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HISTORY AND ARCHEOLOGY OF SOUTHEAST EUROPE IN THE MIDDLE AGES – DEDICATED TO 80 ANNIVERSARY OF PROF. RASHO RASHEV (1943-2008)

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Rasho Rashev (1943-2008)

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Contributions to Cappadocian influences in the architecture and liturgy of the Early Medieval rock-cut monastery at Murfatlar*

George Atanasov

Abstract: With this article, I continue the theme of the rock monastery near Murfatlar and its specifics in decoration and architecture, which have no complete analogue among the other rock monasteries of the 10th century in N/E Bulgaria and Dobrudja. In this case, the emphasis is on the liturgy, respectively on the liturgical installations. Attention is drawn to the forms of the apses, often slightly Ω-shaped, having the altar tables in the apses themselves and to analyses of apses both in Cappadocia and in rock cloisters in southern Italy, Ispatia and the Crimea. Other parallels with the Cappadocian churches and especially the multi-throne altars, such as we see in the Murfatlar churches B1, B2 and B4 and the rock church next to the village of Krepcha, region Targovishte, are also found. Special attention is paid to the location of the prostheses. The ways are also sought as these specifics in the architecture and liturgy in Murfatlar came from Cappadocia.

Keywords: Cappadocia, Prothesis, apse, bathtub, reliquaries

Резюме: Тази статия продължава темата за скалния манастир край Мурфатлар и неговите специфики в украсата и архитектурата, които нямат пълен аналог сред останалите скални манастири от X век в Североизточна България и Добруджа. В случая акцентът е върху литургията, респективно върху богослужебните съоръжения. Обръща се внимание на формите на апсидите, често леко Ω-образни, с олтарни маси в самите апсиди и на анализи на същите както в Кападокия, така и в скални манастири в Южна Италия, Испатия и Крим. Откриват се и други паралели с кападокийските църкви и особено с многопрестолните олтари, каквито виждаме в Мурфатларските църкви B1, B2 и

* This text is the result of scientific research on the Borders and Cultural Models: Paganism and Christianity in the Contact Zone of the Danube Limes (Scythia Minor and Moesia Secunda in the 4th – 7th Centuries) Project financed by the Scientific Research Fund of the Ministry of Education and Science, 17.11.2021-17.11.2024.

В4 и скалната църква до с. Крепча, Търговищко. Специално внимание се обръща на разположението на протезите. Търсят се и пътищата, след като тези специфики в архитектурата и литургията в Мурфатлар идват от Кападокия.

More than 20 years ago, I assumed influences from the Cappadocian rock-cut churches from the late 9th - 10th centuries in the interior architecture and decoration of the rock-cut monastery near the town of Murfatlar, Constanța district (fig. 1).[1] I noticed them in the plan of the earliest church B-1 (fig. 2), and in the architectonic painting on the altar screen of church B-4 (fig. 24a). Recently, in a special paper, I focused on the monastic organization and the dating of the Murfatlar Monastery, pointing out arguments for habitation as early as the second half of the 9th century.[2] Later on, in the fall of 2022, as part of the project Borders and Cultural Models: Paganism and Christianity in the Contact Zone of the Danube Limes (Scythia Minor and Moesia Secunda in the 4th – 7th Centuries), I was able to visit the monastery for the fourth time and to take a closer look and photograph peculiar elements of its architecture, furnishings and decoration. Previously, in 2019, I visited Cappadocia and got to know some of the rock-cut churches in situ - mainly in the Göreme Valley. As a result, my observation that there is a similarity between the plan of church B-1 in Murfatlar (fig. 2) and the Cappadocian churches of St. Symeon in Zelve (fig. 13) and especially of Nikeatas the Stylite at Gűllű Dere (fig. 12) from the 9th – 10th centuries was confirmed.[3] They are similar in plan (one-apse, one-nave, vaulted chapels) and have extensive narthexes. Still another peculiarity is the rounded shape of the apses (in B-3, B-4 and E-3 they are slightly Ω- or horseshoe-shaped) and the arrangement of the altar tables in the apses themselves (figs. 3-5, 11). It is known and up to now supported by thousands of examples that in Early Christian basilicas (respectively Early Byzantine ones) the altar partitions are low and the ceremonial "theatre" in the altar was visible to all in the nave.[4] This is also the case in Medieval churches until the 11th century when the gradual closing of the altar partition with curtains and icons began.[5] In rock-cut churches, the liturgical installations usually do not differ significantly. Indeed,

[1] Atanasov 1992, 79-86. Atanasov 1996, 112-124.
[2] Atanasov 2021, 63-86.
[3] Rodley 1985, 168-170, fig. 34, 35.
[4] Delvoye 1966, 246-268; Delvoye 1966a, 900-920; Chadzidakis 1973, 326-330; Wessel 1966, 115-119.
[5] Lazarev 1971, 121-124; Chadzidakis 1973, 326-330.

there are no high screens in front of the altar apse in the Early Byzantine monasteries along the Suha River and near Dumbrăveni village.[6] Observations are similar in the colony of rock-cut monasteries from the 10th - early 11th century along the Kanagyol/ Dristra River and the neighboring dry rivers between Pliska and Drastar.[7]

It is not excluded that in Murfatlar we have direct or indirect influences from Cappadocia. Indeed, several early rock-cut churches such as the one at Zelve and especially at Gülü Dere (figs. 12, 13)[8] encompass closed apses (with liturgical items: altar table, prothesis and diakonikon or rather additional altars in their interior) and plans very similar to B-1 at Murfatlar.[9] However, some rock-cut churches in Spain in the provinces along the Ebro River, and in Alava and Treviño in particular, have a similar arrangement, which raises more questions. There, especially in the rock-cut churches Gobas 4 and 6, Seracho, Tartalés, Virgen de la Peňa, San Juliân, Cueva 2, etc., we see a similar altar arrangement - rounded apses with an altar table in their interior, solid, rock-cut altar partitions with a narrow door between the apse and naos (figs. 17, 18, 27). Their dating is controversial though, because we observe habitation and reuse from the late 6th to the 11th century as the most peculiar of them refer to the 7th - 8th centuries and are associated with the Visigoths, who at that time had already rejected Arianism and accepted Orthodoxy.[10] A similar layout with rounded apses and with solid partitions, is also recorded in some Early Medieval rock-cut churches in the province of Apulia (now Puglia) in southern Italy (Jacovelli 1963) (fig. 19).[11] In couple of rock-cut churches on the Crimean Peninsula (Inkerman, Mangup, Shulgan?) we again see extensive rounded and horseshoe-shaped apses with altar tables in their interior (fig. 20),[12] dated 8th – 10th century. It is curious how in such distant

[6] Atanasov 2023, 184-196.

[7] Atanasov 2023, 220-237.

[8] Rodley 1985, 168-170.

[9] Atanassov 1996, 112-124.

[10] Palol 1967, 82, 136, 373, 397-401; Garai-Olaun 1988, 159-160, 166-168, 169, 175, 178-182, 247, fig. 22, 26, 27, 31, 33, 74, 82; Jumeno 1989, 49-50, 69-70, 118-124, 130-133, 145-146, 148-150, 252-257, 291-294, 309-312, fig. 16, 28, 72, 74, 83, 100, 102, 109.

[11] Jacovelli 1963, 43-58; Jacovelli 1966, 19-25.

[12] Yakobson 1964, 32-33, fig. 12; Mogarichev & Ergina 2023, 30-33, 68-70, fig. 50, 177, 187. The authors, Y. M. Mogarichev & A. S Ergina refer these churches to the 13th – 14th centuries, when the wall paintings are actually dated. However, it is not excluded that it is a matter of reusing earlier churches and monasteries, as this, for example, was registered in the colony of rock-cut monasteries from the 5th – 6th centuries along

points from Cappadocia, through the Crimean Peninsula, Northeastern Dobrudja and to Southern Italy and Spain, we observe similar features of the arrangement of such an important detail in the architecture of rock-cut churches as the apses, the position of the apse altar tables and the dense altar partitions. Remarkably, we find such specifics predominantly in the rock-cut churches in these regions so far from each other and that they are, as a rule, absent in the hundreds of masonry churches dated between the 5th and 11th centuries. It seems to be a *stadial* phenomenon dictated by the small size of the rock-cut churches and the naves in particular. Perhaps the lack of enough space for setting up the altar tables in front of the apse made it necessary to fit them into the apse itself. This naturally implies apses larger than usual for arrangement the necessary items, as well as for the movement around the holy table. Moreover, in the majority of cases the stone block of the altar table in the presbytery is attached to the eastern wall of the apse, thus making the services, respectively the Eucharistic liturgy, hard to perform (figs. 2, 3, 5, 14, 16, 17). This compromise is also a result of the limited spaces. Rather, it may be attributed to Cappadocian influences, but the issue remains open to debate. It is noteworthy that, unlike the churches of the 9th - 11th centuries in Constantinople and in the Balkans, respectively in Bulgaria, where the altar tables are predominantly in the bema in front of the apse, in Cappadocia they are most often inserted in the apse, i.e., in liturgical terms, the apse is also the bema around the altar. Finally, there in most rock-cut churches, like those in Murfatlar, the altar tables are attached to the eastern walls of the apses (figs. 14, 16). The apses themselves are usually horseshoe-shaped (Ω-shaped) (figs. 13-16), a kind of insignia of the Cappadocian churches,[13] which is rare to appear in other provinces, but is found in the apses of churches B-3, B-4 and E-3 in Murfatlar (figs. 3-5).

However, there are also other signs of possible influences in the rock-cut churches in Murfatlar from the Cappadocian rock-cut monasteries of the 8th -10th centuries.[14] I have already commented

Suha River in Dobrudja, revived in the 10th – 11th centuries (Atanasov 2011, 189-218). This is probably the case on Crimea with the rock-cut church of St. George (Clement) in Inkerman, frescoed after the 13th century, but there, in the conch of the apse, appears a relief cross with tendrils (Mogarichev & Ergina 2023, 18, figs. 8-11) with analogues from the 6th – 8th centuries (Millet 1910, 96-109, figs. 1, 4; Atanasov 1994, 63, note 44).

[13] Teteriatnikov 1996, 36-38, 47, 58.

[14] Atanassov 1996, 112-124; Atanasov 2023, 198-205.

earlier that not only the apse, but in general the plan, dimensions and layout of rock-cut church B-1 (perhaps the earliest one) in Murfatlar (figs. 1, 2, 9) is very reminiscent of the Cappadocian 9th century rock-cut church of Nikeatas the Stylite at Gűllű Dere (fig. 12).[15] In both churches, we see relatively large narthexes, almost as large as the naves, which are common in Cappadocia and Murfatlar respectively. Indeed, all the churches at Murfatlar, with the exception of B-3, have relatively large narthexes, especially in B-1, B-2 and E-3, which is also peculiar of most early Cappadocian churches.[16] The worship, liturgical and funerary functions of the narthex were related to the daily rites and spiritual needs of the monks and laity. Here we can also add the fact that, like in Cappadocia, the entrance to the narthexes of all the 6 churches in Murfatlar is through only one door, which distinguishes them from the practices in Constantinople, the Balkans and the First Bulgarian Kingdom in the 9th - 10th centuries.[17]

The Cappadocian rock-cut churches from the 8th - 9th centuries are peculiar with cut out pools (troughs) for ritual washing,[18] which at first glance we find next to the altar table in Murfatlar B-3.[19] Having in mind the small size of the very shallow "pools" in B-3 (figs. 4, 23c), dug into porous chalk rock, the probability that they stored water is minimal, and even more so, there are no traces of plastering with hydrophobic mortar. Furthermore, in Cappadocia (and in the Early Christian architecture in general) the pools for ritual washing are outside the apse next to the church entrance, most often in the narthex or next to the entrance to the nave, but never in the apse.[20] Their arrangement in close proximity to the altar table in church B-3 suggests another possibility. It is more likely they were small reliquaries, such as are recorded in several Cappadocian rock-cut churches and especially with the two altar tables of the two-aisle St. Basil Church from 9th century in Mustafapaşa area.[21] By the way, between the three altar pedestals in the central church B-4 there are small openings in the floor,

[15] Rodley 1985, 186-188, pl. 168-170.
[16] Teteriatnikov 1996, 131, 155-157, 163.
[17] Teteriatnikov 1996, 124, 162-163.
[18] Teteriatnikov 1996, 94-98, 153-155
[19] Damian *et al*. 2009, 122, fig. 6a; Holubeanu 2020, 182, fig. 21
[20] Teteriatnikov 1996, 98-101, 153-154, 227. Two relatively deep square cuts-outs, flanking the interior entrance to B-3, can hypothetically be interpreted as pools for ritual washings (fig. 4, 23a). Possibly though, they were holes to anchor the sides of the wooden door frame.
[21] Teteriatnikov 1996, 44, 58, il. 10.

which hypothetically can also be interpreted as places for treasuring pieces of relics (figs. 5, 24a). Lastly, on the upper surface of the two (!) slabs flanking the central altar (additional altars?) of the same church, there are cut out rectangular 'boxes' (figs. 5, 24b, c), in which it is also possible to embed small reliquaries? In another rock-cut church from the first half of the 10th century, called "Belrbernitsa", opposite the Early Medieval fortress near Tsar Assen village, Alfatar municipality, again at the foot of the altar, a reliquary chamber was also formed.[22] Furthermore, a small hole for keeping relics (reliquary chamber) was also carved on the top of the altar in the rock-cut church from the early 10th century in Krepcha village, Targovishte region,[23] which is synchronous in dating with the Murfatlar churches.[24] This practice of rock-cut churches in northeastern Bulgarian lands continued in the 12th - 14th centuries as well.[25] Apparently, even in the rock-cut monasteries from the early 10th century, Canon No. 7 of the Seventh Ecumenical (the Second Nicene) Council of 787 was strictly followed, which commanded that an altar should not be consecrated without relics.[26]

I have already paid special attention to the layout of the altar screen of B-4,[27] respectively a single-colour red - dark ocher painting in B-4, C1, E3, E5, G-3 and 4 (fig. 24)[28] and the close parallels with the early Cappadocian churches.[29] It has already been noticed[30] that the rock-cut St. Marina Church in Apulia, Southern Italy, like B-4, has a three-part altar screen with two massive pillars. The formation of the altar table flanked with slabs (of the prothesis and diakonikon?, or rather additional altars?) in the interior of the apse has been documented with relevant references to the rock-cut monasteries of Cappadocia.[31] In this sequence, there were also suggestions of Cappadocian cultural influences in the design and decoration of some of the cloisters at Murfatlar.[32] Therefore, in this direction, we can consider and

[22] Atanasov 2023, 225-226, № V.80, fig. 69.b.
[23] Georgiev 2023, 80-81, obr. 4, 5.
[24] Kostova 2004, 292-293.
[25] Georgiev 2023, 79-85, obr. 1, 2, 7-16.
[26] Ioannou 1962, 260-261; Stefanov 1998, 307-308.
[27] Atanasov 1992, 79-86; Atanasov 1996, 112-124.
[28] Barnea & Bîlcurescu 1959, 557, 559, 591; Barnea & Ştefănescu 1971, 191; Barnea 1981, 52, 59, pl. 15; Holubeanu 2020, 175, 177, 178.
[29] Restle 1967, 15; Verzone 1962, 134, fig. 17, 18; Restle 1978, 1052, 1080.
[30] Agrigoroaei 2007, 569, fig. 4.
[31] Jacovelli 1963, 43-58.
[32] Atanassov 1996, 112-124.

supplement still other analogues. It has already been commented that in the Cappadocian rock-cut churches the side apses and apsidioles flanking the altar were not the places of the prothesis and diakonikon, because there is a theory that until the 11th - 12th centuries the protheses were outside the altar space[33] but rather they were in or near the nave.[34] This is a controversial thesis, but especially for the rock-cut churches in Cappadocia, N. Teteriatnikov unambiguously treats the niches and the slabs cut into them, flanking the altar apse, as additional altars (figs. 14, 15, 26).[35] It is known that in Early Christian and Medieval liturgy the *circumventium* is invariably at work - the prohibition of one altar to perform more than one liturgy during the same day. Therefore, for additional services (memorial, commemorative, dedicated to martyrs and saints, etc.) in Cappadocia, additional altar tables were formed, which most often flank the main altar, where the Eucharistic services were performed. Against this background, it is curious that in most Murfatlar churches, in addition to the central altar in the center of the apse (most often fixed to its eastern wall), more stone pedestals are cut especially in the apse space. In B-1 there are two in the corners of the apse (fig. 2), in B-2 they are also two - one in the southeastern corner next to the altar, and the second one is attached to its southern wall (fig. 3), in B-3 there are also two – fixed to the northern and southern walls of the apse (fig. 4), in B-4 they are two flanking the central altar and fixed to the eastern wall (figs. 5, 24a-c), and in E-3 there is another one in the southwestern corner of the apse (figs. 10, 11). If in churches B-1, B-2, B-3 and E-3 these pedestals could possibly have an auxiliary role in performing the liturgies, even if we assume (as is usually assumed so far) that they played the role of prothesis and diakonikon, for the altar arrangement of B-4 this is very controversial. Their small area also excludes the possibility of keeping the liturgical utensils (by the way, this is also peculiar of the pedestals in the other churches in sector B), as a rule stored in the prothesis. The two massive pedestals flanking the central altar in B-4 are meticulously shaped, even sculpted like it, of roughly similar shapes, sizes and height, affixed to the eastern wall of the extensive Ω-shaped apse (figs. 5, 24a-c). In that, all three pedestals are clearly visible from the nave of the church. This circumstance makes me suppose that, like the Cappadocian churches of the 8th - 11th

[33] Mathews 1982, 134; Varalis 2006, 282-290.
[34] Teteriatnikov 1996, 41, 58, 80-82.
[35] Teteriatnikov 1996, 42, 48-50, 58, 68-69.

centuries, it is also a question of three altars in Church B-4 in Murfatlar - one central (Eucharistic) and two additional ones on which more secondary services were performed - for the deceased, for the martyrs, saints, etc. And one more argument: it was mentioned above that in the two pedestals in B-4 there are reliquary-shaped boxes, which is peculiar only of the altars, but not for the *prothesis*. It is noteworthy that in Cappadocia the additional altars are also often in the same nave of the church as the central altar (figs. 14, 15, 26).[36] The question of the lateral stone pedestals in the apses of the other churches in Sector B in Murfatlar remains open. I do not exclude the possibility that they (especially in B-1) were also designed as additional altars for "secondary" services. Indeed, their small size and location in the corners of the apses makes them difficult to see from the naves, but the central altars are hardly noticeable too, given the narrow entrance between the nave and the apse. It seems curious that in one of the rock-cut churches on Crimea, for example in the so-called Church "Geography" ("Eugraphia") in Inkerman, the central altar is flanked by two monolithically cut-out pedestals in the corners of the apse in a manner very similar to Church B-1 in Murfatlar (fig. 21).[37] Furthermore, the left pedestal has a recess – a niche, possibly for keeping relics. Even in the above-mentioned rock-cut church from the early 10th century near Krepcha village, considered to have two aisles,[38] we again have two altar tables, and in the southern one (considered secondary?) there is a small reliquary chamber carved into it.[39] At first glance, the parabemas in churches from the second halve of the 9th to the early 10th century in Pliska, Preslav (fig. 28), Ravna, and Chernoglavtsi can be interpreted as additional altars. They are three-apse, respectively with a three-part altar, but the walls between the central apse - the presbytery and the side ones (parabemas) are solid and there are no entrances for communication[40] - minimal is the possibility that the side apses can be defined as a prothesis and a diakonikon - an opinion imposed in Bulgaria almost without alternative.[41] Only T. Smyadovski associates them with an earlier

[36] Teteriatnikov 1996, 23-35, 58.
[37] Mogarichev & Ergina 2023, 27, ris. 39, 41,44.
[38] Kostova 2004, 292-293.
[39] Georgiev 2023, 80-81, obr. 4, 5.
[40] Čaneva-Dečevska 1980, 33-44, fig. 41, 45; Čaneva-Dečevska 1984, 61-63, 112-116, fig. 30, 76; Georgiev 1985, 65-81; Georgiev 2003, 76-77, obr. 2.
[41] Čaneva-Dečevska 1980, 33-44, fig. 41, 45; Čaneva-Dečevska 1984, 61-63, 112-116, fig. 30, 76.

liturgical practice, more precisely with the Syrian liturgy, respectively that of St. Jacob, which was not practiced in Constantinople and the Byzantine cultural circle in the 9th - 10th centuries.[42] As a matter of fact, many Syrian churches from the 5th - 6th centuries have side rooms flanking the apse, which also do not have entrances to the presbytery and are interpreted as a space for treasuring relics.[43] When commenting on the apse and parabemas of the church in Chernoglavtsi from the 10th century, P. Georgiev admits that it may be a question of two additional altars flanking the central - Eucharistic one, in which secondary liturgies were performed, in this case of Apostle Paul and St. Nikolas.[44] Even more, similar practice is found in churches from the 9th century in Constantinople and especially in NEA EKKLESIA erected by Emperor Basil I between 867-880, which had 5 altars to perform services for different saints.[45] At this stage, however, in the early churches in Pliska and Preslav, respectively those in Ravna and Chernoglavtsi, where the walls between the presbytery and the parabemas are solid, we have no archaeological traces of additional altar tables, which are clearly visible in the Murfatlar churches. Therefore, their eventual presence in these churches remains a possible but unproven hypothesis.

And yet, the question of the location of the protheses in the Murfatlar churches remains open. Especially in church E-3 there is a small separate room, north of the nave, which also communicates with the narthex. There a small Γ-shaped pedestal was formed in the southwestern corner (figs. 10, 11, 25b). I have an assumption that this is the prothesis of the central monastery church in sector E.[46] The other churches lack similar premises. However, church B-1 contains a hewn monolithic rectangular pedestal 0.58 x 0.45 m in size, located in the northeastern corner of the nave, whose height of 0.65 m excludes the possibility that it was intended for seating (for the individual chairs in the naves below) and we can assume it was used for a prothesis (figs. 2, 22). It is possible that the block in the southeastern corner of church B-

[42] Smjadovski 1976, 33-34; Smjadovski 1983, 11-12.

[43] Donceel-Voüte 1991, 198, note 85; Patrich 2006, 84, 386-392.

[44] Georgiev 2003, 76-77, fig. 2. This practically means that the church may be earlier than the time of Tsar Peter I (927-969), because with the introduction of the Constantinople liturgy in the early 10th century (Smjadovski 1976, 34-36), the presbytery and parabemas are connected with entrances, and in the earlier churches (for example, Avradaka - fig. 28b), entrances are additionally carved into the solid walls separating them (Čaneva-Dečevska 1980, 33-44, fig. 41, 45).

[45] Magdalino 1987, 56-57.

[46] Atanassov 2023, 103, obr. 90, № III.58.

2 played the same role (fig. 3), but the collapsed walls and installations do not allow us to determine the height. A similar pedestal with measures 1.50 x 0.85 x 0.55 m is present also in the southeastern corner of the nave in church B-3 (fig. 4), which implies prothesis as well. For the largest church – Catholicon B-4, registering a prothesis in the nave is problematic. Only by the northern wall to the left of the entrance to the burial chamber there is a hewn oblong "bench" about two meters long, about 0.30 m wide and about 0.50 m high (figs. 5, 24d). At first glance, it seems like a bench to sit on, but the possibility of being a prothesis should not be completely ruled out. True, this pedestal is longer, but it is located in the largest and most visited church, including by lay persons, which implies more offerings, for which a larger area of the "table" is needed.

Here we can add the benches carved in the naves and narthexes of the churches in Cappadocia[47] and Murfatlar (in B-1, B-2, B-3 and B-4), mainly near the northern and southern walls, but sometimes also near the western one. In Cappadocian churches, individual seats around the eastern wall of the nave are also recorded, intended for representatives of the supreme clergy and high dignitaries and donors.[48] It can be hypothetically assumed that the small stone pedestals in the eastern corners of the narthex in B-1 (fig. 2) and those flanking the entrance to the apse in B-2 (fig. 3) had the same function.

Noteworthy is the fact that more than 20 (24?) graves were discovered in the monastery in Murfatlar (figs. 5-7, 10), including of several women and children.[49] At first sight this circumstance is unusual for a monastery, even more so a rock-cut one (!), given the ban on female burials in monastic abodes, already imposed by novel 133 and canon 47 of the Justinian Code adopted at the Trullan Council (Quinisext Council) in the late 7th century.[50] Nevertheless, special attention was paid to exceptions in Cappadocia and Murfatlar in the 10th century, where special tombs were set aside for noble ladies if they were donors to the monastery or had relatives among the monastic community. It has also been proven that the monastery was undoubtedly a popular destination for many pilgrims, as evidenced by numerous graffiti.[51] It is remarkable that burials of women, children and

[47] Teteriatnikov 1996, 102-110.
[48] Teteriatnikov 1996: 113-116, 122-123
[49] Damian *et al*. 2009, 117, 126-131.
[50] Popkonstantinov & Kostova 2003, 269.
[51] Kostova 1966, 149-172.

even families are also recorded in Cappadocian monasteries, often accompanied by epitaphs. These were definitely donors or persons of great authority.[52] There, special attention is paid to the fact that carving rock monasteries require resources and without the help of the secular society this can hardly be accomplished. In comparison, in the rock-cut hermitages from the 10th century along the Kanagyol River, the stone-working operations are much more limited and in most cases they are within the capabilities of a group of monks without external help. I have already indicated that only the so-called Gargeshka Church near the town of Alfatar, like the churches in Murfatlar, was probably carefully carved with the cooperation of the inhabitants of the nearby fortress in the Suha Cheshma area.[53] The epitaph on the wall of the St. Symeon the Stylite Church from the early 10th century in Cappadocia is indicative in this sense, testifying that the monk had prepared his grave before his death: *Until I am alive I dig this burial cave; receive me, O tomb...!.*[54] The extensive life of St. Kliment of Ohrid also points out that when he died on July 27, 916, his body was laid to rest in the monastery he had built in Ohrid: "*...in a grave that he himself, with his own hands, prepared to the right wall of the front part of the church*."[55] In addition to the dating, the practice of hermits preparing their own graves during their lifetime also coincides as graves have been recorded in both cell-mortuary chambers of Nikeatas and Symeon in Cappadocia,[56] as well as of Antonius in Krepcha.[57] Most of the churches and cells in Murfatlar (over 20) and the nearby colony of rock-cut monasteries along the Kanagyol/Dristra River in southern Dobrudja are furnished with burial chambers as well.[58] It is difficult to decipher the meaning of this practice, but it at least shows a disregard for perishability and death, as well as an impatient expectation of the separation of the soul from the flesh and its appearance before the Almighty.

The ways in which these Cappadocian peculiarities show up in the plans and liturgy of the churches in Murfatlar are curious. They

[52] Rodley 1985, 250-253; Teteriatnikov 1996, 179-182, 210.
[53] Atanasov 2007, 187, tabl. XIII.1, XLVI. 122; Atanasov 2023, 227, № V-86.
[54] Jerphanion 1925, 577-580; Restle 1967, XXI, ill. 217; Rodley, 1985, 193-197, fig. 36.
[55] Milev1961,127-130.
[56] Rodley 1985, 88
[57] Škorpil 1914, 102-104; Konstantinov 1977, 19-27.
[58] Barnea & Bilcurescu 1959, 551, 558, fig. 8; Barnea 1981, 86; Damian *et al.* 2009, 117, 126-131; Atanasov 1991, 28-29; Atanasov 1993, obr. 2.6, 4.16; Atanasov 2007, tabl. XLIV. 107, 108; XLV.112; XLVI. 123; XLVII.128.

could come as a result of contacts or movement of the Bulgarian population from Crimea, where Cappadocian influences in church architecture are even more distinct and documented in written sources. In addition, we have already paid special attention to the fact that Bulgarian and foreign sources often talk about the wanderings of monks over great distances and finally, that in the Middle Ages, monks from different ethnicities came to live in monastic abodes together.[59] This can also be seen from the numerous inscriptions in Murfatlar. As a matter of fact, the Old Bulgarian Cyrillic ones prevail - 20, Runic - about 60 and Glagolitic - 2, but there are also 3 Greek inscriptions.[60] In general, pilgrimage is a real opportunity to share liturgical traditions. The historical sources inform us that from the time of St. Basil the Cappadocian monks were frequent pilgrims to the Holy Land and Egypt.[61] Monks from Cappadocia, Asia Minor, and Antioch are also known to have lived and been educated in monasteries in Palestine. For example, from the life of St. Euthymius (5th century) we learn that he accepted into his monastery three Cappadocian brothers who became his disciples. The famous Cappadocian Saint Sabbas, who came to Palestine in 456-7, was trained in the monasteries there and eventually founded his own monastery and typikon. Thus, the travels of the monks and the sharing of traditions by them may have been one of the motivating forces for the liturgical and architectural development of these areas, respectively their transfer and their implantation in the remarkable rock-cut monastery near Murfatlar. Here I will add the thesis that, unlike the West, monasticism in Byzantium and its cultural circle was relatively open, it means not isolated from the outside world, and in that order the monks were connected with the laity (Shreiner 2003, 13-16).[62]

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[59] Shreiner 2003, 13-15.

[60] Barnea & Ștefănescu 1971, 202-221; Beševliev 1977, 50-57; Popkonstantinov 1987, 115-146; Damian *et al*. 2009, 124, notes 46-48.

[61] Teteriatnikov 1996, 74.

[62] Shreiner 2003, 13-16.

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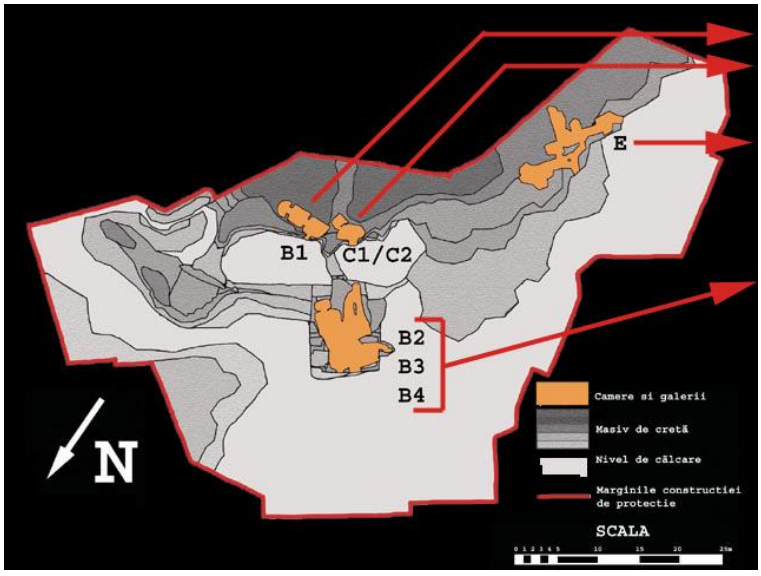


Fig. 1

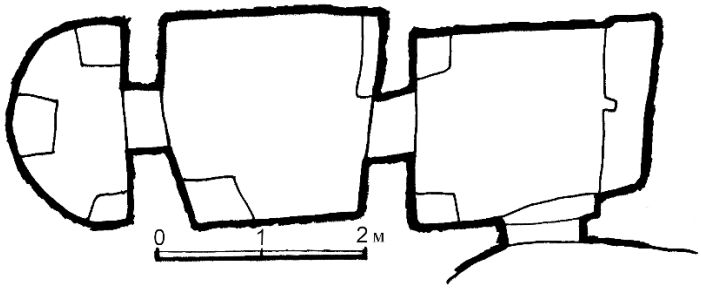


Fig. 2

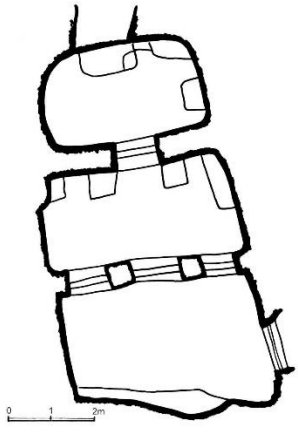


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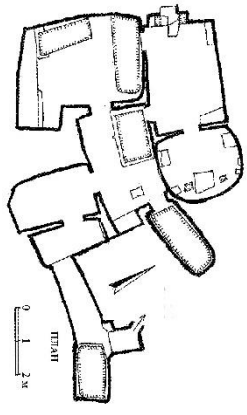


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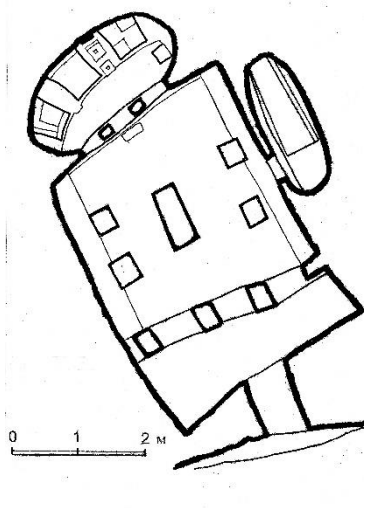


Fig. 5

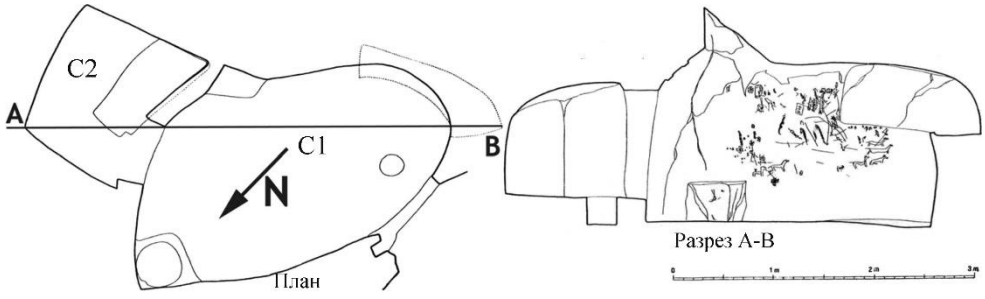


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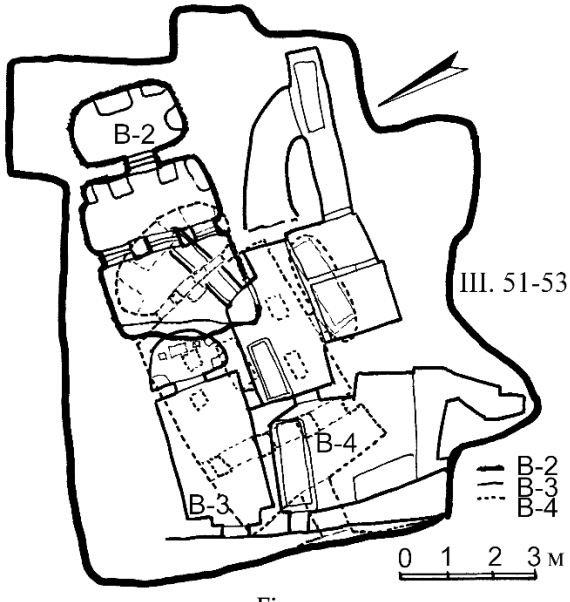


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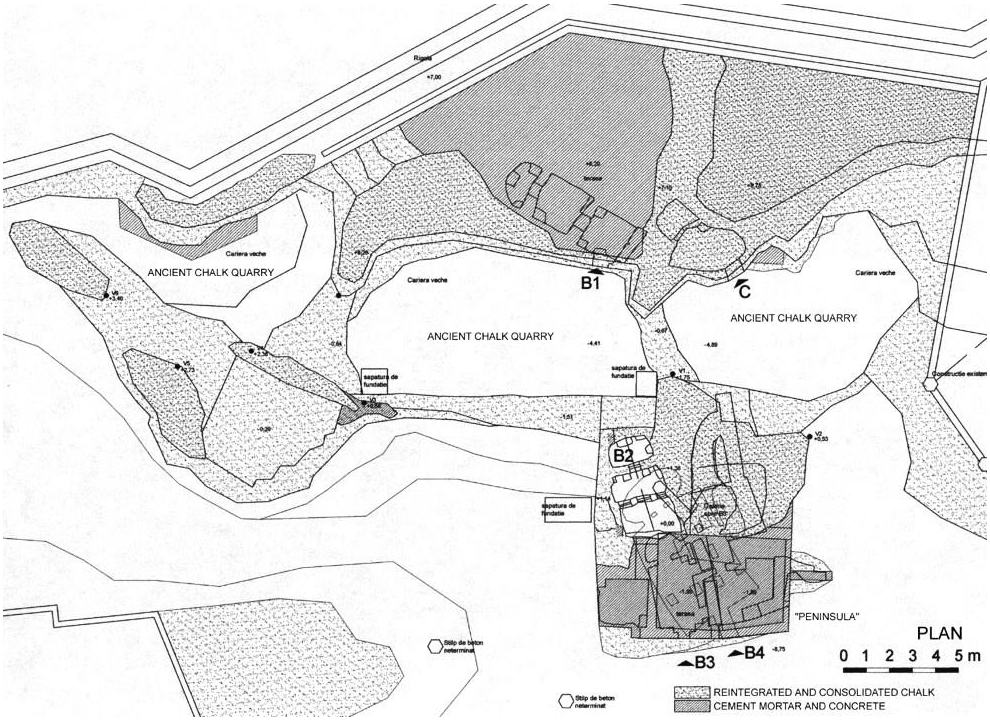

ANCIENT CHALK QUARRY
ANCIENT CHALK QUARRY
ANCIENT CHALK QUARRY
B1
B2
B3
B4
C
"PENINSULA"
PLAN
0 1 2 3 4 5 m
REINTEGRATED AND CONSOLIDATED CHALK
CEMENT MORTAR AND CONCRETE

Fig. 8

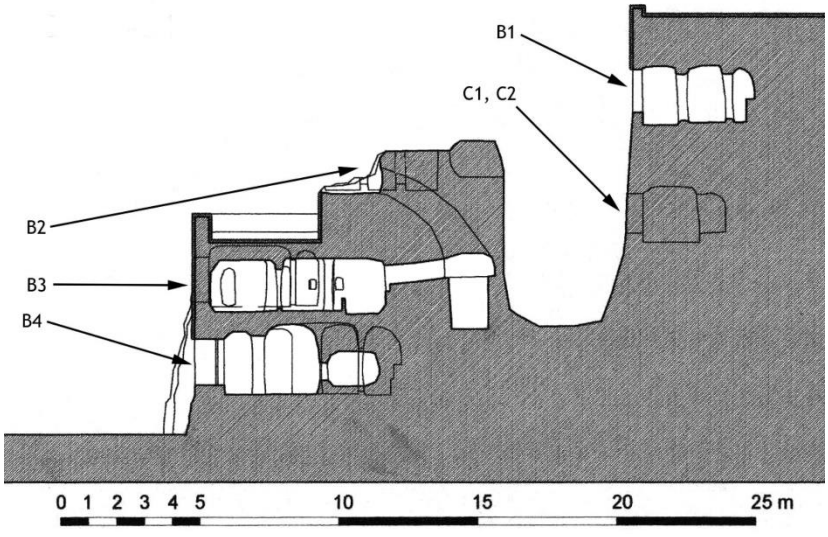

B1
C1, C2
B2
B3
B4
0 1 2 3 4 5
10
15
20
25 m

Fig. 9

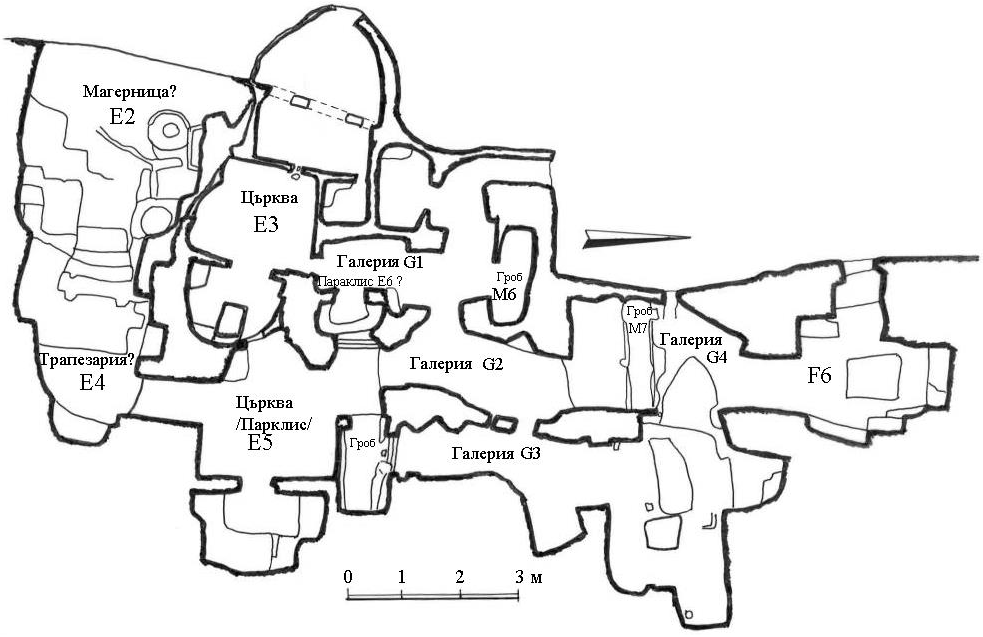

Магерница?
E2
Църква
E3
Галерия G1
Параклис E6 ?
Гроб
M6
Гроб
M7
Галерия
G4
F6
Трапезария?
E4
Галерия G2
Църква
/Парклис/
E5
Гроб
Галерия G3
0 1 2 3 м

Fig. 10

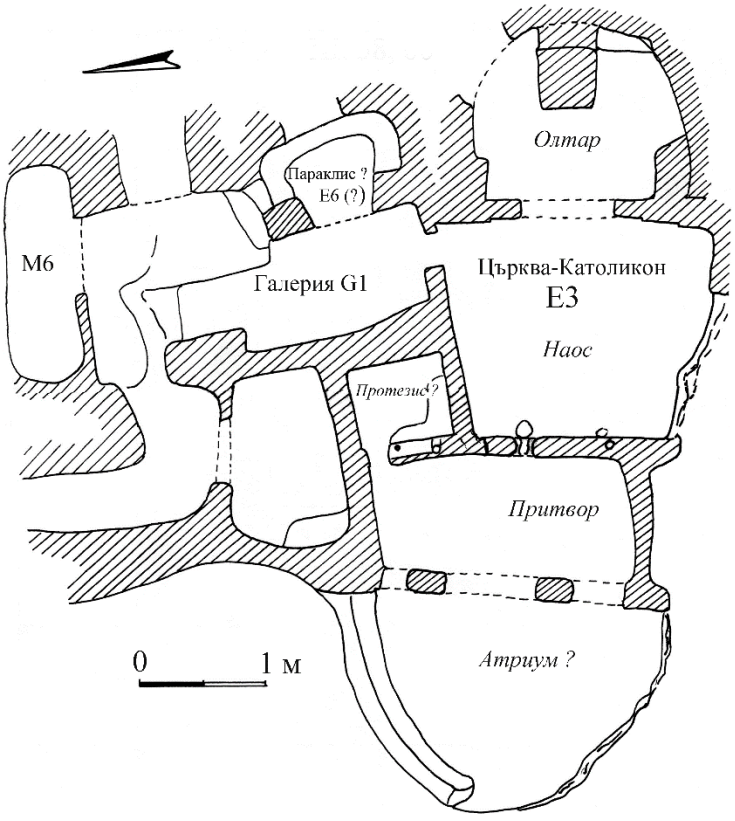

Олтар
Параклис ?
E6 (?)
M6
Галерия G1
Църква-Католикон
E3
Наос
Протезис?
Притвор
0 1 м
Атриум ?

Fig. 11

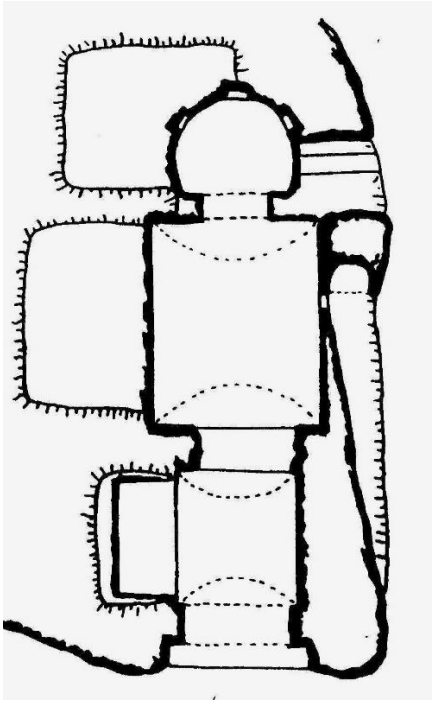


Fig. 12

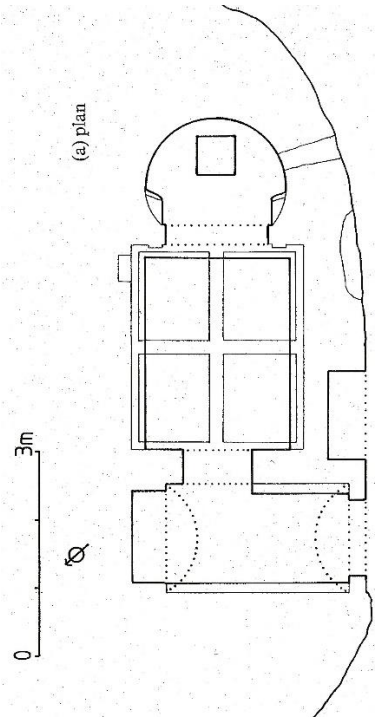


Fig. 13

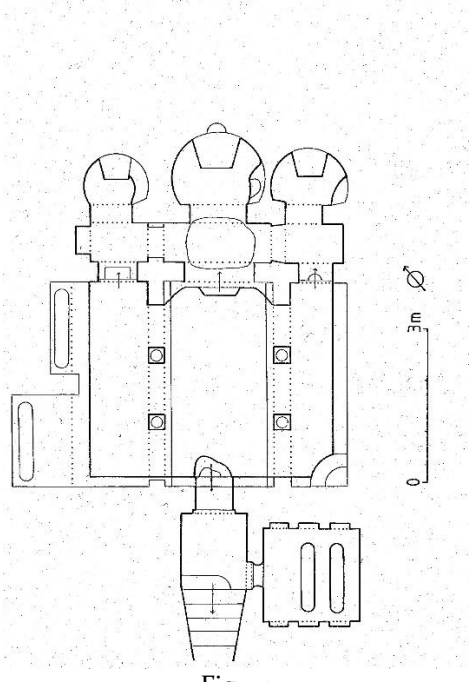


Fig. 14

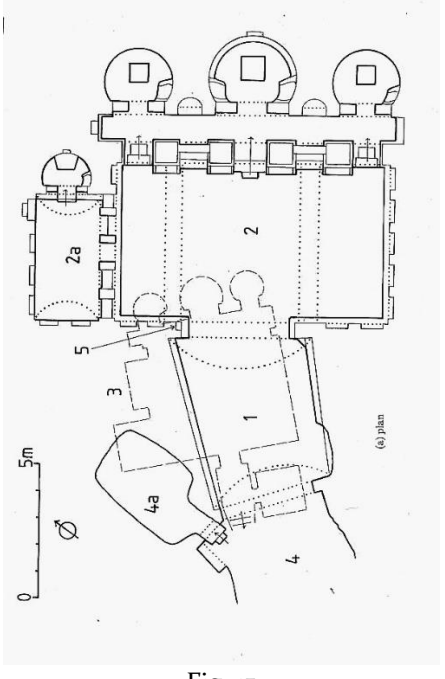


Fig. 15

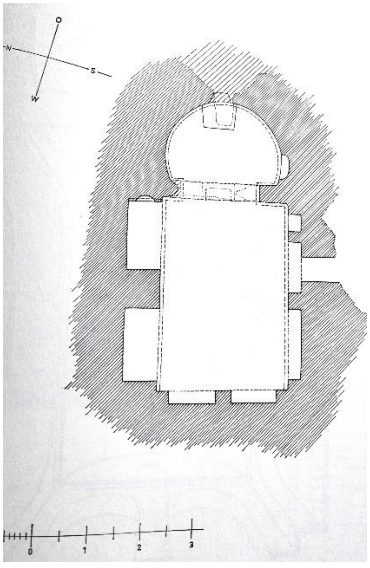


Fig. 16

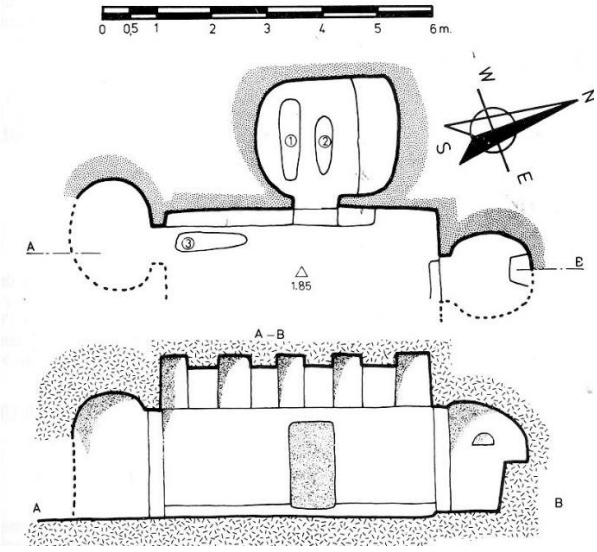


Fig. 17

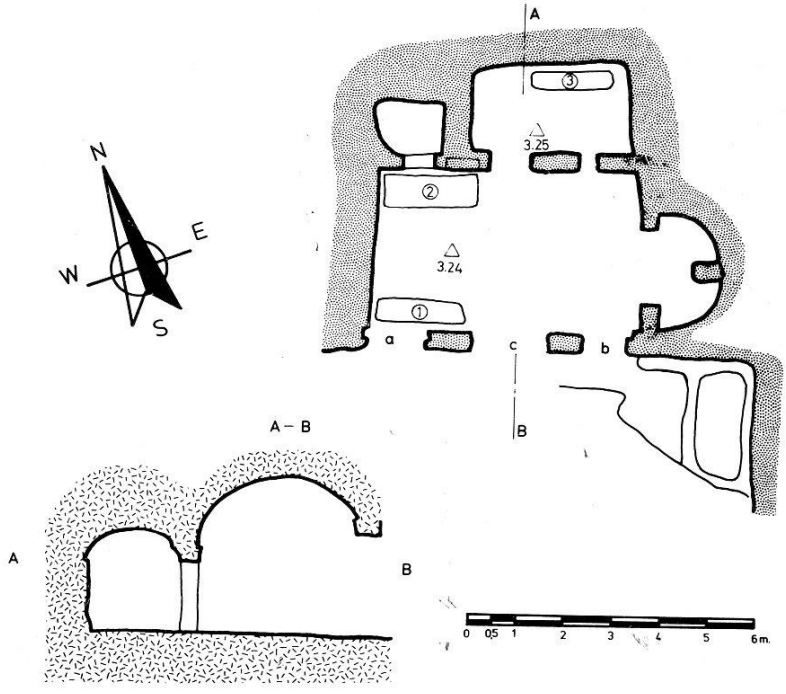


Fig. 18

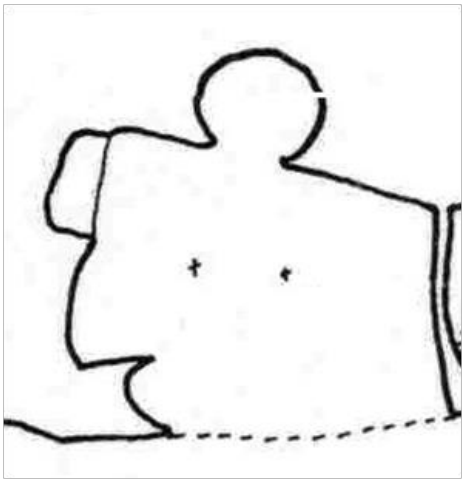


Fig. 19

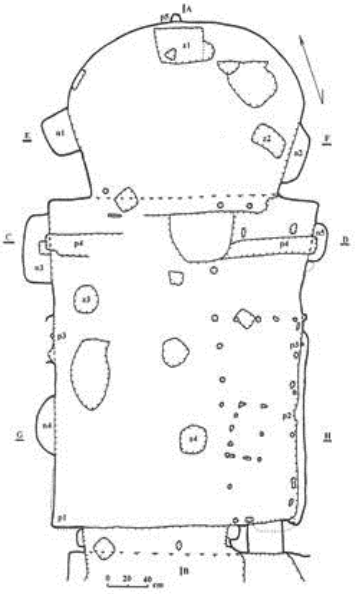


Fig. 20

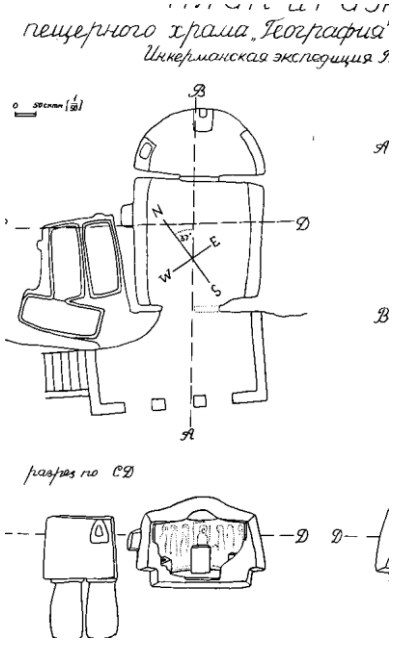


Fig. 21

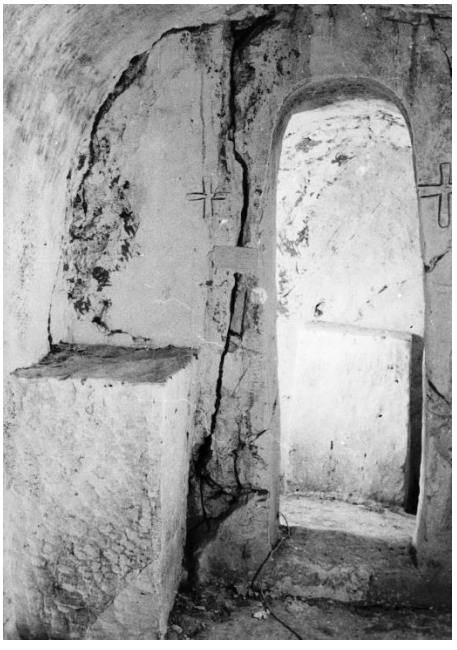


Fig. 22



Fig. 23a



Fig. 23b



Fig. 23c

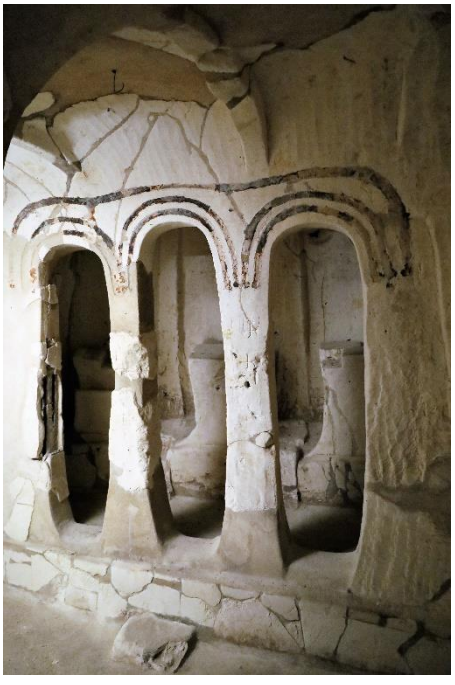


Fig. 24a

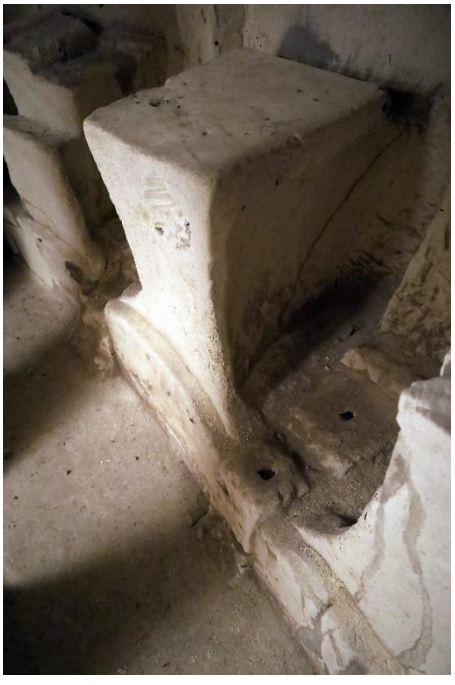


Fig. 24b



Fig. 24c



Fig. 24d

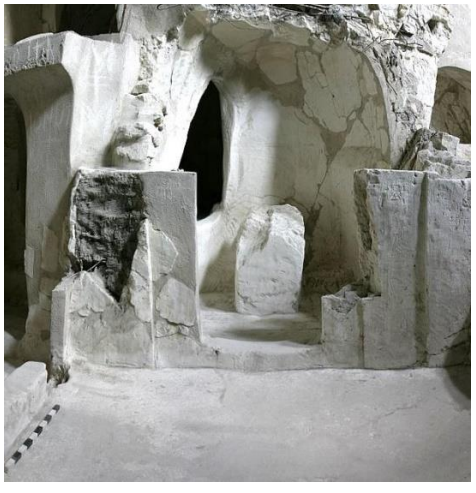


Fig. 25a



Fig. 25b



Fig. 26

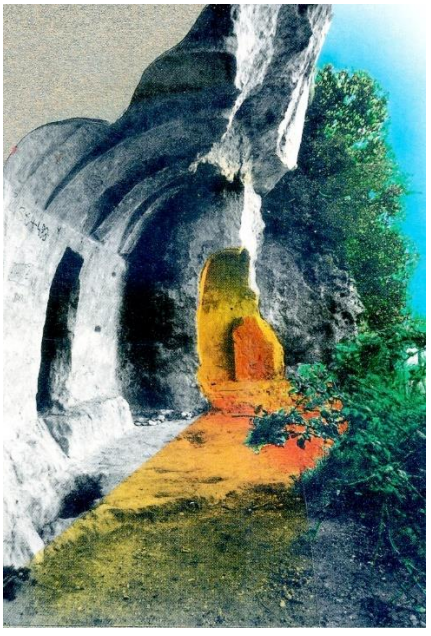


Fig. 27

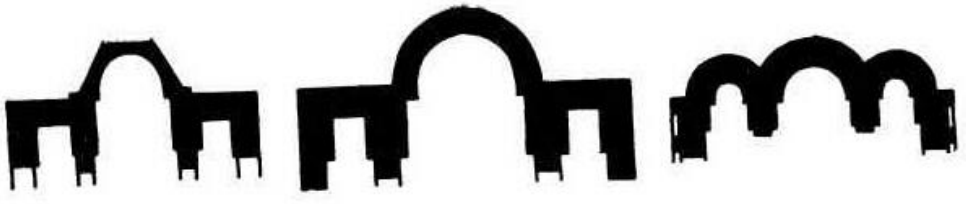


Fig. 28a

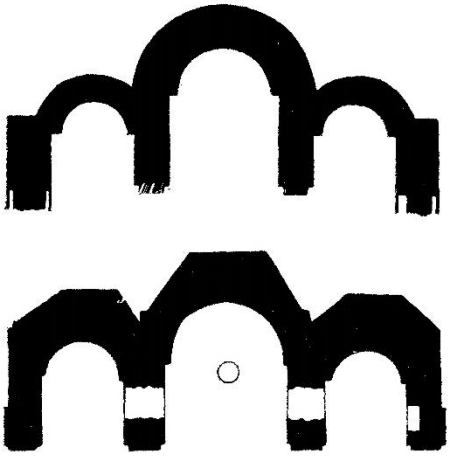


Fig. 28b

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Early Slavic pottery from Ivancha? Possible solutions

Galina Grozdanova, Deyan Rabovyanov

Abstract: In 2019-2020, during rescue archaeological excavations near the village of Ivancha, municipality of Polski Trumbesh, part of an early medieval settlement was uncovered. The present study focuses on three specific features where handmade pottery was found. Through detailed analysis, the chronology of the ceramics is determined in the period after the beginning to around the middle of the 7th century, i.e. the first half of the 7th century AD. The ceramic complex shows diverse cultural influences typical for Romanian Walachia, which is suggested to be the output area of the settlers. These archaeological finds are an important step in our comprehensive understanding of the chronology and cultural interactions of the Lower Danube region in the 7th century and the early years of the First Bulgarian State.

Keywords: early Slavs, Lower Danube, handmade pottery, chronology, cultural interactions

Резюме: През 2019-2020 г. при спасителни археологически разкопки край село Иванча, община Полски Тръмбеш, беше разкрита част от ранносредновековно селище. Настоящото изследване се фокусира върху три конкретни структури, където е открита ръчно изработена керамика. Чрез детайлен анализ хронологията на керамиката се определя в периода след началото до около средата на VII в., т.е. първата половина на VII в. Керамичният комплекс показва различни културни влияния, характерни за румънска Влахия, която се предполага, че е изходната област на заселниците. Тези археологически находки са важна стъпка в цялостното ни разбиране на хронологията и културните взаимодействия в района на Долния Дунав през VII век и първите години на Първата българска държава.

In 2019-2020, because of the construction of the route of the Northern Highway Gas Pipeline, rescue archaeological excavations were

conducted near the village of Ivancha, Veliko Tarnovo region.[1] The site is located 1.6 km, 125˚ SE from the center of the village, on a high terrace, between two streams (fig. 1). On an area of about 20 hectares, a settlement of EBA, LBA, EIA, the First Bulgarian State and the Ottoman period is registered. The terrain is used as an arable field.[2]

Early medieval features were uncovered in the Eastern sector of the site in 2019 and very few in 2020, as well as in the Western Sector in 2020. The distance between the two sectors is approximately 1.5/1.6 km, and it could be suggested that they belong to separate, nearly located settlements. In the E sector, 9 dug-in dwellings, 1 ground structure, 8 heating facilities and 5 pits were studied. The two cases of overlaying features that were documented allow to conclude that the occupation on the site lasted for a relatively long period of time.

No superpositions of the early medieval features were registered in the W Sector (fig. 2). Here, 7 dugouts with stone stoves, 5 household ovens and 3 pits have been unearthed. It is assumed that the excavated sector lies in the southwestern periphery of a settlement that stretches further to the northeast along the steep bank of the stream.

The subject of the present study are the features 16, 19, 41 in particular, situated in the Western sector. They are grouped around two clusters. These are dug-in quadrangular buildings, probably used for residential purposes. One of them is equipped with a clay stove in the NE corner, the outlines of which do not go beyond the boundaries of the dwelling, and the others – with stone heating devices, also in the NE corner (fig. 3-5).

The pottery from these unearthed dwellings was hand made, from coarse, unrefined clay. In addition to the large-sized inorganic impurities of limestone, quartz and pebbles, there are also traces of organic admixtures in the paste. It was fired at a low temperature; the surface is porous and very crumbly. The color after firing is light yellowish to grayish brown, the core is dark gray.

The vessels are thick-walled. The shapes belong to pots and one baking plate/ pan (fig. 6-8). The mouths are slightly curved outwards, with rounded, simply shaped rims. Two of the vessels had relatively long necks (fig. 8). The bases are heavy, massive, convex in profile (fig. 7). Most fragments are not decorated. There are two types of decoration:

[1] The excavations were directed by Assoc. Prof. Dr. D. Rabovyanov (National Archaeological Institute with Museum – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences).

[2] Rabovyanov *et al*. 2020, II, 1242 – 1245; Rabovyanov *et al*. 2021, II, 1151 – 1155.

incised (feature 16) and finger impressions (applied with thumbs?) along the periphery of the mouth rim (feature 41). The incised decoration is shallow and carelessly applied. It is a combination of bands of wavy and horizontal lines, found in Feature 16, on 10 sherds belonging to the same pot (fig. 6).

The only vessel thrown on a wheel was found in the fill of Feature 41. It is made of sandy clay with gray color (10YR 5/2 Munsell – grayish brown) after firing. It is assumed to belong to a storage vessel (container) with almost vertical walls. The decoration consists of single incised and horizontal lines (fig. 8).

Several sites with similar ceramic repertoire, traditionally defined as culture I in the scientific literature, are known south of the Danube. The chronology and the related question about the origin of the pottery from culture I/ the Popina – Garvan group are still open to discussion. Two theses have been proposed for the initial dating of handmade pottery: 6th – the beginning of the 7th century and/or the second half of the 7th century – the beginning of the 8th century, the latter being more convincing.[3] The specifics of the features containing handmade ware are not sufficiently clarified.

The profiles of the above-described fragments from Ivancha are comparable to the latest phases of the Early Slavic ceramics; that means not earlier than the end of the 6th – the beginning of the 7th century.[4]

Among the main characteristics of the pottery repertoire is the ornament with finger impressions (alveoli) along the rim. It was distributed in a culturally diverse environment between the Carpathians, Lower Danube and Dnieper. Its origin is associated with the eastern nomads from the end of the 6th – 7th centuries.[5] Several types of rim decoration (Zierrandgefässe) are defined that could be a result of assumed chronological difference.[6] The examples from the Balkans are concentrated in two groups of sites: belonging to the latest layers of the early byzantine fortifications and in the open-air, multi-layered settlements and cremation cemeteries. This kind of decoration

[3] Vazharova 1965, 159; Vazharova 1976, 417; Vazharova 1986, 70-72; Koleva 1992; Angelova 1997, 499-500, 505; Grozdanova 2018.
[4] Elinkova 2015, 121; Fusek 1994, 103-106; Fusek 2015.
[5] Vida 1999, 138-143; Prihodnyuk 1998, 66; Stanciu 2015, 177, ref. 31; see also Curta 2001, 291-294, fig. 69; Curta 2002 – raises doubt about.
[6] Rafalovich 1972, 149; 161-162; 166; pic. 26, 28; Vida 1999, 138, 142-143.

was found in Dulceanka II, in dwelling 2 from the 6th century,[7] Ciurel,[8] Bucharest-Militari, Dodești, Hansca, etc.[9] Dated to the end of the 6th – the beginning of the 7th century are the finds from the Lower Danube centers like Dinogetia, Kapidava and Tomi,[10] as well as in the Iron Gate area: Kolut-Ritska-dolina and Apatin.[11] The examples from Caričin Grad show the use of similar ceramics no later than the first quarter of the 7th century AD.[12] In the cremation graves at Olympia, Peloponnese, such rim decoration can hardly be narrowed down within the 7th century.[13]

The latest examples of this ornament and the ceramic complex as a whole along the lower Danube have to be considered in the settlements and cremation cemeteries near the villages of Popina, Silistra region, Staro selo, Yurta locality,[14] Garvan,[15] Nova Cherna,[16] Kalenik.[17] All of the mentioned sites are multi-layered with numerous features belonging to the period of the First Bulgarian State.

The ornament with finger impressions is common for the pottery of Hlincha and Luka Rajkovecka types.[18] There is no evidence to suggest it was applied in the Balkans after the end of the 7th century, although in other areas between the Dnieper and the Carpathians, this rim decoration is found in 8th century contexts.[19]

Another feature of the handmade pottery from Ivancha to be highlighted are the long necks of some of the vessels. This feature is also observed in the context of the material from Yakimovo – Valchedrum.[20] Similar profiles are known in the repertoire of the settlements from the

[7] Dolinescu-Ferche 1986, 131, fig. 8/12; 21.
[8] Dolinescu-Ferche 1979, 211, fig. 13/2, 16/5.
[9] Curta 2001, 291.
[10] Opaiț 2004, 52; Hrisimov 2015, 317, 319, 320.
[11] Radichevich 2015, 288, 300-301; fig. 4.28; 5.13; Jankoviћ & Jankoviћ 1990, 69.
[12] Yankovich 2015, 255-257, pic. 3.8-9.
[13] Vida & Völling 2000; Curta 2002, 97-99.
[14] Vazharova 1965, 72-73, fig. 45; 94, fig. 52, 63; 119, fig. 85.
[15] Vazharova 1986, 12, fig.7; 21, fig. 11; 137, fig. 140; Koleva 1992, Tab. I, fig. 8.
[16] Milchev & Angelova 1971, 26-27; table XV.2; XVI.2; fig. 9.
[17] Unpublished material, excavations of G. Ivanov, I. Cholakov (NAIM-BAS; Ivanov & Cholakov 2021, 1166-1170).
[18] Comșa 1959; Comșa 1972, 23-24, fig.9; Teodor 2003, 91, fig. 12/1,4-6; 13/1,2,8; Telynov 1999, 323, 326; pic. 13.
[19] Bekić 2016, 109; Rafalovich 1972, 149, 165-166; Curta 2002, 96-97; Mihaylina 2007, 27; Bajkai 2016, 242.
[20] Angelova & Koleva 1992, 176.

Ipotești – Candești – Ciurel culture and from the Avar Khaganate,[21] which is an additional indication that the chronology of this pottery should be set after 568, even in the first half of the 7th century, if we consider the so-called "*c*" phase of the settlement near Bratei 1.[22] It has been suggested that these profiles survived from local traditions, while other scholars associate them as imitation of metal vessels, known to the Avar cultural environment.[23] They were common in the 7th century.

The comparison to Ipotești – Candești – Ciurel offers parallels of the wheel-thrown fragment as well (fig. 8). A similar sherd from Dulceanka 1 was defined as locally made amphora because of the quality and the characteristics of the fabric (after Dolinescu-Ferche 1984, fig.12.11). Or it could be assumed also that the fragment belongs to a large container, such as those known from Beroe, Turgshor, etc.?[24]

Following the archaeological field results we could conclude that the excavated features belong to an unfortified, rural settlement. It is located in the hinterland of the Roman town of Nicopolis ad Istrum (already abandoned), not far from the medieval settlement of Styrmen. The character of the settlement agglomeration, consisting of relatively small, closely arranged settlements, also finds parallels in the area N of the Danube River, in the Ipotești – Candești – Ciurel background, where Dulceanka is just one of the examples cited.[25]

Pottery was found in dug-in dwellings. Special attention requires the heating facility (clay oven, built entirely in the outlines of the dwelling) of feature 41, which has no exact analog in the settlements of the Popina and Garvan type, but there are such in the area mentioned above north of the Danube.[26]

Documented contexts are almost exclusively composed of handmade pottery. Important technological specifics are the porous surface and the traces of organic admixtures in the fabric, which are known to exist in the early Slavic settlements of the 6th – 7th centuries in Pannonia and Slovenia.[27] The mouths are everted and unadorned, or their decoration imitates the slow potter's wheel ornamental patterns. Baking pans (plates) appear in the contexts as well. The similar traits

[21] Dolinescu-Ferche 1979, 179-230; Stanciu 2013, 345.
[22] Stanciu 2013, 354, fig. 19.
[23] Yankovich 2015, 275; Vida 1999, 119-128.
[24] Opaiț 2004, 52, pl. 40.6.
[25] Teodor 2004, 405-406.
[26] Dolinescu-Ferche 1984, fig. 2; Curta 2001, 284, fig. 63; Teodor 2004, 407.
[27] Bekić 2016, 100-105.

bear the pottery of phase IIb of Lazuri-Pișcolt horizon in north-western Romania, within which, however, synchronous pottery on a slow wheel is also found. The lack of pottery turned on a slow wheel at the discussed inventories of Ivancha is an important item. This could be interpreted as a mark of archaism, and as far as it is methodically allowed to synchronize the pottery development of the regions nearby – Transylvania for example, the concrete contexts from Ivancha should not be later than the middle of the 7th century.[28] The lower chronological limit of the considered structures could be fixed again by a comparative analysis of the development of Early Slavic ceramics from the neighboring regions. The analogies to the pottery of the latest group C/ phase II of the Prague pottery type, suggest the 7th-century dating.[29] In Dalmatia are distinguished phases of development related to the presence and quantity of the handmade pottery associated with decorated pottery turned on a slow wheel. The latter is defined as emerged in the time of Heraclius, i.e., the first half of the 7th century.[30] Dwelling 5 from the settlement near Višegrad-Krščе, dated to the end of the 6th– the beginning of the 7th century, is considered one of the earliest examples of handmade Slavic ceramics, associated with slow-wheel ceramics with incised decoration and baking plates.[31]

Apart from the features described above, there are two other dug-out dwellings found in the western sector of the studied area (Nos. 5 and 21) that deserve attention. Handmade pottery is also found there, badly fired and crumbly with pebble admixtures but associated with decorated pottery turned on a slow wheel. Features Nos. 5 and 21 are situated next to Features 16, 19, 41, and seem to follow the planning of the settlement and the buildings and equipment already existing. This should be an indicator to assume their proximity in time, and even partial synchronization (fig. 2). At the same time, the technological differences in the pottery inventory should mean that features 5 and 21 arose somehow later than dwellings 16, 19, 41.

Features 5 and 21 show close similarity with the complex from Styrmen, No. 79, where both handmade and decorated wheel pottery is found and is dated to the second half of the 7th century.[32] They probably

[28] Stanciu 2013, 336, 337, 343; fig. 6.
[29] Elinkova 2015, 121; Fusek 2015, 154, pic. 3; Stanciu 2015, 194; pic. 20.
[30] Yankovich 2015, 271.
[31] Yankovich 2015, 266-268.
[32] Kurnatowska 1980, 71-72, Tabl. LIV.

belong to a synchronous stage of settlement development south of the Danube.

The dwellings from Ivancha were discovered within the boundaries of the early medieval settlement, which requires to analyze deeper the settlement chronology. Future studies should answer if the settlements from the Eastern and Western sectors of the Ivancha site were synchronous or successive and what is their chronological difference and upper limits. It is noteworthy, however, that at all the sites of the so-called culture I a later phase of habitation is revealed, which is a solid argument against the thesis of a gap that existed between the phases with pottery by hand and on the slow wheel (culture II).[33] Instead, the efforts should focus to precise their internal chronology. A potential successive development would be comparable to the settlement of Dulceanka IV, one of the rare examples on the Lower Danube, where a 7th century dating is suggested.[34]

The studied pottery from the unearthed features from Ivancha site show diverse cultural influences. Peculiarities are discernible that are not typical for the "certain" Slavic complexes. However, these are definitely traits that differ from the local tradition. The closest and most exact parallels are seen at the settlements of Ipotești – Candești – Ciurel types north from the Danube.

The processing and accumulation of new number of sites with precise field surveys such as Ivancha allows to understand and make more substantiated notes if not conclusions about the chronology and cultural development of the Lower Danube region in the 7th century and the First Bulgarian State, in the initial years of its development.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1. Location and plan of the site. Excavations 2019 and 2020 (map by Plamen Doychev, NAIM-BAS).

Fig. 2. Plan of the Western sector of the site, 2020 (drawing by Plamen Doychev, NAIM-BAS).

Fig. 3. Plan of Features 16 and 19 (drawing by Plamen Doychev, NAIM-BAS).

Fig. 4. Plan of Features 41 (drawing by Plamen Doychev, NAIM-BAS)

[33] Rashev 2008, 28.

[34] Dolinescu-Ferche 1992; Teodor 2004, 411-412.

Fig. 5. Photos of the Features 16 (1), 19 (2), 41 (3) (photo by Plamen Doychev, NAIM-BAS).

Fig. 6. Ceramic sherds from Feature 16 (drawing by Galina Grozdanova, NAIM-BAS).

Fig. 7. Ceramic sherds from Features 16 (II/6-9) and 19 (I/1-5) (drawing by Galina Grozdanova, NAIM-BAS).

Fig. 8. Ceramic sherds from Feature 41 (drawing by Galina Grozdanova, NAIM-BAS).

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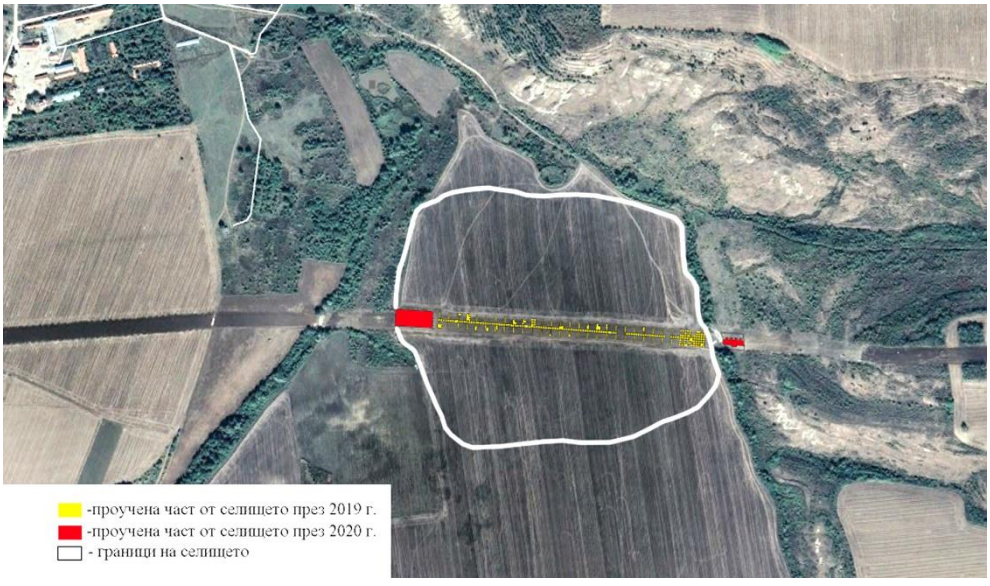

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Fig. 1

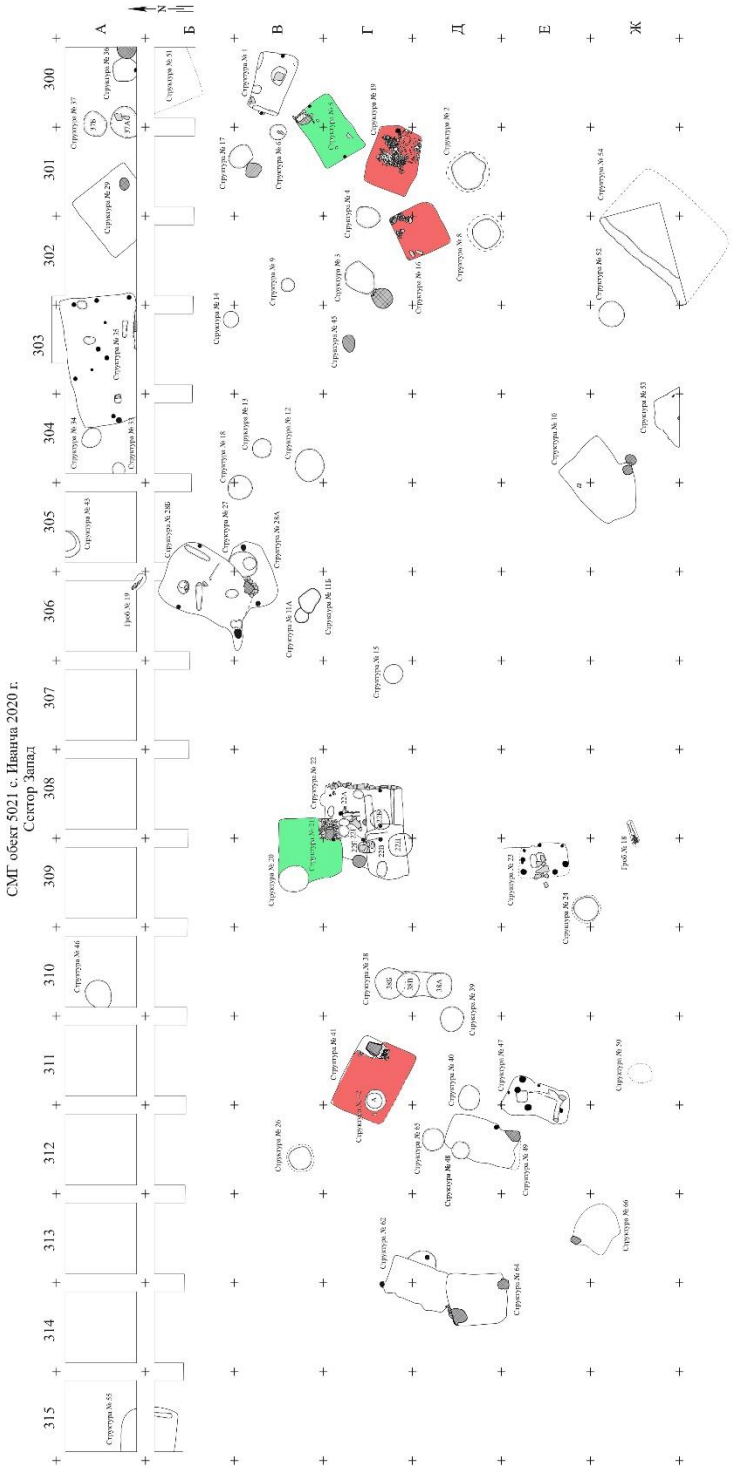

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Fig. 2

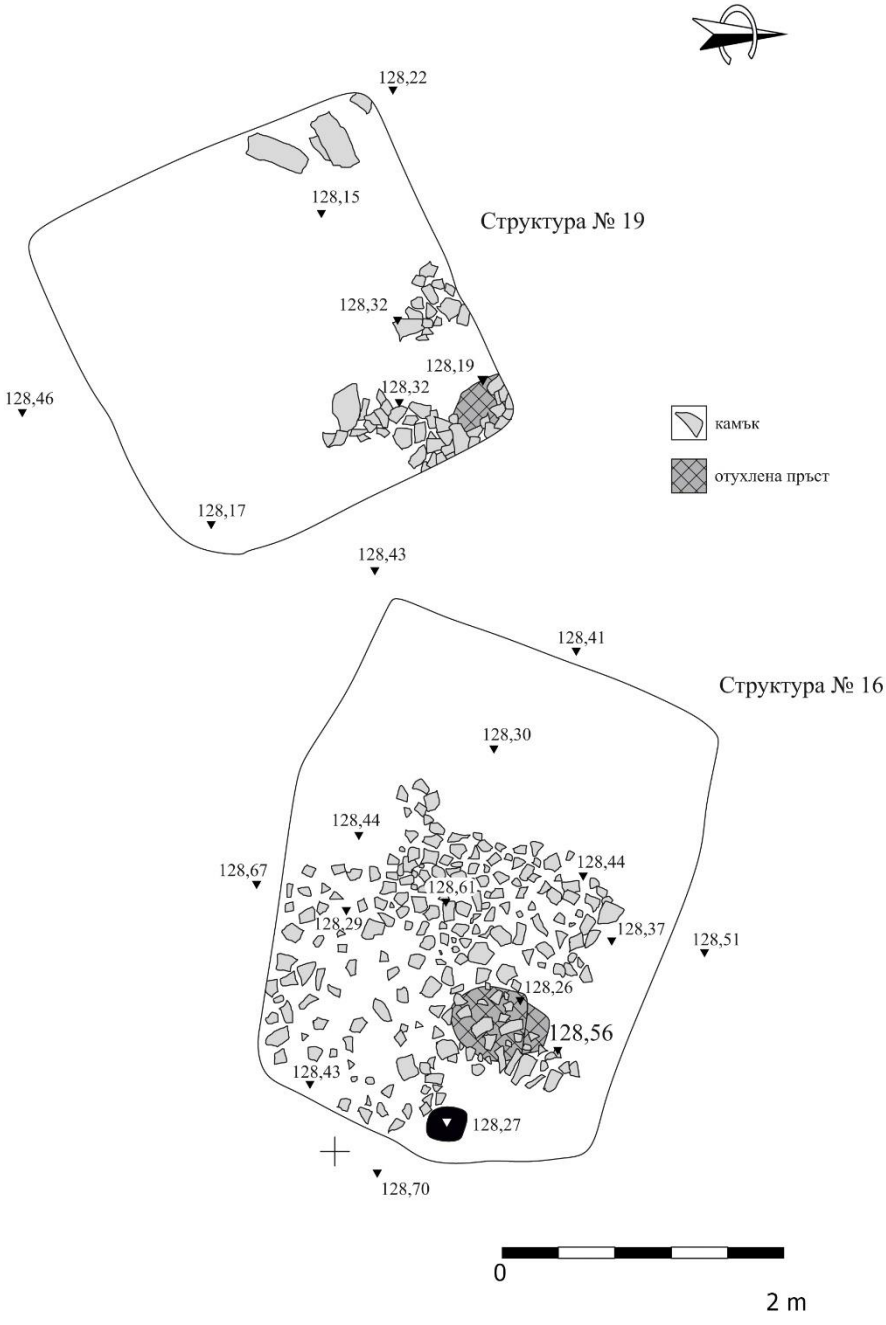

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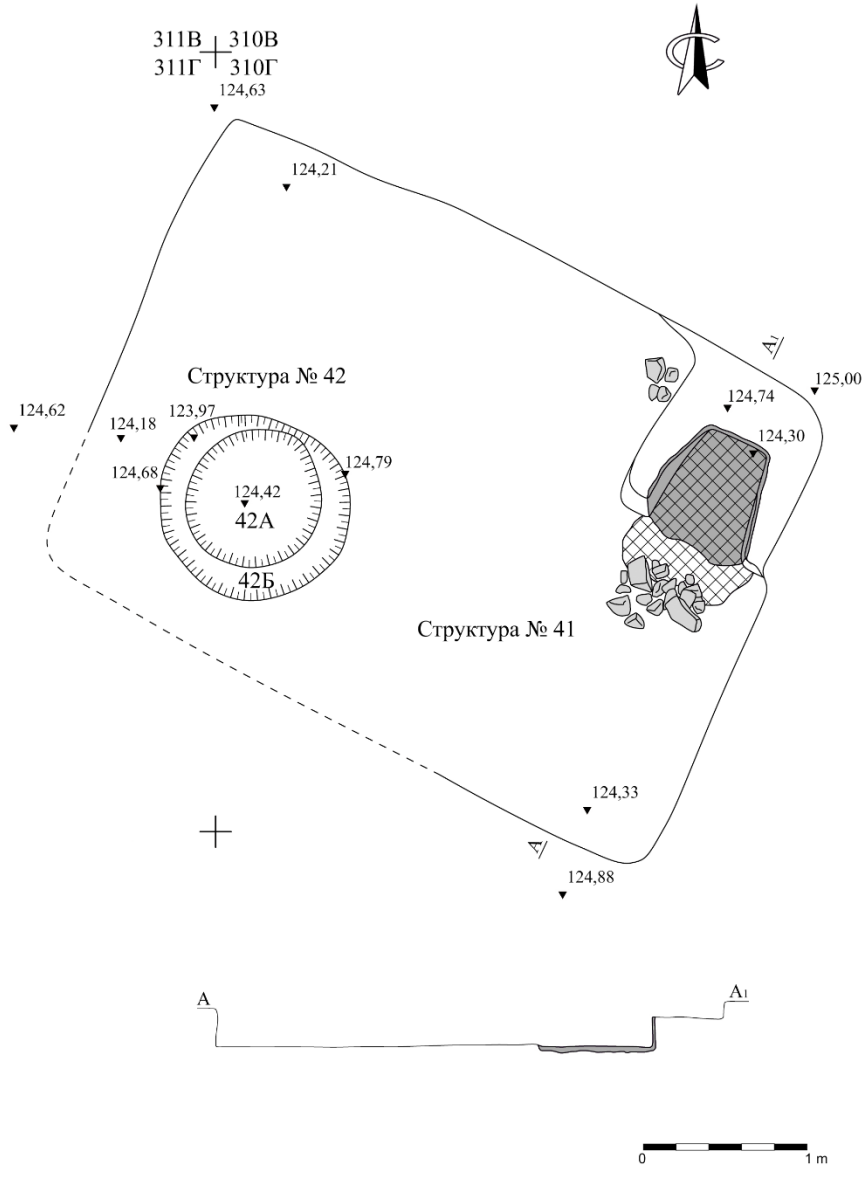

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Fig. 4





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Fig. 5

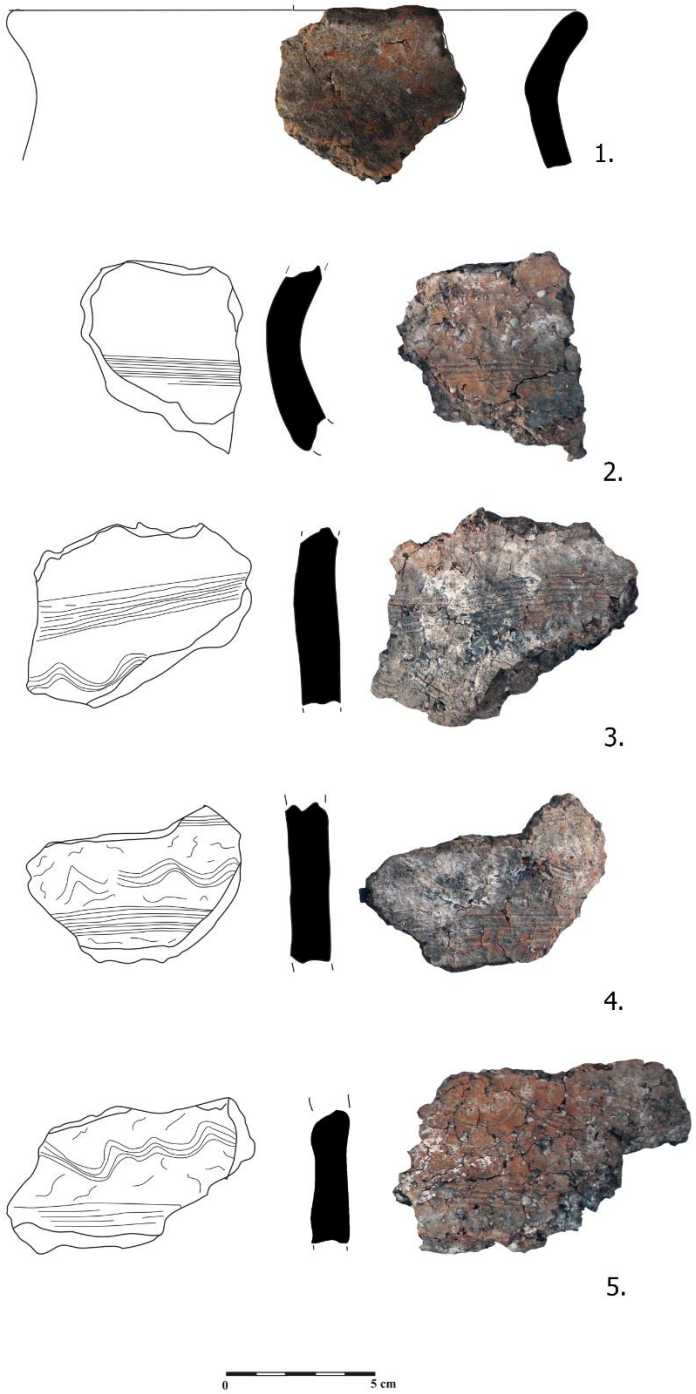


Fig. 6

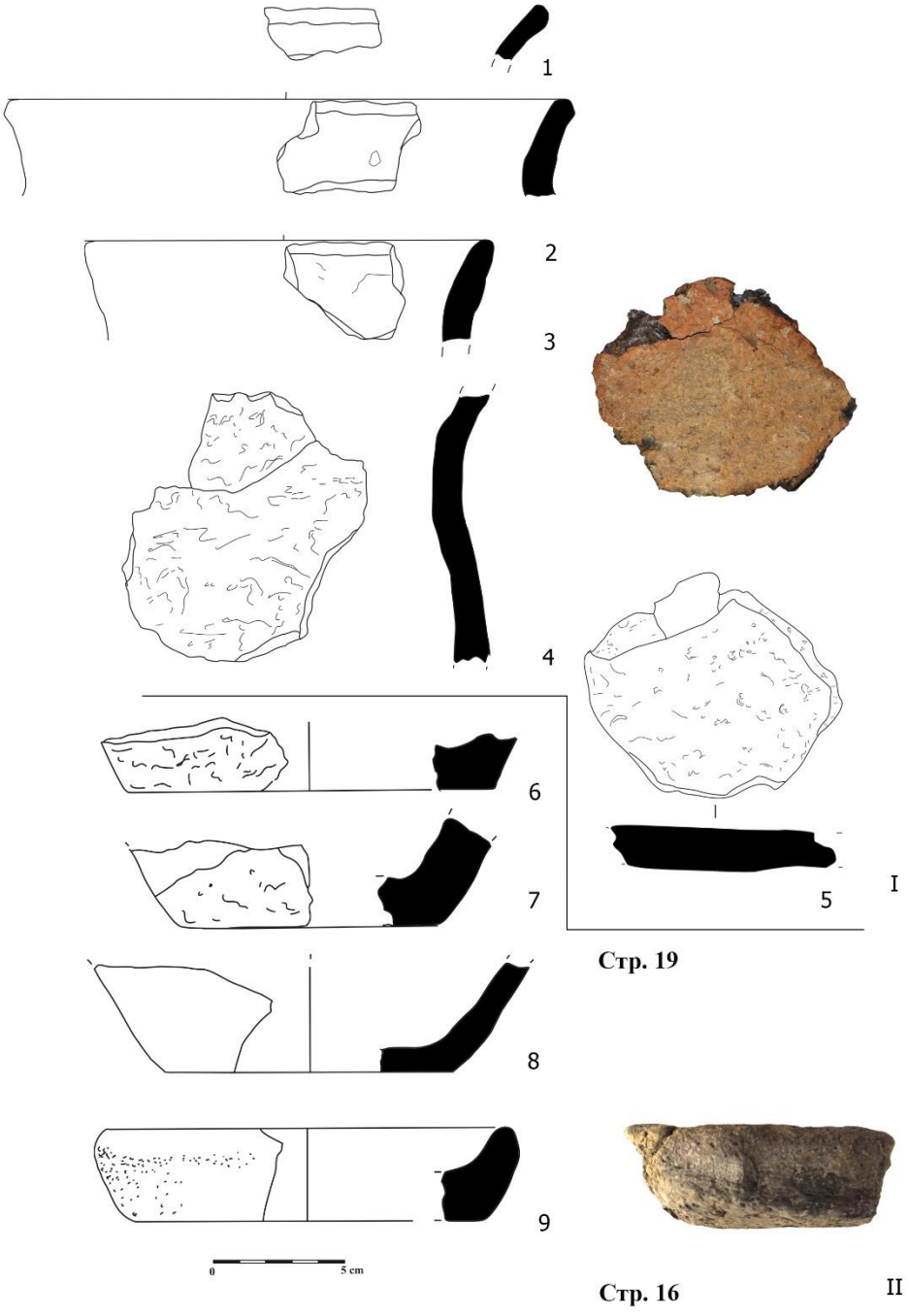


Fig. 7

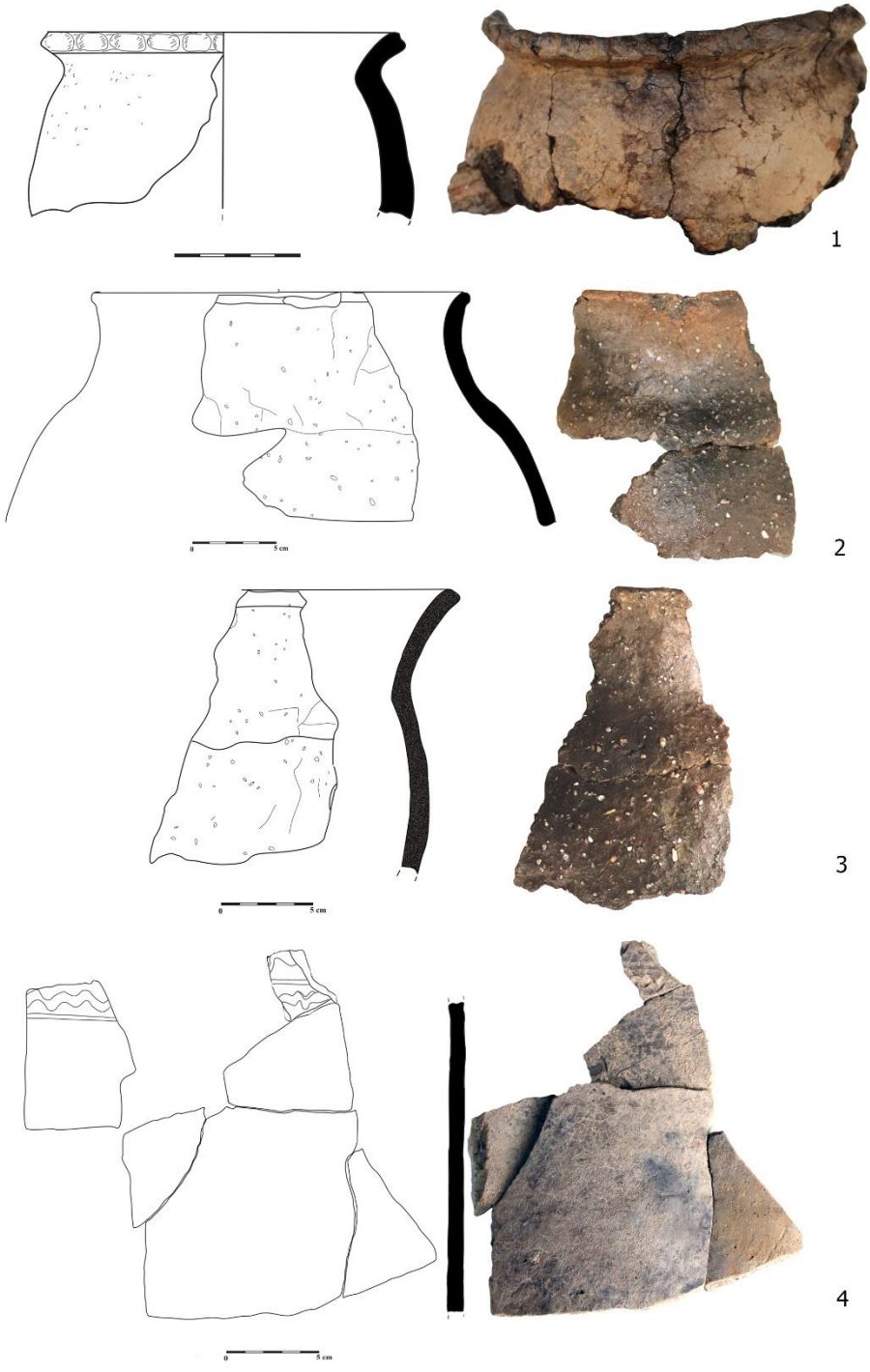


Fig. 8

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Secondary tombs from the early Middle Ages in older tumuli in the Lower Danube area

Boyan Totev, Cristina Paraschiv-Talmațchi, Tiberiu Potarniche

Abstract: In this paper, the authors present three nomadic tombs, secondarily buried in older tumuli, discovered in the territories of Bulgaria and Romania, at different times. Among the analyzed monuments, the most well-known is tomb no. 5, located in the northern part of tumulus no. 3, investigated in the village of Madara (Shumen district), in northeastern Bulgaria. Another secondary tomb, situated on the southern periphery of an ancient tumulus, was discovered near the village of Zlatari (Yambol district), in southeastern Bulgaria, south of Stara Planina (Balkan Mountains) and Sredna Gora Mountains, in the gap between the Sveti Iliyski hills. The last presented tomb was found near the village of Runcu (Constanta County), in southeastern Romania, in the central part of Northern Dobrudja. Tomb M1 represents a secondary burial made near the central part of tumulus no. 15, from the Hellenistic period.

Starting from the presence of a similar indicator for these burials, the belt elements, for which analogs from the Lower Danube are also presented, we assume that representatives of the nomadic aristocracy were buried in the secondary tombs. The contemporaneity of the tombs (with the exception of the tomb at Târgșor, Prahova County) and their territorial distribution may suggest a direct connection between the nomadic aristocracy and the ancient Bulgarian state. However, there is currently no information regarding a unified funerary ritual. On the contrary, the known complexes exhibit differences in essential elements such as burial orientation, types of funerary structures, rituals, funerary inventory, etc. For this reason, ethnic interpretation is currently challenging.

Key words: nomadic tombs, secondary burial, aristocracy, tumulus, Bulgaria, Romania, funeral

Резюме: В статията се представят три номадски гроба, вторично вкопани в по-стари могили. Те са открити на територите на България и Румъния, по различно време. Сред анализираните паметници най-известна е гробница No. 5, намираща се в северната част на могила No. 3, изследвана в с. Мадара (област

Шумен), Североизточна България. Друг вторичен гроб е открит в южната периферия на антична могила край село Златари (област Ямбол, южно от Стара планина и Средна гора, в района на Свети Илийските възвищения. Последния гроб е открит в могила край село Рунку (окръг Констанца), в Югоизточна Румъния, в централната част на Северна Добруджа. Това е вторично погребение, извършено в близост до централната част на могила № 15, от елинистическия период.

Основен хронологически маркер в тези погребения е богато украсения колан. Наличето му е индикатор, че във вторичните гробове са погребани представители на номадската аристокрация и позволява групата да бъде разширена с други паметници от територията на Балканите. Тяхната датировка (края на VII-средата на VIIIв.) и териториално разпределение може да подскаже пряка връзка между номадската аристокрация и древната българска държава. Засега обаче няма информация за единен погребален ритуал. Напротив, известните комплекси показват различия в съществени елементи като ориентация на погребенията, видове гробни съоръжения, ритуали, гробен инвентар и др. Поради тази причина етническата интерпретация в момента е предизвикателство.

The focus of this work is the secondary nomadic burials in older tumuli discovered in the territories of Bulgaria and Romania at different times.

Madara (Shumen district, Bulgaria)

Among the analyzed monuments, the most famous is tomb no. 5 in the village of Madara, in northeastern Bulgaria. It was discovered and investigated in 1935 during emergency excavations to rescue a necropolis from the late Bronze Age or early Iron Age.[1]

Funerary Ritual

Tomb no. 5 was secondarily buried in the northern part of tumulus no. 3 (fig. 1). Initially, at a depth of 0.70 meters, the skeleton of a horse was discovered, placed on its right side, facing north-south. The horse was of a "large breed." The horse's bones were displaced and broken.[2] The most likely explanation for this is the placement of a horse mask in the tomb.[3] Directly below it was the skeleton of a "not very old" man, placed on his back, with his arms stretched along his body (fig. 2), facing the same direction as the horse. Rasho Rashev believes that between the

[1] Mikov 1934, 429.
[2] Mikov 1934, 444.
[3] Komar 2006, 314–315.

two skeletons, a wooden structure supported by so-called "shoulders" was placed.[4]

Funerary Inventory

The tomb's inventory and the elements from the belt, made of gold, have been discussed repeatedly in archaeological literature.[5] However, important aspects regarding the reconstruction of the signs and the ritual remain unclear.[6] The reason for this is the fragmented and confusing position of the belt decorations placed in the tomb (fig. 3/1-5). In our opinion, there were two belts: one with round cabochon-shaped applications and one with hanging belts decorated with granulated belt ends. The belts have not been preserved in their entirety, and the absence of buckles is due to a ritual of deactivation performed during burial. The same practice was applied to the granulated belt ends, where, in our opinion, the silver part was removed, and only the decorated golden parts were placed in the tomb. We also believe that a fragment of a gold chain was deposited at the neck level as a symbol.

A few everyday pieces completed the tomb's inventory: an iron knife, flint, striker, blade and a plate with holes (fig. 3/8-12).

The interpretation of the archaeological complex

The dating of tomb no. 3 has been placed by specialists within the chronological limits of the 7th century. Currently, its cultural and ethnic affiliation is disputed, and the nomadic nature of the complex is not the only hypothesis questioned. However, the interpretation proposed by Rasho Rashev, that this tomb represents the southernmost known representative of the group of tumuli surrounded tombs of Sivashovka type, is indisputable.[7]

[4] Rashev 1993, 52–60.

[5] Stanilov 2006, 34–89.

[6] Daskalov *et al*. 2017, 102–103, no. 41.

[7] Rashev 1993, 55. The Sivashovka burial group is a collection of burials dating from the 6th to the early 8th century, located in the steppe region of Eastern Europe. These burials are primarily concentrated in the lower reaches of the Volga, Don, Kuban, Dnieper, Southern Bug rivers, and the Crimean Peninsula. There are also some isolated tombs found outside this mentioned area. This burial group is named after the village of Sivashovka in the Herson region of Ukraine, where the most characteristic tombs are known to exist (Rashev 2007, 70–117).

Zlatari (Yambol district, Bulgaria)

Another secondary burial in a tumulus was discovered near the village of Zlatari in southeastern Bulgaria, south of Stara Planina (Balkan Mountains) and Sredna Gora Mountains, in the gap between Sveti Iliyski hills. Not far from the village is the tumulus called Dryanazhka. Excavations were carried out on this tumulus during the exercises of the Bulgarian National Army units, which led to the destruction of the funerary structure. From this complex, the buckle and part of the articulated application, which were partially preserved, were handed over for research to Zhivka Vazharova.[8] Unfortunately, these objects were later lost, and only their photographs have reached us.

Funerary Ritual

The tomb was used for the burial of a body and was located on the southern periphery of an ancient period tumulus. The individual's bones buried there have not been preserved, but according to the late Professor J. Werner, it is possible that the burial orientation was north-south.[9]

Funerary Inventory

Both the buckle and the application were decorated with a vegetal motif consisting of symmetrically undulating stems, characteristic of Vrap-Velino type finds (fig. 4). There is no reason to assume that the buckle and the articulated applique were the only elements of the belt placed in the tomb. From the photographs that have reached us, it is clear that these objects were neither restored nor even cleaned before they were lost. In the primary репорт, the finds were presented as being made of gilded bronze. Based on these statements, the opinion was expressed that the belt details from Zlatari are "trees" derived from precious metal objects.[10] The front of the applique is flat and shows no signs of secondary deformation. The breakage edges are sharp and pointed. Such breakages are characteristic of silver objects in which the alloy has lost its plasticity. Among the numerous belt pieces of the Vrap type known to us, none are made of bronze and subsequently gilded in the Bulgarian territory.[11] Only the silver pieces from the tombs of

[8] Vazharova 1981, 53, fig. 24.
[9] Werner 1989, 63, note 182.
[10] Stanilov 1997, 189; 2006, 98; Inkova 2004, 154.
[11] Totev & Pelevina 2010, 68.

aristocrats in the Divdyadovo district and the village of Gledachevo were gilded.[12] It is possible that the belt elements from the tomb near Zlatari were also gilded silver.

The interpretation of the archaeological complex

The funerary structure was probably isolated from the necropolises of the ordinary population. Future research on the tumulus and the area may reveal the presence or absence of other materials from the early Middle Ages. Current data indicate that the buried individual was a high-ranking warrior. What other inventory was placed in the tomb is not known. Probably, the production of the buckle and the applique took place almost simultaneously with the activity of the workshop that created the Vrap-type belt details. According to various researchers, this workshop probably operated in the late 7th or early 8th century.[13] However, for the actual dating of the burial, we suggest a later date, in the first half or middle of the 8th century.

Runcu (Constanța County, Romania)

The village of Runcu is located in southeastern Romania, in the central part of Northern Dobrudja. It is situated near the well-known late ancient fortress Ulmetum, where there is also an early medieval settlement nearby.[14] In 2013, during archaeological excavations conducted 4 km southeast of the village,[15] a mound (tumulus 15) constructed from earth was explored, representing a tumular tomb from the Hellenistic period (fig. 5/1). This was part of a larger necropolis (fig. 5/2).

Funerary Ritual

The primary tomb within the examined funerary structure was destroyed in antiquity and dates back to the 4th century BC, according to ceramic material. Within the same tumulus, two more secondary funerary structures were discovered. Of particular interest to our work is a tomb (M1) found at a depth of 1.20-1.60 meters, near the central part of the tumulus (fig. 6/1).

The tomb pit is large, measuring 2.10 meters in length and a maximum width of 0.90 meters. It narrows down to 0.70 meters at the

[12] Atanasov *et al*. 2008, 61; Daskalov &Tonkova 2010, 81–82.
[13] Werner 1989, 7–104; Daim 2000, 94–106.
[14] Paraschiv-Talmațchi 2013; 2014.
[15] Potârniche 2020, 109–111.

bottom, and it is oriented from south to north, with a slight deviation on the east-west axis.

The tomb pit penetrated through the mantle of the tumulus, stopping at a compacted layer of yellow earth, about 0.64 meters deep. At the bottom of the pit, a skeleton, probably of a man, was discovered, laid on his back with arms and legs extended. The body was enclosed with wooden planks, and the pit itself was significantly larger and longer than the wooden structure. Inside the pit, just below the deceased's head, lay the skeleton of a goat, most likely a sacrificial offering, and on the deceased's pelvis was a flat schist stone (fig. 6/2).

Funerary Inventory

It was found in the lower half of the deceased (fig. 7). In the hip area, a piece of iron that we assumed might be a remnant of a striker (but we're not sure), a silex (flint) and an iron knife were discovered, while between the legs, four silver pieces from a belt (fig. 8/1-4), two iron links (fig. 9/13-14), eight semispherical bronze buttons and a bronze band wrapped and slightly widened at one end (placed around the leg), were found.

The most representative discoveries from the funerary inventory belong to the richly ornamented belt.[16] Its buckle was preserved in a functional state. It is an articulated buckle composed of three parts: a U-shaped plate, a massive tongue, and an arched frame. (All elements of the buckle are decorated, with the decoration achieved through casting. The ornamentation on the plate is particularly distinctive and significant - a openwork palm tree with leaves terminating in ball-shaped tips and a spearhead-like tip inserted between them. The next important element of the belt is the fastening end that holds the tip in a vertical position. Its edges are brought to the back. This part is damaged. The front plate is missing, only the working part is preserved, shaped like a clamp, fixed with belt rivets. Additionally, there is a silver fastener in the shape of a horseshoe, with a smooth face, fixed to the belt with three rivets. The belt was completed with a monolithic silver tip, featuring an elongated shape with a closed cassette-like aspect towards the back. The front part was richly decorated with a double-symmetric openwork palm tree. The closing plate was smooth and remained beneath the main belt. The two parts were glued together, and the belt was additionally secured with two rivets at its base.

[16] Potârniche 2020, 109–111; Paraschiv-Talmațchi 2020, 257–258.

In its current form, the belt is incomplete. It is possible that during the burial, at least some of its elements were separated from the belt and symbolically disassembled.

The other elements, the fragmentary iron striker (fig. 9/1), flint (fig. 9/2), knife (fig. 9/3), and sharpened schist stone, are evidently part of the deceased's everyday inventory, while the semispherical buttons made of thin bronze sheet metal, with a slight flattened border at the base (fig. 9/4-11), are accessories of clothing. The bronze band, like a clamp (7 cm long, maximum width 4 cm, thickness 0.1 cm) had five folds (probably the result of a hammering joint) and was slightly narrower towards the ends, but slightly widened, from a possible link attached to it (fig. 9/12).

The interpretation of the archaeological complex

The belt elements are of particular importance for dating and interpreting the funerary complex. Typologically, they can be attributed to belts without suspended straps, including the buckle, clamp, appliques, hole limiters, and tip. Another characteristic feature is the decoration with an openwork palm tree motif. A similar decoration can be found on belt elements from the Danube Basin. This is known as "Mihelsdorf-Skalistoe"[17] and represents one of the variants of Vrap-Velino type.[18] The fact that this ensemble was not a derivative of a luxury item is evident from its execution quality in a silver alloy. All this indicates a production date in the early or first half of the 8th century. The belt elements show little wear, except for the intentionally damaged clamp. This suggests that the belt was not used for an extended period, and the burial date is probably not much later than its production date. On the other hand, the luxurious execution of this significant artifact indicates that its possessor held a high position in the social hierarchy. This is supported by the funerary ritual - secondary burial in a tumulus, which is not a common practice in the lower Danube region.

It should be emphasized that, apart from the funerary complexes at Madara 2 and especially Zlatari, a very close analog to the complex at Runcu is the secondary tomb at Kabiyuk (Bulgaria). These similarities include a large burial pit, placing the body within a wooden frame, and the positioning of the body in the tomb. They also involve placing

[17] Totev & Pelevina 2001, 88–97.
[18] Totev & Pelevina 2012.

sacrificial food above the head and everyday objects in the chest area, as well as the silver belt of Vrap-Velino type.[19] It should be noted that in the case of the Kabiyuk tomb, we are not dealing with a secondary burial in an older tumulus, but the opposite; the tumulus was intentionally raised after the burial.[20] This significant difference cannot change the essence of the funerary mound concept, which most likely existed in the era when the Bulgarian state on the Danube was established. In fact, the complex at Runcu also presents other analogs, which are the isolated tombs of the nomadic or ancient Bulgarian aristocracy found in Divdyadovo[21] and Târgșor[22] (we specify that the radiocarbon dating for the funerary complex of Târgșor changes the typochronology, lowering the initial dating[23]). However, if we consider the presence of a similar indicator for these burials as aristocratic insignia - the Vrap-Velino type belts, then they can be added to the burials in Gledachevo,[24] Somosheni, and Nova Zagora.[25]

Probably with the exception of the Târgșor tomb, at this stage of analysis, all presented tombs match in terms of chronology and territorial coverage with the existence of the first Bulgarian state on the Danube (fig. 10). However, currently, there is no information regarding a unified funerary ritual. On the contrary, the known complexes exhibit differences in essential elements, such as burial orientation, types of funerary structures, rituals, funerary inventory, etc. For this reason, ethnic interpretation is challenging. Nevertheless, the presence of basic insignia, such as Vrap-Velino type belts, allows us to assume that representatives of the **nomadic aristocracy** were buried in secondary burials, suggesting a direct connection between the nomadic aristocracy and the ancient Bulgarian state.[26] Additional, albeit not very clear, information about the construction (or use) of tombs in the Bulgarian state on the Danube is provided by Pope Nicholas I's letters to Prince Boris,[27] the anonymous apocryphal account naming the first Bulgarian ruler on the Danube a "king with ten insignias",[28] Omurtag's

[19] Rashev 2008, 578, pl. CXXV; Rashev *et al*. 2014, 103, fig. 35.
[20] Rashev *et al*. 2014, 26, fig. 10; Georgiev 2018, 37, fig. 3g.
[21] Atanasov *et al*. 2008, 59.
[22] Diaconu & Diaconu 1962, 165–171, fig. 3/1.
[23] Gall *et al*. 2023.
[24] Daskalov & Tonkova 2010, 78–102.
[25] Borisov 2012, 58–60, fig. 1a.
[26] Totev & Pelevina 2011, 32–52.
[27] Duychev *et al*. 1960, 21.
[28] Argirov 1989, 266.

inscription about his glorious tomb, and even the later names of Ludogorie and Dobrudja's territories – "one hundred mounds".[29]

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Fig. 1. Mound III plan and section, Madara: 1 – Mound III plan; 2 – Mound III section (Mikov 1934, fig. 290).

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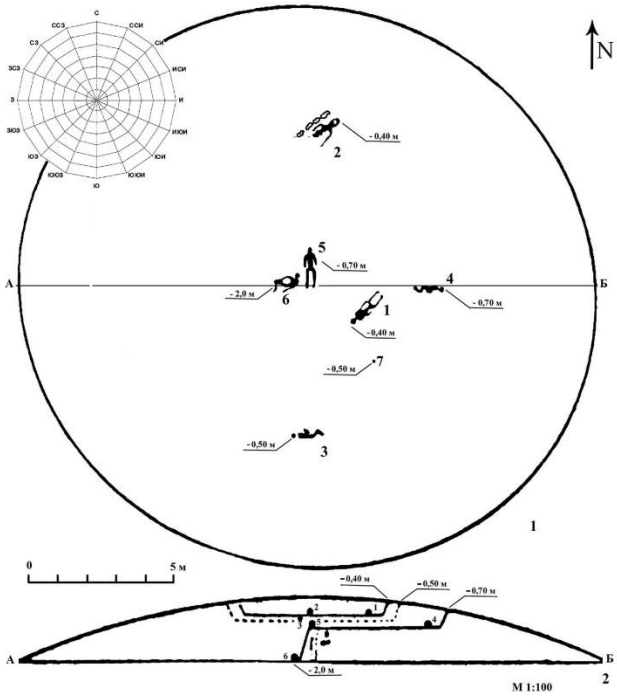

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- 0,70 м
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7
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Fig. 1

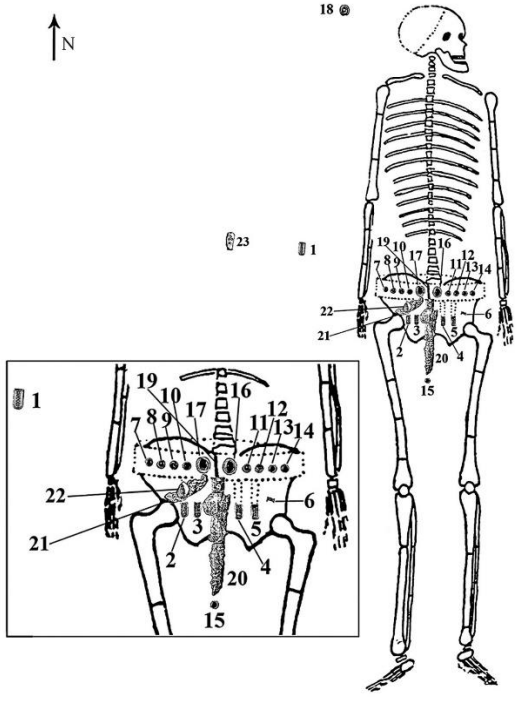

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Fig. 2

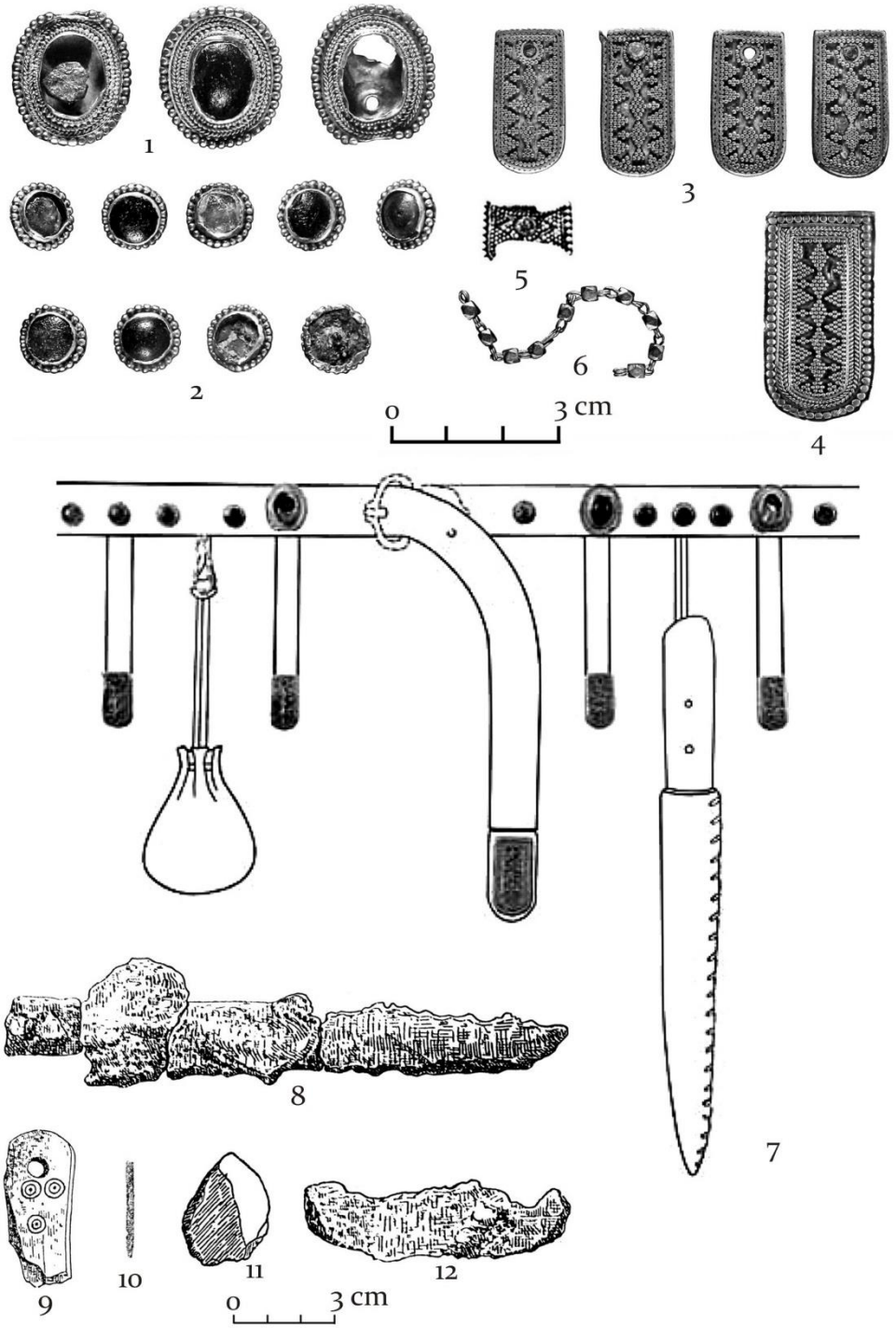


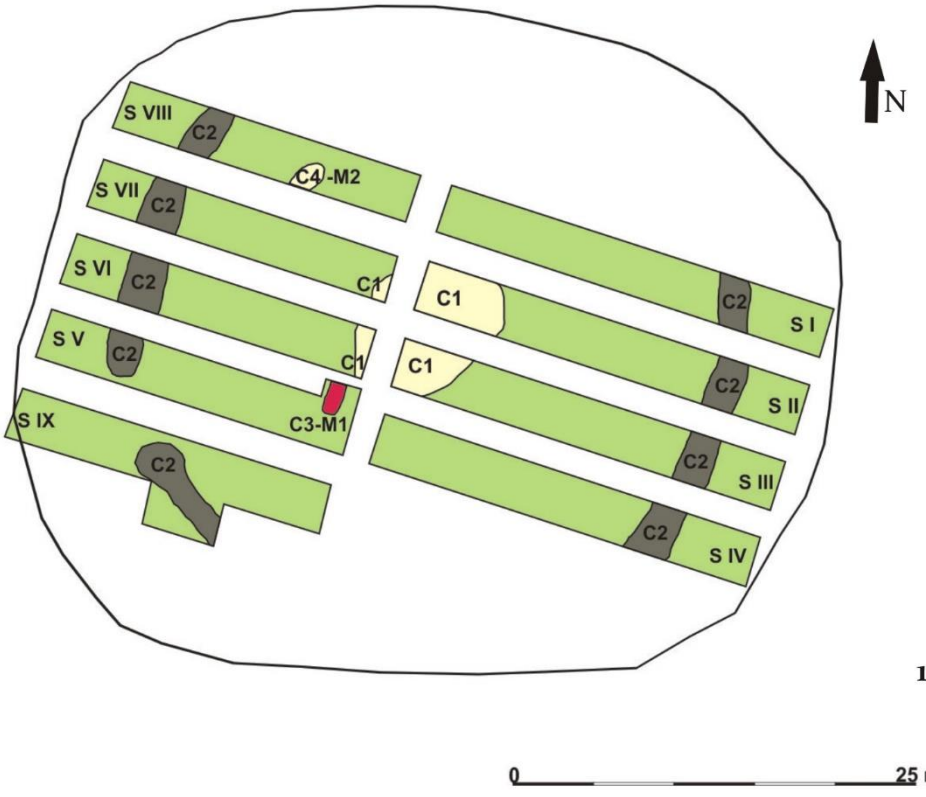
Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5


N
S VIII
C2
C4-M2
S VII
C2
S VI
C2
C1
S V
C2
C1
S IX
C3-M1
C2
C1
C1
C2
S I
C2
S II
C2
S III
C2
S IV
1
0
25 m


Z
2

Fig. 6

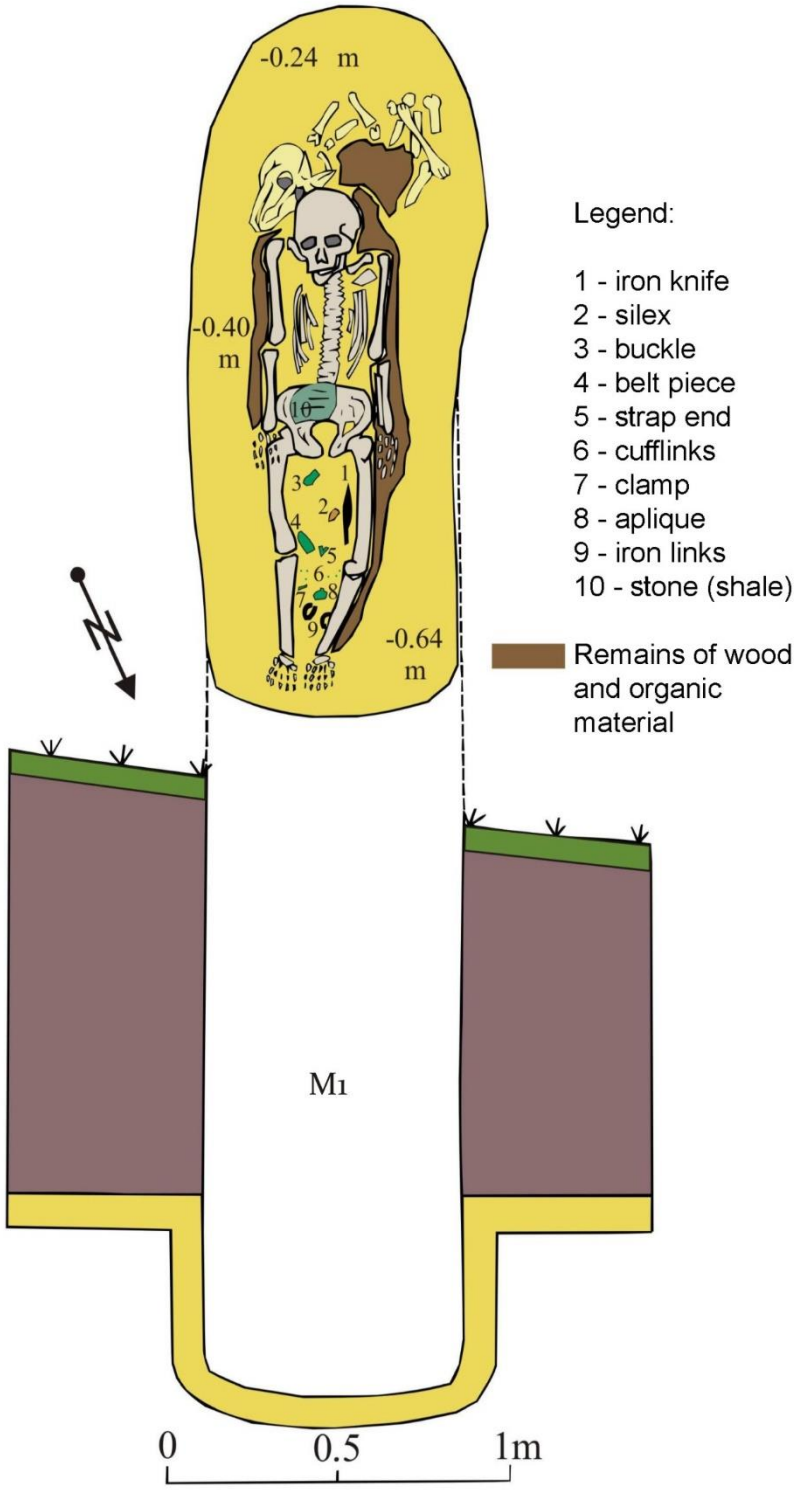

-0.24 m
-0.40 m
-0.64 m
Legend:
1 - iron knife
2 - silex
3 - buckle
4 - belt piece
5 - strap end
6 - cufflinks
7 - clamp
8 - aplique
9 - iron links
10 - stone (shale)
Remains of wood and organic material
M1
0
0.5
1m

Fig. 7

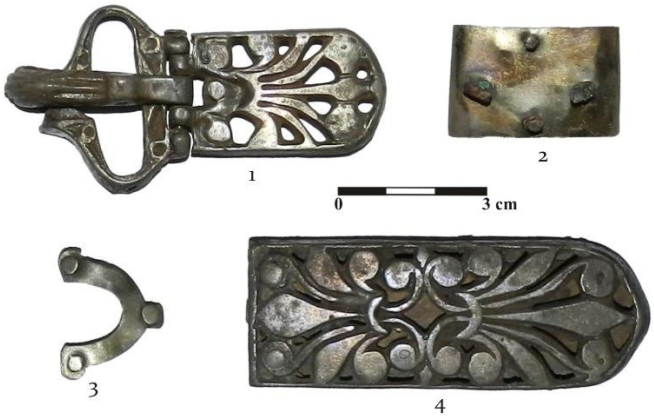


Fig. 8



Fig. 9


ROMANIA
Târgșor
Runcu
Kabiyuk
Madara
Divdyadovo
Black Sea
BULGARIA
Nova Zagora
Zlatari
Gledachevo
N
3000 m
2000 m
1500 m
1000 m
500 m
200 m
100 m
0 m
0
100
200 km

Fig. 10

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The production center of metal art at the village of Nadarevo, Targovishte Municipality (advance notice)

Stella Doncheva, Stanislav Ivanov, Tihomir Tihov

Abstract: The site is located in the lands of the village of Nadarevo and the village of Dalgach, Targovishte region. Its localization was done during field visits and borehole surveys conducted in 1992. Movable monuments and recorded stationary facilities establish the presence of manufacturing activity at this location. The site is synchronous and identical to the other two art metal centers - near the village of Novosel, Shumen Municipality and the village of Zlatar, Preslav Municipality, whose research was completed in 2009 and 2020. The initiation of such a systematic archaeological survey of the third center in the vicinity of Preslav would contribute to the clarification of the production activity during the period of the early Middle Ages, the scale of which is, without a doubt, the result of a purposeful and well-considered policy of the central authority.

The results of the conducted geophysical survey of the production center near Nadarevo shows a detailed survey using the geomagnetic method, the results of which should be confirmed by the archaeological survey. As a research in these sectors, four foundations of furnaces were revealed, heavily destroyed by the mechanized cultivation of the terrain. The two ovens are small, clay-bild, and stand a meter apart and are located to the north of the stone oven.

A total of 64 finds were found during the investigations, mostly of bronze and less of iron, as well as numerous melts, slags and drops of oxidized metal. Most of the objects were found outside the survey sectors, in the plowed layer, which is due to the disturbance of the terrain by the continuous mechanized cultivation of the terrain and the spreading of the material over it.

Key words: production of art metal, Nadarevo, workshop, metalworking

Резюме: Обектът се намира в землищата на с. Надарево и с. Дългач, област Търговище. Локализацията му е извършена при теренни изследвания и сондажни проучвания, проведени през 1992 г. Движими паметници и

регистрирани недвижими съоръжения установяват наличието на производствена дейност на това място. Обектът е синхронен и идентичен с другите два центъра за художествен метал – край с. Новосел, община Шумен и с. Златар, община Велики Преслав, чиито проучвания приключиха през 2009 и 2020 г. Началото на подобно систематично археологическо проучване на трети център в околностите на Преслав би допринесъл за изясняване на производствената дейност през периода на ранното средновековие, чийто мащаб без съмнение е резултат от целенасочена и добре обмислена политика на централната власт.

Резултатите от проведеното геофизично проучване на производствения център край Надарево показват детайлно проучване с геомагнитен метод, резултатите от което следва да бъдат потвърдени от археологическото проучване. При проучването в тези участъци са разкрити четири основи на пещи, силно разрушени от механизираната обработка на терена. Двете пещи са малки, глинени, на метър една от друга и са разположени северно от каменната пещ.

При проучванията са открити общо 64 находки, предимно от бронз и по-малко от желязо, както и множество стопилки, шлаки и капки от окислен метал. Голяма част от обектите са открити извън проучваните сектори, в разорания пласт, което се дължи на нарушаването на терена от непрекъснатата механизирана обработка на терена и разстилането на материала върху него.

The site is located in the lands of the village of Nadarevo and the village of Dalgach, Targovishte region. Its localization was done during field visits and borehole surveys conducted in 1992.[1] Movable monuments and recorded stationary facilities establish the presence of manufacturing activity at this location. The site is synchronous and identical to the other two art metal centers - near the village of Novosel, Shumen Municipality and the village of Zlatar, Preslav Municipality, whose research was completed in 2009 and 2020 (fig. 1).[2] The initiation of such a systematic archaeological survey of the third center in the vicinity of Preslav would contribute to the clarification of the production activity during the period of the early Middle Ages, the scale of which is, without a doubt, the result of a purposeful and well-considered policy of the central authority.

According to the finds, the dating is determined in the first half and middle of the 10th century, supported by the ceramic material and follis of Leo VI (886-912), Roman I (920-944) and Constantine VII and

[1] Totev *et al*. 1994, 141–142.

[2] Bonev & Doncheva 2011; Doncheva & Tihov 2020, 999–1002.

Roman II (945-959), most of which are cast in the production centers themselves. It is an interesting fact that for the first time cast Byzantine imitations of such an early period have been found. A special monograph has been devoted to the topic considering the coins in a comparative plan.[3]

The results of nearly two decades of excavations of the complexes near the village of Novosel and the village of Zlatar show that in the 10th century in Bulgaria there was a well-organized jewelry production.[4] The intensive and long-term work in the production complexes proves that they are not an act of short-term interest in the manufactured product, but a process in which long-term specialization of part of the population is achieved. A process that is related to the supply of raw materials for the production itself and the realization of the finished product at the end. Some of the questions - from where the raw material was supplied and how the individual metals and alloys were composed - have already been answered in the analyses of the metal composition of selected samples by the so-called PIXE-method performed at the Institute for Nuclear Research in Debrecen, Hungary. Among the objects analyzed are those from Nadarevo production center.[5]

The accumulated material over the last decades in museum and private collections provoked us to undertake, first of all, a geophysical survey on part of the territory of the production center, which was carried out in 2021 and 2022. The initial aim is to find the workshop locations and establish the facilities within them, as well as establish the boundaries of the production center. For this, the prepared digital maps of the measured geomagnetic field are used, where several groups of stationary facilities are located. A natural extension of the field survey activity is the undertaking of regular archaeological surveys to confirm the results of the geophysical surveys and to outline the locations of the individual facilities and the relationship between them (fig. 2).

As a result of the geophysical surveys, which covered an area of nearly 100 decares, numerous concentric, positive, unipolar anomalies of probable anthropogenic origin were registered. Sources of similar type of manifestations in the field can be remains of furnaces, pits or other facilities with isometric shape and ferromagnetic filling. Point and a number of serpentine linear anomalies were registered, traceable

[3] Doncheva & Zhekova 2022.

[4] Doncheva 2021.

[5] Doncheva & Penev 2019, 114–121; Doncheva *et al.* 2017, 75–88; 2021, 191–208.

throughout the studied area - probably traces of old natural or artificial water flows. Few in number are linear anomalies of old roads, chenals, deep furrows or similar infrastructural elements (fig. 3).

Part of the single anomalies are united in six zones, and the rest, which are more scattered, are marked individually on the maps. In addition to the marked anomalous areas, 33 positive, single, isometric anomalies are marked on the field maps, which are probably related to the presence of furnaces, pits with burnt material and shallow iron objects. During the field visit, pottery with incised linear decoration from the 10th century was also documented, as well as lifted material with traces of production activity, such as clay fragments from fire facilities in some of the sectors with anomalous zones.

The results of the conducted geophysical survey of the production center near Nadarevo show a detailed survey using the geomagnetic method, the results of which should be confirmed by the archaeological survey (fig. 4). The latter were launched this year. The sectors set for exploration cover the corner of one of the final polygons of 2.5 decares (50/50 m) with designations of G3-G4-H4-H3, which showed good results of the geophysical survey. The concentration turned out to be concentrated in sector G3, which predetermined our choice of laying out the plan-square grid in squares numbered 1, 2, 3, 11, 21.

As a result of the research in these sectors, four foundations of furnaces were revealed, heavily destroyed by the mechanized cultivation of the terrain. The two ovens are small, clay-bild, and stand a meter apart and are located north of the stone oven. From the first furnace, the base and part of the base below it have been preserved, composed of small river stones arranged in a circle. The base of the furnace was destroyed and part of the plastering was scattered on the ground. The furnace rested on the solid terrain to the west. To the right of the base and the partially destroyed base of the furnace, a lower working space emerged, the surface of which was covered with coals and objects from the destroyed furnace. Two post holes were also outlined at the west end next to the upper level furnace. Around the furnaces, the passages of stones around them in the north and west direction and on the dug-in lower level in front of them were also cleared. A rammer was made under the stones in order to level and harden the terrain. The lower walking level of the working room is 0.65-0.70 m above the level of the modern terrain. Behind the furnace, to the north, is the upper level of the workroom, which also consists of a

rammed pad and stones above it, disturbed by the ploughs. At the lower level of the stone pavement, a decayed redish patch surrounded by stones was encountered, which could be defined as a hearth.

The third furnace is also preserved only in the base. Its dimensions are slightly larger, and its location is south of the other facilities. In the course of the work, after the graphic and photographic work, it was necessary to remove the remains of the foundation in order to examine the terrain below it, which includes the ante-furnace space of the stone kiln and the remains of the earlier buried structure below it. After the removal of two layers below it, the sterile layer was reached, and the boundaries of the early structure falling outside the studied area were not outlined. Excavation of the earlier structure continues and enters below the unexcavated terrain from the southwest. When the embankment was depleted, a certain amount of early pottery (4th century BC) was found, which records the presence of a Thracian dugout replaced by the later structures of the workshop.

The fourth furnace, cleared in the northern direction, is made of stone, rectangular, with measurements 1.10/1.20 m on the preserved base (fig. 5). The sizes of the stones are 0.16/0.23 m and 0.15-0.18 m of the largest ones. Next to it from the west, a thick layer of soot from the destroyed furnace was cleared, the uppermost levels of which are only 0.15 m from the modern terrain. Smudges spread by them also fall into the neighboring studied sector. Next to it from the west, a thick layer of decay was cleared from the destroyed furnace casing, whose uppermost levels of decay and medium-sized stones were exposed only 0.20 m from the nowady terrain. In front of the furnace, a pre-furnace space was outlined with thick layers of coal and ash; several fragments of ceramics with the characteristic decoration of the period were also collected. No whole or fragmented casting vessels were found around the furnace, only slags.

A total of 64 finds were found during the investigations, mostly of bronze and less of iron, as well as numerous melts, slags and drops of oxidized metal. Most of the objects were found outside the survey sectors, in the plowed layer, which is due to the disturbance of the terrain by the continuous mechanized cultivation of the terrain and the spreading of the material over it (fig. 6). A certain amount of pottery with linear incised decoration characteristic of the period was also collected, among which small and defaced fragments predominated. To the ceramic material should be added the early fragments of the disturbed Thracian dugout at the southern end of the surveyed sector.

In conclusion, it can be said that the archaeological investigations during the current first season gave very good results and justified our expectations. Among them are the mentioned metal finds and the registered stationary facilities - four furnaces, a pre-furnace space and a hearth, proving the presence of intensive production activity in the third center for metalworking in the vicinity of the capital Preslav, the one near Nadarevo.

Scientific evaluation: The discovery of the facilities, elements of the first known workshop of the 10th century art metal production center near Nadarevo in the vicinity of Preslav, determines the significance of the site. The study of the individual structures contributes to the clarification of the character and structure of a medieval workshop from the early Bulgarian Middle Ages, as well as important and specific stages of the entire production process. A total of 64 finds, among which predominate the finished products (belt trimmings and ornaments) and especially the specific tools, complement the variety of forms and decorations of the artistic metal works and prove the jewelry craft mastered to perfection by the Bulgarian medieval masters in the 10th century.

Exhibition value: Most of the finds - finished products and tools, have a very good exhibition value and can be placed in any museum exposition or exhibition related to the topic of metal art production in the early Bulgarian Middle Ages.

Prescription: The field surveys were carried out on an area of 100 square meters, where no permanent structures were registered. The remains of production facilities are earthen, perishable structures, preserved only partially along the outline of the foundations, therefore they are not subject to future exposure. The studied terrain also falls within the limits of annually cultivated agricultural land, which also necessitates the undertaking of a similar measure. In view of this, all excavations were filled in completely and with the necessary care, and the filling was done manually, with soil cleaned of stones.

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ШУМЕН
Shumen
Новосел
Novosel
Лозево
Средня
Ловец
Острец
Осен
Надарево
Nadarevo
Дългач
Певец
Кочово
Троица
Осмар
Дибич
Мараш
Хан Крум
Мостич
Имренчево
Миланово
Салманово
ВЕЛИКИ
ПРЕСЛАВ
Preslav
Мокреш
Суха река
Драгоево
Златар
Zlatar
Васил Друмев
Шуменско плато

Fig. 1

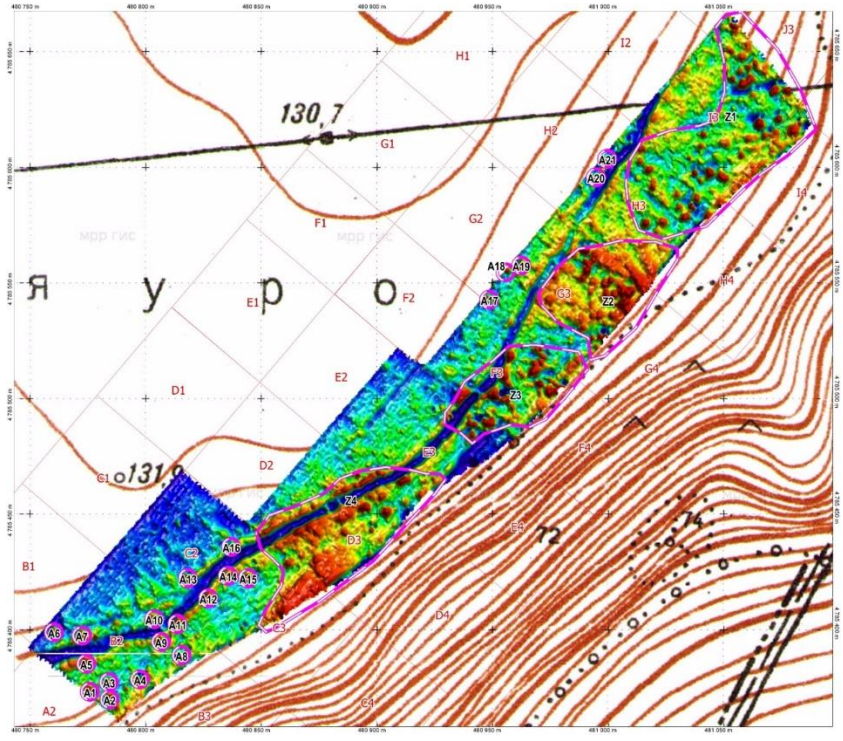

130,7
131,9
Я у р о
A1
A2
A3
A4
A5
A6
A7
A8
A9
A10
A11
A12
A13
A14
A15
A16
A17
A18
A19
A20
A21
Z1
Z2
Z3
Z4

Fig. 2

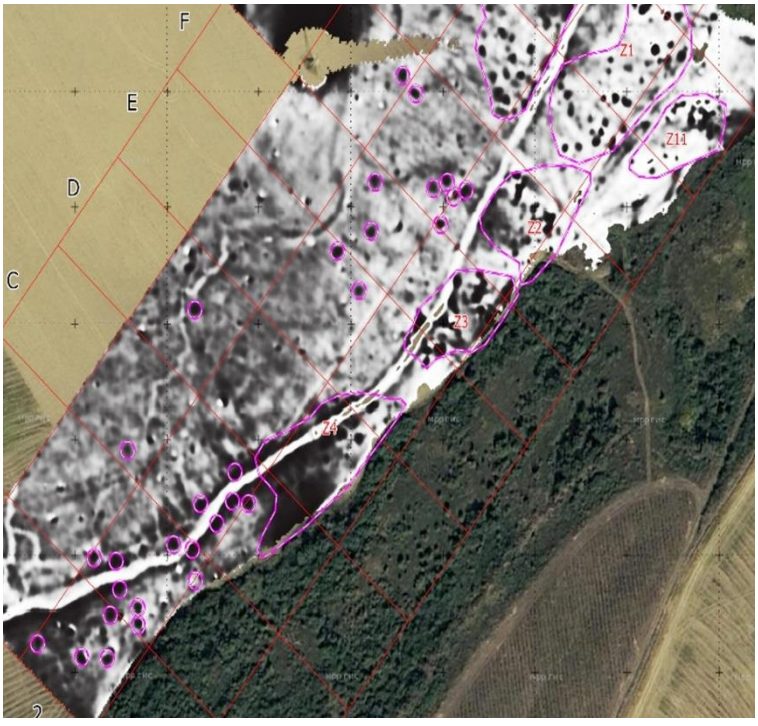


Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6a



Fig. 6b

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Analysis of finds (ingots and scrap) from the production centers near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Part II

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Abstract: The present work aims to explain a part of the results of the elemental analysis of selected finds from the production center near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality. Among them, finished products prevail, as well as raw materials. Mainly the latter refer to ingots and scrap metal reused for the production of new objects. The research was conducted at the Atomki Institute, Debrecen within the framework of IPERION-CH TNA Project (ACONOMAB) in 2018-2019. Proceeding to the essence of the topic, we should note that during the current second stage of the project, a total of 24 finds from the production center near Nadarevo were analyzed (Tab. I). Depending on the elemental composition of the base, the alloys from which the finds were cast are mainly: copper and lead alloys.

The results of the research of the presented products and raw materials show that the non-ferrous metal entered the workshops of the production center near Nadarevo in the form of ingots, various scraps and old, out-of-use products. This includes both brass ingots and alloys with a predominance of brass, as well as "pure" copper, which was used as a basis for preparing the future alloy. Alloying additives, mainly lead and tin, were added to the “pure” metals, which contributed to improving the casting qualities of the alloy and obtaining quality castings with the desired appearance. Besides in the form of ingots, the metal in the workshops also came from scraps of non-ferrous metal - out-of-use products - ornaments, dishes, household items, etc. Thus, various raw materials enter the production centers: copper, brass, lead, tin-lead and lead-tin bronze.

The frequency processing of the data from the analysis shows that tin and lead are predominantly used as alloying components to copper. Arsenic, antimony, silver and zinc do not play a leading role with the alloys in these cases. The insignificant concentrations of these elements give reason to consider them as natural impurities, and their distribution is a consequence of the extraction of metal from ores of different origin. Iron, which reaches several percent in copper, is also a natural impurity. In practice, in the production center near Nadarevo, alloys of non-ferrous

metals of different composition and character were used, but preference was given to high-tin bronzes with the addition of lead.

Key words: Nadarevo, metalwork, non-ferrous metals, alloys, lead bronze, tin-lead bronze, brass, tin brass

Резюме: Настоящата работа има за цел да представи една част от резултатите от елементния анализ на избрани находки от производствения център при Надарево, Търговищко. Сред тях преобладават готови изделия, както и суровини за производство. Основно последните се отнасят слитъците и скрап метала, преизползван за изработката на нови предмети. Изследванията са проведени в Института Atomki, Дебрецен в рамките на проекта IPERION-CH TNA Project (ACONOMAB) през 2018-2019 г. Пристъпвайки към същината на темата, трябва да отбележим, че през настоящият втори етап на проекта са анализирани общо 24 находки от производствения център при Надарево. В зависимост от елементния състав на основата, сплавите, от които са отлети находките основно биват: медни и оловни сплави.

Резултатите от изследването на представените изделия и суровини показват, че цветният метал е постъпвал в работилниците на производствения център при Надарево във вид на слитъци, различни изрезки и стари, излезли от употреба изделия. Тук се отнасят както месинговите слитъци и сплавите с преобладаване на месинг, така и „чистата“ мед, която била използвана за основа на изготвяне на бъдещата сплав. Към „чистите“ метали се добавяли легиращи приставки, най-вече олово и калай, които допринасяли за подобряване на леярските качества на сплавта и получаването на качествени отливки с желания външен вид. Освен под формата на слитъци, металът в работилниците е постъпвал и от ломове цветен метал – излезли от употреба изделия - украшения, съдове, битови предмети и др. Така в производствените центрове навлиза разнообразна суровина: мед, месинг, олово, калаено-оловен и оловно-калаен бронз.

Честотната обработка на данните от анализа показва, че в качеството на легиращи компоненти към медта се използва преимуществено калая и оловото. Арсенът, антимонът, среброто и цинкът не играят водеща роля в сплавите в тези случаи. Незначителните концентрации на тези елементи дават основание да се разглеждат в качеството на естествени примеси, а тяхното разпределение се явява следствие от извличането на метал от руди с различен произход. Желязото, което в медта достига няколко процента, също се явява естествен примес. На практика, в производствения център при Надарево се използвали различни по състав и характер сплави на цветните метали, но предпочитание се отдавало на висококалаените бронзи с добавка на олово.

The present work aims to explain a part of the results of the elemental analysis of selected finds from the production center near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality. Among them, finished products prevail, as well as raw materials. Mainly the latter refer to ingots and

scrap metal reused for the production of new objects (Tab. I). Similar findings from the three famous centers of metalworking in the vicinity of Preslav - near Novosel, Zlatar and Nadarevo - were analysed during this second project. The results of the research on artifacts from the first two centres were recently published, and those from the third one are discussed in the present work.[1] The research was conducted at the Atomki Institute, Debrecen within the framework of the IPERION-CH TNA Project (ACONOMAB) in 2018-2019.[2] The project continues in the current year 2023, when another similar project will be implemented. The purpose of all this research is to gather a significant database of various finds to clarify the compositions of metals and alloys used by the ancient craftsmen.

The implementation of the current project consists in the use of the so-called PIXE-method, in which accelerated charged particles, most often protons, bombard a specific location of the sample and initiate the emission of element-specific X-rays.[3] Another unique advantage is the adjustable particle energy. In this way, X-ray radiation can be induced only from a certain layer of the object, and thus the composition of surface-applied elements, for example silver, gold or other coatings, can be analyzed with minimal thickness. With the help of this method, the characteristic X-ray radiation is excited from a certain spot on the sample, which is of minimal size, ~ 100x100 μm, using protons accelerated to an energy of ~2.5 Mev. The proton beam is focused extremely precisely, at the designated place, and its diameter does not exceed a few microns. X-rays are analyzed using detectors with high energy resolution.

The method used makes it possible to determine both the composition of the main elements making up the sample and the composition of the so-called track or trace elements characteristic of each location. The determination of trace elements is the main indicator and guide regarding the origin of the raw materials and their pre-treatment, and the analysis of the composition of the coatings of the metal objects (on which they have been applied) does not violate the integrity of the object, which is especially important when it comes to archaeological finds.

[1] Doncheva *at al*. 2021a, 71-98; Doncheva *at al*. 2022.
[2] Doncheva *at al*. 2021b, 191-208.
[3] Doncheva & Penev 2019, 114-121.

Proceeding to the essence of the topic, we should note that during the current second stage of the project, a total of 24 finds from the production center near Nadarevo were analyzed (Tab. I). Depending on the elemental composition of the base, the alloys from which the finds were cast are mainly: copper and lead alloys (Tab. II).

1. Cooper alloy: bronze

1.1. Pb-Sn bronze

The examined objects show an enviable diversity in terms of copper alloys, the largest being the lead-tin bronze group, which is attested by 4 objects (Nd 3, Nd 8, Nd 13, Nd 14), (Tab. I-II) , (fig. 1). The copper base ranges from 85.793 (Nd 8) to 96.731% Cu, which is determined by the values of the other two alloying elements – tin and lead (fig. 2). In the sample with a value of 85.793 Cu, the amount of lead is very high and reaches 8.395% Pb, and that of tin – 4.291% Sn (fig. 3-4, 11, 13). In the sample with base values of 96.731% Cu, the indicators for lead are 1.333% Pb, and those for tin - 1.306% Sn (Nd 3), (fig. 19, 29). The remaining two samples, the alloy of which is defined as lead-tin bronze, show some similarity. The copper base is 90.151% Cu (Nd 14) and 91.597% Cu, which corresponds to almost identical values of lead – 5.504 and 5.272% Pb (fig. 11). The differences in the base are due to the amounts of tin, which in the sample with the smaller copper base value is 2.765% Sn (Nd 14) and in the other - 1.050% Sn (Nd 13).

In this reason, the content of silver in these samples correlates with that of lead, since it enters the alloy mostly from the lead ores. In the two samples (Nd 13), (Nd 14), where the lead is from 5.272 to 5.504% Pb, the amount of silver is 0.512 and 0.312% Ag (fig. 10, 16). The arsenic content of this alloy is of interest. In one of the samples, the arsenic is over 1%, i.e. 1.130% As (Nd 13, 14), indicating its artificial entry into the alloy, mainly from the addition of scrap. In the remaining samples, the arsenic is from 0.225% (Nd 3) to 0.651% As (Nd 8), which is due to its entry from the source ores, and also to the addition of lead in the alloy in the form of an alloying component (fig. 8) . The other trace element that is indicative of the origin of the raw material is antimony. It is present in three of the samples with contents from 0.139 to 0.230% Sb (Nd 3, Nd 13, Nd 14), (fig. 9, 15). In one of the samples, the antimony content was below the permissible minimum and was not reported (Nd 8). The antimony enters the alloy from the starting raw materials, and when its values are increased, it is evidence of the addition of scrap to the melt (fig. 21-22).

A similar relationship has the nickel content, which is increased in the sample with a high arsenic content and reaches 0.109% Ni (Nd 13). In the other three samples, it is 0.034%, 0.054% and 0.070% Ni (Nd 3, 8, 14), respectively. The increased content of nickel suggests that the origin of the raw material should be sought in ores mined from metallurgical zones where this metal is present. In this connection are the contents of cobalt, which is in values from 0.0005 (Nd 13) to 0.014% Co (Nd 8), (fig. 7, 18, 26). The two elements are indicative of the ores belonging to the Balkan metallogenic zone, where they are present in the ore sources and are a reliable indicator of the origin of the raw material. The values of manganese, which also stands at this position, are close and range from 0.006 to 0.008% Mn in all samples. Very good reduction conditions in the process of melting and casting of the metal show the iron contents in two of the samples – 0.098% (Nd 3) and 0.148% Fe (Nd 13), (fig. 6, 17). The remaining samples, in which the amounts of iron are 0.616% (Nd 8) and 0.439% Fe (Nd 14), show the opposite – the environment in which this process took place is not so suitable (fig. 28).

The present results prove the thesis that the most widespread in Eurasia after the binary copper-tin alloy was the ternary one - with lead. The lead increased the casting qualities of the alloy, the product was forged well. Therefore, it is assumed that lead was artificially added to tin bronze. In ancient times it was difficult to distinguish lead from tin. Tin was distinguished by its light color and brittleness when bent. Plumbum album (white) meant tin, and Plumbum negrum (black) meant lead. This fallacy existed for about 2 thousand years and even Agricola in the 16th century used these terms. He believed that white lead (tin) was not an independent metal, but an alloy of black lead (lead) with silver.[4]

1.2. Pb bronze

Several of the examined objects were cast from lead bronze (Nd 1, Nd 6, Nd 7, Nd 16), (Tab. I-II). The copper base has relatively high and similar values - from 96.536%, 96.386% and 96.012% to 98.648% Cu, (fig. 2). In this alloy, the amounts of lead are significantly increased compared to the others and are close to and above 1% Pb, which also determines the name of the alloy - 1.978%, 2.335% and 2.081% Pb, (fig. 4, 11). The lowest value in one sample is 0.994% Pb (Nd 16), which is

[4] Shuhradin 1955, 89.

almost 1% and indicates the addition, albeit a minimal amount, of lead to the relatively pure copper alloy. Therefore, the alloy of the last object can also be defined as "pure" copper, which is logical given the fact that it is an ingot, i.e. raw material. The second main component of the alloy – tin Sn has values below 1% Sn or is completely absent. Some of them, however, approach unity - 0.867% Sn (Nd 7), 0.726% Sn (Nd 6), (fig. 3, 13, 19, 29). The silver that enters with the lead and copper is from 0.147% (Nd 1) to 0.224% Ag (Nd 7), (figs. 10, 16, 2, 24). Zinc contents were not measured in the lead bronze samples, indicating, together with the elevated copper base values, that the alloy was artificially alloyed with lead to improve ductility and lower the melting temperature.

In support of the latter are the low values or the complete absence of the elements nickel, cobalt and manganese, respectively 0.027% - 0.061% Ni; 0.004 – 0.006% Co and 0.008-0.009% Mn supporting the view that the alloy is not only artificially composed, but also composed of a relatively "pure" starting material, without the addition of scrap metal and metal reuse. If there are any, then they are in such minimal quantities that they would hardly affect the qualities of the alloy and the quality of the products (fig. 18, 26). Also indicative of the origin of the raw material are the values of arsenic and antimony, which reach 0.351% As (Nd 7) and 0.447% As (Nd 1); 0.141% (Nd 6) and 0.441% Sb (Nd 1) and may enter from the ore minerals. Antimony (Nd 16) was not recorded in one of the samples, which indicates the use of different sources of raw materials and ores with different mineral composition (fig. 8-9, 14-15, 25). Iron, which is an indicator of the conditions of the entire process, has values from 0.061% (Nd 16) to 0.261% Fe (Nd 7), and a significant part of it enters from the starting raw materials, both copper and lead (fig. 6 , 17, 28). In the case of the metal ingot (Nd 16), its presence is in the role of a natural impurity in the copper minerals.

1.3. Sn-Pb bronze

In this alloy, the leading element is tin, while lead has a subordinate role and, accordingly, its quantities are smaller (Nd 5), (Tab. I-II). The copper base of the sample that belongs to this group is 81.416% Cu, and the two alloying components are 13.855% Sn and 3.438% Pb, respectively (fig. 2-4, 11, 19). The amounts of arsenic - 0.640% As, antimony - 0.127% Sb, as well as that of silver - 0.148% Ag enter from the raw material and mostly from the additions of tin and lead to the alloy during melting (fig. 8-10, 14-16, 20, 24-25). The latter was carried

out in a relatively good environment and an indicator of this is the value of iron - 0.298% Fe (fig. 6, 17, 28). The indicators of the origin of the raw material, including those of cobalt and nickel - 0.008% Co and 0.042% Ni come not only from the copper base, but also from the lead additive, which makes it somewhat difficult to accurately determine the source of the ores, but it is still a basis for comparison with consideration of these details (fig.7, 18, 26).

The ancient metallurgists chose tin as the main impurity for copper, but other metals also existed - lead, arsenic, antimony, silver, zinc. Experience was the driving force - craftsmen gave the ornaments a golden hue by introducing up to 15% tin. If they also added antimony, the object became silvery, and the molten metal was thin and could be cast from it into articles of complex shape.

1.4. Sn bronze

The tin bronze alloy is also represented by one example (Nd 11), (Tab. I-II). The copper base is relatively high – 94.909% Cu, so is the main alloying ingredient – tin of 1.716% Sn (fig. 2-3, 13, 29). The amounts of lead are below 1% – 0.702% Pb, which does not give reason to define the alloy as tin-lead bronze (fig. 4, 19). The values of arsenic are significantly increased, reaching 1.716% As (fig. 8, 14, 23). The values of antimony and silver are also somewhat elevated, respectively 0.264% Sb and 0.452% Ag (fig. 9-10, 15-16, 22, 24). The amounts of nickel and cobalt are 0.073% Ni, 0.003% Co, the former being one of the highest of all items examined. In contrast, the iron values are among the lowest – 0.120% Fe (fig. 6, 18, 26). Everything up to this point shows that the article was cast from tin bronze with increased amounts of arsenic and nickel, an alloy characteristic of the earlier periods of the development of metallurgy. In all likelihood, recycled metal from an earlier product was used to cast this object.

Arsenic was added to copper to improve the mechanical and casting properties of the alloy. Thus, arsenic bronze was the oldest recipe for an alloy that was widespread especially in the 4th-3rd millennium BC. In the 2nd millennium BC its dominance ended to give way to pewter bronze, the classical ligature of antiquity. The change is due to the greater hardness of the tempered bronze compared to the arsenical, but the differences are not very great. Moreover, tin ores were not more common than arsenic in particular.

2. Cooper alloy: brass

2.1. Pb brass

With the spread of iron in Europe as an additive to copper, zinc appeared - the third main ligature in antiquity after arsenic and tin. At the beginning, it was rarely found, as a second impurity, after tin. With this, the number of alloys increases and, together with this, it becomes difficult to determine the base. The deliberate artificial addition of lead to the copper alloys from which the products from the production center near Nadarevo were cast is also confirmed by another alloy, which is lead brass. Three items were made from this alloy – Nd 4, Nd 12, Nd 15.1 (Tab. I-II). Here, instead of tin, there are increased amounts of zinc, reaching from 17.664% and 19.081% to 22.874% Zn and exceeding even the lead addition from 2.662% (Nd 4) to 3.517% Pb (Nd 15.1), which defines the alloy as lead brass (fig 5, 12, 27). Given these values, the copper base does not have great indicators - from 74.175% (Nd 12) to 78.453% Cu (Nd 15.1), (fig. 2). Tin Sn and antimony Sb are not recorded in the measurement, or if there are minimal amounts, they fall below the permissible minimum and do not affect the properties of the alloy. This does not apply, however, to arsenic, whose values are elevated and reach from 0.186% to 0.559% As (fig. 21, 23, 25). The remaining trace elements, such as silver, either have not measured values or are very low – 0.081% (Nd 4). Only one of the objects contains 0.222% Ag (Nd 15.1) and this is due to the indicators of both the copper base and the lead additive, which are the highest compared to the rest of the analyzed samples (figs. 10, 22). The remaining trace elements are partially registered. For example, cobalt falls below the permissible measurement minimum, and nickel values range from 0.026% (Nd 4) to 0.043% Ni (Nd 12). Manganese values are also low – from 0.008% to 0.012% Mn. The good reduction conditions provided during the entire process are evidenced by the low values of iron – on average 0.087% Fe (fig. 6, 17). The measurement results of the leaded brass products show the purposeful preparation of the alloy with the addition of mainly zinc and lead in the alloy. The first contributes to increasing the strength of the casting and obtaining a golden color, and the second - to improving the ductility and plasticity of the alloy.

2.2. Sn brass

One artifact from the studied group of objects (Nd10) also falls here (Tab. I-II). What is special here are the low values of the copper base - 68.971% Cu and the high values of zinc - 17.861% Zn and tin -

12.412% Sn, which define the alloy precisely as tin brass (fig. 2-5, 12-13, 30). Compared to these main alloying components, the amounts of lead are minimal – only 0.135% Pb, (fig. 11, 19). Considering this, the value of silver, which enters the alloy mainly with lead, is also not high - 0.071% Ag (fig. 10, 16, 20). The situation is similar with antimony, which is completely absent, and the arsenic values of 0.253% As enter not only from the ore sources, but also from the added alloying ingredients (fig. 14, 23, 25). Nickel is 0.036% Ni and cobalt is not measured, manganese is 0.009% Mn (figs. 7-8, 26). Iron – 0.229% Fe suggests relatively good reduction conditions (fig. 6, 17). The alloy of tin brass is artificially obtained after the addition of zinc and tin in the form, not so much of pure metals but of scrap recycled metal from brass and tin bronzes.

2.3. Brass

One sample, which is an ingot and can be determined as pure brass (Nd 15), should also be assigned to the group of brass alloys (Tab. I-II). This is an alloy in which the copper base is 85.076% Cu, and the main alloying additive – zinc is 14.553% Zn (fig. 2, 5, 12, 27, 30). The values of all other elements are low. For example, lead is only 0.103% Pb, arsenic - 0.021% As, silver - 0.124% Ag, and tin, antimony, cobalt and nickel are not measured at all and are practically absent in the composition of the alloy (fig. 4, 8, 10 , 21-23). Iron also has low indicators - 0.093% Fe, which indicates the entry from the ore sources (fig. 17).

3. Cooper alloy: multicomponent

To this group of bronzes can be attributed two of the studied articles (Nd 2, 9), (Tab. I-II). As the name suggests, almost all the studied elements can be found in this alloy, and especially the main alloying additives in the bronze alloy - lead, tin, brass and the trace elements that accompany them. The copper base is not large - 74.867% Cu (Nd 2) and 74.323% Cu (Nd 9), (fig. 2), which is due to the increased values of lead - 17.826% Pb (Nd 2) and 13.097% Pb (Nd 9), (fig. 4, 11); tin – 4.866% Sn (Nd 2), (fig. 3, 13) and 1.356% Sn (Nd 9), as well as zinc – 1.665% Zn (Nd 2) and 9.997% Zn (Nd 9), (fig. 5, 12, 29-30). The value of antimony - 0.371% Sb in the first sample is increased compared to that in the second - 0.102% Sb, which is compensated by the lack of arsenic in the first and the increased indicators in the second - 0.594% As, (fig. 8-9, 14-15 , 25). The amounts of silver are the same - 0.093% Ag, those of cobalt are also close - 0.020% and 0.018% Co, (fig. 7, 16, 18). The values of nickel are different – 0.090% Ni (Nd 2) and 0.063% Ni (Nd 9), which

is a consequence of the different values of tin, since nickel also enters the alloy with it, apart from the starting raw materials. A similar pattern is observed for the manganese percentages, 0.012% Mn (Nd 2) and 0.006% Mn (Nd 9), respectively. The iron content is 0.168% Fe and 0.344% Fe in the two objects, indicating that they were cast from a different recycled metal with the addition of lead, in order to improve the casting properties of the alloy and obtain a quality casting (fig. 6, 17, 28).

4. Lead alloy

The second main alloy from which articles were cast in the workshops of the production center is lead, (Tab. I-II). A total of five objects (Nd 18-24) were measured, the lead base of which varied from 96.382% (Nd 22) to 99.403% Pb (Nd 24), (fig. 4, 11). Along with the lead alloy, certain amounts of antimony are also often found. Therefore, the measured values are high and reach up to 0.674% Sb (Nd 22), (fig. 9, 19, 21). Arsenic is not found, and tin is present in only one of the samples, and that with a very low value – 0.136% Sn (Nd 22), (fig. 8). Silver values are very low - 0.020% to 0.034% Ag, which suggests the origin of its content rather as a natural impurity to the raw material than as a residue of the cupellation process applied to extract silver from lead ores (fig. 16, 22, 24). This also proves the use of relatively clean raw materials (fig. 20).

Zinc is not found in all objects, but only in three of them and again with low indicators - 0.055% (Nd 18), 0.218% (Nd 19) and 0.122% Zn (Nd 22), (fig. 5, 12, 27, 30). Impurities in lead ores also include copper, which ranges from 0.089% to 2.559% Cu, the latter value being the highest relative to the others due to the low percentage of lead base in this sample of 96.382% Pb (Nd 22), (fig. 2, 28-29). Nickel is also a natural impurity, which also has low values - from 0.009% (Nd 24) to 0.015% Ni (Nd 18). Cobalt was not measured, and iron as a natural additive in lead ores has a low concentration - from 0.041% (Nd 20) to 0.092% Fe (Nd 18), (fig. 6, 17).

The results of the research of the presented products and raw materials show that the non-ferrous metal entered the workshops of the production center near Nadarevo in the form of ingots, various scraps and old, out-of-use products. This includes both brass ingots and alloys with a predominance of brass, as well as "pure" copper, which was used as a basis for preparing the future alloy. Alloying additives, mainly lead and tin, were added to the "pure" metals, which contributed to

improving the casting qualities of the alloy and obtaining quality castings with the desired appearance. Besides the form of ingots, the metal in the workshops also came from scraps of non-ferrous metal - out-of-use products - ornaments, dishes, household items, etc. Thus, various raw materials enter the production centers: copper, brass, lead, tin-lead and lead-tin bronze.

A number of products from the Roman era, from massive statues to small sculptures, served as the main source of raw material. It is known that during the imperial period an important dependence was established between the type of alloy and the production technique of jewelry, household objects and monumental articles. Thus, for the production of mirrors, tin-lead bronzes (Sn 18-22%) were used, in which tin always dominated. Statutory bronze, on the contrary, was distinguished by an increased content of lead, and small plastics, ornaments and household items were produced from a ternary and multi-component alloy of copper, tin, zinc and lead[5]. Often the masters combined the fresh brass with brass or bronze scraps, added lead and tin. In addition, tin could have entered the metal as a result of remelting of soldered items. As a result, multicomponent alloys containing greater amounts of zinc than tin were produced. Therefore, one of the ways for zinc and tin to enter the alloy of the products from the production centers is the remelting of scrap metal from objects from the Roman era.

In practice, preference was given to tin bronze, which is also due to the lower melting point - a simple and technical expediency. Findings of pieces of pure copper and separate analyzes of the metalwork showing the presence of multiple elements provide a direction to investigate the occurrence of these alloys. In reality, the master caster obtained pure copper, and then the craftsman, while melting the copper in the crucible, added tin, lead and other metals to the molten metal. The chemical composition of the casting residues and the finished product allows us to talk about the fact that copper extracted from sulphide ores was used in the workshops in Nadarevo. This is evidenced by such impurities as arsenic, antimony, nickel, cobalt. In products where zinc is not a predominant element, its concentrations are mainly as a component. In these cases, both late Roman and early medieval bronzes show increased lead content, which is artificially introduced into the alloys. The presence of lead gives the

[5] Craddock 1978, 1-16.

metal a good ductility and leads to shrinkage during crystallization, which is not unimportant when making articles with such thin decorative lines. Silver is a mandatory admixture of all non-ferrous metal products.

The frequency processing of the data from the analysis shows that tin and lead are predominantly used as alloying components to copper. Arsenic, antimony, silver and zinc do not play a leading role with the alloys in these cases. The insignificant concentrations of these elements give reason to consider them as natural impurities, and their distribution is a consequence of the extraction of metal from ores of different origin. Iron, which reaches several percent in copper, is also a natural impurity. In practice, in the production center near Nadarevo, alloys of non-ferrous metals of different composition and character were used, but preference was given to high-tin bronzes with the addition of lead.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Table I. Artifacts of non-ferous metals, found at the center of metal art in Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Table. II. Elemental composition of artifacts of non-ferous metals, found at the center of metal art in Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 1. PIXE-analyse of artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at the production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality. Logarithmic scale

Fig. 2. Graph of concentration of copper (Cu) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at the production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 3. Graph of concentration of tin (Sn) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at the production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 4. Graph of concentration of lead (Pb) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at the production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 5. Graph of concentration of brass (Zn) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at the production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 6. Graph of concentration of iron (Fe) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at the production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 7. Graph of concentration of cobalt (Co) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at the production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 8. Graph of concentration of arsenic (As) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at the production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 9. Graph of concentration of antimony (Sb) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at the production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 10. Graph of concentration of silver (Ag) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at the production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 11. Scatter-graph of concentration of copper and lead (Cu-Pb) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 12. Scatter-graph of concentration of copper and brass (Cu-Zn) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 13. Scatter-graph of concentration of copper and tin (Cu-Sn) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 14. Scatter-graph of concentration of copper and arsenic (Cu-As) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 15. Scatter-graph of concentration of copper and antimony (Cu-Sb) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 16. Scatter-graph of concentration of copper and silver (Cu-Ag) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 17. Scatter-graph of concentration of copper and iron (Cu-Fe) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 18. Scatter-graph of concentration of copper and cobalt (Cu-Co) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 19. Scatter-graph of concentration of tin and lead (Sn-Pb) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 20. Scatter-graph of concentration of silver and lead (Ag-Pb) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 21. Scatter-graph of concentration of tin and antimony (Sn-Sb) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 22. Scatter-graph of concentration of silver and antimony (Ag-Sb) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 23. Scatter-graph of concentration of tin and arsenic (Sn-As) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 24. Scatter-graph of concentration of tin and silver (Sn-Ag) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 25. Scatter-graph of concentration of arsenic and antimony (As-Sb) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 26. Scatter-graph of concentration of nickel and cobalt (Ni-Co) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 27. Triplot of concentration of zinc-lead-copper (Zn-Pb-Cu) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 28. Triplot of concentration of copper-lead-iron (Cu-Pb-Fe) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 29. Triplot of concentration of copper-lead-tin (Cu-Pb-Sn) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

Fig. 30. Triplot of concentration of zinc-lead-tin (Zn-Pb-Sn) in artifacts of non-ferrous metal found at production center of metal art near Nadarevo, Targovishte municipality

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Sample No	Dimensions /cm/	Weigth /g/	Object	Alloy	Main elements obtained after PIXE, sorted by quantity above and about 1%	Image
NDR 1	2/2,5/0,2	4,07	Product	lead bronze	Cu, Pb	
NDR 2	1,5/1,5-2/0,1	1,32	Product	multicpomponent	Cu, Pb, Sn, Zn	
NDR 3	2,2/1,3-1,8/0,2	3,16	Product	lead-tin bronze	Cu, Pb, Sn	

NDR 4	2,5/2/0,2	3,78	Product	lead brass	Cu, Zn, Pb
NDR 5	2/1,2-1,5/0,2	1,78	Product	tin-lead bronze	Cu, Sn, Pb
NDR 6	1,8/1,4/0,2	1,76	Product	lead bronze	Cu, Pb

NDR 7	1,9/1,3-1,5/0,1	1,27	Product	lead bronze	Cu, Pb
NDR 8	2,5/2-2,2/0,2	2,65	Product	lead-tin bronze	Cu, Pb, Sn
NDR 9	1,5/1,5/0,1	0,76	Product	multicomponent	Cu, Pb, Zn, Sn
NDR 10	1,6/1,2/0,15	0,92	Product	tin brass	Cu, Zn, Sn

NDR 11	1,9/1,6/0,15	2,10	Product	tin bronze	Cu, Sn
NDR 12	2,2/0,7/0,05	1,10	Product	lead brass	Cu, Zn, Pb
NDR 13	1,8/1,3/0,1	1,26	Product	lead-tin bronze	Cu, Pb, Sn

NDR 14	1,4/0,3	1,90	Product	lead-tin bronze	Cu, Pb, Sn	
NDR 15.1	1,5/1,4/0,1-0,2	1,45	Product	lead brass	Cu, Zn, Pb	
NDR 15.2	2/0,8/0,5	6,39	Ingot	brass	Cu, Zn	

NDR 16	5,5/0,2/0,2	2,33	Ingot	cupper / lead bronze	Cu / Pb	
NDR 18	2/0,7-1/0,3-0,9	5,54	Pour lip	lead	Pb	
NDR 19	1,4/1,1/0,3	3,38		lead	Pb	
NDR 20	2,6/0,5-0,7/0,3-0,5	6,64	Ingot	lead	Pb	

NDR 22	2/0,5-1,2/0,3-0,5	3,96	Waste product	lead	Pb	
NDR 24	2,7/0,6-0,7/0,5	6,17	Ingot	lead	Pb	

Table 1.

Minta	conc (wt%)												
	Cr	Mn	Fe	Co	Ni	Cu	Zn	As	Ag	Sn	Sb	Pb	Alloy
Nd1	0.023	0.009	0.114	0.006	0.040	96.536		0.447	0.147	0.344	0.441	1.978	lead bronze
Nd2	0.023	0.012	0.168	0.020	0.090	74.867	1.665	<LOD	0.093	4.866	0.371	17.826	multicomponent
Nd3	0.020	0.006	0.098	0.006	0.034	96.731		0.225	0.102	1.306	0.139	1.333	lead-tin bronze
Nd4	0.023	0.009	0.088	<LOD	0.026	77.502	19.081	0.559	0.051	<LOD	<LOD	2.662	lead brass
Nd5	0.020	0.008	0.298	0.008	0.042	81.416		0.640	0.148	13.855	0.127	3.438	tin-lead bronze
Nd6	0.023	0.008	0.098	0.006	0.038	96.386		0.090	0.148	0.726	0.141	2.335	lead bronze
Nd7	0.025	0.008	0.261	0.004	0.061	96.012		0.351	0.224	0.867	0.106	2.081	lead bronze
Nd8	0.021	0.008	0.616	0.014	0.054	85.793		0.651	0.155	4.291	<LOD	8.395	lead-tin bronze
Nd9	0.022	0.006	0.344	0.018	0.063	74.328	9.977	0.594	0.093	1.356	0.102	13.097	multicomponent
Nd10	0.023	0.009	0.229	<LOD	0.036	68.971	17.861	0.253	0.071	12.412		0.135	tin brass
Nd11	0.027	0.008	0.120	0.003	0.073	94.909		1.716	0.452	1.726	0.264	0.702	tin bronze
Nd12	0.021	0.008	0.087	<LOD	0.043	74.175	22.874	0.186				2.605	lead brass
Nd13	0.023	0.008	0.148	0.005	0.109	91.597		1.130	0.512	1.050	0.146	5.272	lead-tin bronze
Nd14	0.022	0.007	0.439	0.007	0.070	90.151		0.493	0.312	2.765	0.230	5.504	lead-tin bronze
Nd15.1	0.021	0.012	0.075	<LOD	0.035	78.453	17.664	0.222	<LOD	<LOD		3.517	lead brass
Nd15.2	0.023	0.008	0.093	<LOD		85.076	14.553	0.021	0.124	<LOD		0.103	brass
Nd16	0.019	0.009	0.061		0.027	98.648		0.093	0.149	<LOD	<LOD	0.994	lead bronze
Nd18	0.022	0.008	0.092		0.015	0.400	0.055		<LOD		0.624	98.791	lead
Nd19	0.013	<LOD	0.047		0.010	1.326	0.218		0.034		0.441	97.911	lead
Nd20	0.010	<LOD	0.041		0.011	0.089			0.020		0.629	99.200	lead
Nd22	0.009	0.009	0.053	<LOD	0.014	2.559	0.122		0.041	0.136	0.674	96.382	lead
Nd24	0.016	<LOD	0.041	<LOD	0.009	0.083					0.447	99.403	lead

	Fit.error (%)											
Minta	**Cr**	**Mn**	**Fe**	**Co**	**Ni**	**Cu**	**Zn**	**As**	**Ag**	**Sn**	**Sb**	**Pb**
Nd1	9.380	18.720	2.710	22.350	7.440	0.150		4.340	20.180	20.030	18.840	2.510
Nd2	11.620	18.020	2.380	10.230	3.970	0.170	1.110		25.650	3.670	20.460	0.580
Nd3	9.970	25.570	2.830	25.290	8.240	0.140		5.720	22.940	7.800	40.390	2.840
Nd4	9.900	19.670	3.270		9.890	0.170	0.310	3.600	40.650			2.190
Nd5	10.150	21.290	1.340	21.700	6.140	0.140		2.450	14.240	1.770	36.230	1.330
Nd6	8.670	19.370	2.720	21.470	7.230	0.150		13.240	16.530	10.970	38.620	1.820
Nd7	7.370	17.140	1.280	34.010	4.380	0.130		3.800	11.420	8.800	41.540	1.890
Nd8	11.810	23.320	1.020	15.510	6.000	0.150		3.770	18.580	4.230		0.990
Nd9	9.800	27.000	1.240	10.430	4.290	0.160	0.350	3.770	20.340	6.460	41.820	0.640
Nd10	11.110	23.210	1.900		7.980	0.170	0.310	3.770	34.590	2.480		11.440
Nd11	7.650	18.680	2.340	40.660	4.170	0.140		1.230	8.430	6.860	24.090	4.190
Nd12	9.740	20.200	3.010		5.720	0.150	0.260	7.690				1.850
Nd13	8.600	18.710	1.990	29.100	2.880	0.140		1.940	7.190	8.120	34.310	1.190
Nd14	10.070	25.490	1.160	27.930	4.690	0.150		4.380	11.050	5.220	30.690	1.280
Nd15.1	9.7	13.57	3.35		6.83	0.16	0.29	7.06				1.51
Nd15.2	9.020	18.070	2.830			0.150	0.330	22.600	19.960			13.260
Nd16	12.130	20.900	4.840		11.820	0.160		12.050	22.880			3.800
Nd18	17.660	36.860	3.930		13.240	1.400	5.530				9.440	0.180
Nd19	20.250		4.610		14.910	0.530	1.550		23.920		8.170	0.110
Nd20	29.510		5.730		13.580	2.660			38.110		7.720	0.120
Nd22	35.340	31.130	5.250		13.300	0.490	3.120		27.440	24.390	8.510	0.160
Nd24	21.810		6.540		19.020	3.350					11.520	0.150

	LOD (wt%)												
Minta	Cr	Mn	Fe	Co	Ni	Cu	Zn	As	Ag	Sn	Sb	Pb
Nd1	0.004	0.003	0.007	0.003	0.006	0.011		0.073	0.025	0.106	0.112	0.168
Nd2	0.005	0.004	0.007	0.004	0.005	0.017	0.028	0.253	0.019	0.160	0.094	0.116
Nd3	0.003	0.003	0.006	0.003	0.005	0.019		0.041	0.030	0.102	0.072	0.097
Nd4	0.004	0.003	0.006	0.004	0.005	0.013	0.034	0.069	0.036	0.066	0.070	0.179
Nd5	0.004	0.003	0.006	0.004	0.005	0.019		0.068	0.028	0.082	0.039	0.160
Nd6	0.003	0.003	0.006	0.003	0.005	0.020		0.058	0.029	0.082	0.092	0.057
Nd7	0.003	0.003	0.006	0.003	0.005	0.020		0.050	0.023	0.061	0.035	0.112
Nd8	0.004	0.004	0.007	0.005	0.006	0.014		0.145	0.028	0.129	0.059	0.184
Nd9	0.004	0.003	0.006	0.004	0.005	0.015	0.024	0.190	0.023	0.064	0.053	0.161
Nd10	0.004	0.004	0.007	0.005	0.005	0.015	0.029	0.012	0.030	0.110		0.103
Nd11	0.003	0.003	0.006	0.003	0.005	0.019		0.028	0.029	0.086	0.042	0.354
Nd12	0.004	0.003	0.006	0.004	0.004	0.016	0.028	0.063				0.083
Nd13	0.003	0.003	0.006	0.003	0.005	0.014		0.097	0.030	0.090	0.060	0.250
Nd14	0.004	0.003	0.006	0.005	0.006	0.016		0.107	0.022	0.113	0.078	0.156
Nd15.1	0.003	0.005	0.006		0.005	0.019	0.028	0.076	0.017	0.037		0.091
Nd15.2	0.004	0.003	0.006	0.003		0.008	0.031	0.010	0.039	0.053		0.027
Nd16	0.004	0.003	0.007		0.006	0.010		0.040	0.046	0.075	0.121	0.069
Nd18	0.007	0.006	0.005		0.003	0.002	0.004		0.013		0.078	0.045
Nd19	0.005	0.004	0.003		0.003	0.002	0.003		0.008		0.036	0.043
Nd20	0.005	0.005	0.004		0.003	0.003			0.010		0.038	0.042
Nd22	0.006	0.005	0.004	0.004	0.003	0.005	0.005		0.014	0.086	0.039	0.039
Nd24	0.006	0.005	0.004	0.004	0.003	0.003					0.039	0.043

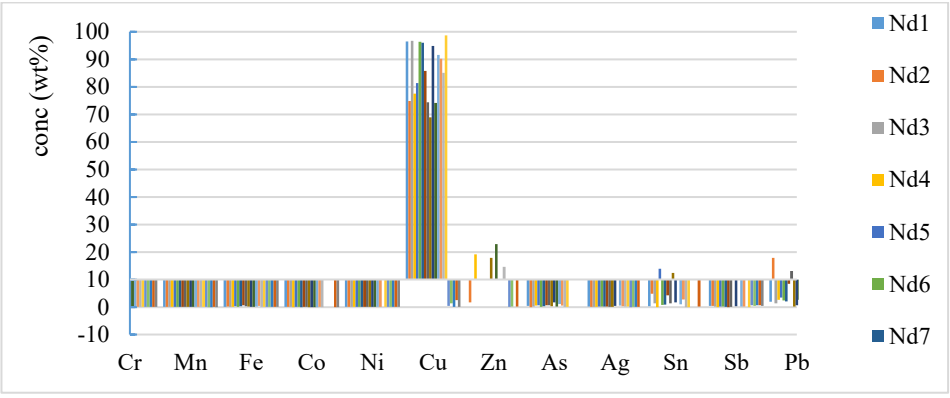

conc (wt%)
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
-10
Cr
Mn
Fe
Co
Ni
Cu
Zn
As
Ag
Sn
Sb
Pb
Nd1
Nd2
Nd3
Nd4
Nd5
Nd6
Nd7

Fig. 1

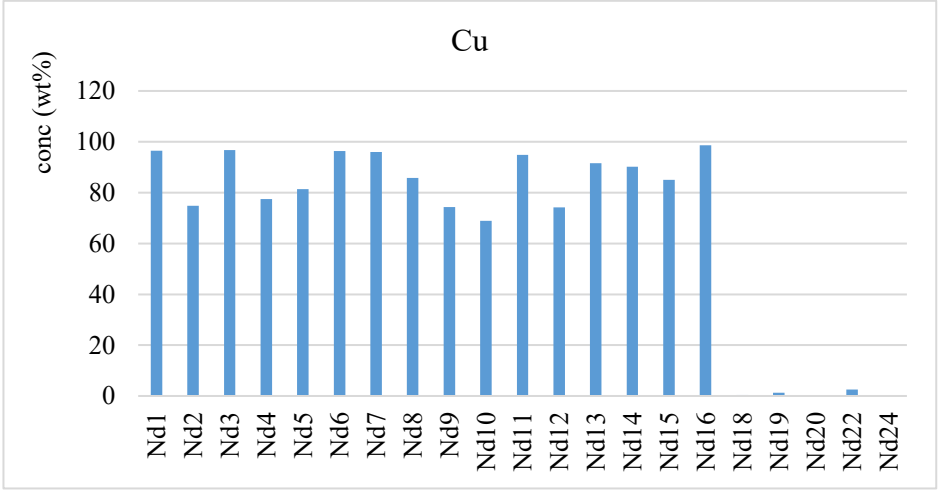

Cu
conc (wt%)
120
100
80
60
40
20
0
Nd1
Nd2
Nd3
Nd4
Nd5
Nd6
Nd7
Nd8
Nd9
Nd10
Nd11
Nd12
Nd13
Nd14
Nd15
Nd16
Nd18
Nd19
Nd20
Nd22
Nd24

Fig. 2

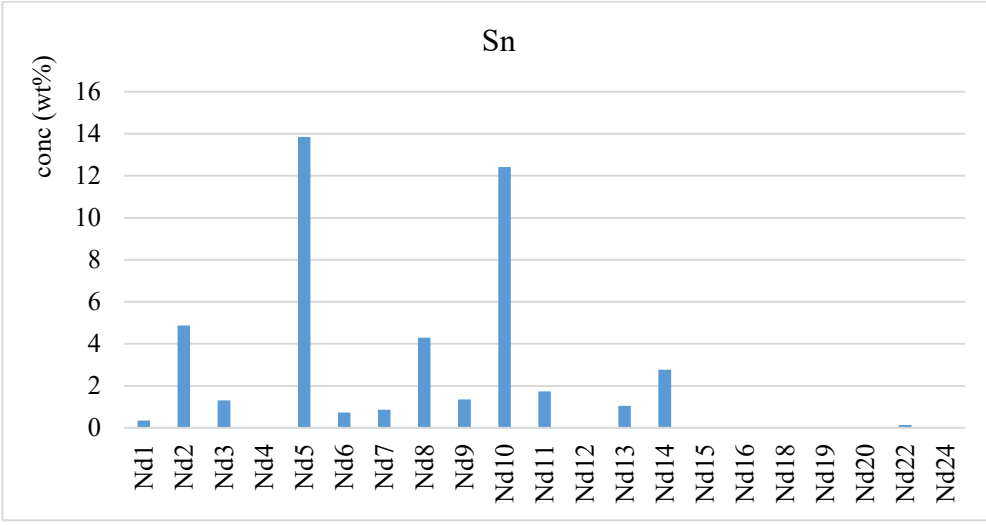

Sn
conc (wt%)
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
Nd1
Nd2
Nd3
Nd4
Nd5
Nd6
Nd7
Nd8
Nd9
Nd10
Nd11
Nd12
Nd13
Nd14
Nd15
Nd16
Nd18
Nd19
Nd20
Nd22
Nd24

Fig. 3

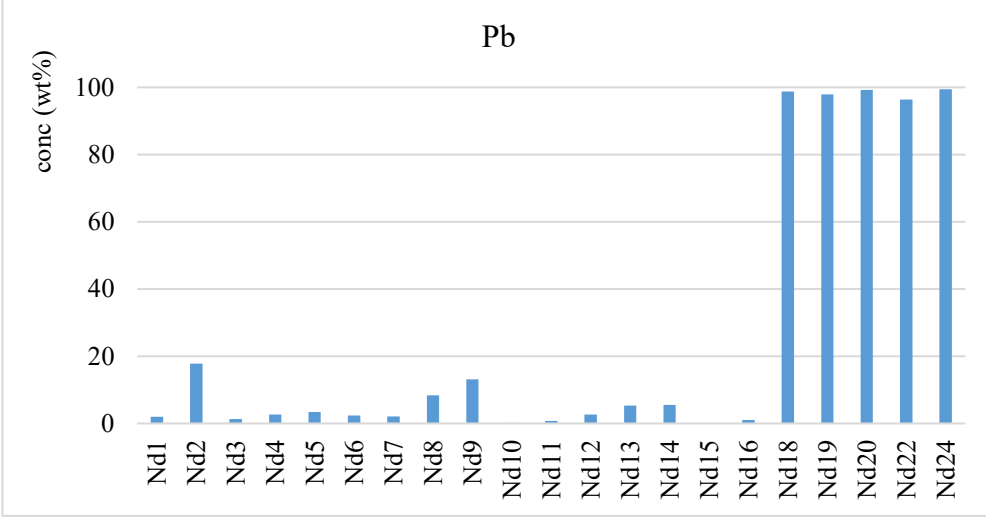

Pb
conc (wt%)
100
80
60
40
20
0
Nd1
Nd2
Nd3
Nd4
Nd5
Nd6
Nd7
Nd8
Nd9
Nd10
Nd11
Nd12
Nd13
Nd14
Nd15
Nd16
Nd18
Nd19
Nd20
Nd22
Nd24

Fig. 4

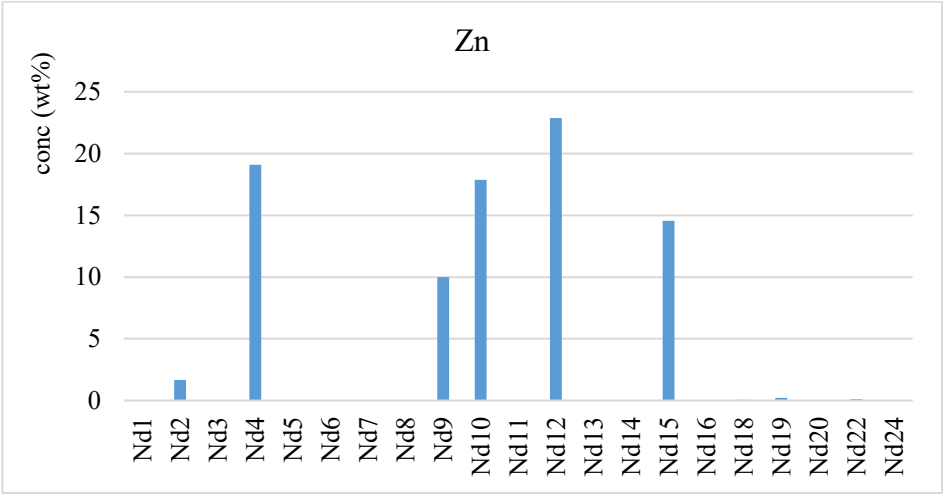

Zn
conc (wt%)
25
20
15
10
5
0
Nd1
Nd2
Nd3
Nd4
Nd5
Nd6
Nd7
Nd8
Nd9
Nd10
Nd11
Nd12
Nd13
Nd14
Nd15
Nd16
Nd18
Nd19
Nd20
Nd22
Nd24

Fig. 5

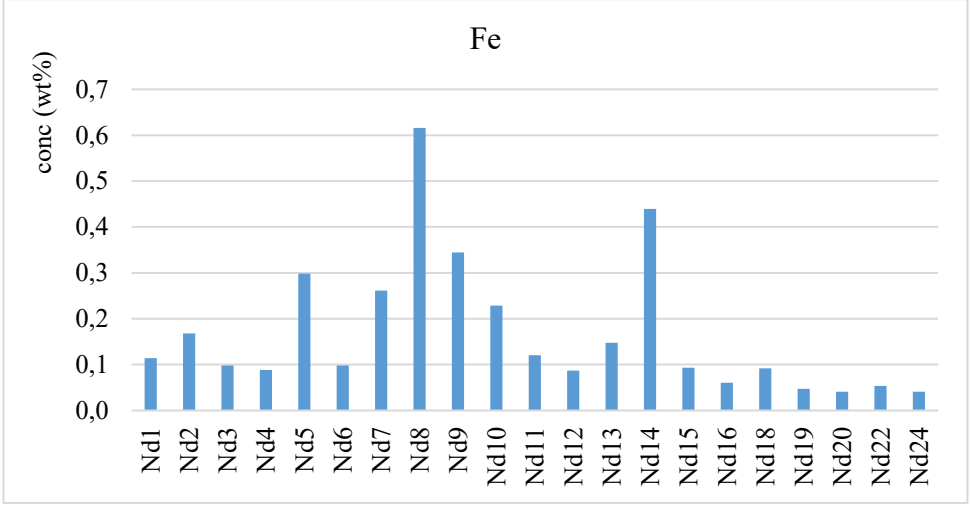

Fe
conc (wt%)
0,7
0,6
0,5
0,4
0,3
0,2
0,1
0,0
Nd1
Nd2
Nd3
Nd4
Nd5
Nd6
Nd7
Nd8
Nd9
Nd10
Nd11
Nd12
Nd13
Nd14
Nd15
Nd16
Nd18
Nd19
Nd20
Nd22
Nd24

Fig. 6

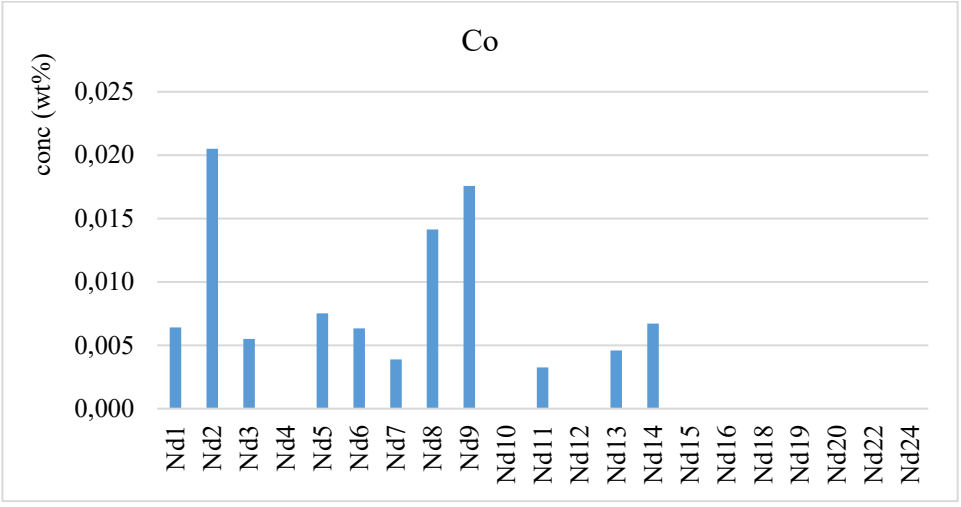

Co
conc (wt%)
0,025
0,020
0,015
0,010
0,005
0,000
Nd1
Nd2
Nd3
Nd4
Nd5
Nd6
Nd7
Nd8
Nd9
Nd10
Nd11
Nd12
Nd13
Nd14
Nd15
Nd16
Nd18
Nd19
Nd20
Nd22
Nd24

Fig. 7

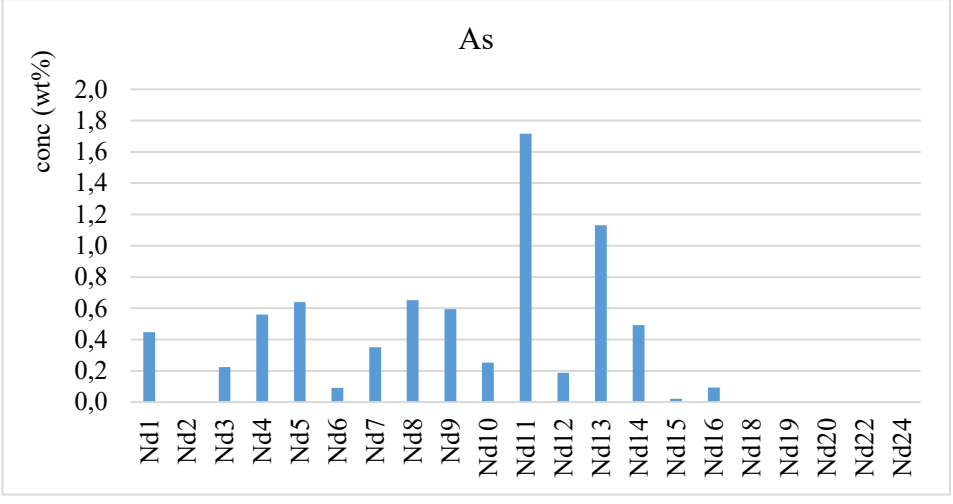

As
conc (wt%)
2,0
1,8
1,6
1,4
1,2
1,0
0,8
0,6
0,4
0,2
0,0
Nd1
Nd2
Nd3
Nd4
Nd5
Nd6
Nd7
Nd8
Nd9
Nd10
Nd11
Nd12
Nd13
Nd14
Nd15
Nd16
Nd18
Nd19
Nd20
Nd22
Nd24

Fig. 8

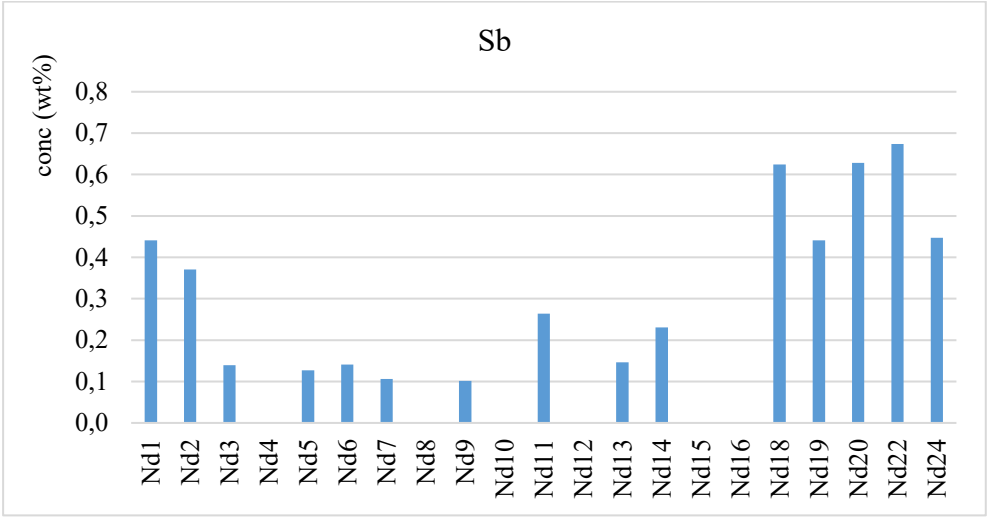

Sb
conc (wt%)
0,8
0,7
0,6
0,5
0,4
0,3
0,2
0,1
0,0
Nd1
Nd2
Nd3
Nd4
Nd5
Nd6
Nd7
Nd8
Nd9
Nd10
Nd11
Nd12
Nd13
Nd14
Nd15
Nd16
Nd18
Nd19
Nd20
Nd22
Nd24

Fig. 9

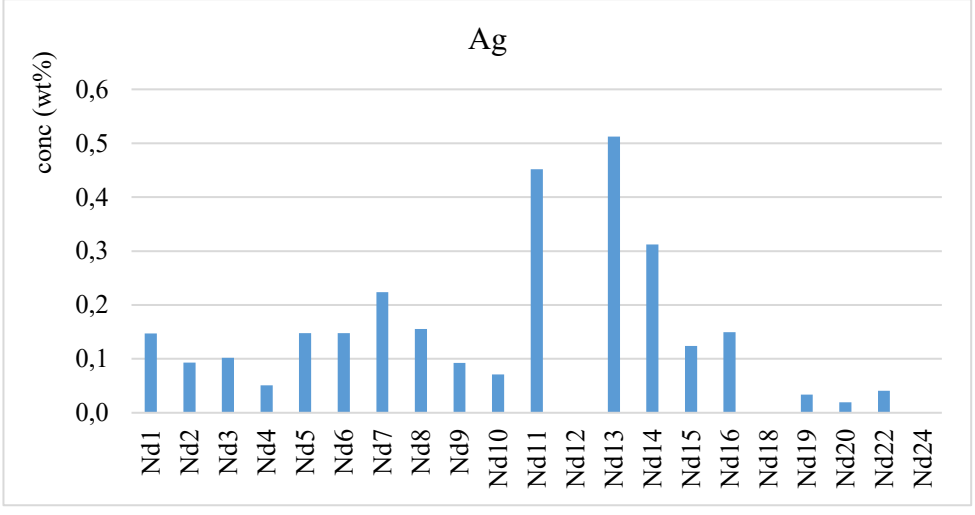

Ag
conc (wt%)
0,6
0,5
0,4
0,3
0,2
0,1
0,0
Nd1
Nd2
Nd3
Nd4
Nd5
Nd6
Nd7
Nd8
Nd9
Nd10
Nd11
Nd12
Nd13
Nd14
Nd15
Nd16
Nd18
Nd19
Nd20
Nd22
Nd24

Fig. 10

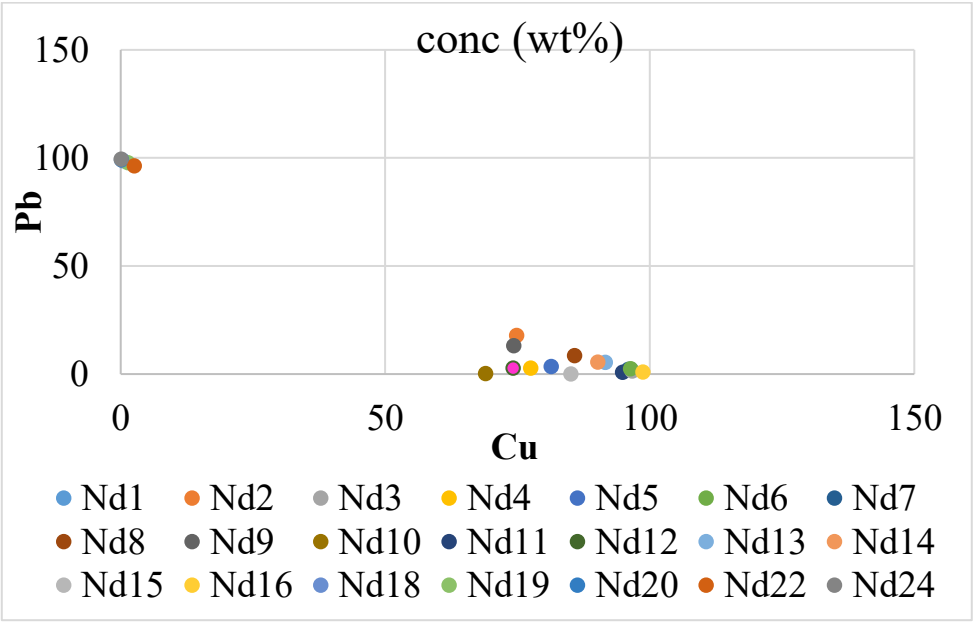

conc (wt%)
150
100
50
0
Pb
0
50
100
150
Cu
Nd1 Nd2 Nd3 Nd4 Nd5 Nd6 Nd7
Nd8 Nd9 Nd10 Nd11 Nd12 Nd13 Nd14
Nd15 Nd16 Nd18 Nd19 Nd20 Nd22 Nd24

Fig. 11

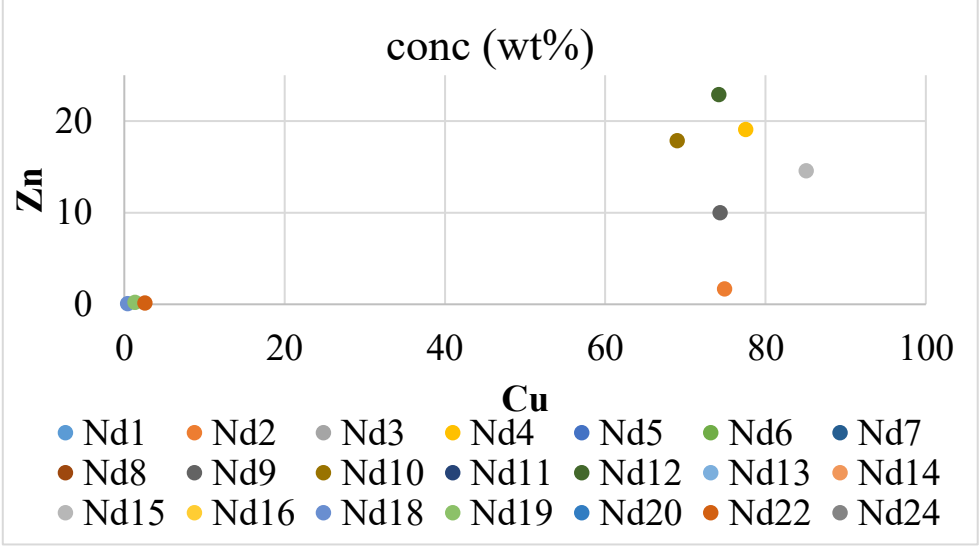

conc (wt%)
20
10
0
Zn
0
20
40
60
80
100
Cu
Nd1 Nd2 Nd3 Nd4 Nd5 Nd6 Nd7
Nd8 Nd9 Nd10 Nd11 Nd12 Nd13 Nd14
Nd15 Nd16 Nd18 Nd19 Nd20 Nd22 Nd24

Fig. 12

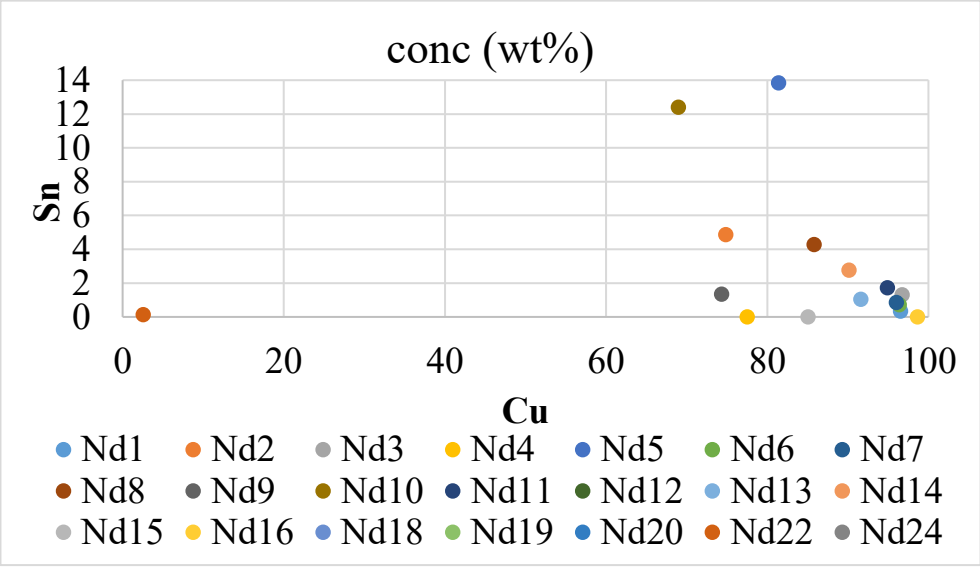

conc (wt%)
Sn
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
0
20
40
60
80
100
Cu
Nd1 Nd2 Nd3 Nd4 Nd5 Nd6 Nd7
Nd8 Nd9 Nd10 Nd11 Nd12 Nd13 Nd14
Nd15 Nd16 Nd18 Nd19 Nd20 Nd22 Nd24

Fig. 13

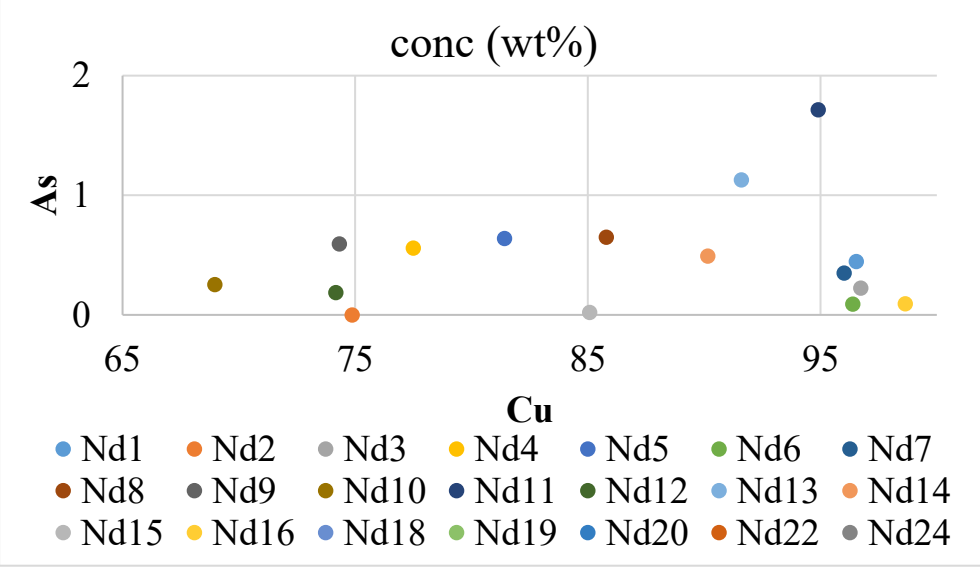

conc (wt%)
As
2
1
0
65
75
85
95
Cu
Nd1 Nd2 Nd3 Nd4 Nd5 Nd6 Nd7
Nd8 Nd9 Nd10 Nd11 Nd12 Nd13 Nd14
Nd15 Nd16 Nd18 Nd19 Nd20 Nd22 Nd24

Fig. 14

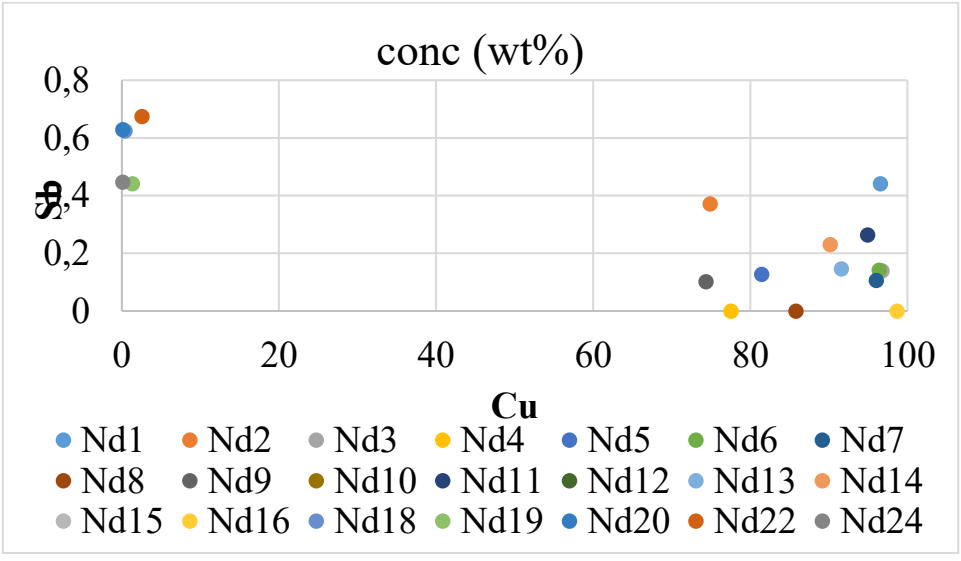

conc (wt%)
0,8
0,6
0,4
0,2
0
Sb
0
20
40
60
80
100
Cu
Nd1 Nd2 Nd3 Nd4 Nd5 Nd6 Nd7
Nd8 Nd9 Nd10 Nd11 Nd12 Nd13 Nd14
Nd15 Nd16 Nd18 Nd19 Nd20 Nd22 Nd24

Fig. 15

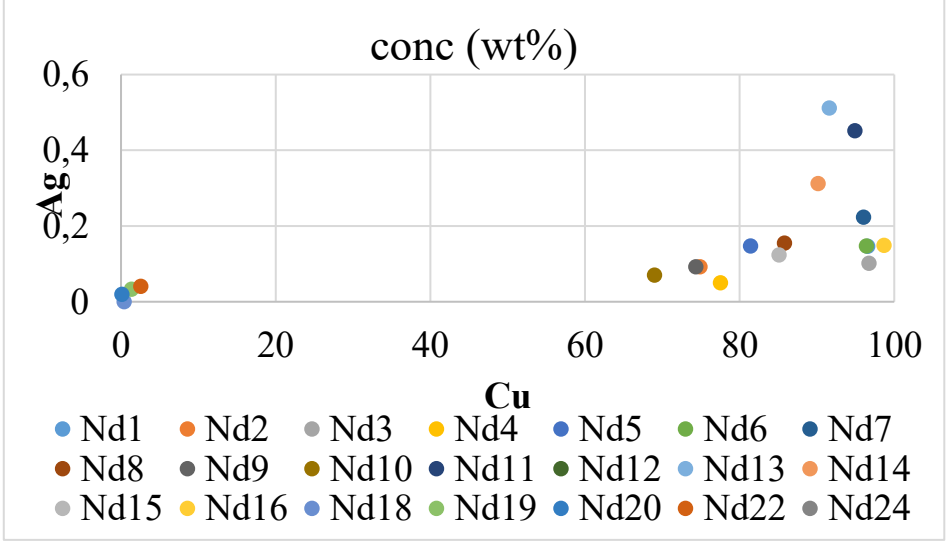

conc (wt%)
0,6
0,4
0,2
0
Ag
0
20
40
60
80
100
Cu
Nd1 Nd2 Nd3 Nd4 Nd5 Nd6 Nd7
Nd8 Nd9 Nd10 Nd11 Nd12 Nd13 Nd14
Nd15 Nd16 Nd18 Nd19 Nd20 Nd22 Nd24

Fig. 16

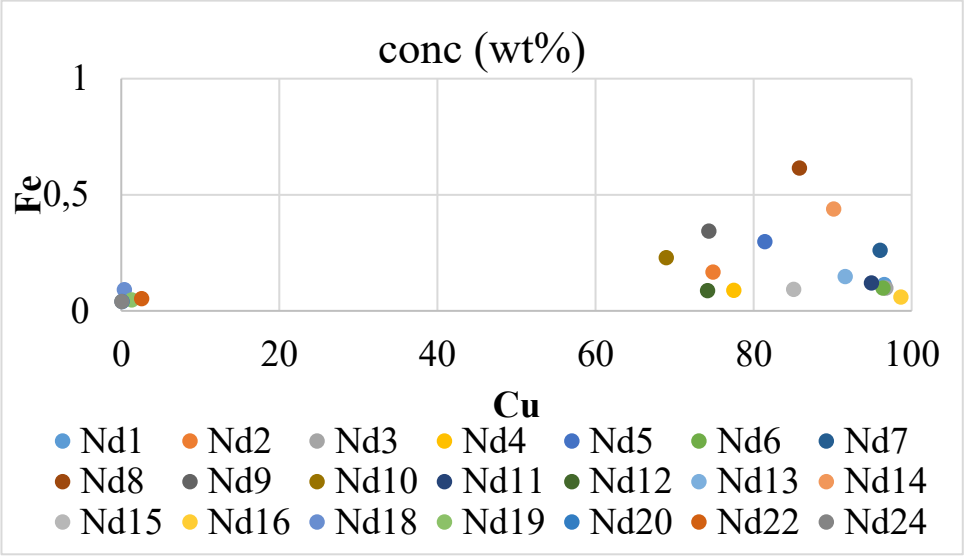

conc (wt%)
1
0,5
0
Fe
0
20
40
60
80
100
Cu
Nd1 Nd2 Nd3 Nd4 Nd5 Nd6 Nd7
Nd8 Nd9 Nd10 Nd11 Nd12 Nd13 Nd14
Nd15 Nd16 Nd18 Nd19 Nd20 Nd22 Nd24

Fig. 17

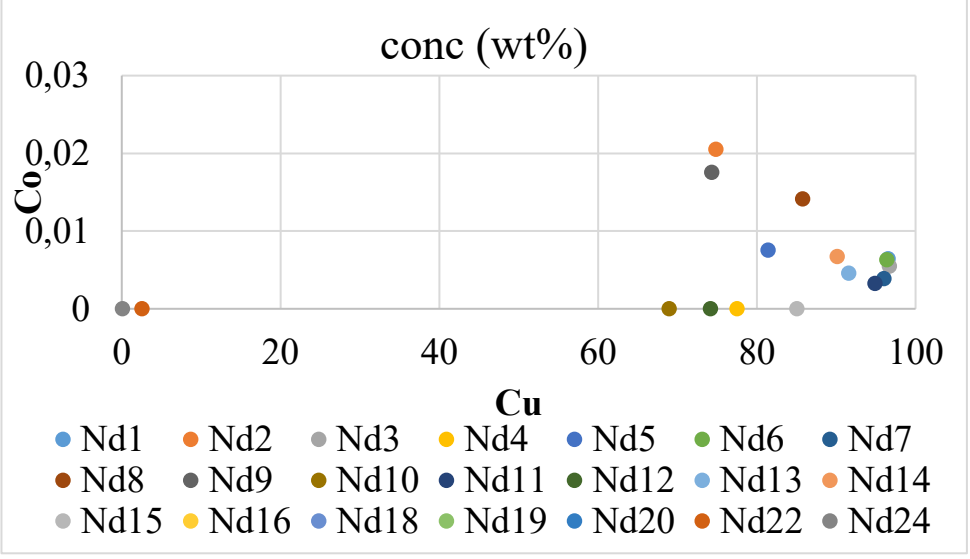

conc (wt%)
0,03
0,02
0,01
0
Co
0
20
40
60
80
100
Cu
Nd1 Nd2 Nd3 Nd4 Nd5 Nd6 Nd7
Nd8 Nd9 Nd10 Nd11 Nd12 Nd13 Nd14
Nd15 Nd16 Nd18 Nd19 Nd20 Nd22 Nd24

Fig. 18

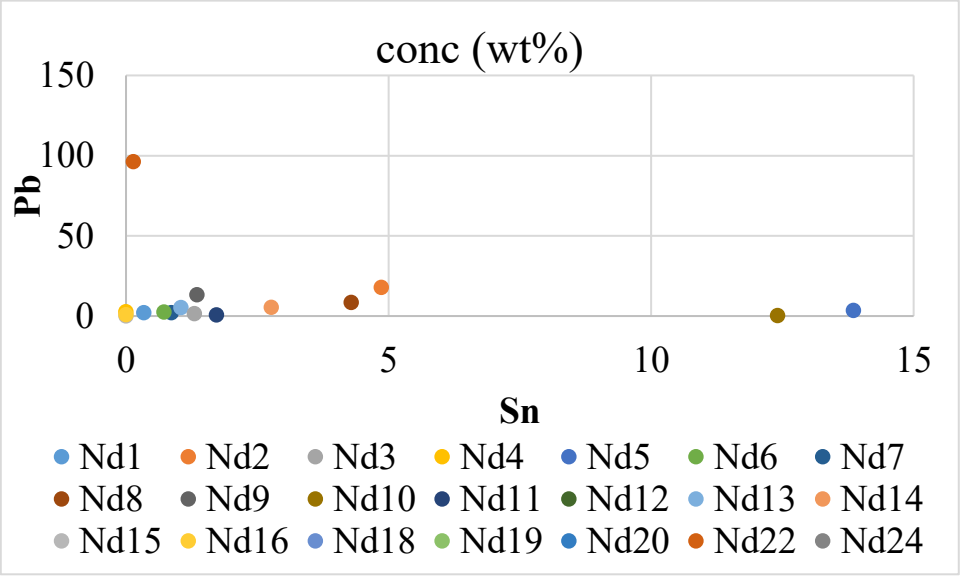

conc (wt%)
150
100
50
0
Pb
0
5
10
15
Sn
Nd1 Nd2 Nd3 Nd4 Nd5 Nd6 Nd7
Nd8 Nd9 Nd10 Nd11 Nd12 Nd13 Nd14
Nd15 Nd16 Nd18 Nd19 Nd20 Nd22 Nd24

Fig. 19

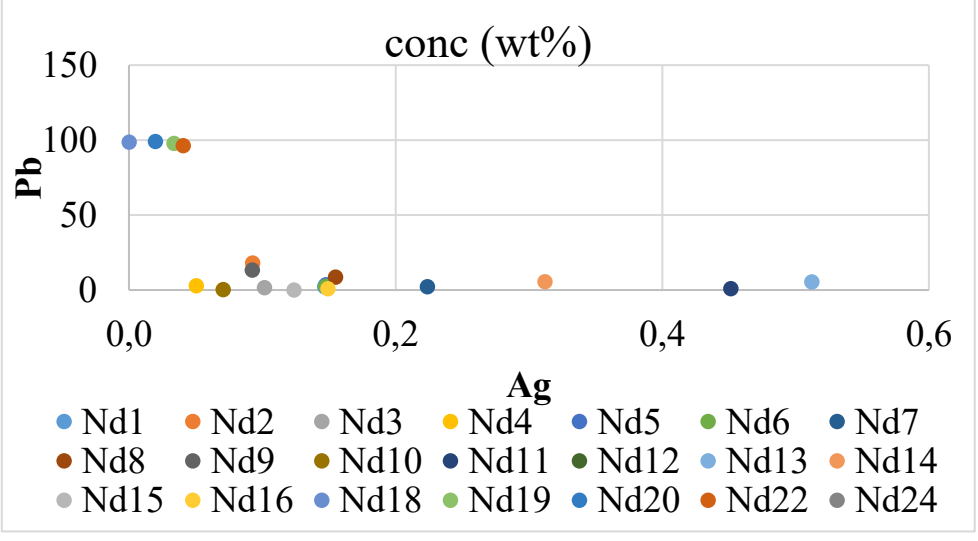

conc (wt%)
150
100
50
0
Pb
0,0
0,2
0,4
0,6
Ag
Nd1 Nd2 Nd3 Nd4 Nd5 Nd6 Nd7
Nd8 Nd9 Nd10 Nd11 Nd12 Nd13 Nd14
Nd15 Nd16 Nd18 Nd19 Nd20 Nd22 Nd24

Fig. 20

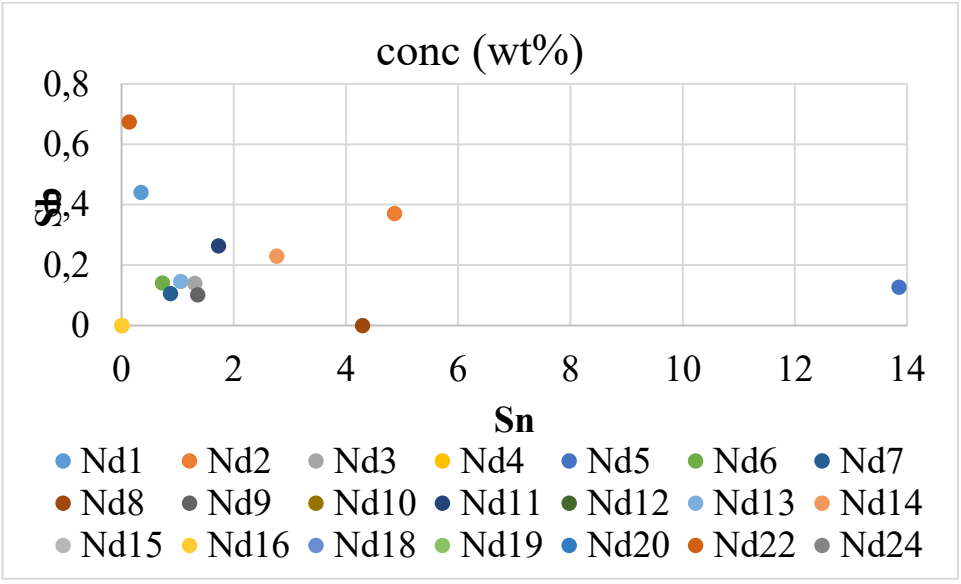

conc (wt%)
0,8
0,6
0,4
0,2
0
Sb
0
2
4
6
8
10
12
14
Sn
Nd1
Nd2
Nd3
Nd4
Nd5
Nd6
Nd7
Nd8
Nd9
Nd10
Nd11
Nd12
Nd13
Nd14
Nd15
Nd16
Nd18
Nd19
Nd20
Nd22
Nd24

Fig. 21

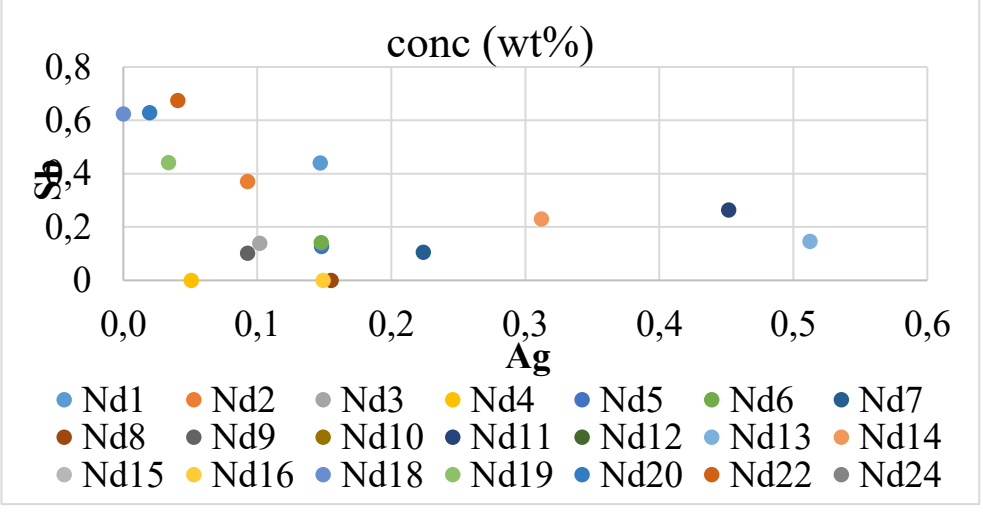

conc (wt%)
0,8
0,6
0,4
0,2
0
Sb
0,0
0,1
0,2
0,3
0,4
0,5
0,6
Ag
Nd1
Nd2
Nd3
Nd4
Nd5
Nd6
Nd7
Nd8
Nd9
Nd10
Nd11
Nd12
Nd13
Nd14
Nd15
Nd16
Nd18
Nd19
Nd20
Nd22
Nd24

Fig. 22

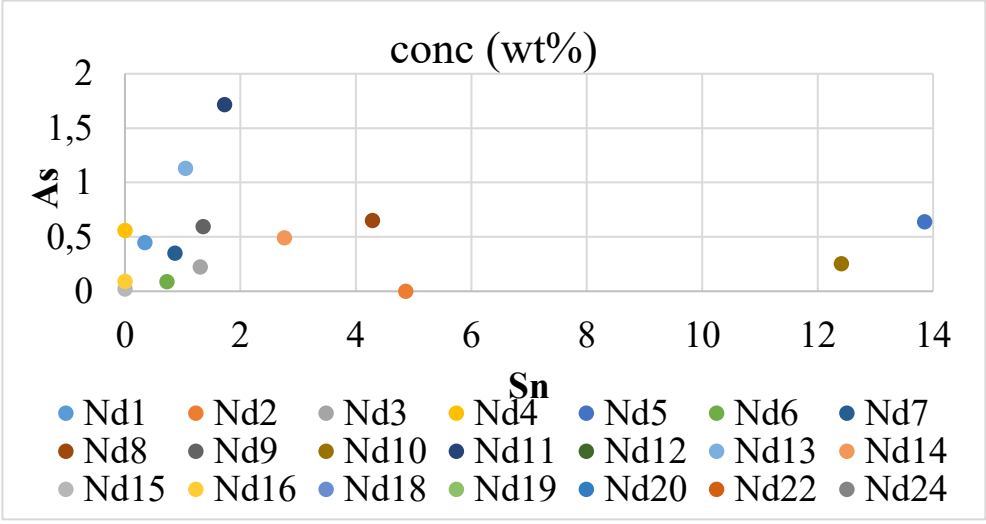

conc (wt%)
As
Sn
0
0,5
1
1,5
2
0
2
4
6
8
10
12
14
Nd1 Nd2 Nd3 Nd4 Nd5 Nd6 Nd7
Nd8 Nd9 Nd10 Nd11 Nd12 Nd13 Nd14
Nd15 Nd16 Nd18 Nd19 Nd20 Nd22 Nd24

Fig. 23

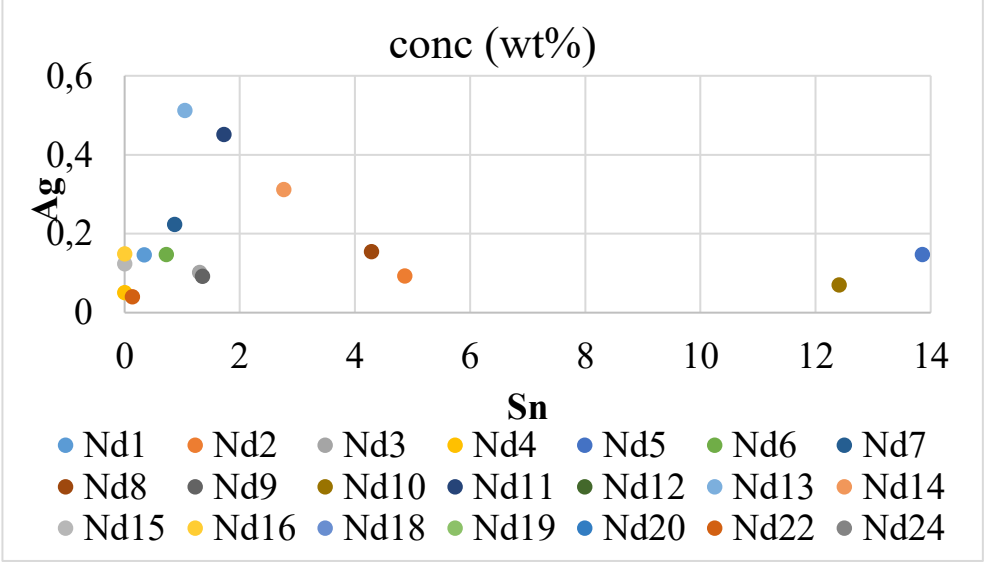

conc (wt%)
Ag
Sn
0
0,2
0,4
0,6
0
2
4
6
8
10
12
14
Nd1 Nd2 Nd3 Nd4 Nd5 Nd6 Nd7
Nd8 Nd9 Nd10 Nd11 Nd12 Nd13 Nd14
Nd15 Nd16 Nd18 Nd19 Nd20 Nd22 Nd24

Fig. 24

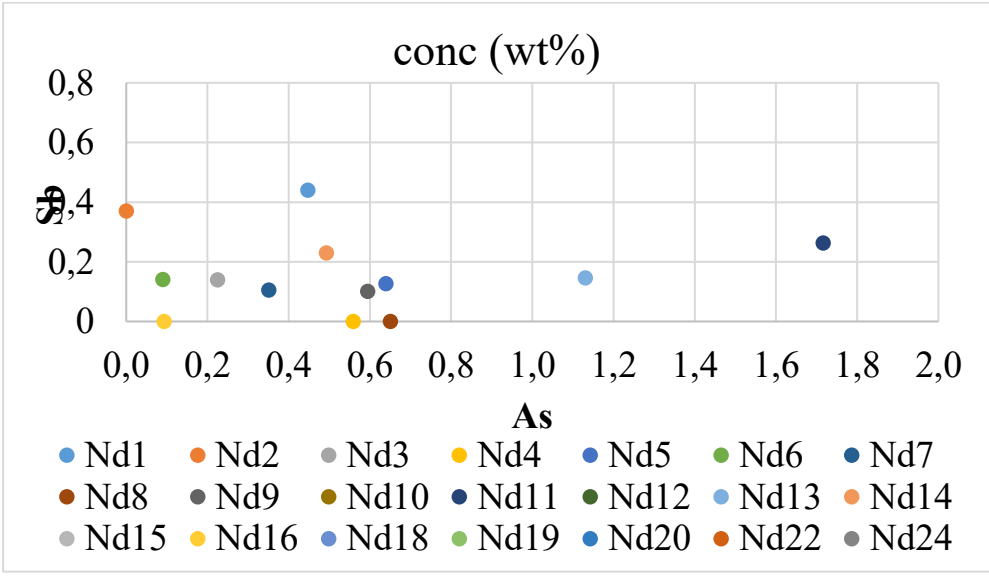

conc (wt%)
0,8
0,6
0,4
0,2
0
Sb
0,0 0,2 0,4 0,6 0,8 1,0 1,2 1,4 1,6 1,8 2,0
As
Nd1 Nd2 Nd3 Nd4 Nd5 Nd6 Nd7
Nd8 Nd9 Nd10 Nd11 Nd12 Nd13 Nd14
Nd15 Nd16 Nd18 Nd19 Nd20 Nd22 Nd24

Fig. 25

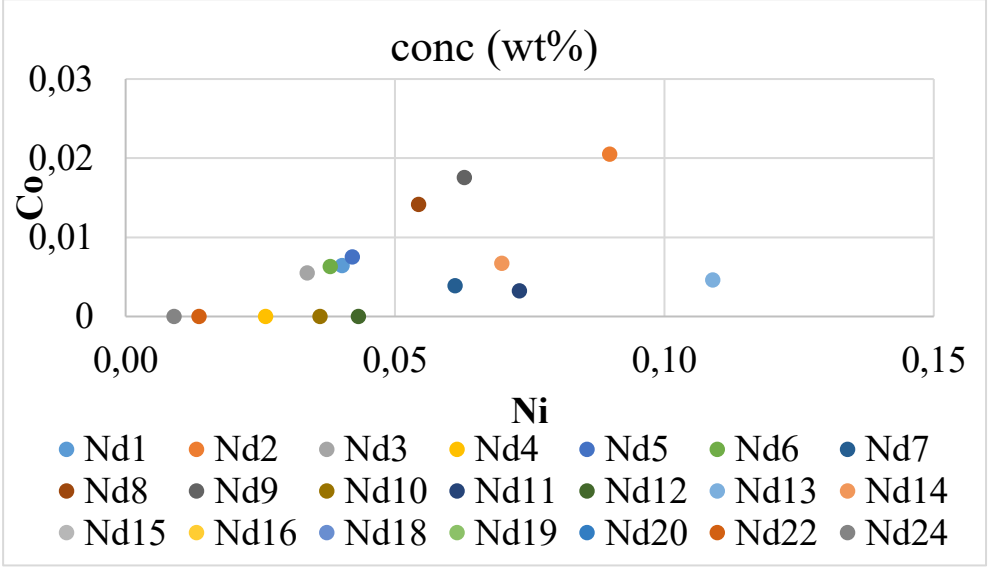

conc (wt%)
0,03
0,02
0,01
0
Co
0,00 0,05 0,10 0,15
Ni
Nd1 Nd2 Nd3 Nd4 Nd5 Nd6 Nd7
Nd8 Nd9 Nd10 Nd11 Nd12 Nd13 Nd14
Nd15 Nd16 Nd18 Nd19 Nd20 Nd22 Nd24

Fig. 26

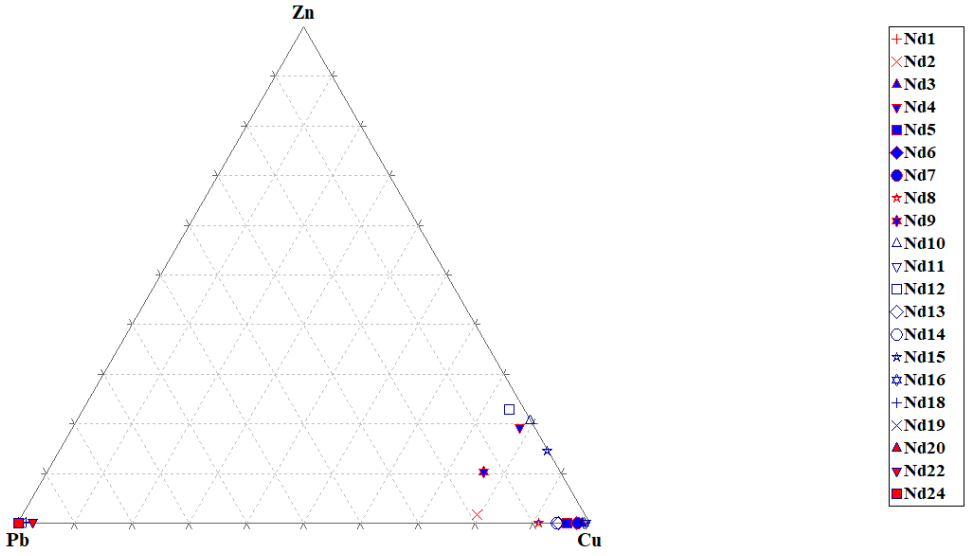

Zn
Pb
Cu
Nd1
Nd2
Nd3
Nd4
Nd5
Nd6
Nd7
Nd8
Nd9
Nd10
Nd11
Nd12
Nd13
Nd14
Nd15
Nd16
Nd18
Nd19
Nd20
Nd22
Nd24

Fig. 27

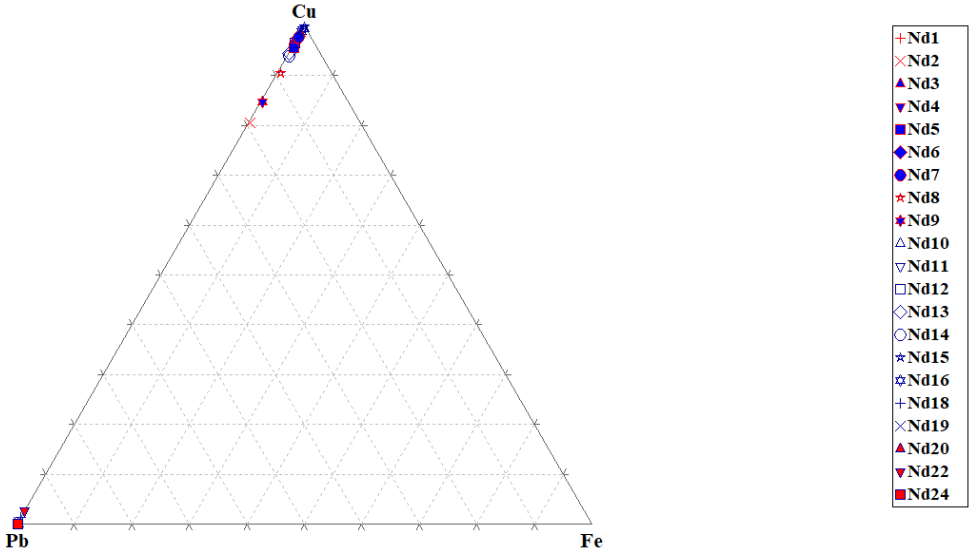

Cu
Pb
Fe
Nd1
Nd2
Nd3
Nd4
Nd5
Nd6
Nd7
Nd8
Nd9
Nd10
Nd11
Nd12
Nd13
Nd14
Nd15
Nd16
Nd18
Nd19
Nd20
Nd22
Nd24

Fig. 28

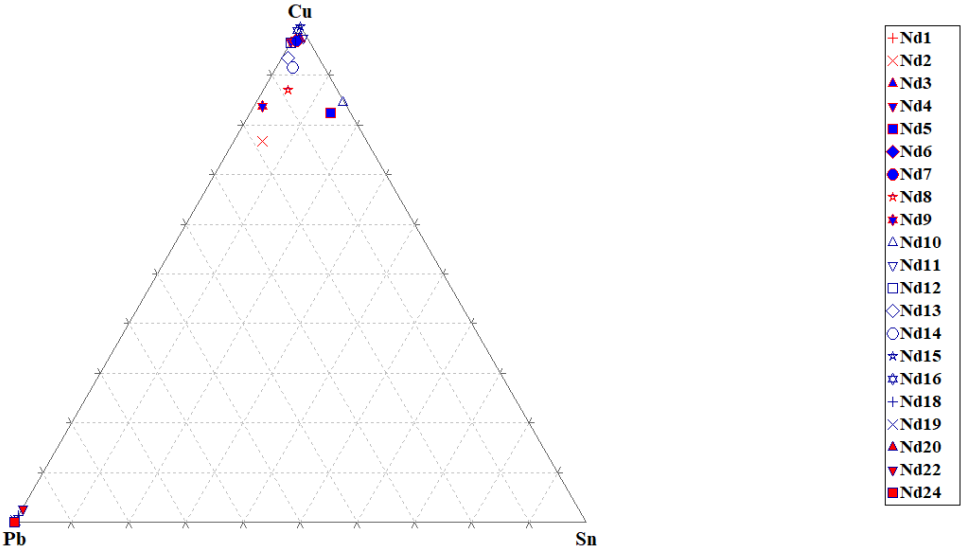

Cu
Pb
Sn
Nd1
Nd2
Nd3
Nd4
Nd5
Nd6
Nd7
Nd8
Nd9
Nd10
Nd11
Nd12
Nd13
Nd14
Nd15
Nd16
Nd18
Nd19
Nd20
Nd22
Nd24

Fig. 29

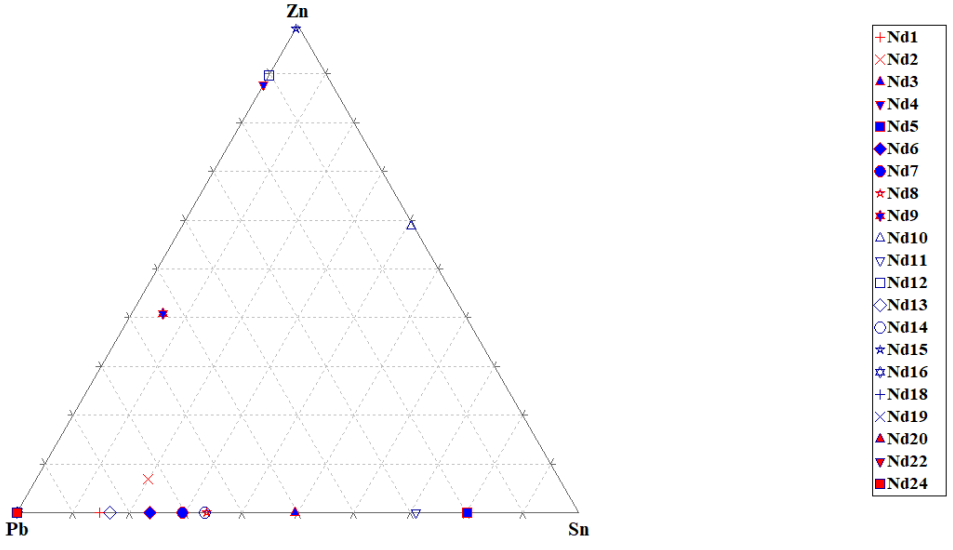

Zn
Pb
Sn
Nd1
Nd2
Nd3
Nd4
Nd5
Nd6
Nd7
Nd8
Nd9
Nd10
Nd11
Nd12
Nd13
Nd14
Nd15
Nd16
Nd18
Nd19
Nd20
Nd22
Nd24

Fig. 30.

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Clothing adornments and jewelry discovered in the early medieval fortified settlement of Oltina

Constantin Șova

Abstract: In this study, the author presents clothing and ornament pieces discovered in the fortified settlement of Oltina-"Capul dealului", a multi-stratified site that includes several early medieval layers, some of which are deep within Roman or Getae layers. The early medieval habitation began in the late 8th century and continued uninterrupted until the late 11th century, exhibiting two distinct phases: under the influence of the First Bulgarian Empire (8th-10th centuries) and later under the administration of the Byzantine Empire (late 10th century and the 11th century).

Located on a hilltop on the right bank of the Danube, not far from the fortresses of Păcuiul lui Soare and Silistra, downstream, the settlement has provided numerous pieces of evidence that make it stand out in the archaeological landscape of Dobruja. It exhibits unique features and characteristics compared to other contemporary settlements. One of its distinctive features is the existence of a defensive system, including a rampart and a ditch, which enclose it on the exposed western side. The investigation of this defensive system is the first research of a settlement of this period in Dobruja.

Among the artifacts discovered at the site are pieces of clothing and jewelry. These include five reliquary crosses and nine simple crosses (items of daily wear), which were made of bronze, sheet of brass, and lead. There are also four bronze appliqués and one belt end. In addition, two earrings, one made of bronze and one of silver, have been found. Several other objects of this type are mentioned but are not discussed in detail: three rings, one of them featuring a pentagram; a gilded buckle; a pendant; glass beads; and glass bracelets. These discoveries indicate that the fortified settlement at Oltina-"Capul dealului" did not function autonomously but was part of a larger system that allowed access to goods from specialized centers.

Keywords: early medieval fortified settlement, Oltina, clothing, jewelry.

Резюме: В това изследване авторът представя фрагменти от облекло и бижута, открити в укрепеното селище Олтина-"Глава на хълма", мулти стратиграфски обект, който включва няколко ранносредновековни слоя.

Населено е от края на VIII век непрекъснато до края на XI век, като се разграничават две фази: под влиянието на Първото българско царство (VIII-X век) и по-късно под управлението на Византийската империя (края на X век и XI век).

Разположено на върха на хълм на десния бряг на река Дунав, недалеч от крепостите Пъкуиул луи Соаре и Силистра, надолу по течението, селището предоставя множество свидетелства, които го отличават в археологическия пейзаж на Добруджа. Налице са уникални черти и характеристики в сравнение с други съвременни селища. Една от отличителните особености на селището е наличието на отбранителна система, включваща вал и ров, който го огражда от откритата западна страна.

Сред артефактите, открити в селището, са части от облекло и бижута. Те включват пет мощехранителни кръста и девет прости кръста (предмети за ежедневно носене), които са направени от бронз, месинг и олово. Има и четири бронзови апликации и един коланен накрайник. Освен това са намерени две обеци, една от бронз и една от сребро. Няколко други находки от този тип са споменати, но не са описани подробно: три пръстена, единият от тях с пентаграма; позлатена катарама; висулка; стъклени перли; и стъклени гривни. Тези открития показват, че укрепеното селище в Олтина-"Глава на хълма" не е функционирало автономно, а е било част от по-голяма система, която е осигурявала достъп на стоки от специализирани центрове.

Located in the southwestern part of Dobruja, the commune of Oltina (fig. 1) is well-known in the world of history and archaeology for the significant discoveries from several historical epochs.[1] For the early medieval period, the three necropolises in the village of Satu Nou (8th-10th centuries) stand out as notable archaeological sites,[2] investigated in the 50s-70s of the last century, the fortified settlement at Oltina-"Capul dealului" (probably late 8th to 11th century) is another significant site from the last century[3] where archaeological excavations are currently underway, and there are four settlements (late 8th to 10th century) contemporary with the initial phase of the evolution of the settlement at "Capul dealului", which were newly identified during surface surveys.[4]

This work focuses on the fortified settlement at Oltina-"Capul dealului", where archaeological research began in 2001 and, with a few interruptions, continues to this day. It has revealed the existence of a

[1] Paraschiv-Talmațchi & Șova 2019, 413.
[2] Mitrea & Anghelescu 1959, 535-542; Mitrea 1962, 643-647; Barnea & Ștefănescu 1971, 38-43; Fiedler 1992, 420-422.
[3] Paraschiv-Talmațchi & Custurea 2018, 365-387; Paraschiv-Talmațchi & Șova 2019, 413-431.
[4] Paraschiv-Talmațchi & Șova 2023, 295-312.

multi-layered site with several medieval-early medieval levels, featuring complexes (dwellings, craft spaces, storage pits, etc.) excavated into Roman or Getae layers. The early medieval levels begin around the late 8th century and have an uninterrupted evolution until the late 11th century, presenting two distinct phases: under the influence of the First Bulgarian State (8th-10th centuries) and under the administration of the Byzantine Empire (late 10th century and the 11th century).[5]

In the early medieval settlement at Oltina-"Capul dealului", systematic archaeological research is currently being conducted in three sectors (A, B, and C), which cover the western, eastern, and northern parts of the site (fig. 2). So far, over 35 early medieval dwellings have been discovered on an area of approximately 650 square meters,[6] two complexes with mechanical grinding installations[7] (from which one is discovered in 2023), a blacksmith workshop, numerous pits with various uses, three graves, and two Getae complexes.

Located on a hill on the right bank of the Danube, not far from the fortresses at Păcuiul lui Soare and Silistra, downstream, the settlement has so far provided numerous data that set it apart in the Dobruja archaeological landscape, with unique and distinctive features compared to other contemporary settlements. For example, a distinctive feature is the existence of a defensive system, an earthen rampart and ditch, which enclose it on the western side, the most exposed area. The investigation of this system represents a pioneering study of this kind for an early medieval settlement in Dobruja. Here, the earthen rampart is preserved to a height of about 2.5 meters, and the ditch in front of it has a depth of about 3 meters from the current ground level, resulting in a preserved level difference of 5.5 meters.[8] In the SIII section opened in 2018, the presence of special arrangements on the crest of the rampart was recorded,[9] which had the purpose of reinforcing its structure and possibly raising it. The remains of these structures (consisting of holes and imprints of stakes) were not identified in the initial perimeter investigated (section SI),[10] although

[5] Paraschiv-Talmațchi & Șova 2023, 298.
[6] Paraschiv-Talmațchi 2017, 211-230.
[7] Paraschiv-Talmațchi & Șova 2021a, 137-156.
[8] Paraschiv-Talmațchi & Șova 2019, 417.
[9] Paraschiv-Talmațchi & Șova 2023, 298-300, fig. 1-2.
[10] Chiriac *et al*. 2004, 222-223.

short, the new information represents a gain for a more rigorous analysis of the earthen rampart and its chronological placement. Research on this area is ongoing.

As mentioned earlier, the settlement has recorded two distinct phases of evolution, under the influence of the First Bulgarian State and under the administration of the Byzantine Empire. For both periods, ceramics represent the majority of the findings, but although less in number, other artifacts cannot be neglected. Among these are clothing and adornment pieces.

The clothing and adornment pieces include reliquary crosses, both elaborate and simple, which have been preserved either in their entirety or as fragments. There are five elaborate crosses made of bronze and nine simple ones made of bronze, brass sheet, and lead.

The first reliquary cross was discovered in sector B (in section SIB) in the year when this sector was opened, 2008. It appeared at a depth of 0.15-0.30 meters in brown-yellowish soil with rare early medieval ceramic fragments, approximately 3 meters to the west of two inhumation graves, M1 and M2, which had the upper part of the skeletons at a depth of 0.30 meters. At a distance of 0.70 meters southwest of the reliquary cross, at a depth of 0.35 meters, a coin was found, Vasile II-Constantin VIII (976-1028), class A2, variant 31.[11] It is possible, but not obligatory, for the coin and the cross to originate from one of the graves, as these objects could have been brought to the surface by plowing during agricultural activities.[12] In many cases coins were used as Charon's obol and remained in use even after they were withdrawn from circulation. Similarly, religious objects could be worn beyond the period they typologically belong to.[13]

On the obverse of the reliquary cross, a relief representation of the crucified Jesus Christ is depicted, dressed in a long *colobium* that reaches his ankles, with his head slightly inclined to the right. Above his head, there appears to be a cross. On the reverse side, also in relief, the Mother of God is depicted in the orans posture, wearing a long *maphorium* that reaches her ankles. The cross is whole and its arms are slightly flared outward: Length = 4.9 cm (3.4 cm without the upper and

[11] Custurea *et al*. 2009, 157; Custurea & Paraschiv-Talmațchi 2009, 486.
[12] Custurea *et al*. 2009, 157.
[13] Diaconu & Vîlceanu 1972, 160.

lower rings); l = 2.5 cm; th. = 0.9 cm; Museum of National History and Archaeology Constanța (henceforth MNHAC) inv. 46154 (fig. 3/1).[14]

From the same sector B (section SIB), a second reliquary cross comes, which was discovered in 2016 in the dusty-loamy soil of the filling of a dwelling, chronologically framed in the first half of the 11th century. The obverse and reverse of the piece are smooth. The cross is complete: L = 4.2 cm (3.3 without the upper and lower rings); w = 3.1 cm; th. = 0.52 cm; MNHAC inv. 51226 (fig. 3/2).[15]

The other three reliquary crosses are fortuitous surface finds from the site, so they lack an archaeological context. One of them probably retains the reverse side (based on the attachment elements, but it does not adhere to the rules of Byzantine iconography, as Jesus Christ does not appear on the obverse)[16] that has a broken arm. On the preserved part of the reliquary cross, Jesus Christ is depicted crucified in relief, wearing a *perizonium* (the folds of which stop above the knees), with His head slightly tilted to the right and a cross above Him. The arms of the piece are slightly widened outward: L = 4.6 cm (4 cm without the rings); l (preserved part) = 1.4 cm; th. = 0.4 cm; MNHAC inv. 46156 (fig. 3/3).[17]

Only the obverse of the fourth piece is preserved, with one arm broken. In relief on this fragment, Jesus Christ is depicted crucified, clothed with a *perizonium*. The vertical arms are slightly widened outward: L = 3.2 cm; w (preserved) = 2.4 cm; th. = 0.35 cm; MNHAC (fig. 3/4).[18]

From the last reliquary cross, only the lower part of the obverse is preserved, on which Jesus Christ (probably crucified) was depicted in relief, dressed in a long *colobium* reaching the ankles. At the lower end, under his feet, there is a bust. The preserved arm is slightly widened outward: L (preserved) = 3 cm; w (preserved) = 2 cm; th. = 0.3 cm.; MNHAC inv. 46155 (fig. 3/5).[19]

In the Istro-Pontic territory, reliquary crosses are relatively common in the layers dating from the 10th to the 12th centuries. Among the findings similar to the first piece presented, we can

[14] Custurea & Paraschiv-Talmațchi 2009, 486, pl. I/1a-c.
[15] Paraschiv-Talmațchi & Șova 2021b, 132, pl. I/2a-c.
[16] Mănucu-Adameșteanu 2020, 59, 92.
[17] Custurea & Paraschiv-Talmațchi 2009, 486, pl. I/2 a-b.
[18] Custurea 2000-2001, 584-585, pl. I/7; Mănucu-Adameșteanu 2020, 524.
[19] Custurea 2000-2001, 585, pl. I/8; Mănucu-Adameșteanu 2020, 526.

mention those from Capidava (10th-11th centuries)[20] and Constanța (late 10th century - early 11th century)[21] in Romania, as well as the one from Skala (10th century)[22] in Bulgaria. On the mentioned analogies, the cross above the head of Jesus Christ also appears, but there are more pieces without this element.[23] The reliquary cross discovered at Oltina is stratigraphically dated to the 11th century.

For the second piece with smooth surfaces, the closest analogies are found in Romania, in the fortress on Păcuiul lui Soare Island (two specimens from the 11th century)[24] and at Isaccea-Noviodunum (two copies from the 11th century).[25] In Bulgaria, the unadorned reliquary crosses are dated to the 10th-11th centuries,[26] with a few having an archaeological context that allows for precise chronological classification.

In Dobruja, similar findings to the following two reliquary crosses presented can be found in Nufăru (11th century - early 12th century, where above the head, a cross, a sun, and the crescent moon are depicted),[27] Ostrov, Tulcea County (10th-11th centuries),[28] and at Hârșova (the end of the 10th century - the 11th century, with the note that this specimen has no cross above the head).[29] Similar pieces have also been discovered in Bulgaria, in sites relatively close to Silistra (at Ruyno, Durankulak, Tsar Asen, Sredishte), dated to the 10th-11th centuries.[30] The piece from Ruyno[31] appears to be identical to the third cross presented, which typologically falls into the category of reliquary crosses from the 10th-11th centuries.[32]

For the last reliquary cross from Oltina-"Capul dealului", analogies can be found in the settlements at Isaccea-Noviodunum

[20] Mănucu-Adameșteanu 1984, 375-76, pl. I/1.
[21] Mănucu-Adameșteanu 1992, 349.
[22] Yotov & Atanasov 1998, 298, pl. XCIX/323; Atanasov 2007, 214, fig. 55.
[23] Custurea & Paraschiv-Talmațchi 2009, 487.
[24] Diaconu & Vîlceanu 1972, 161, pl. 28/3; Diaconu & Baraschi 1977, 128-129, fig. 100/3.
[25] Mănucu-Adameșteanu 1984, 379, pl. 4/2.
[26] Dončeva-Petkova 2011, 37-39, 347-51, pl. I-VII.
[27] Mănucu-Adameșteanu 1984, 379, pl. III.
[28] Aurelian 1962, 586, fig. 23; Mănucu-Adameșteanu 1984, 375; Mănucu-Adameșteanu *et al*. 2008, 315, pl. I/1.
[29] Mănucu-Adameșteanu 1992, 349, 351-352.
[30] Atanasov 2007, 303, fig. 104, pl. LXXIV/385-388.
[31] Atanasov 2007, pl. LXXIV/385.
[32] Paraschiv-Talmațchi & Șova 2021b, 133.

(11th century, the dating is based on analogies),[33] Dinogetia-Garvăn (three pieces, one of which was found in a sunken dwelling, along with a coin from Constantin VIII – 1025-1028),[34] Ostrov (Tulcea County),[35] Hârșova (11th century)[36] and Păcuiul lui Soare (secolul 11th),[37] in the Istro-Pontic territory. In Bulgaria, similar findings of this type are dated to the 10th century and the beginning of the 11th century.[38] Among these, we mention those from Troyansko, Lalkovo, Tsar Asen, Balik, Pliska, Preslav, and Yakimovo, with the last one being almost identical to the cross from Ostrov.[39]

As mentioned above, in addition to the five reliquary crosses discovered in the fortified settlement of Oltina-"Capul dealului", there are nine simple crosses, five of which are made of bronze, one of brass, and three of lead. Of these, three were discovered during archaeological excavations, while the others are chance finds on the site's surface.

The first simple bronze cross we will present depicts Jesus Christ crucified on the obverse, with his head slightly inclined to the right, and wearing a *perizonium*. Above his head, there is a cross framed by the sun and the moon. The vertical arms of the cross are slightly flared outward: H = 4.5 cm; W = 2.8 cm; th = 0.2 cm; MNHAC inv. 46172 (fig. 3/6). It was found in sector A, in SI, inside a dwelling, at a depth of 1 meter. It dates back to the late 10th century to the first half of the 11th century.[40]

The second simple bronze cross depicts the crucified Jesus Christ on the obverse, with his head inclined to the right, dressed in a *perizonium*, and with his feet supported on a *suppedaneum*. The edges of the cross are emphasized by a raised border. Its arms are slightly widened outward: L = 5.2 cm; w = 3.8 cm; th = 0.3 cm; MNHAC inv. 46171 (fig. 3/7). The second simple bronze cross was discovered in sector A, in SII, at a depth of 1.05 meters, in the filling of a burned dwelling, along with a piriform amphora with a collar and several

[33] Mănucu-Adameșteanu 1984, 378, pl. III/3.
[34] Ștefan *et al*. 1967, 360, fig. 193/9-10; Mănucu-Adameșteanu 1984, 377.
[35] Mănucu-Adameșteanu 1984, 376, pl. II/1.
[36] Harțuche & Atanasiu 1976, 270-271, no. 559.
[37] Diaconu & Vîlceanu 1972, 161, pl. XXIX/1-2.
[38] Doncheva-Petkova 2011, 137-139, 389-392.
[39] Milcev 1963, 30-1, fig. 9; Mănucu-Adameșteanu 1984, 377; Doncheva-Petkova 2011, 389-392.
[40] Chiriac *et al*. 2004, 223; Mănucu-Adameșteanu 2020, 527-528.

anonymous *follis* coins from the 11th century. The cross is dated to the first half of the 11th century, and this dating is supported by the archaeological context in which it was found.[41]

The third simple bronze cross has nearly equal arms with a rounded, slightly flattened section, and its ends are thickened and decorated with a relief ring: L = 4.2 cm; l = 2.8 cm; gr. = 0.4 cm; MNHAC inv. 46173 (fig. 3/8). It was discovered in sector A, in SII, at a depth of 0.40 m and chronologically it can be dated between the late 10th century and the end of the 11th century.[42]

The next two small bronze crosses, both decorated with a small cross at the intersection of the arms, were highlighted by grooves drawn along the edges. They have arms slightly widened outwards. One, which is a fortuitous find on the surface of the site, doesn't have the attachment loop preserved: L = 3.6 cm; l = 2.6 cm; th = 0.15 cm; MNHAC inv. 46157 (fig. 3/9). The other one, which has a broken lower arm (fig. 3/10), was discovered in sector A, in SIII, at a depth of 0.23-0.26 m, during the 2023 campaign. Its preserved height is 3.3 cm.

We found analogues of these pieces in Bulgaria, at Skala, Sredishte and Pop Rusanovo (10th-11th centuries),[43] and in Serbia, at Mala Vrbica (11th century).[44] The crosses from Oltina, which do not benefit from an archaeological context that would allow an exact chronological framework, are typologically placed in the category of crosses from the 10th-11th centuries.[45]

The cross made of sheet brass is decorated on both sides with concentric circles and small open circles made of brass wire. Its arms are widened and rounded: L (preserved) = 3.5 cm; l = 4.5 cm; th = 0.17 cm; MNHAC inv. 46158 (fig. 3/11). It appears to be a more modest version of a more elaborate category. Analogous examples, more in terms of decorative style and less in terms of form, are known from Păcuiul lui Soare (late 10th century - early 11th century),[46] Garvăn-Dinogetia (11th-12th centuries),[47] Dervent (end of 10th century –

[41] Chiriac *et al*. 2004, 223; Paraschiv-Talmațchi & Aparaschivei 2008, 285-286; Mănucu-Adameșteanu 2020, 529-530.
[42] Chiriac *et al*. 2004, 223; Mănucu-Adameșteanu 2020, 532.
[43] Atanasov 2007, pl. LXXI/318-320, 323.
[44] Marjanović-Vujović 1987, 55, 62.
[45] Paraschiv-Talmațchi & Șova 2021b, 133-34, pl. I/4.
[46] Papasima 1999, 300-301, fig. 5.
[47] Ștefan *et al*. 1967, 361-362, fig. 192/13; Barnea 1981, 140.

beginning of 11th century),[48] Cioroiu[49] and Ciobanu.[50] As a decorative style, we also mention the items from Skala, Silistra and Tsar Asen (11th century), respectively Pliska (10th-11th centuries),[51] from Bulgaria. Its chronological setting is the end of the 10th century – the 11th century.[52]

The three types of lead cross pendants discovered in the Oltina-"Capul dealului" settlement are relatively rare finds for this period.[53] The first type is represented by a simple, undecorated cross with slightly widened arms. The upper arm is damaged: L = 2.5 cm; l = 2 cm; th = 0.7 cm; MNHAC inv. 46161 (fig. 3/12). As an analogy, we mention a similar specimen found in Bulgaria, at Alfatar (10th century).[54] It was found on the surface of the site. Proposed dating: 10th-11th centuries.

The second one is a simple cross, with its edges highlighted by a raised border. It was decorated in the central area with a relief cross, which has its center marked by a thickened point and its arms end in triangles. The cross preserved three of its arms, which are slightly widened outward: L = 4.1 cm (3.3 cm without the attachment ring); l = 2 cm; thickness = 0.2 cm; MNHAC inv. 46160 (fig. 3/13). A similar finding is known in Bulgaria, at Rujno (10th century - early 11th century). It was discovered incidentally on the surface of the site.[55] Proposed dating: 10th-11th centuries.

The third lead cross has wide, rounded, bifurcated arms decorated with two circles with a dot in the center. The arms are decorated with intersecting relief lines, and in the central area, there is a circle with a dot in the middle. The left arm is broken: L = 3.9 cm; l = 2.7 cm; th = 0.4 cm; MNHAC inv. 46159 (fig. 3/14).

Lead crosses with bifurcated arm ends have been found in Dobruja at Garvăn-Dinogetia (11th century)[56] and Păcuiul lui Soare (11th century),[57] but their decoration is different from that of the piece from Oltina. We find more similarities with the lead crosses

[48] Diaconu 1984, 161-162, fig. 2.
[49] Barnea 1981, 140; Diaconu 1984, 162.
[50] Diaconu 1984, 162; Custurea & Paraschiv-Talmațchi 2009, 488.
[51] Yotov & Atanasov 1998, 298, pl. XCIX/328; Atanasov 2007, pl. LXXVI/413-414; Mănucu-Adameșteanu 2020, 533.
[52] Mănucu-Adameșteanu 2020, 533.
[53] Custurea & Paraschiv-Talmațchi 2009, 486, pl. II/5-7.
[54] Atanasov 2007, pl. LXIX/282.
[55] Atanasov 2007, pl. LXX/307.
[56] Ștefan *et al*. 1967, 358-359, fig. 191/15.
[57] Diaconu & Vîlceanu 1972, 161, pl. XXIX/6.

discovered in Bulgaria, at Silistra, Okorsht, and Balik (?) (10th century – beginning of 11th century).[58] It is a fortuitous discovery on the surface of the site. Proposed dating - 10th-11th centuries.

The lead crosses represent a component of the early medieval inventory in Dobruja,[59] even though they have a low percentage of finds compared to bronze crosses. Upstream from the settlement at Oltina-"Capul dealului", in the fortress on Păcuiul lui Soare Island, the existence of a workshop for making lead items, including crosses, has been confirmed.[60]

The reliquary crosses and simple crosses like those found at Oltina-"Capul dealului" are quite commonly encountered in the levels dating from the 10th to the 12th centuries, both within the territory of the Byzantine Empire and in regions culturally influenced by it.[61] In the Istro-Pontic region, such discoveries are relatively common, as we have mentioned some analogies as well.

The most numerous are the bronze objects that adorned various clothing accessories or leather items (appliqués and belt ends) and textiles (appliqués), along with a few items of adornment (earrings, rings, glass bracelets) that decorated parts of the human body.

So far, 31 appliqués and 3 belt ends have been introduced into scientific circulation, the majority of which are made of bronze (cast or cut from sheet metal), as well as two made by beating on sheets of copper.[62]

Overall, the appliqués come in various shapes, as follows: circular appliqués that seem to depict different flowers, with seven larger circular protrusions, one positioned centrally and the others uniformly like petals, and small protrusions forming a beaded circle around the central one; with eight petals delimited by incised lines emanating from an incised central circle; a corolla with five petals, in the center of which there is a circle with a dot in the middle.[63] They were made of bronze, cast, and on the back, they have one or two nails for attachment.

[58] Atanasov 2007, pl. LXX/296, 298-299, 301.
[59] Ștefan *et al*. 1967, 358-359, fig. 191/16; Diaconu & Vîlceanu 1972, 161, pl. XXVIII/5-6; Mănucu-Adameșteanu 1984, 244, pl. III/29; Barnea & Barnea 1984, 104.
[60] Damian 1992, 309-321.
[61] Ștefan *et al*. 1967, 362.
[62] Paraschiv-Talmațchi & Custurea 2018, 365-387.
[63] Paraschiv-Talmațchi & Custurea 2018, 368-369, pl. I/4-7.

The heart-shaped appliqués were quite popular, predominating in the discoveries from the fortified settlement. They represent about 50% of the total appliqués found there.[64] Throughout the period, their method of decoration varied, depending on the purpose for which they were created, the style of the workshop, and, why not, the fashion at the moment. There are heart-shaped appliqués with a raised and smooth face, with an incised border, with a semicircular cut at the base, with a shield-like appearance, some with one to six bulbs outward. They were made of bronze, by casting, and on the back, they have one to three rivets for attachment, with a small metal disc, or two nails bent to join.

The two appliqués made by beating on a sheet of copper depict flowers with four and nine petals, outlined by the raised "cord" motif. These were attached to textiles by sewing.

The belt ends have a rectangular shape, featuring geometric decoration on the obverse, with rivets or nails for attachment on the reverse.

In addition to the 34 pieces mentioned, we will add five more, consisting of four appliqués and one belt end, some of which were recently discovered.

The first one is a wide heart-shaped appliqué with three bulbs at the base. In the central part of the piece, there is a medallion decorated with a vegetal motif, bordered by two frames, one thin and smooth, the other wide and beaded. It was made of bronze through casting, and on the back, it has three attachment rivets: H = 2 cm; width = 2.73 cm; MNHAC (fig. 4/1). It was discovered during archaeological research in 2022, in SIIB, at a depth of 0.20-0.26 m in a yellow, compacted soil.

The decorative pattern of this appliqué is similar to that found on heart-shaped appliqués with a shield-like appearance, such as those found in Dobruja at Adamclisi,[65] Tufani[66] and Oltina,[67] and in Bulgaria in the settlements of Skala[68] and Preslav,[69] but also in the metal processing center at Novosel.[70] According to the characteristics, we

[64] Paraschiv-Talmațchi & Custurea 2018, 379.
[65] Paraschiv-Talmațchi *et al*. 2014, 178-179, pl. IV/53-55.
[66] Paraschiv-Talmațchi 2018, 393-394, pl. II/12-13.
[67] Paraschiv-Talmațchi & Custurea 2018, 374-375, pl. II/23.
[68] Iotov & Atanasov 1998, 109, pl. CXIV/442-443.
[69] Bonev 1993, 72-73, fig. 12/в.
[70] Bonev & Doncheva, 2011, 206-207, pl. XXXIV/250-254.

propose as dating the 10th century and the first decades of the 11th century.

The second one is a heart-shaped appliqué with an engraved, wide border and two remaining bulbs on the exterior. It was made of bronze through casting and has a perforation where a fastening rivet used to be. It is fragmented: preserved height = 1.58 cm; preserved width = 2.1 cm; MNHAC inv. 44461 (fig. 4/2). The piece was discovered on the surface of the site and then given to the museum.

Similar pieces were discovered at Adamclisi,[71] at Odartsi[72] and Okorsh,[73] several others are in the collection of the museum in Varna.[74] We propose as dating the 10th century and the first decades of the 11th century.

The third one is a heart-shaped appliqué with an incised decoration resembling an open heart or stylized palmette with four leaves. It was made of bronze through casting and has a fastening rivet on the reverse side. It is fragmented: preserved height = 2.44 cm; width = 1.9 cm; MNHAC inv. 44462 (fig. 4/3). The piece was discovered on the surface of the site and then given to the museum.

As analogs, we mention similar pieces discovered in Bulgaria at Novakovo, Suvorovo, Slaveykovo and Kiten.[75] Their chronological setting is 10th century.

The last one is a circular appliqué with incised decoration on the edges. It was made of bronze through casting and has a rivet on the reverse side for attachment. It has some parts of the edges broken: preserved diameter = 1.9 cm; MNHAC (fig. 4/4). The piece was discovered in 2022, in section SIB, in the layer at a depth of 0.80-0.90 m. It bears similarities to two appliqués discovered in Bulgaria, which are part of the collection of Varna Museum.[76] Our piece appears to be flattened. The broad dating range for this piece is the 8th-11th centuries.[77]

The belt end has a rectangular shape with one end shaped like a perforated triangle towards the interior of the piece and another end slightly pointed. It has a flat, undecorated surface. On the reverse side,

[71] Paraschiv-Talmațchi *et al*. 2014, 172, pl. II/16.
[72] Doncheva-Petkova *et al*. 1999, 106, pl. L/665.
[73] Atanasov *et al*. 2011, 224, fig. 12/d.
[74] Pletnov & Pavlova 1994-1995, 47, pl. XIII/233-238.
[75] Pletnov & Pavlova 1994-1995, 161, pl. XXV/433-441.
[76] Pletnov & Pavlova 1994-1995, 138, pl. V/80, 82.
[77] Pletnov & Pavlova 1994-1995, 37.

it has four rivets for attachment. It was made of bronze, through casting: L = 4.13 cm; l = 1.5 cm; MNHAC (fig. 4/5). It was discovered during archaeological research in 2001, in sector A, SI, at a depth of 0.90 m, in the fill of a dwelling. Its general characteristics date it to the 9th-10th centuries. It appears to be a local imitation.

We add to the pieces of jewelry discovered at Oltina-"Capul dealului" two earrings. One, made of bronze, was found in 2022, in sector B, near the western end of section SIB, while excavating a molehill. It is an oval-shaped earring, cast, of the pendant-type. At the area of its maximum diameter, there are two oval protrusions, with one of them having the loop for attaching the earwire, which is missing. The lower half is undecorated. The pendant, in the form of a loop, has two oval protrusions, one in the upper part and one in the lower part: Dimensions: H= 3.8 cm, w 2.52 cm; MNHAC (fig. 4/6). Among the analogies, we mention the earrings discovered at Capidava[78] and Orșova.[79] This type of earring has a wide distribution area, starting from Croatia to the Lower Danube, and falls chronologically mainly in the 10th century and the beginning of the 11th century.[80]

The second earring, made of silver, was found in 2016, in sector B, in SIB, at a depth of 0.10-0.20 m, in vegetation. It belongs to the type with a loop to which a biconical setting made of silver foil was attached. The cones are undecorated. The setting was fixed to the loop with a spiraled silver thread, arranged on both sides. To secure the loop, one end of it was bent and flattened (fig. 4/7). This type of earring has, like the previous one, a wide distribution area (including Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Ukraine) and is framed starting from the 10th century and up to the 14th century.[81] Since in Oltina-"Capul dealului" the habitation does not exceed the end of the 11th century, the piece discovered here may belong, from this wide chronological interval, to the 10th-11th centuries.

Several other bronze and glass objects, which we will briefly mention, complement the findings of this type in the settlement: a ring with a pentagram; a ring with a rhomboidal chaton; an open ring; a gilded buckle; a pendant; glass beads; and glass bracelets.

[78] Paraschiv-Talmațchi *et al.*, 113.
[79] Oța 2008, 91, pl. 3/14.
[80] Oța 2008, 91.
[81] Oța 2008, 94.

All these findings attest that the fortified settlement of Oltina-"Capul dealului" did not operate autonomously. It was part of a larger system that allowed its access to goods from specialized centers, located at various distances, including the important economic and military center of Silistra (within its continuous sphere of influence), Păcuiul lui Soare, and metalworking centers near the capital Preslav. Some of the objects found in the settlement could have originated from these markets and others as well.

Even though they are relatively scarce, the presented findings are considered important in shaping the image of the area, providing additional information regarding clothing and ornament pieces as a fashion of the time, jewelry production, and the region's distribution of such objects.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1. The administrative positioning of Oltina (in the south-east of Romania).

Fig. 2. Marking of sectors and sections in the Oltina-"Capul dealului" site plan (aerial photo).

Fig. 3. Reliquary crosses (1-5) and simple crosses (6-14) discovered in the settlement of Oltina-"Capul dealului" (Custurea 2000-2001, fig. 1/7-8).

Fig. 4. Appliques (1-4), belt end (5) and earrings (6-7) discovered in Oltina-"Capul dealului" (photo by Constantin Șova).

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ROMANIA
BULGARIA
2000 m
1500 m
1000 m
500 m
200 m
100 m
0 m
Dobruja
Oltina
Danube
Black Sea
N
0
100
200 km

Fig. 1

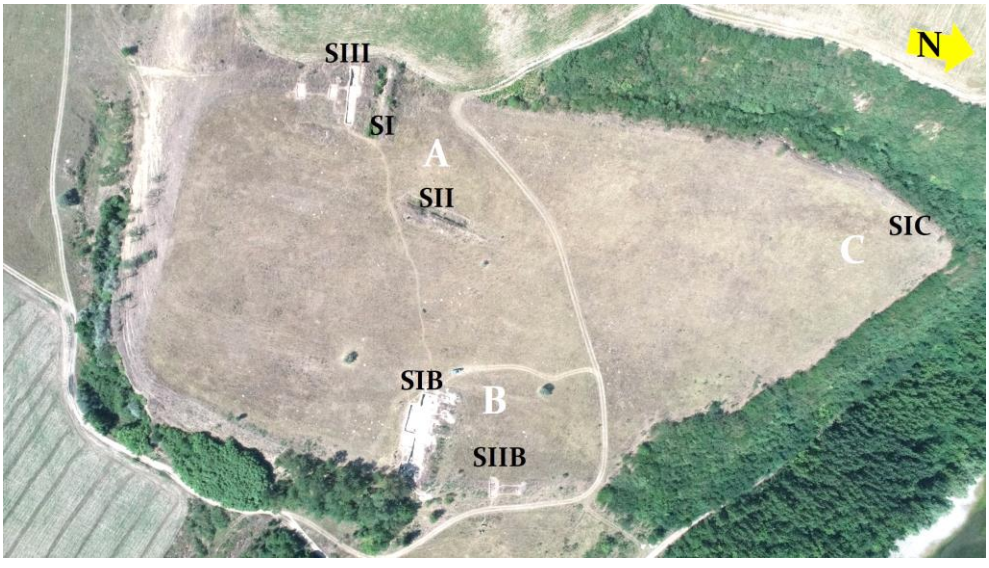

SIII
SI
A
SII
SIC
C
SIB
B
SIIB
N

Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

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Early Bulgarian monuments from Kaliakra

Filip Petrunov

Abstract: Located over 2 km into the Black sea, the massif known today as Kaliakra is one of the most impressive areas of the Dobrudzha plateau. The "beautiful land", as it is referred to in written sources, is a centre of attraction and a starting point for sea faring in the contact zone between the Black Sea and the Danube. Thanks to these natural resources, Kaliakra as the capital of Dobrotitsa played an important role in the political struggles between Venice and Genoa to gain control over the western Black Sea coast. Precisely because Kaliakra was continually inhabited in the 14th century, some data on the earlier periods remained on the periphery of published research for the past 57 years. Therefore, it is time to present some situations and findings related to the time of the First Bulgarian Kingdom. A yurt-like dwelling, a grave, appliqués, belts and bronze vessels stand out. All of them have a common dating, 8th–10th centuries, and they shall be published in more detail shortly.

Key words: Kaliakra, Dobrudzha, First Bulgarian Kingdom

Резюме: Разположен на над 2 км навътре в морето, масивът, известен днес като Калиакра, е един от най-впечатляващите райони на Добруджанското плато. „Хубавата земя", както се споменава в писмените извори, е притегателен център и отправна точка за мореплаване в контактната зона на Черно море и Дунав. Благодарение на тези природни богатства Калиакра като столица на Добротица играе важна роля в политическите борби между Венеция и Генуа за контрол над западното Черноморие. Именно поради това, че Калиакра е била постоянно обитавана през 14 век, някои данни за по-ранните периоди остават в периферията на публикациите за последните 57 години. Затова е време да представим някои ситуации и констатации, свързани с времето на Първото българско царство. Открояват се юртообразно жилище, гроб, апликации, колани и бронзови съдове. Всички те имат обща датировка 8–10 в. и скоро ще бъдат публикувани по-подробно.

Located over 2 km into the Black sea, the massif known today as Kaliakra is one of the most impressive areas of the Dobrudzha plateau. The "beautiful land", as it is referred to in written sources, is a centre of attraction and a starting point for sea faring in the contact zone between the Black Sea and the Danube. Thanks to these natural features, Kaliakra as the capital of Dobrotitsa played an important role in the political struggles between Venice and Genoa to gain control of the western Black Sea coast. Precisely because Kaliakra was continually inhabited in the 14th century, some data on the earlier periods remained on the periphery of published research for the past 57 years. Since the beginning of the excavations the archaeological studies and articles have presented a picture oriented towards the time of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom. Kaliakra, as one of the national archaeological reserves of Bulgaria, is a multi-layered site whose stratigraphy often does not really reflect all the historical stages of deposition and accumulation. The traces of human activity and various diggings have largely destroyed the traces of non-durable buildings and temporary structures. On the other hand, the composition of the soil and the sandy bedrock cannot provide sufficient density of layers needed for a clear stratigraphic picture. However, archaeological practice shows that traces always remain, regardless of the depth of embedment, whether the foundations are laid on rock or a section is cleared. Materials from earlier periods are not completely destroyed. On various occasions we find them as infill in earthworks, and sometimes as embankments for levelling walkways. It is also quite common to find reused objects with modified technical characteristics which, due to the robustness of their structure, came into use in later times. Either way, it is a rare case that no traces have survived from a historical time, when the place was inhabited. Interestingly, neither during the excavations in the 1960s and 1970s, nor during the excavations in the last twenty years, there is a single fragment of pottery that points to a dating earlier than the 2nd century. This can be attributed to at least three objective factors. On the one hand, it is quite possible that there was no fortification in this place before the Roman Empire took over the Balkans. Secondly, the settlement of the Hellenistic era may have been in an area that no longer exists and has been swept away by the sea, a legend you can read in any popular journal today. The third option is that similar layers of earlier material have not yet been reached, in the citadel area, where excavations were resumed in 2023. It is important to note here that during the 1972-1974 excavations led by Anna Balkanska, as evidenced in the preserved field documentation, materials mainly from the 14th

century were unearthed. Presumably, according to the conservation work and the logs from the excavations, kept in the Museum of History in Kavarna, the territory of the town has been carefully studied. However, there are still unexplored areas and the rock is visible only in some places. Along the street network and the aligned residences, there are still unexplored areas. Individual channels from the drainage system of the ancient and medieval town can be identified. Without going into the details of the recent excavations of Kaliakra, which are yet to be published, it should be noted that no archaeological evidence has been obtained so far relating to settlements from the 4th–2nd centuries BC. This is not quite the case with another important historical period. The First Bulgarian Kingdom, the period from the establishment of Danube Bulgaria to the "Golden Age" of the Bulgarian state in the Balkans. These are several centuries marked by an important social and political reorganization of the economic and cultural processes in the Balkans. After the intensive campaigns of a number of emperors from Justinian to Heraclius to conquer the northern provinces of Moesia and Scythia Minor, new trade relations were established, which is to be noticed also in the localised materials at the sites.[1] Kaliakra is no exception to this pattern. There was an abrupt change in the architectural design and some ancient buildings were abandoned, whereby whole segments of roof fell in and were used later on to level the surface for new structures. Unlike Odessos and other major metropolitan centres of the empire, on Kaliakra, as already mentioned, the soil does not favour bulky deposits. On the contrary, constant weathering has led to visible erosion as more than 5 m of rock has disappeared from the southernmost point of the promontory over a decade, from 2009 to 2019.

Notwithstanding the above, there are some finds, situations and structures on Kaliakra that should receive special attention. Only single objects and situations will be highlighted here, just to open up the question of the 8th–10th century period. This topic and the problems of the early Middle Ages of Kaliakra largely remain in the background of research, as mentioned. However, it is known that at the time when the Bulgarians of Asparuh settled south of the Danube the territories near Odessos were conquered.[2] It is difficult to believe, just as it is dismissed for Odessos itself, that the local population with its administration and cultural traditions survived at Kaliakra. Yet, certainly the territory was not abandoned. It was used in the way cattle-breeding peoples make

[1] Pletnyov 2008, 66.
[2] Pletnyov 2008, 41.

use of the land – passing across, moving seasonally from meadows to high pastures and vice versa. It is virtually impossible to register traces of such a population at one point or another, unless they are caught in natural disasters or armed conflicts. It is important to mention the idea advanced by R. Rashev about defence by sea, practiced by the Bulgarians in the First Bulgarian Kingdom. They blocked off the accessible bays and beaches to prevent Byzantine attacks from the sea.[3] Even at first sight, above the entrance of the modern museum at Cape Kaliakra, we are faced with an image carved into the rock. It is one of the typical early medieval forms fulfilling artistic, educational and commemorative purposes (fig. 1). It is a graffito scratched into the rock above the entrance to a natural cavern. It had a 1m wide funnel-shaped opening and was used as a storage area in antiquity. Most probably in the first half of the 5th century a solid block broke off from the massif on the western shore of Kaliakra. This change in the shape of the cape has resulted in the opening of four caves. Next to the silo opening, which eventually became part of the forehead of the front of the cave entrance, a graffito depicting a horse and rider appeared in the 8th–10th centuries. They exhibit the features typical of the Bulgarian Middle Ages and have exact analogies in the book of Prof. D. Ovcharov.[4] The graffito represents a common hunting or battle scene, unfortunately poorly preserved. The horse is depicted to the left, the front legs are presented with one line, straight, side by side. The hind ones are marked with only one arch. Only the lower side of the tail is marked, and the ears are marked by the characteristic two straight parallel lines. The horse has a stirrup that the horseman holds with his right hand. A spear or bow is probably depicted in the horseman's left hand. The horseman himself is scratched through the body of the horse, which in turn is flattened in the middle and arched. Iconography is characteristic of the representational techniques of the graffiti from the 8th–10th centuries.

Back to the archaeological evidence of Kaliakra dating to the period of the First Bulgarian Kingdom, we should undoubtedly start with a child's grave. It was unearthed in 2009. The grave pit is cut in the rock, aligned in the west-east direction, rectangular in shape. The grave was later broken, and a spiral of rough stones was made at its eastern end. A bronze phial was found in it. After lifting the facility, two iron blades were found under the phial stuck in the rock. One of them is a spearhead and the other one is a big nail with a square cross section.

[3] Rashev 1980, 53.

[4] Ovcharov 1982, table XXXV.

One might assume that a safeguarding magic was performed at this location. It is known that until the 19th century, in some areas, the place of death was neutralized by driving a nail or some other type of sharp object (fig. 2). Here we are faced with a Christian burial rite but with specific non-orthodox practices. Impressive is the spiral of stones formed at the feet of the buried child, with a ritual bronze vessel and the "nailing" with two blades. According to the data provided by the archaeologist,[5] and the information gathered in the discussions held with other experts during the study, the grave should be dated to the middle and second half of the 9th century, after Prince Boris-Mihail introduced Christianity. Another important situation, in immediate proximity of the grave, is a cleared and burned patch about 3 m in diameter and round in shape. Three objects were found in this space marking a likely burned wooden structure. A phial with similar characteristics as the one found in the grave, a plate with an image of griffins and belt applications. All these objects are broadly dated to the 8th–10th centuries (fig. 3). Though the plate with the griffins finds analogies in Avar belt-tips from the 8th–9th centuries.[6] There will be a separate article summarizing the data from the materials discovered at Kaliakra on the issue of this particular facility, covering as well other topics related to the material culture in the Balkans. Here, just for this preliminary discussion, it can only be mentioned that the variety of finds and their specifics and analogies unambiguously point at the newly settled Bulgarian and Avar groups controlling the territory initially between the Dnieper and the Danube, and later what is known as Scythia Minor, present-day southern Dobrudzha. Finally, we must mention another very characteristic type of artifacts from the period. These are the so-called shield-shaped, leaf-shaped appliqués[7] dated to the 9th–10th centuries or as they are also known, appliqués with a fan-type decoration published by S. Doncheva dated to the 8th–9th centuries.[8] Regardless of the different readings and dating, the materials belong to the period of the First Bulgarian Kingdom (fig. 4). The pottery found there, also associated with the period, will not be included in this brief article; it will only be noted that it also shows distinctive features relating to the period of the 8th–10th centuries, in general. The

[5] I would like to express my huge gratitude to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Boni Petrunova for the provided materials.
[6] Doncheva & Nikolov 2019, 148.
[7] Doncheva-Petkova *et al*. 1999, 162, cat. No 671.
[8] Doncheva 2004, 214.

complete overview of the discovered Old Bulgarian monuments has to be developed in a separate academic work to illustrate and systematize all the available information about the excavations in the period 2004-2010 at Kaliakra (fig. 5). For one reason or another, the suburb of Kaliakra is an area where the natural and archaeological reserve overlap and no excavations have been conducted there since 2010. Probably, one day, considering the importance of the period for the Bulgarian history, there will be new and more extensive excavations in the direction of the northernmost fortification line. According to the general observations of the museum's long-time director A. Salkin, this is where the traces of early Bulgarian deposits are concentrated. A point of view that remains in the realm of speculations, pending some further studies in this respect.

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Fig. 4. An applique decorated with a "twig" ornament (Filip Petrunov)

Fig. 5. A zone in the Suburb unearthed during 2004-2010 (Filip Petrunov)

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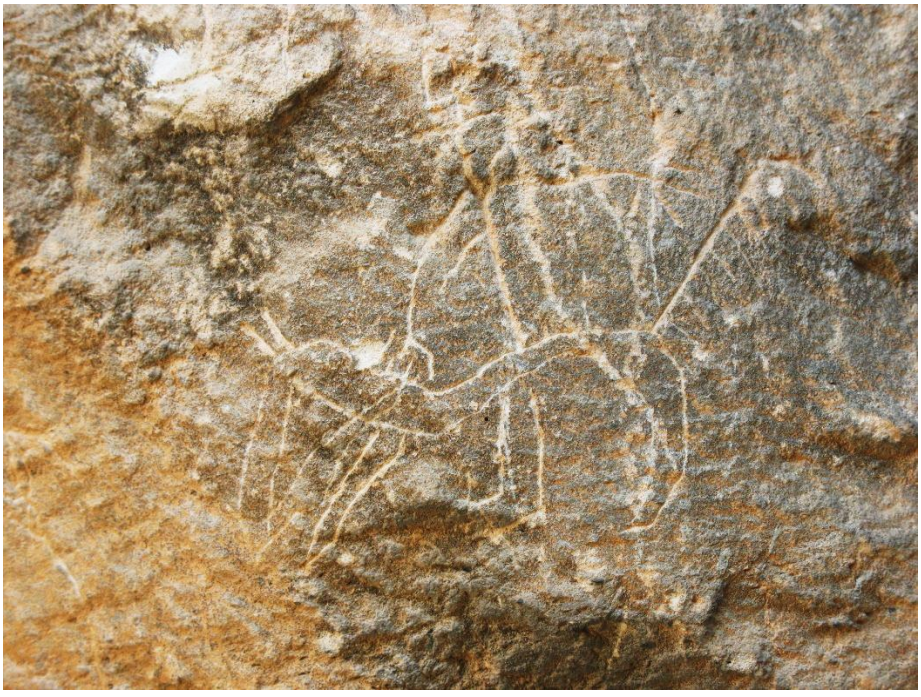


Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

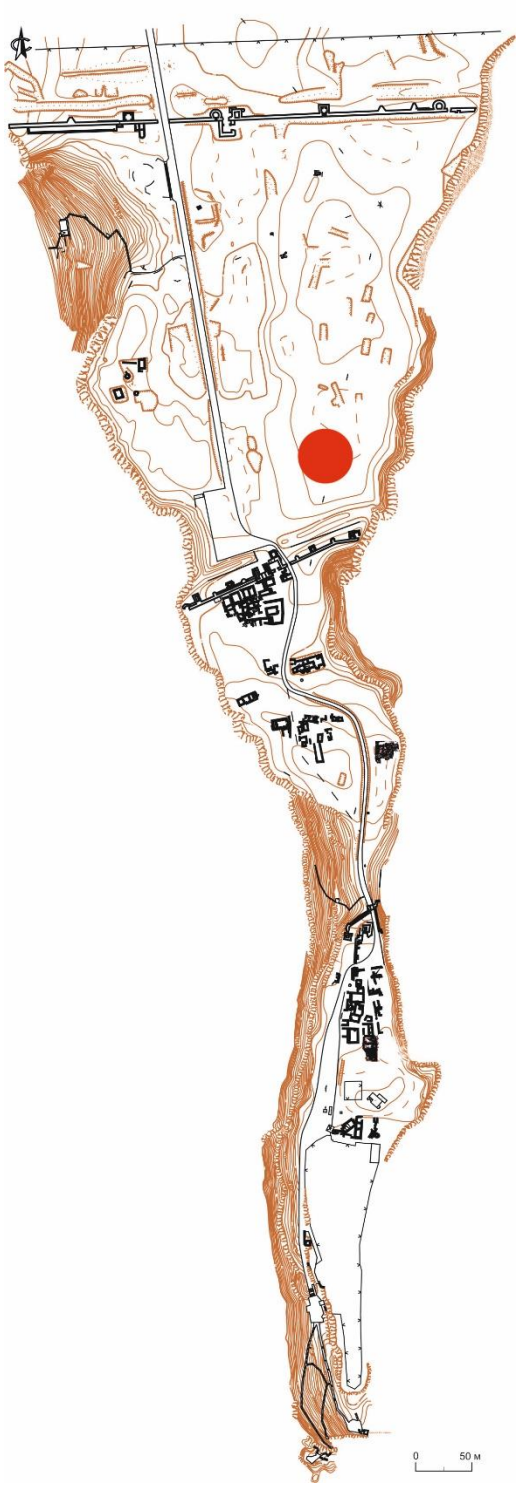


Fig. 5

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Signs on pottery fragments discovered at Vlădeni-Popina Blagodeasca

Emilia Corbu

Abstract: Various signs marked on 26 pottery fragments have been analyzed in this report. The information is organised as follows: description, analogies, data back method, interpretations and significance, conclusions. Descriptions show two kinds of signs: tamga-signs and linear signs. Tamga signs are incised before burning on various fragments depending on production and technology. We don't know if these signs kept the real significance of tamga. We mention some of these: X cross and a cross with equal arms, runic letters, a bird paw, pentagram, etc. The linear signs seem like a stick, a spear or a leaf. There are simply lines, rows or registers. Despite the small number of findings, the analogies indicate their presence in all early medieval cultures like Dridu, Saltovo-Maiaţk, the first Bulgarian Kingdom. The stratigraphic context and analogies have been used to established the chronology. Part of tamga-signs belong to late antiquity and another part of early middle settlements date back to 9-10th century. The linear signs were discovered especially at the "house level" dated back to 10-11th AD. From points of view of culture, there are two different traditions to put signs on pottery. The first is "ostraka": an old tradition to use pottery fragments as a paper for different kinds of notices. The tamga tradition was developed around Black Sea on the old custom of ownership to mark their animals.

We believe the linear signs could be the first tally stick used by shepherds to notice all kind of transactions until the beginning of 20th c. AD.

Key words: linear signs, tamga-signs, cross, pentagram, bird-paw, Early - Medieval, Popina Blagodeasca

Резюме: В настоящата разработка са анализирани 26 фрагмента от керамика, маркирани с различни знаци. Изложението е сруктурирано в следните части: описание, аналогии, метод за възстановяване на данни, интерпретации и значение, заключения. Описанията показват наличието на два вида знаци: тамга-знаци и линейни знаци. В зависимост от производството и технологията тамга-знаците са врязани, преди изпичане върху различни фрагменти. Не знаем дали тези знаци са запазили истинското значение на тамга.

Някои от тях са: Х-кръст и равнораменен кръст, рунически букви, птичи крак, пентаграма и др. Линейните знаци наподобяват пръчка, копие или лист, подредени в прости линии, редове или регистри. Въпреки малкия брой находки, аналогиите показват присъствие във всички ранносредновековни култури като Дриду, Салтово-Маяцка, Първото българско царство. Стратиграфският контекст и аналогиите са използвани за установяване на хронологията. Част от тамга-знаци принадлежат на нива от късната античност, а други от ранносредновековни селища се датират от IX-X век. Линейните знаци, които са открити предимно на „нивото на дома" се датират от X-XI в. От гледна точка на културата има две различни традиции да се поставят знаци върху керамика. Първата е „острака": стара традициия да се използват фрагменти от керамика вместо хартия за различни видове известия. Традицията тамга се е развила около Черно море въз основа на стария обичай собствениците на овце да маркират животните си.

Авторът смята, че линейните знаци на първо място могат да се разглеждат като рабош, използван от овчарите за отбелязване на различни количествени движения до началото на 20 век.

Fragments' descriptions

Various incised signs were discovered on 26 fragments of pottery at Popina Blagodeasca.[1] There are small square or triangular fragments, only 5 x 6 cm. Most of them came from the pot' s body, only few lip fragments. The paste of most fragments is fine, gray colour, work up on slow-wheel. Only few come from amphorae or handmade pottery type. Three signs have been found on other materials: stone, bone, timber-clay. The incisions has been work up with a sharp tool. Some are deeply incised, others are only scratched. Moreover, there are same fragment, which part of the signs are deeply incised, while others only scratched. On three other fragments, a sign is painted in white colour (loam?) pressed in the raw paste.

Categories of signs

We have organized the signs in two categories from the casting point of view: 1) tamga-signs and 2) linear-signs. Tamga-signs look like ancient tamga, but I don't know if they kept the tamga's significance.

[1] A large early-middle settlement with three levels of living has been discovered on Popina Blagodeasca site. The settlement is placed in borderland of two great rivers: Ialomitza and Danube. In history, it was a strategical one because the Danube has been the natural frontier for three great empires. Moreover, the region was full of economical resources like animal breeding, fishing, trade, farming, hunting.

1) X cross was put on three lips, two of them hand made, semifine paste (fig.1,2) and another made of kaolin paste with sand (fig.4). Only one is an amphora handle (fig. 3) and another is on a fragment of lip made of sandy kaolin paste (fig. 4).

2) Runic letters. Two signs, one on a small fragment of a timber-clay (fig. 5) and another drawn before firing on a ceramic fragment (fig. 6) were interpreted as runic letters.

3) Three or four equal lines, of which three vertical and one oblique (fig. 7).

4) "Bird's paw" is a sign composed of three lines joined at the tip. It was drawn before firing on a handmade fragment (fig. 8).

5) A cross with two rays. The sign drawn before burning on a handmade pot (fig. 9).

6) A broken horizontal line from which lines start on both sides. The sign has been drawn before firing on a pot (made of fine paste on the fast wheel, chestnut in color (fig. 10).

7) Linear signs and a rectangle were drawn between the arms of the X-shape (fig. 11). A part of sign was incised before burning and another after.

8) Pentagram composed of two unequal triangles, one of which has a doubled line, incised before burning (fig. 12).

9) The partial signs. The fragments are broken and we can see only a part of the sign. The first is composed of a sign incised before burning and lines incised after that (fig. 13). Two of them have a centered rhombus drawn in white colour on the wet paste before firing, thus the sign is impressed in the paste. One is printed on the inner side of a handmade pot (fig. 14) and the other one on the outside of an amphora (fig. 15). They seem to be made with a template.

Linear-signs

This category of signs consists in one or more lines incised usually on the inner or outer face, after firing the pot. The lines may be simple, bold, lanceolate or like leaves. Their sizes vary between 3 mm to 1.5 cm. They can be in simple strings or in series of two. Sometimes they may be accompanied by dots. In many cases, the string of simple lines is preceded by a lanceolate line. Also, there are cases where the sign is composed only of lanceolate lines. Some are marked on the outer face of the ceramic fragment, some on the inner face. This detail is important because it indicates the sign was put on the fragment, not on the pot. In this case, the fragment being used as a support for a note. A fragment

bearing strings of lines on both sides seems to be leading to the same conclusion. We notice the following types of signs:

a) strings of lines on outside and strings of lines and dots on the inside part of the same fragment (fig. 16); c) groups of three lines with different orientations (fig. 17); d) five lanceolate lines (fig. 18); e) five simple lines preceded and set apart by a bold line (fig. 19); f) seven simple lines, one of which is lanceolate (fig. 20); g) two registers of nine lines each, the first with short and rounded lines, the second with long lines set apart by a space (fig. 21); two rows of oblique lines, but each of it with a different orientation (fig. 22).

Signs can also be found on other objects such as a clay-weight with a cross on the top (fig. 23), a knucklebone incised with lines on the upper side (fig. 24) and a small stone incised with lines (fig. 25).

Analogies

There are many analogies in villages or fortresses from the early medieval culture during 8th – 11th AD like Dridu and Saltovo-Maiatk cultures or the First Bulgarian Kingdom culture. The number of findings is quite small, despite the spread.

Analogies for linear signs

Our target is not to list all the analogies, but only to outline the expansion of this custom in that time and territory. Linear signs on pottery has been found at Dridu and Bucov (Muntenia region), Dinogeția and Capidava (Dobroudja), Pliska (Bulgaria), Sarkel (Russian Federation). At Dridu, we see long, oblique lines with dots on the neck of amphora (fig. 26).[2] On the same site, a knucklebone is covered by six vertical lines preceded by a sign similar to cipher one, crossed by a horizontal line (fig. 27).[3]

Groups of 2-3 lines, incised before or after firing, usually on gray pottery have been discovered at Bucov. Such a sign appears incised before burning on the lip of a gray pot found inside hut 19 dated back to the 8th century AD (fig. 28).[4]

At Dinogetia, barely visible signs and letters can be seen on several fragments of amphorae with raised handles, dated back 11th-12th century AD. Four lines are scratched on a handle (fig. 29 a,b).[5]

[2] Zaharia 1967, 89, fig. XXVII/1.
[3] Zaharia 1967, fig.50/1, fig. 56/1.
[4] Comșa 1978, 129, 133, fig. 99/1.
[5] Ștefan *et al*. 1967, 261, fig. 160/15.

A sign comprising three or four vertical lines was incised on amphora handles (fig. 30 a,b)[6] discovered at Sarkel-Belaia Veja,

Groups of several lines were applied on knucklebones discovered at Bucov and Dridu. A group of 14 lines was incised on a knucklebone found in hut 15 dated 8th-9th century AD (fig. 31)[7] and there, also appear, lanceolate signs dated to 10th century AD (fig. 32).[8]

Tamga signs' analogies

X cross sign has been applied before burning on a jar discovered inside hut 2 dated back to 8th AD at Bucov (fig. 33).[9] The paste of the jar contains sand. At Sarkel, the sign can be seen on the body and handles of spheroidal amphorae (fig. 34).[10]

At Dinogetia (Romania) the sign has been found on all types of pottery except gray.[11] The X cross was applied, before burning, on the lip of jar[12] (fig.35) and on the spheroidal amphorae dated to 10th -11th century AD (fig. 36).[13] This sign can be seen on pottery from Bulgaria,[14] too. Beside pottery, the X cross was found in the inscriptions on stone discovered at Slon (Prahova, Romania).[15]

The cross with equal arms is a sign discovered over a vast territory from Central Europe to Central Asia. We mention the Getic pottery during 1st century BC-1st century AD, the discoveries during the 1st-3rd centuries from the Arys river basin, in the cemetery of Șaga (today Kazakhstan) on a layer dated to 5th-8th century AD (fig. 37).[16] The cross can be seen on the stone slabs from Pliska (Bulgaria)[17] dated to 9th century AD (fig. 38) and in inscription 4 at Slon-Prahova.

[6] Şcerbak 1959, 362-389, tb. XV.
[7] Comșa 1978, fig. 103/15.
[8] Comșa 1978, fig. 103/2.
[9] Comșa 1978, 133, fig.101/14.
[10] Şerbak 1959, tab.VIII.
[11] Stefan *et al*. 1967, 220.
[12] Stefan *et al*. 1967, 221, fig.141/7.
[13] Stefan *et al*. 1967, fig.155/2.
[14] Donceva-Petkova 1977, 138, fig.46/16.
[15] Comșa 2000, 619.
[16] Smagulov & Yațenko 2019, 164, fig.8/15; 166, fig.2/I, 24.
[17] Rashev 2008, Tb. CXLV/5.

It can also be seen on the pottery discovered at Dinogeția[18] (fig. 39) and Sarkel[19] (fig. 40) and others sites from Bulgaria[20] dated to 9th-11th century AD (fig. 41).

The pentagram (five-pointed star) with unequal arms has analogies with the rings discovered at Capidava[21] (Romania), on the neck of a jug from Păcuiul lui Soare[22] (fig. 42 a,b) and Pliska[23] (Bulgaria) (fig. 43). It also can be seen on pottery and inscriptions at Preslav fortresses (fig. 44).[24] The pentagram, used as a tamga sign, was found along others four tamga signs, painted in red colour on a clay model of a temple.[25] It belonged to Alanian's tamga category although it was also used as a tamga in other regions of Saltovo-Maiaţk culture.

"Bird's claw" is a tamga found in the world of Iranian-speaking peoples. The sauromatous cauldrons (Aralsk Museum) and loop-handle mirrors are the oldest artifacts marked with this sign. During the 5th - 8th century AD, it was found in the Șaga cemetery[26] (fig. 45) and Ciaca settlement[27] on a lot of pottery fragments (fig.46). Its continuity can be seen in some discoveries from the last level of living of Sidak (Kazakhstan) sanctuary dated 7th -8th century AD, where it is associated with the image of a bird (fig. 47).[28]

Runic letters used as tamga have been discovered in geographical areas under the rule of the Turkish khagans, but populated by the Alan people.[29] Runic letters from the local Turkish alphabets can be seen on the walls of Mangop and Sarkel fortresses. In the treasury of Martinovka (on the Lower Dnieper) the sign was drawn on the ceremonial belt.[30] In several sites from Romania, the signs had been applied on objects, walls and stone slabs. We mention the ploughshare from Bârlogu-Argeș; the inscriptions inside the small church from Basarabi; the wall of an

[18] Stefan *et al*., fig.160/7.
[19] Șerbak 1959, tb.XIX.
[20] Donceva-Petkova 1977, fig.46/17, 138.
[21] Corbu 2006, 183, Pl.XLII, fig.11,13.
[22] Vâlceanu & Diaconu 1972, 110.
[23] Donceva-Petkova 1977, fig.46/23.
[24] Rashev 2008, CXLV/3,4.
[25] Yatsenko 2001, 116.
[26] Smagulov & Yatsenko 2019, 166, fig.2/I/1.
[27] Yatsenko & Smagulov 2019, 222, fig.5/2.
[28] Yatsenko & Smagulov 2013, 214, fig.3/1.
[29] Yatsenko 2001, 109.
[30] Yatsenko 2001, 115-116.

workshop in Bucov; a hut from Dinogeția; the inscriptions from Slon-Prahova.[31] All of these proposed a dating to 8th-9th century AD.

Method of dating

The analogies give us a broad chronological framework, therefore it has an indicative character. For this reason, we propose to analyze the stratigraphic situation in which these fragments were discovered.

Many fragments with signs have been discovered in the north-western part of the settlement dated to 9th-10th century AD. In that area, there is a true stratigraphic sandwich scattering. The settlement crossed a level of 5th-7th century AD and, in turn, it is crossed by a level of 10th-11th century AD. The entire archeological layers were disturbed patchy by agricultural ploughing to -0,70 m deep.[32]

Our opinion is that part of the tamga-signs belong to the layer of 4th-6th century AD. Others such as the cross with equal arms, the X sign, the pentagram were found in huts and pits belonging to the 9th-10th century AD settlements. The linear signs can be attributed to the late 10th -11th century AD level.

Significance of signs

The interpretation of these signs involves two areas of research: archaeological and historical.

Archaeological interpretation

All -archaeologist, who published such signs, have had their opinion.

Eugenia Zaharia saw in it alphabets signs coming along the line of Greco-Roman ones. She argues that the signs were put on pottery and building materials: tiles and drainage tubes.[33]

Maria Comșa, who published the rich pottery from Dinogeția, Bucov and Slon, believed these are signs of the runic alphabet linked to the nomadic peoples.[34]

[31] Corbu 2006, 117.

[32] There is in agriculture a custom to make sometimes very deep ploughing, scarfication.

[33] Zaharia 1967, 90.

[34] Stefan *et al*. 1967, 221.

About Bucov, she believed that the nomadic people, from the north-Pontic steppes, settled in the middle of the old Romanian people.[35] About the inscriptions from Slon, she mentioned the Alans.[36]

Liudmila Donceva-Petkova proposed a different interpretation. The runic signs belonged to an alphabet brought by the Proto-Bulgarians. Others can be signs of ownership. She also found an incidence of these signs in NE Bulgaria, compared to the other regions of the country, as well as a higher frequency in the 9th-10th century AD.[37] She divided the signs into three categories: 1) signs with analogies in Central and Eastern Europe; 2) unique signs or with few analogies; 3) specific signs of Bulgarian lands.[38]

Very important results were obtained after a large collection of signs from Eurasian districts belonging to the Iranian-speaking peoples of the 5th-7th century had been analysed. The researcher's conclusion was these were tamga-signs. For example, Iațenko established nine groups of related local aristocracy symbols based on the collection from the Sidak sanctuary. Another conclusion is that the pots marked with signs contained offerings brought to the sanctuary.[39] The signs were applied before burning the pots by potters who accede to the demand.

Historical interpretation

Two traditions are mentioned in history. The first, "ostraka" tradition had an Egyptian origin but it was spread by Greco-Roman culture. The ceramic fragments were used as a "paper" to write all kinds of notes.

The second, "tamga tradition" has a Sarmatian origin and it was developed around the Black Sea.[40] In this tradition the sign is unique and it is full of significance like an armorial. It is a sign of nobility or property. This kind of sign could be put on various objects (wood, leather, bones, etc.) including pottery. Its origin starts from the owner's custom to mark animals, especially cattle breeders. This tradition can be found not only in nomadic peoples, but in Persian culture, too. Between 3rd-7th century AD, there are a series of signs found on the seals of secular and religious Persian nobility. On the stones of Derbent

[35] Comșa 1978, 135.
[36] Comșa 2000, 620.
[37] Donceva-Petkova 1977, 136-138, 143-144.
[38] Donceva-Petkova 1977, 143-144
[39] Yatsenko 2008, 98.
[40] Yatsenko 2001, p.27-60

fortress building in 6th century AD, one can see the signs of construction workers. This tradition is present in many cultures of the Iranian world like Persians, Alans, as well as the Slavs' culture. Ioan Stanciu notes the presence of signs on pots and on the clay "bread" where 17 out of 180 specimens have signs. The first group is formed by the X cross. Before the Slavs, the custom can be seen on artifacts which belonged to Sântana de Mureș-Cerneahov culture.[41]

The linear signs on common pottery continue during the 13th-14th century AD as we can see them in the discoveries from Păcuiul lui Soare[42] and Coconi.[43]

Inference

The two categories of signs discovered at Popina Blagodeasca prove the presence in the same area of two initially different traditions, namely, the Sarmatian tradition of tamga-signs and the "ostraka" tradition.

We do not exclude the possibility that some of them were magical signs, especially those which are present throughout several eras, such as the X sign, for example.

The presence of tamga-signs at Popina Blagodeasca is not an event. The Sarmatians presence in the Romanian Plain was recurrent. Their descendants, the Alans, became allies (federates) of the Roman Empire in 5th century AD. Their traces have been discovered at Popina Blagodeasca, too.

Interpretation of linear signs

My opinion is that they are the oldest evidence of the use of a tally on the territory of present–day Romania. The use of ceramic fragments for various notes was part of the ancient tradition of "ostraka". We can see a similarity between the shape of lines with the notches on the wooden tally published by ethnographers. On a wooden tally from the collection of the Neamț Museum Complex, it can be seen that the notches have the same shape as the spear lines incised on the ceramic fragments (fig. 48). What's more, ethnographic research shows that tallies sometimes are marked on shepherds' sticks to record the

[41] Stanciu 2017, 302-303, fig.173.
[42] Diaconu & Baraschi 1977, 67, fig.47.
[43] Constantinescu 1972, 138.

number of sheep or various transactions.[44] This noting system has been in use until the beginning of the 20th century AD.

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[44] Diaconu 2015.

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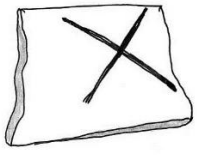


Fig. 1

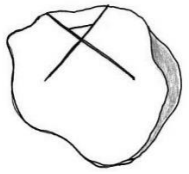


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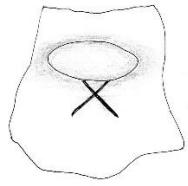


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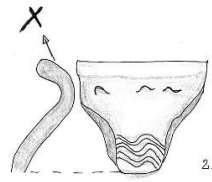


Fig. 4



Fig. 5

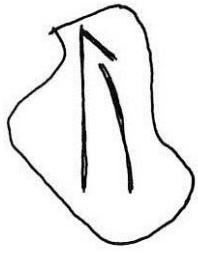


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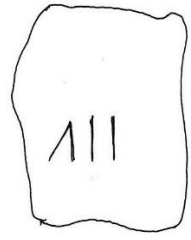


Fig. 7



Fig. 8

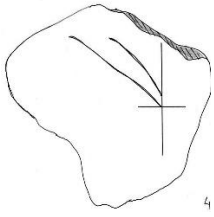


Fig. 9

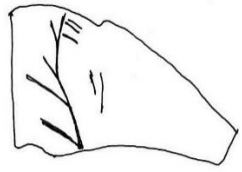


Fig. 10

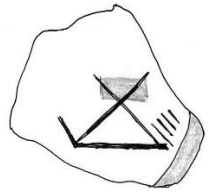


Fig. 11

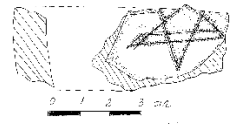


Fig. 12

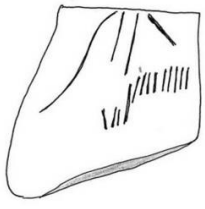


Fig. 13



Fig. 14



Fig. 15

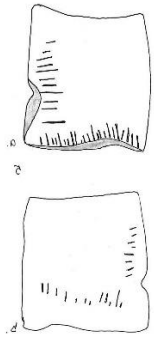


Fig. 16

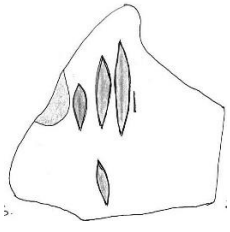


Fig. 17

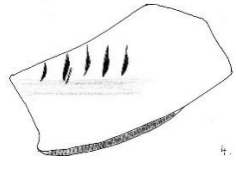


Fig. 18

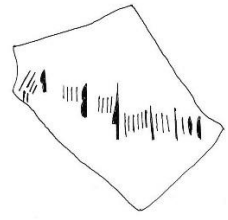


Fig. 19

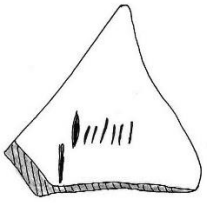


Fig. 20

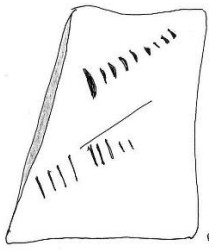


Fig. 21

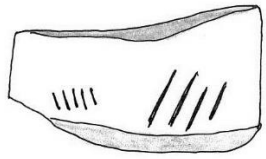


Fig. 22

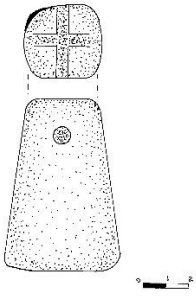


Fig. 23



Fig. 24

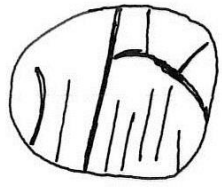


Fig. 25

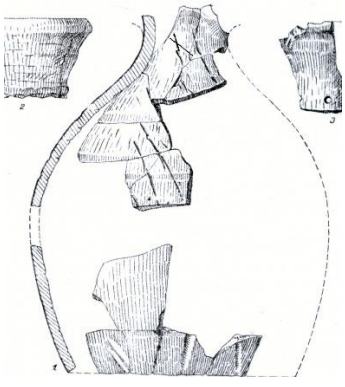


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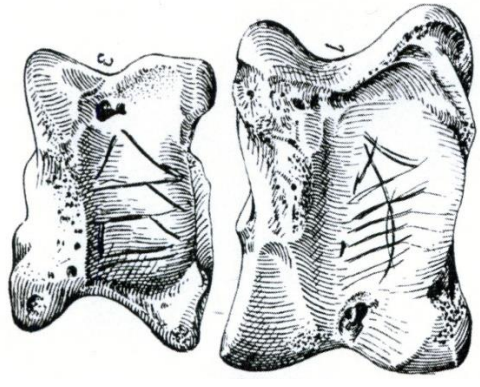


Fig. 27

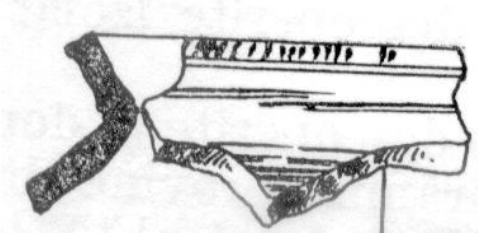


Fig. 28

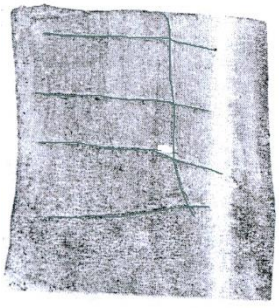


Fig. 29a

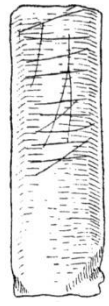


Fig. 29b



Fig. 30a

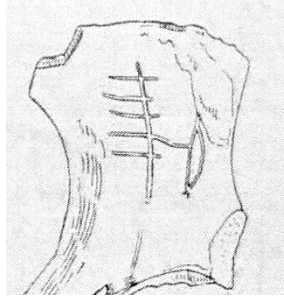


Fig. 30b

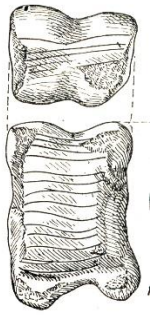


Fig. 31



Fig. 32

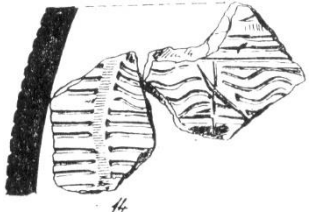


Fig. 33

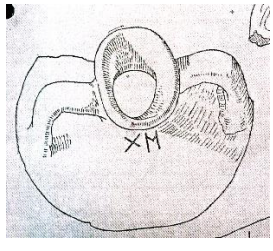


Fig. 34

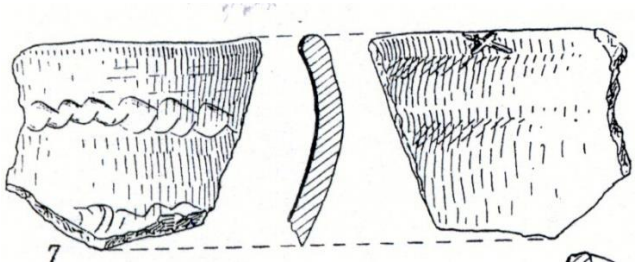


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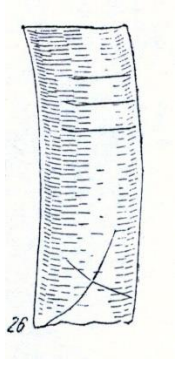


Fig. 36

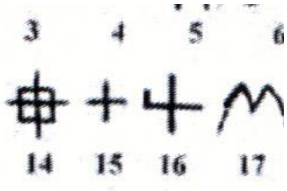


Fig. 37a



Fig. 37b

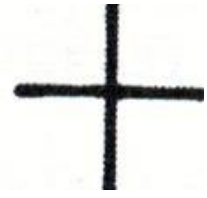


Fig. 38



Fig. 39

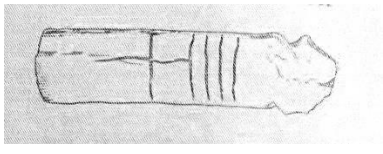


Fig. 40



Fig. 41



Fig. 42a

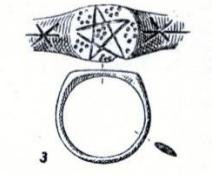


Fig. 42b



Fig. 43



Fig. 44



Fig. 45



Fig. 46

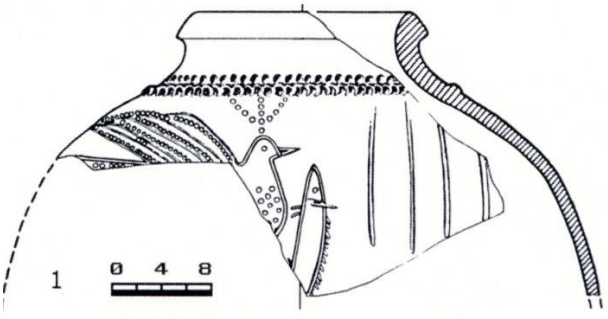


Fig. 47



Fig. 48

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Medieval clothing adornments and jewelry discovered at Tropaeum Traiani

Cristina Paraschiv-Talmațchi, Gabriel Talmațchi

Abstract: This article draws the readers' attention to clothing and jewelry items from the medieval period (10th-14th centuries) found in a site primarily known for its ancient history. The fortress of Tropaeum Traiani (located in the commune of Adamclisi, Constanța County, Romania), situated west of the village of Adamclisi on the plateau in the Urluia valley, is one of the most important economic, political, and religious centers in Roman Dobrudja and the eastern part of the Roman Empire (within the provinces of Moesia Inferior and Scythia). Like many Roman-period sites, there is evidence of early medieval (and possibly later) habitation here, with significant insights provided by recent systematic archaeological research in the last decade, particularly in the southern quarter of the fortress, sector C. Most artifacts were found in three pits that contained household waste. These pits were dug deep into the late Roman living layers dated to the 6th century, while others were found in the area of a Domus type building and its immediate vicinity, in the upper part of the ancient walls' debris layer. This situation arose from the removal of the "barbarian" walls before 1910 to access the Roman layers considered more significant. Although they do not have a well-defined chronological archaeological context, the new medieval discoveries at Tropaeum Traiani provide valuable contributions to this period. These new items help to shape our understanding of the medieval period in the area and provide additional information about clothing accessories, medieval fashion, and their distribution area.

Key words: Tropaeum Traiani, clothing accessories, jewelry, medieval period, archaeological research

Резюме: В тази статия авторите обръщат внимание на дрехи и бижута от средновековния период (X-XIV век), открити на място, известно предимно с древната си история. Крепостта Тропеум Траяни (разположена в община Адамклиси, окръг Констанца, Румъния), разположена западно от село Адамклиси на платото в долината Урлуя, е един от най-важните икономически, политически и религиозни центрове в Римска Добруджа и източната част на Римската империя (в рамките на провинциите Долна Мизия и Скития). Подобно на много обекти от римския период, има доказателства за

ранносредновековно (и вероятно по-късно) обитаване тук, със значителни доказателства, предоставени от последните систематични археологически проучвания през последното десетилетие, особено в южната част на крепостта, сектор С. Повечето артефакти са били намерени в три ями, съдържащи битови отпадъци. Тези ями са вкопани дълбоко в късноримските жилищни слоеве, датиращи от 6-ти век, докато други са открити в района на сграда тип домус и в непосредствена близост до нея, в горната част на слоя отломки от древните стени. Тази ситуация възникна от премахването на „варварските“ стени преди 1910 г. за достъп до римските слоеве, считани за по-значими. Въпреки че нямат добре дефиниран хронологичен археологически контекст, новите средновековни открития в Тропеум Траяни дават ценен принос към този период. Тези нови находки помагат да оформим нашето разбиране за средновековния период в района и предоставят допълнителна информация за аксесоарите за облекло, средновековната мода и техния район на разпространение.

The fortress of Tropaeum Traiani (located in Adamclisi commune, Constanța County), situated to the west of the village of Adamclisi (fig. 1/1), on the plateau in the Urluia Valley, is one of the most important economic, political, and religious centers in Roman Dobrudja and in the eastern part of the Empire (within the provinces of Moesia Inferior and Scythia). Specialized research conducted for over 120 years has provided a wealth of historical, archaeological, and architectural information, disseminated in scientific and popular journals.[1] The systematic archaeological research at Tropaeum Traiani, which began with Grigore Tocilescu in 1891 (through 12 campaigns in the years: 1891-1893, 1895-1897, 1904-1909), had as its major objectives the establishment of the plan and character of the fortress, the uncovering of monuments (gates, walls, etc.), the determination of the topography and street layout of the late Roman and early Byzantine city, the investigation of Christian basilicas, and the examination of the component quarters of the city. Systematic excavations were resumed in 1968 by a team of researchers from the "Vasile Pârvan" Institute of Archaeology in Bucharest, the National Museum of History and Archaeology in Constanța, the Institute of Archaeology and Art History in Cluj, and the Institute of Archaeology in Iași.[2]

In recent decades, various points within the fortress have been and are currently under research, focusing on sectors corresponding to

[1] Tocilescu 1893, 13–34; Murnu 1910, 155–161; Pârvan 1911, 163-91.

[2] Papuc 1974, 325–337; Domăneanțu 1975, 231–240; Barnea 1975, 61–65; 1977, 261–271; Barnea *et al.* 1979, *passim*; Sâmpetru 1994, *passim*.

representative objectives for the history of the ancient city.[3] The broader context in which these research activities are carried out falls within the scope of provincial Roman archaeology. Of particular interest for this article is sector C, corresponding to the southern quarter of the fortress (fig. 1/2). Archaeological research conducted here has provided numerous archaeological, historical, and architectural insights over the years, spanning more than five decades. These investigations were not continuous due to financial constraints, and they are divided into two distinct chronological groups. Research was resumed at the beginning of the 21st century and has been ongoing, not far from the southern gate of the city. The research's aim has been to acquire new information about the layout of late Roman residential complexes and the existing street system in the area, primarily *Via Forensis* (or *cardo*)[4].

So far, three possible civilian buildings have been identified. The most imposing one is located in the western part of the Via Forensis, south of the Basilica Forensis. It is a Roman house of the Domus type, with dimensions adapted to the nearby construction space. At this stage of the research, we can specify that we are dealing with an important building due to its size and location, oriented north-south (slightly northwest to southeast), with a width of 25 meters and a length of nearly 46 meters. Several compartments of the building have been discovered, with the most distinct ones being an *atrium* (7x5 meters) and a *vestibule* (11x4 meters). The *atrium*, usually the central place of such buildings, features a pavement made of large and medium-sized limestone slabs, generally worked and joined with mortar. Some slabs have highly worn surfaces, indicating prolonged use of the complex. Inside the *atrium*, two limestone column bases (one found in situ, the other semi-overturned and slightly displaced) were discovered, as well as a limestone capital and four broken column bases, all made of limestone. Then, the long hall appears to connect the *atrium* to the entrance on the north side, providing, as in

[3] Bogdan-Cătăniciu 2000/2001, 415–424; 2006, 235–254; Gamureac 2009, 243–300; Olariu 2009, 163–177; Ionescu *et al.* 2011, 343–365; Papuc *et al.* 2011, 323–341; Ionescu *et al.* 2013, 173–215; Talmațchi & Șova 2015, 137–192; Gamureac *et al.* 2015/2016, 209–239; Talmațchi & Șova 2016, 173–193; Papuc 2018, 241–249; Panaite 2019, 49–58; 2020, 605–622; Panaite & Talmațchi 2021, 180–199; Talmațchi 2021, 501–510; 2022, 119–141.

[4] All information regarding the Domus building can be consulted extensively in Talmațchi & Șova 2015, 137–192; 2016, 173–193; Talmațchi 2021, 501–510; 2022, 119–141.

the case of other similar constructions, a long axis through the interior of the building, creating the illusion of space and spatiality[5].

The *atrium* did not occupy the exact central space of the building. In fact, in contrast to the "construction rules" of the Empire, it is part of the architectural ensemble specific to the southern part of the building, where it was arranged. The building should have had, at least in the 4th-5th centuries, rooms with special purposes, according to the plans of similar constructions from the Roman era. The destruction of some rooms by affecting the partition walls and the creation of smaller ones (by the appearance of walls made of pieces of stone bound with earth, usually undertaken in the second phase of occupation) occurred at the end of the 6th century and the beginning of the 7th century. These actions led to a substantial modification of the interior composition of the monument, fundamentally changing the primary plan of the construction, both in terms of functionality and interior organization. Additionally, numerous reused construction materials (*spolia*) were found inside the building, incorporated into new partition walls, most of which were whole or fragmented pieces, such as column bases. The reuse of column bases is a phenomenon documented in the fortress for level N 5, which corresponds to the end of the 5th century and the beginning of the 6th century, with the end of that level dated to the end of the same century (586 AD).[6]

The dating of this extensive complex was done considering the construction system, the materials discovered, the general situation observed through previous archaeological excavations in this area of the district, as well as in the city. The initial construction dates to the Constantinian era or shortly thereafter, around the middle of the 4th century. The second stage would be that of partial reconstruction (certain areas of the building) and then recompartmentalization (in the first two or three decades of the 6th century, possibly the first half of this century).

Following the Avar attack recorded in the year 586 AD, the city of Tropaeum Traiani loses its urban character, retaining only modest dwellings (walls with irregular stones on the exterior, connected with earth).[7] The same attack also affects other important centers of the time, such as Ratiaria, Durostorum, Zaldapa, Markianopolis, etc., as

[5] Clarke 1991, 2–6.
[6] Barnea *et al.* 1979, 101, 104–105; Sâmpetru 1994, 37.
[7] Barnea 1977, 269.

literary and archaeological sources tell us.[8] So far, the latest information we have regarding the evolution of the city of Tropaeum Traiani and other mentioned centers belongs to the first and second quarters of the 7th century. In the province and throughout the Lower Danube region, we witness the emergence of new ethnic and military realities amid repeated attempts to maintain early Byzantine authority in this area.[9]

The last decade has brought to the attention of researchers, relatively discreetly, medieval remains discovered during the excavation of the southern district of the city, in sector C. Most of the artifacts have been provided by three pits containing household waste, pits that were deeply dug into the late Roman occupation levels belonging to the 6th century. Others have appeared in the area of the *Domus* building and its vicinity, in the upper part of the debris layer of ancient walls, just below the vegetative soil, and in the earth excavated during archaeological excavations conducted more than half a century ago nearby, and deposited towards the western limit of the building. In the fill of the pits excavated near the south side of the building (emptied in 2020),[10] at the exterior, artifacts from the medieval period have also appeared, with two pits (one appeared during the dismantling of the witness between sections S27 and S28, located in the northern part of the building, and the other, unfinished, in section S31 located south of the *Domus*) containing collected fragments of ancient and early medieval ceramics, as well as pieces of ancient and early medieval jewelry. Another pit, excavated over a decade ago, also yielded ancient, early medieval and medieval pieces. From the only early medieval living space investigated so far in this sector (in 2021), only ceramic fragments and coins have been found.[11]

In this preliminary work, we present some of the medieval clothing and jewelry items, while searching for analogies to help provide a more rigorous cultural and chronological framework for the others. They will be presented by categories of objects.

The first ones we will focus on are seven appliques, six of which are for leather items and one for fabrics.

The first item is a bronze applique with a relatively heart-shaped form, featuring incised decoration that likely suggests a human face. It

[8] Vulpe & Barnea 1968, 433; Madgearu 1997a, 318; 1997b, 19; Barnea 2002, 18.
[9] Petre 1987, 118; Barnea 2010, 526.
[10] Talmațchi *et al*. 2021, 15.
[11] Paraschiv-Talmațchi *et al*. 2023, 140–141.

was made from a sheet of bronze, through cutting and stamping, and has two small indentations on the reverse where attachment elements would have been affixed: H = 1.8 cm; w = 1.45 cm (fig. 2/1). The piece was discovered in the upper part of the rubble layer.

For the applique with anthropomorphic decoration, I did not find similar pieces, as analogs. Similarities can be observed with the pendant-masks from the 8th-10th centuries discovered in Russia.[12] Anthropomorphic representations are present on various artifacts during the early medieval period in a wide area ranging from the Caucasus Mountains to Italy, and from the northern Black Sea territories to the Balkans. For this reason, a Eurasian origin can be considered plausible.[13] In the Carpathian Basin, at Nădlac, rectangular appliques with anthropomorphic decoration appeared in the tomb of a young adult, from the Avar period, dated to the 7th century.[14]

The second one is a leaf-shaped applique with incised decoration resembling ribs, an open heart, or a stylized palmetto with four leaves. It has an outer bulb at the base. It was made of bronze through casting and has a fastening nail on the reverse side: preserved H = 2.12 cm; w = 1.75 cm (fig. 2/2). The piece was found in the fill of a pit.

In Dobrudja, a similar piece was found in the fortified settlement at Oltina- "Capul dealului".[15] Similar appliques were discovered in Bulgaria at Novakovo, Suvorovo, Slaveykovo, Kiten[16] and in the northeast of the territory.[17] The chronological setting of this piece is the 10th century.

The third one is a circular applique with nine larger circular protrusions, one positioned centrally, and the others evenly spaced towards the edge of the piece, along with eight smaller ones forming a beaded circle around the central one. From the central protrusion, eight raised lines extend outward, delineating roughly equal zones, each containing two protrusions, one of each type. It was made from bronze, through casting, and it had a central attachment element on the back: D = 1.65 cm (fig. 2/3). This piece was found on the surface of sector C.

[12] Murasheva 2000, 22, fig. 22/109, 46, fig. 64/1-2.
[13] Garustovich & Ivanov 2001, 155, fig. 26/7,21-22; Gáll 2017, 127–129, fig. 55.
[14] Gáll 2017, 129, pl. 100-101.
[15] See Constantin Șova's article in this volume.
[16] Pletnov & Pavlova 1994/1995, 161, pl. XXV/433-441.
[17] Türk *et al*. 2021, 256–257, pl. 122/1-8.

Usually, this type of applique, which has different sizes and numbers of protrusions, was used to decorate bags,[18] quivers of arrows[19] and harness items.[20] In Dobrudja, similar finds are known near the Tropaeum Traiani fortress at Adamclisi,[21] at Tufani[22] and Oltina,[23] or fortuitous discoveries of which we do not know the exact location.[24] To the east of the Carpathians, appliques of this type were found in the settlement of Lozna.[25] In Bulgaria, similar pieces are mentioned in Markeli,[26] Nadarevo, Zlatar, Novosel[27] and in the northeast of the territory.[28] According to the analogies, the broad chronology of the rosette appliques is the 8th-10th centuries, the piece from the Tropaeum Traiani probably belongs to the 10th century.

The fourth one is a convex-shaped applique with a star-like design featuring six well-defined arms with deepened areas. It was made of bronze through casting and has a fastening pin on the reverse side: D = 1.73 cm (fig. 2/4). The piece was found in the upper part of the rubble layer.

We do not know an exact analogy. Similarities can be found with pieces discovered in Russia and Finland, where they have eight arms and have been attributed to the 11th century,[29] respectively in Bulgaria, where it was dated to the 9th-10th centuries.[30]

The next one is an openwork applique, featuring a central circle framed by another beaded circle. From these, four or six arms (of which two are fully preserved) extend, with a triangular openwork at the base and a palmetto shape with three leaves or a lily at the ends. On the sides of the arms, there are two small full circles each, giving the central part a floral appearance. It was made of bronze through stamping and has four fastening pins on the reverse side, one at each

[18] Abyzova & Ryabtseva 2008, 317.
[19] Oța 2008, 116.
[20] Pletnov & Pavlova 1994/1995, 35–36, pl. IV/58-61; Doncheva 2022, 373, fig. I/4.55.
[21] Paraschiv-Talmațchi *et al*. 2014, 170–171, pl. VI/3-6.
[22] Paraschiv-Talmațchi 2018, 389, pl. III/1.
[23] Paraschiv-Talmațchi & Custurea 2018, 367, pl. 1/4.
[24] Paraschiv-Talmațchi 2021, 92, fig. 1/31.
[25] Teodor 2011, 49, 74, fig. 39/15.
[26] Momchilov 2015, 403–405, fig. 1/2.2.
[27] Doncheva 2022, 889, pl. III/E12.
[28] Türk *et al*. 2021, 434–435, pl. 211/8.
[29] Murasheva 2000, 55–56, fig. 83/O38,3.
[30] Türk *et al*. 2021, 206–207, pl. 97/5.

end of the preserved arms, with two more arranged diagonally in the central part: preserved H = 3.49 cm; width on the exterior of the two arms = 3.05 cm (fig. 2/5). The piece was found in the upper part of the rubble layer.

The closest analogy we know of is a fragmentary piece that comes from the burial ground at Kiszombor, site F. The boot appliqué was found in Tomb 1, alongside an arrow quiver, arrows, bone plates from a bow, a knife, an iron object, a spearhead, and a stirrup. Used for decorating footwear, these were primarily utilized in the 10th century.[31] An incised decoration on a wrapping disc dated to the 10th century, discovered in northeastern Bulgaria, is similar to the piece from Tropaeum Traiani.[32]

The sixth one is an applique in the shape of a palmetto with three leaves or a lily, with an oval base. It was made of bronze, through casting, and on the reverse side, it has three rivets for attachment, two of them still retaining their small metal rings: H = 2.5 cm; w = 2.23 cm (fig. 2/6). The piece was found in the upper part of the rubble layer.

The closest pieces in terms of shape, although not identical, are two appliqués from the northern Black Sea region, near Volgograd, discovered incidentally. These pieces fall into the category of jewelry found in the graves of Oghuz and Pecheneg women, dated to the 10th-11th centuries.[33]

The last one is a concave circular appliqué adorned with a deep circle in the center, with straight edges highlighted by an incised line. It was made from a sheet of bronze and has two holes located at opposite ends, used for attaching the piece to an object: D = 2.42 cm (fig. 2/7). The piece was found in the upper part of one of the pits.

This piece was primarily used to decorate textiles, with its perforations indicating attachment through sewing. It has analogies in Romania, in the settlement of Dinogetia-Garvăn[34] and at Tufani,[35] in Dobrudja, in the necropolis from Alba Iulia, Strada Brîndușei and Stația de Salvare,[36] in Transilvania. In Bulgaria several pieces come from Vetren,[37] Skala (the first decades of the 11th century)[38] and from

[31] Oța 2008, 123–124, 263, pl. 22/26, pl. 87/9.
[32] Türk *et al*. 2021, 502–503, pl. 245/1.
[33] Garustovich & Ivanov 2001, 91–94, fig. 31/25,28.
[34] Ștefan *et al*. 1967, 293, fig. 172/23,27.
[35] Paraschiv-Talmațchi 2018, 394–395, pl. III/15.
[36] Dragotă 2014, 189, fig. 108/1.
[37] Stanilov 1993, 148, fig. 7/3.

the area of the necropolis in Odartsi.[39] In the Lower Danube, this type of application usually appears in contexts attributed to the 11th century, rarely present at the beginning of the 12th century.[40] Their appearance starting from the first decades of the 11th century has been associated with the presence of late migrants in the area. Therefore, they are usually attributed to nomadic populations, with the assumption that their fashion was introduced to the Lower Danube region by the Pechenegs.[41] In the Lower Volga region, in the grave of an Oghuz warrior rider with a rich inventory, there were harness sets that included circular appliques of this type, cast in silver and decorated with a central diamond from the corners of which incised lines started. The grave is chronologically dated from the 10th century to the early 11th century.[42]

We add two belt ends to the belt pieces.

The first one, rectangular in shape, has a rounded end and one brought inward, with a bulb in the middle. The obverse is ornamented with relief elements, consisting of volutes gathered in a cluster and a palmetto with three leaves (one rhomboidal), all framed by two borders, one straight and one beaded, which emphasize the edges of the piece.[43] It was made of bronze, by casting, and has two attachment rivets on the reverse side: L = 4.23 cm, w = 1.66 cm (fig. 2/8). The piece was found in the fill of one of the pits.

A similar belt end was discovered in north-eastern Bulgaria in Samotino, and another similar, but narrower, in Botevo.[44] From northeastern Bulgaria, there are also known a fragmentary piece with a similar decoration, but without the exterior bulb, as well as a longer one, also without a bulb.[45] Similar to the one from Botevo, there is a belt end from the settlement at Dinogetia-Garvăn in northern Dobrudja.[46] We place this piece in the 10th-11th centuries.

The second, rectangular in shape, has a rounded end and one brought inward, with a heart-shaped opening. The obverse is

[38] Yotov & Atanasov 1998, 110, 314, pl. CXV/461.
[39] Doncheva-Petkova 2005, 136–138, pl. XXXIX.
[40] Ștefan *et al*. 1967, 293; Doncheva-Petkova 2005, 136–137.
[41] Ștefan *et al*. 1967, 293; Yotov & Atanasov 1998, 110.
[42] Kruglov 2016, 209, no. 151.
[43] Paraschiv-Talmațchi *et al*. 2020, 119, no. 65.
[44] Pletnov & Pavlova 1992, 184, pl. XI/84-85.
[45] Türk *et al*. 2021, 492–493, pl. 240/1-2.
[46] Ștefan *et al*. 1967, 299, fig. 173/25.

ornamented with elements rendered in relief, consisting of palmetto with three elongated leaves, framed by two borders, one thin straight and one pearlescent, which highlight the edges of the piece.[47] It was made of bronze, by casting, and has five fastening nails on the reverse: L = 3.82 cm, w = 1.23 cm (fig. 2/9). The piece was discovered in the fill of one of the pits.

A similar piece to this belt end is not known to us, but the manner of execution and the decoration place it in the early Middle Ages, and based on these, we date it to the 9th-10th centuries.

Another category consists of pendants with various shapes.

The first one, circular in shape, is ornamented on one side with a rosette featuring six elongated leaves arranged around a central point, all in relief. The edges of the piece are highlighted by a border formed by short, parallel lines. It was made of bronze, through casting, and the reverse side is smooth. At the top, it has a small loop for attachment, arranged perpendicular to the disc: D = 1.84 cm (fig. 3/1).

Similar pieces were discovered at Isaccea,[48] in Dobrudja, in the north-east of Bulgaria[49] and in Novosel,[50] but they are all made of lead. The discovery of a similar pattern in the settlement of Canlia (with a different decoration) reveals that such objects were also produced in the southwest of Dobrudja.[51] Based on analogies, we date this piece to the 10th-11th centuries.

The second one is an openwork pendant, slightly oval in shape, decorated with a central rosette enclosed by three lobes. It was made of bronze, through casting, and has a small loop for attachment at the top, arranged perpendicular to the piece: H = 2.1 cm; w = 1.52 cm (fig. 3/2). It comes from one of the pits.

The third one is an openwork pendant, oval in shape, decorated in the central area with a palmetto with three leaves or a lily flower. The edges of the piece are slightly undulated. It was made of bronze, through casting, and has a small loop for attachment at the top, arranged perpendicular to the piece: H = 2.54 cm; w = 1.83 cm (fig. 3/3). It comes from one of the pits.

The closest analogy for the last two pieces, also in bronze, comes from northern Dobrudja, from Mahmudia, and has been dated to the

[47] Paraschiv-Talmațchi *et al*. 2020, 119, no. 65.
[48] Mănucu-Adameșteanu 1984, 243, pl. III/1.
[49] Doncheva 2007, 139, type G.I.
[50] Bonev & Doncheva 2011, 236, pl. LIII/629.
[51] Diaconu &Vîlceanu 1972, 146, fig. 59.

10th-11th centuries.[52] Two similar pieces come from north-eastern Bulgaria (10th century)[53] and from "St. Demetrius" Church in Veliko Tarnovo.[54]

The fourth one is an openwork pendant with vegetal decoration (grapevine leaf?) arranged radially around a central nucleus, with a rhomboidal ornament on each leaf, depicted in relief, which seems to suggest a cluster of grapes. On the back, it has a circular indentation in the central area. It was made of bronze, through casting, and has a small loop for attachment at the top: H = 2.3 cm; w = 2.38 cm (fig. 3/4).

A similar piece was discovered in Mahmudia (10th-11th centuries?).[55]

Pendant in the shape of a crescent moon with three horns, with the tips bent inward, and equipped with a tubular loop at the top. It was made of bronze, through casting, and its surfaces are smooth: H = 2.94 cm, w = 3.72 cm (fig. 3/5). It was found in the filling of a pit.

As analogies, we mention a bronze piece discovered at Skala,[56] dated to the 10th and early next century, and one of lead, from northeastern Bulgaria.[57] This type of ornament was widely used in the early Middle Ages and is found in contexts dating from the 10th to the 12th centuries, rarely in the 13th century. It was most commonly worn as a necklace pendant, either on its own or attached to a necklace, but it was also used as earrings or attached to bracelets.[58]

Two bronze bell-pendants conclude this category, both originating from a pit excavated in 2023, where they were found together with numerous early medieval pottery fragments. One of them, quasi-globular, has a simple-cut lower face and is undecorated: height = 2.64 cm, diameter = 2.12 cm (fig. 3/6). The second one, pear-shaped, has a crosswise split lower face adorned with incised lines arranged obliquely and horizontally. Its suspension loop is broken: H = 2.3 cm; D = 1.83 cm (fig. 3/7). Both retain the inner ball.

Bell-pendants are widespread from the 9th to the 12th centuries, ranging from Asia to Central and Northern Europe. In the settlement of Dinogetia-Garvăn, located in northern Dobrudja, ten bell-pendants

[52] Oberländer-Târnoveanu 1980, 66, pl. X/27.
[53] Türk 2021, 446–447, pl. 217/2.
[54] Nikolova & Robov 2005, pl. XXXVIII/5.
[55] Oberländer-Târnoveanu 1980, 66, pl. X/28.
[56] Yotov & Atanasov 1998, 120, fig. 86/2.
[57] Doncheva 2007, 159, pl. XCIX/6.
[58] Diaconu &Vîlceanu 1972, 142.

of this type were discovered in specific contexts dated to the 10th-12th centuries.[59] Similar pieces were also found in northeastern Bulgaria.[60]

The next two artifacts belong to the category of head ornaments, represented by fragmentary earrings. The first piece comes from an earring with a spherical mount, and the second one comes from an earring with a crescent-shaped mount.

The first piece has a maximum diameter ornamented with a twisted cord motif, flanked by granules of different shapes and sizes, some surrounded by slightly raised circles, others like small tubes. We assume it represents the spherical mount of an earring. It was made of silver: H = 1.04 cm; D = 1.5 cm (fig. 3/8).

The second piece has the obverse decorated with a smooth central bulb, flanked by four filigree-like protrusions resembling springs. Another five similar motifs are evenly arranged along the edges of the piece. The reverse side is smooth. It was made of bronze: H = 1.55 cm; D = 1.98 cm (fig. 3/9).

We found analogues for the first one in Drobeta-Turnu Severin, Mehedinți County (13th-14th centuries?),[61] and for the second one in Șotînga-Beciu, Teleorman County (14th-15th centuries)[62] and Șușița, Mehedinți County (14th century),[63] Romania.

The jewelry for arms consists of rings and bracelets. Among the rings discovered at Tropaeum Traiani, three made of bronze catch our attention. They were engraved with: a pentagram depicted on a dotted background, with star-like motifs on the sides of the piece (fig. 3/10); a bird with spread wings and a dotted body, framed in a linear border, with star-like motifs on the sides of the piece (fig. 3/11); and a rosette with eight petals depicted on a dotted background, framed in a linear border, with star-like motifs on the sides of the piece arranged within the border (fig. 3/12).

Rings of this type with the mentioned representations were fashionable during the early medieval period, and they were commonly found in the 10th-12th centuries. In Dobrudja, in Dinogetia-Garvăn and Păcuiul lui Soare, these rings are present in the 11th-century layers.[64] In Bulgaria, we recall the discoveries from the

[59] Ștefan *et al*. 1967, 278.
[60] Türk *et al*. 2021, 514–515, pl. 251/1-3.
[61] Dumitriu 2001, 39, pl. 37/35.
[62] Dumitriu 2001, 40, pl. 49/8.
[63] Popescu & Popescu 2008, 26.
[64] Ștefan *et al*. 1967, 284, fig. 170/10-12; Diaconu & Vîlceanu 1972, 140, fig. 56/3,8.

settlement and necropolis in Odartsi,[65] from the central palace in Pliska,[66] in the northeast of the country,[67] etc.

The bracelets are numerous and made of glass. They predominantly feature various shades of blue (fig. 3/13-18), but there are also three black examples (fig. 3/19-21). In cross-section, these bracelets are round or oval. Glass bracelets have a long history of existence, ranging from the Roman period to the Ottoman period. Based on the discovery context (pit with early medieval materials), we believe that the examples from Tropaeum Traiani can mostly be attributed to the 11th century.

Although they do not have a well-defined chronological archaeological context, these new medieval discoveries at Tropaeum Traiani provide valuable contributions to this period. Bringing them to the attention of specialists is important because these new pieces help shape our understanding of the medieval period in the area and provide additional information about clothing accessories, medieval fashion, and their distribution area.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1. Administrative localization of Adamclisi (Constanța County) in Dobrudja and Romania (1); aerial view of Tropaeum Traiani fortress on which Sector C and the southern gate are marked (2) (1. map by Gabriel Talmațchi; 2. photo by Mircea Stoian, marked by Gabriel Talmațchi).

Fig. 2. Appliques (1-7) and belt ends (8-9) discovered at Tropaeum Traiani (Adamclisi) (photo by Cristina Paraschiv-Talmațchi).

Fig. 3. Pendants (1-7), earrings (8-9), rings (10-12) and bracelets (13-21) discovered at Tropaeum Traiani (photo by Cristina Paraschiv-Talmațchi).

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D = diameter; W = width; L = length; H = height


ROMANIA
BULGARIA
2000 m
1500 m
1000 m
500 m
200 m
100 m
0 m
Danube
Adamclisi
Dobrudja
Black Sea
N
0
100
200 km
1

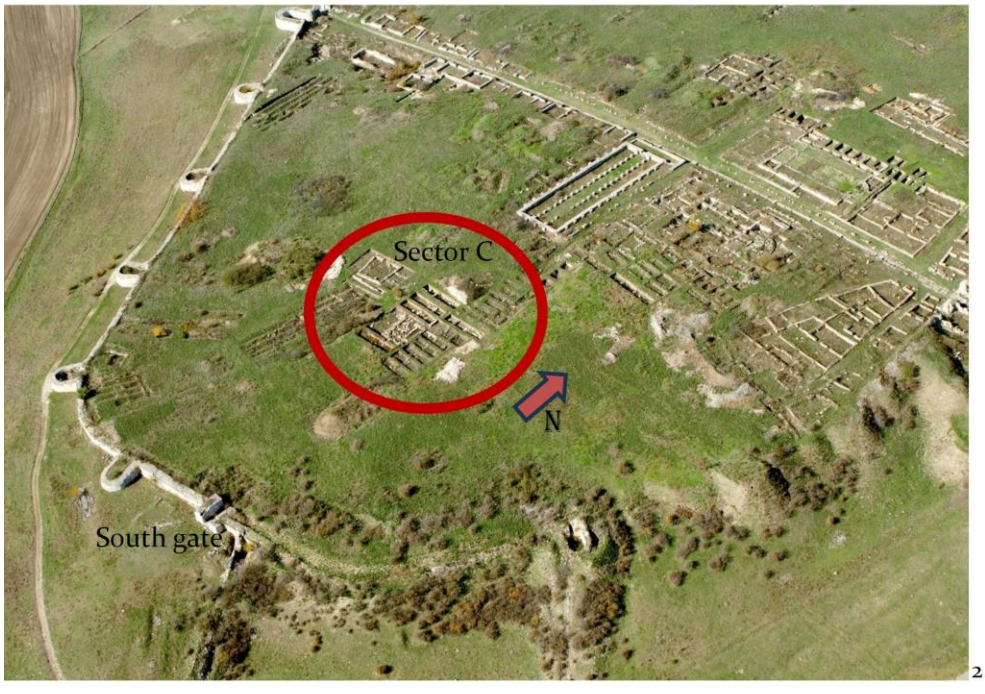

Sector C
N
South gate
2

Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

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Data about Medieval Necropolises in Ruse

Svetlana Velikova, Varbin Varbanov

Abstract: This article presents two possibilities for the locations of necropolises from the Second Bulgarian Kingdom (12th-14th centuries) within the modern town of Ruse. The first is the hill where the long-term studies of the roman fort of Sexaginta Pristas are taking place. Until that moment, the heavily destroyed human remains there were dated to the period of the 16th-17th centuries. Through radiocarbon analysis, the lower border of the necropolis was dated to the second half of the 13th century. About the second layer of the medieval necropolis, information is scarce, based on a group of finds (jewellery) found in a southern direction from the hill of Sexaginta Prista. The two areas are located on heights and correspond to the medieval Ruse fortress, which was located right next to the Danube river's bank.

Key words: necropolises, Middle Ages, Sexaginta Prista, ornaments, Ruse Medieval fortress

Резюме: Статията представя две възможности за локализиране на некрополите от Второто българско царство (12-14 в.) в рамките на съвременния град Русе. Първият е хълмът, където се провеждат дългосрочните проучвания на римската крепост Сексагинта Приста. До този момент силно разрушените човешки останки там са датирани от периода 16-17 век. Чрез радиовъглероден анализ долната граница на некропола е установена през втората половина на XIII век. За втората зона на средновековния некропол информацията е оскъдна, въз основа на група находки (бижута), открити южно от хълма Сексагинта Приста. Двете местности са разположени на височина и съответстват на средновековната русенска крепост, която се е намирала непосредствено до брега на река Дунав.

Necropolises are an essential part of the development of the settlement structure. Unfortunately, for the period of the Middle Ages in Ruse, the data about them is too scarce, often summarized in one

sentence.[1] In addition, the information about the settlement structure and development of Ruse from this period is also limited by a number of circumstances. Modern urban development and the alteration of riversides do not provide us with a wide field for the accumulation of new material. The current article aims to present new data, with the assistance of which we can highlight the possible locations for necropolises from the Second Bulgarian Kingdom (12th-14th century) within the contemporary town of Ruse (with all possible circumstances for this dating).

Despite the difficulties, the territory of Ruse's modern urban environment allows for some analysis of the locations of the "towns of the dead" from the earlier Roman and Late Antiquity periods, as well as from the later Ottoman period. Such research has already been done. For the Roman and Late Antiquity periods, the data reveal the likely areas for the necropolises of the Roman fort of Sexaginta Prista. Their location was registered outside the fortified area of the Roman fort. Two areas have been localized, which are also underneath the contemporary town center. The first zone is the area east of the fort and includes information about 22 facilities from the Roman and Late Antiquity period. Its area includes the streets "Pirot", "Aleksandrovska", "Nikola Palauzov", "Konstantin Irechek", "Svoboda" square, expanding to the south to the Old Postal Palace and the High School of Mathematics. The second zone is to the south, in the region of the streets "Nikolaevska", "Vasil Levski" and "Dondukov-Korsakov",[2] where 7 graves are registered. They are dated from the middle of the 2nd to the middle of the 3rd century; Late Antiquity materials are still not registered from the area. This section is associated with the supposed early camp or Roman vicus in the hinterland of Sexaginta Prista.

There is information for the necropolises from the National Revival period (19th century) in Ruse. In the 17th century the Muslim percent of the population in the town is predominant, which imposed the need for spaces for cemetery zones. On a topographic plan from 1878 are noted several Muslim cemeteries: Bey Mezar, Koshu Mezar, large cemeteries around the mosques Hyusein Hodzha and Dzhami-i Atik, as well as unnamed cemeteries in the Saray neighbourhood, in proximity to the Novata mahala neighbourhood and the old road to Razgrad. Along with the mentioned two cemeteries around the mosques, individual burials

[1] Bakardzhieva & Yordanov 2001, 141.

[2] Rusev 2011, 258.

were conducted in the yards of other Muslim temples.[3] Researchers assume that after the conquest of Ruse, the Christian cemeteries were spared and the local residents were given the opportunity to continue burying their dead in them. The reason for this is the ingrained belief in every Muslim not to commit sacrilege, including the desecration of graves of other religions[4]. Situation changed after the several fires of the town, when the Christian population was shifted to the periphery, and their burials were conducted around the Christian temples – Holy Trinity and St. George. At the end of the 18th century, new Christian cemetery was established outside the town's walls, which were used during epidemic outbreaks and for burials of inhabitants of the periphery neighbourhoods, settlers and foreigners.[5]

The Hoard with Adornments

The story of a group of Medieval finds that have been mentioned several times in the literature over the years, contains scarce and sometimes contradictory information. In order to follow it fully, we will try to look at their "presence/absence" in individual published articles.

In June 1921, construction works were conducted on "19 February" Street and its crossing with "Strazha"/"Strazharska" Street (nowadays "Dragoman" Street) (fig. 1). At that time, at the crossing of the streets the School "Hristo Botev" was located. All of them are located in the southwest direction from the hill on which the Roman fort of Sexaginta Prista was erected. The first mention of the situation is in the series "Proceedings of the Bulgarian Archaeological Institute" from 1921-1922. The text includes the description of an unearthed stone wall with a thickness of 0.70-0.90 m and a length of 25 m. A channel was discovered in it, which was defined as a water line, the width of which is 0.20 m.[6] The quoted text states that outside the excavated wall large number of graves are also violated. The discoveries described do not include finds, which is specifically noted and contradict subsequent descriptions from later years. On the other hand, the tombstones that have been uncovered are said to have had Turkish inscriptions. The year 1753 was read on one of them. In addition to them, the architectural details found are linked to the existence of a mosque, which is also confirmed by the oral accounts of the local Muslim population.

[3] Bakardzhieva & Yordanov 2001, 134.
[4] Bakardzhieva & Yordanov 2001, 141.
[5] Bakardzhieva & Yordanov 2001, 141.
[6] Velkov 1922, 246.

The next description is from 1928 from the book of N. Popov, called "Description of Ruschuk for the Time from 1860 to 1879 year". It again includes familiar details – unearthed "thick foundations of a large building and a large number of human skeletons".[7] The difference with the previous reference is the presence of a narrative for discovered adornment. Next to a female skeleton are found golden earrings, golden bracelets, strings, silver rings and coins. With some degree of irony, the first scientific mention of the collective find is part of the evidential section, testifying for the thousands years of history of the town[8] - Dimitar Kostov,[9] teacher at the Boys' High School dates the items to "more than three thousand years ago". It is indicated that the discovered finds have been sent to Sofia.

In 1962, the article of S. Stanchev in the journal of "Archaeology" was published.[10] There, the author again mentions the group of adornment discovered in Ruse during construction activities. The text states that the collective find was then handed over to the People's Archaeological Museum in Sofia (now the National Institute of Archaeology with Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Science).[11] The first difference appears in the announced changed location of the find from the earlier mentions already discussed. The street "Dimitar Blagoev" (now "Knyazheska" Street) is marked, with which the considered area was changed in the eastern direction from the hill of Sexaginta Prista. The area is the eastern periphery of one of the Roman and Late Antiquity necropolises, located by Dr. N. Rusev.[12] The author S. Stanchev has provided information regarding the revealed adornment: five golden earrings, two silver bracelets, one silver ring and five silver

[7] Popov 1928, 7.
[8] Popov 1928, 7.
[9] Dimitar Kostov is teacher at the Boys' High School in Ruse (nowadays "Hristo Botev" Secondary School). In 1922 he was appointed curator of the museum collection of the High School, which is the ground for the present-day Ruse Regional Museum of History.
[10] Stanchev 1962, 5–11.
[11] The author S. Stanchev indicates the inventory numbers of the finds: earrings (inv. № 2017a, б; inv. № 2019; inv. №2018; inv. № 2019; inv. №2020), ring (inv. № 2028), buttons (inv. №2023; inv. № 2027) and bracelets (inv. № 2021; inv. № 2022). Until the publication of the current text, we did not have the opportunity to receive further information for the find in question, which is preserved at the National Institute of Archaeology with Museum – BAS.
[12] Rusev 2011, 258.

buttons.[13] There is also a difference with the last enumeration of the found items. The "strings and coins" included in N. Popov's description are missing. Each piece of jewellery has a textual description of its shape, method of manufacture, and parallels, but only the two bracelets are accompanied by graphic images (fig. 2.1; 2.2). S. Stanchev dates the find to the 11th-13th century.

The next article in chronology, which includes information for the examined adornment, is from the "Proceedings of the People's Museum – Varna" from 1966 and belongs to A. Kuzev.[14] He notes correctly that the information for the Medieval habitation is limited (especially at that time) and again marks as location of the collective find the "19 February" Street. The information he had at the end of the 1960s guided the author's conclusions about the location of the Medieval fortress up on the hill, where in later periods the fortification of the Roman fort of Sexaginta Prista was revealed. Decades later, analysing texts and plans from the 15th to the beginning of the 19th century, the archaeologist Stoyan Yordanov deduced the exact location of the Medieval fortress of Ruse. It was probably built in the 14th century and survived the Ottoman conquest of these lands in 1388. It was transformed into the Kale Atik15 artillery battery and lasted until the beginning of the 19th century (fig. 3). Archaeological excavations on the hill reveal that materials from the Second Bulgarian Kingdom are found rarely and in small quantities, indicating that the Medieval fortress was located at its foot and guarded the bay of the Ruse harbour.[16] Even the small trenching that A. Kuzev laid in front of the Military Club building in the early 1960s did not direct him to specific data to refine the site's chronology. Perhaps he has not exhausted the cultural layers, or the information he included in his article is limited.[17] In a detailed text in footnote, he described the conversations he had with S. Stanchev about the discovery and location of the find, as well as the inventory numbers of the items. Through the brief tracing of the literature, A. Kuzev establishes the differences in the

[13] Stanchev 1962, 2.
[14] Kuzev 1966, 23–50.
[15] In Turkish language, "kale atik" means literally "the old fortress".
[16] Yordanov 2013, 19–20.
[17] Within the text and in a short footnote, he indicates that he has discovered pottery fragments from the 17th-18th century, and presumes that with further archaeological excavations materials and structures from the Medieval fortress can be found. The trenching has been conducted in March 1964, and the author determines that the data "lacks significant meaning" – Kuzev 1966, 45.

texts about the location of the adornments and corrects the inconsistencies.[18]

Sexaginta Prista – New Data from the Excavations

Research on the site is conducted from 1976 to 2022 with interruptions.[19] On the territory of the hill, several sectors with exposed structures from different periods have been identified (fig. 4). In 1976, during the laying of a new street route, remains of the fortification system of Sexaginta Prista were discovered. The north-western fort wall, a square tower and several buildings were studied - sector A. The next sector B includes the preserved apse part of the Temple of Apollo and the Thracian Horseman, the rest of the building being destroyed by the later built Principia.[20] In 2012, under the "Regional Development" Operational Program, a project for "Restoration and socialization of the Roman fort of Sexaginta Prista" was implemented. In connection with the project, excavations were carried out in three trenches - sector C. Within the boundaries of sector D, a section of the south-eastern fort wall and its adjacent towers, as well as another U-shaped tower, were discovered. The research team's efforts are focused on the systematic survey and expansion of this area. Sector E again includes part of the south-eastern fort wall. Here it is preserved at a height of 7.14 m, and the geological trenches presume the presence of a defensive ditch in front of the fortification wall. In 2020, as part of the Summer Theater renovation project, two small sections were studied – sector F.[21]

The chronology of the revealed structures displays long and intensive habitation on the hill. The earliest layer includes 160 pits studied, fireplaces and two furnaces, dated in the Late Hellenistic era – 2nd century BC – 1st century AD.[22] These structures are revealed in sectors B and D, and probably sector A also had such. This type of sites are interpreted as "pit sanctuaries" in scientific literature.[23] The next

[18] Kuzev 1966, 45.

[19] For further information, see: Varbanov & Dragoev 2012a; 2012b; 2012c; Varbanov 2013; Nenov (ed) 2014.

[20] Varbanov *et al*. 2023.

[21] Varbanov *et al*. 2020, 688–691.

[22] Varbanov 2013, 29–93.

[23] In 2022 a section was excavated, located inside a private property (total area of around 70 sq.m.), which revealed a thick cultural layer from the Late Hellenistic period, and for the first time remains of residential buildings were unearthed. These discoveries, as well as the imported items, found throughout the years, testify for the existence of a commercial settlement (emporion) at the mouth of Rusenski Lom river.

chronological level is from the Roman period and includes several buildings and pits, excavated in sectors A, B, D and F. The Temple of Apollo and the Thracian Horseman belong to this period - the second half of the 2nd to the middle of the 3rd century. The mentioned structures refer to an unfortified settlement that existed until the end of the 3rd century. In the Late Roman era, the fortification walls of the fort were erected and they functioned until the end of the 6th century. In the 4th century, the Principia was also built, which was abandoned in the middle of the 5th century. From the Late Antiquity period, household pits and several buildings, which are mainly around the fort's walls, have been excavated. The Medieval period is registered with habitation in the 10th-middle of the 11th century with the presence of dugout dwellings that use the abandoned Antiquity buildings. From the period of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom (12th-14th century), individual finds such as a small number of ceramic fragments and coins were discovered.[24] The latest levels cover the period of the 18th-19th century with a large number of septic pits studied in sectors B and D. A tunnel was also revealed, which lead to ammunition storage place in the northwestern section of sector B. The last level dates to the 20th century and includes the building of the Military Club, barracks and the Summer Theater.

In the course of the long-term excavations in several sectors of the territory of Sexaginta Prista, remains of human bones and violated graves were discovered. There are two hypotheses for their dating. Until 2010, the bones were dated to the period of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom (12th-14th century), after which the accumulation of new stratigraphic observations changed their dating to the 16th-17th century.[25] In 2019, during the excavations in sector D, on the inside of the southeastern fortification wall, the research of a Medieval dugout from the end of the 10th - beginning of the 11th century was completed. In northwest direction, three graves with varying degrees of preservation were discovered. They are revealed at close distances from each other, in an environment with modern disturbances, above the level of discovery of an Antiquity wall of a building (fig. 5), (fig. 6). It is possible that they were originally surrounded by stones that marked the burial pits. Grave No. 1 is located in the western half of sq. B_1. The shape of the burial pit has unclear boundaries, and the laying level is 38.32 m. The grave is located above the route of an Antiquity building wall. The burial was

[24] Velikova & Varbanov 2023, 312–361.
[25] Varbanov & Dragoev 2012a, 35.

implemented by laying, probably in a prone position. Bones are missing from the lower limbs. An earring was found next to the skull, which is a curved bronze wire, without additional decoration. In the southwestern part of the same square, grave No. 2 was discovered. The burial pit was dug into the cultural layer of dark brown colour, and its shape is trapezoidal. The bottom of the pit was reached at a level of 38.21 m. The method of burial was again by placing the body in a stretched position, with no burial goods. Grave No. 3 is badly damaged, and only two bones from a lower limb have been preserved from it. It is located 1.10 m to the east from Grave No. 2. An anthropological analysis was carried out by Dr. Nadezhda Atanasova (Institute of Experimental Morphology, Pathology and Anthropology with Museum – BAS), which established that the burials were of children aged about 5-6 years and about 11-12 years old at the time of death. In early 2023, the bones from Grave no. 2 were radiocarbon dated at the University of Glasgow Research Centre (fig. 7). The data show the highest probability of dating in the second half of the 13th century.

This new information prompted us to pay attention to the cases where, despite their fragmented state, we come across human remains in the layers of habitation below the initial contemporary level and the period of the 19th-20th centuries.

In 2020, two trenches were studied in the eastern part of the fort, with a total area of about 25 sq. m., in connection with the undertaken renovation of the Summer Theater. Trench A is located to the east of the Military Club. The surface level is about 39.50 m, with the initial embankment soil reaching the 38.50 m level. Scattered bones from several individuals were found here. Skeletal remains were registered in the northern and eastern profiles: in the northern part of the eastern profile, a skull was found at the level of 38.82 m.; in the north-east corner a spine was exposed at the level of 38.44 m; in the southern part of the eastern profile, lower limb bones were discovered at the level of 38.59 m; in the south-eastern corner bones of a spinal column at the level of 38.63 m. In depth inside the trench, earlier structures are revealed, reaching the earliest level of the 2nd century BC – 1st century AD. The situation in Trench B is similar. It is also positioned in the eastern part of the fort, and in an eastern direction from the Summer Theater. The initial level is again embankment earth, which continues to the 39.40 m level. Here, again, destroyed human remains were reached at the 39.38 m level, in the western profile of the trench, the lower limbs of an individual were exposed *in situ*. The grave was violated during the construction of the

Summer Theater in 1961. In the same year, in addition to the studied boreholes, excavations were also carried out in sector D. In the southern profile of sq. A, near the sidewalk of the street, part of a grave was discovered. The lower limbs of a skeleton are revealed whose upper body remains below the pavement (fig. 8). The level of the bones is 37.62 m, and the level of its laying is 37.58 m. The orientation of the body is in southwest-northeast direction.

In 2012, in connection with the renovation of the reception center of Sexaginta Prista, to the south of it, single human bones and a preserved human skull were discovered. Again, the layer is embankment, and no further details can be given about their discovery.

In 2005-2010, excavations are conducted in the area of the Principia of the Late Roman fort of Sexaginta Prista.[26] One burial was found in situ, which is located underneath the foundations of a 19th-century tunnel in sq. I'1 (fig. 9). The burial is Christian (SW-NE direction), but lacks dating material. The skeleton has joined hands in the pelvis area. It is surrounded by unprocessed stones. The wall has violated the upper part of the body. The skeleton belongs to a 15-18 years old girl, and the level of its discovery is 38.12 м. Close to it, at the same level, are found single bones of a 14-year-old individual, and in sq. I'2 – bones from a 60-year-old man.[27] The initial assumption that the discovered burial of the girl belongs to the period of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom (12th-14th century) underwent transformation. During the surveys in 2010, coins of Ferdinand I Habsburg (1543), Murad IV (1623-1640) and a coin from the second half of the 17th century were found within the boundaries of the considered squares.[28] After further analysis of the location of discovery of the coin material, it turns out that the coins in question are from layers higher than the human bones, or from dugouts from the Ottoman period. In 2008, again in the area of the Principia, in the outlines of its last premise, a building from the Ottoman period was completely uncovered. It is dated on the basis of coins discovered in its outlines to the second half of the 18th century (fig. 10). A human skull was discovered under the foundations of the building. In 2005-2010, dozens of pits from the Ottoman period were studied, and the animal bones were processed by Dr. Lazar Ninov (NIAM-BAS). Among them, single

[26] Varbanov 2011, 158–240; Varbanov & Dragoev 2012a, 7–110.
[27] Varbanov & Dragoev 2012a, 35.
[28] Varbanov & Dragoev 2012a, 71.

human remains were also found, which probably fell into these pits from destroyed graves from the Medieval necropolis.

The initial excavations on the hill were carried out in the period 1976-1978.[29] At that time, a part of the northwest fortification wall, a square tower and the remains of several buildings were discovered. Discovered Medieval pottery fragments and finds are succinctly mentioned. Ceramics from these campaigns are preserved in the collections of the Ruse Regional Museum of History, and together with it, human bones have been preserved (more than 10 skeletons are discovered).[30] Their discovery is not noted in published reports, which is a significant difficulty for specific observations. There is a high probability that they belong to the described necropolis. The area surveyed in these campaigns is over 1,000 sq.m., but little of the information obtained has been published.

Conclusion

The studies on the hill of the Roman fort of Sexaginta Prista allow us to refine the chronology of the site. From the carried out stratigraphic observations and laboratory analyses, we can supplement the information about the habitation of the terrain during the Medieval period. In most cases, the unearthed human remains are highly disturbed by various later structures or activities, and there is a lack of dating material around them that makes it difficult to refer them to a specific period. However, the similarity in the level of laying the body is visible, which provides argument to consider the cases of revealed human remains to be attributed to a chronologically unified necropolis that spread over the territory of the hill (fig. 11). According to the considered examples of laying, it is within the border of 37.58 - 39.40 m of depth (most often 38.12 - 38.40 m), and these values indicate the level of the necropolis. Most likely, the radiocarbon dating gives us the lower time border of the necropolis – the second half of the 13th century. At this stage, we could not specify the upper border, but probably the period of its functioning was not long. Intensive 18th-19th century habitation was registered, and the area was transformed into a residential zone, as evidenced by the uncovered foundations of the housing and the large number of pits.

[29] Stanchev 1978, 82; Stanchev 1979, 80.
[30] Varbanov & Dragoev 2012a, 35.

The second zone is located south of the hill of Sexaginta Prista. The territory under consideration is also an elevation on which burials were carried out during the period of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom (12th-14th century) and during the Ottoman period – 18th century. In this way, the section between these two hills, which also includes a dryland (lowering of the terrain, which was levelled in the late 18th century), is the logical location of the unfortified Medieval settlement. The territory under consideration is closest to the Medieval fortress of Ruse, which is located in the lower terrace of the Danube riverbank.

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Fig. 1



Fig. 2.1



Fig. 2.2

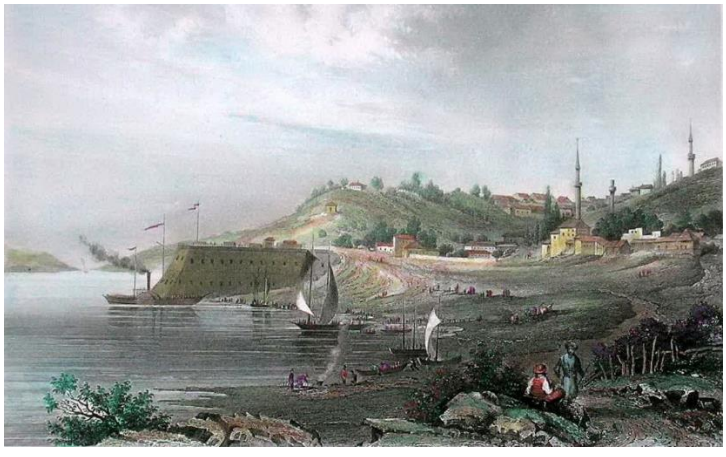


Fig. 3

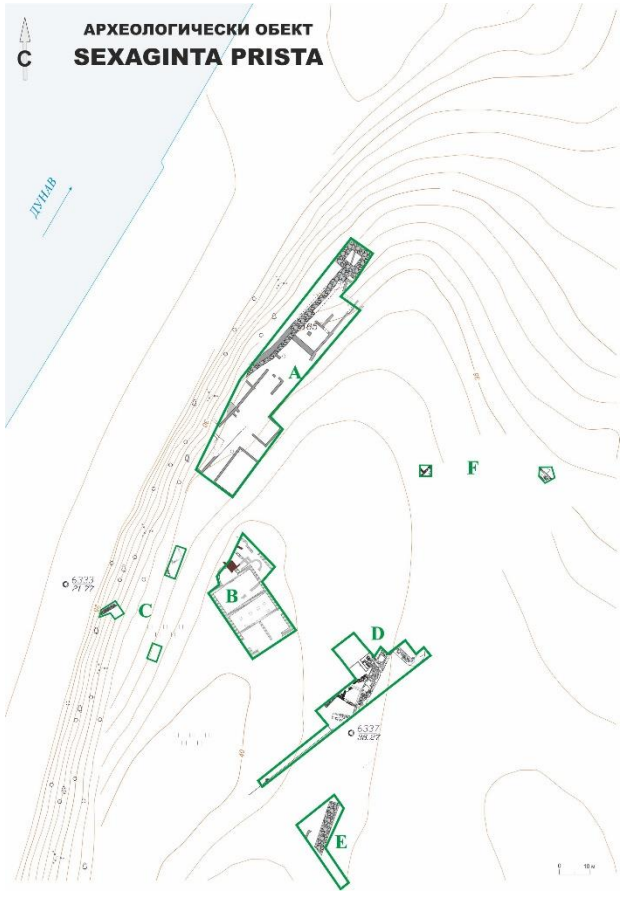

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Fig. 4

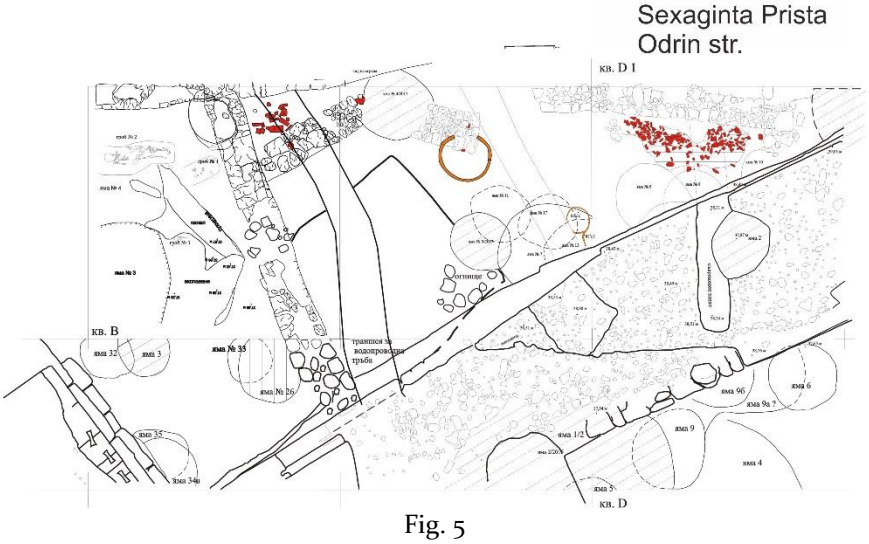

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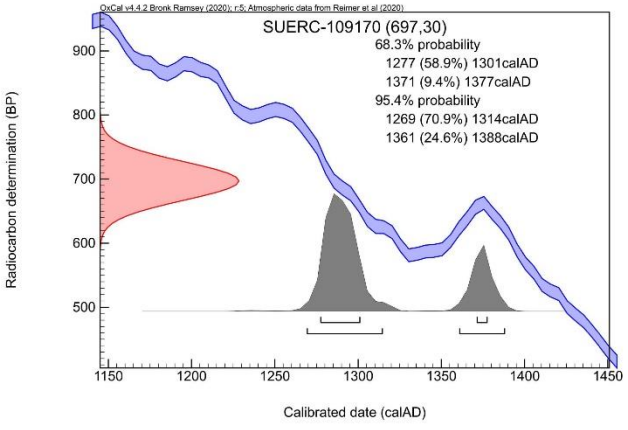
Fig. 5



Fig. 6

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RADIOCARBON DATING CERTIFICATE
28 March 2023



The radiocarbon age given overleaf is calibrated to the calendar timescale using the Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit calibration program OxCal 4.*

The above date ranges have been calibrated using the IntCal20 atmospheric calibration curve†

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Fig. 7

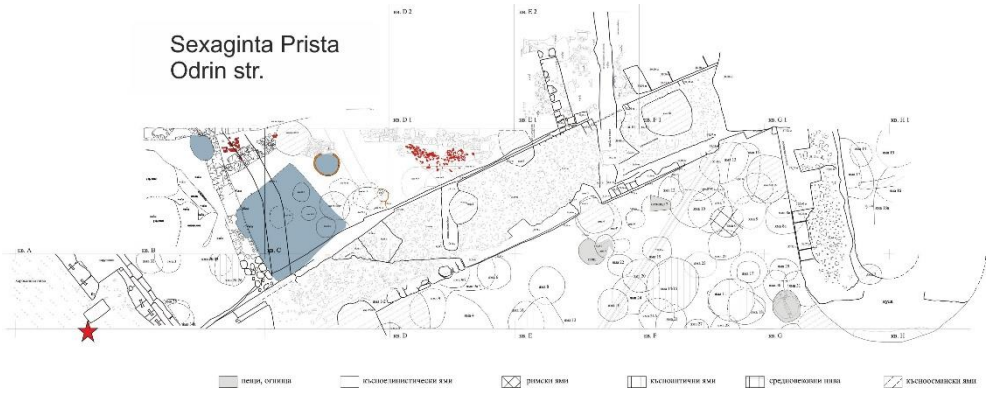


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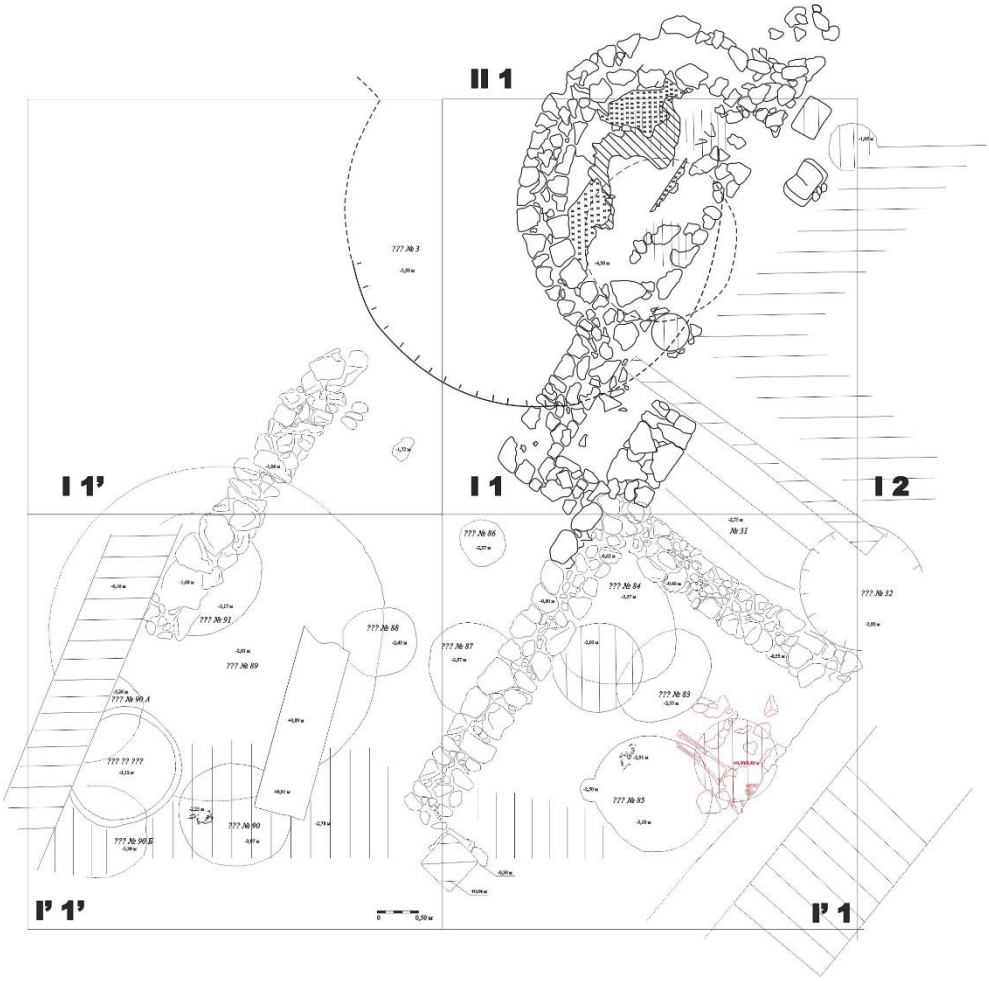


Fig. 9

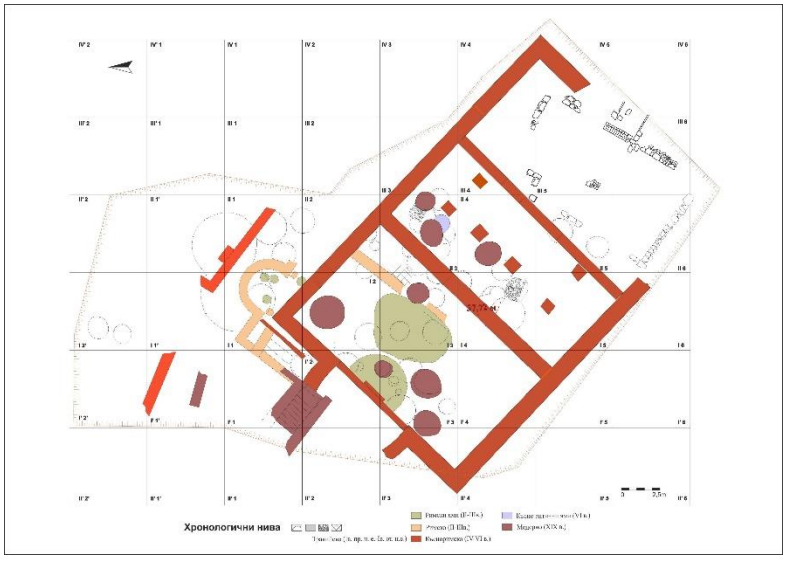

Хронологични нива

Fig. 10

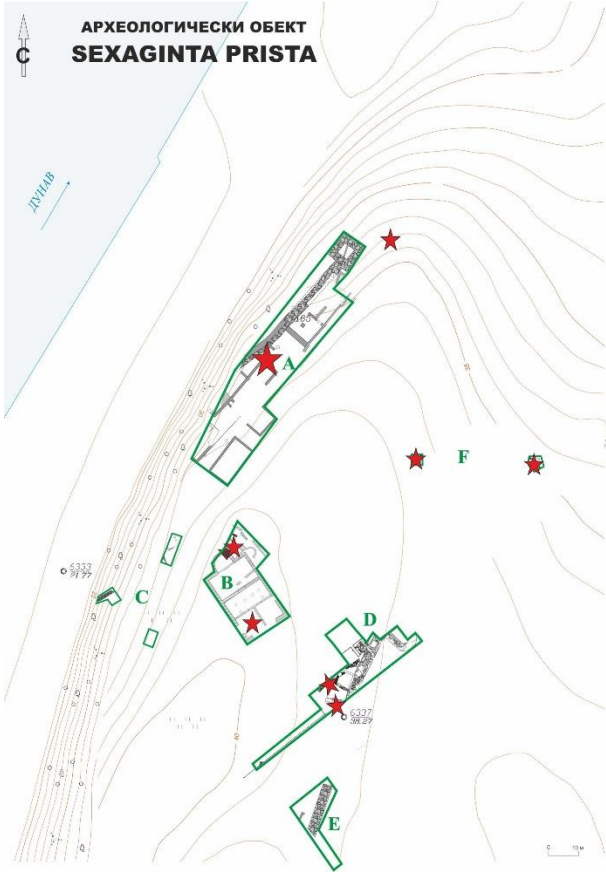

АРХЕОЛОГИЧЕСКИ ОБЕКТ
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Fig. 11

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Traditions and innovations in Late Middle Ages Bulgarian female head coverings

Kalina Atanasova

Abstract: Four different female head coverings worn in Bulgaria in the 15th century are discusses: "turban", "*proto-sokay*", forehead adornment and reverse conical hat. The first one is probably a manner of head covering that was known before but changed and more widely spread in Bulgaria as a result from outside influences and from the removal of several borders. What is typical for it is that it was used both in former Byzantium territories and in the west. The second adornment is an innovation introduced by Western Europe; the third and the fourth ones come from the previous century. During this period, there is a greater percentage of traditional trends in this element of clothing than innovations. It can be seen that the Bulgarian territories were not isolated from the world outside the borders of the Ottoman Empire. The Bulgarian fashion followed trends that are typical for Europe.

Key words: female head coverings, 15th century, traditional trends, innovation, Ottoman Empire

Резюме: Разгледани са четири различни женски украси за глава, носени в България през XV в.: "тюрбан", "прото-сокай", прочелник и обратноконична шапка. Първата вероятно представлява видоизменен, познат от преди начин на забраждане, придобил по-широка употреба в България вследствие външни влияния и падане на някои граници. Характерно за него е, че е употребяван както по бившите византийски територии, така и на запад. Втората украса представлява новост, внесена от Западна Европа; третата и четвъртата са наследени от предишното столетие. Процентно през този период и в този елемент от облеклото традициите се оказват по-силни от иновациите. Видимо е, че българските територии не са изолирани от света извън границите на Османската империя. Модата при българките следва тенденции, характерни за цяла Европа.

There is a number of historical and ethnographic studies on the matter of the origin of complicated head coverings in the Bulgarian traditional clothing and they quite frequently refer it to the First Bulgarian Empire.[1] Alongside the appearance, special attention is given to the semantics of the basic elements.[2] Without underrating this approach, in this article the topic will be considered from a visual point of view and the focus selected is on the 15th century – the period in which Bulgaria gradually became a part of the Ottoman Empire[3] and therefore Bulgarian traditions and identity suffered a setback. At such a time, that is crucial for both politics and economy, it may be expected that there would be a complete change in manners and in people's appearance.

There are detailed illustrations of the costume of the Second Bulgarian Empire which could be combined with archeological and written data. The combination of the different sources of information allows for several types of female head coverings to be distinguished, such as high and low hats, forehead adornment (*prochelnik*) and textile coverings.[4] There are data for part of them that point that they have been inherited from older times. The evolution of the forehead adornment, especially, may be traced in details from a diadem-torque to a combination of various types of metal elements.[5] The Renaissance impact on the costume can also be seen at the end of the Second Bulgarian Empire.[6]

The depictions from the 15th century are not so numerous but, even so, we have the wall paintings in the Dragalevski and Kremikovski monasteries[7] (respectively от 1476 and 1493),[8] which are valuable not only because of the portraits of *ktitors* /donors/ but also because of the contemporary details in scenes from everyday life. When examining them in a chronological order and starting with the portraits as more

[1] See a summary of opinions on this topic at Chokoev 2006, 84–89.
[2] Nikolova 1980.
[3] Here the hypothesis of P. Pavlov that Vidin, Bulgaria, existed until 1422 is adopted - Pavlov 2006.
[4] Atanasova 2016.
[5] Grigorov 2003, 36; Pavlova 2006; Grigorov 2007, 76–80.
[6] Naslednikova 1974, 45–49.
[7] I would like to thank Dr. Ivan Chokoev for the photos of these monasteries made by him and kindly given to me.
[8] The dating is based on Vasiliev 1960, 58–66. Of course, these are not the only wall paintings from the 15th century that have been preserved, but they are of essential value for this topic. Others will also be mentioned in this text.

trustworthy, four types of female head coverings in this period may be differentiated:

A. Turban: The name is provisional. It refers to the head adornment of *ktitorissa* Vida, wife of Radoslav Mavar, in her portrait in Dragalevtsi Monastery (fig. 1).[9] The portrait is not well-preserved but the folds of the white textile wrapped around her head and the covering on the neck and shoulders are distinct. It can be seen that Vida does not wear any earrings or other jewelry.

Textile head coverings that resemble turbans have a long history in Byzantium being introduced through borderland regions such as Cappadocia and gradually conquering the capital.[10] Bulgarians had known about them at least since the 12th century through the contact zone in Kastoria (fig. 2) and some local sources also evidence their use. Even so, the turban is not depicted in an official Bulgarian portrait[11] in the 13th and 14th centuries. Analyzing the works of the Kastoria art circle in the 15th-16th centuries, Tsveta Valeva and some authors, cited by her, posit that the female head coverings of the supporting characters in the scene *The Birth of Christ* are typical realistic elements from the local life in this circle.[12] A group of nativity scenes from the Kremikovski and Poganov Monasteries, the Holy Monastery of Transfiguration of Jesus in Meteora and the church of the nun Eupraxia in Kastoria (fig. 3)[13] is juxtaposed with a group of donor's portraits from the regions of Kastoria, Skopie and Nish. In a chronological order these are: the unknown *ktitorissa* of Dolna Kamenitsa (the beginning of the 14th century); Valka depicted in Saint Spas Church in Leskoets dated back to 1461/1462; Militsa of the Matka Monastery (1496/1497) and finally Vladislava from the St. Nickolas Magaliou church in Kastoria (before 1505) (fig. 4). Vida's

[9] Vasiliev 1960, 58.

[10] Ball 2006, 57.

[11] Some visual resemblance can be seen in the white covering of one of Ivan Aleksander's daughters in miniature painting 2 of the *Manasses*' *Chronicle* (scanned in the digital collection of the Vatikan library <https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_ Vat.slav.2>, access 22.09.2023). The face is again surrounded by a white cloth and there is a horizontal voluminous object around the forehead. However, this figure is in the background and has few details, so no solid conclusion may be made on its basis.

[12] Valeva 2006, 299–303. See also Kuneva 2017 about Kastoria as one of the main art centers in the Balkans at the end of the 15th – early 16th century and about the painter teams travelling within the borders of the Ottoman Empire during this period.

[13] Out of the listed wall paintings, here we discuss only those in which the head coverings are the same.

portrait looks like it belongs to both groups but the portrait from Dolna Kamenitsa is different. It is not only earlier than the rest, but also contains more elements that are both more colourful and more expensive. If we are to suggest the existence of a relationship, this would mean that in the 15th century an original and beautiful head adornment underwent a significant decline.

However, analogues of Vida's turban are not found only on the Balkan peninsular. A series of Netherland drawings contain the same head adornment (fig. 5). The hats, similar to turbans, entered Western Europe in 1400 sometimes as simple rolls of cloth,[14] and they were very much in trend after Constantinople was defeated and looted in 1453 and they kept being fashionable all over Europe until the end of the century.[15] In spite of the eastern origin of the turban, the portrait in Dragalevtsi Monastery may depict not only a local but a common European tendency. It is possible that the similarity to the hat from Dolna Kamenitsa (which is an isolated case) is random and wearing the otherwise familiar turban was a new practice for the remainders of the Bulgarian aristocracy in the 15th century, that was adopted only after it conquered Western Europe. It is interesting that no turbans can be seen in Serbian portraits from the 14th century but in 1568 in Studenitsa the Serbian princess consort – saint Ana Nemanich was depicted with a nun's covering which is an almost exact copy of Vida's one.

B. *Proto-Sokay*: the name is provisional in honour of the thesis of Krastyu Miyatev about the *sokay* originating from the *bolyars* in Veliko Tarnovo.[16] The adornment was worn by Teodora, the wife of the *ktitor* of Kremikovski Monastery, on a wall painting dating back to 1493[17] and, in a simpler form, by the maidservant in the scene of the Virgin Mary's birth in the same monastery (fig. 6). A more intricate adornment, in comparison to Vida's turban, can be seen. There are expensive *naushnitsi* /temple rings/, decorative needles and embroidery but what is the most impressive is the solid base that rises at an angle to the head, similar to a halo. Its outline really resembles the Tarnovo/Gabrovo type of *sokay* with its typical oval board, even though the metal diadem and the vertical embroidery on the covering are missing. According to

[14] Kelly & Schwabe 2007, 105.
[15] Norris 1999, 444.
[16] Miyatev 1950.
[17] Vasiliev 1960, 63.

available art sources depicting head adornments on the Balkans in the 14th century, this design does not have an older analogue.

The style and iconography of the frescoes in the Kremikovski Monastery are so different from the other preserved Bulgarian paintings dating back to the 14th century, that some hypotheses (cited and refuted by)[18] posit that Romanian patterns were used when making them. Virgil Vătășianu even deciphers the *ktitor's* inscription as "Rad Voevod" and states that the *ktitor* is the future Romanian ruler Radu the Great. In support of this, he points out that there are similarities between the clothing of Theodora and the clothing of the *ktitors'* wives in the churches of Dolheștii Mari, Saint Nicholas church in Bălinești (Suceava) and the Arbore Church.[19] The identification has been convincingly disproved by Stamen Mihaylov. However, the proto-sokay indeed has detailed analogues on the territory of Medieval Moldova. The most precise ones of them, however, have been dated to a time that is a bit later than the time of creation of the frescoes on the walls of Kremikovski Monastery: the lady from the Arbore Church (1502/2) and Anastastiya and Teodosiya from Umor Monatsery (1530) (fig. 7).[20]

Similarly to the turban case, there is a series of western parallels from the same time period. Ekaterina Manova gives examples from the Flemish region, Italy, Germany and England.[21] Netherland could also be added (fig. 8). At first sight, the three samples mentioned here do not look that much alike Theodora because of the lack of veil. However, there is a connecting link – an etching from the travel notes of Jean Chesneau of 1547 depicts Bulgarians meeting a caravan and one villager has the same "halo" around her head and no kerchief on it (fig. 9).[22] A Muslim connection may also be allowed when talking about this period but it is difficult to find one even though Ottoman Empire ladies obviously also liked interesting hats (fig. 10).[23]

[18] Mihaylov 1960.

[19] Mihaylov 1960, 26.

[20] Only the fresco in Dolheștii Mari is earlier but the hat depicted is of a very different style.

[21] Manova 1962, 61. Examples from all over Europe are illustrated on the website "Bloshka"<http://bloshka.info/2020/10/20/swirling-hat/>, access 17.09.2023 where this type of hats are called "Swirling hats".

[22] Stoyanova – Serafimova 1979, 27.

[23] In general, it is difficult to discover reliable depictions of Turkish women from the 15th century and this is why here are given examples from the next century as well.

The 15th century in the Western Europe is a period in which female head adornments were in a flourishing state; never before or after did they have such fantastic shapes. Different types of hats sometimes appeared every ten years.[24] Having this background information, it is difficult to discover the origin of the exotic element discussed herein. Yet, in contrast to the Moldovian sources, quite a few of the Western ones are dated earlier than the fresco in the Kremikovski Monastery. It should be accepted that this is not a matter of influence from Moldova to Bulgaria, but of western influence which reached the Bulgarian territories and the Principality of Moldova at approximately the same time.

The western influence on art transformed into a consciously-sought style in Bulgaria around the middle of the 13th century is a result from the founding of the Latin Empire and the establishment of free trade connections with Central and Western Europe. At the same time, western elements appeared in the clothing and accessories of the aristocrats.[25] These influences continued during the following century, being more eminent in male clothing and separate motifs were introduced in female clothing. In the 15th century, oriental innovations can be seen in the Bulgarian garment. The depictions in the Kremikovski Monastery, however, show that the more conservative female costume was still influenced by the west even after the Ottoman invasion. And the etching of Chesneau is evidence that the *proto-sokay* was used by all strata of society – the women welcoming the caravan are obviously on a much lower social level than Theodora. It may be additionally stated that at least in the east this specific accessory was clearly worn by married women; in the Kremikovski Monastery and in the church of Saint Nicola in Balineshti, where mothers are depicted together with their young daughters, only the mothers wear a *proto-sokay*.

C. Forehead adornment / *Prochelnik*: depicted in the Kremikovski Monastery on the forehead of Dragana, the *ktitor*'*s* daughter and on one of the handmaids in the scene of the Birth of Christ (fig. 11). Its use is also confirmed by an archeological finding in Cherven dated back to the end of the 14th century/the first half of the 15th century. This is a broad ribbon of red silk and gold-thread tied at the

[24] Norris 1999, 359.
[25] Grabar 1924, 26; Sotirov 1992, 347.

nape of the woman buried in grave No. 36.[26] The *prochelnik* is one of the most widely spread adornments on the Bulgarian territories from the period of the First Bulgarian Empire and it was worn by all strata of society, with only a little change in its shape and model in time. As it continued to be used in the following centuries, its presence in the 15th century does not need to be commented on.

D. Reverse conical hat: The most often used bolyar's hat of the 14th century is drawn on the heads of the tsaritsa and princess in the scene *Saint George Kills the Dragon* in the Kremikovski Monastery (fig. 12). Each woman has a white kerchief, therefore it is impossible that the artist wanted to depict a crown. For comparison, a tsaritsa's crown can be seen on the head of Saint Elena in the Kremikovski Monastery and on the heads of Saint Elena and Saint Nedelya in Sveti Dimitar Church in Boboshevo[27] – it has a clearly distinguished hexagonal shape and is placed on a maphorion. The drawing of legendary characters is not sufficiently reliable evidence of the real use of the reverse conical hat but the same was also depicted, in a simpler style, on the head of a village woman in the etching in the above-mentioned travel notes of Jean Chesneau of 1547. The description of hats "similar to big and deep plates" and "tower-like" can be found in other travel notes of the 16th century.[28] In their totality, these sources suggest that the reverse conical hat was still in use in the 15th century and probably lost its popularity to the new types of head coverings. In the 16th – 17th centuries, it was made from progressively simpler materials.[29]

***

According to the available data from the 15th century, the use of four very different hats/head adornments may be confirmed with a high degree of certainty. The first type is probably an adornment that was known before, having an Eastern origin, that was a bit changed and more widely used in Bulgaria as a result from outside influence and the fall of some borders. What is typical for it is that in the Late Middle Ages it was used in the former Byzantium territories and in the west. The second one is a novelty introduced by Western Europe; the third and fourth ones

[26] Chokoev 2006, 29–30.
[27] The frescoes in Boboshevo can be seen on the website Medieval Churches in Bulgaria <https://medchurches.livejournal.com/20660.html>, access 10.09.2023
[28] Stoyanova-Serafimova 1979, 17–20.
[29] Stoyanova-Serafimova 1979, 27.

have local origins, they were inherited from the previous centuries. As a percentage the traditions prove to have a stronger influence than the innovations in this period and on this element of clothing. What is remarkable is that the innovations themselves don't have an oriental character which would be easy to explain and is expected. Specifically in women's head coverings it can be seen that the Bulgarians do not lose contact with the world outside the borders of the Ottoman Empire. The fashion in women's head adornments follows the trends typical all over Europe.

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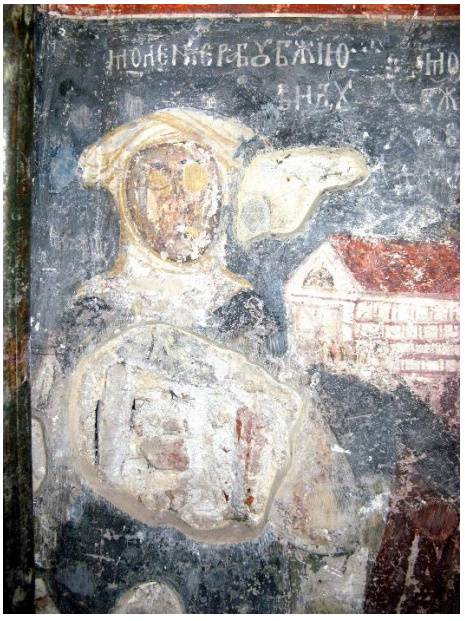


Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 9



Fig. 10



Fig. 11



Fig. 12

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The Khan Kaisar. The lead seal of Tervel and Bulgarian realities in the 8th century

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Abstract: The seal of Tervel as a Kaisar became known to science in 1972. It unquestionably supports the information in Byzantine sources about the high title received by the Bulgarian ruler – the second in importance after the imperial title in Byzantium. He was honored with the title of Kaisar by Justinian II as a sign of gratitude for the assistance provided in the restoration of the throne in 705. Although the seal is well-known, some details of its iconography have not been paid attention to until now. The depiction of Tervel without a beard, the symbol of the two six-rayed stars, the invocation to the Virgin Mary, and the intertwined rank insignia in his hair create prerequisites for a new interpretation of the seal. They present Tervel's position in a new light, suggesting his role as the heir to Justinian II's throne.

Key words: Tervel, Justinian II, Kaisar, seal

Резюме: Печатът на Тервел като кесар става известен на науката през 1972 г. Той по безапелационен начин подкрепя информацията във византийските извори, за получената от българския владетел висока титла – втора след императорската във Византия. Той е удостоен с кесарско достойнство от Юстиниан II в знак на благодарност за оказаната помощ при възвръщането на трона през 705 г. Въпреки, че печатът е добре известен, на някои детайли от иконографията му до този момент не е обръщано внимание. Изобразяването на Тервел без брада, символът на изобразените две шестолъчни звезди, инвокацията към Богородица, както и вплетените в косите му рангови белези, създават предпоставки за ново тълкуване на печата. Те представят позицията на Тервел в нова светлина, предполагащи ролята му на престолонаследник на Юстиниан II.

The first centuries of the Bulgarian Khanate on the Lower Danube are unclear and contradictory.[1] The main sources for the epoch are Byzantine chronicles, which do not always fully and impartially reflect one event or another. The First Bulgarian inscriptions from the 8th to the middle of the 9th century and the archaeological excavations, which have been ongoing in our first capital centers for more than a century, reveal extensive structures, testifying to the great potential of the Early Bulgarian state. However, there are still many questions regarding the organization and functioning of this state.

The fact that the Medieval Bulgarian state arises on Byzantine territory makes it so close to the Empire. Among all Balkan states, Bulgaria stands closest to Byzantium – from its very beginning to its end. Over the years, it follows its model, preserving and implementing both its state idea and its place in history. In other words, *Bulgaria is in the position of a separate "universe", located next to, but at the same time in "cultural" and political opposition to the Romaion*.[2]

The seals of the early Bulgarian state only become a subject of scientific study after the publication in 1972 of the impressive collection of the famous Greek collector *George Zakos*.[3] In addition to the Byzantine seals, several monuments of persons from our early history are included, previously unknown to science.[4] They open a new chapter in Bulgarian sigillography. Several publications by our scholars follow, which examine the seals in the context of Bulgarian history, acknowledging their exceptional role as direct historical sources. Undoubtedly, the seal of Kaisar Tervel holds the greatest significance among them.[5]

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[1] Working on the current text, I received unwavering support from: Plamen Petkov (Harvard University), who involved me in this adventure, Assist. Prof. Dr. Gergana Ilieva (National Archaeological Institute with Museum – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences – Branch Shumen), who directed my attention to some essential details, Prof. Dr. Stella Doncheva (Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen), who revealed to me the symbolism of the six-rayed star, Prof. Dr. Milyana Kaymakamova (Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"), who helped me to overcame the challenges of the 8th century. I express my gratitude to all of them.

[2] Stepanov 2023, 82.

[3] Zacos 1972.

[4] Part of the published collection from 1972 includes the following lead seals: Mauros, patrikios and archon of the Sermisianoi and the Bulgaroi; Tervel, Kaisar; Telerig Theophylaktos, patrikios; Bayan, patrikios and strategos.

[5] Zacos 1972, no. 2672.

Tervel, kaisar (705 – 721).

Kept in the collection of the Center for Byzantine Studies at Harvard University, Dumbarton Oaks (Washington) (BZS.1958.106.4932). Previously part of the collection "Zakos". Origin: Istanbul (Constantinople). D. 36-39 (30) mm. W. 35.67 g.

I had the opportunity to work with the seal in the summer of 2022 during my specialization at Dumbarton Oaks as a summer fellow. The last description of its physical condition can be found in the *Corpus of Medieval Bulgarian Seals*, where we read the following: "The impression was once of a good quality, but now it is corroded rather deeply. Corrosion has made a hole in two places."[6] This observation was provided by Professor *Ivan Yordanov* during his last work with the seal in 2006. I assume that after his note about the condition of this unique Bulgarian artifact, it underwent conservation and restoration, as it was already in a very good physical condition during my work with it.

The description of the seal is as follows (fig. 1).

Obverse. The Bulgarian ruler Tervel is depicted, but in an iconography typical of the Byzantine emperors of the 7th/8th centuries. He is portrayed as a warrior dressed in armour. In his left hand, he holds a shield, upon which a triumphant horseman is depicted who attacks a fallen enemy at his feet. In his right hand, he holds a spear, which is placed over his right shoulder and passes behind his head. The image is of a young man with a calm face, without a beard or mustache, with long, wavy hair cascading over his chest.[7] He wears a kaisar`s diadem on his head. Decorations can be seen in his hair on both sides, which are not part of the crown but are woven into his hair. To the left and right of his head, there are six-rayed stars.

Reverse. Cruciform invocative monogram of – "Mother of God, lend Thy aid", between the shoulders of which the owner's name is written – Tervel Kaisar.

Τ | ЄΡΒ | ЄΛΛΙ | δ – ΚϹΑ | Ρ.. = Τερβελλίου κ(αί)σαρ[ος]

+Θεοτόκε βοήθει Τερβελλίου καίσαρος

The entire inscription on the seal reads as follows: "Mother of God, lend Thy aid, Tervel the kaisar".

[6] Yordanov 2016, 31.

[7] According to Vasil Gyuzelev, "Tervel inherits the khan's throne at a very mature age" – a statement contradicted by his image on the seal, depicting him as a young man. See Bozhilov & Gyuzelev 1999, 104.

It is considered to be the first portrait of a Bulgarian medieval ruler. Immediately after its publication, it became actively involved in scientific circulation and became an integral part of our Early Medieval Bulgarian historiography.[8] The main problem that arises immediately after its publication is that on the obverse side, we see a barbarian ruler, presented as a Byzantine Basileus, and on the reverse side there is an invocation to the Virgin Mary. The prominent Byzantinist *Nikolas Oikonomides*, first expressed the opinion, accepted and long prevailing in our historiography, that as a barbarian, Tervel did not understand the meaning embedded in the iconography of his seal, undoubtedly made in Constantinople on the occasion of his proclamation as a Kaissar in 705 AD.[9] In the last decades, the thesis has been increasingly gaining ground in Bulgarian science that if not all, most of our rulers before the baptism in 864 AD were probably Christians without severing the connection with paganism. Whether Tervel was baptized immediately before the ceremony of elevation to the imperial dignity, or earlier, is difficult to say. But according to the Byzantine doctrine, it is unacceptable for a barbarian ruler to become a Kaisar without being baptized.

It is absurd to assume that the ruler of Bulgaria was so deluded as not to understand what meaning was woven into the iconography of his seal as a Byzantine kaisar or that he was using the Byzantine model, commissioning his official seal to aggrandize his own political successes. I think the idea of belittling Bulgarian rulers and their people and the explanation for the low level of development of society in this era is subject to total revision and rethinking. For it was through the elevation of Tervel to the dignity of kaisar that Bulgaria emerged from the circle of so-called "barbarian" states. This is an official recognition not only of its ruler but also of the status of the khanate.[10] I would even say that this is the moment when Bulgaria actually "enters" Europe.[11]

[8] Yurukova 1978, 3-8; Beshevliev 1992, № 81; Kaymakamova 1981, 101 – 106; Bakalov 1995, 117 – 118; Atanasov 1999, 35 – 46; Bozhilov & Gyuzelev 1999, 107; Yordanov 2011a, 19; Yordanov 2016, 31 – 35; Bozhilov 2017, 237 – 246.

[9] Oikonomides 1986, no. 26.

[10] It should not be forgotten, after all, that the title is personal, and its significance is valid solely within the Byzantine political and ideological model, not beyond it. In practice, the *Kaisar* is the second person in the Empire after the Byzantine Emperor – the supreme ruler of the earthly realm according to the Byzantine ecumenical doctrine. See Kanev 2007, 71.

[11] It is precisely Tervel's rule that marks the triumphant entry of Bulgaria not only into Byzantine but also into European history. See Bozhilov & Gyuzelev 1999, 104-111.

Some details of the seal, however, have not been paid attention to up to this point.

Beard. All scholars of the seal describe the represented ruler with a sharp, wedge-shaped beard and mustache. Only Ivan Yordanov accepts that he was bare-bearded, but without commenting on this fact. In Byzantium, the rule was strictly observed that on coins and seals the minor emperor, and also the heir to the throne, should always be depicted without a beard, in contrast to the incumbent, who was always bearded or bearded with a mustache.[12] Since the seal of Tervel was made in Constantinople in the Byzantine iconographic tradition, this detail in the depiction of Tervel is not at all accidental and could point us to his actual position during the events of 705.

The long hair and the earrings. The wavy hair of Tervel lowered on the shoulders, is accepted as a fashion peculiar to barbarian peoples. This detail is seen as a kind of hint that the person depicted on the seal is a barbarian. The Byzantine basileus of this period followed the fashion line by appearing on coins and seals with short hair curled below the ears, a rule that was strictly observed.[13] Whether Bulgarians in the 8th century wore long hair, or whether it was a privilege for the khan and the military nobility, is a question that remains unanswered at this stage. But what no researcher has so far drawn attention to is that Tervel's hair shows decoration that is certainly not part of the crown (fig. 2). The kaisar`s crown is a gold diadem (hoop) with precious stones, there is no pendilia and no cross. The object seen in Tervel's hair is rather an earring with an unclosed ring and a conical pendant on the left ear and one with a conical shape but no ring on the right (or at least none is visible). The one on the left finds an extremely close parallel with those found during the archaeological excavations of Professor *Rasho Rashev* in the summer of 2005 earrings from a burial in Mound 4 in Kabiyuk (fig. 3). The person buried in Grave 1 was a young man of 20-22 years, about 175 cm tall, laid in a wooden coffin with rich grave gifts.[14] One earring was found on the left side of the skull, the other

[12] Zhekova 2017, 48.

[13] The canon in iconography is also observed on the golden medallion of Khan Omurtag (814 – 831), which, despite being produced in Bulgaria, strictly adheres to the Byzantine model, following the prototype without any deviations. For more information on this artifact, refer to Yordanov 2011b, 161-170.

[14] In 2023, a new sample for analysis was taken from the skeletal remains. The samples will undergo analysis as part of the Bulgarian-American project "Epochs of History," conducted in collaboration with the "David Reich Laboratory" at Harvard University

between the upper bone of the right arm and the ribs (fig. 4).[15] The burial is dated to the late 7th-early 8th century, a dating entirely consistent with that of Tervel`s seal. It is conceded that these may not be earrings, but pseudo-earrings woven into the hair[16] – a conjecture that finds an exact parallel with the image on the seal. The person buried in Grave no. 1 near Kabiyuk was undoubtedly a high-ranked aristocrat (if not a ruler?), as is suggested by both the grave gifts and the manner of burial. Most likely, the earrings/pseudo-earrings were not merely adornment, but rather a rank marker characteristic only of the highest elite of the early Bulgarian society, probably the Khans.

The Six-Rayed Star. On both sides of the image of the Khan, above the shoulder level, two six-rayed stars are depicted, ending with widening beads at the ends of their axes. Researchers do not comment on their presence on the seal. It is known that the six-rayed star is a symbol of the Virgin Mary. Furthermore, it is perceived as a double symbol of the Holy Trinity. Only *Georgi Atanasov* believes that the stars are actually Christograms.[17] The star depicted on the seal has no analogue among the known Byzantine bullae of that period. A similar image, but with eight rays, is seen on a seal from the collection of a *bishop* named *Zachary* in Dumbarton Oaks (fig. 5). The seal is dated to the 7th century, and the image is described as a cross with eight rays.[18] I am inclined to accept that Tervel's seal depicts a six-rayed star, as it is associated with the Virgin Mary and the invocation to her on the other side of the seal.

What conclusions do the commented details lead to?

After the assistance provided by Khan Tervel to Justinian II (685 – 695; 705 – 711) in restoring the throne in Constantinople in 705 AD, he gained several extraordinarily important advantages for the fate of the Bulgarian Khanate. In addition to the Zagore area, which represented the first territorial expansion for Bulgaria, Tervel was also bestowed the title of Kaisar. Thus, he became the first and last foreign ruler in

(USA). The new results are expected to provide a more precise dating for Grave no. 1 and the age of those buried within it. I thank my colleague Stanimir Stoychev from the Regional Historical Museum in Shumen for providing information about this project.

[15] Rashev, Atanasov *et al.* 2006, 374 – 375; Rashev, Stanilov *et al.* 2014, 29.

[16] Rashev, Stanilov *et al.* 2014, 34.

[17] Atanasov 1999, 40.

[18] Zacos 1972, no. 1228; Dumbarton Oaks (BZS. 1955.1.253).

Byzantine history to personally receive this title from the emperor.[19] The big question is whether this title was real or honorary for Tervel. Most authors believe that it was an honorary recognition of the merits of the Bulgarian ruler and that the ceremony was not legitimate in practice.[20] *Ivan Yordanov* briefly hints that Tervel might have been seen as a possible successor to the throne, assuming that he had probably adopted Christianity – a fact that legitimized the ceremony.[21] *Georgi Atanasov* is categorical in his conclusions. He unequivocally accepts Tervel's baptism, probably in his early childhood, and considers the ceremony to be fully legitimate, with Tervel truly holding the title of Kaisar.[22]

The main thesis, which finds the most supporters among researchers on the topic, suggests that it is unacceptable for a barbarian ruler, even if he had adopted the Christian faith, to be recognized as the legitimate heir to the throne in Constantinople. But is this actually the case?

The title "Kaisar" (καῖσαρ) in the 8th century is the highest in the rank hierarchy system in Byzantium after that of the “Basileus”. During Diocletian's time, it designated the junior emperor who is below the Augustus and does not possess his sacred charisma, which gives him the sole and indisputable supremacy over all. From its inception until the major transformations in the hierarchy of honorary dignities during the reign of Emperor Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118) at the end of the 11th century, it remained the highest title predominantly reserved for the imperial son, with some exceptions, of course. Usually, the next in line son was declared Kaisar after the firstborn became heir to the throne or a close member of the imperial family, most often a son-in-law.[23] The title of Kaisar did not extend beyond the imperial family, and

[19] In the history of Byzantium, another foreign ruler was honored with this title. This is the Hungarian king Bela III (1172 – 1196), who, during his stay in Byzantium in 1165, became engaged to the daughter of Emperor Manuel I Komnenos (1143 – 1180), Maria, and was declared heir to the throne. However, since the emperor finally had a son in 1169, Bela was deprived of the succession to the throne. He was compensated with the title of Kaisar, which, by the 12th century, was already depreciated and did not carry the same significance as in the 8th century.

[20] Zlatarski 1970, 228; Bakalov 1995, 118; Bozhilov 2017, 239.

[21] Yordanov 2016, 34.

[22] Atanasov 1999, 39 – 40.

[23] Kazhdan 1991, 363.

its bestowal was a very rare practice on the part of a Basileus Romaion.[24] At any one time, there was only one single Kaisar. There are periods of time when there is no Kaisar, but the title persists. Apparently, this caution in bestowing the title of Kaisar, and the fact that it was reserved only for the circle of the closest relatives of the Roman basileus, was primarily due to the traditional perception of the Kaisarian dignity as almost equal to the imperial one and of the Kaisar as a potential successor to the emperor in the absence of a simbasileus. The title was for life.[25]

Particularly peculiar is the way the Kaisar is presented, his insignia, his position and his participation in important ceremonies. The protocol during a war is interesting. His specially preserved attire includes gilded armour with gold cuffs and kneecaps, wearing the Kaisarian crown on his helmet, a golden sword and a golden spear. In this we can see a reminiscence of the time of the early Empire when the Kaisar was seen as a junior emperor and as such his functions inseparably included those of a senior military leader. That is how Tervel is depicted on his Kaisarian seal. The seal represents an actual Kaisar, a military leader and potential successor to Emperor Justinian II.

By this time, seals of four Byzantine Kaisars are known: the Kaisar Bardas, uncle of Michael III (842-867) (fig. 6), Michael Calaphates (1035-1041), John Doukas (1060-1071) (fig. 7) and Nikephoros Melissinus (after 1081) (fig. 8). The iconography of the Kaisarian seals differs significantly from that of other holders of ranks and titles. Kaesarian, like imperials, always have an image of their owner on one side. In the case of the seal of Kaisar Bardas, according to the norms of iconoclasm, there is an image on one side only, that of Bardas himself, and on the reverse side is the invocative inscription.[26] Whereas on those of John Doukas and Nikephoros Melissinus, the obverse side features a bust of the Virgin and Child followed by the corresponding invocation inscription, and the reverse side – busts of the Kaisars

[24] A typical example is the son-in-law of Emperor Theophilos (829 – 842), Alexios Mousēlē, who married his youngest daughter and was elevated to the rank of Kaisar in 830/831. The emperor decided to strip his son-in-law and Kaisar of his titles only after he gained a son and heir (the future basileus Michael III, born in 840). See Kanev 2006, pp. 169-170.

[25] For the title of Kaisar in the 8th century see Guilland 1967, 25 – 29; Oikonomides 1972, 293; Kanev 2006, 164 – 190.

[26] Stepanenko 2008, 181 – 186.

themselves.[27] This leads to the assumption of whether the image of the Virgin Mary has not been preserved as the obverse side for imperial seals. The iconography of the Mother of God was present on imperial seals throughout the 7th century until the introduction of iconoclasm by Leo III in 726. Since the seal of Tervel was not imperial the straight figure of the Mother of God was replaced by an invocative monogram with her name. Monograms were typical for the Byzantine seals in the 7th - 8th centuries. Instead of crosses, Tervel is flanked by two six-rayed stars, considered to be a symbol of the Virgin Mary. In terms of style, Tervel's seal finds the closest parallels with those of Constantine IV Pogonatos (fig. 9) and Tiberius III Apsimar (fig. 10). In the case of Constantine IV the spear is depicted behind the emperor's head, as it is on the seal of Tervel, while in the case of Tiberius III it is in front of his chest.

It is well-known that the Mother of God is usually the protector of the capital city. She was the protector of Veliki Preslav as well, probably during its entire existence.[28] Assuming that it is the six-rayed star, the symbol of the Mother of God, that is depicted on the obverse on both sides of Tervel`s image, the support that the Kaisar seeks from her is by no means accidental. She is personified by the Byzantine capital, whose real Kaisar is precisely the Bulgarian ruler. Is this possible?

Most scholars believe that the ceremony of Tervel's investiture to the dignity of Kaisar was illegitimate because, on the one hand, he was not a Christian and, on the other, not all the details of protocol were observed.[29] The Byzantine doctrine obliged the Kaisar to be a member of the imperial family – son, son-in-law, or adopted. The other mandatory condition was that he must be a Christian.[30] There is no way that this tradition could be broken given some symbolic honouring of a barbarian ruler with the second most important title in the empire. The main problem that arises is that nowhere in the written sources the eventual baptism of the barbarian Tervel is mentioned. This act would

[27] Only on the seal of Michael Calaphates there is an image of St. George on the obverse side.
[28] Ilieva 2013, 76 – 83.
[29] Zlatarski 1970, 228; Bakalov 1995, 117; Bozhilov 2017, 239.
[30] During his exile among the Khazars, Justinian II himself marries the sister of the Khagan, but only after she is baptized and takes the name Theodora. Later, she is crowned, becoming the first foreign empress in Byzantium. See Kazhdan 1991, 1084-1085.

have been a significant breakthrough for Byzantium, which the chronicles of the time would not have missed. But if Tervel had indeed converted to Christianity at an early age, this event would have remained far in the distance of time.[31] The Byzantine practice of honouring barbarian chieftains with titles is well known, but they were always given only the title of *patrikios*, and necessarily after they had accepted the faith of Christ.[32] They were then usually married off to noble Byzantine women. It was also a prerequisite for the future Kaisar to enter the circle of the imperial family. According to the Byzantine doctrine, the Kaisar must be either the second son in succession (since the first is supposed to have already been declared a symbasileus), an adopted one, or the Emperor's son-in-law. Therefore, along with these conclusions, it can be assumed that Tervel had already married Justinian II's daughter, born by his first wife, Eudokia. Most scholars, however, assume that this promise remains unrealized. Since we do not have definite evidence from the sources, this reasoning remains hypothetical, but based on the strongest evidence at the time, namely the lead seal of Tervel. The fact that Tervel is depicted beardless on his seal leads to the conclusion that he was at some point the heir to the throne himself.

What do we know from the sources? They inform us that in the late autumn of 704, while in exile among the Khazars, Justinian managed to escape a plot organized against him by Tiberius III Apsimar (698 – 705). In an attempt to save himself, he leaves Phanagoria, abandoning his Khazar wife Theodora there. Seeking a way to safety, he enters the delta of the Danube River and sends his close associate Stephan to the Bulgarian Khan to seek support. This is the first mention of Tervel by the chroniclers.[33]

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[31] Baptism does not automatically mean that he was an ardent Christian. Vasil Gyuzelev suggests that if Tervel was indeed baptized, then "his action was in line with the established Bulgarian religious tolerance." See Bozhilov & Gyuzelev 1999, 107.

[32] Such is the case with the former Bulgarian Khan Telerig (768 – 777), who, after a conspiracy against him, is forced to leave Bulgaria. He is accepted by the Byzantine Emperor Leo IV, baptized, and married to Maria, the emperor's cousin. Two seals of Telerig as a Byzantine patrikios are known, preserved in Dumbarton Oaks. See Theophanis Confessoris 1960, 273-276; Zacos 1972, no. 3188; (BZS. 1951.31.5.2256; BZS. 1951.31.5.2203).

[33] Theophanis Confessoris 1960, 266 – 267; Nikephori patriarchae 1960, 298; Sigibertus 1965, 42 – 43. In fact, Sigebert first mentions Tervel as early as 700 AD: "Tervel has become ruler over the Bulgarians."

Tervel welcomes Justinian into his realm, and together they embark on a campaign toward Constantinople in the early spring of 705 AD. "And this one (Tervel) promised with an oath to submit to him in everything and to assist him, receiving him with great honor and raising the entire army under his command of Bulgars and Slavs. And in the following year, having armed themselves, they reached the capital".[34] The narrative in *Patriarch Nikephoros* is more detailed: "From here, one of his companions named Stephan was sent to Tervel, who was then the ruler of this Bulgars, with a request to help him regain the imperial throne. He promised him many other gifts and informed him that he would give him his own daughter as a wife. Tervel willingly agreed to everything and welcomed Justinian with great honors. Later, he armed his entire army and set out with him against Constantinople."[35] According to *Theophanes*, at the time when Justinian conquered Constantinople, he was still unaware of the existence of his heir.[36] Without close relatives and loyal supporters, in an attempt to solidify his power in Constantinople, Justinian used Tervel as the sole potential successor. The Kaisar`s title gave him real authority as the second person in the empire, as he indeed was with his army and he became the guarantee for the victory.[37] At this moment, Justinian's position is still uncertain, which is why the Bulgarians remain in the vicinity of the capital until late autumn, demonstrating strength and support for the new basileus. In such a situation, when the emperor has no sons and heirs, the Kaisar is precisely his potential successor.

The key to the correct understanding of the situation in 704/705 lies in the personality of Justinian II himself. He ascends to the throne at the age of only 16, with a clear awareness of continuing the great deeds of his illustrious predecessors. Educated in the traditions of the Roman legacy, the imperial position is unquestionably given to him by God, carried with the necessary confidence and duty. Described as a cruel and despotic ruler, Justinian achieves significant political success as well as failure, which ultimately cost him not only the throne but also

[34] Theophanis Confessoris 1960, 267.
[35] Nikephori patriarchae 1960, 298.
[36] Mango & Scott 1997, 524.
[37] One of the inscriptions around the Madara Relief, carved by order of Tervel himself, attests to this undisputed political success. The final sentence, though seemingly modest, unequivocally emphasizes whose merit is behind the victory at Nosophoros: "... the emperor, together with me, triumphed well." Beshevliev 1992, 102.

his life.[38] His life is difficult and unfortunate, marked by a series of personal losses. His father dies at the young age of 33—an event that thrusts upon him the responsibility of governing the empire. He also loses his first wife, Eudokia, early in his reign.[39] These personal tragedies contribute to the complexity of Justinian's rule and the challenges he faces in maintaining power. Probably, the personal dramas in his life also reflect on his governance. Despite being dethroned in 695, subjected to mutilation, and exiled, he finds the strength and willpower to triumphantly reclaim the throne. Betrayed, without close relatives and friends, he finds a sole ally in the Bulgarian Khan Tervel.[40] Despite the purely political agreements between the both of them, mutual respect and sympathy shine through their relationship on one hand, and on the other, the desire for superiority in each of them. The death of Justinian in 711 (as well as that of his son Tiberius) marks the end of the Heraclian dynasty, which ruled Byzantium during an extremely difficult and transitional period, ultimately transforming it into a new type of Empire.[41]

It is considered that Justinian's rule is a cornerstone for Byzantine coinage. He first uses the image of Jesus Christ as the primary, leading coin type. He replaces the invocation *Rex Regnantium* with *Servus Christi*, indicating his strong faith in God. He puts an end to the silver *hexagram* and continues to mint only silver *ceremonial* issues, often using dies from *solidi*. The die-sinkers of the coin dies were exceptionally talented, creating some of the most realistic and artistic portraits in Byzantine numismatics. Undoubtedly, the execution of the coin dies, bordering on art, was under the direct control of Justinian himself.[42] Overall, his coinage stands in sharp contrast to the political and social life in the state. Since the coinage of every emperor is a

[38] Justinian carries out active construction activities, develops and improves the thematic administration, leading to the emergence of a numerous and strong class of free peasants. However, this leads to a conflict with the hereditary aristocracy, which is threatened with destruction. His church policy suffers the greatest collapse, leading to his dethronement in 695. For his personal vendetta against the Khazars in 711, he ultimately pays with his life. See Ostrogorski 1996, 192-205; Bozhilov, Bilyarski et al. 1997, 166-171.

[39] Kazhdan 1991, 1084 – 1085.

[40] Probably, he still had some supporters in the capital, as thanks to them, after three unsuccessful attempts, he finally managed to enter Constantinople through the city's aqueduct. See Theophanes the Confessor 1960, 267.

[41] Ostrogorski 1996, 212.

[42] Grierson 1968, 568.

reflection of his rule, Justinian's coinage attests to his overall worldview, the scope of his thinking, strategy, and governance goals. Unfortunately, a large part of them remain unrealized.

In this context, the description by chroniclers is particularly interesting, recounting the ceremony where Tervel is declared Kaisar. After the ceremony, the two rulers sit side by side, receiving acclamations from the army that places them as equals. The narrative informs us that Tervel would throw golden coins with his right hand to the army and silver ones with his left.[43] It is known that silver coins in Byzantium have a ceremonial function and are usually minted in connection with the proclamation of the heir to the throne. They are scattered among the crowd after the procession leaves the church where the ceremony took place. Justinian's silver coinage is extremely scarce, both during his first and second reigns. So, what coins Tervel distributed during the investiture remains unclear. Nevertheless, his actions suggest a ceremony that was actually carried out. Before the Bulgarian ruler departs with rich gifts, bearing the honor of being a Kaisar, he swears allegiance to the Byzantine people, according to which he could sit on the throne next to the emperor.[44]

The dynamics of the events in 705 are also evident in the coinage from the period of Justinian II's second reign. The first gold coins minted immediately after the victory (summer of 705) bear the image and name of Justinian[45] (fig. 11), while in the second, probably minted after the arrival of Tiberius and Theodora in Constantinople and his proclamation as heir (autumn of 705 or even early 706?), both emperors are depicted on the coins[46] (fig. 12). The absence of Tiberius on the first coinage provides grounds to assume that these emissions were minted immediately after his return to the throne when Justinian was still unaware that he had an heir.[47] The replacement of one iconographic

[43] Suidae 1964, 309.
[44] Ostrogorski 1998, 208.
[45] Grierson 1968, Pl. XLIII.1.
[46] Grierson 1968, Pl. XLIII.2.
[47] From the sources, it is not entirely clear where exactly the Khazar wife of Justinian II, Theodora, resided during the time of his escape from Phanagoria until his entry into Constantinople. According to Theophanes, immediately after escaping the assassination attempt, Justinian sent Theodora back to the land of the Khazars, while he secretly sailed from Phanagoria to Tomi (Mango & Scott 1997, 521). The next piece of information informs us that, having regained the throne, Justinian sent a fleet to bring his wife from the land of the Khazars. When the Khagan heard about this, he sent a message informing Justinian that he already had a son. Then Justinian sent his

type with another is evidence of the altered inheritance hierarchy. This chronology applies to the entirety of Justinian's coinage during his second reign (705 – 711). The presentation of Tiberius on the coins shapes two chronological groups. In the earlier group, we see an infant child, while in the later, more mature imagery is portrayed.[48]

I consider that Tervel's seal precisely reflects this hiatus between the conquest of Constantinople by the two rulers and the arrival and proclamation of Tiberius as the heir. At that moment, the only person Justinian II had unreserved trust in was the Bulgarian Khan, inaugurated as a Byzantine Kaisar.[49]

The actions of Justinian II, although seemingly unrealistic, were actually well thought out with a view not only to reclaiming the throne but also of its permanent and secure control. Unlike other emperors, he quickly understands that the Bulgarians need to be integrated and used as allies, Bulgaria must be affiliated with the Byzantine oikoumene—a lengthy process that gradually finds its realization. Undoubtedly, Tervel had demanded what the basileus granted him in 705. These were his conditions for unconditional assistance. Tervel's continued loyalty is evident in his later actions. In 711, Justinian II decides to deal once and for all with the Khazars, whose betrayal he never forgets. Tervel also had old deals to settle with them, considering their role in the destruction of Great Bulgaria. This was probably part of the negotiated political alliance from 704, evidenced by the fact that the same Stephan, who had facilitated the connection between the two rulers earlier, was appointed as military commander. After Justinian is deposed and killed in the autumn of 711, the Bulgarian Khan once again menacingly approaches the walls of Constantinople. The memory of 705 and the fearsome Bulgarians were still vivid in the Byzantine capital. Perhaps Tervel remained loyal to the Rhinotmetos, or rather to Bulgarian interests, until the end.[50] After 711, Byzantium plunges into a political crisis,

cubicularius Theophylact, who brought Theodora and Tiberius to Constantinople, where they were later crowned by Justinian himself (Mango & Scott 1997, 523). In this context, the reasoning of Philip Grierson is interesting. Relying on Theophanes, he concludes that Theodora actually remained in the palace of Tervel, where her son Tiberius was born. See Grierson 1968, 644; Mango & Scott 1997, 523.

[48] Grierson 1968, 646.

[49] Even after Tiberius was declared Augustus, Tervel remains a potential heir to the throne.

[50] The behavior of Justinian II appears strange when, in 708, only three years after regaining the throne with the help of Tervel, he once again attacks the Bulgarians. The motive behind this action remains unclear.

witnessing frequent changes of emperors. Tervel does not interfere but rather patiently observes and analyzes the situation. Only in 716 does something extremely important happen, which is somewhat unclearly reported by *Theophanes the Confessor*. In 812, Khan Krum presented Emperor Michael I Rangabe (811 – 813) with a request to renew the treaty concluded in 716 between Tervel and Tiberius III (715 – 717).[51] This treaty holds exceptional significance for bilateral relations, evident from the fact that its importance is not forgotten even a hundred years later, marking the historical ties between the two states for years to come.[52] The established political alliance is immortalized in one of the inscriptions around the famous Madara relief—a further testament to its significance.[53] Interestingly, in the 716 treaty, instead of Tervel, the name *Krumesis* is mentioned as the *archon* of the Bulgarians. It is accepted that he was likely a co-ruler with Tervel or a regent for his successors.[54]

According to *Patriarch Nikephoros*, at some point, Tervel was sought after by the former emperor Anastasios II Artemios (713 – 715), who by that time was already in exile. The organized conspiracy, once again supported by the Bulgarian ruler, was thwarted, and the Bulgarians were reminded by the new basileus, Leo III (717 – 741) – an old acquaintance of Tervel – to uphold the terms of the peace treaty from 716.[55]

For his actual position as a Kaisar, we can infer from the assistance Tervel provides in repelling the Arab threat in 717/718. Whether as a genuine Byzantine Kaisar or as the ruler of the powerful Bulgarians, he is summoned to save Byzantium, and Europe at large, from destruction.[56]

Despite its uniqueness, Tervel's seal adheres to all the requirements of Byzantine sigillography from the 8th century. It not only symbolizes Bulgarian statehood and its ruler but also reveals the realities of Bulgarian-Byzantine relations during this period. In addition

[51] Theophanis Confessoris 1960, 285.
[52] Zlatarski 1970, 239 – 246; Bozhilov & Gyuzelev 1999, 105 – 106; Angelov 2004, 214; Kaymakamova 2013, 75 – 76.
[53] Beshevliev 1992, 102.
[54] Beshevliev 1992, 112 – 115; Kaymakamova 1981, 105.
[55] Nikephori patriarchae 1960, 301.
[56] During the Arab threat and the siege of Constantinople in 717/718, Tervel's name is not mentioned in the sources. His last mention is in connection with internal conflicts in 717. See Theophanes the Confessor 1960, 269.

to preserving the confidentiality of correspondence, the seal serves another crucial function. It informs us about the actual position of its owner in the Byzantine hierarchical structure. It is a real historical source, a document that cannot be seen merely as a symbolic or feigned gesture towards the Bulgarian ruler. It sealed a document sent by the actual holder of the title "Kaisar," undoubtedly to the Byzantine emperor himself. All of this gives this artifact exceptional significance. On the one hand, it depicts a Bulgarian ruler, as evidenced by the specific representation of his hair, adorned with rank symbols woven into it. On the other hand, he is portrayed as a real Byzantine Kaisar. According to the rules of the Byzantine hierarchical structure, Tervel remains a Kaisar of Byzantium until the end of his entire life, which, according to chroniclers, finishes in 721.

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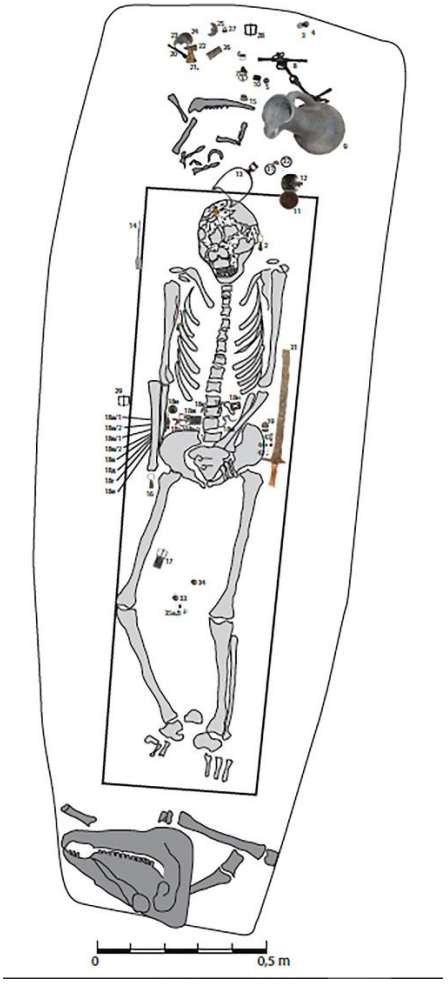
Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



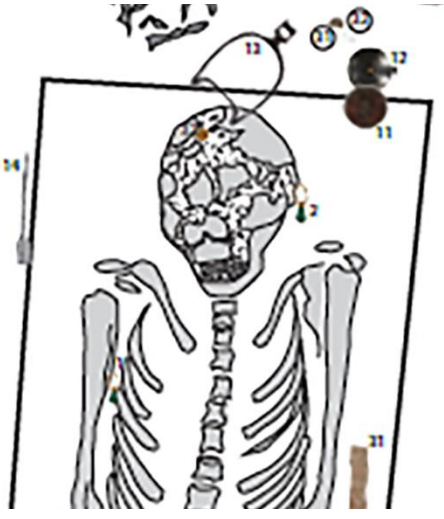


Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6





Fig. 7





Fig. 8





Fig. 9





Fig. 10





Fig. 11





Fig. 12

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Early medieval Bulgarian seals bearing the name John

Todor Todorov

Abstract: The article features three lead seals from the period of the First Bulgarian Empire and, as the title suggests, what they have in common is the name John inscribed on them.

The first two seals have long been in scholarly circulation. They have the following legend: + Κύριε βοήθει τῷ σῷ δούλῳ Ἰωάννῃ βαγατουρ καναρτχινω, i.e. "Lord, help your servant John, bagatur and heir to the throne."

The third lead seal was discovered during regular archaeological excavations in the Outer City of Pliska in 2021 and has the following legend: + Κύριε βοήθη Ἰωάνου ἄρχοντα Βουλγαρίας.

Based on the iconographic and epigraphic characteristics giving grounds for dating the seals into the second half of the 9th century, the idea is proposed that the three seals most likely belonged to one individual and represent two stages of his career in the supreme power of the First Bulgarian Empire - initially as heir to the throne, and later as ruler of Bulgaria.

It is hypothesized that this individual is Prince Boris-Michael's first-born son represented by his Christian name John, hitherto known by his pagan names Rasate and Vladimir.

Keywords: John, early medieval Bulgarian seals, heir to the throne, archon of Bulgaria

Резюме: Обект на настоящата статия са три моливдовула от епохата на Първото българско царство и както личи от заглавието общото между тези печати е, че върху тях е изписано името Йоан.

Първите два са отдавна в научно обращение и са с легенда + Κύριε βοήθει τῷ σῷ δούλῳ Ἰωάννῃ βαγατουρ καναρτχινω, т.е. "Господи помагай на своя раб Йоан багатур и престолонаследник."

Третият моливдовул е открит при редовни археологически разкопки във Външния град на Плиска през 2021 г. и е с легенда + Κύριε βοήθη Ἰωάνου ἄρχοντα Βουλγαρίας.

В хода на изложението, базирайки се на иконографските и епиграфски характеристики на трите моливдовула, които дават основание за датировка през втората половина на IX в., се лансира идеята, че тези три печата най-вероятно принадлежат на едно и също лице и представят два етапа от кариерата му във върховната власт на Първото българско царство. Първоначално като престолонаследник, а впоследствие и като владетел на България.

Изказана е хипотезата, че зад тази личност стои първородният син на княз Борис-Михаил, представен с християнското си име Йоан, до сега познат с езическите си имена Расате и Владимир.

The present paper examines three lead seals from the period of the First Bulgarian Empire and, as the title suggests, what they have in common is the name John inscribed on them. Two of the seals have long been in scholarly circulation,[1] while the third one was discovered during regular archaeological excavations of site No. 41 in the Outer City of Pliska in the summer of 2021.[2]

I have to admit that the reason for considering an article of this title is precisely the latest find. Nevertheless, I will begin with the first two lead seals, struck in the same boulloterion and, as noted above, in scholarly circulation for quite a long time. They have the following iconographic and epigraphic characteristics (fig. 1):

Obv. Double-crossed patriarchal cross on four steps. Around the image, circular inscription: ϵBOHΘHTωCωΔOVΛω.

Rev. Inscription of five lines: +IωAN | NHBAΓAT | OVPKANA | HPTX | HNω

The reading of the legend on the reverse of these two lead seals (one originates from Constantinople and the other was discovered in Varna) has over a century old history. Various assumptions have been made regarding the owner's name, his title, and respectively the dating of these seals.[3] Without underestimating the opinions of the former

[1] Jordanov 1989, 390-399.

[2] Todorov & Konstantinov 2022, 39-48.

[3] On the dynamics of the study of these lead seals since 1905 to the present day, see Jordanov 2016, 135-137.

researchers, I think an important source for the correct deciphering of the legend on the reverse is Ivan Jordanov's publication from 1989. In his article, the prominent Bulgarian sigillographer proposed reading of the whole text as: + Κύριε βοήθει τῷ σῷ δούλῳ Ἰωάννῃ βαγατουρ καναηρτχινω, i.e. "Lord, help your servant John, bagatur and heir to the throne" and reached the following conclusions:

1. The two lead seals bare the title held by the Bulgarian ruler's firstborn son and heir to the throne noted in the "*De Ceremoniis*" by Constantine Porphyrogennetos as κανάρτι κείνος or καναρτικεινο(ς).[4]

2. Taking into account the paleographic and iconographic features that date the lead seals in the chronological framework second half of the 9th – first decades of the 10th centuries and without ruling out other possibilities for identification, I. Jordanov proposed that these seals should be associated with John, the son of the Bulgarian Tsar Simeon I. As regards the period when this son of Simeon's bore the title heir to the throne, the author assumed the first years of the reign of his brother Peter, i.e. in the period 927-928, as most acceptable.[5]

A few years after the above statement was made, five new lead seals of the same iconographic characteristics and a legend +K(ύρι)ε βοήθη τῶ σῶ δούλῳ Μηχαήλ βαγατουρ κανα ηρτχ(ι) θυ(ι)νος appeared and went into scholarly circulation.[6] They generally corroborate the reading proposed by I. Jordanov, especially the idea that the domestic title of the Bulgarian heir to the throne is represented on John's seals.

The overall look of these lead seals, however, suggests dating rather to the second half of the 9th century. This apparently provoked the prominent specialist in the field of Byzantine and medieval Bulgarian sigillography to propose a few years later a probable identification as "another John – a legitimate or illegitimate heir to the throne".[7] These doubts, however, did not prevent many researchers

[4] On the forms of the title with which the Bulgarian ruler's firstborn son is represented in the two manuscripts of the "*De Ceremoniis*", see Mango & Ševčenko 1960, 248.

[5] Jordanov 1989, 390-399.

[6] Georgiev 1990, 103-107. Today, the lead seals of this group are already 7, struck in 3 or 4 boulloteria, and Tsar Simeon's firstborn son Michael is accepted as their owner, see Jordanov 2016, 140-143.

[7] Jordanov 1997, 356-357.

from accepting that the owner of the seals was Tsar Simeon's son John, the unsuccessful claimant to the throne of his brother Tsar Peter.[8] I also accepted this identification years ago, not without reservations.[9] Doubts in this respect are further reinforced by the new find from site No. 41 in the Outer City of Pliska.

It is a fragment of a lead seal slightly larger than a quarter. The lower left part of the obverse and respectively the lower right part of the reverse are preserved. Diameter: 2.4 cm, thickness of the blank: 0.9 cm, weight: 9.1 g. From the preserved fragment, we can assume that it was a relatively well-centered imprint with slight displacement to the right, due to which the outer circle of dots on the obverse remained outside the blank (fig. 2).

Obv. Bust of Christ facing, with an equal-armed cross inscribed behind his head. The left arm of the cross is visible. Also visible is the right hand in benediction and a fragment of the Gospel he holds in his other hand. Around the image, part of a circular inscription: . . . . . APXONTABO. . . . . .

Rev. Severely damaged bust image of the Virgin facing and in praying gesture. Her left hand is clearly visible. Around the image, part of a circular inscription: . . . . . HΘHÏ<u>Ω</u>A . . . . . .

Despite the fragmentary condition of the newly discovered lead seal, the preserved parts of the images and inscriptions point to a close compositional proximity to two groups of Bulgarian ruler's seals, long known to researchers. The obverse of these seals depicts the same bust images of Christ and the Virgin with circular inscriptions around them. According to their content, these inscriptions fall into two groups.

The first group (fig. 3) bears a circular inscription on the obverse reading + Χ(ριστ)ὲ or Κ(ύρι)ε βοήθη Μηχαὴλ ἄρχοντα Βουλγαρίας (Christ or Lord, help Michael, archon of Bulgaria) and on the reverse + Θ(εοτό)κε βοήθη Μηχαὴλ ἄρχοντα Βουλγαρίας (Virgin, help Michael, archon of Bulgaria). Nearly 30 specimens are known from

[8] Pavlov 1999, 1-6; Georgiev 2009, 114-116. Different from this opinion is the hypothesis that the owners of these seals are not the heirs to the throne John and Michael, but the bagaturs of the heir to the throne with the same names, see Popkonstantinov 2008, 75-88. In my opinion, this idea is rightly criticized and rejected, see Georgiev 2009, 118-122; Slavova, 2011, 60-62; Jordanov 2016, 143.

[9] Todorov, 2008, 263-279.

this group. Despite some controversy at the appearance of the first ones, a firmly established opinion today is that the owner of these seals was Boris-Michael (852-889, + 907), and their usage is placed in the period 864-889.[10]

The second group contains a circular inscription on the obverse reading + Χ(ριστ)ὲ βοήθη Συμεὼν ἄρχοντα Βουλγαρία(ς) (Christ, help Simeon, archon of Bulgaria) (Fig. 4) and on the reverse + Θ(εοτό)κε βοήθη Συμεὼν ἄρχοντα Βουλγαρία(ς) (Virgin, help Simeon, archon of Bulgaria) (Fig. 4). There are 24 known specimens. Identification with Simeon I the Great (893-927) has been accepted for this group too, and the use of the lead seals has been assigned to the period 893-913.[11]

The better preserved obverse side of the newly discovered lead seal containing the image of Christ gives me some reason to assume that, according to its composition (images and inscriptions), it bears a close resemblance to the seals of "Michael, archon of Bulgaria." The latter were probably the engraver's model for carving the boulloterion, in which the newly discovered lead seal was struck. It is this similarity that is a determinative factor in the restoration of the full text of the inscriptions.

I will begin with the obverse. As I have already noted in the description above, the preserved letters of the inscription are ΑΡΧΟΝΤΑΒΟ. In fact, this is the end of the inscription and its restoration as ἄρχοντα Βο[υλγαρίας], i.e. "archon of Bulgaria" is unlikely to raise any objections. The beginning of the inscription on this side is missing. I can assume that it started with the invocation Χ(ριστ)ὲ or Κ(ύρι)ε βοήθη, after which the name of this archon of Bulgaria followed.

What we want to know is the identity of this individual. The answer is revealed by the preserved reverse side of the seal. As noted above, the preserved letters are ΗΘΗΪΩA. The first three letters are undoubtedly the end of the invocation + Θ(εοτό)κε βοήθη. The next three letters are probably part of the ruler's name - the first two of which are definitely ΪΩ,[12] and the third one (where the blank broke

[10] Jordanov 2016, №8-35.

[11] Jordanov 2016, №36-59.

[12] The presence of the letter Ω is undeniable. Theoretically, it can be objected that Ϊ is actually a poorly imprinted letter T. Then the restoration of this part of the inscription would lead to τῷ σῷ δούλῳ or τῷ δούλῳ σου. In fact, the second

along the line of the channel) I tentatively determine as 'A'. Thus, on the reverse, the last (preserved) two letters, and probably the third letter (partially preserved), indicate that the owner's name was neither Michael nor Simeon, but John.

Summarizing the above observations, I propose the following restoration of the circular inscriptions on the newly discovered seal found at site No 41 in the Outer City of Pliska:

Obv. [+ Χ(ριστ)ὲ or + Κ(ύρι)ε[13] βοήθη Ἰωάνου] ἄρχοντα Βο[υλγαρίας]

Translation: Christ or Lord, help John, archon of Bulgaria

Rev. [+ Θ(εοτό)κε βο]ήθη Ἰωά[νου ἄρχοντα Βουλγαρίας]

Translation: Virgin, help John, archon of Bulgaria

In the light of the above restoration of the inscriptions, I can ascertain albeit cautiously (after all, we are dealing with a fragment of a lead seal) that a seal of a third "archon of Bulgaria" bearing the name John and dating from the second half of the 9th – the beginning of the 10th centuries (after those of Michael and Simeon) enters the scholarly circulation.

So, after the presentation of the find from the Outer City of Pliska, the following question arises: Did the seals of Ἰωάννη

possibility seems more likely if the remainder of the last letter is defined as Δ and not A, as I believe. However, this form (τῷ δούλῳ σου) was characteristic of the Byzantine seals until the mid-8th century – see Oikonomides 1985, 153. The direct and indirect arguments regarding the dating of our seal will be discussed below in the main text, but, in any case, it cannot be dated earlier than the mid-9th century. Of course, such an archaism is not new in the monuments of medieval Bulgarian sigillography, but I will cease my reasonings here, as I am convinced that the fourth preserved letter on the reverse is Ϊ, and with it begins the name of the owner of the seal, and not the continuation of the invocation with the expression "of his servant" or "of servant of his." This conviction of mine (it can be confirmed or denied only by the appearance of a better preserved specimen) is based firstly on the clearly distinguishable and divided colon (diacritic) above the letter I and secondly on the undoubted compositional proximity to the seals of "Michael, archon of Bulgaria" and "Simeon, archon of Bulgaria". In all known more than 50 specimens, the invocation ends with βοήθη followed by the name of the ruler (Jordanov 2016, №8-59).

[13] The fragmentary state of the seal obliges me to provide this alternative. In fact, according to this criterion (the beginning of the invocation), the seals of "Michael archon of Bulgaria" of similar iconographic and epigraphic design fall into two groups: with invocation beginning as Χ(ριστ)ὲ and with invocation beginning as Κ(ύρι)ε – see Jordanov 2016, №8-35.

βαγατουρ καναηρτχινω and the seal of Ἰωάὴνου ἄρχοντα Βουλγαρίας belong to the same individual?

The coincidence of names, the general dating (the second half of the 9th – the beginning of the 10th centuries) and the logical sequence of titles –initially heir to the throne and later ruler of Bulgaria – point to a positive answer to the above question.

Who was this John? The answer comes spontaneously and at first glance seems to be the only possible one in the light of the well-known and repeatedly commented sources – this is John, Tsar Simeon's third son and unsuccessful claimant to the throne of his brother Peter. His seal of bagatur and heir to the throne illustrates his position as such either in his father's reign or at the beginning of his brother's reign. However, his seal as archon of Bulgaria demonstrates his claims to the throne, which remained unfulfilled after the discovery of the plot of 928.

Such a conclusion, as logical as it may seem, is seriously shaken by the fact that the iconographic and epigraphic characteristics of the three lead seals indicate their use rather in the second half of the 9th century and less likely in the 920s. Moreover, the seals of "John, archon of Bulgaria", according to the image of Christ on the obverse, which has a cross behind his head, but no outlined nimbus, are dated to the period 843–945.[14] In Bulgarian realities, however, the upper limit of this chronological framework shrinks to 913. As written records from 913 show, Simeon I the Great made open claims to the throne of the Byzantine emperors in Constantinople.[15] From this year onwards his seals bearing the title βασιλεὺς[16] are dated. During the reign of Simeon's successor Peter this title was recognized by Constantinople and occupies a major place on his lead seals with a legend in Greek.[17] Therefore, according to the data of the seals and as logic suggests, the title "archon" ceased to be used in the Bulgarian

[14] Nearly 1,000 Byzantine imperial seals are kept in various collections around the world (including Bulgaria) (Andonov 2019, 30-31). It is precisely on the basis of observations of their iconography that a conclusion has been drawn that this iconographic subject generally appeared on the obverse of the imperial lead seal immediately after the fall of iconoclasm in 843 and was used until 945, after which date it gave way to a similar iconographic subject, on which, however, the cross behind the head is inscribed in a nimbus (Shandrovskaya 1999, 116).

[15] Bozhilov 1983, 98.

[16] Jordanov 2016, № 60.

[17] Jordanov 2016, III.3.

ruler's chancery in the period 913-969 and can hardly be associated with the claimant to the Bulgarian throne in 928.

Bearing in mind the above observations as well as the fact that the lead seal of "John, archon of Bulgaria" was discovered during regular archaeological excavations of a site, whose existence has been dated no earlier than the 80s of the 9th century,[18] I can propose a more appropriate alternative for the use of this seal in the chronological framework 889-893. This was the time when Boris-Michael assumed the monastic rank and delegated extensive co-ruling powers to his firstborn son. We know of the latter that he bore the names Rasate (according to the note in the Gospel of Cividale) and Vladimir (according to the Old Bulgarian account of the "Miracle of St. George with the Bulgarian"). A few years ago, Plamen Pavlov quite reasonably pointed out that the two names by which Boris's firstborn son is known are pagan.[19] Is not it possible, however, that in 864 Rasate-Vladimir received the name John in holy baptism? The relevance of this question is enhanced by the new sphragistic find, which in turn points to several well-known records concerning the Bulgarian diplomatic activity towards Rome in 866. The first of them comes from the Annals of Saint Bertin and indicates that in 866 Boris sent to Pope Nicholas I his **son** along with other boils, i.e. bolyars.[20] The second record comes from Pope John VIII's letter to Boris-Michael dated July 8, 879, from which we learn that the Bulgarian envoys to Pope Nicholas I were Peter, **John** and Martin.[21] If to these two records we add the seals of "**John**, bagatur and heir to the throne" with dating in the second half of the 9th century and the seal of "**John**, archon of Bulgaria" with a probable dating in the last two decades of the 9th

[18] Todorov & Konstantinov 2022, 40.

[19] Pavlov 2019, 132.

[20] LIBI 1960, 288. Even Vasil Zlatarski considered that this information "does not seem very trustworthy" because it had not been corroborated by other sources (Zlatarski 1927, 85, note 2). His opinion was almost uncritically accepted in later studies as well as in modern ones (Gyuzelev 1969, 317, note 8; Bozhilov 2017, 35). In this regard, it should be noted that the information from the Annals of Saint Bertin cannot be considered completely isolated. In the "Chronicle" of Andreas of Bergamo from the last quarter of the 9th century, we read that the ruler of the Bulgarians on his own initiative "went to the temple of St. Peter in Rome" and "was established in the Christian faith by Pope Nicholas I" (LIBI 1960, 181). Here we cannot rule out the possibility that behind this strange Boris-Michael's visit is actually the real visit of his son to Rome in 866.

[21] LIBI 1960, 164.

century, some interesting coincidences occur between written evidence and sphragistic data. These coincidences give me a reason to assume the following historical reconstruction.

In 864, Boris-Michael's firstborn son officially adopted the name John. In 866, he was part of the Bulgarian delegation to Rome and was noted in the official documents with this name (the letter of Pope John VIII). With the same name, he sealed his correspondence until 889 as "bagatur and kanartikin," i.e. heir to the throne. After that year, he received from his father Boris-Mihail extensive co-ruling powers and probably used anonymous seals with similar iconography (apparently already established for the Bulgarian ruling institution) as those of "Michael, archon of Bulgaria."[22] At some point, however, probably in an effort to step out of the shadow of the titular ruler "Michael, monk, from God appointed archon of Bulgaria"[23] and to pursue an independent policy different from that of his father's, he came out of anonymity – again with his official name John. The engraver who received the order to make the boulloterion followed almost literally the model of Boris I's ruler's seals and did his best to reproduce their close resemblance. It was with this boulloterion that in the early 890s John, the "archon of Bulgaria," sealed a letter to an unknown addressee in the architectural complex known today as site No. 41 in the Outer City of Pliska.

The third Boris's son Simeon probably followed the same path. In 893, he received from his father the co-ruling powers taken away from his older brother and, until his father's death in 907, sealed his correspondence with anonymous seals, while after that year until 913 he presented himself to his subjects and diplomatic partners with the above-mentioned seals of "Simeon, archon of Bulgaria".[24]

In conclusion, I would like to note that the propositions outlined above are more or less hypothetical in nature, and only future finds will corroborate them or render them untenable. What is more important, however, is that the attention of the scientific community has been focused on an interesting coincidence coming from monuments of early medieval Bulgarian sigillography, directly related to the ruler's institution in the second half of the 9th century.

[22] Todorov 2011, 179-181.

[23] This is the legend of the lead seals, with which the monastic Bulgarian ruler sealed his correspondence after 889, probably until his death in 907 (Jordanov 2016, 35a-в).

[24] Todorov 2011, 179-181.

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Fig. 1. Lead seal of "John, bagatur and hier to the throne" (Jordanov 2016, № 288).

Fig. 2. Lead seal of "John, archon of Bulgaria" (Todorov & Konstantinov 2022, fig. 2a-b).

Fig. 3. Lead seal of "Michael, archon of Bulgaria" (Jordanov 2016, № 15).

Fig. 4. Lead seal of "Simeon, archon of Bulgaria" (Jordanov 2016, № 39).

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Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig 4

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Enlightening the future of the contingent of the Persians in the Byzantine army after Theophobos († 842): Theophilos κόμης τῶν Περσῶν (10th century, first half)

Alexandra-Kyriaki Wassiliou-Seibt, Konstantinos Kalantzis

Abstract: The existence of the Khurramite military contingent in the Byzantine army goes back to Emperor Theophilos and had a brief flourishing associated with its first commander, Naṣr, and his son and successor Theophobos. Emperor Theophilos established the latter as a counterweight against the powerful Armenian faction at court and even married him to his sister Helene. In order to strengthen Theophobos' position at court and to legitimize his ascension into the imperial family, the emperor created the *terminus technicus* ἐξουσιαστὴς τῶν Περσῶν, which is to be translated as "potentate of the Persians". We thus distance ourselves from Zuckerman's interpretation, which seeks to recognize in this term a degradation of Theophobos after the birth of Michael III (840).

We gain a new perspective into the history of this contingent (after the execution of Theophobos, anno 842) from a unique seal (first half of the 10th century), which mentions an officer of lower rank who served in the theme army: Theophilos β. σπαθαροκανδιδᾶτος καὶ κόμης τῶν Περσῶν. His name probably goes back to one of his ancestors, who was named after the emperor Theophilos.

Keywords: Theophobos ἐξουσιαστὴς τῶν Περσῶν, Theophilos κόμης τῶν Περσῶν, Emperor Theophilos, Byzantium in the Iconoclastic Era, Byzantine Aristocracy, 10th century, Byzantine Sigillography, Grundlagenforschung

Резюме: Съществуването на военния контингент на Хуррамите във византийската армия датира от времето на император Теофил и има кратък разцвет, свързан с личността на неговия първи командир Наср и неговия син и наследник Теофоб. Император Теофил издига последния като противотежест срещу могъщата арменска фракция в двора и дори го жени за сестра си Елена. За да укрепи позицията на Теофоб в двора и да легитимира позицията му в императорското семейство, императорът създава като terminus technicus титлата ἐξουσιαστὴς τῶν Περσῶν, което трябва да се преведе като „властник на персите“. По този начин ние се дистанцираме от тълкуването на Цукерман,

който тълкува тази титла като деградация на Теофоб след раждането на Михаил III (840 г.).

Уникален печат от първата половина на X век хвърля допълнителна светлина върху историята на този контингент след екзекуцията на Теофоб, около 842. Моливдовулът е собственост на офицер от по-нисък ранг, служил в темната армия: Теофил β σπαθαροκανδιδᾶτος καὶ κόμης τῶν Περσῶν. Името му вероятно идва от един от неговите предци, който е кръстен на император Теофил.

One of the legendary figures during the reign of the Byzantine emperor Theophilos (829-842) was undoubtedly Theophobos with the surname ὁ Πέρσης,[1] which refers to his function as commander of the contingent of the Khurramites in the Byzantine army. The narrative sources however, do not provide us with the *terminus technicus* of this command - they use the general term ἡγεμονεύειν ("to rule")[2] or ἡγεμονεύειν ἐν Περσαῖς ("to rule over the Persians").[3] Nevertheless, a unique seal reveals that its official designation was ἐξουσιαστὴς τῶν Περσῶν, a discovery that we owe to Werner Seibt.[4] We will deal with the interpretation of this piece later. The Byzantine historians of the 10th century (group of Philomacedonian sources, i.e. Genesios, Symeon Logothetes, Pseudo-Symeon, Theophanes Continuatus) convey a confused, sometimes anachronistic picture of his profile and impact. They attempt to paint a rather pejorative image and conflate events that, in reality, concern the person of his father, Naṣr. C. Zuckermann was able to clarify the connections and make a distinction between father and son by critically comparing the sometimes divergent accounts of the Byzantine chroniclers and consult oriental sources (al-Tabari, Michael the Syrian). For practical reasons, our references to

[1] For a correction of the surviving information on his identity, see the analysis by Zuckerman 2017, 101-150. Cf. nevertheless Signes Codoñer 2014, 161-163, who was the first to separate Naṣr from Theophobos and both argued for a father-son relationship or, in the case of Naṣr, for another Khurramite who was not necessarily related to Theophobos. – The old state of research on the identity of the two individuals is most recently reflected in *PmbZ* I/5 (2001), Lemma 8237, s. v. Theophobos Perses.

[2] Zuckermann 2017, 141 (Genesios).

[3] Zuckermann 2017, 141 (Theophanes Continuatus).

[4] Seibt 1975, 212 (review of Zacos - Veglery 1972, no. 2526, where ἐξουσιαστὴς Χερσῶνος was considered and a dating to the 2nd half of the 9th century was suggested). – The former piece of the George Zacos' collection came into the seal holdings of Dumbarton Oaks in 1958 (DO 58.106.3767) and was republished based on Seibt's correction, ed. *DOSeals* V, no. 108.1; dated to the 830s. Cf. https://www.doaks.org/resources/seals/byzantine-seals/BZS.1958.106.3767/view.

relevant passages in the chronicles cited above are orientated towards the listings in Zuckerman.

The existence of this contingent (of Iranian origin, with the modern Āzarbāyjān at its core) in the Byzantine army is linked to the successful uprising (816) of the Khurramites (a religious sect with a centrifugal socio-political character) under the leadership of Babak Khorramdin against the Arab Chaliphate. Even before the suppression of the movement, which began in 835 when the Abbasid general Afshin was able to oust the Khurramites from the territories they occupied in western Iran with the help of Turkish militias. Some of these Khurramites had already established contacts with the Byzantine army as part of the Byzantine-Arab conflicts, which had reached a new upswing under Theophilos. One of them was Naṣr, the father of Theophobos, who defected to the Byzantines with his entourage in 834 after a devastating defeat, and converted to Christianity (his Christian name remains unknown). With his troops,[5] he took part in the decisive offenses of the plundering campaigns launched by Emperor Theophilos in the Armenian territories of the Chaliphate; in 837, he first plundered Sozopetra (Zibatra), the birthplace of the Chaliph al-Muʿtaṣim, and then defeated the Arabs in the border region on the upper Euphrate; in 838, he is said to even have saved the emperor's life in the battle of Dazimon (Anzen), which was disastrous for the Byzantines.

What Byzantine designation Naṣr had been given by Theophilos as leader of the Khurramites, however, remains unknown. Nevertheless, Naṣr, along with more of his men died in a battle against Arab raiders in the theme of the Boukellarioi (either in 839 or 840); the Khurramite contingent had suffered a considerable decimation and was in a desperate need of a new leader. The sudden death of Naṣr undoubtedly hit the emperor in a heavy and unexpected way, as he had now lost a capable comrade-in-arms and a warrior to whom he ultimately owed his life; a suitable successor had to be appointed for the Khurramite contingent. Theophilos decided in favour of the then around 18 years old Theophobos, the son of Naṣr, and bound him even closer to himself by marrying him to his sister Helen.[6] The honouring with the high title

[5] The term Περσικὸς σύλλογος is found in Genesios, and in Theophanes Continuatus τάγμα Περσικόν. On this cf. Zuckerman 2017, 116.

[6] Helene was probably a few years older than Theophobos. Cf. Zuckerman 2017, 145.

of πατρίκιος[7] is based on this epigamy and corresponds to reality, which is confirmed by a seal.[8]

With this marriage, the *basileus* obviously intended to counteract the powerful Armenian aristocracy, which was anchored at court through Augusta Theodora, or to bring about a rallying act. Michael (III), the son of the emperor, had not yet been born (9/10 January 840), and Alexios Musele καῖσαρ, the emperor's son-in-law, was automatically eliminated as heir to the throne due to the sudden death of the emperor's daughter Maria (839). Theophilos therefore seized this chance and used the *kairos* to position himself and vis-à-vis the powerful Augusta's family, i.e., Manuel Armenios (her "uncle") as well as Bardas and Petronas (her two brothers), by accepting Theophobos into the imperial family. This decision was undoubtedly not welcomed by the Armenian faction. Theophilos evidently intended to build up his young brother-in-law as a counterweight at court and to prepare him as his future successor. Theophobos had already received a Byzantine education at court while his father Naṣr was still alive, with whom Theophilos apparently had a very good relationship. The latter could even be observed in the choice of the name Theophobos ("the God-fearing"), which is related to the name Theophilos ("the beloved of God"). The question arises as to whether Naṣr wanted to impress the emperor with this name or whether the emperor himself chose this name for the former's son. In terms of Byzantine political theory, one could even advance the interpretation: Theophobos embodies the befitting fear of God towards the Emperor Theophilos, whom God loved.

The official *terminus technicus* that Theophobos received from the emperor as the new head of the Khurramite contingent was, as mentioned at the beginning, ἐξουσιαστὴς τῶν Περσῶν, and was interpreted differently in the academic discourse: J.-Cl.Cheynet[9] suggested that it implied a contingent that was not yet integrated into

[7] Documented by Theophanes Continuatus: Τόν τε Θεόφοβον ὁ Θεόφιλος τιμῇ τῇ τῶν πατρικίων ἐναριθμεῖ. Cf. Zuckerman 2017, 112, 115 and 140.

[8] Barber Institute, University of Birmingham (photo in Vienna). On the obverse the invocation monogram Laurent V (Θεοτόκε βοήθει) in the four spandrels τῷ - σῷ- δού-λῳ. cf. the handlist of Dunn 1983, 8, no. 4.

[9] Cheynet 1998, 49: „autorité sur les Perses par un titre qui ne correspond pas à la titulature militaire officielle, ce qui implique que lui et ses hommes n'étaient pas encore intégrés dans l'armée". Cf. *DOSeals* V, 146: „This tagma (scil. of the Persians) was at base his personal military entourage".

the imperial army; J. Signes Codoñer[10] argued in favour of a "ruler of a Persian principality to the south of the Caucasus", following the combination ἐξουσιαστὴς Ἀλανίας (instead of Ἀβασγίας) in the *Book of Ceremonies* (mid-10th century) by emperor Konstantinos VII Porphyrogennetos; C. Zuckerman,[11] on the other hand, recommends translating the term as "king of the Persians" and justifies its application to Theophobos as an attempt by the emperor to eliminate his position as a potential heir to the throne after the birth of Michael (III) (9/10 January 840), who was crowned co-emperor on the 21th of January 842. Both Signes Codoñer and Zuckerman have overruled Cheynet's former suggestion in their argumentation.

Nevertheless, we distance ourselves from rendering ἐξουσιαστής with "king" and considering Theophobos to be a "ruler" of a principality in the South Caucasus. The latter view is unrealistic anyway because of the prosopographical separation between Theophobos and his father. Based on the basic meaning of the Greek noun ἐξουσία, i.e. "power", which corresponds to the Latin *potestas*, the word ἐξουσιαστής is to be translated in its neutral basic meaning as "potentate" (an individual who possesses an undefined amount of power; similar to a ruler but a "lesser" version of it). Seen from this perspective, we argue for an ideological-political action by the emperor aimed at propagating the profile and conveying an elite status of Theophobos in order to legitimise his inclusion in the imperial family. The term ἐξουσιαστὴς τῶν Περσῶν is a *creatio ad personam* that the emperor created explicitly for his brother-in-law Theophobos, in the function of commander of this elite military corps. The Greek word as such has an imposing basic semantic meaning, which in Byzantine is also manifested by the fact that it is used in theological literature as a common epithet of God the Almighty (see the relevant entries in the TLG. Cf. also Lampe 1961, 502, s. v. ἐξουσιαστής). According to the above, it would be surprising to interpret the appointment of Theophobos as ἐξουσιαστὴς τῶν Περσῶν as the elimination of his position at court after the birth of Michael III. It is more appropriate to link this act with the development of his profile. By protecting the young Theophobos at court, Theophilos

[10] Signes Codoñer 2014, 168–172, especially 171.

[11] Zuckerman 2017, 141: „Theophobos' position became delicate in 840, after Michael, Theophilos' long-awaited heir, was born in the night of 9th/10th January. Theophobos' extravagant title, which should be translated as the king of the Persians, was to my mind, mainly Emperor Theophilos' attempt to put the young man out of harm by restricting his authority to the Persians".

aimed to create a counterweight to the Armenian faction rather than to introduce him as heir to the throne.

The birth of Michael III and his coronation as co-emperor (842) undoubtedly strengthened the Armenian party at court and facilitated Theophobos' removal. The context in which his accusation of usurpation was brought to the emperor by Theodora's family party remains unclear, as the relevant sources denigrate the reality in favour of the Armenian faction, as Zuckerman has convincingly demonstrated.[12] In order to damage the profile of Theophobos and defame his person in posterity, Theodora and her family worked all the more efficiently after the emperor's death (who was diagnosed with dysentery), which occurred shortly after Theophobos' execution (842). A usurpation planned by Theophobos is out of question, as well as his proclamation as emperor by his contingent. It is also highly unlikely that the contingent would have proclaimed Theophobos "king of Persia", as this has (previously) been suggested in some modern literature.[13] Basically, the fact that the contingent applauded Theophilos' decision to appoint the young Theophobos as their new commander with acclamations was manipulated.

The fact that he initially hesitated (μὴ ἐκόντα or ἄκοντα) to follow his deceased father in this command may very well have been due to his young age. There are no certain traces in narrative sources of the real person of Theophobos (his mother was by no means a Byzantine innkeeper) in military expeditions. With reservations, the "real" Theophobos could have possibly led an expedition to Abasgia together with Bardas (perhaps in 840 or 841), which is recorded in Theophanes Continuatus.[14] If this is the case, then the Armenian party may have attributed this failure to Theophobos in order to diminish his leadership qualities. During the expedition, the elite corps of the Khurramites experienced another massive reduction in their forces.[15]

After the execution of Theophobos (at the age of around 20),[16] the contingent is said to have been divided into the theme armies

[12] Zuckerman 2017, 141-142 (Genesios: ὁ βασιλεὺς ἡγεμονεύειν αὐτῶν [scil. Περσῶν] ἐβούλετο τὸν Θεόφοβον and μὴ ἑκόντα [scil. Theophobos] … βασιλέα κηρύττουσι [scil. Πέρσαι]. – The formulation is similar in Theophanes Continuatus: ἡγεμονεύειν ἐν Περσαῖς τὸν Θεόφοβον προτεθύμετο … βασιλέα … καὶ ἄκοντα ἀνεκήρυξαν).

[13] In this regard, see the reference in Zuckerman 2017, 142.

[14] On this, see Zuckerman 2017, 146, with A. 65. Cf. *PmbZ* 2001, 657.

[15] Zuckermann 2017, 146.

[16] Zuckerman 2017, 147.

(θεματικὸς στρατός). The narrative sources as such do not contain certain news regarding this matter, as Cheynet has already noted.[17] Nevertheless, thanks to a hitherto unknown seal that was offered for sale at auction (without designation, reading and dating)[18] and was acquired for the private Greek collection of Konstantinos Kalantzis, we gain important information on the existence of a commander of Khurramite detachment for the first half of the 10th century; it is a unique specimen of particular historical significance, which bears Theophilos β.σπαθαροκανδιδᾶτος καὶ κόμης τῶν Περσῶν, but without any indication of the military administrative district (theme) he was assigned to. The piece as such is in good condition.



Obverse

Latin gemmed cross on four steps, surrounded by the usual invocative inscription:

+KЄR…..ѠCѠΔO.. K(ύρι)ε β[οήθ(ει) τῷ σῷ δο[ύλ(ῳ)]

Reverse

+ΘЄO.|IΛ,R,CΠAΘ,|KANΔΔ,SK.|M.TOΠЄP|CON –

Θεο[φ]ίλ(ῳ) β(ασιλικῷ) σπαθ(αρο)κανδ(ι)δ(άτῳ) (καὶ) κό]μ(ητι) τ(ῶ)ν Περσ(ῷ)ν

On both sides of the last line is a longitudinal line, of which only the right one is visible. It is probably no coincidence that the owner of the seal was baptised Theophilos. We interpret it as an indication of the

[17] Cheynet 1998, 48-50.

[18] Auction Savoca 165/2, 28.05.2023, 1955.

open-mindedness and support of the former emperor of the same name towards the Khurramites. Thus, a member of this contingent (probably an officer) would have chosen the emperor's name for one of his descendants and passed it on to the next generations within the family in accordance with Byzantine custom. Bear in mind that this emperor propagated marriages between Byzantine women and foreigners (the Khurramites also fell into this category) and thus aimed to integrate them into society.[19]

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[19] On this, see Terkezis 2019, 24-26 (with references and a statement on the relevant academic discourse).

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Lead seal of Nikephoros *mystikos* found during archaeological excavations at Kale Shirokovo

Deyan Dragoev

Abstract: The article discusses a lead seal, belonging to Nikephoros *mystikos*. It was found during the archaeological excavations of the Late Antique and Medieval fortification Kale Shirokovo, Ruse region. We revise all the known identical seals, containing the name of that Byzantine servant of 12th century AD. There is also a short review of all the theses, concerning the character and the functional essence of the position of the *mystikos* in Byzantine imperial administration's hierarchy. The study makes an attempt for identifying the individual and suggests a hypothesis about the possible addressee of the correspondence.

Key words: lead seal, Kale Shirokovo, mystikos, Byzantine imperial administration

Резюме: В статията се разглежда оловен печат, принадлежащ на Никифор Мистик. Последният е открит при археологическите разкопки на късноантичното и средновековно укрепление Кале Широково, Русенска област. Всички известни идентични печати, съдържащи името на този византийски служител от 12 век, се преразглеждат. Направен е и кратък преглед на всички тези, касаещи характера и функционалната същност на позицията *mystikos* в ранговата йерархия на византийската императорска администрация. Прави се опит за идентифициране на лицето и се предлага хипотеза за възможния адресат на кореспонденцията.

The focus of the current work is a lead seal of a Byzantine administrative assistant, called Nikephoros, who held the effective position of *mystikos*. The seal was discovered during the archaeological excavations of the Late Antique and Medieval Kale Shirokovo's

fortification system (fig. 1).[1] It is worth mentioning that the archeological site is located in Ruse Region. The finds were situated in a layer of ruins, which belong to a later, medieval building. The latter violates the territory of Tower № 1 – part of the main fortification wall.

The seal is centered, well preserved with only small missing parts in its upper half. They should be placed between 9 and 12 o'clock on the seal's observe axis (fig. 2). The diameter is 24-25 mm, the width – 3.7 mm and the weight as follows – 7.22 g.

Observe: Bust of Saint Nicholas, blessing with his right hand, while holding a book in his left hand. In the two margins is visible a vertical inscription in Greek:

[Θ/ NI]/ KO | Λ/ A/ O/ C = [ʽO ἅ(γιος) Νι]κό | λαος

Reverse: Inscription in Greek of five lines:

+C...	+Σ[φρά]
ΓICMA...	γισμα [γρα]
ΦΩNMV...	φών μυ[στι]
..VNIKH	[κο]ῦ Νικη
ΦΟΡϒ	φοροῦ

+Σ[φρά] / γισμα [γρα] / φών μυ[στι] / [κο]ῦ Νικη / φοροῦ

It should be translated as "The sealing of the writings of Nikephoros *mystikos*" (metrical).

The commented seal is stamped on top of an earlier one (fig. 3). On the reverse, in the zone between 6 and 9 o'clock, when turned at 180°, in the right margin are visible traces of a 3-line vertical inscription also in Greek:

ΔΩPO,

which is interpreted as part of the name Θεόδωρος = [ʽO ἅγιος Θεό] δ/ ω/ ρο/ [ς]. One more distinctively visible detail is a granular circle – part of a Saint's halo.

[1] Dragoev & Harbalieva (in print).

The seal, found in the territory of the fortification Kale Shirokovo, has exact parallels, stamped with the same *boulloterion*.[2] Two of the seals are found in the territory of today's Bulgaria – in Anchialus and in the vicinity of village of Fakiya, Burgas Region (fig. 4). They are stored respectively at the National Archaeological Museum (Inv. no.239) (fig. 5.1) and Shumen Regional Historical Museum (Inv. no. 15065) (fig. 5.2).[3] They are published.[4]

Two more seals, without data about their finding location, are stored in the Archaeological Museum of Istanbul (Inv. no. 207)[5] and in the Dumbarton Oaks's collection (DO 1958.106.1978) (fig. 5.3).[6] The only image of the Istanbul's seal, as much as can be seen, shows that it was struck with the same *boulloterion*. That fact is mentioned in both V. Bulgurlu's PhD thesis and a later article cited above. In the J. Ebersolt's article an image is missing. The image published in V. Lauren't's article[7] is identical with the Dumbarton Oaks collection's seal.

The seal itself is correctly read by V. Laurent +Σφρά / γισμα γρα/ φών μυστι / κοῦ Νικη / φοροῦ,[8] but on the Dumbarton Oaks's site (<https://www.doaks.org/resources/seals/byzantine-seals/BZS.1958.106.1978/view>) the Greek inscription is incorrectly represented: Σφρα / [γὶ]ς Μάγγνα / [ν]ων μυστι / [κ]οῦ Νικη / φόρου, translated as "Seal of Nikephoros, *mystikos* of the Mangana".

In a footnote of an article, concerning the function and the role of the *mystikos* in the imperial administration A. Goutzioukostas gives information about three more identical lead seals, belonging to the former collection of G. Zakos.[9]

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[2] Prosopography of the Byzantine World http://pbw2016.kdl.kcl.ac.uk. (last consulted on 14.03.2024)

[3] Here I should express my gratitude towards dr. M. Dotkova (NAIM – BAS) and Ass. Prof. Zh. Zhekova (RMH – Shumen) for the photographic material they provided me with.

[4] Yordanov 1993, 44, № 12, obr. 15; Jordanov & Zhekova 2007, 82, no. 192; Jordanov 2009a, 272, no. 742-743; Jordanov 2009b, 15, no. 742-743.

[5] Ebersolt 1914, 385, no. 441, Laurent 1932, no. 476; Laurent 1981, 55, no. 123, pl. 5; Bulgurlu 1998, 163, no. 117; 2007, no. 117. In his work, dedicated to the Byzantine lead seals, stored in the Istanbul's archaeological museums, V. Bylgurlu mentions a different inventory number - 197(198) (Bulgurlu 1998, 163 - http://nek.istanbul.edu.tr:4444/ekos/TEZ/33629.pdf.).

[6] The image is published with the permission of © Dumbarton Oaks, Coins and Seals Collection, Washington, DC.

[7] Laurent 1981, 55, po 123, pl. 5.

[8] Laurent 1981, 55, No 123.

[9] Gkoutzioukóstas 2011, 196–197.

Having in mind the iconography, the text, the paleography of some letters (C+T= Ϥ) and last but not least – its stratigraphic position, the seal from Kale Shirokovo, should be chronologically dated to the second half of the 12th c. or the beginning of the 13th century.

The matter about the identification of the individual, mentioned on the seals, was essential to all those, who published the examples. According to V. Laurent, the seal's holder is identical either with Nikephoros Borbenos, member of the session of the Synod, which took place on 12th of May 1157 AD, or with Nikephoros Servlias, a correspondent of John Tzetzes.[10] As Prof. Yordanov and Assoc. Prof. Zhekova correctly observe, although the above-mentioned identification is not impossible, it is inevitable to ask the question why the patronyms of the individuals, being mentioned by other written sources, are not written on the seals.

Having in mind that conclusion they identify the seal's owner with the *mystikos* Nikephoros, who is the author of *Typikon* of the monastery τῶν Ἡλίου Βωμῶν, ἤτοι τῶν Ἐλεγμῶν in Bithynia, which was compiled in 1162 AD.[11] Here, however, we should mention that there is an opinion that the author of the above mentioned *typikon* is the already mentioned Nikephoros Borbenos.[12]

The owner of the discussed seal could also be *mystikos* Nikephoros, mentioned in Anonymous Verses, dating to 1131/2 AD. They originate from the monastery of Holy Trinity on the Bosphoros.[13] According to P. Magdalino, the *mystikos* mentioned should be identified with one of the two persons known from the narrative sources – Nikephoros Borbenos or Nikephoros Servlias.[14] Having in mind the dating of the seal, given by A.-K. Wassiliou-Seibt in the second half of the 12th century, A. Goutzioukostas is more eager to identify the seal's owner with Nikephoros Borbenos.[15] In our opinion, the available data is not enough and the identification of the seal's owner with one of the known individuals who lived in the 12th century AD with the same name and position is not just hypothetical, it is almost impossible. We could furthermore discuss the possibility that the owner of the seal should be identified with a person, in which case *mystikos* can refer not to a

[10] Laurent 1981, 55.
[11] Jordanov & Zhekova 2007, 82; Jordanov 2009, 272.
[12] Magdalino 1984, 232.
[13] Lampros 1911, 164.
[14] Magdalino 1984, 232.
[15] Gkoutzioukóstas 2011, 197.

position, but to a family name.[16] The first case of a family name "Μυστικός" is recorded in Theodore II Laskaris's correspondence.[17] Later we have other examples during the Palaiologan period.[18] As an argument against such a possibility is the real archeological substance. The lead seal, discovered by us, is found in a layer dated with certainty between the second half of the 12th c. to the beginning of the 13th c. – a few decades earlier than the earliest appearance of such a family name.

The addressee, whom Nikephoros *mystikos* wrote to, is also unknown. The possible answer to this question is related to the essence of the *mystikos*'s position in the Byzantine Imperial Administration, on the one hand, and to the real archeological substance, on the other.

The position of *mystikos* appears for the first time during the rule of emperor Basil I (867-886).[19] Its original function is however unclear.[20] The name "*mystikos*" itself (in Greek: μυστικός, "the secret one") illustrates well enough the difficulties, related to the attempts to be defined the administrative role of that imperial servant. The last literally means "the secret one" and therefore his work, by default is confidential. Until recently three scientific works have been published, whose aim is to summarize the origin, the essence and the evolution of *mystikos*'s position. Those works are further supplemented by many footnotes and articles, concerning the imperial secretary, the institutions and the administration of the empire. Although there is a rich narrative and prosopographical material, it is impossible to be given a certain answer when discussing *mystikos*' functions. F. Dölger, R Gulliand and many other researchers, see in the position of *mystikos* the personal secretary of the emperor himself.[21] N. Oikonomides, however, thinks that until 11th century AD the *mystikos* had juridical functions.[22]

Despite the fact that Pseudo-Kodinos represents the *mystikos*'s position as 30th by rank at the imperial hierarchy[23] many of the preserved narratives show that during the 12th century AD the imperial

[16] That possibility was shown to me by Prof. A.-K. Wassiliou-Seibt, to whom I express my sincere gratitude.
[17] Festa 1898, 404.
[18] Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit, I-XII https://doi.org/10.1553/0x000487df (last consulted on 14.03.2024)
[19] Kazhdan *et al.* 1991, 1431–1432.
[20] Magdalino 1994, 101.
[21] Dölger 1929, 64; Guilland 1968, 279.
[22] Oikonomides 1962, 324.
[23] Guilland 1968, 280.

servant, known as *mystikos*, is a main figure in the administration of both the imperial household and the treasury. He was responsible for the payment of salaries as well as for the imperial patronage of the Church. Those functions are well represented during the time of the Komnenos dynasty – the rule of emperor Manuel I Komnenos in particular.[24] On the base of his own interpretation of those same historical sources, A. Goutzioukostas denies those statements. According to him, the *mystikos* belonged to the emperor's inner circle of direct associates and most probably was responsible for organizing the emperor's secret meetings with his council and his high ministers.[25] Also according to him, the responsibilities of the *mystikos* (such as juridical, financial and ecclesiastical functions) mentioned in the narratives are not based on his original responsibilities, but are a result of the *mystikos*' position near the emperor. This position of his allows him to be appointed to different missions and functions.[26]

We have to mention that the data from the archaeological excavation shows that the fortification was inhabited from the last quarter of 11th century and there was an active correspondence with the imperial office.[27] Having in mind all information, written above, we could guess that the unknown for us addressee of the correspondence with Nikephoros *mystikos* is an individual, who is responsible for administrating the fortification or a monastery, located nearby.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1. Location and general plan of the site (author Deyan Dragoev).

Fig. 2. The seal from "Kale Shirokovo" (photo by Deyan Dragoev).

Fig. 3. Reverse image and traces of earlier seal (photo by Deyan Dragoev).

Fig. 4. Map of Bulgaria with location of the sites where the seals of Nikephoros mystikos were found and kept (author Deyan Dragoev).

Fig. 5. The Seals of Nikephoros mystikos from: 1. Anchialus (National Archaeological Institute with Museum – Bulgarian Academy of Sciences); 2. Fakiya (Regional Historical Museum – Shumen); 3. Dumbarton Oaks, Coins and Seals Collection, Washington, DC.

[24] Magdalino 2002, 260–261.

[25] Gkoutzioukóstas 2011, 98, 211.

[26] Gkoutzioukóstas 2011, 223-224.

[27] Two lead seals of Alexius I Comnenus, originate from the site, which will be the subject of another publication.

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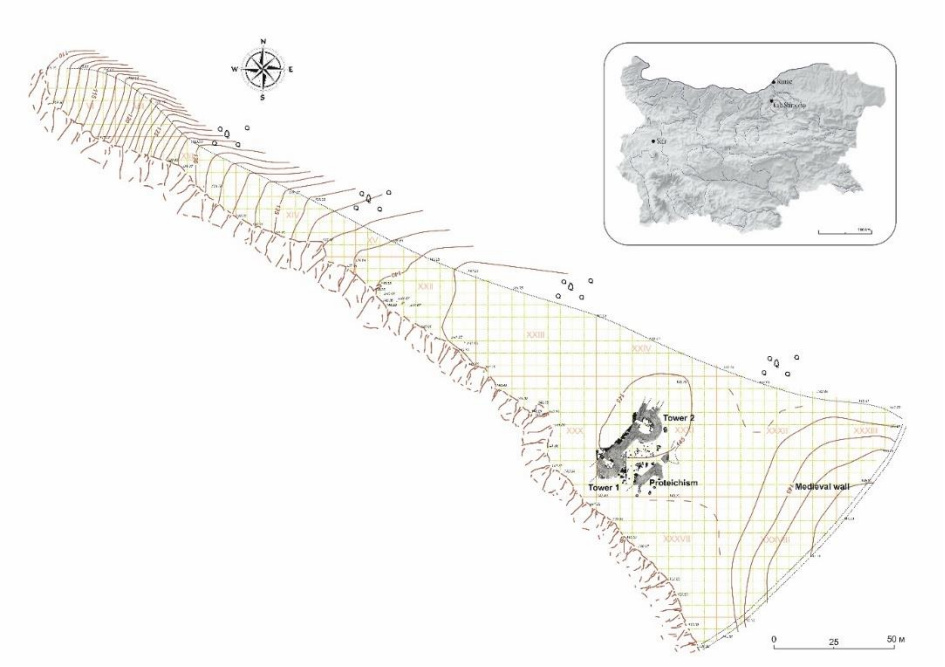

N
W
E
S
Tower 2
Tower 1
Proteichism
Medieval wall
0
25
50 M

Fig. 1


METRIC1
2
3

Fig. 2


180°
1 : 2
METRIC 1 2 3

Fig. 3

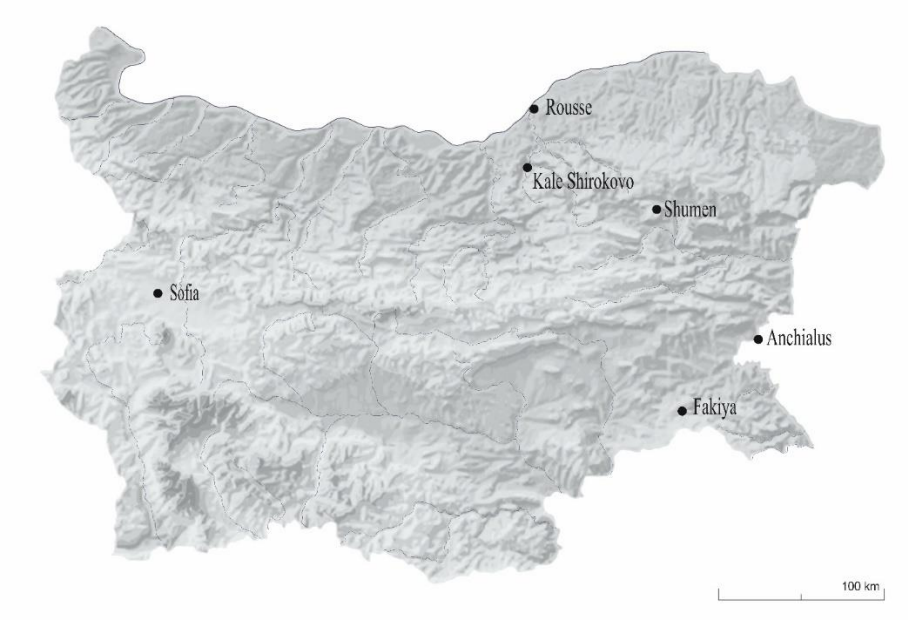

Rousse
Kale Shirokovo
Shumen
Sofia
Anchialus
Fakiya
100 km

Fig. 4



Fig. 5

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Medieval coins from the collection of the Park-Museum of Military Friendship - 1444

Nevyan Mitev

Abstract: This study presents 7 coins from the depository of the Park-museum of Military Friendship – 1444. They are as follows: copper coin of Mitso/Micho Assen (1256 – 1263), a silver specimen of Tsar Ivan Alexander (1331 – 1371), three copper coins from the last ruler, one from the reign of his son Ivan Shishman (1371 – 1395) and a silver Moldovan grosh of Petru Mushat (c. 1375 – 1392). According to the information at my disposal, all specimens originate from Varna region, but unfortunately there is no information about their exact location.

These coins complement the coins found in the Bulgarian lands during the Late Middle Ages, as well as increase the number of published artifacts, which are stored in the depositores of the Bulgarian museums.

Key words: coins, Park-museum of Military Friendship, Late Middle Ages

Резюме: В изследването са публикувани общо седем монети от фонда на Парк-музей на бойната дружба – 1444 г. Те са: медна монета на Мицо/Мичо Асен (1256 – 1263), сребърен екземпляр на цар Иван Александър (1331 – 1371), три медни емисии от последния владетел, една от управлението на сина му Иван Шишман (1371 – 1395) и сребърен молдовски грош на Петру Мушат (ок. 1375 – 1392). Според информацията, с която разполагам, всички екземпляри са от района на Варна, но за съжаление няма данни за точното им местонахождение.

Монетите допълват монетната картина по българските земи през Късното средновековие, както и увеличават количеството на публикуваните артефакти, които се съхраняват във фондохранилищата на българските музеи.

Various artifacts from the medieval era are kept in the depository of the Park-Museum of Military Friendship - 1444 in the city of Varna. Among them, one of the most numerous and significant are the numismatic artifacts. In this paper I will present 7 coins - 6 are Medieval Bulgarian specimens and one is Moldovan. According to the

information at my disposal, all specimens originate from Varna region, but unfortunately there is no information on their exact location.

The earliest chronological coin is from the rule of Mitso/Micho Assen (1256-1263). The coinage of this Bulgarian tsar and subsequently an independent ruler has generally been studied thoroughly enough, and Konstantin Dochev's thesis states that during the period of his reign from 1256 to 1257 he minted coin issues initially in the capital Tarnovo. Subsequently, from 1257 to 1263, when he established himself as an independent ruler in North-Eastern Bulgaria, he also moved his mint.[1] It seems that he most likely struck coins in Veliki Preslav,[2] but there are other assumptions - the fortress near the village of Tsarevtsi near Ovech,[3] Cherven, the fortress near the village of Krasen, Ruse region,[4] the fortress near the village of Mogila, Shumen region.[5] The opinion has also been expressed that possibly his mint was Mesemvria.[6] This version differs from the others and according to it the mint workshop was not in North-Eastern Bulgaria, but in South-Eastern. I will not discuss this question here, since this has already been done in another study of mine, where I supported the first opinion,[7] but I will only point out that the specimen commented on in the present study is precisely from one of these non-capital mints, as it is distinguished by its schematic images, at least as far as the preservation of the coin allows such reasoning. According to K. Dochev's catalog, the issue belongs to the second chronological phase (Cat. № 1).[8]

The second specimen that is published here is a silver issue of Tsar Ivan Alexander (1331 – 1371). It belongs to the type of coins on which the ruler is depicted standing upright on the obverse, and Jesus Christ on the reverse. According to Vladimir Penchev, these coins were struck in the first few years of the ruler's reign - until 1337, when Michael Assen was declared co-tsar of his father. At that point, this first silver type was replaced by the second, where the two co-rulers

[1] Dochev 2009, 47-58.
[2] Yordanov 1981, 21-40.
[3] Lazarov 2001, 21-23.
[4] Dochev 2003, 42-43.
[5] Zhekova 2006, 28.
[6] Dimova 2006, 163-181.
[7] Mitev 2011, 207-211.
[8] Dochev 2009, 52-56.

were depicted.[9] Stoyan Avdev, however, suggests the earliest date for this change to be 1333-1334, acknowledging the possibility of coin minting continuing into the 1340s.[10] Konstantin Dochev divides this first silver coinage into two chronological phases. The first, dated from 1331 to 1347, is further divided into four variants, while the second, characterized by a simplified linear pattern, is placed in the chronological period from 1347/48 to 1360.[11] According to Dochev's classification, the specimen in this study belongs to the first silver coinage, first chronological phase, Var. D (1337/38 – 1347/48), mint – Tarnovo (Cat. № 2).[12] One hoard from the village of Batovo contains a wreath for head decoration, one ear-ring and 96 coins – from them a total of 81 coins are of the type "the tsar alone", predominantly the so-called light aspers, known for their more schematic representation and lighter weight.[13] Based on the weight data of this find, its original publisher divides three periods of cutting of the "tsar alone" type. For the first one, V. Parushev supports Penchev's opinion that it was issued until 1337, and the weight standard was approx. 1.57 g, and the diameter – 21-23 mm. The second group is set from 1355 to 1371 and the metric data varies from 0.80 -1.20 g in weight and 18-21 mm in diameter. The third type circa 1371, weighing approx. 0.80 g and with a diameter of 18 – 19 mm.[14] Avdev suggested that these "light" coins were minted around 1346 – 1355 and were a product of one of the mints serving the lands of despot Dobrotitsa.[15] Notably, only two coins from these specimens have been found in the large medieval fortress of Shumen[16] and none in Ovech,[17] close to Varna.

The next three coins are from the copper coinage of Ivan Alexander. The first two of them are of the type on which the king and his wife - Tsaritsa Theodora II are depicted, and on the reverse - the monogram "АЛЕ" and the title "tsar". Konstantin Dochev places this coinage in the years from 1347-1348 to 1375, dividing it into 4 variants. The identification of this type of coin has caused much discussion over

[9] Yurukova & Penchev 1990, 128.
[10] Avdev 2007, 99.
[11] Dochev 2009, 133-135.
[12] Dochev 2009, 131-132.
[13] This type is the same as the second chronological phase, described by Dochev.
[14] Paroushev 1995, 284.
[15] Avdev 2007, 105.
[16] Zhekova 2006, 33.
[17] Lazarov 2001, 30, 60.

the years. It is already accepted that, apart from Tarnovo, also in other mints from North-Eastern Bulgaria - Cherven, Shumen, etc., similar issues of the ruler were minted, but these local coins are distinguished by a simplified and schematic design, and in this geographical area they are extremely common. The two specimens presented here are not in very good condition and it cannot be definitively determined whether they were minted at the mint in Tarnovo or at one of the other mint workshops. The first issue can almost certainly be referred to Type VI, Var. C, according to Dochev's catalog,[18] which was struck in the years 1355-1365 in the capital (Cat. № 3). For the second specimen, with some conventions, it could be assumed that it was minted in a local mint in North-Eastern Bulgaria and it could be attributed to Var. D according to the same classification, which was struck in the years 1365 - 1375 (Cat. № 4).[19]

The third copper specimen of Tsar Ivan Alexander is very poorly preserved. On the obverse is the figure of a ruler who is standing opposite. Almost nothing is visible on the reverse, but from what has been preserved and from the iconographic features, it can be assumed that the monogram "АЛЕ" and/or the title "tsar" is represented (Cat. № 5). Nevertheless, it is possible that another symbol might also be depicted. The stage of the coin's storage makes it difficult to definitively identify its type. Like the previously mentioned specimens, these copper coins are common in North-Eastern Bulgaria, mostly minted in local mints and characterized by a more schematic style. It is very likely that this issue is like what has been indicated.

The last Bulgarian coin is from the reign of Tsar Ivan Shishman (1371 – 1393). This specimen is of the type with a monogram of the name Shishman on the obverse, and a monogram of the title "tsar" on the reverse. This coinage is known for having concave and flat flans, and the specimen presented here is of the latter type. The assumption has been made that until around 1380 mainly scyphat-shaped emissions were struck, and then only flat ones.[20] According to K. Dochev's classification, it belongs to type I, Var. B – with flat cores, mint- Tarnovo (Cat. № 6).[21]

The last coin to be published in this study is a Moldavian issue of Petru Mushat (c. 1375 – 1392). This ruler was the first undisputed

[18] Dochev 2009, 169-171.
[19] Dochev 2009, 171-172.
[20] Yurukova & Penchev 1990, 172.
[21] Dochev 2009, 217-219.

Moldavian voivode who minted his own coins. Traditionally, on the coins of Petru Mushat, the inscription on the obverse is: + SIM PETRI WOIWODI, and on the reverse - + SI MOLDAWIENSIS. Moldavian researchers P.P. Byarnya, N.D. Russev note that respectively SI and SIM on both sides of the coin are abbreviations of the Latin word SIGILLUM, and accordingly the inscriptions of the issues should be read: "Seal of Peter the Voivode" and "Seal of Moldova (Moldova Seal)".[22] The interesting thing about the specimen published here is that in the inscription on the obverse, the letters T and R are interchanged, so it should read Perti, not Petri (Cat. № 7). It is most likely a technical error of the engraver. Similar cases occur in the history of coinage over the centuries and especially if the coins are fakes or imitations, but with this particular coin the images are presented in the norm, and it does not appear that the issue is an imitation/counterfeit. In the catalog of Buzdugan, Lucian and Oprescu, where more than 300 specimens of Petru Mushat are published, some of them, like the one commented here, have a deviation from the norm of writing the inscription, for example SIM PETI..., SIM PERI, as well as including SIMPERTI.[23] As is evident, our specimen is not a unique or a very rare one, but is part of the normal coinage that was carried out by the Moldavian ruler. It is noteworthy, however, that Peter Mushat's emissions are relatively rarely found on Bulgarian lands. It is therefore an indicative fact that in the study of Georgi Atanasov on the capital these coins are not included as part of the coin circulation in the Dobrudja despotism in the second half of the 14th century.[24] However, the fact is that they are present in these lands. Several coins were found during archaeological research of the Kastritsi fortress (now the residence of Evksinograd),[25] one specimen is kept in the Regional Historical Museum-Dobrich and is generally located in the region of Dobrich,[26] and another comes from a coin hoard, probably found in the medieval fortress above the village of Kranevo.[27] It is not specified how many are the emissions of the Moldavian ruler from the treasure found in the area of Bozhurets

[22] Byarnya & Russev 1999, 183.
[23] Buzdugan *et al*. 1977, 43-58.
[24] Atanasov 2009, 281-315.
[25] Petnyov, Lazarenko, Peev 2012, 457; Pletnyov, Manolova, Lazarova, Peev 2016, 727.
[26] Parushev 2015, 120.
[27] Lazarenko 2005, 232.

village (Kavarna municipality).[28] In another treasure, found at the Kaliakra fortress and known as the "Tatar booty", there is also a grosh of Petru Mushat.[29] Several other specimens were found in the same fortress during archaeological excavations trough the years.[30] The role of these emissions in the Bulgarian lands, particularly in the geographical area of Varna or more specifically Southern Dobrudja, is yet to be clarified.

The presented coins from the depository of the Park-Museum of Military Friendship - 1444 are not very rare specimens in themselves, but are authentic artifacts of medieval coinage that complement the coins found in the Bulgarian lands during the Late Middle Ages. They also increase the number of published artifacts, which are stored in the funds of the Bulgarian museums.

Catalogue

Mitso/Micho Assen (1257 – 1263)

Copper coinage

Second chronological period

Obv. Schematic image of tsar, full face, wearing low stemma, maniakion, divitision with "lattice decoration", loros with ends dropping beside the two arms; holding three-pointed scepter with short shaft in his right hand and large cross in his left one.

Rev. Bust of St. Nickolaos with large nimbus, tunic, kolobion and omophorion; his right hand is at his chest, giving blessing, and in his left hand is holding the Gospel (fig. 1).

1. AE; PMMF – 1444, collection III, inv. № 23. Dimensions: D. 22-28 mm., W. 2,00 g. The specimen is chipped and not well-preserved.

Ivan Alexander (1331 -1371)

First Silver Coinage

Obv. The tsar is standing, full face, with stemma, maniakion, chlamys, divitision and loros, whose end is going over his left arm; holding cross with long staff in his right hand and globus cruciger in his left one. In the left field are presented the monogram of the letters АЛЕ and the БЛГАРОМЪ ethnonym. Up, to the right – the title "tsar",

[28] Parushev 2015, 144.

[29] Petrunova 2020, 169, № 20.

[30] Parushev 1990, 145.

and in the same field, under the globus cruciger – monogram of the ethnonym ГРКОМЪ.

Rev. IC – XC. Christ with large nimbus, wearing richly pleated mantle, tunic and kolobion, sitting on throne. His right hand is raised in blessing, and in his left one is holding Gospel which is put on his knees (fig. 2).

2. AR; PMMF – 1444, collection III, inv. № 21. Dimensions: D. 16-21 mm., W. 1, 23 g. The coin is chipped, but in relatively good relief.

Copper coinage

Obv. The tsar and the tsaritsa standing full face, holding cross with long staff. The figure of Teodora is almost completely deleted, and Ivan Alexander is presented with low stemma with pendants, divitision and loros.

Rev. Large monogram of the letters АЛЕ and title "tsar" (fig. 3).

3. AE; PMMF – 1444, collection III, inv. № 26. Dimensions: D. 18-20 mm., W. 0, 79 g. In some places the coin is clipped and heavily worn.

Obv. The tsar and tsaritsa Teodora II standing full face, with divitisions and loroses, holding cross with long staff.

Rev. Large monogram of the letters АЛЕ and title "tsar" (fig. 4)

4. AE; PMMF – 1444, collection III, inv. № 27. Dimensions: D. 18-20 mm., W. 0, 82 g.

Obv. The tsar is standing, full face, wearing low stemma with prependoulias, divitision and loros. Holding cross with short staff in his right hand, and perhaps globus cruciger? in his left one.

Rev. Almost deleted monograms, probably АЛЕ and/or the title "tsar" (fig. 5).

5. AE; PMMF – 1444, Collection III, inv. № 33 Dimensions: D. 18 – 19 mm. W. 1, 50 g. The coin is in very bad condition, perforated.

Ivan Shishman (1371 – 1393)

Copper coinage

Obv. Monogram of the name "Shishman"; above the monogram – wavy sign for abbreviation.

Rev. Monogram of the title "tsar"; above the monogram – sign for abbreviation (fig. 6).

6. AE; PMMF – 1444, Collection III, inv. № 25. Dimensions: D. 15-16 mm., W. 0, 68 g. The specimen is slightly clipped and slightly worn.

Moldova
Petru Mushat (c. 1375 – 1392)
Grosh
Obv. Circle inscription: +SIMPERTI WOIWOD
In the center is presented a bull's head facing, a star between the horns. Rosette on the right and on the left, where should be crescent, is deleted.
Rev. Circle inscription: +SIMOLDAVIENSIS
In the center is presented shield, divided in two fields. It is almost not visible on left field, and on the right one – only some lilies.

7. AR; PMMF – 1444, Collection III, inv. № 52. Dimensions: D. 19 mm. W. 0, 9 g. The coin is well-preserved but deleted on few places.

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Fig. 1a.



Fig. 1b.



Fig. 2a.



Fig. 2b.



Fig. 3a.



Fig. 3b.



Fig. 4a.



Fig. 4b.



Fig. 5a.



Fig. 5b.



Fig. 6a.



Fig. 6b.



Fig. 7a.



Fig. 7b.

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Ottoman silver coin hoard from Military Building V in the Citadel of Medieval Cherven (14th century)

Iskren Velikov

Abstract: In 1972, a hoard of silver coins is discovered inside one of the premises of Military Building in the western part of the citadel of the Medieval town of Cherven. Having been the subject of several references so far, the hoard has never been published fully. It consists of 341 Ottoman silver coins – 1 of Orhan (1326-1362) and 340 of his son – Murad I. The composition of the hoard, as well as the location and context of its discovery, associates it with the conquest of Cherven by the Ottoman Turks in 1388.

Key words: coin hoard, Cherven, citadel, Ottoman, Orhan, Murad I.

Резюме: През 1972 г. е открито съкровище от сребърни монети в едно от помещенията на Военна сграда в западната част на цитаделата на средновековния град Червен. Съкровището е споменавано неколкократно досега, но никога не е било публикувано изцяло. Състои се от 341 османски сребърни монети – 1 на Орхан (1326-1362) и 340 на неговия син – Мурад I. Съставът на съкровището, както и мястото и контекстът на откриването му го свързват с превземането на Червен от османските турци през 1388 г.

The Medieval town of Cherven is located 40 km to the south of Ruse in Northeastern Bulgaria, in the canyon of Cherni Lom River. It was among the major administrative, military and religious centres of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom (12th-14th century), reaching the height of its development during the second half of the 14th century. The town is located on a rocky hill, surrounded by the river on three sides, securing the road from the Medieval capital of Tarnovgrad to the Danube and the lands beyond it. The structure of Cherven consists of three main elements: the heavily-fortified citadel to the east, the fortified ordinary

town to the west, and the unfortified neighbourhoods, located at the foot of the hill. With minor exclusions, the citadel of Cherven was entirely excavated for a period of 16 years (1961-1977).[1]

The main aim of the current article is to release in scientific circulation the information, concerning a particular Ottoman silver coin hoard, discovered in the citadel of Cherven during the archaeological campaign in 1972. Since its discovery, the hoard has been the subject of several references, but has never received a specific publication, dedicated to it. Because of this, in time it has been improperly mentioned, leading researchers to inaccurate conclusions.[2]

The coin hoard consists of 341 entire and fragmented silver coins. Despite their conservation, due to the severity of the fire that it has experienced, the decay of the specimens continues. The earliest coin is an emission of the Ottoman ruler Orhan (1326 – 1362) – type G/VIII (cat. No 1; Plate I, 1), dated to the final decade of Orhan's rule (the late 1350s-1362).[3] All the other 340 coins in the hoard are emissions of the Ottoman sultan Murad I (1362 – 1389): 339 pcs. from his first type – type A/I, and 1 piece from his second type – type B/II[4] (cat. No 341; Plate XIX, 341). The total weight of the content of the hoard is 347.27 g. The hoard is discovered during the archaeological excavations in 1972 within the outlines of Military building V in the citadel of Cherven. It is registered

[1] *Dimova et al*. 1985, 5; Yordanov 2019, 21.

[2] The earliest mention of the coin hoard is by Yurukova 1977, 73, where an announcement for the discovery is made. The publication states a quantity of 26 coins, comprising the hoard, and refers them to Bayezid II (1481 – 1512). Yet, this first announcement contains the correct inventory number (no. 1765), under which the hoard is registered in the collection of Ruse Museum. In Dimova 1985a, 67 and Dimova 1985b, 286, a description of the location of discovery is given, as well as proper dating. However, in the very same paper a wrong number of the coins is written, and the abstracts in Russian and French refer the silver emissions to Bayezid I (1389 – 1402). The next mention of the hoard is made by Lazarov 1992, 46, where the previous improper information for it has led the author to incorrect conclusions, referring the emissions to Bayezid II (1481 – 1512), which appears to be among the scarce evidences for the habitation of Cherven's citadel during the 16th century. The references to the coin hoard in Yordanov 2019, 273 and in Lazarov 2021, 41 are very short, with as few as possible details, but with directions towards the previous incorrect information circulating.

[3] Following the classification, presented by Lazarov 2021, 113, who refers to Srećković 1999, 17-18.

[4] Following the classification, presented by Lazarov 2021, 114, who refers to Srećković 1999, 31.

under inventory number 1765 of the Numismatic collection of the Ruse Regional Museum of History.

Specialists date type A/I of the silver emissions of Murad I to the 1360s. Such specimens are considered a rarity for the Bulgarian lands, compared to the more widely spread types B/II and C/III.[5] The obverse of type A/I of Murad I is strongly influenced by the design of the last type (G/VIII)[6] of his father Orhan. A three-row inscription stating "*There is no god, but God. Mohammed is the Apostle of God*", surrounded by a thick circle, and then by a circle of dots.[7] The text on the reverse is in two rows, divided by a solid line: "*Murad son of Orhan, may God perpetuate his reign*". The second type of mintage of Murad I – type B/II – has a similar design with additional solid line on the reverse. Specimen of this type are found more often in Bulgarian lands and are generally dated to the 1370s.[8]

Given the composition of the coin hoard, its chronology span is framed between the 1350s and the 1370s. The predominant segment of the specimens is referred to the earlier period of Murad I's reign. However, the presence of an example from type B/II testifies that the moment of loss of the coin hoard should be placed after the 1370s.

The western sector of the citadel of Cherven is quite specific and differs from the other areas of the town. It is composed by a chain of buildings, located along the Western and the Northern fortification walls, referred to as military buildings (with numbers from I to VII). It is considered that they housed the town garrison during the peak of Cherven in the second half of the 14th century.[9] This sector includes the west gate of the citadel, secured by the preserved West battle tower, as well as a dry moat to the west of the wall, dividing the citadel from the ordinary town of Cherven. A complex of two military buildings is located along the Western fortification wall of the citadel, south of the main street of the town – Military buildings IV and V. Due to the presence of drainage system underneath the floor level of the southern part of Military building IV, it is interpreted by specialists as the officers' bath in the complex.[10]

[5] Lazarov 2021, 42.
[6] Lazarov 2021, 113.
[7] Sultan 1971, 77.
[8] Lazarov 2021, 43.
[9] Dimova 1985a, 62-71.
[10] Dermendzhiev 2016, 129.

Military building V follows the trajectory of the main street of the town (fig. 1). It has five premises, located in chain plan. Premises 1 and 2 have irregular plans, dimension around 2.50 x 2.50 m, and no entrances. Premise 3 appears to be the central for the building. It is located in the middle, with dimensions of 11.00 to 3.20 m, and entrance in the southeast corner of the south wall. Premises 4 and 5 follow roughly the plan of premises 1 and 2, but due to the severity of their destruction, no accurate presumptions can be made related to their entrances and complete dimensions. Specialists consider that the lack of recognizable entrance in at least two of the premises testifies for the existence of a second floor of the building.[11]

The coin hoard, examined in the current paper, is discovered in the southeast corner of Premise 3 of Military building V. The initial publication of the building and the mention of the coin hoard declares the presence of "traces of extreme fire" in this sector.[12] The documentation for the excavations delivers more detailed information regarding the context of the hoard. It is discovered in the corner of the building, immediately in front of the wall, on the very floor level.[13] The traces of fire, discovered on the site during the excavations, are quite clearly registered: the earth is strongly mixed with coals and ashes, and the bedrock, which served as floor of the building, is blackened to a degree, which leads to its surface decomposition. Within the same premise are discovered arrowheads and spearheads, as well as iron rings from a chain-mail. Besides rocks and fragments of bricked clay, the destructions also contain large amounts of broken window glass, as well as kitchen pottery, knives, iron shoe heels, etc.[14]

The coin hoards with such or similar composition, discovered on the territory of present-day Bulgaria, are a rarity. An example could be given with the hoard, discovered in the region of Shumen.[15] The hoard

[11] Dimova 1985a, 67.
[12] Dimova 1985a, 67.
[13] The full description in the Field Log for July 27, 1972, is as follows: "*In sq. 12, premise 9, in its southeastern section, immediately next to the wall in the corner, we discovered a large coin hoard of silver coins 418 in number, of which 366 are entirely preserved and 52 fragmented. The hoard was discovered at depth of 1.40 m from the initial level, on the very floor and to 0.40 m above it and belonged to the Early Ottoman era (14th century). There were also many ceramic fragments from both types, nails, 5 horseshoes, etc.*"
[14] Field Inventory book from the excavations in Cherven in 1972 // Digital Center at the Scientific Archive of the National Institute of Archaeology with Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.
[15] Zhekova 2008, 78.

consists of 23 Ottoman silver coins – 2 of Orhan (1326 – 1359) and 21 of Murad I (1359 – 1389). The specimens from Murad I belong to the same type A/I, which is considered to be the earliest of his mintage. The content of the hoard, as well as the good state of preservation of the coins, leads specialists to the conclusion that the specimens were in circulation shortly, and the date of its depositing should be referred to the reign of Murad I. His emissions are considered solid financial ground and were in market circulation in the Balkans for a long period of time.[16]

Another parallel can be given with a coin hoard from the area of the town of Ruse. The hoard was discovered in 1955 at the Sarabair locality to the south of the town, and has been the subject of two major publications.[17] Its composition is quite more complex – from a total of 1489[18] coins, 169 pcs belong to Ivan Sratsimir, 632 pcs to Ivan Shishman, 1 piece to Francesco Dandolo (Venice), 2 pcs to Wallachia (Radu I and Mircea I), 435 pcs to Murad I (1362 – 1389), and 250 pcs to Bayezid I (1389 – 1402). However, the emissions of Murad I, which are the second largest in number in the hoard following these of Ivan Shishman, belong to his second and third types (B/II and C/III). This delivers certain information for the degree of distribution of each type of mintage of Murad I across the Bulgarian lands. Type A/I is regarded as rarity in the lands to the north of the Balkan Mountains, comparable with the degree of distribution of the coinage of his predecessor Orhan.

The initial interpretation of the coin hoard, offered by Violeta Dimova, relates the hoard to a particular event from the history of Medieval Cherven – the conquest of the Ottomans in 1388. This year marks the vindictive expedition of the Grand Vezir Ali Pasha in Northeastern Bulgaria, described by the Ottoman chronicler Mehmed Neshri. Only a short sentence is dedicated to the conquest of Cherven: "*After that, he (the Pasha) reached Chernoz and conquered it as well*".[19] Archaeological excavations, however, testify for a massive fire along the entire territory of the ordinary town, as well as in the western sector of the citadel, dated to the 1380s and associated with this particular event. Such traces are registered at the western fortification gate of the ordinary town, which is considered to have been the breaking point during the

[16] Zhekova 2008, 78.
[17] Dimova 1962; Penchev 2004.
[18] The initial number of the coins is 1525, but during their exhibition at Ruse Museum in the 1960s and the 1970s, several specimens were robbed. For further information in this regard, see Penchev 2004, 119.
[19] Neshri 1984, 98.

Ottoman assault;[20] layers of black earth and burned limestone bedrock is also visible on the territory of Church no. 16,[21] at the Bishop's residence from the Early Ottoman period,[22] etc. On the ground of the existing evidence, a general hypothesis is elaborated that the town was conquered from the west gate of the ordinary town to the castle in the citadel of Cherven.[23]

The gathering of archaeological data after the initial interpretation of the coin hoard only proves its validity. The place of discovery of the hoard, as well as its described archaeological environment associates it with a massive fire cataclysm, which has led to the loss of the hoard by its owner. The presumption for loss due to violent event and not during regular depositing is also confirmed by the hoard's content: emissions not only by a single ruler, but also representations by only one type of coinage. Again, based on the content of the hoard, one even further-reaching speculation can be made that the hoard was lost very soon after it was handed to its owner.

In conclusion, the coin hoard from Military building V in the citadel of Medieval Cherven is a valuable source, testifying for the violent conquest of the town by the Ottomans in 1388. Its composition makes it one of the rare examples for such a coin hoard in the Bulgarian lands so far.

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[20] Yordanov 2016, 139.
[21] Velikova & Zhekunova 2021, 169.
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256. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 0.87 g, Plate XV

257. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 0.83 g, Plate XV
258. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 1.12 g, Plate XV
259. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 0.99 g, Plate XV
260. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 1.05 g, Plate XV
261. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 0.75 g, Plate XV
262. Dimensions: 17/16 mm, weight: 0.90 g, Plate XV
263. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 0.88 g, Plate XV
264. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 1.04 g, Plate XV
265. Dimensions: 17/15 mm, weight: 0.76 g, Plate XV
266. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 0.83 g, Plate XV
267. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 1.00 g, Plate XV
268. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 1.14 g, Plate XV
269. Dimensions: 17/15 mm, weight: 0.95 g, Plate XV
270. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 1.11 g, Plate XV
271. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 0.80 g, Plate XVI
272. Dimensions: 17/16 mm, weight: 0.90 g, Plate XVI
273. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 0.81 g, Plate XVI
274. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 0.94 g, Plate XVI
275. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 1.01 g, Plate XVI
276. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 0.90 g, Plate XVI
277. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 1.11 g, Plate XVI
278. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 0.93 g, Plate XVI
279. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 1.00 g, Plate XVI
280. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 0.85 g, Plate XVI
281. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 1.05 g, Plate XVI
282. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 0.98 g, Plate XVI
283. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 0.86 g, Plate XVI
284. Dimensions: 17/13 mm, weight: 0.84 g, Plate XVI
285. Dimensions: 18/16 mm, weight: 0.94 g, Plate XVI
286. Dimensions: 16/15 mm, weight: 0.47 g, Plate XVI
287. Dimensions: 17/17 mm, weight: 0.87 g, Plate XVI
288. Dimensions: 17/17 mm, weight: 0.85 g, Plate XVI
289. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 0.97 g, Plate XVII
290. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 1.13 g, Plate XVII
291. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 0.86 g, Plate XVII
292. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 0.86 g, Plate XVII
293. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 0.84 g, Plate XVII
294. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 0.81 g, Plate XVII
295. Dimensions: 17/17 mm, weight: 0.88 g, Plate XVII
296. Dimensions: 17/16 mm, weight: 0.90 g, Plate XVII
297. Dimensions: 18/16 mm, weight: 0.89 g, Plate XVII
298. Dimensions: 18/15 mm, weight: 0.73 g, Plate XVII
299. Dimensions: 18/16 mm, weight: 0.92 g, Plate XVII

300. Dimensions: 17/16 mm, weight: 0.91 g, Plate XVII
301. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 0.89 g, Plate XVII
302. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 0.81 g, Plate XVII
303. Dimensions: 17/16 mm, weight: 0.63 g, Plate XVII
304. Dimensions: 17/16 mm, weight: 0.53 g, Plate XVII
305. Dimensions: 16/15 mm, weight: 0.60 g, Plate XVII
306. Dimensions: 16/15 mm, weight: 0.62 g, Plate XVII
307. Dimensions: 17/15 mm, weight: 0.61 g, Plate XVIII
308. Dimensions: 17/15 mm, weight: 0.56 g, Plate XVIII
309. Dimensions: 17/14 mm, weight: 0.46 g, Plate XVIII
310. Dimensions: 17/15 mm, weight: 0.89 g, Plate XVIII
311. Dimensions: 17/15 mm, weight: 0.66 g, Plate XVIII
312. Dimensions: 16/15 mm, weight: 0.53 g, Plate XVIII
313. Dimensions: 16/15 mm, weight: 0.59 g, Plate XVIII
314. Dimensions: 17/15 mm, weight: 0.65 g, Plate XVIII
315. Dimensions: 16/15 mm, weight: 0.52 g, Plate XVIII
316. Dimensions: 17/15 mm, weight: 0.73 g, Plate XVIII
317. Dimensions: 17/16 mm, weight: 0.60 g, Plate XVIII
318. Dimensions: 16/17 mm, weight: 0.43 g, Plate XVIII
319. Dimensions: 17/15 mm, weight: 0.56 g, Plate XVIII
320. Dimensions: 16/16 mm, weight: 0.44 g, Plate XVIII
321. Dimensions: 17/15 mm, weight: 0.46 g, Plate XVIII
322. Dimensions: 16/14 mm, weight: 0.39 g, Plate XVIII
323. Dimensions: 18/12 mm, weight: 0.62 g, Plate XVIII
324. Dimensions: 17/14 mm, weight: 0.50 g, Plate XVIII
325. Dimensions: 17/15 mm, weight: 0.56 g, Plate XIX
326. Dimensions: 18/14 mm, weight: 0.58 g, Plate XIX
327. Dimensions: 17/15 mm, weight: 0.54 g, Plate XIX
328. Dimensions: 17/15 mm, weight: 0.24 g, Plate XIX
329. Dimensions: 17/15 mm, weight: 0.40 g, Plate XIX
330. Dimensions: 17/15 mm, weight: 0.40 g, Plate XIX
331. Dimensions: 17/16 mm, weight: 0.49 g, Plate XIX
332. Dimensions: 17/14 mm, weight: 0.50 g, Plate XIX
333. Dimensions: 17/15 mm, weight: 0.34 g, Plate XIX
334. Dimensions: 17/15 mm, weight: 0.43 g, Plate XIX
335. Dimensions: 17/15 mm, weight: 0.39 g, Plate XIX
336. Dimensions: 17/15 mm, weight: 0.44 g, Plate XIX
337. Dimensions: 17/15 mm, weight: 0.70 g, Plate XIX
338. Dimensions: 17/15 mm, weight: 0.51 g, Plate XIX
339. Dimensions: 17/14 mm, weight: 0.35 g, Plate XIX
340. Dimensions: 17/14 mm, weight: 0.43 g, Plate XIX
341. Dimensions: 18/17 mm, weight: 1.16 g, Plate XIX

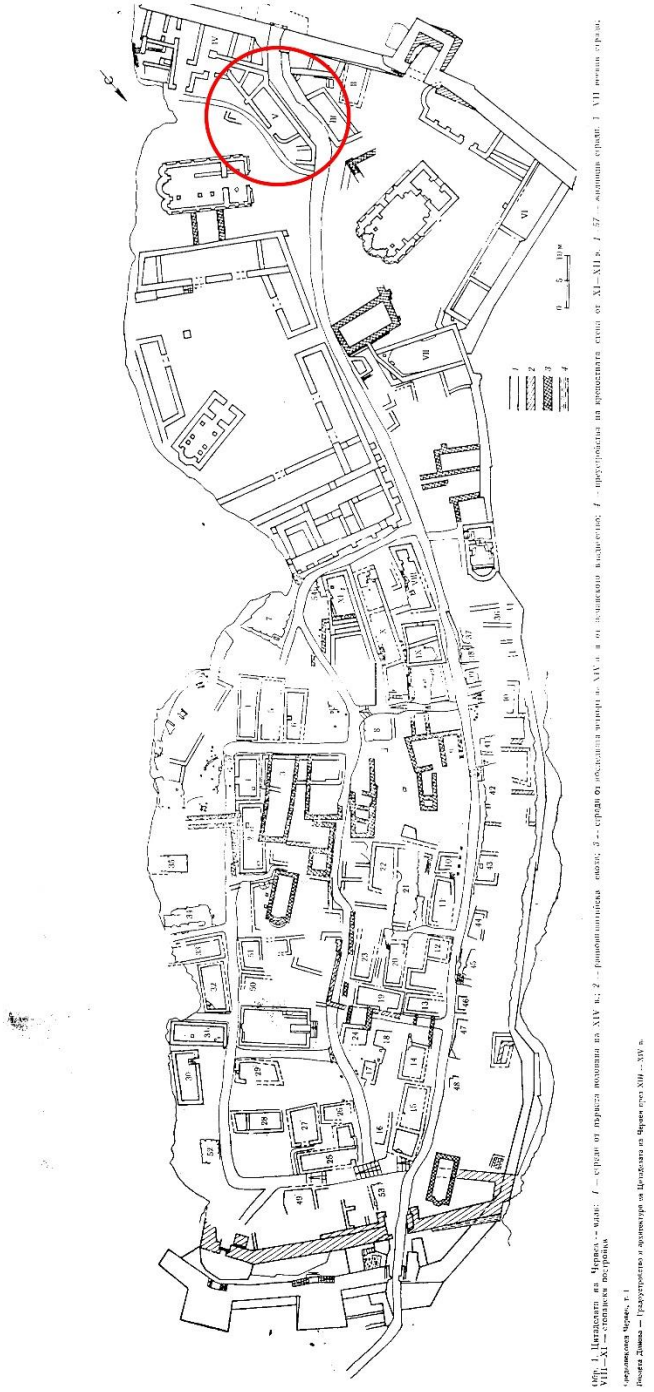


Fig. 1



Plate I



Plate II

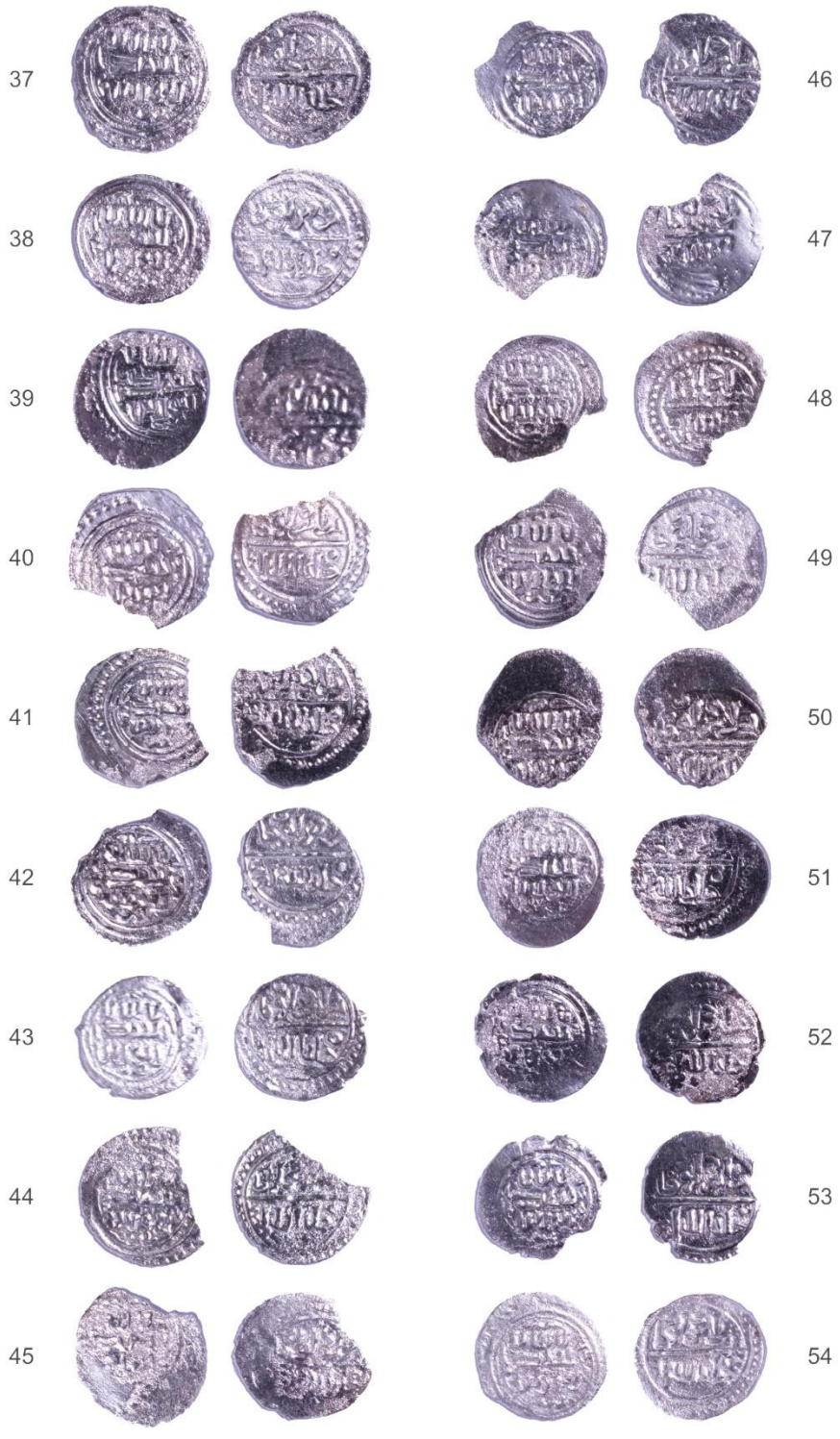


Plate III



Plate IV



Plate V



Plate VI


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Plate VII


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Plate VIII


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Plate IX


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Plate X


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Plate XI

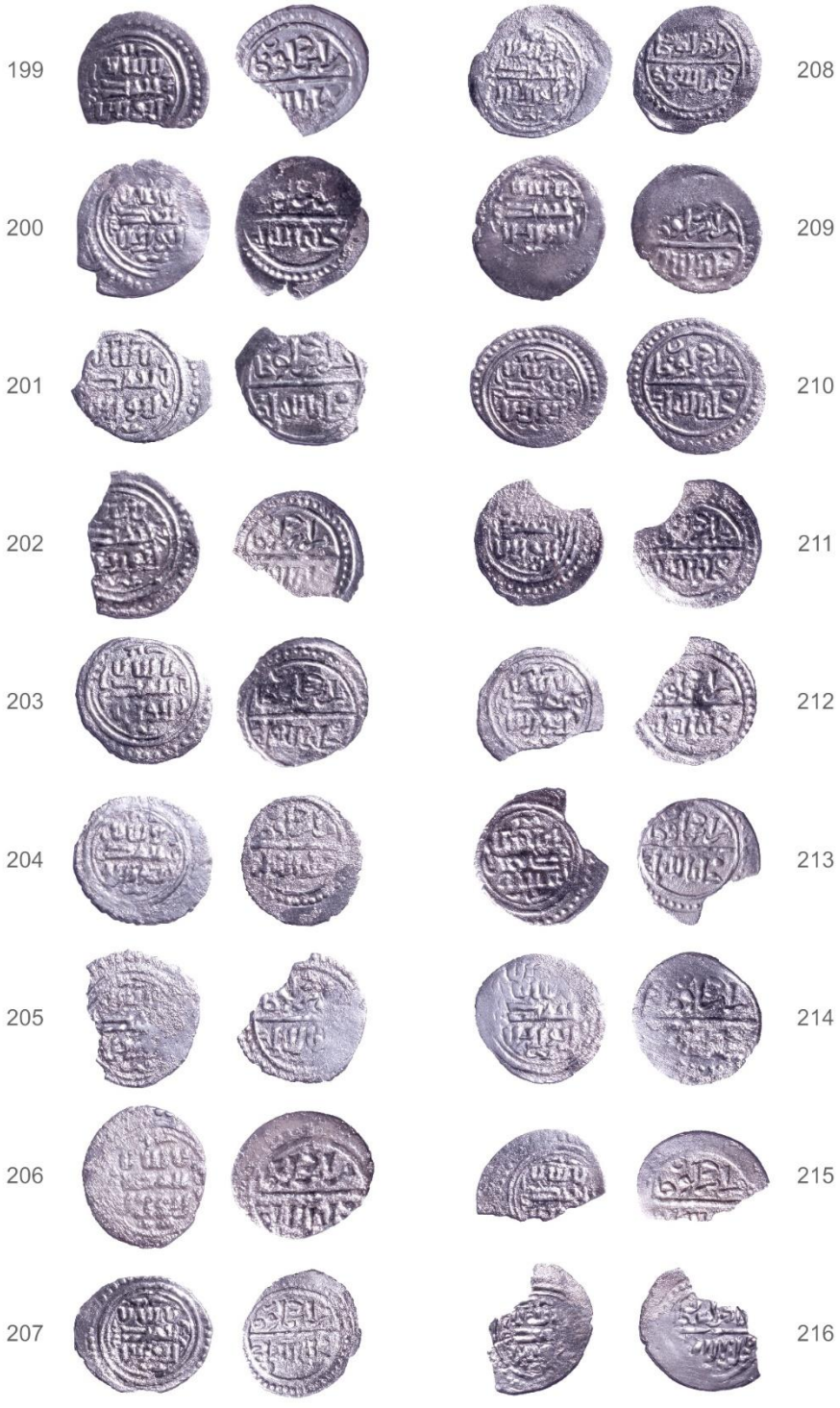

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Plate XII


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Plate XIII


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Plate XIV


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Plate XV


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Plate XVI


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Plate XVII


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Plate XVIII


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Plate XIX

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