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MILITARY ORDERS AND THEIR HERITAGE

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Tajana Sekelj Ivančan, Tena Karavidović, Tea Kokotović, Sebastijan Stingl

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- 5 FOREWORD
Juraj Belaj
- 7 SOME QUESTIONS REGARDING THE ORGANIZATION OF THE
TEMPLAR PROVINCE *IN HUNGARIA ET SCLAVONIA*
Marija Karbić
- 15 PAKRAC AT THE TIME OF THE KNIGHTS HOSPITALLER
Juraj Belaj
- 41 ŽIVOT U UTVRDI I ŽIVOT UTVRDE: KASNOSREDNJOVJEKOVNA
I NOVOVJEKOVNA KERAMIKA IZ STAROG GRADA PAKRACA IZ
ARHEOLOŠKIH ISTRAŽIVANJA 2017. – 2020.
Tatjana Tkalčec
- 107 THE UNFORTUNATE CASE OF THE RIDER FROM GRAVE 10
FROM THE SITE OF PAKRAC–STARI GRAD
Tea Kokotović
- 121 STRUKTURNE I TIPOLOŠKE ODREDNICE BRANIČ-KULA
BURGOVA VRANA, BEDEMGRAD I ČAKLOVAC
Ratko Ivanušec
- 143 SOME NEW REMARKS REGARDING THE CHURCH OF THE
HOLY CROSS IN KRIŽOVLJAN
Danko Dujmović, Nikolina Belošević
- 155 A NEW CONTRIBUTION TO THE RESEARCH OF THE CHURCH
OF ST CLEMENT IN KELEMEN
Ivana Peškan, Duško Čikara
- 169 STONE ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS FROM THE CISTERCIAN
ABBAY IN TOPUSKO – A POSSIBLE ARCHITECTURAL
INFLUENCE ON MEDIEVAL MILITARY ORDERS IN SLAVONIA
Andrej Janeš
- 185 CERAMIC TABLEWARE FROM THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE OF
RAČEŠA (EXCAVATIONS 2012–2022)
Marina Matković-Vrban, Marija Mihaljević, Ana Pavleković Žeruk

- 233 REST IN PIECES: AN ATYPICAL BURIAL FROM THE
NECROPOLIS IN RAČEŠA (CROATIA), 13TH–16TH CENTURY
Nataša Šarkić, Roberto Chigetti, Sofie-Kristin Schendzielorz, Marija Mihaljević
- 247 THE CHURCH OF ST MARTIN AT PROZORJE: A STUDY OF
ARCHITECTURAL STRATIFICATION
Iva Papić
- 259 THE FIRST AMONG EQUALS? – REVIEW OF THE BURIAL
CHAMBERS AND GRAVES WITH SOME ARCHITECTURAL
ELEMENTS INSIDE OF THE CHURCH OF ST MARTIN AT
PROZORJE
Sebastijan Stingl
- 281 DIETARY HABITS AS A REFLECTION OF TRADITION: PLANT
REMAINS FROM THE ROMAN-PERIOD SETTLEMENT CONTEXT
AT THE SITE OF IVANEC-STARI GRAD
Renata Šoštarić, Filomena Sirovica, Dolores Knežić
- 297 SOCIO-HISTORICAL IMPLICATIONS OF TRAUMA PATTERNS:
DATA FROM 15TH TO 17TH CENTURY BURIALS FROM IVANEC
Željka Bedić, Siniša Krznar, Tea Kokotović, Filomena Sirovica
- 309 HERITAGE-MAKING OF MEDIEVAL MILITARY ORDERS:
CONTEMPORARY TEMPLAR ORGANIZATIONS
Marijana Belaj, Petra Kelemen

FOREWORD

Considering the network of military orders in medieval European society, their arrival on the territory of present-day Croatia was immensely important. This was especially the case since they were not only temporarily present in this region, but with their knowledge and skills, as well as in co-operation with other social actors, they were involved in the development of this region on several levels. They contributed to strengthening the ties with Western European traditions, and brought innovations from the West, where they came from, and the East, where they operated. Of course, we have to ask ourselves whether we can still find traces of these influences after all these centuries and to what extent. We must also bear in mind that their influences manifested not only at the time of their presence and activity in our region, but also much later.

In the project *Development and Heritage of the Military Orders in Croatia – milOrd* (HRZZ, IP-2019-04-5513, funded by the Croatian Science Foundation), we took a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approach to the military orders, their activities and influences on society, and the development of their sites, by observing the transformations of various categories of artefacts and features from selected archaeological sites. We also explored the making of the heritage of medieval military orders in today's society.

Human activity continued at most of the sites of military orders, even after they had left Croatian territory. Thus, the attention of the project researchers was drawn to a variety of different archaeological, historical, historical art, osteological, archaeobiological and other materials, not always closely related to the military orders and sometimes extending beyond the late medieval period. However, these materials have become unavoidable when examining the transformations of the estates and facilities once governed by military orders. In addition to researching these later changes, the materials from the period before their arrival were also analysed in order to gain as comprehensive an insight as possible. A diachronic study of changes on the gathered materials in combination with comparative analyses provided us with clues to the presumed influences of the military orders. Besides, the influence of the past of the military orders on the Croatian territory was

also observed in contemporary cultural practices. The goal was achieved through simultaneous research on several levels. The study of artefacts and features from different contexts was complemented by the analysis and interpretation of various historical sources. The art-historical sources were examined by art historians, osteological finds were analysed by biological anthropologists, samples from various archaeological contexts were subjected to archaeobiological analyses, and the contemporary making of the heritage of the medieval military orders was analysed from a cultural anthropological perspective.

The multitude of wide-ranging and multi-layered results obtained through our research prompted the scientific conference entitled *Military Orders and Their Heritage*, which was organised by the Institute of Archaeology as a part of this project. The conference aimed not only at presenting the results of the research project to a wider scientific community, but also at the participation of other scholars dealing with medieval military orders and their heritage, as well as at mutual dialogue within the topic. The conference was held at the Institute of Archaeology in Zagreb on the 9th and 10th of November 2022. It was the eighth conference in the field of mediaeval archaeology organised by the Institute, this time in cooperation with our colleagues from Hungary, i. e. from the Institute of History, University of Szeged. The cooperation resulted primarily from the fact that both the Knights Templar and Hospitaller acted in the joint Hungarian-Croatian province, but at the same time it relies on the interdisciplinary and international collaboration established within this project, particularly with Dr Zsolt Hunyadi, Associate Professor. As far as the original intention is concerned, the conference was a success, with 27 participants from 20 institutions and three countries attending and presenting a total of 19 papers. These conference papers were developed into 15 articles composing this book. All articles were separately peer-reviewed by two carefully selected experts from the international academic community with regard to their specific field of expertise and research

perspective. Most of the articles were published in English in order to achieve broad visibility in the international scientific community. Once again, I would like to thank all conference participants for their constructive and fruitful cooperation. My gratitude also goes to the reviewers of individual articles and the book as a whole for their efforts, expertise and contributions. I would like to thank my colleagues at the Institute of Archaeology for their help in organising the conference and publishing

this book. My special thanks go to the PhD candidates working on the project *Development and Heritage of the Military Orders in Croatia*, funded by the Croatian Science Foundation, for their commitment and help in the realisation of this book.

We sincerely hope that the contributions gathered in this publication will inspire our colleagues from various scientific fields, especially young scholars, to research the phenomenon of military orders further.

Juraj Belaj