

MISLI ZNALCA: dr. sc. Antun Nekić

THOUGHTS OF AN EXPERT: Antun Nekić, PhD



1. Poštovani profesore, ovim se putem zahvaljujemo na odazivu za intervju. Iza Vas su značajni akademski uspjesi koje ste ostvarili u proteklih 10.-ak godina rada, no vratiti ćemo se na sam početak Vašeg akademskog obrazovanja. Zbog čega Vas je srednjovjekovna povijest zainteresirala?

I u osnovnoj i srednjoj školi imao sam izvrsne profesorice povijesti, pa ono što ću navesti kao prvi razlog sklonosti srednjem vijeku nije njihova „krivica“. Naime, praktično jedina stvar koja mi se urezala u pamćenje iz tih faza obrazovanja je pitanje dolaska Hrvata, i to zbog toga što je, nasuprot cjelokupnom ostatku gradiva to pitanje bilo uobličeno u formi problema za čije je razumijevanje bilo ponuđeno nekoliko viđenja, „teorija“. Više se ne mogu sjetiti je li na takav način dolazak Hrvata bio problematiziran u udžbeniku, no jasno se sjećam predavanja na kojima je profesorica Milković minuciozno iznijela nekoliko „teorija“, što je bilo pravo osvježanje, usamljeni poziv na razmišljanje. Tu vrste klice usmjerenosti prema srednjem vijeku

1. Dear Professor, we would like to thank you for agreeing to an interview. During the past 10 years of work you have achieved significant academic success, but let's talk about your early days in academia. What made you interested in medieval history?

I had excellent history teachers in both primary and secondary school, but what I will mention as the first source of my inclination towards the Middle Ages was not “their fault”. That is, virtually the only thing from that period of education that got stuck in my memory was the Arrival of the Croats. This is because, contrary to the rest of the material, this topic was formulated as a problem for which several perspectives or “theories” were proposed. I can no longer remember whether it was problematised like this in the textbook, but I clearly remember a lecture during which Professor Milković thoroughly presented several “theories”, which was a real refreshment, a sole invitation for reflection. This awakening of interest towards the Middle Ages was only fueled further by Professor

samo su produbili kolegiji profesora Ančića o srednjovjekovnoj Europi koje sam slušao na prvoj godini prijeddiplomskog studija. Pritom je susret s knjigom Henrija Pirenna *Muhamed i Karlo Veliki* bio revolucionaran. Umjesto 476. godine kao točke u kojoj kao nekom vrstom dekreta prestaje antika i počinje srednji vijek, morali smo savladati knjigu koja ima veliku tezu, i pritom ta teza počiva na kompleksnoj argumentaciji – bio je pravi šok, a ujedno i užitak, susresti se s time. Kada se tome doda „provokativan“, u najboljem smislu riječi, stil predavanja profesora Ančića, posve je jasno zašto je srednji vijek period kojem sam se okrenuo. Drugim riječima, nije bilo ništa vezano uz sami srednji vijek kao takav, već o načinu na koji se govorilo i raspravljalo o njemu.

Ančić's courses on Medieval Europe, which I had attended during the first year of my undergraduate studies. Not only that, but my encounter with Henri Pirenne's book Mohammed and Charlemagne was revolutionary as well. Instead of using the year of 476 as a point at which, as though it were decreed, antiquity ends and the Middle Ages begin, we had to work through a book with a central argument, it being based on a complex argumentation – this encounter was a real shock, but a pleasure as well. When you also add Professor Ančić's "provoking", in the best sense of the word, style of lecturing, it is quite clear why I turned towards the Middle Ages. In other words, it did not have to do anything with the Middle Ages themselves, but with the way they were spoken about and discussed.

2. Anžuvinski archiregnum u srednjoistočnoj i jugoistočnoj Europi u 14. stoljeću: pogled s periferije projekt je koji traje od 2020. godine i trenutačno je Vaš najvažniji projekt koji je uključio i dva međunarodna znanstvena skupa na našem Odjelu u svibnju i prosincu 2022. godine. Možete li nam ukratko reći nešto više o njegovom sadržaju, suradnjama s drugim znanstvenicima i onome što je proizašlo iz projekta?

Projekt, koji je do svog umirovljenja vodio profesor Ančić, a onda preuzela kolegica Šoštarić, upravo se u trenutku razgovora (kraj svibnja) formalno privodi svome kraju, no najopipljiviji rezultati projekta zapravo će uslijediti tek po njegovom završetku. Naime, na samom kraju je rad oko uređivanja zbornika s druge, prosinnačke konferencije, koji će pod naslovom *Doba (dez)integracije: društveno-političke strukture za vladavine Anžuvina* biti objavljen u izdanju Sveučilišta u Zadru, dok je za nadati se da će zbornik vezan uz prvu, svibanjsku konferenciju, a koji će biti

2. The Angevin Archiregnum in East Central and Southeastern Europe in the 14th Century: A View from the Periphery has been ongoing since 2020 and is currently your most important project. It also included two international scientific conferences which were held at our department in May and December of 2022. Can you briefly tell us more about its content, collaborations with other scholars, and what resulted from it?

The project, which was led by Prof. Ančić until his retirement and then taken over by his colleague Šoštarić, is coming to an official end at the time of this interview (end of May), but the project's most tangible results will only be visible after its completion. That is, the finishing point will be the editing process of the proceedings of the second, December conference, which will be published by the University of Zadar under the title *The Age of (Dis)integration: Socio-Political Structures during the Angevin Rule*, with the hope that the proceedings related to the first conference

objavljen na engleskom jeziku, također ubrzo ugledati svjetlo dana. Pritom treba naglasiti da je jedan zbornik radova vezan uz projekt *Zadarski mir: prekretnica anžuvinskog doba*, objavljen 2022. godine u izdanju Sveučilišta u Zadru. Svibanjska je konferencija okupila preko dvadeset izlagača i bila je usmjerena razmatranju vladavine dvaju anžuvinskih kraljeva, Karla I. i Ludovika I., na cjelokupnom prostoru kojim su dotična dva kralja vladala, odnosno na koji su nastojali projicirati svoju vlast i moć. Neki od temeljnih problema/ pitanja na koje se nastojalo odgovoriti na konferenciji bila su vezana uz razumijevanje načina na koje su anžuvinski vladari projicirali svoju vlast i moć nad provincijama (Hrvatska, Dalmacija, Slavonija, Transilvanija) te nad „labavije“ povezanim teritorijima (Bosna, Srbija, Besarabija). Razmatralo se kako je dvor kao politički centar nastojao uspostaviti kao mjesto s kojeg su potjecali dominantni sustavi simbola, vrijednosti i vjerovanja koje se nastojalo proširiti društvom; koja je bila uloga elita u tim procesima; kroz koje se administrativne strukture odvijala interakcija političkog centra s podložnim periferijama; kako su elite uspostavljale i održavale svoju moć, te kako su oblikovane lokalne i regionalne plemićke zajednice; te kako su različite mreže – osobne, regionalne, diplomatske, vjerske, ekonomske itd. – uspostavljane, korištene i održavane na tako velikom prostoru kojim su vladali Anžuvinci. Širok spektar tema izloženih na konferenciji u svojim je temeljima stoga kao nit vodiću imao razumijevanje modaliteta interakcije političkog centra i periferija tog kompleksnog političkog sustava. I na toj je konferenciji nekoliko izlagača u fokus razmatranja stavilo političke i društvene procese s prostora srednjovjekovne Dalmacije, Hrvatske i Slavonije, no tek je druga, prosinačka konferencija u potpunosti

in May, which will be published in English, will soon see the light of day as well. It should be noted that one of the proceedings related to the project *The Peace Treaty of Zadar: turning point in the age of the Angevins* was published in 2022 by the University of Zadar.

The May conference brought together over twenty speakers and focused on examining the reigns of the two Angevin kings Charles I and Louis I over the entire area of their ruling, or rather the area onto which they sought to project their power and authority.

Some of the fundamental questions that the conference sought to answer dealt with understanding the ways in which the Angevin rulers projected their power and authority over the provinces (Croatia, Dalmatia, Slavonia, Transylvania) and the “loosely” connected territories (Bosnia, Serbia, Besarabia). They examined how the court, as a political center, sought to establish itself as the place from which dominant systems of symbols, values, and beliefs, which tried to spread throughout society, originated; which role the elites had during these processes; through which administrative structures the interaction of the political center with the subject peripheries took place; how the elites established and maintained their power, and how local and regional noble communities were shaped; and how different networks - personal, regional, diplomatic, religious, economic, etc. - were established, utilised and maintained in such a large area ruled by the Angevins. The broad spectrum of topics presented at the conference was therefore based on an understanding of the modalities of interaction between the political centre and the peripheries of this complex political system. Several speakers also focused on the political and social processes in medieval Dalmatia,

fokus premjestila na jednu od periferija anžuvinskog *archiregnuma*. Konferencije su dakako bile komplementarne, istovremeno šireći i suzujući perspektivu iz koje su se promatrali centar i periferija te njihova interakcija, te su zapravo i sukob projektnih ciljeva i zamisli koje su stajali iza njegova oblikovanja.

3. Uz Vas na projektu surađuju i drugi profesori sa Sveučilišta, no samo ste jednom od profesora bili asistent. Naravno, riječ je o prof. dr. sc. Mladenu Ančiću, cijenjenom medievalistu u našim krajevima, trenutačno u statusu emeritus profesora na našem odjelu za povijest. Profesor Ančić magistrirao je 1985., godinu dana prije Vašeg rođenja te ste zasigurno od njega na račun njegovog „staža“ u povijesti mogli naučiti raznorazne stvari. Čemu Vas je profesor Ančić kao Vaš mentor naučio u nizu godina bliske suradnje te koji su najbolji stručni savjeti koje možete podijeliti sa studentima povijesti?

Imao sam nevjerojatnu sreću da mi je profesor Ančić bio mentor te me vodio na početku mog akademskog puta, te sam mu neopisivo zahvalan na svemu što je učinio za mene. Teško je u par riječi ili rečenica sumirati „stručne savjete“, no istaknuo bih da u prvom redu sve počiva na trudu i vremenu uloženom u ono čime se bavite, što se vrlo često smetne s uma. Nije netko dobar povjesničar zbog toga što mu to „leži“ ili „ne leži“, već prvenstveno jer je uložio ogromnu količinu truda i energije u svoj posao. Drugi korak je zapravo da vam taj posao ne predstavlja posao, već da iza toga stoji znatiželja, ushit spoznaje nečeg novog. Sve navedeno krasi profesora Ančića i dan danas, kada je „formalno“ u mirovini, ali nevjerojatno istraživački agilan, te je izniman gušt i dalje, s ponešto akumuliranog znanja, biti u mogućnosti

Croatia and Slavonia, but it was only the second, December conference that completely shifted the focus to one of the peripheries of the Angevin archiregnum. The conferences were, of course, complementary. They simultaneously broadened and narrowed the perspective from which the centre and the periphery, as well as their interaction, were observed, and are in fact the essence of the project's goals and ideas that are behind its formation.

3. Other professors from the University are also involved in the project, but you were an assistant in the past to only one of them. Of course, it is Prof. Mladen Ančić, PhD, a respected medievalist in our region, currently holding the status of professor emeritus at our Department of History. Professor Ančić obtained his master's degree in 1985, a year before you were born, and you were certainly able to learn a lot from him due to his background in History. What has Professor Ančić taught you as your mentor over years of close collaboration, and what is the best professional advice you can give to history students?

I was incredibly lucky to have Professor Ančić as my mentor and guide at the beginning of my academic journey, and I am extremely grateful for everything he has done for me. It is difficult to summarize “expert advice” in a few words or sentences, but I would like to first and foremost emphasize that everything depends on the effort and time you invest in your line of work, which is very often overlooked. Someone is not a good historian because they are ‘good’ or ‘not good’ at it, but primarily because they have invested a huge amount of effort and energy into their work. The second one is that it does not represent a job to you but the curiosity that lies behind it, the excitement of discovering something new. To this day, Professor Ančić still has all of these

„ravnopravnije“ diskutirati s njim, odnosno i dalje svakodnevno učiti od majstora zanata!

4. Uz Anžuvince, bavite li se kakvim drugim projektima, istraživanjima, pisanjem članaka ili kakve bibliografske jedinice?

U svojim se istraživanjima bavim razdobljem od početka 13. do sredine 15. stoljeća, tako da anžuvinsko doba nije jedini period koji me zanima, no rad u sklopu projekta – od pisanja radova, organizacije konferencija, uređivanja zbornika – ipak me ponajviše usmjerava upravo na to razdoblje.

5. Neizostavan je detalj u Vašoj biografiji je studijska godina na magistarskom studiju u Budimpešti. Mađarsku će ljudi slavenske grupe jezika uvijek smatrati egzotičnom ili upravo neprivlačnom zbog jezika koji je jedan od najtežih za učenje, a i nekadašnjih povijesnih događaja, no što je Vas upravo privuklo na studiranje u Mađarskoj i kakvo je to bilo iskustvo? Zbog burne stoljetne prošlosti možete li nam kratko dati uvid kakvo je gledanje mađarske historiografije, naspram hrvatske, na određene događaje iz naše zajedničke povijesti s njima?

Iskustvo Budimpešte je bilo dragocjeno iz više pogleda. Zahvaljujući sredstvima koja mu je na raspolaganje stavio G. Soros, Srednjoeuropsko sveučilište (Central European University) pružalo je jedno od boljih uvjeta studiranja na razini cijele Europe usudio bih se reći. Odsjek srednjovjekovnih studija na kojem sam proveo jednu godinu bilo je nevjerojatno vibratno mjesto, sa studentima iz svih krajeva svijeta, a u pogledu istraživanja i rada iznimno poticajno. Osim toga to je bila prilika upoznati se i s administrativnim djelovanjem sveučilišta. Cijeli niz stvari koje vidimo

characteristics, with him being ‘formally’ retired, but still incredibly research-agile. It is an exceptional pleasure to still be able to, with some accumulated knowledge, have discussions with him on a ‘more equal’ basis, and each day continue to learn from a master of the craft!

4. Besides the Angevins, are you involved in any other projects, research, articles in progress, or bibliographic units?

In my research, I examine the period from the beginning of the 13th to the mid-15th century, which means that the Angevin period is just one of the topics I focus on; however, the tasks within the project – writing papers, organizing conferences, editing proceedings – shift my focus on that period.

5. An indispensable detail of your biography concerns the year you had spent studying in a master's degree program in Budapest. To Slavic language speakers, Hungary will always seem exotic or plainly unattractive due to its language, which is one of the most difficult ones to learn, but also due to past historical events. Why exactly did you decide to study in Hungary and what was the experience like? Given the turbulent past spawning over centuries, can you give us a short insight into how the Hungarian historiography, compared to the Croatian one, sees certain events from our shared history?

The Budapest experience was valuable in many different ways. Thanks to the funds Mr. Soros made available, I would dare to say that the Central European University offered one of the best studying environments in Europe. The Department of Medieval Studies, where I spent one year, was an incredibly vibrant place, with students from all over the world, and was extremely stimulating in terms of research and work.

da se danas pokušavaju utkati u funkcioniranje našeg sveučilišta na CEU su tada bile sastavni dio „operativnog djelovanja“. Dovoljno je navesti zapanjujuću brigu koja se posvećivala održavanju kontakata s alumnima, što mi je tada bila potpuna novost, a danas vidimo da je jedan od elemenata na kojem radi i naše sveučilište.

Nemoguće je u par rečenica uopće i načeti problem drukčijih perspektiva mađarske i hrvatske historiografije na 800 godina „zajedničke povijesti“. Ključnim mi se pritom čini da se danas ta stajališta sve više i više oblikuju kroz međusobni dijalog, a ne kroz razgovor gluhih, što onda primorava i jednu i drugu stranu da u stranu gurnu stereotipe i viđenja naslijeđena mahom iz 19. stoljeća, i onda kroz argumentirane teze adresiraju i najspornija od pitanja, poput pitanja pripadnosti ranosrednjovjekovne Slavonije, odnosno je li taj prostor bio pod kontrolom hrvatskih ili ugarskih kraljeva u razdoblju 10. i 11. stoljeća.

6. Kada vidimo da se u vijestima pojavila tema iz srednjeg vijeka bude nam drago jer je prava rijetkost u svakodnevici. Kako komentirate srazmjer zainteresiranosti, barem Hrvata, za modernu povijest i praktički dojučerašnje događaje, naspram antike i srednjeg vijeka? Hoće li se u budućnosti to možda promijeniti? Arheologija igra veliku ulogu u pronalasku novih materijalnih dokaza za antiku i srednji vijek. Smatrate li da se treba ulagati što više u arheologiju kako bi sama povijest profitirala od njihovih nalaza?

Ne vidim ništa loše samo po sebi u tom nesrazmjeru, dapače, čak je i očekivano da postoji veća razina interesa za suvremeno doba. Interes za obiteljsku povijest rijetko će koga, osim „plave krvi“, odvesti dublje u prošlost od 19. ili u najboljem slučaju, 18. stoljeća. Neosporno je i da je suvremeno doba lakše prezentirati putem

Additionally, it was an opportunity to get acquainted with the administrative work of a university. A whole series of things that we can see the University trying to integrate into its functioning today, were back then an integral part of “operational tasks” at the CEU. Suffice to mention the astonishing care that was devoted to maintaining contact with the alumni, which was at the time completely new to me, but which today we note as one of the aspects that our university is working on as well.

It is impossible to even begin to address the problems of different perspectives of Hungarian and Croatian historiography on 800 years of “common history” in a few sentences. The key point seems to be the increased shaping of these positions through mutual dialogue, rather than through a fruitless discussion. This then forces both sides to push aside stereotypes and views that were mostly inherited from the 19th century, and to address the most contentious issues through argumentative theses. An example is the question of early medieval Slavonia’s political belonging; whether this area was under the control of Croatian or Hungarian kings during the 10th and 11th century.

6. Due to its rare occurrence, we are glad whenever a topic from the Middle Ages appears in the news. How do you comment on the amount of interest, at least among Croats, in modern history and events that basically happened yesterday, compared to Antiquity and the Middle Ages? Could this change in the future? Archaeology plays a major role in finding new material evidence from these periods. Do you think we should invest more in archaeology, so that history can profit from its findings as well?

I do not see anything wrong with this disparity. In fact, a bigger level of interest in the modern era is to be expected. An interest in

vizualnih medija, negoli je to srednjovjekovno doba, što značajno doprinosi neraszmjeru interesa. Mogućnost uspješne ekranizacije srednjeg vijeka uvelike ovisi o mogućnosti da se pogodi dobra tema i da se o njoj ispriča dobra priča, kao što je to recimo bio slučaj sa serijalom *Hrvatski kraljevi*.

7. Vratit ćemo se na konkretna pitanja o samom Odjelu – na koji bi ste način Vi privukli i/ili ohrabрили nove studente na naš Odjel? Možete li nas upoznati s ključnim promjenama na Odjelu za vrijeme Vašeg studiranja i trenutačnog studiranja?

Riječ je o iznimno teškom i kompleksnom pitanju. Dio odgovora, a to je naročito onaj dio koji se tiče onoga što sam Odjel može napraviti, jest da svaka studentica i student koji završe studij povijesti na našem Odjelu budu glavni „saveznici“ u privlačenju novih studenata. To mi se čini kao najbolja „reklama“ Odjela, makar djeluje staromodno u doba kada se sve fokusira na digitalnu sferu. Dakako, to podrazumijeva i da se studentice i studenti u trenutku kada završe pet godina studija mogu sa zadovoljstvom osvrnuti na to razdoblje. S tim ciljem treba pomalo osvježiti program studija, naročito u pogledu mogućnosti izbornosti predmeta na diplomskoj razini, što je recimo iznimno dobro funkcioniralo u doba mog studiranja.

8. U radnom ste odnosu kao asistent na našem Odjelu od 2013. godine te ste od tada neprestano napredovali u zvanju, što naravno uključuje nove obaveze. S kojim se izazovima i općenito obvezama susrećete na poslu? Kako komentirate svoj odnos sa studentima prijašnjih generacija i sadašnjih generacija nakon pandemije korona virusa i jeli sama online nastava dovela do promjena u

family history will rarely take anyone, besides ‘royal bloods’, further back than the 19th or, at best, the 18th century. Undeniably, the modern era is easier to present through visual media than the medieval era, which significantly contributes to this disparity of interest. The possibility of a successful film adaptation of the Middle Ages largely depends on the ability to find a good theme and tell a good story about it, as was the case with the series *Croatian Kings* (*Hrvatski kraljevi*), for example.

7. Let’s get back to questions about the Department itself – how would you attract and/or encourage new students to join the Department? Can you tell us about the key differences during your studies and today’s state?

This is an extremely difficult and complex question. A part of the answer, especially the one that pertains to what is within the Department’s power, is that each student who completes a degree in history would be the main “ally” in attracting new students. This seems like the best “advertisement”, even if it seems old-fashioned during an era where everything takes part in a digital sphere. Of course, this also implies that students, after completing their five-year program, can look back on that period with satisfaction. With this in mind, the program requires a refresh, especially when it comes to elective courses at the graduate level which, for example, worked exceptionally well during my studies.

8. You have been working as an assistant at our Department since 2013, and have since then continuously advanced in your career, with which come new responsibilities. Which challenges and general responsibilities do you face at work? How would you comment on your relationship with students from the

nastavnom procesu koje još primjenjujete u svojim predavanjima?

Raditi na sveučilištu veliki je privilegij i makar se u posljednje vrijeme podiže ljestvica očekivanja, odnosno uvjeta koje je potrebno ispuniti za napredovanje, ništa ne može promijeniti tu činjenicu.

Pandemija je zasigurno značajno utjecala na kvalitetu nastavnog procesa kao i na profil studenata, no američki sociolog Jonathan Haidt vrlo dobro je pokazao da duboka preobrazba mentaliteta i ponašanja mladih ljudi nije bila uvjetovana epidemijom, koja je samo dolila ulje na vatru, već joj se korijeni mogu nazrijeti u sve većem korištenju društvenih mreža u sve mlađim i mlađim dobnim skupinama, pa rad s najnovijim generacijama studenata svakako predstavlja novu vrstu izazova. U današnjem radu ne koristim ništa od onoga na što nas je bila primorala online nastava, a i neka vrsta implicitne sugestije kako bi korištenje digitalnih formi koje se moralo usvojiti u doba online nastave možda koristilo u obraćanju novim generacijama studenata vrlo je problematična u najmanju ruku.

9. Svi studenti vide uzora u nekim profesori-ma, pa neki od njih sanjaju da budu kvalitetni, profesionalni i puni znanja kao i oni, stoga Vas pitamo: Što je sve potrebno za biti dobar medievalist ili „čovjek od struke“? Znamo da ne postoji tajna formula za uspjeh jer svatko kreće s različitim stupnjevima mogućnosti i znanja, no možete li barem studente ili ljude koje zanima srednji vijek uputiti u temeljnu literaturu bez koje se ne može krenuti?

Djelomično smo se toga već dotakli u jednom od prethodnih pitanja: potreban je izniman trud koji vam ne pričinja muku već vam svako novo otkriće, ma kako malo bilo, i svaka nova spoznaja, vrijeme posvećeno istraživanju zapravo pretvaraju u

previous generations versus the post-COVID ones, and has online teaching introduced any changes that you continue to incorporate in your lectures?

Working at a university is a great privilege and nothing can change that fact, even though the bar of expectations and the conditions that need to be met for advancement have been growing recently.

The pandemic has definitely significantly affected the quality of the teaching process as well as the profile of students. However, the American sociologist Jonathan Haidt has shown very well how the profound change of the mentality and behavior in young people was not caused by the epidemic, which, however, did add fuel to the fire, but that its roots can be traced to the increasing use of social media within younger and younger age groups. Therefore, working with the latest generations of students certainly represents a new kind of challenge.

In my current work, I do not apply anything that we had to incorporate due to online teaching. In addition, the type of implicit suggestion that the digital forms incorporated during the era of online teaching might be useful in addressing new generations of students is, to say the least, very problematic.

9. Each student sees a role model in some professors, and some of them dream of being as high-quality, professional, and knowledgeable as them. Therefore, we ask: What does it take to be a good medievalist or a ‘man of the trade’? We know that there is no secret formula for success because everyone starts with different levels of ability and knowledge. However, can you recommend to students or people interested in the Middle Ages the basic literature that they cannot do without?

neku vrst hobija. Teško je govoriti o nekoj neophodnoj literaturi, ono što mi se čini važnijim od toga jest da se čitanjem treba dobiti jedna širina znanja. U tom pogledu budućem medievalistu kao početni korak ne bih uopće preporučio literaturu koja se bavi srednjim vijekom, već autore poput Williama H. McNeilla, Jamesa C. Scotta ili Davida Graebera, pa bih tek nakon toga krenuo na srednji vijek i u ruke uzeo djela Chrisa Wickhama i Roberta Bartletta, da istaknem samo dvojicu autora čije knjige je uvijek užitek uzeti u ruke.

10. Kada smo već kod literature i općenito nekakvih informativnih kanala kao što je danas i You Tube koji nudi pregršt dokumentaraca o raznolikim temama, koje bi ste teme iz srednjeg vijeka naveli da su uvijek prisutne, pa rečeno i „izlizane“, a kojim se tema rijeko kada pridaje pažnja i za njih je čula samo mala skupina ljudi? Možemo li reći da su teme o kojima pučanstvo malo toga točno zna pa razvijaju teorije zavjere koje golicaju ljudsku maštu budući da su takve priče mnogo zanimljivije od stvarnih?

Križarski ratovi, templari i Vikinzi su teme za koje mi se čini da najviše „iskaču iz paštete“ kada je u pitanju srednji vijek. S druge strane pažnji uvijek izmiču one vrste tema oko kojih se ne može isplesti dobra i/ili dramatična priča, a u njih se mogu uvrstiti teme koje i na konceptualnoj razini progovaraju o prošloj stvarnosti, recimo kakva je narav srednjovjekovnih političkih tvorbi koje mi danas nazivamo državama.

11. U sklopu ovogodišnjih Dana Povijesti čija je krovna tema bila *Povijest na filmskoj vrpici* imali smo četiri radionice, dvije od njih su bile *Propaganda te Usporedba fikcije i realnosti*. Naši su izlagači mahom u prvoj radionici birali teme iz moderne povijesti, do su za drugu radionicu birali uglavnom teme vezane

We have partially referred to this in one of the previous questions: an exceptional effort that does not cause you hardship is required. Every new discovery, no matter how small, and every new insight actually turn the time dedicated to research into some kind of hobby.

It is difficult to determine which literature would be necessary. I think that it is more important to broaden knowledge by reading. With this in mind, I would not recommend, to a future medievalist, literature dealing with the Middle Ages as a starting point at all, but rather authors such as William H. McNeill, James C. Scott, or David Graeber. Only after that would I move on to the Middle Ages and pick up the works of Chris Wickham and Robert Bartlett, to name two authors whose books are always a pleasure to pick up.

10. Speaking of literature and some channels that are generally informative such as the ones on YouTube, which offers numerous documentaries on various topics, which Middle Ages related topics would you say are always present, or even “worn out”, and which do we rarely pay attention to, and which are known by only a small group of people? Because the public knows little about those topics, can we say that they develop conspiracy theories that tickle the human imagination, since they are much more interesting than the real ones?

When it comes to the Middle Ages, I find that the Crusades, the Templars and the Vikings are the topics which seem to be ‘a regular feature’. On the other hand, the types of topics around which a good and/or dramatic story cannot be created frequently slip under the radar. They can include topics which deal with past reality on a conceptual level, for example, the nature of medieval political formations which today we call states.

uz kultne filmove s antičkom radnjom (Aleksandar Veliki i Gladijator) uz moderne teme. Možete li Vi navesti neke primjere propagande iz srednjeg vijeka, te koji bi ste film srednjovjekovne tematike ocijenili kao odličan primjer prikaza tog perioda/događaja? Isto tako koji bi ste film ocijenili kao najgori prikaz određenog srednjovjekovnog perioda/događaja? Čisto da ga znamo preskočiti.

Propaganda ima vrlo neugodan prizvuk, i obično ju se veže uz totalitarne sustave 20. stoljeća, a kao blizak pojam, samo bez tog pejorativnog elementa, često joj se uz bok stavlja promidžba. Međutim, nisam siguran da se takva distinkcija može tako lako održati u govoru o konkretnim slučajevima, jer to uvijek podrazumijeva „biranje strane“ (u slučaju fašizma, nacizma i komunizma taj problem nije izražen, jer je riječ o ideologijama koje su posijale toliko smrti i razaranja da ih nitko normalan ne može braniti). S time na umu, svaka vrsta komunikacije koja ima za cilj druge uvjeriti u ispravnost onoga što se promovira i preko takvog uvjeravanja druge potiče na djelovanje spada u specifičan komunikacijski čin. Jedan specifičan izraz takve vrste komunikacije je difamacija, čiji su neki od najpoznatijih slučajeva u srednjem vijeku oni koji su se ticali procesa ukidanja templarskog reda početkom 14. stoljeća ili papinske kampanje difamiranja cara Fridrika II. u prvoj polovici 13. stoljeća.

Budući da nisam veliki filmofil nisam najbolja adresa za filmske preporuke, no film Ridleya Scotta *Posljednji dvoboj* (2021.) toplo preporučujem svima, jer ne samo da je izvrstan prikaz jednog srednjovjekovno fenomena, sudskog dvoboja, već otvara daleko dublje pitanje, a to je propitivanje same stvarnosti, odnosno onoga što se obično naziva „istina“ jer u fokus stavlja „istinu“ u srazu s perspektivama različitih aktera.

11. As a part of this year's History Days, whose central theme was History in Film, we held four workshops, two of which were Propaganda and Comparison of Fiction and Reality. In the first workshop, our speakers mainly chose topics from modern history, while in the second one they mainly chose topics related to cult films with ancient plots (Alexander the Great and Gladiator) but as well with modern themes. Can you name some examples of propaganda from the Middle Ages, and which film with a medieval theme would you rate as an excellent depiction of that period/event? In addition, which film would you rate as the worst depiction? So we know that we should skip it.

Propaganda bears very unpleasant connotations, and is usually associated with totalitarian systems of the 20th century. Still, as a related term without this pejorative element, it is often placed alongside with promotion. However, I am not sure whether such a distinction can be so easily maintained within the discussion of specific cases, because it always implies 'that a side needs to be chosen' (this problem is not prominent in the case of fascism, Nazism and communism because these ideologies have sown so much death and destruction that no normal person can defend them). With this in mind, any type of communication that aims to convince others what is being promoted is correct, and through such persuasion encourages others to act belongs to a specific communicative act. One specific expression for such a type of communication is defamation. Some of the most famous cases, in the Middle Ages, were those that concerned the process of abolishing the Templar order at the beginning of the 14th century, or the papal campaign to defame Emperor Frederick II in the first half of the 13th century. With me not being a big film enthusiast, I'm not the

12. Iako se bavimo prošlošću, nju sve bolje razumijemo kako su znanost i metode oko njenog istraživanja sa dolaskom novih vremena unapredovale. Novi su trendovi u historiografiji, ponajviše oni iz 50.-ih godina 20.st. su upoznali znanstvenike s društvenom poviješću, poviješću žena i marginalnih skupina te onim što nazivamo mikrohistorija. Vidimo li mikrohistoriju kao novi trend koji lagano osvaja znanstvene krugove ili se još daje prednost makrohistoriji zbog lakoće njenog stvaranja?

I jedan i drugi pristup imaju svoje izazove, pa ne bih rekao da je makrohistorijski pristup lakši. Karakteristika mikrohistorijskog pristupa jest da uvelike počiva na pogledu odozdo i na specifičnoj izvornoj građi. Riječ je naime najčešće o sudskim spisima, koji čak i za predmodernu razdoblje pružaju mogućnost da se čuje glas pripadnika nižih društvenih slojeva, a ne samo (obrazovane) elite. Naravno, za takve pojedince riječ je o vrlo neugodnim situacijama, ponekad i pogubnima za sam njihov život, a njihov glas pretačući se u pisanu riječ prolazio je i kroz filter učenog sudskog aparata, pa je i početni zanos oko mogućnosti poimanja svijeta kroz oči „malog čovjeka“ s vremenom pretvoren u jedno od važnih metodoloških pitanja mikrohistorijskog pristupa, koje se okretalo oko problema učenog, pravnčkog, „prevođenja“ iskaza svjedočka. Standard je pritom za sve vezano uz mikrohistorijski pristup postavio Carlo Ginzburg, naročito sa svojom knjigom *Sir i crvi*, pa je svima toplo preporučujem, jer je jedna od onih rijetkih knjiga koja je unatoč sada već „dubokoj“ starosti „dobro ostarjela“. Za sve one koje inače zanima mikrohistorijski pristup za početni uvid koristan je i *reader Mikrohistorija: pola stoljeća inovacija*, koji je izdan 2022.

best source for film recommendations, but I highly recommend Ridley Scott's *The Last Duel* (2021), not only because of its excellent depiction of a medieval phenomenon (trial by combat), but because it also raises a much deeper question, the question of reality itself, or what is usually called 'truth' because it deals with the 'truth' in conflicting perspectives of different characters.

12. Dealing with the past, we understand it much better as the science and methods of research advance with the arrival of new times. New trends in historiography, especially those from the 1950s, have acquainted scholars with social history, history of women and marginalized groups, as well with what we call microhistory. Do we see microhistory as a new trend that is slowly winning over scientific circles, or do we still prefer macrohistory because it can be easily created?

Both approaches have their own challenges. Due to that, I would not say that the macro-historical approach is easier. A distinctive element of the micro-historical approach is its big reliance on a bottom-up perspective and on specific source material. Typically, these are court documents which, even for the pre-modern period, hold the voices of lower-class members, and not just the (educated) elite. These situations are, of course, very unpleasant for those individuals, and sometimes even put their lives into danger. Their voice, when transformed into the written word, passes as well through the filter of the learned judicial apparatus. The initial enthusiasm about the possibility of understanding the world through the 'little man's' eyes eventually became one of the important methodological issues of the micro-historical approach, which revolved around the problem of the learned, legal, 'translation' of witness testimony.

13. Za kraj svakog intervjua pitamo Vas imate li kakav savjet za nas mlade povjesničare? Što nas čeka u budućnosti i treba li nam uopće povijest kada je svaki odgovor udaljen od nas samo nekoliko klikova?

Usprkos poznatoj izreci da je povijest *magistra vitae*, čini mi se da nema „gorih“ kandidata od povjesničara za predviđanje budućnosti. Ali čak i uz takvu ogradu pomalo dramatično ću ustvrditi da je najveća opasnost po cjelokupnu civilizaciju, a ne samo za povijest kao disciplinu, nastavak postojećeg trend koji bi doveo do toga da ljudi prestanu čitati i informacije počnu primati samo putem (sve kraćih i kraćih) videozapisa. Nažalost, problemi počinju tamo gdje bi ih se trebalo rješavati, a to je (osnovna) škola. Postupak je bio vrlo uobičajen: primjena lijeka koji je gori od bolesti. Paradigma cijelog pothvata promjene školstva postao je klik miša: kao i svaka druga jeftina reklama obećavalo se brzo rješavanje problema („klikom miša“) uvođenjem digitalnih sadržaja u škole. Ostaje ipak nada da ćemo biti jednako brzi – ako ne i brži – u izbacivanju ekrana iz škola kao i zemlje koje su nam donedavno bile uzor u uvođenju digitalnih sadržaja u razrede, a koje sve više uviđaju opasnosti „digitalne demencije“. S time na umu, duboko sam skeptičan prema viđenjima kako je odgovor na neko (povijesno) pitanje u današnje doba uvijek udaljen samo nekoliko klikova, jer to implicira da se znanje i obrazovanje svode na kviz-pitanja. Ne ulazeći u to kako se javno može idealizirati upravo ono („bubanje napamet“) što se s druge strane denuncira kao intelektualno natražnjaštvo i jedan od glavnih problema našeg školstva pa samim time i našeg društva, važno je istaknuti kako se povijest sasvim nezasluženo uporno među svim predmetima obično uzima kao ogledni primjer predmeta koji počiva na

The standard regarding the microhistorical approach was set by Carlo Ginzburg, most notably by the book *Cheese and Worms*, which I therefore highly recommend to everyone. It is one of those rare books that, despite its old age, has ‘aged well’. For all those who are otherwise interested in the microhistorical approach, the reader *Microhistory: Half a Century of Innovation*, published in 2022 is an useful initial insight.

13. At the end of any interview we ask whether you have any advice for us young historians. What does the future hold for us and do we even need history when each answer is just a few clicks away?

Despite the well-known saying that history is the *magistra vitae*, in my opinion there are no “worse” candidates for predicting the future than historians.

Despite such an obstacle I will argue, somewhat dramatically, that the greatest danger to the entire civilization, not just to history as a discipline, is this current trend of people stopping reading and only receiving information through videos (which are shorter and shorter). Unfortunately, the problem begins where it should be solved - in (primary) school. The procedure used to be common: a remedy worse than the disease. The paradigm of the entire endeavor of changes within the education system turned into a click of the mouse: like any other cheap advertisement, by introducing digital content into schools it promised a quick solution (‘with a click of the mouse’). However, there is a hope that we will be as fast – if not faster – in the removal of screens from schools like the countries which, until recently, were our role models regarding the introduction of digital content in the classroom, and which are increasingly recognizing the dangers of ‘digital dementia’.

„bubanju napamet“, ili kad se ustvrdi kako se „bubaju činjenice“. Snaga povijesti u današnje je doba upravo ta da mladoj osobi pruža mogućnost stjecanja one vrste znanja i kritičkog razmišljanja uz pomoć kojih može vidjeti što je činjenica, a što je tek (neprovjerena, lažna itd.) informacija. Povijest jednako tako pruža mogućnost stjecanja vještine argumentiranja, a povrh toga zbog svoje narativne naravi kroz tu se argumentaciju oblikuju priče, što povijesti daje zapravo jednu privilegiranu poziciju u odnosu na mnogo drugih humansitičkih i društvenih disciplina.

With that in mind, I am deeply skeptical of the view that, nowadays, the answer to a (historical) question is always just a few clicks away, due to the implication that knowledge and education are reduced to quiz questions.

Without going into how one can publicly idealize the idea of ('cramming') which is, on the other hand, denounced as intellectual backwardness and as one of the main problems of our education system and of our society as well, it is important to point out that history is, quite undeservedly, persistently regarded, among all subjects, as a prime example that depends on 'cramming', or as an example of someone 'stuffing their brain with information'. Nowadays, the power of history lies in the fact that it provides a young person with the opportunity to acquire the kind of knowledge and critical thinking that allows them to see what is fact and what is just an (unverified, false, etc.) information. History provides the opportunity to acquire debating skills as well. Moreover, due to its narrative character, stories are shaped through argumentation, which actually gives history a privileged position compared to many other humanities and social sciences.