lost. There are attempts today to reconstruct it on the basis of photographs, but if

the braid on the doll was preserved, the reconstruction of this knowledge would be more reliable.

Some dolls are clothed with more and some with less attention, with partial adherence to the rules and by mimicking the national garb in tailoring and decorating on one hand, but on the other hand, considering their purpose and simplifications, some style adjustments are present of course, along with some inconsistencies and mismatching. Some parts of the clothes are missing and many decorative details on the dolls are damaged or incomplete. Considering that these are dolls, not even the full tailoring of the traditional clothes, as well as the way it was put on and worn, cannot be fully satisfactory.

Traditional clothes from Slavonia are represented on five of these nine dolls: Two of them represent Aljmaš, and Đakovo, Privlaka, and the Military Frontier are represented with one doll each. Aljmaš is represented by a girl wearing the formal traditional clothes *jaspričanka* (cat. no. 118, MSO) and a woman wearing a *jaspričanka* and a skirt, with detailed headgear (cat. no. 117, MSO). Đakovo is represented by a married woman, *snaša* (cat. no. 119, MSO) in formal traditional clothes decorated with gold embroidery and circular metal plates, *pulje*. The metal wire and the designs have unfortunately corroded and are damaged in places. The traditional clothes from the area of the Military Frontier (cat. br. 120, MSO), for which Zdenka Lechner, the first ethnologist of the Museum of Slavonia, stated in the inventory that it may be from Vinkovci, has some inconsistently combined elements like the *vezenka* with perforated embroidery, šlinganje. The šlinga scarf and the belt do not match.⁴ Nevertheless, all the work was done very well – specific type of weaving (usnivano) for the fabric, embroidery, wool weaving of the foot wraps, small opanci, and especially the wide braid, meticulously made with a large number of strands. Improvisation is more expressed on the

1 We found out the following from the hand written transcript from the old museum documents: *Mr. Count Rudolf and Ms. Countess Julija Normann Ehrenfels donated the following to the Osijek Museum, dolls dressed in traditional clothes:*

1. *Widow from Privlaka*
2. *Farmer from Pizarovina, male*
3. *Farmer from Pizarovina, female*
4. *Farmer from Dobrinaci, male*
5. *Farmer from Dobrinaci, female*
6. *Woman from the Đakovo area in special gold decorated clothes (slatora)*
7. *Farmer from the Frontier*
8. *Farmer from Aljmaš, female*
9. *Farmer from Aljmaš, female*

2 A note in the documents speaks of their origin: *List of dolls, wearing traditional clothes, which represent the clothes worn by people in Croatia and Slavonia, bought at the doll exhibition which was organised for the benefit of the wounded being treated in the hospitals of Osijek, date 12 December 1915.*

3 The Ethnographic Department of the Museum of Slavonia was not founded until 1952.

4 According to the ethnologist from the City Museum Vinkovci, Ljubića Gligorević, MPhil, instead of the šlinga lace shirt, the končano lace would be more appropriate, and the scarf should be *farberica*, *lapaskinja*, or *štofanka*. The belt is also mismatched, i.e. the *starovirsko* belt would be appropriate.

traditional clothes from Privlaka (cat. no. 121, MSO) – the velvet belt and the silk scarf are especially out of place, because the formal materials used do not match the shirt *vezenka*, and so are the small shoes instead of opanci. The stylised *vezenka* made of traditional woven fabric has a nicely embroidered lower part of the dress in four columns, but the thick embroidery on the sleeves does not match these traditional clothes. Aside from the apron, it is also missing the scarf. The doll originally had a shawl instead of the scarf, which was repurposed and arranged into a scarf on the head during the 1950s.⁵

Some of the dolls do not have footwear, and some other details would be necessary for full reconstruction. There are some particularly noticeable gaps on three of the five Slavonian dolls, which were incomplete even when they were inventoried in the 1950s: Aprons on the doll from Privlaka were missing (cat. no. 121, MSO) as well as on the doll in the frontier clothes (cat. no.120, MSO), and the finely braided braid on the doll from Aljmaš (cat. no. 118, MSO). We know from the inventory that the knitted foot pieces called šorkice made of multi-coloured wool on the same doll were significantly damaged and are still missing today. All three cases clearly included sensitive materials susceptible to pests; foot pieces, and probably aprons as well, were made of wool. Natural hair is also very delicate. Aside from the mentioned cat. no. 118 where the hair, or the braid, was not preserved at all, for cat. no. 119 the damage to the hair on the head was emphasized when it was inventoried, aside from the firmly braided braid.

They are followed by two pairs of dolls, as stated in the lists, a male and female farmer from Písarovina and from Dobrinči. Pair of traditional clothes from Písarovina (cat. no. 122, 123, MSO), near Zagreb, are made carefully and with a lot of details, from small ruffles on the white canvas parts to the embroidery and designs, and the headgear on the female doll is particularly complex. The Serbian traditional clothes from Dobrinči in the Ruma municipality, in Srijem, are simpler, but, emulating actual traditional garb, they are made of local fabric and decorated with white embroidery techniques (cat. no. 124, 125, MSO).

The dolls are proof of the humanitarian inclinations of their donors and of their awareness regarding the value of national heritage that surrounded them, as well as the need to preserve that heritage, in this case, through a donation to the Museum. Their family photographs also tell the story about the respect they had toward national heritage, in which some of the members of the family are wearing traditional regional clothes from surrounding and somewhat more distant regions. This is primarily the coloured photograph of a child, Count Rudolf Richard Gabrijel Marija von Normann-Ehrenfels (cat. no. 103, MSO)⁶ in Slavonian traditional clothes, from 1939, and the drawing of a portrait, probably of his mother, Countess Marija-Theresa Laura Antonija von Normann-Ehrenfels wearing traditional clothes from Bizovac⁷. Count Rudolf had his photograph taken on his travels in 1887, 1888, and 1889, in Athens, Cairo, and Seville, and on them he is wearing traditional local clothes.⁸ There are pages from a folder or a publication from the time of Count Rudolf, which has not been fully preserved, with a similar theme. Aside from the photographs related to the estate, there are many pages with photographs, created around 1910, depicting residents of Valpovo, Harkanovci, and Koška in traditional clothes.⁹

Regardless of the stylistic interventions, the dolls in traditional clothes are an important document from the period and a document showing many traditional techniques and materials used in their creation.

⁵ Information from the inventory book.

⁶ Valpovo Regional Museum, inv. no. MV-603.

⁷ Valpovo Regional Museum, inv. no. MV-1517

⁸ Zbirka fotografija. U: Vodič kroz zbirke Muzeja Valpovštine : povodom 60 godina djelovanja Muzeja Valpovštine. Paušak, M. (ur.). Valpovo : Ustanova za kulturne djelatnosti "Ante Evetović-Mirosljub", Muzej Valpovštine, 2017, p. 112–113.

⁹ Lechner, Z. Napomene uz narodnu nošnju Donje Podravine. Osječki zbornik 13(1971), Osijek, p. 287–301.