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PERFORATED COINS FROM GRAVES AT THE VIMINACIUM NECROPOLIS OF VIŠE GROBALJA*

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Abstract. – A common problem that occurs when interpreting finds of perforated Roman coins is whether they had been perforated in Roman times or later. Hence, the specimens that originate from an undisturbed archaeological context, as is the case with finds from the Viminacium necropolis of Više Grobalja, are indispensable. A total of 47 perforated coins were discovered:

31 with a single and 16 with three perforations. The analysis of the context of the finds, in some specimens, allows the confident assertion that they had constituted a part of jewellery.

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

In the course of extensive rescue archaeological investigations at Viminacium, conducted in the 1970s and '80s at the necropolis of Više Grobalja, 3,987 cremation and inhumation burials were discovered.¹ Of 2,211 inhumations, 621 (or 28.08%) contained coins as part of the grave inventory, whereas a far greater percentage of coins was observed in cremations (of 1,776 graves, 725 (or 42.82%) contained coins). A small number of coins from graves were perforated, either once or three times. In inhumation burials, 13 coins with a single and 10 with three perforations were recorded, while this number is significantly smaller in cremations: 6 coins with one and 3 with three perforations. An additional 12 coins with one and 3 with three perforations originate from the layer at the necropolis, which comprises the space between the graves or a sacrificial area above a group of graves.

When interpreting perforated Roman coins, a recurring problem is associated with the context of the

finds. In most cases, such specimens are part of old museum collections, usually providing no data with regard to either the location or the context of the find. Obviously, the coins themselves are not difficult to date, although in such cases a persistent issue as to when they had been perforated arises, since it is always possible that this was done at a later date.² The second category

¹ The research results from the necropolis and graves have been partially published in two volumes (Зотовић, Јордовић 1990; Korać, Golubović 2009). All the coin finds from the necropolis of Više Grobalja are included in the monograph (Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015).

² Numerous finds of perforated Roman coins of the 4th and 5th century from Great Britain confirm this practice during the Anglo-Saxon period (Bland, Loriot 2010, 99–100). A great number of perforated specimens also originate from the Early Byzantine period (Поповић 1993, 55, н. 10). A similar situation is encountered at the necropolises from the 9th–11th century in north-western Bosnia (Šmalcelj-Novaković 2012, 143, ref. 94).

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includes specimens that are part of the so-called “monetary jewellery”, whereby the coins are incorporated into a piece of jewellery (ring, necklace, bracelet, earring or pendant) and can be dated to a specific, more narrow period, based on the typology of the jewellery.³

A familiar context of finds, particularly from undisturbed graves, along with supporting documentation, are therefore of great importance in the assessment of perforated Roman coins, allowing for it to be asserted that they had been perforated in Roman times and used as part of jewellery, or that they had some other role in the funerary ritual. The examples of perforated Roman coins from the Viminacium necropolis of Više Grobalja are thus an excellent starting point for the deliberation on their role in the function of jewellery, funerary ritual or both. At the same time, the largest amount of valuable data regarding our findings can be obtained by analysing the context of finds in inhumation burials, whereby their position in relation to the body is most important. In the case of cremations, the location of the finds and their relation to other grave goods allows us to infer whether the perforated coins constitute a part of composite jewellery (a string), represent an individual pendant or have some other function, based on the type of perforation. The finds of such coins from the layers of the sacrificial areas at the necropolis, testify to a particular role they had in the rites performed after funerals, during regular commemorative repasts.

INHUMATION GRAVES (Tables 1 and 2)

In inhumations, the finds of perforated coins in the graves of adults and children are differentiated. A distinction is also made between graves that exclusively contain coins with either a single or three perforations and those with both types of coins. Furthermore, in both cases, in addition to the perforated ones, coins with no perforations may also be present in the grave.

Singly perforated coins in graves of adults

G 596⁵ – Adult individual, interred in a wooden coffin. Grave goods: next to the left shoulder – a silver lunate pendant; next to the right forearm (position C) – a bronze coin;⁶ next to the left upper arm – a small ceramic pot; on the chest (position D) – a silver lunate pendant and a singly perforated denarius of Hadrian, with a crescent and stars on the reverse.⁷

The perforation on the denarius is square in shape and was made on the obverse side at 6 and on the reverse

at 12 o'clock (Plate I/1).⁸ From this, it can be concluded that the reverse with the crescent representation was exposed to view. The position of the perforated coin and the lunate pendant on the chest indicates that they had been pendants on a necklace, strung onto material that had disintegrated. The other lunate pendant, discovered next to the left shoulder, was possibly a part of the same necklace, which may have slipped from the chest of the deceased.

Lunate pendants are one of the oldest and most prevalent amulets in antiquity. The earliest examples are known from Mesopotamia, dating back to the 3rd millennium BC, from where, across Asia Minor, they later spread to the Mediterranean world.⁹ Thus, necklaces with lunate pendants were present from the Hellenistic period in the Aegean region, southern Italy and the northern shores of the Black Sea. In an unaltered form, they occur throughout the entire Roman imperial period, when they were particularly popular.¹⁰ The

³ However, problems related to dating may arise within this category as well in the cases of simple necklaces or bracelets which, in addition to coins, have pendants such as shells or a wild boar tooth. These components in jewellery occur throughout the whole Roman period and are more difficult to date. At Viminacium, several examples of such a use of coins were recorded: a bronze coin with an eyelet applied (Više Grobalja, G1 1105); a perforated coin with a loop, used as an earring (Pećine, G1 720, G 1749); a perforated coin as part of a necklace (Pećine, G1 187, G 4288, including the examples that will be presented in this paper).

⁴ The position of coins in graves is defined according to Clarke (1979, 158): A – on/around head; B – in mouth; C – on/near right arm (and in hand); D – on/near torso; E – on/near left arm (and in hand); F – on/near pelvis; G – on/near right leg; H – on/near left leg. Position G/H – near/between legs/feet has been added to Clarke's systematisation. It refers to instances when coins were located between the knees or lower legs of the deceased or when, based on the fieldwork documentation, it was not clear next to which leg they were discovered (Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, 18, ref. 29).

⁵ Designation G refers to inhumation graves, whereas G1 to cremations.

⁶ This specimen has been lost. In the fieldwork documentation, two pieces of data appear: in the log (p. 847) it notes that it was a specimen of Antoninus Pius, whereas on card C (No. 4113) for the same coin it was recorded that it belonged to Caracalla.

⁷ The denarius is illegible and therefore could not be determined using the reference catalogue, although, based on the reverse representation, it is dated between 128 and 132 (Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 505). It appears to depict 5 stars above a crescent, but the specimen is fairly worn so this is not certain (BMC III, Pl. 70.5–7).

⁸ All the coins presented in this paper are kept in the National Museum in Požarevac. I am grateful to my colleague Dragana Spasić-Djurić for the material provided.

⁹ Wrede 1975, 249.

¹⁰ Jovanović 1978, 44–45; Поповић 1996, 41–42.

Grave number (G)	Total number of coins in the grave	Number of perforated coins in the grave	Position in the grave according to Clarke
SINGLY PERFORATED COINS IN GRAVES OF ADULTS			
596	2	1	D
1426	1	1	H
1974C	7	1	G
2049	1	1	G/H
TRIPLY PERFORATED COINS IN GRAVES OF ADULTS			
1626	2	1	H
SINGLY AND TRIPLY PERFORATED COINS IN GRAVES OF ADULTS			
2079	3	2	F + F

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

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

Grave number (G)	Total number of coins in the grave	Number of perforated coins in the grave	Position in the grave according to Clarke
SINGLY PERFORATED COINS IN GRAVES OF CHILDREN			
706	2	1	?
1025	1	1	?
1339	1	1	D (?)
1708	3	2	D + E
1897	2	1	F
TRIPLY PERFORATED COINS IN GRAVES OF CHILDREN			
216	3	1	A/B (?)
247	2	1	F
474	2	1	D
1512	1	1	A/B (?)
1775	1	1	?
1825	2	1	G/H
SINGLY AND TRIPLY PERFORATED COINS IN GRAVES OF CHILDREN			
1176	3	2	H + G
2116	2	2	?

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

Табела 2. Перфорирани новчићи у децим гробовима (инхумације)

lunula, as a symbol of the moon, is closely linked to the female cycle and pregnancy, and was traditionally bestowed at birth.¹¹ Women, children and animals, which were, in contrast to males, considered particularly weak and susceptible to evil influences, wore lunate pendants for protection. Although, at first glance, the lunula seems more appropriate for girls, it was worn by children of both sexes.¹² It is interesting that the amulet does not relate to the lunar goddesses such as Luna or Selene, but rather to guardian deities of motherhood. Wrede concludes that the magical protection offered by the lunula is primarily associated with the alternating phases of the moon (waxing – waning = female cycle – pregnancy), and that the lunar deities have only a

secondary influence. This was probably due to the fact that the lunula had been attributed with particular magical powers, even from before the time that the idea of anthropomorphic deities first existed.¹³

The two lunate pendants and the coin-pendant with a depiction of a crescent and stars, as part of the necklace of the deceased from G 596, are definitely not a coincidence. The coin with this representation had been carefully selected and perforated so as to exhibit the

¹¹ Plautus, *Epidicus*, V.639; Wrede 1975, 243.

¹² Wrede 1975, 246.

¹³ Wrede 1975, 246–7, ref. 69.

reverse image. In the absence of anthropological analysis of the osteological remains from this grave, and in light of what has been stated, it can be assumed that this was probably a burial of a female individual. In the course of her life, she was in evident need of protection against evil influences and, to that end, she was in possession of two lunate pendants. The coin-pendant could, on the one hand, be interpreted in the same apotropaic sense as the lunate pendants. However, there is an additional possible interpretation, reflected in the combination of the crescent and the stars. The crescent moon with a star or stars are a symbol of eternity, immortality or *Aeternitas*.¹⁴ In this sense, a coin-pendant could have made possible the journey of immortality among the stars for the deceased.

G 1426 – Adult individual. Grave goods: under the skull (resting on its left side) – a small gold hoop-type earring with a fastening hook; in the waist region – a second, larger gold earring of the same type; next to the left lower leg (position H) – a perforated shell of a sea snail, a glass paste bead, a bronze bead, a fragmented bronze pendant, a bronze pendant with a loop, a circular bronze sheet, perforated in the centre and a singly perforated bronze as of Augustus.¹⁵

The coin is perforated on the obverse side at 4 and on the reverse at 12 o'clock (Plate I/2). This leads to the conclusion that the possible intention was, if there was any, to display the reverse to view, although this is a type with no figural representations, but with a legend around the *SC* in the centre. Concerning the coin, as well as the other listed items that were discovered in the same place, next to the left lower leg, it can be asserted with a great deal of confidence that it formed a part of a string. Gold hoop-type earrings with a fastening hook¹⁶ appear at the necropolises of Viminacium from the 2nd century and last throughout the entire 3rd century, whilst they have not been recorded in the 4th century AD.¹⁷ On the basis of this, it follows that the as of Augustus, dated from 18 to 4 BC, was used as a pendant much later than the time of its issue. It seems that the coin did not form a part of the string due to some special symbolism associated with the depiction, instead it simply served the purpose of a bronze plate. With the exception of the glass paste bead and the perforated sea snail shell, the other pendants were made of bronze, which probably produced a better jingling effect with a magical-apotropaic function. Similar strings, made up of pendants of different materials and forms, are a common find at the necropolises of Viminacium,¹⁸ while those that also include perforated coins are much rarer.

G 1974, the deceased designated as C¹⁹ – Adult individual, interred without a coffin. Grave goods: next to the right femur (position G) – a singly perforated as of Caligula;²⁰ next to the right knee (position G) – an additional 6 coins.²¹

The perforated as of Caligula belongs to a commemorative issue minted in honour of his grandfather Agrippa (Plate I/3). A portrait of Agrippa with a rostral crown is on the obverse, whilst Neptune is depicted on the reverse.²² As the coin is perforated on the obverse side at 12 and on the reverse at 6 o'clock, it appears that the portrait of Agrippa would have been on view had it been used as a pendant. The mere fact that the coin is perforated points to its use as a pendant, although the position of the find, near the femur, does not support this. However, this does not exclude the possibility that in the lifetime of the deceased it had served such a purpose or that it had been hung on a cord made of material that disintegrated and had been laid alongside the deceased.

The group of six coins, discovered near the right knee, comprises specimens of imperial coinage of Nero, Domitian and Gordian III, as well as Viminacium provincial coinage of Trebonianus Gallus (2 coins) and Aemilian. The asses of Nero and Domitian are badly worn and for this reason could not be determined using reference catalogues. The only silver specimen is an antoninianus of Gordian III, with a reverse depiction of Sol holding a globe.²³ Next are the specimens of Trebonianus Gallus from the provincial mint in Viminacium,

¹⁴ BMC III, cxxxvi.

¹⁵ The as belongs to the types that are dated from 18–6 BC. It is countermarked on the obverse and reverse (Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 14).

¹⁶ Зотовић 1995, 234 (type II A); Поповић 1996, 19–20 (variant I 4).

¹⁷ In the graves at Viminacium, 42 gold, 7 silver and 4 bronze specimens of this type have been registered (Зотовић 1995, 234).

¹⁸ Such strings comprise pendants such as: bells, a wild boar tooth, seashells and snail shells, bullae, lunulae, miniature tool and phallic pendants and beads with eyelets. Other than these pendants of an apotropaic character, others are also encountered (mostly ordinary beads) with the additional function of producing a jingling effect (Спасић-Ђурић 2008, 121–174).

¹⁹ 10 deceased were buried without coffins (designated as A–J). The only ones that had grave goods were deceased C (coins) and deceased I (a bronze ring).

²⁰ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 80.

²¹ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 158, 303, 1665, 2601, 2602, 2603.

²² RIC I, 112, no. 58.

²³ RIC IV.3, 37, no. 213 (ORIENS AVG).

minted in the regnal years XIII and XIV.²⁴ The most interesting is the coin of Aemilian, issued at the same mint, also in the regnal year XIV. The reverse image is one of the special types depicting Pax, although it represents an unknown variant in the coinage of Aemilian.²⁵ The chronological span between the oldest and the youngest specimen, including the perforated coin discovered separately, ranges somewhere between 212 and 216 years.²⁶

For the six specimens, discovered in the same place, it can be assumed that they had been located in a pouch (such as a *marsupium* or *viaticum*) placed alongside the body of the deceased, and which was not preserved.²⁷ Gorecki, addressing the purpose of the pouches in graves at the necropolises in the region between the Rhine, Moselle and Somme rivers, concludes that it is difficult to find an answer in the form of a general rule that would apply to all graves. However, with a great deal of caution, he allows for the inference that the coins in pouches signify the final possessions of the deceased that went with him to the grave. This assumption refers to the cases when coins in a pouch represent a snapshot of the coinage in circulation at the time of burial. This would be further supported by those circumstances where the grave contained another coin, particularly if it was discovered in the mouth. In such cases, Gorecki considers that the coin discovered on its own had a role in the journey of the deceased to the other world, whereas the pouch and its contents would constitute his property. He stresses, however, that this is not a rule and that in rare cases the contents of the pouch were specifically assembled for the purposes of the funeral and, in that case, they could have served a role that related to the journey of the deceased to the other world.²⁸ The coin finds from grave 1974C could represent such an example, primarily due to the fact that the contents of the assumed pouch were not composed only of coins from the time of burial, with a *tpq.* of 253 A.D., but also comprised much older specimens of Nero and Domitian. The only silver specimen of Gordian III should not be overlooked. At the necropolises of Viminacium, silver specimens are much rarer as grave goods than bronze, and very seldom occur together.²⁹

It would appear that the six coins had been carefully selected: two from a more distant past, one silver and three contemporary from the local mint. A special place is definitely occupied by the perforated as of Caligula, placed near and above the pouch. Why this was done can only reside in the realms of assumption. The coin was meticulously perforated, producing a

small and finely finished perforation. The profile of Agrippa is clearly visible, as well as the rostral crown and part of the legend. It is evident that, in its function as a pendant, the emphasis is placed on the image of Agrippa, a famed military leader and the supreme naval commander, Augustus' friend and ally, as well as a wise politician and a famous architect. To what extent the memory of this renowned founder of the Empire was kept alive in the turbulent mid-3rd century is not entirely clear, although a moment of personal admiration and the expression of hope for the reestablishment of the values from the Golden Age of Augustus should not be excluded. For the specimens of Nero and Domitian in the pouch it cannot be said in which way they would relate to those of Agrippa. Neither Nero nor Domitian are among the emperors considered virtuous and it would, therefore, be logical to think that these coins had been chosen due to their reverse depictions. In both cases, however, they are totally worn and unrecognisable, and were like that at the time they were deposited into the grave. Both the silver coin of Gordian III with the reverse legend *ORIENS AVG* and the Aemilian coin with *Moesia-Pax*, could, perhaps, be connected with Agrippa and his activities in Syria.³⁰

²⁴ Both coins have a usual depiction of a personification or a "common type" on the reverse according to the classifications of Borić-Brešković (Борић-Брешкових 1976, 35).

²⁵ On this coin, the personification is standing between a lion and a bull, holding a twig in the raised right hand and, in the left, a sceptre, held at an angle. In the collection catalogue of Svetozar St. Dušanić special issues were not recorded in the coinage of Aemilian (Борић-Брешкових 1976, 104–106, кат. бр. 1642–1674). In one of the later works of B. Borić-Brešković, a coin of Aemilian appears with a similar reverse depiction, although without a sceptre in the left hand (Борић-Брешкових 1986, 185, тип III A, кат. бр. 6). A reverse representation identical to this coin occurs only within the issues of Trajan Decius from the regnal year XI (Борић-Брешкових 1976, 78: кат. бр. 1154–1155; Борић-Брешкових 1986, 188, тип III B, кат. бр. 1).

²⁶ The as of Caligula is dated, more widely, from 37 to 41 AD and the youngest specimen of Aemilian to 253 AD.

²⁷ Gorecki (1975, 255) also records examples of such graves, with no preserved pieces of clothing or equipment, containing coins laid alongside the deceased. In most cases the coins were near the legs, then by shoulders and in the waist and pelvic region.

²⁸ Gorecki (1975, 256) believes, given that in most graves only one coin was recorded, there is a strong likelihood that this exact coin was intended for the journey of the deceased, and that the pouches in a small number of graves, therefore, represented personal property.

²⁹ Vojvoda, Mrdić 2015, 13, 16, Table 4, Graph 5.

³⁰ Agrippa was twice appointed governor of Syria, where his just and wise governance gained him the respect and trust of the population of the province.

G 2049 – Adult individual, interred without a coffin. Grave goods: between the feet (position G/H) – a singly perforated denarius of Vespasian;³¹ next to the right femur – the bottom of a ceramic vessel.

The perforated denarius falls into the category of hybrids, whereby both the obverse and reverse belong to a Vespasian issue, but are dated differently (Plate I/4).³² The coin is perforated on the obverse side at 9 and on the reverse at 11 o'clock, indicating that the reverse depiction and its religious symbolism were exposed to view. Specifically, it is a type displaying clerical symbols: *simpulum*, *aspergilum*, a jug and *lituus*, along with the legend *AVGVR TR POT*. At the time of issue, it was supposed to highlight the role of the emperor as the High Priest, whereas used as a pendant, it would have stressed the religious inclination of the owner.³³

A triply perforated coin in the grave of an adult

G 1626 – Adult individual, interred without a coffin. Grave goods: next to the left leg – three ceramic jugs; next to the left knee – a bronze bulla; next to the left femur (position H) – two bronze asses, one of which has three perforations.³⁴

The triply perforated as was issued by Tiberius in 21/22,³⁵ depicting the emperor's portrait facing left on the obverse, with a legend around the *SC* on the reverse (Plate I/5). The perforations are circular and made on the obverse side at 12, 4 and 8 o'clock. The second as belongs to the coinage of Hadrian's "province" series (Cappadocia), dated between 134 and 138.³⁶ Unlike singly perforated coins, which are generally considered to have represented a pendant, there are other views with regard to triply perforated coins, which will later be discussed in more detail (see G 216).

Singly and triply perforated coins in the grave of an adult

G 2079 – Adult individual, interred without a coffin. Grave goods: next to the skull – the bottom of a ceramic vessel; between the lower legs – the bottom and part of the belly of a ceramic vessel; on the chest – a triangular ceramic pendant with three perforations; next to the left side of the pelvis (position F) – a singly perforated as of Nerva, a triply perforated as of Tiberius,³⁷ a bronze coin without perforations,³⁸ a bronze bulla, 3 glass paste beads and a large bead of a white-coloured mineral.

The singly perforated as of Nerva is, based on the obverse legend, dated to 97 (Plate I/6).³⁹ The reverse motif is Nerva's head with a laurel wreath facing left,

whilst the legend is completely illegible. The as could not be defined using reference catalogues, since it is probably a hybrid. The perforation is circular and made on the obverse side at 2 o'clock. The triply perforated as of Tiberius belongs to the commemorative series, *Divus Augustus Pater* (Plate I/7). Due to the poor state of preservation of the reverse image, it is not possible to determine it more accurately by type, and is therefore, based on the obverse portrait of Augustus, dated to 22/23–30(?) or to 34–37 AD.⁴⁰ On the obverse side, it is perforated at 12, 3 and 8 o'clock.

The singly and triply perforated coins, the bronze bulla and the beads had most likely formed a part of a string, which was placed next to the pelvis of the deceased.⁴¹ The only unperforated coin in the grave was discovered in the same place, and not in the mouth or in the head region of the deceased. Irrespectively, it could be interpreted as a "Charon's obol" or, in some other way, associated with the journey into the world of the dead (e.g. as a symbol of material means required for life in the other world).⁴²

³¹ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 175.

³² RIC II, 29, ref. *; 30, no. 137. The obverse of this specimen would belong to the coinage of Vespasian between 75 and 79, whereas the reverse to the issues from 70/71.

³³ The bottom of the ceramic pot cannot be more accurately dated, however, based on the adjacent grave (G 2060) from the same sondage and at approximately the same elevation, which contained a coin of Septimius Severus (Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015: cat. no. 2513), it can be assumed that G 2049 is from about the same period. This would imply that the perforated coin of Vespasian had been employed as a pendant at least 100 years after its issue.

³⁴ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 24 and cat. no. 604.

³⁵ RIC I, 97, no. 44.

³⁶ RIC II, 447, no. 848.

³⁷ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 339 and cat. no. 55.

³⁸ The unperforated coin, registered in the fieldwork documentation under number C-11722/2, has been lost, as noted in the process of compiling the inventory of coins in the National Museum in Požarevac, in 2005. Based on the summary sketch in the fieldwork documentation, it can be assumed that this was also an as (Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, 9, ref. 6).

³⁹ RIC II, 228–229, nos. 77–93.

⁴⁰ RIC I, 99, nos. 81–83.

⁴¹ The string was laid alongside the body and not on the arm of the deceased, since the left arm was bent at the elbow and placed on the chest.

⁴² The presence of the so-called "Charon's obol" in graves at the necropolis of Više Grobalja does not constitute a rule. Only a third of all graves contain coins in their inventory. At the same time, in less than a third of inhumation burials, the coin was placed in the mouth of the deceased (Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, 11, 19, Table 3, Graph 7).

Singly perforated coins in graves of children

G 706 – Child, interred without a coffin.⁴³ Grave goods: on the western side of the bones (probably on the right side of the skeleton) – a singly perforated bronze coin, an unperforated as of Lucilla⁴⁴ and a perforated animal tooth; on the eastern side of the bones (probably on the left side of the skeleton) – two glass paste beads.

The perforated bronze coin belongs to the provincial coinage, most likely of the Nicaean mint (Plate I/8). The obverse is poorly preserved and thus the ruler could not be determined. For the same reason, the position of the perforation cannot be identified. On the reverse four standards can be discerned, based on which it is assumed that this is coinage of Nicaea, present in large numbers at the necropolis of Više Grobalja. The motif with four standards most commonly occurs in the issues of Gordian III, and more rarely in the coinage of Severus Alexander.⁴⁵ The as of Lucilla, minted under Marcus Aurelius between 164 and 169, has a poorly preserved reverse, which is why it was impossible to determine it more accurately.

Given that this is a child's grave, with the perforated animal tooth and coin discovered on one side of the skeleton and two beads on the other, it can be assumed that they had represented pendants on two strings (bracelets). The unperforated coin deposited alongside could be associated with the journey to the other world.

G 1025 – Child, interred without a coffin, on its side in a contorted position. Grave goods: on the right side of the bones – a singly perforated as of Hadrian.⁴⁶

The as of Hadrian belongs to the series of "provincies" minted between 134 and 138, with a depiction of Mauretania on the reverse (Plate I/9).⁴⁷ The perforation is circular and made on the obverse side at 6 and on the reverse at 7 o'clock, thus it cannot be stated that there was an intention to expose either side to view. The coin was perforated either inadvertently or in haste if it had been done for the actual funeral of the child. As it was discovered on the right side of the skeleton, which was lying on its side, it might have represented a pendant around the neck, although this cannot be asserted with any certainty.

G 1339 – Child, only the lower jaw is preserved, with traces of bronze. Grave goods: next to the jaw – a red-painted ceramic jug; below the jaw (position D?) – a singly perforated as of Trajan adhered, by corrosion, to an amorphous iron object,⁴⁸ two glass paste beads, a small bronze link, a conical glass spindle whorl deco-

rated with concentric circles, three whole and several fragmented seashells.

The as of Trajan is poorly preserved and illegible and thus it was not possible to determine it more accurately (Plate I/10). The depiction of Roma seated, holding Victory and a spear, is visible on the reverse, based on which it can be dated between 103 and 111. On the obverse side, the coin is perforated at 9 and on the reverse at 10 o'clock, with a circular perforation. Given that all of the finds, except for the jug, were discovered near the jaw, which also has traces of bronze, it can be assumed that the perforated coin, beads, the small link and the glass spindle whorl formed part of the child's necklace. The shells are not perforated and were most likely laid on the body of the deceased. Unlike perforated shells that were used as pendants and those which had a practical purpose (cosmetic accessories), the occurrence of unperforated shells in the graves of children and young women is interpreted in different ways.

Shells as grave goods have been registered in children's graves since the Bronze Age in the Mediterranean region. In Greece, they constantly occur from the Mycenaean period to the Roman conquest, during which time their use continued and even increased. Different authors interpret them as: toys, a means of payment to Charon, as symbols of the afterlife, fertility, rebirth or eternity, decorative items or food placed in the grave.⁴⁹ Among Serbian authors, with regard to the occurrence of shells in the graves of children and young women at Viminacium, there are those who are of the opinion that these are symbols of origin and the former homeland.⁵⁰ Others hold that they represent *pars pro toto* for the sculptures of Venus Funerariae. The presence of the goddess (shell) in graves of young women, whose untimely demise disrupted the harmony, aims to establish the desired life image of happiness, joy and eudemonia,

⁴³ In a large number of children's burials, due to the poor state of preservation of the skeletons, it was difficult to determine the position of coins and other grave goods, and there are instances when this was impossible to determine, as in the case of G 706.

⁴⁴ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 2616 and cat. no. 1432.

⁴⁵ Вojвода 2011, 248–249, Табела 1.

⁴⁶ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 608.

⁴⁷ RIC II, 449, no. 860.

⁴⁸ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 499.

⁴⁹ Каррес, Leisen 1996, 129, ref. 3; Stroszeck 2012, 58, 62, 67.

⁵⁰ Зотовић 1986, 43.

enabling the return of those whose daylight has been taken away prematurely.⁵¹

G 1708 – Child, interred without a coffin. Grave goods: under the skull – a gold hoop-type earring; next to the right shoulder (position C) – a bronze as of Antoninus Pius;⁵² on the chest (position D) – a perforated quadrans of Hadrian,⁵³ a small silver bell with an iron clapper; next to the left elbow (position E) – a perforated quadrans of Trajan,⁵⁴ a bronze hoop-type earring on top of the coin; in the pelvic region – a glass paste bead; next to the right femur – a small red-painted ceramic bowl.

The bronze as of Antoninus Pius, with a reverse depiction of Romulus holding a spear and a trophy, is dated between 140 and 144 (Plate II/11).⁵⁵ The perforated quadrans of Hadrian, discovered on the chest, is poorly preserved and thus not more precisely defined. The perforation is circular and, on the obverse side, made at 8 o'clock, whilst the position in relation to the reverse could not be determined. The perforated quadrans of Trajan, discovered together with the bronze earring next to the left elbow, is in a similar state of preservation. It is also perforated on the obverse side at 8 o'clock whilst, again, on the reverse it was not possible to determine.

The perforated quadrans of Hadrian and the small silver bell, discovered on the chest, represented pendants worn around the neck for the protection against evil forces. The bell in particular, due to the sound it produces, has a powerful apotropaic function.⁵⁶ The second perforated quadrans, of Trajan, was discovered together with a bronze earring, next to the left elbow of the deceased, and they undoubtedly relate to each other.⁵⁷ The coin had not been used as a pendant on the earring, since the earring was resting on it. Whether they were sewn onto a piece of clothing or a shroud, or strung on a cord and deposited alongside the body, remains unclear. The third, unperforated coin can only be associated with the journey to the other world.

G 1897 – Child, interred in a wooden coffin. Grave goods: outside the coffin – two ceramic jugs, a ceramic beaker and a pot; in the mouth of the deceased (position B) – a bronze coin;⁵⁸ on the right hand – a bronze ring with a setting for a stone; in the stomach region (position F) – a bronze buckle, a string (composed of three pendants: a bronze phallus, a miniature stone tool and a perforated as of Marcus Aurelius as Caesar),⁵⁹ the head of a bone pin in the form of a stylised amphora; near the feet – a string (comprising 9 glass paste beads and one of amber).

The bronze coin discovered in the mouth of the deceased is poorly preserved and it was impossible to determine it more accurately, except that it belongs to provincial coinage, most like of the 3rd century. The perforated as of Marcus Aurelius as Caesar, which was part of a string, could also not be determined more precisely. The other two pendants of the same string, the bronze phallus and the miniature stone tool, have a powerful apotropaic quality. Finds of strings with jingling pendants in children's graves at Viminacium, as has been seen, are not rare. Children received such strings at birth to ward off the evil eye and evil forces and, in the funerary context, the symbolism is transferred to the grave and the deceased.⁶⁰ Perforated coins as part of a string most certainly had the same magical-apotropaic function.

Triply perforated coins in graves of children

G 216 – Child (aged one or under), interred in a wooden coffin, the burial pit was covered with semi-dressed stone.⁶¹ Grave goods: left of the skull – a small red ceramic jug, two seashells; in the head region (position A/B?) – a bronze as of Domitian,⁶² a bronze 1st-century sestertius with three perforations and remnants of fabric,⁶³ on the chest – a bronze bulla; next to

⁵¹ Јовановић 2000, 15–18; Спасић-Ђурић 2007, 186–188.

⁵² Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 888.

⁵³ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 722.

⁵⁴ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 469.

⁵⁵ RIC III: 117, no. 698.

⁵⁶ Bells sporadically occur in graves at Viminacium: G 216, G1 451, G1 1365 (Više Grobalja), G 1807 (Pećine) (Зотовић, Јордовић 1990, 68; Спасић-Ђурић 2008, 125, 141; Кораћ, Golubović 2009, 190).

⁵⁷ The arms of the deceased were bent at the elbows, with the forearms on the chest.

⁵⁸ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 2650.

⁵⁹ Regarding the as of Marcus Aurelius see: Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, 26, ref. 48; Спасић-Ђурић 2008, 131–133, сл. 4/9.

⁶⁰ Спасић-Ђурић 2008, 166–170, н. 76, 79–80, Сл. 4.

⁶¹ Зотовић, Јордовић 1990, 68, Т. XXXVI.

⁶² The coin was originally determined as Nerva's (Зотовић, Јордовић 1990, 68, Т. XXXVI.9), however, after subsequent processing it was established that it is an undetermined as of Domitian (Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 294).

⁶³ The triply perforated coin was initially determined as Domitian's (Зотовић, Јордовић 1990, 68, Т. XXXVI.10); in our processing of the material, this could not be confirmed with any certainty, and the coin was roughly dated to the 1st century (Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 1909). Following conservation, a part of the coin disintegrated, while a head facing to the left is visible.

the right leg – a small red ceramic jug; next to the left leg – a small red ceramic jug, two bronze bullae, a silver bulla, one bone and two glass beads, a pendant of a wild boar tooth with a small bronze loop, two small bronze bells, a calf's vertebra with an inserted bronze coin⁶⁴ and a seashell.

The three perforations are of a circular shape, carelessly made, on the obverse side at 5 and 11 o'clock, whereas the third is approximately in the centre of the coin. At the time of this find's first publishing, the coin had not been conserved and in the drawing it is shown as complete, with the three perforations arranged in a triangle, along with the fabric remnants (Plate II/12).⁶⁵ Following conservation, part of the coin had disintegrated and, consequently, a marked difference compared to the original drawing is observable (Plate II/13). Additionally, after the removal of the remnants of fabric, it became apparent that the perforations are arranged roughly in a straight line, rather than in a triangle. This is the only specimen from the necropolis of Više Grobalja that was discovered with remnants of fabric and, accordingly, this is the only coin for which it can be said that it was sewn onto a piece of fabric, possibly covering the head. No other finds of triply perforated coins with remnants of fabric are known, although there are assumptions that similar coins, discovered in graves, were sewn onto clothing, even though they do not include any remnants of it. Thus, Gorecki states that perforated coins "were occasionally sewn onto the clothes". The only example he cites is grave 99 from Poitiers, whose researchers, in 1934, suspected that the triply perforated coin could have also had another function that did not relate to the funerary ritual or to jewellery. As they discovered another, unperforated coin in the grave, they thought that the triply perforated coin might have been sewn onto the clothes of the deceased.⁶⁶ With reference to Gorecki's quote, similar assumptions have been conveyed in the case of a coin with three perforations from a child's grave in Brigetio. The coin was discovered in the child's hand and the authors consider that it could have been initially attached to the clothes as an amulet and, subsequently, during the burial ceremony, removed and placed in the hand. In this secondary use, it would have the role of a means of payment for crossing into the world of the dead.⁶⁷

In the case of the aforementioned sestertius, as already noted, it can be assumed that the triply perforated coin was sewn onto a piece of clothing of the deceased. The other coin, also discovered in the head

region (position A/B?), would have the function of a "Charon's obol". The bronze bulla located on the chest represented a pendant – an amulet, most often used as jewellery for children, as further confirmed by other finds from graves at Viminacium.⁶⁸ The group of pendants discovered by the right leg probably constituted part of a string with an apotropaic function, since most of these pendants possess this powerful symbolism. The calf's vertebra with an inserted bronze coin and the seashell were discovered together with the string composed of: two bronze bullae, a silver bulla, one bone and two glass beads, a pendant of a wild boar tooth with a bronze loop and two small bronze bells. As already noted, the presence of seashells, especially in children's graves at Viminacium, is not rare, although there are no known analogies regarding the vertebra with an inserted coin.

G 247 – Child (newborn), interred in a wooden coffin.⁶⁹ Grave goods: in the mouth of the deceased (position B) – an as of Hadrian;⁷⁰ in the stomach region (position F)⁷¹ – a bronze bulla, three ceramic beads, a perforated, flat pendant of amber, a bone buckle, a triply perforated as of Domitian,⁷² two glass paste beads, a bronze button with an incrustation of white paste, a small loop of bronze wire with the remains of a deformed pendant made of bronze sheet, a perforated wild

⁶⁴ The coin was designated as "illegible" (Зотовић, Јордовић 1990, 68, Т. XXXVI.8). It fell apart in the process of subsequent conservation.

⁶⁵ The illustration was taken from: Зотовић, Јордовић 1990, Т. XXXVI.10. The hatched areas represent the fabric remains.

⁶⁶ Gorecki 1975, 249, ref. 275.

⁶⁷ At the necropolises in Brigetio, a total of three triply perforated coins were discovered, although documentation with regard to the context of the finds is preserved only for one, Găzdac-Alföldi, Găzdac 2009, 166, ref. 22–23.

⁶⁸ Јовановић 1978, 45; Поповић 1996, 40, н. 237–240.

⁶⁹ Зотовић, Јордовић 1990, 70–71, Т. XLII–XLIII.

⁷⁰ The coin was originally determined as Domitian's (Зотовић, Јордовић 1990, 70; Т. XLII.7) and, after subsequent processing, it was clearly identified as an as of Hadrian (Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 609).

⁷¹ This group of finds was probably deposited in a wooden box which was not preserved. A number of fragments of one or several unidentified iron objects (?) were also discovered which, due to their poor state of preservation, were classified as study material. Within this context, it can be assumed that this is the hardware of the wooden box.

⁷² Although originally designated as an "illegible bronze coin" (Зотовић, Јордовић 1990, 70; Т. XLIII.13), subsequent analysis identified it is an as of Domitian, which is not possible to determine more precisely (Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 293).

boar tooth with a small, closed bronze link, a perforated bovine tooth with a small bronze loop, a perforated sea snail shell with a small, closed bronze link.

The bronze as of Hadrian belongs to the series ADVENTVS, with a depiction of the Emperor and a personification of Mauretania on the reverse, and is dated between 134 and 138.⁷³ Undoubtedly, it had the role of a “Charon’s obol”. All three perforations on the as of Domitian are of a square shape and made on the obverse side at 12, 5 and 10 o’clock (Plate II/14). This specimen of Domitian, most definitely formed part of a string with all the other objects discovered in the same place (except for the bone buckle and the bronze button). Bearing in mind the large number of finds that could have been used as pendants, it could be considered that these might have been two strings. There is also a possibility that these strings were put in a pouch (?) and placed on the child’s stomach.

G 474 – Child (aged one or under), interred without a coffin.⁷⁴ Grave goods: on the left side of the chest (position D) – a triply perforated bronze coin,⁷⁵ nine seashells; on the right side of the chest (position D) – a bronze coin;⁷⁶ near the legs – a ceramic beaker.⁷⁷

The perforated bronze coin is almost completely worn and, for this reason, it was impossible to date it more accurately than approximately into the 2nd century (Plate II/15). The perforations are circular and all three of a different size: the largest is at 3, the next at 6 and the smallest at 9 o’clock.⁷⁸ The other bronze coin is also poorly preserved, but can be assumed to be from the period of Trajan.

G 1512 – Child, interred in a wooden coffin. Grave goods: in the skull region (position A/B?) – a triply perforated as of Claudius;⁷⁹ near the legs – two ceramic jugs.

The perforated as of Claudius has no close references due to its poor state of preservation (Plate II/16). The perforations are circular and made on the obverse side at 12, 4 and 8 o’clock. The coin, based on the place it was found, relates to the region of the head and thus there is a high probability that it was used as a “Charon’s obol”.

G 1775 – Child (newborn), interred in a wooden coffin.⁸⁰ Grave goods: in the western part of the coffin (possibly near the legs of the deceased) – three small ceramic jugs; in the middle part – a small ceramic pot; in the eastern part (possibly in the head region, position A/B?) – six clay beads, three glass paste beads, 25 seashells, a bronze bulla and a triply perforated as of Nero.⁸¹

The perforated as of Nero, due to its illegible obverse legend, is not accurately determined using the reference catalogue (Plate II/17). However, based on the reverse (ARA PACIS, with a depiction of an altar), it can be dated to 65–66. The perforations are circular and made on the obverse side at 1, 5 and 9 o’clock. In addition to the perforated coin, the presence of beads and the bronze bulla indicate that this might have been a string.

G 1825 – Child, interred without a coffin. Grave goods: in the north-eastern part of the grave (probably in the mouth of the deceased, position B?)⁸² – a bronze as of Hadrian,⁸³ a fragmented balsamarium of bluish glass; in the south-western part of the grave (probably near the legs of the deceased, position G/H?) – a ceramic cup, an oil lamp with a depiction of a mask on the discus, the rim and part of the neck of a balsamarium of whitish glass and a triply perforated bronze as.⁸⁴

The bronze as of Hadrian could not be more accurately determined due to its poor state of preservation and, for the same reason, the perforated as could only be approximately dated to the 1st century (Plate II/18). It is an exception among the triply perforated coins at the necropolis of Više Grobalja, as its perforations were executed in a row (at 3 o’clock, in the centre and at 9 o’clock), and on the reverse side. Furthermore, it is one of very few examples with square-shaped perforations. The alignment of the perforations would imply some sort of practical or decorative use (sewing on fabric?). However, since it was possibly located in the region of the legs, its function cannot be stated with any certainty.

⁷³ RIC II, 455, no. 900.

⁷⁴ Korać, Golubović 2009, 384.

⁷⁵ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 2109.

⁷⁶ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 1817.

⁷⁷ The grave also contained an ochre, pottery oil lamp, which fell apart due to its poor firing and was, therefore, classified as study material.

⁷⁸ The contours of the ruler’s portrait are discernible on the obverse, thus allowing the identification of the position of the perforations.

⁷⁹ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 118.

⁸⁰ The bones are preserved in traces and for that reason it was not possible to accurately determine the position of the grave goods.

⁸¹ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 164.

⁸² On the preserved lower jaw, traces of bronze corrosion are evident.

⁸³ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 787.

⁸⁴ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 1936.

Singly and triply perforated coins in graves of children

G 1176 – Child, interred in a wooden coffin. Grave goods: in the head region – a bronze bulla; next to the right femur (position G) – a bone sewing needle, two glass paste beads and a triply perforated as;⁸⁵ next to the left lower leg (position H) – a bone gaming counter, an as of Antoninus Pius and a singly perforated denarius-subaeratus.⁸⁶

The singly perforated denarius-subaeratus, which is deformed and broken, is roughly dated to the first half of the 3rd century (Plate II/19). The perforation is circular and executed on the obverse side at 5 o'clock, at some distance from the edge of the coin and closer to the centre than is usual. The triply perforated as, due to its poor state of preservation, could be classified only into the 1st century (Plate II/20). It was not even possible to determine the position of the perforations in relation to the obverse depiction. All three perforations are circular, one of which has a larger diameter than the other two. The two beads in the vicinity of this coin could indicate that they might have been linked to some kind of pendant or some other form of decoration. The third coin discovered in the grave, the as of Antoninus Pius, could also not be more precisely determined.

G 2116 – Child (newborn), interred without a coffin. Grave goods: in the northern part of the grave – a ceramic pot; under the pot – a singly and a triply perforated provincial bronze coin,⁸⁷ a bronze button with a conical head and three glass paste beads; in the southern part of the grave – a ceramic oenochoe; in the central part of the grave – a bronze bulla.

The singly perforated provincial coin is poorly preserved and, as four standards (?) are discernable on the reverse, it can be assumed that it belongs to the provincial coinage of Bithynia, Nicaea or Nicomedia (Plate III/21).⁸⁸ The perforation is circular, although its position is unknown in relation to the axis of the coin. The triply perforated bronze coin of Trajan belongs to the provincial mint of Heraclea Pontica (Plate III/22).⁸⁹ The perforations are circular and made on the obverse side at 2, 5 and 10 o'clock, and on the reverse at 12, 3 and 8 o'clock. The three aforementioned glass paste beads were discovered together with the perforated coins and, consequently, it can be assumed that they formed part of a string or a bracelet. The bronze bulla discovered in the immediate vicinity, although not under the ceramic vessel, could have been a separate pendant worn around the neck.

CREMATION GRAVES

As previously mentioned, perforated coins are far less common in cremation burials than in inhumations. Six graves with a singly and three with a triply perforated coin in their inventories were recorded.

Singly perforated coins

G1 369 – Cremation, with simple grave pit.⁹⁰ Grave goods: a perforated coin.

The perforation is circular and made at 9 o'clock on the obverse side (Plate III/23). It belongs to an undetermined provincial coinage which, with certain reservations, can be dated to the 2nd century.⁹¹

G1 781 – Cremation, with simple grave pit. Grave goods: an iron knife, parts of a bronze sheet with a loop (small bell?) and a distorted perforated bronze coin.⁹²

The coin was burnt and for that reason is distorted and illegible (Plate III/24). Judging by its diameter and weight, it is evident that this is a sestertius, probably from the 1st–2nd century. The perforation is of an irregular circular shape.

G1 828 – Cremation, with simple grave pit. Grave goods: a perforated as of Augustus.⁹³

It is an as of Augustus from 7 BC (Plate III/25).⁹⁴ The perforation is of a square shape and made on the obverse side at 4 and on the reverse at 9 o'clock.

G1 903 – Cremation, two levelled grave. Grave goods, first level: two glass paste beads, two wild boar teeth, one of which is perforated, a perforated bronze coin⁹⁵ and a bronze handle with a clamp for fastening (small chest?) were all discovered in the same place; a ceramic oil lamp and a bone pin were discovered separately, in two different places; second level: a small ceramic pot.

⁸⁵ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 1963.

⁸⁶ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 1017 (A. Pius); cat. no. 1748 (singly perforated denarius-subaeratus).

⁸⁷ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 2618 (singly perforated); cat. no. 2620 (triply perforated).

⁸⁸ The diameter and weight also correspond to Bithynian coinage from the second quarter of the 3rd century.

⁸⁹ WBR, p. 360, no. 89.

⁹⁰ Korać, Golubović 2009, 113.

⁹¹ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 2504; Antoninus Pius/Marcus Aurelius (?).

⁹² Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 1976.

⁹³ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 6.

⁹⁴ RIC I, 75, no. 428.

The coin is in a poor state of preservation and is roughly dated to the 1st century (Plate III/26). The perforation is circular and made at 9 o'clock on the obverse side (a head facing left is discernable), whereas on the reverse side it could not be determined. The perforated coin could have formed part of a string, along with the beads and wild boar tooth, as they were discovered in the same place. If the bronze handle and the clamp were parts of a small wooden chest, it is also possible that the string was deposited in it.

G1 1034 – Cremation, two levelled grave. Grave goods, first level: a small ceramic pot, a ceramic oil lamp and an iron plate with two rivets were all discovered in the same place; a perforated as of Hadrian was discovered separately;⁹⁶ second level: a small ceramic pot and a bowl.

The perforated as of Hadrian with a reverse depiction of Fortuna standing, holding a patera and a cornucopia, is dated between 134 and 138 (Plate III/27).⁹⁷ The coin is perforated on the obverse side at 12 and on the reverse at 6 o'clock; the perforation is circular.

G1 1111 – Cremation, with simple grave pit. Grave goods: two bronze loops, two glass paste beads, a perforated bone gaming counter, a flat, perforated stone pendant, a perforated bronze coin of Vespasian⁹⁸ and two fragmented balsamaria were all discovered in the same place; two ceramic jugs and a small pot were discovered separately.

The perforated coin belongs to the Vespasian provincial issues from the mint of Stobi (Plate III/28). The heads of Titus and Domitian facing one another are visible on the obverse, whereas a temple with four columns, in front of which there is a statue of a deity (Asclepius?), is depicted on the reverse.⁹⁹ The perforation is circular and made on the obverse side at 12 and on the reverse at 5 o'clock, suggesting that the obverse was exposed to view. The coin most likely formed part of a string, along with the loops, beads, the bone pendant and the stone pendant.

Triply perforated coins

G1 321 – Cremation, two levelled grave, the second of which was covered with gable-wise tegulae.¹⁰⁰ Grave goods, first level: a triply perforated bronze coin¹⁰¹ and a ceramic jug; second level: a hoop-type silver earring, two beads, a bone pin and a bronze coin of Antoninus Pius¹⁰² were all discovered together; three other bone pins and a circular piece of bronze plating were discovered separately.

The triply perforated bronze as is in a poor state of preservation and is, therefore, roughly dated to the end

of the 1st or to the 2nd century (Plate III/29). A portrait is discernable on the obverse, allowing for the position of perforations to be determined at 1, 4 and 10 o'clock; the perforations are of a circular shape. The coin was discovered on its own and thus it cannot be stated whether it was a pendant or had some other function. The as of Antoninus Pius, discovered in the second level, is dated to 139. The reverse depicts Fortuna standing, holding a rudder and a cornucopia.¹⁰³

G1 1318 – Cremation, two levelled grave. Grave goods, first level: a triply perforated bronze as and a ceramic oil lamp were discovered together; a bronze as of Antoninus Pius and two ceramic vessels were discovered separately; second level: a bronze provincial coin of Severus Alexander.¹⁰⁴

The triply perforated as is in a poor state of preservation and, therefore, roughly dated to the 1st century (Nero?). The perforations are circular and made on the obverse side at 12, 3 and 9 o'clock (Plate III/30). The as of Antoninus Pius, with a reverse depiction of an elephant facing right, is dated to 148/149.¹⁰⁵ The third coin, discovered in the second level, belongs to the issues of Severus Alexander from the Bithynian mint of Nicaea.

G1 1728 – Cremation, two two levelled grave. Grave goods, first level: a triply perforated as;¹⁰⁶ second level: a ceramic amphora.

The triply perforated as is roughly dated to the 1st century. The perforations are large and of an irregular circular and oval shape, carelessly executed on the

⁹⁵ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 1931.

⁹⁶ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 592.

⁹⁷ RIC II, 443, no. 812 (group D).

⁹⁸ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 2509.

⁹⁹ Борић-Брешковић 1992, 29, тип 3.3.

¹⁰⁰ Korać, Golubović 2009, 64–65. At least two individuals were buried in the grave: an adult male and another of undetermined sex, aged around 20.

¹⁰¹ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 2005. The coin was discovered later, during the removal of the western wall of G1 320 and, unambiguously, belongs to the first level of G1 321 (Korać, Golubović 2009, 65 (sketch)). Also, the mistakenly identified “doubly perforated” (Korać, Golubović 2009, 64) rather than “triply perforated” (Arsenijević in: Korać, Golubović 2009, 487, cat. 176).

¹⁰² Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 871.

¹⁰³ RIC III, 98, no. 553 (b).

¹⁰⁴ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 1993 (the triply perforated as); cat. no. 922 (A. Pius); cat. no. 2249 (A. Severus).

¹⁰⁵ RIC III, 134, no. 862 (c).

¹⁰⁶ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 1937.

obverse side at 12, 5 and 7 o'clock (Plate IV/31). Given its treatment, it is unlikely to have had a decorative function, but rather a practical one (sewn onto clothing as some sort of fastening, or the like).

Perforated coins from the layer at the necropolis

An additional 12 coins with one and 3 with three perforations originate from the layer at the necropolis, which comprises the space between the graves or a sacrificial area above a group of graves. Chronologically, the incidence of the singly perforated coins is as follows:¹⁰⁷

1. an as of Augustus, dated to 18–4 BC; the perforation is circular and made on the obverse side at 9 and on the reverse at 3 o'clock (Plate IV/32); **2.** an as of Tiberius from the *Divus Drusus* series, dated to 21/22; the perforation is square, at 4 o'clock (obv.) and 2 o'clock (rev.) (Plate IV/33); **3.** an as of Tiberius from the *Divus Augustus Pater* series, with a depiction of an altar on the reverse, dated to 22/23–30(?); the perforation is square, at 12 o'clock (obv.) and 6 o'clock (rev.) (Plate IV/34); **4.** an as of Tiberius from the same series but with a depiction of a winged lightning bolt on the reverse, dated to 34–37; the perforation is circular, at 8 o'clock (obv.) and 9 o'clock (rev.) (Plate IV/35); **5.** an as of Tiberius from the same series but with an unidentified reverse depiction; the perforation is circular, at 8 o'clock (obv.) (Plate IV/36); **6.** an illegible as of Nero with the reverse depicting the gates of the Temple of Janus, dated to 65–67; the perforation is circular, at 11 o'clock (obv.) and 7 o'clock (rev.) (Plate IV/37); **7.** an illegible denarius of Vespasian; the perforation is circular, at 7 o'clock (obv.) and 11 o'clock (rev.) (Plate IV/38); **8.** an illegible as of Trajan; the perforation is circular, at 12 o'clock (obv.) (Plate IV/39); **9.** an illegible as of Antoninus Pius; the perforation is at 3 o'clock (obv.) (Plate IV/40); **10.** an illegible as, roughly dated to the 1st–2nd century; the perforation is circular, at 9 o'clock (obv.) (Plate V/41); **11.** a bronze coin of Gordian III from the Nicaean mint; the perforation is circular, at 12 o'clock (obv.) (Plate V/42); **12.** an illegible bronze coin of unknown provincial provenance from the time of Severus; the perforation is circular, at 9 o'clock (obv.) (Plate V/43).

Chronologically, the incidence of the triply perforated coins from the layer at the necropolis is as follows:¹⁰⁸

1. an as of Tiberius from the *Divus Augustus Pater* series, with a depiction of an altar on the reverse, dated to 22/23–30(?); the perforations are circular, at 12, 4 and

9 o'clock (obv.) (Plate V/44); **2.** an as of Hadrian, with a reverse depiction of Salus feeding a snake, dated to 125–128; the perforations are circular, at 12, 3 and 8 o'clock (obv.) (Plate V/45); **3.** an illegible as, roughly dated to the 1st century; the perforations are circular, at 12, 3 and 9 o'clock (obv.) (Plate V/46).

CONCLUSION (Tables 3 and 4)

It has already been previously concluded that the role of coins in the funerary rituals at Viminacium is more complex than it might have initially appeared.¹⁰⁹ The same can also be said of the perforated coins for a number of reasons. First would be the place where the coins were laid, relative to the deceased (inhumations), followed by their relationship with other grave goods and unperforated coins, as well as the combinations in which certain types of grave goods occurred. There were no stringent rules which was, in part, probably a consequence of the ethnic diversity of the natives and settlers from different parts of the Empire, mainly from the East, who inhabited Viminacium. This was certainly, to a degree, influenced further by contemporary philosophical movements, the incursion of new religious cults and trends, as well as the social status of the family of the deceased. Regardless of the wide variety of the uses of coins in general, and within it the perforated specimens, certain conclusions can, nevertheless, be drawn.

One's attention is immediately drawn by the fact that the largest number of perforated coins (singly and triply in G, G1 and the layer) belongs to the 1st century (55.33%); half as many are from the 2nd century (25.54%), whereas the 3rd comprises only a fifth (10.64%), when compared to the 1st century (Table 3). The incidence of the singly and triply perforated coins from the 1st century is almost equal (29.79% vs. 25.54%). Whilst the coins with a single perforation continue to appear later, although in a noticeably lower percentage, three perforations on the 2nd-century coins decline by almost 20%, whereas they have not been registered at all on the specimens of the 3rd century.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ In the order of 1–12 cf. Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. nos. 16, 26, 31, 46, 63, 167, 177, 424, 1088, 1991, 2644, 2401.

¹⁰⁸ In the order of 1–3 cf. Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. nos. 38, 528, 1780.

¹⁰⁹ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, 36.

Century	Perf. coins in total (singly and triply, G, G1, the layer)	%	Singly perf. coins	%	Triply perf. Coins	%
1st century	26	55.33	14	29.79	12	25.54
2nd century	12	25.54	9	19.15	3	6.39
3rd century	5	10.64	5	10.64	/	/
1st–2nd century	3	6.37	2	4.25	1	2.12
1st–3rd century	1	2.12	1	2.12	/	/
Total	47	100%	31	65.95%	16	34.05%

Table 3. Chronological incidence of perforated coins

Табела 3. Перфорирани новчићи хронолошка засићуљеност

In 18 graves with inhumations, singly perforated coins of the 1st century appear 12 times, of the 2nd century – 8 times and the 3rd century – 3 times. In addition to these, 12 graves also contain specimens without perforations which, chronologically, in most cases do not deviate by more than a century. Only in the case of graves G 1974C, G 1176 and G 2079 does this difference exceed a century, with the first amounting to 212–216 years¹¹¹ and about 200 years for the other two (Table 4).

In the case of 9 graves with cremations, along with the singly perforated coins (6 graves), there are no instances of other coin specimens. In two out of three graves with triply perforated coins, specimens with no perforations were also ascertained. In the first case (G1 321), the chronological difference amounts to a maximum of one century, and probably less, whereas in the second (G1 1318), coins from the 1st to the 3rd century are present, with a range of about 180 years (Table 4). In some graves, regardless of the chronological difference between the oldest and the youngest coin, the question remains as to when the coins were perforated, either at the time of the funeral or earlier. Specifically, were the perforated coins in all, or only in some instances, used during the deceased's lifetime as pendants or parts of a string, or were they perforated for the funeral? As for the perforated coins from the layer at the necropolis, it is interesting that only two singly perforated coins were dated to the 3rd century, whereas the triply perforated coins from that time do not appear at all. The largest number of specimens was again dated to the 1st century (9 coins). In light of this, the perforated coins were used during commemorative repasts mainly in the late 1st and the first half of the 2nd century, probably when they were no longer in circulation.

On the other hand, attention was focused on the position of the perforated and unperforated coins in the

graves and their relationship with the other finds, based on which certain conclusions can be drawn regarding their function in the funerary ritual.¹¹² Naturally, most of the relevant information was obtained by analysing the inhumation graves where, in the majority of cases, it was possible to determine the position of coins in relation to the deceased (Tables 1 and 2). If the inhumation graves of adults and children are observed, the initial overall conclusion is that children's graves are generally richer in grave goods, especially those with a powerful apotropaic function. This evidence from the necropolis of Više Grobalja is contrary to the assertions of ancient authors with reference to the social norms of mourning the newborn and children, as well as the advice for parents to accept their loss calmly and show no grief, and that there was, therefore, no need to perform rituals which were normally practiced for the dead.¹¹³

Graves of adults (inhumations) – In all the graves (6) that included a perforated coin in their inventory, it

¹¹⁰ A completely different picture is observed in perforated aurei from Britain and Ireland. Of 25 registered specimens, only one each is dated to the 1st and the 2nd century, whereas the remainder are from 270–518 (Bland, Lorient 2012, 99). In Gaul, a considerably lower percentage of perforated aurei was recorded: only 7 out of 1,922 registered. On the other hand, in Barbaricum, in the territory of the former East Germany, a large number of perforated aurei was noted: 29 out of 142 (Callu 1991, 103).

¹¹¹ Cf. *supra* ref. 26.

¹¹² Unfortunately, the absence of anthropological analyses for most of the graves mentioned here gives rise to some difficulties when drawing conclusions.

¹¹³ In the works of Cicero, Virgil, Plutarch and the jurist Paulus, such assertions are encountered. The archaeological and epigraphic evidence from a large number of necropolises in Roman Gaul, Germania and Italy further confirm that these social norms did not have an impact on the largest part of the population and that the parents mourned their dead children, no matter how old they were (Carroll 2011, 99–101, ref. 4; 103, ref. 18–19).

G	1 PERF.	3 PERF.	1+3 PERF.	UNPERFORATED
596	2 nd c.	/	/	2 nd or 3 rd c. (? lost)
1426	1 st c.	/	/	/
1974C	1 st c.	/	/	1 st c. (2 coins) + 3 rd c. (4 coins)
2049	1 st c.	/	/	/
1626	/	1 st c.		2 nd c.
2079	/	/	1 st c. (2 coins)	1 st –3 rd c. (? lost)
706	3 rd c. (?)	/	/	2 nd c.
1025	2 nd c.	/	/	/
1339	2 nd c.	/	/	/
1708	2 nd c. (2 coins)	/	/	2 nd c.
1897	2 nd c.	/	/	3 rd c.
216	/	1 st c.	/	1 st c. (2 coins)
247	/	1 st c.	/	2 nd c.
474	/	2 nd c.	/	2 nd c.
1512	/	1 st c.	/	/
1775	/	1 st c.	/	/
1825	/	1 st c.	/	2 nd c.
1176	/	/	3 rd c. + 1 st c.	2 nd c.
2116	/	/	3 rd c. (?) + 2 nd c.	/
G1	1 PERF.	3 PERF.	1+3 PERF.	UNPERFORATED
369	1 st –3 rd c. (?)	/	/	/
781	1 st –2 nd c. (?)	/	/	/
828	1 st c.	/	/	/
903	1 st c.	/	/	/
1034	2 nd c.	/	/	/
1111	1 st c.	/	/	/
321	/	1 st –2 nd c.	/	2 nd c.
1318	/	1 st c.	/	2 nd c. + 3 rd c.
1729	/	1 st c.	/	/
LAYER	1 PERF.	3 PERF.	/	/
	1 st c. (7 coins)	1 st c. (2 coins)	/	/
	2 nd c. (2 coins)	2 nd c.	/	/
	3 rd c. (2 coins)	/	/	/
	1 st –2 nd c.	/	/	/

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

Табела 4. Датовање перфорираних и неперфорираних новчића из гробних целина и из слоја

was possible to determine its position in relation to the deceased. In four graves, unperforated coins were also discovered which, in all cases, were not in the mouth or around the head of the deceased (next to the forearm, knee, hand and pelvis). In most of the graves (4), the perforated coin was located around the legs, in two instances near the pelvis and once on the torso. For half of the graves it can safely be stated that the perforated coins functioned as jewellery (G 596, G 1426, G 2079). In the first case, G 596, a silver lunula and a denarius of Hadrian with a crescent depiction formed the pendants of a necklace. It is possible that the other silver lunula, discovered by the left shoulder, was also part of the same necklace. As already noted, the lunula had a powerful apotropaic function, especially for

women and children, who were considered particularly weak and vulnerable to evil influences. In G 1426, the perforated coin, along with the pendants, beads, a perforated sheet and a snail shell, formed part of a string which was laid next to the left leg of the deceased. In the case of G 2079, the singly and triply perforated coins, the bronze bulla and four beads constituted part of a string. They were discovered on the left side of the pelvis of the deceased and thus it is possible that they were stored in a pouch, hanging on the belt. Together with the string, an unperforated coin was also noted, the role of which could have been linked with the journey to the other world. In G 1974C, seven coins represent the only finds. Six were discovered together and could have been stored in a pouch and placed alongside the

deceased, functioning as *marsupium* or *viaticum*. For the seventh, perforated, coin which was detected in the immediate vicinity of the previous six, it cannot be stated whether it is connected with the journey to the other world or it was a pendant on a cord of organic origin that disintegrated. In G 2049, of a modest inventory, a perforated denarius was discovered between the feet. Neither the position of the find nor the denomination suggest a function of a “Charon’s obol”, but rather some other use, which remains open to conjecture. Finally, in the case of G 1626, again conclusions cannot be drawn with regard to the role of the triply perforated specimen, which was discovered near an unperforated coin, not far from the bronze bulla.¹¹⁴

Graves of children (inhumations) – In children’s graves (13 with 16 perforated coins), one problem encountered is that of the poor preservation of bones and, consequently, a lack of data regarding the position of the coin finds in five instances (four graves – five coins). In three cases, the position was conditionally determined and is questionable (once – the torso and twice – in the mouth or around the head of the deceased). Of the remaining half of the coins (8), where the position of the find was determined with certainty, the largest number of coins (3) was located around the legs, two each on the chest and the pelvis and one next to the left arm. In eight children’s graves, unperforated coins were also recorded, in G 216 two, making a total of 9. In the largest number of cases (3), they were located in the mouth of the deceased (2 definitely and one?), once the position was uncertain, but in the region of the head, twice they were discovered by the left leg, once each on the torso and next to the right shoulder and, in one case, it was not possible to even vaguely determine the position. The inconsistencies of the position of coins in graves at the necropolis of Više Grobalja in general, as well as the examples selected here, indicate that the ritual associated with the so-called “Charon’s obol” was practised by only a portion of the population.¹¹⁵

In the case of nine graves it can be stated that the perforated coins formed a part of a small or large string (G 706, G 1339, G 1708, G 1897, G 216, G 247, G 1775, G 1176 and G 2116). Among these, there are several graves which stand out in particular by virtue of their rich and diverse inventory. At the same time, attention should be focused on the grave goods that are not mandatory or common: bullae, lunate pendants, beads of amber, bells, seashells and snail shells, wild boar teeth, a bovine vertebra, a phallic pendant and a miniature

stone tool pendant.¹¹⁶ One such grave is G 1897, the inventory of which, in addition to other grave goods,¹¹⁷ contained a bronze coin discovered in the mouth of the deceased and two strings. The first was located near the feet and comprises nine glass paste beads and one of amber. The second, of more interest, was discovered in the stomach region and comprises a bronze phallic pendant, a stone pendant in the form of a miniature tool and a singly perforated coin of Marcus Aurelius as Caesar. An amphora-shaped head of a bone pin with perforations was discovered in the same place, which might also have served as a pendant on the same string. The perforated coin, along with other pendants, formed part of the string that, with its sound, warded off evil during the child’s lifetime, a function further transferred to his afterlife. A particularly powerful apotropaic function is that of the phallic and the stone tool pendants, however, what should also not be disregarded is the amber bead from the other string.

The most interesting is G 216 with a find of a triply perforated coin and fabric remnants, which would appear to have been sewn onto the fabric in the head region. In its immediate vicinity, an unperforated coin was also recorded, which would have had the function of a “Charon’s obol”. A rich string, whose pendants (three bullae, a wild boar tooth and two bells) have an apotropaic quality, was discovered next to the left leg. The finds of shells and a bovine vertebra, into which a third coin was inserted, complete the protective function in the afterlife of the child that its parents presumably wanted to ensure. Similarly, in G 247, a coin was discovered in the child’s mouth, which was supposed to signify a payment for crossing to the other world. In the stomach region, numerous grave goods were recorded, constituting part of a string, including a triply perforated coin. The bulla, the amber bead, pendants of a sea snail and two animal teeth all possess an apotropaic quality.

¹¹⁴ In this and similar cases, one should not rule out the possibility that this resulted from individual emotional experiences of the mourners, and their conduct during the burial. They could, regardless of the custom and the burial ritual, have placed a certain item next to the deceased, which was special only to them and which held particular memories.

¹¹⁵ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, 31–35, ref. 68–76.

¹¹⁶ In contrast to, for example, various ceramic vessels, oil lamps, balsamaria, belt buckles, etc.

¹¹⁷ See previous description of G 1897; Спасић-Ђурић 2008, 130–133.

Strings in children's graves, in addition to beads made of different materials, gaming counters, small links and loops, whose only function was to produce sounds or to jingle, most commonly comprise: bullae, bells, perforated shells, wild boar teeth and, in one case, a phallic pendant and another in the form of a miniature stone tool. These numerous grave goods with a powerful apotropaic function confirm the assertions of ancient sources regarding the belief that children, in particular, are exposed and susceptible to evil forces and, therefore, require protection during their lifetime, as well as after death.

Cremations – In graves with cremations there is a considerably smaller total number of finds available, and only in two instances (G1 903 and G1 1111) can it be stated that the perforated coin was part of a string. In these cases, along with the perforated coin, the other parts of the string are beads, bronze loops, a stone pendant and a bone gaming counter. There is a noticeable absence of pendants with an apotropaic function. In all other cases,¹¹⁸ the perforated coins were discovered separate from other grave goods and in two instances they represent the sole find in the grave.

The layer – Coin finds from the layer were discovered individually between the graves, above them or above a larger or smaller group of graves, on the sacrificial areas. They were used during regular repasts, raising another question with regard to the funerary use of coins.¹¹⁹ Most of these finds, in addition to the perforated specimens mentioned here, were discovered near other objects which were evidently used for the same purposes, such as: fragments of ceramic vessels, oil lamps and terracotta, parts of glass vessels, bone pins, bronze loops, fibulae, etc.¹²⁰ However, several perforated specimens were discovered in the vicinity of other coins, which offers an additional possibility when considering the chronological ranges between the older and younger coins at the same elevations. Thus, for example, a singly perforated as of Augustus (no. 1) was recorded near a denarius of Antoninus Pius, dated to 155/156.¹²¹ An even more interesting example is a singly perforated denarius of Vespasian (no. 7), discovered at the same elevation as another 8 coins: an as of Antoninus Pius, a denarius-subaeratus of Severus Alexander, two specimens from the Nicaean mint (one Severus Alexander and one undetermined) and two specimens of an undetermined provincial mint (Severus and Gordian III).¹²² A perforated as of Antoninus Pius (no. 9) was recorded near an as of Galba and a sestertius of Trajan.¹²³ An illegible perforated as, roughly dated to

the 1st–2nd century (no. 10) was found at the same elevation as a sestertius of Antoninus Pius.¹²⁴ Among the specimens with three perforations from the layer, only an as of Hadrian was discovered near an illegible as dated to the 1st century (no. 3).¹²⁵ Based on the several aforementioned examples, it follows that coins from the closer as well as the more distant past were used during repasts. The chronological spans range between 160 and 174 years (for no. 1), 175 years (for no. 7), 72–93 years (for no. 9) and possibly a similar or even smaller chronological range (for no. 10). In the case of the triply perforated as (no. 3), the chronological range is approximately that of the last two examples.

A number of the perforated coins discovered at the necropolis of Više Grobalja definitely represented part of a string, and mostly with an apotropaic function. Others, according to the position they were found, could have been an independent pendant on a cord of organic origin that disintegrated or was attached to the clothes. This, however, remains open to interpretation, except in the case of G 216. The reason for them being sewn onto the clothes also remains unclear, although in this case it could be considered to have had a decorative or an apotropaic (?) function, since the coin was sewn onto the fabric in the region of the head.

The funerary rituals practised at the Viminacium necropolis of Više Grobalja, including both forms of burial, were not uniform. Certain rules were respected and they are noticeable, although obviously did not represent an imperative for all sections of the population. Religious and philosophical views regarding life or the disappearance of the soul after death and, accordingly, the treatment of the body of the deceased, were changing over time, affecting the funerary rituals (e.g. Epicurean,

¹¹⁸ G1 369, G1 781, G1 828, G1 1034, G1 321, G1 1318 and G1 1728.

¹¹⁹ For more details on the use of coins during the regular repasts at the necropolis of Više Grobalja, cf. Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, 34–35.

¹²⁰ For the contents of the layer above the graves and an example of one of the *culinae*, cf. Зотовић, Јордовић 1990, 11–34, Сл. 4–14.

¹²¹ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 864.

¹²² In the order, cf. Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. nos. 995, 1641, 2275, 2438, 2641, 2648. The other two coins have, unfortunately, been lost.

¹²³ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. nos. 171, 382.

¹²⁴ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 876.

¹²⁵ Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015, cat. no. 535.

Stoic, Christian). Nevertheless, the body of the deceased had to be treated in some way. From the analyses of the graves carried out thus far at the necropolis of Više Grobalja, further evidenced by the examples of graves with perforated coins, it would appear that most of the population believed in some form of life after death. Consequently, there was a need to ensure a satisfacto-

ry release of the soul from the dead body, by means of the appropriate rituals.¹²⁶ These rituals provide plenty of room for more enticing hypotheses regarding how they might be interpreted.

Despite numerous studies concerning this topic and scientific polemics, it seems that we are still far from understanding them completely.

¹²⁶ A similar view is expressed by Toynbee (1971, 35), associating this with the belief in, and reverence of, the spirits of ancestors (*di Manes*).

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Резиме:

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ПЕРФОРИРАНИ НОВЦИ ИЗ ГРОБНИХ ЦЕЛИНА СА ВИМИНАЦИЈУМСКЕ НЕКРОПОЛЕ *ВИШЕ ГРОБАЉА*

Кључне речи. – Римско царство, Виминацијум, перфорирани новци, гробне целинет.

Током обимних заштитних археолошких истраживања на Виминацијуму током 70-их и 80-их година прошлог века, на некрополи Више гробаља откривено је 3987 гробова кремираних и инхумираних покојника.¹ Од 2211 гробова са инхумираним покојницима, у 621 гробу (или 28,08%) пронађени су новци као прилози, док је у далеко већем проценту новац заступљен у гробовима са кремацијама (од 1776 гробова, новац је нађен у 725 – или 42,82%). Известан, мањи број примерака новца из гробова је перфориран, и то једном или три пута. Забележено је 13 примерака пробушених једном и 10 примерака пробушених три пута у гробовима са инхумацијама, док је тај број знатно мањи у кремацијама: 6 комада – једном и 3 комада – три пута перфорираних новчића. Из слоја на некрополи, који подразумева простор између гробова или жртвене површине изнад групе гробова, потиче још 12 примерака новчића перфорираних једном и 3 примерка перфорирана три пута.

Приликом интерпретације перфорираних римских новчића обично се појављује проблем у вези с контекстом налаза. Сам новац, наравно, није тешко датовати, али је у таквим случајевима увек отворено питање када је он пробушен, јер је увек могуће да је то учињено касније. За перфориране римске новчиће су зато од велике важности познати услови налаза, посебно из затворених гробних целина, као и пратећа документација, на основу којих се може са сигурношћу утврдити да ли су пробушени у римско време и употребљени као део накита или су имали неку другу улогу у погребном ритуалу.

Примери перфорираних римских новчића са виминацијумске некрополе Више гробаља су зато одлично полазиште за разматрање њихове улоге у функцији накита, у погребном ритуалу или и у једном и у другом. При томе, највише података корисних за наше закључке можемо добити анализом услова налаза у гробовима са инхумираним покојницима, од којих је најважнији положај у односу на тело. У случају гробова са кремираним покојницима, према месту налаза и његовом односу са другим прилозима можемо закључивати да ли је перфорирани новац део композитног накита (ниске), да ли представља самостални привезак или има неку другу функцију с обзиром на врсту перфорација. Налази оваквих новчића из слоја на некрополи, са жртвених површина, го-

воре у прилог чињеници да су имали извесну улогу у ритуалима након сахрана, приликом редовних даћа.

Код гробова са инхумираним покојницима разликујемо налазе перфорираних новчића у гробовима одраслих индивидуа и оне у дечјим гробовима. Такође, разликујемо гробове који садрже само једном или само три пута перфориран новац, односно гробове који садрже обе врсте новчића. Поред тога, у оба случаја је могуће да се у гробу, осим перфорираних новчића, налазе и они неперфорирани (Табела 1–2).

Већ је закључено да је улога новца у погребним ритуалима на Виминацијуму компликованија него што се то можда на први поглед чинило. Исто можемо рећи и за перфориране примерке, и то из више разлога. Најпре би то било место на које је новац положен у односу на покојника (инхумације), а потом следе односи с другим прилозима и неперфорираним новцима, као и комбинације појављивања појединих врста прилога.

Перфорирани новци пронађени на некрополи Више гробаља су у извесном броју сасвим сигурно представљали део ниске, углавном са апотропејском функцијом. Део је, према месту налаза, могао бити самостални привезак на врци органског порекла, која се распала, или је био пришивен на одећу, што остаје у сферама претпоставки, изузев у случају Г 216. Разлог њиховог пришивања на одећу такође остаје нејасан, мада у нашем примеру можемо говорити о декоративној или апотропејској (?) функцији, јер је новчић био пришивен у пределу главе.

Погребни ритуали који су примењивани на виминацијумској некрополи Више гробаља, укључујући оба начина сахрањивања, нису били једнообразни. Извесна правила су поштована и уочљива су, али очито нису представљала императив за све делове популације. Религијски и филозофски погледи који се тичу живота или нестанка душе после смрти, па самим тим и третмана тела преминулих, мењали су се током времена и утицали су на погребне ритуале. Но, у сваком случају, тело преминулог је морало бити третирано на неки начин. Из досадашњих анализа гробних целина на некрополи Више гробаља произилази да је већина популације веровала у извесан облик живота после смрти, а то показују и примери гробова са перфорираним новцима.

¹ Резултати истраживања некрополе и гробних целина делимично су публиковани у две свеске (Зотовић, Јордовић 1990; Когац, Golubović 2009). Сви налази новца са некрополе Више гробаља обједињени су у монографији (Vojvoda, Mrđić 2015).

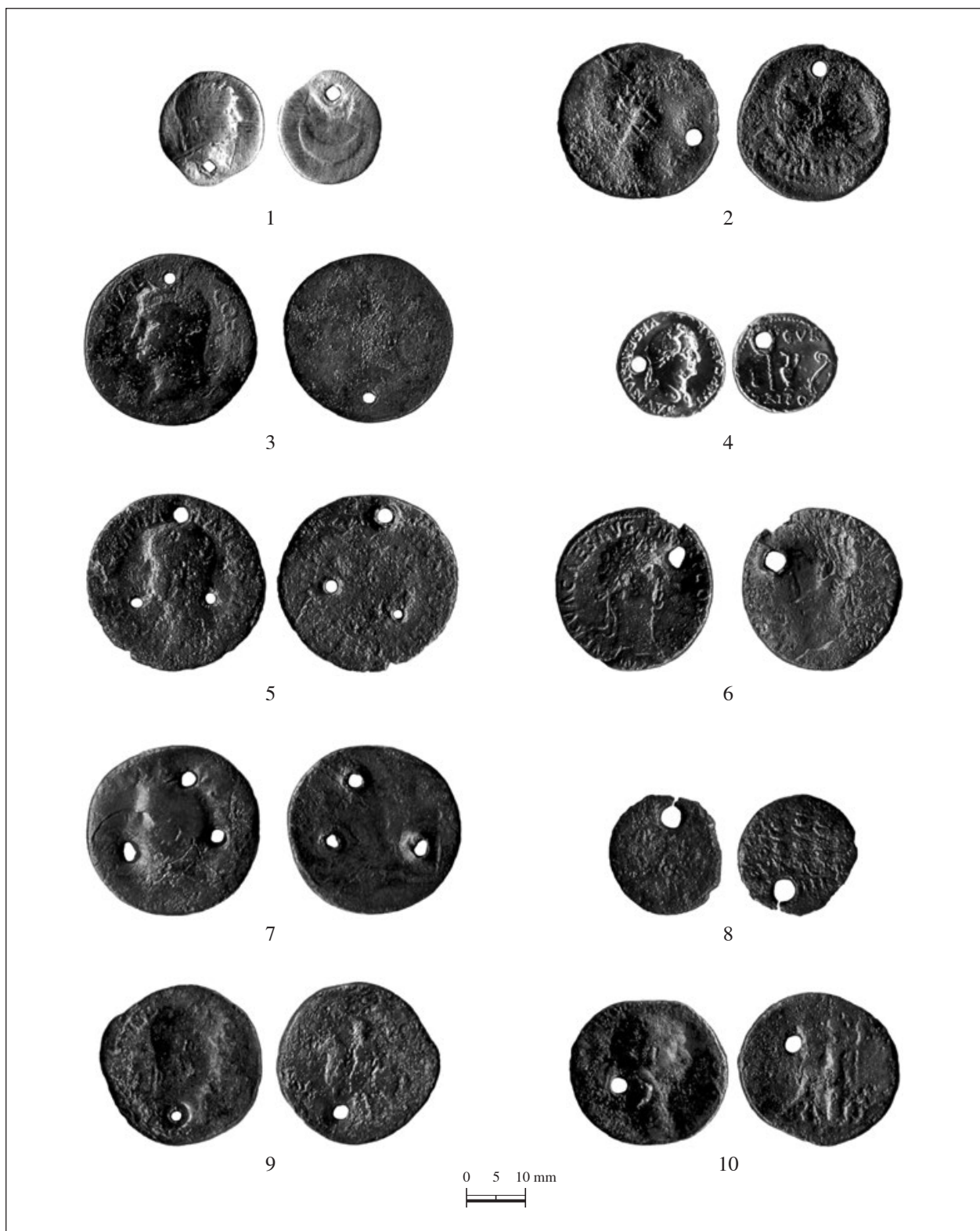


Plate I – 1. Coin from G 596; 2. Coin from G 1426; 3. Coin from G 1974C; 4. Coin from G 2049; 5. Coin from G 1626; 6, 7. Coins from G 2079; 8. Coin from G 706; 9. Coin from G 1025; 10. Coin from G 1339

Табла I – 1. Новац из Г 596; 2. Новац из Г 1426; 3. Новац из Г 1974Ц; 4. Новац из Г 2049; 5. Новац из Г 1626; 6, 7. Новаци из Г 2079; 8. Новац из Г 706; 9. Новац из Г 1025; 10. Новац из Г 1339

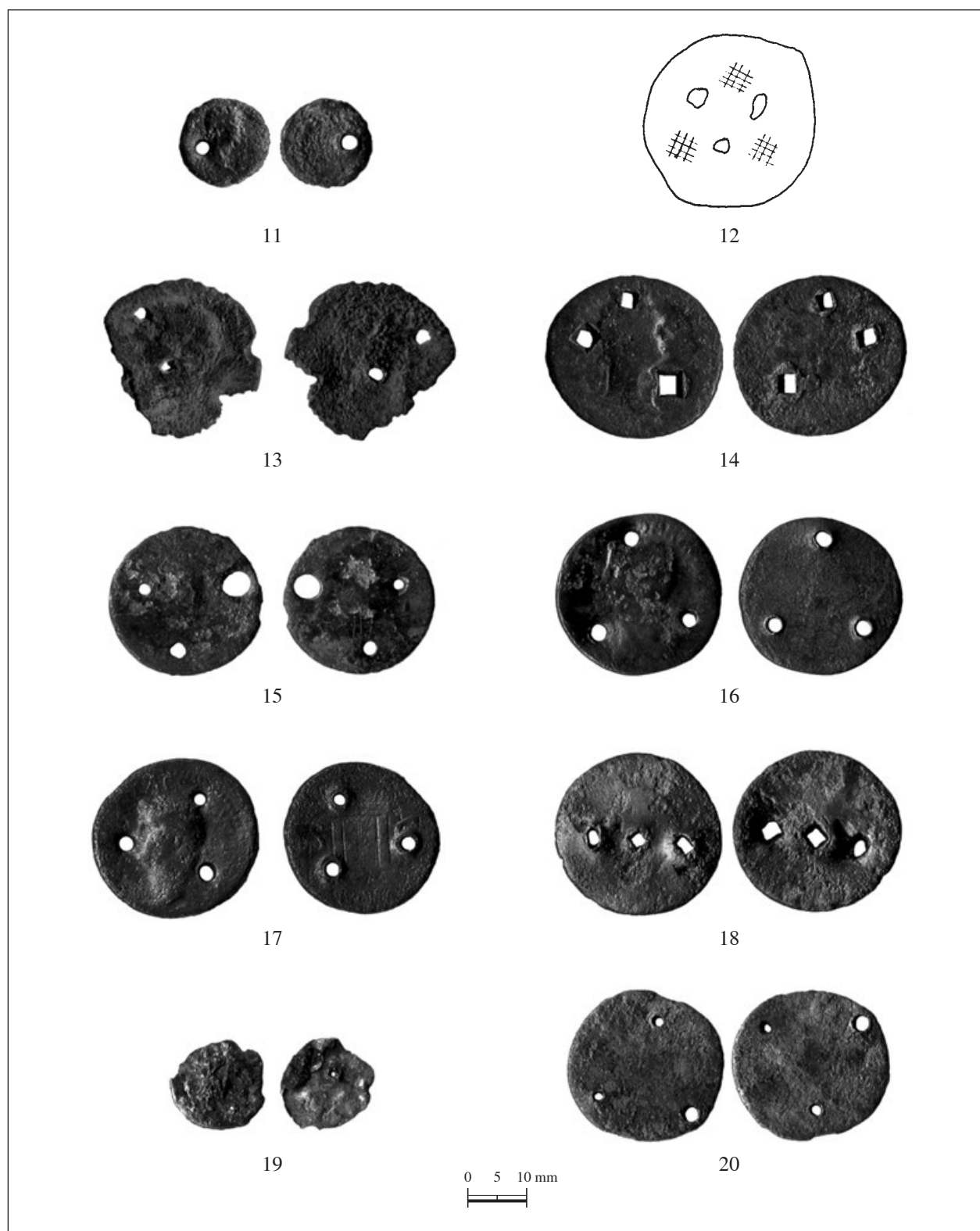


Plate II – 11. Coin from G 1708; 12, 13. Coins from G 216; 14. Coin from G 247; 15. Coin from G 474; 16. Coin from G 1512; 17. Coin from G 1775; 18. Coin from G 1825; 19, 20. Coins from G 1176

Табла II – 11. Новац из Г 1708; 12, 13. Новаци из Г 216; 14. Новац из Г 247; 15. Новац из Г 474; 16. Новац из Г 1512; 17. Новац из Г 1775; 18. Новац из Г 1825; 19, 20. Новаци из Г 1176

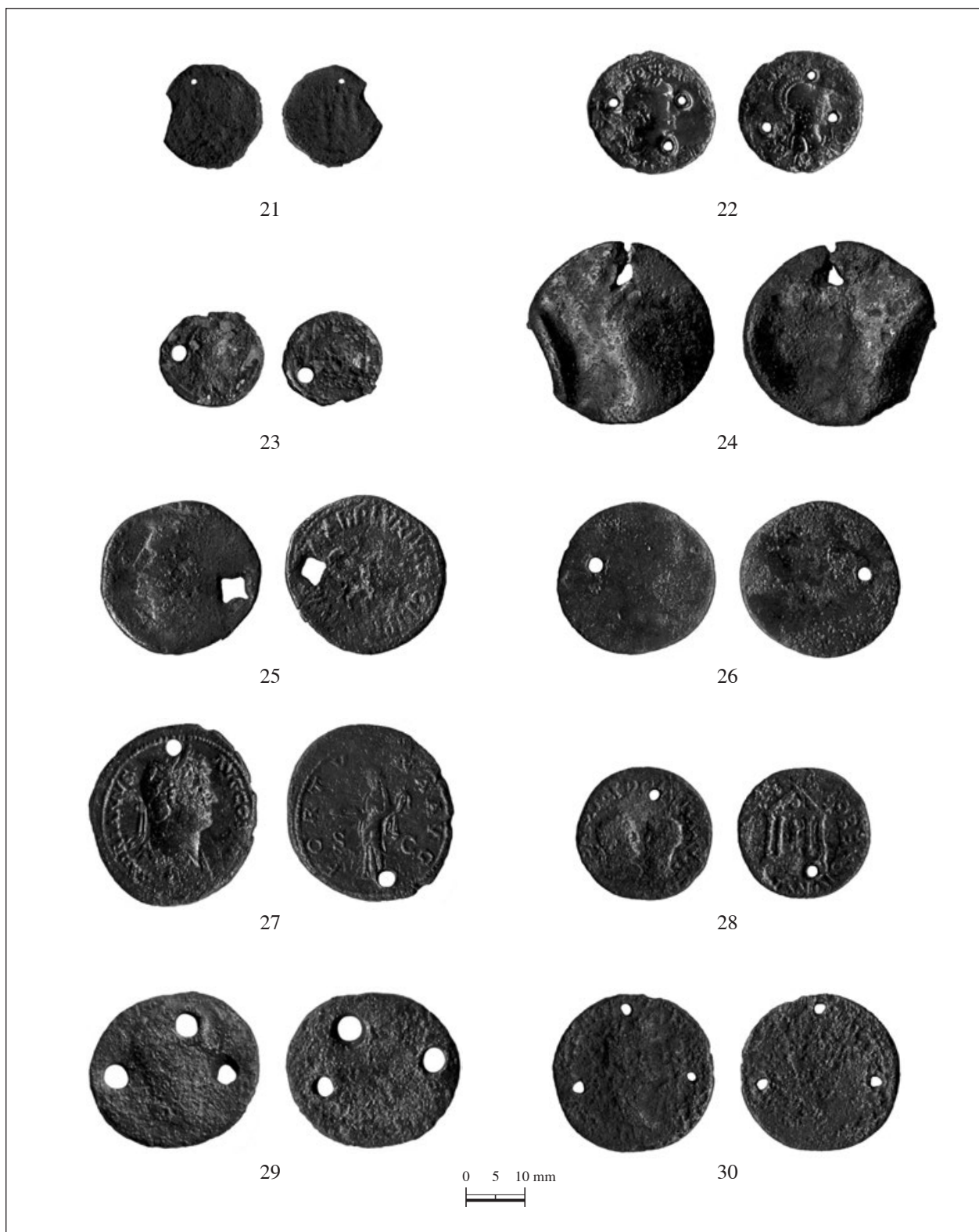


Plate III – 21, 22. Coins from G 2116; 23. Coin from G1 369; 24. Coin from G1 781; 25. Coin from G1 828; 26. Coin from G1 903; 27. Coin from G1 1034; 28. Coin from G1 1111; 29. Coin from G1 321; 30. Coin from G1 1318

Табла III – 21, 22. Новац из Г 2116; 23. Новац из Г1 369; 24. Новац из Г1 781; 25. Новац из Г1 828; 26. Новац из Г1 903; 27. Новац из Г1 1034; 28. Новац из Г1 1111; 29. Новац из Г1 321; 30. Новац из Г1 1318

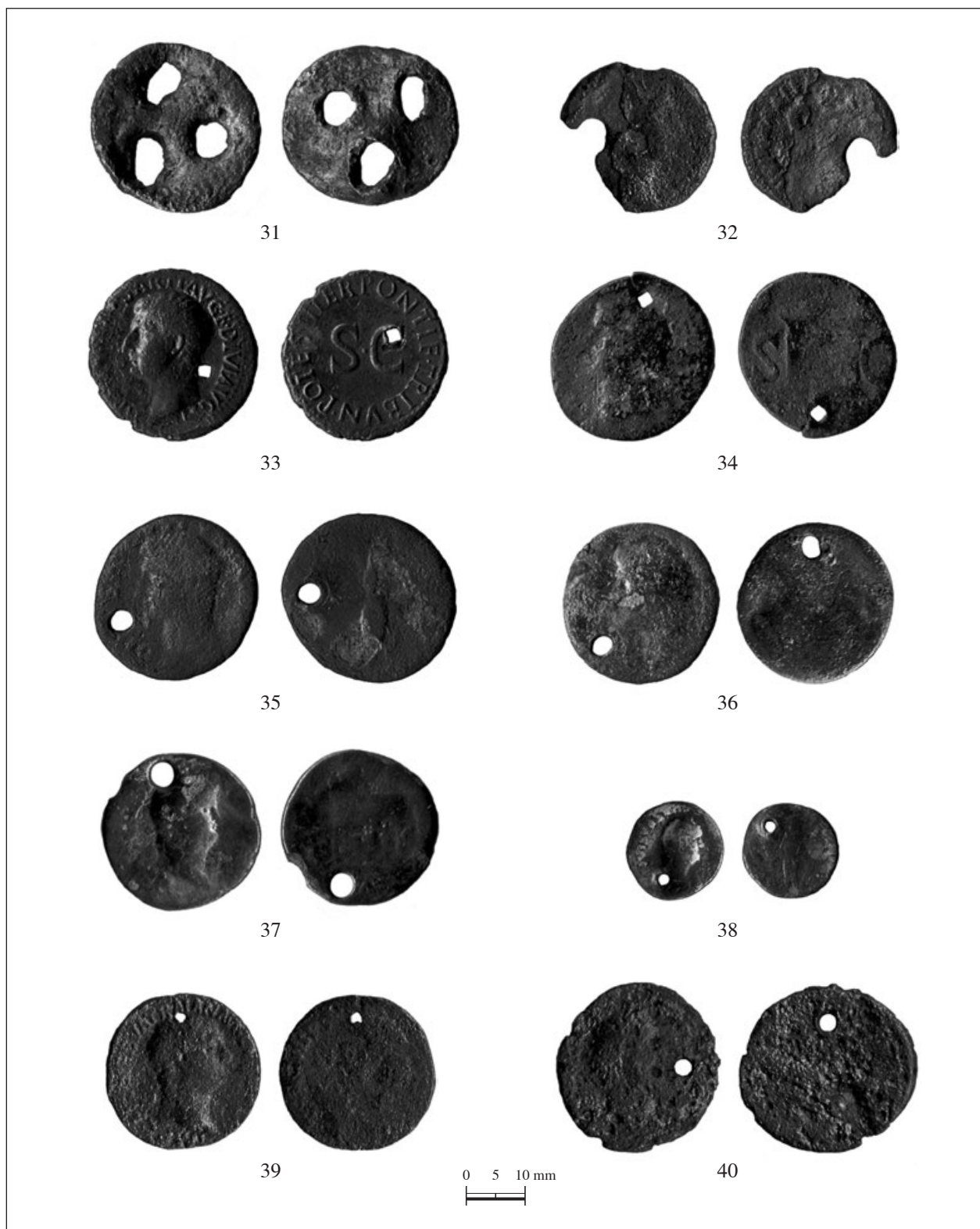


Plate IV – 31. Coin from G1 1728; 32–40. The perforated coins from the layer

Табла IV – 31. Новац из Г1 1728; 32–40. Перфорирани новци из слоја

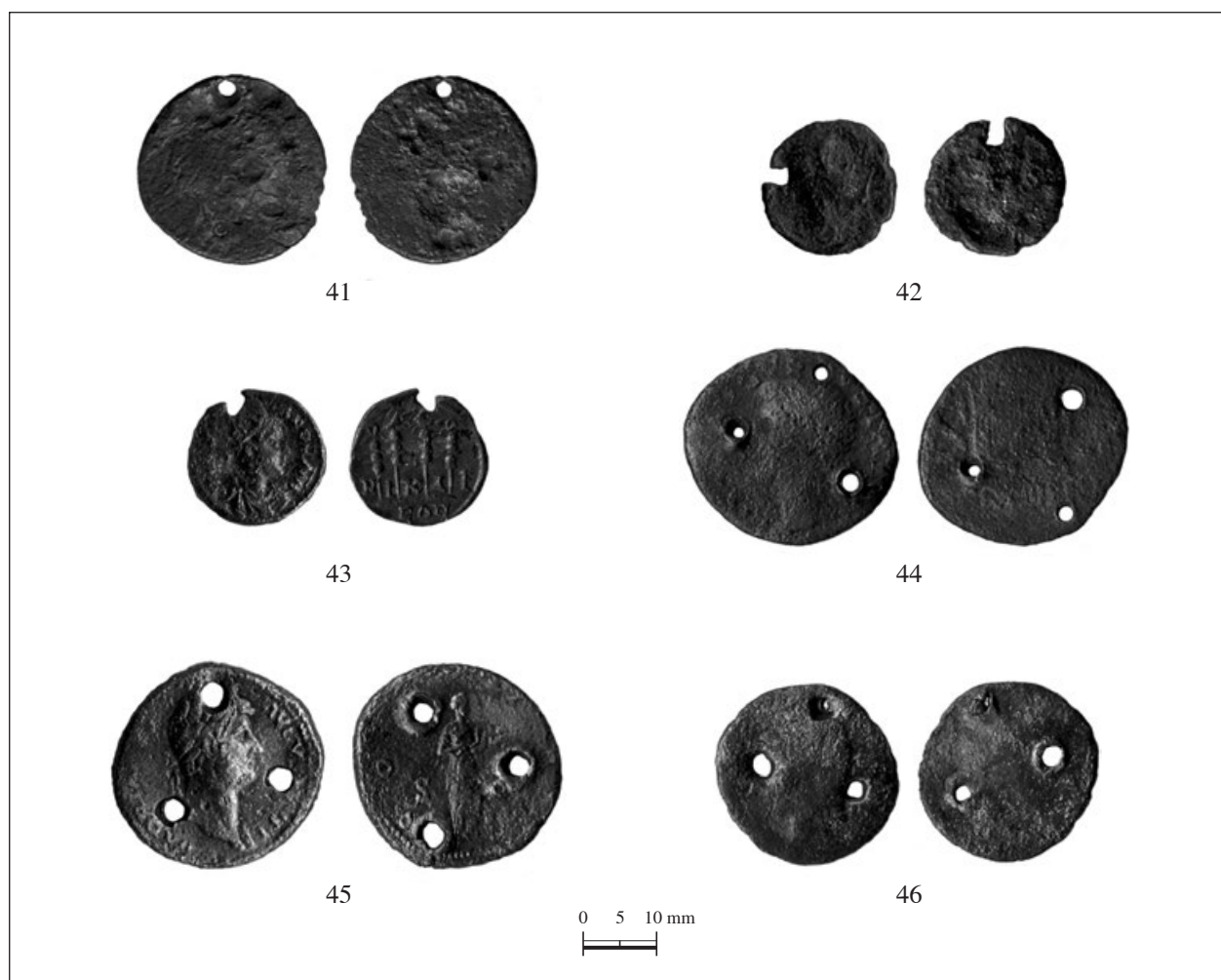


Plate V – 41–46. The perforated coins from the layer

Табла V – 41–46. Перфорирани новци из слоја