

PRINCE FROM BOJNA

A New Chapter of Croatian History

Archaeological site Bojna – Brekinjova Kosa is located in the western part of Banovina (City of Glina area, Sisak-Moslavina County). Because of stone extraction from the *Schwarzl* quarry, companies *Pisa Trade* and *Contarini* carried out archaeological rescue excavation in 2011 and 2015 the hillfort site (352 meters above sea level) located in a strategic position allowing the control of the route between Pounje and Topusko. At the time, some extremely valuable early-medieval finds were found.

Based on valorisation by experts from the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb, Sisak City Museum, Department of History and Department of Archaeology at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb, Institute for Anthropological Research and the Faculty of Textile Technology in Zagreb (also confirmed by the Croatian Council for Cultural Heritage), as well as the immediate threat to the site, systematic archaeological excavation, funded by the Croatian Ministry of Culture, started in 2016. Excavation is being conducted by the Croatian Conservation Institute and coordinated by the Conservation Department in Sisak.

The remains of settlements dating back to the Eneolithic period (Balaton-Lasinya and Vučedol culture), Late Bronze and late Iron Age, as well as finds from the early Middle Ages, including 37 skeletal graves, were found on the multi-layered site (11,380 m²) were excavated by 2018) situated on two naturally connected plains (total area of about 50,000 m²).

Due to extreme acidity of the soil, skeletal remains were poorly preserved or completely destroyed. However, even this modest amount of bio-archaeological remains has resulted in significant data on the sex of the deceased, their age, nutrition and possible antemortem traumas. The DNA analysis will provide data for reconstruction to determine genetic family relationships and their ancestry.

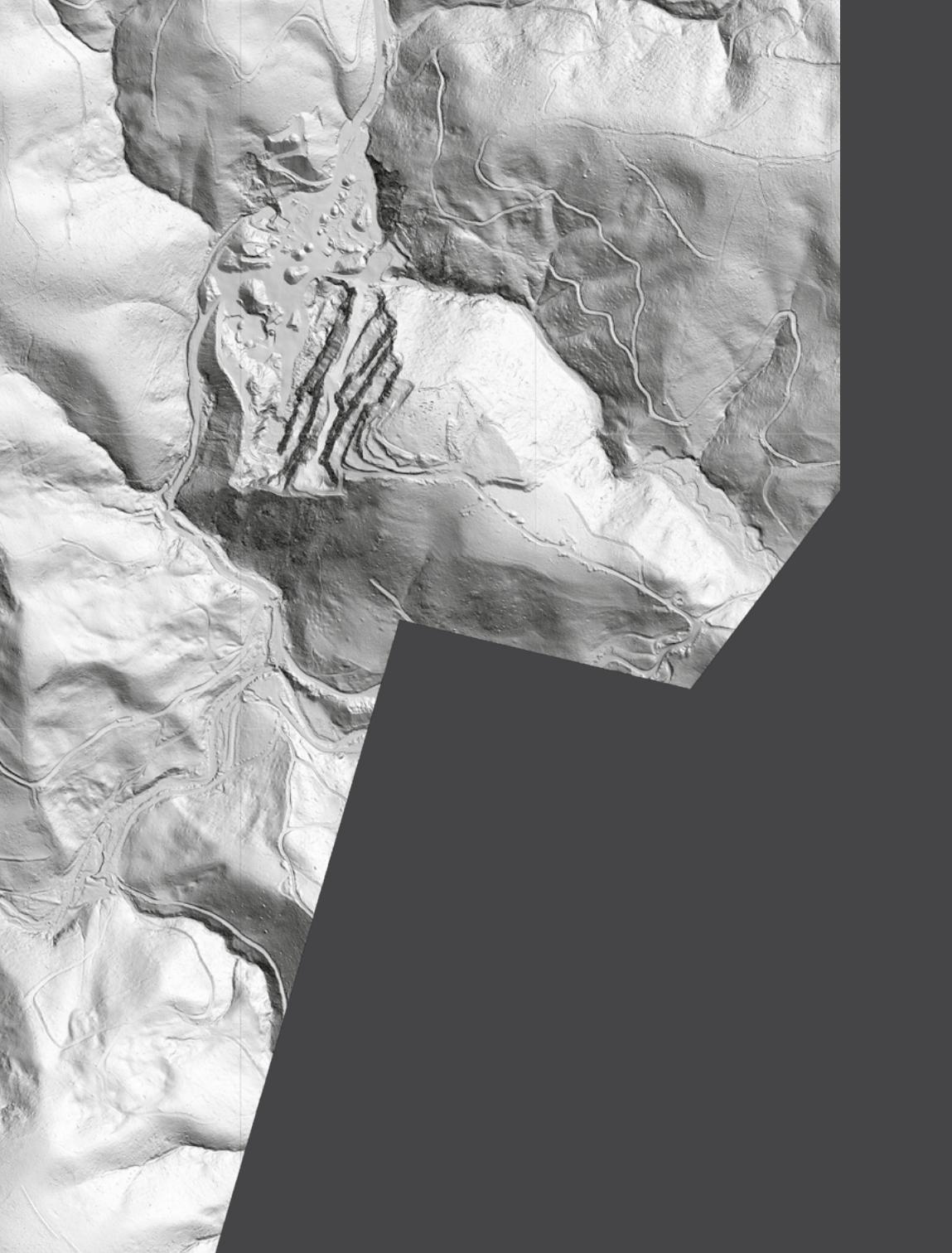
Among the richly equipped graves, the grave of the prince stands out with lavish equipment (cast spur

set made in a Frankish workshop and decorated with notched and *niello* motifs, rock crystal pendant, solidus of Constantine V, clothes with gold threads) similar to the one found in the grave of his contemporary from Biskupija near Knin.

In order to return the original splendour to valuable findings from this and other excavated graves, and to present them to the public, conservation and restoration was carried out. During the complex and long conservation and restoration process, various archaeometric research was carried out to determine the composition of materials as well as technological processes used in their production.

Archaeological site of Bojna – Brekinjova Kosa is extremely important to fully understand the period from the 7th to the 9th century, especially since our knowledge of the region is quite scarce. The Frankish sword and the richly equipped grave in which the deceased was buried, with similar equipment like his contemporary in Biskupija near Knin, confirm the connections between the wider Sisak region and central Croatia. Almost identical objects undoubtedly tell us that the deceased belonged to the same social elite established at the end of the 8th and early 9th century to create the Croatian Dukedom in the former Roman province of Dalmatia. Due to a lack of historical texts about this process, such archaeological finds provide valuable data. Based on the finds from the site Bojna

– Brekinjova Kosa, today we can assume with greater certainty that the authority of the Croatian prince reached the Sisak region. Apart from the importance for the political history of early Croatia, the whole complex provides us with a rare insight into the appearance and everyday life of the local community located inside and around the fortified site. Further research, especially on the wider area of the settlement, will provide an even better insight into the type of settlement and its destiny in the turbulent period of the so-called Dark ages that we still know very little about. (N. Budak)



KNEZ IZ BOJNE

Novo poglavlje hrvatske povijesti



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Arheološko nalazište Bojna – Brekinjova Kosa smješteno je u zapadnom dijelu Banovine (područje Grada Gline, Sisačko-moslavčka županija). Na tom visinskom nalazištu (352 mnv), smještenom na strateškom položaju koji je omogućavao nadzor prometa između Pounja i Topuskog, tvrtke *Pisa Trade* i *Contarini* provele su 2011. i 2015. godine zaštitna arheološka istraživanja, zbog eksploracije kamenoloma investitora *Schwarzl*. Tada su pronađeni i iznimno vrijedni ranosrednjovjekovni nalazi. S obzirom na valorizaciju, kojoj su pridonijeli stručnjaci iz Arheološkog muzeja u Zagrebu, Gradskog muzeja u Sisku, Odsjeka za povijest i Odsjeka za arheologiju Filozofskog fakulteta u Zagrebu, Instituta za antropologiju te Tekstilno-tehnološkog fakulteta u Zagrebu (koju je potvrdilo i Hrvatsko vijeće za kulturna dobra), te na iznimnu ugroženost nalazišta, 2016. godine počelo je sustavno arheološko istraživanje financirano sredstvima Ministarstva kulture RH, koje vodi Hrvatski restauratorski zavod i koordinira Konzervatorski odjel u Sisku.

Kako bi se vratio izvorni sjaj vrijednim nalazima te omogućilo njihovo predstavljanje široj javnosti, provedena je konzervatorsko-restauratorska obrada. Tijekom složenih i dugotrajnih konzervatorsko-restauratorskih postupaka obavljena su i brojna arheometrijska istraživanja, kojima je određen sastav materijala te su rekonstruirani tehnološki procesi njihove izrade.

Arheološko nalazište Bojna – Brekinjova Kosa od izuzetne je važnosti za poznavanje razdoblja od 7. do 9. stoljeća, pogotovo u krajevinama o kojima smo dosad znali vrlo malo. Nalazi franačkog mača i luksuznoga groba u kojem je pokojnik bio pokopan s istom opremom kao i njegov suvremenik u Biskupiji kod Knina, govore o povezanosti šire regije Siska s ondašnjom središnjom Hrvatskom. Gotovo identični predmeti nedvojbeno govore o pripadnosti obojice pokojnika istom elitnom sloju koji se uzdigao potkraj 8. i početkom 9. stoljeća da bi na velikom dijelu nekadašnje antičke Dalmacije stvorio hrvatsku kneževinu. Zbog toga što raspolazemo s vrlo malo povijesnih tekstova koji bi nam o tom procesu pružili dostatne obavijesti, takvi nam arheološki nalazi pružaju dragocjene informacije. Zahvaljujući nalazima na Bojni – Brekinjovoj Kosi, danas možemo s većom sigurnošću tvrditi da se vlast hrvatskoga kneza pružala do okolice Siska.

No osim važnosti za političku povijest rane Hrvatske, cijeli kompleks nalazišta daje nam rijetku sliku o izgledu i životu lokalne zajednice smještene unutar i oko utvrđenoga lokaliteta. Daljnja istraživanja, pogotovo na širem arealu podgrađa, mogući će nam još bolji uvid u karakter toga naselja i njegovu sudbinu u turbulentnim vremenima tzv. mračnih stoljeća o kojima još uvijek znamo premalo. (N. Budak)

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