

## **BETWEEN CROATIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY AND INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY NETWORKS: TWO DECADES OF THE SOCIETY FOR CROATIAN ECONOMIC HISTORY AND ECOHISTORY/ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY (2005–2025)**

The institutionalization of new historiographical approaches typically depends on the creation of organizational frameworks that enable sustained scholarly communication, publication, and the circulation of knowledge. In Croatia, environmental history began to develop more systematically in the early twenty-first century. An important role in that process was played by the Society for Croatian Economic History and Ecohistory/Environmental History, founded on 1 July 2005 at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb.

From the outset, the Society was conceived not merely as a professional association but as a platform for the development of environmental history—then still only weakly institutionalized in Croatian historiography—as well as for the revitalization of economic history. A crucial step in this direction was the launch, in the same year, of the journal *Economic and Ecohistory*. The first issue appeared in 2005 in cooperation with the publishing house Meridijani, with the participation of the international research project *Triplex Confinium* and the Economic History Section of the Croatian National Committee for Historical Sciences. From the beginning, the Society thus combined organizational activity with the creation of a lasting scholarly infrastructure.

An important component of its early work was the popularization of environmental history. Public lectures were organized in Koprivnica, Zagreb, and other towns, while members of the Society also contributed to the preparation of teaching materials for primary schools and participated in activities related to Earth Day. These initiatives indicate that environmental history was understood not only as an academic field but also as a form of publicly engaged scholarship.

By 2011, the Society had consolidated its activities and established a recognizable position within Croatian historiography. A series of scholarly conferences addressed various aspects of environmental and regional history, including “The Sava River and Zagreb” (2009), “Humanism and the Renaissance in Podravina” (2009), and “The Industrialization of Koprivnica and the Podravina Region” (2011). At the same time, publishing activities were strengthened, most notably through the edited volume *Ecohistory of the Drava River* (2011). These developments indicate that the Society had moved beyond its initial phase and become a stable scholarly actor.

The period between 2011 and 2013 was marked by further institutional consolidation and by a shift towards digital dissemination. The launch of the Society’s website and the inclusion of the journal on the Hrčak portal significantly increased the accessibility and visibility of its publications. International scholarly conferences continued to be organized, among them the conference “The Environmental History of the Mura–Drava Regional Park Area” (2012). At the same time, publishing activities intensified, including the monograph *Border Societies and the Environment* (2012), which further strengthened the Society’s profile within Croatian historiography.

By the mid-2010s, the Society had reached a level of institutional maturity. The journal continued to appear regularly, including thematic issues devoted to the Mura River, the history of environmental movements, and sustainability. In 2014, the Society co-organized an international conference on the history of environmental movements and ecological thought in Zagreb, in cooperation with the Ivo Pilar Institute of Social Sciences. It also participated in teaching activities in collaboration with Arizona State University, reflecting an increasing degree of international academic integration.

The period after 2015 was characterized by consolidation combined with a more pronounced international orientation. The Society continued to organize scholarly conferences, including “Lake Šoderica in the Past, Present, and Future” (2015) and an international conference on the Drava River as a link between regions (2016), which brought together participants from several Central European countries. A particularly important moment was the conference “The Environmental History of the Drava River” (2019), which combined scholarly presentations with fieldwork and interdisciplinary approaches. In this context, the Society strengthened its cooperation with the Ecohistorical Laboratory at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb, indicating a gradual shift toward more integrated and collaborative research frameworks.

At the same time, publishing activities were maintained and expanded. Selected issues of the journal *Economic and Ecohistory* were published in English, increasing its international accessibility. The journal also achieved a higher level of recognition within the Croatian academic system, which further confirmed its relevance as a platform for interdisciplinary research in economic and environmental history.

The Society's work was significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as by the earthquakes in the Zagreb and Petrinja regions in 2020. Although many activities had to be reduced, the Society managed to maintain the continuity of its core functions, particularly through the publication of the journal and edited volumes. An important feature of this period was thematic adaptation: issues such as pandemics, climate change, and natural disasters became more prominent in both scholarly and public activities. The increased use of online formats, including virtual meetings and roundtables, contributed to a gradual transition toward hybrid forms of scholarly communication.

In 2021, the Society co-organized an online roundtable on the state and prospects of environmental history in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Slovenia, in cooperation with the European Society for Environmental History and other partners. The contributions from this event were later published in thematic issues of the journal *Economic and Ecohistory*. This initiative illustrates the Society's continued engagement with regional scholarly networks and its role as a forum for exchange within Southeast and Central Europe. Cooperation with Slovenian scholars was also renewed through a series of guest lectures, continuing a collaboration that dates back to the mid-2000s.

After the pandemic, the Society resumed a broader range of activities. In 2023, it co-organized the international summer school *Environmental History and Historical Ecology of the Dinaric Karst* in Slovenia and hosted lectures by leading scholars, including Drago Roksanđić. In this period, the Society operated simultaneously as a publisher, organizer of scholarly events, partner in international teaching initiatives, and a forum for reflection on the development of the discipline. In 2024, the Society further expanded its activities by strengthening the connection between economic history, environmental history, and public history. It co-organized the conference "Academician Dragutin Feletar: Life and Work" in Koprivnica and the "Day of Economic History" at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb, marking the publication of the volume *Economic Reality is the Red Thread of History: Croatian Historiography and Economic History*. These initiatives demonstrate a renewed emphasis on economic history alongside environmental history. In 2025, the Society organized the "Day of Economic History 2025" on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the death of the economic historian Igor Karaman. At the same time, it entered a new phase of development by participating as a partner in the Interreg EU project *Preventing Drought Risks by Making Resilient Communities in the Adriatic-Ionian Region*. This marks a significant step toward involvement in international research and development projects and indicates a gradual shift from a traditional scholarly society toward a more project-oriented model of operation.

Over the two decades from 2005 to 2025, the Society for Croatian Economic History and Ecohistory/Environmental History passed through several distinct phases. In its initial phase (2005–2008), it established its organizational foundations, launched a journal, and developed a public profile. In the second phase (2009–2015), it consolidated its activities as an organizer of conferences and a publisher, becoming an important actor within Croatian historiography. In the third phase (after 2015), it strengthened its international connections, deepened its cooperation with academic institutions, and expanded its activities within regional and global scholarly networks. The pandemic period introduced a temporary slowdown, but also accelerated digital transformation and thematic adaptation. Within Croatian historiography, the Society can be understood as one of the key institutional platforms for the development of environmental history and an important forum for connecting economic history, environmental history, regional history, and public history. Its long-term continuity, the sustained publication of the journal *Economic and Ecohistory*, and its ability to adapt to changing scholarly and social contexts make it one of the relatively rare specialized historiographical associations in Croatia that has maintained both a stable domestic presence and a growing international profile over two decades.

Hrvoje PETRIĆ

*Economic- and Ecohistory*

*Ekonomska i ekohistorija*

Journal for Economic History and Environmental History

Časopis za gospodarsku povijest i povijest okoliša

---

Topic / Tema broja

Environmental Histories of Southern Central  
Europe: State of the Field Perspectives  
(Hungary, Croatia and Slovenia)

*Povijesti okoliša južnog dijela srednje Europe: Pregledi stanja  
istraživanja (Mađarska, Hrvatska i Slovenija)*

Volume XXI / Number 21

Zagreb – Samobor 2025

ISSN 1845-5867

UDK 33 + 9 + 504.3

**Publishers / Nakladnici:**

Društvo za hrvatsku ekonomsku povijest i ekohistoriju  
*Society for Croatian Economic History and Environmental History*  
Ivana Lučića 3, HR – 10000 Zagreb  
[sites.google.com/site/ekoekohist/](http://sites.google.com/site/ekoekohist/)

Izdavačka kuća Meridijani  
p.p. 132, 10430 Samobor  
tel.: 01/33-62-367, faks: 01/33-60-321  
e-mail: [meridijani@meridijani.com](mailto:meridijani@meridijani.com)  
[www.meridijani.com](http://www.meridijani.com)

**Co-publisher / Sunakladnik:** Ekohistorijski laboratorij Centra za inovativne studije Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu Ivana Lučića 3, 10000 Zagreb, Hrvatska [www.ffzg.unizg.hr](http://www.ffzg.unizg.hr); <http://ckhis.ffzg.unizg.hr/>

**Editor-in-chief / Glavni i odgovorni urednik:**

Hrvoje Petrić

**Guest Co-Editor / Gost su-urednik:**

Žiga Zwitter

**Editorial Staff / Uredništvo:**

Željko Holjevac, Mira Kolar-Dimitrijević, Dubravka Mlinarić, Nenad Moačanin, Hrvoje Petrić, Drago Roksandić, Mirela Slukan Altić, Ivica Šute, Žiga Zwitter

**International Editorial Board / Međunarodno uredničko vijeće:**

Drago Roksandić – president/predsjednik (*Zagreb*), Daniel Barić (*Sorbonne-Paris, Francuska*), Marija Benić Penava (*Dubrovnik*), Slaven Bertoša (*Pula*), Zrinka Blažević (*Zagreb*), Tatjana Buklijaš (*Auckland, New Zealand*), Ljiljana Dobrovšak (*Zagreb*), Goran Đurđević, Josip Faričić (*Zadar*), Borna Fürst Bjeliš (*Zagreb*), Boris Golec (*Ljubljana, Slovenija*), Hrvoje Gračanin (*Zagreb*), Paul Hirt (*Tempe, SAD*), Andrej Hozjan (*Maribor, Slovenija*), Egidio Ivetić (*Padova, Italija*), Silvije Jerčinović (*Križevci*), Isao Koshimura (*Tokio, Japan*), Marino Manin (*Zagreb*), Christof Mauch (*München, Njemačka*), Kristina Milković (*Zagreb*), Ivan Mirnik (*Zagreb*), Mirjana Morosini Dominick (*Washington D.C., SAD*), Géza Pálffy (*Budimpešta, Mađarska*), Daniel Patafta (*Zagreb*), Hrvoje Petrić (*Zagreb*), Lajos Rácz (*Szeged, Mađarska*), Gordan Ravančić (*Zagreb*), Marko Šarić (*Zagreb*), Mladen Tomorad (*Zagreb*), Milan Vrbanus (*Slavonski Brod, Zagreb*), Frank Zelko (*Honolulu, SAD*), Žiga Zwitter (*Ljubljana, Slovenija*) Zlata Živaković Kerže (*Osijek*), Matija Zorn (*Ljubljana*), Ivana Žebec Šilj (*Zagreb*)

**Article's UDC markups / UDK oznake članaka:**

Ivica Zvonar

**Layout / Prijelom:**

Saša Bogadi

**Journal directors / Za nakladnike:**

Petra Somek, Hrvoje Petrić, Domagoj Tončinić

ISSN 1849-0190 (Online) ISSN 1845-5867 (Tisak)

**Print by / Tisak:**

Bogadigrafika, Koprivnica 2025.

**Mailing addresses / Adresa uredništva:**

Hrvoje Petrić (editor/urednik)  
Odsjek za povijest, Filozofski fakultet  
Ivana Lučića 3, HR-10000 Zagreb  
e-mail: [hrvoje.petric@ffzg.hr](mailto:hrvoje.petric@ffzg.hr)  
ili Vinka Vošickog 5, HR-48000 Koprivnica

**Cover / Na naslovnici:**

Plan for reinforcing the banks of the Savinja in the district of Novo Celje, 1832.

Ekonomsku i ekohistoriju referiraju:

CAB Abstracts

HISTORICAL ABSTRACTS, ABC CLIO Library, Santa Barbara, California, USA

AMERICA: HISTORY AND LIFE, Washington, USA

JOURNAL OF ECONOMIC LITERATURE (JEL), Pittsburgh, USA

CENTRAL AND EASTERN ONLINE LIBRARY, Frankfurt am Main, Deutschland

ECONLIT – AMERICAN ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION, Nashville, USA