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SOCIETY, CRAFTS AND TRADE FROM ANTIQUITY AND
THE MIDDLE AGES TO MODERN TIMES

Vol. 12,
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Introduction

This thematic issue of *Studia academica Šumenensia* (SAŠ), titled “Society, Crafts, and Trade from Antiquity and the Middle Ages to Modern Times,” is quite broad in terms of both content and chronology. Various aspects of this topic have been repeatedly studied in scientific research.

The editorial board’s idea in choosing this theme for the issue is to include studies covering various segments of the topic, based on both new information and new interpretations and analyzes of well-known sources.

The articles are generally arranged in chronological order.

The volume begins with an article by Ömer Solak, which presents readers with an interesting comparative study of changes in the role of women as mothers in Mesopotamian civilizations. Through an analysis of written sources, the author traces the social and cultural dimensions of motherhood and the status of women in the ancient Mesopotamian society.

Galya Yordanova’s study draws attention to biblical texts in search of the essence and role of money and goods through in-depth theological analysis. The study focuses on the moral dimensions of wealth and the place of material assets in the biblical tradition.

The autonomous section devoted to the ancient and classical eras concludes with an article by Alexander Stankov, which attempts to find the connection between natural resources and the development of trade in the Megarian colony of Byzantium on the Bosphorus.

The transfer to medieval issues is marked by studies that focus on the economic, administrative, and craft structures in the Bulgarian lands during the Early Middle Ages.

The article by Todor Todorov and Konstantin Konstantinov introduces a new, previously unpublished lead seal found in one of the economic complexes of the Outer City of Pliska. Through epigraphic and iconographic analysis, the authors argue for the dating of the find and propose a hypothesis that it belonged to a person associated with the higher clergy of the Bulgarian archbishopric in the second half of the 9th century.

The sigillographic topic is further discussed in the article by Zhenya Zhekova, who presents an unpublished bronze seal with a pseudo-inscription and a patriarchal cross found in the Shumen area. Through comparative analysis and a search for parallels in the sphragistic material, the study attempts to interpret and identify the artifact more accurately.

The following studies are set in the same chronological context, but focus on production activities and material culture.

Stella Doncheva's study is devoted to ceramic production at the artistic metal centre near the village of Zlatar, Preslav region. It analyzes the ceramic material accompanying the production and its contribution to the chronology and typology of early medieval ceramics.

The joint publication by the Bulgarian-Hungarian research team (Stella Doncheva, Nina Arhangelova, Angyal Anikó, Enikő Furu, and Boglárka Döncző) presents the results of PIXE analysis of ceramics produced at the artistic metalworking center near the village of Novosel, Shumen region. By combining archaeological observations with physical and chemical methods, the study contributes to a more in-depth understanding of the technologies and employed raw materials.

The High and Late Middle Ages are represented in the volume through studies focusing on military conflicts, craft traditions, and cultural exchange in a broader European context.

Ivelin Ivanov's article examines siege warfare in Livonia and Latin Romania in the late 12th and early 13th centuries. Based on a comparative analysis, the author highlights similarities and differences in siege practices and traces the adaptation of the Crusaders to local conditions in the two regions.

Alongside the military aspects of medieval development, the volume pays attention to the peaceful forms of cultural and craft exchange.

Milica Radišić's research is devoted to the spread and production of twisted wire bracelets with looped ends during the High Middle Ages. Through stylistic and technological analysis, she traces the transfer of craft knowledge and models between Northern and Eastern Europe and the Balkans, as well as the possible social functions of these ornaments.

The transition to the early modern period is outlined in studies examining trade, clothing, and currency circulation in the Bulgarian lands under the Ottoman rule.

The article by Alexander Stankov and Lilia Lukova analyzes the influence of trade on Bulgarian clothing in the 15th–17th centuries. Based on iconographic, written, and archaeological sources, the transformations in clothing are traced as a reflection of socio-economic and cultural processes.

The economic dimensions of these processes are also reflected in studies on monetary circulation and coin finds from the period.

Krassimir Krastev's study is devoted to a 17th-century coin treasure found near the village of Konare, Stara Zagora region. Numismatic analysis clarifies the composition of the find and its significance for monetary circulation and trade relations in the Bulgarian lands under the Ottoman rule.

The study by Vladimir Bekov and Rositsa Angelova presents the significant numismatic collection of Academician Ananie Yavashov and his family. Selected valuable specimens are presented, highlighting the importance of the collection for the study of monetary wealth and trade relations in Antiquity and later periods.

The final thematic section of the volume is devoted to the transfer to the modern era and the efforts to institutionalize and provide state support for crafts and industry in post-liberation Bulgaria.

Roumiana Parvanova's article examines the attempts to provide legislative support for craftsmanship in Bulgaria in the 1890s. It analyzes legislative initiatives and practical measures to support crafts and craft education.

The volume concludes with Biser Georgiev's review of Roumiana Parvanova's monograph on the promotion of Bulgarian industry in the period 1894–1928. The review highlights the scientific contributions of the study and its significance for the study of state protectionism and industrial development in Bulgaria.

On the whole, the studies included in this volume present a broad chronological and thematic panorama of issues related to the economy, crafts, and trade from antiquity to modern times. The diversity of sources and approaches contributes to a more complete understanding of individual socio-economic processes and outlines opportunities for future research.

Todor Todorov, Svetlana Nedelcheva

The woman and mother in ancient Mesopotamian texts

Ömer Solak

Abstract: Motherhood is one of the most important and oldest female representations and social roles. However, it has not received sufficient attention in gender studies on ancient texts. In this study, the role of women as mothers in ancient Mesopotamia is discussed based on two different texts. The aim of the study is to reveal ancient perceptions around the representation of motherhood. In this context, two texts from the Old Babylonian and then Neo-Assyrian periods, approximately 1000 years apart, “Lu-diġira’s message to his mother Sat-Ishtar” and “Assyrian elegy for a woman”, were analyzed using document analysis, a qualitative data collection and analysis method. According to the textual findings, it can be said that two different mother roles came to the fore in different ages of Mesopotamian civilizations. While the mother was glorified as an independent identity in Old Babylonia, she was a more submissive, fertile caregiver in Neo-Assyria.

Key words: Ancient Mesopotamia, gender studies, femininity, maternal social role.

Резюме: Майчинството е едно от най-важните и най-древните социални роли на жената. Въпреки това то не е получило достатъчно внимание в изследванията на джендър проблематика в древните текстове. В настоящото проучване ролята на жените като майки в древна Месопотамия се разглежда въз основа на два текста. Целта е да се разкрие как майчинството е възприемано в древността. В този контекст са анализирани два текста от старовавилонския и неоасирийския период, разделени от приблизително 1000 години – „Посланието на Лу-диджира до майка му Сат-Ишар“ и „Асирийска елегия за жената“, като е използван документален анализ – качествен метод за събиране и анализ на данни. Според резултатите от този анализ на текстовете може да се заключи, че в различните епохи на месопотамските цивилизации на преден план излизат различни роли на майката. Докато в Старовавилонския период майката е възвеличавана със своята идентичност, в Неоасирийския период тя е представена като смирена пазителка на рода.

Introduction

Motherhood is not only one of the oldest social roles around the institution of the family; it is also one of the most important representations of women. This study analyzes the role of motherhood in ancient Mesopotamian societies based on two different texts, the first from the Old Babylonian period (1894-1595 BC) and the second from the Neo-Assyrian period (911-609 BC). The aim of analyzing these texts, which are approximately 1000 years apart, is to reveal the ancient perceptions around the representations of womanhood and

motherhood and their changes. In this context, the study first summarizes the conceptual discussion around women, the fictional representation of women and motherhood, and then analyzes the selected texts using document analysis, a qualitative method.

Qualitative research is a flexible and inductive research approach that aims to investigate the meanings behind phenomena and reveals how human experiences can be interpreted and made sense of by using rich descriptions¹. Document analysis is a method based on analyzing the content of a document by categorizing it into some codes according to its subject matter. In this method, the content is subjected to a critical evaluation².

A review of the relevant literature reveals that in gender studies of the ancient world, women's roles such as motherhood have remained a kind of blind spot due to the weight given to male roles. However, as we enter the last quarter of the 20th century, with the influence of the second wave of Feminism, there has been an increased interest in exploring the ancient remnants of women's roles. In particular, the roles of women in Classical Antiquity as wives, mothers, sisters, and daughters have been questioned through methods such as discourse analysis, descriptive analysis and rhetorical analysis.

Sarah B. Pomeroy's *Women in Classical Antiquity* (1975) is considered the first contribution to the study of women in classical antiquity³. Studies on women in ancient Mesopotamian civilizations are relatively new. In this context, *Women in Ancient Mesopotamia* (2014) provides a very fruitful treatment of the subject⁴. Likewise, the article titled "Mesopotamian Women" in *Women's Literature in Ancient Mesopotamia* (2017) deals with the same topic⁵. In addition to these studies, there are many others on the subject⁶.

The title of this study, of course, automatically implies a confrontation with a vast geographical and chronological area and textual material. It is also clear that the textual evidence for Mesopotamia is highly uneven. While some geographical areas and times are well documented, others have large gaps. For this reason, only two separate texts on the representation of motherhood have been selected for this study, and the geography and time period to which they belong are approximated based on archaeological sources.

¹ Merriam, 2009; Glesne, 2011.

² Asdal & Reinertsen, 2021.

³ Pomeroy, 1994

⁴ Chavalas, 2014.

⁵ Halton and Svärd, 2017: 3-15.

⁶ Asher-Greve and Westenholz, 2013; Bahrani, 2001.

Theoretical and conceptual framework

Women's identity and women's roles

Before moving on to discuss the role of women as mothers in ancient Mesopotamia, it is necessary to summarize the theoretical debate on some basic concepts such as female identity and female roles. In fact, these concepts have emerged at different times and have been shaped by different theoretical grounds.

Second Wave Feminism is the first of these. French Feminist theorist and Existentialist thinker Simone de Beauvoir made the most fruitful contribution to the issue of women's representation in her seminal text *The Second Sex* (1949). According to her, the disproportionate power relationship between men and women in patriarchal societies is reflected in the representation of women with the same injustice. For this reason, the woman is positioned as the other against the man. Men describe the world from their point of view as if it were an absolute truth⁷. Later, in *Sex, Gender and Society*, published in 1972, Ann Oakley argues that gender roles are social rather than biological. According to her, individuals exhibit behaviors according to social assumptions about the gender to which they belong. Such that these roles vary according to the race, culture and ethnicity of the individual⁸.

The theory of Social Constructivism makes a similar definition of social roles. According to this theory, male and female behaviors are learned through the process of socialization rather than natural, physiological or genetic predisposition. These roles, called gender stereotypes, are hierarchical and patriarchal; they are acquired from parents and/or the environment⁹. These roles that individuals think of as reality are actually formed through a dynamic process of social construction¹⁰.

Role Theory is another theory that explains the concept of gender role. According to this theory, most daily activities are based on social roles such as mother, manager, teacher. Each role consists of a set of rights, duties, expectations, norms and behaviors¹¹. People exhibit predictable behaviors in different contexts according to these roles. Thus, male and female roles are gender-differentiated social behaviors¹². On the other hand, social roles are dynamic; they may lose their validity or gain credibility according to changing social conditions. Moreover, individuals may act in accordance with a role with the expectation of a reward and punishment or for the sake of social acceptance.

⁷ Beauvoir, 2019: 143

⁸ Oakley, 1972.

⁹ Cherlin, 2010

¹⁰ Boghossian, 2001.

¹¹ Biddle, 1986.

¹² Eagly, 1997.

According to this theory, gender roles are social acceptances determined according to gender. People behave, speak or dress according to them.

A stereotype is an overgeneralized, often inaccurate, and resistant to new information identification of a particular category of people¹³. Although there are some universal commonalities among them, they often vary according to the different society, ethnic group or culture¹⁴. Gender stereotypes are gender roles that have become stereotypical and typical. As a matter of fact, it has been observed that female gender roles have historically revolved around characteristics such as helpfulness, passivity and kindness in many societies. Traditionally, women have been represented as caregivers, nurturers, homemakers and helpers¹⁵.

The divine feminine is one of the oldest and most common female gender roles. Rooted in Neolithic depictions, in ancient societies this role is associated with fertility and creation. In fact, the cult of the Mother Goddess is found in many parts of the ancient world long before patriarchal religions. Likewise, the figure of Mother Earth is a matriarchal archetype found in various mythologies around the world and frequently represented in ancient art¹⁶. On the other hand, the claim that primitive societies were initially matriarchal and worshipped a sovereign and nurturing mother earth goddess is largely based on Johann J. Bachofen's 19th century idea of unilinear evolution. Moreover, recent studies have shown that rather than reflecting ancient times, the idea of a mother goddess is a reflection of contemporary Feminist ideology on ancient myths¹⁷. Indeed, for a long time Feminist writers and archaeologists such as Marija Gimbutas have often kept the distinction between a peaceful matriarchal agrarian society and a nomadic patriarchal warrior tribe¹⁸.

Women's roles in ancient Mesopotamia

Indeed, the tablets tell us that in ancient Iraqi society women worked in all fields. However, very few women are mentioned by name in the Sumerian corpus of Old Babylonian literature. Two of them are Nawir-tum, the wife of the merchant Ludingira, and her mother Sat-Ishtar. As a matter of fact, experts in the field generally agree that these may have been real Nippurites.

On the other hand, it should be noted that women in ancient Mesopotamian societies lived different lives according to different social classes and statuses.

¹³ Myers and Twenge, 2013.

¹⁴ Huddy and Terkildsen, 1993.

¹⁵ Hawke, 2007.

¹⁶ Karageorgi, 2022.

¹⁷ Smith, 2007.

¹⁸ Motz, 1997.

Social class is an important social division in ancient Babylonian society. Essentially, society was divided into three social classes: *amelu* (the elite: nobles and clergy), *mushkenu* (free people) and *ardu* (slaves). Women's roles were also influenced by this hierarchy¹⁹. On the one hand, there were the "free women" (Akkadian *awilatum*) who were the mistresses of the great houses, and on the other, the "slave women" (Akkadian *amatum*) who lived in palaces, temples or rich houses.

Elite women are much better represented in the records than poor or slave women. In ancient Mesopotamia they were often found in palaces, temples or in commercial life. The elite women of the ancient Babylonian era were mostly *naditum*, temple priestesses. In this age, priestesses dedicated themselves to a male deity and did not bear children, as was the case with Shamash in Sippar, Marduk in Babylon and Ninurta in Nippur. However, they also had a life outside the temple. For example, the women who lived in the *gagûm* temple complex in Sippar, about whom there are many documents, married but did not have children. These women come from wealthy and elite families; they are engaged in commercial as well as religious duties, and some of them can even read and write, and inherit and leave inheritances²⁰. Likewise, *qadišum* (nursemaid) and *kulmašitum* women, who belonged to the same religious caste, could be literate, acquire property, and even marry and have children, unlike the *naditum*. Judging from the numerous administrative documents and letters left by the Neo-Assyrian Empire (900- 612 BC) from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean, women had considerable influence in the palaces and were engaged in large-scale textile production and trade. In addition to these, there were *sekretu*, or "court women", who performed administrative tasks around the palace, as well as female musicians and soothsayers. There are also numerous records of female soothsayers who foretold the future²¹. Overall, the record shows that elite women in ancient Mesopotamia took on all the roles that men did. They corresponded with the king, other men, or each other; they owned property, engaged in commercial ventures, used seals, or were witnesses in court²².

The free women of the middle class were mostly *muškenum*, who were not slaves and worked the land of a master. Unfortunately, there is not much information available today about women of this class, as the written record is mostly about nobles and the rich. Because they were illiterate or unable to hire a scribe, the voices of poor women and slave women are rarely preserved in

¹⁹ Johns, 1911

²⁰ Jeyes, 1983.

²¹ LouMacgregor, 2012.

²² Halton and Svård, 2017.

ancient texts. According to the records, free women had the right to engage in legal transactions, such as trading, borrowing money and acquiring property, but in general, except for widows and some other special cases, all other women were largely under the authority of the male head of the family. This was not the case for wealthy women, who had the status to act on their own²³.

Slave women are women who belonged to the class of slaves that has always existed throughout Mesopotamian history, although their proportion in the population varies. Sometimes they were former free citizens who became slaves because of debt. In this system, a free person is pledged to a creditor in exchange for a debt; if the debt is not paid, he becomes his property. The other type of slavery is mostly the slavery of prisoners of war, and their social status is slightly lower than that of other slaves²⁴.

The social life and status of women in ancient Mesopotamia was as much related to marriage and work as to the class to which they belonged.

Marriage was a social institution in ancient Mesopotamia, usually arranged by the fathers of the bride and groom, often with financial contributions from the parents after a long betrothal. Divorce, on the other hand, could only be granted with compensation in special cases, such as the inability to give a child to a spouse. On the other hand, the right to take a second wife is only granted to men²⁵.

Working life remained very limited for women in ancient Mesopotamia. In this geographic region, women were always members of a family, clan or a bitum, or "household"; they could either marry and start a family or work in a palace, manor or temple. There are almost no records of women who did both. Women who could be musicians, singers or priestesses in temples and palaces were often paid in food, clothing or goods. On the other hand, in Neo-Assyrian palaces, *šakintu*, i.e. "female administrators", were very wealthy and influential²⁶. Women outside these professions were mostly physical laborers, such as weavers, flour grinders, bread bakers and reed cutters. According to most records, they receive only half of the rations for male workers. On the other hand, there are documents recording female occupations such as midwife, nurse and tavern keeper²⁷. Widows are an important group. In the laws, widows and orphans are usually referred to as a vulnerable group. However, not all widows are vulnerable. When her husband dies, she can manage her business until her son grows up or return to her father's house.

²³ Greengus, 1994.

²⁴ Dandamaev, 2008.

²⁵ Stol, 1995a.

²⁶ Svärd, 2015.

²⁷ Van de Mieroop, 1987, 53-66.

Inheritance goes largely to the eldest son; other sons receive smaller amounts; unmarried daughters receive a dowry from the estate. Sons are expected to take care of their mother in old age. A widow with sufficient property could act quite autonomously, while for a poor widow life was difficult except for remarriage²⁸. According to most Assyriologists, *ḥarimtu* means independent single woman or prostitute in Akkadian. If wealthy, they could be rich and autonomous, without belonging to a household²⁹. Sorcery is seen as another field of work for women. According to Amélie Kuhrt, women fleeing from male authority are seen as the source of malevolent magic. Since magic was taken very seriously in Mesopotamia, malevolent spells had to be dispelled by “white magic”, which was mostly done by female sorcerers³⁰.

Textual findings

Lu-diġira’s message to his mother Sat-Ishtar

This text is part of the Lu-diġira cycle, a series of Sumerian texts from the Old Babylonian era. In fact, the first two of these texts, “Lu-diġira’s lament to his father Nannaya” and “Lu-diġira’s lament to his wife Nawirtum”, were discovered and published by S.N. Kramer in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow in 1957³¹. The “Lu-diġira’s message to his mother Sat-Ishtar”, the subject of this study, was first published by M. Civil in 1964³². In the following years, J. Nougayrol and Laroche published new versions of the text in *Ugaritica* V³³. Subsequently, M.I. Çiğ and S.N. Kramer published another version found in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum on tablet Ni. 2754 in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum³⁴.

The text was probably internationally recognized at the time it was written, as an Akkadian- Hittite version (KUB IV 2 and 9= 97) was found far from its homeland in the Hittite capital of Boğazköy. Subsequently, another multilingual version (RS 25.421) was unearthed in the excavations at Ugarit, again apparently originating from Boğazköy. In this version, the text appears in four parallel columns in Sumerian, phonetic Sumerian, Akkadian and Hittite. There are 40 lines on each side of the tablet and 80 lines in total, so that two lines form a couplet. Thus, with the discovery of the Ugarit tablet, a faithful trilingual example of the poem has been recovered. This study is based on Jaan

²⁸ Stol, 1995b.

²⁹ Assante, 1998.

³⁰ Kuhrt, 1989.

³¹ Kramer, 1963, 208-217.

³² Civil, 1964.

³³ *Ugaritica* V 1968, 1968: 310-319, 444-445, 773-779.

³⁴ Çiğ and Kramer, 1976

Puhvel's Hittite translation, taking into account the Sumerian and Akkadian versions³⁵.



Fig. 1. “Ludingirra’s letter to his mother”. Terracotta tablet from Nippur, Iraq. Approximately 1700 BC. Museum of Ancient Oriental Art, Istanbul

Content of the text: Lu-diğira, originally Luz-kaš4-e lugal-la ħar-ra-anna ġen-na (“Set out, royal courier!”), was a noble poet from Nippur who lived during the reign of Hammurabi’s successor Samsuiluna. The dramatic situation in the text is that the poet, who is in another city for unknown reasons, wants to communicate with his mother who is worried about him.

Part 1 (lines 1-8): Set out, royal courier!/ I will send to Nippur, I will send this letter with you./ I have made a long journey./ My mother is in sorrow, she cannot sleep./ She, who has not seen a fresh word in her room,/ is constantly asking travelers about me./ Leave my letter of greeting in her palms./ To my mother, who will rejoice for you.

³⁵ Puhvel, 1996.

Part 2 (lines 9-20): If you don't know her, I will give you signs so that you can recognize her:/ Her name is Sat-Ishtar, with this information./ Her body, face, and all her limbs are smooth./ She is the most graceful goddess of the neighborhood./ Since childhood, she has always determined her own destiny./ She went directly and reverently to her mother-in-law's house./ She stands humbly in the presence of her goddess, her Mistress./ She knows how to watch over Inanna's house./ She does not disobey her master's orders./ She is energetic and energetic (and) she does everything right./ She is loving, kind (and) lively./ She is a lamb, pure cream, sweet butter, my mother³⁶.

Part 3 (lines 21-31): Let me give you another sign of my mother:/ My mother, a bright light on the horizon,/ a gazelle in the mountains./ The morning star, shining even in the daytime./ An agate, a Marhaci topaz./ A jewel fit for kings./ A seal of Nir stone,/ an ornament like the sun./ A bracelet of metal, a ring of antasura metal./ An ingot of shining silver, but living and breathing./ A statuette of a guardian goddess on a base of lapislazuli./ A polished rod of ivory,/ my mother, whose limbs are full of beauty.

Part 4 (lines 32-39): Let me give you the third sign of my mother:/ My mother is a rain from heaven./ a water of the best seeds./ a bountiful harvest of ripe barley./ a... garden, full of smiles./ a well-watered pine tree, an ornamental juniper./ early fruit, the first harvest of the season./ a canal that brings life to the gardens./ a sweet Dilmun date, a much sought after date, my mother.

Part 5 (lines 40-46): I will give you the fourth sign of my mother:/ My mother's feasts fill the offerings with joy./ She is an offering of akitum, marvelous to behold./ She is the king's daughter, the song of abundance./ She is a place of revelry set up for pleasures./ ...the fruit, ...of abundance./ A lover, a loving heart, insatiable in pleasures./ The good news that the captive will return to his mother.

Part 6 (lines 47-52): Let me give you the fifth sign of my mother:/ My mother, a very fragrant date palm tree./ A chariot of juniper wood, a palanquin of boxwood./

A fine cloth, scented with pure oils./ A bunch of grapes, a garland, growing in abundance./ My mother, a bottle made of ostrich eggs, full of fragrant oil./ ...a beautiful woman, accompanied by her guardian goddess./ A woman like Aruru, tender to you, born of ...-.

Part 7 (lines 53-54): When you stand in his luminous presence with the descriptions I have given, / tell her: "Your beloved son Lu-diġara is the breeze."

In Part 1, Lu-diġara tells a messenger - or "royal courier" - to deliver a letter to his mother in Nibiru. This is because he has learned from other travelers that his mother is very worried about him.

³⁶ Civil, 1964: 1-11

From Part 2 to part 6, Lu-diğira gives the messenger five signs of his mother so that he can recognize her immediately. However, these five signs that will enable the messenger to recognize his mother are not actual physical attributes. Rather, they are poetic expressions in which she is described in exaggerated metaphors. The first characteristic is that the mother is an ideal wife and bride. She is a hardworking wife and daughter-in-law who does everything carefully and multiplies her husband's wealth. The second quality is her unique beauty. This beauty is expressed in poetic and extraordinary metaphors: She is a starlight on the horizon, a doe, a jewel cut from a precious stone, a flawless ivory, an alabaster figure and an attractive being. The third attribute is his productivity. It is a bountiful rain, a bountiful garden, a well-tended pine tree, the first fruit of the year and a fragrant Dilmun date. The fourth quality is the joy of the mother. With her, life becomes a joyful celebration, a transcendent pleasure. The fifth attribute, which is very short, relates to fragrance. The mother exudes sweet fragrances around her, like plants and trees that are constantly fragrant.

Part 7 ends abruptly with Lu-diğira wishing her mother a safe journey home. The end of the letter is not as elaborate and ornate as the beginning. Thus, this simple and brief statement, "Your beloved son Lu-diğira is well", creates a sudden disappointment in the reader.

In fact, Lu-diğira's descriptions are not physical descriptions by which the messenger can recognize her. While the poet could have simply described her mother's house, she describes her mother with poetic and exaggerated similes. These descriptions, which contain stylizations typical of an ideal Sumerian mother, are actually an excuse for the poet to express his love for his mother. Moreover, the poet knows that his letter will be delivered to his mother as a tablet, so that all these words of love will be read by the addressee.

Each section of the letter focuses on a different aspect of the mother. The first emphasis is on the fact that the mother's name is "Sat-Estar", meaning that she is identified with the Goddess Ishtar. Like Ishtar, the mother is a "great lady", that is, the lady of the family home. This indicates that she has a strong social position. The second emphasis is on the mother's physical appearance. For this, the mother's beauty is compared to precious stones, metals and beautiful statues. The third emphasis is on the mother's generosity. This is expressed through plants and botanical metaphors. The fourth emphasis is on her joyful nature. The fifth and final emphasis is on the mother's grace and kindness. This grace is expressed through luxurious objects such as ostrich eggs. Indeed, these eggs, some of which have survived to the present day, were rare ornamental objects in ancient Mesopotamia.

An Assyrian Elegy for a Woman

This text is a lament found in one copy in the archive of the Neo-Assyrian king Asurbanipal (K 890). Laments or elegies usually city laments for a city that had fallen to the enemy, were common in the Old Babylonian period and earlier. In the Neo-Assyrian period, however, such elegies were not found much; rather, personal elegies were found in this period.

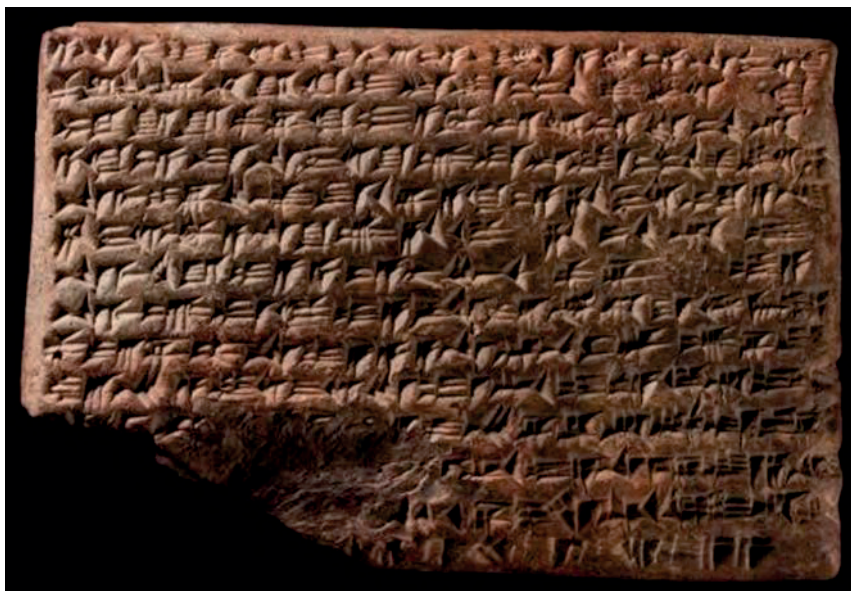


Fig. 2. “An Assyrian Elegy for a Woman”. Terracotta tablet found in the archive of Asurbanipal in northern Iraq. Approximately 700 BC. British Museum, London.

K 890, a personal elegy, is written in Neo-Assyrian on a single clay tablet. It has 14 lines on the front side and 9 lines on the back side. Due to the damage, the lower left edge of the front side (lines 12-14) and the upper left edge of the back side (beginning of lines 1-4) are illegible. There is no indication on the text, of which there is only one copy, that it was used in any cult or ritual. Likewise, the absence of a title makes it difficult to determine its place in Neo-Assyrian literature. For these reasons, it is difficult to determine whether the text is religious poetry or folk poetry. On the other hand, based on its content, the text can be divided into two main parts³⁷.

Content of the text: In this poetic text of unknown authorship, a lamenter of unknown name and gender compares a recently deceased woman

³⁷ Reiner, 1985, 85.

to a stranded boat. She describes her husband, who remains helplessly by her side, with pathetic words.

Part 1 (lines 1-3): Why? Like boats stuck in the middle of the river-/ your hull broken, your ropes broken/ your face covered, you float in the river inside the city./

Part 2 (lines 4-9): **Verse 1, Stanza 1.** “How could I not be adrift, my ropes did not break?”/ “How happy I was the day I carried the fruit!”/ I was happy; my husband was happy./ **Stanza 2.** But the day I gave birth, my face darkened./ **stanza 3.** The day I gave birth, my eyes clouded over./

Verse 2. I opened my hands to Bēlet-ilī and prayed,/ “You, the mother who gave birth to you, save my life!” Bēlet-ilī, hearing this, covered her face./ “(Who) are you, why do you keep praying?”

Verse 3. (My husband who loves me) screamed./ “(Who stole) my wife, “(who stole) my happiness?”/...forever/ in the land of horrors.”/ He wailed as he went into the city.

Verse 4. Stanza 1. In those days, I was with my husband,/ I lived with him; he was my beloved./ Stanza 2. Death came creeping into my bedchamber,/ He took me away from my home, from my husband’s presence,/ Stanza 3. He separated me from my husband’s smile;/ he set my feet / on the land of no return”³⁸.

Ana mīni “why?”, addressed by the lamenter to the nameless woman in Part 1, is the opening phrase of the poem. Following the phrase *kī* “like”, the woman’s helplessness is likened to a “broken boat” with “broken ropes” drifting “in the middle of the river”. The images evoked by the similes are essentially images of hopelessness and despair. The woman, with her face covered, drifts like a drifting boat through the river inside the city, probably the Neo-Assyrian capital Aššur. This is undoubtedly a very vividly drawn picture of disaster, with metaphorical meanings as well. For while the anchoring of the boat to the shore is a metaphor for a successful birth, its drifting with the current indicates a birth gone wrong³⁹. The association between the drifting wreckage and the woman with her face covered is most probably meant to refer to a death. The “closed” face also evokes an isolation between two worlds. In this case, crossing the “river in the city” suddenly makes sense. The mother is being dragged out of a safe space, i.e. life, and into a dangerous journey, a space of chaos and death. In Part 2, the reader recognizes the questions posed to the suffering and dying woman by her relatives. This section is divided into four parts. The first verse of the first stanza section begins with the woman’s answer. She is adrift because her ropes have been cut. The woman expresses her helplessness with the

³⁸ Foster, 2005, 949.

³⁹ Reiner, 1985, 91-92.

interrogative pronouns commonly encountered in elegies. The phrase *ina ūme* “on the day of”, repeated three times in the second and third stanzas, summarizes the process leading to death. *Ētarpū panīya* “my face darkened” and *ittakrima ēnāya* “my eyes misted” describe the approach of death. In the second verse, the focus shifts abruptly; in this stanza, consisting of two stanzas, the woman tries to escape her isolation with the divine help of the goddess *Bēlet-ilī*. The goddess is herself a mother, *ummu ālidāte attī*, “the mother who gives birth to herself”, so she prays fervently: *eṭirī napultī* “save my life!” However, the Goddess, for unknown reasons, “veils her face” and turns away from the suppliant, saying, “Why do you keep beseeching me?” Even the Goddess, the guarantor of life and hope, has now abandoned the woman. Unfortunately, the lower left edge of the front and the upper left edge of the back of the tablet are broken, obscuring the meaning of the following lines. Here, the husband’s reaction and his words such as “my fertile wife” are quoted from the woman’s mouth. This is followed by phrases such as *dūr šanātē* “the years are coming to an end”, *qaqqar ḫibilāte* “the land of violence”, and *tassisi nubū* “you wailed”, the meaning of which is unclear.

On the reverse side of Part 2, the dying woman’s own feelings and experiences are again conveyed. Here, in three successive stanzas, the process from happiness to unhappiness is repeated for the last time. The *mūtu*, or “death”, personified by its crawling arrival, separates the woman from her intimate and safe position and makes her “feet” touch the land of the dead. There is now absolute isolation for her, a final fate, and nothing will ever be the same again. The expectation of disaster, signaled by the metaphor of the drifting boat in the prologue, has come true. In a last ditch effort, the woman repeatedly pleads with *Belet-Ili* to fix the pain and isolation and to restore the bond between the two worlds. However, these pleas go unanswered. Finally, the lines of the poem, which groan with Neo-Assyrian rhymes and strong assonances, have turned into a voice from the grave. In the end, the futile cries of the woman, separated from her husband and family, abandoned by her Goddess, coming from the “land of no return” are no longer heard.

The fact that the text of the elegy begins with the painful exclamation *Why* expresses in a very simple way the helpless nature of death. *City* is another word that needs to be carefully scrutinized. It has a double meaning, both as a specific city and as the realm of the dead where the woman’s soul will go. The word *fruit* is probably a metaphor for pregnancy, but it is left unclear whether this is related to fertilization or to a baby. A third possibility could be life. Life is a delicious fruit given to human beings, but it has expired for the dying mother. Finally, the expression *Belet-Ili*, “Lady God”, is used to invoke the Goddess, the supreme representation of both womanhood and motherhood.

Another characteristic of the text is that the experience of suffering is expressed in concrete body language. The personal and internal nature of the suffering takes on a physical and bodily appearance through gestures and facial expressions. The mother is alienated from the world she belongs to every minute, she slips like a boat from the benevolent presence of her loved ones into a cold and dark world. Body language, spatial experience and the sliding of the suffering body through space give the modern reader an insight into the nature of ancient Mesopotamian laments.

Conclusion and discussion

The texts analyzed in this study strongly reveal the perceptions of the maternal role of women in their own times. In this context, the following comparisons were made between the Old Babylonian Text and the Neo-Assyrian Text in the contexts of womanhood and motherhood.

In terms of the individuality of the female figure, in the Old Babylonian text we encounter a respectable and wise woman who is given a name; in the Neo-Assyrian text we encounter an unnamed woman who is defined only by the act of childbirth and whose social function is biological fertility. While the former is valued as an individual and praised for her personality traits, the latter is defined only by social functions such as conception and childbearing, and her individual life is secondary.

In terms of the value of the woman and the female body, the former is defined in terms of personal connection and spiritual depth, while the latter is evaluated only in terms of fertility. In the first text, the body is sacred and associated with fertility; in the second text, the body is a tool that wears out and dies in childbirth.

In terms of masculine domination, the masculine discourse in the first text is emotional, the love for the woman is expressed sincerely. In the second text, the death of the woman is attributed to the divine order, a masculine fatalism is inherent.

In terms of the image of motherhood, Sat-Ishtar is a mother whose wisdom is glorified and idealized. The nameless woman, on the other hand, is a suffering and passive mother; a tragic victim.

In terms of her social role as a mother, Sat-Ishtar is a guiding, life-giving, protective, selfless figure. The nameless woman, on the other hand, does not receive divine help even when she fulfills the expected fertility. She dies in childbirth and sacrifices her body and life.

In terms of emotional tone, the first text is full of love, respect, gratitude, longing and admiration. The second text is full of sadness, mourning, pain, holiness and tragedy.

In relation to the belief system, in the first text the mother has the same name as a goddess.

This gives her a strong genealogical identity and religious dignity, if not sanctity. In the second text, on the other hand, the sacrifice of the woman becomes almost natural and turns into a ritual.

In terms of the purpose of the text, the first text was written to express emotional attachment to a living woman, while the second text was written to fulfill the social duty of mourning a deceased woman.

In conclusion, based on the above comparisons, the following general conclusions have been reached regarding the historical transformation of the perception of motherhood and thus womanhood in Ancient Mesopotamia.

A shift from the individual to the functional: While in ancient Babylonian times, women were recognized for their wisdom, personality and were directly mentioned by name; in Neo-Assyrian times, women are defined only by their fertility function and are not even mentioned by name. This shows the transformation of the perception of motherhood from a personal bond to a structure based on social functionality, a victim of the masculine order. This change suggests that the status of women in society and their basic social roles such as motherhood are becoming less important. On the other hand, *Sat-Ishtar* is a mother, a sage and an individual. The nameless woman who dies in childbirth is a body. Thus, the mother has evolved from a life-giving and sacred figure to a sacrificial figure glorified by death. This change, which is related to the differentiation of the meanings attributed to woman and mother, shows that women in Mesopotamian culture have become invisible at the individual, social and mythic levels in the past 1000 years. Personal and mythic texts are the tools that both document and reproduce this transformation.

A shift from emotional language to theological and masculine language: In the first text, written by a man, the woman is treated with love; in the second text, she is a social being rather than an individual, and her life and death are part of the divine order. This can be read as an attempt to theologically legitimize the masculine power's control over women.

On the other hand, in both ancient texts, the woman is revered as an ideal mother. This is because she is glorified as a personification of the Mother Goddess, a universal feminine energy. She facilitates and supports God's sacred act of procreation in the process of his creation, care and destruction of the universe. However, there is a sharp distinction between the Goddess and the mortal woman. The mortal woman is defined and limited in her social role by the dominant patriarchal ideology and praised as the mother of a male child.

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Money and the attitude towards it in the context of the Bible

Galya Yordanova

Abstract: The article offers an in-depth look at the main economic categories – money and goods – by examining their nature, role, and interrelationship in the context of economic relations. The main functions of money are outlined, including their role as a medium of exchange, unit of measurement, store of value, and means of payment, highlighting their evolution and importance at different historical stages. Particular attention is paid to the biblical context, where money not only fulfills an economic function, but also carries moral and spiritual messages. In the Bible, money is often a symbol of temptation, greed, but also of responsibility and generosity. The article analyzes how biblical texts present money as a tool that can serve both good and evil, depending on human intentions. Through this analysis, an emphasis is placed on the moral dimensions of economic relations and the need for an ethical approach to wealth and material resources. Thus, the text combines economic theory with theological reflection, offering a comprehensive perspective on the topic.

Key words: coins in the Middle East, money, moral dimensions of wealth and money in the Bible.

Резюме: Статията предлага задълбочен поглед върху основополагащите икономически категории – парите и стоките – като разглежда тяхната същност, роля и взаимовръзка в контекста на икономическите отношения. Очертани са основните функции на парите, включително тяхната роля като средство за размяна, мерна единица, средство за съхранение на стойност и средство за плащане, като подчертава тяхната еволюция и значение в различни исторически етапи. Особено внимание се отделя на библейския контекст, където парите не само изпълняват икономическа функция, но и носят нравствени и духовни послания. В Библията парите често са символ на изкушение, алчност, но и на отговорност и щедрост. Статията анализира как библейските текстове представят парите като инструмент, който може да служи както на доброто, така и на злото, в зависимост от човешките намерения. Чрез този анализ се поставя акцент върху моралните измерения на икономическите отношения и се подчертава необходимостта от етичен подход към богатството и материалните ресурси. Така текстът съчетава икономическа теория с богословски размисъл, предлагайки цялостна перспектива върху темата.

One of the oldest and most fundamental economic categories is money. In a market economy, most goods are given a certain value. Therefore, they can

be exchanged – sold and bought – for money. Therefore, money is a universal means, because various goods can be acquired through it. In the course of human history, money has very often become an end in itself, but this should not be the case. On the contrary, money is only a means to achieve various life goals¹.

In the course of the history of social relations, there are many and varied explanations for the nature of money and its place in the circulation of other objects. For example, Karl Mener, in his work on money, examines the question of the nature of money, which is a desired goal for all people and passes from hand to hand due to its exchange for useful goods². Therefore, from a historical point of view, the answers to this question are different and varied. For example, in the past, in less developed societies, they had the role of “treasure”, but with the development of modern economic societies, money is already defined according to its functions: medium of exchange, means of preserving value and units of account³. I will briefly dwell on the characteristics of these functions.

One of the functions of money is as a medium of exchange. This is a consequence of the difference between the purchase of the commodity and its sale in time and space in the course of the growing economic division of labor. Therefore, commodity is no longer exchanged for commodity, but commodity is converted into money. Since there is a space-time difference between the purchase and the sale, it is necessary to preserve the purchasing power acquired during the sale of goods for a longer period of time, i.e. until the next purchase. Thus, money, being incorruptible, *functions as a store of value*. The ability to express commodity prices in hard monetary units, thus making it possible to compare them across the space-time continuum, defines the function of money as *a unit of account*.

These functions of money facilitate trade and economic interactions by eliminating the necessity of a direct match between the needs of trading parties. Therefore, money plays a key role in the economy by serving as a medium of exchange.

Therefore, what functions money performed and what materials were used as coins (in the beginning) – this is determined by the level of social development, i.e. by the degree of monetization of society.

There are different theories about the concept of “money”. According to T. Jefferdson, “money, not morality, is the guiding principle of commercial states”⁴. And O. Spengler points out that “the last clash is coming, as a result of which civilization will acquire its finished form – this is the conflict between blood and money”⁵. Such a hypothesis is rather gloomy and depressing.

¹ Stoianov 2008, 260.

² Mener 1090, 556.

³ Nort 2003. 7-8.

⁴ Stoianov 2008, 259.

⁵ Uedarford 2001, 29.

It is interesting to speculate on the origin of the word “money”. One of them is related to the first acts of exchange between primitive municipalities. The function of a medium of exchange (i.e. of money) was fulfilled by precisely defined goods such as large and small cattle. On this basis, it is assumed that the etymology of the word pecuniary originates from Latin *pecus*, meaning “cattle”⁶.

About the origin of money there are different opinions of different authors and schools. They can all summarize and relate to three reasons. The first of them is the state. According to Georg Fr. Knapp⁷ “neither gold nor silver is really money”. They are only the material from which the given country makes its money. Therefore, it can be said that money was created by the state in order to serve the commodity-market circulation.

As a second reason, the requirements and regularities of *commodity production and the market can be pointed out*. For example, even Aristotle determined that all things must be measured against one and everything must have a price, therefore everything can be measured with money⁸.

The third reason should not be overlooked – *the difficulty in exchanging goods in kind*. The main reason is that direct barter requires a matching of needs between the trading parties, which is often difficult to achieve. In addition, in-kind exchange incurs high transaction costs, as it takes time and effort to find suitable exchange partners and negotiate terms. Reducing these costs is one of the reasons for the transition to a cash economy. Therefore, it is generally accepted that money facilitates the exchange of goods and that an economy based on monetary exchange has a lower cost than an economy based on the barter exchange of goods.

There are also references to trade and money exchange in the Bible. In Prof. N. Shivarov's words, even in Neolithic Jericho there was trade in salt, asphalt and other goods with distant places⁹. For this barter trade, good infrastructure is needed, i.e. roads. For example, in Vtz. 19:3 states that the Levites are required to maintain the roads to the fortified cities. King David took care of the control and good condition of the roads (2 Tsar. 8 ch.).

Of course, with this type of trade, the dangers come from robbers (mainly nomadic tribes) and from wild animals. In the Old Testament, the tribes of the Ishmaelites, the Midianites, were engaged in trade¹⁰. And internal trade in Palestine is carried out by Canaanites. Of course, this trade is retail and mainly barter¹¹.

⁶ Fridman 1994, 26.

⁷ Stoianov 2008, 262.

⁸ Ikonomika 2006, 4-5.

⁹ Shivarov 1992, 225.

¹⁰ Bit. 37:25.

¹¹ Iez. 27:9, 12.

International trade in the Old Testament was primarily related to replenishing the revenues of the royal treasury¹² and transitive in nature. As a rule, this trade is a royal monopoly. For example, Hammurabi established rules for Babylonian international trade. There is little Israelite involvement in trade until the beginning of the captivity. Even the Mosaic Law does not imply prescriptions and definitions to regulate the activities of merchants. The only thing that is prohibited is lending at interest to compatriots, but if it is a question of foreigners, it is allowed¹³. Therefore, only foreigners were engaged in trade and money transactions¹⁴. It was only under King Solomon that the first steps were taken in international trade¹⁵. For example, he trades with the Queen of Sheba, who comes to him personally, captivated by his wisdom¹⁶. Of course, sometimes trade wars break out¹⁷.

During the Babylonian captivity, the Jews began to be actively involved in large trade and banking. This includes engaging in significant commercial transactions and providing financial services such as loans and investments. This activity will allow them to play an important role in the economic development of the societies in which they live in the future.

The monetary units reflected in the biblical texts are characteristic of the entire Middle East. At first trade was barter, the goods used for this purpose being counted or weighed. Later, with the entry of metals into the daily life of man, their use in trade began in various forms for payment.

Metals play an important role in people's daily lives, leading to their early use as a means of payment. Their value and durability make them suitable for exchange and trade, facilitating economic relationships between people. Therefore, a certain metal is used in the form of different figures, and each time they must be weighed. So, for example, with King Joab, the contents of the ark for donations in front of the temple are taken, the silver is melted down, and then payment is made to the creditors¹⁸.

It is necessary to note that in biblical times in the Middle East there was no single system of monetary circulation. Means of measures, weights and money have variations across eras and countries. The shekel, mina, and talent are coins and are used as means of payment.

The first coins in the Middle East appeared in Lydia, an ancient kingdom located in what is now Turkey, around 600 BC. They contain a mixture of gold and silver. And under Darius, gold darics and silver shekels appear in monetary circulation.

¹² 3 Tsarstv. 10:15.

¹³ Vtz. 20:20.

¹⁴ Shivarov 1992, 226.

¹⁵ 3 Tsarstv. 26-28; 10:11.

¹⁶ 3 Tsarstv. 10:10.

¹⁷ 4 Tsarstv. 12:17

¹⁸ Shivarov 1992, 236.

For example, in Palestine at that time coins from different countries were used. One such coin is the Persian Dariya (8.4 g). It appeared in use after the captivity and at the time of Jesus Christ. And the Greek drachma (4.36 grams of silver) is also in circulation¹⁹. A coin is rarely marked for its value because it depends on its purchase value at the given time. So, for example, in Matt. 17:24 – “And when they came to Capernaum, those who collected the didrachms approached Peter and said: does not your Master pay a didrachm?” – referring to the two drachmas which were the prescribed tax for the temple. Therefore, another type of currency, the stater (a coin of 4 drachmas), is mentioned in verse 27. Jesus Christ tells Peter to catch a fish in whose mouth he will find a “stater” – enough to pay the temple tax for two people.

During Roman rule in Palestine, *the Roman denarius* circulated in the money stream²⁰. It is divided into 16 aces. The smallest monetary unit, *the lepta*, is also mentioned in the New Testament. Such information is contained in the story of the poor widow who donated two leptas²¹. In this connection, Jesus Christ notes that the widow’s donation is much more than all the others, because she gave all that she had.

After 539 BC Babylonia was conquered by the Persian ruler Cyrus II, who gave certain freedoms to the Jews, allowing them to return to Palestine. Giving them autonomy, the Jews began to mint coins - *silver shekels*, similar to the Greek coins. The images on these coins are interesting. On one side of the coin – the obverse – there is an image of a deity sitting on a winged wheel. In his outstretched hand he holds a bird (eagle or falcon) (fig.1)²².



Fig. 1: Silver drachm showing a deity enthroned on a winged wheel (locality unknown, Persian period) (Pyschny 2021)

On the reverse there is an image of a bearded man wearing a Corinthian helmet. Prof. N. Shivarov’s opinion is that these ancient images are combined

¹⁹ Luka 15:8 – “Or what woman, having ten drachmas, if she loses one, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it?”

²⁰ Mat. 18:28.

²¹ Mark. 12:41-44; Luka 21:1-4

²² Pyschny 2021.

with Jewish ideas. For example, the image on the obverse of the coin may be Yahweh from the prophet Ezekiel's vision (10:16)²³

According to Prof. Dr. T. Stoychev, the inscription on the coin, the reading of which is controversial, the three letters can be read as yhd - Yehud, the name of the Persian province of Judea, or as yhw ("Yahu"), the name of the Jewish God²⁴. It is not clear who the deity is from the coin. Assumptions are made between Zeus, Dionysius and Yahweh. Further, Stoychev explains that the "winged wheel" motif is not new to Judea and Samaria – it is found on jar handles, royal seals and in all probability can be taken as a symbol of Yahweh²⁵ and be easily understood by local people.

It was not until the Jewish ruler and high priest John Hyrcanus I (134 to 104 BC) that coinage began²⁶. According to archaeological finds from Qumran from the reign of John Hyrcanus, 14 coins were found. On the obverse of the coins there is an inscription in the ancient Hebrew language and an image of a palm branch. The inscription contains the ruler's name and his titles as high priest and leader of the people. Another image on the coins is the cornucopia, symbolizing prosperity.

From the reign of the next Hasmonean ethnarch - Alexander Yanaeus (103-76 BC) - 140 coins have been found. They have the following images and symbols on them:

- *Anchor* – a symbol of stability and hope.
- *Star* – often associated with divine protection and blessing²⁷.
- *Inscriptions in ancient Hebrew* – containing the name of Alexander Jannaeus and his titles as ruler and high priest.

These coins are an important source of information about the political and religious history of Judea during the reign of Alexander Jannaeus.

Under the last ruler of Judea from the Hasmonean dynasty – Antigonus II Matthias (40 - 37 BC) – the coins have the following images and symbols:

- *A wreath of palm branches* – a symbol of victory and triumph.
- *Horns of abundance (cornucopia)* – a symbol of prosperity and abundance.
- *Temple heptaholic and the table of the shew-offering* – suggests an attempt by the Roman authorities to emphasize the sacred Jewish tradition.
- *Inscriptions in ancient Hebrew and Greek* – containing the name of Antigonus and his titles as king and high priest.

²³ Shivarov 1992, 237.

²⁴ Stoychev 2024, 241.

²⁵ Stoychev 2024, 242.

²⁶ Lonnqvist, Kenneth & Minna 206, 123.

²⁷ The star points to the vision of Baalom in Num. 24:17.- "I see Him, but not yet, I see Him, but not up close. A star rises from Jacob, and a staff rises from Israel; he smote the princes of Moab, and crushed all the sons of Seth".

After 37 BC Herod and the Roman troops conquered Jerusalem, Antigonus was captured and executed by order of Emperor Mark Antony.

During the reign of Herod Agrippa, the coins bear Greek inscriptions and images and symbols from the pantheon of gods of the Greek tradition. This, of course, does not sit well with the Jews, who are traditionalists and strongly attached to their religion.

Coins minted during the time of Pontius Pilate, who was procurator of Judea from 26 to 36 AD, usually include the following images and symbols:

- *Pipe-shaped jug* – a symbol of ritual purity and used in Jewish religious rites.
- *Three colossi* – a symbol of fertility and abundance.
- *Inscriptions in Greek* – containing Pilate's name and his title as prefect of Judea.

After briefly getting acquainted with the history and economic significance of money in the Bible, we must pay attention to the moral messages through it in the biblical text.

The modern Christian faces a number of challenges. One of them is what his attitude towards money should be. There are clear guidelines for this in the biblical text. For example, King Solomon points out what can happen to people who are strongly attached to money. One possibility is that anxiety sets in – “There is one grievous infirmity that I have seen under the sun: wealth kept by its owner to his detriment”²⁸. Disappointment follows, because “he who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver, and he who loves wealth will not benefit from it”²⁹. And all this leads to violation of the moral provisions of the law, because “...he who is in a hurry to get rich will not go unpunished”³⁰.

Jesus Christ often explains the principles of the kingdom of God using parables about money (mins, talents³¹, drachmas³²). They state that the subject of personal finance and giving is a matter of righteousness. This is stated in Matt. 19:16 – 22. When the young man asked Jesus Christ what must be done to achieve eternal life. As a true guide of the heart, the Lord Jesus Christ knows that the young man is righteous, but this is not enough. Mere fulfillment of the commandments of the law and good works are not enough to inherit the Kingdom of God. Something else was hidden in the young man's heart that was leading in his life – it was his attachment to wealth. That is why Jesus Christ advises the young man: “if you want to be perfect, go, sell your property and give to the poor; and you will have treasure in heaven; so come and follow Me”³³.

²⁸ Eccl. 5:12

²⁹ Eccl. 5:10

³⁰ Prov. 28:20

³¹ Mat. 25:14-30.

³² Luka 15:8.

³³ Mat. 19:21.

This advice saddens the young man because he is not ready to give up his possessions.

The Gospel account of the rich young man describes the moment when he has to make an important choice that requires a complete change in his values and lifestyle. This choice will determine his future and completely change the direction of his life. For where the wealth is, there the heart of man will also be³⁴.

As pointed out by St. Ap. Paul in his 1st letter to Timothy "...covetousness is the root of all evil, which, having yielded to it, some have fallen away from the faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows"³⁵ Therefore, it is often because of the attachment to money that people deviate from the faith.

Of course, money is not denied in the biblical text, because "feasts are arranged for enjoyment, and wine makes life merry; and silver is responsible for everything"³⁶. They are a necessary means of purchasing things for daily use. Therefore St. Ap. Paul in the 1st Epistle to the Thessalonians points out that "he who does not want to work should not eat"³⁷. Because the worker deserves his wages³⁸. Moreover, if one does not take care of the loved ones in one's family, then this is tantamount to denying the faith³⁹.

The biblical text, rather, indicates how one can manage money wisely and thereby not lose God's favor. Money matters must be approached responsibly, because you cannot "serve God and mammon"⁴⁰. The love of wealth (love of money) and the desire to enrich (greed) is idolatry that is, serving mammon.⁴¹ Therefore, St. Ap. Paul in his Epistle to the Colossians instructs Christians to put to death earthly passions such as fornication, impurity, evil desires and covetousness, which is idolatry⁴².

The biblical text categorically states that salvation cannot be obtained through wealth and money. In the book of Job, it is emphasized that if a person is struck by the wrath of God, then no great ransom will help him. Because God will not put a price on man's material wealth and money⁴³.

The moral consequences of attachment to money and wealth are discussed in vol. Ecclesiastes 5:9-10 "He who loves silver will not be satisfied

³⁴ Luke 12:33, 34

³⁵ 1 Tim. 6:10.

³⁶ Ekl. 10:19.

³⁷ 1 Sol. 3:10.

³⁸ Luka 10:7.

³⁹ 1 Tim. 5:8.

⁴⁰ Luka 16:13.

⁴¹ Mammon - from the Aramaic word for "possession", in the Greek text it becomes synonymous with "wealth" and "luxury". It is also the name of a pagan deity worshiped by all the ancient people who wanted to get rich.

⁴² Kol. 3:5.

⁴³ Yov 36:18-19.

with silver, and he who loves wealth will not benefit from it. And this is vanity! 10. The property increases – its users also increase; and what profit is there to the possessor of it: shall he but look with his eyes?” Therefore, wealth kept by its possessor is to his detriment. It is necessary for a man to labor all the days of his life which God has given him.

St. ap. Paul advises that the love of money should have no place in a person's life⁴⁴. Anyone who borrows from someone becomes his servant⁴⁵. A good Christian should be able to save as much as he can, and for important things⁴⁶.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus Christ, along with moral instructions and beatitudes, pays attention and encourages people to give⁴⁷. Those who desire God's favor have good reason to be generous of heart, for “God loved a cheerful giver”⁴⁸. St. Paul instructs that giving, charity, and generosity are pleasing to God⁴⁹.

Some people's misconception is that being rich and having a lot of money is a sin. In fact, there are many examples in the Bible of rich and righteous people who actively served God with their wealth (Abraham, Job, David, Solomon, Zacchaeus and others). Because money itself is not evil, but the love for it. By its very nature, money is neutral – it is a means of acquiring material goods. They can be used for both bad things and good things.

Giving everyone an equal share is not the God's plan. We see that He gives to each according to his ability and expects modesty from both the giver and the receiver. When everyone has everything equally, no one needs anyone. Therefore, Christians should be generous. It is not by chance that Jesus Christ advises in Matt. 7:7 – “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you,” i.e., that one be sincere and consistent in one's prayers. Prayer must be performed in faith and in accordance with God's will.⁵⁰

In conclusion, it can be said that the theme of money and wealth is consistently developed in the Bible. In the Old Testament, the lexeme “money” is less often mentioned, but is used as synonyms “wealth”, “treasure”, “gold”, “silver”, “herds of animals”, etc., which are the commodity equivalent of money.⁵¹ All these goods are obtained from God, because from Him is the power to acquire them. In books such as Psalter, Ecclesiastes, Proverbs of Solomon, the topic of money and wealth is interpreted in a moral-ethical aspect. We find

⁴⁴ Evr. 13:5.

⁴⁵ Prov. 22:7

⁴⁶ I Cor. 16:2

⁴⁷ Luke 6:38

⁴⁸ 2 Kor. 9:7.

⁴⁹ Evr. 13:16.

⁵⁰ Yoan 15:14.

⁵¹ Moncheva 2009, 77.

the culmination of this problematic in the book of Job. For the first time in the biblical text, the moral question of testing faith and patience by confiscation of wealth is raised. By God's permission, Job is deprived of all his goods, and he must, through suffering and patience, regain material and spiritual well-being. Because wealth is like a gift from God to those who love Him.⁵² The problem is not wealth and money, but the attitude towards them.

The narrative about money and its role in people's lives continues in the New Testament. Through examples and parables, the moral consequences of avarice and the pursuit of wealth are emphasized⁵³. That man who collects and lays up wealth for himself, and does not become rich in God, will not prosper and inherit the Kingdom of God. The biblical text warns Christians not to become addicted to possessing material things, because in this way they enslave their souls. Emphasis is placed on suffering, patience and love for the acquisition of goods in a spiritual-moral aspect.

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⁵² Ps. 111:1-3.

⁵³ luka 12: 15-21.

Natural resources and trade infrastructure in Ancient Byzantium

Alexander Stankov

Abstract: The economic and political ascendancy of Byzantium, which evolved into the only capital of the Roman Empire, is closely intertwined not only with the region's natural resources but also with the adept utilization of those resources by its inhabitants. The geographical advantages and natural resources contributed significantly to the security of the Megarian colony. The abundance of diverse goods and products, along with access to convenient trade routes, ensured substantial income from exports and effective internal trade, as well as successful sales of local production. Numerous historical sources attest to this throughout different periods in the life of the polis. The city benefited from a network of accessible land and sea routes, with Byzantium playing a crucial role in controlling access to many of them. Trade, both internal and external, was organized around an interconnected system of trade infrastructure within the city itself, centered on the agora, the three ports of Byzantium, nearby warehouses, and numerous trade shops scattered across the markets of the polis. This comprehensive setup fostered the high commercial potential of the Megarian colony, which in turn linked the economic and political prosperity of Byzantium.

Keywords: natural resources, Byzantium, trade, trade infrastructure, emporium

Резюме: Икономическото и политическото издигане на Бизантион и превръщането му в единствена столица на Римската империя е неразривно свързана не само с природните дадености на региона, но и на умелата реализация от населението. Географските и природни богатства благоприятстват гарантирането на сигурността на мегарската колония. Изобилието на различни стоки и продукти и достъпът до удобни търговски пътища, гарантира не само високите доходи от осъществявания износ, но и успешната вътрешна търговия и реализация на самата продукция. Многобройни са изворите, които потвърждават това в различните периоди от съществуването на полиса. Многото удобни морски и сухоземни пътища улесняват търговията, като Бизантион контролира достъпа да някои от тях. Както вътрешната, така и външната търговия е организирана около взаимно свързана сложна система от търговска инфраструктура в самия град. Тя гравитира около градската agora, трите пристанища на Бизантион, складовете за стоки към тях, а също и около търговските магазини, разположени в многобройните пазарища на полиса. Всичко това гарантира високия търговски потенциал на мегарската колония и обвързва икономическия и политическия просперитет на Бизантион.

The assertion that the city of Byzantium¹ boasts a unique location is well-supported by ancient and modern travelers and historians alike. Its subsequent designation as a new imperial capital is attributed not only to the political foresight of Emperor Constantine the Great (306-337) but also to the natural advantages of this Megarian colony. The vitality and strength of Byzantium are deeply rooted in this exceptional setting. There is perhaps no clearer illustration of the interplay between history and geography than in Byzantium's case (Fig. 1). The surrounding waters safeguard the city from enemies on three sides, while its formidable fortress walls provide protection against surprises from the West, enabling it to defend itself with a relatively small army.



Fig. 1. The Propontis, Byzantium and its vicinity (Russell 2017)

No other place in the world better embodies the symbol of the cornucopia than Byzantium. As a result, many ancient coins feature this emblem of prosperity and abundance, reflecting the wealth derived from trade and production. They depict the gulf of the same shape and name—a vital conduit through which the earth's bounty is transported from one sea to another and across continents.

Natural wealth and resources

Equally significant are the commercial opportunities presented by the city's strategic location, along with its abundant natural resources and wealth. Without these advantages, population growth would stagnate, negating the

¹ Byzantios 2019, 35-61.

need for new buildings and architectural monuments that help to define and enhance the urban structure and its monumental framework.

The region of Byzantium experiences prevailing winds from the north to the northwest, resulting in average temperatures of around 5 degrees Celsius in January and February, accompanied by at least 8 days of snow and ice. This climate, which does not align with typical Mediterranean conditions, limits the cultivation of specific vegetables².

Agriculture in the vicinity of the city was favored for pragmatic reasons. Studies indicate that 1 square kilometer of land dedicated to vegetable cultivation can sustain the needs of approximately 25,000 people. Historical accounts from Theophanes³, during the period when the city had already become the imperial capital, corroborate the presence of gardens and vineyards within the fortified urban area, which during Byzantium's time extended beyond the city walls.

Odo of Deuil⁴, who visited the city in 1147-1148, wrote:

*"On the third side of the city triangle there are fields... under the walls stretches an empty land, on which there are gardens that supply the citizens with all kinds of vegetables."*⁵

It can be concluded that at least 2-3 square kilometers within the fortress walls of Constantinople were suitable for agriculture and gardening. Additionally, the area beyond the walls spans more than 10-12 square kilometers and extends no further than 2 kilometers from the city.

In addition to the endless plains of Thrace, which extend beyond the fortress walls of Byzantium, the endless green forests on the road to Adrianople are pastures and home to numerous game, but also to domestic animals - oxen and cows, which supply the city with high-quality products of meat, milk, cheese, such as the whole of Europe does not have access to. On the Asian side, the hills of Scutari⁶ and Nicomedia⁷ are full of vineyards, on which the highest quality grapes are grown, which grow only there. Cherry orchards grow between them. In general, the size, appearance, and sweetness of vegetables and fruits in Byzantium have been known since the time of Polybius. In a letter to Emperor Constantine VII (913-959), Theophylact of Bulgaria⁸ wrote:

² Koder 2016, 50.

³ Theophanes 1997.

⁴ Odo of Deuil 1948.

⁵ Odo of Deuil 1948.

⁶ Today's Uskudar is in Istanbul. In the Middle Ages – a city located on the Bosphorus, on the Asian side opposite Constantinople.

⁷ Nicomedia is an ancient and medieval city in Bithynia. Located near Constantinople, on the shores of the Sea of Marmara, the city had strategic importance for New Rome. On its place today is the Turkish city of Izmit.

⁸ Theophylact was a Byzantine cleric who was Archbishop of Ohrid and All Bulgaria between 1084 and 1107.

*"And so do you not see the fruits of the trees that we city dwellers have, their size predisposes their owner to their sweet taste, while it in turn is so sweet that it overshadows their size. For wherever the size of the fruits is large, people exaggerate their taste and vice versa, but the fruits growing in the queen of cities deserve both kinds of praise."*⁹

The favorable climatic conditions provided an even greater advantage for the development of the city, as the pre-industrial society was dependent on agriculture and agricultural production, the cultivation of cereals and vegetables, vines, and the production of olive oil and other oils, which actively participated in trade and raised its potential. The frequent depiction of god Bacchus¹⁰ on many coins from Byzantium suggests that wine was both plentiful and of exceptional quality.

The inhabitants of Byzantium enjoyed access to a wide array of products from the Black Sea, engaging in trade or exchanging these goods for others. Their role was crucial, as the supply of commercial products for all of Hellas relied on them.

When it comes to seafood, the local waters – encompassing nearby seas and lakes – are exceptionally rich for fishing. The primary aspect of fishing in this region is its seasonality, influenced by the migration patterns of fish traversing the Bosphorus. In March and April, species such as tuna and mackerel move into the Black Sea in search of suitable breeding grounds. Conversely, the reverse migration occurs in November, when these fish migrate to the Mediterranean Sea for the winter, returning to the Black Sea in the spring¹¹. Strabo articulates this cycle as follows:

*"Now these fish hatch in the marshes of Lake Maeotis, and when they have gained a little strength, they rush through the mouth of the lake... and move along the Asiatic coast as far as Trebizond and Pharnaces... There, they are caught by the current, and since at the same time the region is so created by nature as to turn the current of the sea there towards Byzantium and the Horn at Byzantium, they are naturally drawn together thither and thus bring the Byzantines and Romans much revenue."*¹²

The fishing areas of Byzantium and later Constantinople extended from the Black Sea to Lake Nicaea, which was rich in delicious fish. The Bosphorus and the entrance to the Sea of Marmara were the main areas that supplied the polis with seafood¹³. The sweetness of the waters of the Black Sea, mixed with the calm bays of the Sea of Marmara, which could easily be considered its own

⁹ Theophilact Ohridski 1994, 80 - 230.

¹⁰ Bacchus is the deity of reborn and dying nature, fertility, viticulture, grape harvest, wine, merriment, and ritual madness.

¹¹ Russell 2017, 143.

¹² Strabo 1887-9.

¹³ Dragon 1995, 58.

lake, together they functioned as an incubator and refuge for countless species of fish and seafood. Dio Chrysostom¹⁴ writes:

*"Well then, who else among the peoples of our time are destined to be lucky? The people of Byzantium enjoy the most fertile lands and a sea full of gifts... which provides them with its treasures without the slightest labor."*¹⁵

For example, together with Cyzicus, Byzantium shared the possession of the rich fish stocks of Lake Dascylitis¹⁶. When it comes to crustaceans, crabs are caught in the steeper parts of the coast, as Aristotle notes - crabs are caught in calmer waters, giving the name to the bay of Nicomedia - Astacus¹⁷. September is the most fertile month for the Bosphorus, with fishing becoming a festival and continuing into the night. Then mackerel and bonito are abundant, mentioned by Strabo¹⁸ as a great wealth:

*"The bonito is native to these shores (of the Golden Horn); it is easily caught, as it is in great numbers and the force of the currents causes it to move in one piece, and considering the narrowness of the bays, it can be caught even with bare hands."*¹⁹

Building materials were sourced from the nearby hinterlands of Byzantium as well as transported by sea. For instance, bricks discovered in and around the city date from the 4th to the 6th centuries, with a small number also found on the islands in the Sea of Marmara. These bricks are made from marine clay, which was obtained from deep deposits formed beneath ancient seas over a broad area²⁰.

Production centers can be identified through the waste products of brick manufacturing and their proximity to clay deposits. Each clay deposit possesses unique characteristics, allowing the bricks to be easily distinguished by their composition.

Bricks were delivered to each of the city's ports - Neorion, Prosphorion, and the one at the site of the later port of Theodosius. As for fuel, wood fuel was certainly used, which was supplied from the nearby forests. Thus, a river valley, close to the coast and with a nearby forest could have been used most successfully to create a brick production center. Two shipwrecks prove that bricks for the city were also supplied by sea. One from the 7th century carries

¹⁴ Dio Chrysostom was an ancient Roman orator, writer, philosopher, and historian of Greek origin. (40-120 AD)

¹⁵ Dio Chrysostom 1940.

¹⁶ Gyuzelev 2009, 174.

¹⁷ Cancer – from ancient Greek

¹⁸ Ancient Greek and Roman geographer, historian, and traveler. Author of "Geography", which consists of 17 books and is a collection of knowledge about the world at that time. (63 BC – 23 AD)

¹⁹ Strabo 1887-9, 491-2.

²⁰ Bardill 2004, 3.

clay pipes, and the other, dating from Roman times and probably with a destination of Byzantium, carries clay roofing tiles²¹.

The forests surrounding the Marmara and Black Sea served as the primary source of timber in antiquity and continued to be significant for timber production into the 19th century. Historical records indicate that, during the 15th century, pottery workshops were situated north of the Golden Horn and Galata. Observations suggest that the Asian shore of the Bosphorus offers the finest clay in the region²².

The region surrounding the Sea of Marmara boasts a diverse array of natural stones, with numerous stone quarries dating back to Antiquity. In Constantinople, the primary types of stone used for construction are limestone and sandstone, although a variety of other stones are also imported for building purposes. Limestone and sandstone can be quarried roughly 2 km west of the Theodosian Walls at Hebdomon, with colors ranging from cream to silver gray. Further west and northwest, between Hebdomon and present-day Safrakoy, another type of limestone is extracted, typically at a depth of 6–7 meters²³.

Regarding the marble quarries, archaeological research shows that they ceased to exist only after the 6th century. Only the marble quarries on the Proconnesus Island, close to the city, supplied the city with valuable building materials at least until the end of the Iconoclasm²⁴.

Major trade routes and their role in economic development

It is crucial to recognize that Byzantium serves as the crossroads of numerous significant routes, linking it not only to the entire Mediterranean region but also to the Near and Middle East. These roads originate from Byzantium, establishing it as a central hub – politically, religiously, culturally, and economically – for a shared region. Notably, Darius I (522 BC–486 BC) utilized the Bosphorus during his campaign against the Scythians to cross from Asia Minor to Europe²⁵.

Through the Bosphorus (Fig. 2) - 35 km long, the way to the Black Sea and the entire coast opens. Of particular importance is the connection established with the mouth of the Dnieper River. The famous route, called in medieval sources "*from the Varangians to the Greeks*", reaches there: from the Scandinavian Peninsula through Novgorod - Smolensk - Lyubich, Chernihiv - Vyshegrad to Kyiv, and from there to the sea. It was one of the most important routes for European trade until the 12th century, when it shifted from South - North to the West²⁶. Iron ore, ambergris, walrus bones, whale skin products,

²¹ Bardill 2004, 4-5.

²² Chaput, 1936.

²³ Ousterhout 2008, 136.

²⁴ Ousterhout 2008, 139.

²⁵ Giyuzelev 2009, 164-165.

²⁶ Lihachev 1999, 65-86.

weapons, and artistic products were transported along it from Scandinavia²⁷. Amber from the Baltics, "soft gold" from Northern Russia - various types of expensive animal skins, linen fabrics, copper, wax, forged and ceramic utensils, weapons, and resins; later from Southern Russia - various artistic products, silver, etc. Another important commodity is slaves, which are sold in the markets in Byzantium²⁸.

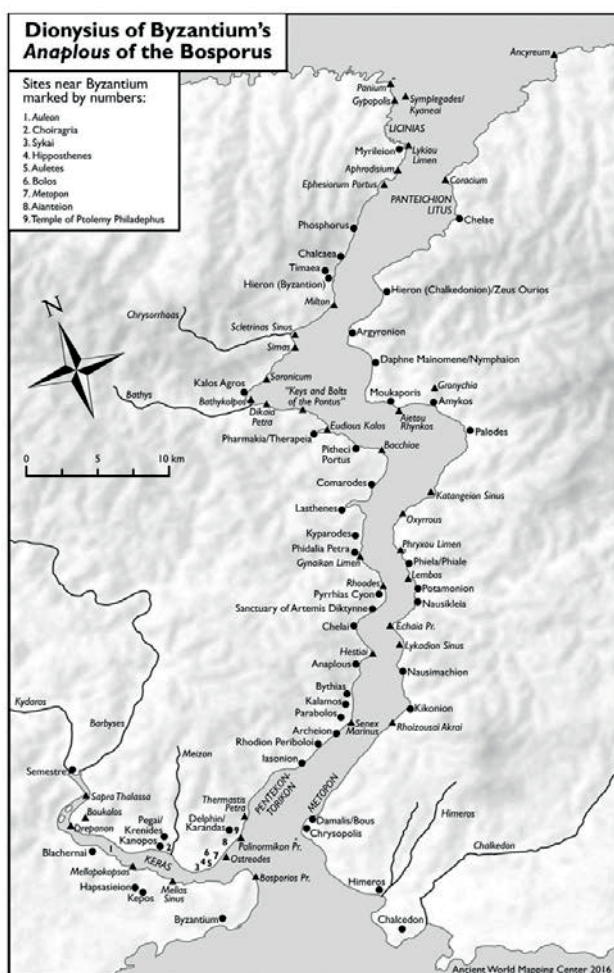


Fig. 2. The Bosphorus according to Dionysius (Russell 2017)

The north-south oriented transverse roads connecting the Aegean Sea with the Danube through the Stara Planina passes have great commercial

²⁷ A gray substance that is primarily made up of waxes. It is formed in the intestines of sperm whales. It is used in perfumery as a fixative for essences.

²⁸ Kendrick 2004.

potential and importance. Passing the passes is risky even in summer, and in winter they remain closed for months²⁹.

Another route passed through the Dardanelles, a 75 km long channel with an average width of 4 m, and connected Byzantium with the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas and in turn with Gibraltar. Control of this route ensured control of grain supplies and trade in grain coming from the Black Sea.

Land routes are also of great importance.

A road starts from the city and goes through Ahtopol - Anchialos - Messemvria - Odessos - Dionysiopol - Kalatis - Tomi - Istria to the Danube.

Another significant road, known as the most important artery connecting Western and Eastern Europe, leads to Adrianople and continues through Philippopolis, Serdica, Niš, and Belgrade to reach the Danube. This renowned route is often referred to as the diagonal road or *Via Militaris*³⁰. Historical references from the 11th to 12th centuries also designate it as “royal,” as it served as the pathway for couriers and state officials. This road is part of the migration route of *Homo sapiens* from 100,000 years ago, evolving through numerous prehistoric trade routes into today's vital communication arteries. The Silk Road, a major trade route stretching from China to the British Isles, has significantly influenced this corridor.

Particularly popular in Antiquity was the road along the Aegean coast – Kavala, Philippi, Syros, and Thessaloniki. There it splits into three directions – the *Via Egnatia* continued west to Durrës, north to Serdica and Belgrade, and south to the Peloponnese. It covered a distance of 1,120 kilometers and connected cities stretching from the Adriatic coast to the Bosphorus. It provided a direct connection from the Bosphorus to Rome. This road was the most heavily used in the entire empire in late antiquity and throughout the Middle Ages. Almost all of the Byzantine land trade with Western Europe passed through it, as did the state post.

From the Asian coast of the Bosphorus - from Chalcedon³¹, also a very important road starts east through Nicaea, Bursa, Iconium, where it divides through Heraclea - Cilicia - Syria to the Euphrates valley and then to Persia and India. The other important road passes through Caesarea in Cappadocia, Erzurum, and heads towards Armenia.

During the Byzantine period, the *Via Egnatia* was not the main link of communication between Rome and Asia Minor. At that time, it was carried out by sea along the western coast of Asia Minor and from there through the developed road system around the cities of Smyrna, Ephesus, extending north through Pergamum and Cyzicus and east to the plains. However, when the capital of the Empire became Constantinople, the old Roman road system was connected to the Bosphorus on both sides. In the south with the road system

²⁹ Simeonova 2006, 105.

³⁰ Larnach 2016.

³¹ Today Kadikoy – now a district of Istanbul.

from Nicomedia to Chalcedon, and in the north by the alternative roads with which the Via Egnatia ended.

The roads significantly impacted trade and markets, enhancing Byzantium's connection to surrounding major cities. They played a crucial role in the city's development and expansion of its influence. Thanks to the extensive sea and land routes we have discussed, Byzantium evolved into a cosmopolitan marketplace, and later, under the name Constantinople, it became the largest trading hub of its era, showcasing goods from every corner of the world.

Economic history

The evidence shows that the Hellenic settlers settled on the first hill of the peninsula. This is confirmed by the archaeological discoveries. There, on the so-called Acropolis of Byzantium, fragments of Corinthian, and East Greek ceramics and terracotta were found. As a 10th-century patrographer³² informs us:

*"it was a custom among the ancients to build their palaces on acropolises"*³³

The Chronicon Paschale³⁴ also gives us information about the beginning of Byzantium:

*"They say that Byzantium was an emporium in Thrace and that its governor was Barbizios, the father of Phidalea, and that while her father was alive, she built much in that marketplace and placed in it the statue of Tyche, which she called Keroe. When her father Barbizios died, she ordered a wall to be built on that very spot, from sea to sea. The king of Thrace, Byzas, married the said Phidalea, after the death of her father. He called the place... after his own name, Byzantium... He also gave that place city rights."*³⁵

The advantageous commercial and strategic position of Byzantium contributed significantly to its accumulation of wealth and influence during the first century following its establishment. A key source of income came from the customs and port fees imposed on ships traversing the strait. As Byzantium controlled the Bosphorus from the outset of its history, this factor played a pivotal role in its subsequent rise and prosperity. Pierre Gilles (1490-1555)³⁶, after describing the topography of the ancient city, wrote that *"The Bosphorus was the first creator of Byzantium, greater and more important."*³⁷

Soon after the expulsion of Pausanias³⁸, Byzantium became a member of the Delian Maritime League, composed of about 300 Greek city-states, led by

³² Giyuzelev 2009, 162-163.

³³ Preger 1901-1907.

³⁴ Chronicon Paschale 1990.

³⁵ Lozanova-Stancheva 2020, 169.

³⁶ Freely 2004, 7.

³⁷ Gilles 1988.

³⁸ As a Spartan commander and strategist during the Greco-Persian Wars, he later achieved significant military successes in Cyprus and Byzantium, liberating them from

Athens. The annual tribute paid by the Byzantines was one of the highest in the league and clearly demonstrates the economic power and wealth of Byzantium at this time³⁹.

Theopompus of Chios wrote about daily life in the city in the second half of the 4th century BC, when the people of Chalcedon shared the governance of the polis and adopted the opulent lifestyle of the inhabitants of Byzantium:

*"At that time the inhabitants of Byzantium had long had a democratic government, their city was also situated in a convenient place for trade, and their entire population spent their time in the market and by the water; therefore they were accustomed to love and drinking in taverns. As for the Chalcedonians, before they began to participate and share the government with Byzantium, they devoted themselves more and more to the better pursuits of life; but once they tasted the democratic freedoms of the Byzantines, they sank completely into depraved luxury and their daily lives from being the most sober and restrained turned into wine drinkers and spendthrifts."*⁴⁰

During the classical period, Byzantium successfully conquered extensive agricultural territories in Asia Minor, a trend it continued to expand during the Hellenistic era. These conquests significantly bolstered its growing economic power. The Hellenistic era marked the height of prosperity for the region and, consequently, for the city's economy. Despite a tense political climate – perhaps even due to the opportunities it provided – Byzantium adeptly capitalized on every event within the region. The increase in its territory served as a tangible reflection of the polis's economic achievements. In contrast to other Hellenic polises, Byzantium's significance did not wane on the eve of the Roman invasion; rather, it grew, aided by a policy of neutrality⁴¹.

Byzantium successfully retained its status as a free city until the last years of the 2nd century. But then the privileged status of the city was compromised when it was drawn into the war for the throne after the assassination of Emperor Pertinax in 193. In the struggle between the two claimants Septimius Severus (193-211)⁴², and Pescenius Niger (193-194)⁴³, the citizens of Byzantium supported Pescenius:

"Niger also sent an army to occupy Byzantium in Thrace, at that time a large and prosperous city rich in men and money. Situated at the narrowest part of the Propontian Gulf, Byzantium became incredibly rich from its maritime

Persian control. After his command was taken away, he aspired to become the tyrant of Byzantium.

³⁹ Freely 2004, 10.

⁴⁰ Theopompus of Chios 1917.

⁴¹ Gyuzelev 2009, 174-175.

⁴² Lucius Septimius Severus was Roman Emperor from 9 April 193 to 211 AD.

⁴³ Pretender to be Roman emperor from 193 to 194. He ruled in the eastern provinces before being defeated by Septimius Severus.

*revenues, both from fish and from tolls. The city possessed very fertile land, and also drew a very good profit from all these sources."*⁴⁴

After suffering defeat in Bithynia, Pescenius withdrew his forces from Byzantium and retreated to Asia Minor, leaving the city vulnerable to the army of Septimius, who promptly began a siege. He deployed all his forces against the city. Thanks to its economic strength, Byzantium endured three long years of assaults from the combined Roman fleet and land army. This endurance clearly highlights the resources at its disposal, as well as its strategic advantages and strengths.

After a three-year siege, however, the city fell during the fifth year of the reign of Emperor Septimius Severus – 196-197 AD, as the resources of the defenders, who even resorted to cannibalism, were exhausted. The Emperor was so pleased with this that when the news of the capture of the city reached him in Mesopotamia, he entered and left his tent crying: "*Byzantium cepimus*"⁴⁵

His revenge was cruel: he took away all the privileges of the city, destroyed the fortress walls and the most important public buildings, and subjected the inhabitants of Byzantium to their neighbors and rivals - the Perinthians⁴⁶ and the Heracleians⁴⁷. Soon, realizing the importance and potential of Byzantium, the emperor ordered its restoration.

A little later, in the 4th century, came the era in which Byzantium would serve as the center of a new civilization that would transform the old world under the sign of the cross.

Commercial infrastructure

The pinnacle of public architecture and urban planning in cities such as Byzantium (Fig. 3) during the Hellenistic period can be seen in the development of the stoa⁴⁸. Initially, stoas⁴⁹ were constructed on just one side of the agora; however, over time, they began to appear on all sides, with some functioning as shops⁵⁰. Beyond the agora, stoas of various shapes and sizes were erected throughout the city. Surrounding the agora were key institutions including the prytanion, bouleuterion, dicasterion, and the magistrate offices, all situated within the different stoas. Thus, while the agora logically served as the economic center of the polis, the port frequently emerged as its epicenter, with sources detailing the economy often placing the agora and port in close

⁴⁴ Herodian of Antioch 1969.

⁴⁵ Latin: "We have taken Byzantium."

⁴⁶ Nowadays Marmaraereğlisi, old names: Perinth, Heraclea.

⁴⁷ This is the reason why the people of Perinthus erected a statue of the emperor, the base of which and the inscriptions on it were discovered before 1657 by Ismail Bouliald, embedded in the wall of the cathedral of Heraclea with the following text: "With good fortune, the council and the citizens maintaining the temple, the people of Perinthus honor the emperor Septimius Severus..."

⁴⁸ Owens 2004, 220.

⁴⁹ Covered colonnade (portico) in a public space.

⁵⁰ Hansen 2004, 141.

proximity. A polis might also feature an emporium, a market designated for foreign trade. During the classical period, the agora's role as a gathering space diminished, transforming primarily into a marketplace where shops and booths were erected, the majority of which were temporary structures.

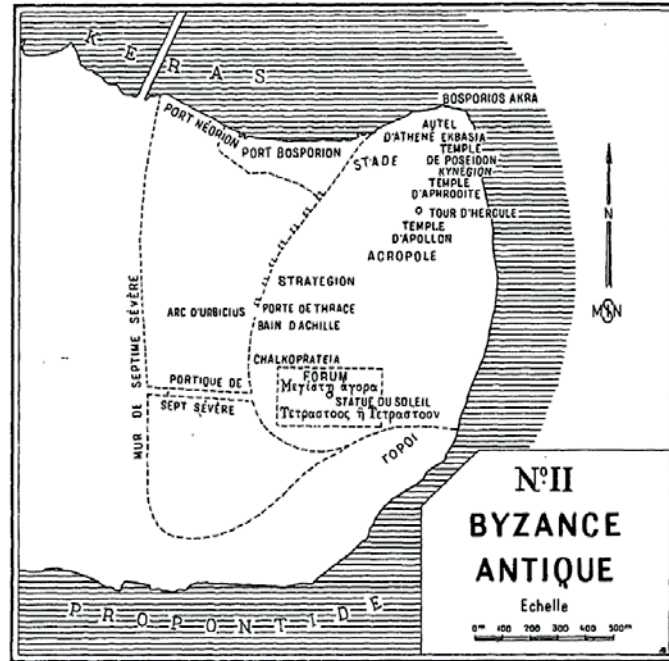


Fig. 3. Topography of Ancient Byzantium (Janin 1950.)

Situated between the northern end of the Hippodrome and the present-day site of Hagia Sophia lies the Tetrastoon, the location of the agora of Byzantium. This forum was reconstructed by Emperor Septimius Severus following the capture of Byzantium and serves as the central space of the revitalized city. The square is rectangular in shape and features a colonnade with porticos surrounding it, which is the origin of its name⁵¹. At the center of the square stands a column topped by a statue of the god Helios⁵². Emperor Septimius Severus removed the original statue, relocating it to the temple of Apollo that he had built on the Acropolis⁵³. From this square extends a broad street, also constructed under Severus, that leads to the main gate of the city⁵⁴. This thoroughfare later evolved into the Mese, the principal roadway of Constantinople, lined with various commercial shops along its length (Fig. 4).

⁵¹ Tetrastoon – from Greek: Four stoas (portico)

⁵² Katsaveli 2007.

⁵³ Janin 1950, 22.

⁵⁴ Mango 1985, 19.



Fig. 4. Ancient Byzantium. 3D Reconstruction
(<https://www.byzantium1200.com/byzantion.html>)

Near the Stadium are also the ports of Byzantium. Here is how Dionysius of Byzantium describes one of them:

“Under the head of the Bosphorus, there is a bay, deeper than necessary for a harbor, extending for sixty stadia. It is safe as a harbor, surrounded by mountains and hills, which protect it from the winds. On its backside, it carries deep and soft mud from rivers, but at the mouth, it lies under the promontory (of the peninsula) on which the city stands.”⁵⁵

The ports were constructed concurrently with the fortification system, specifically in designated mooring areas – initially along the Golden Horn and later along the Bosphorus. Some of these ports were enhanced with additional facilities. Along the Golden Horn, in the first bend of the coast leading to the Bosphorus Cape, Dionysius notes the existence of three ports:

“Going round the cape (up the Golden Horn), it first leads us to three harbors, the middle one is quite deep and not subject to the other winds, but not quite safe in the southwest wind. It is closed on both sides, because the penetration of the sea is prevented by the walls erected there.”⁵⁶

Cassius Dio⁵⁷, for his part, knows of only two ports in this part of the southeast of the Golden Horn, equipped with towers.

⁵⁵ Dionysius of Byzantium 1927.

⁵⁶ Dionysius of Byzantium 1927.

⁵⁷ Dion Cassius 1995.

The inconsistency in the number of ports likely arises from the larger port consisting of two basins, which may be regarded as distinct ports. Alternatively, there may be a third, smaller port situated near the two known ports, which is deemed inconsequential in size and function, thus omitted from the count provided by Cassius Dio.

The first port is situated at the very beginning of the Golden Horn and is known as Prosphorion. The second port, often regarded as the main one, is located in a deeper bay that offers better protection. It features a brick pier and a breakwater and is associated with the name Neorion, as previously mentioned. Notably, this is where the main assault by Philip II (359 BC – 336 BC) was successfully repelled in 340 BC. The third port, conversely, is likely smaller in size and holds less significance for the city⁵⁸.

Thus, the two ports are located inside the fortification belt, which Emperor Septimius Severus destroyed when he conquered the city in 196 and rebuilt only in 240⁵⁹. They are closed with a chain so that during war the enemy cannot penetrate them.

Based on subsequent data⁶⁰, it can be inferred that the port of Neorion was not designed for commercial traffic; rather, it served as a shipyard and a facility for ship repair activities. In contrast, Prosphorion assumed responsibility for the city's commercial traffic. The etymology⁶¹ of its name supports this interpretation. Additionally, there are warehouses constructed around Prosphorion, whereas no such structures exist around Neorion.

As part of the Marmaray-Sirkeci project, which commenced in 2004, archaeological rescue excavations were conducted at Sirkeci Station and along Cağaloğlu Ankara Street. Among the findings were a red-figure vessel depicting a female figure in profile, dating back to the 5th century BC, as well as an amphoriskos, a stamped handle, and fragments of amphorae from the 4th to 3rd centuries BC. These discoveries suggest that this location served as one of the ports of Byzantium referenced in ancient texts and was likely utilized for commercial activities⁶².

Another location not referenced in ancient texts is the area now known as Yenikapı. The extensive finds uncovered during the salvage excavations associated with the Yenikapı Marmaray – Metro project, which commenced in 2005, indicate that this site served as the Byzantine port of Theodosius. However, ceramic artifacts from the Archaic period reveal that it was in use long before it gained significance as a Byzantine port. During the colonization period (8th - 6th centuries BC), vessels navigating from the Sea of Marmara to the Black Sea would seek refuge in Yenikapı, a natural and sheltered harbor,

⁵⁸ Giyuzelev 2009, 168-169.

⁵⁹ Kislinger 2016, 91-97

⁶⁰ *Notitia urbis Constantinopolitanae* 1876.

⁶¹ Πρόσφορος, from Greek – gift, useful, food.

⁶² Lordoğlu 2015, 78.

when faced with unfavorable weather conditions, waiting here until conditions improved to continue their journey. This activity explains the ceramic finds at Yenikapı, which date back to the 6th - 4th centuries BC and suggest that commercial transactions occurred during the Archaic and Classical periods. Notable discoveries include amphorae from Thasos, Chios, and Samos⁶³. No breakwater from before the Byzantine period of the port has been discovered. The absence of mention in ancient sources may be attributed to the port's natural characteristics and its location well outside the city walls of Byzantium⁶⁴.

From Pontus, various goods such as slaves, honey, wax, meat, fish, cattle, and hides were exported, while imports included vegetable oil, wine, and fabrics. The grain trade was inconsistent, necessitating imports. The region surrounding Byzantium was renowned for its abundant figs, as well as its rich catch of fish and oysters, which were also exported⁶⁵. This vibrant trade and control over shipping contributed significantly to the city's wealth.

Situated in close proximity to the ports is the Strategion, a flat area along the shore of the Golden Horn that has historically served for military exercises. Its origins can be traced back to the time before Septimius Severus. Likely located in the northern part of Byzantium, this space exists in the valley separating the first hill from the second. It is believed to have initially functioned as a military parade ground, created by Alexander the Great (336 BC – 323 BC)⁶⁶, which is reflected in its name⁶⁷. This statement by Malala can be regarded as legendary, stemming from the presence of a statue of Alexander the Great at the Strategion, which references Patria. Franz Bauer⁶⁸ posits that it may also refer to the Thrakion, a parade ground noted by Xenophon. It can be inferred that this site served a military logistical function related to the nearby ports of Byzantium.

It is likely the original Agora of Byzantium, which was renovated by Emperor Septimius Severus. Its military significance is further supported by the nearby monuments, particularly an obelisk⁶⁹. Additionally, its proximity to warehouses and the commercial port suggests that the square may have served a market function. However, the question of its size and whether it included a distinct market area remains unresolved. Cyril Mango posits that the civic forum was adjacent to a small market, a characteristic observed in other cities like Palmyra. Furthermore, it is linked by a broad street to the other square we referenced – the Tetrastoon.

⁶³ Kızıltan 2010, 1-17 .

⁶⁴ Lordoğlu 2015, 79-80.

⁶⁵ Giyuzelev 2009, 178.

⁶⁶ Malalas 1836.

⁶⁷ Στρατήγιον, from Greek - Place of generals

⁶⁸ Bauer 1996, 224.

⁶⁹ Westbrook 2013, 5.

The vibrant trade, corroborated by various sources, significantly contributed to the development of the primary unit of exchange and payment-coinage. Historical accounts indicate that the Byzantines began minting iron coins as early as the 5th century BC, although no specimens from this period have survived. The existence of coinage workshops within the city is well-documented. The production of silver coins commenced in 411 BC, and continued until approximately 387/6 BC, during which drachmas (Fig. 5) and hemidrachmas were minted following the Persian standard. From 387/86 BC to around 340/39 BC, the city issued tetradrachmas (Fig. 6), drachmas, and hemidrachmas based on the Rhodian standard. Throughout this same timeframe, smaller denominations of silver were also minted, including trihemiobola and hemiobolas, adhering to the Persian standards, along with six series of bronze coins of various types (Fig. 7).



Fig. 5. Silver Drachm minted in Byzantium. Circa 340-320 BC. (From the Elwood Rafn Collection. CNG.)



Fig. 6. Silver Tetradrachm minted in Byzantium. Circa 230s-early 220s BC. (From the Henry A. Sauter Collection. CNG.)



Fig. 7. Alliance coinage of Byzantium with Chalcedon. Circa late 3rd-2nd Century BC. (Numisart GmbH)

Many of these coins feature the heads of deities such as Athena, Demeter, or Apollo, while animals resembling bulls or cows frequently appear, linked to the myth of Io⁷⁰.

Conclusion

The above information clearly illustrates that Byzantium occupied a unique geographical position, astutely recognized by its founders. The burgeoning population of this new polis capitalized on its abundant natural resources to accumulate wealth. As the city's economic power grew, it gained access to the latest technologies and architectural innovations within the Hellenic world. Consequently, Byzantium became home to significant monumental structures, as well as facilities essential for its commercial and economic activities, including the Agora, shops, ergasteria, emporium, ports, and warehouses. The city even minted its own coins, which were widely circulated through both land and maritime trade routes. With such a robust economic foundation, Byzantium began to play a pivotal role in the politics of the Mediterranean region and beyond. After 331, it rightfully emerged as the new political and economic center of the Roman Empire, with its numerous assets ensuring its longevity and continued prosperity.

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⁷⁰ Schönert-Geiß 1966, 174-182.

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An interesting sigillographic find from the Economic Complex (site no. 41) in the Outer City of Pliska

Todor Todorov, Konstantin Konstantinov¹

Abstract: This article presents an unpublished lead seal discovered in the summer of 2024 during regular surveys of the Economic Complex in the northwestern part of the Outer City of Pliska (site No. 41).

Obverse: In the center, a double-crossed patriarchal cross on a base of three steps. The image is enclosed in a double border of dots, between which is a circular inscription starting at 12 o'clock: + ΚΕΡΟΗΘΗΤΩCΩΔΔΛΩΠΕΤΡΩ

+Κ(ύρι)ε βοήθη τῷ σῷ δούλῳ Πέτρῳ

In translation: *Lord, help your servant Peter.*

Reverse: Bust of the Virgin Hodeghetria with a himation and a maphorion, half-turned to the right. With her right hand, she points to the bust of the Christ Child next to her left shoulder. He has a cross behind his head, wears a chiton and himation and blesses with his right hand. The image is enclosed in a double border of dots, between which is a circular inscription starting at 12 o'clock. Only the first half of the inscription printed: +ΘΕΟΤΟΚΕΡΟΗ.....Ω*

+Θεοτόκε βοή[θη].....φ*

In translation: *Mother of God, help*

According to its epigraphic and iconographic characteristics, the newly discovered lead seal dates to the second half of the 9th century.

It has been assumed that the owner of the seal, Peter, was probably connected to the higher ecclesiastical clergy of the Bulgarian Archbishopric in the last decades of the 9th century.

Keywords: Sigillography, Outer City of Pliska, Peter, lead seal

Резюме: Обект на настоящата статия е един оловен печат, открит през лятото на 2024 г. по време на редовните проучвания на стопанския комплекс в северозападната част на Външния град на Плиска (обект № 41).

Лице: В центъра – двойно пресечен патриаршески кръст върху постамент от три стъпала. Изображението е опасано с два зрънчести кръга. Между тях кръгов надпис, започващ от 12 ч.: + ΚΕΡΟΗΘΗΤΩCΩΔΔΛΩΠΕΤΡΩ

+Κ(ύρι)ε βοήθη τῷ σῷ δούλῳ Πέτρῳ

В обрат: *Господи помагай на своя раб Петър*

¹ Konstantin Konstantinov (head of the regular archaeological investigations at site no. 41) is the author of the portion dealing with the archaeological medium in which the seal was discovered. The metrical, epigraphic and iconographic characteristics as well as the dating, identification and commentary on the seal in this article are authored by Todor Todorov.

Опако: Бюст на Богородица Одигитрия с химатион и мафорион. Полуобърнат надясно. С дясната ръка сочи към разположения до лявото ѝ рамо бюст на Младенеца Христос с кръст зад главата. Той е облечен с хитон и химатион и благославя с дясната ръка. Изображението е опасано с два зрънчести кръга. Между тях кръгов надпис, започващ от 12 ч., от който е отпечатана първата половина: †ΘΕΟΤΟΚΕΡΟΗ.....Ω*

†Θεοτόκε βοή[θη].....ω*

В превод: *Богородице помагай.....*

Според своите епиграфски и иконографски характеристики новооткритият моливдовул се датира през втората половина на IX в.

Изказано е предположението, че собственикът на печата Петър вероятно е свързан с висшия църковен клир на Българската архиепископия от последните десетилетия на IX в.

In the summer of 2024, a lead seal was discovered during regular archaeological excavations in the Economic Complex in the northwestern part of the Outer City of Pliska (site no. 41). The seal is the second sphragistic monument unearthed from this archaeological site.² The present publication aims to bring it into formal scholarly circulation.

Archaeological medium of the sigillographic find

Site no. 41 (Complex Z) was registered on the archaeological map of the Outer City of Pliska through aerial observations of the terrain.³ It is located on a flat terrace between Deniz Dere and Bensiz Kulak, in the land of the village of Izbul, Novi Pazar municipality. It has been subject to archaeological investigation with some interruptions for more than 40 years, starting in 1983.⁴

Site no. 41 is an architectural complex with economic and craft functions occupying an area of 12 decares.⁵ The chronological boundaries of its existence are placed between the end of the 9th and the first decades of the 11th century. Its beginning is determined by a bronze coin of Leo VI and Alexander (886-912), while two anonymous folles class A2 (976-1035) and one anonymous follis class B (1030/35-1042)⁶ serve as a terminus antae quem. The exact outlines of the site have not yet been clearly determined. The seal discussed in this article was accidentally found during pedestrian survey along the western outer enclosure wall in a southern direction⁷ (Fig. 1). Its stratigraphic position shows that it is

² Todorov, Konstantinov 2022, 39-48.

³ Petrova 1984, 55; Petrova 1992, 74-75.

⁴ Konstantinov 2023, 155-173. For a summary of the investigations of the site until 2015, see Konstantinov 2017, 120. For the excavations after 2015, see Konstantinov, Ilieva, Kanev 2019, 459-462; Konstantinov, Ilieva, Kanev 2020, 1108-1111; Konstantinov, Ilieva, Kanev 2021, 984-988.

⁵ Konstantinov 2017, 120, note 3.

⁶ Konstantinov 2015, 47-48, fig. 29.

⁷ The seal was discovered in square V8, at a depth of 0.75 m from the modern terrain level (elevation 249.65 m).

An interesting sigillographic find from the Economic Complex (site no. 41) in the Outer City of Pliska

undoubtedly contemporaneous with the constructions in this part of the complex.

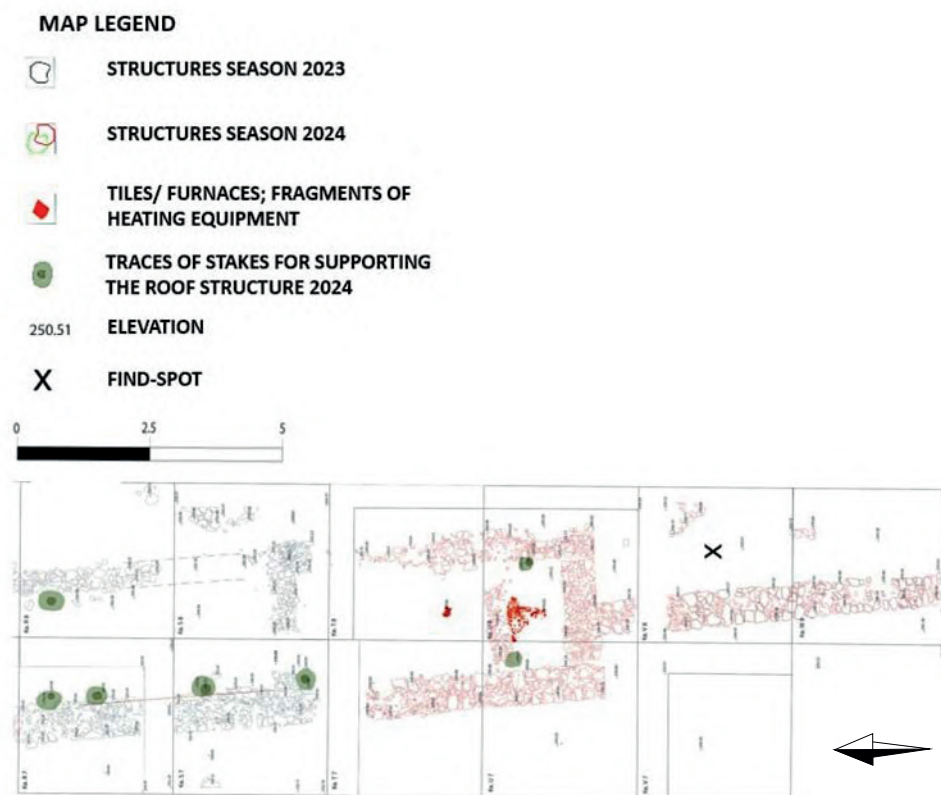


Fig. 1. Site no. 41. General Framework of Investigation for the 2024 Field Season. Horizontal Recording (drawing: H. Uzunov)

Metrical, epigraphic and iconographic characteristics, dating, identification and commentary on the lead seal

It is a relatively well-preserved specimen (Fig.2). A well-centered imprint was obtained on the obverse; however, the right part of the circular inscription on the reverse was not imprinted probably due to loosen arms of the bulloterion or poorly aligned dies.

Weight: 10.1 g. Dimensions: diameter of the blank – 21-22 mm, thickness – 0.3-0.4 mm.



Fig. 2. The newly discovered lead seal of Peter (photo: Y. Arnaudov)

The imprint was made on a relatively thin blank, which raises the question of the purpose of this lead seal - whether it served the usual function of being affixed to a letter. That said, however, it is still important to note that a trace of a channel is noticeable upon careful examination of the blank.

Obverse: In the center, a double-crossed patriarchal cross on a base of three steps. The image is enclosed in a double border of dots, between which is a circular inscription starting at 12 o'clock: + ΚΕΡΟΗΘΗΤΩCΩΔΞΛΩΠΕΤΡΩ

+Κ(ύρι)ε βοήθη τῷ σῷ δούλῳ Πέτρῳ

In translation: *Lord, help your servant Peter.*

Reverse: Bust of the Virgin Hodegetria with a himation and a maphorion, half-turned to the right. With her right hand, she points to the bust of the Christ Child next to her left shoulder. He has a cross behind his head, wears a chiton and himation and blesses with his right hand. The image is enclosed in a double border of dots, between which is a circular inscription starting at 12 o'clock. Only the first half of the inscription printed: +ΘΕΟΤΟΚΕΡΟΗ.....Ω*

+Θεοτόκε βοή[θη].....ω*

In translation: *Mother of God, help*

Following the description of the newly discovered lead seal, now particular attention should be paid to its epigraphic and iconographic features in an attempt to answer the questions related to its dating and ownership.

Clearly, the restoration and deciphering of the circular inscriptions on the basis of the preserved part would not present a problem. As the description above shows, the circular inscription around the double-crossed patriarchal cross on the obverse is fully preserved. This allows for extracting the maximum amount of information, namely that the owner of the seal bore the name Peter. In addition, the lettering, especially the presence of the so-called "open beta"

(R), indicates that the lower chronological limit of the use of this lead seal must not be placed earlier than the mid-9th century.⁸

Unfortunately, as noted in the description above, it is likely that a technical malfunction of the bulloterion resulted in only printing the invocative beginning of the circular inscription on the reverse, while the most important information from a historical point of view is missing. We can only speculate about the ending of this invocation. It is not implausible that the office or title held by the owner of the seal, Peter, was engraved in this space on the die of the bulloterion. It is certainly possible that the circular invocative inscription on the reverse ended in the same way as that on the obverse, i.e., with the name of the owner, Peter. This practice is also observed on other medieval Bulgarian seals⁹. A hope remains that a better-executed specimen struck with the same bulloterion will soon be discovered to address the above speculations.

The iconographic characteristics of the newly discovered lead seal proved no lesser challenges.

I will start with the easier one - the image on the obverse. As mentioned above, it features a double-crossed patriarchal cross on three steps. According to the previous observations of researchers, this iconographic subject appeared on Byzantine seals in the third quarter of the 9th century and was most common until the first quarter of the 10th century.¹⁰

The iconography on the reverse contains relatively more challenges. However, even at first glance, it is clear that the engraver's intention (respectively the commissioner's one, i.e., the owner of the bulloterion with which the lead seal was struck) was to portray the relatively common iconographic subject of the Virgin Hodegetria¹¹ showing the true path to God in the face of the infant Christ. In the implementation of this design, the surviving imprinted image bears some omissions and inconsistencies, which are clearly related to the limitations of the engraver's craftsmanship. Specifically, the image of the infant Christ is bust-like, unnaturally distant from the Virgin, and resembles a miniature of the adult Christ. Contrary to the canon, the mother of God is depicted without a halo behind her head.

⁸ According to the specialists' observations, the significant change occurred in the late 850s–the early 860s. Then the old form "B" was replaced by the so-called "open beta" – "R". The evidence for this change is revealed through the comparison of the seals of two Patriarchs of Constantinople. The old form "B" is inscribed on the lead seals of Patriarch Methodius (843–847), while the new form "R" is on those of Patriarch Photius (858–867, 877–886), see Oikonomides 1985, nos. 50, 53.

⁹ Such repetition of the owner's name on the obverse and reverse is characteristic of the seals of "Michael Archon of Bulgaria" and "Simeon Archon of Bulgaria", see Jordanov 2016, nos. 8–59.

¹⁰ Seibt 1978, 122–123; Oikonomides 2002, p. 7.

¹¹ For the etymology of Ὁδηγήτρια, see Shandrovskaya 2019, p. 389, and the references cited therein.

Regardless of the omissions and inconsistencies mentioned above (addressed further below), it should be noted that the representation of the Virgin Hodeghetria, predominantly in the full-length version, is featured on Byzantine imperial seals from the second half of the 7th to the early 9th centuries.¹² Immediately after the fall of iconoclasm in Byzantium (843), the iconography of the Virgin Hodeghetria with the Christ Child had a significant presence on the seals of the Constantinopolitan Patriarchs, and this trend persisted until the beginning of the 10th century.¹³ It is probably for this reason that the iconographic subject was also adopted on some of the seals of the Bulgarian church leader, Archbishop George, dating between 886-889.¹⁴

Taken together, the above notes on the inscriptions and iconography of the newly discovered lead seal suggest that its dating is in all probability in the second half of the 9th century. On the other hand, this sigillographic monument is unique due to the unusual iconographic combination of a double-crossed patriarchal cross on steps and a bust image of the Virgin Hodeghetria with the Christ Child. I did not find such a combination in the vast amount of published Byzantine seals to which I had access¹⁵.

In summary, the indisputable information that we can derive from the newly discovered lead seal is that it originates in the second half of the 9th century and its owner was an individual bearing the name Peter.

Another question that needs to be addressed is whether this seal is Bulgarian or Byzantine. In my opinion, several facts support the assumption of the Bulgarian origin of the seal, respectively of its owner, Peter. First and foremost is the information about its provenance, which is certain and indisputable. Of course, relying solely on this argument would render the assumption of the Bulgarian origin less convincing, since quite a few Byzantine seals from the second half of the 9th century originate from the Outer City of Pliska.¹⁶ Thus, the data from the seal are of utmost importance, especially those related to the image on the reverse. As noted above, some omissions and incongruities are observed in the representation of the iconographic subject of the Virgin Hodeghetria, which are not characteristic of Byzantine seals, but are found on some Bulgarian lead seals from the second half of the 9th century. First of all, it is the non-canonical image of the Virgin represented without a halo behind her head. We find the same omission in some of the so-called

¹² Shandrovskaya 2019, 393-394.

¹³ Zacos 1984, nos. 5, 7-10.

¹⁴ Jordanov 2016, №322-324.

¹⁵ For example, among the published Byzantine seals in one of the largest private collections (that of Georgios Zakos) there are over 250 specimens, on which "a cross on steps" iconographic subject is represented and on none of them the Virgin Hodhegetria is found, see Zacos 1984, 82-291 (nos. 783-351).

¹⁶ Todorov 2013, 30-31.

"anonymous Bulgarian seals from the second half of the 9th century."¹⁷ Next, the unusual representation of the Child Christ on the newly discovered seal could be perceived as a peculiar miniature of the image of God's Son, which is very similar to the images of both the aforementioned anonymous ruler's seals and those of "Michael Archon of Bulgaria", "Simeon Archon of Bulgaria"¹⁸ and "John Archon of Bulgaria". The seal of the latter was discovered in the same Economic Complex (site no. 41) in the Outer City of Pliska.¹⁹ This proximity to the images on the mentioned Bulgarian ruler's seals from the second half of the 9th century suggests that they might be attributed to the same engraver and with greater certainty indicates a significant influence of the ruler's seals iconography on the execution of the die of the bulloterion with which the newly discovered seal was struck, and seriously sways the balance toward its Bulgarian origin.

Finally, the question related to the seal's owner needs to be addressed. As noted above, the only reliable direct information points to his name, Peter. It has to be determined what other indirect information can be derived from this lead seal, in addition to its absolute dating to the second half of the 9th century on the grounds of the justification outlined above.

It has already been noted that during this period the iconographic subject of the Virgin Hodeghetria was characteristic of the seals of the higher clergy in Byzantium (the seals of the Patriarchs of Constantinople) and in Bulgaria (the seals of "George Archbishop of Bulgaria"). The fact that the owner of our seal, Peter, chose the same iconographic composition attests to his proximity to the higher ecclesiastical clergy of the Bulgarian Archbishopric. Additionally, the close resemblance of the iconography under consideration to that on the ruler's seals suggests that the owner of the newly discovered lead seal was probably in close relationship to those in power. This closeness is evidenced by the fact that the seal's owner, Peter, and the archon of Bulgaria, John,²⁰ had the same addressee, namely the owner of the Economic Complex in the Outer City of Pliska.

In an attempt to shed more light on the individual who owned the newly discovered lead seal, another group of seals also originating from Pliska cannot be overlooked. This refers to the lead seals of "Peter great curator of the archon of Bulgaria". The same double-crossed patriarchal cross is depicted on their obverse, and the owner is assumed to be one of Boris-Michael's close associates, probably his *ichirgu-boila*²¹. It is not implausible that these seals and the newly

¹⁷ Jordanov 2016, №261-266.

¹⁸ Ibid., №8-59.

¹⁹ Todorov, Konstantinov 2022, 39-48.

²⁰ Probably this is the Christian name of the firstborn Boris's son, Vladimir, see Todorov, Konstantinov 2022, 43-45.

²¹ Jordanov 2016, p. 148; Zhekova, Aladzhov, Stoychev, 2025, obr. 7.

discovered lead seal belonged to the same individual representing different stages of his *cursus honorum*: initially, as a layman and one of the first Boris-Michael's assistants in the state administration (the seals of "Peter great curator of the archon of Bulgaria") and subsequently, as a clergyman²² maintaining his connections with the Bulgarian ruling family, as evidenced by the newly discovered seal.

In conclusion, I would like to note that the ideas discussed above, which concern the commentary on the information from the newly discovered lead seal, are more or less hypothetical in nature, and future finds will corroborate their correctness or invalidity. What is more important, however, is that they draw the attention of the scholarly community to an interesting monument of Early Medieval Bulgarian sigillography.

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²² On a seal in the Zacos collection, we find interesting coincidences with the newly discovered seal from Pliska. It has the same dating. On the obverse, there is the same patriarchal cross on three steps and a circular invocative inscription: +K(ύρι)ε βοήθ(η) τῷ σῷ δούλ(ῳ). On the reverse, the owner of the seal is presented by means of a four-line inscription: Πέτρῳ μοναχῷ καὶ ἡγουμένῳ, see Zacos 1984, no. 269. Of course, these coincidences should not be overemphasized and it is not argued that the owner of the two lead seals is one and the same individual because both the double-crossed patriarchal cross on steps and the name Peter are quite common and widespread in Byzantium and Bulgaria in the second half of the 9th century, so the coincidences can be attributed to chance. Again, on the basis of a series of coincidences in the sources, both written and sigillographic, a hypothesis was recently put forward that the Old Bulgarian writer Chernorizets Peter and Boris-Michael's associate in the state government, the ichirgu-boila Peter is one and the same individual, see Krastanov, 2024, 476-485.

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AN UNPUBLISHED BRONZE SEAL WITH A PSEUDO- INSCRIPTION AND A PATRIARCHAL CROSS FROM THE SHUMEN REGION. AN ATTEMPT AT IDENTIFICATION

Zhenya Zhekova

Abstract: A new specimen of the so-called bronze seals with a forked patriarchal cross is introduced into scientific circulation. Based on the evidence presented so far (iconographic, numismatic, and sigillographic), the dating of the bronze seals under examination can be firmly placed between the second half of the ninth century and the first half of the tenth century. That is why the bronze seals subject to this study are related to the Bulgarian administration. If we assume that the bronze seals with a forked patriarchal cross are the regalia of a Bulgarian aristocrat holding a high administrative position, the exact answer can be found in the written sources. The fact that there are seals with the title of strator, as well as their imitations, means that it refers to a military position. An analogous position to the strator in medieval Bulgaria could be the minik – “chief groom, first among the grooms,” the head of the stables. In reality, the minik was primarily a high-ranking military commander, the leader of the cavalry, a general during wartime, as well as a senior figure in the hierarchy of central administration. It is no coincidence that all the bronze seals have been found in important military or administrative centers, where subordinates of the minik were situated, if not the minik himself.

Key words: bronze seals, patriarchal cross, strator, minik

Резюме: Бронзовите печати с патриаршески вилообразен кръст от едната страна и псевдонадпис от другата стават известни на науката през 70-те години на XX век, когато е публикуван първият екземпляр. В настоящото изследване се публикува нов екземпляр и се прави опит за прецизиране на тяхната датировка, както и за обвързването им с конкретна длъжност от българската рангова йерархия от епохата на Първото българско царство. От приведените доказателства (иконографски, нумизматични и сфрагистични) датировката на разглежданите бронзови печати може да бъде поставена твърдо между втората половина на деветия до първата половина на десетия век. Фактът, че съществуват печати с изписана страторска длъжност, както и техни подражания, означава, че става въпрос за военна длъжност. Като аналог на стратора в средновековна България може да бъде посочен миникът. Не случайно всички бронзови печати са открити във важни военни или административни центрове, в които са се намирали подчинени на миника, ако не и самият той.

Bronze seals with a patriarchal fork-shaped cross on the one side and a pseudo-inscription on the other became known to science in the 1970s, when the first specimen was published. Today, fifty years later and almost a dozen publications, their function, dating, place of manufacture and purpose still remain unclear. The interest in this type of material is periodically renewed, usually after the appearance of a new issue. This is the point of the present study as well.

The aim of my work is to introduce a new specimen into scientific circulation. It is part of the collection of the Numismatics Department at the Regional Historical Museum in Shumen and was received back in the 1980s. Its description is as follows (Fig. 1):



Fig. 1. Inv. # 13313 (ИМШ/НЗ) - photo: Zh. Zhekova

Obverse: A patriarchal cross with forked arms was engraved in the center of the sealing field. Around – linear border. A crack is visible in the lower right half, which is even more noticeable on the other side of the seal.

Reverse: The seal handle – a ring, which is now broken and its upper half is missing is situated at the center. A pseudo-inscription was carved around the handle, surrounded on the outside by a linear border. The inscription begins with a cross. The second half of the circular inscription, which runs from the lower to the upper left semicircle, is quite different from the right. While the right is made up of lines resembling Roman numerals, the left half is made up of semi-arcs – more decorative than grammatically formed. The crack here is in the lower left half.

Diameter of the blank – 26/27 mm. Thickness – 3 mm. Diameter of the sealing field – 25 mm. Patriarch's cross height – 21 mm. Weight – 12.18 g.

The seal was found in the area of the modern city of Shumen.

The stamping side is slightly bent towards the center, where the cross is. It is possible that this bending occurred as a result of being in the ground and the weight exerted on it. A well-preserved specimen with a nice brown-green patina. It bears the traces of a long use, as a result of which the stamping surface is smooth and worn, and the edges are rounded.

An unpublished bronze seal with a pseudo-inscription and a patriarchal cross from the Shumen region. An attempt at identification

Parallels¹

Eight specimens are known till now, two of which are “originals”. The rest six are with “pseudo-inscriptions”.

The first specimen was published by the late Professor Totyu Totev – in 1967 and 1971 respectively, with an unclear find-spot, generally they are from the Inner City of Preslav² (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2. AM – Veliki Preslav. Inv. # 1639 (Totev 1971, 201 – 203)

The second and third are of the same origin, discovered during archaeological excavations in Stambol Yolu locality³ (Fig. 3) and on the Early Northern Fortress Wall⁴ (Fig. 4).



Fig. 3. AM – Veliki Preslav. Inv. # 2744 (Totev 2004, 229 – 243)

¹ Totev 1967, 36 – 39; Totev 1971, 201 – 203; Vladimirova, Aladzhov 1979, 3 – 5; Totev 1986, 134 – 135; Stoyanova 2005, 75 – 80; Nikolov 2007, 321 – 324; Popkonstantinov 2014, 240 – 257.

² Totev 1967, 36 – 39; Totev 1971, 201 – 203. In all likelihood, this is the same monument that was first reported by N. Mavrodinov. See: Mavrodinov 1959, 227.

³ Totev 1986, 134 – 135; Totev 2004, 229 – 243.

⁴ Vladimirova & Aladzhov 1979, 3 – 5.



Fig. 4. AM – Veliki Preslav. Inv. # 3677 (Vladimirova, Aladzhov 1979, 3 – 5)

The fourth specimen was purchased from a private owner, whose information links it to the area of a village of Krasen dol, Novi Pazar municipality⁵ (Fig. 5).



Fig. 5. National Historical Archaeological reserve – Pliska. Inv. # 3677 (Stoyanova 2005, 75 – 80.)

The fifth, which has the original inscription **+ΤΩΝ ΣΤΡΑΤΟΡΩΝ**, is in a private collection, and the location is indicated as the village of Vodno in Silistra district⁶ (Fig. 6).



Fig. 6. Private collection (Nikolov 2007, 321 – 324)

⁵ Stoyanova 2005, 75 – 80.

⁶ Nikolov 2007, 321 – 324.

An unpublished bronze seal with a pseudo-inscription and a patriarchal cross from the Shumen region. An attempt at identification

The author of the publication shares information about two more bronze seals with pseudo-inscriptions – one from Pliska and one from Preslav⁷.

At the auction of the Concordia Numismatic auction house on June 17, 2023, a bronze seal of the type **ΤΩΝ ΣΤΡΑΤΟΡΩΝ** was included in Lot 649. It has been identified as a Byzantine seal-matrix from the 8th – 9th centuries and is associated with the position of strators in Byzantium⁸ (Fig. 7).



Fig. 7. Concordia Numismatic/17.06.2023. Lot 649

The last found specimen, number eight, also has an original inscription. It was discovered during an archaeological research in the church of the “Monastery of Georgi Sinkel”, in Selishte locality, in the Outer City of Preslav⁹ (Fig. 8).



Fig. 8. AM – Veliki Preslav, field # 30/06.10.2006 (Popkonstantinov 2014, 240 – 257)

In short, this is the sequence of discovery and publication of the eight specimens known to date. All are in a very good condition, which allows us their

⁷ Ibidem, 323.

⁸ <https://www.biddr.com/auctions/concordianumismatic/browse?a=3592&l=4162748>.

⁹ Popkonstantinov 2014, 240 – 257.

accurate identification and interpretation. In recent years, the monuments have also been discussed in two general publications¹⁰.

There is no doubt that all specimens are part of a group of stamping devices – a fact that everyone who has worked on the topic accepts¹¹. The main problem is with what kind of institution we should associate the bronze seals in question, especially considering the fact that seven of them have a pseudo-inscription which is not readable. First of all, to be linked with a particular state institution, they need to be placed in the correct historical and chronological context. Four of the seals were found during regular archaeological excavations, in secure surroundings. All of them originate from Preslav–the Inner City, the Northern Fortress Wall of the Early Fortification, Stambol Yolu locality and the “Monastery of Georgi Sinkel”. Their authors date them as follows: 9th – 10th century¹², the end of the 10th – the beginning of the 11th century¹³, the second half of the 10th – the beginning of the 11th century¹⁴. The seal from Vodno is also dated to the end of the 10th – the first quarter of the 11th century¹⁵. In the other two general articles, the dates are set in the 70s – 80s until the end of the 10th century¹⁶ and, respectively, after the 20s – 30s of the 10th century¹⁷. In addition to the secure archaeological surroundings, which nevertheless provide some broader chronological boundaries, varying between the end of the 9th – beginning of the 11th century, the authors attempt to date the monuments based on the epigraphy of the inscriptions and iconography.

The general conclusion about the seals with a pseudo-inscription is that all of them are copies of an unknown Byzantine original. This is the core question around which all expressed hypotheses gravitate. Ultimately, after the publication of Vodno specimen, a possible Byzantine original was put into circulation. Later, the seal from the “Monastery of Georgi Sinkel” appeared, and nevertheless that it differs from the above, was also announced as an original. The opinion was also expressed that the seals with pseudo-inscriptions actually copied the Preslav original¹⁸.

¹⁰ Georgiev 2011, 189 – 206; Antonov & Vatov 2023, 175 – 209.

¹¹ It is unknown why, but these bronze seals are not included in the *Corpus of Medieval Bulgarian Seals*, although without seals there are tools used for stamping, such as matrices, rings, etc. See: Jordanov 2016.

¹² Totev 1971, 202; Totev 2004, 229 – 243.

¹³ Vladimirova & Aladzhov 1979, 3.

¹⁴ Popkonstantinov 2014, 247.

¹⁵ Nikolov 2007, 322.

¹⁶ Georgiev 2011, 189 – 202.

¹⁷ Antonov & Vatov 2023, 175 – 209.

¹⁸ Popkonstantinov 2014, 245.

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My analysis of the seals to which I had access in the process of my research¹⁹ revealed specifics unnoticed by most authors who had worked on the topic before me²⁰.

The three seals with a pseudo-inscription from Preslav, together with the newly published copy from Shumen, are from the same matrix. They have identical dimensions, shape of the cross, and inscriptions. In my opinion, the engraving of the patriarchal cross and the inscription on the other side were made after the seal itself was cast, by hand. The case of the Krasen Dol seal was different – the cross was shaped using a chisel or a similar sharp tool. The manual making of the border of dots in its periphery is clearly visible, which is uneven, with inconsistent carvings of the dots.

The inscription

The pseudo-inscription on the Shumen specimen, as well as those on the two from Preslav²¹, consists of 12 graphemes, if we assume that the lines form one sign or letter (Fig. 9).



Fig. 9. The pseudo-inscription (drawing: Zh. Zhekova)

They are located between the letters +T (5 lines), C, N (8 lines), N (4th U), W, N. The same number of letters we have on the seal from Vodno with the inscription **+ΤΩΝ ΣΤΡΑΤΟΡΩΝ**. But if we count every line and character, we get a total of 23. On the original from Selishte locality, the letters are also 23: **+ΒΟΥΛΑ ΑΠΟ ΧΟΡΗΩΝ ΕΗΣ ΧΟΡΗΩΝ!** This further complicates the identification of the imitations with one of the two originals. It seems that the last two letters of their inscription are precisely **ΩΝ**. The seal from Krasen Dol,

¹⁹ I express my gratitude to my colleagues Hristina Stoyanova from NIAR "Pliska", Dr. Radostina Georgieva and Plamen Slavov from AM "Veliki Preslav", who provided me with the seals stored in their collections for scientific processing, as well as photographs. I am also grateful to Prof. D.Sc. Kazimir Popkonstantinov for sharing his opinion regarding the specimen from Selishte locality. Unfortunately, at the time of completing my research, I still do not have access to the seal from the village of Vodno, whose location is unknown.

²⁰ In some of the articles, there is confusion of individual seals, as well as explanations that indicate that the author in question did not work directly with the studied object.

²¹ Since the specimen from Stambol Yolu locality was burned, it is deformed and reproducing the inscription is difficult.

which is different from the others, does not have any letters or combinations of letters – except the letter “N”. It also does not have a cross sign at the beginning. Its metrical data and crafting bring it closer to the originals and especially to the specimen from Vodno.

The design of the cross preceding the beginning of the inscriptions is interesting. In the imitative specimens and the one from Selishte locality, it is a simple equal-armed one, with which the inscriptions on the molibdobullae most often begin, while on the specimen from Vodno (and the one from the auction) the cross is decoratively shaped, with widened edges, with the vertical arm depicted as a fork²².

The logical question arise – what is the purpose of the inscription on the side that is not used for stamping? The fact that the inscription was not intended to be printed is also evidenced by the fact that it is engraved in the positive. This is evident from the two original seals, where the inscription can be read, but the same can be assumed for the others. If we draw a parallel with modern seals (which are gradually disappearing from our everyday lives, replaced by electronic signatures and other modern digital fingerprints), at the top, at the grip point, we see an inscription that appears on the sealing surface during the sealing process. Or what is written on the top comes out from the bottom of the paper sheet as a verification sign. Practically, the seal is marked on top to make it easier for the user to know which seal it is. Does this mean that in the bronze specimens the semantics of the inscription is identical to the image of the patriarchal cross?

The patriarchal cross

The patriarchal cross on the bronze seals represents the so-called triumphal cross or resurrection cross – a symbol of the Christian triumph over death and the enemy²³. Most researchers of these seals focus their attention on the side where the inscriptions are, which is logical, especially for the two issues with “original” ones. Only some of them dwell in more detail on the patriarchal cross, marking in general its symbolism and appearance on related monuments. The presence of the fork-shaped cross on other representatives of metal sculpture (mostly the bronze medallions with IYI) (Fig. 10) gives reason to examine and date both groups in parallel²⁴.

²² Kazimir Popkonstantinov also draws attention to the elegant design of the graphemes and the cross sign, noting that the cross and the inscription are in unison. See: Popkonstantinov 2014, 245. Pavel Georgiev has a different view. See: Georgiev 2011, 195.

²³ Koltsida-Makre 1994, 45.

²⁴ Antonov & Vatov 2023, 175 – 209.

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Fig. 10. Bronze medallion (Antonov&Vatov, Fig. 5.1)

Without a doubt, the closest parallels to the patriarchal cross depicted on the bronze seals should be sought among numismatic and sphragistic monuments, which are the most accurate indicator of the appearance of a given iconographic type. As an element of the iconography, it appears on the solidi of Justinian II (685 – 695; 705 – 711) from the second period of his reign (Fig. 11), but in its role as an independent coin type we see it only on the coinage of emperor Theophilus (829 – 842). On the reverse side of the class 1 solidus (829 – 830/31) a patriarchal cross with widened ends on a three-stepped pedestal is depicted (Fig. 12).



Fig. 11. Solidus of Justinian II (www.commonswikimedia.org)



Fig. 12. Solidus of Theophilus (www.coinarchive.com)

The cross is an elegant, with barely hinted widening at the end of the shoulders, which on bronze seals is represented as bifurcation or “fork-shaped”. In the solidi of the remaining classes (Classes 2, 3 and 5), the patriarchal cross is already in the hand of the ruler himself (Fig. 13), as well as in the folles of class

1. We also see it represented on a provincial coinage (Syracuse and Naples). Thekla also holds a patriarchal cross on the class 1 solidi, minted by her mother Theodora during the minority of Michael III (842 – 867) (Fig. 14). The fact that on the reverse of the solidus the figure of Michael is depicted smaller than that of his sister, despite his occupying the honorary left position on the coin, hints at Thekla's probable position as a co-ruler with their mother²⁵. This trend was brief, as after 843 she disappears from the imperial coinage²⁶. Then the cross itself disappears.



Fig. 13. Solidus of Theophilus (www.coinarchive.com)



Fig. 14. Solidus of Michael III (www.commonswiki.org)

The appearance of the patriarchal cross on the coins of the iconoclastic emperors is mentioned by Dochka Vladimirova and Zhivko Aladzhov in their publication on the specimen from the Northern Fortress Wall of the early Preslav fortification. They correctly dated the possible original to the 9th century. Although according to them, their specimen was found in the layers at the end of the 10th – beginning of the 11th century, the question of the time of its use remains in question²⁷. The coin finds from the Northern fortress wall of the early fortification are among the earliest in Preslav – the beginning of the 9th century²⁸. The period of iconoclasm in Byzantium was a time when the images of religious symbols abounded, with the cross undoubtedly dominating.

²⁵ Zhekova 2017, 62.

²⁶ Grierson 1973, 458 – 459.

²⁷ Vladimirova & Aladzhov 1979, 3.

²⁸ Jordanov 1985, 207 – 215.

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Immediately after the restoration of the Iconophiles, the obverses of coins and seals were once again occupied by the main religious figures – Jesus Christ and Virgin Mary. After 843, the image of the cross almost disappears, remaining mainly on the miliaresion, especially of the “Golgotha” type. Later, the patriarchal cross as an imperial insignia is represented on the coinage of the rulers of the Macedonian dynasty²⁹. In fact, it was during the reign of this very Byzantine dynasty the image of the cross on various monuments was most convertible (Fig. 15).



Fig. 15. Solidus of Basil I (www.reddit.com)

On the Byzantine seals, the double-crossed patriarchal cross on steps and a circular invocative inscription appeared in the third quarter of the 9th century, and its use continued until the first quarter of the 10th century³⁰. Among the imperial seals, it was placed as an insignia held by the two rulers on the seals of the minor Constantine VII and his mother Zoe, regent in the period (914 – 919)³¹ (Fig. 16).



Fig. 16. Seal of Constantine VII and Zoe (www.doaks.org)

The cross was used as an obverse element on the seals of officials from the Byzantine administration, occupying certain positions related to interstate

²⁹ Grierson 1973, 139.

³⁰ Seibt 1978, 122 – 123; Oikonomides 2002, 7; Todorov 2012, 48.

³¹ Zacos & Vegler 1972, no. 62, type A.

relations, legations, missions, etc.³² (Fig. 17). In this sense, the cross symbolizes the supreme authority of the ruler, given to him by God. In practice, it replaces the ruler, the vicegerent of Jesus Christ on earth – hence God himself.



Fig. 17. Seal of John patrikios, imperial ptotospatharios and strategos of Thrakesion (Jordanov 2009, № 1277)

The appearance of the patriarchal cross on sigillographic monuments in the Early Medieval Bulgarian Kingdom is associated with the seals of Peter and Maria from the group of “basileis of the Bulgarians” (927 - ?), on the reverse side of which the two rulers hold between them a patriarchal cross, which ends at its lower end with a sphere³³. This chronologically first group of seals of Simeon’s son has given rise to many discussions arising from his iconographic features. The hypothesis has been put forward that Peter had the status of co-emperor of one of the peoples in the empire – the Bulgarians³⁴. The way Maria is presented, and the fact that she is holding the patriarchal cross, leads to the assumption that she is more likely the co-ruler³⁵. Ivan Jordanov believes that the engravers of the boulloterion have reproduced a situation relevant ten years earlier during the reign of the infant Constantine VII and his mother Zoe³⁶.

The patriarchal cross is presented on all of Peter’s seals, on which his wife Maria is represented (autokrators of the Bulgarians and pious basileis) – until 945 (Fig. 18). Without a doubt, the meaning of the patriarchal cross here is the legitimacy and recognition that Peter receives from Constantinople. Thus, this

³² Koltsida-Makre 1994, 48.

³³ Jordanov 2016, 86 – 87. The patriarchal cross is depicted in a similar manner on the class 1 solidi of Michael III from the period of the regency of his mother Theodora. On the reverse side of the solidi, where the minor Michael and his sister Thekla are depicted, she is holding the patriarchal cross, which is shaped with a sphere at the lower end.

³⁴ Todorov 2008, 93 – 108.

³⁵ Zhekova 2017, 132.

³⁶ Jordanov 2016, 89.

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cross is established as the supreme symbol of reign, with which the Bulgarian ruler is blessed by God himself.



Fig. 18. Seal of Peter I and Maria, pious basileis (Jordanov 2016, №164)

The patriarchal cross is also found on several other sigillographic monuments from the late 9th – early 10th centuries. These are the seals of John, bagatur and heir to the throne (927 - ?), Michael, bagatur and heir to the throne (9th – 10th c.), and Peter, megas kourator of the archontes of Bulgaria (the end of the 9th c.)³⁷ (Fig. 19). In 2024, during an archaeological excavations in the capital of Pliska, another seal with a patriarchal cross appeared, of a certain Peter³⁸.



Fig. 19. Seal of Peter, megas kourator of the archontes of Bulgaria (Jordanov 2016, №299)

Patriarchal crosses are also found on the walls of palaces, fortress walls, and the Golden Church in Preslav. One of the most striking images is the limestone block with a graphite image of a church and the “tomb of Golgotha” from The Ruler’s Church, dated to the 9th – 10th centuries (Fig. 20). The crosses carved on the Holy Sepulchre have the same widening of the edges as on the bronze seals. At the top, on the symbolic image of a church, a patriarchal cross with fork-shaped arms is visible as well³⁹.

³⁷ Jordanov 2016, №№ 135; 140; 147.

³⁸ The seal was found in the summer of 2024 during regular archaeological excavations at site No. 41 in Pliska. See here the article by T. Todorov and K. Konstantinov.

³⁹ Goryanova & Grozdanova, G 2019, № 144.

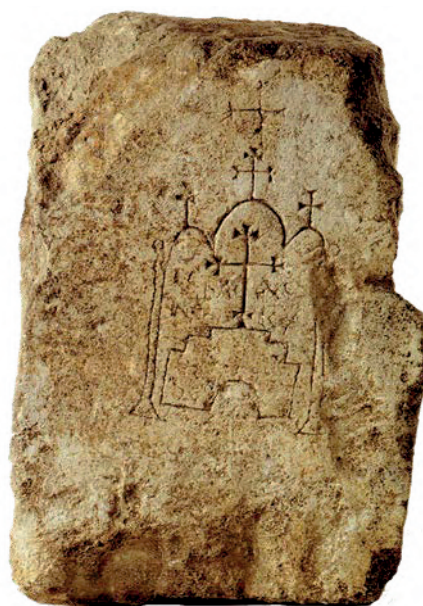


Fig. 20. Limestone block with a graphite image of a church and the “tomb of Golgotha” (Goryanova & Grozdanova 2019, № 144)

From the examples listed so far, it can be concluded that the patriarchal cross depicted on the bronze seals (both on those with the original text and on the issues with a pseudo-inscription) dated them in the same chronological framework – at the earliest in the last quarter of the 9th century to the first half of the 10th century. The medallions with an upsilon with two hastas, which Vatov and Antonov date in parallel with the bronze seals examined here, also have the same date⁴⁰. This dating places the production and use of the monuments under consideration here in the era of the First Bulgarian Kingdom, which confirms their Bulgarian character. This is also supported by the fact that no such artifacts have been found anywhere in the Byzantine cultural space to date, which excludes their Byzantine origin.

The find-spotting

The question arises about the person(s) or institution(s) who used the sealing devices in question. Once their Bulgarian origin has been proven, their owners must be sought among the Bulgarian administrative institutions of the examined period. An important role in clarifying this question is their find-spotting, which is as follows.

⁴⁰ Antonov & Vatov 2023, 203.

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The first two seals from the town of Preslav were found in the Inner City under unclear circumstances. In 1979, the specimen from the Northern fortress wall of the early fortification was found. It was discovered directly above the base of the fortress wall, which was destroyed in the very beginning of the 10th century. The seal got there almost immediately after that. The authors of the publication assume that this happened at the end of the 10th or in the very beginning of the 11th century, considering it most likely to have been produced at the end of the 9th or the first years of the 10th century⁴¹. The specimen from Stambol Yolu locality originated from the monastery complex. The seal from Selishte locality was also found north of the monastery temple⁴². In the case of the specimens from Preslav, the location is certain, considering that they were discovered during an archaeological research. This is not the case with the two specimens purchased from private owners. The indicated places of origin allow some attempt to be made for their more precise find-spotting.

The information about the seal from the village of Vodno, Duloovo municipality, links its origin to the surroundings of the village itself. The reference in the archaeological map of the region indicates that 4 km northeast in the area of Paraikinlik locality (translated from Turkish, literally “money, a place where there is money”), to the right of the Duloovo – Bradvari road, a settlement from the 8th – 10th centuries is located⁴³. North of the village of Vodno is the village of Bradvari, on the territory of which an early medieval settlement is also placed⁴⁴. From there, four molibdobullae have been documented to this day – of Leo, imperial protospatharios and epi tou... (9th – 10th centuries), of Basil the Apocapus, magister and dux (1064 – 1065)⁴⁵ and two of Emperor Alexios I Komnenos (1081 – 1118)⁴⁶.

The seal from the village of Krasen Dol, Novi Pazar municipality, originates generally from the land of the village. Two and a half kilometers northeast, in Klisecheshme locality, solid foundations of a building have been excavated. These are probably the remains of a medieval church and a settlement⁴⁷. Without a doubt, as the name of the locality itself suggests, on the same place a monastery complex existed or a church.

⁴¹ Vladimirova & Aladzhov 1979, 4.

⁴² Popkonstantinov 2014, 241.

⁴³ *Materiali za kartata na srednovekovnata balgarska darzhava* 1995, № 234.

⁴⁴ *Materiali za kartata na srednovekovnata balgarska darzhava* 1995, № 88.

⁴⁵ Jordanov 2009, № 1449; 2668.

⁴⁶ Jordanov 2015, 223 – 305; Dragoev 2024, 199 – 208.

⁴⁷ Dremsizova-Nelchinova & Antonova 1975, 27.

The possible localization of almost half of the specimens (Stambol Yolu, Selishte, Krasen Dol) links them to possible monastery centers⁴⁸. Does this mean that they belonged to clergy or a church institution?

Monasteries from the Early Bulgarian Middle Ages are a topic of a discussion. Among the nearly twenty architectural complexes excavated in the Outer City of Preslav, half have been identified as monasteries. Since there are no clear criteria for the precise distinction of private estates from monastery estates, preconditions are created for challenging their identity⁴⁹. Whether the location of the bronze seals is in monastery or administrative centers is a question that remains unanswered at this stage.

To the *strator* or to the *practor*

Both seals – from Vodno and from Selishte locality, published as originals, have inscriptions that are shaped according to the same circular scheme as the “imitative” ones, but differ from each other orthographically and etymologically. However, what lies behind the dignities of *strator* and *practor*? The semantics of the concepts has been examined by some of the authors who have traced the development of these two dignities over the centuries. They will be briefly analyzed here, in view of the possibility for or against the identification of the bronze seals with persons holding these positions.

The dignity of a *strator* (*strator*=στράτωρ), also found in written sources as *hippokomos* (horseman), dates back to the Roman Empire. They were also known as shield bearers⁵⁰. The *strators* formed a corps (*schola*) both at the imperial court and in the service of high-ranking provincial governors. In general, their functions were related to the care of horses and stables. The head of this department held the position of *komes ton staulon*, later renamed *domestikos of the stratores*. On seals from the 8th–9th centuries, the term was used as a title for lower-ranking officials (*tourmarches*, *droungarios*) and provincial dignitaries such as *kommes*, *archon of Mesembria*, *chartularios of Thrace*, *protonotarios of Thessalonica*, etc. To distinguish themselves from the true grooms, who were under the direct command of the *protostrator*, the latter were called *strators of the imperial stratorikon*. The title is presented both in the *taktikon* of Uspensky (842/843) and in the *Cletorologia* of Philotheus of 899, where it already occupies lower positions in the hierarchy. It disappears from the sources and falls out of use in the 10th and early 11th centuries. It is

⁴⁸ Half of the medallions with an *upsilon* with two *hasts* were also found in monastery centers.

⁴⁹ Kostova 2019, 100.

⁵⁰ Pavel Georgiev suggests the shape of the seals is a “miniature likeness of a soldier’s shield.” See: Georgiev 2011, 195.

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interesting that the term *strator* appears in Western Europe after 754, undoubtedly under Byzantine influence⁵¹.

So far, five seals of Byzantine *strators* have been documented from Bulgaria (the origin of two of them is Istanbul)⁵². They are dated to the 9th century – the beginning of the 10th century and their find-spotting is in Pliska, Silistra, Debelt – important administrative centers, one of which was a *kommerkiaria*. Later seals of *strators* are not known – a fact supporting the information that after the middle of the 10th century the title disappeared⁵³.

In this line of thoughts, the reasoning of some of the authors about the existence of a “*strator’s* association” in the Bulgarian lands from the end of the 10th – beginning of the 11th century is strange. There is no way that after the conquest of the Bulgarian Northeast by the Byzantines, an already decadent position, such as the *strator’s*, could have been organized into an institution that even had its own seals⁵⁴. This statement is contradicted by the lack of any information in the sources. In Byzantium itself, no Byzantine seals of *strators* are known after the beginning of the 10th century⁵⁵. This is why the statement that “the signing cross on the bronze seals from Northeastern Bulgaria from the end of the 10th or beginning of the 11th century is a symbol of persons from the Byzantine army or administration” does not find confirmation among the sources and sigillographic material⁵⁶. The comparison that Pavel Georgiev makes between the medallions with the *upsilon* sign and the bronze seals leads him to the conclusion that the inscription on the seals corresponds to the *upsilon* sign. “This strengthens the argument for their significance as attributes of some power”⁵⁷. For me, the cross corresponds to the *upsilon*, not the inscription. Because both are symbols of supreme power, of God.

⁵¹ Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium 1991, 1967; Jordanov 2009, 258.

⁵² Jordanov 2009, №№ 706 – 710; 836; 1100.

⁵³ The seals of the *strators* are relatively rare in the world’s sigillographic collections as well.

⁵⁴ Pavel Georgiev comes to the “logical conclusion that, being a governor in the old Bulgarian centers of Drastar and Preslav, Leon Sarakinopul would be the likely founder of the *strator’s* association of the Lower Danube.” See: Georgiev 2011, 201.

⁵⁵ The lack of any *strators* and their seals at the end of the 10th century is also evidenced by the fact that in the monograph of Ivan Jordanov. *Pechati na vizantiyskata administratsia v Bulgaria (971 – 1118)*. Shumen, 2019, covering precisely the period for which the “*strator’s* association” is claimed to have existed, not a single *strator’s* seal is included. The logical explanation is that in the period under consideration such seals were not documented from the Bulgarian lands.

⁵⁶ Georgiev 2011, 195.

⁵⁷ Georgiev 2011, 192.

The second original, from Selishte locality, according to Professor Kazimir Popkonstantinov, is a “document of the official tax authority”, “a deed of ownership, for measuring land or for collected taxes and their transfer to Preslav”⁵⁸. Thus he links the bronze seal with the inscription **+BOYΛA AΠO XOPHΩN EHS XOPHΩN** with the Byzantine tax administration in the northeastern Bulgarian lands from the end of the 10th – the first half of the 11th century⁵⁹. The author identifies the tax office of *practor* known from written sources and his subordinates as possible users of these seals. Thus, he concludes that the seal from Selishte locality and the other strators’ seals are “an expression of intensive production of bronze seals, most likely in a workshop in Preslav, the center of the strategy at that time”⁶⁰.

Up to now, no seals of *practors* are known. Probably because they never had the right to seal. The *practor* (**πράκτωρ**) was a low-ranking official in the late Roman Empire. The position was retained throughout all Byzantine period, with the functions not being clearly determined. On the one hand, Theophylact of Ohrid describes them as “tax collectors”, but in sources from the 10th – 12th centuries they are also mentioned as officials of the treasury⁶¹. In Bulgaria, the position of *practor* is characteristic of the Bulgarian Tax (clerical) apparatus in the 13th – 14th centuries. *Practors* are mentioned in some Bulgarian charters from the 13th century – Sigilium of Despot Alexii Slav from 1220, the Vatopedi Charter of Tsar Ivan Asen II from 1230, the Virgin Charter of Konstantin Asen (although compiled towards the end of the 14th – beginning of the 15th century, it included the content of older charters), the Mrachka Charter of Ivan Alexander from 1347⁶².

The *practor* actually inherited the functions of the *dioketes*, whom he replaced after 1109⁶³. The *dioketes* (**διοκητής**) is a financial position of unclear origin. There is an indication that the *dioketes* was a “tax collector” in the novels of Leo VI. The first mention of a person holding this position dates back to 680. It is a seal of Paul, *dioketes* of Anatolikon. From the 7th – 8th centuries we have seals of *dioketes* of dioceses. Seals of various dioceses from the provinces of Byzantium, coastal cities, islands are known. In general, this is a fiscal official, subordinate to the *logothete* of the *genikos*, sent temporarily or residing in a certain diocesan. There, he controls the population census on the spot and specifies the amount of taxes to the fiscal. In the performance of his duties, he

⁵⁸ Popkonstantinov 2014, 246.

⁵⁹ Popkonstantinov 2014, 247.

⁶⁰ Popkonstantinov 2014, 248.

⁶¹ Litavrin 1987, 222.

⁶² Duychev 1944, 31 – 35; 41 – 42; 55 – 63; 130 – 131.

⁶³ Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium 1991, 1711.

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is subordinate to the local strategos. But sometimes he is a representative not only of the treasury, but of the central administration as well. Such is the case with the seals of Andronikos, dioketes and ex prosopo of Arcadiopolis and Messemvria – third quarter of the 11th century, found in the Strategy in Preslav⁶⁴. Three more seals of a certain Theophanes, dioketes of Rundac and Anatolikon (11th century) are documented from the Bulgarian lands⁶⁵. After 1109, when it was replaced by the practor, the dioketes disappeared as a position⁶⁶.

It was not by chance that I made a comparison between these two positions. If we assume that the seal from Selishte locality is related to tax duties, then the more likely owner of the bronze seal is the dioketes, and not the practor (or his subordinates), who does not even have the right to a seal. After the iconographic analysis, it became clear that the dating of the bronze seals does not exceed the beginning or first half of the 10th century. So, linking the seal with the inscription +ΒΟΥΛΑ ΑΠΟ ΧΟΡΩΝ ΕΗΣ ΧΟΡΩΝ with the Byzantine tax authorities in the Bulgarian lands from the Byzantine period is unacceptable⁶⁷. The same applies to the “strator’s assosiation” from the 11th century.

The dating

From the evidence presented so far (iconographic, numismatic and sigillographic), the dating of the bronze seals in question can be firmly placed between the second half of the ninth and the first half of the tenth century. There is no way that the two “originals”, dated by their authors to the end of the tenth – the first quarter of the eleventh century, could be later than the imitative ones. This is contradicted by the image of the fork-shaped patriarchal cross, which is strictly chronologically determined in an earlier period. Since in Byzantium iconography was strictly subordinate to the canon, it is a reliable benchmark for dating. The appearance of a particular iconographic pattern was strictly regulated by the power and doctrine of the Empire. That is why I believe that the bronze seals, the focus of this study, are related to the Bulgarian administration, about which we still do not have sufficient information from sources and archaeological research. The fact that the patriarchal cross is an

⁶⁴ Jordanov 1993, 115; Jordanov 2009, № 1123 – 1124.

⁶⁵ Jordanov 2009, № 1424 – 1426.

⁶⁶ Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium 1991, 627.

⁶⁷ In a footnote, Prof. Popkonstantinov mentions that he is not aware of any other bronze seals with inscriptions on them from the 10th – 11th centuries in the area of the Byzantine Empire. See: Popkonstantinov 2014, 246, note 17. Simply because there are none. This leads to the assumption of the Bulgarian origin of the ones considered here.

emanation of supreme secular and spiritual authority leads to the conclusion that their use would have been in the hands of high-ranking officials from the ruler's office, who stamped documents by or in the name of the ruler himself.

Until now, we do not have seals of officials or private individuals from the Early Bulgarian State. All known ones belong to rulers or those holding high administrative and church positions. In recent years, several interesting sigillographic monuments have also appeared, the identification and connection of which to a specific historical person or institution is uncertain. They are defined as "seals of various holders in medieval Bulgaria from the 9th – 10th centuries"⁶⁸. The opinion has been expressed that some of the Bulgarian titles and dignities of the highest rank, during interstate relations, were equated with the Byzantine ones in order to show that Bulgaria was a worthy partner or opponent of Byzantium⁶⁹. If we assume that the bronze seals with a fork-shaped patriarchal cross are the regalia of a Bulgarian aristocrat holding a high administrative position, the answer to which one exactly, can be sought in the sources. The fact that there are seals with the strators position inscribed, as well as their imitations, means that it is a military position. As an analogue of the strator in medieval Bulgaria, the *minik* can be mentioned – "first groom, first among grooms", head of the stables. This position is first mentioned in 921, when Tsar Simeon sent an army to Constantinople under the leadership of the kavkhan and the minik⁷⁰. We come across it twice more – in 924, again in connection with military affairs, and in 927, at the conclusion of peace between Bulgaria and Byzantium⁷¹. Historical sources outline two main functions of the *minik* – military and diplomatic. He leads the army during war together with the *kavhan* or the *ichirgu boila*, and also participates in the negotiations of international treaties. In reality, the *minik* was primarily a senior military commander, a leader of the cavalry, a commander during war, as well as a high-ranking figure in the hierarchy of the central administration. The fact that he was included in the Bulgarian envoy for the peace negotiations of 927 indicates that he was also a diplomat of the highest rank. Although the information about him dates back to the beginning of the 10th century, there is no doubt that the

⁶⁸ Jordanov 2016, 145 – 152.

⁶⁹ Slavova 2010, 163.

⁷⁰ Sreznevskij 1971, 132; Duychev 1940, 127 – 140; Prodolzhitelyat na Teofan 1964, 130; Prodolzhitelyat na Georgi Monah 1965, 145.

⁷¹ Slavova 2010, 106.

An unpublished bronze seal with a pseudo-inscription and a patriarchal cross from the Shumen region. An attempt at identification

position was active long before that⁷². The position of *minik* existed in the period of the Bulgarian Khanate even before the Christianization and continued to function after that. It is likely that we should also connect the seal from Selishte locality with a similar position. It is no coincidence that all bronze seals were found in important military or administrative centers where subordinates of the *minik*, if not the *minik* himself, were located⁷³. A future physicochemical study of the composition of the metal from which the bronze seals with a patriarchal cross (original and imitation) are made would answer the questions about their true manufacturer – one for all, or different for each⁷⁴.

Despite the exceptional archaeological discoveries in recent years, especially in Pliska and its surroundings, we still cannot obtain an accurate picture of the structure of the Early Medieval Bulgarian state. This is particularly true for the titles and offices in the administrative and military structure of the khanate, especially after the Christianization. The discovery in recent decades of “strange” sphragistic monuments⁷⁵, which cannot be linked to a specific title, dignity or person from our history, suggests that the Bulgarian aristocracy, occupying high state positions, most likely used their Byzantine analogues. This is a question of the duality¹ of the Bulgarian medieval elite or the increasingly rapid penetration of Byzantine influence among it, especially after 927. Without a doubt, this change was dictated by the desire to display belonging to the Byzantine civilizational circle, because only in this way would our state be accepted and recognized in the Byzantine oecumene. This is a deeply conscious aspiration for self-affirmation and equality, originating from our first rulers – a model followed steadily by all others throughout the years of medieval Bulgaria’s existence.

⁷² Zlatarski 1994, 523, note 4; Istoria na Bulgaria 1981, 175; Gyuzelev 2007, 156 – 157; Slavova 2010, 108 – 109.

⁷³ It has been suggested that the *minik* performs the functions of the army’s quartermaster general. See: Stanilov 2003, 22.

⁷⁴ My attempt to perform such an analysis in 2024 was thwarted by the inability to use one original – the one from Vodno, which makes the study meaningless. The main purpose of such an analysis would be to compare the composition of the alloys from which the originals were made with that of the imitations.

⁷⁵ Here we can include the seals of the anonymous Bulgarian rulers, of the bagaturs and crown princes, of various holders of departments, those with rune-like signs, all dated to the 9th – 10th centuries. Despite the stated and somewhat confirmed hypotheses, discussions around these sigillographic monuments continue. Most recently summarized in: Jordanov, 2016.

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Ceramic production at the center of metalwork near Zlatar, Preslav region

Stella Doncheva

Abstract: The presentation of the archaeological context related to the intensive production activity in Zlatar will not be complete if due attention is not paid to the ceramic material collected during the long-term research. Although of secondary importance, at least as far as the category of household ceramics is concerned, the finds can contribute to enriching the information from the general picture of the production activity or at least supplement the classification and typology of early medieval ceramics from Bulgaria for the period 9th-10th centuries. In this work, we conditionally accept the term “household” ceramics, which is popular and generally accepted to designate this type of products. Unlike the majority of the finds found during the study of settlement structures of various nature, the ceramics from the production centers have a different character, mainly associated with the stages and technology of artistic metal production.

Evidence of the production of local household ceramics is the open furnace in one of the workshops of the production center in Zlatar. Among the metal melting furnaces discovered in the workshops of the center in Zlatar, there is also a pottery kiln, used for firing only clay vessels. The kiln belongs to the so-called first type of two-chamber kilns of small dimensions, where the lower chamber is the hearth dug into the solid terrain, and the upper chamber is the place where the vessels are arranged and fired. Its presence explains the finds of local ceramics, made on site and with the main purpose of satisfying production needs. The collection of household ceramics accompanying the metallurgical activity is indicative in terms of dating. The functioning of the center is determined from the 20-30s to the 60-70s of the 10th century. This makes the modest contribution of the ceramics from Zlatar to the background of ceramic production at that time a reference point, refining the dating of the main ceramic types characteristic of the era of the early Bulgarian Middle Ages.

Key words: ceramic, production of pottery, Zlatar, metalwork center

Резюме: Представянето на археологическия контекст, свързан с интензивната производствена дейност в Златар, няма да бъде пълен, ако не бъде обърнато подобаващо внимание и на керамичния материал, събран в хода на дългогодишното проучване. Макар и с второстепенна роля, поне що се отнася до категорията на битовата керамика, находките могат да допринесат за обогатяване на информацията от общата картина на производствената дейност или най-малкото да допълнят класификацията и типологията на ранносредновековната керамика от България за периода IX-X в. В настоящата работа приемаме условно понятието „битова“ керамика, което е популярно и общоприето за обозначаване на този вид изделия. За разлика от преобладаващата част от находките, които са намерени при проучването на селищни структури от различен характер, то

керамиката от производствените центрове има по-друг характер, основно свързан с етапите и технологията на производство на художествен метал.

Свидетелство за производството на местна битова керамика е откритата пещ в една от работилниците на производствения център в Златар. Сред пещите за стапяне на метал, разкрити в работилниците на центъра в Златар, попада и грънчарска пещ, служеща за изпичане единствено на глинени съдове. Пещта принадлежи към т.нар. първи тип двукамерни пещи с неголеми размери, където долната камера е огнището, вкопано в здравия терен, а горната камера – мястото, където са подреждани и изпичани съдовете. Наличието ѝ обяснява находките от местна керамика, изготвяна на място и с основна цел – да задоволява производствените нужди. Колекцията от битова керамика, придружаваща металургичната дейност, е показателна по отношение на датировката. Функционирането на центъра се определя от 20-30-те години до 60-70-те години на Х век. Това прави скромния принос, който има керамиката от Златар на фона на керамичното производство по това време в ориентир, прецизиращ датировката на основни керамични типове, характерни за епохата на ранното българско средновековие.

Although of secondary importance, at least as far as the category of household ceramics is concerned, the finds can enrich the information from the general picture of the production activity or at least supplement the classification and typology of early medieval ceramics from Bulgaria for the period of 9th-10th centuries. In this work, we conditionally accept the term “household” ceramics, which is popular and generally accepted for designating this type of products. Unlike the majority of the finds found during the study of settlement structures of various types, the ceramics from the production centers have a different character, mainly associated with the stages and technology of artistic metal production. This is not about production ceramics, which include crucibles and pots for melting metal, but about the widespread ceramics, known for their shapes, decoration and manufacturing technology. In this regard, clay vessels are divided into several categories – pots, trays, bowls, cups, jugs, amphora-shaped pitchers, amphorae. The category of vessels defined as kitchen ceramics includes pots and trays. During the research, no lids and vessels with internal handles were found, which complement this category of ceramics, but the fragmentary nature of the ceramic complex and the lack of sufficiently complete vessels do not exclude the possibility of their use. This applies especially to lids, which, given the great variety of shapes and profiles of the pots, could be assumed. The category of vessels defined as table ceramics, which has recently been accepted rather conditionally, includes bowls, cups, jugs and amphora-shaped pitchers. The ceramics intended to store and transport products include jugs and amphorae.

One of the most important components of ceramic production is the starting raw material. Its quality is determined by the additives, the degree of

firing, and partly the molding and shape of the vessel¹. Thus, the entire technological process depends on the physical properties of the clays used. In this sense, the technological tradition is a kind of adaptation of the ancient potters to the natural conditions. Most of the products found in the production center at Zlatar are made of purified clay with a tile-red color (fig. 1). Among the vessels with purified clay, there are also those with a black color, obtained at the end of the firing, when smoke is introduced into the kilns or by stopping the access of fresh air.



Fig. 1. Ceramics made of purified clay with a tile-red color
(photo St. Doncheva)

¹ Gluskov & Grebenshikov & Jushtihovskaja 1999, 150-166.

A significant part of the vessels are made of sandy clay with impurities of red, ochre-red or gray-black color (fig. 2). In most cases, the impurities are small and medium-sized, but some fragments show significant grain size (fig. 3).



Fig. 2. Ceramics made of sandy clay with impurities of red, ochre-red or gray-black color (photo St. Doncheva)



Fig. 3. Grain size in the clay dough of household ceramics
(photo St. Doncheva)

In most examples, where significant grain size is observed in the clay dough, it can be assumed that their presence is a consequence of the artificial addition of calcite or dolomite. At the same time, large sand grains are also

observed in some of the examples, which suggests their deliberate introduction and addition to the clay dough to obtain the same effect. It is known that sand is the most common mineral impurity in natural clays. It can differ in its composition, color, size, concentration and degree of roundness of the grains. The latter characteristics are of great importance for determining the origin of the raw material. Gray-white, matte or transparent quartz sand is most often found (fig. 4).



Fig. 4. Impurities of quartz sand in household ceramics
(photo St. Doncheva)

In most cases, their presence is assumed to be a consequence of artificial addition of calcite/dolomite or of the origin of the clays. It is known that alluvial river clays, deposited along river banks, contain significant amounts of coarse river sand. Such clays are found everywhere in our lands where there are rivers².

² Peev 1959, 19.

The additives, in turn, help reduce the shrinkage of the vessel during drying and firing and increase its fire resistance during heat treatment. It can be represented by calibrated particles of a certain size (small, medium, large), as well as uncalibrated inclusions of various sizes. To avoid the harmful effects of these impurities, sometimes leading to the destruction of the vessel, potters also used some organic solutions, such as animal urine or saline solution. Vessels with such additives were subjected to prolonged firing (less than 650-700°C) in a semi-reductive environment or incomplete firing in an oxidizing environment at a higher temperature, but with a short exposure³. In these cases, the harmful effect of these impurities is not noticeable or, if it occurs, it is to a limited extent.

All these features are present and clearly visible when observing some of the ceramic fragments and even some of the examples of the more completely preserved vessels found at the metal-plastic production center in Zlatar. This shows only one thing: this type of vessels, with a similar composition of clay dough, were made on site, on the territory of the center itself, and were intended to satisfy the needs of this production. The vessels baked from such clay, with artificially added impurities, fulfilled production rather than domestic needs. Pottery technology is a system of sequential actions of the master potter, aimed at transforming the starting raw material into a finished product. The technique, in turn, refers to all the technical devices used by potters – pottery wheels, molds, hearths, kilns and various small tools that are used throughout the entire process. Observations of the ceramics from Zlatar show the application of several technologies for making vessels. Few of them were made by hand. These are mainly shallow trays, of which only a few fragments have been found and which were associated with metal smelting and production technology. Their proximity to the furnaces and hearths is indicative. No similar vessels have been found outside their range, therefore they should be defined as having production purpose rather than domestic.

Depending on the shape and purpose of the vessels, the method of manufacture and the clay, various ornaments were applied to the walls of the vessels, most often belts of incised concentric and wavy lines, alternating with pits, notches and broken lines (fig. 5). The decoration was applied immediately after the vessel was drained during the rotation of the wheel. Bone or wooden sticks with rounded or pointed ends were used as tools, as well as combs – thin or wide, with dense or sparse teeth. The pits were hollowed out in a row immediately below the neck, after the vessel was drained, with elliptical and triangular pits being the most common. Over twenty combinations of ornamental motifs have been identified. The most common are straight or wavy lines, narrower or wider belts of similar ones, horizontal rows of obliquely arranged triangular pits or combinations with belts of horizontal lines, bundles of obliquely arranged cuts on horizontally incised lines, alternation of single

³ Cetlin 2017, 86-87.

straight and wavy lines, horizontal rows of S-shaped pits, etc. The bands of wavy lines alternate with straight parallel lines, the former occupying the shoulder part of the vessels, and the horizontally incised lines reaching the bottom parts of the vessels.

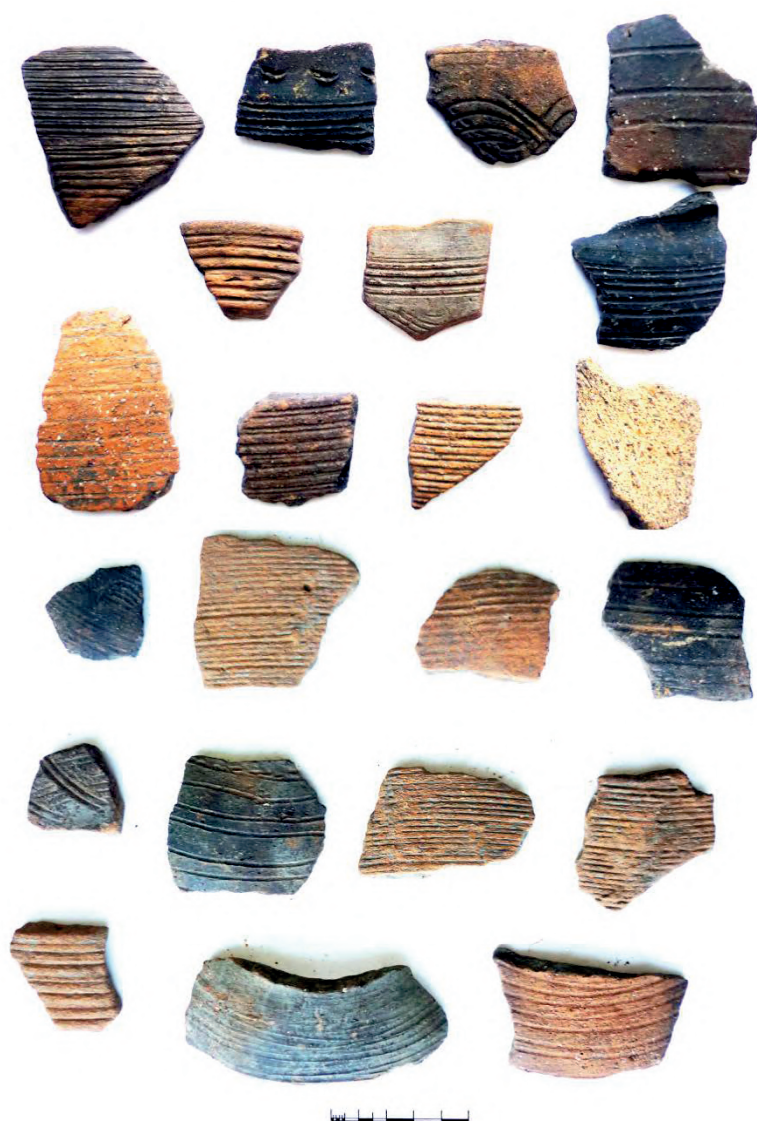


Fig. 5. Incised linear decoration on household ceramics
(photo St. Doncheva)

Some of the pots are covered with shallowly incised horizontal lines, while in others the depth of incising is greater. In the vessels of the slow handwheel, the lines are more deeply incised and often intertwine. In the pots

of the faster wheel (heavy handwheel), the lines are parallel and more shallowly incised. Most often the horizontal lines are incised with combs with different numbers and densities of teeth, which leads to a variety of decorations – from very dense and fine lines to wide and shallow grooves (fig. 6).



Fig. 6. Incised linear decoration on household ceramics
(photo St. Doncheva)

Some of the vessels are decorated with a polished ornament, applied shortly before the vessel had completely dried. On fragments of medieval amphorae, horizontal lines (grooves) are also observed, incised on the wet walls of the vessel and subsequently smoothed with a smooth object. Unlike the incised ornament, applied after the vessels had been drained, the polished one

was applied shortly before they had completely dried. Smoothing in the incised ornament is a common method of decoration, which is always done on the wet base with various materials and tools. Both simple smoothing, in which a low relief is formed on the surface of the vessel, and the making of deeper grooves, forming a clearly distinguishable relief, giving a new look to the entire decorative system, are observed. Such smoothing qualifies as a method for creating a technologically decorated surface of the vessel. Smoothing is carried out with thumbs, leather, cloth or a wooden knife, and the deep grooves – with animal skin, plants and tools with a comb-shaped working end, made of various materials. Relief ornaments or signs are found on the bottoms of some vessels, but they have a technological purpose rather to strengthen the vessel on the stand during its manufacture than to carry a certain symbolism. Less often, signs are noticed on the walls of the vessel, usually applied before firing. Vessels for storing liquids, such as amphora-shaped pitchers, have a glaze applied after firing. Then the vessels acquire porosity, allowing them to easily absorb the water in which the glaze was diluted. After glazing, the vessels are fired again. Glaze is a method of coating the vessel before the final firing, in which a semi-molten mineral mass is applied, usually consisting of fusible silicate compounds. Despite the insignificant thickness of the glaze compared to the tile, it contributes significantly to the improvement of a number of performance indicators, as well as to the artistic impact of the finished ceramic products. The color of ceramics is also determined by the amount of iron and the degree of its oxidation, as well as the presence of organic substances. The degree of oxidation of iron depends on the firing conditions. The oxidizing atmosphere in the ceramic kiln involves the conversion of iron into trivalent – Fe_2O_3 , the color of which is the cause of the red color of the ceramics. The reducing atmosphere is the cause of the conversion of iron into divalent – FeO , which is the cause of the gray color of the ceramic products. Very often, when firing thicker-walled ceramic products, the surface of the ceramic is colored red (brown), and in depth the color is gray and gray-black⁴. The reason for this phenomenon is the rapid cooling of the ceramic products. The effect of fire on ceramics is similar. The color of the ceramic body, in addition to the concentration of iron, also depends on the presence of other components in the ceramic dough.

The production of pottery, whether custom-made or intended for the market, was determined by the ceramics made on a potter's wheel. According to researchers, the bulk of the vessels discovered in our early medieval settlements, hillforts and necropolises were made on a hand-made potter's wheel⁵. Some of the vessels were made on a light hand-made pottery wheel, as evidenced by the band technique, the indented imprint of the axis of the wheel in the central part, the stamps, the sand filling and the asymmetry of the lines in the upper parts. The edge along the rim of the bottoms is particularly

⁴ Kulev 2012, 303-305.

⁵ Doncheva-Petkova 1977, 23-24.

characteristic, with traces of strengthening the surface and processing of the bottom area. The imprints on the bottoms are combined with traces of the use of non-plastic filling (ash, sand). The majority of the vessels were made on a heavy hand-made wheel, in which the bottom is smooth, cut with a thread, there is no filling, the lines are clean and there is complete symmetry. After shaping the vessels and applying the ornament, the vessels were left to dry for some time, as the water contained in the clay dough evaporates. Drying is an important process that guarantees the integrity and shape of the vessels. The ancient masters knew the properties of clays, which is why in many cases impurities of medium and small quartz particles were added. This leads to the creation of a non-plastic consistency that is resistant to cracking and deformation due to the uniform drying of the vessels molded from it. After drying the vessels, they were placed in pottery kilns and fired at a temperature of 500-600° C, when the chemically bound water is separated and the clay turns into a stone-like mass, unaffected by water⁶.

Evidence of the production of local household ceramics is the open kiln in one of the workshops of the production center in Zlatar (fig. 7-8). Among the metal melting furnaces discovered in the workshops of the center in Zlatar is a pottery kiln used exclusively for firing clay vessels⁷. It consists of two chambers – an upper grate with a thickness of 0.20 m and six holes with a diameter of 0.17 m drilled evenly in it. The dome on top has been destroyed due to the small depth from the terrain level and the processing of the terrain. The height between the grate and the level of the bottom is 0.70 m. The latter measures 0.85 m in the widening at the front and 0.70 m in the narrow part inward. Its bottom is rounded, similar to the entrance. The length along the longitudinal axis is 1.10 m. On both sides of the bottom there are two holes. One is semicircular, and the other is round. The bottom of the furnace is 1.0 m above the modern ground level. In front of the furnace, a pit measuring 1.70/1.80 m and 0.15 m deep was formed. When the embankment was cleared, several fragments of pottery and a dozen bronze melts were recovered from the furnace and pit.

East of the furnace and the pit, a hearth with dimensions: 0.80/0.75 m was outlined. It consists of several highly burned and red-colored stones, arranged in a circle. Between them there is a thick layer of charcoal mixed with pieces of burnt ceramics. In front of the hearth from the north, another such layer of charcoal was revealed, falling on the uppermost level of a pre-furnace pit (1.70 m lower level and 2.20 m – upper level). The digging level of the pit starts from 1.10 m, i.e. the lowest walking level registered in the studied sectors and reaches 0.50 m. A hole of a pillar structure was formed between the two pits – the one in front of the furnace and the one in front of the hearth. In addition to the furnace dug into the ground, the boundary of the complex from

⁶ Opp. cit, p. 29.

⁷ Doncheva 2015, 633-636.

the west, which passes behind it, was also captured. It is a continuation of the one registered last year. The excavation is on three levels, reaching 0.80-0.90 m at the lowest point with two concentrations of stones rammed onto the ground.



Fig. 7. Furnace for household ceramics in one of the workshops of the production center in Zlatar. View from the east (photo St. Doncheva)



Fig. 8. Furnace for household ceramics in one of the workshops of the production center in Zlatar. Close-up (photo St. Doncheva)

The furnace belongs to the so-called first type of two-chamber furnaces of small dimensions, where the lower chamber is the hearth dug into the solid terrain, and the upper chamber – the place where the vessels were arranged and fired. The two chambers are separated by a grate with round holes through which the hot air passed. The furnace in Zlatar is the only pottery furnace so far found on the territory of the centers for artistic metal. Its presence explains the finds of local ceramics, made on site and with the main purpose – to satisfy production needs. The collection of household ceramics accompanying the metallurgical activity is indicative in terms of dating. The functioning of the center is determined from the 20-30s to the 60-70s of the 10th century. The modest ceramic finds from Zlatar contribute to the broader context of ceramic production of the period, serving as a reference point that helps refine the dating of the main ceramic types characteristic of the early Bulgarian Middle Ages.

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PIXE-analysis of industrial ceramics from the center of metal art at Novosel, Shumen region

Stella Doncheva, Nina Arhangelova, Angyal Anikó, Enikő Furu,
Boglárka Döncző

Abstract: In 2019, a successful project was implemented to study the elemental composition of production ceramics (crucibles) from the two studied centers for artistic metal in the vicinity of the capital Preslav, dated by finds of household ceramics and coins in the 10th century. The results of the study of the crucibles, given the significant volume of the text, are presented in successive publications, according to the origin of the foundry vessels. This work presents in detail the results of the analysis of crucibles from the production center in Novosel, Shumen region. The aim of the study is to determine the quantitative elemental composition of the production ceramics from the centers for artistic metal by using PIXE-analysis. The study of the elemental composition of the ceramics allows conclusions to be drawn about the origin of the raw material, as well as a comparison with the results of similar studies from other regions outside the country.

The results of the study of the glazed surfaces of the crucibles and their interior prove that the fragments of foundry vessels subjected to analysis contain molten copper alloys and, more specifically, lead-tin bronze. This is also confirmed by the numerous finds of metal products, blanks and scrap found at the production center near Novosel. In addition to bronzes, precious metals and alloys are also used, as evidenced by the found silver products and those with gilding and white metal coating (silver and tin). Thus, the combination of microscopic and chemical analyses of crucible slag remains the best approach to the study of the basic technology of production and use of refractory ceramics in the period from antiquity to the present day, which is also confirmed by the elemental analysis of crucibles found in the workshops of the center for artistic metal at Novosel, Shumen region.

Key words: industrial ceramics, crucibles, elemental composition, PIXE-analysis

Резюме: През 2019 г. се реализира успешен проект за проучване на елементния състав на производствена керамика (тигли) от двата изследвани центъра за художествен метал в околностите на столицата Преслав, датирани с находки на битова керамика и монети през X век. Резултатите от изследването на тиглите, предвид на значителния обем на текста, са представени в поредни публикации, според произхода на леярските съдове. В тази работа са представени подробно резултатите от анализа на тигли от производствения център в Новосел, Шуменска област. Целта на проучването е да се определи количественият елементен състав на производствената керамика от центровете за художествен метал чрез използването на PIXE-анализ. Изследването на елементния състав на керамиката позволява да се направят заключения за произхода на суровината, както и сравнението с резултатите от подобни изследвания от други региони извън страната.

Резултатите от изследването на остъклените повърхности на тиглите и вътрешността им доказва, че в подложените на анализ фрагменти от леярски съдове са топени медни сплави и по-конкретно оловно-калаен бронз. Това се потвърждава и от многобройните находки на метални изделия, заготовки и скрап, намерени на производствения център при Новосел. Освен бронзи, приложение намират и благородните метали и сплави, за което говорят намерените сребърни изделия и такива с нанесена позлата и бяло метално покритие (сребро и калай). Така комбинацията от микроскопски и химични анализи на тигелна шлака остава най-добрият подход към изследването на основната технология на производство и употреба на огнеупорна керамика във времето от античността до наши дни, което се потвърждава и от елементния анализ на тигли, намерени в работилниците на центъра за художествен метал при Новосел, Шуменско.

A successful project to study industrial ceramics from the two studied artistic metal centers in the vicinity of the capital Preslav, dated by finds of ceramics and coins in the 10th century, was implemented in 2019. The study analyzes fragments of crucibles, the most common type of foundry vessel, recovered from a secure archaeological setting and distinguished by the characteristic features of their shape and function. More than 100 complete casting vessels and thousands of fragments of them have been discovered in the investigation. A large amount of whole and fragmented pieces of vessels and manufacturing ceramics have been collected and this is a solid base to realize similar research. The crucibles have a hemispherical shape with an elongated and widened bottom (belly), a pinched handle for gripping and a narrow mouth for pouring the molten metal. The found whole and fragmented vessels also show that they were made according to a model (mold), with the help of which the hemispherical volumetric body was shaped together with the mouth. This is confirmed by the visible edge above the latter and the outline of the oval wide opening next to it in the upper part of the crucible. The initial assumptions that arose during the research of the center at Zlatar for a separate manufacture of the handle for gripping and subsequent attachment to the body were confirmed by the numerous fragments found from different parts of the vessel. Like the handle, the plug of the opening in the upper part was made additionally. It was also formed in a mold, plugging the vessel after placing the metal shavings in it after the clay had completely dried.

The assumption that the crucibles were made with a shape and pattern is confirmed by the dimensions and thickness of the walls (0.5-0.8 cm). It is striking that the length, width and height are multiple integer values, which cannot be observed if the vessels were made by hand, without the use of a certain template (pattern). The volume of metal melted in the largest crucibles does not exceed 35-40 cm³, with crucibles with a volume of 15 to 30 m³

prevailing, which is a general indicator for this type of ceramics¹. Overall, there is a clear connection between the functionality of the crucibles and the required technical characteristics. Key among them is the closed shape, necessary to maintain the specific gas atmosphere inside the vessel. Closed shapes are a major protective measure to prevent oxidation of the contents.

Until now, such a study of the elemental composition of foundry vessels had not been undertaken. Attention was focused primarily on the metal finds and the study of their elemental composition, as a result of which a significant database was accumulated, which makes it possible to carry out some more detailed observations related to the production technology and the origin of the raw materials. The results have been published in a series of articles in Bulgarian and foreign journals, and some are yet to be published, and this applies mainly to the analyses of metal finds from the third known center for artistic metal in the vicinity of Preslav, the one near Nadarevo, Targovishte².

The results of the research are divided into two groups, according to the origin of the foundry vessels. In this work, the results of the analysis of crucibles from the production center in Novosel, Shumen region will be presented in detail. In a separate publication, the data from the analysis of crucibles from the production center in Zlatar, Preslav region will be examined. This is necessary due to the large volume of information that cannot be presented in a shortened version for the finds from the two centers, due to the importance of the color maps of the registered elements and the tables and graphs that necessarily accompany such a study. The focus is placed on each object separately, with the analysis results for each sample point reviewed, the dominant elements highlighted, and the findings synthesized in a summary. The conclusion situates the studied group of foundry vessels from the production center in Novosel within the established patterns of structure and elemental composition of the material, with particular emphasis on their function and the traces of use they bear.

Place of work: All analyses, both of the metal finds and of the production ceramics, were carried out at the Institute for Nuclear Research Atomki, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Laboratory of Ion Beam Applications, Atomki, Debrecen according to IPERION-CH TNA Project (ACCVCFKCMAMB).

The aim of the analysis: To determine the quantitative elemental composition of vessels and manufacturing ceramics from medieval Bulgaria by ion beam analytical technique (PIXE). The study of the elemental composition of ceramics allow us to draw conclusions about the origin of the raw material by comparing it with the results of such research so far on ceramics from other regions. The study of the elemental composition of the crucibles will give us a

¹ Eniosova 2012, 209-214; Eniosova & Zarnov 2006, 69-70, fig. 2.

² Doncheva & Tsekova & Penev et al. 2012, 67-82; Doncheva & Tsekova & Penev et al 2013, 71-85; Doncheva & Tsekova & Penev et al 2017, 75-88.

starting point not only for the composition of the clay from which they are made, but above all for the kind of metal that has been melted in their shape. From the available bits of ceramic 30-35 samples (vessels and crucibles) was selected. Appropriate places for analysis have been smooth and cleaned. The main objective of the analysis was clarification of various composition, mainly brass, bronze and their variations, as well as tin-lead alloys. The study focused especially on trace elements, determined by the PIXE method, as these could yield insights into the types of metals employed in the crucibles. The applied analytical methods: particle induce X-ray emission (PIXE). The measurement was realized at the scanning nuclear microprobe facility of Atomki installed at the 00 beamline of the 5MV Van de Graaff accelerator³.

Measurement setup: Two X-ray detectors placed at 1350 geometry to the incidence beam were applied to collect the emitted characteristic X-rays. An SDD detector with AP3.3 ultra-thin polymer window (SGX Sesortech) with 30 mm² active surface area was used to measure low and medium energy X-rays (0.2 – 12 keV, $Z > 5$). A permanent magnet protects the detector from the scattered protons. A Gresham type Be windowed Si(Li) X-ray detector with 30 mm² active surface area equipped with an additional kapton filter of 250 mm² thickness was applied to detect the medium and high energy X-rays (3-30 keV, $Z > 19$). The beam dose was measured with a beam chopper⁴. Signals from all detectors (two PIXE, and the particle detector of the chopper) were recorded event by event in a list mode by the Oxford type OMDAQ data acquisition system. High quality PIXE spectra were recorded parallel to this with the SGX digital DPP⁵.

Measurement conditions and measurement procedure: A proton beam of 3.2 MeV energy focused down to ~1.5 mm x 1.5 mm with a current of 200-300 pA was used to irradiate the samples. At first elemental maps of a 1mm x 1mm area was recorded to find mineral inclusions of interest. Once the potentially interesting areas were identified the scan size was reduced, and the mineral inclusions were studied in details. Quantitative measurements were done on masked areas.

Data evaluation: The obtained PIXE spectra were evaluated with the GUPIXWIN program code⁶. At first the composition of the matrix was determined from the spectra of the SDD detector using the iterative matrix solution method, and then the spectra of the Be windowed detector was analysed in trace element mode, using the previously obtained matrix and the measured irradiation dose. The samples were treated as “thick” samples. On the spectra of both detectors the X-ray energy range of 3.0 - 8.5 keV is common,

³ Rajta & Borbély-Kiss & Móri et al. 1996, 148.

⁴ Bartha & Uzonyi 2000, 339-343.

⁵ Kertész & Szikszai & Szoboszlai et al. 2009, 2236-2240; Simon & Matiskainen & Uzonyi et al. 2011, 224-228.

⁶ Campbell & Boyd & Grassi et al. 2010, 3: 3356-3363.

therefore intensive X-ray lines within this range (e.g. Ca K_{α} , Ti K_{α} , Fe K_{α}), was used to normalize the elemental concentrations. In most cases the differences of the concentration values of the 2 detector were 0 - 5%. As a final step, the elemental composition was normalized to 100%, if needed.

The following elements were fitted: C, O, F, Na, Mg, P, S, Cl, K, Ca, Sc, Ti, V, Cr, Mn, Fe, Co, Ni, Cu, Zn, Ga, Ge, As, Se, Br, Rb, Sr, Y, Zr, Nb, Mo, Rh, Cs, Ba, La, Ce, Pr, Nd, Pm, Sm, Eu, Gd, Tb, Dy, Ho, Er, Tm, Yb, Hf, Ta, W, Re, Os, Ir, Pt, Au, Hg, Tl, Pb, Bi, Th, U. The uncertainty of the PIXE measurement for the main components is ~ 2-5%, while for the trace elements it is ~10-15%. The uncertainty originating from the fitting process is added to this. Carbon was treated as surface contamination, remnant from the carbon coating of the sample (**Tab. 1**).

Quality assurance: In order to check the quality and precision of the dose measurement and of the determination of the concentrations' measurements on standard reference materials were carried out. Used SRMs were a series of pure metals and a layered sample (6 mm thick Ti foil on 50 mm Ni). The calibration of the beam chopper was also done at the beginning of the campaign. These measurements serve for the determination of the exact measurement conditions (eg. solid angles of detectors)⁷.

Analysis of the analysis:

Crucible 1_Ns. The crucible fragment subjected to analysis is part of a foundry vessel with an irregular shape and a highly glazed outer surface, colored in red and green (fig. 1). Two points on the outer side were analyzed. The elemental composition shows similar values for both samples with small differences in some of them (Tab. 1). The values of non-metals are increased - Si - 22.43%, 19.65%; C - 4.36%, 11.13%; O - 48.66%, 42.2% and some of the alkali and alkaline earth elements - K - 4.74%, 3.75%; Ca - 9.41%, 12.55%; Mg - 1.85%, 2.03%. Over 5% is the transition metal Al - 5.49%, 4.97%. Fe - 1.85%, 2.41% also reaches almost 2%. Tens of a percent are marked by the non-metal P - 0.637%, 0.648% and the metal Ti - 0.281%, 0.305%. The alkaline earth metal strontium is registered only in the second sample - Sr - 0.171%. (fig. 13, 18-19). The remaining elements are expressed in hundredths and thousandths of a percent. Such are the important for us copper and zinc - Cu - 0.061%, 0.023%; Zn - 0.001, 0.003% and trace elements - Co - 0.014% in both samples and Ni - 0.004%, 0.006%. The increased values of silicon and alkaline earth metals potassium, calcium, magnesium, as well as the other mentioned elements are due to the main chemical components of the clay from which the crucibles are made - silicon dioxide SiO₂ (30-70%), dialuminum trioxide Al₂O₃ (10-40%), H₂O (5-15%) and the secondary ones - oxides Fe₂O₃, FeO, MnO, MgO, CaO, K₂O, Na₂O (fig. 20). The blue-green coloration is due to copper compounds - oxides (CuO) and salts, which are unstable coloring substances. In an oxidizing

⁷ Kertész & Furu & Angyal et al. 2015, 306: 283-288.

environment, copper oxide forms blue-green copper silicates, and in a reducing environment, it colors the surface in a bright red color. The red color is also due to Fe_2O_3 , which forms red-colored silicates with the components of the tile, and yellow-colored silicates with those of the glaze. The elemental composition maps are colored in green and blue, which indicates the presence of copper compounds (fig. 2). Their deposition on the surface of the crucible occurred as a result of the high temperatures during heating in the furnace, which vitrified and slag-coated the outer side of the vessel. Considering also the values of copper, as well as the trace elements nickel and cobalt, which are not in large quantities, but sufficient to be an indicator of the presence not only in the crucible mass, but also in the metal melted in it, we can certainly say that a copper alloy was melted in the crucible.

Crucible 2_Ns. The second sample is a fragment of a crucible with an irregular shape and a slag-covered, broken-structure surface, colored in blue-green with a narrow strip of red coloring at one end (fig. 3). Predominantly high values were measured among nonmetals, alkali and alkaline earth metals – Si – 15.86%, 19.08%, C – 27.54%, 3.72%; O – 34.89%, 29.75%; Mg – 1.46%, 1.49%; K – 4.31%, 4.8%; Ca – 8.22%, 9.56% (Tab. 1). Among the metals, high values are recorded for iron and aluminum, respectively Fe – 2.28%, 2.23%; Al – 4.33%, 5.18%. Tenths of a percent are titanium and manganese, i.e. Ti – 0.262%, 0.25%; Mn – 0.184%, 0.142% (fig. 18-20). The results are similar to those of the first crucible with small deviations in hundredths of a percent, which indicates the similar conditions of use of the foundry vessels, as well as the same origin of the raw material for their manufacture. The blue-green coloration of the glazed surface is again due to the copper spillage on the surface, and the red hue at the end (where the second point of study falls) to the conversion of iron compounds into iron oxide and metallic iron (fig. 4). The high content of phosphorus P – 0.499% and calcium Ca – 8.22%, 9.56% is explained by the addition of organic impurities in the clay dough (fig. 19, 24). Chemical components in the clays are the oxides SiO_2 and Al_2O_3 , and other oxides are also involved as accompanying components – Fe_2O_3 , TiO_2 , CaO , MgO , K_2O , Na_2O and MnO_2 , which is confirmed by the values of the main elements of the compounds (fig. 14).

Crucible 3_Ns. The fragment is part of the bottom of a crucible with a slag-coated outer surface, colored blue-green, and an inner side with a preserved layer of the melt with a light yellow and dark red color (fig. 5). Two measurements were made on each side, respectively on the entire surface and at a selected point on it. This gives a fairly good picture of the composition of the clay structure, both on the surface of the crucible and in its interior, where the processes of melting the metal took place. The values of the main non-metals in the composition of the clay – silicon Si – 18.53%, 20.2%, 17.16%, 20.66%, carbon C – 13.76%, 6.91%, 6.73%, 3.07%, oxygen O – 42.36%, 42.36%, 47.59%, 49.5% are significantly increased due to the oxides they form with the other elements (Tab. 1), (fig. 18-19). The presence of chlorine Cl – 0.032%,

0.072%, 0.024%, 0.03%, unlike most examples included in this work, indicates the addition of inorganic non-plastic materials, such as limestone, quartz sand, chamotte. In this regard, increased values of the alkaline Na - 0.353%; K - 2.34%, 1.87%, 1.17%, 2.35% and the alkaline earth metals Mg - 1.29%, 1.85%, 0.879%, 1.06%; Ca - 11.07%, 1.22%, 2.85%, 2.23% were registered, which are natural impurities in the material from which the crucibles were molded (fig. 15, 24). In the present sample, the non-metals phosphorus and sulfur are significantly present, especially phosphorus P - 0.398%, 0.2%, 2.87%, 1.36%; S - 0.03%, 0.052%, 0.048%, 0.052%.

Of the metals, the leading role is played by aluminum Al - 6.08%, 9.9%, 5.89%, 8.68%, which is due to the natural impurity of the clay - dialuminum trioxide - Al_2O_3 , which is part of the mineral kaolinite ($\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot 2\text{SiO}_2 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$), (fig. 18-19). In addition to it, montmorillonite ($\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot 4\text{SiO}_2 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$) and halloysite ($\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot 2\text{SiO}_2 \cdot 4\text{H}_2\text{O}$) can be found in the composition of the clay (fig. 20). After aluminum, manganese Mn - 0.065%, 0.056%, 0.105%, 3.18%, which in the selected point inside the crucible reaches over 3% Mn. The high values of iron Fe - 1.91%, 14.34%, 14.1%, 7% are due to the iron oxides, which together with limestone, orthoclase (KAlSi_3O_8), etc. are additional clay components. The red color of the interior of the crucible is also due to the iron hydroxides. The green color on the outer surface is due to the copper oxides from the melt, which, taking into account the registered values of zinc and lead, can be assumed to be a copper alloy - bronze. The trace elements - nickel and cobalt, which are present in hundredths of a percent and come from copper raw materials, also confirm such an assumption (fig. 6-7).

Crucible 4_Ns. The crucible fragment represents part of the bottom of the foundry vessel, the choice being dictated by the highly glazed surface of the outer side and the parts of the interior of the vessel that stand out with their yellow-brown coloring (fig. 8). The analysis of the elemental composition of the crucible fragment was made on both sides - outer and inner, and here, similarly to the previous object, the measurement was on the entire surface and separately at a selected point of it. Thus, we have four samples, two on each side. The results are similar to those of the previous crucible, with small deviations. The non-metals C - 14.64%, 3.8%, 9.28%, 4.99%; O - 43.93%, 38.44%, 47.21%, 52.52% have high values due to their participation in metal oxides, as natural impurities in the clay raw material of the crucible (Tab. 1). Of these, phosphorus P - 0.734%, 0.984%, 0.925% has lower values, and sulfur is registered only in one of the measurements S - 0.03%. The addition of organic components is supported by both the presence of phosphorus and the high values of calcium - Ca - 5.82%, 4.31%, 2.93%, 2.43%. The main element silicon Si - 20.28%, 17.83%, 23.91%, 20.45%, which enters the silicon dioxide, which makes up the composition of the raw material, is the highest (fig. 18-20). In this connection, the values of potassium K - 5.44%, 5.28%, 1.91%, 1.63% and magnesium Mg 1.84%, 1.84%, 1.04%, 1.38% in the form of oxides MgO , K_2O , part

of the secondary chemical elements of clays (fig. 24). Of the transition metals, we should pay attention to titanium, whose values are close to those of the transition crucible and are tenths of the percentage Ti – 0.282%, 0.254%, 0.388%, 0.234%. Its presence is associated with the presence of titanium-containing minerals - mainly anatase, less often rutile, and can be structurally bound or structurally unbound TiO_2 . Manganese is also in this order, which in one of the measurements reaches values over 2%, Mn 0.123%, 0.102%, 0.09%, 2.5% and proves the presence of MnO. Traditionally for the group of crucibles from Novosel, the indicators of iron Fe 2.55%, 2.03%, 4.07%, 3.45% are also high, and is determined by the presence of iron hydroxides and iron-bearing micas, absorption by clay minerals, as well as their inclusion in the structure (fig. 16).

The element copper shows values in the sample from the interior in tenths of a percent Cu – 0.003%, 0.116%, 0.03%. Together with the measured values of the trace elements nickel Ni 0.004%, 0.003%, 0.004%, 0.03% and cobalt Co 0.021%, 0.014%, 0.04%, as well as the bronze alloying additives zinc Zn 0.012%, 0.008%, 0.014%, 0.02%, which is volatile and flies off at high temperatures; and lead Pb 0.004%, 0.016%, 0.044%, which is insoluble and is separated in the form of small drops on the walls of the vessel, it can be concluded that bronze was also melted in this crucible (fig. 21-23). This is also supported by the color charts that accompany the elemental composition (fig. 9), as well as by the coloring of the outer surface of the crucible in oil-green from the copper oxides.

Crucible 5_Ns. The last crucible included in the present work is a part of the wall of the foundry vessel, which was heavily slag-coated and with a changed shape and structure due to the high temperature during the melting of the metal in it. The green and red coloring is due to the molten metal penetrating the clay, as well as to the coal fuel in the furnace, adhering to the surface of the heated crucible in it (fig. 10). Both sides were analyzed – external and internal, and the entire surface and selected points of it were measured (Tab. 1). The high values of non-metals, including carbon C – 16.18%, 15.65%, 12.29%, 9.96%, 5.04%; oxygen O – 46.57%, 47.48%, 46.61%, 40.68%, 41.09%; silicon – Si – 19.05%, 20.33%, 22.56%, 14.26%, 22.43%; phosphorus P 0.382%, 0.481%, 0.728%, 4.44%, 2.15%. In this regard, the presence and values of the alkali and alkaline earth metals Mg – 0.93%, 0.762%, 1%, 0.887%, 0.322%; K – 4.48%, 2.3%, 1.63%, 0.617%, 1.61%; Ca – 5.1%, 3.06%, 3.77%, 5.9%, 5.88% are due to the main chemical components of the clay SiO_2 (30-70%), Al_2O_3 (10-40%), H_2O (5-15%) and the secondary Fe_2O_3 , FeO, MnO, MgO, CaO, K_2O , Na₂O (fig. 18-20, 24). The presence of manganese Mn 0.041%, 0.022%, 0.066%, 0.032%, 0.226% and aluminum Al – 5.35%, 4.78%, 7.03%, 5.08%, 3.81% are also indicative of the composition of the clay raw material from which the crucibles are made (fig. 11-12, 17).

Of particular interest is the presence of a significant amount of copper Cu – 0.111%, 0.21%, 0.234%, 0.676% and as much as 12.95% in the measured values

from a selected point on the inner surface (Tab. 1). This indicates that a copper alloy or more precisely tin-lead bronze was melted in the crucible. This is supported by the significant amounts of tin, which are the only ones registered so far with measurable values Sn 0.786%, 0.25% and that in the interior of the vessel (fig. 21). To this are added the indicators of lead Pb – 0.007%, 0.037%, 0.198%, 0.234% and the trace elements from the composition of the copper ores - nickel and cobalt Ni – 0.003%, 0.019%, 0.005%, 0.016%; Co – 0.034%, 0.105%, 0.033%, and parts of nickel may also be present in the clay from which the crucibles were made (fig. 22-23). The presence of tin in the samples and the high values of copper indicate that the temperature to which this crucible was subjected was quite high, more than 1200-1250°C, which led to an increase in porosity, vitrification of the surface and the melting of parts of the crucible itself, mixed with metal from the melt. Thus, the technological requirements were violated, as a result of which a full reduction process did not take place, which in turn gives us a good picture of the elemental composition not only of the crucible slag, but also of the molten metal in the casting vessel.

Conclusion: All crucibles clearly bear traces of use in the production process, which is evidenced by the heat-glazed surfaces of the outer walls and the multi-colored slag-like coatings on the inside and outside of these technological vessels. Most of the crucibles used for melting metals in antiquity have glazing to a greater or lesser extent. It depends on the dough of the vessel and is a measure of fire resistance. The distribution of glazed areas on the vessels can suggest how the crucibles were heated - from below or above. Glazing on the outside of the crucible is always caused by the flow of flux and ash in the fire. This hot ash “glazes” or slags the often contained traces of metal, even small drops of metal or those associated with the slag layer. With their high density (ρ 1600-1800 kg/m³), specific heat capacity (878 J/kg.K) and thermal conductivity coefficient (λ 0.17- 0.21 W/mK), clay products have the ability to accumulate heat and release it into the environment for a long period of time, making them an exceptionally good thermal mass.

The main oxides that make up the ceramic skull are SiO₂, Al₂O₃, CaO, Fe₂O₃. Impurifying oxides are TiO₂, and coloring oxides are Cr₂O₃, MnO, NiO. K₂O is used as a flux. The high SiO₂ contents indicate that the clay from which the crucibles are made contains significant impurities of quartz, which is registered in the profile of the vessels. The proportions of the various non-ferrous metals represented in the crucible slag depend not only on their original concentrations in the metal smelter, but also on their chemical nature. The chemical elements (Ag, Cu, Sn, Pb, etc.) as components of the alloy melted in the crucible diffuse into the crucible wall, causing a higher concentration of metal elements in the ceramic vessel. Elements, such as gold Au, which are unreactive, are not detected unless they are represented as small drops in the slag. The concentration scale of lead Pb and especially zinc Zn are increased, which can act as glaze-forming elements and are also confined in the crucible

slag. Zinc Zn is very volatile and spreads well on the crucible walls, so it is well visible in analysis, even if it is present in small amounts of molten metal.

The presence of potassium K and calcium Ca shows that the alkaline and alkaline earth aluminum silicates, such as orthoclase, anorite, kaolinite, are predominant in the composition. These are the main component of all clays, sodium carbonate (Na_2CO_3), potassium carbonate (K_2CO_3), etc. The clays used are marl with a CaO content. More specifically, the clay from which the crucibles are made can be defined as secondary (sedimentary) clay, and depending on the substances it is composed of, such as marl. Marl clays contain significant amounts of powdered calcium carbonate (chalk), with the amount of CaCO_3 ranging from 15 to 50 percent and more. However, those that contain up to 30% calcium carbonate have practical application. In this particular case, they are 16%. The share of fuel ash is mainly lime and alkali, such as sodium and potash. The slag may contain 10% CaO and bind to the bases. The sulfur content S in some samples favors copper and, like iron, appears as an impurity from the melt in the crucible. Small inclusions of nickel, antimony, etc. are from the metal itself. Nickel Ni comes from the copper, while arsenic As and antimony Sb are gradually lost under oxidizing conditions when melting copper. The correct technique for melting in a crucible is to melt under oxidizing conditions by introducing air or adding cuprous oxide. These products should be scraped through a piece of charcoal or wood and only then tin should be added to obtain bronze, as well as lead if desired⁸.

The chemical composition of the crucible material proves that high-alumina clays were used. The Al_2O_3 content is within the range for high-melting clays. Ceramics with higher aluminum content and lower alkali levels are more heat-resistant, while high levels of other oxides, such as lime (CaO), soda (Na_2O) or potash (K_2O), reduce refractoriness. The increased presence of Fe_2O_3 gives rise to very good sintering at a lower temperature and an intensification of the red coloration. Above 800-900° C, iron oxides with silicon dioxide from clay minerals and free quartz from impurities form low-melting silicates, which lower the softening temperature of the clays and often lead to deformation of the products. Analyses of the slag surface, which is mainly green and red in color, show the presence of iron and copper. The presence of a significant amount of Fe_2O_3 in combination with cuprorivate ($\text{CaCuSi}_4\text{O}_{10}$) gives an optical green color. The clay used to make the vessels is highly fusible, and the increased content of Fe_2O_3 in combination with K_2O helps to sinter at a lower temperature and thus preserves the vessel from breaking. Even temperatures up to 1100°C have had a silicate effect on the materials. The ash in the fire, which is rich in alkalis, reacts with the silicates, creating glazed materials called slags. These alkaline silicate slags are known as fuel-ash slags and are not in themselves evidence of specific production processes, but are an

⁸ Tylecote 1982, 239.

indicator of a high-temperature fire⁹. The glazed layer is observed with a completely glazed surface. The fragments have a glazed surface or are completely glazed - classic fuel-ash slag. Alkali-silicate slag is often in a large color range – from white to gray and brown to black. Thin glazes are often light bluish-green. Most of the colors are due to the presence of small, quite variable amounts of iron, which are present in the original silicate materials.

The refractory properties of crucibles depend on the composition of the clay from which they are made and the inorganic impurities added to the mass. For example, the high content of phosphorus and calcium is explained by the addition of organic impurities. The composition of the melting vessels may contain more silicon and aluminum, but there should be little iron oxides, bases (Na_2O , K_2O) and alkaline earth metals, which act as fluxes that soften the dough¹⁰. The most important components of clay are aluminum oxide (Al_2O_3), silicon dioxide (SiO_2), oxides of alkaline earth metals (CaO , MgO), alkali oxides (Na_2O , K_2O), etc. In addition to the molding mass, all kinds of additives are added that reduce the plasticity of the clay – organic substances of plant nature. Rounded quartz sand also serves as a mineral additive. Significant quantities of these clays are found precisely in the northeastern regions of Bulgaria¹¹. An important clue to the place of extraction of the clay for the foundry vessels is the presence of the element strontium in the chemical composition. It indicates the presence of strontium sulfate (SrSO_4), which is formed by the crystallization of seawater. It has been established that in Bulgaria, celestine is found in Popovo and Shumen regions. The most significant deposits of high-quality kaolin are concentrated in Northeastern Bulgaria, near Kaolinovo, Todor Ikonomovo, Senovo and Vetovo. In the region of Preslav and Targovishte, deposits of pure white clay are also known, which confirms the assumption that the main material from which the refractory crucibles were made in the production center in Novosel, Shumen region came from the nearby vicinity. It is also important to note the local production of the foundry vessels, which were made in the workshops themselves and were not subject to regular import or brought from other similar production centers, such as those registered in the vicinity of the capital Preslav.

The study of metal remains on the inside of crucible walls can be correlated with crucible typology to determine whether specific shapes correspond to specific metals. The same strategy can be used to investigate whether specific workshops at a site were focused on different metals. The combination of aluminum-rich and flux-poor clays with abundant quartz inclusions makes the crucibles sufficiently refractory and resistant to thermal shock to fulfill their function. This ceramic withstands high temperatures

⁹ Bayley 2007, 42.

¹⁰ Nuretdinova 2017, 254-266, 257-258, Tab. 2.

¹¹ Ivanov 2016.

without breaking. Analysis of the glazed layers on the inner surface of crucible fragments and the metal particles they contain allows conclusions to be drawn about the metallurgical processes that may have taken place in these vessels. When performing this type of analysis, it is important to keep in mind that the composition of metal particles in the crucible slag layer may not accurately reflect the overall composition of the metal melted within, due to local concentration effects and potentially heterogeneous reduction conditions in different parts of the crucible, leading to selective oxidation.

Observations of the entire preserved crucibles and their fragments show that they were heated from all sides, being almost completely buried in the charcoal previously placed in the furnace. This is due to the slag-covered and glazed outer surface and the spillage of metal and its mixing with the softened clay structure of the casting vessel in cases where the temperatures reached much higher than permissible values. Some of the fragments have large and deep cavities, almost without exception glazed and colored in blue-green, red and black, which, as shown by the values from the measurement of the main chemical elements, indicates the interaction of the melt, the clay texture of the crucible and the fuel ash in the furnace.

The results of the study of the glazed surfaces of the crucibles and their interior prove that the fragments of foundry vessels subjected to analysis contain molten copper alloys and, more specifically, lead-tin bronze. This is also confirmed by the numerous finds of metal products, blanks and scrap found at the production center near Novosel. In addition to bronzes, precious metals and alloys are also used, as evidenced by the found silver products and those with gilding and white metal coating (silver and tin). Thus, the combination of microscopic and chemical analyses of crucible slag remains the best approach to the study of the basic technology of production and use of refractory ceramics in the period from antiquity to the present day, which is also confirmed by the elemental analysis of crucibles found in the workshops of the center for artistic metal near Novosel, Shumen region.

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Component	Crucible_1 Ns		Crucible_2 Ns		Crucible_3 Ns				Crucible_4 Ns				Crucible_5 Ns			
	Point 1	Point 2	Point 1	Point 2	Point 1 (full area)	Point 1 (selected area 1)	Point 2 (full area-back side)	Point 2 (selected area-back side)	Point 1 (full area)	Point 1 (selected area)	Point 2 (full area-back side)	Point 2 (selected area-back side)	Point 1 (selected area)	Point 1 (full area-back side)	Point 2 (selected area 1-back side)	Point 2 (selected area 3-back side)
C	4,36	11,13	27,54	3,72	13,76	6,91	6,73	3,07	13,64	3,8	9,28	4,99	16,18	15,65	12,29	9,96
O	48,66	42,2	34,89	29,75	43,62	42,36	47,59	49,5	43,93	38,44	47,21	52,52	46,57	47,48	46,61	40,68
Na					0,353					0,741	0,382	0,217			0,418	0,586
Mg	1,85	2,03	1,46	1,49	1,29	1,85	0,879	1,06	1,84	1,84	1,04	1,38	0,93	0,762	1	0,887
Al	5,49	4,97	4,33	5,18	6,08	9,9	5,89	8,68	5,13	4,73	7,46	8,89	5,35	4,78	7,03	5,08
Si	22,43	19,65	15,86	19,08	18,53	20,2	17,16	20,66	20,28	17,83	23,91	20,45	19,05	20,33	22,56	14,26
P	0,637	0,648	0,499		0,398	0,2	2,87	1,36	0,734		0,984	0,925	0,382	0,481	0,728	4,44
S			0,023		0,03	0,052	0,048	0,052				0,03				0,164
Cl		0,015			0,032	0,072	0,024	0,03	0,007				0,01			0,015
K	4,74	3,75	4,31	4,8	2,34	1,87	1,17	2,35	5,44	5,28	1,91	1,63	4,48	2,3	1,63	0,617
Ca	9,41	12,55	8,22	9,56	11,07	1,22	2,85	2,23	5,82	4,31	2,93	2,43	5,1	3,06	3,77	5,9
Ti	0,281	0,305	0,262	0,25	0,313	0,648	0,272	0,36	0,282	0,254	0,388	0,234	0,198	0,17	0,304	0,158
V	0,007	0,008	0,007	0,007	0,008	0,012	0,015	0,013	0,009	0,004	0,007	0,006		0,005	0,008	0,035
Cr	0,003	0,005	0,002	0,006	0,004	0,013	0,009		0,002	0,003	0,017	0,006	0,003	0,007	0,01	0,027
Mn	0,05	0,066	0,184	0,142	0,065	0,056	0,105	3,18	0,123	0,102	0,09	2,5	0,041	0,022	0,066	0,032
Fe	1,85	2,41	2,28	2,23	1,91	14,34	14,1	7	2,55	2,03	4,07	3,45	1,51	4,61	3,16	15,76
Co	0,014	0,014	0,016	0,031	0,01	0,077	0,081	0,097		0,021	0,014	0,04		0,034		0,105
Ni	0,004	0,006	0,006	0,016	0,004	0,013		0,037	0,004	0,003	0,004	0,03	0,003	0,019	0,005	0,016
Cu	0,061	0,023	0,013	0	0,01	0,071	0,037	0,023	0,003		0,116	0,03	0,111	0,211	0,234	0,676
Zn	0,001	0,003		0,034	0,018	0,019	0,054	0,044	0,012	0,008	0,014	0,02	0,002	0,006	0,016	0,067
Rb	0,007		0,008	0,008	0,006	0,014			0,009		0,012	0,012	0,006	0,008	0,015	0,014
Sr	0,09	0,171	0,033	0,047	0,096	0,018	0,058	0,028	0,099	0,072	0,05	0,039	0,047	0,023	0,042	0,115
Ce							0,12					0,059				
Sn																0,786
Zr	0,011		0,012	0,03	0,02	0,056			0,044	20,15	0,051	0,018			0,035	
Hf										0,329						
Pb					0,006		0,03	0,05	0,004		0,016	0,044		0,007	0,037	0,198
																0,234

Table 1. Elemental composition of crucibles found at the metal art production center near Novosel, Shumen region

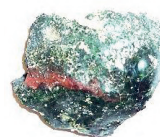


Description of the object

Name of the object: Crucible _1 Ns

Owner: RIM-Shumen

Contact person: Stella Doncheva



Analysis:

Date of measurement: 05.06.2019

Place of measurement: 3,5/2.9/0,8

Applied analytical method(s):

Measurement conditions:

Measurement points

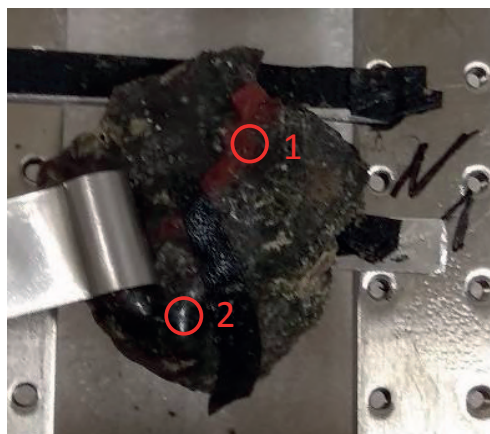


Fig. 1. Elemental analysis of Crucible 1. Measurement points.



Description of the object

Name of the object: Crucible _1 Ns

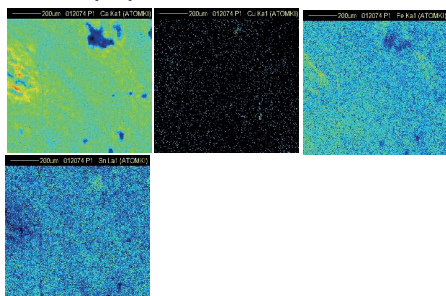
Owner: RIM-Shumen

Contact person: Stella Doncheva

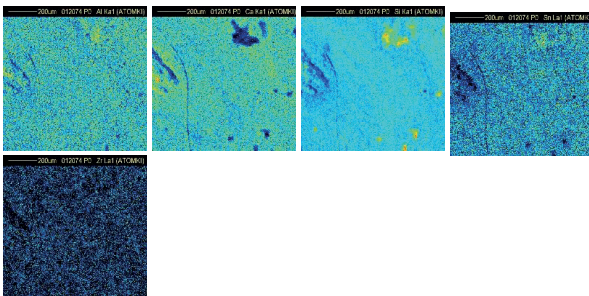
Elemental maps

Point 1:

Si(Li) detector:

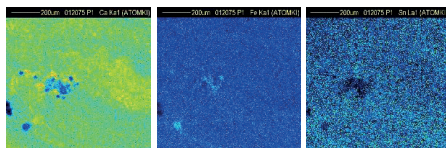


SDD detector:



Point 2:

Si(Li) detector:



SDD detector:

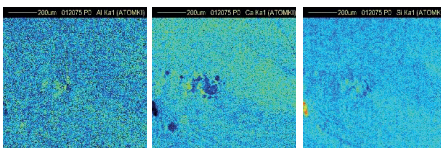


Fig. 2. Elemental analysis of Crucible 1. Elemental maps.

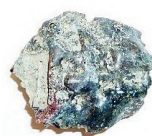


Description of the object

Name of the object: Crucible_2 Ns

Owner: RIM-Shumen

Contact person: Stella Doncheva



Analysis:

Date of measurement: 05.06.2019

Place of measurement: 3/2,5/0,6

Applied analytical method(s):

Measurement conditions:

Measurement points

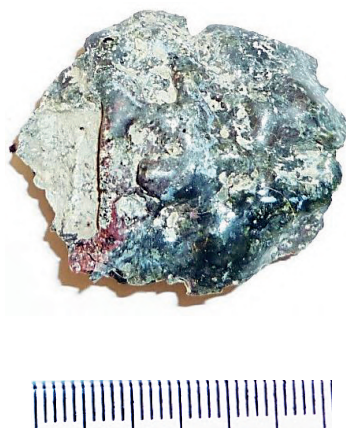


Fig. 3. Elemental analysis of Crucible 2. Measurement points.



Description of the object

Name of the object: Crucible_2 Ns

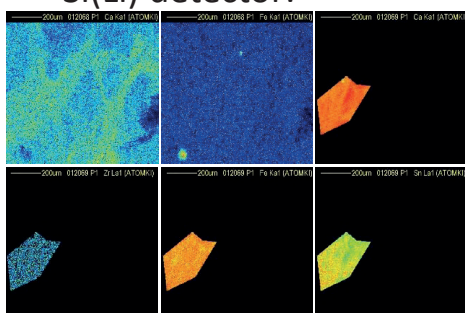
Owner: RIM-Shumen

Contact person: Stella Doncheva

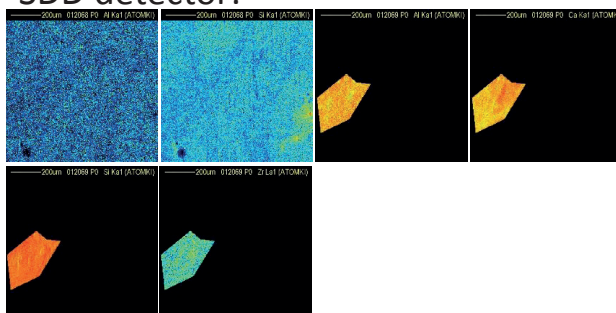
Elemental maps

Point 1:

Si(Li) detector:

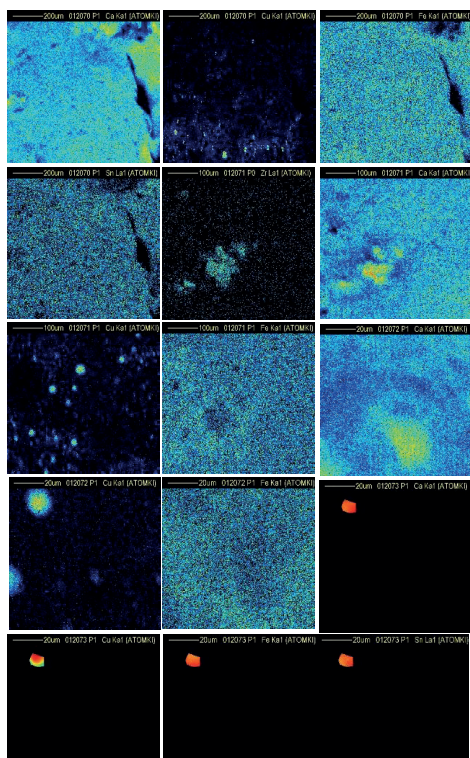


SDD detector:



Point 2:

Si(Li) detector:



SDD detector:

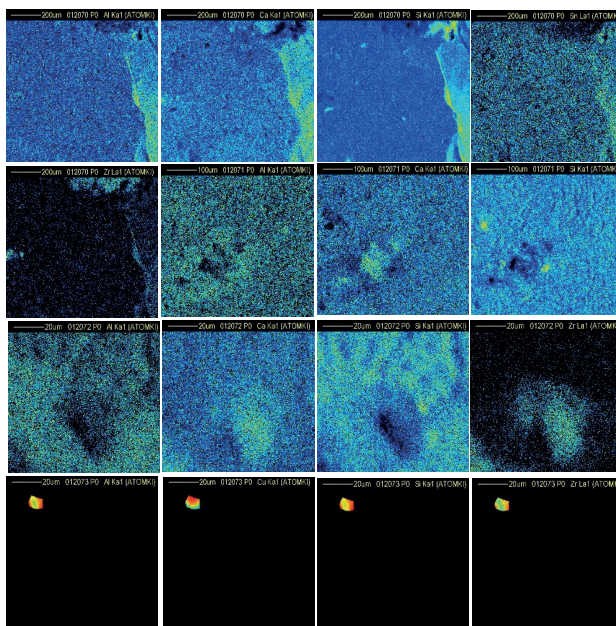


Fig. 4. Elemental analysis of Crucible 2. Elemental maps.



Description of the object

Name of the object: Crucible_3 Ns

Owner: RIM-Shumen

Contact person: Stella Doncheva



Analysis:

Date of measurement: 05.06.2019

Place of measurement: 4,7/3,2/0,8

Applied analytical method(s):

Measurement conditions:

Measurement points



Back side

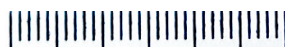


Fig. 5. Elemental analysis of Crucible 3. Measurement points.



Description of the object

Name of the object: Crucible_3 Ns

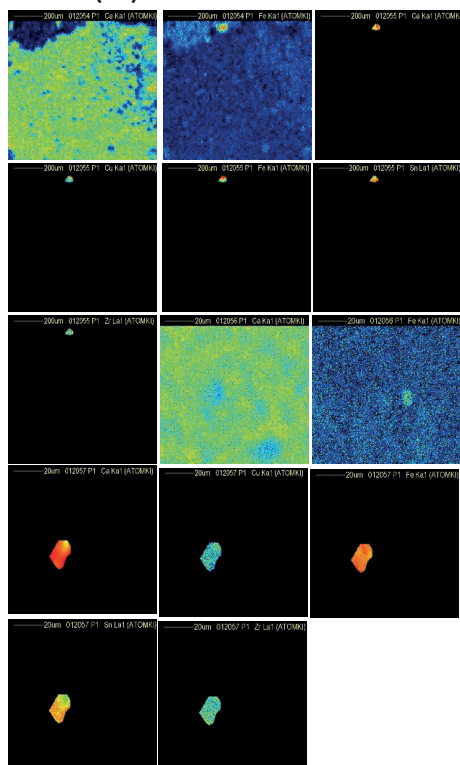
Owner: RIM-Shumen

Contact person: Stella Doncheva

Elemental maps

Point 1:

Si(Li) detector:



SDD detector:

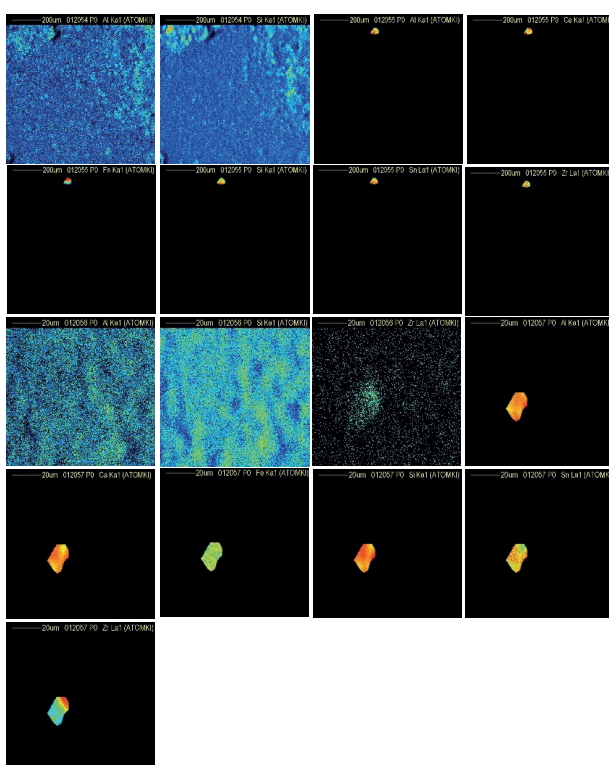


Fig. 6. Elemental analysis of Crucible 3. Elemental maps.



Description of the object

Name of the object: Crucible_3 Ns

Owner: RIM-Shumen

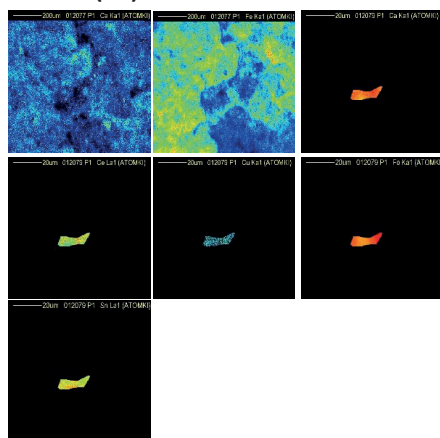
Contact person: Stella Doncheva

Elemental maps

Back side

Point 2:

Si(Li) detector:



SDD detector:

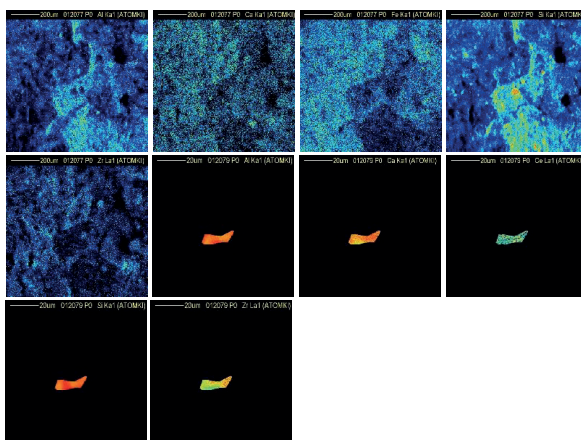


Fig. 7. Elemental analysis of Crucible 3. Measurement points.



Description of the object

Name of the object: Crucible_4 Ns

Owner: RIM-Shumen

Contact person: Stella Doncheva



Analysis:

Date of measurement: 05.06.2019

Place of measurement: 4/1,5/1,1-0,4

Applied analytical method(s):

Measurement conditions:

Measurement points



Back side

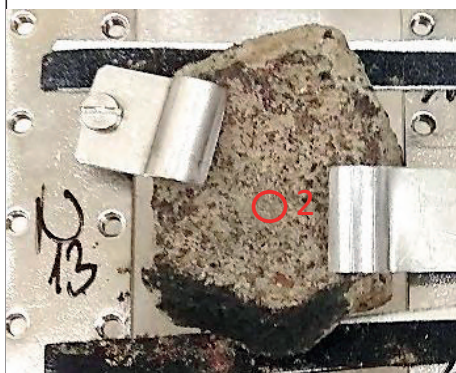


Fig. 8. Elemental analysis of Crucible 4. Measurement points.



Description of the object

Name of the object: Crucible_4 Ns

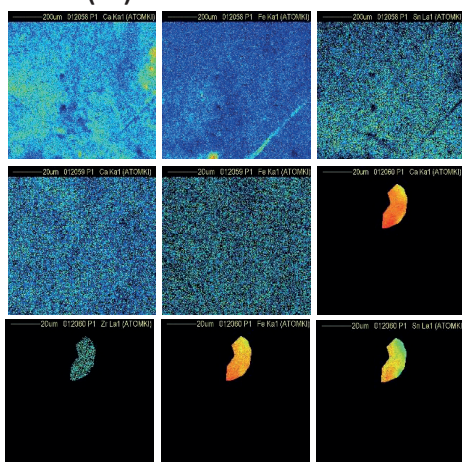
Owner: RIM-Shumen

Contact person: Stella Doncheva

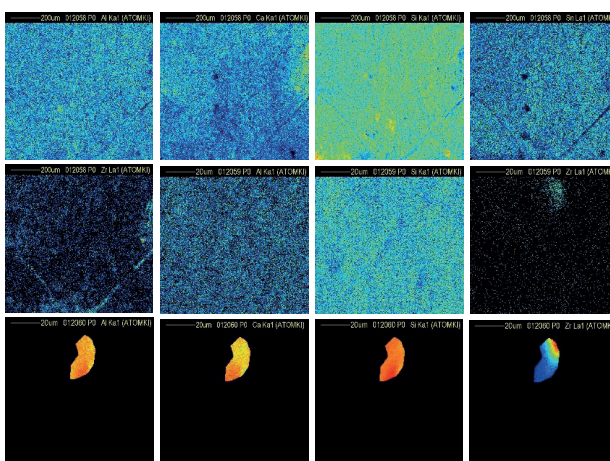
Elemental maps

Point 1:

Si(Li) detector:



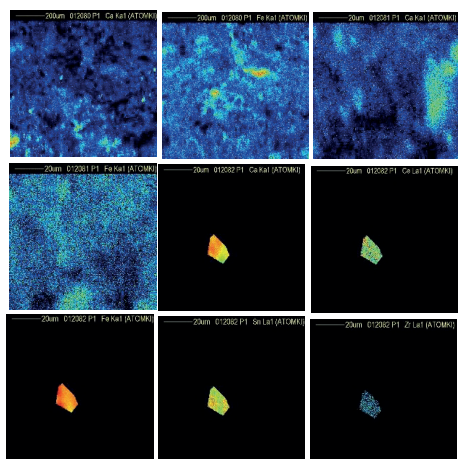
SDD detector:



Back side

Point 2:

Si(Li) detector:



SDD detector:

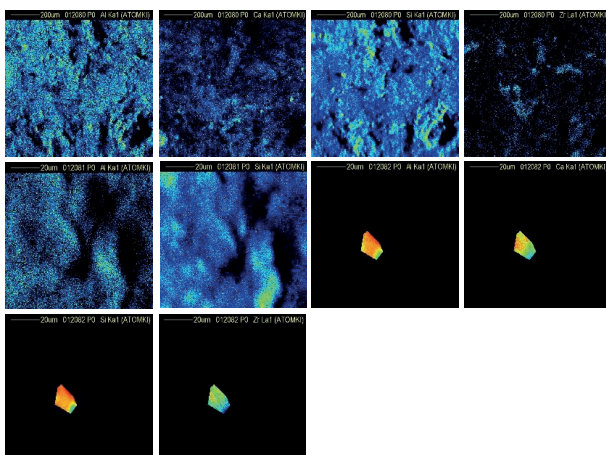


Fig. 9. Elemental analysis of Crucible 4. Elemental maps.



Description of the object

Name of the object: Crucible_5 Ns

Owner: RIM-Shumen

Contact person: Stella Doncheva



Analysis:

Date of measurement: 05.06.2019

Place of measurement: 2,2/1,9/0,4

Applied analytical method(s):

Measurement conditions:

Measurement points



Back side

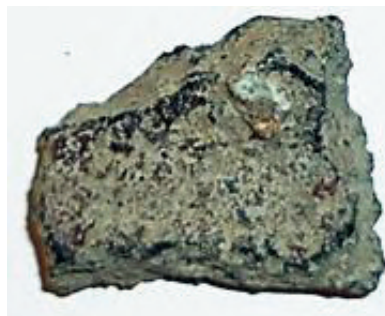
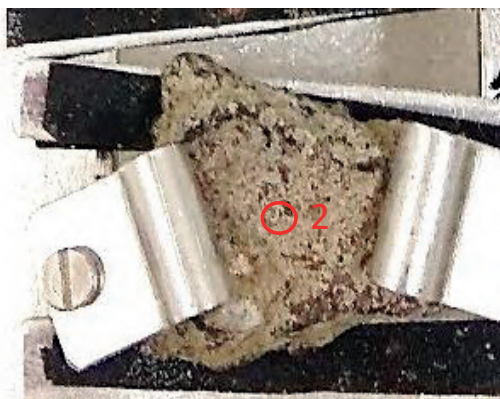


Fig. 10. Elemental analysis of Crucible 5. Measurement points.



Description of the object

Name of the object: Crucible_5 Ns

Owner: RIM-Shumen

Contact person: Stella Doncheva

Elemental maps

Point 1:

Si(Li) detector:

SDD detector:

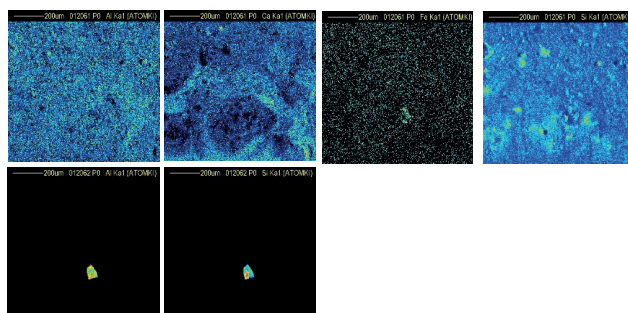
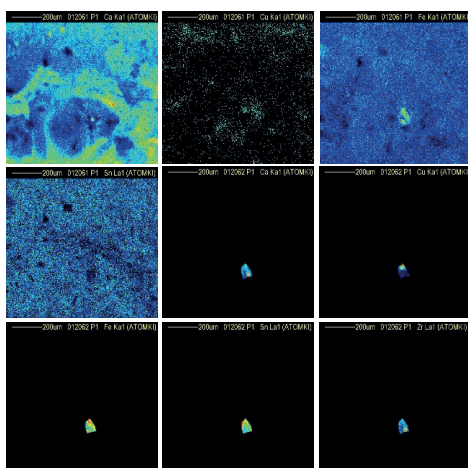


Fig. 11. Elemental analysis of Crucible 5. Elemental maps.



Description of the object

Name of the object: Crucible_5 Ns

Owner: RIM-Shumen

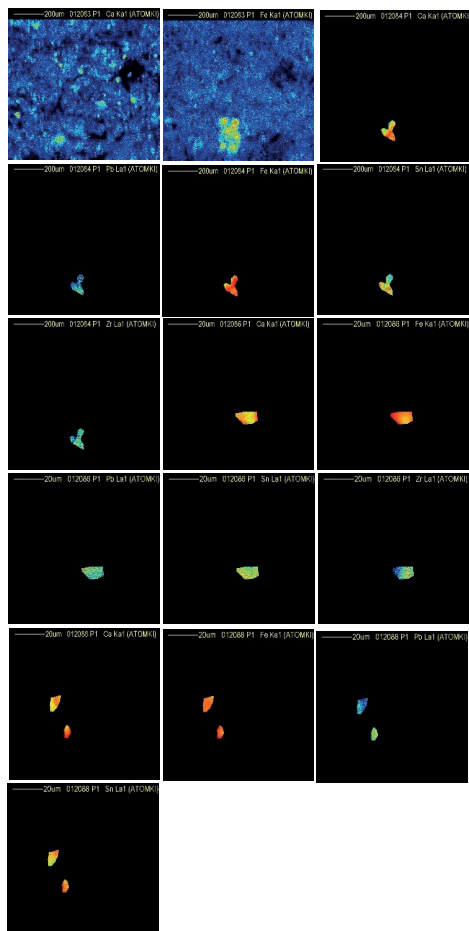
Contact person: Stella Doncheva

Elemental maps

Back side

Point 2:

Si(Li) detector:



SDD detector:

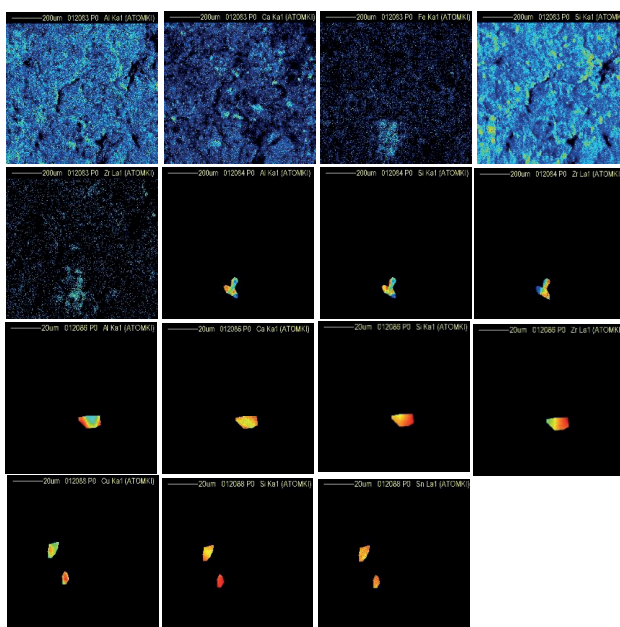


Fig. 12. Elemental analysis of Crucible 5. Elemental maps.

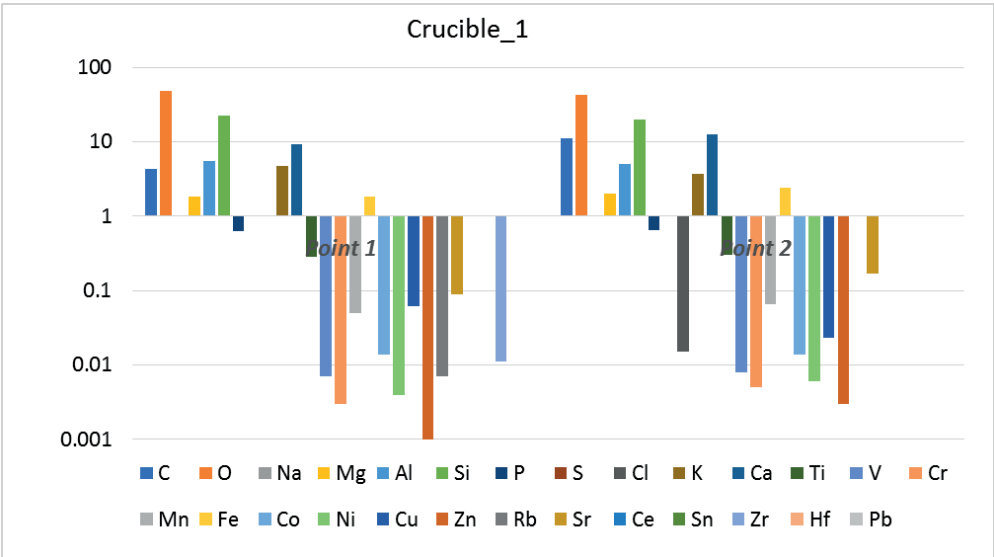


Fig. 13. Crucible_1. Elemental composition. Logarithmic scale.

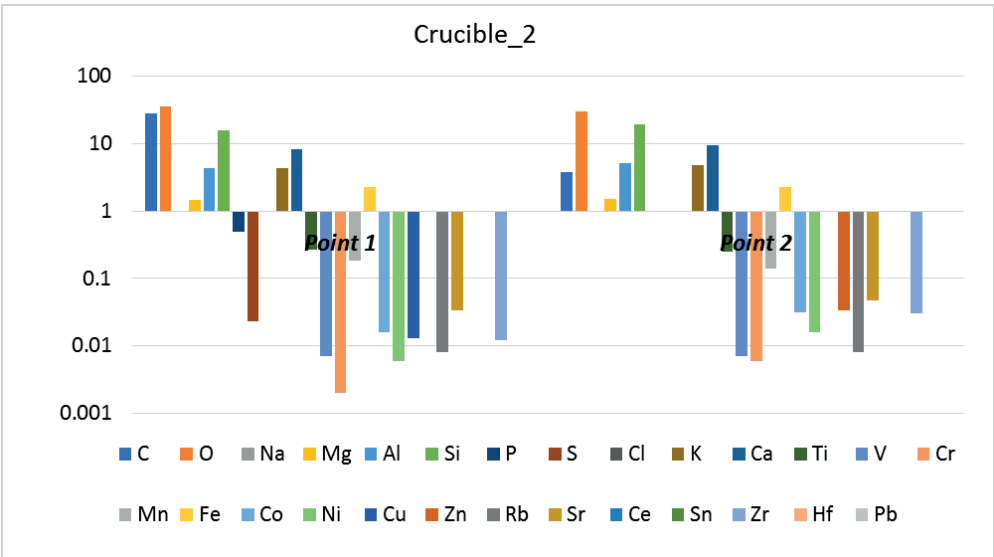


Fig. 14. Crucible_2. Elemental composition. Logarithmic scale.

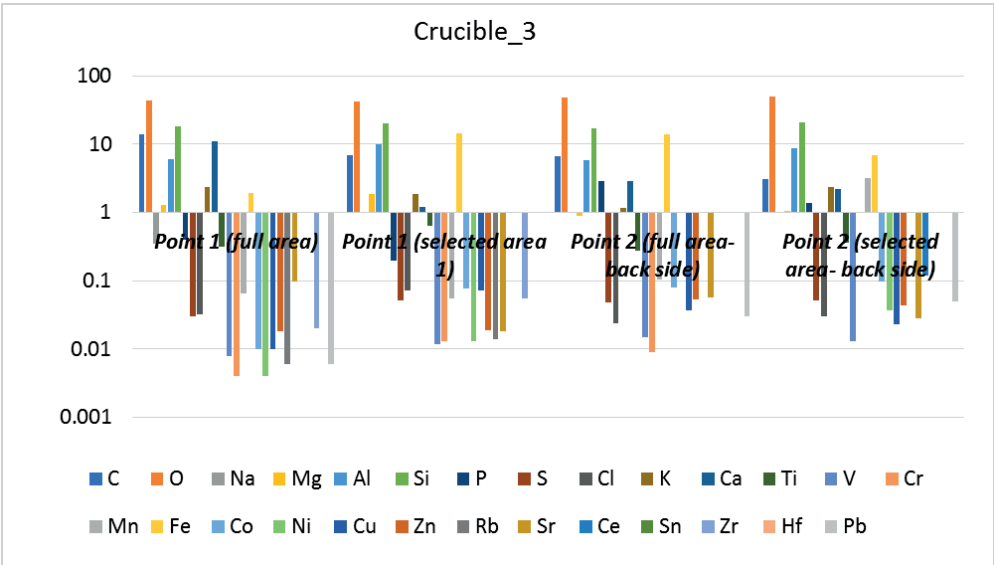


Fig. 15. Crucible_3. Elemental composition. Logarithmic scale.

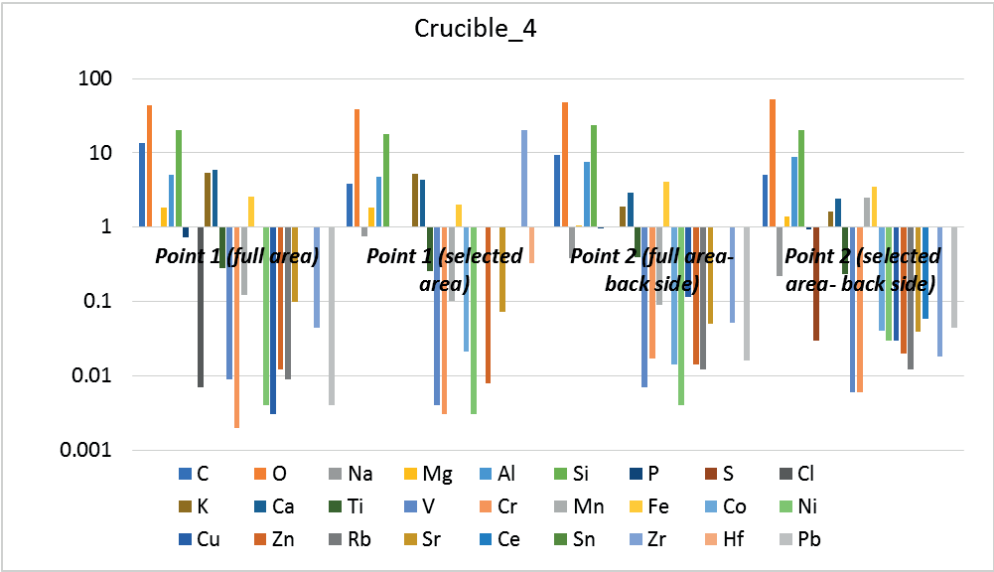


Fig. 16. Crucible_4. Elemental composition. Logarithmic scale.

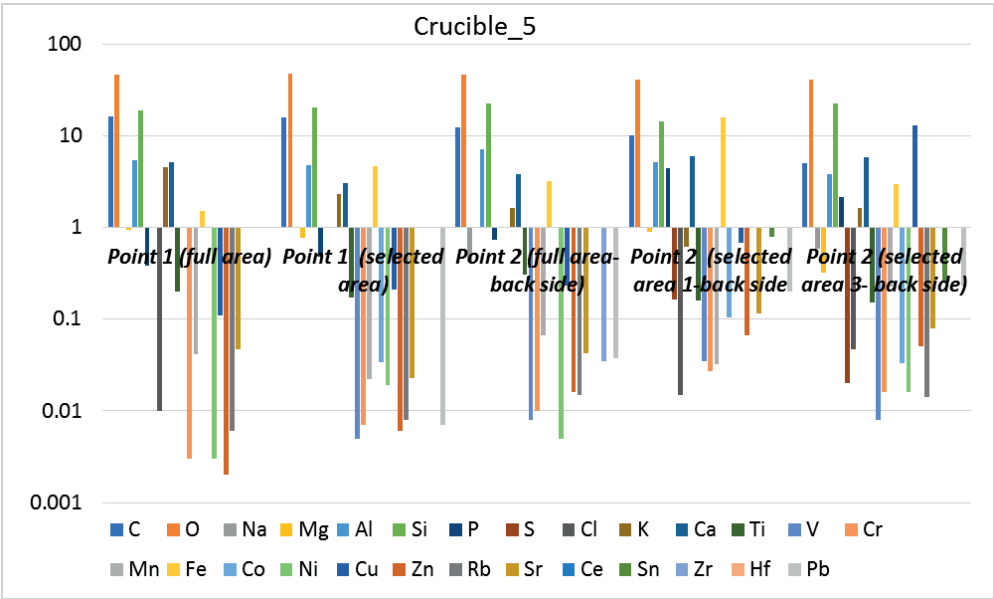


Fig. 17. Crucible_5. Elemental composition. Logarithmic scale.

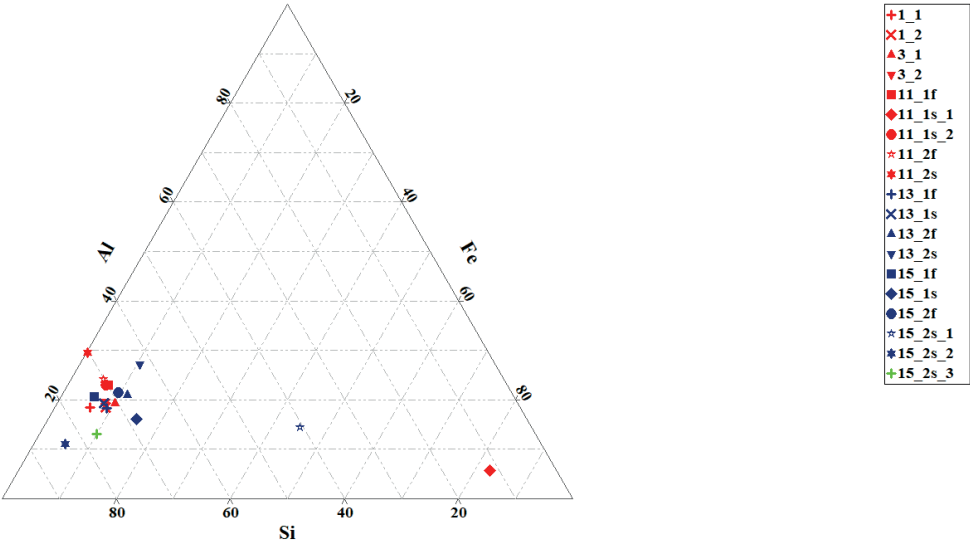


Fig. 18. Triplot. Elemental composition – Si-Al-Fe.

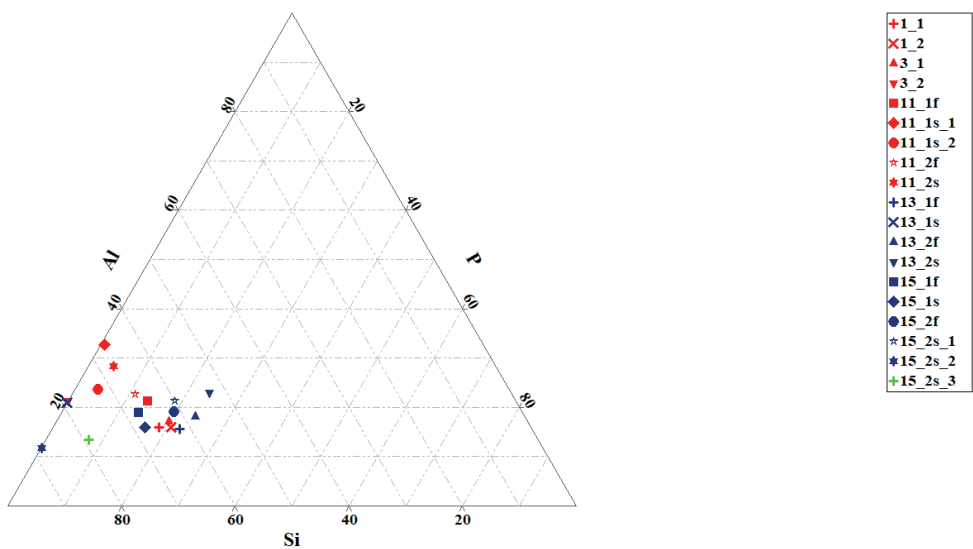


Fig. 19. Triplot. Elemental composition – Si-Al-P.

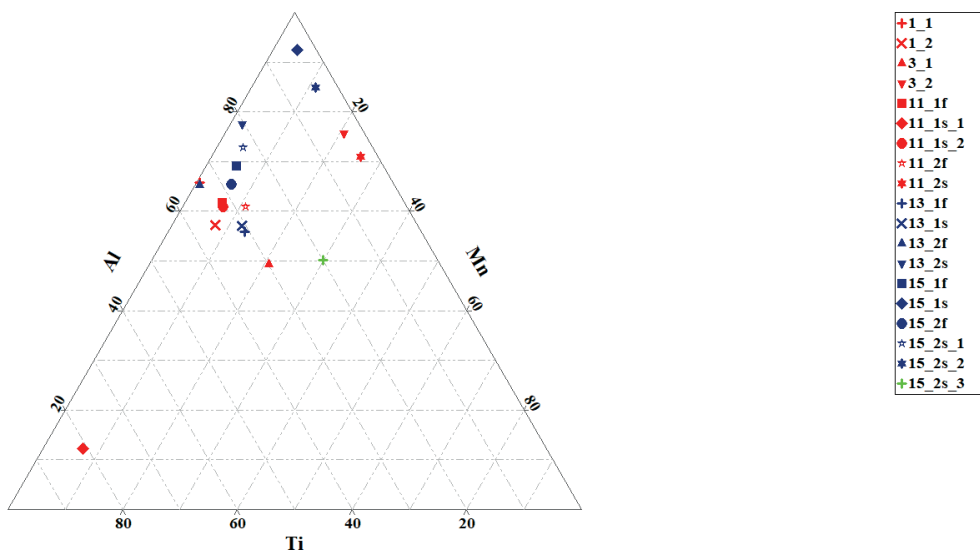


Fig. 20. Triplot. Elemental composition – Ti-Al-Mn.

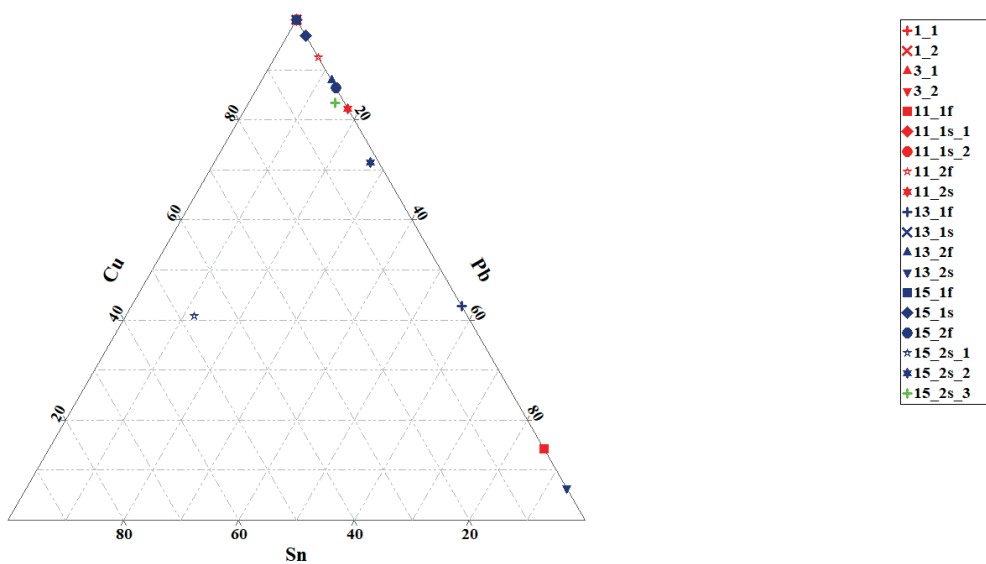


Fig. 21. Triplot. Elemental composition – Sn-Cu-Pb.

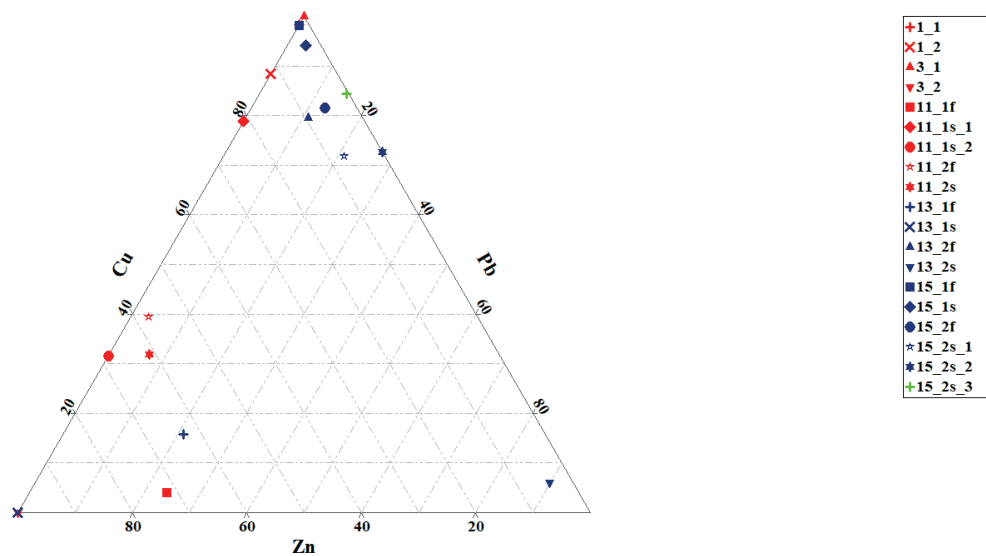


Fig. 22. Triplot. Elemental composition – Zn-Cu-Pb.

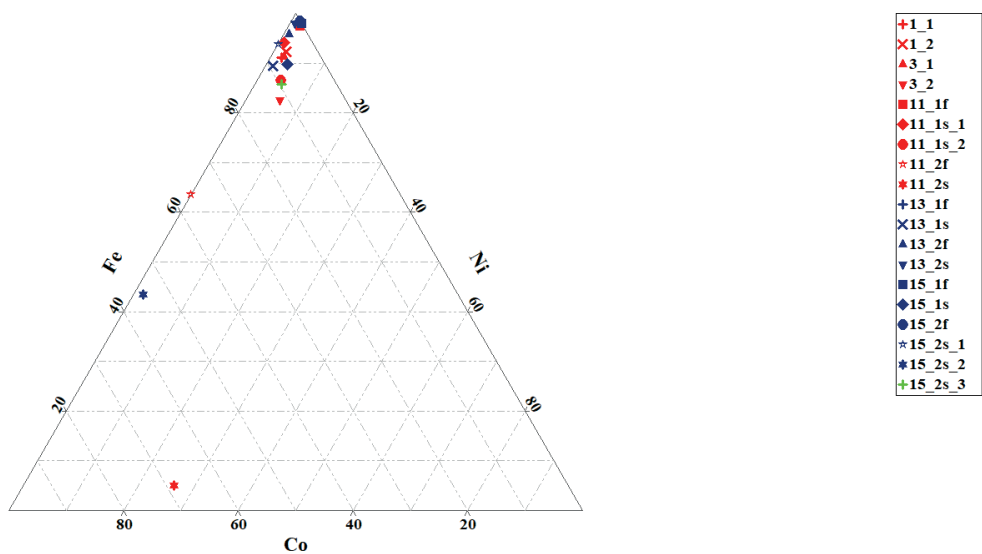


Fig. 23. Triplot. Elemental composition – Co-Fe-Ni.

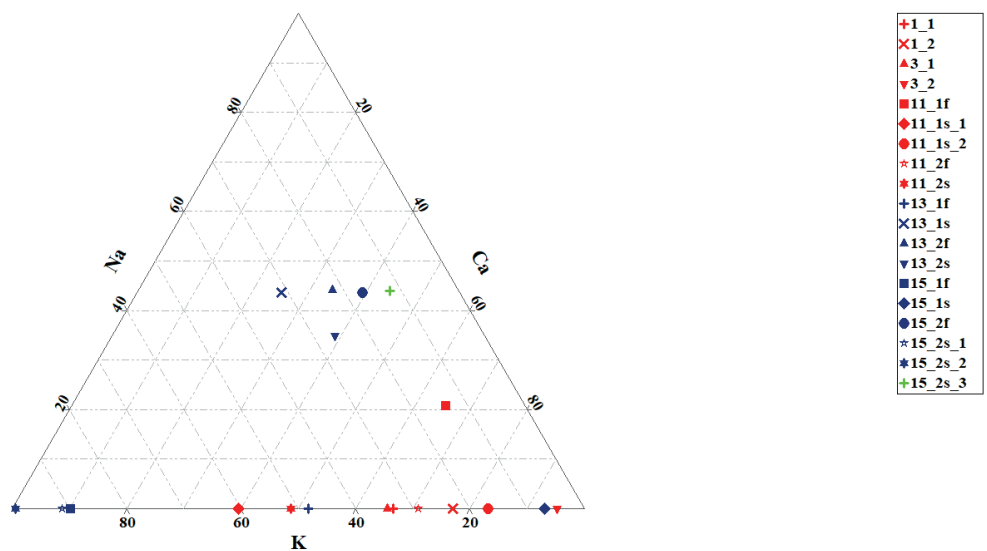


Fig. 24. Triplot. Elemental composition – K-Na-Ca.

On the siege warfare in Livonia and Latin Romania at the end of the 12th -beginning of the 13th century

Ivelin Ivanov

Abstract: In the late 12th and early 13th centuries, the Crusader movement expanded its reach in northeastern and southeastern Europe, in territories known as Livonia and Romania. The clash of the crusaders with the local Baltic pagan tribes, and Balkan Christian peoples led to unexpected changes in the military system of the Latins, who were forced to adapt the Crusader warfare to the local conditions. Military activity in Livonia and Romania acquired a specific, unique character at the beginning of the 13th century, and several parallels can be drawn between the model of warfare in these border regions. Among the most frequent and significant characteristics of military activities was siege warfare. The article presents some specific features of siege warfare in Livonia and Romania, reaching the conclusion of better adaptation of Western Crusaders to the Eastern Baltic lands compared to the Latin warfare in the lands of Romania in the studied period. In conclusion, the author summarizes that some differences between the nature of siege warfare in the two regions can be outlined. While in Livonia traditional earthen-wooden fortifications prevailed, and stone fortresses emerged slowly in the studied period, in the lands of Romania the sieges were entirely against stone and stone-brick fortifications. Also, while the local Baltic tribes used siege techniques in siege actions against the fortifications of the German Crusaders rarely and mostly unsuccessfully, the Greeks, Bulgarians, Vlachs, and Cumans implemented full-scale and often successful siege actions against Latin fortresses and garrisons in Latin Romania.

Key words: medieval siege warfare, Crusades, medieval Livonia, Latin Romania.

Резюме: В края на XII и началото на XIII век кръстоносното движение се разпространило в Североизточна и Югоизточна Европа, в територии, известни като Ливония и Романия. Сблъсъкът на кръстоносците с местните балтийски езически племена и с балканските християнски народи довел до промени в латинската военна система, които били принудени да адаптират кръстоносната война към местните условия. Войната в Ливония и Романия придобила уникален характер в началото на XIII век. Сред най-честите и значими характеристики на военните действия била обсадната война. Авторът представя някои пещифични характеристики на обсадната война в Ливония и Романия, като стига до извода за по-добрата адаптация на западните кръстоносци към източнобалтийските земи в сравнение със земите на Романия през изследвания период. В заключение авторът обобщава някои различия между характера на обсадната война в двата региона. Докато в Ливония преобладавали традиционните землено-дървени укрепления, а каменните крепости навлизали бавно през изследвания период, в земите на Романия обсадните действия били водени срещу каменни и каменно-

тухлени укрепления. Също така, докато местните балтийски племена използвали обсадни машини рядко и с ограничен успех, то българи, власи и кумани прилагали пълномащабни и често успешни обсадни действия срещу латински крепости и гарнизони в Латинска Романия.

At the beginning of the 8th century, mass colonization began, carried out mainly by the German-speaking population. It included peasants, nobles, merchants, and clerics, who settled territories from Transylvania in the south to Estonia in the north. This movement was motivated by adventurism, a quest for new lands, freedom, and strong religious sentiments. One of these colonized areas along the eastern and southern coasts of the Baltic Sea became known in the 13th century as Livonia. These lands traditionally attracted German merchants by water and land routes to Novgorod the Great, the northern trade gate to the East. Large rivers such as the Daugava and the Aia were major arteries from the Baltic Sea to cities in the east and south. The rapidly developing northern German trading cities quickly realized the need to secure these trade routes, and far-sighted German bishops used the crusading aspect of military campaigns to Christianize the local population.

The second aspect of the present study is related to Southeastern Europe during the considered period, and the name Romania (Latin Romania is often used), referring to the territories of the Byzantine Empire on the eve and immediately after the Fourth Crusade (1204-1261)¹. The name Romania used to refer to the Latin Empire of Constantinople by its contemporaries from Catholic Europe². In the course of tradition, the leaders of the Fourth Crusade of 1204 gave the newly created Latin Empire the name Romania, which was also associated with the ideological continuity between the new and the old empire. In this case, the name Romania demonstrated not only the claims on all the territories of the former Byzantine Empire but also the continuity of power, symbols, and terminology³. This name is also found in the correspondence of Pope Innocent III, who used Romania as a synonym for Imperium Constantinopolitanum.

At the beginning of the 13th century, Livonia and Romania became territories of fierce clashes between the Western Crusaders and the local tribes

¹ Wolff 1948, 1-34.

² Longnon 1929, col. 1522. Emperor Henry I titled himself '*Dei Gratia fidelissimus in Christo imperator, a Deo coronatus, Romaniae moderator et semper augustus*'; Riant 1878, 44-45.; Torsello 1873, 99.

³ At his coronation, Emperor Baldwin wore purple boots and his mantle was decorated with the Byzantine imperial eagles. Also, Emperor Baldwin used the titles *Porphyrogennetos, semper Augustus, Imperator Romanie* – a title that reflected the Western concept of the position of an Eastern emperor. The treaty dividing the empire was titled *Partitio regni Romanie*, and official documents referred to the Latin Empire as Romania. See: Kanev 2018, 53-67.

and peoples. According to some researchers, there are significant parallels between the crusades in Romania, those against the Albigensians in South France, and those against the pagans in the Baltic region. In Greece and southern France, the Crusades began at the beginning of the 13th century. Crusading activity in the Baltic region began in 1147 but manifested on a more significant scale in the 13th century. Apart from this superficial similarity, however, between the crusading movements in these regions, significant differences existed. In the Baltic region, the enemies were pagan tribes, whereas in Romania, the Crusade was directed against Orthodox Christian states. Next, various powers were involved in these campaigns: the Scandinavian kings, German knights, merchants, bishops, and missionaries in the Baltic region and western feudal lords, the Italian maritime republics, and the Kingdom of Hungary in Romania. These parallels show that in the early 13th century the papacy responded to different challenges with crusades that were organized similarly regardless of specific circumstances and regions.

Among the important aspects of warfare in these distant but comparable regions is siege warfare, reflected in written sources and attested in some archaeological evidence. First, the course of Christianization of Livonia was connected with a change of fortification work. Archaeological excavations in present-day Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia prove the existence of local earth and wooden fortifications, which served as protection against unexpected attacks and as residences of local rulers. Their number and density were not particularly large and for this reason, the majority of the population relied mainly on fleeing into the forests in case of an unexpected attack, especially by Lithuanians and Estonians, who often ravaged the lands of the Zemgali, Leti, and Livs, taking captives and seizing valuables, and cattle. Local fortifications were built of horizontally laid wooden trunks on top of hills, high banks, or headlands of lakes and rivers to enclose areas that sometimes spanned two and a half acres⁴.

Most fortifications were surrounded by a moat, which was probably flooded, and had towers built over the gates and at the corners. Compared to the stone fortresses in Europe from the end of the 12th century to the beginning of the 13th century, however, the wood-earthen fortifications in Livonia were primitive but effective enough in regional conflicts with neighboring pagan tribes and with the Rus people⁵. Because of this, the military operations were dominated by raids aimed at looting the villages and capturing and taking away the local inhabitants who lived outside the fortifications. The defense was primarily passive because the local armies rarely attacked these earth and wooden fortifications.

⁴ Turner 1993, 106.

⁵ Kasekamp 1990, 27-38.

Describing Meinhard's missionary activity at the end of the 12th century, the chronicler Heinrich of Livonia presents the promise of building stone fortresses as the main motive for the adoption of Christianity by the local Livs⁶. A similar desire to rise a stone fortress was shown by the Livs from nearby Holm, but after the fortress was built, they rejected Christianity⁷. However, to what extent Holm was a completely stone fortress because of Meinhard's efforts can only be speculated, as subsequent descriptions of Crusader attacks on Holm paint a different picture. In truth, the construction of a strong stone fortress was both technically and physically overwhelming for the missionary and his small Christian mission. This was the reason for the earth-wooden fortifications to remain certainly dominant in that lands the next decade. The chronicler Heinrich of Livonia describes the attack on a similar fortification – Dobrel, by German Crusaders and their Zemgalian allies, who took it by assault⁸.

Not all cases of storming such fortifications were accompanied by quick success. The Livs, in alliance with the Russians from Polotsk, launched an attack on the Uexküll fortification, occupied by the crossbowmen of the knight Konrad, who successfully repelled them. The situation was similar to the attempt of the Livs and warriors from the Russian city of Pskov to capture Holm. The attackers piled wood next to the wall to set it on fire. The attempt failed as a result of the crossbow shooting of the defenders, who did not allow them to set fire to the fortification⁹. Wood piled up around the walls for the purpose of burning is also found in the description of the Crusaders' attack on the fortification of the selons (villages) – Selburg. In this case, the villagers surrendered as the arson was successful¹⁰. In some cases, such as the night attack of knight Daniel with his men on the Koknese fortification, there is evidence of another way of taking these wooden-earthen fortifications¹¹.

The written notice that later the bishop of Riga ordered Daniel to withdraw and sent 20 knights, sergeants, and crossbowmen to repair the damage to Koknese, testifies in favor of the thesis that Koknese was still a fortification of the earth-wooden type. Most likely, the Yersike (Gersike) fortification, stormed by the Germans, was similar. The above confirms the archaeological data and excavations and shows the presence of tribal earth-wooden fortifications in the early phase of the Crusader conquest in Livonia.

⁶ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 26. "When the Lithuanians withdrew, Meinhard accused the Livonians of stupidity because they had no fortifications; he promised them that fortresses would be built if they chose to become and be considered sons of God. This pleased them, and they promised and affirmed with an oath that they would receive baptism."

⁷ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 27.

⁸ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 60.

⁹ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 62–63.

¹⁰ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 76.

¹¹ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 88.

The quick and relatively easy capture of these fortifications by the Crusaders testifies to technological superiority of the Germans, as well as the fact that these fortifications were vulnerable to arson. There were five ways to capture a fortification of the type we find in Heinrich of Livonia's chronicle: an attack over the ramparts, an attack through a breach in the wall, fire, undermining the wall, or blockade by starvation. First, the besiegers filled part of the moat around the fortress with trees and earth to secure access to the walls. Soon after the first Crusade conquests, new stone fortifications appeared in Livonia, and the experience of the Crusaders in siege operations was far more advanced than that of the natives. The Teutonic Knights came from areas dominated by fortifications, much of them were already made of stone¹². Focusing on the situation in Livonia, the lack of stone fortresses among the locals was a key factor in the looming large-scale military clash.

It is often difficult to determine which of the fortifications described in the written sources were earth and wooden and which were built of stone, including those made by the first Crusaders, but in general, while some, such as Treiden (Turaida), remained wooden, after 1212, the number of those built with stone increased¹³. According to written records, the first stone fortresses in Livonia were built at Uexküll and Holm by stonemasons from Gotland as early as 1186. As I have already noted, these accounts are uncertain, since, if we are to trust the chronicle of Heinrich of Livonia, over the next three decades the Order of the Swordsmen did not build any stone fortresses due to a lack of resources and time. This means the knight-brothers only strengthened local earth-wooden fortifications and built them partially from stone¹⁴. It is a clear fact that stone was used in the walls of Kockenhausen (Koknese), rebuilt by the Crusaders in 1209, and in a new fortress called Vreeland in 1214. Also, the fortifications of Dunamunde and Riga were built by stone. Most likely, so was Wenden. I must note, however, that wooden fortifications still had some advantages over stone ones. First, building a wooden structure was much faster, easier, and cheaper. Also, the solid earth-wooden walls took the impact of small and medium-sized cores and stones from the throwing machines better than the solid stone wall. Although the pagans did not have siege engines, they had one weapon that was quite effective in besieging wooden fortifications - fire. It is true that in some written records the German defenders armed with crossbows successfully thwarted pagan attempts to set fire to their earth-wooden fortifications, but the fate of a Swedish garrison in 1220 shows that the use of crossbows and ballistae against the besiegers was not effective enough. In another case from 1212, the Germans managed to set fire to the earth and wooden fortification of Turaida, attacking it by surprise at night. Next, the stone

¹² *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 183.

¹³ Kasekamp 1990, 27-38.

¹⁴ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 173-174.

fortifications allowed the Crusaders to minimize the size of their garrisons, while remaining confident that any active siege methods the pagans might employ would be fruitless. Smaller garrisons also meant the need of less food supplies.

The construction of new stone fortifications was not carried out only by German crusaders. In 1219, Danish crusaders appeared in the lands of the Estonians, who almost immediately began the construction of a stone fortress. This provoked an immediate response from the Estonians, who attacked the Danes but failed to stop the construction of the fortress¹⁵. Soon after the Danes, the Swedes appeared in the lands of the Estonians, who built the Leal fortress¹⁶. We can only speculate to what extent this first Swedish fortress was made of stone since it was soon captured and burned by the Estonians¹⁷. The analysis of the written information leads to the conclusion that initially, the Crusaders used and additionally strengthened (probably only partially with stone construction) the wood and earthen fortifications found on these lands. Most likely, the stone construction started later, in the second decade of the 13th century. The great Estonian uprising of the Estonians of 1222 showed the lack of an alternative and marked an increased construction of all-stone fortresses. This new fortification finally established German power in Livonia.

Next, the descriptions of the capture of fortresses and defensive fortifications in Livonia at the beginning of the 13th century are of considerable interest. The first descriptions of Heinrich of Livonia are related to storming defensive structures such as the Holm and Dobrel fortifications¹⁸. They were associated with surprise attacks and the effectiveness of crossbowmen. Heinrich also describes the brief sieges of Uexkühl and Holm by the Livonians in alliance with the Russians from Polotsk¹⁹. According to the chronicler, the Russians tried to build a small siege engine, but it was unsuccessful and wounded the besiegers, not the besieged²⁰. Similar was also the siege of Selburg, the fortress of Selon, by the Crusaders, who succeeded after a short siege²¹. The information about the short-lasting siege of Riga by the Kurches in 1210 is interesting. The reinforcements ended the siege and the Curshes withdrew with their ships²². We can summarize that reports of unsuccessful sieges by pagans and Russians prevail. Often during sieges of fortifications and fortresses, Heinrich of Livonia described the construction and use of siege towers²³. More

¹⁵ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 190.

¹⁶ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 191.

¹⁷ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 60.

¹⁸ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 62–63.

¹⁹ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 62–63.

²⁰ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 74.

²¹ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 97–99.

²² *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 105–106.

²³ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 139.

often, however, the main means of the besiegers was fire, which forced the besieged to capitulate²⁴. Besides siege towers and fire, Heinrich describes other machines such as *trebuchets*, *ericeos* (spiked beams to repel defenders on the ramparts), and undermining the walls and fortifications through underground tunnels²⁵. In truth, these accounts only represent sieges carried out by the Crusaders, not by their opponents, the local pagan tribes.

The analysis of the siege engines described in the chronicle of Heinrich of Livonia leads to the conclusion that the main type among them was the counterweight trebuchet²⁶. The chronicler Heinrich of Livonia gives a detailed account of the power of the “great machine” at the siege of the Mesoten fortress and describes the effect of the hits with great accuracy. According to him, after the first shots and hits of large stones, the enemy was terrified. According to Heinrich, after three initial hits, the defenders fled the rampart and begged for mercy²⁷. In addition to the usual trebuchets and catapults, Heinrich of Livonia also describes *ericeos* – spiked beams to repel defenders along a fortification’s palisade²⁸. Among the rare weapons are the so-called *claviculis*, scattered by the citizens of Riga in the field around the city to hinder the enemy’s movement²⁹. Heinrich also relates that sometimes the crusaders built their siege engines before the start of the campaign and transported them to their destination. In other cases, his accounts describe the construction of the engines on site. On several occasions, the machines were transported from Riga to Estonia, which means transportation over several hundred kilometers.

It is interesting to note that all the campaigns in which the Crusaders used siege engines were conducted in winter. In all likelihood, the trebuchets were disassembled for transport and the various parts of the machines were transported on sledges. One of the most important fortifications in the lands of Estonia was Dorpat, which was besieged by a large army led by the Archbishop of Riga. The siege was heavy, with many siege engines and fire by the Germans and counterattacks by the besieged. Quite interesting is Heinrich’s account of a psychological attack by maintaining constant noise and music on part of the besiegers, which exhausted the besieged.³⁰ Similar are the accounts of the siege of the Estonians in the Mona fortification, which was subjected to an active siege by digging a tunnel under the palisade, shelling with siege machines, and destroying the palisade with the help of a special machine. The siege lasted six days and Mona was captured. In summary, I would emphasize the effective siege actions of the Germans and the Crusaders, who mastered siegecraft, the

²⁴ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 180.

²⁵ Ekdahl 2007, 46-47.

²⁶ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 180-182.

²⁷ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 180.

²⁸ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 63.

²⁹ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 223-224.

³⁰ *The Chronicle of Henry of Livonia* 1961, 241, 243.

construction of siege engines, and siege towers. The accounts of Heinrich of Livonia state that the longest siege by the Crusaders lasted 15 days, and almost all siege actions undertaken by them succeeded.

In contrast, the Rus and the local pagans were not effective at siege work, and few of the sieges they undertook were successful. This testifies to the considerable superiority of the Crusaders, who surpassed the local pagans and Russians in their ability to build, defend, and capture fortresses. I would summarize that the Livonian Chronicle is a valuable source regarding the siege machines from the late 12th - early 13th centuries. Heinrich of Livonia's focus is on crossbows and siege engines, which played an important role in the Baltic Crusades. When besieging the fortifications of local tribes, the Crusaders used crossbows, heavy crossbows, and siege engines. Crossbows played an important role in the siege of enemy fortifications and the defense of crusader fortresses in the Baltic lands. Since the natives were unfamiliar with such machines, their use initially brought great success to the Crusaders. The information provided by the chronicle of Heinrich of Livonia coincides to a large extent with the archaeological artifacts obtained from the excavations of local fortifications and their surroundings.

Next, sieges were also an important element of military operations in the lands of Romania at the beginning of the 13th century. The main Latin source about the Fourth Crusade, the chronicle of Geoffrey de Villardouin, abounds in terms describing siege actions: *assegie*, *assaillie*, *siege*, *assaus*, *asseir*. In the chronicle of Villardouin, many terms can be found describing fortifications, fortresses such as: *chastel* (*chastiaus*), *forteresce*, *fermer*, *mur*, *tors*, *porte*, *barbecane poterne*, *fossés*, *pont*, *baille* (*breteches*), *chaaine*³¹. Among the vivid descriptions of sieges in the war under consideration is that of the Orestiada in the summer of 1206. According to Choniates, the initial assault on the Latins failed. Thus, in practice, the only remaining option was the blockade, but since the Latins were blocked by the Bulgarians and Cumans, they were soon forced to withdraw. We also find evidence of siege actions in one of the letters of Emperor Henry I (1206-1216)³². The Latins also operated against forts in Henry I's summer 1206 campaign. These included Moniac in the Arda valley in July 1206, Beroe, and an unlocated fort near Aytos in the fall of 1206. These forts were abandoned by the Bulgarians, and when they left, the Latins destroyed them.

The information about the siege actions of the Bulgarian Tsar Kaloyan is far more numerous. Among the first was the siege of Serres in the late spring of 1205. According to Villardouin, after the death of Hugues de Coligny, the Bulgarians besieged the remaining Latins in the citadel of Serres and set up

³¹ Pentek 2004, 232-234.

³² Henricus imperator fratri suo Gaudefrido scribit ut imperio Constantinopolitano succurrat 1981, 13.

siege machines³³. According to Villardouin, after a brief siege, the besieged began negotiations and surrendered to Kaloyan as it was clear that the stone throwers would bring down the wall. Choniates also describes this siege. He points out that the reason for the surrender of the Latins was the threat of a large siege machine that began to tear down the fortress walls³⁴. After the first battle under the walls of the fortress, in which the Latins were defeated, the Vlachs and Romans invaded the fortress. Subsequently, Kaloyan destroyed the castle, i.e. the citadel. This siege was short-lived, as the garrison surrendered after days on the apparent promise of being spared.

In the same way, the Bulgarian ruler acted during the siege of Philippopolis, which surrendered, and the population was taken captive. Nicetas Choniates testified that in the January 1206 campaign against the Latins and Greeks in Thrace, the fortresses were besieged by the Wallachian detachment, which operated with hoes and shovels³⁵. Villardouin, for his part, notes that in early 1206 Naples, defended by the Latins and Greeks, was taken by storm, not as a result of a siege³⁶. According to the chronicler, in January 1206, Arecloa (Heraclea) on the coast of the Sea of Marmara, defended by a small Venetian garrison, was also stormed. Similar was the fate of the city of Nature (Atira) in the vicinity of Constantinople, which was stormed by Kaloyan's troops³⁷. Dimotika was also taken by storm in the fall or winter of 1206. After retreating at the end of June that year, in front of Henry's troops, the Bulgarians made a surprise return and took by force the half-ruined Dimotika, defended by a small garrison³⁸. A striking example of the actions of the Bulgarians is the siege of Dimotika described by Choniates from the end of February to May 1206³⁹. This siege was among the longest in the course of the war (about 70 days), but it is also notable for the diversion of the flow of the Evros River and depriving defenders of fresh water. This and some other examples show the important role of the Cumans in providing for the besieging troops.

For this reason, the great siege actions of the Bulgarians were carried out in the winter and spring, and Kaloyan was forced to end the sieges while withdrawing his allies to the north. Among the significant sieges of the researched period, I would also point out the siege of Adrianople from the spring of 1207. Focusing on the siege of Thessaloniki from 1207, I would point out that the sources do not testify to siege engines, but only to ladders. Here we find a different pattern of siege operations, providing for a general assault

³³ Zhofroa dyo Vilarduen 1985, 121-123.

³⁴ Zhofroa dyo Vilarduen 1985, 113.

³⁵ Nicetae Choniatae 1983, 78.

³⁶ Zhofroa dyo Vilarduen 1985, 117.

³⁷ Zhofroa dyo Vilarduen 1985, 118.

³⁸ Zhofroa dyo Vilarduen 1985, 122.

³⁹ Nicetae Choniatae 1983, 88-89.

on the third day of the siege, as the defenses of Thessaloniki were strong and hardly vulnerable to siege equipment⁴⁰.

Analyzing the duration of the sieges in the studied period, I would note that the shortest was the siege of Naples (Novpoleon) in the summer of 1206, and the longest was the siege of Stanimaka, which lasted 13 months⁴¹. Next, the actions of the Bulgarian-Cuman troops in the studied period relied primarily on speed and surprise when capturing fortresses. Geoffrey de Villardouin, who describes the siege of Adrianople in the spring of 1206, attests to the presence of sappers in Kaloyan's troops.⁴² After Tsar Kaloyan withdrew from Adrianople, the Latin emperor Henry arrived before the city and stayed for a day "*... to see the damage that Ioannis had done there.*"⁴³

We can also find interesting information about the besieging troops of Tsar Kaloyan in the Deeds of St. Demetrius of Thessaloniki. Siege actions varied by duration, but followed basic principles and patterns. Probably the shortest siege was that of the fortress of Varna, (ended in three days) and perhaps the capture of Naples in the summer of 1206, and the longest – the siege of René de Tri in the citadel of Stanimaka, which lasted 13 months. In addition to the usual, Kaloyan sometimes applied unconventional and less frequently applied siege actions. At the siege of Dimotika in 1206, he combined the typical siege with a large-scale project to divert the local river⁴⁴. Choniates's report that during the siege of Adrianople in 1206 Kaloyan also acted at night is quite notable⁴⁵.

Also, we can find information about his actions in the fall of 1207 in the written sources. Here a different pattern of siege operations, providing for a general assault on the third day of the siege, could be underlined. Destroying with siege engines and undermining the walls took time, and the large army was also a burden, as it needed a good supply of food and was vulnerable to the rapid spread of disease. The written sources present valuable information about the destruction of besieged fortresses and cities. One of the most striking cases is the siege of Varna in 1201⁴⁶. Another striking example is related to the capture of Philippopolis in 1205. Villardouin testified as follows: "*...and in the city he caused all to collapse - the towers and the walls, and the high palaces and rich houses he ordered to burn and destroy.*"⁴⁷ Similar was the fate of Naples in 1206. We observe the same in Rodesto and in Panedor, which, although it surrendered, was destroyed, and the inhabitants were taken away as

⁴⁰ Dall'Aglio 2002, 276-277.

⁴¹ Zhofroa dyo Vilarduen 1985, 121.

⁴² Zhofroa dyo Vilarduen 1985, 128.

⁴³ Zhofroa dyo Vilarduen 1985, 131.

⁴⁴ Nicetae Choniatae 1983, 88.

⁴⁵ Nicetae Choniatae 1983, 90.

⁴⁶ Nicetae Choniatae 1983, 66.

⁴⁷ Zhofroa dyo Vilarduen 1985, 114.

prisoners⁴⁸. A similar fate befell Heraclea and Daonium, stormed and taken by force⁴⁹. It is a logical conclusion that the reports about the collapse of the captured fortresses are credible. As we have already noted, in the summer of 1206, the Latin emperor Henry himself inspected the ruins of Dimotika and he was convinced that the fortress walls were in an irreparable state⁵⁰.

The above leads to several conclusions. First of all, the siege actions, the capture and destruction of the fortresses, and the depopulation of vast regions in Thrace were basic elements in the military actions of the Bulgarian ruler Kaloyan. Based mostly on accounts for the period 1201–1207, these hostilities were almost continuous. It was achieved by attracting and using allies such as the Cumans and mercenaries such as Alans, Rus, Greeks, and possibly other foreigners. The analysis of the sieges leads to the conclusion that they were carried out professionally and with specialized units such as sappers, engineering corps, and stormtroopers. Also noteworthy is the amount of siege equipment and its effectiveness, which speaks of the successful application of siege equipment typical of that era. Information about siege warfare can also be obtained from descriptions of the siege operations carried out by the Latins.

Nicetas Choniates testifies that during the siege of the Orestiada in the summer of 1206, the Latins decided to capture the outer moat, fill the second moat, and thus bring the siege engines to the walls. When the second ditch was filled with earth and wood, two siege towers were brought up to the walls, but they were broken by the besiegers. The next day the towers were moved close to the walls, but the besieged made an unexpected exit from the fortress and burned them. The Latins withdrew from the walls of the Orestiada, but they did not give up and began the construction of new siege machines⁵¹. Also, in one of his letters, Latin Emperor Henry notes that during his first campaign against Kaloyan, which ended around the feast of St. Remigius, the Latins subdued many fortresses that had risen against them⁵².

The above and other written records testify to the frequent implementation of siege actions by the Latins, despite the problems with the lack of sufficient troops in 1205–1206. A vivid example is the siege of the castle of Thebes, defended by the Lombards, conducted by Emperor Henry's troops. According to the chronicler, the French raised their mangonels and arrayed their crossbowmen by the trenches, but without success. The besiegers built a siege machine to storm the fortress, but the Lombards made an exit and burned

⁴⁸ Zhofroa dyo Vilarduen 1985, 117.

⁴⁹ Zhofroa dyo Vilarduen 1985, 118.

⁵⁰ Zhofroa dyo Vilarduen 1985, 123.

⁵¹ Nicetae Choniatae 1983, 81.

⁵² Henricus imperator fratri suo Gaudefrido scribit ut imperio Constantinopolitano succurrat 1981, 13.

it during the night. Then the French began to raise large ladders and siege towers, and the Lombards were forced to ask for a truce⁵³.

As for the type of siege engines in Latin Romania at the end of the 12th and the beginning of the 13th century, we find interesting information in Nicetas Choniates' description of the siege of the Prosek fortress by the troops of Alexius III Angelus in 1198. According to the chronicler, these were human-operated trebuchets, powered by human force.⁵⁴ Considerably more detailed information about siege engines and equipment can be found in the chronicle of Geoffrey de Villardouin, who mentions *engine*, *perriere*, and *mangonial*.⁵⁵ When describing the attack on Zadar in 1202, he states "...engins qui ont mestier"⁵⁶. Also, Villardouin describes a *perrieres* (lat. *petraria*) or catapult, firing cores weighing up to 100 kg., and at a distance of up to 70–80 meters. The other machine described by Villardouin is the *mangonial* (from Provençal *manganel*) – a catapult driven by torsional force⁵⁷. At the first siege of Constantinople in 1203, Villardouin also describes archery machines operating from the deck of the *naves* and *uisiers*, arrows flying from crossbows, bows that shoot continuously, ladders in the *naves* for storming the towers of the city⁵⁸.

During the second attack on the city in the spring of 1204, the Latins placed stone-throwers, arrow-throwers, and all other machines, as well as ladders for the masts, on the *naves* and *uisiers*⁵⁹. Villardouin testifies that stone throwers and arrow throwers were used by both the defenders of Constantinople and the Crusaders⁶⁰. Later, on the eve of the Battle of Adrianople on April 14, 1205, Emperor Baldwin's small army besieged the revolted Greeks at Adrianople, with the Latins constructing various types of machinery from beams and placing miners to work underground to undermine the wall⁶¹.

Later, when the Bulgarian ruler Kaloyan besieged Seres, Emperor Henry I besieged Adrianople with various war machines and ladders⁶². In the chronicle of Villardouin, we find information about another effective siege weapon – fire. Describing the first siege of Constantinople by the crusading army in 1203, he attests to a purposeful fire to stop the Greeks⁶³. Fire was also used during the second siege of Constantinople by the Crusaders in the spring of 1204 when the

⁵³ Anri dyo Valansien 2009, 76-77.

⁵⁴ Petrov 2014, 137-139.

⁵⁵ Pentek 2004, 132.

⁵⁶ Zhofroa dyo Vilarduen 1985, 52.

⁵⁷ Zhofroa dyo Vilarduen 1985, 126.

⁵⁸ Zhofroa dyo Vilarduen 1985, 69.

⁵⁹ Zhofroa dyo Vilarduen 1985, 82.

⁶⁰ Zhofroa dyo Vilarduen 1985, 83.

⁶¹ Zhofroa dyo Vilarduen 1985, 105.

⁶² Zhofroa dyo Vilarduen 1985, 113.

⁶³ Zhofroa dyo Vilarduen 1985, 70.

Latins again lit a great fire between themselves and the Greeks to secure themselves from an unexpected attack⁶⁴. Focusing on the siege actions of the Bulgarians in the studied period, we can also find information about siege engines in many of the written sources. During the siege of Varna in 1201, a siege tower was used – a complex structure, which, according to Nicetas Choniates, was a bridge over the moat, a tower, and a ladder to the fortress ramparts⁶⁵. We also find information about machines during the siege of Serres from 1205, and both Choniates and Villardouin testify to this⁶⁶. During the siege of Dimotika in 1206, 16 large stone throwers and all kinds of military machines were positioned.

In a short time, they destroyed the walls in four places and the Bulgarians stormed through them. Choniates also testifies to the use of stone-throwing machines at Dimotika. This is also evidence that Kaloyan used large stone-throwing machines⁶⁷. An example of the destructive power of siege engines is provided by the siege of Adrianople in 1206, in which Kaloyan used 33 large stone-throwing machines⁶⁸. Although he does not note the number of siege machines, Nicetas Choniates also testifies that they were many and operated not only during the day but also at night⁶⁹. Although the siege of Thessaloniki undertaken in 1207 was perhaps the most extensive, it is striking that there are no descriptions of siege engines, and the only devices described are the ladders.

The above descriptions raise the question of what kind of stone throwers were used en masse by Kaloyan's troops. A partial answer can be found in an interesting description by Nicetas Choniates, who presents stone-throwing siege machines used by Dobromir Hrysos against the Byzantines who besieged Prosek in 1198⁷⁰. This, although a cursory description, leads to the assumption that this machine was of the type called the trebuchet, a term derived from the Latin *trabucium* and the Italian *trabocco*. The period 1180–1220 was the golden age in the evolution and use of the trebuchet, with human power replaced by a counterweight. These technical improvements led to the use of larger stone cores weighing up to 100–150 kg and launching them at about 150 m. For comparison, we can point out that a large Roman-era catapult could launch 20–30 kg stones at about 225 m. Even greater interest is caused by the fact that during the great sieges in Western Europe in the 13th–14th c. the number of trebuchets or stone-throwing machines used at the same time did

⁶⁴ Zhofroa d'yo Vilarduen 1985, 85.

⁶⁵ Zhofroa d'yo Vilarduen 1985, 66.

⁶⁶ Nicetae Choniatae 1983, 78; Zhofroa d'yo Vilarduen 1985, 113.

⁶⁷ Nicetae Choniatae 1983, 88.

⁶⁸ Zhofroa d'yo Vilarduen 1985, 122.

⁶⁹ Nicetae Choniatae 1983, 90.

⁷⁰ Nicetae Choniatae 1983, 59.

not exceed twenty⁷¹. From this point of view, the siege of Adrianople, in which Tsar Kaloyan used 33 machines of this type, exceeds this average figure and is indicative of the power of the Bulgarian sieges in the period under consideration.

In conclusion, I would note that siege actions and the use of siege engines appear frequently in the description of warfare in Livonia and Latin Romania at the beginning of the 13th century. Quantitative analysis shows that the number of sieges in these two regions prevails over the number of battles, most of which occurred before the major, decisive battles. This gives reason to define the war in Livonia and Romania at the beginning of the 13th century as a predominantly siege warfare, with the theft of machines and equipment by both the besiegers and the besieged. At the same time, however, we must point out some significant differences between the nature of siege warfare in the two regions. While in Livonia traditional earth-wooden fortifications prevailed, and stone fortresses entered slowly in the studied period, in the lands of Romania the sieges were entirely against stone fortresses and stone-brick fortifications. This suggests and explains the similarities and differences in the siege warfare technologies used in Livonia and Romania in the early 13th century. While the local Baltic tribes rarely and mostly unsuccessfully used siege techniques in siege actions against the fortifications of the German Crusaders, the Greeks, Bulgarians, Vlachs, and Cumans implemented full-scale and often successful siege actions against Latin fortresses and garrisons in Latin Romania.

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From North to South: The transmission of jewellery styles and craftsmanship in the High Middle Ages (evidenced by twisted wire bracelets with looped ends)

Milica Radišić

Abstract: The paper explores the manufacturing process and socio-economic contexts of twisted wire bracelets with looped ends, a type of ornament frequently found in cemeteries of the High Middle Ages across the Central and Eastern Balkans. Although these bracelets emerged during a period of intensified Byzantinisation in the region, their origins cannot be traced to Late Antique or Byzantine craft traditions. Instead, the paper suggests that the introduction of this jewellery style to the Balkans occurred through contacts with Northern and Eastern Europe. The adoption of twisted wire bracelets reflects broader patterns of cultural exchange, associated with diverse social preferences and specific wire-working techniques. Building on previous research, this study provides new insights into the contexts and characteristics of these objects, examining their origins through both stylistic and technological perspectives within the wider European tradition of medieval wire jewellery. The relative scarcity of other types of wire jewellery in the Balkans further emphasises the distinctive significance of these bracelets and their potential social, symbolic, or economic roles.

Keywords: wire jewellery, bracelets, craft, wire-drawing, the Balkans, Byzantine, Northern and Eastern Europe, Kievan Rus', Viking Age, transfer knowledge

Резюме: Статията изследва производствения процес и социално-икономическия контекст на гривни от усукана тел с примкови краища, вид украшение, често срещано в гробове от зрялото средновековие в Централните и Източните Балкани. Въпреки че тези гривни са се появили по време на периода на засилена византинизация в региона, техният произход не може да бъде проследен до късноантичните или византийските занаятчийски традиции. Вместо това, настоящото изследване твърди, че въвеждането на този стил бижута на Балканите е станало чрез взаимодействие и влияние от Северна и Източна Европа. Възприемането на гривни от усукана тел отразява по-широките модели на културен обмен, оформени от разнообразни социални предпочитания и техники за работа с тел. Надграждайки върху предишни разработки, това изследване предлага нови приноси за контекста и характеристиките на тези предмети, като разглежда техния произход както през стилистични, така и през технологични перспективи в рамките на по-широката европейска традиция на средновековната телена бижутерия. Относителната рядкост на други видове телена бижутерия на Балканите допълнително подчертава отличителната привлекателност на тези гривни и тяхното потенциално социално, символично или дори икономическо значение.

The use of bracelets in Europe grew significantly from the end of the Early Middle Ages into the High Middle Ages, especially in the eastern parts of the continent, including Byzantine territories. One explanation for this trend is linked to changes in clothing styles from the 10th to the 12th centuries. Iconographic evidence suggests that women's clothing during this period featured long, wide sleeves, often folded or fastened behind the neck, leaving the arms exposed and encouraging the adornment of wrists and forearms.¹ Archaeological evidence also reveals traces of fabric on bracelets, suggesting that they may have also served a practical purpose, such as fastening the sleeves of a shirt below the elbows.² With the Byzantine reoccupation of the Balkans in the second half of the 10th century, significant changes in jewellery and adornment occurred, expanding the range of items and increasing the prominence of bracelets, alongside the emergence of new styles of earrings and finger rings.³ Among the new jewellery repertoire, twisted wire bracelets with looped ends emerged as one of the most distinctive jewellery types in the Central and Eastern Balkans. While glass bracelets are firmly linked to Roman and Byzantine production, the origins of metal bracelets, including twisted wire examples, are still not fully understood.

Medieval twisted wire bracelets with looped ends in the Balkans

The open twisted bracelets with looped ends discussed here undoubtedly represent a geographically and culturally specific phenomenon. Unlike banded metal bracelets, which may feature hinged fastening mechanisms and are widely distributed across the broader Byzantine territory, these pieces reflect a distinct regional pattern. Their distribution is restricted to the Central and Eastern Balkans, covering the modern Serbian Danube region and eastern Serbia, southwestern Romania, as well as western and central Bulgaria, parts of Thrace, North Macedonia, and northern Greece (fig. 1). There is no evidence of this type appearing in the southern regions of Greece or the Asia Minor territories of the Byzantine Empire, apart from a few exceptional cases that will be addressed later.⁴ In the western Balkans, bracelets are almost entirely absent from medieval archaeological contexts.

The emergence of twisted wire jewellery in the medieval period was, in earlier research, usually attributed to Roman traditions. Scholars often cited and replicated one another's views, relying on general formal similarities and

¹ Antonaras 2005, 332.

² Radišić 2015, 111, with references therein.

³ Cf. Bikić 2010.

⁴ This observation was derived from an insight into the material from available catalogues and studies on finds from Greece, Turkey and Near East: Davidson 1952; Greek Jewellery 1996; Everyday Life in Byzantium 2002; The remnants 2007; Antonaras 2012; Poulou-Papadimitriou, Tzavella & Ott 2012; Dospěl Williams 2019; Pülz 2020.

assuming that its origins lay in Late Antique jewellery.⁵ However, twisted bracelets from the Byzantine period greatly outnumber those from the Roman period. Some twisted bracelets with animal-shaped ends, discovered in the Balkans and Dacia, date back to the Late Prehistoric and early Roman periods, reflecting roots in Hellenistic traditions.⁶ Wire bracelets dated to the 3rd–4th century are typically of a closed type, characterised by distinctively shaped ends, often featuring a loop and hook. From a morphological perspective, they cannot be genealogically linked to those of the Middle Byzantine period.⁷ Such wire-made items were not in use during the Early Byzantine period and therefore cannot be regarded as a type derived from direct Byzantine models – a view we share with V. Bikić.⁸

Bracelets have been extensively discussed in the literature in terms of dating and distribution,⁹ but aspects of production and genealogy remain insufficiently studied. The type exhibits morphological consistency with minimal technical variations. The basic example from the cemetery in Odartsi (Northeastern Bulgaria) consists of three twisted wires that are joined at the tapered ends, without loops (fig. 2/1).¹⁰ Typical examples of this type are crafted from one or two wires of varying thickness, folded in half and twisted together. Each end forms a wide loop, with the distinctive feature being one or two protruding wire ends. The simplest examples are made from a single twisted wire with loops at the ends (fig. 2/2)¹¹, followed by examples made from a piece of long wire bent into an ‘8’ shape, then twisted so that the ends protrude through the loops (fig. 2/3; cf. fig. 12/a). These are

⁵ Vinski-Gasparini 1954; Alekseva 1966, 58; Minić 1969, 171; Maneva 1992, 74; Grigorov 2007, 74.

⁶ Popović & Borić-Brešković 1994a, 42, T. XI; Popović 1996, 50–52, fig. 6/1 (type I); Greek Jewellery 1996, 126 (cat. 120), 138 (cat. 135).

⁷ Cf. Jovanović 1978, 26–27, sl. 50–55; Petković, Ružić, Jovanović, Vuksan & Zoffmann 2005, 72–73, fig. 12/i, j, Pl. V.G29/3–4, Pl. VI.40/6, Pl. VII.G57/2, G.62/1; Milovanović 2018, 129–130, n. 85.

⁸ Bikić 2010, 86.

⁹ For a broad overview of sites in Southeastern Europe, see Oța 2010, 418–419, with the references therein. For a detailed list of finds in Serbia, see Fidanovski & Zečević 2006, 79, n. 110, and additional literature by region: Gatev 1977, 38–40, fig. 5 VII; Grigorov 2007, 74, fig. 101 (Bulgaria); Maneva 1992, 74–75, T. 58–63 (North Macedonia).

¹⁰ Doncheva-Petkova 2005, 113–114, obr. 113/49(6), T. LXIII/6. There are two more examples of twisted wire bracelets from this cemetery, belonging to the closed type – one with two hooks (Doncheva-Petkova 2005, LXXVII/28), and another with a loop at one end, while the other end is damaged (Doncheva-Petkova 2005, CVII.270/1).

¹¹ A fragment of jewellery made from two twisted bronze strands, found in Corinth and interpreted as a 12th-century bracelet (Davidson 1952, 262, cat. 2137), may represent this variant.

rare in the archaeological record; only a few examples are known from northern Greece,¹² southern Serbia,¹³ and western Bulgaria.¹⁴ Almost identical bracelets are known from Russia and Poland, which will be discussed later (fig. 8/3-4).

The vast majority of bracelets belong to the variant made of two folded and twisted bronze wires (fig. 2/5-6, figs. 3-6). The twisted wires are turned in opposite directions and then intertwined, creating a combination of loops and free wire ends¹⁵ (fig. 12/b). This is particularly evident in the bracelet from Gazdare (Leskovac), where the wires display different colours due to variations in their metal composition (fig. 3a). The diameter of the bracelets ranges from 4 to 8 cm¹⁶, with wire thickness usually measuring 0.2-0.3 cm.¹⁷ Noticeable differences can be observed in the size of the loops, as cemeteries in North Macedonia and Kosovo contain examples with both smaller and larger ones. In the northern regions (the Serbian Danube region and southwestern Romania), the loops at the ends are generally more massive. The two wire ends protruding in loops raise the question of their purpose: were the two tips merely a technical detail (perhaps an indication that the craftsman chose not to shorten and polish the wires), or did they serve a symbolic function that we are unable to fully understand today?¹⁸ The potential discomfort or irritation caused by these ends during wear should also be considered, although some examples feature polished tips. One hypothesis suggests that the ends may have had a practical role, such as fastening sleeves or securing fabric, and may also have held threads or strips of textile for decorative purposes.

Bracelets with loops and cut wire ends are, to date, unknown in the Balkans. One such example is a twisted wire bracelet from the Middle Byzantine period, discovered at the site of Tille Höyük in southern Turkey,

¹² *Everyday Life in Byzantium* 2002, 417, cat. 529; *Greek Jewellery* 1997, 172, cat. 172-173, misdated to the Early Christian period (cf. Antonaras 2012, 119).

¹³ Trbuhović & Trbuhović 1970, 89 (cat. 3), 93 (cat. 16).

¹⁴ Čangova 1992, 136, obr. 126/4.

¹⁵ This method of twisting is described in: Čangova 1992, 135; Maneva 1992, 74; Teicu 2009, 25; Bosselmann-Ruickbie 2011, 270; Antonaras 2012, 119.

¹⁶ Grigorov 2007, 74. The bracelets from Donja Toponica in Serbia are reported to have an exceptionally small diameter of 3.5 cm, indicating that they were placed in graves of very young children (see n. 13).

¹⁷ In the literature on jewellery from Viking Age hoards, elements of twisted torcs and bracelets are often referred to as 'rod', implying that they were hammered. In this work, the term 'wire' is used for all metal components, whether hammered or drawn.

¹⁸ The interpretation that the loops with two wire ends resemble serpent heads or fangs, symbolising the amuletic and protective (prophylactic) properties attributed to snakes (Gatev 1977, 40; Stamenova-Atanasova 2015, 511), appears simplistic and rather speculative.

which attests to the presence of wire jewellery in this part of the Empire (fig. 2/7). The object, discovered in a settlement context, is made of four twisted wires. One preserved end is shaped into a small oval loop (while the other wire ends are cut off), which has been hammered flat and appears to bear an inscription.¹⁹

In scholarly literature, bracelets have been dated within a broad chronological range, from the 10th to the 13th century, while available data indicating that they were most commonly used in the 12th century. The exact chronology of the appearance of this type remains imprecisely determined across regions, which complicates the interpretation of its distribution. No samples of twisted bracelets have been clearly stratified to the 10th century. As correctly noted, this type has not been documented in the core regions of Byzantium before the late 11th century.²⁰ Three examples originate from the well-dated 11th-century cemetery in Odartsi (Bulgaria); yet they are not classic examples of the type but rather related variants.²¹ It appears that finds in the south are generally younger than those in the north, particularly in the Danube region and Romania. Twisted bracelets with loops found at sites in Greece appear in significantly smaller numbers and are dated to the so-called Middle Byzantine period (10th to 12th century), although these specimens are poorly stratified.²² The earliest dated examples were found in the exceptionally richly furnished female grave 181 at Demir Kapija (Macedonia), which contained a variety of valuable items attributed to the end of the 10th or the beginning of the 11th century.²³ This cemetery was in use from the 10th to the 15th century,²⁴ with the most intense burial activity between the 11th and the 13th centuries, from which the majority of finds originate. Based on its contents, grave 181 cannot date earlier than the 11th century, since it contained several rings with accentuated shoulders, a

¹⁹ Moore 1993, 139, fig. 55/3.

²⁰ Bikić 2010, 86.

²¹ See n. 10.

²² Greek Jewellery 1997, 210, 215, cat. 243–244, 255; Everyday Life in Byzantium 2002, 417, cat. 529–530; Bosselmann-Ruickbie 2011, 113, kat. 110–114; Antonaras 2012, 119, fig. 4.

²³ A very early date for this type of bracelet in: Alekseva 1966, p. 36, 58 T. XVI–XVII, Maneva 1992, 75, 148, 152. V. Grigorov refers to unstratified twisted wire examples from the Greek Jewellery catalogue (1996), which are wrongly dated to the 4th–5th century, and also cites examples from 7th–9th century graves in Tuhovišta, in southwest Bulgaria (Grigorov 2007, p. 74). However, we were unable to verify these claims using the cited literature, particularly regarding the appearance of the bracelets in question. Twisted bracelets from the 7th–9th centuries with documented contexts are unknown to us.

²⁴ Aleksova 1966, 86.

twisted wire example, and bezel-headed rings, all primarily characteristic of that century. Macedonian scholars have suggested an earlier dating for bracelets from North Macedonia that feature additional twisted filigree wire (fig. 2/4).²⁵

Two bracelets were found outside the graves in the cemetery at Maticane (Kosovo), dated to the late 10th to the late 11th century,²⁶ while finds from another cemetery in the same region of Kosovo, at Velekince, were discovered in graves alongside earrings and rings attributed to the 12th century.²⁷ The finds from the cemetery at Donja Toponica (near Niš) may suggest an 11th-century date, including a bracelet with loops and one wire end within the loop; found in a grave alongside a lunula-shaped pendant typical of the period. Additionally, S-shaped hoop earrings, characteristic of 11th-century material culture in the Carpathian Basin, were discovered in this cemetery.²⁸ Examples from Serbia north of Leskovac all originate from the 12th- to early 13th-century burial contexts.²⁹ In Bulgaria, this type of bracelets is usually dated to the 11th-12th century³⁰, or in more recent literature, to the 12th and 13th centuries.³¹

The largest concentration of twisted wire bracelets was recorded at the Trnjane cemetery, near Požarevac (Serbian Danube region), where 62 examples were found in 32 graves, each containing from one to eight bracelets (fig. 5/8-17).³² Those items were often found in combination with banded bracelets and those with a solid cross-section.³³ The site is well-dated by Byzantine and Central European coins from the second half of the 12th and early 13th centuries; yet no wire bracelets were found in graves containing coins. One richly furnished grave with such bracelets, located near Požarevac, contained coins of the Byzantine emperor Manuel I (1143-1180).³⁴ Numerous bracelets have also been found in the Banat and Oltenia regions of Romania, dating from the 11th to the early 13th centuries, with most examples originating from the second half of the 12th century and the early 13th

²⁵ Maneva 1992, 75.

²⁶ Jovanović 1988, 24, sl. 18.

²⁷ Fidanovski 2010, 44, T. IX/90/3-4, X/90/8-9.

²⁸ Trbuhović & Trbuhović 1970, 89-95.

²⁹ Cf. Janković 1975, 237-240; Radičević 2009, 198-200; Fidanovski & Zečević 2006, 79-80.

³⁰ Grigorov 2007, 74.

³¹ Petrova & Hristova 2018, 260-263.

³² Marjanović-Vujović 1984, 98-99, T. II-XVII, XIX-XXV.

³³ Interestingly, this cemetery does not contain glass bracelets, which are common in other cemeteries, such as those in Korbovo and Prahovo, also in the Serbian Danube region.

³⁴ Marjanović 1967, 217-220.

century.³⁵ Finally, the mass occurrence of this type of jewellery is indirectly evidenced by its frequent appearance on websites selling illicit antiquities (fig. 6), where they are often mistakenly identified as Ancient Thracian, Romano-Celtic, or Viking artefacts.³⁶ One particular variant of twisted bracelets includes specimens currently known only from the Bulgarian Black Sea region. These are silver or gold pieces, composed of three thick twisted wires with double bent loops, decorated with dotted impressions (fig. 2/8).³⁷ They originate from jewellery hoards associated with a slightly later horizon of jewellery production, and connected to the Golden Horde, from the mid-13th century onward.³⁸ Given that they belong to a different historical context, following the retreat of Byzantium from the northern Balkans, they are not the focus of this work.

In the Balkans, bracelets were undoubtedly gender-specific attire, unlike in other parts of medieval Europe.³⁹ They are predominantly found in the graves of young females aged between 15 and 20/25, as evidenced by examples from Gazdare (fig. 3),⁴⁰ Trnjane (fig. 5)⁴¹, Mokranjske Stene (Negotin),⁴² and other sites. Furthermore, a notable feature is the distinctive manner in which glass and metal bracelets were worn. Glass bracelets were typically worn on the left arm, while metal ones – including those made of twisted wire – were found on the right arm of the deceased women. It has been suggested that metal bracelets were worn on the right arm, as it is more frequently used. In graves where metal bracelets are the only adornments, they are occasionally found on both arms, although the right arm seems to have been preferred.⁴³ The widespread occurrence of multiple bracelets in

³⁵ Teicu 2009, 25–26, fig. 2; Oța 2006, 253–254, Pl. I–II; Oța 2014, 170–171, Pl. 8.

³⁶ <https://www.invaluable.com/auction-lot/viking-bronze-twisted-bracelet-30-c-36e43de9d3>
<https://www.ancientresource.com/images/greek/jewelry-greek/thracian-bracelet384.jpg> <https://www.etsy.com/uk/listing/715213042/ancient-romano-celtic-bronze-childs> (accessed 16 November 2024)

³⁷ Neševa 1985, 116, Tab. II/1a,6; Pavlova 2007, 55, 76, kat. 10.3–4, 15.14.

³⁸ Cf. Oța 2023.

³⁹ Wrist ornaments were worn by both genders in the Carpathian Basin (Fülop 2022, 165–167), and the Upper Volga region (Stepanova 2017, 291–298, figs. 190, 201–202), although they are more commonly associated with females. According to historical, pictorial, and archaeological evidence, both genders in the Viking world wore jewellery, though they were rarely buried with precious torcs or bracelets (Graham-Campbell & Kidd 1980, 101–102, 108).

⁴⁰ Jović *et al.* 2019, 139, sl. 34–35.

⁴¹ Marjanović-Vujović 1984, 25–26, sl. 39.

⁴² Radišić 2015, 104–105, sl. 2.

⁴³ Gatev 1985, 143, n. 113–115.

Balkan cemeteries is particularly noteworthy, as this practice is scarcely observed in other regions of medieval Europe. For example, in the Carpathian Basin, bracelets are typically found in quantities of one or two per arm.⁴⁴ In the Viking Age, bracelets were rarely included in graves; an exceptional example comes from the Late Viking-Age Bodzia cemetery in Poland, where a bracelet composed of three twisted bronze wires, with cut-off wire ends touching each other, was discovered in a cenotaph grave.⁴⁵ In the territories of Russia, wrist ornaments are also commonly found in pairs, typically worn on both the left and right arms. Evidence from burial mounds indicates that bracelets are sometimes found in considerable numbers, ranging from one to eight per individual.⁴⁶ In a recent study on the reconstruction of medieval clothing from the Upper Volga region, based on grave findings, it was shown that women wore one or two bracelets on each hand, which fastened the sleeves, including items.⁴⁷

Medieval twisted wire jewellery in a broader European context

The use of wire jewellery, particularly torcs and bracelets crafted entirely from wire, reflects a longstanding tradition spanning diverse regions and populations from late prehistory to historical periods. Its prevalence and significance vary significantly across Europe. Bulgarian archaeologist J. Čangova once stated that twisted wire bracelets were popular among Slavic populations from the 10th to the 14th century, and spread from Corinth to the Baltic region.⁴⁸ While her subjective assessment of the jewellery's exclusively Slavic origin is inaccurate, given that such jewellery has been found in regions inhabited by Vikings, Hungarians, Volga Bulgarians and nomadic tribes in Eastern Europe – her observations regarding the temporal and geographical distribution of wire jewellery remain valid. Although open-ended and looped forms belong to a broader medieval jewellery tradition, the Balkan bracelets exhibit distinct regional characteristics. Current evidence indicates that they were produced locally in the Balkans rather than imported.

In a closer geographical context, similar jewellery was used in the Carpathian Basin during the 10th–11th centuries, at the formative years of the Hungarian state. A large number of metal adornments made from wire have been found in cemeteries; these pieces exhibit clear similarities with jewellery production in the Viking sphere and Kievan Rus'.⁴⁹ Several types of twisted wire bracelets are known, most of which are of a closed type, featuring an

⁴⁴ Radišić 2025.

⁴⁵ Kara 2015, 91, 174–175, fig. 8.5. The scale in the image with bracelet is incorrect; the text description states that the bracelet's diameter is 5 cm.

⁴⁶ Sedova 1981, 93; Zhilina 2010, 177, ris. 1/I, IV, 183, ris. 5/2–4, 6.

⁴⁷ Cf. Stepanova 2017, 206–285.

⁴⁸ Čangova 1992, 135.

⁴⁹ Radišić 2025.

oval loop and a hook for fastening. These are produced by twisting and braiding (fig. 7/2–4). One type, with loops and a wire end twisted into a spiral (fig. 7/1), resembles bracelets from Eastern European contexts and the Balkans. The chronological span of this type was brief, ranging from the 920s to the 990s,⁵⁰ or from the middle to the second half of the 10th century,⁵¹ which is significantly earlier than comparable Balkan pieces. A few examples from Central Europe provide direct analogies to the Balkan variant featuring one end of the wire extends and passes through loops (fig. 2/3). One bracelet comes from Niewiarów in southern Poland (fig. 8/3),⁵² while a finger-ring with loops originates from the cemetery at Uherské Hradiště-Sady in the Czech Republic (fig. 8/2).⁵³ A particularly intriguing discovery is a torc from Trnjan near Požarevac, imported from the territory of medieval Hungary and uncovered as a stray find. This unique example, probably dating to the mid-11th century, features two free wire ends that are completely flattened and shortened within a loop (fig. 8/1), in a manner similar to that of bracelets.

Close analogies for wire jewellery from the Balkans appear across Northern and Eastern Europe, whereas such adornments are absent in the western parts of the continent. Numerous finds of twisted wire items—including bracelets, neck-rings (torcs), finger rings, and chain-like jewellery—draw clear parallels with Viking Age hoards, spanning from Great Britain to Russia. Twisted wire bracelets from Viking hoards in Scandinavia and Poland are typically of higher quality and made from silver, with a different design compared to those in Russia (they lack loops and have differently designed open or closed ends).⁵⁴ These items were produced throughout the Viking Age, although most appear to date to the 10th century. Researchers of jewellery have traced earlier prototypes of these forms and techniques, suggesting they spread from the Viking sphere eastward to the regions of present-day Russia and Ukraine.⁵⁵ Wire jewellery remained in use in Eastern Europe until the late Middle Ages.

As earlier authors have observed, open-looped twisted bracelets are well-documented in the territory of Kievan Rus',⁵⁶ particularly in the lands of the Krivich and Vyatich Slavic tribes who inhabited the regions around the Upper Dnieper, Desna, Oka and Moskva rivers. These bracelets have been found in burial mounds (kurgans) as well as in settlements. In medieval Rus'

⁵⁰ Szabó 1979, 64, fig. 7.

⁵¹ Dragotă 2015, 258.

⁵² Dzik 2015, 204, 301, Tabl. I. 11.

⁵³ Galuška *et al.* 2018, 166, hrob 15/60.

⁵⁴ Eg. Graham-Campbell 2006, Pl. 1–3, 32–35; Means of Exchange 2008; Czonstke & Koperkiewicz 2013, Tabl. IV. 6–7.

⁵⁵ Graham-Campbell 2006, 74–75; Lesman 2014, 48–49.

⁵⁶ Kovačević 1953, 116; Niderle 1954, 208; Maneva 1992, 74; Bikić 2010, 87.

cities, the drawing of wire was a common practice. There was a high demand for wire, and a large quantity was needed for various purposes. Copper, silver, and gold wire were used for different products. Thick wire was used to make torcs (*grivnas*) and bracelets, thinner wire for earrings and chains, while the finest wire threads were used to decorate the surface of various objects with complex and delicate filigree patterns.⁵⁷ In the settlement layers of Kyiv, a few-meter-long stick of twisted wire was discovered, bent into multiple loops. These pre-formed rods were subsequently cut as required to craft the desired jewellery.⁵⁸

A substantial collection of non-ferrous metal bracelets emerged from the renowned site of Gorodishte in Serensk (Kaluga Oblast, Russia), where evidence of a jewellery workshop was documented. The designs of these bracelets vary, with some featuring braiding or intertwining of two, three, four, or more wires, with open and looped ends (fig. 13), achieved through multiple bending and twisting. Many wire finds and bracelet fragments, similar to those from the Balkans, have also been discovered during excavations of the Kremlin in Moscow, particularly from medieval settlement layers dating to the 12th to 14th centuries.⁵⁹ In Mužiševo (Tver Oblast), a treasure containing open-loop twisted and braided bracelets was discovered in a wax pot, buried during the Mongol invasion in the 13th century. Among the items are bracelets featuring loops and free wire ends (fig. 9/1,3,6).⁶⁰ One of the more recent discoveries is the treasure from Isady (Vologda Oblast), unearthed in 2021. It comprises silver torcs and bracelets dated to the late 11th to the first half of the 12th century, including two twisted bracelets with open double-looped ends (fig. 10/a),⁶¹ which closely resemble a later example from Bulgaria (fig. 2/8). Numerous similar bronze pieces are available online, especially through auctions, where they are frequently described as Viking artefacts. Nevertheless, they were most likely produced in Eastern European workshops (fig. 11).⁶² Moreover, numerous bracelets crafted from twisted, braided, or plaited wire with variously shaped ends have been discovered in the medieval layers of Novgorod, dating from the early 11th to the late 14th century. Their chronology has been reliably determined through

⁵⁷ Ribakov 1948, 330.

⁵⁸ Ribakov 1948, 327, ris. 86.

⁵⁹ Zaytseva 2022, 129–132, ris. 80–82.

⁶⁰ Korzuhina 1954, 13, 44, 148, Tabl. LXII.

⁶¹ Striklinov 2022.

⁶² <https://www.invaluable.com/auction-lot/viking-bronze-twisted-bracelet-385-c-1464b7288b>
<https://www.invaluable.com/auction-lot/viking-twisted-bronze-bracelet-130-c-fe64dfe96f>
<https://www.artemisgallery.com/product/lot-70-auction-9-4-2025-two-rus-viking-twisted-bronze-copper-bracelets/> (accessed 12 October 2024)

dendrochronological dating.⁶³ There are almost identical bracelets to the Balkans examples (fig. 2/3), featuring a single free wire end within both loops (fig. 8/4).⁶⁴ The jewellery repertoire of this historic Russian city also includes various types of banded metal bracelets, which share similarities with Byzantine examples, supporting connections between these craft traditions.

Open bracelets made of wire are commonly found in the regions inhabited by the Volga Bulgars, eastern neighbours of Kievan Rus'. These bracelets are predominantly made of silver, using an elaborate braiding or plaiting technique; the more elaborate examples feature ends hammered into flat, decorated plates or include settings with ornamental glass. However, there are also simpler bronze variants with double-looped ends, dating from the late 10th to the 12th century.⁶⁵

Wire craftsmanship

Before the advent of written records, metalworking techniques developed through practical experience and were transmitted from generation to generation. Archaeological evidence reveals parallels between early methods and those later documented in historical texts, underscoring the continuity of metallurgical traditions across cultures. Byzantine manuscripts suggest that some techniques were influenced by Persian and Indian practices, particularly following the expansion of Alexander the Great's empire, while others reflect Arab influences.⁶⁶ Regarding wire production in medieval Europe, various interpretations exist concerning the manufacturing processes and techniques used to craft wire jewellery. Today, wire is something we often take for granted. In the past, it was crafted by hand using a variety of techniques and skills to produce a thin metal strand with a smooth, shiny surface. Before the invention of sophisticated wire-drawing techniques, metal wire was produced using methods such as hammering, casting, block-twisting, strip-twisting, strip-drawing, and roll-drawing (folding technique).⁶⁷ All of these, except for wire-casting (which was employed by the Pre-Columbian civilizations of South America), were practiced by European craftsmen. The aforementioned techniques involved twisting a strip or square bar of metal to create a round cross-section, which was then polished using various methods. The development of the wire-drawing process was driven by the increasing demand for stronger and more abundant wire. This process utilized a sturdy metal plate, known as a wire-

⁶³ Sedova 1981, 94–101, ris. 34–36.

⁶⁴ Sedova 1981, 95, ris. 34/3a,b .

⁶⁵ Rudenko 2015, 198–199, 253–255, ris. 52. 1, ris. 53. 1–7 (type I).

⁶⁶ Papathanassiou 2002, 126.

⁶⁷ Cf. Oddy 1977; Whitfield 1990; Stjerna 1998; Newbury & Notis 2004; Wärmländer *et al.* 2023.

drawing plate, which had holes drilled into it. The holes were typically of graduated sizes, ranging from large to small (fig. 14). Once the wire passed through the largest hole, the process could be repeated using progressively smaller holes in the drawing plate until the desired diameter was achieved. During this procedure, the drawplate was either affixed to a wooden block or wedged between two vertical supports.⁶⁸

The origin of the wire-drawing method has been debated for decades, yet no definitive answers have been reached. Specific diagnostic macro-traces of metalworking techniques on jewellery artifacts allow scholars to reconstruct the process through surface analysis. According to J. Ogden, there is no evidence of drawn wire prior to the 7th century, suggesting it was not practiced during Antiquity.⁶⁹ The earliest archaeologically documented drawplates, dating to the Vendel Period (AD 550-775) were discovered in Uppsala in Sweden,⁷⁰ and Stara Ladoga in Russia, from the mid-8th century.⁷¹ Viking wire production involved hammering a wire from a cast ingot, followed by the use of a drawplate to produce fine, round-sectioned wire. The rods, of varying diameters, were then shaped by hammering the metal into a groove carved into an anvil.⁷² In practice it is difficult to achieve an even result, and, unless a swage has been used, hammered wire varies along its length. Hammering is a process better suited to relatively large-diameter; wires made on an anvil have a square cross-section at the ends.⁷³

A. Bosselmann-Ruickbie challenges Ogden's claims, arguing that wire-drawing was practiced as early as the early Byzantine period, with evidence of pieces from the 4th–5th centuries. She further asserts that numerous 10th-century Byzantine jewellery pieces show that wire-drawing was a common technique, particularly in the crafting of earring hoops,⁷⁴ as also shown in one recent paper.⁷⁵ Regarding bronze wires used in making twisted bracelets, however, she explains that they were made by folding a metal strip lengthwise and hammering it into shape, indicating they were not produced using a drawplate. This technique leaves a longitudinal groove running along the entire length on the wire, resulting in a more oval than circular cross-section. Bosselmann-Ruickbie argues that bronze jewellery, particularly simpler pieces, was not produced using the wire-drawing technique, unlike gold

⁶⁸ Oddy 1977, 79–80.

⁶⁹ Ogden 1994, 164.

⁷⁰ Wärmländer *et al.* 2023.

⁷¹ Bosselmann-Ruickbie 2011, 83, n. 989.

⁷² Armbruster & Eilbracht 2006, 29.

⁷³ Zaytseva & Saracheva 2011, 225.

⁷⁴ Bosselmann-Ruickbie 2014, 340–343.

⁷⁵ Logothetou *et al.* 2024, fig. 4.

jewellery.⁷⁶ All described features are clearly visible on a bracelet from Gazdare (fig. 15/a. 1). It shows noticeable traces of additional hammering, both on the loops and on the inner side of the bracelet, particularly in the middle, to create a flat surface and allow it to better conform to the wrist. On the specimen from Kruševac grooves are not visible on the surface (fig. 4).

Wire-drawing was an established technology in Europe during the High Middle Ages, and numerous iron drawplates have been found through Viking Scandinavia and in the Rus' contexts, particularly from the Novgorod area, dating from the 11th to the 14th century (fig. 14/1).⁷⁷ The earliest datable description of wire-drawing is that provided by Theophilus Presbyter in the 12th century. His book 3, chapter 8, describes the manufacture of the iron plates through which wires are drawn.⁷⁸ Nonetheless, researchers of Byzantine jewellery have referred to an 11th-century Byzantine source, which also briefly describes the same principle of wire production. The fact that the wire-drawing technique was not described in detail in the sources is considered to indicate that it was a common practice and required no further explanation.⁷⁹

Some authors believe that wire-drawing was performed in two different ways: by drawing either a twisted metal strip or a folded strip.⁸⁰ Both of these traditional methods begin with strips of metal foil and result in wire that is, in reality, a hollow tube (fig. 15/b). The first method, known as strip-drawing (fig. 15/b. 1), involves placing the metal strip in a drawplate. Alternatively, the strip could be flattened by rolling it between two flat stones or hard pieces of wood, as was commonly done in other techniques.⁸¹ The second method, also called single-seam or single longitudinal wire techniques (fig. 15/b. 2), involves folding a metal strip that is first creased with a cold chisel, then hammered into a C-shape, and finally rounded on an anvil.⁸² It may then be finished by rolling or filling, and it is characteristic that pieces of folded wire are relatively thick, just like in twisted wire bracelets. It can be observed that examples with longitudinal marks have also been observed on wires from Russian centres. Analysis of wires from temple rings, bracelets, and needles from medieval layers of the Moscow Kremlin, conducted using optical microscopy at various magnifications, showed that nearly all samples were

⁷⁶ Bosselmann-Ruickbie 2011, 82–83, 113, 270–271; Bosselmann-Ruickbie 2014, 344–345.

⁷⁷ Eniosova & Singh 2009; Lesman 2014, 48–49; Wärmländer *et al.* 2023.

⁷⁸ Ogden 1994, 165.

⁷⁹ Bosselmann-Ruickbie 2014, 342.

⁸⁰ Oddy 1977, 84–85; Stjerna 1998, 85–86.

⁸¹ Cf. Whitfield 1990, 13–14.

⁸² Whitfield 1990, 20–21, fig. 10.

produced by drawing from a rod or a folded plate.⁸³ In some samples, a distinct longitudinal groove running along the entire length is visible. This groove forms when the wire is made from a rolled plate and subsequently drawn through the holes of a draw-plate (fig. 15/a.2–3). The method was previously documented in the study of wire ornaments from the Serenysk and Vyatichi burial mounds.⁸⁴

Drawn wire differs from hammered wire in its uniformity of cross-section and smoothness of surface, caused by the action of pulling the wire through the various holes of the drawplate. More unusual was the mismatch between the strong elongation of inclusions in the microstructure and the results of visual observation which suggested that the wire had been forged: uneven cross-section, surface tuberosity, and the absence of longitudinal grooves from irregularities in the drawplate hole. This meant that the wire had been hammered under special circumstances which led to a marked expansion of the metal in the longitudinal direction. This was done using an anvil with a groove, the walls of which prevented transverse deformation of the metal.⁸⁵ Microstructural analysis of the wire showed that Novgorod jewellers were highly skilled and frequently employed intermediate annealing during drawing wire, having empirically studied annealing temperatures based on the colour of the heated metal's glow. Hammered and drawn wire coexisted in Eastern Europe until the 14th century.⁸⁶

All experts agree that drawing wire through multiple openings in a plate leaves parallel marks on the surface by the irregularities of the die, which can be observed under a microscope, but such analysis could not be conducted on this occasion. The cross-sections are often characteristic of the wire type: solid drawn wire has a solid cross-section, while strip-drawn and roll-drawn wires have cross-sections with spiral patterns and hollow interiors. Hammered wire is also solid, but with a faceted rather than round shape, and it lacks the surface striations typical for drawn wire.⁸⁷ It was also pointed out that these marks could have been removed over time due to the effects of corrosion (on bronze and silver) and that they can only be detected on gold pieces.⁸⁸ However, the mentioned examples of bronze earring hoops from the Peloponnese show traces of wire-drawing.⁸⁹ If wire were produced solely by

⁸³ Zaitseva 2022, 131–132.

⁸⁴ Zaitseva & Saracheva 2011, 169.

⁸⁵ <https://rezansky.com/jewelry-production-technology-in-10th-15th-century-novgorod/> (accessed 20 December 2024), a translation of Ryndina, N.V. (1967) 'Tekhnologija proizvodstva novgorodskikh juvelirov X-XV vv.', *Materialy i Issledovaniya po Arkheologii SSSR* 117, 200–268.

⁸⁶ Lesman 2014, 49.

⁸⁷ Wärmländer *et al.* 2023.

⁸⁸ Bosselmann-Ruickbie 2014, 345.

⁸⁹ See n. 75.

hammering sheet metal into shape, it would have a faceted surface rather than the smooth appearance observed in the examined specimens. This suggests that both wire-drawing and forging techniques were used in the production of wire bracelets in the Balkans. Given that no metallurgical analyses or microscopic examinations of bracelets from the Balkans have been conducted, existing conclusions rely solely on general observation.

Several drawplate finds attest to wire production in the Eastern Balkans (fig. 14/3–4). These plates feature small holes⁹⁰, likely intended for shaping earring hoops. In contrast, drawplates from northern regions typically have holes of varying sizes, including some measuring several millimetres in diameter – dimensions that could correspond to the thickness of wires used for bracelets (fig. 14/1). A drawplate recovered from a High Medieval layer in the fortress of Pernik, located in western Bulgaria, closely resembles Russian examples (fig. 14/2).⁹¹ Drawplates could also have been made of hard wood or bone. Moreover, it has been suggested that objects such as beads or amulets made of precious stones, featuring small holes, may have served this purpose, though researchers have been unable to conclusively identify them as wire-drawing tools.⁹² Another notable discovery from medieval Pernik is a bundle of thin copper wire wound around a small spool, which the excavator describes as filigree wire.⁹³

Various methods of intertwining wires are attested across different regions of Europe. In the north, numerous bracelets were crafted using multiple folds and interweavings of wire (fig. 13). The specific twisting technique, characterised by the pattern most commonly found in the majority of Balkan bracelets (fig. 12/b), is absent from related northern specimens. Analysis of the material indicates that this twisting method is unique to the Balkans. It may be considered relatively simple compared to the plaiting and braiding techniques observed in the Viking and Rus' spheres. While the abundance of such bracelets in rural cemeteries is often attributed to the simplicity of their production,⁹⁴ their manufacture still required a considerable degree of skill and advanced metalworking techniques. During twisting the workpiece must be annealed several times to ensure a regular twist.⁹⁵ The braiding-wire technique, a more complex and demanding method, was not employed in the Balkans,⁹⁶ while in the Carpathian Basin, it

⁹⁰ Vaklinova 1995, 37–38, fig. 91, 92.

⁹¹ Čangova 1992, 29, 31, obr. 18/4.

⁹² Oddy 1997, 84.

⁹³ Čangova 1992, 37–38, obr. 26/11.

⁹⁴ cf. Maneva 1992, 75; Teicu 2009, 25.

⁹⁵ Armbruster & Eilbracht 2006, 29.

⁹⁶ Georgieva 1961, 12, obr. 1/1; Neševa 1985, 116, Tab. II/4.

was imitated by the double-twisting technique, which produced a similar appearance to multiple interwoven wires.⁹⁷ Double-twisting was also widespread in Eastern and Northern Europe⁹⁸, from where the auction specimen presented here (fig. 11) originates.

The only embellishment on these uniform bracelets is the addition of very fine filigree wire; according to the available evidence, such examples are known exclusively from North Macedonia and Greece (fig. 2/4).⁹⁹ The use of filigree in twisted bracelets can be traced back to the Hellenistic and Roman periods¹⁰⁰, but it becomes significantly more frequent in medieval wire jewellery (torcs, bracelets, finger-rings) across northern Europe, particularly in Viking Age hoards and finds from Russia and Ukraine. In these contexts, thin wire strands were intricately intertwined with thicker wires to form more elaborate decorative motifs (fig. 10/b). The same type of decoration was applied in the Carpathian Basin during the 10th and the 11th centuries.¹⁰¹

Interpreting the transfer of the twisted wire jewellery style in Europe

The Byzantine influence on European regions – from the south to the north, encompassing the Kievan Rus', Viking, and Hungarian spheres – has been extensively studied.¹⁰² The reverse influence, particularly the transmission of northern products and craft styles to the Balkans, remains comparatively underexplored. While direct imports of goods from the north into the Balkans are insufficiently documented, the transfer of jewellery forms and techniques is evident, with these forms being adapted to suit local preferences. In this context, the emergence of twisted wire bracelets should be analysed alongside other indicative types of ornaments. A pertinent example of transmission of jewellery styles is the so-called Volhynian earrings, a type that originated in medieval workshops in the region of present-day western Ukraine. These earrings, widely distributed across the Carpathian Basin and the Central Balkans, first appeared in medieval Hungary by the late 10th century, and spread southward. They are also commonly found in northern Croatia (Slavonia) and Slovenia during the 11th

⁹⁷ Kovács 2016, 591–592; Radišić, 2025, 25.

⁹⁸ Cf. Armbruster & Eilbracht 2006, 29.

⁹⁹ Aleksova 1966, 57–58, T. XVI. 140–142, T. XXII. 295, 296; Maneva 1992, 75, 148, 178, 219, T. 58. 54/8, T. 62. 78/2, 78/3; Bosselmann-Ruickbie 2011, 270, kat. 111.

¹⁰⁰ Popović & Borić-Brešković 1994b, 18–19, sl. 4/1, 2, T. IV/2, 3; Greek Jewellery 1996, 138, cat. 135.

¹⁰¹ The addition of wire is common on torcs, while it is encountered sporadically on bracelets (e.g. Demo 2009, 153, Pl. 18/1).

¹⁰² There are numerous works and thematic publications, particularly published in the last two decades, that explore the influence of Byzantine material culture on Northern and Eastern Europe, e.g.: Musin 2010; Bollók 2010; Rome, Constantinople and Newly-Converted Europe 2012; Byzantium and the Viking world 2016.

century. In the Balkans, they took on more developed and modified forms, remaining in use into the 12th century.¹⁰³ In the case of these earrings, the chronological trajectory from the north to the south – passing through Hungary – is easier to trace and more certain than that of twisted wire bracelets with looped ends.

Similar phenomena are observed in other adornments, such as Kievan-type crosses and encolpia, although their presence in the Central Balkans is limited.¹⁰⁴ Additionally, earrings featuring large biconical beads, commonly referred to as Polovtsian-type earrings and dated to the 12th century, have been found in the same area of the Central and Eastern Balkans as the bracelets in focus. These ornaments are believed to have been introduced from Eastern Europe and are associated with nomadic Turkic peoples, particularly the Cumans (Polovtsians) and the Pechenegs. Direct analogies for such earrings exist in their original homelands.¹⁰⁵ The role of eastern groups in fashion transition in the Balkans requires further exploration. These nomadic populations, historically documented in the Eastern Balkans from the second quarter of the 11th century,¹⁰⁶ and in the Central Balkans from its latter part¹⁰⁷, may have facilitated the transfer of certain jewellery types or techniques. However, evidence does not support their role as primary mediators of twisted wire bracelets, as no such finds have been discovered in their Black Sea homeland. In the regions inhabited by the Pechenegs and Cumans, twisted wire bracelets were used to some extent, although these items featured settings for decorative stones at their ends.¹⁰⁸ As demonstrated by F. Kurta, the Pechenegs reshaped their material culture after crossing the Danube; in their cemeteries, including the abovementioned Odartsi cemetery, there are objects of material culture from various regions in the surrounding area, with very few items coming from their homeland.¹⁰⁹

The mass production of jewellery made of wire did not exist in Byzantium before the 11th century. The available data supports the hypothesis that twisted-style ornaments may have reached the Balkans from the north, particularly from the territories of Kievan Rus'. As discussed above, wire crafting techniques likely varied both regionally and over time, depending on local resources and craftsmanship skills, yet, the wire jewellery style was undoubtedly a legacy of the Viking and Rus' spheres in the Middle Ages. The

¹⁰³ Minić 1970; Rabinovič & Rjabceva 1997; Radišić 2024.

¹⁰⁴ Špehar 2022, 56–60, sl. 7.

¹⁰⁵ Marjanović-Vujović 1984, 82.

¹⁰⁶ Doncheva-Petkova 2005, 244; Curta 2013.

¹⁰⁷ Uzelac 2009, with extensive literature on the Pechenegs and Cumans in the region.

¹⁰⁸ Pletneva 1981, 216–217, ris. 82/94–95, 84/23.

¹⁰⁹ Curta 2013, 202, fig. 27.

mechanisms of interaction between Balkan societies and Northeastern Europe remain unclear. Whether this distribution reflects the spread of fashion, trade networks, or/and population movements remains an open question. It is unlikely that the influences came through the Kingdom of Hungary; rather, they passed through Bulgaria, occurring in at least two distinct periods: one wave of influence can be traced to the 11th century, while the other emerged from the mid-13th century onward. It is possible to hypothesize that people from Kievan Rus' also arrived in the Balkans with the aforementioned nomadic groups, bringing jewellery-making styles and techniques, but for now, this hypothesis lacks stronger support.

Jewellery carries multiple meanings – decorative, functional, symbolic, apotropaic, and even economic, serving as trade goods or a means of exchange. It is proposed that the adoption of twisted wire bracelets extended beyond mere aesthetic appeal. The scarcity of other jewellery made from twisted wire suggests these adornments held particular significance in the Balkans.¹¹⁰ Their introduction likely reflected shifts in social structures and expressions of identity within a defined geographical area (fig. 1). As a result, these bracelets underwent a transformation in meaning: they became more than decorative objects, playing a key role in reshaping social and cultural patterns. This phenomenon may also be linked to their role as exchange items, similar to cowrie shells, called 'money cowries',¹¹¹ which are believed to have reached the Balkans from the north, specifically across the Carpathian Basin, through long-distance trade.¹¹² Cowrie shells have been discovered in cemeteries along the Danube in present-day Serbia and Bulgaria, most often as part of necklaces.

The potential economic role of jewellery in the medieval Balkans has not been explored. In this context, we aim to illuminate this topic and raise key questions for further investigation. During the Viking Age, adornments and ornaments were valued not only for their decorative and symbolic

¹¹⁰ There are only a few torcs found in Bulgarian cemeteries (Vazharova 1976, obr. 123/5, 125/2, 8, 131/5; Doncheva-Petkova 2005, T. CXXVI/3), and three stray finds from the Serbian Danube region (Radišić 2020, 400, T. 75/1), as well as a few twisted finger rings in Serbia, Bulgaria, and North Macedonia, sometimes with a bezel containing a decorative stone (Aleksova 1966, T. XVII/158; Maneva 1992, T. 82/19/12; 31/14; Čangova 1992, obr. 122/22; *Everyday Life in Byzantium* 2002, cat. 587–588; Doncheva-Petkova 2005, T. LVI/5, CXIV/313/3, CXXXVI/28; Radišić 2020, T. 75/9–11, 15). We believe that some of these finds are imports from the north; they did not become a lasting part of the material culture of the inhabitants of the Central and Eastern Balkans, unlike other forms of jewellery.

¹¹¹ Cf. Kovács 2008. 120–122, 127. This author disagreed with the view that cowrie shells served as a medium of exchange, arguing instead that they functioned solely as amulets.

¹¹² Fidanovski & Zečević 2006, 75, with the references therein.

functions but also for their bullion value. Across Northern Europe, from England to Russia, money rings – objects resembling bracelets or armlets – were used as primitive currency.¹¹³ The situation in the Balkans during the medieval period (particularly in the 12th century when the use of bracelets peaked), was different, as a developed currency system was in place and the region was relatively monetised.¹¹⁴ Nevertheless, it is known that various forms of primitive money continued to coexist with official coinage in some parts of Europe.¹¹⁵ A more recent example from modern history is the phenomenon of *manilla*, which highlights the symbolic and trade-related functions of metal jewellery. Bracelet-shaped objects called manilla were widely used as currency in slaves trade in West Africa from the 15th to the 20th century. Their value was determined by the sound they made when struck, and they served as the dominant form of currency for various transactions, including everyday market purchases, bride prices, and burials.¹¹⁶ Possessing a larger number of bracelets indicated higher economic power. The potential connections between these temporally and geographically distant practices from theoretical and ethnographic perspectives seem justifiable. When it comes to glass bracelets, which were also very numerous during the Middle Byzantine period, their value may have been different, serving apotropaic and protective roles that continued to be significant until the 19th century.¹¹⁷ The combination of different types of bracelets in cemeteries of the Central and Eastern Balkans, as well as the absence of certain types in specific regions (for example, glass bracelets are rare in the Danube area between Belgrade and Požarevac), reflects the distinct preferences of the medieval population and the likely varied purposes of these objects, which remain challenging to be fully comprehended.

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¹¹³ Cf. Means of Exchange 2008.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Radić & Ivanišević 2006, 34–37.

¹¹⁵ Einzig 1949, 259.

¹¹⁶ Gaouette & Frahm 2024, and: <https://orijinculture.com/community/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/manilas-bangles-slave-trade-1.jpg> (accessed 9 November 2024). They were produced in large numbers in a wide range of designs, sizes, and weights; it is also interesting there are twisted wire examples.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Radišić 2015, 111–112.

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Fig. 1. Approximate distribution of twisted wire bracelets with looped ends in Southeastern Europe (map source: www.freeworldmap.net, adapted by the author)

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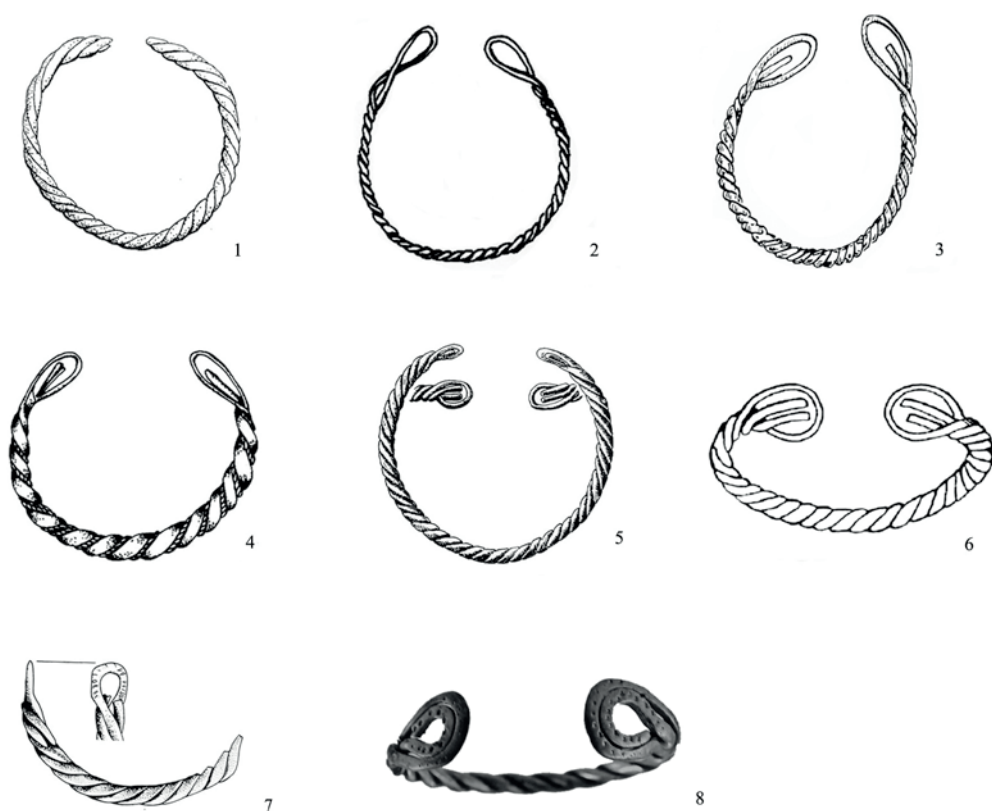


Fig. 2. Variants of twisted wire bracelets with looped ends

1. Odartsi, Bulgaria (Doncheva-Petkova 2005, LXIII/6)
2. North Macedonia (Maneva 1992, T. 62.59/7)
3. Donja Toponica, Serbia (Trbuhović & Trbuhović 1970, 93, cat. 16)
4. Andžibegovo, Macedonia (Maneva 1992, T. 62.78/2)
5. Matičane (Kosovo), Serbia (Jovanović 1988, sl. 18)
6. Orlea, Romania (Oța 2006, Pl. II/26)
7. Tille Höyük, Turkey (Moore 1993, fig. 55/3)
8. Krumovo (Varna), Bulgaria (Pavlova 2007, 55, kat. 10.3)

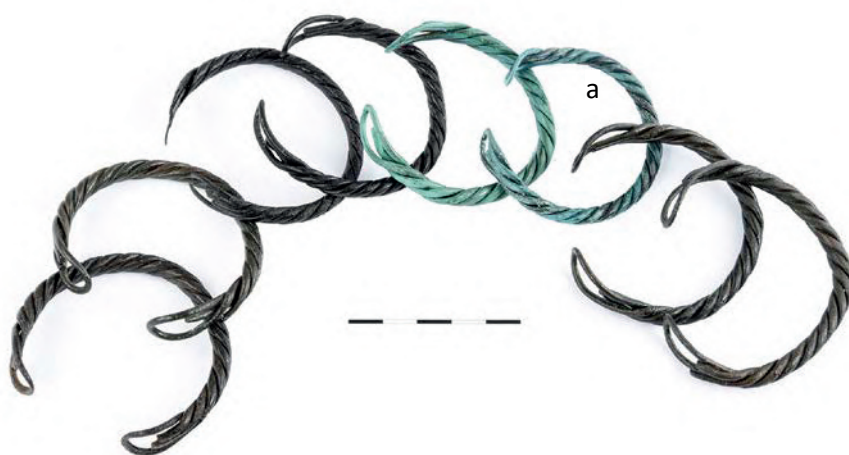


Fig. 3. Gazdare, Leskovac (Serbia), grave 91 (National Museum in Leskovac, photo: V. Prokopović)



Fig. 4. Konopljara, Kruševac (Serbia), grave 67 (National Museum in Kruševac, photo: P. Čeranić)

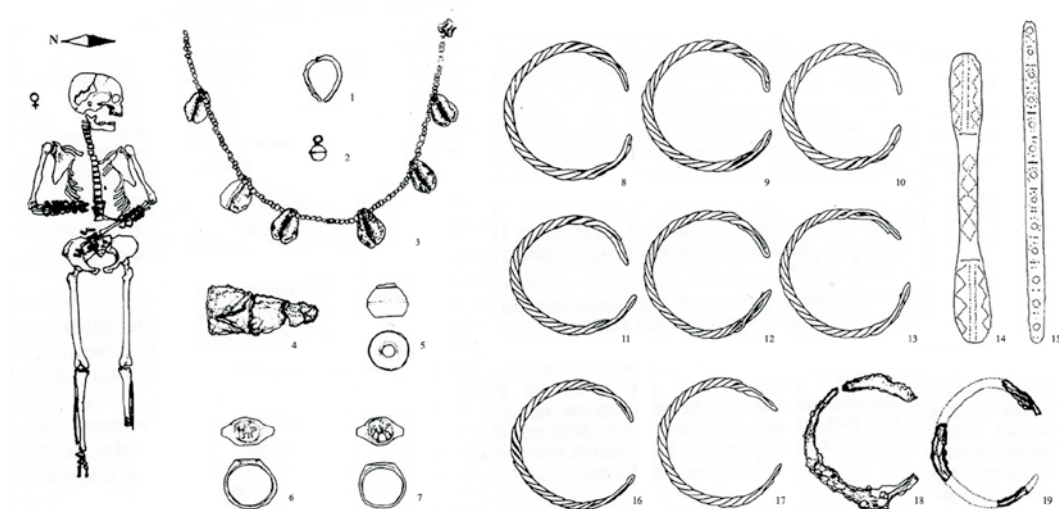


Fig. 5. Trnjane (Serbia), grave 129 (Marjanović-Vujović 1984, 26, sl. 39)



Fig. 6. Bracelet at auction

<https://www.ancientresource.com/images/greek/artifacts-greek/thracian-bracelet-3864a.jpg> (accessed 16 November 2024)

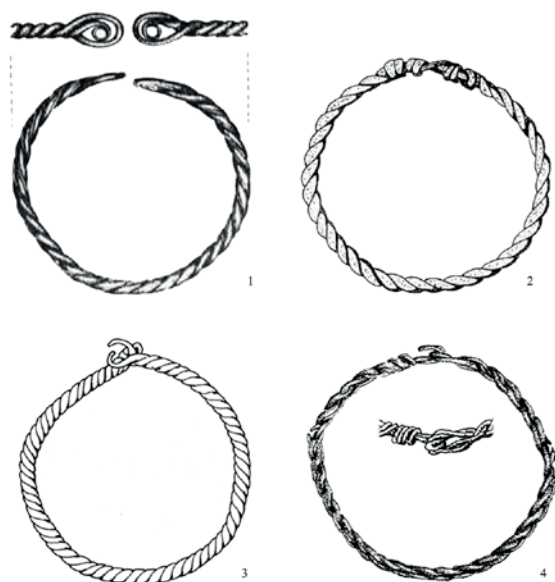


Fig. 7. Twisted wire bracelets in the Carpathian Basin

1. Dunaszekcső, Hungary (Dragotă 2015, Pl. 2/8)
2. Vărșand, Romania (Oța 2006, Pl. III/35)
3. Horgoš (Vojvodina), Serbia (Stanojev 1989, kat. 694)
4. Bogojevo (Vojvodina), Serbia (Stanojev 1989, kat. 136)

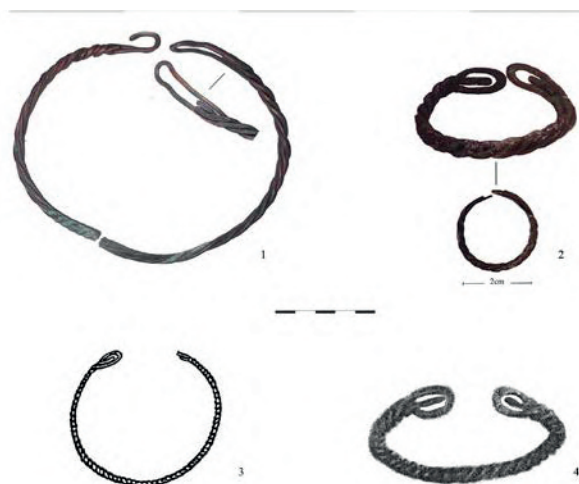


Fig. 8. Wire jewellery similar to Balkan twisted wire bracelets

1. Trnjane, Serbia (National Museum in Požarevac, unpublished)
2. Uherské hradiště-Sady, Czech R. (Galuška *et al.* 2018, 166)
3. Niewiarowo-Sochy, Poland (Dzik 2015, Tab. I/11)
4. Novgorod, Russia (Sedova 1981, ris. 34/3a)

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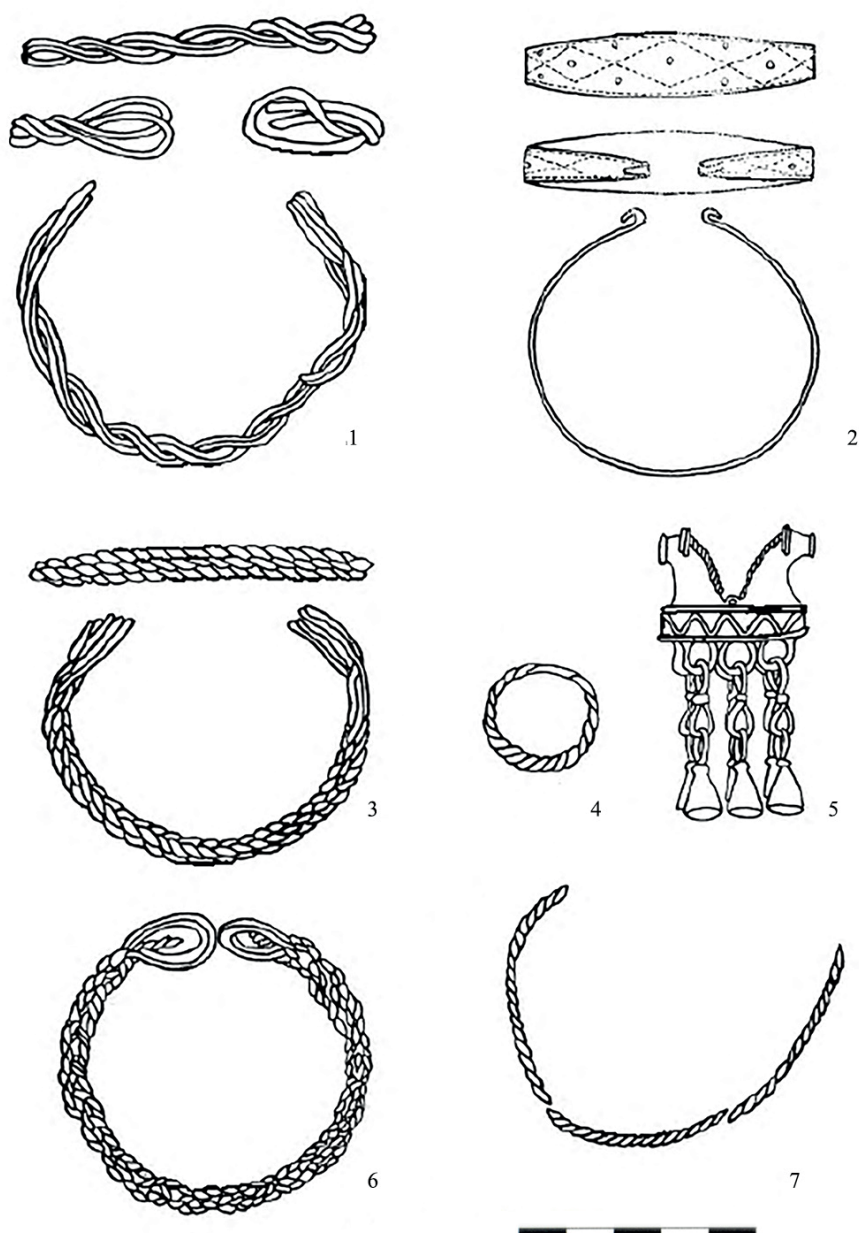


Fig. 9. Mužiševo hoard, Russia (Korzhuhina 1954, Tab. LXII)



Fig. 10. Bracelets of the Isady hoard, Russia (Strikalov 2022, 157, fig. 5A; <https://valerongrach.livejournal.com/1235081.html>, accessed 15 January 2025)

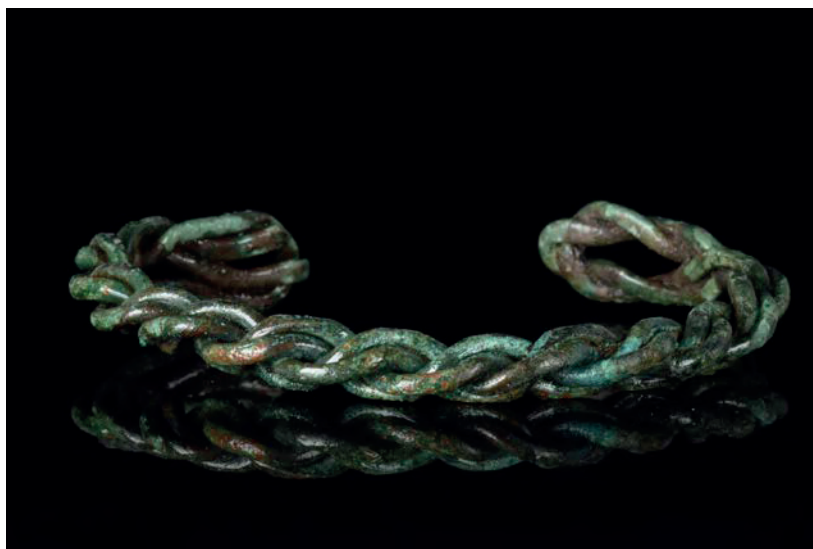


Fig. 11. Wire bracelet made in double-twisting technique (auction) <https://www.invaluable.com/auction-lot/viking-bronze-twisted-bracelet-384-c-72e4c8692b> (accessed 8 November 2024)

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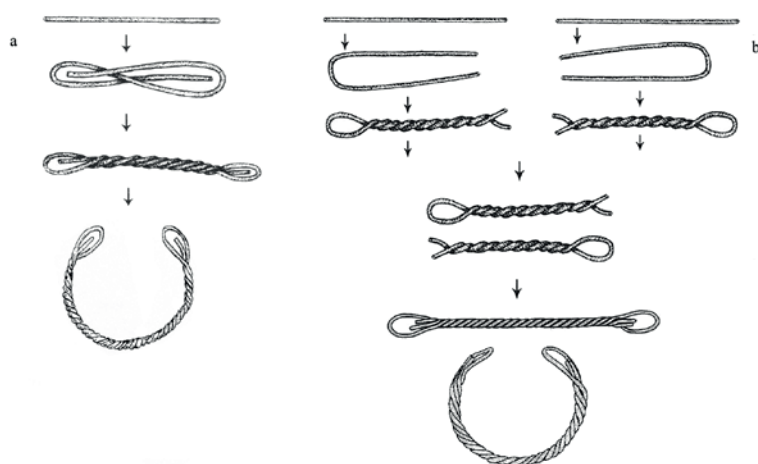


Fig. 12. Technique for making twisted wire bracelets in the Balkans (reconstructed based on drawings by Zaytseva & Saracheva, 2011, figs. 114/v, g, d, 116/a, b, v; refined by the author)

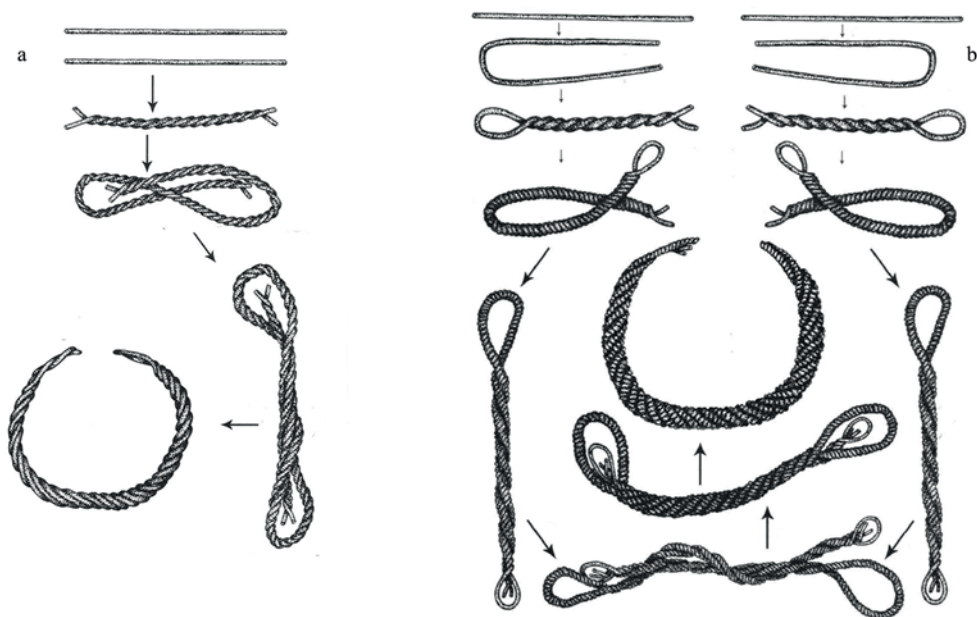


Fig. 13. Techniques of multiple wire bending and twisting: selected examples from Serensk, Russia (Zaytseva & Saracheva 2011, figs. 114, 117, 119)

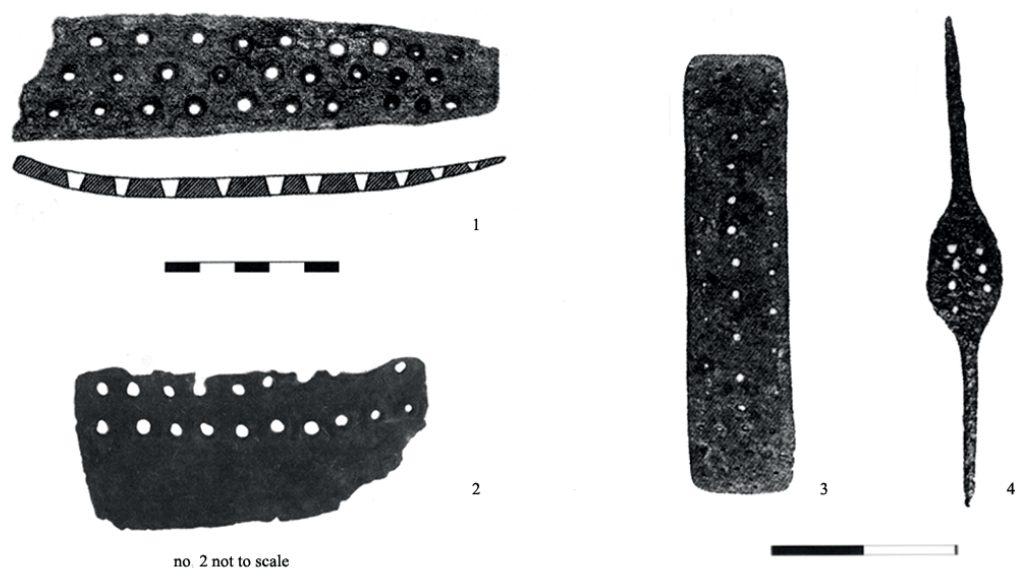


Fig. 14. Drawplates

1. Novgorod, Russia (Eniosova & Singh 2009, 80, ris. 7/2)
2. Pernik, Bulgaria (Čangova 1992, obr. 18/4)
3. Kabile, Bulgaria (Vaklinova 1995, 37, fig. 91)
4. Bulgaria, unknown place of discovery (Vaklinova 1995, 37, fig. 92)

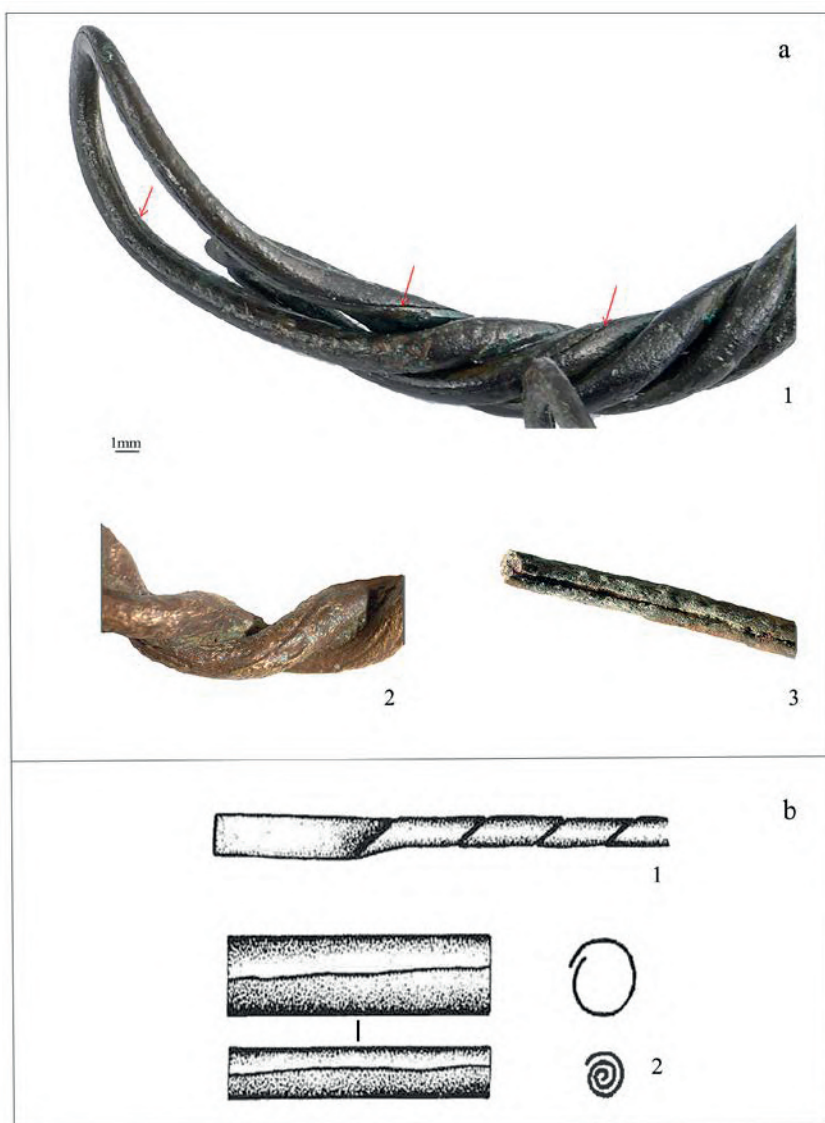


Fig. 15

a) Magnified view of the grooves on the wires

1. Detail of Gazdare bracelet, Leskovac, Serbia (National Museum in Leskovac, photo: V. Prokopović); 2. Detail of a bracelet, Moscow Kremlin – site of Chudov Monastery (Zaytseva 2022, ris. 82/1); 3. Detail of a pin, Moscow Kremlin – site of Chudov Monastery (Zaytseva 2022, ris. 82/5)

b) Methods of making wire

1–2. Strip-twisted wire and strip drawn wire (Stjerna 1998, 86, fig. 3)

On the clothing of the Bulgarians under the Ottoman rule. Parallels and influences. 15th – 17th century

Alexander Stankov, Lilia Lukova

Abstract: The development of trade and trade relations with Western countries during the 15th to 17th centuries is closely intertwined with the socio-economic conditions of the Bulgarian population during this period. In this article, we will specifically address a topic that has not been extensively explored: the new influences that emerged through trade and their impact on the clothing of Bulgarians from the 15th to the 17th centuries. The examination of clothing traditions and trends, along with their evolution, plays a crucial role in understanding the cultural heritage of a society, its growth, and its overall identity. Given the passage of time, the fragility of textiles, historical upheavals, and the scarcity of surviving visual representations, the information concerning clothing is particularly susceptible to loss. Due to its scarcity, various myths surrounding traditional Bulgarian clothing have developed over time, significantly distorting contemporary Bulgarians' perceptions of their history, culture, and traditions. To address these issues, we propose a study that utilizes available sources, iconographic images, and archaeological data to present the most comprehensive picture of Bulgarian clothing from the 15th to the 17th centuries.

Keywords: influences, trade, markets, clothing, evolution, crafts, Ottoman period.

Резюме: Развитието на търговията и търговските отношения със западните страни през XV – XVII в. е неразривно свързано със социално-икономическото положение на българите през посочения период. В тази публикация, ще се спрем по-конкретно на проблем, който не е разработван и касае новите влияния проникващи чрез търговията и моделиращи облеклото на българското население през XV-XVII век. Изучаването на традициите и тенденциите в облеклото и неговите промени са съществена част от културната традиция на един народ, неговото развитие и цялостното му формиране като такъв. Поради отдалечеността на времето и нетрайността на текстилните материали, различните исторически катаклизми и изобщо липсата на голям брой достигнали до нас изображения, информацията свързана с облеклото е най-склонна към загубване. Поради липсата ѝ и с времето се налагат различни митологеми за традиционното българско облекло, които деформират в голяма част представите и разбиранията на днешните българи, свързани с тяхната история, култура и традиции. За да изясним гореописаните проблеми предлагаме следното изследване базирано върху събрани налични извори, иконографски изображения и археологически данни, за да представим най-пълно възможно картината на облеклото на българина през XV до XVII век.

Various authors have extensively studied the period, leading to a clearer understanding of the key elements of trade exchange. This includes identifying primary markets and counterparties, as well as the goods involved - particularly textiles, textile materials, and clothing components for the population. Additionally, there is a significant focus on imports and exports, along with the pricing of certain goods during specific periods. Clothing, in this context, is intricately linked to these activities. Throughout history, clothing has played an essential role, accompanying us from antiquity to the present day. Beyond its utilitarian functions, clothing serves as a social symbol and a means of communication within both urban and rural communities, radiating distinct meanings. The lives of Bulgarians in the Ottoman Empire¹ underwent significant changes over the course of five centuries following the conquest, and these transformations were evident in both the appearance and quality of their clothing.

Archaeological discoveries offer the most dependable insights into clothing, yet textiles are notoriously challenging to preserve. Consequently, the items unearthed are often difficult to attribute to specific individuals or nationalities, and their identification can sometimes be contentious. As a result, we primarily seek information about clothing from the Ottoman period through various other sources. Unfortunately, from the 15th to the 17th centuries, very few records have survived, mainly existing in the form of brief travel accounts penned by foreign diplomats and travelers. One notable traveler is the European explorer Ogier Busbecq², who, in 1553, provided a detailed account of the Bulgarian lands and their way of life. Another significant figure is Stephan Gerlach, who authored "Diary of a Journey to the Ottoman Gate in Constantinople."³ Additionally, Salomon Schweigger's travelogue⁴, published in 1608 under the title "Ein neue Reiss Beschreibung auss Deutschland nach Konstantinopel und Jerusalem." offers valuable insights into the lifestyle and clothing characteristics of the Bulgarians.

Mural images found in churches and monasteries from the respective period serve as particularly valuable sources of information. Notable among these masterpieces are the murals from the Dragalevski Monastery, specifically the "Assumption of the Virgin Mary." The inscription above the entrance and the donor portraits of Radoslav the Moor, his wife Vida, and their two sons, Nikola and Stakhia, are especially important for understanding the costumes of that era. Additionally, the murals from the Kremikovski Monastery depicting "St. George the Victorious," as well as those from the church dedicated to "St. Theodore Tyrone and St. Theodore Stratilates" in the village of Dobarsko, and

¹ Howard 2017.

² Busbecq 2005.

³ Gerlach 1976.

⁴ Schweigger 2014.

the donor portraits in the church of "St. Peter and Paul" in Svishtov, along with the chapel dedicated to John the Baptist in the village of Arbanasi and the murals from the Bachkovo Monastery's "Assumption of the Virgin Mary," all provide significant insights into the clothing styles and characteristics of that time.

A key resource in the study of Bulgarian costume is the comprehensive work of Venera Naslednikova ⁵, titled "History of the Bulgarian Costume". This book has served as a fundamental textbook for researchers, students, educators, and costume designers in both cinema and theater. Additionally, the authoritative work "Founder Portraits" by Assen Vasiliev ⁶ is also noteworthy.

Trade and the various influences along its routes, along with the broader cultural exchanges, left a significant mark on the crafts associated with clothing production. Although these changes occurred gradually during this early period, the clothing of the population serves as a true reflection of the socio-political and economic transformations taking place in the Ottoman Empire. It is evident that Byzantium had a substantial impact on the Bulgarian ruling class and the royal court prior to their subjugation under Ottoman rule. This influence extended to the methods of clothing production, styles of dress, women's makeup, accessories, hats, jewelry, and even the customs practiced by Bulgarians. With the conquest of Bulgaria by the Ottomans, some members of the former Bulgarian ruling class who managed to escape left their homes and fortresses to hide among the village inhabitants. This period saw a disruption in trade, leading to a decline in the craft potential and craftsmanship related to clothing production. Over time, the distinctions between the clothing of the various social strata began to fade, with only select elements of the boyar costume—be it in composition, decoration, or color combinations—making their way into the folk costume, which was significantly transformed by the tastes, traditions, and craftsmanship of the local people. The clothing styles in Bulgaria during the era of Ottoman rule, particularly in the 15th century, are primarily documented through preserved donor portraits found in the small monastery churches of Dragalevtsi and Kremikovtsi. There exists a notable difference between the attire of the 14th century and that of the 15th century in Bulgaria.

Following the Great geographical discoveries in the West, local markets evolved into a global marketplace. The relationships between commodities and currency began to permeate all sectors of the feudal economy. In many areas, production had outgrown the constraints of traditional workshops and feudal limitations, necessitating a transition to a broader capitalist framework. This shift led to an increased demand for raw materials to fuel the burgeoning

⁵ Naslednikova 1974.

⁶ Vasiliev 1960.

Western industry and ignited the search for new markets to accommodate the ever-growing volume of goods. In this context, the Ottoman Empire and the Bulgarian regions within its borders emerged as particularly promising targets⁷.

In the 15th century, the influence of fashion, driven by trade, led to the gradual decline of the Byzantine style of clothing. Although its elements persisted for some time, they underwent significant transformations. By the 14th century, the Byzantine style was primarily represented as a traditional ceremonial costume for the palace. Meanwhile, in their daily lives, members of the royal family and the ruling class began to don attire that showcased Western influences, as evidenced by frescoes found in Kostur and Kalotina⁸.

In his book "Donor Portraits," Assen Vasiliev describes the portrait of the principal donor depicted in the frescoes of the Kalotina Church. This figure is adorned in a remarkable upper garment made from two different colored fabrics—reddish and white—featuring large black circles. This style, known as "mi party," was quite popular in the West during the same period ⁹ (fig. 1).



Fig. 1. Frescoes from Kalotina Church 1331-1337.
(<https://badamba.info/BySource/kalotina.html>)

The costumes of the founders depicted in the Dragalevski and Kremikovski monasteries showcase the attire of Bulgarian princes, distinguished by a greater fluidity in design. This is evident in the wide

⁷ Vecheva 1982, 171 .

⁸ Naslednikova 1974, 45 .

⁹ Vasiliev 1960.

garments, the voluminous sleeves, and the presence of various large turned-up or standing collars. The shirt plays a significant role in the ensemble, richly adorned with intricate embroidery and elegantly finished around the neck and wrists with decorative curls. The prominence of the shirt, along with its centrality to the overall attire, is a defining characteristic of Renaissance costume design. A similar evolution is evident in the Bulgarian women's upper tunic, known as sukman. This transformation is illustrated in the costume of Radoslav the Moor, as depicted in the frescoes of the Dragalevski Monastery (fig. 2). The two sons—Stahia and Nikola—are attired similarly to their father; however, subtle differences in the cut color, and embellishments of their garments distinguish the costumes of all three men¹⁰.



Fig. 2. Frescoes from Dragalevski Monastery. (Lubomir Vasilev.
<https://lubomir-vassilev.blogspot.com/2020/11/v.html>)

It is crucial to highlight this distinction when examining men's costumes, as it underscores the diversity of individual garments that reflect social status and age. This analysis also allows us to evaluate the economic conditions of the population during this period, which are intricately linked to the rise of trade, the evolution of crafts adapting to new fashion demands, and the aesthetic preferences of clothing consumers. A notable source for understanding Bulgarian costume in the 15th century is found in the portraits of the founders at Kremikovski Monastery. This collection includes portraits of the Sofia boyar Radivoj, along with his family—his wife and two children—and

¹⁰ Naslednikova 1974, 47

the Sofia bishop Kalivid. (Fig. 3). The founder, Radivoj, is attired in a striking ankle-length bright red tunic featuring long sleeves that taper at the wrist and flare out at the elbow. This design closely resembles the Renaissance sleeves typical of that era in Italy. His wife stands at his right side, dressed in a loosely cut garment that flows to the ground. Her outfit has a round neckline that transitions into a narrow vertical opening extending to the middle of her chest, rounded at the bottom. Beneath the tunic, the bosom of a white shirt is visible, its neck high and adorned with intricate golden embroidery, secured with small golden buttons arranged closely together. The sleeve of the tunic features an opening from the wrist to just above the elbow, revealing a large portion of the shirt sleeve adorned with an intricate golden geometric pattern. The shirt sleeve is secured at the wrist and terminates in a small curl, lined with a golden edge—a detail reminiscent of Renaissance design. Radivoj's son, depicted standing in front of his father, wears a red, ankle-length outer garment with long, hanging sleeves that have a slit at their upper ends. Similarly, the girl's costume closely resembles that of her mother¹¹.



Fig. 3. Portraits in the Kremikovski Monastery. (Edal Anton Lefterov. <https://bg.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%A4%D0%B0%D0%B9%D0%BB:Donors-of-Kremikovtsi-Monastery.jpg>)

The striking similarities in these costumes, along with the proximity of their cuts and patterns, illustrate a clear exchange of cultural influences

¹¹ Naslednikova 1974, 47-48

between the Bulgarian territories and the wider European context, facilitated by various trade routes. (Refer to Fig. 3 in comparison to the lady depicted in Fig. 4). Consequently, in the 15th century, we observe an evolution in the Bulgarian costume, moving away from the Byzantine model toward greater plasticity and decorative richness. This shift is evident through diverse color combinations, fabrics, decorative elements, and trimmings, as well as the elaborate ornamentation seen in the embroidered sections. The various accessories - shoes, hats, scarves, and crowns - add a sense of completeness and originality to the clothing of this period, which was already beginning to resemble Western fashion trends. This shift also necessitated the adaptation of craft technologies to produce the individual elements of these costumes. However, the process of modernity that had begun was quickly halted by the Ottoman invasion, leading to impoverishment and blending of social classes. As a result, fashion began to evolve in different directions, favoring simpler and more functional clothing over its previous grandeur.



Fig. 4. 15th century Italian fashion.
(Carl Kohler. <https://world4.eu/italian-14th-century-clothing/>)

In the 16th century, coinciding with the height of Turkish military power, the political and intellectual elite in the Bulgarian territories had either been destroyed or compelled to emigrate. The Ottoman conquest brought about a profound psychological shock during this period. The dominant export trade of Dubrovnik within the Ottoman Empire was intricately linked to the economic transformations occurring in Europe throughout the 16th and 17th

centuries. While exports from nearby regions tended to comprise goods of relatively low value, those from Bulgarian lands consisted of more expensive animal raw materials. Some of these raw materials were utilized by the people of Dubrovnik to support their manufacturing industries, while a larger quantity was exported via Ancona to destinations such as Rome, Florence, Western Europe, and occasionally to Venice and Genoa¹².

Consequently, folk clothing was crafted from materials that were readily available to Bulgarians, derived from their roles as farmers and herders. These materials included flax, hemp, wool, and animal skins. The fabrics were often in the natural hues of these fibers, featuring the off-white shades of linen and hemp, the creamy white of wool and silk, and the earthy tones of wool in beige, walnut, brown, and black. Additionally, a limited quantity of yarn was dyed for use in decorative weaving patterns, such as stripes and squares, or for vibrant embroidery embellishments on shirts and garments in general¹³.



Fig. 5. Typical Bulgarian folk clothing. 16th century. (Salomon Schweigger. *Ein neue Reiss Beschreibung auss Teutschland nach Constantinopel und Jerusalem.*)

Folk clothing is primarily designed for functionality, with its components reflecting the climatic and living conditions (Fig. 5). The essential garment for both men and women is a shirt that lacks cut-outs at the shoulder and sleeve. For women, this shirt extends to just above the ankle, while for men, it reaches approximately mid-thigh. The hat is an integral part of the

¹² Vecheva 1982, 72

¹³ Naslednikova 1974, 50

men's attire, worn throughout the year, serving mainly practical purposes. In the 16th century, Bulgarian clothing remained relatively simple in design compared to Western Europe, a fact influenced by the limited economic resources of the Bulgarian population. Unlike the horizontal cutting that became characteristic of Western European dress during this period, Bulgarian attire did not adopt this style. Instead, garments were shaped and fitted by cinching a long belt around the waist. The emergence of a new trend, characterized by the leveling and unification of clothing across individual Bulgarian villages and regions, is notable in the context of preserving elements from the 15th century. This includes the introduction of long men's outerwear and women's veils and the migration of embroidery and ornamentation from the boyar costume to the folk costume, albeit achieved with the most basic techniques¹⁴.

Beginning in the 16th century, we possess detailed written accounts from foreign travelers that provide insights into the lives of Bulgarians, including their lifestyle, clothing, and the trade routes that facilitated the flow of Western influence. For instance, in 1553, Ogier Busbecq described the costumes of Bulgarian women in the regions between Niš and Sofia:

*"One cannot ignore the adornments of those women. They dress almost exclusively in sukman's or shirts, which are made of canvas but are trimmed with many colorful embroideries, with primitive and ridiculous workmanship. However, they liked them amazingly, so that when they looked at our shirts, even though they were made of the highest quality canvas, they said that they were surprised at our modesty, where we wear simple shirts, without any color or embroidery."*¹⁵

Hans Dernschwam, for his part, mentions:

*"Bulgarians are not allowed to wear nice clothes. They all wear gray and white yamurluks¹⁶, they have neither shoes nor boots, only rawhide sandals and knee-high socks."*¹⁷

Foreign visitors who have traveled through Bulgaria often comment on women's clothing, highlighting its uniqueness. In contrast, Bulgarian men's attire tends to receive far less attention. Melchior Besolt wrote in 1584:

*"Bulgarian men dress almost the same as Turks, but women dress so differently; they walk around with their faces open, while Turkish women walk covered and veiled. They also wear dresses made of thick cloth, and the more colors the garment is made of, the more beautiful they consider it."*¹⁸

¹⁴ Naslednikova 1974, 54

¹⁵ Naslednikova 1974, 51

¹⁶ A thick outer garment from the traditional costume, designed to protect against cold and rain.

¹⁷ Dernschwam 1970, 185-197

¹⁸ Georgieva, Tsanev 1982 .

In the 16th and early 17th centuries, the military power of the Ottoman Empire began to decline, marked by a growing rift between the spahis and the janissaries. Throughout the 17th century and into the early 18th century, this period was characterized by a continuous deterioration of the Empire's military strength. During these years, the merchants of Dubrovnik were gradually supplanted by others, and from the latter half of the 17th century onward, wool lost its significance as an export item, with references to it becoming increasingly rare¹⁹.

The travelogues written by foreigners who traversed Bulgaria in the 17th century are less numerous than those from the 16th century. Conversely, the burgeoning class of Bulgarian craftsmen and merchants, fueled by a revived national spirit, began to invest considerable resources in the restoration, construction, and decoration of churches and monasteries. Notably, these donors were often portrayed in their secular attire. As a result, 17th-century donor portraits emerged as a valuable source for studying the clothing of that era. These portraits provide greater insights into the evolution of male attire during the 17th century, while information regarding female clothing remains relatively scarce. Furthermore, these portraits depict the attire of individuals from the wealthier classes, with little evidence of folk clothing being preserved. Many elements of the costume, recognized since the 15th century from donor portraits in the Dragalevski and Kremikovski monasteries, remain present in the 17th century, such as decorative sleeves, buttonholes, cords, ornamented fabrics, and hats. This indicates a notably slow evolution of Bulgarian clothing. The changes that do occur are primarily, if not exclusively, influenced by socio-economic and material factors. It is important to note that the Turkish influence on costume remained relatively minimal until the mid-17th century.

In the "Travelogue" of the French traveler A. Poulet²⁰, there is notable information regarding the period from 1657 to 1658, during which he traversed the Bulgarian lands to or from Constantinople. Poulet exhibited a keen interest in the local population's way of life, particularly in his descriptions of ordinary peasant clothing. He observed:

"The peasants have created a model Tyrolean costume. It lacks only their felt hat, which resembles our hats with four corners cut off: two of them remain closed, and the others hang over their ears. Their women do not at all have their faces covered, like other women of the East. They are all adorned with flowers and fruits. Their hair is loose and braided in a braid at the back. At the end, they attach gold or silver buttons and even small shiny glass or pebbles. They all wear a necklace. Instead of beads, it has only one row of copper, silver, or gold coins according to their (i.e., women's) means. They (the coins) hang on a cord just like meatballs. On their breasts (the women), they have cloth handkerchiefs, so

¹⁹ Vecheva 1982, 179

²⁰ Georgieva, Tsanev 1982.

covered with some of these coins that they hide everything underneath like tiles on a roof: from this, it may be assumed that oppression is not such as our writers paint us."²¹

Poulet's perspective suggests a notable similarity between the traditional costumes found in Bulgaria and those in Western Europe. In the church of "St. Theodore Tyrone and St. Theodore Stratilates" located in the village of Dobarsko, a group portrait of the founders exists. The attire of the five founders features a consistent style, with the three key components of the costume - shirt, caftan, and outer garment - clearly depicted²².

The portraits of the founders in the church of "St. Peter and Paul" in Svishtov have suffered significant deterioration over the years. The images of Matej Basarab and his wife Elena provide limited information about mid-17th-century clothing, revealing only that they wore fur coats fastened with buttonholes at the chest. While these garments were typically associated with men, it is evident that women also wore them during this period.

In contrast, the portraits of the founders in the church of Arbanasi, located in the Veliko Tarnovo region and dating back to the mid-17th century, offer a clearer depiction of men's attire. Above the entrance to the chapel dedicated to John the Baptist, an unknown founder is illustrated in full length, adorned in an opulent costume. This ensemble features a fine fur coat with short elbow-length sleeves lined with dark leather and secured with cords at the chest.

The portraits of the founders in the church of "St. Peter and Paul" in Svishtov have suffered significant deterioration over the years. The images of Matej Basarab and his wife Elena provide limited information about mid-17th-century clothing, revealing only that they wore fur coats fastened with buttonholes at the chest. While these garments were typically associated with men, it is evident that women also wore them during this period.

In contrast, the portraits of the founders within the church of Arbanasi, situated in the Veliko Tarnovo region and dating back to the mid-17th century, provide a more detailed representation of men's attire. Above the entrance to the chapel dedicated to John the Baptist, an unknown founder is depicted in full length, dressed in an elaborate costume. This outfit includes a luxurious fur coat with short elbow-length sleeves lined with dark leather and fastened with cords at the chest.

In addition to the examined samples, information regarding Bulgarian costumes can be found in various other texts by foreign travelers who journeyed through Bulgarian territories in the 17th century. One such traveler was Baron de Courmenin²³, the envoy of French King Louis XIII (1610-1643),

²¹ Georgieva, Tsanev 1982 .

²² Naslednikova 1974, 56

²³ Courmenin 1632.

who passed through Bulgaria in 1621. His extensive travelogue, "Journey to the East, made by the royal commandant in 1621," was published in Paris in 1624. In his account, Baron de Courmenin described the clothing of the inhabitants of Sofia:

*"Their shirts are embroidered around the openings with threads of different colors. Whoever sees our shirts is amazed at our modesty, and therefore, we do not decorate them at all nor enrich them with impurities of colors. The men also wear a kind of hat (bonnet), which is funny, and since the clothing of the men, as well as that of the women, is the most extravagant that I have seen in all these areas, I ordered the preceding illustration to be placed."*²⁴

We can summarize that in the 17th century, men's attire typically consisted of a shirt, trousers, and outerwear of varying lengths. In contrast, women's outfits featured a single outer garment with a deep neckline that extended to the waist. Women often used a belt to cinch their waist, a practice documented as early as the 15th century, as illustrated by frescoes in Kremikovtsi. Among the general populace, shirts made from hemp were the most commonly worn.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, lace became a popular decorative element in Western European costumes, particularly for lower garments. It subsequently made its way along trade routes to Eastern Europe, where it was also incorporated into the works of Bulgarian craftsmen, particularly among the burgeoning wealthy classes. Evidence of this influence can be seen in the donor portraits from the villages of Arbanasi and Bachkovo.



Fig. 6. Frescoes in Saints Peter and Paul church in Svishtov. (Lachezar Toshev. https://toshev.blogspot.com/2020/06/blog-post_29.html)

²⁴ Naslednikova 1974, 60

These upper garments are typically adorned with collars of varying sizes, often covered with leather (as illustrated in Fig. 6). The design of the upper garment is fitted at the waist, and it gradually flares out with wedges from the waist down. It is secured at the waist with either round or elliptical metal buttons, as depicted in the donor images from the villages of Dobarsko and Bachkovo. Alternatively, some garments feature long cords and buttonholes, as shown in the portraits from Arbanasi. This embellishment of the buttonhole, crafted from a cord or braid, serves a purely decorative purpose. Unfortunately, no images of women's costumes from the 17th century have survived, with the exception of a portrait depicting the wife of Matej Basarab (1633-1654) found in the church of "Saints Peter and Paul" in Svishtov. However, this portrait is significantly damaged, providing limited insights into the history of women's attire. We can deduce that, during the 17th century, women, like men, wore outer garments such as fur coats featuring decorative slit sleeves and a large leather collar that rested on the shoulders. These fur coats were secured with long buttonholes at the chest. The style known as the *saya*, a women's outer garment that is open in front running its full length, was adopted into Bulgarian folk clothing relatively late, only appearing in the 17th century. Notably, a similar garment by the same name existed in the 16th century within the Spanish court costume.

One of the significant types of fabrics imported through trade routes into Bulgarian lands and supplying artisanal production was the satin. These fabrics were not produced in Dubrovnik but were imported from Italian cities, primarily Florence. Almost all commercial documents explicitly refer to "rassi di Firenze." In the bazaars, satins are typically sold by the yard, although their placement can present certain challenges. Available in various colors, including red, yellow, and milky white, these fabrics are also purchased by the Turkish and Bulgarian populations. Notably, due to the subjugated status of the Bulgarians, satins are primarily accessible to the dominant ethnic group, which restricts the number of buyers and consumers of these Western goods²⁵.

Towards the end of the 17th century, a gradual shift towards darker hues in folk clothing began, initially taking place in the southern regions of Bulgaria and around the Rhodope Mountains. Concurrently, elements of traditional Turkish attire began to influence various areas of Thrace and Eastern Bulgaria, particularly in men's garments such as *poturi*²⁶, vests, turbans, and more²⁷.

Based on inventories from the period, which serve as a model for detailing elements of urban clothing, the hypothesis suggests that the attire of Christians in the city did not significantly differ from that of Muslims, largely

²⁵ Vecheva 1982, 188

²⁶ Wide men's trousers made of home fabric with a large bottom.

²⁷ Naslednikova 1974, 61-64

depending on their economic status and social category. Wealthy Christians, to the extent that they existed, wore garments typical of urban residents, irrespective of their ethnoreligious background - such as chashir²⁸, kurk²⁹, shirts, etc. Meanwhile, the clothing of impoverished Muslim and Christian women remained exceedingly simple and worn. The distinction between their garments lay not so much in the style but rather in the materials, embellishments, and colors used. The color green was exclusively worn by Muslims³⁰ and prohibited for non-Muslims. For the latter group, clothing in black, white, light blue, and blue was permitted, while red ornaments and embroidered items were also commonly seen. The colors themselves had varying values in the market, with scarlet being the most expensive, followed by violet and pink. Yellow and brown garments were typically worn by the wealthy and very affluent. Various shades of these colors were predominantly found among the Ottoman elite, including the viziers. Among affluent Muslims, luxurious fabrics such as expensive animal skins and silks were prevalent. Christian women often wore cotton fabrics alongside the chokha³¹ and Hodden. Additionally, both Christians and poorer Muslims adorned themselves in white clothing with embroidery, as well as the more affordable colors of red and blue. In terms of jewelry, middle-class citizens typically possessed silver earrings and bracelets, while gold was reserved for the wealthy. The impoverished rarely owned even silver jewelry, reflecting their economic standing and their ethno-religious identity, which also influenced their head coverings³².

The Sultan's Order of 1631³³ notes that the Christian population during this period frequently failed to adhere to directives concerning restrictions on dress, horse riding, and the expected submissive behavior toward the dominant Muslim population. The order was enacted at the discretion of the qadi, and there were no indications of severe repercussions or extreme measures threatening the lives of Christians for non-compliance.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that the clothing of the Bulgarians from the late 14th to the 17th century reflects the historical development of our people during this era. The Western influences that flowed in through merchants along various trade routes were a significant factor in this

²⁸ Chashir – Type of pants. Chashirs seem to come in two versions: short, tied below the knee, and long, tied at the ankles; in both cases they are wide, similar to shalwars and poturis.

²⁹ Type of fur coat.

³⁰ Jirousek 2019.

³¹ Type of woolen fabric.

³² Andonova 2020.

³³ Todorov 93-94.

transformation. Although these changes occurred slowly, they were nonetheless significant, prompting the adaptation of several crafts associated with the emerging new fashions. This evolution followed the trajectory of historical events, demonstrating a cyclical nature while consistently preserving some elements of the past. The evolution of the Bulgarian costume reflects the continual emergence of new trends while others fade into oblivion. This transformation began with the incorporation of elements from Byzantine attire until the 15th century. From the 15th century onwards, Western European medieval styles were introduced, and we can even observe distinct Renaissance influences. These diverse elements harmoniously blend into elegant silhouettes, rich colors, and intricate decorations, resulting in a unique and native eclecticism. Craftsmen consistently adapt to these subtle yet significant changes, allowing the Bulgarian costume to develop features that align more closely with those of Western models and the Western populace. Bulgaria did not fully adopt the subsequent styles of European art and culture. In the eras following the 16th century, Bulgarian clothing increasingly mirrored that of their conquerors, reflecting their fashion trends while also looking towards the West as part of the modernity of the time. This attire reveals significant aspects of the Bulgarian population's lifestyle, worldview, and spirituality. Notably, clothing served as a means of subtly defying the Sultan's orders, highlighting its importance and role in the trade and crafts associated with it during this period in the historical development of the Bulgarian people.

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Coin hoard from the 17th century from Konare village, Stara Zagora region

Krassimir Krastev

Abstract: A large number of coin hoards from the 15th – 17th centuries are known from the territory of present-day Bulgaria, more than 275 in total. Of these findings, 170 have only been reported or mentioned in publications. Regarding the fate of the finds, most are those stored in museums, without it being possible to determine whether these are fully or partially stored finds. According to the publications in the short reports on collective coin finds from Bulgaria, the coins were found by chance near the village of Konare (Gurkovo municipality, Stara Zagora region) in 1965, but only part of the coins was handed over with Protocol No. 6 / 27.05.1965 and was recorded on March 9 and 10, 1971. According to the information preserved in the literature, the find from Konare contained 21 silver specimens, as follows: Belgian Confederation – lion-thaler from 1647 (the province is not specified); Brandenburg – 2 pcs. ¼ thalers of Georg Wilhelm (1619 – 1640); Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth – 8 pcs. ¼ thalers; Ottoman Empire – 10 pcs. akches from the 17th century. After analyzing the coins stored in the Iskra Museum – Kazanlak, the situation is as follows: not all coins of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth have been preserved – 8 are described, and 5 are in the museum. The lion-thaler is also not preserved. The 10 Ottoman akches are not preserved either. Of the stored 5 coins of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, 4 were minted for the Kingdom of Poland in the mint of the city of Bydgoszcz in 1621 (2 pcs.), 1623, and 1624; 1 coin was minted for the city of Danzig in 1623. The coins of Brandenburg are two quarter thalers of different variants.

Key words: silver coins, Ottoman studies, Ottoman Balkans, Early-Modern coinage, European coins

Резюме: От територията на днешна България са известни голям брой монетни съкровища от XV – XVII в. – над 275. От тях 170 са само докладвани или споменати в публикации. Що се отнася до съдбата на находките, повечето са съхранявани в музеи, без да може да се установи дали това са напълно или частично съхранени находки. Според публикациите в кратките бюлетини за колективни монетни находки от България, монетите са намерени случайно край с. Конаре (общ. Гурково, обл. Стара Загора) през 1965 г., но само част от монетите са предадени с протокол № 6 / 27.05.1965 г. и са инвентирани на 9 и 10 март 1971 г. Според запазената в литературата информация находката от Конаре съдържа 21 сребърни монети, както следва: Белгийска конфедерация – льовенталер от 1647 г. (провинцията не е посочена); Бранденбург – 2 четвъртталера на Георг Вилхелм (1619 – 1640 г.); Реч Посполита – 8 четвъртталера; Османска империя – 10 акчета от XVII век. След анализ на монетите, съхранявани в Исторически музей „Искра“ – Казанлък, ситуацията е следната: не всички монети на Реч Посполита са запазени – 8 са описани, а 5 са в музея. Льовенталерът също не е съхранен. Не са запазени и 10-те османски акчета. От съхраняваните 5 монети на Реч Посполита, 4 са сечени за Кралство Полша в монетния двор на град Бидгощч през 1621 г. (2 бр.), 1623 г. и

1624 г.; 1 монета е отсечена за град Данциг през 1623 г. Монетите на Бранденбург са два четвъртталера от различни варианти.

A large number of coin hoards from the 15th – 17th centuries are known from the territory of present-day Bulgaria, more than 275 in total. However, many of them were scattered when they were found or afterward, and only very brief information about them has been preserved in bulletins about collective finds and in other publications. Most of them have been irretrievably lost to science.

Of these findings, 170 have only been reported or mentioned in publications. This extremely brief and often unconfirmed information has been cited many times by later researchers. There are 49 partially published finds, sometimes with descriptions, but most often without photos and data about the coins. 20 finds are partially published with photos and data, but only some of them are coins, most often European ones. The fully published treasures, with photos and data for all coins, are only 33 in number in Bulgaria and 2 more in Romania, referring to finds stored in Romanian museums, but originating from the territory of Bulgaria. Only 1 find is unpublished.

Regarding the fate of the finds, most are those stored in museums, without it being possible to determine whether these are fully or partially stored finds. The number is 167 in Bulgarian museums, and 3 more finds were stored but were stolen at different times. 2 more finds are stored in museums in Romania. Those stored in private collections (fully or partially) at the time of their publication are 4. Another 4 are unknown, probably also stored in private collections, at least as far as can be concluded based on the information stored in the publications about them. Certainly, scattered or destroyed (for most of them, the publications indicated that they were melted down) are 56 finds, some of them with gold coins. The fate of 39 collective coin finds is unknown. For most of them, the publications indicate that they were scattered "looted" by the finders, but it is entirely possible that they subsequently ended up in private collections. It is possible, of course, that they were scattered, especially the Ottoman akche, for which it is more difficult to find a good market, and the gold ones were melted down to make jewelry. The important information that can be gleaned from the coin hoards is related not only to purely numismatic conclusions but also to those related to economic, political, military, commercial, etc. activities. The collective coin finds from the beginning of the 15th to the end of the 17th century. have been summarized in full or in part several times¹. One of these finds is that from Konare.

According to the publications in the short reports on collective coin finds from Bulgaria, the coins were found by chance near the village of Konare (Gurkovo municipality, Stara Zagora region) in 1965. This find is mentioned

¹ Teodosiev 2017; Krastev 2019: 199-295; 2022a: 7-191.

several times in the numismatic literature². However, the information in all these extremely modest reports is confused and inaccurate. The publications indicate that the find is kept in the Iskra Museum of History – Kazanlak. Some time ago, a reference to the Museum's Inventory Book showed that only a part of the coins was handed over with Protocol No. 6 / 27.05.1965 and was recorded on March 9 and 10, 1971, together with other specimens, which were noted to also originate from the land of the village of Konare. The name of the bearer and the method of receipt (purchase, donation) are not indicated. Based on this information, it can be assumed that the coins from this find, handed over to the museum, were brought only by one of the finders, who owned some of the coins. The fate of the rest remains unknown. They are probably scattered.

According to the information preserved in the literature, the find from Konare contained a small number of coins. It consisted of 21 silver specimens, which according to the publications are distributed as follows: Belgian Confederation – lion-thaler from 1647 (the province is not specified); Brandenburg – 2 pcs. $\frac{1}{4}$ thalers of Georg Wilhelm (1619 – 1640); Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth – 8 pcs. $\frac{1}{4}$ thalers; Ottoman Empire – 10 pcs. akches from the 17th century. Nothing more specific is mentioned about the latter.

After analyzing the coins stored in the Iskra Museum – Kazanlak, the situation is as follows: not all coins of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth have been preserved – 8 are described, and 5 are in the museum. The lion-thaler is also not preserved. The 10 Ottoman akches are not preserved either.

Of the 5 coins of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth stored in the Iskra Museum – Kazanlak, 4 were minted for the Kingdom of Poland in the mint of the city of Bydgoszcz in 1621 (2 pcs.), 1623, and 1624; 1 coin was minted for the city of Danzig in 1623. In general, all of them are well preserved and none is pierced. The most common years of one of the most common denominations of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth – the quarter thaler – are presented.

More curious are the Brandenburg coins. They are among the few in Early-Modern Europe with inscriptions in German (not Latin). In them, the abbreviation on the obverse is actually: Georg Wilhelm Von Gottes Gnaden Markgraf Zu Brandenburg; on the reverse: Des Heiligen Römischen Reichs Ertz Cämmerer Und Churfürst In Preussen, Zu Gülich, Cleve, Berg Herzog. The two specimens presented in the Konare find belong to two variants, differing in the clothing of the duke – in knightly armor and with an ermine mantle.

The coins presented in the Konare find are among the most widespread in the Bulgarian lands under Ottoman rule in the 17th century. Little written information has been preserved about the exchange rate of the quarter-thalers of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Serbian researcher Vuk Vinaver points out that the local population of the Balkans called them "*urupi*" or "*talerichi*"³,

² Gerasimov 1966, 212; Haritonov 1998, 276, No. 245; Teodosiev 2017, 515; Krastev 2019, 235-236, No. 34; 2022b, 66-67, No. 74.

³ Vinaver 1970, 152.

but it is not certain that they were also called that by the Bulgarians, because these names are missing from those described by Hristo Kharitonov in his rather detailed monograph⁴. According to Vladimir Penchev, referring to Vuk Vinaver, in the 17th and early 18th centuries their official rate fixed by the Ottoman state was about 20 akches, but their market value was about 25 in 1625 and about 30 in 1664⁵. These coins were used long after their minting in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth ceased. There is numismatic evidence for this – they are found in finds hoarded at the beginning of the 18th century. There are also written accounts of their use, for example that of the Englishman Edmund Chishull, who passed through the Balkans in 1702, although these confused and inaccurate accounts cannot always be used with certainty⁶. On the other hand, however, these are eyewitness accounts providing first-hand data. Chishull mentions the use in Transylvania and Wallachia of a Polish coin, which he calls a “*quart*”⁷. In the Bulgarian translation of part of his travelogue, it is noted that it is about the “*quartnik*” coin, which is first explained as “*half gross*”, and a little later it is stated that “*one quartnik is equal to ¼ half gross*”⁸. The Polish quartnik, in addition to its very low value, which almost completely excludes its use abroad, ceased to be minted in 1403 and its survival until 1702 is incredible. Here, in my opinion, Chishull meant “*quart*” and in all likelihood referring to the quarter thaler coin.

The find from Konare belongs to the mixed treasures with Ottoman and European coins, which are very typical for the Bulgarian lands under Ottoman rule for the period from 1585 to the end of the 17th century. The confused information and contradictory data from the publications about the other coins in this interesting find do not allow for a definitive analysis. The question of which is the earliest coin in the find cannot be answered unequivocally, due to the lack of information about the Ottoman coins. Among the European coins, the earliest are the two Polish ones from 1621. The situation with the latest coin is also unclear, for the same reason. Among the European ones, the latest is the Dutch lion-thaler from 1647, described in the publications, but whose fate remains unknown. Perhaps this is a find with coins from a small chronological range (even if the Hungarian coin is part of the treasure) – probably between 25 and 45, i.e. it is very likely that the coins were collected within one human lifetime. Nikolay Teodosiev suggests that the Konare find was hoarded in 1650 – 1670, without providing any arguments⁹.

If we try to calculate the value of the coins from the Konare find stored in the Iskra Museum – Kazanlak, and take into account that the Polish and Brandenburg ¼ thaler coins were approximately equal to 30 akches in 1664, then

⁴ Haritonov 1998, 13-209.

⁵ Vinaver 1970, 152, 154; Penchev 2023, 157-148.

⁶ Chishull 1747, 85; Todorova 1987, 286, 292-293.

⁷ Chishull 1747, 85.

⁸ Todorova 1987, 196, n. 86.

⁹ Teodosiev 2017, 515.

the total value of the stored coins is about 210 akches – a small amount for their time. If we add the value of the remaining coins that are not stored but are known, the following picture emerges: 10 quarter thalers of 30 akches (value for 1664) – 300; 1 lion-thaler in 1673 was exchanged for 120 akches¹⁰, i.e. a total of 420 akches for all European coins. If we add the Ottoman 10 akches to the find, we get 430 akches. In his extensive monograph, Lyuben Berov provides detailed data on prices in the Ottoman Empire in the mid-17th century. From them it becomes clear that at that time a loaf of bread (1 oka) cost 1 akche, a hen: 2 – 3, a lamb: 50 – 60, honey: 12 – 13, beeswax: 50 – 80, salt: 4 – 5, homemade soap: about 10, sheepskin: 5 – 6, sheep wool: about 10, cowhide: 100 – 120 akches, 1 arshin (about 70 cm) of locally produced woolen cloth cost 10 – 18 akches, and a pair of boots – about 100 – 140 akches¹¹. However, it should also be taken into account that this was a period of increased inflationary processes with rapidly changing prices. For example, in 1690 bread reached a price of and from 8 akches for a loaf of 1 oka, and the most consumed by Muslims (and not only by them) mutton reached 14 – 18 akches for 1 oka in 1690, while the price before 1683 was 3 akches¹². Of course, the prices given at the end is during the war with the Holy League (1683 – 1699), which was difficult for the Ottoman Empire, but the price changes are not related only to it.

Catalogue

Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth *Kingdom of Poland* *Sigismund III (1587 – 1632)*

1



A: Waist-up portrait of Sigismund III with a beard and mustache, to the right. The ruler has a crown on his head and is dressed in knightly armor, a folded collar, and a cloak. With his right hand, he holds a sword resting on his right shoulder, and with his left – a globe with a cross. Round inscription:

SIGIS III D.G REX·POL·M:D:LIT:RVS·PRVS·MAS

¹⁰ Vinaver 1970, 162; Penchev 2017, 240.

¹¹ Berov 1976: 268, 231, 229, 232, 239, 242, 246, 277, 270, 252, 243, 249, 257.

¹² Vinaver 1970: 171.

R: The coat of arms of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth during the reign of King Sigismund III: a heraldic shield divided into four fields, in which the coats of arms of the Kingdom of Poland (an eagle with spread wings and head to the left) and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (a knight on horseback with a sword raised above his head) are presented in a checkerboard pattern. Above the shield – a royal crown. In the center, in a small shield, the coat of arms of the Vasa family is depicted – a lictor's sheaf. The coat of arms divides the year: 16 – 21. Round inscription:

SAM:LIV:NECO:SVE-GOT·VAN:Q:HRI:R

quarter thaler, 1621, Bydgoszcz, silver, 29.4 – 29.6 mm, 7.08 g

Kopicki 2007, #943

Inventory No. 3560-1

2



A: As No. 1.

SIGIS·III·D·G·REX·POL·M·D·LIT·RVS·PRVS·MAS

P: As No. 1.

SAM:LIV:NECO:SVE-GOT·VAN:Q:HRI:R

quarter thaler, 1621, Bydgoszcz, silver, 29.2 – 29.8 mm, 6.27 g

Kopicki 2007, #943

Inventory No. 3560-2

3



A: As No. 1.

SIGIS·III·D·G·REX·POL·M·D·LI·RVS·PRV·M

P: As No. 1, but the year on both sides of the coat of arms is: 16 – 23.

SAM·LIV·NECN·SV-GOT·VAN·Q·HRI·R

quarter thaler, 1623, Bydgoszcz, silver, 28.7 – 29.3 mm, 6.27 g

Kopicki 2007, #957

Inventory No. 3561

4



A: As No. 1.

SIGIS·III·D·G·REX·POL·M·D·LI·RVS·PR·M

P: As No. 1, but the year on both sides of the coat of arms is: 16 – 24.

SAM·LIV·NECN·SV·GOT·VAN·Q·HRI·R

quarter thaler, 1624, Bydgoszcz, silver, 29.1 – 29.5 mm, 6.57 g

Kopicki 2007, #959

Inventory No. 3563

Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth

City of Danzig (Gdańsk)

Sigismund III Vasa (1587 – 1632)

5



A: Bust of Sigismund III with beard and mustache, on the right. He is dressed in knightly armor, a Spanish collar and cloak, and a royal crown is placed on his head. To the left and right of him: 1 6. Round inscription:

SIGIS·III·D·G·REX·POL·M·D·LI·RVS·PRV·M

R: The coat of arms of the city of Danzig: two lions with protruding tongues support an oval shield on both sides. It depicts the small coat of arms of the city: two crosses one below the other, and above them a crown. Above the coat of arms: 2 3. Above – flower. Round inscription:

MONETA·CIVIT·GEDANENSIS

quarter thaler, 1623, Danzig, silver, 28.9 – 29.2 mm, 6.50 g

Kopicki 2007, #1487var

Inventory No. 3562

**Duchy of Brandenburg
Georg Wilhelm (1619 – 1640)**

6



A: Duke Georg Wilhelm with beard and mustache, to the right, in metal armor, folded collar, and ducal crown on his head. With his right hand, he holds a scepter, which is supported on his right shoulder. With his left hand, he holds the hilt of a sword. Round inscription:

GEORG:WILHELM:V:G:G:M:Z:BRAN

P: Coat of arms: crowned shield, divided into four fields. In the middle – a small shield with an upright scepter. On both sides of the coat of arms: 2 – 2. Round inscription:

D:H:R:R:ERT:C:V:CHVRE:I:P:Z:G:C:B:H

quarter thaler, 1622, Königsberg, silver, 29.6 – 29.8 mm, 6.22 g

Kopicki 2007, #3915; Olding 1998, #41a

Krastev 2015a: 298, No. 64 (this coin)

Inventory No. 3564-1

7



A: As No. 6, the duke is dressed in an ermine mantle.

GEORG:WILHELM:V:G:G:M:Z:BRAN

P: As No. 6, but on both sides of the coat of arms: 2 4.

D:H:R:R:ERT:C:V:C[H]VRE:I:P:Z:G:C:B:H

quarter thaler, 1624, Königsberg, silver, 29.6 – 30.0 mm, 6.05 g

Kopicki 2007, #3917; Olding 1998, #41a; Bahrfeldt 1901-1910, #1448

Krastev 2015a: 298, No. 65 (this coin)

Inventory No. 3564-2

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Kopicki, E. (2007) *Monety Zygmunta III Wazy* (Szczecin).

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Ananie Yavashov and his numismatic collection

Vladimir Bekov, Rositsa Angelova

Abstract: This article introduces into scientific circulation a part of the numismatic collection of Academician Ananie Yavashov and his family, containing ancient, medieval, Ottoman and Revival coins that circulated mainly in Northeastern Bulgaria. It also presents a short biography of the prominent Bulgarian Revival and modern family, the Yavashovs. The collection was donated in 1952 to the Regional History Museum – Razgrad by Anani Yavashev (grandson of Ananie Yavashov). It contains over two hundred high-quality coins, among which we have selected 12 valuable and high-quality specimens – two tetradrachms of the island of Thassos and a group of Roman provincial coins of the cities – Adrianople, Odessos, Dionysopolis, Callatis, Marcianopolis, Nicopolis ad Istrum and Pautalia. The coin, minted in Pautalia, turned out to be unique – a new type for the city with a statuary group of Zeus (Jupiter) and Hera (Juno) of very high scientific and artistic value (Fig. 5). The collection improves our knowledge of the monetary wealth and trade relations of Macedonia, Thrace and Moesia Inferior during the Hellenistic and Roman periods.

Keywords: Ananie Yavashov, numismatic collection, ancient coins

Резюме: Тази публикация въвежда в научно обръщение част от нумизматичната колекция на академик Анание Явашов и неговото семейство, съдържаща антични, средновековни, османски и ренесансови монети, циркулирали предимно в Североизточна България. Представена е и кратка биография на видния български род Явашови/ Явашеви. Колекцията е дарена през 1952 г. на Регионален исторически музей – Разград от Анание Явашев (внук на Анание Явашов). Съдържа над двеста висококачествени монети, сред които сме подбрали 12 ценни и висококачествени екземпляра – две тетрадрахми на остров Тасос и група римски провинциални монети на градовете – Адрианопол, Одесос, Дионисополис, Калатис, Марцианополис, Никополис ад Иструм и Пауталия. Монетата, сечена в Пауталия, се оказва уникална – нов тип за града със Зевс (Юпитер) и Хера (Юнона) с много висока научна и художествена стойност (фиг. 5). Колекцията подобрява познанията ни за паричното богатство и търговските отношения на Македония, Тракия и Долна Мизия през елинистическия и римския период.

This publication brings into scientific circulation a part of the numismatic collection of Academician Ananie Yavashov and his family, containing ancient, medieval and Revival coins that circulated mainly in Northeastern Bulgaria.

Numismatics has two aspects: collecting and scientific study. Conducting thorough research requires assembling and analyzing substantial collections. The more numerous collections that are brought into scientific

circulation, the more research on coin circulation and trade relations in different historical periods would be facilitated, and a clearer view of the type diversity of different issues would be given. Among the collectors are exceptionally intelligent and distinguished individuals – doctors, engineers, officers, lawyers, artists, filmmakers, and businessmen – each a true pillar of the nation's identity and spirit¹.

The life and work of Ananie Ivanov Yavashov are eloquent proof of the above words. His father was the homespun tailor Ivan and his mother was Todora. Ivan, the son of Kolyu Vulkoboretsa, also a homespun tailor, settled in Razgrad during or after the Russo-Turkish War of 1828/29, which ended with the Treaty of Edirne in 1829. Ananie was born on October 1, 1855 in Razgrad. The young Ananie studied in his hometown until 1872, and then spent a year as an apprentice learning trade. For the next three years, he partnered with his older brother Stefan in commerce, gaining valuable experience in the field. He continued his education at the Bolgrad High School, where he remained until fifth grade. From 1878 he was a pupil at the High School in Prague. Ananie was the oldest high school student - he was already 24 years old. He showed interest in natural sciences. He graduated from the department of the grammar school in Prague with a matriculation examination in 1881².

In the same year, 1881, he enrolled at the Higher Technical School in Prague, unofficially called "Polytechnic". It was one of the most established schools and had a long history in Central Europe, dating back to 7 January 1718. Yavashov enrolled in the industrial chemistry department in the period 1881/1884. At the same time he attended lectures on botany, zoology, geology and mineralogy at the University of Prague. He graduated with a degree in industrial chemistry in 1884³.

He returned to the Principality of Bulgaria and his hometown. Immediately Yavashov was appointed headmaster of the district fifth-grade school in Razgrad. He became a teacher on 1 September 1884, and was a district school inspector from 15 June 1885 to 1 September 1899. He took a break from teaching from 15 September 1900 to 19 January 1901. In 1901, he began teaching natural history and chemistry at "Maria Luisa" State Girls' High School in Varna. As with his other students, he required every pupil in the Varna school to keep a herbarium. Dried plants had to be secured with paper strips on special cardboards, labeled with their names in Bulgarian and Latin, along with the location and date of finding⁴.

Throughout his distinguished teaching career, Yavashov worked in various Bulgarian towns as a teacher, headmaster, and school inspector - Razgrad, Tarnovo, Sofia, Dobrich, Varna, Svishtov, and Shumen.

¹ Bekov, Mitev 2015.

² Stoyanov 2007, 13.

³ Tanchev 2012, 208.

⁴ Angelova 2024, 23.

City	Razgrad	Tarnovo	Sofia	Dobrich	Varna	Svishtov	Shumen
period	1884- 1890 1891- 1894 1908- 1925	1890	1890- 1891	1894- 1896	1896- 1899 1899, 1901- 1908	1899	1899- 1900

Table 1. Where and when Yavashov lived and worked

In Varna, Yavashov was initially the school inspector of the school district in the city from 25 April 1896 to 27 May 1899. In the same year, 1899, he was appointed a teacher at the Varna Male High School. In the sea capital he was again from 20 January 1901, but already as a first-grade teacher at the Varna State Girls' High School "Maria Luisa", where he remained until 1908. There Yavashov taught a wide range of subjects. Among them were Natural History, Mineralogy, Physics, Chemistry, Zoology, Anthropology, Botany, etc.⁵

At the Male High School the three teachers Ananie Yavasov, Karel Škorpil and Hristo Genkov organized outings to explore the nature of the area and to collect antiques. The three were among the founders of the Varna Archaeological Society, established on 12 December 1901 (Bekov and Georgieva 2014, 74-81). Yavashov became treasurer of the society in June 1902⁶.

Alongside his teaching career, Ananie Yavashov actively engaged in local history and archaeological research, with records of his work preserved in the State Archives – Varna, Fund 91-K (Varna Archaeological Society), inventories 1 and 2. He took part in the research of numerous antiquity and medieval sites in the Varna region, including several Christian temples, and contributed to the collection of cultural monuments. Yavashov became a member and founder of the Varna Tourist Society in April 1902⁷.

Along with these activities, Yavashov conducted research on Bulgarian flora. In this regard, he appealed to the director of the Varna Girls' High School, who then petitioned the Ministry of National Education to reduce Yavashov's teaching load, allowing him more time for research. At the same time, he worked on textbooks and teaching aids. In 1905, he published his work, Contribution to Folk Botanical Medicine, spanning 62 pages, in Book 21 of the esteemed journal Collection of Folk Minds, Science, and Literature⁸.

Yavashov, together with Andrei Toshev and Bozhidar Davidov, co-authored The Flora of Northern Bulgaria, a highly acclaimed work. As a result, on November 1, 1900, the Bulgarian Literary Society – now the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences – honored him with the title of academician. This

⁵ Angelova 2024, 24.

⁶ Izvestnik 1902, 2.

⁷ Bekov and Georgieva 2014, 74-81; Petrov 2017, 200.

⁸ Angelova 2024, 24.

recognition came two years after he was elected a corresponding member of the same society on November 10, 1898⁹.

Yavashov's interest in the history of Razgrad dates back to the Revival period. As an adolescent he observed the excavation of the Thracian burial mound south of Abritus. In 1887, when he was already a school inspector, he also conducted the first archaeological excavations. With the artifacts he discovered, Yavashov curated a museum collection in the Male High School building, earning recognition as the founder of museum work in the town. His archaeological excavations and research efforts culminated in the publication of the significant work *Razgrad: Its Archaeological and Historical Past* (Sofia, 1930). In 1922, he founded the Archaeological Society and served as its first chairman, a position he held for the rest of his life due to his outstanding contributions¹⁰.

A tireless researcher and public figure, he took part in the work of the Beekeepers' Society and the Vineyard Syndicate in Razgrad. He was also a long-time chairman of the Community Centre "Razvitie"¹¹.

On August 19, 1884, he married Anna Antonin Trunecek (1862–1938) in a church ceremony in Ruse. An exceptionally intelligent and highly educated woman for her time, Anna graduated from the Faculty of History and Philology at Charles University and the Academy of Music in Prague. In the 1904 teachers' records, Yavashov listed his seven children. Plamen Radev lists eight: Ruzha (1885–1886), Marijka or also Madla (1887–1912), Elena (1889–1921), Ivan (1892–?), Andon (1894–?), Boris (1896–1916), Theodora or Dora (1899–1969), and Vladimir (1901–1983)¹².

Ananie Yavashov died on 25 May 1934 in Razgrad.

Yavashov's name is closely linked to the first archaeological excavations in the western part of the Hisarlak fortress in 1887 and the establishment of a museum collection that same year in the building of the Male Gymnasium in Razgrad. Five years later Yavashov conducted archaeological excavations in the eastern part of the fortress. The artifacts he uncovered led to the founding of the Archaeological Society with Museum on March 19, 1922, with Yavashov elected as chairman – a position he held until the end of his life in 1934. Notably, Yavashov was the first to introduce Abritus to scientific study. While significant research on the site took place in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, notable contributors included Hermann and Karel Shkorpil, National Museum archaeologist Anastas Chilingirov, and National Archaeological Museum curators Rafael Popov and Dr. Ivan Velkov.¹³

⁹ Stoyanov 2007, 14.

¹⁰ Angelova 2024, 25.

¹¹ Angelova 2024, 25.

¹² Angelova 2024, 25.

¹³ Radoslavova 2017, 11–65.

In all research and excavations, the discovered artifacts were brought back to the museum. The museum's collection was further enriched through donations, which Yavashov meticulously documented in the Archaeological Society's reports. Among the donated items were written records, printed publications, and a significant number of coins – the largest category of contributions (Reports of the Razgrad Archaeological Society I–X, 1922–1934).

Abritus originally developed as a Thracian settlement, which is also epigraphically attested in an inscription from the time of one of the last Thracian kings, Remetalchus II (21-26), in which we learn the name of the local strategos - Ruzika. After the establishment of the province of Thrace in 45 AD, the settlement became a Roman military camp (fortress), and in late antiquity it expanded into a flourishing city, which continued its development into the First Bulgarian Empire.¹⁴

Hundreds of years later, numismatic artefacts can be found shallowly in the soil in Razgrad. The Shumen numismatist Vasil Kharalanov testifies to this in a letter to Todor Gerasimov:

"In the spring of 1954, in Razgrad, a handful of pennies belonging to Ivan Alexander and Mikhail were unearthed by themselves buried shallowly in the soil on a hillside near the Vintners' School and subsequently looted by students. I examined 13 pieces, all perfectly preserved, showing little circulation, with various drawings of the monograms, of ordinary type and non-repeating seals."¹⁵

Thus, through repurchases and donations, today the Regional Historical Museum - Razgrad has one of the richest numismatic collections, to the discovery of which Georgi Dzanev made a significant contribution.¹⁶

Among the donors is Yavashov himself and his relatives. In different periods Yavashov donated 13 copper church coins, five miscellaneous coins, an American coin, etc.¹⁷ Thus he became the discoverer of the coins of the Christian temples - an interesting source for the Bulgarian National Revival. Hristo Kharitonov dedicated a special study to the.¹⁸ Donations are also made by his relatives: Vladimir An. Yavashev - two Austrian copper coins, Ivan An. Yavashev - various coins from the Chirpan region. It is evident that there were antiques and coins in the family, although they parted with some of them. Among the donors is Vladimir, son of Anani Yavashov. Vladimir and Tsveta Yavashev started a family and their son was born on 18 October 1932 in Gabrovo. He was named after his grandfather, Ananie Yavashov. In 1949, Vladimir Yavashev was accused of sabotage in the production of the Prince Cyril Factory. He was detained, subjected to a harsh trial, and subsequently spent a year and a half in Tarnovo Prison. The family moved to Plovdiv, where Anani Yavashev

¹⁴ Ivanov, Stoyanov 1985.

¹⁵ Kharalanov 2018, 89.

¹⁶ Dzanev, Prokopov 2007.

¹⁷ Otcheti 2022, I-X 1922-1934, I, 10.

¹⁸ Kharitonov, 2010.

enrolled to study at St. Augustine's French College. His origins and family dramas created obstacles for him to enter university. However, Anani Yavashev worked for a year with his father at the Maritza Textile Factory. Then he entered the Theatre Academy. He graduated in acting at NATFA. These arguments probably weighed in Anani Yavashev's decision to make a large donation to the History Museum in Razgrad. Thus, in 1952 he donated over two hundred high-quality coins - Greek, Roman, Byzantine, from the Second Bulgarian Kingdom, Renaissance and Ottoman rule.

Two beautiful tetradrachms of the island of Thasos stand out among them. And a large group of Roman provincial coins of the cities of Adrianopolis, Anchialos, Messambria, Odessos, Dionysopolis, Calatis, Marcianopolis, Nicopolis ad Istrum and Pautalia. The coin of Pautalia proved to be unique with very high scientific and artistic value (Fig. 5).

The most widespread coinage standard in the Hellenistic era, unified as a world currency by Alexander the Great, was the Euboean-Athenian coinage system. It was based on the talent = 25.86 kg = 60 mines = 6000 drachmas ($1 \approx 4.3$ g) = 36,000 obols. Gold was related to silver very simply, 1/10 on the basis of the gold stater (≈ 8.6 g.) = 20 drachmas (Bekov, Mitev 2015, 10).

The Roman coinage system in the 1st-2nd centuries was based on the reform of Augustus of 31-27 BC. According to it, coins were minted of gold (aureus 8.19 gr.) = 2 quinarii = silver 25 denarii = 50 quinarii = bronze 100 sestertii = 200 dupondi = 400 aces = 1200 quadrans. The base currency was again, as in the Republic, the denarius = 3.89 g.¹⁹ The Roman provincial coins from the territory in question were issued exclusively in bronze, in various denominations of $\frac{1}{2}$, 1, 2, 4, 4 and $\frac{1}{2}$ (only in Tomis), 5, 10 (for special cases) asari.²⁰

In 214 the Carpi, a large tribal group north of the Danube delta first threatened Moesia Inferior. Emperor Caracalla (198-217), who was on his way to the East at the time, detoured to repel the invaders (History of Dobrudzha 2011, 261-262). We also see a reflection of these visits in the Yavashov collection. Caracalla is represented in quite a few coins (Fig. 5 and 6). He also visited Moesia Inferior in 198, when he was declared co-emperor by Septimius Severus.²¹

The first four decades of the 3rd century, the age of Severus, were peaceful and rich in coinage.

Martianopolis and Nicopolis ad Istrum (with the largest number of coins in the collection studied) were organized following the Greek model, after the model of the polis on the Western Black Sea coast with a bicameral governing body. The inferior was the National Assembly, which included all adult citizens (demos). The city council (boule) made the decisions. At the head

¹⁹ Abramzon 1995, 45-46,

²⁰ Bekov, Mitev 2015, 12.

²¹ Boteva 2010, 240-241.

of the council was the archon.²² A special role in Moesia Inferior was played by the West Pontic Koinon, which included the cities of Odessos, Tomis, Iстриa, Dionysopolis, Callatis, and probably until 193-195 Mesambria or Anchialos. The union was led by a Pontarch. The main function of the koinon was largely limited to organizing the imperial cult, but it also served as a provincial assembly of the West Pontic cities, without superseding the authority of the provincial governor (legate). In the early period of the existence of the West Pontic Koinon, Odessos was the center of the cult of the Roman emperor until the time of Marcus Aurelius (161-180), after which the main city became Tomis, titled "Metropolis of the Pontus" in the coins and inscriptions of the city from the time of Marcus Aurelius.²³ The executor of the emperor's will was the provincial governor, appointed by his direct order and his close associate. In the border province of Moesia (divided into Moesia Superior and Moesia Inferior after 86), and after Trajan's time in Thrace, the governor was called *legatus Augusti pro praetore*. Civil and military life, as well as coinage, was under the supervision of the legate. The seat of Augustus' envoy was the West Pontic city of Tomis (now Constanta, Romania), and of Thrace – the city of Perinth (now Ereğli, Turkey). The construction of new temples, as well as the restoration and maintenance of existing ones of various religions and cults held a special place in the duties of the representatives of the supreme power.²⁴ Coinage was also organized and signed by the legate.

At the end of the 2nd century an important administrative reform was carried out - the provincial border between Moesia Inferior and Thrace was shifted to the south. In the period 193-195 the cities of Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis came under the rule of the Moesia Inferior imperial legate.²⁵ The earliest evidence of this new status relates to the autonomous coins minted in Nicopolis ad Istrum in the time of Septimius Severus, on behalf of the provincial governor of Moesia Inferior, Pollienens Auspex (193/4-195). In Ivan Varbanov's catalogue the coins of this provincial governor are No. 2779-2792.²⁶

After the Age of the Severans Dynasty, severe and prolonged invasions began, accompanied by an internal economic and political crisis. These events affected all the Balkan provinces as well as some on the Middle Danube. They were in fact the first harbingers of the end of the Roman provincial economic structure and culture. The beginning of this process was marked by the great invasion of the Carpi in 238. The successes of the barbarian and Roman armies alternated. In 239 the Goths devastated Dobrudzha (History of Dobrudzha 2011, 262). With a series of medallions (Fig. 9) and other coins the cities of Odessos, Tomis and Marcianopolis paid homage to the emperor Gordian III (238-244),

²² Ivanov 2008, 26.

²³ Bekov, Mitev 2015, 18.

²⁴ Ivanov 2008, 18-19; Alexandrov 2013, 89.

²⁵ Boteva 1997, 27.

²⁶ Varbanov 2005, 2779-2792

who, during his journey across the Balkan Peninsula to the Orient in 242, or possibly on his return, also visited these cities. On this occasion, the city council of Odessos organized games in his honor, as attested by some coin images, depicting a globular crown on a table (*corona donatica*) with the inscription ΔΑΡΖΑΛΕΙΑ.²⁷

The coins in this inventory are divided chronologically. They are autonomous and Roman provincial coins from cities in Thrace and Moesia Inferior (Fig. 1-12). The autonomous city coins date from the early 1st century BC, while the Roman provincial coins date from Septimius Severus (193-211) to Gordian III (238-244). From the collection we have selected Roman provincial coins from the following cities - in Moesia Inferior: Odessos (today Varna), Marcianopolis (until 193/5 in Thrace, after it in Moesia Inferior, today Devnya), Nicopolis ad Istrum (until 193/5 in Thrace, after it in Moesia Inferior, today the village of Nikyup, Veliko Tarnovo), Dionysopolis (today Balchik). In Thrace: Pautalia (today Kyustendil), Deultum (today village Debel), Adrianople (today Adrianople, Turkey). The autonomous coins presented here are from the island of Thasos dating to the early 1st century BC (Fig. 1 and 2), However, according to Ilya Prokopov, these particular 'imitations' were minted in the Roman province of Macedonia.²⁸

Roman provincial coins have impressed collectors with their rich variety of reverses, where Greek and Roman pantheons, as well as local Thracian cults, are intertwined. In the described coins we recognize - Zeus (Jupiter), Hera (Juno), Hermes (Mercury), Heracles (Hercules), the health-bearing deities: Asclepius and his daughter Hygeia. We also see the mythical dragon with a nimbus, fish tail and beard - Glykon and the Lernaean Hydra (water dragon with a serpent body and nine heads) in the moment of her defeat by Heracles (second feat). Animals also appear in the inventory, with the eagle depicted alone, and others such as the serpent and panther shown alongside their respective gods, as well as the Capitoline she-wolf with Romulus and Remus suckling. Additionally, there is an interesting depiction of Dionysus (Bacchus) riding a panther and with his thyrsus slung over his shoulder - likely a painting or mosaic by Calathes (Fig. 3). Local river deities are also represented in the collection. Ister, in a coin of Nicopolis ad Istrum (Fig. 8), is represented half reclining amid the turbulent waters of the river Danube with the bow of the galley at his feet. The ship highlights the importance of the river as a waterway for military and merchant fleets connecting the provinces along its course. The inscription ICTPON (part of the city's name) is so inscribed (in front of the god) that it leaves no doubt whose image it is - the Ister. The karst spring at Marcianopolis is also represented as a half-reclining river god (Fig. 7).

In the 3rd century there was a growing syncretism in religion due to the influence of the religious beliefs of the migrants from Asia Minor and Egypt

²⁷ Gerasimov 1951, 71

²⁸ Prokopov 2006.

who arrived as craftsmen and merchants in the cities of Thrace and Mysia. These new ethnic elements, with their economic and social rise, seem to have exerted an influence on the religious life of the cities in question. The latter is attested by the coin images representing Sarapis (Fig. 11), Isis, Harpocrates, etc.

The catalog also contains some names of provincial governors on coins at Marcianopolis and Nicopolis ad Istrum. These include: Gaius Iulius Quintilianus (213–216), Pontius Furius Pontianus (Aug. 217 – Nov. /Dec. 217), Novius Rufos (218–219). This precise chronology, particularly regarding the time of the Severans, is also derived from coinage ().²⁹ The Greek titles that we see on coins and epigraphic monuments differ. In the present description, except for the Greek title of legatee in Lower Moesia (Moesia Inferior) – VII (for πατατευοντος, in Latin Consularis)³⁰ in coin of Pautalia (Fig. 5) there is the name and title of the provincial governor in Thrace – ΗΓΟΜ (for ηγεμονευοντος, which in a broader sense is Latin Praetor)³¹ Gaius Caecina Largus (Greek: Καικινὰ Λαργου) was the Roman governor of the province of Thrace (legatus Augusti pro praetore Thraciae) during the reign of emperor Septimius Severus in the period 198–201 years. He originated from the ancient Roman family of Caecina. He participated in the meeting of the imperial family in Thrace upon their return from Persia to Rome in 198³² We note that this provincial governor of Thrace is particularly sophisticated, as the coins (Fig. 5 and 5A) issued by him are not only remarkable for their artistic achievement but also innovative in terms of coin type. We are deeply grateful for the expert opinion of Yanislav Tachev, who recently published a complete catalog of coinage of Pautalia, as well as to Nikolay Malchev, who donated the second unpublished specimen of this type from his extensive coin collection to Paulatalia (Orca Collection – Florida). The coins come from a pair of prints, highlighting the great rarity of this new type (currently unique with only two known copies!).

All inscriptions on the provincial coins, which we will examine, are in Greek language. An exception is the colony of Deultum, which was founded entirely by retired Roman legionaries and minted its own coins in Latin.³³

The collection presented here enhances our understanding of the monetary wealth and trade relations of Macedonia, Thrace and Moesia Inferior through the Hellenistic and Roman eras. Additionally, it presents another new aspect of the Yavashovi/Yavashevi family from the time of the National Revival – collecting. High aesthetic criteria used in selecting the numismatic collection of Academician Ananie Yavashov, may have influenced the artistic endeavors of his grandsons. One became the famous actor – Anani Yavashev, and the other

²⁹ Boteva 1997; Hristova, Zhekov 2006; Bekov, Mitev 2015, 27.

³⁰ Knechtel 1912, 38; Varbanov 2002, 5

³¹ Yurukova, 1987, 87; Bekov, Mitev 2015, 27.

³² Boteva 1997, 156, 157

³³ Draganov 2006.

conquered the world stage as sculptor, artist and avant-garde figure Hristo (Christo) Yavashev.

Catalogue

Fig. 1. Tetradrachm from the island of Thasos (90-75 BC). According to Ilya Prokopov, these coins were minted in the Roman province of Macedonia, in imitation of the tetradrachm produced in the island of Thasos (Prokopov 2007, Group XII).



Obverse: Head of young Dionysus with long hair and brushwood wreath, to the right.

Reverse: Heracles standing erect, facing forward, head to the left, leaning on a club with his right hand, and draping a lion's pelt over his left arm. A monogram in the left field

Silver, 16.68 gr., 32 mm, 12 h. (Regional History Museum – Razgrad, Inv. № 352; Prokopov 2006, Group XII, № 743; Dzanev, Prokopov 2007, № 8).

Fig. 2. Tetradrachm from the island of Thasos (90-75 BC). According to Ilya Prokopov, these coins were minted in the Roman province of Macedonia in imitation of the tetradrachm produced in the island of Thasos (Prokopov 2007, Group XV).



Obverse: Head of young Dionysus with long hair and brushwood wreath, to the right.

Reverse: Heracles standing upright, facing forward, head to the left, leaning on a club with his right hand, and draping a lion's pelt over his left arm. A monogram in the left field

Silver, 16.73 gr., 32 mm, 12 h. (Regional History Museum – Razgrad, Inv. № 353; Prokopov 2006, Group XV, № 1128; Dzanev, Prokopov 2007, № 11).

Fig. 3. Coin of the Thracian king Rhoemetalkes I (11– 12 AD) with Emperor Augustus.



Obverse: ΚΑΙΣΑΡΟΣ ΣΕΒΑΣΤΟΥ

Bare head of Augustus, right.

Reverse: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΡΟΙΜΗΤΑΛΚΟΥ Bare head of Augustus r.

Jugate heads of Rhoemetalkes, diademed, and his queen, right.

A rectangular countermark of Rhoemetalkes I with a monogram containing his name (Paunov 2018, 231).

Bronze, 8.03 gr., 22 mm, 6 h. (Regional History Museum – Razgrad, Inv. № 355; Yurukova 1992; № 162 (var.); Dzanev, Prokopov 2007, № 2; Paunov 2018, 1.9).

Fig.4. Coin of the city of Callatis with the image of Septimius Severus (193-211).



Obverse: ΑΥΤΚΛΣΕΠ ΣΕΥΗΡΟCΠΕΡ Τ

laureate head of Septimius Severus, right.

Reverse: ΚΑΛΛΑΤΙΑΝΩΝ

Dionysus (Bacchus) riding a panther, throwing over his shoulder his thyrsus, to the right.

Bronze, 11.91 gr., 26 mm, 6 h. (Regional History Museum – Razgrad, Inv. № 422; Varbanov 2005, № 278).

Fig.5. Coin of the city of Pautalia with the image of the emperor Caracalla (198-217). Gaius Caecina Largus (198-201).



Obverse: AVT M AVPHAIOC ANTΩNEINOC

Laureate, draped, and cuirassed bust of Caracalla, right.

Reverse: ΗΓΕΥΜ ΚΑΙΚΙΝΑ ΛΑΡΓΟΝ ΟΥΛΠΙΑΣ ΠΑΥΤΑΛΙ/ΑC

Zeus (Jupiter), to right, standing facing, head left, holding patera and sceptre, Hera (Juno), to left, standing facing, head right, holding patera and sceptre, and between them a flaming altar.

Bronze, 14.89 g., 29 mm, 8 h. (Regional History Museum – Razgrad, Inv. № 367; Varbanov 2005, № – ; Tachev 2020, № – ; Unpublished – unique!)

Fig.5 A. Coin of the city of Pautalia with the image of Emperor Caracalla (198-217). Gaius Caecina Largus (198-201).



Obverse: AVT M AVPHAIOC ANTΩNEINOC

Laureate, draped, and cuirassed bust of Caracalla, right.

Reverse: ΗΓΕΥΜ ΚΑΙΚΙΝΑ ΛΑΡΓΟΝ ΟΥΛΠΙΑΣ ΠΑΥΤΑΛΙ/ΑC

Zeus (Jupiter), to right, standing facing, head left, holding patera and sceptre, Hera (Juno), to left, standing facing, head right, holding patera and sceptre, and between them a flaming altar.

Bronze, 14.60 gr., 30/29 mm, 8 h. (Collection Nikolay Malchev (Orca collection – Florida); Varbanov 2005, № – ; Tachev 2020, № – ; Unpublished – unique!)

Fig. 6. Coin of the city of Marcianopolis with the image of the emperor Caracalla (198-217). Gaius Iulius Quintilianus (213-216).



Obverse: ΠΙΟC AVΓVCTOC ANTΩNEINOC
 Laureate head of Caracalla, right.
 Reverse: ΒΠ ΚVNTΙΛΙΑΝΟΥ ΜΑΡΚΙΑΝΟΠΟΛΙΤΩΝ
 Eagle standing facing with open wings, head turned left.
 Bronze, 9.31 gr., 25/26 mm, 12 h. (Regional History Museum – Razgrad, Inv. № 388; Varbanov 2005, № 964; Hristova, Zhekov 2006, 6.18.1.8-11-1).

Fig. 7. Coin of the city of Marcianopolis with the images of the emperor Macrinus and Diadumenianus. (217-218 AD). Pontius Furius Pontianus (Aug. 217 – Nov./Dec. 217 AD).



Obverse: AV Κ ΟΠΠΕΛ CΕVΗ ΜΑΚΡΕΙΝΟC / Κ Μ ΟΠΠΕΛ
 ANTΩΝΙΝΟC

Confronted heads of bareheaded Diadumenian right, on left, and laureate Macrinus left, on right.

Reverse: ΒΠ ΠΟΝΤΙΑΝΟΝ ΜΑΡΚΙΑΝΟΠΟΛΕΙ / ΤΩΝ

A river god, half-reclining to the left, with his left hand resting on a flowing stream, and his right hand placed on his knee. Nominal letter Ε (five assaria).

Bronze, 10.64 g., 27/25 mm, 12 h. (Regional History Museum – Razgrad, Inv. No. 392; Varbanov 2005, No. 1283 (var.); Hristova, Zhekov 2006, 6.24.5.2-3 (var.).

Fig. 8. Coin of the city of Marcianopolis with the image of the emperor Elagabal (217-218). Novius Rufos (218-219).



Obverse: AVT K M AVP ANTΩNEINOC

Laureate head of Elagabal, right.

Reverse: ΥΠ ΝΟΒΙΟΥ ΡΟΥΦΟΥ ΝΙΚΟΠΟΛΙΤΩΝ ΠΡΟΣ ΙΣΤΡΟΝ

The river god Ister, half-reclining to the right, leans on the prow of a ship with his left hand while holding a bunch of reeds in his right. Behind him, the river's waters flow.

Bronze, 10.89 gr., 26 mm, 12 h. (Regional History Museum – Razgrad, Inv. № 382; Varbanov 2005, № 3891 (var.); Hristova, Hoeft, Jekov 2012, 8.26.32.1-5).

Fig. 9. Medallion of Odessos with the image of Emperor Gordian III (238 – 244).



Obverse: AYTKMANTTOPΔ I A NOCAVT

Radiate, draped and cuirassed bust of Gordian III to left, raising his right hand in salute and holding globe in his left.

Reverse: ΟΔΗC C ΕΙΤΩΝ

Hygeia, feeding serpent from patera, standing right, facing Asclepius standing facing left, leaning on serpent-entwined staff.

Bronze, 26.04 gr., 33.5/34 mm, 6 h. (Regional History Museum – Razgrad, Inv. № 416; Varbanov 2005, № 4434).

Fig. 10. Coin of Adrianopolis with the image of Emperor Gordian III (238 – 244).



Obverse: ΑΥΤ Κ Μ ΑΝ ΓΟΡΡΙΑΝΟC ΑΥΤ

Laureate and draped bust of Gordian III, right.

Reverse: ΑΔΡΙΑΝΟΠΟΛΕΙΤΩΝ

Heracles naked, on the right, with his left hand holding the Lernaean Hydra (a water dragon with the body of a serpent and nine heads), and with his right swinging his club (second feat)

Bronze, 7.11 gr., 24/25 mm, 12 h. (Regional History Museum – Razgrad, Inv. № 413; Yurukova 1986, 641; Varbanov 2005, № 3800).

Fig. 11. Coin of Dionysopolis with the image of Emperor Gordian III (238 – 244).



Obverse: ΑΥΤ Κ Μ ΑΝΤΩ ΓΟΡΔΙΑΝΟC ΑΥΤ

Busts of Gordian III, with laurel wreath and Sarapis with calathos, facing each other.

Reverse: ΔΙΟΝΥCΟΠΟΛΕΙΤΩΝ

Glycon.

Bronze, 13.99 gr., 27/28 mm, 6 h. (Regional History Museum – Razgrad, Inv. № 425; Varbanov 2005, № 579).

Fig. 12. Coin on Deultum with the image of the Empress Tranquillina (238 – 244).



Obverse: SAB TRANQVILLINA AVG
Draped bust right of Tranquillina right, wearing stephane crown.
Reverse: COL FL PAC DEVL
The Capitoline she-wolf with Romulus and Remus suckling, left.
Bronze, 13.99 gr., 27/28 mm, 6 h. (Regional History Museum – Razgrad,
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Attempts at legislative support of the craft industry in the 90's of the 19th century

Roumiana Parvanova

Abstract: The study highlights the guidelines for supporting crafts, which have often been overlooked in contemporary works on economic history. It briefly outlines the status and internal organization of craft associations, as well as the decline of crafts prior to the Liberation. Attention is given to the Resolutions of the First Agricultural-Industrial Council in Plovdiv (1892) concerning the development of handicrafts. The paper also examines the practical measures and legislative acts introduced to promote craft education. The practical steps and legislative acts to support craft education are revealed - adoption of a Law on the organization of the craft training school in the village of Knyazhevo; proposing bills for specialized training of craftsmen; financing the supply of craft equipment; supporting exemplary craft workshops, sending young people to study abroad to specialize in various crafts. Laws requiring the mandatory wearing of local clothing and footwear are also considered an aspect of the protectionist state policy towards crafts. A detailed analysis is made of the Law on the Regulation of Guilds, adopted at the end of 1897, which defines the purpose, structure and functioning of guild associations, compiles a list of 22 crafts that are subject to association, and regulates state control over guilds. The weaknesses of the law and the reason for its repeal in 1899 are pointed out.

Keywords: Crafts, craftsmanship, associations, education, legislation

Резюме: Изследването хвърля светлина върху насоките за подкрепа на занаятчийството, останало извън фокуса на вниманието на съвременните публикации по стопанска история. Проследява се накратко статутът и вътрешното устройство на занаятчийските сдружения и западането на занаятите преди Освобождението. Представят се Постановленията на Първия земеделско-промишлен събор в Пловдив (1892) за развитието на занаятчийството. Разкриват се практическите стъпки и законодателните актове за подпомагане на занаятчийското образование - приемане на Закон за устройството на учебната занаятчийница в село Княжево; предлагане на законопроекти за специализирано обучение на занаятчиите; финансиране на доставки на занаятчийско оборудване; подпомагане на образцови занаятчийски работилници, изпращане на младежи за обучение в чужбина за специализация по различни занаяти. Като аспект от протекционистката държавна политика спрямо занаятите се разглеждат и законите за задължително носене на местни дрехи и обувки. Прави се подробен анализ на Закона за уредба на еснафите, приет в края на 1897 г., който определя целта, устройството и функционирането на еснафските сдружения, съставя списък на 22 занаяти, които подлежат на сдружаване, регламентира държавния контрол върху еснафите. Посочват се слабостите на закона и причината за неговата отмяна през 1899 г.

In historical studies of the 1890s, attention is primarily given to issues of internal, financial, tax, and educational policy, while in the sphere of economic life, the focus falls on efforts to develop agriculture and industry. The present study sheds light on guidelines for craft support that have remained out of focus in contemporary economic history research.¹ Transcripts from meetings of the National Assembly, published documents, specialized literature and monographs are used to write the study.

During the Ottoman rule, especially in the 18th and early 19th centuries, crafts in the Bulgarian lands reached a significant flowering. Craftsmanship is organized in tight uniform units – associations called guilds, which arose spontaneously on local soil. Each craft was organized into its own association. 1772 Fermanagh grants the right to Bulgarian craftsmen to organize themselves in guilds, which are closed organizations. All individual craftsmen from a city form a guild. No one in a given settlement can practice the trade unless he is a member of the guild. Guilds get the right of internal self-government. Guild members elect a Grandmaster from among themselves. Operationally, the cases are handled by the Board of Trustees of the guild. All independent masters form the General Assembly of the guild, which decides the most important issues of the corporation's activity: drawing up statutes, regulating internal relations in the guild (training of apprentices and journeymen), announcing masters, granting loans to members of the guild, the commercial policy of the association, etc.² The guild assembly is "something like a judicial-administrative government of the craftsmen and was empowered by the head of state." For this purpose, a "proper sultan's firman is issued, so that the local authorities cannot interfere in the autonomy of the guild"³. Decisions made by the General Assembly on the punishment of guild members are carried out by a guild police guard without outside interference. If necessary, the General Assembly has the right to request assistance from the local police authority at any time. An important institution is the guild treasury, in which the sources come from contributions of the masters, journeymen and apprentices, from sums paid to obtain master's right, fines, etc. These funds are used to purchase materials, to support needy members of the guild.

It is believed that after the Crimean War (1853-1856) a process of decline of craftsmanship gradually began in the Bulgarian lands. Therefore, various factors exerted influence, such as the development of transport infrastructure – the establishment of shipping along the Danube River and the construction of the Ruse–Varna railway line (1867) and the Sarambei (now Septemvri)–Constantinople line (1872). The new infrastructure creates channels for the placement of foreign goods, and the advanced Western

¹ Statelova & Grancharov 2006, 145-174; Georgiev 2014, 347-376.

² Hinkov 1929, 33-35; Bochev 1932, 37-39.

³ Hinkov 1926, 29.

technology makes the competition of European goods successful, which surpass the works of Bulgarian craftsmen in terms of quality and price. After the Liberation, the situation of the artisans worsened further as a result of the changes in the borders. They lost the vast markets of the Ottoman Empire and the opportunity to work on orders for the Turkish army⁴. Changes in tastes and fashions, along with consumers' growing preference for European goods, also negatively affected the situation of certain crafts. There is also a lack of funds for the modernization of manual production⁵. Most of the guild organizations are falling apart. At the beginning of the 1990s, calls began to be made to the state to take care of supporting and organizing the crafts.

It is known that artisans as a social and professional stratum are second in number after peasants in Bulgaria. Based on data on the occupational composition of the population from census statistics K. Popov calculated the number of craftsmen "self-employed owners" in 1892 to 105,377, and in 1900 to 81,830. Their "helpers and workmen" in the same years were respectively 138,611 and 56,762, or all employed in the sector for 1892 – 243,988 people, for 1900 – 138,592. The tendency of the decrease of craftsmen between the years 1892 and 1900 is evident⁶.

It is known that the mastery of a craft in which manual labor predominates is obtained through long training and practice of the job. Almost immediately after Liberation, a step was taken to support craft education. Then it becomes clear that the reason for the backwardness in the development of crafts is the absence of proper knowledge about craft productions. Realization of this lack led to the adoption in July 1883 of the first law affecting craft education, called "Law on the establishment of the educational craft shop in the village Princely (Knyazhevo)". The aim of the educational institution is to "improve the crafts in Bulgaria in carpentry and ironwork". In the first years after its establishment, the hopes placed on it to be a stimulus for the development of crafts were not justified. The poorer students who entered it do not have the opportunity to find work on their own after the end of the studies and are directed to the clerkship. Other, more affluent students after graduation banded together and managed to open workshops. The creation of the Craft School in the village of Knyazhevo is evaluated as "the right step of the Bulgarian state towards the improvement of crafts" and "their adaptation to new needs and tastes"⁷. In 1892-1893 the workshop was renamed as "State Technical School". Another educational

⁴ Andreev 2020,5. At the beginning of the 19th century, by order of the sultan, Bulgarian craftsmen in Constantinople sewed uniforms for the Turkish army, while Turkish officials were also dressed in their products.

⁵ Shishkov 2016, 170.

⁶ Popov 1916, 303-304.

⁷ Hristov 1929, 47; Pandov 1934, 11.

measure to support the modernization of crafts was the 1885 state-funded initiative that sent 38 young people abroad to specialize in various trades.

An idea from the 80s of the 19th century also offers another form of craft training. The Industrial Commission under the Ministry of Education makes a proposal for the creation of model workshops supplied with modern equipment, in which skilled Bulgarian or foreign masters can work. The project includes 18 trades such as the existing tannery, weaving and dyeing, etc., as well as new ones such as stonemasonry and carpentry. Georgi Zhivkov, Minister of Education in the Stambolov's Government, published sample plan-accounts on the Belgian model for their opening and functioning. Students' interest in the learning process is tied to a material incentive⁸. Zhivkov's ideas about creating model craft workshops and "opening industrial exhibitions from time to time", i.e. organizing sales of handicrafts are measures that should give impetus to the development of handicrafts.

A much more systematic attention to the needs of handicrafts was paid in 1892, when the First Bulgarian Agricultural-Industrial Council met in Plovdiv, (a public-state forum held during the exhibition of the same name), whose purpose was to popularize and encourage the development of Bulgarian producers, including the artisans. "Industry Resolutions" were drafted within the framework of the assembly⁹, which are an extensive document with recommendations to the government and private farmers. Ivan Ev. Geshov is considered their author¹⁰. The decrees propose: "To form free guild societies in all cities, with the aim of mutual support of the craftsmen and their members and measures for the development of the guild craft". The companies should be established either at the initiative of the guilds themselves, or at the insistence of the district and municipal authorities. Two approaches to the establishment of the companies are taken, namely with the initiative of the craftsmen themselves or with the support of the local authorities.

The council recommends that the government issue a law on the practice of trades with a "strong support" for "advancement" in the association. To create "industrial-production companies", societies have statutes to be approved by the government. It shall determine the rights and obligations of the members of the companies and their assistants. Clearly, the guidelines for the role of the state are a far cry from the guild self-governance of the pre-liberation period.

It is suggested that the state, county and municipal authorities immediately take up the "advancement" of the crafts. For this purpose it is recommended: to open craft workshops subsidized by the state or open to the district and municipal councils. These workshops will be profiled in 23 types

⁸ Zhivkov 1889, 22-23.

⁹ The term "industry" includes both artisanal and factory production.

¹⁰ Geshov 1889, 152.

of crafts: “1. Tannery; 2. Fur trade; 3. Saddlery; 4. Shoemaking; 5. Weaving - knitting; 6. Rope making; 7. Tailoring; 8. Pauperism; 9. Kazastvo - bagpipes; 10. Carpentry; 11. Cycling; 12. Cooperage; 13. Basket making; 14. Ironwork; 15. Cutlery; 16. Goldsmithing; 17. Pottery; 18. Soap making; 19. Carpentry; 20. Masonry; 21. Hat making; 22. Brushing; 23. Coppersmithing”¹¹. Four years later, most of the listed trades were included in the draft law on their regulation. The decrees also give a number of recommendations for the organization of craft training for young people, such as increasing the number of departments in “Knyazhevska zanayatchiinita” (Craft School in the village of Knyazhevo). To make sure that the graduates work only in their specialty, and if they graduate, the government grants “interest-free money to get them to work.”

Recommendations are made to the County and Municipal Councils to finance the supply of cutlery, machinery and utensils which may assist the progress of the trades. A special point is the mandatory opening of repair ironwork workshops to the district councils. In 1893 with the assistance of the Varna District Standing Committee, the Varna District Model Ironwork Workshop is opened¹².

Measures in the field of administrative and customs protectionism have not been forgotten. The decrees give instructions: “The government should make long-term contracts for local products and products needed for the army, the gendarmerie and other state bodies without an auction and at prices from recent years.” To oblige all military, civil, state, district and municipal officials to wear clothes and shoes made of local products, such as can be prepared in the country, at least while they are in their occupations”. To raise tailoring and shoemaking, which suffer from large imports, through a customs policy, concluding trade agreements with increased import duties for “products such as the ones produced in our country”. The Ministry of Finance is tasked with establishing a special Directorate for Agriculture, Industry and Trade¹³. The decrees provide guidelines for the implementation of a purposeful complex and systematic policy in support of the crafts, which is implemented until the wars.

There are two bills and two laws with which the government of K. Stoilov tries to support the craft industry. On December 9, 1894, the date of the resignation of Stoilov's first cabinet and the formation of his second government, Iv. Ev. Geshov, who manages the Ministry of Agriculture and Trade, submits to the Assembly a draft law on craft training. In the reasons for it, it is stated that after 11 years of operation, the craft school in the village of Knyazhevo has not achieved its goal. Instead of preparing the necessary contingent of master craftsmen, it increased the “number of unproductive labor forces”. The project envisages the creation of state and private craft

¹¹ Opp. cit, p. 152.

¹² Denkov 2024, 58.

¹³ Geshov 1899, 163.

schools, for which private model workshops can also be recognized. The goal is a “thorough” study of “known crafts at a modern level”. 15 trades are listed which can be studied in public schools and private workshops, such as ironwork with foundry; pottery; weaving; painting; tailoring etc.¹⁴. The bill regulates a number of requirements for the educational process in state and private institutions. The organization and supervision of craft schools is entrusted to the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture. In the general statements about the “state practical craft schools”, the material incentives for the students make an impression¹⁵. Government scholarships are provided for the poor. According to the project, private model workshops can also serve as schools if the master owners are Bulgarian subjects, if they have civil and political rights, good morals and have practiced the craft for at least 5 years¹⁶. After its adoption in principle at the first reading, the Draft Law on Craft Education did not become law due to the premature closure of the 8 Ordinary National Assembly¹⁷.

Part of the text of the Craft Apprenticeship Bill of 1894 is set out in another separate law. It foresees the state vocational school in the village of Knyazhevo to be divided into four departments (schools) – in Samokov for ironwork; in Ruse – for carpentry; in Trun for pottery; in Sliven – for weaving with dyeing¹⁸. On December 9, this draft law was adopted in principle without debate and went to the Parliamentary Committee on the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture. On December 16 and 17, 1894 the National Assembly is looking at the budget of the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture, which provides for the allocation of sums for the next financial year for the “Practical Crafts School and its four departments: ironwork (with 7 positions per staff), carpentry (three), pottery (four) and weaving with painting (with 9 positions). Money is also provided for traveling teachers of pottery and coppersmithing¹⁹.

Immediately after the movement of the budget money on December 17, 1894, “Bill for state practical craft schools” was submitted to the parliament. It repeals the law on the educational craftsman in the village of Knyazhevo by “distributing” it into four separate practical schools – the ones mentioned in Samokov, Ruse, Tran and Sliven. It is planned that the Ministry

¹⁴ Stenografski dnevnitsi (SD) (Stenographic diaries) na (of) 8 ONS (Eighth Ordinary People’s Assembly), 1 r. s. (First regular session), 35 zas. (35th sitting), 9 dek. (9th December) 1894 g. (year), s. (page) 115.

¹⁵ Bobchev 1932, 61. According to Bobchev, practical schools are “inferior”. To enter them, a completed primary education is required, the course is 2-3 years long, and those who have finished these schools have the opportunity to practice a given trade independently.

¹⁶ SD na 8 ONS, 1 r. s., 35 zas., 9 dek. 1894 g., s. 116.

¹⁷ Nikolova 1986, 198-199. Nikolova notes that in the majority of the People’s Party in the 8 Ordinary National Assembly, only one representative is defined as a craftsman.

¹⁸ SD na 8 ONS, 1 r. s., 35 zas., 9 dek. 1894 g., s. 116.

¹⁹ SD na 8 ONS, 1 r. s., 41 zas., 16-17 dek. 1894 g., s. 447.

of Trade and Agriculture will draw up regulations for the organization of schools. At the meeting of the National Assembly on December 19 and 20, the draft law was adopted without discussion in the second and "as a matter of urgency" in the third reading²⁰. For Hr. Hinkov, the establishment of a craft school with four departments has the task of preparing Bulgarian craftsmen and teachers in "various crafts according to the requirements of the new times"²¹. According to V. Nikolova, the adoption of the Law on practical craft schools is a "positive moment" in the activities of the ruling People's Party in relation to crafts. D. Sazdov notes another aspect – the social significance of the law, as it aims to provide practical training in ironwork, carpentry, pottery, weaving and painting for Bulgarian youth in areas where these crafts are widely practiced²².

On October 28, 1898 at the end of the government of K. Stoilov, the Minister of Trade and Agriculture K. Velichkov submits a "Bill for Craft Education"²³. Not only the title, but also two-thirds of the performances are borrowed from the previous one, but there are many new details. The "Geshov" bill contains 30 articles, and that of K. Velichkov – 55. And this bill deals with state craft schools and model workshops. Provisions for vocational education cover 19 types of trades, such as tailoring, stonemasonry, sausage making, turning and tinsmithing. As in 1894 this project also regulates, but much more widely and in more detail, the educational process, which is under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce and Agriculture. It is prescribed that the students wear a uniform – "uniform clothing made of local material - shayak in winter and hemp cloth in summer"²⁴.

Unlike 1894 the 1898 project attempts to offer wider support to the private initiative in vocational training. Therefore, it is proposed to open private craft schools supported by district councils, municipalities, societies, girls' schools, etc. with the same curricula as the state ones. Another novelty is the possibility of granting scholarships for practicing a craft or obtaining a craft education in a "foreign country", provided that after returning the craft will be practiced for 2 years in Bulgaria. There is an aspiration for state stimulation of private craft training, as well as education abroad, to activate the initiative of the district standing committees and private companies to support the development of crafts. On the day of importation, October 28, 1898, the vocational training bill was passed in principle without discussion,

²⁰ SD na 8 ONS, 1 r. s., 42 zas., 17-18 dek. 1894 g. s. 561; 44 zas. 19-20 dek. 1894 g., s. 756-757; Dazhaven vestnik, br. 8, 11 yanuari 1895. (State Gazette, issue 8, January 11 1895).

²¹ Hinkov 1926, 44.

²² Nikolova 1990, 37; Sazdov 2008, 259.

²³ SD (Stenographic Diaries) na (of) 9 ONS (Ordinary People's Assembly), 3 r. s. (Third Regular Session), 6 zac. (Sixth sitting), 28 okt.(Oct.) 1898 g., s. (pp.), 66-69.

²⁴ SD na 9 ONS, 3 r. s., 6 zas. 28 okt. 1898 g. s. 67.

but did not become a law. After two and a half months, the government of K. Stoilov resigned.

The resolutions of the Plovdiv Agricultural-Industrial Council (September 1892) for the protection of the placement of craft production were preceded by two laws that have the same direction. At the end of 1883 the "Act for the Development of Native Industry" with "Temporary Additions" (1884) was voted, according to which all "guards, police, forest, customs, dispatchers" as well as "soldiers" should dress in "local woolen cloths (shayaks and abi)" and their shoes are supplied "from local leather works". In February 1892 the "Law on supplying the army with equipment, clothing, food and various other needs" was promulgated, which extended the preference for local products for the needs of the army, not only for its uniform, but also for its armament and food²⁵.

The protectionist line regarding craft production was continued by the government of K. Stoilov. In February 1897, the "Law on the compulsory wearing of local clothes and shoes" was adopted. By virtue of this law, all "state, municipal and district officials, and employees who receive salaries, as well as the MPs, are obliged to wear clothing and shoes of local manufacture during the performance of their duties"²⁶. Historians' assessments of the effect of the law are opposite. According to V. Nikolova, it aims to promote the development of the leather and textile industry, as well as to stop the process of the dissolution of the crafts. She believes that the law is the result of the naive belief that this is how a breakthrough can be made in the development of local production and the artisans can be saved. According to her, such acts have no "special effect"²⁷. D. Sazdov, who defined the law of 1897, has a different opinion as a "stimulator" for local artisans. It solves an important social issue – it provides work and patronage to dozens of craftsmen related to the production of clothes and shoes, which improves their material and social condition²⁸.

The government of K. Stoilov sought to stimulate the development of larger factory enterprises and at the end of 1894 the Domestic Industry Promotion Act passed, which took effect almost immediately. However, this is not the case with the adoption of the special law on handicrafts. The draft law on the organization of the guilds was introduced three times in the first reading in the parliament, and only on the third time it managed to become a law. The bill was first introduced on January 16, 1896 in 8 Ordinary National Assembly (ONA) by the managing Ministry of Trade and Agriculture, i.e. Iv. Ev. Geshov. In the plenary hall, several deputies propose that it be adopted immediately, but the National Assembly proceeds to the first reading and

²⁵ Pandov 1934, 11-13.

²⁶ Darzhaven vestnik, br. 58, 14 mart 1897.

²⁷ Nikolova 1990, 36.

²⁸ Sazdov 2008, 301-302.

short debates. The project has been met with sharp criticism from the opposition. According to the social democrat N. Gabrovsky the project brings back the old guild system from Turkish times. The decline of the crafts was not due to the destruction of the guild regulation, but to the fact that the craftsmen could not offer quality and cheap goods that could compete with the European ones. Nothing was foreseen to stimulate the modernization of the crafts²⁹. The other social democrat Ya. Sakazov believes that machine production destroyed the guilds and the idea of forcing the craftsman to join a guild to ensure his existence is an "illusion"³⁰. P. Karavelov, a liberal, suggests that artisans protect themselves through customs protection and credits. Strongly affected by Gabrovski's words that the bill sends the crafts to the Middle Ages, Iv. Ev. Geshov expresses his irritation. In fact, the internal organization of the associations is similar to the Ottoman guilds, but this is not the essential difference with the previous period. The same day, January 16, 1896 the draft law was adopted in principle at the first reading, but the 8th (The Eighth) National Assembly was prematurely dissolved³¹. For the second time, the draft law on the regulation of the guilds was proposed at the first regular session of the 9th (Ninth) National Assembly on February 12, 1897, but it too, after reporting, this time without debate, was accepted again only in the first reading³². The initiator of its re-importation is Yv. Ev. Geshov. However, he resigned from the office of K. Stoilov in August 1897. Eight months after his resignation, the bill was introduced for the third time in the Parliament on 7 November 1897 by the next Minister of Trade and Agriculture, K. Velichkov.

All three drafts have the same title "Bill for the regulation of guilds" and were introduced with the same motives, but despite the claims of some authors about their uniformity, there are certain differences between those introduced by Geshov and Velichkov. It is important to note that the "Geshov" bill (114 articles) applies not only to artisans but also to merchants. In the third submission, Art. 13 states: "A person who is deprived of political and civil rights and is not legally capable of disposing of his property cannot be a member of a guild association"³³. The final draft contains 10 chapters and 121 articles. The texts concern the purpose and organization of guild associations; the rights and obligations of persons who belong to the guild – students (apprentices), journeymen and masters; the functions of the collective governing body – the guild assembly; the duties of the members of the

²⁹ SD na 8 ONS, 2 r. s. (Second Regular Session), 48 zas. (sitting), 16 yan. (January) 1896 g., s. (pp.) 358-360.

³⁰ SD na 8 ONS, 2 r. s., 48 zas., 16 yan. 1896 g., s. 360-362.

³¹ Nikolova 1986, 198-199.

³² SD na 9 ONS, 1 r. s., 34 zas., 12 fev. 1897g., s. 501-509.

³³ SD na 8 ONS, 2 r. s., 48 zas., 16 yan. 1896, s. 350. In the 20s of the 20th century some artisans complain about the competition of artisan workshops to prisons.

operative management of the guild; guild unions; arbitration court; rights and obligations of artisans who came from abroad; transitional and final provisions. Supervision and punishments for artisans and guild associations are detailed³⁴.

On November 7, 1897 the draft law was reported by G. Gavrilo, member of the Parliamentary Commission for the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture³⁵. In the reasons it is mentioned that the project was sent to the country and for a year it was the subject of study by the craftsmen and the chambers of commerce. Already on the eve of the first submission of the Bill on the regulation of the guilds in the chambers of commerce and industry (public-state institutions that give opinions on the state of the various economic branches), the question of the reasons for the decline of the crafts is being discussed. The Chambers note a decline in the quality of craft production and the training of young personnel. They emphasize the idea that the artisans do not realize that it is necessary to make a collective effort to get out of the crisis³⁶.

According to the legislator, the final project has found “equal approval in the country and especially among the craftsmen”. The comparison between the stated approval and the requests of the chambers of commerce and industry, which deal with the project in detail, shows that their most important proposal was not taken into account. The Plovdiv Chamber of Commerce and Industry, supported by the Ruse Chamber, insists: “All movable and immovable properties that have been owned by the respective guilds, which the current law established, remain the inviolable property of the guilds that owned them”³⁷. The Chambers show sensitivity to the financial aspects of the project – fees, fines and state crediting of guild associations.

The draft law states that the “fragmentation and dispersion” of artisans make them “less powerful” due to the “disappearance of guild associations”. Therefore, the legislator decrees that guild associations are “formed” in the country. Every craftsman who wants to practice his craft independently is obliged to register in the “proper guild association” (art. 2), i.e. associations (guilds) are formed and membership in them (under fear of punishment) becomes mandatory³⁸. Craftsmen are given a period of one year to “establish themselves” in guild associations. The project further states: “Masters who practice the same trade or several related trades will form associations” (Article 7). “Where possible, masters of the same craft living in the same place

³⁴ SD na 9 ONS, 2 r. s., 12 zas., 7 noem. 1897 g., c. 240-249.

³⁵ Gancho Gavrilo, an entrepreneur, is a shareholder (with 15%) in the “Nameless Joint Stock Company for the Construction of the Varna Port”, registered on February 8, 1899. – Denkov 2024, 33.

³⁶ Veleva 2005, 154-155.

³⁷ TSDA (Central State Archive), f. 173K, op. 1, a.e. 833, l. 3.

³⁸ SD na 9 ONS, 2 r. s., 12 zas., 7 noem. 1897 g., s. 240.

and within the circle of a municipality should form a separate guild association for themselves. If it is not possible to form a "sufficient" guild association for each individual craft or for each city municipality, then: a) if in a municipality there is not a sufficient number of masters from one craft to form a separate guild association for themselves, masters from two or more related trades must come together and collectively form a guild association; b) if it is impossible to form a "reputable" guild association of craftsmen from one municipality, then craftsmen from several places or municipalities and if possible from one type, or if not, from several types of crafts, must gather and form a common association for themselves" (Article 8). Each association must consist of "at least 12 members" (Article 9)³⁹. With these provisions, the legislator shows an extreme, forcing the craftsmen in each municipality or several settlements of the same or even different trades (mixed associations) to necessarily form guild societies, something that is difficult to implement. Khinkov points to the reason for offering these productions. According to him, the artisans thought that through forced association they would be able to develop as it was before the Liberation, that they would protect themselves from the competition of large manufacturers, since thus forcibly associated they would better protect their common interests⁴⁰.

The Ministry of Trade and Agriculture is given great rights in relation to the organization and functioning of guild associations. The same associations are under the supervision of the Ministry and the financial authorities. It is planned to establish the position of "inspector of crafts and industry" at the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture, who will be entrusted with this supervision (Article 120). The Ministry has the right to allow to create guild associations also from trades not provided for in the law; formation of a guild association with less than 12 members; the separation of a homogeneous guild association from a larger mixed association (art. 4, 9, 11). In general, the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture monitors whether guild associations adhere to the law and has the right to suspend any action of a guild association that does not comply with it (Article 11, letter "b")⁴¹. It can intervene in the financial affairs of the guild association, and in the event of a lack of income, assist in taxing the members of the association with a "special tax" (Article 16, letter "I").

State control is also introduced through the so-called guild commissioners, defined as "direct state bodies through which direct supervision over guild associations is exercised" (Article 86). Although the guild commissioners were designated as financial inspectors, auditors of the guild coffers, their powers extended far beyond the realm of financial matters. Their decisions are not subject to review and approval by the Ministry of

³⁹ SD na 9 ONS, 2 r. s., 12 zas., 7 noem. 1897 g., s. 240.

⁴⁰ Hinkov 1926, 48-49.

⁴¹ SD na 9 ONS, 2 r. s., 12 zas., 7 noem. 1897 g., s. 241, 249.

Trade and Agriculture (Article 87). Obviously, these productions are very far from the self-management of the craft guilds during the Ottoman period and envisage active intervention of the state in the activities of the companies. D. Sazdov defines them as “direct control over the associations through the financial authorities and the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture”⁴². According to the project, associations are formed for the following crafts: 1. Tailoring with embroidery; 2. Shoemaking with cobblers; 3. Cooperage; 4. Quarring with building-trade and masonry; 5. Carpentry with turning and carving; 6. Upholstery and quilting; 7. Iron-smithery (blacksmiths, locksmiths, farriers, cutlers and shot-gunsmiths) with founding; 8. Saddlery and harness-making; 9. Rope walks and making of goat’s-hair rugs; 10. Millwork and priesthood; 11. Fur and hat making; 12. Goldsmithing and watchmaking; 13. Tannery; 14. Painting; 15. Coppersmithing; 16. Cycling; 17. Pottery and brickwork; 18. Tinsmithing; 19. Cockroach breeding; 20. Barbarianism⁴³. The legislator proposes the association of many types of crafts, some of which are in decline, but others still find a market. In the first half of the 90s of the 19th century, the crafts of (item 1), (item 7), (item 12), (item 15) (item 16) fell under the blows of European imports. Pottery is primitive (item 17). Coopers (item 3), carpenters (item 5) find customers. A characteristic craft for Transko is carpentry (item 4). In 1896-1897 the number of “migrant carpenters” is 3,612 people, but the tendency is to decrease the number of craftsmen at the expense of the increase of their assistants⁴⁴. The list for mandatory association includes trades that are promising, subject to modernization, but not listed as a priority. Such are modern tailoring (item 1), carpentry (furniture making), turning (item 5), foundry (item 18) and modern ironwork, which is in demand because it deals with repairs of imported appliances and machines. In accordance with the Resolutions of the Plovdiv Agricultural-Industrial Council of 1892, 16 trades recommended by the council were listed in the draft law of 1897.

The draft law burdens the craftsmen with costs. Apprentices and journeymen incur fees for registration with guild associations, for taking examinations and for obtaining certificates of completion of training; masters and journeymen are obliged to make monthly contributions to the guild treasury; the Grand Masters impose fines in cases of violation of the law. Forcible collection of revenues not collected by the members of the association by “government bodies” is also foreseen. The bill preserves the old

⁴² Sazdov 2008, 322.

⁴³ SD na 9 ONS, 2 r. s., 12 zas., 7 noem. 1897 g., s. 241. In the first and second submission of the project, 27 “crafts and trades” appear in the list. In the third, trade professions have been removed, which corresponds to the elimination of their association from the “Velichkov” project.

⁴⁴ Georgiev & Trifonov (compilers) 1994, 476-485, 487.

institution of the guild fund with its concern for assisting members of the association due to old age, illness, etc.

A number of duties fall to the masters. The project stipulates that every craftsman who wants to independently practice one of the trades in the list and those whom the current law has already defined as self-employed craftsmen, are obliged to register as members of the guild associations (Article 13). In order for someone to enroll in a guild association and thereby acquire the right to practice a craft independently, he must first of all be "recognized as a guild master" (Articles 60, 68). In order to join the association, the person recognized as a master pays fees (Article 64). If he does not pay them within a certain period, the exercise of his trade is suspended (Article 117). Anyone who independently practices a trade without holding a guild certificate is subject to a fine (Article 119, letters "b" and "c"). The draft law defines in detail the conditions of the apprenticeship, which takes place with a written agreement, the rights and obligations of the students. In addition to training in a trade, the student can, by arrangement, also perform the work of "domestic service". The draft stipulates in which cases the master may dismiss the student and in which cases the student may withdraw prematurely from his tutor.

According to the project, the journeyman is "free to start work where he wants", which is done with an agreement for a period fixed by the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture. Calvinist training is paid for by the master. The circumstances under which the master has the right to fire the journeyman and vice versa are described – the grounds on which the journeyman can leave the master (Article 57), as well as the requirements for obtaining a master's certificate (Article 61).

The draft law also covers the matter of the composition and functions of the two governing bodies of the associations – the guild meetings and the boards of directors. In the meetings, under certain conditions, all guild masters, members of non-guild associations sit and vote (Art. 74). The meeting reviews and approves the budget of the guild treasury, the benefits that are distributed to guild members, elects the board of directors and the members of the arbitration court, determines the training time of the apprentices and the wages of the journeymen, disposes of the properties of the guild association, etc. (Art. 84)⁴⁵. The Board of Trustees, which decides all other current matters, consists of five members headed by a Grand Master. His duties are described in detail and systematized in 13 points (Article 92). There is also a section for the guild treasury. The draft law regulates the relations of the participants in the labor process and their rights and obligations, which does not correspond to the practice of the unwritten rules until the Liberation.

A small section of the project deals with the so-called "Arbitration" court that "settles" disputes between members of the association regarding

⁴⁵ SD na 9 ONS, 2 r. s., 12 zas., 7 noem. 1897 g., s. 246.

wages, products, etc. (art. 103 – 108). The Court of Arbitration is a Western European institution for out-of-court settlement of disputes between members of the association.

The penultimate section of the bill is dedicated to craftsmen “from abroad”. In order to work in the country, foreigners are required a certificate of mastery (Art. 109), payment of annual fees for obtaining permits to practice the trade (Art. 113). This aims to put an end to “the invasions of the country by such suspicious persons, without a home and without a dwelling, who are accustomed to freely enter our fatherland and establish themselves as craftsmen, togas, when in their fatherland they would not have the right to any trade”⁴⁶. The productions suggest an aspiration to “legalize” the residence in the country of foreign craftsmen.

Finally, the draft states that the position of “crafts and industry inspector will be established at the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture, who will be entrusted with the supervision of guild associations” (Article 120)⁴⁷. It is also planned for the “adjustment” of the law for the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture to draw up a “special regulation”. According to one of the MPs who spoke in the debates, many of the detailed regulations in the project have a place in the regulations, and not in the actual text of the law.

In the discussion G. Konsulov and Hr. Gendovich (People’s Party) point out that the purpose of the law is to give the artisans the opportunity to pool their means and technical forces so that they can improve their work and obtain more favorable conditions. Minister K. Velichkov explains that through the association of guilds, the government aims to prepare centers (groups) to take the initiative for their own development⁴⁸. According to V. Neichov, the regulation cannot “uplift” the trades, but it deserves to be accepted because it is directed against people who “do not meet the requirements of a known trade”, but abuse the trust of customers. Gabrovsky repeats what was said in 1896 that the project aims to bring back the old guild system. His prediction is that the law will not be implemented and achieve its goal, not only because of the compulsion to unionize, but also because the trades are “doomed to fail”⁴⁹. As a representative of the Social Democratic Party, Gabrovsky defends the thesis that crafts will disappear under the blows of factory production. Deputies also pay attention to the social and labor aspects of the draft law – the master-apprentice relationship, the protection of child labor, the antagonism, in Gabrovski’s words, between apprentices, journeymen and masters. K. Velichkov points to the “making” of apprentices and journeymen “in complete dependence on the masters” as a drawback of the project, but nevertheless rejects the proposals that minors and illiterates should not

⁴⁶ Zlatarov 1902, 404-405.

⁴⁷ SD na 9 ONS, 2 r. s., 12 zas., 7 noem. 1897 g., s. 249.

⁴⁸ SD na 9 ONS, 2 r. s., 12 zas., 7 noem. 1897 g., s. 256 - 258.

⁴⁹ SD na 9 ONS, 2 r. s., 12 zas., 7 noem. 1897 g., s. 251.

become apprentices; The Ministry of Trade and Agriculture to determine the working hours of the students. Criticism also endures the composition of the examination boards, which, according to the opposition, have an interest in preventing apprentices and journeymen from becoming masters. However, the biggest dispute is caused by Art. 38, which prescribes that if the apprentice runs away before the expiration of the term of training agreed upon, the master shall have the right to require the police authorities to bring him back by force. Gabrovski, Hr. Teodorov, Konsulov declare to throw out this text with the argument that it violates personal and labor freedom, and Gendovich defends it. On November 7, 1897 the parliament adopts the bill in principle and sends it to the Parliamentary Committee for examination and reporting⁵⁰.

On December 4, 1897 the committee submits its changes to the project, which consists of 122 members, at the second reading in the plenary hall⁵¹. In the list of 20 trades, the commission adds two new ones "21) printing with bookbinding and 22) confectionery". The two additions were proposed by Sofia and Ruse Chambers of Commerce and Industry as early as January 1897 and were accepted. The Parliamentary Committee was particularly keen to state as the primary objective of the law "to raise and improve the craft and to place it in a position to meet modern needs"⁵². The rapporteur Gavrilov explained that the supplement would encourage the artisans' associations to give greater consideration to the improvement of crafts. The Parliament accepts what is declared, but a declaration alone cannot stimulate the development of crafts.

The Parliamentary Committee proposes four changes which relate to the rights of apprentices and journeymen. It is proposed that the duration of the training not only of the journeymen, but also of the apprentices, should be determined by the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture, and not as recorded in the project by agreement between the father of the apprentice, the master and the association. The motive of the commission is that "the guild association cannot impose excessively long apprenticeships, as this would amount to the exploitation of students, which is neither appropriate nor beneficial"⁵³. The commission also removes the proposal for paid training for apprentices. Both of the committee's amendments were accepted by the Parliament. On the surface, they better protect the rights of learners. At the second reading, the issue is raised of removing Art. 38, which requires the police to return runaway apprentices to their masters. The parliamentary commission wants

⁵⁰ SD na 9 ONS, 2 r. s., 12 zas., 7 noem. 1897 g., s. 259.

⁵¹ The composition of the Parliamentary Commission is: Gr. Naydenov, N. Marinov, Hr. Manafov, Penyu P. Krastev, G. Gavrilov, D. Stoyanov, K. Hadzhiyanev, Il. Sterbanov, Gavril B. Nenovich, Kostaki Peev, D. Yablanski, Riza Ibrahimov, Nestor Abadzhiev and Hr. Gendovich. - SD na 9 ONS, 2 r. s., 2 zas., 17 okt. 1897 g., s. 9.

⁵² SD na 9 ONS, 2 r. s., 28 zas., 4 dek. 1897 g., s. 367.

⁵³ SD na 9 ONS, 2 r. s., 28 zas., 4 dek. 1897 g., s. 370.

the text to remain, to serve as a “threat”. Hr. Teodorov, a progressive, and Hr. Slaveykov (Democratic Party) propose Art. 38 to be removed because it cannot produce effective results. Minister Velichkov agrees with the deputies and the National Assembly accepts their proposal. The meeting then adjourned for lack of a quorum, a fact indicative of insufficient interest in the bill. On December 5, 1897 Art. 83 is discussed concerning the project: “Journeyman have the right to send three of their elected representatives to each guild meeting, who in certain cases will present both requests and complaints on behalf of the journeymen. The journeymen sent to the meetings attend only as listeners without the right to participate in the debates”. The Parliamentary Commission crossed out “in certain cases” and “elected persons”, replacing them with “only if they have to submit requests and complaints” and “Journeyman will give explanations on requests and complaints without the right to vote”⁵⁴. Hr. Slaveykov (Democratic Party) does not approve of the new edition, which limits journeymen’s attendance rights only in case they have complaints and not to all meetings. Kraev and Gabrovski support Slaveykov. The representatives of the majority V. Dimchev and G. Yurukov (People’s Party) insist on the editorial of the Parliamentary Commission and the National Assembly accepts their proposal. The editorial narrows the possibilities of the journeymen to become familiar with the activities at the guild meetings.

An extensive discussion developed on the question of when to establish the position of “inspector of trades and industry”, who was entrusted with the supervision of guild associations. The proposal of the Parliamentary Committee is to create such a position “only when it is deemed necessary”. Gendovich, G. Yurukov, Hr. Slaveykov and K. Velichkov argue when the inspector should be appointed, immediately after the law comes into force or later. The National Assembly adopts the wording of the bill.

Gendovich suggests that immediately after the vote on the second reading, the assembly proceed to the third reading. His request is contrary to the rules of the National Assembly, which stipulates that the second and third readings should not take place on the same day. But the parliament accepts the draft law on the regulation of the guilds in the third reading as well⁵⁵. According to the next Minister of Trade and Agriculture, regulations for the implementation of the law have not been adopted.

The law on the regulation of guilds is assessed ambiguously. In the Report to King Ferdinand on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of his accession to the throne, the law is presented in a negative light. The obligations of the associations are outlined, along with the enforced merging of craftsmen from different professions and municipalities into common

⁵⁴ SD na 9 ONS, 2 r. s., 29 zas., 5 dek. 1897 g., s. 381.

⁵⁵ SD na 9 ONS, 2 r. s., 28 zas., 4 dek. 1897 g., s. 396-404; Darzhaven vestnik, br. 30, 9 fevr. 1898 g.

associations, created solely under administrative pressure. Many of the artisans saw in the forced associations an obstacle to the proper development of their crafts, protested to the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture against the law and wanted its cancellation⁵⁶. The assessment was made two years after the more successful Trades Organization and Assistance Act (1910), which abolished compulsory association. In 1929, K. Hristov added to these criticisms the observation that the compulsory requirement for a craftsman's certificate – obtained through examinations conducted by commissions of craftsmen whose interest lay in restricting new competitors in the “independent practice of the craft” – placed an additional burden on craftsmanship⁵⁷. D. Sazdov's assessment on the results of the Law on Guild Associations is nuanced. With it the government of K. Stoilov provides a large part of the population with a livelihood and a normal lifestyle for its time from a social point of view. But forced association is not welcomed equally by all artisans. “Administrative and financial authorities respond to refusals to join by imposing heavy fines. As a result of these government actions, Parliament and Chambers of Commerce and Industry have been inundated with complaints. Facing such great dissatisfaction, the 10th National Assembly repeals the Law on the Organization of Guilds”⁵⁸. At the time, some of the regulations of the law regulating craft production were also valid in European countries such as Germany and France. These are the following: specialized education, appearing before examination boards at the end of training; the requirement to present a document of legal capacity when starting work; membership in craft societies; control over the quality of the work of participants in the production process; determining the rights and obligations of those involved in production; financing arrangements and resolution of disputes. The office of K. Stoilov ended his rule with three laws, with which he tried to support the craft industry – one in the field of professional craft education, second a protectionist one for the production of clothing and third for the restoration and regulation of craft associations.

The next government of D. Grekov, which took power on January 18, 1899, was composed primarily of representatives of the Liberal (Radoslavist) Party. In the 10th National Assembly, it is supported by a majority of supporters of Radoslavov and Stambolov⁵⁹. The new administration revised many of the laws of the previous one. About a year and a half after the adoption of the law, on June 21, 1899, the MP – P. N. Daskalov, from the city of

⁵⁶ Doklad 1912, 417.

⁵⁷ Hristov 1929, 49.

⁵⁸ Sazdov 2008, 322-323.

⁵⁹ Zhivkov 2014, 54, 100.

Razgrad, made a proposal in the parliament to “repeal the Law on the Regulation of Guilds”. His initiative is supported by 48 MPs⁶⁰.

The reasons emphasize that the adopted Law on the Regulation of Guilds “did not in the least achieve the goal of uplifting the crafts, because it introduced measures not for the advancement of craftsmen and the improvement of the guilds, but for the mere formation of guild associations, which is not the same.” It is further noted that the law, “under the guise of fees from masters, journeymen, and apprentices, imposed a kind of new taxes” on artisans, who already struggled to pay “even their ordinary taxes to the state”; and that its provisions did not foster genuine association “for an obvious reason – the multitude of our guilds”⁶¹. Daskalov claims that protests against the law, “the most unpopular due to its shortcomings, which are rooted not only in its individual articles, but in the basis of the entire law”, have been filed from all the cities of Bulgaria. Therefore, he proposes to repeal the law⁶².

The discussion revolves around the question of whether the repeal should be accepted immediately or postponed until the next session of the National Assembly. V. Kanchov, a progressive, asks about the government’s position. In his response, the Minister of Trade and Agriculture Gr. Nachovich⁶³ says that some of the guilds responded “sympathetically” to the law because they thought that the old situation of apprentices being slaves to the masters would be renewed. The latter hoped to have 20-30 apprentices each, who for just one meal would serve them not only in their craft, but in all their works. Seeing, however, that the law gave more freedom either to the journeymen or to the apprentices, they turned against it. Of the applications received by the Ministry of Trade and Agriculture, 90% were against the law. Nachowicz does not support its immediate repeal, arguing that the decision should be postponed until October. In the meantime, he suggests it should not be applied, so that by then “something more carefully studied and more useful,” namely appropriate amendments, could be presented. At the same time, he mentions suspending the law, which shows his hesitation. But in the end, the minister states that he will comply with the will of the National Assembly⁶⁴. The oppositionist St. Danev, leader of the Progressive Liberal Party, is in favor of implementing the law until October, in order to see its shortcomings and only then to cancel it in whole or in part. Danev suggests

⁶⁰ Support the bill: Hr. D. Popov, V. Dochev, N. Vladikin, M. Makaveev, Dr. P. Gudev, Dr. L. Dragorov, K. Rankov, Dr. N. Genadiev, N. Hranov, M. Matakiev (Radoslavist), St. Kalenderov, Hr. Konkilev, Hr. Topuzanov, etc.

⁶¹ TSDA, f. 173K, op. 1, a.e. 1272, l. 1.

⁶² SD na 10 ONS, 1 i. s., 24 zas., 21 yuni, 1899 g., s. 84 - 85.

⁶³ In the government of D. Grekov Gr. Načovič describes himself as a conservative, unlike most of the other portfolios in the cabinet, which are occupied by Radoslavist liberals. – Zhivkov 2014, 100.

⁶⁴ SD na 10 ONS, 1 i. s., 24 zas., 21 yuni, 1899 g., s. 86.

that the craftsmen receive from the National Assembly encouragement in their associations with the aim of improving known crafts. Additional light on the meaning of this statement is shed by the Program of the Progressive-Liberal Party of 1899, which provides for the “organization of the guilds on the basis of forced association”⁶⁵. The opposite principle of voluntary associations is defended by P. Karavelov (Democratic Party) and Ts. C. Taslakov⁶⁶. N. Gabrovski wants the law to be repealed “entirely”. He is supported by Hr. Topuzanov, Hr. Konkilev (manufacturers), Z. Mitov, Vlaev. The Act to repeal the Guild Regulation Act was passed by a majority vote in three consecutive readings on the very day it was introduced, June 21, 1899⁶⁷.

The legislative framework of the trades remains up-to-date and for subsequent governments, that of St. Danev and Al. Malinov, who passed two other laws – the Law for the Organization of Crafts and Guild Associations (1903) and the Law for the Organization and Support of Crafts (1910).

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⁶⁵ Nikolova & Sazdov (compilers) 1992, 367.

⁶⁶ SD na 10 ONS, 1 i. s., 24 zas., 21 yuni, 1899 g. s. 85.

⁶⁷ SD na 10 ONS, 1 i. s., 24 zas., 21 yuni, 1899 g. s. 90; Darzhaven vestnik, br. 149, 14 yuli 1899 g.: Georgiev & Paraskevov & Ignatovski & Topalilov & Minkov & Todorov 2019, 354.

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New research on the development and encouragement of the Bulgarian industry

Biser Georgiev

Rumyana Parvanova. *Industriyata v Balgaria – nasarchenie i predpriyatiya (1894-1928)*, Faber, V. Tarnovo, 2021.

With few exceptions, topics related to economy do not gain great popularity among professional Bulgarian historians. This applies, especially, to the field of modern and contemporary Bulgarian history. On this basis, the publication of the above-mentioned monograph by Assoc. Prof. Rumyana Parvanova is a significant contribution. Until now, the state encouragement of Bulgarian industry in the period from the late 19th century to the 1930s has been studied rather in parts and published in individual articles or in pamphlets by non-professionals¹. Now, for the first time, a precise overview of this serious historical issue is presented to both readers and eminent researchers.

The monograph consists of introductory remarks, preface, three chapters with a total of 12 paragraphs, conclusion, bibliography and appendices. The main themes that the author traces are the legislative measures for the protection of Bulgarian industry that have been adopted and in force for more than four decades, the concrete achievements and problems in the most important industries, the continuity in state policy, the measures to restrict foreign capital, the relationship between Bulgarian business organizations, the state and municipal institutions, the discussions regarding legislative projects in the National Assemblies, the opinions of the major political parties, the proposals of professional business organizations and groups, benefits among the government officials, tax relief and other exemptions, industrial concessions, provisions for the enforcement of the laws, etc. The protection of workers' rights and the application of the Law in times of war and economic crises are also addressed. It can be said that the presented scholarly work covers almost all spheres of Bulgarian economy for a very long period and largely answers most of the questions posed.

The author's language and style are clear, making the book accessible to the general audience. It should also be noted that the sources used and the scholarly apparatus are of a very high standard. For the writing of the monograph, unpublished archival sources were used from eleven collections

¹ Here we will not list the specific titles that R. Parvanova has already presented thoroughly in her monograph.

and one individual collection (the memoirs of Stoycho Moshanov) preserved in the Central State Archives of Bulgaria, the Scientific Archives of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, and the Bulgarian Historical Archives at 'Sts. Cyril and Methodius' National Library. In addition, materials from nine newspapers and sixteen magazines from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the stenographic records of five National Assemblies, a considerable amount of published documentary material, contemporaries' recollections, reference works, and other sources were consulted. A small part of the documents is published in the 'Appendix' section, which makes this monograph even more attractive. There is a significant presence of professional scientific literature, which is in four languages, with an emphasis on Bulgarian publications. Here, along with research by prominent contemporary scholars, are publications by professionals from the distant past, such as Iv. Geshov, St. C. Bobchev, etc., as well as works by prominent economists. Some of them have been subjected to a 'more thorough reading'².

In chronological terms, the period of the research was well chosen. The initial point, the end of 1894, is marked by the decision of the Eighth Regular National Assembly to pass the first enacted Law for the Encouragement of Domestic Industry, with the final year being 1928³, by the last such law, which lasted until 1936. As the author points out, the encouragement acts, and especially their implementation, have so far not been the subject of a special comprehensive and detailed study for the entire period of their operation. This makes the work very relevant. Moreover, Parvanova notes that within the individual chapters⁴ she tries to explain why specific industries are subject to encouragement while others remain in the shadows⁵.

Already in the introduction R. Parvanova notes that one of the peculiarities of the historical development of industry in agrarian Bulgaria is the fact that in a long 35-year period (1894 - 1928) almost all branches developed under the protection of the state⁶. This observation, with which I fully agree, is further elaborated and defended by the author. Again, it is noted that the monograph focuses on the special laws for the development of industry, as well as on the means of so-called "administrative protectionism" (the term is coined by the author, B. G.) applied in the implementation of the legislation.

In the introductory remarks, preface and the first paragraph of Chapter One of the monograph, R. Parvanova traces the first steps towards

² See. e.g., Parvanova 2021, 12-13.

³ It was officially published in the State gazette on 22 January 1895.

⁴ The second chapter deserves special attention in this regard, where a special overview of the individual patronized industries is made.

⁵ Parvanova 2021, 19-20.

⁶ Parvanova 2021, 9.

establishing the idea of state patronage. There it is logically explained that the root cause of the absence of such an initiative was the lack of substantial Bulgarian capital, as well as the serious political instability during the first decade after the Liberation in 1878. Naturally, other authors long before her made similar conclusions, which is correctly pointed out. What is new now is that Parvanova links the “global” (often purely theoretical, B. G.) conclusions reached by other researchers with concrete steps taken by Bulgarian merchants and industrialists. She also explains the reasons for some unsuccessful attempts to patronize specific enterprises. She carefully traces the process of issuing certificates, as well as the motives for supplementing the law in 1897. She also successfully connects the beginning of state patronage with other actions of Konstantin Stoilov’s government – the December 1894 Railway Act for the Design and Construction of the Railway Network in Bulgaria (which also officially came into force in January 1895, B. G.) and the establishment, in June 1895, of the Four Chambers of Commerce and Industry. The author also makes a serious analysis of the reports of the first patronized enterprises on the capital invested by their owners, concluding that some of them invested less than 25,000 BGN, which was a violation of the Patronage Act.

Protectionist legislation for the period from 1905 (at the end of the first law) to the Balkan Wars is the main topic of the second paragraph of Chapter One. Here, the shared view in Bulgarian historiography of the 1980s is that the lucrative new trade treaties concluded with major European countries stimulated the development of domestic industry is also supplemented by the observation that the Bulgarian industrialists were already struggling to protect their interests. There is also a very thorough analysis of the parliamentary debates regarding the second Act for the encouragement of industry. Special attention is given to the terminology contained in the second Act, as well as the chapters that cover the obligations of entrepreneurs, penalties and transitional provisions. Particular emphasis is placed on the hesitations of some of the representatives of the largest opposition parties, who approve of what has been started in general terms but disagree with specific articles. Within the analysis of the second law some of the major differences with the first are also pointed out. On this basis, the author draws the conclusions that, while the 1894 Act can be called ‘the true patron of large-scale industry’⁷, the 1905 one follows the specific characteristics of the Bulgarian economy as regards the processing of agricultural products. In this regard, some of the lower requirements of the second Act for entrepreneurs are explained. As a corollary, the range of products whose production is subject to protection has expanded considerably. The beginning of labour protection as a condition for protection is also noted.

⁷ Parvanova 2021, 50.

In her analyses R. Parvanova also pays special attention to the reasons for the short-term effect of the second encouragement Act. As the main reason for its replacement by a new one in 1909 she announces the change of political power. No one can disagree that such a statement is quite correct, and the author proves it with facts. It would be good, however, to supplement what has been said with some conclusions of a purely political nature: despite the upward development of the economy and the foreign policy successes associated with the defense of Bulgarian independence, a number of negative phenomena seep into the domestic political scene under the idea of the opposition of “us” vs “them” (the opponents). Attempts to insult political opponents in any way, which the author points out on more than one occasion, and even to wipe out the leadership of some of the major parties in power, lead to a hardening of political mores and a distortion of the public’s perception of politicians, including those at the top. This also adversely affects some economic decisions. One of them, as Parvanova points out is that the Democrats declared the second protection Act as “an anachronism” and at the same time copied it to some extent in theirs. This addendum, of course, does not detract from the author’s substantial efforts to compare the 1905 Act with the 1909 Act, nor from her detailed analysis of the latter, including its parliamentary debates⁸ and implementation.

The third paragraph of Chapter One is devoted to postwar protectionism. It begins with brief statistics⁹ on the number and potential of patronized industries for the period 1910–1921. The researcher shows that 29% of all 1,544 industrial enterprises were patronized, accounting for 60% of all money (about 2.5 billion BGN) invested in industry. Her attention then turns to the issues surrounding the post-war economic crisis and the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union’s policy of protectionism. Within several pages, the author addresses certain gaps in Bulgarian historiography concerning the protectionist policy of Al. Stambolyiski’s government. Parvanova’s main thesis is that the agricultural government did not actively pursue a protectionist policy and did not make changes to the 1909 Act because it had not yet expired.

One of the main tasks of the third paragraph, addressed toward its conclusion, is to analyze the motives of Prof. Al. Tsankov’s government regarding the patronage law. Here, the ‘significant discrepancy between the earlier protectionist laws and the Tsankov government’s draft’ in the area of tax allowances is highlighted. This policy is declared impossible to implement in terms of the fiscus. R. Parvanova explains this by the desire of the cabinet

⁸ A small correction is in order: Ivan Hadzhiev, who opposes the bill, is a Liberal representative, not a Democratic one. He is one of the Liberal theorists. See, e.g. Hadzhiev 1906.

⁹ Part of it was extracted from the Bulgarian Historical Archive and has not been published until now, which is a contribution of the author.

to win over the manufacturers at the expense of the interests of the state. Some other differences with the previous protection legislation are also noted¹⁰.

The most voluminous and substantial part of the monograph is the preparation and implementation of the Fourth Act for the Promotion of Local Industry. Two of the three chapters, Chapters Two and Three, are devoted to it, which clearly shows where the author's attention is directed.

Chapter Two begins with a very brief exposition of the controversy in the historiography concerning the reasons for the delay in submitting Tsankov's project to the National Assembly. Parvanova defends the thesis that the continuation of the Democrats' law was due to the disapproval of the chairman of the parliamentary majority - Andrei Lyapchev, with some points of the draft of the Minister of Agriculture and State Estates, Dimitar Hristov. Immediately afterwards, a presentation of the protectionist policy of Lyapchev's government began. Moreover, the Prime Minister's own motives and statements on the changes of the European and world economy are presented in detail.

The bill for a new law for the encouragement of local industry was not presented to the National Assembly until 11 November 1927. R. Parvanova, drawing primarily on previously unpublished documents, subjects it to a thorough analysis, with particular emphasis on the new objectives: the legislator's intention to promote the creation of larger enterprises and their transition to the 'tariff regime'.

The bill proposed by the new Minister of Agriculture and State Estates does not take stock of what has been achieved so far and offers no account of the future benefits of the law. This has caused dissatisfaction among MPs and forced Tsvyatko Boboshevski to present a number of concrete figures. The latter allow Parvanova to make a more serious analysis of the successes of the laws so far, now on individual industrial items. It covers more than 90 pages. It presents the development of the food and beverage industry, the textile and leather goods industry, the mining and chemical industries, the electricity industry, etc. In the limited length of this publication, it is practically impossible to present all the conclusions¹¹ drawn by the author. We will only point out that it also pays special attention to the parliamentary discussions accompanying the various phases of the adoption of the draft. Much space is also devoted to the work of the parliamentary committee, the demands of professional business organizations, etc. Similarly, the stenographic logs of the Twenty-second Regular National Assembly, dozens of archival documents,

¹⁰ Parvanova 2021, 82.

¹¹ A summary was made by Parvanova herself in Paragraph 1 of the Third Chapter, dedicated to the benefits and practical application of the facilitations for the period 1894-1927,. Parvanova 2021, 226-233.

some memoirs, newspaper and magazine publications of the period, as well as published research by fellow historians are used in detail.

The third chapter is devoted specifically to the major provisions of the 1928 Domestic Industries Promotion Act. It traces in turn the discussions surrounding tax exemptions, industrial concessions and the provisions surrounding the implementation of the Act, workers' rights including their participation in the profits of enterprises, and other lesser issues. The application of the law in the context of the 1929–1933 economic crisis is also addressed.

The conclusion offers readers some important broader outcomes. First of all, it is noted that in terms of protectionism Bulgaria is learning from foreign experience, including that of neighbouring Balkan countries. The legislator's tendency towards a gradual but slight limitation of facilitation is noted. The existing inconsistency in the implementation of laws due to the interests of the fiscus and the failure to take into account the serious economic changes, especially after World War I, is pointed out. The growth of encouraged companies over a period of about 35 years is presented. A rough list of the most iconic encouraged businesses and industries is also provided. It is prominently featured that the general view of patronage is not investment but the necessity of the state making "sacrifices" in the name of progress. On this basis, the author considers the different views of the political parties and the definition of protectionism by some of them as a way to divide the society between the rich and the poor. At the same time, the enduring and close linkage between state and municipal structures and patronised enterprises is demonstrated. However, it is not quite correct to identify particular parties as the most consistent advocates of protectionism. Rather, it is more correct to say that the various political parties support different industrial branches. After all, nowadays, it is a well-known fact that for the most part the membership of the parties is petty-bourgeois in character and only the elites have some differences.

In a very broad overview, the monograph by Assoc. Prof. R. Parvanova should be defined as valuable and very useful for future researchers. It fills certain gaps in the Bulgarian historiography and poses questions that have found an unambiguous answer.

Parvanova, R. (2021) *Industriyata v Balgaria – nasarchenie i predpriyatiya (1894-1928)* (V. Tarnovo).

Hadzhiev, Iv. (1906) *Obyasneniya i talkuvaniya kam programata na Liberalnata partiya* (Sofia).

Contributors to the volume:

Alexander Stankov, PhD

University “Prof. d-r Assen
Zlatarov” – Burgas
BG – 8000 Bourgas
al_stankov@yahoo.com

**Angyal Anikó, PhD, Senior
Research Associate**

HUN-REN Institute for Nuclear
Research
(HUN-REN ATOMKI), P.O Box 51,
Debrecen 4001,
Hungary
angyal.aniko@atomki.hu

**Prof. Dr. Habil. Biser Georgiev,
PhD**

Shumen University
115 Universitetska Str.
BG – 9700 Shumen
b.georgiev@shu.bg

**Boglárka Dönczö, PhD,
Research Associate**

HUN-REN Institute for Nuclear
Research
(HUN-REN ATOMKI), P.O Box 51,
Debrecen 4001,
Hungary
d.boglarka@atomki.hu

**Enikő Furu, PhD, Research
Associate**

HUN-REN Institute for Nuclear
Research
(HUN-REN ATOMKI), P.O Box 51,
Debrecen 4001,
Hungary
furu.eniko@atomki.hu

**Assoc. Prof. Galya Yordanova,
PhD**

Shumen University
115 Universitetska Str.
BG – 9700 Shumen
g.iordanova@shu.bg

**Prof. Dr. Habil. Ivelin Ivanov,
PhD**

University of Veliko Tarnovo
2 Teodosii Tarnovski Str.
BG – 5003 Veliko Tarnovo
ivoar@abv.bg

**Assoc. Prof. Konstantin
Konstantinov, PhD**

Shumen University
115 Universitetska Str.
BG – 9700 Shumen
k.konstantinov@shu.bg

**Prof. Dr. Habil. Krassimir
Krastev, PhD**

Shumen University
115 Universitetska Str.
BG – 9700 Shumen
k.krustev@shu.bg

Lilia Lukova

University “Prof. d-r Assen
Zlatarov” – Burgas
BG – 8000 Bourgas

Assoc. Prof. Milica Radišić, PhD

Institute of Archaeology,
Kneza Michaila 35/IV
Belgrade 11000,
Serbia
mveselicic@gmail.com

Assoc. Prof. Nina Arhangelova, PhD
Shumen University
115 Universitetska Str.
BG – 9700 Shumen
n.arhangelova@shu.bg

Prof. Dr. Ömer Solak
Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart
University, Faculty of Education,
Çanakkale, Turkey
omersolak@yahoo.com

Prof. Dr. Rositsa Angelova, PhD
Shumen University
115 Universitetska Str.
BG – 9700 Shumen
r.angelova@shu.bg

Assoc. Prof. Roumiana Parvanova, PhD
Institute for historical researches –
BAS
Shiptchenski Prohod“ Blvd, No. 52,
block 17
Sofia 1113,
Bulgaria
parvanova.r@abv.bg

Prof. Dr. Habil. Stela Doncheva, PhD
Shumen University
115 Universitetska Str.
BG – 9700 Shumen
s.doncheva@shu.bg

Assoc. Prof. Todor Todorov, PhD
Shumen University
115 Universitetska Str.
BG – 9700 Shumen
t.todorov@shu.bg

Vladimir Bekov, PhD
Regionalen Istoricheski Muzey -
Razgrad
BG - Razgrad, 70"Aprilsko
Vastanie" Blvd..

Professor Zhenya Zhekova, PhD
Keeper of Coins and Seals
Collections
Regional historical museum,
Shumen
17 Slavjanski Blvd. 9700 Shumen
Bulgaria
zhenya.zhekova@yahoo.com