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**Filip Krčmar**  
**Boris Bulatović**

## PHOTOS OF NIŠ DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR FROM THE FONDS AND COLLECTIONS OF THE AUSTRIAN STATE ARCHIVES AND THE AUSTRIAN NATIONAL LIBRARY

**Summary:** During the First World War, the southern Serbian town of Niš was occupied by Bulgarian troops, who imposed a strict and ruthless occupation regime, accompanied by atrocities, ethnic cleansing, and assimilation policies against the native Serb population. As the administrative seat of the Moravian Military Inspectorate, Niš played an important role, since two important historical visits took place here at that time: namely, the German Emperor Wilhelm II visited the city in early 1916 to meet his relative and Bulgarian Tsar Ferdinand. Two years later, the Austro-Hungarian Emperor and King Charles I was ceremoniously received here during his journey to Sofia and Constantinople. These two important state visits, intended to cement the Central Powers' alliance, were photo-documented. In addition, there are about 30 different photos, on which various motifs from the wartime Niš are immortalized. They depict scenes from everyday life (funeral, shopping, etc.), ethnicities, local architecture (mosques, fortresses, sights, etc.), as well as genuine military motifs such as captured guns, Serbian prisoners of war and internees, etc. The Austrian State Archives contain a total of 25 photos that can be found in the War Archives department (archive holdings: picture collection and audiovisual collections, holdings: picture collection World War I 1914–1918, series: fronts, sub-series: Serbia).

In the Austrian National Library (digital platform: Bildarchiv Austria) a total of 11 photos of Niš can be found, five of which bear witness to the visit of the Austro-Hungarian imperial couple in 1918, but six others show the Niš train station, market life and street motifs (two of each). They were all made by the Imperial and Royal War Press Quarters produced.

Regardless of their provenance and side of the war on which they were created, they present valuable contributions to the local history of Niš in the difficult times, which can be further processed from various (historical and ethnological) scientific points of view.

**Keywords:** Austrian State Archives, Austrian National Library, Niš, Serbia, the First World War, photographs

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