

FOREWORD

The Miroslav Krleža Lexicographic Institute's *One Hundred Croatian Archeological sites*, a scholarly overview of important archeological sites and finds in Croatia, is the first synthesizing work of this kind. Although extensive research has been going on for a relatively long time, with numerous finds, and there is copious domestic and foreign scholarly material, neither a Croatian archeological atlas nor a reference book of finds has yet been compiled. This is reflected particularly in many contemporary archeological atlases giving overviews of world historical events recorded in sites from the Paleolithic to the medieval periods; it is immediately evident how poorly the Croatian area is represented in them. And such atlases contribute to the creation of the historical and cultural conceptions about every country and wider region that they describe.

In them one most often finds from our region only phenomena isolated in place and time, for example Krapina as the largest site of Neanderthals, Vučedol from the Copper Age, and Diocletian's Palace or the amphitheater in Pula from Classical Antiquity. Other sites only exceptionally appear, and the medieval period is not represented by a single site.

At the same time the sites from certain prehistoric and early historic periods of all our neighbors are significantly better represented. Why is that? Was the area of Croatia not attractive for habitation in those early periods, or did it not leave sufficiently impressive and recognizable sites or cultures, so that there would be no need to even mention them? Has the country's archeology fallen short and been unable to present the results of its research, which by themselves would merit some relevant world selection? On the contrary, we have more and more high-quality and attractive monographic treatments of archeological research on individual sites.

It appears, however, that such publications are not all that is needed for the scholars who compile world archeological atlases to include Croatian sites in their selection. Is this the one and only true way to gain acceptance in the atlas of world events, when there interesting finds are more numerous every day, as are countries that seek to present their archeological trove to the world? Let us not forget that promoting its archeology is one of the more effective ways for every country to get its cultural heritage on the map of cultural tourism, potentially one of the most rewarding sorts nowadays.

The basic reason why Croatia is not more systematically represented in world atlases is that we do not have a single complete, nor even selective, catalogue of the important archeological sites and the corpus of their finds. Nor have we yet compiled an archeological map of Croatia which could serve someone outside of our domestic circles as a basic source of information. There do exist regional, county or museum surveys and maps, but not an exhaustive survey that would encompass Croatia as a whole.

This survey seeks first and foremost to cover the sites and demonstrate their importance not only for the area of Croatia but also in a broader archeological context. It addresses the way in which archeology gives evidence about Croatia and the elements that are interwoven to form the basis of the civilization of our area.

The territory of Croatia, from an archeological viewpoint, is the richest cultural heritage area of Europe, particularly in its diversity. Recall that our land has been marked by nearly all the peoples who affected Europe. Coming from the Anatolian, Greek, Italic, Frankish, Germanic and Scandinavian, Hungarian, Eastern European, Siberian and even Korean area they left their traces — in the form of settlements or graves. From whatever land they came, this part of the world seems to have been their final destination. And while the Slavonian plain and the Adriatic coast could not retain all these immigrations and underwent change after change, even at the level of the highest achievements of European civilization, the hinterland was an area of refuge where endangered populations withdrew

to safety protected by the mountain ranges. It is this remote territory, vital for survival, that has been the guardian of long-remembered traditions and of values extinct in other areas.

The survey One Hundred Croatian Archeological Sites came about from cooperation between the Croatian Archeological Society, which when celebrating its 125th anniversary sought effective ways to present archeology in Croatia, and the Miroslav Krleža Lexicographic Institute, which in a number of its general and national publications has treated part of the archeological heritage. The format of the first scholarly survey publication giving a hundred selected sites arose out of the urgent need to bridge the gap between scholarly knowledge about this area with the impression that exists about it, or rather fails to exist, in the Croatian cultural community and in the world in general. We have selected one hundred archeological sites which can for the first time give a well-rounded view of the Croatian archeological potential in order to present the material in a unified manner, the descriptions and treatments of all the sites were reduced to texts of approximately the same length and similar graphic layout, and for accessibility and ease of reference the sites were not arranged chronologically but in alphabetical order.

The basic intention was to select a hundred sites from the twenty Croatian counties (Zagreb City and Zagreb county are treated as a unit) as a sample and cross-section of events on Croatian soil through the millennia. Five sites were added that are connected with shipwrecks under Adriatic waters.

It is very hard to set reliable criteria for selecting one hundred sites among the thousands already known and also to give all the counties (and the sea floor) their due, when some of them have had sites presented to the public for a whole century, whereas in others the first archeological investigations began scarcely twenty years ago. Some counties, moreover, cover twice as much territory as others. Thus the average of five sites per county was hard to maintain. In the end a principle was adopted that each county can be represented by at least 2 sites and at most 8. To mitigate any possible injustice, the texts about the sites have been supplemented by twenty county texts (and one about underwater research) with a very brief archeological profile of prehistoric and early historic events. Attached to them are geographic maps with the position of the sites. Thus some better-known sites can be described with only a few sentences. Here too the principle was maintained of not exceeding the designated number of 30 sites per county.

We wanted to have each region itself propose the candidates for selection of the hundred most important. This was indeed how the list of all the sites presented here was compiled for the most part. The approach adopted, except in the case of sites investigated long ago, was that the texts should be written by the archeologists who conducted the research, and not by those who know the issues only from the literature. However, several proposed sites remained uncovered because we did not receive texts from their researchers. Instead of these, other sites from other counties were included.

According to European archeological custom we divided the sites into prehistoric, classical and medieval ones. But, since archeology in the classical period in the area covered by the Roman Empire clearly distinguishes monuments connected with Classical Antiquity and Early Christianity, we have divided them into separate parts. Thus the sites are arranged in four categories.

Some of the sites covered have long continuity and encompass several of the above categories. In such cases each period has received the graphic scope of a separate site. Otherwise descriptions of such sites would be overloaded with information and harder to understand. The best example of that is Vinkovci, the city in Europe with the longest continuity of living, which began around 6200 BC, and the valuable cultural monuments are presented in three full units. Solin and Split likewise are presented in three parts. Classical Antiquity, Early Christianity and the Middle Ages. It is most of all on account of such sites that alphabetical presentation was chosen since a division of the book into periods would have lost the picture as a whole.

In this survey we could not include medieval castles, although they are most often the most impressive monuments of the cultural heritage (even without archeological research). Only a few were included, those which, like Čakovec, have been fully archeologically investigated.

Many museums and other archeological institutions have kindly provided photographs of material from their holdings, of sites and also plans of excavations and structures that were found. Without these, some sites, especially those that were researched only for short periods, would have been left without suitable illustrations. We thank the authors for their efforts and for their understanding of the imposed limitation that were not always easy to conform to.

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