

PREFACE

The Book of Proceedings from the First Interdisciplinary Scientific and Professional Symposium with International Participation titled *The Croatian East in the Homeland War – Experiences, Insights and Consequences*, held in Osijek on December 4-5, 2014, is a result of the professional and scientific work of the participants and organizers. The Symposium was co-organized by the Institute of Social Sciences Ivo Pilar, Zagreb - the Regional Center of Osijek; the Department of Cultural Studies at the University of Josip Juraj Strossmayer, Osijek and the Branch of Matrix Croatica in Osijek.

Even twenty years after the end of the Homeland War, e.g. 17 years after the peaceful reintegration of the Croatian Danube Region into the constitutional and legal system of the Republic of Croatia and there are still many issues to be explored as well as the role of the large number of the defenders and patriots defending the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Croatia. During the Homeland War a continuous social and public life of citizens existed. The schools and the colleges had their lectures held in the dislocated places in the country itself or abroad. The utilities, the fire department, the health care service and other providers of civic activities performed their daily duties. The theaters performed their repertoires almost during the entire Homeland War. The sports competitions took place and the Republic of Croatia was presented to the world. In the world of sports there were very significant efforts undertaken by the athletes and sports diplomacy, led by the Croatian Olympic Committee. As a result of these efforts, the International Olympic Committee invited the Croatian Olympic Committee to participate in the XVIth Winter Olympic Games in Albertville, France (8-23 February 1992) and in the XXVth Summer Olympic Games in Barcelona, Spain (25 July – 9 August 1992). The XVIth Winter Olympic Games were the first sport competition in which Croatian athletes competed independently for their country. Croatian athletes won three Olympic medals and these sports achievements were of great political significance for the just internationally recognized Republic of Croatia and they gave strong moral support to the defenders and to all the citizens of the Republic of Croatia.

In their everyday life the organizers of this Symposium as well as citizens felt the lack of knowledge regarding many topics from the Homeland War, particularly those relating to the Croatian East, the last area that had been liberated and reintegrated into the constitutional-legal system of the Republic of Croatia on 5 January 1998. In fact, that was when the mandate of the UN Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium, colloquially known as the UNTAES, had ended. There are numerous topics from the Homeland War in this area of which the public has very little or no knowledge at all, but they had shaped the everyday life of the Cro-

atian people and the official policy to very large extent during the War and post-war period. Among these issues one should point out: military operations and battles for particular towns and villages; the existence of quasi-fiscal and quasi-monetary system introduced by the occupying powers ; the war monetary union (federation) of the Federal Republic Of Yugoslavia, Serbian Republic and the Republic of Serbian Krajina; many aspects of social life that relate to education, science, religion, culture, arts and media in the Croatian East during the Homeland War. Due to the heterogeneous group of scientists e.g. presenters at the Symposium, this Book of Proceedings consists of several thematic units covering certain aspects of scientific research pertaining to the issues of military, politics, legislation, peace, education, culture, economy, language, society, health-care, religion, information, judicature etc.

I would like to thank all the participants in the First Interdisciplinary Scientific and Professional Symposium with International Participation: *The Croatian East in the Homeland War – Experiences, Insights and Consequences*, whose participation and work contributed to the scientific enlightenment and other insights to the events that had happened in the area of the Croatiaian East during the Homeland War and in the post-war period- I would also like to express my gratitude to the co-organizers: the Department of Cultural Studies at the University of Josip Juraj Strossmayer Osijek and the Branch of Matrix Croatica in Osijek, whose generous and dedicated work contributed to the realization of this project. The project is to be continued this year and it will be enriched by the institutional participation of the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Mostar, whose scientists took a notable part in the Symposium last year and have announced some very interesting topics for this year.

The First Symposium took place in an extremely complex financial time and it was held thanks to the financial support of the business companies and the administrative units of the regional and local self-government, who expressed their sensitivity to the themes from the Homeland War and the post-war period, the themes that had not been systematically addressed. An identical situation can be noticed with the organization of this year's Symposium that is to take place on 2-3 December 2015 and it represents a continuation of efforts to scientifically and professionally explore the issues from the Homeland War and the post-war period. On behalf of the co-organizers and me I would like to thank the representatives of business companies and local authorities who have given their financial support in order to make it possible to hold both the last and this year's Symposium.

The First Symposium as well as the one coming up this year are both dedicated to the veterans of the Homeland War as well as to all those patriots and martyrs who lost their lives, to those who were persecuted, imprisoned and harassed fighting for the identity and survival of the Croatian people in the course of the thirteen centu-

ries-long Croatian history. Likewise, the Symposium is also dedicated to every person, who was not a member of the Croatian national copus but who fell victim ti the Homeland War fighting for freedom and survival of the Croatian people. Therefore I express my special gratitude tothis group of the citizens of the Republic of Croatia for all they had done for the identitiy and survival of our homeland.

Editor in chief:
prof. Ph. D. Miljenko Brekalo