

ANNUAL REPORT: LOBOR BIOARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SCHOOL 2019

Directors: Dr. Krešimir Filipec, Dr. Zdravka Hincak, Mrs. Jana Škrgulja



The LOBOR BIOARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT 2019 was held from June 30 to July 27 at the prehistoric, late antique, medieval and post-medieval site of Lobar – Our Lady of the Mountain in northwestern Croatia. The archaeological and bioarchaeological field school was organized for 26 students, 12 of which were IFR students from the USA, Canada and Australia. The goal of the field school was to provide the students with practical experience of the excavation and documentation techniques in the archaeological trenches, as well as the basic knowledge of working with human skeletal remains in the trenches and at the bioarchaeological workshop. The history of Lobar and its surrounding area was provided through on site lectures and the excursion to Krapina Neandarthal Museum and Trakoscan Castle. The IFR students spent three days sightseeing in Zagreb and learning about the Croatian capital, they visited Museum of Natural History, City Museum of Zagreb and Archaeological museum in Zagreb where they had lectures about prehistory, antiquity, late antiquity and middle ages with special focus to the specific artifacts important for the archaeological heritage of Croatia. They had opportunity to talk to all the curators in the museums and they also visited the biggest archaeological library in the Archaeological museum in Zagreb where they had introduction lectures. They had opportunity to learn about the development of pottery and stone artifacts and they also saw the most important metal finds. After first days in the capital of Croatia, the IFR students had a two-day excursion to the Dalmatian coast that was organized to introduce the students to Croatian natural and cultural diversity. They visited Mestrovic Gallery in Split, Museum of Croatian Stone Monuments in Split, Archaeological Museum in Split, Diocletian's Palace in Split, Fortress Klis above Split, archaeological remains of the ancient roman city Salona near Split, Kastela City Museum in Kastela where they saw some Game of Thrones filming locations. We visited Bribirska

glavica archaeological site (called Croatian Troy) and city of Zadar where we visited Archaeological museum in Zadar, Stomorica church, Sibenik cathedral and Sibenik City Museum. They also saw the most beautiful sunset in Croatia (according to Hitchcock). All the museum experience was an introduction to material that they could see during excavation in Lobar.

This year's excavation took place at three closely related positions on the inner and outer side of the northern rampart. A long section of the stone wall was discovered in the first trench, positioned on top of the rampart, where the students were able to learn about the stone cleaning process and on how to document architectural remains. A part of medieval cemetery was found nearby in the second trench, with the standard jewelry finds of that period (mostly located around skull and in the pelvic area). The bioarchaeological part of the field school started in the trench itself, where the students learned how to clean and document the graves and how to transport to the workshop. A part of the late antique cemetery was discovered outside of the hillfort, where the students were taught how to work with more delicate infant skeletal remains. They also experienced landscape archaeology.

The bioarchaeological workshop concentrated on lectures about basic human osteology, human age and gender differences, as well as pathological changes on the human skeleton. The lectures were organized by those four categories, and the remaining time was used for hand-on experience gained from washing the newly excavated skeletons, assembling them and determining the data the remains could provide us.

All the excavations and documentation were done by the Croatian and IFR students under the close supervision of the field school directors, assistants and a documentarist. The bioarchaeological lectures and hands-on practice were conducted by an osteology instructor. The excavation was done according to the modern standards, using the system of stratigraphic units. The excavated area and finds were documented with the total station, but the students were instructed on the older methods of hand-drawing. Paperwork consisting of various forms and labels was done at the end of each workday.

The results of the excavations and research will be published in the relevant scientific journals, presented at the Croatian and international conferences, and an extensive monograph on the late antique and medieval discoveries at Lobar is being prepared for publication. A part of this year's field school experience can be seen on the Lobar Bioarchaeological Project Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/lobor_ifr_bioarchaeology/) and on the website of a local newspaper (<https://www.zagorje.com/clanak/vijesti/na-najpoznatijoj-zagorskoj-arheoloskoj-destinaciji-ovo-ljeto-istrazivali-i-studenti-iz-ame>).