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Danijel Dzino, *Becoming Slav, Becoming Croat. Identity Transformations in Post-Roman and Early Medieval Dalmatia*
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Knjiga ima 271 stranicu, sadrži uvod sa sažecima osam poglavlja na koja je podijeljena, zaključak, popis primarnih izvora, bogatu bibliografiju korištenih knjiga i članaka (osobito značajnih recentnih izdanja, gotovo nikada necitiranih u našoj medievalistici) te indeks; obogaćena je i s osam fotografija te pet zemljovida. Autor u knjizi elaborira ideje iznesene u članku *“Becoming Slav”, “Becoming Croat”: New Approaches in the research of Identities in Post-Roman Illyricum*, objavljenom u časopisu *Hortus Artium Medievalium*, vol 14, Zagreb-Motovun 2008, str. 195-206.

U knjizi se na nov način pristupa problematici promjena koje su se dogodile u “mračnom razdoblju” 7. - 9. stoljeća na tlu Dalmacije. Ne prihvaća se više metanarativna povijesna priča kako ispražnjeni prostor Dalmacije u 7. st. u migracijskom valu preplavljaju Slaveni/Hrvati rušeći sve pred sobom, a preostaci romaniziranog starosjedilačkog stanovništva bivaju ili asimilirani ili se sklanjaju u preostale gradove na obali. Ne prihvaća se evolucionistički pogled na etnicitet kao primordijalan, stalan socijalni fenomen koji se mijenja na površini, ali u jezgri ostaje postojan, kao ni povezivanje arheoloških artefakata uz određeni etnicitet. Moderan, poststrukturalistički pristup etnicitetima stavlja naglasak više na procese negoli na statičke identitete te ih kroz povijest kulture, mentaliteta, skupnih identiteta promatra kao fluidni i promjenjiv fenomen. Preispituju se također i povijesna vrela, koja više govore o samom autoru, njegovim pogledima i stereotipovima o pojedinim etnicitetima koji su mu većinom strani, te je to uvijek pogled izvana, svojevrsan “orijentalizam”, dok nam stvarni identiteti ostaju skriveni jer nam nedostaje pogled iznutra. U osnovnim crtama pokušat ću prikazati autorove ideje, kako su iznesene po poglavljima, ne ulazeći pritom detaljnije u brojne argumente i primjere kojima su potkrijepljene.

1. Podrijetlo Hrvata u hrvatskoj imaginaciji

U ovom poglavlju raspravlja se o različitim teorijama etnogeneze Hrvata u hrvatskoj historiografiji. Jedna je migracijska, po kojoj su Hrvati došli u postrimski Ilirik bilo kao Slaveni, Goti, Iranci ili Turci, dok je druga autohtona, koja ih promatra kao starosjedioce. Diskurs da su Hrvati i Južni Slaveni domorodačko stanovništvo Ilirika koje kontinuirano od antike, potječe još od vremena renesanse (Vinko Pribojević, Matija Petar Katančić, Mauro Orbini, Pavao Ritter Vitezović). Tu teoriju zastupa i ilirski nacionalni pokret Ljudevita Gaja u ranom 19. stoljeću. Najznačajniji predstavnik migracijske teorije po kojoj Hrvati kao integralni dio slavenskog etnika koji su se proširili Balkanskim poluotokom dolaze s područja Poljske u Ilirik u 7. st., u vrijeme cara Heraklija, zastupao je Ivan Lucić u svom djelu *De Regno Dalmatiae et Croatiae*. Te ideje poslije razrađuju povjesničar Franjo Rački i lingvist Vatroslav Jagić. Ideja o zajedničkom dolasku Hrvata i Srba u postrimski Ilirik odgovarala je zagovornicima jugoslavenske ideje i panslavizma, u intelektualnim i političkim krugovima

The book has 271 pages, consisting of an introduction with summaries of its eight chapters, a conclusion, a list of a primary sources, a bibliography of books and articles consulted (particularly the major recent editions, almost never cited in Croatia’s medieval studies field), and an index, and it is also enhanced by eight photographs and five maps. In the book, the author builds upon the ideas examined in the article “Becoming Slav’, ‘Becoming Croat’: New Approaches in the Research of Identities in Post-Roman Illyricum”, published in the journal *Hortus Artium Medievalium*, vol. 14, Zagreb-Motovun 2008, pp. 195-206.

This book constitutes a new approach to the problems surrounding the changes which occurred in the “dark age” in the territory of Dalmatia from the seventh to ninth centuries. No longer is there any acceptance of the meta-narrative of historical discourse whereby the deserted space of Dalmatia was flooded by Slavs/ Croats in the seventh century, tearing down everything before them, while the remains of the Romanized indigenous population were either assimilated or sought refuge in the remaining coastal cities. No longer is there any acceptance of the evolutionist view of ethnicity as a primordial, immutable social phenomenon which changes superficially while remaining the same at its core, nor of the linkage of archaeological artefacts to a specific ethnicity. The modern poststructuralist approach to ethnicities places more emphasis on processes than on static identities, and through the history of culture, mentalities and group identities, it views them as fluid and fluctuating phenomena. Historical sources are also re-examined, as they speak more of their actual authors and their views and stereotypes on individual ethnicities, largely foreign to them, because they always constitute a view from the outside, a sort of “Orientalism”, while actual identities remain hidden because the view from inside is absent. I shall endeavour to convey Dzino’s ideas in their basic outline as presented in the individual chapters, without exhaustively covering the numerous arguments and examples used to back them.

1. Croat Origins in the Croatian Imagination

The first chapter contains a discussion of the various theories concerning the ethnogenesis of the Croats in Croatian historiography. One such theory is migrational, according to which the Croats came to post-Roman Illyricum either as Slavs, Goths, Iranians or Turks, while another is the autochthony theory, which views the Croats as indigenes. The discourse according to which the Croats and South Slavs are the indigenous population of Illyricum, present in continuity since Antiquity, has its origins in the Renaissance (Vinko Pribojević, Matija Petar Katančić, Mauro Orbini, Pavao Ritter Vitezović). This theory was also advocated by the Illyrian national movement of Ljudevit Gaj in the early nineteenth century. Ivan Lucić, in his work *De Regno Dalmatiae et Croatiae*, was the most prominent proponent of the migration theory, according to which the Croats, as an integral component of the Slavic *ethnie* which spread throughout the Balkan Peninsula, came from the territory of Poland to Illyricum in the seventh century during the reign of Emperor Heraclius. These ideas were later elaborated by the historian Franjo Rački and the linguist Vatroslav Jagić. The idea of the common arrival of the Croats and Serbs in post-Roman Illyricum suited

okupljenim oko Josipa Jurja Strossmayera. Povijesni okvir što ga je ocrtao Rački, odlično je odgovarao novoutemeljenoj državi, Kraljevini Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca, osnovanoj 1918., od 1927. Kraljevini Jugoslaviji. Ferdo Šišić ukomponirao je ideje Račkoga u svoje djelo *Povijest Hrvata u vrijeme narodnih vladara*, kamen temeljac hrvatske historiografije. Hrvati su posebna slavenska skupina koja u drugom valu migracija dolazi u Ilirik. Gotska teorija o podrijetlu Hrvata derivira od srednjovjekovnog stereotipa identifikacije svih migrantskih skupina s Gotima, ideja sačuvana u *Libellus Gotorum* i kod Tome Arhiđakona. Osnovni politički kontekst jest odvajanje hrvatskog identiteta od slavenskoga, a osobito srpskoga, u borbi za ostvarenje političkih prava u Kraljevini Jugoslaviji kojom su dominirali Srbi, osobito nakon uvođenja diktature godine 1929. U novije vrijeme kombinaciju autohtone i gotske teorije u svojim radovima zastupa Ivan Mužić. Iranska teorija postala je osobito popularna nakon otkrića dvaju natpisa iz Tanaisa, s uklesanim imenima *Horoathos* i *Horouathos*. Lingvisti su također ime Hrvat, koje nije slavensko, tumačili perzijskim podrijetlom. Neslavenske teorije uglavnom nastaju kao opozicija Srbima i Jugoslaviji.

Novi pogled na podrijetlo Hrvata, ranosrednjovjekovni, javlja se sedamdesetih i osamdesetih godina 20. st., kada Lujo Margetić i poslije Nada Klaić povezuju pojavu Hrvata s događajima vezanim uz kraj Avarskog Kaganata i franačkom ekspanzijom u kasnom 8. i ranom 9. st., prije negoli sa slavenskim migracijama u 6. i 7. stoljeću. Lingvist Kronsteiner spekulira o turko-avarskoj etimologiji etnonima Hrvat, a Walter Pohl smatra da je hrvatski identitet ponajprije socijalni, elitni identitet jedne ratničke skupine u Avarskom Kaganatu čiji pripadnici nakon sloma Kaganata postaju vođe slavenskih skupina u Dalmaciji.

Razni nabrojeni pogledi na podrijetlo i doseljenje Hrvata u svoje vrijeme su bili korišteni ili da se podcrta panslavenstvo ili južnoslavensko bratstvo protiv “drugih” (Nijemaca, Germana, Talijana, Mađara), ili pak da se hrvatski identitet odvoji od drugih Slavena, osobito Srba.

2. Teoretski okvir i izvori

Nove interpretacije, znane kao postmoderne, u užem smislu poststrukturalističke, nastoje demontirati slojeve struktura postojećih pogleda (političke, kulturološke, ideološke), koje su utjecale na ranije povijesne interpretacije. Svi izvori moraju se ponovo ispitati, s osobitim usmjerenjem na kontekst u kojemu su nastali. Ispituje se politička i kulturna pozadina autora i njegovih kulturoloških stereotipova prije negoli povijesna “istina” ili njezini fragmenti. U novom konceptu orijentalizam i postkolonijalni kriticism imaju posebno mjesto. Orijentalizam je način na koji su Zapadnjaci gledali na kulturalno drugačije narode svojih kolonija; to je odnos “mi” i “oni”, od kojih su jedni dominantni, a drugi podčinjeni. Kolonijalni i imperijalni pogled vladao je i u grčko-rimskom svijetu u odnosu na

advocates of the Yugoslav idea and Panslavism in the intellectual and political circles gathered around Josip Juraj Strossmayer. The historical framework outlined by Rački ideally suited the new Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes established in 1918, and called the Kingdom of Yugoslavia from 1927 onward. Ferdo Šišić incorporated Rački’s ideas into his book on the history of the Croats in the era of its own ruling dynasties (*Povijest Hrvata u vrijeme narodnih vladara*), the cornerstone of Croatian historiography. The Croats were a distinct Slavic group which came in the second wave of migrations into Illyricum. The Gothic theory of the origin of the Croats had its roots in the medieval stereotype which identified all migrating groups as Goths, an idea maintained in the *Libellus Gotorum* and also in the works of Thomas the Archdeacon. The basic political context is the separation of the Croat identity from the Slavic, and most pointedly from anything Serbian, in the struggle to secure political rights in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia dominated by the Serbs, especially after the institution of the dictatorship in 1929. In more recent times, Ivan Mužić has advocated a combination of the autochthony and Gothic theories in his works. The Iranian theory became particularly popular after the discovery of two inscriptions from Tanais bearing the engraved names Horoathos and Horouathos. Linguists have also interpreted the name Croat, which is not Slavic, as being Persian in origin. The non-Slavic theories generally emerged as a form of opposition to the Serbs and Yugoslavia.

A new view of the origin of the Croats, early medieval in nature, appeared in the 1970s and 1980s, when Lujo Margetić and then Nada Klaić linked the appearance of the Croats with the Avar Khaganate and Frankish expansion in the late eighth and early ninth centuries rather than to the Slavic migrations in the sixth and seventh centuries. The linguist Otto Kronsteiner speculated as to the Turco-Avar etymology of the ethnonym Croat, while Walter Pohl posited that the Croatian identity was first and foremost a social, elite identity of a warrior group in the Avar Khaganate which, after the latter fell, became the leaders of Slavic groups in Dalmatia.

The various views on the origin and arrival of the Croats cited above were at one time also exploited to underscore Panslavism or South Slav brotherhood in opposition to “others” (Germans, Italians, or Hungarians), or to distinguish the Croat identity from that of other Slavs, especially Serbs.

2. Theoretical Framework and Scholarship

The new interpretations known as postmodern, poststructuralist in the narrower sense, attempted to deconstruct the layers of structure imposed by existing views (political, cultural, ideological) which influenced earlier historical interpretations. All sources must be re-examined with particular focus on the context in which they emerged. Examination of the political/cultural background of their authors and their cultural stereotypes must take precedence over historical “truth” or fragments thereof. Orientalism and postcolonialism play an important role in the new concept. Orientalism is the manner in which Westerners viewed the culturally different peoples of their colonies; this is the “us” and “them” dichotomy in which one is dominant and the other subjugated. The colonial and imperial view also held sway in the Graeco-Roman world with reference to indigenous populations

Ante Piteša

starosjedilačko stanovništvo (“barbare”). Što se Ilirika tiče, još uvijek je nejasno što se zbilo s populacijom u kasnoantičkom razdoblju. Prema lingvistici i toponimiji, slavenizacija, odnosno širenje slavenskih jezika događa se otprilike u razdoblju od 650. do 750. godine, pri čemu nije bilo rapidne i potpune promjene stanovništva, već dolazi do prihvaćanja slavenskog jezika u procesu akulturacije. Najveći problem je nedostatak i pisanih vrela i arheoloških nalaza koji bi rasvijetlili slavenske migracije tijekom 6. i 7. stoljeća. “Starohrvatska” groblja obično se dijele na groblja poganskoga i kršćanskoga horizonta. Groblja poganskog horizonta teško je datirati, obično se datiraju u 8. st., do otprilike godine 850., kada u grobovima nestaju prilozi, što bi upućivalo na kršćanski način pokapanja. Odsutnost nalaza iz 7. st. objašnjava se ritusom spaljivanja. Jedna skupina autora (Petrinec, Jarak, Belošević) zastupa mišljenje o kontinuitetu poganskoga i kršćanskog horizonta, te da Hrvati dolaze u 7. st., a da odvojene hrvatske migracije u 9. st. nije bilo. Druga skupina (Rapanić, Milošević) sumnja u najstarije starohrvatske ukope u 8. st., uočavajući povezanost materijala iz kasnoantičkog vremena i tražeći dokaze o preživljavanju starosjedilačkog stanovništva, a tek pojavu predmeta karolinške provenijencije pripisuje dolasku Hrvata.

Najnoviji radovi iz područja genetike i antropologije ne mogu dati odgovor o skupnim identitetima (etnicitetima), jer su oni socijalna, a ne biološka kategorija.

3. Identiteti prije Slavena

Autor u ovom poglavlju analizira etnicitete u Iliriku počevši od kasnog željeznog doba. Saznanja crpi iz arheologije regionalnih kultura željeznog doba i onomastike te iz interpretacije grčkih i rimskih izvora o Ilirima. Iliri su bili skupine s različitim identitetima, ujedinjeni u starim izvorima pod zajedničkim imenom; Rimljani su posudili termin *Illiris* od Grka za njihove negrčke, zapadne susjede (*Illyrioi*). Poslije zadnjeg ilirskog rata (*bellum Batonianum*) nastupa romanizacija Ilirika. Nakon rimskog osvajanja starosjedilačko stanovništvo podijeljeno je u pereginske *civitates*, organizirane na regionalnoj i etničkoj osnovi te nastupa proces akulturacije (romanizacije). Matrica rimskog identiteta prihvaćena je na različite načine u različitim dijelovima Rimskog Carstva, nastaju različite starosjedilačke interpretacije unificirane rimske kulture. U kasnoj antici najvažnije pojave su uspon vojničke elite, pojava kršćanstva, formiranje regionalnih identiteta. Regrutiranjem starosjedilačkog stanovništva u legijama na panonskom limesu nastaje vojna elita *Illyricani*, identitet formiran u odredima rimske vojske koji potječu većinom iz istočnog dijela Ilirika. U kasnoantičko doba provincije se dijele na tzv. *patriae*. *Patriae* i njihovi *civitates* postaju osnova za razumijevanje kasnoantičkog poimanja svijeta. Rimski Ilirik podijeljen je u *Kosmografiji* Anonima iz Ravene na *patriae*: *Liburnia Tarstaciensis*, *Dalmatia*, *Pannoniae* (*Superior*, *Inferior* i *Valeria*).

Danijel Dzino, Becoming Slav, Becoming Croat. Identity...

Danijel Dzino, Becoming Slav, Becoming Croat. Identity...

(“barbarians”). As far as Illyricum is concerned, it is still uncertain as to what happened to the population in Late Antiquity. According to linguistics and toponymy, Slavification, i.e., the spread of the Slavic languages, occurred from roughly 650 to 750, wherein there was no rapid nor comprehensive change in the population, rather the Slavic language was accepted in the process of acculturation. The biggest problem is the absence of both written sources and archaeological finds that would shed light on the Slavic migrations during the sixth and seventh centuries. The “early Croatian” cemeteries are often divided into cemeteries with pagan and Christian horizons. The cemeteries of the pagan horizon are difficult to date, and normally they are dated from the eighth century to roughly 850, when goods appeared in the graves that would indicate Christian-style burials. The absence of finds from the seventh century is explained by the ritual of cremation. One group of authors (Petrinec, Jarak, Belošević) advocates the view of continuity between the pagan and Christian horizons, maintaining that the Croats arrived in the seventh century, and that there were no separate Croatian migrations in the ninth century. Another group (Rapanić, Milošević) casts doubt on the oldest early Croatian burials in the eighth century, noting the ties with materials from Late Antiquity and seeking evidence of the survival of the indigenous population, while only ascribing the appearance of items of Carolingian provenance to the arrival of the Croats.

The most recent work in the fields of genetics and anthropology cannot provide an answer to group identities (ethnicities), for these are social rather than biological categories.

3. Identities Before Slavs

In this chapter, Dzino analyzes ethnicities in Illyricum, beginning with the Late Iron Age. Our knowledge here is drawn from the archaeologies of Iron Age regional cultures, onomastics and interpretation of Greek and Roman sources on the Illyrians. The Illyrians were groups with differing identities, combined in ancient sources under a common name; the Romans borrowed the term *Illiris* from the Greeks for their non-Greek, western neighbours (*Illyrioi*). After the last Illyrian war (*bellum Batonianum*), the Romanization of Illyricum proceeded. After the Roman conquest, the indigenous population was divided into peregrine *civitates*, organized along regional and ethnic lines, and acculturation (Romanization) took effect. The matrix of Roman identity was accepted in various ways in different parts of the Roman Empire, and different indigenous interpretations of the unified Roman culture emerged. In Late Antiquity, the most important phenomena were the rise of the military elite, the appearance of Christianity, and the formation of regional identities. The recruitment of indigenous populations into the legions on the Pannonian limes led to the appearance of a military elite, *Illyricani*, an identity formed in the detachments of the Roman military which largely originated in the eastern part of Illyricum. In Late Antiquity, the province was divided into so-called *patriae*. The *patriae* and their *civitates* became the basis for understanding the Late Antique conception of the world. In the *Cosmography* by Anonymous of Ravenna, Roman Illyricum was divided into these *patriae*: Liburnia Tarstaciensis, Dalmatia, and Pannoniae (Superior, Inferior and Valeria).

Kršćanstvo nije bilo jedinstven, monolitan religijski blok; tako postoje razlike između dva središta, Salone i Jadera, u arhitekturi, liturgiji, kultu svetaca i unutrašnjoj dekoraciji. Jader ima uže veze s Akvilejom i sjevernom Italijom, Salona s istočnomediteranskim krugom. Unutrašnjost je kristijanizirana od sredine 6. st., s većim utjecajem starosjedilačkoga stanovništva u umjetničkim formama i sinkretističkim vjerovanjima.

Stanovništvo kasne antike identificiralo se: municipalno, provincijalno, regionalno, kozmopolitski, kršćanski, barbarski, rimski, vojnički.

4. Ilirik i Dalmacija od 378. do 600.: vrlo kratak pregled

U poglavlju se ukratko obrađuju povijesni događaji nakon bitke kod Hadrianopola godine 378. i smrti cara Valensa, koji su ostavili Panoniju širom otvorenu za prodore Gota i drugih transdunavskih skupina. Nakon smrti cara Teodozija godine 395. uslijedila je podjela Carstva te novo teritorijalno ustrojstvo Ilirika. O promjenama političkih i društvenih prilika doznajemo iz pisanih vrela koja se odnose na specifične prilike u Dalmaciji u kasnoantičkom vremenu. Nedugo nakon ugasnuća Zapadnoga Rimskog Carstva Dalmacija i Savija dolaze pod ostrogotsku vlast, nakon čega je uslijedila Justinijanova rekonkvista, kada dalmatinska obala postaje važno uporište za ratove u Italiji. Značajne promjene događaju se i u Panoniji, Justinijan dopušta naseljavanje Langobarda, a istočnorimski zapovjednik Narses dopušta im naseljavanje u Italiji, što je otvorilo prostor za dolazak Avara, koji godine 582. zauzimaju Sirmij te za duže vrijeme politički dominiraju Panonijom. Razmatraju se i materijalni ostaci, s naglaskom na promjene naseljavanja kao i pojava prvih grobalja na redove u 5. i 6. stoljeću. Nastupa proces deurbanizacije i kastrizacije gradova na obali, odnosno tranzicija iz urbane u ruralnu kulturu. More postaje glavna komunikacija, s više od stotinu manjih utvrda na plovnome putu. U zaleđu stanovništvo često bira naseobine oko napuštenih željeznodobnih utvrda na brežuljcima (gradine), na lako branjivim pozicijama. Arheološki dokazi o migracijama skupina kao što su Slaveni i Avari koji u velikim masama dolaze i uništavaju u kasnom 6. i 7. st., gotovo ne postoje. Isto tako nema ni onodobnih pisanih izvora; jedini spomen nalazimo kod Teofilakta Simokata koji piše o avarskom pohodu na Dalmaciju godine 597., te u pismu pape Grgura Velikog salonitanskom nadbiskupu Maksimu oko godine 600., o strahu od slavenskih pohoda na Istru. Pisana vrela u kojima se govori o doseljenju su iz kasnijeg doba, kod Konstantina Porfirogeneta u 10. st. i Tome Arhiđakona u 13. stoljeću.

5. Pisani izvori za slavensku migraciju u 6. i 7. st. u zapadnom Iliriku i Dalmaciji

U ovome poglavlju autor raspravlja o pisanim povijesnim vrelima, čiji pisci su većinom “drugi”, pripadnici bizantske elite

Christianity was a not a unified, monolithic religious bloc, so there were differences between the two centres of Salona and lader in terms of architecture, liturgy, cults of saints and interior décor. lader had closer ties to Aquileia and northern Italy, while Salona had similar ties with the Eastern Mediterranean sphere. The interior was Christianized as of the mid-sixth century, and the indigenous population exercised greater influence on artistic forms and syncretic beliefs.

The Late Antique population had the following identity markers: municipal, provincial, regional, cosmopolitan, Christian, barbarian, Roman and military.

4. Illyricum and Dalmatia 378-600: A Very Brief Overview

This chapter contains a brief look at the historical events following the Battle of Adrianopole in 378 and the death of Emperor Valens, which left Pannonia wide open to the incursions of the Goths and other trans-Danubian groups. A division of the Empire followed the death of Emperor Theodosius in 395, as well as a new territorial organization for Illyricum. Written sources tell of political and social changes, referring to the specific circumstances in Dalmatia in Late Antiquity. Not long after the Western Roman Empire collapsed, Dalmatia and Savia came under Ostrogothic rule, followed in turn by Justinian’s reconquest, when the Dalmatian coast became an important stronghold for the wars in Italy. Considerable changes also proceeded in Pannonia, as Justinian permitted the immigration of the Lombards, while the Byzantine general Narses allowed them to settle in Italy, which opened the way for the arrival of the Avars. In 582, the latter occupied Sirmium and they dominated Pannonia for a considerable period. There is also a consideration of physical remains with emphasis on changes in settlement as well as the appearance of the first cemeteries in rows in the fifth and sixth centuries. On the coast, a process of deurbanization of cities and a move back to fortified hilltop sites began, meaning the transition from an urban to a rural culture. The sea became the principal means of communication between over one hundred small fortifications on navigation routes. In the hinterland, the population often chose to form settlements around abandoned Iron Age fortifications on hillocks (hillforts), at easily defended positions. Archaeological evidence on migrations of groups such as the Slavs and Avars, who arrived in large masses and engaged in destruction in the late sixth and seventh centuries, almost does not exist. By the same token, there are no written sources from that time, and the only mention of it is found with Teophylact Simocatta, who wrote about the Avar raid on Dalmatia on 597, and in the letter of Pope Gregory the Great to the Salona Archbishop Maximus at around 600, on the fears of Slavic incursions in Istria. Written sources which speak of the incoming migrations date to later periods, in the writings of Constantine Porphyrogenitus in the tenth century and Thomas the Archdeacon in the thirteenth century.

5. Written Sources on the Slav Migration in the 6th and 7th centuries in Western Illyricum and Dalmatia

In this chapter, Dzino discusses written historical sources written by “others”, the members of the Byzantine elite who depended on the

Ante Piteša

koji se koriste literarnim i etnografskim stereotipovima svoga vremena kada pišu o Slavenima. Skupina nazvana Slaveni (*Sclavenoi*, *Sclabeno*i, *Anti*) u bizantskim pisanim vrelima pojavljuje se u vrijeme Justinijana (Prokopije Cezarejski), dok se u latinskim izvorima (Jordanesova *Getica*) rabe tri skupna imena, *Venethi*, *Sclavenes* i *Antes*. Pavao Đakon spominje Slavene u kontekstu devastacije Istre i njihova sukoba s Langobardima godine 642. Epizoda u *Liber pontificalis* spominje papu Ivana IV. Dalmatinca i misiju opata Martina koji godine 641. skuplja relikvije istarskih i dalmatinskih mučenika te otkupljuje zarobljenike. U izvorima nema spomena o migraciji Hrvata, koji se spominju tek kasnije, najprije kod Konstantina VII. Porfirogeneta, a potom u vrelima 12. i 13. st., kod Popa Dukljanina i Tome Arhiđakona. Toma piše s antislavenske i antihrvatske pozicije, sa svrhom da dokaže kako je splitska Crkva nasljednica salonitanske. Posebnu pozornost autor posvećuje analizi *De administrando imperio* (poglavlja 29, 30 i 31), Konstantina Porfirogeneta, najznačajnijeg izvora za etnogenezu (*Origo gentis*) i doseljenje Hrvata. *DAI* je izvorno bila knjiga o narodima izvan Imperija, etnografski i didaktički rad za sina mu Romana II. što zrači imperijalnom strategijom i kulturnom dominacijom Bizantinaca. Priču o hrvatskoj migraciji i pokrštenju u *DAI* treba vidjeti kao literarnu konstrukciju, kombinaciju bizantskog “orijentalizma”, praktični ideološko-politički priručnik, s tragovima historijske memorije iz regije. Za događaje iz 7. st. potpuno je nepouzdan izvor.

6. “Mračno doba” 7. i 8. stoljeća u postrimskoj Dalmaciji I. (groblja)

U ovome opširnom poglavlju raspravlja se o različitim pogledima na materijalnu ostavštinu iz “starohrvatskih” grobalja i njihovu kronologiju. Materijal u grobovima upotrebljavan je kako bi se dokazao jasan prekid s antikom, utvrdio novi etnik i religija. Značajan je problem datiranje starohrvatskih grobalja. U gruboj podijeli i kronološkoj shemi tako se groblja s kremacijom datiraju otprilike 650.-700., ona s inhumacijom i priložima u grobovima kao što su keramički lončići, sitni alat, noževi, britve, kremen općenito se svrstavaju u poganski horizont i datiraju u kraj 7. stoljeća i 8. stoljeće, dok od 9. stoljeća prestaje stavljanje priloga (što se tumači kristijanizacijom Slavena/Hrvata) i počinje kršćanski horizont i pokapanja oko crkava. Autor nabraja primjere spaljivanja i sahrane u keramičkim urnama na cijelom prostoru Dalmacije, u Panoniji i Bosni. Kontroverzno je pitanje spaljivanja pokojnika; registrirano je na samo četiri lokaliteta u Dalmaciji, a kronološki ne korespondira s dolaskom Slavena u ranom 7. stoljeću. (Primjer su ukopi u urnama s lokaliteta Duga cesta u Vinkovcima gdje je pomoću analize C 14 utvrđena starost između 667.-780. i 672.-776.) Rasprave se također vode oko mogućnosti da su groblja bila biritualna, odnosno da su se istovremeno prakticirala oba ritusa, kremacija i inhumacija. U odnosu na obred sahranjivanja pojava kremacije čini iznimku

Danijel Dzino, *Becoming Slav, Becoming Croat. Identity...*

Danijel Dzino, *Becoming Slav, Becoming Croat. Identity...*

literary and ethnographic stereotypes of their time when they wrote about the Slavs. The group referred to as Slavs (Sclavenoi, Sclabeno*i*, Antes) in Byzantine written sources appeared at the time of Justinian (Procopius of Caesarea), while the Latin sources (the *Getica* of Jordanes) used three group names: Venethi, Sclavenes and Antes. Paul the Deacon mentioned the Slavs in the context of the devastation of Istria and their conflict with the Lombards in 642. The episode in *Liber pontificalis* contains mention of Pope John IV of Dalmatia and the mission of Abbot Martin, who in 641 collected the relics of the Istrian and Dalmatian martyrs and gathered captives. The sources do not mention the migration of the Croats, who are only mentioned later, first by Constantine Porphyrogenitus, and then in the sources of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, written by Presbyter Diocleas and Thomas the Archdeacon. Thomas wrote from the anti-Slav and anti-Croat standpoint with the objective of proving that the church in Split was not successor of the Salona church. Dzino dedicates particular attention to an analysis of *De administrando imperio* (chapters 29, 30 and 31) by Constantine Porphyrogenitus, the most important source on the ethnogenesis (*Origo gentis*) and arrival of the Croats. The DAI was originally a book about the peoples outside of the empire, an ethnographic and didactic work written for the emperor’s son Romanus II, which means that it is imbued with the spirit of Byzantine imperial concerns and cultural dominance. The story on the Croatian migration and their conversion in the DAI should be viewed as a literary construction, a combination of Byzantine “Orientalism” and a practical ideological-political manual, with vestiges of historical memory from the region. It is an entirely unreliable source for seventh-century events.

6. The “Dark Ages”: 7th and 8th Century in Post-Roman Dalmatia I (Cemeteries)

This extensive chapter contains a discussion of the different views of the material remains from “Early Croatian” cemeteries and their chronology. The goods in the graves are used to prove a clean break with Antiquity and confirm the existence of a new *ethnie* and religion. The dating of early Croatian cemeteries is a significant problem. In the rough division and chronological scheme, cemeteries with cremations are dated to roughly 650-750, and those cemeteries with inhumation and grave goods such as ceramic pots, miniscule tools, knives, razors and flints are generally classified to the pagan horizon and dated to the end of the seventh and eighth centuries, while in the ninth century the placement of goods stopped (which is interpreted as due to the Christianization of the Slavs/Croats) and the Christian horizon and burials around churches began. Dzino counts examples of cremation and burials in ceramic urns in the entire territory of Dalmatia, Pannonia and Bosnia. The question of cremating the deceased is controversial, and it has been registered at only four sites in Dalmatia, while it does not chronologically correspond to the arrival of the Slavs in the early seventh century. (An example is the burials in urns at the Duga Cesta site in Vinkovci, where an age between 667-780 and 672-776 was determined with the help of C14 analysis.) Debate also proceeds around the possibility that the cemeteries were biritual, i.e., that both rites, cremation and inhumation, were practiced there simultaneously. With reference to interment rites, the appearance of cremation was an

i brojčano je minorna. Pojava kremiranja nije u Dalmaciji dokaz najranijih tragova slavensko/hrvatske migracije, nego samo znak da je manjina ljudi izabrala taj način pokapanja ili da pokaže svoj status, korijene, ili članstvo u nekom klanu. Sahranjivanje pokazuje kulturalnu uniformiranost, a groblja se mogu podijeliti u dvije faze: ranija, pretkarolinška, u kojima nema konjske opreme i oružja u karolinškom stilu, i kasnija, karolinška, s konjskom opremom, ostrugama, mačevima u karolinškom stilu. U grobovima prije godine 775. nema konjske opreme ni oružja osim sjekira i vrhova strjelica, te se zamjećuje socijalna jednakost bez vidljivo diferencirane elite koja se primjećuje u grobovima u kasnom 8. i ranom 9. stoljeću. Također se razmatra i smještaj grobalja u krajoliku, s pogledom na more, pokraj tekuće vode, rimske ceste, pokraj željeznodobnih humaka, oko crkava iz kasne antike ili pokraj kasnoantičkih grobalja. Ranije grobove s priložima autor ne smatra nužno “poganskim”, nekršćanskim, jer, kao što je slučaj u merovinškoj Galiji ili ranosrednjovjekovnoj Engleskoj, stavljanje priloga ne kosi se s kršćanstvom, odnosno Crkva nema interesa kontrolirati pogrebene običaje prije karolinške ere. Isti je slučaj i u crkvi sv. Marije u Biskupiji, mauzoleju hrvatske elite, gdje su potvrđene sahrane unutar crkve s priložima u grobovima. Nije moguće otkriti kršćanstvo ili poganstvo preko grobnih priloga; dokazi o evidentnom poganstvu nedostaju, tek se mogu nazrijeti u toponimiji. “Bio je to svijet barbariziranih kršćana i kristijaniziranih barbara.” Promjena nastupa u kasnom 8. st., s pojavom karolinškog materijala i diferenciranja elitnih, pretežno muških grobova, što korespondira s formiranjem kneževina i pojavom nasljednih ratničkih elita; te se promjene, prema autoru, događaju prije aktivnog franačkog djelovanja osamdesetih i devedesetih godina 8. stoljeća. U tom razdoblju zamjećuje se kompleksna socijalna, regionalnopolitička i etnička fragmentiranost.

Autor zaključuje kako nema materijalnih dokaza o pojavi Slavena u 7. st., nema keramike praškog tipa koja bi indicirala Slavene u 6. i 7. st., a keramiku označenu kao slavensku treba datirati u 8. i 9. st., jer je usporediva s onom u Panoniji. Od 7. do 9. st. na prostoru Dalmacije postoji unificirani kulturni habitus. Starohrvatska groblja najranije faze, “poganskog” horizonta pokazuju društvo u tranziciji, koje iznova gradi društvenu strukturu iz korijena. Groblja, pak, nisu dokaz slavenskoga ili hrvatskog dolaska u Dalmaciju, niti nestanka starosjedilačkog stanovništva, niti pokazuju nestanak kršćanstva i pojavu poganstva.

7. “Mračno doba” 7. i 8. stoljeća u postrimskoj Dalmaciji II. (postati Slaven)

Nakon Heraklijeve vladavine bizantska vojska i mornarica napuštaju dalmatinske gradove, te u obalnim gradovima stanovništvo stvara novi rimski identitet, romanski (*Romaioi*), dok se u zaleđu stvara slavenski identitet i širi se slavenski jezik. Kako je došlo do širenja slavenskog jezika i toponimije,

exception and numerically minor. The appearance of cremation is not evidence in Dalmatia of the earliest traces of Slav/Croat migrations, rather it is just a sign that a minority of people chose this manner of burial or it demonstrated their status, roots, or membership in a given clan. Interments reflect a cultural uniformity, and cemeteries can be divided into two phases: an earlier, pre-Carolingian style and a later, Carolingian, with riding gear, spurs, and swords in the Carolingian style. The graves dated prior to 775 contained no riding gear nor weapons, with the exception of axes and arrowheads, and there was notable social equality without visible differentiation of elites, which was apparent in the graves of the late eighth and early ninth centuries. Also considered is the location of the cemeteries in the landscape, with views of the sea, next to running water, Roman roads, alongside Iron Age mounds, around Late Antique churches or next to Late Antique cemeteries. Dzino does not necessarily consider earlier graves with goods “pagan” or non-Christian, for as was the case in Merovingian Gallia or early medieval England, the depositing of goods in graves was not contrary to Christianity, i.e., the church had no interest in controlling burial rituals prior to the Carolingian era. This same case can be found in the Church of St. Mary in Biskupija, the mausoleum of Croatian elites, where interments with grave goods have been confirmed inside the church. It is not possible to ascertain either Christianity or paganism through grave goods; proof of evident paganism is absent and may only be discerned in toponymy.“This was a world of barbarized Christians and Christianized barbarians”. The change emerged in the late eighth century, with the appearance of Carolingian materials and differentiation of elite, largely male graves, which corresponded to the formation of principalities and the appearance of a hereditary warrior elite, these changes, according to Dzino, occurred prior to Frankish activity in the 880s and 890s. A complex social, regional-political and ethnic fragmentariness in this period is notable.

Dzino concludes that there is no physical evidence testifying to the appearance of the Slavs in the seventh century and there is no pottery of the Prague type that would indicate Slavs in the sixth and seventh centuries, while the pottery designated as Slav should be dated to the eighth and ninth centuries because it is comparable to the pottery of Pannonia. From the seventh to ninth centuries there was a unified cultural *habitus* in Dalmatia. The Early Croatian cemeteries of the earliest phase, the “pagan” horizon, indicate a society in transition, which was once more building its social structure from the ground up. The cemeteries are not evidence of the Slavic or Croatian arrival in Dalmatia, nor of the indigenous population’s disappearance, nor do they prove the disappearance of Christianity and the arrival of paganism.

7. The “Dark Ages”: 7th and 8th Century in Post-Roman Dalmatia II (Becoming Slavs)

After the Byzantine army and navy departed from the Dalmatian cities when the reign of Heraclius ended, the coastal population in the cities created a new Roman identity, Romanic (*Romaioi*), while in the hinterland a Slavic identity was created and the Slavic language proliferated. This spread of Slavic language and toponymy is still

Ante Piteša

ostaje i dalje nejasan i nedovoljno objašnjen proces. Po nekim autorima staroslavenski je bio *lingua franca* u Avarskom Kaganatu, dio kulturnog habitusa transdunavske populacije. Lingvistički pomaci mogu se događati i bez velikih populacijskih pokreta, a vode ih brojčano male elitne skupine. Kada je regija Dalmacija postala periferija avarskoga kulturnog kontinuuma, slavenski je postao bolji alat komunikacije od provincijalnoga latinskog, a možda je prihvaćen i kao opozicija romanskim govornim jezicima u gradovima. Institucije župana i bana primjer su avarskoga kulturnog i političkog utjecaja, a sustav županija na mnogo načina korespondira s kasnoantičkom administrativno-teritorijalnom i crkvenom strukturom.

Materijal iz grobova ne pokazuje da su se dogodile dramatične demografske promjene, nego prije ukazuje na kulturnu i socijalnu transformaciju kasnoantičkog društva. Mogućnost pojave imigrantskih skupina sa sjevera zacijelo se prihvaća, ali nema ničega što bi sugeriralo da je u 7. ili 8. st. postrimska Dalmacija bila pometena Slavenima koji su fizički zamijenili raniju populaciju. Slavenske “migracije” bile su kaotični populacijski pokreti manjih skupina, a ne “slavenska poplava” ili organizirana kolonizacija prostora ispražnjenog od starosjedilaca. Dogodila se promjena identiteta i lingvistički pomak starosjedilačkog stanovništva. (Sličan proces dogodio se prigodom anglosaksonizacije Engleske, kada domorodci prihvaćaju identitet pridošlica, a omjer stanovništva bio je 4:1 u korist starosjedilaca.) Razdoblje “mračnih stoljeća” u Dalmaciji, između povlačenja Istočnog Rima u 7. st. i dolaska Karolinga i obnovljenog Bizanta u kasnom 8. i ranom 9. st. bilo je glavno vrijeme tranzicije, kada se od ekstremne političke fragmentiranosti gradi novo društvo, počevši od malih rodovskih zajednica, preko regija do političkih institucija.

8. Deveto stoljeće: Hrvati ex machina

Prvi spomen Hrvata kao posebnog etnika pojavljuje se sredinom 9. st., u ispravi kneza Trpimira (*dux Chroatorum*), koja je sačuvana kao falsifikat iz 16. stoljeća. Prvi sigurno datirani spomenik je gređa i zabat oltarne ograde s natpisom kneza Branimira (*Branimiro commes dux Cruatorum*) iz Šopota (8. desetljeće 9. stoljeća). Pojava hrvatskog identiteta većinom se tumači migracijom, koja je sa 7. st. sada pomaknuta u kraj 8. i početak 9. stoljeća. Glavne političke promjene na ovom prostoru su karolinška ekspanzija i uništenje Avarskog Kaganata te ponovni povratak Bizanta na Jadran. U novonastaloj konstelaciji dalmatinski gradovi pripali su Bizantu, dok su Dalmacija i Liburnija pripali Karolinzima. Nalazi karolinške vojničke opreme pripisuju se dolasku nove etničke skupine - Hrvata, kao jedne od malih etničkih skupina koje su se naselile pod karolinškim pokroviteljstvom (druge manje skupine su: *Abodrites*, *Dlamožani*, *Guduscani*, *Timocani*). Glavni je problem nedostatak pisanih vreła; nijedan karolinški izvor ne spominje migraciju, pa se argumenti grade na sličnosti toponimije i etnonima u

Danijel Dzino, Becoming Slav, Becoming Croat. Identity...

Danijel Dzino, Becoming Slav, Becoming Croat. Identity...

an insufficiently explained process. According to some scholars, Old Slavonic was the *lingua franca* in the Avar Khaganate, a part of the cultural *habitus* of the trans-Danubian population. Linguistic breakthroughs can occur even without major population shifts, led by numerically small elite groups. When Dalmatia became a periphery of the Avar cultural continuum, Slavic became a better communication tool than provincial Latin, and perhaps it was also accepted as a counterpoint to the Romanic spoken in the cities. The institutions of the *župan* (roughly equivalent to a duke) and the *ban* (governor) are examples of Avar cultural and political influence, while the system of *županija* (county/canton/province) in many ways corresponded to the Late Antique administrative-territorial and church structure.

The material from the graves do not show that any dramatic demographic changes had occurred, rather they are more an indication of the cultural and social transformation of Late Antique society. The possibility of the appearance of immigrant groups from the north is certainly accepted, but there is nothing to suggest that post-Roman Dalmatia was overrun by Slavs in the seventh and eighth centuries who then physically replaced the earlier population. The Slavic “migrations” were a chaotic population movement of smaller groups, and not a “Slavic flood” nor an organized colonization of the area abandoned by its natives. What had transpired was a change in identity and a linguistic shift among the indigenous population. (A similar process occurred during the Anglo-Saxonization of England, when the native peoples accepted the identity of the new arrivals, even though the ratio of the population was of 4:1 in favour of the natives.) The period the “dark centuries” in Dalmatia, between the withdrawal of the Eastern Roman Empire in the seventh century and the arrival of the Carolingians and the restoration of Byzantine rule in the late eighth and early ninth centuries was generally a time of transition, when, in the wake of extreme political fragmentation, a new society began to be built, beginning with small tribal communities which grew into regional units and then political institutions.

8. The Ninth Century: Chroati Ex Machina

The first evidence of the Croats as a separate *ethnie* appeared in the mid-ninth century, in the charter of Trpimir (*dux Chroatorum*), which was preserved as a forgery in the sixteenth century. The first reliably dated monument is the beam and pediment of an altar screen bearing an inscription testifying to the ruler Branimir (*Branimiro commes dux Cruatorum*) from Šopot (eighth decade of the ninth century). The appearance of the Croatian identity was largely interpreted as a result of migration, which was now moved from the seventh to the end of the eighth and early ninth centuries. The main political changes in this territory are the Carolingian expansion and the destruction of the Avar Khaganate and the return of Byzantium to Dalmatia. In this newly-emergent constellation, the Dalmatian cities belonged to Byzantium, while Dalmatia and Liburnia went to the Carolingians. The finds of Carolingian military gear is ascribed to the arrival of a new ethnicity, the Croats, as one of the small ethnic groups which settled here under Carolingian patronage (other small groups were the Abodrites, Dlamožani, Guduscani, Timochani). The main problem is the absence of written sources, for not a single Carolingian source

sjeveroistočnoj i središnjoj Europi. Prvo regionalno središte moći bilo je u Lici (*Guduscani*), a sredinom 9. st. prostorna jezgra prvih hrvatskih vladara čini se da je bila u trokutu što ga čine Nin, Knin i Skradin, gdje je i najveća koncentracija crkava i groblja iz 9. stoljeća. Za ovo razdoblje ima dosta pisanih izvora: od franačkih kraljevskih anala, biografskih radova, zapisa putujućih benediktinskih monaha (Gottschalk iz Orbaisa, Amalarius iz Metza), pisama pape Ivana VIII. vladarima Domagoju, Zdeslavu i Branimiru, venecijanske tradicije (Ivan Đakon) do grčkog izvora - Konstantina Porfirogeneta. Franački izvori rabe etnonime kao što su Dalmatinci, Romani, Slaveni, ne spominju poimence Hrvate. Za Amalarija iz Metza stanovnici dalmatinskog zaleđa su *Illirici*, iako na drugome mjestu spominje “divlje Slavene”. Prvi spomen hrvatskog identiteta u crkvenim izvorima je iz 925., u zaključcima Prvog sabora u Splitu, kada se spominje *episcopus Chroatorum* i *rex Chroatorum*. U istoj godini papa Ivan X. oslovljava Tomislava kao *rex Chroatorum*. Za razliku od karolinških, bizantski izvori imaju drugačiji pristup te razlikuju više različitih skupnih identiteta u regiji. Drugu važnu skupinu izvora čini korpus natpisa od ranog 9. do 11. st., većinom dedikacijskog i sakralnog karaktera, s nekoliko nadgrobnih natpisa, svi sponzorirani od pripadnika elita: knezova, kraljeva, župana, koji sebe referiraju isključivo kao Hrvate. Hrvatska elita pokazuje svoje “hrvatstvo” samo kao definiciju i to ističe na natpisima. Imena misionara, crkvenih osoba su germansko-lombardskog podrijetla. Hrvatski identitet je samo identifikacija vladajuće skupine, dok je slavenski percepcija vanjskog promatrača.

Dolazak postrimske Dalmacije u franačku političku sferu povezuje se i s pitanjem pokrštenja Hrvata. Osim konfuznog izvještaja kod Porfirogeneta, nema pisanih dokaza o formalnom pokrštenju. Od 9. st. nastaje značajan korpus sakralne arhitekture, groblja se od polovice 9. st. sele oko crkvenih objekata, u grobove se više ne stavljaju prilozi i pozornost se usmjeruje na liturgijske rituale za spas duše. Prema autoru, istodobno je postojalo elitno kršćanstvo koje donosi organizirana franačka Crkva i misionari te popularno kršćanstvo (izmiješano s popularnim vjerovanjima), koji su u nekoj vrsti dijaloga, tako da do nekog formalnog pokrštavanja nije ni došlo. Kršćanstvo je u nekom obliku bilo prisutno tijekom “mračnog razdoblja” u 7. i 8. st., te širenje karolinškog duhovnog modela kršćanstva u 9. st. nije bilo razlog za otpor starosjedilačkog stanovništva.

Hrvatski identitet pojavljuje se nestankom struktura avarskog kontinuuma i uspostavljanjem novih modela moći u Dalmaciji temeljenih na novom društvenom i duhovnom sustavu Zapada i starosjedilačkih regionalnih zajednica - županija.

Knjiga zavrjeđuje svaku pozornost jer malim pomacima u gledištu mijenja uvriježenu kulturno-historijsku sliku o događanjima na prostoru Dalmacije u ranom srednjem vijeku.

mentions migrations, so these arguments are based on the similarity of toponyms and ethnonyms in north-east and central Europe. The first regional power centre was in Lika (Guduscani), while in the mid-ninth century the territorial core of the first Croatian rulers appeared to be in the triangle bounded by Nin, Knin and Skradin, where the highest concentration of churches and cemeteries dates to the ninth century. There is a considerable number of written sources for this period: from Frankish royal annals, biographic works by itinerant Benedictine monks (Gottschalk of Orbais, Amalarius of Metz), letters from Pope John VIII to the rulers Domagoj, Zdeslav and Branimir, Venetian chronicles (John the Deacon) and Greek sources - Constantine Porphyrogenitus. Frankish sources make use of ethnonyms such as Dalmatians, Romanics, and Slavs, and do not explicitly mention the Croats. For Amalarius of Metz, the denizens of the Dalmatian hinterland were *Illyrians*, even though in another place he mentioned “savage Slavs”. The first evidence of the Croatian identity in church sources dates to 925 in the conclusions of the first synod in Split, when the *episcopus Chroatorum* and *rex Chroatorum* were mentioned. In that same year, Pope John X addressed Tomislav as *rex Chroatorum*. As opposed to Carolingian sources, Byzantine sources reflect a different approach and distinguish between several different group identities in the region. The other vital group of sources consists of the body of inscriptions from the early ninth to eleventh centuries, mostly dedicatory and sacral in character, with several sepulchral inscriptions, all commissioned by members of the elite: princes, kings and dukes who refer themselves exclusively as Croats. The Croatian elite demonstrated its “Croatism” only as a definition and this is underlined in the inscriptions. The names of missionaries, clerical personages, are Germanic and Lombard in origin. The Croatian identity was only a designation of the ruling group, while the Slavic identity was the perception of outside observers.

Post-Roman Dalmatia’s entry into the Frankish political sphere is associated with the question of the conversion of the Croats. Besides the confusing reports from Porphyrogenitus, there are no written records of their formal conversion to Christianity. From the ninth century onward, a considerable body of sacral architecture appeared, while as of the mid-ninth century, cemeteries began to surround churches, and goods were no longer deposited in graves and attention was turned to liturgical rituals for the salvation of the soul. According to Dzino, an elite Christianity brought by the organized Frankish church and missionaries co-existed with a popular Christianity (mixed with folk beliefs) which were engaged in some form of dialogue, so that there was no formal conversion. Christianity in some form was present throughout the “dark period” in the seventh and eighth centuries, and the expansion of the Carolingian spiritual model of Christianity in the ninth century was not a reason for the indigenous population to mount any resistance.

The Croatian identity appeared with the disappearance of the Avar continuum and the establishment of new models of power in Dalmatia based on the new social and spiritual system of the West and the indigenous regional communities (the *županije*). The book certainly merits attention, for by small advances in standpoints, it alters the accepted cultural and historical picture of events in Dalmatia in the Early Middle Ages.