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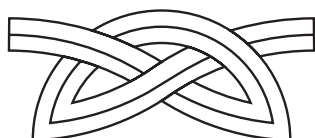
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548 str., 109 slikovnih priloga, 263 table, 10 grafičkih i 12 tabličnih priloga. ISBN 978-953-7008-57-4. Cijena: 100 €
Anita Rapan Papeša, TENDRILS, LIONS AND GRIFFINS, Avar period warriors from Nuštar Vinkovci Municipal Museum, Avaria Musei Cibalensis 1, Vinkovci, 2024
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Prikaz knjige
Book review

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period cemetery

Gradski muzej Vinkovci pokrenuo je u 2024. godini novu seriju izdanja naziva *Avaria Musei Cibalensis*, čiji je primarni interes avarodobno razdoblje. Znanstvena monografija *Vitice, lavovi i grifoni – Avarodobni ratnici iz Nuštra*, autorice Anite Rapan Papeša, prva je knjiga navedenog izdanja, u kojoj je sustavno obradila avarodobno groblje u Nuštru, slučajno otkrivenom prilikom građevinskih radova 2011. godine. Monografija je prva takva u Hrvatskoj u kojoj je sveobuhvatno obrađeno jedno avarodobno groblje, a osim multidisciplinarnosti, kao jedne od značajnih vrijednosti ove knjige, interaktivni tlocrt groblja dostupan na internetskoj stranici Gradskog muzeja Vinkovci predstavlja važan napredak u predstavljanju i dostupnosti informacija širem krugu istraživača.

In 2024, the Vinkovci Municipal Museum inaugurated a new publication series titled *Avaria Musei Cibalensis*, dedicated primarily to the Avar period. The scholarly monograph *Tendrils, Lions and Griffins: Avar Period Warriors from Nuštar*, by Anita Rapan Papeša, is the inaugural volume of this series. It provides a systematic analysis of the Avar-period cemetery at Nuštar, which was uncovered by chance during construction work in 2011. This work represents the first comprehensive study of an Avar period cemetery in Croatia. Beyond its multidisciplinary approach – one of the monograph's principal merits – the interactive site plan available on the Vinkovci Municipal Museum website marks a significant advancement in the presentation and accessibility of data for the international research community.



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AVARIA MUSEI CIBALENSIS 01

VITICE, LAVOVI I GRIFONI —

AVARODOBNI RATNICI IZ NUŠTRA

TENDRILS, LIONS AND GRIFFINS —

AVAR PERIOD WARRIORS FROM NUŠTAR

ANITA RAPAN PAPEŠA

GRADSKI MUZEJ VINKOVCI / VINKOVCI MUNICIPAL MUSEUM

Autorica knjige Anita Rapan Papeša muzejska je savjetnica Gradskog muzeja Vinkovci i jedna od rijetkih arheologinja u Hrvatskoj koja je svoj stručni i znanstveni rad posvetila avarskom razdoblju. Avarodobni nalazi vinkovačkog muzeja čine najveću zbirku tog razdoblja u Hrvatskoj, i to, kako autorica navodi, „više od 6.000 pojedinačnih nalaza“. U knjizi posvećenom jednom arheološkom nalazištu, slučajno otkrivenom prilikom građevinskih radova, predstavljeno je groblje zajednice koja je od prve četvrtine 8. pa sve do početka 9. stoljeća sahranjivala svoje pripadnike u današnjem Nuštru i tako nam ostavila vrijedne informacije o samoj zajednici, ali i društvenim odnosima u kasnoavarodobnom društvu.

Knjiga je većeg formata (230 x 300 mm), tvrdih korica, obuhvaća 548 stranica dvostupčanog dvojezičnog teksta (lijevi stupac na hrvatskom, desni na engleskom jeziku) i obogaćena je obiljem kvalitetnog ilustrativnog materijala (fotografijama, crtežima, kartama, grafikonima, tablicama i tlocrtima). Grafičko oblikovanje knjige potpisuje Ana Mrazek Lugarov (Atelier ANII), crteže arheološkog materijala izradila je Miljenka Galić (Arheološki muzej u Zagrebu), a prijevod teksta na engleski jezik djelo je Barbare Smith Demo. Monografiju su recenzirali Krešimir Filipec (Arheološki zavod Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu) i Ivan Bugarski (Arheološki institut u Beogradu).

Knjiga je podijeljena u dvije cjeline: u prvoj autorica detaljno obrađuje arheološko nalazište i nalazesprihozima i objašnjenjima, a drugoj predstavlja interdisciplinarnе radove kolega srodnih znanosti.

Prva cjelina podijeljena je na sedam poglavlja, nakon kojih slijedi popis korištene literature. U uvodnom poglavlju, nazvanom *Povijest istraživanja*, autorica predstavlja arheološko bogatstvo vinkovačkog područja s obzirom na broj istraženih avarodobnih nalazišta, posebice grobalja. Ističe kako od sveukupno istraženih 800 avarodobnih grobova u Republici Hrvatskoj, na vinkovačkom području je istraženo njih 550, od čega samo groblje Nuštar broji 196 grobova. S obzirom na to da je groblje u Nuštru otkriveno prilikom građevinskih radova, djelatnici Gradskog muzeja Vinkovci istražili su nalazište površine 2500 m² tijekom 35 radnih dana, u razdoblju od 2. rujna do 21. listopada 2011. godine. Nakon terenskog, krenuo je dugotrajniji i mnogo zahtjevniji rad u laboratoriju za konzervaciju i restauraciju Gradskog muzeja Vinkovci i Hrvatskog restauratorskog zavoda, u Institutu za antropologiju u Zagrebu gdje su obrađeni i analizirani kosturni ostaci te na Veterinarskom fakultetu Sveučilišta u Zagrebu gdje su u Zavodu za anatomiju, histologiju i embriologiju analizirani životinjski ostaci.

Budući da su poslijeterenska obrada i analiza zahtjevan i dugotrajan rad, informacije o novootkrivenom i istraženom avarodobnom groblju bile su prezentirane kroz djelomične objave. Prva takva objava je predstavljena u formi izložbe uz prateći katalog manjeg obujma naziva „Prvi nalazi s avarskog groblja na položaju Nuštar“ iz 2012. godine, nakon kojeg su do 2023. godine slijedile

The author of the monograph, Anita Rapan Papeša, is a Museum Advisor at the Vinkovci Municipal Museum and one of the few archaeologists in Croatia who has dedicated her professional and scholarly career to the Avar period. The Avar period holdings of the Vinkovci Museum constitute the largest collection from this era in Croatia, comprising, as the author notes, “...more than 6,000 individual finds...”. This volume, focused on an archaeological site discovered by chance during construction work, presents a cemetery of a community that interred its members at present-day Nuštar from the first quarter of the 8th century until the beginning of the 9th century. It thus provides invaluable data regarding the community itself, as well as social relations within Late Avar period society.

The publication is a large-format, hardbound volume (230 x 300 mm) comprising 548 pages of bilingual text in a two-column layout (with Croatian in the left column and English in the right). It is enriched with an abundance of high-quality illustrative material, including photographs, drawings, maps, charts, tables, and site plans. The graphic design was executed by Ana Mrazek Lugarov (Atelier ANII), while the illustrations of the archaeological material were produced by Miljenka Galić (Archaeological Museum in Zagreb). The English translation was provided by Barbara Smith Demo. The monograph was peer-reviewed by Krešimir Filipec (Department of Archaeology, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb), and Ivan Bugarski (Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade).

The volume is structured into two main parts: in the first, the author provides a detailed analysis of the archaeological site and the recovered finds, accompanied by appendices and interpretative commentaries; the second part presents interdisciplinary studies by specialists in related scientific fields.

The first part is divided into seven chapters, followed by a list of references. In the introductory chapter, titled *History of Research*, the author details the archaeological wealth of the Vinkovci region in light of the number of excavated Avar-period sites, particularly cemeteries. She highlights that, of the 800 Avar-period graves excavated in total in the Republic of Croatia, 550 are located in the Vinkovci area, with the Nuštar cemetery itself comprising 196 graves. As the Nuštar cemetery was discovered during construction activities, staff from the Vinkovci Municipal Museum conducted a rescue excavation across an area of 2,500 m² over 35 working days, from 2 September to 21 October 2011. The fieldwork was followed by a more protracted and demanding phase of laboratory processing. This included conservation and restoration at the Vinkovci Municipal Museum and the Croatian Conservation Institute, anthropological analysis of the skeletal remains at the Institute for Anthropology in Zagreb, and the analysis of faunal remains at the Department of Anatomy, Histology, and Embryology of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Zagreb.

As post-excavation processing and analysis are demanding and time-consuming endeavours, information regarding the newly discovered and excavated Avar period cemetery was initially disseminated through preliminary publications. The first of these appeared in 2012 in the form of an exhibition accompanied by a small-scale catalogue titled “First Finds from the Avar Cemetery at the Nuštar Site”. This was followed by a series of thematic articles

tematske objave u različitim publikacijama i časopisima. Međutim, ovim je izdanjem arheološka građa objedinjena i objavljena na jednom mjestu.

Sljedeće poglavlje naziva *Pogrebni običaji* autorica je podnaslovima podijelila u nekoliko segmenata u kojima ističe i opisuje karakteristike groblja u Nuštru uz prateće fotografije grobova i nalaza, tlocrt groblja te različite grafičke prikaze koji olakšavaju praćenje teksta. Poglavlje donosi zaključak kako su pogrebni običaji prakticirani na groblju u Nuštru usporedivi s istovremenim nalazištima na području čitave Avarije.

Najopsežnije i najkompleksnije je poglavlje *Katalog grobova i nalaza*, koje započinje popisom kratica, uobičajenih u sklopu kataloga, s iznimkom, tj. dodatkom kratice *gen. – aDNA analizom određen spol*, koji je baziran na rezultatima analiza drevne DNA provedenih na kosturnim ostacima (ukupno 41 osobe). Osim kratica, ova stranica (a kasnije i zadnja stranica knjige) sadrži poveznicu koja vodi na internetsku stranicu na kojoj se nalazi interaktivni tlocrt groblja. O ovom značajnom elementu knjige bit će riječi kasnije. Poglavlje čine tekstualni opisi grobova, popis priloga i njihov opis (numeracija prati crtež), navedeni od najmanjeg do najvećeg broja groba (od groba 1 pa sve do groba 201, iako su kosturni ostaci pronađeni u njih 196). Uz svaki opis nalazi se tabla s crtežom groba i crtežima nalaza i priloga. Svaka je tabla dodatno obilježena brojem groba radi jednostavnijeg praćenja. Ovisno o broju nalaza i priloga, uz opis groba se nalazi jedna ili više tabli. Osim crteža, u poglavlju su smisljeno smještene i fotografije na kojima su prikazani grobovi, predmeti ili njihove rekonstrukcije. Ova ujednačenost nosi najveću težinu knjige, a tomu doprinosi i činjenica da su crteži arheoloških predmeta djelo iste crtačice (M. Galić), što je rijetkost u arheološkim publikacijama. Na tablama se mjestimično može uočiti simbol obrnutog trokuta, koji predstavlja keramičke predmete i to ulomke lonaca ili čitave lonce. S obzirom na sveobuhvatnost monografije, fotografija keramičkih predmeta bi sasvim dobro odgovarala u ovoj situaciji (zamijenila crtež), ali u ovako opsežnom radu ovaj nedostatak ne umanjuje vrijednost djela u cjelini.

Sljedeća dva poglavlja naslovljena su *Nalazi izvan grobnih cjelina* i *Nalazi izvan grobnih cjelina, nalazi prikupljeni tijekom istraživanja*. Bez obzira što navedeni nalazi nemaju kontekst, oni su popisani, opisani i pridodani odgovarajućem crtežu na isti način kao u prethodnom poglavlju. Nažalost, niti jedno od navedena dva poglavlja nema uvodni tekst koji bi objasnio način na koji su nalazi prikupljeni. Moguće je zaključiti, prateći tekst u poglavlju *Povijest istraživanja*, kako je riječ o nalazima koji su sakupljeni nakon devastacije grobova, a prije početka zaštitnog arheološkog istraživanja koja je proveo Gradski muzej Vinkovci. Isto vrijedi i za sljedeće poglavlje, koje također obrađuje predmete prikupljene detektorom metala u pregledanoj izbačenoj zemlji „koji su promakli tijekom iskopa“, na što sugerira i naslov pratećih tabli (NIZG – DETEKTOR I, II, III).

in various journals and publications through 2023. This monograph, however, consolidates the archaeological material, presenting it in its entirety within a single volume.

In the following chapter, titled “Funerary Practices”, the author utilizes subheadings to divide the text into several sections, where she highlights and describes the defining features of the Nuštar cemetery. The analysis is supported by photographs of the burials and finds, a cemetery site plan, and various graphic representations that enhance the readability of the text. The chapter concludes that the funerary rites practiced at the Nuštar site are analogous to those documented at contemporary sites throughout Avaria.

The most extensive and complex section is the *Catalogue of Graves and Finds*, which begins with a list of abbreviations standard for such catalogues, with one notable addition: the abbreviation *gen. – aDNA based sex*. This is based on the results of ancient DNA testing performed on the skeletal remains of 41 individuals. Alongside the abbreviations, this page – and the final page of the book – features a link to a website hosting an interactive cemetery site plan. This significant digital component will be discussed in further detail later. The catalogue consists of textual descriptions of the graves, followed by a list and description of the associated finds (where numbering corresponds to the illustrations), arranged sequentially from grave 1 to grave 201 (though skeletal remains were present in 196 of them). Each description is accompanied by a plate containing a drawing of the grave and the associated finds and grave goods. To facilitate ease of reference, each plate is clearly marked with the corresponding grave number. Depending on the density of the material, a grave description may be accompanied by one or more plates. In addition to the line drawings, the chapter is thoughtfully supplemented with photographs showing graves, individual objects, or reconstructions. One of the monograph's greatest strengths is its illustrative consistency; all drawings of archaeological material were produced by a single illustrator (M. Galić), a level of uniformity rarely seen in archaeological publications. On the plates, an inverted triangle symbol is occasionally used to denote ceramic objects, specifically pot sherds or complete vessels. Given the comprehensive nature of this monograph, the inclusion of photographs of the ceramics might have been a preferable alternative to drawings in these instances; however, in a work of such large scope, this minor point does not detract from the overall value of the publication.

The following two chapters are titled *Finds outside of grave units* and *Finds outside of grave, finds collected during excavations*. Although these artifacts lack clear context, they are catalogued, described, and cross-referenced with corresponding drawings in the same systematic manner as in the preceding chapter. Regrettably, neither chapter includes an introductory text explaining the methodology behind the collection of these items. However, based on the *History of Research* chapter, it can be inferred that these finds were recovered following the initial disturbance of the graves by construction work, prior to the commencement of the rescue archaeological excavations conducted by the Vinkovci Municipal Museum. This also applies to the subsequent chapter concerning objects recovered via metal-detecting from the spoil heaps – described as items that „were overlooked during the initial digging” – as indicated by the headings

Poglavlje *Materijalna kultura* autorica započinje analizom pojasnih garnitura (elementima nošnje) kojima daje najviše prostora i u kojem ove nalaze komparira s drugima, koristeći relevantnu literaturu. Sam naslov knjige „Vitice, lavovi i grifoni“ ukazuje na autoričinu posvećenost ovom elementu nošnje jer su upravo vitice i grifoni najzastupljeniji motivi, a lavovi pak rijedak i jedinstveni motiv (okovi i jezičac iz groba 34) upravo pojasnih garnitura.

Osim što navodi analogije, dodatno navodi i tipove po *Zábojniku* (*Zábojnik* 1991: 219–321), klasificira pojasne garniture prema Daimu (Daim 1987), Garam (Garam 1995) i Szentheu (Szenthe 2019: 215–290), te ih kronološki smješta u period od prve četvrtine 8. pa sve do početka 9. stoljeća.

Autorica se posebno osvrnula na spojke, koje smatra vrhunskim zlatarskim radom, i jezičce podvezica, koje ističe kao zanimljivost i netipični dio nošnje koji na području Avarije nisu zabilježeni, stoga ostavlja mogućnost da je riječ o parcijalnom prilogu pojasne garniture.

Ostali predmeti materijalne kulture kao što su nakit i nakitni oblici, oružje, osobni predmeti, oruđe i toaletni pribor, predstavljeni su kao tipični avarodobni predmeti, dok se kod konjske opreme (oglavlje i funkcionalni dijelovi opreme) naglašava izostanak žvala i stremena, inače standardnih elemenata navedene opreme.

Pred sam kraj poglavlja autorica izdvaja *Kulturne predmete*, u čiju kategoriju svrstava keramičke i drvene posude, koštane recipijente i „šamansku krunu“ pronađenu u grobu muškarca (G51). Riječ je o predmetu izrađenome od željeza, drva i organskog materijala, zbog čega smatra da je u tome grobu sahranjen šaman nuštarskog društva ili nuštarske zajednice. Detalj predmeta prikazan je na fotografiji koja prati opis groba, iako je autorica propustila navesti isti u samom popisu predmeta ili ga opisati u opisu groba. U ovim dijelovima daje i vrijedne opaske poput one da jedan od dvaju pronađenih konja predstavlja prvog arapskog konja u Europi. Na samom kraju autorica izdvaja pomalo neprikladan termin *Arhivalije*, pod kojima podrazumijeva predmete iz prethodnih razdoblja (prapovijesnog i antičkog razdoblja, te predmete iz Bizanta) koji su korišteni, ili bolje rečeno reciklirani, u avarodobnom razdoblju.

Poglavlje *Zaključna razmatranja* ipak je najvažniji dio prve cjeline ove monografije u kojemu autorica sažeto izvodi zaključke o ovoj „eliti s periferije“, kako autorica ukratko opisuje avarodobnu zajednicu iz Nuštra. Od prve četvrtine 8. stoljeća pa sve do početka 9. stoljeća, u kasnoavarodobnom razdoblju, zajednica, čije naselje nije još otkriveno, ukapala je svoje pripadnike u obiteljske cjeline. Naime, zahvaljujući analizi drevne DNA, prepoznate su obiteljske zajednice s pet grupa grobova u svakoj, s „prvim“ grobom oko kojeg se u pravilnim linijama na redove ukapaju pripadnici iste obitelji. Prema nalazima i analizama autorica zaključuje da je riječ o „polusjedilačkoj zajednici autohtonog podrijetla s nekoliko pridošlica“.

Druga cjelina monografije, pod naslovom

of the accompanying plates (NIZG – DETEKTOR I, II, III).

The author opens the chapter on *Material Culture* with an analysis of belt sets (costume items), a subject to which she devotes the most extensive coverage. In this section, she contextualizes these finds through a comparative analysis using relevant bibliography. The monograph's title, *Tendrils, Lions, and Griffins*, underscores the author's focus on these specific costume items; while tendril and griffin motifs are the most frequent, the lion motif – appearing on the mounts and strap end from Grave 34 – represents a rare and unique feature of the belt sets recovered from this site.

In addition to providing analogies, the author further cites types according to *Zábojnik* (1991: 219–321), classifies the belt sets based on the typologies of Daim (1987), Garam (1995), and Szenthe (2019: 215–290), and situates them chronologically within the period from the first quarter of the 8th to the beginning of the 9th century.

The author pays particular attention to the brooches, which she regards as examples of exquisite goldsmithing, and the garter strap ends, which she highlights as an intriguing and atypical costume item which has not been recorded elsewhere in Avaria. Therefore, she suggests the possibility that they represent a partial deposit from a belt set.

Other categories of material culture, such as jewellery and ornaments, weaponry, personal items, tools, and toilet sets, are presented as characteristic Avar period artefacts. Regarding the horse equipment (harness and functional components), the author highlights the notable absence of bits and stirrups – elements that are otherwise standard components of such assemblages.

Toward the conclusion of the chapter, the author distinguishes *Ritual Objects*, categorizing within this group ceramic and wooden vessels, bone containers, and a “shamanic crown” discovered in the grave of a male (G51). This artefact, composed of iron, wood, and organic materials, leads the author to posit that the individual interred in the grave was a shaman of the Nuštar community. While a detail of this object is featured in a photograph accompanying the grave entry, it is worth noting that it was omitted from the primary finds list and the descriptive text for that specific burial. This section also includes significant observations, such as the identification of one of the two horses found at the site as the earliest instance of an Arabian horse in Europe. Finally, the author employs the somewhat unconventional term “Archivalia” to describe artefacts from preceding eras – namely the Prehistoric, Roman, and Byzantine periods – that were reused or, more accurately, recycled within an Avar period context.

The chapter titled *Concluding Remarks* constitutes the most significant portion of the first part of this monograph, providing a synthesis of the author's findings regarding this “elite from the periphery,” as she characterizes the Avar period community at Nuštar. From the first quarter of the 8th century until the beginning of the 9th century – during the Late Avar period – this community, whose settlement remains undiscovered, interred its members in distinct family units. Specifically, through ancient DNA (aDNA) analysis, kinship groups were identified, each with five grave clusters where family members were buried around a “primary” grave in an orderly row-grave arrangement. Based on the material finds and scientific analyses, the author concludes that this was a “...semi-sedentary

Prilozi, obuhvaća sedam radova u kojima su predstavljeni rezultati analiza velikog broja suradnika, što prije svega ukazuje na to da monografska objava jednog nalazišta danas jest, kao i samo istraživanje, timski i interdisciplinarni rad. Upravo su ovi interdisciplinarni prilozi pokazatelj važnosti ove monografije jer su neke analize na ovaj način po prvi put provedene i objavljene u Republici Hrvatskoj. *Antropološka analiza ljudskog kosturnog materijala s avarodobnog groblja u Nuštru* autorica Zrinke Premužić¹ i Petre Rajić Šikanjić² prvi je rad ovog poglavlja koji donosi analizu kosturnog materijala. Iako spol nije određen za osobe mlađe od 20 godina (u sljedećem radu spol je određen na jednom dijelu uzorka pomoću analize aDNA), a s obzirom na to da se u arheološkom kontekstu zadnja dobnja kategorija (16 – 20 godina) teško može vezati uz dječju dob, zanimljiva je informacija da je na groblju ustanovljena niska zastupljenost djece (45) naspram odraslih (141), kod kojih je zastupljenost muških osoba viša, a sve je to prikazano tablično i grafički. Od patoloških stanja, osim onih već utvrđenih na drugim avarodobnim grobljima, zanimljiva je prisutnost trepanacije na jednoj lubanji. Autorice se dotiču i segmenta odnosa biološkog spola i tipičnih grobnih nalaza i priloga (tipično „muški“ i tipično „ženski“ prilozi) te dolaze do zaključka da je u 11 grobova uočeno odstupanje od očekivanog. Među njima su slučajevi dviju žena „ratnica“ koje su sahranjene sa svojim pojasnim garniturama, što je iznimno rijetko na cijelom teritoriju avarske države.

U radu *Primjena naprednih analitičkih metoda u (bio)arheologiji – primjer iz Nuštra*, autora Maria Novaka,³ Brine Zagorc⁴ i Maria Carića,⁵ doneseni su podaci koji u zadnje vrijeme u arheološkoj znanosti imaju sve veći značaj. To su analitičke metode i tehnike (analize izotopa i genoma) koje uz bioarheološke analize imaju cilj dati više podatka o životu predaka, a kako autori naglašavaju, želja im je da ovakav pristup postane zlatni standard budućih istraživanja. Analize su rezultirale zanimljivim podacima o nuštarskoj populaciji (barem prema korištenim uzorcima – 44 uzoraka za stabilne izotope i 41 uzorak za drevnu DNA) prema kojima je ona genetski bliska suvremenim populacijama jugoistočne i srednje Europe. Također, analiza 27 uzoraka dječjih ostataka pokazala je podjednaku zastupljenost muške i ženske djece te, nadalje, da je nuštarska populacija povezana s drugim onovremenim europskim populacijama, među ostalim i onima koje su boravile na teritoriju današnje Hrvatske (Šarengrad – Klopare). Analiza je

community of indigenous origin with a few newcomers.”

The second part of the monograph, titled *Appendices*, comprises seven papers presenting the analytical results of a large number of contributors. This underscores the fact that the monographic publication of a site is today – much like the excavation itself – a collaborative and interdisciplinary endeavour. These interdisciplinary contributions highlight the importance of the monograph, as some of the analyses were conducted and published for the first time in Croatia in this manner. The first paper in this section, *Anthropological Analysis of Human Skeletal Material from the Avar-Period Cemetery at Nuštar*, by Zrinke Premužić¹ and Petra Rajić Šikanjić,² provides the analysis of the skeletal material. Although sex was not determined for individuals under the age of 20 (the following paper utilizes aDNA analysis for sex determination on a portion of the sample), and despite the fact that in an archaeological context the final age category (16–20 years) is seldom associated with childhood, it is interesting to note the low representation of children (45) compared to adults (141), among which male graves are represented in a higher number. These demographic data are supported by comprehensive tables and charts. Regarding pathological conditions, beyond those already documented in other Avar period cemeteries, the presence of trepanation on one skull is particularly noteworthy. The authors also explore the correlation between biological sex and typical grave assemblages (typically “male” vs. “female” grave goods), concluding that deviations from expected patterns were observed in 11 graves. Among these are two cases of “warrior” women interred with their belt sets – a phenomenon that is exceptionally rare across the entire territory of the Avar Khaganate.

The paper titled *The Use of Advanced Analytical Methods in (Bio)(bio)archaeology – an example from Nuštar*, by Mario Novak,³ Brina Zagorc,⁴ and Mario Carić,⁵ presents data that has gained significant prominence in contemporary archaeological science. These analytical methods and techniques – specifically stable isotope and genomic analyses – supplement traditional bioarchaeological research to provide deeper insights into ancestral ways of life. As the authors emphasize, their objective is for such an approach to become the “gold standard” for future investigations. The analyses yielded compelling data regarding the Nuštar population (based on the analysed sample of 44 individuals for stable isotopes and 41 for ancient DNA), indicating that the group is genetically proximal to modern populations of Southeastern and Central Europe. Furthermore, the analysis of 27 subadult samples revealed an equal distribution of male and female children. The results further suggest that the Nuštar community was connected to other contemporary European populations, including those residing in present-

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pokazala i srodstvo među pojedincima te je omogućila određivanje najmanje šest obitelji u prvom i drugom stupnju srodstva – podaci koje je autorica monografije prenijela u svojim zaključnim razmatranjima.

Arheozoološka analiza kasnoavarodobnih grobova u Nuštru, autorica Magdalene Kolenc i Kim Korpes,⁶ sljedeći je rad u *Prilozima*. U njemu su determinirani životinjski ostaci (životinjske kosti, zubi i rogovi) pronađeni u grobovima, od kojih su u najvećoj mjeri zastupljeni konji, goveda i ptice. Životinjski nalazi u avarodobnim grobovima nisu neuobičajena pojava i prisutni su na svakom avarodobnom groblju na teritoriju Avarije. Prema autoricama, u Nuštru je zabilježen neobično visok broj petnih kosti goveda kao prilog u grobovima. Međutim, teško je naći razlog ili dati značenje takvoj pojavi. Iako su konji načešće zastupljeni u grobovima, sa sigurnošću se mogu determinirati samo dvije jedinke konja, prema tome i samo dva konjanička groba na ovom groblju, a upravo te jedinke nakon provedenih analiza predstavljaju novu genetsku liniju (orijentalnu), prvi put u Europi i upravo u Nuštru.

Interdisciplinarna cjelina nastavlja se radom *Sažetak o arheobotaničkoj analizi uzoraka prikupljenih na avarskom groblju u Nuštru*, koji donose Ákos Pető⁷ i Árpád Kenéz.⁸ Podaci koje donose rezultat su prikupljanja i flotiranja zemlje iz grobova i zemlje iz keramičkih posuda. Rezultat koji su dobili provedenim analizama, kako ističu, „oskudan je i ograničava naša tumačenja“, no moguće ga je povezati s rezultatima ostalih avarodobnih nalazišta. Iz navedenoga slijedi da su žitarice vrlo malo zastupljene u grobnom kontekstu, odnosno da se ne može govoriti o prilogu biljne hrane u grobnom ritualu u Nuštru, što je ipak vrlo zanimljiva i značajna informacija.

Konzerviranje i restauriranje metalnih nalaza iz Nuštra – izazovi i rješenja, autora Maše Vuković Biruš i Mihaela Golubića,⁹ pokazuje kako je neophodan i važan rad restauratora i konzervatora tijekom i nakon arheoloških istraživanja na kojima su pronađene velike količine metalnih nalaza kao i ostaci tkanine, kosti i drva – kao što je slučaj i u Nuštru (više od 1000 nalaza). Autori opisuju rad s raznovrsnim materijalom i naglašavaju svoje zlatno pravilo – nakon konzervatorsko-restauratorskih radova predmeti zahtijevaju odgovarajuću pohranu i rukovanje. U radu *Analiza staklenih perli*, autorice Danijele Ašperger,¹⁰ nakon opsežnog uvoda potrebnog za razumijevanje procesa analiziranja staklenih predmeta, odnosno osjetljivost pristupa analizi, predstavljene su dvije metode pomoću kojih su analizirane avarodobne perle iz Nuštra. Destruktivna (MAD-ICP-AES) i

day Croatia (such as at the Šarengrad–Kloparski site). The analysis identified biological kinship among the individuals, enabling the identification of at least six families related within the first and second degrees – data that the author of the monograph synthesized in her concluding remarks.

The next contribution in the Appendices is the paper titled *The archaeozoological analysis of the Late Avar graves at Nuštar*, by Magdalena Kolenc and Kim Korpes.⁶ This study identifies and analyses the faunal remains (animal bones, teeth, and antlers) recovered from the burials, with horses, cattle, and birds being the most prominently represented taxa. Animal deposits are not uncommon in Avar period contexts and are documented at nearly every cemetery across Avaria. According to the authors, a notably high frequency of cattle calcaneus was recorded as grave goods at Nuštar; however, assigning a specific meaning or reason for this particular practice remains difficult. While horse remains are among the most frequent finds, only two individuals – and thus only two true equestrian burials – could be identified with certainty. Notably, genomic analysis of these individuals revealed a new “Oriental” genetic lineage, marking the first recorded appearance of this lineage in Europe, specifically at the Nuštar site.

The interdisciplinary section continues with the paper titled *Short summary on the archaeobotanical analysis of samples collected at the Avar Age cemetery of Nuštar*, authored by Ákos Pető⁷ and Árpád Kenéz.⁸ The data presented are the result of soil sampling and flotation performed on earth recovered from both the graves and the ceramic vessels. The authors characterize the results of their analysis as “...meager, limiting our interpretations,” though they note that the findings are consistent with data from other Avar period sites. Specifically, the analysis shows that cereals are minimally represented within the funerary context. This suggests that plant-based food offerings were not a standard component of the burial rites at Nuštar – a finding that is, in itself, a compelling and significant piece of information.

The paper titled *The conservation and restoration of metal finds from Nuštar – challenges and solutions*, by Maša Vuković Biruš and Mihael Golubić,⁹ illustrates the indispensable role of conservators and restorers during and after archaeological excavations. This is particularly critical at sites like Nuštar, where large assemblages of metalwork – totalling over 1,000 finds – were recovered alongside remains of textiles, bone, and wood. The authors detail the complexities of treating such diverse materials and emphasize their “golden rule”: once conservation and restoration treatments are complete, artefacts must be maintained through appropriate long-term storage and handling protocols. The paper titled *The Analysis of Glass Beads*, by Danijela Ašperger,¹⁰ begins

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nedestruktivna (PIXE spektrometrija) metoda pokazuju da su perle izrađene od više vrsta staklene paste dobivene mrvljenjem i povezivanjem više vrsta stakla. Autorica zaključuje da su obje metode precizne, s naglaskom kako nedestruktivna metoda ipak čuva uzorak za neka buduća istraživanja. Cjelina završava radom autorice Karine Grömer,¹¹ *Organski ostaci s avarskog groblja u Nuštru (istočna Hrvatska)*. Osmam fragmenata mineraliziranog tekstila očuvano je na metalnim predmetima (slitina bakra i željezo) koji potječu iz sedam grobova. Autorica navodi kako su sačuvane tkanine najvjerojatnije dijelovi posmrtnog pokrova i dijelovi odjeće, pogotovo oni dijelovi pričvršćeni na dijelove pojasne garniture iz grobova muških osoba. Analiza pokazuje da su tehničke kvalitete tkanine (jednostavno tkanje i njihove varijacije) s nuštarskog groblja usporedive s drugim avarodobnim grobljima u Karpatskoj kotlini.

Ova znanstvena publikacija zaokružena je i sustavno obrađena istraživačka tema zasnovana na dugotrajnom i iscrpnom radu pretočenom u smislene cjeline i poglavlja koja prate ujednačeni crteži i grafički izgled tabli. Također je prva publikacija u Hrvatskoj u kojoj je sveobuhvatno obrađeno jedno avarodobno groblje. Osim multidisciplinarnosti, kao jedne od najizrazitijih vrijednosti ove knjige, interaktivni tlocrt groblja predstavlja važan napredak u predstavljanju i dostupnosti informacija potrebnih znanstvenicima koji se bave istom ili sličnom temom. Napoveznici <https://avari-nustar.muzejvk.hr/> izdavač je omogućio jednostavno sučelje u kojemu je klikom na određeni grob korisniku omogućen uvid (kroz pop up prozor ili u full screen verziji) u opis groba s priložima (na hrvatskom i engleskom jeziku), ali i fotografije groba, stoga ova značajka pokazuje kako je važno pratiti razvoj u prezentaciji arheoloških nalazišta i njihove građe ili, u ovom slučaju, kako je važno biti među prvima koji će uvesti inovaciju u objavu arheološkog nalazišta. Predstavljene značajke groblja u Nuštru uglavnom se uklapaju u već poznatu sliku avarodobne kulture i tako potvrđuju, ali i dopunjavaju, neke ranije pretpostavke o životu avarodobnih zajednica na području istočne Hrvatske. Po svemu sudeći, autorica je uspjela u naumu da objavu arheološkog nalazišta dovede na razinu usporedivu s publikacijama renomiranih europskih institucija. Na kraju svakako vrijedi istaknuti dvojezičnost monografije, što omogućuje njezino prihvaćanje u stranim stručnim i znanstvenim krugovima. Ova je publikacija prvenstveno namijenjena arheolozima, ali i povjesničarima i znanstvenicima srodnih interesa, i zasigurno će biti nezaobilazno štivo pri novim objavama materijala i studijama o avarodobnim nalazima i nalazištima.

11 Odsjek za zapovijest, Prirodoslovni muzej Beč.

with an extensive introduction necessary for understanding the processes involved in analyzing glass objects and the sensitivity required in such analytical approaches. Following this, the author presents two methods used to analyse the Avar period beads from Nuštar. Both the destructive method (MAD-ICP-AES) and the non-destructive method (PIXE spectrometry) indicate that the beads were manufactured from multiple types of glass paste, produced by crushing and bonding various types of glass. The author concludes that both methods provide precise results, while emphasizing that the non-destructive method is preferable as it preserves the sample for potential future research. The final contribution to this section is the paper titled *Organic Remains from the Avar Cemetery in Nuštar (Eastern Croatia)*, by Karina Grömer.¹¹ Eight fragments of mineralized textiles were preserved on metal artefacts (copper alloy and iron) recovered from seven graves. The author suggests that these textile remnants likely represent portions of funerary shrouds or clothing items, specifically those found in association with the belt sets in male burials. Technical analysis reveals that the weave types – plain weave and its variations – found at the Nuštar cemetery are comparable to those documented at other Avar-period sites throughout the Carpathian Basin.

This scholarly publication represents a comprehensive and systematically analysed research topic, rooted in extensive and exhaustive work presented in cohesive sections and chapters. These are complemented by high-quality, uniform illustrations and a consistent graphic layout across the plates. It is also the first publication in Croatia to provide a comprehensive treatment of an Avar period cemetery in its entirety. Beyond its interdisciplinary character – one of the book's most prominent merits – the interactive site plan represents a significant advancement in the presentation and accessibility of data for researchers working in this or related fields. Via the link <https://avari-nustar.muzejvk.hr/>, the publisher has provided a user-friendly interface. By clicking on a specific grave, the user can access (via a pop-up window or full-screen version) the description of the grave and its associated finds in both Croatian and English, along with photographs of the burial. This feature underscores the importance of keeping pace with modern developments in the presentation of archaeological sites and material culture – or, in this case, the significance of being among the first to introduce such innovations into archaeological site publications. The features of the Nuštar cemetery presented in this volume largely align with the established understanding of Avar culture, confirming and further elucidating previous hypotheses regarding Avar period communal life in eastern Croatia. By all accounts, the author has succeeded in her objective of elevating this site publication to a standard comparable with those issued by renowned European institutions. Finally, the bilingual nature of the monograph merits particular emphasis, as it ensures the work's accessibility and integration into the international research community. While primarily intended for archaeologists, this volume will also prove invaluable to historians and scholars in related disciplines. It will undoubtedly serve as an indispensable reference for future material analyses and synthetic studies concerning Avar period sites and assemblages.

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