

## LOOKING AHEAD

From even a quick glance at the contents of this issue of the RCH, it is clear that the contributions deal with themes from almost all periods of Croatian history, from the Middle Ages to contemporary history. Nonetheless, the majority of contributions for this issue deal with the newer periods of Croatian history, especially the period of the Independent State of Croatia (NDH) and the decades of Communist rule that followed. This is not surprising, since these periods in particular were somewhat neglected episodes, often heavily influenced by ideology and politics.

It is therefore logical to start this issue with a set of articles dealing with different aspects of politics in the NDH and with various aspects of life under the Communist regime.

Jure Krišto wrestles with the difficult issue of the persecution of Jews in the NDH and the role of the Church during the war years. He relies primarily on documents published several years ago by the Vatican to elucidate the efforts of the Holy See, as well as those of members of the Catholic Church in Croatia, especially those of Archbishop Alojzije Stepinac, to protect and save Croatian and other Jews. In the end, he probes the reasons why the Catholic Church in general, and in Croatia in particular, has been portrayed unfavorably in spite of abundant evidence to the contrary.

Nevenko Bartulin explores the anti-Italian elements in Ustaša wartime policies, and how the Ustaše sought to extricate the NDH from the Italian 'sphere of influence' and place their state firmly within the German 'New Order'. He explains how relations between the Ustaše and Fascists were always problematic, owing to the territorial issue.

We conclude this section with Milenko Krešić's quick survey of Croat-Serb relations during the first South-Slavic state, especially from the perspective of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and their consequences during World War II. He presents us with problematic ideologies, nationalistic plans (and attempts to offset them), and the tragic consequences of those ideologies and plans, making it difficult for the reader to resist concluding that efforts to organize a common South Slav state were questionable from the start.

Three articles deal with the early stages of Communist rule in Croatia. Tomislav Jonjić explores the phenomenon of organized opposition to repressive Communist rule that lasted from the beginning of Communist rule in 1945 to 1953. Based on documents from judicial proceedings, Jonjić discusses individuals and groups who opposed the Communist regime, many of whom were not very well known at the time and most of whom have been completely forgotten since.

Miroslav Akmadža and Anđelko Vlašić examine the role of Vladimir Bakarić in creating tense relations between the Catholic Church and the Communist regime in Croatia. They follow the torturous evolution of this question until 1952, the moment of the breakup of the relations between the Vatican and Yugoslavia.

Departing from his broad interest in the fate of Germans in former Yugoslavia (Volksdeutsche), Vladimir Geiger focuses his research on the concentration camp Krndija, which Yugoslav Communists organized immediately after the end of war in order to intern those German nationals who still remained in Yugoslavia, most of whom were eventually expelled.

Mario Jareb also contributes a well-rounded discussion of the German ethnic community before the World War II and during the war.

We conclude this section with James Sadkovich's examination of the pre-suppositions, prejudices, and simple material interests that tend to influence the judgments of journalists, publicists, and historians in historical matters. He uses the example of Franjo Tuđman, using the late Croatian leader's writings and political activity to question claims that he was an authoritarian figure and a dangerous nationalist.

From earlier periods of Croatian history, we bring you three articles. Professor Mirjana Matijević-Sokol presents the famous chronicler of the earliest periods of Croatian history, Archdeacon Thomas (1200. – 1268.) of the Split Church. After being schooled in Italy and elected to the position of Split Archdeacon, Thomas became an influential reformer of the city's government and institutions, copying Italian models and even placing Italians in important positions. Thomas was the author of a chronicle of the Split Bishops and Archbishops until 1266, which Ivan Lučić Lucius, its first publisher, entitled the "Historia Salonitana." The significance of this work lies in the fact that the chronicle incorporates important information about various aspects of Croatia's earliest history. Thus, Thomas writes about the arrival of Croats, proposing the so-called Gothic theory of their provenance, and he mentions various Croatian rulers—Trpimir, Branimir, Muncimir, Tomislav, Držislav, Krešimir, and Zvonimir. A particularly noteworthy feature of Thomas' work is that it relies on historical sources, not on myth and legend. "Historia Salonitana" has been reworked and enlarged by other authors; the revised work is generally referred to as the "Historia Salonitana maior."

Working for years in the Vatican archives, particularly the Secret Archives, Jadranka Neralić has discovered documents that throw particular light on the local Church in Zadar in the fifteenth century. She shares with us the atmosphere of those long past times, using court proceedings and adjudications in various cases.

In his contribution to this issue, Robert Holjevac presents us with the political and theological aspects of Mark Antun de Dominis (1560.-1624.), the Bishop of Senj and Archbishop of Split, who contributed a great deal to the discussion of the nature and the role of the Church (ecclesiology).

We are pleased that so many scholars have contributed to the *Review of Croatian History*, and we hope that our readers will profit from the research and scholarly work of our colleagues. At the same time we would like to invite those of you who are interested in Croatia and conducting research on Croatian topics and other questions that concern Croatia which might be of interest to our readers to consider publishing the results of your research in the RCH.

We would like to remind you that the year 2008 marks several important anniversaries. This year marks the hundred-fortieth anniversary of the Nagodba, the (in)famous agreement between Croatia and Hungary, following the Agreement a year earlier between Austria and Hungary, which brought into existence the Dual Monarchy. There are so many interesting issues connected to that year that we are certain that they will pique your interest and prod you to pick up your pens and spend time with your computers.

The coming year is also the hundredth anniversary of the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Croatian politicians, intellectuals, Church representatives, and some independent individuals were very much involved in discussions and concrete work before and after the annexation. They all, some more and some less, deserve our scholarly attention, and we encourage you to submit your work on them to the RCH.

Finally, the 2008 also marks other important anniversaries – 1918, 1928, 1948, and 1968. While we do not plan to devote the next issue of the RCH to any of those anniversaries in particular, we do invite scholars who are conducting research on events related to these anniversaries to consider submitting their work for publication in our journal.

We thank Vlasta Švoger for everything she has done in the capacity of editorial assistant for the first two issues. We will miss her punctuality and gentle nagging. At the same time, we welcome to our editorial team Hrvoje Čapo, who will take her place.

We also thank members of the editorial board for their efforts in making this and other issues of the RCH a solid English-language source book for Croatian history.

*Jure Krišto, Editor-in-chief*