13th Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists (EAA)
Zadar, Croatia, from 18th to 23rd September, 2007.

info:

Thematic block:
Archaeology and the material culture,

**Early medieval period from Pannonia to Adriatic**

Session organizers:
mr.sc.Luka Bekić, Croatian Conservation Institute, Zagreb, Croatia
prof.ddr.Mitja Guštin, Institute for Mediterranean Heritage, Piran, Slovenia

Session proposal:
The aim of this session is to shed more light on complicated aspects of a Great Migration and early medieval period in areas of Panonnia and Adriatic.

Many nations crossed the panonnian plain from 4th to 10th century in search for a better life in the west. Some of them turned southwards, and settled near the Adriatic coast.

Although neighboring, these two areas are in fact very different considering the topographic and climatic conditions. Our aim is to bring forward some new investigations which could elaborate on aspects of life in the fertile panonnian plain and later their transition to life in mountainous areas close to Adriatic. Who controlled the areas on their arrival, and how did newcomers adapt to such a great change.

We hope to gather scholars with new results which could help us understand connections, similarities, differences and adaptations of these peoples towards new environments.
All papers shall be published till end of 2007.

**Papers:**

dr.sc.Tajana Sekelj Ivančan
mr.sc.Tatjana Tkalčec
Institute of Archaeology, Zagreb, Croatia.

**MEDIEVAL SETTLEMENTS IN THE VIROVITICA REGION OF THE DRAVA RIVER BASIN IN THE PERIOD FROM THE 7TH TO THE 11TH CENTURIES**

In the paper the results of archaeological research of the two sites - Virovitica-Đota and Virovitica-Kiškorija-jug, excavated on the place of the western Virovitica ring-road, are presented. These locations, positioned on elevated terraces in the Drava River Valley, were continuously settled from the Late Bronze Age, Roman Times to the Early Middle Ages. Archaeological excavations gave data for traces of mediaeval dwelling houses, hearths and other features. These objects, as well as small finds (mostly finds of pottery) are dated on the site of Đota in the period from the 7th to the 8th centuries and later in the 11th century, while the nearby settlement on the site of Kiškorija-jug dates from the second half of 8th to the run-up to the 10th century. The
finds are going to be compared with the contemporaneous settlements known from the archaeological excavations and from the field surveys of the surrounding area. The results of the research represent a contribution to our knowledge of human habitation in the Northern Croatia, especially in the region of the fertile Drava River plain.

Majda Predovan
Museum Nin, Croatia.

ALTAR SCREEN PARTS OF THE HOLY CROSS CHURCH FROM NIN, CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHURCH DATING

This article analyses two partly reconstructed plutei, parts of the altar screen of the Church of the Holy Cross from Nin. According to the authoress, plutei are important component for disquisition of the church dating establishment. Parts of plutei are presented in the Museum of Nin and they are part of the permanent museum exposition.

Parts of the altar screen pluteus, which are being analyzed, first were published by don Luka Jelić in 1911. Archaeological excavations of the Church of the Holy Cross and its surrounding, which were done by don Luka Jelić (he was professor of theology in Zadar from 1894. to 1912., whose research and interest were oriented towards Nin) from 1907. to 1910., have questionable scientific value and have not had adequate technical documentation. Reconsidering results of Jelić's excavations, including contemporary scientific achievements, the authoress is trying to clarify in this exposition.

Based on the comparison method of the composition and style decoration characteristic, reconstructed plutei chronologically-stylish have been related to the first half of the 9th century, or more likely, the middle of the 9th century (the age of prince Trpimir from 845. to 864.)

mr.sc.Karla Gusar
University of Zadar, Department of Archeology, Zadar, Croatia.

EARLY MEDIEVAL POTTERY FROM KRNEZA

Archaeological sites from the Early Medieval period are quite numerous in the region of north Dalmatia and especially in the hinterland of Zadar. In this period Croats inhabited this area, that was once part of Roman province of Dalmatia and archaeological evidences of these changes in the population structure are to be found in different locations all over this region.

Explored sites of Early Middle Ages in north Dalmatia mainly belong to cemeteries, but some settlements are also confirmed. One of the latest archaeological excavations started in 2007. in the village of Krneza near Žadar, at a site called Jokina glavica. It is a burial mound with finds from Early Medieval period where significant amount of pottery was found. Even though these vessels belong to the pottery group that in Croatia still isn't thoroughly explored, comparisons can be found in different sites in Dalmatia, as well as ones found in the other parts of Croatia and Eastern Europe.
This pottery collection also presents small, but important part that will hopefully contribute to better understanding of everyday life, culture and religion of Early Middle Ages in Croatia.

Andrej Preložnik  
Institute for Mediterranean Heritage, Science and Research Centre, University of Primorska, Piran, Slovenia  
Dr. Dragan Božič  
Institute of Archaeology, Scientific Research Centre of The Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Ljubljana, Slovenia

BIZANTINE FIBULA WITH HARIS FROM NIN - ORIGIN AND MEANING

On coast of Ždrijac, grave place of Nin community from prehistory till middle age, very interesting and for this site unique fibula was found. It is made from silver sheet in the shape of shallow box with sunken gilded relief plate in the centre. On it is depicted relief image of a woman with inscription XA PIC (HARIS). Fibula was classified between Liburnian finds and interpreted as Hellenistic product or influence from 2nd to 1st century BC, but depiction, inscription and shape clearly shows its origin in Byzantine culture.

There are several analogies, which illustrate iconography and meaning of central motif. We can find it on quality products of Byzantine goldsmith, as well as on mass scale produced talismans. Inscription HARIS is frequent prayer for god’s grace, and endow objects, on which it is written - mostly marital jewelry - with a protective character. On its basis we can interpret depiction on Nin fibula as personification of Grace.

Fibula belongs by its shape in group of round box-like brooches, typical for Pannonian Keszthely culture, but known also from Albania and Calabria. Because of meaning and style of their motives as well as their Greek inscriptions, it is obvious, that these objects have Byzantine roots. They came in Pannonia probably from Byzantine centers like lader in Dalmatia or Sirmium on Balkans. In Pannonia, they were used and further developed – judging after distinctive Christian themes of both, imperial and biblical origin – at least in beginning by members of Christian and Romanized community.

Andrej Pleterski, Ph.D., Associate Professor  
Benjamin Štular, Ph.D.  
Institute of Archaeology, Scientific Research Centre of The Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Ljubljana, Slovenia

EARLY MEDIEVAL BETWEEN PANNONIA AND ADRIATIC. MAKING SENSE OF LANDSCAPE.

The use of place names for reconstructing the Early Medieval physical landscape has a long and honoured tradition. It is possible and quite straightforward in cases, where the creation of these place names is based on mental charts of the environment. In some Slovenian case studies one can reconstruct the physical landscape with surprising details as regards the field systems, the use of pasture land and forest etc.
Using archaeological data, GIS, oral tradition and place names (etymology and charting) and historical cadastral maps we are able to reconstruct several aspects of the sacred landscape. The latter can be described, in the words of the session organizers, as an example of both contingent and structured built space. Every piece of land had its own sacred meaning. The dichotomy sacred - profane did not exist. We can, however, speak of places where the sacred meaning was more accentuated. Therefore, sacred landscape was a matter of perception and not the actual physical state, contingent and not structured built space. Every landscape and all of the landscape was a sacred landscape. In search of the sacred landscape one is not searching for a specific place but rather the perception of the researched people. Changing the viewpoint changes the sacredness of the landscape. In our case study this change occurred through the processes of Christianization and feudalization. However, the change was so slow and gradual that the ancient sacred landscape was still in place in the 17th c. and some aspects have been preserved until today.

The elements of structured built spaces are the organization of settlements and cemeteries, field systems and path networks. We have reconstructed several such sacred landscapes in Slovenia, Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany and Ireland. Combining time sensitive archaeological data with spatially sensitive oral traditions enables us to pinpoint the time and place. In our research we have also started to observe temporal dynamics.

Combining the above listed elements, the physical landscape, the sacred landscape and temporal dynamics offers a good insight into the social processes that formed and people who used the landscape. One could say that these people lived the landscape. Through that one can observe their adaptation on new landscape upon arrival. All aspects of their lives were intertwined in single belief system. One of the names for this belief system that we know from Slovenian oral tradition is Tročan (derived from the word "tri", the number three).

We believe that the methodology and the results are best shown in the following two case studies. The first deals with the micro region of Bled and the second with the village Police. In the second part of the presentation we will briefly show some other case studies.

Dr. Orsolya Heinrich-Tamaska
Geisteswissenschaftliches Zentrum Kultur und Geschichte Ostmitteleuropas, Leipzig

NEW INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCHES IN KESZTHELY-FENÉKPUSZTA, PANNONIA

In Keszthely-Fenékpuszta the continuity of occupation may be followed from the Late Antiquity all the way to the early medieval period. Sixth- to seventh-century assemblages are often described as the so-called Keszthely-culture with Christian traditions. Such a remarkable continuity raises a number of fundamental questions. How long was the Roman infrastructure maintained after the evacuation of the province? What was the military and strategic function of the castellum in post-Roman times? What role was given to the site by the changing ruler? Substantial changes were made to the landscape by modifying the water level of Lake Balaton to influence the agricultural profile of the area. An interdisciplinary, German-Hungarian joint project in now under way at this site and research in a number of neighboring
disciplines is expected to produce significant results for what appears to be an intensive study of the late antique and early medieval history of the region of Pannonia.

dr. Judit Kvassay
Göcseji Museum Zalaegerszeg, Hungary

NEW 9TH AND 10-11TH CENTURY SETTLEMENTS IN THE REGION OF NAGYKANIZSA (ZALA COUNTY, HUNGARY)

The Directorate of the Museums of Zala County (Hungary) accomplished between 2003 and 2007 excavations preceding the construction of the M7 motorway in the surroundings of Nagykanizsa. Within the frames of these works 3 sites provided settlement objects from the 9th and 3 sites from the 10-11th century. The variously shaped pits and the ovens at Nagyrécse-Bakónaki-patak revealed typical potsherds and seed-drying sheets of the first half of the 9th century. Similar settlements objects and ceramic finds came to light at Galambok-Hársas-erdő site. The settlement fragment unearthed at Nagyrécse-Baráka-dűlő can be dated to the second half of the 9th century by an iron spur and by mould used to prepare earring-pendants. These lately excavated sites underline that Nagykanizsa and its surroundings had become relatively dense populated in the course of the Carolingian Period in the 9th century. A quite new feature is the discovery of 10-11th century sporadic settlements in the Nagykanizsa region. Similar phenomenon has earlier been registered only in the northern part of Zala County.

prof.dr.sc.Mitja Guštin
Institute for Mediterranean Heritage, Science and Research Centre Koper, University of Primorska, Slovenia

ZATAK, FIELD BY THE RIVER LEDAVA

In the year 2005, on the Zatak site, near the city Lendava, unfortified village has been discovered. Its architecture and inventory represents period from 10th to 15th century very good. During archaeological excavations at the new highway route in Hungary, similar material has been found between Nagykanisza and Tornyiszentmiklős. The material links this area with a wider river Ledave/Lendva area in a very clear settling pattern. Types of housing, pottery and various sacral edifices in the river Ledava and the Zala county areas, let us connect them with the times of Arpadović ruling house (895 - 1301). A line of settlements around Lendava gives quality data for understanding the genesis of this area. Material evidence of settlement features and small finds witness the link between settling and areas which in later times becomes a part of Hungarian border - defense zone Gyepülve.

mr.sc.Luka Bekić
COMPARISON OF 8TH CENTURY POTTERY FROM BLIZNA AND ŠARNJAK NEAR VARAŽDIN, CROATIA.

Blizna and Šarnjak are two multilayer archaeological sites discovered on fertile plains south of river Plitvica and Drava, in northwest Croatia. There are some more sites like them in nearby locations north of river Plitvica, like Pod lipom, Brezje and Zaves. All of them are up to three hours walking away from each other, so we can presume some interaction between them if they were indeed settled at the same time. Both Blizna and Šarnjak have early medieval strata, consisting of pit-dwellings and middens. Some of the early medieval features were lately explored, and dated with AMS c-14 analysis. This paper will deal with pottery found on these two sites, especially with two pits dated in first half of 8th century. Pottery sherds from these two pits are quite different considering technique and materials used, so this problem needs some attention.

prof.dr.dc. Marek Dulinicz  
Polish Academy of Science, Poland

THE SLAVS OF 6th TO 7th CENTURY - ONE DISMEMBERED NATION

summary expected

mag.dr. Georg Tiefengraber  
Graz, Austria  
summary expected

Aleksandra Bugar  
Museum of town Zagreb, Croatia

MEDIEVAL SETTLEMENT NEAR BY VELIKA GORICA - SITE ŠEPKOVČICA

This paper deals with medieval horizon explored in multi-layered locality of Šepkovčica near by Velika Gorica during conservation archeological excavations on the route of the future highway Zagreb - Sisak, which took place from November 2006 to July 2007. Turopolje, the lowland area south of Zagreb, is an archeologically rich area where traces of various types of settlements have been found - ranging from prehistoric periods, exceptionally abundant Ancient Roman times to the period of Middle Ages and the Modern Age. Similar situation can be found in the site of Šepkovčica which covers an area of over 50 000 m², where we can see the prehistoric settlement layer (Lasinja Culture), the cemetery from the roman period - (Noric-Pannonian grave mound), the ancient settlement layer, the remains of the road and architecture as well as the medieval settlement which existed in the 11th century (confirmed by AMS c14 analysis, but also with the archeological finds).
Since the research is still in progress and its results have not been fully analyzed yet, this paper mainly focuses on the ground-plan disposition of the archeological units and it aims to interpret the spatial relations within a settlement. The explored medieval settlement covers an area of more than 15 000 m² and it contains, so fare, more then 600 settlement objects, (mostly bases for columns, a few semi dwelling pits, numerous waste holes of different sizes, a few smaller fire places, draw well…). What we are dealing with here is a rural settlement of the open type which was built on an eolian sandy foundation. It is placed on a slightly raised terrace of river Sava, probably with stream flows on the surface and in the area which was once rich with oak forest. The soil in the waste holes are very dark and it contains a large amount of animal bones and sherds of pottery decorated with carved wavy or horizontal lines. In addition to that, 2 annulets with S-loop have been found as well as the fragment of the cast grape-shaped earring, which is typical of the 11 century repertoire.

That old settlement in the locality of Šepkovčica had a view overlooking medieval settlement at Kaptol in Zagreb with the old pre-Tatar cathedral and it probably gravitated to the center of diocese and market town, which is less than 20 km by air. The greatest benefit of the “large scale” archeology on the highways, is the overall view of the spatial organization of settlement and at the same time it expands the archeological knowledge of medieval settlements in the south of Pannonia.