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XXV 2021 1

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On the cover: the guard of a Great Migration Period iron sword; photo by Krasimir Georgiev; see the article of L. Vagalinski in this issue.

Thasian Amphora Stamps from a Tumulus near the Village of Ivanski

ARCHAEOLOGIA BULGARICA
XXV, 1 (2021), 1-14

Georgi ATANASOV† / Kalin MADZHAROV

Abstract: In 1999-2001 and in 2003-2004 Georgi Atanasov, Regional History Museum – Shumen, excavated the south section of a tumulus near Ivanski, Northeastern Bulgaria. The investigations were conducted after treasure hunters plundered one of the two corbel-vaulted tombs inside the mound. The second tomb was destroyed in Antiquity. Many fragments of Thasian amphorae were discovered within the embankment of the tumulus which covered both tombs. Most of them were broken upon fireplaces and heaps of stones, associated with the final use of the tombs and their covering with earth. Twelve Thasian stamps were found among these amphora fragments 10 of which could be identified. They were stamped in the terms of five officials: Ἀριστοφάνης I (1 ex.), Ποῦλος (2 ex.), Κρινομένης (5 ex.), Ἡρόδοτος (1 ex.) and Κλεοφῶν II (1 ex.). Moreover, a Thasian amphora stamp of the official Ἄλκιμος I was found at a distance of 400 m from the tumulus, in a small fortified site. According to the different chronological schemes of the Thasian magistrates, the time span between the earliest and the latest of the six Thasian officials registered at Ivanski ranges between 11/12 and 14 years. The data from the amphora stamps and the architectural features of both tombs at Ivanski, indicate that they were built in the 310s BC and their final use and covering with earth took place in the very end of the 4th c. BC – the very beginning of the 3rd c. BC.

Key words: Thasian amphora stamps, end of the 4th – beginning of the 3rd c. BC, Northeastern Thrace.

The tumular necropolis near the village of Ivanski, Shumen Region, Northeastern Bulgaria, consists of four tumuli. In 1999-2001 and in 2003-2004, a team led by Georgi Atanasov, archaeologist at Regional History Museum – Shumen, excavated the south section of mound # 1 from the necropolis (Атанасов 2005, 184-185; Atanasov / Yorgov 2007, 38-41; Атанасов / Стойчев 2016; Grudeva 2018, 106-107). The tumulus is situated on the west slope of the Provadian plateau, approximately 100 m above the valley of Kamchiya river, 2.4 km to the southeast from the centre of Ivanski. A small fortified site is located upon a small height, 400 m to the southeast from tumulus # 1. The limited trench excavations, conducted by Georgi Atanasov in 2001, revealed 2 m thick walls preserved at a height of 1-1.5 m (Атанасов 2002). The thin cultural layer of 0.10-0.30 m clearly shows that the site was inhabited for a short period of time. The finds consist of an arrowhead, pieces of iron slag, and many fragments of roof tiles, *pithoi*, ceramic vessels, transport amphorae etc. A Thasian amphora stamp of the official Ἄλκιμος I (cat. # 9, **fig. 18-19**), found on the surface, dates to the last decade of the 4th c. BC¹. A synchronous tumular grave was discovered in 1929 in the village of Ivanski, on the first terrace above Kamchiya river, approximately 1.4 km to the west of tumulus # 1 (Велков 1932; Teleaga 2008, ## 125, 642, 824, 839, 855, 891, 896, 980, 985, 1010). The cist, made of and covered with stone slabs, contained a pile of cremated bones and rich funeral offerings (silver, bronze and ceramic vessels, transport amphorae) that date the burial to the last decade of the 4th c.

¹ In some publications it is stated that the stamp of Ἄλκιμος I from Ivanski was found in tumulus # 1 (Tzochev 2009, 65, table 3; 2016, 85, table 2). According to the field inventory book of the excavations in 1999 the stamp was discovered by chance on the surface of the terrain inside the small fortified site.



Fig. 6. Cat. # 3. A Thasian amphora stamp of the official Πούλυς (photo: Kalin Madzharov)

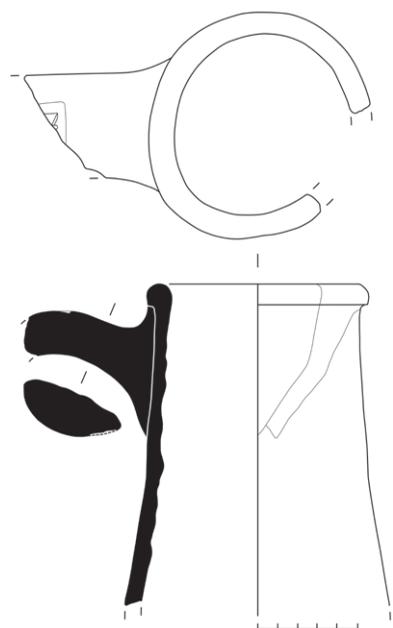


Fig. 7. Cat. # 3. Parts of the neck and the handle of a Thasian amphora stamped in the term of the official Πούλυς (drawing: Kalin Madzharov)



Fig. 8. Cat. # 4. A Thasian amphora stamp of the official Κρινομένης (photo: Kalin Madzharov)

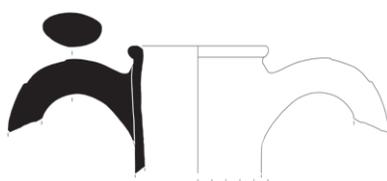


Fig. 9. Cat. # 4. The handle of a Thasian amphora stamped in the term of the official Κρινομένης (drawing: Kalin Madzharov)



Fig. 10. Cat. # 5. A Thasian amphora stamp of the official Κρινομένης (photo: Kalin Madzharov)

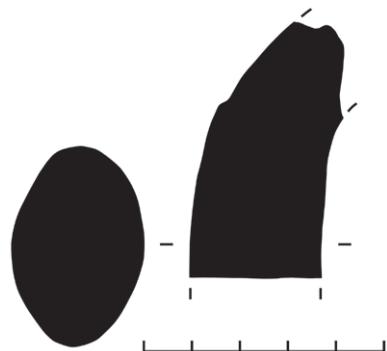


Fig. 11. Cat. # 5. The handle of a Thasian amphora stamped in the term of the official Κρινομένης (drawing: Kalin Madzharov)



Fig. 12. Cat. # 6. A Thasian amphora stamp of the official Κρινομένης (photo: Kalin Madzharov)

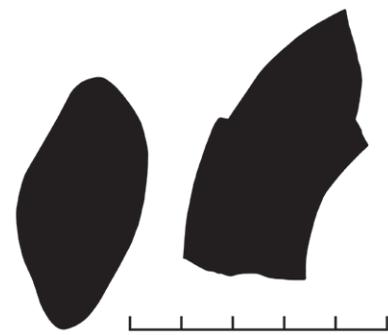


Fig. 13. Cat. # 6. The handle of a Thasian amphora stamped in the term of the official Κρινομένης (drawing: Kalin Madzharov)



Fig. 14. Cat. # 7. A Thasian amphora stamp of the official Κρινομένης (photo: Kalin Madzharov)

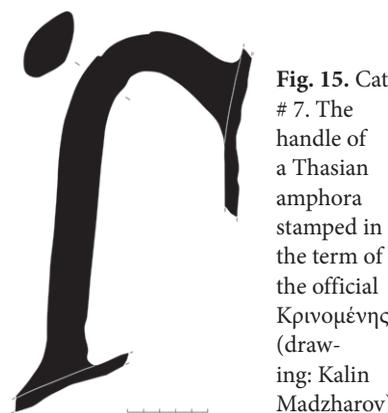


Fig. 15. Cat. # 7. The handle of a Thasian amphora stamped in the term of the official Κρινομένης (drawing: Kalin Madzharov)

Fragments of Wall Painting from Residential Buildings at the Site of Čair (*Viminacium*)

ARCHAEOLOGIA BULGARICA
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Dragana GAVRILOVIĆ / Bebina MILOVANOVIĆ

Abstract: This paper focuses on the remains of wall paintings from residences of the area of antique *Viminacium* (capital of Roman province of Upper Moesia). The largest number of specimens comes from the residences researched during the re-excavations in 2007 at the site of Čair, while a smaller portion comes from the public bath (*thermae*) and amphitheater. Detailed analysis of the fragments of wall painting showed that these buildings were once meticulously maintained since the materials show traces of renovation. These fragments revealed an entirely new image of plaster composition, which differs significantly from that found in the funerary painting of *Viminacium*. Highly polished surfaces of certain specimens, as well as possible figurative representations, indicate luxurious buildings which were in use during the 2nd and 3rd century.

Key words: *Viminacium*, Čair, wall paintings, fresco technique, mortar, pecking.

INTRODUCTION

Viminacium, the capital of the Roman province of Upper Moesia, was erected by the confluence of the Mlava and Danube rivers (the village of Kostolac, Republic of Serbia). Owing to its favorable geographic position, this area has been inhabited ever since the prehistoric times (Bulatović et al. 2019, 26-56), throughout the antiquity (Mirković 1968; Mirković 1986; Зотовић / Јордовић 1990; Korać / Golubović 2009; Спасић-Ђурић 2015), and until the medieval period (Зотовић 1981, 95-116; Поповић 1987, 1-37; Ivanišević et al. 2006). A great advantage for the researchers of this multi-layered site lies in the absence of modern-day settlements in this area. On the other hand, the development of an industrial zone, the construction of a thermal power station and coal exploitation in a strip mine, accelerated development-led archaeological excavations at the site in the early 1980s. Due to these factors, *Viminacium* is now a well-researched site. The best researched areas are those that are directly threatened by the expansion of the strip mine, which encompasses the periphery of Roman *Viminacium*. These are, primarily, the necropolises around the city. Up to now ca. 14000 graves (southern, eastern and northern necropolises) have been excavated plus memorial family tombs, suburban and rural villas and buildings with economic facilities (Зотовић / Јордовић 1990; Korać / Golubović 2009; Korać et al. 2018, 62-63). The area of the city itself, which is not directly endangered by the advance of the surface mine and belongs to the protected zone of *Viminacium* Archaeological Park, is the least researched. In the past decade, the following buildings in the city zone were researched: the public city bath (Nikolić et al. 2017, 39-58), amphitheater (Bogdanović / Jevtović 2019, 109-116) and parts of the *castrum* – military fort (Nikolić et al. 2019, 125-134, fig. 1).

The first systematic research of the city area began around the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. M. Valtrović conducted the first archaeological excavations as early as 1882



Fig. 8. *Viminacium, thermae*, wall paintings (photo by the authors)

in the past, as shown in **fig. 7a-e**, but also in some examples from the Thermae and the Amphitheater in *Viminacium*.

As it has been mentioned, in the immediate vicinity of the site of Čair, there are Thermae built around the end of the 1st, and destroyed in the beginning of 5th century (Rogić et al. 2008, 175; Nikolić et al. 2017, 39-58). Moreover, the amphitheater which was in use during the 2nd and 3rd century, and abandoned in the 4th century (Богдановић et al. 2018, 46). In these buildings, used over a long period of time, remains of renovated wall painting were also found, consisting of a multitude of fragments of wall painting, as well as the painting *in situ*.

In the Thermae, two layers were identified in the preserved *in situ* paintings, one on top of the other, i.e., in one moment in the past, a new painting was made over the previous one – **fig. 8** (Rogić 2018a, 899). The earlier painting has a marble motif and was decorated by sprinkling red paint onto the white plaster surface. The painting of the later period contains green branch and garland motifs, and between these two motifs, there are two vertical ochre strips, with a somewhat wider red strip between them. Fragments of wall painting with highly polished painted plaster surfaces were also found at the site.

For examples of renovation in the amphitheater on the fresco from the earlier phase, see the zoomorphic motif in **fig. 9b**, and the floral motif in the fresco from the later phase (**fig. 9a**). These two frescos were separated by a conservation procedure (Rogić 2014, 508).

CONCLUSION

The research of the city center of Roman *Viminacium* has been modest and based on the scarce data from the beginning of the 20th and 21st century. When observing the map published in 1905 (**fig. 2**), it was deduced that in the central part of the city of *Viminacium* (site of Čair) there were several buildings along the right side of the street with a portico (direction NE- SW). The function of these buildings has not been determined, but the remains of floor heating (*hypocaustum*) and wall painting suggest that some parts of the complex were residential; they could have been homes of distinguished citizens or served to host important persons from the public life. The very

A Great Migration Period *Spatha* with Garnet Decoration from SE Bulgaria

ARCHAEOLOGIA BULGARICA
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Lyudmil VAGALINSKI

Abstract: In 2016 a sword belonging to the so-called “Asian type” was seized from treasure hunters. It is embellished in the decorative technique of cloisonné and the cells for the inlays are made from native gold. The gemstones are andradite. The *spatha* was presumably found in Haskovo region, southeast Bulgaria. Most likely, the sword was deposited in a tomb of a noble horseman of barbarian descent, buried in the period around the middle of the 5th – the second half of the 5th century AD. It is possible that he was in the Byzantine service. This article discusses the sword to introduce into scientific discourse.

Key words: *spatha*, garnet decoration, Great Migration, Bulgaria.

PROVENANCE

In October 2016, during the international operation “Pandora” falling under the scope of Europol, a car of a Bulgarian citizen travelling from Bulgaria to Germany was stopped at the Danube Bridge 2 border checkpoint (NW Bulgaria) for inspection. Artefacts of Antiquity – three silver vessels (*phiale*, *sympulum* and *kantharos*) and an iron sword – were found and seized during the vehicle inspection. These are antique objects dug out by treasure hunters in Haskovo Region, SE Bulgaria. The silver artefacts have already been published¹. The *phiale* and the *sympulum* date to the first half of the 4th century BC, and the *kantharos* dates to the second half of the 2nd or early 1st century BC. Most probably they were manufactured in West Anatolian workshops. Apparently, the four artefacts were not found together in an archaeological context. Unfortunately, their history is irreversibly destroyed by greedy people – both treasure hunters and dealers/collectors of illegally obtained antiquities. The purpose of this article is to introduce the sword into scientific discourse².

DESCRIPTION

Sword: Iron, inv. # 9267/2018 (**figs. 1-3**). The total preserved length is 102 cm. The sword is in good condition, although has not been cleaned. It was probably lying in a dry environment which contained some organic matter.

Blade: Double-edged. Dimensions: length – 89.3 cm, width at the handle – 5 cm, width in the middle – 4.5 cm, thickness at the handle – 0.7 cm, thickness in the middle – 0.7 cm, thickness at the top – 0.4 cm (**fig. 3**). There are notches on the edges and traces of the wooden scabbard are visible on the blade³.

Hilt (figs. 3, 4): The iron tag is almost entirely preserved. Its upper edge is broken but the opening for attaching the grip is evident. Dimensions: preserved length – 13 cm; width below, at the cross-guard – 2 cm; width above, at the broken edge – 1 cm; thickness in the middle, at the shown cross-section – 0.6 cm.

¹ *Rescued Treasures* 76-79, cat. # 100-102.

² The silver vessels and the sword were handed over to the National Archaeological Institute with Museum in Sofia. I thank Associate Professor Dr. Georgi Nekhrizov (NAIM), who sought me for a consultation on the sword in October, 2016.

³ According to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tsvetana Popova (NAIM) the traces of wood on the sword and on the scabbard's decorative appliqué are not enough to recognize the species of the wood.

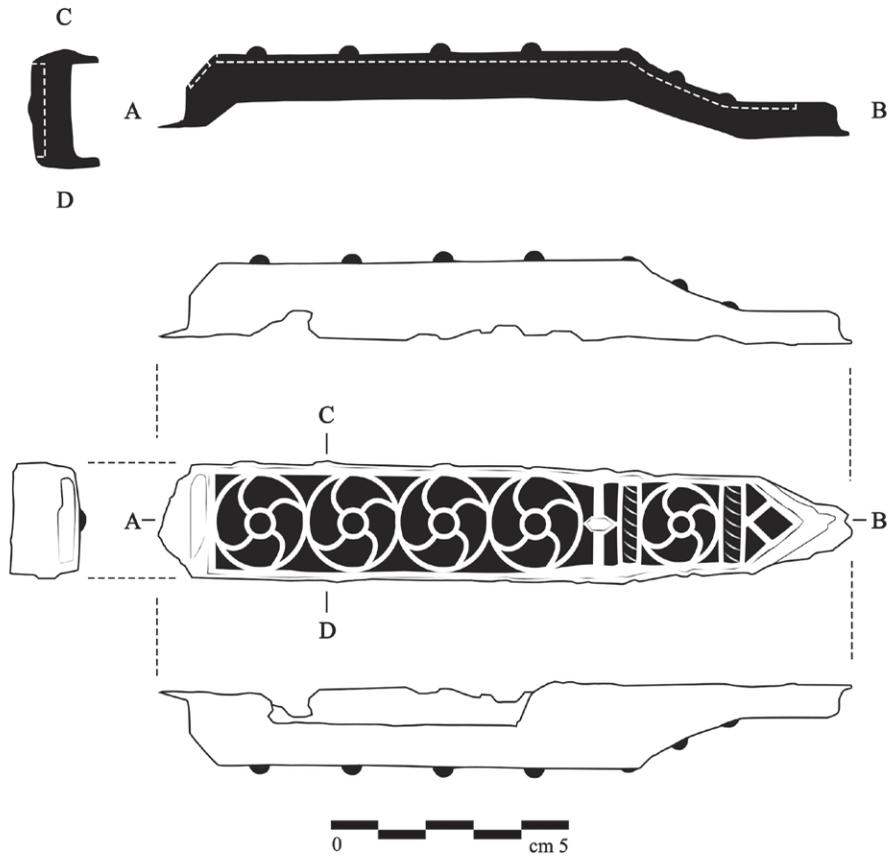


Fig. 11. Appliqué of sword's scabbard, SE Bulgaria (drawing: Chavdar Chomakov / Angel Grigorov)



Fig. 12. Appliqué of sword's scabbard, SE Bulgaria, detail (photo: Krasimir Georgiev)



Fig. 13. Appliqué of sword's scabbard, SE Bulgaria, detail (photo: Krasimir Georgiev)



Fig. 14. Appliqué of sword's scabbard, SE Bulgaria, detail (photo: Krasimir Georgiev)

“Slavic” Bow Fibulae from the Environs of Bucharest

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Florin CURTA / Eugen TEODOR

Abstract: With the surge in metal detector activity over the last seven years or so, a number of artifacts have been brought to the attention of the archaeologists in the National Museum of History in Bucharest, the largest museum of its kind in Romania. What proportion of the actual number of metal detector finds those artifacts represent remains unknown, but for what is worth, some are presented in this article. They have been found in the environs of Bucharest, three of them in the Cornetu Forest, between the town of Măgurele (on the southwestern outskirts of Bucharest) and the village of Cornetu. One of the other two was found to the north of Bucharest, near Buriăș, on the right bank of the river Ialomița. Finally, the fifth find is from the Gorgota Forest near the village of Potigrafu, a few kilometers south of Ploiești. All five artifacts are “Slavic” bow fibulae of different types – Werner’s classes ID (two specimens), IF, IH, and IIC. Their analogies suggest long-distance contact between 6th to 7th century communities in the area of the present-day city of Bucharest and communities in the Carpathian Basin, as well as in the Middle Dnieper region. However, one of those fibulae has no hinge support and no pin catch; it may well have been either a miscast or a half-manufactured product. At any rate, it indirectly documents the local production of “Slavic” bow fibulae, which has until now been only surmised, and never documented archaeologically. Such production was most likely at a household level, with no workshops and no special facilities, such as furnaces.

¹ The offer is a written document in which the person discovering the artifacts puts them up for acquisition by the museum, with or without mentioning the provenance (i.e., location of the find spot). Offers diminished drastically after 2015, both because of the large-scale protests of archaeologists against such practices (which are a direct violation of the Valetta Convention that Romania ratified in 1997) and because of payment difficulties. However, there is no indication of a diminishing “market” of finds; only the ultimate targets have changed.

² Including any artifact in the national patrimony is a long, slow, bureaucratic process, which is often blocked by technical problems, such as the absence of a sale contract. As a matter of fact, out of all fibulae presented in this article, only one has an inventory number. For each of the other artifacts only the number and date of the offer is known.

³ There is an abundant literature on the archaeology of southern Romania (Walachia) during the second half of the 6th and the early 7th century. However, only a few syntheses have been published so far: Dolinescu-Ferche 1984; Teodor 2005; Gândilă 2018, 33-190. For Bucharest and the its environs as an industrial center in the 6th century, see Teodorescu 1972. For social and political elites in the region, see Măgureanu 2010a and 2010b.

Key words: Walachia, “Slavic” bow fibulae, metal detector, miscast.

Over the last decade or so, the market availability of metal detectors has triggered an epidemic of treasure hunting. This phenomenon, while present before 2000, has grown to proportions far beyond the capability of the current Romanian legislation on the protection of the patrimony (which was adopted between 1999 and 2001) to deal with it. As a matter of fact, the only legal prohibition concerns access to archaeological sites already in the national database (which is far from being regularly updated). At the present moment, the number of treasure hunters armed with metal detectors is ten times larger than that of professional (and licensed) archaeologists, with no chance for that number diminishing any time in the nearest future. The consequences were particularly severe for the National Museum of History in Bucharest, the largest history museum in Romania. Most offers for acquisition were recorded between 2013 and 2015¹. As the legal aspects of this phenomenon have been discussed in detail elsewhere, we will deal here only with a few “Slavic” bow fibulae acquired by such means (for the legal aspects of the problem, see Teodor 2018a)². Those fibulae came to the National Museum of History in recent years. They do not alter much the distribution map of “Slavic” bow fibulae in southern Romania, but consolidate the impression that the territory of the present-day city of Bucharest, was a regional center of sorts (Teodor 2018b, 446; **fig. 1**)³.

The part of the Lower Danube region now known as Walachia (Romanian, “Muntenia”) is where the Sclavenes most likely lived, as mentioned in the 6th century, early Byzantine sources. Most archaeo-



Fig. 6. The region between the villages of Buriăș and Bălteni, at the boundary between the Ilfov (to the south, center) and Prahova (to the north) counties. The arrow points to the find spot of the fibula. Orthophoto (Romania, ANCP, 2012)

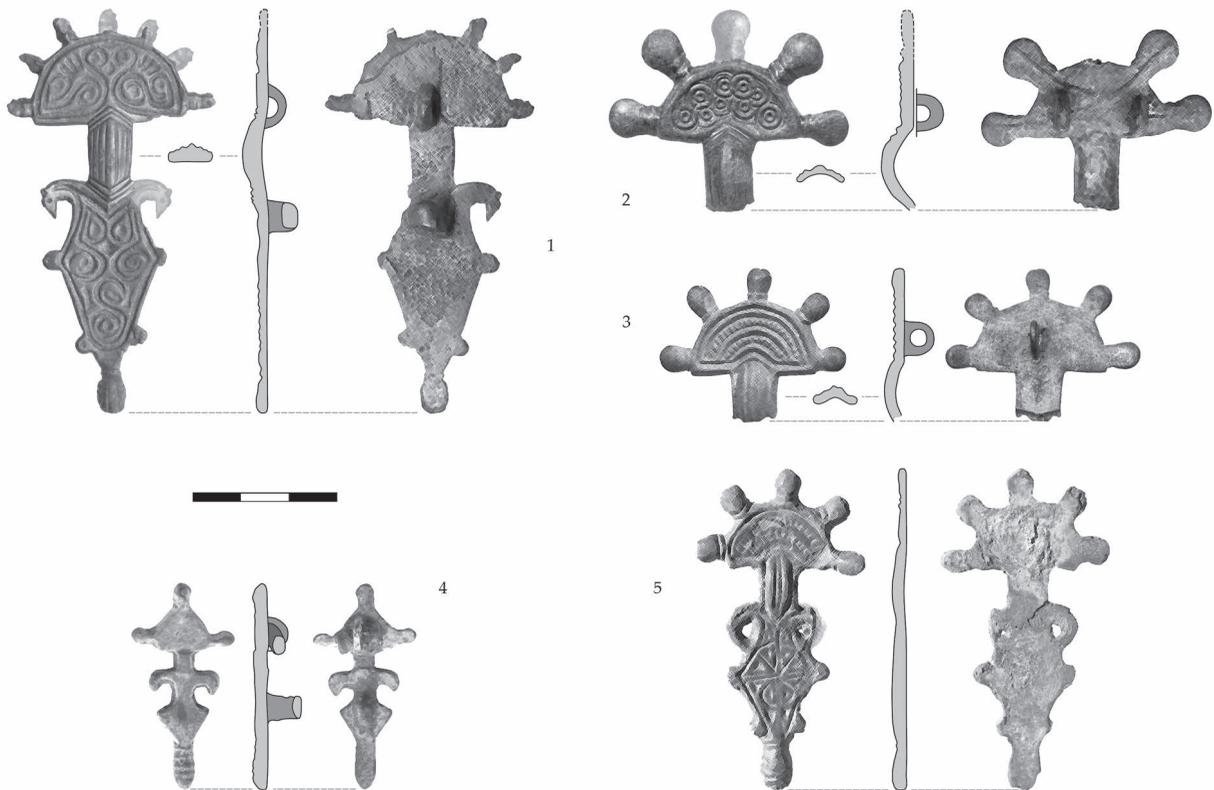


Fig. 7. "Slavic" bow fibulae from the environs of Bucharest: 1-3 Cornetu Forest; 4 Buriăș; 5 Potigrafu

THE FIBULAE

Cornetu Forest, Semedreni site; found in 2019⁷. Copper-alloy, well-preserved with the exception of one of the two bird heads and a portion of the foot plate upper edge. The headplate has seven knobs, of which two were knocked off, and one was broken; L=8.3 cm (**fig. 7/1**). The headplate is decorated with two vertical S-shaped spirals attached

⁷ There are no records for the acquisition of this artifact, but an archaeological survey took place on the find spot, at the request of the Ilfov County Directorate for Culture.

Rethinking Periodization in Post-Roman Southeastern Europe: The Case-Study of Dalmatia

ARCHAEOLOGIA BULGARICA
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Danijel DŽINO

Abstract: Periodization of historical periods is a way to divide the past into well-defined, mutually different periods of time, such as for example: Antiquity, Late Antiquity, Middle Ages, etc. While it is clear that these historical periods are modern constructs, they still provide useful templates against which historians and archaeologists interpret the past in more successful ways. This paper focuses on the territory of the late antique Roman province of Dalmatia, mapping, through the archaeological record from the sixth to ninth century, the social change which brought in the transition from the 'ancient' to 'medieval' era. This reassessment of the transition from the ancient world into Middle Ages, while specific to Dalmatia, provides material for comparative analyses with the other regions of south-eastern Europe and the Balkans, which went through comparable processes of transition after the Byzantine evacuation of this region in c. 620.

Key words: historical periodization, Dalmatia, Balkans, Late Antiquity, Early Middle Ages, cemeteries, migrations, elites.

The debate on the end of Antiquity and the beginning of Middle Ages in the post-Roman world has generated voluminous bibliography focusing on two major problems: the nature of the process and the chronological delimitation between these two periods. The debate is much fiercer amongst text-based historians (Marcone 2008), while art historians and archaeologists are somewhat more relaxed about defining borders between two periods (Chevalier 2019). The idea of a 'long' Late Antiquity and slow societal transformation until the eighth or even ninth century is more popular with the scholars dealing with the post-Roman West. However, in the context of post-Roman south-eastern Europe and the Balkan peninsula, the model of a 'long' Late Antiquity does not make as much sense. Material evidence from different sub-regions consistently shows discontinuity rather than transformation, evidenced in the lasting disruption of late antique networks and demographic collapse starting from c. 620 (Curta 2013).

This study aims to address and rethink the transition from Late Antiquity into the Middle Ages in southeastern Europe and the Balkan peninsula, using as a case-study Dalmatia between the sixth and later ninth century. 'Dalmatia' is for the purpose of this study defined as the area of late antique Dalmatia after Diocletian's reforms, encompassing the areas between the eastern Adriatic coast and the eastern Alps, the river Sava and the line determined by the river Drina and the gulf of Boka Kotorska – in other words: modern southern and central Croatia, Herzegovina, Bosnia, and western parts of Montenegro. The absence and insufficiency of preserved written sources necessitates a focus on existing archaeological research, which in some ways can be even more helpful for assessing social changes occurring at a grassroots level. The evidence brought forward here is representative of a much larger corpus of available archaeological finds scattered throughout numer-

REVIEWS

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Christian MANN / Sofie REMIJSEN / Sebastian SCHARFF (eds.). *Athletics in the Hellenistic World*. Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag, 2016, 366 pp., 16 b/w illustrations, 10 b/w tables, 38 b/w photos. ISBN 978-3-515-11571-1 (Print). ISBN 978-3-515-11588-9 (eBook)

Every book that covers little-discussed topic in historiography has always been met with a growing interest in the scholarship. And when the book is edited by prominent experts in the field, the scholarly interest is even greater. The present volume has benefited enormously from the intriguing topic of athletics in the Hellenistic period that has so far been largely neglected by the scholars, but has been effectively exposed to thought-provoking and even cross-traditional discussions at the conference held under the research project entitled “The self-presentation of athletes in the Hellenistic period: social identities, political identities, ethnic identities”.

The “Athletics in the Hellenistic World” includes 16 contributions, 9 in English and 7 in German, presented by short abstracts that open the book. Papers are not grouped into categories addressed to broad-scope issues, and there is no definite connection between them. Each contribution represents a sedulous study, and hence, it can be read and discussed independently. However, all papers are connected to provide in-depth understanding and often nontraditional approach to the history and archaeology of the athletics in the Hellenistic period. Some of the articles are focused on a specific aspect of the sporting events of wider cultural significance, constantly overlooked or left out within previous agonistic studies, while others relate to case studies on various features of sport activities and athletic games held in particular cities and regions of the Hellenistic world. All contributions are accompanied by a voluminous bibliography including recent studies on the topic.

Compared to the Archaic and Classical periods, when the multi-dimensional character of Greek agonistic culture has been established and gradually developed, and to the Roman period, when the *agones* have been widespread in the Roman Empire to the extent that well-defined and effective agonistic system or “agonistic network” could be safely evidenced, the nature of the relationship between many characteristics and certain peculiarities of the Hellenistic agonistic world has not been considered so far. Christian Mann, member of the book editorial board, presents an article that is a kind of introduction to the volume that substantiates the need for a general in-depth study of the Hellenistic athletic culture (pp. 17-29). The scientific potential of the topic considered in the diachronic development of the Greek agonistic world is revealed through the following major *Forschungshorizonte*: the source database; the organization and structure of the agonistic sphere in the Hellenistic period; the social structure of the polis and the civic role of the athletes; the agonistic culture and ethnic identity; the political influence on the agonistic world. According to Mann’s conclusive remark, the aim of this book is not to present a comprehen-