

Papers in Honour of Rastko Vasić 80th Birthday

Зборник радова у част 80 г. живота Растка Васића

АРХЕОЛОШКИ ИНСТИТУТ

**ЗБОРНИК РАДОВА У
ЧАСТ 80 Г. ЖИВОТА
РАСТКА ВАСИЋА**

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**Војислав Филиповић
Александар Булатовић
Александар Капуран**

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**PAPERS IN HONOUR
OF RASTKO VASIĆ
80th BIRTHDAY**

Editors

**Vojislav Filipović
Aleksandar Bulatović
Aleksandar Kapuran**

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Miomir Korać

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Vojislav Filipović

Aleksandar Bulatović

Aleksandar Kapuran

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CONTENTS

Foreword / Увод.....	7
M. Svilar, Biography of Rastko Vasić / М. Свилар, Биографија Растка Васића	11
M. Svilar, Bibliography of Rastko Vasić / М. Свилар, Библиографија Растка Васића....	17
A. Harding, Rastko Vasić: some personal reflections.....	40
С. Мандић, Пут у Миделхарнис.....	41
Notes about life and archaeology / Цртице о животу и археологији.....	42
D. Antonović, S. Vitezović, J. Šarić, The Early Neolithic Settlement at Velesnica:	
Lithic and Osseous Industries.....	63
M. Stojić, Mislilac iz Medvednjaka.....	71
S. Alexandrov, Early Bronze Age Barrow Graves in North-West Bulgaria.....	75
†B. Hänsel, B. Teržan, K. Mihovilić, Konzeptioneller Wandel im früh- bis mittelbronzezeitlichen Befestigungsbau Istriens.....	95
J. Станковски, Планинско светилиште Татићев Камен: три аспекта обредне праксе....	111
M. Ljuština, Rame uz rame: zajednice vatinske kulture u Banatu.....	125
K. Dmitrović, Contribution to the Study of Spectacle-shaped Pendants in Western Serbia.....	137
B. Molloy, A warrior's journey? Some recent taxonomic, trace element and lead isotope analyses of Mediterranean Later Bronze Age metalwork in the Central and West Balkans...	143
M. Blečić Kavur, B. Kavur, Privjesak kao tijelo – tijelo kao poruka.....	155
A. Kapuran, The Find from Medoševac 20 Years Later – an Addition to the Studies of the Tumulus Culture on the Territory of the Central Balkans.....	165
J. Koledin, "Novi" nalazi nanogvica tipa Regelsbrunn u Вачкој.....	177
М. Лазих, Гробови инхумираних покојника у некрополама брњичке културе.....	187
P. Medović, Sečanj IV — ostava metalnih predmeta.....	201
L. Leshtakov, Bronze Spear and Javelin Heads with Polygonal Sockets - A Balkan Phenomenon.....	209
A. Bulatović, Particular Types of Bowls as Heralds of a New Age in the Balkans.....	215
A. Ђорђевић, Нова сазнања о остави бронзаних налаза из Рудника.....	233
J. Bouzek, Some Early Iron Age symbols and their possible interpretations.....	241
D. Ložnjak Dizdar, Notes on several finds from the beginning of the Early Iron Age in the Danube area.....	247

B. Govedarica, Tumuli iz Brezja i neka pitanja socio-kulturnog razvoja na Glasincu u starijem željeznom dobu.....	259
T. Bader, Bemerkungen über die chronologische Lage der Hortfundgruppe „Somartin-Vetiš“.....	273
И. Бруяко, Костяной скипетр предскифского типа из городища Каргал в низовьях Дуная.....	289
V. Filipović, Iron Spears of the <i>Balkan Syginnæ</i> Type from the Central Balkans.....	297
Д. Топал, Акинак из Вршаца и проникновение клинкового вооружения скифов в Среднее Подунавье.....	307
M. Dizdar, New Late Hallstatt Finds from the Vinkovci Region (Eastern Croatia): A Contribution to the Study of Impacts from the Balkans to the southeastern Carpathian Basin.....	319
D. Mitrevski, The Ruler's Palace in Bylazora – Capital of “Independent Paeonians”.....	345
O. Mladenović, A New Find of Bronze Hinged Fibula from the Vicinity of Svrljig.....	355
M. Guštin, D. Božič, Eine kleine Sondergruppe der thrakischen Fibeln.....	367
List of authors / Списак аутора.....	372

Foreword

Since 1990, after practically 30 years and the publication of the volume of the *Starinar* journal dedicated to the academician and professor Milutin Garašanin, the Institute of Archaeology in Belgrade publishes a volume dedicated to a doyen of both Serbian and European archaeology, Rasko Vasić. In contrast to university centers, where this kind of publications are usual, due to the position of individuals as professors and teachers (*Festschrift*, *Homage...*), the scientific researchers are usually neglected in that respect, which can be seen in the fact that this volume represents the first of a kind published by the Institute of Archaeology. Bearing in mind the significance and the influence of Vasić's work on ex-Yugoslav and prehistoric archaeology of Europe, as well as the fact that he spent his entire career at the Institute of Archaeology, we consider this volume as a humble act of our gratitude for everything our dear colleague Vasić did for archaeology and the Institute, on occasion of his 80th birthday.

Indeed, Rastko Vasić stands as a great of both Serbian and Yugoslav archaeology, distinctly appreciated and esteemed, which stands in opposition to his humble and unobtrusive nature. Vasić's scientific and artistic educations often intertwined in his papers dealing both with the protohistoric art and the particular problems of the Bronze and Iron Age in southeastern Europe. Years of work and scientific questions led him to various phenomena of our prehistoric archaeology, many of which he had himself defined, but from time to time he used to go back and discover the until then unobserved Iron Age art of the Central Balkans. Only a glimpse of his bibliography at the beginning of this volume reveals the archaeological phenomena he had defined and interpreted, and through his serious and responsible scientific work and afterwards authority introduced to archaeology. His first monographs (*Културне групе старијег гвозденог доба у Југославији* and *The Chronology of the Early Iron Age in Socialist Republic of Serbia*) were created on basis of his doctoral dissertation and more than a couple of decades since the publication represent often cited literature.

Увод

Након безмало 30 лета и *Старинара* посвећеног академику и професору Милутину Гарашанину из 1990. године, Археолошки институт у Београду објављује једну засебну публикацију посвећену дојену српске, али и европске археологије Растку Васићу. За разлику од универзитетских центара, где је овај тип публикација (*Festschrift*, *Homage...*) уобичајен због позиције појединца као професора и учитеља, научни су радници обично занемарени у томе погледу, што се види и по томе да је ово прва таква засебна публикација наше куће. Но, имајући у виду значај Васићевих дела за бившу југословенску и праисторијску археологију Европе и утицај на њу, као и то што је цео свој радни век провео у Археолошком институту, сматрали смо да је овај зборник поводом 80 година живота један скромни чин наше захвалности за све што је драги колега Васић учинио за археологију и Институт.

Растко Васић доиста представља велика на српске и југословенске археологије, изразито уваженог и цењеног, што је у неку руку у супротности са његовом скромном и ненаметљивом природом. Васићево научно, али и уметничко образовање често се сустицало у његовим првим радовима, када се бавио како уметничким протоисторијским темама, тако и конкретним проблемима гвозденог и бронзаног доба југоисточне Европе. Године рада и стручна питања одвела су га ка многим феноменима наше праисторијске археологије, од којих је неке и сам дефинисао, али се с времена на време враћао, а уједно и откривао до тада незапажену уметност гвозденог доба централног Балкана. Само и летимичан поглед на његову библиографију на почетку овог зборника говори о археолошким појавама које је Васић одредио и интерпретирао, а својим озбиљним и одговорним научним радом и доцнијим ауторитетом увео у домаћу археологију. Његове прве монографије (*Културне групе старијег гвозденог доба у Југославији* и *The Chronology of the Early Iron Age in Socialist Republic of Serbia*), настале на основама док-

A complete affirmation in Yugoslav archaeology for colleague Vasić was the invitation to write no less than 13 chapters for the 5th volume of the distinguished publication *Praistorija jugoslavenskih zemalja*, as one of the youngest authors, dealing with less familiar subjects or subjects with scarce background data, undetermined origin or undefined to a great extent. It can be said that even nowadays, after more than 30 years, Vasić's certain syntheses from the aforementioned publication, remain the postulates for the Iron Age of the Central Balkans. Another significant work of Rastko Vasić, although often not emphasized enough, is the fact that under the invitation of the academician Dragoslav Sreјović, he participated in writing of 150 separate units in the unique domestic archaeological encyclopedia - *Arheološki leksikon – preistorija Evrope, Afrike i Bliskog Istoka, grčka, etrurska i rimska civilizacija*, a paper that Yugoslav and Serbian archaeology lacked for a number of decades. His international reputation was confirmed by five monographs published within the prestigious *Prähistorische Bronzefunde* edition. In parallel with that, through his advice and influence, as well as through his scientific renown, he aided younger colleagues to prepare the volumes for the same edition.

In that context, it is important to mention that defending boards for magister or doctoral thesis on the subject on Bronze and Iron Age could not be imagined without the presence of the colleague Vasić. On such occasions, not a single critique or a bad word could be heard from Vasić, but positive opinion and useful suggestions above all, so that the candidate could properly prepare the thesis for future publication. Rastko Vasić has been a member of the editorial board for the *Starinar* journal for more than 40 years, as well as for many other corpora and journals in the territory of southeastern Europe. As a member of editorial staff or as a reviewer of papers and monographs, he would always point out the qualities of the submitted material, and if the other members of editorial staff or reviewers decided to reject the material, his benevolent suggestions would help in publishing each useful paper after all, even in some other journal. Also, as a long-time director of scientific projects at the Institute of Archaeology, he would always do his best to help

торске дисертације, и даље су, неколико деценија након објављивања, цитирано штиво.

Потпуну афирмацију у југословенској археологији колега Васић доживео је када је позван да, као један од тада најмлађих аутора, напише чак 13 поглавља за том V чувене *Праисторије југославенских земаља*, и то на неке теме о којима се мало знало или у вези с којима су подаци били штурни, нејасног порекла и добрим делом недефинисани. Може се рећи да и данас, након 30 и више година, поједине Васићеве синтезе из ове серије и даље остају једини постулати гвозденог доба централног Балкана. Још један значајан допринос овога типа, чини се, није довољно помињан у досадашњем његовом раду, а то је чињеница да је на позив академика Драгослава Срејовића учествовао у изради преко 150 засебних јединица у јединственој домаћој археолошкој енциклопедији – *Археолошки лексикон – преисторија Европе, Африке и Блиског истока, грчка, етрурска и римска цивилизација*, делу које је дуги низ деценија недостајало југословенској и српској археологији. Међународни углед потврдио је са пет монографија у престижној едицији *Prähistorische Bronzefunde*, док је паралелно саветима и својим утицајем, као и научним реномеом, помагао млађим колегама да припреме своје свеске за исту едицију.

У томе контексту, важно је поменути да се без колеге Васића није могла замислити комисија за одбрану магистарских или докторских дисертација на тему бронзаног или старијег гвозденог доба. Том приликом од њега се није могла чути покуда или лоша реч, већ надамне позитивно мишљење и корисне сугестије како би кандидат своје дело адекватно припремио за будуће објављивање. Преко 40 година члан је редакције *Старинара*, као и многих зборника и часописа на простору југоисточне Европе. Као чест члан редакција или рецензент радова и монографија, увек је истицао квалитете прилога, а уколико би се остатак редакције или други рецензенти одлучили да одбију аутора, он би сесвојим благонаклоним сугестијама трудио да сваки користан рад ипак буде објављен, па макар у неком другом часопису. Такође, као дугогодишњи руководиоца научних пројеката у Археолошком институту,

young colleagues on each matter, never striking as a boss or a superior.

Plenty of details on the private and professional life of Rastko Vasić, both as an archaeologist and painter and literate, can be found in the continuation of this volume, which was one of the ideas of the editors. Therefore, about 60 pages are dedicated to his life and work, biography and a detailed bibliography, while the interview is illustrated with Vasić's numerous paintings, selected by the celebrant himself. Afterward, there is a collection of papers dedicated to the colleague Vasić, written in English, German, Russian and the ex-Yugoslav languages, assorted chronologically. Unfortunately, certain authors which were invited in agreement with the celebrant did not respond, primarily due to the poor health, so the editors once again point out that they regret the situation, although on the other hand, we are grateful and proud of the content of the volume, on 33 authors of the papers, and the editorial board comprised of prominent names of the word archaeology from nine different countries.

Through this volume, the editorial board and the Institute of Archaeology would like to heartily congratulate the jubilee to our colleague Vasić and to wish him many more years in archaeology.

Vojislav Filipović
Aleksandar Bulatović
Aleksandar Kapuran

тудио се да помогне млађим колегама по свим питањима, не постављајући се притом као шеф.

Многи детаљи о приватном и професионалном животу Растка Васића и као археолога, и као сликара и књижевника, могу се наћи у наставку овог зборника, што је била и једна од идеја приређивача. Стога је првих шездесетак страна посвећено његовом животу и раду, биографији и детаљној библиографији, док је интервју илустрован бројним Васићевим сликама, по избору самог слављеника. Након тога уприличени сурадови посвећени колеги Васићу, на енглеском, немачком, руском и језицима бивше Југославије, поређани по хронолошком реду. Нажалост, поједини аутори позвани у консултацијама са слављеником нису се одазвали позиву, поглавито због нарушеног здравственог стања, па уредници и овом приликом напомињу да жале због оваквог развоја ситуације. С друге стране, поносни смо на садржај зборника – како на 33 аутора прилога, тако и на редакцију, у којој су врхунска имена светске археологије из девет земаља.

Колеги Васићу уредници и Археолошки институт овим зборником од срца честитају јубилеј и желе још много година рада у археологији.

Војислав Филиповић
Александар Булатовић
Александар Капуран



In the National Museum in Belgrade, 2018 (by Aca Đorđević)
У Народном музеју, 2018. године (фото Аца Ђорђевић)

Early Bronze Age Barrow Graves in North-West Bulgaria

Stefan Alexandrov

Abstract: Ten Early Bronze Age barrows with 20 mortuary complexes from North-West Bulgaria are presented in this paper. The earliest barrow grave in North-West Bulgaria is argued to be Tarnak, “Ninovska barrow”, grave No. 2 that could be dated to Cernavodă I – Cernavodă III period; the other graves being chronologically assigned to EBA-1b (Zimnicea-Celei), EBA-2 and, EBA-3 periods. Possible relations between “*Yamnaya*” and local populations in the region are discussed as well.

Key words: Early Bronze Age, Lower Danube, barrow graves, EBA pottery and metal ornaments.

In the course of the last 30 years the Early Bronze Age (EBA) in North-West Bulgaria (the region west of Iskar river) has been subject of many field and analytical investigations. Its basic characteristics and chronological sequences have already been established (Alexandrov 1995); mortuary practices remaining one of the most intriguing problems for the investigators. So far, we have data for 10 EBA barrows with 20 mortuary complexes from the region in our disposal; 17 of them with secured archaeological context as follows:

1. Barrow necropolis near Tarnava, Vratsa district

According to B. Nikolov the necropolis consisted of more than 20 barrows; three of them were investigated in 1964–1969 (Николов 1996, 291–292; for the anthropological analyses – Boev 1972, 104–106).

1.1. Barrow 1, known as “*Glavchovska barrow*”, was located about 4 km north of Tarnava (Plate II/1). It was 3.5 m in height with a diameter of 23 m. Ten EBA graves had been discovered in it during the excavations in 1967 (Николов 1976, 38-44):

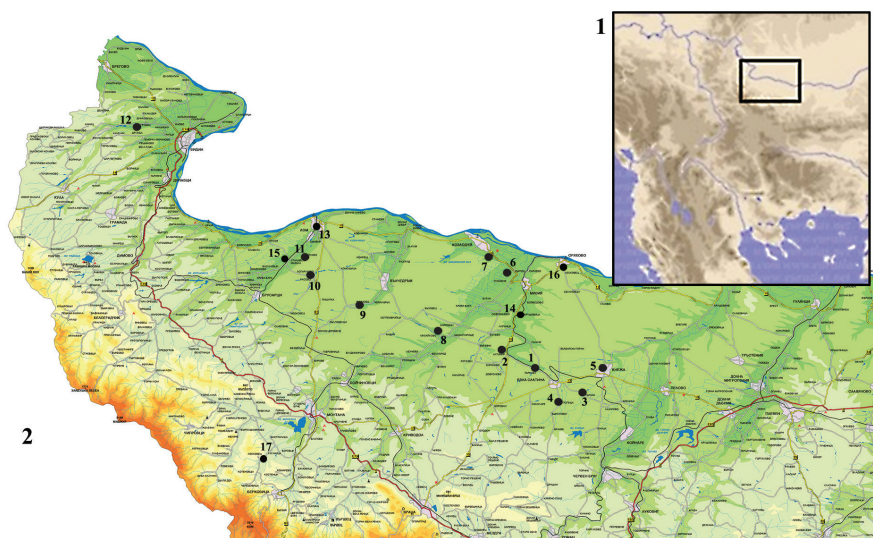


Plate I – 1) Region investigated; 2) Sites mentioned in text: 1- Tarnava; 2 - Altimir; 3 - Tarnak; 4 - Popitsa; 5 - Kneza; 6 - Harlets; 7 - Kozlodui; 8 - Mihaylovo; 9 - Yakimovo; 10 - Rasovo; 11 - Traykovo; 12 - Gradets; 13 - Lom; 14 - Krushovitsa; 15 - Staliyska mahala; 16 - Oryahovo; 17 - Leskovets.

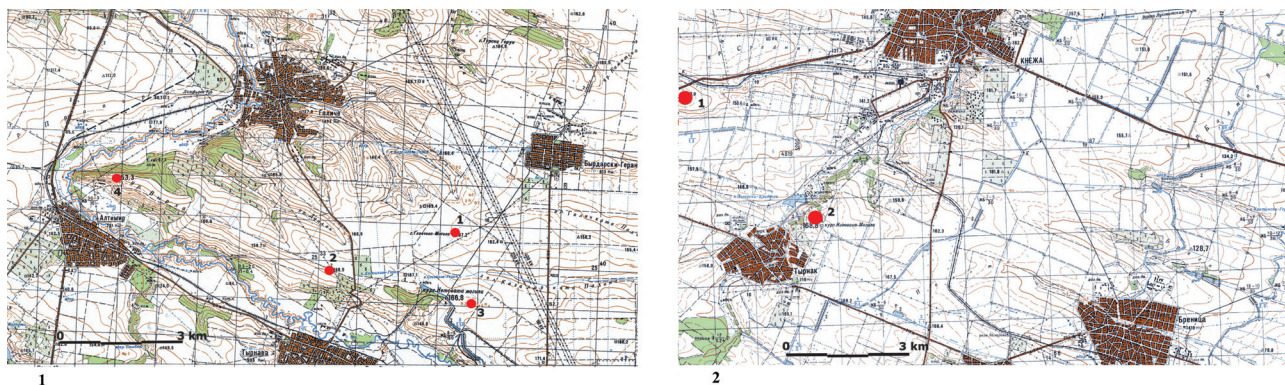


Plate II – Location of the EBA barrows investigated in North-West Bulgaria. I.1 - Tarnava, “Glavchovska barrow”; I.2 - Tarnava, barrow 2; I.3 - Tarnava, barrow 3; I.4 Altimir; II.1 - Kneza; II.2. - Tarnak, “Ninovska barrow”.

Grave No. 1 – Inhumation (*adultus*, male) in a rectangular pit covered with wooden planks. Dimensions of the pit: 2.2 x 1.5 x 1.0 m. The pit had been dug into the ancient humus level and the virgin soil. Position of the skeleton – relaxed hocker on the right side. Orientation: West-East. Red ochre over the bones. Inventory – clay vessel decorated with encrusted incised lines and red paint in front of the skull (Plate VI/3). Outside the pit – bones belonging to *bos taurus*.

Grave No. 2 – Cremation outside the barrow fill. Some of the burnt bones had been placed at the bottom of a pit dug into the fill of grave No. 1 and the ancient humus level and covered with wooden planks. Inventory – a bowl with two horizontal tunnel-lugs near the cremated bones (Plate VII/8). Animal bones had been found outside the pit.

Grave No. 3 – Inhumation (*infans*) in a rectangular pit covered with wooden planks. Dimensions of the pit: 1.6 x 1.1 x 0.7 m. Position of the skeleton – supine with flexed legs; arms bent at the elbows. Orientation: North-South. Red ochre over the bones. Inventory – shell beads in the *cervical vertebrae* zone. An askos decorated with encrusted incised lines (Plate VII/10) and bones from *bos taurus* had been found outside the pit.

Grave No. 4 – Inhumation in a rectangular pit covered with wooden planks. Dimensions of the pit: 1.8 x 1.0 x 0.9 m. The pit had been dug into the fill of grave No. 1 and the virgin soil. Position of the skeleton¹ – hocker on the right side. Orientation: South-North. Red ochre over the bones. Inventory – clay cup decorated with encrusted incised lines near the skull (Plate VI/1). The pit had been surrounded by stone walls measuring 5 m in length. The construction is described as Tomb No. 1, destroyed by later anthropogenic activities.

Tomb No. 2 was built on the surface of the already existing barrow piled above graves 1, 3 and 4. The walls (1 m in height) had been constructed by stones arranged in a quadrant with length of 6 m. The upper part of the tomb had been covered with wooden planks. Additional fills were piled above the tomb “...thus, the barrow enlarged significantly its dimensions”. Two graves (Nos. 5 and 6) had been found inside the tomb:

Grave No. 5 – Cremation outside the barrow fill. Some of the burnt bones had been placed at the bottom of a pit dug into the barrow fill and the virgin soil and covered with wooden planks. Dimensions of the pit: 1.4 x 1.0 x 0.9 m. Inventory – vessel decorated with encrusted incised lines and red paint (Plates VI/2) and cup decorated with encrusted incised lines (Plate VII/3) near the cremated bones.

Grave No. 6 – Inhumation (*female*) in a rectangular pit covered with wooden planks. Dimensions of the pit: 1.8 x 0.9 x 0.9 m. Position of the skeleton – supine with flexed legs; arms bent at the elbows towards the pelvis. Orientation: West-East. Red ochre over the bones. No inventory.

¹ The grave is not illustrated. Sex and age are not mentioned as well.

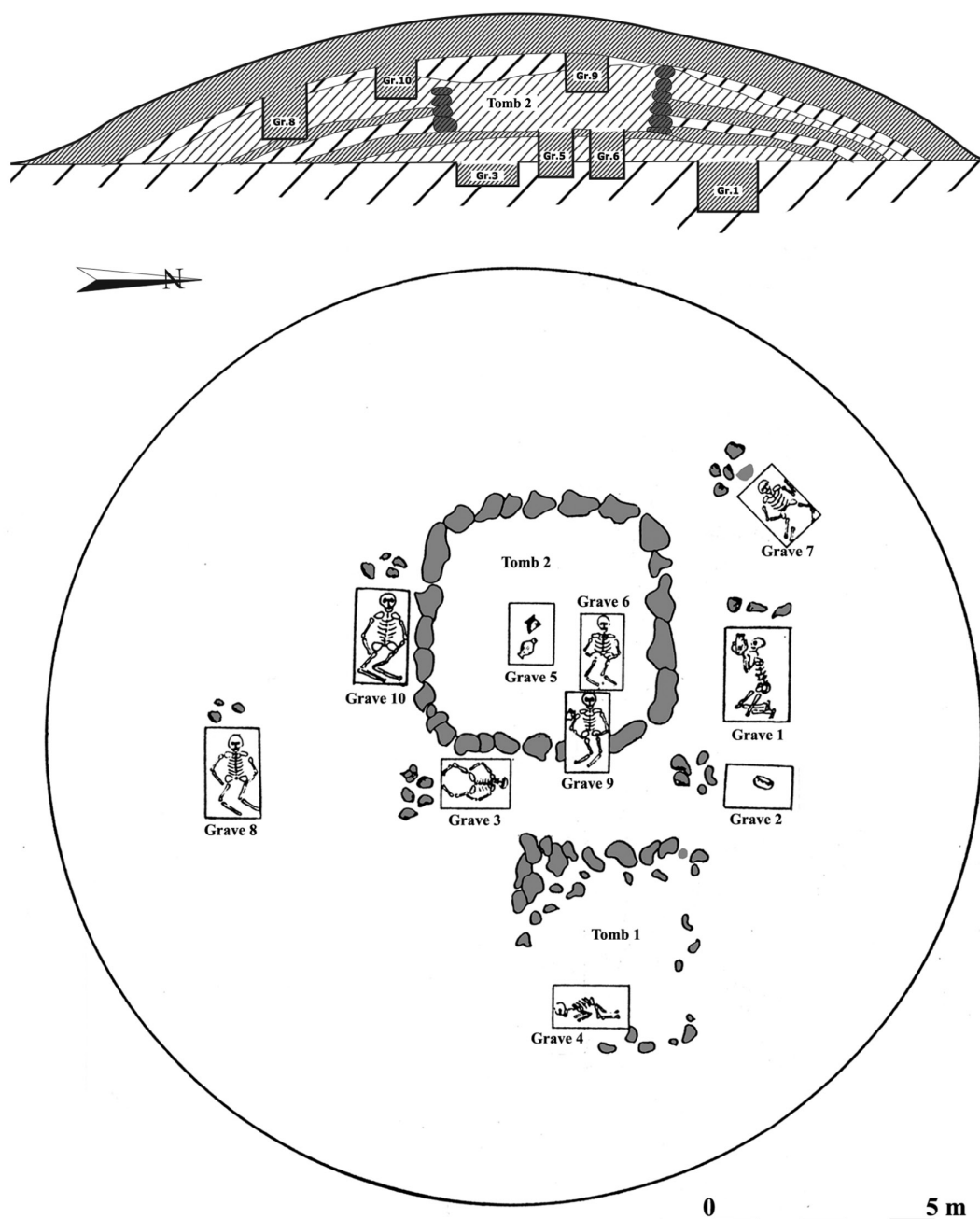


Plate III – Tarnava, “Glavchovska barrow”. Horizontal plan and section of the EBA graves (adapted from Николов 1976).

Grave No. 7 – Inhumation (*infant*, ~ 6 years old) in a rectangular pit covered with wooden planks. Dimensions of the pit: 1.5 x 1.0 x 0.8 m. The pit had been dug into the barrow fill. Position of the skeleton – supine with flexed legs; left arm bent at the elbows towards the skull; right arm – near the body. Orientation: Southwest-Northeast. Red ochre over the bones. Inventory – copper hair-ring at the right shoulder. Outside the pit – a clay bowl with two tunnel-lugs (Plate VII/2) and animal bones had been discovered.

Grave No. 8 – Inhumation (*adultus, female*) in a rectangular pit covered with wooden planks. Dimensions of the pit: 2.0 x 1.2 x 0.8 m. The pit had been dug into the barrow fill. Position of the skeleton – supine with flexed legs; arms bent at the elbows, alongside the body. Orienta-

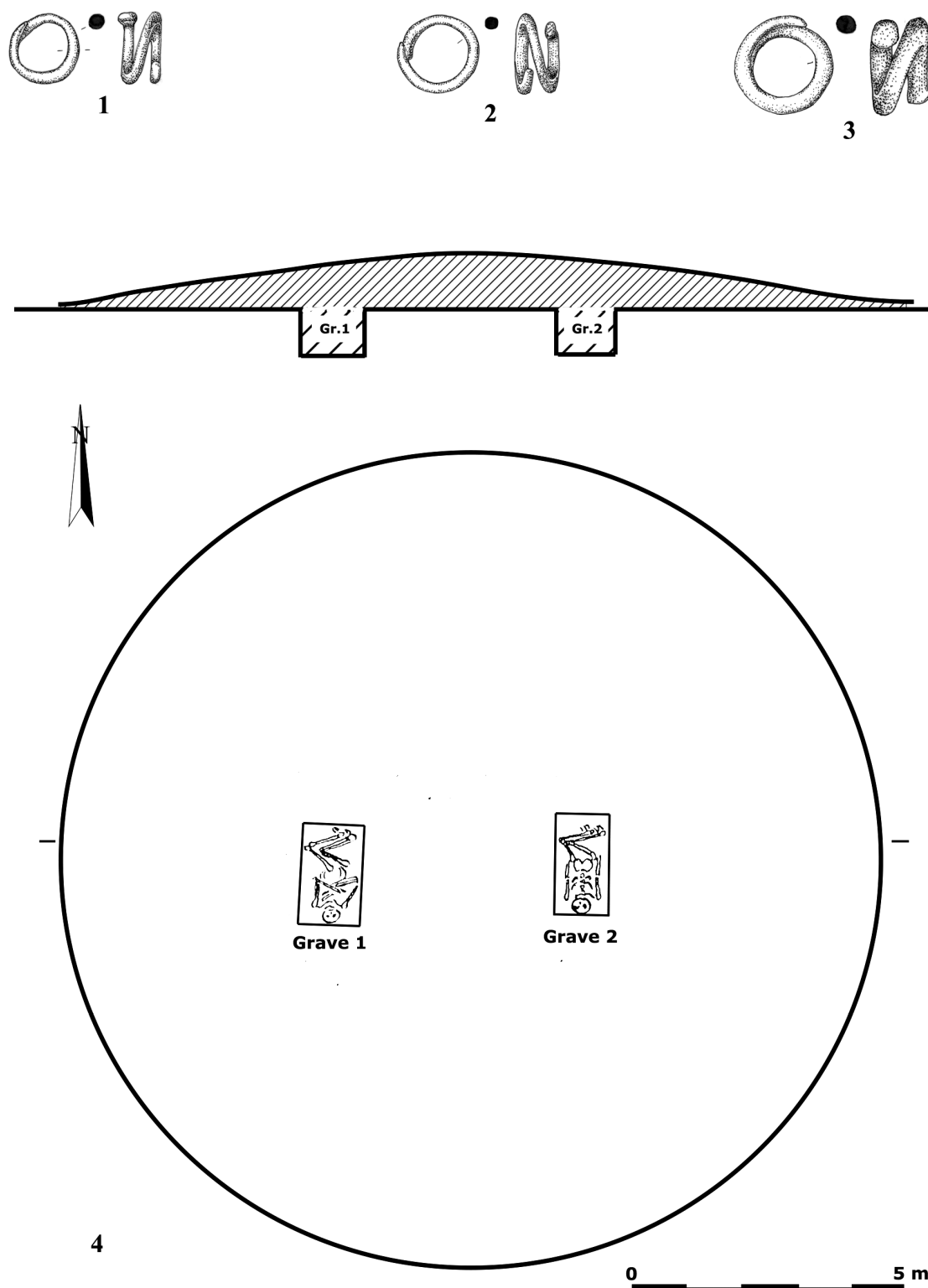


Plate IV – 1,2 - Tarnava, barrow 3, grave 1 - golden hair-rings; 3 - Mihailovo, golden hair-ring, stray find (after Александров 2009); 4 - Tarnava, barrow 3, Horizontal plan and section of the EBA graves (adapted from Николов 1976).

tion: West-East. Red ochre over the bones. Inventory – golden ear-ring – 6.7 gr (Plate X/3) in the *cervical vertebrae* zone.

Grave No. 9 – Inhumation (*infant*, ~ 12 years old) in a rectangular pit covered with wooden planks. Dimensions of the pit: 1.8 x 1.0 x 0.8 m. The pit had been dug into the barrow fill. Position of the skeleton – supine with flexed legs; arms alongside the body. Orientation: West-East. Red ochre over the bones. Inventory – two copper hair-rings, on both sides of the skull and a clay jug² (Plate X/5) near the shoulder. Outside the pit – bones belonging to *bos taurus*.

Grave No. 10 – Inhumation (*adultus*) in a rectangular pit covered with wooden planks. Dimensions of the pit: 2.2 x 1.1 x 0.9 m. The pit had been dug into the barrow fill. Position of the skeleton – supine with flexed legs; arms alongside the body. Orientation: West-East. Red ochre over the bones. No inventory. Outside the pit – a clay bowl with two tunnel-lugs (Plate VII/1) and animal bones had been found.

It should be added that during the excavations more pottery sherds (Plates VI/4; VII/4-7) had been found in the barrow fills,³ which suggests ritual breaking of vessels during the piling of the barrow.

1.2. *Barrow No. 2* was located in the “*Lozyata*” (The vineyards) locality, 2 km north of Tarnava (Plate II/1). It had 0.5 m in height and a diameter of 12 m. A single grave had been discovered during the excavations – cremation outside the barrow fill. Some of the burnt bones had been placed in a small vessel with corded decoration (Plate VII/9), the vessel itself was put in a pit with dimensions 1.6 x 1.0 x 0.8 m and covered with wooden planks (Николов 1976, 44–45).

1.3. *Barrow No. 3* was located in the “*Ogradishteto*” locality, 2.5 km north-east of Tarnava (Plate II/1). It was 1.0 m in height with a diameter of 15 m. Two graves had been discovered in it (Николов 1976, 45–46):

Grave No. 1 – Inhumation (*adultus*) in a rectangular pit covered with wooden planks. Dimensions of the pit: 1.8 x 1.0 x 0.8 m. The pit had been dug into the ancient humus level and the virgin soil. Position of the skeleton – supine with flexed legs; arms bent at the elbows, palms over the chest. Orientation: South-North. Red ochre over the bones. Inventory – two golden spiral hair-rings (Plate IV/1,2) with total weight of 6.5 gr, discovered beneath the left *clavicula* and right *humerus* respectively.

Grave No. 2 – Inhumation (*adultus, male*) in a rectangular pit covered with wooden planks. Dimensions of the pit: 1.9 x 0.9 x 0.8 m. The pit had been dug into the ancient humus level and the virgin soil. Position of the skeleton – supine with flexed legs; arms alongside the body. Orientation: South-North. Red ochre over the skull. No inventory.

2. Barrow near Kneza, Vratsa district

The barrow was located in the “*Koshutanets*” locality, 5 km south-west of Kneza (Plate II/2). It was 1.4 m in height with a diameter of 22 m. A single grave had been discovered during the excavations – inhumation (*adultus*) in rectangular pit covered with wooden planks. Dimensions of the pit: 2.0 x 1.2 x 1.0 m. The pit had been dug into the ancient humus level and the virgin soil. Position of the skeleton – supine with flexed legs; arms alongside the body. Orientation: South-North. Red ochre over the bones. No inventory (Николов 1976, 46–47).

3. Barrow near Tarnak, Vratsa district

The barrow necropolis consisted of at least 4 barrows located north of the village; one of them – “*Ninovska barrow*” (Plate II/2) was investigated in 1993. It was 1.4 m in height with a diameter of 22 m, severely destroyed by treasure-hunters and other modern activities (Plate V/1,5). Two EBA graves had been discovered in it (Торбов 1994):

Grave No. 2 – Inhumation in a rectangular pit covered with wooden planks. Dimensions of the pit: 1.8 x 1.0 x 0.8 m. Position of the skeleton – relaxed hocker to the right. Orientation: West-East. Red ochre over the bones. No inventory. The pit had been dug into the ancient humus level and the virgin soil. First barrow fill has been piled above the grave (Plate V/4).

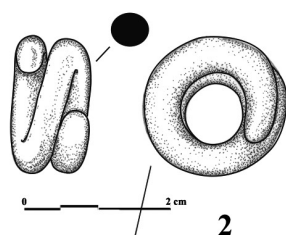
² See the discussion below.

³ Personal information from Bogdan Nikolov.

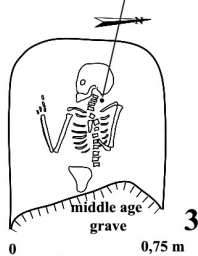
Grave No. 1 (partly destroyed by a Middle Age grave-pit) – inhumation in supine position; the remaining legs bones had traces of heavy burning. Orientation: West-East. Red ochre over the bones. Inventory – a silver hair-ring (Plate V/2) found between the skull and the *cervical vertebrae* zone. Chemical composition: Ag – 85.55%, Sn – 13.2%, Pb – 1.03%, Au – 0.2%, As – 0.006%, Bs – 0.004%, An – 0.003%, Zn – 0.001%. The grave-pit had been dug into the already existing barrow fill and the virgin soil. Additional barrow fills have been piled over the grave.



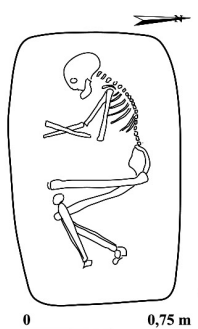
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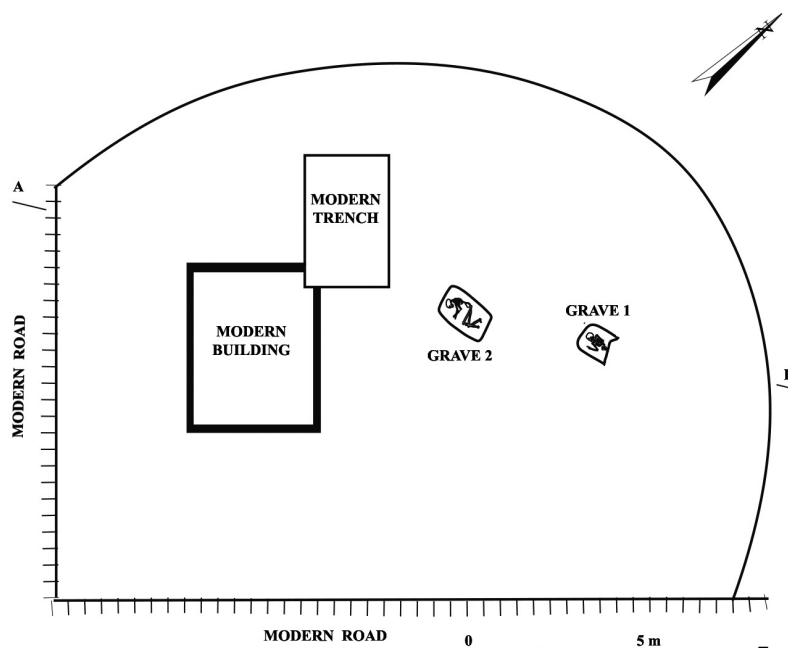
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3



4



5

Plate V – Tarnak, “Ninovska barrow”. 1 - The central profile; 2 - silver hair-ring from grave 1; 3 - grave 1; 4 - grave 2; 5 - horizontal plan and section of the barrow (adapted from Topčob 1994).

4. Barrow near Popitsa, Vratsa district

In the beginning of the 90-es of the 20th century a barrow grave with inhumation has been destroyed. Red ochre over the bones was mentioned as well.⁴

5. Barrow near Altimir, Vratsa district

Four vessels have been published as coming from a destroyed barrow grave in “Drandarska kosara” locality near the village. The additional information was that they come from a cremation grave. The vessels and the grave, respectively, have been dated to the Iron Age (Николов 1965, обр. 16/a-r). However, one of the vessels published (Николов 1965, обр. 16/г = Plate X/11) has all the characteristics of the EBA-3 pottery and thus, should rather be connected to a destroyed EBA barrow grave than to the Iron Age one (see the discussion below).

6. Barrow near Harlets, Vratsa district

During the 70-s of the 20th century a barrow grave, located approximately 3 km south-west of the roman town *Augustae* near the village had been destroyed. The deceased had probably been placed in supine position with flexed legs, the bones being “...covered with red ochre”. A vessel (Plate X/9) placed near the skull had been found in the grave as well (Машов 1980, 8; Николов 1982, 193, обр. 1/a).

7. Barrow near Kozlodui, Vratsa district

Excavations by N. Torbov and G. Ganetsovski in 2009-2010. The necropolis consists of 4 barrows from which barrow No. 2 is under investigation. A pottery fragment from the EBA Coțofeni culture was found in the barrow fill (Торбов, Ганецовски 2011).

8. Barrow near Leskovets, Montana district

Excavations by D. Agre. The skeleton in the primary grave in barrow No. 1 had been covered with red ochre. According to the excavator, the inventory of the grave is to be connected with the EBA (Александров 1994, 87).⁵

Stratigraphy and relative chronology of the barrow graves in North-West Bulgaria

Tarnak barrow

Grave No. 2 is the primary grave (Торбов 1994). The closest parallel comes from Central North Bulgaria – Goran-Slatina necropolis, Barrow VII, grave No. 5 (the primary one) – relaxed hocker inhumation on the left side in a rectangular pit covered with wooden planks; orientated southwest-northeast; with red ochre over the bones and pieces of red ochre near the skull. An organic sheet was placed beneath the skeleton. Stratigraphically, grave No. 4 is the next semi-supine position to the right, followed by graves nos. 1 and 3, with skeletons in supine position with flexed legs, arms alongside the body (Китов и др. 1991, 90–96). Generally, the grave in discussion enters the group of “*relaxed hocker graves*” between Danube river and Balkan range – Zebil I/1,2,5-7,14,15 and Tulcea-sud (Simion 2003, p. 17; 21–23), Anadolkiöi II/1 (Schuchardt, Traeger 1918), Belitsa (Александров, Бенъм 1995); a group of presumed date in Cernavodă I or Cernavodă III-Usatovo periods (Alexandrov 2011).

Grave No. 1. The chronology of the grave might be indicated by the date of the silver hair-ring (Plate V/2). It enters group IA1 – large, heavy rings with diameter around 2 cm. The best analogies for the Tarnak one come from Oltenia – Celei settlement, level 2c (Nica 1982, 24, fig. 6/2,3) and Muntenia, Zimnicea flat necropolis (Alexandrescu 1974: 7, Pl. 6/4, 8/11, 9) both dating to the EBA-1b period (Александров 2009). Not long ago the earliest hair-rings of this group were known from Late Tripolye – Usatovo milieu (Патоква 1979, 109) but some new investigations suggest their synchronous appearance in Lower Danube as well. Such rings come from the

⁴ Information from citizens of Byala Slatina in 1993.

⁵ The results of the excavations have not been published yet, so the relation of the grave to EBA is uncertain.

Smyadovo flat necropolis, grave 20, dated by 2 AMS dates (4445± 35 BP and 4470± 30 BP) in 3338-3015 calBC (Chohadzhiev, Mihaylova 2014, 18-19, fig. 28b/3-6). In Thrace they are known from EBA-2 complexes as well (Alexandrov 2015, Obr. 14), although, it is the author's opinion that in the Lower Danube basin their date should be placed in the EBA-1 period, such as the date of the grave in discussion.

Tarnava, barrow 1 (*"Glavchovska barrow"*)

From the very beginning *"Glavchovska barrow"* attracted the attention of specialists. Its dating to the EBA and relation of the pottery to the Coțofeni Culture (Николов 1976, 49; Николов 1982, 199) have generally been accepted by most (Georgiev 1982, 190-192; Панайотов 1989, 22-24; Китов и др. 1991, 21), while others related some of the graves to Celei (Comşa 1976, 37) or Orlea-Sadovec groups (Roman 1981, 33). According to B. Jovanović, graves Nos. 1 and 3 from one side and 2,4-6 – from the other side, form two groups with parallels in Coțofeni Culture, while graves Nos. 7-10 should be connected to steppe populations (Jovanović 1992, 245-246). F. Burtănescu suggested that the primary grave is grave No.3, connected to „...*yamnaya*” ritual, synchronous to Orlea-Sadovec, Coțofeni I and Golyama Detelina. Grave No. 30 (Upper Thrace), and the rest of the graves should be dated to the Coțofeni II, III and post-Coțofeni III periods (Burtănescu 2002, 327-328), while L. Nikolova argued that the last grave – No. 10, based on the bowl discovered, should be dated to the end of the Coțofeni Culture (Nikolova 1999, 383; Николова 2000, 440-441).

It is quite obvious that the chronological distribution of the Tarnava, barrow 1 graves have been subject of different approaches, leading to different conclusions. On several occasions, the author of the present article argued for a chronological sequence of Tarnava, barrow 1 graves (Александров 1994, 86-87; Александров 2011, Alexandrov 2011), which will be summarized here using the last investigations of the problematic EBA barrow in South-Eastern Europe:

1. Stratigraphic observations: According to B. Nikolov the primary grave is grave No. 1, the author underlining that *"... after the burial, clay had been piled above the grave, thus forming a small barrow"* (Николов 1976, 40). Chronologically, next is grave No. 3, above which another clay fill had been piled *"...thus, the initial barrow enlarged its dimensions"* (Николов 1976, 41). Next in line come the two stone constructions labeled as *"tombs"*. The first one, related to grave No. 4, had been built in the eastern part of the already existing barrow on an initially *"...leveled and well tamped terrain"*. The second tomb, related to graves Nos. 5 and 6, had been located in the *"...western part of the barrow fill of the first tomb"*, which is additional proof of the existence of a separate barrow fill over grave No.4. Above tomb No. 2 additional *"clay"* had been piled, *"...thus, the barrow enlarged significantly its dimensions"* (Николов 1976: 41-42). Graves Nos. 7-10 had been dug into the barrow fill without adding new ones (Николов 1976: 42-44). From the above mentioned, the sequence of the graves discovered should be: grave No. 1 (the primary one) → grave No. 3 → grave No. 2 → grave No. 4 (tomb 1) → graves Nos. 5, 6 (tomb 2) → graves Nos.7-10. This sequence was illustrated in the original publication (Николов 1976, Обр.1) and is presented here as well (Plate 3).

In several publications, the vessels discovered near graves Nos. 3, 7 and 10 (Plate VII/1,2,10) have been related to the graves that had been found nearby (Comşa 1976, 37; Roman 1981, 33; Nikolova 1999, 383; Николова 2000, 440-441; Motzoi-Chicideanu 2011, 256). However, it is quite clear, considering the fact that all the grave pits had been covered with wooden planks, that those vessels had been found outside the mortuary complexes/graves. Then, including the fact that barrow fills had been piled above graves Nos.1-6, I think it is more reasonable for the vessels in discussion are connected with the mortuary practices performed during the piling of the barrow fills, rather than to the respective graves. Supporting such an assumption are the fragments found in the fills (Plate VI/4; VII/4-7), but were not mentioned in the original publication from 1976.

2. Relative chronology of the graves.

2.1. The vessel from grave No. 9. The published vessel – an askoidal cup (Plate X/5) has been subject of several scientific arguments. Its shape is characteristic of the Zimnicea – Mlăjet

– Sânzieni chronological horizon (Roman 1986, 30; Alexandrov 2002; Schuster 2003, 112), even argued to represent the “...secondary region” of its regional development (Motzoi-Chicideanu, Olteanu 2000, 24-25). Considering the stratigraphic position of grave No. 9 – one of the latest in the barrow, a later chronological position of the Zimnicea Group compared to the Coțofeni Culture has been, quite logically, argued as well (Bajenaru 2014, 231). In fact, the published vessel coming from grave No. 9 (Николов 1976, Обр. 11/а = Plate X/5) is registered in Vratsa Museum (inv. No. A-670) before the excavations of Tarnava barrows as a stray find from Krushovitsa (to-

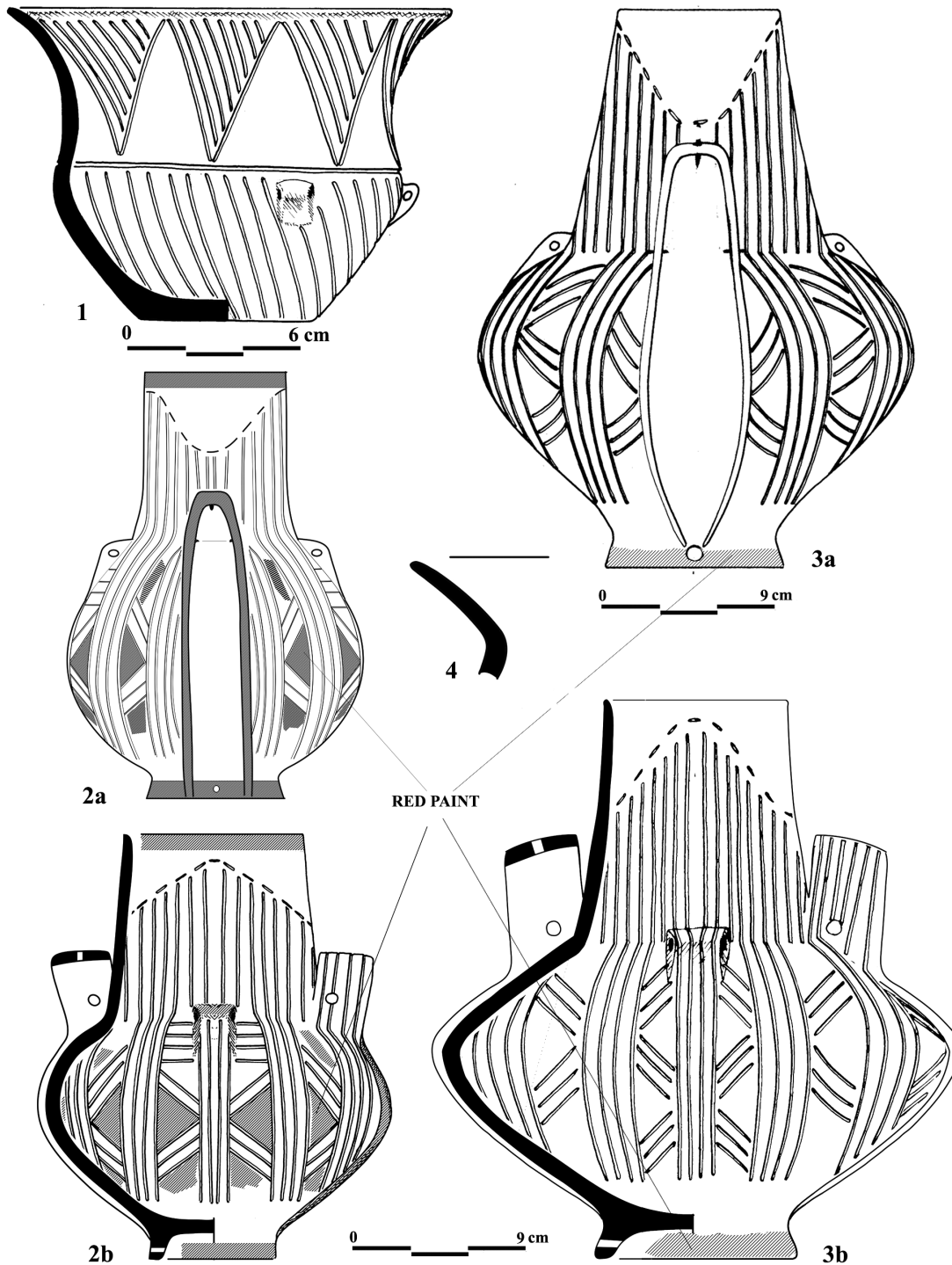


Plate VI – Tarnava, “Glavchovska barrow”. Pottery. 1 - Grave 4; 2 - Grave 5; 3 - Grave 1; 4 - from the fill.

gether with another askoidal cup – inv. No. A-669; see Alexandrov 2002, Pl. I/4). I have already argued that its appearance in the Tarnava publication was the result of a technical fault (Alexandrov 2002, 141–142) and, therefore, should be excluded from the Tarnava finds discussion.

2.2. The askos found near grave No. 3 and the fragments from the fill (Plate VII/6,10). According to E. Comşa the vessel is to be related to the Celei group (Comşa 1976, 37). Based on a fragment of a similar askos found in Orlea (Roman 1976a, Fig. 12/1) P. Roman and I. Motzoi-Chicideanu connected Grave No. 3 to the Orlea-Sadovec group (Roman 1981, 33; Motzoi-Chicideanu 2011, 256). However, the closest parallel of the Tarnava askoi comes from the Altimir, Bresta locality, where a very similar askos (Plate IX/1) was found in a Coţofeni III Culture pit. (Ганецовски 2006, табл. II/1,2,4). A similar askos comes from a destroyed inhumation barrow grave from Cârna, Oltenia connected to the Coţofeni III culture (Bichir 1958a, 101–103) as well as from several other Coţofeni sites in North-West Bulgaria (Plate IX/2,4).

2.3. Bowls from grave No. 2 and near grave No. 7, both covered with red slip (Plate VII/2,8). In the aforementioned Cârna barrow grave, a bowl and a fragment of another had also been found, both identical to the Tarnava ones (Bichir 1958a, 101–103, fig. 1-3; Bichir 1958b, 101–103, fig. 5/1; 6). The form and decoration are characteristic for the Coţofeni culture III (type Ib3) and have their best parallels in the Castrele Traiane site, Oltenia (Roman 1976, Pl. 89/1).

2.4. Vessels from graves Nos.1 and 5. It is worth mentioning that both vessels were decorated with encrusted incised lines and crude red paint (Plate VI/2,3). The shape is characteristic of the Coţofeni culture (type IXb3, known as “*vessels for liquids transportation*”). Identical vessels come from a cremation grave near Maceşu de Jos, Oltenia (Dumitrescu 1960: 76, fig. 4/3) as well as from the destroyed cremation necropolis at Ostrovul Corbului, Iron Gates region (Berciu 1939: 24, fig. 13/1) dated to Coţofeni III phase (Roman 1976a: Pl. 97/5). Vessels of this type come from North-West Bulgaria as well: the Gradets settlement – level II,⁶ Traykovo and Kozlodui – Kileria sites (Plate VIII/4,7-9; IX/4-6), all of them dated to the Coţofeni III phase. The existence of virtually the same vessel and decoration in both graves strongly suggests that the burials in graves 1-6 had been performed within a relatively short period of time.

2.5. The cup from grave No. 4 represents type XV from the typology of the Coţofeni culture pottery. It is a characteristic shape for the third phase of the culture in South Oltenia. An identical cup, including the two tunnel lugs, comes from the Basarabi settlement (Roman 1976, 45, Pl. 32/1; 90/14).

2.6. Graves Nos. 7-10 form the latest group in the barrow. The grave inventory consists of a copper ring in grave No. 7 (Николов 1976, Обр. 10/a); two copper hair-rings in grave No. 9 (Николов 1976, Обр. 10/б,в) and a golden ear-ring in grave No. 8 (Plate 10/3). The hair-rings from grave No. 8 belongs to the group IA2, generally dating to the second half of the 4th – 3rd millennium BC (Александров 2009 and the discussion below).

The golden ear-ring from grave No. 9 belongs to the so-called “*Leucas*” type, first known from the “grave circle R” from Dörpfeld’s excavations in Leucas, North-West Greece (Dörpfeld 1927, Beil. 60/3,4; 63/3,5). The dating of the necropolis is quite arguable. According to R. Hammond and K. Branigan it covers Early Helladic II – the beginning of Middle Helladic periods (Hammond 1974, 135–138; Branigan 1975, 38) while, based on the pottery analyses of “circle R”, S. Müller states that „...*terminus post quem for piling the first barrows is the very end of Early Helladic II or the beginning of Early Helladic III*” (Müller 1989, 15, 39). Similar is the situation with the five ear-rings from Velika Gruda, Montenegro, dated by M. Primas at the end of 4th – beginning of 3rd millennium BC (Primas 1996, 25,39,53) although other authors have connected them to post-Vučedol period (Tasić 1995, 145; Durman 1988, 58–60) or in a period between 2750-2500 BC (Harrison, Heyd 2007, Fig. 48). Two golden ear-rings of the „*Leucas*” type come from grave No. 1, barrow No. 3 near Ampoiţa, Transylvania, synchronized with the Late Glina and Odaia Turcului and dated „...*not later than Early Helladic III*” (Ciugudean 1991,

⁶ Excavations Ana Iocova (Vidin Museum).

85, Abb. 20/4,5; Ciugudean 1996, 128, Fig. 96). The type is known from Oryahovo, North-West Bulgaria (Plate X/2) and Petrich, South-West Bulgaria (both kept in NAIM-Sofia), from a barrow grave near Jurilovca, North Dobrudza (Vasiliu 2008, Fig. 4/2; Popescu 2010, 168, Fig. 1/14) as well as from Yunacite tell (Plate X/1 = Миков 1940, обр. 14; Миткова 2011, Обр. 2/1). All of

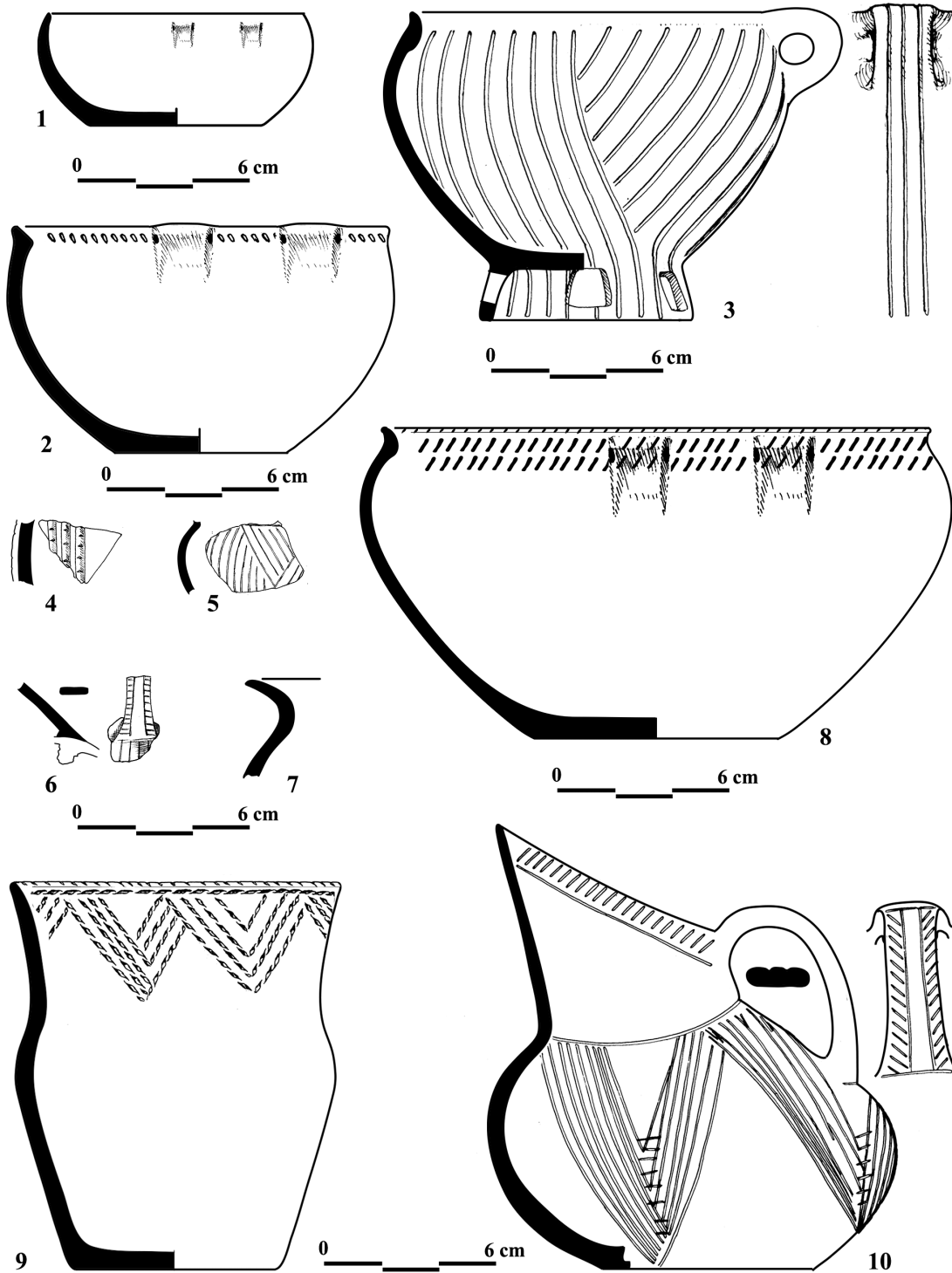


Plate VII – Tarnava, “Glavchovska barrow”. Pottery. 1 - from the fill, near grave 10;
 2 - from the fill, near grave 7; 3 - Grave 5; 4-7 - from the fill; 8 - Grave 2;
 10 - from the fill, near grave 3; 9 - Tarnava, barrow 2, grave 1.

them, unfortunately, remain without certain archaeological context. However, considering the stratigraphic position of the Grave No. 9, as well as the chronological position of the Ampoița grave (Ciugudean 2011), I am inclined to date the “Leukas” type ear-rings to the Post-Coțofeni period, or EBA-3 according to the Bulgarian periodization of the period.

Concluding for “Glavchovska barrow” – graves Nos.1-6 date to EBA-2 period. All of them had their separate barrow fill/fills; during their piling, clay vessels had been broken and thrown

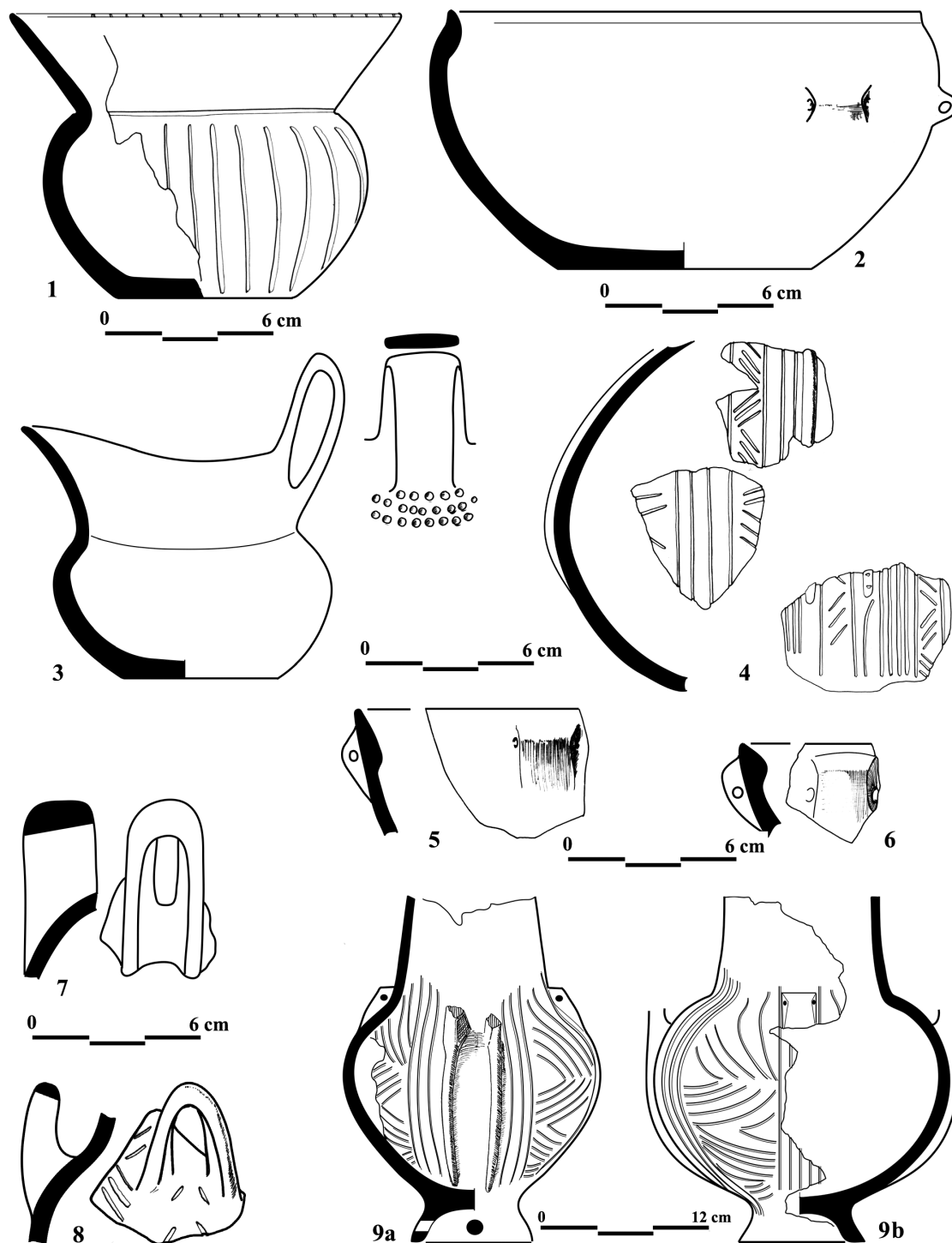


Plate VIII – Gradets, level II. Coțofeni III pottery with parallels in the “Glavchovska barrow”.

into the fills - some of them near the grave-pits. All the discovered vessels and fragments should be connected to the Coțofeni Culture, phase III. Graves Nos.7-10 were dug into the already existing barrow without adding additional fills. According to their inventory - metal ornaments - they could be dated to the EBA-3 period, quite possibly to the very beginning.

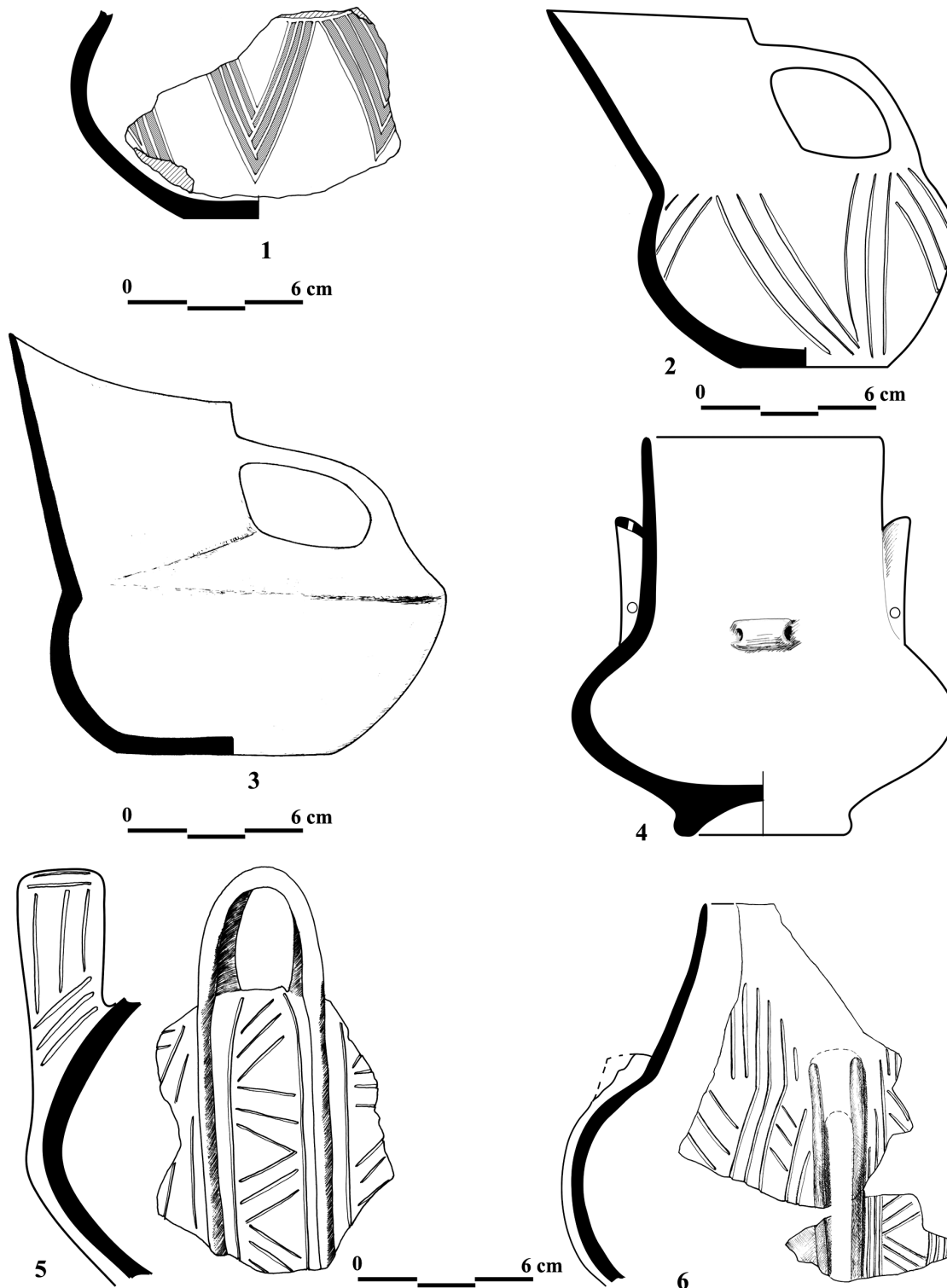


Plate IX – North-West Bulgaria. Coțofeni Culture pottery with parallels in the “Glavchovska barrow”.

1 - Altimir; 2 - Rasovo; 3 - Yakimovo, Gradishteto; 4 - Kozlodui, Saltirov Vodopoy
(after Панайотов, Александров 1988); 5 - Traykovo; 6 - Kozlodui, Kileria.

Tarnava, Barrow 2.

The cremation grave, No. 1, is the only grave in the barrow. The vessel used as an “urn”, a corded decorated beaker (Plate VII/9), is not common for the local EBA pottery production and has been connected by V. Dergachev to the “*Dniester variant of Yamnaya Culture*” (Дергачев 1986, 79). Similar vessels and corded decorations are common for the *Yamnaya* graves in North-West Pontic area – Dalnik II, Траповка 4/5; 6/20 (Субботин 2000, Рис. 4/6, 14, 17); Bash-tanovka, barrow No. 7, grave No. 12 (Иванова 2001, Рис. 9/3) etc., but they are to be found in the flat necropolis in Brăilița, in the Danube delta as well, with the closest parallel from there coming from grave No. 30, which is related to the Cernavodă II Culture (Harțuche 2002, 55, 133, Fig. 90/4). Further west in Walachia, such vessels with corded decorations appear in secondary graves from Ploiești-Triaj, barrow II (Comșa 1989). Considering the aforementioned, the grave from Tarnava could be dated to the end of EBA-1 – EBA-2, according to Bulgarian periodization of the period. This date is supported by the observation that barrow graves with such vessels provided ¹⁴C samples “... *seemingly dating to after 3050/3000 BC*” (Frînculeasa *et al.* 2015, 23).

Tarnava, Barrow 3.

The two graves were situated under a single barrow fill, suggesting their synchronism. Their relative chronological position could be established by the two golden hair-rings from grave No. 1 (Plate IV/1,2). They belong to the group IA2 – smaller and lighter compared to the Tarnak ring, with a diameter around 1 cm (Александров 2009). The hair-rings have recently been the subject of several analysis (Motzoi-Chicideanu, Olteanu 2000; Субботин 2002; Александров 2009; Popescu 2010; Preda 2015), so here I will add some new observations considering their chronological position in the Lower Danube region. Alongside the hair-rings from group IA1, they appear in the North-Pontic region as early as Late Tripolye and Usatovo (Дергачев, Манзура 1991, 71, 101, 107; рис. 47/11, 63/3, 68/8) being characteristic for *Yamnaya* and *Katakamnaya* complexes there as well (Dergachev 2002: 104; Вангородьска 1987, 3-5, рис. 2/11,12). The chronological timespan of their existence in the Lower Danube basin is from 3338-3015/3370-3090 calBC – AMS dates from Smyadovo, grave 20 and Ariceștii-Rahtivani, Barrow 4, grave 5 respectively to 2890-2580 BC – AMS dates from Ariceștii-Rahtivani, Barrow 4, grave 4 (Chohadzhiev, Mihaylova 2014, 18–19, fig. 28b/3-6; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2015, 15). Even their later appearance here is not excluded from the EBA-3 period, suggested by the copper ring from the barrow grave from Verbița (Oltenia) which is associated with pottery related to the Late Glina period (Berciu, Roman 1984, fig. 1/3). So, considering the above mentioned, the Tarnava, Barrow 3 graves should be dated in the broader frame of the EBA, or 3300–2300 BC.

Kneza barrow.

Alongside Goran-Slatina, barrow No. 4, grave No. 3 (Китов и др. 1991, 77), the only grave in Kneza barrow is considered by L. Nikolova to be one of the earliest “*Yamnaya*” graves in the Balkans dating to the end of the 4th millennium BC (Николова 2000, 440). The arguments for such a precise dating do not seem very convincing, so I am inclined to date the grave in discussion in the general frames of the EBA only.

Altimir barrow grave.

As mentioned above, in a 1965 publication a stray find of 4 vessels was related to a destroyed Late Iron Age cremation barrow grave. While three of the published vessels (Николов 1965, 175, обр. 16/a-в) are, without doubt, characteristic for that period, the fourth one, a bowl (presented here at Plate X/11) could have another date. Its closest parallels come from Staliyska mahala, Bagachina site dated to the EBA-3 period (Alexandrov 2007, 226–230, Pl. VIII/2,3,7,9-11). Similar bowls come from the Glina IV settlement at Ostrovul Corbului, Iron Gates region (Roman 1998, Abb. 3/5) as well as from Hotnitsa, Central North Bulgaria (Ilcheva 2000, fig. 2/9). Similar vessels come from Dyakovo, Central West Bulgaria, associated with Yunatsite-type cup also dated to EBA-3 (Alexandrov 1998, fig. 5/2-4,7). Such vessels appear in EBA complexes from the Central Balkans as well – Gradina and Južac near Pazarište (Jevtić 1997, Pl. V/4; XII/2); Vubanĵ (Бубанĵ 1983, cat. Nos. 137, 138; Булатовић, Станковски 2012, Т. II/12), Pelince (Булатовић, Станковски 2012, Т. LII/22,24, LV/43).

It is obvious that the Altimir find is not genuine. However, if its relation to the barrow graves is to be accepted, than the only possible explanation would be that the bowl in discussion comes from an EBA-3 barrow grave which was destroyed by a later Iron Age cremation grave. All the other characteristics of the EBA grave, especially if it had been a cremation one, remain uncertain.

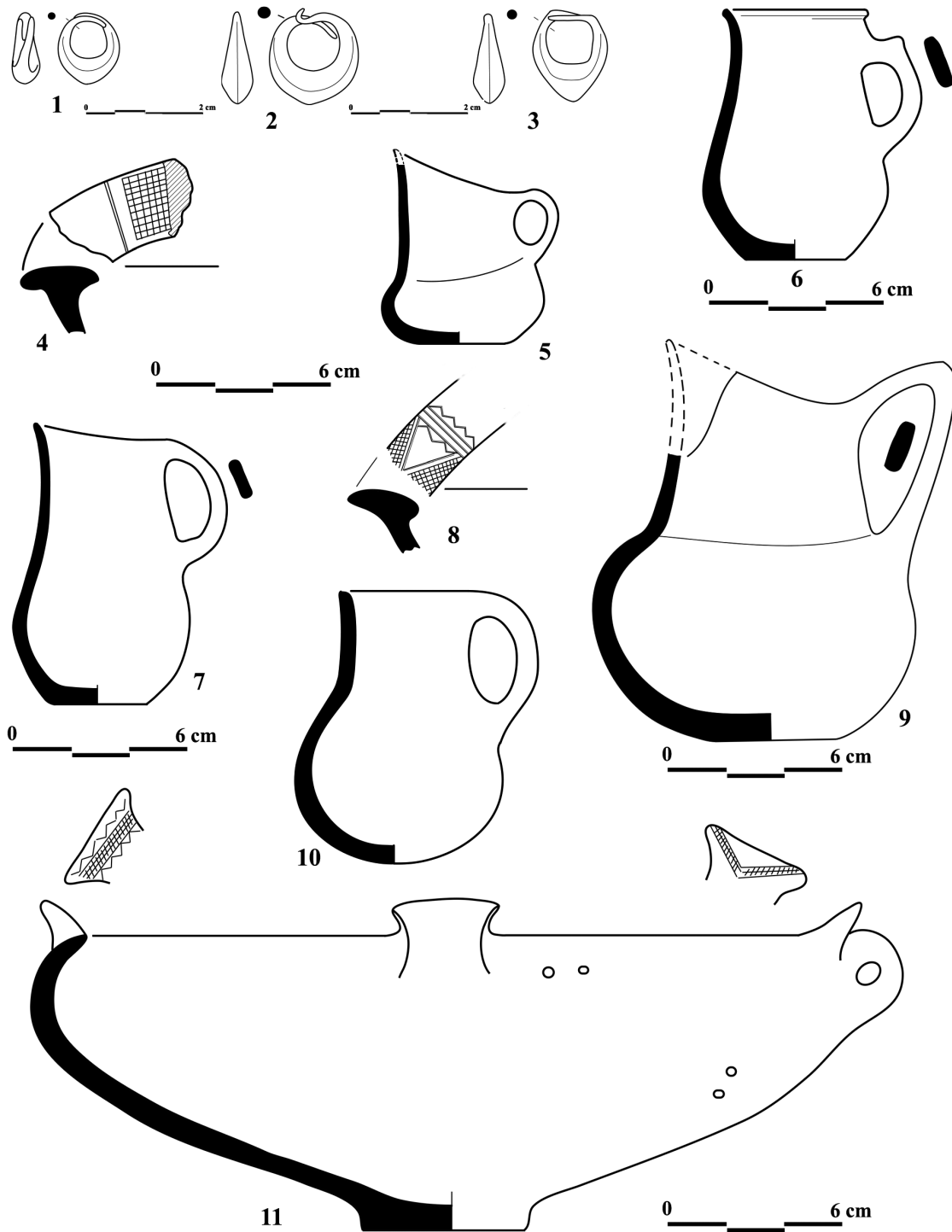


Plate X – EBA-3 materials from West Bulgaria. 1 - golden ear-ring from Yunacite (after Миткова 2011); 2 - golden ear-ring from Oryahovo; stray find; 3 - golden ear-ring from Tarnava, Glavchovska barrow, Grave 8; 4,8 - Yakimovo, Mogilata; 5 - Krushovitsa (stray find, EBA-1), published as coming from Tarnava, “Glavchovska barrow”, Grave 9; 6,7,10 - Lom, stray finds; 9 - Harlets, destroyed barrow grave; 10 - Altimir, destroyed barrow grave.

Harlets barrow grave.

According to L. Nikolova, the vessel from the grave had been made following the tradition of the ceramic production during the EBA-2 period (Nikolova 1999, 63, 383). However, distant resemblances present the jugs from the aforementioned Ariceştii-Rahtivani, barrow 4, grave 5, dated to 3370-3090 cal. BC (Frînculeasa *et al.* 2015, 15; Fig. 11) and in the one from Glubokoe (Дергачев 1999, обр. 27/3). Similar jugs come from the Edinets Culture (Дергачев 1986, рис. 27/9) as well as from Ezerovo sites (Tončeva 1981, figs. 9-10 and, especially fig. 9/1). In my opinion the shape is not common for the EBA-1 and 2 ceramic traditions in the region (Cernavodă III, Zimnicea – Celei, Coţofeni) and should probably be dated to EBA-3 period.

Finally, the following conclusions could be drawn from the discussion above:

1. So far, the earliest barrow grave in North-West Bulgaria is Tarnak, “Ninovska barrow”, grave No. 2 and could be dated to the Cernavodă I – Cernavodă III period;
2. Chronologically next comes Tarnak, “Ninovska barrow”, grave No. 1, dated to the EBA-1b period;
3. Graves Nos. 1-6 from Tarnava, “Glavchovska barrow” and, probably the cremation grave from Tarnava, barrow 2 date to EBA-2 period;
4. Graves Nos. 7-10 from Tarnava, “Glavchovska barrow” as well as the destroyed barrow graves from Altimir and Harlets date to EBA-3 period;
5. The rest of the graves should be dated in the general frames of the EBA period.

Some conclusive remarks

All the barrows investigated are located in the relatively flat regions of North-West Bulgaria; with the exception of the Leskovets grave, none are known in the sub-montane zone of the Balkan range or in the river lowlands so far. Barrow graves appear in the region as far west as Ogosta River, but some new information could place them further west – to the Lomska River region.⁷ At the present stage of the investigations, no connections between a barrow necropolis and a settlement could be established.

In a broader context, the North-West Bulgaria region follows the chronological and spatial patterns of the appearance and distribution of the barrow graves in the Lower Danube basin: quite a few graves are earlier than 3100 BC and their massive appearance was around and after that date (Alexandrov, Kaiser 2016; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2013). The connection of most of the graves to the “*Yamnaya*” culture is a common belief, as the region investigated presents bi-ritualism and various positions of the skeletons in the inhumation graves; the Coţofeni Culture pottery in EBA-2 graves and in the fills suggest a co-existence of “*Yamnaya*” and local populations in different micro-regions during that period (Панайотов 1989, 48–51). This relation is also seen north of the Danube River, in the barrows with Coţofeni culture pottery from Suharu-Dolj, Cârna, Rast, Basarabi and Ploşor, Oltenia (Александров, 1994, 87; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2015, 33), and even further east as well – Ariceştii Rahtivani, barrow 4, grave 3, Wallachia (Frînculeasa *et al.* 2015, 16, Fig. 6/5) and Taraclia, Budzhak steppes, barrow 14, grave No. 16 (Agulnikov 1995, 82–82, Pl. I/4-10).

The securely dated EBA-3 graves present supine position with flexed legs only. The grave inventory – metal spiral rings, ear-rings of the “Leukas” type, pottery related to Glina IV or Belotić-Bela Crkva and Somogyvár groups (Александров 1994, 88; Frînculeasa *et al.* 2015, 33–34) suggests increasing western/south-western contacts with the *Yamnaya* groups during that period, generally characterized in the investigated region by T-shaped bowls and cups/jugs (Plate X/4,6,7,8,10,11) with parallels west/southwest in the Lower Danube region. The questions related to the possible movement of such groups from the east together with Glina populations in EBA-3 (Roman 1976, 75) should be the subject of another analyses, as well as should be related to the appearance of the barrow graves in the Cernavodă I – Cernavodă III periods.

⁷ The Coţofeni materials from Traikovo (Plate IX/5) probably come from the fill of a barrow near the village.

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List of authors / Списак аутора

Stefan Alexandrov
National Institute of Archaeology and Museum
Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
2 Saborna Str.
1000 Sofia, Bulgaria
stefanalexandrov@abv.bg

Dragana Antonović
Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade
Knez Mihailova 35/IV
11000 Belgrade, Serbia
d.antonovic.960@gmail.com

Tiberius Bader
Max Eyth Str. 12
71282 Hemmingen, Deutschland
tib.bader@web.de

Martina Blečić Kavur
Univerza na Primorskem, Fakulteta za
humanistične študije, Titov trg 5
6000 Koper, Slovenia
martina.blecic.kavur@upr.si

Jan Bouzek
Charles University
Smetanovo nábřeží 6
11001 Prague, Czech Republic
Jan.Bouzek@ff.cuni.cz

Dragan Božić
Znanstvenoraziskovalni center SAZU
Inštitut za arheologijo
Novi trg 2
SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenija
dragan.bozic@zrc-sazu.si

Игорь Викторович Брюяко
Одесский археологический музей
Национальной академии наук Украины
Ланжероновская ул.4
65026 Одесса, Украина
ibruyako@yandex.ru

Aleksandar Bulatović
Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade
Knez Mihailova 35/IV
11000 Belgrade, Serbia
abulatovic3@gmail.com

Marko Dizdar
Institute of Archaeology
Ljudevita Gaja 32
10000 Zagreb, Croatia
marko.dizdar@iarh.hr

Katarina Dmitrović
Narodni muzej Čačak
Cara Dušana 1
32000 Čačak, Serbia
katarina.dmitrovic@gmail.com

Aca Đorđević
National Museum in Belgrade
Trg Republike 1a
11000 Belgrade, Serbia
a.djordjevic@narodnimuzej.rs

Vojislav Filipović
Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade
Knez Mihailova 35/IV
11000 Belgrade, Serbia
vfilipov1@gmail.com

Blagoje Govedarica
Institut für Prähistorische Archäologie
der FU Berlin, c/o Eurasien Abteilung des DAI
Im Dol 2-6, Haus II
14195 Berlin, Germany
blagoje.govedarica@dainst.de

Mitja Guštin
profemeritus
Pusterla 7
6330 Piran, Slovenia
mitja.gustin@upr.si

✠ **Bernhard Hänsel**
Institut für Prähistorische Archäologie,
Freie Universität
Fabeckstraße 23-25
14195 Berlin, Deutschland

Aleksandar Kapuran
Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade
Knez Mihailova 35/IV
11000 Belgrade, Serbia
a.kapuran@gmail.com

Boris Kavur
Univerza na Primorskem, Fakulteta za
humanistične študije, Titov trg 5
6000 Koper, Slovenia
boris.kavur@upr.si

Jovan Koledin
Muzej Vojvodine
Dunavska 35
21000 Novi Sad, Srbija
jovan.koledin@muzejvojvodine.org.rs

List of authors / Списак аутора

Мирослав Д. Лазич
Универзитет у Београду, Филозофски факултет,
Одељење за археологију, Археолошка збирка
Чика Љубина 18-20
11000 Београд, Србија
mdlazic@gmail.com

Ljuben Leshtakov
National Institute of Archaeology with Museum,
Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
Sofia, 2 Saborna str.
1000 Sofia, Bulgaria
l_leshtakow@abv.bg

Marija Ljuština
Univerzitet u Beogradu, Filozofski fakultet
Odeljenje za arheologiju
Čika-Ljubina 18-20
11000 Beograd
mljustin@f.bg.ac.rs

Daria Ložnjak Dizdar
Institut za arheologiju
Ljudevita Gaja 32
10000 Zagreb, Hrvatska
dldizdar@iarh.hr

Predrag Medović
Narodnog fronta 71
21000 Novi Sad, Serbia

Dragi Mitrevski
Ss. Cyril and Methodius University
blvd. Goce Delcev 9
1000 Skopje, Macedonia
dragimit@yahoo.com

Ognjen Đ. Mladenović
Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade
Knez Mihailova 35/IV
11000 Belgrade, Serbia
mladenovic40@gmail.com

Kristina Mihovilić
Arheološki muzej Istre
Carrarina ulica 3
52100 Pula, Hrvatska
kristina.mihovilic@ami-pula.hr

Barry Molloy
School of Archaeology
University College Dublin
Newman Building
Dublin 4, Ireland
barrymolloy@gmail.com

Јовица Станковски
Т. Думба 88/4-21
1100 Куманово, Македонија
stankovskijovica@yahoo.com

Milorad Stojić
Milutina Milankovića 28
11000 Beograd, Srbija
milestojic@gmail.com

Marija Svilar
Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade
Knez Mihailova 35/IV
11000 Belgrade, Serbia
marijasvilar@yahoo.com

Josip Šarić
Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade
Knez Mihailova 35/IV
11000 Belgrade, Serbia
josips@eunet.rs

Biba Teržan
Filozofska fakulteta, Univerza v Ljubljani
Aškerčeva cesta 2
1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
biba.terzan@ff.uni-lj.si

Денис Топал
Универзитет «Высшая антропологическая школа»
Зимбрулуй 10а
2024 Кишинев, Молдова
denis.topal@gmail.com

Selena Vitezović
Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade
Knez Mihailova 35/IV
11000 Belgrade, Serbia
selenavitezovic@gmail.com