

A PRECARIOUS YEAR

Every published number of the periodical *Numizmatičke vijesti* brought pleasure to generations of our members and to the public at large. From the first number, printed in 1939, to this last 65th number, we have retained continuity in publication, which is especially important. In its long history our periodical enabled many Croatian and foreign numismatists to share their knowledge. The abilities and great numismatic expertise of our editors and authors (Rengjeo, Bauer, Zmajić, Krasnov, Fabry) helped create an internationally respected journal. It is, indeed, its cultural, scholarly and professional importance and renown that made possible its further publication this year. This was a financially very difficult year and, sadly, an unhappy one for many cultural, scholarly-research and professional periodicals in Croatia. Besides justified and very necessary quality assessments and criteria, this year the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports introduced another criterion that proved decisive for many periodicals – that of a periodical’s international citation. We are proud and happy to have satisfied all the criteria set down by the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports and to have been granted funding (although somewhat less) for this year’s *Numizmatičke vijesti*. It was our periodical’s international references in the ERIH (European Reference Index for the Humanities) bibliographic database that determined its fate. As its editor in chief, I am not happy that the fate of many, otherwise distinguished periodicals, hinged on only one, formal decision. I hope that such problems will soon be resolved and that these periodicals will continue to carry out their cultural, scholarly-research and professional roles.

Numismatics itself has this year passed through dark times. Making use of the general situation, increasing hardship and very high prices of gold and silver, some very astute dealers opened hundreds of shops buying gold and silver. Tons of gold and silver coins are pouring into them, also medals, decorations, jewellery and various other objects made of precious metals. These dealers, in most cases numismatically completely ignorant and lacking any foreknowledge, using only stone and acid, indiscriminately determine the fate of coins and objects that indisputably belong to the cultural heritage. This legal destruction of collectables and their transformation into gold and silver bars to be exported abroad is causing irreparable damage to our cultural heritage. It is hard to believe that our State has not created any protective mechanisms to prevent the destruction of such culturally precious objects.

We must remember that in the early 1960s *Numizmatičke vijesti* wrote about the attempts of the Croatian Numismatic Society to prevent the destruction of silver and gold coins which was at that time taking place in the Precious Metals Refinery in Zagreb. Then this destruction was carried out for the needs of our industry!?

We hope that the next, “European” *Numizmatičke vijesti* will be part of the European Union formally as well, as our contribution to the European cultural heritage.

Editor in chief
Edgar Fabry