

6th International Scientific Symposium
in honour of Stjepan Gunjača

**Political and Social Structures
in Early Medieval
Central, South and Eastern Europe
(9th – 15th centuries)**

Archaeological and historical evidence



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Museum of Croatian Archaeological Monuments,
Split, Croatia



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GUNJAČA

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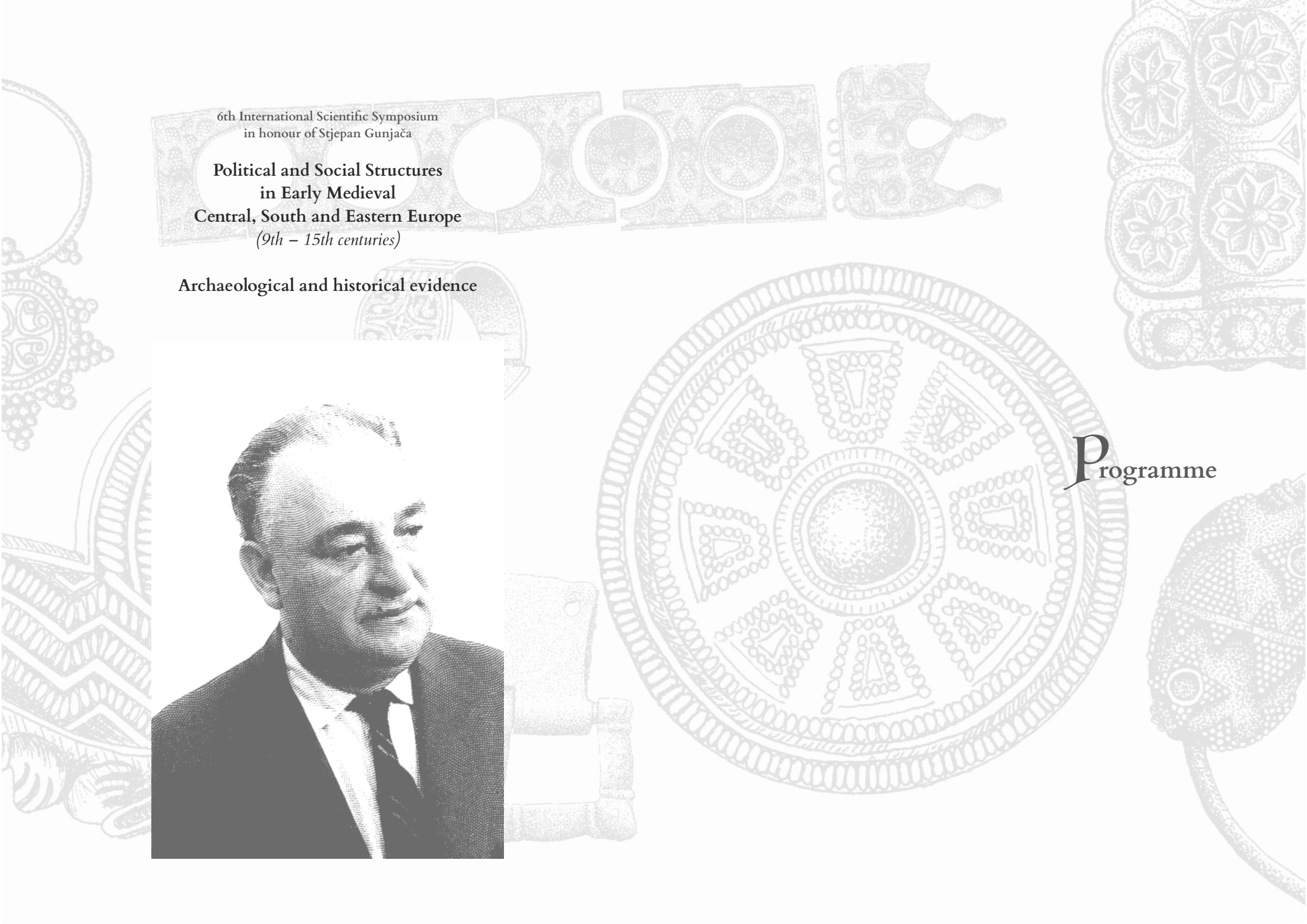
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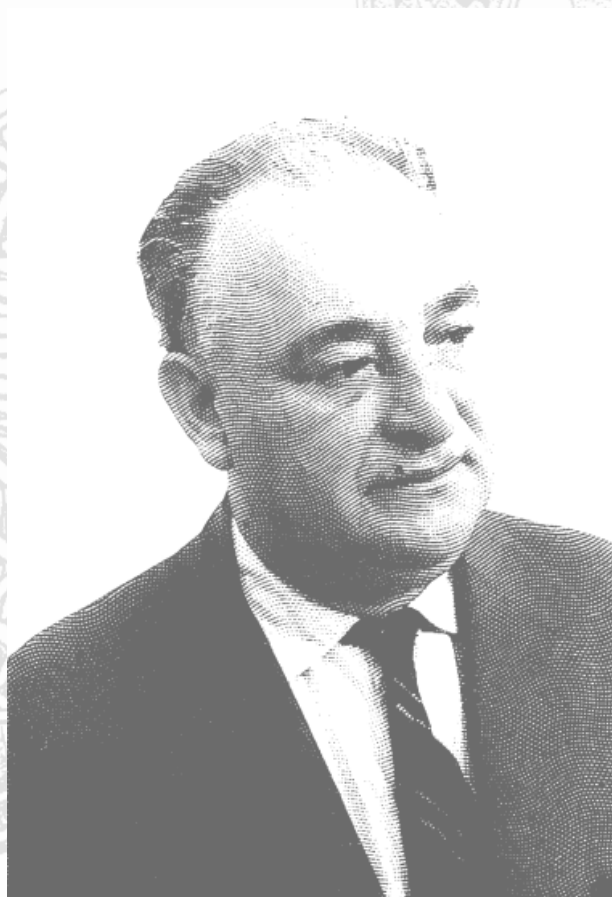
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Programme

Milica Radišić*On how justified the term Bijelo Brdo culture is in medieval archaeology*

The term "Bijelo Brdo culture" was introduced in the field of archaeology in the 1920s and refers to the archaeological remains from the period of the formation and rise of the Hungarian state in the Carpathian Basin, spanning from the 10th to the 12th century. However, this term has sparked a controversy within medieval archaeology due to conflicting opinions among experts regarding the interaction between the local post-Avar population and the settled Hungarian groups. In accordance with the specific development of archaeological science, various interpretative frameworks have been established in Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Croatia and Serbia, often influenced by an ethnocentric approach and primarily based on the interpretation of finds from necropoles. Rather than solely criticizing earlier research practices in these countries, the focus of this paper is to present modern tendencies and provide a fresh perspective on the topics covered by the term "Bijelo Brdo culture." We believe that the socio-economic processes associated with the formation of the Hungarian state led to the development of a distinct material culture in this region, the elements of which can also be traced in areas that were not initially under the direct political influence of the Hungarians, such as Slavonia and southern Banat. It would seem that the rise of Byzantium, the Holy Roman Empire and Kievan Rus', along with the intensified activities of the Vikings across Europe, influenced, in a wider sense, the creation of a new regional identity in the neighbouring areas. While the Carpathian Basin was continuously influenced by these spheres, which could be deemed "more progressive" on the basis of general parameters, its material culture possessed certain traits of its own. Though the finds may appear modest at first glance, they display distinctive traits in terms of their development. We would, therefore, like to highlight the similarities and differences in the morphology of jewellery and craft production between East-Central Europe and its surroundings. In this regard, the author suggests that the archaeological heritage of the Carpathian region should not be named after a single site (Bijelo Brdo in Croatia) but rather use a more specific terminology, such as the phrase "culture of the Árpád period" as an alternative.

