

**A Step into the Past**  
**Approaches to Identity, Communications and Material Culture in**  
**South-Eastern European Archaeology**





Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade

Monographs No. 87 (printed) • Monographs No. 88 (digital)

# A STEP INTO THE PAST

Approaches to Identity, Communications and  
Material Culture in South-Eastern European  
Archaeology

Papers dedicated to Petar Popović  
for his 78<sup>th</sup> birthday

**Editors**

Blagoje Govedarica

Ivan Vranić

Aleksandar Kapuran

Belgrade  
2023

**Publisher**

Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade

**Editor in chief**

Snežana Golubović

**Editors**

Blagoje Govedarica, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Berlin, blagoje.govedarica@dainst.de

Ivan Vranić, Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade, ivanvran@gmail.com

Aleksandar Kapuran, Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade, a.kapuran@gmail.com

**Reviewd by**

Dr Marko Dizdar, Institute of Archaeology, Zagreb

Dr Vujadin Ivanišević, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts

Dr Hrvoje Potrelica, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Zagreb

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Institute of Archaeology

**Printed by**

Birograf comp DOO, Beograd

**Printed in**

100 copies

Printed (ISBN-978-86-6439-096-5)

Digital (ISBN-978-86-6439-097-2)

[https://doi.org/10.18485/arhe\\_step2past.2023](https://doi.org/10.18485/arhe_step2past.2023)



Република Србија

МИНИСТАРСТВО НАУКЕ,  
ТЕХНОЛОШКОГ РАЗВОЈА И  
ИНОВАЦИЈА

This volume was published with financial support from the Ministry of Science, Technological Development and Innovation of the Republic of Serbia



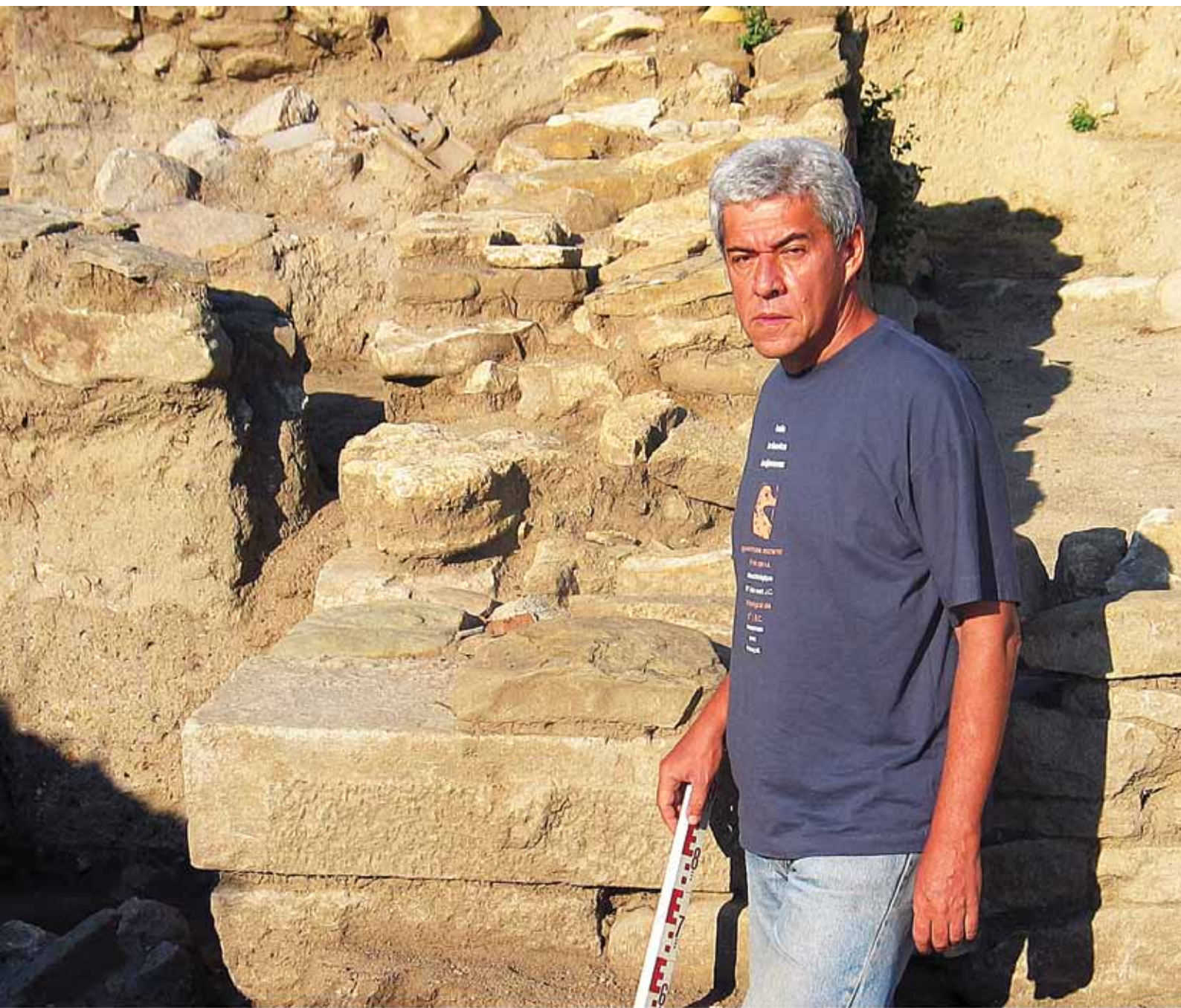
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ARCHAEOLOGY**



Wesley Tomlin



## Библиографија Петра Поповића

Библиографија Петра Поповића израђена је према Интернационалном стандарду за скраћени библиографски опис (ISBD). Референце су подељене у три целине: монографске публикације, прилози у зборницима, серијским и осталим публикацијама и преводи, прикази књига, унутар којих су поређане хронолошки.

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This bibliography was compiled in accordance with the International Standards for Bibliographic Description (ISBD). The references are divided into three segments: monographs; chapters, papers and other periodicals; and translations and book reviews, all of which are placed in chronological order.

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1986

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1998

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2006

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[https://doi.org/10.18485/arhe\\_step2past.2023.ch1](https://doi.org/10.18485/arhe_step2past.2023.ch1)



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Blagoje Govedarica, Ivan Vranić and Aleksandar Kapuran

## INTRODUCTION: PETAR POPOVIĆ AND SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPEAN ARCHAEOLOGY

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It is a rare occasion that one researcher's career in archaeology including published results, extensive fieldwork and professional contacts, can inspire a volume with such vast, diachronic and diverse topics as is the case here. Namely, the bibliography of Petar Popović (*see* Bibliography of Petar Popović in this volume) contains numerous papers, chapters, and books focused on numismatics; (*e.g.*, Popović 1983; Поповић 1987; Borić-Brešković, Popović 2006), ancient Celts and Scordisci, their cultures, migrations and contacts (*e.g.*, Jovanović, Popović 1991; Popović 1992a; 1992b; 1992c; 1993; 1994; 1996a), the Balkan Bronze and Iron Ages (*e.g.*, Vukmanović, Popović 1982; Popović, Vukmanović 1992; Popović 1996b), Kale–Krševica (*e.g.*, Popović 2006; 2012), etc. These publications reveal his main scholarly interests in social, cultural, and economic aspects of the interrelations between the Paleo-Balkan communities and the Greek and Roman worlds. Beginning in the 1960s, Popović participated in numerous local and multinational excavation projects targeting some of the most prominent archaeological sites in Serbia and former Yugoslavia (*e.g.*, Padina, Gomolava, Vinča, Bosut, Kadića Brdo, Faros, Issa). As a result, along with abundant friendships, fruitful discussions, and international contacts, he also became an indispensable participant in most regional archaeological interpretative endeavours focusing on problems beyond the Iron Age and numismatics. Having all this in mind, the three editors along with all of the authors, who are Petar's friends and colleagues, have happily decided to publish this volume as a birthday present to him. Our scholarly goal is to provide space for some new answers to the archaeological questions Petar Popović is interested in. Since his interests remain vast and focused on still very current topics, connecting the two is not a difficult task.

Beyond social, economic and other interactions and communications, we decided to focus on identity and material culture changes as an interpretative thread connecting all the chapters and people behind this volume. When it comes to geography, Popović's scholarly interests are focused on the Balkans in prehistory and protohistory, and on regional and global contacts local communities had with societies inhabiting regions in the Mediterranean or further inside continental Europe. Hence, we have divided this volume into two segments beginning with the Danube as a route or a "highway" in prehistory and protohistory, and the consequent identity and material culture changes. In the second segment, the focus is on social, economic and cultural interactions between the communities from south-eastern Europe and the Mediterranean world, from prehistory to the Middle Ages.

### **The Danube as a "highway": identity, communications and material culture changes in south-eastern European Prehistory and Protohistory**

A significant portion of Petar's research is focused on Iron and previous Bronze Age phenomena in the Balkans. Since most of these periods' cultural manifestations and identity characteristics are considered reflections of some interrelations and contacts with other cultures, in the next few pages we will discuss the importance of the Danube as a communication route. Besides obvious scholarly interests,

this topic is also appropriate since Popović conducted some of his very important excavations on the banks of this river, contemplating its role in the lives of prehistoric men and women (e.g., Popović, Vukmanović 1992).

During prehistory, the Danube represented a “highway” for various central European and Balkan communities that moved, interacted and shared achievements along its course, consequently changing their ways of life, customs and cultures. However, this river was more than just a two-way communication route. The inexhaustible food and other resources it supplied allowed numerous hunting, agricultural, pastoral and warrior communities to establish long-term or temporary settlements. During the Mesolithic/Neolithic transition, in the late seventh millennium BC, the earliest permanent food-producing settlements appeared along its banks (Борић 2008). Subsequently, the first urban-looking Vinča culture centres were built along this and other rivers as well (Ристић, Опачић 2005: 73). These changes represented the most important segments of the so-called process of Neolithisation, which apparently originated in the Middle East and slowly spread into the Balkans and beyond (Waterbolk 1971: 342).

After the collapse of the Neolithic communities, settled in fertile areas of the Carpathian Basin and the Balkans, numerous dynamic and migratory societies of the Copper Age moved upstream and Bronze Age societies moved downstream along the middle course<sup>1</sup> of the Danube, towards the Balkan Peninsula (Тасић 1983a: 55). It is believed that during the Early Iron Age, the penetration went exclusively from the Black Sea along the lower and towards the middle Danube course (Тасић 1983). Historical sources say that at the end of the Old Era, the mighty conquerors of the Old World, such as the phalanxes of Alexander the Great or the Roman legions, finally arrived on its banks (Јовановић 2010). The ancient name of the Danube was *Istros*, and Herodotus stated that it sprung in the Celtic country near the city of Pirene, and flowed through the middle of Europe cutting it into two parts (Херодот II: 33). Eventually, the Danube became a border that divided but also connected the Roman Empire with various other communities, creating a very dynamic socio-political context (see Rustoiu in this volume).

Some of the most attractive prehistoric archaeological finds from the territory of Serbia dating to the Middle and Late Bronze Age are found on the banks of the Danube. Namely, the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC was characterised by three phases of the penetration of the Encrusted Pottery culture, first pointed out by Miloje Vasić at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the beauty of the anthropomorphic plastic typical for this culture inspired numerous European archaeologists to remain focused on this phenomenon for a long time (Васић 1907: 47; 1912: 189; Childe 1929; Гарашанин 1973: 351; Letica 1973: 52; Majnarić-Pandžić 1982: 47; Coles, Harding 1979; Holenweger 2011). Another term used for the Encrusted Pottery culture is the Transdanubian culture, which I. Bona elaborated upon by connecting it to some wider Bronze Age phenomena with similarly decorated ceramics – using the technique of *Furchenstich* and white incrustation (Bona 1975: 194). The dominance of the Encrusted Pottery culture in the Danube region appeared in stages, spreading from the north to the south. N. Tasić labelled its older phase in the territory of southern Hungary and Baranja the Transdanubian culture, while in the territory of Srem and Banat, under the influence of the Szremla culture, he argued that it turned into the Dubovačka culture (Tasić 1974: 229). During its last phase, in the area of Iron Gates and further into Romania, the Dubovačka culture grew into the Žuto Brdo culture (Тасић 1983: 82), or the Žuto Brdo-Girla Mare cultural complex (Garašanin 1983: 520). There are various hypotheses about the cultural movements and interactions behind these Middle Bronze Age phenomena. Many authors argue that the Encrusted Pottery culture concentrated in the Danube region exchanging their luxury ceramics for metal products from the Eastern Carpathian basin, and obtaining raw materials and finished metal products from centres of metallurgy in Central Europe (Bóna 1975: 220-222). The intensive exchange between Middle Bronze Age communities in the Carpathian basin is best illustrated by numerous imitations of forms and decorations taken from neighbouring communities (Kiss 2011: 217).

In the territory of Serbia, the Dubovačka culture group is best represented by several exceptional finds: the now-lost Kličevac idol (Васић 1952-1953), the models of carriages pulled by birds (Dupljajska and Vrsačka kolica), and the gold jewellery hoard from Vrbica (Гарашанин 1954, Т. II; Molloy *at al.* 2023).

<sup>1</sup> The Danube’s middle course begins near Budapest and ends near Turnu Severin, and is 860 km long (Дукић 1983: 25).

Arguably, the two chariot models can be figural representations of the agrarian cycle that was mythically linked with the solar and chthonic movement of Apollo, and his three seasons spent in the south and one in the north, with the Hyperboreans (Jovanović 2007, 10). The other characteristics of the Encrusted Pottery culture are flat necropolises with cremated individuals placed in urns and short-lived settlements which only occupy narrow strips along the banks of the Danube and its immediate hinterland, outside of which there are almost no other traces of this phenomenon. Consequently, it seems that during the Middle and Late Bronze Age, these communities dominated the European communication route along the Danube until the arrival of the Gava culture in the second half of the 2nd millennium BC. M. Peković lists around 150 sites of encrusted ceramics in Serbia, concentrated exclusively along the course of the Danube and around the confluence of the Tisa, Sava and Morava rivers (Пековић 2013: 25, Map 1).

Petar Popović made a significant contribution to clarifying the relationship between the Encrusted Pottery culture and the Gava culture (fluted ceramics) through research in the territory of Ključ (Konjska glava), the area where the Danube passes from the middle to its lower course. These rescue excavations took place within the project of the construction of the Đerdap II hydroelectric power plant during the 1980s. Popović directed or took part in the research of Livade – Mala Vrbica, Vajuga Pesak, Ljubičevac – Gornje Ostrvo, Egeta, Ljubičevac – Obala, and Konopište (Вукмановић, Поповић 1984; Премк, Поповић, Бјелајац 1984; Поповић 1984; 1984a). An interesting feature of the Ključ region is that several necropolises from different prehistoric periods (from the Mesolithic to La Tène) and the Middle Ages are concentrated in this relatively small area. The inhumation burials were characteristic of the Mesolithic (Kula in Mihailovac – Сладић 1984), the Neolithic (Konopište) and in the Early Bronze Age (Vajuga – Popović, Vukmanović, Radojčić 1986, Fig. 3), while the cremated burials dominated in the Late Bronze Age (Glamija – Krstić 2003; Vajuga-Korbovo – Krstić 1986; Konopište – Popović, Vukmanović, Radojčić 1990; and Peska near Korbovo – Radojčić 1986). In Ključ, there are also several necropolises with cremated individuals belonging to cultural groups Žuto Brdo–Girila Mare and the Gava culture buried together – Veliki Gradac, Konopište, Vajuga–Korbovo, as well as the Balej necropolis in northwestern Bulgaria (Alexandrov, Ivanov, Hristova 2016).

The Early Iron Age, when the Bosut group dominated the Danube region, stands for the period of the appearance of iron, but not in its full use (Васић 1997: 92). Then, on the territory of Ključ, the inhumation burials reappeared, which can be seen at the Vajuga-Pesak necropolis (Popović, Vukmanović 1998). This necropolis simultaneously shows the characteristics of the late Kalakača and the early Basarabi. It is also one of the largest Early Iron Age necropolises on the territory of Serbia, next to the group tomb at Gomolava (Tasić 1972). There are more necropolises with these characteristics on the left bank of the Danube, in today's Romania, where the dead were buried under tumuli, which is not the practice in Serbia, on the right bank (Dumitrescu 1968). However, in the Valley of Western Morava River, there are Bronze Age skeletal burials under tumuli, which can be seen in the necropolis of Mojsinje near Čačak (Никитовић, Стојић, Васић 2002).

Numerous Celtic tribes penetrated the Carpathian Basin, Transylvania, the middle Danube course and the Balkans during the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC (Jovanović 2018). At the turn of this century, the Eastern Celts reached the banks of the Danube in Serbia where they took a break for several decades, to consolidate their strength for further penetration into the Eastern Balkans and beyond. This period of consolidation is best illustrated by the necropolises at Karaburma and Rospri Ćupria in Belgrade, and Pećine near Kostolac (Тодоровић 1956; 1974; Јовановић 2018). Almost a century passed from the appearance of the Celts in the Danube region of Serbian to the first traces of their presence in north-eastern Serbia (Поповић, Сладић 1997: 109). The characteristics of the discovered material culture indicate that the social groups behind these finds are the so-called kingdom or the tribal alliance of Skordisci (Todorović 1974), while the discoveries of the coins from the hoard in Jabukovec – barbaric imitations of Tetradrachms – represent the first issues of their autonomous coinage in the Balkans (Поповић 1987: 39). The presence of Celts in the area of Ključ was almost non-existent during the first phase of the invasion of the Balkans, and warrior graves appeared only at the turn of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, e.g., the grave from Čubra near Negotin (Поповић, Сладић 1997: 102,103). The grave from Debelica (near

Knjaževac), and the necropolises Vajuga-Pesak (near Korbovo), Ajman and Konopište (near Kladovo) belong to the third horizon of the 2<sup>nd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> century BC. There was another necropolis on the river island near Ljubičevac, which over time was washed away by erosion into the Danube (Поповић, Сладвић 1997: 104). The funeral rites were again transformed, so now the deceased are exclusively cremated and their remains are placed in pits together with weapons and pottery (Popović 1992c: 116). Weapons include spears, swords, massive knives and shield bosses, while ceramic accessories are represented by grey cooking pots and bowls thrown on a potter's wheel and ornamented with polishing, as well as "fructieras" on high feet (Popović 2001).

The local production of pottery reveals hybrid shapes taken over from the earlier Iron Age, which were given a new look due to the use of the potter's wheel (Popović 2014; cf., Egri in this volume). This was also the case with the finds from a child's grave discovered near the village of Mokranje in Negotin, in which the skeleton of a 2-year-old was covered with a "fructiera" and a larger fragment of cooking pot thrown on a potter's wheel, while among other ceramic items in the grave, there were also larger hand-made pots with characteristic shapes for the Ferigile culture of the Early Iron Age (Popović, Kapuran 2011). Although the grave chronologically belongs to the transition from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, the child was inhumed, which is completely different from the funeral customs typical to the Mali Skordisk in this period.

The chapters we decided to place in this section of the volume will provide thorough insights into some of the most prominent material culture changes in south-eastern European prehistory and proto-history, spanning from the late Neolithic till the Roman conquest. The authors focus on various topics, from Metal Age cultural horizons at Foeni-Salaş in Romania to various distinctive objects discovered in south-eastern Europe. A reader will find valuable information about Early Eneolithic arrowheads, Bronze Age golden objects, various types of prehistoric and protohistoric fibulae, some concepts behind an archaeological site, „barbarian“ *kantharoi*, scabbards and swords, belts, Scordiscian ladies, glass beads and Roman statuette discovered in indigenous contexts.

### **The Mediterranean connections: social, economic and cultural interactions between south-eastern Europe and the Mediterranean world, from prehistory to the Middle Ages**

Social, economic and cultural interrelations between numerous European communities from the past and the Mediterranean world are some of the most prominent topics in archaeology and history. Trade and exchange of material culture, transfers of knowledge and technology, communications and human mobility, therefore, become questions of paramount importance, and how these interrelations were perceived in scholarly endeavours usually follow some broad socio-political trends of modern societies (Gosden 2004; Dietler 2011). Petar Popović contributed to answering some of these questions by interpreting various Paleo-Balkan cultural phenomena emerging from contacts with ancient Greeks and Romans. His main focus was on the emergence of local Iron Age coinage and the use of Greek and Roman Republican pieces (e.g., Поповић 1987; Borić-Brešković, Popović 2006), on the culture of Scordisci (see above) and on the site of Kale Krševica (see below).

Since we did not receive any numismatic contributions for this volume, which could have been expected given the bibliography of Petar Popović, here we decided to pay attention to a lesser-known but often quoted section from his monograph on the Scordiscian coinage (Поповић 1987). It is a question he asked – whether and from what moment in the past this or any other coins used by Scordisci or other Paleo-Balkan communities can be considered as evidence of the existence of market and human understanding of concepts of prices in the modern sense of the word (1987: 28, 132-133). Without slipping into the primitivist vs. modernist, or substantivism vs. formalism debates in history and anthropology (see Dalton 1968; Finley 1981), Popović's question about how the role of money could have changed over time represents a very important theoretical breakthrough in Serbian and ex-Yugoslav archaeology.

Subsequently, further development of such ideas has led to the conclusion that communities from the past should never be viewed through the prism of ‘ancient civilisations’ like Greece and Rome or modern European societies, but as culture-specific phenomena, and that the spirit of the age (or *Zeitgeist*) should always be taken into consideration when contemplating any past or present culture (*cf.*, Vranić 2022: 157-180).

**Kale-Krševica:** During the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, more than a hundred years before the first La Tène finds reached the Sava and the Danube region, another culture (or cultures) located in today’s Northern Macedonia, Bulgaria, Albania and southern Serbia was going through extraordinary changes (*see* Parazoglu 1967; Папазоглу 1980; 1988; Микулчиќ 1999; Theodossiev 2011; Archibald 2013; Popov 2015), which was equally important for Petar Popović and his scholarly interests. This culture does not have a straightforward archaeological name as is the case with earlier prehistoric ones, and in archaeological literature, it is referred to after different Paleo-Balkan ‘tribes’ or ‘peoples’ – e.g., Paeonians, Thracians, Illyrians. The most prominent is its characteristic connections with the Mediterranean world, which are visible in almost all aspects of locally produced objects and structures, in numerous Greek and Macedonian imports, and overall similarities of the locally produced material culture on this vast territory.

Beginning in the early 2000s, Petar Popović has dedicated almost two decades of his career to excavations and interpretation of the site Kale-Krševica, located to the south of Vranje in southern Serbia (*e.g.*, Popović 2006; 2012). This fortified Iron Age settlement is very unusual compared to other Iron Age sites in modern-day Serbia (*see* above). Yet, it is very similar to all contemporary settlements in Bulgaria, North Macedonia and Northern Greece (*see* Nankov 2011; 2015; Popov 2015; Mitrevski 2016) as it represents one of the most prominent manifestations of these ‘Hellenised’ phenomenon in the southern Balkans (Vranić 2022).

Kale-Krševica is located on and around a small hill (Kale), covers an area of around 5 hectares (with less than 5% being excavated), and is divided into several zones or parts of the settlement: the ‘acropolis’, the ‘slopes’ and the ‘suburbium’ (Popović 2005; 2006; 2007; 2012). The ‘acropolis’ is located on a plateau and it is enclosed by a massive stone rampart and a deep wide trench oriented towards Mt Rujen. Besides some earlier prehistoric finds, the earliest structures and objects belonging to the ‘Hellenised’ phase are discovered at the ‘acropolis’ and they are dated to the final years of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. At this moment, a few domestic structures with inner yards were built along a street-like communication (*see* Vranić in this volume). The finds of Attic red-figure late 5<sup>th</sup> and early 4<sup>th</sup> century BC pottery are important since they provide some crucial temporal and regional context for the earliest buildings. During the entire 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, the Kale-Krševica ‘acropolis’ withstood some significant changes resulting from intensive building campaigns featuring various domestic and public structures, which changed the site’s appearance several times. The architecture consisted of broken stone foundations, wattle and doubt walls (maybe some adobe) and roof tiles.

At the end of this century, significant architectural changes also took place at the ‘suburbium’ of the Kale-Krševica site. Here, Petar Popović discovered probably the most prominent structure – a massive subterranean barrel vaulted ashlar masonry water reservoir (measuring 9.68m long × 5.74m wide externally, and 9.48×5.26m internally), built following the architectural principles used in Macedonian and Thracian royal burial chambers. This structure sits in the middle of a large fortified complex consisting of several buildings, two ramparts, many post holes and bearings for horizontal wooden beams cut into the slope of the Kale hill, as well as numerous domed bread ovens and pits. The purpose of this ‘hydro-complex,’ as it is labelled in the literature, was to provide a safe place for food production on a massive scale in at least a dozen bread ovens conveniently located near the water reservoir, tapping into a subterranean aquifer (Popović 2009; Popović, Vukadinović 2011; Vranić 2019).

**The issue of Damastion:** The location of the enigmatic city of Damastion is a very prominent topic in Popović’s research. Strabo mentioned Damastion and its mining activities twice, saying that the silver mines belonging to this city were situated in the hinterland of Epidamnos and Apollonia, further to the east, somewhere in the Illyrian realm (7. 7. 8). In another passage (8. 6. 16), Strabo also says that by

the end of the 5th century BC, Greeks from the island of Aegina and the Chalcidicean city of Mende had founded the city Damastion near the silver mines in Illyria (Popović, Vranić 2013). Petar Popović strongly believes that the issue of the location of Damastion could not be answered without taking into consideration the Kale-Krševica site (Popović 2012). One of the main reasons behind this belief, besides the appearance of the discovered material culture and settlement planning, was an already established proposal that Damastion due to the position of the silver ore in the Balkans should be located in modern-day Kosovo and Metohija (e.g., Ujes 2002). If so, Kale-Krševica appears to be the most prominent unnamed ancient settlement in this general area, and definitely, the one that shows the most direct contact with the Greek world, especially with the Chalcidicean region that was important in Strabo's story.

To this day, unfortunately, Petar Popović has not been able to prove that Kale-Krševica is indeed the ancient mining city of Damastion. Some indications are going in favour of his claims and yet others contradict it, and we will not go any further into this discussion here. What needs to be underlined is that when it comes to the discovered locally produced material culture at Kale-Krševica (objects and structures alike), it is very difficult to find anything that does not have a very direct technological and stylistic analogy in northern Greece during the same period. Combining this information with the location of ore deposits in the region, Popović's hypothesis about the location of Damastion at Kale-Krševica seems more probable. On the other hand, the fact that this site is not unique when compared to other fortified settlements discovered nearby, in North Macedonia and Bulgaria, it is obvious that further research is needed. This is especially the case when it comes to the segments of this site built after the moment when Damastion stopped producing silver coins during the second half of the fourth century. Namely, the discoveries at the 'suburbium' of the Kale-Krševica site (e.g., the barrel-vaulted reservoir) inevitably bring into the picture the issue of the Macedonian army.

The chapters in this section tackle various diachronic issues concerning communications between prehistoric and historic societies from south-eastern Europe and ancient Greeks and Romans, and the social, economic and cultural consequences of these interrelations. There are contributions covering a long period, from important Bronze Age burials in Monkodonja, Istria, to prominent Early Medieval rings showing some Byzantium traditions. Also, chapters focus on Iron Age silver production, jewellery, the culture of ancient Paeonians, Attic red-figure pottery from Kale-Krševica, Thasian transport amphorae stamps, Philip II's and Alexander the Great's commanders in ancient Thrace, Greek towers in Dalamtia, Gilded wreaths found in unexpected contexts, history of the archaeological discipline in the Balkans, representations of Dionysus and Mars in Roman provinces, Romans on the Adriatic after 476 AD, and 8<sup>th</sup> century AD fibulae with Christian motifs from Dubrovnik.



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**THE DANUBE AS A “HIGHWAY”: IDENTITY,  
COMMUNICATIONS AND MATERIAL CULTURE  
CHANGES IN SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPEAN  
PREHISTORY AND PROTOHISTORY**



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**Haskel J. Greenfield and Aleksandar Kapuran**

University of Manitoba and St. Paul's College, Winnipeg and Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade  
greenf@cc.umanitoba.ca and a.kapuran@gmail.com

## “BRUSSELS SPROUTS AND POST-NEOLITHIC ARCHAEOLOGY”: THE METAL AGE SETTLEMENT AT FOENI-SALAŞ

**Abstract:** Systematic archaeological excavations at the multiphase site of Foeni-Salaş in the Romanian Banat were conducted during the first half of the 1990s. The site was inhabited during the Early Neolithic, Copper, Bronze, Early Iron, Late Antique and medieval ages. This paper presents a description of the deposits and the most important ceramic finds that represent the Metal Age cultural horizons at the site. This is the first time that the finds from the Metal Age deposits at the site have been published.

**Keywords:** Eneolithic, Bronze Age, Early Iron Age, Pottery.

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### Introduction

We present this paper in honour of our good friend and colleague, Petar Popović. Haskel first met Petar in 1977 during a visit to the site of Gomolava. He was a gracious host to a lowly student, at the time. In the ensuing years, he mentored myself and many others in the Iron Age of the region. Most of all, I valued his friendship and cooking (hence the title of this paper – he will understand). Aleksandar spent 10 years with Petar on the excavation of the Kale-Krševica site in southern Serbia. We also worked together in the Institute of Archaeology as associates on the Metal Ages Prehistoric Project, and spent every Saturday lunchtime with Aca Đorđević and Mihailo Milinković in the Brankovina Tavern.

The site of Foeni-Salaş in south-western Romania near the border of Serbia is known for its Early Neolithic occupation, which has been reported upon elsewhere (Greenfield and Draşovean 1994, Greenfield and Jongsma 2008, Greenfield and Lawson 2020). In this paper, we present never before published data on the Metal Ages (or post-Neolithic periods) excavated at the site. First, the location and environment surrounding the site of Foeni-Salaş are described. Second, the history of research and methods of excavations are presented. Third, each period and the associated loci and pits

are described to provide a sense of the history of post-Neolithic settlement at the site. Fourth, some of the important ceramic finds from the Metal Age deposits are presented and described. Finally, the role of Foeni-Salaş in the region is discussed.

### Site location and environment

The site of Foeni-Salaş is found in the Romanian Banat, about 45 km southwest of the city of Timişoara, and c. 3 km north of the modern village of Foeni and the Romanian border with Serbia (20°51'32.05" long. east, 45°31'13.76" lat. north, and 80 m ASL) (Fig. 1A). It is located in the midst of a broad alluvial plain between the Timiş and Bega rivers, on the right bank of the Timişat stream. Low lying wetlands and old stream meanders and channels surround the site. The soils in the surrounding plain are mostly sandy loamy clay superimposed over Pleistocene loess. They were heavily affected by a fluctuating water table until the modern drainage system was created (Greenfield and Draşovean 1994, 47). The surroundings have little to no natural or indigenous vegetation since the region was drained of wetlands in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Modern agriculture and forestry further transformed the nature of vegetation in the region. According to the landowners, the site has

been continually under cultivation for several generations (Greenfield and Draşovean 1994, 46). The current climate is warm continental with hot and wet summers and cold and drier winters. The winter is relatively warm because of damp warm winds from the Mediterranean offset the cold and dry winds from the east and north (Pounds 1969).

The site is on a slight natural rise above the surrounding plain, with a slight dip between the north-eastern and south-western parts. The accumulation of superimposed strata is reminiscent of larger tell sites in the region. It gently slopes down to the plain to the north and west and more rapidly into an old river channel to the south. The site itself is c. 2,000 m<sup>2</sup> in size (Fig. 1B).

### History and nature of research

Florin Draşovean was the first to investigate the site when he noticed two concentrations of surface remains: 1) Metal Ages and 2) Early Neolithic Starčevo-Criş (Greenfield and Draşovean 1994: 48). Haskel Greenfield, in collaboration with Florin Draşovean, directed a large-scale spatially-oriented excavation at the site from 1992-1994 to investigate the Starčevo-Criş settlement at the site. A consequence of this excavation was the discovery of many deposits from later periods. This report describes them for the first time, with a focus on the Iron Age remains.

Several techniques were used to discern the extent of settlement in each period, including surface collection, auguring, geomagnetic survey, and excavation. They allowed the nature and extent of each occupation to be captured without completely excavating the site. They demonstrated the presence of Modern, medieval (10-11th and 14-15th cent. AD), Daco-Roman (2-5<sup>th</sup> cent. AD), Early Iron Age (Hallstatt B and C), Middle Bronze Age (Verbicioara), Eneolithic (Černavoda III – Baden and Kostolac), and Early Neolithic (Starčevo-

Criş) deposits. All deposits, except for the Early Neolithic, were dated with respect to the local culture-historical sequence (Dumitrescu 1983, Luca, Suci, and Dumitrescu-Chioar 2011).

The site was excavated in a 1x1 nested quadratic block system (Fig. 1C). Each block was divided into 5x5 m trenches and assigned a letter (A-P), beginning in the northwest corner and moving left to right. These trenches were divided into 1x1 m units (quads) and numbered 1-25, starting at the northwest corner and moving left to right. Each 1x1 m unit could be identified to an exact spatial provenance. For example, unit 150C2 represents Block 150, Trench C, and Quad 2. Each quad was excavated down to sterile soil. The heavily disturbed plough zone was shovelled, as cultural debris was mixed and the primary context lost.

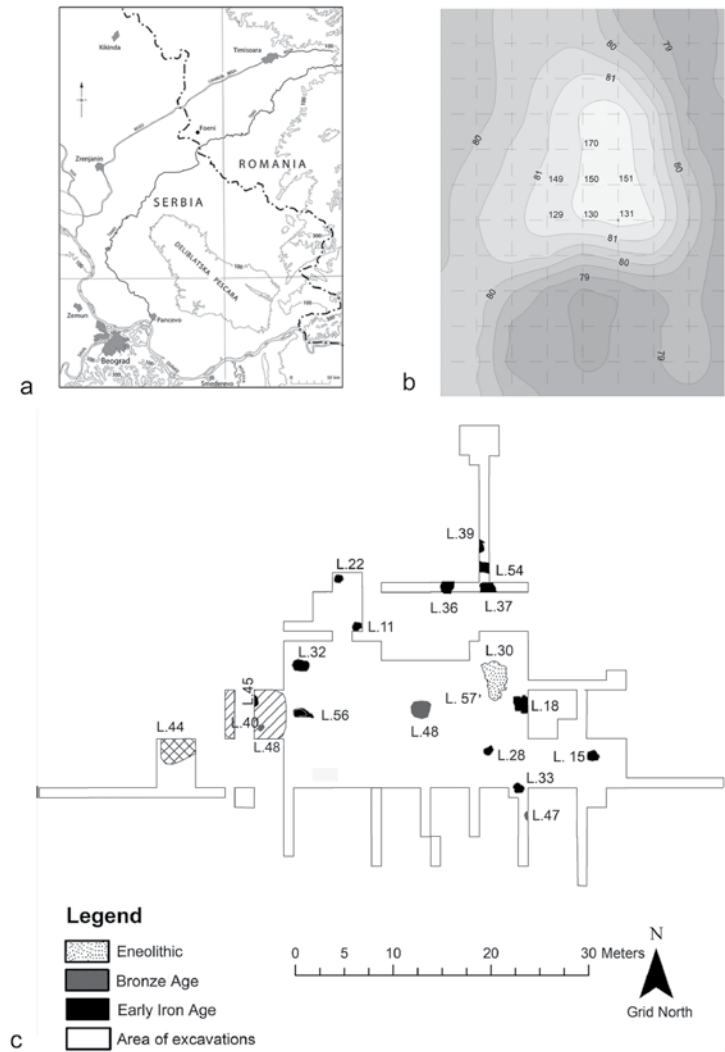


Fig. 1. a) Position of the Foeni- Salaş site; b) Topographic map of the site; c) Location of excavated Metal Age features across the site.



Natural, undisturbed soils were excavated using trowels. Excavators followed the natural stratigraphy as much as possible, but used arbitrary levels when soil changes could not be discerned or where deposits became too thick. Artefacts were pedestaled *in situ* as much as possible and were collected only after having been drawn and photographed. Soils were dry sieved using a 0.5 cm mesh (1992), but this was later replaced by a larger 1 cm mesh (1993-1994) since the soil was very clayey and clogged the smaller mesh. Soil samples were taken for flotation, particularly when charcoal and ash were noticed.

### **Site taphonomy**

A major source of disturbance at the site was rodents. All loci had evidence of extensive rodent activity, especially those with high organic content. For the most part, rodent disturbances were recorded and artefacts disturbed by rodents removed from the analysis (Greenfield and Draşovean 1994, 56). The second major disturbance was modern and ancient ploughing, which extended to 30 cm below the surface, and levelling of the mound conducted during the 1970s. While these activities were carried out for agriculture purposes, they destroyed and/or disturbed much of the existing Metal Age deposits at the site that were on a higher level of the tell. The deeper Early Neolithic cultural layer was fortunately mostly undisturbed by such activities. The *in situ* archaeological material from the Metal Ages was preserved as concentrations that were just beneath the plough zone in the form of storage and/or midden pits and pit houses that were excavated deeper into the mound (Fig. 1c) (Greenfield and Draşovean 1994, 57, 60-63). The third major disturbance source was later occupations. Later pits intruded into and destroyed parts of earlier deposits (Greenfield and Draşovean 1994, 71-72).

### **Metal Age cultural horizons**

There are five pan-site loci in descending order from the surface: Locus 1 (plough zone), 4 (medieval), 2 (Early Neolithic Starčevo-Criş), 5 (post-Pleistocene humus), and 12 (sterile loess)

(Greenfield and Draşovean 1994, 62-64). The thick (30 cm) plough zone (Locus 1) is a mixture of cultural debris from all periods present at the site (Greenfield and Jongsma 2008). We will focus on the Metal Age horizons.

#### *Early Iron-Age (Hallstatt) (Fig. 1C)*

The Early Iron Age occupation is represented by the Hallstatt B culture complex (1000-800BCE). It extended across the entire southern half of the site. The tops of many of the pits were cut off by Locus 4, a medieval plough zone. The pits that disturbed the underlying Early Neolithic horizon included some Starčevo-Criş ceramics

*Locus 11* is a small storage pit. A large ceramic vessel was found in the bottom.

*Locus 18* is a possible pit house. It has a floor that appears to be divided into two sections. It is associated with a storage pit (Feature 3).

*Locus 22* is a small pit. Its function is ambiguous.

*Locus 28* is a small circular storage pit surrounded by postholes. The postholes indicate that it may be the superstructure of a small building. There are few ceramics in this locus.

*Locus 30* is a large pit house dug into the centre of a Starčevo-Criş pit house (Locus 24). It is filled with occupational debris (ceramics, bones, grinding stones, etc.).

*Locus 31* is a small bell-shaped storage pit with mostly carbonised remains.

*Locus 32* is a small oval storage pit with very few remains associated with it. There is darker coloured soil in this locus.

*Locus 33* is a small oval storage pit filled with Hallstatt remains. Only the base remains. The top was disturbed by ploughing.

*Locus 36* is a very small oval and shallow pit with few remains.

*Locus 37* is a small pit with few remains.

*Locus 39* is a small circular midden pit filled with an assortment of different artefact types including wall daub, animal bones, Hallstatt ceramics, and a small grinding stone.

*Locus 40* is a large pit house with several associated postholes, an oven, and concentrations of wall and floor daub (Jongsma 1997). This locus is cut by Locus 8, the medieval fortification ditch. While there are mostly Hallstatt remains in this locus, there are also a number of Starčevo-Criş

ceramics. This locus was divided into 2 sub-loci. *Sub-locus 40.1* is the upper stratum, possibly wall and roof spills, and light-grey in colour. *Sub-Locus 40.2* is the lower stratum and floor level. The remains of collapsed (wall?) daub separates the two sub-loci.

*Locus 44* is a large pit house. As with Locus 40, there are some intrusive Starčevo-Criş remains as a result of disturbing an underlying Starčevo-Criş deposit (Locus 41). There are two sub-loci: *Sub-locus 44.1* is the upper and is probably the remains of the fallen roof and wall. *Sub-locus 44.2* is the basal fill. The loci are separated by fallen wall daub.

*Locus 45* is a small storage pit cutting into Locus 40. There are few remains and it is likely a slightly later storage pit.

*Locus 47* is a midden pit found beneath the pit house and pre-dating Locus 40.

*Locus 48* is a small pit that extended down from the base of Locus 40.2. It is likely a storage pit associated with the overlying structure.

*Locus 54* is a small ellipsoid storage pit with a concentration of ceramic and animal bone remains.

*Locus 56* is a small pit filled with burnt debris (ceramics, animal bone and charcoal) that extended down into the underlying Starčevo-Criş deposit (Locus 23). It is interpreted as a fire pit.

*Feature 3* is the bottom of a very large Hallstatt *pithos* (large storage jar). The base was dug into the ground for stability. It is associated with Locus 18, to the east of Feature 3.

#### *Middle Bronze-Age (Fig. 1C)*

Only a single locus contained any Bronze Age materials. *Locus 15* is a small Middle Bronze Age pit that extends down through the earlier Early Neolithic deposits (Locus 7) and into the Pleistocene loess (Locus 12) (Fig. 4). It was sealed by Locus 4. White, ashy clay lines the inside of the pit. Carbonised animal and plant remains indicate that it was used for heating objects to high temperatures.

#### *Eneolithic (Fig. 1C)*

The Eneolithic is represented by a few ceramic remains of the Černavoda III–Boleráz complex. Some scattered remains were found in Loci 1 and 4. Only one small feature was eventually identified and excavated - *Locus 57*. It is a small Černavoda

III–Boleráz pit in the northwest peripheral corner of Locus 30 (Fig. 6), which was identified during post-excavation laboratory analysis of the cluster of distinctive ceramic finds. No sedimentary distinction could be made from the surrounding soils.

### **Metal Age ceramics**

In this section, the important ceramic finds from the Eneolithic, Bronze and Iron Ages are presented and discussed.

#### *Eneolithic*

According to the stylistic and typological characteristics of the Eneolithic pottery at the site of Foeni Salas, the Cernavodă III–Boleráz and Kostolac cultures are the most represented. Certain difficulties regarding the cultural attribution of the finds are the significant similarities in forms and decorations of the aforementioned cultural manifestations. Considering that none of the most characteristic elements of the Baden culture vessels were found in the assemblage (e.g., amphora-shaped *pithoi*, one-handled cups with an emphasised lower portion of the recipient (onion-shaped) or vessels such as *sosieras* or *askoi*), we consider that the material is from the second phase of the Eneolithic at the site (i.e., the Kostolac culture).

The ceramics of the Cernavodă III–Boleráz culture at the site are represented by globular cups with one handle that can be decorated with vertical or oblique channels and incised lines (Fig. 2/1, 2, 6, 7). Cup handles are commonly rectangular in cross-section and undecorated. One almost completely preserved cup represents a typical example of vessels common for the culture (Fig. 2/4) (Ecsedy 1978, taf VII/1, taf. XI/2, Tasić 1995, 48, XV/3). Besides the cups, finds of storage pots represented by amphora-type pots and S-profiled *pithoi* are also characteristic for the Cernavodă III–Boleráz cultural group (Fig. 3/1, 2). The *pithoi* are usually decorated with cork-like applications and modelled bands decorated with incisions or *impresso* ornaments (Fig. 3/1, 2, 8). Among other finds common for the Cernavodă III–Boleráz culture are tunnelled handles that can be either undecorated or decorated with grooves (Fig. 3/3, 7). Biconical bowls with a thickened (Fig. 2/11) and wide everted rim are uncommon and, unlike the

examples typical for the Černavodă III–Boleráz horizon, do not possess an inner surface decorated with vertical channels (Fig. 2/11) (Krstić 1986, 150, fig. 10). Biconical bowls with wide everted rims usually possess an emphasised junction of

cones on the belly (Fig. 2/8-10). Bearing in mind that the decorated vessels are more suitable for cultural attribution, the number of bowls decorated with imprints on the rim or on the junction of cones is higher (Bulatović and Milanović 2020, fig. 189).

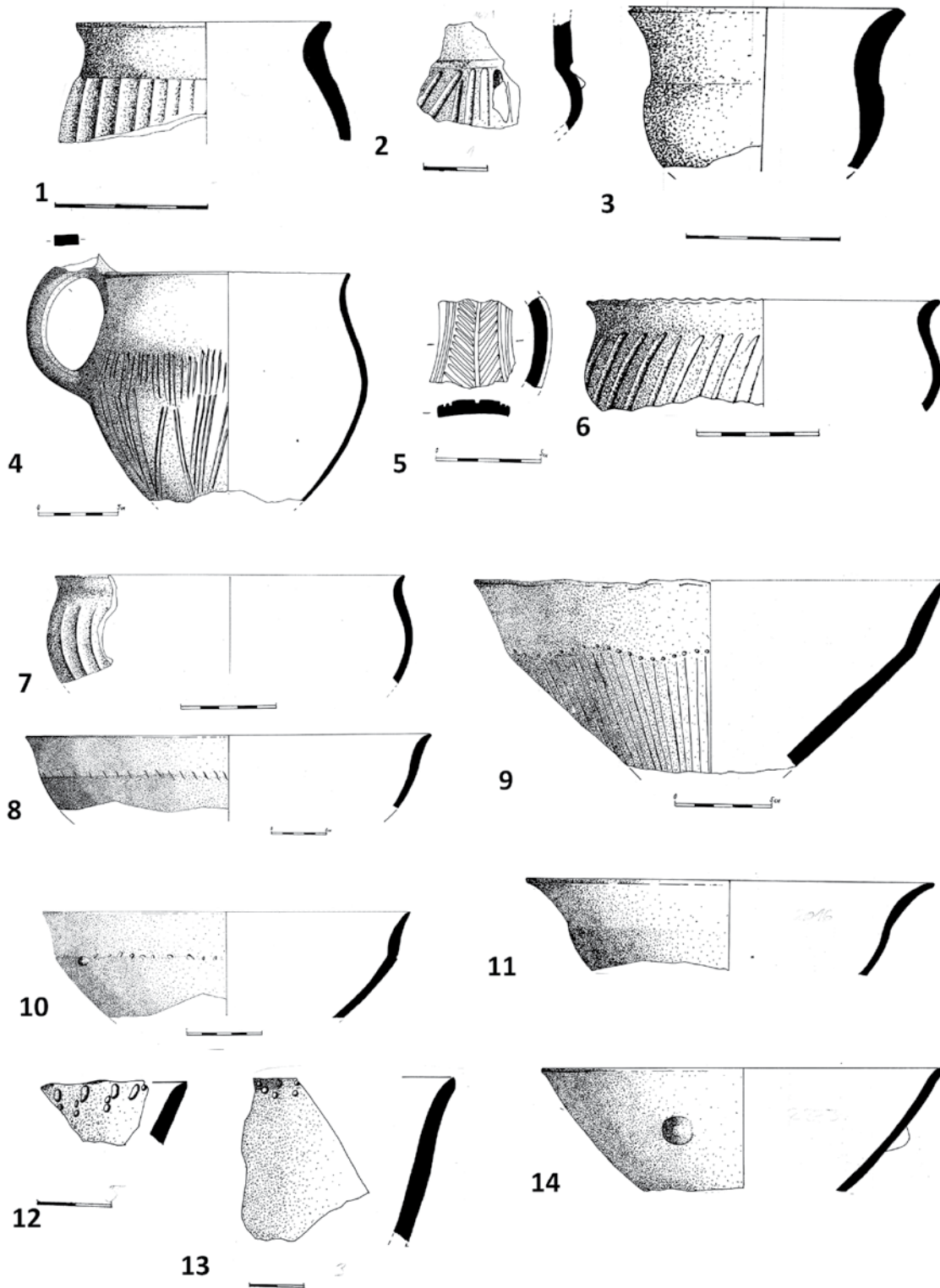


Fig. 2. Examples of Černavoda III–Boleráz pottery (1-11) and Kostolac pottery (12-14) found at Foeni-Salaş.

Such bowls are characterised by the decoration of the lower cone with vertical strips of incised lines (Fig. 2/11) (Tasić 1983, сл. 3/6).

The second phase of the Eneolithic at Foeni-Salaş is represented by finds attributed to the

Kostolac culture, such as vessels decorated with pricks or incisions filled with white incrustation (Fig. 2/12, 13). According to the decoration, those are scarce potsherds decorated with zig-zag grooving, an incised net-shaped motif, or the so-called

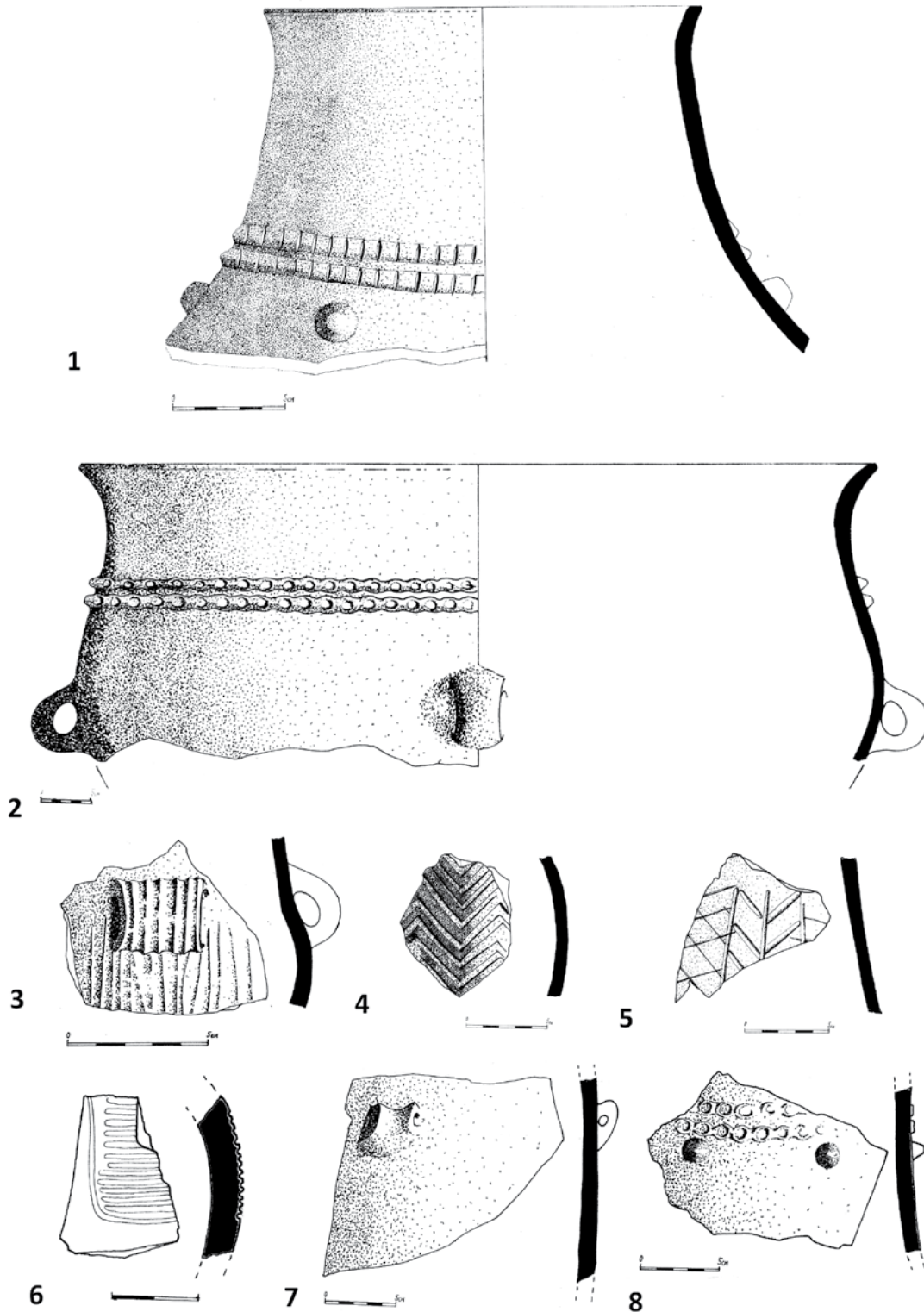


Fig. 3. Examples of Černavoda III-Boleraz pottery (1-3, 8) and Kostolac pottery (4-7) found at Foeni-Salaş.

pine-twig motif (Fig. 2/5; Fig. 3/5), which possesses analogies found within the preceding Cernavodă III–Boleráz-Baden culture (Uzelac 2002, T. 48/4; T. 25/1,3,4). The decoration characteristic of the Kostolac culture is rectangular metopes filled with horizontal rows of incised lines (Fig. 3/6). Additionally, a small and sharp S-profiled cup is typical of the Kostolac culture (Fig. 2/3).

#### *Bronze Age*

The following Metal Age cultural horizon is represented by a small number of finds characteristic of the Early and Middle Bronze Age. In previous reports, the ceramics from this horizon were originally identified as being from Vatin culture (Greenfield and Draşovean 1994, 64). However, we now think that it is more appropriate to assign this material to the Verbicioara cultural complex. Some of the Bronze Age pottery shards were found in a small circular pit (Locus 15) dug into the northern end of a Starčevo pit house (Locus 7) (Greenfield and Jongsma 2008, fig. 10). Other finds lay mixed into the Metal Age cultural layers on the site. Those are represented by potsherds with a characteristic manner of decoration found on Bronze Age ceramics. For example, a fragmented conical bowl is decorated both on the inner and the outer surface (Fig. 4/1, 3) with motifs that are well known from the Early Bronze Age Makó culture (Kalicz 1984, 96, taf. XX). There are also parts of vessels whose shape suggests that they were lids of urns for the incinerated deceased, typical of the Late Bronze Age (Kapuran 2019, 15). These vessels are decorated with incisions and one of the most dominant motifs are hatched triangles (Fig. 4/1, 3). The remaining Bronze Age finds are represented by atypical potsherds decorated with rows of incised lines (Fig. 4/2) and finger imprints (Fig. 4/3).

#### *Early Iron Age*

The final pre-Classical Metal Age period at the site is represented by Hallstatt origin finds of the Early Iron Age Gornea-Kalakača cultural group. Coarse ware vessels and pottery with highly polished surfaces are particularly noticeable. The pottery of the Kalakača group is primarily characterised by fine ware decorated with channels or a combination of channels and incised motifs (Fig. 4/13). In terms of types of vessels, conical bowls

with an inverted rim decorated with channels are dominant (Fig. 4/1, 11), followed by pots decorated with channels on both the outer and the inner surface (Fig. 4/9, 13, 14), incised decoration, and handles decorated with channels (Fig. 4/7, 8). The coarse ware pottery is represented by bell-shaped pots decorated with incisions (Fig. 4/5) or modelled and decorated bands (Fig. 4/6). A large pot is decorated with four tongue-shaped handles on the lower cone (Fig. 4/12).

### **Discussion and conclusion**

The Cernavodă III–Boleráz culture, which Nikola Tasić considers the substrate for the later development of the Baden culture (Tasić 1983, 30), is found across a broad swathe of central and south-eastern Europe. Its disposition in the Vojvodina region extends across the eastern parts of the Serbian Banat region to the Romanian border, which is in direct proximity to the site of Foeni-Salaş. To a certain degree, the culture existed in the central Bačka and Srem regions (Tasić 1983, 31). Medović is one of the pioneer researchers of this culture in Serbia, as a result of his research at the settlement site of Brza Vrba near Kovin (1969-1971). This initiated the discovery of several finds attributed to this culture in the storage of the Vršac museum (Medović 1976, 105 abb. 1, Uzelac 2002, 55).

Besides the Vojvodina region, finds attributed to the Cernavodă III culture have also been recorded in the Iron Gates, in Korbovo (Krstić 1986), the site of Bujanj-Staro selo near Niš (Bulatović and Milanović 2020, 168, Milanović 2013), and Kosovo (the site of Gladnice near Priština). The new phase of research at Bujanj (2008-2014) resulted in the *in situ* discovery of a completely preserved Cernavodă storage pot in Cultural Horizon IV, possessing characteristics of the Cernavodă III–Boleráz-Baden culture (Bulatović and Milanović 2020, fig. 158/1), which is almost identical in size and decorations to the example from Foeni-Salaş (Fig. 3/1). The absolute dates for this phase of the eponymous site are c. 3400 BP (Vander Linden and Bulatović 2020, 240, fig. 220, tab. 16). Aside from the territory of Serbia, this cultural group extended across the Romanian Banat, the lower Danube region in northern Bulgaria, and the Struma Valley (Alexandrov 1995, 253-254).



The small number of finds and few intact deposits at Foeni-Salaş that can be attributed to the cultural horizon suggests that there was no significant occupation at the site. It was probably visited a few times as pastoralists moved across the region

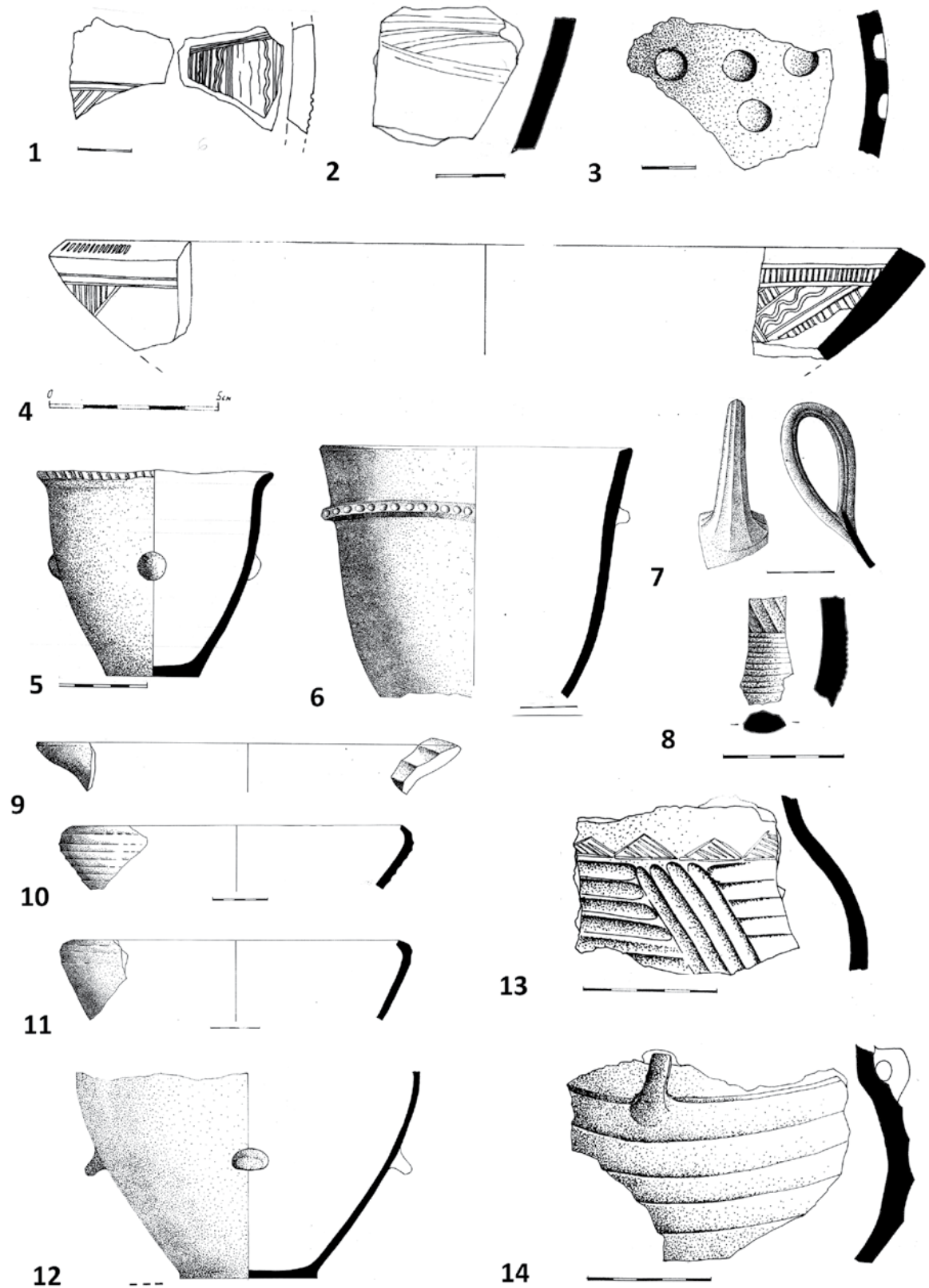


Fig. 4. Examples of Verbicioara pottery (1-4) and Kalakača pottery (5-14) found at Foeni- Salaş.

during their seasonal rounds. Although it was considered that the Baden and Kostolac cultures represent mutually related manifestations (Garašanin 1973, 234), Nikolić suggests that they are quite different in terms of material culture (Nikolić 2000, 80). Within the Balkan Peninsula, the Kostolac culture encompasses the regions to the west (the courses of the Drava, Sava, Danube, Great, and South Morava rivers), while the Coțofeni culture encompasses the areas farther east (Transylvania, Banat, Oltenia, and parts of Muntenia) (Roman 1976, 70). At one point during the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC, the bearers of the Coțofeni culture began settling in the region that extended from Transylvania to the south-eastern parts of the Carpathian Basin and north-eastern Serbia (Boyadziev 1988, 360). Tasić considers the territory of north-eastern Serbia as the point of symbiosis between the Kostolac and the Coțofeni cultures (Tasić 1982, 27). However, as previously noted, the small number of potsherds that could be attributed to both cultures recorded at the site of Foeni-Salaș does not provide sufficient evidence for a precise attribution to either the Kostolac or Coțofeni culture.

A similar situation is recorded for the Middle Bronze Age, as only a few potsherds were recorded. These are most likely attributed to the early phase of the Verbicioara culture. While Gumă considers that the Verbicioara culture from the Middle Bronze Age is undefined in the Banat and that it most likely represents a variant of the Crvenka-Cornești or Vatin culture (Gumă 1997, 120-121), our opinion is different. We think that there is a cultural connection between Phase II of the Verbicioara culture (Crăciunescu 2004, 216-218) and the Iron Gates Region and its hinterland, especially with the regions of the Negotin and Timok river valleys (Kapuran 2009). For example, an almost identical bowl decorated with incised motifs both on the inner and the outer surface was recorded at the site of Kot I in Metovnica near Bor (Kapuran and Jovanović 2013, 4, сл. 3/2), while the finger impressed decoration and decoration with rows of incised lines is quite common for the Timok valley during the Middle Bronze Age (Kapuran, Živković, and Štrbac 2016, t. 3/5,7; 5/9).

The last prehistoric Metal Age cultural horizon is from the Early Iron Age. It is represented by finds attributed to the Kalakača culture. Forms

and the manner of pottery decoration suggest that the genesis of the Kalakača culture is based on pottery in the Late Bronze Age Gava culture complex (Медовић 1994, 46). Tasić considers that the origin of the Kalakača cultural complex came from the Thraco-Cimmerian influence from the East (Tasić 1983, 114-115). Kalakača settlements are found in the territories of Srem, south-western Bačka, central and southern Banat, Iron Gates, and part of the Serbian Danube region (Medović 1988, 429). The finds from Foeni-Salaș indicate it was most likely part of the Kalakača cultural complex. In Serbia, the complex is characterised by the appearance of cross-shaped axes (Ärmchenbeil) made of iron and the emergence of new technologies in the production of iron objects (iron axes within a mass grave at the site of Gomolava and Layer IIa at the site of Bosut-Gradina) (Медовић 1990, 27). The Iron Age settlement at Foeni-Salaș covered most of the southern half of the mound. Some of the deeper pits and pit houses filled with ceramics, animal bones and grinding stones escaped destruction by modern and medieval ploughing.

In conclusion, we express our profound gratitude to Dr. Petar Popović whose research in the region of the Iron Gates has made a significant contribution to understanding the development of the Bronze and Iron Age Cultures in the prehistory of Southeast Europe. His research on the Bronze and Iron Age necropolis issues has secured him a place among the important scholars in Serbian, in particular, and Central Balkan archaeology in general.

Acknowledgements: The excavations at Foeni-Salaș between 1992 and 1994 were financed through a grant to Haskel J. Greenfield from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, International Research and Exchanges Board (Washington, DC), the National Academy of Sciences (Washington, DC), and the Museum of the Banat, Timișoara, Romania. Permits for the excavation were obtained through the efforts of Florin Drașovean and the Museum of the Banat-Timișoara. The excavations were directed by Haskel Greenfield (with occasional visits by the Romanian co-director, Florin Drașovean); the lab director was Tina Jongsma-Greenfield. Photography was by Zev Greenfield. Post-Neolithic ceramic culture-historical analysis was by Dimitri Madas. The excavation team included Viktor Aćimović, Dušan Borić, Bonnie Brenner, Vali Cediea, Dan

Leopold Ciobotaru, Lisa Challinor, Stuart Cox, Vladan Čurić, Elizabeth Dinan, Sandra Jezik, Aleksandar Kapuran, Ian Kuijt, Hani Khalidi, Megan Mare, Iosif Moravetz, Mark Paxton-Macrae, Silviu Saftu, Alexandru Szentmiklosi, Boban Tripković, and a host of other Romanian, Serbian, and Canadian students, professionals, and labourers. Finally, we graciously thank once again our host and hostess in the village (Deian and Marietta Amici and their family), Liviu Chira (who owned the land), and the people of Foeni who opened their world to us.

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Vera Bogosavljević Petrović  
Belgrade

## TANGED ARROWHEADS AND THE PROBLEM OF THEIR ORIGIN IN THE EARLY ENEOLITHIC IN THE CENTRAL BALKANS

**Abstract:** Rare finds of tanged chert arrowheads in Late Neolithic and Eneolithic horizons in the Central Balkans, unearthed from the sites of Vinča-Belo Brdo, Divlje Polje, Jela-Benska bara, Beljin, Pločnik and Petnica, most often lack context, primarily due to the small scale of the excavations. Currently, only tanged arrowheads from closed archaeological units, for example pits, can be analysed and compared. So far, little work has been done in the Serbian literature to unravel their use, given that the reports have mainly been focused on typological features and the choice of raw materials. This paper presents an overview of findings from the Late Neolithic and Early Eneolithic horizons, with special emphasis on the identification of areas that could indicate their manufacture as well as their potential role in the life of prehistoric communities.

**Keywords:** tanged arrowhead, Late Neolithic, Early Eneolithic, Central Balkans, white chert, stone raw materials.

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### Introduction

Tanged arrowheads are not common among the chipped stone assemblages in the Late Neolithic settlements on the territory of the Central Balkans. Moreover, previously published studies by other scholars suggest that their occurrence in Vinča culture layers is highly unusual. In most cases, we are dealing with isolated, individual finds, which is one of the main reasons why there is a lack of broad-based analysis. However, when found, they were considered special finds, bearing in mind the applied technology and the energy invested in their production compared to the manufacture of standardised blades using the pressure technique. Do they occur in response to hunting-related activities in the areas where this practice represents an apparent component of the community economics and diet? Do they represent imported types of projectile points made for occasional use? Or, do the special circumstances during the previous research become a decisive factor in the creation of interpretative data?

In the Serbian literature, only a few finds of tanged arrowheads that originate from archaeo-

logical excavations have been published: from M. Vasić's excavations at the site of Vinča-Belo Brdo (Radovanović et al. 1984: 52); from Petnica (Radovanović 1988: 99–100, Plate I/15); from the Divlje Polje site on the bank of the West Morava river (Богосављевић Петровић 1992: 23, 27, sl. 35), (Fig. 1); and from the Jela-Benska bara site settled in the Šabac city area (Стојић и Церовић 2011: 437, Ф 344; Šarić 2005: Pl. II/11, 14). It is widely known that in the western areas, such as the territory of the Hvar-Lisičići (Benac 1958: 3; Batović 1979: 586), and the Butmir culture (Benac 1979: 425), as well as in the northwest, within the Sopot III phase of the Sopot culture (Dimitrijević 1979: 290), arrows form a significant part of the lithic technology collections. However, since this group of artefacts has not been analysed in more detail, our information is reduced to general descriptions and statistical quantification.

The occurrence of larger groups of tanged arrowheads on the territory west of the Vinča culture area pose the question of the origin of individual finds from central and western parts of Serbia. The need for further research came after an arrow from Divlje Polje made of white opal, which repre-

sents the main raw material used for production in this settlement, was published (Bogosavljević Petrović 2001: 36). The closest confirmed exploitation of this raw material comes from magnesite and white opal outcrops, found in the upper course of the Ribnica river, which are 7–10 km from the settlement (Bogosavljević Petrović and Marković 2014; Bogosavljević Petrović 2018: 93). With these results, the local aspect of arrow production in the settlement of Divlje Polje was confirmed, but the assumption about the import of arrows from the west at the sites of Vinča, Jela–Benska bara and Petnica remains current. On the other hand, a group of arrows from the site of Ripanj (Perišić 1984), accidentally discovered, raised the question of the local provenance of the raw materials, but also the question of import, as reported by J. Šarić (1987).

Arrows with a concave base, a wide group of points that could not be attributed to projectile points without the application of use-wear analysis, and arrows with pronounced wings of later provenance were not taken into account for this type of analysis. At this stage of the research, the most basic question is not the typological consideration of a small sample, but rather the function of tanged arrowheads in the community, their origin, and whether they were the result of knowledge transfer or the experience of predecessors.

### Sample and archaeological context

The one of the first published finds of this type of arrow comes from the site of Petnica in western Serbia. An example of an arrow with a 4.5 cm long thorn belongs to the Vinča phase B layer (Fig. 2/2), while another example, with a 2.3 cm long concave base, belongs to the Vinča C phase (Radovanović 1988: 99–100, Plate I/11). The chronological division of the artefacts was made according to Milojčić's (Milojčić 1949) periodisation of the Vinča culture.

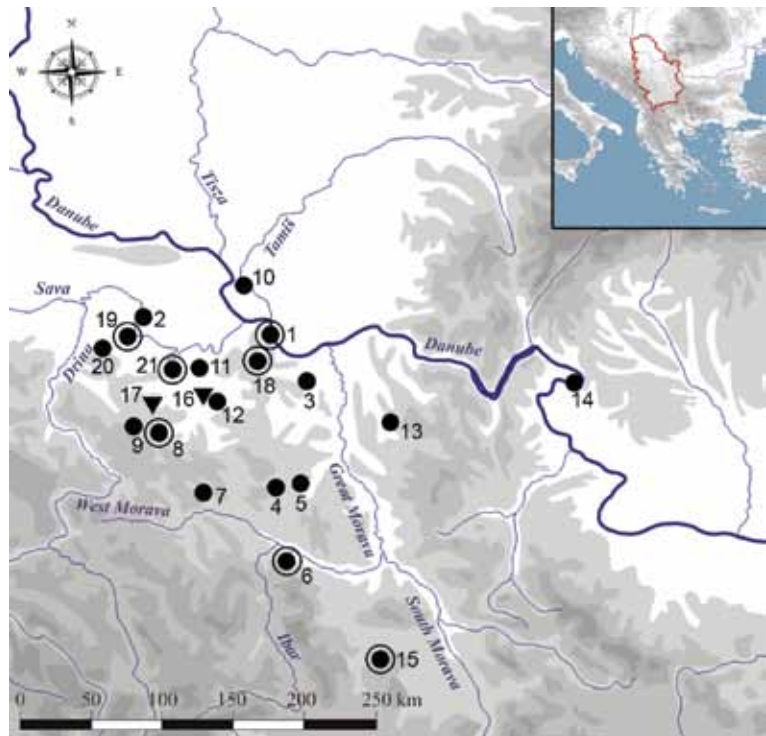


Fig. 1. Late Neolithic and Early Eneolithic sites in the Central Balkans with the published chipped stone assemblages (●, ▼) and finds of tanged arrowheads (⊙) (after Bogosavljević Petrović 2015; Šošić–Klindžić and Tripković 2018): 1 Vinča – Belo Brdo; 2 Gomolava; 3 Selevac; 4 Grivac; 5 Divostin; 6 Divlje polje; 7 Trsine; 8 Petnica; 9 Anatema; 10 Opovo; 11 Crkvine–Stubline; 12 Crkvine–Mali Borak; 13 Belovode; 14 Zbradila; 15 Pločnik; 16 Livade; 17 Bodnjik; 18 Ripanj hoard; 19. Jela–Benska bara; 20. Šanac–Izba; 21 Graduština–Beljin (adapted by Đ. Radonjić and S. Tripković).

The second arrow, made in the same manner as the tanged arrowhead from Petnica, originates from Miloje M. Vasić's excavations at the site of Vinča-Belo Brdo, from a depth of 6.7 m. It is attributed to the Vinča-Tordoš IIb phase, according to the chronology of M. Garašanin (Radovanović et al. 1984: 52, fig. 34a; Garašanin 1979). This is the only published find of an arrow from the eponymous site of the Vinča culture. During the Vinča excavations carried out between 1999 and 2005, in the collection which consisted of 5700 artefacts, this type of projectile has not been confirmed. The tanged arrowhead was made on a blade with parallel edges that are wider than 20 mm (Fig. 2/1). Considering their high occurrence on the territory of Hvar-Lisičići, Danilo III and Smilčić cultures compared to the Vinča culture, and the research being on a relatively small scale, the tanged arrowhead was characterised as an import (Radovanović et al. 1984: 52).

In the settlement of Divlje Polje, which is located on the southern border of the Šumadija region, a

white opal arrow with a length of 5 cm was found within unit B, in the secondary fill of a pit-house. The arrow represents a bifacially retouched specimen. It was made on a blade more than 20 mm wide. The edges and the top are covered with arranged lamellar, with occasional scalar semi-steep and semi-raised retouch. The thorn is steeply retouched along the edges that meet on the ventral side and cover a narrow surface (Богосављевић Петровић 1992: 23), (Fig. 2/3). The fully investigated pit-house was filled with three layers of waste material from Vinča culture stone and ceramic production. Unit B belongs to the early phase of Vinča phase C or, as it was characterised by S. Valović, who investigated the site, as the Early Pločnik phase of the settlement, with houses that had a sub-structure of timber floors (Valović 1983).

An elongated deltoid arrow of opal lustre chert with a thorn 6.8 cm long, 2.2 cm wide, and 1 cm thick comes from the Jela-Benska site (hereinafter: Jela). It was found in Square I/7 in the fifth mechanical layer (Стојић и Церовић 2011: 160, F. 344; cf. Šarić 2005: Pl. II/14), Fig. 3. There is no information that the arrow was petrologically determined, so we cannot discuss the origin of the raw material. The chronology of this settlement was determined based on the analogies with finds from the Vinča-Belo brdo site at the beginning of the Vinča B phase, through the Eneolithic with the intertwining of the Sopot, Lendel and Butmir cultures, and abiding through the Bronze and Iron Ages (Stojić and Cerović 2011:152-153). Another specimen from the same museum, an arrow with a thorn, was acquired by purchase. It was found at the site of Graduš(t)ina, in the village of Beljin, southeast of Šabac (Fig. 4). It is made of red chert, and its length is 4.5 cm.<sup>1</sup> In the publication on knapped projectiles from the territory of Serbia in prehistory, this specimen has been published as a find from the Jela-Benska bara site (Šarić 2005: Pl. II/11).

The sixth, unpublished, arrow comes from the site of Pločnik, and it was not recovered during archaeological excavations. It was found in 2016, during the revision of the archaeological material from The National Museum in Serbia (Fig. 2/4;

<sup>1</sup> The data was obtained from the curator of the National Museum from Šabac, Momir Cerović, to whom I would like to express my warm thanks for providing the data and clarifying the context of the arrows already published.

5). In 1974, at the time of the fieldwork led by B. Stalio, the left bank of Toplica was destroyed by a huge torrential flow, revealing a soil profile, with the remains of buildings, charcoal and ash (Fig. 6). In the process of the preparation of the profile for photo documentation, a tanged arrowhead was found, at the floor level of an unearthened house. This specimen was similar in shape to the above-mentioned examples, with an invasive retouch that covers both ventral and dorsal surfaces. The preserved length of the tanged arrowhead, which is missing a few millimetres of the point,

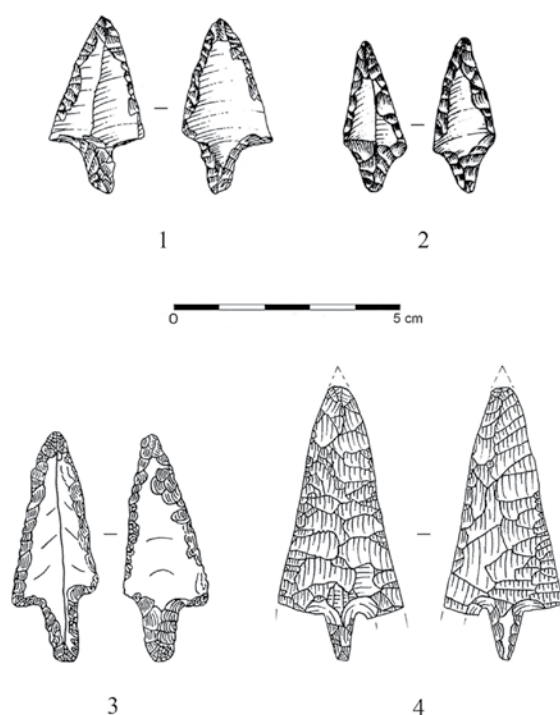


Fig. 2. Tanged arrowheads from Vinča (1) after Radovanović et al. 1984; 2. Petnica (2), after Radovanović 1988; Divlje Polje (3) after Богосављевић Петровић 1992, Pločnik (4). Drawing by P. Popović, adapted by S. Tripković).

with an indication of wings, is 5.7 cm. A small number of tanged arrowheads in Vinča settlements are disproportionate in relation to the documented mixed type of diet, consisting of domestic and wild species (Orton 2012). For example, at the site of Opovo, where although a significant share of wild species has been recorded, arrows of this type are not represented in the collection (Tringham et al. 1985:440-441). The perception of tanged arrowheads in the role of projectile points found inside settlements can also be a way of defining activities on a wider scale.



Fig. 3. Tanged arrowhead from Jela-Šabac (Documentation of the National Museum, Šabac; adapted by S. Tripković).

The main reasons for conducting a more detailed study of this tool type are their rare occurrence in settlements, the large amount of energy needed for their production and the type of retouch that covers the majority of their surface. The long transformation of the Vinča settlements after 5000 BC was marked by the expansion of stone tools and copper artefacts. The flat invasive retouch became the dominant retouch type of chipped stone industries in the period of the developed phases of the metal ages, especially at the transition from the Late Eneolithic to the Early Bronze Age (Shea 2013: Fig. 7.19; Rosen 1997).

### Manufacture and chronology of tanged arrowheads

Arrows were made on primary flakes with parallel negatives, with an average width of 20 mm. They are characterised by detailed processing of edges, thinning of the base and the top, a slightly pronounced dorsal and plate ventral side, and trimming in the area where the thorn is planned for hafting. This technological aspect is achieved with notching to obtain an angle of the tanged blade type. The newly formed edges are modified by continuous semi-steep retouch on the dorsal side, while simple retouch is most often applied on the ventral side. To produce the mentioned arrows, blades with parallel edges made from quality raw

materials were selected that would, additionally, require some final modification by retouching. It was necessary to possess certain knowledge about the blanks. This way the desired shape could be extracted before the final retouch was executed. These operations indicate the artisan's effort and skill (Whittaker 1994: 127-176, 219-242). Unlike the tanged arrowheads from Divlje Polje, Jela, Beljin and Petnica where greater energy was invested in the production, the example from Vinča was made with less effort. The type of finishing on these samples is both the result of the quality of the specific raw material and of gained experience through manufacture of various materials for specific needs. The most careful implementation and completely different approach to the processing of raw materials can be seen on the arrow from Pločnik. Shallow invasive lace-like retouching covers the surface, achieving the desired quality for a specific purpose.

A tanged arrowhead from Petnica B layer, which is analogous with the example from Vinča – Belo Brdo that is attributed to the end of the Vinča – Tordoš period, and the example from Divlje Polje, which is associated with the transitional period from Vinča-Tordoš II to Vinča-Pločnik I, are more phenomena in a series of similarities among the sites of this production circle. To the south of the two major rivers, the Danube and the Sava, some settlements such as Divlje Polje were specialised for standardised blade production or, like Belovode, focused on acquiring experience of early copper metallurgy. These production centres were developed to meet their own needs, and to facilitate exchange with others (Bogosavljević Petrović 2018). Six examples found on six different sites derive from the horizon of the transition from the early to late phase of the Vinča culture, when settlements were built on river terraces, or on terraced hillsides, often surrounded by ditches, like Belovode, Oreškovića or Stubline (Borić et al. 2018). There are no significant typological differences in the choice of raw materials among examples from Petnica, Divlje Polje and Vinča, therefore, they represent a characteristic type in the Late Neolithic of the Central Balkans. They are dated approximately to the time of the transition from phase B to phase C of the Vinča culture, according to the chronology of V. Milojević. Subsequently, the latest absolute dates from Vinča-Belo Brdo site,



provided from a profile at depth of 6.7 m, are related to the transition from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> millennium BC, i.e., the last decade of the 6<sup>th</sup> millennium BC (Tasić et al. 2016: Tab. 2, Fig. 14).

The specimens from the Jela and Beljin sites are of two different types in terms of the form and shaping of the dorsal and ventral surfaces. The specimen from Beljin is very similar in terms of production to the samples from Petnica and Divlje Polje. Indirectly, therefore, it could be related to the transition period from the Vinča B phase to the Vinča C phase of the Vinča culture. Observing the elongated spindle-shaped arrow from the Jela site, whose wings, unlike the previous examples, are not particularly emphasised, and the surface is completely covered with combined types of retouches, it can be roughly dated to the Eneolithic period because it was found together with Vinča and Baden pottery. Probably, it represents a younger find in relation to the homogenous set of arrows from Petnica, Beljin, Vinča and Divlje Polje.



Fig. 4. Tanged arrowhead from Graduština, Beljin (Documentation of the National Museum, Šabac; adapted by S. Tripković).

As for the example that was found at the site of Pločnik, in the profile of the Toplica river, there is no reliable archaeological context, except that it might belong to the house whose floor has not yet been excavated (Fig. 6). It can be roughly dated to the late Vinča–Pločnik phase, considering the archaeological material unearthed from the nearby trenches. The retouch is spread over the entire surface of the artefact, which is not the case with previous examples. Bearing in mind that shallow invasive retouching represents one of the most recognisable aspects of late Vinča culture stone production, which is largely of the Eneolithic charac-

ter, then it can be assumed that this specimen must be younger than the samples from Divlje Polje, Vinča and Petnica. An arrow finished this way, with its surface covered with detached micro flakes, belongs to the end of the Vinča culture phase at the Pločnik site, during the Eneolithic (Bogosavljević Petrović 2001: 42). It is a prototype of an artefact that, in terms of surface treatment, would be more represented later, in the Early Bronze Age period.

## Discussion

Although individual finds made from local raw materials, related to the mentioned sites, are not a sufficient starting point for complex analyses, they are indicative of the problem of their origin. The Late Neolithic settlements of Vinča–Belo Brdo and Pločnik have been excavated and studied for many years and, thus, one example of these specific arrows found on each site is an indisputable fact. The dating, except for the samples from Jela and Pločnik, is quite uniform and is related to the peak of the Vinča culture and the transition to the late phase, the Pločnik period (after M. Garašanin) or Phase C and D (after V. Miložčić). The absolute dating for the timeframe of their production is around 5000 BC (Tasić et al. 2016).

Bifacial retouching and thinning of the proximal part into a thorn are common attributes of all the finds published so far. Tanged arrowheads from local raw materials in regions close to forested areas currently represent the first information for studying their origin. A large number of arrows found in Ripanj<sup>2</sup> were made from the most widely used group of opal cherts, type 1-C, according to the characterisation of M. Babović. It is a group of raw materials of whitish, greyish-white, greyish-brown and honey-coloured cherts of opal lustre (Perišić 1984: 166-167).

Leaving aside the variants of arrows from the period of the Early and Middle Neolithic in the region of the Starčevo culture, and overlooking for a while the partial study of projectile points in prehistory (Šarić: 2006: 16, 17; Šarić 2005), the groups of arrows from Polimlje from the Late Neolithic sites of Potkućnica and Beran Krš on the territory

<sup>2</sup> One part of the hoard is part of the inventory of The Belgrade City Museum, the other part is in private ownership.



of Montenegro (Дерикоњић 1996: 48-51, Fig. 37 / 32-37; Fig. 39/25, 26, 33-38) and a collective find from the site of Ripanj in the vicinity of Belgrade (Perišić 1984: 60-61; T. 42; Šarić 1987) remain to be considered and discussed here in detail.

The arrows from Ripanj were found in a grey, conical ceramic vessel, with a rough surface and inclusions of crushed shells. Presumably, tanged arrowheads represented an important component of the daily life of the inhabitants of nearby Neolithic settlements, such as the Čaršija in Ripanj (Ђорђевић, Радић, Цвјетићанин 2005). If these finds represent projectile points used in hunting activities, the majority of such hoards could easily have been lost during the shooting of the prey. This could be one of the explanations for the small number of arrows found in settlements.

According to this data, a group of arrows from Ripanj could represent a good example of the organisation of hunting and the preparation of the necessary equipment, only a small amount of which, inevitably, has been found. An additional look at the problem leads to the conclusion that the production of arrows shows a well-thought-out concept and, as a rule, careful processing, and, therefore, a significant expenditure of time and energy. The deposition context of the arrowheads is very important because it implies they were carefully preserved tools before they were used in some subsequent task. In that sense, it is important to correctly detect the products of knapping in the workspace, and to reconstruct daily routines, which, until recently, represented a sporadic practice in the archaeological literature.

In the context of broader analogies, in the settlement of Lisičići in western Bosnia and Herzegovina, published drawings of tanged arrowheads show that the raw material is different compared to the published scrapers and blades (Benac 1958: 38, Table IV / 8-15). The artefacts are similar in shape to the arrows from Polimlje. S. Derikonjić reported that during the Late Neolithic, flaked tools were made of whitish chert and that the expression “fairy’s bone” has been preserved among the people, which Č. Marković also mentioned (Дерикоњић 1996: 51; Marković 1985: 62). Based on this observation, it can be assumed that the raw material “fairy’s bone” is a counterpart to white chert and white opal from archaeological sites in Central Serbia, as was petrologically iden-

tified (Bogosavljević Petrović and Marković 2014; Bogosavljević Petrović 2015: 259-312). A direct comparison of tanged arrowheads from the collections from Vinča settlements and from the region of Late Neolithic and Eneolithic manifestations on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina is necessary in order to identify the origin and development of this type of artefact. Finds of arrowheads recovered in workshops at the site of Okolište are a new contribution to the problems of tanged arrowheads, their relationship with the settlement of Obre II, and trade relations with settlements of the Vinča culture (Hofmann et al. 2008/2009: 95, Fig. 66 /10-12).

As an indicator for recognising the type of economy of settlements at higher altitudes, such as Potkućnica, Beran krš and the circle of settlements of the Butmir culture with the latest finds from the site of Okolište are brought into connection with a group of arrows found near sources of stone raw materials from the Ripanj area on the slopes of Avala. Petrological research in the vicinity of Ripanj indicated stratified grey chert sediment in the olistolites near the Minel company, an outcrop of marl with Upper Jurassic strata of chert near the Railway Station, and smaller fragments of cherty rocks bearing radiolarian assemblages of the Middle Triassic in the area of Ripanj village (Bragin et al. 2011: Fig. 2). In the spring of 2018, petroarchaeological excavations with M. Toljić at the new location of Ladna Voda identified ochre cherts and potential artefacts that need to be separated from modern pieces<sup>3</sup>. The results of complete petrological analyses of cherts from Ripanj are known from the mentioned research of M. Toljić and colleagues, while the samples of arrows from The Belgrade City Museum were determined macroscopically. So far, they have not been directly paralleled with samples obtained in recent years.

<sup>3</sup> As part of the project of The National Museum in Belgrade “Interpretation, origin and distribution of stone raw materials during the Neolithic and Eneolithic in Serbia” (led by V. Bogosavljević Petrović), a petroarchaeological survey with geologist M. Toljić (The Faculty of Geology in Belgrade), D. Janković (The Belgrade City Museum) and A. Starović (The National Museum of Serbia) was conducted in late 2017 and early 2018.

### Tanged arrowheads and the problem of their origin on the territory of the Vinča culture

The local origin of raw materials for the production of four arrows, white chert and white opal (Belo brdo, Petnica and Divlje Polje), although stressed on several occasions does not imply the manufacture of these finds at the given sites. At this level of research, we can assume that tanged arrowheads could have been exchanged between settlements as projectile points that were required occasionally. Production centres are potentially localised where white, grey and amorphous cherts of light brown colour and white opal are represented in quantities that enable serious production. Import of a direct type from the region of the Butmir culture deep into the inner core of Vinča culture settlements such as Divlje Polje, with the current degree of knowledge, seems to be a somewhat irrational practice and a poorly sustainable scenario.



Fig. 5. Tanged arrowhead from Pločnik  
(Photo V. Ilić, adapted by S. Tripković).

The manufacture of the other tools, such as endscrapers, points, denticulated blades, was established based on the needs of the community and the intended functional role, further determined by the shape, quality of raw materials and artisan's skill. The type of procurement of raw materials shows how complex the activity of making knapped tools was, which is one more in a series of important prerequisites that significantly defined the type of production. For example, there is a higher presence of scrapers at the Gomolava and Divlje Polje sites compared to other types of tools (Kaczanowska, Kozłowski 1990: 43; Богосављевић Петровић

1992: 27). Gomolava represents a site whose inhabitants were mainly consumers who procured raw materials from greater distances within the local radius of 35 km, while Divlje Polje is an example of local acquisition and production of standardised blades of the main raw material – white opal (Bogosavljević Petrović 2018). Debitage products indicated the final production of tools in the settlements. However, for now, there is no concrete data available for the identification of waste in the production of tanged arrowheads.

The manufacture of tanged arrowheads within the Butmir culture involved another type of raw material and somewhat different finishing, often completely covering the dorsal and ventral sides with a shallow/flat retouch, which is not often the case among examples from the Vinča culture, except from Pločnik. In line with the observations from the site of Okolište, that the commercial aspect of the community could relate to the procurement of ground stone porcellanite tools from Vinča culture settlements in the Central Balkans (Hofmann et al. 2008/2009: 95), we hypothesise that the stone resources south of the Sava and the Danube could have been greater than the Vinča community's needs. This could be related to the results of the raw material and knapped stone artefact studies from the sites of Divlje Polje, Crkvine-Mali Borak, Trsine or Grivac, where it has been confirmed that the communities exceeded the production for their own needs (Богосављевић Петровић 1992; Богосављевић Петровић 2011; Bogosavljević Petrović 2016). It should be pointed out that the whitish raw materials, which were widely used in the area of the Vinča culture, have been petrologically identified as tuffs, and groups of rocks containing magnesite as well as numerous allotropic modifications of magnesite.

To date, there has been no comprehensive study on arrows and other projectile points exclusively from the Late Neolithic and Eneolithic periods in the Central Balkans, apart from a review of projectile points over a longer time span (Šarić 2005), which provided a starting point on which to focus future research. At the same time, there is a lack of published studies on the origin of the raw materials for the Butmir culture arrows. According to researchers at the settlement of Okolište, the source for one component of knapped tools is linked to the mountain of Trebačko brdo, at a distance of 110 km

from the site, as well as the possible origin of raw materials from the Bosna river and its tributaries (Hofmann et al. 2008/2009: 95).

The preliminary results of the research on the settlement organisation at Okolište provide a solid basis for understanding this specific problem. Documented activity areas for the processing of stone raw materials, deposits of unretouched and retouched blades, and zones of concentration of arrowheads represent indicative contexts that are expected to be published in the future (Hofmann et al. 2008/2009: 65-66, 95-106). This study could take its results a step further by evaluating the main aspects of the manufacturing process of tanged arrowheads, and, at the same time, serve as an inspiration for new research on the territory of the Central Balkans. Shallow, invasive retouch is one of the characteristic markers of the transformation of Late Neolithic production towards to the Eneolithic and Metal Ages (Bogosavljević Petrović 2001: 42).

An tendency towards the use of local raw materials, noted in the Sopot culture, as well as the proximity of raw material sources could have been the reason for the construction of the settlements near the aforementioned outcrops (Balén and Burić 2006: 36). A significant collection of obsidian finds, produced in the Samatovci site, originates from a Carpathian I source, the centre that supplied the inhabitants of both the Vinča and Sopot culture settlements. Regarding the local concept, the similar repertoire of tools, rare finds of tanged arrowheads and a statistically respectable collection of obsidians of the same origin as in a number of Late Neolithic and Early Eneolithic settlements from the territory of Serbia (Tripković and Milić 2009), the situation can be described as a general trend and as a representation of the similar needs of these communities.

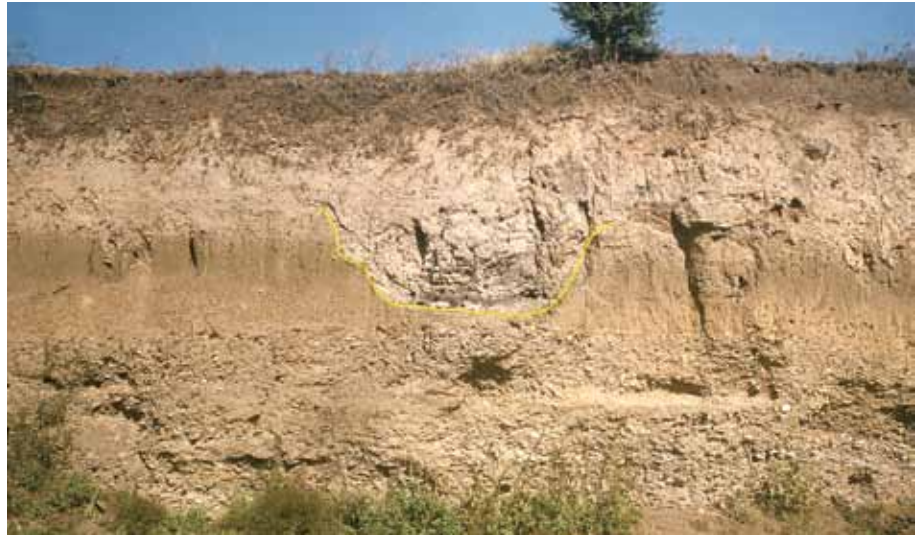


Fig. 6. Riverbank of Toplica with building layers after the flood in 1974. (Photo B. Stalio, adapted by S. Tripković).

In a broader geographical context, a study of lithic technology after the Stone Age in the Levant by Steven Rosen is illuminating, where arrows of the same type also lack context, and where a certain isolation of finds from the rest of the assemblages is also documented (Rosen 1997: 43, 44; Fig. 3.3). Typologically identical examples (Fig. 3.3/3-6: Harparsa points), as well as other types shown in Fig. 3.3, generally disappear during the Late Neolithic in the Levant, when typological changes on the tanged arrowheads become apparent and can be regarded as chronological indicators. In a paper that deals with typological suggestions regarding Early Neolithic arrows in the southern Levant, part of the discussion revolves around the functional resolution of whether they represent points, borers, awls, or projectile points, based on the preserved wear traces (Nadel et al. 1991). The most similar types to our tanged arrowheads are arrows from the sites in the Jordan Valley 2 and 4, as well as from Salbiya 6 (Nadel et al. 1991: Fig. 3/16-21). It is also anticipated that the influence in their production was based on the model seen from artisans from the north in the developed network of relationships of the 9<sup>th</sup> millennium BC in the southern Levant. However, given the chronological difference in absolute dates, these analogies are conditional, meaning they should be regarded more as a basis for future extensive studies about the projectile points in the Late Neolithic of the Central Balkans.

## Conclusion

Tanged arrowheads occur at the transition from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> millennium BC, when great changes took place in the organisation of Late Neolithic communities, from daily routines to gaining experience in copper metallurgy. Individual finds from the settlements of Vinča, Beljin, Petnica, and Divlje Polje, and a group find from Ripanj that has the characteristics of a hoard, are chronologically close and belong to the Early Eneolithic period. The arrowhead from Pločnik and from the Jela site in Šabac represent chronologically younger finds that could be linked to contacts, influences and stylistic differences observed in Vinča settlements. The long transformation of these settlements in changed regional conditions does not necessarily mean a change in the population. The arrow from Pločnik is made of local amorphous chert, from which a large part of the knapped tools were produced.

The isolation of this type of projectile point in the settlements, along with the uniformity in the choice of raw materials, are the first observed characteristics that suggest an import into the territory of the Vinča culture from the western and north-western areas. The choice of raw materials, however, refutes the possibility of import, considering the local manufacturing concept of several communities such as Divlje Polje, Trsine, and Crkvine in Mali Borak. These settlements achieved independent production on white chert, white opal, tuffs and magnesite, the surplus of which they exchange with others. New elements in the development of the arrow with a thorn from Pločnik represent an indication of new times. If we assume the increased production and use of copper objects in relation to the already known production around 5000 BC, it would be a natural continuation and prelude to the long development of the community during the transition to the early Bronze Age. Since traces of use on the arrows from Divlje Polje, Petnica and Vinča have not been registered, it is not possible to say more about their actual use. However, the morphological characteristics - shape, thorn and production method, indicate their usage as projectile points, and we can assume that they were not used for drilling or boring. This assumption is confirmed by the find of an example from Pločnik, which lacks a tip rejected by a burin

blow that occurs during hunting (Lombard 2005). Although use-wear and residue analysis would clarify the function of the considered arrows, in conclusion, we hypothesise that these artefacts were locally produced on the territory of the Vinča communities, with raw materials that are typical for the production of knapped tools at the transition to the Early Eneolithic phase. Considering the combined type of diet of the Late Neolithic population, their isolated occurrence can be interpreted in accordance with hunting activities.

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**Martina Blečić Kavur and Jovan D. Mitrović**  
University of Primorska, Faculty of Humanities and  
National Museum of Serbia/University of Primorska  
martina.blecic.kavur@upr.si and j.mitrovic@narodnimuzej.rs

## BOSUT GOLD

**Abstract:** During the Early Bronze Age the region of Sylvania had a very special position in the South Pannonian territory. Its location at a natural and cultural crossroads of Europe enabled it to play a historical role and to be important in communications and the trade of various goods of that time, as indicated by old and new archaeological research. One of the most important settlements of that time was located on Gradina on Bosut, which is unequivocally documented by the impressive stratigraphic picture from the fringe of Gradina. The hoard of gold objects, which is presented, analysed and interpreted in detail within the social manifestations of the Early Bronze Age elite of the Vinkovci cultural community, is undoubtedly the most significant discovery from that settlement. Together with other prestigious finds in the region, especially hoards from Orolik and Stari Jankovci, they are considered a *symbolic capital* of this exceptional territory, whose owners sovereignly represented themselves as active actors in the pan-European phenomenon of the first elites and “rulers” of Bronze Age cultures.

**Keywords:** Gradina on Bosut, Vinkovci cultural group, elites, gold, status and prestige.

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In the Early Bronze Age, gold was of great value due to its rarity, stability and luminosity. However, it is quite rare as an archaeological find in the southern Pannonian area, but we know it from several sites in Sylvania. The study analyses in detail and comprehensively considers the hoard of gold objects from Gradina on Bosut, which was discovered in controlled circumstances. It is interpreted, based on archaeometallurgical and comparative methods, within the framework of related gold finds on European territory and in the context of the representation of Bronze Age elites.

The elite part of the history of Yugoslav and Serbian prehistoric archaeology of the modern age was definitely marked by the exceptional work of our celebrant Petar Popović. As a long-time member of the expert team in Gradina research, he also participated in the campaign when the hoard was discovered. We respectfully dedicate the *Bosut gold* to his honour.

### Gradina in time and space

The area of Sylvania is located within the confluence of the Sava and Danube rivers – it is a micro-region of the southern part of the Pannonian

Plain. It is characterised by flat plains and alluvial pleistocene-holocene river floodplains, with an abundance of fertile soil and a very favourable climate (Magaš 2013). An exceptional geostrategic position at the junction of eastern and western Europe, throughout history, it has enjoyed the privilege of a dynamic circulation of various influences, both from the southern Balkan, and northern Central European cultural spheres. The most important prehistoric archaeological site in this area is Gradina on Bosut, near the village of Vašica (Fig. 1). It is located on a dominant position along the left bank of the river Bosut, between the villages of Batrovci and Vašica, on the road that leads from the Belgrade – Zagreb route northwards to Šid and Ilok. The site is situated on a flat, ellipsoidal plateau measuring 265 x 60 m, raised about 10 metres above the surrounding terrain. Most of the settlement was naturally protected by rivers – in the south by the Bosut and in the west by the river Struga. Two naturally unprotected sides were secured by a deep, man-made ditch. Various authors assumed that such a defence system was probably built as early as the Bronze or Early Iron Age (Medović, Medović 2010: 9–14; Spasić 2011: 92).

The prehistoric settlement at Gradina was discovered almost 140 years ago, and was explored, in

various campaigns, for a total of 14 years. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, during the construction of the bridge and the local road, Gradina was partially damaged. It was then that it was mentioned for the first time as an important and very promising archaeological site (Stojanović 1859: 202–205; Ljubić 1880b: 123). Test excavations were started by the Museum of Sirmia from Sremska Mitrovica in 1964/1965 (Tasić 1965) and the first results indicated the importance of this multi-layered site. However, the increasing river erosion encouraged more extensive works that, in 1975, grew into systematic excavations. The cooperation of several institutions lasted until 1988, a period during which about 650 m<sup>2</sup> of the surface were examined (Medović, Medović 2010: 5–8; Sremac 2014, 5). Unfortunately, due to various circumstances, the monographic publication of the complete uncovered material has not yet been realised (Medović, Medović 2010: 13; Spasić 2011: 91–115; 2015: 61–80; cf. Popović, Radojčić 1996; Popović 2003).

Thanks to the well-defined cultural and chronological stratigraphy, cultural horizons of enviable (prehistoric) layers have been determined – not only in the region but also in the wider South Pannonian territory. According to available data, it is considered that the oldest settlement was formed during the final Neolithic (Bosut I) and, with short and long interruptions, occupation continued during the Eneolithic (Bosut II) (Spasić 2011; 2015). This was followed by a more pronounced layer of the Bronze Age (Bosut III) in which the Vinkovci, Vatin and Dubovac-Žutobrdo cultures were singled out. After a hiatus, Gradina was inhabited in a particularly rich horizon of the Early (Bosut IVa–c) and Late Iron Age (Bosut V). This is how the elevation was formed with cultural layers almost 6 metres high, from which a 3.15 m thick block with distinct stratigraphy belonged to the Early Iron Age. Based on the material culture from this complex, the Bosut cultural group was defined, which is one of the starting points for studying that period in the areas of south-eastern Pannonia and the Danubian region (Popović 1981; Поповић, Радојчић 1996; Popović 2003: 311–320; Medović, Medović 2010; Spasić 2011: 91–92).



Fig. 1. Geographical position of Gradina on Bosut on the territory of eastern Sirmia.

### Vinkovci horizon of the early Bronze Age

The Bronze Age layer is most pronounced at Gradina on Bosut (▼80.62–81.52 above sea level). It was identified as the living space of the Early Bronze Age community belonging to the Vinkovci cultural group, dated to the second half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BCE and considered within the wider Somogyvár–Vinkovci cultural complex (Tasić 1984; cf. Kulcsár 2009: 225–347) (Fig. 2). Most of the known settlements belonging to this culture were identified through systematic field surveys or random finds from Slavonia and Sirmia.<sup>1</sup> Settlements were often erected on important elevated positions alongside river communications and the material culture is mainly represented by the discoveries of numerous pits and hearths as well as numerous ceramic objects. Continuous settlement probably did not last longer than 150

<sup>1</sup> S. Dimitrijević singled out the Early Bronze Age Vinkovci cultural group as a special cultural manifestation and determined it chronologically based on research of the eponymous tell-settlement in Vinkovci-Tržnica. During the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was established that the material culture of the Vinkovci culture does not show significant differences from the northern Somogyvár group. Consequently, both cultural groups were merged into a wider cultural complex of early Bronze Age Pannonia. The Vinkovci cultural group spread over a wide area of southern Pannonia, Sirmia and Slavonia. Based on the stratigraphy on the tell of Tržnica, S. Dimitrijević divided the culture into an older and a younger phase with subphases (A1/A2 and B1/B2) (Dimitrijević 1966; 1982: 7–36; Bondár 1995, 220–239; Ložnjak 2001; cf. Kalafatić 2005; Hirscher 2009; Kulcsár 2009, 225–354; cf. Ložnjak Dizdar, Potrebica 2017: 27–32).





Fig. 2. Gradina on Bosutu in the context of the wider distribution Somogyvár–Vinkovci cultural complex and the surrounding Carpathian cultures around 2300/2200 BCE (after Fischl et al. 2015).

to 200 years, as M. Bondár assumed, since most of the sites had a thin settlement layer, which indicates their existence in a shorter period (Tasić 1984: 18; Bondár 1995: 236; Kalafatić 2006: 23; cf. Hirschler 2009: 145). However, the lack of necropolises and the generally insignificant number of individual graves (Vranić 1991; Kalafatić 2006; Kalafatić, Hršak 2007) further complicates the understanding of the cultural event itself and its transmission over a large area, as well as the perception of its social aspects as a whole.

Archaeological excavations of Gradina demonstrated that communities that built and formed the settlement on a clayish and relatively compact geological layer, with the remains of several dozen buildings, could be attributed to the Vinkovci cultural group or the Bosut III horizon (Medović, Medović 2010: 19). First finds were recorded in 1976, and by 1985, numerous waste pits and a single oven for preparing food with supports for the grill were discovered (Tasić 1984: 17–18). In almost every pit, numerous pottery fragments were discovered, sometimes including as many as ten whole or slightly damaged vessels. The impressive Vinkovci culture layer is defined from the base of the 21<sup>st</sup> to the 23<sup>rd</sup> excavation horizon – and one must stress that excavation horizons 24, 25 and 26

represent dug-in pits also dated to Vinkovci culture. The material culture of this Bosut IIIa, i.e., Vinkovci A2/B1, horizon remained almost completely unpublished, except for the papers presented by M. Girić in 1981 and N. Tasić in 1984 in which the material culture from this phase was preliminary presented (Girić 1981: 79; Tasić 1984: 15–32, cf. Kulcsár 2009: 261–262).

#### *Bosut gold*

Among numerous other finds during the excavations of Gradina in 1980, an unusual and, for this cultural layer, completely unexpected find was discovered – a hoard consisting of a large number of gold items, colloquially called the *Bosut gold* (Fig. 3; Pl. 1). Preliminary discussed and, based on its stratigraphic position, determined to the developed A2/B1 Vinkovci culture horizon of the Early Bronze Age on Gradina, it thus became, and remains, the only hoard of gold objects within the entire Somogyvár–Vinkovci cultural complex that has a known context of discovery. It was discovered in a pit at the base of the 21<sup>st</sup> excavation horizon – and 61 gold objects were found in an amphora shaped vessel (Tasić 1984: 22–23). The hoard consisted of a set of 54 conical appliques and their fragments, and 7 spiral (coiled double wire) orna-



Fig. 3. *Bosut gold* – Early Bronze Age hoard from Gradina on Bosut (National Library “Simeon Piščević”, Šid).

ments, with a total weight of 29.23g (Fig. 3; Pl. 1). During the presentation of this exceptional discovery, N. Tasić published a more detailed description of a round pectoral disc (Tasić 1984: 23), which, unfortunately, is not preserved.

It is a larger hoard of a heterogeneous composition of exclusively decorative items. Most of them belong to the uniform type of conical appliques, shaped like buttons, but without a sewing eye.<sup>2</sup> They were made of a thin gold sheet with a smooth surface and two holes for sewing on opposite edges. The holes were made by piercing the sheet metal from the inside (most likely with a thin goldsmith’s awl), which is why they have an unevenly cut and

outwardly bent edge. On some better preserved conical appliques the perforation of several holes is visible – from 3 to 5 in number (Pl. 1: 15, 22, 27, 31-32, 35, 40, 43, 45-46, 50, 54). They are evenly distributed along the very edges, which can be a consequence of subsequent or unsuccessful perforation. Some specimens have a minimally drawn peripheral edge with compressed sheet metal and no additional decorations. A large number of them are deformed (15 examples), and three of them are preserved only in small fragments (Fig. 3; Pl. 1). Conical appliques of this shape, mostly made of bronze, served to enrich the costumes and jewelry repertoire sewn in different positions, mainly the upper part of the garment – from the neck and shoulders, to the arms and chest, and the lavish decorations of various headwear (Kiss 2012: 111–112;

<sup>2</sup> Tasić reports an even larger number of conical appliques – as many as 78 (Tasić 1984: 23; cf. Medović 2001: fig. 77; Sremac 2014, 9).

Găvan 2015: 120; Bertemes, Heyd 2015: 10). However, they could also be part of a decorative set of belts and lower parts of skirts, i.e., aprons. We can follow the wider use from the Early Bronze Age horizon, with good examples from the cultures of the Danubian–Carpathian basin, e.g., the contemporary early Nagyrev and Maros cultures (Fig. 2), especially from the sites of Periam, Beba Veche and Mokrin (Gogâltan 1999: 173; Wagner 2009: 343, fig. 11). They are also present further west in the Bell Beaker cultural complex in the contexts of the 24<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> century BCE (Heyd 2007: 341–344). Although they were numerous until the Late Bronze Age, they probably experienced the greatest intensity of use during the Middle Bronze Age cultures of the Carpathian-Pannonian

region and the Koszider horizon (Vinski 1958: 12; Mozsolics 1967; 1968; O’Shea 1996: 49; Szabó 1997: 66–69; Kiss 2012: 111–112). Many of them were discovered in hoards of large tell-settlements, such as those in the hoard from Jászdózsa with 30 admittedly miniature conical appliques or e.g., from the settlement in Periam and Pecica (Gogâltan 1999: 173–174; Găvan 2015: 120). The closest cultural and chronological direct parallel to our examples is the discovery of 20 gold conical appliques from Orolik near Vinkovci (Majnarić-Pandžić 1974: 22–24; 1998: 171, Fig. 4). All of them are also of the cone-shaped type, with narrowed edges, and several holes were also observed on some of the appliques on the inside of the pierced gold sheet (Fig. 4).

The second, smaller group of objects is represented by spiral ornaments or hair rings. They are basically divided into two groups; a) 6 smaller examples made of thinner coiled wire, and b) a larger and thicker spiral ring (Fig. 3; Pl. 1: 1-7). The latter is a much larger object with overlapping ends, made of thicker gold wire of uneven round cross-section (Pl. 1: 1). In terms of shape and dimensions, it could have been worn as an ornament on clothes, although its role in decorating the head and/or hairstyles cannot be ruled out. Most of the smaller spiral ornaments can be further typologi-

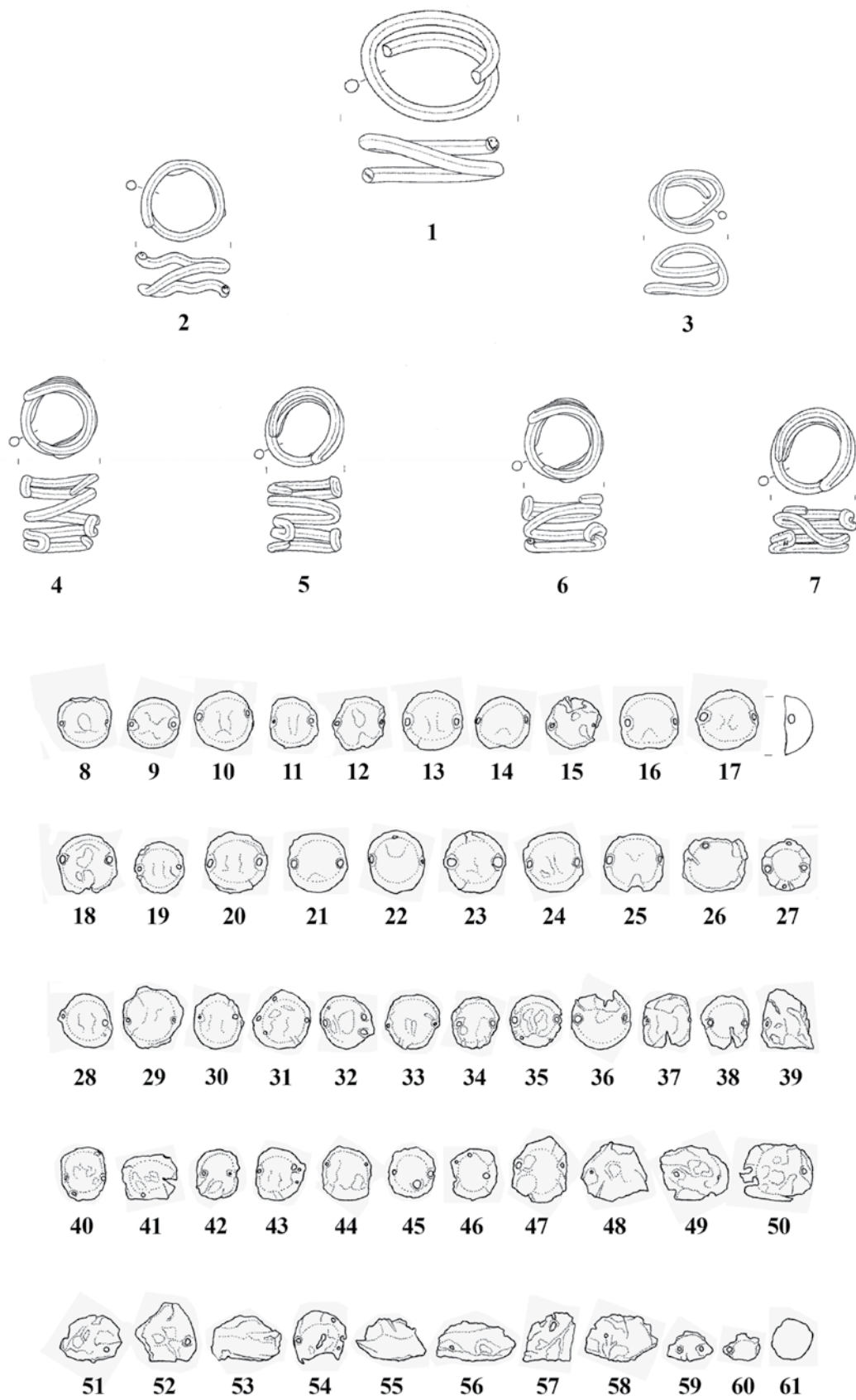


Fig. 4. Early Bronze Age hoard from Gradina on Bosut near Orolik (Vinkovci City Museum).

cally divided into two types according to their production. The first group (2 spirals), were simple, smaller spirals made from coiled, slightly thicker wire with a round and uneven cross-section and overlapping ends (Pl. 1: 2-3). One example has the end slightly thinned and broken off, so it may have been originally flattened (Fig. 3; Pl. 1: 2). The second group (4 spirals) are spirals made of thin single but in the opposite direction bent/double-coiled wire, also with a round cross-section and pointed ends (cf. Moucha 1997: 159, Abb. 6.10: 7; Reiter 2008: 93–100) (Pl. 1: 4-7). It is generally accepted that these were ornaments intended for styling hair (*noppenring*), worn directly on the hair, in strands and braids, as decoration on headwear, or on decorative ribbons or diadems – although they could also be used as rings.

Spiral hair rings absolutely marked the trend of Early Bronze Age costumes in Europe, from the Carpathian to Central European and Scandinavian areas, where they were discovered mostly in graves but also in hoards (O’Shea 1996: 201; Szabó 1997: 68–69; Kovács 1999; Kiss 2012: 112–113; Găvan 2015: 134–135; cf. Meller 2014: 616–620, 623–624; Szathmári et al. 2019; *in print*). The oldest finds of gold hair rings, dated to the initial appearance (Neusiedl) of the Somogyvár–Vinkovci culture in the northwest, originate from grave 1 in





Pl. 1.

Neusiedl am See (Ruttkay 2002: 154–155, fig. 4; Kern 2011: 163–164; cf. Heyd 2007: 341; Kulcsár 2009: 346). Despite the absolute dating of the grave, the inadequate conditions of the discovery and the unusual inventory still support the doubt of a closed set of finds and their belonging to the corresponding skeletal remains (Kern 2011: 164). All this makes it difficult to interpret the inventory, so it cannot be a reference for other identical or related discoveries from the Late Eneolithic/Early Bronze Age of that area. At the same time, it should be noted that the spiral rings are very large and do not represent the best comparison for those from Bosut and Orolik. Better and more adequate comparisons could be established with a significant number of rich graves from the Fanzhausen I and Gemeinlebarn necropolises of the early Unterwölbling cultural group from the 24<sup>th</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> century BCE, where a variety of hair rings could be divided into several typological groups (Neugebauer 1994: 87; Reiter 2008: 93–100; cf. Lutteropp 2009: 76, 138, 264, fig. 16). With hair rings from a thin single, but in opposite direction bent/double-coiled wire, many equivalent and similar comparisons can be observed in burials of the late Bell Beaker cultural complex, e.g., at the Szigetszentmiklós necropolis, where a total of 12 examples were discovered, and where the burials were dated between the 25<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> centuries BCE (Patay 2013: 293, fig. 15: 3–4; cf. Szabó 2017). Similar hair rings are known, on the other hand, from the graves of Beba Veche, Pitvaros, and Szöreg, dated to the Early Maros culture (Bóna 1965: T. V: 1–6; O’Shea 1996: 77, 83, 224, T. 5.1; 5.5; Wagner 2009: 343), while in the graves of Mokrin their bronze equivalents were discovered (O’Shea 1996: 49, 204; cf. Wagner 2009: 343).

The closest parallels to spiral ornaments made of a single round wire, with overlapping and broken ends can be observed in the gold spirals from Orolik (Majnarić-Pandžić 1974: 22–24; 1998: Fig. 4) (Fig. 4). However, in the pair of smaller rings from Orolik, one end is leaf-shaped and decorated with simple points along the edge of the leaf and in its middle. In analysing these truly unusual finds from the southern Pannonian area, N. Majnarić-Pandžić used the then most extensive synthesis of ornaments by E. Zaharia (1959) and found related examples in the, as yet unpublished, necropolis of Sărata-Monteoru (Majnarić-Pandžić 1974:

25). However, these Romanian examples are not coiled into a spiral, but into a ring. Considering the method of their manufacture and assembly, and the decoration on the leaf-shaped ends, we can observe much more appropriate analogies in spirals of the Apfelstädt type made from precious metals, from the Bell Beaker cultural complex (Meller 2014: 616–620, fig. 4). According to its style of decoration, the most similar parallel would be an example from the Austrian Oberndorf in der Ebene, although it is made of silver (Meller 2014: fig. 4: 6). The rings from Orolik and Bosut display a major difference – their spirals were not made from an embossed flat band as in the types and variants of the Apfelstädt type, but from a wire of round cross-section like all other spiral ornaments/hair rings. If we add to this the information about the discovery of the same/similar type of gold spirals with overlapping ends, unfortunately now lost, from neighbouring Stari Jankovci (Ljubić 1880a: 92–93), we can probably assume a local variant of these special spiral ornaments, influenced by the north-western trends deriving from the Bell Beaker cultural complex. Furthermore, the production of very similar spirals is present in the simultaneous cultures of Chłopice-Vesele and Mierzanowice in Slovakia and southern Poland – again in a certain regional variant that would still be closer to Romanian examples (Machnik 1984: T. XC: 14, 19–20; XCIV: 23–24; 1991: 164–168; cf. Bertemes, Heyd 2002: 204–208). From known circumstances of discovery, mostly in graves, we learn that they are equally represented in inventories attributed to male and female deceased – as a canon they are discovered next to the skull, thus marking a social rather than a gender-oriented means of representation. Therefore, a unique criterion shaped by a specific hairstyle with gold hair rings became widespread throughout Europe, especially in communities of the Bell Beaker cultural complex, which were proven more closely associated with the elites of Somogyvár–Vinkovci culture (Fig. 2). Consequently, the design of gold hair ornaments demonstrates regional differences, but also strong similarities over extremely long distances (Meller 2014: 616–619).

Gold items are not only prestigious and high-value archaeological finds resistant to the ravages of time. They represent a raw material that, like stone, did not change from the deposit of its

origin to the finished, desired product – they are remarkable finds in terms of analytical potential for the determination of origins of the metal (Borg 2010; Armbruster 2013: 463–464; Pernicka 2014: 159–161; Borg, Pernicka 2017: 117–118). Based on preliminary physical and chemical tests using a non-destructive technique, energy dispersive X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy (EDXRF spectroscopy), something more can be said about the chemical composition of the *Bosut gold*. Namely, as was assumed with a certain degree of certainty, it was established that the sampled gold objects were made of natural gold, consisting of a composition of different components, mostly gold and a smaller amount of silver, copper, aluminium, magnesium, iron and other trace elements (cf. Pernicka 2014). Most of the gold objects from the Early Bronze Age come from alluvial gold collected along rivers that washed away gold from quartz ore veins and native gold (Borg 2010; Armbruster 2013: 464–465; Borg, Pernicka 2017). Along the way, gold came into contact with sand and various minerals, gradually incorporating them, which is reflected in the presence of elements of aluminium, iron, magnesium and other characteristic minerals, thus preventing the accurate identification of one primary deposit (Borg, Pernicka 2017: 181–121). Accordingly, most likely, the sampled items from the Bosut hoard were actually made from gold originating from eroded secondary deposits, rolled and cold-forged from a gold sheet in the case of appliques, while the spiral rings were produced from extruded wire produced from long and narrow gold strips or bars (Kiss 2012: 112; Armbruster 2013: 465–466; Gävan 2015: 120, 135). In 11 samples (6 spiral rings and 5 conical appliques), a higher percentage of silver (from 17.3% to 38%) and copper (from 0.4% to 4.2%), and the absence of tin were detected. The presence of silver at levels of more than 20% is also known for gold spiral rings from the Maros culture (Szathmári et al. 2019; *in print*). It should be noted, however, that most of the analysed items actually have up to 1% of copper and only two hair rings have a higher percentage of 3.3% (Pl. 1: 4) and 4.2% of copper (Pl. 1: 5). Hair rings also have the highest percentage of gold. It is interesting that the appliques are richer in silver (from 27% to 37%), and also have a significantly lower percentage of copper (from 0.6% to 1%), while the situation is

exactly the opposite with spiral ornaments. Given the composition, the gold could generally be attributed to the group of heterogeneous gold of A3C geochemical composition with higher copper content, according to A. Hartmann, characteristic for the early phases of the Early Bronze Age of the wider Danubian and Southeast European cultural circle (Hartmann 1972; 1982; Kovács 1999, 47; cf. Borg 2010: 742–746, Fig. 8; Pernicka 2014: 159–160, Fig. 10; Borg, Pernicka 2017: 118, Fig. 1; cf. Szathmári et al. 2019; *in print*). They are, therefore, connected to other finds from the Pannonian-Carpathian area – from the contemporary early Maros and Nagyrev cultures, so their gold sources should be sought further east, all the way to Banat and Transylvania, as was suggested by N. Majnarić-Pandžić (Majnarić-Pandžić 1974: 23; cf. Hartmann 1982; O’Shea 1996: 49, 51, 330, 355; Borg, Pernicka 2017: 131).

## Discussion

Conical appliques and spiral hair rings are recognisable decorative items whose origins date back to the Eneolithic and Early Bronze Age in continental, especially Central and Eastern Europe, and all the way to the Aegean and the Black Sea (e.g., Primas 1995; Heyd 2007: 341; Armbruster 2013: 462; Leusch et al. 2015). The oldest gold appliques are known from the rich male graves of the Varna necropolis, dated to the middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> millennium BCE (e.g., Hansen 2013; Leusch et al. 2014). Spiral ornaments were also discovered in the richest graves of Central European Bell Beaker and Proto-Únětice cultural complexes (Heyd 2007: 341, 347–348; Meller 2014: 616–620, 623–624; Schwarz 2014; Bertemes, Heyd 2015: 49–50), and in the ambience of Early Bronze Age cultural manifestations of the gold-rich eastern Carpathian Basin, as presented (Bóna 1965: 31–33; Mozsolics 1968; O’Shea 1996, 204, 354–355; cf. Fischl, Kulcsár 2011; Szathmári et al. 2019; *in print*) (Fig. 2). Although such decorative objects were mostly made from bronze, luxury examples were usually made of more durable and, therefore, more valuable gold. Moreover, in that earlier Bronze Age cultural circulation, they had the role of representing the status and prestige of selected individuals within different but socially hierarchical communi-



Fig. 5. The elite graves/hoards with precious metal of the Early Bronze Age in the Carpathian and Balkan territory from the second half of the 3rd millennium BCE (supplemented after Heyd 2013a; 2013b).

ties of Europe. These oldest elites were certainly well connected and networked in the circulation of goods, knowledge, ideas and, above all, raw materials, as well as in all other activities that this revolutionary time brought with it (Heyd 2013a: 14–33; 2013b: 48–55; Vandkilde 2016). Connecting people regarding mineral resources and their control in terms of transportation, trade and exchange was certainly of primary interest. However, a much closer and more intensive connection took place in the processes of various mobilities, matrimonial ties and, above all, political and diplomatic contacts of elites – precisely by the gifts of ideological and symbolic valuables, which, to some extent, reflects the circulation and deposition of precious metals. Gold jewellery was not only an ornament of luxurious costumes but also a symbol of value and identity, emphasising their power and significance like an *insignia* (cf. Primas 1995; Kilian Dirlmeier 2005: 119; Armbruster 2013; Heyd 2013a: 32–33; 2013b: 54–55; Meller 2014; Schwarz 2014).

In the preliminary presentation, the items from the Bosut hoard were compared with gold finds from the nearby Gradina on Orolik, located along the northern bank of the Bosut river, in western Sarmatia (Fig. 4). In 1968, these items were dis-

covered in a pit, next to a bronze flat axe. They were exhaustively analysed and interpreted in the time horizon of the developed Vinkovci culture, which in many ways reflected the intertwining of complex processes of nurturing old traditions and accepting and adapting to new circumstances (Majnarić-Pandžić 1974; 1998: 171, Fig. 4; cf. Tasić 1984: 22–23; Machnik 1991: 144–146, fig. 30; Forenbaher 1993; Glogović 2003: 100; Kulcsár 2009: 346). Interpreting the discovery, N. Majnarić-Pandžić presented two possibilities for its deposition: a) enclosed items of costume and jewellery in the grave of a prominent female or b) since the bones of the deceased were not discovered, disposed jewellery in a hoard of prestigious items in the settlement of a Vinkovci culture community (Majnarić-Pandžić 1974: 21–22; 1998: 171, Fig. 4). For a long time, direct analogies were lacking in the closer territory, but also in the wider area of the Somogyvár–Vinkovci cultural complex, although brought into closer connection with the early cultures of the Danubian area and the Carpathians. The discovery of the hoard in Gradina on Bosut was, therefore, extremely important for establishing arguments for the Orolik discovery. Adhering to the second interpretation of the dis-



posal at Orolik Gradina, in the Bosut example, N. Tasić actually saw a reference for the Orolik gold – a position which is also accepted in recent literature (cf. Ložnjak Dizdar, Potrebnica 2017: 29). This could also be, despite a very distanced rhetoric, the position of G. Kulcsár. Namely, despite the precisely described situation of discovery and exact position on the edge of the pit in the settlement, she treated the Orolik gold as an unreliable find, and the *Bosut gold* was not even adequately published at that time (Kulcsár 2009: 346). She was, of course, sceptical about the dating of both hoards as well as their attribution to communities of the Vinkovci cultural group. In this sense, she paid special attention to the pectoral disc from Orolik, attributing it stylistically to discs of the Stollhof-Csáford type, referring to interpretations of N. Tasić, J. Machnik and D. Glogović (Kulcsár 2009: 346; cf. Machnik 1991: 144–146, Fig. 30; Glogović 2003: 97–99; 2004). Consequently, in the example of the grave in Neusiedl am See, where the hair rings are obviously much older than the ones from the Gradinas Orolik and Bosut, neither could this comparison, let alone attribution, be considered valid, especially after taking in to account substantial differences in the methods in which they were produced and the differences in the style of decoration in the repoussé technique. N. Majnarić-Pandžić demonstrated, a position confirmed later by N. Tasić and J. Machnik, that we can observe certain analogies and a long tradition of these artistic and symbolic pectoral ornaments, ranging from the Eneolithic to the Early Bronze Age in that narrow part of the interfluvium of the Drava, Sava and Danube (Majnarić-Pandžić 1974: 25; Tasić 1984: 23, Machnik 1991: 146; cf. Glogović 2004) (Fig. 6). However, a comparison was also presented with gold discs from the early Maros cultural group, known only from Mokrin, Beba Veche and Battonya, unfortunately without more certain circumstances of discoveries (Girić 1971; Bóna 1965: T. VI: A1, B1; O’Shea 1996: 78, 204, 330; Wagner 2009: 338, cf. Fischl, Kulcsár 2011, 77, T. 1) (Fig. 7). N. Tasić insisted on this even more vigorously, describing and interpreting the alleged disk from the *Bosut gold* as quite simple, cut from a thin gold sheet and without additional ornaments. He interpreted the phenomenon of the use of these two pectoral discs in a wider space, comparing them with those from Mokrin (Tasić 1984: 23; cf. Girić 1984: T. XI: 6),

i.e., in the context of cultures whose elites were embellished and ideologically represented by gold pectoral discs.

If we consider the fact that there was a round pectoral disk in the Bosut hoard, then the composition of these two mixed hoards would be basically typologically, stylistically and, of course, chronologically identical – with a larger difference only in quantity, i.e., in the number of preserved specimens, where the discovery from Orolik represent a much larger and heavier collection of objects (75.56 g) than that from Bosut (29.23 g). The difference is that the Orolik gold contains many thin rings, while the find from Bosut has coiled hair rings. We could add to them the discovery from Stari Jankovci, which, if we accept the information from Š. Ljubić, also represents a larger hoard of mixed composition, deviating from the Orolik and Bosut finds only due to the enclosed status weapons, i.e., a pair of silver parade axes (Balén, Mihelić 2007). In that find, in addition to a pair of larger spirals with overlapping ends, there were also 16 smaller rings that, together with a larger one, formed a chain 40 cm long – a composition that irresistibly reminds us of the find from nearby Orolik. There were also two rectangular gold sheets, with two holes at each end, one even decorated with embossed dots on the edges, which Š. Ljubić interpreted as parts of belt sets (Ljubić 1880a: 93). For this discovery, we can observe comparable elements in the tombs from Szigetszentmiklós (Patay 2013: 293, fig. 15: 4) and, thus, perhaps follow once again the intertwining and importance of strong influences from the northern circle of the Bell Beaker cultural complex (Fig. 2) (cf. Kalafatić, Hršak 2007; Koledin 2012; Dani, Tóth, 2014).<sup>3</sup>

## Conclusion

The Bosut gold should be interpreted as an exceptional find of a Vinkovci culture community of the Early Bronze Age for numerous reasons. The primary value of the hoard is, due to the collected items and the value of the precious metal itself, more significant given the directly known topo-

<sup>3</sup> The gold finds from Čepin are not included in the discussion, because it has been confirmed that they belong to the set of older finds from Tenja – Orlovnjak (Glogović 2004 – with earlier literature).

graphic position of the find on the outskirts of the settlement of Gradina, near the Bosut river communication. The river was obviously the dominant connection with Gradina on Orolik, where a very similar and simultaneous hoard of gold objects originates. If we add to them the slightly northern hoard of Stari Jankovci on the Bosut *highway*, we get three impressive and undeniably important hoards of the second half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BCE on the southern edge

of the Pannonian plain, in the narrowest crossing of the most important crossroads of prehistoric Europe (Fig. 6).

The conical appliques from the Bosut hoard will undoubtedly represent the most numerous collections of decorative objects of this type in the entire Carpathian and Pannonian area and, together with the appliques from Orolik, form their greatest concentration within that vast territory. The representation of as many as four types of spiral ornaments/hair rings is still without comparison – it is the largest collection in the wider area of Somogyvár–Vinkovci cultural and topographical distribution. By the typological and stylistic analysis and interpretation of known contexts of the same or similar objects, as well as by the stratigraphic situation from Gradina on Bosut, we can date them more widely within the time range from the 24<sup>th</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup> century BCE. This would mean a developed phase of the Vinkovci culture, which could roughly correspond to the stage Br A0, according to Central European relative chronology (Szabó 2017: 108, fig. 5). They are, therefore, located in the era of the so-called *international spirit* present in the networks of superregional circulation of luxury items, serving as an emblem of European “golden” elites in their recognition, social characteristics and identifications of the already complex composition of values (Flannery, Marcus 2012; Heyd 2013b; Schwarz 2014; Dani et al. 2016: 219–241).

The importance of the presented gold hoards, however, is not only crucial for understanding the status and cultural relationships of individuals and/



Fig. 6. Gold pectoral discs from a) Mokrin (National Museum Kikinda) and b) Beba Veche (elaborated after Vörös 1997).

or the ruling hereditary elite or clan, as is generally assumed, but also for understanding the topography of landscape as an attractor in general. Besides this, they also provide us with valuable data on social structures that were focused on procurement, i.e., a specific way of approaching gold, to possible toreutic gold-working centres and to manipulations with their values in the pre-monetary chain (e.g., Hänsel, Weihermann 2000; Leusch et. al. 2014). After a certain time of use, such prestigious items were collected and disposed of with a particular intention, thus implying a possible understanding of certain customs of Vinkovci elites. Hoards along the outskirts of the settlement are not uncommon and are mostly associated with ritual and ceremonial activities, especially if they are near rivers. The place of dedication has always played a special role in collective memory and depended on numerous factors (Hansen 2012; Bradley 2013: 123-125). Perhaps, therefore, the Bosut hoard can be associated with the renunciation of valuables during the sacrifice, i.e., donations during the opening or closing of settlements as a symbolic and status practice, but also a reflection of the power of the most prominent individuals within the Vinkovci culture hierarchical society. Given the content and circumstances of the finds, it is most likely that both finds, from Bosut and Orolik, were votive hoards lacking suitable or at least approximate counterparts in the graves. They will, therefore, reflect the *symbolic capital* of this exceptional space in a time of the superregional fashion of two-dimensional gold jewellery made of “sheet and wire”, whose owners sovereignly participated in the ideological and

pragmatic pan-European phenomenon of the first elites and “rulers” of Bronze Age cultures.

### Acknowledgements

The study was created with the help and support of many colleagues, whom we sincerely acknowledge. First, we would like to thank Slavica Varničić (National Library “Simeon Piščević” in Šid) who enabled the publication of *Bosut gold* on this occasion, then Milica Marić Stojanović (National Museum of Serbia) who performed the preliminary analyses of gold in collaboration with Aleksa Jelikić (Republic Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments, Belgrade), to Veljko Ilić (National Museum of Serbia) for photographs, and Janja Tratnik Šumi (University of Primorska, Koper) for the drawings. We are grateful, for the critical suggestions, forwarded documentation and literature, to Lidija Milašinović (National Museum Kikinda), Maja Krznarić Škrivanko (Vinkovci City Museum), Maja Bunčić (Archaeological Museum in Zagreb), Viktória Kiss (Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest), Jan Kysela (Charles University, Prague) and Boris Kavur (University of Primorska, Koper). The author acknowledges the financial support from the Slovenian Research Agency for the “*Sea2Sea: Continuity and Changes between the Bronze and Iron Age on the territory between the Adriatic and the Pannonian plain* (ERC KS N6-0297)”.

### Catalogue

The Bosut hoard is kept in the Archaeological Collection at the “Simeon Piščević” National Library in Šid under unified inventory number 34. The numbers in the catalogue correspond to the numbers on the plate.

1. A large spiral ring with overlapping ends made of thicker smooth gold wire, round in cross section. It is damaged at the ends – cut with a tool. Size: diameter 2.1 cm, weight 5.67 g.  
 2. Spiral hair ring made of thin, smooth gold wire with a round cross-section. One end is pointed and the other is flattened and broken. In places, the wire is damaged and improperly bent. Size: diameter 1.3 cm, weight 1.56 g.  
 3. Spiral hair ring made of thin, smooth gold wire with a round cross section. One end is pointed, the

other is broken off. Width 0.6 cm, length 1 cm, weight 1.59 g.

4. Larger fully preserved spiral hair ring made of thin gold wire of a round cross-section and with pointed ends. Size: diameter 1.1 cm, weight 3.58 g.  
 5. Larger fully preserved spiral hair ring made of thin gold wire of a round cross-section and with pointed ends. Size: diameter 1.1 cm, weight 3.78 g.  
 6. Smaller completely preserved spiral hair ring made of thin gold wire of a round cross-section and with pointed ends. Size: diameter 1.1 cm, weight 1.65 g.  
 7. Smaller completely preserved spiral hair ring made of thin gold wire of a round cross-section, partially bent central wire and with pointed ends. Size: diameter 1.1 cm, weight 2.2 g.

A total of 54 conical appliques made of thin and smooth gold sheet metal, slightly drawn and in places narrowed ends, with two to five holes for fastening.

8. Size: diameter. 0.9 cm, weight 0.16 g.  
 9. Size: diameter 0.9 cm, weight 0.15 g.  
 10. Size: diameter 1 cm, weight 0.22 g.  
 11. Size: diameter 0.9 cm, weight 0.11 g.  
 12. Size: diameter 0.9 cm, weight 0.14 g.  
 13. Size: diameter 1.1 cm, weight 0.24 g.  
 14. Size: diameter 1 cm, weight 0.22 g.  
 15. Size: diameter 0.9 cm, weight 0.15 g.  
 16. Size: diameter 1.1 cm, weight 0.22 g.  
 17. Size: diameter 1.1 cm, weight 0.26 g.  
 18. Size: diameter 1.1 cm, weight 0.17 g.  
 19. Size: diameter 0.9 cm, weight 0.14 g.  
 20. Size: diameter 1.1 cm, weight 0.23 g.  
 21. Size: diameter 1.1 cm, weight 0.23 g.  
 22. Size: diameter 1 cm, weight 0.24 g.  
 23. Size: diameter 1.1 cm, weight 0.25 g.  
 24. Size: diameter 1.1 cm, weight 0.22 g.  
 25. Size: diameter 1.1 cm, weight 0.22 g.  
 26. Size: diameter 1 cm, weight 0.27 g.  
 27. Size: diameter 0.8 cm, weight 0.12 g.  
 28. Size: diameter 0.9 cm, weight 0.22 g.  
 29. Size: diameter 1.1 cm, weight 0.23 g.  
 30. Size: diameter 0.9 cm, weight 0.13 g.  
 31. Size: diameter 1 cm, weight 0.18 g.  
 32. Size: diameter 0.9 cm, weight 0.16 g.  
 33. Size: diameter 1 cm, weight 0.16 g.  
 34. Size: diameter 0.9 cm, weight 0.10 g.  
 35. Size: diameter 0.9 cm, weight 0.15 g.  
 36. Size: diameter 1.1 cm, weight 0.20 g.  
 37. Size: diameter 1 cm, weight 0.12 g.

38. Size: diameter 0.9 cm, weight 0.11 g.
  39. Size: diameter 1.1 cm, weight 0.22 g.
  40. Size: diameter 1 cm, weight 0.15 g.
  41. Size: diameter 1 cm, weight 0.15 g.
  42. Size: diameter 0.9 cm, weight 0.08 g.
  43. Size: diameter 0.9 cm, weight 0.13 g.
  44. Size: diameter 1 cm, weight 0.17 g.
  45. Size: diameter 0.9 cm, weight 0.10 g.
  46. Size: diameter 0.9 cm, weight 0.11 g.
  47. Size: diameter 1.1 cm, weight 0.20 g.
  48. Size: diameter 1.1 cm, weight 0.23 g.
  49. Size: dim. 0.9x1.2 cm, weight 0.17 g.
  50. Size: diameter 0.9 cm, weight 0.22 g.
  51. Size: dimensions. 0.7x1 cm, weight 0.15 g.
  52. Size: diameter 1 cm, weight 0.22 g.
  53. Size: dimensions 0.8x1.2 cm, weight 0.22 g.
  54. Size: diameter 0.9 cm, weight 0.13 g.
  55. Size: dimensions 0.8x1.2 cm, weight 0.22 g.
  56. Size: dimensions 0.7x1.4 cm, weight 0.24 g.
  57. Size: dimensions 0.7x1.2 cm, weight 0.15 g.
  58. Size: dimensions 0.7x1.3 cm, weight 0.21 g.
- Three smaller fragments of dome-shaped patches of thin and smooth gold sheet metal.
59. Size: dimensions 0.6x0.9 cm, weight 0.06 g.
  60. Size: dimensions 0.7x0.5 cm, weight 0.03 g.
  61. Size: diameter 0.7 cm, weight 0.17g.

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**Aca Đorđević and Aleksandar Kapuran**  
National Museum, Belgrade and Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade  
djaca057@gmail.com and a.kapuran@gmail.com

## NEW FINDS OF PESCHIERA FIBULAE IN THE IRON GATES REGION

**Abstract:** Throughout his successful career, Petar Popović dedicated more than 10 years to the research of the Bronze and Iron Age settlements and necropolises in the Iron Gates region. His extensive knowledge and field experience, as well as long-lasting friendships with colleagues from the National Museum in Belgrade, have all contributed to the greater degree of research at the site of Konopište in Mala Vrbica near Kladovo. The renewed excavations at the site were initiated by A. Đorđević, curator of the National Museum in Belgrade, back in 2015. The excavations resulted in new finds of the so-called violin-bow fibulae (Violinbogenfibeln), or the Peschiera type of fibulae, which represent a prominent piece of the Late Bronze Age and the Early Iron Age attire. New insight into the funeral ritual and the double-natured function of Peschiera fibulae are the focus of this paper.

**Keywords:** Danube, Bronze Age, Mala Vrbica-Konopište, Urnenfelder, Gava, violin fibulae, Peschiera fibulae.

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The first mentions of the sites of Livade and Konopište in Mala Vrbica date to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in the study on Žuto Brdo culture by M. M. Vasić, who mentioned them as the site of Kurvingrad (Васић 1912) (Fig. 1a, 1b). In the course of the Iron Gates II rescue archaeological excavations, it was confirmed that the toponym Kurvingrad refers to three separate sites. The prehistoric necropolises at the site of Konopište was significantly devastated by the construction of a large object in Antiquity, during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD (Fig. 1c). The cultural stratigraphy at the site indicates the importance of the location of Konopište throughout the prehistoric, antique and medieval periods, as it most likely represented a strategic position for reaching the left bank of the Danube. The island of *Šimian*, which enabled the route across the Danube during high-water and the formation of ice, is located between the village of Mala Vrbica on the right and the village of *Šimian* on the left bank of the Danube, in present-day Romania. There is also a possibility that during Antiquity, some smaller dock was located downstream of the location, in the area of Kurvin grad.

Besides Mirjana Vukmanović, the director of excavations and curator from the National

Museum in Belgrade, Petar Popović from the Institute of Archaeology in Belgrade participated in the rescue and systematic archaeological excavations that were conducted within several campaigns between 1980 and 1988. A total of 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> were excavated together with the renewed excavations in 2015. Between 1980 and 1988, prehistoric necropolises with cremated deceased buried in flat graves (*Urnenfelder*) and a medieval necropolis with inhumed deceased were recorded. The prehistoric necropolises comprise 13 graves attributed to the Encrusted Pottery Complex (Žuto Brdo-Girila Mare-Cirna), 19 graves attributed to the Gava Channelled Pottery complex (Hinova-Mala Vrbica-Balta Verde) and 4 graves attributed to the Late Iron Age (Popović, Vukmanović, Radojčić 1990; Popović 1998; Ђорђевић 2019). Of 32 graves and enclosed features recorded during the 1980s, only 3 graves and one cenotaph have been published (Вукмановић 1983; Popović 1998; Ђорђевић 2019). Additionally, 4 graves and one hoard of bronze objects were recorded during the 2015 excavations directed by A. Đorđević (Ђорђевић 2019; Đorđević, *forthcoming*). The focus of this paper lies in new finds of the *Peschiera* type of fibulae that originate from Grave No. 4, re-

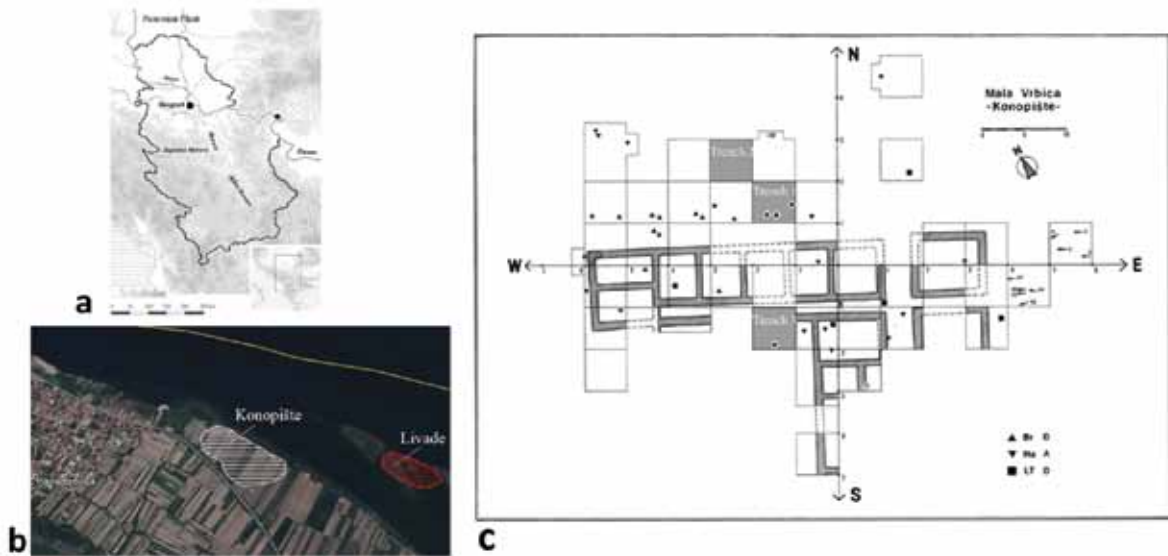


Fig. 1. a) Map of Serbia with Konopište site; b) Location of the Konopište and Livade sites; c) Konopište site.

corded during the 2015 excavation campaign at the Konopište necropolis (Fig. 2).

Besides the field excavations, the contribution by Petar Popović to the research of the necropolis is marked through the publication of one sepulchral feature from the 1988 campaigns. The feature 4/1988 was located on the northern periphery of the necropolis, and it was represented by a circular zone filled with river pebbles, with dimensions of 4 x 1.5 m, which covered a pit. The pit most likely had a sepulchral character, considering that the architecture deviates from the prevalent burial of urns into a grave pit, which was a common ritual practice on Bronze Age necropolises with cremated deceased in the Danube region (Popović 1998: 148). The eastern half of the pit was filled with pebbles in the form of a retaining wall, while the western half of the pit yielded finds of several vessels and a dog skeleton. Large biconical vessels were aligned next to the northern edge of the pit together with the remains of a pig skeleton, and a small binocular vessel, a *pyraunos* and ritually crushed bowls mixed with soil and animal bones were recorded in the central part of the pit (Popović 1998: 147-148).

Aside from the graves in which the *Peschiera* type of fibulae was recorded, Grave No. 20 should be highlighted, in which 2 decorative pins of the *Flachkegeligem* type were recorded (Vasić 2003: 64, Taf. 23/361), of which one is attributed to the *Halsrippung* variant (Vasić 2003: 64, Taf. 24/367). Likewise, Grave No. 3/1988 should be noted, in

which a bronze knife with decorated bone handle plating together with channelled pottery was also found (Ђорђевић 2019: 122, 124, Fig. 8, 9, 11). A. Đorđević accepts the common dating for the Hinova-Mala Vrbica-Balta Verde for this grave, which falls within the time frame between 1100 and 1000 BC (Jevtić, Vukmanović 1996: 290; Ђорђевић 2019: 134;).

Ever since the first graves were discovered at the site of Konopište, M. Vukmanović realised the importance of *Peschiera* type of fibulae and highlighted them in several articles. A double-looped fibula of the *Peschiera* type, decorated with parallel incisions was recorded in Grave No. 1/1980 together with a group of channelled vessels (Вукмановић 1983: 44, сл. 1).<sup>1</sup> Regarding the context itself, Grave No. 1/1980 represents a cenotaph, as no remains of the deceased were recorded in it, but solely unburnt femurs of a pig that lay on the bottom of the pit.<sup>2</sup> The fibula was located at the bottom of the pit, next to the largest vessel, which led A. Đorđević to the conclusion that the fibula served as a safety buckle for the textile in which the vessel was wrapped (Đorđević, forthcoming). R. Vasić agrees with the dating proposed by M. Vukmanović, who attributes the example from the site of Konopište to examples with triangular scheme fibulae, and dates them to the Ha A1 period (Вукмановић 1983: 46; Vasić 1999:

<sup>1</sup> The group consisted of five biconical vessels and two cup-ladles decorated with channels.

<sup>2</sup> The data on the context was revisited in the documentation of the National Museum by A. Đorđević.

15, Taf. 2/20), meaning the Late Bronze Age, according to R. Vasić (Vasić 1999: 16). Grave No. 2/1981 contained 8 vessels, of which three biconical ones served as urns, and the fourth contained no remains of the deceased, just one cup-ladle. A *pyraunos*, two conical bowls, of which one contained the remains of the cremated deceased and the other an unburnt pig bone, were also recorded

sewing needle with flaps. Bones of an adult together with a bronze pin of the *Flachkegeligem* type were recorded in the conical bowl. A fibula of the *Peschiera* type with one loop and a preserved twisted bow was located on the bottom level of the pit, next to the largest biconical vessel, which contained no human remains (Вукмановић, Поповић 1984: 87, сл. 59; Вукмановић 1983: 45, сл. 2;

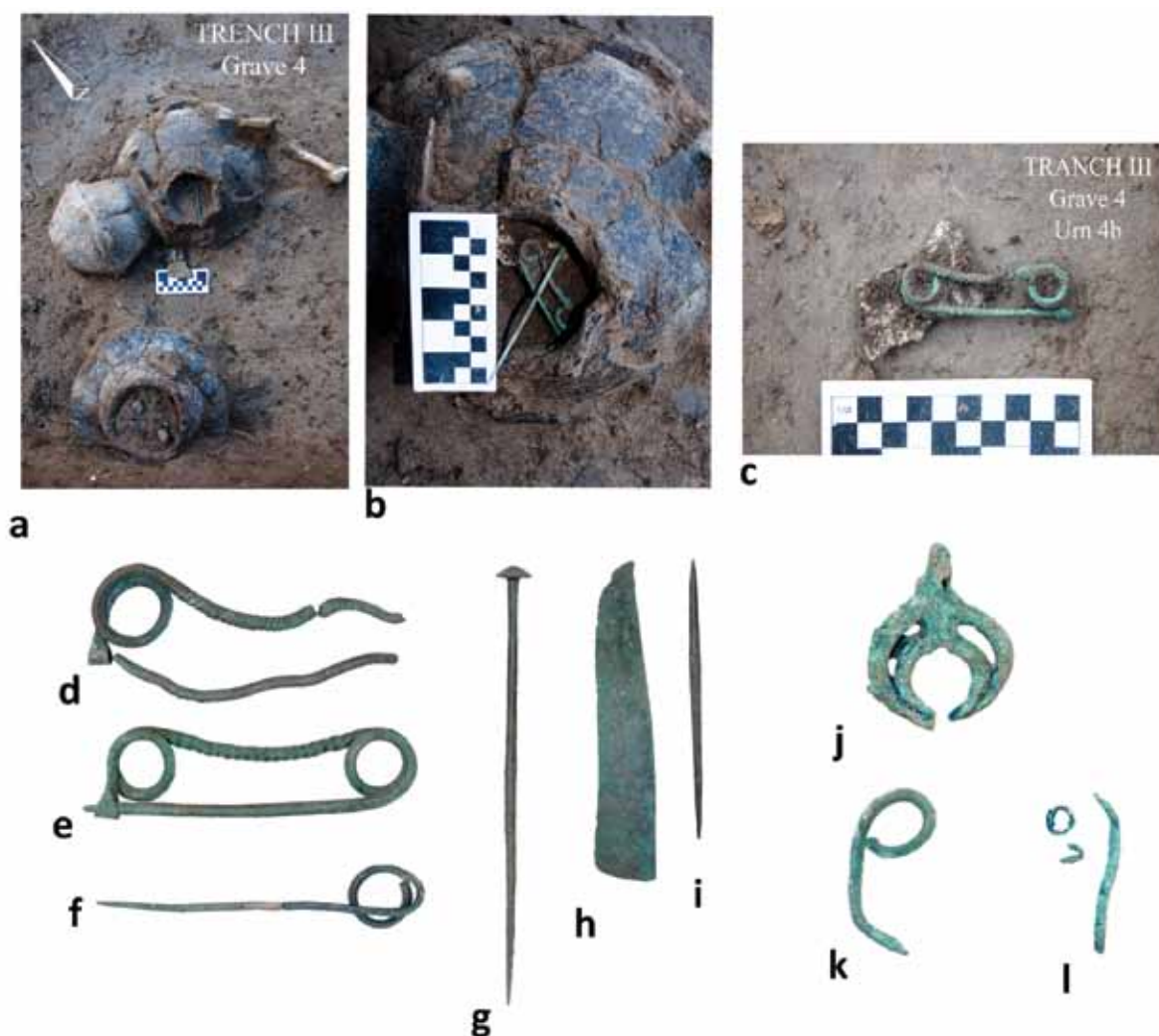


Fig. 2. Bronze finds from the grave 4/2015.

within the grave. An infant and adult were buried in urn 1, and a fragmented blade of a knife was recorded as a burial gift.<sup>3</sup> The remains of a young adult and a bronze pin with a conical head were recorded in urn 2. Urn 4 contained the remains of an adult female, a child aged between 5 and 10, and a new-born. The grave goods consisted of a

Vasić 1999: 15, Taf. 2/15). The fibula from Grave No. 2 is dated to the same period as the example from Grave No. 1 (Vasić 1999: 16). Based on the context, it can be assumed that this fibula is also connected with the process of wrapping the textile around the vessel.

As highlighted above, renewed excavations at the Konopište necropolis were conducted in 2014/2015, when a total of four new graves were recorded (Ђорђевић 2019; Ђорђевић, *forthcom-*

<sup>3</sup> The anthropological analyses were conducted by M. Roksandić.

ing). One of the graves was attributed to the Žuto Brdo-Girila Mare group, two graves were attributed to the Gava culture, and the urn from Grave No. 1/2015 could belong to the Late Iron Age necropolis, although the upper part of the urn is missing. Grave Nos. 1, 2, and 3 were located in the central part, and Grave No. 4/2015 was located in the southern part of the necropolis.

The context of Grave No. 2/2015, with an inventory counting a total of nine vessels, is particularly interesting for the reconstruction of the burial ritual at the Konopište necropolis. Burnt bones of the deceased were recorded both in the urn and within the pit, while all the other vessels represented grave goods. Save for the typical characteristics of the necropolises within the Danube region, the grave possesses certain analogies with the urns at the Szeremle necropolis (Bóna 1975, Taf. 255). Grave No. 3/2015 is represented with two biconical channelled vessels, of which the smaller one served as an urn, three so-called turban dishes (bowls), and one cup-ladle. Besides the bones of the cremated deceased, a decorative pin of the *Flachkegeligem* type (Vasić 2003: 64) and a sharpening stone were also recorded, while the larger biconical vessel contained a cup-ladle with a missing handle (Đorđević, *forthcoming*).

The most important finds for the subject of this paper are those that originate from Grave No. 4/2015, comprised of three biconical channelled vessels, of which two served as urns, one bowl on a high conical foot, one channelled so-called turban dish (bowl), a small beaker and one cup-ladle with a channelled handle (Fig. 3). An adult male was buried within urn 4a,<sup>4</sup> and the grave goods comprised one bronze awl with a square cross-section (Fig. 2/i), a fragmented blade of a single-edged knife (Fig. 2/h), and a fragmented pin of a looped fibula (Fig. 2/f). Judging by its dimensions, the pin with a loop would most likely belong to the *Peschiera* type. None of the bronze objects from urn 4a were burnt on the funeral pyre.

A decorative pin of the *Flachkegeligem* type (Fig. 2/b, g) and a fibula of the *Peschiera* type (Fig. 2/b, c, e) were recorded on top of the infill of urn 4b, above the cremated remains of the deceased. The pin is dated to the transition between the Ha

A1 and Ha A2 periods (Vasić 2003: 64). The first fibula from this urn was, due to corrosion, fused with a large fragment of a cranial bone (Fig. 2/c), which is uncommon for graves with cremated deceased in the Danube region. An almost identical fibula was recorded within the urn infill, below the previous one (Fig. 2/d). Partially burnt femurs of sheep and goat and a rib of an unidentified mammal were recorded next to the urn.

A cup-ladle was recorded within the biconical vessel 4c (Fig. 3/c). Besides the abovementioned bowls, a small biconical beaker filled with animal bones (Fig. 3/f), a crescent-shaped bronze pendant, and several fragments of bent bronze wire were all part of the funeral ritual (Fig. 2/j, k, l). The crescent-shaped pendant is analogous with the find from Svračkovo in Western Serbia (Zotović 1985: 42, T. X/11) and with the pin fastener from the Vršac-Majdan hoard, which is dated to the Ha A period (Рашијски 1988: 22, 27, Сл. 2/16, 17). Other fragments of bronze from the biconical beaker most likely belong to a decayed chainlet composed of small hoops made of thin wire.

As an important and typologically relevant piece of attire, the *Peschiera* fibulae are characterised by an elongated body or bow and loops with a large diameter, which is represented on examples from the Konjuša hoard, where some pieces exceed 20 cm in length (Валтровић 1890: 74-79, T. VII; Vasić 1999). R. Vasić notes that the over-emphasised dimensions do not necessarily reflect the specific status of their owners (Vasić 1999: 16).<sup>5</sup> Various decorative techniques and motifs that characterised those fibulae through time did not affect their function. O. Betzler assumes that the large dimensions and the tendency to bend the bow were connected with the increase in the volume of textiles that the fibula could envelop (Beltzer 1974: 12). The initial form of those fibulae did not vary significantly over time, from the elongated forms (Konjuša) to the fibulae of the triangular scheme, which was minutely analysed by O. Dorer in his study of their genesis (Dorer 2008: 544 - 546, Abb. 3). According to his version of shape modification, it could be concluded that the fibulae from Konopište and Vajuga are similar but do not represent the type with a triangular scheme fibula, as

<sup>4</sup> The anthropological analyses of the remains of the deceased recorded during the 2015 campaign were conducted by S. Stefanović.

<sup>5</sup> R. Vasić supports those claims with analogies from graves of Knossos.

those are closer to the standard elongated form, resembling a “fiddle”, with two large loops.

Besides the fact that they are underrepresented on necropolises with cremated deceased in South-eastern Europe, the *Peschiera* fibulae with a twisted bow from urn 4b in Grave No. 4/2015 at the Konopište necropolis are rare finds both in the Balkans and the Apennines (Dorer 2008: Abb. 2).

The new finds from the Konopište necropolis refute K. Kilian’s claims that they were not usually worn in pairs (Killian 1985: 152, Abb. 1; Vasić 1999: 16). Likewise, according to the overall form and the shape of the foot, those examples are parallel solely to the fibula from the cenotaph at the Vajuga-Pesak necropolis and a fibula of unknown origin from Korbovo

(Вукмановић 1983: 45, сл. 2; Kilian 1985: Abb. 10/3). Some authors refer to *Peschiera* fibulae as *Schlangenfibeltype* (Doner 2008: 543), and others define them as *Wiege* fibulae, which would appear in *Urnenfelder* necropolises in Southern Pannonia several centuries later (Kilian 1985: 191). The twisted bow that tends to bend, connects the examples from the Konopište necropolis with snake-shaped fibulae that are common during the final phases of the *Urnenfelder* horizon in a slightly altered form; such is the case with the site of Doroslovo. With all of the aforementioned, the assumption proposed by K. Kilian, that the examples from Konopište and Vajuga most likely represent a local form developed on the existing interactions between Italy and Greece, seems the most plausible (Kilian 1985: 200).

In terms of chronology, M. Guma separates the Hinova-Mala Vrbica into two phases. One of the chronological references for the later phase of the group is the *Peschiera* fibulae, while the occurrence of bronze knives in graves is connected to the earlier phase (Guma 1995: 108). The fact that urn 4a of grave 4/2015 contained a blade of a bronze knife, and urn 4b two *Peschiera* fibulae, questions the proposed chronology. Considering the

funerals were simultaneous and that there are no indicators of a secondary burial within the grave, the stated chronological references are contradictory. According to the finds of *Peschiera* fibulae, grave 4/2015 corresponds to the later phase of the Hinova-Mala Vrbica group, dated to the Ha A2-Ha B1, meaning the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 10<sup>th</sup> century BC (Guma 1995: 109).

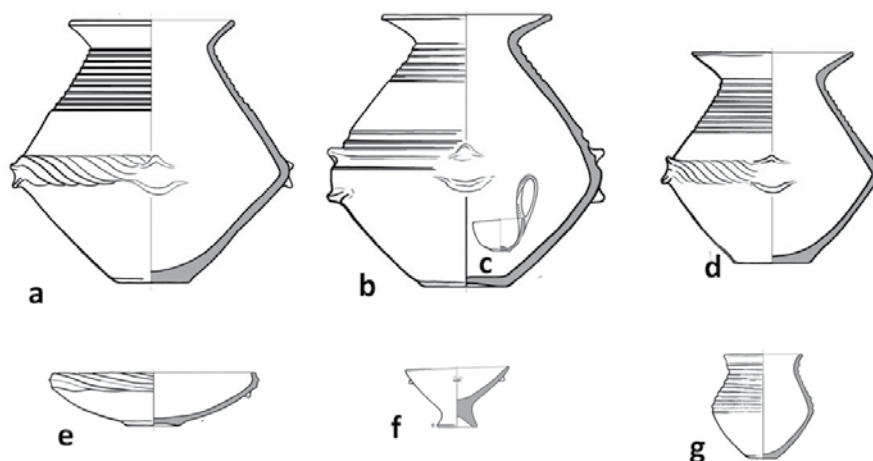


Fig. 3. Konopište necropolis, grave 4/2015, pottery finds.

To reconstruct the Bronze Age burial ritual at the site of Konopište, several characteristics of the context of Grave No. 4/2015 should be taken into consideration. Besides the precisely determined position of the *Peschiera* fibulae within urn 4b, the taphonomy of the remains of the female deceased buried within the urn should be examined as well. In the context of the Bronze Age, there are examples where the remains of the deceased were carefully selected from the funeral pyre and often purified with water. On the other hand, some examples indicate that the remains laid in the urns were following the anatomical position of the body, meaning that the extremities were deposited on the bottom, thorax bones above them, and cranial bones on top. In such cases, the urn served as a medium that simulated the return of the deceased into its primordial form, a symbolic reincarnation (Rebau-Salsbury 2010: 67). Such funeral practice can be observed at the Late Bronze Age necropolis of Cottbus (Brandenburg, Germany), where almost all of the body parts of the cremated deceased are deposited within urns, following the anatomical articulation (Cherzo-Roman, Williams 2014: 243). Considering the remains of the deceased from urn 4b at the site of Konopište could not be separated by



anthropologists and that there were no conditions to recover the remains in layers (Миладиновић-Радмиловић 2009: 11), our assumptions on the abovementioned ritual practice remains open for the time being. However, the fibula merged with the large fragment of cranial bone within the very top of the urn remains the most intriguing find.

The primary function of *Peschiera* fibulae was as a buckle for Late Bronze Age clothing, although a peculiar occurrence was recorded within the ritual practice at the site of Konopište, based on the detailed analyses of archaeological materials and documentation from previous excavations. Besides the two mentioned fibulae from urn 4b of Grave No. 4/2015, other examples of *Peschiera* fibulae were recorded in positions that indicated that they served to secure the textiles that sealed the mouth of biconical vessels without the remains of any deceased. Those were exclusively recipients in which a cup-ladle was laid as a grave good, which indicates a more complicated process within the ritual burial practice at the necropolis, and whose importance is emphasised with a fibula that had the function of “sealing” the recipient without human remains. It remains open whether the “doubled ceramic sets” from the Konopište graves could be connected with the funeral process of rinsing the remains from the funeral pyre, where a cup-ladle would serve as an instrument for water and a large biconical vessel as a recipient for rinsing the osteological remains, or that they represent the remains of a libation ritual (Ђорђевић 2019: 129).

Translated by Ognjen Mladenović

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**Staša Babić**

Department of Archaeology  
Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade

## DIMENSIONS OF A SITE – THE CASE OF VAJUGA<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** The *archaeological site* is one of the basic concepts in the discipline, aimed at demarcating the spatial limits of research. More often than not, a chronological dimension is added, creating distinct units of observation. Sites usually bear the names of the current settlements in their vicinity. The text discusses the ways in which separate units of analysis are discerned, on the particular example of the village of Vajuga (Eastern Serbia), mentioned in the archaeological literature for over a century. Here, various traces of past occupation were registered on several occasions and systematised into separate units (*sites*), according to varying disciplinary standards. Finally, the role of fieldwork and the immediate experience of a *site* in the training and subsequent professional identity of archaeologists is discussed.

**Keywords:** archaeological site, spatial/chronological determination, horizontal/vertical stratigraphy, fieldwork, training of archaeologists

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One of the basic terms that archaeologists use, and yet rarely reflect upon, is that of the *archaeological site*. Standard manuals of field research offer quite broad definitions, such as: “*that is where people have done things in the past and left some residue of having done something*” (Drewett 1999: 17), or state that “*any place where human beings have established themselves, even momentarily, is considered a site*” (Joukowsky 1980: 38). However, in actual research practice these broad strokes are somewhat narrowed and archaeologists apply this term, more or less intuitively, to denote an area of special interest, primarily on the grounds of the high density of registered traces of previous occupation (cf. e.g., Bintliff, Snodgrass 1988; Foley 1981; see below). On the other hand, even the volumes setting the path to reflexive reconsideration of fieldwork practices and their theoretical implications, such as those written by Gavin Lucas (2001, 2012) or Ian Hodder (1999), although extensively discussing a wide range of decisions taken during excavation in the field in relation to their epistemological implications, do not dwell

upon this very basic issue: when and why a plot of land is considered to “become” an archaeological site? How are these places different from any other spot in the landscape, leading professionals to investigate, process and make them reference points for further research? What practices are enacted by archaeologists that single out some locations as those of particular importance?

The aim of this paper is not to offer a definite answer to these seemingly simple questions, but to demonstrate some of the potentially productive lines of inquiry they may initiate. The example will be discussed of the archaeological site(s) near the village of Vajuga, in whose excavation I was fortunate to take a part, under the direction of Mirjana Vukmanović and Petar Popović, and where I received my first training in many aspects of archaeological fieldwork. The lessons I was given during these summers in the early 1980s have formed firm cornerstones of my subsequent professional life (Babić 2018: 127-130) and I remain deeply grateful for the willingness and patience with which I was introduced to many dimensions of an archaeological site. This experience made me aware of the various modes in which sites partake in the construction of the professional identities of archaeologists.

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<sup>1</sup> Tatjana Cvjetičanin, Monika Milosavljević, Jasna Vuković, Predrag Novaković, Aleksandar Palavestra and Perica Špehar kindly provided help and advice during the course of writing this paper.

## Surface

*“Sites must first be discovered before they can be explored.”*  
(Cherry 2005: 249)

Vajuga is a village in the region of Ključ in eastern Serbia, situated on the right bank of the Danube river, in the municipality of Kladovo. This spot was first brought to archaeologists’ attention at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when Miloje M. Vasić mentioned it in his seminal paper (Vasić 1912: 13), introducing his comprehensive interpretive system of the remote Balkan past, to be elaborated in the following years (Milosavljević, Palavestra 2016; Palavestra 2020). The aim of this text, stated very clearly by Vasić himself, was to establish the area over which the “*cultural traces of the Iron Age in Serbia*” are spread (Vasić 1912: 2, Tab. I). Although the title of the text indicates a larger geographical scope (“*Serbia*”), it was based solely upon the material registered along the Danube Valley from Vinča, by Belgrade to Radujevac, a village in the vicinity of the town of Negotin. The bulk of the objects was acquired by a local “*antiquities collector Miladin Vukašinović*”, and Vasić himself paid a short visit to the region in 1907, when he observed “*the location of the finding spots, the mode of discovery of the remnants and, where possible, the appearance and character of their cultural layer*” (Vasić 1912: 2). In order to link the distribution of the registered finds into a coherent pattern, Vasić produced the list of places proceeding in an orderly fashion along the Danube Valley, to reach Ključ and the village of Vajuga. In the article, this particular place is represented by seven ceramic fragments, three attributed as fragments of clay figurines and four as parts of pottery vessels (Vasić 1912: 13; Tab. IX – X, No. 78 – 83), considered by Vasić as “*characteristic occurrences*” of the Iron Age (Vasić 1912: 1) and, therefore, included in his survey on the matter. All the fragments are described, measured and photographed. However, no data is given on the more precise location(s) of these finds, apart from the general introductory remarks that “*the material is collected either on the surface of the sites or in their base, on the Danube bank, where they were washed down by water*” (Vasić 1912: 2, underlined by S.B.). No detailed information is given as to the

criteria according to which some locations along the river were identified as *sites*, and it may well be assumed that all the places where surface finds were registered were considered as such.

This was the period of the establishment of professional archaeology in these parts and Miloje M. Vasić was certainly one of the most important figures in this endeavour. Notwithstanding the particularities of his interpretation of the Balkan prehistory (Milosavljević, Palavestra 2016; Palavestra 2020), his attempt to plot the identified archaeological material and to discern the regularities in its spatial and chronological groupings is very much in accordance with the culture-historical agenda of the time (Milosavljević 2020). This mode of organising and mastering the information by projecting chronological attributions onto spatial coordinates has a long tradition in the study of the past. Although customarily considered to be one of the most neutral tools of archaeological reasoning, this procedure in fact stems from a number of theoretical premises, linking human behaviour to the distribution of its material traces in lawlike generalisations (Bandović 2017). One of the most important results of this practice of archaeological plotting onto maps is the deeply ingrained concept of *cultural group* as the basic temporal and spatial unit of archaeological research, particularly under the culture-historical paradigm (Babić 2015a). In his attempt to discern the “*cultural traces of the Iron Age*” (Vasić 1912: 2) along the Danube Valley, Vasić was diligently working towards establishing one such unit, although not explicitly naming it. The village of Vajuga thus became one of the reference points on the archaeological map of the Iron Age, since Vasić judged that the stylistic characteristics of the sherds found there represent typical artefacts attributed to the period whose “*area of spread*” (Vasić 1912: 2) he was intent on delineating.

However, this initial information did not lead to further research on the location, and for decades to come Vajuga remained a dot on the map of the Iron Age finds drawn by Vasić, until 1971, when the right Danube bank surrounding the region of Ključ was extensively surveyed (Vasić, Janković 1971). This archaeological activity was brought about by the planned construction works on the hydroelectric plant bridging the river near the village of Kusjak by the town of Negotin, and the expected rise of the river course, due to the construction of the res-

ervoir of the dam. Previously collected data on the region of Ključ indicated that this was an area of particular interest for archaeologists and a survey was organised in order to determine the plan of rescue excavations in the locations endangered by the increase of the water level. Half a century after Vasić collated the evidence primarily collected by an amateur – Miladin Vukašinović, this time the survey was conducted by the archaeologists themselves and the criteria for their identification of potential places of interest were somewhat different. Since this project was initiated by a wider context – the pending huge state-sponsored construction works, and primarily oriented towards the protection of the archaeological record from flooding, the main goal was to identify all the potential locations for further research, regardless of the chronological and/or cultural attributions (*cf.* Cherry 2005: 250). While Vasić had endeavoured to establish the geographical span of a particular archaeological phenomenon, determined by the stylistic qualities of artefacts, this time the aim was to collect and register *all* archaeologically pertinent traits over the area – the focus was not on chronology, but rather on geography. The report published after this field prospection states the “*huge importance of future archaeological work in this region*”, since “*the survey of the Danube bank from Kladovo to Prahovo emphasized once more... the existence of complex sites in the region, encompassing various periods, where it will be possible to monitor almost continually the cultural development from the earliest agricultural cultures to the late Middle Ages*” (Vasić, Janković 1971: 112, 113, underlined by S.B.).

In this context, Vajuga once more caught the attention of archaeologists (Vasić, Janković 1971). This time, however, two separate locations (sites?) are identified in the village and its vicinity: the first is Selište, with traces of a possibly mediaeval necropolis (skeletal remains) and fragments of “*various periods – developed metal age, late Antiquity and Middle Ages*”; the second is Blato, where “*building constructions from Antiquity*” were registered, as well as another series of potsherds dated into periods of the Neolithic and Bronze Ages (Vasić, Janković 1971: 110).<sup>2</sup> Since

Vasić had not provided a clear indication of the precise location where the material he attributed to the Iron Age was collected, it is not possible to conclude how these two newly identified positions relate to his vague reference to the village in general. Be that as it may, in this second appearance of the village in archaeological literature the “*image resolution*” is higher and there are now two dots on the mental map<sup>3</sup>, indicating “*the existence of complex settlements with the material from various periods*” (Vasić, Janković 1971: 107). While Vasić was explicitly searching for traces of the Iron Age and it was appropriate for his purpose to note that there are indeed the sherds corresponding to his quest, the later surveyors had a different task: to establish the wider archaeological relevance of certain locations. In this respect, they repeatedly emphasised the significance of the locations where a *complex* archaeological record may be expected, diverse in cultural and chronological terms, enabling inferences on *continual cultural development*. Consequently, they identified two locations in the region of the village, with differing chronological attributions of the collected material, but equally indicative of a possibly repeated (continuous?) presence at the location. The change in the perspective, thus, resulted in the differences in the maps produced. Finally, the fact that in 1971 two distinct locations were registered under the same toponym of Vajuga, indicating that the researchers posited some kind of demarcation between them, points to the intricacies of ascertaining the boundaries of a *site* (Cherry 2005: 251). The situation becomes even more complex when traces of previous occupations overlap, making it difficult to equate one particular spatial coordinate with its straightforward chronological dimension (Babić 2015). One possible way to solve the dilemma of the exact limits of a site and its contents is to change the research strategy and explore its other dimensions.

<sup>2</sup> In the illustrative part of the report from this survey the finds from Vajuga are represented by a sole pottery vessel described in the caption as an “*urn*” (T. LXII, 14).

<sup>3</sup> Somewhat strange is the fact that the report on this survey does not include an actual map indicating the precise locations of the place-names listed in the text.

## Depth

*“When man made his advent on the Earth, he began a great revolution in the processes of stratification which then existed and were carried out by natural agencies.”*

(Harris 1979: xii)

The archaeological activity in the area of Ključ, triggered by the construction of the Kusjak dam, became particularly intense by the beginning of the 1980s (Bikić, Šarić 2017: 70, 71; Cvjetičanin 2020). A massive research project was launched, based upon all the data previously collected by surveys. Starting from the observations gathered from the surface, the next step of the investigation was carefully planned and some of the previously identified places of interest were now chosen for further work (Bikić, Šarić 2017: 71). Vajuga was one such place and in the summer of 1980, the archaeological crews set off to investigate the situation in the field: *“After a detailed prospection, it was clear to a great extent what cultural groups are the most represented, so the immediate task was to find the sites (with a closed archaeological layer) belonging to them”* (Premk, Popović, Bjelajac 1984: 111, underlined by S.B.). In order to advance the archaeological knowledge, a new criterion was now added to observations – that of *“closed cultural layers”*, implying undisturbed deposits of material traces of past human activities over a certain area (Lucas 1999: 148 f., 2012: 74 f.). Although in archaeological theory and practice some very fervent discussions have taken place over the issue of subsequent *disturbances* (Babić 2015), there are solid reasons archaeologists prefer to rely on evidence collected from the contexts judged to be least disturbed by ensuing events. Principally, this ensures more reliable observations of stratigraphic and chronological sequences of collected artefacts (Harris 1979: 92-95). Indeed, from the very start of the field prospecting in the area, efforts have been made to establish *“where possible, the appearance and character of ... cultural layer”* (Vasić 1912: 2). Apparently, though, it was not possible to obtain conclusive evidence of the *“character of cultural layers”* in the area of Vajuga without moving *from surface to depth*, thus adding another dimension to the *archaeological record (sensu Lucas*

2012), so the decision was made to start the next phase of research – that of test excavation.

Consequently, the fieldwork campaigns of 1980 in the area of the village established two locations in the zone of the village where reliable information on stratigraphic sequences could be gathered, and new place names were introduced to identify them. In the first case – **Karaula** (Lj. Popović 1984: 109), the previously recorded surface finds of Late Roman pottery sherds were supplemented by observations of the configuration of the terrain and additionally confirmed by the fact that the location had been included in the list of Roman fortifications compiled by Felix Kanitz (Kostić 2011: 227-228), one of the first authorities on the subject (Cvjetičanin 2011). On the grounds of the architectural remains, pottery, glass and metal objects retrieved, the test excavations established that there was a military fortification at that location, with 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> centuries dates confirmed, and that further and more detailed fieldwork on the area may produce *“even more important discoveries”* (Lj. Popović 1984: 109). Vajuga-Karaula thus became a *site* with a number of pertinent features: established and fixed spatial and chronological parameters, confirmed both by the archaeological excavations and by the written testimony of the esteemed authority of Kanitz. The results of the ensuing excavations have never been published *in extenso*, but the Late Roman material from Karaula has been included in comprehensive studies of Roman pottery in the region (Cvjetičanin 2006: 134; 2016: 127-129) and specialised catalogues of museum exhibitions (I. Popović 1994: 342). Finally, although the original report from 1984 emphasised the Roman component of the material, the finds from the site most frequently mentioned in subsequent literature are those from a grave dated into the Migration Period (Milinković 2006: 32-34; V. Popović 1987: 129-132, Špehar 2012: 142).

The second campaign of test excavations in 1980 was conducted on a 1,100-metre-long strip of the Danube bank, upstream of Karaula, identified as **Vajuga-Pesak** (Premk, Popović, Bjelajac 1984). Since, in this case, the configuration of the terrain did not offer any conclusive indication of previous occupation, a larger area was researched and a more diverse pattern was revealed. Based on the stylistic and typological traits of the artefacts gathered, several distinctive groups of finds were

identified, cited in the report in chronological order. Five graves with cremated human remains, dated into the periods of the Bronze and Iron Ages, were interpreted as a part of a larger necropolis and posed questions about the complex relationships between the cultural groups of Žuto Brdo and Gava (Premk, Popović, Bjelajac 1984: 114). In another trench, some 500 metres from these graves, a distinctive construction built in gravel and pebbles was identified, with pottery fragments indicative of another, stylistically and chronologically discrete Iron Age cultural group, the Basarabi, also registered in two adjacent trenches (Premk, Popović, Bjelajac 1984: 114, 115). Finally, in two locations, separated by c. 400 metres, two groups of graves were identified, dated into the Middle Ages on the grounds of the mode of burial (skeletal remains, body position, scarcity of grave offerings) and rare artefacts (pottery, parts of jewellery) spanning from the 10<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> centuries (Premk, Popović, Bjelajac 1984: 115, 116). So, during this test excavation at Vajuga no less than four separate locations along the river were registered, with stylistically, typologically and chronologically identifiable archaeological contexts. However, should all these diverse groups of finds, stretching over more than a kilometre, be considered as one single *site*, marked by a single toponym: Vajuga-Pesak, or as four distinctive *sites*, linked in space and investigated during the same fieldwork campaign, but separated by their chronological determinations? Since “*the immediate task was to find the sites*” (Premk, Popović, Bjelajac 1984: 111), it may safely be assumed that the researchers considered them to be separate units, although encompassed under the name of the modern village or, more precisely, the stretch of the sandy (“pesak”) Danube bank on its outskirts.

The actions that followed confirm that this was indeed the case and in 1982, the systematic fieldwork at Vajuga-Pesak started, focused on one archaeological feature – the platform built of pebbles and containing the traces of funerary practices. The material registered during the previous research is mentioned, but relegated to a footnote (Popović, Vukmanović 1992: 358, footnote 3). In the process of selection, the section of the landscape was singled out as the most productive in terms of potential knowledge that may be gained by a more detailed approach. This is a hard choice that archaeologists

constantly face: guided by the information gathered from the surface, aided where possible by test excavations and/or written record, we decide what particular places are the most suitable for further research. Constraints are numerous, from financial to logistical, and have to be mitigated by scholarly rigorous considerations of the most productive course of further action in the field (*cf.* Cherry 2005: 249, *passim*). The platform at Vajuga-Pesak outweighed other features registered at this location and the systematic excavations aimed at exploring its purpose (Popović, Vukmanović 1998: 11) lasted from 1982 until 1989, resulting in several interim reports (Popović, Vukmanović, Radojčić 1986; Popović, Vukmanović 1992), and the comprehensive monograph published nine years after the fieldwork was finished (Popović, Vukmanović 1998). This detailed account of the information gathered starts with the reference to prior research at the location, acknowledging both the 1970 survey and the records by Vasić. However, of seven artefacts listed in his account of the Vajuga finds (Vasić 1912: 13; Tab. IX – X, No. 78 – 83), only one is mentioned: the one numbered as fig. 85 (Popović, Vukmanović 1998: 11, footnote 2). This is again the consequence of scrupulous selection; since only this potsherd is indeed correctly dated by Vasić into the Iron Age and corresponds with the results of the extensive research of the pebble platform. The remaining six fragments, also included by Vasić into his list of Iron Age finds, are now stylistically and chronologically attributed to the Bronze Age – the period which is registered on the location both by the 1971 survey and the 1980 test excavations, but not pursued further. The now well-known chronological inaccuracy of Vasić’s interpretation of the Balkan past (Milosavljević, Palavestra 2016; Palavestra 2020) is tacitly corrected by taking into account only the corresponding evidence, and not commented upon. At the same time, the finds now firmly dated as the Bronze Age artefacts were registered on the spot in all the instances of archaeological visits to the region of Vajuga, from 1907 up to the works of 1980. However, in the extensive research plan launched in 1982, the focus was on the pebble platform and its Iron Age contents. Other traces of human activity at the location are duly registered, but are not considered to be the key feature of the now firmly established *site*.

## Focusing

Let us now briefly review the contexts in which the name of the village of Vajuga has appeared in the archaeological literature. It was first introduced by Miloje Vasić in his 1912 review of the finds along the Danube Valley he considered as manifestations of the Iron Age in the region. After a long pause, the toponym was again used in the 1971 survey, aimed at identifying the archaeologically relevant locations possibly endangered by the rise in the river level, in order to determine the plan for future rescue excavations. This time, the objectives of the survey were not chronologically restricted to the artefacts dated into a certain period, and the results indicated a much wider range of finds, originating from the praehistoric times up to the Middle Ages. This wider scope of observation is reflected in the diversification of locations in the village zone, and the introduction of more precise naming of two particular locations where the density of surface finds was the most prominent – Selište and Blato (Vasić, Janković 1971). Ten years later, the large-scale test excavations began in the region of Ključ and the river bank in the zone of Vajuga was included in the long string of places to be researched in more detail. Two separate locations were singled out, but the toponyms established previously, in the 1971 survey, are not mentioned in either of the reports from the 1980 test excavations. Instead, two new names are introduced: Karaula and Pesak, each with its distinct chronological determination. In addition, the second location – Pesak, is further broken down into four separate units, again based upon the stylistic/typological and, hence, chronological attributions of the recovered material.

Consequently, over the course of almost nine decades, the representation of the village of Vajuga on archaeological maps has been transformed from a single dot to seven disparate locations singled out as *sites* and two of them were thoroughly investigated by systematic fieldwork campaigns. Each of these locations is characterised by its chronological determination and this temporal dimension is then projected onto the spatial distribution of artefacts. Since in almost all of the locations a very diverse set of material is identified and reported, spanning several chronological units (Bronze Age, Iron Age, Antiquity, Middle Ages), in two cases, where extensive fieldwork produced a more de-

tailed insight (Karaula and Pesak), the predominant material is emphasised. In subsequent research, the complexity of successive presences of various human groups that inhabited the area and/or buried their dead is noted, but the focus is firmly set on the segments of the past that are represented by the densest, best preserved and most scholarly challenging archaeological record. As the result, Vajuga is now present in the archaeological literature predominantly as the site representative of the burial rites of the Basarabi culture of the Iron Age and the period of the Great Migration in these parts. The Bronze Age is mentioned in passing, as well as the two mediaeval necropolises registered at Pesak. The temporal dimension is identified with the spatial one, to constitute two fully defined *archaeological sites*. Thus, it was through continued archaeological practices, each building upon the previous one, but at the same time selecting the most relevant information, introducing new criteria, new approaches and new information, that Pesak and Karaula have been established as reference points in the archaeological knowledge of the region. Other features registered in the zone of Vajuga, although repeatedly mentioned, have not been extensively researched. The Bronze Age material, or the one from the two mediaeval cemeteries at Pesak, has remained out of the focus, in the grey zone of *disturbances* (cf. Babić 2015; Lucas 2001: 60). In order to partake in these processes of identification and selection of pertinent information, leading to the determination of the spatial and temporal dimensions of a site, archaeologists need to acquire particular skills. (Fig. 1)

## ‘Skilled visions’

For over a century and a half, archaeology has been an academic profession and archaeologists are required to obtain a university degree in order to engage in research. The professionalisation in our discipline went hand in hand with other similar processes of the early modern era, when procedures were established to determine and maintain the standards necessary to vouch for the results of scientific inquiry (Babić 2018). However, along with the officially structured training track, designed to enable the introduction of new cohorts of professionals into the disciplinary knowledge, every particular academic community is structured by





Fig. 1 - Locations in the vicinity of the village of Vajuga identified by archaeologists: 1. Selište, 2. Karaula, 3. Pesak, 4. Blato (source: [https://www.topografskakarta.com/jugo/download/srb\\_25/kladovo\\_3/h253.html](https://www.topografskakarta.com/jugo/download/srb_25/kladovo_3/h253.html) , adapted by I. Vranić)

a number of less formal social norms determining the *field* of interaction, cooperation and exchange (Bourdieu 2014), whose mastering is equally important for the successful integration of newcomers. In the case of archaeology, these ‘initiation processes’ are often linked to fieldwork, where different generations, with varying levels of professional knowledge and skills, work and live together for protracted periods of time, forming temporary seasonal communities with their own rules of conduct (Edgeworth 2006; Holtorf 2006). Under these extraordinary circumstances, professional identities are constructed through various inter-generational transfers of knowledge and skills.

Fieldwork involves a series of tasks in which a researcher physically engages with the tangible objects of observation – artefacts and layers, employing his/her senses in order to ascertain the relevant qualities of the materiality before them and translate it into field notes, reports, charts, drawings and photographs, according to prescribed standards (Lucas 2001: 200 f.). This conversion of individual observations into generalised statements is the key step in conveying the information beyond the immediate and irreversible moment of the first encounter, enabling any future reference. When novices learn to discern changes in soil colour in the trench, ascribe meaning to them and express it in various standardised forms of textual and visual documentation (Lucas 2001, 2019), they are mastering “*methodologies practically embodied as sensibilities, dispositions, ways of interacting, knowing and seeing*” (Yarrow 2015: 34). The particular mode of disciplining one’s perception is

acquired through immediate practice and lived experience of these tangible, direct encounters with material traces of the past. Since the primary way of perceiving is visual, ‘*enskilment*’ is achieved through “*apprenticeship of particular skilled visions that are specific of situated practices*” (Grasseni 2007: 3). In other words, young archaeologists are in fact “*learning to see as*” (Chapman, Wylie 2016: 5; see also Palavestra 2019). The role of the experienced teacher in this *apprenticeship* is, therefore, vital for the success of this transfer of skills, and the initial habituation may remain a permanent disposition.

It was my good fortune that I was *learning to see* under the careful supervision of Petar Popović, while excavating the pebble platform at Vajuga-Pesak. Along with the skill to transfer my observations from the trench into field notes, I learned to see the dimensions of the site – its spatial parameters, the chronological attributions of the artefacts we were handling and the relevance of the information we were producing for the wider archaeological interpretation. I also learned that all sites are not the same – some remain ingrained in our own professional history and the ways in which we perceive our discipline. This vital part of archaeological experience often remains hidden from outsiders’ view and is rarely reflected upon in our scholarly writings. However, the ways in which we interpret the past, generate meaning out of objects, and ultimately produce relevant knowledge (*cf.* Lucas 2019) are decisively shaped by our own lived experience of observing and making sense of past materialities. Therefore, for me, Vajuga is not

only the site of the Basarabi necropolis, it is also the site where I wrote my first field notes and ex-

perienced that uniquely archaeological process of transforming objects into narratives.

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**Mariana Egri**

Institute of Archaeology and Art History Cluj-Napoca  
marianaegri@yahoo.com

## THE SO-CALLED ILLYRIAN-PANNONIAN *KANTHAROI*: REVIVAL OR TRANSFORMATION?

**Abstract:** The article discusses the evolution of the so-called Illyrian-Pannonian *kantharoi* throughout the Late Iron Age and the early Roman provincial period, and their relationship with the so-called Danubian *kantharoi*, which became popular in the Carpathian Basin during the early and middle LT. A number of factors are considered, including the earlier integration of indigenous communities from the southern Carpathian Basin into different regional networks of interaction and the social and cultural transformations experienced by the same communities towards the end of the Late Iron Age. Some technological influences coming first from the Scordiscan ceramic repertoire and later from the Roman one must also have contributed to the appearance of certain local variants of *kantharoi*. The analysis demonstrates that a preference for two-handled drinking vessels persisted throughout the entire Late Iron Age in much of the southern Carpathian Basin, having earlier origins, and this preference was still visible during the early Roman provincial period.

**Keywords:** Carpathian Basin; Danubian *kantharoi*; Illyrian-Pannonian *kantharoi*; invented tradition; ceramic technology; social practice.

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### Introduction

During a long and outstanding scientific career, Petar Popović has written about a wide range of topics that are important for understanding the history and archaeology of the Late Iron Age communities from the Carpathian Basin. The great majority of these studies are based on an extensive knowledge of the material culture belonging not only to these communities, but also to those from the neighbouring regions. His comprehensive book about the Scordiscan coinage (Popović 1987), as well as the articles that discuss the late Republican bronze vessels (Popović 1992), the characteristics of the latest phase of indigenous ceramic production (Popović 2000), or the circulation of amphora-shaped glass beads in the western Balkans and the southern Carpathian Basin (Popović 1997), are some of the most influential. These works are the result of his keen interest in the material evidence of the social, economic and cultural interactions between the indigenous communities from the aforementioned regions and the Mediterranean basin, and in the ways in which these shaped lo-

cal practices, customs and beliefs throughout the Late Iron Age. Consequently, a note about the emergence of the so-called Illyrian-Pannonian ceramic *kantharoi* in the southern Carpathian Basin is a fitting homage to his scientific endeavour of integrating the archaeology of this part of Europe into the wider scientific debate concerning the relationships between the Mediterranean world and temperate Europe during the Late Iron Age.

### The early Illyrian-Pannonian *kantharos*

In archaeological literature, this term usually designates a ceramic vessel that is characterised by a carinated or, more often, squat-shaped body, a flat narrow base without a foot, and two raised strap handles attached to the rim and above the maximum diameter (Fig. 1). The vessel is usually listed among the forms specific to the Iron Age indigenous ceramic repertoire from the lower Sava and Drava basins, down to the confluence with the Danube, and the north-western Balkans, hence the accompanying ethnonyms.

This particular ethnic labelling is problematic due to a number of reasons. First, both Illyricum and Pannonia are Roman geopolitical constructs that largely reflect the evolution of the Roman state's external policy between the middle Republic and the early Principate, which was neither coherent nor continuous, but adapted to various socio-political and economic circumstances, and its perception of the populations encountered during its expansion. These constructs had almost nothing to do with the pre-conquest political or ethnic layout of the regions in questions, for which the written information is rather patchy and almost exclusive-

ly coming from Greek or Latin sources (Dzino, Domić Kunić 2012; Egri 2019: 25). Second, material culture has no predetermined identity and its practical and symbolic functions and meanings are created through social practice, being continuously shaped and transformed in the process of human interaction in different social contexts (Miller 1985: 11-12; Appadurai 1986: 5 and 34; Kopytoff 1986; Hodder 2004: 69). An important consequence is that the same object may be given various meanings by different people in different contexts, underlining the necessity of a contextual analysis of archaeological evidence, which would

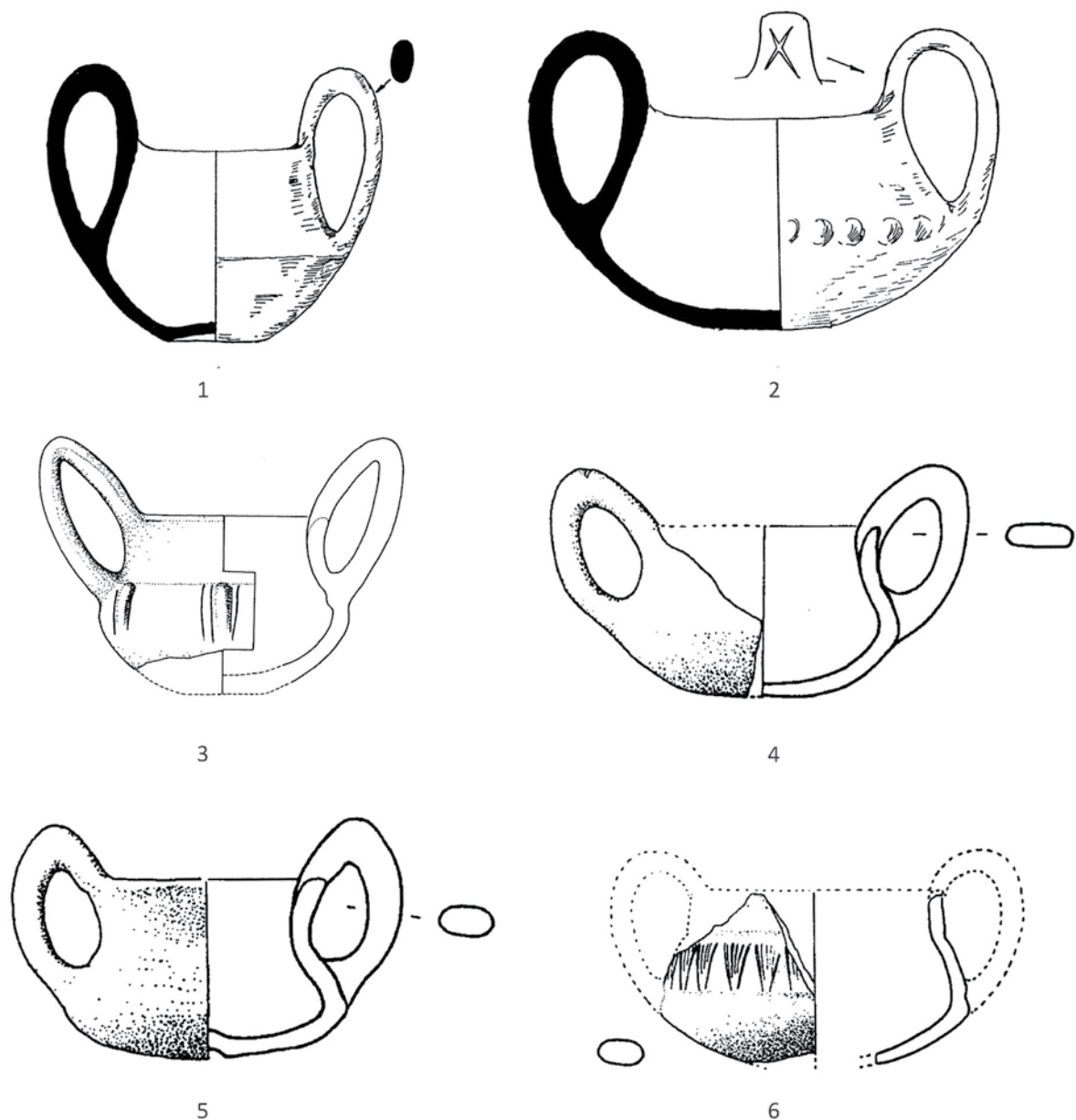


Fig. 1. Illyrian-Pannonian kantharoi, different scales: 1–2. Szentlőrincz (after Jerem 1968); 3–6. Stari Mikanovci (after Dizdar 2001 and Potrebica, Dizdar 2002).



allow the identification of the associated social and cultural practices that characterised a particular community or social group.

The vessels in question have been classified as *kantharoi* on the basis of their main morphological features, which resemble, more or less closely, different variants of the Classical and Hellenistic vessels bearing this name (Edwards 1975: 71-88; Rotroff 1997: 83-92; James 2018: 86-90; see also Rustoiu, Egri 2011: 17), though some authors have opted to identify them as pseudo-*kantharoi*. In the Greek-speaking areas of the Mediterranean basin, the form was usually associated with the cult of Dionysos, thus, with wine drinking, and some ceramic variants appeared in contexts dated to the Archaic period (Courbin 1953). Its raised handles were normally set 180° apart and allowed it to be passed between two reclining symposiasts. However, the origin of this vessel has proved to be difficult to pinpoint. At least some of the early forms seem to have a western Anatolian origin, attested by a series of Late Bronze Age two-handled ceramic vessels that resemble the so-called sessile *kantharos*, whose popularity increased during the Archaic period in the mixed cultural environment from the north-eastern Aegean area, where it was primarily encountered in cult or funerary contexts (Ilieva 2011).

Returning to the so-called Illyrian-Pannonian *kantharoi*, it has been noted that earlier variants of two-handled drinking vessels were used by different populations from the southern Carpathian Basin from the end of the Early Iron Age (Dizdar 2010, with previous bibliography). Still, the form apparently has much older local origins, attested by a series of two-handled handmade vessels found in Eneolithic and Bronze Age sites from the Central Balkans and the middle and lower Danube basin, pointing to the recurrent emergence of this kind of vessel among different indigenous populations through time. In a recent study, Petar Popović has suggested that it would be more appropriate to call these two-handled vessels Balkan *kantharoi* on account of their more likely origin and distribution area (Popović 2014).

The form continued to appear in some peripheral areas of the Drava – Sava – Danube interfluvies, which were characterised by a more heterogeneous social and cultural environment during the early and middle LT, despite the increasing popularity

of the so-called Danubian *kantharoi* in much of the Carpathian Basin. The two main types even coexisted in some settlements and cemeteries, leading to the appearance of some new variants. The persistence of the so-called Illyrian-Pannonian *kantharos* during this period could be the result of a strong indigenous ceramic tradition in the respective peripheral areas, motivated by some localised requirements that the new two-handled forms could not always fulfil, though the precise nature of them cannot be clearly identified. The existence of a certain degree of conservatism among some of the indigenous consumers could, perhaps, also be taken into consideration. Different variants of the traditional form are known from a few cemeteries, such as Zvonimirovo-Veliko polje and Kupinovo, or from settlements like Gomolava, Vinkovci-Dirov Brijeg, and Stari Mikanovci-Damića Gradina (Dizdar 2010; see also Majnarić-Pandžić 1970: pl. X/4; Jovanović, Jovanović 1988: 86, fig. 13, pl. V/12, 14, XL/5; Dizdar 2001: pl. 18/5; Potreblica, Dizdar 2002: 92-93, pl. 4/2-4).

The aforementioned Danubian *kantharoi* (Fig. 2) first appeared in the LT B2a (variant 1), becoming widespread in most of the Carpathian Basin during the LT C1 (Rustoiu, Egri 2011: 20-52, fig. 4). Their variant 1 (Dizdar 2013, 292-303, identifies two different types within this variant) imitated more or less faithfully the Hellenistic *kantharoi*, especially the calyx and the Attic straight-walled ones. Their emergence was most likely related to the increasing interactions with the Mediterranean basin, sometimes mediated by communities from the northern Balkans and Macedonia, during the period in question. The other two variants, which only appeared in the LT B2b, were created by local potters by adding two more or less raised handles to two different types of common local vessels, the tall carinated bowls and the large bitronconical or ovoid jars (see also the Pecine type and others in Dizdar 2013, 304-309, figs. 119-121). The appearance of the latter variants was most likely a response to the increasing demand of the local consumers for different kinds of two-handled drinking vessels. Their interest was spurred not only by the popularity of the Hellenistic *kantharoi*, imported or locally made, but also by the earlier widespread use of the aforementioned Illyrian-Pannonian two-handled drinking vessels. The size could have also played a role in their emergence,

since several examples belonging to variants 2 and 3 of the Danubian *kantharoi* were much larger than those belonging to variant 1, thus being able to hold a larger quantity of beverage. They could perhaps have been used for mixing and/or decanting. Accordingly, the emergence of these new variants could also have been related to the particular convivial practices in which the vessels in question were used. Still, all three variants of the Danubian *kantharoi* disappeared from settlements and cemeteries in the Carpathian Basin in the first decades of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC. A vessel recovered from the earliest level of habitation in the settlement at Gomolava is among the latest dated discoveries (Jovanović, Jovanović 1988: 126, no. 13, pl. V/13).

burnished geometric details, and two raised strap handles that were sometimes obliquely set, have commonly been found in contexts dated to the late 2<sup>nd</sup> century – 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, and even later during the first decades of the Roman provincial period (see, for example, Popović 2000: 84-85 and 96, pl. 2/2-4, 5/20-23 and 10/6; Dizdar 2013, 316-329, figs. 123-127). They visually recalled the tradi-

### The late Illyrian-Pannonian *kantharos*

During the same period, two-handled drinking vessels closely resembling the traditional Illyrian-Pannonian *kantharoi* started to appear in cemeteries and settlements from the southern Carpathian Basin, replacing the Danubian ones. A number of different regional variants have recently been identified, primarily based on the body outline (Dizdar 2013, 316-329). These seem to be particular creations of the local potters, who transformed the earlier two-handled squat-shaped vessels by incorporating certain morphological details of variant 1 of the Danubian *kantharoi*, notably the cylindrical neck, the annular base, and the more slender body, as well as the burnished geometric ornaments of the Scordiscan ceramic tableware (Fig. 3). The resulting vessels, usually made of fine grey to black fabric and having a carinated body, a cylindrical or conical neck decorated with

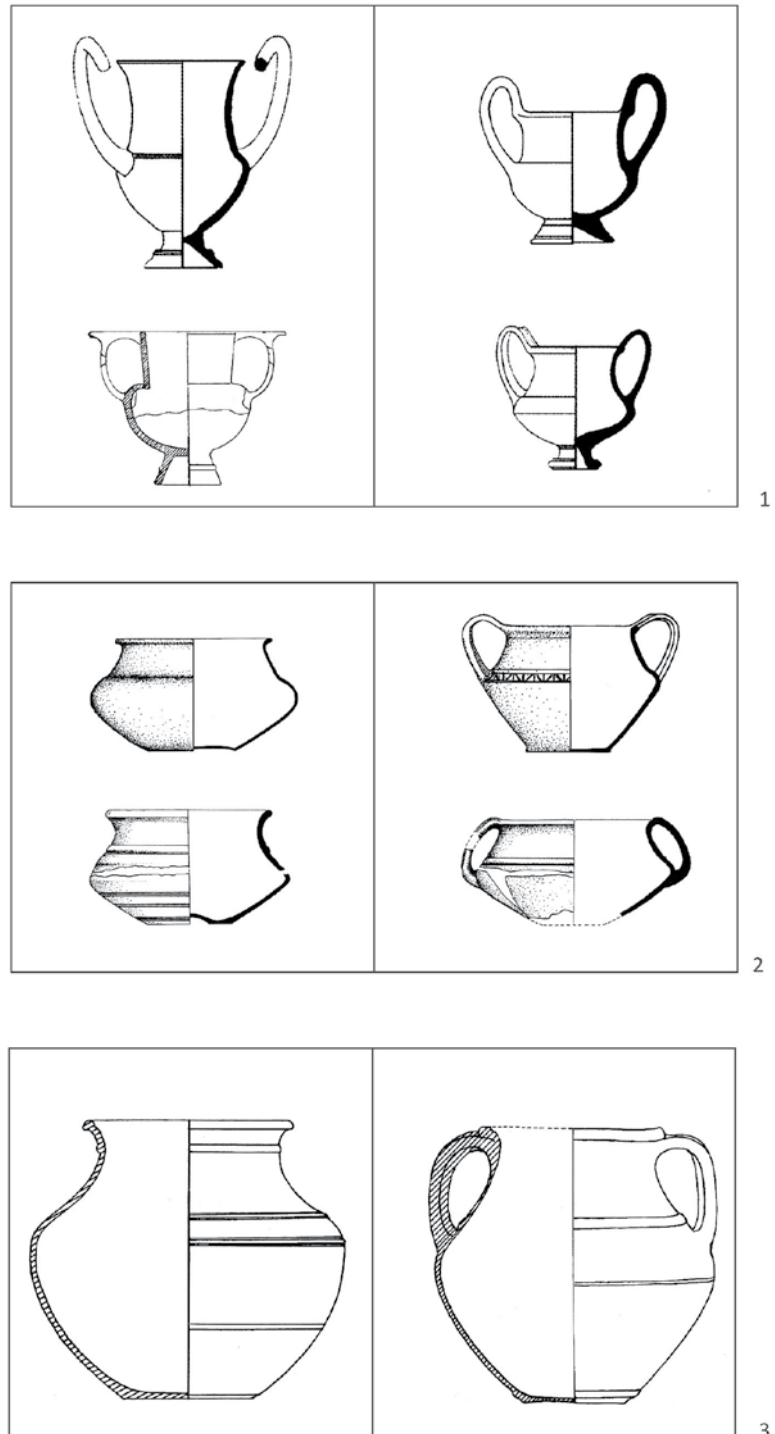


Fig. 2. Typology of the Danubian *kantharoi* (after Rustoiu, Egri 2011).



tional form, while also incorporating other more recent morphological features that entered into the local ceramic repertoire, most likely responding to the new demands of the local consumers.

Although these vessels were popular mostly in the Scordiscan territory from the Drava – Sava – Danube interfluves, several examples are also known from other areas in the Carpathian Basin, such as northern Hungary, south-western Slovakia, Crişana and Transylvania (Kelemen 1987: 205, pl. XXI/6; Bednár et al. 2005: 145, pl. 3/4, 11/1, 17/6; Crişan 1969: 140-141, pl. LXXI/1, 3-4, 6-8; another example comes from the settlement at Poiana, to the east of the Carpathians, see fig. 64; Popa, Totoianu 2000, 78-79, fig. 20, pl. XVI/1). Their wider circulation could perhaps be related to the increased individual and collective mobility that

characterised much of the Carpathian Basin, especially during the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC and at the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, though the number of finds remains small in all of these peripheral regions.

It has previously been considered that the Danubian imitations of the Hellenistic *kantharoi* disappeared from the region in question due to the diminished direct contacts with the Mediterranean world (Kruta, Szabó 1982: 58-59), while no straightforward typological relationship existed between any variant of the Hellenistic *kantharoi* and the late Illyrian-Pannonian ones (Kruta, Szabó 1982: 63, fig. 9). However, a diverse range of archaeological evidence (e.g., Rustoiu 2005: 75-81, figs. 18 and 21; Mihajlović 2014: 199-207; Dizdar, Tonc 2014: 590-592; see also Egri 2019: 65-73)

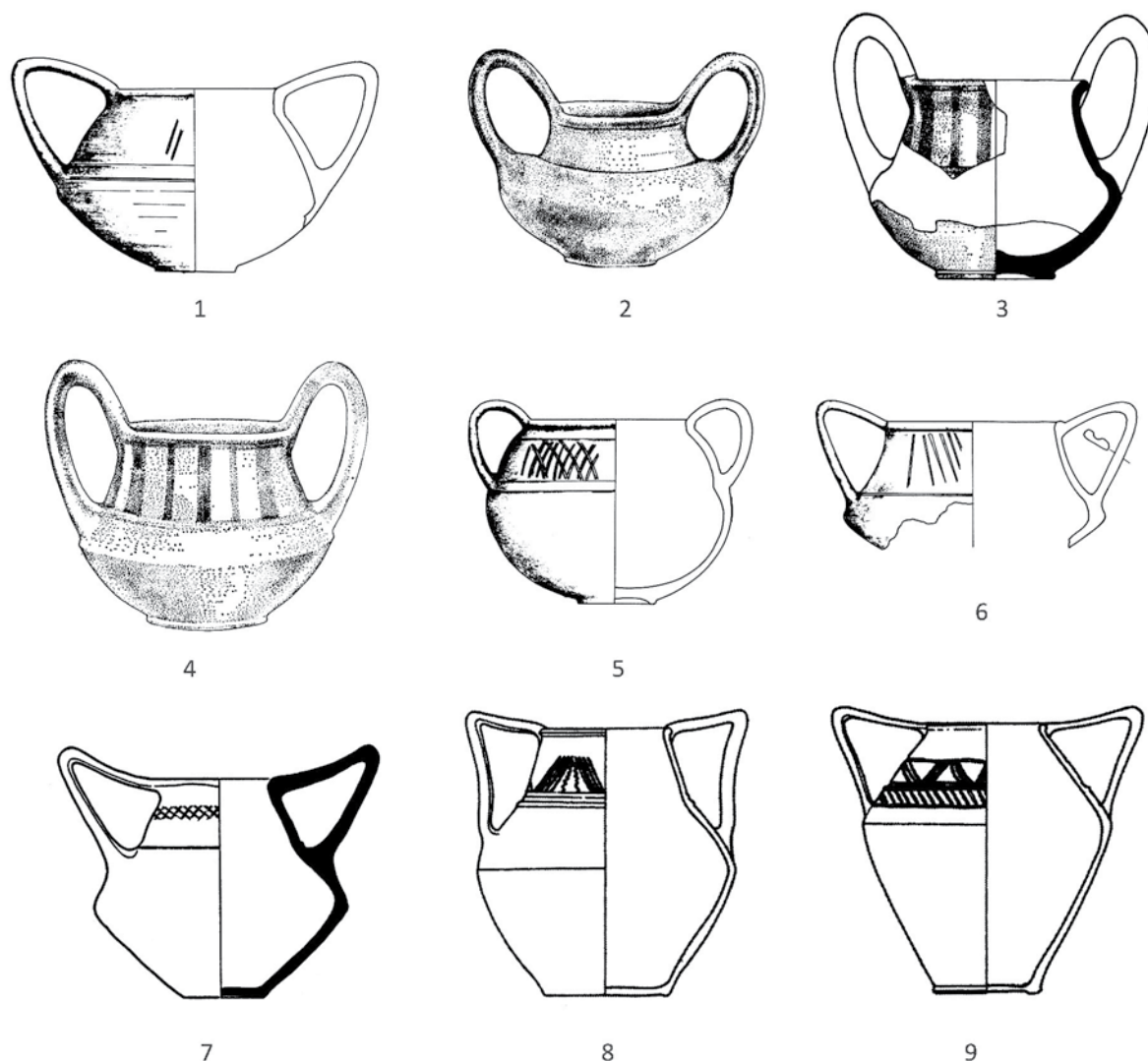


Fig. 3. Late Illyrian-Pannonian kantharoi, different scales: 1, 5–6. Židovar (after Sladić 1986); 2–4. Gomolava (after Jovanović, Jovanović 1988); 7. Mala Vrbica-Ajmana; 8–9. Kale-Krševica (after Popović 1989–90 and 2014).

demonstrates that the indigenous communities from the southern and eastern Carpathian Basin still maintained contacts with Italy and the western Balkans until the end of the Late Iron Age, either directly or through the mediation of other communities from the surrounding areas. At the same time, the supposed reduction in long-distance connectivities would not explain the concomitant disappearance of variants 2 and 3 of the Danubian *kantharoi*, which combined local and Mediterranean features.

As a matter of fact, the answer to this question lays in the principal morphological similarities between all of these forms – the deep, carinated or ovoid body and the two raised strap handles – which apparently were enough to convince the local consumers that they were perfectly suitable for the same practical and/or symbolic functions in which their predecessors were used. Furthermore, despite minor morphological variations, the preference for two handled-drinking vessels actually persisted during the entire Late Iron Age, leading first to the creation of two new local types of *kantharoi* based on other already known local ceramic forms, then to the so-called revival, in the Scordiscan territory, of a traditional vessel most likely having a similar morphology and functionality.

In the first case, the stylistic input was more likely provided by the metal and ceramic Hellenistic *kantharoi* whose arrival in the Carpathian Basin was facilitated by the establishment of a number of complex regional networks of interaction that included some of the indigenous communities from the territory in question, as well as others from the northern and western Balkans, also reaching Macedonia and Greece. Archaeological evidence indicates that the Macedonian kingdom in particular seems to have had quite a significant influence northward until its dismantling by the Romans in the mid-1<sup>st</sup> century BC (Rustoiu, Egri 2011: 35-42; see also Sideris 2000: 13-20; Kavur, Blečić Kavur 2018:

158-159; Egri 2019: 76-78). Within these regional networks, the novel form coming from the south was first imitated in the Carpathian Basin and later adapted to suit the local taste and practices, hence the appearance of the so-called Danubian *kantharoi*. However, the interest in them faded during the first decades of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC.

In the case of the so-called revival of the traditional form in the core area of the Scordiscan territory, the influence of the indigenous substratum predating the Celtic arrival could have played a role, perhaps aided by the persistence of earlier forms of two-handled drinking vessels in the peripheral areas. Another element that could have contributed to this phenomenon was the tendency of certain social groups or individuals to resort to various real or invented traditions in order to claim a long and prestigious lineage anchored in the history of the community, or an adherence to

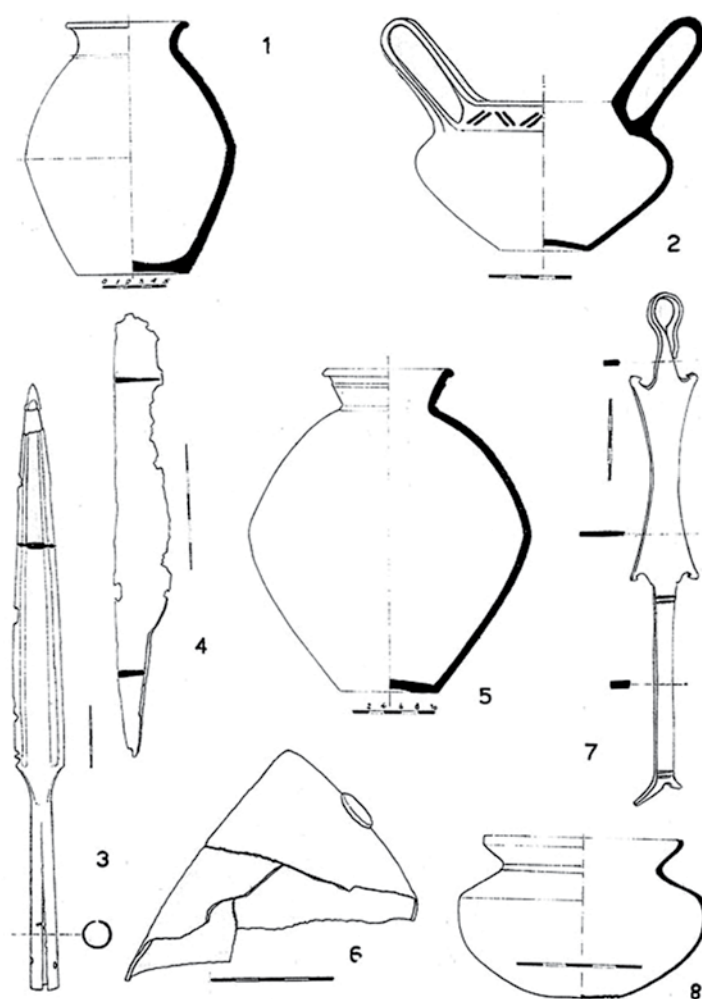


Fig. 4. Funerary inventory from grave 11 at Belgrade-Karaburma (after Todorović 1972).

a shared social and cultural heritage. The practice was mainly meant to consolidate their social status and authority while also maintaining or restoring the social cohesion within the community. This is more commonly encountered at times of social stress, when the local social structures and norms are challenged by newcomers, or even from the inside, due to extraordinary political, demographic, economic or military events (Hobsbawm 1992: 4-6; for an archaeological analysis of this phenomenon in Late Iron Age and early Roman provincial Pannonia, see Egri 2012 and 2019). The frequent presence of these vessels in burials associated with the dominant social groups seems to confirm this hypothesis, though the possible late elevation of certain individuals belonging to the local pre-Celtic populations into these groups should not be overlooked.

The main body of archaeological evidence comes from the cemetery at Belgrade-Karaburma (Todorović 1972), but other examples are also known from some incompletely published cemeteries from the same region, like Mala Vrbica-Ajmana in the Danube's Iron Gates region (Stalio 1986: 32-34, fig. 28-49). Unlike the Danubian *kantharoi*, the late Illyrian-Pannonian ones are almost exclusively encountered in male burials, for example in graves nos. 11 (Fig. 4) and 112 at Belgrade-Karaburma (Todorović 1972: 13 and 35, pls. 3 and 33-34), while in female burials they are usually replaced by tall carinated cups without handles or sometimes by single-handled ovoid beakers. For example, graves nos. 39 and 110 (Todorović 1972: 21-22 and 34, pls. 15 and 32) at Belgrade-Karaburma contain a cup each, whereas grave no. 15 from the same cemetery (Todorović 1972: 15, pl. 6) includes a beaker. In this case, it is possible that the two-handled beakers were perceived as symbols of male identity, at least in funerary contexts ascribed to the Scordisci. A similar gender-based differentiation of drinking vessels has been observed in Celtic cemeteries from northern Italy, dated to the 4<sup>th</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BC. In this case, a shallow cup (*kylix*) was placed exclusively in male graves, while the funerary inventories of the women contain only tall cups (*skyphoi*) as drinking vessels (Lejars 2006: 88).

It is also important to note that although these drinking vessels inspired by the so-called Illyrian-Pannonian tradition were included into the conviv-

ial practices of the dominant social groups, there were no changes in the functional structure and symbolic meanings of the funerary assemblages. Thus, these late local *kantharoi*, together with other feast-related objects and the weaponry, were still meant to define the identity and status of the martial elites, while also providing a sort of connection with the common past, the associated practices helping them to stand out as a distinct social group within the local communities.

Even after the disappearance of proper burials from the area of the Sava – Drava – Danube interflaves during the so-called Beograd 3b horizon, which corresponds to the LT D2 in the Central European chronology, the late Illyrian-Pannonian *kantharoi* continued to be used by members of the local communities, as attested by the finds from different fortified and open settlements (Dizdar 2013, 317-318, 320-322, 327). The form continued to evolve throughout the late 1<sup>st</sup> century BC and the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, leading to the appearance of taller vessels with a slightly wider rim diameter and less raised strap handles that were sometimes fired in an oxidising atmosphere, probably influenced by

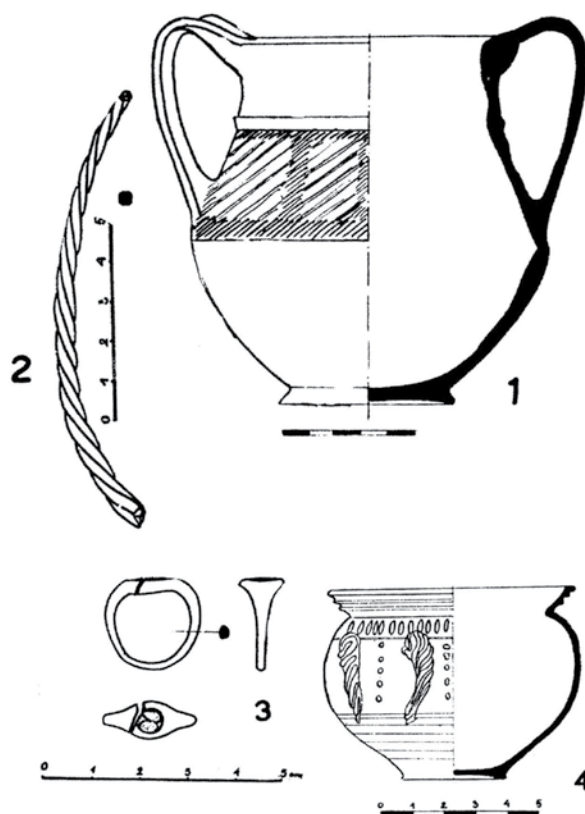


Figure 5. Funerary inventory from grave 8 at Belgrade-Karaburma (after Todorović 1972).

Roman tableware. These new variants are quite commonly encountered during the Roman provincial period in southern Pannonia (e.g., Bojović 1977: 52-53, pls. 35-37; Brukner 1981: 41, pls. 103-105; 1988, 110, 112-113, fig. 7-8), and some examples are also known from a small number of settlements in pre-Roman Dacia (Crişan 1969: 178, figs. 93-94, pl. LXXI/2) that were integrated into some regional networks of interaction oriented towards the empire.

Other similar examples are known from a series of burials from the same Belgrade-Karaburma cemetery, belonging to the so-called Beograd 4 horizon (Egri 2016), which corresponds to the first decades of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. For example, one wheel-thrown grey *kantharos* was used as funerary urn in cremation grave 8 (Todorović 1972: 12, pl. 2/1-4) (Fig. 5), whereas an almost identical vessel was found in cremation grave 10 together with an iron spearhead and bronze (or brass) fragments of a sword scabbard of the Mainz type (Todorović 1972: 13, pl. I2/1-3; see also Egri 2016: 342-343). On the other hand, cremation grave 145 from the same cemetery contains a different type of *kantharos*, having a fine red fabric, a tall cylindrical neck decorated with two prominent nervures under the rim, a bitronconical body and a narrow concave base resembling a ring-shaped one; two strap handles are attached to the middle of the neck and above the maximum diameter of the body. Vessels with nearly similar features were also found in other sites from southern Pannonia, for example at *Mursa* and *Cibalae*, where they were largely dated to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD (Brukner 1981: 101, pl. 103/1-3, 5). The funerary inventory in question can be more likely dated to the first half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD due to the accompanying weaponry, which includes an iron spearhead belonging to the Pannonian variant 1.2 and an iron slashing knife with a curved blade (Egri 2016: 346).

The presence of weaponry in some of these graves and in others from the same cemetery, which have been dated to the first decades of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, suggests that they belong to a community that had some connections with the Roman army but was also keen to revive several funerary practices that were at least perceived as traditional, namely cremation and the offering of food, feasting implements and weaponry (Egri 2018 and 2019: 89). The weapon-bearing members of this

community were more likely involved in a system of regional control set up by the Roman state, which functioned in the area of the Drava – Sava – Danube interflaves during the late 1<sup>st</sup> century BC – early 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. This hegemonic system based on friendly indigenous leaders was only abandoned by the Roman state after the *Bellum Batonianum*, at the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, when supplementary Roman troops were brought over to build forts and enforce the defensive structures in this region.

### Concluding remarks

It can be noted that the preference for two-handled drinking vessels persisted throughout the entire Late Iron Age in much of the southern Carpathian Basin, with earlier origins. A number of morphological variations that occurred through time were the result of different cultural and technological influences following the integration of several local communities into different regional networks of interactions during the early and middle LT, and again at the end of the Late Iron Age.

One relevant example is provided by the adoption and transformation of the Hellenistic *kantharoi* in the wider Carpathian Basin, which contributed to the emergence of the so-called Danubian *kantharoi*. Other morphological variations were most likely related to the internal social transformations experienced by many local communities, which contributed to the appearance of new social and cultural practices in which these vessels were integrated.

At the same time, the earlier two-handled bearers known as the Illyrian-Pannonian *kantharoi* remained in use, especially in the peripheral areas of the Scordiscan territory. These forms contributed later to the appearance of new variants of this type that often incorporated a number of features borrowed from the aforementioned Danubian *kantharoi* and also from the Scordiscan ceramic repertoire. Their so-called revival can more likely be seen as a return to a traditional form that was considered an appropriate connection with the common past. These later variants continued to evolve during the later stage of the Late Iron Age and in the early Roman provincial period, in some cases incorporating morphological and technological de-



tails that were adopted from the Roman ceramic repertoire.

Acknowledgements: This work was supported by a grant of the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research, CNCS - UEFISCDI, project number PN-III-P4-ID-PCE-2020-0566, within PNCDI III.

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**Boris Kavur and Miloš Spasić**

University of Primorska, Faculty of Humanities, Koper and Belgrade City Museum  
boris.kavur@upr.si and spasicmilos@gmail.com

## MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE...

### LOOKING AT THE DECORATED SCABBARD FROM RITOPEK

**Abstract:** Although an accidental discovery, the find from Ritopek, and especially the sword with a decorated scabbard, became a reference point and a much-reproduced image in the Celtic archaeology of south-eastern Europe. In this presentation we are again presenting the depicted image composed from several elements – the plastic style decorated suspension loop and reinforcement clamp, the similarly decorated upper part of the scabbard and an incised image of a deconstructed Type III dragon-pair in the lower part of the image. Taking into consideration the technologies of production and motifs used, we propose that the sword was decorated by two different artisans and most probably in two different regions. Based on several analogies, we assume that the plastic style decoration was produced in the territory of today's Slovenia, while the incised motifs were added in the territory of today's Serbia. Consequently, the sword with its scabbard becomes a symbol of communications and interaction – linking communities, production centres, and group as well as individual identities within the dynamic realm of the Middle La Tène world.

**Keywords:** Ritopek, Middle La Tène, sword decoration, dragon-pairs, plastic style.

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#### Prologue

Most images from the past are not art, or at least most archaeologists do not think they are. In addition to pictures made following the Western concept of art, derived from Classical Antiquity via the Renaissance perfecting the reflection of reality, those predating or existing in parallel with ideological, aesthetical and chronological worlds (Müller 2014: 37) are often described with a rhetoric of defiance or indifference, or even as ignorance of true art. Prehistoric Celtic items are especially often not well described in terms of art (which is a problem with the archaeological rhetoric rigidity and not with the art itself), but forced down into the shady concept of production described as crafts. Such a decision is often excused by the notion that there are not many ideas about the function of Celtic art, that individual styles and used symbols can enable the reconstruction of a visual language, but they cannot be understood (Megaw, Megaw 2001: 16–20). This is not a consequence of technology employed in production or the following of different evolutionary trajectories of stylistic development,

but more due to the fact that these images are often principally intended to convey information, bound by the necessity to perform a utilitarian function and, therefore, unable to express much more than what meets the eye. However, they can present more complex questions of representation, convention, medium, production, interpretation and reception than fine art – there is a hidden, wider meaning in inexpressive images. We would like to present one such story, the story of the decoration on a sword's scabbard from Ritopek in Serbia.

#### Introduction

The village of Ritopek is located some 20 km east of the Serbian capital of Belgrade. Sites dated from the Neolithic to medieval period are situated on the high river terrace above the Danube, and the Belgrade City Museum and the National Museum in Belgrade house a significant number of objects dating to various (pre)historic periods (Гаршанин 1954; Тодоровић 1967; 1971; 1975) (Fig. 1). Spacious terraces above the Danube were

used both as domestic living spaces and as a funereal landscape – the earliest graves date to the Early Eneolithic Tiszapolgar culture, as confirmed by the find from the site of Ritopek-Dalekovod, which is most certainly a grave good (Тодоровић 1967). Middle and Late Bronze Age graves are most numerous among the 16 graves discovered during the only extensive archaeological excavation carried out at the site of Ritopek-Dalekovod, during 1960 (Тодоровић 1967). Finds from cremation grave 12, i.e., two iron spears, a ceramic bowl, an iron knife and horse bits with a bridle (Тодоровић 1967), and several other items, e.g., decorative plates of the Scythian animal style (Тодоровић 1967: T. IV: 2, 4; see also Јовановић 1977; Јовановић 1999; Ljuština, Ninčić 2017), speak of the long tradition of this sacral landscape before the arrival of the Celts.

Jovan Todorović mentioned seven Celtic find spots in the village of Ritopek in his 1974 book on the Scordisci (Todorović 1974: 184, 186). All sites were located on the high Danube river terrace, on the approximate 7x2 km area between the confluence of the Bolečica river in the northwest and the confluence of the Plavinački potok (stream) in the east. The necropolis at the site of Dalekovod is at the north-western part of this area and Plavinački potok is situated at the far eastern point of the Ritopek Danube terrace, suggesting that the whole area was once populated. Despite numerous finds, only the necropolis of Dalekovod was systematically excavated and only a single Celtic cremation grave was discovered (Тодоровић 1967: 154, 155, T. II: 10–13, T. III: 5). Unfortunately, numerous Celtic graves from the village of Ritopek were, in the past, destroyed by looters and the discoveries were sold on illegal markets and are now owned by both local and international collectors of antiquities (Тодоровић 1975: 79).

Numerous Celtic objects were collected as stray finds or were presented to the Belgrade City Museum by locals from Ritopek, originating from the same site of Dalekovod (Todorović 1967: 155, 156, T. III–V). Based on the number and composition of stray finds from the sites at the village of Ritopek, Vodice and Plavinački potok

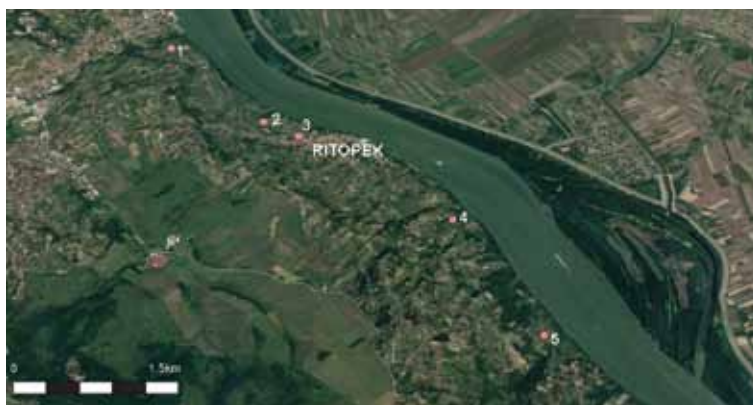


Fig. 1. Reconstructed positions of Celtic sites in Ritopek:  
1. Ritopek–Dalekovod; 2. Ritopek–Vodice; 3. Ritopek–Oglavak;  
4. Ritopek–Kamenita glavica; 5. Ritopek–Plavinački potok.

(mainly iron objects otherwise deposited as grave goods), Todorović made a sound conclusion that Celtic necropolises were also probably located here (Todorović 1974: 184). Furthermore, Todorović refers to three other sites located in the village of Ritopek, i.e., Ritopek–Zapisi, Ritopek–Kamenita Glavica and Ritopek–Oglavak, with a smaller number of accidental Celtic finds recovered (Todorović 1974: 186).

The so-called double grave from the site of Ritopek-Plavinački potok was discovered by chance during construction works. All objects were found by a local from Ritopek and were sold to Belgrade City Museum by Tihomir N. Pantić, a local from the village of Ritopek. Thus, the circumstances of discovery are to be taken with great caution, since the context of the find was described by the local who found them and not by specialist archaeologists. It was reported that metal finds were supposedly discovered in a 0.5m deep hole, piled in a heap, with no osteological remains or pottery. J. Todorović did not have any doubt regarding the reported circumstances of discovery, since similar Celtic burials with scattered cremations were already known from the broader vicinity, e.g., Karaburma (Тодоровић 1975: 79). A total number of 9 iron objects were sold to Belgrade City Museum and later published by Todorović who reproduced an idealised illustration of the finds (Fig. 2). Two iron swords exhibited substantial differences in their preservation, demonstrating different rituals of the manipulation of material culture – despite the fact that they were reported as being in a bad state of preservation, they were reproduced as intact. Additionally, the second sword, illus-

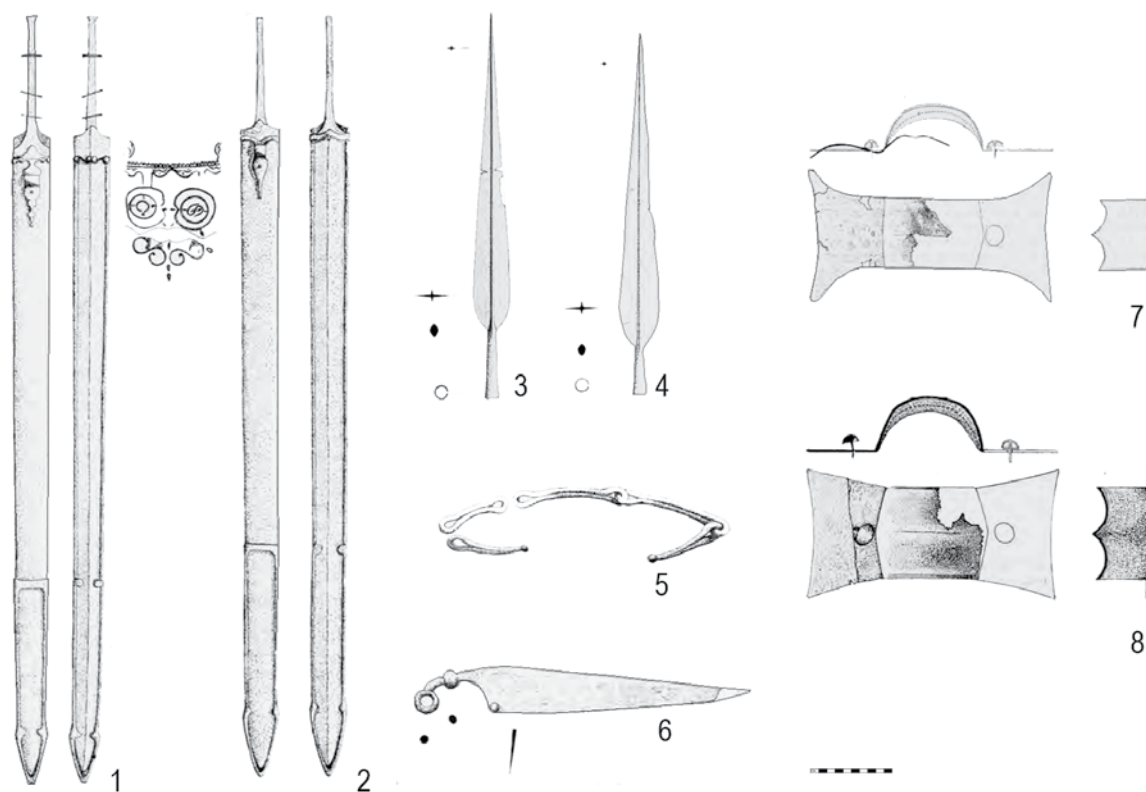


Fig. 2. Inventory of the double grave from Ritopek–Plavinački potok, without one of the chain-belts: 1. Iron sword and scabbard, ID number AP 7101; 2. Iron sword and scabbard, ID number AP 7102; 3. Iron spearhead, ID number AP 7105; 4. Iron spearhead, ID number AP 7106; 5. Iron chain belt, ID number AP 7109; 6. Iron battle knife, ID number AP 7107; 7. Iron shield boss, ID number AP 7104; 8. Iron shield boss, ID number AP 7103 (after Тодоровић 1975).

trated as fully extended, was actually intentionally folded. In the collection were two shield bosses, broken in halve and their state of preservation was clearly indicated on the illustration. Also surprisingly, the spearpoints were reproduced as almost intact, even though they were both heavily bent several times. Furthermore, the discovered belt elements were parts of two different belts, while the large knife was described as the only single element in the supposed burial.

### The scabbard

All iron objects from the so-called double warrior grave from the site of Ritopek–Plavinački potok were heavily corroded after almost 50 years since their discovery. All finds were inadequately conserved, using paraffin wax, after their arrival at Belgrade City Museum, a conservation procedure that is now outdated. Later, they were again re-conserved in the period from 2008–2012. The

decorated scabbard was in poor condition, with active corrosion visible on all surfaces. Its corrosion led to the mineralisation of some parts, which did not contain much of the iron core anymore. Consequently, some parts were no longer preserved and have not been reconstructed. To reconstruct the history of the object we can look at its original publication and several details indicating its state of preservation. We can assume that the drawing was actually an idealistic reconstruction and that the situation of the object was similar to its present state. The first major problem of the original illustration is the decoration of the scabbard itself – it was not projected into the sword but depicted separately and enlarged between the two swords (Тодоровић 1975: 80, Fig. 1: 2) (Fig. 3). Unfortunately, the illustration was very schematic and missing several details and, most importantly, it was turned upside down. The second detail of its preservation is observable on the illustration of the scabbard (Тодоровић 1975: 80, Fig. 1), where we can see that the front plate is at least a centimetre

higher than the backplate. Since it was drawn out of position on the upper side, we have to assume that the sword was already fragmented, but depicted as intact.

Today, the preserved upper part of the scabbard presents a completely different picture and it is the intent of this contribution to pay attention to several details in its production and decoration. The sword is removed from the scabbard – the front and back sheath of the chambered plates are held together by the edges of the backplate folded over the edges of the narrower one and by the reinforcement clamp.

To describe it accurately we have to deconstruct it into the several constructive elements of the visual narrative - the ornament of the scabbard consists of three partly preserved elements produced using different techniques:

- The first element of the decoration, although only partly preserved, is the iron clamp that held together and reinforced the two plates of the scabbard. The sword was partly pulled out of the scabbard and the front plate was also pulled out of its original position. The front plate is currently positioned almost a centimetre higher than initially



Fig. 3. Front side of the scabbard with the remains of the reinforcement clamp.



Fig. 4. Reverse of the scabbard with the suspension loop.



– as we can see on the outlined undecorated part of the scabbard of the same form as the clamp that once covered it. The reinforcement clamp is part of the arched suspension loop (Fig. 4). On the reverse are two rounded loop plates fixed with a central rivet to the plate – the lower one extends into an elaborate profiled extension, while the upper one continues on the left and right in the form of the reinforcement clamp. On the reverse of the clamp there are four oval widenings and two profiled, elevated large buttons on the sides. Despite its poor preservation in the upper portion, it currently seems that the suspension loop and the reverse of the reinforcement clamp were not decorated. The front side of the clamp consisted of four connected flat circular buttons decorated with undulating tendrils forming two horizontal figures of eight. Unfortunately, however, only the first left button exhibiting the remains of the decoration is preserved. A circular tendril, elaborated in high relief ran along the edge of the button and terminated in a rounded point. The tendril became wider and bigger towards the middle of the scabbard.

- The second element of the decoration was elaborated above the clamp – two tendrils in the form of a figure of eight were positioned symmetrically on each side of the scabbard. Produced in high relief, they were of similar form as the decorated front side of the clamp with a smaller circle laterally and a larger one in the middle. Above and below them were several incised leaf-shaped ornaments.

- The main decoration of the scabbard was produced with a different technique and following different stylistic conventions, contrary to the plastic, high relief elaborated decoration, it is incised. It consists of two circles filled with yin-yang shaped ornament surrounded by four incised leaf-like elements. Below the circles are two undulating lines ending with a leaf-shaped ornament in the centre. Eight similar ornaments are located between and above the circles – one of them being positioned into the deepening of the circle facing the central rib. Each circle has a vertical “foot” consisting of two lines running first parallel and then forming two horizontal bumps – larger ones in the middle and smaller ones laterally. All of them are decorated with two inscribed smaller bumps and a leaf-shaped central ornament. Below them is a horizontal line and below it another undulating line

limiting the ornament. Vertically along the lateral edges are two incised bumps, again filled with an ornament in the form of two smaller bumps and a leaf.

To understand the role and position of the scabbard in the Celtic archaeology of Serbia and wider, we have to observe its publications and direct comments about the decoration. Interestingly the illustration of the sword was published even before the item was properly described and published according to archaeological standards – it was depicted in the book *Scordisci* where Jovan Todorović used its “standard illustration” to illustrate the chapter about the armament. The sword lacked the ornament on the scabbard, but was reproduced on page 208, turned upside down and with a completely wrong subtitle (Todorović 1974: 83, Sl. 60: 208; 131). A year later, in the first publication of the find in the journal *Starinar*, the author depicted both swords together with the ornament positioned between them. Here the mistake was repeated and the ornament was again turned upside down (Тодоровић 1975: 80, Fig. 1; 2). The standard illustration appeared again in the book *Skordisci i starosedeooci u Podunavlju* almost 20 years later, where it was illustrated, again without the ornament, in the English version of the article by Petar Popović about the Scordisci (Popović 1992: 35, Fig. 31). In the same year, Miklos Szabó and Éva Petres reproduced a redrawn image of the *Starinar* illustration in their compendium of decorated weapons from the Carpathian Basin (Szabó, Petres 1992: 241, Pl. 123: 2). From here, the upside down ornament entered specialist international literature.

The unusual decoration of the sword was only rarely commented on. M. Szabó and É. Petres described it as a combination of a dragon-pair Type III and of the Hungarian sword style, but also added that the exact position of the ornament and its style of ornamentation are not clear from the published illustration (Szabó, Petres 1992: 116). Furthermore, T. Stöllner, although listing the sword on the dragon-pairs map, sustained himself of attributing the ornament to a specific type (Stöllner 1989: 166), while N. Ginoux added it to the list and catalogue without any description or comments (Ginoux 2007: 175).

## Discussion

Looking at Celtic art, the most emblematic motif was usually defined as a “dragon-pair”, an image being almost exclusively discovered depicted on scabbards of swords. The subject of numerous presentations and publications was discussed on an individual and regional level, swords were published and maps generated. Consequently, it was mostly colloquially explained as a protective element of the swords and its bearers, or later as an element and materialisation of the long-distance communication networks connecting, on a symbolic level, the military caste from Celtic societies across Europe. Looking at the speed and extent of its diffusion, it seemed as if we had never before witnessed such a quick spread of technological and stylistic elements across Europe as in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, in a period of wide mobility and, from our present perspective, targeted movements of armies and small groups of Celtic immigrants.

In our presentation, we will approach and observe the decoration of the sword from Ritopek from an iconographic perspective – as a means to follow the transformation and disintegration of the widely accepted image on its way of becoming a stylised visual code lacking any figural elements. Consequently, we will observe Celtic art as being truly modern before its time. The process of transformation and standardisation of the dragon-pair motif will be used for considering modernism in its narrow sense of an increasingly autonomous and medium-specific artistic expression of the Iron Age.

It is now 30 years since V. and R. Megaw pointed out that studies of the origin of this motif clearly show a risk of dependence on distribution maps of contemporarily known finds (Megaw, Megaw 1989; 1990: 55). These maps, with their dots interpreted as if they reflected a past reality, are subject to dramatic changes through time and every publication of a new corpus of finds could shift the presumed production centres and reverse the previously presumed directions of expansion. However, let us return to the beginning. It was José Maria DeNavarro, in his pioneering publication, that managed to summarise the multitude of known decorations and to reduce their variability into three distinct groups of depictions. Subsequently, Types I, II and III of dragon-pairs were born (DeNavarro 1959: 98–100).

We can, undoubtedly, claim that this is one of the longest living definitions in Celtic archaeology that is, despite numerous modernisations due to its simplicity and, most importantly clarity, still used by archaeologists across Europe. When J. M. DeNavarro presented his division of dragon-pair motifs, it seemed that the Type III dragon-pairs were rare in the east and most numerous in the west. Consequently, he assumed that Switzerland was the most probable place of origin of these motifs. He described them as having been derived from Type I and being highly abstract, due to the reduction of forms and merging of once independent extremities, creating an impression that the bodies of the dragon-pair were constructed from nothing more than two concentric circles topped by a deconstructed palmette (DeNavarro 1959: 99–100). Three decades later, V. and R. Megaw presented a picture that had changed due to new discoveries (and new interpretations of Celtic art) (Megaw and Megaw 1989; 1990). At that time, it seemed that Type III dragon-pairs were most common in Switzerland and on the territory of the then Yugoslavia. Less than a decade later, T. Stöllner produced a detailed list and map of swords with dragon-pairs and their number grew again (Stöllner 1998: 162–167). The last comprehensive overview was published by Nathalie Ginoux in 2007, when she, although still based on the general principles of the previous typological division, demonstrated a much more dynamic evolutionary development of the iconic image and a more detailed typological division (Ginoux 2007). Her map still demonstrated the highest concentration of this type of ornament in Switzerland, but the number of specimens on the south-eastern and southern edge of the Carpathian Basin along the Sava and Danube rivers increased dramatically (Ginoux 2007, 121, Fig. 61). She took a step back in order to venture two steps forward; instead of the tripartite division of J. M. DeNavarro, she introduced a binary division of a Type 1 motif (zoomorphic lyre) and a Type 2 motif (griffon pair). Furthermore, she introduced into this bipartite division a several-stage development of the motif; a process of abstraction and decomposition described in four stages (Ginoux 2002: 76–79). In a further elaboration, she additionally subdivided both types and stages of development according to the technical manufacture and visual expression of the decorations (Ginoux 2007: 39–121).



The only discussion addressing the scabbards decorated with dragon-pairs in south-eastern Europe was published in 2020 by I. Drnić. He only presented the Early La Tène scabbards with griffin-pairs and zoomorphic lyres, but still demonstrated a substantial increase of known examples (Drnić 2020: 105, Fig. 6).

Regarding the description of the central ornament on the scabbard from Ritopek, the body of the griffin-pair, it is important to consider the concept of abstraction and deconstruction of the Type II ornament as proposed by N. Ginoux. She demonstrated that the organic form of Type II becomes more geometric and reduced, consequently transforming the image into Type III, indicating that these are just stages on a continuum of image transformation, which she subdivided into four stages. In the last stage, the body of the once recognisable griffin is reduced to a circle on a vertical foot standing on a horizontal surface and above it are just tendrils indicating the form and position of the once present beak. According to her opinion, the introduction of relief in the later developed form was an attempt to intensify the visibility of the image with the use of a third dimension. With this development also came the fear of empty surfaces and the subsequent multiplication of smaller ornamental elements filling the empty spaces of the image (Ginoux 2002, 77-78; Ginoux 2007, 65 - 73). With her approach, she actually returned to the position proposed in the beginning by J. M. DeNavarro and discussed by numerous authors supporting the opinion that all motifs are actually linked in an evolutionary chain and that Type II is also a derivation of Type I (Szabó 1989: 119). In acknowledging such an approach we can assume that the tendrils above the circular body on scabbards from graves Brežice 47 (Jovanović 2007: 25, Sl. 16), Dobova 10 (Guštin 1981: 224, Abb. 1) and Karaburma 29 (Todorović 1974, 140, Sl. 101) represent the formal remains of the beaks, but looking at the ornament of scabbards from Negotin (Szabó, Petres 1992: 238, Pl. 120: 1), Brestovik (Ginoux 2007: Pl. 80) and Ritopek (Fig. 3) we can no longer identify such logically connected elements. Consequently, based on the find from Ritopek, we could further supplement her four-stage transformation of the image with a fifth stage, where the remains of the head and beak are absolutely absent, the body is reduced to a circle, and the foot is

represented only with straight vertical lines linking the circle with the horizontal line. The once figurative body becomes reduced to a series of geometric motifs, but the image is now supplemented with decoration coming from another tradition – with undulating lines, tendrils, yin-yang shaped ornaments and leaf motifs filling the empty spaces.

Perhaps a visually less impressive, but no less important, element of decoration is the use of the undulating line incised along the lower part of the body and below the horizontal line beneath. An undulating line on the outer side and above the body is known from the scabbard from grave 29 from Karaburma (Todorović 1974: 140, Sl. 101), while it appears below the body and below the horizontal line on the scabbard from Negotin (Szabó, Petres 1992: 238, Pl. 120: 1), and in the upper row of the three different undulating horizontal lines on the sword from Dalj (Szabó, Petres 1992: 223, Pl. 105: 2). Furthermore, an almost horizontal undulating line is running below the magnificent, Swiss-sword-style decorated, and almost identical, scabbards from Odžaci and Dobova grave 23 (Guštin 1984b: 124-125, T. 7: 2; Sl. 4).

Also of interest is the leaf-shaped motif occurring inside and around the body, below the foot as well as on the side, where it appears in a combination of three leaves. A similar decoration is known from the scabbard from grave 6 of Dobova in Slovenia, where a single leaf appears inside the indentation of the body and centrally above the body (and below the beak), while two groups of three leaves appear below the body and on the side (Guštin 1982: 202, Abb. 6: 3; 1983: T. XC: 9; 1984, T. 47: 1; Jovanović 2007: 23, Sl. 14).

Finally, we can look at the second element, the reinforcement clamp with the suspension loop. The reinforcement clamps were a visual problem; N. Ginoux proposed that their visual function changed in the later period. These functional elements shifted from a visually attractive element in the plastic style decoration to a disturbing one running across the dragon-pairs image, covering it and dividing it into two parts. However, in the final development of the motif, they again became plastically decorated and with the deconstruction of the image inserted into the position where they partly replaced the head or their decoration stood in for the eye of the dragon (Ginoux 2007: 73). Although the frontal side of the clamp from Ritopek is not

fully preserved, it could not have played such a role since its outline follows the motif of a figure of eight and is positioned far too low to substitute for the beak.

The plastically decorated clamps connected to the suspension loop with the side rods forming a T-shaped element above the upper loop-plate are typical of the Hungarian sword style where comparable elements, although highly variable, can be observed on several swords in the Carpathian Basin, such as Halmajugra 2 (Szabó, Petres 1992: 135, Pl. 17) and Kečovo (Szabó, Petres 1992: 211, Pl. 93: 2). Perhaps the most similar form of the suspension loop was discovered on the sword from Regöly, which has one of the few scabbards decorated in the Swiss sword style (Szabó, Petres 1992: 174, Pl. 56). On the other hand, it is interesting to note that the frontal reinforcement of the clamp is, unfortunately, preserved only on the left side with a profiled button on the side and the first flat button on the frontal surface. The horizontal deeply incised side button and the front button decorated with a spiral running along its outer edge and ending with a circular point in high relief were both manufactured in the tradition of the plastic style. The best comparison with a similar spiral on the side button comes from grave number 47 at Brežice in Slovenia (Jovanović 2007: 25, Sl. 16). Nevertheless, this scabbard is a strange piece – its decoration is composed of a Type III dragon-pair in the upper and a Hungarian sword style vegetal tendril ornament in the lower part. Additionally, both ornaments were manufactured in deep relief so characteristic of the plastic style and the space between individual elements was filled with symmetrical circular tendrils. Such S tendrils are actually a rare element on the decoration of scabbards, but appear on other items decorated in plastic style, such as fibulae and decorative nail-heads on spears (Szabó 1989b; Čižmář 1996). Perhaps we could also observe a reflection of this decorative approach on the scabbard from Sremski Karlovci, where the inside of the Type III dragon-pair and the space above it was decorated with ornament of symmetrical and non-symmetrical triskele tendrils (Szabó, Petres 1992: 243, Pl. 125: 1). However, the ornament within the circular body of the dragon could also be linked to the same ornamental tradition as the bipartite division of the ornamental field, described as the ying-yang motive. It seems that the oldest ones are known from the scabbards

from Szob (Szabó, Petres 1992: 189, Pl. 71) and Sremska Mitrovica (Szabó, Petres 1992: 237, Pl. 119: 1) where it divides the space between two dragon beaks.

Discussing the weaponry of the Taurisci and Scordisci, Dragan Božič demonstrated that Middle La Tène swords on both territories feature decorations elaborated in Hungarian and Swiss style as well as examples of scabbards decorated with Type III dragon-pairs, according to J. M. DeNavarro (Božič 1983: 78). Moreover, in his overview of the Celtic occupation and material culture in the former Yugoslavia, Mitja Guštin stressed that there is an observable similarity in the decoration of Middle La Tène sword scabbards from the territory ascribed to the Scordisci and the Taurisci, especially in those decorated with Type III dragon-pairs according to J. M. DeNavarro (Guštin 1984: 339). Although their observations were based mostly on the selection of motifs, it seems today that the plastic decoration of the frontal reinforcement clamp and the spiral motif above it, produced with a similar technique, offer the strongest confirmation of their claims. If we also take into consideration the Dobova – Odžaci pair of swords, we can formulate a hypothesis according to which it seems plausible that the sword from Ritopek (actually its scabbard) was most probably produced in the north-east, perhaps in the Dobova – Brežice region, transported to the south-east and finally decorated in the region of today's northern or central Serbia.

## Conclusion

This essay, dedicated to our dear friend Petar Popović, is not an archaeological article about the heavy contextualisation of the discovery, an eloquent justification of all the parallels and an explicit explanation based on all the literature to enable the precise dating of each element in the supposed grave – it is just an essay drawing attention to a familiar piece of archaeological (Celtic) heritage of Serbia that has never been presented in its entire beauty. Previously, we were unable to recognise the creativity of the masters who produced the elaborate plastic design with its fluent vegetal form that was later adapted to local aesthetic conceptions by another artisan. Interpreted as a product of two workshops, two traditions and two crafts, it becomes a link between two centres

(and worlds) of eastern Celtic creativity, a reflection of the relationships between people and material culture. The combination of two information systems exceeds the purely narrative nature of the decoration. Combining two crafts elevates the product with its aesthetic to the level of art. It tells us more about the social complexity of the Celtic populations traditionally referred to as Scordisci, since the decoration is a direct testimony of aesthetic (and social) interactions reflecting complex systems of thinking. By combining different traditions it emphasises non-deterministic and non-linear behaviour in the selection and combination of motifs and styles. It demonstrates interactive interdependencies among cultural system components of individual sword producers (and owners), indicating complex behaviour emerging from simple interactions and long-distance trade (and mobility) networks. Additionally, interactions were not just simple information transmissions but important multiplicative events for the development of local identities that, by combining different stylistic information, generated novelty and innovation in the decoration of swords. A materialisation of several identities projected into the iron scabbard of the sword from Ritopek created one of the most intriguing but, at the same time, modernistic decorations where the abstraction of the organic form was taken a step further. We can observe in the decoration three creative processes involved in its production; disarticulation, repurposing, and disruption of form and meaning. The sword and the scabbard were produced as a part of the corpus decorated in a late form of the plastic style, but another artist revived, manipulated and repurposed this historic imagery and material culture. With his intervention and addition of new decorative elements, he disrupted the preconceived ideas about scabbard decoration. Furthermore, he completely disarticulated another decoration, the Type III dragon-pair, removing it consequently from its historic connections and then, finally, he repurposed the decoration of the scabbard as if it was a new, fresh and undecorated product. With his actions he (let us assume it was a he) disrupted both the understanding of the past and present role of the decoration and created a new perspective for the future. The artist did not express conflict with the past but presented his personal interpretation and understanding of the functioning of art. The latter is a form of material culture intended to have

specific social effects; it grows out of performance and participation (DeMarrais, Robb 2013: 6). It is not about a solitary artist producing a work of art, it is about all the participants involved in its production and all the audience involved in viewing it. Art constitutes social interactions in which the specific element of material culture, in our case the sword with its scabbard, is involved. Based on our observations, we can ascribe to the scabbard from Ritopek a series of social interactions that took place in two culturally (and ethnically?) different environments on the territories of today's Slovenia and Serbia.

This brings us to the beginning of the ideas about stylistic development in art and the potential for the creation of new artistic forms and expressions. It has been argued that the origins of increasing social complexity (and creativity) lie in growing community sizes and the exponential increase in social interactions (Ortman et al. 2015). Such an explanation would perfectly fit the observation of variability in material culture and stylistic features in larger agglomeration centres, where improvements in material condition accelerated specialisations in production; observable in the case of Celtic cemeteries at sites like Karaburma and Rospri Čuprija in Serbia or in Dobova and Brežice in Slovenia. However, if we observe regions with a low level of settlement agglomeration, indicated by numerous Celtic Middle La Tène burial sites around Ritopek (and in a larger area around today's Belgrade) in Serbia, or the plain of Ptuj in Slovenia, we can assume a low level of social connectivity and, consequently, a high level of productivity diversity in societies with kin-based institutions. As a consequence, redistributive rituals and cultural discourses were performed on a less institutionalised and almost individual level, again stimulating the numbers of random social interactions. With a less rigid social (and aesthetic) control, the variability in material culture and artistic expression can, therefore, be perceived as a consequence of interactions of numerous factors; economic stability, settlement patterns and communication networks that created the Middle La Tène world as we understand it today. Nevertheless, as we can see, it is, from the perspective of "European global archaeology", in less prominent regions of the Celtic world, such as the surroundings of Ritopek, that we can expect the creation of the most interesting pieces of Celtic Art.

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**Marko Dizdar**  
Institute of Archaeology  
marko.dizdar@iarh.hr

## MIDDLE LA TÈNE BRONZE BELTS OF THE SCORDISCAN TYPE WITH LYRE-SHAPED SEGMENTS OF THE SURČIN VARIANT – WHAT DID THE SCORDISCAN WOMEN LIKE TO WEAR?

**Abstract:** A recognisable part of the Middle La Tène material legacy of the Scordisci are bronze belts of the so-called Scordiscan type, composed in different combinations of lyre-shaped and rectangular segments, with zoomorphic buckles and anthropomorphic pendants. They are a distinctive regional form of the female costume, which is characteristic for the communities settled along the Danube river that shared similar ideas about the decoration of women's bodies. This was confirmed with finds of belts discovered in cremation burials of women, which can be dated at the end of LT C1 and in LT C2. Regarding their shape, there are three basic variants of lyre-shaped segments, often decorated with enamel filled depressions. Belts with lyre-shaped segments of the Surčin variant, as a characteristic part of the Middle La Tène Scordiscan female costume, were probably produced in their workshops. Bronze belts of the Scordiscan type represent some of the more recognisable manifestations of visual identity and provide a valuable insight into the way in which Scordiscan women decorated their bodies, as well as into their public presentation.

**Keywords:** female costume, Scordisci, Middle La Tène, bronze belts, lyre-shaped segments, identity.

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### Introduction

In the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, the south-eastern part of the Carpathian Basin was settled by Celtic communities, which marks the beginning of the Late Iron Age defined by the characteristic material legacy of the La Tène culture.<sup>1</sup> In ancient written sources, the community that emerged out of the symbiosis of the Celtic settlers and the local population in that area was called the Scordisci. Their material legacy is attributed to the Central European La Tène culture. Certain characteristics of their material culture are considered to be contributions of the indigenous population's legacy and the position of the Scordisci on the south-eastern edge of the spreading La Tène culture. This influenced the emergence of the complex cultural landscape. In defining the characteristic content of

the material legacy of the Scordisci in all phases of their development, besides weaponry, some of the most significant determinants are functional and decorative objects of the female costume and jewellery, which are arranged in graves in various combinations. Due to that, they are of great importance in the cultural and chronological defining of the Scordisci material legacy. Since these objects are gender-specific, wearing them indicated different aspects of the social identities of women, as well as their position within the community. The Middle La Tène female costume of the Scordisci is represented by different types of iron and bronze belts, buckles and variously shaped fibulae, mostly made of bronze. Still, the most recognisable outer forms of the costume are various shapes of bronze belts that served as a functional, but also decorative elements of the visual identity of the women who wore them. They probably also had a symbolic meaning. Their shape, the material from which they were made and the way in which they were

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<sup>1</sup> This article was funded by the Croatian Science Foundation with the project (IP-06-2016-1749): Iron Age Female Identities in the Southern Carpathian Basin (FEMINE).



decorated communicated various messages, i.e., they offer valuable insights into how Scordiscan women decorated their bodies, as well as into their public presentation.

What we have found out so far shows that it is possible to distinguish certain forms of the Middle La Tène female costume of the Scordisci that belongs to the widespread legacy of the La Tène culture in the Carpathian Basin and Central Europe (Dizdar 2015; 2016; 2018). On the other hand, certain characteristic forms belonging to their legacy can also be identified. One of the forms considered to be characteristic of the Middle La Tène Scordiscan legacy, aside from bronze astragal belts of the Osijek type (Božič 1981; Filipović, Mladenović 2017; Dizdar, Tonc 2018; Dizdar 2019), represent bronze belts composed in combinations of a lyre-shaped and rectangular segment, due to which they were named the Scordiscan type (Challet 1992: 76).

Various forms of Middle La Tène belts from the area settled by the Scordisci, especially those made of bronze, were presented by J. Todorović (1968; 1971; 1972; 1974), N. Majnarić-Pandžić (1970), B. Jovanović (1982/1983; 1983; 1987) and S. Arsenijević (2013). Additionally, a great contribution to the research of the material legacy of the Scordisci, not just of their abundant numismatic heritage, was provided by my esteemed colleague Petar Popović in his numerous papers. One of the topics he studied was the distinctive forms of female costume decorated with enamel, most prominently the Middle La Tène bronze belts (Popović 2002). Likewise, bronze belts from the Scordiscan sites were included in various analyses directed towards certain forms of bronze belts from the Carpathian Basin. As a result, bronze belts that consist of lyre-shaped segments were analysed along with belts with rectangular segments of the so-called Hungarian type, most of which were discovered at sites in the eastern part of the Carpathian Basin (Stanczik, Vaday 1971; Rustoiu 2004/2005; 2008a; 2011). It is certainly important to point out that belts with lyre-shaped segments, besides at the Scordiscan sites (Jovanović 1982/1983; 1983; Guštin 1984: 340), were also discovered at sites in Transdanubia and in the Tisza valley (Stanczik, Vaday 1971: 25). The last discovered finds show that belts with lyre-shaped segments also appear at sites in the Drava valley (Dizdar 2011: 110, Fig.

3: 1), and all the way to the Dolenjska region (Križ 2009: 322, cat. no. 46). However, the number of finds of belts with lyre-shaped segments in the area settled by the Scordisci, where belts composed of differently shaped segments were also discovered (Dizdar 2016), enabled their definition as a special variant, the Scordiscan type (Challet 1992: 73–76, Tab. 12). Bronze belts composed in combinations of lyre-shaped and rectangular segments were placed in a separate group (Gk-S) by J. Bujna, who divides these belts into four types. Actually, three of them represent pendants at the ends of the belts, while the type Gk-S-D, which he calls the Scordiscan type, has characteristically stylised lyre-shaped segments (Bujna 2011: 116–118, Fig. 49).

The largest number of bronze belts from the area settled by the Scordisci known so far is composed in combinations of lyre-shaped and rectangular segments. Some sites have yielded only lyre-shaped segments, based on which nothing more can be said about the composition of the belts themselves. Unfortunately, so far, grave assemblage is not known with a bronze belt with lyre-shaped segments from the area settled by the Scordisci. Nevertheless, traces of burning documented on certain belts, but also on belts from neighbouring areas, indicate that they definitely come from cremation burials, i.e., that the deceased women were cremated with the belts. This burial rite prevents a precise analysis of their functional position and the way in which they were worn.

Each of the belts so far discovered at the Scordiscan sites, as well as in neighbouring areas, represents a unique form with different combinations of lyre-shaped and rectangular segments, as well as buckles and pendants, although some similar shape characteristics of segments can also be noticed. Based on the find of a belt from Hrčkovci with lyre-shaped and rectangular segments (Fig. 4), it was assumed that belts could have been composed of two symmetrical halves (Jovanović 1982/1983: 27, 31; 1983: 49–50). However, this belt was not entirely preserved and the assumption is not completely reliable. Based on the composition of the preserved belts with lyre-shaped segments, i.e., composition and arrangement of the segments, B. Jovanović recognised four variants: – belts composed only of lyre-shaped segments; – belts composed of alternating lyre-shaped and rectangular segments; – lyre-shaped segments placed

at the final part of the belt with a pendant at the end;  
– lyre-shaped segments placed on the part of the belt leading to the buckle (Jovanović 1982/1983: 31; 1983: 51). V. Challet distinguishes only two variants that actually correspond with the aforementioned classification. The first variant consists of belts composed in combinations of lyre-shaped and rectangular segments; the second variant was represented by belts composed only of lyre-shaped segments (Challet 1992: 101–104). Considering the finds known until now, it is not possible to recognise belts made only of lyre-shaped segments (Bujna 2011: 118). The closest find of that variant is a find of a belt with lyre-shaped segments damaged by fire from Pecka bara, where no segments of other shapes were found; but only a few segments of this belt were preserved (Jovanović 1983: 51, Fig. 8; 10; Popović, Sladić 1997: 103, Fig. 4: 2; Popović 2002: 350–351).

most commonly hollow and have a groove along their top edges, while some of the segments are decorated with variously shaped depressions with enamel. Only rarely were there belts with lyre-shaped segments in combination with rectangular segments that have a short rib along the top side of the two longer edges, while the central part can also be decorated with depressions filled with enamel. Likewise, on the segment loops through which rings are passed, there can be depressions with enamel, most commonly triangular in shape, along which there can also be parallel grooves. Otherwise, on the lyre-shaped and rectangular segments, there can be variously shaped depressions filled with differently coloured enamel, most commonly red. At the ends of the belts, there can also be complex pendants with lyre-shaped top portions, while their lower part usually includes a rectangular plate from which bronze pendants hang.

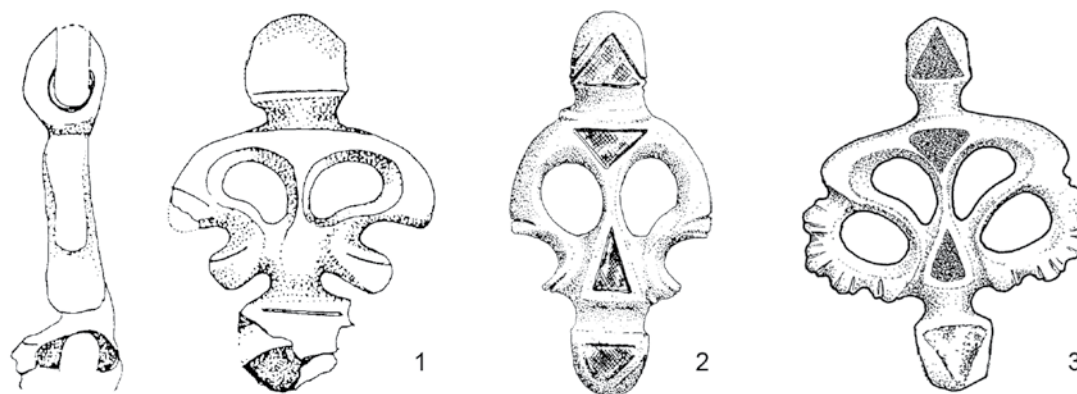


Fig 1. Variants of lyre-shaped segments: 1 Hrtkovci variant; 2 Surčin variant; 3 Zvonimirovo variant.

Belts composed of variously shaped segments, such as belts composed of lyre-shaped and rectangular segments, testify to the extremely complex procedure of typological classification of bronze belts. Classifications seem even more complex if we attempt to single out certain variants, due to which it is necessary to define distinct criteria when listing basic shapes, whereby the most significant criteria are the shapes of segments. Of course, one of the aggravating circumstances in classifying bronze belts is certainly the degree of their preservation, since they are often only partly preserved, which does not necessarily represent the original composition of the belt. Besides lyre-shaped segments, the integral parts of the Scordiscan type of belt are rectangular segments, which are

This composition gives them an anthropomorphic shape (Dizdar, Ložnjak Dizdar 2020).

Each of the bronze belts of the Scordiscan type discovered so far, with different combinations of lyre-shaped and rectangular segments, actually represents a unique form. The inconsistent arrangement of differently shaped segments in belts is the reason it is so difficult to conduct a precise typological classification of these belts, especially when they are preserved only partially. Therefore, it might be more appropriate to classify lyre-shaped segments according to the shape of their bodies and, so far, three variants can be distinguished (Fig. 1) (Dizdar 2015: 191):

– the first variant is represented by lyre-shaped segments with curved lateral sides that, at the

end, after they touch the central part of the body, terminate in small protrusions with rounded endings – Hrtkovci variant (Fig. 1: 1);

– in the second variant the aforementioned lateral protrusions, after they touch the central part of the body, do not exist anymore or they are barely noticeable, and they are flat on the bottom side, which contains grooves – Surčin variant (Fig. 1: 2);

– the third variant is characterised by an extension of lateral protrusions after they touch the central part of the body and close in the middle, so that the lateral protrusions have a figure-of-eight shape, whereby its lower parts were hemispherically ribbed – Zvonimirovo variant (Fig. 1: 3).

The recognised variants probably indicate that several workshops produced lyre-shaped segments. It is necessary to point out that B. Jovanović (1982/1983: 31–32; 1983: 56–57)

and P. Popović (2002: 351) rightly assumed that the simply formed lyre-shaped segments, listed here as the Surčin variant segments, were probably produced in the Scordiscan workshops and are a characteristic part of their material legacy (Dizdar 2015: 191, Fig. 3; 2018: 18).

### Lyre-shaped segments of the Surčin variant

The lyre-shaped segments of the Surčin variant have characteristically curved lateral sides that, after they touch the central part of the body, do not exist anymore or they are barely noticeable, and they are flat on the bottom side, which contains grooves (Fig. 1: 2). To this variant is attributed a

chance find of a lyre-shaped segment from Osijek, which has triangular depressions on its body; the top one is wider, while the bottom one is taller and narrower. Segment loops through which rings passed also contain triangular depressions (Fig. 2: 1) (Todorović 1974: Fig. 114; Jovanović 1983:

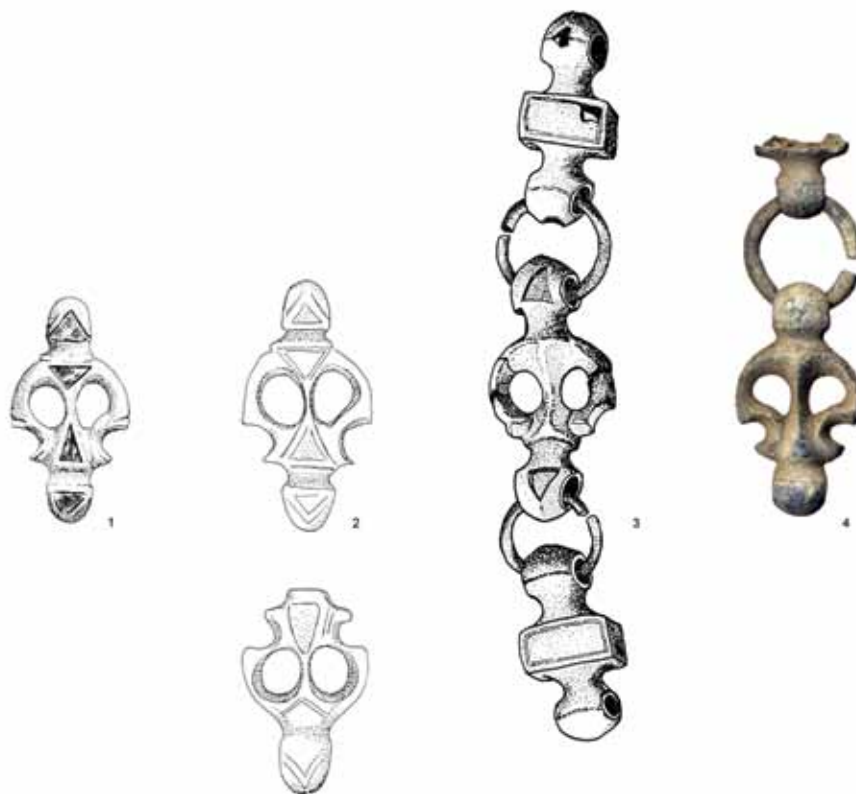


Fig. 2. Finds of lyre-shaped segments of the Surčin variant: 1 Osijek (after: Todorović 1974); 2 Surčin (after: Jovanović 1983); 3 Beljarica near Zemun (after: Todorović 1974); 4 Stari Kostolac – Čair (after: Stojić, Jacanović 2008).

47, Fig. 5; Popović 2002: 351, Pl. II: 2; Bujna 2011: 118, Fig. 49: 11; Dizdar 2015: 191, Fig. 3: 1). Lyre-shaped segments with triangular depressions on the body and loops were also found at the Surčin cemetery, in A. Poturičić's vineyard (Fig. 2: 2). Along with triangular depressions, there is also one parallel groove on each side of the segment loops. The belt also consisted of hollow rectangular segments with a groove along the edges (Majnarić-Pandžić 1970: 47, 96, Pl. XLI: 5–7; Jovanović 1983: 46, Fig. 4; Popović 2002: 351; Dizdar 2015: 191, Fig. 3: 2). A smaller part of a belt with rhythmically arranged lyre-shaped and rectangular segments was discovered by chance on Beljarica, near Zemun (Fig. 2: 3). The segments have loops at their ends with triangular depres-

sions on lyre-shaped segments, while the rectangular segments contain a horizontal groove. There is also a groove along the edges of the rectangular segments (Todorović 1968: 158, Pl. LII: 2; 1971: 158, Pl. LXXI: 6; 1974: Fig. 59; Stanczik, Vaday 1971: 20; Jovanović 1983: 46, Fig. 3; Popović 2002: 350; Bujna 2011: 118, Fig. 49: 10; Dizdar 2015: 191, Fig. 3: 3). The lyre-shaped segment discovered at the site of Stari Kostolac – Čair (Fig. 2: 4) partly corresponds to the Surčin variant. There is one horizontal groove on each loop of the segment. A single ring that connected the lyre-shaped segment with the rectangular one was also preserved (Stojić, Jacanović 2008: 264, Fig. 96).

decorated with blue enamel on the loop (Dizdar, Ložnjak Dizdar 2020). The pendant, which has a lyre-shaped top part, is thought to represent a stylised female figure and has depressions with blue enamel at the edges, while in the central part there is red enamel (Majnarić-Pandžić 1970: 37, 89, Pl. XXVI: 4; Jovanović 1983: 45, Fig. 2; 1987: 838, Pl. LXXXIII: 1; Todorović 1974: 102, Fig. 80; Majnarić-Pandžić 1998: 332–333, no. 156; Popović 2002: 351, Pl. II: 5; Bujna 2011: 118, Fig. 49: 9). The anthropomorphic pendant from Novi Banovci is considered to be one of the most beautiful examples of colour effect, which was represented by bronze belts composed of lyre-shaped and rectangular segments.



Fig. 3. Anthropomorphic pendant from Novi Banovci (after: Todorović 1974; photo by: I. Krajcar, AMZ).

The top part of the anthropomorphic pendant from Novi Banovci, probably from one of the destroyed graves, is similar in shape to the Surčin variant segments (Fig. 3).<sup>2</sup> The pendant has a unique composition and was probably placed at the end of the belt, which, along with hollow rectangular segments with a groove along the edges, also had lyre-shaped segments, one of which was

### Lyre-shaped segments of the Hrtkovci and Zvonimirovo variants

Scordiscan sites yield more bronze belts composed in combinations of lyre-shaped segments of the Hrtkovci variant and rectangular segments with a groove along the edges, which are hollow on the bottom side. Lyre-shaped segments of this variant have curved lateral sides, which at the end, after they touch the central part of the body, terminate in small protrusions with rounded endings (Fig. 1: 1). A belt composed of such lyre-shaped segments was discovered in Hrtkovci, in the vicinity of a prehistoric multilayer settlement on Gomolava (Fig. 4). Some lyre-shaped and rectangular segments, a buckle and rings were deformed during cremation, which indicates that the belt probably originates from a cremation burial. The lyre-shaped and rectangular segments mostly interchange in a rhythmical fashion (Fig. 4). The belt was dated to the period from the second half to the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC (Jovanović 1982/1983: 27–29, Fig. 1–2; 1983: 47, 49, Fig. 7; 9; Skordisci 1992: 123, cat. no. 45, Pl. XIII; Popović 2002: 350, Pl. II: 1; Bujna 2011: 118, Fig. 49: 8). This belt was probably similar in composition to the belt discovered in Bački Monoštor, which also shows traces of cremation, and has directly linked lyre-shaped segments (Jovanović 1982/1983: 29–30, Fig. 3; 1983: 47, Fig. 6). A part of a belt was discovered by chance in Bačko Gradište, with a preserved part of a lyre-shaped segment, rectangular segments and an anthropomorphic pendant

<sup>2</sup> My thanks go to Dr I. Drnić from the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb for the photo of the pendant from Novi Banovci.



(Hunyady 1942: Pl. XXXIV: 1; XXXV: 13–14; Todorović 1968: Pl. L: 1; Stanczik, Vaday 1971: 17; Jovanović 1991: 30–31, Fig. 1–2; Popović 2002: 351, Pl. II: 4). The aforementioned part of the belt with only lyre-shaped segments was discovered in Pecka bara in eastern Serbia. The segments were mostly damaged in cremation, which indicates that the belt probably originates from a cremation burial (Janković 1969: 101; Jovanović 1983: 51, Fig. 8; 10; Popović 1990: 169; Popović, Sladić 1997: 103, Fig. 4: 2; Popović 2002: 350–351).

chance finds from destroyed cremation burials. A part of a belt, which seems to be composed of rhythmically arranged lyre-shaped and rectangular segments and has an elaborately decorated anthropomorphic enamelled pendant, was discovered at the site of Bölcske – Madocsahegy (Tischler 1890: Pl. B2; Hunyady 1942: 104; Stanczik, Vaday 1971: 17, Fig. 5: 9; Eluère 1973: 318, Fig. 2: 5; Szabó 1989: 29, Pl. V: 6; 1992: 154; Challet 1992: 102, Fig. 60; Rustoiu 2008a: 131, Fig. 63: 8; Bujna 2011: 118, Fig. 49: 1). A belt composed of lyre-shaped and hollow rectangular

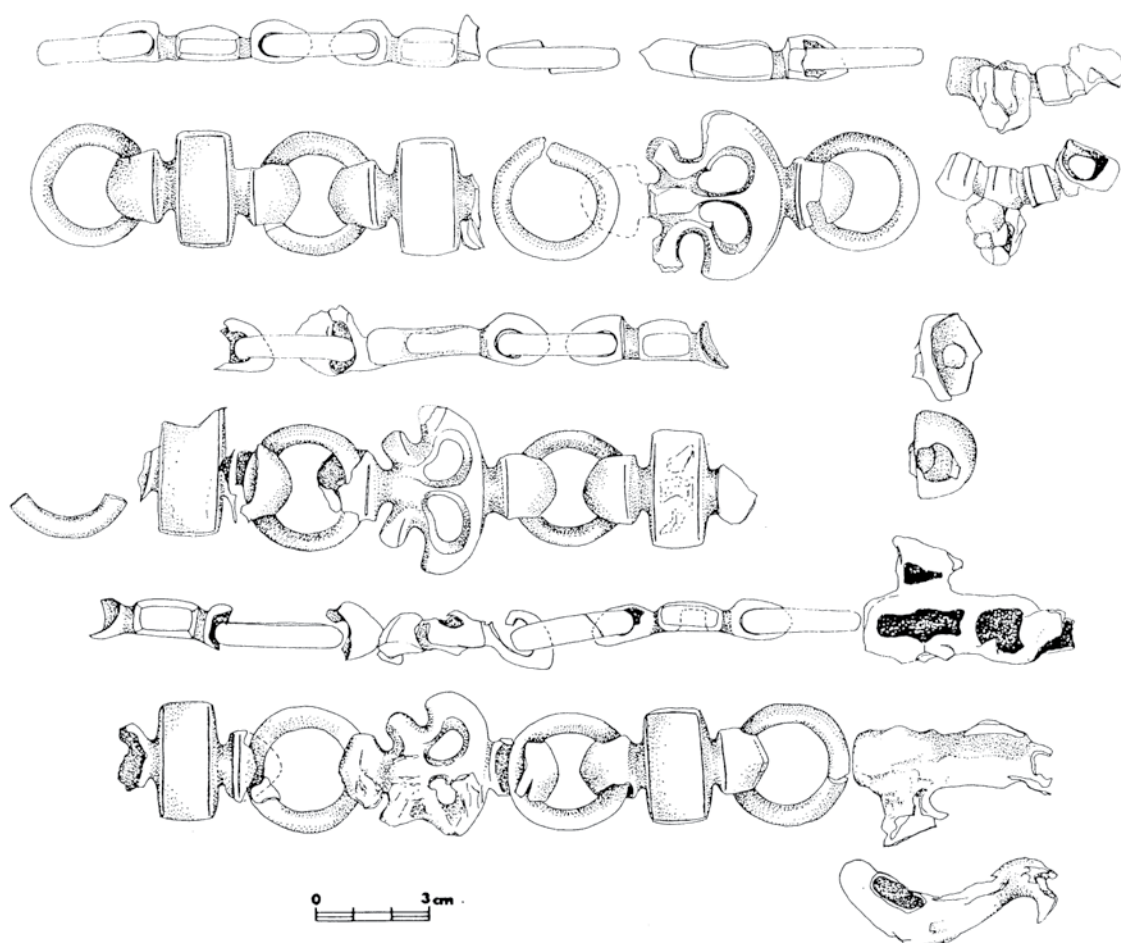


Fig. 4. Bronze belts from Hrtkovci (after: Jovanović 1982/1983).

Aside from cemeteries of the Scordisci, bronze belts composed in combinations of lyre-shaped segments of the Hrtkovci variant and rectangular segments were also found in neighbouring areas of Transdanubia and the Tisza valley, while most finds were discovered at sites between Lake Balaton and the Danube river. They are mostly

segments with a groove along the edges or crescent-shaped depressions, between which are ring-and-dot motifs, was found in a cremation burial at the site of Cece – Hardpuszta. A part of an anthropomorphic pendant was also preserved (Sellye 1939: 47, Pl. I: 1–14; Stanczik, Vaday 1971: 17; Challet 1992: 102, Fig. 61; Horváth, Keszi 2004:



45, 346 k p.). A belt from the site of S rosd was probably composed of lyre-shaped and rectangular segments with a groove along the edges, with one of the segments shaped as a double-lyre. The top part of an anthropomorphic pendant was also preserved (Tompa 1937: 112, Pl. 53: 4–5, 8; Hunyady 1942: Pl. XXXV: 2–3; Stanczik, Vaday 1971: 19, Fig. 5: 5a–b; Rustoiu 2008a: 131, Fig. 63: 4; Bujna 2011: 118, Fig. 49: 2). A double-lyre shaped segment was discovered in Tengelic. The segment has a short zoomorphic buckle in the shape of a horse head in the middle of one of the lateral sides (Stanczik, Vaday 1971: 20, Fig. 5: 4a–b; Challet 1992: 95, Fig. 47). A lyre-shaped segment with a horizontal groove on loop comes from the site of S rszentl rincz (Stanczik, Vaday 1971: 19, Fig. 5: 3a–b; Bujna 2011: 118, Fig. 49: 7), while another lyre-shaped segment originates from an unknown site (Stanczik, Vaday 1971: 21, Fig. 5: 2a–b). Yet another part of a belt with lyre-shaped segments also originates from an unknown site. There was probably a pendant at the end of the belt (Challet 1992: 104, Fig. 64; Bujna 2011: 118, Fig. 49: 12). An anthropomorphic pendant of a belt and a loop of a segment, probably lyre-shaped, was discovered in Szentes in the Tisza valley (Tischler 1890: Pl. B4; Hunyady 1942: Pl. XXXIV: 2; Stanczik, Vaday 1971: 20, Fig. 5: 6; Elu re 1973: 318, Fig. 2: 3; Challet 1992: 103, Fig. 62; Sch tze aus der Keltenezeit in Ungarn 1998: 84, cat. no. 177; Rustoiu 2008a: 131, Fig. 63: 7; Bujna 2011: 118, Fig. 49: 3). A fragment of a lyre-shaped segment and hollow rectangular segments are also attributed to Szentes (Tischler 1890: Pl. B5; Stanczik, Vaday 1971: 21; Challet 1992: 103, Fig. 62); the second segment has a zoomorphic buckle on its lateral side (Tischler 1890: Pl. B6; Stanczik, Vaday 1971: 21; Challet 1992: 103, Fig. 62). Parts of a belt composed of lyre-shaped and rectangular segments were discovered in a woman’s cremation burial in Tele sti in Oltenia. There was an anthropomorphic pendant at the end of the belt. The grave was dated to the LT C1 and is considered to prove the mobility of women, with whom these belts crossed the borders of the areas in which they were produced; whereas the woman from the grave in Tele sti also kept elements of her local costume (Calotoiu 1986; Rustoiu 2004/2005: 54–55, Fig. 1: 6–13; 2008a: 128, Fig. 62: 6–13; 2008b: 38,

Fig. 5: 6–13; 2011: 167, Fig. 5: 6–13; 2017: 43, Fig. 8: 3). A belt mostly composed of rectangular segments with a groove along the edges, but also fragments of lyre-shaped segments, belong to E. Marcel’s collection of finds, allegedly gathered in south-western Slovakia in the area around Galanta (Pichlerov  1986: 162, Pl. IX: 65).

The Zvonimirovo variant is represented by lyre-shaped segments with a characteristic extension of the lateral sides after they touch the central part of the body and close in the middle, by which the lateral protrusions have a figure-of-eight shape, and its lower parts were hemispherically ribbed (Fig. 1: 3). A belt with such lyre-shaped segments was discovered in grave LT 29 in Zvonimirovo, dated to LT C2. Most of the segment with a zoomorphic buckle, was damaged during the cremation with the deceased woman. Some rectangular segments have depressions in the middle that are filled with red enamel, while some rectangular segments have no decorations, i.e., have a rib along the longer edge. On the lyre-shaped segments, there are also depressions filled with red enamel (Dizdar 2011: 110, Fig. 3: 1). A belt with lyre-shaped segments of this variant was discovered in grave 390 on Kapiteljska njiva in Novo Mesto, which had also been burned with the deceased woman. The belt was composed of lyre-shaped and rectangular segments with depressions and segments with only a rib along their longer edge (Kri  2009: 322, cat. no. 46). At another unknown site in Hungary, a larger portion of a belt was found, which was composed of rectangular and lyre-shaped segments of the Zvonimirovo variant, which were placed only at the preserved ends of the belt (Tischler 1890: Pl. B1; Stanczik, Vaday 1971: 21; Challet 1992, 101: Fig. 59). A single lyre-shaped segment of the Zvonimirovo variant was probably part of a belt from the site of Kunszentm rton – Bokonya in the Tisza valley, which seems to originate from a grave. The belt was also composed of hollow rectangular segments with bell-shaped and triangular depressions filled with red enamel on the segment loops. The remains of the belt were dated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. An anthropomorphic pendant probably belongs to this belt, which was located at its end (Kov cs 2017: 15, 21, 82–83, cat. no. 199–204).

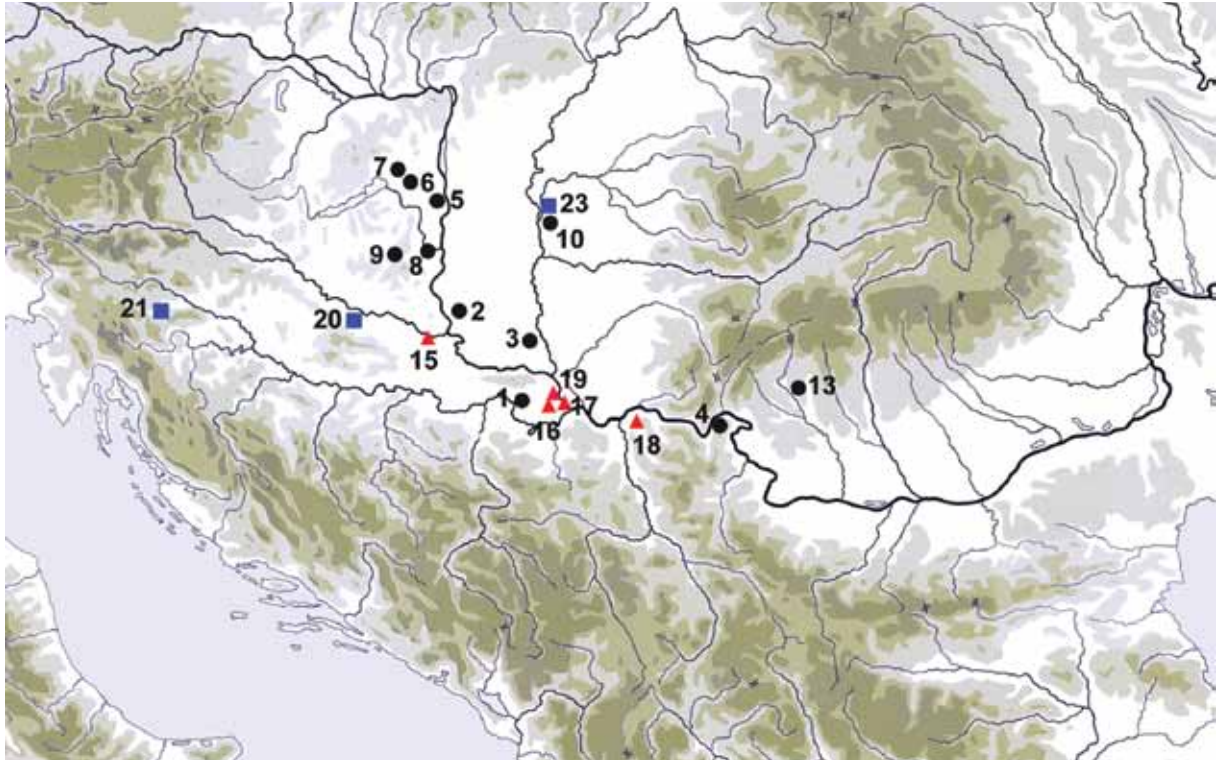


Fig. 5. Distribution of bronze belts of the Scordiscan type with lyre-shaped segments of the Hrtkovci variant (●), Surčin variant (▲), Zvonimirovo variant (■):

- Hrtkovci variant (●): 1. Hrtkovci; 2. Bački Monoštor; 3. Bačko Gradište; 4. Pecka bara; 5. Bölske – Madocsahegy; 6. Cece – Hardpuszta; 7. Sárossd; 8. Tengelic; 9. Sárszentlőrincz; 10. Szentes; 11. Unknown site in Hungary; 12. Unknown site in Hungary; 13. Telešti; 14. Unknown site in southwestern Slovakia.
- Surčin variant (▲): 15. Osijek; 16. Surčin; 17. Beljarica near Zemun; 18. Stari Kostolac – Čair; 19. Novi Banovci.
- Zvonimirovo variant (■): 20. Zvonimirovo – Veliko polje; 21. Novo Mesto – Kapiteljska njiva; 22. Unknown site in Hungary; 23. Kunszentmárton – Bokonya.

## Conclusion

Bronze belts composed of differently arranged lyre-shaped and rectangular segments – the so-called Scordiscan type of belts (Challet 1992: 76), with zoomorphic buckles and anthropomorphic pendants, were mostly discovered at sites along the Danube river from Lake Balaton to the mouth of the Sava river, where workshops that produced them were also probably situated (Fig. 5). Therefore, it is a recognisable regional form of the Middle La Tène women's costume characteristic of communities settled along the Danube river that shared similar ideas of decorating women's bodies and took part in creating a complex cultural landscape. These belts were previously recognised within the so-called Hungarian type of belts, which are thought to belong to the material legacy of the eastern Celts, perhaps best-known today for its characteristic forms of women's costume (Hauschild 2010: 173). The belts with lyre-

shaped segments of the Surčin variant are particularly characteristic of the material legacy of the Scordisci (Fig. 5), which were definitely produced in workshops located in their territory (Jovanović 1982/1983: 33; 1983: 55). Therefore, it is a segment shape that was represented in the Scordiscan legacy by a unique form and which was produced according to a widely-accepted paradigm and common concept of decoration. It is certainly necessary to point out that areas of distribution of differently shaped bronze belts overlap, which might point to the possibility of certain workshops producing differently shaped belts. This is supported by belts composed of differently shaped segments (Dizdar 2018: 17). Individual choice, or selectivity, could certainly have been of great importance as well. On the other hand, discoveries of certain belt or segment types outside of principal areas of distribution could point to the mobility of women who wore them or craftsmen who produced them. Likewise, they could have been objects of cultural

transfers, used for exchanging ideas and knowledge necessary for the production of such complex objects. However, finds like these are certainly evidence of established contacts, often between distant areas (Dizdar 2018: 24–27).

Although, for now, there is no data of finds of bronze belts with lyre-shaped segments in closed grave assemblages, aside from the grave in Telești and cemeteries in Zvonimirovo and Novo Mesto, we can conclude that wearing them was not only a socially determined category, but it simultaneously reflected various aspects of social identities and had a recognisable gender and age significance. The aforementioned graves are particularly significant for the dating of bronze belts of the Scordiscan type with lyre-shaped segments. The bronze belts with lyre-shaped segments from the Scordiscan sites were dated to the period from the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC and are assumed to originate from wealthy women's graves (Majnarić-Pandžić 1970: 15, 21, 37; Jovanović 1982/1983: 31–32; 1983: 52–54; Guštin 1984: 340, App. 1: 49; Jovanović 1987: 838, 840–841; Popović 2002: 350–351). Based on the finds in the aforementioned graves, we can assume that bronze belts composed of lyre-shaped and rectangular segments appeared in late LT C1 (Stanczik, Vaday 1971: 25–26; Bujna 1982: 337; Hellebrandt 1999: 86–88; Rustoiu 2002: 30; 2004/2005: 54–55; 2011: 167–168), but it seems they were worn much more in LT C2, or during the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC (Challet 1992: 107; Bujna 2011: 116–118, 143). This was confirmed by the results of the excavation of the Zvonimirovo cemetery, where bronze belts with different lyre-shaped segments were found in several grave assemblages (Dizdar 2011: 111; 2013: 230; 2018: 18). A find of a part of a belt with a pendant from Bačko Gradište points to a similar conclusion, with finds from destroyed graves (Jovanović 1991) dated mostly to LT C2.

Similarities in concept and shape between bronze belts of the Scordiscan type with various combinations of lyre-shaped and rectangular segments testify to the existence of intense contacts in the area along the Danube river during the Middle La Tène. These belts represent a recognisable physical expression of a defined visual code and identity of women in the Middle Danube region, while the belts with lyre-shaped segments of the Surčin variant were most commonly worn by

Scordiscan women. Wearing them, as a part of a complex decoration of a woman's body, probably also had a symbolic meaning that sent a message that created an idealised image of the wearer and her social status, due to which the belts were burned with the deceased women during the Middle La Tène – from the end of LT C1 and during LT C2. The Middle La Tène bronze belts decorated with enamel have been the subject of many scientific studies written by my esteemed colleague Petar Popović, to whom we are thankful for many inspirational discussions about the material legacy of the Scordisci, and also all other things that make our lives better.

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**Petar Milojević and Vojislav Filipović**

Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade

pertinax1983@gmail.com and vfilipov1@gmail.com

## TWO IRON SWORDS FROM THE LOWER COURSE OF THE SOUTH MORAVA

**Abstract:** The paper analyses two iron swords that represent chance finds from the valley plains between the present-day cities of Niš and Aleksinac, within the lower course of the South Morava river. Both examples are well preserved double-edged swords utilised during two different periods. The first sword belongs to the collection of the Hometown Museum in Aleksinac. It was discovered during gravel extraction on the left bank of the South Morava river, between the villages of Lužane and Tešica. Without a doubt, the sword represents an early Celtic type, positioned into the LT B2/C1 period, based on existing analogies, or the end of the 4th and the beginning of the 3rd century BC. The other sword comes from the collection of the National Museum in Niš, where it was stored as a chance find from the village of Draževac. For years, the sword has been interpreted as a Late La Tène example. An audit analysis has shown that this sword, a long-term exhibition piece of the prehistoric collection, in fact, represents a solidly preserved Roman spatha. In conclusion, several military campaigns across the territory of the Central Balkans, along with their archaeological records, are analysed, in order to provide a comparison with the Celtic campaigns towards the southern Balkans in 279 BC, and provide a possible interpretation for the uncommon location of the sword.

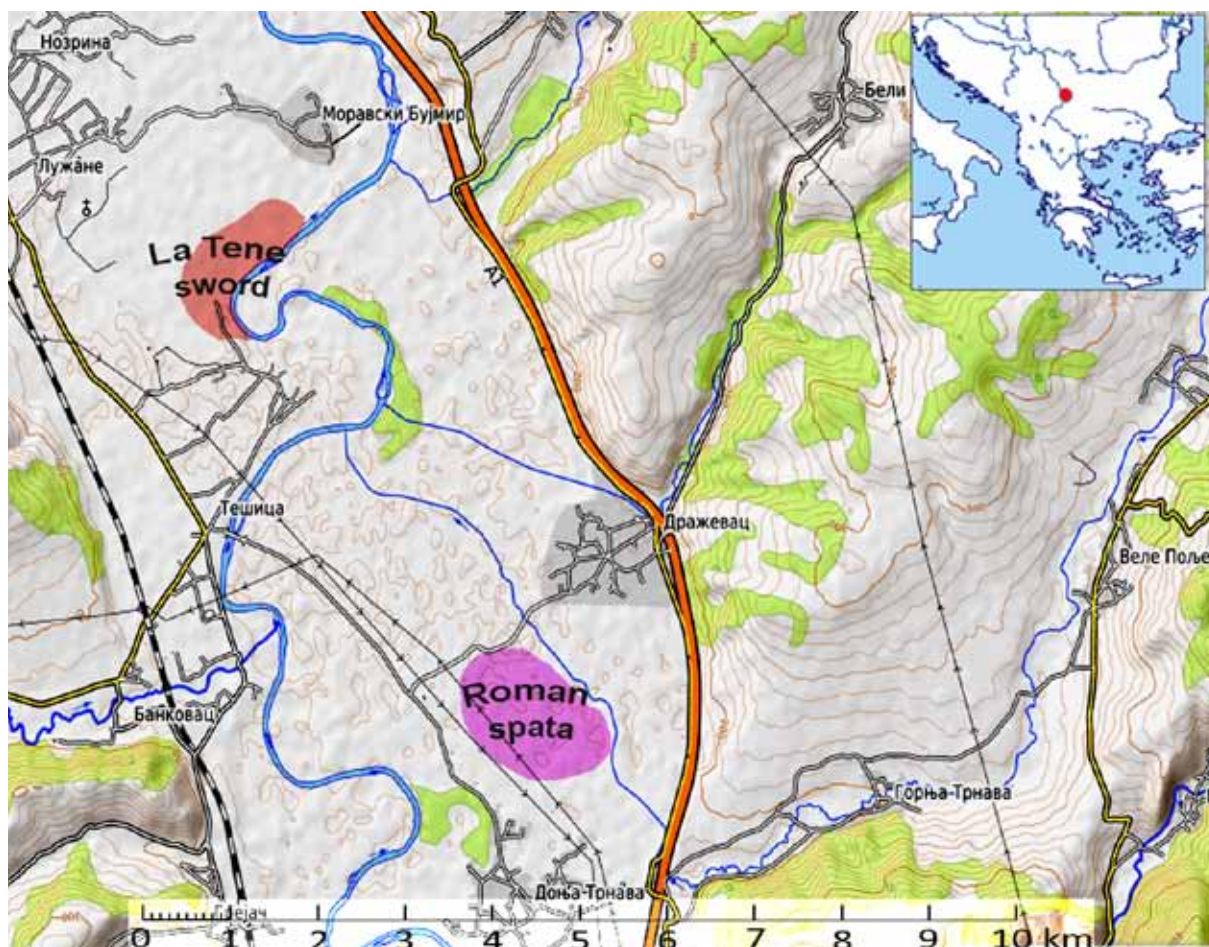
**Keywords:** LT B2/C1, spatha, military campaign, historical sources, Central Balkans.

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Many local and foreign archaeologists directly associate the words Celts and La Tène of the Central Balkans with the works of Petar Popović. His initial papers, although related to the protohistorical numismatic finds from the Central Balkans, have directed his fruitful work on the subject of the protohistory of the Balkans and, therefore, towards the issues of the Celts and Scordisci. Consequently, in time, P. Popović completely affirmed himself to the research related to the protohistorical population and, besides several professional excursions, positioned himself as an authority on the subject of the Central Balkans during the final centuries BC. However, the representation of archaeological finds in the region, and the state of research of certain regions, has determined the scientific opus of the author on La Tène subjects.

Hence, only a few papers by P. Popović (1994; 1996; 2012) reflect on the early presence of Celts and finds of their material culture in the region. In his final comprehensive review from 2012, in the monograph *Central Balkans between the Greek*

*and the Celtic world (Централни Балкан између грчког и келтског света)*, on page 46 the author notes: “Towards the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, the Celts have occupied considerable parts of the Carpathian Basin and settled in the area around the Sava and Danube rivers. Thus, Pannonia and the Danube region became a starting point for belligerent groups of Celts that soon after flooded parts of the Balkans, and invaded Macedonia, Greece, and the renowned sanctuary of Delphi in 279 BC. One of the main directions of their penetration towards the south was the Morava Valley...” Although aware that the cited lines by P. Popović might sound old-fashioned and in the manner of the cultural-historical archaeology, and that the overall problem regarding the invasion of Delphi could be easily relativised within the professional domain and categorised as a *passé* narrative, this paper will continue the cited plot of P. Popović and present another unusual Celtic find from the lower course of the South Morava river, which is chronologically positioned between 325 and 275 BC.



Map 1. Early La Tène sword and Roman spatha find-spots.

The paper will briefly present a sword from the collection of the National Museum in Niš, which has been chronologically misinterpreted into the Late La Tène period for half a century. Such an interpretation has principally been caused by the nature of publications, relying primarily on descriptions, without the accompanying documentation.

### Sword from the collection of the Hometown Museum in Aleksinac

The sword from the Hometown Museum in Aleksinac represents a chance find that found its way into the museum as a gift from a private collection (Милојевић, Филиповић 2017). It was discovered in the course of the mechanical extraction of gravel from the banks of the South Morava river, in the administrative municipality of Aleksinac, in the area between the villages of Lužane and Tešica

(Map 1).<sup>1</sup> The area includes an alluvial plain on the southern fringe of the Aleksinac Basin, which encompasses the space<sup>2</sup> between the left bank of the South Morava river and the north-eastern slopes of the Jastrebac mountain. The valley between the villages of Lužane and Tešica is covered with fertile plough land with numerous marks of an old riverbed, while the wider area along the riverbank is marshy and prone to flooding during the rainy months. Such characteristics of terrain indicate the fleeting nature of the South Morava watercourse, which was subject to frequent flooding and waterbed shifts in this area. The information that the sword was found in the river indicates the possibility that it might, in fact, originate from a remote location, although its solid state of preservation does not indicate such a case.

<sup>1</sup> The riparian area of these villages has a long tradition of intensive exploitation of gravel and sand for the construction purposes (Костић 1969: 488).

<sup>2</sup> The alluvial plain within the aforementioned area measures up to 4 km wide, with an average altitude of 167 m.

The degree of preservation of the sword during its discovery remains unknown, due to the fact that it came to the Museum cleaned and coated with a layer of paraffin. There is no major damage on the sword, save for several indentations on the blade, which could easily represent signs of usage. The sword is characterised by a short tang, rectangular in cross-section, which ends with a small spherical pommel. The transition from tang to the blade is executed through a concave shoulder. The blade, which is rhomboid in cross-section, gradually narrows and thins, ending in a sharp point. The total length of the sword is 63.1 cm, comprising the blade with the shoulder at 50.6 cm long, the tang at 10.7 cm long, and the pommel at 1.8 cm long. The weight of the sword is 205.1 g. (Fig. 1).

Based on its characteristics, the sword from the Hometown Museum in Aleksinac is attributed to the Early La Tène short-sword with concave shoulder and a sharp point. The spherical pommel on this type of sword represents a secondary characteristic, which strengthens its stylistic and typological determination within the Early La Tène swords from the territory of Central Europe. Swords with a concave shoulder and pointed blade are common for the territory of the Pannonian Basin,<sup>3</sup> while examples with a spherical pommel occur in a wider area, such as examples from Požarevac (Božić 1981: T. 6/5), Grave 1 in Unterpemstätten-Zettling (Guštin, Kavur 2015: Pl. 1/1), Grave 9 from Srednica (Lubšina Tušek, Kavur 2009: fig. 5), a chance find from Kosd (Szabó, Petres 1992: 100, cat. no. 67, Pl. 70), Grave 7 from Iškovac (Szabó, Petres 1992: 105-106, cat. no. 91, Pl. 91), a disturbed grave from Formin (Szabó, Petres 1992: 112, cat. no. 119, Pl. 115/2), a disturbed grave from Šumanovci (Szabó, Petres 1992: 116-117, cat. no. 138, Pl. 124) or Grave 6 from the Monte Bibeles necropolis (Vitali 2003: Tav. 256, tombe 66, 266; Lejars 2008: 193, tombe 66). Interestingly, a sword with similar characteristics is possibly represented on a fresco from the famous Thracian tomb at Sveshtari in Bulgaria (Anastassov 2008). Similar swords with a spherical pommel modelled as a mask could be chronologically younger,<sup>4</sup> and most likely represent an evolutive variant of the basic

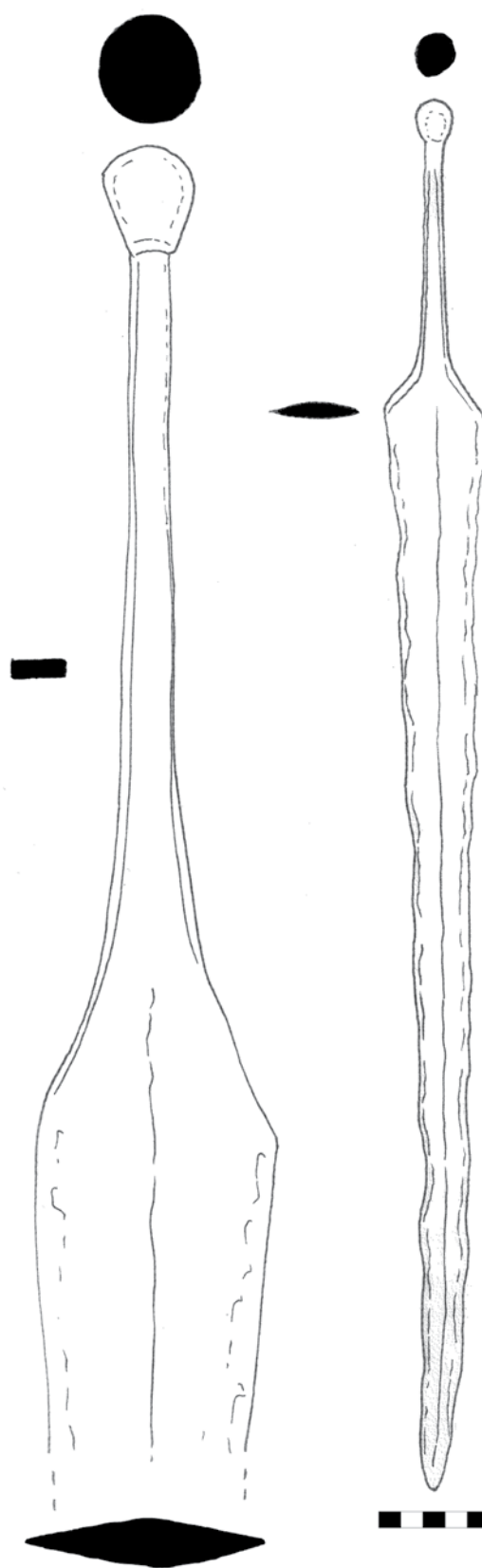


Fig. 1. Early La Tène short-sword from the South Morava river (drawing: A. Kapuran).

<sup>3</sup> Detailed in Drnić 2020b: 98 and further, with complete earlier literature.

<sup>4</sup> Detailed in Drnić 2015: 23 and further, with complete earlier literature.

type. According to the stylistic and typological characteristics, the sword from the South Morava river belongs to Early/Middle La Tène swords of the LT B2/ LT C1 phases, or the Belgrade 1 phase, according to D. Božič (Božič 1981: 324 and further). In general, such swords correspond to those examples recorded together with decorated scabbards made of iron sheets and with a heart-shaped chape, known as the Hatvan-Boldog type, one of the four types of the Kosd systematisation and classification according to E. Petres and M. Szabó (Petres, Szabó 1985; Petres, Szabó 1992). Based on the aforementioned analogies, the sword from the South Morava river could be attributed to the LT B2 period or the very beginning of the LT C1 period, meaning the period between the final quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> and the first quarter of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. The fact that no sites from the Early La Tène period have been registered between the villages of Lužane and Tešica, prevents us from connecting the sword with a certain location in the vicinity of the find spot. It is peculiar to highlight that at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Đoka Jovanović recorded the existence of a mound in the area of the Lužane and Tešica villages (Јовановић 1892: 81), although from the perspective of contemporary research such data is disputable, considering that no mounds have been recorded in this area. On the other hand, the information provided by Đ. Jovanović should not be easily dismissed as several mounds have been registered in the wider area of the plain on the left bank of the South Morava river, such as those in the nearby Moravac (Гарашанин, Гарашанин 1951: 168; Вучковић-Тодоровић, Тодоровић 1959) and Nozrina (Милојевић, Трајковић-Филиповић 2017: 136-138), of which several have been archaeologically excavated. The small-scale excavations of those mounds determined their attribution to Roman and medieval periods (Васић 1910: 273; Јовановић 1984: 144), with sporadic prehistoric finds (Вучковић-Тодоровић, Тодоровић 1959: 291-292).

Sites on which Late Iron Age material was recorded in the wider area of Lužane and Tešica are Šanac in Gornja Trnava (Тодоровић 1968: 23) (approximately 7 km southeast of the find location of the La Tène sword), Carina in Vakup (Милојевић, Трајковић Филиповић 2017) (10 km to the north), Drum in Sečanica (11 km to the

south),<sup>5</sup> Velika Česma in Vrtišće (Стојић, Јоцић 2006: 67) (12 km to the south), Vrečić Backyard in Rutevac (Булатовић, Филиповић 2011: 32, T.1/7-12), Gorča in Niš (Дејановић (ур.) 1971: 56) (20 km to the southeast), Liljače near the village of Vovan (Милојевић 2017), Darov in Pasi Poljana (Тодоровић 1974: 185; Ђурић 1985: 22; Стојић, Јоцић 2006: 200; Милановић 2011: 164) (22 km to the south) and Medijana in Brzi Brod (Дејановић (ур.) 1971: 55) (24 km to the southeast).

### Sword from the prehistoric collection of the National Museum in Niš

The sword from the prehistoric collection of the National Museum in Niš also represents a chance find, which was acquired in 1956 as a gift from the finder himself. The sword was found in a private field within the valley on the right bank of the South Morava river, opposite the previously presented example from the vicinity of the Tešica and Lužane villages. More precisely, the find location is associated with a particular field in the village of Draževac, in an area marked as Ograde (Map 1). The aforementioned area measures approximately 1 km<sup>2</sup> within the alluvial plain of the Draževac and Donja Trnava villages, on the southern fringe of the Aleksinac Basin. The Draževac plain encompasses a wide valley extension positioned between the course of the South Morava river and the slopes of the Ozren and Devica mountains. The watercourses of Velepolska and Belobrška rivers, which flow into the South Morava river, were formed through the mentioned mountain massifs. Their valleys, together with the nearby Toponička river represent important natural connections with the mountainous hinterland of Moravski Golak. However, the most important natural communication in the area is the South Morava Valley itself, which merges with the Nišava Valley approximately 10 km to the south, forming one of the most important communication hubs of the Central Balkans.

The exact conditions of the find remain unknown and the notes of Natalija Đurić indicate that the sword was possibly discovered within a

<sup>5</sup> The site of Drum is known from archaeological records from surveys in 1982, conducted by the National Museum in Niš.



ploughed mound.<sup>6</sup> However, the source of that information remains unknown considering that the sword ended up in the museum years before the respective curator was employed. On the other hand, the data regarding the existence of mounds in the Draževac region is not surprising, considering that the aforementioned antique-period mounds were recorded on the other bank of the South Morava river. Besides the sword, the only known archaeological finds from the area of Ograde are connected to the Early Iron Age (Милојевић, Трајковић-Филиповић 2017: 103).

The sword is 87.8 cm long with a uniform width of parallel edges (5.1 cm), which only narrow within the final 5 cm of the blade (Fig. 2). The tang is formed as a triangular thorn (length: 14 cm; width 0.8-1.9 cm), with a rectangular cross-section (1 cm thick), which emerges from a completely flat shoulder and ends in a spike. The blade is rhomboid in cross-section with two longitudinal grooved bands running parallel to edges (width 1.2 cm). The weight of the swords is 622.3 g (Fig. 2).

During the acquisition in 1965, the sword was listed in the inventory book of the Antique Department under number R/396 and, 15 years later, during the preparation of the exhibition *Prehistoric Cultures of the Morava Region and Eastern Serbia* (Праисторијске културе Поморавља и источне Србије), it was transferred to the Prehistoric Collection and a new inventory number PR/3456 was assigned. Within the catalogue of the exhibition, the sword was published without either a drawing or photo, as an *Iron Sword of the La Tène Type* (Дејановић (ур.) 1971: 56). Meanwhile, the reanalysis of the sword with insight from contemporary literature relevant for La Tène and antique weaponry determined that the type of sword is not represented during the Late Iron Age and that the shape and the manner of production correspond to examples of Roman *spathae* represented throughout the empire between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD. (Bishop, Coulston 1993: 126-135, fig. 86-87). Similar misinterpretations of such swords are known from the literature (Radman-Livaja, Drnić 2016), especially from the time when archaeology did not adequately master the stylistic and typological characteristics and classifications of iron



Fig. 2. Roman spatha from Draževac (drawing: A. Kapuran).

<sup>6</sup> АНМН, Notes from the 1981-1982 survey of the highway route.

objects, as the focus of the study of material culture was on the non-ferrous and precious metals, as well as their alloys. One of the most similar examples regarding both the dimensions and typology is the *spatha* from the Belgrade City Museum, dated from the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD (Бујовић 2000/2001: 47). Due to the lack of context and detailed conditions of the find, it seems inappropriate to discuss a more precise chronology of such finds. Another example, possibly even more similar to our example, judging by the dimensions, is the recently published *spatha* with marks of a workshop and a military unit from Ratari near Obrenovac (Црнобрња, Ратковић 2019), which bears the mark of a weaponry workshop from the area of antique Naissus (Црнобрња, Ратковић 2019, 258-259).

Several antique-period sites are known from the surroundings of Draževac, while certain authors locate the Roman *Gramrianae* or *mutatio Rariana* within the area of the village (Каниц 1989: 134). Numismatic finds from the collection of the Hometown Museum in Aleksinac indicate that a late antique site was located in the vicinity of the village, at the Mamutovac location. Approximately 5 km from Draževac, late antique sites have been registered in the Bukovik area near Beli Breg, Mitovo Branište near Donja Trnava, and the sites of Kusi Bres and Po Strani are known from the village of Gornja Trnava (Милојевић, Трајковић-Филиповић 2017: 53, 79, 100). Felix Kanitz described the remains of antique *Gramrianae* or *Rariana* in the place of the former Turkish guard near Draževac (Каниц 1989: 134), which is highlighted as the final settlement on the *Via Militaris* Road before Naissus. The antique *Gramrianae* is not precisely located, yet according to antique itineraries, the station was positioned approximately 12 miles (18 km) (*Tabula Peutingeriana*) or 13 miles (19 km) (*Itinerarium Hierosolymitanum*) north of Naissus, which indeed corresponds to the present distance between Niš and Draževac.<sup>7</sup> The topographic position of Draževac tends to favour such an interpretation.

The find of the late antique *spatha* from Draževac could, perchance, be connected with military campaigns correlated with the Barbarian invasions

during the final quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD. The archaeological record of turbulent circumstances is illustrated by hoards of coins deposited in the wider area of Niš. The first major crisis was caused by the Gothic War (376-382 AD), illustrated by the large hoard from Maćedonce near Medveđa,<sup>8</sup> with the series ending with pieces coined between 375 and 378 AD (Јанковић-Михалцић 2005: 54). A similar reason was most likely behind the deposition of two hoards from the Aleksinac Basin, whose series end with Gratian and Valens coinages (364-375 AD) (Рашковић 1997: 110-111).

This paper will not deal with the find of the late antique *spatha*, and the precise analyses and detailed publication is left to colleagues dealing with younger periods. However, it is important that we have provided the revision of this supposedly La Tène sword from the prehistoric collection of the National Museum in Niš and concluded that it does not represent a weapon associated with the Late La Tène period.

### Discussion and concluding remarks

We return now to the Early La Tène sword and the historical setting of the territory in which it was found, as well as the facts regarding the distribution of Early La Tène weaponry in the Central Balkans during well-defined chronological scopes. In that context, a sentence from P. Popović's monograph *Central Balkans between the Greek and the Celtic world* (Централни Балкан између грчког и келтског света) is particularly important (2012: 48): *The Celtic invasion of Greece is well-known from antique written sources, yet those events did not provide considerable archaeological traces, which represents an additional problem for scholars...*

The approximate chronological span of the sword between 325 and 275 BC makes it logical to connect it with the Celtic penetration towards the south of the Balkans, known from historical sources (Papazoglu 1969: 210-215). The words of P. Popović on the lack of archaeological traces correlated with the aforementioned invasion, certainly

<sup>7</sup> The aerial distance between Draževac and Aleksinac is approximately 12 km and between Draževac and Niš approximately 17 km (Петровић 2007: 74).

<sup>8</sup> The hoard is kept in the National Museum in Niš and contains 3,971 Roman bronze coins from the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, with the chronological span between Constantine and Gratian.

<sup>9</sup> Highlighted by authors.

come from decades of experience and insight into the sites and archaeological material in the Central Balkans. On the other hand, numerous cases indicate that the material remains do not reflect historical events and, therefore, historical sources represent the only testimony of such military campaigns. Due to the lack of archaeological material, certain younger authors have even introduced the idea that the invasion of Macedonia and Delphi represents an exaggerated result of Hellenistic political propaganda in historical sources, and that those should rather be observed as small-scale raids during the turbulent political events following the death of Alexander the Great (e.g., Džino 2007: 55). The greatest uncertainties were supported by the fact that the lack of archaeological material in the Serbian Danube region from the period preceding the Celtic invasion is in line with the idea of small-scale raids, although several papers have been recently published that provide a specific treatment of the appearance of La Tène material culture in graves from the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, and the general idea of its occurrence in the Central Balkans and the Danube region (Majnarić Pandžić 1995; Popović 1996; Blečić Kavur, Kavur 2010; Ljuština 2013; Jovanović 2014; Lazić 2017; Jovanović 2018; Mihajlović 2019; Drnić 2020a).

Before attempting to provide answers to some of the raised questions, a short overview of natural communications within the territorial scope of this paper will be provided. Certainly, the Central Balkans had the best connections with the Pannonian Plain, as the northern extent is widely open to the Danube and Sava valleys, originating in Central Europe, as well as rivers on the northern borders of the Balkans, such as the Drava or Tisza (Цвијић 2000a: 26). However, although open to the north, the communication lines of the Central Balkans became more dispersed in the south and concentrated on only a few primary roads. Two of them are the most important natural routes: *Morava - Vardar* and *Morava - Nišava - Isker - Marica* (*Via Militaris*) (Filipović 2018: fig 1). Cvijić believed that the *Morava - Vardar* route was more traversable (Цвијић 2000a: 27), which fits into our potential route of Celtic penetration towards the south, although Cvijić also mentioned that the *Via Militaris* was of greater importance (Цвијић 2000b: 100). K. Jireček, the famous Czech histo-

rian and Balkanologist, on the other hand, considered the *Via Militaris* to be the main communication route of the Balkans (Jireček 1957: 73). All of the primary trans-Balkan routes had their crossroads, but the present-day area of Niš is certainly the most important and fundamentally strategic crossroad of the Central Balkans, and the discussed sword was recovered not more than a several-hour-walk from the crossroad. Likewise, according to Cvijić, a series of large rifts in a meridian direction, with a length of more than 100 km, occur from Golubac on the right bank of the Danube river to the present-day city of Paraćin. In that direction, the massifs of Homolje, the Beljanica mountain, and the Kučaj mountain separate the Great Morava and Mlava valleys from the Timok Basin.<sup>10</sup> Still, it is apparent that the valleys of the Crnica and Grza rivers and Čestobrodica with the Stolice Pass are the most easily accessible natural communication from the Morava Valley towards the Timok Basin, regarding the territory south of the Danube river. This lateral road, first towards the east after the Danube crossing, is important due to the fact that the earliest find that could be connected with the Celtic population was recorded on its route - a dragon head fibula from Banjska Stena, which is chronologically attributed to LT B1 period (Сладић 2003). It is important to highlight the opinion of A. Rustoiu (2012: 361) on possible contacts of armed groups involved in the crossing of territories controlled by other communities. During such trespasses, gifts were exchanged, including horses with harnesses, luxury wares, jewellery, and dress or garment accessories. Some of the La Tène artefacts found in indigenous contexts in the southern Carpathian Basin might have been distributed toward the south. Peculiar is the fact that both the fibula and the sword were recorded within important communications that connect the Central Balkans with the south and east.

The highlighted lack of material remains from the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC has guided our research towards the analysis of archaeological material from two historically confirmed military campaigns in the Balkans, although both a millennium and a half later than the presumed Celtic penetration towards the south. We

<sup>10</sup> On the potential prehistoric Great Morava-Timok route refer to Filipović, Mladenović, Vučković 2019 and Filipović, Mladenović 2019.

consider that a sufficient number of papers over the last decade minutely analysed the origin and chronology of finds related to La Tène period burials within the Danube region and that the repetition of the *circulus vitiosus* would not contribute to a more precise interpretation of our sword. Therefore, the possible interpretation will be reached through an indirect path of analogies.

Since the Balkans has always been a common route for military campaigns, we have decided to analyse the quality and quantity of material remains of those campaigns that are well documented in historical sources. The analysis includes two large-scale and short-lived military expeditions, the Third Crusade and the movement of an army from Belgrade to Sofia in 1189, and the well-known Mongolian Invasion in the Balkans in 1242.

Although armies of the First and Second Crusade used the *Via Militaris* as one of the roads towards Constantinople, historical sources provide most data on the crusaders passing through the area during the conquest of the German Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa (Matković 1878: 118-144; Фејић 1996; Loud 2010; Коматина 2015; Freed 2016: 490-503; Узелац 2018). Historical sources testify that Fredericks' army numbered approximately 30,000 soldiers and that the trip from Braničevo to Niš lasted a total of 16 days (Узелац 2018: 151-160), while previous armies made the journey in half the time (Узелац 2018: 56, 117). Almost all of the historical sources, of which some were written by participants in the campaign, inform us of the misfortune of crusaders and pilgrims during the journey, primarily due to conflicts regarding food and supplies with the local population, but also due to raids by the domestic population in the numerous forests and swamps of the Central Balkans. (Узелац 2011: 100-102; Коматина 2015: 77). Of particular importance is the information from *Historia de expeditione Friderici imperatoris* that "the bodies of almost all of the pilgrims that were buried along the road were dug-up and removed from their graves by Bulgarians" (Узелац 2018: 158-159). From those lines, we can assume that the soldiers and pilgrims that were killed or died on the road were buried at the site and that burial in the local cemetery was not an option in those cases. Therefore, a rational archaeological question arises; how many of those graves or even chance finds of Crusade Era

weapons and military equipment of western provenance, which could confirm the historical sources, have been recorded on the *Via Militaris* so far? As far as we are aware, no such finds have been recorded from Braničevo to Pirot. By comparing such a state with the issue of the Celtic invasion in 279 BC, we could assume that the numbers of soldiers and pilgrims were blown out of proportion and that the Crusades might have been of a smaller scale. Indeed, the only crusader burial in the Central Balkans is recorded in Grave XII from Mound II at the site of Kunovo-Čuki near Kočani, in present-day Macedonia (Џидрова 2005). Besides the antique and New Era burials, a grave of a crusader with a pair of spurs and a bronze ring dated to the Third Crusade was recorded within the Iron Age mound (Џидрова 2005). Without engaging the issue of medieval roads and other routes of the crusade,<sup>11</sup> it seems this this single grave cannot solely confirm the dramatic events regarding the destiny of a vast army of tens of thousands of soldiers that crossed the Central Balkans on their way towards the east. On the other hand, the grave could confirm the historical source regarding lone burials along the road.

The Mongolian invasion across the Balkans represents a suitable comparable event for several different reasons, in contrast to the Third Crusade. This invasion came from the southwest and did not fully utilise the Morava-Vardar communication. It was an utterly violent event and executed by a population whose material culture differs from the concurrent European material culture in all parameters. Therefore, one would expect that certain objects or even graves are clearly recognised within the dominant material culture of the 13<sup>th</sup> century AD. Following the devastation of Hungary in 1241, the Mongols pursued King Béla to the Adriatic, and in the early spring of 1242, one of the units went further south towards present-day Montenegro, where it laid waste to several coastal towns and executed the local population (Узелац 2015: 50; Sophoulis 2015). Thereafter, most likely by using the only diagonal trans-Balkan and shortest and fastest road from the Lower Danube and Oltenia towards the Mediterranean – the *Lissus-Naissus-Ratiaria (Archar)* road (Петровић 2007:

<sup>11</sup> Some of the Crusade armies utilised the well-known *Via Egnatia*, which crossed the Balkans on an east-west axis, from Constantinople to Thessaloniki, Durrës and the Adriatic.

87), the Mongols advanced towards the Lower Danube and, at one point, certainly had to pass along parts of the Morava-Vardar communication and the *Via Militaris* Road. The precise route of such an advance has not been archaeologically confirmed, considering that archaeological evidence is still lacking within the aforementioned route. Traces of Mongolian fires and devastation have been registered in Hungary, as burnt houses, numerous hoards of metal artefacts as well as dozens of deceased throughout the burnt village with numerous injuries and severed heads have been recorded in the village of Orosháza-Bónum (Gyucha, Lee, Rózsa 2019). The deceased were not buried and all age categories were represented (Gyucha, Lee, Rózsa 2019: 1048-1053). Similarly, remains of large fires and the destruction of urban architecture, burials with arrow points, severed extremities, and dislocated deceased covered with burnt parts of the church have all been recorded in Svač, in present-day Montenegro (Zagarčanin 2017: 190-197). Unfortunately, except for Svač, archaeological traces of the Mongolian advance in the hinterlands of the Balkans are completely missing (Радичевич 2020). Previously proposed connections between the destruction layers of Ras and Studenica Monastery with the Mongolian invasion have not yet been confirmed (Радичевич 2020: 241). Although such an invasion represented a swift operation, it seems reasonable to assume that archaeological traces would have been discovered on their route, although there is a possibility that the archaeological material remains uninterpreted within museum storage facilities.

Particularly interesting archaeological records on Roman military campaigns during the Marcomannic Wars have been recorded within the Middle Danube region. More than 20 temporary military camps have been registered in the territories north of the Danube river, of which most have been archaeologically researched (Hüssen *et al.* 2020). Besides scarce archaeological finds, numismatic finds and examples of weapons and military equipment stand out, while structures are represented solely by V-shaped trenches and hearths in thin cultural layers (Hüssen *et al.* 2020: 24-29). On the other hand, a total of 10 temporary military camps and a small necropolis with six burials of Roman soldiers has been recorded near the fort of Iža (Hüssen *et al.* 2020: 27-29). The

Roman soldiers died in hostile territory, where they were buried as well. Such burials represent a necessity due to technical reasons and the burial of deceased individuals in “hostile” territory can be considered a common military practise, as is the case with previously analysed crusaders or numerous other cases from the war history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>12</sup>

The presented events serve as examples of reliably confirmed large-scale military campaigns that left significantly fewer archaeological traces than expected, based on the analyses of various historical sources. The reason for the lack of results regarding the quest for archaeological material from the short-term conflicts or military campaigns across the mentioned territory, confirmed by historical sources, should be sought through the prism of the relationship between the civilians and soldiers and material goods during wartime. Primarily, campaigns and wars reflect a state of constant turmoil and insecurity during which civilians protect their material goods through relocation or hiding. From a military point of view, one of the basic defensive strategies is to preserve weaponry, equipment, and other logistics necessary for life sustain, while on the other hand, at the core of offensive tactics is the need to capture the same resources in a functional state (Стокић 1871; Klauzevic 1951; Sun Cu 2009). During wars, weaponry becomes a scarce and needed commodity, resulting in a constant rise in prices, providing a lucrative environment for war profiteers or even individuals that do not hesitate to desecrate graves containing potential goods such as weapons, as seen in the example of the Bulgarian thieves mentioned in *Historia de expeditione Friderici imperatoris* (Узелац 2018: 158-159). The desecration of graves of adversaries could, likewise, have been connected with the perception of the local population towards the conquerors, who not only caused all the problems, but often represented a population with a different culture, religion, tradition, and language, which, together, could have provided an

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<sup>12</sup> German military cemetery near Sologubovka in Russia is a fine example of such practice. It holds bodies of more than 30.000 German soldiers, victims of the Eastern Front during the Second World War (1941-1944). Similar example is the Zeitenlik Cemetery in Thessaloniki, which hosts 20.000 graves of Serbian, French, Italian, English and Russian soldiers, victims of the breach of Salonica Front during the First World War.



“excuse” for such a moral deterioration within the local populations.

We can conclude that most military doctrines consider weaponry to be one of the most important resources, wanted by both warring parties, with the goal to preserve their own and take over the opponent’s arsenal. It is a fact that equipment and weaponry with specifications favoured by the opponent would not be easily accepted, mostly due to a lack of training and “sentimental” issues. Therefore, it is only logical to presume that following short-term campaigns, most of the seized arsenal would be either melted down or adjusted to the victors’ personal needs and taste, therefore losing its original characteristics.

With this approach, it has primarily been attempted to explain the low representation of the material culture of conquerors during invasions within hostile or transit territories. Since weaponry and military equipment represent a basic form for the distinction of the material culture of invading armies, their scarce representation within the archaeological material should not come as any surprise, especially in the context of short-term and unsuccessful campaigns, such as the Celtic penetration towards the southern Balkans and the raid of Delphi in 279 BC. The only relevant locations in which weaponry could be expected are the raiders’ graves in hostile territory. However, even those burials, and especially those with lavish grave goods, have probably often been desecrated and raided by native populations, due to both sentimental reasons and potential profit. Hence, it can be assumed that the greatest chance of preservation was in those cases when the graves were located in highly respected locations, such as the burial of a crusader within the Iron Age mound at the site of Kunovo-Čuki near Kočane.<sup>13</sup> Considering that during the 19<sup>th</sup> century several mounds were recorded near the location in which our Early La Tène sword was found (Јовановић 1892), a similar interpretation could be possible. Likewise, more straightforward presumptions are possible; that the sword ended up in river deposits by pure chance, as the warrior dropped it directly into the river during the crossing.

translation: Ognjen Mladenović

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**Mitja Guštin**

Piran

mitja.gustin@upr.si

## THE SCORDISCIAN LADY AND HER ATTIRE FROM “SREMSKA MITROVICA”

**Abstract:** An extraordinary grave group from the surroundings of Sremska Mitrovica contained an excellent example of a belt buckle and its fastening plate, depicting a horseman, which is an important and significant find in terms of female dress accessories. Along with the exceptional grave goods from Jarak and the rich hoards from the Srem and Banat regions, the presumed grave group confirms the existence of an important female elite in the Celtic community of the Scordisci, which was especially prominent before the Roman conquest.

**Keywords:** Scordisci, LT D1, Szárazd-Regöly hoards, Laminci type belt buckles, strap mounts, human heads, bracelets with ram’s head finials, double foil pendants

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The material legacy of the Celtic Scordisci tribe is a topic that has preoccupied my friend Petar Popović throughout his working life. The intention of this contribution is to, once again, draw attention to a group of finds from the surroundings of Sremska Mitrovica (hereafter “Sremska Mitrovica”). The extraordinary objects probably belonged to a woman from the upper echelons of the Celtic Scordisci elite during the most lavish phase of their existence.

Vojislav Filipović and Rastko Vasić published several archaeological finds from an anonymous antiques market in the *Glasnik* (Journal) of the Serbian Archaeological Society, at the end of 2017. What caught our attention, among other things, were black and white photographs and a comment relating to a group of objects, possibly representing a grave unit, from “Sremska Mitrovica”. According to V. Filipović and R. Vasić, based on their unreliable source, these objects may have been discovered in the village of Kuzmin near Sremska Mitrovica. Among the possible finds from the supposed grave unit, the authors mentioned a silver belt buckle, 18 silver belt (?) plaques (strap mounts; description by the author), a pair of silver bracelets, necklaces made of amber and quartz (glass; description by the author), and beads and pendants, including a large bear tooth. They concluded their overview by informing us that the finds had been sold to a buyer

from the United States of America at the end of 2016, or the beginning of 2017.<sup>1</sup>

V. Filipović re-published the same finds in 2019 on the website of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, with some detailed information on their origins and original colour photographs, instead of the black-and-white photos published previously, and dated 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2017, along with pages of the *Hermann Historica* auction catalogue from 2018.<sup>2</sup> In November 2018, this valuable set of finds, now reduced to the silver objects - the belt buckle, 18 strap mounts polished to a shine and the pair of bracelets – reappeared, thanks to high quality colour photographs, accompanied by descriptions written by an expert, in an auction catalogue of the antiquity auction company *Hermann Historica*, based in Munich.<sup>3</sup> The valuable silver objects were offered at the auction, but did not sell and were returned to the owner/salesman. However, the whereabouts of the necklaces made of amber and quartz/glass beads, as well as of a bear tooth and a large amber bead are currently unknown. We have partly used the descriptive text of the catalogue in our work. The find has been offered to collectors of archaeological antiques in Austria and Germany since 2015, and in 2019 the silver objects were still

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<sup>1</sup> Filipović, Vasić 2017, 339–343, fig. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Filipović 2019.

<sup>3</sup> *Hermann Historica* 2018, 93–100.

on offer for sale from a distributor based in Vienna.

On account of the belt buckle of the Jarak group of the Laminici type (Fig. 1), we focussed our attention on this *magnificent* group of objects by analysing a similar belt buckle from “Donja Posavina”, whose belt terminal fastening plate is also decorated with a figure of a horseman (Fig. 2). The comparison of characteristics of their depiction on metal, and the motif of the warrior present on these two belts buckles, confirms their origins in the region of Syrmia, at the end of the Iron Age.<sup>4</sup>

**1. A silver-plated belt buckle** of the Jarak group of the Laminici type (Fig. 1), consists of two parts: the buckle itself and a square fastening plate. The thick iron base plate of the belt buckle features

edge there is a band between two repoussé lines, which is filled with embossed rings and dots. In the centre of the buckle is a prominent, contoured rib, hammered from the back. The wider lateral edge of the silver sheet is turned inwards around the iron base plate, thereby forming a sleeve. The buckle was flexibly attached to the fastening plate with metal wire. The belt hook is missing.

Before restoration, all twelve large nail heads were still in place.<sup>5</sup> During the process of being cleaned they were lost; imprints of the nail heads are still visible. Belt buckle length is 27.5 cm, and the height is 18.3 cm.

The fastening plate (Fig. 1) is made of silver sheet, bent into a U-shape on the upper and lower edges to be fixed to the belt. Unusually, the plate



Fig. 1. “Sremska Mitrovica”, female grave. Belt buckle with fastening plate length 37 cm and the height is 18,3 cm. After Hermann Historica catalogue 2018, cat. no. 3132 on page 95. Drawing - idealised reconstruction made by Janže Lorber.

a decorative coat of silver sheet. The upper and lower edges curve distinctly outwards and are held together with a bulged silver strip. At each lateral

also has an additional narrow plate, attached to it with two rivets. With the help of the U-shaped edge and an iron wire it was flexibly attached to the belt buckle.

<sup>4</sup> Guštin, Koledin 2019–2020, 202–203, figs. 4; 5; 8.

<sup>5</sup> Filipović, Vasić 2017, fig. 6e.



The fastening plate, bordered with four hatched, embossed ribs, is decorated with a depiction of a horseman sitting atop a stallion. The rider holds a shield in his left hand and a sword in his right. The contours of the entire embossed figure are bordered with a row of fine dots, punched from the

the appearance of a horseman on the fastening plates, the belt buckles from “Sremska Mitrovica” and from “Donja Posavina” were produced locally for the Scordisci elite. The motif of a horseman certainly fits within the so-called “Hellenistic” concept of the Illyrian tribes between the Adriatic

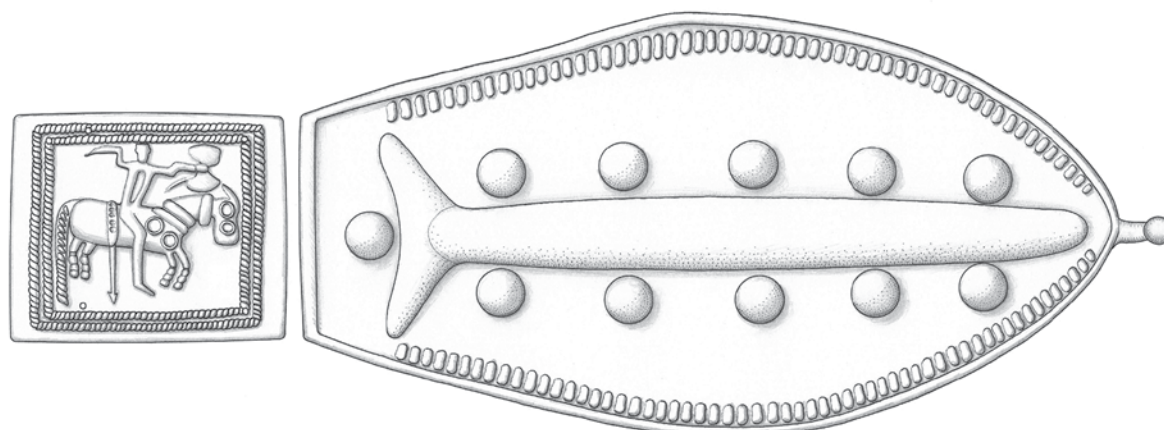


Fig. 2. “Donja Posavina”, isolated find. Belt buckle and fastening plate with a horseman. Belt buckle with fastening plate length 35 cm and the height is 15 cm. Drawing - idealised reconstruction made by Janže Lorber.

top. The horse is decorated with embossed rings and dots; six of them are on the body representing the decorative *phalerae*, the seventh on the head serves as the eye. Width 9.5 cm, height 9.7 cm.

The belt buckles of the Jarak group appear in a geographically limited area between the surroundings of the town of Vršac and the Sava river (examples from the “Donja Posavina” region, Hrtkovci, Sisak-near Silos, Sisak-Kupa and Židovar), as well as an example beyond this area from Breza near Sarajevo.

The best parallel for the belt buckle from “Sremska Mitrovica” is an example from “Donja Posavina” (Fig. 2), whose belt terminal fastening plate also depicts a horseman. These fastening plates share the same theme of representing an equestrian figure, as well as some details of decoration. One example represents precise craftwork performed with different tools – produced by hammering from the back, and also partly from the front, using a simple punch (Fig. 1), whereas the other one is more schematic and only embossed from the back (Fig. 2). They also share the border of hatched embossed ribs, with the difference being that on the “Donja Posavina” fastening plate it is doubled.

According to their method of manufacture and

Sea and the Sava river. The motif is also known from a large group of decorative *phalerae* and ceramic vessels with equestrian motifs, related to the Thracian, pre-Dacian and Dacian population from the final centuries BC.<sup>6</sup>

2. **Flat silver strap mounts**, 18 pieces with representations of clean-shaven male heads (Fig. 3). The lateral edges of the plates have been bent into a U-shaped profile, perhaps to enable them to be attached onto a leather strap. All the heads were produced by hammering from the back, with some details hammered from the front, using a simple punch. Height 28 mm, width 25 mm.

The heads are almost triangular in shape, with the chin sharply pointed. The mouth is indicated by a single line with four or five short vertical lines representing teeth, and the nostrils with two dots. On the forehead is a headband represented by two grooves. Above the band, the hairstyle is represented by a series of parallel lines. The head is framed with a twisted band, which should be interpreted as a torc; its finials seemingly depicted just below the chin. The eyes are round with punched pupils.

In the original publication all 18 strap mounts

<sup>6</sup> Guštin, Koledin 2019–2020, 197–201, figs. 6–7.

were intact.<sup>7</sup> It seems that they were damaged later during the restoration process. In some cases, evidence of damage can be discerned on the edge, whilst some heads have been punctured (Fig. 3).

tion of the hair and the almond-shaped eyes are also found on the bronze fitting that crowns the iron calotte of the Novo mesto type helmet from the Sava river near Stara Gradiška.<sup>13</sup>



Fig. 3. “Sremska Mitrovica”, female grave. Strap mounts from silver sheet with depictions of human heads. After Hermann *Historica* catalogue 2018, cat. no. 3134 on page 100.

The backwards combed hairstyle, indicated with a series of parallel lines, clean shaven look, and torc are characteristic for representations of human heads in the La Tène period and correspond to the majority of Celtic anthropomorphic depictions.

Stylised classic Celtic heads typically have an overly long triangular nose and almond-shaped or oval eyes, such as those on the Rynkeby and Gundestrup cauldrons, masks from Compiègne Forest, the stone relief of Montsalier near Marseilles, the warrior statue of Saint-Maur-en-Chaussée, the head of Garancières-en-Beauce, discs from Manerbio sul Mella<sup>8</sup> or on the much older, yet similar, disc from Hořovičky.<sup>9</sup> To this list can be added the heads on the kantharos from Balatonederics,<sup>10</sup> both figurines from Nyergesújfalu<sup>11</sup> and the bronze stamp from Gradišče above Dunaj, all of which have similarly formed eyes.<sup>12</sup> A comparable depic-

The combination of a backwards combed hairstyle and round eyes are found on the silver pendants of human masks from the hoard of Židovar,<sup>14</sup> while round eyes like those on the strap mounts from “Sremska Mitrovica” are also common in the Celtic world.

For example, round eyes are found on the depictions of human heads on ceramic *kantharoi* in Novo mesto, Rozvágy, Kósd, Körösszegapáti, Blandiana, Nyékládháza, Kakasd, Zalokomár, Levice and Deta.<sup>15</sup> We find them also on the bronze torc with globular heads on the finials from Vas County and on a figurine from Ószőny.<sup>16</sup> Such eyes are also on the supposed belt plate of bronze sheet from Staré Hradisko,<sup>17</sup> on bronze knife handles terminating with two heads from Zemplin and Žerovnišček near Bločice,<sup>18</sup> as well as on the

<sup>7</sup> Filipović, Vasić 2017, fig. 6e; Filipović 2019.

<sup>8</sup> Olmsted 2001, pls. 12; 60–61.

<sup>9</sup> I Celti 1991, 141.

<sup>10</sup> Knez, Szabó 1980–1981, fig. 9.

<sup>11</sup> Szabó 1982, figs. 12–17; 19; 22–26.

<sup>12</sup> Laharnar, Turk 2018, 152, fig. 147.

<sup>13</sup> Mihaljević, Dizdar 2007, figs. 3–7.

<sup>14</sup> Sladić 2006, 44–45, figs. 27–30.

<sup>15</sup> Knez, Szabó 1980–1981, figs. 1–4; 9; 11; 13–14; Rustoiu, Egri 2011, figs. 20–24.

<sup>16</sup> Szabó 1982, figs. 1: 2–3; 18; 20.

<sup>17</sup> Meduna 1961, pl. 1: 10–11; Hradišče nad Okluky 2018, 154–155.

<sup>18</sup> Stegmann-Rajtár 2014, 103–107, figs. 3–5. For Janus-heads see also Rustoiu, Egri 2011, 87–92.

handle of a short sword from Dinnyés.<sup>19</sup> On the famous Bavai Vase we observe a combination of slanted and round eyes.<sup>20</sup>

Good comparisons for the heads on our mounts on Fig. 3 appear to be the heads on some pieces of precious jewellery (Fig. 4) from the swampy confluence of the rivers Kapos and Koppány, in the area between the villages of Szárazd and Regöly (hereafter the Szárazd-Regöly marsh). The numerous objects of gold, silver, bronze, glass and amber were sold to the National Museum in Budapest in the period between 1890 and 1906. All the gold, and some exceptional silver objects, were later arbitrarily ascribed to one gold (Szárazd) and one silver and gold (Regöly) hoard. The origin and circumstances of discovery, as well as the character of finds (hoards or votives) remained unclear even after the presentation and evaluation of the finds by Tibor Kemenczei.<sup>21</sup>

The heads on the gold beads, the silver pectoral and the silver plate from the Szárazd-Regöly marsh, with their almost triangular form (Fig. 4), with bands dividing the face from the upper part of the head, the chin sharply pointed and round half-pearl formed eyes, broadly correspond to the heads on the strap mounts from “Sremska Mitrovica” (Fig. 3). The twisted wire fringing the heads on the pectoral (Fig. 4: 2), and the twisted band around the heads on the mounts (Fig. 3) should probably be interpreted as a Celtic torc. This interpretation seems to be supported by the small spheres on the top of the human heads on the pectoral, and the barely visible spheres beneath the chin of the heads on the mounts. Miklós Szabó recognised the heads on the jewellery from the Szárazd-Regöly marsh as belonging to the La Tène fashion. He dated them, in view of their artistic style and manufacture, predominantly to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC.<sup>22</sup>

When considering the small strap mounts (approximate size of 28 x 25 mm), the best parallels come from the nearby necropolis in Čurug, southern Bačka. Within cremation grave 36 from Detelinara 1, six small iron mounts were found (21 x 18 mm), as well as a larger example (37 x 21

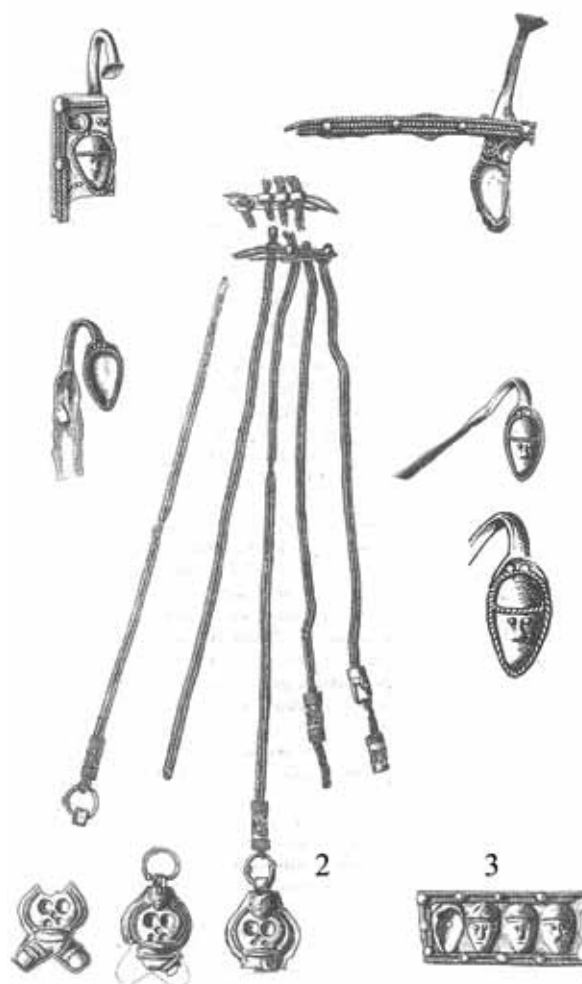


Fig. 4. Szárazd-Regöly marsh, votives. 1 detail of a gold bead decorated with depictions of human heads (after Szabó 1999, fig. 63e); 2 parts of the silver pectoral with anthropomorphic pendants; 3 silver plate with depicted human heads (after Hadaczek 1907, 65).

<sup>19</sup> Rustoiu, Egri 2011, fig. 32: 1.

<sup>20</sup> Olmsted 2001, pls. 60–61.

<sup>21</sup> Kemenczei 2012.

<sup>22</sup> Szabó 1975, 152–154, fig. 7; pls. 7; 8: 1–3; 9: 1, 5; Szabó 1999, 115; Szabó 2006, 114–115, fig. 20; Szabó 2012, 1806–1807.



mm). All have lateral edges bent into a U-shaped profile. The grave group also consisted of a classic Laminci A-type belt buckle with fastening

scribed) are known also from grave 1 in Cvjatkova mogila at Šipka. From 22 pieces, 8 of them are still gilded, dated in the second half of 4<sup>th</sup> century BC.<sup>25</sup>



Fig. 5. Katerini, tomb A. Photos and idealised drawings of gilded silver strap mounts with heads of a goddess with lion's skin or with lion's heads (after Grammenos 2004, 160–161, the idealised drawings made by Janže Lorber).

plate, a fragment of a bronze fibula, a glass bead, a stone pendant and numerous pottery fragments. The mounts are decorated with embossed circles and crescents, similar to the belt buckle. Important for our discussion is the presence of these strap mounts on more specimens, together with the dating of the grave to the LT D1 period.<sup>23</sup>

In both cases, at “Sremska Mitrovica” (Fig. 3) and at Čurug, the mounts have the same form, which indicates their use as decoration for leather straps. The gilded silver mounts from Tomb A at Katerini in the province of Pieria (Fig. 5), dated between 375–350 BC,<sup>24</sup> with two silver wire loops at the back probably had a similar function; a leather strap was likely inserted into the wire loops. Silver mounts with similar depicted lions embossed head like those on the figure 5: 2 (the back side is not de-

The mounts are of two different sizes, as is the case of Čurug. A total of 13 pieces are smaller, square (approximately 25 x 25 mm) and decorated with the embossed heads of a goddess (Omphale or Artemis) with a lion's skin, and six pieces are larger, about 50 mm long, rectangular and decorated with lion's heads and paws between two “egg and dart” borders. We can see a similar motif for example on the catch-plates of gold fibulae of the Macedonian type from the surroundings of Thessaloniki, dated to the period from 330 to 300 BC.<sup>26</sup>

3. **Two large silver spiral bracelets** terminate with rams' heads (Fig. 6; 7: 1). Each has nine coils. The spiral bands have a slight roof-shaped ridge in the middle, located between two longitudinal grooves, and are adorned alternately with punched marks, concentric circles, crescents with dots at the ends, and U-shaped marks.

<sup>23</sup> Čurug-Detelinara 1, Grave 36 (Trifunović 2019, 256, fig. 18: 2–8).

<sup>24</sup> Grammenos 2004, 160–161. The photos do not show the back sides of the mounts, so it is difficult to have a right picture of the loop function.

<sup>25</sup> Dimitrova 2019, 74, 92, fig. 8.

<sup>26</sup> Williams, Ogden 1994, 78–79, cat. no. 33.

The bands widen at the ends into 3 cm long, trapezoid finials, above which is a curving sheet of silver with filigree decoration and inlays of coral, which is further affixed by a notched-head rivet at the inner end of the metal sheet. To the finials protruding from the finials are attached, by means of notched-head rivets, animal heads with red coral inlays. The eyes are formed by large, round coral cabochons on top, set in notched frames and surrounded with additional notched wire. The nostrils are, likewise, encircled by notched wire. One head displays an antique repair to fix a fracture sustained in Antiquity: the overlapping ends of the fracture are, thus, held together with twisted silver wire. Weight 127.3 g and 124.7 g. Maximum diameter approx. 8 cm, length approx. 12 cm.

The torc and the bracelet are fine examples of the goldsmith's work, both of which have a copper alloy core.<sup>27</sup>

On the bracelets from Băiceni and "Sremska Mitrovica", a technique involving ropework collet lines was used to decorate the section between the animal head and the coils. On the coils there are small incised circles connected with curved lines (Fig. 7). Such decoration of the coils with lines, half circles and circles with a dot in the middle have strong similarities with the decoration of well-known silver bracelets with wide strip ending on both sides in a triangular terminal known, with horizontal ribs and geometric ornamentation from the several hoards as Čurug in Vojvodina and Vladinya, Granitovo and Stališka makhala in Thrace dating in the second half of 4<sup>th</sup> centu-



Fig. 6. "Sremska Mitrovica", from female grave. Silver spiral bracelets with depictions of ram's heads (after Hermann *Historica* catalogue 2018, cat. no. 3133 on pages 98–99).

Looking closely at the main strokes of the animal heads with a high nasal ridge on the bracelets from "Sremska Mitrovica" (Fig. 6; 7: 1), they correspond, without doubt, to a ram's head.

There is no direct analogy for these two incredible spiral bracelets. V. Filipović and R. Vasić declared the bracelet finials to be snake-heads, which are well known on bracelets, earrings and torcs in the ancient Greek world, as well as in the Early Iron Age of the Mediterranean and its hinterland, where they were quite popular.

For the finials of the bracelets, we have a good parallel in the finials of the 16.5 cm long gold triple spiral bracelet (Fig. 7: 2) and on the gold torc from the Thraco-Getique princely treasure hoard from Băiceni, in Iași county, dated to around 400 BC.

ry BC.<sup>28</sup> There is no doubt that we can recognise the local [Thracian, Triballi] manufacturing enriched in the case of bracelet from surroundings of „Sremska Mitrovica” with the challenging filigree and granulation goldsmithing.

A key difference between them is the form of the eyes. In the case of Băiceni they are embossed and encircled by twisted wire. In the case of "Sremska Mitrovica" they are formed by coral cabochons, surrounded with notched wire. Inlays of coral are also found on the necks, the area be-

<sup>27</sup> Petrescu-Dîmbovița, Dinu 1975; Petrescu-Dîmbovița 1995; Popescu 1997, 193, cat. no. 172. Also found in the grave were other gold objects such as a richly decorated helmet and numerous decorated appliques.

<sup>28</sup> Tonkova 2017, 22; Simon 2022.





Fig. 7. 1 “Sremska Mitrovica”, female grave, silver spiral bracelet (after Filipović 2019);  
2 Băiceni, grave, gold spiral bracelet (after Popescu 1997, 193, cat. no. 172).

tween the heads and the coils. On the Băiceni bracelet, a classical rosette made of twisted wire is located on the top of the heads, but on the bracelets of “Sremska Mitrovica” a simple notched-head rivet is on the top.

The motif of the wavy line with a larger grain in each loop has a good comparison in the tubules and finials in the hoards from Židovar and Hrtkovei, dated to the LT D1 period, and also in the tubules on the pectoral from the Szárazd-Regöly marsh (Fig. 4: 2).<sup>29</sup> The flat spiral bands of the bracelets from “Sremska Mitrovica”, with the slight roof-shaped ridge in the middle, and their inlays, can be compared to similarly formed coils and inlays of the gold finger ring from Nesebăr (Mesembria – “Pearl of the Black Sea”), in ancient Thrace. The Nesebăr example dates to the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC.<sup>30</sup> The decoration, consisting of inlays of

semi-precious stones, corals, glass, etc., is actually a feature that seldom appears in jewellery from the end of the Classical period, but predominates in the Hellenistic and Roman periods.

The finials of the spiral bracelet and the torc from Băiceni were described by Mircea Petrescu Dîmbovița and Marin Dinu as horned horse heads. Based on the position of the horns, they correspond to ram horns, but their ribbed form reminds us of Capricorn horns.<sup>31</sup> The depictions of ram horns also appear on other animal heads. A fine example of such a case is the Celtic kantharos from Novo mesto in Dolenjska, from the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. Here the ram horns were added to snake heads executed in high relief at the ends of the handles.<sup>32</sup> In addition to Novo mesto, several

<sup>29</sup> Jevtić 2006, 156; Dautova-Ruševljan, Jevtić 2006, 296, 300, fig. 6.

<sup>30</sup> L’Or des cavaliers Thraces 1987, 254, cat. no. 459.

<sup>31</sup> They cite such motifs from the Orient (Petrescu-Dîmbovița, Dinu 1975, 107–109); in the catalogue I Daci (Popescu 1997, 193, cat. no. 172) the finials are described as Capricorn heads.

<sup>32</sup> Knez, Szabó 1980–1981, 83, figs. 2; 5–6; Kaul 2011; Rus-toiu, Egri 2011, 69.

depictions of horned snake heads are known from south-eastern Europe and well-presented also on the main plate of the Gundestrup cauldron.<sup>33</sup>

“Sremska Mitrovica” (Fig. 8). They are also well known from the workshop centre at Staré Hradisko in Moravia.<sup>37</sup> Dragan Božič divided these kinds of



Fig. 8. “Sremska Mitrovica”, female grave. Small quartz/glass and amber beads, a large amber bead and a partly silver-plated bear tooth (after Filipović 2019).

4. **Bear tooth** with a perforation, the sharp end is plated with silver sheet (Fig. 8). During the Iron Age, animal teeth were quite often used as amulets or as parts of necklaces. V. Filipović and R. Vasić have already noted the presence of two perforated bear canine teeth in the rich hoard found on the settlement of Židovar, dated to the Late La Tène period (LT D1).<sup>34</sup> A perforated animal canine tooth from the same period is also known from Čurug.<sup>35</sup>

5. **A large amber bead** (Fig. 8). The existence of unusually large amber beads in Celtic graves of the Early La Tène period is sporadically reported, such as, for example, the bead with a 4.5 cm diameter from the rich grave 63 at Pilismarót-Basaharc.<sup>36</sup> In the Middle La Tène period, the presence of amber beads, mostly in combination with glass beads, on necklaces declined. It is possible this was due to the shift to cremating the dead during this period; thereby destroying amber beads in the process.

In the Late La Tène period amber is often represented by large and thick rings of apparently special significance, such as the example from

beads into three variants and listed them for some hoards in the Celtic world (Ptení, the Szárazd-Regöly marsh and Spodnji Lanovž in Celje), as well as from the graves of Adria and Aquileia, and the settlement in Oderzo, in the hinterland of Caput Adriae.<sup>38</sup>

#### 6. **Necklace of amber beads**

Numerous amber beads in various shapes belong to the necklace (Fig. 8). Based on their forms they correspond to the amber beads from the hoard of Židovar of the LT D1 period.<sup>39</sup>

#### 7. **Necklace from quartz/glass beads**

The numerous small sized beads are of mostly a round shape (Fig. 8). Based on the published photo, it is impossible to determine if they are made from quartz or glass.

<sup>33</sup> Kaul 2011, 105–106.

<sup>34</sup> Filipović, Vasić 2017, 342, fig. 6c.

<sup>35</sup> Trifunović 2012, fig. 15: 2.

<sup>36</sup> I Celti 1991, 284.

<sup>37</sup> Čižmarová 1996, 177–181, fig. 4: 11–12; from other places in Moravia: fig. 5: 5–10.

<sup>38</sup> Božič 1998, 146–148, 151–152, fig. 18. To this list should be added the bead from “Sremska Mitrovica” (Fig. 8) and the beads from the silver hoard of Lički Ribnik (Klemenc 1935, pl. 3: 40) and from the cemetery at Prozor (Bakarić 2006, 168, cat. no. 170).

<sup>39</sup> Sladić 2006, 59; Jevtić 2006, 127–134.

## Conclusion

Double foil pendants stand out among the Scordiscian silver jewellery hoards from Židovar, Hrtkovci and Kovin. They were constructed from symmetrical front and back halves, fashioned by hammering silver foil against a matrix and then

silver pendants of hollow double foil, which were parts of necklaces, into the following types: 13 examples depict human heads, four are anthropomorphic, 20 specimens have a bird shape, 11 are fashioned after ivy leaves, eight are of a biconical shape, and 37 depict insects.<sup>43</sup> Such a rich diversity is known only from this hoard. M. Jevtić supposed



Fig. 9. Kovin hoard (Vršac City Museum), (photo archive M. Guštin).

soldered together. It has to be noted that pendants of the same type belonging to one hoard were made using a single stamp, but in each hoard a different stamp was used.

Such double foil pendants have a long tradition. Mention should be made of, for example, the unique gold necklace from Roccanova in Basilicata with pendants in the form of simple flower buds, ram heads and a woman's head, dated to the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC.<sup>40</sup> The origins of highly elaborate silver double foil pendants from the Szárazd-Regöly marsh, Židovar, Hrtkovci and Kovin have been identified by M. Szabó and M. Jevtić, and later also by T. Kemenczei, in various silver pendants produced in workshops on the eastern coast of Adriatic. They also mentioned specimens from the region of Liburni (Baška on Krk, Jagodnja Gornja and Nin), from the territory of Japodes (Lički Ribnik<sup>41</sup> and Jezerine (Fig 10: 2), and from Sisak (Fig. 10: 3).<sup>42</sup>

In the publication concerning the hoard from Židovar, M. Sladić divided comparably formed

that the pendants in the form of human heads or human bodies were produced *ad usum celticum* in some eastern Adriatic workshops, or in some pre-Roman centre closer to the territory of the Scordisci.<sup>44</sup>

The double foil pendants from Židovar are clearly different from those on the eastern coast of the Adriatic and in its hinterland.<sup>45</sup> By the same method of manufacture, and partly comparable forms, they are closely connected with the pendants from the hoards of Hrtkovci in Syrmia and Kovin in Banat (Fig. 9; 10: 1).

The hoard from Kovin has, among other finds, two simple double foil pendants (Fig. 9). The hoard from Hrtkovci contained three types of double foil pendants (Fig. 10: 1; anthropomorphic, bird-shaped and seed-like), which have good parallels in the Židovar hoard. Of these, the best represented are those of an anthropomorphic shape (10 specimens). On the small head, the eyes, nose and mouth are depicted. There are two circular impressions in the middle of the body and the short legs are spread. The same type is known from four

<sup>40</sup> Deppert-Lippitz 1985, fig. 89; Guštin, Kuzman 2021, fig. 3.

<sup>41</sup> Klemenc 1935, pl. III: 12–17.

<sup>42</sup> Szabó 1975, 153–154; Jevtić 2006, 147; Kemenczei 2012, 335.

<sup>43</sup> Sladić 2006, 43–54.

<sup>44</sup> Jevtić 2006, 147, 149.

<sup>45</sup> See Tonc 2012.



specimens in the hoard from Židovar and three of the pectorals from the Szárazd-Regöly marsh (Fig. 4: 2). One pendant of this type, with a clearly visible small head, is known from grave 379 of the necropolis at Jezerine in the Una valley.<sup>46</sup> Therefore,

richly decorated with filigree wires and inlays of red glass (Fig. 10: 4). Under the base of this box a rod is inserted in both terminal loops of a thick loop in loop chain. From the rod hangs a 2.35 cm high and 6.15 cm wide rectangular plate. Its edges



Fig. 10. 1 Hrtkovci, part of hoard (photo Vojvodina Museum, Novi Sad); 2 Jezerine (photo National Museum of Bosnia and Hercegovina, Sarajevo) 3 Sisak-Kupa river, anthropomorphic pendant (after Dmić 2020, 120, fig. 80); 3 Židovar hoard, detail of box for valuables (after Sladić 2006, fig. 15).

it is reasonable to assume that the double foil pendants from the aforementioned hoards were produced in some specialised silver workshops in the Scordisci territory.<sup>47</sup>

The short overview of double foil pendants is also important for us because of the ram's head finials of the bracelets from "Sremska Mitrovica" (Fig. 6–7), which must have been hammered out with the help of a stamp, and were soldered with the help of the head-edge to the flat base plate. The technique is old, as we have seen, but again very popular during the period of depositing the hoards in the region of the Scordisci.

The rich hoard from Židovar, with its predominantly silver objects, such as the fibulae of the Jarak type, boxes for valuables, loop in loop chains, numerous double foil pendants of different types, silver and bronze finger rings, an amber necklace and toilet accessories, is dated to the LT D1 phase.

The most luxurious and enigmatic objects in the hoard are two small cylindrical boxes, as well as the cover of a third. The best preserved is

are decorated with filigree bands and, with an additional four bands, it is divided into five fields; the three largest fields are inlaid in the middle with red glass.<sup>48</sup> The filigree bands were enriched with small spheres. The artistry of the filigree bands is comparable to the two fragmented rectangular plates from the Szárazd-Regöly marsh (Fig. 4: 3), decorated with depictions of human heads.

As we have seen, the silver hoards of Židovar, Hrtkovci and Kovin are characterised by double foil pendants, various LT D1 fibulae and necklace or chain finials. Two of them (Židovar and Kovin) are even more closely connected by saddle-shaped finger rings and folding razors. All these precious objects testify to the existence of important local silversmith workshops in the Scordisci territory. The distribution of these distinctive jewellery pieces can be traced far afield, to the Kapos river valley, with the silver pectoral and the smaller decorated rectangular plate from the Szárazd-Regöly marsh (Fig. 4), and to the west to the Una river valley with the silver anthropomorphic pendant in grave 379 of Jezerine (Fig. 10: 2), as well as to Sisak with a pendant from the Kupa river (Fig. 10: 3).

In figure 11 we have summarised the main objects for the comparison of the "Sremska Mi-

<sup>46</sup> Radimský 1895, 150, fig. 347.

<sup>47</sup> Concerning the workshop producing the precious gold and silver finds from the Szárazd-Regöly marsh, the location in the territory of the Scordisci was already presumed by M. Szabó (1999, 115).

<sup>48</sup> Sladić 2006, 31–35; Jevtić 2006, 105–115.

trovica” grave with the Szárazd-Regöly hoard finds, the Židovar hoard and other corresponding hoards/graves of the period. There is no doubt that all of them correspond to the same period and are to be dated mostly on the end of LT D 1. They can be compared not only thanks to the presence of silver Jarak type fibulae, but also because of the close similarities in the numerous silver objects listed in the legend in figure 11

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
SZÁRAZD-REGÖLY MARSH	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
ŽIDOVAR		•	•	•	•	•		•		•	•		•	•
HRTKOVCIVUKODER		•	•	•	•	•							•	
KOVIN	•		•		•							•		•
„SREM. MITROVICA“	•	•						•	•			•		

Fig.11. The presence of finds in the contemporary hoards/graves with silver jewellery: 1 astragal belts; 2 use of filigree; 3 wavy line with a grain in each loop; 4 gold or silver necklaces; 5 silver tubules with a wavy line; 6 double foil pendants; 7 gold or silver beads or pendants with extensions; 8 loop-in-loop chains; 9 depictions of human heads with twisted wire or a head-band on the forehead; 10 coral/glass inlays; 11 basket-shaped pendants or boxes for valuables; 12 rings/bracelets with overlapped and spirally wrapped ends; 13 amber necklaces; 14 fibulae, typical for the LT D1 forms.

With its rich silver jewellery, composed of a large belt buckle of the Laminci type with a fastening plate depicting a horseman, outstanding spiral bracelets with rams’ heads finials and square strap mounts with Celtic heads, the grave from “Sremska Mitrovica” is an exceptional find. The named objects do not usually appear in female graves of the Scordisci (Fig. 11). However, it is regrettable that presumably only a part of the entire grave group is known to us – we lack the silver Jarak type fibulae and pendants – foil beads, which are so well attested in the hoards of the period. The grave from “Sremska Mitrovica”, together with the noted finds in fig. 11 and others from Sarmia and Banat,<sup>49</sup> confirms the existence of presumably the last generation of important and rich female elites in the Celtic community of the Scordisci.

In the marshes between the villages of Szárazd and Regöly, formerly settled by the Hercuniates

tribe, gold and silver jewellery was found, together with amber necklaces as well as votive offerings of an exclusively female character, with which can also be associated, either in the same period or later, coin hoards of the Kapos Type. The absence of male warrior and personal equipment would speak to an exceptional period of male absence in which the local female population intensively practiced rituals whilst waiting on the successful return of their husbands, brothers and fathers.

In such a scenario, whereby the male members of the tribe may have been largely absent, we can use the historical frame of the confrontations between the Dacian warriors of king Burebistas who, in the period 58 to 44 BC, sought to extend his reign to the west against the Celtic Boii and Tavrisci tribes, also passing through the territory of the Hercuniates. If this possible explanation can be accepted, then these offerings and burials listed in fig. 11 from the territory of the Scordisci could reflect these events and the finds should be dated to the transition from the LTD1 to the LT D2 period, and certainly to the decades before the final Roman conquest.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Guštin, Koledin 2019–2020; Guštin, Stanković-Pešterac 2020.

<sup>50</sup> I would like to thank Dr Dragan Božič for his useful peer review and Dr Andrew Lamb for amending the English text.



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**Ognjen Mladenović and Mladen Jovičić**  
Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade  
mladenovic40@gmail.com and mladen\_jovicic@yahoo.com

## A THREE-HEADED GLASS BEAD FROM VIMINACIUM

**Abstract:** The paper presents a new find of a three-headed glass bead from the vicinity of Viminacium, Serbia. The bead originates from the multi-layered site of Nad Klepečkom, and represents the second find of a three-headed glass bead in the territory of Serbia. In this paper, the glass bead is provided with a typological and chronological background, and discussed within the scope of the existing glass beads in the territory of Serbia and the neighbouring regions.

**Keywords:** glass bead, Viminacium, Scordisci, Balkans, La Tène period.

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### Introduction

The multi-layered site of Nad Klepečkom is located on the right bank of the Danube river, approximately 3 km east of the present-day confluence of the Mlava and Danube rivers, on the north-western fringe of the Stig Region of Serbia (Figure 1, No. 14). It lies on a loess terrace east of the renowned antique town of Viminacium. Due to endangerment from the “Drmno” coal seam, rescue archaeological excavations of the site were reinitiated in 2008, while the first rescue actions were conducted back in 2004. In the period between 2010 and 2013, the excavations at the site yielded a number of antique period objects, two necropolises dated between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, and a *villa rustica* dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD. The multi-layered nature of the site was determined through all of the excavation campaigns (Mrđić, Jovičić 2012; Redžić, Danković 2012; Redžić *et al.* 2014a; Redžić *et al.* 2014b; Jovičić, Redžić 2014; Спасић-Ђурић 2015: 36-37). The corpus of prehistoric finds from Viminacium, including the site of Nad Klepečkom, confirmed that the site was continuously inhabited during the Late Eneolithic (Bulatović *et al.* 2019), the Early and Late Bronze Age (Kapuran *et al.* 2019a), the Early Iron Age and the La Tène period (Late Iron Age) (Kapuran *et al.* 2019b; Спасић 1992; Спасић 1997; Mladenović *et al.* 2019).

In the course of one of the campaigns of systematic surveys in 2011, a glass bead was recorded within the area that would be excavated in the following years, where the aforementioned remains of successive prehistoric settlements were registered. Unfortunately, the glass bead was not published in the volume on prehistoric finds from Viminacium and its surroundings.

The glass bead from the site of Nad Klepečkom has a cylindrical shape, with a length of 2.6 cm, and a diameter of 1.9 cm (Figure 2). It is relatively well preserved, with visible deterioration, due to the fact that it represents a surface find, therefore most likely exposed to various atmospheric conditions for a period of time. The bead itself is separated into two almost identical sections, representing summary depictions of anthropomorphic faces. The third face is missing due to damage to the bead, yet, based on known examples, it can be assumed that the bead was comprised of a total of three faces. The preserved faces are composed of an elongated and emphasised central portion (nose), surrounded by two eyes represented by circles with a dot in their center. The faces are separated by a vertical rib. The colour scheme of the preserved faces of the bead is white and dark blue, with two different nuances of blue – dark blue for the background, and slightly lighter for the eyes. The upper edge of each bead is lined with white “drops”.

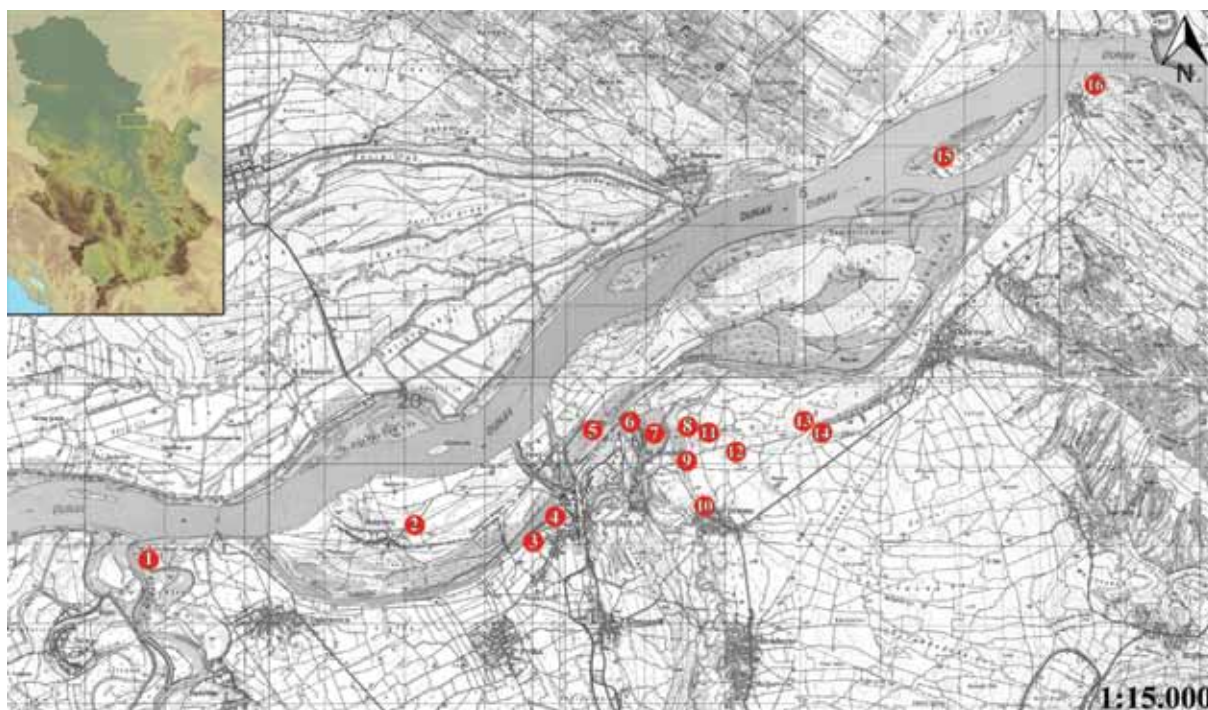


Fig. 1. La Tène sites and individual finds from the area of Stig: 1. Orašje-Dubravica (Margum); 2. Ostrovo-Kostolac (više lokacija); 3. Dunavac-Kostolac; 4. Repnjak-Kostolac; 5. Humka-Kostolac; 6. Mali Grad-Todića Crkva; 7. Rudine; 8. Čair; 9. Pećine; 10. Drmno; 11. Viminacium; 12. Pirivoj; 13. Rit; 14. Nad Klepečkom; 15. Čibuklija-Ostrovo; Ram (Lederata) (Mladenović et al. 2019).

### Origin and Distribution

The most comprehensive overview of glass beads with faces was provided by T. E. Haevernick. According to her typology, such glass beads, with three (most often), four, or five faces (*Rbhrenperlen*, *Maskenperlen*), are marked as group 6 of glass beads, to which our example is attributed as well. Based on their distribution throughout the Mediterranean world (Seefried 1982), their origin is sought in Phoenician glass workshops, although the high representation of such beads within the North Pontic area indicated the existence of workshops in Greek colonies within that part of the world (Haevernic 1977).

Besides the Mediterranean world, their highest distribution has been recorded from the North Pontic region to the east, the Tisza Valley, eastern parts of Central Europe (Poland, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia) to the west (Ludikovský 1968; Wozniak 1996; Karwowski 1997; Karwowski 2005; Karwowski 2010; Březinová, Soják 2009; Venclová 2016; Čižmarová 2019), the Carpathian Basin (Hungary, Romania), and the Adriatic coast

(Croatia) to the south. Such beads have been recorded in other territories as well, such as Slovenia, Serbia, and Bulgaria, where they represent rather rare finds (Karwowski 2005). Regarding the distribution and typology of face-beads, M. Karwowski separated two distinct typo-distributional forms of face-beads, squat beads and slender beads. Our example could be attributed to the squat form, which is common for the southern and eastern zones of their distribution (Karwowski 2005: 166). Within the northern and central zones of their distribution, such face-beads are commonly connected with the domain of the so-called eastern La Tène culture and are believed to have been obtained through contacts with Pontic areas, following the routes along the Danube, Tisza and Sava rivers (Karwowski 2005, 167). Within the territory of South-eastern Europe, their highest distribution has been recorded within the Carpathian Basin, in present-day Hungary (Polgar, Vác-Kavicsbánya, Mezonyarad, Nyirbator, Tiszalok, Sayopetri) (Szabó 1985; Szabó 2001; Hellebrandt 1999; Čižmarová 2019), and Romania (Mangalia, Constanta-Tomis, Govora, Greacea, Pietroasele-Gruiu Darii, Bratei,



Bunesti, Fintinele-Livada, Pisco, Zimnicea) (Crişan 1974; Crisan 1975; Preda, Bârlădeanu 1979; Zirra 1979; Alexandrescu 1980; Nemeti 1988; Sîrbu *et al.* 1996; Rustoiu 2011; Sîrbu, Matei 2013; Berzovan 2019). Furthermore, face-beads have been recorded on the eastern Adriatic coast (Croatia) (Kompolje, Prozor) (Drechsler-Bižić 1966; Balen-Letunić 1990), and Bulgaria (Kolmen, Nesebar, Sveštari) (Чимбулева 1964; Čižmarová 2019). Only two examples have been recorded in present-day Serbia (Krševica and Nad Klepečkom) (Popović 2007), one example in Tolmin in present-day Slovenia (St. Lucia) (Balen-Letunić 1990),<sup>1</sup> and one example in Donja Dolina in present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina (Marić 1964) (Figure 3). As highlighted by M. Karwowski, the face-beads from the territory of South-eastern Europe are not strictly related to La Tène culture, as demonstrated by examples from Croatia. The examples from the Kompolje and Prozor necropolises originate from graves, which yielded material culture typical for the Iapodes tribe (Balen-Letunić 1990: 45-47). When discussing the origin and distribution of face-beads in Croatia, D. Balen-Letunić makes an important remark. The eastern coast of the Adriatic was connected with commodities that circulated throughout the Mediterranean, and since no face-beads were recorded on the western coast of the Adriatic, which led the author to the conclusion that the face-beads from Iapodian graves came from the Pontic area, through the valleys of the Danube and Sava rivers, which she further supported with a find of a face-bead from Donja Dolina on the bank of the Sava river (Balen-Letunić 1990: 45), on a presumed trade route.<sup>2</sup> Such a remark is of particular importance for the discussion on the origin of such face-beads in the territory of present-day Serbia. As previously mentioned, only two examples are known from this territory, one example from the site of Krševica in the South Morava Valley, and the second example from the site of Nad Klepečkom, presented in this paper. According to P. Popović, the three-face bead from the site of Krševica should either be connected with the Celtic presence at the site and

within the South Morava Valley, dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> century BCE, or regarded as an import from the Mediterranean (Popović 2006; Popović 2007: 818; Вранић 2022: 69, with cited literature).

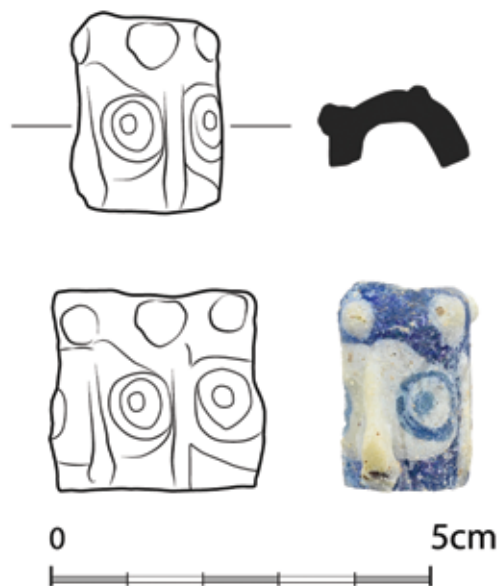


Fig. 2. Three-face glass bead from Nad Klepečkom.

The observations provided by D. Balen-Letunić and P. Popović speak in favour of a North Pontic origin of our example. An additional argument for this is the position of the site of Nad Klepečkom itself. As mentioned, the site is located on the right bank of the Danube river, and somewhat east of the Mlava and Danube confluence, within the Stig region. The distribution of prehistoric and Roman sites in this region indicate that the area was on one of the main communications that came from the east, possibly crossing the Danube from the Banat region east of the site, and led further to the west through the Danube and Sava valleys, and to the south by the Mlava and Morava valleys (Cf. Мишић, Ђокић 2011; Filipović, Mladenović 2019). Regarding the cultural context of the face-bead from Nad Klepečkom, judging by the number and distribution of sites and finds attributed to the La Tène period, from the 4<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE to the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE, and the Scordisci settlement at the site itself, the face-bead from the site should most probably be connected with the Celtic/Scordisci cultural domain (Figure 1).

<sup>1</sup> The example from Tolmin is considered Mediterranean (Balen-Letunić 1990: footnote 11, with cited literature).

<sup>2</sup> For a slightly different view on the topic, based on a find of a glass head-shaped pendant in Nadin (Croatia), refer to Čelhar, Kukoč 2014: 96, with cited literature.



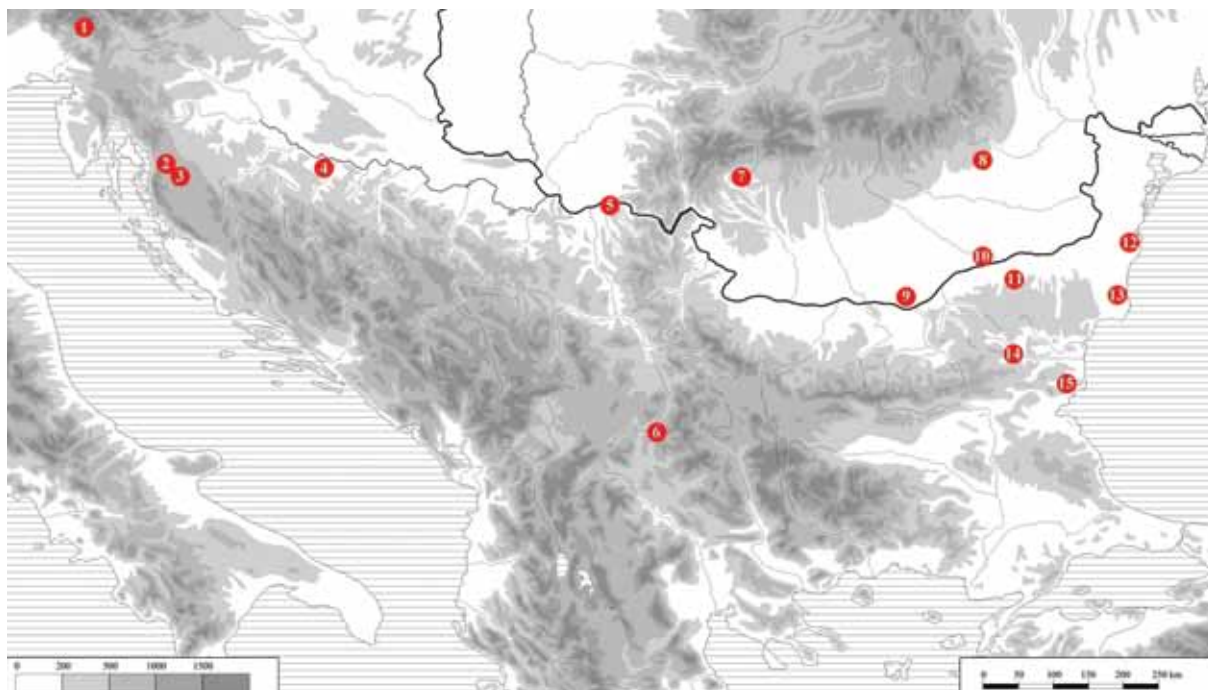


Fig. 3. Face-beads in the Balkans and the Danube region: 1. Tomlin (St. Lucija), 2. Kompolje, 3. Prozor, 4. Donja Dolina, 5. Nad Klepečkom, 6. Krševica (Kale), 7. Govora, 8. Gruiu Darii, 9. Zimnicea, 10. Greaca, 11. Sveštari, 12. Mangalia, 13. Constanța, 14. Kolmen, 15. Nesebar.

### Chronology

In terms of chronology, face-beads do not represent particularly sensitive finds. In the Pontic area, their occurrence is dated to the 4<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE, and to the mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE within the eastern La Tène domain (Karwowski 2015: 166). Unfortunately, finds of face-beads rarely originate from enclosed archaeological contexts, therefore preventing the possibility of a more precise chronological attribution. The earlier dating is proposed for the example from Grave 2b at the Mangalia necropolis on the western shore of the Black Sea, which is dated to the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE (Preda, Bârlădeanu 1979: 104). Similarly, the face-bead from the fortress of Gruiu Darii, originates from the phase dated to the 4<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE (Șirbu, Matei 2013: 348). The example from the Daco-Getic necropolis in Zimnicea originates from a horse burial, which belongs to the later phase of the necropolis, dated after the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE (Alexandrescu 1980: 32). Likewise, based on the remaining inventory of the disturbed presumed Celtic grave from Fîntînele, the example of a face-bead is dated to the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE (Crișan 1975: 55-56). The example

from Grave 127 in Kompolje is, based on the analogies with a grave from Prozor, dated to the 3<sup>rd</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE, although A. Tonc proposes a slightly earlier dating to the Lt B2 period, meaning the final quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE (Cf. Balen-Letunić 1990: 45-47; Tonc 2017: Figure 2).

Dating of the three-face glass bead from Nad Klepečkom is certainly problematic since it originates from a survey as a surface find. The earlier dating to the 4<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE does not seem plausible in the context of this site, since there is a gap in settling at the site between the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE (Kapuran *et al.* 2019b: 164). The Scordisci settlement at the site, based on the material culture and one absolute date, is positioned into the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE, with a possible prolonged duration into the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE (Mladenović *et al.* 2019: 204-206). Such a late date does not fit properly into the chronological span of similar beads in the surrounding regions, and a more likely dating could be connected with the neighbouring site of Pećine. The Early La Tène necropolis of Pećine is located approximately 7 km west of the site of Nad Klepečkom and dated to the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of

the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE, thus chronologically corresponding to finds from Kompolje and Prozor, and therefore providing a more plausible chronology for our example.

### Final Remarks

Typologically, the example from the site of Nad Klepečkom is similar to examples from Kompolje (Grave 127 and disturbed grave), Prozor (disturbed grave), and Krševica, both in terms of form and the selection of colours (Balen-Letunić 1990: Tabla 1/1-3; Popović 2007: Sl. 3/14). In terms of dimensions, our example is almost identical to the bead from the site of Krševica and two examples from Kompolje and Prozor (Popović 2007: Sl. 3/14; Balen-Letunić 1990: Tabla 1/2-3). Regarding the colour scheme, P. Popović does not precisely highlight the colour of the faces of the bead from Krševica and solely mentions blue, white and yellow. The examples from disturbed graves in Kompolje and Prozor (no. 2 and 3) possess two white faces and one yellow face, while the remaining beads possess either two yellow faces and one white face or two green faces and one white face. Certainly, our example had two white faces and matches the aforementioned ones, while the colour of the third face remains unknown. A prominent difference can be noticed in the lack of small drops (“beard”) in the lower portion of our example, compared to the examples from Kompolje and Krševica, which could likewise be a consequence of their state of preservation.

The discussion of the origin of the piece is significantly blurred by the fact that it represents a survey find. However, going back to the point made by D. Balen-Letunić, on the Pontic origin of examples from the eastern Adriatic coast, the example from Nad Klepečkom would perfectly fit into the proposed trade/exchange route that followed the valleys of the Danube and Sava (Balen-Letunić 1990: 45). As seen in Figure 3, a number of face-beads from Serbia, Romania, and Bulgaria gravitate toward the Danube Valley, therefore reaffirming the idea of their direction of distribution.<sup>3</sup> Face-beads are known for their cultural variabil-

ity, ranging from the La Tène domain in central and eastern Europe, Iapodian on the Adriatic coast, Dacian in the Carpathian Basin, and “Greek” in the Pontic area. Based on the nature and finds from the site, the example from Nad Klepečkom should be set into the Celtic/Scordiscian cultural domain, and dated to the 4<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE. The relationship between the examples from Nad Klepečkom and Krševica, which are similarly dated, remains unknown. Based on the existing research and historical sources, the region of Stig represented a stronghold of the so-called Celtic populations from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, and their settling significantly intensified during the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE, following their defeat by Lucius Cornelius Scipio in 84 BCE (Todorović 1968: 107; Papazoglu 1969: 272 and further; Popović 1994: 17-20; Lazić 2017: 69 and further). On the other hand, based on the scarcity of sites from this period, P. Popović suggested that the period related finds from Krševica represent the results of a short-lasting “stopover” for their raids against Hellenistic and Roman Macedonia, which are attested in written sources (Papazoglu 1969: 209 and further; Popović 2007: 818). Such a point of view should be taken with caution, considering that a significant number of Late La Tène sites have been recorded in the valleys of the Great and South Morava (Булатовић 2000; Булатовић, Филиповић 2011; Filipović *et al.* 2019).

The function of these three-faced glass beads remains unknown. Some authors consider that such beads represent pendants which were worn on a necklace, and connect them with the apotropaic sphere, as amulets that protected its owner from spells and misfortunes (Balen-Letunić 1990: 45-47). The find of a three-faced glass bead from the site of Nad Klepečkom, on the right bank of the Danube river, reaffirms the idea of a trade/exchange route that connected the Black Sea with the eastern Adriatic coast. However, the large number of excavated sites along the banks of the Danube and Sava, and the relatively low number of three-face glass beads recorded, indicate that such beads possibly represented an exclusive, rather than common, item for the prehistoric populations that inhabited the Balkans between the 4<sup>th</sup> and the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE.

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<sup>3</sup> Another significant concentration of face-beads is observable within the Carpathian Basin, which would rather be connected with the Tisza river.

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**Aurel Rustoiu**

Institute of Archaeology and Arts History  
aurelrustoiu@yahoo.com

## THE MAGIC OF THE “LEFT”. A FRAGMENT OF A STATUETTE FROM THE DACIAN FORTRESS ON THE PIATRA CRAIVII IN TRANSYLVANIA (ROMANIA)

**Abstract:** A fragment representing the left leg of a Roman bronze statuette was discovered in the fortress of Piatra Craivii (Alba County, in south-western Transylvania). A Roman bronze statuette, most likely coming from one of the neighbouring provinces, was surely not a regularly trade good. An alternative way of acquiring it could have been a Dacian plundering raid across the Danube. Another fragment of a Roman bronze statue (the left hand of a life-size statue) comes from the Late Iron Age fortified settlement at Nitriansky Hrádok (in south-western Slovakia) and a fragment of a statuette, this time made of ceramic, was discovered in the Getic settlement at Popești (Giurgiu County in southern Romania). The selective cutting off of the left leg or hand of these statuettes indicates the importance of the symbolical meaning of the left and the right side of the body. On the other hand, the intentional mutilation of some parts of the legs or hands could suggest the practising of particular magical rituals, perhaps related to black magic. The discussed artefacts illustrate another kind of connection between the Mediterranean world and the populations living in the vicinity of the Roman Empire, which is seldom taken into consideration. Moreover, these illustrate the complexity of the mechanisms of interactions that contributed to the circulation of various goods from one cultural environment into another, as well as the different means by which they were transformed and assimilated in the process of transfer.

**Keywords:** Dacians, Romans, Transylvania, magic, bronze statuette.

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### Introduction

The name Petar Popović was already familiar to me at the end of the 1980s, when I discovered in the library of the Faculty of History and Philosophy from Cluj-Napoca the newly-arrived book *Le monnaie des Scordisque* (Popović 1987). A few years later, I finally had the opportunity to meet the author in person during a scientific symposium organised in October 1993 at Montana, in Bulgaria. On that occasion, I discovered an outstanding specialist, who was open to discussing a wide range of subjects and to exchange research ideas, including his innovative opinions regarding the archaeology of the Scordisci. Petar had just published a study about the Lesser Scordisci from the Danube's Iron Gates region (Popović 1989-1990), as well as his very important contribution to the analysis of the late Republican bronze vessels from the Scordiscian environment (Popović 1992). These studies, which he offered me as off-

prints, provided the starting point for a number of discussions regarding the relationships between the Late Iron Age communities from the south of the Danube and those living to the north of it. This fruitful dialogue continued during the following decades, either in written form or face to face, not least during a number of conferences, for example at Turnu Severin or Vršač, in 1998 or 2007.

Accordingly, the publication of a volume honouring the outstanding scientific activity of Petar Popović provides a good opportunity to comment on an archaeological artefact discovered in a Dacian fortress from Transylvania which, besides its magical meanings that are discussed below, suggests, up to a point, the range of relationships established by the Dacian communities with the Roman provincial environment south of the Danube. The respective artefact is a fragment of a Roman bronze statuette discovered many years ago in the Dacian fortress of Piatra Craivii (Craiva, Cricău commune, Alba County, RO).

### The artefact from Piatra Craivii and its archaeological and historical context

The fragment represents the left leg of a Roman bronze statuette (probably that of a man) which comes from the fortress of Piatra Craivii (Alba County, in south-western Transylvania). The leg was cut off below the knee and the big toe was also cut off. The fragment has a height of 16.5 cm (Gلودariu 1974: 237, no. 11/v, Pl. 47) (Fig. 1).

tance of this community in the exploitation of metal resources (iron, gold, silver and copper) from this region. Their output, including many manufactured goods, was apparently distributed across wider areas. The manufacturing and trading functions of the Piatra Craivii fortress and its civilian settlement facilitated an increased human mobility in the region. This is demonstrated by the presence of a large number of artefacts having distant origins: Greek and Roman coins, bronze vessels, cos-



Fig. 1. Left foot of the Roman bronze statue from the Piatra Craivii Dacian fortress.

The context of discovery is unknown, but the artefact was found during the archaeological excavations carried out between 1960-70 on one of the terraces of the civilian settlement (Fig. 2) (see below).

The Piatra Craivii fortress was investigated systematically in successive stages over several decades (Berciu, Popa, Daicoviciu 1965; Moga 1981; Rustoiu 1996: 59; Moga, Rustoiu 1997; Plantos 2019, etc). It is located on the eastern side of the Apuseni Mountains, on a limestone peak that has a height of 1,083 m, dominating the surrounding landscape and visible from the valley of the Mureş River, which flows about 20 km to the east (Fig. 2; 4). The fortress has enclosure walls built of dressed stone using the Hellenistic technique, similar to other aristocratic residences from the area of the Dacian kingdom's centre of power in the Orăştie Mountains (located ca. 50 km to the south). Several anthropogenic terraces at the foot of the peak host the civilian settlement and the manufacturing areas. One iron smelting kiln, metallurgical workshops and other traces of metal processing were identified in the latter areas, indicating the impor-

tance accessories and tableware coming from the Mediterranean area, or brooches and ceramic tableware coming from the eastern and south-eastern areas outside the Carpathians (Rustoiu 2002: 110). Some of these foreign goods also provide some chronological point of reference, dating the Piatra Craivii site between the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC and the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD; its end can more likely be related to the Roman campaigns in Dacia under Trajan.

Taking into consideration the aforementioned characteristics of the Piatra Craivii settlement, the presence of the fragmentary bronze statuette could perhaps be related to the use of collected scrap bronze in one of the local metallurgical workshops. However, the presence of fragments resulting from Roman statues in the “Barbarian” environment north of the imperial frontier is very scarce. The local metallurgical workshops mostly recycled scrap metal originating from household utensils, vessels or costume accessories that arrived more frequently in settlements from Late Iron Age Dacia, and which became too deteriorated to be repaired successfully (see Rustoiu 1996: 46; for reusing bronze



Fig. 2. The Piatra Craivii Dacian fortress: fortress – red arrow; civilian area and workshops – white arrow; sanctuaries – yellow arrow; presumed “familial” cemetery – blue arrow (aerial photography Z. Czajlik – June 2011).

sheet for repairing other Late Republican bronze vessels see also Rustoiu 1996: 164-165 with bibliography; for recycling bronze objects in “Barbaricum” see e.g. Günther 1990; for recycling bronze objects in prehistory see e.g. Bray, Pollard 2012). Accordingly, the fragment of a bronze statue must have had another function and meaning.

One important question concerns the way in which this “exotic” piece arrived at Piatra Craivii. A Roman bronze statuette most likely coming from one of the neighbouring provinces was surely not a regularly trade good. An alternative way of acquiring it could have been a Dacian plundering raid across the Danube. One example is the invasion of Moesia in the winter of AD 85/86 (Suetonius, *Domitianus* VI, 1). Along the same lines, Florus (II, 28, 18) also mentions that in Augustan times the Dacians used to live close to the mountains but raided the neighbouring territories whenever the Danube froze over.

On the other hand, the Piatra Craivii fortress was in the territory of the Apulii. The two Roman cities established after the Roman conquest at ca. 20 km from Piatra Craivii, one on the Mureş banks at Alba Iulia-Partoş, and another in the *canabae* of the legionary fort built by the Legion XIII Gemina, a few km to the north-east, perpetuated the name of

this indigenous population. Both urban centres included the local identifier Apulum in their official name (*Colonia Aurelia Apulensis* and *Municipium Septimium Apulensis* respectively). In this context, it has to be noted that the Apulii tribe is mentioned in an elegy of the Augustan age (*Consolatio ad Liviam* 387-388) as the protagonist of a plundering raid in Dobrogea in 15-13 BC (Russu 1961).

It can, therefore, be presumed that the fragment of bronze statuette discovered at Piatra Craivii could have been the result of a plundering raid organised by the Dacian tribe of the Apulii across the lower Danube. Furthermore, the manner in which the statuette was subsequently treated (the cutting off of the left leg of the human figure and also of the big toe) more likely suggest its incorporation into some magic practices rather than any intention of recycling the bronze.

## Discussion

It is worth mentioning that another fragment of a Roman bronze statue comes from the Late Iron Age fortified settlement at Nitriansky Hrádok (in south-western Slovakia) (Fig. 3/1). In this case, the fragment consists of the left hand of a life-size

statue, having a length of 18 cm, which was cut off at the wrist, while the ring finger was also cut off (Pieta 1996: 185-186, Fig. 2). K. Pieta has considered that the fragment from Nitriansky Hrádok was acquired as bronze scrap or it was just an “exotic” object brought into the Barbarian environment from the north of the middle Danube, coming either from the Mediterranean area or from the Black Sea shores (Pieta 1996: 185).

Another fragment of a statuette, this time made of ceramic, was discovered in the Getic settlement at Popești (Giurgiu County in southern Romania), in an archaeological context dated to the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC (Fig. 3/2). The manufacturing technique indicates that the statuette comes from the Mediterranean area. Two fragments of the left leg, cut off below the knee, are preserved. The fragmentary leg has a height of 15 cm (Vulpe 1960: 332-333, Fig. 9/4).

In all of these cases, only the left side limbs of the Greek or Roman statues have been cut off. These were subsequently mutilated in one way or another by cutting off fingers or toes or by removing the foot, as in the case of the ceramic statuette from Popești. The practice indicates that the meaning of these artefacts in the local environment should perhaps be sought in the magical perception of the “left” and the “right” in traditional beliefs.

The ritual opposition “left/right”, the left side being associated with the “bad” and the right side with the “good”, or the left being associated with the female principle and the right with the male one, is known among various populations from the Mediterranean area and elsewhere. The left is also associated with the chthonic domain and the right with the Olympian one; with the left hand were offered libations for the dead and the chthonic deities, while the right hand was involved in the invocation of celestial divinities, etc. More clearly defined by the Pythagoreans, the concept of the “left/right” duality was already present in Homeric poems. At the same time, this duality was related to some rituals performed in Archaic Greek sanctuaries dedicated to the divine siblings Apollo and Artemis, for example at Delos or at Dreros in Crete (Deonna 1935; Deonna 1940; Lévêque,

Vidal-Naquet 1960).

In temperate Europe, the dual symbolism of certain anatomical parts is suggested, for example, by the different positioning of the hands of several stone statues, like those from Hirschlanden or Glauberg (Armit, Grant 2008), or by a number of objects (pendants, brooches or ceramic vessels) depicting human body parts (the left or right hand



Fig. 3. 1. Fragment of a Roman bronze statue from the fortified settlement at Nitriansky Hrádok (after Pieta 1996); 2. Left foot of the ceramic statue from settlement at Popești (after Sirbu 2006).

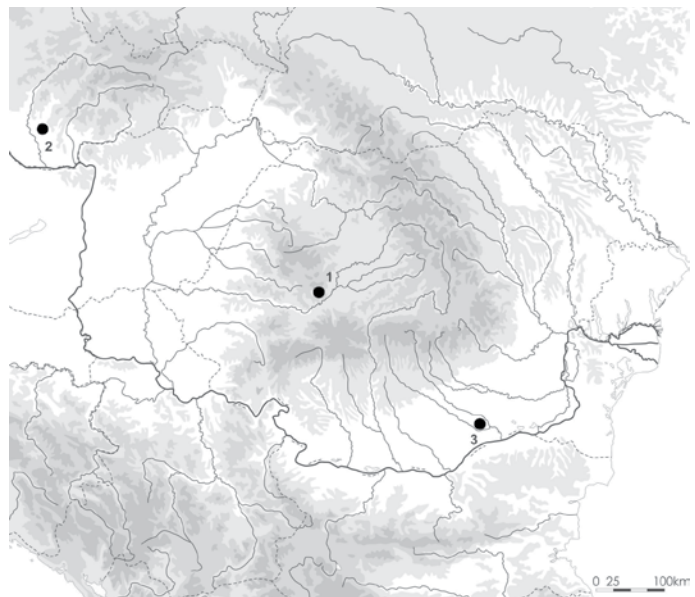


Fig. 4. Distribution map of the fragments of statues mentioned in the text: 1. Piatra Craivii; 2. Nitriansky Hrádok; 3. Popești.

or foot) (Feugère 1998; Schönfelder 1999: 537-538, Fig. 1; Čižmář 2008; Čižmář 2012: Fig. 6-8; Rudnicki 2014: 43, Pl. 6/17 etc.).

The wearing of finger-rings on a particular hand could also be related to the practice of ascribing different meanings to the left and the right side of



the body, or to the magical, ritual or medical representation of the human body. Such concepts are attested, for example, among different Mediterranean populations. Aulus Gellius (*Noctes Atticae* X. 10), citing Appian, mentions that the custom of wearing the ring on “the finger of the left hand which is next to the little finger”, encountered among both the Greeks and the Romans, originated from Egypt where it was believed that a fine nerve connects this finger with the heart. The Latin author concludes “that it therefore seemed quite reasonable that this finger in particular should be honoured with such an ornament, since it seems to be joined, and as it were united, with that supreme organ, the heart” (Rolfe 1927; Ogden 1990: 107).

In the case of the leg fragment of the statue from Piatra Craivii, and in those of the other examples mentioned above, subsequent mutilations were also carried out. These interventions could suggest their use in certain magical practices. This situation is somewhat similar to that of the human figurines made of clay, wax, lead, etc that are attested in the Mediterranean area and also among the indigenous populations from the northern Balkans, the lower Danube basin or the north-western Black Sea coast (the so-called “voodoo dolls”, as they are named by modern authors, or *kolossoi* in the ancient Greek literature), which display traces of intentional mutilation, decapitations, prodding marks, twisted limbs, etc (Faraone 1991; Ogden 2002: 71-79; Németh 2018; Rustoiu 2019: 239-257 etc). All these interventions, more likely accompanied by incantations or curses, indicate the practising of certain magical rituals. The selective preference for the left leg or hand could have played a particular role in these rituals.

### Conclusions

It can, therefore, be concluded that the fragment of bronze statuette discovered many years ago in the Piatra Craivii Dacian fortress, in south-western Transylvania, was less likely part of a scrap metal batch collected for recycling. The statuette could have been acquired during a plundering raid of the Dacian Apulii in one of the Roman provinces south of the lower Danube. The selective cutting off of the left leg of this statuette indicates the importance of the symbolical meaning of the left and the

right side of the body. On the other hand, the intentional mutilation of some parts of the leg could suggest the practising of particular magical rituals perhaps related to black magic. The incidence of other left side limbs cut off from other statues in the indigenous environment across the Roman frontier indicates that similar rituals were perhaps also performed by other communities. Lastly, the discussed artefacts illustrate another kind of connection between the Mediterranean world and the populations living in the vicinity of the Roman Empire, which is seldom taken into consideration. Once more, this illustrates the complexity of the mechanisms of interactions that contributed to the circulation of various goods from one cultural environment into another, as well as the different means through which they were transformed and assimilated in the process of transfer.

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**THE MEDITERRANEAN CONNECTIONS:  
SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL  
INTERACTIONS BETWEEN THE COMMUNITIES  
FROM SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE AND  
THE MEDITERRANEAN WORLD, FROM  
PREHISTORY TO THE MIDDLE AGES**



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**Blagoje Govedarica**

Eurasien-Abteilung des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Berlin  
blagoje.govedarica@dainst.de

## ZUR CHRONOLOGIE UND BEDEUTUNG DER GRÄBER AUS DEM BEREICH DES WESTTORS VON MONKODONJA IN ISTRIEN

**Abstract:** The purpose of this article is to clarify the chronology of the graves located in the front part of the West Gate of the fortified settlement of Monkodonja and to substantiate their interpretation as monuments of a local ancestral cult. In this sense, the inclusion of an ancient tumulus grave (Grave B) within the newly built fortification in ca. 1750 BC was regarded as the initial factor in the emergence of this cult. Decisive for the full recognition of this cult was a ceremony that took place during the extensive renovation of the defence walls and the expansion of the West Gate in ca. 1600 BC. Thereby the skeletal remains of the important ancestors were transferred from their original burial places and solemnly united and reburied in grave A. This ossuary was then closed and incorporated as the core of a bastion on the edge at the rebuilt gate. At the same time or shortly thereafter the final burial and sealing of Grave B and the construction of a further bastion that enclosed this tomb took place. Regardless whether these important events occurred at the same time or within a certain interval, the moment at which the front of the West Gate was flanked with the two grave-bastions can be assumed as the birth of a specific cult, in which the heroized ancestors were symbolized as protectors of the settlement.

**Keywords:** Bronze Age, Castelliere, Istria, Fortifikation, Cult Rituals, Special Burials.

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### Einführung

Istrien stellt ein eigenes Gebiet dar, denn es ist nicht nur die größte Halbinsel in der Adria mit einer ausgeprägten Geomorphologie, sondern es ist außerdem durch die Bergmassive von Učka und Ćićarija von der Kvarner-Bucht und dem Slowenischen Karst deutlich getrennt. Dadurch blieb Istrien abseits der wichtigen Landkommunikationswege in diesem Teil Europas. Der Küstenweg, der von Südosten über die Ausläufer von Velebit und des Kvarners führt, verlässt hier die Küste, läuft über den nördlichen Rand des Gebirge Ćićarija, umgeht somit Istrien und biegt direkt ins Hinterland von Triest ab. Auch die von Triest und der Kvarner Bucht ausgehenden Haupttrouten, die die nördliche Adria mit den Alpen und Pannonien verbinden, treffen in Postojina aufeinander (Tor zur Adria) und umgehen so ebenfalls die Halbinsel Istrien.<sup>1</sup>

Diese naturräumlichen Bedingungen spiegeln sich in der kulturhistorischen Entwicklung wider, so dass Istrien auch in dieser Hinsicht Besonderheiten im Vergleich mit umliegenden Gebieten aufweist. So kann davon ausgegangen werden, dass die zu geringe Anzahl von Fundorten des mittleren und späten Neolithikums nicht auf den archäologischen Forschungsstand zurückzuführen ist, sondern ein objektives Spiegelbild einer dünnen Besiedlung und damit einhergehenden eingeschränkten kulturellen Entwicklung ist.<sup>2</sup> Dasselbe gilt für die späteren Kulturen des Typs Ig I und Ig II, die im Triester-Karst und in der weiteren östlichen Adria reichlich repräsentiert sind, jedoch nicht in Istrien; hier treten Funde dieser beiden Typen nur sporadisch auf.<sup>3</sup> Nach den bisherigen Erkenntnissen ändert sich diese Situation erst mit dem Anbruch der Bronzezeit, denn erst ab dieser prähistorischen Epoche ist Istrien relativ gut besiedelt. Dies belegen zahlreiche befestigte Höhensiedlungen, soge-

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<sup>1</sup> Gabrovec 1983, 21-22; Govedarica 1989, 22.

<sup>2</sup> Vgl. Batović 1979, 477-479, 524, 575.

<sup>3</sup> Govedarica 1989, 28, 75.

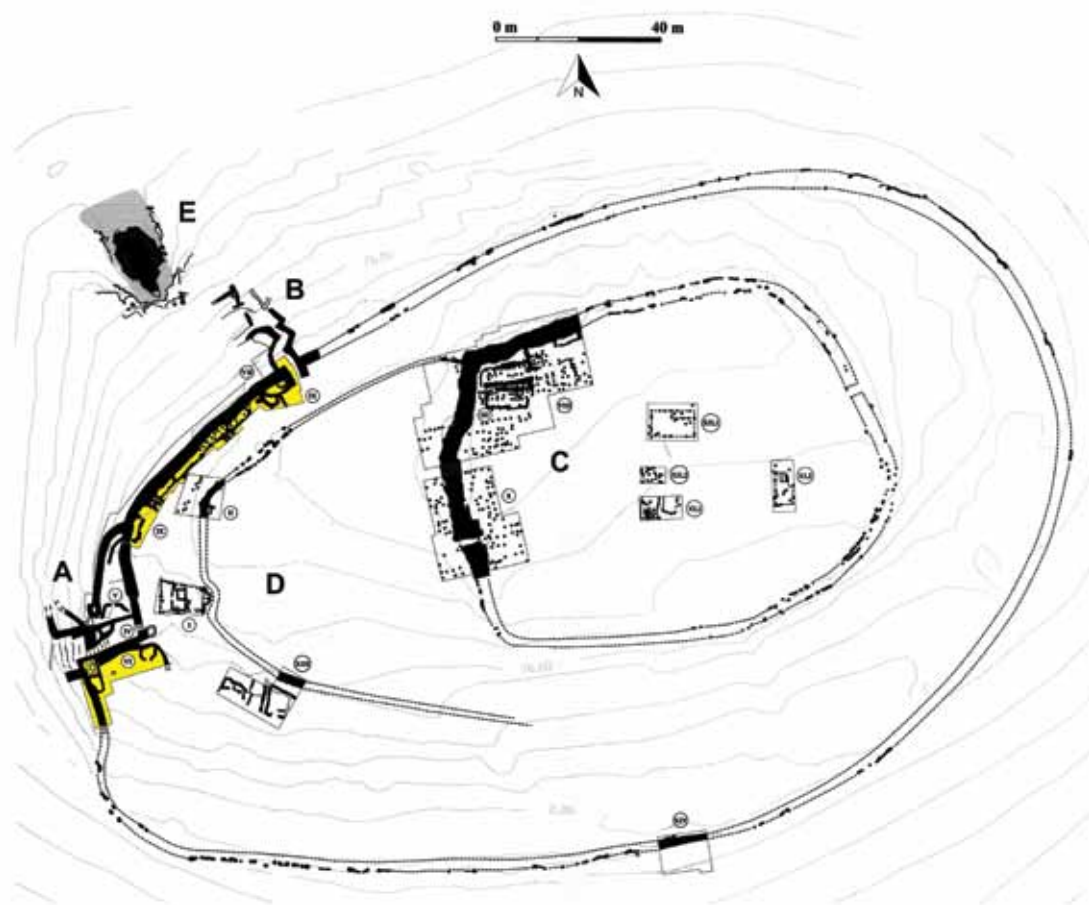


Abb. 1. Grundriss der befestigten Siedlung Monkodonja mit den markierten Bereichen, die 1997-2008 untersucht worden sind: A-B - Teil der Befestigung mit dem West- und Nordtor; C - Akropolis; D - untere Stadt; E - Schachthöhle; gelbmarkiert Schnitt 6 und 9 (nach Hänsel u.a. 2015, ergänzt).

nannte Castellieri, und die Grabhügel, die schon in den Arbeiten von Richard Francis Burton, Carlo Marchesetti und Anton Gnirs aus dem späten 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert dokumentiert worden sind.<sup>4</sup> Die Gründe für eine solche Intensivierung der kulturellen Entwicklung sind noch unklar, was auch nicht weiter verwundert, da es sich hierbei um eine noch immer wenig erforschte Phänomen handelt. Die Kenntnisse über die Bronzezeit in Istrien beruhten bis vor kurzem auf sparsam publizierten kleineren Forschungen, die sich auf eine relativ geringe Zahl an Fundplätzen beschränkten.<sup>5</sup>

Ein breiterer Einblick in der Bronzezeit der Halbinsel Istrien wurde erst nach den systematischen Untersuchungen des Siedlungskomplexes Monkodonja bei Rovinj möglich, die Ende des 20. und Anfang des 21. Jahrhunderts durchgeführt

worden sind.<sup>6</sup> Es ist interessant, dass diese große und gut befestigte Siedlung (160m x 250m groß; Abb. 1)<sup>7</sup> in der ersten Forschungsetappe, als die meisten Castellieri entdeckt worden sind, nicht verzeichnet wurde. Erst im Jahr 1953 hat der damalige Mitarbeiter des Archäologischen Museums

<sup>6</sup> Dieser Fundort wurde in der jugoslawischen Literatur zu meist als Makadanj, manchmal auch als Mokodonj, Mokadonj, Makedonski vrh und Makadanija aufgeführt. Der Name Monkodonja kommt als eine kroatisierte Form des italienischen Moncodogno zum ersten Mal im Jahr 1998 vor. Vgl. Bačić 1970, 215 ff.; Čović 1983, 115, 134, 233-234, 237, 239.; Batović 1983, 278, 282, 285-287, 294.; Govedarica 1989, 23, 73; Buršić Matijašić 2008, 150. Zu Etymologie des Terminus Moncodogno-Monkodonja siehe auch Hänsel u.a. 2015, 513-516.

<sup>7</sup> Ermittelt nach Hänsel u.a. 2015, Beilage 1. Buršić Matijašić 2008, 150 gibt etwas kleinere Dimensionen (160x200m). Zu den großen Castellieri gehören auch Vrčin bei Vodnjan und Veliki Brioni, wahrscheinlich auch Gočan bei Rojnić, Monkaštel bei Bale, Kaštelir 101 bei Nova Vas und Sv. Martin bei Rovinj. Vgl. Bekić 1997, 23-26; Buršić Matijašić 2008, 83.

<sup>4</sup> Burton 1874, 385 ff.; Marchesetti 1903; Gnirs 1925, 11 ff.

<sup>5</sup> Vgl. Govedarica 1989, 71 ff.; Codacci-Terlević 2006, 41-74; Buršić Matijašić 2008, 7 ff.; Hänsel u.a. 2015, 27-43.



in Pula, Boris Bačić, die befestigte Anlage bei Geländearbeiten erkannt. Bei dieser Gelegenheit konnte die Befestigung mit den Haupteingängen sowie einige Objekte innerhalb der Anlage teilweise dokumentiert werden.<sup>8</sup> Die Ergebnisse wurden jedoch ziemlich summarisch publiziert, so dass sie kein breiteres Interesse in der Forschung weckten. Daher wurden lange Zeit keine weiteren archäologischen Arbeiten unternommen. Das änderte sich völlig mit den umfangreichen Untersuchungen, die zwischen 1997 und 2008 von Mitarbeitern des Archäologischen Museums Istriens aus Pula, des Heimatsmuseums aus Rovinj, der Abteilung für Archäologie der Philosophischen Fakultät von Ljubljana und des Instituts für Prähistorische Archäologie der Freien Universität Berlin durchgeführt wurden.

Dabei wurden folgende Teile der Siedlung eingehend erforscht: die Befestigungsmauer vom Haupteingang im Südwesten (Westtor; Abb. 1A) bis zum Seiteneingang am Nordwesten (Nordtor; Abb. 1B), der westliche Teil der Akropolis mit Schutzmauer und Wohnstrukturen sowie Teil des zentralen Plateaus der Akropolis (Abb. 1C); Teile der westlichen Terrassen der Unterstadt und der inneren Mauer, die den westlichen Vorraum der Akropolis schützte (Abb. 1D). In der Schachthöhle beim Nordtor (Abb. 1E), die den Bewohnern der Siedlung höchstwahrscheinlich als Kultstätte diente, wurden Probegrabungen durchgeführt. Neben umfangreicher interdisziplinärer Forschung wurden außerdem eine vorbildliche Restaurierung und Konservierung von Teilen der äußeren und inneren Befestigung durchgeführt. Schließlich erfolgte eine zeitnahe und umfassende Veröffentlichung aller Forschungsergebnisse, wodurch die Funktion und Bedeutung dieser Fortifikation in ihrer Zeit und ihrem Raum umfassend erläutert werden konnte. Die befestigte Anlage Monkodonja ist somit nicht nur zu einem unverzichtbaren Eckpunkt

in der Untersuchung der Bronzezeit Istriens geworden, sondern dient in vielerlei Hinsicht als grundlegende Ausgangsbasis für bronzezeitliche Forschungen, auch in einem größeren Raum über Istrien hinaus.

An dieser Stelle haben wir nicht die Absicht, im Detail über die vielfältigen Ergebnisse der durchgeführten Untersuchungen zu schreiben. Der Leser kann sich darüber ausführlich in den Büchern der Ausgräber informieren.<sup>9</sup> Es soll stattdessen auf einige noch unzureichend geklärte chronologische und kulturelle Fragen hingewiesen werden, die allerdings vor allem durch den schon genannten ungenügenden Forschungsstand zur Bronzezeit Istriens und durch den Charakter des Fundplatzes selbst bedingt sind. Denn starke Erosion hat eine Dislozierung ausgelöst und Sedimente mit Artefakten erheblich reduziert, was bei den hochgelegenen Castellieri auf Bergkuppen ein weithin bekanntes Problem ist. In Monkodonja fehlen vertikale stratigraphische Ablagerungen in vielen Bereichen und dementsprechend, ist das Informationspotenzial der geoarchäologischen Sedimente stark beeinträchtigt.

Für die chronologische Zuordnung mussten sich die Ausgräber neben wenigen aussagekräftigen Funden vor allem auf 36 Radiokarbonaten verlassen.<sup>10</sup> 25 Proben waren Tierknochen (18 Herbivoren, fünf Omnivoren, zwei blieben unbestimmt) und elf weitere stammten von menschlichen Knochen. Die 18 Proben von Herbivoren können, da sie nicht durch den Salzwasserreservoireffekt beeinflusst sein können, als zuverlässig angesehen werden. Die Daten der restlichen 18 Proben, einschließlich der elf aus menschlichen Knochen, ergaben zumeist keine zuverlässigen Resultate. Diese Datierungsunsicherheiten tangieren besonders Chronologie und Interpretation der drei im Bereich des Westtors gefundenen Gräbern. Mit diesen und anderen Fragen zu diesen Gräbern werden wir uns im folgenden Text ausführlich beschäftigen.

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<sup>8</sup> Bačić 1970, 215-218. Hinsichtlich dieser Untersuchungen bestehen einige Unstimmigkeiten. Neben dem hier zitierten Angaben von Bačić selbst, wird auch angegeben, dass die Untersuchungen in den Jahren 1953-1955 von B. Bačić und B. Marušić durchgeführt worden sind (Buršić Matijašić 2008, 150). In der Publikation Monkodonja 1 wurden diese Arbeiten nur mit den Aktivitäten von B. Bačić verbunden, wobei angeführt wurde, dass der Fundort zum ersten Mal am 9.2.1953 besichtigt wurde, darauf die zwei Grabungskampagnen in den Jahren 1954 und 1955 folgten (Hänsel u.a. 2015, 33).

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<sup>9</sup> Hänsel u.a. 2015; 2020; Helmuth Kramberger 2017; sowie die dort eingeführte weitere Literatur.

<sup>10</sup> Hänsel u.a. 2015, 144-145, 160, -161; 423-452.



Abb. 2. Monkodonja, Westtor - Zustand nach der Restaurierung (nach Hänsel u.a. 2015, ergänzt).

### Die Gräber am Westtor

Im Bereich des gut befestigten Westtors, das offenbar als Haupteingang in Siedlung diente, wurden drei Gräber freigelegt. Jedes stand im Zusammenhang mit der komplexen Torbefestigung, obwohl sie an unterschiedlichen Bereichen lagen. Abgesehen von einigen partiellen Skelette aus der Akropolis und vereinzelt an mehreren Stellen verstreut gelegenen menschlichen Knochen, sind diese drei Gräber einzige Befunde, die auf ein bewusstes Bestattungsritual im Siedlungsgebiet hinweisen.<sup>11</sup> Zwei Gräber bzw. Grabkisten waren mit den Buchstaben A und B gekennzeichnet, während das dritte Grab, in den Veröffentlichungen nicht nummeriert ist.<sup>12</sup> Übersichtshalber wird diese Bestattung hier als Grab C geführt.

### Grab A<sup>13</sup>

Die Steinkiste des Grabes A befand sich innerhalb eines quadratischen, teilweise beschädigten Sockels (ursprüngliche Fläche: 3,7m x 3,4m; Abb. 1A; 2A; 3a),<sup>14</sup> unterhalb des verbreiterten Abschlusses der Bogenmauer, der nördlich des Haupteingangs von den Festungsmauern eingefasst war und zwei Seitenpassagen zur Siedlung schützte (Abb. 2,2). Die Kiste bestand aus vier gut bearbeiteten Steinplatten, die einen 80 cm x 50 cm großen und NW-SO ausgerichteten Raum umschlossen (Abb. 3a,b). Den Boden des Grabes bildete größtenteils ein horizontal ausgelegter Stein. Auf und neben ihm befand sich eine dicht gepackte Lage von kinderfaustgroßen, im Meerwasser abgerollten weißen Kalkstein. Die Kiste war mit

<sup>11</sup> Vgl. Hänsel u.a. 2009, 159; 2015, 228; Teßmann 2020, 529 ff.

<sup>12</sup> Dazu Hänsel u.a. 2015, 199 ff. und Anm. 14.

<sup>13</sup> Hänsel u. a. 2009, 168 ff.; Hänsel u.a. 2015, 199 ff; Teßmann 2020, 551 ff.

<sup>14</sup> Im beschädigten Ostteil des Sockels, unmittelbar neben der Grabkiste war eine leere Grube angeschlossen. Sie war möglicherweise mit dem Grab A verbunden worden, doch ihre Funktion ist unklar. Vgl. Hänsel u.a. 2009, 170, 175.

einer massiven, bis zu 10 cm dicken und 130 cm x 80 cm großen Platte bedeckt, die offensichtlich bis zum Zeitpunkt der Öffnung des Grabes bei der Grabung unberührt geblieben war.<sup>15</sup> Am Boden des Grabes, in einer 20 cm mächtigen Schicht, wurden dicht übereinander verstreute Einzelknochen von mindestens 15 Personen gefunden. Es wurden zumeist Schädel und obere Gliedmaßen, hauptsächlich von Erwachsenen sowie von vier Kinder

2468 und 1625 cal BC gelegt.<sup>17</sup> Im Unterschied dazu weist der geborgene Bronzeschmuck auf die mittlere und späte Bronzezeit hin, d.h. auf eine deutlich jüngere Zeit, ab 1600 v. Chr.<sup>18</sup>

#### *Grab B<sup>19</sup>*

Dieses Grab befand sich am Boden eines geschlossenen 4 m x 3 m großen Raumes (quadratischer Turm ohne Eingang), der an der Südwestecke

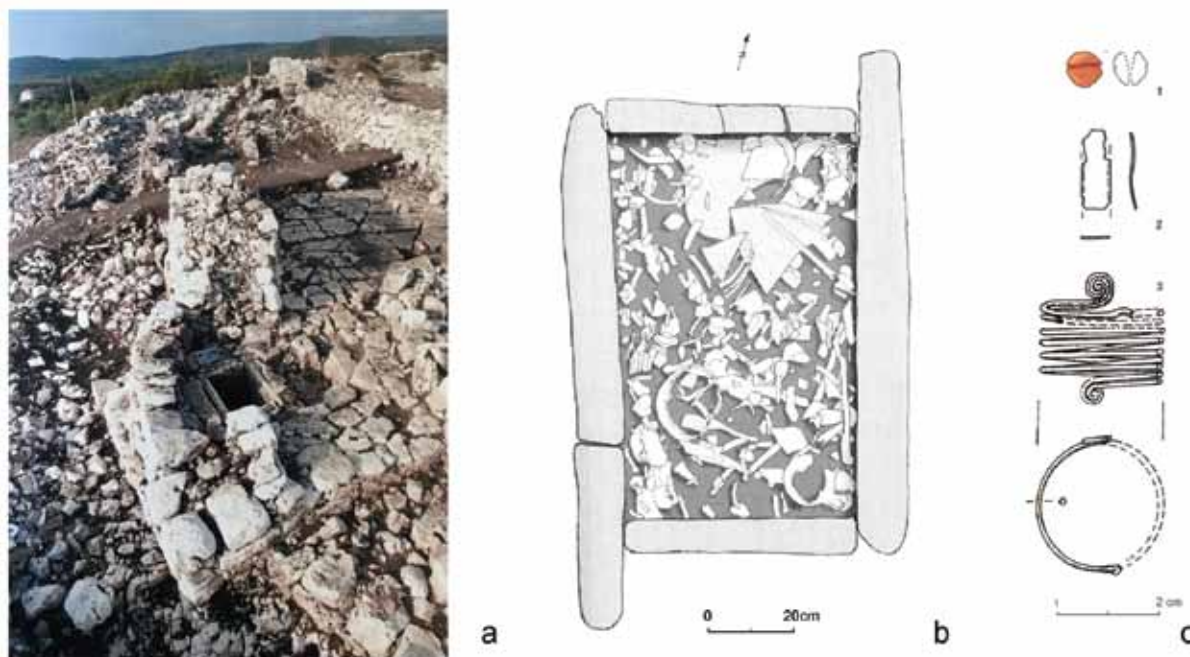


Abb. 3. Monkodonja, Grab A (nach Hänsel u.a. 2009).

und eines frühjugentlichen Individuum identifiziert.<sup>16</sup> In der Grabfüllung sind einige atypische Scherben gefunden worden, während im oberen Teil der Schicht, in der die Knochen lagen, zwei beschädigte Schläfenringe aus Bronzedraht mit Spiralenden, ein Fragment eines Bronzeblechrings und drei Bernsteinperlen freigelegt worden sind (Abb. 3c).

Den vier radiokarbondatierten Menschenknochen zufolge wurden die menschlichen Überreste in diesem Grab nicht gleichzeitig, sondern in einem Abstand von 550 bis 850 Jahre, zwischen 2288 und 1742 bzw.

des Westtors an der Befestigungsmauer nachgebaut wurde (Abb. 2B, 4a). Diese Lage stellt auch den markantesten Punkt der ganzen Befestigung dar. Die Steinkiste dieses Grabes wies gleiche Charakteristiken wie Grab A auf. Sie bestand aus vier gut bearbeiteten Platten und einer Steinbedeckung, die einen ca. 100 cm x 50/60 cm großen und NW-SO ausgerichteten Raum abschlossen (Abb. 4b). Dieser ‚Steinsarg‘ stand auf dem natürlichen Gestein, den Boden bildete eine flache Platte, die exakt in den Rahmen der Kiste eingepasst war. Wie Grab A lag auch dieses Grabes innerhalb einer Steinplattform, die dies-

<sup>15</sup> Hänsel u.a. 2009, 171. Die Vermutung der Ausgräber, dass eine zerbrochene Steinplatte, die teilweise über der Deckplatte lag, Teil einer Grabstele gewesen war, lässt sich anhand der Dokumentation nicht nachvollziehen (Vgl. Hänsel u.a. 2015, 199, Abb. 144).

<sup>16</sup> Teßmann 2020, 552.

<sup>17</sup> Eine fünfte Radiokarbonprobe aus diesem Grab wurde als unbrauchbar erklärt. Vgl. Hänsel u.a. 2015, 203.

<sup>18</sup> Vgl. Hänsel 1968, 99-101; Čović 1983, 236. Kilian-Dirmeier 1975, 100-101; Taf. 61;A; Batović 1983, 290.

<sup>19</sup> Hänsel u.a. 2009, 161 ff.; Hänsel u.a. 2015, 211 ff.; Teßmann 2020, 555 ff.



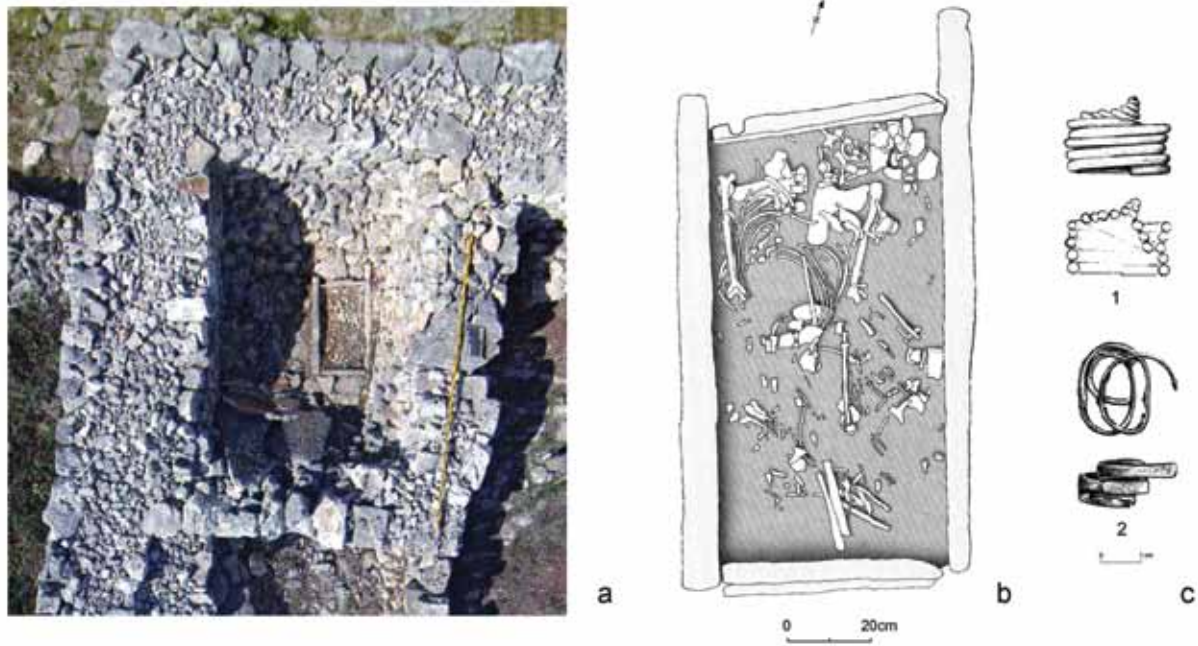


Abb. 4. Monkodonja, Grab B (nach Hänsel u.a. 2015).



Abb. 5. Monkodonja, Rundplattform und die Kiste des Grabes B (nach Hänsel u.a. 2015).

mal nicht quadratisch, sondern kreisförmig war (Abb. 5a,b). Eine 1,85 m x 1,20 m große Platte unregelmäßiger Form bedeckte die Kiste und einen guten Teil des kreisförmigen Sockels (Abb. 5a). Gleich der Abdeckung des Grabs A war auch diese Platte bis zur Grabung unberührt geblieben. Die um den Sockel dicht gestreuten Steine wurden von den Ausgräbern als Reste eines Hügels interpretiert.<sup>20</sup> Darüber lag eine ca. 40 cm mächtige Steinaufschüttung, die mit einer Humusschicht be-

deckt war, die sich wahrscheinlich noch während der Besiedlungszeit herausgebildet hatte. Diese Humusschicht war mit Steinen bedeckt, die hier in der späteren Zeit herabgestürzt waren.

Die Skelettreste befanden sich im Bodenbereich. Im oberen Teil dieses Bereiches lagen die Knochen einer jüngeren Frau (ca. 17-25 Jahre alt),<sup>21</sup> die hier offenbar sekundär beerdigt worden ist. Dies zeigt die Position der Skelettknochen an, die sich nicht in einem natürlichen Zusammenhang befanden, aber die anatomische Lage nachahmend, mit dem Kopf auf Norden ausgerichtet niedergelegt waren (Abb. 4b).<sup>22</sup> Zuunterst, in den Spalten des Grabbodens fan-

<sup>20</sup> In der Hügelaufschüttung, südlich der Steinkiste befand sich eine kleine Platte aus poliertem Sandstein. Die Funktion dieser Platte ist unklar, jedoch wird von den Ausgräbern wie beim Grab A auch hier eine Grabstele vermutet (Hänsel u.a. 2015, 219, Abb. 161-162, 164).

<sup>21</sup> Teßmann 2020, 559.

<sup>22</sup> Vgl. *ibid.*, 556-557.



Abb. 6. Monkodonja, Grab C (nach Hänsel u.a. 2009 u. 2015).

den sich vereinzelt Knochen von zwei Kindern im Alter von 5-7 und 7-8 Jahre. In der Grabverfüllung wurden unmittelbar über dem weiblichen Skelett mehrere Muscheln und Schnecken geborgen, während in der Steinaufschüttung oberhalb der Steinkiste zwei Bronzespinalen lagen (Abb. 4c), von denen einer einen tutulusförmigen Abschluss aufwies (Abb. 4c1). Zwei Radiokarbonproben aus Menschenknochen ergaben unterschiedliche Daten:  $1658 \pm 29$  cal BC für das Frauenskelett und  $2032 \pm 58$  cal BC für die Kinderknochen.<sup>23</sup> Der Schmuck aus der Steinaufschüttung ist, ähnlich wie die Funde aus Grab A, der Mittel- und Spätbronzezeit zuzuweisen.

#### Grab C<sup>24</sup>

Im Gegensatz zu den beiden anderen stellt dieses Grab eine einfache Grube von unregelmäßiger Form dar, die ca. 100 cm x 60 cm groß und 40 cm tief war. Sie war in einen natürlichen Felsen eingetieft, wo sich die östliche Wand des Turmes vom Grab B und die Südflanke der Torgasse kreuzen

(Abb. 6a, b). Hier waren die Überreste eines etwa 18-20 Jahre alten Mannes beigesetzt.<sup>25</sup> Es gab keine Beigaben im Grab, während in der Umgebung der Grabgrube ein erhaltenes Keramikgefäß und eine große Anzahl verzierter und verstreut liegender Scherben aufgefunden worden sind, deren Verhältnis zur Bestattung aber unklar ist. Eine Radiokarbonprobe des Skelettknochens aus diesem Grab ergab das Datum  $1774 \pm 65$  cal BC.<sup>26</sup> Die Ausgräber gehen davon aus, dass es sich hierbei um eine sekundäre Bestattung oder um eine zerstörte Grablege handelt, wobei, die Beisetzung vor der Errichtung der zweiten Mauerverstärkung der Westorgasse (Stadium 2 des Westtores, nach Hänsel u.a. und Teržan) erfolgt sein soll.<sup>27</sup>

#### Diskussion

Die drei vorgestellten Gräber verbindet die Tatsache, dass sie sich im Kontext der monumental befestigten Haupteingang zur Siedlung

<sup>23</sup> Hänsel u.a. 2015, 223-224.

<sup>24</sup> Hänsel u.a. 2009, 159 ff.; Hänsel u.a. 2015, 224; Teßmann 2020, 541 ff.

<sup>25</sup> Teßmann 2020, 542.

<sup>26</sup> Hänsel u.a. 2015, 227.

<sup>27</sup> Hänsel u. a. 2009, 168; Teržan 2020, 202, 204 ; Teßmann 2020, 542-543.



befinden, d.h. an der sensibelsten Stelle des Verteidigungssystems. Gleichzeitig, und beide Aspekte betonen ihren außergewöhnlichen Charakter, wurden sie an einem Ort angelegt, der von Natur aus nicht für Bestattungen vorgesehen ist. Diese spezifische Position unterstreicht, dass es sich hier um keinen gewöhnlichen Bestattungsplatz handelt, was auch in allen bisherigen Publikationen nachdrücklich hervorgehoben wurde. Eben darauf fußen die möglichen Deutungen im Kontext der Stadtbefestigung, die von einer schützenden Funktion als Ahnengräber oder Gräbern der Siedlungsgründer („*heros ktistes*“) bis zu einer sozial motivierten Beseitigung gleich einer *damnatio memoriae* reichen.<sup>28</sup> Die Möglichkeit einer kultischen Opferung im Rahmen der Einrichtung der Befestigung (Bauopfer) wurde ebenso erörtert.<sup>29</sup>

Die letztgenannte Deutung kann sich allerdings nur auf Grab C beziehen, denn nur diese Bestattung scheint eher nachlässig in den Boden gebracht worden zu sein. Es liegen jedoch keine weiteren Anhaltspunkte vor, um dieses Grab näher beurteilen zu können, außer der Radiokarbondatierung. Sie muss zurückhaltend beurteilt werden, da ein Reservoirereffekt nicht auszuschließen ist. Daher muss die genannte Interpretation dieses Grabes, wie auch die anderen Deutungsversuche, im Bereich der Spekulation bleiben.

Besondere Aufmerksamkeit kommt den Gräbern A und B zu und zwar aus verschiedenen Gründen: Nicht nur eröffnen ihre vorbildlich verarbeiteten Steinkisten und an strategisch sensiblen Stellen positionierten Plattformen eine Palette an Interpretationsmöglichkeiten. Gleichzeitig bereiten ihre chronologischen Bestimmungen und die damit verbundenen möglichen kulturell-historischen Deutungen große Schwierigkeiten. Die Ausgräber gründen ihre Schlussfolgerungen, nach denen beide Gräber älter als die Stadtbefestigung sein sollen, wobei die quadratische Steinplattform mit dem Grab A ursprünglich eine freistehende Struktur gewesen sein soll, auf die verfügbaren absoluten Daten und einige stratigraphische Beobachtungen.<sup>30</sup> Dahingegen waren die kreisförmige Plattform und die Kiste des Grabes B von einem Steintumulus bedeckt. In der ersten

Bauphase der Befestigung und des Westtors, die, wie gesagt, im 19 und 18. Jh. v. Chr. erfolgt sein soll,<sup>31</sup> blieb das Grab A außerhalb der Stadtmauern, während das Grab B zusammen mit der Plattform und mittlerem Teil des Tumulus in einen speziell dafür gebauten quadratischen Turm an der Südwestecke des Westtors integriert worden ist (Stadium 1, nach Hänsel u.a. und Teržan).<sup>32</sup> Bei der Erweiterung des Westtors, die in der ersten Hälfte des 16. Jh. v. Chr. erfolgen sollte, ist auch das Grab A mit einer Steinmauer umgeben worden. Damit sind beide Gräber zu einem integralen Teil des Befestigungssystems geworden (Stadium 2, nach Hänsel u.a.).<sup>33</sup>

Diese Interpretationen beruhen weitgehend auf den <sup>14</sup>C-Datierungen, die sich für Monkodonja allerdings nicht immer als zuverlässig erwiesen haben. Insbesondere bieten die an Proben von menschlichen Knochen gewonnenen Daten keine zuverlässige Grundlage für die chronologische Einordnung. Das gilt vor allem für die hohen Datierungen und die große Diskrepanz zwischen dem ältesten und jüngsten Datum, die für Grab A sich um 550-850 Jahre (2288 - 1742 1σ cal BC bzw. 2468-1625 2σ cal BC) und für Grab von B um 370-450 Jahre (2032-1658 1σ cal BC bzw. 2054-1604 2σ cal BC) auseinanderklaffen. Hier ist ein maritimer Reservoirereffekt offensichtlich verantwortlich zu machen, der bis zu 400 Jahre ältere <sup>14</sup>C-Alter ergeben kann. Dabei ist es meist nicht möglich, die Abweichungen realistisch zu bestimmen.<sup>34</sup> Dass hier jedenfalls mit erheblichen chronologischen Abweichungen zu rechnen ist, zeigen sowohl datiertes archäologisches Material als auch Radiokarbondatierungen der Knochen von Pflanzenfressern. Somit ist anzunehmen, dass die <sup>14</sup>C-Datierungen der Menschenknochen zu hohe und für die chronologische Bestimmung der Gräber nicht verwendbare Werte ergeben. Legt man eine jüngere Zeitstellung der Gräber zugrunde, so müssten die Errichtungszeiträume der Gräber und Befestigung neu und anders beurteilt werden.

Für den ganzen Bereich des Westtors fehlen zuverlässige Radiokarbondatierungen. Einen gu-

<sup>28</sup> Hänsel u.a. 2009, 175 ff.; 2015, 204, 208-210, 490-492; Teržan 2020, 206.

<sup>29</sup> Hänsel u.a. 2015, 491.

<sup>30</sup> Hänsel u.a. 2009, 168.

<sup>31</sup> Hänsel u.a. 2015, 446.

<sup>32</sup> Hänsel u. a. 2009, 168 Abb. 17; Teržan 2020, 202, 204 Abb. 4.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.; Hänsel u.a. 2015, 447.

<sup>34</sup> Die Ausgräber selbst haben ausdrücklich betont, dass bei dem Umgang mit Radiokarbondaten Vorsicht geboten ist. Vgl. Hänsel u.a. 2015, 205, 426-427.

ten Anhaltspunkt bieten hingegen die Datierungen aus dem Schnitt 9, die am inneren Teil der Befestigungsmauer zwischen dem West- und

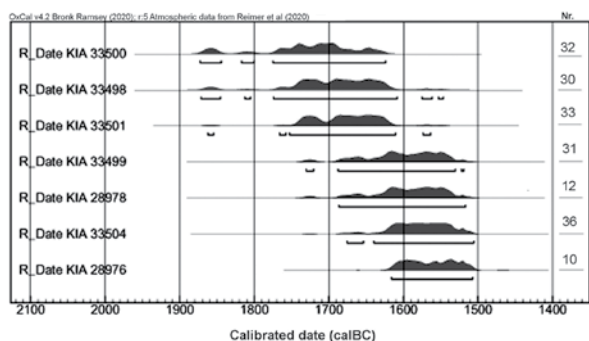


Abb. 7. Monkodonja, die zwei Gruppierungen der Radiokarbonaten aus dem Schnitt 9 (OxCal v4.4.2 / Bronk Ramsey 2020).

Nordtor untersucht worden ist (Abb. 1). Hierbei handelt es sich um eine Serie von acht Daten, die an Knochenproben von Herbivoren ermittelt worden sind. Sieben Daten ergaben kalibrierte Zeitspannen von 1779-1491 bis cal BC ( $2\sigma$  -94%) bzw. 1765-1514 ( $1\sigma$  -68%), während Probe-Nr. 34 die in die Zeit 1910-1740 cal BC (94.5%) bzw. 1866-1772 cal BC (68%) weist. Diese letzte Datierung, die von einem Rinderknochen aus der Schuttschicht der älteren Phase von Wehrmauern stammt, stellt das älteste Datum der Stadtbefestigung dar. Allerdings weicht diese Datierung von allen anderen erheblich ab, so dass sie kaum zur weiteren Argumentation herangezogen werden kann. Daher bleibt die Serie der sieben Proben mit sehr ähnlichen Radiokarbonaltern ein zuverlässiger chronologischer Indikator. In einer im OxCal v4.4.2 (Bronk Ramsey 2020) kürzlich durchgeführten Neukalibrierung<sup>35</sup> ergaben sich zwei klare Gruppierungen (Abb. 7): eine ältere mit drei Proben (Nr. 30, 32, 33), die sich im Zeitraum

von 1750-1620 cal BC konzentrieren, und die zweite von vier Proben (Nr. 10, 12, 31, 36), die von 1630 bis 1530 cal BC reichen (Abb. 7). Die erste Gruppe ergibt die Bauzeit der Stadtbefestigung, während die zweite auf ihre Restaurierung verweist. Dabei zeigt es sich, dass die Errichtung der Befestigung nicht vor 1750 cal BC stattgefunden haben konnte, während die erste große Erneuerung 80-100 Jahre später, jedoch nicht vor 1630 cal BC erfolgt ist.

Eine weitere Beurteilung der Chronologie der Befestigung wird durch die archäologischen Funde und einige stratigraphische Beobachtungen am Westtor möglich. Ausschlaggebend ist eine Hülsenkopfnadel mit tordiertem Schaft, die neben der Bogenmauer, die das Grab A überdeckte, gefunden wurde (Abb. 8). Nadeln dieser Art stellen eine entwickelte Aunjetitzer Form dar, die ziemlich präzise am Ende der Periode Br. A2 d.h. 1650/1600 v. Chr. datiert werden kann.<sup>36</sup> Diese Nadel lag auf der Oberfläche des nach der Errichtung der Hauptbefestigung entstandenen Sediments, in das das Fundament der Bogenmauer eingegraben wor-

den ist (Abb. 8,5).<sup>37</sup> Damit ist die stratigraphische Folge dieser zwei Mauern gut dokumentiert und die Radiokarbonatierung der Bogenmauer, die in die zweite Hälfte des 17. Jh. v. Chr. aufweist, kann präzisiert werden. Den dritten bedeutenden Hinweis in diesem Zusammenhang bieten die Schläfenringe aus dem Grab A, die zugleich die einzigen datier-

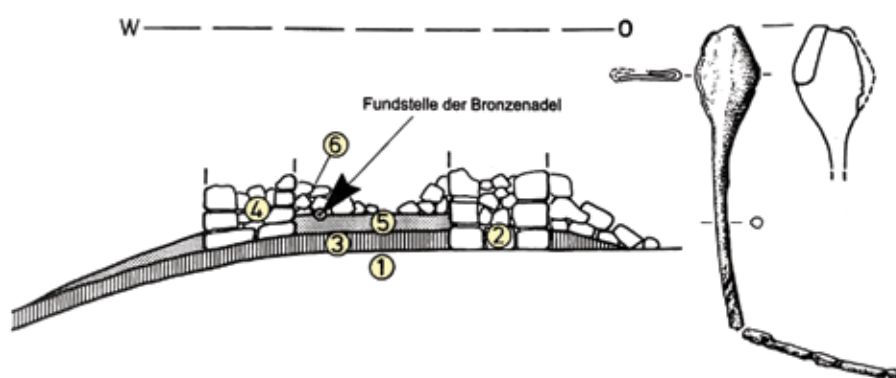


Abb. 8 Monkodonja, stratigraphische Position der Hülsenkopfnadel (nach Hänsel 2003) 1: Naturfelsen; 2: Befestigungsmauer; 3: Schicht, in die die Mauerfundamente eingegraben sind; 4: Bogenmauer; 5: Kulturschicht, in die die Fundamente der Bogenmauer eingegraben sind; 6: Steinschuttpackung

den ist (Abb. 8,5).<sup>37</sup> Damit ist die stratigraphische Folge dieser zwei Mauern gut dokumentiert und die Radiokarbonatierung der Bogenmauer, die in die zweite Hälfte des 17. Jh. v. Chr. aufweist, kann präzisiert werden. Den dritten bedeutenden Hinweis in diesem Zusammenhang bieten die Schläfenringe aus dem Grab A, die zugleich die einzigen datier-

<sup>35</sup> Für die Durchführung dieser Neukalibrierung bin ich Frau Prof. Dr. Elke Kaiser zu Dank verpflichtet.

<sup>36</sup> Rückdeschel 1978, 115; Bartelheim 1998, 66.

<sup>37</sup> Hänsel u. a. 2015, 160, Abb. 112. Dazu auch Hänsel 2003, 86, Abb. 15.

baren Funde aus diesem Kontext repräsentieren. Ihr Ursprung ist ebenso im Aunjetitzer Kreis zu suchen, obwohl Exemplaren mit Spiralenden zu späteren Formen zählen, die in der Periode Br. B, d.h. ab 1600 v. Chr., vorkommen.<sup>38</sup>

So haben wir aus drei verschiedenen Quellen Daten erhalten, die sich gegenseitig ergänzen und eine weitere Präzisierung der Entstehungs- und Renovierungszeit der Stadtbefestigung sowie des Ausbaus des Westtors und der damit verbundenen Anlagen möglich machen. Das erste Datum, um 1750 cal BC, markiert den wahrscheinlichsten Baubeginn der Stadtbefestigung; das zweite Datum, 1630 cal BC, stellt eine Zäsur dar, vor der die große Renovierung dieser Befestigung nicht erfolgen konnte; das dritte Datum, 1650-1600 v. Chr. gibt den möglichen Zeitrahmen für den Bau der Bogenmauer und der Verstärkung des Westtors vor, die offenbar im Zusammenhang mit der oben genannten großen Restaurierung der Befestigung stattgefunden hat; das vierte Datum, 1600 v. Chr. ist der *terminus ad quem* für die Schließung des Grabes A. Angesichts der stratigraphischen Beziehung zwischen dem Grab A und der Bogenmauer, die es bedeckt, lässt sich logischerweise schließen, dass diese Mauer nicht vor 1600 v. Chr. erbaut werden konnte, da sie nicht älter als das darunter liegende Grab sein kann. Und umgekehrt wird dadurch die Datierung von Grab A und der dortigen Schläfenringe indirekt verfeinert, weil dies ein sicherer Hinweis darauf ist, dass dieses Grab nicht nach 1600 v. Chr. entstanden sein konnte und die genannten Schmuckstücke zu den ältesten Exemplaren dieser Art gehören. Die so gewonnenen Daten stehen dem Datum der ersten großen Renovierung der Stadtmauer und des Westtors nahe, die von den Ausgräbern in die erste Hälfte der 16. Jh. v. Chr., gesetzt wurde.<sup>39</sup> Hervorzuheben ist, dass demzufolge die Errichtung der Befestigung höchstens in der Mitte des 18. Jh. v. Chr. begonnen haben kann, was wesentlich später ist als zuvor gedacht.<sup>40</sup>

Es gibt viele Hinweise darauf, dass Grab A nicht außerhalb der Festung gelegen hat. Somit bezeichnet das Jahr 1600 v. Chr. nicht nur die letzte Beisetzung in der Kiste, sondern auch der Zeitpunkt in dem das Grab selbst errichtet wurde.

Dieses Grab war durchaus von großer spiritueller und strategischer Bedeutung für die Bewohner von Monkodonja. Hätte es tatsächlich bereits vor der Renovierung der Befestigung frei existiert, wie das vermutet wird, hätte es außerhalb der Mauern gelegen, wäre somit ungeschützt vor potenziellen An- und Eingriffen gewesen. Dies widerspricht allen Grundprinzipien, denn die bloße Zerstörung eines solchen Grabes würde für die Verteidiger der Siedlung eine große moralische Niederlage dargestellt haben. Darüber hinaus wurden die bronzezeitlichen Gräber in der Regel mit einem Tumulus bedeckt oder in den Boden eingegraben, was hier eindeutig nicht der Fall gewesen ist.<sup>41</sup> Daher lässt sich die Ansicht der Ausgräber, das Grab habe in der ersten Besiedlungsphase (Stadium 1, nach Hänsel u.a.) vor der Befestigung frei gelegen, nicht nachvollziehen.

Dank der präzisen Grabungsmethoden und sehr genauen anthropologischen Analysen gelang es, Skelettteile von mindestens 15 Menschen unter den chaotisch verstreuten Knochen dieses Grabes, zu identifizieren. Fünf davon wurden mittels der Radiokarbonmethode datiert. Obwohl diese Daten nicht zu einer Präzisierung der absoluten Chronologie entscheidend beitragen konnten, lässt sich jedoch annehmen, dass die großen Unterschiede zwischen ihnen auf bestimmte zeitliche Abstände zwischen den einzelnen Bestattungen hindeuten. Doch sind hier nur die selektiven exkarnierten Teile von Verstorbenen beerdigt worden,<sup>42</sup> während die primären Bestattungen an anderen Stellen und zu verschiedenen Zeiten stattgefunden haben. In der Kiste des Grabes A wurden sie dann nachträglich und nicht sukzessiv, sondern während eines einmaligen Ereignisses beigelegt. Das alles deutet darauf hin, dass zu Beginn der ersten Erweiterung des Westtors um 1600 v. Chr. eine Zeremonie stattfand, in der die Überreste bedeutender Vorfahren aus ihren ursprünglichen Bestattungsorten hierher gebracht und im neu-erbauten Grab A wie in einem Beinhaus bzw. Ossuarium feierlich vereint und wiederbeerdigt worden sind.<sup>43</sup> Das Beinhaus wurde danach ver-

<sup>38</sup> Čović 1983, 236. Kilian-Dirlmeier 1975, 100-101; Taf. 6:A.

<sup>39</sup> Über die bisherigen Datierungen: Hänsel u.a. 2015, 446-447.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid. 446.

<sup>41</sup> Über die bronzezeitlichen Bestattungssitten: Govedarica 2011, 33 ff.; Čović 1983, 236-237; Hänsel u.a. 2009, 159-161.

<sup>42</sup> Dazu Teßmann 2020, 551-552.

<sup>43</sup> B. Teßmann weist auch darauf hin, dass Grab A ein Ossuarium war, vgl. Teßmann 2020, 557.

schlossen und war am Rand der neuengerichteten Torschutzmauer als Kernbestandteil dieser Bastion inkorporiert. Dadurch wurden die hochverehrten Ahnen als symbolische Hüter der Befestigung und ihrer Bewohner wieder zu aktiven Mitgliedern der Gemeinschaft. Aus diesen Gründen ist das Grab A nicht als eine gewöhnliche Grabstätte anzusehen, sondern als einen sehr geachteten Ort des Ahnenkults und eine wichtige Quelle der spirituellen Kraft der Gemeinschaft, die im prähistorischen Monkodonja lebte.

Die chronologische und kulturhistorische Beurteilung des Grabes B erwies sich als besonders kompliziert, da für es, abgesehen von den zwei nicht übereinstimmenden <sup>14</sup>C-Daten, keine weiteren Hinweise für die zeitliche Einordnung vorlagen. Der Unterschied zwischen den Datierungen der Kinderknochen und des weiblichen Skelettes beträgt 370–450 Jahre, was fast dem höchsten Abweichungsgrad des Reservoireffektes in Seewasser entspricht. Somit dienen sie weder für die absolute Datierung des Grabes noch für eine Einschätzung des zeitlichen Abstandes zwischen den Bestatteten. Vorausgesetzt, dass der Reservoireffekt sich unterschiedlich ausgewirkt hat, könnte es sich bei den hier Bestatteten sogar um die beinahe gleichzeitig gestorbene Mutter und ihre zwei Kinder gehandelt haben. Jedoch ist das angesichts der stratigraphischen Lage im Grab wenig plausibel. Allerdings waren diese drei Toten in Grab B nicht wie in einem Ossuarium niedergelegt, sondern es handelt sich bei ihnen eindeutig um eine primäre und eine sekundäre Bestattung. Auch die Ausgräber sprechen die Kinder als primäre Beisetzung an, während die weibliche Person nachträglich begraben wurde; eine vollkommen plausible Deutung. Die Frage nach dem zeitlichen Abstand zwischen diesen Bestattungen sowie die Datierung des Primärgrabes bleibt hingegen offen.

Die Einordnung von Grab B wird zusätzlich erschwert, da es in der Steinkiste, d.h. im Grab selbst, keine datierbaren Beigaben gab. Die in der Aufschüttung oberhalb der Grabkiste gefundenen Schmuckstücke lassen sich nur grob in eine breite Spanne von mittlerer bis später Bronzezeit einordnen.<sup>44</sup> Sie können aber nicht sicher in unmittelbaren Zusammenhang mit dem Grab gebracht

werden, obwohl es nicht ausgeschlossen ist, dass sie bereits während des rituellen Verschließens des Grabes in die darüber errichtete Steinaufschüttung gelangt sind. In diesem Fall könnte dieser rituelle Akt, jedoch nicht das gesamte Grab, zeitgleich mit Grab A angesehen und um 1600 v. Chr. bzw. an den Beginn der mittleren Bronzezeit angesetzt werden.

Wenn die Steinkiste dieses Grabes ursprünglich durch die Aufschüttung eines Tumulus geschützt war, wie das die stratigraphische Situation nahelegt,<sup>45</sup> dann ist jedoch ein anderer Hergang als bei Grab A anzunehmen. Das würde bedeuten, dass Grab B vor dem Bau der Befestigung angelegt sein können und zunächst unabhängig davon existiert hat. Für diese Betrachtung ist ausschlaggebend, dass die Befestigungsmauer unmittelbar neben diesem Grab einen rechten Winkel bildet (Abb. 2,1). Dafür musste ein großer Teil des Tumulus zerstört werden, doch blieben die kreisförmige Plattform und die Steinkiste, in der damals nur die primäre Bestattung d.h. die Überreste der zwei Kinder lagen, unbeschädigt. Es ist nicht eindeutig zu klären, ob die Existenz dieses Grabes entscheidend dafür gewesen ist, dass ausgerechnet an dieser Stelle der hervorstechendste Punkt der Befestigung, errichtet wurde. Möglicherweise ist das auch auf ein durchdachtes und topographisch bedingtes Baukonzept zurückzuführen. Jedoch ging höchstwahrscheinlich damit eine besondere Würdigung sowohl des Grabes als auch des Ortes einher.<sup>46</sup> Es scheint, dass dies ein *Spiritus Movens* für eine besondere geistige Verbindung zwischen den nachfolgenden Generationen zu ihren Vorfahren war, so dass sich in dieser Siedlung ein außergewöhnlicher Ahnenkult entwickelte. Das kommt deutlich mit der Anlage des Grabes A zum Ausdruck, mit dem Einfügen des Ossuariums, in dem die Knochen der Ahnen gesammelt waren, in die Fundamente der Schutzbastion, als das Westtor um 1600 v. Chr. erweitert bzw. endgültig gestaltet wurde. Obwohl für Grab B keine sicheren Datierungen vorliegen, spricht nichts gegen die Möglichkeit, dass die sekundäre Bestattung und der Turm, mit dem das Grab umschlossen wurde, in die gleiche Zeit gehören. Eine feierliche Errichtung von Grab A und die Nachbestattung

<sup>44</sup> Kilian-Dirlmeier 1975, 100-101; Taf. 61;A; Čović 1983, 236; Batović 1983, 290; Buršić Matijašić 1989, 484.

<sup>45</sup> Vgl. Hänsel u.a. 2015, 214 Abb. 161.

<sup>46</sup> Vgl. Hänsel u.a. 2009, 164.

im Grab B zur gleichen Zeit erscheinen plausibel. Doch abgesehen davon, ob diese beiden Ereignisse zeitgleich oder mit einem gewissen Abstand voneinander stattfanden, ist der Zeitpunkt, zu dem das Westtor mit zwei Grabbastionen flankiert wurde, entscheidend. Er kann als Geburtsstunde eines einheimischen Ahnenkultes gelten, in dem die Vorfahren als Heroen und Stadtbeschützer versinnbildlicht wurden.

In diesem Zusammenhang soll noch auf die denjenigen aus Monkodonja sehr ähnelnden Befunden aus der benachbarten Höhengsiedlung Vrčin/Monte Orcino bei Vodnjan/Dognano, eingegangen werden. In den alten Ausgrabungen von R. Battaglia und B. Forlati-Tamaro wurden innerhalb des komplexen Eingangsbereichs dieser befestigten Siedlung 16 oder 17 Gräber freigelegt, die jeweils mit Mauern, zumeist in Form von Vierecktürmen wie bei Grab B in Monkodonja, umgeben waren.<sup>47</sup> Darüber hinaus weisen auch alle Gräber in der Siedlung Vrčin Mehrfachbestattungen in Steinkisten auf. Leider wurden die Ausgrabungen von R. Battaglia nie systematisch veröffentlicht, so dass dieser Befund weiterhin nicht vollständig betrachtet werden kann. Klar ist jedenfalls, dass bei diesen Grabungen nur ein sehr kleiner Teil einer sehr großen und bedeutenden Siedlung untersucht worden ist.<sup>48</sup>

Den verfügbaren Daten nach war im Eingangsbereich der Stadtbefestigung von Vrčin eine kleine Nekropole errichtet worden, wobei jedes Grab durch speziell dafür erbaute turmartige Mauern umschlossen war. Allerdings befand sich keines dieser Gräber in einer strategisch hervorgehobenen Position, wie das für das Westtor von Monkodonja dargestellt wurde. Die Gräber in Vrčin, für die die chronologischen Angaben vorliegen, datieren in die mittlere und späte Bronzezeit. Damit sind sie den Bestattungen von Monkodonja sowohl zeitlich nach als auch in eine direkte kulturelle Tradition zu stellen. Es ist davon auszugehen, dass der symbolische Schutz der Siedlungsbefestigung durch die Heroengräber auch in Vrčin im Vordergrund stand. Doch hat sich das Kultgeschehen weiterentwickelt und weitere soziale Züge erhalten. Der Fokus lag nicht mehr

auf einzelnen Vorfahren, sondern auf lokalen Familien, die einen führenden gesellschaftlichen Status verkörpert haben. Sie übernahmen offenbar die Rolle der heroisierten Ahnen und strebten dadurch eine Stärkung der eigenen sozialen Position an.<sup>49</sup>

## Schlussfolgerungen

Die Gräber an dem Hauptzugang der Befestigung Monkodonja gehören zusammen mit den von bereits zuvor bekannten, aber nicht ausreichend dokumentierten Bestattungen aus dem benachbarten Vrčin zu den auffälligsten Erscheinungen der Bronzezeit Istriens. Es ist ein glücklicher Umstand, dass die Gräber von Monkodonja während umfangreicher und gut dokumentierter Ausgrabungen, wie sie an diesem Platz von 1997 bis 2008 stattgefunden haben, freigelegt worden sind. Dadurch ergibt sich erstmals die Möglichkeit dieses außergewöhnlichen Phänomen auf sicherer Grundlage zu beurteilen. Die ungewöhnliche Lage sowie andere charakteristische Elemente deuten darauf hin, dass diese Gräber das Ergebnis von spezifischen Kulthandlungen sind, die in erster Linie mit dem Bau und dem Schutz der Befestigung zusammenhängen. In dieser Hinsicht sind die Gräber A und B, die sich in den geschlossenen Bastionen im Eingangsbereich des Westtors befanden, besonders aufschlussreich (Abb. 9, 2A.B).

Eines der auffälligen Merkmale dieser Gräber ist der ungewöhnliche Gegensatz zwischen der komplexen Grabkonstruktion innerhalb der Bastionen und dem geradezu bescheidenen Inhalt der Gräber. Es fanden sich Skelette von mehreren Individuen partiell niedergelegt, während Grabbeigaben nahezu vollständig fehlen. Dadurch wird deutlich, dass die Funktion dieser Gräber nicht die herkömmliche Bestattung von Verstorbenen war, sondern ihre Bedeutung im Bereich eines besonderen, symbolträchtigen Kultes gelegen haben muss. Dies wird ausdrücklich deutlich durch das Ossuarium in Grab A, in dem die exkarnierten Skelettteilen von min-

<sup>47</sup> Battaglia 1958, 421 ff. Ausgrabungen wurden in den Jahren 1925-1929 durchgeführt. Vgl. Buršić Matijašić 1989, 475 ff.; Hänsel u.a. 2015, 170-171.

<sup>48</sup> Vgl. Buršić Matijašić 1989, 477, Abb. 1.

<sup>49</sup> A. Gnirs berichtet über noch einer ähnlichen Grabgruppierung, die sich am Westtor des Castelliere Brioni befand. Leider, waren diese Gräber bei den Bauarbeiten im 19. Jh. weitgehend zerstört, so dass Anfang des 20. Jh. nur noch die letzten Spuren festgestellt werden konnten. Vgl. Gnirs 1925, 32-33.



destens 15 ursprünglich an einem anderen Ort beigesetzten Individuen wiederbestattet worden sind. Der Mangel an datierbaren Grabbeigaben erwies sich als ein schwerwiegender Umstand, der dazu führte, dass die Ausgräber sich bei der zeitlichen Zuordnung der Gräber hauptsächlich auf die wenig zuverlässige Radiokarbondatierungen anhand von Menschenknochen verlassen mussten. Nicht zuletzt aus diesem Grund sind einige Fragen zu diesen Gräbern bislang noch ungelöst geblieben.

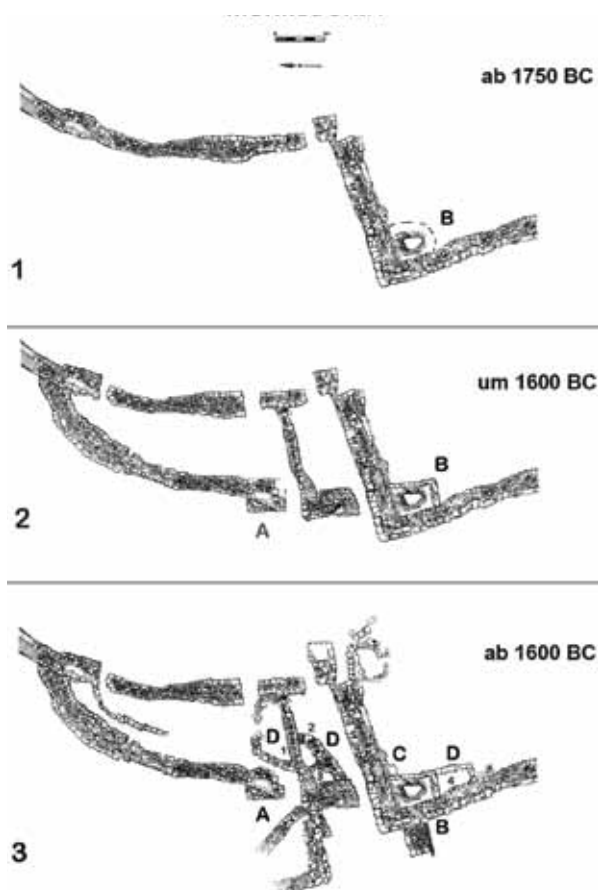


Abb. 9. Monkodonja: Bauphasen des Westtors.

Mit diesem Artikel haben wir versucht, die bisherigen Untersuchungen mit einigen Anregungen zu ergänzen. Unseren Schlussfolgerungen nach sind diese Bestattungspätze keine gewöhnlichen Gräber, sondern Ausdruck besonderer Kulthandlungen, mit denen die geistigen Kräfte einer prähistorischen Gesellschaft gestärkt worden sind. Mit den rituellen Verankerung der heroisierten Vorfahren in den Bastionen der Befestigungsmauern sollte ihre sinbildliche Rückkehr zum Stammesgemeinschaft gesichert, ihre spirituelle Energie erhalten und

damit ein unvergänglicher Schutz der Bewohner gewährleistet werden. Die Ursprünge dieses Kultpraxis gingen auf das primäre Grab B zurück, das unter einem Tumulus an diesem Ort noch vor dem Festungsbau existierte. Bei der Errichtung der Befestigungsmauern um 1750 v. Chr. wurde ein großer Teil des Tumulus zerstört, aber der zentrale Bereich mit der kreisförmigen Plattform und der Grabkiste blieb in der Festung bewahrt (erste Bauphase – Errichtung der Befestigung; Abb. 9,1B). Es lässt sich nicht entscheiden, ob die Existenz dieses Grabes den Ausschlag gab, ausgerechnet an dieser Stelle den höchsten Punkt der Befestigung zu errichten, oder ob es zufällig in das vorhandene Baukonzept hinein passte. Sicher ist hingegen, dass mit dem Einbinden von Grab B in die Stadtmauern eine besondere Wertschätzung sowohl des Grabes als auch seinem Ort einherging.

Der entscheidende Schritt bei der Etablierung dieses neuen Kults war die Eingliederung von Grab A in die Fundamente einer Bastion, die die neue Seitenpassage des Westtors schützte. Das geschah im Rahmen des großen Wiederaufbaus der Befestigung und des Ausbaus des Westtors um 1600 v. Chr. (Abb. 9,2A). In diesem Grab wurden gleich einem Ossuarium sekundär und symbolisch Skeletteile angesehenere Vertreter der älteren Stammesaristokratie, die aus ihren primären Grabstätten herausgeholt worden waren, wieder beigesetzt. Dadurch konnten wichtige Vorfahren als heroisierte Ahnen symbolisch in die Gemeinschaft zurückkehren, um die Bewohner sinnbildlich zu stärken und in ihrer Existenz zu unterstützen. Wahrscheinlich wurde zur gleichen Zeit die sekundäre Bestattung in Grab B durchgeführt, im Anschluss daran der Turm darum gebaut. Seit diesem Moment wurden die beiden Haupteingänge des Westtors mit den Bastionen der Gräber A und B flankiert und damit war in Monkodonja ein Kult von zurückgekehrten heroisierten Ahnen manifestiert, die als geistige Beschützer der Festung und der Siedlung wirkten (zweite Bauphase – endgültige Gestaltung des Westtors; Abb. 9,2A.B).

Im anschließend erfolgten Nachbau des Westtors sind einige turmartige Nachbauten zu erkennen (dritte Bauphase – Nachbau des Westtors; Abb. 9, 3D1-4), die der Situation bei Grab B ähneln. Die Ausgräber vermuten, dass es hier Platz für weitere Bestattungen geschaffen worden ist, vielleicht sogar nicht mehr erhaltene Beisetzungen

stattgefunden haben.<sup>50</sup> Derartige Strukturen wurden auch am Norddort vermutet (Abb. 1, B).<sup>51</sup> Träfe diese Annahme zu, wäre von einer Weiterentwicklung des beschriebenen Ahnenkults auszugehen, ähnlich wie er für Vrčín im oberen Text diskutiert wurde.

Ein solcher Kult der heroisierten Ahnen ist bisher für das bronzezeitliche Istrien nicht beschrieben worden. Die Praxis, Gräber in den Fundamenten von Siedlungsmauer oder in den Eingangsbereichen von Befestigungen anzulegen, konnten für die Nachbargebiete ebenso nicht nachvollzogen werden.<sup>52</sup> Als nächster territorialer und chronologischer Vergleich sind die reichen intramuralen Gräber der mykenischen Kultur und einige ähnliche Beispiele aus dem ostmediterranen Gebiet anzuführen. In diesem Zusammenhang wird besonders auf das Schachtgrab in der Festung in Altägina, das Königsgrab von Qatna in Syrien,<sup>53</sup> sowie auf die Schachtgräber im Rund A aus Mykene verwiesen.<sup>54</sup> Allerdings sind alle vergleichbaren Elemente allgemeiner Natur. Im Gräberbund A aus Mykene waren Mitglieder der örtlichen Aristokratie zwar mit üppigen Ausstattung und reichen Beigaben beigesetzt, aber es handelt sich um die übliche Bestattungspraxis in dieser Zeit und in diesem Raum. Bei dem Bau der zyklischen Mauern wurden diese Gräber von Stadtbefestigung umhegt, vor allem um sie vor Plünderung und Zerstörung zu schützen sowie aus dem Bedürfnis heraus, ein ungehindertes Betreten der Nekropole zu sichern. Dasselbe trifft auf das reiche Grab aus Altägina und die Königsgruft von Qatna zu.<sup>55</sup> Bei ihnen allen handelt es sich um hervorragende Elitebestattungen, bei denen die Einbindung in eine Befestigung eine zusätzliche Sicherung und Schutz für die Gräber der bedeutenden und besonders geehrten Individuen, gewährleistete.

Eine vollkommen andere Situation liegt im Westtor von Monkodonja vor. Die hier gelegenen Gräber sollten nicht die Toten, sondern die Siedlung und ihre Einwohner schützen. Die repräsentative Ausführung der Grabkonstruktionen aus Monkodonja weist deutlich auf die Bedeutung ih-

res wertvollen Inhalts hin, der nicht im Materiellen bestand, sondern eine hochsymbolische Bedeutung hatte. Es handelt sich bei diesen Bastionengräbern nicht um einfache Bestattungsorte, sondern um sekundäre bzw. endgültige Ruhestätten der heroisierten Ahnen. Die Errichtung von solchen Monumenten bedeutete für die Bevölkerung Monkodonjas eine Wiedervereinigung mit den Vorfahren. Man hoffte auf ihre spirituellen Kräfte, die zum Wohl der Gemeinschaft wirksam werden sollten. Obwohl ihrer metaphysischen und symbolischen Konnotation hatte diese Rückkehr der Vorfahren nicht nur sinnbildliche sondern auch reale Macht. Es lässt sich leicht vorstellen, dass diese Rückbesinnung auf die heroisierten Ahnen in den Augen ihrer Nachfahren mindestens ebenso wichtig, stark und wirkungsvoll empfunden wurde wie die Befestigungsmauer selbst.

<sup>50</sup> Hänsel u.a. 2015, 224-225.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid. 468-469.

<sup>52</sup> Dazu auch Hänsel u.a. 2015, 222.

<sup>53</sup> Hänsel u.a. 2009, 179; 2015, 223.

<sup>54</sup> Hänsel u.a. 2009, 179.

<sup>55</sup> Kilian-Dirlmeier 1997, 13 ff.; Pfälzner 2009, 200 ff.

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**Biba Teržan**

Department of Archaeology, Philosophical Faculty, University of Ljubljana  
biba.terzan@ff.uni-lj.si

## THE MASTERS OF SILVER IN THE CENTRAL BALKANS – A BRIEF OUTLINE

**Abstract:** The chapter provides an overview of the use of silver, as one of the precious metals, for the production of prestigious items in the region of the Central Balkan peninsula. The earliest indications of silver mining and metallurgical activities are known from the 5th to the early 4th millennia BC (Vinča and Lasinja cultures). In the time of the Vučedol cultural complex (3rd millennium BC) large artefacts of silver or silver-alloys stand out, such as the axes from Mala Gruda/Boka Kotorska and Stari Jankovci. Silver objects in the Bronze and Early Iron Ages represent exceptional rarities. Only at the end of the 6th century BC did silver products, particularly silver jewellery, again become a true fashion. Three types of fibulae, as recognisable elements of attire, in the Central Balkan area are discussed in detail: the Novi Pazar type of fibulae (late 6th/5th centuries BC) and hinged fibulae of variants IIa and Vb, according to Rastko Vasić (late 5th and 4th centuries BC). They are indicators of the emergence of a new social elite – the “masters of silver” in the Central Balkans, which could be explained under the influence of Graeco-Macedonians, at first in the time of the Persian wars and later with the rise of the Macedonian state (Philip II and Alexander the Great). This thesis could also be supported by the circulation of Damastion coinage, as well as by the architecture, built in a Hellenistic manner, at the site of Kale-Krševica near Bujanovac in the South Morava river basin, excavated by the honouree and his team.

**Keywords:** Central Balkan region, Copper Age, Late Iron Age, silver items, axes, fibulae of the Novi Pazar type, hinged fibulae, Damastion coinage, Hellenistic architecture, Graeco-Macedonian influences.

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Silver, as one of the precious metals, first attracted the attention of prospectors, miners and metallurgists from a very early period in ancient prehistory, as the thus-far oldest silver products are known from as early as the 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> millennia BC. These come primarily from the Near East, with individual examples also known from Central Europe.<sup>1</sup> Silver, which appears in its native form much less frequently than gold, whose use also extends back to at least the 5th millennium BC,<sup>2</sup> was acquired from lead-silver ores through a special process called cupellation. Lead is a by-product from this process and, hence, can represent an indirect indicator of silver production.<sup>3</sup>

Also, in the region of the Central Balkan peninsula, rich in lead-zinc silver ores, primarily in the so-called Serbian-Macedonian metallogenetic province (Fig. 1), where, for instance, the ore from Srebrenica (in eastern Bosnia) and Stari Trg near Kosovska Mitrovica contain up to 100 g/t of silver,<sup>4</sup> mining began, and with it metallurgical activities, as shown by several indicators also as early as in the 5<sup>th</sup> and early 4<sup>th</sup> millennia BC, i.e. in the framework of the Vinča culture. It is probably not merely a coincidence that metallurgical activities, from which traces have been preserved of the processing of copper and also lead ores (galenite), have been discovered at Gornja Tuzla, in the immediate vicinity of the Srebrenica mining district. The settlement, or in fact its stratum III,

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hansen, Helwig 2016: 43-51, Fig. 7; Pernicka 1995: 56-57.

<sup>2</sup> Pernicka 1995: 59-60.

<sup>3</sup> Pernicka 1995: 58-59; Primas 1996a; Hansen, Helwig 2016: 43.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Janković 1967; Faninger 1975: 4, 7-9; Gržetić, Jelenković 1995: 17-21, Fig. 1-6; Ramović 1999: 15-17, Fig. 3.





Fig. 1. The ore-bearing region with mineralisation of silver in present-day Serbia and eastern Bosnia (from Gržetić, Jelenković 1995, Fig. 5-6; Ramović 1999, Fig.3).

from which the earliest copper objects also came, has been dated to the period of the Vinča culture.<sup>5</sup> The most recent analyses of the remains of material from small pottery vessels from the Vinča and Lasinja cultures are particularly important, as they showed that the vessels contained an ingredient made from lead and beeswax, probably used as a colouring for body decoration or as a medical preparation.<sup>6</sup>

## I.

If it is possible, on the basis of the mentioned traces of lead in the Vinča and Lasinja cultures, to at least presume that in addition to bronze and

lead they also extracted silver,<sup>7</sup> the technological development and expansion of metallurgical activities in the period of the Vučedol culture, i.e., in the early 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC,<sup>8</sup> would also have contributed to the production of silver objects. Among them, certainly stand out relatively large artefacts of silver or silver alloy, particularly prestigious weapons/tools, such as the famous silver collared axe from Mala Gruda in the Bay of Kotor/Boka Kotorska, the silver axes from a hoard find from an unfortunately unknown site in Bosnia, and the find of two silver axes from Stari Jankovci in eastern Slavonia. For the excellently manufactured collared axe with a faceted socketed extension for a handle from Mala Gruda, Margarita Primas convincingly showed that it belonged to a special variant of the Kozarac type, into which she also classified several bronze examples of axes, such as those from the hoard of Vranovići near Gračanica and Topolje near Knin, and such types were also found in the hoard from Griča near Mrkonjić

<sup>5</sup> Čović 1961: 98-99, 102-103, 117-119, Sketch 1(hearth/oven), Fig. 16 (copper products); Durman 1983: 12; Pernicka 1995, 57, Pl. 12; Glumac, Todd 1987.

<sup>6</sup> Kramberger, Berthold, Spiteri 2021. Similar small biconical vessels with traces of lead were also discovered and analyzed from the Romanian site of Pietrele in the lower Danube basin, which are also dated to the middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> millennium BC: see Hansen et al. 2019 (B. Kramberger drew my attention to this, for which I would like to thank him).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Durman 1983: 7 (Bezdan in Rudnik); Bogosavljević-Petrović 2005.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. e.g., Durman 1983; Durman 2006.

Grad.<sup>9</sup> Despite other valuable grave goods, mostly of gold and electrum, in the grave in the tumulus of Mala Gruda, as well as from the central grave of the tumulus of Velika Gruda, which would mostly consist of imports from Greece or, rather, the eastern Mediterranean region,<sup>10</sup> she nonetheless stated that the silver collared axe from Mala Gruda would represent a local, or Western Balkan product, because of which a local source for the metal can also be suggested. Four silver axes from a hoard belong to the same type of collared axe, which originated together with another bronze collared axe and 23 flat axes of the Griča type from an unidentified site in Bosnia.<sup>11</sup> Svend Hansen drew particular attention to the unusual composition of these silver axes, which was an alloy of silver and copper, such as is known to him only from Uruk in Mesopotamia and Arslantepe in eastern Anatolia, potentially representing evidence of the transfer of knowledge or “know-how” and the mobility of metallurgists, rather than that the Bosnian axes had been imported objects.<sup>12</sup>

A third example of finds of silver axes is the alleged hoard from Stari Jankovci in eastern Slavonia. It was discovered at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and only recently published.<sup>13</sup> It consisted of two silver axes of different types, one of which belonged to the collared axe type, the same type as the silver axes from the hoard from Bosnia and the tumulus from Mala Gruda, as well as the above-mentioned bronze collared axes from Bosnian hoards such as Vranovići near Gračanica and Griča near Mrkonjić Grad. In terms of the cited parallels, the axes from Stari Jankovci belong to the same cultural circle and chronological span, i.e., in the

framework of the Vučedol culture of the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC,<sup>14</sup> for which, at present, sufficient radiocarbon dates exist, and not, in fact, to the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC.<sup>15</sup>

Although archaeometric chemical and lead isotope analyses of the alloys did not provide clear answers regarding the type and source of the metals for the manufacture of the silver axes, the trace elements nonetheless indicate metals from raw material from polymetallic ores.<sup>16</sup> Where to seek them remains an open question, of course, until further research is carried out. The discussed silver collared axes, as an exceptionally prestigious and high-status symbol, together with the numerous hoard finds of bronze collared axes of the Kozarac type and flat fan-shaped axes of the Griča type, indicate the richness of metallurgical production in the Western and Central Balkans, and permit the hypothesis that the masters of silver in the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC should be sought in the framework of the Vučedol cultural complex. This refers to the area between the central Danube region, with Vučedol as one of the important metallurgical centres,<sup>17</sup> across Bosnia<sup>18</sup> to the Adriatic Sea, specifically to the Bay of Kotor/ Boka Kotorska, where the princely tumuli of Mala and Velika Gruda are no longer an isolated phenomenon. Contemporaneous tumuli with outstanding grave goods have also been discovered in the hinterland, in the vicinity of Podgorica and Nikšić in Montenegro, meaning also in the immediate vicinity of rich copper ore sources.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Primas 1996b: 105-109, 152-155, Fig. 7, 10-12; 10.9; Parović-Pešikan, Trbuhović 1971: 134-135, Pl. 5, 11-12. For the hoard from Vranovići, cf. also Čović 1957: 244-245, Fig. 3-5; for the hoard from Topolje and the other axes of the Kozarac type, cf. Durman 1983: 60-61; Žeravica 1993: 22-32, Pl. 6-8; Kitanoski 1976: 119-120, 131-132, Fig. 1.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Primas 1996b: 75-112; Jovanović 1995; Hansen 2001: 23-36, Fig. 18.

<sup>11</sup> Hansen 2001: 13-36, Fig. 5-10, Pl. I-VI; Born 2001: 218, 180-182, Fig. 160-161.

<sup>12</sup> Hansen 2001: 22-23. Unfortunately, analysis of lead isotopes because of the lack of such analyses of archaeological objects in the region of the Western Balkans or Dalmatia and Bosnia did not produce results about the eventual source of raw materials for the silver axes, cf. Born 2001: 180-181; Pernicka, Adam 2001.

<sup>13</sup> Balen, Mihelić 2003: 85-96, Fig. 1; Pl. 1, 1-2; Mihelić 2006: 108-109.

<sup>14</sup> Primas 1996b: 141-169; Guštin, Preložnik 2015: 31-35, Fig. 14-16.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Balen, Mihelić 2003: 90-91. Even if the classification of both axes from Stari Jankovci to the Vinkovci Culture would be correct, the axes still have to be dated to the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC, as the radiocarbon dates have shown for the Vinkovci Culture. See Črešnar, Teržan 2014: 661-666, Fig. 8-11.

<sup>16</sup> Parović-Pešikan, Trbuhović 1971; Jovanović 1971: 143-144; Durman 1983: 46-58; Primas 1996b: 107; Riederer 2001: 269; Balen, Mihelić 2003: 86, Fig. 2.

<sup>17</sup> Durman 1983; Durman 1988a; Durman 1988b; Durman 2006: 64-67, 132 (moulds Vučedol-Gradac, Vinkovci, hoards Borinci, Brekinjska), 70 (Griča hoard), 74 (Kozarac hoard), 76; Durman and Hutinec 2016.

<sup>18</sup> Žeravica 1993: 22-32, 59-63, Pl. 6-8; Pl. 15, 170-177; 16; 17, 199-201; Hansen 2001: 13-35.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Durman 2006; Guštin 2006: 87-99, Fig. 1-4; Guštin, Preložnik 2015.

## II.

After the decline of the Vučedol culture, many centuries passed when silver was not so sought after as a metal for the manufacture of prestigious goods, as silver objects in the Bronze and Early Iron Ages represent exceptional rarities. Only towards the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC did silver products, particularly silver jewellery, become a true fashion “hit”, which applied especially to the region of the Central Balkan peninsula. A true advance can be traced in valuable artistic craft products made from both silver and gold. At that time, silver products appeared less often in the area of present-day Bosnia and Montenegro, and instead mainly in the region of present-day Serbia. This unusual and sudden phenomenon of silver presence was the subject of a special exhibition in the National Museum in Belgrade in 1990 titled “Gospodari srebra/ Masters of Silver”, which was further supplemented in 1994 with a scientific symposium on an expanded theme – in addition to the prehistoric period, it included the Roman and medieval periods – called “Radionice i kovnice srebra/ Silver Workshops and Mints”. The exhibition was also displayed abroad in a somewhat changed and supplemented form, for example in Hochdorf, Germany,<sup>20</sup> and Adria in Italy.<sup>21</sup> Given that at the opening of the exhibition, I was a guest of my respected colleague – honouree, let me be allowed to look back and attempt to recapitulate our knowledge of the “Masters of Silver”.

The most characteristic new products of the late 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries BC include bow fibulae with a rectangular foot with a button on the top, known in the literature as the Novi Pazar-Atenica type fibula. They were most often made of silver, less often from gold, and there are also bronze examples, some gilded. The fundamental studies on them come from the pen of Rastko Vasić,<sup>22</sup> on which this article is also based. As was shown by Vasić, the Novi Pazar type fibulae were typologically related to the somewhat earlier bronze fibulae of the Marvinci-Gogošu type, which appeared as early as towards the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century and were characteristic primarily for attire in the first half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, from Chalkidiki through

Macedonia to the Danube basin. Both of them were created under the influence and models of Grecian-Macedonian jewellery.<sup>23</sup> Although it does not seem doubtful that the fibulae of the Novi Pazar type followed the tradition of the Marvinci-Gogošu type fibulae and that at the same time they were also related in design and decoration to several types of Macedonian fibulae, such as the Trebenište type fibula,<sup>24</sup> their clearly limited distribution throughout the central parts of the Balkans indicates that these were their own unique type of fibula used primarily as attire by the local social elite of this region (Fig. 2).

An interesting aspect is displayed by the spatial distribution of these fibulae in terms of the metal from which they were made. Silver fibulae are grouped primarily in two or three areas. The first extends between the West Morava river, along the valley of the Ibar river, or rather its western tributary the Raška, all the way to the Drim on the one side and Glasinac on the other side. This is, thus, a region near the rich mines of lead-silver ore at Kopaonik and Trebča, as well as Srebrenica (cf. Fig. 1 and 2).<sup>25</sup> The second area is represented by finds of fibulae in the lowland between the lower course of the Morava and its confluence with Danube and the confluence of the Drina and Sava, that means to the south of Belgrade, while the third extends further into Srem/Srijem/ Syrmia with individual examples all the way to Baranja/Baranya. It is thought that this distribution of fibulae can be understood as an indicator of the knowledge and exploitation of ore deposits in the region of Šumadija, for example at Avala or Kosmaj<sup>26</sup> (cf. Fig. 1 and 2). For the Srem group it cannot be excluded that the precious metals also came from the Bosnian Srebrenica district (cf. Fig. 1 and 2). Gold examples are so far only known from the central region of distribution of these fibulae, from the eponymous Novi Pazar, from a rich hoard,<sup>27</sup> located near the district with

<sup>20</sup> Silber 2004.

<sup>21</sup> Balkani 2007.

<sup>22</sup> Vasić 1987; Vasić 1999: 77-81, Pl. 41, 582-604; 42, 605-626.

<sup>23</sup> Vasić 1987: 43-46, Fig. 2-3, Add.1; Vasić 1999: 74-77, Pl. 40-41, 573-581; 67 A.

<sup>24</sup> Vasić 1987a: 47-49, Pl. 4, 1-4; Vasić 1999: 77-78, Pl. 42, 616-617; 81-82, Pl. 42, 628-632; 43, 633-643.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Gržetić, Jelenković 1995: 20-21, Fig. 5-6.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Gržetić, Jelenković 1995: 20, Fig. 5-6.

<sup>27</sup> Mano Zisi, Popović 1969a: 33-34, Pl. 27, 37; Mano Zisi 1969b: 196, Taf. 82. The provenience of one gold fibula should be Kostolac, but it is questionable, because Vasić listed it under unknown sites in Serbia: cf. Vasić 1999: 78 No. 614; Balkani 2007: 141 No. 98.



rich deposits of lead-silver ore. In contrast to this, bronze fibulae predominate in areas along the edges of the distribution of the Novi Pazar type fibula, among which appear gilded examples, such as an example from Sremska Mitrovica (Fig. 2).

These fibulae do not merely indicate where possible mines could be sought, but also indirectly the redistribution of economic potential and political power, as can be explicated particularly on the basis of the princely graves. If in the earlier period of the Early Iron Age, i.e. from ca. the 8<sup>th</sup> to the middle of the 6<sup>th</sup> centuries BC, the leading role/primacy, both in terms of the number of graves as well as their wealth, was played by the region of the Glasinac culture at Glasinac itself (Ilijak, Osovo, Arareva tumulus, etc.),<sup>28</sup> its gradual decline occurred at the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, at the same time as the rise of the above defined groups – on one side in the region of present-day western Serbia and Kosovo,<sup>29</sup>

and on the other in the region of Srem and eastern Slavonia.<sup>30</sup> If we start from the image offered by the princely graves in addition to the fibulae, the area marked by the tumuli from Atenica<sup>31</sup>, Kruševica<sup>32</sup>, Novi Pazar<sup>33</sup> and Pečka Banja<sup>34</sup> represents a new nucleus. A special group in the lower Morava valley and/or the Belgrade Danube basin area seems to be only slightly later, where, in addition to the Novi Pazar type fibula, the silver belts

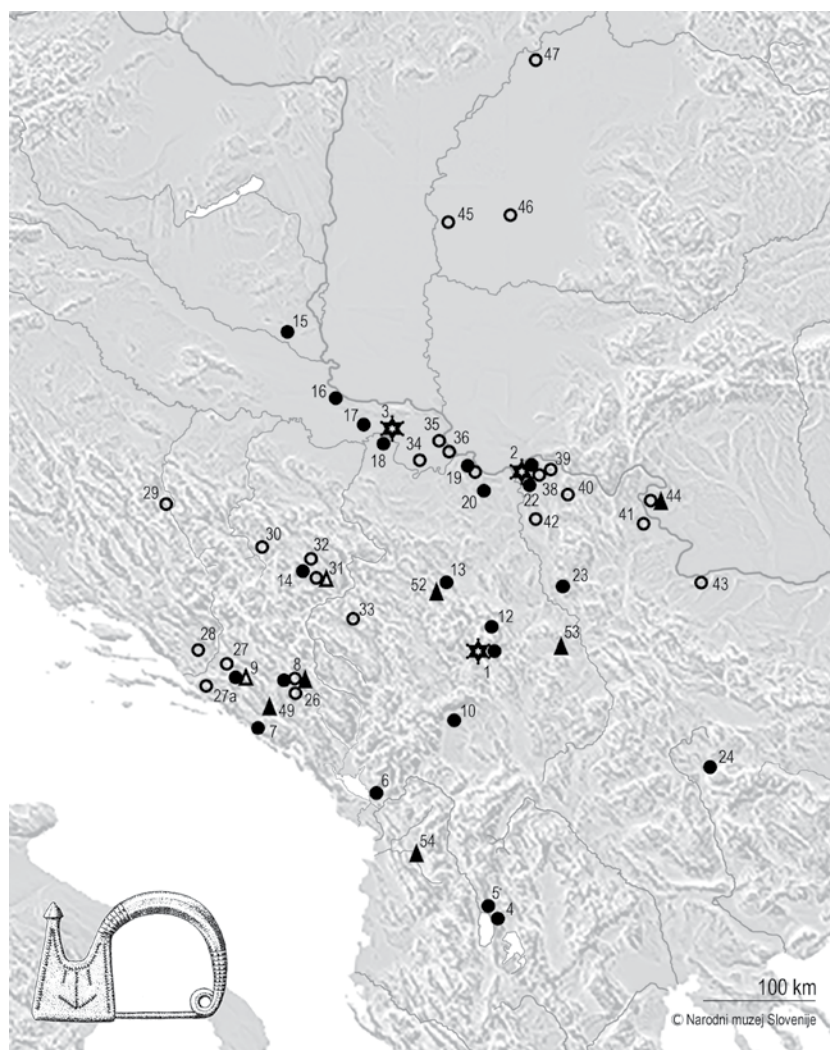


Fig. 2. Distribution map of bow fibulae of the Novi Pazar – Atenica type: see List 1: 1 /star- gold, 2/ black circle - silver, 3 /white circle - bronze (according to Vasić 1987; Vasić 1999).

<sup>28</sup> Benac, Čović 1957; Čović 1979; Čović 1987.

<sup>29</sup> Vasić 1987b; Vasić 1997.

<sup>30</sup> Vasić 1987c; Vasić 1988; Vasić 1989.

<sup>31</sup> Djuknić, Jovanović 1965; Vasić 1987b.

<sup>32</sup> Srejšević, Vukadin 1988.

<sup>33</sup> Mano Zisi, Popović 1969a; Mano Zisi, Popović 1969b; Vasić 1987b.

<sup>34</sup> *Gospodari srebra* 1990: 185-187, no. 137/1-14; Ljuci 1998: 212-228.

of the Mramorac type are particularly characteristic.<sup>35</sup> If we take into account the fact that so far the only example of a Mramorac type belt made from gold came from a hoard in Novi Pazar,<sup>36</sup> it could be suggested that the magnates with silver belts from the lower Morava valley<sup>37</sup> were in an interdependent relationship with the “lords of silver and gold” from Novi Pazar. More or less simultaneously to the “Mramorac” group,<sup>38</sup> the third group also arose from anonymity – the so-called Srem group, which

<sup>35</sup> Vasić 1986: 15-22, Fig. 1-10; Stojić 2007: 52-65, Fig. 1; Stojić 2008.

<sup>36</sup> Mano Zisi, Popović 1969a: 32-33, Tab. 25; Mano Zisi, Popović 1969b: 196, Taf. 68-71,2; Balkani 2007: 66-67, Fig. 7.

<sup>37</sup> It has to be mentioned that two silver belts from the Batinac site are gilded, cf. Stojić 2007: 53-55, Abb. 3.

<sup>38</sup> Stojić 2008 attributed this group ethnically to the Triballi.

does not merely attest to connections with the nearby Mačva and Šumadija districts, but also the central region of the Glasinac culture.<sup>39</sup>

From the shown distribution of the Novi Pazar type fibulae, as is currently known on the basis of the archaeological finds, it can be concluded which ore-bearing districts/regions were dominated by the presented three mutually interdependent groups (cf. Fig. 1 and 2), which nonetheless differed in terms of certain specific cultural features. At the same time, it is possible to hypothesize their interior social differentiation, in which it is evident that an initial and central role was played at the start of extracting silver by the elite from the central section of the fibula distribution, where rich princely graves were located, ranging from Atenica, Kruševica, and Novi Pazar, to Pečka Banja, which obviously represented the very top of the hierarchical ladder of the “masters of silver”.

Certainly, the question arises as to why and how such an economic advance of these communities in the Central Balkans occurred, and from where the mining and metallurgical knowledge had been transmitted. Although a final answer cannot be given at the present time but will perhaps be offered in the future by archaeometrical chemical and metallographic analyses, it is possible, on the basis of several grave goods, to note what the interests were of the political forces at the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> and in the 5<sup>th</sup> centuries in the area under discussion.

As was already noted, the very appearance of the bow fibulae of the Novi Pazar type indicates close connections with the Grecian-Macedonian world. This picture is supplemented by relatively numerous imports such as pottery vessels (e.g. black-figured Attic pottery)<sup>40</sup> and metal vessels (bronze and silver), primarily those of a ritual or symposium repertoire, which came either from the artistic-craft workshops of Greece itself or from Magna Graecia,<sup>41</sup> and also weapons such as Greco-Illyrian helmets (e.g. Pečka Banja, Ražana),

double edged and single edged swords, etc.<sup>42</sup> However, the imports do not consist merely of objects of Grecian-Macedonian provenance, but also from other regions, both nearby and further away. Objects of Etruscan-Italic origin found in the central grave of tumulus II at Atenica attract attention, in addition to a partially preserved bone casket,<sup>43</sup> and objects in the hoard from Novi Pazar, such as a draining ladle (infundibulum)<sup>44</sup> and perhaps also a ribbed cista.<sup>45</sup> Italic artistic-craft workshops were probably the source for most of the amber valuables, such as various figurines, different pendants and appliquéés, and beads for necklaces from Novi Pazar and Atenica.<sup>46</sup>

Both tumuli at Atenica also contained objects of Scythian provenance, such as three-lobed arrowheads, (which were also found in the princely grave at Pečka Banja,<sup>47</sup> and they are also known from several other Serbian sites<sup>48</sup>), bone scale-handles of knives/daggers decorated in the Scythian animal style, as well as horse equipment and a wagon.<sup>49</sup> The horse equipment and the wagon in and of themselves do not indicate merely connections of the Atenica site to the Szentes Vekerzug group, rather the very manner of burial with a wagon is also significant, which has parallels not merely with Szentes Vekerzug, but also the broader region of the Hallstatt culture.<sup>50</sup> The close connec-

<sup>39</sup> Vasić 1987c; Vasić 1988; Vasić 1989.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Mano Zisi, Popović 1969a: 13-14, Tab.1-2; Mano Zisi, Popović 1969b: 195-196, Taf. 65-66; Parović-Pešikan 1989; Parović-Pešikan 1989-1990.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Mano-Zisi, Popović 1969a: 13-16, 55-62, Pl. 1-6a; Mano Zisi, Popović 1969b: 195, Taf. 47-54, 61-64; Popović 1975: 41-44, 84-86; Vasić 1987b; Vasić 1992: 57-59, Fig. 7; Vasić 2003: 115-119, 122-130; Fig. 81-86, 88-97; Stibbe 2003: 89-110, Fig. 62.

<sup>42</sup> Vasić 1982; Parović-Pešikan 1982; Teržan 1995: 87-88, 111-129, Fig. 5-12; Vasić 2010.

<sup>43</sup> Djuknić, Jovanović 1965: 19, Pl. 22, 1-3; Vasić 1992: 53-59, Fig. 1-6; Vasić 2003: 123, Fig. 80.

<sup>44</sup> Mano Zisi, Popović 1969a: 16-17, 80-81, Pl. 8, 39; Mano Zisi, Popović 1969b: 195, Taf. 56-60; Dehn 1970: 74-78, Fig. 2.

<sup>45</sup> Mano Zisi, Popović 1969a: 16-17, 80, Pl. 7; Mano Zisi, Popović 1969b: 195, Taf. 55. For a general orientation to the typological characteristics and distribution of bronze cists, cf. the still fundamental work by Stjernquist 1968. It is certainly also possible that the cista originated in the south-eastern Alpine cultural circle, most probably from the south-eastern Alpine cultural circle, most probably from the Dolenjska/Lower Carniola cultural group, see Jereb 2016: 77-92, Pl. 95-105.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Mano Zisi, Popović 1969a: 18-25, 82-89, Pl. 9-13; 33-34; Mano Zisi, Popović 1969b: 197-201, Taf. 97-109; Djuknić, Jovanović 1965: Pl. 16, 20-21; Palavestra 1993: 144-152; Palavestra, Krstić 2006: 88-89, 94-285, 321-337.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Ljuci 1998: 220. For the distribution of Scythian trilobed arrowheads, see Teržan 1998: 524-525, Fig. 8.

<sup>48</sup> Stojić 1998: 5-10, Map.

<sup>49</sup> Djuknić, Jovanović: 1965, 9-21, Pl. 18; 20, 19-20; 22, 7; 24, 1-5; 25; Cf. Vasić 1987b: 648-649; Vasić 2003: 122-124.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Chochorowsky 1985: 108-123, Fig. 36, 40; Pare 1992: 195, Fig. 134; Kemenczei 2009: 51-57, Pl. 65-67.



tions with the Szentes Vekerzug group, last but not least, are also indicated by the bow fibulae of the Novi Pazar type, especially the bronze examples from Szentes Vekerzug, Békéscsaba-Fényes, and Tiszavasvári-Dózsa telep,<sup>51</sup> which goes some way to supporting the above mentioned thesis about the peripheral position of bronze fibulae in the distribution of this type of fibula (Fig. 2).

Influences in the Central Balkan region also came from the region of the southeast Alpine Hallstatt culture, particularly from the Dolenjska/Lower Carniola cultural group, which can be seen both in the area of the Glasinac group<sup>52</sup> and also the Srem group,<sup>53</sup> whose region also extended into eastern Slavonia all the way to Baranya<sup>54</sup> and southern Bačka<sup>55</sup>. The most evident elements are examples of Certosa fibulae of type V, which are partly imported and partly local versions of these fibulae.<sup>56</sup> In the Srem group, in a somewhat later period, they also took over from the south-eastern Alpine region the crossbow Certosa fibula of type XIIIc, and transformed them into their own variant XIIIh,<sup>57</sup> which indicates that not merely brief cultural contacts existed between the two cultural groups, but rather they were evidently maintained over a longer period of time. This is also indicated by the find of the bronze situla from Sremska Mitrovica,<sup>58</sup> which belongs to type 3.B1b according to Mojca Jereb,<sup>59</sup> characteristic for the area of the Dolenjska/Lower Carniola cultural group. As was already shown by Vasić, the Srem group, which was formed into a recognisable community towards the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, in the period of the appearance of the Novi Pazar bow fibula

type, represented a symbiosis of Central Balkan, Glasinac, and south-eastern Alpine elements.<sup>60</sup>

The described situation of diverse influences on the region of the Central Balkans shows that various cultural/political centres attempted to reach out and establish contacts with the “masters of silver”, the most pervasive among them being the Greeks and/or the Macedonians, as is shown by the numerous Greek imports. In terms of this, it must be remembered that the period around 500 BC represented the beginnings of the Persian attempt to conquer mainland Greece, after having previously conquered Ionian Greece and returned from an unsuccessful campaign against the Scythians,<sup>61</sup> which took place through the eastern, Thracian Balkans and far away across the lower Danube.<sup>62</sup> Despite the unsuccessful campaign and defeat of the Persians, Thrace became a Persian satrapy and Macedonia their vassal, while Persian allies supposedly also included the Cartaginians, and in addition even the Etruscans.<sup>63</sup> Perhaps it was the Persian threat that triggered an urge to seek new resources, on the one hand probably because of the increased extent of minting silver coinage for their own use, as in the 6<sup>th</sup> century the Greek world moved to a monetary payment system,<sup>64</sup> and on the other for paying tribute, which Macedonia probably had to do regularly as a vassal Persian province.<sup>65</sup> If, for example, we look at the grave goods in the rich princely graves from Trebenište, it can be established that in that period, in addition to various silver jewellery (fibulae, pins, bracelets, etc.), other prestigious goods also became contemporary, such as silver vessels for serving alcoholic beverages,<sup>66</sup> in the form of two-handled cups (kantharos), jugs, and drinking horns,<sup>67</sup> prob-

<sup>51</sup> Kemenczei 2009: 74-75, Pl. 74, 5; 104, 5.

<sup>52</sup> Čović 1987.

<sup>53</sup> Vasić 1987c.

<sup>54</sup> Dizdar 2019.

<sup>55</sup> For Bačka, cf. Medović 2006: 141-142, Fig. 127-128; Medović 2007: 10-19.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Teržan 1976: 323-324, 353, 375-377, Fig. 18; 45-47; Teržan 1977: 14-16, 20-21, Fig. 4 (grave from Vučedol); Guštin, Teržan 1975: 192-195, Map 2, Fig. 2-3; Guštin, Teržan 1977: 80, Map 2, Fig. 1-2 (grave from Sremska Mitrovica); Čović 1987: 631, Pl. 64, 7; Vasić 1987c: 555-558; Medović 2006; Medović 2007: 10-19, Fig. 6, 2-4; 9, 7-10; 11, 6; Dizdar 2019: 323-333, Fig. 1, 3; 3,1; 4, 1-4.

<sup>57</sup> Teržan 1977: 339-340, 362, 377-380, Fig. 5h; 30; 48-50; Vasić 1989; Dizdar 2019: 327-330, Fig. 1,4-5; 2,1; 3,2; Soós 2019-2020: 117-123, Fig. 1-3.

<sup>58</sup> Medović 1989-1990: 159-162, Fig. 1, 1-3; *Gospodari srebra* 1990: 180, no. 122.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Jereb 2016: 51-56, Pl. 40-41 etc.

<sup>60</sup> Vasić 1987c; Vasić 1988; Vasić 1989.

<sup>61</sup> Also of interest here are the so-called Persian type of arrowheads and their distribution, see Hellmuth Kramberger 2015: 165-175, Abb. 8-11.

<sup>62</sup> Herodotus, *Stories*, Book Four: 83-143.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Vasić 1992: 59; Wittke et al. 2012: 76-77, 86-89, 104-105.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Kos 1997: 126-133; Koukouli-Chryssanthaki, Vokotopoulou 1993: 197-198; Popov 2018: 205-207.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. for example, Weisser 2009: 114.

<sup>66</sup> Herodotus, *Stories*, Book Five: 17-20.

<sup>67</sup> Vasić 1987d: 724-727, Pl. 76, 2-3; 77; Balkani 2007: 115-117, cat. nos. 65-67; Trebenište 2018: 231 ff., cat. nos. 11, 12, 39, 58, 74, 93, 131-133, 393.

ably directly under Persian influence.<sup>68</sup> Evidently, local sources, such as those from Pangaion,<sup>69</sup> could no longer satisfy the increased need for silver and, hence, they set out to discover new ore deposits in the heart of the Balkans. With the participation of the local inhabitants and the transfer of knowledge, or “know-how”, the newcomers/specialists, together with locals, enabled the extraction of the valuable mineral wealth and the development of metallurgy and artistic crafts, which led to the emergence of a new social elite – the “masters of silver” in the Central Balkans.

### III.

However, even the era marked by the bow fibulae of the Novi Pazar-Atenica type gradually came to an end (Fig. 2).<sup>70</sup> From the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> and in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, a new type of fibula was predominant in the area of the Central Balkans and the southern Adriatic, the so-called hinged fibula, also known in the literature as the Macedonian fibula. The fundamental study about them was also written by Rastko Vasić.<sup>71</sup> In the framework of this type of fibula, for which it is thought that prototypes should be sought in the fibulae of Asia Minor or those of Phrygian origin,<sup>72</sup> Vasić distinguished several variants, the most important for our theme being fibula variant IIa and variant Vb. These fibulae were made mostly from silver or also gold, and frequently also



Fig. 3. Distribution map of hinged fibulae of ..type IIa: see List 2: 1/ black circle - silver, 2/ white circle - bronze (according to Vasić 1985; Vasić 1999; Dmitrović 2019-2002).

from bronze. In terms of their distribution, it can be established that it partly overlaps or matches the distribution of the Novi Pazar type bow fibula (cf. Fig. 2 in 3-4). The distribution of the hinged fibula variant IIa with two globular discs on the bow is interesting, being most frequently found in Macedonia, while they are also present in the region of Central Serbia and the Drina river valley,<sup>73</sup> where they inherited, so to speak, the place of the Novi Pazar fibulae in attire (Fig. 3). Fibulae of variant Vb, which have four or more star-shaped or rosette-like decorative elements (*Windrad*, *Windmill*),<sup>74</sup> are also most frequent in the region of Macedonia, from where the only yet known gold examples come (Fig. 4). It also seems important to note that in areas south of the Olympus mountain range, in Greece, silver fibulae are rather rare, ex-

<sup>68</sup> Cf. e.g., Koch 1992: 176-188, 129-130; 135; Boardman 2000: 184-104, Fig. 5.66, 5.68, 5.71-5.72.

<sup>69</sup> Unger, Schütz 1982; Popov 2018: 203-206, Fig. 1.

<sup>70</sup> Only several fibulae of Novi Pazar-Atenica type are equipped with hinge, which shows they stay in use for a while: cf. Vasić 1999: 86-87, Taf. 43, 656; Vasić 2014: 208-211, Abb. 3, 5-6.

<sup>71</sup> Vasić 1985; Vasić 1999: 102-118, Pl. 51-57.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Lisičar 1960-61; Vasić 1985: 123-124; Vasić 1999: 102.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Vasić 1985: 128-129, Fig. 5; Vasić 1999: 103-106, Pl. 68 B; Dmitrović 2019-2020: 109-116, Map 1.

<sup>74</sup> See, for example, Braun 2010: 260, cat. no. 59.



Fig. 4. Distribution map of hinged fibulae of type V b: see List 3: 1/star - gold, 2/black circle - silver, 3/ white circle - bronze (according to Vasić 1985; Vasić 1999; Mladenović 2019).

cept in the hoard from the Valley of Tempe, while in contrast bronze fibulae are more frequent and known especially from sanctuaries or their vicinity, as for example from Pherai, Dodona, Delphi, etc. (Fig. 4). More numerous are sites in the coastal belt of the southern Adriatic and its hinterland,<sup>75</sup> all the way to Glasinac and the Drina river valley, among which stands out the famous hoard of silver jewellery from Štrpci,<sup>76</sup> which lies halfway along the route between the silver ore bearing areas of Srebrenica and Trebča (cf. Fig. 1 in 4). It seems significant that their distribution to the north does not differ greatly from the Novi Pazar type fibula, as it extends to the Danube and only exception-

ally across it. Their finds are in fact concentrated at the mouth of the Morava all the way to Srem, and beyond the Danube into the lower Tisza river valley, with finds standing out from southern Bačka and the southern Banat regions (cf. Fig. 2 in 4).<sup>77</sup> In fact, as the exceptional quality of the products, particularly in terms of the number of star-shaped elements on the bow, distinguish these hinged fibulae from the “northern periphery” – namely from the hoard finds from Čurug and Sombor as well as Staliskaja mahala, they were therefore defined by Rastko Vasić as a special Čurug variant in the framework of the Vb type. On the basis of the hoard from Čurug, which, in addition to rich silver jewellery (fibulae, bracelets, etc.), also contained

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Lisičar 1960-61; Vasić 1985: 145, Fig. 6; Marijan 1987-1988: 42-44, Tab. 4; Batović 1988: 65-66, Sl. 9, 9-10.

<sup>76</sup> Hoernes 1901.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. Vasić 1985: 134-148, Fig. 6; Vasić 1999: 109-117, Pl. 69; Mladenović 2019: 355-366, Map 2, Fig. 1-3, Pl. 1-2.



fibulae of an Early La Tène type (Lt B), they were dated to the middle of the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC.<sup>78</sup>

Particular attention is also drawn to several examples of hinged fibulae of variant Vb, which not only have a bow richly decorated with star-shaped knots, and at the foot and the so-called head also feature a rich decoration in the form of a palmette and/or animal heads or masks, but also feature further decoration in the form of miniature zoomorphic figurines. For instance, the figurines of lions on the silver fibulae from the wealthy hoard from Bosnian Štrpci (Fig. 5), which contained three pairs of large and one pair of smaller type Vb hinged fibulae as well as silver rosettes in three sizes, a silver appliqué in the form of a bust, and a bronze libation cup,<sup>79</sup> have their closest parallels in the silver fibulae from Ždanec near Skopje, which come from an even richer hoard/grave with silver jewellery.<sup>80</sup> The figurines of lions as symbols of royal power may perhaps indicate close connections between their owners – both those from Štrpci as well as those from Ždanec – with the ruling Macedonian house. The figurines on the gold fibula/fibulae from the hoard/grave (?) from Tremnik near Negotino in Macedonia are more enigmatic, might depict a frog, as a symbol of fertility, or more likely a reptile (crocodile?), and two horse protomes beneath it – perhaps an allegory of the sea god Poseidon.<sup>81</sup> It is suggested that these tiny figurines on the fibulae represented additional status symbols and probably also genealogical markers on the already outstandingly valuable and extravagant fibulae of type Vb – as jewellery marking the social elite, who evidently wore attire “in the Macedonian style”.

The distribution of hinged fibulae of type Vb, in all probability, indicates a sphere of interest and

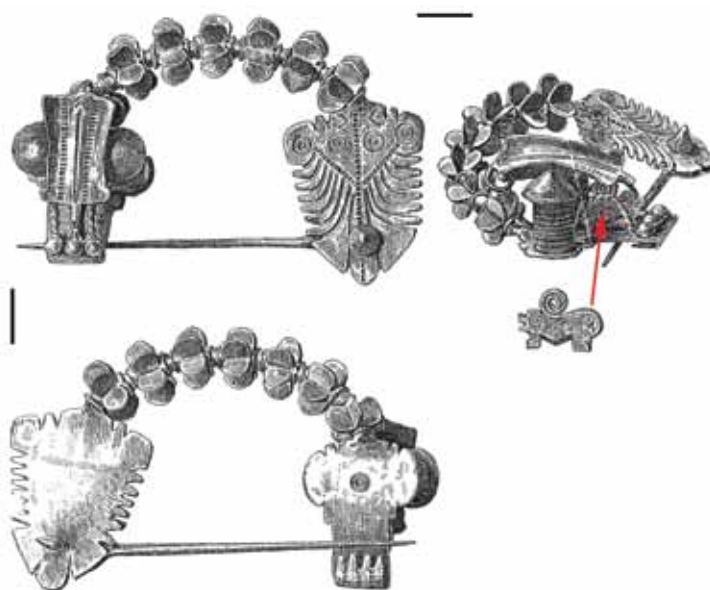


Fig. 5. Štrpci, a silver hinged fibula of type Vb with a lion figurine on the foot (from Hoernes 1901, Fig. 11-14).

influence of the rising Macedonian state at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> and in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. An important role in this must also have been played by resources of precious metals such as gold and silver. As is shown by early examples of these fibulae, the influence over the Central Balkans began during the reign of King Perdiccas II and Archelaus I and subsequently intensified with the military campaigns of Philip II and Alexander III/the Great, when Macedonian domination supposedly extended all the way to the Danube.<sup>82</sup> In this regard, the question is raised as to whether the rich hoard finds of silver jewellery along the northern edge of the distribution of hinged Vb fibulae or rather the Čurug variant (Sombor, Čurug, Stalijska mahala, Majur na Juhorju) in fact represent possible material remains of special sacrificial rites.<sup>83</sup> That this was a special ritualisation can be concluded on the basis of the composition of the jewellery in the hoards, particularly in terms of the number of fibulae, which are always represented by an even number (e.g. Čurug: 4 silver fibulae and 4 (=1+3) La Tène fibulae, Sombor: 4 silver fibulae, Majur:

<sup>78</sup> Vasić 1995: 85-87, Fig. 2; Vasić 1999: 116-117, Pl. 57; 69; for the complete composition of the hoard, see also Medović 1998: 84-89, Fig. 2, 22, Pl. 39, 8-10, 40-44.

<sup>79</sup> Hoernes 1901: 532-533, Fig. 13-14.

<sup>80</sup> Vasić 1985: 143, Fig. 10; Vasić 1999: 144, Pl. 56, 1065-1066; Mitrevski 2011: 200, Fig. 3.

<sup>81</sup> Mitrevski 2011: 201-203, Fig. 5; David 2017a: 77-83, Fig. K 79.

<sup>82</sup> See e.g., Errington 1986: 44-47, 58-59; Bratož 1997: 163-176.

<sup>83</sup> The on-going discussion about the functional significance of hoard finds in prehistory, which are interpreted in very different ways, is extremely extensive, hence in this place the entire literature need not be cited, rather attention can be drawn only to several fundamental works, such as Hänsel 1997; Tomedi 2012; Hansen et al. 2016.

4 silver fibulae, Stalijska Mahala: 4 silver fibulae, Štrpci: 4 pairs of silver fibulae = 3 pairs of large fibulae and one pair of smaller ones).

Perhaps these alleged ritual sacrifices could be explained in connection with special events, such as on the occasion of declaring a truce or alliance between the local magnates and the victorious Alexander.<sup>84</sup> The hoard from Čurug could even be connected to the Celtic mission to the young Alexander in 335 BC as mentioned in ancient written sources, on the occasion when he was in the Danube Basin and, among other things, had conquered the Triballi.<sup>85</sup> Perhaps in a similar sense – as indicators of direct Macedonian domination over the area along the upper course of the Vardar – it is also possible to understand the rich finds of silver and gold jewellery from Demir Kapija through Tremnik to Ždanec near Skopje, where there were also gold coins of Philip II and Alexander III in the hoard/grave (?) from Tremnik, which enables an undisputed dating of the hoard to 328-320 BC.<sup>86</sup> It is also significant that the hinged Vb fibulae fell out of fashion at the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC.

It is also striking that the same is true for the coins from the mint of Damastion, which circulated primarily in the region of present-day southern Serbia, Kosovo, and North Macedonia. Although the location of the mint has not yet been precisely identified, it should be sought somewhere in the silver ore bearing and silver mine region mentioned in the introductory section, probably in present-day Kosovo. Their minting began at approximately the same time as the popularity of Vb hinged fibulae in the early 4<sup>th</sup> century BC and ceased in the period of 325-320,<sup>87</sup> which corresponds to the decline in wearing the Vb type fibula. This correspondence in the beginning and end of the fashion for hinged Vb fibula and the circulation of the Damastion coinage cannot be merely coincidental. It is evident that the cessation of minting and the crafting of silver jew-

ellery corresponded with the death of Alexander the Great, which was followed by the struggle of his successors – the Diadochi – for power.<sup>88</sup> For them, the Central Balkans, on the outskirts of Alexander's "world state"<sup>89</sup>, despite the mineral wealth, was not interesting. The local lords, the masters of silver, evidently lost their political and economic power too, which is particularly shown by the end of the Damastion mint. This political void caused by the collapse of the Macedonian superpower and the sudden lack of power of the local elites was evidently exploited by the Celtic tribes, particularly the Scordisci, who first occupied the region along the Danube between Srem/Syrmia and Đerdap/Iron Gates,<sup>90</sup> and later with their looting raids also threatened the northern parts of Macedonia<sup>91</sup> and Greece itself – up until their mysterious defeat in 279 BC at Delphi.

#### IV.

How strong the Grecian-Macedonian influences were on the Central Balkan region is shown not merely by the widespread distribution of the hinged fibulae of types IIa and Vb and the minting of silver coins of Damastion, but also by the newly unveiled and also ambitious excavations of the honoree at the archaeological site of Kale-Krševica near Bujanovac in the South Morava river basin. The settlement of Kale, whose beginnings extend back at least to the period of the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages,<sup>92</sup> experienced its rise and peak in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC.<sup>93</sup> The finds include not merely hinged fibulae of types IIa and Vb,<sup>94</sup> but also a large quantity of Greek pottery,<sup>95</sup> which exhibits an exceptionally wide spectrum of forms that indicate that these were not only individual prestigious pieces as in the previously mentioned princely graves in the late 6<sup>th</sup> and in the 5<sup>th</sup> centuries BC, but

<sup>84</sup> For the sacrificial rituals of Alexander before crossing the Marmara-Sea on his military expedition to conquer Asia, see e.g., Gehrke 2010, 26-27. For his costumes, addressing the local fashion and status symbols, cf. Paetz gen. Schieck 2009: 105.

<sup>85</sup> Tomaschitz 2012.

<sup>86</sup> Mitrevski 2011: 201, Fig. 5; David 2017a: 83, Fig. K 83-84.

<sup>87</sup> Kos 1997: 73-74; Popović 2007: 416-417, Fig. 6; Ujes Morgan 2011: 492-495, Fig. 3-4; Schwarz 2012 (A. Šemrov drew my attention to the articles of Ujes Morgan and Schwarz, for which I would like to thank him).

<sup>88</sup> See e.g., Errington 1986: 108-121; Bratož 1997: 195-203.

<sup>89</sup> Bratož 1997: 186-188.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. Todorović 1968; Skordisci 1992; Jovanović 2018.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. Errington 1986: 146; Guštin, Kuzman 2014; David 2017b.

<sup>92</sup> Bulatović 2005.

<sup>93</sup> Popović 2005; Popović 2012.

<sup>94</sup> Popović 2012: 94, Fig. 113-14; Dmitrović 2019-2020: 114; Mladenović 2019: 359, Fig. 3.

<sup>95</sup> Krstić 2005; Popović 2012: 30-33; Krstić, Djordjević 2012: 58-73.



rather everyday tableware and drinking vessels, mostly from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. Special mention should also be made of silver coins of Philip II and Alexander III and a silver coin of Damastion from the vicinity.<sup>96</sup> The most important element is the discovery of architecture at the foot of the acropolis, in the suburbium (a vaulted cistern for water, buildings, walls, etc.), built in the Hellenistic manner.<sup>97</sup> The manner and quality of the construction indisputably indicates that the builders came to Kale-Krševica from the Grecian-Macedonian world, or they had at least been schooled there to attain the necessary knowledge and experience. The results of the archaeological investigations of the honouree and his team at Kale-Krševica, thus, open a new dimension in the knowledge of the epoch in question and offer hints of the civilisational, technological, and cultural advances experienced by parts of the Central Balkans in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, although they were only on the outskirts of the “world state” of Alexander the Great.

#### Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Barbara Smith-Demo (Zagreb) for the English translation, Vesna Svetličič (Ljubljana) for the distribution maps (Fig. 1-4), Manca Vinazza (Ljubljana) for preparing Fig. 5 for press, and Daniela Udovič (librarian of the Department of Archaeology FF UL) for help in seeking out barely accessible literature during the Covid-19 lockdown.

**List 1:** Bow fibulae of the Novi Pazar-Atenica type (see Fig. 2).

(According to Vasić 1987a, Prilog/App. 1 = AV No...; Vasić 1999: 77-81, No. 582-626 = PBF No<sup>98</sup>).

Abbreviations: AL – Albanija/Albania; BG – Bugarska/Bulgaria, BiH – Bosna i Hercegovina, H – Mađarska/Hungary, HR- Hrvatska/Croatia, KOS – Kosovo, MA – Makedonija/North Macedonia, RO – Romunska/Romunia, SRB – Srbija/Serbia.

Gold fibulae (star)

1. Novi Pazar, SRB, barrow (hoard/grave?), 4 x (AV No. 51; PBF No. 597-599, 603; Silber 2004: 96 No. 71; Balkani 2007: 76 No. 23).
2. Kostolac (?), SRB, 1 x (PBF No. 614; Balkani 2007: 141 No. 98).

Bronze gilded fibula (1/star)

3. Sremska Mitrovica, Srem, SRB, 1x (AV No. 66; PBF No. 615).

Silver fibulae (2/black circle ●)

4. Ohrid – Gorna Porta, MA, grave, 2x (David 2017b: 30-31, K 38; Kuzman 2018: 218, Pl. 2, 15-16).
5. Trebenište, MA, graves, 2x (AV No. 42; PBF No. 616-617; Silber 2004: 93 No. 47; Balkani 2007: 123 No. 73; Trebenište 2018: 299, Cat. No. 150).
6. Gajtan, AL, grave, 1x (AV No. 45; Shqipëria 1971, Fig. 49; Albanien 1988: 224 No. 85).
7. Cavtat, HR, 1x (AV No. 86; Batović 1988: 62-64, Sl. 9, 12; Marijan 2000: 173, Sl. 19, 5).
8. Kačanj, Bileća, BiH, graves, 2x (AV No. 88; Marić 1969: 92-93, T. 2, 2 and 4; Marijan 2000: 173, Sl. 19, 3).
9. Radimlja - Konštica, Stolac, BiH, 1x (Marijan 2000: 173, Sl. 19,4, T. 11, 2).
10. Pečka Banja, KOS, grave, 2x (AV No. 49; PBF No. 605-606; Silber 2004: 94 No. 51).
11. = 1 Novi Pazar, barrow (hoard/grave?), 5x (AV No. 51; PBF No. 596, 600-602, 604; Silber 2004: 97 No. 72; Balkani 2007: 100 No. 50-51).
12. Kruševica, Raška, SRB, hoard/grave?, 4x (AV No. 52; PBF No. 587-590; Silber 2004: 100 No. 97, 99).
13. Atenica, Čačak, SRB, barrow/ grave, 1x (AV No. 53; PBF No. 582).
14. Crvena Lokva, Glasinac, BiH, barrow/grave (Stratimirović von Kulpin 1893: 122, Fig. 22; Guštin, Teržan 1975: 192-193, Sl. 2, 2; Guštin, Teržan 1977: 79-80, Abb. 1, 2; AV No. 83).
15. Beremend, Baranja, H, grave, 2x ((AV No. 69).

<sup>96</sup> Popović 2007: 414-417, Fig. 5; Krstić, Djordjević 2012: 92, Fig. 104-105, 107.

<sup>97</sup> Popović 2012: 20-29, 44, 52; Popović, Vukadinović 2011; Jeremić 2005.

<sup>98</sup> Vasić 2014: 208 gives for the new finds of the fibulae Novi Pazar type (Nikinci, Velika Krsna, Miroč) no information about their metal – bronze, silver or gold, and they are not mapped on Fig. 2.

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16. Sotin, Slavonija, HR, grave, 1x (AV No. 68; PBF Taf. 59 D).
  17. Kuzmin, Šid, Srem, SRB, grave, 1x (AV No. 65; PBF No. 592).
  18. Salaš Nočajski, Sremska Mitrovica, SRB, grave, 2x (AV No. 67; PBF No. 608-609).
  19. Vinča, Beograd, SRB, 1x (AV No. 61, Taf. 3, 1; PBF No. 619).
  20. Umčari, Grocka, SRB, grave, 1x (AV No. 60; PBF No. 618; Silber 2004: 101 No. 108).
  21. = 2 Kostolac (?), SRB, 4x (PBF No. 610-613; Silber 2004: 102 No. 114-115; Balkani 2007: 140 No. 96-97).
  22. Požarevac, SRB, 1x (PBF No. 607).
  23. Vitoševac, Ražanj, SRB, 1x (PBF No. 622).
  24. Červenbreg, Kjustendil, BG, 3x (AV No. 14, Taf. 2, 6, 8-9; Gergova 1987, No. 92-94).
  25. Madžarska/Hungary, H (PBF Taf. 59, E).
- Bronze fibulae (3/white circle ○)
26. = 8 Kačanj, Bileća, BiH, graves, 1x (Marić 1969: 89, T. 3,2; AV No. 88) and 26/1: Plana, Bileća, grave, 2x (Truhelka 1901: 7, Sl. 5-7).
  27. Prenj, Stolac, BiH (Marijan 1987-1988b: 65, T. 2, 1-2; PBF, 81).
  28. Humac, Ljubuški, BiH, vicinity (Čović 1985: 55, T. 4, 4; AV No. 92; PBF, 81).
  29. Jajce - Bočačka klisura, BiH, 1x (Nadbath 2004: 66, Taf. 13, 4; AV No. 73; PBF, 81).
  30. Vratnica, Visoko, BiH, 5x (Čović 1984: 43-44, Fig. 8, 1-2; PBF, 81).
  31. Glasinac - Gosinja planina, Ilijak, Rusanovići, Taline, BiH, graves, 4x (AV No. 76; Truhelka 1893: 87-88, Fig. 85; Fiala 1897: 25, Fig. 45; Benac, Čović 1957: 17, T. 34, 1-2).
  32. Šarenčeve vrtoče, Glasinac, BiH, grave, 1x (Truhelka 1893: 87, Fig. 84; AV No. 80).
  33. Zabrnjica - Oborište, Priboj, SRB, barrows/graves, 3x (PBF No. 623-625).
  34. Kupinovo, Ruma, Srem, SRB, 1x (AV No. 64; Taf. 3, 3; PBF No. 591).
  35. Novi Banovci, Srem, SRB, 2x (AV No. 63; PBF No. 594-595).
  36. Zemun, Srem, SRB, 4x (AV No. 62; PBF No. 626; Vasić 2014, 208, Abb. 3, 4).
  37. = 19 Vinča, Beograd, SRB, 1x (AV No. 61, Taf. 3, 2; PBF No. 620).
  38. Drmno, Požarevac, SRB, grave, 2x (AV No. 58, Taf. 2, 7; PBF No. 583-584).
  39. Kličevac, Požarevac, SRB, 1x (AV No. 59; PBF No. 585).
  40. Kožice, Kučevo, SRB, 1x (PBF No. 586).
  41. Negotin, SRB, 1x (AV No. 57; PBF No. 593).
  42. Viteževo, Žabari, SRB, 1x (PBF No. 621).
  43. Orsoja, Mihajlovgrad/Montana, BG, grave (Gergova 1987, No. 95).
  44. Ostrovu Mare, RO, 1x (AV No. 24; Bader 1983, No. 289A).
  45. Szentcsaba-Fényes, H, grave, 1x (AV No. 70).
  46. Bekéscsaba-Fényes, H, grave, 1x (AV No. 71).
  47. Tiszavasvári-Dózsa telep, H, grave, 1x (Kemenczei 2009, Taf. 104, 5).
- Fibulae Novi Pazar-Atenica type with hinge (Ag – black triangle ▲, Bz – white triangle)
48. = 8 Kačanj, Bileća, BiH, grave, 1x Ag (Marić 1975-1976, 107, T. 2, 3a-b; AV No. 88, T. 5, 5).
  49. Ljubomir- Ukšići/Grebnice, BiH, grave, 1x Ag (Marijan 2000: 173, 176, Sl. 19, 6, T. 6, 1; AV No. 87).
  50. = 9 Radimlja, Stolac, BiH, 3x bronze (AV No. 90, T. 5, 2-4).
  51. = 31 Gosinja planina, Glasinac, BiH, 1x bronze (Fiala 1897, 26, Fig. 50; Benac, Čović 1957: 9, T. 9, 10).
  52. Guča – Grotnica, Lučani, SRB, 1x Ag (PBF No. 656; Vasić 2014: 208, Abb. 3, 6; Silber 2004: 103 No. 125).
  53. Hisar, Leskovac, SRB, 1x Ag (Vasić 2014: 208, Abb. 3, 5).
  54. Mati, AL (PBF, 86, Footnote 438).
  55. Ostrovu Mare, Gogoşu, RO, 1x Ag (Bader 1983: 118 No. 373).
  56. Banat, RO, 1x Ag (Bader 1983: 118 No. 373).
  57. Romunska/Romunia, 1x Ag (Bader 1983: 118, No. 372).
- List 2:** Hinged fibulae of type IIa with two globular discs on the bow (see Fig. 3)  
(According to Vasić 1985: 128-129, Sl. 5; Vasić 1999: 103-106, Taf. 68 B = PBF No.; Dmitrović 2019-2020: 113-114, Karta 1).
- Abbreviations: AL – Albanija/Albania; BG – Bugarska/Bulgaria, BiH – Bosna i Hercegovina, ČG – Crna gora/Montenegro, GR – Grčija/Greece, HR – Hrvatska/Croatia, KOS – Kosovo, MA – Makedonija/North Macedonia, SRB – Srbija/Serbia.
- Silver fibulae (1/black circle)
1. Prilep – pod Kuli Varoš (1x), Zagrad (1x), MA (Vasić 1985, 128-129; PBF No. 903, 906).
  2. Ohrid, MA, 3x (PBF No. 887-889).
  3. Gostilj, Donja Zeta, ČG, 6x (Vasić 1985: 128; Basler 1969: 28, 36, T. 6, 2-3; 17, 1-2, 4-5; Dmitrović 2019-2020, Karta 1, 9).
- Bronze fibulae (2/white circle)
4. Olint, Halkidika, GR, 2x (Vasić 1985: 128).
  5. Čaušica, GR, 4x (Vasić 1985: 128).
  6. Pontoirakleia, Kilkis, GR, 1x (Vasić 1985: 128).
  7. Philiria, Kilkis, GR (PBF, 105, Footnote 183).

8. Dojran, Stari, MA, 1x (Vasić 1985: 128; PBF No. 916).
9. Demir Kapija, Negotino, Ma, 2x (Vasić 1985: 128; PBF No. 877-881).
10. Čepigovo, Prilep, MA, 1x (Vasić 1985: 128; PBF No. 872).
11. = 1 Prilep – Kaldrma (13x), pod Kuli-Varoš (2), Zagrad (3), Volkovo (1x), Pelagonija, 4x, MA (Vasić 1985: 128-129; PBF No. 890-902, 904-905, 907-909, 918; 910-913).
12. Golem Grad, Resen, MA, 1x (PBF No. 882).
13. Delagožda, Struga, MA, 4x (PBF No. 873-876).
14. Podgradec, AL, 2x + (Vasić 1985: 128).
15. Lešnje/Leshnje, AL, 1x (Vasić 1985: 128)
16. Irmaj, AL, 1x (Vasić 1985, 128; PBF, 105, Footnote 581).
17. Vrrin, AL, 1x (PBF, 105, Footnote 581).
18. Činamak, AL (PBF, 105, Footnote 581).
19. Katlanovo, Veles, MA, 1x (PBF No. 884).
20. Skopje – Kale, MA, 2x (Vasić 1985: 129; PBF No. 914-915).
21. Filipovci – Dolno gradište, Kratovo, MA, 1x (PBF No. 883).
22. Pernik, BG, 2x (Vasić 1985: 128; PBF 105, Footnote 586).
23. Krševica – Kale, Vranje, SRB, 2x (Vasić 1985: 128; PBF No. 886; Popović 2012: 94 No. 113; Dmitrović 2019-2020, Karta 1, 11).
24. Veletino, Lipljan, KOS, 1x (PBF No. 917; Dmitrović 2019-2020, Karta 1, 10).
25. Momišići, Podgorica, ČG, 5x (Vasić 1985: 128; Dmitrović 2019-2020, Karta 1, 8).
26. Zabrnjica – Oborište, Priboj, SRB, 3x (PBF No. 920-922; Dmitrović 2019-2020, Karta 1, 4).
27. Krajčinovići - Rudine, Priboj, SRB, 1x (PBF No. 885; Dmitrović 2019-2020, Karta 1, 5).
28. Rudine-Rusanovići, Glasinac, BiH, 2x (Vasić 1985: 128; Benac, Čović 1957: 24, T. 49, 1-2; Dmitrović 2019-2020, Karta 1, 3).
29. Čačak, SRB (Dmitrović 2019-2020: 111-114, Sl. 1-2, Karta 1, 6).
30. Beočić, Juhor, Jagodina, SRB, 1x (PBF No. 871; Dmitrović 2019-2020, Karta 1, 7).
31. Zemun, Srem, SRB, 1x (Vasić 2014: 211, Abb. 3, 9; Dmitrović 2019-2020, Karta 1, 2).
32. Dalj, Slavonija, HR, 1x (Vasić 1985, 128; Dmitrović 2019-2020, Karta 1, 1)

**List 3:** Hinged fibulae of type V b with four or more star shaped or rosette-like decorative elements on the bow (see Fig. 4)  
(According to Vasić 1985: 135-148, Sl. 6; Vasić 1999: 109-117, Taf. 69 = PBF No.).

Abbreviations: AL – Albania; BiH – Bosna i Hercegovina, ČG – Črna gora/ Montenegro, GR – Grčka/Greece, HR- Hrvatska/ Croatia, KOS – Kosovo, MA – Makedonija/North Macedonia, SRB – Srbija/ Serbia.

Gold fibulae (1/star)

1. Solun/Thessalonike, Macedonia, GR, 6x and more (Vasić 1985: 135; PBF, 114-115; Braun 2010: 260, Kat.Nr. 59).
2. Dervení, Solun/Thessalonike, Macedonia, GR, 6x (Vasić 1985: 135).
3. Veria, Macedonia, GR, 2x (Vasić 1985: 136).
4. Tremnik, Negotino, MA, 4 x (Mitrevski 2011: 201-203, Fig. 5; David 2017a: 78-81, K. 77-80).

Silver fibulae (2/black circle)

5. Elis, Pelopones, GR, 4x (Vasić 1985: 136; Blinkenberg 1926: 229 XII 17 c).
6. Halieis – Porto Cheli, Pelopones, GR, 1x (Vasić 1985: 136).
7. Halai, Phokis, GR, 13x (Vasić 1985: 136).
8. Tempe, Tesalija/Thessaly, GR, 4x (PBF, 114, Footnote 634; Blinkenberg 1926: 229 XII 17 b; Jacobstahl 1956: 207, Abb. 648; Kilian 1975: 156 No. 1748-1751).
9. Ioanina/ Janina, Epiros, GR, 2x (Vasić 1985: 136; Blinkenberg 1926: 229, XII 17 a).
10. Aiani, Kozani, Macedonia, GR, many (PBF, 115, Footnote 644),
11. Kozani-Mavropigi, Macedonia, GR, 1x (Vasić 1985: 136).
12. Sindos, Macedonia, GR, many (Vasić 1985: 136; Sindos 1985, No. 61-62, 132-133).
13. = 1 Solun/ Thessalonike, GR, 20x and more (Vasić 1985: 136).
14. Potidaia, Halkidike, GR, many (Vasić 1985: 136).
15. Demir Kapija, Negotino, MA, 3x (Vasić 1985: 137; PBF No. 981-983).
16. Prilep – Zagrad (1x), Volkovo (1x), MA (Vasić 1985: 138-139; PBF No. 1013; 1053).
17. Beranci, Bitola, MA, 6x (Vasić 1985: 137; PBF No. 970-975).
18. Gimbabica, Resen, MA, 1x (Vasić 1985: 137; PBF No. 993).
19. Trebenište, Ohrid, MA, 7x (Vasić 1985: 139; PBF No. 1040-1047).
20. Delagožda, Struga, MA, 3x (PBF No. 978-980).
21. Radolište, Struga, MA, 1x (Vasić 1985: 138; PBF No. 1027).
22. Amantia/Ploça, AL, 2x (Vasić 1985: 136; Albanien 1988: 367 No. 278).
23. Belsch, AL, 15x (Vasić 1985: 136; Albanien 1988: 256 No. 125 a,b).

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24. Gajtan, AL, 5x (Vasić 1985: 136).
  25. Gostilj, Donja Zeta, ČG, 6x (Vasić 1985: 137; Basler 1969: 27, 36, T. 5, 7-11; 17, 3).
  26. Budva, ČG, 3x (Vasić 1985: 137-138, Sl.7).
  27. Glogovik, Herceg Novi, ČG, 1x (Vasić 1985: 137; Pušić 1962: 78, T. 11, 8).
  28. Cavtat, HR, 2x (Vasić 1985: 137; Lisičar 1960-61: 30, Sl. 3; Batović 1988: 63-65, Sl. 9, 9-10).
  29. Ljubomir – Ukšići/ Grebnice, BiH, 1x (Marijan 2000: 23, 123, 176, Fig. 29).
  30. Blato, Korčula, 2x (Vasić 1985: 137; Lisičar 1960-61: 30, Sl. 2).
  31. Neum – Gradac, BiH, 17x (Lisičar 1960-61: 26; Marijan 1987-1988: 42-44,47, T. 4; Marijan 1988: 325 (No. 25107); PBF, 115, Footnote 642).
  32. Gorica, Ljubuški, 1x (Vasić 1985: 137; Hoernes 1901: 529, Sl. 8; Truhelka 1901: 25, Fig. 40).
  33. Ružići - Gradac, Gorica, Ljubuški, BiH, 4x (Vasić 1985: 138; Lisičar 1960-61: 25-26; Nadbath 2004: 66, T. 13, 5-7).
  34. Rusanovići, Glasinac, BiH, 1x (Vasić 1985: 137; Hoernes 1901: 530, Sl. 9; Fiala 1896: 18, Fig. 38-39; Benac, Čović 1957: 23, T. 46, 11).
  35. Štrpci, Višegrad, BiH, 8x (Vasić 1985: 139; Hoernes 1901: 530-533, Sl. 11-15).
  36. Ždanec, Skopje, MA, 8x (Vasić 1985: 139-140, Sl. 9; PBF No. 1059-1066; Mitrevski 2011: 200, Fig. 3).
  37. Oraovica, Preševo, Vranje, SRB, 1x (Vasić 2014: 211).
  38. Donja Toponica, Prokuplje, SRB, 1x (Vasić 1985: 137; PBF No. 990).
  39. Niš, Velika Humska Čuka, SRB, 1x (Vasić 1985: 138; PBF No. 1004).
  40. Majur, Juhor, Jagodina, SRB, 4x (Vasić 1985: 137; PBF No. 1071-1074; Silber 2004: 103 No. 127).
  41. Kostolac, Požarevac, SRB, 4x (Vasić 1985: 137; PBF No. 996-998).
  42. Beograd – Čukarica, SRB, 2x (Vasić 1985: 137; PBF No. 968-969; Silber 2004: 102 No. 118).
  43. Nikinci, Srem, SRB, 3x (Vasić 2014: 211-212, Abb. 4; Vasić 2006: 121-122, Fig. 2-3).
  44. Sremska Mitrovica, SRB, 4x (Vasić 1985: 138; PBF No. 1034-1037).
  45. Susek, Beočin, Srem, SRB, 1x (Vasić 1985: 139; PBF No. 1039).
  46. Sombor, Bačka, SRB, 2x (Vasić 1985: 138-139, Sl. 8; PBF No. 1075-1078).
  47. Čurug, Bačka, SRB, 4x (Vasić 1985: 137; PBF No. 1067-1070; Silber 2004: 104 No. 129-130; Balkani 2007: 148 No. 106-109).
  48. Bačka (?), SRB, 3x (PBF, Taf. 59, G 1-3)
  49. Ostrovul Mare, Gogoşu, RO, 7x (Vasić 1985: 140; Bader 1983: 119 No. 375-381, Taf. 38).
  50. Negotin, SRB, 1x (Vasić 1985: 138; PBF No. 1003).
  51. Stalijska mahala, BG, 4x (Vasić 1985: 136; Vasić 1995: 85, Fig. 2).
  52. Lom, BG, 2x (Thraker 1975: 68, Abb. 25).
  53. Bukjovci, Orjahovo, BG, 6x (Vasić 1985: 136; Thraker 1975: 68-69, Abb. 229).
  54. Tarnava, BG, 1x (Vasić 1985: 136; PBF, 115, Footnote 649).
  55. Vladinja, Loveč, BG, (Vasić 1985: 136; Thraker 1975: 68, No. 228).
  56. Penkovci, Pernik, BG, 2x (Vasić 1985: 136).
  57. Garbino, BG, 2x (Vasić 1985: 136).
  58. Kjustendil, BG, 2x (Vasić 1985: 136).
  59. Mesembria, Nesebur, BG, 2x (Vasić 1985: 136).
  60. Kizik/ Cysikus, Marmara Sea, TR, 3x (Vasić 1985: 140, Sl. 11; Blinkenberg 1926: 229 XII 17d).
  61. Bugarska/Bulgaria, unknown sites, 1x (Vasić 1985: 136).
  62. Grčka/ Greece – Macedonia, Thessaly, unknown sites, ca 10 x (Vasić 1985: 137).
  63. Slavonija, HR, unknown sites, 3 x (Vasić 1985: 138).
  64. Srbija/Serbia, unknown sites, 2x (PBF No. 1028-1029, Silber 2004: 102-103 No. 117-121, 126).
- Bronze fibulae (3/white circle)
65. Lousoi, Pelopones, GR, 1x (Vasić 1985: 146).
  66. Thebes, Beotia, GR, 1x (Vasić 1985: 146).
  67. = 7. Halai, Phokis, GR, 1x (Vasić 1985: 146; Mladenović 2019: 365 No. 28, Pl. 2, 28).
  68. Delphi – Suvala (2x), Medeon (1x), GR (Vasić 1985: 146).
  69. Dodona, Epiros, GR, 4 x (Vasić 1985: 146; Blinkenberg 1926: 224, Fig. 257; Hoernes 1901: 528, Sl. 2).
  70. Pherai, Tesalija/Thessaly, GR, 2-3x (Vasić 1985: 146; Kilian 1975: 156 No. 1744-1745, 1746).
  71. Almyros, Tesalija/Thessaly, GR, 1x (Vasić 1985: 146; Kilian 1975: 156 No. 1747; Mladenović 2019: 365 No.27, Pl. 2, 27).
  72. Skiros, GR, 2x (Vasić 1985: 146).
  73. = 10. Aiani, Kozani, GR, 1x (Vasić 1985: 146).
  74. Pella, GR, 1x (Vasić 1985: 146).
  75. Olinth, GR, 15x (Vasić 1985: 146).
  76. Halkidike, GR, many (Vasić 1985: 146).
  77. Aksiokastro, GR, 1x (Vasić 1985: 146).
  78. Milci, Gevgelija, MA, 1x (Vasić 1985: 147; PBF No. 1002).
  79. Marvinci, Valandovo, MA, 1x (PBF No. 1001).
  80. = 15. Demir Kapija, MA, 6x (Vasić 1985: 147; PBF No. 984-989; Mladenović 2019: 365 No.14, Pl. 1, 14)).
  81. Stari grad – Babuna, Negotino, MA, 1x (Vasić 1985, 146; PBF No. 1038).
  82. Katlanovo, Veles, MA, 1x (PBF No. 995).

83. Gradište Knežje (Bylazora), Sveti Nikole, Veles, MA, 1x (Mitrevski 2019: 351, Fig. 9; Mladenović 2019: 365 No.16, Pl. 2,
84. = 16. Prilep – Kaldrma (4x), Zagrad (13x), Volkovo (4x), MA (Vasić 1985: 147; PBF No. 1009-1012, 1013-1026A, 1053-1057; Mladenović 2019: 365 No.17-26, Pl. 2, 17-26).
85. Golem Grad, Prespa, MA (PBF No. 994).
86. Ohrid – Velmej, Bučište, MA (PBF No. 1052; Mladenović 2019: 365 No.13, Pl. 1, 13).
87. = 19. Trebenište – Tri Čeljusti, MA, 1x (Vasić 1985: 147; PBF No. 1050; Mladenović 2019: 365 No. 15, Pl. 1, 15).
88. Podgradec, AL, many (Vasić 1985: 146; Mladenović 2019: 365 No. 31, Pl. 3, 31).
89. Selce Donje/ Selca e Poshtëme, AL, 1x (Vasić 1985: 146; Mladenović 2019: 365 No. 30, Pl. 2, 30).
90. Rosuje, Kukës, AL, 1x (Vasić 1985: 146).
91. Lješ/Lezha/ Lissos, AL, many (Vasić 1985: 146).
92. Skadar/Shkodra (vicinity), AL, 1x (Vasić 1985: 146).
93. Momišići, Podgorica, ČG, 1x (Vasić 1985: 147; Mladenović 2019: 365 No. 8, Pl. 1,8).
94. = 27. Glogovik, Herceg Novi, ČG, 1x (Vasić 1985: 147; Pušić 1962: 78, T. 11, 7).
95. Gradac – Hrasno Donje, BiH, 10x (Vasić 1985: 147).
96. Debelo Brdo, Sarajevo, 1x (Vasić 1985: 146; Fiala 1896: 27, Fig. 175; Hoernes 1901: 528, Sl. 6).
97. Gosinja planina, Glasinac, BiH, 2x (Vasić 1985: 147; Fiala 1897: 19, Fig. 31)
98. = 34. Rusanovići, Rudine, Glasinac, BiH, 5x (Vasić 1985: 147; Fiala 1896: 26, Fig. 57; Hoernes 1901: 528, Sl. 4; Benac, Čović 1957: 24, T. 49, 6-10; Mladenović 2019: 365, No. 9-12, Pl. 1, 9-12).
99. Zabrnjica – Oborište, Priboj, SRB, 1x (PBF No. 1058; Mladenović 2019: 365, No.7, Pl. 1.7).
100. Čečan, Vučitrn, KOS, 2x (Vasić 1985: 146, Sl. 1-3; PBF No. 976-977; Mladenović 2019: 364-365, No. 5-6, Pl. 1,5-6).
101. Dubovac, Priština, KOS, 1x (PBF No. 992).
102. Krševica-Kale, Vranje, SRB, 1x (Vasić 2014: 211; Popović 2012: 94 Fig. 114; Mladenović 2019: 359, Fig. 3).
103. Pernik, BG, 1x (Vasić 1985: 146; Mladenović 2019: 365 No.29, Pl. 2, 29).
104. = 39. Niš, SRB, 1x (Vasić 2014: 211; Vasić 2006: 121, Fig. 1).
105. Bogdanica – Svrlijig, SRB, 1x (Mladenović 2019: 356, Fig. 1, Pl. 1,1).
106. Požarevac (vicinity), SRB, 2x (PBF No. 1007-1008; Mladenović 2019: 364 No. 4, Pl. 1, 4).
107. = 41. Kostolac - Čair, Požarevac, SRB, 1x (PBF No. 999).
108. Dubovac, Bela Crkva, Banat, SRB, 1x (PBF No. 991; Mladenović 2019: 364 No. 2, Pl. 1,2).
109. Banatska Palanka, Bela Crkva, Banat, SRB, 1x (PBF No. 967; Mladenović 2019: 364 No. 2, Pl. 1,2).
110. Zemun, Srem, SRB, 1x (Vasić 2014: 211, Abb. 3, 8).
111. Novi Banovci, Srem, SRB, 2x (Vasić 1985: 147; Mladenović 2019: 364 No. 3, Pl. 1,3).
112. = 44. Sremska Mitrovica, Srem, SRB, 1x (Vasić 1985: 147).
113. Mala Mitrovica, Mačva, SRB, 1x (PBF No. 1000).
114. Novi Sad -Volarsko polje, SRB, 2x (Mladenović 2019: 359, Fig. 2).
115. Dalj, Slavonija, HR, 2x (Vasić 1985: 146).

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**Ivana Popović**  
Belgrade  
ivpop055@gmail.com

## SOME CHARACTERISTIC JEWELLERY TYPES FROM THE PRE-ROMAN AND ROMAN CENTRAL BALKANS: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES, HELLENISTIC INFLUENCES AND LOCAL ADAPTATIONS

**Abstract:** Different types of pre-Roman and early Roman silver jewellery have been registered on Central Balkan archaeological sites. Some adornments maintained the same shape over the centuries, but others, imitating the original matrix, changed in appearance, manufacturing techniques and function. The reproduction of previous Hellenistic models continued on jewellery from the Balkan-Danubian Basin area until the middle of the 3rd century AD. The symbiosis of various influences resulted in the establishment of a specific style in manufacture of the early Roman jewellery in this region, which was originally just in the reproduction of Hellenistic models transformed through symbiosis with autochthonous forms, many of these later appeared as a result of contacts with the Hellenic world.

**Keywords:** jewellery, pre-Roman Period, the early Roman period, cultural influences, Hellenic cultural complex, autochthonous traditions.

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Different types of pre-Roman and early Roman silver jewellery have been registered on Central Balkan archaeological sites. Pieces of gold jewellery are more or less represented. Some adornments maintained the same shape over the centuries, but others, supporting the original matrix, changed in appearance, manufacturing techniques and function.

### I Radial diadems

Radial diadems or radial crowns are best known as one of the Roman emperors' *insignia* (*corona radiata*). The busts of these emperors (fig. 2a) were represented on the obverse side of coins issued during the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the first years of the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD (RIC V, 1968; VI, 1967), i.e., at a time when the growth of the cult of the Sun god, Sol, was noted, who had a radial crown as his attribute. However, the appearance of this *insignia* came much earlier. A hoard from Mačvanska Mitrovica (?) contains two rectangular silver *emblemata* made of thin silver sheets that were hanging on a small bronze

loop, which defines them as a part of a necklace or collar. The plates were decorated with embossed lines and points and had schematised representations of the figure of a female barbarian deity, with her hair curled into two braids and with a radial diadem around the head. The diadem rays have a leaf-form or denticulate appearance (fig. 1 a). The composition of silver objects in the hoard from Mačvanska Mitrovica (?) show close similarities with the hoards of silver jewellery from Bare (in the vicinity of *Viminacium*) and Tekija (*Transdierna* military camp, Iron Gates region). The jewellery from these hoards, worn by the autochthonous elite in the second half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, was deposited in the period after 81/82 AD as a result of a tumultuous period, connected with the conflicts between the Romans and Dacians in the last decades of the 1<sup>st</sup> century (Guštin, Popović 2017: 56, 69-70, fig. 3. 1-2). In the monetary parts of the hoards from Tekija (Popović P. 1975: 97-107) and Bare (Borić-Brešković 1994: 128-170, 192-198) the latest coins are Domitian's *denarii* from the end of 81 AD, confirming the time of their deposition. Later, during the early Roman period,



Fig. 1. Radial diadem or crown: a) Mačvanska Mitrovica (?), silver *emblema*, after 81/82 AD; b) Juhor, silver pendant-amulet, the first half of the 3rd century AD; c) Jagodina, silver amulet, 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD; d-e) *Sirmium*, handle of ceramic patera, the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.

on the territory of the Lower Danube and its wider hinterland, chronologically different groups of exceptionally rich hoards of silver and, rarely, gold jewellery were deposited.

On the circular silver pendant amulets belonging to the find from Juhor (central Serbia, left bank of the Velika Morava river), motifs of very stylised human faces or masks with radial diadems on the heads appear; the rays of these diadems were shaped as oblique lines (fig. 1b). The find from Juhor can be defined as a hoard or sacred treasure. The jewellery from this find represents forms that had been in use during the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, meaning that it was deposited around the middle of that century at the latest (Popović 2002: 22, 84, 113-117, cat. 17-18). Not far from Juhor, in the city of Jagodina (site of Crvene livade), three round, fragmented, sheet silver plates, of 5 cm in radius each, were found by the entrance to a Late Iron Age hut, dated into the first centuries of the Roman rule in these areas. Each of them bore a very stylised figure of a goddess wearing a diadem or crown with rays (fig. 1 c), a necklace of globular beads and a lunular ornament below the breasts (Стојић 1995: 80-81, сл. 3; Стојић 2017, сл. 360).

The appearance of the radial diadem or crown worn by a female figure, represented on the handle of a ceramic *patera* found near the north town rampart of *Sirmium* (fig. 1 d-e), is testimony to the different circumstances of the use of this *insignia*. The rays of the diadem are leaf-formed, inclined to the left and right, with a recess in the centre, suggesting that it was a mural crown (*corona muralis*), the insignia of the city goddess, a very popular motif in the late Roman period, the time when the marble head of Tyche of Simium (fig. 2b) was produced. The figure is dressed in a tunic, probably with ar-



Fig. 2. Radial crown: a) AV multipla of Constantine I Caesar, Rome, 307 AD, mural crown; b) *Sirmium*, marble head of Tyche of *Sirmium*, 4<sup>th</sup> century AD.

mour on top of it. The front side of left vertical edge of the *patera* handle is designed to resemble a sceptre ending with a swan's head(?), while on the reverse military insignia, the *vexillum* and *signum*, are depicted. This complex composition could be explained as the portrait of Tyche of *Sirmium*, as a universal goddess who, in peacetime, held the sceptre as a sign of authority, while in wartime she was the guardian, not just of the city, but also of the military units stationed in this Pannonian centre at that time (Popović 2009: 122-123, 131, no. 5). *Sirmium* was the starting point in the wars of the Roman army against the barbarians in Pannonia during the final decades of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century (Mirković 1971: 30-34). This historical data corroborates our thesis that the figure on the *patera* handle denotes the city of Tyche in a dual, peaceful and military, role. As it was discovered in a zone outside the north town rampart, it could have been an offering at some cult location of a military character.

## II Necklaces

Necklaces composed of metal beads are not a common ornament among the pre-Roman and early Roman Central Balkan finds. However,

in the grave assemblage at the site of Kruševica near Raška (south-western Serbia), dated to the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC (fig. 3a), a necklace made of nine large metal beads was discovered, together with eleven *salteleone* made of silver wire. Five large silver or gilded silver, segmented beads have a filigree ornament along the ribs between the segments and the spools around the apertures (Срејовић, Вукадин 1998: 7-9, T. I, IV, V; Popović 1994b, cat. 11/1-6). The beads of the necklace from the Bela Reka hoard, deposited after 182 AD, are very similar in shape and size. These large, segmented, bulbous silver beads, connected by plaited silver chain (fig. 3 b), are unusual for Roman metalwork (Popović 1994a: 24-26, 53-55, fig. 3, Pl. III). Besides the similarity with the beads from the Kruševica find, they look like large segmented beads of multi-coloured glass (*Melonenperlen*), known even from the Archaic period, such as at necropolis in Trebenište (Popović Lj. 1956, T. XLIV, 4). The clasp of the necklace from the Bela Reka hoard is richly decorated with filigree, granulation and black glass incrustation and manufactured in the best traditions of the Hellenistic toreutics, showing that this necklace was made as a result of various layers of cultural influences. The stratification of these influences on this necklace's clasp



Fig. 3. Necklaces: a) Kruševica, the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC; b) Bela Reka, the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.

is also demonstrated by its hook in the shape of a swan's head, analogous to torque ends from the Dacian cultural complex, but known to have been used in Pannonia until the 2<sup>nd</sup> century (Popović 1994a: 41, 68).

### III Twisted chains, decorated *tubuli* and pendants shaped as ivy-leaves

Two bulky chains twisted according to the “loop in loop” system (Sladić 2006: 41-42, Fig. 26), which have *tubuli* at the ends and rings for hanging (fig 4 a), probably attached to a silver fibulae of the Jarak type (Jevtić 2006: 103-104; Popović 2011: 181, fig. 5), were the parts of the Židovar treasure (fig. 4 b). This treasure was discovered during archaeological excavations in Židovar (Nord-East Serbia) in 2001, in a stratigraphically defined layer, which, together with the historical data, enables the dating of its storage to the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC (Lazić 2006: 13-28). The finds from this hoard mainly have characteristics of the Dacian and Celtic cultural complexes (Popović 2011:

188). Connecting silver arched fibulae with chains of the same type was registered in the Late Archaic period on jewellery from the already mentioned site of Kruševica (Срејовић, Вукадин 1998: 9, T. I, 3, 6; II, 3; Popović 1994b, cat. 10/1-2) and in the period of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC - 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, a prototype of which can be seen in the chains found in a rich grave from the late 4<sup>th</sup> century BC at Malkata mogila in Thrace (Tonkova 2011: 195, fig. 8) This practice continued during the first centuries of the Roman domination. In the numerous Balkan-Pannonian finds of silver jewellery from the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century (Bela Reka (Popović 1994a), Janja (Popović 1996: 142, Fig. 9-11), Szalacska (Darnay 1911, T. II; III, 4; Járdányi-Paulovics I. 1953, T. XXVII, 1, 2; XXVIII, 1), *Brigetio* (Popović 1997: 79-80, Fig. 7), Bare-Tribovo (Patsch 1912: 151-152, Fig. 94), Arčar ( Ruseva-Slokoska 1991, Cat 136, 136), Gorj (Popilian 1998: 59-60, Fig. 5. 1, 4), Aţel (Crişan 1959: 353-367, Fig. 2), Bălăciţa (Pl. CI-CIII; Popilian 1998: 49-50, Fig. 8-9), silver fibulae of the anchor type and more or less preserved silver chains connecting them have been noted (fig. 4c). The connecting of the elbow fibulae with silver

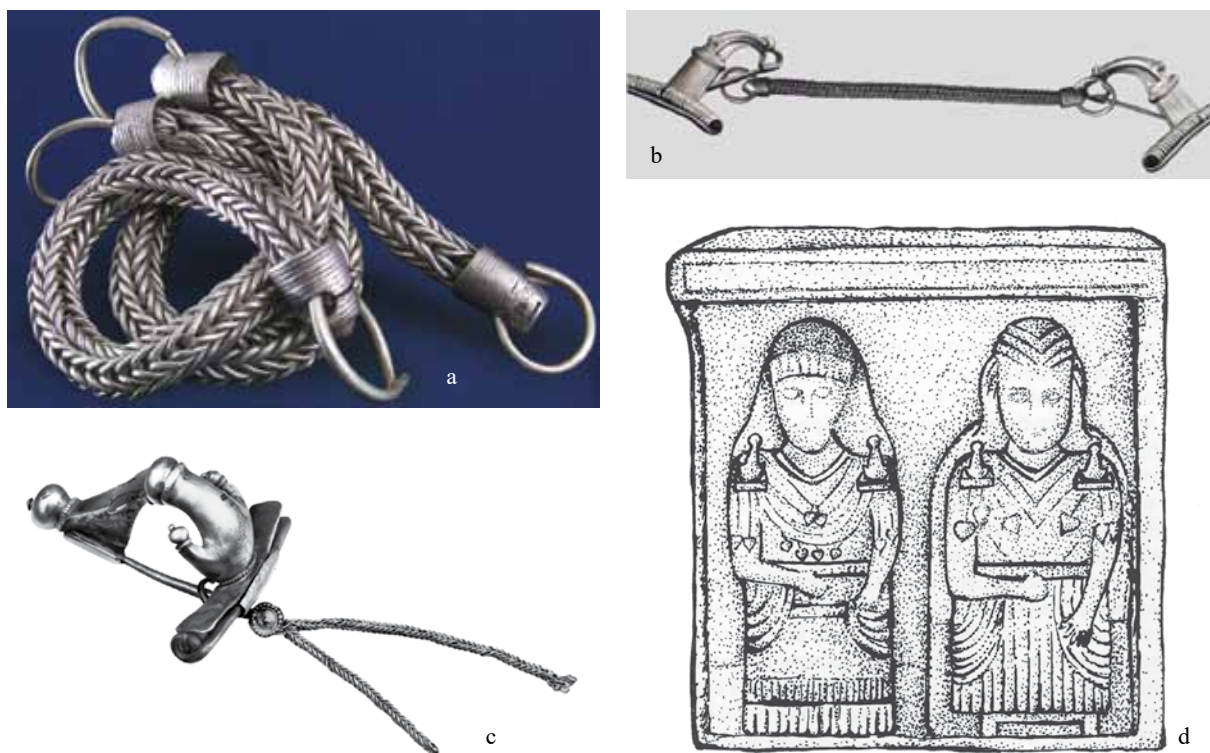


Fig. 4. Twisted chains connecting fibulae: a) Židovar, silver twisted chains, the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC; b) Židovar, twisted chain and fibulae of the Jarak type (reconstruction after Jevtić, Lazić, Sladić 2006, fig. on page 80); c) Janja, fibula of the anchor type and part of a chain, the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD; d) tombstone Seča Reka, the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD (drawing by A. Premk).





Fig. 5. Silver fibulae, chains and pendants in the form of ivy-leaves, finds from the Drina Valley, Pannonia and Oltenia, the middle of the 3rd century AD: hoards of silver jewellery; tombstones; 1) Janja, 2) Dvorska, 3) Brigetio, 4) Gorj, 5) Vátrop, 6) Bălăcița; a) Voljevica, b) Crvica, c) Skelani, d) Bajina Bašta, e) Seča Reka, f) Vrhpolje (map created by I. Popović).

twisted chains in the Balkan finds was noticed only in Nova Božurna (Jovanović 1978: 82, cat. 9, 12-14, Fig. 163, 166, 167) and Kolovrat (Cermanović-Kuzmanović 1995: 227, Fig. 1, 2). Wearing fibulae connected with twisted chains is closely related to pendants in the form of an ivy-leaf, which, besides the common finds of these ornaments, are also represented on tombstones. Tombstones from the Drina Valley at Bajina Bašta, Voljevica, Crvica, Skelani, Seča Reka and a recently discovered monument from Vrhpolje near Ljubovija (Popović 2013: 541-550, figs. 1-5, 7, with cited bibliography concerning the finds) clearly show the specific decoration on the chest and shoulders, formed by the tangles of chains and pendants in the form of an ivy-leaf (fig. 4d). Such ivy-leaf shaped pendants also adorned earrings (Juhor: Popović 2002, cat. 13-14), or on parts of horse tack (Nova Božurna: Jovanović 1978, cat. 10, fig. 164; Popović 1994, cat. 94, 95). The frequent appearance of pendants in the form of an ivy-leaf in Balkan finds can be explained by the early penetrations of the cult of Dionysos from Greece and Macedonia, i.e., his assimilation with the local cults of the deities of nature. Therefore, the combination of fibulae, chains and pendants in the form of an ivy-leaf is characteristic of the Drina Valley, Pannonia and Oltenia (fig. 5), where this jewellery can be found in hoards deposited during the fifth and sixth decades of the 3rd century. The deposition of the hoards, which, besides silver jewellery, also contained coins, is dated based on the latest registered coin: Vátrop-

denarius of Gordianus III from 241AD (Popilian 1998: 44-45); Janja-denarius of Gallienus from 254 AD; Dvorska-denarius of Gallienus from 254 AD (Popović 1996a: 142); Szalacska-denarius of Gallienus from 258 AD (Darnay 1911: 311-328). According to their representations on the tombstones, these composite decorations were worn by women. These three elements of the pectoral decoration were also registered in the Židovar treasure. Of course, these fibulae have a different construction to the Roman ones, and all eight specimens belong to the Late La Tène variety of the Jarak type (Sladić 2006: 37-40, Fig. 18-25). Two silver chains were twisted in the same way as the specimens from the Roman period, although they are much thicker and larger.

However, of most interest is a group of eleven pendants in the form of an ivy-leaf (Sladić 2006: 52, Fig. 43-44; Popović 2011: 182-183, fig. 10, 1). They were different to the flat-embossed Roman pendants in the shape of an ivy-leaf (fig. 6b), having been embossed on a die in two parts and then the front and the back were connected, giving a three-dimensional quality (fig. 6a). Were these pendants worn on the chains hung on fibulae, as is shown on the representations on monuments from the Roman period (fig. 6c)? Given the conditions of their find, separate from the fibulae and chains, at this moment this is only one of the possible hypotheses.



Fig. 6. Silver pendants in the form of ivy-leaves: a) Židovar, the middle of the 1st century BC; b) Dvorska, silver chain with ivy-leaf shaped pendants, the middle of the 3rd century AD; c) tombstone, Vrhpolje, the middle of the 3rd century AD.



Fig. 7. Silver filigree decorated *tubuli* of chains: a) Židovar, the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC; b) Bela Reka, the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD.

The third element of pectoral decoration from the Židovar find are the small damaged *tubuli* decorated with corrugated filigree wire twisted around the grains (fig. 7a). The Celtic Scordisci tribe, who settled in the Danubian region of Serbia, did not use filigree and granulation as decorative techniques in the treatment of the metals. The use of *tubuli* decorated by filigree and granulation appears on the silver chain from Malkata mogila in Thrace, dated to the late 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, regarded as the prototype of chains from the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC - 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (Tonkova 2011: 195, fig. 8). These techniques and analogue decorative motifs were also used on *tubuli* of the chains among the finds in the already mentioned region of the Drina Valley and Pannonia, from hoards deposited at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> (Bela Reka: Popović 1994a, cat. 7, fig. 2, 4, Pl. IV, 1) (fig. 7b) and during the fifth and sixth decades of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century (Dvorska: Popović 1996a: 142-144, fig. 13, 14; Szalacska: Járdányi-Paulovics 1953, T. XXVII, 2, XXVIII, 1-4).

#### IV Pendants and beads in the shape of a lunule, amphora, bird, insect and human mask

Besides ivy-leaf-shaped pendants, the appearance of pendants and beads made in different forms have been well confirmed among the pre-Roman and Roman finds jewellery in the Central Balkans. Pendants of the lunule type or crescent-shaped pendants are known from the Hellenistic period, when they were especially widely distributed in southern Italy and on the Black Sea coast, from where they were very quickly distributed into the Danube Valley (Beccatti 1955, T. CXLVII, 322; Marshall 1911 (1969), no. 2921-2922; Popović 1996: 41-42, 137-138). Nevertheless, the combi-

nation of the lunule and ivy leaf pendants on the same piece of adornment is not common among the silver jewellery from the Balkan-Pannonian region; both of these types of pendants were frequently hung separately on different silver chains. On one silver chain from the National Museum in Belgrade (Popović 1994b: 247, cat. no. 132) and a torque from grave no. 722 at the *Vimancium* necropolis (Zotović 1995: 157-158, Abb. 17, 18), both dated at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> - beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, pendants of a lunula and ivy-leaf shape were hung on the same piece of jewellery, but separately. The necklace-chain from the Mačvanska Mitrovica (?) hoard (fig. 8a), deposited in the period after 81/82 AD, seems to be unique by its size, decoration of the clasps and the form of pendants shaped as lunulae in combination with the rhomboidal ivy-leaf (Guštin, Popović 2017: 60, fig. 6, 1), but these forms are not known in pre-Roman jewellery in the Balkan-Pannonian region. In the same find, a simple pendant of the lunula type also appeared (Popović, Guštin 2017: 64, fig. 8, 2) (fig. 8b). Different types of lunula pendants were hung on the five gilded silver belt pendants from the Tekija hoard (Manozišić 1957: 24-26, 85-87, Pl. XIV, XV), also deposited in the period after 81/82 AD, and on the specimen from the site of Hunedoare-Sânpetru in Transilvania (Sirbu et al. 2007, fig. 18. 1). In the Balkan-Pannonian region, silver lunula shaped pendants hung on chains are sometimes found together with other specimens of jewellery of an autochthonous style, as with the specimens from Arčar (*Ratiaria*) and Szalacska, dated to the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> or the first half - middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century (Велковъ 1933: 407, обр. 159-162; Járdányi-Paulovics 1953, T. XXVII, 2; Popović 2011: 184, fig. 11, 2). The gold lunula pendants, such as the specimens from the necropolis at the site

of Guberevac (Popović 1996b, cat. 130-131) and the gold chains with the lunula-shaped pendants, such as the specimen from Dubravica (*Margum*) (Popović 1996b, cat. 102) (fig 8c), show that gold lunula-shaped ornaments are less frequent among the finds from this period. The use of lunula pendants hung on a chain during the Tetrarchic period is testified by one gold specimen (fig. 8d) from a set of gold jewellery found in the crypt of the mausoleum in the Tetrarchic imperial complex at

Šarkamen, eastern Serbia (Popović 2005: 60-62, cat. 3, fig. 44, Pl. II).

Pendants in the shape of amphorae appeared in the Hellenic cultural circle in the 7<sup>th</sup> –6<sup>th</sup> centuries BC at the sites in Agora and Chalcidic (Amandry 1953, no. 45, 84-94). Later, in the Hellenistic period, they were widespread in the whole Mediterranean basin as beads or pendants on necklaces or earrings. The same custom is also noted among the material from the Židovar treasure, deposited



Fig. 8. Lunula-shaped pendants: a) Mačvanska Mitrovica(?), necklace-chain and pendants in the form of lunula in combination with an ivy-leaf, after 81/82 AD; b) Mačvanska Mitrovica(?), lunula shaped pendant; c) Dubravica (*Margum*), gold chain with lunula-shaped pendant, 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, d) Šarkamen, gold chain with lunula-shaped pendant, first decades of the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD.



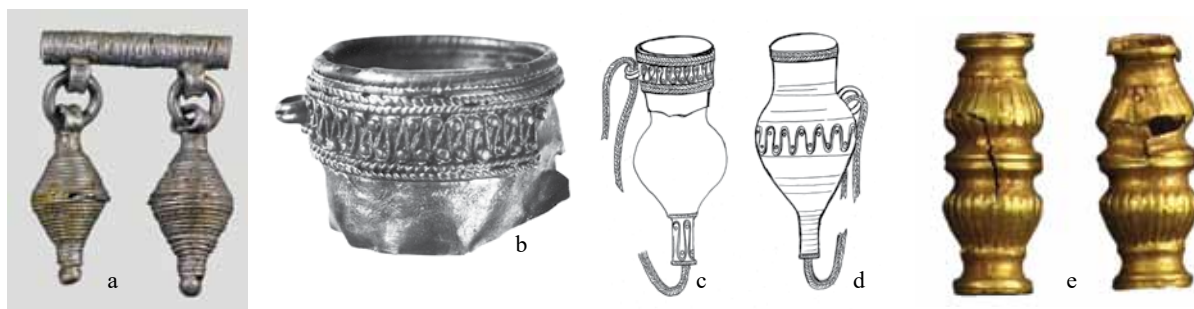


Fig. 9. Pendants made in the form of a miniature vase: a) Židovar, amphora-shaped pendants, the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC; b) Dvorska, a silver miniature vase on a chain, the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD; c-d) miniature vases chains: Dvorska, Szalacska, reconstruction (drawing by A. Premk); e) gold beads in the form of miniature vases, Guberevac, 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> century AD.

around the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, which contained four silver *tubuli*, parts of a necklace, each with two pendants shaped in the form of an amphora decorated with filigree wire (Jevtić 2006: 139-140, fig. 83; Popović 2011: 186, fig. 13, 4) (fig. 9a). Concerning the early Roman Danube-Pannonian hoards of jewellery, this form of amphora-shaped beads or pendants is not known. However, as with the ends of the silver chains from the Szalacska (Darnay 1911, T. I) and Dvorska (Popović 1996a, fig. 16-17; Popović 2011: 187, fig. 17) hoards (fig. 9b-c), the manufacture of decorations in the form of miniature vessels, based on Hellenistic traditions, continued in the local workshops until the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. In the same period,

during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the first decades of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, beads in the forms of miniature vessels (fig. 9d), made of sheet gold, have been confirmed at the site of Guberevac, in the Kosmaj region of the Roman silver and lead mines (Popović 1996b, cat. 122-124). Specimens from Vinik near Niš (Jovanović 1978: 47-48, cat. 21, fig. 88), Karataš (*Diana*) (Popović 2001: 41, fig. 1), Ćirikovac near Smederevo (*Vinceia*) (Цуњак, Марковић-Николић 1997: 41-43, sl. 8), Arčar (*Ratiaria*) (Ruseva-Slokoska 1991: 279) and Silistra (*Durostorum*) (Mușețeanu 1982: 127, fig. 1, 8), show that local transformations of Hellenistic models of gold beads shaped in the form of *cantharos* were also produced sporadically in the Balkan workshops during the 3<sup>rd</sup> -4<sup>th</sup> centuries.



Fig 10. Pendants in the shape of birds: a) Židovar, the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC; b) Nova Božurna, earrings, 2<sup>nd</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD.

Silver pendants and beads of different shapes are dominant ornaments in the Židovar treasure. Besides the already mentioned pendants in the form of an ivy-leaf and amphora, there are also pendants and beads in the shape of a bird (fig. 10a), insect (fig. 11a), human figure, human head and mask (fig. 12a) (Sladić 2006: 46-54, Fig. 31-47; Popović 2011: 186-187, fig. 13). Although such jewellery is not common among Balkan finds of decorations of an autochthonous style, some specimens of Roman jewellery from this region deserve closer attention. Namely, pendants in the shape of birds and insects, from Greece and the East Mediterranean, in the Hellenistic period became a frequently represented form of decoration on earrings, necklaces and other adornments. This applies, above all, to pendants in the form of different kinds of birds, such as the miniature figurines from sites in northern Greece, from the 8<sup>th</sup> -7<sup>th</sup> centuries BC (Deppert-Lippitz 1996, no. 23), and, especially, the luxuriously executed pendants of the Hellenistic earrings from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC (Deppert-Lippitz 1996, no. 67). The simplified



Fig. 11. Pendants and beads in the shape of insects: a) Židovar, the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC; b) Nova Božurna, necklace, 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> century AD; c) Juhor, a silver diadem with a gold application, the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD.

variant of this jewellery, gold earrings from Nova Božurna near Prokuplje (Jovanović 1978: 81, cat. 1, fig. 158), with an impressed motif of a stylised bird on pendants (fig. 10b), reflects the tradition of reproducing this motif, which survived in the region of Central Serbia until the 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD. This same find also includes a gold necklace composed of 22 pendants in the shape of a stylised bee (Jovanović 1978: 81-82, cat. 4, fig. 160) (fig. 11b). This find could be considered a part of the inventory of some cult place or sacred treasure. The same conclusions apply to a find from Juhor, containing a ribbon diadem decorated with punched ornament, a running zig-zag line touching the edges with dots, circles with dots in the centre as well as with punched lines joined by dots, and schematised representations of bees (fig 11c). The bee had a very important symbolic role in the Ionian world, transferring religious traditions from the pre-Hellenistic period, from Asia Minor and Crete, where, as in Egypt, it was a symbol of royal power. As a

substitute for the human spirit, it played an important part in rituals of the divinisation of the dead, as the guardian of his power (Popović V. 1964: 40). After the establishment of the Ionian colonies, such beliefs spread to the Black Sea coast, whereby a gold bee-shaped pendant also appears in the Scythian finds (Minns 1913: 427, fig. 318). In the Balkan hinterland, bee-shaped applications have been registered in princely graves, dated to the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, in Atenica near Čačak (Đuknić, Jovanović 1965, T. XV, 5-7; XIX, 6, 7). This motif also retained its symbolic meaning among the local population in the first centuries of Roman domination.

Motifs of crickets and scarabs, noted on pendants from the Židovar treasure (Popović 2011: 184, fig. 13, 1), as well as very stylised human heads or masks (Popović 2011: 184, fig. 13, 3), also appear on pendants-amulets from Juhor (Popović 2002, cat. 17-18) (fig. 2a; 12c). The material from Juhor also shows certain similarities with objects from the hoards of silver jewellery in Oltenia (Popović 2002: 66-70, 109-112). The representations of beetles or stylised human masks can also be found on the cylindrical silver panelling from the Bare hoard (Popović 1994, cat. 16-17, fig. 12, Pl. XIII; Popović 2011: 187, fig. 16) (fig. 12b), connected to the last phase of the so-called Dacian hoards of silver objects. Should we treat these representations as a continuation of the Hellenistic goldsmith's tradition, in whose preservation and enrichment maybe Celts played an important role?

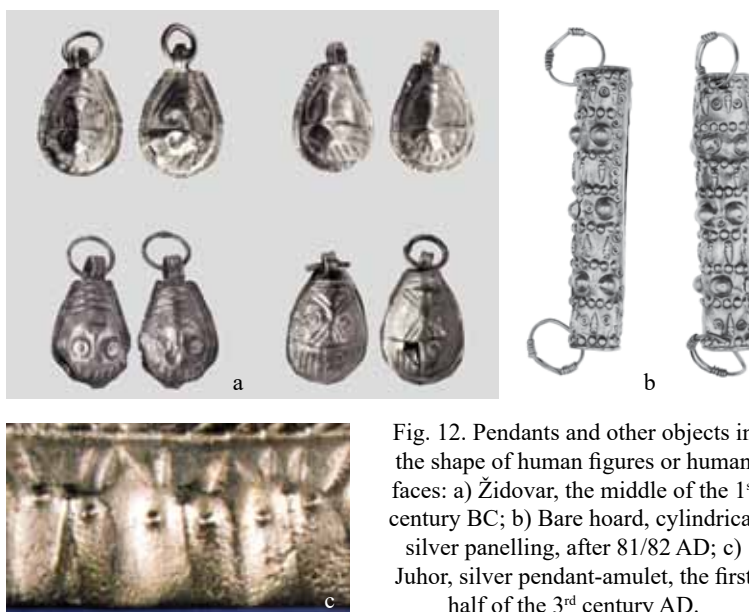


Fig. 12. Pendants and other objects in the shape of human figures or human faces: a) Židovar, the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC; b) Bare hoard, cylindrical silver panelling, after 81/82 AD; c) Juhor, silver pendant-amulet, the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD.



## V Miniature and double axes

Small axe pendants are known from Celtic graves dated to the Late Iron Age period (*Artefacts AML-3003*) and also from the Roman world (Martin-Kilcher 2008: 228, Abb. 10.2). Later they had a strong protective meaning and were added to various jewellery items, especially rings with overlapped and spirally twisted ends (earrings, bracelets, chains) and even on *tubuli*. These types of amulets made of silver, bronze, iron and even ceramic, were popular in the second half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC on both sides of the Carpathian mountains and widespread in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (Rustoiu 1996: 124, tipul 4b, fig. 90; Spanu 2012: 69; Tonkova 2011: 192-193, fig. 5.1; Ruseva-Slokoska 1991: 25, 131, cat. no. 7).

among the grave finds. We can follow their distribution on both sides of the Carpathians and in the wide Lower Danube, far to the north, to the confluence of the Sava river. Nevertheless, several silver rings with axe pendants were found far to the west in the hinterland of Kvarner Bay, Istria (Guštin, Popović 2017: 66-69, fig. 10). The long duration of this type of amulet is well documented in the hoard from Recaş (Horedt 1973: 137). The practice to attach tool amulets (axes, wedges, pins, spades, bars, etc.), i.e., on rings with overlapped and spirally coiled ends, was also represented in the jewellery of the Migration period (Kiss 1972: 120, 121, T. I, 3).

Concerning pendants in the shape of a double axe - *labrys*, the situation is completely different. A pendant in the form of a double axe was suspended



Fig. 13. Pendants in the form of miniature axes: a) Tekija, silver bracelet, after 81/82 AD; b) Tekija, gold ring, after 81/82 AD; c) Mačvanska Mitrovica, silver rings, after 81/82 AD.

In the group of Tekija – Bare hoards horizon, a discussion about the presence of axe amulets attached to bracelets and rings is obligatory. In the Tekija hoard, the richest of this period, an axe pendant was attached with other miniature tools on a large silver bracelet made of wire with a rectangular cross-section, with overlapped and spirally twisted ends (fig. 13a). Another, smaller, similarly manufactured axe pendant made of filigree wire (fig. 13b) was fixed on a gold ring in the space between the spiral coils. (Mano-Zisi 1957: 13-14, 15-16, 72, 74, Pl. III, 7, VI, VII). The exceptional use of gold and filigree techniques shows the strong tradition of Hellenistic Black Sea goldsmiths and the influence of the metalwork style of this period on objects made in later workshops. In the Mačvanska Mitrovica (?) hoard, four silver pendants in the form of miniature axes were hung separately on rings (fig. 13c) and three were hung on *tubuli* (Guštin Popović 2017: 63-64, figs. 4, 7, 2-5, 8, 1). In this period, axe pendants were present in the settlements, in the hoards and

by an open-ended torque of plain silver wire, originating from the Juhor find (fig. 14). The pendant is profiled at the joint of the two blades, while at its lateral edge there is a wide flat bronze suspension loop attached by rivets (Popović 2002, cat. 3). Pendants of a double axe shape (*labrys*) were not, as far as we know, used as amulets on Roman torques. However, the *labrys* is an important and ancient religious symbol especially frequent in the Minoan and Mycenaean cultures. It was a double-headed axe with a shaft-hole in the middle and was made of various materials



Fig. 14. Double axe-shaped pendants: Juhor, silver torques, the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD.

and in different sizes. As votive offerings, *labryses* were deposited on Crete in graves and shrines or placed on columns and Horns of Consecration, while miniature specimens were used as magic objects related to rain and agrarian cults. The *labrys* also retained a significant role in religion during subsequent periods and in the Roman times as an attribute of Jupiter Dolichenus and other deities (Hatto 1969, col. 431-432.; Cermanović-Kuzmanović, Srejšević 1992: 115). In the Balkan hinterland, the custom of depositing a *labrys* in the grave has been recorded for the 6<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> century BC, in a tumulus necropolis at Romaja near Prizren (Tasić 1998: 196), but no jewellery shaped as a *labrys* has been noted in this region. However, in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, in a grave in Sidonis near Thessalonike, a luxurious gold necklace, decorated with filigree and granulation, composed of many segments, among which four were shaped as *labryses*, was discovered (*Greek Jewellery* 1997, 83, cat. 61). This indicates that within the Hellenic cultural circle, miniature *labryses* preserved the function of magic objects, used in jewellery production as elements of a protective character for a relatively long time, probably to the end of Hellenism. The pendant of a *labrys* shape on the silver torque found at Juhor was made of thin silver sheet and decorated in the middle and along the edges with tiny incisions, depicting a fishbone motif. This motif was very popular with Dacian goldsmiths, where it was most often used as decoration on sheet silver shield-like pendants. These pendants, as well as pendants of a *labrys* shape, are characterised by the reduced linear style of their shape and decoration. Therefore, although pendants of a *labrys* shape are unknown types among Dacian jewellery, pendants of the Juhor torque could be based on the ornamental scheme related to the tradition of the Dacian goldsmiths, which is characterised by standardised linear ornaments. However, it has already been noted that in the formation of the so-called Dacian style in jewellery production, strong cultural influences from the Hellenic-Hellenistic world from the Black Sea coast, especially goldsmith centres in *Olbia*, played rather a significant role. In the same way, the *labrys* symbol could have been accepted as an amulet and, thus, via Dacian goldsmiths, also distributed outside the strictly Dacian territory. As the bronze suspension loop was subsequently attached to the lateral edge-blade of the axe on the

Juhor torque, we concluded that this object was originally used as the amulet and only later, preserving its function, was it used as a pendant on the torque.

## VI Rings

A large group of jewellery consisted of silver wire rings of different sizes, with overlapped ends attached to the loop by spirally twisted coils. They were formed of wire with different cross-sections, mostly simple and round, sometimes very fragile. The luxury variant was made of large wire with a square cross-section. They were produced mostly of silver, but also bronze and rarely of gold. The overlapped ends were attached to the ring loop by twisted ends with a different number of coils. As jewellery, they are well known in the Late Hellenistic period and especially in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, with continuity in early Roman imperial contexts. This jewellery was popular along the Black Sea coast in the territory of the Dacians, but also well distributed by the tribe of Liburni (*Nin/Asseria*) in their hinterland, in necropolises in the Una river valley (Gorica, Jezerine, Ribić), to the east and the west from the north of the Italic peninsula and in the hinterland of Lion Bay, as far as the Iberian peninsula, then to the north of the Alps and even further to Northern Europe. The distribution of bracelets and different small rings with overlapped ends attached to the loop by spirally twisted coils is also traceable on numerous sites south of the Danube valley in today's Bulgaria and, on the other side, towards Pannonia and the Middle Danube, and in the territory of Western Balkans, mostly in the early Roman Empire context of the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. The hoards at Bare, Tekija and Mačvanska Mitrovica (?) show the popularity of these rings at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD (Guštin, Popović 2017: 59-60, 63). This was an enduring style of ring and it is possible to trace it even to the Migration period. Other types of rings are not common among the pre-Roman and the early Roman Central Balkan finds of adornments, although some specimens from this region deserve our attention.

A small bronze ring from the Židovar hoard (fig. 15a), dated to the first half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, was kept in a luxurious silver box (Sladić

2006: 56, fig. 51; Popović 2011: 179-181, fig. 4, 1). This ring has its closest parallels in a gold ring from the hoard in Tekija (*Transdierna*) on the Danube (Mano-Zisi 1957: 13, 71, no. 5, Pl. III, 5; Popović 1992, cat. 2; Popović 2011, fig. 4, 2), deposited after 81/2 (fig. 15b). The form of the bronze ring from Židovar and of the gold one from Tekija has an ellipsoid loop, gradually widening and thickening towards the ellipsoid, flat head of the ring. However, the ring from the Židovar hoard has a developed ornament on the head, whereas on the specimen from Tekija it is represented only by a palm leaf. On the specimen from Židovar the palm leaf is above a stylised human figure, under which there is a dolphin. The standing, probably male, figure, has long hair, which falls on his shoulders, secured in two braids, while his arms are held close to his body. Such an ornamental scheme suggests a representation of Apollo, the deity whose sacred animal was the dolphin (Srejšović, Cermanović-Kuzmanović 1979: 40), and who is often represented with long hair, with long curls or braids down the neck. On the other hand, the palm leaf is a symbol not only of Apollo but also of his twin sister Artemis, to whom Leto gave birth by embracing a palm tree with her arms (Srejšović, Cermanović-Kuzmanović 1979: 38, 55). Consequently, the ring from Židovar contains symbols of the solar cult, whose elements can be noticed in this part of Banat on Bronze Age terracottas, to which belong the so-called Votive Cart from Vršac and, especially, the famous Votive Cart from Dupljaja, which, according to the interpretation of some authors, allude to the Hyperborean myth of Apollo (Јовановић 2007: 9-13 with quoted literature). On the ring from Židovar, Apollo and his sacred animal and plant are probably represented, which is also the iconographic scheme represented on the specimen from Tekija, in a reduced form. At the same time, the ornament on the ring from Židovar explains the meaning of the motifs on the ring mentioned above, and also on another one (fig. 15c), a double ring from Tekija (Mano-Zisi 1957: 13, 71-72, no. 6, Pl. III, 6; Popović 1992, cat. 3; Popović 2011, fig. 4, 3). These motifs were, until now, regarded as simple decorations, such

as a palm tree or a spike. The relative geographical proximity of Židovar and Tekija supported the thesis that these rings are connected. Rings of this type are dated approximately into the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (Henkel 1913, Nr. 63, 107; Deppert-Lippitz 1985, Nr. 129, 127); among the Italic finds they are represented since the early imperial period, and on their flattened heads there are the representations of birds, sea-shells, comic masks and other motifs (Seipel 1996, Kat. 93, 161, 162). The specimens from Tekija were made, given the range of time in which the hoard was deposited, probably in the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century. Another ring from Tekija gives the testimony to the use of a motif of a palm leaf. The palm leaf is engraved on an ellipsoid gilt plate inserted on top of the large silver ring, dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD (Popović 1992, cat. 79). Above the



Fig 15. Rings: a) Židovar, the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC; b) Tekija (*Transdierna*), after 81/82 AD; c) Tekija (*Transdierna*), after 81/82 AD, Tekija (*Transdierna*), 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> century AD.

palm leaf, a Greek inscription *EYTYXI*, was engraved. This acclamation, expressing a wish for happiness or good fortune, was very popular in the Roman period, and placed on many different objects. Consequently, the iconographic scheme representing Apollo with his sacred animal and plant (Židovar treasure, the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC) appears in a reduced form of a single palm-leaf motif (Tekija hoard, after 81/82 AD), whose symbolic meaning was later transformed through the accompaniment of a wish for happiness or good fortune (Tekija accidental find, 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD).

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A short review of some of the characteristic jewellery types from the pre-Roman and Roman

Central Balkan finds shows that some of the forms kept the same shape throughout centuries, but others, supporting the original matrix, changed their appearance, technique of manufacture and original symbolic meaning. Several directions of these processes can be registered.

A good example of an adornment retaining the same appearance and symbolic meaning during the pre-Roman and Roman times is a lunula-shaped pendant. These kinds of pendants always had some protective role. They are made of silver, gold, bronze or other materials. The ends of the crescent can be separated or touching each other, and the upper side of the pendant can be plain or decorated with granulation, but their shape and function did not significantly change from the Hellenistic period to the later Roman times (fig. 8).

Other types of pendants show a different picture. Ivy-leaf shaped pendants, registered in the Židovar treasure, deposited during the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC, were made by embossing on a die and the additional connecting of the front and back side, rendering a three-dimensional quality. Different appearances and techniques of manufacture could be noticed in the early Roman ivy leaf-shaped pendants, which were stamped flat. According to the finds of silver jewellery from Balkan and Pannonian hoards from the 1<sup>st</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries and representations on the tombstones in the Drina Valley, these pendants were hung on the chain that connected fibulae, and on the chains hanging on fibulae placed on the shoulders. This combination of fibulae and chains with the pendants in the form of an ivy leaf is characteristic of the Drina Valley, Pannonia and Oltenia (figs. 5-6). The relation of the silver fibulae with the silver chains twisted based on the "loop in loop" system in south-western Serbia was registered in the Late Archaic period on jewellery from Kruševica. However, in the early Roman period, the pectoral ornament composed of silver chains and ivy leaf-shaped pendants was characteristic of women's decoration in the Drina Valley, Pannonia and Oltenia. The question arises as to where this mode of wearing decoration among the inhabitants of different entities, living at the same time in relatively distant regions, originates. The answer could be the hypothesis, which

has already been set forth, that the upper part of the Drina Valley in the pre-Roman period was inhabited by the *Breuci*, skilled in mining and metallurgy, who, during the period of the hegemony of the *Scordisci*, exploited the mines around Krupanj and Srebrenica (Јовановић 1995: 111-115). The skilfulness of the *Breuci* as miners is confirmed by the epigraphic material from the mining zones in Dacia, where they worked on the extraction of metal ores and metal processing (Јовановић 1995: 112), which could also explain the appearance of the silver anchor-fibulae, twisted chains and pendants in the form of an ivy-leaf at many sites in Oltenia. If we accept this hypothesis, it would mean that the *Scordisci*, for whom the *Breuci* were extracting silver ore in the Drina Valley, took over from them the custom of wearing twisted chains and pendants in an ivy-leaf shape. Because of their conservatism and low intensity of Romanisation, the *Scordisci* continued to practice this fashion in women's costumes until the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, not only in its central region but also in Oltenia, where certain parts of this tribe had migrated. However, after the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, the custom of pectoral ornaments with chains and ivy-leaf pendants in women's costumes had disappeared in the Balkans.

Regarding necklaces composed of large metal segmented beads, the situation is similar. Originating from the Late Archaic period (the Kruševica find), the transformed type of this jewellery was sporadically represented in the early Roman time (Bela Reka hoard) (fig. 3). Some of the other types of pendants, such as those shaped as lunulae, amphorae, birds, insects and human masks, originated from the Hellenic cultural circle and had appeared in the Central Balkan finds in the Archaic period (a princely grave in Atenica). However, all of these forms are represented in the Židovar treasure, dated to the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. These motifs were in use in some parts of today's Central Serbia (Nova Božurna, Juhor and Bare) until the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD (figs. 10-12), albeit in stylised forms. Only beads shaped as miniature vessels, silver specimens used during the 2<sup>nd</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD on silver chain ends (Dvorska, Szalacska), or gold ones as the beads for necklaces (fig. 9), were continuously produced in the late Roman period, mostly as kantharos-shaped beads fixed on hair-pin tops, often used in sites



along the Middle and Lower Danube. The silver miniature vessels from the 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD were decorated with filigree and granulation, and the *tubuli* of the silver chain ends were produced at the same time. The custom of the decoration of silver *tubuli* using filigree and granulation was noted on pieces from the Židovar find, dating to the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC (fig. 7). However, the most expressive piece of jewellery ornamented by the filigree and granulation technique is the clasp of a necklace from the Bela Reka hoard, deposited during the last years of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD. The result of a combination of fine toreutic techniques with black glass inlays, it is an extraordinary example of early Roman jewellery, manufactured using the best Hellenistic traditions. The clasp was fixed on a necklace composed of large segmented silver beads, originating from Late Archaic pieces of jewellery (fig 3).

When observing the types of miniature pendants in the shape of an axe and double axe, the *labrys*, the situation of their origin and representation is different. The small axe pendants had strong protective meanings when added to various jewellery items. This type of amulet was popular in the second half of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC on both sides of the Carpathian mountains and widespread in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. In hoards of silver jewellery deposited after 81/82 AD (Tekija, Bare and Mačvanska Mitrovica (?)) the presence of the axe amulet on bracelets and rings was obligatory (fig. 13). In this period, axe pendants are also present in settlements and graves. We can trace them on both sides of the Carpathian and in the wider area of the Lower Danube to the confluence of the Sava river, but some of them were found far to the west in the hinterland of Kvarner Bay. The long duration of this type of amulet is documented by pieces dated to the Migration period. On the other hand, the pendants of the double axe shape (*labrys*) were not, as far as we know, used as amulets in Roman jewellery. However, the *labrys* is an important and ancient religious symbol especially frequent in the Minoan and then Mycenaean culture. The *labrys* also retained a significant role in religion during subsequent periods, and in Roman times it was considered an attribute of Jupiter Dolichenus and other deities. On one open-ended torque of plain silver wire from the Juhor find the pendant in the form of a double axe was suspended (fig. 14). This

pendant was decorated by incisions depicting a fishbone motif, very popular in Dacian goldsmithing. Maybe the appearance of the *labrys*-shaped pendant was as a result of the strong cultural influences from the Hellenic and Hellenistic centres on the Black Sea coast, especially goldsmith workshops in Olbia, on Dacian toreutics.

The evolution of two jewellery groups is especially interesting.

The first group, radial diadems, was worn by the solar goddesses in the pre-Roman and early Roman period (finds from Mačvanska Mitrovica (?), Juhor and Smederevo). Later, these adornments developed in two different directions.

The first is a radial crown (*corona radiata*), the insignia of Roman emperors, but first worn by the sun god, Sol, a very important divinity from the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, i.e., during the time of the religious syncretism when cults of a solar character became widespread. In this atmosphere, even the supreme god, Jupiter, was sometimes represented with a laurel wreath resembling a radial crown, as on one bronze statuette of this god, found in the village of Planinica near Zaječar, eastern Serbia (Јаловић 1974: 163-164, Т. I; Јовановић 2007: 189-191, сл. 26. 1).

The second direction of the radial diadem's evolution is the town crown (*corona muralis*), worn by city goddesses (figs. 1-2), very popular personifications during the late Roman period.

The second group of jewellery, whose evolution can be traced, comprises rings with symbols of the Apollo cult depicted on the tops of their heads. The earliest specimen, a bronze ring from the Židovar treasure (the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC), renders a developed ornament containing the figure of Apollo with his sacred animal and plant, the dolphin and the palm leaf. Two gold rings from the Tekija hoard, deposited after 81/82 AD, have only a palm leaf represented on their heads, symbolising Apollo. On the head of the latest ring from Tekija, an accidental find dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD, above a palm leaf, a Greek inscription EYTYXI, was engraved (fig. 15). This acclamation, expressing a wish for happiness or good fortune, was very popular in the Roman period.

The mentioned rings from Židovar and Tekija are good examples of the transformation of messages engraved on the head of these rings, primarily by the appearance of the simplified symbol-



ism, and later by their use for profane purposes. The chronological difference between the jewellery from the Židovar treasure and the Tekija hoard can explain the presence of the reduced ornament on the rings from Tekija, visible in its full form on the specimen from Židovar. On the other hand, this would point to this ring having been placed into a box just before the deposition of the hoard, i.e., that it is one of the latest objects in the treasure, made around the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. Although a hundred years is not a short chronological period, our opinion is that this simple form of ring, created under the influences of a Roman goldsmith, could have remained in use during this period. The cultic content of the visual presentations on these rings probably depicts the beliefs of the local population, created through the long-lasting contacts with the Hellenic world. However, this jewellery does not render any facts on the ethnic affiliation of its owners. This population, although in some religious aspects connected to the Hellenic and Hellenistic culture, was indirectly in touch with the Roman civilisation's heritage during the last decades of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. The composition engraved on the head of the latest ring from Tekija, the acclamation expressing the wish for happiness or good fortune accompanied by a palm leaf, shows that the influence of Roman culture became stronger in the Iron Gate region during the 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD.

Numerous individual finds and hoards with silver jewellery from the early Roman period testify to the important role in local manufacture in the whole Balkan-Danubian area that was played by the autochthonous component, resulting from the tradition of the La Tène culture, expressing in its manifestation numerous generally adopted elements, common to the Illyrian, Dacian, Thracian and Celtic substrate. The presence of Hellenistic elements on jewellery from the Roman period had been the expression of older contacts of this territory with the Hellenic world, which had already been intensive since the Archaic period. At this time, the penetration of cultural influences into the interior of the Balkans followed two main directions.

The road leading across the western parts of the North Macedonia and Kosovo region and then, by the valleys of the Ibar and Drina rivers, to south Pannonia is testified by the inventory of the princely graves at Trebenište, Radolište, Pečka

Banja, Novi Pazar, Kruševica, Atenica and of the assemblage of some later graves at Jarak in Srem. The other direction, running by the Vardar and Morava valleys, representing the direct communication between the Hellenic world and the Balkan hinterland, was confirmed by the decoration of large silver belts of the Mramorac type (Palavestra 1995: 35-56). During the last centuries BC, the strong cultural influences from the Hellenic and Hellenistic world from the Black Sea coast, especially goldsmith centres in *Olbia*, played a somewhat significant role in the manufacturing of local pieces of adornments. Nevertheless, the later replicas of the Hellenistic models, made by local craftsmen, show some divergence from classical forms, although the filigree and granulation techniques were well-known and had been mastered. However, the reproduction of previous Hellenistic models continued on jewellery from the Balkan-Danubian area until the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. Various influences resulted in the establishment of a specific style in metalwork and manufacture of jewellery in this region, the originality of which was just in the reproduction of Hellenistic models transformed through a symbiosis with autochthonous forms, out of which many had appeared as a result of previous contacts with the Hellenic world.

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**Artefacts AML** – *Artefacts. Encyclopédie collaborative en ligne des objets archéologiques*

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- National Museum Niš: figs. 10b and 11b
- National Museum, Požarevac: fig. 12b
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**Dragi Mitrevski**

Institute of Art History and Archaeology, Faculty of Philosophy Skopje  
dragimit@yahoo.com

## PAEONIAN CULTURAL MARKS

**Abstract:** During the last 30 years, archaeological investigations conducted in the area historically attested as belonging to ancient Paeonian tribes have highlighted several cultural characteristics that appear as the main features of the Paeonian Iron Age culture. Firstly, inhumations in cists, most often built of stone slabs, stand out as a unique ritual for all Paeonian communities from the Late Bronze Age onward. Second, there were unique, yet stylistically reduced, similar ceramic forms that developed throughout the entire Iron Age. However, there are also some local differences in pottery. For instance, the ceramic production of the northern Paeonian communities stands out with large numbers of hand-made vessels that are decorated with carvings and grooves. In the more advanced, and more open to archaic influences, southern regions these forms were produced on a potter's wheel and with a matte coating and linear decoration. The strongest expression of the Paeonian Iron Age culture is the so-called cult bronzes – various forms of small bronze plastic items, closely related in their unique stylistic character, context of discovery, territory, and period. These interesting small finds belong to the extended family of so-called Macedonian bronzes and represent the strongest manifestation of the Paeonian culture of the 7th century BC.

**Keywords:** Ancient Paeonians, Paeonian bronzes, Iron Age, Macedonia

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Some 30 years ago, there was nothing known as Paeonian culture, nothing typical, distinctive or easily known as a “Paeonian object” or “Paeonian cultural context” (Merker 1965: 45; Hammond 1972: 25).

As a result of excavations over the last decades in the historically depicted Paeonian territory, the Paeonian culture has now been determined to a large extent, especially the Iron Age community.

From Homer's time until Herodotus, on the territory along the Vardar river valley and its tributaries, a very indicative culture of the Iron Age developed (Vasic 1987: 710; Mitrevski 2013: 214; Mitrevski 2022: 158). Many cultural manifestations, characteristic only for that time and territory, express the very strong and distinctive culture of the Paeonian tribes. Paeonian burial customs, Paeonian pottery and Paeonian cult bronzes are the most indicative of these.

**Inhumation in cist graves**, together with other burial characteristics, is the first Paeonian cultural mark. It is exposed as a unique burial ritual for all Paeonian communities, from the Late Bronze Age

until the classical time. During the Late Bronze Age, it is best known through the necropolises of the so-called Vardar or Ulanci group (Vardarski Rid-Gevgelia, Ulanci-Gradsko, Vodovratski Pat-Vodovrati, Scupi-Skopje, etc.) (Mitrevski 2003: 46; Mitrevski 2022: 64). The crouched inhumations with different orientations by gender in the cist graves are the main characteristics of these burials (Fig. 1). During the Iron Age, the same burial customs were practised, but the deceased inhumed in extended positions (Fig. 2). The Iron Age graves were organised in flat necropolises or under tumuli, depending on the different social and economic conditions (Mitrevski 2013: 214-232). In the more conservative or cattle breeding areas, the graves were organised under tumuli. On the other hand, in the more communicative regions, opened to the south to the Aegean world, the graves were organised in so-called flat necropolises. In fact, the organisation of the graves offers an excellent insight into the organisation and social structure of any Paeonian community.





Fig. 1. A part of the Ulanci necropolis from the Late Bronze Age

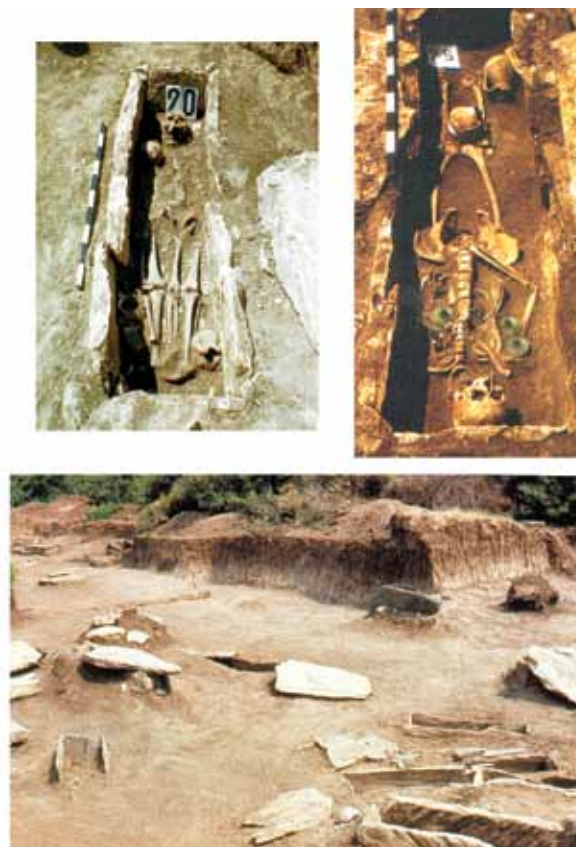


Fig. 2. A part of the Dedeli necropolis from the Iron Age

Through the phenomena of tumuli and their development, we have the best possibility of comprehending Paeonian social and economic changes during the Iron Age (Mitrevski 1997: 102). During the Early Iron Age (10<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> century BC) the so-called *Clan type* of tumuli appeared, which expressed the clan organisation of the community. These were common grave constructions for the whole clan, where the grave of the founder of the clan received special treatment, being positioned in the very centre of the tumulus (Fig. 3), and it is the oldest initial burial in specially made grave construction. Subsequent graves of his family and successors could be organised in one, two or three circles, positioned with the heads toward him. All of them expressed special respect toward the father of the clan, but mutually they were equal in all burial elements. Such clan tumuli appear in small groups, usually only a few of them, placed in some dominant position (Visoi-Beranci, Barata-Caniste, Krusevica-Mariovo, Orlovi Cuki-Karaorman, Kunovo Cuki-Orizari and so on) (Mikulčić 1961: 30; Nacev, Jovanov 1996: 5; Mitrevski 2013: 222; Mitkovski 2010; Mitrevski 1997: 102).

During the 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C., a new, so-called *family type* of tumuli was established. They were much smaller, with only a few graves and without a central burial. In the previously determined circle area, the members of just one biological family were buried (Fig. 4). They were buried uniquely, each with a unique orientation and covered by the common burial mound, which was less than one metre in height. Contrary to the elder clan tumuli, many large necropolises with several hundred tumuli of the family type were created during the 7<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries BC (Dabici-Sopot, Radanje-Stip, Gorno Pole-Karaorman, Krsianski Gumenja-Vinica, Slamite -Rapes and so on) (Garasanin, Garasanin 1959: 25; Mitrevski 1997: 92; Vasilevska 1993: 69).

Burial under tumuli was practised in continuity until the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> or the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. After the disintegration of the old tribal or clan system, or more precisely, with the emergence of greater social differentiation and the so-called *princely graves*, there was no longer a need for the old Iron Age tumuli, and they consequently went out of use.

Paeonian tumuli are a much more social rather than ethnic category. Through them, we can fol-

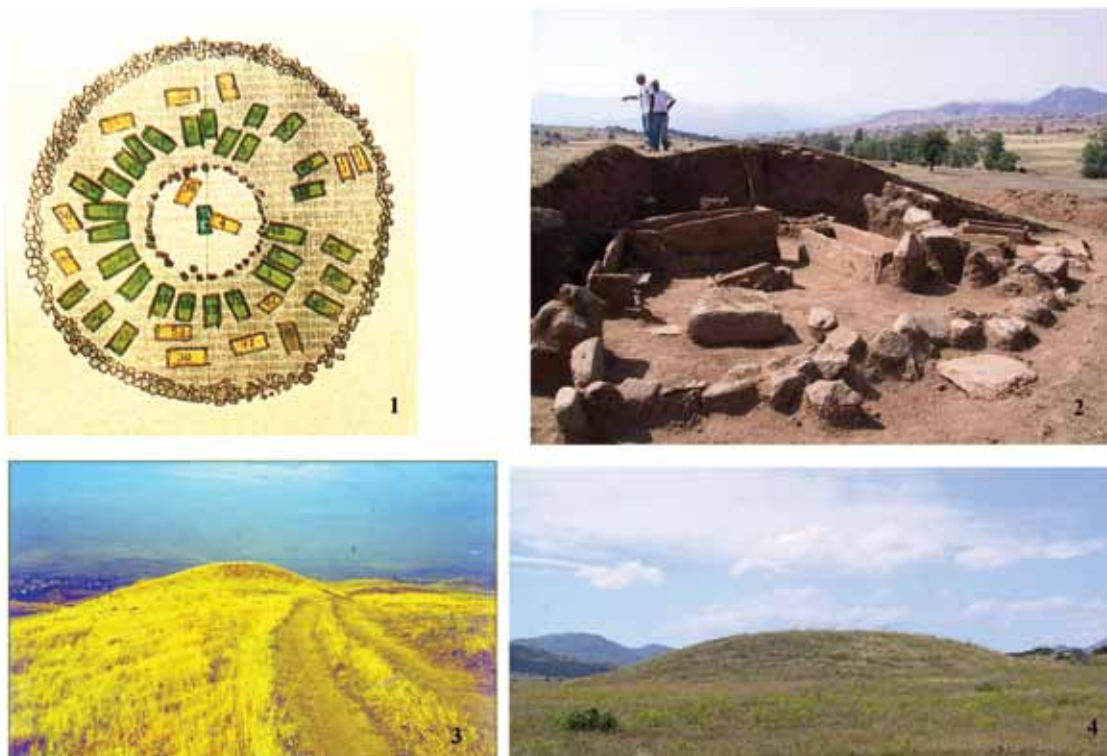


Fig. 3. Some examples of Iron Age tumuli of the so-called Clan tumuli:  
1 Visoi-Beranci near Bitola; 2, 4 Krusevica-Mariovo; 3 Orlovi Cuki-Star Karaorman near Stip

low social and economic changes throughout the whole Iron Age, but only for those communities in conservative areas. The other communities, in the open, communicative areas, prolonged the old burial practices of the Bronze Age, including slab-cist graves, organised in flat necropolises. During the Late Bronze Age, the Paeonians were closely related to the Aegean world. As a result of this, during the Iron Age, they were much more progressive compared to the other conservative communities, and probably no longer using the clan system of social organisation (Mitreviski 2022: 152-155).

As a conclusion about Paeonian burial customs, we can highlight a unique burial ritual of

inhumation in two kinds of necropolises, two different kinds of grave organisations in tumular or flat necropolises. Everything else, regarding grave forms, burial activities, grave goods, and so on, is unique for all Paeonian communities and the entire territory in which these communities are believed to have lived.

Similar to the Paeonian burial costumes, unique types of Paeonian pottery was created during the Iron Age. It was also produced in two different ways, as North and South Paeonian pottery. The more developed South Paeonian communities produced their pottery under the strong influence of archaic Aegean pottery (Fig. 5). It is a specific wheel-thrown ochre coloured ceramic, matt painted with linear decoration, which represented the most sophisticated pottery north of the Aegean world (Vasic 1987: 705; Mitrevski 2012: 105). Its mass production is testified by its requirement as grave goods in every grave in the Lower Vardar necropolises during the 7<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries BC. Several pottery kilns discovered on the site of Isar-Marvinci near Valandovo are final confirmation of its local production. The interior of a kiln was filled with vessels of this type, so such pottery can definitely be known as south Paeonian ceramic of the



Fig. 4. A tumulus of the so-called Family type from the Dabici-Sopot necropolis near Veles





Fig. 5. The main shapes of the so-called South Paeonian or Lower Vardar pottery

Iron Age (Mitrevski 2012: 110, Fig. 9). At the same time, in the northern Paeonian communities, there were the same shapes of pottery, but hand formed, rather than wheel-thrown, and decorated mostly by engraving (Fig. 6). The greatest number of them were discovered as grave goods in the previously mentioned tumuli, but they were also daily-used vessels in every Iron Age settlement. Unlike the South Vardar pottery, the northern vessels were produced under strong Central Balkan influences (Vasic 1987: 690; Garasanin, Garasanin 1959). There were only a few main types (jugs with cut-away necks, mugs with one or two handles, bowls with horizontal handles, etc) that developed into many variations over the whole Paeonian territory.

It can, therefore, be said that, during the Iron Age, on the historically proved Paeonian territory, a very indicative and easily recognisable pottery was created that represents an important part of Paeonian Iron Age material culture. This is especially related to the Lower Vardar ochre baked and wheel-thrown pottery, which was a real leitmotiv of the south Paeonian communities.

The third and strongest expression of the Paeonian culture is the cult bronzes. These are various types of small bronze items in the form of birds, pyxis pendants, miniature jars, stylised birds, round plates, ball objects, horned objects, and different forms of composite pendants, often

with bird decorations, etc. (Fig. 7–13) (Mitrevski 2022: 158).

They are affirmed in science as “Paeonian cult bronzes”, because they were spread across more than 90% of the Vardar valley and its tributaries, more precisely in the historically proved Paeonian territory, during the Paeonian era, or the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC (Mitrevski 1988; Bouzek 2006; Mitrevski 2013: 227; Mitrevski 2021: 93). Only a few specimens have been found outside this territory so



Fig. 6. The main shapes of the so-called north Paeonian pottery



far, mainly as grave goods (Radenkovic-Macva, KuciZi-Korca, Amphipolis, etc.) or as gifts in some Greek temples and sanctuaries (Samos, Chios, Ferre, Philia), which points to their popularity and the Paeonian contact with neighbouring regions (Vasic 2003, Fig. 3-4; Andrea 1976; Bouzek 1974; Kilian 1975, Kilian-Dirlmeir 2002, Taf. 63-64).

The bronzes are all closely related to each other and are revealed in the same context, in separate women's graves. In addition to the usual women's jewellery, the mentioned cult objects also appear in these graves, due to which they are defined as priestly burials (Fig. 7) (Mitrevski 2007; Mitrevski 2021: 98). The cult character of the objects in these burials is no longer disputed, given that, to date, a dozen burials with such objects in their original position have been excavated (Mitrevski 2007; Mitrevski 2021: 97-99; Papazovska, Husenovski 2019). Their very shape and position in the tomb define these objects as of a cultic nature, appearing in two groups, as cult symbols or as cult implements (Mitrevski 2007: 574). According to their iconography, but also according to the data of the ancient authors about the beliefs of the Paeonians, it is indisputable that they relate to the cult of the sun and the burials of priests - guardians of that cult (Vasileva 1994: 21; Mitrevski 1999: 85).

Cult symbols are considered to be all bronzes that represent any appliques or pendants worn on clothes or hung on body parts (Fig. 8). They regularly have an attachment ring at the top. They can

Fig. 7. Two priestly graves from the Marvinci necropolis, with possible reconstructions



Fig. 8. Different types of Paeonia cult bronzes as "cult symbols"





Fig. 9. Different types of Paenonia cult bronzes as “cult implements”



Fig. 10. The cult implements from grave 15 at the Marvinci necropolis



be pendants in their own right, such as bird figures or variants thereof, and they can also appear as complex pendants on which smaller pendants were hung. In any case, they affirmed the cult and illustrated the beliefs of the population, but also the very meaning and role of the deceased, who would have been perceived as a priestess in the cult.

such finds from Chauchitsa (Fig. 9, 14) (Casson 1968: 155, Fig. 59-62; Mitrevski 1999, T-III, 3). They were decorated with concentric circles and engraved lines and are considered to symbolise the sun itself. The question is whether such plates were carried on a stick, as the ancient authors wrote about the Paeonian sun worship, or were simply



Fig. 11. Paeonian cult bronzes from the South Paeonian or Lower Vardar group

An even stronger expression of the cult of the sun are the so-called implements or instruments of the cult. These are objects that served in the ritual activities of the priestesses, which, at the funeral, were specially treated and usually laid separately, next to or on the body of the priestess. Such a position of those objects in the grave and the relationship with the skeletal remains indicate that they probably served as tools – instruments in the practice of the cult actions of the priestess. In that category, as the most prominent types, circular plates, cups with lids, miniature vessels and horned objects are distinguished (Fig. 9).

Several examples of large circular plates have been discovered to date, the best known of which are the Marvinci specimen, along with two other

part of a ritual belt, as the Marvinci finding suggests (Fig. 7, 1; Fig. 10, 1).

Cups with lids or Pyxis pendants are the most striking among the Paeonian cult bronzes (Fig. 9, 1-11). They come in different sizes and different variants, depending on the local production and taste, but they were always made according to the same concept, in two parts, with a cup-container, where certain substances were probably kept, and a lid with which the contents of the cup were covered (Bouzek 1973; Kilian 1975, Taf. 34-44; Vasic 1974: 230). They were carried on a leather strap passed through the side holes of the cup itself and on the lid, which in turn was held closed by a large ball bead (Fig. 10, 2). The smallest cups were probably the most popular and, because of their poppy



Fig. 12. Paeonian cult bronzes from the North group or the Middle, North Vardar and Bregalnica region

bud shape, they are also known as poppy cups (Fig. 9, 8-11). Chemical analyses from the inside of such a cup have determined the presence of morphine, proof that opium-poppy tar was stored in it (*The analyses were made at the Chemical Institute at the Faculty of Natural Sciences, Skopje, made by Dr P Tosev*). In all of them, bird protomes or stylised birds were added to the cup itself or to the lid. Their bodies were usually decorated with engraved bundles of parallel lines and embossed concentric

circles, which refer to the symbols of the sun, light, and freedom.

Miniature bronze vessels appear in two versions: a jug or a bowl, usually with a horizontally extended handle (Fig. 9, 12). Thus, they copy the local ceramic production, only in miniature and bronze editions. They were discovered in a different context, but never in a sufficiently readable situation, so it is assumed that they could have been worn as pendants. However, their very form suggests that they probably also served in some of the priestly activities.

The situation is similar with several objects in the form of consecutive horns (Fig. 9, 13). One can only guess in which processes of the priestly activities they served, but the lower part was cast hollow, in the form of a cylindrical sleeve, which indicates that a wooden holder was implanted in it, similar to the heads of iron spears.

As a consequence of developed metallurgy, the central area of production of the Paeonian bronzes was the Lower Vardar region, or the territory of the southern Paeonians (Fig. 11). Besides that, two more regional groups are evident, a northern and a western group. The northern group of Paeonian cult bronzes includes such objects discovered in the Skopje region, the Middle Vardar region and the valley of Bregalnica (Fig. 12). Contrary to that, the western group includes bronzes from the



Fig. 13. Paeonian cult bronzes from the Western group, or from the Pelagonia and Ohrid regions



Fig. 14. Some later forms of so-called Macedonian Bronzes, from the 6th century BC

Pelagonija and Ohrid region (Fig. 13) (Mitrevski 2021: 105). All groups are characterised by the particular popularity of individual forms, which developed their own variants, with pronounced local features.

Comparative analysis of the finds of thousands of Iron Age graves allows us to conclude that Paeonian cult bronzes appear only in the context of the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC.

During the 6<sup>th</sup> century, they went out of use and were replaced by many new forms of bronze pendants, but they were not exclusively Paeonian bronzes. They were more widely spread, over the whole territory of the later Macedonian state, which is why they are known as younger or manneristic Macedonian bronzes (Fig. 14) (Bouzek 1974; Bouzek 1997, Fig. 110).

In any case, Paeonian cult bronzes were products of the Paeonian art and aesthetics that originated directly from Paeonian religion and ritual practices. Consequently, they are the strongest expression of Paeonian culture in general.

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Instead of a conclusion, we can say that during the 5<sup>th</sup> century, Paeonians started to accept many values of classical culture, gradually Hellenising their local culture. However, that process did not develop with the same intensity in all Paeonian communities. The south Paeonians, as a significant

part of the Early Macedonian state, were more exposed to the influences from the south. In contrast, the northern group of Paeonian communities was politically independent of the ancient Macedonian state. So, along the Bregalnitsa river, in the area of today's Ovče Pole and Štip region, a state of so-called Independent Paeonians was established, which played an important role in the pre-Roman history of the Balkans. They had their dynasty, monetary system and administration, most likely located in their capital city of Bilazora. Bilazora has been historically proven to be the largest town of the Independent Paeonians (Mikulcic 1976: 149). It is located on Gradishte hill in the village of Knezje, near the town of Sveti Nikole, where many representative structures and important small objects have been found. They testify to Bilazora being not just the largest town of the Paeonians but also their capital (Mitrevski 2016; 2017).

On the acropolis of Bilazora, representative architecture has been discovered. According to its disposition, conception and architectural and archaeological values, it was determined as a ruler's complex with a palace and a Doric temple (Mitrevski 2019). The palace is very similar to the palace in the early Macedonian capital of Aigae (Fig. 15). So, it seems to be the residence of well-known Paeonian rulers such as Agist, Likey, Patray, Audoleon, Leon and Dropion. It was used during the 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries BC and was vio-





Fig. 15. Some parts of the Ruler's Palace in Bilazora

lently destroyed by the Gauls, at the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. Soon after that, the short history of the Paeonians and Paeonian culture came to an end.

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**Ivan Vranić and Nenad Radojčić**

Institute of Archaeology and National Museum of Serbia  
ivanvran@gmail.com

## CULTURAL BIOGRAPHIES OF GREEK POTS: ATTIC RED-FIGURE AND OTHER GLAZED POTTERY CONSUMPTION AT KALE-KRŠEVICA

**Abstract:** Archaeological excavations at the site Kale-Krševica (south-eastern Serbia) have, so far, revealed between 1,500 and 2,000 red-figure, black glazed and Early Hellenistic period sherds, originating mostly from the Athenian potters' quarter of *Kerameikos*. These fragments, even though they represent a minority of the overall ceramic finds, have been discovered in almost all household and public contexts. Therefore, it seems that they played an important role in the everyday lives of the local population inhabiting this fortified Iron Age settlement, active from the late 5th until the early 3rd century BC. Their consistent distribution within the site is also a strong indication that the vessels were not elite or 'prestige goods', as in the case of earlier Iron Age settings in the Balkans, and that they were accessible to wider echelons of society. Consequently, we believe that it is possible to better understand the social changes behind the so-called process of Hellenisation by following subtle variations in archaeological contexts showing how these imports were treated by the community at Kale-Krševica. As a theoretical base, we will use the so-called biographical approach, together with material culture studies.

**Keywords:** Kale-Krševica, Greek pottery, consumption studies, 'Hellenisation', the Iron Age, the Balkans

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### **Kale-Krševica site: an introduction**

Kale-Krševica is an archaeological site located near the town of Vranje in south-eastern Serbia where, in 2001, Petar Popović initiated and directed the first systematic excavations (*e.g.*, Popović 2006; 2012). Subsequently, during numerous field sessions, this fortified Iron Age settlement slowly emerged. It consists of three spatial sectors appearing in different moments of the site's history. Located on the hilltop (*i.e.*, *Kale* = fortification), the 'acropolis' is the central part, where domestic structures and a rampart appeared as early as the late 5th century BC. From here, it seems, the settlement slowly grew<sup>1</sup> toward the 'slopes' and the 'suburbium'. The 'slopes' are the least excavated sector, and which have suffered from erosion in the past. Some information only exists about the eastern slope with man-made terraces designed for houses and other structures. The 'suburbium' is lo-

cated below this slope at the foot of the hill, in the modern-day village of Krševica. Discovered here are mostly public buildings, including ashlar masonry and mud-brick ramparts, various other defensive structures, and a massive water reservoir. They formed the so-called hydro-technical complex that dates into the second half of the 4th century BC (Popović 2008; Popović, Vukadinović 2011). Recent studies of the most intriguing structure of the complex – the subterranean barrel-vaulted reservoir in ashlar masonry – indicate that the architects had a thorough knowledge of the Macedonian military building practices. Additionally, the reservoir seems to originate from the final years of the 4th or the very beginning of the 3rd century BC, when the entire 'suburbium' was added to the already thriving settlement on the hilltop (Vranić 2019a). It is possible, however, that some earlier buildings had existed here, which were demolished to construct the 'hydro-technical complex' as we know it today.

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<sup>1</sup> It is estimated that in the 3rd century BC the site occupied an area of 5ha (Popović 2012: 13).

Kale-Krševica belongs to a group of dozens or possibly even hundreds of similar fortified Iron Age settlements featuring various Greek objects including pottery, technological know-how, and also architecture that are located in the Balkan hinterland to the north of the Aegean shores (*see* Archibald 2013; Vranić 2022: 37-60). The ‘Greek’ structures at these sites are in ashlar masonry and mudbrick, i.e., massive ramparts (Nankov 2008), various public buildings and rich funerary chambers similar to the so-called Macedonian and other Hellenistic-period burial chambers from the Mediterranean (Stoyanova 2015). According to Bulgarian archaeology, the sites belong to the Late Iron Age – an era beginning in the 5<sup>th</sup> or maybe even the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, which is further divided into the ‘Classical’ and the ‘Hellenistic’ periods, following the chronology in Greece (Theodossiev 2011: 4). Furthermore, they are considered to be ‘Thracian’ fortified settlements or towns (*e.g.*, Nankov 2015a). Colleagues from the Republic of North Macedonia perceive the same era as the ‘early antique’ period (*sensu* the earliest historic period). They usually argue that the settlements from their territory were built by the ‘Paeonians’, who are considered to be a separate cultural and ethnic identity (*e.g.*, Mitrevski 2016). It seems that most of the settlements and their material culture did indeed grow more Greek-like in appearance during their existence. At some of the sites, these material and social changes are visible after the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. Yet, they are especially prominent and far-reaching during the Early Hellenistic period, with an increase in the number of ashlar masonry structures (Nankov 2008).

Recent archaeological and anthropological literature has usually approached similar examples of translating Greek material culture and technological knowledge into different cultural settings from the post-colonial perspective. According to post-colonial authors, the imports and foreign technology acquired fresh local meanings, leading to the construction of culture-specific ‘Hellenised’ identities that could be different from the supposed Greek ‘originals’ – the process that we often confuse for the ‘spread of Greek culture’, due to our European fascination with Classical heritage (*e.g.*, Dietler 2010a). However, in the Balkan Iron Age archaeologies, the social changes behind

the appearance of these sites and their Greek-like material culture are not thoroughly explained beyond culture-historical concepts that perceive ‘Hellenisation’ as a straightforward and almost natural process of ‘spreading’ and ‘accepting’ Greek culture (Vranić 2014a; 2014b; Vranić 2022: 157-180). Recent studies, however, have shown that the situation is indeed more complex than this, with various agents of change and different local meanings ascribed to the Greek material culture and technology (Nankov 2011; 2015b; Vranić 2018a; 2019a; Vranić 2022).

Following this concept, we have decided to use the term Late Iron Age ‘Hellenised settlements’ for the entire group of sites in the Balkan hinterland; this also helps in avoiding ethnic labels that can hide the overall similarity of their material culture. Considering the sheer number of imported pottery finds, this approach in the case of Kale-Krševica also raises several other important questions. For instance, does the presence of glazed Attic pottery indicate the acquisition of some Greek practices and habits related to the same shapes and iconography, or have we – the archaeologists – relied too much on imports as a false indication of the ‘spread of Greek civilisation’? How did the local culture change during almost 150 years of contact with the Greek world and consumption of their materiality and technology? What were the active roles of the pottery in the contact and inevitable social changes? In other words, to better understand ‘Hellenisation’ we have to comprehend the place of Greek pottery within the local habitus at Kale-Krševica. As a theoretical base, we think, the most fruitful are the so-called biographical approaches (*e.g.*, Kopytoff 1986; Gosden, Marshall 1999; Gosden 2005), material culture studies (*e.g.*, Clarke 2003; Hicks, Beaudry 2010), and, maybe, Ian Hodder’s concept of entanglement (*e.g.*, 2016; *cf.* Latour 2005; Vranić 2023).

### **Greek pottery at Kale-Krševica: a temporal perspective to contacts and consumption practices**

Until 2012, when Petar Popović retired, the excavations at Kale-Krševica provided *c.* 1,000 red-figure, black glazed and Early Hellenistic period sherds originating mostly from the Athenian pot-

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ters' quarter of *Kerameikos* (e.g., Крстић 2005; Поповић 2006; 2007; Вранић 2022: 113-156, 221-368). These sherds were found at all three sectors of the site. Additionally, long-distance contacts and cross-cultural consumption practices have been represented with finds of Thasian, Mendeian, Samian, Chian, Peparetosian and "Macedonian" transport amphorae (Поповић 2012: 33; Поповић, Ђорђевић 2019), Macedonian and other coins, and possibly some north Aegean Early Hellenistic period glazed and, seemingly more numerous, painted vessels (Поповић 2012).

Attic red-figure pottery is the most numerous imported material at the 'acropolis'. Discovered in many domestic contexts, the earliest seems to be the *Saint-Valentine* class *kantharoi* from the 5<sup>th</sup> and early 4<sup>th</sup> centuries BC (Крстић 2005). Besides these *kantharoi* (Fig 1/1-4), more common are *skyphoi* of type A, with various figured scenes – usually athletes and draped youths (Fig 1/5-8,10); most of which, we think, belong to the F.B. ('Fat Boy') group, while some could be related to the Jena Painter and his associates. Due to extensive fragmentation, however, a more precise insight



Fig 1. Attic red-figure pottery from the Kale-Krševica 'acropolis', late 5th - first half of 4th century BC

into the selectiveness of local tastes is very difficult to determine. Numerous sherds with other figured scenes and floral decoration (laurel wreaths, palmettoes and tendrils), wave, egg, and tongue patterns, etc., indicate the extensive use of other red-figure drinking vessels and probably some



Fig 2. Late 4th and early 3rd century BC Attic glazed pottery from the Kale-Krševica 'suburbium' and the so-called central structures at the 'acropolis'



larger shapes – most likely *kraters* (some could belong to the Telos Group) and *oinochoai*. In any case, it seems that the preferred glazed pottery at the ‘acropolis’ was wine-related; or, at least, this was the case with these shapes in the Greek world. Whether they were indeed used for the same beverage at Kale-Krševica remains uncertain until some further multidisciplinary analysis is carried. Still, the presence of transport *amphorae* indicates the consumption of wine (Popović 2007). Also, there are other imports: black-glazed bowls and plates of various types, a few stemless cups and one saltcellar made using the same technique, and red-figured *squat lekythoi*, among other shapes, which are less numerable.

Later imports from the final decades of the 4<sup>th</sup> and the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC represent a different context. The biggest change is not in the possible appearance of a large number of other glazed shapes (besides probably the plates), nor the lack of *amphorae*. It is related to the public spheres dominating at the ‘suburbium’ (the ‘hydro-technical complex’) and in the so-called central structures at the ‘acropolis’, where these Attic glazed sherds were found (Popović 2008; 2012; Popović, Vukadinović 2011; Vranić 2019a; Vranić 2022: 123-131, 144-155). These imports fall into what Susan Rotroff calls a ‘controversial period of ceramic chronology’ (1983: 258, *cf.* 2005). The easiest to recognise is a small number of early 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC West Slope *kantharoi* (Fig. 2). The most common motifs are olive (Fig. 2/14-15, 17) and ivy garlands in orange, and, rarely, grapevines, and a spearhead necklace. Black glazed *kantharoi* of the Classical shape with plain or moulded rims seem to belong to the same phase (Fig. 2/18), usually with spur handles, and sometimes bearing the olive and ivy branch motifs on their upper bodies. One black glazed straight-walled *kantharos* with a comic mask is distinctive (Fig. 2/16). Also, there are red-glazed bowl *kantharoi* with hemispherical recipients, fragile high-swung handles and low stems, and occasional finds of strap handles with ivy thumb rests. Additionally, at the ‘suburbium’, finds of non-Attic painted pottery seem to be very common, featuring some West Slope-like iconography including ivy garlands and grapevine in orange on coarse red-surfaced pots which could have been imported from the northern Aegean or produced locally. Consequently, this smaller number

of early Attic West Slope and the almost complete lack of the true West Slope (with white and incised lines, circa 275 BC and later, *see* Rotroff 1997: 40-43) are usually considered indicative of abandonment of the site or, maybe, a substantial change in the consumption patterns taking place during the early decades of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century (Popović 2006: 528; Vranić 2018a: 28-29).

Published by Petar Popović and his associates (*see* above), these sherds have been instrumental in providing the chronology of various phases at the site. Additionally, they are very important as concrete pieces of evidence of contacts with the Greek world, which seem to have been the decisive factor behind the appearance of the ‘Hellenised’ settlements (Popović 2007; Vranić 2012). In the next pages, we will present new finds excavated after 2012 at the north-eastern part of the ‘acropolis’. So far, besides several short field reports (*see* Vranić 2014c; 2017a; 2017b; 2018b; 2019b; 2021), they have not been accessible to the archaeological public. Besides the possibility of checking and reaffirming the information and conclusions provided by previously published Greek pottery, we shall try to comprehend the social lives of these new finds, from their production at *Kerameikos* in Athens until their discovery at this very specific part of the ‘acropolis’ at Kale-Krševica where, as it seems, the earliest domestic structures were located.

### **Early consumption practices of Greek pottery at the north-eastern part of the ‘acropolis’**

The north-eastern part of the ‘acropolis’ has shed some light onto the very complex stratigraphical sequences related to the earliest inhabitants. Conducted from 2012 until 2018, the excavations at this place, besides c. 500 glazed Attic pieces, have revealed some information about the domestic life practices from the late 5<sup>th</sup> until the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. The most intriguing spatial aspect appears to be two communications merging at right angles, with several multi-roomed structures following these two ‘streets’. In the southern trenches, there is a three-roomed structure with a walled ‘yard’. The structure is represented with drystone walls, which are perfectly preserved. The now lost upper wall segments consisted of wattle

and daub and maybe some adobe; while the roofs appear to have been covered with tiles. As an illustration of the rebuilding processes, there are numerous surfaces and earthen floors in the rooms and the yard, with a large number of potsherds, animal bones, and other small finds. These surfaces were superimposed onto the earlier ones, trapping some of the finds in between. Potsherds, including the red-figure ones, were also used as an inclusion

This bird is a very common image in Athens, not only on pottery, where it symbolises the goddess Athena but also the city itself. The *owl-skyphoi* were numerous during the second and third quarters of the 5<sup>th</sup> century and their production was in some way related to the *Saint-Valentin* class (Beazley 1963: 982-984; 1971: 437; cf. Johnson 1955). Further studies have shown that the owls were produced during the entire 5<sup>th</sup> century BC,

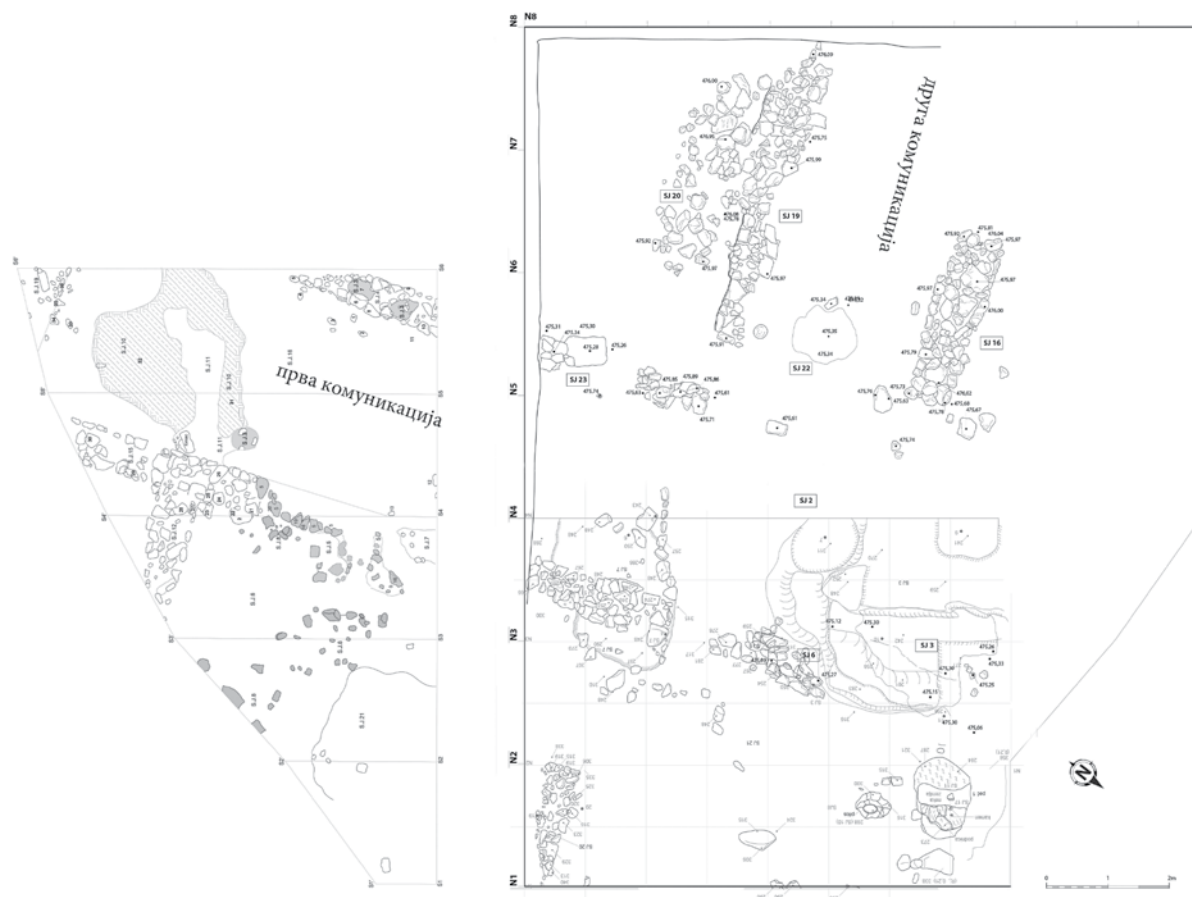


Fig. 3. Plan of the north-eastern part of the Kale-Krševica 'acropolis', late 5<sup>th</sup> to first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC

to the sandy layers utilised to level the ground before the building of the new earthen floors.

Similarly to previous campaigns (*see above*), the most indicative are numerous *Saint-Valentin* class *kantharoi* fragments (Fig. 4/22). Yet, there are some other recognisable contemporary Attic red-figure vessels, including one *owl-skyphos* piece (Fig. 4/24). The owl was found on top of seemingly the earliest surface within one of the rooms in the southern trench. According to Beazley, *owl-skyphoi* were made by a group of numerous painters at *Kerameikos* and they were widely distributed around the Mediterranean.

although more often in the second and third quarters (Moor 1997: 63-64). Imitations of the Athenian owls were produced during the first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century in Italy (Kirigin 2020). Nevertheless, the piece discovered at Kale-Krševica appears to be Attic and it is the only example of this group discovered in Serbia (Vranić 2021). A handful of the owls have been discovered at sites in North Macedonia and Bulgaria (*see* Sanev 2013; Микулчиќ 2005; Archibald 1996). A few have also been found on the eastern shore of the Adriatic and there is one Attic piece that was discovered at the Glasinac site in

Bosnia and Hercegovina, although some of these are Italic in origin (Kirigin 2020: 60-63).

The *Saint-Valentin* vases represent a class – one or more shapes decorated in the same way – with nine known groups of painters active from the late second quarter of the 5<sup>th</sup> until the first decades of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC (Howard, Johnson 1954; Moor 1997: 61-62). According to Beazley, the class was invented by some of the last painters of the Early Classical period related to the Lewis

Painter. The class is contemporary and close to the group of *owl-skyphoi* from the third and second quarters of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. (Beazley 1963: 972-985). These *kantharoi* are common finds in North Macedonia and at some sites in Serbia (*i.e.*, Касируп near Preševo, Postenje near Novi Pazar) (Паровић-Пешикан 1992: 343-344). Besides other red-figure fragments, they have been numerous finds at Krševica; most belong to groups six and seven (Крстић 2005: 191). It is interesting to



Fig. 4. Attic red-figure pottery from the north-eastern part of the Kale-Krševica 'acropolis', late 5th to first half of the 4th century BC

note that one of the *Saint-Valentin* fragments from the structure in the southern trenches, where the owl was found, belongs to none of the nine known groups (Fig. 4/22). It is similar to group six from the final quarter of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC (cf. Howard, Johnson 1954: 194, 206) and yet it does not feature the two horizontal laurel branches in white, but only one. The lower field where the second laurel is expected shows a narrow ivy branch also in white. Therefore, it seems that this piece represents an innovation created by one of the painters from *Kerameikos*, belonging to group six of the *Saint-Valentin* class. This means that the Balkan hinterland is an important source of information, not only about the local consumption practices and the cultural and economic interrelations with the Greek world but also about the changes in production and innovations that took place at *Kerameikos* in Athens (Vranić 2019b: 92).

The northern trenches have not been completely excavated. Thus far, the discovered material mostly belongs to the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. Here, the red-figure fragments indicate *kraters*, *skyphoi*, and shapes with added white – probably of the ‘Kerch style’. Again, most of the *skyphoi* seem to belong to the F.B Group (e.g., Fig. 4/28). Quite interesting is a fragment of a bowl-like vessel with a winged Eros flying to the right in a scene including another partially preserved female figure (Fig. 4/25), and a piece featuring a nude reclining man (Fig. 4/30). Since the structures in these trenches have not been excavated completely, we still do not know the earliest imports. Furthermore, it remains a mystery as to when the two communications merging at right angles were created. According to the Attic pottery, the structure from the southern trenches seems to originate from the final decades of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC and it remained in use for a long time. The northern structures, across the ‘street’, seem to originate sometime in the first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. It is possible that this was the moment when the southern structure was incorporated into the street layout. However, further excavations are needed to better understand these contexts.

The *Saint-Valentin* class fragments discovered in the north-eastern sector of the ‘acropolis’ (i.e., both the northern and southern trenches) often appear within the same structures and sometimes even within the same archaeological context with the *skyphoi* of the ‘Fat Boy’ group. At *Kerameikos*,

it is supposed that the production of the two did not take place simultaneously. Namely, Beazley considers the ‘F.B.’ group to be one of the latest representatives of the red-figure technique ‘corresponding to the cups of the YZ Group’ while the *Saint-Valentin* class was earlier (cf. Beazley 1963: 984, 1484-1494; see above). Does this indicate longer and more complex biographies of the *Saint-Valentin kantharoi* at Kale-Krševica compared to the other imports, possible issues with our stratigraphy, or is there a problem with Beazley’s chronology? Today, most authors date the ‘F.B.’ Group into the early 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, relying on the information provided by the D 19:1 cistern located to the southwest of the Agora proper in Athens (Lawall 2005: 40-42) – a hypothesis that the finds at Kale-Krševica seem to corroborate

### Production and distribution of Greek glazed pottery

Production is an initial step in any glazed pot’s biography and can shed light on subsequent interrelations, networks, and potential differences between Greek and non-Greek consumption practices. Pioneers of Greek pottery studies like Beazley have determined that it is possible to distinguish various ‘hands’ of actual painters or groups of these artisans active in black- and red-figure techniques (1963; 1971; 1986). Contrary to post-processual criticism and the consequent neglect of this traditional methodology (e.g., Whitley 1997), recent scholarly endeavours have shown that starting from Beazley’s information we can calculate the number of contemporary workshops, which seem more significant than painters. Relying on statistics, this knowledge is further used for reconstructing the number of vases produced in one year, the general productivity of a workshop, and a more precise understanding of the roles of potters (usually workshop owners) and painters, etc. (see Sapirstein 2013; 2014). Since Greek glazed pottery has been found all around the Mediterranean, this plethora of information becomes particularly useful in studying interrelations, trade and exchange, and various other networks created around a pot sometimes travelling very long distances to its final users. Additionally, some authors believe that at *Kerameikos* in Athens, it is possible to follow



the development of the production for non-Greeks (*see* below). Therefore, a better understanding of the initial steps in a pot's biography is fruitful for subsequent reconstructions of its eventual changing meanings and active roles during its distribution and final consumption.

The distribution of Greek pottery represents a different cultural setting (*e.g.*, Boardman 1979). Recent studies have focused on possible cooperation between the owners of workshops and traders who were responsible for the distribution of selected material in other Mediterranean regions. Besides cooperation, an important issue becomes a probable awareness of the Athenian artisans that some of their products were for non-Greek (*i.e.*, the Others *sensu* the post-colonial studies) consumers (Osborn 2007a; *cf.* Paleothodoros 2007). The iconography of Attic vases found in other regions, especially in the early years of the red-figure technique (that is before the foundation of the settlement at Krševica), seems to show that the painters created images of the Others or scenes that they believed would appeal to that specific Other. Some of these theses about the cooperation and complex social networks between the producers and the traders have been recently confirmed in the case of Etruria (Bundrick 2019). The same study shows that the knowledge about the pot's final destination and the local tastes gradually changed the iconography of the vases designed for that specific market, sometimes resulting in images that were completely unacceptable for Greek consumers. On the other hand, the iconography of the red-figure shapes discovered in Greece appears to have been designed for specific occasions and culture-specific consumption practices where it seems to have actively projected different Greek identities (Osborn 2007b). Consequently, Greek glazed pottery was a very versatile materiality with multiple meanings and entanglements, and the aspects of production and distribution seem significant for the understanding of why specific classes or groups ended in some regions. A better understanding of these two steps in a pot's biography can shed light on the interrelations of various agents responsible for contacts and communication between Greece and other regions, changes taking place at *Kerameikos* in Athens, as well as various meanings ascribed to that pot in the culture of its final destination (Vranić 2023).

The fragments discovered at Kale-Krševica do not represent the so-called masterpieces of Greek pottery production, most likely because the site originated in the last decades of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, when a steady decline in the quality of the figured scenes had already started. Besides a relatively small number of the very specific pieces dating to the final decades of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC (*i.e.*, the *Saint-Valentin* class and the group of *owl-skyphoi*), they rather appear to have been mass-produced by mediocre artisans dominating the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC red-figure technique. Yet, they are discovered in precisely excavated contexts that are of great importance for the study of the distribution of Attic pottery deep into the Balkan hinterland. Their heterogeneous character considering the recognisable groups, classes, and possible painters seems to follow dichromic changes in 'styles' among the artisans at *Kerameikos*. Combined with finds from other centres like *Pistiros* (*e.g.*, Archibald 1996) or *Demir Kapija* (*e.g.*, Микулчиќ 2005; Sanev 2013), the pieces from Kale-Krševica contribute to a slowly emerging picture of the distribution of red-figure and other Attic pots in the Iron Age Balkan hinterland. It seems that besides some other better-supplied Mediterranean regions, the continental area of this peninsula was a prominent market for Greek vases – especially those of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. Therefore, more research is needed to comprehend the agents responsible for transporting this pottery from the Aegean and the Black Sea shores further inland. This is also the case with the *Kerameikos* artisan's hypothetical knowledge of inland Balkan tastes; yet, maybe there is something significant to this issue with the *Saint-Valentin* class, which seems to be represented in greater numbers than expected. Whatever future studies reveal, it seems beyond doubt that distribution was more systematically organised than previously believed. The number of pieces and the variety of possible producers also indicate long-lasting distribution, which was not an exception but rather a usual occurrence.

### **Conclusion: consumption practices behind Attic glazed pottery at Kale-Krševica**

The information about the producers and distributors and their agencies is important (*see* above);



yet, as in any case of cross-cultural consumption, the end-users and their desire to own foreign objects are a *conditio sine qua non* (e.g., Appadurai 1986). At Kale-Krševica, the aspirations of the local population to consume Greek pottery appeared in the late 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. We believe it is possible to comprehend the development of these local tastes by following how the imports were treated within the different spatial and temporal contexts. A better understanding of this phenomenon may be a crucial aspect behind the local social change labelled under the ‘Hellenisation’ process.

All the glazed fragments discovered in the north-eastern part of the ‘acropolis’ originate from domestic contexts. Petar Popović believes that the contemporary late 5<sup>th</sup> and early 4<sup>th</sup> century BC red-figure pieces revealed previously in the same sector were used for “special occasions and for distinguished guests” (2012: 31). This argument follows a general archaeological understanding of Iron Age cross-cultural consumption of Greek imports, and the status and role of wine (e.g., Dietler 1990). However, compared with other archaeological material, the ways in which the imported sherds were discarded do not indicate any specific treatment. After fragmentation, they were either left on the surface and subsequently covered with debris originating from collapsing walls or, more often, they appeared incorporated in the sandy layers used for levelling the ground for the upcoming building of new floors within the same structures (Вранић 2022: 113-156). In general, the domain of pottery consumption was predominantly represented by the locally produced wheel-thrown ‘Hellenised grey ware,’ which is, by far, the most numerous corpus of archaeological material at the site, totally a number of c. 200,000 sherds (Антић, Бабић 2005; Вранић 2009; 2022: 45-46, 66). These local vessels are also a distinctive characteristic of all ‘Hellenised settlements’ in the Balkans, including the Black Sea regions and, as expected, their shapes are also ‘Greek’ in appearance (e.g., Avram *et al.* 2009; cf. Rotroff 2006). The fact that the utility ware (e.g., *skyphoi*, *kantharoi*, *hydriai*, *oinochoai* but also *chytrai*, *lekanides* and *pithoi*) was made following Greek household shape production practices, even though some of the ‘originals’ had never been imported, is an intriguing question. Whatever lies behind this phenomenon, the end of the social lives of the imported shapes

does not seem different from their ‘grey’ counterparts.

Considering the local selectiveness of the imports, the most remarkable aspect seems to be the focus on drinking vessels that were, in the Greek world, related to wine. Beginning from the late 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, these vessels have been found in almost all household and public contexts at Kale-Krševica. However, there are some temporal differences visible for instance at the ‘acropolis’ compared with the contexts at the ‘suburbium’. Firstly, there is the issue of public and domestic consumption that seems to follow the overall history of the site and its spatial development. While the earlier cases featuring the red-figure *skyphoi* and *kantharoi* represent household activities, the later ones, from the Early Hellenistic period, seem to signify collective actions taking place in public. This is especially prominent concerning the barrel-vaulted reservoir at the ‘suburbium’ and its role in possible communal food preparation and consumption that favoured *kantharoi* and plates – maybe as some kind of feasts or, more likely, as meals for soldiers (Vranić 2019a: 159; Вранић 2022: 113-156). Secondly, this local favouritism toward the Greek wine-drinking vessels endured for almost 150 years at Kale-Krševica, even in times when a particular shape like the Attic *skyphos* or the entire red-figure technique lost its prominence at *Kerameikos* (cf. Moor 1997; Rotroff 1997).

Nevertheless, the Greek pottery at Kale-Krševica, which incorporated more shapes than just *skyphoi* and *kantharoi* (see above), must have been ambiguous. On the one hand, the local population undoubtedly recognised it as a collection of foreign objects. Maybe they even understood that it originated from Greece or Macedonia, obviously in the local perception of this Other that remains obscure to us (Вранић 2022: 9-12). It seems reasonable to believe that initial consumption practices would have been different than in the case of the local materiality. A necessity to create a ‘proper way’ to approach, perceive, and use the new forms of material culture in order to determine their new culture-specific significance could have stood behind the process of ‘Hellenisation’. Consequently, the results of this process are not necessarily related to the social roles of the same objects in the Greek world, which may even have been completely obscure to the local community (cf. Dietler 2010a;

2010b). As a result of the long and widely accessible consumption, on the other hand, this foreign material culture was gradually appropriated into the cultural practices determined by the local habitus, subsequently resulting in the same treatment as any other local materiality but, also, with some changes of the habitus. However, the earliest contexts in the north-eastern part of the ‘acropolis’ do not display this hypothetical process. The Greek pottery pieces discovered here already appear to have been treated equally as any other materiality; at least this was the case in the practices related to their discarding. It remains elusive whether this means that the process of appropriation within the local culture had already been finished before its members decided to settle down at the ‘acropolis’, or that we are dealing only with one segment of the local population that was acquainted with Greek pottery. The subsequent consistent and long-lasting distribution within the entire site is a strong argument that the local habitus did not set these imports as elite or ‘prestige goods’ materiality, as was the case in earlier Iron Age settings in the Balkans, and that the Greek pottery remained accessible to wider echelons of society. This is even more visible in the ‘suburbium’. Here the Early Hellenistic period Attic and other glazed fragments are found in larger numbers, possibly representing even less prestigious materiality (Вранић 2022: 113-156).

What the roles of wine and all the other Greek materiality like architecture were in these social changes remains to be studied further. As represented with the pottery, we believe that the local logic of cross-cultural consumption is paramount for any attempt to understand ‘Hellenisation’ in the Iron Age Balkans.

**Acknowledgements:** The authors would like to extend their gratitude to Branko Kirigin for valuable comments that improved this chapter, especially regarding the information about the production centres of some transport amphorae. The chapter is dedicated to Petar Popović, whose friendship, enthusiasm, and good spirit have profoundly influenced our lives and professional careers.

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Alexandru Avram †

Le Mans Université

Faculté des Lettres, Langues et Sciences humaines

## DE NOUVEAU SUR LE KÉRAMARQUE DES TIMBRES AMPHORIQUES THASIENS

**Abstract:** The author discusses the title *κεραμάρχης*, occurring on Thasian stamps under the magistrate Pythion I (c. 337 BC). With the word *κεραμάρχης* being inserted in the stamps' legends between the producer's name (Anphikrates, Megakleides or Pylades) and the magistrate's name, it is difficult to decide to which of them it refers. Contrary to the prevailing orthodoxy (even if sometimes rejected, e.g., Börker 1998: 15–17; Börker 2003; Börker 2019: 79–80), the author argues that this title does not refer to the potter but to the magistrate. He briefly discusses the meaning of Greek compounds ending in *-arches* and *-archos* and admits that they refer to officials or quasi officials. On the other hand, all Pythion I's stamps use as device the famous Thasian parasemon (Heracles archer) occurring not only on several amphorae but also on silver coins of the same period. Thus, we would expect *κεραμάρχης* to be a reference to the magistrate rather than to the potter. Moreover, the main argument in the same direction is a stamp (note 18) where the producer's name stands in genitive. Therefore, it cannot be related to the nominative *κεραμάρχης* that follows.

**Keywords:** *keramarches*, *ergasteriarches*, Thasos, Rhodes, amphora stamps.

Yvon Garlan, le maître incontestable des timbres amphoriques thasiens, parvenait à constituer dans son corpus monumental de 1999 une série éponymique ayant comme titulaire un certain Pythiôn, conventionnellement désigné dans la littérature amphorique, afin de le départager de ses bien nombreux homonymes plus tardifs, comme « Pythiôn I » et daté, selon toute vraisemblance, de *ca.* 337 a.C.<sup>1</sup>

Garlan 1999 : n° 879 :

Ἀνφικράτ[ης]  
κεραμάρχης  
Πυθίων.  
Héraclès archer †

L'exemplaire illustré est celui de Thasos (= Bon 1957 : n° 912). Il y a en outre un exemplaire à Athènes (Pnyx, période III, publié plus récemment dans Tzoché 2016 : n° 108 : [Ἀν]φι[κ]ράτ[ης]), un autre en provenance de Dobroudja (que je n'ai pas pu identifier)<sup>2</sup> et, enfin, un troisième à Panticapée

(Škorpil 1914 : 137 n° 3 B), au sujet duquel Garlan fait la précision : « je n'ai pas pu trouver l'exemplaire du musée de Kerč qui a servi de base à la lecture de Škorpil ».

Garlan 1999 : n° 880 :

[Με]γακλείδ[ης]  
κεραμάρχη[ς]  
Πυθίων.  
Héraclès archer †

Garlan mentionne un exemplaire à Istros (= Avram 1996 : n° 125 : [Μεγακλείδης], restitution d'après les timbres similaires de Panticapée) et trois autres à Panticapée.

Garlan 1999 : n° 881 (= Bon 1957 : n° 913, timbre d'Athènes) :

Πυλάδ[ης]  
κεραμάρχ[ης]  
Héraclès archer †  
[Πυθίων].

<sup>1</sup> Tzoché 2016 : tableau 2.

<sup>2</sup> Il pourrait s'agir de l'exemplaire que je reprends *infra*, note 18.

Garlan 1999 : n° 882 :

Πυλάδης  
 κεραμάρχης  
 Héraclès archer  $\uparrow$   
 Πυθίων.  $\downarrow$

Garlan recense trois exemplaires à Thasos, ensuite les timbres d'Istros (= Avram 1996 : n° 126), d'Albești (Dobroudja méridionale ; Bărbulescu *et al.* 1986 : 70, n° 96 = Buzoianu, Bărbulescu 2008 : 283, n° S 153 : [Πυλάδης]), enfin, deux exemplaires de Panticapée et un autre du Kouban, avec la précision : « c'est sa lecture sur un exemplaire de Panticapée qui a permis d'établir l'unité de cette série éponymique ».

Dans son commentaire consacré au titre de « kéramarque » dans le cadre de son étude introductive<sup>3</sup>, Garlan, après avoir dressé un bilan des opinions émises à ce propos – sur lequel il serait superflu de s'attarder ici<sup>4</sup> –, annonce que la solution lui fut « fort heureusement offerte » par un exemplaire de Panticapée (son n° 882 ; voir *supra*), sur lequel « aux deux lignes supérieures déjà connues (Πυλάδης | κεραμάρχης) s'ajoutait une troisième, située devant l'arc perpendiculairement aux deux précédentes, où l'on pouvait lire Πυθίω[v] en disposition rétrograde ». Le magistrat « faux éponyme » est donc Pythiôn et « il en découle également – ce qui est encore plus important – que le titre de *kéramarque* se rapporte, comme c'est du reste généralement le cas sur les inscriptions grecques, au nom précédent, donc au fabricant, et non à la ligne suivante, celle du magistrat, qui se trouve, dans l'un des types, rejetée sur le côté du timbre »<sup>5</sup>.

La même idée fut reprise par le même savant à plusieurs occasions, surtout dans son ouvrage de référence consacré au timbrage dans les cités grecques : « beaucoup plus rares encore sont les qualificatifs de *kéramarchês* (“chef-potier”) et d'*ergastériarchês* (“chef d'atelier”) »<sup>6</sup>. À retenir pour



Fig. 1. Timbres amphorique de Callatis. Musée d'histoire nationale et d'archéologie de Constanța, inv. 16 667. Photo Laurențiu Cliante.

l'instant les deux arguments avancés par Garlan : la disposition verticale du nom de Pythiôn (lequel est, nul doute, le magistrat) et le fait que le titre de κεραμάρχης se rapporte « comme c'est du reste généralement le cas sur les inscriptions grecques » au nom propre le précédant. Cependant, ce deuxième argument ne me paraît pas très fort : « généralement », oui, mais pas toujours, ne fût-ce qu'à rappeler, pour nous en tenir à l'épigraphie céramique, quelques timbres sinopéens du genre Γέροντος ἀστ|υνομοῦντος Ζ|ωπυρίωνος ou Γέροντος ἀστ|υνομοῦντ|ος Φόρβα<sup>7</sup>, où ἀστυνομοῦντος se rapporte à coup sûr à Zopyriôn et à Phorbas respectivement, donc aux noms qui suivent, et non à celui qui précède ce mot. Il ne reste donc que l'argument de la disposition verticale, sur le côté, du nom du magistrat sur le timbre de Panticapée, ce qui, apparemment, inviterait à la solution Πυλάδης κεραμάρχης et, par conséquent, à l'interprétation de toutes les autres légendes dans le même sens.

Si, comme plusieurs de ses prédécesseurs, Garlan avait renvoyé, à titre de parallèle et de ma-

<sup>3</sup> Garlan 1999 : 71–75, où l'auteur reprend les idées directrices d'un article publié dans un premier temps en russe, Garlan 1986. Voir aussi Garlan 1988 : 29 (« chef de poterie ») ; Garlan 1998 (*SEG* 48, 2102) : 582 (« chef-potier »).

<sup>4</sup> Il convient pourtant de rappeler que Michel Debidour avait déjà suggéré qu'il était « plus tentant » de rapporter le titre de κεραμάρχης au « magistrat dont le nom figure sur les timbres » : Debidour 1979 : 275, approuvé entre autres dans Calvet 1982 : 9, et – de manière plutôt hésitante – dans Salviat 2019 : 87, n. 7.

<sup>5</sup> Garlan 1999 : 73.

<sup>6</sup> Garlan 2000 : 115.

<sup>7</sup> Garlan 2004 : n°s 134 et 149.

nière d'ailleurs fort judicieuse, à l'ἐργαστηριάρχης de Rhodes<sup>8</sup> et de Sinope<sup>9</sup>, toujours est-il qu'un spécialiste tout aussi averti des timbres rhodiens exprimait à ce même propos une opinion fort différente. Car Christian Börker avait déjà jeté le gant en 1998 : « Die mit -άρχης oder -αρχος (die Endungen bewirken keinen Sinnunterschied und sind bisweilen austauschbar) zusammengesetzten Wörter gehören sämtlich in den Bereich der öffentlichen Verwaltung, bezeichnen also mit staatlichen Aufgaben Betrauten, die ἄρχοντες [font suite de nombreux exemples – A. A.]. Diese Parallelen bestätigen wohl zur Genüge die Vorstellung, daß weder der thasische κεραμάρχης noch der ἐργαστηριάρχης von Rhodos und Sinope ein ἡγεμὼν τοῦ ἐργαστηρίου, wie Aischines einmal einen privaten Leiter einer Werkstatt nennt, gewesen ist, sondern ein öffentliches Amt innehatte »<sup>10</sup>. Réaction de Garlan<sup>11</sup> : « D'une liste (incomplète) des termes se terminant en *-arches* ou *-archos*, Chr. Börker conclut d'emblée (à tort) qu'ils s'appliquent toujours à des magistrats ou du moins à des personnages remplissant une fonction officielle ou quasi officielle ». Et enfin, tout récemment, contre-réaction de Börker : « [Garlan] bringt aber kein einziges Gegenbeispiel. Inzwischen sind mir wenigstens ein Dutzend weitere derartige Ausdrücke begegnet, aber ich verzichte auf die Wiedergabe, denn die größere Zahl, die mit Sicherheit auch noch nicht vollständig ist [...], ändert nichts am

Ergebnis »<sup>12</sup>.

Maintenant, si – du moins à ma connaissance – il n'y a aucune étude exhaustive consacrée au sujet des composés en *-archès*, *-archos*<sup>13</sup> (cela ferait d'ailleurs, dirais-je, l'objet d'une belle thèse de doctorat de lexicologie grecque), je me déclare convaincu par l'argument linguistique de Börker. Mieux encore, je trouve que le degré de supériorité – pour peu que le qualificatif de « chef » (sur les autres pratiquant la même activité) puisse être justifié – aurait mieux été rendu en grec par un préfixe comme *arch(i)-*, quelque chose du genre τέκτων vs. ἀρχιτέκτων, ἔμπορος vs. ἀρχέμπορος (voir aussi l'unique ἀρχικερδέντορος de Thasos, *IG XII* 8, 581), ἱερεύς vs. ἀρχιερεύς, etc. Les composés finissant en *-archès*, *-archos* semblent donc être utilisés pour désigner non pas ceux qui dirigeaient (en « chefs », que ce fût à titre privé ou à titre public) certaines activités – autrement dit, une équipe qui leur était subordonnée – mais ceux qui en portaient la responsabilité en tant que magistrats et qui y exerçaient le contrôle<sup>14</sup>.

Pour revenir maintenant au κεραμάρχης thasien<sup>15</sup>, je rappelle tout d'abord que les timbres de Pythiôn I que l'on connaît actuellement présentent

<sup>8</sup> On n'en connaît pour l'instant que deux exemplaires (timbres ronds avec rose au centre, autrement dit, un épiséme) portant les deux la légende Αἰνέας ἐργαστηριάρχης (ἐργαστηριάρχης étant, bien entendu, la forme dialectale pour ἐργαστηριάρχης) : Nilsson 1909 : 359, n° 28.4 et pl. I.5 (avec commentaire, p. 57–60 ; cf. Garlan 2000 : 118 et fig. 81b) ; Nicolaou 2005 : 309, appendix I, n° 162 (*SEG* 55, 1535, 20).

<sup>9</sup> Garlan 2000 : 117–118 (avec des références) et fig. 81a.

<sup>10</sup> Börker 1998 : 15–16 et Börker 2003, interprétation reprise dans Killen 2017 : 29, n. 319. Sans pour autant discuter l'argument de Börker, mais avec renvoi entre autres à Garlan 2000 : 113–133, Finkielsztein 2001 : 34, estime qu'il s'agit d'un fabricant : « à Rhodes, le fabricant est un ἐργαστηριάρχης (mentionné sur une seule matrice ! [à laquelle on peut maintenant en ajouter une deuxième, voir note 8 – A. A.]), mais dans d'autres régions de fabrication, on trouve les fonctions de κεραμεύς ou κεραμάρχης mentionnées sur le timbre ». À moins que je ne me trompe, je n'ai rien trouvé à ce sujet dans l'ouvrage désormais de référence de Badoud 2015. En revanche, dans une autre contribution, le même savant estime que l'ἐργαστηριάρχης était un « chef d'atelier » à « responsabilité publique » : Badoud 2019 : 203.

<sup>11</sup> Garlan 2002 : 206, n° 262.

<sup>12</sup> Börker 2019 : 79, n. 7.

<sup>13</sup> Voir tout de même Tzannetatos 1949, une contribution à laquelle renvoie d'ailleurs Börker 2019 : 79, n. 7.

<sup>14</sup> Je verrais, par exemple, dans le domaine des associations religieuses, une différence de nuance entre le μυστάρχης et l'ἀρχιμύστης (deux termes plusieurs fois attestés), que je traduirais respectivement par « responsable des initiations (ou contrôleur, modérateur, etc. des activités des initiés) » et « initié en chef, leader du groupe d'initiés ».

<sup>15</sup> Pour l'ἐργαστηριάρχης rhodien, voir maintenant l'étude de Börker 2019. *Contra* : Badoud 2019 : 203–204. En ce qui concerne le κεραμάρχης thasien, je me contente de citer les deux dernières prises de position à cet égard. Tzochev 2016 : 11 : « The fabricant–κεραμάρχης could therefore be considered a person responsible for a single production group, be it as manager, supervisor, or master-potter ». Badoud 2019 : 205–206 : « La légende ne témoignerait donc d'aucune anomalie si, sur la série de l'éponyme Pythiôn 1, le fabricant ne prenait le titre de *kéramarchès*, qu'il ne porte jamais ailleurs, mais qui fait écho à l'*ergastèriarchès* rhodien, lui aussi mentionné sur un timbre ... à épiséme. L'erreur consistant à ne pas admettre le caractère public de certains emblèmes (malgré l'usage bien établi des épisémes par les cités grecques) ne pouvait qu'amener à réfuter le caractère officiel des titres attribués aux fabricants (malgré la signification constante des termes en *-archès* dans la langue grecque). Alors qu'à Rhodes, certains ateliers relevaient toujours du droit public, à Thasos – semble-t-il – tous les ateliers pouvaient en relever dans des circonstances exceptionnelles ».

tous l'emblème civique, Héraclès agenouillé tirant de l'arc, le même qui figure sur le revers des monnaies d'argent frappées à partir de *ca.* 390<sup>16</sup>. C'est également le cas, au IV<sup>e</sup> s. *a.C.*, des magistrats Ἀριστομέ(νης) (toujours)<sup>17</sup>, Κρῖνις (occasionnellement) et Λεώδικος (toujours, mais avec des attributs secondaires représentant autant de marques d'ateliers) : ce qui montre qu'il y avait des cas où le magistrat en charge pouvait imposer aux fabricants un emblème unique. Il est donc envisageable qu'à côté d'un tel παράσημον, le qualificatif de κεραμάρχης se rapporte lui aussi au magistrat plutôt qu'au fabricant.

À tout cela je peux maintenant avancer une preuve factuelle qui me semble décisive. Liviu Buzoianu et Nicolae Cheluță-Georgescu ont publié en 1998, soit peu avant la parution du corpus de

Garlan, un timbre de Callatis portant la légende<sup>18</sup> :

Ἀμφικράτεος  
κεραμάρχης  
Πυθίων.  
Héraclès archer ⚔

Le génitif du nom du fabricant exclut tout lien avec le nominatif κεραμάρχης, ce qui prouve que ce qualificatif se rapporte à Pythiôn, le magistrat. Il faudrait donc, sur la foi de l'exemplaire de Callatis, changer la lecture du type Garlan 1999 : n° 879, en utilisant le génitif Je verrais, par exemple, dans le domaine des associations religieuses, une différence de nuance entre le μυστάρχης et l'ἀρχιμύστης (deux termes plusieurs fois attestés), que je traduirais respectivement par « responsable des initiations (ou contrôleur, modérateur, etc. des activités des initiés) » et « initié en chef, leader du groupe d'initiés ». pour le nom du fabricant. Ce qui, au demeurant, n'aurait rien d'étonnant : Pyladès, qui travaille lui aussi sous Pythiôn I, signe à un certain moment Πυλάδεω<sup>19</sup>. Quant à la disposition à part du nom de Pythiôn sur les exemplaires Garlan 1999 : n°s 881–882, plutôt que de se risquer à tirer des conclusions sur son rapport (ou absence de rapport) avec le mot κεραμάρχης, il vaut mieux s'abstenir, tout en constatant, une fois de plus, la variété des « mises en page » des timbres amphoriques thasiens. Enfin, si je me trouvais dans l'obligation de me prononcer sur l'occurrence unique du mot κεραμάρχης dans la série éponymique de Pythiôn I, je supposerais timidement qu'il s'agit d'un dispositif anti-homonymie : Pythiôn étant un nom extrêmement fréquent à Thasos<sup>20</sup>, il n'est pas exclu que pendant la même année il y ait eu, hormis notre kéramarque responsable de son domaine spécial d'activité, un autre magistrat homonyme

<sup>16</sup> Pour les emblèmes des cités, voir, en général, Killen 2017 ; Picard 2018. On trouvera par ailleurs quelques considérations intéressantes sur les types monétaires reflétés dans le timbrage des différentes cités dans Stefanaki, Seroglou 2019. Pour le monnayage thasien, à titre d'introduction générale : Picard 2000 (en particulier, p. 306–309 et fig. 271, pour les monnaies à la représentation d'Héraclès archer ; cf. Killen 2017 : 199, cat. Ia), et à propos du rapport entre le monnayage et le timbrage amphorique thasien, Picard 2019, surtout p. 67. Le prototype des monnaies portant sur le revers l'image d'Héraclès archer est un relief (actuellement au musée d'Istanbul) du début du Ve s. *a.C.* qui ornait à Thasos la porte dite « d'Héraclès » : Holtzmann 1994 : 19–22, n° 3, avec pl. I et IV ; cf. Grandjean, Salviat 2000 : 130–131 et fig. 86 ; Geis 2007 : 31–41. La même image figure également sur une tuile : Garlan 2001 : 193, fig. 19 (Killen 2017 : 199, cat. Ie.1 et pl. 15.14).

<sup>17</sup> Ce magistrat (identifié à Ἀριστομένης Ἀπημάντου, qui sera théore en 377) a toutes les chances d'avoir exercé son mandat autour de 389 *a.C.* Or, cette dernière date n'est pas du tout anodine, car elle correspond à la « libération » de Thasos par Athènes et au retour à la démocratie : bref, une époque de renouveau institutionnel, suggéré entre autres par l'apparition d'un nouveau monnayage, daté, on l'a vu, justement des environs de 390. Voir Salviat 2019 : 78 : « 389 donc. Il est très significatif de constater que les timbres au nom d'*Aristomé(nès)*, bien connus pour cela, présentent l'image d'Héraclès archer agenouillé, reproduisant le relief de la porte archaïque "d'Héraclès" (relief conservé à Istanbul). On note que cette vignette-logo apparaît à l'identique et triomphe sur le nouveau monnayage thasien – or, argent et bronze. O. Picard a placé le début de ce monnayage au point de retour de la cité dans l'alliance d'Athènes, et le situe vers 390. Soyons un peu plus précis : ce retour, nous venons de le voir, eut lieu après l'été 389. On datera donc avec beaucoup de vraisemblance de 389 ou 388, ou peu de temps après, la charge de l'éponyme amphorique *Aristomé(nès Apèmantou)*, qui choisit d'illustrer son timbre du même symbole civique que les monétaires ». Voir aussi, dans le même sens, Badoud 2019 : 206.

<sup>18</sup> Buzoianu, Cheluță-Georgescu 1998 : 62, n° 25, avec dessin. Dans le catalogue, le nom du fabricant figure non complètement, mais les auteurs envisagent, avec point d'interrogation, dans leur commentaire (p. 51, n. 14) [Ἀμφ]ικράτεος. Je ne saurais répondre à la question si ce timbre est en effet celui donné comme provenant de « Dobroudja » par Garlan (voir *supra*, note 2). Dans une note liminaire insérée dans *SEG* 48, 975bis, 24, j'avais déjà attiré l'attention sur les conséquences qui découlent de cette lecture : il y a là en effet un croquis de ce que je suis en train de développer ici.

<sup>19</sup> Avram 1996 : n° 62 = Garlan 1999 : n° 772.

<sup>20</sup> Rien qu'à regarder l'index produit récemment par Hamon 2019 : 450. Pour les magistrats amphoriques portant ce même nom, voir l'index de Tzochev 2016 : 241.



exerçant d'autres charges et qu'il ait alors fallu faire la distinction entre tel Pythiôn céramarque et tel autre Pythiôn, à une autre aire de compétences.

J'avoue que j'éprouve un sentiment bizarre en écrivant ces lignes remettant en cause une théorie soutenue par mon cher maître Yvon Garlan, d'autant plus que j'avais jadis moi-même accepté ses vues<sup>21</sup>. Toutefois, *amicus Plato* ...

### Abréviations

BAR British Archaeological Reports. Oxford.  
BCH *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique*. Athènes – Paris.  
IG *Inscriptiones Graecae*. Berlin.  
REG *Revue des études grecques*. Paris.  
SEG *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*. Leyde.  
ZPE *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*. Cologne.

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<sup>21</sup> Avram 1996 : 33.





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**Emil Nankov**

National Archaeological Institute with Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences  
ehn2@cornell.edu

## TOWARDS THE PROSOPOGRAPHY OF MACEDONIAN COMMANDERS IN THRACE DURING THE REIGN OF PHILIP II AND ALEXANDER III

**Abstract:** This article reconsiders several recently published sling bullets from Thrace to showcase the entangled nature of the inscribed bullet as an object of study, as well as the methodological obstacles facing modern scholarship when attempting to contextualise them within a larger spatial and temporal framework. I demonstrate the importance of the archaeological evidence from inland Thrace and the west Black Sea coast in our understanding of the geographical scope and military logistics of the Macedonian expansion beyond the northern frontier. A complex approach remains a necessity, whereby the sling bullets treated are cross-examined via comparanda from excavations, collections and electronic auctions. Ultimately, the main goal is to get a better sense of the prosopographic profile and of the ethnic diversity of the military personnel of the Macedonian armies during the reign of Philip II and Alexander III through the lens of the Thracian interior.

**Keywords:** warfare, slingers, Thrace, Macedonian expansion, inscribed sling bullets, Philip II, Alexander III.

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A steady stream of new finds of inscribed lead sling bullets, mainly from the northern Aegean, Asia Minor and inland Thrace (Angelovski 2012; Weiss, Draskowski 2010; Özenir 2017; Manov, Torbov 2016; Nankov 2016), in particular, is on its way to solidifying the foundations of what J. Ma has already described as “molybdénologie” (Ma 2010: 166). Among the salient features of these often neglected objects of war is the fact that sometimes (but not always) they are officially endorsed with personal names (Rihll 2009, 153-154; Ma 2010, 166-173; Avram et al. 2013). Most often these belong to the military personnel responsible for the contingents of slingers (σφενδονῆται) within the Macedonian armies of Philip II and Alexander III, who both resorted to their capabilities quite regularly. Although much still remains unknown, particularly with regard to the manufacturing process and ammunition supply to troops, to name but two, the growing number of personal names attested on sling bullets from different regions allows for certain observations to be made concerning the movement of the Macedonian army over great distances,

inland Thrace in particular (Manov, Torbov 2016; Nankov 2015; Nankov 2016).

Scholars dealing with sling bullets need to sift through excavation data, private collections and electronic auctions in order to secure acceptable identifications and produce reliable historical narratives (e.g., Ma 2010; Avram et al. 2013). Although the greatest value is attached to artefacts generated through archaeological excavations, it is rather unfortunate that a sizable number of sling bullets have ended up in collections, stripped of their primary archaeological milieu (cf. Pritchett 1991: 43-49; Rihll 2009: 147-148). Subsequently, their role gets reduced to the historical value of the names inscribed on them. Nevertheless, archaeology always gets the upper hand by validating uncertainties through excavation (Kozi Gramadi: Hristov, Manov 2011; cf. Nankov 2015; Dabnitsa: Киров, Ваклинов 2022; Olynthos: Robinson 1941: 418-443; Carevi Kuli, Strumitsa: Angelowski 2012; Argilos: Romero 2015). In any case, both lines of investigation work towards a common goal – tracing the historical vicissitudes of human conflict

by extracting information from rather inconspicuous pieces of ammunition.

For a long time, the sample of personal names attested on the sling bullets excavated by D. Robinson at Olynthos has been an indispensable resource for identifying the long list of military commanders serving under Philip II (Lee 2001; Avram et al. 2013 *passim*). Among those is Potalos who is represented by 5 sling bullets inscribed ΠΩΤΑΛΟΥ (Robinson 1941: 434, nos. 2245-2248; Lee 2001: 16, Fig. 4; Avram et al. 2013: 288). At Stageira, another site on the Chalcidice peninsula besieged by Philip II in 349 BCE, Potalos' sling bullets of the same type have been found in association with those of Philip II, as in the case of Olynthos (*SEG* LII 952; cf. Avram et al. 2013: 288). Recently, at Apollonia Pontica on the west Black Sea coast another example was found, with the bullet inscribed ΠΩΤΑΛΟΥ in a retrograde manner (Cat. no. 1, Fig. 1). Although no sling bullets with the name of Philip II have so far been discovered at Apollonia, the constantly increasing number of other sling bullets (to date, 30 specimens originate from the site "Fortification walls and features" [Иванов 2019: 198, обр. 2, кат. № 220]) seems to indicate that

Apollonia was besieged by the Macedonians, most likely during the retreat of Philip II towards the Scythian king Ateas following his unsuccessful sieges at Perinthus and Byzantium in 339 BCE (Nankov 2016, 285; Damyanov et al. 2021, 118).

There is a second type of sling bullet inscribed with the name of Potalos, which has so far remained unrecognised. Up until recently, only two examples were known (Gorny&Mosch 202, Lot 679; Roma Numismatics LOT 1342<sup>1</sup>). In both cases, the

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.romanumismatics.com/201-lot-1342-greek-pb-sling-bullet?arr=0&auction\\_id=0&box\\_filter=0&cat\\_id=&department\\_id=&exclude\\_keyword=&export\\_issue=0&gridtype=listview&high\\_estimate=0&image\\_filter=0&keyword=sling%20bullet&list\\_type=list\\_view&lots\\_per\\_page=100&low\\_estimate=0&month=&page\\_no=1&paper\\_filter=0&search\\_type=&sort\\_by=lot\\_number&view=lot\\_detail&year=](https://www.romanumismatics.com/201-lot-1342-greek-pb-sling-bullet?arr=0&auction_id=0&box_filter=0&cat_id=&department_id=&exclude_keyword=&export_issue=0&gridtype=listview&high_estimate=0&image_filter=0&keyword=sling%20bullet&list_type=list_view&lots_per_page=100&low_estimate=0&month=&page_no=1&paper_filter=0&search_type=&sort_by=lot_number&view=lot_detail&year=)



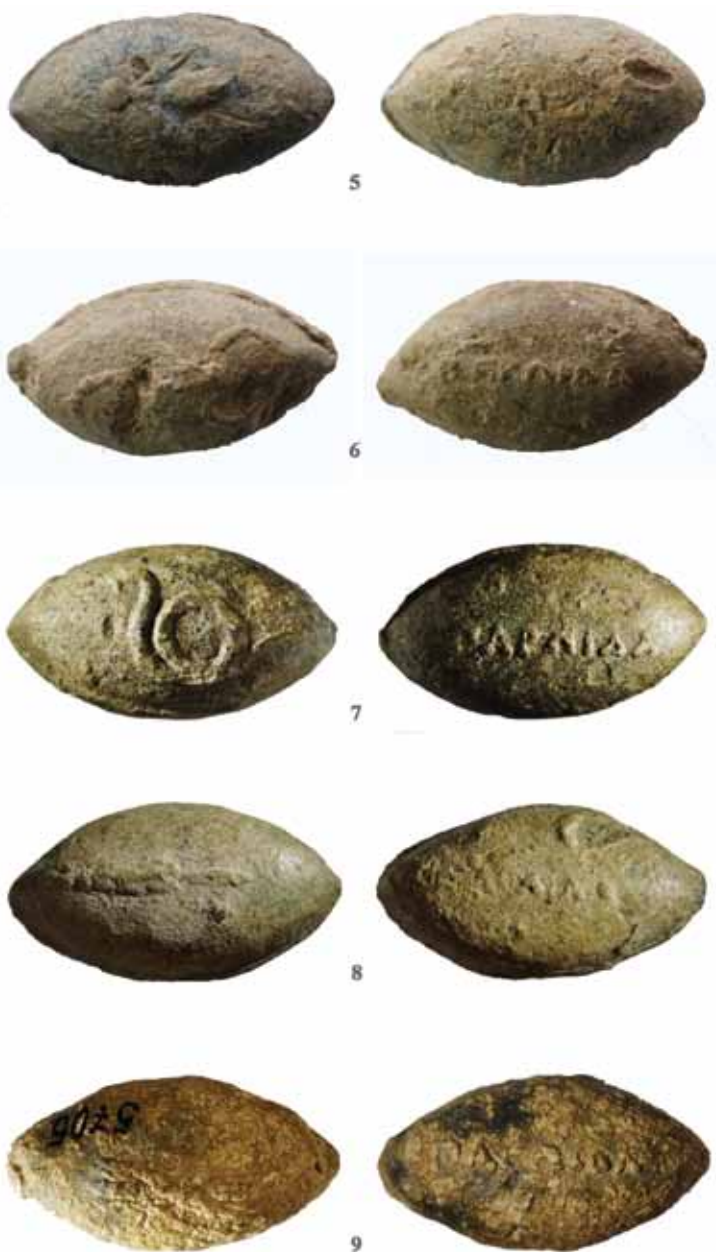
Pl. 1.

name is rendered, again, in a retrograde manner, with the letters distributed differently, and with a shortened genitive – ΠΩΤΑΛΟ. A third example found in Thrace should be added, as I will demonstrate, from the "Vatevi" collection published by M. Manov and N. Torbov in 2016 (Cat. no. 2, Fig. 2).<sup>2</sup> The letters on the bullet were misread as ΙΘΝΑΙΠΠΟΥ, and the name unconvincingly identified as Ἰανθίππος (Manov, Torbov 2016: 32, cat. no. 22). The comparison with the sling bullets from the auctions mentioned above clearly demonstrates that the example found in Thrace belongs to the same type. It would appear that the sling am-

<sup>2</sup> I was able to study the sling bullets from the "Vatevi" collection, then housed at the Archaeological Museum in Plovdiv, in April 2017. I am indebted to Narcis Torbov and Rositsa Mitkova for the logistical support during this process.

munition under the name of Potalos was manufactured on a larger scale using at least two different matrices. Their presence in Thrace, especially the one from Apollonia Pontica, traces the movement of Philip II's troops during his Thracian campaign in 341-339 BCE (Nankov 2016, 286-287; Damyanov et al. 2021, 118-120).

Another sling bullet from the "Vatevi" collection that I would like to revisit here was first published by M. Manov and N. Torbov. As a result of the bad state of preservation of the lettering, they offered no possibility of reading, while the presence of a monogram was recognised on the reverse (Cat. no. 3, Fig. 3). Two better preserved examples of the same type appeared on Roma Numismatics (LOT 1486<sup>3</sup> [Fig. 4] and 1657<sup>4</sup>), which allow for an identification of the name inscribed on the sling bullet found in Thrace as Hippostratos. The inscription reads IIIIOCTPA[TOY], whereas the monogram may be interpreted tentatively as an acronym of his name. Significantly, two other identical examples originate from the immediate surroundings of Selymbria (Cat. nos. 4-5). Based on the lunar sigma, A. Avram opted for a date in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, which is in agreement with the date offered by Oikonomos and Varoucha-Christodouloupoulou (Avram et al. 2013: 275). There is, however,



Pl. 2.

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.romanumismatics.com/218-lot-1486-greek-pb-sling-bullet?arr=0&auction\\_id=0&box\\_filter=0&cat\\_id=&department\\_id=&exclude\\_keyword=&export\\_issue=0&gridtype=listview&high\\_estimate=0&image\\_filter=0&keyword=sling%20bullet&list\\_type=list\\_view&lots\\_per\\_page=100&low\\_estimate=0&month=&page\\_no=1&paper\\_filter=0&search\\_type=&sort\\_by=lot\\_number&view=lot\\_detail&year=](https://www.romanumismatics.com/218-lot-1486-greek-pb-sling-bullet?arr=0&auction_id=0&box_filter=0&cat_id=&department_id=&exclude_keyword=&export_issue=0&gridtype=listview&high_estimate=0&image_filter=0&keyword=sling%20bullet&list_type=list_view&lots_per_page=100&low_estimate=0&month=&page_no=1&paper_filter=0&search_type=&sort_by=lot_number&view=lot_detail&year=)

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.romanumismatics.com/219-lot-1657-greek-pb-sling-bullet?arr=0&auction\\_id=0&box\\_filter=0&cat\\_id=&department\\_id=&exclude\\_keyword=&export\\_issue=0&gridtype=listview&high\\_estimate=0&image\\_filter=0&keyword=sling%20bullet&list\\_type=list\\_view&lots\\_per\\_page=100&low\\_estimate=0&month=&page\\_no=1&paper\\_filter=0&search\\_type=&sort\\_by=lot\\_number&view=lot\\_detail&year=](https://www.romanumismatics.com/219-lot-1657-greek-pb-sling-bullet?arr=0&auction_id=0&box_filter=0&cat_id=&department_id=&exclude_keyword=&export_issue=0&gridtype=listview&high_estimate=0&image_filter=0&keyword=sling%20bullet&list_type=list_view&lots_per_page=100&low_estimate=0&month=&page_no=1&paper_filter=0&search_type=&sort_by=lot_number&view=lot_detail&year=)

no further evidence to support the idea for such a late date.

Some written sources could offer more insights regarding the identity of Hippostratos, suggestive of an earlier chronology for his bullets. For example, Marsyas mentions that Hippostratos, son of Amyntas, perished in the Macedonian campaign of Philip II in Illyria in 344/343 BCE (*FGrHist* 135/6 F7). Arrian (*Anab.* 3. 11. 8) states that the father of Hegelochos, who served as a cavalry commander and admiral of the fleet of Alexander III, was called Hippostratos. Finally, Satyros recounts that Hippostratos was the brother of Cleopatra,

Philip II's last wife (*apud* Athen. 13. 557d). According to W. Heckel, all three sources speak in favour of the same individual, whose association with the military personnel of Philip II cannot be overstated (Heckel 1992: 8-9; Tataki 1998: no. 19-20, 333). The existence of sling ammunition in his name would strengthen the link with Philip II even further. Cases in point are the bullets from inland Thrace and Selymbria, which was ravaged by Philip en route to Byzantium in 339 BCE. Furthermore, I have recently identified another commander of Philip II among the inscribed bullets retrieved from the immediate surroundings of Selymbria (Nankov 2020). If the identification proposed here is correct, though, one should allow for the possibility that slingers armed with bullets in Hippostratos' name remained under Macedonian service after his Illyrian demise in 343 BCE.

Rather intriguing is the case of the sling bullets inscribed with the name Παρώδας, numerous specimens of which are known from private collections, chance finds and electronic auctions. The greater majority originate allegedly from the fortified site of "Archangel Mihail" near the village of Dabnitsa, in the Gotse Delchev region. More than a hundred examples were first published by E. Paunov (with no photographs), who divided them into five types based on the image (bee, scorpion, snake, spearhead and thunderbolt) accompanying the name rendered in genitive (Paunov, Dimitrov 2000: 49, 53, fig. 5, Table 3). Three more examples come from the "Vatevi" collection, whose level of preservation precluded a definitive restoration (Manov, Torbov 2016: cat. nos. 24-26). The reading of the name as Παρώδας proposed by Paunov and later accepted by Manov and Torbov, was rectified by A. Avram based on a specimen that appeared on Gorny&Mosch (Avram et al. 2013: 261, 288; cf. Avram 2016: 481). The five examples I present here (Cat. Nos. 6-10, Figs. 5-9), which all originate from the region of Gotse Delchev, and most probably from Dabnitsa, confirm beyond any doubt Avram's suggestion, thus the reading of the name as Παρώδας should now be considered secure. In addition to the main core at Dabnitsa, where recent excavations have brought to light several more specimens (Киров, Ваклинов 2022: 181), singular outliers are recorded in north-eastern Bulgaria (see here Cat. No. 10, Fig. 9; cf. Manov, Torbov 2016: cat. nos. 24-26).

In addition, an overlooked parallel comes from the region of Amphipolis, which has been interpreted, together with several other inscribed sling bullets found in the town (e.g., Mikinas and Kleoboulos), as archaeological evidence confirming the written account, according to which Amphipolis was besieged and taken by Philip II in 357 BC. The bullet in question features a coiled snake in relief and an inscription published as "ΠΑΙ.ΙΔΑ." (Malamidou, Kosmidou 2006, 136). This link with Amphipolis would tip the scales in favour of the hypothesis that Parodas was a general of Philip II and less likely one active during the time of the Diadochoi (cf. Avram et al. 2013: 288). Future publication of the ongoing archaeological excavations at Dabnitsa would demonstrate the magnitude of the destruction caused by the unrecorded Macedonian siege at the site and whether it took place during the reign of Philip II or that of Alexander III (cf. Nankov 2015, 5).

M. Manov and N. Torbov presented 12 examples of a hitherto unknown type of sling bullet from the "Vatevi" collection inscribed with the name of Alexander, son of Philip (Manov, Torbov 2016: cat. nos. 1-12). Rather unusually, his name is rendered with the patronymic ΦΙΛΙΠΠΙΟΥ, which makes the identification with Alexander III quite secure (Manov et al. 2019: 148-149; cf. Avram et al. 2013: 236). Here, I present one more example from the same collection (Cat. no. 11, Fig. 10). At the time of publication, no other specimen of this type was known. Recent excavations at the acropolis of the Lycian town of Patara, at the Tepecik acropolis (North Bastion), however, have brought to light numerous sling stones and one lead bullet with the legend ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ|ΦΙΛΙΠΠΙΟΥ (Cat. no. 12, Fig. 11). The dimensions, weight and metrology are identical to the 12 specimens published by M. Manov and N. Torbov in 2016, together with the one presented here. Most importantly, the stratigraphic data from the North Bastion, among which were found arrowheads and projectile points, confirms that Patara was taken by force by Alexander III, along with Pinara and Xanthos, in 334 BCE (Arrian, *Anab.* 1. 24. 3; Dündar, Rauh 2017: cat. no. 64, Fig. 53). The bullet from Patara confirms beyond doubt that the now 13 sling bullets found in Thrace should be firmly associated with the Thracian campaign of Alexander III in 335 BC. In short, slingers in his army at the time were

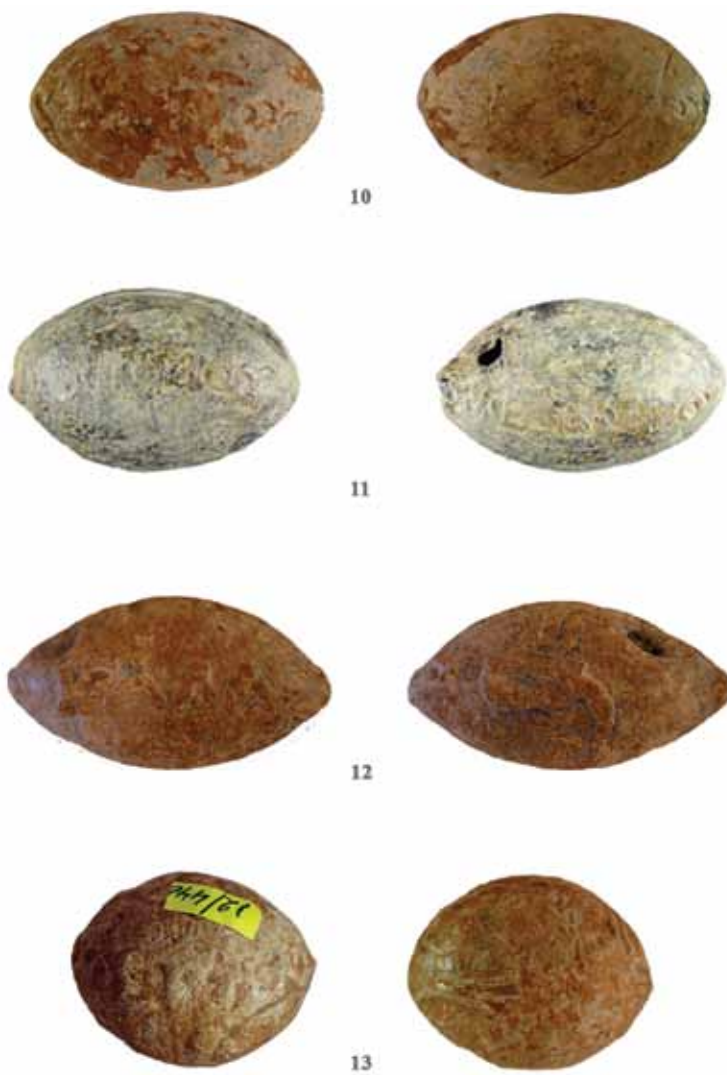


equipped with ammunition of this particular type with the legend ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ|ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΥ.

Among the group of sling bullets published by M. Manov and N. Torbov is an example inscribed with ΚΑΛΑ on the front and an image of a scorpion in high relief on the back (Cat. no. 13, Fig. 12). Traditionally, there have been two major problems with this type. One has to do with the interpretation of the inscription, and the second pertains to the fact that all known specimens to date come from private collections and electronic auctions (Avram et al. 2013: 275). The link with Lydia concerning the findspot of the specimen published by F. Moog remains uncertain (Moog 2007: 281). The old view took ΚΑΛΑ to mean “good things”, but as J. Ma has already convincingly argued, it is far more likely that this is a genitive from the personal name Κάλας, which has the highest frequency in Macedonia (Ma 2010: 169-170, n. 72, Avram et al. 2013: 275). More significant is the plausible identification with the historically attested Kalas, son of Harpalos, who was appointed a satrap of Hellespontine Phrygia by Alexander III after the battle of Granicus in 334 BCE (Heckel 1992: 217-218). Significantly, he also resided in Daskyleion, the capital of Hellespontine Phrygia (Arrian, *Anab.* 1. 17. 1-2).

A further piece of overlooked evidence comes from a sling bullet, possibly inscribed ΚΑΛΑ, found in the surroundings of Daskyleion (Brelaz 2007: cat. no. 13, Fig. 3, 77, n. 43). Coupled with the 5 sling bullets inscribed ΘΕΟΔΟΤΟΥ, that have been identified with Theodotos serving under Alexander III in 331 BCE (Heckel 1992: 305), it would seem more likely that these bullets trace the movement of Alexander’s army after the battle of Granicus (cf. Brelaz 2007: 75, 77; Avram et al. 2013: 275). Therefore, the newly published example found in Thrace further solidifies the identification with Kalas, some of whose slingers apparently took part in the Thracian campaign of Alexander III in 335 BCE.

A rather peculiar sling bullet with an almost spherical shape deserves further attention (Cat. no. 14, Fig. 13). M. Manov and N. Torbov provided a dubious reading, mainly because of the state of preservation, identifying the name inscribed as Aeropos (Manov, Torbov 2016: cat. no. 13). Closer inspection and an identical example that appeared on Gorny&Mosch 202, Lot 678, allow for a better reading of the inscription, thereby disproving the untenable association with Aeropos (Manov, Torbov 2016: 31). In fact, the name reads ΜΕΤΡΩΝ, presented most likely in nominative rather than in a shortened genitive form, even though personal names in nominative are relatively uncommon on sling bullets (Avram et al. 2013: 259-294). More intriguing are the options for identifying Metron, a name found in Macedonia (LGPN IV), with a historically attested individual. In this case, again,



Pl. 3.

the connection with the entourage of Alexander III appears as a good possibility to explore. Metron, son of Epicharmos, from Pydna, a commander of triremes in the Hydaspes fleet in 326 BCE (Arrian, *Ind.* 18. 5. 1), may be identical to the Royal Page Metron, in charge of the king's armoury (Curt. 6. 7. 22). He was also instrumental in revealing the Dimnos and Philotas' affairs to Alexander (Heckel 1992: 293-294; Tataki 1998: no. 74, 373, no. 11, 171; Diod. 17.79.4-5). At this point, however, linking the sling bullets with the historically attested Metron remains inconclusive, until more empirical data comes to light.

I hope that the small sample of inscribed sling bullets presented above was representative enough to showcase the importance of employing various strings of data when tackling complicated cases. Archaeological evidence from inland Thrace and the west Black Sea coast continues to be of considerable importance in charting the geographical scope of the Macedonian expansion beyond the northern frontier. A complex approach remains a necessity, and no example should be treated in isolation. Eventually, we should be in a position to obtain a better sense of the prosopographic profile and of the ethnic diversity of the military personnel of the Macedonian armies during the reign of Philip II and Alexander III.

### Catalogue

1. Archaeological Museum, Sozopol. Apollonia Pontica (site "Fortification walls and features"); archaeological excavations by Dimitar Nedev in 2012; **L 27 W 15 Th 12 Wt: 24.05 g**. Cast in a bivalve mould, almond-shaped, intact, traces of casting sprues flattened, inscription retrograde. ΠΩΤΑ ← ΛΟΥ ←. Reading: Πώταλου (fig. 1).  
Unpublished.
2. Collection "Vatevi", Inv. No. 1862/21. Region of north-eastern Bulgaria; **L 26 W 16 Th 12 Wt: 25.47 g**. Cast in a mould, almond-shaped, intact. ΠΩΤ ← ΛΑΛΟ ←. Reading: Πώταλου (fig. 2).  
Publication: Manov, Torbov 2016: 32, cat. no. 22
3. Collection "Vatevi", Inv. No. 456/16. Region of north-eastern Bulgaria; **L 33.5 W 18.5 Th 14 Wt: 42.45 g**. Cast in a mould, almond-shaped, intact, one end chipped. ΠΠΠΟΤΡΑ[ΤΟΥ] monogram. Reading: Ἰππόστρατου (fig. 3).  
Publication: Manov, Torbov 2016: 32, cat. no. 17
4. Numismatic Collection "Anastasios Stamouliis". Selymbria or vicinity; **L 35 W 18 Th not reported Wt: 40.60 g**. Cast in a bivalve mould, almond-shaped. ΠΠΠΟΤΡΑΤΟ[Y] monogram. Reading: Ἰππόστρατου (not illustrated)  
Publication: Οικονομου, Βαρουχα-Χριστοδουλοπουλο 1955: 147, no. 994
5. Numismatic Collection "Anastasios Stamouliis". Selymbria or vicinity; **L 33 W 18 Th not reported Wt: 40.10 g**. Cast in a bivalve mould, almond-shaped. ΠΠΠΟΤΡΑΤΟ[Y] monogram. Reading: Ἰππόστρατου (not illustrated)  
Publication: Οικονομου, Βαρουχα-Χριστοδουλοπουλο 1955: 147, no. 995
6. Historical Museum – Gotse Delchev, Inv. No. 849. Region of Gotse Delchev; **L 31 W 16 Th 12 Wt: 32.54 g**. Cast in a bivalve mould, almond-shaped, traces of mould on the sides visible; chipped on the edge.  
Bee facing left | ΠΑΡΩΙΔΑ. Reading: Παρώδας (fig. 5).  
Unpublished.
7. Historical Museum – Gotse Delchev, Inv. No. 849. Region of Gotse Delchev; **L 31 W 16 Th 12 Wt: 31.13 g**. Cast in a bivalve mould, almond-shaped, traces of mould on the sides visible; chipped on the edge.  
Scorpion facing right | ΠΑΡΩΙΔΑ. Reading: Παρώδας (fig. 6).  
Unpublished.
8. Regional Historical Museum – Blagoevgrad, Inv. No. 1.2/1808. Region of Gotse Delchev; **L 31 W 17 Th 12 Wt: 32.00 g**. Cast in a bivalve mould, almond-shaped, traces of mould on the sides visible; chipped on the edge. Coiled snake facing left | ΠΑΡΩΙΔΑ. Reading: Παρώδας (fig. 7).  
Unpublished.
9. Regional Historical Museum – Blagoevgrad, Inv. No. 1.2/1809. Region of Gotse Delchev; **L 30 W 17 Th 12 Wt: 31.00 g**. Cast in a bivalve mould, almond-shaped, traces of mould on the sides visible; chipped on the edge. Spearhead facing left | ΠΑΡΩΙΔΑ. Reading: Παρώδας (fig. 8).  
Unpublished.
10. Regional Historical Museum – Razgrad, Inv. No. 5705. Region of Razgrad; **L 30 W 16 Th 13 Wt: 31.00 g**. Cast in a bivalve mould, almond-shaped, traces of mould on the sides visible; chipped on the edge.

Thunderbolt | ΠΑΡΩΙΔΑ. Reading: Παρώδας (fig. 9).

Unpublished.

11. Collection “Vatevi”, Inv. No. 8096/25. Region of north-eastern Bulgaria; **L 30 W 18 Th 14 Wt: 39.60 g**. Cast in a mould, almond-shaped, intact, barely legible; surfaces worn. ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ|ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΥ. Reading:

Ἀλέξανδρου Φιλίππου (fig. 10).

Publication: Unpublished

12. Patara, PTR’13-252. L-19 (SU 025-62/fire-damaged floor). Tepecik acropolis (North Bastion); **L 30 W 19 Th not reported Wt: 37.75 g**. Cast in a mould, almond-shaped, intact, air-hole. ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ|ΦΙΛΙΠΠΟΥ. Reading: Ἀλέξανδρου Φιλίππου (fig. 11).

Publication: Dündar, Rauh 2017: cat. no. 64, Fig. 53

13. Collection “Vatevi”, Inv. No. 1920/22. Region of north-eastern Bulgaria; **L 33 W 17 Th 12 Wt: 32.54 g**. Cast in a bivalve mould, almond-shaped, intact, air-hole, small chip from impact (?). ΚΑΛΑ|scorpion. Reading: Κάλα (fig. 12).

Publication: Manov, Torbov 2016: cat. no. 23

14. Collection “Vatevi”, Inv. No. 440/12. Region of North-eastern Bulgaria; **L 25 W 20 Th 15 Wt: 41.03 g**. Cast in a bivalve mould, round-shaped, intact, casting sprues smoothed. ΜΕΤΡΩΝ|two thunderbolts. Reading: Μέτρων (fig. 13).

Publication: Manov, Torbov 2016: cat. no. 13

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**Branko Kirigin**  
Hvar – Split, Croatia  
branko.kirigin@st.htnet.hr

## PROTECTING THE CHORA: THE GREEK TOWER AT MASLINOVIK ON THE ADRIATIC ISLAND OF HVAR - EXCAVATIONS IN 1987, 2011-2012, AND 2016-2018

**Abstract:** The author reports on the six field seasons of excavations at the Greek isolated square tower on Maslinovik hill situated within the chora of Pharos on the Adriatic island of Hvar. After a brief history of research of the tower, its position and viewshed, attention is paid to the specific features of the building technique, stratigraphy, analysis of artefacts that were found (predominantly late 4th – early 3rd century BC), compared with other isolated towers in the Greek world, its price and symbolic function, as well as the city’s notion of its importance in the defence of their territory.

**Keywords:** Maslinovik, excavations, Greek tower, defence, Pharos, masonry, stratigraphy, pottery, tiles.

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### Introduction

Some 36 years ago, Petar Popović and I published the preliminary results of our excavations at the site of Maslinovik (Olive Grove), in which we rediscovered (after 111 years) the remains of a Greek isolated tower (Kirigin, Popović 1987)<sup>1</sup>. Although some observations in our report had to be corrected, we highlighted in it that an isolated tower could also have formed part of a defence system that was established to protect the *chora* and *eschatia* of a Greek polis: in our case the Greek settlement of Pharos founded by the Parians from the Aegean island of Paros in 385/384 BC on the c. 700 NM distant island of Hvar, in the Adriatic Sea (for more details see Kirigin 2006). We were also the first to use viewsheds to demonstrate the existence of this defence network (Figure 1; Kirigin, Popović 1987: 180, 183, Figure 10.3), which was confirmed by GIS analysis in 1991 (Gaffney and Stančić 1991: 77-81). This method was later developed by scholars as “networks of intervisible tow-

ers used in surveillance and signalling” (Morris, Papadopoulos 2005: 162 and note 29). Petar and I have also shown that the tower at Maslinovik was a public investment whose purpose was to protect the *chora* of Pharos.

After our first excavation campaign in 1987, we had to wait 24 years for the next one. The turning point was in 2008, when Pharos and its *chora* were put on the UNESCO list of protected cultural landscapes (Čavić 2016). Three years later, the Croatian Ministry of Culture supported additional excavations in 2011-2012 (when Petar was with us), albeit with modest funding, and again in 2016-2018, for a total of 5 seasons of fieldwork. In 2019 it was decided (without consulting the excavation team) to stop the unfinished excavations and to begin a partial reconstruction of the tower<sup>2</sup>.

Maslinovik is a rare, if not unique, example of a small site that has been excavated over so many decades and yet has not been satisfactorily investigated. The discontinuity of work has created many

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<sup>1</sup> The first mention of the Maslinovik tower was not in 1897 by G. A. Botteri (as we have mentioned on p.177), but 21 years earlier (Anonymous 1876), most probably written by Botteri. The site code of Maslinovik is JE0120.00 (Gaffney et al. 1997: 143)

<sup>2</sup> This unexpected situation has enabled our small team to have time to properly tidy up the documentation and the finds that are held in the Stari Grad Museum. The results of the reconstruction work can be seen, thanks to the efforts of Eduard Visković, on this site: <https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/grcka-kula-na-maslinoviku-stari-grad-na-hvaru-2762cf8b715f4c3d8d0d9f384cc620bf>



problems and some features could not be explored properly and remain enigmatic. However, olives live for millennia even when they are neglected over a long period of time. Maybe the tower at Maslinovik will have the same fate and will end up being fully explored, protected, and presented to the public, and will become an exceptional attraction for visitors. Despite the incompleteness of this report, it is a great pleasure for me to contribute to the publication that celebrates the work Petar has done for archaeology and numismatics. After getting to know him during my student days from 1966, we have become close friends and shared many exciting archaeological field projects on the Dalmatian islands and all the turbulent and horrible days in our recent history.

As far as I know there is a large number of isolated towers in the Greek world, with a circular or a rectangular plan, although only a few examples in Greece have been excavated (Fachard 2016a: 83)<sup>3</sup>. While the literature on Greek isolated towers is quite extensive<sup>4</sup>, the total number of these fortifications is still unknown. What we have is data about individual or regional isolated towers<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> It was not possible for me to see all the papers that Fachard mentions, as well as some others that I could not get hold of.

<sup>4</sup> Exhaustively presented and discussed by Morris, Papadopoulos 2005: 209-225 and by Fachard 2016a: 86-88; 2016b, 200 and note 57.

<sup>5</sup> For example, on the border area between Attica and Beotia there are 10 square and 5 round towers (Champ 1991, 197, sl. 69); in southeast Attica around the silver mines (Laurion) there are 7 of them (Morris, Papadopoulos 2005: 176, Figure 20); around Mantinea in central Peloponnese there are 9 square towers (Maher, Mowat 2018); on the island of Leukas in the Ionian Sea there are 12 round and 7 square ones (Morris 2001: 290-291, 337-338 and Figure 1 on p. 286). The situation in Epirus (Molossia) is unclear. Nakas (2016: 426) mentions some 200 various Greek fortifications but does not classify them. On the island of Thasos (an archaic Parian settlement) to the north of the Aegean Sea there are 30 of them: 23 are square and 7 round (Osborne 1986: 166-167), while on the very island of Paros (the mother-city of Pharos) only one round is known (Haselberger 1978/3: 354-375). On the neighbouring island of Siphnos there are 40 round towers (Young 1956). See also: Fachard 2016b:220 and note 57.

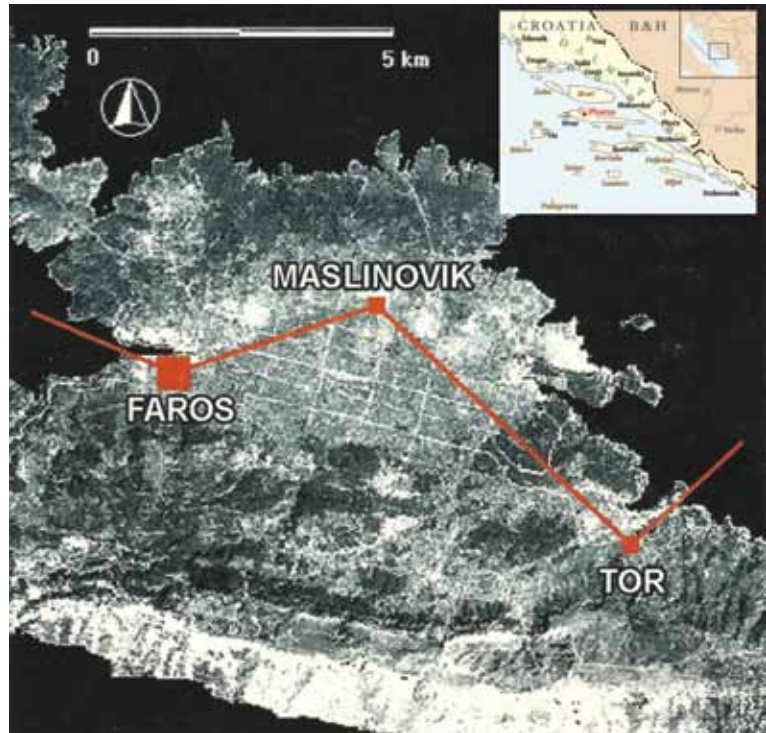


Fig. 1. Satellite image of the Stari Grad Plain with clear traces of the Greek land division. The red line indicates the visual communication between Pharos and the towers at Maslinovik and Tor.

From B. Kirigin 2003a and b, 21, Figure 16. Modified by B. Kirigin.

Isolated towers have been interpreted in various ways: they protected and kept under surveillance the borders of a *polis*, its agricultural or mining areas, roads and passes, and individual farms. Some towers also served as lighthouses. Most of them are dated to the 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BC.

In what follows I will try to present the results of the excavations of the Maslinovik tower, the finds, and some observations about how it was built, its dating, and its functions in the Pharian community.

### Position of the site

Maslinovik, at 66 masl, is situated in an Arcadian karstic landscape on the northern edge of the Stari Grad Plain, some 3 km as the crow flies north-east of Stari Grad town, the site of the Greek city of Pharos. The vegetation on the hill is sparse and mainly consists of various macchia, oak and wild olives. The hill is exposed to all winds. Various structures are located in the vicinity of the tower (Figure 2, no. 1). Some 10 m to the west there are the remains of a traditional



Fig. 2. Aerial view of the tower at Maslinovik and surrounding buildings made during excavations in 2017. 1. Tower, 2. Lime kiln, 3. Small drystone hut, 4. Drystone ramp. 5. Drystone house, 6. Station. Photo by E. Visković (numbers by B. Kirigin).

round drystone lime kiln c. 14 x 12 m and around 2-3 m high (Figure 2, no. 2). This kiln was built in late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century and owned by the late Nikola Buratović - Rus from the village of Vrbanj, to which the area of Maslinovik and its environs belong administratively<sup>6</sup>. Tower blocks were built into its wall (one has a drafted edge). At some 2 m west of the south-western corner of the tower can be seen the ruins of a small rectangular shelter (c. 2 x 2m) used as a place of rest by workers at the

kiln (Figure 2, no 3). It is a drystone hut with a slanting roof made of typically thin irregular stone slabs supported by unworked wooden beams. Its northern side leans onto a drystone wall, a ramp, about 1-2 m wide (SU 38), also made of some larger tower blocks (Figure 2, no 4). This extends to the west for some 9 m. It was most likely built to make it easier to transport the tower's blocks towards the limestone kiln. Along the south face of the tower, at a distance of about 4 m, there is a rectangular dry-stone building, which was also owned by Nikola Buratović (Figure 2, no. 5). This could be a warehouse (now roofless, c. 5 x 4 m) with a door facing south; it was also built with some blocks from the tower. South of this is a smaller abandoned stone building (now roofless) built with mortar and with some large blocks, the so-called *stacija* (station), erected in 1899, which was part of an elaborate system for protecting the Stari Grad Plain from hail (Figure 2, no. 6). There was

<sup>6</sup> This traditional drystone vault building (kiln) – *japjenica* in local dialect - was made out of limestone in which dry bush was set on fire continuously for, depending on the size, from five days to one month. Lime was made from the melted limestones. Our kiln could have produced some 30 tons of lime after 6 days of burning. According to Ivan Ljubić (born in 1941) from Vrbanj, the kiln was closed in 1905. It is very likely that the kiln was built after Botteri mentioned the tower in 1876. For the building technique of these kilns see: Zaninović 1980. For the history and method of making these rather complex kilns see: Blagajić and Burica 1990; Blagajić N. 2012; Blagajić M. 2012, and especially Puljak 2018.



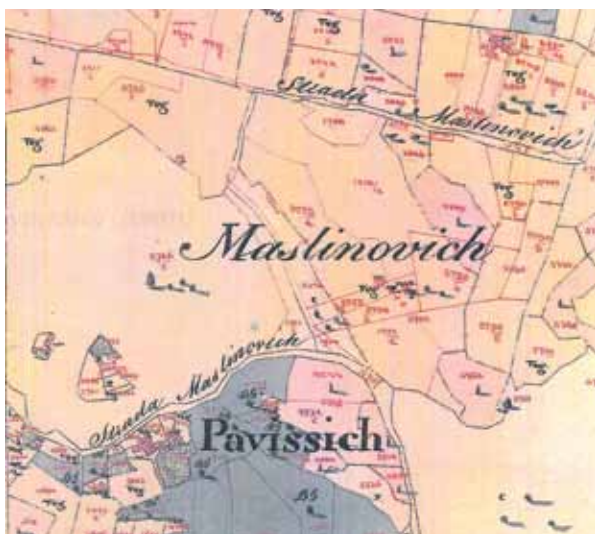


Fig. 3. Excerpt from the Imperial Austrian cadastral map from 1834. Courtesy of the State Archive in Split.

an anti-hail device in it (Moškateo 2008). In addition, there are smaller heaps of stones and dry-stone walls within this rocky terrain. A little further south, 50 m away, is the hamlet of Pavišići, which was established from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Figures 3 and 6). Among the buildings of this hamlet, one also finds blocks of the tower; one has a drafted edge.

To the south and west of Pavišići hamlet, all the way to the fields in the plain, are olive groves that probably gave the name to the hill. A Greek tombstone was accidentally found in 1905 at the site of Taveinac, at the south-western slope end of Maslinovik hill (Petrić 1998, 30, T. VI, no. 1). To the east is Škudljivac hill (74.7 masl), atop which lies a destroyed prehistoric mound (Vujnović et al. forthcoming). Somewhere nearby, the earliest hoard of Greek bronze coins, minted in Dalmatia in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, which still attracts lively attention (Goricke Lukić 2017 and references therein) was accidentally found in 1835.

A survey around the tower has shown that no other ancient structures were recorded indicating that the tower was an isolated building and not part of a farmstead or a place of refuge in case of danger (except if a timber enclosure was erected around the tower)<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> On towers that form part of an enclosed area see Young 1956: 138; Fracchia 1985: 689; Morris, Papadopolous 2005: passim. Fortified Pharos was less than an hour's walk from Maslinovik.

#### Access

The easiest access to the tower is from the west. When taking the old road from Stari Grad (Pharos) to Vrboska, the main W-E axis of the regular Greek land division system (For more details see: Slapšak 2002; Slapšak, Kirigin 2001; Popović 2020), towards the east for some 2 km, at the place of intersection of the two main axes of the land division (*omphalos*), one has to turn left and follow the road north for around 1.3 km, and then turn right where an upward path leads to the now abandoned hamlet of Pavišići (Figures 3 and 6). From there, to the left, after some 50 m, stands the tower, at a distance of c. 4.4 km from ancient Pharos. However, if one walks along the edges of the plain, the tower is at some 3.2 km from Pharos<sup>8</sup>, and as the crow flies it is 3.1 km from the city, less than an hour walking time.

#### Visibility

From the current height of the tower at 66 masl, one cannot see the sea towards the north or the bay of Stari Grad. On the south-western side, the southern part of Stari Grad town (the site of Pharos) is visible (Figures 1 and 4). Above Stari Grad and the village of Dol (Figure 4) is Purkin kuk at 275 masl (Figure 4), the site of the largest prehistoric mound on the island. The remains of a fortification/temple (?) have been incorporated into its western side. On the south side beyond the plain is the village of Vrbanj (Figure 5) below Hum hill (Figure 5), which also has a prehistoric mound, and the village of Vrisnik (Figure 5), to the rear of Vrbanj. At some distance to the east of Vrisnik is the bell tower of the village of Pitve (Figure 5). Further to the south-east is the hill on which the Greek tower Tor (235 masl) stands (Figure 1 and 5) above the town of Jelsa, some 7 km from Maslinovik as the crow flies. Behind Škudljivac to the east is Vetežnji hum with a prehistoric barrow (125.4 masl) and to the right is Tatinja hill (101.9 masl) also with a barrow. Some 3 km behind Tatinja is the Tor tower. Towards the north are the peaks (Vidova gora) and cliffs of the island of Brač (Figure 6) and the low hills north of Maslinovik encompassing the fertile area of Priloge (Figure 7), which was incorporated

<sup>8</sup> Most of this path is visible. This could be a somewhat similar to the GIS suggested "least cost path across the cumulative coast surface between Maslinovik and the lower site of Pharos (Gaffney, Stančić 1991, 78-81, figures 50-52).



Fig. 4. View from Maslinovik tower towards Stari Grad from 10 m above the present ruins (2020). Inserted small photo is an enlarged image from the present level of the tower showing the positions of the churches in Stari Grad (2011). Photos by E. Visković and B. Kirigin.



Fig. 5. View from Maslinovik from 10 m above the present ruins toward the tower at Tor with surrounding settlements (2020). Photo by E. Visković (modified by B. Kirigin).

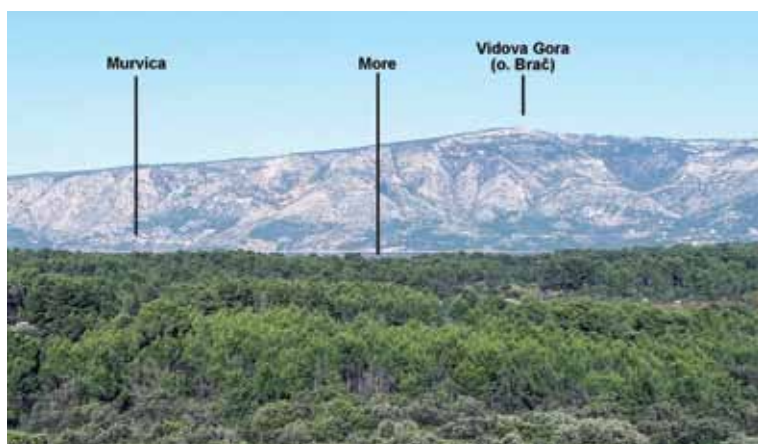


Fig. 6. View on the northern side of Maslinovik from 10 m above the present ruins showing the sea towards the island of Brač (2020). Photo by E. Visković (modified by B. Kirigin). (more = sea)

in the Greek land division system. Almost the entire Stari Grad Plain is visible from Maslinovik, Tor and Purkin kuk<sup>9</sup>.

In our case, visibility towards Stari Grad is especially important. From the current height of the Maslinovik tower, one can see the bell towers of the parish church of St. Stephen, and the monastery of St. Peter (whose bell tower, which stands at the highest southern point of the medieval city, probably lies on the foundations of a Greek tower). A little further south, one can see the church of St. Nicholas, which, according to oral tradition, was located in the middle of the ancient city<sup>10</sup> (Figure 4).

One would think that the position of the tower would be better at a 10 m higher elevation on nearby Škudljivac hill, from where the view is wider, but from the latter spot any view of the Priloge area is not possible. One must keep in mind that the whole Stari Grad Plain was under cultivation, and without any fast-growing pine trees (*Pinus halepensis*), or macchia and oak trees, until 60 years ago. Predominantly pine and less so macchia now occupy 71% of the cultivated area, which encompasses some 1,200 ha (Andlar et al. 2018,; 4) Using a drone from an elevation of 10 m above the present level of the tower walls at Maslinovik, one can see a small area of sea on the north-western side to

<sup>9</sup> The Greek style fortifications at Tor and Purkin kuk have been published by Zaninović (1978; 1981; 1982). I will address this subject in another paper.

<sup>10</sup> Kirigin 1991: 14, no. 3 (based on an unpublished report by Mladen Nikolanci from 1968 in which this is mentioned). G. A. Botteri (1897) also writes: “È certo però che la *tradizione* colloca la Chiesa di San Nicolò nel bel centro dell’ *Antica Città*...”. See also: Kovačić 1994: 364 and note 27 with data from the 18<sup>th</sup> century; Popović: Devlahović 2018, 392.





Fig. 7. The northern part of the Greek regular land division with the position of the tower at Maslinovik and the site of Priloge.  
Courtesy of Sara Popović.

wards Priloge and the island of Brač (Figure 6)<sup>11</sup>. Even more could be seen if we eliminated the pine trees that are now at least 5-8 m high<sup>12</sup>.

#### *Orientation of the tower*

The orientation of the tower is approximately in a N-S direction, with 12 degrees of deviation to the north-east, identical to the orientation of the regular Greek land division system that was laid down after the foundation of Pharos (Kirigin 2006: 88). The tower lies on the western side of plot D-18 of the regular Greek land division system (Figure 7)<sup>13</sup>. If this is not a coincidence, then the orientation of the tower and the land division system could have been planned and carried out concurrently.

#### *The name of the tower*

As was mentioned earlier, Maslinovik is the name for the hill, not of the tower at its top. If, by any chance, the tower had been preserved like Tor (*Turrium* in Latin, *Torre* in Italian) above Jelsa, it would certainly have been named. It is difficult to say when our tower became unrecognisable, but it is possible that it was already lost from view in Late Antiquity or in the Middle Ages (14<sup>th</sup> century) when today's toponyms in and around Stari Grad Plain were recorded (Kovačić 1993: 210). Yet, according to an anonymous writer, who said in his 1876 newspaper article (see note 1) that the wall of the tower at Maslinovik was 7.7 m tall (quite accurately), the tower must have been better preserved then when we partially rediscovered it 111 years later.

<sup>11</sup> The drone film from 10 and 12 m above the Maslinovik tower was made by Eduard Visković, an archaeologist from the town of Hvar. It will soon be available on YouTube.

<sup>12</sup> The above-mentioned Ivan Ljubić told us that when he was a child he could see the sea from Maslinovik, since there were no trees around.

<sup>13</sup> These plots are not visible. This area most probably served as common pasture land: see: Popović 2020: 82.



### Excavation results

Altogether, the excavated area covers some 10.5 x 10.5 m with an average depth of 1 m = i.e. some 90 m<sup>3</sup>. The excavations were not completed at parts of the lowest layers along the eastern, northern and western exterior faces of tower walls and also (deliberately) within the tower in the south-eastern quadrant (later SU 8 = the line between SU 2 and SU 1 on Figure 11) together with a smaller part along the northern interior side of the eastern wall (SU 15 on Figure 30).

According to the visible remains, the tower has collapsed mostly to the north-west and north-east, while for the southern side it is hard to tell as it is possible that the blocks from this side were taken away (*i.e.*, plundered) when all the nearby buildings, as well as the hamlet of Pavišići, were built. The preserved remains of the tower show an almost exact square measuring 7.55 (W) x 7.48 (N) x 7.48

on analogous isolated Greek towers, the tower on Maslinovik would have been at least 10 m high (see below). The preserved remains are only 10% of the original height of the tower. This is about a third of the height of the preserved remains of the similar tower at Tor above Jelsa<sup>14</sup>.

If we assume that the total length of the walls of our tower is 27 m and if we consider that they are preserved at a height of about 1 m, then we would be dealing with about 28 cubic meters of worked stone. If we assume that the tower was at least 10 m high, then about 270 cubic meters of stones were used to build the tower (not to mention the chips of the hewn blocks).

Excavations have shown that the walls of the tower were built on bedrock that is slightly sloping to the north-east. It is not completely flat or smooth, but has a lot of cracks, recesses, depressions and holes typical for the karstic landscape (Figure 9). What is interesting is that most of these

recesses within the tower, about 20 cm or more deep, have rounded edges (Figure 10). They are full of fine dark brown soil and some smaller stones (SU 0 = 24). At the bottom along the interior of the eastern wall in the SI quadrant there is a layer of horizontally placed thin white irregular stones with rounded edges mixed with dark brown soil that are put in a somewhat semi-circular shape (SU 15, Figures 10 and 30). These differ from the direction of the surrounding bedrock (SU 0 = 24). Two blocks of the eastern wall (SU 7) lay over them (Figure 10).

A similar situation is found in Pocket A (SU 11) along the eastern profile of the south-western quad-

rant and along the interior side of the southern wall (SU 4), with similar stones within dark brown soil (Džep A on Figure 11). On a higher level of this dark brown soil 33 sherds of prehistoric pottery (most probably Bronze Age) were discovered (see below). It is difficult to determine how these irregular thin white flat and rounded pieces of stone were formed. They look as if water has

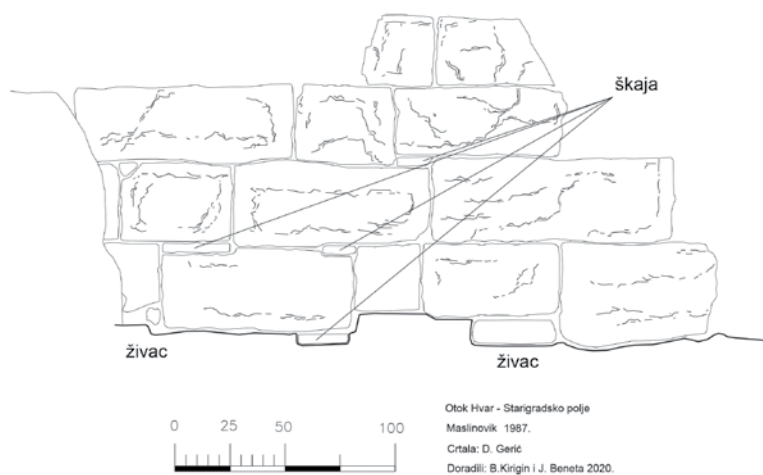


Fig. 8. Western part of the northern wall of the tower. Produced by Dunja Gerić in 1987, published in Kirigin and Popović 1988, 181, Figure 101 above; Kirigin and Olujić 2011, 692, modified by B. Kirigin in 2020, redrawn by Jasmina Beneta. (živac = bedrock)

(E) x 7.53 (S) m on the exterior face. The highest preserved height is about 1.5 m – the north-western angle - with 4 rows of blocks (Figure 8) and the lowest in one row at the inside northern face. The width of the wall is about 1.1 m, and the inside measures 5.5 x 5.5 m (= 30.25 m<sup>2</sup>). If we were to convert this into Greek measurements, that is to the foot measure of Pharos (= 30.21 cm) (Stančić, Slapšak 1987: 194), then the length of the exterior wall face could be 22 feet, the interior 18, and the wall width about 3.3 feet. Apparently, based

<sup>14</sup> Estimated height to be from 6.3 m on the southern and 8 m on the northern side (Zaninović 1978-1979: 205-206; 1982: 63). These heights include the restored 5 layers of blocks.



Fig. 9. The bedrock within the tower. Photo by P. Popović (2011).



Fig. 10. The north-eastern square within the tower showing the bedrock and the eastern tower wall built on SU 15. Photo by P. Popović (2011).

been washing over them for a long time. The bedrock at the bottom of the southern trench (SU 24), as well as the southern part of the eastern wall, is flat and similar to the above-mentioned features. It is possible that here we have “boundaries” of two geological limestone formations<sup>15</sup>.

There are very rare signs that the bedrock was levelled out (hewn) for adjusting the first row of the tower blocks (Figure 8). It looks as if most of the blocks were adapted to the bedrock and at the north-western and south-eastern corners a stone socle was used (Figure 8 and 19).

<sup>15</sup> Unfortunately, because of insufficient funding, we did not perform any palaeobotanical analysis to see what kind of vegetation existed before the tower was built. However, this kind of study is still feasible.

## The interior of the tower

### *The course of research*

After the exterior and interior edges of the western part of the southern and the interior face of the eastern wall of the tower were defined in 1987, the surface layer of soil, stones, bushes and grass, thicker on the western side, was removed in the same year. It also contained recent pottery (late 19<sup>th</sup> / early 20<sup>th</sup> century), mostly smaller fragments of Greek tiles, 4 animal bones (phalanx) and, in the deeper part, some burnt stones and scattered Greek tile sherds. These tiles appear in the north-eastern part of the quadrant, from which it appears that the fallen tower blocks were removed at some point. The northern part of the interior seems to have been mostly devastated in recent times, in some places to the bedrock (SU 18 on Figure 11). In the north-eastern part, a skeleton of a large animal (donkey?) was found below the surface layer together with recent pottery and Greek tile sherds. These animal remains were above a layer of smaller stones placed on the bedrock. In the north-western part of the interior the situation is similar. The area has experienced recent excavations (of tower blocks?) and

backfills so there are no traces of the cultural layer (later SU 2 and 25) that was found in the southern parts of the tower (Figures 11 and 13).

In the north-western part beneath the layer of humus there is a layer of small and large stones that were lying on the bedrock. Many small fragments of tiles were found in this stone layer - 107 in total (SU 18). Tiles were also found along the narrow and shallow ditch that was excavated in 1987 to define the exterior line of the northern wall and especially near the southern wall. Within the tower, in the subsurface layer, 185 tile fragments were found (Figure 15) together with 21 daub fragments with no traces of straw, which may represent remains of a clay floor and some remains of an oven (?) (Figure 13a).



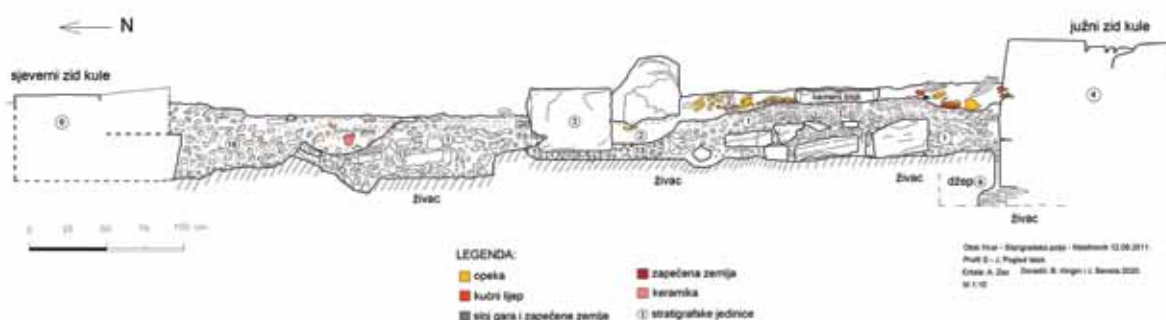


Fig. 11. The north-south section of the interior of the central part of the tower. Drawn by Asja Zec in 2011. a. surface layer from 1987. b. cultural layer excavated in 1987 (hypothetical reconstruction), modified by B. Kirigin, redrawn by J. Beneta.



Fig. 12. The start of the field season on Oct. 31st 1987. Team members Irena Radić, Petar Popović, Zoran Stančić and B. Kirigin, after cleaning the western tower wall, revealed the letter  $\Phi = \text{Ph(aros)}$ . Photo by Vinko Šribar.

cross-section: it is 10 cm wide and 20 cm long (Figures 11, 13, 14 and 28). On the eastern side of the central block there were several smaller blocks of stones in a vertical position that probably increased the stability of the square block on that side. The second larger dislodged and broken block of the tower was located on the western side of the square block, while next to the southern side of the square block there is a larger, also dislodged, whole block of the tower (Figures 11, 13 and 14). It could be seen that there was a pit around the square block (SU 20) into which the centre block was inserted (Figures 11 and 17, no. 1) Underneath this block

fragments of sea shells (*Murex brandaris*) were found.

After removing the surface layer within the interior of the tower, its southern, eastern and northern walls were completely defined. Almost all of them were preserved, more or less, at the same height. On the north-eastern, south-eastern and south-western exterior corners of the tower, drafted edges exist, while on the north-western corner a block with a drafted edge appeared during excavations. Under the surface layer a stone block with a finely worked top surface (50 x 50 x 40 cm) was discovered (SU 3), located in the very centre of the tower and in the centre of the diagonals (Figures 13, 14 and 17 no. 1). Around this nearly square block, on the southern side, are three larger dislodged tower blocks. On the southern side, a fallen (or shifted) block from the tower wall leaned on the square block, its western edge rests on the south-eastern tip of the square block. On the southern side of this block is a carved groove with a square

Beneath the surface layer (Figure 12) in most of the southern part there is a thicker cultural layer (Figure 11, no. 2) composed of compact brown soil mixed with small and large reddish daub, oven (?) fragments (Figure 13a), with many fragments of Greek tiles, course and fine wares and same small stones. Here, most of the tile sherds were found in a horizontal position (Figure 15). Within this layer, but not everywhere, is a dark area, in some places 10-15 cm thick, with traces of soot, possibly a burned wooden floor beam (?) (Figure 13), fragments of baked red clay (some are burnt on one side), tiles, an amphora, a few fragments of course and fine pottery (all in various positions), and a small bronze nail (Catalogue no. 79). In this layer the tile sherds are in various positions and are small. This layer overlies a layer of compact

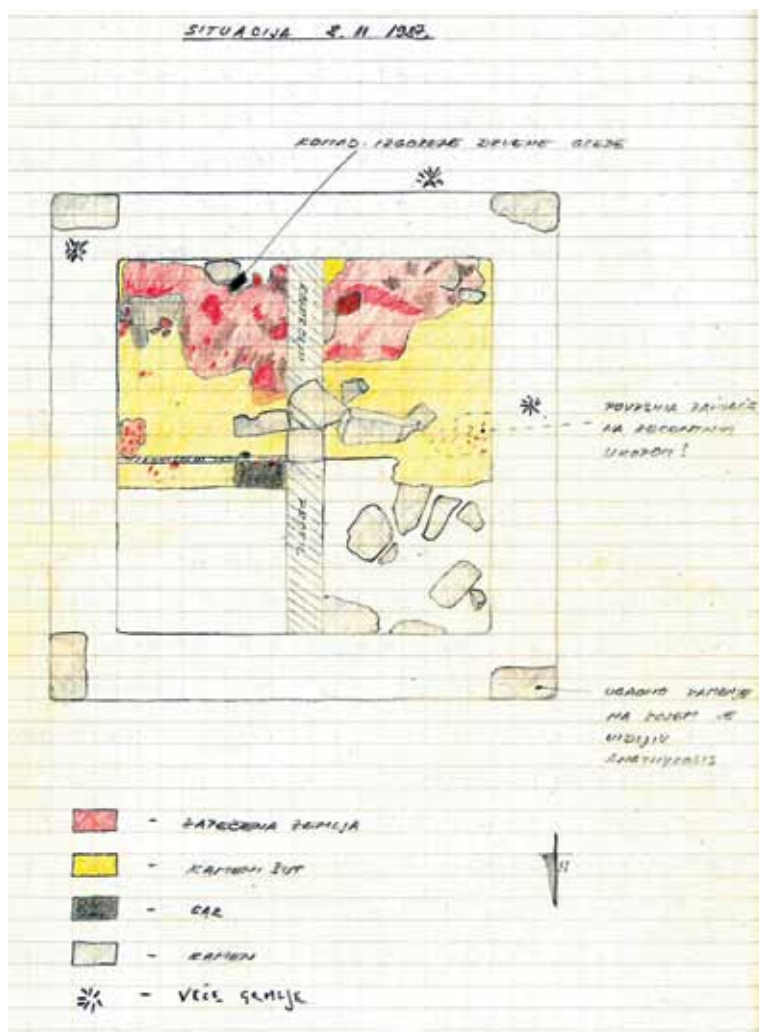


Fig. 13. Sketch by Irena Radić from the diary of excavations in 1987. Arrow indicating the position of the burned wooden beam. Daub and fired clay in red, stone rubble in yellow, burned layer in black, stones in grey. Small crossed lines for bush trees.



Fig. 13a. A large part of a ceramic object. Catalogue no 75a. Photo by B. Kirigin.

smaller stones that are spread all the way to the edges of the interior tower walls (SU 8) (Figure 13, in yellow). The surface has a dark appearance, resulting from burning.

On the sketched plan of the tower from 8<sup>th</sup> November 1987. (Figure 13) and the aerial pho-

to from the same year (Figure 14), the distribution of red burned soil/clay (floor and maybe an oven), the burned (ash) layers, bedrock in the north-western part, the central square block and the fallen blocks around it, the layer of smaller stones (in yellow), and the N-S section can be seen (see Figure 11 for details)<sup>16</sup>. The distribution of finds (except tiles) found in 1987 can be seen on Figure 16<sup>17</sup>.

Further excavations within the tower took place in 2011, 24 years later. The whole western part of the interior as well as the north-eastern quarter were excavated to bedrock, leaving the 0.5 m wide N-S section (Figure 9 and 13) and most of the south-eastern quarter untouched. It was confirmed that that the central block was not placed on bedrock but on a thick layer of crushed sea shells (*volak/volci* in Croatian, *Murex brandaris* or *Bolinus brandaris* in Latin) mixed with smaller stones (SU 13), all laying on bedrock<sup>18</sup> (Figures 11 and 17, no. 1). Also, the pit (SU 20) made for the placement of the central block that was dug into the layer of small and large irregular stones (SU 1=8), which rest on bedrock, became more evident. The surface of SU 1=8 is of small thin sharp-edged stones that have a dark appearance, a result of burning.

An amphora body sherd was found lying on it (Figure 17, no. 2), as well as some other sherds noticed in 1987 in the south-eastern quadrant (Figure 16). This surface of stones in some places consists of patches of encrusted lumps forming a compact mass of stones mixed with small crumbs of lime, probably because of weathering (SU 30). These

<sup>16</sup> The burnt beam and wood, together with 11 samples of daub were taken to Ljubljana University in 1987 but all of them were subsequently lost.

<sup>17</sup> The south-eastern quadrant within the tower was covered with plastic foil in 1987.

<sup>18</sup> The central block was not removed during our excavations. The top surface is finely chiselled, clearly showing its square shape. The vertical sides are roughly trimmed especially on the northern side. The height of the block is 40 cm.





Fig. 14. Aerial photo from 1987 excavations. North towards top.  
Photo by Vinko Šribar.



Fig. 15. Layer with tiles in the southern part of the interior of the tower from excavations in 1987. View from the north-east. Photo by Vinko Šribar.

encrusted lumps were formed before the soil layer came above it, otherwise the lumps would have soil within them that would prevent the water from flowing away. It is conceivable that these lumps were thrown here when the levelling of the interior of the tower was made and when the pit (SU

20) was dug in the centre for placing the central square block on a layer of crushed murex shells (SU 13)<sup>19</sup>. It is possible that the central square block (SU 3) was placed at the point from which all the measurements were taken for the positions of the tower walls. When this was done, and after the filling of the levelling layer of stones (SU 1) (Figure 11), the pit (SU 19 and 20) was dug to place the central block. The murex shells probably have some symbolic meaning, like in many cases when the building of structures started (Figures 11 and 17, no. 1). The composition of SU 1 allowed the water to run away from the tower basement and kept it dry.

There is a puzzling feature along the interior side of the southern wall. It looks like a semi-circular depression c. 1 m in diameter slanting towards the southern tower wall (Figure 17, no. 3). It was formed of irregular flat stone blocks some 10 cm thick (SU 29). It looks like these blocks were once the pavement of the ground floor. A few similar blocks were found within the southern half of the tower's interior (Figure 11). The layer around SU 29 is SU 1=8 (a fill of small and large stones) and the layer in it is SU 2 (soil with a few tiles, an amphora, CW and FW pottery, and daub). SU 29 overlies a layer of looser dark soil mixed with small stones (SU 8). It is hard to tell whether this depression was made for some purpose (to hold a pithos where water was collected and stored<sup>20</sup>) or whether it was a result of natural sinking.

It is very possible that fire was responsible for the destruction of the tower. This can be traced, if I am correct, by looking at the surface layer of small stones that

<sup>19</sup> Smaller murex shells were found complete.

<sup>20</sup> As Ober has suggested at the round tower (F) of Vathychoria (Ober 1987: 593, Figure 27, C). Body sherds of three different pithoi were found at Maslinovik (see below).



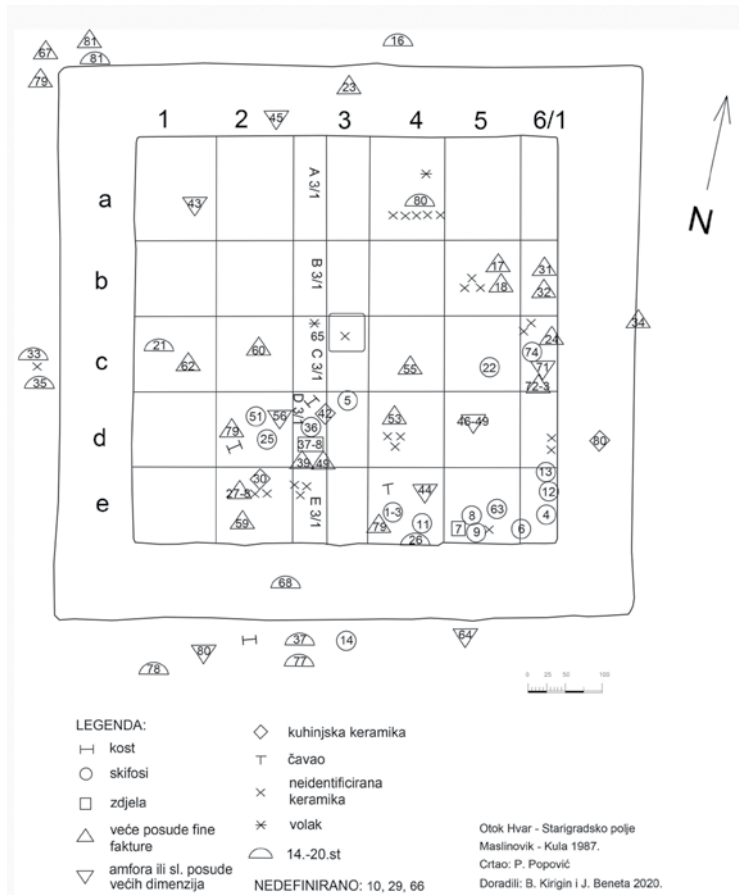


Fig. 16. Sketch of tower plan with position of finds (except tiles) within the tower. Lines within the tower are 1x1 m grid squares. Made by P. Popović in 1987, redrawn by J. Beneta in 2020.

formed the basement level of the tower (SU 1). This layer was first covered with a burned layer (SU 8) and of fallen wooden interior floors and beams, pottery, tiles, daub and the clay oven (?) (SU 2 and 25) (Figures 13-15, 17, no. 2, no. 2-3). SU 25 may have been thicker as it could have been partly removed when the tower blocks were taken away to be used as spolia in various nearby structures, as can be seen by numerous finds in SU 23

in the trench along the southern wall (Figure 19). Also, the layer of tower blocks within the tower could have fallen on SU 2 later, during the abandonment of the tower. The surface layer could have been formed from the period when the removal of the tower blocks came to an end at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the lime kiln was closed. Thus, the layers with mostly Greek tiles in the southern trench (surface and SU 23) could represent the period when the removal of blocks was at its greatest (in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century).

### Trenches around the tower walls

In 1987, before the excavations of the interior of the tower, a shallow and narrow trench was dug along the exterior face of all the tower walls. A wider area was excavated at the north-western corner of the tower.

#### Southern trench

Along the southern wall (SU 4) a large number of Greek roof tiles were found in 1987. In 2011, a trench of 7.5 x 1.5 m was laid out and only the surface layer consisting of small stones and dark soil was excavated (SU 12 = 22). It contained small and large stones, dark soil and roots. At the upper part of this SU plenty of sherds of late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century AD coarse cooking and glazed wares were recorded, while fewer of these were found in the lower part of this layer.



Figure 17. No. 1. View from the north at the central block (SU3): 1. SU1(8). 2. Plastic cover from 1987. 3. 1987 fill. 4. SU20. 5. SU3. 6. SU13. 7. Bedrock. No. 2. Type B amphora body sherd (yellow clay) on SU 8 in the south-eastern quadrant of the tower's interior. To the right is SU 29 (see Figure 18a). Photo: B. Kirigin (2016). No. 3. Depression next to the inner side of the southern tower wall. 1. SU 29, 2. SU 8, 3. SU 2, 4. SU 4. Photo (2012) and numbers (2021) by B. Kirigin.



Fig. 18. View on the tower from the south-eastern side and at the eastern part of the trench along the southern wall.  
Photo by P. Popović (2012).

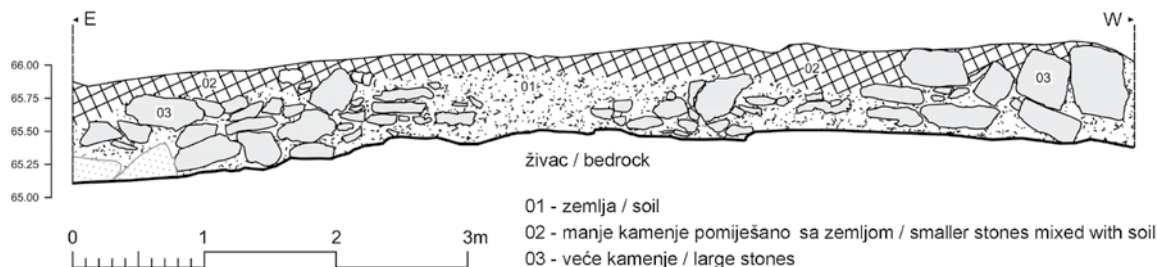


Fig. 19. Southern section of the trench along the southern wall. Made by Andrea Devlahović (2013).

In addition, some Greek tiles were found (Figure 19, no, 02) (Kirigin, Olujić 2012: 593) In 2012 and 2017, the whole trench was excavated to bedrock, which appeared at a depth of c. 0.8 m (Figures 18 and 19). The trench was divided into two parts, separated by a 0.5 m wide profile corresponding to the S-N profile in the interior of the tower (Figure 20). Below SU 22 is a thicker layer (SU 23) of dark soil, some bigger blocks of the tower walls and many Greek tile sherds, as well as Greek amphorae, plain and coarse, and a few fine wares, some 40 kg together (Figure 19, nos. 01 and 03). Only 4 recent pot sherds were found in this SU. Below SU 23 is the bedrock (SU 24), which consists of flat cracked limestone (some have polished

edges) with dark soil and roots. Pottery and tile sherds from SU 23 were found on the surface of this SU. A circular piece of bronze of 15 by 14 mm in size (3.17 g) with traces of a dotted border and flat smooth sides and an oblique edge was found in this layer (Figure 21). It could be a flan of an unstruck coin of the Pharian mint of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC (For similar size and weight see Brunšmid 1898 [1998]: 41 no. 2; Bonačić Mandinić 2004: 64 no. 103).

#### *Eastern trench*

The southern part of this trench along the eastern wall (SU 7) was excavated in 2016 and the northern part, which was a bit on a higher level, in





Fig. 20. The central section in trench along the southern wall from the east. Photo by P. Popović (2012) SU layers marked by B. Kirigin (2020).



Fig. 21. Circular piece of bronze from SU 23. Catalogue no. 78a. Photo by Tonči Sesar (2013).

2017. It has the same dimensions as the southern trench. The stratigraphy is basically the same as in the southern trench, but with many fewer finds and less soil. In the northern part of the trench there are more fallen tower blocks appearing from the surface to the bedrock, which – because of their weight and the lack of a crane – prevented us from excavating the trench all the way to the bedrock (Figure 22, nos. 1 and 4; Figure 23).

#### Northern trench

In 1987 the western part of the exterior of the northern wall (SU 6) was excavated to the bedrock, mainly to find the north-western corner of the tower and to see how deep the bedrock was (Figure 8). The eastern part was excavated in 2017 and the central part in 2018 (Figures 22, no. 2; 23). The surface layer produced a few tile sherds. Below it is the same situation as along the eastern wall, with large fallen tower blocks and soil that is of a lighter colour and a few tile and pottery sherds and many roots from the nearby wild olive tree that fill the space between the tower blocks (here SU 33 = 23 in the south and 28 in the east). The finds consist of small amounts of tile fragments, mostly concentrated in the central part, fragments of amphorae, coarse and fine wares, house daub, seashells and animal bones, contaminated with a few modern pottery sherds.



Fig. 22, No. 1. View of the tower from the north-east and the trench along the eastern wall. Photo by Ivana Protulpec (2017). No. 2. View from the south of the trench along the eastern wall. Photo by Ivana Protulpec (2017). No. 3. View from the east of the trench along the northern wall. Photo by Ivana Protulpec (2017). No. 4. View from the north of the western wall with Igor Dužević and Nikša Vujnović in front. Photo by Ivana Protulpec (2018). No. 5. Petar Popović documenting the western tower wall in 1987. Photo by Zdravko Fističić.

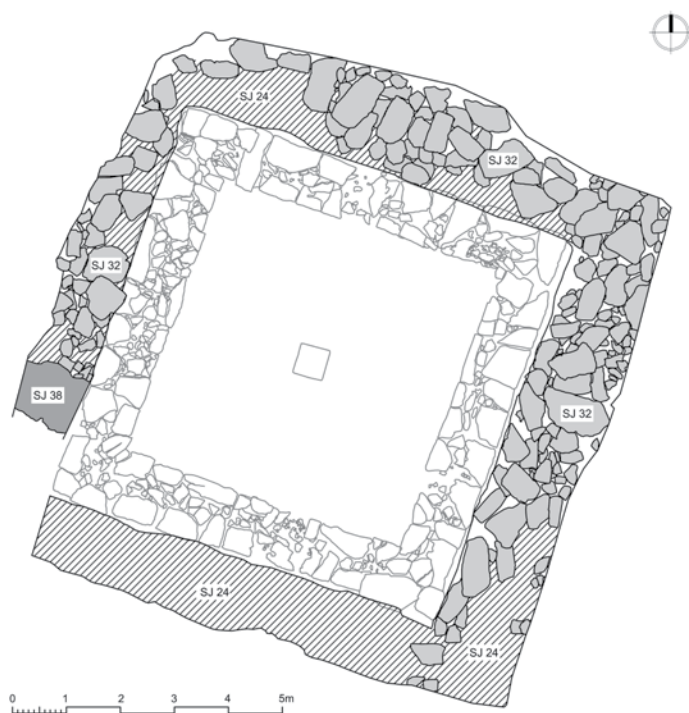


Fig. 23. All trenches around the tower after excavations.  
Made by Andrea Devlahović (2019).

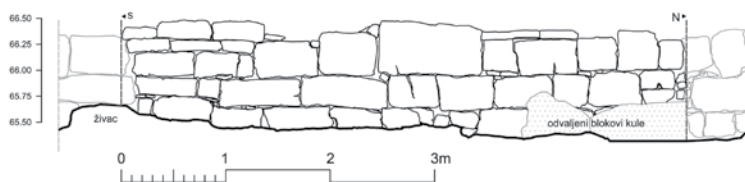


Fig. 24. Interior face of the western tower wall. Made by Andrea Devlahović (2019). (Odvajljeni blokovi kule = dislocated tower blocks). See also Kirigin and Popović 1988, 181, Figure 10.1 below.

### Western trench

Most of the northern part of this trench along the western tower wall (SU 5) was excavated in 1987 (Figure 22, nos. 3 and 5), and the rest of it in 2018. What is characteristic is that underneath the surface layer, layer SU 34 differs from SU 33 on the northern side and looks like a fill that was contaminated with modern material (Fig. 2 no 4; SU 38 on Figure 23). In the deeper levels of this trench, together with standard Greek ceramics, a few body sherds of prehistoric pottery were found, the only ones found outside the tower. Near the southern end of this trench there is a uniface face south-facing drystone wall, using some tower blocks, that runs toward the lime kiln in the west (SU 38 on Figure 23; Figure 2, no. 4), partly incorporating the drystone hut described above (Figure

2, no. 3).

The very south-western corner has the lowest cornerstone with a drafted edge preserved (Figure 25, no. 1). It is slightly sloping towards the SSW. This happened, presumably, in recent times during the construction of the drystone hut built 2 m from the western wall of the tower (Figure 2, no. 3). While constructing this shelter, at one point the builders obviously had to remove some of the blocks along the south-western corner of the tower (Figure 25, no. 3). Then they pulled out not a block, but a part of the bedrock on which the lowest block of the tower was placed (Figure 25, no. 2). In order to prevent the corner block of the tower from collapsing into the recess below it, they stacked slab stones against it (Figure 25, no. 5). The original builders of the tower would never have done this, as it would have been too risky. They would have found a better solution. The corner block is massive; its dimensions on the southern side are 90 x 44 cm.

### The exterior and the interior face of the walls of the tower

The tower was built using two types of limestones. One is a foliate type found on the surface or near it, and the other is a hard, compact type dug from deeper subsurface layers. The quarry was obviously nearby, most likely on the western side of the tower towards the lime-kiln. Foliate blocks were used only to build the walls, while compact, higher quality blocks were used for the exterior corner blocks (as well as the central block SU 3), but not for the interior angle one. The exterior corner blocks, usually more massive than the blocks in the walls of the tower, have drafted edges (often referred to as *anathyrosis*, *peritenia* or *kyphros*; in our local Dalmatian dialect *špigul*) (Figures 8 and 25, no. 1). The upper surface of these blocks was flat, so as to fit well with the next similar corner block that was above it. The drafted edge served





Fig. 25. The south-western corner seen from the west. 1. The corner block with drafted edge. 2. Bedrock. 3. Dislocated tower block. 4. Stacked slab stones. 5. Dark soil with recent pottery. Photo by B. Kirigin (2020).

the builders as they were the first ones to be placed in the position of the corners of the tower, separated by 7.5 m on each side. After that, the rectangular and trapezoid blocks of the wall were laid between these corner blocks<sup>21</sup>. The next row of blocks proceeded in this way too. The drafted edge helped to ensure the vertical line of the corners was always consistent (90 degrees)<sup>22</sup>. With the help of a plumbline, one could easily see that the edges fit the proper vertical line of the tower corner. In this way, the builders were sure that the blocks would not slip out and cause the tower to collapse. By doing this the statics of the tower would not be disturbed. In some places, as is the case at the south-eastern and north-western corners, the lowest corner blocks, due to the shape of the terrain, are in fact stone socles that are more prominent outwards than the main line of the tower, and parallel

<sup>21</sup> This drystone building technique was in use in Dalmatia until recently: Bubalo, Frangeš, Šrajer 2016: 68.

<sup>22</sup> This was told to me by the stonemason Ivica Stipičić - Cigo who carried out the restoration work at the tower in 2019. He has excellent knowledge of traditional stone building techniques. The same was observed by Yannis Pikoulas, who has studied the isolated towers in Agrolid, Arkadia and Laconia: "Pikoulas suggests that these drafted joints would have served as "guides" for the architects, presumably to ensure that the critical corner blocks did not shift when the courses of irregular polygonal blocks were laid": quoted from Maher, Mowat 2018: 479.

to the southern and northern walls of the tower and stretch out about 20 cm (Figures 8 and 18). There is no drafted edge on these blocks. These were most likely placed to make sure that the upper block with the drafted edge would not, due to the slope of the terrain or a gap in the bedrock, "fly out"<sup>23</sup>.

In the walls of the tower, both on the outside and on the inside (Figure 24), the blocks are arranged in rows that are sometimes not completely horizontal and of the same height (the isodomic style). In order to obtain the same level between blocks that are not of the same height along their entire length, the lower block would be hewn or a smaller rectangular stone block would be inserted. These are called, in our local Dalmatian dialect, *škaja*, *škaica* or

*kunj*, as the professional stone mason Ivica Stipičić – Cigo from Brač told us (Figure 8)

The shapes of the blocks are most likely dictated by the layers of stone in the quarry. The upper and lower surfaces are in most cases flat, especially in the case of the corner blocks. The exterior face of the block is not specially worked while the rear faces of the blocks are in most cases left unfinished. Sometimes, the blocks at the ends would be carved so that they could better receive the side or upper block. This was most likely caused by the fact that no long layer of stone of the same height could be found in the quarry that would give the same height to all the blocks. The longest block to be seen in the tower is 128 x 38 cm (the western exterior face). The longest and the highest block is on the interior face of the western wall, measuring 100 x 50 cm (Figure 24). This method of masonry with different heights of blocks trying to obtain the same level is called the pseudo-isodomic style. It is possible that this method required less work. The face of the walls consists mainly of properly carved rectangles or trapezoids, of various lengths, but not always of the same height. Only the face of

<sup>23</sup> It is estimated that to make one corner block a stonemason would need 1 day of work. If the tower was 10 m high then 120 corner blocks would have been made by one stonemason in 4 months (information: Ivica Stipičić - Cigo).

the block was roughly worked, while more attention was paid to the upper, lower and side surfaces. In any case, care had to be taken that the blocks fit well on all sides since the tower was at least 10 m high (as will be discussed below). Invisible to the eye, the internal appearance of the blocks is irregular and, in most cases, untreated (Figures 14 and 30). The longest block of the tower wall is on the inside face of the southern wall, measuring 130 x 30 cm.

*The core between the exterior and interior face of the tower walls*

In several places on the surface of the tower walls as well as along the exterior face of the tower there were trunks and roots of various trees, primarily of spruces whose roots crept into the walls and decomposed and crushed the stones, especially on the preserved surface. It was very difficult to get rid of them because, surprisingly, inside the tower there is a lot of quality soil and clay that attracted the roots. This made it difficult to determine the true appearance of the core between the exterior and interior faces of the tower, that is, whether it was some kind of fill or that the blocks that belonged to the interior and exterior face of the walls, over time, cracked and were filled with soil and roots. However, we found that in the case of our tower, the technique of randomly inserting small irregular stones into the interior between two faces – a technique often, but incorrectly, called *emplekton* (Pedersen 2019) – was not used.

The internal appearance of the blocks of our tower is not regular, that is, they are not square in shape, as is the case with the construction of the foundations of Greek temples or more important buildings (Pedersen 2019). These are intertwined blocks whose interior parts, unlike the exterior face, are not cut or finely worked (Figures 14 and 30). Therefore, for the strength of the overall structure, suitable carved stones or suitably shaped ones were added between them in order to fill the surface space of each row of blocks, the so-called *škaca* in the local language. Since the blocks between the exterior corners of the tower are made of leafy limestone and have cracked over time due to the action of vegetation (spruce roots, holm oak trees, etc.) and the penetration of soil (humus) that we found when we first began excavating (and for

quite a long time struggled with the roots of these trees), it is possible that the blocks simply cracked and look like they represent some sort of fill of smaller stones. In addition, the space between the blocks was filled with moist reddish soil, which further strengthened the structure of the building<sup>24</sup>. After we cleaned the surface of the tower walls, we could get the impression that in some places it looked like the builders had filled smaller untreated stones into the core of the wall (Figures 14 and 30). However, these are not two separate walls that are joined by some kind of fill (like some of the walls of Roman fortifications or other wider walls: *opus incertum*). Also, on our tower we have “binders” in some places, oblong not very regular or almost triangular blocks that make up both faces of the tower walls (Figure 14 and 30). Such finely cut blocks are called *diatonoi* (Pedersen 2019: 2). Therefore, the building technique used for the tower at Maslinovik could be called pseudo-*emplekton*. When cleaning the surfaces of the walls, the space between the blocks as well as the face of the tower, we did not find any fragments of ancient pottery deliberately inserted into the wall matrix<sup>25</sup>.

The evidence indicates (at least to me) that after the building of the first two rows of tower walls, the interior of the tower was filled in with SU 1<sup>26</sup>. The central square block is a unique feature among the isolated Greek towers known to date. Thus, it is hard to interpret its function as well as why it was laid at all and why on SU 13 and not on the bedrock that is almost flat or easy to level? One might think that it was meant to be a base for a wooden pier that would support the wooden floor of the tower where heavier things had to be placed (pithoi, amphora, oven (see below), things for maintaining the tower and other equipment necessary for the guardians of the tower - *chorophilakes*.

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<sup>24</sup> Good quality impermeable pinkish soil/clay is found at the nearby natural pond in Dračevica within the Stari Grad Plain. When exposed to sun, the clay becomes dust. During rainy days it absorbs moisture and stops water and moisture from entering the interior of a building.

<sup>25</sup> Potsherds used in this way have been found during excavations of the walls of Pharos (Katić 2000: 127, sl. 29).

<sup>26</sup> Due to the finds of prehistoric sherds below SU1 it was thought that SU1 might represent the remains of a barrow, as similar ones are found on the surrounding hills around the Stari Grad Plain (Kirigin 2006, 14, Figure 8), but it was found that SU1 is not present outside the tower walls while in the inside it is clear that it is a fill.



Fig. 26. Dislocated tower block with a square slot. Photo by B. Kirigin (2018)

### *Tower height*

Considering the number of blocks around the tower and those dismantled for spolia in various surrounding buildings, it can be said with some certainty that the entire tower was built of stone blocks<sup>27</sup>, and that the roof was made of flat tiles - the so-called Corinthian type (Figure 28 and Pl. 6 and 7), and polygonal and curved tiles - the so-called Laconian type cover tiles (Pl. 8, nos. 70-72). Based on the width of the tower walls and analogies with other isolated towers in the Greek world (e.g., Mazi and Vathychoria in western Attica or Poros on the island of Leukas) it can be assumed that the tower could have been about 10 to 12 m high, the exact height cannot be determined but it was certainly more than 7.5 m high<sup>28</sup>. If we assume that the square stone block in the middle of the interior of the tower served as a base for a wooden pier for the first tower floor (which is quite probable but for which we have no comparanda), then the tower certainly had one floor. As the area inside the tower measures about 25 m<sup>2</sup>, parts of it had to be reserved for housing, event cooking, and space for food and

water, rest and equipment for the garrison. If it was necessary to guard the *chora* for 24 hours, then the garrison had to consist of 4-5 people. It is possible, if there was a door on the ground floor, that the space was intended as a stable for keeping a mule, donkey or a horse, while on the first floor there was a kitchen and a place for storing food. Above that a dormitory, and above it a covered attic look-out space. This would mean that the tower had a ground floor and three floors connected with wooden ladders (fixed and/or removable). Thus, the height of the tower could have been between 10 and 12 m. The tower must have been high enough to be seen clearly from Pharos (Figure

4), at a distance of some 3 km as the crow flies, as well as from Tor (Figure 6), at a distance of some 7.2 km as the crow flies.

Excavations have shown that there are no traces of a door on the ground level, which some towers have (Ober 1987: 592, Figure 26, 594, Figure 28). Thus, the function of the ground floor is not clear. The absence of a door on the ground floor could indicate that the door was on the level of the first floor, a feature also known among isolated Greek towers<sup>29</sup>. If this was the case, then our tower was accessed via a removable wooden ladder. Among the dismantled blocks outside the tower there is a broken part of a block that has a square slot (20 x 20 cm and 3-3.5 cm deep) that could have been part of a door jamb (Figure 26) (For a similar one see: Morris and Papadopoulou 2005: 188 and Figure 21). The tower must have had windows (or similar openings) to illuminate the interior and to get fresh air. No lintels were found, nor lamps. If the ground floor did not have a window, does this mean that the ground floor of the tower was not in use, or was used in special situations (protecting valuables)?

<sup>27</sup> As is the case at the tower of Tor and elsewhere in the Greek world. Regarding the isolated towers that protected the territory of Mantinea, the upper parts of the towers were built using bricks. It is estimated that these towers were 8 m high (Maher and Mowat 2018, 479-484).

<sup>28</sup> Fachard 2016b, 220 states, based on Ginouvès (1998, 24) "By definition a tower is a rectangular, square or round construction, the height of which is distinctly greater than its width or diameter".

<sup>29</sup> For example, Agia Marina on Keos (Morris, Papadopoulou 2005 158, Figure 4, and 190 for two other towers). During the reconstruction of the tower at Tor, a doorway was made on the level of the first floor. It is not known whether the doorway was here in the first place. Old photographs do not support the existence of a doorway on the southern side.





Fig. 27. Dislocated fragmented of tower block with a carved groove of a square cross-section, 10 cm wide and 20 cm long (the place where it was found is on Figure 13). Photo by B. Kirigin (2016).

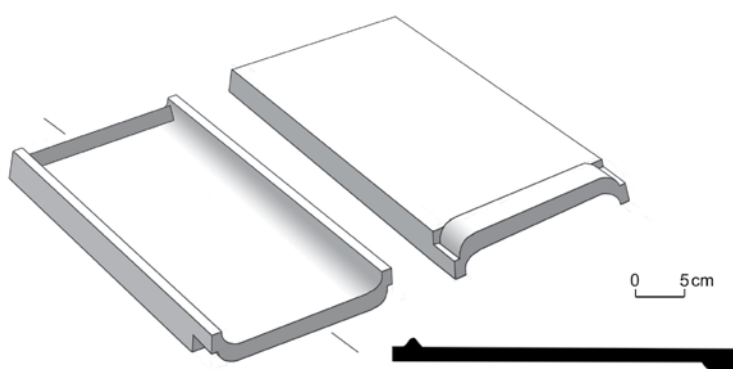


Fig. 28. Hypothetical reconstruction of a flat roof tile from Maslinovik made by P. Popović in 1987, redrawn by the late Zoran Podrug (2021).

### The floors and the roof

Only one big chunk of a burned beam was found (Figure 13), next to undefined large and small fragments of charcoal (now lost). Whether it is a floor or a roof beam is not possible to say. The only other evidence is the abovementioned block with a carved groove of a square cross-section, 10 cm wide and 20 cm long (Figures 13, 14 and 27). No other architectural elements for floor or roof beams that formed part of the tower construction were recorded. To bridge the 5.5 m space the floor beams had to be 6.5 m long as they had to be inserted into the tower walls at least 0.5 m. The beams were most probably made from local hewn pine trees (*pinus nigra* or *pinus halepensis*) that had a cross-section of 16 x 14 cm, and had to age for at least one year before use. These beams would carry a floor without the support of a central pier from below, otherwise they could be of c. 12 x 12 cm which is similar to the space on the carved groove on Fig. 27. In SU 23 (trench along the southern wall) five fragments of large very rusty nails were found (Pl. 8, nos. 79-80).

Due to the abundant number of sherds of tiles (mostly flat tiles) found within and around the tower, in 1987 it was estimated that there are some 5 m<sup>2</sup> of flat tiles and some 3-4 more were recovered during later excavations, it is evident that the tower had a pitched roof covered with tiles. Still, it is unknown whether the roof sloped on one side, two or four sides. This is mainly because we have found altogether not more than 8-9 m<sup>2</sup> of tile sherds and not a single one that we could wholly complete (Figure 28). Rare preserved whole flat roof tiles – in shape identical to our ones – come from the neighbouring Greek settlement of Issa on the island of Vis. It measures 66 x 52 cm and weighs 15.2 kg<sup>30</sup>. According to my estimates, the flat tiles from Pharos are of 10 kg, and 3 tiles are c. equal to 1 m<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, if we had a roof with one sloping side (for rainwater runoff) one would need c. 180 tiles (2.736 kg or 2.052 kg) and roof beams to cover an area of some 64 m<sup>2</sup>. If the tower had two slanting sides then to cover 78 m<sup>2</sup>, c. 235 tiles would be needed (3.500 kg or 2.625 kg) with more roof beams. If the tower had four slanting sides, to cover c. 62 m<sup>2</sup>, some 187 tiles (2.842 kg or 2.131 kg) would be needed and even more roof beams would be employed. A roof with four slanting sides is the most complicated type of roof to construct. If the roof was covered on one sloping side (for rainwater runoff) then it would have had an area of about 64 m<sup>31</sup>. As we have only c. 8-9 m<sup>2</sup> of preserved roof tiles and we did not find any tile that was cut to fit oblique joint side of a four sided slanting roof, and we also did not find any stone blocks that were cut to fit two slanting roof sides, it is not possible

<sup>30</sup> These measures are based on Greek tiles that were used in grave 90 at the necropolis of Vlaško njiva at Issa, dated to the late 4<sup>th</sup>/early 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC (Ugarković 2019, 44-46). These are by shape and size almost identical to those produced in Pharos (Kirigin, in preparation). For the weight calculation of 15.2 kg of the tile from Issa, I am grateful to my colleague Boris Čargo.

<sup>31</sup> For these measures, I am grateful to Meludin Kadrić – Braço, construction contractor from Hvar.



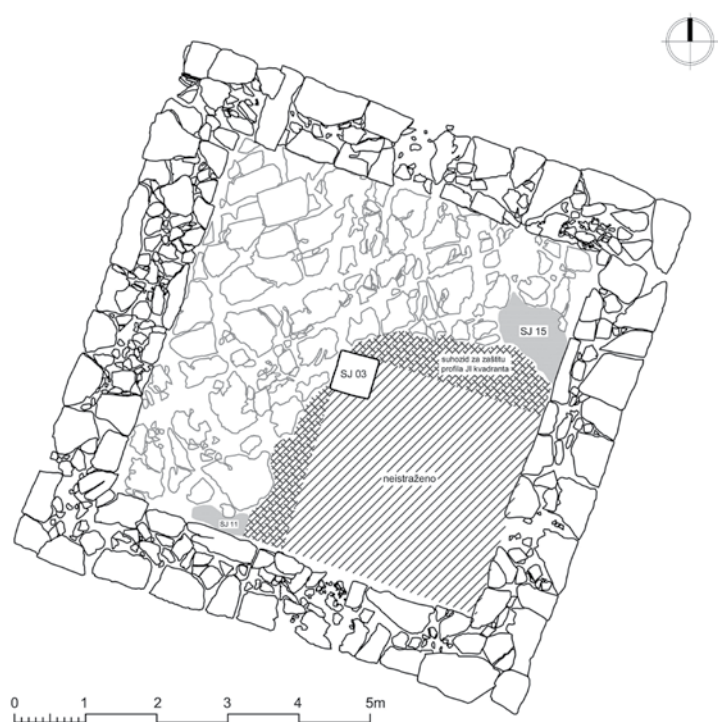


Fig. 29. Plan of the tower interior with the position of unexcavated south-eastern square (hatched), our drystone wall that protects the western and northern sections (reticulated), and positions of SU 11 and 15. Made by Andra Devlahović (2019).

to say what kind of a roof we had at our tower<sup>32</sup>. Aside from the mentioned iron nail, no metal fittings (clamps) were found that would join the roof or floor beams. The hypothetical reconstruction of the roof for the signal towers around Mantinea (Maher, Mowat 2018: 484, Figure 18) seems not to stand due to the weight of the tiles and the force of the wind. To me it looks more likely that the uppermost story, the attic of the tower, had larger windows on all sides that could be closed with shutters (Ober 1987: 577, Figure 8, 603, Figure 31) depending from what side the wind blew. Above it, a tile roof of whatever shape stood. Also, it is not known if the roof was used to collect rain water. Fragments of pithoi and amphorae indicate that water was stored, but whether it was brought to the tower or if a water collection system existed within the tower like at the tower at Vathychoria in Magaris (Ober 1987: 591-594, Figure 27 C) remains unknown. The presence of natural springs or of a cistern in the broader area around Maslinovik has not been recorded.

<sup>32</sup> According to Ober's reconstructions of some artillery towers on fortification walls, they have two-sided slanting roofs and windows (Ober 1987: Figures 5, 14, 16, 30).

### *Surface finds around the tower*

In an area of some 50 m around the tower, only a few Greek pottery or tile sherds (c. 20) were recorded, mostly near the southern and western parts of the tower.

### **Date of the tower**

No simultaneous or later adaptations or buildings can be seen in or around the tower. There is no evidence that it was part of some enclosure or a farmstead. Its isolation indicates that the function of the tower was not modified for the same or some other purpose (except that it has been used as a source of stone since the late 19<sup>th</sup> to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century AD). It, therefore, functioned for a limited period, which, according to archaeological finds, can be dated from the mid-4<sup>th</sup> to

mid/late 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC (predominant number of finds). From the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC there are only a few sherds: one amphora neck and 4-5 sherds of fine grey clay wares (Pl. 2, no. 25), and from the Roman period there are also only a few fine ware sherds. One belongs to the Early Roman period (Pl. 2, no 27a) and two belong to the Late Roman period (Pl. 2, no. 29; Pl. 3, no. 29; Pl. 8, no. 76) (see below under Finds).

### **Price of the tower**

Morris and Papadopoulos (2005: 155, 164) state that the round tower of Cheimarrou on the island of Naxos (near Paros), which had an original height of 53 rows of blocks, about 15 m (and is preserved at a height of 42 rows today), was 9.2 m in diameter and had a 70 cm thick wall, with a brick roof, cost 8,000 drachmas. At that time, a construction worker in Athens received a daily wage of 1 drachma. Such a wage met the minimum needs of a family (Franke 1999: 59-60). If the tower at Maslinovik was 1/3 smaller than the tower of Cheimarrou, then the price of Maslinovik tower would be c. 5,340 drachmas. If the Athenian daily

wage were transferred to Pharos, then it would have taken 15 construction workers about a year to build a tower on Maslinovik, and 30 workers could have built it in about half a year<sup>33</sup>. In any case, it was a large investment that the city had made to secure their protection.

### **Comparisons with the neighbouring Adriatic and Balkan areas**

Fortifications of Greek and Hellenistic masonry have been recorded at several sites along the north-eastern Adriatic coast, from Uljein (Olkinion) in Montenegro in the south to Osor (Apsorus) on Cres in Croatia to the north. Some 45 years ago, Aleksandra Faber published the first comprehensive study of these fortifications (Faber 1976), based mainly on a sequence of masonry styles. However, this approach is unreliable, as has recently been pointed out (Frederiksen 2011: 63-65; Maher 2017: 41-43). The problem is that there have been no modern stratigraphic excavations at these sites, and even if there are some similarities in masonry, the conclusions are arbitrary, especially if there are no context analyses of excavation finds and historical arguments. A striking example comes from the recent excavations at Pharos, where the presumed city walls, which used to be dated to the early 4<sup>th</sup> century BC (a dating that I myself once supported), have been proved to have been built in the late 3<sup>rd</sup>/early 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC. This wall was built of reused block of the original early 4<sup>th</sup> century BC fortification walls that have still not been found *in situ*. (Popović, Devlahović 2018).

Many fortified sites in north-western Greece and in Albania were also built in a pseudo-isodomic manner. Yannis Nakas has mentioned that there are 153 fortified settlements, forts, blockade walls and towers in ancient Epirus (southern Albania and north-western Greece) and that only very “few studies of their architecture, topography and history have been undertaken” (Nakas 2018: 426-427). Unfortunately, this is true for northern

Albania as well (Ceka 2008, Dausse 2008, Nakas 2016, Bogdani 2020 (summary on Academia.edu); Sphuza 2020).

The Ionian islands towers at Leukas (Morris 2001) and Kephallénia are among those that have been studied in more detail. The closest masonry analogies can be found in Randsborg’s classification of masonry stiles on Kephallénia, within his group D in which types of wall nos. 19-22 are built using the drystone technique from worked trapezoidal blocks of unequal sizes, built in a pseudo-isodomic style (Randsborg 2002: 232-245). This very detailed classification based on the findings on the island of Kephallénia is supported by numerous examples from other parts of Greece, especially from Epirus and Attica: the walls of the Pleuron and Thermon fortifications in Aetolia and Thorikos in Attica, dated between c. 425 and 200 BC (Randsborg 2002: 232-238, 251-253; 2014). From what can be seen in the illustrated examples, these walls do not use small rectangular blocks (our so-called *škaja*, Figure 8) that fill the gaps between the heights of the larger blocks<sup>34</sup>, which is a relatively common case at the tower at Maslinovik, but is seen less often at the Tor tower (Zaninović 1978/1979: Figures 3-5, 7), as well as in the fortification wall of Issa (the Greek settlement on the neighbouring island of Vis) (Kirigin and Marin 1985: 55-56, Figure 9; Kirigin and Marin 1988: 137, Tav. 29, 2), at Tragurion (modern Trogir) (Kovačić 2002, 387, Figure 5) and Epetion (modern Stobreč) (Neuhauser et al. 2014 and Figure 9), both on the mainland near Split. None of these fortification walls have yet been reliably dated. Also, in Kephallénia, as well as on Leukas, the walls seem to have only one face, i.e., they were built with one row of blocks (Randsborg 2002, 256; Morris 2001), which also seems to be the case with other isolated towers in Greece. Therefore, our two isolated towers would, for now, be unique examples.

### **Comparanda: Sicily and Southern Italy**

It is tempting to think that the Syracusans who helped the Parians to establish Pharos also helped them to build the fortifications, especially bearing in mind the impressive fortifications that Dionysius

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<sup>33</sup> This calculation lacks the price for the mason, scaffolding to build the tower, equipment, time for quarrying and preparing the blocks, etc. According to master Ivica Stipičić – Cigo, who, in 2019, carried out partial reconstruction work on the tower of Maslinovik, it would take 6 men (a master and his assistant and 4 workers) in ideal conditions (without using modern tools and devices) 2 years to quarry and prepare the stone, and build the tower.

<sup>34</sup> These appear on the tower at Agia Marina on the Aegean island of Kea (Keos): Morris, Papadopoulos 2005, 158, Figure 4.



Fig. 30. No. 1. Petar Popović analysing the roof tiles from Maslinovik at the church of St. Marko in Hvar town, 1987. No. 2. Pithoi body sherd nos. 41 (above left), 42 (bottom left) and 43 (right). No. 3. B type amphora handle with impressed stamp (no. 54 in catalogue). No. 4. Cover tile fragment from the 1987 excavations.

the Elder made during his reign, particularly at Syracuse<sup>35</sup>. However, as was mentioned earlier, the tower at Maslinovik was most probably built after the Syracusans had left the island. No similar isolated towers (of whatever function) are known to me from Southern Italy or Sicily (Sconfienza 2005; Pope 2014; Mertens and Beste 2018; Visonà 2019 (but see Visonà 2016 re. Contrada Palazzo di Cittanova); Jonasch 2020).

### Symbolic function of towers

If we agree that the tall towers on Maslinovik and Tor had the function of protecting valuable agricultural resources from field fires that could endanger the harvest, and from possible pirate or other seaborne attacks and lootings, and that they were built bearing in mind the conflict that erupted a year after the founding of Pharos (385/4 BC) and after the withdrawal of the Syracusans, who helped the Parians to defeat the Illyrians, we can

<sup>35</sup> Diodorus Siculus book XIV, 18, 2-5; XVIII, 8; Mertens, Beste 2018: 11-15. For the possibility that the Syracusan fleet wintered at Pharos, see Kirigin 2006: 67 note 98.

also assume they certainly had other functions, too. Thus, for example, by their very appearance (monumentality and their dominance in the landscape), they could have projected a sense of security for the inhabitants of Pharos and those who worked in the fields and used the space belonging to the city. The towers were landmarks and orientation points that could be seen from everywhere: Tor has effective control of the eastern maritime approaches to the *chora* and Maslinovik is seen from everywhere within the *chora*. They could also have fostered the notion of belonging to a community among the settlers and evoked a sense that the *polis* was looking after them and the wealth they produced. The towers also proclaimed the supremacy of the city over the surrounding indigenous population, very well presented by Müth (2020). We can, therefore, assume that the towers did not have

to be very high, but that it was important that they be visible. One does not need towers to send a warning by fire, smoke or sound<sup>36</sup>.

### The finds

#### Prehistoric pottery

Most of the prehistoric sherds (46 of them) were found in the lowest SU 15 and in SU 11 (36), both near the bedrock, while in SU 34 (12) and in SU 8, 10, 18 and 25 one or two were found. Altogether, we have some 104 sherds (583 gr), although only 2 can be recognised: a rim and a handle (PL. 1, 1-2). It looks like there are two types of pots, a large and

<sup>36</sup> Regarding smoke signals, there is an interesting example from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century AD from the nearby island of Brač. When the people of Pučišća (a village on the northern coast facing the mainland) had completed the work on the limekiln and “When the lime kiln was burned down, we would make a great fire, whose smoke signal would be visible all the way to Mimica (some 3.2 NM from the mainland, or 7 km, like from Tor to Maslinovik). This represented the sign for the shipowner to start the journey towards our dock. And he would also respond with a smoke signal. Signalling that he was starting the journey” Puljak 2018: 70.



a small one. Three fabrics can be distinguished: **1.** Dark brown clay with tiny, unevenly distributed holes on the surface, **2.** Dark brown clay with an ochre yellowish surface, and **3.** Dark brown clay with calcite grits. One of these has a polished surface. They all appear to be from the Bronze Age. Although it is difficult to explain their presence, it is possible that a barrow existed here, as they do on all the hills around the Stari Grad Plain (Kirigin 2004: 25-35, 264, Pl. 4, B.; Kirigin 2006: 12-22, Figure 8 on p. 14).

#### *Greek pottery*

The earliest FW pots (skyphos, larger pot, two bowls and a lekanis (nos. 3, 13, 14, 16 and 17), due to their pinkish clay and a slightly higher quality black gloss (BG), could be the earliest among the finds, but not earlier than the mid-4<sup>th</sup> century BC. The skyphoi ring foot (profiled and round) and rim sherds (all everted), or their fabrics, do not support the idea that they might be from the first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC<sup>37</sup>. More likely is that they are from the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> and possibly even the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC (Ugarković 2019, 85-8, Figure 108, with updated bibliography. The skyphoi with everted rims from Gravina are dated c. 335-300 BC (Prag 1992: 117-121). A similar dating can be applied to the painted Alto-Adriatico style sherds (Pl. 1, no. 11 and 12), which can also be dated to the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> and early 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC (Ugarković 2019, 67-70, with updated bibliography).

#### *Amphorae*

Some 105 sherds of amphorae have been recorded. Of these, there are sherds of 13 rims, 12 handles, 4 toes and 76 body sherds.

Rims: 1 is pinkish, 9 are light pinkish-brown and 2 are of yellow clay (two joined). All are of the type B amphora (Pl. 4, nos. 47-52).

Handles: 1 red and 10 light pinkish-brown (not joined) and 1 ochre. All are flattened oval shape in section. One is almost complete (Pl. 5, no. 53) and one has a stamp with the Greek letter Σ (Fig. 30, no. 2). This stamp is known on type B amphorae dated to the late 4<sup>th</sup> and early 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. The most similar to ours is Koehler's no. 431 from

Corfu, dated to the late 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, which has the stamp on the base of the handle (Koehler 1979, 249-250. See also her other Σ stamp nos. 424-436 on pp 248-251, all similarly dated), while ours is on the shoulder.

Bases: One yellow and three light pinkish-brown (Catalogue nos. 56-59). The moulding of the bases is different. One (no. 56) has an elaborated groove at the beginning of the toe, one less elaborate (no. 57) and on two (nos. 56 and 57) the groove is hardly visible.

Some of the 76 body sherds may also belong to larger table amphorae. One would expect more amphorae body sherds, as is the case at Pharos (Kirigin 2018).

The treatment of the rims, the longer vertical arch handles and the piriform body indicate the 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC (Koehler 1979: 183-205; Koehler 1992)<sup>38</sup>.

#### *Pithoi*

Only three body sherds and three lid sherds are preserved. Catalogue nos. 41 and 42 are two different large pithoi and no. 43 is of a smaller one (Fig. 30, no. 2). Of the lids (Pl. 4, nos. 44-46) 46 is of c. 56 cm in diameter, indicating that it covered a large pithos. One, not illustrated, also from SU 23 and of the same fabric, has a groove where the missing rim would have started. Additionally, a sherd (not illustrated) of the same fabric and thickness has a conical hole (1 x 2 cm). Two of the pithoi sherds (nos. 41 and 42) are thick in section indicating that they could have been rather large. It is difficult to date these jars as no rims are preserved. The fabrics are similar to the Greek pithoi found at Pharos (Kirigin 2017).

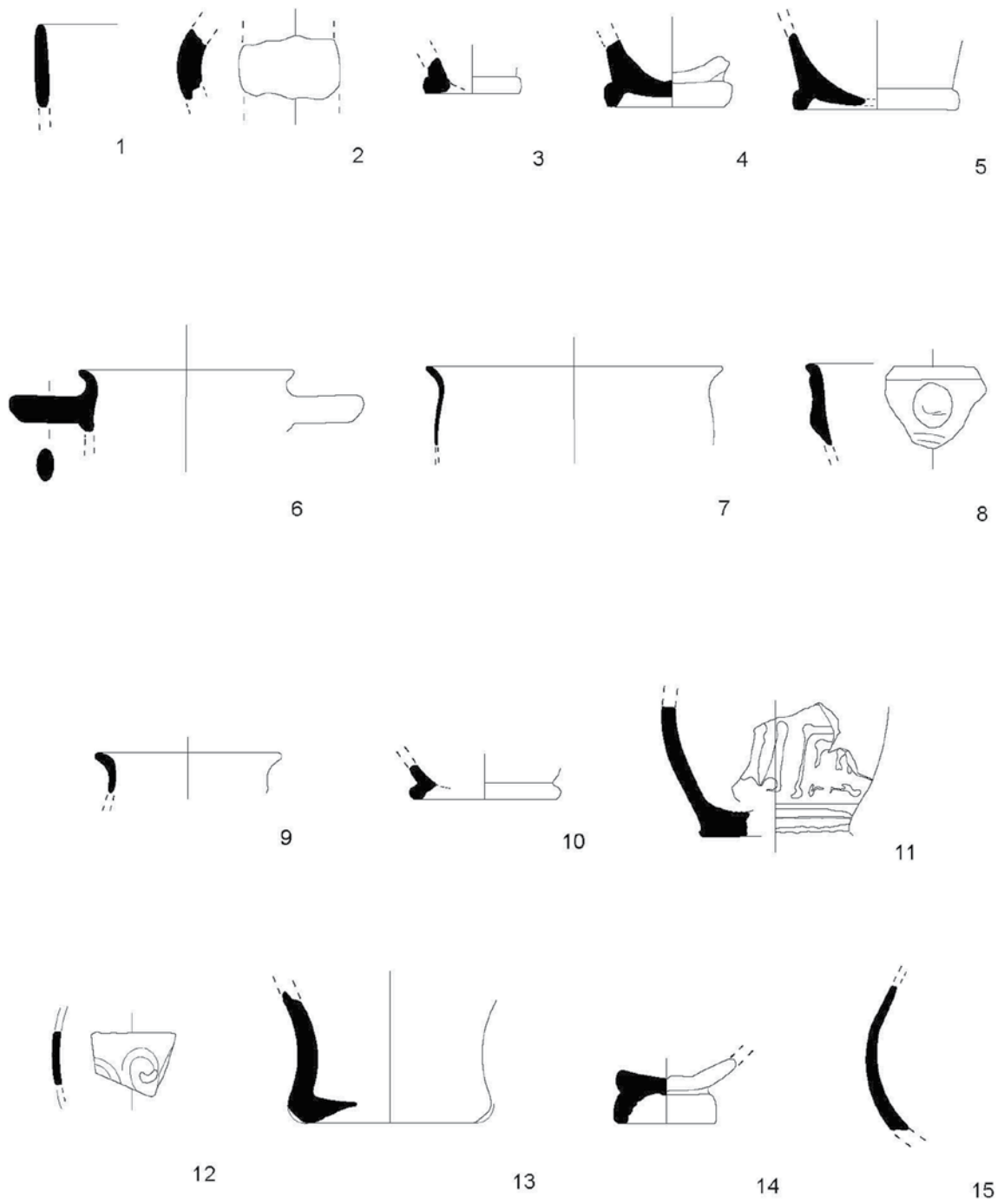
#### *Minimum number of pottery shapes*

Of the total finds, fine wares are represented with 8 skyphoi, 5 jugs, 2 bowls, 1 lekanis or related, and 1 bigger vase (krater?). Among the coarse or table wares there are 2-3 large table amphorae and 1 smaller, 4-5 jugs and 1-2 cooking pots (?). There are 4-5 transport amphorae, two large pithoi and a smaller one. If we take into consideration these sherds, we can almost be sure that some 90% of each vessel is missing. This could indicate that there were even more pots. Be that as it may, it is

<sup>37</sup> Fine wares from the first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, as well as amphorae, are known from Pharos: see Katalog Pharos 1995: passim; Kirigin 2018; Kirigin, Barbarić 2019.

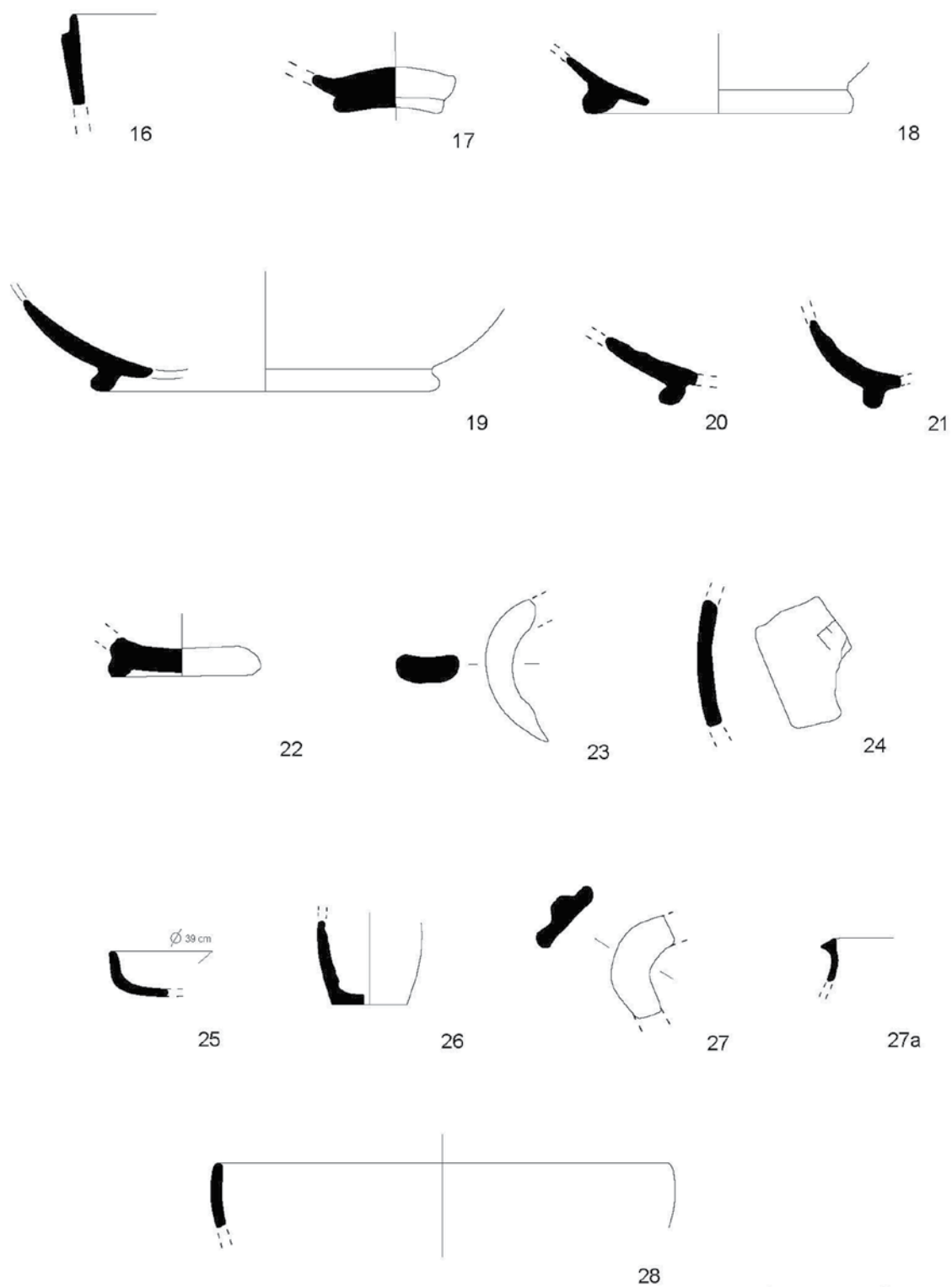
<sup>38</sup> .



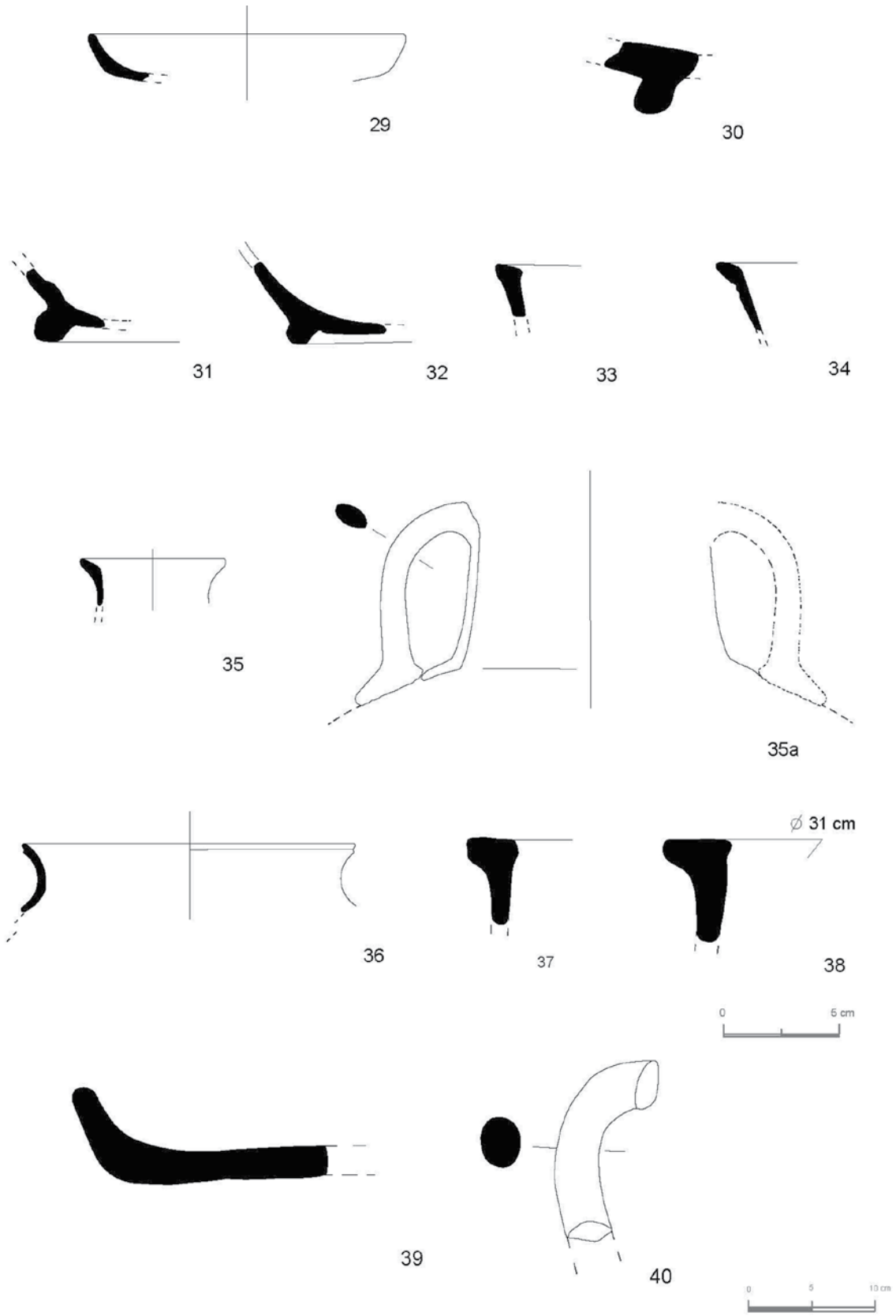


Pl. 1

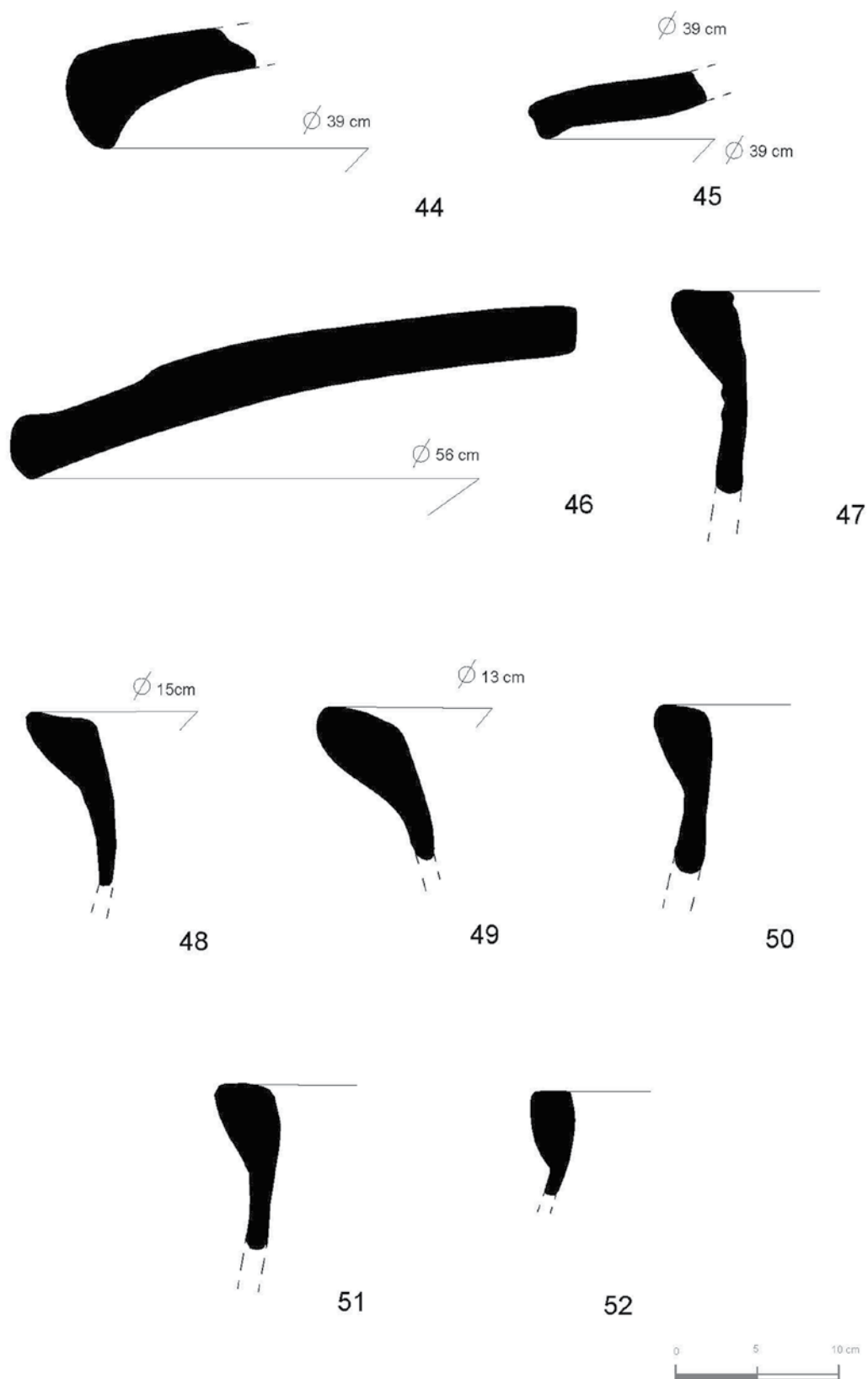
A Step into the Past: Approaches to Identity, Communications and  
Material culture in South-Eastern European Archaeology



Pl. 2

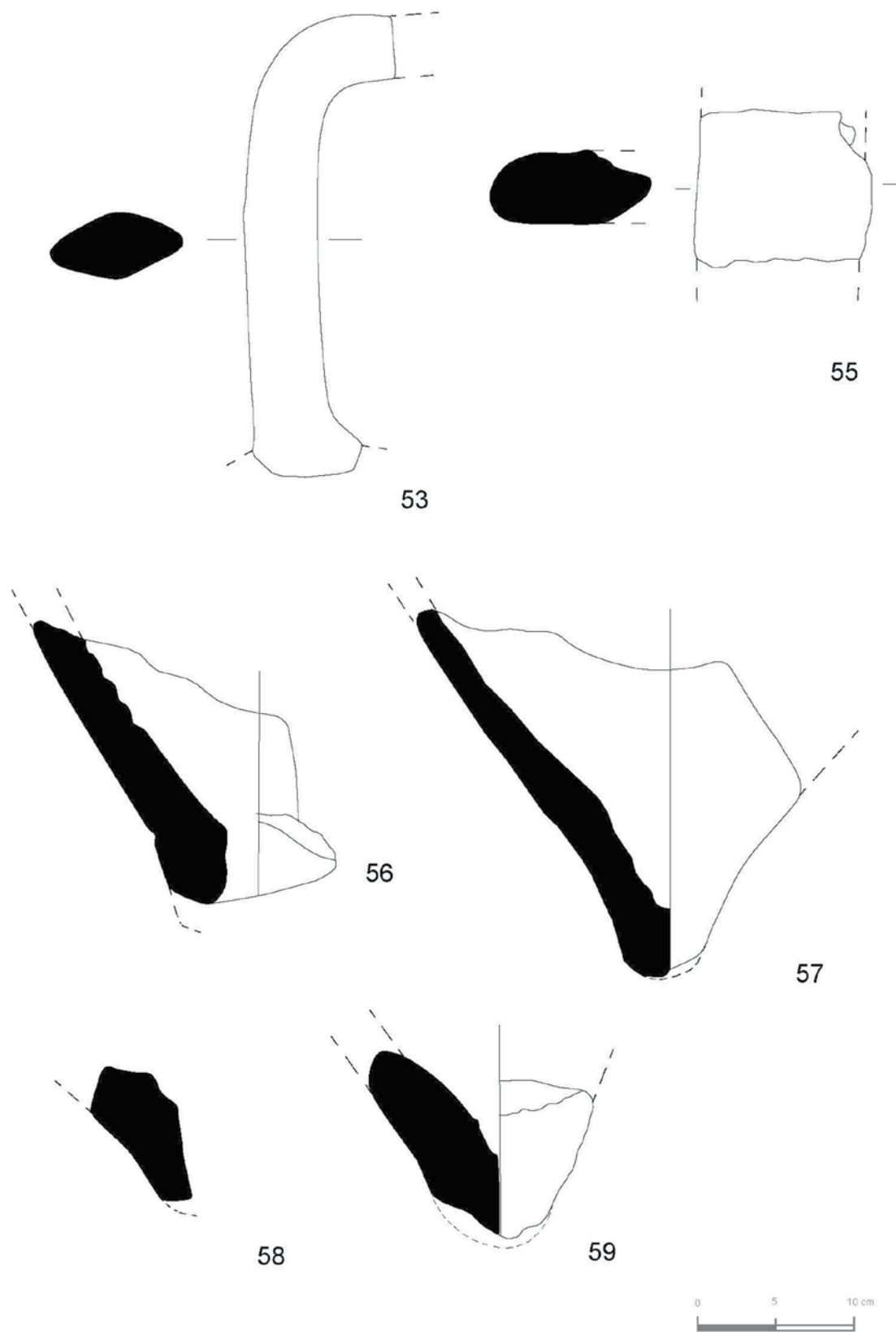


Pl. 3

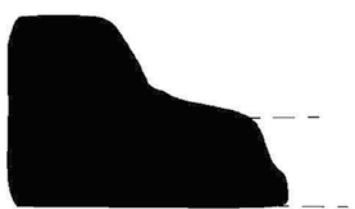


Pl. 4





Pl. 5



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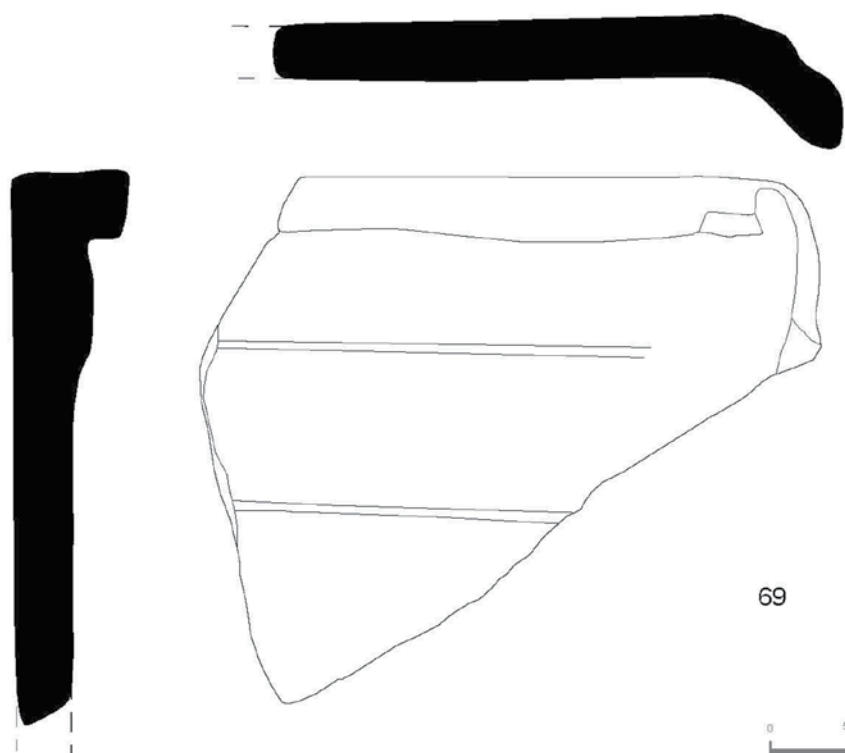
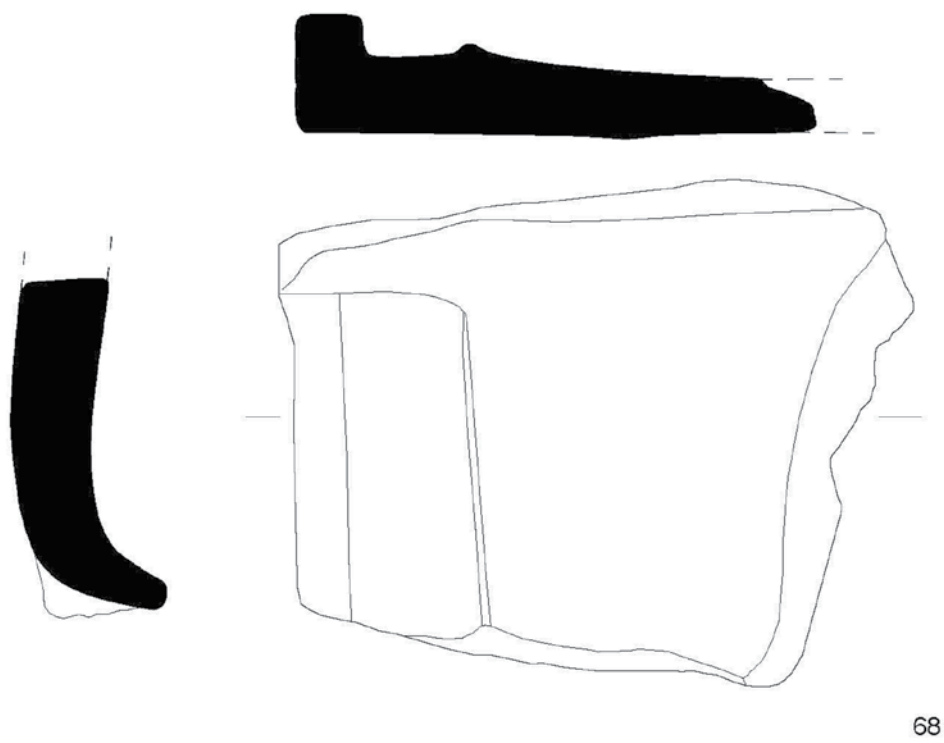
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Pl. 6



Pl. 7



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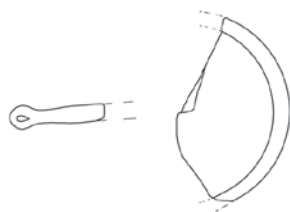
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80



Pl. 8



evident that, at some point, there was a need for a permanent team at the tower and that the pithoi and amphorae could have contained foodstuffs needed for difficult times.

#### *Roof tiles*

As mentioned earlier, about 8-9 m<sup>2</sup> of roof tile fragments were found at Maslinovik. Most of them are flat tiles of the so-called Corinthian type that have various flanges on their longer sides and are made from various fabrics. The fabric that is mostly represented in our finds is made of fine clay with a yellow surface and a pinkish core (Pl. 6 and 7). Cover tiles comprising three shapes are much less frequent (Pl. 8, nos. 70-72.).

Greek tiles, except decorated ones or those with stamps, have yet to be comprehensively studied. Similarities in shape and dates are to be found among the tiles from the Ionian island of Kephallénia (Randsborg 2002, 149-152). The same types of tiles are found in Pharos, where those unearthed at our site must have come from<sup>39</sup>.

As mentioned above, some 67 m<sup>2</sup> of tiles were needed to roof the tower. This would mean that we are missing c. 70% of the tiles that were used. The way in which these tiles were interlocked has yet to be discerned. The tile fragments found in 1987 include a distinctive cover tile that, on its inner side, has a straight vertical edge of a flange with a platform on one side and a rounded low edge on the opposite side (Figure 30, no. 4)<sup>40</sup>. No stamps or other marks on tiles were recorded.

#### *Late Hellenistic pottery*

Next to the plate rim (Pl. 2, no. 25) there were only 4 more grey FW body sherds (all 25 gr) found (3 from SU 28 and 1 from SU 25). These may represent typical deep bowls. Together with a beaker sherd (Pl. 2, 26), the jug handle (Pl. 2, no 27) and the neck sherd of a presumed Lamboglia 2 amphora from the 1987 excavations, found along the southern wall (Fig. 16, no. 64), these may be the only evidence of some presence at the tower in the period from the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the mid-1<sup>st</sup> century BC.

#### *Early Roman Period*

Only one recognisable sherd belongs to this period (Pl. 2, no 27a). It is close to Riley's no. 499, dated to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (Riley 1979: 259, Figure 102).

#### *Later Roman period*

Only five small sherds can be attributed to this period. Next to nos. 28 and 29 (Pl. 2 and 3), two body sherds and a very small ring foot sherd were found. No. 28 is Hayes form 50b, dated from the mid-4<sup>th</sup> to the early 5<sup>th</sup> century AD or later, and no. 29 is Hayes form 64, dated from the late 4<sup>th</sup> to the late 5<sup>th</sup> century AD. Additionally, a glass base could belong to this period (Pl. 8, no. 76). No other finds from this period were recorded.

#### *Glass finds*

Most of the glass sherds are of a recent date. Few belong to the Late Roman and/or Medieval periods (Pl. 8 no. 76 and 77).

#### *Metal finds*

Very few metal finds were found. They consist of a small bronze disc (possibly an unstruck coin flan?) (Figure 21), 1 smaller bronze nail with a large circular head (Pl. 8, no. 78) and a long, very corroded, iron nail also with a large circular head (Pl. 8, no. 79) that could have been used to secure the wooden floor beams.

#### *Animal bones and shells*

These are also very rarely found, indicating that meat was not consumed much by the tower occupants. Little can be added to the analysis of the faunal remains made by Mario Jurišić in 1989 (Jurišić 1989). His main observation is that the sample is rather specific as it consists exclusively of far distal sections of feet. The sample consists of 13 phalanxes and 1 astragalus of sheep/goat, 10 phalanxes of cow, and 2 phalanxes of pig. One cow phalanx is perforated and might have been used as a pendant. In later excavations we also found a few bones and a few phalanx bones and 4 astragali (SU 9, 18 and 25). In trying to find an explanation, I have considered that these bones could have been used as gaming pieces for the guards of the tower who whiled away the time in this manner (Kirigin 2004: 113; Kirigin 2006: 91. For animal bones from Pharos see Gastra 2016. For games using

<sup>39</sup> Overfired tile sherds were found in Pharos indicating local production: see Kirigin, in preparation.

<sup>40</sup> Unfortunately, the tile sample from the 1987 excavations was lost at some point.

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astragali see Dandoy 1996; Tahberer 2012). Next to the large number of crushed murex shells that were found below and around the central square block (SU 3) within the tower, only three oyster shells have been found in SU 33, together with a few *Monodonta turbinata* found in SU 12 and 33.

To end this section, I note in passing that no fragments of millstones, loom weights, frying pans or braziers, lopades (although some body sherds indicate their existence), lamps, coins, metal parts of dress, arrowheads or tools were recorded.

### Concluding notes

This is how I perceive the process of the building, occupation, destruction and abandonment of the tower (Fig. 31). The site was chosen as it has a good view from the north of the *chora* of Pharos and has visible contact with the *asty* of the *polis* to the south-west and with the tower at Tor to the south-east. On almost flat bedrock that has cracks and recesses, dressed stone blocks were placed. Where necessary, in some places the bedrock was cut so the blocks could fit better. When the first 2-3 rows of blocks were erected, the interior of the

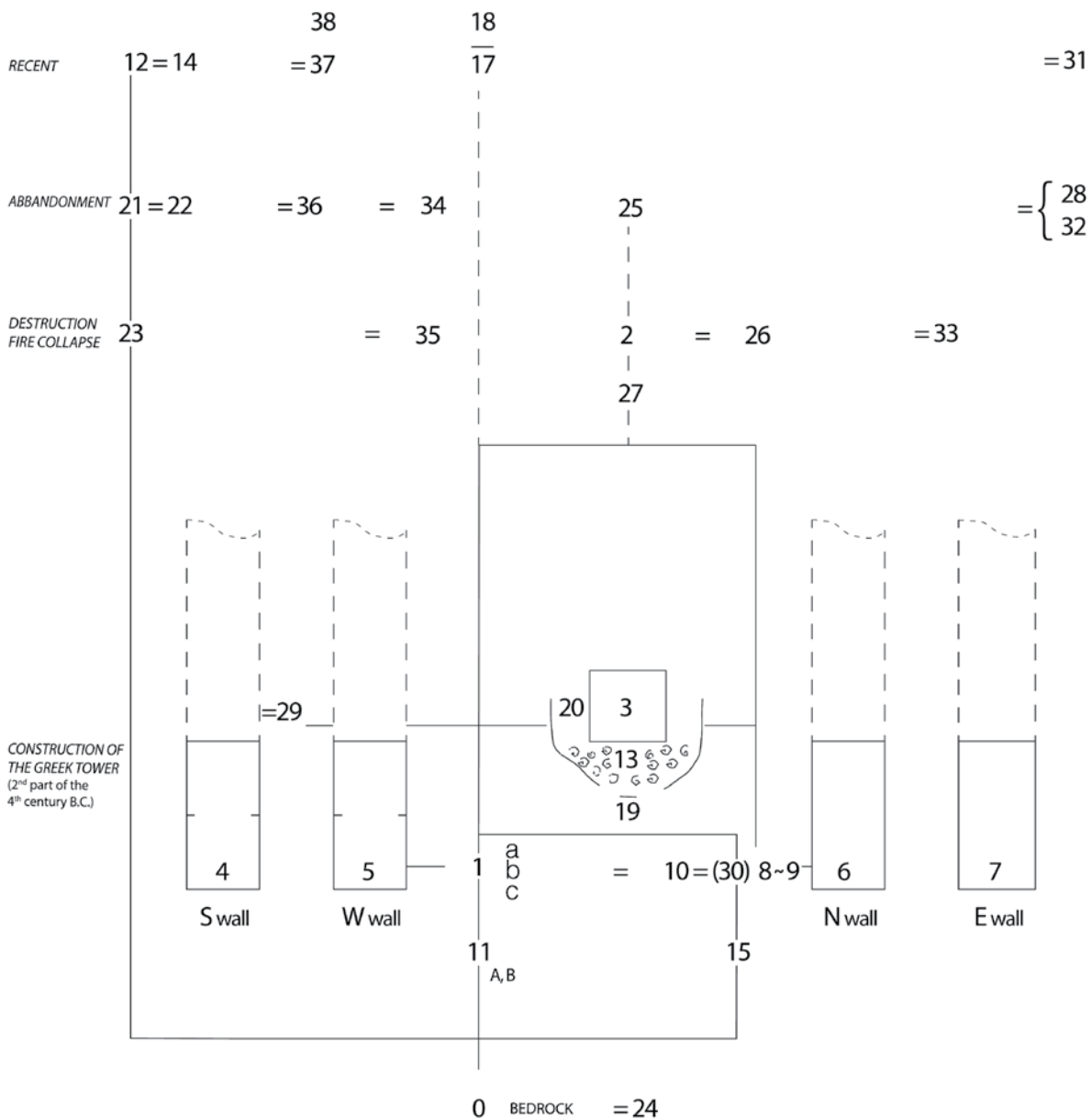


Fig. 31. Matrix of Maslinovik excavations. Made by Asja Zec (2020).

tower was filled with rubble consisting of small and large stones with some soil. After this, a pit was dug in the centre of the tower in which to place the central stone block. The building of the tower continued to the first floor. Square cuttings were made on tower blocks for wooden beams at the level of the first storey and a large wooden (?) pier was positioned on the central block that supported this wooden floor. The building of the tower continued to the second and maybe the third storey, an attic that was covered with wooden rafters and roofed with tiles.

As there are no traces of a door on the ground level, it is most probable that the door existed on the first storey. Amphorae, pithoi and other pottery sherds for cooking(?) and serving food and drinks indicate that on the first or second storey there was a kitchen and a storage area, including maybe an oven. A fire occurred at some point (remains of burned timber from 1987 and the burnt layer) and everything collapsed onto the ground floor. It is not known whether any repairs were made. As the tower ceased to have any purpose, tower blocks began to fall off, too. This stage lasted for a long period of time. There are several sherds from the 2<sup>nd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> centuries BC, 1 sherd from the Early Roman period, and a few from the Late Roman period; almost insignificant when compared with the number of Greek and Early Hellenistic pottery sherds. This state lasted until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, when several buildings and the hamlet of Pavišići were erected in the vicinity, all using tower blocks. The dislodging of the tower blocks ended at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. After 80 years, we have the situation that we encountered in 1987.

Considering the amount of soil within SU 2 (destruction layer) and SU 25 (abandonment), it looks as though these layers were formed over a long period of time. What we find in SU 22-24 along the southern wall (SU 4) – the most numerous finds –, could be the result of the removal of SU 25 within the tower towards the south when the tower blocks were moved to be incorporated into other structures. The situation in the southern trench is, thus, different than that along the other walls, where tower blocks were not removed when they had, at some point, fallen down.

It is also known that the pseudo-isodomic style is well attested in north-western Greece, Albania, Montenegro, Bosnia and Hercegovina and along the Croatian coast and its islands, making it a

trans-regional phenomenon. However, the way in which the pseudo-isodomic style of the exterior and interior faces of the tower walls at Maslinovik was combined has no parallels, as far as I am aware. Therefore, I suggest that this technique could be called pseudo-*emplekton*. How it came about remains unknown, for the time being, but it could have derived from narrow dry stone boundary walls that were used while building walls with two faces, a *longue durée* feature on karstic Mediterranean landscapes.

The Greek towers at Maslinovik and Tor are local Adriatic phenomena. Such or similar isolated towers are not attested on other parts of the island of Hvar (Gaffney et al 1997; Vujnović et al, forthcoming) nor on the neighbouring island of Vis (Issa) or, as far as I know, around Dyrrhachion and Apollonia, the only other Greek poleis in the Adriatic region.

The pottery described above gives prominence to the period from the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> to the early-mid 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. The supply in food and other necessities would not have been a problem, as Maslinovik is at most an hour's walk from Pharos. Thus, the presence of amphorae and pithoi is somewhat unusual and may be due to some reason that is, as yet, unknown to me<sup>41</sup>. At Maslinovik there are no indications that a farmstead existed nearby as is the case at other sites, for example on the Ionian island of Leukas (Lefkada) (Morris 2001 with other examples). The same pottery from all these periods at Maslinovik is found at Pharos, but regarding the Greek fine wares, Pharos has pottery from the first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century (Katalog Pharos 1995; Kirigin 2018; Kirigin, Barbarić 2019) that is not present at Maslinovik.

According to these dates, it is possible that the tower was built in the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, some 40 years after the foundation of Pharos. It is hard to tell for how long the tower was occupied, but it may have been in use in some way until the mid-1<sup>st</sup> century BC, although there is no material evidence from the mid/late 3<sup>rd</sup> to the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century BC (the period of the three Illyrian wars). The absence of material evidence for this period might be explained by the change in the organisation of the defence of the *chora* of Pharos.

<sup>41</sup> These containers would be more appropriate for the tower at Tor that is at a much higher elevation and at some 2 hours' walk from Pharos. For the finds from Tor see: Zaninović 1982.

From Greek inscriptions it is known that pirate attacks from the sea were also made during night time, so it is possible that there were permanent garrisons at the towers within the *chora* of Pharos. Officials responsible for the protection of the *chora* could have also existed (Chianotis 2008).

It is well known that the primary concern of Greek communities was the protection of the territory and the *polis* itself, not only in the motherland but also far away from home – in the *apoikiai*. The *chora* was the backbone of the *polis*. The agricultural production of the *chora* of Pharos, visible through the regular land division grid, the discovery of large number of type B amphora (imported and local) and pithoi, and coin iconography (the head of Demeter, the kantharos, the grape cluster), strongly indicate the potential wealth of Pharos in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries BC (Kirigin 2017 (pithoi); Kirigin 2018 (amphorae)). This wealth needed protection.

As we have seen, Pharos' territory was guarded by two isolated towers. The viewshed from Maslinovik provided by Google Earth Pro is slightly different from data presented here. This is because the elevation of Maslinovik in Google Earth Pro is at 52 masl, making Pharos and some other parts of the *chora* not visible. However, the official geological *height* of Maslinovik is at 66 masl, 14 m higher than that given by Google Earth Pro, thus making the visibility much greater.

### *Historical background*

Except for the conflict with the natives a year after the foundation of Pharos (384 BC) described by Diodorus (XV, 14) and the battle mentioned on an 4<sup>th</sup> century BC inscription (CIG II 1837c), no other important conflicts are recorded in ancient literary sources prior to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Illyrian war in 219 BC, when the Romans “razed it (Pharos) to the ground” (Polybius III, 19). It is, thus, possible that there was a period of peace from the mid-4<sup>th</sup> to the late 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, i.e., these towers protected the Pharians for some 120 years, or 4 generations. The archaeological evidence does not suggest that Maslinovik was occupied from the late 3<sup>rd</sup> century to the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC (no Greco-Italic amphora, late Gnathia, or similar pottery has been found)<sup>42</sup>. Some minor activity at

Maslinovik is attested from the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the mid-1<sup>st</sup> century BC (Lamboglia 2 amphora and grey wares), as well as in the Early and Late Roman periods.

While it is tempting to connect the same orientation of the tower and the Greek regular land division within the *chora* of Pharos and, use the dating evidence from the Maslinovik tower, to date the initial date of the layout of the grid, more evidence is needed to support this hypothesis.

Given that the current state of research on Greek and Hellenistic fortification walls in Dalmatia and along the eastern Adriatic coast lacks firm dates and as Faber's paper from 1976 needs a thorough revision, the data provided from the excavations at Maslinovik can be a good starting point for future research.

**Afteword:** While my paper on Maslinovik was handed over to the publisher I have in the meantime written and published an extensive paper on the ancient tower at Tor (see Kirigin 2022). I thought that it would appear after the tower Maslinovik was published.

### **Acknowledgements**

First I wish to thank all the members of the excavation teams in the six field seasons: Ivana Protulipac (4x), Petar Popović (3x), Nikša Vujnović (3x), Barbara Olujić (3x), Asja Zec (2x), Andrea Devlahović (2x), Aldo Čavić (2x), Marko Matković (2x), Eduard Visković (2x), Vince Gaffney (1x), the late Vinko Šribar (1x), Petra Čerče (1x), Zoran Stančić (1x), Irena Radić (1x), Silvia Tinazzo (1x), Zdarvako Fistonić (1x), Filip Bubalo (1x), Marina Labor (1x) and Mariana Begović (1x).

I would also like to thank my colleagues Sara Popović, Darja Grosman, Boris Čargo, and especially Ivica Stipičić – Čigo and Meludin Kadrić – Braco, the rare masters of good building on my island.

I am grateful, for the valuable contribution on animal bones, to the late colleague of ours, Mario Jurišić. For the important comments and English improvements, I owe gratitude to my old dear friend and colleague, Paolo Visonà, as well as to Ante Milošević who improved the illustrations. I would also like to thank the editors for their patience and the two anonymous reviewers.

<sup>42</sup> This is in contrast with the finds from the Tor tower (Zaninović 1982). Future excavations at Tor will certainly clarify this.



**Select catalogue (Plates 1 - 8)**

Abbreviations Max. height = maximum height, Est. diam. = estimated diameter, Max. dim. = maximum dimension, BG = black gloss

**Prehistoric pottery**

1. Pl. 1, 1. Prehistoric rim sherd from SU 11 (Džep A = pocket A). Max. height 3.3 cm, 0.5 thick. Fabric 2. 6 gr.

2. Pl. 1, 2. Prehistoric handle sherd from SU 11. Max. height 3.9 cm. Fabric 1.13 gr.

**Greek and Hellenistic fine ware<sup>43</sup>**

3. Pl. 1, 3. Skyphos ring foot sherd from SU 34. Ochre clay with pinkish surface and rare small white grits. Soapy<sup>44</sup>. Est. base diam. 4 cm. No gloss visible. 7 gr.

4. Pl. 1, 4. Skyphos ring foot from SU 23. Ochre clay. Soapy. Base diam. 4.8 cm. No gloss visible. 24 gr.

5. Pl. 1, 5. Skyphos ring foot sherd from SU 23. Ochre clay. Soapy. Est. base diam. 7 cm. No gloss visible. 18 gr.

6. Pl. 1, 6. Skyphos rim and handle sherd from SU 23. Ochre clay. Soapy. Est. diam. 11 cm. No gloss visible. 8 gr.

7. Pl. 1, 7. Skyphos rim sherd from SU 23. Yellowish clay. Soapy. Est. diam. 14 cm. No gloss visible. 5 gr.

8. Pl. 1, 8. Skyphos rim sherd with handle root. Worn BG on rim. Pinkish clay. Soapy. Est. diam. 13 cm. No gloss visible. 7 gr.

9. Pl. 1, 9. Skyphos (?) rim sherd from SU 25. Hard fired brown clay with rare mica and tiny white inclusions. Est. diam 11 cm. No gloss visible. 2 gr.

10. Pl. 1, 10. Skyphos (?) ring foot sherd from SU 28. Ochre clay. Soapy. Est. base diam. 7 cm. 5 gr.

11. Pl. 1, 11. Jug (?) sherd with a flat bottom from SU 23. The slightly profiled edge of the base has been chipped off all around the preserved part. Worn BG meander ornament above a band. Worn BG on inside. Ochre clay. Soapy. Meander motif. Max. height 5.2 cm. 27 gr. Alto-Adriatico style.

12. Pl. 1, 12. Body sherd of a skyphos(?) from SU 23. Worn BG spiral ornament. Ochre clay. Soapy. Max. dim. 3.4 cm. 2 gr. Alto-Adriatico style.

13. Pl. 1, 13. Base (?) sherd of a large closed vessel from SU 23. Worn BG on the outside and below. The base ring (?) has been chipped off all around the preserved part. Light pinkish-brown clay with one white inclusion. Max. preserved dim. 9 cm. 51 gr.

14. Pl. 1, 14. Ring base of a bowl from SU 23. Traces of BG on base ring. Light pinkish-brown clay. Diam of base 3.9 cm. 17 gr.

15. Pl. 1, 15. Body sherd of a bowl from SU 25. Worn BG on both sides. Light pinkish-brown clay. Soapy. Max. dim. 5.7 cm. 12 gr.

16. Pl. 2, 16. Rim sherd and handle root of a lower part of a lekane or a related pot from SU 18. Fine BG on both sides. Pinkish clay. Max. dim 4.5 cm. 8 gr.

17. Pl. 2, 17. Slightly concave bottom of a bowl from SU 23. Finer BG on both sides. Pinkish clay. Base dim 4.4 cm. 29 gr.

18. Pl. 2, 18. Base of a jug (?) from SU 23. Ochre clay. Soapy. Est. base diam. 11 cm. 15 gr.

19. Pl. 2, 19. Base of a jug (?) from SU 23. Ochre clay. Soapy. Est. base diam. 13 cm. 18 gr.

20. Pl. 2, 18. Base of a jug (?) from SU 28. Ochre clay. Soapy. Est. base diam. 11 cm. 17 gr.

21. Pl. 2, 18. Base of a jug (?) from SU 23. Ochre clay. Soapy. Est. base diam. 6 cm. 11 gr.

22. Pl. 2, 23. Ring foot of a jug or bowl (?) from SU 23. Ochre clay with rare traces of BG. Soapy. Base diam. 6.3 cm. 36 gr.

23. Pl. 2, 23. Handle sherd of a jug from SU 18. Light pinkish core with ochre surface. Max. height 5.8 cm. 23 gr.

24. Pl. 2, 24. Body sherd of closed tableware pot from SU 18. Graffito on wall, single letter (E?) or symbol. Ochre clay with rare white inclusions. Max. height 5.5 cm, 0.5 thick. 10gr.

**Late Hellenistic fine wares**

25. Pl. 2, 25. Rim sherd of a plate from SU 2 found in square E5 within the tower in 1987. Light grey clay with worn grey slip on the outside and dull, dark slip inside. Soapy. Max. dim. 5 cm. 7 gr.

26. Pl. 2, 26. Sherd of a beaker (?) from SU 33. Ochre clay with worn thin, dark slip. Soapy. Max. height 3.3 cm. 12 gr.

27. Pl. 2, 27. Jug handle sherd with ribs from SU 33. Light brown clay. Soapy. Max. height 3.3 cm. 15 gr. 4 gr.

**Early Roman coarse ware**

27a. Pl. 2, 27a. Rim of a small cooking pot from SU 33. Triangular rim. Hard fired pinkish clay with mica. Est. diam.. 8 cm.

**Late Roman fine ware**

28. Pl. 2, 28. Rim sherd from SU 28. Pinkish clay with rare tiny white inclusions. Hayes (1972) form 50b. Max. height 5.8 cm. 9 gr.

29. Pl. 3, 29. Rim sherd from SU 34. Pinkish clay with tiny white inclusions. Hayes (1972) form 64. Max. Dim. 4.5 cm. 15 gr.

**Greek and Hellenistic table and coarse ware, pithoi, amphorae, and tiles****Table and coarse ware**

30. Pl. 3, 30. Ring foot of a large jug or a table amphora from square C4, no. 55 (SU 2) found in 1987. Light pinkish-brown clay. Max. dim. 5 cm. 32 gr.

<sup>43</sup> Seven Greek sherds that are not included in this list were published in Kirigin, Popović 1988: 182, Figure 10.2.

<sup>44</sup> This could mean that the sherds that are soapy have been in moist soil a long time.

31. Pl. 3, 31. Ring foot of a large jug or a table amphora from western part of the interior of the tower, no. 48 (sub humus) found in 1987. Pinkish clay with rare white inclusions. Max. dim. 7.5 cm. 36 gr.

32. Pl. 3, 32. Ring foot of a jug from SU 32. Light pinkish-brown clay. Max. dim. 7 cm. 40 gr.

33. Pl. 3, 33. Rim sherd of a bowl (no. 37) found in 1987 outside the western wall. Pinkish clay. Max. dim. 3.4 cm. 7 gr.

34. Pl. 3, 34. Rim sherd of a bowl from SU 34. Light pinkish clay. Max. dim. 3.5 cm. 6 gr.

35. Pl. 3, 35. Rim sherd of a bowl from SU 8. Dark burned clay on surface. Brown fabric with tiny white inclusions. Max. dim. 3 cm. 2 gr.

35a. Pl. 3, 35a. Handle and neck of a jug from SU 23. Eleven joined sherds out of 83. Brown-pinkish clay with traces of yellowish slip on handle. Core of handle pinkish. Some body sherds grey on both sides. Clay with small dark inclusions and voids. Soapy. Est. diam. of neck 13 cm. 561 gr.

36. Pl. 3, 36. Rim and neck sherd of a cooking pot (?) from SU 23. Pinkish clay. With small white inclusions. Max. dim. 4.3 cm. 7 gr.

37. Pl. 3, 37. Rim of a larger bowl or a mortaria from SU 23. Light pinkish on inside and ochre yellowish on outside. Est. diam. 35 cm. 54 gr.

38. Pl. 3, 38. Rim of a large open pot from SU 23. Brownish clay with small, rare white inclusions. Est. diam. 40 cm. 64 gr.

39. Pl. 3, 38. Base and wall of a pan/platter (?) from SU 2. Light pinkish clay with pinkish and brown inclusions. Est. diam. 34 cm. 144 gr. Three parts have been mended.

40. Pl. 3, 39. Round handle of a larger jug(?) from SU 23. Pinkish clay with greyish core. Max. height 8 cm. 38 gr.

#### **Pithoi**

41. Figure 31, no. 2, upper left. Body sherd of a pithos found on surface near the south-west of the tower. Pinkish surface on both sides with many large and small white and dark inclusions. Core greyish. Max. dim. 12 cm. Thickness 2.3 cm. 236 gr.

42. Figure 31, no. 2, upper right. Body sherd of a pithos with small white and dark inclusions. Core ochre-greyish. Max. dim. 10 cm. Thickness 3 cm. 236 gr.

43. Figure 31, n/o. 2, bellow. Body sherd of a small pithos from SU 23. Brownish clay with many irregular white and pinkish inclusions, especially on the inner side. Max. dim. 16.7 cm. 1.7 cm thick. 340 gr.

44. Pl. 4, 44. Two joined rims of a pithos (?) lid from SU 23. Ochre pinkish clay with tiny white inclusions. Est. diam. 39. Max dim. 15.5 cm. 221 gr.

45. Pl. 4, 45. Rim of a large pot lid. Ochre pinkish clay with small white and pinkish inclusion. Est. diam. 39.

Max. dim. 11.4 cm. 86 gr.

46. Pl. 4, 46. Rim of a pithos lid from SU 23. Ochre pinkish with dark inclusions all over. Core light grey. Est. diam. 56 cm. Max. dim. 17.2. cm. 418 gr. with two joined sherds and one non-joined.

#### **Amphorae**

47. Pl. 4, 46. Rim of a type B amphora from SU 34. Two grooves below rim. Ochre clay. Max. dim. 7.2. cm. 70 gr. Two joined sherds.

48. Pl. 4, 47. Rim of a type B amphora from SU 23. Two grooves (?) below rim. Ochre clay with very rare mica. Max. dim. 8 cm. 38 gr. with 1 joined and 1 non-joined.

49. Pl. 4, 48. Rim of a type B amphora from SU 23. Ochre clay. Max. dim. 9 cm. 42 gr.

50. Pl. 4, 49. Rim of a type B amphora from SU 23. Ochre clay with very rare mica. Max. dim. 6.2 cm. 26 gr.

51. Pl. 4, 50. Rim of a type B amphora from SU 23. Yellow clay. Max. dim. 7 cm. 27 gr.

52. Pl. 4, 51. Rim of a type B amphora from SU 23. Pinkish clay. Max. dim. 4.5 cm. 11 gr.

53. Pl. 5, 52. Handle of a type B amphora from SU 23. Pinkish core, ochre surfaces. Oval in section with pinched edges. Height 14 cm. 168 gr.

54. Fig. 31, no. 3. Handle sherd of a type B amphora with a stamp – letter Σ – in an oval or iron like field from SU 23. Oval in section. Ochre clay. Max dim. 5.6 cm. 29 gr.

55. Pl. 5, 54. Handle sherd of a type B amphora. Oval in section. Pinkish surface, greyish core. Max. dim. 5.8 cm. 45 gr.

56. Pl. 5, 55. Body and base sherd of a type B amphora from SU 23. The top of the toe is missing. Groove separating body from toe. Wheel marks. Oval in section on inside. Yellow clay. Max. dim. 13 cm. 233 gr.

57. Pl. 5, 56. Body and base sherd of a type B amphora from SU 23. The very top of the toe is missing. Shallow groove separating body from toe hardly visible. Ochre clay. Max. height. 12 cm. 345 gr.

58. Pl. 5, 57. Toe sherd of a type B amphora from SU 23. The top of the toe is missing. Shallow groove separating body from toe is hardly visible. Ochre clay. Max. dim. 6.8 cm. 51 gr.

59. Pl. 5, 58. Toe sherd of a type B amphora from SU 23. The top of the toe is missing. Shallow groove separating body from toe is almost invisible. Ochre clay. Max. height. 6.5 cm. 116 gr.

#### **Roof tiles**

60. Pl. 6, 60. Sherd of a longer part of a tile with a straight vertical inner side of lower flange with platform. Surface find at north-western corner of the tower. Pinkish clay with yellow strips at core. Core also grey with rare dark, large and white inclusions. Max.

dim. 16 cm. 448 gr.

**61.** Pl. 6, 60. Sherd of a longer part of a tile with curved inner side of a lower flange with platform. Surface find at north-western corner of the tower. Yellow clay with rare small, dark inclusions. Max. dim. 17.5 cm. 568 gr.

**62.** Pl. 6, 62. Sherd of a longer part of a tile with rounded rim on the straight inner side of a lower flange with platform, from SU 2. Pinkish clay with grey core and rare dark inclusions. Max. dim. 10.5 cm. 243 gr.

**63.** Pl. 6, 60. Sherd of a longer part of a tile with slanting inner side of a low flange with platform, from SU 23. Greyish clay, possibly overfired. Max. dim. 12.3 cm. 283 gr.

**64.** Pl. 6, 60. Sherd of a longer part of a tile with a curved inner side of a low flange with platform. From SU 18. Pinkish surface and greyish core with rare white inclusions. Max. dim. 11.5 cm. 263 gr.

**65.** Pl. 6, 60. Sherd of a longer part of a tile with straight inner side of a lower flange with platform and a low square ridge on the body, from SU 23. Ochre fine clay. Max. dim. 11.5 cm. 361 gr.

**66.** Pl. 6, 60. Sherd of a longer part of a tile with straight inner side of a lower flange with platform and “nose” next to it, from SU 23. Yellow surface and pinkish core, fine clay. Max. dim. 10 cm. 245 gr.

**67.** Pl. 6, 67. Sherd of a shorter side of a tile with a moulded ridge close to the edge, from SU 23. Pinkish clay with rare large red and white inclusions. Max dim 21.2 cm. 490 gr.

**68.** Pl. 7, 68. Corner sherd of a tile from SU 23. On the lower side, there is a groove along the short side of the tile. This groove ends on the corner of the longer side of the tile. Ochre fine clay with pinkish core. Max. dim. 22.5 cm. 1135 gr.

**69.** Pl. 7, 69. Same as 68. This has no groove on the reverse, as 68. It could be the other end of 68. Max. dim. 25 c. 921 gr.

**70.** Pl. 8, 70. Sherd of a curved cover tile from SU 18. Ochre-pinkish clay with rare white inclusions. Max. dim. 13.4 cm. 226 gr.

**71.** Pl. 8, 71. Sherd of a polygonal cover tile from SU 2. Pinkish clay with rare tiny white inclusions. Max. dim. 13 cm. 255 gr.

**72.** Pl. 8, 72. Sherd of a cover tile with triangular edge. Yellow clay with rare tiny white and larger dark inclusions. Max. di. 19.2 cm. 451 gr.

#### Miscellaneous

**73.** Pl. 8, 73. A large sherd of a round shaped object with a higher thick base, a stand (?), from SU 23. Smoothed top and conical side. Pinkish brown clay with dark clay inclusions, Max dim. 16.5 cm. 466 gr. with two non-joined smaller sherds.

**74.** Pl. 8, 74. Rim (?) of a large basin (?) from SU 23. Ochre clay with small rare dark inclusions. Max. dim. 7.8 cm. 86 gr.

**75.** Pl. 8, 75. Rim (?) of a small tile (?). Ochre clay with rare dark inclusions. Max. dim. 5.2 cm. 30 gr.

**75a.** Figure 13a. A large part of a ceramic object (30 x 13 x 12 cm) from SU 25. Dark core, one stone and smaller inclusions. More red-orange on one side than on the other (interior?), found in 2016.

#### Glass finds

**76.** Pl. 8, 76. Part of a base of foot of a calix glass (?) from SU 31. Greenish colour. Est. diam. 5 cm. 5 gr.

**77.** Pl. 8, 77. Base sherd of a taller glass vessel with a concave base, from SU 31. Green core with worn patina, silver shine in places.

#### Metal finds

**78.** Pl. 8, 78. Bronze nail with a large round head found in square B5 (SU 2) in 1987. 2.2 cm long, head diam. 1.5 cm. 4 gr.

**78a.** Figure 22. Circular piece of bronze of 15 by 14 mm in size with traces of a dotted border and flat smooth sides and an oblique edge, from SU 23. 3.17 gr.

**80.** Pl. 8, 80. Upper part of a large iron nail, from SU 8. Very corroded. Head diam. 3.7 cm. 18 gr.

**81.** Pl. 8, 81. Upper part of a small iron nail, from SU 23. Very corroded. Head diam. 2.1 cm. 4 gr.

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Vera Krstić and Milica Marić Stojanović

National Museum of Serbia

v.krstic@narodnimuzej.rs and m.stojanovic@narodnimuzej.rs

## GILDED WREATH FROM KALE, KRŠEVICA

**Abstract:** The paper presents a gilded wreath from the archaeological site of Kale in Krševica in the south of Serbia. Besides the stylistic features and archaeological context, preliminary results of spectroscopic analyses are given in order to shed some light on the production technique of this find and to compare them with other published results. The fragmented wreath was found in 2008 in the foothills of the site, comprising parts gilded with gold leaf of high purity. More than 30 fragments of copper wire and leaves were found, including three ceramic beads and one ceramic flower. Based on the flower with six petals and smaller pieces of lanceolate leaves, it is possible to identify the wreath from Krševica as a myrtle wreath. Such types of wreaths characterise Hellenistic graves from Macedonia, and they were used in religious rituals and mysteries, with believers offering them to gods and sanctuaries. The wreath does not originate from a grave but from the space at which several cult and ritual ceremonies were identified. A bronze coin from the city of Uranopolis, from the period of Cassander, was found in close proximity to the wreath, which enables the dating of the wreath to the end of the 4th century BC.

**Keywords:** Kale, Krševica, wreath, myrtle, sanctuary, goddesses, Aphrodite, Demeter.

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Kale archaeological site is located in Krševica village in the south of Serbia, not far from Bujanovac and Vranje. It was registered in 1965 for the first time, during a survey of the South Morava valley, from Vranje to Bujanovac (Јовановић 1966), while protective excavations took place in 1966 (Јовановић 1966; Микулчић, Јовановић 1968). The first systematic archaeological research began in 2001 and lasted until 2018. Colleague Petar Popović PhD, to whom this volume is dedicated on the occasion of his 78<sup>th</sup> birthday, managed this research in the period between 2001 and 2012.

The settlement consists of an *acropolis* with slopes and a suburb built using Greek standards, with the architecture being the most interesting and most significant aspect of the site (Поповић 2012a). A large architectural complex with stone constructions, protective walls, bread ovens, openings for pillars, and bearings for horizontal wooden construction beams was discovered in one part of the suburb alongside the Krševica river. A fully preserved ashlar construction with an arched vault

of 10 m in length, 6 m in width and over 6 m in height dominates the suburb. It is presumed that it was a reservoir that supplied inhabitants of this settlement with water (Поповић 2012a; Поповић 2010; Vranić 2019).

Among many finds from the site, ceramics are the most numerous, to a small extent representing Attic products (Крстић 2005; Вранић 2022), whereas to a larger extent, they are of local manufacture – various forms of kitchenware and containers (Антић, Бабић 2005; Vranić 2009), followed by loom weights (Popović, Vranić 2006), grindstones of volcanic rock (Popović, Kapuran 2007), various jewellery – hinged and Thracian fibulae, ‘M’ pins, earrings, rings, glass beads (Popović 2007), and coins (Митровић, Поповић 2010). Finds, which could be dated to the period from the 4<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, confirm that this settlement, throughout its existence, managed close connections with the Hellenistic world of ancient Macedonia and the North Aegean region (Поповић 2012a).



Fig. 1. Fragmented wreath from Kale – Krševica

In 2008, in the foothills of the site, not far from the arched vault, a fragmented wreath<sup>1</sup> was found (Fig. 1). Fragments of the wreath were gilded with gold leaf of high purity.<sup>2</sup> More than 30 fragments of copper wire and leaves were found, including three ceramic beads and one ceramic flower. Some pieces of the wire (Image 7) consist of hollow tin tubes covered in copper corrosion with traces of a sprig/cane, which could have been structuring the main hoop or parts of pendants and ceramic flower carriers. The preserved fragments of leaves are of small dimensions and were gilded only on one side (Fig. 2). The beads, which used to represent fruits of the plant, are of a spherical form, with a 6 mm diameter and weighing from 0.23 to 0.26 grams. They are gilded and on one end have a hole for inserting the wire (Fig. 3). The flower is of a conical form, with a 23 mm diameter and a 10 mm height, and weigh 2 grams. A white coating, over which green and purple pigments were applied, is partial-



Fig 2. Lanceolate leaf of the wreath



Fig. 3. Ceramic beads covered in different layers

<sup>1</sup> The wreath is stored in The Greek-Hellenistic collection of the National Museum of Serbia, Inv. No.1094/I.

<sup>2</sup> The results of chemical analyses conducted by colleague M. Marić Stojanović, The National Museum of Serbia, which are part of this paper.

ly preserved on the flower (Image 8). The flower is perforated through the axis to enable the insertion of the wire and hanging. The wreath could be dated to the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC given that in its immediate proximity, at the bottom of the pit which was partially dug into the cultural layer of the large structure's arch base, a bronze coin from the city of Uranopolis was found. The coin is of local provenance from the period of Cassander (310-305 BC) (Митровић, Поповић 2010).

Metal wreaths made of gold, silver or gilded metals imitated natural wreaths and were styled on different plants – laurel, pine, ivy, olive, and myrtle. The wreaths, both metal and natural, were used as religious and societal symbols. They were used in religious rituals, ceremonies, and mysteries, while believers offered them to gods and sanctuaries.<sup>3</sup> They had an important role in burial rites and customs because the wreath was a reward won during life and its magical and miraculous function protected the deceased during their long journey to the underworld. Wreaths were gifted to winners of athletic and musical competitions, as well as to persons of note – magistrates and doctors (Jaffreys 2022; Chatzipangioutou, Ignatiadou 2018: 267; Ignatiadou, Tsigarida 2011).

Two main groups of wreaths can be noted. The first group is made of gold and dates from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC. They are lavish, opulent wreaths whose decorations consisted of branches, sprigs, blossoms, and pods, while sometimes they were also decorated with vitreous enamel and gemstones (Ignatiadou, Tsigarida 2011). The second group, to which the Krševica wreath belongs, consists of more modest examples made of a combination of materials: different types of metal, matter of organic origin, and ceramic beads and flowers. This type is characteristic of Hellenistic graves from Macedonia, Greece, Thracia, and Anatolia. As the custom of gifting the deceased with jewellery and offerings was very strong in these areas, the deceased was laid into the grave with a gold wreath that he was honoured with during life, followed by a gilded wreath. Such cases were noted in Pella and Derveni (Macedonia), Kabyle in

the Yambol district (Thracia), Parion (Anatolia), etc. (Χρυσόστομου 2000; Θέμελης, Τουρατσόγλου 1987: 111, Πιν.123; Стоянов *et al.* 2013; Çelikbaş 2019). Today, a scholarly opinion prevails that gilded wreaths, because of the great disproportion between the type and the weight of materials and the carrying hoop, could not have been used in everyday life but were used exclusively as offerings in graves and sanctuaries (Asderaki, Rehren 2008: 507; Çelikbaş 2019). While only one ceramic flower and three ceramic gilded beads were found next to the Krševica wreath, this type of wreath was usually very richly decorated with ceramic beads and flowers.<sup>4</sup> The opulence of a gilded wreath probably depended, as in the case of gold wreaths, on the status that the deceased had during life or the reason for bequeathing at the sanctuary. By offering them to sanctuaries, believers were expressing their piety, wealth, and generosity, while at the same time expecting that their prayers were granted regardless of whether it was a personal, material or social wish.

In ancient Greek society, as in all cultures, jewellery carried significant social messages even when it was meant for gods and the deceased, or given as a reward. Apotropaic or protective attributes of wreaths depended on the importance and power attributed to the plants they represented (Chatzipangioutou, Ignatiadou 2018: 267; Tsigarida 2010). Based on the flower with six petals and smaller fragments of lanceolate leaves, it is possible to identify the Krševica wreath as a myrtle wreath.<sup>5</sup> It does not originate from a grave but from the area where several cult and ritual ceremonies performed by inhabitants of the settlement in Krševica were registered. The wreath was ritual and burial jewellery, and the fact the living used noble and durable materials for the deceased and gods demonstrates their expectations of the immortality

<sup>3</sup> E. Tsigarida finds that ancient Greeks offered gold wreaths to important sanctuaries. Artefacts are not preserved, but they were, according to epigraphic inscriptions, noted in annual inventories of sanctuaries, sometimes with short descriptions (Ignatiadou, Tsigarida 2011).

<sup>4</sup> Next to the wreath from Aiani 13 gilded rosettes and 16 gilded beads are preserved (Καραμήτρου–Μεντεσίδη 2009), whereas next to the wreath from Piryi, Eordaia 16 gilded flowers are preserved, of which 4 are labelled as myrtle wreaths (Καραμήτρου–Μεντεσίδη 1998). Wreaths from Thessaloniki and its surroundings (Σουέρεφ, Ματθαίου 2000; Σουέρεφ, Χαβέλα 2002), Thasos (Κουκούλη–Χρυσανθάκη, Σγουρού, Αγελαράκης 1997), and Pella (Χρυσόστομου 2000) were decorated with more than 40 gilded beads/fruits.

<sup>5</sup> It is considered that every flower having 6 or more petals and lanceolate leaves belongs to myrtle (Tsigarida 2010: 305).



of the soul and granting of their prayers. The myrtle plant was a symbol of immortality, widespread in ancient Macedonia and Greece. It was a sacred plant of the goddess Aphrodite who was, like the goddesses Persephone and Demeter, connected to the underworld (Срејовић, Кузмановић 1987: 69-71, 109-111, 339). Her chthonic nature was expressed as Aphrodite Epitymbia and Aphrodite Anthea. It is worth mentioning that not far from the wreath, aurochs' horns were found, with vertically placed hydria and *oinochoe* without the base (Popović 2009; Vranić 2016: 666), and a layer of charred wheat, which could indicate the cult of Demeter. A large quantity of ceramics, large broken dishes, *pithoi* and *hydriai* were found on the outer side of the reservoir. Two altars, stone pillars - *περιρραντήρια* – and deer antlers (the goddess Artemis's sacred animal) were found in the same space two years earlier, north of the wreath (Popović 2012b).

There is still no answer to the question of who the inhabitants of this settlement were who accepted Macedonian customs - whether it a small ethnic group of Macedonians within a larger local community, a group of local people who adopted Macedonian customs after the eventual appearance of Macedonian rule in that region, or a Macedonian garrison town (Vranić 2019: 157-160). Numerous finds from Kale Krševica confirm that it is an exceptional site in the south of Serbia nonetheless, with the gilded wreath being one of a few preserved wreaths, which we assume was used for religious purposes. Unfortunately, many doubts remain about exactly what town this was. The reason lies in the fact that the foothills of the Kale site in Krševica, due to the impossibilities of adequate conservation, protection, and preservation as well as unfinished property legislation, had to be restored to its original condition and left to future researchers and some better times.

### **Physicochemical analyses of the wreath, inventory number 1094/1**

The analysis was conducted based on fragments of the object under inventory number 1094/1. The fragments were arranged in several bags. Copper corrosion is present on the majority of fragments, while gilt over corrosion can be noticed on several

thin sheet fragments. Three brown-coloured beads on which gilt can also be noticed as well as one ceramic flower with traces of colour comprise a separate group.

The analyses were performed with the Energy-dispersive X-ray fluorescence spectroscopy technique (EDXRF) on a device consisting of an X-ray mini tube AMPTEK of 50 Kv, X-ray detector SSD-123 AMPTEK, and a 2 mm diameter laser pointer. The scanning conditions were 40 keV voltage, 10 µA current, and 100 s scanning time.

One fragment of metal with gold leaf on one side was dipped into Araldite 2020 epoxy resin, out of which a cross-section was made. Electronic microscope observations coupled with EDXRF were performed on the aforementioned fragment, as well as on two beads, and one fragment resembling a cane fragment with corrosion on one end, with the aim of a more precise identification of the composition and structure of the samples. Analyses and scanning (SEM-EDS) were performed on the JOELJSM-6610LV instrument.

Most of the samples were observed using an Olympus SZ61 optical microscope (OM) combined with a KL200 Shott halogen lamp with a magnification of 15-60 x. Digital pictures were made with an Olympus Camedia C-5060 digital Camera with a C5060-ADU adapter for the microscope.

Based on the performed analyses it can be concluded that the metal leaves are made of pure copper which was, on one side, gilded with gold leaf glued with an organic binder. The beads are made of ceramic that was (probably alongside the copper string representing its handle) fired in a reduced atmosphere, so as not to melt the metal string. Traces of a covering that consisted of an insulating kaolin-based coating and then a copper-based mineral pigment, on which a gold leaf was applied, can be noticed on the beads. Several fragments appear as thin tubes of organic origin covered in corrosion.

We were unable to identify the composition of the tubes through electronic microscope detection, which once again indicates their organic origin. Another decorative element – a ceramic flower – is covered with a white skim based on lime or kaolin, with green and purple pigments applied to it. The green pigment is copper-malachite based, whereas we were unable to identify the composi-

tion of the purple pigment through this technique. We assume, therefore, it is some sort of organic pigment, tentatively the one known as Phoenician purple. Details of the analyses are presented in the results section below.

In the context of published results about similar finds, we may say that the quality of gold is similar to all other finds. It is technically pure gold without a significant amount of silver, indicating refined gold (Jeffreys 2022; Asderaki-Tzoumerkioti, Rehren 2002). Here, the gold leaf is of uneven thickness and thicker (2-8  $\mu\text{m}$ ) compared to published results where the thickness usually is about 1  $\mu\text{m}$ . Also, the myrtle leaves and copper wire are made of pure unrecycled copper, as in other finds. The gilding was performed with some kind of organic binder directly applied onto the metal. One sample from the ancient Demetrias cemetery in Volos from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC also has the same type of gilding on metal reported (Asderaki, Rehren 2008: 507). This is quite different from the prevailing practice of putting some kind of coating on the metal, usually made of kaolin or calcium carbonate or calcareous clay. Actually, this kind of coating here is registered on clay beads that are first covered with a yellowish coating then with a green pigment and finally with gold leaf. A white coating, most probably made of calcium carbonate, was applied to the ceramic flower before painting. The pigments on the flower are green copper-based malachite and there is an indication of the organic purpurin, but other options are also possible. Sometimes, a circlet made of lead, wood or bone was used in order to hold the heavier elements made of clay, but here we found no traces of a circlet so we cannot say what its composition was. We also found no elements made of lead, wood or bone. Only fragments of some sort of sprigs or cane, which could be part of carrying elements for metal pendants, have been found.

## Results

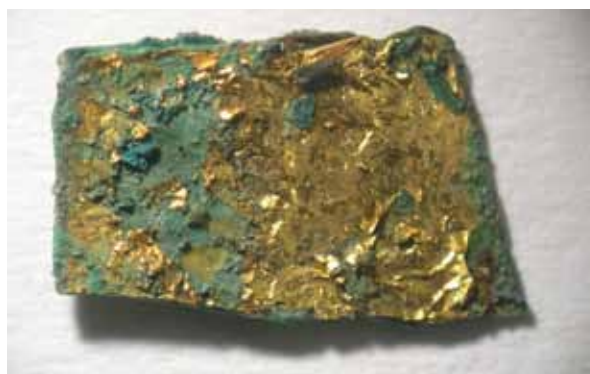
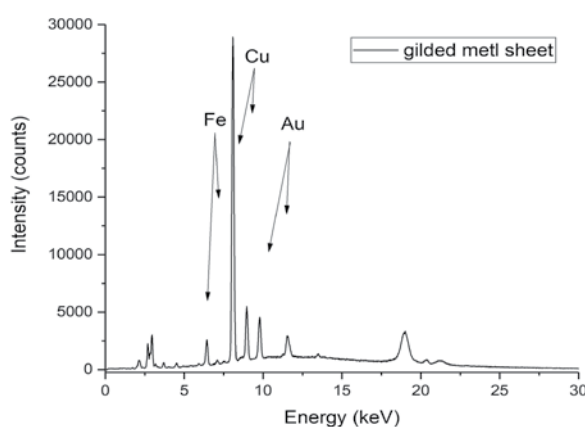


Image 1: Metal sheet covered in corrosion and gold leaf



Spectrum 1: Elements detected through EDXRF instruments on the sheet from image 1

Alongside copper as the main element, the gilded side (image 1, spectrum1) shows peaks of gold too, which confirms that the sheet was made of copper gilded with a gold leaf of high purity. The presence of iron is interpreted as an integral part of corrosion.

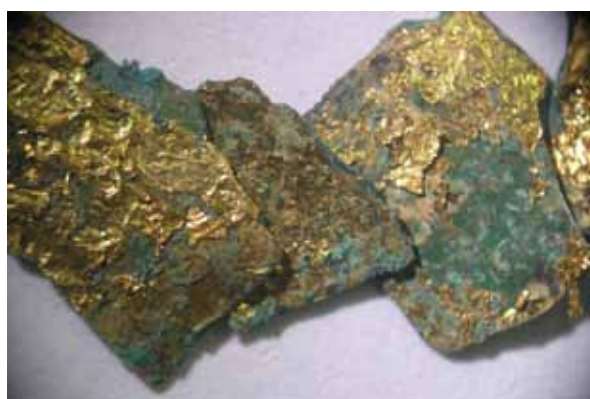


Image 2: Group of metal sheets covered in corrosion with gold leaf over it

The separation of the gold leaf from the surface can be seen in image number 2. Therefore, we assume that the leaves were applied on the copper surface with some sort of organic binder, unlike techniques of embossing or fire gilding where gold would enter the structure of copper through diffusion or mercury application, in which case mercury would be identified in the spectrums. The organic binder is confirmed by scanning the cross-cut of one smaller gilded sample. Image 3 shows the cross-cut of one piece of metal sheet with gilt (3A and 3B) as well as the scan of the cross-cut mapping in the area of the gold leaf (3C, 3D, 3E, 3F). On the mapping scans, we can see that the presence of the elements nitrogen, phosphorus, and sulphur, common for an organic protein binder indicating their animal origin, is connected to the presence of gold. The thickness of the gold leaf is uneven, ranging between 2 and 8 micrometres, while based on the silhouette in the middle of the scan we can presume that the copper sheet was 30 micrometres thick, but the metal core has not been preserved (3B).

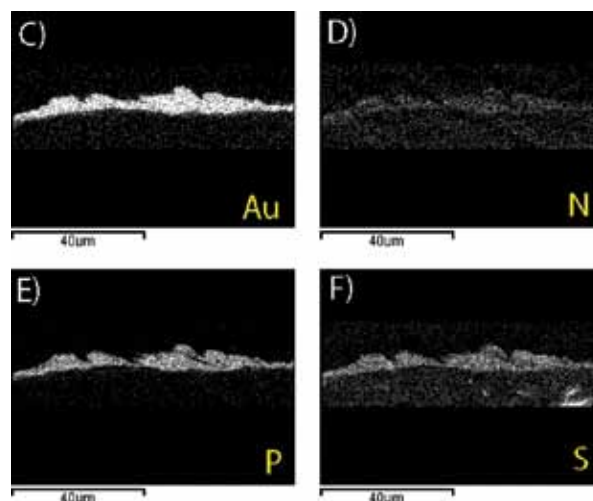


Image 3: The cross cut of the metal sheet with gilt: A) under the regular microscope of 100X magnification, B) Backscatter electronic scan under the electronic microscope, the reflection of the gold leaf can be seen on the surface, while remains of a metal core of the former copper sheet can be seen in the middle, C), D), E) and F) are the results for individual elements of Au, N, P, and S respectively

The beads are sporadically covered with one layer of pale-yellow colour, topped by a layer of green and the gilt (image 4 and image 5). Through electronic microscope analyses it was confirmed that the beads are made of ceramic and covered with a layer of kaolin, then coloured with a green copper-based pigment, and then finally gilded (image 6 and table 1).

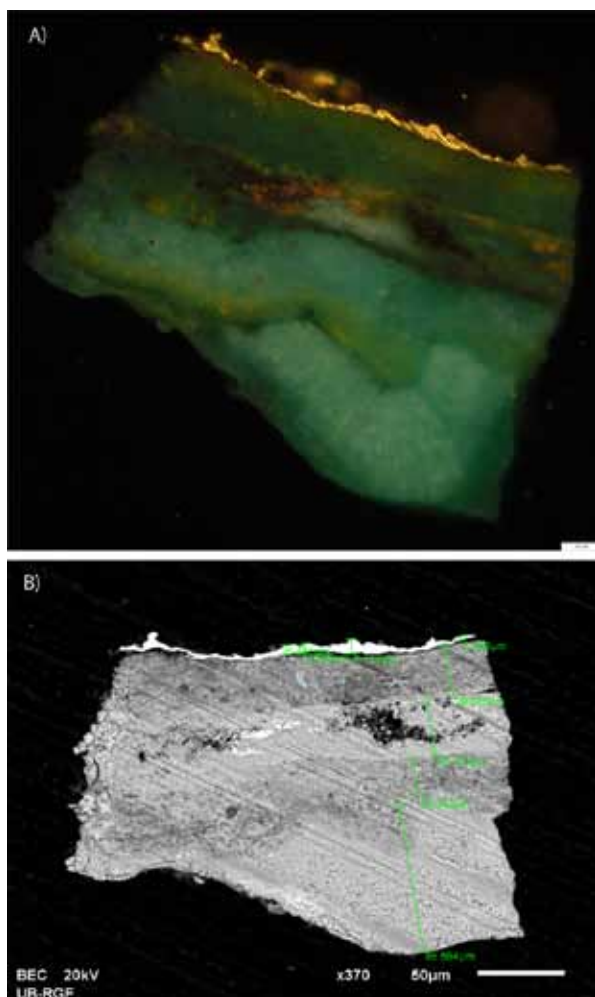


Image 4: Ceramic bead covered in different layers, magnified 10X

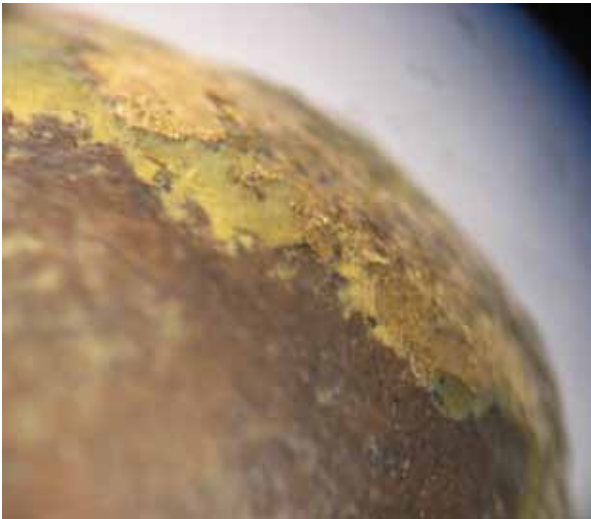


Image 5: Dark brown ceramic bead with a white-yellow layer, and a green layer topped with gold leaf

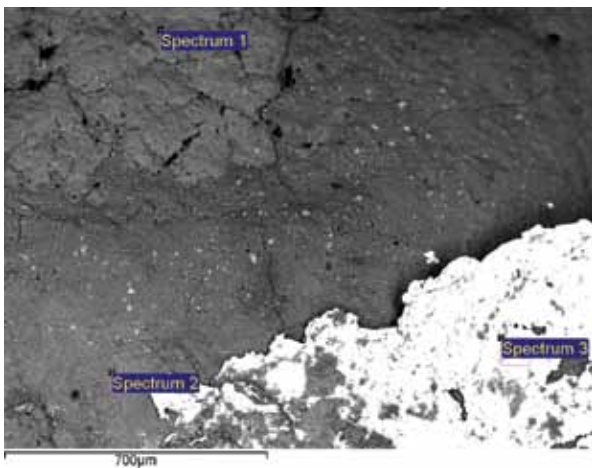


Image 6: Electronic scan of yellow, green, and golden layers of the bead, with markings on areas where the analysis was performed

Sp	O	Na	Mg	Al	Si	S	K	Ca	Ti	Fe	Cu	Au
Sp 1	46.59	1.43	2.27	8.54	23.89		3.87	0.64	1.24	7.08	4.44	
Sp 2	45.59	1.41		8.74	21.00	1.24	0.36	0.80	0.22	2.62	18.02	
Sp 3	27.45			2.62	4.30		0.29			1.15	5.48	58.71

Table 1: Results of SEM EDXRF electronic microscope analyses; the weight percentage of detected elements in different layers (pale yellow, green, gilt) with marked areas of scanning on image 6

Image 7 shows forms resembling hollow tubes covered in copper corrosion (they were probably wrapped in copper ribbons), which are associated with organic material – some sort of sprigs or cane, which could be part of carrying elements for metal pendants.



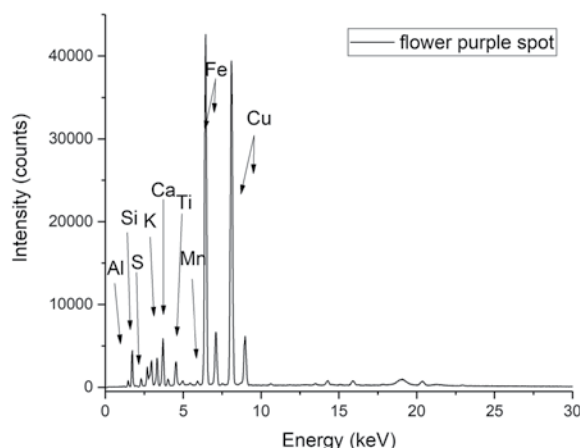
Image 7: Traces of tubes (of organic material), which could be carrying elements of metal pendants

Peaks of iron, calcium, titanium and manganese, which could be connected to the ceramic surface or the white skim of lime or kaolin the flower was covered with are shown on spectrums performed on the flower (images 8 and spectrum 2). Copper is connected to the green colour that the flower was decorated with (malachite mineral), whereas the purple colour remains undefined. Given that the equipment used in the analyses cannot detect organic carbon-based matter, we can only presume that it is some sort of organic colour such as Phoenician purple, which was obtained from particular species of seashell from the *Muricidae* family.



Image 8: Observation of the ceramic flower under the optical microscope A) 10X magnification, B) 20X magnification, purple colour resembling Phoenician purple can be noticed on the petals





Spectrum 2: EDXRF spectrum on the purple area on the ceramic flower; no peak which could be more intense than it is in the body of ceramics or which refers to green colour (copper pigment under purple colour) can be singled out

Translated: Stefan Zarić

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**Aleksandar Bandović**  
National Museum of Serbia  
a.bandovic@narodnimuzej.rs

## GRADIŠTE ABOVE THE CHURCH OF ST. ERASMUS NEAR OHRID: *ON THE TRAIL OF THE ILLYRIANS*

**Abstract:** The first excavations of Gradište near Ohrid Lake were conducted in 1931 and 1932 in a collaboration between the German Archaeological Institute and the National Museum in Belgrade (now the National Museum of Serbia). One of the first international projects was clearly linked to the prestigious finds at Trebenište during the First World War and the questions raised by this inventory. Based on various types of archival and documentary material, this study analyses different social and archaeological contexts of the Gradište excavations, as well as the motivations that brought together different parties in this joint endeavour. On the one hand, German archaeology was guided by the broad concept of “Nordic thought” and the belief that Gradište could be evidence of the Illyrian prehistoric migrations from Central to Southern Europe. On the other hand, by participating in the project the National Museum aimed to assert itself as the most prominent Yugoslav institution in the field of archaeology. Although the research results did not yield the expected outcomes, the subsequent reactions speak to the specific context in which archaeology found itself before the Second World War. Even though, at first glance, the excavations could be seen as irrelevant or marginal, their impact on Yugoslav archaeology and the way the Balkans were perceived by foreign researchers in contemporary and the following years is more than significant.

**Keywords:** History of archaeology, National Museum of Serbia, German Archaeological Institute, Illyrians, Iron Age, Hillforts, Nordic thought, Ohrid, Gradište, Trebenište.

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*The antiquities of Ohrid await a more diligent and prepared traveller than myself, for I have only recorded as much as I know, and that is not everything and not much* (Нушић 1894, 72).

After a warm July day of archaeological work at the Krševica “Acropolis”, Petar Popović would often engage in discussions about various archaeological topics. As the team gathered for lunch in the kitchen of the village school in Žbevac, conversations would arise about Krševica itself and the ethnicity of its ancient inhabitants. The location of Krševica was contemplated in relation to its position “between the Celtic and Greek worlds,” prompting discussions about Celtic migrations and the conquests of Hellenistic rulers in the interior of the Balkans. Pera’s boyish curiosity extended to the history of archaeology, and it was through

his personal stories that I gained insights into the history of Serbian/Yugoslav archaeology. As a young researcher, I was fortunate to have Pera as a storyteller, and I eagerly listened to his accounts. These stories ignited my interest in the history of the discipline, and I am indebted to Pera for sparking my curiosity. Among the many tales he shared, one that stood out was the history of the research conducted on the Hellenistic fortress of Gradište above the church of St. Erasmus in Ohrid, northern Macedonia. Gradište is located above the road that connects Struga and Ohrid, with remains of the fortification being visible in the field and on satellite images (Fig. 1). The remains of the “cyclopean” ramparts, constructed using the *opus quadratum* technique, cover an approximately 10-hectare area (Битракова Грозданова 2017: 46-47). Today, these structures are also interpreted as the potential “tribal capital” of the upper Macedonian tribe known as Engelani or even as the town of



Fig.1. North Macedonia and the Lake Ohrid region

“Engelana” (Kuzman 2009: 38-1). Putting aside the semi-mythical nature of the Engelani tribe and the romantic interpretations of Polybius’ writings, it is evident that even in the present day, this archaeological site continues to generate curiosity. This is not surprising, as Hellenistic settlements remain a subject in which contemporary political and nationalistic perspectives intersect with archaeological interpretations (*see* Vranić 2014).

In my opinion, the history of archaeology can contribute to a reflective and relevant understanding of our scientific discipline. Although, until recently, the history of the discipline was regarded as a hobby for retired archaeologists, there has been a growing emphasis on the significance of this field of research in recent times (*e.g.*, Corbey and Roebroeks 2001; Kaeser 2008; Moro Abadía 2013). However, it is important to recognise that the history of archaeology should not be perceived as a linear progression of the discipline “from darkness to light.” Archaeologists now understand the importance of delving into dusty archives, examining private and official correspondence, studying notes and institutional decisions, and exploring archaeological and private diaries in order to gain insights into the development of archaeological ideas (Kaeser 2013; Schlanger 2002: 130). Let us approach the history of archaeology with an ‘ethnographic zeal,’ viewing it as a means to

understand and illuminate the ideas, practices, and cultural, social, and political contexts in which our predecessors created and worked. This perspective allows us to explore how archaeological knowledge was disseminated and shaped within these contexts (Schlanger 2002: 128; Hamilakis 2010): “Herodotus thought of historians as the guardians of memory, the memory of glorious deeds. I prefer to see historians as the guardians of awkward facts, the skeletons in the cupboard of the social memory” (Burke 2011[1989]: 192).

Bearing this in mind, let us now revisit the research conducted on Gradište. The origins of this research date back to the period between the two world wars when the

National Museum in Belgrade held significant authority as the primary institution overseeing archaeological heritage in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Since there were no specific laws regarding the protection of cultural monuments at the time, the museum took on the dual role of safeguarding the heritage and functioning as a prominent scientific, educational, and propagandistic entity. Under the leadership of the art historian Vladimir Petković (1874-1956), the National Museum in Belgrade extended its activities and jurisdiction to encompass a wide region, including present-day Serbia, Kosovo and Metohija, Montenegro, and North Macedonia. Aligned with the cultural policy prevalent in Yugoslavia, archaeological research in northern Macedonia served not only as a scientific endeavour but also as a socio-political project, integral to the overarching goal of “the people’s enlightenment” (*sensu* Jovanović 2014: 177-201). Soon, northern Macedonia became known as “the land of archaeologists”, “the real Eldorado” or “the archaeological California”. These poetic epithets romanticised and emphasised the role that archaeology played in the cultural and educational mission of the Yugoslav state in northern Macedonia (Bandović 2019: 32-35).<sup>1</sup> The most significant

<sup>1</sup> During the 1920s, a part of the territory of present-day North Macedonia was referred to as Southern Serbia, and later as the Vardar Banovina.

state archaeological project, which began between the two world wars, is undoubtedly the research of the ancient site of Stobi (Novaković 2011: 418). However, the excavations of Gradište above the Church of St. Erasmus hold a distinct place in the history of archaeology for a different reason. What sets Gradište's research apart is the fact that it was one of the earliest instances of international cooperation, specifically between the National Museum and the German Archaeological Institute (DAI). So, what drew the attention of archaeologists to this site, and how did this collaboration come about?

### **From Trebenište and Illyrians to Gradište**

More than 100 years have elapsed since the discovery of the necropolis near Trebenište, which was first documented in a book authored by Bogdan Filow (1883-1945) and Karel Škorpil (1859-1944). The book, published in German by the prestigious publishing house Walter de Gruyter, was a lavish edition dedicated to Filow's mentor, Ernst Fabricius (1857-1942), a professor of Roman archaeology and history at the University of Freiburg (Filow und Schkorpil 1927). In 1918, a group of Bulgarian soldiers, under the leadership of Colonel Dimitar Mustakov (1874-1973), discovered five graves from the Iron Age containing magnificent grave goods. The excavations were subsequently continued by Karel Škorpil. While some of the finds from 1919 to 1921 were displayed at the National Museum in Sofia (Chukalev 2018: 17), it was the publication of the book rather than the exhibition that generated a particular sense of excitement among European archaeologists. The rich funerary finds, including gold masks, helmets, weapons, tools, luxurious bronze vessels, and other movable objects, sparked a debate regarding the ethnic identity of the individuals buried in the necropolis. Much speculation arose, suggesting "Greek mercenaries in the service of local tribes" (Filow), Illyrians (Dassaretæ) (Jacobsthal), and even Celts (Čajkanović) (Filow, Schkorpil 1927; Jacobsthal 1928; for Čajkanović see Палавестра 2000: 20). It has been speculated that these individuals were warriors who perished in battle, which could explain the absence of a corresponding settlement (Filow, Škorpil 1927: 3, n.6). Filow

and Škorpil were the first to draw attention to the similarities between the masks found at Trebenište and those from Mycenaean culture, even associating the depiction of lions in antithetical positions with the Lion's Gate in Mycenae (Filow, Škorpil 1927: VIII, 15-16). Similarly, British archaeologist Stanley Casson wrote about the "conservative nature of Macedonians and Illyrians," considering Ohrid and Mycenae as "two phases of the same culture" (Casson 1928: 270). The perception of Trebenište by German archaeologists, particularly Carl Schuchhardt (1859-1943), was of significant importance. Schuchhardt, educated as a philologist and classical archaeologist, possessed extensive experience in excavating prehistoric and ancient sites. In 1908, he was appointed as the director of the prehistoric department at the Ethnographic Museum in Berlin. Although in Germany he is considered one of the greatest opponents of Gustaf Kossinna (1858-1931) and his nationalist and racist perceptions of archaeology (Grünert 2002: 174-184; Bandović 2012: 640), even his "antipode" (Eggers 2010 [1959]: 268), Schuchhardt shared similar perspectives (Härke 1991: 205; Härke 1998: 21; Клейн 2000: 125; see Schuchhardt 1934: V; *contra* Roth 2020: 67, n. 283). Like Kossinna, Schuchhardt shared the belief that ethnic identity in prehistory could be determined through the analysis of pottery, which he considered to be the "finest seismograph for migrations" (*die-ser feinste Seismograph für Völkerbewegungen*) (Schuchhardt 1919: 296; cf. Kossinna 1911: 10). Unlike Kossinna, who placed the cradle of the "Indogermanen" (Indo-Europeans) in a small area of Northern Germany and Scandinavia (see Bandović 2012: 637-638), Schuchhardt located the cradle of the Indo-Europeans in Central Europe (Thuringia), suggesting their alleged origin from the Paleolithic population (Schuchhardt 1934: 73). Like many German archaeologists, Schuchhardt rebelled against the *ex oriente lux* theory and held the belief that migrations originating from Central and Northern Europe played a significant role in the development of Mediterranean civilizations. He saw these newcomers, despite their small numbers, as comparable to Alexander the Great and his elite army, asserting themselves as the "ruling nation" (*Herrenvolk*) (Schuchhardt 1919: 214; Schuchhardt 1935: 3-4, 250-251). According to Schuchhardt, the Illyrians played a very important

role in this process. He considered them to be the bearers of the “Band Ware” (*Bandkeramik*), who set out for Greece during the first invasion of the Indo-Germans, carrying the spiral motif on pottery vessels (Schuchhardt 1932: 343; Schuchhardt 1934a: 78). Judging by his character, even Odysseus, in his opinion, was an Illyrian king (Schuchhardt 1935: 254; Schuchhardt 1934b: XLIX–LIII).<sup>2</sup> In light of the findings from the Trebenište necropolis, Schuchhardt believed that the occurrence of death masks was an old Illyrian custom, present wherever the Illyrians were or wherever they spread their influence, from Mycenae through Kleinklein to Trebenište (Schuchhardt 1934a: 78, 182; Schuchhardt 1935: 253). No doubt it was one of the variants of “Nordic thought” (*Nordische Gedanke*), a subtle identity myth woven into the prevailing academic discourse (see Клейн 2000: 125). Essentially, it was a Eurocentric, migrationist, and colonial perspective on prehistory, serving as a symbolic appropriation of Mediterranean classical civilizations, which were attributed to the influence and origins from Central and Northern Europe. Following the *Machtergreifung*, this ideological viewpoint would thrive, giving rise to the ideological myth of the Nordic Mediterranean (Chapoutot 2016: 51–97).

The perception of the book about Trebenište in the National Museum in Belgrade was markedly different. Miodrag Grbić, a young curator and prehistorian who had been educated in Prague under Lubor Niederle (1865–1944) and Albín Stocký (1876–1934), strongly reacted to the situation. Alongside director Vladimir Petković, he accused the Bulgarians of disregarding the Treaty of Neuilly-sur-Seine (article 126). They demanded that the finds be handed over to the National Museum in Belgrade. Grbić publicly voiced this request by delivering a lecture on Trebenište and

publishing an op-ed in the newspaper *Politika*. In his article, he stated, “Mr. Filow’s book is an excellent archaeological study, but Bulgarian scholars have erred by neglecting the regulations of the Treaty of Neuilly-sur-Seine. These regulations demand scientific objectivity and prohibit the appropriation of other people’s archaeological treasures, which rightfully belong in one of our museums” (*Политика* 19.1.1928). However, the note in protest addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Yugoslav Embassy in Sofia was not met with support. A few years later, when a new display was implemented in the Museum of Prince Paul, Grbić repeatedly requested the return of the finds from Sofia. In response, the museum’s new director, Milan Kašanin, wrote that they should not insist on the Bulgarian government returning the Trebenište finds, considering the fortunate circumstance in which they were discovered by the Bulgarians themselves.<sup>3</sup>

Parallel to Grbić’s claims for the return of the Trebenište finds from Bulgaria, the National Museum in Belgrade was engaged in preparations for excavations in the vicinity of Ohrid (Bandović 2019: 89). However, the Museum was not the sole stakeholder interested in excavations in Trebenište. Nikola Vulić (1872–1945), educated as a historian but driven by a passion for archaeology, was also preparing to participate in the archaeological race in Macedonia. Vulić’s involvement in the Trebenište excavations also highlighted the significant disputes over various responsibilities that existed between the Serbian Royal Academy and the National Museum in Belgrade (Bandović 2019: 90–91). During the 1920s, Vulić dedicated his summers to tirelessly searching for archaeological sites in northern Macedonia. Alongside Milovan Kokić (1885–1950), who served as the museum trustee and later became the curator of the Museum of Southern Serbia, Vulić embarked on a comprehensive tour of Macedonia, tirelessly searching for epigraphic finds and ancient sites (Вулић 1928). Simultaneously, Vulić diligently popularised archaeology by delivering public lectures and writing articles for popular magazines and newspapers (Љубомировић 2013: 193–209). Unlike Grbić and Petković, Vulić was among the intellectuals who advocated the idea of fostering closer ties between

<sup>2</sup> While Odysseus was “undoubtedly the true Illyrian, one should not imagine the character of the ancient Greeks based on his appearance” according to Schuchhardt’s opinion “The true Greeks, after the northern invasions, the so-called “Germano-Greeks,” are Achilles, Ajax and Diomedes, who always attack from the front, never cease the fight until they have achieved victory, and become highly unforgiving when they feel their rights have been infringed upon.” (Schuchhardt 1934b: LIII). Schuchhardt’s words can be seen as reflecting a time when there was an invitation for the mobilisation of “Germano-Greeks” and can be seen as an example of the appropriation of classical heritage through a “Nordic perspective”.

<sup>3</sup> ANM, br. 716, 20.11.1935.



Yugoslavia and Bulgaria (Љубомировић 2013: 41; Новак 1958: LXVI– LXVII).<sup>4</sup> Prior to the start of World War II, Vulić strongly opposed the Macedonian emancipatory movement, refusing to acknowledge the existence of Macedonia and the Macedonians. He openly engaged in debates with members of the movement, often referring to them as “ignorant and dreamers” (Katardžiev 1981: 39; Време 16.11.1939; see Новак 1958: XXX).

During that period, another participant emerged on the scene who would later become a prominent figure in the archaeological race in northern Macedonia. This was Johann Albrecht von Reiswitz (1899-1962), a baron and autodidact (Fig. 2) who began to crystallise his romantic view of the Balkans during his travels around Yugoslavia during the 1920s. In his academic pursuits, Reiswitz explored various areas of interest, eventually obtaining a doctorate with a dissertation focused on Schopenhauer (Roth 2020: 31–32). From 1924, Reiswitz was a regular visitor to Yugoslavia, nurturing a correspondence with a circle of scholars dealing with the history, geography or folklore of Southeast Europe – such as Hermann Wendel (1884-1936) or Gerhard Gesemann (1888-1948). He was well acquainted with the work of Jovan Cvijić (1865-1927), whose work he wanted to translate and publish in Germany (Roth 2020: 43–49). Between 1926 and 1928, Reiswitz became interested in various historical aspects of Serbian-German relations, the history of *Bogomil* as well as the Illyrian question. Despite displaying contempt and employing a set of stereotypes towards Bulgarians, he regarded Filow’s book as a “Great book on Ohrid Lake” (*das große Buch über den Ohrid See*). In accordance with his interests, Ohrid became his passion (Roth 2020, 69). In the following years, Reiswitz became acquainted with Schuchhardt’s work, accepting ideas about the northern origin of the Illyrians and their importance for the process of the “Indo-Germanisation” of the Balkan Peninsula (Roth 2020: 67-68). He developed a deep admiration for Schuchhardt’s

work, as indicated by the fact that he referred to him as “Papa Schuchhardt” in private correspondence, suggesting his high regard for Schuchhardt’s significance and authority (Bandović 2019: 90).



Fig.2. Johan Albrecht von Reiswitz, passport 1925

Reiswitz visited Ohrid in 1928 and 1929, where by visiting the remnants of the past in the vicinity of Ohrid he prepared the terrain. In addition to the assistance of local professor Lazar Jovančić (1893-1977), who brought his attention to the Gradište site, which Reiswitz believed to be the remains of an “archaic settlement with the remains of Cyclops ramparts”, Reiswitz also conducted a thorough study of Filow’s book (Roth 2020: 69, 74-75).<sup>5</sup> Based on the notes he gathered, Reiswitz also made use of the book “On the Shores of Lake Ohrid” by Branislav Nušić (1864-1938) as a guide

<sup>4</sup> In the context of Trebeništa Vulić, after the discovery of grave VIII near Gorenci, thought that: “The Bulgarian government will likely not pose any obstacles and will return them to the Belgrade Museum. However, even if the Bulgarian government does not return these objects, our museum will still have a significantly larger collection of this kind, even after considering what they have excavated here” (Politika 18.7.1930).

<sup>5</sup> Mündlicher Bericht an die Adresse des Herrn Professor Dr.VI.Petković gelegentlich des Archäologenkongresses in Berlin, April 1929, ANM, The legacy of Johann Albrecht von Reiswitz



book (Нушић 1894).<sup>6</sup> As he later expressed in a letter, he had the intention of conducting a thorough investigation of the “dark history of Ohrid” using a shovel (Roth 2020: 60). In addition to his field activities, Reiszvitz concurrently expanded his circle of acquaintances and quickly established himself as a liaison between the National Museum and the German Archaeological Institute, whose director at the time was Gerhart Rodenwaldt (1886-1945). In that context, thanks to Herman Wendel, Reiszvitz made contact with Vladimir Petković (Roth 2020: 73).<sup>7</sup> Coincidentally, during the same period, Petković recognised the value of involving the German Archaeological Institute in the research project in Macedonia. Having such a strong ally in local disputes with the Serbian Royal Academy and broader Balkan disagreements with Bulgaria was an opportunity that Petković did not want to miss (Bandović 2019: 90-91). Simultaneously, the German Archaeological Institute (DAI) clearly recognised the interest and potential for mutual cooperation. Led by Rodenwaldt in the 1920s, the DAI aimed to expand its sphere of influence and broaden the scope of its archaeological excavations. In this context, archaeologists saw themselves as cultural ambassadors of Germany and as reconnaissance men, national *Kulturagenten* in service of *Kulturpolitik* (Marchand 1996: 279). Another crucial factor during that time was the enduring rivalry among the great powers, along with the involvement of British archaeologists and financiers in Miloje Vasić’s (Miloje Vasić, 1869-1956) excavations in Vinča (*see* Palavestra 2020: 64-79). This presence further intensified the pressure on German archaeologists to secure a concession for excavations near Ohrid (Roth 2020: 90; compare Marchand 1996: 279). Around the same time, the American expedition to Europe, led by Vladimir Fewkes (1901-1941), initiated negotiations with the National Museum in Belgrade to commence excavations at Starčevo, a Neolithic site that held the potential to shed light on significant questions regarding European prehistory (Bandović 2019:

96-106). This convergence of archaeological endeavours created a sort of gathering at the crossroads, as archaeologists perceived the position of the Balkans and Yugoslavia at that moment.

### Excavations at Gradište and the Echoes of the Spade

Although the contract between the National Museum and DAI was signed in September 1929, the German archaeological expedition had to wait for two more years before the excavations could begin. As per the contract, which was approved by Božidar Maksimović (1886-1969), the former Minister of Education in the Yugoslav government, the National Museum retained ownership of the archaeological finds, while the right to publish belonged to DAI. Additionally, an agreement was made with the museum in Belgrade to provide “duplicates” of the finds to the museum in Berlin. The contract also involved the employment of Yugoslav workers for the archaeological excavation.<sup>8</sup>

In June 1930, Nikola Vulić embarked on his quest for the “capital” in the “Valley of the Kings” (Vreme 22.6.1930). The reference to the “Valley of the Kings”, whether in a journalistic or Vulić’s context, indicates a profound and romantic appreciation for Howard Carter’s momentous discovery of Tutankhamun’s tomb in 1922.<sup>9</sup> For Vulić, who delivered a public lecture about Tutankhamun’s tomb “before all of Belgrade,” Carter’s discovery was akin to “a tale from One Thousand and One Nights... a fairy world... none of the archaeological explorations was as romantic as that (Правда 7.2.1927). Three years later, in the village of Gorenci, Vulić discovered another “princely grave” (VIII), and the sensation, reminiscent of Carter’s discoveries, reached London in December of the same year (Illustrated London News 27.12.1930).

<sup>6</sup> Zur Geschichte des Ohrida-See-Gebietes, undated, ANM, The legacy of Johann Albrecht von Reiszvitz. Lazar Jovančić wrote one of the first popular science books about the origin of humans, *Traces of the First People* (Јованчић 1933).

<sup>7</sup> Wendel was a historian, travel writer and politician. His travelogues about the Balkans were of a significantly different sensibility than those of his contemporaries and without stereotypical images of the Balkans (Abramović 2013).

<sup>8</sup> ANM, br. 658, 5.10.1929, Document of the Ministry of Education PBr. 21360, 30.8.1929 and draft contract on excavation of Gradište near Ohrid.

<sup>9</sup> For example, Midorag Grbić writes in his autobiography “Lights under the Ground”: “During my studies, the marvellous archaeological discovery of Tutankhamun’s tomb in Egypt echoed throughout the world.” (Грбић 1956)

Vulić and Milovan Kokić<sup>10</sup> discovered the grave together after conducting brief excavations in the same area where Bulgarian soldiers and Škorpil had previously dug in 1918. It was Budimir Buda Borislavljević, a former Župan (administrative head of a district) of the Bitol district, a lawyer, and one of the museum trustees, who recognised the burial site and informed Vulić (Krstić 2018: 21). At first, Vulić interpreted the identity of the deceased in line with Filow, considering them soldiers who had fallen in battle. The question of the ethnicity of the warriors remained open, but Vulić doubted the idea of Greek mercenaries fighting for the local tribes (Vulić 1930: 299).

As historian Andreas Roth has already pointed out, immediately after Vulić's discovery, Gerhart Rodenwaldt gave an interview to Belgrade Politika (2020: 101-102). In the interview, Rodenwaldt acknowledged that they (DAI) "received the news about the famous Trebenište discovery of our colleague Vulić with great joy, and we cordially congratulate him on his great success." During the interview, Rodenwaldt emphasised their intention to "clarify very useful historical facts" and stated that they did not expect to discover splendid finds similar to those at Trebenište. However, it is possible to interpret the matter differently. It is highly likely that archaeologists, including Vulić, actually anticipated finding the richest artifacts within the settlement, contrary to Rodenwaldt's claims. As previously mentioned, since Filow's publication of the findings, Trebenište had been compared to Heinrich Schliemann's discoveries in Mycenae. It can be assumed that archaeologists expected to find the richest artifacts *intra muros*, just like in Grave Circle A in Mycenae (Bandović 2019: 89).

Setting aside this hypothesis, it is crucial to note that neither the DAI, the museum, nor Reiszvitz were pleased with Vulić's success. Reiszvitz, for instance, wrote in his notes that Vulić "had taken over the supremacy of Ohrid". Concerns also arose due to Vulić's intention to search for the settlement of the princess buried in the necropolis. There were anxieties that this pursuit might endanger the

concession (see Roth 2020: 102). Nevertheless, Reiszvitz still held out hope that the excavation of Gradište would contribute to a "true understanding of the Trebenište findings." (Bandović 2020: 90). Great interest in the excavations by German and Yugoslav archaeologists is confirmed by a letter from Gerhard Bersu (1889-1964), the second director of the DAI, addressed to the future head of excavations Wilhelm Unverzagt (1892-1971): "About Lake Ohrid, I will provide you with a verbal report. I have heard very interesting things from Abramić and Saria."<sup>11</sup>

Unverzagt was chosen as the director of the excavations at Gradište due to his extensive experience as a field researcher. He had succeeded Schuhhardt as the Director of the Prehistoric Department at the Museum für Völkerkunde and had a long-standing collaboration with him. Unverzagt became a full member of the DAI in 1927. Together with Schuhhardt, he co-founded the Association for Research into Pre- and protohistoric Fortifications in Northern and Eastern Germany (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft für die Erforschung der nord- und ostdeutschen vor- und frühgeschichtlichen Wall- und Wehranlagen*). This association aimed to conduct interdisciplinary research on the settlements and boundaries of Slavic and Germanic tribes based on the ethnic interpretation of archaeological findings. It is important to note that this organisation had a strong ideological basis and focused on Eastern research (*Ostforschung*) (Saalman 2017: 850-853; Fehr 2004: 203, 206-207). Unverzagt considered the excavations at Ohrid to be of significant importance for studying the relationships between the "Greek-Aegean world" and the "Illyrian-Thracian hinterland". In Christine Kott's recent work on "Kunstschutz im Zeichen des totalen Krieges", she reveals the content of a letter sent by Unverzagt to the Emergency Association of German Science (*Notgemeinschaft der Deutschen Wissenschaft*). In this letter, Unverzagt emphasised the importance of cooperation between Yugoslav and German science, particularly in light of the potential risk if American aid to Yugoslav archaeology were to precede German participation (Kott 2017: 250-251). He certainly alluded to the American expedition

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<sup>10</sup> Svetozar Radojčić (1909-1978), under the initials S. R., published a short note in *Starinar* after Kokić's death. Radojčić refers to him as the "right hand of Professor Vulić" and states that this teacher from Prilep had the most credit, among others, for the large lapidary of the museum in Skopje (Радочић 1951, 356)

<sup>11</sup> Bersu to Unverzagt, 10.09.30, Archiv RGK, Akte 1244. Bersu mentioned Mihovil Abramić (1844-1962) and Baludin Saria (1893-1974).

to Central Europe led by Vladimir Fewkes (1901-1941). Competition was set as an important motivation for the whole story but also as a convenient way to obtain funds for excavations. Unverzagt was well known as a person who did not question how the funds for excavation were obtained, offering in return a “völkisch” agenda and nationalist narratives (Saalman 2017: 852).

The German archaeological expedition finally set out for Yugoslavia in the spring of 1931. In addition to Reiszvitz and Unverzagt, the German team also included Josef Franz Keller (1902–1982), while Miodrag Grbić represented the National Museum in the field. Interestingly, before the start of the excavation, Reiszvitz sent a letter/travel guide to Unverzagt, suggesting where he should stay in Belgrade, Skopje, and Ohrid. He also rec-

and Unverzagt wearing spring coats and hats. According to the report, their expectations were that “under the ruins of Gradište they would find a city where the dead from the necropolis near Trebenište had their homes and from where they ruled the valley” (Politika, April 15, 1931). Ten days later, Politika announced that the German expedition had discovered three prehistoric cities, and excavations at Gradište (St. Erasmus) were scheduled to begin in September of the same year (Politika, April 25, 1931). The political potential and propaganda value of the Ohrid excavations, as well as the desire to please the Yugoslav press, were evident in Unverzagt’s statement: “After the Roman epoch that maintained order and peace in Macedonia for centuries, the Yugoslav epoch is coming, which puts an end to the unfortunate



Fig.3. German archaeological expedition at Gradište, May 1930.  
1. Johan Albrecht von Reiszvitz 2. Wilhelm Unverzagt 3. Georg Caro  
4. Franz Josef Keller 5. Miodrag Grbić (after Kott 2017)

ommended taverns (kafanas) to him and, based on his rich experience, wrote: “Anyone who has visited Belgrade and Yugoslavia and has not dined in Tri Šešira has not truly experienced Yugoslavia.”<sup>12</sup>

On April 15, 1931, the newspaper Politika reported on the arrival of the German expedition delegates. A photo was taken at the train station in Belgrade, capturing Reiszvitz, Grbić,

setbacks to which Southern Serbia has been exposed for centuries” (Politika, May 6, 1931). In addition to field surveys, the archaeologists also undertook excavations at three archaeological sites, indicating settlements from different periods, ranging from the Neolithic to the Roman period. These sites were Trebeniško Kale, Lakočeri, and Gradište, with Gradište showing the greatest potential (Politika 6.5.1931).

Based on the information provided, it appears that Unverzagt had doubts about the interpreta-

<sup>12</sup> Reiszvitz to Unverzagt, without a date, ANM, Legacy of Johann Albrecht von Reiszvitz

tion of the findings at the excavation site. In a letter to Bersu, he expressed uncertainty and decided to break the contract by taking pottery samples to Berlin for further analysis. Unverzagt assumed that the pottery might have a Hellenistic provenance, and he believed that the Serbs were not well versed in this area of study (Roth 2020: 105-106).<sup>13</sup>

But how did the representative of the National Museum, Miodrag Grbić, cope with the German expedition? Indirectly, we learn from a letter that Vladimir Petković sent to Grbić from Stobi, where he led the excavations. Grbić was initially unsure of his position, but he had the impression that the Germans were becoming more receptive. Petković expressed his confidence in Grbić's ability to keep the Germans satisfied, stating, "I had no doubt that you would do everything to keep the Germans, who were with you in company, satisfied." Petković believed that Grbić may have misunderstood some gossip or rumours that led to initial distrust from the Germans. He reassured Grbić that it was known for Germans to be reserved and distant at the beginning of acquaintances, but he was glad to hear that Grbić was able to soften their attitude.<sup>14</sup> Grbić had already established contacts that would continue for the next decade and, according to the same letter, he had plans to travel abroad. While at Gradište, Grbić had the opportunity to meet Georg Karo (1872-1963), who was en route to Athens (Fig. 3).<sup>15</sup> This meeting proved beneficial as it eventually helped Grbić secure a DAI scholarship to Athens in 1934 (Bandović 2019, 118–121). Initially, Grbić had a promising relationship with Unverzagt, and as a memento of their first joint trip to Ohrid, Unverzagt sent him the book "Archaeological Discoveries in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century" (Archäologische Entdeckungen im XX Jahrhundert, Friedrich von Oppeln-Bronikowski).<sup>16</sup>

Although the archaeologists had anticipated that full-scale excavations would proceed from September 1931, they had to wait for an entire year. It is interesting to note that during this interim period, Grbić took proactive measures to protect

all potential DAI sites. He did so by advocating police supervision and coordinating with the municipal authorities in Ohrid (Bandović 2019: 93).

German archaeologists returned to Yugoslavia in the spring of 1932. Reiszvitz, having obtained a *Laissez Passer* (a diplomatic travel document) from the Yugoslav embassy, travelled to Yugoslavia for the purpose of "scientific research in the Kingdom."<sup>17</sup> Predrag Milojević (1901-1999), a journalist of *Politika* and a friend of Reiszvitz, informed readers about the return of the German delegation to Yugoslavia.<sup>18</sup> Milojević also conveyed several important ideas of Unverzagt that would appear as recurring motifs in the narratives about the excavations at Gradište. Besides emphasising the significance of the Yugoslav region for understanding key aspects of European prehistory, Unverzagt stated, "We in Germany are particularly interested in the history of the Illyrians, as their influence has been traced as far as the Lusatian area in Germany" (*Politika* 1.4.1932). It was Schuchhardt's postulate that Reiszvitz would later explain in the article "On the Trail of the Illyrians" (*Auf den Spuren der Illyrer*) for *Deutschen Allgemeinen Zeitung (DAZ)*, connecting the Illyrians from south-eastern Germany, Pomerania, and Lausitz with the "Balkan" Illyrians: "...before their migration to the south, which may have occurred around the turn of the second to the first millennium BC, Illyrians settled in eastern and south-eastern Germany, in Pomerania and Lusatia. With 'Gradište' near St. Erasmus, we seem to have one, if not the southeasternmost, point where Illyrian tribes built their fortresses." (*Deutschen Allgemeinen Zeitung* 18.08.1932).

However, the results of the research in 1932 were much more modest than the expectations of German archaeologists. They discovered a later fortification from the Hellenistic period (Fig. 4) that could not be connected in any way with the Trebenište necropolis or the "northern" Illyrians. Nevertheless, for the public (Fig. 5), archaeologists appeared satisfied with the excavations and quickly provided an answer: "that Gradište played an extraordinarily large, and perhaps crucial, role in the struggle between Macedonia and Rome"

<sup>13</sup> Unverzagt to Bersu, Archiv RGK, Akte 1244, 28.04.31

<sup>14</sup> Petković to Grbić, 14.5.1931, SASA Archive in Sremski Karlovci, Miodrag Grbić Fund

<sup>15</sup> Karo to Grbić, 8.5.1931, SASA Archive in Sremski Karlovci, Miodrag Grbić Fund

<sup>16</sup> Unverzagt to Grbić, 9.7.1931, SASA Archive in Sremski Karlovci, Miodrag Grbić Fund g Grbić

<sup>17</sup> *Laissez Passer*, 17.3.1932, ANM, Legacy of Johann Albrecht von Reiszvitz

<sup>18</sup> Milojević to Reiszvitz, 2.4.1932, ANM, Legacy of Johann Albrecht von Reiszvitz



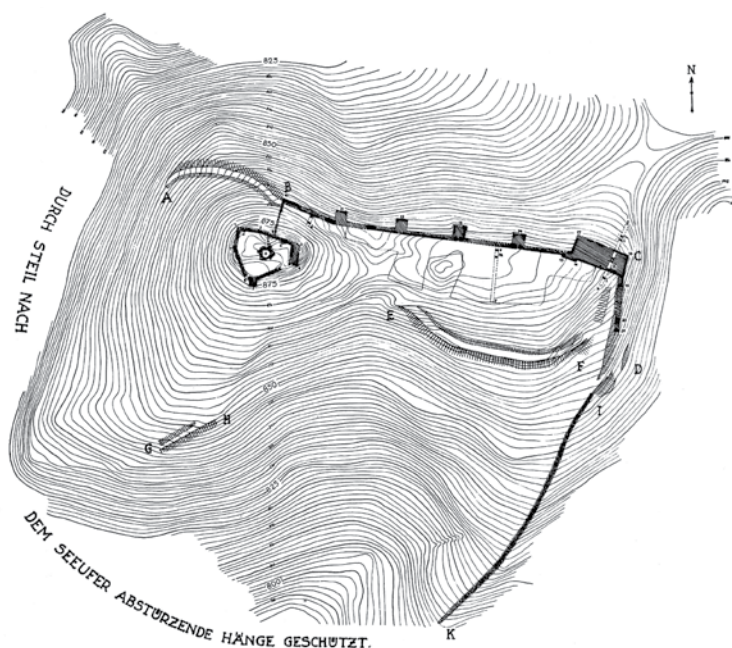


Fig. 4. Plan of Gradište (after Unverzagt 1953)

(Politika, May 5, 1932; Pravda, May 15, 1932). It was evident that war and conflict were a narrative that Unverzagt liked to exploit. As Susan Grunwald writes about the Zantoch excavations that Unverzagt started the same year: “He successfully applied for funding for the project with the argument of the everlasting struggle to control Zantoch.” (Grunwald 2019: 87).

The visit of the American expedition to the German excavations in Ohrid is indicative and speaks very clearly of the rivalry that existed between the foreign expeditions. The director of the expedition, Vladimir Fewkes and Robert Ehrlich (1908-1992), together with Grbić, began excavating Starčevo in 1931. The following year they were joined by Hetty Goldman (1881-1972), as an experienced connoisseur of Aegean prehistory. Their intention was to establish a missing link between Central and South-eastern Europe in the Neolithic period and to establish a relative chronology (Bandović 2019: 97–98). The visit of the American expedition to the German excavations took place in May 1932. Some comments that Fewkes wrote about the visit in the logbook speak of an unpleasant atmosphere: “Excellent fish dinner in unpleasant German surroundings.” However, the American expedition also had its plans in Ohrid, as Fewkes stated, “We know from the work of Vulić

and the German Expedition that this is a promising region for us” (Roth 2020: 107-108). While Fewkes had a good opinion of the German excavation methodology, he had a negative view of the Bulgarian and Vulić excavations. He wrote, “What a lousy job... Awful methods visible” (Roth 2020, 108). Caught in the crossfire, Grbić, as a member of both expeditions, faced objections from both sides. For example, Unverzagt furiously accused him of being to blame for all the events, stating, “You are to blame for all of these occurrences, as you called the Americans to Ohrid and neglected our excavation from the moment the Americans appeared in Ohrid.” On the other hand, Unverzagt sought guarantees that the Ohrid area would remain reserved for the German expedition: “Since

it is undoubtedly in both of our interests, for the sake of our scientific community and further development of good relations, to settle this unpleasant matter, I kindly request that we put an end to all the discord. Engaging in further disputes would only create more inconvenience. I have never had any doubts about the sincerity of your statement, made on behalf of Director Petković, that the surroundings of Ohrid will remain reserved for us”.<sup>19</sup>

Unverzagt’s reaction to Vulić’s new discoveries in July 1932 (see Krstić 2018, 24; Vulić 1933) is particularly interesting. He could not hide his surprise when he learned about the discovery from the newspaper rather than from Grbić or Vulić themselves. Furthermore, he expressed disappointment that the Belgrade newspapers did not provide any coverage of the German excavations. Unverzagt believed that such an approach was not conducive to raising funds for future excavations in Ohrid.<sup>20</sup>

What contributed to Unverzagt changing his tone and mood in the following months was the shipment of six boxes of pottery to the Staatlichen Museen für Völkerkunde in Berlin. This fulfilled his primary idea, which he had conceived after

<sup>19</sup> Unverzagt to Grbić, 15.6.1932, SASA Archive in Sremski Karlovci, Miodrag Grbić Fund

<sup>20</sup> Unverzagt to Grbić, 13.8.1932, SASA Archive in Sremski Karlovci, Miodrag Grbić Fund



the first campaign in Gradište. Unverzagt desired to have Robert Zahn (1870-1945), whom he considered the best expert in the field, examine and process the ceramics from “Gradište”.<sup>21</sup> Based on the decision of curators and the director of the National Museum, Miodrag Grbić, Jozo Petrović, and Vladimir Petković, it was concluded that the ceramics from Gradište had “no material or scientific value.” As a result, the Museum sent six boxes of pottery fragments to Berlin, under the condition that they would be returned after processing. However, over time, this transaction was forgotten, and the National Museum in Belgrade never requested the findings again (Bandović 2019: 94-95).

In 1933, although the excavations did not continue, Reiswitz still had Gradište on his mind. While reading *Politika*, Reiswitz wrote to Unverzagt mentioning that he observed “a lot of funny things politically,” but he did not come across any new information regarding “Vulić’s actions.” However, he expressed his unease, stating that his “nerve vagus” tormented him “with the idea that Vulić might be excavating beneath their Gradište or that something significant might be happening there. Perhaps Grbić climbs up to Trebenište with Miss Goldman”<sup>22</sup>. In the same year, Vulić’s text about his discoveries from 1932 was published, where he made reference to the German excavations and expressed a certain level of satisfaction. He wrote: “This year, some German archaeologists excavated an ancient city on a hill near Trebenište. They uncovered impressive walls, the remnants of a grand fortress. However, it is certain that the remains of the city whose inhabitants were buried in the necropolis near Trebenište should not be attributed to these ruins” (Вулић 1933: 29).

Unsurprisingly, in 1934, Vulić received a letter from Carl Schuchhardt sending him his Illyrian lecture (*Illyrier-Vortrag*)<sup>23</sup> and acknowledging that Vulić’s Trebenište graves provided the first explanation of the relationship between Mycenae and Illyria. Among other things, Schuchhardt thanks Vulić for the report about Trebenište and acknowl-

edges that the opinion he expressed in the lecture on the relationship between Illyria and Mycenae has now become a widely accepted view: “When E. Pernice (Greifswald) reviewed Filow’s publication, he explained that Filow’s belief in ancient Greek influence on Lake Ohrid must be reversed: the custom of producing gold masks, breastplates, and gloves for bodies found in Mycenaean graves originated from northern regions and continued to be practiced at Lake Ohrid by noble families until the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. Wilamowitz, in his work “*Der Glaube der Hellenen*,” incorporated this perspective and attempted to explore the Illyrians’ belief in the gods during the final four weeks of his life.”<sup>24</sup>

For now, setting aside Vulić’s opinion about Schuchhardt’s letter and the interpretation of the discovery, new archaeological finds from Macedonia sparked the imagination and curiosity of German explorers. However, subsequent attempts to continue the excavations of Gradište were unsuccessful. Grbić, Unverzagt, and Reiswitz maintained their correspondence, hoping for the continuation of archaeological work. The “great political upheaval,” as Reiswitz referred to the rise of Hitler to power in a positive letter (Bandović 2019: 118), also had an impact on their plans for the future. That same year, the museum commissioner Buda Borisavljević inquired why there were no Germans in Macedonia. In a letter to Grbić, he stated, “No Germans this year. Hitler must have interfered with their plans and spent the loan on cannons, machine guns, rifles, and poisonous gases because they are more contemporary goods than ‘old pots’ and statues. Such is the age”.<sup>25</sup>

Despite various attempts and plans to resume the excavations until 1940, they were not realised due to tense political circumstances. However, Unverzagt remained determined to continue excavating in Ohrid, even after Bulgaria annexed Macedonia in 1941. A map, hand-drawn by Unverzagt, depicting the division of the Ohrid area between Italy and Bulgaria, reveals his unscrupulousness (Koth 2017: 253, fig. 4). During

<sup>21</sup> Unverzagt to Grbić, 13. 8.1932, SASA Archive in Sremski Karlovci, Miodrag Grbić Fund

<sup>22</sup> Reiswitz to Unverzagt, concept, 6.8.1933, ANM, Legacy of Johann Albrecht von Reiswitz

<sup>23</sup> Schuchhardt is addressing his lecture *Die frühesten Herren von Ostdeutschland* (Schuchhardt 1934b)

<sup>24</sup> SASA Archive, 10331/517, Schuchhardt to Vulić, 22.5.1934. Most cordially, I give my gratitude to Mario Lončarić, who managed to transcribe the letter written in *Kurrent*. Schuchhardt mentioned Erich Pernice and Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff in his letter.

<sup>25</sup> Borisavljević to Grbić, 20.10.1933, SASA Archive in Sremski Karlovci, Miodrag Grbić Fund.

the war, Reiszvitz, serving as a military adviser (*Kriegsverwaltungsrat*) at the military administrative headquarters in Belgrade, also expressed his interest in excavating Ohrid (*unserem alten Grabungsgebiet Makedoniens in Ohrid*), aiming to expand his area of expertise (Bandović 2019: 149).

As the war approached, Nikola Vulić frequently addressed the issue of Illyrians. He criticised Schuchhardt on multiple occasions, sometimes directly and sometimes indirectly without mentioning his name. In the journal “Srpski književni glasnik” (Serbian Literary Herald), he sarcastically commented that the ideas about the Illyrians “are in great fashion among modern scholars (...) Today, according to these scientists, almost everything can be attributed to the Illyrians”. Mocking the “Illyrian hypotheses” and highlighting the exaggerated importance attributed to the Illyrians, Vulić further remarked, “Undoubtedly, all these hypotheses are very interesting, but they remain mere speculations in the absence of concrete evidence. Archaeologists, in their eagerness to fill gaps, often come up with witty hypotheses that can be impressive. With the endorsement of esteemed scholars, such hypotheses are readily embraced and quickly disseminated” (Vulić 1938, 378). However, in the *Jugoslovenski istorijski časopis* (Yugoslav Historical Journal), Vulić engaged in an open argument with Schuchhardt. In his review of several of Schuchhardt’s works, Vulić boldly stated that “there is a lot of fantasy” (Vulić 1939a: 248). Commenting on Schuchhardt’s idea about Odysseus being Illyrian, Vulić expressed his perspective by saying: “Odysseus is, according to Schuchhardt, “Iliros,” and the story of the Odysseus is of Illyrian origin. This story shares many similarities with Nordic tales, and the Illyrians are said to have come from the northern regions to the later Illyrian lands, which include the Ionian Islands. Illyrian influence even reached Crete and even Malta. The booklet is full of spirit and wit, but it is difficult to accept the results that are obtained in it.” (Vulić 1939b: 300).

Vulić’s critique of Schuchhardt was driven by his anti-Nazi attitude, which he strongly held. While it raises the question of how effective irony is in combating mythomania, it is clear that Vulić’s anti-Nazi views were recognised by some German archaeologists even before the outbreak of World War II (Gašić 2005: 190; Bandović 2019:

142). On the other hand, Schuchhardt, as the president of the Society for Anthropology, Ethnology, and Prehistory (*Gesellschaft für Anthropologie, Ethnologie und Urgeschichte*), was involved in the expulsion of anthropologist Franz Boas from the society in 1938. Boas was expelled on the grounds that he was Jewish and considered an enemy of Germany (Marshall 2013).

## Epilogue and Conclusion

During World War II, the roles and affiliations of the individuals involved underwent significant changes. Reiszvitz assumed the position of a major at the military-administrative headquarters, where he was entrusted with the task of safeguarding cultural and artistic monuments (*Kunst und Denkmalschutz*) in occupied Belgrade. Meanwhile, Grbić served as Reiszvitz’s trusted assistant within the Ministry of Education, responsible for supervising museums under the collaborationist government led by Milan Nedić. The trio of Reiszvitz, Grbić, and Unverzagt reunited, this time working together at the Kalemegdan excavation as associates of the Ahnenerbe organisation, which was headed by Himmler (Bandović 2019: 144-169). During this time, Reiszvitz still held on to his fascination with the idea of “real little Illyrians” and believed he could recognise them in the blue eyes of a boy from Dalmatia whom he encountered on Balkanska Street (Roth 2020: 70). Meanwhile, amidst the changing circumstances, Nikola Vulić delivered one of the last lectures of his life. On July 14<sup>th</sup>, 1943, he presented a lecture titled “Dispersal of Illyrians” at a meeting of the Academy of Philosophical Sciences. The focus of his lecture was to challenge and criticise Schuchhardt’s interpretations regarding the role of Illyrians in Central Europe and the Balkans. Vulić dedicated a significant portion of his lecture to arguing against the idea that linguistic evidence for Illyrians could be found in geographical place names (see Љубомировић 2013: 163-165). He also questioned the significance of etymological parallels, suggesting that they did not hold much value. Furthermore, Vulić discussed the archaeological connections between Mycenae and Trebenište. He argued against the conclusion that the presence of similar customs, such as the use of

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Fig. 5. Headlines about Trebenište and Gradište in the Yugoslav newspapers (Politika, Vreme, Pravda etc)

masks in funerary practices, implied a direct link between the Illyrians and Mycenae. Vulić pointed out that covering the faces of the deceased with masks was not exclusive to the Illyrians and could be found in other cultures as well. He emphasised that Mycenae and Trebenište could be independent of each other and inhabited by different peoples. Vulić cautioned against the assumption of migrations or direct influences between these distant regions, highlighting the significant geographical distance between them.<sup>26</sup>

Andreas Roth states that Reiswitz assisted in the rescue of the 69-year-old professor Vulić from the Banjica concentration camp, where he had been imprisoned along with other intellectuals after his arrest on the night of November 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup>, 1941. That may be true. Roth also mentions that when Professor Vulić received an invitation to see Unverzagt's excavation works on Kalemegdan, he expressed his regrets with the words: "I am really sorry that I cannot see Mr. Unverzagt's brilliant excavation. But you will certainly come to me with no hesitation to tell me about your successes" (Roth 2020: 235). And that may be true. Given the context that Reiswitz and Unverzagt, who were protégés of

Schuchhardt, were leading the excavations at Kalemegdan, it can be inferred that Vulić, being aware of this, deliberately chose a form of silent resistance. Schuchhardt's "Illyrians" came, and the only way to express his intolerance of them was by doing what he knew best - giving a lecture.

Finally, let's take another look at the excavations of Gradište. Interestingly, when publishing the results of the excavations after WWII in the journal *Germania*, Unverzagt described in detail the remains of architecture but provided misleading information about the movable finds: "Solving the question of the time of the fortress foundation turned out to be extremely difficult, as there was no cultural layer in the entire area, and no remains of pottery or metal finds were found." (Unverzagt 1954: 21). At the same time, Unverzagt did

not abandon the idea that Gradište could be somehow connected to Gorenci. He proclaimed it a "refuge" (*Zuflucht*) for the people buried in Gorenci, while acknowledging that a permanent settlement should be sought elsewhere. (Unverzagt 1954: 21).

As we have observed, the excavations of Gradište in 1931 and 1932 cannot be fully understood without considering the impact of the excavations at Trebenište. Both sites hold significant importance in regional and European archaeology. The history of their research is characterised by various forms of appropriation, which involved romanticising and nationalising the past, projecting contemporary patterns and prejudices onto historical narratives, and exploiting the past for contemporary political purposes. The competition and rivalry that existed among different parties involved (such as the German Archaeological Institute, the museum, Vulić and the Serbian Royal Academy, and the American Expedition) further highlight the interconnectedness of political, personal, and scientific agendas during that time. For German scholars, the Illyrians represented a crucial link between Central Europe and the Mediterranean, seen as a wandering people whose legacy they sought to incorporate into the imperialist myth of the Indo-Germans. For former Yugoslav archaeology,

<sup>26</sup> SASA Archive, *Dispersal of Illyrians*, 13577

and especially the National Museum, of which Miodrag Grbić was the sole representative in the expedition, it was one of the small steps towards the international archaeological scene. Although Grbić's role in the expedition was relatively minor in this power asymmetry, the connections he established at that time would have echoes in the future. There is no doubt that migrationism would also leave a lasting impact on Grbić's understanding of prehistoric archaeology (Bandović 2019: 134). Determining the impact of this imperialistic myth on post-war Yugoslav archaeological thought is a complex task. Challenging the prevailing notions of Illyrian origins and migrations from Central Europe formed a crucial basis for Yugoslav archaeology. The concept of ethnogenesis, contrasting migrationism, played a significant role in reshaping the perception of the Illyrians now as an indigenous population with ancient Balkan roots (Benac 1964; Stipčević 1989: 17-18; Džino 2014: 17). Yet, this narrative represents only one strand in the multifaceted tale of the Illyrians in the Balkans, with Gradište being just a part of the larger picture.

It is indeed interesting that the story of the search for the Illyrians in the foreign press also had a local, "Balkan sound". For example, describing how Vulić, in 1932, discovered new graves and had to sleep in a tomb out of fear of grave robbers or curious individuals, the British newspaper, *The Sphere*, noted: "Professor Vulitch had many strange adventures during his work. He is probably the only man alive who can claim to have slept in the grave of an ancient Illyrian princess" (*The Sphere*, 12.11. 1932).

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**Bojan Djurić**  
University of Ljubljana  
bojan.djuric@gmail.com

## DIONYSOS IN THE PROVINCE. DIONYSIAN MOTIFS ON A POETOVIAN MONUMENT

**Abstract:** During the era of the Severn dynasty, the worship of Dionysus/ Bacchus/ Liber Pater once again became prominent in Roman society. A belief in the circle of life, rebirth, and the immortality of the soul is visible in figural, non-figural, and motifs combining the two decorating funerary monuments. In ancient Noricum and Pannonia, these motifs as attributes of Dionysus/ Bacchus/ Liber Pater appear in the form of kantharoi, grape vines, panthers and, rarely, the god himself. These motifs appear without distinction on funerary aediculae, stelae, tombstone altars, sarcophagi, and in Poetovio also on typical tombstones – ossuaries. Although it is not possible to read these depictions exclusively in an eschatological sense, the motif of the kantharos with a vine, guarded by two panthers should be seen as a sign of faith and hope in the promises of Dionysian ideology. The transition of these same motifs into early Christian contexts with similar promises confirms their symbolic nature.

**Keywords:** Poetovio, ash chest, Dionysus/Bacchus/Liber Pater, kantharos, grapevine, panther

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I met Petar Popović professionally for the first time in the typically Dionysian landscape of the Dalmatian island of Hvar, in January 1982. We came there on the invitation of a mutual friend,

Branko Kirigin, to conduct a field survey in the Starogradsko polje (figure 1), which holds Greek and Roman remains of the chora of Pharos. In the spring of 1983, we spent a memorable week



Fig. 1. P. Popović, B. Kirigin, B. Djurić, Starigradsko polje, Hvar, January 1982.

among Yugoslav archaeologists on a boat travelling between the Greek colonies of central Dalmatia, an excursion organised by the *Arheo* journal (figure 2). Later, we again collaborated on the island of Vis, excavating the large Hellenistic and Roman cemetery of the colony of Issa – Vlaška njiva. We continued to meet on occasion in different places across Yugoslavia, and regularly during my visits to Belgrade or his to Ljubljana. Our last professional meetings were related to his important excavations at the Kale Krševica site. Throughout our common history, we were linked with the Greeks or their contemporaries, be it in the Mediterranean or deep in the heart of the Balkans. In honour of his anniversary, I therefore wish to dedicate to him a short discussion of Dionysos. More precisely, I shall



Fig. 2. The Arheo excursion of Yugoslav archaeologists in 1983.

discuss the Dionysian motifs carved on one of the stone monuments of Roman Poetovio (modern-day Ptuj), standing as witnesses of the once culturally uniform area of the wider Mediterranean.



Fig. 3. The epitaph for Andrej Praunfalch, ca 1600, church of St George, Ptuj (photo by author).

The analysed monument is a product typical of Poetovio's stonemasonry workshops – an ash chest.<sup>1</sup> It was later reused as a church washbasin (figure 4), transformed in a workshop in Ptuj sometime towards the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> or beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, as indicated by the motific and stylistic features on products of the same provenance (figure 3).<sup>2</sup>

Ash chests are a form of sepulchral monument typical of the cemeteries of Poetovio (Diez 1948; Djurić 2001a; Pochmarski 2014; Pochmarski 2015), but almost completely absent in those of neighbouring towns.<sup>3</sup> Their characteristic feature is the form of the chest, which resembles a small sarcophagus, and the gabled lid with the ridge running perpendicular rather than parallel to the length, as is the case in sarcophagi. This created additional space for carved decoration, usually portraits of the deceased, in the triangular pediment facing the spectator. With a few exceptions, the longer side of the chests is divided into three panels: a usually sunken central one reserved for the inscription and two side ones intended for relief depictions. These could also have adorned the left and right short sides, while the back was left plain. In all these elements, the ash chests are identical to the

<sup>1</sup> Pokrajinski muzej Ptuj – Ormož, inv. no. RL 453.

<sup>2</sup> On the funerary epitaphs built into the walls of the church of Sv. Jurij (St George) in Ptuj, cf. Cevc 1981, 84-218.

<sup>3</sup> With the exception of the Norican town of Iuvavum. Cf. Pochmarski 2018.





Fig. 4. Ash chest transformed into a washbasin (photo by author).



Fig. 5. Long side of the ash chest (photo by author).



Fig. 6. Left short side of the ash chest (photo by author).

chests of the sarcophagi produced in the Pohorje and Gummern quarries (Djurić 2001b; Djurić, Hebert *et al.* 2005). The structure of these chests, already determined in the quarry phase of production, is most frequently created with the help of four modules lengthwise – two for the central and one for each side panel – both for ash chests and

for sarcophagi (Trunkelj 2020; Vomer Gojkovič 2015). The frame of the lateral panels of the longer sides, which is consistently moulded in sarcophagi and only occasionally in ash chests, usually has a simple Norico-Pannonian volute at the top.

The ash chest under discussion is heavily damaged on the front (figure 5). Only its far-left part survives together with a moulded frame and part of a male figure standing on a characteristic pedestal. We may confidently presume a full-figure portrait of a man depicted in the left side panel of a tripartite front side. The man is dressed in a girded tunic, most likely long-sleeved (*tunica manicata*), reaching down to just above his knees. Only the terminal part of the belt, identified as *cingulum militare*, survives and he is holding it with his right hand in a manner known from several depictions of soldiers from the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century (Hoss 2014: 147, cat. nos. 20, 39, 168, 169). He has a long sagum around his shoulders,<sup>4</sup> presumably fastened with a brooch on the right shoulder, though the brooch has not survived. The contours of his heavily damaged head suggest a full beard, such as is most characteristic of the Severan period. All the surviving elements point to a depiction of a military man in ‘camp dress’ (Speidel 1976: 124), dated fairly confidently to the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

The left short side shows a standing figure of a panther/leopard in a plain frame, with the left front paw placed on a drinking vessel made of a goat horn (figure 6).<sup>5</sup> Depicted on the right short side, also in a plain frame, is a centrally positioned two-tiered handleless vessel on a pedestal, out of which grows a vine with two cordons, at least two leaves, two grapes and spiral tendrils (figure 7). Even though without handles, parallels show that the vessel can safely be identified as a kantharos.

The motif of a panther with a raised paw resting on a drinking horn belongs to a fairly common depiction of standing or seated animals on sarcophagus short sides, mainly of griffins, lions or sphinxes.<sup>6</sup> These creatures also frequently occur in

<sup>4</sup> For the tunic, belt and sagum, see Ubl 1969.

<sup>5</sup> For the identification of the horn, see Walde 2005, 110.

<sup>6</sup> In addition to heraldic pairs, individual seated griffins also occur on the funerary aediculae of Noricum; cf. e.g., the griffins on the tomb of the Spectatii in Šempeter v Savinjski dolini: Klemenc, Kolšek, Petru 1972; Kremer 2001, 35-43.



Fig. 7. Right short side of the ash chest (photo by author).



Fig. 8. Pediment fragment of a funerary aedicula, Löffelbach (photo O. Harl).



Fig. 9. Part of an altar, Villach (© Stadtmuseum Villach, photo O. Harl).

heraldic pairs on the longer sides of sarcophagi,<sup>7</sup> while a pair of panthers is only known from the short side of an Attic sarcophagus from Athens.<sup>8</sup>

Pairs of standing panthers with a paw on a drinking horn (or kantharos) are known in Noricum and Pannonia and occur in pediments (figure 8) and epistyles of marble funerary aediculae,<sup>9</sup> as well as

<sup>7</sup> Predominating on the Attic sarcophagi are pairs of griffins with a paw raised against a candelabrum or a vase, or a pair of lions with a paw raised on a kantharos; cf. Papagiani, 2016.

<sup>8</sup> Athens, Teseion, no inv. no., 131, no. 50.

<sup>9</sup> Löffelbach, Lupa 6182; Oswaldgraben, Lupa 11603.



Fig. 10. Pyramidal terminal of a funerary altar, Hörzendorf - Sankt Veit an der Glan (photo O. Harl).

aedicula-type stelae,<sup>10</sup> and, in rare cases, also funerary altars (figure 9).<sup>11</sup> Much more common in the two provinces is the variant of a seated pair of panthers with a front paw on a drinking horn flanking a kantharos with a vine, which is most frequently depicted on the pyramidal terminals of marble funerary altars (figure 10)<sup>12</sup> and on the large relief panels of funerary aediculae (figure 11),<sup>13</sup> and also once on a fragment of a sarcophagus, from Ptuj.<sup>14</sup> Outside Noricum, this motif is known on a pyramidal terminal of a funerary altar from Aquileia.<sup>15</sup> A pair of panthers without a drinking horn has been recorded as a supporting motif to a krater with a vine on the narrow panels of funerary aediculae,<sup>16</sup> but even more so on the short sides of large marble

<sup>10</sup> Carnuntum, Lupa 0144; Tiffen, Lupa 1955; Szombathely, Lupa 3314; Jak, Lupa 3383; Lobor, Filipec 2017, 103, no. 7; Lupa 30068.

<sup>11</sup> Villach/Beljak, Lupa 2143.

<sup>12</sup> Zollfeld/Gospovetsko polje, Lupa 1093; Villach, Lupa 2144 and 2172; Zweikirchen, Lupa 2357; Hörzendorf, Lupa 2400; Maria Rain, Lupa 2549.

<sup>13</sup> Salzburg, Lupa 0316; Lendorf, Lupa 2079; Gurk/Krka, Lupa 2324; Zollfeld/Gospovetsko polje, Lupa 2644 and 2661; Sankt Thomas am Zeiselberg, Lupa 27311.

<sup>14</sup> Pokrajinski muzej Ptuj Ormož, inv. no. RL 1019; Djurić 2001b, fig. 10; Djurić 2020.

<sup>15</sup> Scrinari, 1972, 403; Ortalli, 2005, 260-1; Lupa 14081; probably erroneously dated to the mid-1<sup>st</sup> century.

<sup>16</sup> Seggauberg, Lupa 1278; Sankt Johann bei Herberstein, Lupa 1480; Althofen, Lupa 3229; Ptuj, Tušek 1986, Tab. 4.





Fig. 11. Relief of a funerary aedicula, Zollfeld (photo O. Harl).



Fig. 12. Short side of a sarcophagus from Sremska Mitrovica (© KHM Wien, photo O. Harl).



Fig. 13. Short side of a sarcophagus from Veliki Bastaji near Daruvar (© AM Zagreb, photo I. Krajcar).

sarcophagi<sup>17</sup> that were produced in the workshops of Virunum and Poetovio and exported to different centres across Pannonia (figure 12).

<sup>17</sup> Szombathely, Lupa 3387; Sremska Mitrovica, Lupa 4353; Šid, Lupa 26164; Veliki Bastaji, Lupa 3811.

The motif of a grape vine growing from a vessel, usually a kantharos, depicted on the other short side of the ash chest in question, is a variant of the tree of life motif (James 1966). At least two other variants are known on the Roman monuments of Noricum and Pannonia: one, earlier, with acanthus and the other with ivy. In the course of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, this often purely decorative motif replaced the earlier acanthus tendrils and calyx popular from the Augustan period to at least the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century; the two motifs can even occur together, on the same monument.<sup>18</sup> The later of the two motifs is frequently depicted on funerary stelae from at least the Hadrianic period onwards,<sup>19</sup> on funerary altars,<sup>20</sup> and, even more commonly, on the funerary aediculae put up across Noricum during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries.<sup>21</sup> On these aediculae, it represents the most common plant motif, in some cases very lavishly rendered.<sup>22</sup> The motif with a double vine on the sarcophagi of the late 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries,<sup>23</sup> and on contemporary ash chests from the Poetovio's workshops<sup>24</sup> (figure 14), is often depicted on the short sides, on the travertine sarcophagi of Pannonian production also as a single

<sup>18</sup> Such is the marble pyramidal terminal of the altar of Titus Cominius Severus imported into Sirmium from Noricum in the Trajanic period; Sremska Mitrovica, Muzej Srema, inv. no. A 1. Dautova Ruševljan 1983, no. 30; Lupa 4340 and 4334.

<sup>19</sup> E.g., on the stela of Caius Aprius Frontinus from Becsehely, dated to the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. Nagykanisza, Thury-György-Múzeum, inv. no. 81.217.1. CSIR Salla 18; Lupa 3403. Or on the contemporary stela of Salvia Vera from Szentpeterfa. Previously in Veszprem, Laczkó Dezső Múzeum, inv. no. 1955.283.15, now in Szombathely, Savaria Múzeum. Tóth, 2011, no. 197; Lupa 3327.

<sup>20</sup> E.g., the altar of Marcus Cocceus Verecundus from Zollfeld, dated to the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. CSIR Virunum 451; Lupa 2624.

<sup>21</sup> E.g., on the tomb of the Ennii in Šempeter near Celje: Klemenc, Kolšek and Petru, 1972, 53, no. 243; Kremer 2001, 27-34; Lupa 13329.

<sup>22</sup> E.g., Millstatt: Sankt Peter in Holz, Römermuseum Teurnia. CSIR Teurnia 86; Steinklauber, 2005, 489; Lupa 2114. Seggauberg: Diez, 1949, no. 30; Hainzmann and Pochmarski, 1994, no. 24; Steinklauber, 2005, 479; Lupa 1285.

<sup>23</sup> Szekszárd: Budapest, Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, inv. no. 23.1849.1. Koch and Sichter mann, 1982, 327; CSIR Sopianae 97; Erdélyi, 1974, no. 73; Lupa 824.

<sup>24</sup> Savci: Graz, Universalmuseum Joanneum, inv. no. 84. Hof-filler and Saria, 1938, no. 445; Modrijan and Weber, 1979, 94, no. 84; Hudeczek, 2004, no. 8; Lupa 1696.

vine in the side panels of the longer side.<sup>25</sup> It is known on the short sides of the sarcophagi forming part of the Sirmium<sup>26</sup> and Salona<sup>27</sup> productions in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, also at least one of the Aurisina production.<sup>28</sup> The ash chest from Savci, near Ptuj (figure 14), bears a kantharos with a double vine on the right short side. This is almost identical to the one on the ash chest from Ptuj, revealing the great popularity of the motif in Poetovio's stonemasonry workshops of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.



Fig. 14. Ash chest from Savci  
(© Joanneum Graz, photo O. Harl).

The differences in the rendition of the motif (shape of the leaves, grapes and vases) are mainly due to the differences between individual workshops that otherwise follow the same basic scheme in both the vine and the kantharos from which it grows.<sup>29</sup> Having said that, the joint distribution area of the Virunum and Poetovio products does reveal certain specific commonalities. One is the simple and rather stylised, probably late form of a kantharos composed of two conical parts: pedestal

belly and neck<sup>30</sup> (figure 12). This form occurs on funerary aediculae, as well as sarcophagi and ash chests,<sup>31</sup> replacing a much more widespread kantharos with a hemispherical pedestal belly and a concave neck connected with a pair of S-shaped handles. The second commonality is a pointed arch that forms where the two vine cordons cross above the rim of the kantharos (figure 12); it can be observed on aediculae, as well as some stelae, sarcophagi and ash chests.<sup>32</sup>

Both motifs carved on the short sides of the ash chest from Ptuj rank among the series of Dionysian/Bacchic motifs<sup>33</sup> that were increasingly popular in both the private and the sepulchral sphere of life in the western part of the Roman Empire from the Antonines onwards, when the cult of Dionysus was established in Rome (Davies 1978). The cult of Liber Pater, which in Italy became assimilated with that of Dionysos/Bacchus very early on, gained in strength under the Severans, particularly in Rome; the most prosperous period of the cult was roughly between 140 and 220 (Bruhl 1953). Margaretha Pochmarski-Nagele (Pochmarski-Nagele 1992) and Erwin Pochmarski (e.g., Pochmarski 2012) showed that the series of Dionysian motifs depicted on the Norican sepulchral monuments, consequently also on those from Pannonia, largely depended on formulations realised on the Metropolitan frieze sarcophagi with depictions of the Dionysian thiasos. They mainly consist of individual figures of maenads<sup>34</sup> and satyrs<sup>35</sup> in numerous variants,<sup>36</sup> though rarely paired together.<sup>37</sup> We may add to these the different personifications of the Seasons (Horae, genii), which

<sup>25</sup> Szöny: Budapest, Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, inv. no. 45.1925.2. Erdélyi, 1974, no. 72; Pochmarski, 2001, 207, no. 22; Lupa 3427. A similar lateral position, flanking the inscription, is observable on the Early Christian limestone sarcophagus of Severilla from Sisak, now kept in the Arheološki muzej in Zagreb (inv. no. KS 351). Hoffiller and Saria 1938, no. 581; Lupa 3809.

<sup>26</sup> Sremska Mitrovica (Pivara): Sremska Mitrovica, Muzej Srema, inv. no. A/5763.

<sup>27</sup> Solin: sarcophagus of Petronia, Sophronia and Nereia. Cambi, 2010, 99, no. 14; Lupa 24449.

<sup>28</sup> Ajdovščina: Krašna, 2019, 112, no. 44. Another sarcophagus possibly of Aurisina production is that from Concordia Sagittaria, kept in the Museo Nazionale Concordiese, Portogruaro, inv. no. 317. Di Filippo Balestrazzi, 2012, 156, no. 133.

<sup>29</sup> The exceptions are the vines on the sarcophagi from Szombathely and Šid, which grow on a horizontal trellis, and the vine on the ash chest from Vranje (Lupa 1653), which is supported by a pole.

<sup>30</sup> Ulla Steinklauber (Steinklauber, 2005, 484) calls it *etagenförmiger Krater*.

<sup>31</sup> Aediculae: Seggauberg (Lupa 1278), Piber (Lupa 1391). Sarcophagi: Sremska Mitrovica (Lupa 4353), Szombathely (Lupa 3387), Šid (Lupa 26146). Ash chests: Ptuj (Lupa 9439).

<sup>32</sup> Aediculae: Millstatt (Lupa 2114), Zollfeld (Lupa 2644), Magdalensberg (Lupa 27311). Stelae: Szentpeterfa (Lupa 3327), Kostolac (Lupa 5415). Sarcophagi: Sremska Mitrovica (Lupa 4353), Szombathely (Lupa 3387), Šid (Lupa 26164). Ash chests: Savci (Lupa 1696).

<sup>33</sup> Cf. e.g., the statues from Alba Iulia (Apulum): Diaconescu 2001.

<sup>34</sup> E.g., a funerary altar in Celje, Lupa 4114.

<sup>35</sup> E.g., a funerary altar in Seggauberg, Lupa 1305.

<sup>36</sup> On a single monument e.g., on the Orpheus stela from Ptuj, Lupa 3106.

<sup>37</sup> E.g., Zollfeld, Lupa 1038; Šempeter, Lupa 13258 and 13259; Osijek, Lupa 2810

belong to the Dionysian/Bacchic/Liberian sphere of nature's renewal,<sup>38</sup> and regularly occur on funerary aediculae, sarcophagus lids<sup>39</sup> and particularly on the lids of Poetovian ash chests.<sup>40</sup> What is completely absent is the main figure, of Dionysos, such as formed part of the Dionysian thiasos. Also extremely rare in the funerary sphere is the other, canonical image of Dionysos/Bacchus/Liber Pater depicted on votive reliefs. The latter has thus far only been recorded on two monuments, on the lateral panels of two Poetovian ash chests.<sup>41</sup>

The panther/leopard with a raised front paw, kantharos and vine are all attributes that stem from the canonical depiction of young Dionysos/Bacchus/Liber Pater<sup>42</sup> as formulated in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC (Gasparri 1986: 511), rather than from the depictions of the Dionysian thiasos. In the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, they became separated from this image and began functioning independently or in a variety of combinations. In most cases, they acted by association and in relation to "the general popularity of bacchic scenes in domestic and non-funerary contexts" (Bruhl 1953: 317).<sup>43</sup> Having said that, we should not disregard the possibility of seeing formulations of these elements in an eschatological sense or even as an expression of the deceased as a member of the Dionysian cult.

The basic premise of the eschatological interpretation is related to the belief in the immortality of the soul, a concept present very early on in Greek Orphism, in which the myth of Dionysos played a central role (Torjussen 2005). Until the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE, such a belief is unknown to the philosophy and religion of the Roman world with the exception of certain aristocratic Neopythagorean circles

in Rome. It is not detected with the Epicureans, the Stoics or the Sceptics, which see the soul as perishable. What was widespread among them was the concept of this-worldly immortality, according to which a person was immortal when he or she was remembered after death (Davies 1978: 18-19).

Roman written sources reveal that agnosticism and non-belief in any form of posthumous existence prevailed throughout the 1<sup>st</sup> and into the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, at least in the west. The traditional fables and concepts were at this time no longer acceptable, but not yet replaced by ideas of salvation or a mystical perception of the soul as advocated by the eastern religions and their mysteries; the presence of these only becomes more apparent after the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century (Davies 1978: 20). In the time of the Antonines, the cult of Dionysos became established in Rome and the Dionysian concept of the afterlife became widespread across different social milieus, mainly as a consequence of the Hellenisation of Roman society and culture. Bacchic propaganda encountered no real opposition at this time. The cult of Liber Pater spread across the Empire and in different parts Liber came to be assimilated with different local gods. He retained his prestige in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century and, in the Christian assault on Roman polytheism, remained one of the divinities worshipped by the last defenders of paganism (Bruhl 1953: 332-333).

An eschatological reading of images on the sepulchral monuments of this time is certainly reasonable, but one needs to be cautious so as not to make the reading exclusively eschatological, as both Adrien Bruhl and Glenys Davies have already pointed out. In the past century, a very significant contribution to the understanding of Roman funerary symbolism was that by Franz Cumont (Cumont 1922; Cumont 1942), who had many followers among scholars.<sup>44</sup> He is known to have especially favoured eschatological beliefs of different philosophical traditions and eastern religions in his analyses, looking for equivalents in iconographic depictions. In the assessment of Cumont's work, Arthur D. Nock cautioned thus, "In ancient art, decoration was commonly decoration and did not necessarily bear any relation to the specific purpose of the structures or objects decorated, large or small" (Nock 1948: 154). The danger of overly

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<sup>38</sup> Of interest in this sense is the floor mosaic with the Triumph of Neptune and the Four Seasons from La Chebba (Bardo museum, inv. no. A 292; Ako-Adounvo 1991), in which the Autumn Hora is joined with the image of Dionysos.

<sup>39</sup> E.g., on the lid of a sarcophagus from Šid, Lupa 26146.

<sup>40</sup> Lids in the Pokrajinski muzej Ptuj-Ormož.

<sup>41</sup> Two front side fragments of ash chests, kept in the Pokrajinski muzej Ptuj Ormož - RL 487 and RL 600, have the figure of Dionysos/Bacchus/Liber in the lateral panels. Abramić, 1914, 105, fig. 79; Bratanič, 1952, 305, fig. 5.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. a presumed funerary altar from Celje, kept in the Pokrajinski muzej Celje, Lupa 4123.

<sup>43</sup> Numerous depictions of a kantharos with vine are known on floor mosaics of private houses across the empire. Particularly interesting is the floor mosaic from Sant'Antioco, Sardinia (Museo Archeologico Feruccio Barreca), which bears a kantharos with a vine and a pair of leopards.

<sup>44</sup> In Slovenia e.g., Kastelic 1998.



reading the sepulchral motifs as symbols of death and the afterlife, where every single motif has a specific symbolic meaning, can lead to an interpretation as advocated by Jocelyn Toynbee.<sup>45</sup> Today, it is widely believed that the Roman ‘visual picture-language’ as she proposed, with its own vocabulary and grammar, cannot be recognised in Roman sepulchral art. It is, in fact, not possible to presume that a motif/symbol consistently had the same meaning in all contexts. It is also not possible to speak in favour of the hypothesis that the meaning of a motif/symbol was the same or equally evocative for each spectator. Glenys Davies has argued quite convincingly that the sculptors/stonemasons working on funerary monuments primarily used those motifs that were known to be most popular in other contexts (Davies 1978: 58).

An eschatological significance related to the immortality of the soul and its presence in the Bacchic feasts in the netherworld, or even the possibility of the deceased being members of the Dionysian cult is an assumption that is feasible for the large reliefs on the funerary aediculae and sarcophagi of Noricum and Pannonia, where the vine dominates the relief and is guarded by panthers with or without drinking horns. The vine on these reliefs, with the panthers gazing upon it much like the panther gazed on the divinity in the canonical formulation of Dionysos/Bacchus/Liber, could be seen as a manifestation of the divinity<sup>46</sup> in the sense of Christ’s phrase *ego sum vitis vera* (Jn 15, 1). The specific variant of this motif on the sarcophagus from Veliki Bastaji near Daruvar (figure 13), with an unmistakable Christian connotation as Branka Migotti correctly noted (Migotti 1996), would confirm such an interpretation. It is expressed formally in the pair of panthers/leopards with heads bowed to the vine, which, in this case, stands as an emanation of a new divinity, and corresponds with the gesture of the panther on the medal of Constantine the Great,<sup>47</sup> which Jules Maurice (Maurice 1908: 246-247) interpreted as a sign of vanquished paganism.

The figural (panther) and non-figural (kantharos with vine) motifs such as those depicted next

to the portraits of the deceased on the ash chest under discussion are elements that in numerous and varied combinations formed the characteristically Roman visual narrative, full of decorative replication (*see* Elsner 2018). Their meaning was always determined by the context and the point of view of the customer or the spectator. It is, therefore, not reasonable to see individual motifs as pure symbols, but rather to envisage motifs that easily shift from one semantic field to another. This is also the reason for motifs such as the kantharos with vine, one of the most prominent in the Dionysian sphere of Late Antiquity, to be centrally or at least prominently positioned within the floor and wall mosaics of Early Christian churches.<sup>48</sup> Thus, the floor mosaic in the apse of the mausoleum of Bishop Marciano, in the church of Sant’Eufemia in Grado (6<sup>th</sup> century) (Zovatto 1967: 34-36), includes the motif of a kantharos with a double vine, identical to the one on the ash chest from Ptuj, but its context brings a completely different, Christian reading of the depiction.

<sup>45</sup> “It (visual picture-language) had its rules, its ‘vocabulary’, ‘grammar’, and ‘idiom’ understood and accepted throughout the empire.” Toynbee, 1956, 226.

<sup>46</sup> This is also suggested by Steinklauber 2005, 487.

<sup>47</sup> RIC VII 279, minted in 326 in Rome.

<sup>48</sup> E.g., in the presbytery of the pre-Euphrasian basilica in Poreč, 5<sup>th</sup> century, Mader 2003, 37; the church of San Severo in Classe (Ravenna), 6<sup>th</sup> century, Farioli 1975, 19, fig. 5; ‘basilica Probi’-San Apollinare in Classe (Ravenna), 6<sup>th</sup> century, Farioli 1975, 19, fig. 4; San Vitale, Ravenna, 6<sup>th</sup> century, Bovini 1955.

## Abbreviations

CSIR – Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani  
LIMC – Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae  
Lupa – Ubi erat lupa <http://lupa.at/>  
RIC – Roman Imperial Coinage

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**Radmila Zotović**

Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade

rzotovic@eunet.rs

## THE CULT OF THE GOD MARS ON THE TERRITORY OF SERBIA

**Abstract:** On the Serbian territory, a total of 11 votive monuments dedicated to the god Mars have been noted to date. Of these, seven monuments belong to the independent cult of the god Mars. In contrast, the remaining four belong to this cult's symbioses with imperial or other deities' cults. Two votive monuments have been preserved at the Ravna location. It is there that the god Mars is presented in a cult symbiosis with the imperial cult in two votive monuments - one with Jupiter, and the other with the Capitoline triad, Fortuna, and other gods and goddesses. There are a total of five monuments dedicated to Mars in Central Serbia and six in Vojvodina. The six monuments in Vojvodina originate from the area of Sremska Mitrovica. As for Central Serbia, four monuments originate from the Ravna location, and one from the Kaliste (Viminacium) location. A monument dated within the period 208-211 A.D., and originating from Ravna, confirms that a temple dedicated to the god Mars was located in this area. Other monuments may be dated within a broader historical period, from the second half of the 2nd century to the beginning of the 3rd century.

**Keywords:** Serbia, Central Serbia, Vojvodina, Mars, Fortuna.

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On the Serbian territory, a total of 11 votive monuments dedicated to the god Mars have been noted to date. Of these, seven monuments belong to the independent cult of the god Mars. In contrast, the remaining four belong to this cult's symbioses with imperial or other deities' cults. There are a total five monuments dedicated to Mars in Central Serbia and six in Vojvodina (map I). All six monuments in Vojvodina originate from the area of Sremska Mitrovica. As for Central Serbia, four monuments originate from the Ravna location, and one from Kaliste (Viminacium) location (map II).

Besides Jupiter, the god Mars is the most significant Italic and Roman deity, having praised him from ancient times. The ancient Etruscans, Oscs, and Sabinians, also honoured the god Mars. It was a supreme Italic deity first, but Jupiter, the former god of the heavens and weather conditions, later became the supreme god, while Mars was primarily celebrated as the god of war and warfare.

However, the rural population considered him the god of livestock and agriculture. They honoured Mars and believed he was the protector of

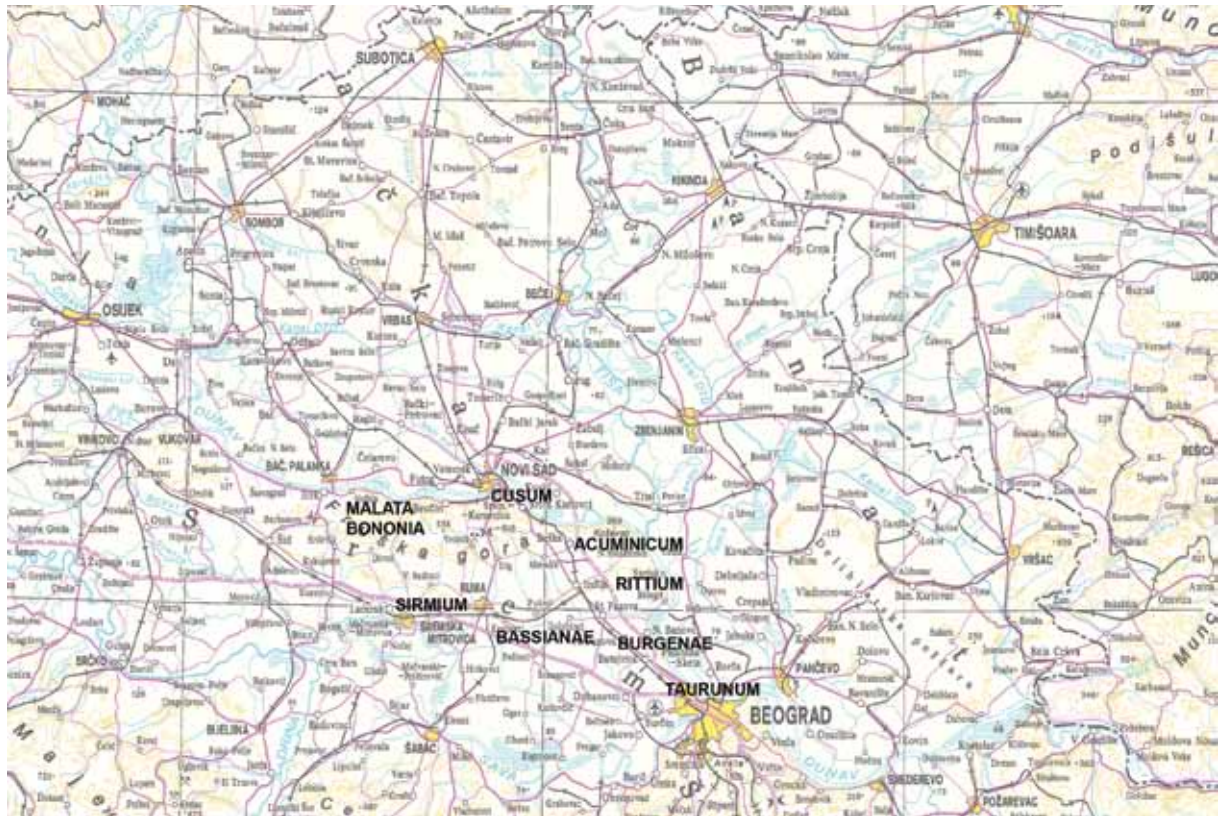
cattle and crops, as these could have been compromised or destroyed in warfare. Being the god of cattle and fields, the rural population addressed prayers to him to protect their land from enemies and to grant progress with their livestock and agriculture. The Romans considered Mars the god protector of the nation and state (Замуровић 1936; Срејовић, Цермановић Кузмановић 1979).

It is also likely that the aforementioned quality connected Mars to Jupiter, who was the patron deity of the entire nation and the state. In this form, a cult symbiosis, Mars is presented on a monument on the territory of Vojvodina. On the same memorial, Jupiter is designated as Jupiter, the Capitoline. It is little wonder that this monument intensified the concept of *praefectus*.

A much more interesting monument is the votive monument dedicated to the Capitoline Triad, Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, as well as Fortuna and other deities.

Mars was connected to the Capitoline Triad not only because of Jupiter but also because of Juno. People believed that Mars was the son of





Map 1. Vojvodina

Juno (and therefore Minerva's brother). He was conceived when Juno received a flower gift from Flora. This beautiful myth points to the potential connection of Mars with many other gods and goddesses, especially those referring to bushes, woods, pastures, and meadows. In this reference, the god Silvan was believed to have evolved into an independent deity from the attributes of the god Mars (Mars Silvicolo). In addition, connections among other deities with either Jupiter or Juno are persistent, according to finds on the territory of Central Serbia. This territory is featured by the formula "other deities" (*dis deabusque*); Western provinces are featured by the formula "all deities" (*omnes*).

In particular, the connection with Fortuna focused on prayers addressed to both the Capitoline Triad and the god Mars to grant good fortune, something that was both essential and unpredictable during times of war. Fortuna was referred to as the first daughter of Jupiter. This is the origin of the link between Mars and Fortuna, which was mediated by the god Jupiter. At the same time, this monument especially presents Mars and Fortuna to highlight Mars' significance in the Roman

Pantheon. Designated as *Campestri*, Mars represents the protector of fields and plains. At the same time, the monument reflects the respect for the god Mars. Such respect is shown in the Field of Mars in Rome, where a temple dedicated to Mars was built. People highly respected Mars in connection with Minerva and these two deities were celebrated on a joint holiday on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March each year (*Quinquatrus maiores*), one of the oldest Roman holidays. At first, this was a holiday dedicated to the god Mars, but later it also included the goddess Minerva, with celebrations lasting for five days. Minerva had initially been praised and honoured as the goddess-protectress of crafts, craftsmen, and students. Craftsmen respecting Minerva included physicians, pipers, and trumpet players, as these were important for the army and military action. Juno had initially been recognised as the goddess-protectress of marriage and married women, the Moon, and childbirth. This deity later evolved into the goddess-protectress of the Roman family, Rome, and the entire Roman state. Each provincial town had a temple built in honour of the Capitoline Triad, similar to that built in Rome. Sirmium likely had a temple dedicated to Jupiter,

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Juno, and Minerva. It is another question as to whether Sirmium had a separate temple dedicated to the god Mars, or if the dedications were made in the temple dedicated to the Capitoline Triad, as was the case in the sanctuary of the benefactor consuls.

On the territory of Central Serbia, the cult symbioses of the god Mars are shown on two monuments at the Ravna location. Mars is here related to the imperial cult. Both monuments connect him with the Severi and Antonini dynasties. Both monuments designate Mars by the attribute *equitum* – equestrian, as the protector of equestrians. One of these is particularly significant, as it serves as proof that a temple dedicated to the god Mars

the Ravna location, with one of them lacking the given feature. However, the other one is particularly interesting as it contains attributes to Mars. Mars is designated here by the attribute *campestris*, which can have multiple meanings. This attribute can refer to Mars as the god coming from fields for training the army, especially during wars. A more important meaning of this attribute refers to Mars as a god originating from the Field of Mars or a god standing on the Field of Mars (Bogdanovic 1931: 53). The dedicator's name has not been preserved, but it is known that he belonged to the *equity cohort* II Aureliae Dardanorum. The aforementioned shows the multiple meaning of this attribute and Rome as its origin.



Map 2. Central Serbia

existed at the Ravna location (*Marti equitum templum*). As this monument can also be dated within the period 208-211 A.D., it means that a temple dedicated to the god Mars existed on the territory of Ravna at the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

Three monuments of the individual cult of the god Mars also originate from the territory of Central Serbia. One of them is situated at the border between the Viminacium and Horreum Margi location, where the attribute *sacrum* – saint designates Mars. Two other monuments were found at

On the territory of Vojvodina, four monuments dedicated to the individual cult of the god Mars have been found to date.

On two of these monuments, Mars is designated with no attributes involved; in the other two, Mars was referred to by the features “imperial” and “saint” (*Augusto* and *sacrum*). The designations lacking attributes are likely to include the overall significance and meaning of the god Mars. Simultaneously, the titles with details “imperial” and “saint” refer to the state’s patron and protector.

As for the monuments' tectonic appearance, each of them represents the front of a temple. It is surprising to see *pulvinus* as an ornament on the monument's capital. For the four monuments, some descriptions have not been lost. Of these four monuments, three include *pulvinus* as a decorative element of the capital. In this sense, one can see the influence of the western provinces on the territory of the Roman Vojvodina, as *pulvinus* is almost never present anywhere else (with minor exceptions) on the territory of Central Serbia. The capital of these monuments is most often ornamented with rosettes positioned directly on the *pulvinus*, or on the triangular gable in the middle. There is only a single case with a spiral ornament positioned on the *pulvino*. This ornament is rare; it is found only on the side of a votive monument in Cajetina (Zotović 2011). The decorative spiral element is considered to originate from the pre-historical tradition lasting until the ancient period, which saw it as rare, but distinct and acceptable. The rosette is a common decorative element on both the territory of Vojvodina and Central Serbia. The triangular gable and palmettes' presence re-confirms that the votive monument is a temple "miniature", with the capital imitating the temple roof.

It is interesting to review the votive monuments' dedicators. Four of them were found in the Jupiter sanctuary, erected and dedicated to Jupiter by the *beneficiarius consularis*. The benefactor consuls also had all the four monuments erected and dedicated to the god Mars. The fact that votive monuments dedicated to Mars were found in the sanctuary dedicated to the god Jupiter indicates a close relationship between Jupiter and Mars.

Personal names are not very helpful when dating monuments. Only the monument dedicated to Jupiter and Mars might be dated to Marcus Aurelius' reign. Following the information given on the monuments where consul pairs have been preserved, we can date the other monuments found in the Jupiter sanctuary into a broader chronological period, from the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century to the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.

## Catalogue

### Mars

1. Ara, limestone, dimensions: 0.58 x 0.44 x 0.38 m. Capital accented with three-fold, and postament with two-fold proliferation. Acroteria in the capital corners, a triangle containing a rosette with palmettes in the middle.

Location.: probably the border between the Viminacium and Horreum Margi

*Mart(i)/ sac(rum)/ T. F(lavius) Sapi (/) ex viso(!)*.

Literature: Н. Вулић 1909, 143 – 144, n. 66; IMS II, 197, n. 299.

2. Ara, sandstone, dimensions: 0.82 x 0.42 x 0.36 m. A large libation opening on top.

Location.: Ravna

*Marti*

Literature: Н. Вулић, 1931, 82, n. 191; IMS III/2, 65 – 66, n. 6

3. Ara, sandstone, preserved in a fragmented condition.

Location: Ravna

Tekst:

Vulić:

*[Marti] Campestr[i] coh(ors) II Aur(elia)/ Dard(anorum) ] equit(ata) pro [salute]/ [---*

Petrović (IMS III/2):

maybe: *[Marti] camperstr[i] et] equit(um)*; or *[Dis] Campestr[ibus et]/ [Marti] equitum?*

Literature: Н. Вулић 1941 – 48, 81, n. 171; IMS III/2, 66, n. 7.

4. Ara.

Location.: Sremska Mitrovica

*Marti*

Literature: M. Mirković 1971, 66 – 67, n. 22.

5. Ara, limestone, dimensions: 0.85 x 0.39 x 0.38 m. Capital carved with spirally ornamented *pulvini*, triangular gable in between, with two rosettes in the middle.

Location: Sremska Mitrovica

*Marti/ Aug(usto) sacr(um)/ Ti. Claud(ius)/ Fortis beneficiarius/ co(n)s(ularis)/ v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito)*.

Literature: M. Mirković 1994, 382, n. 40. (fig. 1)

6. Ara, limestone, dimensions: 0.88 x 0.45 x 0.39 m. Capital carved with spirally ornamented *pulvini*, triangular gable in between, with a rosette in the middle.

Location: Sremska Mitrovica

*Marti/ Ti. Cl(audius)/ Postuminus/ b(ene)*





Fig. 1. Ara, Mars, Sremska Mitrovica

*f(iciarius) co(n)s(ularis)/ v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito).*

Literature: M. Mirković 1994, 383, n. 43. (fig. 2).

7. Ara, limestone, dimensions: 0.99 x 0.43 x 0.39 m. Capital with carved acroteria.

Location: Sremska Mitrovica

*Marti/ Aug(usto) sac(rum)/ C. Iul(ius) Valens/ b(ene)f(iciarius) co(n)s(ularis)/ v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito).*

Literature: M. Mirković 1994, 390, n. 56.

#### Mars – Imperial Cult

1. Ara, sandstone, dimensions: 0.98 x 0.48 x 0.32 m.

Location: Ravna

*Mart(i) eq(uitum)/ pro salute do/minor(um) NN[N] Se/veri et Antonini/ IMPP G. Atrius Deco/rat(us) trib(unus) coh(ortis) II Aurel(iae)/ Dard(anorum) Antonini/anae (milliariae) eq(uitae) l(ibens) p(osuit).*

Literature: IMS III/2, 66 – 67, n. 8.

Dated: AD 208 – 211



Fig. 2. Ara, Mars, Sremska Mitrovica

2 .

Ara, marble, dimensions: 0.59 x 0.52 x 0.10 m.

Location: Ravna

*[Mart]i equitum te[mplum]/ pro s[alut(e)] domino[rum] n(ostorum duorum)/ Seve]ri et Antonin[i] imp(eratorum duorum)/ ---] Atrium Deco[rat(um) trib(unum)/ coh(ortis)]/ II Aure(eliae) Dard(anorum An[toni]nia]nae (milliariae) eq(uitatae) AE[---].*

Literature: Н. Вулић 1941 – 48, 81, n. 172; IMS III/2, 67 – 68, n. 9.

Dated: AD 208 – 211

#### Jupiter – Mars

1. Ara. Lost.

Location: Sremska Mitrovica

*I(ovi) o(ptimo) m(aximo)/ et Marti/ custodi/ Helvius/ Pertinax/ praef(ectus).*

Literature: CIL III 3232; M. Mirković 1971, 66, n. 20.

Dated.: most likely from the period of Marcus Aurelius.





Fig. 3. Ara, Jupiter, Juno, Minerva, Fortuna, Mars and diis deabusque, Sremska Mitrovica

Jupiter – Juno – Minerva – Fortuna - gods and goddesses - Mars

1. Ara, sandstone, dimensions: 0.85 x 0.40 x 0.36 m. Capital with carved pulvini, with a rosette in the middle and embossed decoration of acanthus and palmette.

Location: Sremska Mitrovica

*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo)/ Iunoni Reg(inae)/ Min(ervae) Fort(unae) Mart(i)/ Cam(pestri) dis dea<bus>/que sacr(um) T./ Fl(avius) Aulus b(eneficiarius) co(n)s(ularis)/ ex n(umero) fr(umentariorum)/ v(otum) s(olvit) l(ibens) m(erito).*

Literature: M. Mirković 1994, 385, n. 47. (fig. 3).

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*Translated by Radosav Milutinović*

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**Mihailo Milinković**  
Belgrad/Zug  
mihailo@yubc.net

## DAS WEITERLEBEN DER ROMANEN AUF DER BALKANHALBINSEL NACH 476 N. CHR. – ARCHÄOLOGISCHE NACHWEISE AUS DEM SÜDOSTADRIATISCHEN KÜSTENGEBIET UND SEINEM HINTERLAND, MIT BESONDERER BERÜCKSICHTIGUNG EINIGER AUSGEWÄHLTER FUNDE<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** Das Weiterleben der Romanen auf dem westlichen Teil der Balkanhalbinsel nach 476 n. Chr. wird im Anschluss an eine geographische, historische und archäologische Einführung durch Vergleiche der Ereignisse zwischen dem Küstengebiet an der östlichen-südöstlichen Adria und dem kontinentalen Hinterland (dem heutigen Gebiet von Kroatien, Montenegro, Bosnien und der Herzegowina, und Serbien) dargestellt. Dies wird vornehmlich anhand von archäologischen Funden unternommen, vor allem Bekleidungszubehör wie Fibeln und Gürtelschnallen, wobei Siedlungen und Kirchen nicht ausgeschlossen sind. In geringerem Masse wird auch auf die Angaben aus schriftlichen Quellen Bezug genommen. Dazu werden, wo angebracht, ethnographische und literaturgeschichtliche Beispiele vorgeführt. Neben bestehenden Parallelen zwischen den beiden Vergleichsgebieten werden auch Unterschiede festgestellt, die sich auf die Kontinuität oder Diskontinuität der einheimischen Bevölkerung beziehen, mit einem Ausblick auf die weiteren Ereignisse im Mittelalter und in der Neuzeit. Ausgewählte Funde aus Süddalmatien und Montenegro, darunter bisher nicht publizierte oder nur erwähnte, werden als Beispiele präsentiert.

**Schlagworte:** Romanen Balkan Kontinuität Fibeln Schnallen.

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### Geographische Gegebenheiten

Da geographische Gegebenheiten auf die Kontinuität bzw. Diskontinuität der Prozesse in besiedelten Räumen einwirken können, ist eine entsprechende Einführung für die Balkanhalbinsel gegeben, deren westliche Teile hier im Vordergrund

stehen.<sup>2</sup>

Dalmatien ist durch eine zergliederte Küstenlinie mit vielen vorgelagerten Inseln und dem dahinter steil aufsteigenden Dinarischen Gebirge gekennzeichnet. Solche Umstände führten zu einer Hinwendung zur Seefahrt und Handel, wodurch sehr gute Verbindungen zum Mittelmeerraum entstanden (Für die Welt des Mittelmeeres in Vorgeschichte und Antike siehe

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<sup>1</sup> Der erste Teil dieses Aufsatzes wurde am International Workshop „The Transformation of Romanness. Archaeological Perspectives (400-800 AD)“, 27-28 November 2014 in Wien unter dem Titel: „Formen der ‚Romanität‘ im heutigen Balkangebiet nach 476 - archäologische Nachweise aus Serbien, Montenegro und Dalmatien“ vorgelegt. Dieser Vortrag ist hier Änderungen und Ergänzungen unterworfen worden und kann als Prolog für den zweiten Teil des Beitrags betrachtet werden, welcher sich auf einige ausgewählte archäologische Funde, vor allem aus Montenegro, konzentriert.

<sup>2</sup> Der Begriff „Balkanhalbinsel“ wird hier im geographischen Sinne verwendet. Da die Halbinsel von der östlichen, südlichen und westlichen Seite durch das Schwarze, Ägäische, Ionische und Adriatische Meer umgeben ist, bleibt es, seine Nordgrenze zu bestimmen. Dabei scheint es empfohlen, einem der besten Kenner, dem Geographen Jovan Cvijić zu folgen, welcher sie seinerzeit entlang der Flüsse Donau-Save-Kupa, bis zum Laibacher Becken festsetzte (Цвијић 1987: 17-18) [Cvijić 1918].

weiterhin Braudel 1998). Handelswege mit Pässen überwand die Bergketten und führten im kontinentalen Hinterland in das Gebiet des heutigen Bosniens und der Herzegowina, und Serbiens (römische Provinzen Dalmatien, Moesien usw.), wobei sich Serbien mit seinem zentralen und südlichen Teil auf der Balkanhalbinsel befindet (rechtsufrig der Save und der Donau). Die Hauptkommunikationsadern, die hier jahrtausendlang auf die kulturgeschichtlichen Prozesse einwirkten, sind neben der östlichen adriatischen Küste die Läufe der größten Flüsse: der Donau, der Save und der Morawa, mit der Zweigstelle beim heutigen Niš/*Naissus*, wo sich, wie heute, die Hauptstraßen nach Konstantinopel, Thessaloniki und Athen trafen. Diese Straßen waren wichtige Kommunikationsadern des Imperiums, für den Handel und Verkehr anderer Art. In einer gegen Norden abfallenden Berg- und Hügellandschaft, in den Flusstälern und Becken, bieten sich, zum Teil im Karst, Möglichkeiten für Viehzucht und Landwirtschaft. Dank des Reichtums an Erzen sind diese Gebiete seit der Vorgeschichte eine *terra metallica*, was in früherer römischer, und, wie es nach den archäologischen Funden als möglich erscheint<sup>3</sup>, frühbyzantinischer Zeit (auch im 6. - Anfang 7. Jahrhundert) von Bedeutung war (Цвијић 1987: 13-18, 96-99; Schramm 1999: 53; Milinković 2005a: 197; Милинковић 2015: 266-267).<sup>4</sup>

### Die vorrömische Bevölkerung, die Romanisierung und Christianisierung

Die zu romanisierende vorrömische Bevölkerung bestand im erwähnten Raum aus keltischen, thrakischen und illyrischen Stämmen – wie die Skordischer, Tribalen, Dentheleten, Dardaner,

Autariaten, Delmaten oder Japoden. Dazu sind einige griechische Kolonien und Niederlassungen an der Adria zu nennen, wie auf den Inseln Vis/*Issa* oder Hvar/*Pharos* (Suić 2003: 60-62). Am Übergang vom dritten zum zweiten vorchristlichen Jahrhundert kamen die Römer mit den im zentralen Balkangebiet wohnenden Stämmen in Berührung, nachdem sie vorher das illyrische Dalmatien unterworfen hatten. Der Zeitpunkt einer endgültigen Eingliederung dieser Gebiete erfolgte um Christi Geburt; infolgedessen setzte ein stärkerer Romanisierungsprozess ein (Alföldy 1965: 26; Wilkes 1969: 13ff; Milinković 2005a: 197-198). An der Donaugrenze wurde der befestigte Limes errichtet. Als wichtige Städte sind in Serbien Sremska Mitrovica/*Sirmium*, Belgrad/*Singidunum*, Stari Kostolac/*Viminatum*, Niš/*Naissus* oder Lipljan-Gračanica/*Ulpiana* (später *Iustiniana Secunda*) zu nennen, in der breiteren Küstenzone in Kroatien Zadar/*Iadera*, Solin/*Salona* und etwas davon entfernt *Narona* (nahe Vid bei Metković), wie auch das tiefer landeinwärts gelegene *Doclea* (bei Podgorica in Montenegro). Im Hinterland kann nicht von einem allzu dichten Städtenetz gesprochen werden, wohl aber gab es Kolonien, Munizipien, Benefiziarierstationen und kleinere Siedlungen anderer Art. Bergwerkreviere bestimmten zusammen mit den Landvillen das Bild in den Provinzen.

Seit dem späten 3. Jahrhundert stieg die Bedeutung dieser Gebiete im Reich, da einige Kaiser aus der Region stammten, etwa Maximin Thrax, Decius, Probus, Diokletian, Galerius und Konstantin der Große. Diese unternahmen bemerkenswerte Baumaßnahmen, wie die befestigten Paläste Diokletians in Split/*Spalatum* an der dalmatinischen Küste, in Ostserbien der Palast des Galerius in Gamzigrad/*Romuliana* und ein weiterer im nahe gelegenen Šarkamen zeigen. Dazu kommen kaiserliche Villenanlagen in Brzi Brod/*Mediana* bei Niš/*Naissus*, während Sremska Mitrovica/*Sirmium* eine der Reichsresidenzen wurde. Später fügten sich in diese Reihe die oströmischen Kaiser Justin I. (518-527) und dessen Neffe Justinian I. (527-565) ein, welcher in seiner Heimat, die im heutigen Südserbien vermutet wird, die Stadt *Iustiniana Prima* neu gründete (Übersicht bei Brandl/Vasić 2007). Dabei befanden sich Dalmatien, Montenegro und Serbien in der lateinischen Sprachzone, nordwestlich der sogenannten

<sup>3</sup> Soweit sind nicht genügend Analysen der ansonsten oft vorhandenen Schlackenfunde durchgeführt worden.

<sup>4</sup> Der Begriff „frühbyzantinisch“ wird in dieser Arbeit als ein konventioneller Begriff für die spätantike Periode auf dem Gebiet des Oströmischen Reiches verwendet. Er ist nicht von einer Selbstbezeichnung der Reichsbevölkerung oder des Reiches hergeleitet (Romania), wie es z.B. der Fall mit seiner Benennung vonseiten östlicher Völker war, vgl. „Rumelien“ usw., sondern von einer Konstruktion des 16. Jahrhunderts. „Byzanz“ ist in diesem Zusammenhang ein neuzeitlicher Kunstbegriff (Ostrogorsky 1963: 1-2; A.E. 1997; Al.B. 2001; Kaldellis 2012, 387-404; Kaldellis 2019a; Gantner 2014: 71).

Jireček-Linie, welche das lateinische vom griechischen Sprach- und Kulturgebiet trennt. Diese nach dem tschechischen Historiker Konstantin Jireček (1854-1918) benannte Linie sondert die Einflussgebiete der zwei Sprachen auf Grund der Verbreitung von epigraphischen Funden, darunter Inschriften auf Meilensteinen sowie auf lokalen Münzprägungen ab (Jireček 1901: 13; Nedeljković 2015: 324). Latein war die erste Sprache von Konstantin dem Großen und von Hieronymus, die beide aus dem Balkangebiet stammten, so wie es auch für den Spanier Theodosius und den Afrikaner Augustinus die Muttersprache war (Nedeljković 2015: 325).

Das Christentum auf der Balkanhalbinsel ist seit Diokletian in den schriftlichen Quellen fassbar, ab dem 4. und 5. Jahrhundert auch archäologisch (Gamber 1982: 77-84; Радмиловић 2014). Insbesondere Sremska Mitrovica/*Sirmium* und Belgrad/*Singidunum* waren lange Zentren des Arianismus. In den Städten residierten Bischöfe, auch Klöster werden erwähnt. So wirkte Bischof Niketas Ende des 4./Anfang des 5. Jahrhunderts in Bela Palanka/*Remesiana*, an der Militärstraße (*via militaris*) *Singidunum-Constantinopolis* zwischen *Naissus* und *Serdica* gelegen. Niketas war ein bekannter christlicher Missionar und Kirchenvater seiner Zeit und soll den Stamm der thrakischen Bessen bekehrt haben. Manche Forscher meinen, dass der Dialekt der Bessen als Missionssprache verwendet wurde, was wichtig für die Auswertung des Romanisierungsprozesses wäre (Schramm 1999: 76ff.; Nedeljković 2015). Die ältesten materiellen Spuren des Christentums stellen Kirchenüberreste, Gräberfelder, Memorien, Grabkammern, die mitunter mit Fresken geschmückt sind, Inschriften und entsprechende Kleinfunde wie Reliquiare dar. Zusammenfassende Arbeiten über frühchristliche Kirchen in Serbien fehlen soweit, ebenso über die Gräberfelder und Grabkammern (zu Kirchen in Serbien siehe die allgemeine Übersicht bei Milinković 2012b: 167-176, in Sremska Mitrovica/*Sirmium* bei Јерemiћ 2014: 43-73; zu Grabkammern und Gräbern in Moesien Nikolajević 1980, zu Reliquarien und Amulettkapseln aus Serbien Milinković 2013: 27-40, zur Malerei Kaplarević 2011; zu Kirchen in Dalmatien Chevalier 1995. Für den Balkanraum mit Umgebung siehe auch den Tagungsband Pillinger 2015).

Mit dem Verfall der alten römischen Städte nach den Hunnenstürmen (darunter *Sirmium*, *Singidunum*, *Viminatum*, *Naissus*) wird auch die Struktur der frühchristlichen Gemeinden stark beeinträchtigt gewesen sein. Im weiteren Verlauf können wichtige, verschieden große überregionale und regionale Zentren bzw. Siedlungen mit zentralörtlicher Funktion wie *Salona* (bestehende Tradition, Dalmatien), Caričin Grad/*Iustiniana Prima?* (Neugründung, Südserbien), Jelica-Gradina (Neugründung, Westserbien) erwähnt werden, die auch kirchliche Zentren waren (Милинковић 2015: 111-248). Ob dazu auch die bemerkenswerten Ruinen von Zlata-Kale nahe Caričin Grad/*Iustiniana Prima?* in Südserbien gezählt werden können (grössere befestigte Anlage auf einem leicht zugänglichen Plateau, Basilika mit Mosaiken und Freskenbemalung, ca. 100m langer Staudamm), bleibt soweit offen – solange die Erforschung dieser vernachlässigten Fundstätte, die seinerzeit das Interesse von Arthur Evans und Felix Kanitz erweckte, auf Hindernisse stösst (Милинковић 2009).

Dem derzeitigen Forschungsstand nach war das Christentum in der Region im 6. Jahrhundert bereits weit verbreitet und konsolidiert, bis in die befestigten Bergdörfer hinein. In diesen Dörfern befanden sich mitunter, wie durch Ausgrabungsfunde bezeugt, mehrere, meistens in einfacher Technik gebaute Kirchen (oft aus gebrochenem Stein mit Erdmörtelverbindung). Das bedeutet nicht, dass in ländlichen Gebieten Kirchen ausschließlich in schlichter Weise und ohne Dekoration erstellt wurden – vgl. die gut mit Bauplastik, Mosaiken, Fresken mit Inschriften und Marmorverschalung ausgestattete Basilika in Bregovina, Südserbien, (Kondić, Popović 1977: 361, Fig. 117; Jeremić, Milinković 1995) - erstellt in der Heimat Justinians (?), oder die mit Bemalung verzierte Kirche mit Baptisterium und Atrium in Kladenčište-Špaj nahe Bela Palanka/*Remesiana*, an der *via militaris*, die 2015 der Errichtung von Autobahnkorridoren geopfert wurde (Благојевић 2017: 158-199). Mehrere Kirchen in einer Siedlung wurden bereits bei im Umfang begrenzten Testgrabungen entdeckt (z.B. Babotinac auf dem Jastrebac-Gebirge nordwestlich von Niš, Liška Čava bei Guča in Westserbien). Dies aktualisiert die Frage nach ihrer wirklichen Anzahl in dörflichen Ansiedlungen, unter der Voraussetzung, dass alle gleichzeitig



benutzt wurden. Angesichts der relativ kurzen Lebenszeit dieser Ortschaften erscheint dies allerdings sehr wahrscheinlich (Милинковић 2015: 262, Abb. 6,7; zum Christentum im Illyricum 4-6. Jahrhundert Mirković 1997). Reste eines Mosaikbodens und von Freskenbemalung sind in der allem Anschein nach außerhalb einer nahegelegenen Siedlung errichteten Kirche auf Nebeske Stolice im Kopaonik-Gebirge (Südwestserbien), 1800 Meter über Meeresniveau, nachgewiesen worden (zu Dorfkirchen Milinković 2012a: 287-288). Schon die hohe Lage dieser Kirche in einer entlegenen Berglandschaft belegt auf eindrückliche Art und Weise das Vordringen des Christentums vom vierten bis zum sechsten Jahrhundert. Die Kirchen wurden nicht selten auf den dominantesten Positionen innerhalb der befestigten Siedlungen errichtet, sozusagen als ein sichtbares Zeichen des neuen Glaubens (Caričin Grad, Bregovina, Zlata, Jelica-Gradina usw.). Jedoch können die in den schriftlichen Quellen bezeugten konfessionellen Unterschiede zwischen den einzelnen Christengemeinden in der Reichsbevölkerung mit archäologischen Methoden allein nicht festgestellt werden (Bockmann 2014: 201-218). Dass es Streitigkeiten unter den Christen gab, bezeugen u.a. die Unruhen in *Ulpiana* um 552, die wegen des sogenannten Dreikapitelstreits über das Verhältnis zwischen der göttlichen und menschlichen Natur Jesu Christi ausbrachen (Баришић 1955: 50 mit Anm. 105). Dabei sollte nicht außer Acht gelassen werden, dass es neben denjenigen in der Reichsbevölkerung noch andere Christen gab: Zumindest oberflächlich waren in der gleichen Zeit auch manche Barbarenstämme christianisiert, wie die Goten oder Gepiden, neben anderen Gruppierungen, welche sich in der Balkanregion oder in derer Nähe aufhielten (Vida 2016: 93-106). Dieser Umstand hat sich kaum auf den Grabbrauch der Barbaren, z.B. der Gepiden oder Langobarden ausgewirkt, welcher weiterhin Beigaben in Gefäßen, Waffen, Ausrüstung usw. erlaubte, wie Funde aus *Viminatium* oder *Singidunum* zu verdeutlichen scheinen, ohne dabei in ihre strikte Stammeszuweisung eingehen zu wollen (Ivanišević, Kazanski, Mastykova 2006; Milinković 2006a; Ivanišević, Kazanski 2007, mit weiterführender Literatur; Milinković 2005c: 458-461). Als einen Fall von Akkulturation kann man das sogenannte germanische Frauengrab aus *Ulpiana*

bzw. *Iustiniana Secunda* beim Kloster Gračanica im Kosovo nennen, gelegt inmitten eines Friedhofs der einheimischen Bevölkerung (Milinković 2006b). In dieser Grablage mischen sich, neben anderem Inventar, Bekleidungszubehörteile die für skandinavisch-nordische, germanisch besiedelte Gebiete typisch sind, mit denjenigen, die werkstatts – und verbreitungsmäßig dem romanischen Kreis entstammen.

### Das Ende und das Weiterleben

Die Romanisierung der besprochenen Gebiete verlief in unterschiedlicher Dynamik. Am stärksten war sie an der Adriaküste und entlang der Donau ausgeprägt, an der Küste wegen der Verbindungen zum Mittelmeer und der relativ frühen Anwesenheit der Römer, am Donaulimes wegen den dortigen Legionen, Veteranenansiedlungen und Händlern. In der geschichtswissenschaftlichen Literatur wird der Standpunkt vertreten, dass die Romanisierung im Inneren nicht so schnell vor sich ging und sich erst im 2. oder 3. Jahrhundert stärkere Auswirkungen zeigten (Мирковић 1981: 77-88). Ob in einigen entlegenen Berggebieten die einheimischen Idiome, wie etwa das erwähnte Bessische, noch im 6. Jahrhundert lebendig waren, bleibt offen (Schramm 1999). Die ersten Handelskontakte und Herrschaftsformen ausgenommen, kann zusammengefasst werden, dass die Romanisierung im heutigen Dalmatien, Montenegro und Serbien ungefähr um Christi Geburt einsetzte und für etwa 600 Jahre fast ausnahmslos andauerte, wobei die Goten- und andere Einfälle von Barbaren nach 375 miteingerechnet sind - „von *Augustus bis Phokas*“ - wie sich Konstantin Jireček noch vor mehr als 120 Jahren ausdrückte (Jireček 1901: 12). Nach sechs Jahrhunderten kam es im Hinterland als Folge der Barbareneinfälle zur Auflösung des römischen Staatswesens und damit zu einem Kontinuitätsbruch, welcher an der adriatischen Küste nicht überall in dieser Art stattfand.

Für die nördlichen und zentral gelegenen Gebiete auf der Balkanhalbinsel waren die Hunneneinbrüche in den 40er Jahren des 5. Jahrhunderts dennoch folgenreich. Durch sie entstand in Obermoesien und auch in den Nachbarprovinzen (*Dacia Ripensis*, *Dacia Mediterranea* usw.) eine vorläufige Unterbrechung

oder zumindest eine Störung der Kontinuität, die sich auch im Umlauf der Münzen widerspiegelt (Ivanišević, Stamenković 2011). Dem konnte mit der Zeit zwar entgegengewirkt werden, aber nun unter neuen Umständen, in einer zum Teil anderen Epoche. Dutzende von Städten und Ansiedlungen wurden zerstört, wie durch schriftliche Zeugnisse und entsprechende Brand- und Destruktionshorizonte bei Ausgrabungen belegt. Manche Siedlungen in Tallagen wurden nie mehr erneuert, wie z.B. im Tal der Westlichen Morawa, bei der heutigen Stadt Čačak in Westserbien (Milinković 2008: 545 mit Anm. 19). Eigentlich haben diese Zerstörungen das Leben in den alten römischen Städten erschüttert und destabilisiert, nach heutigem Forschungsstand für Jahrhunderte. Auf dem Balkan ist das Siedlungsnetz erst unter Justinian in großem Umfang neu auf- und ausgebaut worden, obwohl sich derartige Ansätze bereits unter Anastasius oder sogar früher andeuten<sup>5</sup>, aber an anderen Standorten, meistens in geschützten Höhenlagen (Milinković 2008). So wurde dennoch ein Weiterleben der romanisierten Bevölkerung, durchdrungen mit neuen ethnischen Elementen, darunter auch germanischen, innerhalb des Reiches möglich gemacht. Im kontinentalen Hinterland dauerte dieses Weiterleben mindestens bis etwa 614/615 n. Chr., als der Münzumlauf in Illyricum für Jahrhunderte unterbrochen wurde, und mit ihm zusammen das römische Staatswesen in diesen Gebieten zugrunde ging (Popović 1975: 504).

Im Weiteren soll geprüft werden, ob und wie die Romanisierung in bestimmten Teilregionen länger als in anderen andauerte und ob sie sich eventuell zu einem kontinuierlichen Prozess ausbaute, infolgedessen die lokale Bevölkerung die "romanische Lebensweise" als die ihr angestammte betrachtete. Im Falle von Dalmatien kam es zu einer jahrhundertelangen Abgrenzung gegenüber den angekommenen Slawen, die manchmal ihre langen Schatten auf veränderte Art und Weise bis heute in überlieferten Traditionen zu werfen scheint. Wahrscheinlich hängt das Stereotyp vom „schlauhen [betrügerischen] Latiner“, hier und da an der östlichen adriatischen Küste vertreten, z.B.

in der Bucht von Kotor und im Hinterland, mit diesen überlieferten Traditionen zusammen; dasselbe Stereotyp kommt auch in der serbischen epischen Dichtung vor, „Die Lateiner sind alte Betrüger“ (Harder, Lemberg 1996: 4). Man sollte auch den Gegensatz zwischen den „lateinischen“ „nobili“ und den „popolari“ noch im 16. Jahrhundert („odio antico et inestinguibile“) nicht vergessen (nach Jireček 1901: 99).

Zum Abbruch der romanischen Kontinuität kam es nicht überall zur gleichen Zeit, sofern von einem abrupten Ende überhaupt die Rede sein kann. Im kontinentalen Hinterland brach die Siedlungskontinuität wie gezeigt Anfang des 7. Jahrhunderts ab, was mit den slawisch-awarischen Angriffen und der damit verbundenen slawischen Landnahme zusammenhängt und archäologisch oft durch Brandhorizonte in den zentralörtlichen Anlagen („Städten“) und befestigten Bergdörfern/Höhensiedlungen nachweisbar ist (beispielsweise in Jelica-Gradina, Ostra-Sokolica, Viča-Stojkovića Gradina, Bregovina-Kale, Gojin Dol-Kale, Đurđevica-Đerekare usw.). Gewisse, soweit nur vereinzelte Funde lassen es möglich erscheinen, dass es unter Umständen auch Ausnahmen von dieser Entwicklung gab, die im Weiteren erwähnt werden. Währenddessen konnten an der Küste die Romanen ihre *Lebensweise*, wenn auch beschränkt und unter veränderten Umständen, weiterführen. Das ist vor allem durch den *christlichen Glauben*, die *lateinische Sprache*, durch *angestammte Beschäftigungen* wie Seefahrt, Fischfang und Handel, sowie durch das *Weiterverfolgen einer bestimmten Art der Bekleidungsweise* ersichtlich, welches durch die oströmische Thalassokratie im Mittelmeerraum, auch in der Adria, begünstigt war (Werner 1955: 38-39, 43; vgl. Schulze-Dörlamm 2009: 328ff. und 2010: 241-273). Am besten ist das am Bekleidungszubehör wie Fibeln oder Schnallen belegbar.<sup>6</sup> An der Küste treten, hauptsächlich im Gegensatz zum Hinterland, auch Formen des 7. bis 8. Jahrhunderts auf (Vinski 1974; Milošević 1995; Milošević 2010; Milinković 2005b). Viel mehr kann die Archäologie der Kleinfunde kaum zur Frage der Identität beitragen. Ob ein – soweit dies archäologisch fassbar ist – mit entsprechenden Fibeln und Schnallen ausgestatteter und nach

<sup>5</sup> In Arčar/Ratiaria (Nordwestbulgarien) wurde eine Inschrift aus der Zeit des Kaisers Anasthasius (491-518) gefunden: +Anasthasiana Ratiaria semper floreat (Ivanov 1996: 17; Rizos 2011: 462ff.).

<sup>6</sup> Zubehör, welches u.a. für die Gestaltung des eigenen Äußeren verwendet wird.

romanischer Mode bekleideter („akkulturierter“) Slawe damit automatisch auch eine romanische Identität übernahm und ob ein romanischer Berghirte im Hinterland, nach der Erstürmung seines Dorfes, ohne Möglichkeiten, zu neuem Bekleidungszubehör aus alten Zentren zu kommen<sup>7</sup>, nun auch keine romanische Identität mehr hatte, sei zur Diskussion gestellt, wird sich aber kaum so vereinfacht und schnell abgespielt haben (Zur Frage der Bekleidung und der archäologischen Aussagemöglichkeiten zur Identität siehe von Rummel 2010; Kaldellis 2019b). Mit der Zeit werden die „wlachischen“<sup>8</sup> Hirten ihre Romanität vergessen und sich an die neue Situation in den mittelalterlichen Staaten auf der Balkanhalbinsel und danach an die Herrschaft des Osmanischen Reiches angepasst haben.

Die Slawen stießen jedenfalls bis an die Adria vor, überließen aber den Romanen eine Anzahl von Städten mit Umland und die Inseln, wo sie in verschiedenem Ausmaß ihre Lebensweisen und Kulturformen weiterpflegen konnten. Einige Städte, darunter *Salona*, gingen wohl erst im zweiten Viertel des 7. Jahrhunderts zu Grunde (Marović 1984: 297-298, 303, 306, 313).<sup>9</sup> Die Bevölkerung suchte Schutz in Rückzugsgebieten, z.B. auf den vorgelagerten Inseln („horizontale Tension“), in den Bergen („vertikale Tension“) oder in den Ruinen des diokletianischen Palastes in *Spalatum*, was zur Gründung der heutigen Stadt Split führte. Zum eventuellen reduzierten Weiterleben der einheimischen Bevölkerung in *Salona* im 7. Jh. gibt es entgegengesetzte Meinungen (für ein Weiterleben Rapanić 2016: 98, 132-133, kritisch dazu Katić 2018: 248 mit Anm. 7). Während die romanischen Bevölkerungsgruppen an der zergliederten buchten- und inselreichen Küste immerhin mit der ihnen angewohnten Schifffahrt zusammengehalten werden konnten, waren ihre „Verwandten“ im kontinentalen Hinterland, besonders in den Bergregionen, wo es fast keine Funde entsprechender Schnallen und Fibeln des 7. oder 8. Jahrhunderts gibt, sozusagen isoliert

(Milinković 2005b: 303-304). Ob es frühmittelalterliche Enklaven der romanischen Bevölkerung in entlegenen Berggebieten gab, ist bisher für das ostadriatische Hinterland archäologisch nicht bezeugt. Eine derartige Präsenz ist in der Region um Niš/*Naissus* und im Tal der Grossen und Südlichen Morawa nur als Möglichkeit angedeutet, bisher durch sehr wenige Funde, welche keine schwerwiegenden Schlussfolgerungen und Zuweisungen zulassen. Auch auf der Jelica-Gradina ist ein gewisses Weiterleben nicht auszuschließen. Die für die regionalen Verhältnisse große befestigte Siedlung gehört bestimmten Eigenschaften nach nicht gänzlich zu den typischen frühbyzantinischen Zentren (Милинковић 2015: 188-190), aber auch sie wurde in einem mächtigen Brand zerstört, der eindeutige Spuren hinterlassen hat.

Diese wenigen späten Funde, Münzen, ein Räuchergefäß, Bekleidungszubehör und Schmuck werden hier nicht im Einzelnen behandelt. Es bleibt der weiteren Forschung zu erkunden, wer im 7. Jh., nach 615, die Kommunikation entlang der Täler der Nišava und der Morawa, bis zur Donau, unter Kontrolle hatte (Bugarski, Radišić 2016: 91-95; Бугарски 2020: 59-67; vgl. auch Kardaras 2011). Die vor allem in Nordalbanien verbreitete und kontrovers gedeutete Koman-Kultur, die ihre Ausläufer in Nordmazedonien, Montenegro, Dalmatien und Korfu hat, sei hier ausgenommen, da sie ein Thema für sich darstellt (Popović 1984: 181-243; Milinković 2005b; Milošević 1995 und 2010).

Der Übergang von der Antike zum Mittelalter muss an der Adriaküste nicht immer einen Antagonismus hervorgerufen haben, wie er etwa durch Zerstörungshorizonte im kontinentalen Hinterland manifestiert wird; er scheint an manchen Orten langsam und ohne große Zäsuren verlaufen zu sein. Auf der anderen Seite zeugen lateinische Sprachreste in Serbien und Montenegro (Toponymie, Hydronymie usw.) von Kontakten, die es zwischen den verbliebenen Romanen (rurale Population) und den landnehmenden Slawen zweite Hälfte/Ende des 6. und im 7. Jahrhundert gab. Dieser hier nur im allgemeinen Rahmen dargestellte Vorgang ist auf der anderen Seite an der östlichen Adriaküste durch Architekturüberreste und Kleinfunde in viel umfangreicherem Ausmaß archäologisch nachgewiesen worden.

Die Übergangsdynamik von der Spätantike

<sup>7</sup> Ohne äußere Merkmale.

<sup>8</sup> „Vlah“- slawische Bezeichnung für Romanen, etwa dem deutschen Begriff „Wälsche“ entsprechend (Jireček 1901: 34-35; zu Wlachen allgemein Pohl, Hartl, Haubrichs 2017).

<sup>9</sup> Zum Weiterleben der Städte in Dalmatien vgl. Suić 2003: 341-375, mit Abb. 190 auf S. 370 (Städte mit antiker Kontinuität im 10. Jahrhundert).

zum Frühmittelalter an der Küste, die sowohl hinsichtlich der materiellen als auch der geistigen Kultur mancherorts ohne traumatische Zäsuren verlief, unterschied sich somit von derjenigen im kontinentalen Hinterland: Es ist eine nicht vollständig unterbrochene, wenn auch beeinträchtigte Kontinuität der Romanität festzustellen. Mit der Zeit drang das slawische Element in die von den Romanen bewohnten Städte ein, die einst zum Römischen Reich gehört hatten. Die Slawen waren es, die erst vom 15. Jahrhundert an in den Städten dominant wurden, obwohl es an der Küste Ansiedlungen und Städte gab, die schon früher slawischen Charakter hatten. Der letzte bezeugte Sprecher des *dalmatinischen Romanischen* (Dalmatisch) starb 1898 auf der Insel Krk und mit ihm auch dieses mit anderen romanischen Sprachen eng verwandte Idiom (Jireček 1901: 93-101, 78-80). Deshalb bietet Dalmatien besonders gute Möglichkeiten zur Erforschung von allgemeinen Fragen zur Kontinuität und Diskontinuität der Romanität, wie sie auf dem kontinentalen Teil der Balkanhalbinsel für die Zeit nach ca. 615 anders gegeben sind.

In den Berggebieten im Inneren der Balkanhalbinsel, in welchen sich im 6. und am Anfang des 7. Jahrhunderts befestigte Dörfer und Kirchen in bis zu 1800m Höhe befanden, erwähnen die späteren mittelalterlichen Quellen die Wlachen (Јиречек 1959: 191-204). Wenn sich dieser Ausdruck auf die Ethnizität einer Gruppe anstatt bloß auf eine Tätigkeit und Lebensweise bezieht (als Hirten, Begleiter von Warentransporten, Wegführer usw.), dann gilt er einer Transhumanz treibenden Hirtenbevölkerung<sup>10</sup>, die sich eines romanischen Idioms bediente. Reste dieser Bevölkerung sind bis heute in Serbien und in der Umgebung (z.B. Nordmazedonien) erhalten oder in Erinnerung geblieben – es handelt sich um die sogenannten Cincaren<sup>11</sup> oder Aromunen, der Konfession nach christlich orthodox, die ganz generell als Nachfolger der einstmaligen Bewohner der befestigten Höhenlagen vermutet werden können und die sich mit der griechischen, slawischen und anderen Bevölkerung in dem Maße vermischt haben, dass heute zumindest fraglich ist – auch

wegen der nicht nur ihnen angestammten „ethnischen Mimikry“ (Поповић 2008: 30 und Anm. 1.) – ob sie noch eine eigene, besonders romanische Identität haben. Die Antwort würde, falls diese Annahme erlaubt ist, wohl eher negativ ausfallen. Zudem bleibt es aufgrund ihrer Transhumanz und Wanderwirtschaft unbekannt, aus welchen Gebieten genau die Aromunen ursprünglich stammen.<sup>12</sup>

Über ethnische Identitäten anhand von archäologischen Funden zu urteilen ist undankbar, im Sinne eines strikten und überprüfbaren wissenschaftlichen Befundes auch unmöglich, und zwar nicht nur, weil Artefakte keine solche Identität besitzen können, sondern letztendlich auch wegen der erwähnten ethnischen Mimikry (Vortäuschen der eigenen Zugehörigkeit).<sup>13</sup> So müssen Herkunft und Identität nicht immer übereinstimmen, was auch moderne Analogien vor Augen führen. Das Kriegsheil und die Möglichkeit der Vergabe von Beutegut oder Land und die damit einhergehende Verbesserung der Lebensumstände mögen der Macht der heutigen auf Migrationen einwirkenden Zusammenhängen wenigstens zum Teil entsprechen.<sup>14</sup> Einer der Motivationsgründe war und bleibt: *ubi bene, ibi patria* (vgl. Wenskus 1961: 346ff). Die Identitätsänderung kann sich auf solchen Gleisen verschiedentlich abspielen, und kann als Prozess unterschiedlich lang andauern. Dadurch werden archäologische Kriterien zur Identitätsbestimmung relativiert, auch diejenigen, die hier vorläufig verwendet wurden: *Lebensweise* die u.a. durch bestimmte *professionelle Tätigkeiten* (z.B. Seefahrt, Fischfang, Handel, Handwerk, Viehzucht usw.) charakterisiert ist, *der christliche Glaube* – in dieser Zeitspanne –, *die lateinische Sprache* (in den besprochenen Gebieten), die *Art des Wohnens*, das *Bestimmen des eigenen Äußeren* nach einer über Regionen hinausgehenden me-

<sup>10</sup> Durch die Ereignisse der Völkerwanderungszeit teilweise in den Raum südlich der Jireček-Linie gedrängt.

<sup>11</sup> Eine in Serbien und den umgebenden Gebieten übliche Bezeichnung für die Aromunen, bzw. Armanen.

<sup>12</sup> Es sollte hier in Betracht gezogen werden, dass sich die „Neugriechen“ bis ins 19. Jahrhundert als „Romäer“ bezeichnet haben (A.E. 1997: 872).

<sup>13</sup> Den Architekturüberresten gehört diesbezüglich eine besondere Stellung, auch den Überresten von Kirchen.

<sup>14</sup> Die eine neue Identität als Endresultat haben können, wenn auch nach einigen Generationen.



diterranen *Mode*<sup>15</sup> (archäologisch fassbar durch Bekleidungszubehör wie Fibeln, Gewandnadeln, Schnallen, auch Schmuck usw.). Obwohl es keine strikten und beweisbaren Interpretationen in Einzelfällen geben kann, die vom Gesamteindruck eines regional und chronologisch bestimmten Fundrepertoires hergeleitet sind, wäre auf der anderen Seite ein Ignorieren von Verbreitungskarten und Statistiken ebenso nicht den Tatsachen gerecht – Vorlieben für gewisse Formen, wie z.B. die der Romanen für Bügelfibeln mit umgeschlagenen Fuß und verschiedene Tierfibeln, oder der Langobarden für S-Fibeln, sind kaum zu leugnen. Die schriftlichen Quellen differenzieren die Ethnien u.a. auch nach ihrem Äußeren. Einzelfunde erlauben aber keine Rekonstruktion von in diesem Falle romanischer oder langobardischer Anwesenheit. So ist es auch mit den Kleinfunden aus dem Balkanraum bestellt. Die Verbreitung eines Teils von ihnen deckt sich im 7. Jh. mehr oder weniger mit den Rückzugszonen der autochthonen Bevölkerung, wie an einigen auserwählten Beispielen aus Süddalmatien und Montenegro im weiteren Text gezeigt wird. Dazu kommen die architektonischen Überreste von befestigten Städten, Basiliken, Palästen, Villen und anderen Siedlungen. Dem gegenüber steht eine Anzahl von Grubenhäusern, Brandbestattungen und ein verhältnismäßig schlichtes Fundrepertoire aus den Anfangsphasen der slawischen Landnahme.

Nach diesen Anmerkungen scheint es ersichtlich, dass Spekulationen über ethnische Identitäten in Einzelfällen über die Grenzen der Archäologie hinausgehen. Groß angelegte Migrationen oder wichtigere Umwandlungen auf lokaler Ebene, hinterlassen jedoch Spuren in der materiellen Ausstattung und sind in ihrer Gesamtheit nicht zu übersehen. Sie können nach aktuellem Forschungsstand wenigstens zum Teil erfasst werden, wie es in Dalmatien und im kontinentalen Hinterland in der Spätantike und im Frühmittelalter der Fall ist.

Vorerst kann die Schlussfolgerung gezogen werden, dass dort, wo es keinen romanischen (Lateinisch) oder romäischen (Griechisch), d.h. rö-

mischen Staat bzw. Nachfolgestaat (auch Stadtstaat) oder keine Handels- und andere Kontakte mehr gab, die Romanität im Sinne einer bewussten, besonderen Identität im Balkanraum, nach einer gewissen von Region zu Region unterschiedlichen Zeit, ausstarb. Das romanische Idiom der neuzeitlichen Aromunen oder das Weiterführen von professionellen Tätigkeiten, hier der Viehzucht<sup>16</sup>, haben dieser Entwicklung auf lange Sicht wohl kaum entgegengestanden. Enklaven wie die am Plattensee gab es nach aktuellem Forschungsstand im heutigen Bosnien, der Herzegowina, Montenegro und Serbien (Hinterland) nach 614/5 nicht, die Koman-Kultur vorerst ausgenommen (in Serbien nicht vertreten). Dort, wo die Romanität in Städten an der dalmatinischen Küste auch unter neuen, weniger günstigen Bedingungen weiter gepflegt werden konnte, entstand aus ihr, überspitzt formuliert, mit dem „schlaunen Latiner“, ein Gegensatz zum Berghirten im Dinarischen Gebirge oder zum damaligen slawischen *populus* („odio antico et inestinguibile“). Erst nach Jahrhunderten haben sich diese Antagonismen gemildert und ausgeglichen.

\*

Im Weiteren werden einige ausgewählte archäologische Funde aus Süddalmatien und Montenegro erwähnt, die zum Bekleidungszubehör und Schmuck gehören, und vorwiegend nach einer Machart hergestellt wurden, die für die romanische, bzw. einheimische romanisierte Population typisch ist, oder unter dem Einfluss derer Mode, bzw. deren Werkstätten standen.

#### *Sokol*

Die Festung Sokol ist vor allem aufgrund ihrer spätmittelalterlichen Phase bekannt, die heute noch gut erhalten ist. Sie befindet sich im nordöstlichen Teil der Region Konavle im Süden Dalmatiens (Kroatien), im Dorfe Dunave.

In der Unterstadt von Sokol, wo Reste einer spätantiken und frühmittelalterlichen Siedlung entdeckt wurden (die Fundstelle ist durch mehrere archäologische Horizonte gekennzeichnet), fand man 2013 eine nicht fertiggestellte plastisch gegossene bronzene Vogelfibel (gedeutet als Werkstattabfall), in Form einer Taube, Dim. 4,8 cm

<sup>15</sup> Im Gegensatz zur (barbarischen) „Tracht“, „Volkstracht“, etwa „Folklore“, ist die Kleidungsmode aus den mediterranen urbanen Zentren wie Konstantinopel oder Rom heraus diktiert, und u.a. durch Handel oder Mobilität von Personen oder Personengruppen verteilt worden.

<sup>16</sup> Die Viehzucht war bei der einheimischen Bevölkerung Illyricums im 6. Jahrhundert von großer Bedeutung, schon durch das Verlegen der Siedlungen in die Bergregionen.



Abb. 1 Fibel aus Sokol

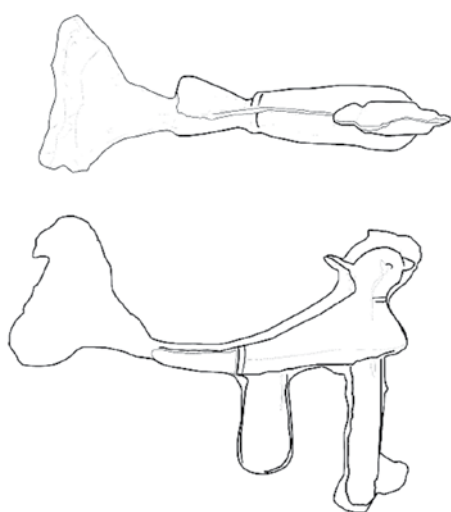


Abb. 2 Fibel aus Sokol



Abb. 3 Fibel aus Ljuta

x 3,5 cm (Abb. 1, 2).<sup>17</sup> Als nächsten analogen Fund erwähnen Katić und Kapetanić eine ebenso plastisch geformte silberne Vogelfibel aus dem unweit

entfernten Ljuta, mit eiserner Nadel. Sie nehmen an, dass auch sie in der Werkstatt von Sokol hergestellt wurde (Abb. 3). In beiden Fällen sind die Flügel geschlossen. Die Autoren führen auch weitere Analogien aus Dalmatien und dem Hinterland an (Katić, Kapetanić 2019: 8-16, Sl. 2,3, T. 1/sl. 2a, 3a). Zum Vergleich, Vogelfibeln kommen auch bei den Barbaren vor, sind aber auf andere Weise gestaltet (Rácz 2011: 165-179). Der Fund aus Sokol ist wichtig, da er wegen der Fibel mit Guss Spuren und entsprechenden Begleitfunden die Existenz einer Werkstatt belegt, deren flexibler chronologischer Rahmen ins 6. Jh. zu setzen wäre, was eine Benutzung im 7. Jh., vor allem in der ostadriatischen Küstenregion, nicht ausschließt.

Aus Sokol stammt dazu eine Gürtelschnalle des Typs „Sucidava“ (Kapetanić 2013: 20), wie auch ein cloisonnierter Schnallenbeschlag. Die Gürtelschnalle des Typs „Sucidava“ (D 1) ist aus Bronze hergestellt, mit dem typischen Durchbruchmuster in Form eines Kreuzes und Halbmondes auf dem schildförmigen Beschlag, und kleinem Endfortsatz. Die Schnalle ist rechteckig, der Dorn fehlt, auf der Rückseite befinden sich drei Lochzapfen. Angaben zu den



Abb. 4 Gürtelschnalle aus Sokol

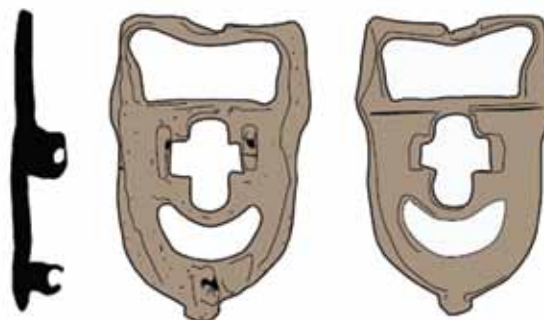


Abb. 5 Gürtelschnalle aus Sokol

<sup>17</sup> Die Abb. 1 und 3 wurden ohne Maßstab in Katić, Kapetanić 2019: Sl. 2 und Sl. 3. veröffentlicht.

Dimensionen stehen nicht zur Verfügung (Abb. 4, 5). Dieser vor allem in Südosteuropa verbreitete Schnallentyp wurde größtenteils von Männern getragen, im Karpatenbecken auch von Frauen. Zu datieren ist er schwerpunktmäßig in die Mitte und die zweite Hälfte des 6. Jahrhunderts (Schulze-Dörrlamm 2009a: 146-151, 246).

Der Hochrechteckbeschlagn aus Bronze mit vier Ecknieten und Fassungen für cloisonnierte Einlagen, die außer in Spuren beim oberen und unteren Rand (rötliches Glas oder Almandin) nicht mehr erhalten sind, gehörte primär zu einer wohl



Abb. 6 Beschlag aus Sokol

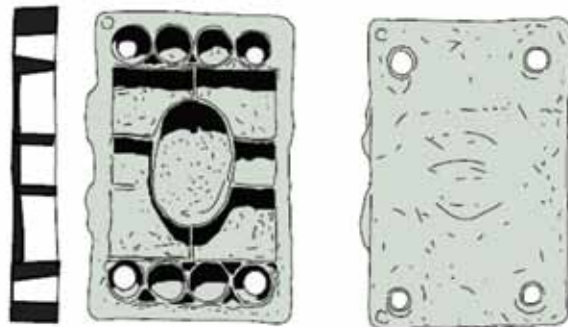


Abb. 7 Beschlag aus Sokol

ovalen Schnalle, die ebenso fehlt (Abb. 6, 7).<sup>18</sup> Die Positionen der Ecknieten sind außer für die rechte obere angedeutet, nachträgliche Änderungen (vier Perforationen innerhalb der runden Fassungen), für einen neuen Zweck (Applikation?) sind möglich. Die größte und zentrale Fassung ist ovaler Form, je vier kleinere runde Fassungen befinden sich entlang des oberen und unteren Randes. Horizontal

und vertikal angeordnete, gerade Stege durchtrennen das Mittelfeld. Die Höhe des Beschlags beträgt ca. 4cm. Ähnliche rechteckige cloisonnierte Schnallenbeschläge mit Ecknieten, bzw. Teile von Beschlägen sind aus der Nekropole Korita bei Duvno (nordwestliche Herzegowina) bekannt (Miletić 1979: 149-150, 170-172, T. IV). Dazu sind Beschläge gleichen oder ähnlichen Typs aus Solin/Salona zu erwähnen (Piteša 2009: 26 Nr. 28, 32 Nr. 37; zu cloisonnierten Schnallenbeschlägen aus der Provinz Dalmatien siehe auch Fabijanić 2004: 96-97), aus Italien (Bierbrauer 1975: 153-158, T. III/5, XXIV/3, vgl. auch T. XXV/1-1a, XLV/1-1a) und aus Klinovac bei Vranje in Südserbien (Mitrović 2010: 52, Nr. 85). Sie sind mit den Schnallentypen und dazugehörigen Beschlägen C9-C12 vergleichbar und können vom Ende der ersten Hälfte des 5. Jahrhunderts bis in den Anfang des 6. datiert werden. Verbreitet waren sie im östlichen Mittelmeergebiet, in Kleinasien und im Nahen Osten, treten aber auch anderswo auf, wie im westgotischen Spanien (Schulze-Dörrlamm 2002: 105-115, 244). Ein in gewisser Hinsicht vergleichbares Exemplar, aber mit gegenständigen Vogelköpfen am hinteren Rand, wurde in der Nekropole in Globasnitz/Globasnica bei Völkermarkt/Velikovec in Kärnten, im Männergrab Nr. 11 als Teil eines, nach F. Glaser, ostgotischen Militärgürtels gefunden. In dieser Nekropole fand man Gräber mit künstlich verformten Schädeln (Glaser 2003: 431-438). Offensichtlich wurden Schnallen mit cloisonnierten Rechteckbeschlägen auf dem Gebiet des Reiches getragen, sie kommen aber auch in Zusammenhängen mit germanischen Merkmalen vor.

Der Fund aus Sokol scheint am ehesten dem Typ C 10, Ende der ersten Hälfte des 5.-Ende des 5. Jh. nahe zu kommen, was einen Gebrauch bis hinein ins 6. Jahrhundert nicht ausschließt, besonders wenn es nachträgliche Änderungen für einen neuen Zweck gab.

#### *Rose/Hrisinon?*

Rose ist dank seiner günstigen Lage seit langer Zeit ein Hafenort (Halbinsel Luštica), unweit der südlichen Seite des Eingangs in die Bucht von Kotor (Boka Kotorska).<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Die Angaben zu diesem Fundstück verdanke ich den Kollegen Dr. M. Katić aus Split und N. Kapetanić aus Dubrovnik.

<sup>19</sup> Die meisten Fundangaben zu Rose und Budva sind nach Milinković 2005b: 308-311 wiedergegeben, mit Änderungen und Erweiterungen.

In einer der zwei Buchten von Rose, Male Rose, sind während Grabungen 1996-2001 Überreste einer Kirche vollständig freigelegt worden, welche in die Zeit des 9. bis 11. Jahrhunderts gehört, mit insgesamt 18 bisher aufgedeckten Skelettgräbern in der unmittelbaren Nähe.<sup>20</sup> Diese Kirche wurde über einer schon bestehenden Nekropole errichtet, die sich womöglich um einen älteren Sakralbau bildete, für dessen Bestehen es gewisse Indizien gibt (Mauerreste, Spolien, Glastessera u.a.). Unweit der Kirchenruine steht die chronologisch undefiniert gebliebene serbisch – orthodoxe Kirche der Hl. Dreifaltigkeit, was insgesamt betrachtet auf eine „Tradition des Kultortes“ hindeuten könnte. Unter der vorangehenden Nekropole befindet sich wiederum eine starke Schicht aus der römischen Zeit. Leider ist bisher nur ein Teil der Fundstelle erforscht, ein anderer ist inzwischen durch Neubauten für eventuelle weitere Ausgrabungen unzugänglich gemacht worden.

Die Grablagen sind nicht alle zeitgleich und haben verschiedene Ausrichtungen. In den Gräbern Nr. 10 und 15 wurden eine Gürtelschnalle und eine Fibel *in situ* gefunden, eine weitere Gürtelschließe und Fibel sind ohne gesicherten Grabzusammenhang geborgen worden.

Aus dem SSW-NNO orientierten Doppelgrab Nr. 10 (mit den Köpfen in SSW) stammt die kleine 3,3 cm lange, gegossene Bronzefibel in Form eines katzenartigen Tieres (Abb. 8/1). Die Nadel ist nicht erhalten, der Tierkörper wurde lediglich mit einigen Strichen verziert. Es kann nicht eindeutig bestimmt werden, zu welchem der beiden Skelette, die nicht im besten Zustand angetroffen wurden, sie gehört. Jedenfalls lag sie in der Brustgegend des östlichen Skelettes, was der romanischen Tragsitte entsprechen würde, in Längsrichtung parallel zur Grabachse. Leider konnten diese Gräber nicht anthropologisch un-

tersucht werden. Fibeln in Form eines katzenartigen Tieres wie diejenige aus Rose sind aus romanischen Zusammenhängen, z.B. aus der Region von Salona in Dalmatien oder aus Svač/*Suacium* (Montenegro) bekannt und können in die zweite Hälfte des 6. und den Anfang des 7. Jahrhunderts datiert werden, was eine Weiterbenutzung nicht ausschließt, besonders die Schnalle aus dem Grab Nr. 15 im gleichen Gräberfeld in Betracht ziehend (Vinski 1974: 16ff; Buljević et al. 1994: 223 Nr. 25-27; Milinković 2005b: 315, Abb. 5/5; Zagarčanin 2017: 219, T. 8/1a, 1b - 2a, 2b).

Die zweite hier zu nennende Fibel wurde im Aushub des Sektors südlich der Kirchenruine gefunden, ist also mit aller Wahrscheinlichkeit auch einem Grab zugehörig. Die bronzene Ringfibel mit Omegaenden und bandförmigem Querschnitt besitzt einen Durchmesser von 4 cm (Abb. 8/2).



Abb. 8 Kleinfunde aus Rose

Ähnliche Fibeln sind aus Korita bei Duvno in der Herzegowina mit ebensolchen Enden (Miletić 1979: 143-149, 151-152), aus Italien und Virpazar-Mijele in Montenegro bekannt, in Virpazar allerdings mit Volutenenden. Fibeln des erwähnten Typs befanden sich innerhalb der Gräber in Korita hauptsächlich im rechten Schulterbereich, oder auf der Brust, bzw. unterhalb des Halses, in einem Falle bei der linken Schulter. Im Grab 15a lag eine bronzene Omegafibel unter dem Hals und eine

<sup>20</sup> Das Fundmaterial wird im Museum in Herceg Novi aufbewahrt.



zweite, aus Eisen, in der unteren Brustgegend (als Schnalle verwendet?). In den drei anthropologisch untersuchten Gräbern mit Fibeln des erwähnten Typs wurden jüngere Frauen begraben. Die Fibeln befanden sich auf der Brust, bei der rechten Schulter bzw. in der Halsgegend (Miletić 1979; Riemer 2000: 121-124; Milinković 2005b: 316; Zagarčanin 2018: 123-124, T. III/27, Sl. 4/27).

Zusammen mit ihren analogen Funden kann die Omega-fibel aus Rose zeitlich in die zweite Hälfte des 6. und in den Anfang des 7. Jh. bestimmt werden – auch hier mit der Möglichkeit einer Weiterverwendung.

Zu den Schnallen aus Rose gehört ein gegossener Bronzebeschlag vom Typ „Korinth“ (E6), der in einer kleinen topographischen Sondierung nur wenig südlich der Kirchenruine mit zeitlich verschiedenartiger Keramik (vorwiegend römisch, aber auch rezent) und verstreut liegenden menschlichen Knochen gefunden wurde (Abb. 8/3). Es ist sehr wahrscheinlich, dass auch dieser Schnallenbeschlag aus einem (gestörten?) Grab stammt. Der Bügel mit dem Dorn ist nicht erhalten geblieben, doch der Draht zu seiner Verbindung mit der dreieckigen Beschlagplatte war aus Eisen, was an Korrosionsresten zu erkennen ist. Der 3,4 cm lange Scharnierbeschlag hat beim Bügel zwei kreisrunde Auslassungen neben welchen sich die typische, annähernd herzförmige, durchbrochene Form befindet. Am Ende des Beschlags befindet sich eine rundförmige Platte mit eingeritztem Pentagramm. An der Rückseite sind Lochzapfen angebracht. Vergleichbare Exemplare von Schnallen des Typs „Korinth“, die ebenfalls mit einem Pentagramm versehen sind, kommen von der süddalmatinischen Insel Majsan (Milinković 2005b: 304-308) und sind auch in Budva gefunden worden (s.u.). Diese Massenprodukte, die in Frauengräbern auftreten (Tigani, Peloppones), sind von der Krim bis nach Südspanien verbreitet (nicht im Nahen Osten oder in Nordafrika) und können in die Mitte und zweite Hälfte des 7. Jh. datiert werden (Schulze-Dörrlamm 2009b: 19-26, 354).

Bei Anlage des Grabes Nr. 15 sind Skelettreste einer früheren Bestattung beiseitegeschoben worden. Das Skelett einer Frau war S-N bis SW-NO orientiert, mit Kopf im S bis SW. Im oberen Brustbereich fanden sich zehn Perlen aus Glaspaste, bei der Hüfte ein fragmentierter runder Eisenring, etwas unterhalb davon eine bronze-

ne Schnalle mit insektenförmigem beweglichem Beschlag (E 11). Die Schnalle ist gegossen, 4,8 cm lang (Abb. 8/4). Der Beschlag zeigt eine einfache Punktornamentik, an der Unterseite sind drei Lochzapfen. Der Dorn ist massiv und sattelförmig. Solche Schnallen waren von Südspanien bis zum Kaukasusgebiet verbreitet. Sie sind von der Mitte des 7 - bis zum ersten Viertel des 8. Jh. datiert (Schulze-Dörrlamm 2009b: 36-39, 355).<sup>21</sup>

Es ist darauf hinzuweisen, dass Rose, wie in Montenegro noch Prevlaka, Budva, Bar, Virpazar, Svač und Đuteza bei Podgorica, die Möglichkeit bieten, romanische Gürtelschnallen und Fibeln im Grabzusammenhang zu erfassen, wenn auch bislang nur in wenigen Beispielen. Leider lässt hier die anthropologische Bearbeitung der Skelettreste zu wünschen übrig, was den Wert des Befundes mindert. Für Rose wäre noch zu betonen, dass sich der spätromanische Horizont zwischen römische und mittelalterliche Schichtungen einfügt, was für eine Siedlungskontinuität an diesem Ort spricht und ihn für die weitere Erforschung empfiehlt.

#### *Prevlaka*

Die Kleininsel Prevlaka im Meerbusen von Tivat (innerhalb der Bucht von Kotor) liegt nur wenige Meter von der Küste entfernt. Auf dieser Fundstelle, die durch mehrere Zeithorizonte charakterisiert ist, wurden mit Unterbrechungen seit den 50-er Jahren des 20. Jahrhunderts Ausgrabungen durchgeführt. Hier gilt das Interesse zwei Vogelfibeln.<sup>22</sup>

Während der Grabungen 1957 wurde am nahen Festland, gegenüber der kleinen Insel, eine Bestattung südlich der Lokalität Bačve erforscht (Grab Nr. 19). Sie hatte eine nicht ganz erhalte-

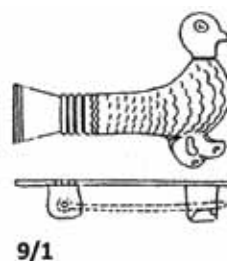
<sup>21</sup> Auf der Verbreitungskarte des Typs E 11, Abb. 16 auf S. 37 des angeführten Werkes ist als einer der Fundorte die Gradina auf dem Jelica-Gebirge in Westserbien (Regionalzentrum aus dem 6./Anf. 7. Jh.) eingetragen, unter 9, mit der Bemerkung: „unpubl., freundl. Mitt. M. Milinković, Belgrad“. Leider ist es hier zu einem Missverständnis oder zu einer Verwechslung gekommen; auf der Jelica ist ein solcher Schnallentyp bisher nicht gefunden worden. Von demselben Fundort stammt aber eine publizierte Schnalle des Typs „Sucidava“ (D1), die nicht auf der Verbreitungskarte dieses Typs eingetragen ist (vgl. Schulze-Dörrlamm 2009a: 150, Abb. 54).

<sup>22</sup> Die Einsicht in die Grabungsdokumentation, welche im orthodoxen Kloster des Hl. Erzengels Michael auf derselben Insel aufbewahrt wird, verdanke ich der Klostergemeinschaft, Abt Benedikt und besonders Pater Maxim.

ne Konstruktion aus *tegulae* und *imbrices*, die oberhalb des Skelettes wohl dachförmig angeordnet waren.<sup>23</sup> Wegen der schlecht erhaltenen Skelettreste konnte das Geschlecht der bestatteten Person nicht bestimmt werden.

Das Grab war N-S orientiert, mit dem Kopf im Norden (vgl. die Ausrichtung der Gräber in Rose). In der Brustgegend befand sich eine Fibel aus Silber (Ковачевић 1967: 275, jedoch mit der Anmerkung im Grabungsprotokoll, in Klammern: „Plotin“ – was auf eine Legierung oder schlechteres Silber hindeuten könnte), mit einer korrodierten Nadel aus Eisen. Die Fibel hatte die Form einer Taube.<sup>24</sup> Eine Zeichnung der Fibel ist bei Kovačević zu finden, ohne weitere nähere Angaben (Abb. 9/1). Aus ihr geht hervor, dass sie plattenförmig war, mit einfacher Verzierung des stilisierten Körpers, die die Federn anzudeuten scheint (Ковачевић 1967: 275, Сл. 25). Somit ist sie mit den plattenförmigen Taubenfibeln aus Budva, Bar und Svač vergleichbar (s.u.), und hat, wie die erwähnten Fibeln, geschlossene Flügel. Das bronzenes Exemplar aus Bar in Montenegro (Abb. 10) wurde bei den Überresten einer frühchristlichen/frühbyzantinischen Kirche in einem ebenso mit Dachziegeln konstruierten Grab gefunden (Zagarčanin 2008: 18, sl. 17). Romanische Tierfibeln, darunter auch Vogelfibeln, gehörten zur Bekleidung der Frauen. Sie wurden nach der Fundlage in der Brustgegend wohl als Umhangschliessen benutzt und können allgemein in das 6-7. Jh. datiert werden (Riemer 2000: 109, 111-113). Den Beifunden der Vogelfibel aus Budva nach (Schnalle des Typs „Boly-Želovce“), dauert ihre Laufzeit im 7. Jh. an.

Die zweite Taubenfibel von der Prevlaka (Abb. 9/2a, b) wurde während den Ausgrabungen 1999 in einer Grube gefunden (Танасић 2020: Инв. бр. 80).<sup>25</sup> Den Angaben aus dem Katalog von



9/2a



9/2b

Abb. 9 Fibeln von der Prevlaka bei Tivat



Abb.10 Fibel aus Bar

Tanasić nach ist diese Fibel aus Bronze erstellt, mit Vergoldung am Hals, Schwanz und den Füßen. Da sie leider noch nicht restauriert wurde, kann dies nicht überprüft werden. Die Dimensionen betragen 3,6 cm x 2,6 cm x 0,3/0,9 cm. Auch diese Fibel hat geschlossene Flügel und ist im Gegensatz zur erst-

<sup>23</sup> Fotografien des Grabes bei Танасић 2020, S. 20.

<sup>24</sup> Unpublizierte Grabungsdokumentation – Grabungstagebuch für 13. und 14. August 1957, Grabprotokoll für das Grab Nr. 19 vom 13. August 1957; vgl. mit Танасић 2020, 19-20, wo die Fibel aus dem Grab von Bačve als aus Bronze mit Vergoldung erwähnt wird, was den Angaben aus der Grabungsdokumentation widerspricht, aber dem angegebenen Herstellungsmaterial der zweiten, später gefundenen Taubenfibel von der Prevlaka gleicht (s.u.).

<sup>25</sup> In der Grabungsdokumentation für das Jahr 1999: C 143/1999. Nach Zagarčanin stammen beide Fibeln von der Prevlaka aus Gräbern (Zagarčanin 2017: 217, 219), was den Angaben aus der Grabungsdokumentation folgend nicht richtig ist, vgl. Grabungstagebuch für 23.08.1999, Verzeichnis der Kleinfunde 1999/C 143, Zeichnung Nr. 36 (Grundriss der angeschnittenen Grube mit angezeigter Fundstelle der Fibel).

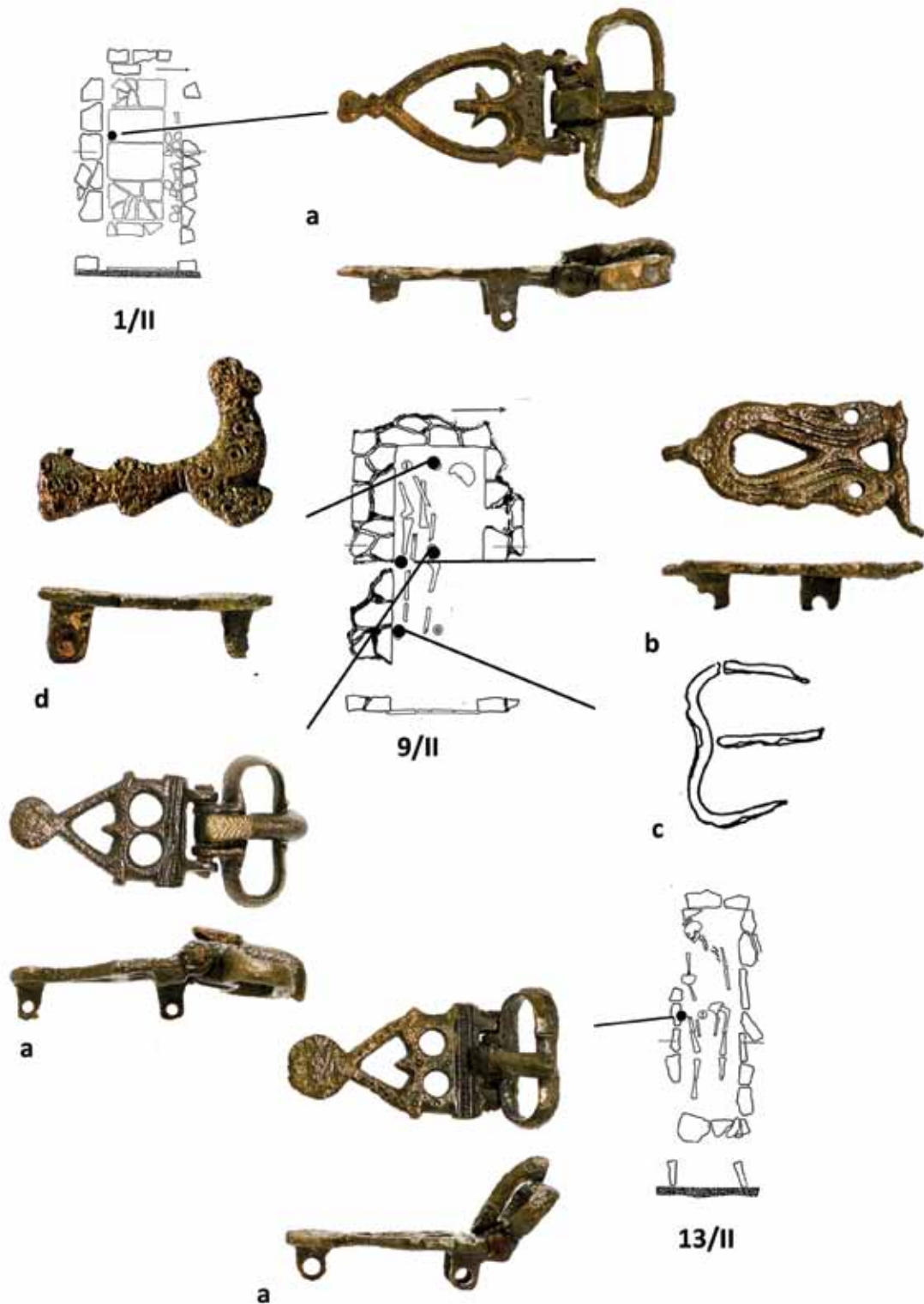


Abb. 11 Funde aus der Nekropole in Budva

erwähnten von Bačve zum Teil plastisch geformt (in gewissem Maße ähnlich zu den Vogelfibeln aus Sokol und Ljuta). Zusammen mit den voran genannten kann sie in den allgemeinen Zeitrahmen – 6/7. Jahrhundert datiert werden.

*Budva/Buthua*

Innerhalb der Nekropole am Mogren-Strand in Budva/Buthua (Montenegro), die von der griechisch-illyrischen Zeit bis ins frühe Mittelalter genutzt wurde und von der mehr als 450 Gräber frei-

gelegt sind, befinden sich auch einige Grablegen des späten 6. bzw. des 7. Jh. (Milinković 2005b: 310-311; Marković 2012: 281-282). Es sollen, was dieses Gräberfeld anbetrifft, an dieser Stelle Funde aus vier Ost-West orientierten Gräbern vorgestellt werden.

Das Grab 1/II enthielt verstreut liegende Skelettreste. Die Grabkonstruktion (2,40 m x 1 m x 0,15 m) bestand aus einer Reihe grob behauener Steine in rechteckiger Anordnung, der Boden war mit Ziegelsteinen und Ziegelsteinfragmenten bedeckt. Als einziges Fundstück in dieser Grablege wird eine 5,9 cm lange, aus Bronze gegossene Gürtelschnalle erwähnt (Abb. 11/1 II, a).<sup>26</sup> Der herzförmig durchbrochene bewegliche Beschlag hat in der Schnallenachse eine dreiblattförmige Erweiterung, die Blattenden sind spitz auslaufend geformt. Der Schnallenbügel ist leicht nierenförmig und mit einem massiven Dorn versehen, dessen rechteckig geformte Basis mit gekreuzten Strichen verziert ist. Der Beschlag hat vier reihenförmig angeordnete, eingepunzte Kreisaugen. An der Unterseite finden sich Lochzapfen. Die Schnalle gehört dem Typ „Balgota“ an (ähnlich zu D 9 und E 16 nach Schulze-Dörrlamm). Ein analoges Exemplar wurde in Budva im Atrium der Basilika gefunden (s.u.). Solche Schnallen, mit Varianten, werden in die erste Hälfte des 7. Jh. datiert (Schulze-Dörrlamm 2009a: 247; Schulze-Dörrlamm 2009b: 355).

Die Konstruktion des Grabes 9/II (1,92 m x 0,80 m x 0,10 m) war ähnlich, wobei die Steine mit Mörtel verbunden waren. Der nordöstliche Teil des Grabes ist beschädigt. Auch hier waren die Skelettreste schlecht erhalten. Das Inventar war mit drei Schnallen und einer Fibel verhältnismäßig reich. Eine der Schnallen gehört dem Typ „Korinth“ an (E 6). Sie ist aus Bronze gegossen und 5,6 cm lang (Abb. 11/9 II, a). Der durchbrochene Beschlag endet in der typischen Rundscheibe, die, wie in Rose, mit einem eingeritzten Pentagramm versehen ist. Der massive Dorn trägt an der Basis ein Strichornament in Fischgrätmanier. Von der zweiten, 4,3 cm langen bronzenen Schnalle ist nur der lyraförmige Beschlag erhalten (Abb. 11/9 II, b). Sie gehört dem Typ „Boly-Želovce“ an, der in

Griechenland, Albanien, Pannonien und auch in Istrien im 7. Jh. verbreitet war (Ibler 1992: 138-140). Die dritte ist aus Eisen und stark fragmentiert (Abb. 11/9 II, c). Außer den Schnallen befand sich in diesem Grab eine bronzene, 2,7 cm lange Taubenfibel, die mit Kreisaugen und einfachen Strichornamenten verziert ist (Abb. 11 9 II, d). Die Flügel des Vogels sind geschlossen wiedergegeben. Diese Fibel kann mit den erwähnten von der Prevlaka und aus Bar, wie auch aus Svač verglichen werden (Milinković 2005b: 315, Abb. 5/6). Schließlich wurde im Grab 13/II, welches eine einfache Steinumrandung aufwies (2,10 m x 0,62 m x 0,26 m) und Skelettreste einer erwachsenen Person enthielt, in der Gürtelgegend noch eine Schnalle des Typs „Korinth“ gefunden. Auch sie ist aus Bronze gefertigt, 5,2 cm lang und trägt eine etwas andere Verzierung, wobei neben dem Punktornament wiederum das Pentagramm auf der Rundplatte begegnet. Ihre Länge beträgt 5,2 cm (Abb. 11/13 II, a).

Aus dem beschädigten Grab mit Steinumrandung (Nr. 39) stammt eine Bronzefibel mit dem Motiv zweier Vögel, vielleicht Tauben, die aus einem Becher trinken. Sie wurde in oberer Brustlage gefunden. Bei dieser Gelegenheit soll sie nur erwähnt und vorläufig in das 6-7. Jh. datiert werden (Marković 2012: 123-124, 246-247, T. 54/39,1; Загарчанин 2019, 100).



Abb.12 Gürtelschnalle aus der Basilika in Budva

Zu den Grabfunden aus der bekannten Nekropole gesellen sich diejenigen aus einer Gräbergruppe im Atrium der frühbyzantinischen Basilika in der Altstadt von Budva (*intra muros*). Im Grab Nr. 1 (Doppelgrab mit Ziegelsteinumrandung), wurde eine Schnalle des Typs „Balgota“ gefunden (Abb. 12), mit der Annahme, dass hier ein Mann bestattet wurde (Јанковић 2007: 36, 66, 75, Сл. 28).

<sup>26</sup> Die für diese Arbeit erstellten Aufnahmen der Funde aus der Nekropole in Budva verdanke ich den Kolleginnen und Kollegen aus dem Museum der Stadt Budva, vor allem Milena Vrzić und dem Fotografen Velimir Perunović.



*Duteza*

Die befestigte Höhenanlage Đuteza im Dorf Dinoša, wenige Kilometer südöstlich von Podgorica, wurde im Jahre 2014 durch Ausgrabungen erforscht (Cerović 2020: 970-971; Bugaj et al. 2013: 149-165).<sup>27</sup> Auf den Überresten einer vorgeschichtlichen Befestigung wurde im 6. Jh. im reduzierten Umfang eine neue Anlage errichtet, mit aller Wahrscheinlichkeit eine befestigte Höhengsiedlung (Dorf), wie sie auf dem Balkan in dieser Epoche die Siedlungsgrundeinheit bildet (Ciglencčki 2014: 242,245; Милинковић 2015: 258), mit einer Kirche in zentraler Lage. In dieser Kirche mit Narthex, Naos und einem Baptisterium im nördlichen Anbau wurde zwischen dem Narthex und Naos (Durchgang?), im Gürtelbereich eines O-W orientierten Skelettgrabes Nr. 1, eine Schnalle gefunden (Abb. 13, 14).<sup>28</sup>

Die Gürtelschnalle mit viereckigem, an den Kanten ausgeschweiftem Bügel und schildförmigem festem Beschlag mit Endfortsatz wurde aus Bronze gegossen (Abb. 13 links oben, Abb. 14). Es ist nicht eindeutig, scheint aber, dass der Dorn aus Eisen ist (mit Korrosionsspuren auf einem Teil des Beschlags). Auf der Rückseite befinden sich bei der kleinen Schnalle zwei Lochzapfen. Ihre Masse betragen 2,3 cm x 1,8 cm. Hinsichtlich der

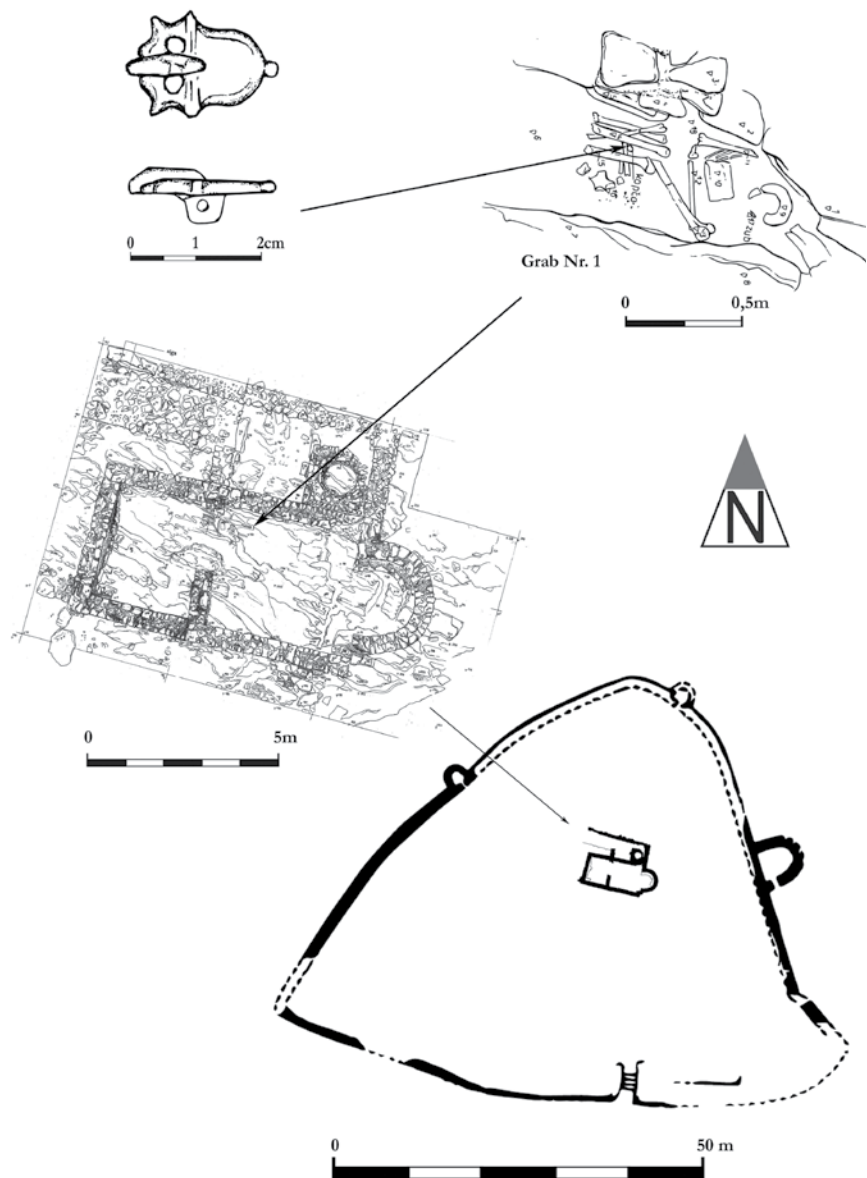


Abb.13 Đuteza bei Podgorica, Montenegro

Fundlage kann allerdings bemerkt werden, dass das Grab gestört war. Das Geschlecht der verstorbenen Person wurde nicht bestimmt.

Diese Schnalle wurde bereits von Mladen Zagarčanin vorgelegt (Zagarčanin 2019: 155, Fig. 6). In der Form analoge Schnallen können aus Davidovac-Gradište bei Vranje in Südserbien (Mitrović 2010: 57, Nr. 84)<sup>29</sup>, aus *Viminatum-*

<sup>27</sup> Die Ausgrabungen fanden unter der Leitung von Mag. Mitra Cerović statt, Nationalmuseum von Montenegro, welcher ich die Erlaubnis für die Benutzung und Publikation der Grabungsdokumentation wie auch die Einsicht der Funde verdanke.

<sup>28</sup> Grabungsdokumentation Skizze 12, Grabungsinventar Blatt Nr. 24.

<sup>29</sup> Streufund, zu dem es 1996 während einer Prospektion kam. Die mündliche Angabe zu den Fundumständen stammt von G. Mitrović, Museum in Vranje. Gradište ist ein erhobenes Plateau mit einer Fläche von mehreren Hektar, auf welchem sich höchstwahrscheinlich Überreste einer frühbyzantinischen Befestigung befinden (vgl. M. Јовановић, 1966: 316).



Abb.14 Đuteza, Schnalle

Više Grobalja (Zotović 1994: Abb. 2; Ivanišević-Kazanski-Mastykova 2006: 25, 174, Pl. 18/3, Fig. 12/12, 41/3)<sup>30</sup>, Sremska Mitrovica/Sirmium an der Save (Dimitrijević-Kovačević-Vinski 1962: 95, Abb. 9)<sup>31</sup>, aus der Nekropole in Szentcs-Nagyhegy, Ungarn, am Veker-Fluss (Csallány 1961: 45-46, T. XXIII/15)<sup>32</sup> und aus Piatra Frecăței/Beroe in Südost-Rumänien angeführt werden. A. Petre, welcher die Resultate der langjährigen Ausgrabungen der großen hiesigen Nekropole interpretierte (es handelt sich um eine posthume Publikation), hat die dort gefundene Schnalle einem Typ zugeordnet, welchen er in seiner detaillierten Typologie als „Sucidava-Béroé II“ benannte. Diese Typenbezeichnung hat m.W. keine breite Verwendung gefunden (Petre 1987: 68, Pl. 122bis/190b).<sup>33</sup> Eine leicht abgeänderte Variante

<sup>30</sup> Die Schnalle wurde im Grab Nr. 121 gefunden, in der Nähe des Gürtelbereiches. Es handelt sich um ein Männergrab mit Waffenbeigaben (Spatha, Schildbuckel, Lanzenspitze), einer Schilddornschnalle usw., innerhalb der germanischen, wohl gepidischen Nekropole, 6./Anf. 7. Jh.

<sup>31</sup> Zufallsfund, gemacht um das Jahr 1900, ohne nähere Angaben.

<sup>32</sup> Die Schnalle wurde hier im Männergrab Nr. 7 an der rechten Seite des Schädels gefunden. Das Grab wird von Csallány eindeutig als gepidisch bestimmt (S. 44). Der allgemeine chronologische Rahmen ist eigentlich schon im Titel seines Buches vorgegeben (454-568), obwohl Csallány das Grab. Nr. 7. „auf Grund der Grabbeigaben“ in den „Anfang der Awarenzeit“ setzt, S. 258. Zum Grab Nr. 7 aus Szentcs-Nagyhegy siehe auch Kiss 2019: 475-477, wo die Schnalle in die zweite Hälfte oder in das Ende des 6. Jh. datiert wird.

<sup>33</sup> Der Fund stammt aus dem Körpergrab Nr. B 59. Seine genaue Lage ist nicht angegeben. Zum Unterschied von den meisten anderen hier entdeckten, zahlreichen Schnallen, ist für diese keine chronologische Zuweisung angeboten. Die Spätphase der Nekropole hat Petre in zwei Gruppen unterteilt: a) 491-602 und b) 602-679 (S. 111).

des Schnallentyps kommt aus Kostogryzovo, aus einem Grab mit Pferdebestattung (Ukraine, nahe der Dnjepr-Mündung), frühe Awarenzeit (nach Gall et al., 2020: S. 56, Fig. 11/1).

Die bisherigen Interpretationen des Schnallentyps, welchem der Fund aus Đuteza angehört, und die dazugehörige vorgelegte Argumentation werden an anderem Ort in näheren Betracht gezogen werden. Zu einem vorläufigen Datierungsrahmen können neben Szentcs-Nagyhegy dank dem Fundzusammenhang die Funde aus *Viminatum*, und nun auch Đuteza beitragen, welche eine Zuordnung in die zweite Hälfte des 6./Anfang 7. Jh. erlauben. Die Grundform der Schnalle, dem Typ „Sucidava“ ähnlich, widerspricht grundsätzlich einem solchen Datierungsvorschlag nicht. Nach den angeführten Analogien mit Beifunden wurde sie von Männern getragen, als Gürtelschnalle.

Aus Đuteza stammt ein Armring mit offenen und plattenförmig erweiterten Enden, gefunden im Narthex der Kirche, oberhalb der Skelettreste des Grabes Nr. 1, aus welchem die Schnalle stammt (Abb. 15).<sup>34</sup> An einem der Enden befindet sich die schematische Darstellung einer Büste, mit



Abb.15 Đuteza, Arming

Nimbus (?) und Perlenumrandung. Auf der linken Seite der dargestellten Figur könnte vielleicht ein erhobener Arm angedeutet sein (unklar - Abb. 15, Detail). Es kann nicht mit Gewissheit über das Herstellungsmaterial gesprochen werden, da die Patina nicht entfernt, und bisher noch keine entsprechenden Untersuchungen vorgenommen

<sup>34</sup> Mitteilung von M. Cerović; Grabungsdokumentation - vorläufiger Fundbericht, S. 16, Foto 38, Grabungsinventar, Blatt Nr. 22.

wurden. Ob es sich um Bronze, Silber oder eine Legierung handelt, bleibt deswegen ungewiss, obwohl anzumerken ist, dass die bislang bekannten analogen Fundstücke in der weiteren Region aus Bronze hergestellt sind. Es ist unnötig darauf hinzuweisen, inwiefern das Herstellungsmaterial für eine Interpretation des Fundmaterials Bedeutung hat.

Für Armringe desselben Typs gibt es Analogien in Caričin Grad (Мано-Зиси 1956: 176 сл. 36/9; Кондић, Поповић 1977: 199 Кат. Nr. 49; Јовић et al. 2017: 272)<sup>35</sup>, auf der Jelica-Gradina (Милинковић 2010: 191, Т, XII/5, Сл. 261 Грoб бр. 6), aus Štrbovac bei Babušnica in Südserbien (Јовановић 1978: 26, 31, kat. br. 40, Sl. 49)<sup>36</sup>, auf dem Jerinin Grad in Vojska, einer frühbyzantinischen befestigten Höhenanlage oberhalb des Tales der Grossen Morawa in Serbien, (Цветковић et al. 2019: 13, kat. бр. 38)<sup>37</sup> und aus Mokranjske Stene in Ostserbien (Шпехар, Радишић 2015: 79, сл. 4/2). Dazu sind drei Exemplare aus dem Limeskastell Karataš bei Kladovo an der Donau (Eisernes Tor) zu erwähnen (Špehar 2010: 134, T. VI/143-145). Ohne hier auf Einzelheiten eingehen zu wollen, haben einige von diesen Armringen auf den plattenförmig erweiterten Enden Darstellungen von Oranten oder Heiligen; für eine genauere Bestimmung wären nähere Untersuchungen nötig (was bei bestimmten Exemplaren eine gründliche Restaurierung der Funde voraussetzt). Einige Enden sind mit Kreis – Punktornamentik verziert, oder mit einem Kreuz versehen. Als Beitrag zur Deutung sei angeführt, dass der Fund von der Jelica sich am linken Unterarm eines um die 10 Jahre alten Kindes befand, welches im Nordschiff der Basilika „A“ begraben wurde. Zusätzlich, aus dem nahegelegenen Grab eines erwachsenen Mannes (Grab Nr. 7), aus der Gürtelgegend, stammt eine Schilddornschnalle, was, neben anderen Fundumständen, eine Datierung solcher

Armreife, die alle aus frühbyzantinischen befestigten Siedlungen/Anlagen herkommen, ins 6.- den Anfang des 7. Jh. bedingt. Bekanntlich sind für frühbyzantinische Fibeln und anderes Bekleidungszubehör bzw. Schmuck, neben der Form oder Darstellungen an sich, christliche Inschriften oder Symbole üblich (Благојевић 2017: 180, Т. 6.1; Минчев 1995: 18-23; Haralambieva 1998: 367-373). Das gilt in kleinerem Ausmass auch für Gebiete ausserhalb des Reiches (Leitz 2004; Vida 2016).

Neben den hier behandelten Funden mag zum Schluss noch eine fragmentiert erhaltene „Stilus-Nadel“ mit erweitertem Kopf erwähnt werden (Abb. 16). Solche Nadeln konnten auch als Gewandnadeln benutzt werden, die Fibeln ersetzend (Čaval 2013: 197–248). Anderswie wäre dieser Fund einer der späten Zeugen der schwindenden Schriftlichkeit in Illyricum, im 6. und am Anfang des 7. Jh., nahe *Doclea*.

Mit der vorläufigen Darstellung einiger ausgewählter Funde von der Đuteza endet dieser Aufsatz. In Montenegro wären noch andere ähnliche, zeitgleiche oder jüngere Funde zu erwähnen, wie z.B. von der kleinen Insel Stari Ulcinj zwischen Bar und Ulcinj (Zagarčanin 2019: 145-153), aus Svač (Milinković 2005b: 312-315; Zagarčanin 2019) oder Virpazar (Milinković 2005b: 311-312; Zagarčanin 2018).

Zusammenfassend kann folgendes festgehalten werden: durch die archäologischen Funde und Befunde ist ersichtlich, dass ins 6. Jh. und um den Anfang des 7. Jh. datierendes Bekleidungszubehör und Schmuck (Schnallen Fibeln, Armreife) aus mit der einheimischen romanisierten Bevölkerung verbundenen Zusammenhängen, gleichwohl in der Küstenregion und im kontinentalen Hinterland vorkommt. Das kann für die später aufkommenden Schnallen, z.B. des Typs „Korinth“ oder diejenigen mit insektenförmigem Beschlag nicht ohne Weiteres gesagt werden – solche Schnallen

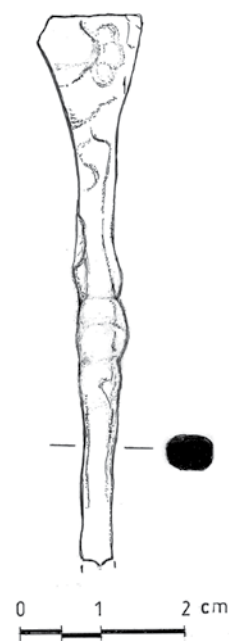


Abb.16 Đuteza, Nadel

<sup>35</sup> Auf dem erhaltenen erweiterten Ende befindet sich die Büste einer Orantenfigur mit erhobenen Händen.

<sup>36</sup> Nach Jovanović ist hier eine Figur in Orantenhaltung dargestellt, was auf der beigelegten Abbildung allerdings nicht gut ersichtlich ist. Der Fundzusammenhang deutet, Jovanović folgend, auf das 6. Jh. hin.

<sup>37</sup> Hier sind auf beiden Enden perlenumrandete Büsten von Orantenfiguren mit Nimbus dargestellt. Nähere Angaben verdanke ich Smiljana Dodić, Museum in Jagodina, welche die Ausgrabungen auf dem Jerinin Grad in Vojska geleitet hat.



kommen fast nur in der Küstennähe vor, wo sich die Restromanen zusammenfanden. Im Hinterland gab es dem aktuellen Forschungsstand nach nur wenige (Umgebung von Niš/*Naissus*, Tal der Grossen Morawa?), die eine neue „Mode“, die jetzt nicht unbedingt aus Konstantinopel kommen musste, weiterführen konnten, was ebenso für die Hirtenbevölkerung in den Bergregionen gilt. Die Verbindungen waren unterbrochen oder zumindest sehr beeinträchtigt. Die neue, slawische Population hatte andere Bedürfnisse, denen sich die dortigen „Restromanen“ auf diese oder jene Weise anpassen mussten. In beiden Fällen, im Küstengebiet und in seinem Hinterland, haben die Jahrhunderte letztendlich die Grenzen verwischt, Romanen gibt es heute nicht mehr auf dem Balkan.

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*RGA Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde.*  
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Ante Milošević

Sinj

milosecic.tonci@gmail.com

## EARLY MEDIAEVAL BRONZE FIBULA FROM THE CHURCH OF ST. STEPHEN IN DUBROVNIK

**Abstract:** The text discusses the rare finding of a bronze fibula with the motif of two doves that are facing each other and drinking from the same vessel. It was found in one layer during archaeological excavations near the church of St. Stephen in Dubrovnik. Its shape is simple, almost schematic, and subsequently decorated with circles with a dot in the middle. After typological, stylistic and iconographic analyses, it is assumed that this is a fibula with a Christian *fons vitae* motif. Considering the stratigraphic relationships at the site, it should probably be dated to the 8<sup>th</sup> century.

**Keywords:** Dalmatia, St. Stephen church, early middle age, early Byzantine, bronze fibula, fons vitae.

The church of St. Stephen the Protomartyr in Pustijerna is among the most famous shrines whose construction is placed at the time of the founding of Dubrovnik, according to legends (Fig. 1). It was first mentioned by Constantine Porphyrogenitus, and subsequently by other chroniclers. They all stated that it was a very revered temple where relics of many saints were kept. It was destroyed in the 1667 earthquake and never rebuilt again. It has been explored since 1897 (Radić 1897: 14-27), and the first excavations took place in 1927 (Karaman 1929: 269-273). Excavations were also carried out in 1997–1998, and the last extensive archaeological reinvestigations were made in 2011 and 2012, when many previous doubts were clarified (see Peković 2012: 341-376 for history and new research results; Janeković Römer 2019: 9-28 about the cult of St. Stephen and historical information about the church). On that occasion, its entire interior and a part of the courtyard outside the north wall and apse were explored. A multi-layered cemetery was discovered, located next to the pre-Romanesque church. The earliest layer of graves was partly damaged by the expansion

and extension of the church in the Romanesque period and, to some extent, by burials from the later centuries of the Middle Ages (Fig. 2.1)<sup>1</sup>. Judging by the finds, the span of the excavated part of the cemetery can be dated to the period between the

<sup>1</sup> Radiocarbon analysis of bone samples from five graves showed that the cemetery had been in use for several centuries, approximately from the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> to the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Cf. Topić, Radić, Rajić Šikanjić, Ilkić 2019: 66–69.



Fig. 1. Location of the church of St. Stephen in Pustijerna, Dubrovnik.





Fig. 2. Results of the 2011–2012 archaeological research of the church of St. Stephen:  
 1. Ground plan of architectural remains and investigated graves (according to: Ž. Peković);  
 2. Find-spot of the fibula with birds (photograph: Ž. Peković).

8<sup>th</sup> and the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In this paper, we will discuss a bronze fibula with confronted birds, found under the layer of graves, in a red subsoil on the bed-rock (Fig. 2.2).<sup>2</sup> Stratigraphically, it was

located below a grave that has been dated to the first half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century by the <sup>14</sup>C method. The intact layer of clayey *terra rossa* from which it was excavated is identical to that on the north side of the church, where double-sided bone combs were unearthed. They have been said to be from Late Antiquity, but it is also possible that they belong to

<sup>2</sup> Peković, Topić, 2012. The research was conducted by the *Omega engineering* d. o. o., a company from Dubrovnik. The director was N. Topić, and her deputy I. Radić. – Topić, Radić, Rajić Šikanjić, Ilkić 2019: 55–143.

the early Middle Ages, which yielded very similar specimens. A recent brief review of the discovered fibula with birds from St. Stephen, notes that it is a Byzantine product and that, based on stratigraphy, it can be dated to the 9<sup>th</sup>–10<sup>th</sup> centuries (Topić, Radić, Rajić Šikanjić, Ilkić 2019: 61, 69, 80, 101, Pl. 14/1, fns. 92–95). However, no exact archaeological information has been given in this respect, and such a dating is all the more unusual because the same article also claims that the fibula had been found in a layer below a grave dated to the first half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century using the radiocarbon method.



Fig. 3. Front and back of the fibula with birds from Pustijerna (photograph: M. Rogošić).

The fibula belongs to the plate type with a stylised figural representation of two upright confronted birds with their beaks touching, standing on the sides of a kantharos, high chalice or amphora (Fig. 3). It is cast in bronze, in a two-piece mould, together with a fastening system on its back. During the casting process, four perforations were made on the plate, two ellipsoids at the height of the birds' necks, and two rounds in the area of their legs. In order to render the schematic representation on the front of the plate more clearly, the fibula was finished by incising and drilling after casting. The shape of the vessel is incised in the middle, as well as two stripes on each of the birds' necks, which is why it can be assumed that they are doves. Circles with a hole in the middle of the birds' heads that suggest eyes and five other such ornaments on the plate are all drilled. One is on the neck of the vessel, and two on the bodies and tails of each bird. On the back, there is a hefty fastening system. It lacks the pin, which used to be placed onto a jut with a hole on the left side, and secured

on the bent stem on the right. The fibula is 2.4 cm wide, 2.9 cm high and 0.9 cm thick (including the fastening assembly).

The motif on the fibula is *fons vitae*, a Christian allegorical scene that illustrates *Psalm 42*, iconographically symbolising Christ as the source of *eternal life*<sup>3</sup>. When birds are depicted in such cases, they are most often peacocks or, as in our case, doves, as a Christian allegory of peace and moral purity. The motif of confronted birds, drinking from a well, appeared very early in Christian art and was used in almost all media. Two confronted peacocks with a kantharos in the middle on a fresco from the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, in the hypogeum at the *Via Latina (Via di Dino Campagni)* in Rome is one of the earlier such motifs in Christian art (see Ferrua 1960: 86–87 about two peacocks and a kantharos in the wall painting above the arch of the loculus in Cubicle E). Such scenes are also well known in the fifth-century mosaics in Ravenna, for instance, the depiction of two doves drinking water from a bowl on a stem in the mosaic of the Mausoleum of Gala Placidia, and the dove with a kantharos in the presbytery of the church of *S. Vitale* (Bovini 1980: 67, 86), as well as a similar representation in the floor mosaic with the tombstone inscription of Peter Papario in the basilica of St. Euphemia in Grado from the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century (Testini 1958: 498, Fig. 236). Approximately contemporaneous motifs of that type are also depicted in two floor mosaics in the presbytery of the southern church of St. John in Stari Grad on the island of Hvar (Fig. 4) (Jeličić 1984: 29–37; Jeličić Radonić 1994: 68–79). A very high quality marble relief with a *kantharos* from which a vine grows with two peacocks on it is carved on the altar screen in the church of *S. Apollinare Nuovo* in Ravenna, dating to the mid-

<sup>3</sup> The motif of two birds drinking from a kantharos is, in essence, pre-Christian. It emerged as early as Hellenistic times (the lost mosaic with a bowl and birds by master Sosus of Pergamon from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, known from a historical piece of information and preserved Roman copies), and was also used on funeral occasions in Antiquity, well exemplified by the urn from the Augustan-Tiberian period with architectural decoration, today in the *J. Paul Getty Museum*. On its left and right sides there are two frames with the motif of birds drinking from a kantharos; cf. Koch 1988: 2–3. For general information on this motif in pre-Christian times see Cabrol, Leclercq 1935: cols. 57–332; Parlasca 1963: 285–292, and on such motifs in Christian art cf. Cabrol, Leclercq 1914: cols. 2198–2228.



Fig. 4. Fragments of the floor mosaic in the church of St. John, Stari Grad on the island of Hvar (according to: J. Jeličić Radonić; photograph: B. Kirigin).

6<sup>th</sup> century (Bovini 1980: 50; Angiolini Martinelli 1968: 57-58, Cat. No. 77), and on a fragment of the coetaneous altar screen from the *Archiepiscopal Museum* in the same town (Angiolini Martinelli 1968: 56, Cat. No. 73). A number of such scenes can also be found on sarcophagi in churches of Ravenna (Valenti Zucchini, Bucci 1968: 31-32, Cat. No. 12, Cat. No. 28, Cat. No. 29, Cat. No. 31, Cat. No. 35, Cat. No. 45, Cat. No. 59).

The motif of two confronted birds with a kantharos was also used in reliefs from the early Middle Ages, especially in Veneto. Two peacocks drinking from a kantharos on the side of the marble sarcophagus of Theodotus in the monastery of *S. Maria alla Pusterla* in Pavia from the 8<sup>th</sup> century, represent one of the best stonemasonry creations of that time (Menis 1990: 311-312).

Approximately contemporaneous reliefs with the allegorical motif of *fons vitae*, depicting confronted peacocks or doves on both sides of a kantharos, were also made by artists of the early Middle Ages on the eastern Adriatic coast. Without having to list all such finds, we will refer to several examples here, taking into account that the selection should cover the entire area of the eastern Adriatic coast, from Istria to Kotor Bay. For example, two such motifs can be found on the now somewhat damaged altar screen from the cathedral in Novigrad, Istria, from the last quarter of the 8<sup>th</sup> century (Matejčić 2018: 24, 40-41, Cat. No. 16). Approximately of the same age is a fragment of an altar screen with dinosaurian birds on both sides of a stylized kantharos from the church of St. Maria the Great near Bale (Fig. 5.3) (Matejčić,

Mustać 2014: 199-200, Cat. No. 67.3), while on a fragment of the ninth-century altar screen from the church of St. Mary of the Snow in Maružini near Kanfanar there are two matching motifs of confronted birds drinking from a blooming chalice (Matejčić, Mustać 2014: 182, Cat. No. 56). This composition can also be seen on the corners of one side of the ninth-century ciborium from the cathedral in Rab (Fig. 5.4) (Domijan 2005: 14; Vežić, Lončar 2009: 52-57; Jarak 2017: 93-100, 188-189), and a very similar motif adorns one of the sides on the restored and recomposed ciborium of Proconsul Gregory from Zadar (Fig. 5.1). It is this side of Gregory's ciborium architrave that we believe is earlier and belongs to the ninth-century sculpture (Petricioli 1960: 15-18; Vežić, Lončar 2009: 81)<sup>4</sup>. A fragment of the altar screen gable with confronted birds and a chalice is also from Zadar, most probably from the church of St. Lawrence (Fig. 5.2) (Jakšić, Hilje 2008: 31, Fig. 39). As far as we know, monuments with the allegorical motif of the "source of life" with two antithetical birds and a chalice or kantharos between them, are completely missing in the rich repertoire

<sup>4</sup>There is a discrepancy in the text and figures elaborating the Zadar ciboria from the Cathedral and the church of St. Thomas in Zadar, precisely with regard to the side with peacocks and a chalice, today incorporated into Gregory's ciborium. We assume that this side of the ciborium architrave does not belong to the ensemble because it is earlier. This original opinion of ours, presented orally some fifteen years ago, has been accepted in professional and scientific literature (cf. Jakšić, Hilje 2008: 24-128, Cat. No. 037, Figs. on pp. 126, 128), and discussed in more detail in: Josipović 2020: 110-111.



of early mediaeval reliefs in central Dalmatia and the territory of the early mediaeval Croatian state. This phenomenon is yet to be explored. Such motifs reappeared further south, in the Dubrovnik area and Kotor. The ninth-century altar screen gable

tar screen fragment with peacocks and a chalice, whose dating has varied (Fig. 5.7)<sup>5</sup>.

This distribution of finds along the eastern Adriatic coast is interesting because it is apparent that monuments with such motifs are more



Fig. 5. The motif of birds with a kantharos in early mediaeval reliefs on the eastern Adriatic coast: 1. Detail of the ciborium architrave from Zadar; 2. Detail of the altar screen gable from the church of St. Lawrence in Zadar; 3. St. Mary the Great near Bale in Istria; 4. Side of the ciborium architrave from Rab; 5. Detail of the altar screen gable from Župa Dubrovačka; 6. Side of the baptistery from the cathedral in Kotor; 7. Fragment of the altar screen from the cathedral in Kotor.

from Župa Dubrovačka (Fig. 5.5) (Peković 2010: 191–192, Fig. 179), and the relief on one side of the baptistery from the Kotor Cathedral from the early 9<sup>th</sup> century (Fig. 5.6) are beautiful and interesting examples. The church of St. Mary in Kotor also has an approximately contemporaneous relief on the altar screen gable with confronted birds and an unusual vessel (Tomić 2009: 106–107, Cat. unit 25) between them, as well as a remarkable al-

tar screen fragment with peacocks and a chalice, whose dating has varied (Fig. 5.7)<sup>5</sup>. This distribution of finds along the eastern Adriatic coast is interesting because it is apparent that monuments with such motifs are more frequent in areas that were more susceptible to Byzantine influences. It is in Byzantine art that we can find numerous examples of such allegorical Christian scenes (Vikan 1995: 87–90), but in

<sup>5</sup> M. Abramić and Lj. Karaman were in favour of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, which we find acceptable. Cf. Abramić 1932: 330; Karaman 1941–1942: 93–94. Most other authors assume it is from the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Cf. Cat. unit 34, M. Zornija in: Tomić 2009: 111.



that cultural sphere, unlike in Europe, they were also used on jewellery and items intended for cult and everyday use. Objects with such scenes have been found in various parts of the Mediterranean and in areas that had more intensive contact with Byzantium. They were either imported or locally

er very similar matrix, also from the 7<sup>th</sup> century, found in Byzantine Cherson (today on the outskirts of Sevastopol) in Crimea (Fig. 6.11) (Ajabin 2011: 413, 417, Fig. 8). The production of belt strap-ends with the motif of confronted birds with a kantharos in the Byzantine cultural sphere of the

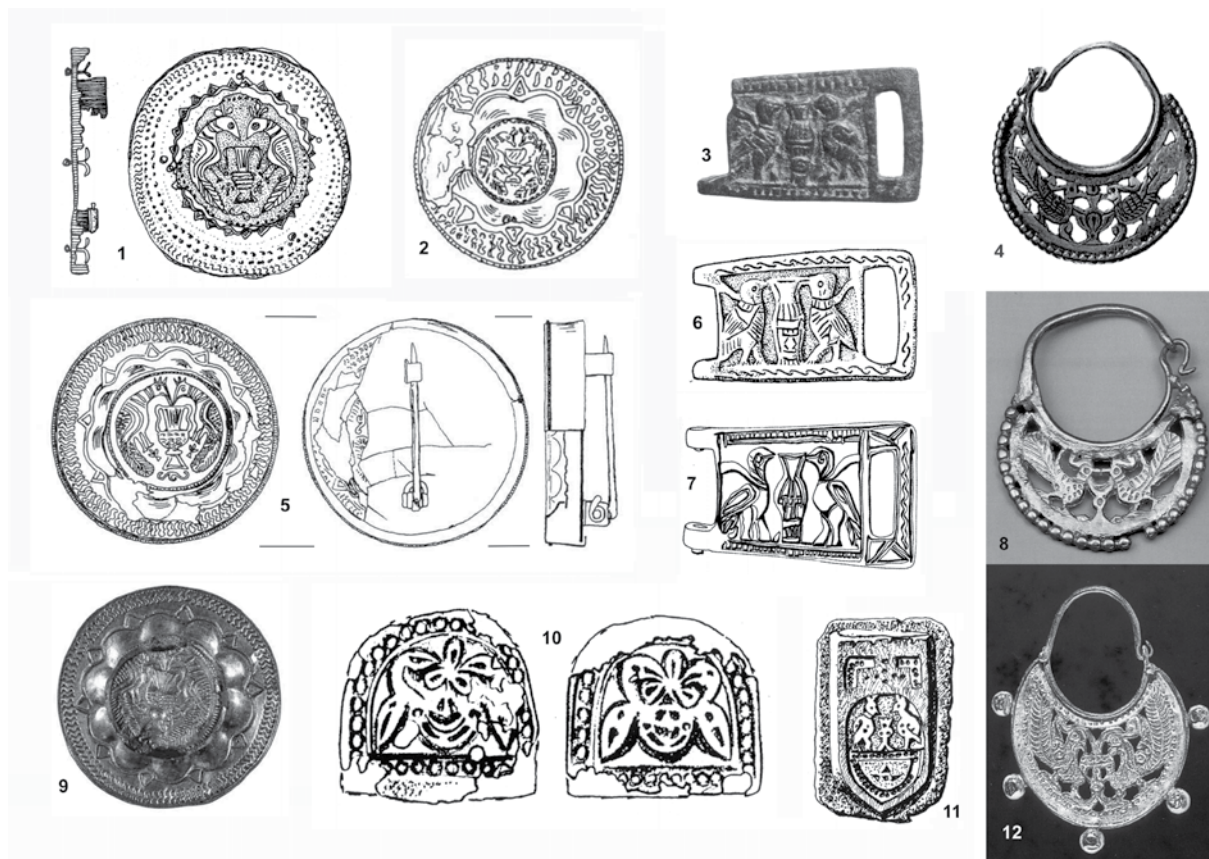


Fig. 6. The motif of birds with a kantharos on early mediaeval jewellery and cult objects:  
1. Mjele near Virpazar in Montenegro; 2. Cannaro in Calabria; 3. Asia Minor; 4. Eastern Mediterranean;  
5. Caracones in Calabria; 6.–7. Asia Minor; 8. Steinhöring in Bavaria; 9. Krujë in Albania;  
10. Pohibuj-Macko (Kiskőrös); 11. Kherson (Chersonesos) in Crimea; 12. Athens.

produced, according to Byzantine models (Baldini Lippolis 1999: 172–173; 2010: 123–132). Local manufacture according to Byzantine models can be archaeologically proven by the belt strap-ends discovered in graves of the Pohibuj-Macko necropolis (Kiskőrös). Some of the strap-ends have motifs of confronted birds with a chalice (Fig. 6.10), and are dated by the solidi of the Byzantine Emperors Heraclius (610–640) and Constantine IV (668–685) (Garam 1992: 147, 249, Pl. 77). In terms of possible cultural and workshop origins, a mould for pressing similar strap-ends, discovered in Adony, central Hungary (Hampel 1905: 639, Fig. 2002) is quite interesting, as well as another

7<sup>th</sup> century is also confirmed by a plate for pressing sheet metal unearthed in Antalya in Asia Minor (Schulze Dörrlamm 2009: 306–307, Fig. 122.1; Tobias<sup>6</sup> 2011: 160–162, Fig. 10.6) and a strap-end with a pair of confronted birds from the *National Museum of Art* in Kyiv (Tobias 2011: 168, Fig. 20).

Good examples of the assumption made here are numerous discoid *encolpion* fibulae with inserted bracteates, which were worn as reliquaries with relics. It is assumed that they were mostly pilgrim items because they contained wax in the

<sup>6</sup> The same paper (p. 168, Fig. 20) also presented the seventh-century strap-end from Kyiv, with two pairs of doves and a kantharos between them.

hollow space below the bracteate, which is good protection for relics, or the wax itself was a relic when collected from candles burning on graves of famous saints (Daim 2002: 119, 129-131). Presumably, their motifs were taken from now-lost mosaics in basilicas of the Constantine period in Jerusalem and Bethlehem (Volbach 1922: 80-84)<sup>7</sup>. However, confronted peacocks with a kantharos between them were not the sole iconographic depictions on them (Garam 1993: 99-134). Namely, a discoid casket and *encolpion* fibulae with various other motifs on bracteates, primarily with religious Christian messages, were quite widespread. They have been found in significant numbers in western Pannonia, especially among the finds of the Keszthély culture (Daim 2002: 113-132; Glaser 2002: 145-152), mainly on pilgrimage routes to the Holy Land, both also those connecting said areas by land with northern Italy and its ports (Ravenna, Venice, Torcello, Grado) and those relying on navigation on the Danube. These routes were used not only by the stalwart pilgrimage industry, bringing faith, hope and strength (e.g., Vikan 1982; Lambert, Pedemonte Demeglio 1994: 205-231; Anderson 2004: 79-93; Anderson 2007: 221-243) to the Christians at the time, despite the possible difficulties on the way, but also by Byzantine trade and diplomacy.

As far as we know, specimens of discoid *encolpion* fibulae (brooches) with the motif we are discussing have only been found on both sides of the southern Adriatic. Two of them originate from seventh-century graves in Cannaro and Caracones (Province of Crotona) in Calabria, southern Italy (Figs. 6.2, 6.5) (Spadea 1991; for Cannaro on p. 569, Fig. 6, and for Caracones p. 571, Fig. 8; Riemer 2000: 127, Fig. 15; Garam 2001: 51-57). Specimens related in style, age and manufacture have also been unearthed in graves from the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries on the eastern side of the Adriatic. Two of them are from the Komani necropolis of Krlež near Durres in Albania (the Theme of *Dyrrachium*), which was also an important pilgrimage port at the time (Fig. 6.9) (Anamali 1964: 149-181; Anamali, Spahiu 1988: 51, Cat. No. 86; Nallbani 2004: 37-39, Figs. 11-13a; Nallbani 2007: 57-58, Fig. 13 on

p. 253; Bollók 2014: 269-270, Figs. 8.1-2), and one each from graves of the same temporal and cultural horizon in Lezhë, also in Albania (Nallbani 2014: 79-80, Fig. 14; Bollók 2014: 269-270, Fig. 8.3), and in the village of Mjele near Virpazar on the shores of Lake Skadar in Montenegro (Fig. 6.1) (Velimirović Žigić 1971: 152-153; Baldini Lippolis 2010: 128). It should be further emphasised that the specimens from Cannaro and the one from Krlež, which was published first, are almost identical and undoubtedly originate from the same workshop. Given the dispersion of the finds, we assume that it should be located in the pilgrimage port of Durres.

The motif of confronted birds with a kantharos or chalice between them was also used on jewellery and other items of everyday use in the Mediterranean area. For instance, we know of several unearthed seventh-century gold filigree earrings, in repoussé, with open-worked lunular pendants, which have such motifs (Figs. 6.4, 6.8, 6.12) (Cf., e.g., Wamser, Zahlhaas 1999: 177-178; Drauscke 2010: 175-188), among others, as well as a cast bronze belt buckle with a rectangular plate with various relief depictions of animals. Most often they are lions and various fantastic animals, but there are also a few specimens from Asia Minor with depictions of confronted doves with a tall amphora-like vessel between them (Figs. 5.3, 6.6, 6.7). According to a recent thorough systematisation of Byzantine belt buckles, they belong to type G2, with a proposed date to the late 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries (Schulze Dörrlamm 2009)<sup>8</sup>. We assume that this chronology, which had also been presented by Z. Vinski, was the reason for the dating of the Dubrovnik fibula when it was first published (Topić, Radić, Rajić Šikanjić, Ilkić 2019: 61, 69, 80, 101, Pl. 14/1, fns. 92-5).

A relevant piece of information for the dating of the Dubrovnik fibula with contrasted birds could be its circlets with a dot in the middle. These small ornaments are among only a few decorative elements used over a long time on various items and in different domains, especially in the late antique and early Byzantine periods. They were mainly reserved for items of the so-called “small arts”,

<sup>7</sup> A number of examples of such motifs from the 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> century in floor mosaics of ancient Palestine and Jordan can be found in: Hachlili 2009: 116-119, 131-140, 268-269, Figs. IV.17b, VI.6-8, 14, IX.2a-d, X.3.

<sup>8</sup> For general information on this type of buckle see pp. 204-243, and on buckles with birds, p. 239. Byzantine buckles with square or trapezoidal frames with relief ornaments were also covered in a paper by Vinski 1974: 60-61.

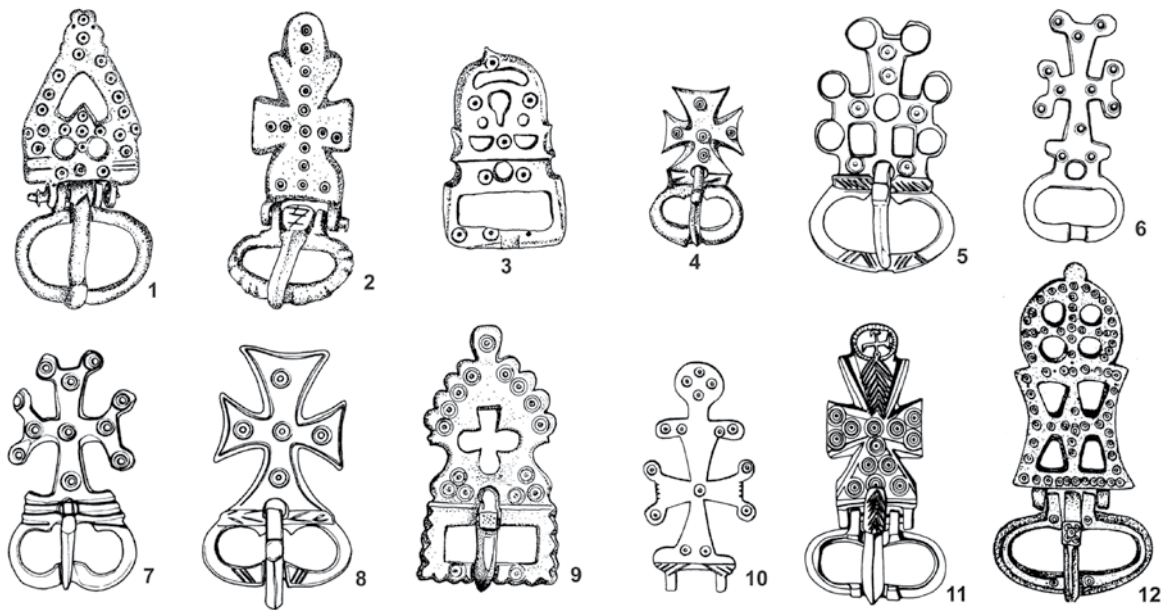


Fig. 7. Early Byzantine buckles decorated with circlets with a dot in the middle: 1.–2. Brkač (Istria); 3. Osijek; 4. Constantinople; 5. Unknown site; 6.–8. Asia Minor; 9. Antioch; 10. Asia Minor; 11. Sicily; 12. Skalistoe (Crimea) (according to: Z. Vinski and M. Schulze-Dörrlamm).

primarily bone products and jewellery (Figs. 7.1–12) (see Vinski, 1967; Schulze Dörrlamm 2009; Riemer 2011). During the 7<sup>th</sup> century, such ornaments presumably temporarily disappeared from use, but widely returned in the second half of the 8<sup>th</sup> and the early 9<sup>th</sup> century, when they became almost a trade-mark, especially in the then Lombard sculpture of the *Liutprand Renaissance* in northern Italy (Cividale, Monza, Zuglio, Sesto al Reghena, Sedegliano, Rive d’Arcano) (Lusuardi Siena, Piva 2001: 493-593), and in Istria (Novigrad) (Matejčić 2018: 46-48). They were sometimes used on artefacts from the sphere of early Carolingian art, for example on the reliquary of St. Liudger in the *Münster City Museum* from the second half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century (Effman 1901, cols. 293-308; Elbern 1989: 951-980). Such ornaments were very rare outside the chronological framework of the 8<sup>th</sup> century. In the art of the early Christian period in Italy, they were entirely sporadic, and in Croatia, they did not appear at all, except for the examples from Otok in Sinjsko polje, Cista and Dikovača near Imotski, and several churches from Herzegovina and Bosnia, which we believe belong to the second half of the 7<sup>th</sup> and the 8<sup>th</sup> century (Milošević 2005: 218-223; Milošević 2017: 117-125). More recently, such ornaments have been recognised in reliefs from the second half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century from the Cathedral in Split and interpreted as influences

from northern Italy (Basić, Jurković 2011: 149-185).

An interesting find for the topic at hand could be a perforated plate, probably a part of a belt set or fibula. It was found in Belhorn near Paderborn and dated to the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> century (Fig. 8). The iconographic depiction on the plate from Germany is vague. It is assumed that it portrays Daniel in the Lions’ Den or Odin from Norse mythology (Stiegeman, Wemhoff 1996: Vol. 1, Cat. unit VI.64, p. 366; Eggenstein, Börste, Zöller, Zahn Biemüller, 2008: Cat. unit 57.1, p. 210). Although it is not a direct analogy for the fibula from Dubrovnik in an iconographical sense, its workmanship and decoration are quite comparable, so it can help in its dating, to some extent.

Concluding the overview of the typological comparisons of the fibula from Dubrovnik, one



Fig. 8. Perforated plate (fibula) from Belhorn near Paderborn (according to: Eggenstein, Börste, Zöller, Zahn Biemüller, 2008).



should also point out a very similar find from the necropolis of ancient Budva on the Montenegrin coast. This find is a bronze fibula, approximately of the same size, on which two confronted birds drinking together from a vessel are depicted (Fig. 9). It was found in a damaged, stone-walled inhumation grave, with several other non-dated finds (Marković 2012: 123-124, T. 54/39). The precise dating of this find is not provided. Due to its likely



Fig. 9. Front of the fibula with birds from Budva (according to: M. Zagoričanin and Č. Marković).

Christian iconographic content, it is assumed that it dates no later than the 4<sup>th</sup> century. However, given that the grave in which it was found belongs to a group of late antique skeletal graves, some of which are of Byzantine provenance (Corinthian-type belt buckles), it is considered that the Budva fibula with two confronted birds should be attributed to the Byzantine cultural circle of the 7<sup>th</sup> century (Marković 2012: 247).

Although the Budva fibula is, in an iconographic sense, identical to the fibula from Dubrovnik, they differ significantly in execution. Both were made by casting, yet unlike the birds on the fibula from Dubrovnik, which are flat, almost schematically depicted and modestly decorated, the birds on the fibula from Budva are more realistic, voluminous and their necks, wings and tails are indicated by dense rows of incised stripes. There are also differences in the fastening system. The needle of the Budva fibula is an extension of the coil, while the Dubrovnik fibula has a movable needle fixed by a small shaft. We consider that the more simply executed example from Dubrovnik could be somewhat younger and that its Mediterranean cultural origin is indisputable, as well as the influences of the early Middle Ages recognisable on the stone

reliefs in the north of the Apennine peninsula, in Istria and on the eastern Adriatic coast. Such stylistic and cultural permeation is also visible in the recently published belt strap-end, which was also found in Dubrovnik's Pustijerna (Milošević 2021: 175-188).

From all that has been said above, it follows that the fibula with confronted birds and a kantharos from Pustijerna in Dubrovnik is, by all accounts, a peculiar find with only one direct analogy among similar products of the time. Notwithstanding, the analysis we have presented clearly shows that its eastern Mediterranean cultural and cult influences predominate to a considerable degree. Its uniqueness in Dubrovnik to date can be explained by the position of the town on an important maritime route used by merchants and diplomats at the time, and later by pilgrims on their way to the Holy Land, intensively so, since maritime routes were much safer than travel by land. We believe that it originated in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, or more precisely, in its second half, which, in addition to the numerous and widely covered analogies we have mentioned, is also indicated by the archaeological stratigraphy in which it was located. We also assume that it was made in one of the local workshops, probably in a Dalmatian town – perhaps in early mediaeval Ragusa – or in a monastic environment on the coast, where artisanal production based on late antique traditions was still sustainable<sup>9</sup>. Recently, an opinion has been expressed that one such workshop, whose important products were the very bird-like fibulae, had existed at the late antique castrum and mediaeval fortress of Sokol in Konavle, east of Dubrovnik (Katić, Kapetanić 2019: 7-21)<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> There are well-known examples from the Apennine Peninsula, where items were produced without the features inherent to the culture of the area where their workshops, i.e. monasteries, were located, but were rather made to the taste of clients (pilgrims) arriving from very distant lands (cf. e.g., Mitchel 1994: 129-131. – Giannichedda, Mannoni, Ricci 2001: 331-335).

<sup>10</sup> Sokol, on the eastern edge of Konavle, is a fort with a significant past, in continuous existence from the Copper Age to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The late antique and early Byzantine phases in its history are very significant periods. The unsuccessfully cast or damaged bird-shaped fibula referred to in the mentioned article originates from that time. It is not a product of archaeological excavations, but the result of a metal-detector search, so these overall circumstances are not sufficient to unreservedly accept the premise of a workshop at that site.



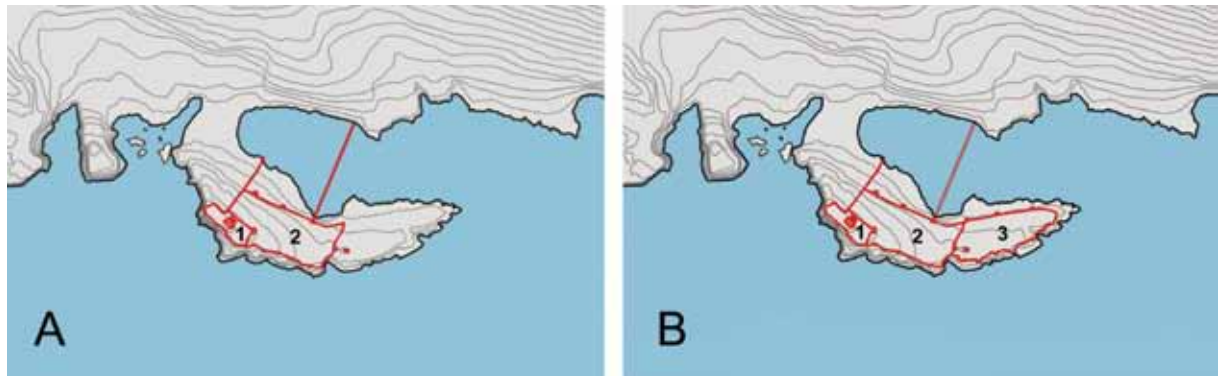


Fig. 10. Spatial development of early mediaeval Dubrovnik: A. Dubrovnik in 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> centuries; B. Dubrovnik in the 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> centuries; 1. Kaštio sexterium; 2. St. Peter's sexterium; 3. Pustijerna sexterium (according to: Ž. Peković).

Finally, this interesting and rare early mediaeval metal find is yet another confirmation of the early settlement of Pustijerna (Peković 2010: 24–26). Initially, it was a town suburbium, but since it was located just above the port, it quickly evolved into a very active section of the town, later surrounded by walls. As the third *sexterium* in the development of the town (Fig. 10), it was most likely mainly inhabited by merchants, artisans, and sailors.

Translation: Denis Gracin

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**Željko Demo**  
Zagreb  
zeljko.demo@zg.t-com.hr

## A SHIELD-SHAPED RING OF EMBOSSED SHEET METAL FROM THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM IN ZAGREB<sup>1</sup>

**Abstract:** In terms of early medieval rings made of bronze (or silver) sheet metal with a widened circular, oval, elliptic, or rhomboid form, usually called the head of the ring, much has been written about their origin, variants, and distribution, as well as the period of their first appearance and the continuity of this truly interesting form of jewellery. Shield-shaped rings, such as they are frequently termed in part of the earlier professional literature, are characteristic primarily for Moravia, and also for eastern Austria and Slovenia. They can also be found in Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria, and in the last two countries they are considered a jewellery form characteristic for the Danubian region. Finds from Dalmatia and Albania suggest a different solution, and the problems related to this type of ring are certainly more numerous and complicated than previously thought. One particularly interesting example, previously unpublished, is in the collections of the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb, and its main characteristics tie it to a specific group known as the Blučina type. Another specimen, also unpublished, is a child's ring with a rhomboid widened head found at Novi Banovci (Serbia).

**Keywords:** Hrvatska (Croatia); Zagreb, Archaeological Museum; Serbia, Novi Banovci; early Middle Ages, jewellery for the hands, rings, shield-shaped rings of sheet metal of the Blučina type.

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The extensive collection of chance and individual finds of medieval rings in the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb (further: AMZ) also contains a rare, but unfortunately not complete, early medieval ring made of bronze sheet metal with a large, decorated circular upper section, attached on one side to the only remaining part of an undecorated banded hoop that did not widen at the joint with the decorated upper section (AMZ S-4103). As most of the hoop is missing, it is not possible to say if the ends of the hoop were cut straight, open, overlapped, or overlapped and were fastened with a rivet. The upper part of the ring is decorated in the usual manner for such rings, with an embossed decoration of dots and wider protrusions created by hammering from the underside. In the centre of the decorative field, surrounded by a single row of dots around the outside, is a four-pointed star formed by embossed dots with concavely rounded

arms with a hemispherical protrusion in the centre and at the end of each arm — a total of 5 rounded protrusions in a 1-3-1 combination. The arms of the star are formed by a double row of dots, while an uninterrupted single line of dots surrounds the central rounded protrusion. The same pattern of dots forms a circular decoration in the semi-circular fields on the outer side of each of the four arms of the star. The diameter of the upper, decorated part of the ring measures 2.45 cm, the width of the hoop 0.60 cm, and the thickness of the sheet metal on the hoop 0.14 mm, while one can only speculate about the height of the ring, i.e., the diameter of its hoop (ca. 2.00 cm). The weight of this incompletely preserved bronze ring is only 0.995 g [Fig. 1:1-2].

It must be noted, with regret, that no information whatsoever accompanied the ring and, hence, nothing is known about its origin, whether it was a gift or purchase, or the possible circumstances of its find. This is hardly surprising, as the ring belongs to an old and, until recently, unorganised museum collection in which data of this type is scarce,

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<sup>1</sup> I dedicate this work to my colleague and friend Pera, remembering many heartfelt meetings, fellowship, and conversations about the varied themes and issues of our everyday professional and personal lives.



or does not exist at all. Nonetheless, the preserved parts of the ring are in very good shape, covered by a healthy and solid green patina, and it can be hypothesised that the ring could have been an aquatic find, coming from a river bed (for example, a large number of artefacts from various archaeological periods in the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb come from the bed of the Kupa river in Sisak). In contrast to this, the evident damage to the ring is certainly old, perhaps even very old, if it occurred in the medieval period, or it could be more recent if it occurred in the time more or less immediately before the acquisition of the ring for the present Archaeological Museum in Zagreb.<sup>2</sup>

In Croatia, shield-shaped rings are characteristic of early medieval archaeological sites in coastal Croatia, particularly Dalmatia, where a significant number have been documented. Accordingly, issues related to them have been discussed several times. It should be noted that, at first, they were considered characteristic of the early Croatian cemeteries of the 8<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> centuries in the region of northern Dalmatia, and the rings themselves were dated from the 8<sup>th</sup> century to the middle of the 9<sup>th</sup> century (Belošević 1980: 94). Later, numerous archaeological excavations and new finds greatly contributed to a better understanding of the situation in the wider area of Dalmatia, and the lower boundary for the appearance of shield-

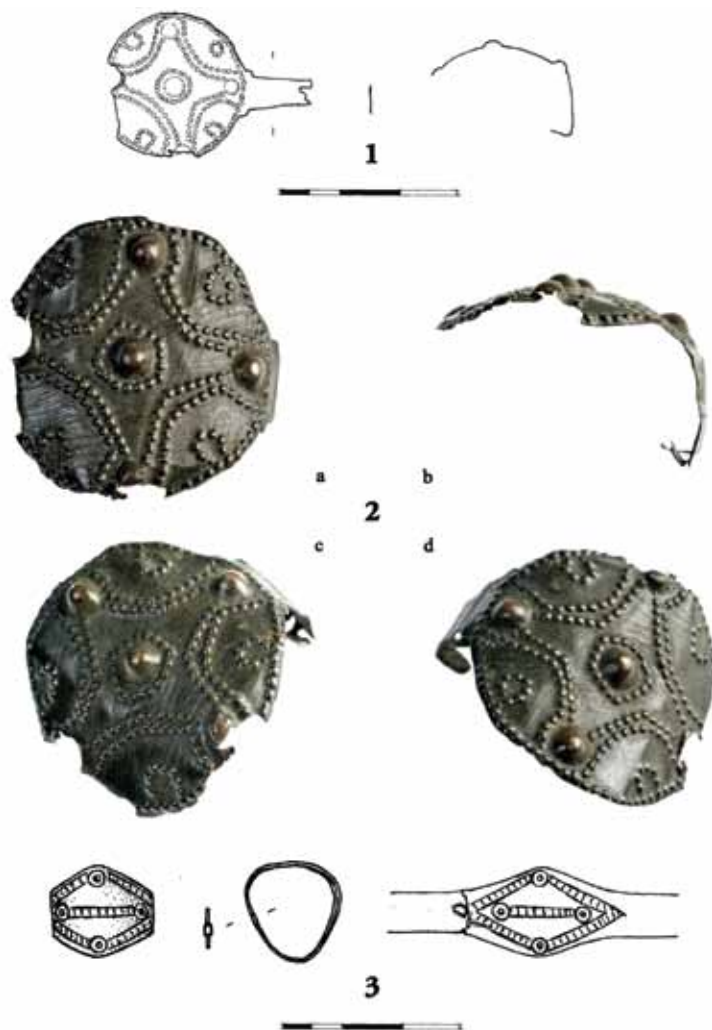


Fig. 1. The shield-shaped ring from the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb, S-4103. 1 - The drawing of the ring in 1:1 scale (drawing: Miljenka Galić, AMZ). 2a-d - Photographs of the ring in ca. 2:1 scale (photo: Igor Krajcar, AMZ). 3 - The drawing of the ring in 1:1 scale (drawing: Anita Dugonjić, AMZ).

<sup>2</sup> As well as this one, the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb has one more ring (S-1617 = P-9615) with a rhomboid shield-shaped upper section or head of the ring (*further*: widening.) The rhomboid widening is decorated with incision and punching, while the banded hoop to the ring was attached with an iron rivet on one of the shoulders. The ring is very well preserved, and came from Novi Banovci (Republic of Serbia), and was purchased for the AMZ between 1892 and 1912. It has very small dimensions and most probably belonged on a finger of a very small child. The dimensions of the ring are: height 1.65 cm, width 1.30 cm; width of the shield-shaped 1.26 cm; weight of the ring 1.627 g.

shaped rings was placed in the first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, the area of distribution encompassed the region of Dalmatian Croatia, and certain evidently late Roman and circum-Mediterranean similarities were recognised and specified in the workmanship and decoration of the rings, such as a cross, Christogram, pentagram, etc. (Belošević 2007: 263-264). In the recent period, following certain previously noted observations (Kurnatowska 1980: 167-168), research has moved forwards, and today the appearance, form, and development of shield-shaped rings are considered related to enclaves of autochthonous late Roman and early Byzantine populations in Dalmatia, the eastern Alpine region, the central and lower Danube basin,

and the south-eastern Balkans, which independently of one another, and in contact with new arrivals of various provenances, would have created a related but not necessarily identical object based on the same or approximately the same model from Late Antiquity. It is considered that this process in Dalmatia had its beginnings at the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> and in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, continuing until around the middle of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, and in individual cases, it seems to have been present longer (Petřinec 2005: 35-37; Petřinec 2009: 131-134, 240). Such a developmental process lasted long enough that it would have left behind sufficient recognisable and chronologically valuable typological variants that, except for their basic elements, are nonetheless inapplicable to the formal features and typological characteristics of the shield-shaped ring from the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb. The model for its features and characteristics should be sought elsewhere, and certainly not at present in Croatia.

A second, considerably larger, zone of finds and distribution of early medieval shield-shaped rings encompasses the region along the Morava river in Czechia and Slovakia, as well as regions in the neighbouring Austrian Danube basin, and in eastern Austria and western Hungary (Eastern Alpine, Dalmatian, and Lower Danube regions: Kurnatowska 1980: 159 Ryc. 4:1; Lower Danube: Fiedler 1992; 180-182; Grigorov 2013: 106-107, 109, 112). In Czechia and Slovakia, shield-shaped rings (*prstěny štítkové, štítkové prstěny*) have long ago been noted as a special feature and, accordingly, considerable attention has been paid to them. There are considerable numbers of rings with a distinct widening of the upper section and the frequent use of dotted decoration made by hammering from below (embossed), and they are considered a special type of shield-shaped rings, named after the many examples found at the famous site of Blučina, not far from Brno in Czechia (Poulik 1947: 153-157). At first, there were even dilemmas as to whether these rings should be placed among those manufactured in the Danube basin or if they should be considered an import from Byzantium (Eisner 1947, 4), but the conviction soon prevailed that these were in fact the products of local (Slavic) inhabitants dwelling in Moravia and, hence, these rings should be dated to the second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century (Poulik 1947: 156; Poulik 1948: 51, 54, 201-202), in some cases with continuity even into

the second half of the 10<sup>th</sup> century (Dostál 1965: 394). Subsequently, not much later, four forms of the shield-like widening were typologically distinguished (circular, oval horizontal, oval vertical, and rhomboid), along with two, or rather, three variants of decoration - *var. a*: a decoration hammered from below consisting of rounded and dotted protrusions; *var. b*: an engraved floral or geometric decoration combined with a punched pattern in the fields between; and *var. c*: an incised decoration or a combination of incision and punching (Hrubý 1955: 268-269; additional elaboration: Dostál 1966: 57-58; Rejholcová 1995: 70), and all these forms and decorative variants are attributed as chronologically contemporary to the period from the last third of the 9<sup>th</sup> century to the first quarter of the 10<sup>th</sup> century (Hrubý 1955: 267-268) or, at the earliest, from the second third of the 9<sup>th</sup> century to the period around the year 900 (Budimský-Krička 1959: 142-143) [Fig. 2]. More recently, a chronological span has been suggested from the

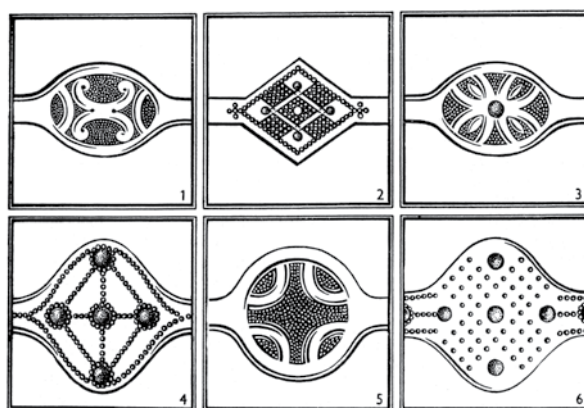


Fig. 2. Forms of shield-shaped widenings on rings from sites in Moravia (from: Hrubý 1955, 269 Obr. 42). 1,3 - Oval lengthwise. 2 - Rhomboid. 4,6 - Oval transverse. 5 - Circular.

second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century to the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> century (Rejholcová 1995: 70/Čakajovce-Kostolné; to the second half of the 10<sup>th</sup> century or into the early 11<sup>th</sup> century: Dostál 1965: 394; Knific 1974: 18; Szőke 1996: 101), so the earliest dates remain those placing the appearance of the shield-shaped rings in the lower Austrian part of the Danube basin in the first quarter of or the early 9<sup>th</sup> century (Friesinger 1974: 97; Tovarnik 1986: 435), which were later corrected to an even earlier date and time, i.e., the period before the year 800 (Tovarnik 1993: 274), while more recently, even

the third quarter of the 8<sup>th</sup> century is mentioned (Hausmair 2016: 49/Micheldorf/Kremsdorf).

The observations of Hungarian archaeologists have contributed to a better knowledge of the issues involving shield-shaped rings, based primarily on insights and conclusions gathered during excavations of Avar cemeteries. In the 1960s, the presence of shield-shaped rings in Hungary was noted as early as in the first half of the 7<sup>th</sup> century, but they were more commonly produced and used in the following century, as was shown and proven by finds from late Avaric graves from the late 8<sup>th</sup> century (Kovrig 1963: 166-168. Similarly, Čilinská 1966: 156-158; Čilinská 1975: 89-90, Fig. 10:3/type III). Recently, these and numerous other new data have meant that today, with considerable certainty, it can be established that narrow and less widened upper parts of these rings were, in terms of relative chronology, an earlier element characteristic of the final late Avar and early Carolingian periods, while examples with a broad widening often decorated with rounded protrusions – known as the *Blučina* type – were later than the former type and were closer to the middle and second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century (Szőke 1992: 869-871; Szőke 1992a: 87-88; Szőke 1996: 101; Müller 2010: 217).<sup>3</sup> This dating is, hence, more or less congruent to the dating that relates the appearance and use of this late group of shield-shaped rings in the eastern Alpine region to the *Köttlach I* horizon, with the beginning of this horizon placed in the period around the middle of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, continuing into the first half of the 10<sup>th</sup> century (Giesler 1980: 86, 87 Fig. 2:9, 95-96).<sup>4</sup> Grave goods have clearly shown that shield-shaped rings, generally speaking, were

a jewellery form characteristic of female and child graves, and only rare examples were found in male graves. This is true for all the regions of distribution mentioned here, as well as both phases or periods of use of shield-shaped rings.

In the eastern Alpine region, because of the variety and relative abundance, the finds of shield-shaped rings discovered in Slovenia are essential (Gorenjska/Upper Carniola, central and eastern Slovenia), although any more comprehensive reports about this type of early medieval material are as yet scarce that exceed the framework of a catalogue publication of grave, settlement, or chance finds (Knific 1975: 18).<sup>5</sup> It should certainly be emphasised that the local production of these rings was probably proven for Slovenia (Veršnik 2009: 37/Ljubična nad Zbelovsko goro), where rings with open ends that overlap predominate, as opposed to the rare rings whose ends were joined with a rivet, that examples are more frequent with a widened upper section, and that among the decorations variously conceived incised banded patterns and impressed circles with a dot in the centre, as well as the decoration of embossed rounded protrusions and dots, were all approximately equally represented. Among the shield-shaped rings from Slovenia, in particular examples of the *Blučina* type, so far not a single example has been registered with a circular widening.

The decorative motif on the circular shield-shaped widening of the ring, the circular form of the peltate widening, and the smooth and undecorated banded hoop not broadened at the join with the shield-shaped widening make the example from the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb distinctive and, hence, even more interesting. Suitable comparisons for these characteristics at present are offered merely by rare examples, most-

<sup>3</sup> Szőke also considered that in Moravia examples of the *Blučina* type extended all the way to the second half of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, taking as an example the finds from the cemetery of Čakajovce-Kostolné, gr. 426, where a shield-shaped ring of this type was found together in a grave with a pair of S-circlets (Rejholcová 1995: 156 Pl. LXVIII). This same find is, in fact, dated to the second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> century (op. cit., 70). A chronological framework close to that once suggested by W. Hrubý (1955) was supported in Hungary by Sós 1973: 120-121.

<sup>4</sup> In contrast, the earlier group of shield-shaped rings with a narrower and less widened upper section would be approximately contemporary to the early Carolingian cemeteries of the “*Sopronköhida-Pitten-Pottenbrunn*” type in Lower and Upper Austria and north-western Hungary, with the “*Vör-Köttlach*” horizon in the eastern Alpine region, and with the early Great Moravian period in Moravia and south-western Slovakia.

<sup>5</sup> Knific listed the finds from most of the then known Slovenian sites, noting an example from the site of Kranj-farna cerkev, gr. 120/53, discovered together with a raceme earring of the Bijelo Brdo culture and, hence, dated to the 10<sup>th</sup> or early 11<sup>th</sup> century; Korošec 1979: 219-221 (group 4.1a — “*of thin sheet-metal*”, earlier variant; group 4.2a — “*of thicker sheet-metal*”, later variant); Bitenc and Knific 2001, 90 no. 288 (Bled-Pristava), 91-92 no. 291 (Kranj-farna cerkev), 100 no. 328 (Gradišče nad Bašljem), 103 no. 340 (Ljubična nad Zbelsko Goro). — Some twenty years ago an exhaustive BA dissertation (84 pages) for the Faculty of Philosophy in Ljubljana was written on the subject of early medieval shield-shaped rings from Slovenia, but unfortunately it was not published (Udovč 2003).

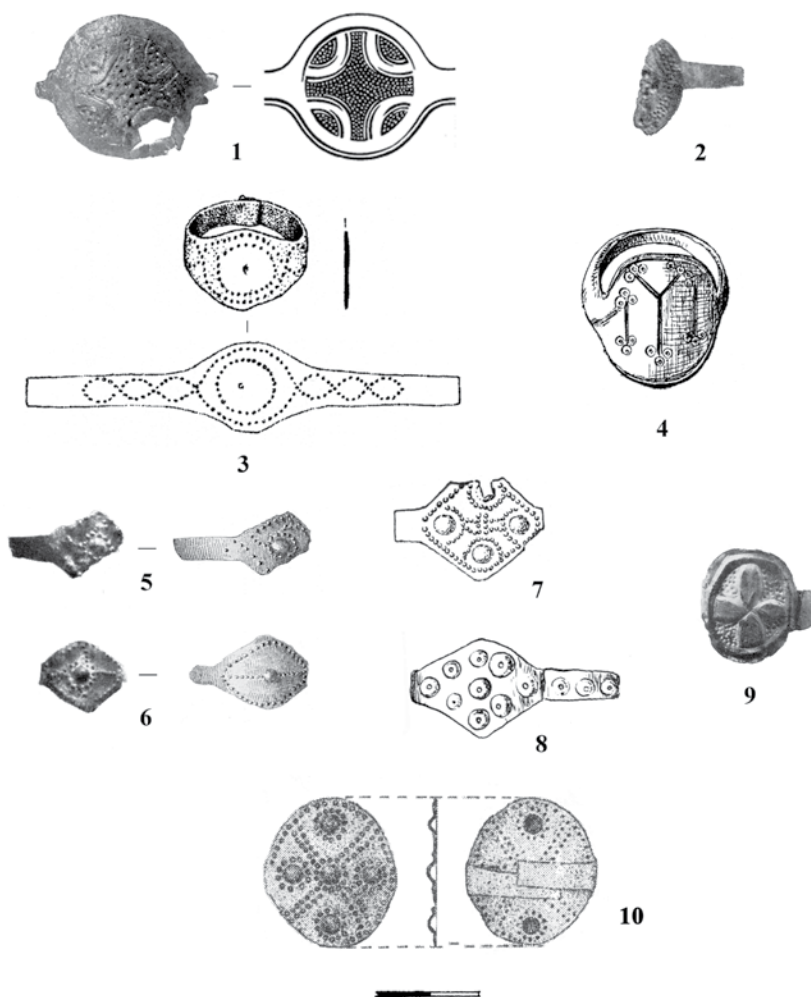


Fig. 3. Comparisons of the form and decorations present on the shield-shaped ring from the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb, S-4103. 1-4 - Circular shield-shaped widening: 1 - Staré Město-Na valách, gr. 52/50 (Hrubý 1955, 268-269, 474, Tab. 73:9); 2 - Devín-Staré vinohrady; gr. 17/m (Kraskovská 1963, 396, 399, 405 Tab. III:13); 3 - Nin-Ždrijac, gr. 54/f-ch (Belošević 2007, 64, 267 no. 16, Tab. LIV:14); 4 - Brestovac, 1821, hoard? (Hampel 1905/2, 425; Hampel 1905/3, Taf. 320:9). 5-10 - Smooth and undecorated banded hoop not broadened at the juncture with the circular widening: 5-6 - Boleradice-Radle, gr. 37/f (Poulik 1948, 155, Tab. LXVII:6-7); 7 - Skalice-Háj, tumulus 8: gr. 1/f (Budimský-Krička 1959, 65-66, 142 Abb. 33:4, 186 Taf. XVII:9); 8 - Bled-Pristava II, gr. 68/f [sic!] (Korošec 1979, 68, Korošec 1979/2; Tab. 11:5a); 9 - Steinabrunn, gr. 80 (Friesinger 1965, 90, Abb. 2); 10 - Izvoare-La pod la Hărmănești (Mitrea 1980, 111, 184 Pl. XLV:2).

ly discovered in Moravia. A circular shield-shaped widening with a decorative motif of a four-sided star in the centre can be noted only on one partly damaged ring from the site of Staré Město-Na valách, gr. 52/50 Hrubý 1955, 474 no. 1042:1, 269 Fig. 42:5, Pl. 73:9),<sup>6</sup> although this differs from the Zagreb example both in the decorative technique (incision and punching) as well as the simplicity of the decorative composition, which, according to the differences in the workmanship, did not utilize either the prominent rounded protrusions or the dotted hammering of a circular pattern (Měřínský

1985: 38, 108 Fig. 1, 138) [Fig. 3:1].<sup>7</sup> Examples with a circular peltate widening like the above are rare. To tell the truth, their existence has long been recognised (Hrubý 1955: 268), but as suitable comparisons only two can be mentioned here; an incompletely preserved ring of the *Blučina* type from the Moravian cemetery of Devín-Staré vino-

<sup>6</sup> The ring belongs to Hrubý's decorative *variant b* (dia. ring 2.3 cm; dia. of the shield-shaped field 1.8 cm), and was discovered on the right hand of the deceased (a boy 15-16 years old), buried with a pair of decomposed iron spurs. For the decoration of the ring see Dostál 1966: 57 Fig. 12:24.

<sup>7</sup> The circular widening contains an incised four-pointed star with concavely rounded arms, whose outer rim is banded, undecorated, and slightly narrowed towards the ends. The four regularly arranged semi-circular fields that surround the star are decorated with punching. The decoration can be considered conceptionally related to an incised cross with a semicircle in each of the corners that decorates the oval shield-shaped surface of a bronze ring from the cemetery of Velké Bilovice-Úlehly found in the grave of a boy 6-7 years old (gr. 49). Four semicircles made from a two-row dotted pattern with a wart-like protrusion in the middle [Fig. 4:9.3] can be seen on a bronze ring from the cemetery of Břeclav-Pohansko, gr. 342 discovered on the right hand of a female individual of 16-30 years old (Kalousek 1971: 187 no. 8, Pl. 34:6).



hrady, gr. 17/m (Kraskovská 1963: 395 Fig. 6, 396 no. 5, 405 Pl. III:13),<sup>8</sup> and a similarly incomplete and broken example from Pottschach in Lower Austria, gr. 10/ch (Caspart 1931: 166, 166, Pl. III:13) [Fig. 3:2].<sup>9</sup> The fragmentary ring from the cemetery of Devín-Staré vinohrady, gr. 17/m and the shield-shaped ring from the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb are the only ones among these few rings where the hoop is banded and not widened at the joint with the upper section. This detail is also present on rings with a rhomboid widening, as is shown by examples from the sites of Boleradice-Radle, gr. 37/f (Poulik 1948: 155 no. 5-7, Pl. LXVII:6-6a, 7-7a/two rings) and Skalice-Háj, tumulus 8: gr. 1/f in Slovakia (Budimský-Krička 1959: 66 no.13, 142 Fig. 33:4, 143, 186 Pl. XVII:9) [Fig. 3:5-6,7], and Bled-Pristava II, gr. 68/f in Slovenia (mentioned: Kastelic and Škerlj 1950: 50-5; description, drawing and attribution to

her Carantanian Cultural group: Korošec 1979: 69 (gr. 68), Pl. 11:5a (gr. 192 sic!; same attribution: Knific 1974: 325 Plan V) [Fig. 3:8], while a banded hoop without a broadening at the join with an oval widening is visible on a bronze gilded ring from Steinabrunn, gr. 80 in Austria gr, unique because of the decorative motif on the widening reminiscent of a four-leaved clover (Friesinger 1965: 90, 110, Fig. 20:2) [Fig. 3:9],<sup>10</sup> on one ring from the cemetery of Kaposvár-61-es út, gr. 10/ch (Bárdos 1985: 7, 13, 24 (Pl. I:10), and perhaps also on a chance find from the settlement site of Izvoare-Bahna/La pod la Hărmănești in north-eastern Romania, among the rare examples of a ring of the *Blučina* type from this region (Mitrea 1978: 215, 226, 229, 240 Fig. 10:2, 251 Fig. 21:2; Mitrea 1980: 111, 184 Pl. XLV:2/Izvoare-Bahna; Constantinescu 1996: 186 no. 864, Pl. XXXVII:864/Bahna-Neamț) [Fig. 3:10].<sup>11</sup> The decoration composed of five prominent rounded protrusions on the shield-shaped widening of the ring from the above Romanian find, as well as the example from the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb, places them among the frequent, if not the most common, features on shield-shaped rings of the *Blučina* type [Fig. 4:5.1-5].

The possible symbolism of numbers and the meanings of individual decoration and decorative combinations on early medieval objects from the Great Moravian period noted long ago (Klanica 1970: 73-79), but later mostly disregarded, is possible to apply specifically to these rings. In fact, on the widened upper section of the greatest number of shield-shaped rings decorated with rounded protrusions, there are either only *one* (1), rarely

<sup>8</sup> The fragmentary bronze ring belonged to one of the fingers of the right hand and, on the basis of the grave goods, it was found in a wealthy male grave together with an iron spear, axe, spur (1), and a knife in a pottery vessel.

<sup>9</sup> A shield-shaped ring with a circular widening with non-*Blučina* characteristics comes from the Nin-Ždrijac cemetery, gr. 54/f-ch in southern Croatia. The ring is bronze, open, and decorated with impressed points forming a circular decoration on the shield-shaped widening [Fig. 3:3]. It was found on the right hand of a female skeleton buried together with a child (Belošević 1980: Pl. XXXVI: 12-12a; Belošević 2007: 53, 64-65 no. 5, 145 Pl. LIV:14, 265 no. 16). The circular shield-shaped widening is visible on several other rings with non-*Blučina* type characteristics, including an exceptional gold closed shield-shaped ring from a supposed hoard discovered in 1821 at Brestovac near Požega in eastern Croatia [Fig. 3:4]. The ring is decorated with incised straight vertical lines with triple dotted circles on the ends (a circle with a dot in the middle), formed based on a so-called pre-Bulgarian IYI or, according to others, a Christian symbol, or a possible syncretic blending of pagan and Christian; in more detail Fiedler 2012: 110 and with important citations in notes 26-28. For this ring, see Hampel 1905 (2): 425; Hampel 1905 (3), Pl. 320:9 (s.v. "*Presztovác*"), and more recently Bühler 2014: 29, 152, 193-194, Taf. 9:1-4, 57:1-8, 58:1-4; Grigorov 2007: 51, 189 fig. 59:11 (type II/4); Grigorov 2013, 112 Fig. 9:II/4; Atanasov 2018: 377-378, where along with the ring from Brestovac, two other Early Bulgarian rings decorated with the symbol IYI were depicted (Fig. 4,6 and 7). — It should be noted that the circular form could be widened on at least two of a total of three shield-shaped rings discovered at the cemetery of Kaposvár-61-es út, gr. 10/ch and 23/f, see Bárdos 1985: 13 Fig. 7 (below), 24 Pl. I:10 (gr. 10/ch), 25 Pl. II:23 (gr. 23). In this sense, of interest is a ring made of bronze sheet metal discovered during excavations at Doróol in the old part of Belgrade in an archaeological layer dated to the 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> centuries, Bikić and Bugarski 2022: 15 fig. 6:8, 17.

<sup>10</sup> A similar decorative arrangement can be noted on the mounts of individual eastern Mediterranean belt buckles dated to most of the 7<sup>th</sup> century, Schulze-Dörrlamm 2009: 180-181, 247 (type D 13).

<sup>11</sup> The ring is bronze and decorated with five large wart-shaped protrusions hammered from below. It seems to be quite well preserved, but it was published without any metric data (according to the drawings or photographs the dimensions of the crown were ca. 2.7-3.1 x 2.3-2.5 cm). The site where the ring was found is dated to the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries, Mitrea 1978: 215, 226, 229, 240 Fig. 10:2, 251 Fig. 21:2; Mitrea 1980: 111, 184 Pl. XLV:2 (Izvoare-Bahna); Constantinescu 1996: 186 no. 864, Pl. XXXVII:864 (Bahna-Neamț). One of two shield-shaped rings found in the Romanian lower Danube basin in the cemetery of Izvoru-La Drăghiceanu, gr. 248 belong to rings with one protrusion, Mitrea 1989: 198 Abb. 41:2.

*three* (3),<sup>12</sup> more frequently *four* (4) and *seven* (7), and most often *five* (5) or *nine* (9), sometimes even *eleven* (11) prominent wart-like protrusions, so that it seems the protrusions have not merely a decorative, but also some other, symbolic role characteristic for rings [Fig. 4]. *Four* (4), *five* (5), and *seven* (7) rounded protrusions form a cross with their arrangement<sup>13</sup>, *seven* (7) and *nine* (9) rounded protrusions form a cross inscribed with a Christogram (X),<sup>14</sup> while *eleven* (11) rounded protrusions form a row of three crosses with an inscribed Christogram (X) whose arms cross in the centre of the central cross, connecting the vertical arms of both side crosses.<sup>15</sup> In addition to the interpretation of Christian symbolism, the same expression can be joined by a numerological component, which attributes not merely a quantitative but also qualitative descriptive meaning and value to each of the above numbers:<sup>16</sup> *one* (1) is the starting point and centre of the beginning and represents the totality contained in one individual – in

God; *three* (3) symbolises a trinity in which the Father is number one, the Mother is number two, and number three is the Son, which completes the great triad of existence – for Christians this is the idea of the Holy Trinity, in other words one god in three entities; *four* (4) is related to the meaning of the square (the symbol of soil) and the cross, this is the number of the Bible and the world in its entirety (the four corners of the world, the four winds, the four phases of the moon, the four seasons, the four elements, the four temperaments, the four rivers of Paradise, the four letters in the name of God, the four Evangelists, etc.); *five* (5) is the sum of the first even and the first odd numbers and, as the middle of the first nine numbers, is a sign of union, marriage, the centre, harmony, and balance; *seven* (7) is the sum of the number four, symbolising a square (earth) and the cross, and the number three, which symbolises the heavens and together constitutes the totality of the universe, is common in the Bible, is the key to the Gospel of John, and has similar power and meaning in many other religions; *nine* (9) is the last in the series of single numbers, so at the same time it announces the end and marks the beginning, is a measure of maturation, fertility, and the completion of a job and, as it is the last in the series of numerals, it contains the concept of birth and the idea of death. It can be added that as a ring is in fact a circle, and a circle in its perfect closure is a symbol of harmony and the absolute, from time immemorial of prophylactic meaning and value, it should not be doubted that the symbols used to complete, decorate, or mark the rings were deliberate.

On the other hand, the question remains as to whether it is also possible in this numerological symbolism to recognise an already advanced process of the syncretism of the solar-lunar symbolism of the ancient Slavs with the symbols of the new, only recently accepted, Byzantine Christianity — an issue that will one day certainly require a more thorough examination and exhaustive answer. This answer will be awaited regarding the shield-shaped ring from the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb, probably in the broader sense a southern Pannonian find that is dated, like the *Blučina* group of shield-shaped rings to which it fully belongs, to the period around the middle of the 9<sup>th</sup> century to the late second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century (Szöke 1996: 101, and following him Tomka 2000: 200).

<sup>12</sup> Attention should be drawn here to an exceptional, unfortunately not complete, silver shield-shaped ring from Doničko Brdo at Gradac in the Šumadija district of Central Serbia (Petrović 1965: 284-285). Its widened upper section is decorated with three transversely placed wart-like protrusions, the edges of the shoulders decorated with a row of incised slanted lines, while the lower half of the ring features three transverse and two perpendicular incised lines. The ring is dated between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries (Đurović 2012: 75 no. 53), but it is more likely to have been earlier and to belong to the first half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>13</sup> A similar arrangement of concentric circles with a dot in the centre (seven and four) can be found on the crowns of Byzantine rings from Sicily, see Orsi 1910a: 472 fig. 11 (left and right).

<sup>14</sup> A similar arrangement of concentric circles with a dot in the centre and straight lines that connect them into an eight-pointed star is a decoration on bronze U-shaped mounts found on a series of Byzantine belt buckles attributed to a workshop(s) on Sicily, in the second half of the 7<sup>th</sup> century and the early 8<sup>th</sup> century. For some examples of the dating proposed here, see Orsi 1910: 72 fig. 5 (lower right); Orsi 1912: 200 fig. 13 (right); Riemer 2000: 211-212, 437, pl. 93.3, 438, Pl. 96.9 and 450, Pl. 116.2; Eger 2010: 151 Fig. 7:13, 157-158 no. 13; Entwistle 2010: 24-25 no. 25-26 (dating).

<sup>15</sup> Such an interpretation of the symbolism of decoration on these rings considerably increases the number of registered and interpreted Christian symbols on Great Moravian objects. For the situation to the present, see Ungerma 2001: 224-228.

<sup>16</sup> The possible symbolism of numbers and the meanings of individual decoration and decorative combinations on early medieval objects from the Great Moravian period was noted long ago by Klanica 1970: 73-79, but these comments have mostly remained disregarded.

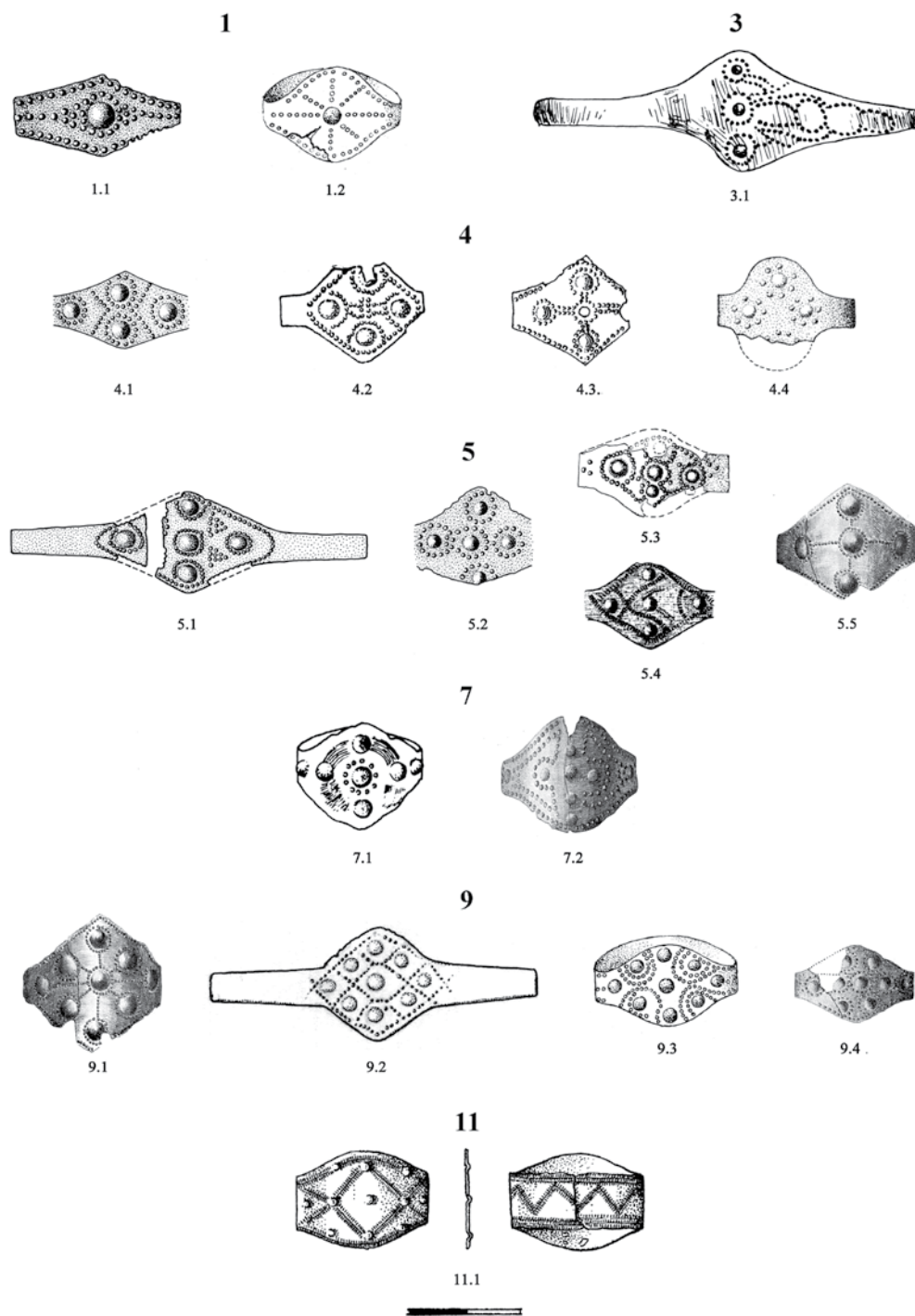


Fig. 4. Rings of the Blučina type with one (1), three (3), four (4), seven (7), nine (9), and eleven (11) wart-like protrusions. 1.1 - Pitten-Kreuzackergasse, gr. 33/f (Friesinger 1977, 60, 129 Taf. 18:5); 1.2 - Břeclav-Pohansko, gr. 342/f (Kalousek 1971, 187 Obr. 342:9, Tab. 34:1). 3.1 - Bled-Pristava II, gr. 142/f (Korošec 1979/1, 72; Korošec 1979/2, Taf. 14:1h). 4.1 - Pitten-Kreuzackergasse, gr. 36/f (Friesinger 1977, 62, 132 Taf. 21:5); 4.2 - Skalice-Háj, tumul 8:gr. 1/f (Budimský-Krička 1959, 142 Abb. 33:4, 186 Taf. XVII:9); 4.3 - Josefov-Záhumenica, gr. 26/f (Šrašková 1958, 65 Taf. 22); 4.4 - Keszthely-Feképuszta, gr. 11/1951/ch (Müller 2010, 266 Taf. 19:21). 5.1 - Pitten-Kreuzackergasse, gr. 42/f (Friesinger 1977, 64, 134 Taf. 23:4); 5.2 - Pitten-Kreuzackergasse, gr. 15/f (Friesinger 1977, 55, 124 Taf. 13:3); 5.3 - Alsórajk-Határi tábla, gr. 15/f (Szőke 1996, 101, 131, Taf. 25:1); 5.4 - Pitten-Kreuzackergasse, gr. 43a/ch (Friesinger 1977, 64, 134 Taf. 23:2); 5.5 - Blučina-Malý kopec, gr. VI (Poulik 1948, 145 no. 17, Tab. XLXI:12a). 7.1 - Kranj-farna cerkev, gr. 120/53 (Valič 1974, 31 no. 124, T. 3:2); 7.2 - Brno-Maloměřice (Poulik 1948, 173, Tab. XLI:2). 9.1 - Blučina-Malý kopec, gr. VI (Poulik 1948, 145 no. 16, Tab. XLXI:10a); 9.2 - Cerov Log-Camberk, gr. 9/ch (Breščak 2002, 107 Sl. 5:3); 9.3 - Břeclav-Pohansko, gr. 342/f (Kalousek 1971, 187 Obr. 342:8, Tab. 34:6); 9.4 - Boleradice-Radle, gr. 46 (Poulik 1948, 157 no. 12, Tab. LXIII:13a). 11.1 - Čakajovce-Kostolné, gr. 426/f (Rejholcová 1995, 46, 158, Tab. LXVIII:18).

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### \* **Figures and captions**

(gr. - grave; ch - child; m - male; f - female; AMZ - Arheološki muzej u Zagrebu / *The Archaeological Museum in Zagreb*)

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902.2(497.11)(082)  
902/904(082)

A STEP into the Past : approaches to Identity, Communications and Material Culture in South-Eastern European Archaeology : papers dedicated to Petar Popović for His 78th birthday / editors Blagoje Govedarica, Ivan Vranić, Aleksandar Kapuran. - Belgrade : Institute of Archaeology, 2023 (Београд : Birograf comp). - 375 str. : ilustr. ; 30 cm. - (Monographs ; no. 87)

Tiraž 100. - Str. 15-23: Introduction : Petar Popović and South-Eastern European Archaeology / Blagoje Govedarica, Ivan Vranić, Aleksandar Kapuran. - Bibliografija uz svaki rad.

ISBN 978-86-6439-096-5

а) Поповић, Петар (1946-) б) Археолошка истраживања -- Европа -- Зборници в) Археолошка истраживања -- Србија -- Зборници г) Културна добра -- Презентација -- Зборници

COBISS.SR-ID 134299657