

Konavoski spomenici prvom hrvatskom kralju Tomislavu

“ Spomen-ploče, koje svjedoče kako su Konavljeni kroz povijest na poseban način čuvali hrvatski identitet, podignute su u selima Gornje i Donje bande, i to u Vitaljini, Pridvorju, Dubravci, Grudi, Moluntu, Pločicama, Mikulićima, Čilipima te u Cavtatu.



Krunidba kralja Tomislava, Josip Horvat Međimurec / King Tomislav by Josip Horvat Međimurec

U Konavlima se na nekoliko mjesta mogu vidjeti spomen-ploče posvećene prvom hrvatskom kralju Tomislavu, čime se svjedoči o privrženosti ovoga kraja hrvatskom identitetu kroz povijest.

Iako je knez Branimir (*dux Croatorum*, 879.) ostvario potpuno samostalnu Hrvatsku, a njegov nasljednik knez Muncimir (*dux*, zatim *princeps*, 895.) dodatno je osnažio, prvi vladar kojeg pisani izvori nazivaju kraljem Hrvata bio je Tomislav. Papa Ivan X. u pismu iz 925. godine Tomislava naziva „dragim sinom, kraljem Hrvata“.

Premda je naslijedio uređenu kneževinu, Tomislav je izrastao u moćnog vladara tijekom burnog srednjovjekovnog razdoblja obilježenog opetova-

nim vojnim sukobima protiv Arpada (Mađarske) i cara Simeona (Bugarske). U kronici bizantskoga cara Konstantina VII. Porfirogeneta (913. – 959.) stoji kako “krštena Hrvatska postavlja do 60 000 konjanika, do 100 000 pješaka i do 180 ratnih brodova”. Nakon vojnih pobjeda, Tomislav je ujedinio Panoniju i Dalmaciju te uspostavio samostalnu Hrvatsku Kraljevinu, koja se prostirala od rijeke Drave na sjeveru do Jadranskog mora na jugu, s tri vazalne zemlje: Zahumljem, Dukljom i Travunijom.

Po predaji, Tomislav je okrunjen u veličanstvenoj ceremoniji na Duvanjskom polju, danas Tomislavgradu u Bosni i Hercegovini. Stolovao je na Klisu, Kninu, Ninu i Bijaćima pokraj Trogira. Smatran je najkulturnijim slavenskim

kraljem, služio se materinjem hrvatskim (čakavskim narječjem), bizantskim grčkim i crkvenim latinskim. Budući da su se pri njegovu dvoru nalazili diplomati i savjetnici iz maurske embahade, vjerojatno je razumio i ponešto arapskoga. Naslijedio ga je njegov mlađi brat Trpimir II. Tomislav je danas u narodu najpopularniji hrvatski kralj, a Red kralja Tomislava najviše je državno odlikovanje Republike Hrvatske.

Nakon Prvog svjetskog rata i raspada Austro-Ugarske, Trojedna Kraljevina Hrvatska, Slavonija i Dalmacija postala je dio Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca. Ipak, težnja Hrvata za vlastitom državom ostala je neugasiva sve do konačnog osamostaljenja Republike Hrvatske. Povjesničar Vjekoslav



Spomen-ploča u Cavtatu / Commemorative Plaque, Cavtat

Klaić u djelu iz 1923. godine slikovito opisuje taj žar kazavši kako „sporazum iz 1918. nije odobren od tadašnjeg zakonitog zastupstva hrvatskog naroda... i diametralno se protivi temeljnoj ideji tisućgodišnjeg razvitka samosvojne države Hrvatske.“

Dakle, očuvanje identiteta i samosvojnosti bilo je u srcu proslave tisućite obljetnice krunidbe kralja Tomislava i Hrvatskog Kraljevstva 1925. godine. Zanimljivo, Družba “Braća Hrvatskog Zmaja” već je dvadeset godina prije te obljetnice započela pripreme za njezino obilježavanje. Brojne proslave, parade i manifestacije održavale su se diljem hrvatskih zemalja i u prekomorskim mjestima gdje su Hrvati živjeli. Godine 1925., ali i u godinama koje su uslijedile, organizirane su izložbe, koncerti i glazbeno-scenske izvedbe, objavljivane su knjige, izrađivane medalje, postavljani su spomenici te



Kralj Tomislav, Ivo Kerdić, bronca, 1925. Spomen-medalja predstavljena na III. Hrvatskom svesokolskom sletu 1925. / King Tomislav by Ivo Kerdić, bronze, 1925. A commemorative medal presented at the Third Croatian All-Falcon Gathering in 1925.

spomen-ploče na zgradama i crkvenim zvonnicima.

U dubrovačkom kraju postavljeno je tridesetak spomen-ploča. Naravno, za nas posebno važno mjesto zauzimaju Konavle, gdje je tijekom tri godine postavljeno njih devet. Spomen-ploče, koje svjedoče kako su Konavljani kroz povijest na poseban način čuvali hrvatski identitet, podignute su u selima Gornje i Donje bande, i to u Vitaljini, Pridvorju, Dubravci, Grudi, Moluntu, Pločicama, Mikulićima, Čilipima te u Cavtatu.

Prva ploča u Vitaljini postavljena je uz crkveno pa narodno veselje, prvo u lipnju, a zatim u studenome 1925. godine. Tri godine nakon toga, ukrašena hrvatskim zastavama, povorka Cavtačana i njihovih gostiju zaputila se cavtatskom rivom. Govori velikodostojnika i zvuci limene glazbe cavtatskoga i dubrovačkoga orkestra odjekivali su cavtatskom valom. Tako je 6. lipnja 1928. deveta ploča svečano postavljena na glavnom cavtatskom trgu, današnjem Trgu dr. Franja Tuđmana.

Prošle godine Hrvatski državni sabor prihvatio je prijedlog Družbe “Braća Hrvatskoga Zmaja” i Matice hrvatske, proglašavajući 2025. godinu *Godinom obilježavanja 1100. obljetnice Hrvatskog Kraljevstva*. Ova obljetnica nije jedino podsjetnik na prošlost, nego i potvrda trajne povezanosti hrvatskoga naroda s idejom slobode, samostalnosti i identiteta.

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Kralj Tomislav, bronca, Robert Frageš Mihanović
King Tomislav by Robert Frageš Mihanović, bronze



Krunidba kralja Tomislava, Oton Iveković / Coronation of King Tomislav by Oton Iveković

Konavle Monuments to King Tomislav, the First Croatian Ruler

“ Commemorative plaques, which bear witness to how the people of Konavle have preserved the Croatian identity in a unique way throughout history, were placed in the villages of Gornja and Donja Banda, specifically in Vitaljina, Pridvorje, Dubravka, Gruda, Molunat, Pločice, Mikulići, Čilipi, and in Cavtat.

In Konavle, several commemorative plaques dedicated to King Tomislav, the first Croatian king, can be found, bearing witness to this region's long-standing devotion to the Croatian national identity throughout history.

Although Duke Branimir (*dux Croatorum*, 879 A.D.) achieved full Croatian independence, and his successor Duke Muncimir (*dux*, later *princeps*, 895 A.D.) further strengthened it, the first ruler explicitly referred to as the King of the

Croats in written sources was Tomislav. In a letter from the year 925 A.D., Pope John X addressed Tomislav as “our beloved son, the King of the Croats”.

Though he inherited a well-established principality, Tomislav grew into a powerful ruler during a turbulent medieval period marked by frequent military conflicts with the Árpáds (Hungary) and Emperor Simeon (Bulgaria). In the chronicle of Byzantine Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (913–959), it is recorded that “Christian Croatia fields up to 60,000 cavalry, up to 100,000 infantry, and up to 180 warships”. After his military victories, Tomislav unified Pannonia and Dalmatia, establishing the independent Croatian Kingdom, which stretched from the Drava River in the north to the Adriatic Sea in the south, with three vassal states: Zachlumia, Dioclea, and Travunia.

According to tradition, Tomislav was crowned in a grand ceremony on Duvno Field, today known as Tomislavgrad, in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He ruled from Klis, Knin, Nin, and Bijaći near Trogir. Regarded as the most cultured Slavic king, he spoke his native Croatian (Čakavian dialect), Byzantine Greek, and Church Latin. Since his court hosted diplomats and advisors from the Moorish embassies, it is believed that he may have understood some Arabic as well. He was succeeded by his younger brother, Trpimir II. Today, King Tomislav remains the most popular Croatian king, and the Order of King Tomislav is the highest state decoration of the Republic of Croatia.

After World War I and the dissolution of Austria-Hungary, the Triune Kingdom of Croatia, Slavonia, and Dalmatia became part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes. However, the Croatian people’s aspiration for their own state remained strong until the eventual independence of the Republic of Croatia. In a work from 1923, historian Vjekoslav Klaić vividly described this enduring national sentiment, stating that “the 1918 agreement

was never approved by the legitimate Croatian representation at the time... and stands in direct opposition to the fundamental idea of the 1000-year development of the independent Croatian state”.

“ Last year, the Croatian Parliament accepted a proposal from the Brotherhood of the Croatian Dragon and Matica hrvatska, declaring 2025 as the “Year of the 1100th Anniversary of the Croatian Kingdom”.

Thus, the preservation of Croatian identity and sovereignty was at the heart of the 1925 millennium celebration of King Tomislav’s coronation and the Croatian Kingdom. Interestingly, the Brotherhood of the Croatian Dragon (*Braća Hrvatskoga Zmaja*) began preparing for this commemoration 20 years prior. Numerous celebrations, parades, and events were held throughout Croatian lands and in overseas communities where Croats lived. In 1925, and in the years that followed, exhibitions, concerts, and musical-theatrical performances were organized, books were published, medals were crafted, and monuments and commemorative plaques were placed on buildings and church bell towers.

In the Dubrovnik region, about 30 commemorative plaques were installed. However, Konavle holds a particularly significant place, as nine plaques were erected there over a span of three years. These plaques, which bear witness to how the people of Konavle have preserved the Croatian identity in a unique way throughout history, were placed in the villages of



Rukopisna spomen knjiga, 1925. Umjetnički okov - Ivo Kerdić, ukrasno pismo – Olga Höcker, uvez - Anka Martinić. Knjiga sadrži tekst „Tomislav prvi kralj Hrvata” povjesničara Vjekoslava Klaića. Čuva se u Hrvatskom povijesnom muzeju u Zagrebu.

Manuscript Commemorative Book, 1925. Artistic binding by Ivo Kerdić, decorative script by Olga Höcker, binding by Anka Martinić. The book contains the text “Tomislav, the First King of the Croats” by historian Vjekoslav Klaić. Preserved in the Croatian History Museum in Zagreb.

Gornja and Donja Banda, specifically in Vitaljina, Pridvorje, Dubravka, Gruđa, Molunat, Pločice, Mikulići, Čilipi, and in Cavtat.

The first plaque in Vitaljina was unveiled with church and public festivities, first in June, and then again in November 1925. Three years later, in Cavtat, a procession adorned with Croatian flags made its way along the waterfront, accompanied by dignitary speeches and the music of the Cavtat and Dubrovnik brass bands, whose sounds echoed across the bay. On June 6, 1928, the ninth plaque was ceremoniously placed on the main Cavtat square, today Dr. Franjo Tuđman Square.

Last year, the Croatian Parliament accepted a proposal from the Brotherhood of the Croatian Dragon and Matica hrvatska (one of Croatia’s oldest and most important cultural, literary, and scholarly institutions), declaring 2025 as the “Year of the 1100th Anniversary of the Croatian Kingdom”. This anniversary is not just a remembrance of the past, but also a reaffirmation of the enduring connection between the Croatian people and the ideals of freedom, sovereignty, and national identity.