

La visibile spinta della scolarizzazione croata nel montonese all'inizio del XX secolo era stata una conseguenza del rafforzamento del movimento nazionale croato. Nonostante le numerose difficoltà, il movimento aveva creato una premessa organizzazionale-materiale ed intellettuale-politica per l'opposizione ai propositi irredentisti italiani. Nella stessa misura in cui la fazione italiana era consapevole del ruolo che ricopriva la scuola nell'italianizzazione dei croati, quella croata era consapevole del significato della scuola e dell'alfabetizzazione nella conservazione della sua identità croata. Per questo motivo la lotta per le scuole era molto più di un proposito culturale-istruttivo. Nel breve periodo delle attività di queste scuole nella zona del Comune locale di Montona si rispecchiano l'entusiasmo e il romanticismo, la determinazione e il coraggio dell'élite intellettuale e politica croata nella persistenza di aprire scuole proprie quali solido bastione nella preservazione dell'identità croata.

In condizioni in cui pareva che i Croati istriani del montonese, come tra l'altro anche i loro connazionali delle altre regioni dell'Istria, fossero condannati al "processo naturale" dell'italianizzazione, in cui erano proprio le scuole a dover ricoprire il ruolo principale, si è manifestata la fierezza e la dignità degli s'ciavi. Tale fierezza si è manifestata nell'erezione di scuole. In condizioni di carenza materiale, il Croato montonese era consapevole che, oltre a pane e panni, aveva il dovere di dare in mano ai propri discendenti anche il libro, alfabetizzandoli per non essere soggetti agli influssi e alle manipolazioni straniere.

### **Croatian schools in the area of the Local Municipality of Motovun 1869 – 1918**

#### **Summary**

A fairly bad condition of Croatian elementary schools in the Local Municipality of Motovun, presented on the pages of *Naša sloga* in 1890, was significantly improved before the outbreak of World War I, which was more than 20 years after the articles in the magazine were published. At the time of the "lament" in *Naša sloga* there was a single school in Muntrilj, and that was a branch public school. At the beginning of the century, branch schools in Karojba and Rakotule were opened, but where supplanted in 1912, when a public elementary school was opened in Močibobi for Karojba and Rakotule. A year earlier, a public elementary school in Motovunski Novaki was opened. The addition of the St. Cyril and Methodius schools in Sovišćina and Kaldir, and most likely the one in Laze near Kaldir, brings the total to six cadastral municipalities with public schools out of the total of nine that comprised the Municipality of Motovun. Only Motovun proper, Brkač and Zamask were without a Croatian public school. Instead, there was an Italian public elementary school in Motovun, a Lega Nazionale school in Brkač, and Zamask did not have a school on its territory.

The distinctive ascent of Croatian education in the Motovun area at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was brought about by the growing strength of the Croatian national movement. Despite a number of obstacles, the movement had created the organizational, material, intellectual, and political basis for a successful resistance against the Italian irredentist efforts. Both sides were equally aware of

the vital role that the schools played in the process of Italianisation or the defence against it. Therefore, the fight for schools was much more than just a cultural or educational matter. The relatively short period of activity of these schools in the Municipality of Motovun reflects the zeal, romanticism, determination, and courage of Croatian intellectual and political elites in their persistence to found schools as a bastion for the preservation of Croatian identity.

In an atmosphere that seemed to almost presage the eventual completion of the "natural process" of Italianisation of Istrian Croats in Motovun and the rest of Istria, a process in which the schools were supposed to play a key role, the pride and dignity of the Slavs appears to have awakened. This pride was evident by the constant building of schools. In times of material scarcity, Motovun Croats knew that, besides bread and clothing, they were obligated to provide their offspring with a book and make them literate in order to stop them from becoming susceptible to foreign influence and manipulation.