

Historični seminar 8

Uredila

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Luka Vidmar



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HISTORIČNI SEMINAR 8

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Foreword

The monograph *Historični seminar 8* (Historical Seminar 8) is the eighth consecutive volume of the ZRC SAZU Historical Seminar, an international multidisciplinary cycle of public talks dedicated to presenting new original and topical findings in various areas of research, especially the humanities and social sciences. The papers collected in this volume were written based on talks that took place in 2008 and 2009 in the baroque Little Hall of the ZRC SAZU, the former salon of Cobenzl Palace on Novi Trg. In its traditional interdisciplinary spirit, *Historični seminar 8* brings together eight innovative writers specializing in general history, classical philology, Slavic studies, anthropology, religious studies, ethnology, migration studies, and law. This time, they include four researchers from Slovenia and four researchers from other countries (France, Austria, Albania, and the Netherlands/England).

The volume begins with papers by two classical philologists dealing with the eternally applicable literature and wisdom of antiquity. **Gregor Pobežin** reconstructs Polybius' conception of time and space, in which he presents well-founded arguments to oppose the widespread assumption that this distinguished Greek historiographer perceived history as a cyclic phenomenon of inevitably repeating events. **Matej Hriberšek**, on the other hand, deals with an illustrious Roman, Pliny the Elder. In his paper, he verifies in great detail the findings on Pliny's life and work established to date, and concludes by presenting the thorny issues he faced when translating Pliny's monumental encyclopedic work *Naturalis Historia*. This is followed by a paper by French historian **Bernard Bourdin**, with which the volume steps across the threshold of the modern era in Europe. Within the context of religious and ecclesiastical-political conditions in Europe (with an emphasis on sixteenth-century Scotland and England), Bourdin carefully focuses on the political and religious concept of a ruler's authority – that is, the “divine right of kings” as enforced by King James VI of Scotland and I of England.

This is followed by papers that – although taking various approaches – all tackle recent history, thus not only inevitably, but also entirely intentionally addressing issues relevant to people and society today. This applies first of all to the paper by **Janja Žitnik Serafin**, a specialist in Slovenian migrations,

who analyzes the views of the Slovenian émigré writer Louis Adamic on the identity, integration, and assimilation of American immigrants during the interwar period. The author convincingly demonstrates the relevance of Adamic's views in today's world. Equally interesting to Slovenians is the paper by the Austrian Slavic specialist **Hubert Bergmann**, who examines the presence of Slovenian in the *Wörterbuch der bairischen Mundarten in Österreich* (Dictionary of Bavarian Dialects in Austria) and its archive, as well as episodes from the history of research on Slovenian in Central Europe. The author teases out contacts between the Slovenian and German linguistic and cultural environments in the first half of the twentieth century that have been completely unknown to date.

The last three papers discuss the time from the end of the Second World War to the present. Ethnologist **Armanda Hysa** reveals the pressure of Marxist-Leninist and national ideology on Albanian ethnography under communism, in which she shows how profoundly Albanian history affected the development of the discipline in this area. The topicality of Balkan issues also emanates from the paper by lawyer **Matej Accetto**, who studies the role of the judiciary in regulating interethnic relations in the former Yugoslavia, and thus the model of maintaining the federal balance in a multiethnic country. The impact of one's predecessors' perspectives on the search for human identity in the twentieth century continues and concludes in a paper by the Dutch specialist in Islamic studies **Carool Kersten**, who discusses one of the major challenges of the contemporary world: the integration of Islam. The author presents the overly soft-spoken and relatively unknown thought of recent, more moderately inclined Islamic philosophers and theologians that, in their endeavors to build a bridge between civilizations, have had to face both the traditionalist and fundamentalist interpretations of Islam as well as the secular orientation of the West. All of the papers in *Historični seminar 8*, this series of interconnected stories that despite their diversity occasionally end up along surprisingly similar coordinates, thus enrich us through a number of new findings, and at the same time confirm our belief that *historia* is truly a *vitae magistra*.

Katarina Keber and Luka Vidmar