

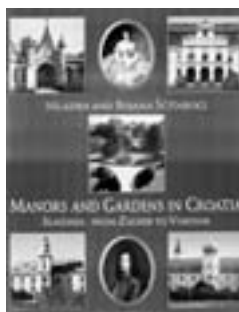
**KSENIJA KROTIN****MANORS AND GARDENS IN CROATIA  
SLAVONIA - FROM ZAGREB TO VUKOVAR**

MLADEN &amp; BOJANA ŠČITAROCI

**DVORCI I PERIVOJI U HRVATSKOJ  
SLAVONIJA - OD ZAGREBA DO VUKOVARA**

MLADEN I BOJANA ŠČITAROCI

Knjiga Bojane i Mladena Ščitarocija *Dvorci i perivoji u Hrvatskoj (Slavoniji)* objavljena je 1998. godine, a sada je izašla i u prijevodu na engleski jezik. Hrvatski kulturni centar, Međunarodna fondacija za hrvatske spomenike i knjižara RIBA organizirali su promociju knjige koja se u prisutnosti autora održala u utorak, 30. travnja 2002. godine u knjižari Kraljevskog instituta britanskih arhitekata, 66 Portland Place u Londonu. Za knjigu je vladalo veliko zanimanje pa je Bojana Ščitaroci tri sata odgovarala na pitanja, nastojeći objasniti pojedinosti o perivojima i dvorcima tijekom burne hrvatske povijesti.



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*Manors and Gardens in Croatia*, a book by Bojana and Mladen Ščitaroci, first published 1998, has now been translated into English. The Croatian Cultural Centre, The International Trust for Croatian Monuments and the RIBA Bookshop organized the launch of the book, in the presence of the authors, on Tuesday 30 April 2002 in the bookshop of The Royal Institute of British Architects, 66 Portland Place, London. There was great interest in the book and Bojana Ščitaroci did her best, for three hours, to answer all the questions and explain the details connected with the gardens and manors through the turbulent history of Croatia.

The image of the manor house should be viewed as a spatial complex that includes: the house, farmyard, park, vegetable gardens, orchards, surrounding forests, copses, meadows and arable land, all blending into the natural countryside. The manors were the management centres of feudal estates, as well as country houses. Written records of the gardens are very rare. Most of the gardens are small, from 1 ha to 10 ha in a range. Many star-shaped baroque gardens of the eighteenth century, were replaced by gardens and parks in the romantic style of the nineteenth century. Every one is a unique and attractive model of landscaping but none of the gardens are in a single style.

The day after the book launch, on 1 May, there was an excellent lecture by the Mladen Ščitaroci. The event took place at The Croatian Cultural Centre - Embassy of the Republic of Croatia, 21 Conway Street, London.

After a warm welcome, the story about gardens and manors rolled from the medieval hill-forts to the moated castles in the valleys. Baron Turković Kutjevski, Peter Farnell-Watson of the Vranyczany-Dobrinović family and the members of the Pejacević family, including Countess Mary and Count Marcus, honoured the lecture with their presence. They were particularly welcomed as their homes were among the manors featured.

Because the lecture was so short, there was not time to turn the audience into conservation experts. It could only be a brief overview of the two books, which are highly recommended for further reading. In the first book, *Castles, Manors and Gardens of Croatian Zagorje*, published in 1992, there are 60 manors described in detail as there are in the second book, which has just been launched. We learned that there are, at least, that many more still to be researched in Zagorje and Slavonija, let alone Istria, Dalmatia and Dubrovnik.

The lecture was not only about houses and gardens. It was about the people who lived and worked in them, about the customs and traditions, the land and the management of land. Every manor has its own story. Once, they were the centres of prosperity, today, most have the same problem, how to survive. Bojana and Mladen have put a lot of time and work into researching and writing about the gardens and manors of Croatia, in their efforts to help save them.

It appears that the main problem is a lack of an established conservation framework and ethos. The essential points for successful conservation and preservation of the national heritage is a reasonable measure of support from the general population and a suitable economic climate to sustain it. While talking about all the positive things resulting from a private initiative in the renovation of Miljana, selling properties to private investors has a down side too. It is very difficult to find people willing to invest in them, and at the same time, to keep control over restoration and legal rights in the long run.

After the lecture, the talk turned to The National Trust, sparking ideas for providing an adequate income to maintain old buildings and to find a new use for them. A good example is the archive of the National Monument Record which is now stored in a listed building, part of the former Great Western Railway Works in Swindon. The National Trust is probably not the best model for the present situation in Croatia, but SAVE (Save Britain's Heritage) could be a very interesting solution for a start. They have a list of buildings and try to find suitable owners and use for them, apart from exhibitions and museums.

Although some other nations might have things that they can teach all of us, especially in the way most of their tax systems operate, the difficulties facing the heritage are similar throughout Europe and demand the same blend of sensitivity, patience and positive commitment if they are to be solved.