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PERFORATED COINS FROM GRAVES AT THE VIMINACIUM NECROPOLIS OF PEĆINE

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Abstract – A common problem that occurs when interpreting finds of perforated Roman coins is their function and whether they were perforated in Roman times or later. Hence, the specimens which originate from an undisturbed archaeological context, as is the case with finds from the Viminacium necropolis of Pećine, are indispensable. A total of 45 perforated coins were discovered at Pećine: 23 from graves and 22 from sacrificial areas.

Key words – Roman Empire, Viminacium, necropolis, Roman coins, perforated coins.

During almost five centuries of dwelling at Viminacium, several cemeteries were established. According to their position compared to the legionary fort and the civilian settlement, they were divided as follows: northern, southern, eastern and western cemeteries. Due to the building activities of the power plant Kostolac 2, from 1977 to 1990, in the area of the southern cemeteries, extensive rescue archaeological investigations took place.¹ Within this territory, nine cemeteries were distinguished and five of them belong to the period of Roman domination (from the middle of the 1st to the early decades of the 5th century)². The two earliest ones, Pećine and Više Grobalja, were established in the middle of the 1st century and they include both cremations and skeletal burials.³ The change in burial rites that took place in the middle of the 3rd century, resulted in the abandonment of these two burial areas.⁴ At another separate cemetery, also belonging to the area of the Pećine site,

only cremations were discovered, with the exception of skeletal graves that always represented infant burials. This necropolis was formed at the end of the 1st and the

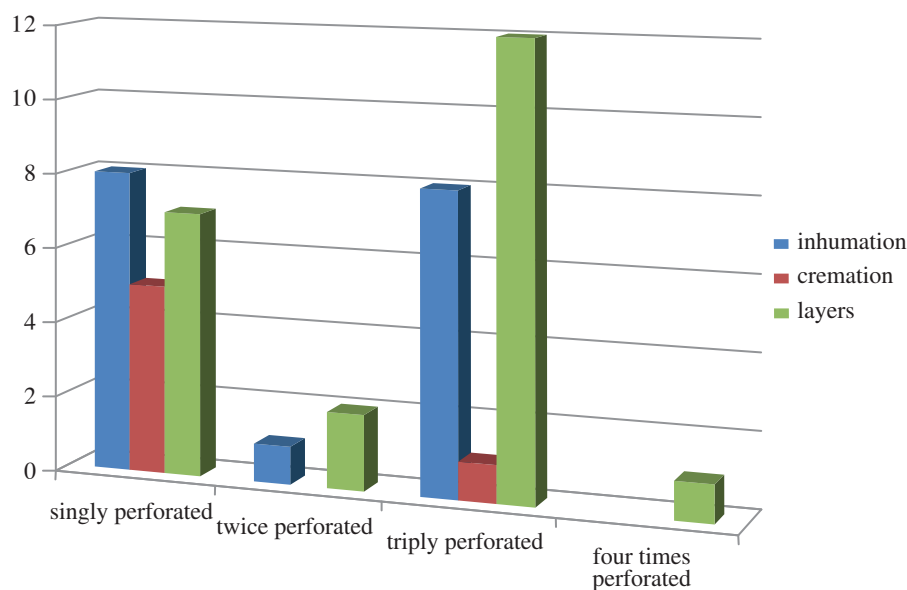
¹ Зотовић 1986, 41; Golubović 2008, 15.

² The oldest cemetery belongs to the Celtic population that inhabited the area at the end of the 4th and the beginning of the 3rd century BC. The two youngest cemeteries belong to the period of the Great Migration: the eastern Gothic one was used during the second half of the 5th century and the Gepidic one was used in the middle of the 6th century. The absolutely youngest one is a smaller mediaeval cemetery, roughly dated to the period from the 12th to the 14th century (cf. Зотовић 1986, 41, ref. 4; 54–55; Зотовић, Јордовић 1990, 2).

³ Within the examined area of the site of Pećine, three cemeteries were distinguished: the oldest one, contemporary to the site Više Grobalja; the second one from the same period, but with cremations and infant skeletal burials only and the youngest one, from the middle of the 3rd to the middle of the 5th century.

⁴ Зотовић 1986, 42–45; Зотовић, Јордовић 1990, 1–34; Korać, Golubović 2009, 12–13, ref. 15–17.

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Graph 1 – Perforated coins at Pećine necropolis (from graves and from layers)

Графикон 1 - Перфорирани новчићи са некрополе Пећине (из гробова и слојева)

beginning of the 2nd century and was used until the middle of the 3rd century. At the southern Viminacium cemeteries, cremation was abandoned in the middle of the 3rd century and from that point onwards, only skeletal burials were practiced. During that period and in the southern area, two further cemeteries were established: Burdelj and Pećine. The first one remained in use until the middle of the 4th century and the second one until the middle of the 5th century.⁵

During the excavations of the cemeteries at the Pećine site, a total of 3,865 coins were discovered.⁶ Of this number, 3,497 pieces were available to be examined. They belong to the period starting from 32/31 BC. (Marcus Antonius) to 423 AD. (Theodosius II).⁷ A certain number of the coins discovered at Pećine, actually 45, were perforated either one, two, three or four times. Of that number, 17 were discovered in skeletal burials (G), six were discovered in cremations (G1), while 22 come from the layer of the necropolis (Graph 1). As already noticed on the necropolis of Više Grobalja, the number of perforated coins from Pećine is much larger from the skeletal burials than from the cremated ones. At the same time, the latter also represent the only numismatic finds from graves, contrary to skeletal burials, which in some cases include several perforated coins and even more often imperforated ones. This coincides with analyses of the necropolis of Više Grobalja. Here, regardless of a smaller total sample of examined coinage,

more perforated coins were discovered than at the necropolis of Pećine (47 pieces or 1.72% compared to 45 pieces or 1.28%).⁸ In addition, a larger percentage of perforated coins as grave goods was noticed at the necropolis of Više Grobalja (23 in G and nine in G1 or 48.92% and 19.14%) than at Pećine (17 in G and six in G1 or 37.77% and 13.33%) and compared to the number of coin finds from layers (15 pieces or 31.92% from Više Grobalja and 22 pieces or 48.90% from Pećine).⁹

⁵ This necropolis at the site “Pećine” cuts through the areas of older, already abandoned cemeteries with both cremations and skeletal graves (cf. Зоровић 1986, 52).

⁶ The coins came from both graves and layers (sacrificial areas formed on top of one or several graves).

⁷ All of the numismatic finds from the mentioned sites were listed during 2005 and 2006 at the National Museum in Požarevac (M. Vojvoda, D. Spasić-Đurić). It was concluded that a certain number of pieces was either lost or permanently damaged during conservation processes (367 pieces). A similar situation was observed with pieces from the cemetery of Više Grobalja – according to the field documentation, a total of 3,161 coins were excavated, but only 2,736 remained preserved (cf. Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, 10, ref. 6).

⁸ The percentage relates to the total number of coins available for examining: 2,736 pieces from Više Grobalja and 3,497 pieces from Pećine.

⁹ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, 30, 32, 33, Tabele 7–8; Vojvoda 2015a, 55.

¹⁰ Cf. *supra* ref. 8.

INHUMATION GRAVES (Tables 1–2)

Within the group of skeletal burials with perforated coins as grave goods, one can distinguish between infant graves and those of adults (Tables 1–2). Three graves of adult individuals were noted with a single perforated coin in each of them (G–1749, G–4923 and G–5119), and three graves with triply perforated coins in each of them (G–1827, G–4197 and G 4975). In addition, in one of the graves, both singly and triply perforated coins were discovered together (G–877). Among the infant graves, four contained singly perforated coins (G–1807, G–2947, G–3562 and G–4160).

In four further graves there were finds of triply perforated coins (G–227, G–342, G–2669 and G–3541). It can be noticed that the number of graves containing perforated coins as grave goods is almost identical both at the cemetery of Više Grobalja and Pećine (6–7 graves). The only difference is the relation of singly and triply perforated coins. However, the necropolis of Više Grobalja contains a somewhat larger number of perforated coins in infant graves when compared to the necropolis of Pećine (13 to 9). Moreover, the necropolis at Pećine revealed no infant graves with two perforated coins as grave goods, while the necropolis Više Grobalja revealed two of them.¹⁰

singly perforated coins in graves of adults			
Grave number (G)	Total number of coins in the grave	Number of perforated coins in the grave	Position in the grave according to Clarke
1749	2	1	A - D
4923	1	1	A
5119	1	1	A
triple perforated coins in graves of adults			
1827	1	1	A
4197	2	1	? - ?
4975	2	1	D - F
singly and triple perforated coins in graves of adults			
877	2	2	D - D

Table 1 . Perforated coins in graves of adults (inhumations)

Табела 1. Перфорирани новчићи у гробовима одраслих индивидуа (инхумације)

singly perforated coins in infant graves			
Grave number (G)	Total number of coins in the grave	Number of perforated coins in the grave	Position in the grave according to Clarke
1807	1	1	H
2947	3	1	A - B - D
3562	1	1	?
4160	1	1	D
twice perforated coins in infant graves			
4288	2	1	D - G
triply perforated coins in infant graves			
227	1	1	F
342	1	1	?
2669	1	1	D
3541	1	1	?

Table 2. Perforated coins in graves of children (inhumations)

Табела 2. Перфорирани новчићи у децим гробовима (инхумације)

Singly perforated coins in graves of adults

G 1749¹¹ – An adult buried in a wooden coffin. Grave goods: beneath the right clavicle (position D) there was an imperforated as of Trajan; next to the pelvis, on the left side, shards of a grey burned pot; between the feet a red burned, single handled pot; on the stomach there was a larger red stone; on the right side of the skull (position A) there was a ring-shaped bronze earring with a pendant representing a perforated coin.

The Trajan's as is dated to the year 99–100 (cat. 246), with the image of Victoria facing left, holding a palm branch and a shield with the inscription SPQR. The perforated coin represents part of the so-called "monetary jewellery" as an earring pendant (Pl. I/1).¹² Since it is quite badly preserved, the only thing one could think of is that is an anonymous quadrans (Mercury's group?).

G 4923 – An adult buried without a coffin. Grave goods: next to the skull (position A) there was a perforated silver tetradrachm of Nero; some 60 cm away from the skull towards the south there was a bronze key-ring;¹³ near the feet there was a red painted oil-lamp with the stamp FLVI and a bronze ring.

The Nero's silver tetradrachm (Pl. I/2) dated to the year 65–66 belongs to the series of the provincial mint of Alexandria and represents the only piece from this mint discovered so far in Viminacium.¹⁴ On the obverse there is an emperor's bust with an Aegis and a radial crown, while on the reverse there is the bust of the personification of Alexandria with an elephant's skin on her head. The perforation is circular, made from the obverse side, from an aesthetical point of view indicating that the obverse was meant to be seen. However, the obverse axis compared to the reverse axis measures 0 degrees, also indicating that the reverse side was meant to be seen. The perforation edges were polished on both sides and show only very small traces of perforating.

G 5119 – An adult buried in a grave constructed of upward placed bricks and with a floor paved with tegulae. Grave goods: next to the head a glass bead and a perforated coin of Constantius II (position A).

The perforated coin belongs to the fractional folles (AE 3) of the mint Siscia with the inscription on the reverse HOC SIGNO VICTOR ERIS (the emperor and Victoria), dated to the year 350 (Pl. I/3).¹⁵ The perforation is of an irregular circular shape, made from the obverse side at 3 o'clock. Since the coin was discovered together with a glass bead, there is a possibility that both finds once represented necklace pendants. However, the position of the perforation does not indicate

that the images represented upon the coin were important in a decorative sense, meaning that none of the images were meant to be seen as such.

Triply perforated coins in graves of adults

G 1827 – An adult buried without a coffin. Grave goods: on the left eye socket (position A) there was a triply perforated bronze coin; beneath the lower legs, a ceramic pot.

The perforated coin is illegible, but it is a dupondius or as from the Julio–Claudian dynasty (Pl. I/4).¹⁶ The perforations are circular and made from the obverse side at 5, 7 and 10 o'clock. The finding place on the deceased's left eye provides information about the variety of coin usage in funerary rituals in Viminacium cemeteries.

G 4197 – An adult buried in a grave with brick construction and covered with bricks. Grave goods: on the upper grave construction level (position?) there was a perforated coin; in the middle (over the stomach of the deceased?) there was a bronze coin from the provincial mint of Nicaea, a glass bead and part of an object made of lead.¹⁷

The fact that the coin discovered "on the upper grave construction level" was damaged after the coffin lid was hit with mechanisation is in some doubt. One suspects that the coin was placed upon the grave construction lid during the funeral. It is a triply perforated as from the series DIVVS AVGVSTVS PATER, with the image of an altar on the reverse side (Pl. I/5). It was minted during the reign of Tiberius and dated to the years 22/23–30 (?). The perforations are circular, made from the obverse side at 2, 7 and 10 o'clock. Within the grave, a bronze coin of Gordian III was discovered, belonging to the series of the Bithynian mint of Nicaea.¹⁸

¹¹ The mark G refers to skeletal graves, while G1 refers to cremations.

¹² Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 246 (as Trajan); C-5027 (earring with a perforated coin).

¹³ Миловановић, Мрђић 2016, 250, Tabela 1, no. 22; 253, ref. 12; T. I.22.

¹⁴ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 3110.

¹⁵ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 1530.

¹⁶ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 2266.

¹⁷ While levelling the terrain, the top of the grave construction was damaged with mechanisation. The fragment of the lead object was classified as study material (cf. fieldwork diary, 2974).

¹⁸ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 36 (perforated coin); cat. no. 3023 (Nicaea mint).

Since there are no other finds that would enable a more precise dating of this grave, the coins represent its *terminus post quem*.

It is obvious that there is a huge time span between the coin discovered within the grave (238–244) and the perforated one from the upper grave construction level (22/23–30). It covers between 208 and 222 years. This is not a single example, since at the Viminacium cemeteries, there were several such cases with even greater time spans.¹⁹ The presence of coins from the Julio–Claudian dynasty in the graves from the 3rd century is rare, but it is not an exception.²⁰ A similar occurrence was noticed with some hoard-finds of coins from the Danube and the Balkan provinces. Coins of triumvir Marcus Antonius and the members of the Julio–Claudian dynasty are represented in some hoards as late as the fourth decade of the 3rd century.²¹ The choice to keep a bronze coin over a long period of time is certainly no coincidence and it is not connected with its material value. The cult of divine Augustus was one of the most important phenomena within ideological propaganda. It was initiated during the reign of the Julio–Claudian dynasty and later, during the Principate. The political consequences of Augustus' deification were quite remarkable. Starting with his direct heirs, but also later, emperors were keen to highlight their origin or the continuity of reign that went back to their divine ancestor, the founder of the Principate. Basically, by using the authority of the divine Augustus, his heirs attempted to strengthen their position, further leading towards the development of the emperor's personal cult.²² Such tendencies are clearly expressed in the coin minting series of *divus augustus pater* during the reign of Tiberius.

We do not know when the coin from grave G 4197 was perforated, but it is possible that, for a while, it was used as part of some composite jewellery (necklace?). The fact is however, that it was kept over two hundred years only to be deposited into a grave. It is interesting to mention that when compared to the total number of discovered coins dated into the 1st century, pieces from these series represent common finds at the Viminacium cemeteries of Više Grobalja and Pećine. At the necropolis of Više Grobalja, a total of 37 pieces were discovered that belong to the series *divus augustus pater*: of that number, 26 were unearthed from graves (both G and G1) while eleven came from the necropolis layer. Of the total number unearthed, six coins were perforated.²³ At the necropolis of Pećine, a total of 19 pieces were unearthed, fourteen came from

graves and five from the necropolis layer. Three of them were perforated.

G 4975 – An adult buried in a wooden coffin. Grave goods: on the chest (position D) there was an as of Septimius Severus; on the left pelvis side (position F) there was a perforated as of Antoninus Pius; on the right pelvis side there was an oil-lamp.

Due to the poor state of preservation and according to relevant catalogues, it was not possible to determine the triply perforated as of Antoninus Pius (Pl. I/6). The perforations are square, made from the obverse side at 12, 4 and 8 o'clock. Because of the same reasons, the as of Septimius Severus was not precisely determined.²⁴ It is interesting that the imperforated coin was discovered on the chest, while the perforated one was placed next to the deceased's pelvis. This example again illustrates the variety of perforated coin usages in funerary rituals in Viminacium. On the other hand, it narrows our attempt to draw certain conclusions regarding the existence of regularities within them.

Singly and triply perforated coins in graves of adults

G 877 – An adult, buried without a coffin. Grave goods: next to the left shoulder a singly perforated bronze coin; next to the right shoulder a triply perforated bronze coin.

The only grave goods include two perforated coins discovered next to the deceased's shoulders, thus indicating that they might have been pendants on a string-like necklace or sewed to pieces of clothing. The singly perforated coin of Marcus Aurelius (caesar?) represents a series from an unknown provincial mint (Pl. I/7). The perforation is circular and made from the obverse side at 7 o'clock. The triply perforated dupondius is also rather badly preserved, but it most likely belongs to the

¹⁹ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, 28–29.

²⁰ Gorecki 1979, 55–56, Fig. 1; Fitz 1980, 37, Tab. a, b; Istenič 1999, 203, ref. 2; Găzdac-Alföldy, Găzdac 2009, 164, ref. 13.

²¹ Kos 1986, 74–78; Borić-Brešković, Crnobrnja 2005, 13–14; Borić-Brešković, Crnobrnja 2008, 14–15; Borić-Brešković, Arsenijević 2008, 101–103, Table 2–4; Borić-Brešković, Vojvoda 2010, 22–23, ref. 10, 12–13, 31–35; Table 3–6b; Borić-Brešković, Vojvoda 2011, 15–18, Table 1–3, Graph 1–2, 19, ref. 29; Borić-Brešković, Vojvoda 2012, 23–26; ref. 10, Table 1–2, Graph 1.

²² Vojvoda 2015b, 53–55.

²³ Vojvoda 2015a, 53–78.

²⁴ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 768 (perforated coin); cat. no. 1126 (as of Septimius Severus).

mints of Augustus Octavianus and certainly dates to the first half of the 1st century (Pl. I/8).²⁵ The perforations are square, made from the reverse side at 3, 6 and 9 o'clock.

Singly perforated coins in infant graves

G 1807 – Grave of an infant buried in a wooden coffin. Grave goods: on the right pelvis side there was a fragmented balsamarium; on the left pelvis side there was another balsamarium and an oil-lamp; between the lower leg parts there was a bronze brooch with a bow; next to the right foot there was a fragmented balsamarium; next to the left foot there were several items piled on one spot (position H):²⁶ a singly perforated coin of Augustus, a shell, a bronze bulla, an iron finger-ring with a circular head, a bronze bell, large perforated boar tooth, a processed antler, an earring made of silver wire with a spherical bead, a bronze sewing needle bent to look like a pendant, a pendant made out of a cow's tooth, three bone pendants in the shape of a phallus, four glass beads, two pendants made of bronze wire and a single carnel pendant in the shape of a phallus. The majority of items from the casket are perforated, possibly representing parts of a single or several strings. Their content indicates that they did not possess a decorative, but a protective purpose.²⁷

The perforated coin of Augustus belongs to special editions of the Roman mint from the year 7 BC made by the monetarius P. Lurius Agrippa (Pl. I/9). They include pieces minted in copper and of various weights. There are numerous studies regarding this phenomenon, but the most common theory is that they possess a triumphal character connected to the victories of Tiberius in the year 7 BC and under Augustus' auspices.²⁸ The coins were obviously parts of a string, along with the other listed items, all of them possessing protective features. The perforation is circular, made from the obverse side at 12 o'clock, indicating that Augustus' portrait was meant to be seen.

G 2947 – Grave of an infant buried in a wooden coffin, in an oval grave pit. Grave goods: in the mouth (position B) there was a bronze coin of Trajan; beneath the skull (position A) there was a perforated bronze coin; on the chest (position D) a bronze coin of Hadrian (?);²⁹ on the left skull side a jug; in the western part of the oval pit: two pottery jugs, a pot and an oil-lamp.

The bronze coin of Trajan (cat. 386) discovered within the deceased's mouth was poorly preserved and it was not possible to specify it more precisely according to the relevant catalogues. It was roughly dated

between the years 98 and 117. The perforated bronze coin (Pl. I/10) belongs to the series of one of the provincial mints. Due to the poor state of preservation, it was not possible to classify it to either a specific ruler or a specific mint. Because of the same reason, it was broadly dated from the 1st to the 3rd century, although it most likely belongs to the 2nd century. The perforation is circular and made from the obverse side at 12 o'clock. The third bronze coin (cat. 2405) was also poorly preserved, but it was possible to determine it into the period of Hadrian's reign (although with some uncertainty).³⁰

G 3562 – Grave of an infant buried without a coffin. Grave goods: at the same spot, in the northern pit part³¹ there was a fragmented sea-shell, a perforated bronze coin of Trajan, a stone chip, a bronze ring with a round cross-section, a fragmented and deformed sewing needle, and two circular plates made of bronze sheet with tin with rivets and a deformed bronze sheet.

The perforated bronze as of Trajan (Pl. II/1) is fragmented and poorly preserved and it was not possible to determine it according to the relevant literature. It is dated into the entire chronological span of Trajan's rule, from 98 to 117.³² The perforation is circular and made from the obverse side at 8 o'clock. There is a possibility that on the damaged spot there was another perforation, but this cannot be claimed with any certainty.

²⁵ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 3303 (singly perforated coin); cat. no. 2193 (triple perforated coin).

²⁶ In a soil lump a wooden imprint was discovered and this is why it is considered that all of the items were once deposited in a wooden casket; cf. fieldwork diary, 1625.

²⁷ Спасић-Ђурић 2008, 124–128, Sl. 1.2.

²⁸ RIC I, 75, ref. *.

²⁹ The grave is orientated east/west. Since only the skull remained preserved, the position of finds was determined according to the distance from the skull and to the cardinal directions. The coffin measures 1.50 x 0.55 m. At a distance of 20 cm to the west of the skull there was the third coin, possibly corresponding to the position of the chest or stomach. Since anthropological analysis is missing and according to the length of the coffin, we presume that this was a deceased in his/her early years of life.

³⁰ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 3388 (perforated coin); cat. no. 386 (Trajan); cat. no. 2405 (Hadrian).

³¹ The pit measures 1 X 0.50 m and it was orientated north-south. The bones were not preserved and this causes all of the doubts regarding position of grave goods towards the deceased. However, there is a great chance that the head of the deceased was placed in the north, since this was observed in many Viminacium graves.

³² Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 352.

G 4160 – Grave of an infant buried without a coffin. Grave goods: on the right clavicle (position D) there was a perforated antoninianus of Aurelianus with traces of textile.

The perforated antoninianus (Pl. II/2) of Aurelianus bears an illegible mint mark on its reverse side and it was, therefore not, determined according to the relevant literature.³³ The perforation was made from the obverse side at 12 o'clock, indicating that the portrait of the emperor was meant to be seen. It most likely played the role of a pendant. Textile remains do not necessarily indicate that it was sewn onto clothes, but possibly only simply placed upon the deceased's clothes.

Twice perforated coins in graves of infants

G 4288 – Grave of an infant buried in a wooden coffin. Grave goods: next to the right leg (position G) there was a bronze coin and a fragmented needle made of amber; around the neck (position D) there was a necklace consisting of: a twice perforated bronze coin, a bronze bulla, a pendant made of amber and a pendant made of clay, one perforated snail-shell, a bead made of bone and another one made of stone and several glass beads.

The bronze coin discovered next to the right leg belongs to the autonomous Macedonian minting (ΚΩΙΝΩΝ ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΩΝ). Due to the poor state of preservation it was not possible to determine it precisely, although it is most likely one of the series of Claudius I.³⁴ The twice perforated coin that makes one part of the necklace (Pl. II/3) is very poorly preserved, but it is most likely an as from the beginning of the 2nd century (Hadrian?).

Triply perforated coins in graves of infants

G 227 – Grave of an infant with the grave construction made of bricks and covered with tegulae. Grave goods: next to the pelvis on the right side (position F) there was a triply perforated bronze coin.

The triply perforated bronze as belongs to the series of the Roman mint for Tiberius from the year 15–16 (Pl. II/4).³⁵ The perforations are square and made from the obverse side at 3, 7 and 11 o'clock.

G 342 – Grave of an infant buried in a wooden coffin. Grave goods: outside the coffin on the western side there were three jugs; outside the coffin on the eastern side there was a pot and fragments of a censer; in the eastern part³⁶ there was a glass bead and a triply per-

forated bronze coin; in the middle there was a pendant modelled from a vessel's stomach with three holes and a gold earring in the shape of a ring.

The perforated bronze coin (T. II/5) is poorly preserved and it was dated into the 1st century, in the time of the Julio–Claudian dynasty (Tiberius–Drusus?).³⁷ The perforations were made from the obverse side, two of them being circular (at 12 and 8 o'clock), while the remaining one is square (at 5 o'clock). The coin and the bead could have represented parts of a string.

G 2669 – Grave of an infant buried in a wooden coffin. Grave goods: above the head there was a glass balsamarium, an iron knife blade and a small glass bottle with two handles; on the left side of the deceased there was a glass guta, a bone sewing needle and a bronze one; next to the right arm there was a bone spatula and a glass balsamarium; on the body (position D) there was a triply perforated bronze coin.

The coin belongs to the mints of Claudius I (Pl. II/6), but since it is badly preserved, it was not possible to determine it precisely.³⁸ The perforations are circular and made from the obverse side at 3, 6 and 9 o'clock. The perforation at 9 o'clock actually consists of two overlapping perforations, thus forming the shape of an "8".

G 3541 – Disturbed grave of an infant, the area with bones measures 20 cm; among the bones there was a triply perforated bronze coin.

Due to the poor state of preservation, the perforated coin (Pl. II/7) was not precisely determined, except that it belongs to the period of Julio–Claudian dynasty.³⁹ The perforations are circular, made from the obverse side at 3, 8 and 10 o'clock. They all have different diameters.

³³ The inscription on the reverse ORIENS AVG, with the image of Sol holding a globe and lifting his right arm, next to his feet there are two captives. This image was depicted on coin series from Rome and Serdica and it is dated in the year 273–274. Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 1324.

³⁴ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 3133.

³⁵ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 26.

³⁶ The grave is orientated east-west. While the grave pit and the coffin are clearly distinguished, the bones were only preserved in traces and it is, therefore, not possible to determine the orientation of the skeleton.

³⁷ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 2195.

³⁸ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 77.

³⁹ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 2242.

CREMATION GRAVES

Compared to skeletal burials, at the cemetery of Pećine, just as already noticed at the cemetery of Više Grobalja, perforated coins are much less represented in cremations. Six graves were unearthed in which there were singly or triply perforated coins. The latter was represented in only one grave.

Singly perforated coins

G1 110 – Cremation in a grave with two levels.⁴⁰ Grave goods on the first level, all of them in the same spot: parts of a casket (bronze plates, a circular lock with a key, a handle), a bronze mirror, a bronze box decorated with enamel, a round bronze brooch, a perforated silver coin of Augustus Octavianus; at the bottom of the first level (30 cm away from the remaining finds) there was a larger fragment of a circular bronze mirror.

The perforated Augustus' quinarius (Pl. II/8) with the inscription on the reverse ASIA RECEPTA (Victory standing left on cista mystica between two snakes) is dated to the years 29 to 26 BC.⁴¹ It was minted in Italy, but the question of the mint (Brundisium or Rome) is still indefinable in relevant literature. The perforation is circular and made from the obverse side (at 9 o'clock compared to the obverse axis), indicating that the reverse side was meant to be seen. However, the reverse axis is positioned to the south-west when compared to the obverse, thus making the perforation position at 8 o'clock when compared to the obverse axis. The perforation's position does not indicate that either of the images was intentionally to be seen, if one considers that the coin was used as a pendant on a necklace. This does not exclude the possibility that it was a pendant on, for example, an arm ring.

G1 111 – Cremation with two levels. Grave goods on the first level: in the northern part there was a bronze as of Hadrian; in the southern part there was a fragmented oil-lamp; on the second level: in the northern part a glass balsamarium and a perforated coin; in the south-eastern part there was a pot.

The bronze as of Hadrian has the image of Iustitia on the reverse side and it is dated to the years 132–134. The perforated as (Pl. II/9) bears the image of an eagle on a globe on the reverse side and represents yet another piece from the series *divus Augustus pater*, minted during the reign of Tiberius, between 34 and 37.⁴² The perforation is circular and made from the reverse side, at 10 o'clock compared to the obverse axis.

G1 542 – Cremation with two levels. Grave goods on the first level: next to the eastern wall a small bronze ring, fragments of a bronze mirror, plating parts made of bronze sheets, a fragment of a bronze bulla, and eight decorative nails with spherical bronze heads and iron thorns; on the second level there was a perforated bronze coin.

Due to the poor state of preservation, the perforated bronze coin (Pl. III/1) was only roughly determined into the period of Hadrian's reign, but without any precise dating within this period.⁴³ The perforation is circular and made from the obverse side at 12 o'clock, possibly indicating that it might have represented a necklace pendant.

G1 663 – Cremation with two levels. Grave goods on the first level: in the eastern part there was a bronze coin; on the second level: next to the eastern wall: a pottery oil-lamp with the stamp APRIO and a pot; as the grave wall had collapsed, a perforated bronze coin and a bronze ring (a finger-ring?) were unearthed.

The bronze coin discovered on the first level belongs to the time of Hadrian, but since it is poorly preserved, it was not possible to determine it precisely. For the same reasons, the perforated bronze coin (Pl. III/2) was only roughly dated into the period of the Julio-Claudian dynasty.⁴⁴ The perforation is circular and made from the obverse side at 12 o'clock, indicating that it might have been used as necklace pendant.

G1 720 – Cremation without levels. Grave goods: next to the northern wall there was a pot and three jugs; to the west of them there was a pot made of kaolin clay, a bronze coin of Nero, an earring made of silver wire with a perforated denarius of Hadrian as a pendant, a bronze, phallus-shaped pendant and an iron finger-ring with a glass gem; in the south-eastern part there was a bronze coin of Hadrian.

The bronze as of Nero (cat. 102) with the image of a flying Victoria holding a shield on the reverse, was dated to the years 66–68. The bronze coin of Hadrian (cat. 449) belongs to the series with the image of the

⁴⁰ The grave was damaged with two later burials (G 344 and G 336) and with one sarcophagus. Only a smaller part of the first and the second level remained preserved.

⁴¹ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 2.

⁴² Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 41 (perforated coin); cat. no. 426 (Hardian).

⁴³ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 582.

⁴⁴ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 2211 (perforated coin); cat. no. 589 (Hardian).

province of Dacia and it is dated between 134 and 138. The perforated denarius of Hadrian belongs to the set of the so-called “monetary jewellery” and was used as a pendant on an earring. It belongs to the early series of Hadrian, from the years 119–122. The reverse image depicts Pax holding a branch and a sceptre (Pl. III/3).⁴⁵

Triply perforated coins

G1 844 – A cremation.⁴⁶ Grave goods: a pottery bowl, a cup, a small pot, a jug, a glass guta, an amber statuette in the shape of a larva (a bug?) and a perforated bronze coin of Trajan (excavated beneath the amber statuette).

The perforated as of Trajan was poorly preserved and because of that, it was not possible to determine it precisely. According to the visible inscription part on the obverse, it belongs to his early series from the year 98 to 102 (Pl. III/4).⁴⁷ The perforations are of irregular circular shape, made from the obverse side at 12, 5 and 7 o'clock.

PERFORATED COINS FROM THE NECROPOLIS LAYERS

Approximately one half of perforated coins discovered at the necropolis Pećine come from layers, including spaces between graves or sacrificial areas on a group of graves. Of the 22 unearthed perforated coins, seven of them were singly perforated, two were perforated twice, twelve of them bore three perforations and a single piece was perforated four times.

Singly perforated coins

The singly perforated coins can chronologically be distinguished as follows: **1.** dupondius or as from the time of the Julio–Claudian dynasty (Pl. III/5); the perforation is circular and made from the reverse side at 4 o'clock compared to the obverse axis; **2.** dupondius or as from the time of Julio–Claudian dynasty (Pl. III/6); the perforation is circular and made from the obverse side at 12 o'clock.⁴⁸ **3.** quadrans dated to the 1st or 2nd century; the perforation is circular and made from the obverse side, near the middle (Pl. III/7).⁴⁹ **4.** bronze piece of Julia Domna from the mint of Stobi (Pl. III/8); the perforation is large, circular, roughly made and pierced near the middle; **5.** denarius of Julia Mamaea (Pl. III/9); the perforation is circular and made from the obverse side at 3 o'clock; **6.** antoninianus of Probus from the mint of Siscia and dated to the year 280 (Pl.

III/10); the perforation is circular and made from the obverse side at 5 o'clock. **7.** folles fraction dated to the 4th century (Pl. IV/1); the perforation is circular and made from the obverse side at 9 o'clock.⁵⁰

Twice perforated coins

At the necropolis of Pećine and within layers, twice perforated coins were noticed only in two cases: **1.** an as of Trajan (Pl. IV/2); the three perforations are circular and made from the obverse side at 5 and 6 o'clock; **2.** a folles fraction dated to the 4th century (Pl. IV/3); the perforations are circular and made from the obverse side at 2 and 10 o'clock.⁵¹

Triply perforated coins

The total of twelve triply perforated coins were discovered within the necropolis' layers: **1.** Tiberius' as of the type *divus Augustus pater* (Pl. IV/4); the perforations are square and made from the obverse side at 4, 7 and 11 o'clock; **2–3.** two dupondii or ases of Claudius; the first one bears rectangular perforations, made from the obverse side at 1, 5 and 8 o'clock (Pl. IV/5); the second one bears circular perforations at 12, 5 and 9 o'clock (Pl. IV/6); **4.** an as of Nero (Pl. IV/7), with circular perforations made from the obverse side at 12, 4 and 8 o'clock; **5–7.** three dupondii or ases from the time of the Julio–Claudian dynasty. All of the coins bear circular perforations, made from the obverse side at 2, 4 and 9 o'clock (Pl. IV/8); at 3, 6 and 11 o'clock (Pl. IV/9); and at 2, 6 and 10 o'clock (Pl. IV/10); **8.** an as of Domitianus (Pl. V/1) bears circular perforations

⁴⁵ Спасић-Ђурић 2008, 147; C–7443 (perforated coin); Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 102 (Nero); cat. no. 449 (Hadrian).

⁴⁶ It is a completely destroyed grave, reconstructed according to the traces of burned soil and grouped grave goods; cf. fieldwork diary, 2376.

⁴⁷ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 338.

⁴⁸ The coin was discovered at 0.40 m to the west from G 5291 (without any grave goods). At 0.70 m from the same grave and also towards the west, there was another coin. It is a provincial mint of Nicaea for Gordian III (cat. 3055).

⁴⁹ The perforated quadrans was discovered at the same depth and coordinates with: a folles of Constantine I (cat. 1426), a folles fraction from the time of Constantine's sons (cat. 2699) and a piece of provincial mint of the unknown origin and period (dated between the 1st and the 3rd century, cat. 3430).

⁵⁰ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 2263 (1); cat. no. 2258 (2); cat. no. 2349 (3); cat. no. 3154 (4); cat. no. 1190 (5); cat. no. 1340 (6); cat. no. 2730 (7).

⁵¹ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 316 (1); cat. no. 2744 (2).

made from the obverse side at 2, 6 and 10 o'clock; **9–10.** two dupondii or ases unearthed together:⁵² one of them is most likely from the time of Domitianus, while the second one is dated to the 1st century; the perforations are circular and made from the obverse side at: 12, 3 and 9 o'clock (Pl. V/2) and 12, 6 and 9 o'clock (Pl. V/3); **11.** a dupondius or as dated to the second half of the 1st century (Pl. V/4); the perforations are circular and made from the obverse side at 2, 5 and 9 o'clock; **12.** dupondius of Antoninus Pius (Pl. V/5); the perforations are circular and made at 12, 3 and 8 o'clock.⁵³

Coins with four perforations

Only a single piece with four perforations has been discovered so far in Viminacium. It is a dupondius or an as minted for Faustina II (Pl. V/6), with circular perforations made from the reverse side at 4, 6, 8 and 10 o'clock.⁵⁴

CONCLUSION

Studying the role of coins as grave goods contributes, at least partially, to resolving doubts connected to funerary rituals during the Roman Empire. The study of coins from the southern Viminacium cemeteries has already resulted in the conclusion that their role in funerary rituals was complex and still very little known.⁵⁵ Regardless of this, we consider that with systematic coin analyses from as many cemeteries from this period as possible, but also with an interdisciplinary approach and an understanding of the graves from the Viminacium cemeteries, one can come closer to resolving the issue. The same can be said for perforated coins. Here again, one comes across a great variety of coin deposits regarding the position of the deceased (in inhumations), the number of perforated coins within graves and their relationship to imperforated coins and other grave goods, their function in graves of adults or infants etc.

Even though there were no rules, the position of perforated coins in graves of adults was most commonly close to the head or torso (positions A and D). When it comes to graves of infants, position D can be encountered again, while all of the others are isolated and different. After analysing other grave goods in graves with perforated coins, we tried to understand whether there are elements that would indicate their function (whether they represented parts of necklaces/arm-rings, isolated pendants, whether they were sewn

onto the clothes or they had an unclear function). Additionally, our attention was also focused on the numismatic analysis of perforated coins, as well as the imperforated ones that were parts of inventories of the same graves.

Graves of adults (inhumations) – With six out of seven graves with perforated coins as grave goods, it was possible to determine their position regarding the body of the deceased. In three graves, imperforated coins were also unearthed. In both cases in which it was possible to determine the position, they were laid on the chest of the deceased. In most of the graves (four of them), the position of perforated coins was close to the head (around the head in three cases and in one case, it was positioned on the eye socket). None of them were discovered within the mouth. In one of the graves, a perforated coin was discovered next to the pelvis, while in another grave, two perforated coins were placed next to the left and the right shoulder of the deceased. The find of perforated a coin from G–1749 represented part of the so-called “monetary jewellery” (a pendant on a bronze earring). From the same grave there was a find of an imperforated coin, discovered beneath the right clavicle of the deceased. The finds of singly perforated coins from G 4923 and G 5119, in both cases discovered next to the skull, still remain undefined regarding their purpose. In the case of the first grave, the perforated coin was discovered independently, while in the second case, next to the perforated coin there was a glass bead. In both cases, the position of the coins could indicate their role on a string around the neck. Only in one grave so far (G 1827), was a triply perforated coin unearthed on the eye socket of the deceased. Owing to the position of the find, it does not leave much room for presumptions regarding its function since, at the same time, it was also the only numismatic find in this grave.⁵⁶ The discovery of a

⁵² Both coins most likely belonged to the devastated cremation grave. At the same spot, traces of soot and ash were discovered, together with a bronze bulla and fragments of a bronze belt plate; cf. fieldwork diary, 1979.

⁵³ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 42 (1); cat. nos. 74, 85 (2–3); cat. no. 105 (4); cat. nos. 2204, 2220, 2229 (5,6,7); cat. no. 176 (8); cat. nos. 2284, 2313 (9–10); cat. no. 2340 (11); cat. no. 814 (12).

⁵⁴ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, cat. no. 1050.

⁵⁵ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, 36; Vojvoda 2015a, 65; Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017.

⁵⁶ Besides the triply perforated coin, in this grave only a ceramic pot was unearthed, deposited near the lower legs.

triply perforated coin in G 4975, unearthed next to the pelvis of the deceased, also does not indicate that it was used as a piece of jewellery. Since the grave construction of G 4197 was devastated, it was not known where the coin was deposited in relation to the position of the deceased's body.⁵⁷ In the only grave of an adult in which a singly and a triply perforated coin were discovered (G-877), we can presume that they were used as pendants, since they were discovered next to the left and the right shoulder of the deceased.

Graves of infants (inhumations) – It was already noticed that in infant graves of the necropolis of Više Grobalja, perforated coins represented parts of composed necklaces or arm-rings, along with other different pendants, more commonly than in graves of adults.⁵⁸ Pendants played the role of repulsing evil forces by jingling and there were those of protective importance, but there were also pendants that incorporated both functions.⁵⁹ Such an example was also noticed at the necropolis of Pećine, in G 1807. In this grave, close to the legs, there were different finds, parts of a single or several laces, presumably deposited in a wooden casket, since they were all piled together.⁶⁰ The inventory of this casket included: a perforated coin, a shell, a bronze bulla, an iron finger-ring with a circular head, a bronze bell, a large perforated boar tooth, a processed antler, an earring made of silver wire with a ball-shaped pearl, a bronze sewing needle bent into the shape of a pendant, a pendant made of a cow's tooth, three phallus-shaped bone pendants, four glass beads, two pendants made of bronze wire and a phallus-shaped carneole pendant.⁶¹ All of the listed grave goods possessed a strong protective power, confirming statements from ancient sources about the belief that children were especially exposed to evil forces and that they needed protection, both during their lifetime and in the afterlife. With some uncertainty, the perforated coin from G 2947 might have represented a pendant, since it was discovered beneath the deceased's skull. In the same grave and within the mouth of the deceased, an imperforated coin was also discovered, along with another one next to the skull.

The find of a perforated coin from G 3562 most likely represented part of a string, since it was discovered in the same place with a bronze ring, a deformed bronze sewing needle, a sea-shell, a stone chip, two circular bronze plates with nails and a deformed bronze sheet. The first two finds could have made parts of a string, along with the perforated coin.⁶² The only grave good from grave G 4160 was a perforated coin discov-

ered on the chest of the deceased, which could have played the role of a single pendant of a necklace. The fact that it was unearthed together with textile remains does not necessarily mean that it was sewn onto the clothes, especially since it is a single antoninianus with one perforation made from the obverse side at 12 o'clock compared to the obverse axis.⁶³ Twice perforated coins represent rare finds in the cemeteries of Viminacium.⁶⁴ Three of them have been registered so far. One of them was unearthed in G 4288 and it represented part of a necklace around the deceased's neck. Besides the twice perforated coin, the remaining parts of the necklace included a bronze bulla, pendants made of amber, clay, bone and a snail shell and several glass beads. Within the grave G 227, the only grave good was a triply perforated coin deposited near the pelvis, therefore not incorporating any piece of jewellery. Due to the poor state of preservation of the bones, in G 342 it was not possible to determine the position of grave goods compared to the skeleton of the deceased. A triply perforated coin and a glass bead were unearthed together, possibly making parts of a necklace with two pendants. In the other location within the grave pit there was a pendant modelled out of a pottery vessel's stomach, triply perforated, and next to it a gold earring in the shape of a ring. According to the situation in G 2669, we can presume that the perforated coin played the role of a pendant, since it was discovered on the chest of the deceased. The same cannot be said for G 3541, in which the bones were disturbed and the only grave good among them was a perforated coin.

Cremated graves – Of five singly perforated coins and one triply perforated piece discovered within cremations, only one represents part of a jewellery set (a pendant on an earring), while for all of the others there

⁵⁷ Cf. supra ref. 13.

⁵⁸ Vojvoda 2015a, 68–69.

⁵⁹ Besides beads made of different materials, pierced chips and rings, there were also bullas, bells, shells, boar's teeth and teeth of other animals, phallus-shaped pendants etc.

⁶⁰ Cf. supra ref. 19.

⁶¹ Спасић-Ђурић 2008, 124–128, Fig. 1, 2.

⁶² The bones are practically completely unpreserved and it is, therefore, not possible to determine the position of coins in relation to the body of the deceased.

⁶³ The Aurelianus antoninianus was pierced from the obverse side at 12 o'clock. All of this indicates that the obverse was meant to be seen and that it was most likely used as a pendant. Textile remains simply represent parts of the deceased's clothes.

⁶⁴ Not discovered at the necropolis of Više Grobalja.

are no elements to support such a presumption. It was the grave G1 720 in which, among pottery finds and in the same spot, there were an as of Nero (cat. 102), an earring made of silver wire and a perforated denarius of Hadrian,⁶⁵ a phallus-shaped bronze pendant and an iron finger-ring.⁶⁶ In all of the other cremations with perforated coins, after having analysed the position of grave goods within the grave pits, we cannot draw any conclusions as to whether they played roles as pendants included in jewellery sets. In G1 110, the perforated coin was most likely deposited in a casket. Pieces of bronze plating, a handle and a lock belonging to this casket were also unearthened. Besides the coin, and within the casket, there were also a bronze mirror, a bronze box for an amulet, decorated with enamel, and a circular bronze brooch.⁶⁷ In G1 542, in its first level, there were parts of bronze casket plating. Within the casket, there were a bronze mirror and a bulla, all of them piled together. However, the perforated coin was discovered in the second level and it was the only grave good there. In both cases, regardless of whether the coin was within or outside the box, the presumption remains open that it could have represented an independent pendant or played any other possible role.

Already, with the Više Grobalja cemetery, we indicated that certain experts' opinions regarding the function of triply perforated coins need to be changed since, according to them, they were sewn onto clothes.⁶⁸ This is shown once more with the discoveries from the necropolis of Pećine. At least with the Viminacium cemeteries, one is, therefore, allowed to say that such finds were first of all used as jewellery, more precisely, parts of necklaces, as shown in most of the cases. Speaking about the role of perforated coins in funerary rituals, it is interesting to note that such finds from the two Viminacium cemeteries make parts of necklace sets in infant or female graves, along with other pendants that possessed a protective function. Contrary to men, women and children were considered to be especially vulnerable and exposed to evil influences and needed extra protection during their lifetimes, but also in the afterlife. Such necklace sets include crescent-shaped pendants, bronze bells, wild boars' teeth, snail shells, bronze bullas, pendants shaped as miniature tools, phallus-shaped pendants, eye-shaped beads, red beads, etc. Besides these pendants with a protective character, there were also other pendants (coins, common beads, rings), playing an additional role of jingling or making a noise.⁶⁹ However, not in all of the cases did coins play the role of jingling items, as shown in the ceme-

tery of Više Grobalja. Within the grave of an adult, most likely a female individual (G 596), two silver, crescent-shaped pendants and a singly perforated denarius of Hadrian, bearing the image of a crescent and stars on its reverse side, were discovered on the chest of the deceased. The perforation was made from the obverse side at 6 o'clock and from the reverse side at 12 o'clock. This indicated that the reverse side and its image of a crescent were meant to be seen. The crescent-shaped pendants belong to the oldest and ever present examples in Antiquity. Two crescent-shaped pendants and the coin with the related image are surely not a coincidence. The coin was carefully chosen and pierced in such a way as to expose the reverse image. Described like this, it can also be understood as a protective item, just as well as the crescent-shaped pendants.⁷⁰ This example shows the necessity to check every grave find of a perforated coin in detail, especially when they represent parts of string sets (positions of perforations, the images on the reverse sides etc.).

Layers at the necropolis – Besides graves, perforated coins (22 pieces) were also discovered in layers between or on graves. They were used during funerary rituals and during annual funerary festivals. Among them, there were seven singly perforated pieces, two of them were perforated twice, twelve were perforated triply and one was perforated four times. Most of them represent single finds and there are no elements to confirm that they might have represented parts of a string set. Only with two coins, both of them triply perforated and discovered together with a bronze bulla and a fragment of a belt plate made of bronze sheet, is there a remark in the field diary that this might have been a devastated cremation grave.⁷¹ Of great interest is also the four times perforated coin, so far representing an isolated discovery at both cemeteries. It was unearthened

⁶⁵ Cf. *supra* ref. 63.

⁶⁶ Спасић-Ђурић 2008, 147. Besides the two coins, there was also another as of Hadrian, but it was deposited in the other part of the grave pit.

⁶⁷ All of the finds were unearthened at the same spot within the first level.

⁶⁸ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, 35, ref. 51, 52.

⁶⁹ Vojvoda 2015a, 56, ref. 18.

⁷⁰ Vojvoda 2015a, 54–56.

⁷¹ The two coins were excavated together, just next to two further finds (C-7199, 7200, 7201). At the same spot there were traces of soot and ash – most likely the bottom of a devastated cremation grave (cf. fieldwork diary, 1979).

Century	Total of perforated coins (G, G1, layers) pcs.	%	singly perf. pcs.	%	twice perf. pcs.	%	triply perf. pcs.	%	perf. four times pcs.	%
1 st c.	26	57.77	7	15.56	1	2.22	18	40.00	/	
2 nd c.	11	24.44	6	13.34	1	2.22	2	4.44	1	2.22
3 rd c.	4	8.90	4	8.89	/		1	2.22	/	
4 th c.	3	6.67	2	4.45	1	2.22	/		/	
1 st - 2 nd c.	1	2.22	1	2.22	/		/		/	
Total	45	100	20	44.46	3	6.66	21	46.66	1	2.22

Table 3. Chronological incidence of perforated coins

Табела 3. Перфорирани новчићи хронолошка заступљености

directly after the sacrificial area in trench 124 was removed. The perforations are circular and positioned at 3, 5, 7 and 9 o'clock compared to the obverse axis and at 9, 11, 1 and 3 o'clock compared to the reverse axis. The facts that the perforations were made from the reverse side, that they are positioned in the upper reverse part, not damaging the reverse image (a sitting female figure facing left and holding a horn of plenty) all indicate that the reverse side was meant to be seen, no matter how the coin was hung.

The role of coins in the funerary rituals of Viminacium in general, and especially perforated pieces as one part of them, is very complex and far from being clarified. We come across a great variety in their usage. With a small sample, one can set certain rules and draw conclusions accordingly. Since only a small number of graves contained coins as grave goods,⁷² the position of coins within graves compared to the position of the deceased (only with skeletal burials), and their relationship with other grave goods, the usage of coins within rituals after funerals and during annual festivals still need explanations. Recent analyses show that there were no strict rules regarding all of the listed issues, but certain conclusions can yet be drawn.

If we consider the number of perforated coins through their dating (Table 3) and as we consider pieces from the 1st and 2nd century, we reach almost identical results to those from the cemetery of Više Grobalja: 57.77% (Pećine) to 55.33% (Više Grobalja) and 24.44% to 25.54% for the 2nd century.⁷³ Perforated coins from the 1st century make up more than half of the total number, while the 2nd century accounts for only one quarter. Less than one fifth belongs to the 3rd century and only 6.67% of perforated pieces belong to the 4th century. Within an almost identical frequency of per-

forated coins of the 1st century, there is a huge difference compared to the cemetery of Više Grobalja. This reflects in the frequency of singly and triply perforated pieces. At the cemetery of Više Grobalja, this relationship was quite well balanced (29.79% of singly perforated to 25.54% of the triply perforated ones). On the other hand, at the cemetery Pećine, there is a much larger number of triply perforated coins (40.00%) compared to those perforated only once (13.34%).

The relationship between the two cemeteries regarding perforated coins from the 3rd century remains more or less the same: there are single finds of singly perforated pieces (10.61% at Više Grobalja to 8.89% at Pećine), while at both cemeteries there were no finds of triply perforated numismatic finds from this century. What is specific for the cemetery Pećine are coins perforated twice and four times. No such finds are known from Više Grobalja. There are also regional differences, but also similarities in the frequency of perforated coins at the cemeteries of Viminacium and those in the western provinces and in Barbaricum.⁷⁴

⁷² At the cemetery of Više Grobalja, coins as grave goods were found in 33.74% of cases, while at Pećine this percentage is even smaller, at 19.22%; cf. Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, 48; Vojvoda, Mrđić 2017, Table 3.

⁷³ Cf. Vojvoda 2015a, 66, Table 3.

⁷⁴ From Britain and Ireland there are 25 registered perforated pieces. Of that number, only a single piece each is dated to the 1st and 2nd century, while all of the remaining ones chronologically belong to the period from 270 to 518.; cf. Bland, Lorient 2012, 99. In Gaul, there is only an insignificant number of perforated aurei – only seven out of 1,922 registered pieces (or 0.36%). In the territory of Barbaricum (former Eastern Germany), there is a huge number of perforated aurei: 29 out of 142 registered pieces (or 20.42%); cf. Callu 1991, 103.

Singly perforated coins were discovered in eight skeletal graves (Table 4). In one of them there was also an imperforated coin, contemporary to the perforated one. With G 877, both singly and triply perforated coins were unearthed, but their chronological span is about 150 years (from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius Caesar). Of these eight singly perforated coins, two belong to the 1st century; four to the 2nd century and one piece each belong to the 3rd and the 4th century. In most of the cremated graves (five of them) with perforated coins as grave goods, all of them were singly pierced. Three of them were dated to the 1st century and two to the 2nd century. In two of these graves (G1 111 and 663), further imperforated numismatic finds were unearthed, one in each grave, but in G1 720 there were even two imperforated pieces. The chronological span with the first two graves is about one hundred years, from the Tiberius/Julio–Claudian dynasty – Hadrian. In G1 720, this span covers about seventy years: from Nero to Hadrian. In the necropolis layers there were seven pierced coins: two of them belong to the 1st century, three to the 3rd century, one to the 4th century and one more is dated into the period between the 1st and the 2nd century.

Twice perforated coins represent rare finds and only three of them were discovered. One of them comes from a skeletal grave and was dated to the 1st century (?). The remaining two finds come from the necropolis layers and they were dated to the 2nd and the 4th century.

Tripily perforated coins are the most numerous ones, although their number is only slightly bigger than that of the singly perforated pieces. What is clearly noticeable is that the majority of them are dated to the 1st century. This was already noticed after the analysis of the triply perforated coins from the cemetery of Više Grobalja.⁷⁵ Regarding the total number of samples from both Viminacium cemeteries, we are so far inclined to say that this phenomenon represented a rule. In skeletal graves there was only one piece each from the 2nd and the 3rd century. In two graves (G 4197 and G 4975), imperforated coins were also unearthed, in both cases dated to the 3rd century (Table 4). The time span of the first case varies between 208 and 222 years (Tiberius – Gordian III), while the second case covers 73 years at the most (Hadrian – Septimius Severus). In cremations, a find of a triply perforated coin was noticed only once and it was dated to the 2nd century. Finds of such coins from the necropolis layers include twelve pieces. Of that number, only one belongs to the 2nd century, while

all of the others were dated to the 1st century. Although we noticed that the majority of triply perforated coins were dated to the 1st century, we must point to the fact that in two cases at the necropolis of Pećine and once at the cemetery of Više Grobalja, they were unearthed together with imperforated coins from the 3rd century (reign of Gordian III the latest).

Four times perforated coins were unearthed in a single case, representing a find from a layer at the necropolis of Pećine. Since this is just an isolated find, we cannot draw any conclusions about their role in funerary rituals.

While interpreting finds of perforated coins, there are common dilemmas about their function and about the time they were pierced, either in Roman times or later. Thus, such numismatic finds unearthed in the cemeteries of Viminacium and from closed archaeological contexts are of huge importance. Gorecki, in his study of grave finds from the area between the Rhine, Moselle and Somme, but also Gazdac and Alföldy and Gazdac in their papers about coins in funerary contexts and the example of the cemetery of Brigetio, together with Perassi and her paper about perforated Roman coins, all drew attention to this phenomenon.⁷⁶

Analyses of the role of coins in funerary rituals at the southern Viminacium cemeteries, including the perforated ones, still leave many unanswered questions. It is very difficult to surmise what people believed in and to what extent, but also how their beliefs changed through time. Part of the perforated coins discovered at the cemetery of Pećine certainly represented parts of the so-called “monetary jewellery”, pendants on earrings or strings, most of them possessing protective functions.

According to their place of find, some coins could have represented independent pendants, although this cannot be claimed with any certainty. However, Perassi tends to think that singly perforated coins (their perforation being on the edge and in the middle) from grave contexts always represent pendants. Those pierced in the middle and not coming from grave contexts could have also had practical purposes.⁷⁷ Regarding the function of triply perforated coins, there were

⁷⁵ Vojvoda 2015a, 66–67, Table 4.

⁷⁶ Gorecki 1975, 249–250; Găzdac-Alföldy, Găzdac 2009, 166; Perassi 2011, 270.

⁷⁷ Perassi 2011, 276, 288–289.

G	singly perforated	twice perforated	triply perforated	four times perforated	coins without perforations
1749	2 nd c. (?)				2. v./ 2 nd c.
4923	1 st c.				
5119	4 th c.				
1827			3 rd c.		
4197			1 st c.		3. v./3 rd c.
4975			2 nd c.		3. v./ 3 rd c.
877	2 nd c.		1 st c.		
1807	1 st c.				
2947	2 nd c.				
3562	2 nd c.				
4160	3 rd c.				
4288		1 st c.			
227			1 st c.		
342			1 st c.		
2669			1 st c.		
3541			1 st c.		
G 1	singly perforated	twice perforated	triply perforated	four times perforated	coins without perforations
110	1 st c.				
111	1 st c.				2 nd c.
543	2 nd c.				
663	1 st c.				2 nd c.
720	2 nd c.				1 st and 2 nd c. (2 pcs.)
844			2 nd c.		
Layers	singly perforated	twice perforated	triply perforated	four times perforated	coins without perforations
1. v.	2 pcs.		11 pcs.		
1.-2. v.	1 pc.				
2. v.	/	1 pc.	1 pc.	1 pc.	
3. v.	3 pcs.				
4. v.	1 pc.	1 pc.			
Total	20	3	21	1	7

Table 4. Dating of the perforated and unperforated coins from graves and layers

Табела 4. Датовање њерфорираних и њејерфорираних новчића из гробних целина и из слојева

already theories that they might have been sewed onto clothes.⁷⁸ Based on the way the perforations were made and according to their positions, for some of them, one can presume that they really were sewn onto clothes, especially when there were pieces of textile attached. An example of this includes the find of a triply perforated coin from G 216 at the cemetery of Više Grobalja.⁷⁹ As already highlighted, this cannot,

however, be confirmed for the singly perforated antoninianus from G 4160 at the cemetery Pećine.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Gorecki 1975, 249, ref. 275; Găzdac-Alföldi, Găzdac 2009, 166, ref. 22–23.

⁷⁹ Vojvoda 2015a, 61.

⁸⁰ Cf. *supra* ref. 40.

Nonetheless, the analysis of perforated coins from the Viminacium cemetery of Pećine offers new data about the role of this kind of find in funerary rituals. Any future analysis of monetary finds from the eastern and southern Viminacium cemeteries and the large sample

it would include will certainly represent further huge steps towards answering some of the already opened questions.

Translated by the author

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ПЕРФОРИРАНИ НОВЦИ СА ВИМИНАЦИЈУМСКЕ НЕКРОПОЛЕ ПЕЋИНЕ

Кључне речи. – Римско царство, Виминацијум, некрополе, римски новац, перфорирани новци.

Током заштитних археолошких истраживања на некрополама локалитета Пећине откривено је укупно 3865 примерака новца. Од овог броја је за обраду било доступно 3497 комада, који се крећу у распону од 32/31. г. ст. е. (Марко Антоније) до 423. г. н. е. (Теодосије II). Одређени број новчића пронађених на некрополи Пећине био је перфориран – једном, два, три или четири пута. Укупно их је регистровано 45, а од тога је 17 пронађено у гробовима инхумираних покојника (Г), 6 у гробовима кремираних покојника (Г1) и 22 у слоју на некрополи (Графикон 1, Табела 1).

Као што је већ опажено на некрополи Више гробаља, и на Пећинама је знатно већа присутност перфорираних новчића у гробовима инхумираних у односу на кремиране покојнике. Код последњих су то истовремено и једини нумизматички налази у гробовима, за разлику од инхумација код којих се у појединим случајевима појављује више перфорираних новчића или чешће и неперфорираних. Ово се поклапа са анализама добијеним на некрополи Више гробаља, на којој је, без обзира на мањи укупни узорак испитаног новца, пронађено више перфорираних новчића него на некрополи Пећине (47 ком. или 1,72% према 45 ком. или 1,28%). Осим тога, на некрополи Више гробаља забележено је веће процентуално присуство ове врсте новца у гробовима (23 у Г и 9 у Г1 или 48,92% и 19,14%) него на Пећинама (17 у Г и 6 у Г1 или 37,77% и 13,33%) у односу на налазе из слоја (Више гробаља 15 ком. или 31,92% и Пећине 22 ком. или 48,90%).

Досадашња анализа улоге новца у погребним ритуалима на виминацијумским јужним некрополама, а у оквиру њих и перфорираног, и даље оставља бројна питања отвореним.

Веома је тешко проценити у којој мери и у шта су људи веровали, те како су се та веровања мењала кроз време. Део перфорираних новчића пронађених на некрополи Пећине свакако је представљао делове тзв. монетарног накита – привеске на наушницама или нискама, које су углавном имале апотропејски карактер. Извесни перфорирани новчићи су према месту налаза могли представљати самосталне привеске, у шта наравно не можемо бити сасвим сигурни, мада је Пераси склона мишљењу да су једном пробушени новчићи (са перфорацијом на ивици и у средини) из гробних целина у сваком случају представљали привеске, а да су они пробушени у средини и не представљају налазе из гробних целина могли имати и утилитарну намену. У погледу функције три пута перфорираних новчића већ су изнета мишљења да су могли бити пришивани на одећу.

Према начину на који су перфорације направљене и по томе на којим се местима налазе, за неке од новчића можемо претпоставити да су заиста били пришивени на одећу, нарочито у примерима пронађеним са остацима тканине. Пример представља налаз три пута перфорираног новца из Г 216 са некрополе Више гробаља. Као што је већ наглашено, ово не можемо тврдити за једном перфорираном антонинијаном из Г 4160 са некрополе Пећине. У сваком случају, анализа перфорираних новчића са виминацијумске некрополе Пећине пружа нове податке о улози ове врсте монетарних налаза у погребним ритуалима. Будућа анализа нових налаза са источних и јужних виминацијумских некропола свакако ће својим великим узорком допринети разрешењу неких отворених питања.

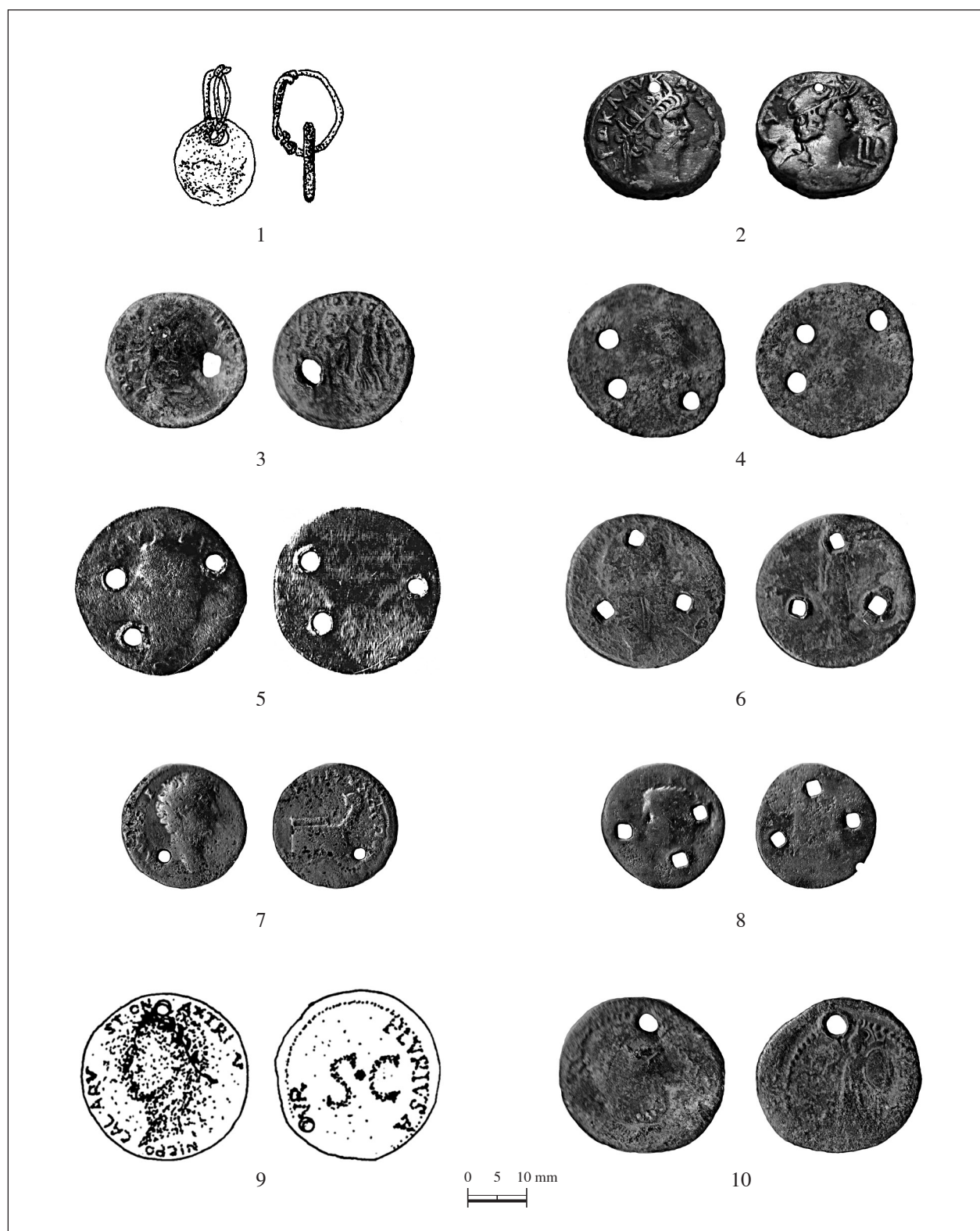


Plate I – 1. Coin from G 1749; 2. Coin from G 4923; 3. Coin from G 5119; 4. Coin from G 1827; 5. Coin from G 4197; 6. Coin from G 4975; 7. Coin from G 877; 8. Coin from G 706; 9. Coin from G 1807; 10. Coin from G 2947

Табла I – 1. Новац из Г 1749; 2. Новац из Г 4923; 3. Новац из Г 5119; 4. Новац из Г 1827; 5. Новац из Г 4197; 6. Новац из Г 4975; 7. Новац из Г 877; 8. Новац из Г 706; 9. Новац из Г 1807; 10. Новац из Г 2947

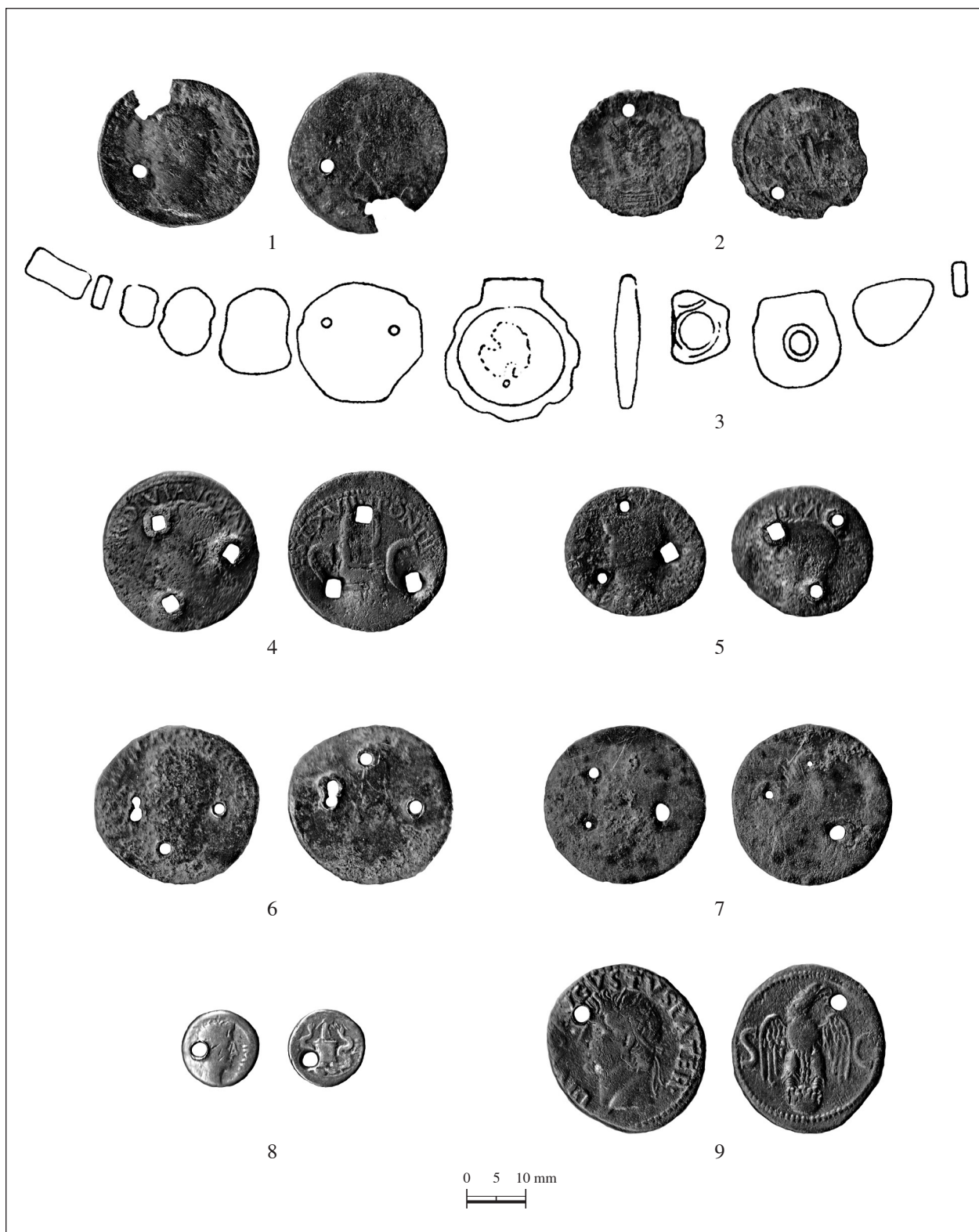


Plate II – 1. Coin from G 3562; 2. Coin from G 4160; 3. Coin from G 4288; 4. Coin from G 227; 5. Coin from G 342; 6. Coin from G 2669; 7. Coin from G 3541; 8. Coin from G1 110; 9. Coin from G1 111

Табла II – 1. Новац из Г 3562; 2. Новац из Г 4160; 3. Новац из Г 4288; 4. Новац из Г 227; 5. Новац из Г 342; 6. Новац из Г 2669; 7. Новац из Г 3541; 8. Новац из Г1 110; 9. Новац из Г1 111

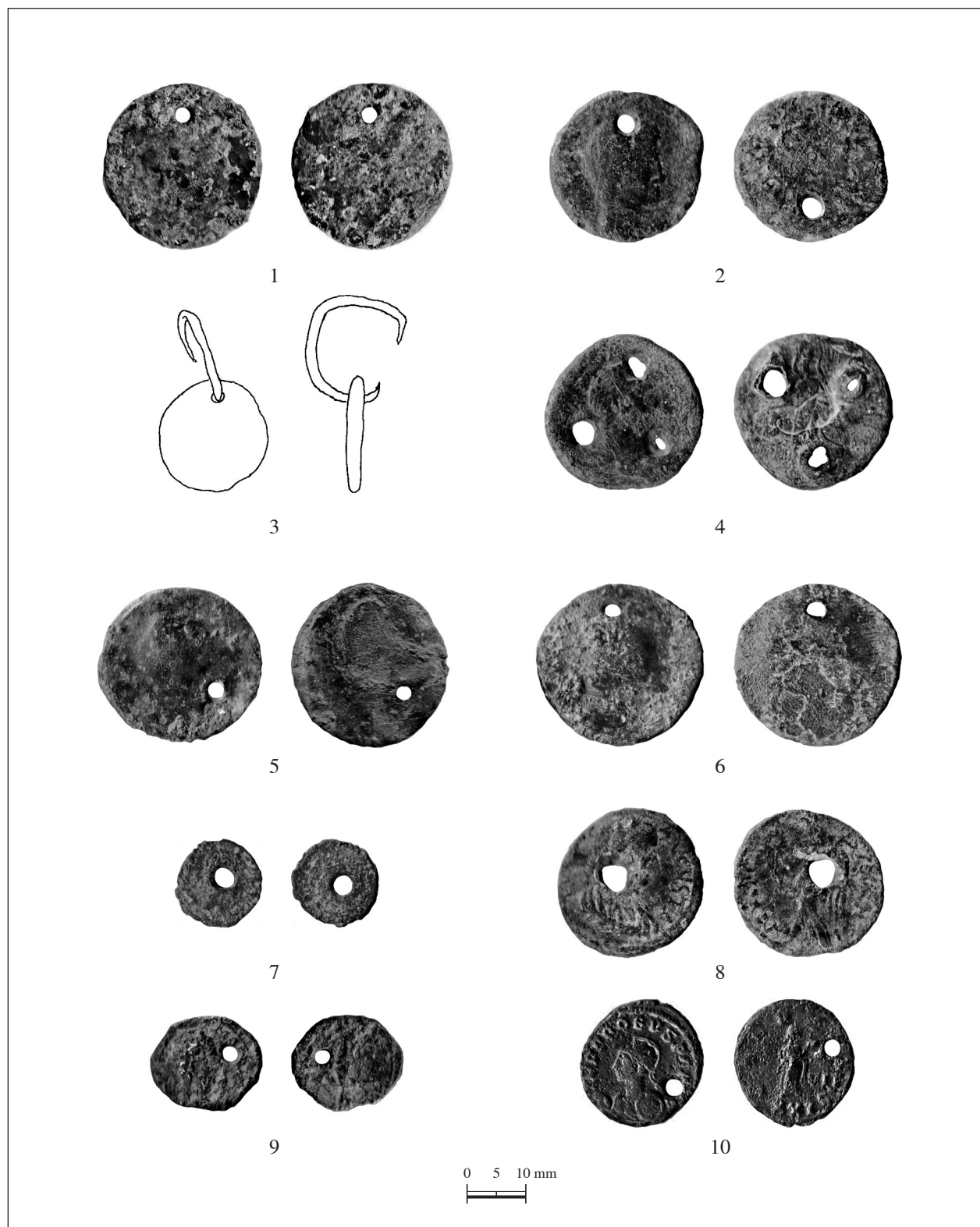


Plate III – 1. Coin from G1 542; 2. Coin from G1 663; 3. Coin from G1 720; 4. Coin from G1 844;
5–10. The perforated coins from the layers

Табла III – 1. Новац из Г1 542; 2. Новац из Г1 663; 3. Новац из Г1 720; 4. Новац из Г1 844;
5–10. Перфорирани новац из слојева

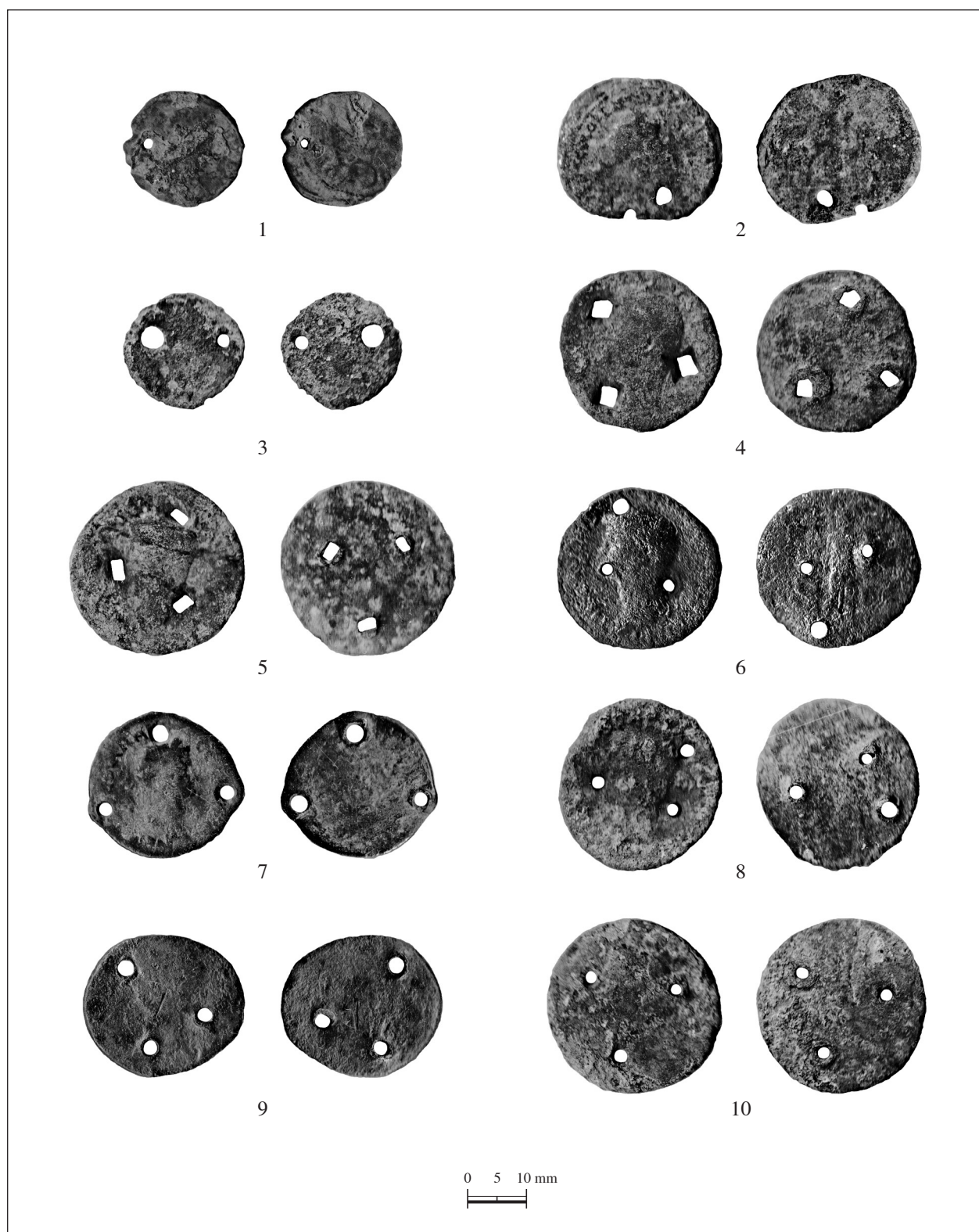


Plate IV – 1–10. The perforated coins from the layers

Табла IV – 1–10. Перфорирани новци из слојева

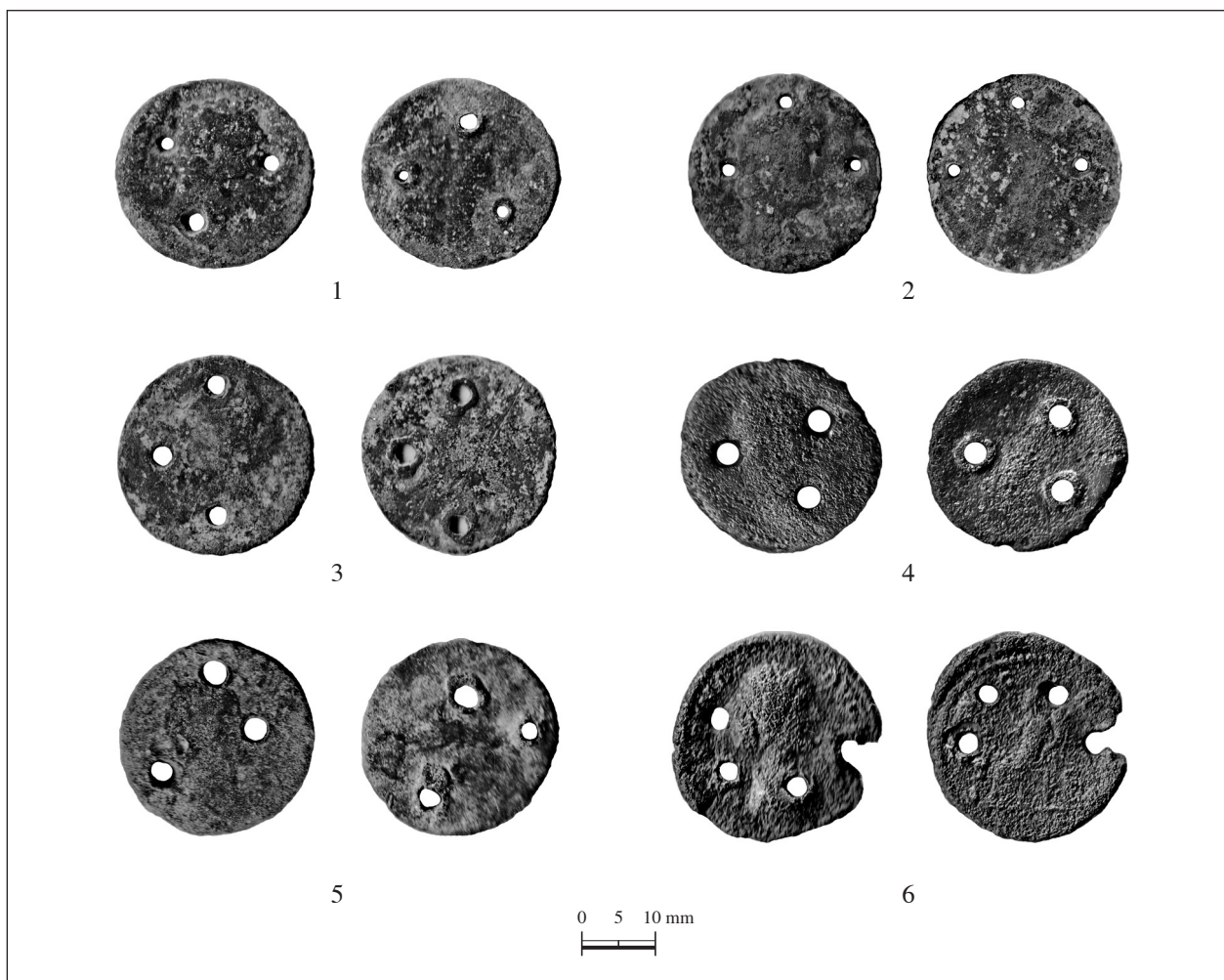


Plate V – 1–6. The perforated coins from the layers

Табла V – 1–6. Перфорирани новци из слојева