

ALEKSANDAR KAPURAN, Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade  
MIRJANA BLAGOJEVIĆ, Republic Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments, Belgrade  
DRAGICA BIZJAK, Knjaževac

## SETTLEMENTS AND NECROPOLISES OF THE EARLY IRON AGE ALONG THE MIDDLE COURSE OF THE NIŠAVA RIVER\*

UDK: 903.5"6387"(497.11-11)

903.4"6387"(497.11-11)

DOI: 10.2298/STA1565145K

Short communication

e-mail: a.kapuran@gmail.com

Received: February 10, 2015

Accepted: May 7, 2015

*Abstract.* – As a result of the rescue archaeological investigations conducted along the E-80 motorway route, around the middle course of the Nišava river, from Sićevo Gorge to Dimitrovgrad, several sites from the Early Iron Age were discovered. At the same time, two caves located on the margins of this natural transportation route which links the Morava Valley and the Sofia Basin were explored. This paper comprises all the relevant finds of the material culture from Bela Palanka, Pirot and Dimitrovgrad, and sepulchral architecture and funerary customs practised during Hallstatt C and D. The aim of the paper is to indicate the influences of the Basarabi and Pšeničevo material culture in the territories assumed to have been inhabited by the Thracian and Illyrian tribes, which may help with the more accurate pinpointing of the demarcations between the Triballi, Thracians and Paeonians.

*Key words.* – Hallstatt C, Hallstatt D, Basarabi, Triballi, Thracians, settlements, necropolises, funerary customs.

Until recently, the region along the middle course of the Nišava river has represented an archaeologically insufficiently explored area with regard to the Early Iron Age. The geostrategic significance of this natural transportation route, which links the Morava Valley and the Sofia Basin, certainly influenced the economic and cultural movements between the central Balkans, Thrace, the Black Sea and the Aegean. As a result of the rescue excavations conducted along the E-80 route (Niš–Dimitrovgrad motorway), several sites have been explored, including two necropolises from the Iron Age which, it is believed, will contribute to gaining a clearer insight into the chronological span, as well as certain ethnic questions related to the Paleo-Balkan communities of eastern Serbia.

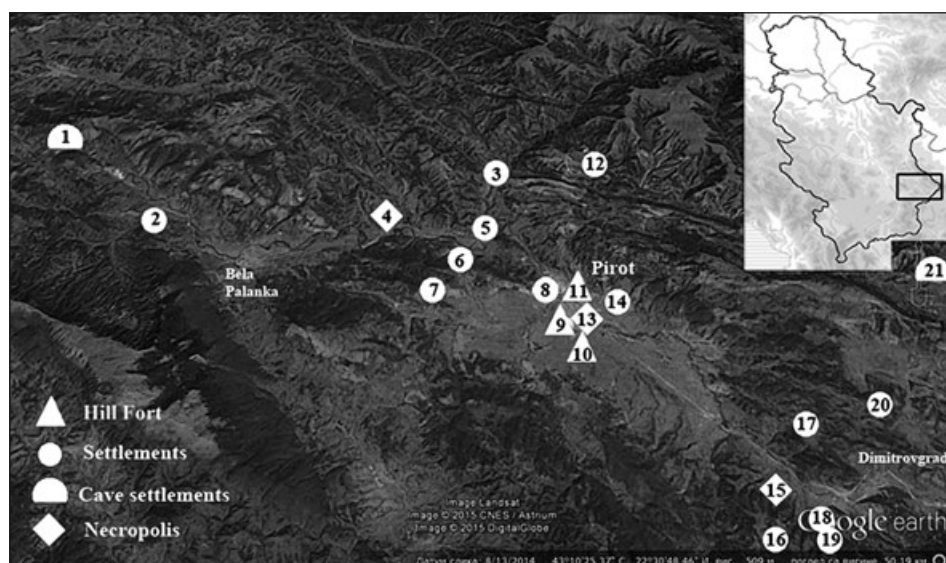
### RESEARCH HISTORY

The Early Archaic bronze sculpture of the “Blacksmith from Vranište”, which was discovered in the 1960s by Milan Pavlović, a teacher from Bela Palanka, is certainly the most interesting find from the Early Iron Age (Pl. I/1).<sup>1</sup> This sculpture depicts a man working with an anvil, and probably originates from the Peloponnese. It was roughly dated between 750 and 725 BC.<sup>2</sup> The first major rescue investigations related to

---

<sup>1</sup> Поповић 1994, 19, 22, кат. 21; Митић et al. 2005, 50. The context of the find is not sufficiently clear.

\* The article results from the projects: *Archaeology of Serbia: cultural identity, integration factors, technological processes and the role of the central Balkans in the development of European prehistory* (No. 177020) and *Cultural changes and population movements in the early prehistory of the central Balkans* (No. 177023), funded by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia.



- 1) Ostrovica, Donja pećina
- 2) Kladenčište
- 3) Vranište
- 4) Sinjac: Selište, Crkvište, Belavina
- 5) Crnoklište
- 6) Ponor, Turske bare
- 7) Bele vode, Romanija
- 8) Gnجان
- 9) Kamnik, Gradište
- 10) Jalbotina, Kale
- 11) Pirotski grad
- 12) Velika Lukanja
- 13) Poljska Ražana
- 14) Krupac, Pobjen Kamnik
- 15) Gornja Držina
- 16) Vlasi
- 17) Milojkovac, Konopište
- 18) Grapa
- 19) Barje
- 20) Petrlaška pećina
- 21) Senokoška pećina

Map 1. Satellite image of the middle Nišava river valley, the section from Sićevečka gorge to the town of Dimitrovgrad

Карта 1. Сателитски снимак средње Понишавља, у делу од Сићевачке клисуре до Димитровграда

the Iron Age involved two necropolises with cremated deceased, Selište in Velika Lukanja and Madjilka in Pirot.<sup>3</sup> Two chance finds of bronze axes – celts, originating from the vicinity of Dimitrovgrad and Pirot, would also correspond to this Early Iron Age horizon.<sup>4</sup> A somewhat larger number of stratigraphically clearer finds were obtained from systematic excavations conducted at the site of Pirotski Grad between 1986 and 1987.<sup>5</sup> A more accurate cultural determination of the ceramic production with characteristics of the Basarabi culture was provided by the syntheses of M. Jevtić and R. Vasić.<sup>6</sup> What should also be mentioned here is the very useful habilitation work of the archaeology graduate Aleksandar Manić from Pirot, which incorporated all the relevant prehistoric finds from this area that were known prior to the outset of the major rescue investigations along the E-80 motorway.<sup>7</sup> However, the results of the rescue investigations conducted by the Republic Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments and the Institute of Archaeology are pivotal for this paper, while the results obtained by the Centre for Archaeological Research of the Faculty of Philosophy will be included in a separate publication. The cave habitats were explored as part of an international, Serbian–American project, jointly managed by Prof. D. Mihailović (Department of Archaeology, Faculty of Philosophy, Belgrade) and Prof. S. Kuhn (Arizona, USA).

## SETTLEMENTS

The habilitation work of A. Manić in the municipal territories of Dimitrovgrad and Pirot<sup>8</sup> (as well as Bela Palanka) included a number of sites that could be determined as Hallstatt C and D (Map 1). In the municipality of Dimitrovgrad, these are the sites of Barje (Parprat) in Borovo; Šumje (Pročni Kamnik) in the village of Vlasi; Komje in Gornja Držina; Petrlaška Pećina and the cave in Senokos near Turski Kladenac.

<sup>2</sup> Gordon-Mitten and F. Doerningen, 32, kat. 9. Identical characteristics in the modelling of the face and eyes can be seen on a bronze sculpture representing Heracles fighting the Minotaur, which originates from Olympia and is dated to the same period. Boardman 1999, kat. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Пејић 2001; Јевтић 1990.

<sup>4</sup> Gavranović, Kapuran 2014, 34; Taf. I/6; Manić 2010, T. V/1.

<sup>5</sup> Деланин, Пејић 1986; *idem* 1987.

<sup>6</sup> Jevtić 1983; *idem* 1992; Vasić 1987, 662; *idem* 1992.

<sup>7</sup> Manić 2010. We also express our gratitude to the curator of the National Museum in Belgrade, A. Djordjević, for the information from the preliminary field survey of the Babušnica region.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> The rescue investigations of the sites of Selište, Crkvište, Crnoklište and Kladenčište during 2013 were directed by M. Blagojević.

<sup>10</sup> The director of the excavations was A. Kapuran.

In the municipality of Pirot, there are still no indications of the exact location from where the sculpture of the “Blacksmith from Vranište” originates, however, by means of preliminary field surveys, possible sites were ascertained in the village of Grljan, Kale in Jalbotina, Gradište in Kamnik, Pobjijeni Kamnik in Krupac, Konopište in Milojkovac, Turske Bare in Ponor, Pirotski Grad, Visoki Breg in Poljska Ržana, Česma in Crnoklište and Selište in Velika Lukanja.

The investigations conducted along the E-80 motorway route, in the territory of Bela Palanka, included the sites of Belavina, Selište and Crkvište in the village of Sinjac, as well as Kladenčište in Špaj, whereas the sites of Turske Bare in Ponor, Romanija in Bele Vode and Donja Pečina in Ostrovica, situated on the border of this municipality and Sicevo, were previously explored.

The map of the central Nišava Valley, in the area stretching from Sicevo Gorge to Dimitrovgrad (Map 1), shows a dense distribution of settlements, positioned on

slightly sloped, terraced elevations, mainly representing protection from flooding of the Nišava river and its tributaries. The sites of Barje, Vlasi, Grapa, Gnjilan, Pobjijeni Kamnik, Konopište, Turske Bare, Selište in Velika Lukanja, Crnoklište, Sinjac and Kladenčište belong to a group of an open lowland settlement type.

In the vicinity of the village of Sinjac, three sites were explored – Selište, Crkvište<sup>9</sup> and Belavina,<sup>10</sup> extending in a southeast-northwest direction, covering an area of about 5 ha (Fig. 1). They possess a multicultural stratigraphy, from the Middle Neolithic (Starčevo), Late Copper Age (Kostolac culture), Early and Late Iron Age to the Middle Ages. During the Early Iron Age, a large sepulchral complex emerged here. It is important to highlight that the deposits, resulting from the force of devastating floods (probably caused by the collapse of the natural dam at the Zavoj lake) and erosion, are clearly distinguishable in the stratigraphy of these sites. An approximately 1 m tall drift of the secondarily deposited finds of pottery and daub, formed above the subsoil,

Fig. 1. Sinjac Polje site

Сл. 1. Локалитетет Синџац поље

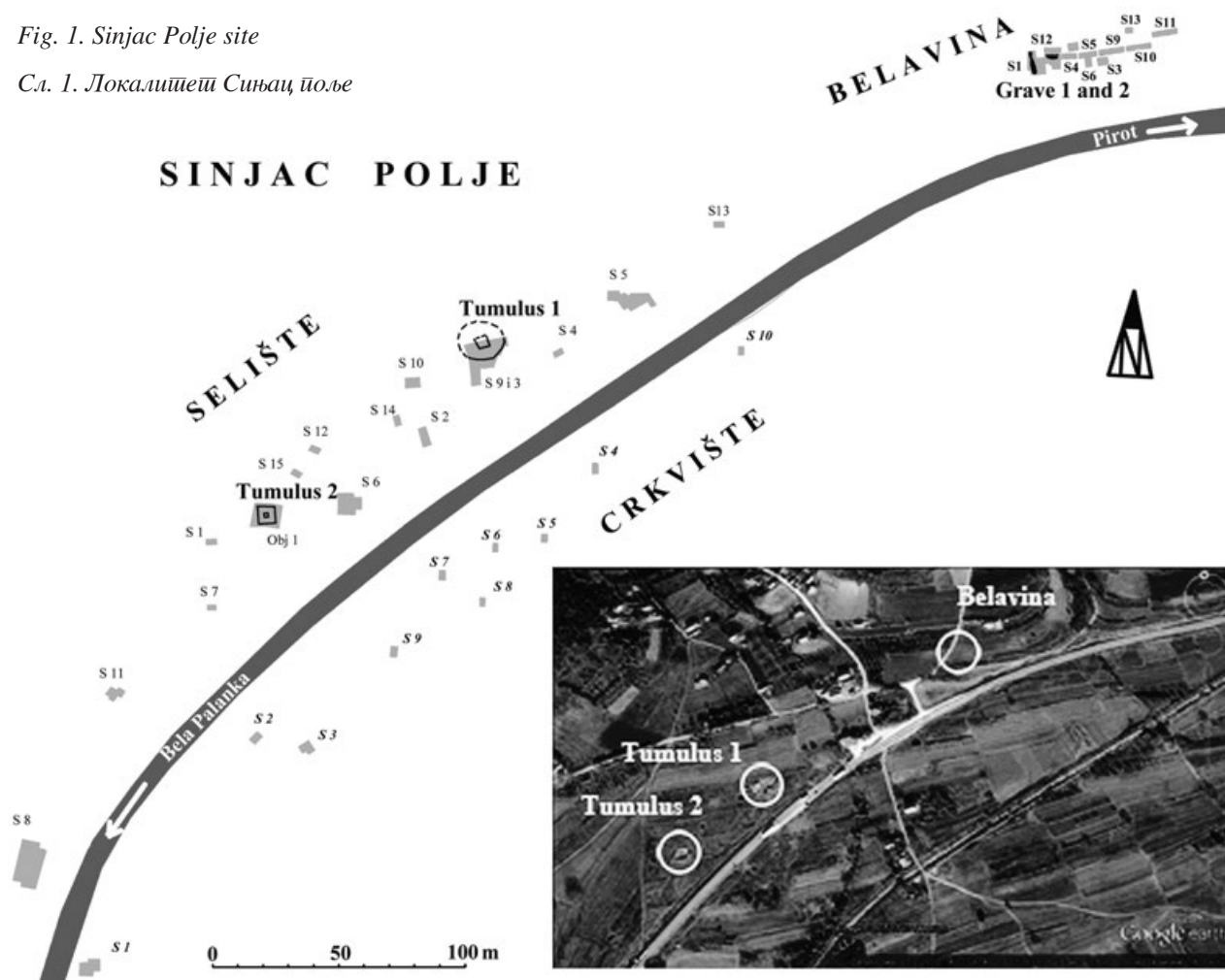


Fig. 2. Belavina site

Сл. 2. Локалитет Белавина



best testifies to the intense erosion that this area was exposed to in the Middle Neolithic.

At the site of Crkvište, in trench 1, three pits filled with fragments of pots and pithoi were noted, which are believed to have served the function of storing grain (Pl. VI/6, 7, 8, 10). In recent times, however, there have been other opinions that interpret them in three ways: as being residential, economic (storerooms)<sup>11</sup> or used for cult purposes. The conical section of pit 1 excludes the possibility that it represents a residential dugout (Fig. 12). The baked and stone lined base in the central part, along with a structure resembling an oven calotte in section, might suggest that this was some sort of smoke-house for curing meat, since numerous animal bones were detected in the same place. A feature of an identical shape was discovered at Koprivlen and, according to the authors of the research, had a cult role.<sup>12</sup> Pit 2, in trench 1 at Crkvište, is assumed to have possibly been used for storing provisions, whereas pit 4, of a conical section, is also believed to represent a cult pit. Although, in recent times, identical features in the territory of Bulgaria have mainly been defined as cult pits, silo pits for storing provisions are a common occurrence in the Danube and Morava valleys, indicating the orientation of the prehistoric communities towards agriculture.<sup>13</sup> Their position should also be taken into consideration as they were most frequently located away from the centres of settlements, as is the case with the pit which was situated in the apse of the basilica at Kladenčište (Fig. 5). A large number of pits from Crnoklište will be

discussed in more detail in other papers.<sup>14</sup> Identical pit structures were discovered at the sites of Meanište and Kovačke Njive near Vranje.<sup>15</sup> The pit located in the sacral complex at Belavina is assumed to have had a cult character, since the fragments of an almost complete, richly ornamented krater (Pl. IV/7) were located in all the excavated layers, from the top of the pit to its bottom.

Some Early Iron Age settlements in the central Nišava Valley were positioned on dominant hills, thus it is not excluded that they were of a hill-fort type. Since only a preliminary field survey was carried out, their topographic features could point to the fact that the sites of Kale in Jalbotina, Gradište in Kamnik and Pirotski Grad may have been hilltop fortifications. Cave settlements in which Iron Age and Eneolithic habitation horizons were noted are Senokoška, Petrlaška (Fig. 13a) and Donja Pećina in Ostrovica (Fig. 13b).

<sup>11</sup> Јевтић 2010.

<sup>12</sup> Вълчева 2002, 116, Фиг. 77/4.

<sup>13</sup> Јевтић 2011, 32, сл. 36.

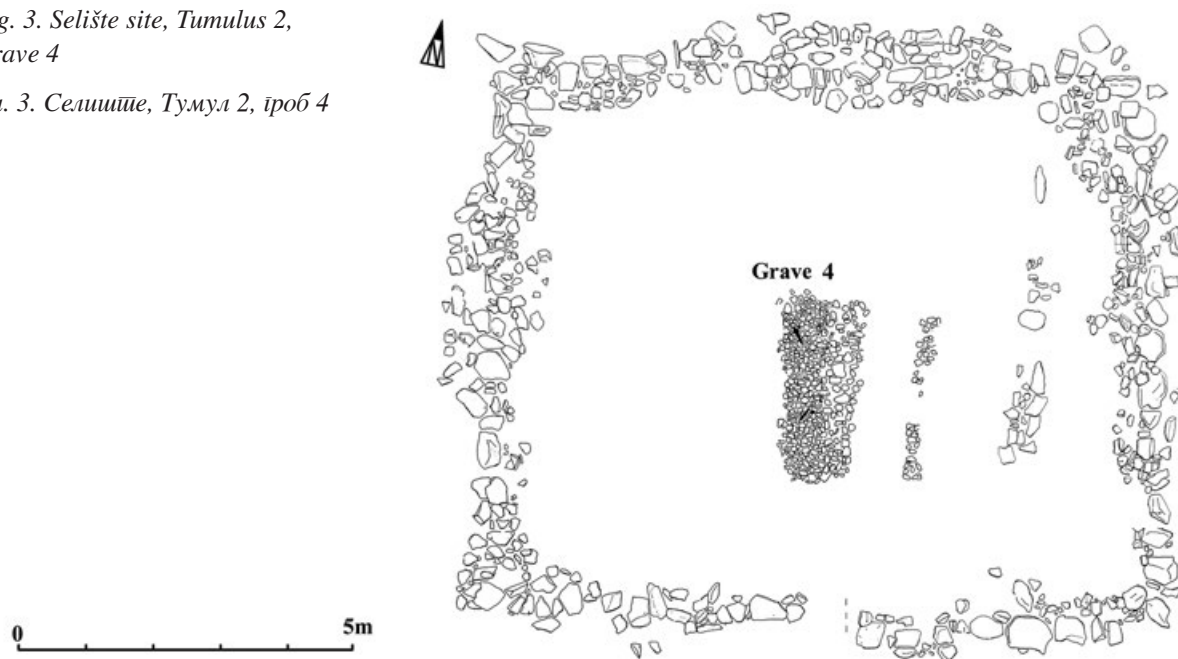
<sup>14</sup> The head of the field research in 2013 was P. Pejić from the Ponišavlje Museum in Pirot, while the project leader of the rescue investigations was M. Blagojević. During 2014, additional rescue investigations were conducted under the leadership of Dr. A. Bulatović.

<sup>15</sup> Several pits of a similar character were discovered in the same area where the Early Bronze Age necropolis was located, which was explored in the course of the rescue excavations conducted along the E-75 motorway route during 2012; Bulatović et al. 2014.



Fig. 3. Selište site, Tumulus 2, Grave 4

Сл. 3. Селиште, Тумул 2, гроб 4



## NECROPOLISES

In terms of the developed Iron Age in the Nišava Valley, apart from the explored necropolises of Selište and Belavina, there are indications of at least two others. At the site of Komje in the village of Držina, on the left bank of the Jerma river (Map 1/15), during the course of the expansion of the local road, an inhumation grave was discovered containing grave goods in the form of poorly preserved and fragmented bronze artefacts, buttons, fibulae, bracelets, small tubes, loops and applications,<sup>16</sup> which may belong to the Late Hallstatt period. The information regarding the other potential necropolis, located at the site of Poljska Ržana (Map 1/13), was provided by R. Vasić. Specifically, it is an accidentally discovered necropolis with cremated deceased, from which a ceramic beaker decorated in the Basarabi style and a stone axe are today in private ownership.<sup>17</sup>

In the course of the rescue investigations along the motorway route in the vicinity of the village of Sinjac, three sepulchral features were discovered (Fig. 1, 2, 3, 4). At the site of Selište, two tumuli<sup>18</sup> with four inhumed and twelve cremated deceased were explored, while two devastated graves with two inhumed and four cremated deceased were located at the adjacent site of Belavina. Erosion, along with the long-term depositing of material from a nearby hill, made these sepulchral features invisible from the surface. The question remains as to whether the dispersal of the mound happened over time, which, based on analogies, is believed to have not ex-

ceeded 1 m in height.<sup>19</sup> This was probably the reason for the graves being easily accessible to robbers. At the site of Belavina, grave constructions of stone were destroyed by deep ploughing, since they were situated only about 30 cm below the surface.

Tumulus 1 (Fig. 4) at its base comprised a wide oval ring in the form of stone paving of a N–S orientation, encircling a square-based burial chamber (dimensions 6 x 6 m and 0.5 m wide), which contained two inhumed deceased (graves 2 and 3) and an urn containing a cremated deceased (urn 1). At the outer paving ring, there were several ritually broken vessels underneath and between the stones (Pl. V/3, 4, 6) and a subsequently inhumed deceased, aged 20–24, with an approximate

<sup>16</sup> Manić 2010, 8–9.

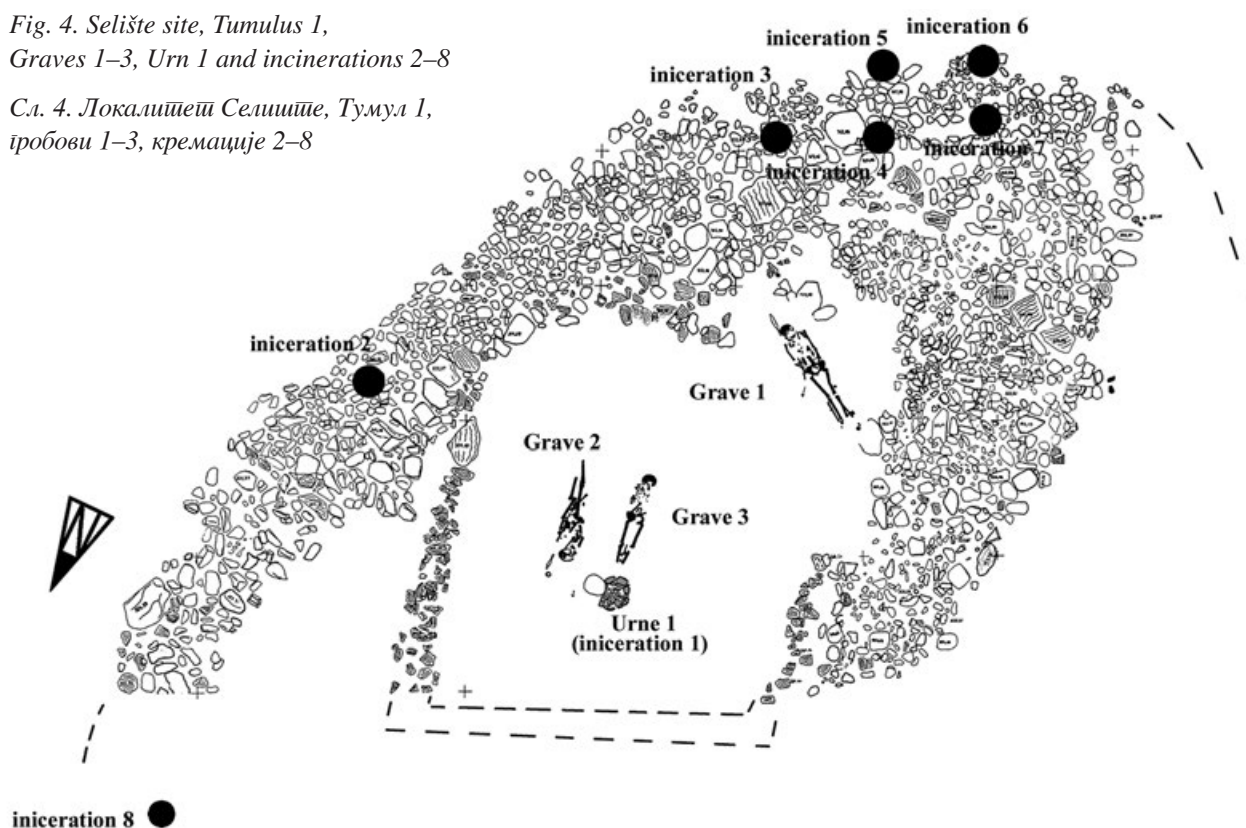
<sup>17</sup> Vasić 1992.

<sup>18</sup> Although there are no clear indications as to whether greater amounts of soil had been heaped over the deceased in the form of a burial mound, it has been decided to use the term “tumulus”, since the strong effect of erosion could have caused the disappearance of the original mound. On the other hand, in the older Vajuga–Pesak necropolis, the deceased were lying on the platforms of stones, directly below the surface. For this information we thank Dr. M. Jevtić who had been surveying the necropolis prior to the systematic excavations.

<sup>19</sup> A similar situation was encountered at the necropolis of Lugovi–Bent in Mojsinje where, in a tumulus less than 1 m in height, the existence of three burial horizons from the Bronze and Iron Age was noted. Kapuran took part in these investigations as a member of the team.

Fig. 4. Selište site, Tumulus 1,  
Graves 1–3, Urn 1 and incinerations 2–8

Сл. 4. Локалитети Селиштије, Тумул 1,  
гробови 1–3, кремације 2–8



stature of 1.71 m (grave 1). The skeleton was in a supine position, with an iron spear, a knife, a tool in the form of an awl or a punch, a bronze fibula with a saddle-shaped foot and a dual loop (or a distributor) with protomes discovered next to him (Fig. 6). In grave 2, in the central part of the tumulus, a male individual of 18–20 years of age was buried, positioned supine and of a N–S orientation. The anthropological analysis indicates that this was a healthy man, next to whom were an iron spear, a curved iron knife, a fragmented iron fibula with a ribbed bronze cover, a small bronze tube (the lower part of a spear) and, placed above his head, a single-eared beaker (Fig. 7). Grave 3 belongs to a female of an approximate age of 30, orientated in the opposite direction to the individual in grave 2, and whose grave, in our opinion, could have been plundered at a later date since her mandible was near the pelvis and the upper, devastated part of the skeleton did not include any finds. Near the legs, two bracelets made from a spirally twisted bronze wire and a bronze loop with overlapping ends were discovered (Fig. 8). Not far from her legs, an urn covered with a stone was found, containing the remains of a cremated deceased (urn 1) and a few animal bones. Except for a few corroded metal objects of unknown use, the content of the tumulus included a saltelon, a

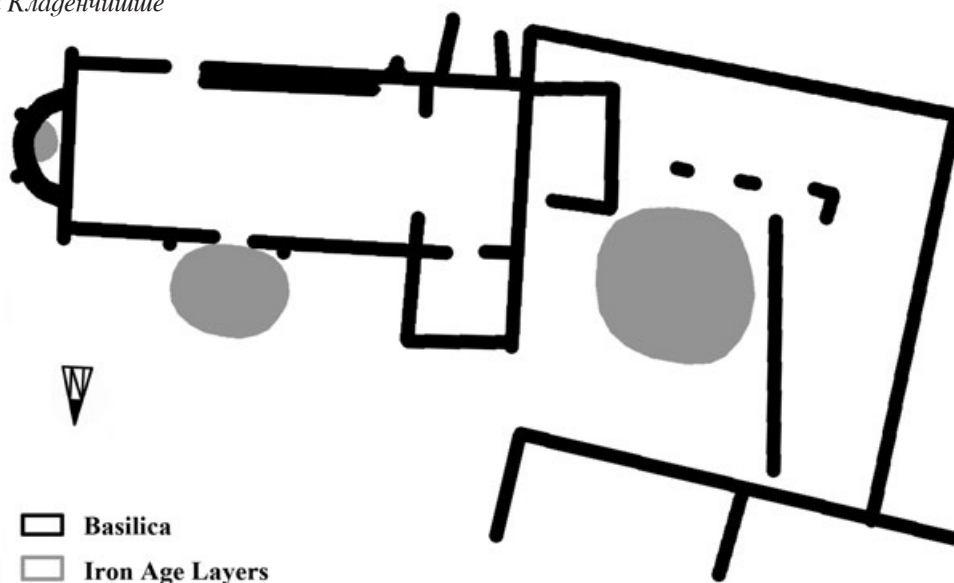
bronze double-shank pin and, situated on the stone ring, a bronze La Tène fibula (Pl. I/6, 10, 12).

Under the stone paving (particularly on the periphery) several areas were discovered, comprising black soil, crushed pottery and burnt human bones (hereinafter referred to as incinerations), which preceded inhumations. In the process of removing the stone ring, six such incinerations were noted (Fig. 4). Incineration 2 (urn 1 would represent incineration 1) (sq. 8–9) is located on the far western edge of the stone construction and, within it, fragments of a large vessel with tongue-like handles (which could not be reconstructed) were discovered along with the cremated remains of an individual. In the far southern part of the stone paving, five other incinerations were detected, of which incineration 3 (sq. 16) contained two individuals placed in a large conical pot (Pl. V/7). Incinerations numbers 4 (sq. 18), 5 (sq. 20) and 6 (sq. 36) each comprised a single individual, whereas incinerations numbers 7 (sq. 37) and 8 (western extension of trench 9) comprised two individuals each. In incinerations numbers 4 and 5, fragments of ceramic vessels (urns) were mixed with the bones.

The central part of tumulus 2 (Fig. 3) comprised a low wall (of only two stone courses) in the form of a

Fig. 5. Špaј, Kladenčište site

Сл. 5. Шпај, локалитети Кладенчиште



rectangle (11 x 9 x 1.2 m in size), enclosing the central stone platform (2.7 x 2.8 m in size) on which a female individual was lying (grave 4), with only a small number of bones preserved. Traces of an outer ring have not been recorded around the stone construction as in the case of tumulus 1. Furthermore, it is not sufficiently clear whether the skeleton had been devastated by erosion, an increased Ph value of the soil, a subsequent grave robbery or perhaps a combination of all the factors listed. Nevertheless, apart from the skeleton, the finds from the platform comprised an iron spear, a fragmented shank with a rivet (most likely from the spear), a knife, a fibula and an iron buckle, a fragmented bow of an iron fibula with a bronze cover and, at head height, a ceramic beaker (Fig. 9). Outside the sacral context, a fragmented fibula and a sharp profiled tip of a small bronze object (perhaps an earring?) were discovered (Pl. I/4, 9).

At the adjacent site of Belavina (Fig. 2), within the narrow route of a local road, an 8-m-long and 2-m-wide pavement (or a wall) of a N–S orientation was discovered. On the eastern side of this structure, two destroyed grave constructions with two inhumed and four cremated deceased were noted. Skeletal fragments and potsherds, along with unburnt animal bones, were concentrated only in two small areas of black soil, between the stones (features 2 and 6) (Fig. 10, 11), as was also the case under the stone ring at Selište. Unfortunately, reconstruction of the original appearance of the constructions that contained these incinerations was not possible. The

only thing that can be stated with any certainty is that outside the areas filled with black soil and stone, as well as in the pit (feature 2), no pottery originating from the Early Iron Age has been discovered.

## MATERIAL CULTURE

### Metal finds

The bronze sculpture of the “Blacksmith from Vranište” represented the beginning of a new epoch in the development of the Iron Age, which arrived in the Nišava Valley after the collapse of the Urnfield cultural complex. The Hallstatt C finds from this area can also include an openwork cage pendant from around Dimitrovgrad,<sup>20</sup> for which there are analogies in the “Macedonian Bronzes” and can be dated to the 7<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> century BC (Pl. I/2).

What represent culturally and chronologically clearly determined finds discovered at Selište are fibulae, dual loops, double-shank pins, bracelets, saltelon and iron weapons. The fibulae can be divided into three groups. The first group comprises fragmented fibulae with an iron core and a ribbed bronze cover. Taking into account the entire corpus of finds from tumuli 1 and 2, it is believed that similar fibula bows (Pl. I/3–5)

<sup>20</sup> Manić 2010, T. V/2.

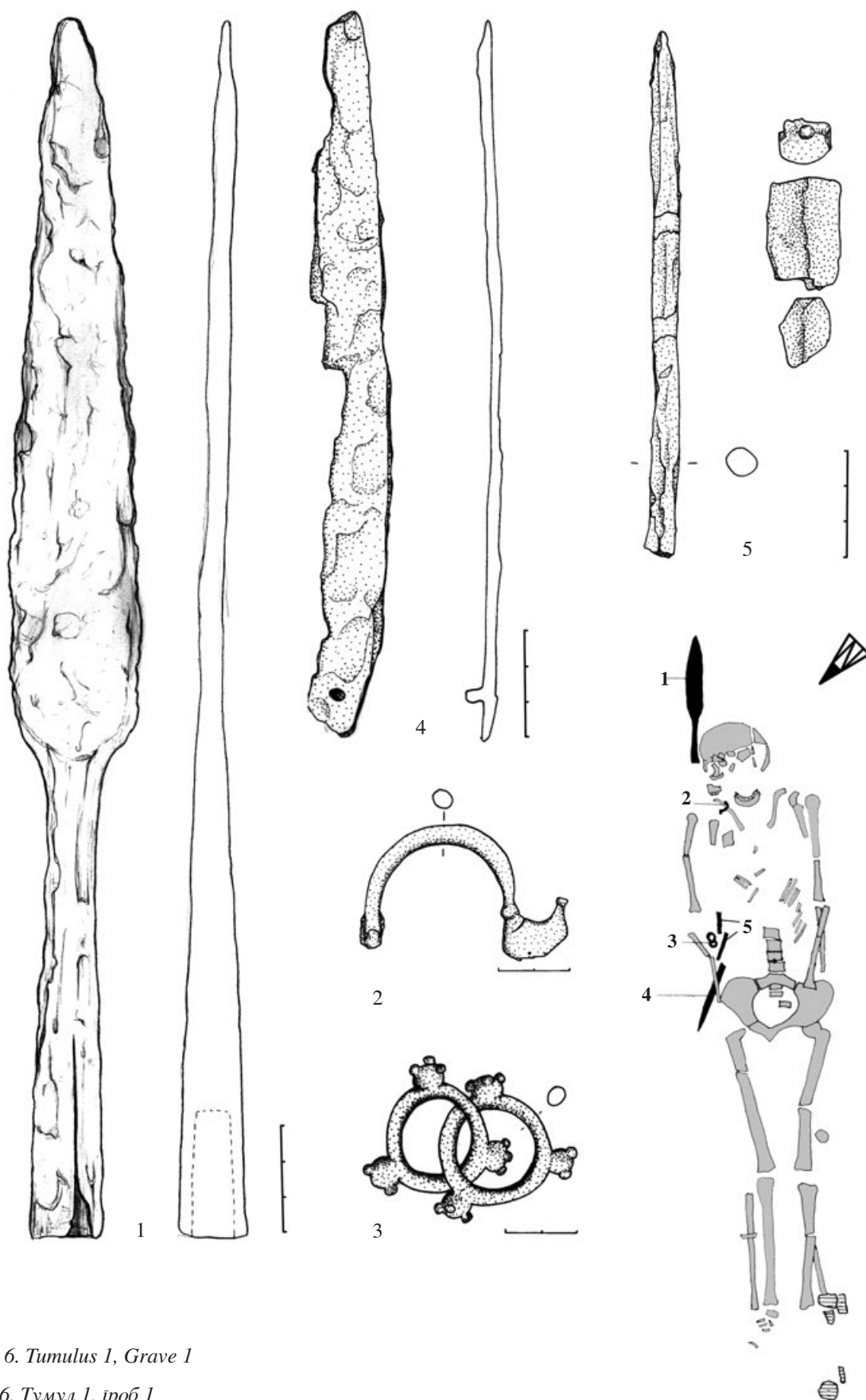


Fig. 6. Tumulus 1, Grave 1

Сл. 6. Тумул 1, гроб 1



may also have had a saddle-shaped rectangular foot. The technique of combining iron and bronze represents the continuation of the traditions characteristic of Hallstatt C. The bronze fibula with a saddle-shaped foot, of the Marvinci–Gogošu type, has numerous analogies in the vast area stretching from Donja Dolina,<sup>21</sup> to Grivac and Slanište in the Morava Valley,<sup>22</sup> Arilje in the west,<sup>23</sup> the Lisičiji Do necropolis in the Vardar Valley in the south,<sup>24</sup> Ferigile<sup>25</sup> in the north and Gradec, near Vidin,<sup>26</sup> in the north-east. All of these are roughly dated to the 6<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> century BC. However, the bronze dual loops with protomes found in the vast area extending from Trebeništa,<sup>27</sup> through Salakovac,<sup>28</sup> to Thracian-Scythian graves in Bulgaria<sup>29</sup> and to the Romanian Banat can also be dated to the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC.<sup>30</sup> Some authors are of the opinion that these loops had been attached to the funerary shroud of the deceased,<sup>31</sup> while others believe that they represented pre-monetary means of payment.<sup>32</sup>

The double-shank pin with a head shaped like the letter “M”, of Trebeništa type,<sup>33</sup> recovered from the centre of tumulus 1, is associated with Greek influences and it has numerous analogies from Donja Dolina,<sup>34</sup> Gosinja Planina on Glasinac,<sup>35</sup> across Pečka Banja,<sup>36</sup> Novi Pazar,<sup>37</sup> Krševica,<sup>38</sup> Hisar,<sup>39</sup> Kaldarma,<sup>40</sup> Trebeništa<sup>41</sup> and the necropolis of Signal near Svrlijig.<sup>42</sup> The small bronze tube with a rivet, decorated with ribbing, has its closest analogies with the finds from Trebeništa<sup>43</sup> and the peripheral tumulus in Atenica, and is considered to represent the lower part of a spear handle, the so-called butt.<sup>44</sup> It is also interesting to mention a find of a circular iron buckle with four “eyelets” made of white glass paste, from the grave in tumulus 2, identical to a surface find from Pećine near Kostolac.<sup>45</sup>

Bracelets made of a spirally twisted bronze wire represent common finds at the Basarabi necropolises in the north,<sup>46</sup> Suva Reka near Gevgelija in the south,<sup>47</sup> and Rogatica (Glasinac) in the west.<sup>48</sup>

The La Tène bronze fibula “with a small paw” from tumulus 1, which does not belong to the Early Iron Age burial context, is dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC and has numerous analogies at sites in the Danube Valley, Kostolac,<sup>49</sup> Gomolava and Surčin.<sup>50</sup>

Prior to the discovery of the necropolis at Sinjac, burials with iron weapons in eastern Serbia had been noted only at the Vajuga–Pesak necropolis in Korbovo, which is chronologically older.<sup>51</sup> Compared to the area here presented, there are more necropolises of this type in the Danube Valley and, accordingly, R. Vasić chose to focus on a separate group of necropolises of the Vajuga–Moldova type, since biritual burials had also

been practised at Moldova.<sup>52</sup> Iron weapon finds from Sinjac have numerous analogies, with the spindle-shaped iron spear with a rib, from grave 2 in tumulus 1, resembling spears from Ravni Lug in Pilatovići,<sup>53</sup> Basarabi,<sup>54</sup> Krivodol,<sup>55</sup> Nevestino near Kyustendil<sup>56</sup> and Govedarnik near Knjaževac.<sup>57</sup> The iron spear of a rhomboid cross-section (Fig. 6/1) bears a resemblance to spears from the necropolises of Tri Čeljusti,<sup>58</sup> Donja Toponica,<sup>59</sup> Romaja,<sup>60</sup> Selište,<sup>61</sup> Govedarnik<sup>62</sup> and Sveti Gajevi at Mihailov Ponor.<sup>63</sup> The iron spear with a long

<sup>21</sup> Marić 1964, T. IX/34, 35.

<sup>22</sup> Богдановић 1974, Т II/6; Булатовић 2007, 105.

<sup>23</sup> Zotović 1985, T. XXI/6.

<sup>24</sup> Видески 1996–1997, Т III/1, 3, 4, 6; Т III/3–6.

<sup>25</sup> Vulpe 1967, Pl. XXIII/7.

<sup>26</sup> Атанасова, Кичашки 1965, 53, 1.

<sup>27</sup> Поповић 1994, кат. 114, 115, 117; Кузман 1985, Т. А/13.

<sup>28</sup> Stojić 2006, Abb. R̄.

<sup>29</sup> Мелюкова 1979, 228, Рис. 48.

<sup>30</sup> Guma 1977, Pl. IX b.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> Topalov 2004; Stojić 2006.

<sup>33</sup> Vasić 1999, 123.

<sup>34</sup> Marić 1964, T. XII/4.

<sup>35</sup> Венас, Čović 1957, T. VIII/13.

<sup>36</sup> Јевтовић (ed.) 1990, 186, кат. 137/6.

<sup>37</sup> Мапо–Zisi, Поповић, Taf. 85/1–4.

<sup>38</sup> Цвјетичанин (ed.) 2012, 93, кат. 108–109.

<sup>39</sup> Тасић 1998, 576, кат. 211.

<sup>40</sup> Санев et al. 1976, кат. 669, 670.

<sup>41</sup> Поповић 1994, 147–149.

<sup>42</sup> Filipović, Bulatović 2010, Fig. 2/6.

<sup>43</sup> Lahtov 1965, T. XXI/17.

<sup>44</sup> Đuknić, Jovanović 1965, XX/18.

<sup>45</sup> Стојић, Јацановић 2008, 488/145.

<sup>46</sup> Dumitrescu 1968, Fig. 18/4–5.

<sup>47</sup> Пашић 1978, сл.9а–б.

<sup>48</sup> Венас, Čović 1956, T. XII/2, 3, 5.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 484/138b.

<sup>50</sup> Сладић 1999, 53/11; 177/2.

<sup>51</sup> Поповић, Vukmanović 1998.

<sup>52</sup> Jevtić 1993, 314.

<sup>53</sup> Јевтовић (ed.) 1990, 169, кат. 104/1

<sup>54</sup> Vulpe 1986, Abb. 2/12.

<sup>55</sup> Николов 1970, 5/в

<sup>56</sup> Буюклиев 1985, Обр. 4/в.

<sup>57</sup> Стојић, Илијић 2011, 152/сл. 64.

<sup>58</sup> Кузман 1985, Т. Б/2.

<sup>59</sup> Трбуховић, Трбуховић 1970, 72, кат. 126.

<sup>60</sup> Đurđić et al. 1975, T. XI/5.

<sup>61</sup> Vulpe 1986, Abb. 18/5.

<sup>62</sup> Стојић, Илијић 2011, 152/сл. 65.

<sup>63</sup> Пековић 2006, 37, кат. 30824.

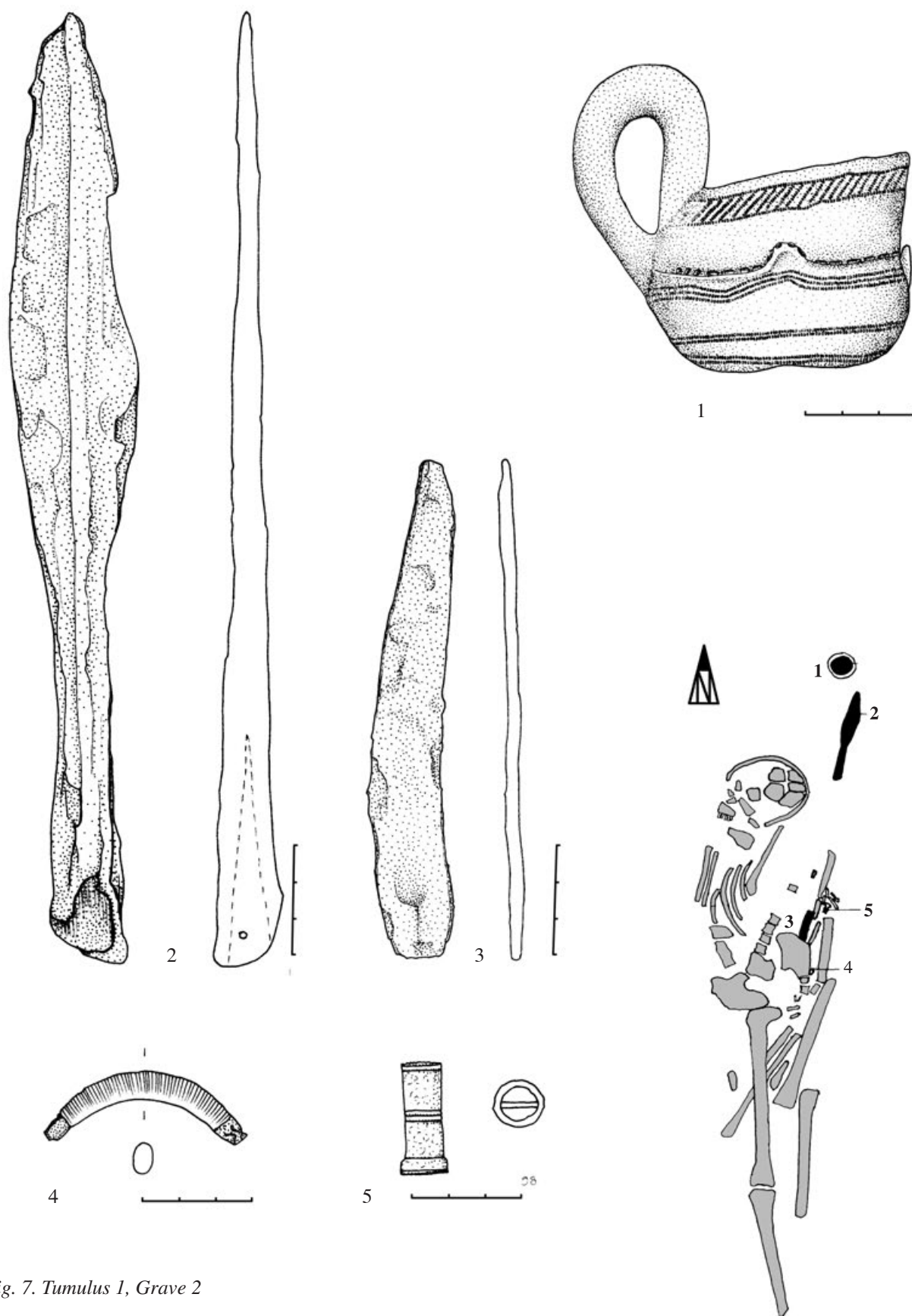


Fig. 7. Tumulus 1, Grave 2

Сл. 7. Тумул 1, гроб 2

conical shank and a somewhat shorter spindle-shaped blade with a pronounced rib (Fig. 9/1) has analogies at the necropolises of Basarabi,<sup>64</sup> Beli Izvor in Vratsa,<sup>65</sup> Ploesti,<sup>66</sup> Gradište on the Juhor mountain in the Morava Valley,<sup>67</sup> Arareva Gomila on Glasinac,<sup>68</sup> Mihailov Ponor<sup>69</sup> and Ražana.<sup>70</sup>

Iron knives are present in all the graves with weapons at Sinjac. The curved, single-edged knife (Fig. 7/3) with a short blade and an unpreserved tang, most closely resembles the finds from grave 3 at the necropolis of Vajuga,<sup>71</sup> grave 58 at Doroslov,<sup>72</sup> Mihailov Ponor<sup>73</sup> and the Ferigile necropolis.<sup>74</sup> The single-edged knife (Fig. 6/4) with a curved handle and one preserved rivet is similar to finds from Glasinac,<sup>75</sup> Juhor,<sup>76</sup> Velika Krsna,<sup>77</sup> Ferigile,<sup>78</sup> Basarabi,<sup>79</sup> Balta Verde,<sup>80</sup> Telești-Drăgoiești,<sup>81</sup> Krivodol<sup>82</sup> and Rudeni.<sup>83</sup> The single-edged knife with a straight body and a wide tang is one of a rare type, with its closest analogies found at Zlotska Pečina.<sup>84</sup>

Based on the reconstruction of the funerary ritual, the incinerations from the necropolis at Belavina justifiably seem to be concurrent with the earlier phase of the necropolis at Selište. The role of the long stone paving, which is on the western side of this sepulchral complex, still remains insufficiently clear. What can only be claimed with any certainty is that the pit near feature 6 (Fig. 2) most probably had a cult character, since the fragments of the ceramic krater were discovered in all levels from the top of the pit to its bottom. It can also be asserted that ceramic beakers and bowls decorated with a false cord, stamping in the form of an “S” spiral and concentric circles or triangles could have also represented ritually broken vessels (Pl. IV/1–6).

Other finds that chronologically belong to the Late Hallstatt comprise a bead of yellow glass paste with four pairs of blue eyes (Pl. I/7), for which there are numerous analogies from Mihailov Ponor,<sup>85</sup> Stubarlija,<sup>86</sup> Donja Dolina<sup>87</sup> and Gorni Pol near Štip,<sup>88</sup> a saltelon of spirally twisted wire (Pl. I/10), also common at a number of necropolises from all stages of the Early Iron Age, a bronze prong with its head shaped like a rhombus and of a square cross-section (Pl. I/9) and a bronze bead (Pl. I/8). The iron buckle with reinforcement in the form of a rib in the centre (Pl. I/11) most closely resembles a buckle from Kopana Glavica,<sup>89</sup> although it also has certain analogies with an exclusive find of a gold-plated buckle from the princely grave in Velika Krsna.<sup>90</sup>

### Ceramic Finds

The Middle and Late Hallstatt ceramic production at the sites in the central Nišava Valley is primarily divided

into stratigraphically reliable finds that are obtained from archaeological investigations, and those gathered in the course of field surveys or brought into the museum by the finder. The first group comprises finds from Pirotski Grad (Pl. II/12–20), Crnoklište (Pl. III), Belavina (Pl. IV), Selište in Sinjac (Pl. V), Crkvište in Sinjac (Pl. VI), Kladenčište (Pl. VII), Petrlaška Pečina (Pl. VIII) and Donja Pečina (Pl. IX) and, accordingly, have priority over the other group.

Although the majority of forms are familiar, there are some less well known ceramic forms as well. The basic pottery types of the Basarabi complex in our territory, elaborated on by M. Jevtić,<sup>91</sup> represent shallow and deep cups, conical bowls, bowls with an inverted rim, S-profiled bowls, beakers, pitchers, amphorae, pots, pithoi, tripod stands and lids. As will be shown, some types are combined regarding their appearance and production method, indicating characteristics of two or more types. A small number of ceramic forms belong to pottery manufactured based on Greek models.

Cups are not chronologically sensitive finds unless they are ornamented, but can be roughly grouped as

<sup>64</sup> Dumitrescu 1968, Fig. 15/10; Vulpe 1986, Abb. 2/6; 3/20.

<sup>65</sup> Буюклиев 1985, Обр. 5/в.

<sup>66</sup> Vulpe 1990, Taf. 51/A6.

<sup>67</sup> Stojić 1986, T. 38/4a.

<sup>68</sup> Венас, Čović 1957, T. XXXXI/23.

<sup>69</sup> Пековић 2006, 34, кат. 30818.

<sup>70</sup> Zotović 1985, T. XX 3/6.

<sup>71</sup> Popović, Vukmanović 1998, Pl. 4/4.

<sup>72</sup> Трајковић 2008.

<sup>73</sup> Пековић 2006, 35, кат. 30830.

<sup>74</sup> Dumitrescu, 1968: Fig. 16/2; Vulpe 1967, Pl. XVII/7.

<sup>75</sup> Венас, Čović 1957, T. XXV/13.

<sup>76</sup> Stojić 1986, T. 38/4b.

<sup>77</sup> Катић 2013, 15.

<sup>78</sup> Dumitrescu 1968, Fig. 16/1; Vulpe 1967, Pl. XVII/13.

<sup>79</sup> Dumitrescu 1968, Fig. 16/1; Vulpe 1986, Abb. 1/22; 2/8.

<sup>80</sup> Vulpe 1990, Taf. 57/D3.

<sup>81</sup> Serbu 2003, Fig. 14/1.

<sup>82</sup> Tončeva 1980, Pl. XLIII/9.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, Taf. 28, kat. 178.

<sup>84</sup> Јевтић 2004, сл. 79/3.

<sup>85</sup> Пековић 2006, 36, кат. 30827–30829.

<sup>86</sup> Medović 2007, Sl. 6.

<sup>87</sup> Marić 1964/ T. XXIII/9.

<sup>88</sup> Санев et al. 1976, кат. 593.

<sup>89</sup> Пековић 2006, 94, иб. 30836.

<sup>90</sup> Катић 2013, стр. 10.

<sup>91</sup> Jevtić 1992, T. 278–282.

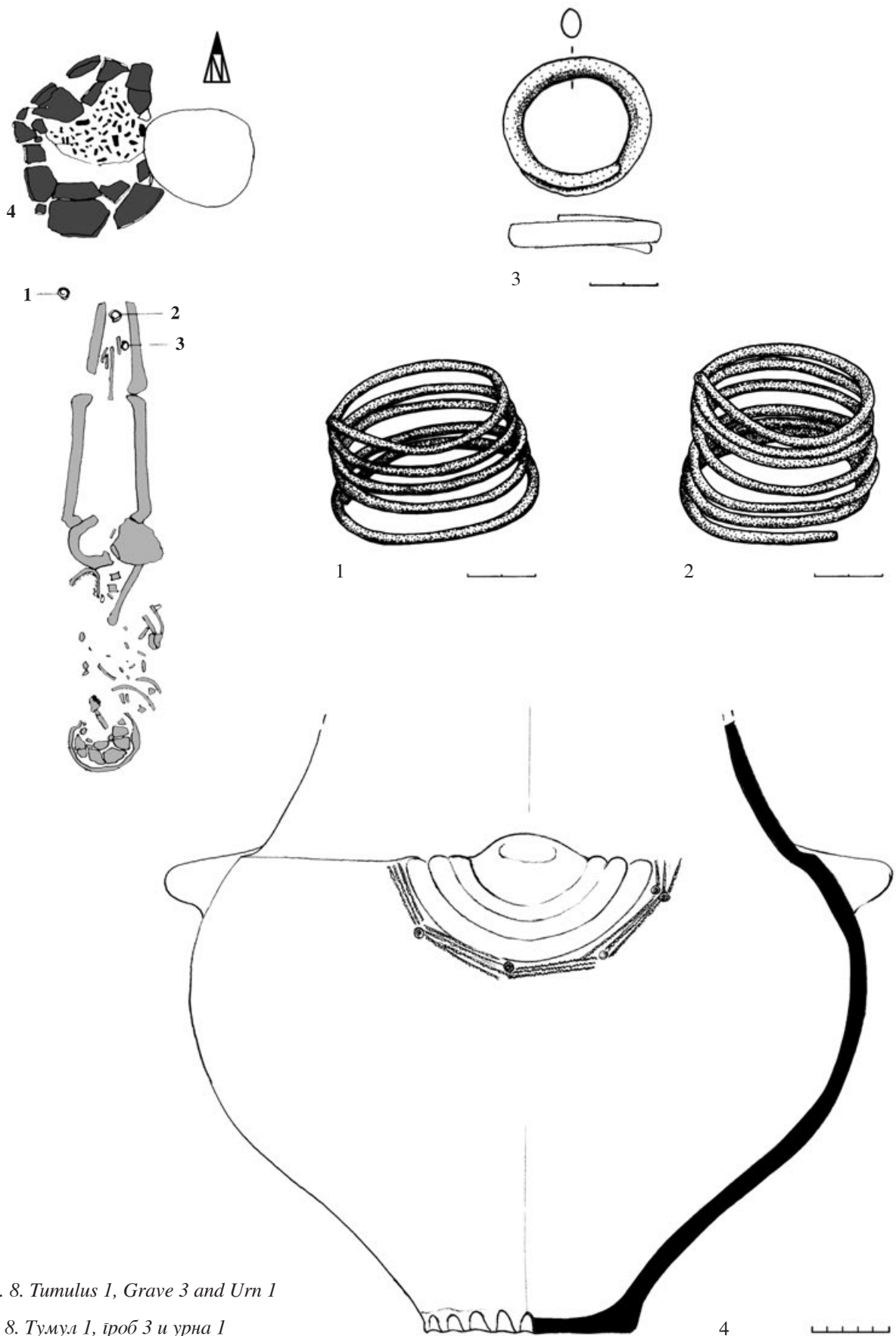


Fig. 8. Tumulus 1, Grave 3 and Urn 1

Сл. 8. Тумул 1, гроб 3 и урна 1



those with a shallow or deep recipient, i.e. of a conical or spherical cross-section. A rare example is a fragment of a rim with a handle decorated with “S” stamping and a white incrustation, from Petrlaška Pećina (Pl. VIII/5). Conical bowls appear in far fewer numbers than bowls with an inverted rim (Pl. II/14; Pl. VII/4), although the principal problem when interpreting their real function is the fragmented state of the finds (especially where the bottom is missing) since certain conical forms may also represent lids (Pl. III/1; Pl. VI/2; Pl. VII/4). In the Nišava Valley, this simplest form of bowl is decorated by impressing, fluting and applying horn-shaped protomes.

Conical bowls with an inverted rim are usually the most common type of ceramic finds at Early Iron Age sites. They differ in the manner in which the rim is shaped and in the protomes, handles and decoration. The most prevalent type has a clearly defined inverted rim (Pl. II/2, 8, 9, 12; Pl. III/2, 3; Pl. IV/2; Pl. V/1; Pl. VI/1, 2; Pl. VII/2, 3; Pl. VIII/3, 4; Pl. IX/1–5). The flat topped rim is somewhat rare (Pl. II/1; Pl. IV/1), whereas the least frequent type has a slightly bevelled rim (Pl. II/5; Pl. VIII/2). S-profiled bowls represent a rare type of find in the territory of the central Nišava Valley and appear only in one instance at Crkvište (Pl. VI/4), Belavina (Pl. IV/4) and Crnoklište (Pl. III/18). Conical cups are common finds, but they are not chronologically sensitive enough to devote attention to. The ornamentation is reduced to a few basic forms of decoration: faceting, impressing, stamping and the application of a white incrustation. Faceting or, more specifically, the horizontal and oblique cutting of the surface around the opening (Pl. II/4; Pl. V/1; Pl. IX/2, 3), is further accentuated by an impressed ornament in the form of a false cord (Pl. II/5, 9, 11; Pl. III/4). The stamping of a row of “S” motifs (Pl. II/8, 9; Pl. IV/2; Pl. VI/1; Pl. VIII/1–4), a row of triangles that form a strip (Pl. II/12, 14; Pl. VII/3), concentric circles (Pl. II/5), circles connected with oblique tangents (Pl. II/1) and a tremolo pattern (Pl. II/13; Pl. VII/2) are characteristic of decoration within the Basarabi cultural circle. Bowls can also contain combinations of all the listed decorating techniques. The most interesting example of ornamenting is a stylised “swastika”, executed using a technique of pricking the interior of a bowl (Pl. V/1).

In terms of the diversity of forms and decorations, beakers represent the most attractive ceramic finds that can be encountered at Early Iron Age settlements and necropolises. They appear in several variants and a range of sizes. The most richly decorated are the single-eared beakers found near the head of the deceased and amongst

the contents in both tumuli 1 and 2 (Fig. 7/1; Fig. 9/4; Pl. V/2). Their rims are slanted and bellies pronounced, with miniature horn-shaped protomes applied (Pl. V/2). The other types of beakers have a slightly rounded cross-section (Pl. V/4), a pronounced conical neck (Pl. III/6, 7) and a sharp biconical profile (Pl. II/3). The ornamental techniques of decorating the beakers from tumuli 1 and 2 show that they were probably made by the same hand, and are decorated with horn-shaped applications, while the hatched strips and garlands were executed using tremolo, along with an “S” stamping in a horizontal row (Fig. 7/1; Fig. 9/4). On the beaker from Poljska Ržana, the techniques of false cord, a row of “S” stamps, impressed concentric circles and fluting were combined (Pl. II/3), and a similar technique is repeated on the beaker from Crnoklište (Pl. III/8). The handles of the beakers exceed the level of the rim and are mainly decorated with fluting (Pl. III/9, 11), stamping (Pl. II/3; Pl. VI/13; Pl. VII/10), the application of a white incrustation and a motif of a series of hatched rhombi (Pl. III/10), hatched triangles (Pl. VI/14) and a false cord (Pl. VII/8). One small beaker is ornamented solely by a technique of incising hatched strips and hatched hanging triangles (Pl. III/8), while another by a double, incised strip and circular punctures with a white incrustation (Pl. V/3).

Pitchers are also rare among the finds of Iron Age ceramic production and are represented by an example with a sharp profile from Crkvište (Pl. VI/3), decorated with tremolo, and one from Selište (Pl. V/8), with punctured volutes accompanied by oblique flutes, and represent a unique style of ornamentation in this region.

Amphorae are the most lavishly decorated ceramics even though they are not strictly typologically defined, with classifications varying widely from author to author. In this paper, amphorae represent vessels of a biconical form with a widely everted rim, narrow neck, shoulders of a wide diameter and a narrow bottom. In some cases this type overlaps and converts into pithoi, given their large dimensions and utilitarian or sacral function which they are assumed to have performed. Based on size, they can be classified into a group of smaller (Pl. III/13; Pl. IV/3, 5; Pl. VII/6) or larger dimensions (Pl. III/14, 16, 17; Pl. V/6; Pl. VIII/7). Both groups can, in some way, be associated with the sacral complexes at Selište and Belavina (Pl. IV/3, 5). The miniature amphorae from Belavina are decorated with a combination of a false cord and impressed triangles and, at Crnoklište, with an incised strip with hatched triangles and a false cord (Pl. III/13). The larger ones are more modestly decorated,

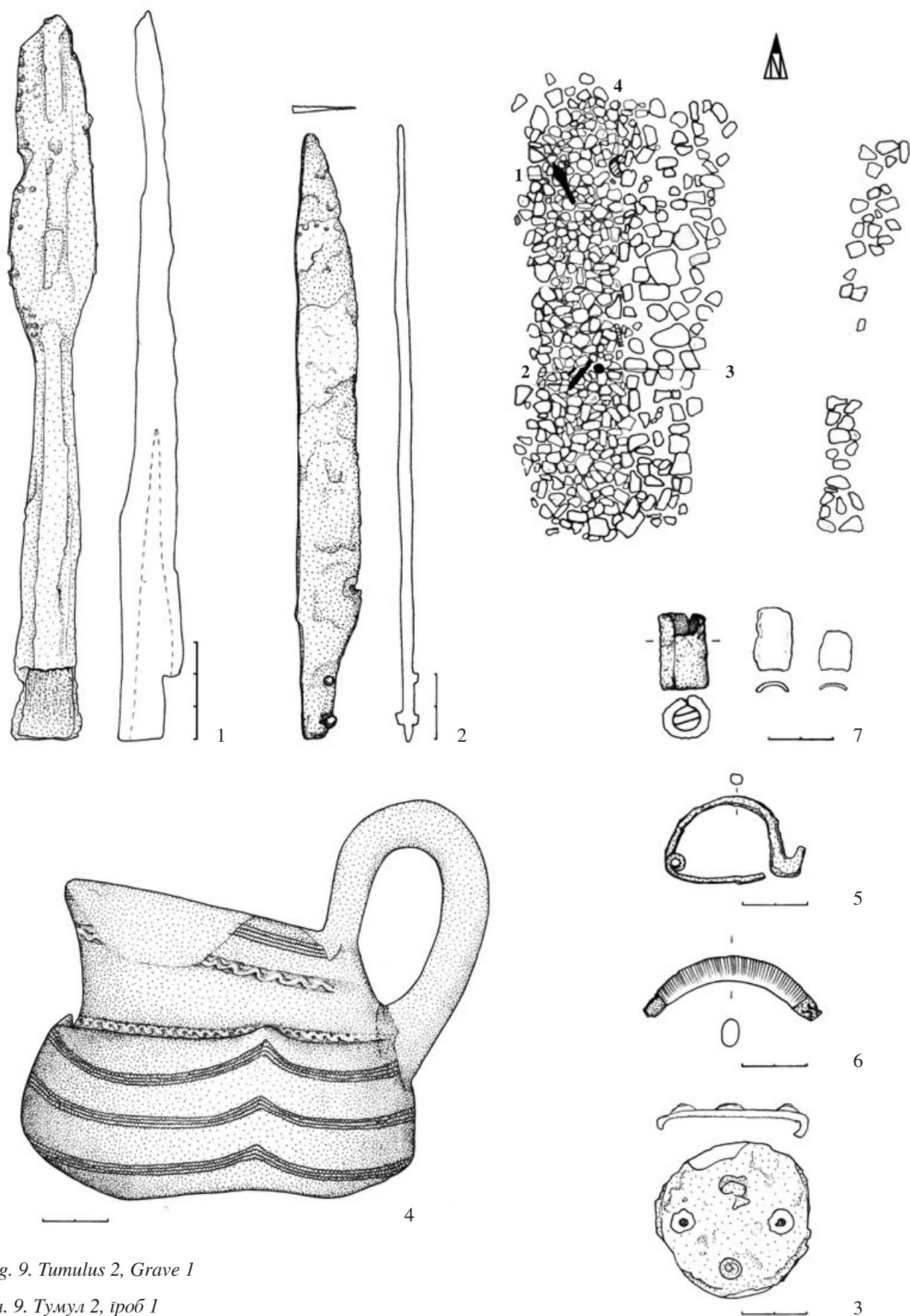


Fig. 9. Tumulus 2, Grave 1

Сл. 9. Тумул 2, гроб 1

displaying a false cord and a roughened neck (Pl. III/14, 16). The urn with a cremated deceased, from tumulus 1, although lacking its rim, represents the most interesting example of combining fluting, tremolo and the stamping of concentric circles (Fig. 7/4). Forms typologically indistinguishable from pithoi are biconical amphorae with a distinctly pronounced belly and very thin walls (Pl. III/15; Pl. VI/10, 11; Pl. VIII/6).

Pots are the most common and also the most diverse type of finds besides bowls. In the whole territory of the Balkans during the Early Iron Age, they appear in several basic types: conical (Pl. V/7, 9; Pl. IX/8), conical with an inverted rim (Pl. V/10), with a pronounced belly (Pl. IV/8; Pl. VI/5, 8), inverted bell-shaped (Pl. VI/6, 7; Pl. VII/5; Pl. IX/9) and biconical pots with a widely everted rim. Their dimensions vary, ranging from miniature, of about only 15 cm (Pl. IX/9) to 0.5 m in height (Pl. V/7; Pl. VI/6–8). The ornamentation is reduced to applying strips decorated with imprints made by a finger (Pl. III/21) or a tool (Pl. III/20), incising notches and cross-hatching (Pl. III/19; Pl. IX/9). Some examples, on their upper segments, have radially arranged spool-shaped handles (Pl. V/7, 10; Pl. 7/5), between which circular indentations are impressed, or a strip with circular indentations applied. In some cases, in addition to the pair of spool-shaped handles, they are decorated with crescent handles (Pl. V/9, 10; Pl. IX/9).

Tripod stands also represent a regular item of inventory at Early Iron Age settlements and necropolises, and serve a double function, i.e. being used in houses for heating rooms, or for certain metallurgical processes. A large number of them have been discovered in pits at Sinjac, Crnoklište and Kladenčište (Pl. VI/9), mostly as lower segments with characteristically circular perforations.

Pottery patterned on Greek models represents the last type. Only two examples from this group have been noted at Sinjac, and are associated with some cult activities performed during burials. The krater discovered in the cult pit near the graves at Belavina is decorated with a false cord and “S” stamps (Pl. IV/7). The other vessel was scattered amongst the stones of the ring of tumulus 1. Its upper part with the rim is missing and it had two horizontal handles with three protomes each (Pl. V/5). The analogies for this type of vessel can be found at the Varvara necropolis in Skopje and Sopot near Veles,<sup>92</sup> at Seuthopolis,<sup>93</sup> as well as the Zimnicea necropolis.<sup>94</sup>

An interesting find is a serrated tool used for decorating ceramic vessels (Pl. VI/12). These tools are a

common find at sites in Serbia,<sup>95</sup> which indicates the existence of the development of local ceramic production in settlements.

Judging by the shapes of the vessels and their ornamentation, it can be concluded that Early Iron Age ceramic production at the sites in the central Nišava Valley mostly dates from the time of the dominant Basarabi cultural complex. For a more accurate cultural and chronological determination, the influences coming from several directions, the Morava Valley, the Danube Valley, Bulgaria, Oltenia and the Vardar Valley, would have to be taken into account. Given the numerous parallels that were characteristic of the finds from the Danube Valley, the Morava Valley and Bulgaria, an opinion was formed that there had been a certain cultural unity during the second half of the 7<sup>th</sup> and most of the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC.<sup>96</sup> For some elements of the decoration, such as those seen on the beaker from tumulus 1 (Pl. V/3), analogies can be found in the remote sub-Alpine region of Dolenjska<sup>97</sup> and Bela Krajina.

M. Garašanin held that the Basarabi cultural group in the territory of the central Morava Valley had been developing in two phases (Iron Age IIa and IIb) which are differentiated based on the manner of decoration and, more specifically, that the tremolo decoration dominates in the younger phase.<sup>98</sup> The single-eared beakers found in the tumuli at Selište (Fig. 7/1; Fig. 9/4) may even speak of the recurrences that extend into the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, as evidenced by some metal finds in the graves. What stems from this is that there are certain discrepancies in the chronological determinations of the cultural movements in the Early Iron Age in the central Balkans. To date, beakers decorated with a combination of “S” stamping and tremolo have either not been found in the Morava Valley, or very little is known of them.<sup>99</sup> The mixing of decorating styles which originate from neighbouring areas in the Balkans is reflected in the ceramic production. Only by form, not decoration, do these beakers have the most similarities with Crnokalačka Bara,<sup>100</sup>

<sup>92</sup> Папазовска-Санев 2009, 97.

<sup>93</sup> Чичикова 1984, Табла V/1.64.

<sup>94</sup> Serbu 2003, Fig. 18/11.

<sup>95</sup> Jevtić 1992, 340; T. 246.

<sup>96</sup> Васић 1997, 95.

<sup>97</sup> Stare 1973, T. 42/1; Dular 1975, T. 10/2; Spitzer 1975, T. 5/10.

<sup>98</sup> Гарашанин 1991, 4.

<sup>99</sup> Васић 1997, 95.

<sup>100</sup> Јевтић 1992а, Т. VI/4.





Fig. 10. Belavina site, Grave 1 (Feature 2)

Сл. 10. Белавина, гроб 1 (објекат 2)

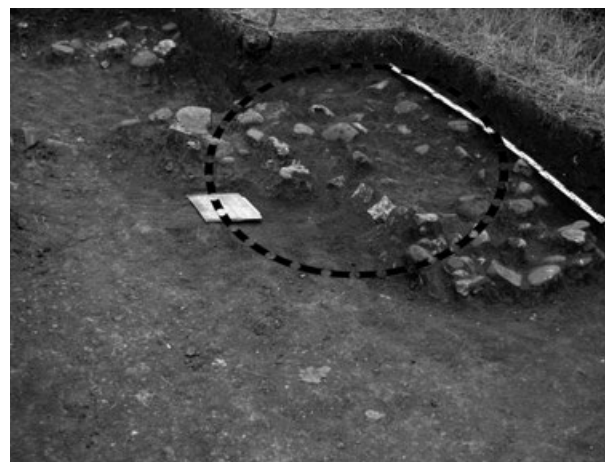


Fig. 11. Belavina site, Grave 2 (Feature 6)

Сл. 11. Белавина, гроб 2 (објекат 6)

Panjevački Rit,<sup>101</sup> Dubič in Volkovo,<sup>102</sup> as well as with Bosut.<sup>103</sup> A rare shape of beaker handle from Kladenčiste (Pl. VII/9) is identical to the handles from Panjevački Rit<sup>104</sup> and Crvene Livade.<sup>105</sup>

Decorating with impressed concentric circles connected by tangents and “S” stamps, arrived from the territory of Bulgaria, in the region of the Stara Planina mountain range,<sup>106</sup> and is believed to have reached the central Morava Valley from Pšeničevo towards the end of Iron Age I.<sup>107</sup> An almost identical motif, with local differences, appears on pottery of the Babadag type.<sup>108</sup> The ceramic finds decorated with tremolo represent an additional problem, since this manner of decorating occurs in the territory of Bulgaria together with impressed circles, while this is not the case in the Morava Valley. On the urn from tumulus 1 at Selište, the tongue-like handles are surrounded by concentric flutings and triple tremolo lines, with concentric circles impressed between them (Fig. 7/4), which bears a resemblance to the older finds from Pšeničevo and the Sakar mountain.<sup>109</sup> The closest analogies for deformed urns of large dimensions (Pl. V/6) are observed in the Thracian traditions of the Late Hallstatt necropolis of Ravna,<sup>110</sup> as well as at Mokranjske Stene in north-eastern Serbia.<sup>111</sup> In contrast, richly ornamented urns – pithoi, from the pits at Crkvište (Pl. VI/10, 11), have characteristics reminiscent of decorating associated with the Gáva cultural influences, and analogies exist on the pottery from horizon III at Telak,<sup>112</sup> the “Somotor” type finds from Šumen, Sava,<sup>113</sup> Babadag<sup>114</sup> and Ostrovo.<sup>115</sup>

The influences of further accentuating flutings using a false cord on the bowls with an inverted rim most like-

ly arrived from the South Morava Valley and northern Macedonia (Pl. II/5, 9; Pl. III/2, 4, 5), although it is also characteristic of the classical phase of the Basarabi culture.<sup>116</sup> Analogies exist at Krševica,<sup>117</sup> Kacipur,<sup>118</sup> Pelince,<sup>119</sup> in Kumanovo and Varvara.<sup>120</sup> The beaker from Crnoklište, decorated with incised, hatched and elongated hanging triangles, also indicates the influences from the south (Pl. III/8), best illustrated by a beaker which was located near the legs of the deceased in a grave at Kunovo Čuka.<sup>121</sup> These influences recur at

<sup>101</sup> Стојић 2004, 355, сл 25.

<sup>102</sup> Georgiev 1989, T. XVIII/1.

<sup>103</sup> Medović, Medović 2011, T.X/5.

<sup>104</sup> Стојић 2004, 38/1.

<sup>105</sup> Stojić 1986, T. 32/5.

<sup>106</sup> Бонев 2003, 129.

<sup>107</sup> Čičikova 1972, Fig. 12; Jevtić 1983, 42.

<sup>108</sup> Hänsel 1976, Taf. VI/19–29.

<sup>109</sup> Čičikova 1972, Fig. 10/7; Бонев 2003, T. 81/18.

<sup>110</sup> Topčeva 1980, Pl. XLII/10; Бонев 2003, T. 85/12.

<sup>111</sup> Kapuran 2013, Pl. 3/17.

<sup>112</sup> Cigudean 1991, 81, Fig. 41/3, 5, 7.

<sup>113</sup> Topčeva 1980, Pl. XXIII/1, 2, 5.

<sup>114</sup> Hänsel 1978, Taf. V/17, 18.

<sup>115</sup> Бонев 2003, Табл. 83/8.

<sup>116</sup> Јевтић 2004, 143.

<sup>117</sup> Булатовић 2007, T. LXIII/28–31.

<sup>118</sup> Vukmanović, Popović 1982, T. X/7; T. XI/1, 2; T. XII/1, 5.

<sup>119</sup> Georgiev 1989, T. I/5; T. III/6.

<sup>120</sup> Папазовска 2009, 55, кат 68–69.

<sup>121</sup> Санев 1978, сл. 2.





Fig. 12. Crkvište site, Pit 1

Сл. 12. Црквиштије, Јама 1

nearly all sites of the central Nišava Valley, where the fluted bowls are decorated with a combination of a false cord (Falschschnur) and “S” stamps.

The influences of the east Serbian Zlot group can be seen in the decoration of beakers and pots. In pots, they are represented by the motif of incised cross-hatching (Pl. III/19; Pl. VII/7; Pl. IX/9), impressed triangles (Pl. III/20), crescent shaped handles (Pl. V/9, 10), etc.<sup>122</sup> This is also the case with the rare finds of the sharp-profiled beakers with a widely everted rim (Pl. III/7)<sup>123</sup> which, according to M. Jevtić, represent characteristic finds of the post-Basarabi period.<sup>124</sup>

A single find of a La Tène fibula in tumulus 1 at Sinjac, for which there is no clear explanation as to how it came to be in this context, chronologically corresponds to ceramic finds from the younger strata of Donja Pečina in Ostrovica (Fig. 13b). These ceramic finds, along with the fibula, belong to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC.

## BURIALS

The rescue archaeological investigations which had to be conducted within the strict confines of the E-80 motorway route are the main cause of partially obtained (incomplete) information regarding the burial ritual at the aforementioned necropolises. Prior to these investigations, only Vajuga–Pesak near Korbovo<sup>125</sup> and Signal near Svrlijig<sup>126</sup> were known in the entire area of eastern Serbia. It has been determined that the necropolis at Vajuga is older than Sinjac, while certain elements suggest that the Signal necropolis could possibly

even be concurrent (the “omega” double-shank pin), although the ceramic finds and the burial ritual indicate a greater influence of the older traditions of the Kalakača–Insula Banului cultural complex, which the authors of the research interpret as a reflection of the conservative views of the communities in this markedly mountainous region.

For now, certain architectural elements of the sacral features at Selište and Belavina do not have analogies in the territory of Serbia.<sup>127</sup> The constructions of the “burial chambers” or the rectangular stone constructions in the central part of the tumulus (Fig. 3, 4) represent one of the rare customs for which there are analogies in the north, in the Carpathian Basin, i.e. Kaptol–Čemernica (tumuli XI and XII) and Süttö,<sup>128</sup> or Kunovo Čuka in the valley of the Bregalnica river<sup>129</sup> and Dabici<sup>130</sup> in the south. At the aforementioned necropolises in Pannonia, the entranceways, dromoi, are characteristic of these kinds of grave chambers where, exclusively, cremated deceased were interred.<sup>131</sup> It can be assumed that the rectangular “burial chambers” at Selište may have represented a kind of substitute for cists, only larger in size, which further emphasised the status of the deceased. By analysing the elements of the burials at Kunovo Čuka, it can be concluded that the kinship between the deceased is probably underlined by their burials in a separate space. The stone ring (or paving) from tumulus 1, being of a more oval than a circular form, represents a unique example in Serbia. The paving in the form of a wall, which was located right next to the graves at the Belavina necropolis (Fig. 2), is also a unique element of the sacral architecture in this region.

The biritual burial practice in tumulus 1 at Sinjac cannot be disputed since the stratigraphy indicates only one subsequent burial (grave 1). Consequently, there is no evidence that urn 1 with a cremated deceased could have been buried at a later date, which means that the deceased in graves 2 and 3 were buried at the same time

<sup>122</sup> Kapuran 2013, 30; Јевтић 2004, сл. 86.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, Pl. I/13, 14; Pl. IV/1, 2, 5; Јевтић 2004, сл. 84, 87.

<sup>124</sup> Јевтић 2004, 159.

<sup>125</sup> Поповић, Vukmanović 1998.

<sup>126</sup> Filipović, Bulatović 2010.

<sup>127</sup> Лазвић 1989, 61–70.

<sup>128</sup> Potrebića 2013, sl. 96, 103, 18.

<sup>129</sup> Санев 1978, Пл. 3.

<sup>130</sup> Ретацки 1986, sl. 3.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.

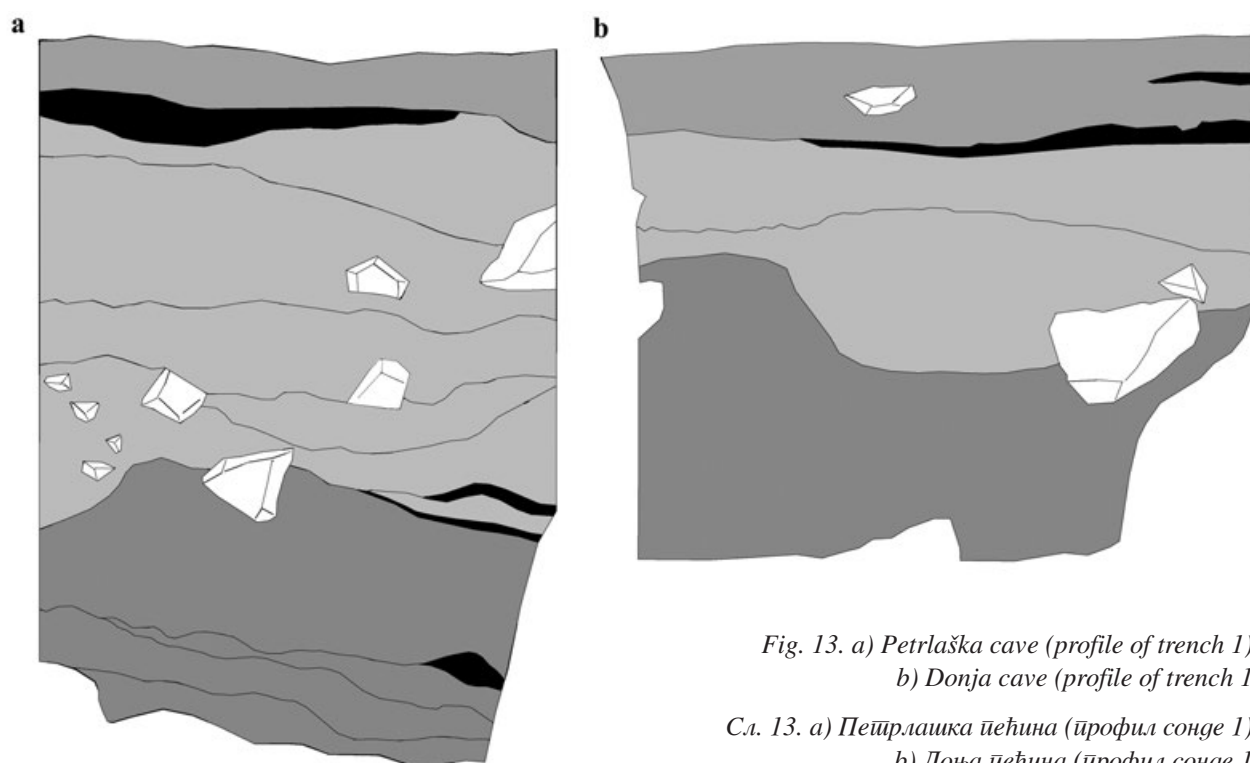


Fig. 13. a) Petrlaška cave (profile of trench 1);  
b) Donja cave (profile of trench 1)

Сл. 13. a) Петрлашка пећина (профил сонде 1);  
b) Доња пећина (профил сонде 1)

as the deceased from urn 1. The beakers located above the heads of the deceased (graves 2 and 4) represent a deviation from the known funerary traditions, while urn 1 was located directly next to the legs of the deceased without weapons in grave 3. It should be particularly stressed that in the area extending from western Serbia to western Bulgaria, only a small number of necropolises and isolated burials from the Late Hallstatt are known to date. From the Carpathian Basin, through the Danube Valley (Ferigile) and the Morava Valley (Mojsinje, Atenica, Ljuljaci,<sup>132</sup> Mala Krsna<sup>133</sup>) to Kosovo (Romaja), the cremation of the deceased was most commonly practised. The biritual burial represents an extremely rare instance. There are two viewpoints with regard to this type of ritual practice. While some consider it to be of Thracian influences (who Herodotus also claims buried and cremated with an equal frequency), others are of the opinion that the Illyrian traditions influenced the indigenous population.<sup>134</sup> It is also believed that between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> century BC, in the southern regions of Romania, inhumations were predominantly practised,<sup>135</sup> but later it was the exclusive privilege of the aristocracy. D. Srežović was of the opinion that the analysis of the funerary rituals could demonstrate some degree of relatedness between the Dardanians, Triballi and Moesians and the Pannonians in the north, as well as the Paeonians, Macedonians and Greeks in the south.<sup>136</sup>

All of this further points to the fact that our knowledge of the ethno-cultural characteristics of Early Iron Age communities is still insufficiently clear. The only example of a biritual burial in the Morava Valley is mound V at Mojsinje near Čačak. During the Early Iron Age, in the location of a tumulus of the Hügelgräber culture, a necropolis with inhumed and cremated deceased was established.<sup>137</sup>

The groups with partially burnt human bones that were located directly beneath the stone ring of tumulus 1 testify, for now, to a rare example of this kind of burial practice at the necropolises in Sinjac. Several areas of black (burnt) soil were noted, containing the partial remains of one or two buried individuals together with, occasionally, unburnt animal bones. In some cases, a large number of fragmented vessels, which could not be fully reconstructed, were located next to the skeletal remains. These groups of finds were denominated as incinerations, and are located based on the excavation

<sup>132</sup> Срејовић 1991, Сл. 1 и 2.

<sup>133</sup> Катић 2013.

<sup>134</sup> Срејовић 1979, 80; Гарашанин 1988, 74, 75.

<sup>135</sup> Serbu 2003, 145.

<sup>136</sup> Срејовић 1979, 82.

<sup>137</sup> Никитовић et al. 2002, 42–45.

grid.<sup>138</sup> The general characteristics of these incinerations are elaborated on in the anthropological section of this paper.

At the necropolis of Belavina, in feature 2, the cremated remains of a female and a child were detected, along with a number of unburnt animal bones, while feature 6 contained a total of four middle-aged individuals, i.e. two inhumed and two cremated. The contexts of the finds show that the burials at Belavina are identical to the group of incinerations discovered beneath the ring of tumulus 1 at Selište. Had the incinerations been performed immediately prior to the construction of the tumulus, they could represent some kind of preparation for the burial of prominent members of the community, who were inhumed along with weapons. Further analyses of the human remains may possibly additionally indicate the kinship of the deceased buried in this sacral complex.

The custom of laying the deceased onto a platform of stones (tumulus 2) has its closest analogies at the Vajuga–Pesak necropolis, with the biritual burials showing that the communities, during the Late Hallstatt, were gradually switching to cremating the deceased, which can be linked to both Thracian and Illyrian influences.<sup>139</sup> The role of the “wall”, or the stone paving, for which there are analogies at Koprivlen (the southern sacral complex) remains the biggest enigma.<sup>140</sup> Although there is no clear evidence confirming this, it can be assumed that the stone paving could have had the role of a ceremonial path leading through the sepulchral complex. Along with the human remains, a large number of unburnt bones of an ox, deer, pig and possibly an ass were discovered at Belavina.<sup>141</sup> Based on the traces of subsequent gnawing, it can be surmised that these were pieces of meat from funeral repasts, which could have been shallowly buried, most likely together with the cremated deceased (the degree of devastation does not allow this to be completely asserted). Finds of animal bones at Early Iron Age necropolises have been noted in the collective tombs at Gomolava, with a species of an ox, deer and dog having been identified.<sup>142</sup>

## ANTHROPOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

The methodology of the anthropological analyses conducted on the human remains at the necropolises of Sinjac includes five categories proposed by Ž. Mikić.<sup>143</sup> Based on this scheme, category I comprises complete, well-preserved skeletons; category II – incomplete, well-

preserved skeletons; category III – moderately preserved skeletons; category IV – partially preserved skeletons, while category V comprises poorly preserved skeletons. Sex determination on the skeletal material of juvenile and adult individuals was conducted using a combination of morphological and metrical methods. Particular attention was paid to the morphological elements of the skull, mandible and pelvis.<sup>144</sup> Based on the obtained metrical elements, calculated indices are presented in tables, separately for each grave (Tables 2 and 3). Individual age was determined based on the degree of obliteration of the cranial sutures,<sup>145</sup> the change on the occlusal surface of the dental material with the numerical classification of the attrition of the upper surface of all teeth in relation to age,<sup>146</sup> and morphological changes on the joint surface of the pubic symphysis.<sup>147</sup> At the necropolises of Sinjac, 26 epigenetic variations on the cranial and 11 on the postcranial part of the skeleton were analysed.<sup>148</sup> The stature of juvenile and adult individuals was calculated based on standardised formulae.<sup>149</sup> The analysis of the burnt human osteological material included the recording of the types of cracks formed on bones during the process of burning on the funeral pyre and the occurrence of an abnormal bone curvature.<sup>150</sup> The degree of oxidation of the organic material in bones, i.e. the temperature of burning on the pyre, was determined using a macroscopic method, based on the colour of the bones.<sup>151</sup>

<sup>138</sup> Sq. 8–9 contained a single individual, sq. 16 – two individuals, sq. 18 – two adult female individuals and a foetus, sq. 20 – a male individual, over 50 years of age, sq. 36 – a single individual, sq. 37 – an inhumed and a cremated individual and, in the western extension, an inhumed male and a cremated female individual.

<sup>139</sup> M. Garašanin links it to the Paeonians and Dardanians; Гарашанин 1988, 74, 75.

<sup>140</sup> Делев 2002, 99–101, Фиг. 71.

<sup>141</sup> The analyses of the zooarchaeological remains were conducted by Stefan Milošević MA.

<sup>142</sup> Tasić 1972, 32.

<sup>143</sup> Mikić 1978, 9.

<sup>144</sup> Ferembach et al. 1980, 519–527; Buikstra, Ubelaker 1994, 15–21; Bass 1995, 84–85.

<sup>145</sup> Vallois 1937.

<sup>146</sup> Lovejoy 1985.

<sup>147</sup> Todd 1920, 285–334; *idem.* 1921a; *idem.* 1921b.

<sup>148</sup> Hauser, De Stefano 1989; Ђурић-Срејић 1995, 238–260.

<sup>149</sup> Trotter, Gleser 1952.

<sup>150</sup> Helgar 1984, 148–158; Krogman, Işcan 1986.

<sup>151</sup> Shipman et al. 1984, 307–325; Holden et al. 1995, 24–45; Mays 1998, 217.

| INDIVIDUALNA STAROST                        |                    | MUŠKI POL |   | ŽENSKI POL |   | NEUTVRĐEN POL |   | UKUPNO |   |
|---|--------------------|-----------|---|------------|---|---------------|---|--------|---|
| INFANS I                                    | fetus              | -         |   | -          |   | 1             |   | 1      |   |
|   | NB – 0,5 година    | -         |   | -          |   | -             |   | -      |   |
|   | 0,5 – 1 година     | -         |   | -          |   | -             |   | -      |   |
|   | 1,5 – 2 година     | -         |   | -          |   | -             |   | -      |   |
|   | 2,5 – 3 година     | -         |   | -          |   | -             |   | -      |   |
|   | 3,5 – 4 година     | -         |   | -          |   | -             |   | -      |   |
|   | 4,5 – 5 година     | -         |   | -          |   | -             |   | -      |   |
|   | 5,5 – 6 година     | -         |   | -          |   | -             |   | -      |   |
|   | 6,5 – 7 година     | -         |   | -          |   | -             |   | -      |   |
| INFANS II                                   | 7,5 – 8 година     | -         |   | -          |   | -             |   | -      |   |
|   | 8,5 – 9 година     | -         |   | -          |   | -             |   | -      |   |
|   | 9,5 – 10 година    | -         |   | -          |   | -             |   | -      |   |
|   | 10,5 – 11 година   | -         |   | -          |   | -             |   | -      |   |
|   | 11,5 – 12 година   | -         |   | -          |   | -             |   | -      |   |
|   | 12,5 – 13 година   | -         |   | -          |   | -             |   | -      |   |
|   | 13,5 – 14,5 година | -         |   | -          |   | -             |   | -      |   |
| НЕПОЗНАТА СТАРОСТ                           |                    | -         |   | -          |   | 1             |   | 1      |   |
| УКУПАН БРОЈ ДЕЧИЈИХ ИНДИВИДУА               |                    | -         |   | -          |   | 2             |   | 2      |   |
| JUVENILIS I ( 15-18 година )                |                    | -         | 1 | -          | - | -             | 1 | -      | 2 |
| JUVENILIS II ( 19-22 година )               |                    | 1         | 1 | -          | - | 1             | 1 | 2      | 2 |
| ADULTUS I ( 23-30 година )                  |                    | 1         | 1 | 2          | 3 | -             | 1 | 3      | 5 |
| ADULTUS II ( 31-40 година )                 |                    | -         | 1 | 1          | 3 | 1             | 1 | 2      | 5 |
| MATURUS I ( 41-50 година )                  |                    | -         | 1 | -          | - | -             | - | -      | 1 |
| MATURUS II ( 51-60 година )                 |                    | 1         | 1 | -          | - | -             | - | -      | 1 |
| SENLIS I ( 61-70 година )                   |                    | -         | - | -          | - | -             | - | -      | - |
| SENLIS II ( 71 и више година )              |                    | -         | - | -          | - | -             | - | -      | - |
| НЕПОЗНАТА СТАРОСТ                           |                    | -         |   | 3          |   | 9             |   | 12     |   |
| УКУПАН БРОЈ ЈУВЕНИЛНИХ И ОДРАСЛИХ ИНДИВИДУА |                    | 3         |   | 6          |   | 11            |   | 20     |   |
| UKUPAN BROJ INDIVIDUA                       |                    | 3         |   | 6          |   | 13            |   | 22     |   |

Table 1. Sex and age structure of individuals

Табела 1. Полна и старосна структура индивида

The anthropological analysis included the skeletal remains of 22 individuals, 10 of which belong to inhumed (45.45%) and 12 to cremated deceased (54.55%) (Table 1). Sex determination was possible on the skeletal remains of nine individuals (40.91% of cases). Male morphological characteristics and metrical values relate to the remains of three individuals (13.64%), whereas the skeletons of six individuals are female (27.27%). Sex could not be determined in 13 cases (59.09%). The remains of two individuals correspond to children (9.09%). The skeletons of two individuals belong to juveniles (9.09%), while the remaining 18

skeletons are associated with adults (81.82%). The mortality rate is most pronounced in adult individuals (aged 23–40). Due to the decomposition of the long bones of the upper and lower limbs, stature could be calculated only in the case of the deceased from grave 1. These are the remains of an adult male, with a stature of  $171 \pm 4$  cm.

The poor preservation of the bones precluded the building of a comprehensive picture with regard to the population's health status, since paleopathological changes could also be observed only on the skeletal remains of the inhumed individual in grave 1.



Epigenetic characteristics were perceived on the skeletons of three individuals (13.64%). From a total of 37 observed epigenetic characteristics, only three relate to the cranial part of skeleton: *sutura supranasalis* (the individual buried in grave 3), *sulci frontales* (the individual buried in grave 1) and *ossa suturae lambdoideae* (the individuals buried in graves 1 and 2).

Markers of occupational stress, in the form of hypertrophy of the muscle and ligament attachment points and the presence of “squatting” facets, are visible on the

remains of three individuals (13.64%). Due to the high degree of decomposition of the osteological material, it was impossible to accurately reconstruct the physical activities these individuals were engaged in during life.

The analysis of the cremated remains has led to several conclusions. First of all, it should be mentioned that the degree of oxidation of the organic matter in bones in most cases shows an inconsistent burning temperature of the pyre. The lower limbs of the deceased had generally been exposed to lower temperatures, whereas the bones of the cranial part of skeleton and upper limbs, particularly the bones of the thorax, vertebral column and the pelvis had burnt at higher temperatures. The remains gathered from pyres were laid in the grave immediately after cremating, without the additional grinding of bones, and were most probably followed by an offering (pieces of animals) which was placed alongside the deceased. In some instances, besides the cremated deceased, a secondary burial of unburnt human osteological material was performed. In most cases, a relatively small amount of bones was retrieved from the pyre, weighing on average about 40 g. The only exception is the remains from urn 1, with an overall weight of 598.9 g. In addition to the large amount of recovered osteological material, the fact that it had

| КРАНИЈАЛНИ СКЕЛЕТ                       | Гроб 1                      | Гроб 3 |
|---|-----------------------------|--------|
| <b>МАНДИБУЛА</b>                        |                             |        |
| <i>индекс робусности шела мандибуле</i> | 41,38                       | 46,15  |
| <i>индекс гране мандибуле</i>           | 44,26                       | -      |
| <i>фронто-мандибуларни индекс</i>       | 116,48<br>сури-мандибуларни | -      |

Table 2. Indices on the cranial skeleton

Табела 2. Индекси на кранијалном скелећу

| ПОСТКРАНИЈАЛНИ СКЕЛЕТ            | Гроб 1                       | Гроб 2                       | Гроб 3                       | Гроб 4                       | Објекат 6,<br>инд. 2         |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>ХУМЕРУС</b>                   |                              |                              |                              |                              |                              |
| <i>индекс појречној пресека</i>  | 90,00<br>84,21               | 80<br>81,63                  | 72,00<br>-                   | -<br>-                       | 84,78<br>81,82               |
| <b>РАДИЈУС</b>                   |                              |                              |                              |                              |                              |
| <i>дужинско-дебљински индекс</i> | -<br>16,52                   | -<br>-                       | -<br>-                       | -<br>-                       | -<br>-                       |
| <i>индекс појречној пресека</i>  | -<br>5,22                    | -<br>-                       | -<br>-                       | -<br>-                       | -<br>-                       |
| <i>дужинско-ширински индекс</i>  | -<br>13,91                   | -<br>-                       | -<br>-                       | -<br>-                       | -<br>-                       |
| <b>ФЕМУР</b>                     |                              |                              |                              |                              |                              |
| <i>Индекс робустности шета</i>   | -<br>-                       | -<br>-                       | -<br>-                       | -<br>105,88                  | 12,39<br>12,92               |
| <i>Пиласџични индекс</i>         | 103,92<br>101,96             | 110,71<br>-                  | 112,00<br>116,00             | -<br>-                       | 112,73<br>117,86             |
| <i>Платимерички индекс</i>       | 81,25 плати.<br>81,25 плати. | 67,10 хипер.<br>67,50 хипер. | 81,25 плати.<br>83,87 плати. | -<br>-                       | 90,32 еури.<br>90,62 еури.   |
| <b>ТИБИЈА</b>                    |                              |                              |                              |                              |                              |
| <i>Дужинско-дебљински индекс</i> | -<br>-                       | -<br>-                       | -<br>-                       | -<br>23,88                   | -<br>20,42                   |
| <i>Платицнемички индекс</i>      | 64,70 мезок.<br>55,56 платк. | -<br>67,50 мезок.            | -<br>66,67 мезок.            | 67,50 месок.<br>65,25 платк. | 74,63 еурик.<br>75,34 еурик. |

Table 3. Indices on the postcranial skeleton

Табела 3. Индекси на посткранијалном скелећу

\* вредности су прво дате за десну, а потом и за леву страну тела

been stored in an urn and placed in the central part of the tumulus points to a more attentive treatment dedicated to this deceased, compared to those buried beneath the ring of the tumulus, which indicates that this individual had a higher social status or was related to the deceased in graves 2 and 3.

Further investigation would enable us to complement the current knowledge about the population that lived in the area of Sinjac during the Iron Age, and allow for a more accurate reconstruction of its paleodemographic structure, relationships within the community and the conditions in which they lived. This would contribute to a better understanding of different criteria of the ritual practice according to which the deceased of different social or kindred status were buried.

## CONCLUSION

Judging by the small number of finds from the settlements (obtained in the course of the preliminary field surveys) and the results of the systematic and rescue investigations, the Early Iron Age in the central Nišava Valley unfolded in three phases. The first phase of the transitional period between the Bronze Age and the Iron Age (Hallstatt A) is represented by two necropolises and a settlement in Velika Lukanja and at Madjilka near Pirot. The second phase (Hallstatt C) comprises a number of settlements of the Basarabi cultural complex, from which the ceramic finds with classical Basarabi decoration and the recurrences of the Babadag and Pšeničevo group originate. In the third phase (Hallstatt D), a certain symbiosis most likely occurred between the younger phase of the Basarabi complex (tremolo pottery) and Illyrio-Paeonian elements which are characterised by the metal finds from the graves at Sinjac (the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC). This can also be seen in some burial rituals. Based on all that has been stated, D. Srejšović and A. Palavestra maintain that the period in the middle of the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC was characterised by the particularly dynamic movement of material goods from one side of the Bal-

kan Peninsula to the other, which not only impedes the ethnic identification of the Late Hallstatt communities, but makes it almost impossible.<sup>152</sup> Since funerary customs represent a distinctive feature of the essence of a nation, they were least susceptible to changes.<sup>153</sup> The biritual burial and rectangular burial chambers are, for now, a rare example in the central Balkans. Taking all the aforementioned into account, it is believed that the necropolises at Sinjac have more elements in common with the south Balkan group (the upper and lower regions of the Vardar Valley and Paeonia) than with the central Balkan group (Morava Valley)<sup>154</sup> however, in spite of that, strong Thracian influences prevail in burials.

A particular problem is the question of the ethnicity of the communities that lived and were buried in the central Nišava Valley, since the finds of the material and spiritual culture show influences arriving from a number of directions (Oltenia, the West, Great, South and Kosovo's Morava river valleys, the Vardar Valley and Thrace). The necropolises at Sinjac perhaps best confirm the assertion of R. Vasić, who states that, due to some very close contacts, a type of symbiosis occurred between the material culture of the Autariatae and Triballi, which lasted until the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC when the Autariatae defeated them on the battlefield.<sup>155</sup> Taking into consideration all of the chronologically sensitive finds of ceramics, metal, the funerary architecture and rituals, it is believed that the necropolises in the vicinity of the village of Sinjac chronologically belong to the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. The cultural horizon with the La Tène pottery from Donja Pećina in Ostrovica, along with a fibula from tumulus 1 at Sinjac, which all originate from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, would represent the last stage of prehistory in the central Nišava Valley. Finally, what needs to be said is that it would be right to wait for the pending results of anthropological and physicochemical analyses which would help to elucidate the problems regarding the ethnicity of the prehistoric communities that lived between the Morava Valley and the upper course of the Iskar river.

<sup>152</sup> Srejšović 1981, 61; Palavestra 1984, 74.

<sup>153</sup> Srejšović 1979, 79.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, 94.

<sup>155</sup> Vasić 1992, 396.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- Атанасова, Кишачки 1965** – Ђ. Атанасова, П. Кишачки, Гробни находки от ц. Градец, Видинско, *Археология* кн. 3 година VII (1965), Софиа: 52–55.
- Бенас, Џовић 1957** – А. Benac, B. Čović, *Glasiac II, Željezno doba*, Zemaljski muzej, Sarajevo.
- Boardman 1999** – J. Boardman, *Greek sculpture, The Archaic Period*, Thames and Hudson, London.
- Богдановић 1974** – М. Богдановић, Прилог проучавању бронзаног и старијег гвоздног доба на подручју централне Србије, *Старинар* XXII, 145–156.
- Бонев 2003** – А. Бонев, Ранна Тракија, формирање на тракијската култура-крај на второто-началото на првото хиљадолетие пр. Хр., *Раскопки и проучвания* XXXII, Софиа.
- Буюклиев 1985** – Х. Буюклиев, Тракийски върхове на копия от ранножелезната епоха в бугарските земи, *Археология* кн. 2 (1985), Софиа: 27–35.
- Булатовић 2007** – А. Булатовић, *Врање, културна стиратиографија праисторијских локалитетна у Врањској регији*, Археолошки институт и Народни музеј у Врању, Београд–Врање.
- Bulatović et al. 2014** – A. Bulatović, S. Vitezović, D. Milanović, Lokalitet Meanište u Ranutovcu – naselje iz gvozdenog doba, u: D. Antonović i dr. (ur.), *Arheologija u Srbiji, projekti Arheološkog instituta u 2012. godini*, Arheološki institut, Beograd: 40–43.
- Цвјетичанин (ed.) 2012** – Т. Цвјетичанин (ур.), *Централни Балкан између Грчкој и Келтској светиа, Кале–Кршевица 2001–2011*, Каталог изложбе, Народни музеј, Београд.
- Cigudean 1991** – H. Cigudean, Ceramica, in: V. Vasulev et al. (eds.), *Civilizația Dacică timpurie în aria intracarpatică a României*, Editura Dacica, Cluj–Napoca: 78–102.
- Џићикова 1972** – М. Џићикова, Nouvelles donnees sur la culture Thrace de l'epoque du Hallstatt en Bulgarie du sud, *Thracia I*, Academia litterarum Bulgarica, Sofia: 79–100.
- Чичикова 1984** – М. Чичикова, Антична керамика, у: Т. Иванов (ред.), *Светиолис Том I, Биш и култура*, Бугарска академия на науките Археологически институт и музеј, Софиа: 18–114.
- Делев 2002** – П. Делев, Археологически структури, у: А. Божкова, П. Делев (ред.), *Копривлен Том I*, изпълнителна агенция „Птица“ и Археологически институт с музеј при БАН, Софиа: 91–101.
- Dular 1975** – J. Dular, Bela Krajina v strohalštatskem obdobju, *Arheološki vestnik, Acta archaeologica* XXIV, Slovenska Akademija znanosti in umetnosti, Ljubljana: 544–591.
- Ђурић et al. 1975** – N. Đurić, J. Glišić, J. Todorović, *Praistorijska Romaja*, Zavod za urbanizam i zaštitu spomenika kulture i prirode Prizrena i Savez arheoloških društava Jugoslavije, Beograd.
- Ferembach et al. 1980** – D. Ferembach, I. Schwidetzky, M. Stloukal, Recommendations for age and sex diagnosis of skeletons, *Journal of Human Evolution* 7: 517–549.
- Filipović, Bulatović 2010** – V. Filipović, A. Bulatović, An Early Iron Age necropolis in Eastern Serbia, *Гласник САД* 26: 73–83.
- Гарашанин 1973** – М. Гарашанин, *Праисторија на шлу СР Србије*, Српска књижевна задруга, Београд.
- Гарашанин 1988** – М. Гарашанин, Настанак и порекло Илира, у: М. Гарашанин (ур.), *Илири и Албанци*, Српска академија наука и уметности, Београд: 9–144.
- Гарашанин 1991** – М. Гарашанин, *Гвоздено доба у Поморављу, насеље Градац у Ланишту*, каталог изложбе, Галерија САНУ, Београд.
- Gavranović, Kapuran 2014** – M. Gavranović, A. Kapuran, Über einige tüllenbeilvarianten im zentralbalcan, *Старинар* LIX: 31–56.
- Geogrijev 1989** – Z. Geogrijev, *Keramika gvozdenog doba u skopsko-kumanovskom i ovčepoljsko-bregalničkom regionu*, Magistarski rad, Filozofski fakultet, Univerzitet u Beogradu.
- Gordon-Mitten, Doeringer 1968** – D. Gordon-Mitten, F. Doeringer, *Master Bronzes from the Classical World*, The Fogg Art Museum, City Museum of Saint Louis, The Los Angeles County Museum of Art and Vettireb in Deutschland: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, Mainz.
- Делјанин, Пејић 1986** – Б. Делјанин, П. Пејић, Пиротски град – археолошка ископавања у 1985. години, *Гласник САД* 3, Београд: 227–232.
- Делјанин, Пејић 1987** – Б. Делјанин, П. Пејић, Пиротски град – археолошка ископавања у 1986. години, *Гласник САД* 4, Београд: 149–154.
- Durmitrescu, 1968** – V. Durmitrescu, La Néropole tumulaire du premier âge du fer de Basarabi (dep. de Dolj, Oltenie), *Dacia* XII, Bucarest: 177–260.
- Ђукнић, Јовановић 1965** – М. Ђукнић, B. Jovanović, Illyrian Princely Necropolis at Atenica, *Archaeologia Yugoslavica* VI, Societas Archaeologica Iugoslaviae, Beograd: 1–76.

**Hänsen 1976** – B. Hänsen, *Beträge zur regionalen und chronologischen gliederung der älteren Halsstattzeit an der unteren Donau*, Rudolf Habelt verlag GMBH, Bonn.

**Hauser, De Stefano 1989** – G. Hauser, G. F. De Stefano, *Epigenetic Variants of Human Skull*, E. Schweizerbart'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, Stuttgart.

**Helgar 1984** – R. Helgar, Burned remains, in: T. A. Rathburn, J. E. Buikstra (eds.), *Human Identification: Case Studies in Forensic Anthropology*, Charles C. Thomas, Springfield: 148–158.

**Holden et al. 1995** – J. L. Holden, P. P. Phakey, J. G. Clement, Scanning electron microscope observations of heat-treated human bone, *Forensic Science International* 74 (1995): 29–45.

**Jevtić 1983** – M. Jevtić, *Keramika starijeg gvozdenog doba na centralno balkanskom području*, Centar za arheološka istraživanja Filozofskog fakulteta, Beograd.

**Јевтић 1990** – М. Јевтић, Праисторијска некропола у Пироту – прилог познавању Брњичке групе, *Гласник САД* 6, Београд: 92–102.

**Jevtić 1992** – M. Jevtić, *Basarabi kultura na teritoriji Srbije*, Doktorska disertacija, Filozofski fakultet, Univerzitet u Beogradu, unpublished.

**Јевтић 1992а** – М. Јевтић, Прилог истраживању насеља старијег гвозденог доба са Црнокаљачке Баре код Ражња, *Зборник Народног музеја XIV*, Београд: 249–264.

**Јевтић 2004** – М. Јевтић, *Гвоздено доба у околини Бора*, у: М. Лазих (ур.), *Бор и околина у праисторији, антици и средњем веку*, Музеј рударства и металургије и Центар за археолошка истраживања Филозофског факултета, Бор–Београд: 127–164.

**Јевтић 2011** – М. Јевтић, *Чувари живота у праисторији, студија о живиним јамама са Калакаче код Бешке*, Градски музеј у Вршцу и Филозофски факултет у Београду, Вршац–Београд.

**Kapuran 2013** – A. Kapuran, Late Hallstatt pottery from North-East Serbia (6<sup>th</sup>–4<sup>th</sup> centry BC), *Старинар LXIII*: 39–52.

**Катић 2013** – В. Катић, *Трибалски кнежевски гроб из Велике Крсне код Младеноваца*, Градска општина Младеновац, Младеновац.

**Кузман 1985** – П. Кузман, *Три челюсти и Вршњуља Требеништа 1972*, завод за заштити на спомениците на културата и Народен музеј Охрид, Охрид.

**Лазих 1989** – М. Лазих, *Топографија и типологија праисторијских тумула у Србији и Црној Гори*,

Центар за археолошка истраживања Филозофског факултета, Београд.

**Lahtov 1965** – V. Lahtov, *Problem Trebeniške kulture*, Narodni muzej Ohrid, Ohrid.

**Lovejoy 1985** – C. O. Lovejoy, Dental Wear in the Libben Population: Its Functional Patterns and Role in the Determination of Adult Skeletal Age at Death, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 68: 47–56.

**Manić 2010** – A. Manić, *Praistorijska nalazišta u gornjem Ponišavlju*, Habilitacioni rad odbranjen u Narodnom muzeju u Beogradu, nije publikovan.

**Mano-Zisi, Popović 1971** – Đ. Mano-Zisi, Lj. Popović, Der Fund von Novi Pazar (Serbien), *50. Bericht der Römisch-Germanischen Kommission*, Berlin: 191–273.

**Marić 1964** – Z. Marić, Donja Dolina i problem etničke pripadnosti predrimskog stanovništva sjeverne Bosne, *Glasnik Zemaljskog muzeja XIX*, Sarajevo: 5–102.

**Mays 1998** – S. Mays, *The Archaeology of Human Bones*, Routledge, London and New York.

**Medović 2007** – P. Medović, *Stubarlija, Nekropola naselja Feudvar*, Muzej Vojvodine, Novi Sad.

**Medović, Medović 2011** – P. Medović, I. Medović, *Gradina na Bosutu, naselje starijeg gvozdenog doba*, Herausgeber, Pokrajinski zavod za zaštitu spomenika kulture i Platoneum, Novi Sad.

**Мелюкова 1979** – А. И. Мелюкова, *Скифия и Фракийский мир*, Академия наук СССР, Издательство „Наука“, Москва.

**Mikić 1978** – Ž. Mikić, O antropološkoj metodologiji terenske obrade skeletnih nalaza, *Godišnjak Centra za balkanološka ispitivanja ANUBiH* 16/14: 3–44 (201–242).

**Митић et al. 2005** – В. Митић, П. Пејић, Д. Златковић и Т. Видановић, *Враниште*, Музеј Понишавља, Пирот.

**Никитовић et al. 2002** – Л. Никитовић, М. Стојић, Р. Васић, *Мојсиње, некропола под хумкама из бронзаног и гвозденог доба*, Народни музеј у Чачку и Археолошки институт, Чачак.

**Николов 1970** – Б. Николов, Колективна находка од железни предмети од халшатска епоха до гр. Криводол, Врачански округ, *Археологија* кн. 1(1970), Софија: 51–57.

**Палавестра 1984** – А. Палавестра, *Кнежевски гробови старије гвозденог доба на централном Балкану*, Балканолошки институт САНУ, Београд.

**Папазовска-Санев 2009** – А. Папазовска-Санев, *Керамиката од железното време по долината од Вардар (од XI до VI век пред Христа)*, Магистерски труд, Филозофски факултет, Институт за историја



на уметноста и археологија, Универзитет св. Кирил и Методије у Скопју.

**Пашиќ 1978** – Р. Пашиќ, Археолошки испитувања на локалитетот Сува Река во Гевгелија, *Зборник, Recueil des travaux* (1975–1978), Археолошки музеј на Македонија, Скопје: 21–52.

**Пејић 2001** – П. Пејић, Селиште, праисторијска некропола и насеље код Велике Лукање на Старој планини, *Лесковачки зборник XLI*, Лесковац: 179–217.

**Пековић 2006** – М. Пековић, *Археолошка збирка војног музеја у Београду*, Српско археолошко друштво и Војни музеј, Београд.

**Поповић 1994** – Љ. Поповић, *Античка грчка збирка*, Народни музеј, Београд.

**Роповић, Vukmanović 1998** – Р. Роповић, М. Vukmanović, *Vajuga–Pesak, nekropola starijeg gvozdenog doba*, Arheološki institut, Beograd.

**Potrebica 2013** – Н. Potrebica, *Kneževi željeznog doba*, Meridijani, Zagreb.

**Rendić-Miočević 2005** – А. Rendić-Miočević, *Makedonske bronce, željeznodobni nalazi na području Makedonije*, Katalog izložbe, Arheološki muzej u Zagrebu i Muzej Makedonije, Zagreb.

**Санев 1978** – В. Санев, Могилице од Куново–Чуки кај ц. Оризари–Кочанско, *Зборник, Recueil des travaux* (1975–1978), Археолошки музеј на Македонија, Скопје: 7–20.

**Санев et al. 1976** – В. Санев, Д. Симоска и Б. Китаноска, *Праисторија во Македонија*, Археолошко друштво на СР Македонија, Скопје.

**Serbu 2003** – V. Serbu, Funerary practices in the Iron Age between the Carpathians and the Danube, in: N. Voјović, R. Vasić (ur.), *Sahranjivanje u bronzano i gvozdeno doba*, Narodni muzej u Čačku i Arheološki institut, Čačak: 139–170.

**Shipman et al. 1984** – P. Shipman, G. Foster, M. Schoeninger, Burnt Bones and Teeth: An Experimental Study of Colour, Morphology, Crystal Structure and Shrinkage, *Journal of Archaeological Science* 11 (1984): 307–325.

**Sladić 1999** – М. Sladić, *Mlade gvozdeno doba na teritoriji Srbije*, Doktorska disertacija, Filozofski fakultet, Univerzitet u Beogradu, unpublished.

**Spitzer 1975** – G. Spitzer, Ein Hallstattzeitlicher tumulus von Dragatuš, *Arheološki vestnik, Acta archaeologica XXIV*, Slovenska Akademija znanosti in umetnosti, Ljubljana: 780–830.

**Срејовић 1979** – Д. Срејовић, Покушај етничког и територијалног разграничења старобалканских племена на основу начина сахрањивања, у: М. Гараша-

нин (ур.), *Сахрањивање код Илира*, САНУ и Балканолошки институт, Београд: 79–87.

**Срејовић 1981** – Д. Срејовић, Културе гвозденог доба, у: С. Ђирковић (ур.), *Историја српског народа I*, Српска књижевна задруга: 54–65.

**Срејовић 1991** – Д. Срејовић, Трибалски гробови у Љуљацима, *Старинар XL–XLI* (1989–1990): 141–154.

**Stare 1973** – V. Stare, *Prazgodovina Šmarjete*, Narodni muzej v Ljubljani, Ljubljana.

**Stojić 1986** – М. Stojić, *Gvozdeno doba u basenu Velike Morave*, Centar za arheološka istraživanja Filozofskog fakulteta i Zavičajni muzej u Svetozarevu, Beograd–Svetozarevo.

**Стојић 2004** – М. Стојић, *Пањевачки рид*, Археолошки институт, Београд.

**Stojić 2006** – М. Stojić, Prämonetäre Zahlungsmittel aus dem Morava-Gebeit und Ostserbien, *Archaeologia Bulgarica* No 3, IX (2005), Sofia: 15–24.

**Стојић, Јацановић 2008** – М. Стојић, Д. Јацановић, *Пожаревац, културна стразиографија праисторијских локалитета у Браничеву*, Археолошки институт и Народни музеј Пожаревац, Београд–Пожаревац.

**Tasić 1972** – N. Tasić, An Early Iron Age Collective Tomb at Gomolava, *Archaeologia Jugoslavica* XIII, Beograd: 27–38.

**Тасић 1998** – Н. Тасић, Гвоздено доба, у: Н. Тасић (ур.), *Археолошко благо Косова и Метохије, од неолита до средњег века*, Каталог изложбе, САНУ и Музеј у Приштини, Београд: 148–125.

**Todd 1920** – T. W. Todd, Age changes in the pubic bone: I The male white pubis, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 3: 285–334.

**Todd 1921a** – T. W. Todd, Age changes in the pubic bone: II The pubis of the male Negro–white hybrid; III The pubis of the white female; IV The pubis of the female Negro–white hybrid, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 4: 1–70.

**Todd 1921b** – T. W. Todd, Age changes in the pubic bone: VI The interpretation of variations in the symphyseal area, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 4: 407–424.

**Tončeva 1980** – G. Tončeva, *Chronologie du Hallstatt ancien dans la Bulgarie de Nord-est*, Academia Litterarum Bulgarica, Болгарска Академија наук, Софија.

**Topalov 2004** – S. Topalov, *Nichtmonetäre autauschgegenstände im rahmen des kleinhandels der Thrakischen regionen während des ersten jahrtausends v. Chr.*, *Archaeologia Bulgarica* No 2, VIII (2004), Sofia: 35–45.

**Трбуховић, Трбуховић 1970** – В. Трбуховић, Л. Трбуховић, *Доња Тојоница, Дарданска и словенска некропола*, Археолошки институт и „Раде Драинац“, Прокупље–Београд.

**Trotter, Gleser 1952** – M. Trotter, G. C. Gleser, Estimation of stature from long bones of American whites and Negroes, *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 10: 463–514.

**Vallois 1937** – H. W. Vallois, La Durre de la vie chez l'Homme fossile, *L'Anthropologie* 47: 499–532.

**Васић 1973** – Р. Васић, *Културне групе старије гвозденој доба у Југославији*, Археолошки институт, Београд.

**Vasić 1987** – R. Vasić, Moravsko–Тимочка oblast, u: A. Benac (ur.), *Praistorija jugoslavenskih zemalja V*, ANUBIH i Svjetlost, Sarajevo: 651–672.

**Васић 1992** – Р. Васић, Праисторијски предмети из Пољске Ражане код Пирота, *Гласник САД* 8, Београд: 99–101.

**Васић 1997** – Р. Васић, Старије гвоздено доба на подручју Источне Србије, у: М. Лазић (ур.), *Археологија источне Србије*, Центар за археолошка истраживања Филозофског факултета, Београд: 91–100.

**Vasić 1992** – R. Vasić, Pages from history of the Autariatae and Triballoi, in: M. Garašanin and D. Srećević (eds.), *Homage to Nikola Tasić, Balcanica XXIII*, Beograd: 393–399.

**Vasić 1999** – R. Vasić, *Die Fibeln im Zentralbalkan*, PBF Abteilung XIV, 12. Band, Frantz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart.

**Вълчева 2002** – Д. Вълчева, Ямно светилище, у: А. Бошкова, П. Делев, *Копривлен Том 1*, Изпълнителна агенция „Пътища“ и Археологически институт с Музей при БАН, София.

**Видески 1996–1997** – З. Видески, Лисичин Дол – Марвинци, некропола од железното време (истражувалца 1997), *Macedoniae Acta Archaeologica* 15, Скопје: 91–112.

**Vukmanović, Popović 1982** – M. Vukmanović, P. Popović, Sondažna istraživanja gradinskih naselja na području vranjsko-preševske kotline, *Godišnjak XX*, Sarajevo: 189–226.

**Vulpe 1967** – A. Vulpe, *Necropola Hallstattiană de la Ferigile*, Editura Academiei Republicii socialiste Romania, București.

**Vulpe 1986** – A. Vulpe, Zur entstehung der Geta-dakischen zivilization die Basarabikultur, *Dacia XXX*, Bucarest: 49–89.

**Vulpe 1990** – A. Vulpe, *Die Kurtzschwerter, Dolche und Streitmesser der Hallstattzeit in Rumänien*, PBF Abteilung VI, 9. Band, Verlag C. H. Beck, München.

**Zotović 1985** – M. Zotović, *Arheološki i etnički problemi bronzanog i gvozdenog doba zapadne Srbije*, Zavičajni muzej Titovo Užice i Savez arheoloških društava Jugoslavije, Beograd,

**Резиме:**

АЛЕКСАНДАР КАПУРАН, Археолошки институт, Београд  
 МИРЈАНА БЛАГОЈЕВИЋ, Републички завод за заштиту споменика културе, Београд  
 ДРАГИЦА БИЗЈАК, Књажевац

## НАСЕЉА И НЕКРОПОЛЕ СТАРИЈЕГ ГВОЗДЕНОГ ДОБА У СРЕДЊЕМ ТОКУ РЕКЕ НИШАВЕ

*Кључне речи.* – Халштат С, Халштат D, Басараби, Трибали, Трачани, насеља, некрополе, погребни обичаји.

Захваљујући заштитним истраживањима на Коридору 10 Е-80 (ауто-пут Ниш–Димитровград), током 2013–2014. године истражено је неколико локалитета и две некрополе из гвозденог доба, што ће, сматрамо, допринети јаснијем сагледавању хронолошког распона и етничких питања везаних за одређене палеобалканске заједнице које су живееле на територији источне Србије.

Најзанимљивији налаз из старијег гвозденог доба свакако представља раноархајска бронзана скулптура „Ковача из Враништа“, коју је 60-их година прошлог века, у кориту реке, нашао учитељ Милан Павловић из Беле Паланке (Т. I/1). Ова скулптура представља човека који ради за наковњем, а највероватније потиче са Пелопонеза. Оквирно се датује између 750. и 725. године пре н. е. Културне детерминације керамичке продукције које се односе и на керамику Басараби културног круга са овога подручја анализирани су кроз синтезу М. Јевтића и Р. Васића. Такође би требало поменути и веома користан хабилитациони рад дипломираног археолога Александра Манића из Пирота, у којем су обједињени сви релевантни праисторијски налази са подручја Пирота и Димитровграда. У овом раду биће првенствено представљени резултати заштитних истраживања Републичког завода за заштиту споменика културе и Археолошког института, док су резултати истраживања Центра за археолошка истраживања Филозофског факултета у припремној фази за публикавање.

Карта средњег Понишавља, у делу од Сићевачке клисуре до Димитровграда (Карта 1), показује како су насеља, у највећем броју случајева, позиционирана на благо закошеним терасастим узвишењима, која им пружају заштиту приликом плављења реке Нишаве и њених притока. Групи отворених насеља равничарског типа припадају локалитети Барје, Власи, Грапа, Ђиљан, Побујен Камник, Конопиште, Турске баре, Селиште у Великој Лукањи, Црноклиште, Сињац и Кладенчиште. Поједина насеља из старијег гвозденог доба у средњем Понишављу налазила су се на доминантним узвишењима, тако да није искључено да су могла да буду градинског карактера. Будући да су само рекогносцирана, њихове топографске карактеристике указују да су Кале у Јалботини, Градиште у Камнику и Пиротски град могли да припадају овој врсти локалитета. Пећинска насеља у којима су констатовани хоризонти становања током гвозденог доба и неолита, представљају Преконошка, Петрлашка (Сл. 13а) и Доња пећина у Островици (Сл. 13б).

У атару села Сињац истражена су три локалитета – Селиште, Црквиште и Белавина, која се један за другим надовезују у правцу југоисток–северозапад и заузимају површину

од 5 ha (Сл. 1). Ови локалитети имају мултикултурну стратиграфију, односно, на њима су присутне културе средњег неолита (старчева), позног бакарног доба (Костолачка култура), старијег и млађег гвозденог доба, као и средњег века. Током старијег гвозденог доба овде је настао и већи сепулкрални комплекс. У сонди 1 на локалитету Црквиште констатована су три укопа са бројним фрагментима лонаца и питоса, за које се иначе сматра да су служили за чување хране (Т. VI/6, 7, 8, 10). На Селишту су откривена три сепулкрална објекта (Сл. 1, 2, 3, 4). Наиме, претпостављамо да су у питању била два „тумула“ са 4 инхумирана и дванаест спаљених покојника, док су на суседном локалитету Белавина откривене две девастиране гробне целине са два инхумирана и четири спаљена покојника. У „тумулу“ 1, чији је централни део представљала правоугаона камена конструкција (димензија 6 m × 6 m × 0,5 m) било је поплочање на коме је откривен накнадно укопан гроб 1 са скелетно сахрањеним покојником, уз кога су откривени гвоздено копље, нож, једна алатка у облику шила или пробојца, бронзана фибула са седластом стопом и двојна алка (или разводник) са протомима (Сл. 6). У гробу 2 су се уз покојника налазили гвоздено копље, гвоздени криви нож, фрагментована гвоздена фибула са наребреном бронзаном навлаком, једна бронзана цевчица (петица, односно доњи део копља) и једноухи пехар похрањен изнад главе (Сл. 7). Гроб 3 је припадао жени старости око 30 година, а код њених ногу су пронађене две наруквнице од спирално увијене бронзане жице и једна бронзана алка са преклопљеним крајевима (Сл. 8). Недалеко од ногу налазила се већа урна са остацима спаљеног покојника, која је била покривена плочастим каменом (Урна 1). Осим неколико кородираних металних предмета непознате намене, у испуни тумула нађени су један салтелон и једна бронзана двојна игла, а на каменом прстену се налазила једна латенска бронзана фибула (Т. I/6, 10, 12). Испод каменог поплочања (односно уз његов обод) откривене су зоне са црном земљом, уситњеном керамиком и спаљеним људским костима (кремације), за које сматрамо да су претходиле изградњи тумула. Приликом скидања каменог прстена констатовано је шест таквих места са кремацијама (Сл. 4).

Централни део „тумула“ 2 (Сл. 3) чинило је ниско поплочање (од само два реда камена), у облику квадрата (димензија 11 m × 9 m × 1,2 m), подигнуто око правоугаоне камене платформе (димензија 2,7 m × 2,8 m) на којој је била положена индивидуа, највероватније женског пола (Гроб 4), а уз коју су откривени гвоздено копље, фрагментовани тулац са закивком (највероватније од копља), нож, фибула и једна копча од гвожђа, фрагментовани лук гвоздене фибуле са бронза-

ном навлаком, док се у висини главе налазио један керамички пехар (Сл. 9). Ван сакралног контекста нађена је фрагментована фибула као и један оштро профилисани врх бронзаног предмета малих димензија (можда наушнице?) (Т. I/4, 9).

На суседном локалитету Белавина (Сл. 2), у оквирума уске трасе за локални пут, откривено је поплочање (или зид?), дугачко 8 m и широко 2 m, усмерења N–S. Са источне стране ове структуре, чија намена није до краја разјашњена, налазиле су се две уништене гробне конструкције у којима су се налазили парцијални остаци два скелетна и четири спаљена покојника. Фрагменти скелета и керамичких посуда, заједно са неспаљеним животињским костима, били су искључиво концентрисани у две мање зоне црне земље између камених облутака (објекти 2 и 6) (Сл. 10, 11), као и у случају „тумула“ 1 на Селишту. Услед високог степена девастације, ближа реконструкција тих зона са кремацијама није могућа. За сада је једино сигурно то да изван зона црне земље и камена, као и у јами (објекат 2), није пронађена керамика из старијег гвозденог доба.

Међу осталим налазима из тумула (али ван контекста везаних за сахране) и другим налазима на локалитету који би припадали позном Халштату издвајамо једну перлу од жуте пасте са четири пара очију плаве боје (Т. I/7), затим један салтелон од спирално увијене жице (Т. I/10), један бронзани врх у облику ромба четвртастог пресека (Т. I/9) и једну бронзану перлу (Т. I/8).

Керамичку продукцију развијеног и позног Халштата на локалитетима у средњем Понишављу треба у првом реду разврстати на стратиграфски сигурне налазе који потичу са археолошких истраживања и на оне који су прикупљени на рекогносцирањима или су их у Музеј донели налазачи. У прву групу локалитета убрајамо налазе са Пиротског града (Т. II/12–20), Црноклишта (Т. III), Белавине (Т. IV), Селишта у Сињу (Т. V), Црквишта у Сињу (Т. VI), Кладенчишта (Т. VII), Петрлашке (Т. VIII) и Доње пећине (Т. IX), и они ће имати предност у односу на другу групу налаза.

Антрополошком анализом обухваћени су скелетни остаци укупно 22 индивидуе, од којих десет припада инхумираним (45,45%), а 12 спаљеним покојницима (54,55%) (табела 1). Полна детерминација је могла да се изврши на скелетним остацима девет индивидуа (87,50% случајева), тако да се мушке морфолошке карактеристике и метричке вредности везују за остатке три особе (13,64%), док женском полу припадају скелети шест особа (27,27%). Пол није могао да се утврди у 13 случајева (59,09%). Дечјем узрасту одговарају остаци две особе (9,09%). Јувенилном узрасту припадају скелети две индивидуе (9,09%), док се преосталих 18 скелета везују за одрасле особе (81,82%). Морталитет је најизраженији код адултних индивидуа (старости од 23 до 40 година). Декомпозицијом дугих костију горњих и доњих екстремитета, телесна висина је могла да се израчуна само у случају покојника из гроба 1 у „тумулу“ 1. У питању су остаци одрасле индивидуе мушког пола, чија је телесна висина износила  $171 \pm 4$  cm. Лоша очуваност костију онемогућила је сагледавање потпуне слике о здравственом статусу популације, пошто су палеопатолошке промене такође могле да се посматрају само на скелетним остацима инхумиране индивидуе сахрањене у гробу 1.

Епигенетске карактеристике су уочене на скелетима три индивидуе (13,64%). Од укупно 37 посматраних, само три

епигенетске карактеристике се везују за кранијални скелет, а то су: sutura supranasalis (индивидуа сахрањена у гробу 3), sulci frontales (индивидуа сахрањена у гробу 1) и ossa suturae lambdoideae (индивидуе сахрањене у гробовима 1 и 2).

Судећи према оскудном броју налаза из насеља (добитних рекогносцирањима) и резултата систематских и заштитних истраживања, старије гвоздено доба се у средњем Понишављу одвијало у три фазе. Прву фазу прелазног периода из бронзаног у гвоздено доба (Халштат А) представљају две некрополе и једно насеље у Великој Лукањи и на Мађилци код Пирота. Другој фази (Халштат С) припада више насеља Басараби културног комплекса, са којих потичу налази керамике са класичном Басараби декорацијом и одликама Бабадага и Пшеничево групе. У следећој фази (Халштат D), највероватније, дошло је до извесне симбиозе елемената карактеристичних за млађу фазу Басараби комплекса (тремолиране керамике) и елемената карактеристичних за илirsка и пеонска племена, који се најбоље виде на налазима метала из гробова у Сињу (крај VI и почетак V век пре н. е.). Ова промена се такође види и у ритуалној пракси сахрањивања покојника. На такве појаве су раније указивали Д. Срејовић и А. Палавестра, тврдећи како средину I миленијума карактерише изузетно динамично кретање материјалних добара са једне на другу страну Балканског полуострва, што не само да отежава етничку идентификацију заједница позног Халштата већ је чини готово немогућом. Будући да погребни обичаји представљају динстинктивно обележје бића једног народа, они су били најмање подложни променама. Биритуално сахрањивање унутар правоугаоних камених конструкција представља за сада јединствен пример на територији Србије. Имајући ове елементе у виду, сматрамо да некрополе у Сињу показују више блискости са јужнобалканском (горње и доње Повардарје и Пеонија) него са централнобалканском групом (Поморавље), али да у ритуалу сахрањивања ипак преовладавају јаки трачки утицаји. Ово тврдимо не само због сличности елемената сакралне архитектуре већ и узимајући у обзир хронолошки најмлађе налазе (двојне алке и двојне игле), који би за ову некрополу представљали *terminus ante quem*.

Посебан проблем представља одређивање етничитета заједница које се сахрањују на некрополама средњег Понишавља, будући да на налазима материјалне и духовне културе препознајемо утицаје који долазе из више праваца (Олтеније, западног, централног, јужног и косовског Поморавља, Повардарја и Тракије). Некрополе у Сињу можда најбоље потврђују тврдњу Р. Васића да је, захваљујући веома блиским контактима, долазило до извесне симбиозе између Аутаријата и Трибала све до V века пре н. е., када су Аутаријати војно поразили Трибале. Узевши у обзир све хронолошки осетљиве налазе керамике, метала, погребне архитектуре и погребних ритуала, сматрамо да би се некрополе у атару села Сињац могле хронолошки одредити у крај VI и почетак V века пре н. е. Културни хоризонт са латенском керамиком из Доње пећине у Островици, заједно са једном фибулом са Селишта, који потичу из II века пре н. е. представљали би последњу етапу праисторије на територији средњег Понишавља. На крају треба рећи да би било добро сачекати и остале резултате антрополошких анализа и датовања, за које сматрамо да ће ближе појаснити осетљива питања о етничитету праисторијских заједница које су живееле између Поморавља и горњег тока Искера.



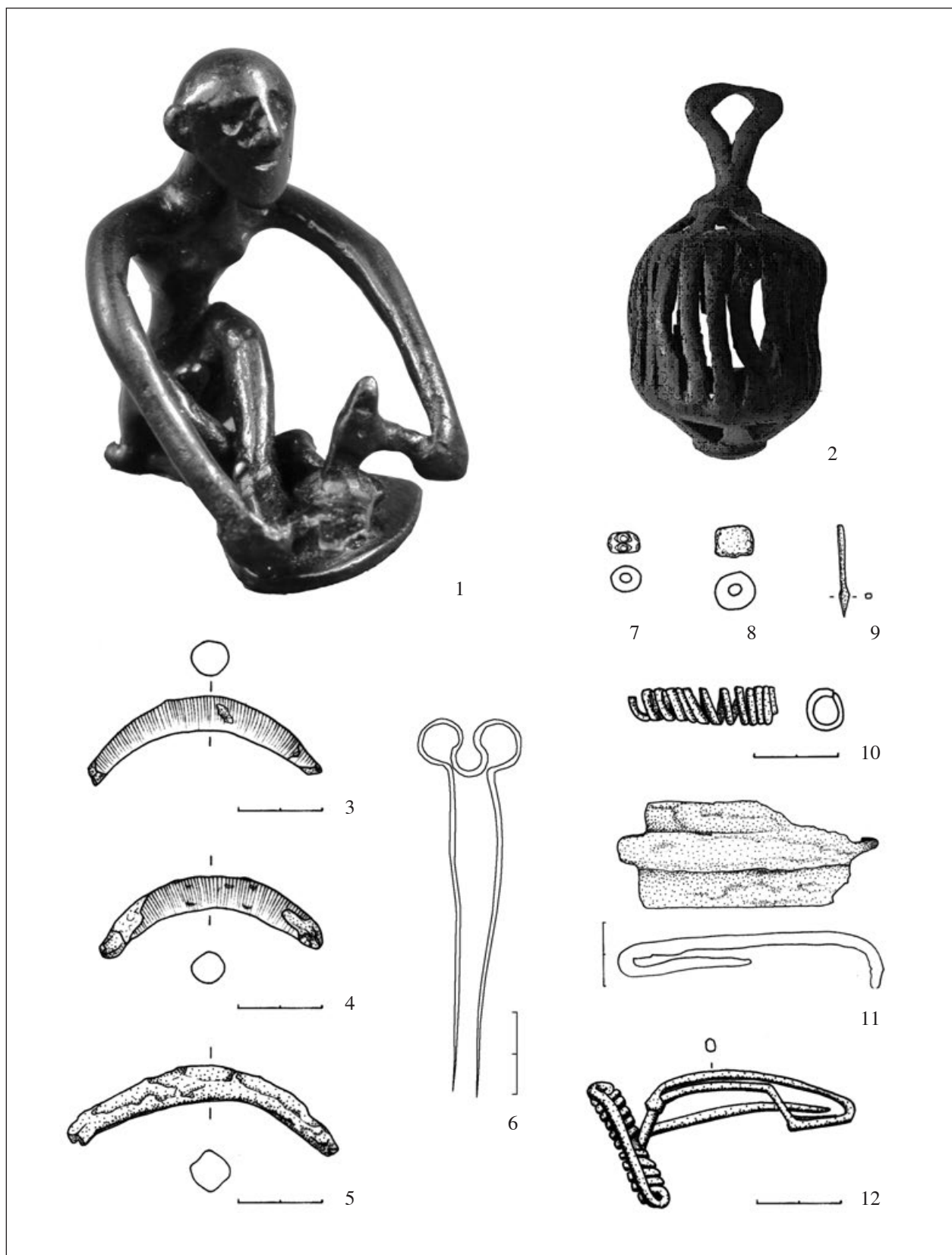


Plate I – Metal finds from the Nišava valley

Табла I – Метални налази из Понишавља

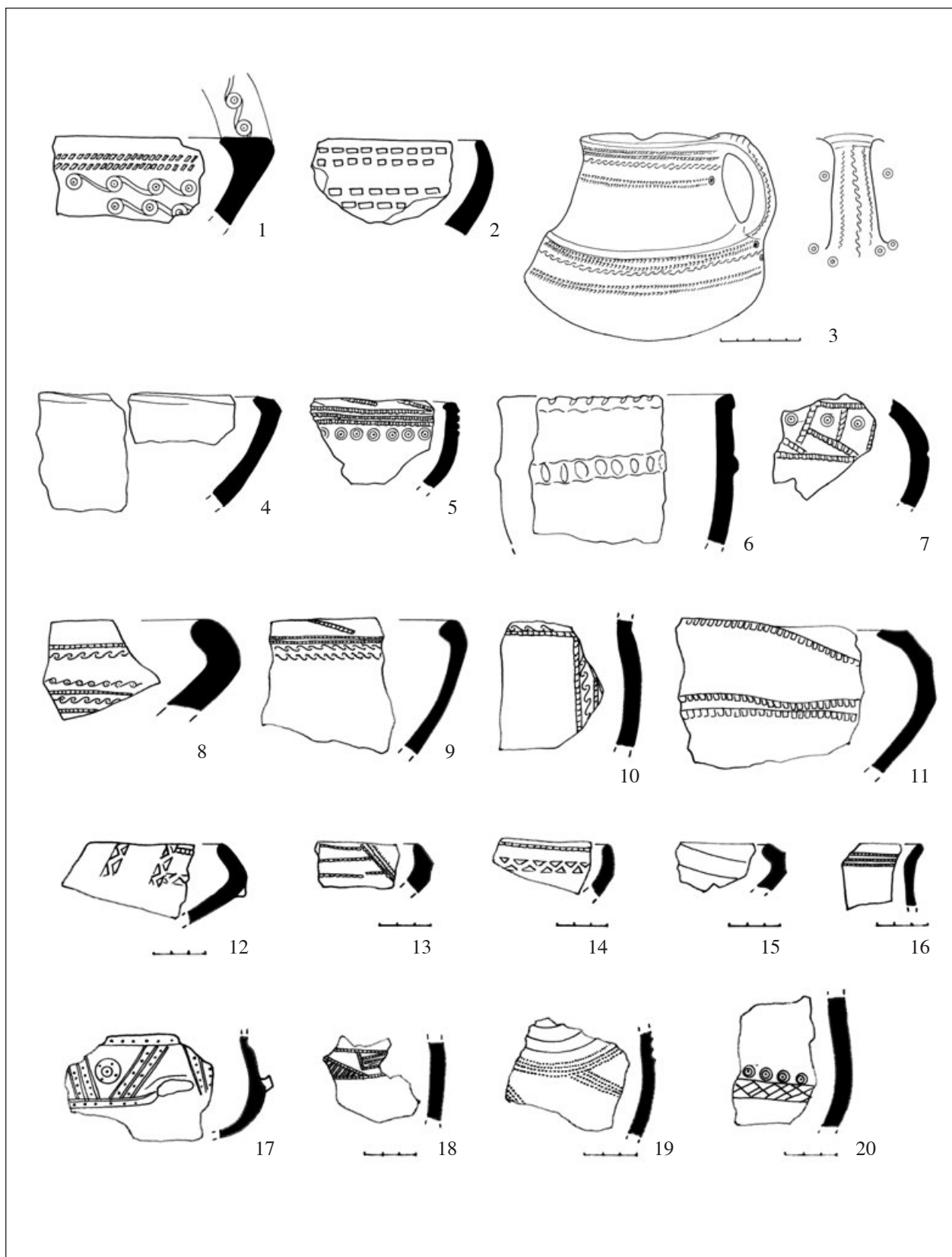


Plate II – Pottery finds from the Pirot region

Табла II – Налази керамике из Пироша и његове околине

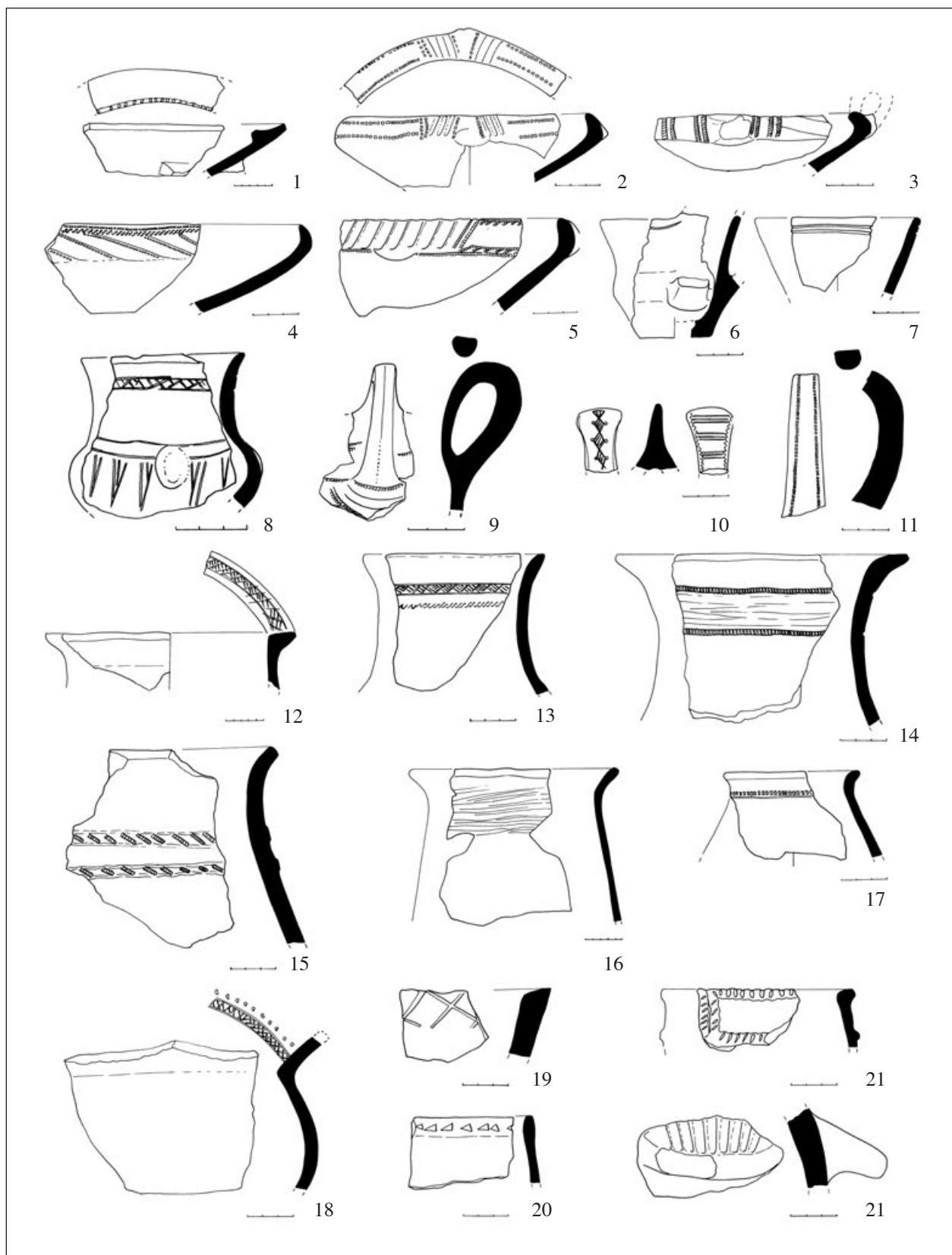


Plate III – Pottery finds from Crnoklište

Табла III – Налази керамике са Црноклишта

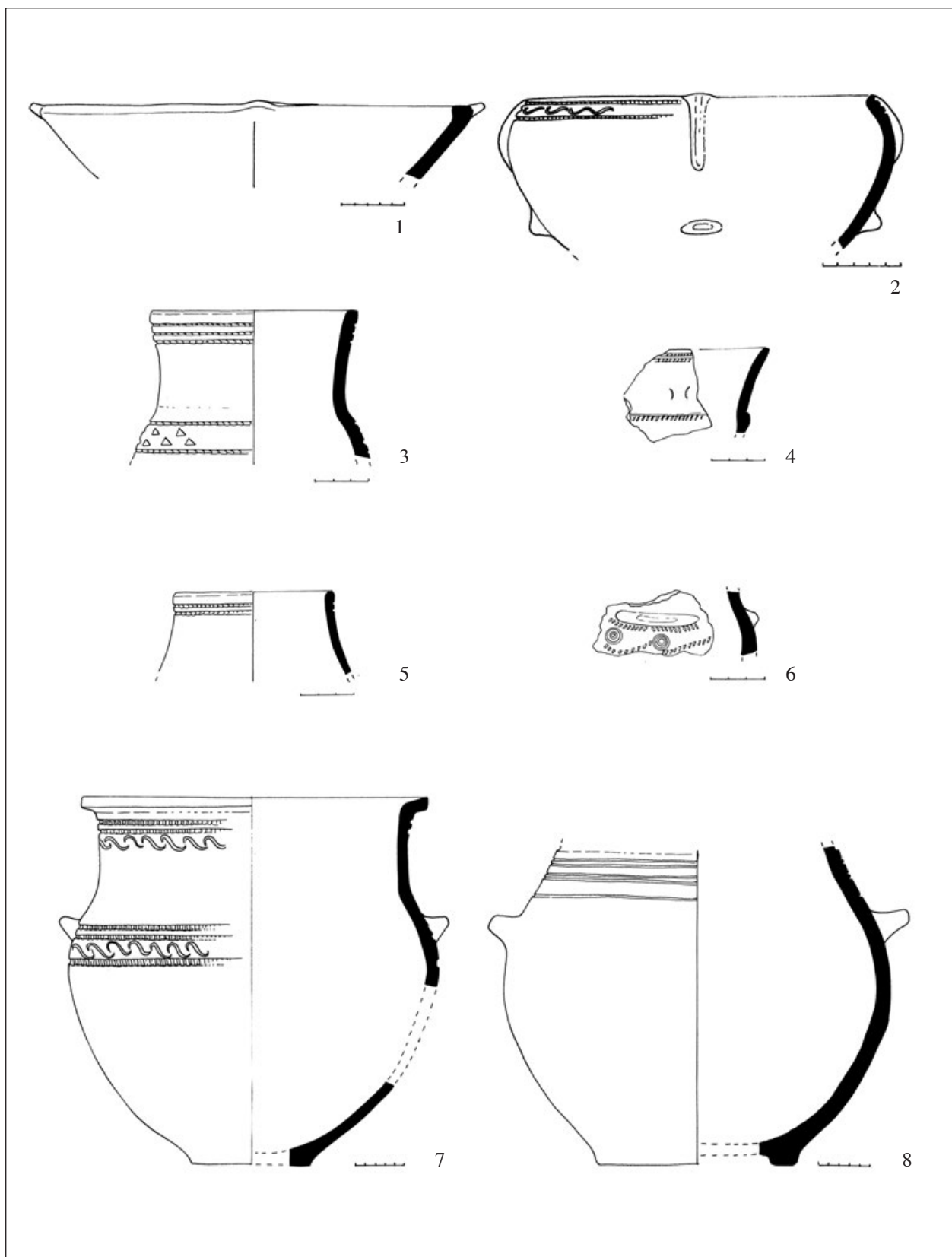


Plate IV – Pottery finds from the site of Belavina

Табла IV – Налази керамике са Белавине



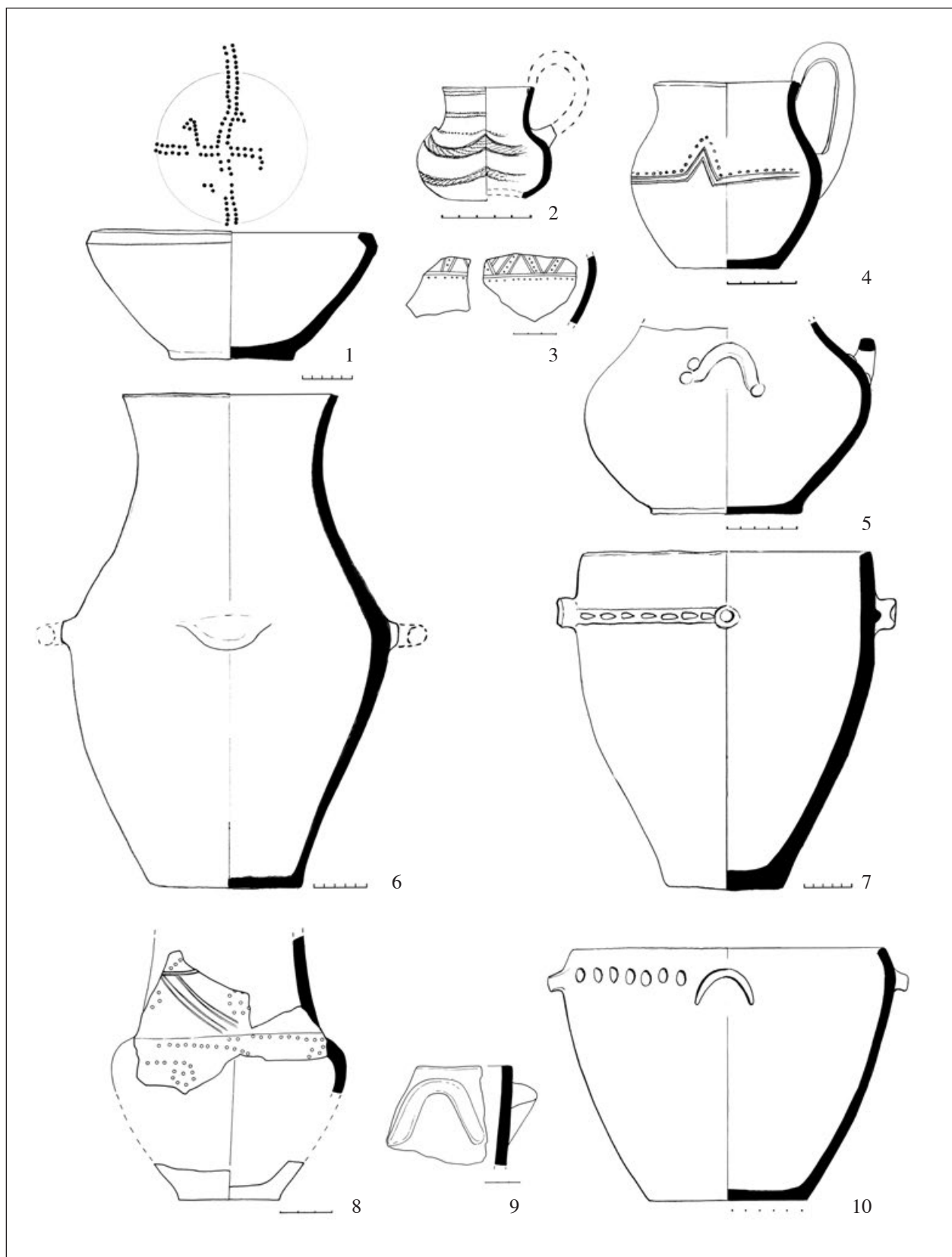


Plate V – Pottery finds from Tumulus I

Табла V – Налази керамике из Тумула I

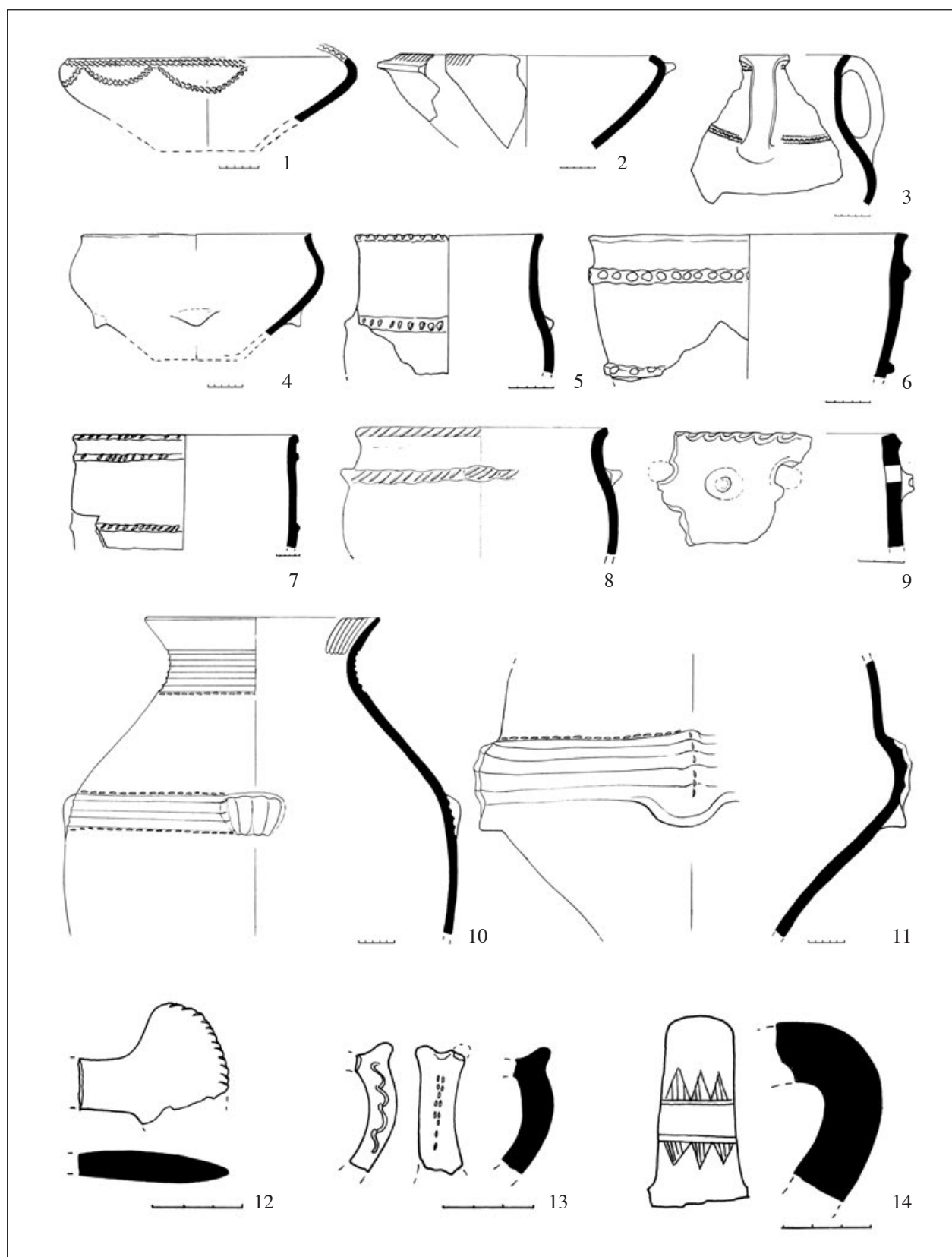


Plate VI – Pottery finds from Crkvište

Табла VI – Налази керамике са Црквишта

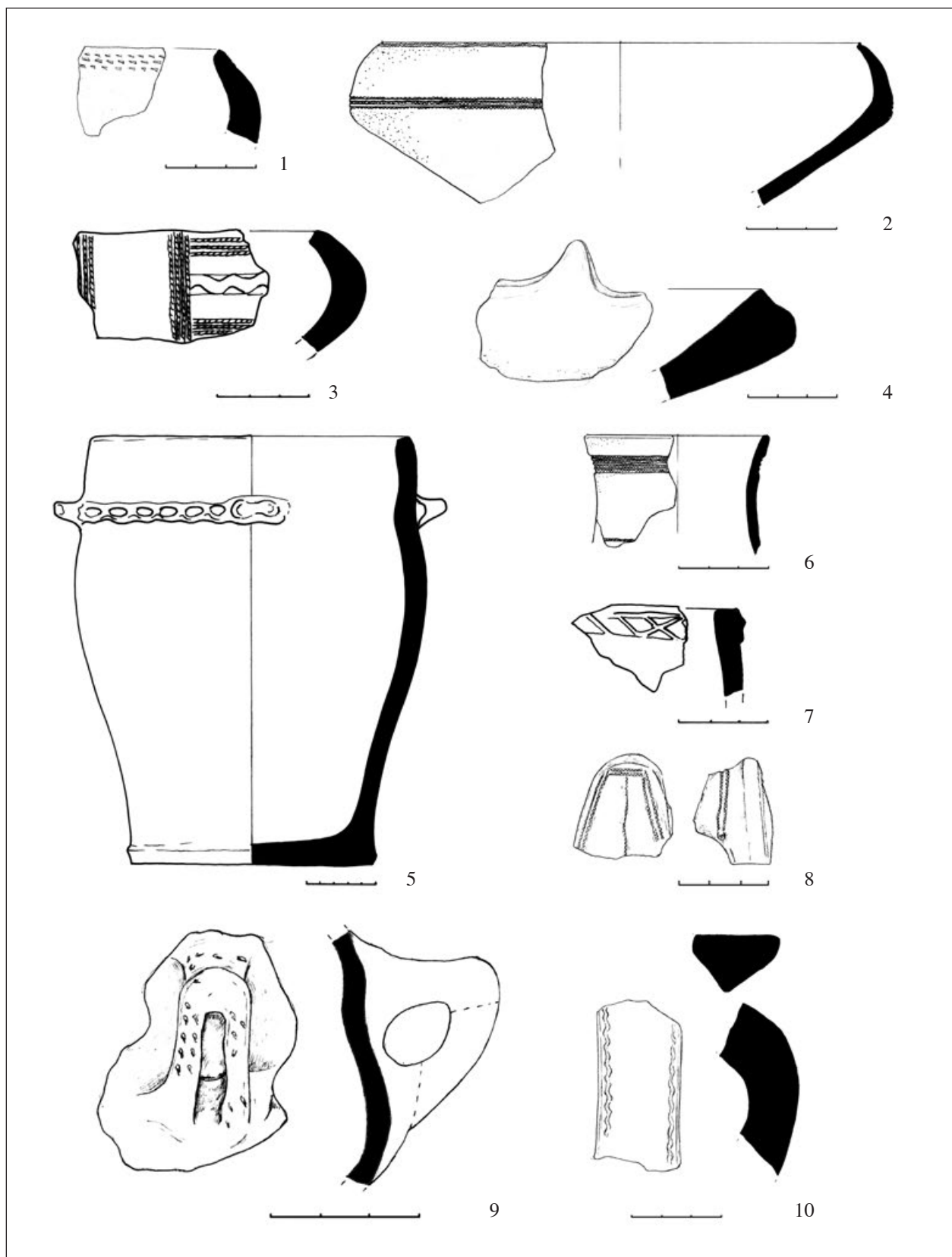


Plate VII – Pottery finds from Kladenčište

Табла VII – Налази керамике са Кладенчишта

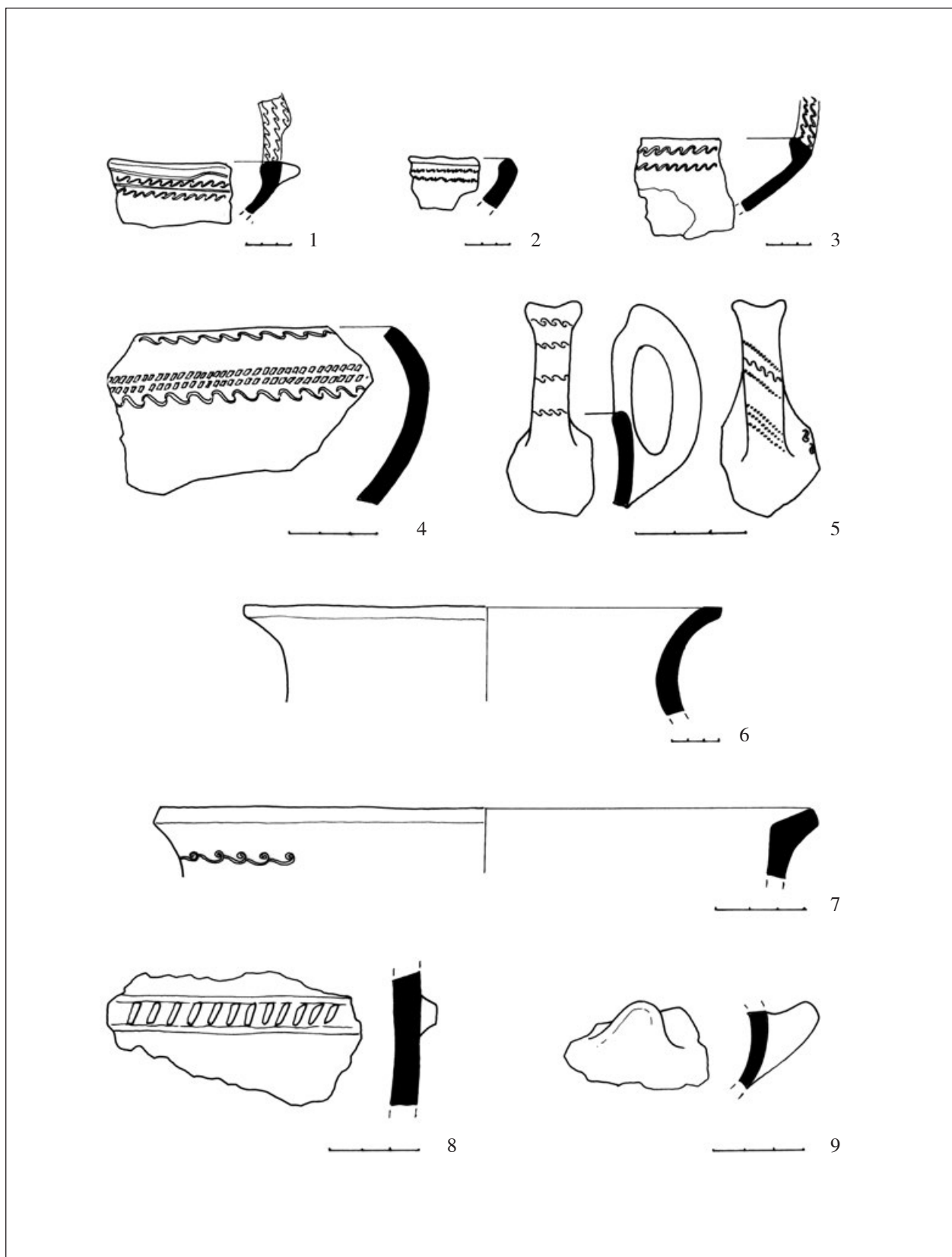


Plate VIII – Pottery finds from the Petrlaška cave

Табла VIII – Налази керамике из Петрлашке њећине



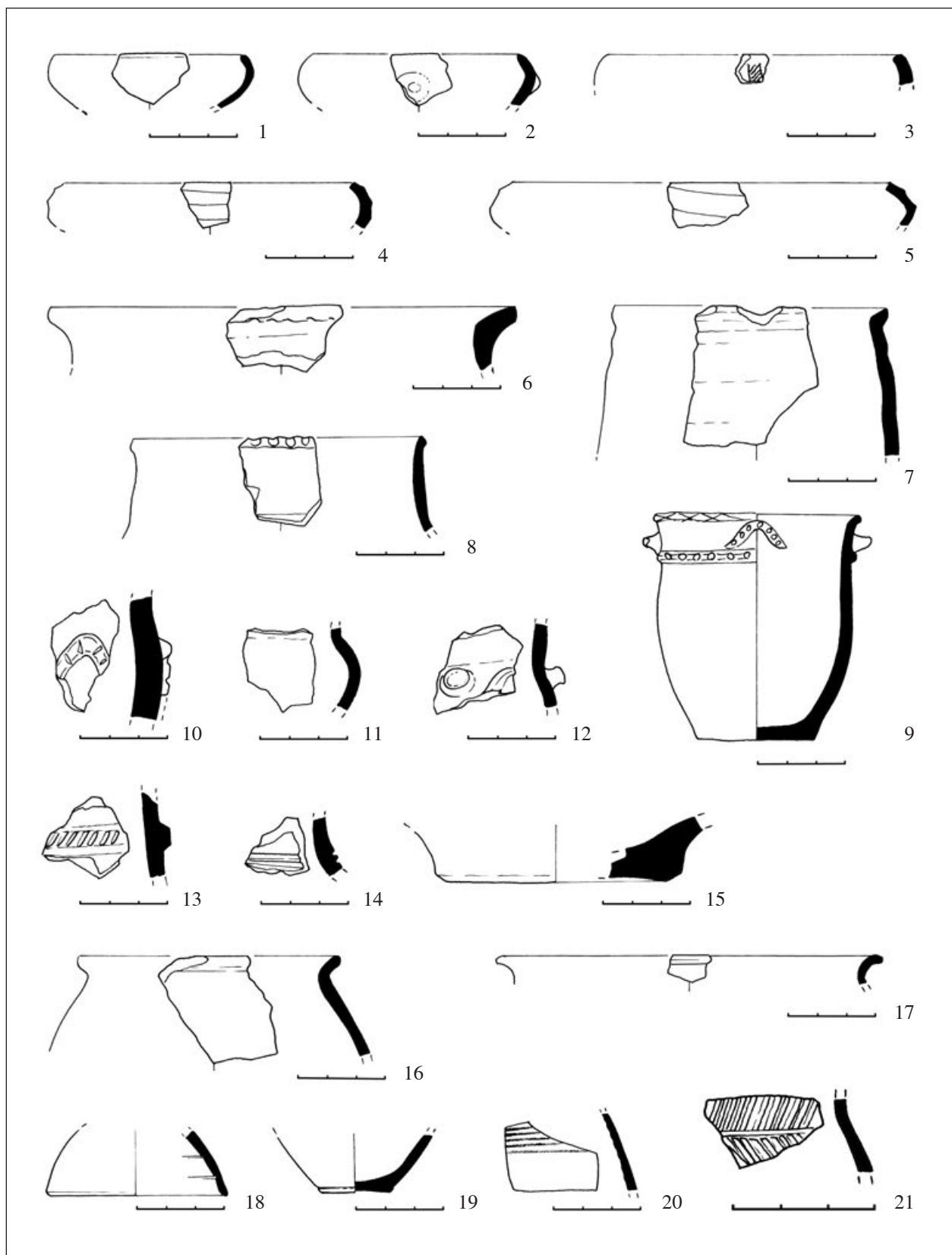


Plate IX – Pottery finds from the Donja cave

Табла IX – Налази керамике из Доње њећине