

# VIVERE MILITARE EST

FROM POPULUS TO EMPERORS - LIVING ON THE FRONTIER  
VOLUME II



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## **JEWELLERY AS A SYMBOL OF PRESTIGE, POWER AND WEALTH OF THE CITIZENS OF VIMINACIUM\***

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Numerous jewellery finds, mostly from necropolises, are proof of the wealth of the citizens of Viminacium. We will note here only some of the examples from the latest archaeological excavations from the eastern necropolises of Viminacium: "Pirivoj", "Nad Klepečkom", and "Kod Koraba." For the production of jewellery various materials are used: metals, precious stones, glass and rare materials such as jet and amber. The city's location on an important military, strategic and also merchant crossroads enabled its citizens the import of luxurious raw materials and goods from both East and West. Besides this, the majority of jewellery is locally manufactured by both local and foreign masters.*

**KEY WORDS: JEWELLERY, VIMINACIUM, GRAVE, NECROPOLIS, NECKLACE, EARRING, PENDANT, BRACELET, RING**

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<sup>1</sup>The article results from the project: *IRS – Viminacium, roman city and military legion camp – research of material and non-material culture of inhabitants by using the modern technologies of remote detection, geophysics, GIS, digitalization and 3D visualization* (no. 47018), funded by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia.

In an important geo-strategic position during the first decades of the 1<sup>st</sup> century, the future capital of the Upper Moesia province emerges: Viminacium. Its development went gradually, from buildings made of wood to the massive walls of stone and brick. The army played a vital role in the urbanisation and building of a city on uninviting swampy grounds on the right bank of the Mlava River, close to its confluence with the Danube. Throughout history, the role and importance of Viminacium was rising. Numerous historical writings are there to show the geo-strategic significance of Viminacium and the city is also marked in all three Roman itineraria (*Tabula Peutingeriana; Itinerarium Antonini; Itinerarium Burdigalense*)<sup>1</sup>. Viminacium represented an important military centre during the Dacian wars led by Trajan. This city was where the army would be crossing to the Dacian coast.<sup>2</sup> The conflicts with barbarian tribes brought Marcus Aurelius to Viminacium, to defend the borders of the Empire from there. The greatest development this city saw was during the rule of Severus, when the city grew to appear as archaeologists are discovering it today. The period of frequent usurpation of power of the so-called “baracks emperors” did not skip this city, where the army had a crucial role. Instability and crisis affected the development of Viminacium, so a degree of stagnation can be noticed. The final peak the city experienced was during the rule of Constantine and his sons. Burned, destroyed and looted by the Huns, and Avars, the city was left beneath arable land to wait some other time for its story to be told.

Life in Viminacium can be followed by studying different segments of its economic, military, cultural and artistic development. One of these segments is jewellery, as a part of another, broader aspect, where the object, apart from having aesthetic value, has both practical and apotropaic symbolic importance as well. The Romans did not exhibit a refined taste with jewellery, but were rather prone to exaggerate and, even through kitsch, show their wealth and power. For this reason they would decorate the visible parts of their bodies with jewellery. These items needed to be extravagant and on places not covered by clothes. Drawing attention was, thus, one of the aims of wearing the luxury pieces of jewellery, to show the respect an individual had in the eyes of the public. We should not neglect the fact that jewellery represented a kind of accumulative wealth that was passed on from generation to generation. It always had a constant value, and was inherited. The

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1 Mirković 1986, 21-27.

2 Mirković 1968, 56; Mirković 1986, 38.

jewellery found in graves belonged among the personal items of the deceased, but it was not necessarily a part of their everyday clothing. The inherited pieces were often kept in chests and worn only on special occasions. This makes it difficult to be exact when it comes to chronologically dating the jewellery, especially with precious metals, as one piece could be in one family for several generations.

Different techniques were used to make jewellery. The two basic ones for the production of metal jewellery were blacksmithing and extraction. Blacksmithing was used for producing a thin metal sheet and the artisans whose job this was were called *bratarii*. With extraction, a fine wire was made, which was further shaped into various types of jewellery. Engraving, repoussage and chasing are additional techniques for artistic refining of the jewellery to make decorative motifs. For all these techniques, great craftsmanship and patience was needed. Engraving was done by carving the motifs based on a previously drawn design. With repoussage, using special tools, the metal was shaped from the reverse side to create a design in low relief, whereas chasing is the opposite process. The metal was hammered on the other side to make the desired motif. Particularly luxurious techniques for jewellery making included granulation and filigree. They were mostly used for decorating gold, and sometimes silver jewellery. The two often complement each other, and are applied simultaneously on the same item. Filigree is the soldering of thin wire thread onto a flat metal surface to create a distinct ornament. The granulation technique involves soldering tiny granules of metal onto a surface. If these ornaments were made by melting, then the process would be called pseudo-granulation. The technique of carving the drawn motif onto a piece of jewellery to achieve a lacy ornament, the Romans called *opus interrasile* and it was used in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries. Oftentimes, different types of jewellery were made in the same way (a ring, an earring, and a bracelet), and can be distinguished only by their size and based on the context of the find.

Jewellery was made of a variety of different materials. Gold has always been among the favourite materials, as still is, particularly because all the advantages of this metal were noticed very early on. The brightness, durability, and the ease with which it can be shaped are characteristics that have given a constant value to this metal throughout history. The goldsmith shops were called *aurifices*, although these were further categorised into those who were making rings - *anularii* or bracelets - *armillarii*.

Apart from gold, other materials had a notable place in jewellery production. The rarity and aesthetics of certain materials were of crucial significance for them to be considered highly valued finds. Semiprecious stone, glass and jet (a type of flat surfaced matte black coal) were used, and jet was among the favourites for making rings, bracelets and beads. This material was popularly called “black amber”, whereas identical examples of jewellery were made of black glass paste resembling jet. There are historical sources that confirm that jet was mostly mined in Britain during the Roman rule (Whitby, York) and transported to continental Europe.<sup>3</sup> A significantly large number of jet artefacts were found in Gaul, as along with the mineral itself. Cologne was one of the most important centres for crafting items from jet.<sup>4</sup> Our findings have so far suggested that jet jewellery was mostly discovered in the graves of female individuals. In the historical writings of Pliny the Elder and Galen, the health benefits of this material were emphasised, especially in treating uterine diseases.<sup>5</sup> It is highly likely that jet jewellery could be expected in the graves of mature females. The material was used to make bracelets, beads as necklace or bracelet segments, and pendants.

Amber had a significant place in jewellery making, for its rarity and symbolism. During the time of Tacitus and Pliny the Elder, a general opinion prevailed that amber was hardened resin of trees (mostly coniferous) that came to Europe from the coasts of the Baltic via various merchant routes.<sup>6</sup> In the ancient era, the magical and healing characteristics of amber were known, and these refer to its electrostatics. Pliny the Elder notes that amber protects from sore throat and helps with some nervous and bladder diseases when worn either as an amulet or drunk dissolved in water.<sup>7</sup>

The Roman doctor Galen also wrote about the health benefits of amber, citing recipes and popular tradition.<sup>8</sup> The greatest manufacture of amber during the Roman times was noted during the rule of Flavians and Antonines (from 69 to 192 AD). The most important centre for the manufacture of amber goods was

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3 Parker 2014, 16; Solin *De Mir. M.* XXIII

4 Todd 1992, 246.

5 Plinije, *Hist. Nat.* XXXVI.XXXIV

6 Plinije, *Hist. Nat.*, XXXVII, 32-53.

7 Plinije, *Hist. Nat.*, XXXVII, 51.

8 Палавестра, Крстић 2006, 28.



in Aquileia, where the amber was imported from the Baltics as early as in the Bronze Age. The workshops were active until the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.<sup>9</sup> Items made of amber were valued more than gold at the start of the Roman Empire.<sup>10</sup> Various ornaments, toiletries, and cosmetic items, toys or ceremonial gifts made of amber on the territory of Serbia are mostly found in necropolises (Kosmaj-Gomilice, Babe; Singidunum and Viminacium).<sup>11</sup>

Numerous jewellery finds, mostly from necropolises, are proof of the wealth of the citizens of Viminacium.<sup>12</sup> We will note here only some of the examples from the latest archaeological excavations from the eastern necropolises of Viminacium (“Pirivoj”, “Nad Klepečkom”, “Kod Koraba” and the other).<sup>13</sup>

In a grave of a female individual buried in a pit without any construction (Fig. 1), several pieces of gold, semiprecious stone (opal) and glass paste jewellery were found. A pair of gold earrings with green stone was found on each side of the skull, whereas a necklace made of 170 jet beads and a gold medallion was found on the chest. The medallion contains a cameo made of opal. On the fingers of the left hand, two rings were found: made of jet and gold with a red stone in them. This set of jewellery, where two different materials are dominant—jet and gold, represents a refined taste where elegance and contrast are achieved by a highly visible colouristic effect (black and yellow). Even though the deceased was buried

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9 Палавестра, Крстић 2006, 70-71.

10 Facsady 1995, 49.

11 Палавестра, Крстић 2006, 296, 297-302, кат. 458-468 (Kosmaj-Guberevac, Babe); 368-376, кат. 608-629 (Viminacijum); 380, кат. 640-642 (Singidunum).

12 Part of the findings, including the jewellery from older archaeological excavations of the southern necropolis of Viminacium, has been published in: Зотовић, Јордовић 1990 and Korać, Golubović, 2009.

13 The mentioned necropolis spread east and northeast of the city. In the eastern necropolis “Pirivoj”, during the rescue archaeological excavations in the period from 1997 to 2016, with minor interruptions, 511 graves were explored (436 inhumations and 74 cremations). Burying was performed in the period from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the mid-4<sup>th</sup> century. At the north-eastern necropolis “Nad Klepečkom” salvage excavations were conducted in the period from 2008 to 2013. A total of 205 graves (94 inhumations and 111 cremations) were explored. Burials were carried out in the period of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century. The necropolis “Kod Koraba” salvage excavations were conducted from 2005 to 2008. A total of 211 graves were investigated (132 cremations and 79 inhumations). Burials were carried out over a period from the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. The exceptions are two graves (G-71 and G-78) belonging to the 4<sup>th</sup> century. See: Bogdanović 2010 83-99. In the following, the graves with inhumed deceased are marked with letter G, while the cremations are identified as G1. All finds were photographed by G. Stojić, for which I am deeply grateful.

Fig. 1. Jewellery from the grave 290, the site Pirivoj.



in a common grave, without any construction, her personal jewellery meant that she belonged to the higher social circles. It is assumed that the early death of the young girl required that she be buried with all her precious items. When it comes to the dating of this find, a bronze coin on the chests of the deceased was of assistance. It was a coin of Julia Domna, minted between 211 and 217 AD.<sup>14</sup>

An identical case of a combination of gold and jet jewellery was found in the brick constructed grave of a child (Fig. 2). One hundred beads made of jet (97 chevroned beads, two tubes and one circular) and 21 spherical beads of gold sheet metal were found near the head. These were the remains of two necklaces combined in strings of the mentioned beads. As the grave was ruined and looted, we do not have the exact number of beads, and suspect that there were more. In the middle section of the grave, thirteen more jet beads representing a bracelet made of segments were found. These were crescent on one side, and flat on the other, and each had a double perforation. Two beads or plates are faceted on the side, the crescent edge, whereas one bead is in the form of a slice (*melonen* type). They were all highly polished.<sup>15</sup> A pair of earrings made of link-shaped gold wire was found next to the head.<sup>16</sup>

An almost identical construction with tegulae is a grave of a young female individual (between 30 and 35 years of age), buried with numerous pieces of jewellery (Fig.3). The fragments of two necklaces were found in the neck area. The first one was formed by gold wire with a string of beads made of glass and a wire pendant with green beads. The other necklace consists of a triple interwoven string of beads, made of jet (285 pieces), bones (36 pieces), and glass and amber (2 pieces). There was a medallion with it, with a cameo representing a Medusa and a smaller gold metal sheet frame (perhaps a part of a pendant). On the right side of the necklace a smaller radial link was found, made of gold, a silver monetary medallion with illegible bronze coins, three fragmented silver tubuli and a silver ring with a gem. On the right side of the skull, a silver pendant was found, with a purple stone and one radial silver link. In the skull itself, there was a gold earring with an 'S' shaped link and a circular, solid head. Apart from the jewellery, bronze

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14 RIC IV, 375. There were no other findings.

15 These types of bracelets were known from graves from the older archaeological excavations, both in Viminacium and the surrounding area, see: Спасић-Ђурић 2011, 9-60; Спасић-Ђурић 2007a, 176, 188-190; Спасић-Ђурић 2007b, 333-337; Микулчић 1975, 96-97; Јовановић 1978, 28.

16 There were no other finds in the grave.

Fig. 2. Jewellery from the grave 205, the site Pirivoj.



Fig. 3. Jewellery from the grave 134, the site Pirivoj.



coins were also found in the grave, which were minted in Nicaea during the 3<sup>rd</sup> century,<sup>17</sup> alongside a smaller quantity of green glass bottles with berries at the bottom. The mentioned jewellery can be divided into two sets. The first one would be comprised of the gold items found (the necklace, the earring, the medallion with a cameo, radial link and gold frame). The other set consists of silver pieces (the ring, the tubuli, the monetary medallion, the purple stone pendant and the radial link). A string of beads made of jet and bones shows a kind of border between these two sets. The variety of shapes and materials in jewellery of this age suggest the colourful aspect widely present in Roman lives. Aesthetics was apparently neglected, and if we were to discuss any meaning behind wearing jewellery this way, this would be interpreted from an apotropaic and symbolic aspect. The jet and amber as materials have certain apotropaic characteristics. On the other hand, the silver tubuli probably contained plants or seeds that had a protective purpose. Furthermore, it is highly unlikely that this individual wore all her jewellery at the same time. We need to bear in mind that these were just goods to be carried to 'the other side', to prove the importance of this individual in her earthly life, and to protect her from any inconveniences in the afterlife.

Sets of necklaces with earrings or single pieces of jewellery made of precious metals, semiprecious stones, and various strings of beads in different shapes are present in the rest of the graves as well. In most cases we were not lucky enough to find a grave that had not been looted. Most graves were destroyed and pillaged as early as the ancient times and, thus, a many goods are missing. We are, therefore, not privy to the real circumstances. Distinctive stylistic features are found in all types of jewellery. Influenced by eastern Mediterranean culture, during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century, a polychromous type of jewellery was being developed. This type was called *uniones*, and was characterised by the combination of colourful semiprecious stones with pearls and beads made of glass. The favourite technique was *opus interrasile*, which included the piercing of metal to achieve a "lacy" look. All mentioned novelties are present in the Viminacium jewellery, and the items were probably made in local workshops where the locals and inhabitants from the eastern provinces were working. However, jewellery workshops have not been archaeologically confirmed in Viminacium, and it is doubtful that they did not exist, as the large quantity of jewellery found suggests their presence.

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17 BMC, 168, no. 100; WBR, 477, no. 617; Weiser 030.

## NECKLACES

The term *monile* referred to all ornaments carried around the neck. This term was applied to all necklaces intertwined with wires of beads and glass paste, pearls and gemstones, whereas the metal wires connected in different ways refer to chains. A luxury example of a necklace known as *hormoi* was found in the aforementioned grave (Fig. 3, 4).<sup>18</sup> It consists of a gold noose chain with various beads in different shapes and materials. Discoid pearls are dominant, made of stone and red glass. There is a pendant on the necklace, made of intertwined heart-shaped wire with volutes at the ends and a polyhedral green stone bead (emerald?). An identical pendant made of bronze was found on a fragmented earring from the same site, but with a white bead (G-232, C-687). Identical heart-shaped decoration is often found at the ends of a necklace of this type.<sup>19</sup> Similar examples of whole or fragmented necklaces are kept in the National Museum in Belgrade and the Museum of the City of Belgrade.<sup>20</sup> Numerous analogous examples can be found in the *Aquincum* Museum in Budapest, as well as in Mainz.<sup>21</sup>

The necklace with cylindrical jet beads and a medallion pendant is elegantly shaped. The pendant is made of gold and has a cameo (Fig. 1, 5).<sup>22</sup> Contrary to the monotone and monochromatic beads, the elliptically shaped medallion made of gold metal sheet with a frame decorated with palmettes, made using the grooving technique, makes this necklace a special one. There is a cameo of two-coloured blue and white opal, with an engraved female face in the white part, in right profile, in the medallion. The facial features are schematically represented, and the haircut is typical of empresses in the second decade of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.<sup>23</sup> In the tomb were found bronze coins of Julia Domna, who minted between 211 and 217 AD.<sup>24</sup>

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18 Raičković, Milovanović 2010, 97, Fig. 44.

19 Popović et al 2005, 62-63, Fig. 46; Поповић 1996, 89, кат. 104; Ruseva-Slokoska 1991, 138, Cat. No. 97; 141-142, Cat. No. 103; Marshall 1911, Pl. LXI, 2746.

20 Поповић 1996, тип III, кат. 107-114; Крунић, Игњатовић 2016, 61, 145, кат. 48-51.

21 Facsády 2009, 114, Type II, Cat. Nos. 219-220; Deppert-Lippitz 1980, Cat. 5.

22 Raičković, Milovanović 2010, 97-98, Fig. 45.

23 Поповић 1996, 37-38, тип IV; Vágó-Bóna, 1976, 193, Taf. XXIII; XXV, 1.

24 RIC 375.

Fig. 4. Necklace with the pendant, the site Pirivoj, grave 134, C-349.





Fig. 5. Necklace with medal-  
lion, the site Pirivoj, grave  
290, C-844 and 846.



Fig. 6. Golden necklace,  
the site Pirivoj, grave 205,  
C-740.



A necklace found in grave G-205 (Fig. 2, 6) is formed from gold spherical beads, but the clasp is unusual. The beads were probably strung on a thread that has since perished. Hollow beads of gold sheet are known in various shapes since the Archaic period, and the Roman examples were derived from the Hellenistic tradition. During the Roman period, beads of gold were favourites from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century until the end of Late Antiquity.<sup>25</sup> There are numerous finds of necklaces made of colourful glass beads, stone, and amber, which make the necklace luxurious by being polychromatic, and with its shapes and size. This was a cheaper and simpler way for the lower social strata to get closer to the respectable members of Roman society.

## EARRINGS

The most diverse type of jewellery is the earrings. There are two basic earring types: the open or closed link type and the “S”-shaped hook type. Chronologically, they overlap and it is difficult to date them precisely. Viminacium earring typological analysis was performed by Lj. Zotović some time ago.<sup>26</sup> Listed here are just some of the more luxurious pieces from the latest Viminacium necropolises excavations.

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25 Поповић 1996, 40, тип III.

26 Зотовић 1995, 233–242.



Fig. 7. Earring with a hook and loop, the site Pirivoj, grave 126, C-335.

Fig. 8. Earring with a hook and loop, the site Pirivoj, grave 198, C-703.

Fig. 9. The pair earrings with hook and loop, the site Pirivoj, grave 212, C-758.

The more simple examples are thin wire-link type earrings that close simply using a hook and a loop.<sup>27</sup> In a grave that was constructed of fragmented bricks, apart from a gold earring (the site “Pirivoj”, G-126; Fig. 7), a bronze coin of A. Severus was found.<sup>28</sup> In another grave of the same type as the previous one, as well as an earring with a hook and loop (the site “Pirivoj”, G-198; Fig. 8), a spherical bead made of dark brown paste was also found. In addition to the findings of the individual, is found a pair of earrings of the same type in the grave from the same site (the site “Pirivoj”, G-212; Fig. 9). In a destroyed grave with a structure of bricks, gold earrings with a hook and loop were found along with a gold earring with an insert of green glass paste and a gold ring also with an insert of green glass (Fig. 18).<sup>29</sup> This simple form earrings with hook and loop, has long been in use and the earliest samples are known from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century and last until the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

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27 Зотовић 1995, 234, тип II; Поповић 1996, 17-18, Тип I/2; Миловановић 2007, 12-13, тип II а.  
28 BMC 168, no. 100; WBR, 477, no. 617; Weiser 030.

29 There were also three more beads made of glass and a bronze ring in the grave. The earring and the ring with the green glass will be specifically described afterwards.

Fig. 10. The pair earrings with hook and loop, the site Pirivoj, grave 205, C-741.



Fig. 11. Earring with wrapped wire around the link, the site Pirivoj, grave 275, C-820.



Earrings that have several layers of wrapped wire around the link represent a more developed form. The one pair of earrings is from the above-described grave (G-205; Fig. 10), while the other (G-275; Fig. 11) is from child grave in which was subsequently located a bronze coin from mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century.<sup>30</sup> In some cases the wire is spirally wrapped around the loop itself so that the spiral represents the head of the earring (G-319; Fig. 12).<sup>31</sup> Two pairs of earring-chains (Fig. 13 and 15) are from the graves of children.<sup>32</sup> The second tomb contained the skeletal remains of two children. In addition to the other items, next to the deceased a bronze coin was found.<sup>33</sup>

30 BMC 168, no. 100; WBR 477, no. 617; Weiser 030. Besides the earrings and a coin in the grave of the newborn, eleven wedges for footwear and a ceramic lamp were also found

31 Зотовић 1995, 234, тип IIa; Поповић 1996, 17-19, Тип I/3-4; Миловановић 2007, 16, тип Va, b.

32 The grave of a child (G-44) buried in a wooden coffin with a ceramic lamp with palmette on the disc and a small grey baked cup. There was one earring on both sides of the head. Around her neck more colourful beads made of glass were found.

33 The coin from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, was damaged. With skeleton A, six cylindrical pearls of black-coloured paste were found around the neck. In addition to the second deceased (B) who was buried in a wooden casket. Besides the earrings, a fragmented pot with one striped handle of white-coloured clay was found.



Fig. 12. Earring with spirally wrapped wire, the site Pirivoj, grave 319, C-930b.



Fig. 13. The pair earring with spirally wrapped wire, the site Kod Koraba, grave 44, C-233.

The majority of this type of earring was found in the graves of inhumed children, located individually or in pairs.<sup>34</sup> There is evidence that boys of Eastern origin wore one earring, which may be the case in these graves. Such examples are often found in the graves of Viminacium necropolises from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

Rarely is this type of earrings found in the graves with other jewellery. However, there are exceptions, as was the case with the findings of the earlier mentioned graves (G-86, G-205), and in the grave (G-212) with a pair of gold earring type chains, five rings, two identical bracelets made of bronze closed with ribbed decoration on the rim and a necklace of glass beads. Two bronze rings are fragmented, of the same type with a circular head, without decoration, the third is of the same type, but with an engraved lion presented jumping to the right, while the fourth ring of silver has an etched monogram of Christ. On the fifth ring, which is silver, is a gem, reddish in colour, with a carved human figure – possibly a deity.<sup>35</sup> The

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<sup>34</sup> In the grave of a child buried in a pit without any construction (the site of “Pirivoj”, G-191, between the ages of 8 and 12) on the right side of the skull there was one earring (C-503) and an unreadable bronze coin in the mouth (C-502, significantly damaged, probably from the 2nd century).

<sup>35</sup> In the grave (G-212), in addition to the above mentioned finds, more items were found: two

Fig. 14. Earring with spirally wrapped wire on the inner side, the site Pirivoj, grave 191, C-503 (1)



Fig. 15. The pair earrings with wrapped wire around the link, the site Kod Koraba, grave 62B C-400a.



objects were found with bronze coins of the emperor Constans 341-346.<sup>36</sup>

It is interesting to point out that some earrings show the craftsmen's mistakes, probably due to some negligence, which indicates local manufacturing, because such oversights were inadmissible with master goldsmiths. On the earring ending with a loop and a hook (Fig. 14), the spirally wrapped wire next to a loop forming the earring head is positioned usually on the outer side, but on this piece it is on the inner side. In a dual grave containing the skeletal remains of two children in the B skeleton arms area, two gold earrings were found (G-62 A, B; Fig. 15). Based on the context of the find, we would assume that they are from the same pair, one of the earrings, however, ends with a hook and a loop with a triply wrapped wire around the link, while the wire is spirally wrapped above the loop on the other. In this case, it is hard to say with any certainty if this was a mistake by the craftsmen or if these pieces are from different pairs. On the other hand, we know gold to be

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glass vessels, one of which is a bottle of pear-greenish glass body, a long cylindrical neck, an annular thickened rim and a slightly recessed bottom. The second bottle is stored in small fragments which cannot be reconstructed; an unguentarium, cosmetic palette, a fragmented iron object with paneling, wall panelling and pieces of bone fragments and silver tubules.

36 LRBC I-860.



Fig. 16. Earring with a soldered calotte-shaped head, the site Kod Koraba, grave 66, C-216.

a precious material so it is possible that after the loss of one, it was replaced with a similarly shaped earring from another pair. It is also possible that each deceased had only one earring.

A special thin gold wire hook type earring with a soldered calotte-shaped head was found in a grave of an cremated deceased (Fig. 16).<sup>37</sup> In the tomb, a bronze coin of Faustina I minted after 141 AD was found.<sup>38</sup> Earrings of this type can be decorated with pseudo granulation around the edge (Fig. 17).<sup>39</sup> They are often present in graves from 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century.<sup>40</sup> A gold earring with a gold sheet circular head on the link and faceted green paste is a more luxurious example. The frame is decorated with a chain motif with the art embossed on the matrix (Fig. 18).<sup>41</sup> Earrings with a head in the shape of a flower usually have not hook and

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37 Зотовић 1995, 236, тип V; Поповић 1996, 20, Тип II/1-2; Миловановић 2007, 17, тип VI а. In the grave (the site of “Kod Koraba” G1-66) on both of the étages there were a multitude of attachments. Among the items of pottery were found: fragments of plate, bowl, amphorae, pot, and lamp. Then, a bronze crank fibula with semicircular support beams, at the head, two glass balsamaria, and the remains of letter-boxes (three bronze handles, the formwork for the lock, the angular profiled formwork and bronze pins with conical heads).

38 RIC 1124.

39 The gold earrings were found in the grave (the site “Pirivoj”, G-258) of buried deceased whose bones were dislocated, and were the only find.

40 Ruseva-Slokoska 1991, Cat. No 8a, b; Пешић 1995, 32, сл. 11; Jovanović 1978, 35, kat. 6-7; Ratković et al. 2013, 130, kat. 1175, 1184 and 1187.

41 The earring was found in a severely damaged brick grave (the site “Nad Klepečkom”, G-86) of an inhumated deceased. Since the structure is preserved only in the lowest zone of the coffin made of bricks, very few bones of the deceased were found in the tomb, and they were all dislocated. Apart from the said earring, one type of small gold earring link was found, together with a gold ring with inserted green glass paste. About the other findings of the course see note number 30.

Fig. 17. Earring decorated with pseudogranulatio, the site Pirivoj, grave 258, C-767.



loop fasteners, and identical specimens are known on the earrings with an “S” link. On the other pair of gold links, there is an almond-shaped cassette with a dark red stone - ruby (Fig. 19).<sup>42</sup> These types of earring is rarely represented in this form and usually contains hanging charms and have been found in the southern Viminacium necropolises' graves in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.<sup>43</sup>

Earrings with a hook and loop often have hanging pendants in the form of pearls, stone or glass beads. Of this type is a gold pair (Fig. 20), with a spiral twist forming the head of the earring.<sup>44</sup> Among other findings in the tomb is a coin of A. Severus, minted in Nicaea between 222–235 AD.<sup>45</sup> The gold example earrings are the most dominant in Viminacium, although two silver earrings of the same type have also been found.<sup>46</sup> To date, one almost identical example is known from the vicinity of Viminacium (Salakovac and Malo Crniće).<sup>47</sup> Particularly interesting is the gold earring with a deformed hook made of wire which has a fixed ornamental head on the lower end formed by a plate teardrop shaped frame inside of which is a dark red glass. The wire is spirally wrapped around the teardrop frame resembling the shape of a flower (Fig. 21).<sup>48</sup> It is possible that the link of the hanging wire pendant was deformed and secured with a link. We do not know the direct

42 The earrings are from the grave of a cremated deceased (the site “Kod Koraba”, G1-56), which had a walled lower étage. On the bottom of the first étage, apart from pairs of gold earrings, a fragmented ceramic pot was found. On the bottom of second étage, there was a fragmented bone needle.

43 Поповић 1996, 21, Тип II/2; Миловановић 2007, 17, Тип VI б.

44 Raičković, Milovanović 2010, 98, fig. 51. A pair of earrings were found in the brick grave, with semi spherical arches (the site “Pirivoj”, G-67). The deceased was a female aged between 20 and 22 years. Inside four iron nails were found, as well as pieces of wood, which testify to a funeral in a wooden coffin. In addition to the earrings, the following items were found: fragmented ceramic vessels, part of a container of clear glass and two fragmented objects of copper sheet.

45 BMC 168, no. 100; WBR 477, no. 617; Weiser 030.

46 Поповић 1996, 20, Тип I 4а; Миловановић 2007, 17, Тип Vб1.

47 Крунић, Игњатовић 2016, 50, сл. 25, кат. 16.

48 It is a cremation grave with two étages (the site “Više grobalja”, G1-1782), in which, in addition to the bronze plating earrings, a suitcase, three fragments of bone pins, and some metal nails were found.





Fig. 18. Earring and ring with a green glass, the site Nad Klepečkom, grave 86, C-1401 and C-1402.

analogy for this item, but the head of the earrings have certain similarities with examples with “S” links.<sup>49</sup>

The other earring type is the “S”-link type that has much more diversity compared with the previous. One of the more simple examples is a pair of “S”-hook, six-sided pyramid shaped sheet plate head (Fig. 22).<sup>50</sup> This type representing the original late Etruscan model, still in existence even during the Roman period, until the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.<sup>51</sup> Earrings of this type are made only out of gold and the Viminacium examples are, by quantity, paralleled only by examples from Bulgaria,<sup>52</sup> while other sites only have a few finds.<sup>53</sup> Two pairs of “S”-link earrings have a transversal gold sheet band with a six-sided processed green glass (Fig. 23).<sup>54</sup> On an

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49 Поповић 1996, 25, Тип VIII 2/2.

50 Raičković, Milovanović 2010, 98, fig. 49. The earrings were found in a grave made of bricks (the site “Pirivoj”, G 313). One was on the chest, and the other to the right of the skull. There were no other findings.

51 Зотовић 1995, 236-237, Тип VI; Поповић 1996, 24, Тип VI 1; Миловановић 2007, 18-19, Тип VIII a1.

52 Ruseva-Slokoska 1991, 121, Cat. No 43-46a, b.

53 Крунић, Игњатовић 2016, 52, кат. 27; Цермановић-Кузмановић, Велимировић-Жижић, Срејовић 1975, Г-40; Girardi-Jurkić, Džin 2003, kat. 191.

54 The grave (the site of “Rit”, G-121) belongs to a plain grave pit. Under the jaw, the ribs and vertebrae, several different coloured beads of glass paste and jet, including a bead of gold sheet were found. On the left side of the skull the aforementioned pair of gold earrings was found. In the vertebra, at the breast, an anthropomorphic pendant made of amber was found. In the left hand on the pelvis, bronze coins from the mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century, minted in Viminacium, were found. At the

Fig. 19. The pair earrings with almond-shaped cassette with red stone-ruby, the site Kod Koraba, grave 56, C-154.



almost identical pair from the other grave, in place of the glass, there are beads (Fig. 24).<sup>55</sup> Both graves date back to coins from the middle of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. The first grave was found with a coin from the Viminacium mint, while the second bronze coin is of Trajan Decius, 249–250 AD.<sup>56</sup> There are identical examples throughout the Empire from a long chronological period, from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century. Two identical examples purchased from Viminacium are located today at the Zagreb Archaeological Museum, besides other examples of this type.<sup>57</sup>

A pair of “S”-link earrings with a square gold cassette shaped head decorated with grooves with polyhedral green paste is a particularly lavish example (Fig. 25).<sup>58</sup> The cassette is even more adorned by the application of loop-shaped golden wire bent on all four sides on the ends where beads or pearls would be expected. Similar are the earrings from Solin which on all four sides of the bearings have one wire with preserved pearls.<sup>59</sup> Interesting wire extensions are present on the pair of gold earrings from the marble sarcophagus in Viminacium,<sup>60</sup> but there are

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right forearm lay a whole glass balsamarium and on the chest, close to the amber pendant, was a fragmented bronze bullae.

55 The pair of earrings with pearls of a coarse structure were found together with masonry and brick fragments (the site of “Pirivoj”, G-70). A coin of Trajan Decius and an iron case of rectangular cross-section were found with the earrings.

56 Црнобрња 1993, бр. 69

57 Perok 2012, 47–49, kat. 31–38; Поповић 1996, 25, Тип VIII 1; Миловановић 2007, 19–20, Тип IX а.

58 Raičković, Milovanović 2010, 98, fig. 50.

59 Perok 2012, 47, kat. 30.

60 Спасић-Ђурић 2002, 89–90, сл. 71.



Fig. 20. The pair earrings with hanging pendants in the form of pearls, the site Pirivoj, grave 67, C-164.



Fig. 21. Fragmented earring with red glass, the site Više grobalja, grave 1782, C-12345



Fig. 22. The pair earrings with pyramid shaped sheet plate head, the site Pirivoj, grave 313, C-913.



Fig. 23. The pair earrings with a six-sided processed green glass stone-emerald, the site Rit, grave 121, C-2417.



Fig. 24. The pair earrings with beads, the site Pirivoj, grave 70, C-161.

Fig. 25. The pair earrings with a square cassette and polyhedral green glass, the site Pirivoj, grave 290, C-843.



Fig. 27. Earring decorated with peltas and polyhedral green stone, the site Pirivoj, grave 31, C-487.



also examples from Siscia, Serdica, Carnuntum and Aquincum.<sup>61</sup> All the mentioned earrings belong to the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century period. An earring with a skilfully worked flower shaped head is made with extraordinary craftsmanship (Fig. 26).<sup>62</sup> An eight petal flower is made out of hammered gold sheet, while in the middle is a protruding circular dark red stone – possibly a ruby. Beneath the head there is a trapezoidal sheet plate band with remains of the links for missing pendants. The earring was found in a cremated burial from the late 2<sup>nd</sup> or first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. A similar pair of earrings was found in a Singidunum brick grave.<sup>63</sup> On that pair, a stone in the middle is to be expected. An identical petal shape was made on a gold pair from Ratiaria, found in a grave from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.<sup>64</sup> The most extraordinary achievement was made in making the “S”-shaped link and circular head of thin metal sheet. The head is decorated with peltae, in the technique of piercing. A polyhedral green stone is fastened in the middle (Fig. 27).<sup>65</sup> Beneath the head, a band in the shape of stylised dolphins is laid. Only one pendant was preserved on the band, made of twisted wire with a pearl at the end. The earliest dated example of this type comes from Plovdiv, from the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century.<sup>66</sup> Two analogous pairs of earrings from an unknown Viminacium site are today at the National Museum in Belgrade, and belong to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.<sup>67</sup> Examples from the Zagreb Archaeological Museum, Mainz Museum and the British Museum are also dated in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.<sup>68</sup>



Fig. 26. Earring with flower shaped head and red stone-ruby, the site Pirivoj, grave 5, C-72.

61 Perok 2012, 51, kat. 40; Ruseva-Slokoska 1991, 123, Cat. No. 48; Facsády 2009, 12, Type VII, cat. 281

62 The earring is from the grave of a cremated deceased (the site of “Pirivoj”, G1-5, C-72). There were no other findings.

63 Pop-Lazić 2002, sl. 21/1; Крунић 2016, 56, сл. 35 а, б; kat. 38а, б.

64 Ruseva-Slokoska 1991, 125, Cat. No. 54a, b.

65 Raičković-Milovanovic 2010, 98, fig. 51. It is a grave of the cremated deceased (the site of “Pirivoj” G1-31, C-487). The lower étage was built of horizontally placed masonry bricks. At the bottom of the first étage, other than the aforementioned earring, a small bluish glass vessel was found and about 40 wedges for footwear.

66 Ковачева 1973, 51-52, сл. 4а, б.

67 Поповић 1996, kat. 97-98; Миловановић 2007, 101-102, kat. 477-478, T. XVI, 199.

68 Perok 2012, 59-61, kat. 58, 59 and 60; Deppert-Lippitz 1985, Taf. 33, 76; Marshall 1911, Pl. 2665.

Fig. 29. The pair earrings with Medusa, the site Kod Koraba, grave 76, C-465.



Fig. 28. Medallion with Medusa, the site Pirivoj, grave 134, C-352.



## CAMEOS

Glyptic art, although not originating from Rome, but taken from the ancient craftsmen of Egypt, Greece and Etruria, has left a special mark in the production of jewellery in the Roman period. In the Hellenistic period, colourful gemstones were carved into figures, so as to form reliefs, that is, cameos. These were usually worn on necklaces, within cassettes of gold or on earrings. Numerous gems and cameos found in Viminacium confirm the existence of a workshop in this city, which supplied wealthy citizens with these highly valued art pieces.<sup>69</sup> On cameos found in Viminacium, mostly portraits of women were represented, which resembled, by their haircuts, the empress of the time. Oftentimes, a representation of Medusa would be shown. On a necklace with cylindrical black beads, the face of one of these women is shown (Fig. 5), and on a medallion (Fig. 28) a head of Medusa, en face.<sup>70</sup> A pair of gold earrings with an 'S'-hook and elliptical head made of gold metal sheet with grooved ornament has a cassette that contains a cameo made of white opal with the Medusa head en face (Fig. 29).<sup>71</sup> A pair of earrings

<sup>69</sup> Поповић 1989, 8-13.

<sup>70</sup> Milovanović, Anđelković Grašar 2017, 173-174, Fig. 15.

<sup>71</sup> Milovanović, Anđelković Grašar 2017, 175, Fig. 16. In the plain grave pit (the site of "Kod Koraba",

was found in a grave with a bronze coin of A. Severus, minted in Nicea between 238 and 244 AD.<sup>72</sup> Earrings of the same type with three hanging pendants are known from Prahovo (*Aquae*) and also belong to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.<sup>73</sup>

## PENDANTS

Apart from the pendants of the medallion type that contain gems, cameos, coins and a semiprecious stone, a special kind can be isolated: pendants that were used as a status symbol, or had an apotropaic character. Such types are calotte pendants, that is, bulla and cylindrical boxes or tubules. A bulla (*bulla*) was worn as part of the Etruscan heritage by the sons of free Romans, until they reached maturity. However, in time this tradition lost its significance and the bulla started to be worn by children of both sexes, and men and women. Besides emphasising status, different contents of the calotte (plants, parts of cloth, hair) gave this pendant an apotropaic character.<sup>74</sup> There are two basic forms of this kind of pendant – with flat or radial edges. The majority of examples were made of bronze, and we can rarely find those made of silver or gold (Fig. 30).<sup>75</sup> The grave with the gold bullae is a part of the northern Viminacium necropolis of “Rit”, where the burial of cremated and inhumation deceased in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century was carried out.<sup>76</sup> They are mostly found in graves, independently or as a part of a bead necklace or other kind of pendants located in the torso area. They are most often found in the graves of children, but are present in adult graves as well. Chronologically, they cover a wide scope from the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>77</sup>

Fig. 30. The gold bullae, the site Rit, grave 130, C-2459.



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G-76), the skeleton is partially damaged. In addition to the earrings, there was found: a bronze ring, beaded pearls, and gilded paste; a bronze coin of A. Severus and a smaller number of iron wedges for footwear.

72 BMC 101.

73 Jaњић 2016, 67, кат. 8.

74 The contents of the bullae are more diverse among the finds from the other parts of the Empire. These can be seeds of fruit, and even a small figurine of Hippocrites. See in, Migotti 2007, 187-219.

75 In the devastated brick-built tomb (the site of “Rit”, G-130), the dislocated remains of a skeleton (skull and long bones of an adult), gold bullae and iron wedges for footwear, were found.

76 Milovanović, Redžić, Jovičić 2017, 71-76.

77 Stojić 2015, 48, 51; Milovanović 2017, 110-112. In a grave of a newborn (the site of “Pirivoj”,

Fig. 31. The silver tubuli,  
the site Pirivoj, grave 304,  
C-882.



Hollow tubuli are small cylindrical tubes of thin metal sheet which usually have links for attaching to a chain. Luxurious examples made of gold and decorated with filigree and granulation have not been found in Viminacium so far. There are no known examples with monetary pendants that were worn in the late ancient era.<sup>78</sup> The tubuli from Viminacium are made of silver, simple in design, without ornament and with two or three attachment links. Their function was primarily symbolic and apotropaic. In almost all better preserved examples the rolled-up metal sheet plate-lamellas were found. These were made of gold and silver, with inscriptions or symbols carved onto them. Demons and deities that had a protective purpose are usually mentioned in the inscriptions.<sup>79</sup> These types of tubuli are found in graves of inhumated children (Fig. 31).<sup>80</sup> Hence, it is understandable that these were meant to protect the weak children from diseases, the evil eye and other 'evil' forces – both in this and in the afterlife.

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G-379) three bullae were found, a silver, a bronze and one made of lead. The lead example is, for now, the only known find of its kind. On the necropolis of "Više grobalja" from earlier archaeological excavations, in the grave (G-216), four bullae were found with the skeletal remains of a child up to one year old. The grave is, based on the finding of coins of the Nerva and Domitian, dated to the end of the 1st century, see in, Зотовић, Јордовић 1990, 68, T. XXXVI, 2-5.

78 Поповић 2001, 53-58.

79 Korać, *RicI* 2017, 164-175.

80 It is an individual who was probably buried in a wooden coffin, as indicated by two iron wedges found next to the bones of his legs (the site of "Pirivoj", G-304). The deceased was of a child's age. Bronze bullae and a silver cylindrical box - tubuli were found between the right shoulder bone and the skull. On the chest was found one iron ring.





Fig. 32. A closed-type bracelet made of multi-stranded bronze wire, the site Pirivoj, C-685.

## BRACELETS

Bracelets (*armillae*) that were most often worn on their wrists, and rarely on their ankles (*periscelides*), were mostly part of female jewellery. However, as part of military decorations (*dona militaria*) together with torques and phalerae, they were given to soldiers for special merit.<sup>81</sup> Bracelets from older archaeological excavations of Viminacium are typologically defined in fourteen types.<sup>82</sup> They are made of different materials: from gold, silver, bronze, iron, bone, glass and jet. The most numerous are bronze and silver specimens. Based on the closing method, there are two basic groups of bracelets: with closed and open ends.

We will only mention the representatives of some types of graves from the recent excavations of the eastern Viminacium necropolises. Among the bracelets of the closed areas, the specimens exhibit hook and loop, as well as with coiled and wound ends, sometimes with spiral decorations.<sup>83</sup> A closed-type bracelet made of multi-stranded bronze wire with a hook and loop at the ends (Fig. 32)<sup>84</sup> was found on the left forearm of a deceased, along with three more bronze bracelets, while a fifth bronze bracelet was on the right forearm.<sup>85</sup> There were no other findings. In a brick constructed grave with

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81 Maxfield 1981, 89-91.

82 Радуловић 2006, 355-374.

83 Радуловић 2006, 362-365, Тип VII, VIII.

84 Raičković, Milovanović 2010, 99, fig. 57.

85 The bracelet is from a grave from the site "Pirivoj", G-232. The bronze bracelet (C-682) is a closed type with coated and wound ends; the second bronze bracelet (C-683) is an open type with snake

Fig. 33. The bronze bracelet of coated ends, the site Nad Klepečkom, grave 98, C-1399.



Fig. 34. The bronze bracelet with pendants, the site Kod Koraba, grave 3, C-9.



a plain cover, on the left forearm of the deceased, three bronze bracelets were found, one of which ended with a hook and loop.<sup>86</sup> The examples from Viminacium with hook and loop, based on the conditions of the findings, belong to the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries, while some findings from Bulgaria were given earlier in the 2<sup>nd</sup> –3<sup>rd</sup> century.<sup>87</sup>

Bracelets with coated ends are usually without pendants, but there are also rare items with pendants (Fig. 32 and 33).<sup>88</sup> On a large bronze bracelet from the grave of a cremated deceased, there are five hoops of covered and twisted ends, and in one of them a heart-shaped

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heads at both ends; the bronze bracelet (C-684) has open ends with stylised snake heads on both ends that overlap; the bronze bracelet (C-686) is of a closed type of twisted wire with a loop on one and a hook on the other end.

86 In a grave at the site of “Pirivoj”, G-248, there were two other bronze bracelets of the same type with ends in the form of snake heads. The heads are enlarged, with square cross sections and are separated from the arc by incisions. On the sides, the eyes were pierced. The mouths are open and linearly emphasised. In the perforations for the eyes there may have been a stone or glass. Around the neck, there were seventeen beads of glass and a deformed object made of glass.

87 Радловић 2006, 362-363, Тип VII/1-2; Ruseva-Slokoska 1991, 153, Cat. No. 142; 156, Cat. No. 153a, b.

88 The bracelet from the grave of a cremated deceased (the site of “Nad Klepečkom”, G1-98) was found among burnt bones in a brick-built casket. In the filling box, another fragmented bronze wire bracelet was found, probably with a hook and loop missing; eight bronze alloys with enamelled filament; a bone cube; a bronzed ring with an expanded shoulder with an incised representation of a lion on an elliptical head, eight beads (four of amber and four of glass); a cosmetic pallet made of stone; a bronze medical probe (cyathiscomella); fragmented bone needles with sloping cuts, a bronze bracelet of a closed type with coated and wound ends and a fragmented iron ring with a red gemstone. In addition in the grave, eight iron wedges and three shells were found. In the second grave (the site of “Kod Koraba”, G1-3) of rectangular shape with rounded corners, among the cremated bones only the mentioned bracelet with hoops was found.



Fig. 35. The bronze bracelet with snake ends, the site Pirivoj, grave 232, C-683.

pendant is preserved.<sup>89</sup> Bracelets of this type represent the Laten heritage and, in addition, they belong to the most widespread and longest lasting type that did not change form from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> century. The same forms are also torques, rings and earrings. This jewellery can differ from each other only by dimensions and place of finding, if it is from a grave. There are numerous analogies both from immediate region and beyond. Among the earliest specimens are the finds from Tekija and Bare, which were dated to the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>90</sup> Similar examples have been found in *Aquincum*.<sup>91</sup> The specimens with coiled and wound ends were in use longer, from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, while a somewhat more developed form with spirals was present in the whole Balkan region from the end 1<sup>st</sup> to the last quarter of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.<sup>92</sup>

Chronologically younger specimens appear as bronze wire enclosed bracelets, whose outer side is ribbed and grooved.<sup>93</sup> In the previously mentioned grave (G-212), two bracelets of this type were found. A coin from the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, found in the grave, confirms the chronological presence of these specimens, which are numerous at other late antique sites.<sup>94</sup>

Among those usually found are the open-ended bracelets made of bronze with

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89 Two examples of this type are known from the twisted wire finds from Viminacium with one ring, or bulla, as a pendant. See in, Радуловић 2006, 363-365, Тип VIII/1.

90 Mano-Zisi 1957, T.III/8; IV/10; Поповић, Борић-Брешковић 1994, кат. 7-9; сл. 5; 8/5-8; 9/1-15.

91 Facsády 2009, 105, Type IV, Cat. 139-140.

92 Радуловић 2006, 368-369.

93 Радуловић 2006, 357.

94 Радуловић 2006, 357, Тип Iб.

Fig. 36. The bronze bracelet with snake ends, the site Pirivoj, grave 248, C-723.



Fig. 37. The bronze bracelet with snake ends, the site Pirivoj, grave 122, C-316.



Fig. 38. The open-type bracelets, the site Pirivoj, grave 135, C-343.



the ends in the shape of a snake head. One end can have a snake's head, while the other ends in the shape of a snake tail; both ends are in the form of a snake's head or the ends are minted and the cuts are supported by snake patterns. It is a Greek-Hellenistic form of jewellery that has remained in the tradition of the local population.<sup>95</sup> The bronze bracelets with both ends formed in the shape of a snake head are located in several graves. In the site of "Pirivoj", in the graves (G-232 and G-248), besides a bracelet with twisted wire with a hook and loop, a bronze bracelets with snake ends were found (Fig. 35 and 36). Four fragmented and whole bronze bracelets were found in the plain grave pit (G-122).<sup>96</sup> Among them there was a bracelet with serpentine heads (Fig. 37). The abovementioned bracelets with both the snake ends belong to a younger version that was in use during the 4<sup>th</sup> century. Silver samples from Bulgaria were dated sometime earlier in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> century.<sup>97</sup>

Among the open-type bracelets, specimens with profiled, thickened ends, often decorated with geometric notches from Viminacium, Singidunum, Naissus, Sagvar, Intercisa and Emona, were dated to the 4<sup>th</sup>

<sup>95</sup> Радловић 2006, 359-361, 368; Тип V/1-3.

<sup>96</sup> In addition to these bracelets, among the finds there were two ceramic bowls with an olive green glossy inner surface, a grey coloured ceramic pot, a fragmented bronze bell, three glass beads and one stone, as well as a fragmented object made of bronze sheet.

<sup>97</sup> Ruseva-Slokoska 1991, 159 Cat. No. 161; 162a, b



Fig. 39. The open-type bracelets, the site Pirivoj, grave 135, 344.

Fig. 40. The bronze bracelet with double profiled ends, the site Pirivoj, grave 165, C-488.

century.<sup>98</sup> In a grave with a brick construction with a plain cover a deceased man with two bronze bracelets of this type was buried (Fig. 38, 39). One was on the left, the other on the right forearm. In the same grave were found two more bronze bracelets on the left forearm. One is fragmented and striped, while the other, coated and with wound ends.<sup>99</sup> The same type, but the second variant<sup>100</sup> belongs to the bronze bracelet with double profiled ends (Fig. 40). It was found in a grave (the site “Pirivoj”, G-165) of a imhumated deceased together with another closed-type bracelet of thicker wire circular cross-section and two fragmented bronze rings on his left hand. On the circular, plating heads of the rings, a representation of a ship, or a scorpion, is engraved. Open-type bracelets with thickened ends from Viminacium belong to the middle and second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, while they were present in *Aquincum* at the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>101</sup>

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98 Радуловић 2006, 357-359, Тип III/1.

99 In the grave (the site of “Pirivoj”, G-135), besides the bracelets, there were 32 beads of blue glass, a bronze ring lacking a stone, a part of a silver chain and part of a bone needle.

100 Радуловић 2006, 359, Тип III/2.

101 Радуловић 2006, 359; Facsády 2009, 109, Type VI/c, cat. 173-175.

## RINGS

Wearing gold rings in Roman times was mostly characteristic of aristocrats, senators and other powerful figures. Only iron rings were worn by the wider population. However, this practice changed in time, and it was only during the rule of Septimius Severus (197. AD) that soldiers were allowed gold rings. The rings were not only used for decorative and social or political reasons, but were used as seals. The inscriptions on the heads or ring shoulders were a mark of its owner or contained messages for luck, piety or loyalty. The link and the head of the ring would become more and more massive in time, with cameos, gemstones or glass. The silver examples from Viminacium often have a head with a gem or glass, while the more luxurious ones made of gold contain precious stones. We will only mention some of the silver and gold rings from the eastern Viminacium necropolises. A silver ring with a gem on the head showing a lion's head (Fig. 41) belongs to the type where the ring and the head form the whole. A rectangular cross section gradually extends towards a head which is expanded and contains a gemstone with a cut-in representation of a lion jumping to the left. The shoulders are rounded. This type is present in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries.<sup>102</sup> A fragmented silver ring with a reddish, hemispherical gem (Fig. 3 and 42) was found in a grave with the number of jewellery, about which the above text has already mentioned. Of the same form is a whole silver ring with a gem of reddish, semiprecious stone on which a human figure or a deity is shown (Fig. 43).<sup>103</sup> By their type, the two rings are similar to the one above; the only difference is a stone cassette above the ring line, while the shoulders are accentuated and wider than the ring. These differences define the ring into a special type that is chronologically present from the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the mid-4<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>104</sup> With the ring with an engraved deity, numerous pieces of jewellery were found, as well as a coin from the middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>105</sup> A large gold ring with a dark red coloured glass paste (Fig. 1 and 44)<sup>106</sup> was found in the aforementioned grave with a bronze coin of Julia Domna, from 211 and 217 AD.



Fig. 41. Silver ring with gem, the site Nad Klepečkom, grave 43, C-220.



Fig. 42. Silver ring with gemme, the site Pirivoj, grave 134, C-356.



Fig. 43. Silver ring with gemme, the site Pirivoj, grave 134, C-356.

102 Поповић 192, 10, Тип II.

103 Raičković, Milovanović 2010, 100, fig. 60.

104 Поповић 1992, 10, Тип II.

105 See note number 35 and 36.

106 Raičković, Milovanović 2010, 100, fig. 61.

The extended shoulder of the ring has two peltae made in the technique of piercing. An identical blue stone ring was found at Šarkamen. The rings in this form are present from the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> to the middle of 3<sup>rd</sup> century.<sup>107</sup> Similar examples are found at sites from the surrounding area.<sup>108</sup> The gold ring from the grave with a brick-built construction (Fig. 45) has a circular ring, decorated with horizontal incisions, while on the head, in an oval cassette, is a gem with a *dextrarum iunctio* depiction. This type of rings were typical of the so-called “engagement rings” of the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries. In the grave with the jewellery there were two more fragments of a ring of bronze wire of a circular cross-section and a bracelet of a closed type of bronze sheet of a half-sized cross-section.<sup>109</sup>



Fig. 44. Golden ring with two peltas, the site Pirivoj, grave 290, C-848.

Fig. 45. Golden ring with a gemma, the site Pirivoj, grave C-848.

## CONCLUSION

Studying the jewellery from the graves of the Viminacium necropolises, we can partly get to know the people that lived there. Bearing in mind that we only have access to a very small number of graves that have not been looted, the preserved jewellery represents an image of a wealthy population that dwelled in this area. The use of various metals, precious stones, pearls, rare materials such as jet and amber, puts the citizens of Viminacium among a wealthy population of refined taste. Through a brief depiction of jewelry from recent archaeological excavations of the Viminacium necropolises, we conclude that the earrings and necklaces are the most numerous among the golden jewelry, while the rings are somewhat less represented. The bracelets were made mostly of bronze, while gold pieces are not known at the moment. Certain types of jewellery were comprised of multiple pieces. It is similar with the rings, which are sometimes found in two or three pieces in the same grave. The most numerous jewelry in the graves of newborns and children are pendants with apot-



107 Поповић 1992, 10, Тип III.

108 Popović et al 2005, 62-63; Ruseva-Slokoska 1991, 172, 187, 193, Cat. No. 198, 237, 251; Facsády 2009, 91, Type I, Cat. Nos. 2 and 3.

109 The above findings were in a grave (the site of “Pirivoj”, G-163), which was partly destroyed by mechanised groundwork. In addition to jewellery, a ceramic lamp depicting a deity (?) displayed on a disc and a ceramic pot with three handles were also found.

ropaic character (bullae, tubuli) and the type of simple gold wire earrings with hook and loop fasteners. Luxurious examples of jewellery are usually found in graves of young, prematurely deceased women. In this way, not only was the high social status of the deceased person highlighted, but the grave inventory can be understood as a dowry that is stored together with an unmarried or recently engaged girl.

The city's location on an important military, strategic and also merchant cross-roads enabled its citizens the import of luxurious raw materials and goods from both East and West. Besides this, the majority of jewellery is locally manufactured by both local and foreign masters. This is confirmed by the number of finds and typologically similar examples, moulds and an anvil found on the site itself.<sup>110</sup> The most luxurious and lavish pieces are found in the graves from the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. At the time, the canabae of the *VII Claudia* legion were rebuilt and more investments into the city curia were noticed. At the same time, one of the veterans and a decurion of Viminacium rebuilt the temple of Mithras.<sup>111</sup> Therefore, most precious jewellery belongs to the population of the mentioned period and testifies to the power and luxury that marked the era of greatest prosperity in this region.

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110 Спасић-Ђурић 2002, 86.

111 Mirković 1968, 63-65.



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