

Croatian emigrant books and digital humanities

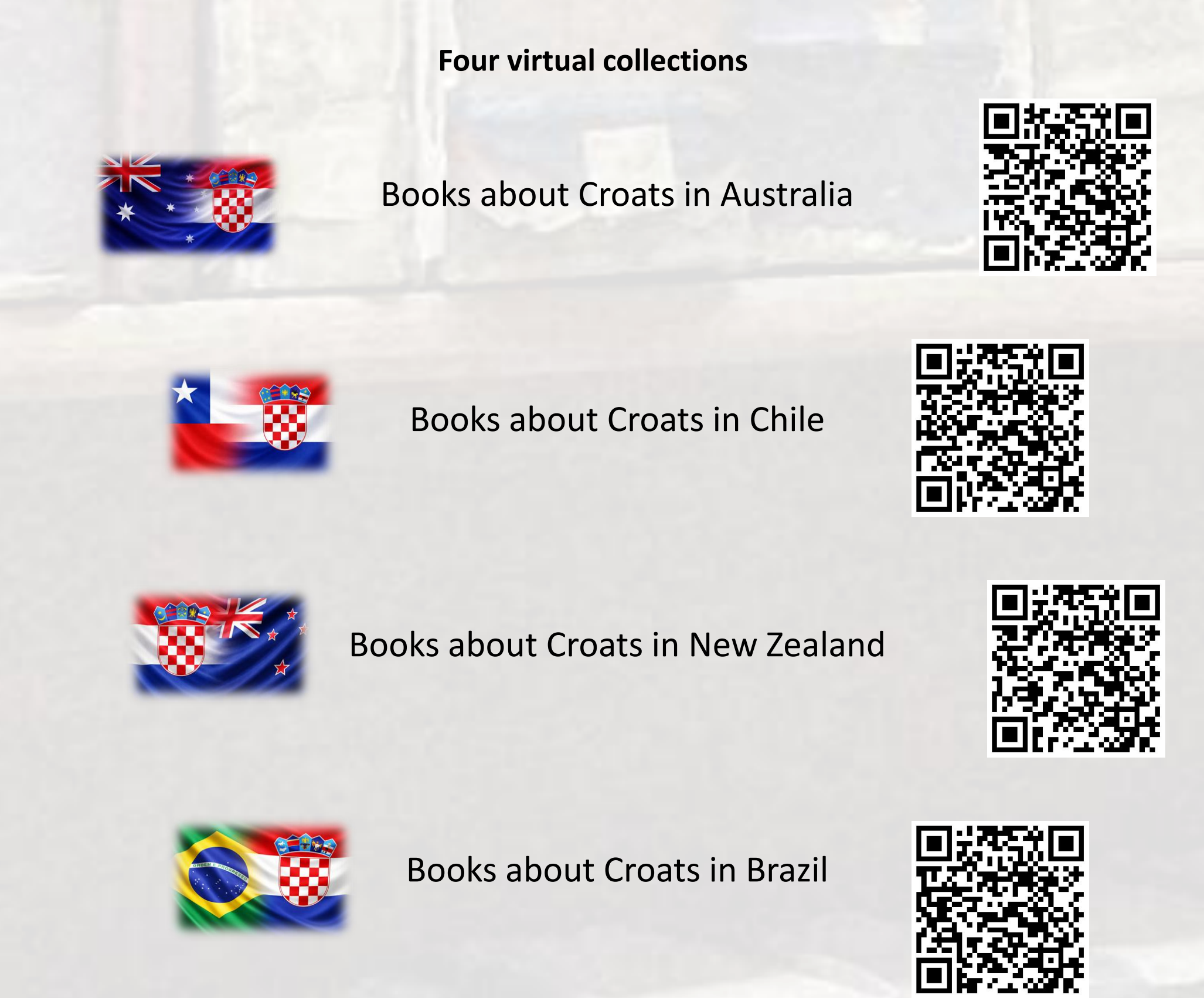
Ensuring access and long-term preservation

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Introduction During research into Croatian books published in Australia, New Zealand, Chile, Argentina and Brazil, bibliographies are being compiled. The aim is to gather books connected to Croats in these countries, whether as authors, editors, publishers, or through content related to them. Collecting data on these books is challenging and the involvement of the Croatian emigrant community is essential for the creation of bibliography records. Through numerous formal and informal contacts, it is possible to find information on books that have been lost or forgotten. Five bibliographies (for Australia, New Zealand, Chile, Argentina and Brazil) are being compiled as part of the project *Communication Patterns and Information Needs of Croats in Chile, Argentina and Brazil: Croatian Emigrant Press* at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb.



Research results The Croatian Emigrant Press Repository is established on the Croatian national platform Dabar, maintained by the University of Zagreb. The repository is therefore reliable and interoperable, provides a customisable user interface, supports indexing and metadata, and stores objects in accordance with the FAIR principles. It enables the storage of various objects and metadata. Of over 200 objects in the repository, 78 are books, all deposited in open access with the permission of the copyright holders.



Since research in Chile and Brazil is at very early stage, we a greater number of records in the bibliographies and more books in the Open Access repository over the next two years.



There are 60 books in the four virtual collections (the total number is 62, but two books appear in two collections). Most of the books are independently published: 17 (28.3%) are self-published, and 33 (55%) are published by other non-commercial independent publishers (mostly Croatian organisations, public universities, or public institutes). Commercial publishers have published 10 books (16.7%). Analysing the language, most of the books, 30 or 50%, are published in the language of the country (English for Australia and New Zealand, Spanish for Chile and Portuguese for Brazil). The total number of books in Croatian is 22, or 36.7%, and 8 books (13.3%) are published bilingually.

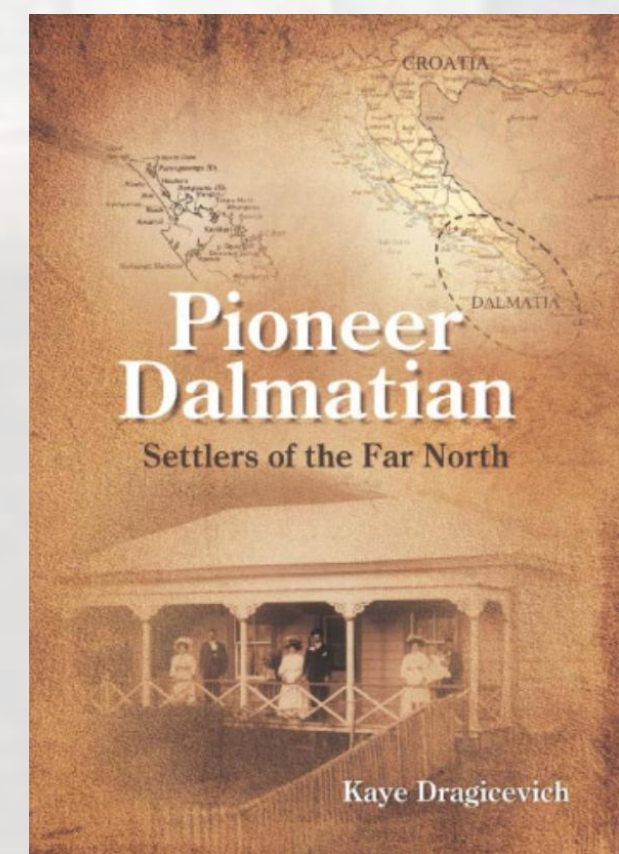
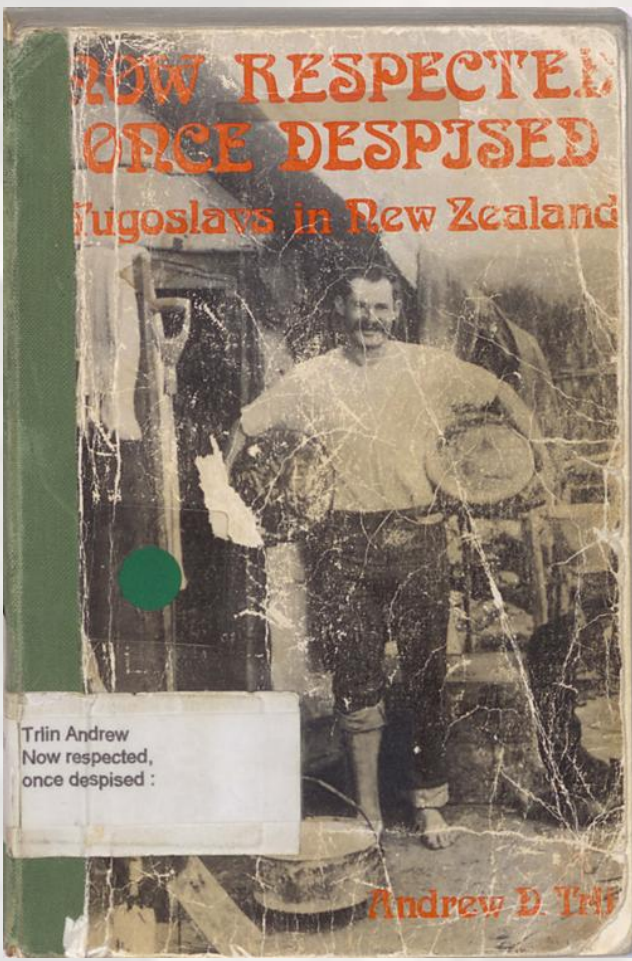
Non-commercial publishers by country

country	self-published	other non-commercial publishers	total no. of non-commercial publishers
Australia	2	12	14
Chile	1	9	10
New Zealand	9	7	16
Brazil	5	5	10
Total	17	33	50

Examples

Trlin, Andrew Drago. *Now respected once despised. Auckland: Dunmore Press, 1979.*

The book is long out of print, unavailable for purchase, and available only in the National Library of New Zealand. An updated edition was published in 2016 under the title Foundations: early Croatian immigration to New Zealand. After digitisation in collaboration with the National and University Library in Zagreb and the National Library of New Zealand, both books are available in the Croatian Emigrant Press Repository, where they had, as of April 2026, more than 550 views and 400 downloads.

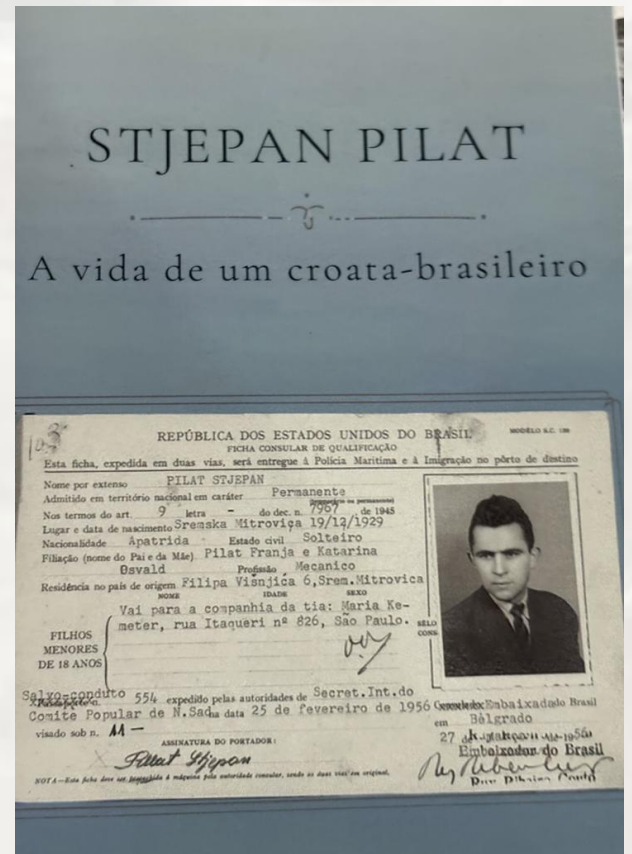


Dragicevich, Kaye. *Pioneer Dalmatian settlers of the Far North. Awanui: Willow Creek Press, 2022.*

The book was first published in 2017 and had several reprints. Before digitisation, it was not available in Croatia. After digitisation, in collaboration with National and University Library in Zagreb, by April 2026 it had more than 1,300 views and 900 downloads in the repository.

Pilat, Stjepan. *A vida de um croata-brasileiro. São Paulo: self-published, 2020.*

The book was printed in a small number of copies and was available only in private collections and in the collections of two Croatian clubs in São Paulo. It was not available in any library, nor was it available in Croatia. A digital copy was provided by the family of the late author, along with permission to deposit the book in the Croatian Emigrant Press Repository.



Conclusion Open Access repositories can play an important role in the preservation of digitised books. The Croatian Emigrant Press Repository, using national e-infrastructure, enables permanent access to books related to Croatian emigration. These books would otherwise be difficult or impossible to access. Thanks to the repository, the books can serve as starting points for new research, especially in the social sciences and humanities, as well as for amateur research, such as family or local history. The example of the repository demonstrates the importance of digital humanities in preservation and research.

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