

Milovan Gavazzi's Ethnographic Photography and Ethnological Research in Dalmatia in the First Half of the 20th Century

Petrović Leš, Tihana; Rubić, Tihana; Grkeš, Ivan

Source / Izvornik: **Formats of (Non)Seeing, 2024, 348 - 371**

Conference paper / Rad u zborniku

Publication status / Verzija rada: **Published version / Objavljena verzija rada (izdavačev PDF)**

<https://doi.org/10.31664/9789533730530.17>

Permanent link / Trajna poveznica: <https://urn.nsk.hr/urn:nbn:hr:254:502405>

Rights / Prava: [In copyright](#) / [Zaštićeno autorskim pravom.](#)

Download date / Datum preuzimanja: **2025-03-29**



Repository / Repozitorij:

[PODEST - Institute of Art History Repository](#)

TIHANA PETROVIĆ LEŠ
TIHANA RUBIĆ
IVAN GRKEŠ

Milovan Gavazzi's Ethnographic Photography and Ethnological Research in Dalmatia in the First Half of the 20th Century

DOI: 10.31664/9789533730530.17

INTRODUCTION

The subject of this paper is the photographic oeuvre of the Croatian ethnologist and university professor Milovan Gavazzi, which arose in the period from 1928 to 1939 and was related to the region of Dalmatia.¹ Some of the photographs were taken as a result of organized fieldwork within the then Chair of Ethnology and Ethnography.² Others were the result of Gavazzi's private travels that, as it turns out, were inseparable from his scientific research interests and vocation.³ Since Gavazzi's photo-

- 1 Milovan Gavazzi (1895-1992), Croatian ethnologist, university professor, intellectual, and scientist of worldwide reputation. He is the central figure of older Croatian ethnology. In 1927, he filled the vacant position of associate professor at the Department of Ethnology and Ethnography, which he thoroughly reorganized. In terms of research, he dealt with: a) South Slavic linguistic heritage, b) ethnomusicological features of Southeastern Europe, and c) family structure, especially of the cooperative type. For more information on Gavazzi and his activities in the context of the history of Croatian ethnology, see: Belaj, "Zreli plodovi", 353-357; Belaj, *Die Kunde vom kroatischen Volk*, 1-304; Petrović Leš, "The intellectual circle of Milovan Gavazzi", 69-94; Grkeš, Petrović Leš, "Care mi amice nec non fratre in Christo", 354-375; Rubić, "Milovan Gavazzi and ethnographic photography".
- 2 The photographic material that is the subject of this paper is the result of fieldwork conducted by the members of the Chair and their collaborators from the interwar period to the late 1970s. See: Rubić 2023, "Milovan Gavazzi and ethnographic photography"; Grkeš, Petrović Leš, "Care mi amice nec non fratre in Christo", 354-375.
- 3 In previous research, Milovan Gavazzi's contribution to visual anthropology was insufficiently explored. Most works dealing with his contribution to the visual aspects of ethnology and cultural anthropology focus on his important and pioneering role in the development of ethnographic film (See: Majcen, "Etnološki filmovi Milovana Gavazzija", 121-133; Antoš, "Etnografski film Milovana Gavazzija", 73-75; Urem, "Specifičnost disciplinarnih i institucio-

graphic oeuvre is the subject of our current research, which also includes a long-term arrangement and description of all archival material of the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology⁴ as a prerequisite and prearrangement for its future digitization, in this article we present, in an informative way, a selected body of material thematically related to Dalmatia.⁵ We consider the photographic material as a historical source and at the same time as a cultural anthropological document that has documentary value and is subject to interpretation and critical questioning.⁶

Gavazzi photographically documented various aspects of culture and the everyday life of the rural and suburban population in interwar Croatia and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.⁷ From the point of view of ethnology and cultural anthropology, this material represents a valuable source for the study of social and cultural changes in the 20th century and for the study of historical anthropology, cultural history, and the history of Croatian ethnology. In this paper, we focus on two research questions: 1) how the photographic work of M. Gavazzi can be used as a source for the study of topics from the history of ethnology and cultural anthropology, and 2) how this visual material contributes to the (re)evaluation of previous views on Gavazzi's research work and early Croatian ethnology. The work is methodologically based on archival research—written and photographic material—and on literature related to (the history of) ethnology and cultural anthropology.

nalnih pristupa etnografskom filmu”, 247-273.), while his photographic engagement, which preceded his filming efforts but also ran parallel to them, has remained in the background.

4 The work on organizing archival materials is carried out within the framework of the institutional project The Visual Identity of the Croatian Nation and Homeland in the First Half of the 20th Century (leader: Professor Tihana Petrović Leš, PhD), whose members are Professor Tihana Petrović Leš, PhD, Professor Suzana Leček, PhD, Associate Professor Tihana Rubić, PhD, Sanja Grković, MA, and research assistant Ivan Grkeš. Tihana Rubić is also a member of the project Exposition [Ekspozicija]: Themes and Aspects of Croatian Photography from the 19th Century until Today of the Croatian Science Foundation (IP-2019-04-1772), and this paper has been written as part of the mentioned project.

5 The Department archives hold written and visual materials intended for research and university teaching. About the Archives of the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology see: Kelemen, Rubić, “Arhiv Odsjeka za etnologiju i kulturnu antropologiju”, 99-114.

6 Gidley, “North American Indian Photographs”, 33.

7 Although the focus of this paper is not the political history of interwar Yugoslavia, it should be noted that we are aware of the complexity of this concept, which we have necessarily simplified due to the subject of our paper. Interwar Yugoslavia changed its name several times: first it was called *Kraljevstvo Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca*. (Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes) (1918), then, *Kraljevina Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca* (Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes) (1921), and finally, *Kraljevina Jugoslavija* (Kingdom of Yugoslavia) (1929).

From the institutionalization of ethnology as a science in Croatia in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, research was conducted by documenting elements of *traditional culture* as “research of the way of life and culture of the peasantry”.⁸ The aim of this research was 1) to preserve and reconstruct traditional customs, techniques, and skills and save from oblivion the cultural treasures of the peasantry as a part of society that has a strong national feeling;⁹ and 2) to study the origin of elements of traditional culture with an awareness of their scientific importance and multi layeredness.¹⁰ At the same time, within the framework of newly established museum and scientific institutions, photographs also began to be collected and preserved 1) as documentation of a museum (ethnographic) object, and 2) as a museum object that provided insight into everyday life and testified to culture/cultural and social changes, people, and events.¹¹

Milovan Gavazzi was primarily interested in (South) Slavic cultural heritage and its traces in the linguistic or cultural inventory within the Croatian historical space.¹² In his scientific and teaching work, he very quickly turned to ethnographic photography and then to ethnographic film as a visual means of documenting the material, spiritual, and social elements of traditional peasant culture. For Gavazzi, ethnographic photography was an important tool for understanding and documenting the spatial spread of cultural elements, whose purpose was to interpret the origin, age, and distribution of the phenomenon under study.¹³ His reasons for visual documentation were: a) fixing reality, “preserving” what would soon cease to exist in the rush of modernization and subsequent social and cultural changes, b) the idea that visual content is¹⁴ an invaluable scientific arbiter in ethnological problematization and action, and c) the idea that such material is extremely important as a medium of knowledge transfer, which is why it could be used in university teaching.¹⁵ At the time when Milovan Gavazzi made his first ethnographic photographs in the interwar period, this kind of photography was thought to enable additional—visual—mediation, experience, and “evidence” (visual record)

8 Muraj, “Teorijsko-metodološke zamisli Antuna Radića”, 32.

9 Muraj, “Teorijsko-metodološke zamisli Antuna Radića”, 34.

10 Gavazzi, “Kulturna analiza etnografije Hrvata”, 115-144.

11 Maroević, “Fotografija kao muzejski predmet”, 14-15; Dejanović, “Doprinos Vladimira Tkalčića razvoju sustava muzejske dokumentacije”, 83.

12 Gavazzi, *Sudbina stare slavenske baštine*, 1-41.

13 Belaj, “Milovan Gavazzi, sein Leben und Werk”, 7-18.

14 In the interview, Križnar and Vinšćak focus on ethnological film, but the same characteristics can be associated with ethnographic photography.

15 Križnar, “Razgovor z Milovanom Gavazzijem”, 187-200.

of what was thus far recorded in text; therefore, in the positivist climate of the time, which was deterministic and excluded the author's interpretation and reflective moments, photography was understood as a research tool and as a document of "reality".

Milovan Gavazzi's scientific and research work in the interwar period shows that, from the very beginnings of ethnology as an established science in the 1920s, photography was its indispensable part, and Gavazzi's first original photographic material was also created around that time.¹⁶ Gavazzi most likely encountered ethnographic photography while working as a curator at the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb (1923–1927), and his photographic sensibility was influenced by the museum's manager at the time, Vladimir Tkalčić, a champion of museum and conservation photo-documentation.¹⁷

After his arrival at the Chair of Ethnology and Ethnography at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb in 1927, Gavazzi established the study of ethnology: he shaped the teaching process and initiated scientific research, publication, and collecting activities within the Ethnology Seminar.¹⁸ From the very beginning the photographic documentation of phenomena, was systematically included in all this, and visual material served as 1) illustrative material for scientific purposes, 2) a scientific document in ethnological knowledge, and 3) a pedagogical tool for training ethnology students. When Gavazzi arrived at the Department, he already had basic photographic knowledge and skills, even though he was not a professional photographer. He had excellent knowledge of the photographic technology of the time and of photographic processes and all their stages: preparation, shooting, and development. Photographic technology in the interwar period was still in its infancy and technically limited, so a

16 The archives currently contain around 700 units of Gavazzi's photographs from various locations throughout Croatia and the countries of the former Yugoslavia, and it is expected that this number will increase as new photographs are discovered during sorting.

17 Grković, "Vladimir Tkalčić i fotografsko dokumentiranje baštine", 110-119; Vlatković, "The Role of Vladimir Tkalčić", 272-288; Vujić, Development of Museological Thought, 217-234. In the letters that Gavazzi, as curator of the Ethnographic Museum, exchanged with Tkalčić, we find information about their collaboration in the field of ethnographic photography. During his scholarship stay in Czechoslovakia in 1925-26, Gavazzi arranged with Tkalčić the purchase of various equipment for the museum, including a 6x9 "pocket camera" (negative size) and a suitable lens (Zeiss, Tessar 4.5) (Grkeš, Petrović Leš, "Care mi amice nec non fratre in Christo", 139). It was a camera with roll film for low light shooting, with the largest possible aperture, which could be stored in a leather case. In that period, Dresden was the centre of Germany and Europe in the production of cameras and camcorders (<https://zeissikonveb.de/start/objektive/normalobjektive/tessar.html>; accessed: 14 June 2023).

18 Belaj, *Die Kunde vom kroatischen Volk*, 1-304; Petrović Leš, "The intellectual circle of Milovan Gavazzi", 69-94.

good knowledge of exposure, composition, and the process of developing photographs was necessary. His interest in photography probably led him to ethnographic film.¹⁹

The photographs at issue here were taken during fieldwork conducted by the Chair of Ethnology and Ethnography and during Gavazzi's own travels, which were private in nature and inseparable from his scientific research interests and vocation.²⁰ This is not surprising considering that the interwar period saw a democratization of travel and vacations.²¹ Thus, in August and September 1929 and 1930 he used his time off from teaching to combine leisure and work and conducted field research in the surroundings of Trogir, in the towns of Seget, Labin (Prgomet), Okruk, Marina, and others.²² His research in Dalmatia and his interest in Dalmatia stemmed from his general interest in Mediterranean subjects. He was one of the first researchers in Croatian ethnology to contribute to the development of Mediterranean studies²³ by identifying the Mediterranean region in the context of traditional Croatian culture as a distinctive cultural region to which he attributed certain characteristics like fishing, olive and wine cultivation, stone construction, traditional clothing, and so on.²⁴ In the eastern Adriatic area, he discovered different cultural strata that influenced the emergence of traditional culture, such as the Paleo-Balkan and Old Mediterranean cultural strata.²⁵

Gavazzi came to the ethnological field with his own research agenda and interests, looking for cultural elements that interested him as a researcher but sometimes spontaneously recording what caught his eye on the field

19 We were first led to this interpretation by the photographs themselves—Gavazzi often photographed the process of handicraft production in the form of series (sequences)—for example, the making of a vessel on a manual potter's wheel from Kaluderovac in Lika. Today, when we look at the pictures on the computer, we have the impression of connected sequences that show the entire production process.

20 Gavazzi stated in a 1970 interview that he had stayed for longer or shorter periods of time in more than 220 villages (all over Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Gradišće, and southern Italy). See: Šestan, *Milovan Gavazzi*, 4.

21 Duda, *U potrazi za blagostanjem*, 35.

22 Grkeš, Petrović Leš, "Povjesničar Miho Barada u svjetlu korespondencije". He was assisted by Miho Barada (1889-1957), a historian and medievalist who worked closely with Gavazzi as his local guide and collaborator on these field travels. On this occasion, Gavazzi stayed the night in Seget in the house of Barada's brother Ante, about which an extensive correspondence has been preserved. The correspondence also testifies to the contacts and connections of older Croatian ethnology with other disciplines, for example historical science, precisely because of its interdisciplinary orientation.

23 Čapo, "Ethnology, Mediterranean Studies", 37.

24 Gavazzi, *Vrela i sudbine narodnih tradicija*, 193-194.

25 Gavazzi, "Kulturna analiza etnografije Hrvata", 119.

regardless of his original predetermined research interests. Thanks to information provided by his collaborators on the field, often museum associates, he knew exactly where and when something was taking place (for example, roof-laying ceremonies, burials, customs, etc.). After returning from the field, he made photographs,²⁶ which he systematically processed (catalogued) according to the rules of museum and archive documentation at the time: by entering them in the inventory book and creating data cards with the corresponding content and technical data.²⁷

CHARACTERISTICS OF GAVAZZI'S PHOTOGRAPHS THEMATIZING THE REGION OF DALMATIA

Gavazzi's photographs fall typologically under *ethnographic photography*—a visual source whose purpose is to document and reflect on the culture of the subject or the culture of the photographer himself.²⁸ It is a subtype of documentary photography that detects a certain condition or changes in the ethnological field, which is characteristic of ethnological and cultural anthropological research.²⁹ Ethnographic photography is used as scientific and educational material and by is by no means employed for commercial purposes. For the study of ethnographic photogra-

- 26 How much attention he paid to photography and film can be seen from the fact that in the new building of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, built in 1961 in the Zagreb neighbourhood of Trnje, a space for a photo laboratory was planned. From 1961 to 1980, the Ethnology Division of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences employed an expert collaborator, Andrija Stojanović, who, in addition to drawing ethnological maps and contributing to ethnological publications, managed photographic documentation, conducted field research, and made photographs and films. See: Belaj, "Andrija Stojanović", 147-148. After Stojanović retired, his position was filled by Krešimir Tadić, MA, (1934-1997), art historian and photographer at the Faculty's Department of Art History and at the Institute of Art History of the University of Zagreb (Tadić, Krešimir. *Croatian encyclopedia, online edition*. Miroslav Krleža Lexicographic Institute, 2021. Accessed on 14 June 2023 <http://www.enciklopedija.hr/Natuknica.aspx?ID=60153>). In the early 1990s, the photo laboratory of the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, the photo laboratory of the Department of Archeology, and several additional rooms were merged to form a large, modernly equipped laboratory, which fell into disuse after Tadić's death in 1997 and was soon after converted into teachers' rooms.
- 27 A comparison of the data cards from the Archives of the Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology with those from the Photo Library of the Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb shows a different approach to cataloguing visual material in the same period. Data cards from the Department's archives thus contain a photograph with basic information about the visual material on the face and back of the card, while those from the Ethnographic Museum contain textual data separated from the photograph.
- 28 Schrerer, "Historical photographs as anthropological documents", 131-155; Pinney, *Photography and Anthropology*, 7-154.
- 29 Belaj, *Obiteljske fotografije*, 1-175; Rubić, "Milovan Gavazzi and ethnographic photography".

phy, it is important to comprehend the technical, cultural, and socio-historical context in which it was created, as well as the need out of which it was created.³⁰

The context in which the photographs were taken can be determined in several ways. First and foremost, this can be done by a literal analysis of the information written on the data cards. In the case of the photographs we studied, the systematization is very clear, legible, and detailed, and the written content that accompanies the photographs is particularly valuable. Gavazzi not only describes what is in the photograph but also provides additional information about the first and last names of the people pictured, their occupation and importance in the local community, and other valuable biographical facts. He also describes the manner, method, or process of making an object and the function of the object, details about customs, and so on. The data card consists of a front and a back side (Fig. 1 and Fig. 2). The front side contains the following elements: a) positive showing the subject/object in a certain situation, b) inventory number and link to the negative, c) information about the location where the photograph was taken, d) short notes about the photographed subject/object, which clarify why the author chose to record a certain scene and what interested him at that moment.³¹ The back side contains a) information about the year (and sometimes, the date) when the photograph was taken, b) information about the author of the photograph, and c) additional information, such as information about the place where the photograph was reproduced, the type of camera used, and occasionally also the type of film used.³² Thus,

- 30 Pinney, *Photography and Anthropology*, 7-154; Belaj, *Obiteljske fotografije*, 1-175.
- 31 The notes often contain descriptions of individual objects, customs, or skills as well as descriptions of how the objects were made and interesting facts about the subject of the photograph.
- 32 Gavazzi published the photographs in scientific articles and in books he wrote himself. In this sense, it is significant that in the literature the photographs were credited only to the institution, as their owner, while the authorship was mentioned very rarely and can be determined only by examining the data cards. In his 1928 article "The Cultural Analysis of the Ethnography of Croats" in the journal *Narodna starina*, he published photos of an old man from central Dalmatia wearing a cap with a slightly conical top, a weaver and the process of weaving an apron and a bag on an upright loom from Donji Seget near Trogir, as well as a photo of an older male folk attire from Dalmatian Zagora (Gavazzi, "Kulturna analiza etnografije Hrvata", 115-144). The second time he published the same photos was in a paper in German entitled "Der Aufbau der kroatischen Volkskultur" in the Berlin journal *Baessler Archiv für Völkerkunde* (Gavazzi, "Der Aufbau der kroatischen Volkskultur", 138-167). In 1939 he also supplemented the book *Godina dana hrvatskih narodnih običaja* (A Year of Croatian Folk Customs) with his own photos of *zvončari* (bell ringers), Easter bonfires, *jurjaši* (St. George's Day village processionists), *ladarice* (female singing processionists), the Christmas custom of covering fruits with straw on St John's Day (27 December) in Podravina, and a crown for the custom

the above content testifies to the role of photography in the scientific research and educational activities of the time and to the development of documentation in the ethnological profession. The photographs from the oeuvre of Milovan Gavazzi provide an insight into the scientific research and educational activities within the Chair of Ethnology and Ethnography. The locations listed on the data cards also help reconstruct Gavazzi's first fieldwork research after his arrival at the Faculty. (Fig. 1a., Fig. 1b.)

An insight into the context in which the photographs were taken can also be gained from other archival material: more specifically, from M. Gavazzi's correspondence—letters in which he often talks about his own field research and scientific work. The letters offer a *view from below* of the context in which the photographs were made; they refer to circumstances that preceded going to the field and testify to events on the field itself or to events that followed shortly after the fieldwork was completed. Their micro dimension allows us to detect social connections and contacts that were often a prerequisite for the fieldwork research and photography to take place at all. In conclusion, they allow us to trace the relationships between collaborators, local officials, the community, and the local elite with the central figures of ethnological science (in this case, Milovan Gavazzi). The study of social nexuses, contacts, and transfer and reception of ideas within ethnological science is particularly relevant from the perspective of actor-network theory.³³ Newer research trends in the sub-discipline of the history of ethnology/cultural anthropology attempt to study issues such as transfer and reception of ideas, centre-periphery relations—particularly by exploring the relations between the central figures of ethnological science and other stakeholders, by analysing the intellectual circles in which individual ethnologists/anthropologists move. An attempt is made to surpass the classical approach, which focuses on the events and biography of the central figures of cultural anthropology. Therefore, the studied photographic material and letters reveal a multi-layered, dynamic, and lively relationship between Gavazzi, local populations, and collaborators. Gavazzi maintained a particularly strong relationship with the local population. He often stayed in contact with community members long after his fieldwork had ended: he continued to correspond with colleagues, exchanging copies of photos, greetings, and various information.³⁴ On some

of electing village kings on the islands of Silba and Olib. The book *Pregled etnografije Hrvata* (A Review of the Ethnography of Croats) (Gavazzi, 1-80) is equipped with photographs of streets and architectural buildings (houses and outbuildings, interiors of peasant homes—hearth), various aids and tools (children's walkers, ploughing tools and ploughing), and peasants in their traditional clothes.

33 Darnell, Gleach, *Centering the Margins of Anthropology's History*, 1-270; Delgado Rosa, Vermeulen, *Ethnographers before Malinowski*, 1-522; Darnell, *History of theory and method in anthropology*, 1-315; D'Agostino, Metera, *Histories of Anthropology*, 1-676.

34 In 1930, he had 9 copies of photographs made for his collaborators and tellers from Dalmatia, which he sent to the following places:

of the photographs he recorded the names of the people in the picture. The above examples show that maintenance of connections with informants was a very important determinant of his research approach, which was far from depersonalized, decontextualized, or typological.

In terms of content, Gavazzi's photographs taken in Dalmatia in the inter-war period can be roughly divided into four groups: a) photographs of the local population in everyday or festive dress, b) panoramic photographs and views of different places, c) sacral and vernacular architecture, and d) objects of material culture. We have made this classification according to the predominant motifs, but the division is only conditionally valid because in some cases the motifs overlap or complement each other, as can be seen in the photographs we have included in the paper.

In the photograph (Fig. 2) Gavazzi noted the name and surname of the old man, who was photographed in worn out everyday clothes. The photograph was taken at a moment when the man was immersed in reading a prayer book, to which he directed his gaze and attention. He is pictured frontally, in a portrait-like manner, in a seated position with a walking stick resting on his body. The background is blurred, but the exterior is recognizable (it is probably trees, compositionally placed vertically in the central part of the background, thus visually emphasizing the posture of the person in the photograph).

Photograph (Fig. 3) is a full-figure shot of five women wearing "old Olib clothing". The women are standing side by side, half-posed and looking toward the photographer. They were photographed outside, in front of the rectory stairwell.

In terms of ethnographic film, Gavazzi emphasized the importance of relations with the local population and members of the local elite, such as priests, teachers, and prominent peasants. As mentioned earlier, collaborators/associates often informed him of village events that they deemed worthy of recording on film and of the professor's attention.³⁵ In addition to his relationships with collaborators, Gavazzi obviously had prior agreement, acquaintance, and close relationship with the local population in regard to photography—for example, for the realization of individual portraits or group photographs in different situations and places, at a time when photography was a technically demanding and slow process unknown in broader layers of society. The small distance between the

Seget (4 photos), Bitelić (3 photos), Potravljje (1 photo), and Marina (1 photo) (HR-HDA-1029-7, box 69: 8 October 1930). He sent special thanks and photos to his collaborators from the Barada family, the historian Miho and his brother Ante. To Ante's younger sons he sent a small toy as a gift (a wooden motorboat) (Grkeš, Petrović Leš, *Povjesničar Miho Barada u svjetlu korespondencije*).

35 Križnar, *Razgovor z Milovanom Gavazzijem*, 188.

camera and the subject indicates the researcher's familiarity and closeness with the people he photographs. In some places, the private space of the informant's family home was recorded. An extremely large number of photographs are portrait in nature and indicate a social interaction that must have preceded the fact that the researcher could photograph someone (up close) or inside their home.³⁶ This does not mean that the negotiation process was without problems. The local population often reacted to photography with resistance and fear of the unknown.³⁷

A photograph can be a source for "reading" and interpreting the context in which it was recorded. Our photographs contain valuable visual information about the historical period and the geographic and cultural space in which they were taken. They also serve as confirmation of the author's presence on the field, reflect the researcher's interests, and refer to the research agenda and to the choices and ways of presentation (selection) of cultural elements. Certain photographs point to the technical limitations that Gavazzi encountered as a researcher in this period, for example, problems with exposure, which could not be achieved artificially as it can be today.³⁸

The photograph (Fig. 4) shows four men of different ages in a boat by the rocks on a slightly rough sea. They are dressed differently according to their age and role, with the oldest man standing out in light-coloured clothing, sitting at the oars in the back of the boat. Two young men sit in the front, focused on the fishing net, and the youngest boy peeks out from behind the oarsman, intently watching the action in the front of the boat. Gavazzi instantly captured this marine scene with his camera. The boat was shot from the shore, from above, positioned diagonally in a horizontal photo, with the bow and the rocks in the foreground.

The photograph (Fig. 5) shows an "old fisherman", whose last name (Mavrić) was recorded by Gavazzi, sitting and weaving a net. The shot is vertical, showing the upper half of the fisherman's body. The moment of threading the needle through the mesh is captured and the fisherman's gaze is focused on his work. Compositionally, the fisherman's figure fills

36 This possible feature of ethnographic photography is mentioned by Christopher Pinney, who points out that "photographs became a crucial pivot of interaction" (...) and "means of eroding barriers between anthropologist and locals (...) a research tool" (Pinney, *Photography and Anthropology*, 48).

37 Dragutin Boranić, editor of the *Zbornik za narodni život i običaje* (Proceedings of Folk Life and Customs) (1902-1954), on one of his inspection trips through Dalmatia in 1902 made contact with older village women who refused to pose for him, which he later interpreted, based on foreign literature, as a result of their belief that "having your picture taken strips away your soul" (Čuli-nović-Konstantinović, "Etnografska istraživanja u Dalmaciji", 36).

38 Some of the photographs are of lower quality due to the developing process, which depended on chemical procedures that were not always successful.

the entire left half of the photo, while in the lower right corner of the photo there is a taut and stretched fishing net, which the fisherman gently holds with his left hand while weaving. Architecture, shafts, and open wooden sheds are visible in the close background.

The photograph (Fig. 6) shows a wide horizontal shot of the local port of Veli Iž, where pit fired pottery products are being loaded on a ship. The shot is in landscape format and captures several people moving around and working in the foreground and centre, while in the background there is architecture, several single-story or stone houses, and partially visible dry-stone walls.

The vertical photograph (Fig. 7) shows a full view of a wind-driven flour mill. The windmill was filmed in its natural environment showing the preserved part of its stone masonry tower. The upper part of the windmill and its covering have fallen into decay, exposing the wooden cornice that supported the former construction of the structure's upper part. Three people in civilian clothes pose in front of the entrance to the windmill.

The photograph (Fig. 8) shows a single-nave stone Gothic church of St. Peter in Nerežišća on the island of Brač. The church is shot from the rear, showing the apse and a tree growing on the roof of the apse.³⁹ The chapel is covered with stone slabs. In the background, on the church's front façade, there is a horse-pulled bell tower. Compositionally, the church is placed in the upper half of the vertical photo, while in the foreground there is an unpaved clearing.

The photograph (Fig. 9) shows stacked pottery products and potters in the local port of Veli Iž. The foreground of this horizontal photograph shows pottery items to be pit fired, mostly arranged in a circle, with branches for kindling the fire. Next to the various vessels (*lopiže*, *čripnje*, *teće*) for preparing food on an open hearth stand male figures and a boy in front on the far left. Interestingly, at the same time Gavazzi also documented the pottery modelling of Veli Iž on film, noting this fact on the back of the photographs and inviting comparison with the film. Gavazzi independently shot his first ethnographic film recordings precisely in the 1930s, with a 16 mm amateur film camera, AGFA movex with cassette, container for 12 m of film tape. These are black and white films without sound made on reversal film (Majcen 1997:128).⁴⁰

39 The church is a protected immovable cultural property (Z-4453). Today it is a well-known tourist attraction because of the black pine tree that grows on the apse's roof and is one of the most photographed wedding motifs and postcard pictures. Due to its rarity, this pine was declared a protected natural monument in 1969. https://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crkva_sv._Petra_u_Nere%C5%BEi%C5%A1%C4%87ima (accessed: 18 June 2023).

40 Vessel modeling-Veli Iž. b/w, silent film, 1930, author and camera Milovan Gavazzi (Majcen, "Etnološki filmovi Milovana Gavazzija", 130).

In this vertical photo (Fig. 10), a long, large net (*migavica*) is seen spread out on the sand (*pržina*) on the shore. The net is positioned diagonally across the photo, with the baggy part of the net (*sak*) seen in the foreground. *Migavica* is a “special kind of movable net found in the Adriatic”, named for the movement that occurs when the meshes of the net are tightened and loosened causing the fish to gather in the centre, which bulges out like a bag.⁴¹ In the photograph, the net follows the line of the shoals and the coastal zone, compositionally extending from the lower left edge in a semicircle towards the upper edge and background of the photograph. Gavazzi used the photograph to illustrate a text about fishing, published in *Pregled etnografije Hrvata* (A Review of the Ethnography of Croats) (1940). In 1955, Gavazzi recorded film footage of fishing with the *migavica* and *šabak* nets, but this was in Tkon on the island of Pašman.⁴²

Gavazzi’s work on visual documentation and visual research as seen on this small sample proves to be much comprehensive. Material culture did interest him, but not outside the social, interactional, environmental, and functional context. Most of the photographs show people rather than material objects, and people are the dominant feature in Gavazzi’s photographs. Furthermore, the photographs present individual or group portraits of women and men in everyday informal clothes usually captured while working, as well as informal events the photographer witnessed “on the fly”, as they unfolded (e.g. pit firing and loading pottery products on the coast in Veli Iž, reading prayer books, weaving nets, fishing), noting the changeability and dynamism of culture and even the decay of architecture (windmills without a roof structure). The variety of motifs is also pronounced. Gavazzi’s photography is not distant, not voyeuristic, not separated from the immediate event and the protagonists. We cannot yet speak here of the photographer’s direct presence in the photographs themselves, in the sense of a tangible self-reflexive consideration of the ethnological terrain as a construct, Gavazzi’s photography is characterised by the fact that the people in the photographs are shown in a specific context and occasionally in a posing position. They are mostly in a larger group of people or in a particular ecological setting. They are not decontextualized or typological, as can be seen in many foreign anthropological photographs of the period.

CONCLUSION

In this paper, we have presented Gavazzi’s ethnographic documentary photographs from the region of Dalmatia in the interwar period. If we read Gavazzi’s written works more closely, it is certain that he treated film and photography as scientific documents in the service of ethnological

41 Gavazzi, *Baština hrvatskog sela*, 49.

42 Fishing with the *migavica* and the *šabak* – Tkon, author and camera Milovan Gavazzi, 16 mm, b/w, silent film, 16 mm (Majcen, “Etnološki filmovi Milovana Gavazzija”, 131).

knowledge, analysis, and comparison. For Gavazzi, photographs were a document of culture as valuable as any other cultural historical source. We can now see that Gavazzi documented pottery, one of his most important research topics in the field of material culture in the interwar period, precisely in Dalmatia. In 1930, in Veli Iž on the island of Iž he recorded the making of vessels on a manual potter’s wheel both photographically and on film, and the film recording of the pottery from Iž is one of his first films. Thematically, we have singled out examples of sacred and vernacular architecture here. It is particularly interesting that the church of St. Peter in Nerežišća on Brač caught Gavazzi’s eye and that he took a picture of it from the apsidal side to capture the then small black pine tree, which is today not only a very popular but also a protected natural phenomenon. Gavazzi will return to windmills as an example of buildings that were already disappearing in some of his field research after the Second World War. Photographs with depictions of women in ceremonial dress taken in front of the lavish staircase of the rectory on the island of Olib contrast with the old man from Seget near Trogir immersed in reading the prayer book and dressed in worn out everyday clothes. In addition to the distinctive fishing net, *migavica*, also indicative is the depiction of a fisherman in work clothes occupied with weaving a net. Perhaps Gavazzi went from the documentary to the aesthetic in his photograph of fishing from a boat.

Here, we have only scratched the surface of Gavazzi’s photographs of the Adriatic region, for which he laid the foundations in the framework of Croatian ethnology and cultural anthropology, highlighting its predominant cultural features and then photographically documenting them, for example, in his photographs of stone constructions, clothing, and fishing, as shown in the paper.

Working on Gavazzi’s photographs opens up the issues of (re)valorizing his research work and using this type of material in university teaching.⁴³ Photography as a source offers many possibilities, including that of a better understanding of cultural historical topics that Milovan Gavazzi researched.

43 In discussion with our colleagues at the Department and with the students we teach, both the potential and the challenges of using this type of source in the university teaching of ethnology were recognized. Practical work in the classroom to date has shown that it is possible to present the history of the profession through literature and photographs, to create an awareness of the dynamism and changeability of culture, but also to better understand the role of photography as a technique in ethnological research.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Antoš, Zvezdana. "Etnografski film Milovana Gavazzija za vrijeme rada u Etnografskom muzeju u Zagrebu". *Studia ethnologica Croatica* 7, br. 8-1(1996): 73-75. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/143201>
- Belaj, Vitomir. "In memoriam. Andrija Stojanović". *Etnološka tribina: godišnjak Hrvatskog etnološkog društva* 8 (1985): 147-148.
- Belaj, Vitomir. "Zreli plodovi", 353-357. In: *Etnografija. Blagdan i svagdan hrvatskog puka*, ur. Jasna Čapo Žmegač et al. Zagreb: Matica Hrvatska, 1998.
- Belaj, Vitomir. *Die Kunde vom kroatischen Volk: eine Kulturgeschichte der kroatischen Volkskunde*. St. Augustin: Gardez! Verlag, 1998.
- Belaj, Vitomir. "Milovan Gavazzi, sein Leben und Werk: Hommage anlässlich seines hundertsten Geburtstags". *Studia ethnologica Croatica* 7, br. 8 (1996): 7-18.
- Belaj, Melanija. *Obiteljske fotografije. Kulturno-antropološka perspektiva*. Zagreb: Biakova –Institut za etnologiju i folkloristiku, 2020.
- Čapo, Jasna. "Ethnology, Mediterranean Studies and Political Reticence in Croatia From Mediterranean Constructs to Nation-Building". *Narodna umjetnost: Croatian Journal of Ethnology and Folklore Research* 36 (1998): 33-51. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/en/clanak/53488>
- Čulinović-Konstantinović, Vesna. "Etnografska istraživanja u Dalmaciji do početka 20. stoljeća". *Ethnologica Dalmatica* 9 (2000): 27-40.
- D'agostino, Gabriella and Vincenzo Matera, eds. *Histories of Anthropology*. Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2023.
- Darnell, Regna and Frederic W. Gleach, eds. *Centering the Margins of Anthropology's History*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2021.
- Darnell, Regna. *History of theory and method in anthropology*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2022.
- Delgado Rosa, Frederico and Han F. Vermeulen. *Ethnographers before Malinowski. Pioneers of Anthropological Fieldwork, 1870-1922*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2022.
- Dejanović, Antonija. "Doprinos Vladimira Tkalčića razvoju sustava muzejske dokumentacije Muzeja za umjetnost i obrt". *Etnološka istraživanja* 27 (2022): 72-86. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/clanak/419342>
- Duda, Igor. *U potrazi za blagostanjem: o povijesti dokolice i potrošačkog društva u Hrvatskoj 1950-ih i 1960-ih*. Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2005.
- Gavazzi, Milovan. "Kulturna analiza etnografije Hrvata". *Narodna starina* 7, Nr. 16 (1928): 115-144. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/61597>
- Gavazzi, Milovan. "Der Aufbau der kroatischen Volkskultur", 138-167. In *Baessler Archiv für Völkerkunde*, ed. Alfred Maas. Berlin: Verlag von Dietrich Reimer, 1937.
- Gavazzi, Milovan. *Pregled etnografije Hrvata*. Zagreb: Klub ABC, 1940.
- Gavazzi, Milovan. *Sudbina stare slavenske baštine kod južnih Slavena*. Beograd: Etnološko društvo Jugoslavije, 1959.
- Gavazzi, Milovan. *Vrela i sudbine narodnih tradicija: kroz prostore, vremena i ljude: etnološke studije i prilozi iz inozemnih izdanja*. Zagreb: Liber, 1978.
- Gavazzi, Milovan. *Baština hrvatskog sela*. Zagreb: Otvoreno sveučilište, 1991.
- Gidley, Mick. "North American Indian Photographs/Images: Review Essay". *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 9, br. 3 (1985): 37-47.
- Grkeš, Ivan and Tihana Petrović Leš. "Povjesničar Miho Barada u svjetlu korespondencije s etnologom Milovanom Gavazzijem (1929.-1932.)". *Zbornik u čast Mirjane Matijević Sokol*. Split: Splitski književni krug (u objavi), 2023.
- Grkeš, Ivan and Tihana Petrović Leš. "Care mi amice nec non fratre in Christo, St. Cecilia, Ethnographique. Contribution to the Intellectual Biography of Vladimir Tkalčić according to his Correspondence with the Ethnologist Milovan Gavazzi". *Etnološka istraživanja* 27 (2022): 354-375.
- Grković, Sanja. "Vladimir Tkalčić i fotografsko dokumentiranje baštine". *Informatica museologica* 49 (2018): 110-119. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/218485>
- Kelemen, Petra and Tihana Rubić. "Arhiv Odsjeka za etnologiju i kulturnu antropologiju". *Studia ethnologica Croatica* 18 (2006): 99-114. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/17524>
- Križnar, Naško. "Razgovor z Milovanom Gavazzijem". *Etnološka tribina: godišnjak Hrvatskog etnološkog društva* 22, Nr. 15 (1992): 187-200. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/clanak/119990>
- Majcen, Vjekoslav. "Etnološki filmovi Milovana Gavazzija i hrvatski etnološki film u prvoj polovini 20. stoljeća". *Studia ethnologica Croatica* 7, Nr. 8-1 (1996): 121-133. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/59859>
- Maroević, Ivo. "Fotografija kao muzejski predmet". *Informatica museologica* 31, Nr. 3-4 (2000): 13-16. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/142827>
- Muraj, Aleksandra. "Teorijsko-metodološke zamisli Antuna Radića i njihov utjecaj na etnološki rad u Hrvatskoj". *Etnološka tribina: godišnjak Hrvatskog etnološkog društva* 13-14, Nr. 6-7 (1984): 31-36. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/80162>
- Petrović Leš, Tihana. "The intellectual circle of Milovan Gavazzi: correspondence with slovenian colleagues through the example of correspondence with Angelos Baš, 1960-197". *Studia ethnologica Croatica* 30 (2018): 69-94. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/clanak/419351>
- Pinney, Christopher. *Photography and Anthropology*. London: Reaktion Books, 2014.
- Rubić, Tihana. "Milovan Gavazzi and ethnographic photography: Practices and policies of Croatian field research and archiving in the first half of the twentieth century". In: *Watching, Waiting. The Photographic Representation of Empty Places*. Sandra Križić Roban i Ana Šverko, eds. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2023.
- Schreier, Joanna. "Historical photographs as anthropological documents: A retrospect". *Visual Anthropology* 3, Nr. 2-3 (1990): 131-155. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Historical-photographs-as-anthropological-A-Scherer/6085ed4ab556ae24a3f148b306f7493b264869d6>
- Šestan, Ivan. *Milovan Gavazzi: proživljeno stoljeće*. Zagreb: Etnografski muzej, 1995.
- Tadić, Krešimir. *Croatian encyclopedia. Online edition*. Miroslav Krleža Lexicographic Institute, 2021. <http://www.enciklopedija.hr/Natuknica.aspx?ID=60153>
- Urem, Sandra. "Specifičnost disciplinarnih i institucionalnih pristupa etnografskom filmu – Milovan Gavazzi i Andrija Štampar". *Studia ethnologica Croatica* 27 (2015): 247-273. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/clanak/221975>
- Vlatković, Aleksandra. "The Role of Vladimir Tkalčić in the Establishment of the Ethnographic Museum Record-Keeping System". *Etnološka istraživanja* 27 (2022): 272-288. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/en/clanak/419341>
- Vujić, Žarka. "Development of Museological Thought in Croatia and Vladimir Tkalčić's Place in It". *Etnološka istraživanja* 27 (2022): 217-234. <https://hrcak.srce.hr/en/clanak/419335>

WEB SOURCES

<https://zeissikonveb.de/start/objektive/normalobjektive/tessar.html> (date of access June 14, 2023)

https://hr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crkva_sv._Petra_u_Nere%C5%BEi%C5%A1%C4%87ima (date of access June 18, 2023).

Neg. A-237f



Ži Keli (kot. Biograd-
Preko)

Šva lončara: lijevi urezuje
~~drvenim~~ drvenim pomagalom
(silikom) trače u bokove
petnjaka, desni je dovršio
izipnje. - Ostali poltaci
u. Neg. 229. (samo što ^{je} odje
stac uz dema a sin ne lijevo
kela).

[1a]

Snimljeno: 28. VII. 1930. - M. Gavazzi - DKW Kamera - film 9x12
Zap. snimke: Neg. 229 - 236 [i 238]
Zap. kinofilm.

[1b]

Neg. A-128f



Seget (kot. ^{Split}
~~Trgini~~)
(gornji dio sela)

Stari seljak (Jozo?
Parković) čita molit
venik; u sadašnjij
nensiensj odjeu.

[2]



[3]



[5]



[4]



[6]



[7]



[8]



[9]

- 1a. Front side, photograph of two potters from Veli Iž. Source: AOEKA: 237. Author: M. Gavazzi, 1930.
- 1b. Back side with technical data. Source: AOEKA: 237. Author: M. Gavazzi, 1930.
2. An old peasant (Jozo Pavković?) from Seget near Trogir reading a prayer book. AOEKA: 128. Author: M. Gavazzi, 1928.
3. Five women in traditional Olib clothing standing in front of the rectory. AOEKA: 212. Author: M. Gavazzi, 1930.
4. Lowering the net from the boat in Podgora near Makarska. AOEKA: 428. Author: M. Gavazzi, 1937.
5. Old fisherman Mavrić from Silba weaving a net. AOEKA: 224. Author: M. Gavazzi, 1930.
6. Loading of pottery products on a ship anchored in the port. AOEKA: 242. Author: M. Gavazzi, 1930.
7. Windmill from Silba. AOEKA: 223. Author: M. Gavazzi, 1930.
8. Stone church of St. Peter with apse and bell tower, Nerežišća on the island of Brač. AOEKA: 103. Author: M. Gavazzi, 1929.
9. Pottery products stacked for pit firing in Veli Iž. AOEKA: 239. Author: M. Gavazzi, 1930.
10. Drying of a large fishing net (migavica) in Podgora near Makarska. AOEKA: 427. Author: M. Gavazzi, 1937.



[10]