



Multilingualism and the Social Status of Women in the City of Osijek in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries

Ljubica Kordic¹, Visnja Lachner²

¹Associate Professor, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, Faculty of Law Osijek, Croatia

²Assistant Professor, Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, Faculty of Law Osijek, Croatia

*Ljubica Kordic

Abstract.

The authors strive to present the social status of women in Croatian cities in the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries on the example of the multilingual city of Osijek. The main goal of the paper is to determine the main features of the social position of women at that time and to examine how it was influenced by their knowledge of two or three languages spoken in the multilingual milieu of the city: Croatian, German and Hungarian. The object of the research encompasses job announcements and advertisements concerning women in the local newspapers in the German language *die Drau* and *Slawonische Presse* published in Osijek in that period. In the introduction, the political background of Croatian society at the observed period is presented and the analysis of the relevant legal regulations conducted from the point of view of the history of law. In the main part, newspaper announcements and advertisements concerning women and multilingualism are researched into and discussed from the perspective of pragmatic linguistics and sociolinguistics. The method used in achieving this goal was fieldwork research of the original issues of two local newspapers in the German language - *Die Drau* and *Slawonische Presse* available at the State Archives of Osijek. The corpus of the research encompasses all the issues of *Slawonische Presse* published from 1870 to 1918, and of *Die Drau* from 1870 to 1927. In the final part, conclusions are drawn based on the findings and the social status of women is depicted as influenced by their knowledge of two or more languages spoken in the city of Osijek.

Keywords: multilingualism, women, social status, the multilingual city of Osijek, Croatia