

Roman coins out of time: the transformation of values

The reuse of Roman coins in medieval cemeteries in the territory of Serbia (AD 400 –
1400)

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Gordana Ćirić

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1. Gutachter/-in: Prof. Dr. Fleur Kemmers
 2. Gutachter/-in: Prof. Dr. Hans Peter Hahn
 3. Gutachter/-in: Prof. Dr. Sebastian Brather
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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Subject, questions and the research aims

Throughout numerous excavations of medieval necropoles across Europe, Roman coins were found as grave goods. One of the oldest and probably the most famous example is the tomb of Childeric I (457 – 481). It was discovered in 1653 during renovation work in the church of Saint-Brice in Tournai. Among numerous objects, about 100 *solidi* in a purse and 200 *denarii* from the 2nd century were found there. Shortly afterwards the objects were studied by Jean-Jacques Chifflet, a physician and an antiquarian.¹ Even though almost all of this grave furniture was lost over the course of history, archaeologists never stopped discussing the meaning of these coins and the motivation of their deposition. Especially intriguing was their chronological “incoherence” with the other objects from the grave. Therefore, from antiquarian times, the question of how people socially incorporated objects incoherent with their usual material culture has been present in archaeology. Further examples of the reuse of Roman coins as well as other objects from the Roman period were identified in many early and late medieval graves of England,² Switzerland³ and Italy⁴ and have continued to generate more debates on this issue. Two main interpretations of this phenomenon, developed over years of studying examples from mainly Anglo-Saxon contexts,⁵ were summarized in a noteworthy contribution by Eckardt and Williams.⁶ In the first, the emphasis is on “practical” reasoning (such as recycling) at the hand of new users. In the second, the main drive for this practice is seen as some kind of belief in magical qualities of these objects. What is common to both approaches is that different ways of handling these objects resulted from a process of their (re)valuation.

This research investigates precisely this transformation of values ascribed to Roman coins by exploring the (re)uses of Roman coins (2nd – 4th century) in medieval funeral practices (5th – 15th century) in the territory of present-day Serbia. Although the examples from this area are neither as lavish as those from the famous tomb of Childeric, nor familiar to the international archaeological community, I strongly believe that the study of these examples

¹ Chifflet 1655

² Coock and Dacre 1985; Down and Welch 1990

³ Frey-Kupper 2008, 222 – 226

⁴ Travaini 2004, 159 – 181

⁵ King 1988, 224 – 229

⁶ Eckardt and Williams 2003, 141 – 170

will significantly contribute to a better understanding of the transformation of values and offer a new perspective on this phenomenon observed in almost all territories that were once part of the Roman Empire. Since Roman coin finds in these graves are scarce, but do appear in cemeteries up to the 14th / 15th century⁷ and are mostly base metal denominations of the 3rd and 4th centuries, no immediate understanding of their value as being of an intrinsic character is possible. Rather, their symbolic and representative character is investigated.

Coins by their "nature" belong to the category of things that are understood as tokens of a certain value and they are very portable objects. Without going any deeper, for the moment, into the complexities of ancient coinage, its origin, character and modes of operating,⁸ there is no doubt that in order to term some piece of metal a coin, the presence of an authoritative stamp is unavoidable. By marking, the authority is guaranteeing the weight and value of a coin.⁹ Most certainly, it is questionable what makes this value. Usually, the debate is on whether the coin's value is embedded in the metal content or whether it is nominal.¹⁰ The dispute is most intensive in cases of precious metal coinage, while for the base metal denominations scholars generally agree on their value as more of a nominal nature.¹¹ Nevertheless, even if we accept that the value depends solely on the inherent quality of the substance (gold or silver) from which it is coined, somehow this value has to be transformed into a nominal value, i.e. one *aureus* or one *denarius*. Therefore, a coin is first of all a representation of a value. This combination of properties, the ability for easy handling and to signify, enables coins to appear in various contexts. Being tokens of some specific value they are used as a means of exchange and payment. This is possible only if the actors share the same or compatible notion on relationships between value and equivalent. The archaeological record has shown that coinage can be found in diverse types of sites, such as markets, households, cemeteries, shrines, etc. The variety of locations expands also in spatial terms. Roman coins have been found in regions as distant as India and Sri Lanka.¹²

⁷ For example, at Porečka Reka: Minić 1984c, 295

⁸ Kraay 1964, 76 – 91; von Reden 2010

⁹ von Reden 2010, 5

¹⁰ For recent thoughts on this subject, see Strobel 2004, 207 – 221

¹¹ Whiting 1971

¹² Turner 1989; Harl 1996, 305

However, the final deposition of Roman coins in later, medieval, graves implies a more diverse and extended usage of these coins than their initial purpose intended. This could be seen, among other explanations as a consequence of different comprehensions of value in the widest sense. In attempting to understand the basic concepts of all societies, such as value and equivalence and furthermore how they change, these coins are taken as crucial signs for that, but also as partakers to some extent in the establishment or change of these concepts. Cases such as this enable us to explore how the same object has alternated meanings; depending on the social rules of the community and on the position of the individual within that society who was handling them.

Since the topic encompasses a wide range of issues, the main challenge is in bringing them together through a successful combination of the methodological capacities available in the study of material culture with the current theoretical debate on values of things. Central questions raised in this research concern the relationship between objects, values and people. Speaking in more general terms, the research explores how and why established and confirmed values assigned to an object in one society are changed through its use in another cultural entity. More specifically, this is observed through the alteration of the value of Roman coins in their primary context to the one created in the time of their deposition in the grave. In other words, this research is about how social rules constructed through everyday practice in the Roman World "made" the *value* of a coin and how this same coin did or did not gain *another value* under a different set of norms.

I will question this by focusing on the coin use habits in the Roman provinces covering the territory of modern-day Serbia. This includes parts of Moesia Superior and Pannonia Inferior, and later Moesia Prima, Pannonia Secunda, Dacia Ripensis and Dardania. Furthermore, I will follow how these habits changed after the collapse of the Empire and how Roman coins were revaluated by the social groups of the subsequent medieval period in the same region – in groups traditionally interpreted as parts of the Germanic, Avar and South Slavic populations. These issues are discussed in three central chapters (IV, V and VI).

In terms of methodology, this research attempts to unite the specific methods of different fields in the study of material culture. This is necessary in view of the heterogeneous types of objects gathered in the grave assemblages. Firstly, as the transformation of values is observed primarily through the different uses of Roman coins, a traditional numismatic

analysis presents a starting point. That is, identifying types as accurately as possible and comparing them with circulation patterns both at the time of their issue as well as at the time of burial. For the interpretation of the value of these coins in their primary (Roman) context the most problematic issue is that the volume of data is actually very limited and the numismatic attribution is questionable due to being worn out. The number of coins (117) for any considerable monetary or economic analysis is more than insufficient. An additional difficulty is the atypical context of these finds. Usual contexts considered in coin studies are either hoard depositions or well-identified contexts of single finds (for example floor, post-hole, etc.). However, as the coin types found in the medieval graves coincide with the common types that were circulating in this region during the Roman period, it is considered that they are relics of the larger and more diverse coin pool existing at the time, on which enough numismatic evidence exists. Therefore, the coins are considered more in a way of a *pars pro toto*. Given that they originate from different periods of the Roman Imperial coinage – Principate, including the issues from the 3rd-century crisis and Dominate – I will elaborate on some basic trends in the use of coins in that time.

Subsequently, since the crucial indicator of the transformation of values for these coins is actually the context of their final deposition, the medieval grave, a standard archaeological survey, as is necessary in the research of any necropolis, will be carried out. I will examine different factors affecting the outcome of the funeral practice: the construction of the grave, orientation, body arrangement, grave goods and cemetery organization. This can reveal much about the social ranking and structure of the group buried in it. Often there is a relationship between the role and rank of the deceased during life and the manner in which the remains are disposed of and accompanied by artefacts. Certainly, it is taken into account that what is buried with the deceased person is not simply the exact equivalent either of status or material goods owned or used during life. Therefore, coins are considered inseparably from their association with other objects and remains of a deceased in a single grave and how this grave is positioned in the necropolis as a whole.

In order to understand how these material remains reflect a process of transformation of value, we come to the point where social theories on value are of great importance. Relatively recently, one of the most widely debated and largely recognized concepts in archaeology has been the idea of *object biography*.¹³ For this research, the concept of

¹³ Kopytoff 1986, 64 – 91

cultural biography of things corresponds very much with the topic. Examples of coins from a Roman cultural and historical background found in the context of a medieval grave offering, sometimes even shaped into a pendant, indicate that they have gone through different points of understanding, valuation and handling over the course of their “lives”; going in and out of different social spheres. However, in spite of its appealing potential for this research, the concept is re-examined and in instances where it was insufficient in the interpretation, other possible and compatible approaches will be developed. Besides Kopytoff’s notion of object biography, other similar, sequential, views on the production, usage and discard of material culture, such as the studies of formative processes in archaeology, will be questioned.¹⁴ The concept of *chaine operateire* usually goes hand in hand with the studies of formation processes, very favourable among the pre-historians who study the technologies of past societies, especially lithic and pottery production.¹⁵ Through both of these approaches archaeologists try to establish and reconstruct the sequence of events that preceded and affected the creation of an archaeological find – whether a single artefact or the whole site.

Another important set of theories on the character of premodern economies and the role of coinage in them recur throughout this study as an undercurrent, as the material really cannot contribute to solving this everlasting debate, though similar concerns emerged through this research. The key question whether ancient Greece and Rome had economic systems that could be identified with a market economy, known as the primitivist / modernist debate, was started by the German scholars Meyer and Bücher in the early 20th century¹⁶ and became widely known through Finley’s famous work *The Ancient Economy*.¹⁷ In contrast to the modernist standpoint of Mayer, Bücher argued that the naturalist-positivist quest to discover trans-historical laws of social behaviour should be rejected and emphasised instead the uniqueness of the historical moment, the variability of economic systems, the determining role of ethics and the necessity of the inductive method. For Mayer, economic institutions of all ancient civilizations resembled modern capitalism and were governed by similar forces. Finley’s notion of the ancient economy was mostly related, apart from leaning on the Bücher and Mayer controversy, to the studies of Polanyi, who, as maybe the most famous representative of the primitivists, argued that

¹⁴ Schiffer 1996

¹⁵ Schlanger 2005, 25 – 31

¹⁶ For more see Finley (ed.) 1979; Wagner-Hasel 2011; Dale 2013, 138

¹⁷ Finley 1985 [1973]

the economy was embedded in the societal cosmos of any pre-industrial society.¹⁸ The ancient social and economic systems were not to be separated and stood in constant mutual dependence. Therefore modern notions of an economy regulated only by market laws of supply and demand are not applicable to these societies. Despite the continuing arguments in support of both models, this matter is still open.¹⁹ In this research, I will devote special attention to the differences in the economic matters and coinage systems of the Roman Empire and subsequent medieval states that developed after its collapse. Although there are perhaps no essential differences between the classical and medieval economies, if we accept Polanyi's view, most certainly the degrees of their sophistication varied throughout this long period. Precisely these variations are crucial for perceiving the changed value of coins in the research rather than the essential differences in the economic systems of Roman and medieval communities.

Finally, the perception of the past and its material remains in the pre-Renaissance societies are crucial for the understanding of the changed valuation of these coins. Research on the perception and reuse of classical heritage is most common in Art History, and it is often known as the study of *spolia*. These are mostly about the incorporation of architectural fragments of classical buildings in later structures, usually concentrating on a small set of monuments mainly from the Italian peninsula. The reuse of Roman coins as grave offerings in the Middle Ages is quite different from building ancient marble into medieval edifices, but recent examinations of *spolia* in the wider social context are most certainly helpful.²⁰ Very often, the medieval cemeteries included in the research were formed on the remains of Roman forts, towns or necropoles. They were embedded in a fairly well-preserved "Roman landscape", because the biggest devastation of Roman sites started only with the modernization of Serbia in the late 19th and beginning of the 20th century. Additionally, Roman coins were not the only objects reused; the same applies to bricks and marble slabs.²¹ Hence, the concept of spoliation has to be taken into consideration, particularly how the reuse of Roman material remains was organized and managed within the social structure of the medieval community.

¹⁸ For recent critical reconsideration of Polanyi's work see Dale 2013

¹⁹ In favor of the market model, see Temin 2001, 169 – 181; in favor of Finley's notion of ancient economy, see Hopper 1979, 18 – 21; Starr 1977, 23 – 25; Crawford 1970, 40 – 48

²⁰ Brilliant and Kinney (eds.) 2011

²¹ Minić 1970, 233 – 247; Parović – Pešikan 1981, 179 – 191

1.2 Geographical and chronological framework

As already mentioned, Roman coins appear as grave goods in medieval cemeteries throughout the entire European continent. In this research, the focus lies on the examples from medieval graves in the area of present-day Serbia. Though it is noted in the archaeological literature of Serbia, this phenomenon has never been much discussed as a distinctive subject. On the other hand, this topic has been present for some time in the archaeology of other European countries. The outcomes of these studies could give some constructive insight and a possibility for comparative studies with cases from Serbia and are therefore incorporated in the research as well.

The territory of present-day Serbia is located in the southeastern part of the European continent. It consists of parts of the Pannonian plain in the north and the Balkan Peninsula in the south. A natural border between these two parts is the flow of the Sava River and, after it joins with the Danube in Belgrade, the course of the Danube up to Banatska Palanka. The northern part (Vojvodina) is entirely located within the Central European Pannonian Plain and is divided into three parts: Srem, Bačka and Banat. All of them are divided by three rivers (Sava, Danube and Tisza). The Srem area is situated between the Sava and Danube rivers and the border with Croatia, Bačka spreads between the Danube and Tisza and the borders of Croatia and Hungary, and Banat is encircled by the Tisza and Danube rivers and the Romanian border. The southern section of Serbia is part of the central Balkan region which includes, apart from Serbia, eastern Bosnia, Kosovo, Montenegro and northern Macedonia. This area is mainly mountainous terrain where four large mountain systems cross. The Dinaric Alps in the west cover the greatest part, while parts of the Carpathian Mountains, the Balkan Mountain and the Rhodope system stretch across eastern Serbia. One large plain along the course of the Great Morava River and its tributaries dominates this landscape.

Over the course of history, the territory of modern Serbia was inhabited by various cultures. To some extent, these different geographical sections corresponded to the boundaries of distinctive archaeological cultures that were present in these areas in different periods in the past. The medieval necropolises included in the research are located in both geographical sections of Serbia. In the north, they are mainly situated in the Srem area, but a few examples also originate from Bačka and Banat. Within the central Balkan

region, excavated necropoles are located mostly along the courses of the Danube and the Great Morava rivers.

Although the limitation of an archaeological study with the present political boundaries is a problematic issue, it is believed to be appropriate for the purposes of this research. After the Roman conquest at the beginning of the 1st century AD, the present-day area of Srem and most of central Serbia were parts of the provinces Pannonia Inferior (later Pannonia II) and Moesia Superior (later Moesia I, Dacia Ripensis and Dardania). At the same time, large sections, such as modern Bačka and Banat, were never conquered and were Barbaricum. The border between these “two worlds” was along the Danube. In the medieval period a variety of social groups or some partial units, which are traditionally interpreted as tribes – Germanic, Avar, Slavic, Hungarian, etc. – were present here. Surely, these groups did not limit their presence only to the territory of modern Serbia, but were present in the territory of neighbouring countries (Hungary, Croatia, Bosnia, Bulgaria). Hence, this diversity enables a comparison in handling practices of Roman coins traceable through funerary customs in all of these communities. This is thought to contribute more to the subject than focusing on the changed evaluation of these coins in just one particular culture or only in one phase of the medieval period.

The chronological framework of the research is actually determined by two different timelines. The first one is established by the period of use of medieval necropoles, while the other follows the emission dates of the Roman coins found in them (Fig. 1).

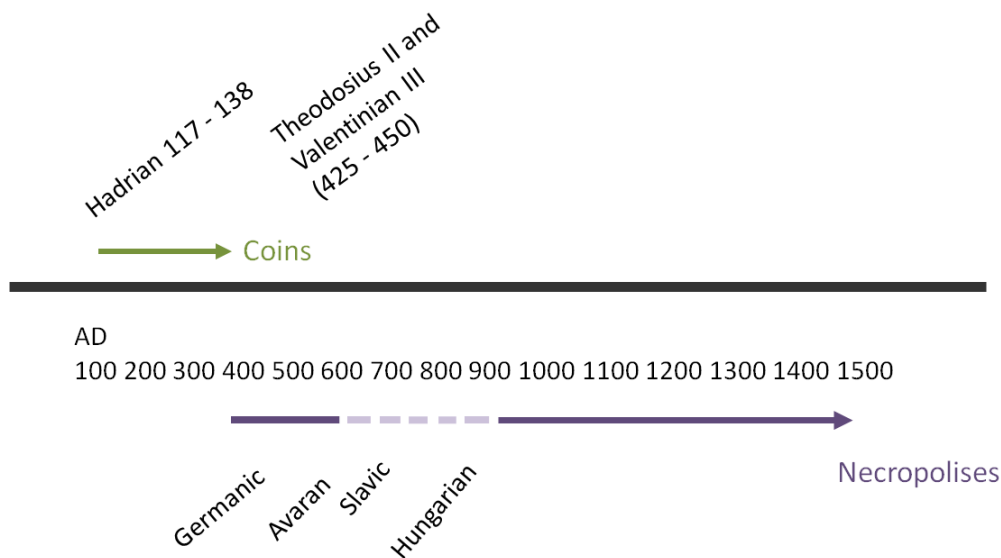


Fig. 1: Chronological framework of the research

Concerning necropolises, the case studies have been chosen from within a period that corresponds to the traditional historical periodization of the Middle Ages – from the 4th / 5th to the 14th / 15th centuries. We can roughly divide this period into two groups: necropolises belonging to the period of transition from Late Antiquity to the early medieval period (c. 5th – 7th), and those from the high and late medieval periods (c. 10th – 15th). In general, the chronology of the necropolises is accepted as scholars suggested in their publications on these sites or as found in the documentation of museums and the Archaeological Institute in Belgrade if the site was not published. For the group of early medieval necropolises, and especially for those from the end of the 4th and the early 5th centuries to the end of the 6th century, the chronology established by Ivanišević for the sites Singidunum II – IV, Viminiacium – Burdelj and Viminacium – Više Grobalja is important.²² Other case studies belonging to this early medieval period are Sirmium site 3 – “Germanic grave” (the end of the 5th / early 6th centuries),²³ Sirmium site 5 (5th century),²⁴ Subotica – unknown site (early 6th century)²⁵ and Kormadin – Jakovo (mid-6th century).²⁶ A slightly later necropolis is

²² Bjelajac and Ivanišević 1991, 123 – 139; Ivanišević and Kazanski 2002, 101 – 157; 2007, 113 – 135; Ivanišević, Kazanski and Mastykova 2006, 119 – 127

²³ Milošević 1994, 13

²⁴ Milošević 1994, 14

²⁵ Dimitrijević, Kovačević and Vinski 1962, 61

²⁶ Dimitrijević 1960, 31

Aradac – Mečka (second half of the 6th and early 7th centuries).²⁷ Afterwards, from the late 7th until the early 10th centuries a “Dark Age” follows, from which we have very poor written and archaeological sources, and accordingly there are no cemeteries with the reuse of Roman coins.

Chronologically, the next included case study is the cemetery at the Ravna – Slog site (9th / 10th centuries), which could be determined as the transition from the early to the high medieval period.²⁸ Three necropolises from the sites Bogojevo III (Bačka), Pesača and Pontes – Early Medieval Necropolis II (Iron Gate area) are dated to the turn of the 10th to the 11th century.²⁹ The rest of the cemeteries mostly consist of sites dated to the period from the 11th / 12th centuries to the 14th / 15th centuries. Necropolises dated to the period from the 11th to the end of the 12th centuries are Sirmium site 4 (Srem), Popovac (central Serbia) and Niš – Glasija (southern Serbia).³⁰ A younger starting date of use, the 12th century, and also later ending date, middle and late 13th century, is attributed to the necropolises Omoljica (Banat), Brestovik (near Belgrade), Konopljara (central Serbia), Niš – Sv. Pantelejmon (south Serbia).³¹ Several necropolises were in use for quite a long time and they are sites with complex stratigraphy. These are Mačvanska Mitrovica (10th – 15th century), Vrcalova Vodenica (10th – 15th century), Mirijevo (11th – 15th century), Vinča (8th – 17th century) and Trnjane (11th – 14th century).³² However, for this research only archaeological layers with graves where Roman coins were found are of most importance.

Some new revisions of the periodization of late medieval necropolises in the Serbian area of the lower Danube indicate more precise dates for the few necropolises included in this research.³³ According to these revisions, the cemetery at Veliki Gradac, formerly dated from the last decades of the 11th century to the end of the 13th century,³⁴ has now been determined to have been in use from the suggested date, but not longer than the middle of the 12th century or some 10 – 20 years thereafter.³⁵ Furthermore, corrections of the

²⁷ Nađ 1959, 67

²⁸ Petković *et. al.* 2005, 238 – 242

²⁹ Stanojev 1989, 6; Minić 1984a, 175; Garašanin, Vasić and Marjanović-Vujović 1984, 47

³⁰ Parović-Pešikan 1981, 184; Milošević 1959, 117 – 120; Ercegović-Pavlović 1977, 93

³¹ Đorđević and Đorđević 2007, 15; Ćorović-Ljubinković 1958, 326; Berić 2001, 114; Korać 2001/2002, 103 – 145; Crnoglavac and Čerškov 2011, 135

³² Ercegović-Pavlović 1980, 66 – 67; Minić 1995, 291; Marjanović-Vujović 1984a; 1984b, 131 – 136

³³ Radičević 2007, 87 – 102; 2008, 197 – 212

³⁴ Minić 1970, 247

³⁵ Radičević 2007, 87 – 102

chronology for the necropoles at Ljubičevac and Brza Palanka were made in shifting the beginning date from the 12th century for Ljubičevac³⁶ and the end of the 12th century for Brza Palanka³⁷ to the second quarter of the 13th century.³⁸ The upper date – the end of the 14th century – remains uncorrected with the possibility that the cemetery in Brza Palanka was in partial use even until the beginning of the 16th century. One of the latest dated necropoles is from the site Porečka Reka. It was surely used from the middle of the 14th to the middle of the 15th century, but there are some indications for an even longer period of use, namely the early 16th century.³⁹

The chronology of the coins found in these cemeteries, they cover the period from the 2nd to the end of the 4th century. The earliest Roman coin is from the time of Hadrian (117 – 138) and it was found at Burdelj – Viminacium (g. 24),⁴⁰ while the latest example is from the first half of the 5th century, a conjoint issue of Theodosius II and Valentinian III (425 – 450) found at Brestovik (g. 65).⁴¹ Most of the coins are from the 4th century with issues of Constantine I (324 – 337) and his family being the most represented, followed by issues of Valens (364 – 378) and Valentinianus I (364 – 375). The coins from the 3rd century are less frequent and include issues of Alexander Severus (222 – 235), Philippus (244 – 249), Galienus (260 – 268), Claudius Gothicus (268 – 270) and Tacitus (275 – 276). In contrast, coins from the 2nd and the early 5th centuries are very rare.

1.3 History of previous research

Since the subject of usage of Roman coins in the funeral practices of the medieval period was never discussed as a separate subject, the history of previous research is presented in two segments. It covers the chronology of excavations and research of medieval necropoles⁴² included in this research, and gives a short overview of the history of coin studies in Serbia. In a later chapter a possible explanation for this situation is considered by

³⁶ Parović-Pešikan 1984, 139

³⁷ Ercegović-Pavlović 1967, 150

³⁸ Radičević 2008, 197 – 212

³⁹ Minić 1984c, 295

⁴⁰ Zotović 1980, 110; Ivanišević, Kazanski and Mastykova 2006, 144

⁴¹ The information was given by the courtesy of S. Fidanovski, curator of the medieval collection of the National Museum in Belgrade.

⁴² On the history of research of medieval necropoles in Serbia until the middle of the 1980s see Marjanović-Vujović 1985a, 105 – 113; 1986, 191 – 209

examining the relationships between the disciplines of archaeology and numismatics as well as differences in various fields of study in archaeology itself.

1.3.1 History of research of medieval necropolises

The earliest excavated necropolis included in this research is from Bogojevo III (Bačka). It was explored between 1898 and 1901 by Cziráky.⁴³ The early 20th century could be seen as the beginning of investigation of medieval necropolises south of the Sava and Danube. During his preparations for the excavations of the site Vinča – Belo Brdo between 1905 and 1911, M. Vasić immediately recognized that there were some medieval artefacts among the prehistoric material gathered through acquisitions. He attributed those finds as “ancient Serbian”. Unfortunately, throughout the course of the systematic archaeological excavations of Vinča (1911 – 1912), the medieval necropolis was totally neglected and just summary references to these graves were published in *Journals* (diaries) of the excavations. The necropolis at Vinča had to wait until the year 1978 when a special *Board for scientific research of Vinča* was established. In the following years 1978 – 1981 and in 1983 the medieval necropolis at this site was finally excavated with appropriate archaeological methodology under supervision of G. Marjanović-Vujović. However, the results of these excavations still have not been completely published and preparations for an extensive monograph are in progress. Another example from quite old excavations is an accidental find of a grave assemblage from the early 6th century that was found in an unknown location in Subotica in 1929.⁴⁴

A second phase in the research and excavations of medieval necropolises started after World War II and most of the examples included in this research originate from these excavations. One of the first necropolises excavated right after WWII is from the site Dubravica – Orašje in 1947 – 1949. Excavations were carried out by Đ. Mano-Zisi, R. Marić and M. Garašanin and renewed in 1989 and 1990 by M. Cunjak and A. Jovanović. For this research, the 1947 excavation of the necropolis in trench III is of importance. In 1951 the National Museum in Belgrade organized archaeological excavations of the severely destroyed necropolis in Popovac (central Serbia). Around the same time, in 1952, D. Petrović conducted research at Doničko Brdo (Kragujevac, central Serbia) where part of a larger necropolis was excavated. One Avar necropolis at the site Aradac – Mečka (Banat)

⁴³ Cziráky 1900, 257 – 267

⁴⁴ Dimitrijević, Kovačević and Vinski 1962, 61

was excavated on several occasions from 1951 to 1955 by the Museum of Vojvodina and the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments. During the construction of the Belgrade – Smederevo road in 1953, in the section through Brestovik, a large medieval necropolis (887 graves) was found and it was excavated until 1959 under the supervision of M. Ćorović-Ljubinković. However, this necropolis, just as the one from the site Vinča, has not yet been fully published. In contrast, the medieval necropolis in Mirijevo (part of Belgrade) was excavated in 1955 and 1958 – 1959 and completely published in 1960 by M. Bajalović-Birtašević. In the late 1950s several further early medieval necropoles were found at the site Kormadin – Jakovo (1956 – 1958) and in the very centre of Sremska Mitrovica (Sirmium) at Sirmium Site 3 and Site 5 (in 1958 and 1959).

Preparations for the construction of the hydroelectric dam Iron Gate I provided a good opportunity for major protective excavations of archaeological sites in this area. One of the first was the excavation of the necropolis at Brza Palanka in 1964 conducted by S. Ercegović-Pavlović. At the site Veliki Gradac near Donji Milanovac archaeological campaigns were conducted in 1958, 1960 – 1962 and 1965 before excavations of considerable extent were undertaken in 1966. Between 1967 and 1969, D. Minić excavated necropoles on the sites Porečka Reka and Pesača. Around the same time important medieval necropoles were excavated in other regions of Serbia, too. In Niš, around the church of Sv. Pantelejmon, one medieval necropolis was investigated in 1966 and 1969. New research of this site started in 2002 and lasted until 2005. The results of this research are expected to be published very soon, but by the courtesy of curator V. Crnoglavac, of the National Museum in Niš, I was granted access to the Roman coins and information on their context. In Srem, an extensive necropolis with a long use period from Roman times until the 15th century was discovered in Mačvanska Mitrovica. Excavations were carried out in 1966 – 1970 under the supervision of S. Ercegović-Pavlović. The same archaeologist also excavated a necropolis in Niš at the site Glasija in 1975. After a considerable pause, the National Museum in Belgrade organized systematic excavations of the necropolis in Trnjane near Požarevac from 1976 to 1978 that were managed by G. Marjanović-Vujović. In nearby Kostolac, during the excavations of the large Roman necropoles of Viminacium, two early medieval cemeteries were explored at the sites Burdelj and Više Grobalja in several campaigns between 1977 and 1980 and again in 1984 and 1985.

Continuation of the works on the hydro plant at the Iron Gate generated additional archaeological excavations. In 1979 several medieval necropolises were discovered at the site Pontes – Trajan's Bridge through the research of G. Marjanović-Vujović. Also in Ljubičevac at the site Glamija, M. Parović-Pešikan excavated one necropolis and in 1980 another section of the necropolis in Brza Palanka was explored. During the construction of the highway in Srem, a medieval necropolis with a church was excavated under the supervision of D. Minić at the site Vrcalova Vodenica in 1983. Later in the period from 1991 to 1993, three early medieval necropolises were excavated by the Archaeological Institute in the very city centre of Belgrade, located on the fringes of the Belgrade fortress. These projects were conducted by Lj. Bjelajac and V. Ivanišević. In 1994, 1995 and 1996 the multi-layered archaeological site Konopljara near Kruševac with one medieval necropolis was investigated. At the same time (1995 and 1996) at the site Ravna – Slog, a vast necropolis from the Roman and medieval periods was excavated by S. Jovanović and M. Vuksan. The most recently excavated and published necropolises that are included in this research are Singidunum IV and Omoljica – Preko Slatine, which were explored in 2005 and 2006. Singidunum IV is an early medieval necropolis located near the Belgrade fortress that was studied by V. Ivanišević. The other, at Omoljica near Pančevo, is from the later medieval period and was explored by a group of archaeologists, J. Đorđević, V. Đorđević and D. Radičević.

1.3.2 History of numismatic research in Serbia

The first mention of the establishment of state supervision and record keeping over old coins found in Serbia dates to 1820. It mentions coins, most probably Roman ones, unearthed at the site Grad in the vicinity of Požarevac (Viminacium). Beside this, it also notes penalties for unauthorized excavations and defines compensation rates for finders.⁴⁵ At the same time this reference marks the beginning of the formation of the numismatic collection of the National Museum in Belgrade – the oldest collection of coins systematically collected and studied in Serbia.

The foundation of the National Museum in Belgrade in 1844 through its Founding Act recommended to all officials and teachers to collect old coins and other objects for the National Museum. Very soon, different artefacts started to arrive at the museum, amongst

⁴⁵ Borić-Brešković and Popović 2006, 12

which old coins were the most numerous. One of the most important coin collectors from this early period was J. Šafarik, who donated his collection of 886 pieces to the museum in 1847. Until very recently the document listing the coins from this collection was thought to be the first inventory of the whole numismatic collection of the National Museum, but in fact new archivist research showed that it is just an inventory of this particular collection.⁴⁶ Other important donations were made in 1864 by L. Mušicki and the Serbian Literary Society. Only after the introduction of a general inventory in 1871 for all museum collections, the inflow of coins to the museum was better documented.⁴⁷ However, these records were often very general and poor in data on the circumstances of finds.

Beside the collection of the National Museum, another important numismatic collection for the beginning of the coin studies in these areas started to be built up in the City Museum of Vršac (Banat). In fact, the finds of three hoards of bronze coins from the 4th century, found in the vicinity of Vršac, were the main argument for its foundation in 1882. While not a specialist in numismatics, Felix Milleker, the first curator and in a way the founder of this museum, collected and noted all coin acquisitions.⁴⁸ In spite of generally poor record keeping in these early times of Serbian numismatics and many interruptions in studies, particularly through the two World Wars, the pioneer efforts of the first collectors established a basis for further development of numismatics.

Changes in approach with a more elaborated documentation and collection of coinage, preferably from scientific excavations, occurred after World War II. Also in 1956 two very important actions marked the history of numismatics: one of the two most important collections from the 19th century, the Weifert Collection, was transferred from Belgrade University to the National Museum and the Serbian Numismatic Society was founded with Dr. B. Bajić as its first president. The Weifert Collection was the result of many years of work by three members of this well-known family from Pančevo. Hugo Weifert, a beer producer, began to systematically accumulate coins around 1878. After his death it was subsequently enlarged by his father Ignjat Mihailo, the owner of the mine in Kostolac near the famous site Viminacium. Later Đorđe Weifert, brother of Hugo, continued their work. The collector's work of this industrialist, founder and governor of the National Bank of Serbia, and a member of the Vienna Numismatic Society was interrupted by World War I.

⁴⁶ Eremić 2008, 453 – 462

⁴⁷ Borić-Brešković and Popović 2006, 13

⁴⁸ Medaković 2008, 30

In 1923 the collection was bequeathed to Belgrade University. The greatest value of the collection, which contains over 14,000 specimens from all periods, lies in its vast quantity of ancient, and particularly rare and valuable Roman coins, mostly collected from the territory of Serbia.⁴⁹

One of the most important achievements of the Serbian Numismatic Society, among the many activities it has and continues to carry out, occurred in 1978 when in collaboration with the National Museum in Belgrade, the yearly scientific journal *Numizmatičar* (Numismatist) from 1934/5 was re-issued. Since then, the most important research papers of various experts, covering subjects from the beginnings of coinage and print money until today, have been published in this journal. The works of several important numismatists and archaeologists of the second half of the 20th century are crucial for this research. P. Popović for pre-Roman, Celtic and Roman Republican coins in the territory of Serbia was indispensable, as was B. Borić-Brešković's research on 1st and 2nd-century coin circulation. The research of M. Arsenijević was a key contribution on the monetary affairs of the 3rd century and coin circulation in the area around Viminacium. For the Srem area and Sirmium the articles and publications of V. Dautova-Ruševljan present a basis for further inquiries. M. Vasić established foundations for the study of coinage of the Late Empire. The studies of early Byzantine monetary affairs were founded with the work V. Popović and D. Gaj-Popović, and continued with the work V. Ivanišević who is also a great specialist on medieval coins, especially for Serbian medieval issues. His work with V. Radić is one of the most important contributions to medieval numismatics.

⁴⁹ Borić-Brešković and Popović 2006, 24

II. ROMAN COINS IN MEDIEVAL NECROPOLES IN SERBIA

Up to date a number of medieval necropoles revealing finds of secondarily-used Roman coins have been discovered in the territory of modern Serbia (Map 1). The following chapter presents a summarized review of the material from the 36 medieval sites used as a basis for this study.⁵⁰ In these necropoles, 83 graves containing a total of 117 Roman coins were found. It should be also taken into consideration that data for two sites provide a possibility for a greater number of graves. Namely, we have indications that four more graves at the site Mirijevo contained Roman coins and that there were two more at the site Brza Palanka.⁵¹ In spite of obvious quantitative and qualitative limitations, I believe that these finds still provide a bulk of data which could be used as a starting point in accessing the problems of this research, particularly in light of this subject having been neglected within the Serbian archaeological tradition.

2.1 Regional distribution of the case studies

In terms of the regional distribution of the sites, the necropoles are situated in the eight regions of Serbia: Srem, Bačka, Banat, Belgrade and vicinity, Požarevac and vicinity, Central and South Serbia, East Serbia and in the Iron Gate area (Table 1).

Table 1: Regional distribution of case studies

Region	Former part of the Roman Empire	No. of necropoles	Necropoles: AD 400 -700	Necropoles: AD 900-1400	No. of graves with R. coins	No. of Roman coins
Srem (A)	Pannonia Inferior (Sirmium)	6	2	4	10	14

⁵⁰ The detailed review of case studies included in the research with all bibliographical information is presented in Appendix I (pp. 230) in which there is a brief description for each site on the location, research history, type of structures and objects recovered as well as on chronological identification of the graveyard; a description of the grave containing Roman coins with information on the sex, age, grave construction and other grave goods found in the burial is also presented.

⁵¹ See Appendix I pp. 259, 300

Bačka (B)	Barbaricum	2	1	1	2	3
Banat (C)	Barbaricum	2	1	1	5	5
Belgrade and vicinity (D)	Moesia Superior, Moesia Prima (Singidunum)	8	4	4	22	44
Požarevac and vicinity (E)	Moesia Superior, Moesia Prima (Viminacium)	4	2	2	9	12
Central and South Serbia (F)	Moesia Superior, Moesia Prima, Dardania, Dacia (Naissus)	6	1	5	23	24
East Serbia (G)	Moesia Superior, Moesia Prima, Dacia	1		1	1	1
Iron Gate (H)	Moesia Superior, Moesia Prima, Dacia	7	1	6	11	14

Such distribution pattern of finds is the result of various different factors. Firstly, it should be noted that the absence of finds from the western part of Serbia is most probably due to the poor level of the research and excavations done in this area in general. Therefore, this absence does not reflect that the practice of leaving Roman coins in graves was not performed in this area during the medieval period. Concerning the even concentration of medieval necropoles in the regions of Srem, Belgrade, Požarevac, Central and South Serbia and Iron Gate, this is again a result of the level of research conducted in these areas. In Srem, Belgrade, Požarevac and Central and South Serbia, extensive archaeological research has been done due to the important archaeological sites in these areas, mainly from the Roman period (such as Sirmum, Singidunum, Viminacium and Naissus). As mentioned previously, the region of the Iron Gate was extensively excavated and investigated due to the construction of the Danube hydro plant and dam. A small number of finds in the regions of Banat and Bačka are most probably the result of a combination of factors. On one hand, these regions were a part of the Barbaricum in the past and not under the control of the Roman state; therefore there is the possibility that the absence of Roman material remains affected the opportunities the medieval people in these regions had to scavenge such material culture, in contrast to the medieval populations who lived

surrounded by Roman ruins. All of the sites in Bačka and Banat, though in the Barbaricum, are actually on the borderline, that is, in the proximity of the former Roman territories and later Roman ruins. On the other hand, the research interests of scholars in the past probably had a significant impact on the level of detection of the phenomenon. It is particularly important to be aware of this for the region of Bačka and Banat in the period of the Avars. If we compare the data from neighbouring Hungary for the period from the late 6th to the end of the 8th century, we will notice that the occurrence of Roman coins in cemeteries of Avar dominance is more than frequent. Therefore, it seems that the absence of medieval graves with Roman coins in these regions is also most likely a result of the Serbian archaeologists not having recognized this practice.⁵² Concerning the dating of the necropolises, there are 12 cemeteries from the early medieval period (AD 400 – 700) and 24 cemeteries dated in the full and High Middle Ages (AD 900 – 1500).

2.2 Main features of the case studies

The following Table 2 presents the main features of all of the case studies in terms of their regional positioning, chronology, closer dating of the graves with Roman coins within the cemetery, relation of the necropolis with Roman remains if any were detected, ratio of the number of graves with Roman coins and the total number of graves in the cemetery and the time difference between the coins' issue and deposition date.

Table 2: Main features of the case studies

Site	R (C no)	D1 (D2)	RC	N1	N2	N3	T
Singidunum II	D (11)	AD 375-600 (400-600)	castrum	15	1	1	90
Singidunum III	D (12)	AD 375-600 (430-510)	settlement	106	9	12	50-230
Viminacium V. G.	E (21)	AD 375-600 (430-560)	cemetery	106	4	5	200-300
Singidunum IV	D (13)	AD 450	settlement	3	1	4	50-300
Vajuga	H (34)	AD 400-500	-	20	1	2	50
Sirmium 5	A (2)	AD 400-500	villa	7	1	1	100
Sirmium 3	A (1)	AD 450-550	villa	1	1	2	100

⁵² This issue is discussed in greater detail in chapter V pp. 130

Viminacium B.	E (20)	AD 400-550 (430-480)	settlement	45	2	2	100-200
Niš-Medijana	F (26)	AD 400-600	villa	56	1	1	50-150?
Subotica	B (7)	AD 500-600	-	1	1	1	150
Kormadin- Jakovo	D (14)	AD 500-600	-	26	1	1	250
Aradac- Mečka	C (9)	AD 550-700	-	98	4	4	200-250
Ravna Slog	G (29)	AD 800-1000	cemetery	65	1	1	400-600
Bogojevo III	B (8)	AD 800-1000	-	40	1	2	400-600
Sirmium 66	A (4)	AD 900-1100	hippodrome	?	1	1	400-600
Pesača	H (30)	AD 900-1100	speculum	11	2	2	750-950
Pontes	H (33)	AD 900-1100	pontes	15	1	1	500-700
Vinča-B. Brdo	D (16)	AD 700-1600 (1000-1200)	-	1000	4	4	650-850
Niš-Glasija	F (27)	AD 1000-1200	settlement	77	3	3	600-800
Mačvanska Mitrovica- Zidine	A (5)	AD 900-1400 (1000-1200)	cemetery	159	2+1?	2+4 (?)	800-1000
Vrcalova Vodenica	A (6)	AD 1000-1500	-	267	1	1	630-1130
Sirmium 4	A (3)	AD 1000-1200	settlement	33	3	3	660-860
Brestovik- Čair	D (18)	AD 1000-1300	-	?	1	1	620-920
Veliki Gradac	H (31)	AD 1000-1300	castrum	105	4	5	600-900
Popovac	F (24)	AD 1000-1300	-	30	1	2	600-900
Trnjane	E (22)	AD 1000-1300 (1100-1200)	-	379	2	3	700-800
Mirijevo	D (15)	AD 1000-1400	-	160	1	1	600-1000
Omoljica	C (10)	AD 1150-1250	-	158	1	1	750-850
Brestovik- V.R.	D (17)	AD 1150-1250	-	888	4	20	700-1000
Konopljara	F (25)	AD 1150-1250	vicus	126	3	3	750-800
Niš-Sv. P.	F (28)	AD 1150-1300	cemetery	244	13	13	850-1000
Doničko Brdo	F (23)	AD 1100-1400	castrum	40	2	2	700-1000
Ljubičevac	H (35)	AD 1150-1400	castrum	7	1	1	800-1050

Brza Palanka	H (36)	AD 1200-1400	thermae	57	1	1	800-1050
Porečka Reka	H (32)	AD 1350-1500	castrum	37	1	2	950-110
Dubravica	E (19)	AD 1400-1600	settlement	7	1	2	1000-1200
Total: 36					83	117	50-1200

R- Region; C no.- Catalogue number in the appendix; D1- dating of the medieval necropolis; D2- closer dating of the graves with Roman coins; RC-Roman context, if detected on the medieval necropolis; N1- total number of graves excavated at the necropolis; N2- number of graves with Roman coins; N3- number of Roman coins; T- time difference in years between the dates of the issue and deposition of the Roman coins.

Based on the type of the Roman site on which the medieval cemetery was erected, I have divided the case studies into three groups:

Roman settlement: Singidunum III⁵³, Singidunum IV⁵⁴, Viminacium – Burdelj⁵⁵ Sirmium 3 and 5⁵⁶, Niš – Medijana, Sirmium 4⁵⁷, Sirmium 66, Konopljara⁵⁸, Niš – Glasija⁵⁹, Brza Palanka⁶⁰

Roman fortification: Singidunum II⁶¹, Doničko-Brdo⁶², Pesača⁶³, Veliki Gradac⁶⁴, Porečka Reka⁶⁵, Pontes⁶⁶, Ljubičevac – Glamija⁶⁷

Roman necropolis: Viminacium – Više Grobalja⁶⁸, Ravna – Slog⁶⁹, Mačvanska Mitrovica – Zidine⁷⁰

⁵³ Ivanišević and Kazanski 2002, 103

⁵⁴ Ivanišević and Kazanski 2007, 113

⁵⁵ Zotović 1980, 95, 107

⁵⁶ Milošević 1994, 13 – 14

⁵⁷ Parović-Pešikan 1981, 179, 185

⁵⁸ Berić 2001, 109; Rašković 2001, 89

⁵⁹ Ercegović-Pavlović 1977, 83, 93

⁶⁰ Ercegović-Pavlović 1967, 143

⁶¹ Bjelajac and Ivanišević 1991, 123, 136 – 137

⁶² Petrović 1963, 277 – 279

⁶³ Minić 1984a, 173, 175

⁶⁴ Minić 1970, 233, 247

⁶⁵ Minić 1984c, 293, 295

⁶⁶ Garašanin, Vasić and Marjanović-Vujović 1984, 25, 44 – 47

⁶⁷ Parović-Pešikan 1984, 137, 139

⁶⁸ Ivanišević, Kazanski, and Mastykova 2006, 10, 119 – 127

⁶⁹ Petković et al. 2005

⁷⁰ Ercegović-Pavlović 1980, 12 – 18

The ruins of Roman forts and towns probably dominated the landscape for many centuries after they were deserted, as large-scale destruction of Roman sites started only with the modernization of these areas in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The work of the early explorers of this region in the 18th and throughout the 19th centuries showed an abundance of visible Roman antiquities that could not be imagined today. Surely in medieval times such remains existed in even greater intensity. In these antiquarian descriptions, most attention is given to the Roman remains along the Danube at the Iron Gate, where a great density of monuments is testament to the massive construction programmes conducted during the reigns of the emperors Domitian and Trajan. Key works on the state of Roman remains in Serbia in the 18th and 19th centuries were compiled by Count Marsigli (1726), engineer Bela de Gonda (1896), who also summarized the observations of previous explorers,⁷¹ and Felix Kanitz – the most famous 19th-century explorer of the Balkans.⁷²

As we can see, different Roman structures were reused as burial sites during the medieval period. Sometimes the cemeteries were dug into parts of the previous civic or military areas, so there is no continuity in the usage of a cult place. Yet, in the cases of Niš – Sv. Pantelejmon, Viminacium – Burdelj, Ravna – Slog and Mačvanska Mitrovica, the medieval cemeteries developed in the same locations as the previous Roman necropolises. This could be an indication of reconnection in terms of respect for the same sacral space for burial purposes. Usually, this could be explained with the presence of an Early Christian basilica or martyrion, which is the case in the Mačvanska Mitrovica and Niš – Sv. Pantelejmon cemeteries. However, this should not be understood as meaning that the new users connected with a previous sacral place only in the context of a mutual Christian tradition, since there are also examples of reuses of prehistoric tumuli for medieval burials. At the site Bela Crkva, mound I, nineteen medieval graves were dug into a Bronze Age tumulus.⁷³ Therefore, the connection with and respect for such places by the medieval populations could be understood in a more general sense, while visual elements, such as dominance over the landscape, probably were as important factors as the religious practice in whose context they were constructed. The reuse of Roman coins and other Roman objects very often coincides with the reuse of “Roman spaces”, but there are also examples where we have finds of Roman artefacts, even though the medieval cemetery itself is not

⁷¹ Petrović 2003, 71 – 95

⁷² Kanitz 1868

⁷³ Garašanin and Garašanin 1958, 26, 33 – 36, 46

situated on a Roman site. In a few cases, medieval necropolises are in areas of the former Barbaricum or directly on the frontier (Bogojevo, Subotica, Aradac, Omoljica). Sometimes, even if they are within the former Roman territories, the Roman sites are not in the immediate surroundings, but are relatively close or the existence of a Roman period site could be assumed in the vicinity (Kormadin – Jakovo, Mirijevo, Vinča – Belo Brdo, Brestovik – Visoka Ravan, Tranjane, Popovac).

The rest of the data in Table 2 immediately imply that the practice of leaving Roman coins in medieval graves was, although continuous, a rare occurrence. In the vast majority of the case studies finds of Roman coins were detected in less than 10% of the graves. Only in cases where few graves were excavated is the percentage greater, but this should be understood as the result of insufficient recovery of the medieval necropolis. All medieval cemeteries in which more than 20 graves were excavated had less than 5% of the graves containing secondarily-used Roman coins and necropolises where more than 100 graves were discovered had less than 1% of the graves with Roman coins. In terms of the time difference between the date of the coins' issue and the moment of deposition in the grave, it varies from 50 to 1200 years. In the group of the early medieval cemeteries the time span is from 50 to 300 years, but on average around 150 to 200 years. In the group of the later medieval cemeteries the time difference is on average between 500 and 1000 years. However, in order to better understand the rarity and other aspects of the phenomenon, another set of data should be also taken in to account. The following two tables (3 and 4) present data on the age and sex of the deceased, as well as the amount of Roman coins and other grave goods found in the grave. Apart from this, the tables present the ways in which these specific graves relate to other graves within the necropolis in terms of the total number of graves excavated, number of graves with grave goods and the number of medieval (contemporary) coins found in the cemetery. The sites are divided into two tables (early medieval and later medieval cemeteries) for clearer presentation.

Table 3: Main features of the cemeteries and graves with Roman coins AD 400 – 700

Site	G no./A/S	Grave context	N1	N2	N3	N4	N5
Singidunum II	G15/adult/?	1 R. coin + 5 more objects	15	3	1	1	-
Singidunum III	G2/ 30 y./F	2 R. coins + 3 more objects	106	58	9	12	-
	G6/ 20 y./M?	2 R. coins + 13 more objects					

	G10/ 30-50y./?	2 R. coins + 1 more object					
	G43/ adult/?	1 R. coin and no other objects					
	G55/?/?	1 R. coin + 6 more objects					
	G71/adult/?	1 R. coin and no other objects					
	G73/ 30.40 y./F	1 R. coin + 2 more objects					
	G71/adult/?	1 R. coin + 4 more objects					
	G89/?/?	1 R. coin + 1 more object					
Viminacium V. G.	G141/45 y./M	1 R. coin + 7 more objects	106	79	4	5	-
	G1193/adult/?	2 R. coins + 7 more objects					
	G1292/juvenile/?	1 R. coin + 1 more object					
	G1311/adult/?	1 R. coin + 2 more objects					
Singidunum IV	G2-2006/adult/M	4 R. coins + 45 more objects	3	2	1	4	-
Vajuga	G18/juvenile/F	2 R. coins + 8 more objects	20	?	1	2	?
Sirmium 3	GG/adult/F?	2 R. coins + 4 more objects	1	1	1	2	-
Sirmium 5	G4/?/?	1 R. coin and no other objects	7	?	1	1	-
Viminacium B.	G24/adult/?	1 R. coin + 8 more objects	43	31	2	2	-
	G52/adult/?	1 R. coin + 2 more objects					
Niš-Medijana	G35/40 y./M	1 R. coin + 2 more objects	56	?	1	1	-
Subotica	G?/?/?	1 R. coin + 4 more objects*	1	1	1	1	-
Kormadin- Jakovo	G7/adult/M	1 R. coin + 4 more objects	26	24	1	1	1**
Aradac-Mečka	G18/adult/M	1 R. coin + 22 more objects	98	69	4	4	1
	G22/?/F	1 R. coin + 3 more objects					
	G31/adult/M	1 R. coin + 10 more objects					
	G42/juvenile/M	1 R. coin + 6 more objects					
<p>G no./A/S- grave number, age, sex; N1- total number of graves excavated at the necropolis; N2- number of graves with grave goods; N3- number of graves with Roman coins; N4- number of Roman coins; N5- number of medieval (contemporary) coins; * grave goods contained forged R. coin or object imitating a R. coin; ** forged Byzantine coins</p>							

Table 4: Main features of the cemeteries and graves with Roman coins AD 900 – 1400

Site	G no./A/S	Grave context	N1	N2	N3	N4	N5
Ravna Slog	G98/29-35 y./F	1 R. coin + 10 more objects	65	40	1	1	-
Bogojevo III	G3/juvenile/F	2 R. coins + 4 more objects	40	15	1	2	-
Sirmium 66	At least one	?	?	?	1	1	?
Pesača	G1/adult/M	1 R. coin and no other objects	11	3	2	2	-
	G8/adult/?	1 R. coin and no other objects					
Pontes	G8/?/?	1 R. coin + 1 more object	15	3	1	1	-
Vinča-B. Brdo	G134/?/?	1 R. coin + ?	1000	120 ⁷⁴	4	4	5 ⁷⁵
	G143/?/?	1 R. coin + 2 more objects					
	G289/?/?	1 R. coin + ?					
	G326/?/?	1 R. coin + ?					
Niš-Glasija	G16/juvenile/?	1 R. coin + 1 more object	77	31	3	3	1**
	G35/juvenile/?	1 R. coin and no other objects					
	G35/?/?	1 R. coin and no other objects					
Mačvanska Mitrovica-Zidine	G226/adult/F	1 R. coin + 2 more objects	159	32	2+1?	2+4?	12
	G230/adult/F	1 R. coin + 1 more object					
	G215/adult/F	4 R. coins + 8 more objects					
Vrcalova Vodenica	G189/25-30 y./M	1 R. coin + 6 more objects	267	47	1	1	10
Sirmium 4	G5/?./M	1 R. coin + 1 more object	33	15	3	3	2
	G6/?./M	1 R. coin + 3 more objects					
	G35/?/F?	1 R. coin + 2 more objects					

⁷⁴ The number of graves with grave goods is estimated on the basis of the data at the time when 552 graves were discovered from which 66 contained grave goods, Marjanović–Vujović 1979, 129; Marjanović-Vujović 1980, 187

⁷⁵ At least five medieval coins, but probably more.

Brestovik- Čair	G2/?/F	1 R. coin + 1 more object	?	?	1	1	?
Veliki Gradac	G8/adult/M	2 R. coins + 1 more object	105	23	4	5	1
	G23/adult/M	1 R. coin and no other objects					
	G100/adult/?	1 R. coin and no other objects					
	G102/juvenile/?	1 R. coin + 1 more object					
Popovac	G2/adult/?	2 R. coins and no other objects	30	3	1	2	-
Trnjane	G204/10 y./F	1 R. coin + 2 more objects	379	136	2	3	9
	G324/adult/F	2 R. coins + 6 more objects					
Mirijevo	G20/?/F	1 R. coin + 15 more objects	160	43	1	1	5
Omoljica	G94/50 y./F	1 R. coin and no other objects	158	57	1	1	69**
Brestovik- V.R.	G41/adult/F	5 R. coins + 6 more objects	888	r	4	20	3 ⁷⁶
	G65/adult/F	3 R. coins + 8 more objects					
	G68/adult/F	3 R. coins + 9 more objects					
	G297/adult/F	9 R. coins + 3 more objects*					
Konopljara	G66/?/?	1 R. coin and no other objects	126	27	3	3	1
	G82/?./M	1 R. coin + 5 more objects					
	G84/?/F	1 R. coin + 2 more objects					
Niš-Sv. P.	G22(1966)/?/?	1 R. coin and no other objects	244	74	13 ⁷⁷	13	32**
	G48(1969)/?/?	1 R. coin and no other objects					
	G120/?/?	1 R. coin and no other objects					
	G123/?/?	1 R. coin and no other objects					
	G125/?/?	1 R. coin + 2 more objects					
	G22(2002)/7 y./N	1 R. coin and no other objects					

⁷⁶ At least three medieval coins, but probably more.

⁷⁷ There is information that 15 more Roman coins were found at the necropolis Niš Sv. Pantelejmon during the excavations from 1966–1969, but there is no data on whether they were deposited as grave goods, Crnoglavac and Čerškov 2011, 135

	G33/18 m./N	1 R. coin and no other objects					
	G41(2003)/45 y./M	1 R. coin and no other objects					
	G45/40-45 y./F	1 R. coin + 1 more object					
	G47/25-30 y./M	1 R. coin and no other objects					
	G66/50-60 y./M	1 R. coin + 1 more object*					
	G80(2004)/60 y./M	1 R. coin and no other objects					
	G84/35-45 y./M	1 R. coin and no other objects					
Doniće Brdo	G4/?/F	1 R. coin + 1 more object	40	8	2	2	2
	G8/?/M	1 R. coin + 1 more object					
Ljubičevac	G1/?/?	1 R. coin + 1 more object	7	3	1	1	1
Brza Palanka	G18/?adult/F	1 R. coin + 18 more objects*	57	12	1	1	1
Porečka Reka	G?/?/?	?	37	3	?	2	1
Dubravica	GV	2 R. coin + 2 more objects	7	r	1	2	1
<p>G no./A/S- grave number, age, sex; N1- total number of graves excavated at the necropolis; N2- number of graves with grave goods; N3- number of graves with Roman coins; N4- number of Roman coins; N5- number of medieval (contemporary) coins; r- no data on how many graves contained grave goods, but only mentions of the rarity of this practice; * grave goods contained also medieval coins in addition to R. coin; ** presence of “imitations” of Byzantine coins.</p>							

The data on the age of the deceased buried with the Roman coins show that we have 42 adult individuals and 10 more probably also of adult age, while only 11 deceased were children and juveniles. For 20 skeletal remains it was not possible to determine the age. Concerning the sex, it was possible to detect 22 males and 24 female individuals. The frequency of secondarily-used Roman coins among the graves of different age and sex groups in medieval cemeteries is difficult to establish since we do not have the bio-anthropological data on all skeletons that were discovered in these cemeteries. However, in the group of early medieval cemeteries, I have calculated the frequency between the age groups based on the data from five cemeteries (Singidunum II, III, IV and Viminacium – Burdelj and Više Grobalja). In these cemeteries the reused Roman coins occur more often

among adults than children and juveniles. Almost 7% of adult graves had Roman coins, while 3% were found in child and juvenile graves. In the group of later medieval graves, I have selected four sites (Niš – Sv. Pantelejmon, Mačvanska Mitrovica, Mirijevo and Tranjane). In this group there are no great differences between the frequency of reused Roman coins between the age and sex groups: around 3% of adult graves had Roman coins, while around 2% of child and juvenile graves; reuse of Roman coins in female graves was slightly higher (4%) than in male graves (2,5%). However, these conclusions should be taken with caution, and it should be kept in mind that usually the qualitative data reveal more valuable information than quantitative. For example, in the group of early medieval graves is a very interesting grave of a girl from the site Vajuga (discussed in Chapter V), indicating that perhaps the age group per se is not of difference to the practice of reuse of Roman coins, but rather the status of the deceased. Concerning the graves from the later medieval periods, it is very important to mention that all Roman coin pendants were found in female graves and one child burial. Therefore, again the data on sex become more relevant in relation to information about specific modification of the Roman coins in their reuse.

The most numerous burials are with only one Roman coin found in the grave (65). The presence of two Roman coins was detected in 10 graves, while finds of more than two Roman coins per grave is very scarce. Three Roman coins were found in two instances, the same is for four Roman coins per grave. Only in one example do we have five Roman coins and one case with nine Roman coins. Both of these graves are found in the cemetery Brestovik – Visoka Ravan, which is also the site with the most numerous finds of Roman coins per medieval necropolis.

In terms of the amount of the rest of the grave assemblage, the most numerous examples are those where, aside from the Roman coins, no other items were deposited in the grave (22). From these only three were detected in the early medieval cemeteries, while 19 were in the group of the necropoles of the full and High Middle Ages. Graves containing more than 10 objects in addition to the Roman coins were detected in seven cases – four in the early medieval and three in the later medieval cemeteries. It is interesting that all four burials of the early medieval period were males, while in the later medieval period graves containing 10 and more objects in addition to the Roman coin(s) were all female. For five sites there is no information on whether the burials contained any grave goods apart from

the Roman coins. The rest of the distribution of the amount of grave goods in the burials with the Roman coins is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Distribution of the amount of grave goods in the burials with Roman coins

R. coin(s) and other objects	Necropoles: AD 400-700	Necropoles: AD 900-1400	Total
R. coin(s) and no other objects	3	19	22
R. coin(s) + 1 more object	3	12	15
R. coin(s) + 2 more objects	4	7	11
R. coin(s) + 3 more objects	2	2	4
R. coin(s) + 4 more objects	4	1	5
R. coin(s) + 5 more objects	1	1	2
R. coins(s) + 6 more objects	2	3	5
R. coins(s) + 7 more objects	2	0	2
R. coin(s) + 8 more objects	2	2	4
R. coins(s) + 9 more objects	0	1	1
R. coin(s) + <10 more objects	4	3	7

Concerning the relation of graves with Roman coins and the number of graves with grave goods per necropolis, it seems that it can again be confirmed that the practice of leaving Roman coins was indeed scarce, since the percentage of graves with Roman coins observed only among the burials with grave goods is also low. There is a slight increase in comparison to the percentage calculated in which the total number of graves excavated is taken into account, but graves with Roman coins are still rare. However, some new aspects have been revealed. In the group of early medieval cemeteries, grave goods were more often deposited in contrast to the group of the cemeteries of later periods; therefore the quantitative representation of Roman coins in these sites is not increasing. Nevertheless, when observing the presence of the contemporary coinage in these graves, we immediately notice that they were found only in two cemeteries of the early medieval group, suggesting a greater importance of the reused Roman coins for the study of these necropoles. The presence of 36 reused Roman coins compared to only two coins contemporary with the period of the cemetery's use, is a more than a strong signal for researchers to address this issue.

In the group of necropoles of the later medieval periods, grave goods usually occur in less than 30% of the graves. If we focus on coins as a category of grave goods among the

burials with offerings we will again notice that the presence of such objects is not common, either of contemporary, medieval coinage or of reused Roman coins. The only exceptions are the sites Omoljica and Niš – Sv. Pantelejmon where a large amount of coins were found to be used as a grave offering. In other cases, Roman coins were the only type of coinage found in burials or, if medieval coins were discovered, they were not present in any great amount. Observed through these facts, it can be concluded that the reused Roman coins in cemeteries of the later medieval period should be investigated in more detail, at least with the same attention given to the analysis of the other grave goods and medieval coins found in them.

2.3 Main features of the Roman coins found in medieval cemeteries

In this section, I would like to elaborate on some of the main features of the Roman coins that were found in the medieval necropoles. Chronological determination of the Roman coins was in general very difficult due to their worn-out condition, but still possible, and in the majority of cases only the century of their production was determined. In traditional numismatic research most of these coins would have been exempted from any deeper analysis. However, for this research exact chronological and type attribution is not of crucial importance, but rather the identification of the time span between the dates of production and deposition in the grave, which is the starting point for the interpretation of reuse and transformation of value. Of the 117 coins the vast majority (95) belong to the 4th century AD. Only six were dated to the 2nd century and eleven to the 3rd century. Four coins were dated to the early 5th century (Fig. 2). All of the coins were bronze denominations, except for three silver *denarii* that were found in three graves in three different cemeteries of the early medieval period. No precious metal denominations of Roman coins were found in graves of the later medieval periods.

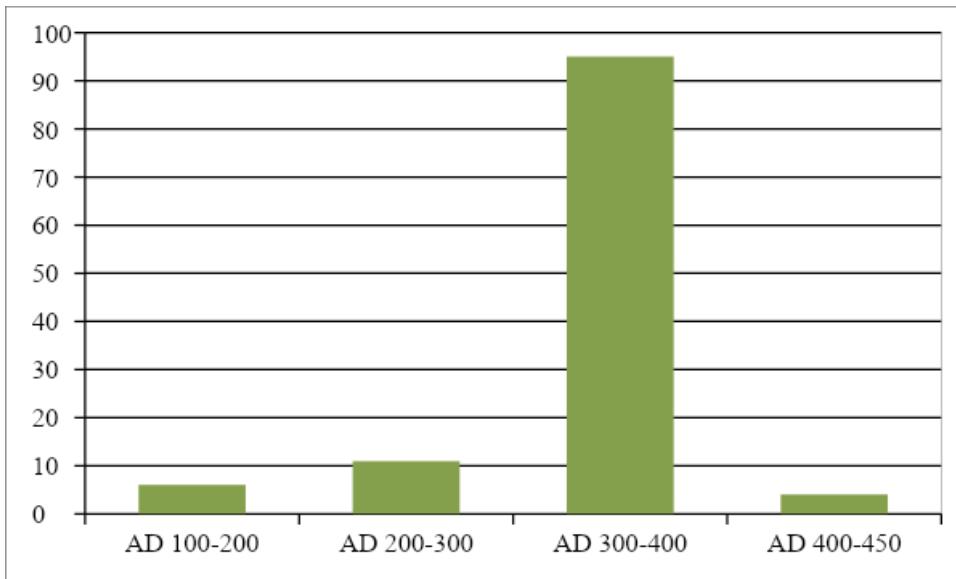


Fig. 2: Chronological identification of Roman coins found in medieval cemeteries

In Fig. 3 a more detailed chronological classification of the Roman coins is presented. It can be observed that it was not possible to determine more precise dates of production for almost half of the Roman coins. The most numerous issues reused were of Constantine the Great and his family (35), followed by coins of Valens and Valentinian (10).

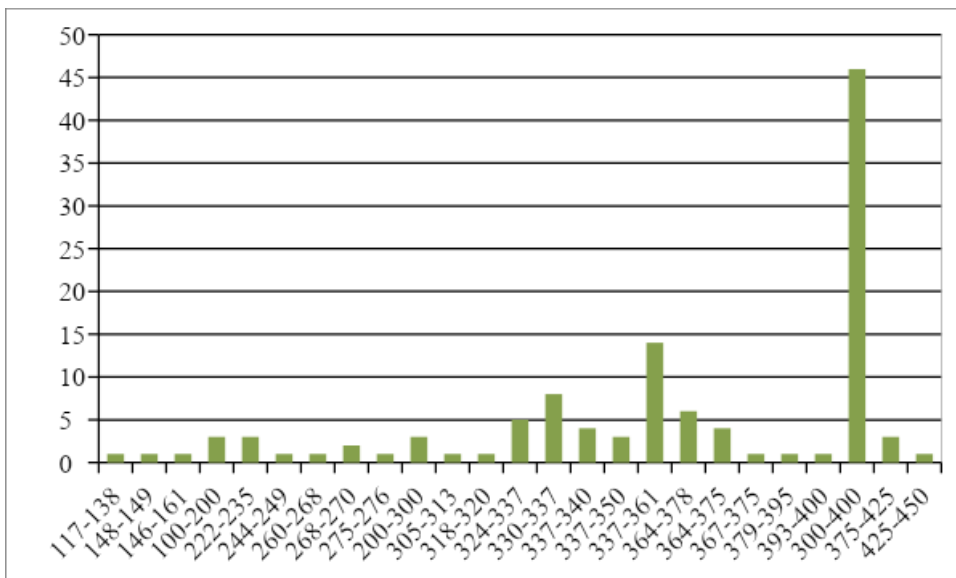


Fig. 3: Chronological classification of Roman coins according to periods of production

Concerning the dispersal of the coins among the early medieval and later medieval cemeteries according to their chronological provenance, there are no great differences present – the issues of the 4th century AD prevail in both groups.

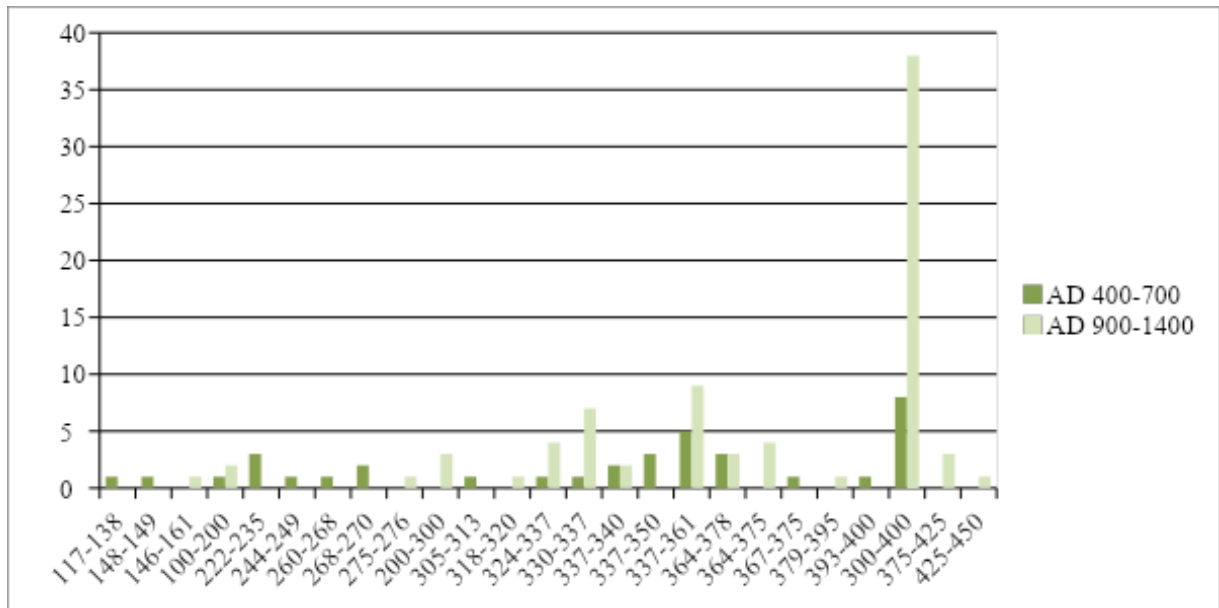


Fig. 4: Distribution of the coins among the early medieval and later medieval cemeteries according to their chronological classification

In terms of the interventions and modifications noticed on the Roman coins, perforations had been detected in 35 cases and in one example a coin had a hoop – a silver *denarius* from the Singidunum III site (Fig. 5). The majority of the pierced coins were detected in the group of necropoles of the later medieval periods (31). All of the perforated Roman coins from the later medieval period were reused as pendants, indicating that more than one third of all Roman coins (around 38%) found in the cemeteries of the later Middle Ages were reused as pendants. For the examples found in the early medieval period it is not clear whether they were used as pendants, except for the abovementioned silver *denarius*. However, the percentage of pierced Roman coins in early medieval graves is much lower, accounting for less than 15% of the Roman coins discovered in this group. Unfortunately, it was not possible to determine whether the perforations on the coins had been made in the medieval periods or whether the medieval populations reused already perforated Roman coins.

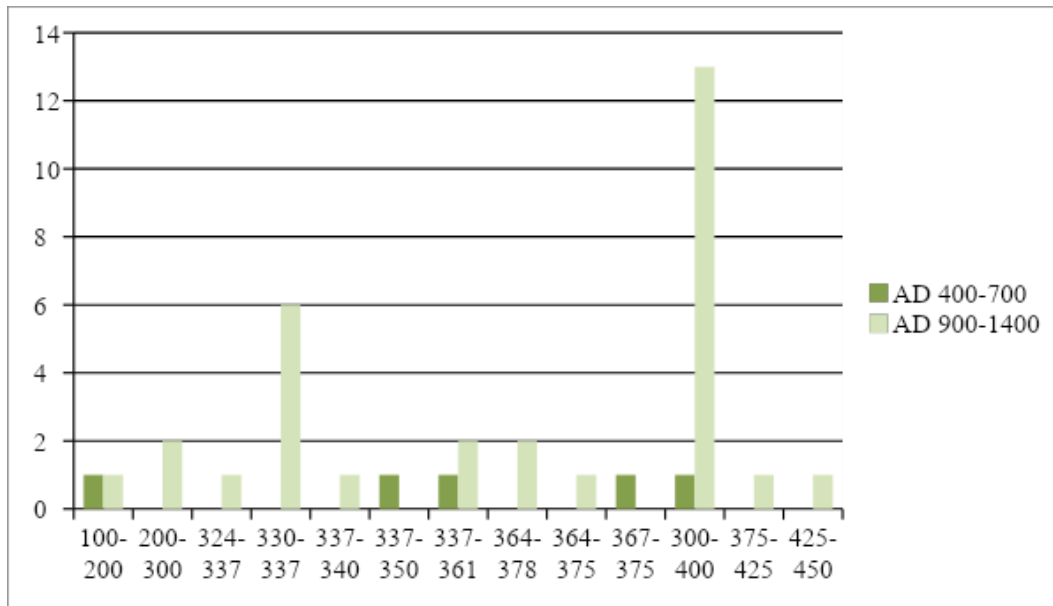


Fig. 5: Number of pierced Roman coins found in early and later medieval cemeteries

Finally, I would like to address the issue of the iconography of the Roman coins found in the medieval necropolises. In my opinion, due to the significantly worn-out condition of the coins and actually poor visibility of the depictions on both sides – obverse and reverse – we cannot argue that their specific iconography played a significant role in the meanings and values ascribed to them during the medieval period. Most certainly, the new users were not able to detect much of the iconographical details in these examples that numismatist and collectors often profoundly analyse in coins. However, this does not mean that the basic visual contours were not evident to them – mainly the rough outlines of figures and inscriptions. This is important in the sense that the visual aspects of these coins were indeed relevant, but more in a way of distinguishing them from the style and iconography of the medieval coinages – signifying them as “different” from the contemporary coins. The Roman coins found in these graves differ visually from all of the coins that were contemporary during the medieval period in the region: early and later Byzantine, Hungarian, Friesacher and Serbian coinage. The typical profile bust on the obverse and depictions on the reverse, as well as the Latin letters on Roman coins were very different from the mainly frontal schematic, often of a whole figure, representations on medieval coinage, as well as from the Greek or ancient Slavic alphabet in the case of Byzantine and Serbian coins (Table 6). For these reasons a detailed study of the specific iconographical meanings of the depictions on the Roman coins that were reused in medieval cemeteries was not conducted. It seemed very unlikely that the medieval users would have been able

to read the very specific messages that were communicated from the Empire to the Roman population through the coins.

Table 6: Main visual differences between the Roman coins found in medieval cemeteries and the medieval coin types that were in circulation during this period

Type	Obverse	Reverse	Inscriptions
Roman	Profile, bust, Emperor	Imperial public actions	Latin
Byzantine (491-717)	Frontal, bust, Emperor	Christian symbols	Latin/Greek
Byzantine (after 963)	Frontal, bust/whole figure, Christ, Virgin Mary	Frontal, bust/whole figure, Emperor (with another figure)	Greek
Hungarian	Christian symbols. enthroned king	Christian symbols	Latin
Friesacher	Frontal, bust, archbishops	Christian symbols, churches	Latin
Serbian	Similar to Byzantine	Similar to Byzantine	Greek/ancient Slavic

III. THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

As stated in the introductory chapter, this research aims to question the complex phenomenon of the transformation of values on the basis of case studies which, by their features, also demand a multifaceted approach in a theoretical and methodological sense. The study encompasses a wide chronological period of over one millennium and at the same time includes, besides the Roman coins, heterogeneous objects that were also a part of the grave assemblages. Certainly, when research attempts to cover such a wide time period, scholars are left with limited possibilities to delve into the details of certain historical epochs. Instead they focus on the main aspects and some crucial characteristics, usually oversimplifying the overall picture of the society of some specific period. However, as the transformation of values is more often observable as a consequence of long-term social processes, rather than a result of events in quite short time intervals, it seemed justified to continue along this line. Especially, since it was thought that questioning the revaluation of Roman coins in societies that were formed during or after significant time had passed since the Roman Empire and its monetary system had collapsed is incomplete without comparison to the situation when these coins were used in their primary context – Roman society. Thus, it was also inevitable to make inquiries about both – the question of the value of the Roman coins at the time when they were a functional currency and how they were revaluated in later periods. On the other hand, it was not possible to be exhaustive about all of them. Apart from the wide chronological framework, the material culture and its specific use in funeral practice that are the focus of this research poses further theoretical as well as methodological challenges. Artefacts from graves belong not only to different archaeological cultures, i.e. the coins to Roman material culture and other objects from the graves to the usual material culture of the medieval community in question, but they are also different types of archaeological evidence, which were traditionally investigated by different specialists – numismatists and archaeologists respectively.⁷⁸ This calls for critical consideration of the specialization in the study of past societies, because in order to structure the theoretical and methodological outline of the research, a principal step must be to relate the subject to an appropriate discipline. For this research the appropriate discipline of the subject is not immediately obvious. Thus, the first

⁷⁸ Kemmers and Myrberg 2011, 88

part of this section on theoretical and methodological issues deals with questions of specialization and its effects on archaeological interpretation, particularly in terms of the case studies of this research.

In continuation, I will elaborate the idea that seemed a good starting point for overcoming the challenge set by the features of the case studies. These are the corpus of theories that deal with the *social life history / cultural biography of things* initiated in social and economic anthropology by Appadurai and Kopytoff.⁷⁹ This approach has since been discussed in archaeology as a relevant theoretical framework that could contribute to the interpretation of material culture. For the research in question the concept of social life history or cultural biography of things corresponds very much with the topic and could contribute to bridging the various standpoints of different specialisms. Furthermore, it emphasizes the importance of context as crucial for understanding the construction of the value of objects. Object biography has only recently been recognized in numismatics,⁸⁰ but since it has already been discussed for some time in anthropology and archaeology, I will critically reconsider its potential for this research. Subsequently, I will focus on the issues of the archaeology of cemeteries and mortuary practices. It is a well-known fact that graves and cemeteries in general, as a type of archaeological context, present a treat for archaeologists in their studies on social structure. I will question how the analysis of mortuary practices of case studies can provide a basis for interpretation of the value of the Roman coins used in them. A separate discussion in this chapter deals with the last relevant concept, namely, the more general practice of reuse and recycling of Roman ruins in the Middle Ages, since the reuse of Roman coins must surely be seen in correlation with the reuse of other fragments of Roman material culture.

3.1 Collision and coalition of the disciplines: numismatics, archaeologies, history and anthropology

In this section, I would like to question the practice of specialization in different fields of archaeological inquiry, since the study of Roman coins in medieval graves lies at the intersection of various archaeological sub-disciplines. Though, specialization is most certainly conducive and often inevitable for understanding the vast number of issues in

⁷⁹ Appadurai 1986, 3 – 63; Kopytoff 1986, 64 – 91

⁸⁰ von Kaenel 2009, 9 – 24; Krmnicek 2009, 47– 59

archaeology, it seems that in the cases from the territory of Serbia, it has proved one of the main obstacles for any significant analysis of the reuse of Roman coins.

Usually Roman coins from medieval graves in Serbia were understood just as secondary uses of ancient coins without further inquiry.⁸¹ I argue that this derives from, among other reasons, an “inventory methodology” of exploring necropolises. By classifying artefacts from a necropolis in predetermined categories, these coins tend to “lose” their place in the supposed scheme. Sometimes they are reused as pendants on a necklace, so they can be classified as both coins and jewellery. In contrast to their multiple categorizations, these coins are generally featureless. Another general problem in the analysis of coins is the division between numismatic and archaeological approaches.⁸² For traditional numismatic analysis, the coin is usually the primary source of data. Its shape, weight, material, inscription and depiction are of utmost importance, while little attention is given to the context of a coin find. “Apart from its immediate physical characteristics, a coin’s most easily distinguishable features are its types – designs and inscriptions.”⁸³ On the other hand, archaeologists commonly use coin finds as a means for dating a site or smaller units within it. These two approaches, where a coin is self-sufficient or just a dating device, hinder broader insight. It is clear that they do not suffice in providing a profound understanding of Roman coins in medieval graves. The numismatic identification of the coins is just the starting point for us to notice that there was some kind of reuse or perhaps continuation of use, while, in terms of dating, these coins are useless.

In some instances of Roman coins from medieval graves, even the tradition of dispatching coin finds to the specialists was “neglected”. Often only medieval coins, those contemporary to the period of use of the cemetery in question, were subjected to more careful analysis, while Roman coins were of low priority, both for medieval archaeologists and numismatists. Yet, upon transfer to a museum, assigning them to the appropriate collection could be questionable. If held in a numismatic collection, i.e. a collection of Roman coins, then the emphasis is on their monetary aspect and it focuses on the period of their issue, whereas their relationship with the context of the grave assemblage has become

⁸¹ In all publications of the case studies authors did not refer to the reuse of Roman coins in any great detail, only Marjanović-Vujović and Bajalović-Birtašević recognized this practise as something usual for the medieval period in this region, but without any further elaboration: Marjanović-Vujović 1985b, 7; Bajalović-Birtašević 1960, 33

⁸² A relevant discussion on this subject was initiated by Kemmers and Myrberg 2011, 87 – 108

⁸³ Brooke et al. (eds.) 2008, xxvii – xxviii

irrelevant, and the fact that they were deposited when the Roman coinage system was no longer operating is not immediately noticeable. Contrary to this, if they remain together with other objects from the burial, there is a chance that the peculiarity of the phenomenon might be overlooked in the pursuit of detecting “bigger issues” such as the chronological and cultural identification of the cemetery in question. It is my opinion that these circumstances were one of the main reasons why these coins have never been taken into greater consideration.

In this research, the coins are analysed as any other archaeological find and as a part of a wider social context. This means that these coins could be, and in this research are, a subject of both archaeological sub-disciplines, Roman and medieval archaeology, as well as of numismatics. Again, this is an uncommon practice that most scholars have kept away from.

A traditional, historical, division between the classical and medieval period is taken into account as a determinant of social change, an important factor for the transformation of value systems. This notion is very questionable. One of the most debatable matters in the theory of archaeology and other historical studies concerns the interpretation of social / cultural change. The biggest discussion between the processual and post-processual archaeologists deals with the causes of why societies change or stay the same.⁸⁴ The concept of periodization itself was constructed on the notion that, in the course of human history, societal organization and structure differentiated. This three-part separation in history is an outcome of the *progress* idea. The term *Middle Ages* was introduced by the humanists of the Renaissance to distinguish the period between the *Classical* era (Greece and Rome) and the time when they lived, understood as *Modern*.⁸⁵ Ever since, social change was mainly perceived in terms of the progressive development of all human societies. Despite significant criticisms of the modernism approach in the interpretation of human history, and therefore the periodization concept,⁸⁶ this division remains widespread. Certainly nowadays there is an established awareness that social change does not have to be taken as an indicator of progress and that likewise historical dates for the beginning or ending of a period are conventional. The people living in the past surely did not just stop living in a certain way on some date and then continue in another way. Nevertheless,

⁸⁴ Trigger 2008, 386 – 483

⁸⁵ Gerrard 2003, xi, 7, 10

⁸⁶ Starting with Foucault 1972

crucial differences between what we term the *classical* and *medieval* periods are perceivable. This research uses this division as a necessary wider cultural-historical framework in which I try to get into the particularities of the supposed different evaluation of Roman coins in the primary context (Roman culture) and secondary context (particular social group in the medieval period).

In spite of these differences between the periods, mutual for both classical and medieval studies is that they are part of historical archaeology. Acknowledging the coins as historical sources would be stating the obvious, but by this I would like to move on to the next important issue concerning the “discipline problem”. The “Great Divide”⁸⁷ in the study of the human past is most certainly the presence of literacy, as it has resulted in the development of two branches within archaeology that have significantly different research approaches and aims – prehistory and historical archaeology. In view of the fact that in this research all objects and their contexts are from the historical period, either classical or medieval, it might appear unnecessary to start this particular discussion. I am doing it for the following reasons. Very often in classical archaeology or in the archaeology of any other historical period, written sources have been given a supreme position.⁸⁸ They have been taken as crucial for the explanation of material culture, providing a political, religious and societal context for it. On the other hand, the archaeology of prehistory, devoid of written sources, had to develop alternative ways of interpreting the material remains. It has been oriented towards cultural anthropology, and many functional explanations of prehistoric tools derived from ethnographic analogies.⁸⁹ Apart from this, prehistoric archaeologists have been keener to apply ideas on social organization and structure from anthropological theory.⁹⁰ In contrast, archaeologists studying historical periods have stayed more conservative and descriptive in their interpretations,⁹¹ usually not as concerned with the developments in neighbouring disciplines. But, eventually, serious questioning of the “supremacy” of the written word started amongst even the historians themselves,⁹² and

⁸⁷ This phrase is from the article *The Great Tradition versus the Great Divide*, Renfrew 1980, 287 – 298, in which he called for greater interaction between anthropological/prehistoric and classical archaeologists.

⁸⁸ Babić 2004, 27

⁸⁹ Stiles 1977, 87 – 103

⁹⁰ Starting with the famous article *Archaeology as anthropology*, Binford 1962, 217 – 225, which also presents a starting point of “theory” in archaeology.

⁹¹ Renfrew 1980, 290

⁹² Finley 1985

soon after passed on to classical archaeologists.⁹³ This resulted in a broadening of the range of research issues, and it shifted the focus from the study of “The Greats” to questions regarding social structure and organization. Medieval archaeology and numismatics, in contrast, have remained under the dominant position of history to a larger extent, with the situation changing only recently. Studies of the medieval period suffer from an additional burden, since historians usually take this time as the formation of most national identities in Europe.⁹⁴ As a consequence, medieval archaeology was mainly engaged with providing the “material” content for the “remarkable nations” in their emergence. Medieval archaeology in Serbia, especially studies of the full Middle Ages, was often dedicated to the ethnic attribution of the material culture.⁹⁵

My intention is to try to investigate the topic in an interdisciplinary way, since I think this approach will be more conducive to the interpretation than to consider the subject exclusively from a numismatic, historical or archaeological standpoint. Therefore, I will try to observe the material without giving more importance either to the “text” or to the “object”. To start with the coins themselves as a specific mixture of historical source and archaeological artefact:

“The production of coins is in most cases linked to some kind of central authority, while the use of coins involves all levels of society. They are thus an excellent source not only for events and personas of the ‘big history’ preferred within the history discipline, but also for the ‘small histories’ increasingly studied within archaeology – which often give a different picture.”⁹⁶

In order to link the supposedly opposing histories and to get to the question of value, an approach that prefers a holistic view of the society is required. Therefore, I will turn to anthropology and apply practices already established in that field. However, this will be carried out cautiously and without any automatic application of some concept from anthropology to this research. In the following I will elaborate on some of the concepts from anthropology and determine why I believe they are suitable for this research.

⁹³ Morris (ed.) 1994; Shanks 1996; Snodgrass 1991, 58 – 61

⁹⁴ Austin 1990, 11–18

⁹⁵ Marjanović-Vujović 1984, 113; Bikić 2010, 11

⁹⁶ Kemmers and Myrberg 2011, 92

3.2 The object biography and “life cycle” concepts of material culture

Relatively recently the idea of object biography became very significant in archaeological theory, generating major debates. Before presenting how this idea contributes to the research, I shall briefly review how object biography was used in the interpretation of material culture. Through the analysis of the development of this concept, I came to the conclusion that it is possible to distinguish between “anthropological” and “archaeological” approaches. In social and economic anthropology, Kopytoff introduced object biography to give new perspectives on the circulation of commodities, focusing more on the commodities themselves than on the form or purpose of the exchange.⁹⁷ Kopytoff questioned the economists’ point of view that commodities are simply an *a priori* category of objects in any society:

“From a cultural perspective, the production of commodities is also a cultural and cognitive process: commodities must be not only produced materially as things, but also culturally marked as being a certain kind of thing. Out of the total range of things available in the society, only some of them are considered appropriate for marking as commodities. Moreover, the same thing may be treated as a commodity at one time and not at another. And finally, the same thing may, at the same time, be seen as a commodity by one person and as something else by another.”⁹⁸

He illustrated through the life of a slave how something might be treated as a commodity at one point in time, and not at another, depending on the social context. He introduced biography as a metaphor suitable even for the “life” of objects. Objects can be categorized as commodities through the principle of *common* and *singular*.⁹⁹

“In no system is everything so singular as to preclude even the hint of exchange. And in no system ...is everything a commodity and exchangeable for everything else within a unitary sphere of exchange...In the realm of exchange values, this means that the natural world of singular things must be arranged into several manageable value classes – that is, different things must be selected and made cognitively similar when put into different categories. This is the basis for a well known economic phenomenon – that of several spheres of exchange values, which operate more or less independently of one another.”¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ Kopytoff 1986, 64 – 91

⁹⁸ Kopytoff 1986,64

⁹⁹ Kopytoff 1986, 68 – 69

¹⁰⁰ Kopytoff 1986, 70

Besides Kopytoff's idea of object biography, "a reverse" approach has developed in anthropology in more recent years. In this case, objects are looked at as shaping factors of a person's biography. In pursuit of trying to find out about the lives of her informants, Hoskins realized that talking about certain objects was more productive than just asking them questions about their life.¹⁰¹

In archaeology, object biography has been present for a very long time, although perhaps not phrased exactly like that. The investigation of formative processes is an important field in archaeology. Studies of how archaeological sites are created are inseparable from the interpretation of those remains. In researching the formation processes, archaeologists try to establish and reconstruct the sequence of events that preceded and affected the creation of the archaeological find – whether a single artefact or entire site. In other words, archaeologists try to determine the history of production, use and discard of material culture. The most important studies in this vein were conducted by Schiffer, with his flow models of artefacts' life cycles (Fig. 6).¹⁰² For this research, the life cycle model of durable elements is of interest, since coins would be categorized as such.

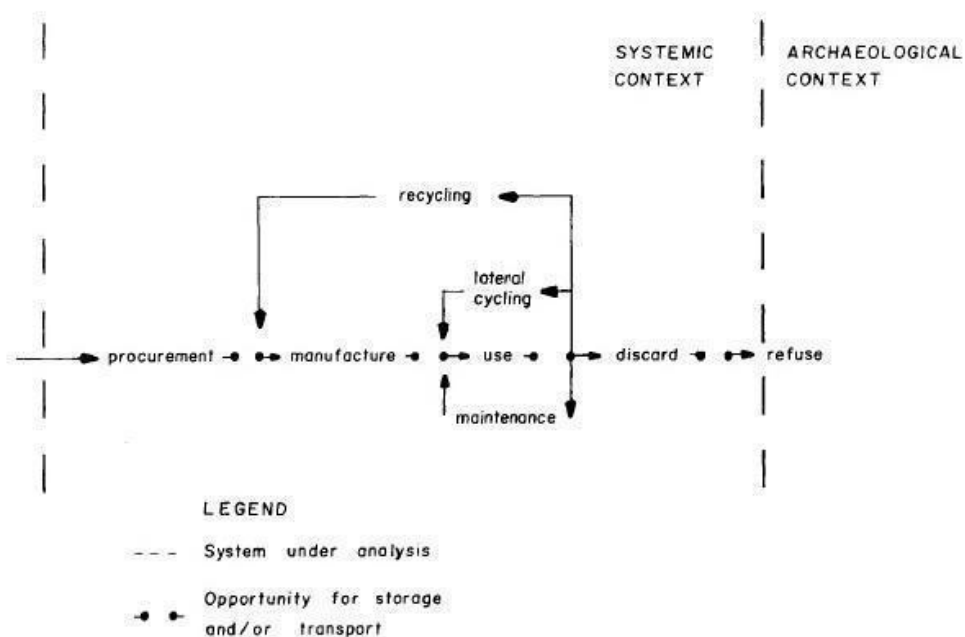


Fig. 6: The flow model for viewing the life cycle of durable elements¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Hoskins 1998

¹⁰² Schiffer 1996; 1972, 156 – 165

¹⁰³ Schiffer 1972, 159, Fig. 2

The future archaeological context is influenced by cultural and natural factors.¹⁰⁴ Cultural factors consist of any human activity or intervention on one's physical surroundings. These include tool-making or settlement, exploitation of natural resources, deposition of waste, etc. Natural factors consist of all biophysical occurrences that impact a site after its abandonment. Even though Kopytoff's comprehension of object biography can be considered a cultural factor, cultural formation processes direct attention towards linking given behaviours to a certain pattern of the archaeological record. Ethno-archaeological research, especially on ritual deposition of objects, took these assumptions seriously.

More recently, archaeological discussions on object biography have tended to reference Kopytoff. Archaeologists who have worked within this framework include Holtorf, Shanks, Gosden and Marshall, to name but a few.¹⁰⁵ This concept has recently been recognized in numismatics as well, and von Kaenel explained its importance in the following words:

“When using the word "context", we refer to everything in the "space" in which a coin once "lived", where it fulfilled its function as a coin. Just as "life" evolves in a manifold network of relationships of a biological, spiritual, religious, social and material nature, so too the "life" of a coin occurs in one, several or even in a great number of "spaces". But not only this; a precondition for being able to hold an ancient coin in our hand today is its transmission, which again took place in its own, specific "context". Coins are thus things, objects and these have their own physical and social "life", their individual and supra-individual history, their object biography. The goal of the scholarly study of coins in general, and more specifically of coin finds, must be to decode this as far as possible”¹⁰⁶

For the research in question the concept of object biography, in every sense, corresponds very much with this topic. Coins from the Roman period found in medieval grave offerings, sometimes shaped as a pendant, indicate that, over the course of their “lives”, these coins have gone through various stages of understanding, valuation and handling; passing in and out of different social spheres. This resonates with Kopytoff's conception of object biography. Yet the transformation here is not from object to commodity, whether we perceive coins as money, i.e. the ultimate commodity, or only as a means of exchange. Still, more than less, the principle of common and singular pertains to this case. In the

¹⁰⁴ Schiffer 1996, 7

¹⁰⁵ Holtorf 2002, 49 – 71; Shanks 1998, 15 – 42; Gosden and Marshall 1999, 169 – 178

¹⁰⁶ von Kaenel 2009, 20

original context, where the coins were used according to their purpose, the aspect of common is applied. The coins could only be understood in relation to other objects, either coins of different denominations or commodities whose value they expressed. The coins always had to share some properties in common with other factors in the exchange. In the secondary context the coins are singular. Their exclusiveness is not achieved by temporal distance alone. Rather, ultimate “singularization” occurs with the intentional final deposition of the coins in the grave. In addition, since the value of the coin is formed, confirmed and modified through the manner of its usage, the challenge is to reconstruct all of the different backgrounds in which the coin circulated. For this part, a more archaeological or formative approach to object biography is valuable.

In both approaches to object biography, each class of things is determined by one idealized version of the object’s life cycle or biography. This ideal biography could be shaped by the social norms of one culture¹⁰⁷ and by the pure usefulness of an object for some specific purpose.¹⁰⁸ In reality, however, multiple factors come to play, and therefore the final biographies often vary significantly from some ideal model. This leads us to question what might be considered an ideal biography for objects such as coins, and how this biography varies in the cases included in this study.

Since we are now speaking about an ideal object biography or about models of their production and use, I will first consider coins in their ideal sense, focusing more on their economic aspect. Models of Roman coin circulation have been heatedly debated in ancient numismatics. Numerous attempts were undertaken over years of research to compile data and map coin use in the Roman period.¹⁰⁹ Although it is impossible to define one single model that could incorporate all of the possibilities of the coin circulation process, Kemmers implies that “current ideas on coin supply and circulation can be summarized in one basic model” (Fig. 7):

¹⁰⁷ Kopytoff 1986, 64 – 91

¹⁰⁸ Schiffer 1972, 156 – 165

¹⁰⁹ Howgego 1994, 15 – 21 summarized the research on models of Roman coins’ circulation very well

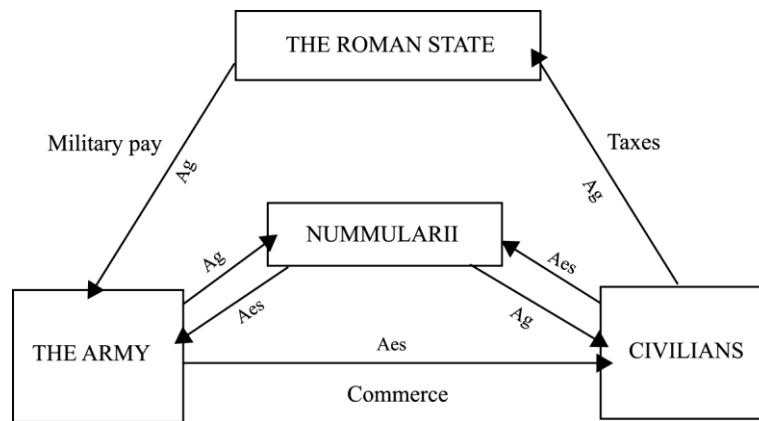


Fig. 7: The traditional model of coin circulation in the Roman Empire¹¹⁰

“In this model, the state supplied the army with precious metal coins. Through daily commerce, coins were disseminated into civilian sphere, after the soldiers had changed their *denarii* into small change at *nummularii*. Civilians then paid their taxes to the state in precious metal for which they first had to change their bronze coinage back into silver at the same *nummularii*. The state could then melt or reuse the silver coins to pay the army, and so on and so forth. Several additions to this model have been made, allowing for provincial treasuries as intermediaries, payments to civil servants, deposition and hoarding of coins, etc. but in its essence the concept remains the same.”¹¹¹

In other words, we could say that the ideal object biography for coins is to endlessly circulate and be recycled, without ever getting out of the pool and reaching our hands as a final destination. If we were to express it in Schiffer's terminology, coinage, as durable elements, would always be somewhere between the phases of manufacture and discard (Fig. 6). Even though the model presented here corresponds more closely to the possible mode of coin circulation before the changes in the nominal system in Late Antiquity, one can say that the basic idea of endless circulation is also present in the monetary policy of the 4th century. However, we know that this is not the case, and very often the archaeological record, and even our contemporary everyday experience, suggest many other possibilities. Coinage ends up in many different contexts: hoards, lost finds, grave offerings, etc. Its constant (re)valuation is a key factor for these oscillations with respect to the ideal prototype. From the coin's issue until its final deposition, it is primarily the value ascribed to the coin that determines its life cycle. Divergences in the object biographies of

¹¹⁰ Kemmers 2009, Fig. 1

¹¹¹ Kemmers 2009, 139

coins can occur in various stages of their life cycle, beginning with the minting of coinage and conceiving the principles on which it would further operate. Value, both as a concept and as a quality, is what drives these changes. Establishing a system of values creates a complex network of relationships between different denominations (or between the coins themselves) and creates bonds with various other things (tangible and intangible), based on the notion of equivalence. After coins enter circulation, the stability of the coin's value in relation to other elements ensures its “perfect” biography. As soon as some change occurs in these relations, an opportunity for different directions arises. Numismatists often consider Gresham’s Law as one of the main principles regulating circulation patterns of coins.¹¹² If, for example, the value of a coin rises, due to the introduction of lower quality coins, chances for that coin to be temporarily withdrawn from circulation and selected for hoarding increase. Alternatively, if its value decreases, the coin will re-enter circulation as a result of an attempt to exchange it for a coin of greater value. A coin of a smaller denomination (or of lower value) tends to be lost more often because it changes hands more frequently.¹¹³ Also, once isolated from other coins, its limited purchasing power would no doubt discourage efforts to find it. Finally, with the breakdown of an entire system, and in the interval before the establishment of a new system in which they can be of use, coins become valueless and are likely to be discarded; hence the occurrence of secondary use as an option.

Observing examples from the research, it is obvious that the object biographies of these particular coins diverged from the assumed ideal version for this category of thing. In an attempt to account for this, I briefly wish to recall the data crucial to understanding the object biographies as already mentioned in the previous chapter:

- the time difference between the coin’s issuance and its deposition in the grave,
- the association of coins with other finds in a single grave and the position of the grave in the necropolis as a whole,
- its relation to the remains of Roman towns, fortifications and necropoles,
- and the wider sociocultural, historical and monetary background in the time the necropolis was in use.

¹¹² Laughlin 1903, 420 – 437; Spiegel 1971, 73

¹¹³ Collis 1988, 192

In conclusion, the study of coinage within a strict framework of numismatics limits the interpretation of these finds. In a traditional numismatic analysis, the coin is observed in isolation from other finds and contexts. The shortcomings of this approach are most observable in cases where coins have been used differently from what is expected. The examples of Roman coins in medieval graves demonstrate the necessity for (a) observing them as part of a wide corpus of material culture, and (b) directing attention to the coins' context. The object biography paradigm seems highly adequate in overcoming these difficulties. Through object biography, it is possible to perceive at the same time the general and particular aspects of these coins. However, object biography is ultimately insufficient on its own and leaves many dilemmas unresolved. In researching the object biographies of the Roman coins in this study, many questions require greater consideration.

3.3 Grave goods and value

The study of funeral practices represents one of the most fruitful fields in archaeology when it comes to the investigation not only of religious beliefs and cult practices, but perhaps more importantly of variations in social complexity and socioeconomic organization. This turn towards the analysis of the social structure and organization of past human communities by studying the form and structure of their mortuary practices prevailed among processual archaeologists. Funeral practices became a central point for "New" archaeologists, resulting in a vast number of studies and the development of several theoretical as well as methodological models mostly based on ethno-archaeological scrutiny.¹¹⁴ relevant are only some of the aspects of this rich field of study, which also continued to be important for post-processual archaeologists who developed their own perspective on this issue.¹¹⁵ Of course, these ideas will be applied in this research in a manner adequate and slightly adjusted according to its goal. Since my final aim is not to interpret the social structure and organization of the communities observed in this study thorough analysis of their funeral ritual, but rather to understand how Roman coins, deposited as grave goods, were reevaluated, my method is actually conducted in the opposite direction. To express myself in the vocabulary of the middle range theory, my methodological steps do not follow a linear path from the static archaeological record to dynamical social system. Instead, they are circular in their nature: I will try to interpret the

¹¹⁴ For summary on this topic, see Parker Pearson 2003, 21 – 44

¹¹⁵ For example, Parker Pearson 1993, 203 – 229

new value of the Roman coins through observation of the social structure which is in turn readable from, among other factors, the remaining features of the funeral ritual in question.

To accomplish this, I have focused on some main points from the exhaustive work mentioned earlier that can be applied in this research. For example, in the majority of cases wealth and/or status are reflected in the contents of the burial, its form and size and its location relative to the burials of other segments of the population. This is based on several assumptions that Chapman summarized very well:

“During life an individual will possess a variable number of statuses (referred to by Saxe as “social identities”) such as father, son, brother, priest, chief, etc. By virtue of these statuses he will take part in social relationships with other individuals (e.g. father and son, chief and subject) which involve reciprocal rights and duties. The higher the social position of the individual, the larger the number of people entering into these relationships with him. On the individual's death, a selection is made of the statuses possessed by that individual during life, only some of them being reflected in the burial ritual (e.g. “the status of the chief” will usually be more highly valued than of the “mother's mother's brother).”¹¹⁶

In other words, it is possible for archaeologists to detect relatively successfully traces of social ranking in the investigation of cemeteries. Binford, but even more so Tainter, suggested that the effort-expenditure principle is the most important for its detection:

“...higher social rank of a deceased individual will correspond to greater amounts of corporate involvement and activity disruption and hence should result in the expenditure of greater amounts of energy in the interment ritual. Energy expenditure should in turn be reflected in such features of burial as size and elaborateness of the interment facility, method of handling and disposal of the corpse, and the nature of grave associations.”¹¹⁷

A further very important feature to be investigated in funeral practices is the composition and form of grave goods, as well as their spatial patterning within the burial. It is argued that in the analysis of the grave goods it is possible to distinguish certain types of artefacts and attributes that could be associated with the different social statuses of the deceased. This usually means that according to the estimated value of the objects and their cultural meanings archaeologists try to establish the status of the deceased – chief, king, queen, priest/ess, craftsman, nobleman, citizen, peasant, slave, outcast, etc. Thus, archaeologists

¹¹⁶ Chapman 1977, 21 – 22

¹¹⁷ Tainter 1975, 2

frequently identify certain objects as prestige goods and valuables within some social group from the past that are understood as markers of highly-ranked social individuals. In this research, I will question with whom, with which objects and with what features of the burial these Roman coins are associated. From there I will see how their value in relation to these various elements could have been understood.

At first glance it might seem that the examples from the transition of Late Antiquity to the early medieval period, burials of the Migration Period, are more rewarding for such investigations, as Germanic and particularly Avar cemeteries are famous for studies of the social hierarchies of these groups. Elaborate funeral rituals and grave goods found at necropolises of both of these communities have been observed from the socio-economic perspective for quite some time. There is also a substantial corpus of studies of the material culture found in these graves, which have established a clear overall picture of what objects could be understood as valuables, potential status markers or what their possible cultural meaning was.

Studies of the graves of various Germanic tribes across the European continent and of Anglo-Saxon populations in Britain revealed certain constants in the funeral rituals that resulted from social hierarchy. The most famous examples are the so-called “Warrior Graves” which dominated in the post-Roman period in the territories of the former Empire (P. LXII/2). In his study on the background of the Anglo-Saxon weapon burial rite (5th – 8th centuries), Härke came to some conclusions which I believe contribute significantly to understanding this phenomenon and could be also applied in the research at hand. He suggested that the weaponry, “their quantity and quality must reflect not only types of military equipment, but also the social, economic and even legal status of the individual.”¹¹⁸ Through analysis of their frequency, relation to the historical context, composition of the weapon sets, anthropological profile and stature of the deceased, and association of other grave goods he came to the following conclusions:

“The Anglo-Saxon weapon burial rite was independent of the intensity of warfare; it did not always reflect functional fighting equipment; it was not always determined by the individual ability to fight, nor by the actual participation in combat. Weapon burial was positively

¹¹⁸ Härke 1990, 22

correlated with burial *wealth*, with labour investment into burial, and with stature; and it was, in some places at least, determined by descent.”¹¹⁹

In other words, it was above all a symbolic act; these burials did not reflect on real warrior function, but they were the ritual expression of a culturally, socially and perhaps ideologically based warrior status. Examples of “warrior graves” from other areas of Europe (France, Germany, etc.) were interpreted in a similar way.¹²⁰ James has suggested that the weapon burial rite sprang from the need of the Germanic military aristocracy in 4th-century Western Europe to express their new status.¹²¹ Interestingly, it looks like these elaborate and richly furnished funerals were more conspicuous and more attention was given to this ritual in the “Roman territories” than in the areas of the “original” German territories.¹²² In the territory of the Balkan Peninsula analogous funeral practices appear in the first half of the 5th century. To a large extent, the basic argumentation applied in the interpretation of the examples from England and Western Europe is applicable also to the cases from the Balkans. Most certainly, in Germanic cemeteries of the Early Middle Ages, besides distinguished members of this high social rank, including wives, children and the closest kin in addition to the “warriors”, it is possible to recognize other social groups. This can frequently be achieved on the basis of a lack of any particular grave features and grave goods, the degree of quality and craftsmanship of the objects or the spatial distribution of graves in relation to “warrior graves”, if such graves are identified within a cemetery.

In the Avar cemeteries (mid-6th century to the end of the 8th century) it is also possible to detect traces of social ranking that are expressed through specific mortuary practice.¹²³ Among the various features of Avar necropolises, belt sets are the most important for the analysis of social structure (P. LXIII/3, LXIV-LXVIII). Their material, implementation of precious stones or certain decorative patterns and other elements are markers of different ranks in the social hierarchy.¹²⁴ The so-called “Princely graves” could be distinguished, aside from the appropriate belt sets, by other features. Avar clan leaders (khagans), together with their closest kin, were buried separately from other members of society. Usually, all metal objects found in the graves, parts of garments or of weapons, dishes and

¹¹⁹ Härke 1990, 42 (my emphasis)

¹²⁰ Périn and Kazanski 2011, 308 – 329

¹²¹ James 1979, 72

¹²² Périn and Kazanski 2011, 306

¹²³ Kovačević 1977, 101 – 112

¹²⁴ Kovačević 1977, 101, 109

jewellery, were made of gold until the c. mid-7th century, and in the latter period they were made of gold-plated silver. Written sources as well as archaeological evidence confirm that insignia of political authority were the throne, sword and a whip.¹²⁵ However, many other aspects have to be taken into consideration in order to understand the rest of the Avar social structure. Those would be the orientation and posture of the deceased, presence of a horse burial, total lack of grave goods, or if the grave goods were deposited, what types of objects were included – weapons, agricultural or craft tools, cult objects, etc.¹²⁶ According to some theories, the presence of knives marked free members of the Avar society, distinguishing them from slaves and captives. Therefore, both the Germanic and Avar mortuary rituals provide us with a considerable amount of evidence at least for an overall idea of how different types of objects were valued and how were they associated with different social personas. This then allows for the possibility to establish the “new” value of Roman coins by examining their relation to the types of objects and mortuary rituals with which they are found.

Yet, when it comes to examples from the high and late medieval period, the situation is different – instead of richly furnished burials there are mainly large necropolises with modest graves, because the mortuary practices in this period appear to have been affected by “levelling mechanisms” to a larger extent.¹²⁷ In the study of mortuary practices, anthropologists and archaeologists noticed that along with the need to express, reflect and even emphasise social structure in the funeral rites, there is also the “possibility that the identity, social structure and the ideology of the living may have been inverted or disguised in death.”¹²⁸ There are societies where individuals of the highest social status are buried in a simple way rather than being distinguished by any rich or monumental interment. Archaeologists sought to see a possible explanation of these “levelling forces” in increased levels of social complexity. According to Binford, “levelling mechanisms” are usually more emphasised in state societies.¹²⁹ In the civilisations of Greece and Rome there were legislative attempts, in the form of sumptuary laws, to limit the energy expended in funerary practices.¹³⁰ In his comparative study on the historical dimensions of mortuary

¹²⁵ The most famous example of a “Khagan grave” is from Kunbaborony (Hungary), see Kovačević 1977, 108 – 109

¹²⁶ Kovačević 1977, 101 – 102

¹²⁷ Chapman and Randsborg 1981, 14

¹²⁸ Okely 1979, 86

¹²⁹ Binford 1971, 6 – 29

¹³⁰ Toynbee 1971

expressions of status, Cannon came to the conclusion that they are cyclic in nature.¹³¹ Through the examination of mortuary practices in the three different historical contexts – Victorian England, Northeast Iroquia and ancient Greece, he suggested:

“Although competitive display is a major factor in the elaboration of mortuary behaviour, it can also lead to an eventual reduction in its intensity – initially through the reduced effectiveness of differentiating forms of expression in a context of a multiplicity of expressions both past and present and ultimately through social control – as elaboration becomes increasingly associated with lower status categories.”¹³²

In the medieval period it seems likely that the main homogenizing instrument was Christianity, but other socio-economic factors also had direct effects on mortuary practices. On the other hand, even though these levelling mechanisms might have been at force, some degree of social stratification is still visible in the funeral rites of the latter medieval periods in the Balkans. However, it manifested in a very different manner than in the time of the Migration Period. During the High and Late Middle Ages, lavish grave goods were not of crucial importance as manifestations of the social status of the deceased, although inventories of graves still remained partial indicators of the economic status of the deceased, but rather other features were more important. The higher social status of individuals is more likely to be noticed in the funeral practices of that time through the position of the grave in relation to others, and more importantly in relation to the cemetery church, or even in some cases its location inside of the church. Usually, noblemen and members of the elite were buried in the churches that they financed during their lifetime. Therefore, in this context, even if their graves are modest in the strictest sense, the whole edifice actually serves as testimony to their social rank. In contrast, the vast majority of the society, the mostly peasant population, was buried in large cemeteries with very poor burials. In other words, it is still possible to establish certain associations of material culture evaluation and social stratification through the investigation of mortuary practices. Thus, an examination of how the reuse of Roman coins was incorporated in this context provides the possibility to establish how they were revalued. Interestingly, in the high and late medieval period the largest proportion of reused Roman coins were found in village cemeteries, in contexts that, at first, carry associations of everything opposite to concepts of wealth. However, by examining the wider social and monetary context of the time, it is

¹³¹ Cannon 1989, 437 – 458

¹³² Cannon 1989, 437

possible to reach some ideas for the interpretation of this practice. Furthermore, the examples in which the Roman coins were modified into jewellery indicate they were not only reused, but even became a personal belonging of the deceased.

3.4 Reuse and value

The final concept to be discussed in this chapter is the practice of reusing and recycling material culture. Unlike in modern consumer society, the reuse of materials and artefacts is common in any pre- or non-industrial society. It is an indispensable element of the economy, as well as of other societal aspects – cultural and ideological. In this section, I wish to position the reuse of Roman coins within a more general practice of reuse and recycling of Roman material culture during the medieval period in the territory of Serbia. Reuse of objects from the Roman period in the Middle Ages can be observed in almost all territories covered by the Roman Empire, and it has at times been discussed in archaeology and art history.¹³³ Indeed, the whole image of the Dark Ages has been depicted as a time of low innovative production, but abundant in reuse and recycling of the achievements of the previous Roman civilization. The adjustments to Roman material remains by the new users vary from the disintegration of buildings into reusable components to the adoption of whole objects, and also include the continuation of use of settlement or burial sites. There is a wide range of well-known archaeological examples, such as the transformation of the Severan Basilica into a church at Leptis Magna in the 6th century¹³⁴ or the use of complete *amphorae* as roof fillings of San Simpliciano in Milan in the 4th century.¹³⁵ Finds of many Roman artefacts, particularly coins, in Anglo-Saxon graves from the 5th to the 7th century,¹³⁶ as well as numerous “invisible” building compositions of crushed Roman bricks, pots and stone slabs are also very usual.

Unlike with the usage of the common, contemporary, medieval material culture, perhaps in these instances of reuse the relationship between the subject and object is even more noticeable and draws additional attention. These objects were originally created to meet the demands of one specific culture (Roman) and after having been discarded they were reused by the people whose social practices differed significantly, and who also produced their

¹³³ Kinney 2006, 233 – 252

¹³⁴ Cantino Wataghin 1999, 697

¹³⁵ Lusuardi Siena 1999, 760

¹³⁶ Eckardt and Williams 2003, 141 – 170

own material culture (for example Avar). In that sense, it is interesting how these objects were incorporated and whether any of the previous meanings and values ascribed to the Roman artefacts were relevant for their revaluation. This coincides directly with recent discourse in archaeological theory where emphasis is in re-examining the significance of objects in the societal cosmos of people. A number of archaeologists have been turning their focus to things and highlighting the effect and power they have in shaping human societies.¹³⁷ Most of these scholars have been inspired by the ideas developed in *material culture studies*,¹³⁸ *thing theory*¹³⁹ and *actor network theory*,¹⁴⁰ in which objects and other non-human elements are observed as equal agents in society and not only as passive and detached embodiments of supreme ideas, values and abstract social relations without any influence on the creation of these same ideas, values and relations.

3.4.1 *Spolia* and reuse: different approaches to the interpretation of medieval use of Roman material culture

Research on the perception and reuse of classical heritage is most common amongst art historians, and it is often known as the study of *spolia*. Originally, these were mostly about the incorporation of architectural fragments of classical buildings into later structures, usually concentrating on a small set of monuments mainly from the Italian peninsula.¹⁴¹ However, as research on *spolia* became more established it came to include almost any reuse of objects or materials from a previous era in some later period.¹⁴² As mentioned, this practice is not exclusively restricted to the medieval period and the use of Roman materials, but there are plenty of other instances. For example, in Rome the 3rd-century BC Temple of Apollo Sosias used 5th-century BC *spolia*,¹⁴³ while in Orkney and the Atlantic Scottish seaboard Neolithic graves were reused in the Iron Age, and Neolithic decorative patterns were copied on Iron Age ceramics.¹⁴⁴

However, in terms of the interpretation of this phenomenon, whether we name it *spolia* or just reuse, scholars shift between two opposing fields: either observing it as the result of a

¹³⁷ Olsen 2003, 87 – 104; Hodder 2006, v; Ingold 2007, 1 – 16

¹³⁸ Miller (ed.) 1998; 2005

¹³⁹ Brown 2001, 1 – 16

¹⁴⁰ Latour 2005

¹⁴¹ For example, the work of Esch 1969, 1 – 64

¹⁴² Kinney 2006, 233

¹⁴³ Greenhalgh 1999, 788

¹⁴⁴ Hingley 1996, 231 – 243

“practical” necessity (recycling, lack of raw materials, etc.) or as some kind of an “ideological” statement. One of the most influential studies on *spolia* in the traditional sense (reuse of classical heritage in medieval architecture) and its categorization was carried out by the German historian A. Esch.¹⁴⁵ He identified five essential motivations for *spolia* by studying mostly examples from Italy: convenience and availability; profanation and exorcism of demonic force; *interpretatio christiana*; political legitimation; and aesthetic admiration.¹⁴⁶ Similar categorizations also appear in Stocker and Everson’s article on building stone, proposing casual, functional and iconic use – causal reuse occurs when the function of the original stone is disregarded; it is functional when an element is reused for the purpose for which it was made; and it is iconic when a particular stone is reused because of its associations, history or superstitious power.¹⁴⁷

A very special case in the study of *spolia*, especially concerning more “meaningful” reuses, are reused antique gems, often found on crosses or other reliquaries. Here the debate is often whether previous “pagan” notions were relevant or the objects were used in a completely new Christian symbolic order. Hamann-MacLean believed that gems were valued for their antiquity, exquisite craftsmanship and supernatural powers more and longer than other objects or materials from antiquity. For him, the Herimann Cross (1040), where a female portrait (Livia?) functions as a head of Christ, was a “form of reified mystery,” in which antipathy of pagan and Christian was surpassed by the timeless numen of a precious substance.¹⁴⁸ In an earlier study on gems, Wentzel completely rejects the idea that any pre-Christian and pagan significance of these stones was known in the Middle Ages, and he sees the Herimann Cross in a completely different way.¹⁴⁹ He argues that the unusual appearance of the cameo and its probable discovery in the ground was most certainly understood in the medieval mind as the head of the Savior himself.¹⁵⁰ More recent studies on ancient gems have tried to avoid these dualities of the pagan / Christian and classical / medieval. For example, the research of A. Krug sees the medieval collectors in a quite different light from the stereotype of a “naive ignoramus”, but as capable to read

¹⁴⁵ Esch 1969, 1 – 64

¹⁴⁶ Esch 1969, 42 – 57

¹⁴⁷ Stocker and Everson 1990, 83 – 101

¹⁴⁸ Hamann-MacLean 1949 – 50, 166

¹⁴⁹ Wentzel 1941, 45 – 98

¹⁵⁰ Wentzel 1941, 49

the gems in more than one sense.¹⁵¹ However, we should note that in most traditional studies on *spolia*, the examples that were taken into consideration are understood as art works and symbolical representations of a strong authority – political or religious; from the Arch of Constantine to the chapel of Charlemagne in Aachen.¹⁵²

Contrary to these examples, archaeological excavations revealed many reuses of Roman artefacts in contexts not so explicitly related to the utilization of these objects in an imagery of some specific historical authority. They were identified in many graves throughout the medieval period in England,¹⁵³ Switzerland¹⁵⁴ and Italy.¹⁵⁵ These studies also raised the question of the motivation for reuse. A relatively recent study by Eckardt and Williams elaborated possible interpretations of this phenomenon in Anglo-Saxon graves (5th – 7th century), questioning earlier assumptions that emphasized either its practical aspects or its magical significance.¹⁵⁶ Their contribution develops these interpretations and suggests:

“that the reuse of Roman artifacts can also be understood in relation to their role in defining social memories. The funerary contexts, in which these objects were discovered, the ways in which they were used in early Anglo-Saxon costume, and their burial with the early Anglo-Saxon dead, all provide evidence to suggest that Roman objects were important in defining relationships between past and present in Early Anglo Saxon England. In contrast to later periods, such social and symbolic meaning may not have been related to a coherent ideology of reclaiming a specifically Roman past. Rather, because these objects had no known biographies of production, exchange and use, they became the focus of other kinds of social memory focusing upon their supernatural associations.”¹⁵⁷

In order to support these statements they have explored different aspects / stages in the practice of reuse. Starting with the methods of their retrieval, it is argued that the way of acquiring Roman objects from deserted Roman settlements, hoards and burial sites most certainly had a deep impact on the way they would be evaluated by the new users. In contrast to objects that were possessions obtained through social exchange and produced by known craftsman, these objects could have been related to special places and to some

¹⁵¹ Krug 1993, 161 – 172

¹⁵² Brenk 1987, 103 – 109

¹⁵³ Down and Welch 1990

¹⁵⁴ Frey-Kupper 2008, 222 – 226

¹⁵⁵ Travaini 2004, 166 – 168; Lusuardi Siena 1999, 751 – 784

¹⁵⁶ Eckardt and Williams 2003, 141 – 170

¹⁵⁷ Eckardt and Williams 2003, 146

general notion of the past. Another important issue is how they were incorporated into the funeral costume, since in some cases Roman brooches and pierced Roman coins were found suggesting that they served as dress elements of the deceased. To some extent such reuses are connected with female and child burials, indicating that they were perhaps seen as appropriate for signalling between the age and gender groups of these societies. And finally, usage of Roman objects as mortuary containers and structures has been preferred for their apotropaic or protective function.

Another and less visible way of reuse is the recycling of Roman metal objects. This was usually interpreted as an economically driven practice, as the effort to mine new metal ore was much greater than melting down existing objects. Yet a recent study on the metal component of saucer brooches (5th – 7th centuries) suggests that this practice hints at a much wider meaning, arguing for an understanding of the metal scrap as an “ancestral material”.¹⁵⁸ The analyses have shown that there was considerable control over the zinc content within the studied pair of saucer brooches, which were cast mostly from retained or recovered late Roman brass objects and less from a new copper alloy.

“In the case of the saucer brooches, in order to provide a suitable level of control in the zinc content seen in these brooch pairs it is likely that a single common brass object was divided in two, half in one crucible and half in the other. Additional copper and bronze scrap was added to give the required amount of metal for casting the brooch. The most likely social or cultural explanation for this complexity would be that the brass object had particular meaning which it was desired to invest equally in both new saucer brooches. The most likely explanation is that a common ancestral brass artefact was deliberately divided so that the ancestral values were passed through the metal into the new saucer brooches,...”¹⁵⁹

To sum up this part, it seems that the question of reuse of Roman objects in the medieval period continuously left scholars with ambiguous attitudes on the subject, and even when we suppose that the reuse is “clearly” driven by economic reasons this may not be the case.

¹⁵⁸ Caple 2010, 305 – 318

¹⁵⁹ Caple 2010, 314

IV. COIN CIRCULATION AND USE IN THE PERIOD OF ROMAN DOMINANCE IN THE TERRITORY OF SERBIA

Before proceeding to the questions on how Roman coins were perceived, used and valued in medieval communities, it is first necessary to go back a step and to establish with what this changed valuation should be compared. In other words, how was the value of these coins conceptualized in their original use context? To define an “original context of use” for these coins is very problematic, since the archaeological record only provides us with hints about their use during the medieval period. Yet, by analysing the coins (mostly base metal denominations from the 3rd and 4th centuries AD with some 2nd-century coins, including *denarii*),¹⁶⁰ it is clear that they present a part of the coin pool dating from the period when the region was a part of the Roman Empire.

In this chapter, I will explore the scale and nature of coin use in the period from the Roman conquest of the territories of present-day Serbia (the last decades of the 1st century BC) to the breakdown of the Danubian limes, when the supplies of bronze coinage to this region ceased (the end of the 4th century AD). The aim of this chapter is to examine how the value of coinage was constructed through the interaction between the population and state structures of the established provinces, Pannonia Inferior (later Pannonia Secunda) and Moesia Superior (later Moesia Prima, Dardania, Dacia Mediteranea and Dacia Ripensis) (Maps 2 and 3). The presence and power of the Roman state and the later absence of these factors is the key point of difference that influenced the perception and evaluation of these coins through time. Therefore, it is necessary to realize how the authority of the Roman apparatus affected coin use, before we ponder the question of how its disappearance was replaced with other factors in later periods.

Apart from the use of coins within the Roman territories, we also have evidence of the circulation of Roman coinage across the Roman border, in modern-day Bačka and Banat. Although there are examples of the medieval reuse of Roman coins in the territories of the former Barbaricum, these are small in number and therefore this region will not be examined.

¹⁶⁰ More than 80% are Ae-s from the 4th century AD, see Chapter II.

4.1 Coin circulation and use in the territory of Serbia in the period before the Roman conquest (c. 400 BC – AD 1)

Although it was only with the Roman conquest and organization of Roman military, political and administrative structures that the supply of coinage in the area of modern-day Serbia started to operate on a regular basis, the first coins actually appeared in this region many centuries earlier, in the first half of the 4th century BC. Since these early examples are not found in medieval graves, and are thus beyond the scope of this research, I will address these very briefly¹⁶¹ since I believe it is important to give a short insight into the level of familiarity with coin use before the Romans. This is important in order to distinguish the changes in the understanding of coinage and its role after the integration of these territories into the Imperial monetary system. Greek coins of the late Classical and Hellenistic periods, as well as issues of the Celtic tribe Scordisci, were the main coin types used in the northern part of the central Balkans and in the southern Pannonian plain before the adoption of the Roman monetary system.¹⁶² Three barbarian tribes (the Triballi, the Dardanians and the Scordisci) are usually seen as the main participants in monetary transactions and thus the coins' users. The Triballi settled in the area between the lower course of the Southern Morava and the Danube, and are mentioned in historical sources from the second half of the 5th century BC.¹⁶³ Dardanian lands stretched from the Drim to the Timok, and included the upper course of the Vardar in the south and the Ibar valley in the northwest.¹⁶⁴ In 279 BC Gallic warriors on their way to central Greece passed the Danube Basin and the Balkan Peninsula. On their way back, some of them settled permanently around the confluence of the Sava and the Danube – those Celts were known as the Scordisci.¹⁶⁵

The use and function of coins within the barbarian societies has been an intriguing issue for many years in Serbian archaeology, numismatics and history. Inevitably, these questions are closely connected with the socio-economic organization and structure of the different tribes mentioned as the users, later even as the producers of coins, and their

¹⁶¹ For any further inquiry and more about this topic see the quoted authors with bibliographies.

¹⁶² Ujes 2002–2003, 165–171

¹⁶³ Papazoglu 1978, 9

¹⁶⁴ Papazoglu 1978, 131

¹⁶⁵ Papazoglu 1978, 271

contacts with the classical cultures through which they were initially introduced with coinage.

Scholars mainly agree that the political organization of prehistoric Balkan communities was based on a kinship structure.¹⁶⁶ However, the levels of sophistication and cohesiveness among different kinships and tribes, as well as the strength of the main authority, certainly varied. However, no matter how complex these structures became, they did not exceed the level of chiefdom and transform into “proper states”. From the three abovementioned tribes, it seems that the Triballi had the simplest and loosest political structure. They were semi-nomadic herders and farmers who readily changed their habitation, and they were only occasionally united in large tribal alliances.¹⁶⁷ On the other hand, the Scordisci and Dardani were politically and socially organized on a much more complex level. Popović interprets the social organization of the Scordisci as a chiefdom in its true sense, characterized by a deep social stratification and the existence of a centre (or more) where goods were redistributed and all economic, social and religious activities were coordinated.¹⁶⁸ The most stable and the most complex political and socio-economic organization was within the Dardani tribe. As Papazoglu has suggested, it “was not an ordinary tribal alliance, but a *super-tribal* organization of lasting character.”¹⁶⁹ One of its main features was a strong and firmly established ruler. The Dardanian chiefs were hereditary and even their title could have been, to a certain extent, comparable with the designation of a king.¹⁷⁰ Some interesting testimonies reveal that among Dardanians there existed individuals who owned up to a thousand or more slaves. These slaves were obliged to cultivate the land during peacetime and to fight for their lord in wartime.

Coinage initially entered into these different communities as a consequence of a particular set of historical circumstances, i.e. major military and political events in the ancient world. In all cases, barbarians were introduced to coins through contact with the classical societies, either by the foundation of colonies that minted coins in their territories, such as Damastion,¹⁷¹ or by the engagement of barbarians in wars and exchange. Prehistoric central Balkan tribes were provided with coins through three different methods: through

¹⁶⁶ Papazoglu 1978, 442; Popović 1987a, 120

¹⁶⁷ Papazoglu 1978, 521 – 522

¹⁶⁸ Popović 1987a, 138

¹⁶⁹ Papazoglu 1978, 445

¹⁷⁰ Papazoglu 1978, 443 – 445

¹⁷¹ Ujes 2011, 487 – 496

payments as mercenaries, plunder and trade. The Triballi are mentioned as mercenaries in the army of Philip II (360/359 – 336 BC).¹⁷² Other tribes, the Dardani and the Scordisci, were also paid armed forces. Ujes has demonstrated in several studies that the major influx of Macedonian and Hellenistic coinage into the territory of the Scordisci was connected with the military arrangements and plans of Philip V (221 – 179 BC) at the end of his life.¹⁷³ These coins probably reached the Scordisci as payments, if not directly from Philip, then perhaps mediated through another tribe, the Bastarnae, who are directly mentioned in sources as mercenaries in Philip V's army.¹⁷⁴ A similar explanation could be given for the rapid and extensive spread of coins of Appollonia and Dyrrachium in the region of the Scordisci, but in this case as a result of their involvement during the Roman Civil War.¹⁷⁵ By contrast, Papazoglu emphasized trade and plunder as the main ways in which barbarians obtained coinage, such as the trade in salt between the Dardanians and the Macedonians, or the plundering of Greek shrines in the 80s of the 1st century BC, performed by the Dardanians among other numerous tribes.¹⁷⁶ In Papazoglu's opinion: "A much smaller source of money came from the payments of mercenaries. As long as tribal society is not undermined by distinctions based on property, there can be no mercenary service within it, i.e. no system under which individuals voluntarily enter a foreign army for pay. [...] whole tribes headed by their chiefs, carried out certain tasks for a monetary payment."¹⁷⁷

Similar to the interpretation of how coinage entered barbarian societies, Papazoglu understood the function and use of coins in these communities mainly in an economic sense. A rather spontaneous and mechanical development has been suggested – from the valuation of coinage for its precious metal to an indispensable means of exchange, not just with other parties, but among the tribe themselves.¹⁷⁸ However, in Papazoglu's opinion the use of coins among different tribes varied. The Triballi were less monetized, while the Dardanians and the Scordisci did not only know how to use money, but minted their own.¹⁷⁹ Whereas the production of coins by the Scordisci is confirmed by many

¹⁷² Papazoglu 1978, 466

¹⁷³ Ujes 2002, 20 – 25

¹⁷⁴ Ujes 2002, 25

¹⁷⁵ Ujes 2012, 375

¹⁷⁶ Papazoglu 1978, 462, 464

¹⁷⁷ Papazoglu 1978, 465

¹⁷⁸ Papazoglu 1978, 467

¹⁷⁹ Papazoglu 1978, 463

numismatic finds, in the case of the Dardanians there is no evidence for this.¹⁸⁰ In spite of the absence of finds, Papazoglu insisted that there was the possibility that the Dardanians also minted coins, since they were in such close proximity to the classical Greek and Macedonian world and had the most complex socio-political structure.¹⁸¹

In contrast to the emphasis on economic aspects in Papazoglu's approach, other scholars have proposed different interpretations, allowing coinage to have multifaceted meanings in barbarian culture. Popović interpreted the use of coins in these groups more from the perspectives of scholars such as Polanyi, Godelier and Mauss.¹⁸² In other words, since the economy of pre-modern societies is embedded in a cultural matrix and cannot be observed separately from all other aspects of that society, coinage in prehistoric Balkan communities did not only have an economic function, but it was above all a means of a social exchange.¹⁸³ According to the ways the barbarians obtained the coinage – plunder, collective mercenary activity, gifts, etc. – it was concentrated in the hands of the warrior aristocracy.¹⁸⁴ The acquired money was used first and foremost for maintaining political power and in gift exchanges through which alliances and friendships were confirmed; thus the coins are distributed mainly in the upper social strata.¹⁸⁵ However, the emergence of smaller denominations within the coin production of the Scordisci opens the question: is this a sign of the adjustment of the coinage system to the use of coins for everyday transactions? Popović suggested that even if this is the case, and smaller denominations do represent indications for the emergence of a wider use of coins among the population in a more economic manner, it may be that the two denominations, larger and smaller, did not compose one united monetary (value?) standard. Rather they may have been used for completely different purposes and on different occasions, belonging to two “parallel” standards that did not intertwine.¹⁸⁶

Recent studies on the use of coins in barbarian societies support this idea of separate functions and meanings of denominations, especially in the case of the Scordisci. The large silver coins were used mainly as “bullion coins” and “transaction coins” for the storage of

¹⁸⁰ Popović 1987a, 61 – 63

¹⁸¹ Papazoglu 1978, 467 – 469

¹⁸² Popović 1987a, 127, 132, 151

¹⁸³ Popović 1987a, 131

¹⁸⁴ Popović 1987a, 132

¹⁸⁵ Popović 1987a, 132

¹⁸⁶ Popović 1987a, 139 – 140

wealth and for effecting large-scale payments.¹⁸⁷ On the other hand, commercial aspects are far more recognized in the use of small denominations. They were probably used in retail contexts or as small-sum payments, as well as for settling other minor obligations within Scordiscian society.¹⁸⁸ In accordance with this, Ujes proposes that the economic base of the Scordisci culture should be significantly reconsidered.

At the end of this section, I would like to conclude with some comments on the state of monetary affairs before these territories and their populations were incorporated into the Roman Empire. I will also introduce some aspects of coin use that have not been discussed, maybe because they are actually absent in this period, but are perhaps crucial for understanding the essential differences in the use and value of coins before and after the Romans. It seems that two major features that are very much connected with the use of coinage are missing prior to the Roman conquest – a well-determined tax system and an obligation to pay taxes via coins. In socially stratified societies, the main source of income for those who have only indirect connections with food production is through tribute.¹⁸⁹ This may include taxes, rents, booty, remunerations and gifts.¹⁹⁰ Most certainly tributes to chiefs and the elite in prehistoric Balkan communities were an obligation of the people, but to date we do not have any indication that this was settled by coinage. We only have mention of taxes paid in coins in indigenous societies in the Illyrian Kingdom (mostly modern Albania) under the rule of Genthius (180 – 168 BC).¹⁹¹ The absence of such coin use invites us to rethink the nature of coinage, as well as how widespread the use of coins in these communities actually was.

The main supply of coinage in these areas was, after all, mainly through mercenary payments, despite the production of the Scordisci, and as such it was not a constant and stable flow, but occasional and dependent on an outside source and particular political events. In contrast to this, the arrival of Roman military and state structures provided more suitable conditions for a much wider spread of coins, involving the population in monetary transactions on a whole different level than before. On the one hand, by positioning troops and governmental officials the need for a continuous supply of coins was created; but on

¹⁸⁷ Ujes 2002, 25 – 26

¹⁸⁸ Ujes 2002, 28

¹⁸⁹ Claessen 1978, 549

¹⁹⁰ Claessen 1978, 554, 571

¹⁹¹ Popović 1987a, 21

the other hand, by introducing taxes, a mechanism to bring back all the coins to the source (the Roman state) was also present. Furthermore, by imposing coin taxes people who previously had no necessity to engage in monetary transactions were now compelled to do so in order to get hold of some coins. However, this is only an ideal concept; how the process of integration into the Imperial monetary system actually worked and to what extent coin use infiltrated the population is a different matter, and will be discussed in the following section.

4.2 Roman conquest and integration into the Imperial monetary system (c. AD 1 – 200)

Roman military and urban centres were the main points that were supplied with coinage for the payment of soldiers and governmental officials, and from there coinage spread into the rural hinterland. A rough estimation for the number of soldiers in Singidunum is that in the 3rd century AD there were about 5 000 soldiers stationed in the city.¹⁹² The annual pay (*stipendium*) for a legionary soldier was 600 *denarii* under Septimius Severus, and 900 *denarii* during the reign of Caracalla.¹⁹³ Accordingly, in these periods the amount of *denarii* needed only for the military pay of the troops in Singidunum would have been 3 000 000 under Septimius Severus, or 4 500 000 *denarii* during the reign of Caracalla. The demand for coins to cover military payments in Singidunum in the earlier period was most certainly less, since the annual pay for a legionary soldier was 225 *denarii* until Domitian and 300 *denarii* afterwards.¹⁹⁴ Singidunum was just one of the many points in which troops were stationed and numerous other fortifications also had soldiers. Apart from legions, many auxiliary troops were positioned across Pannonia Inferior and Moesia Superior. The rates of pay for auxiliary soldiers have been a disputed topic over the years, but Speidel calculated that the pay for a *miles cohortis* reached 750 *denarii* by the time of Caracalla.¹⁹⁵ Although these numbers, like any other calculations concerning coin production in Antiquity, should be treated with great caution they are presented here only to illustrate, at least partially, the amount of coinage required to cover state payments in these provinces, to which we should add the pay of government officials and numerous other expenditures. Certainly, many of the state's obligations towards soldiers were settled not in coinage but in kind, and this must have reduced the demand for coinage.

¹⁹² Kondić 1967, 26

¹⁹³ Speidel 1992, 106

¹⁹⁴ Speidel 1992, 106

¹⁹⁵ Speidel 1992, 106

At the time when the present-day territories of Serbia were incorporated into the Roman Empire, the Augustan monetary system was in use, which operated with only small changes until the end of the 2nd century AD. During this whole period the basis of the entire coinage system was the silver *denarius*.

The process of debasement of the *denarius* started with Nero's monetary reform in AD 64, when its weight was reduced to 1/96 of a pound of silver.¹⁹⁶ This continued well into the 2nd century; though the weight remained stable, the level of silver fineness decreased, and by the end of the 2nd century the *denarius* was seriously depreciated. In AD 215 Caracalla introduced a new coin, the *antoninianus* (two *denarii*), and both denominations were struck in parallel, but by the middle of the 3rd century *denarii* ceased to be minted.¹⁹⁷ The organization of the production of coinage during the first two centuries AD was highly centralized. Coins were mainly minted in Rome, where gold, silver and base metal denominations were struck and exported to all other areas from Italy.¹⁹⁸ A large number of towns in Greece, Asia Minor and Syria retained or regained the authority to produce coins of a municipal or provincial character, producing mainly bronze coins, but in some mints silver denominations were also struck.¹⁹⁹ Due to this largely centralized production of coinage, its distribution was also managed from the core – Rome.

Generally, the model of coin distribution in the Roman Empire was mostly shaped by state expenditure, from which military pay was the greatest cost, and by state revenues (taxes).²⁰⁰ It is estimated that army costs consumed about two thirds of the state budget in the mid-2nd century, while the remaining expenditure included the salaries of public employees, public buildings, handouts, the emperor's household costs, gifts, and external subsidies.²⁰¹ Accordingly, the structure of public spending affected the dispersal of coinage the most, and army pay was the main tool through which coins reached the provinces.²⁰² On the other hand, the trade and use of coins as a means of exchange may have had a limited impact on the circulation of coins. According to Duncan-Jones, after a group of coins were dispatched by the state to certain areas they stayed within regional economies

¹⁹⁶ Butcher and Ponting 2005, 164, footnote 2

¹⁹⁷ Borić-Brešković 1994, 104

¹⁹⁸ Howgego 1994, 6

¹⁹⁹ For more on Roman provincial coinage, see Butcher 1988

²⁰⁰ Garnsey and Saller 1996, 96

²⁰¹ Duncan-Jones 1994, 45

²⁰² Duncan-Jones 1994, 106; Howgego 1994, 6

and did not circulate widely on a large scale.²⁰³ Contrary to this, Hopkins suggested a model where trade was a major factor for the circulation of coinage, but this was in close connection to the collection of taxes in money.²⁰⁴ The Roman Empire was comprised of two types of province: tax-exporting and tax-consuming provinces.²⁰⁵ The former were provinces without garrisons or only lightly garrisoned, which created a “surplus” of coinage in their taxes.²⁰⁶ These were mainly in the Iberian Peninsula, the south of France, and western Asia Minor. The other type included Italy with the city of Rome and an outer ring of frontier provinces in which defensive armies were stationed.²⁰⁷ Both the centre and border provinces consumed a large volume of taxes, and actually did not cover expenses with the taxes collected only from their territories, while in the case of Italy, tax on land was not even paid.²⁰⁸ On the other hand, the tax-exporting provinces, not having an army, could not acquire money through state payment, but had to resort to trade in order to keep paying the taxes.

In the following section, I will present the general features of coin circulation and coin use in the Roman provinces Pannonia Inferior and Moesia Superior. Both of these provinces belonged to the “army” provinces and they probably “consumed” more coins than were collected as tax. The province of Moesia had been registered in the Roman tax system since the time of Tiberius (AD 14 – 37)²⁰⁹ and from that time the population was gradually compelled to start settling at least part of such obligations in coins. But it is difficult to say to what degree commerce and other types of exchange included coinage. Generally, the economy remained largely on a subsistence level throughout the whole period, satisfying local needs.²¹⁰ Production, in terms of agriculture and different crafts, never reached an export level. On the other hand, being rich in metal ores, Upper Moesia significantly exploited and exported metal, as an example of lead casting manufactured in Dardania and found in a shipwreck in Caesarea shows.²¹¹ If we must distinguish the main contribution of Upper Moesia and other Balkan provinces (Noricum, Pannonia, Dalmatia) to the economy

²⁰³ Duncan-Jones 2002 [1990], 30 – 47

²⁰⁴ Hopkins 1980, 101 – 125

²⁰⁵ Hopkins 1980, 101

²⁰⁶ Garnsey and Saller 1996, 96

²⁰⁷ Hopkins 1980, 101

²⁰⁸ Hopkins 1980, 101; Garnsey and Saller 1996, 96

²⁰⁹ Mirković 1968a, 22, with footnote 9

²¹⁰ Mirković 1968a, 143

²¹¹ Dušanić 2006, 87 – 89

of the Empire, it is most certainly the supply of metal. The mining industry was strictly under the control of the state, and the individuals and communities allowed to take part in the metal business were either of senatorial rank or, more often, equestrians.²¹² Mining operations took place within a strictly defined territorial entity distinct from colonial, municipal, or other territories within a province. In his studies on *res metallica* of Illyricum, Dušanić came to the conclusion that due to this the Balkan provinces were considered important and specific enough by the Roman authorities to introduce a series of adaptations to the socio-administrative structure that are not observed elsewhere. Thus, the direct and strong interference of the state's top on the organization of these territories was crucial in shaping the Romanization process.²¹³

Despite not being great exporters, Lower Pannonia and Upper Moesia were provinces that imported various goods and parts of their populations consumed not only local products, but also formed a taste for certain unavailable goods thus creating demand for foreign commodities. This is most obvious in larger urban zones, such as Singidunum, where pottery from workshops in northern Italy and southern Gaul was already being traded as of the end of the 1st and beginning of the 2nd centuries.²¹⁴ Throughout the 2nd century Singidunum was supplied with luxurious ceramics from various western centres, and with food that was not available in the immediate vicinity, such as olives and olive oil.²¹⁵ However, it should be noted that in some cases it is difficult to distinguish what pottery was brought by soldiers as part of their equipment and what arrived as a result of commerce.²¹⁶ Another good example that attests to importing activities in Lower Pannonia are stone products (funeral monuments, votive altars and architectural elements) that originate from Sirmium. Analysis of the stone monuments revealed that although there were materials for limestone products in the wider region of Sirmium (a quarry was located less than 100 km to the south), the marble used for the various objects came from quarries in the eastern Alps – Gummern and Pohorje.²¹⁷ These centres were the main providers of marble products for Sirmium from the 1st to the 3rd century AD.²¹⁸ At the end of the 3rd

²¹² Dušanić 2006, 85 – 102; for a detailed debate on the questions of ownership and rights on managing or exploiting mines by the State, the Emperor or private individuals see Hirt 2010, 82 – 93.

²¹³ Dušanić 1989, 154

²¹⁴ Nikolić-Đorđević 2000, 187 – 188

²¹⁵ Nikolić-Đorđević 2000, 189 – 193

²¹⁶ Nikolić-Đorđević 2000, 15, 34, 190

²¹⁷ Đurić et al. 2006, 105, 113

²¹⁸ Đurić et al. 2006, 115 – 116

century the demand for marble rose considerably due to the extensive construction of Imperial buildings and marble was also shipped to Sirmium from further centres in the Eastern Mediterranean and Egypt.²¹⁹

4.2.1 Coin circulation and use (1st – 2nd century AD)

In contrast to the relatively poorly preserved archaeological remains from the 1st and 2nd centuries, the coin finds from this period testify not only about the use of coinage, but are also sometimes the only witness to the intensive activities of this period. However, the greatest problem concerning finds of Roman coins, in general and from the territory of Serbia, is the poor documentation about the context of the find, regardless of whether the finds are from sites or from hoards. In site finds of coins, usually detailed data on its context within a site is missing – floor, wall, ditch, etc. – and very often the finds originate from disturbed archaeological layers. On the other hand, another difficulty is that hoards are not frequently found in systematic archaeological excavations, but rather accidentally. Therefore, they are sometimes disturbed and parts end up in private collections. It is not always certain if the entire content of a hoard is known to numismatists and archaeologists. In the cases of coin depositions in burials, the circumstances of finds are better known.

Despite this, the numismatic data provides us with an overview of the general features of coin use in the 1st and 2nd centuries in these territories. As already mentioned, the major influx of Roman coins had already started in the last decades of the 1st century during the period of conquest and expansion of Roman power in this area, only to be increased with the establishment of Roman state structures. In this early period, especially in the 1st century, Republican *denarii* and legionary *denarii* of M. Antony were still in use and constitute about 25% to 60% of the content of several hoards buried at the end of the 1st century.²²⁰ Though they constitute less than 2% of the total, legionary *denarii* of M. Antony are even present in a hoard from Čortanovci (Srem) buried at the beginning of the 3rd century.²²¹ Imperial issues also started to circulate very soon after the conquest with issues of the Rome mint dominating, though examples from other mints sporadically

²¹⁹ Đurić et al. 2006, 118 – 122

²²⁰ In the Bare hoard around 46%: Popović and Borić-Brešković 1994a, 172; In the Tekija hoard around 25%: Popović 1975, 100; In the Boljetin hoard around 60%: Popović 1987b, 6

²²¹ Borić-Brešković and Vojvoda 2011, 9

appeared over time – e.g. *drachms* minted in Lycia, Caesarea and Amisus.²²² A wide range of denominations and emperors are represented in coin finds until the end of the 2nd century, but *denarii* are the main coins recorded in hoards. Apart from the widespread finds of *denarii*, base metal denominations began to circulate much more frequently and, in comparison to the earlier period before the Roman conquest, it seems that the use of bronze coinage was closely connected with the organization of Roman settlements.

From the emperors of the 1st century, the *denarii* of Vespasian are dominant in several hoards buried at the end of the 1st century; usually his issues represent about one third of all examples.²²³ Even in the hoards buried in the course of the 2nd century, issues struck under Vespasian remained the most represented in comparison to issues of other 1st-century emperors.²²⁴ However, in the hoard of *aureii* (250) from Zemun (Taurunum), buried at the beginning of the 2nd century, the most represented issues are those of Domitian (around 80%).²²⁵ A further hoard of 27 *aureii* from Belgrade (Batal – Džamija) had a heterogeneous composition, including issues from Nero to Hadrian, in which examples of Vespasian (7), Domitian (5) and Trajan dominate (7).²²⁶ The presence of 2nd-century *denarii* is documented among various hoards buried from 168/169 until the middle of the 3rd century. The analysis of the contents of these hoards revealed no uniform influx of 2nd-century *denarii*, but the hoards had peaks in the influx under diverse emperors from the 2nd century. However, to a certain extent, issues under Antoninus Pius tend to be the most numerous.²²⁷ On the other hand, issues of other 2nd-century emperors are also very well represented. The issues of Trajan are consistently present in the hoards, but they never compose the majority of any hoard and usually make up about 10–12% of the hoard.²²⁸ Coins of Hadrian and his family are slightly better represented in comparison to the issues

²²² In the Grocka hoard there is a Domitianic drachma of Lycia: Borić-Brešković 2003, 11 – 58; in the Čortanovci hoard there are 2 drachmae, one issue of Trajan from Lycia and one of Hadrian from Amisus: Borić-Brešković and Vojvoda 2011, 9; in the Radalj hoard there is one drachma of Trajan from Caesarea: Borić-Brešković and Arsenijević 2008, 93 – 156.

²²³ In the Bare hoard about 30% Popović and Borić-Brešković 1994a, 172; in the Tekija hoard about 33% Popović 1975, 100; in the Boljetin hoard around 26%: Popović 1987b, 6.

²²⁴ In the Grocka hoard: Borić-Brešković 2003, 11 – 58; in the Nemenikuće hoard: Borić-Brešković and Crnobrnja 2005, 7 – 94; in the Ušće kod Obrenovca hoard: Borić-Brešković and Crnobrnja 2008, 9 – 82

²²⁵ Mirmik 2008, 88

²²⁶ Vasić 1968, 237 – 246

²²⁷ In the Grocka hoard: Borić-Brešković 2003, 11 – 58; in the Nemenikuće hoard: Borić-Brešković and Crnobrnja 2005, 7 – 94; in the Radalj hoard: Borić-Brešković and Arsenijević 2008, 93 – 156

²²⁸ In the Grocka hoard: Borić-Brešković 2003, 11 – 58; in the Nemenikuće hoard: Borić-Brešković and Crnobrnja 2005, 7 – 94; in the Radalj hoard: Borić-Brešković and Arsenijević 2008, 93 – 156; in the Ušće kod Obrenovca hoard: Borić-Brešković and Crnobrnja 2008, 9 – 82

of Trajan, with the exception of one hoard from the vicinity of Požarevac, where his issues dominate the whole hoard.²²⁹ The issues of Marcus Aurelius comprise about 11 to 16% of finds in hoards,²³⁰ while again only in one hoard are his issues the most numerous at about 34% of the total.²³¹

Apart from the usual denominations of Roman coinage, during the 2nd century a special type of coin was used in some parts of the Balkan territories. The so called mine coins (*nummi metallorum*) were used for the expenditures of the administrative apparatus and other staff of the mining districts.²³² However, these types of coins have not been found having had a secondary use in the medieval period and will not be discussed in detail.

Having presenting some general features of the coin types in use, I wish to turn to the question of the manner in which they were used. By observing different denominations together with the contexts in which they are found it is possible to interpret to some degree the manner of their use. Among the single coin finds from the 1st and 2nd centuries the base metal denominations (*as*, *sestertius* and *dupondius*) are more represented than *denarii*, while single finds of *aurei* are extremely rare. On the other hand, hoards usually contain precious metal denominations, mainly *denarii* and to a lesser extent *aurei*. Hoards of base metal denominations have also been recovered on several occasions, but they are more uncommon.²³³ This picture is generally in accordance with the patterns of coin finds across the Empire. Generally, such patterns are explained with the idea that smaller denominations were used in every day and retail transactions, while bigger coins, *denarii* and *aurei*, were used as a store of value. However, we should be aware that the pattern of stray finds is biased in favour of base metal denominations. The smaller denominations were used more often, but, as the investigations at Pompeii revealed, people carried with them a variety of denominations, including gold pieces, and they were keen on using all of them for transactions. Thus, what the pattern of site finds actually reveals is that the low value of bronze coins meant diminished efforts to find them after they were lost. On the other hand, if a *denarius*, or especially an *aureus*, was lost its owner would try harder to

²²⁹ Borić-Brešković and Vojvoda 2010, 21 – 106

²³⁰ In the Grocka hoard about 11%: Borić-Brešković 2003, 11 – 58; in the Nemenikuće hoard about 15%: Borić-Brešković and Crnobrnja 2005, 7 – 94; in the Radalj hoard about 16% Borić-Brešković and Arsenijević 2008, 93 – 156; in the hoard near Požarevac around 13%: Borić-Brešković and Vojvoda 2010, 21 – 106

²³¹ In the Ušće kod Obrenovca hoard: Borić-Brešković and Crnobrnja 2008, 9 – 82

²³² For more see Dušanić 1978, 23 – 29; 1980, 9 – 18

²³³ For example the Babe hoard Mihailović 1994, 25 – 34; see also Borić-Brešković 2005, 341 – 359

recover it. But to what extent these “every day and retail transactions” were practiced in society and for whom the accumulation of wealth was possible are perhaps more important questions.

I will first consider the question of the use of base metal denominations. As mentioned previously, the use of base metal denominations increased in the 1st and 2nd centuries in comparison to the period before the Roman conquest, but if we observe further, finds of bronze coins are far more frequent from the 3rd and 4th centuries. The reasons why we have so many more finds of base metal coins in the later period will be discussed in the next section where I explore the monetary affairs of the Late Empire, but for now the increased amount of coins from this period should be kept in mind. Usually finds of bronze coins from the 1st and 2nd centuries from sites that were occupied for several centuries comprise only a minor part of the total in comparison to the number of coins from the 3rd and 4th centuries. For example, in *Rittium* about one quarter of coin finds are from the first two centuries and the rest are coins of the 3rd and 4th centuries.²³⁴

The main function of base metal denominations as a means of exchange is, though generally accepted, also very much discussed. Among others, Crawford has explored this function of Roman coinage and come to the conclusion “that an economic and social system in which coined money played a major role as a means of exchange, although it existed in the Roman world, was not common.”²³⁵ Despite the existence of a correlation between the system of smaller denominations and prices of various essential commodities (i.e. wine and bread) in the period between 200 BC and AD 200, which facilitated the use of coinage in exchange and spawned many literary notions on everyday monetary transactions, this phenomenon was likely limited to the cities of the Empire.²³⁶ More importantly, the use of coined money as a means of exchange was probably an accidental consequence of its existence, and not the result of government policy. This is in contrast to the other functions of coins, such as their use in payments.²³⁷ This standpoint was questioned by a new reconsideration of the evidence in Howgego’s research, but

²³⁴ Dautova-Ruševljan 1995, 140 – 142

²³⁵ Crawford 1970, 40

²³⁶ Crawford 1970, 41

²³⁷ Crawford 1970, 45

nevertheless he concluded that the “money was the normal form of exchange of goods, at least in towns”.²³⁸

But let us see what the coin evidence from the southeastern part of Lower Pannonia may imply about the presence of soldiers and their role in stimulating the use of coinage for exchange. In order to investigate this, I will refer to Dautova-Ruševljan’s catalogue of single finds (179) from the 1st century AD in Srem, originating from various sites in this area.²³⁹ This analysis included single coin finds from urban sites such as Sirmium, from forts along the Danube and other sites (11 in total). The largest concentrations of coins were in Sirmium (122) and Burgene (26), while almost half the sites (5) provided up to 3 coins from this period. Further sites with slightly more examples were Taurunum (9), Rittium (6) and Malata Bononia (5). Concerning the denominations that were represented among the finds, base metal denominations dominated (almost 95%), while the rest (c. 5%) were precious metal examples. The most numerous denomination was the *as*, representing more than half of the whole sample. The larger denominations, *dupondius* and *sestertius*, comprised about one quarter of the sample, whereas denominations smaller than an *as* were represented only with one *quadrans*. The biggest concentration of coin finds was in an urban settlement, which was an administrative centre of the province, and other larger groups of finds were in fortifications. Such a picture is most certainly formed by the history of research, in which sites such as Sirmium and fortifications were investigated more than other types of sites, but the data was also formed by monetary activities in the Roman period. Thus, it should not be neglected that this could indicate that the main background of monetary transactions was in urban and military contexts, and it is probable that the central agents in these transactions were the city population and soldiers. Of course, this does not exclude inhabitants of rural areas using coins as a means of exchange, but implies perhaps that they had to go to cities or the vicinity of a camp to partake in these transactions. At the same time, the data depicts the rural hinterland as a place of little monetary transaction, where the population probably did not handle coins on a daily basis. Aarts viewed coin records from the Dutch river area on the fringe of the Empire populated by Batavians in a similar way:

“Most of the early Roman coins which were found in the rural settlements are unlikely to have been lost during monetary exchange. More probably they were soldier’s pay, brought home by

²³⁸ Howgego 1992, 29

²³⁹ Dautova-Ruševljan 1987, 84 – 92

Batavian soldiers on leave. When the coins arrived in these settlements, they became part of hoards, or were used for ritual and ceremonial purposes, such as the offering of coins in temples or other ritual places. They could also be brought back into circulation and used for market exchange, but only in places which featured a monetary exchange system, i.e. in the *civitas* capital, the forts and the *vici* adjacent to the forts. What is important to note here is that they were being used by the same people, but for different purposes in different contexts.”²⁴⁰

From the use of coins as a means of exchange, I wish to turn to the question of the accumulation of coins and hoarding, or, in other words, to explore their function as a store of value. Coin hoards have usually been examined in order to provide evidence for the historical mention of insecure periods and warfare that prevented the owner from recovering the wealth.²⁴¹ On the other hand, inquiries of by whom, for what purposes, and in what way the hoard was created very often remain underexplored and unanswered, due to the difficulties in addressing these matters.

The hoards buried in the first two centuries on the territory of Serbia indicate various possible answers to these questions. One of the first comments on the features of hoards should be that very often they consist not only of precious metal coins, but also include other objects (jewelry, applications, cult objects, etc.) usually made from silver and gold.²⁴² Thus, coins shared their function as a store of value with other artefacts and this function was not exclusively limited to them, but was also a feature of various types of objects, though the material (precious metal) was obviously important. Further important features of the hoards, particularly concerning the coin finds in them, is that in the cases of *aurei* hoards the preservation of the coins was very good, pointing to their hoarding “immediately” after they were minted, either having circulated for only a little time or hoarded even before entering into circulation.²⁴³ It is clear that in order to get a hold of freshly minted gold coins one has to be in close connection with the state, since the production and distribution of golden coins was carefully organized and supervised by the state structures. Payments for military or administrative officials or public works were

²⁴⁰ Aarts 2005, 11 – 12

²⁴¹ However the correlation between the periods of the deposition of hoards and horizons of destruction in archaeological sites in the territory of Serbia has been seriously questioned by Mihajlović 2010, 9 – 29

²⁴² For example Tekija: Mano-Zisi 1956, 174 – 178; Bare: Popović and Borić-Brešković 1994a, 64 – 71
Nemenikuće: Borić-Brešković and Crnobrnja 2005, 7 – 94; Ušće kod Obrenovca: Ratković 2008, 83 – 94;
Bela Reka: Popović and Borić-Brešković 1994b, 11 – 76

²⁴³ Mirnik 2008, 77; Vasić 1968, 237 – 246

generally the main mechanisms for the distribution of coinage, but this was particularly the case in larger amounts of precious metal coins.

Many of the hoards of silver *denarii* from the territory of Serbia are very often interpreted as the savings of soldiers, particularly of those found in close proximity to military camps.²⁴⁴ One such example is the hoard from Tekija, where, among other objects, parts of a military belt with the inscription *VII R. I. G. Valerius Cresces* were found.²⁴⁵ Archaeological excavations confirmed that this hoard was hidden inside the camp Transdierna (Tekija) where the cohorts V Gallum and IX Gemina Voluntariorum were stationed in the late 1st and 2nd centuries.²⁴⁶ The heterogeneous content of the hoard, which included numerous other objects in addition to the coins, raises the question of how such wealth was acquired. Most likely, apart from military pay, the soldier gained part of his possessions through plunder during invasion campaigns in Dacia.²⁴⁷ Other possible owners of hoards usually were veterans, wealthy landlords or high-positioned local chiefs.

A number of hoards found in the context of large *villa rustica* were interpreted as possessions of the owners of these estates.²⁴⁸ The surroundings of Singidunum, today Grocka and Kosmaj, are known as areas of large agricultural estates in addition to being famous as mine districts, and the hoards found in Nemenikuće and Grocka were understood within this context. The famous hoard from Bare, around 20 km southeast of Viminacium, was interpreted as having belonged to a tribal leader whose family had collected the wealth over several decades and who was in the service of the Roman army.²⁴⁹ Such an interpretation was based on the analysis of the non-monetary part of the hoard, the jewelry and cult objects that derived from Dacian cultural tradition. But the monetary part also indicated such an assumption, since this hoard was the largest hoard of *denarii* from the 1st century and it is questionable whether it would have been possible for a regular Roman soldier to acquire such an amount of coinage during the short Roman domination of this area.

²⁴⁴ Tekija: Popović 1975, 101; Boljetin: Popović 1987b, 10 with footnote 22

²⁴⁵ Mano-Zisi 1956, 175

²⁴⁶ Popović 1987b, 10 with footnote 22

²⁴⁷ Mano-Zisi 1956, 174 – 178

²⁴⁸ Nemenikuće: Borić-Brešković and Crnobrnja 2005, 7 – 94; Grocka: Borić-Brešković 2003, 11 – 58; Batal-Džamija: Vasić 1968, 242

²⁴⁹ Popović and Borić-Brešković 1994a, 93

However, it is perhaps a good moment to turn the focus from the methods of acquisition to reflect on the motivation behind the collection of these treasures. As we have seen, the main method of obtaining coins was through payments for a certain service, and such transactions underline the economic aspect in the exchange. But whether the hoarding of coins should also only be understood from an economic perspective is questionable. It is clear that the high value of gold coins meant that they were reserved for certain kinds of transactions, and probably only for specific sectors of Roman society.²⁵⁰ Obviously, coined gold was completely unsuitable as a means of exchange in the context of consumer goods and services, but rather it was suitable either for buying capital assets or for facilitating exchanges that were more social than economic in character. Transactions such as the hereditary transfer of property among the upper class, and particularly the payment of dowries, required large amounts of stored wealth. Thus, hoards from the first two centuries AD in the territory of Serbia may also be interpreted in such a context, even though they mainly contain silver issues. Examples where other objects (especially jewellery) are found in addition to coins could be understood as family heirlooms that were to be used not only in an economic manner, but in a much wider social context. Understanding hoards as stocks saved to purchase some capital asset or to be invested in some business cannot be excluded, but we should not forget that Roman society had another financial tool in addition to coinage that was much more suitable for large business transactions – credit.²⁵¹

Without any doubt the turning point in coin use in this region came with the conquest by the Romans and the region's incorporation into the complex state apparatus of the Empire. Although the conquest was a trigger for change, the transformation of coin use and its understanding was influenced by more factors than just the conquest. The main changes that occurred after this area became a part of the Roman state were most certainly the alterations of power relations within the social structure. Social status was an important factor in the use of coins in Balkan prehistoric communities, and this remained the case in the Roman context. After the conquest, the positions of powerful agents and those without social power had to be re-established within the Roman social structure. This does not mean that previous power relations were completely denied; on the contrary, many of the

²⁵⁰ On the function of gold coinage in the Roman Empire, see Lo Cascio 2008, 160 –173

²⁵¹ Howgego 1992, 27

local chiefs were recognized as powerful and remained so even in the Roman context. It is just that these relations were transferred so as to be suitable in the context of Roman domination and according to Roman cultural norms. At the same time, coin use was embedded within the restructured society, both reflecting and confirming the re-established power relations. Thus, the manner and degree of coin use was defined mostly by social stratification, and this limited the extent of coin use. However, it is important to notice that this is contrary to the Roman monetary system in its ideal sense, at least during the first two centuries, when the value ratios between the denominations were fixed and the system corresponded relatively well to the prices. But, as we saw, the use of coins as a means of exchange was not accepted widely, although it was certainly more common than in the period before the Roman conquest, and any greater quantities of bronze coins are to be connected with the formation of Roman settlements.

4.3 General monetary issues of the 3rd and 4th centuries – debasements and reforms

In the history of the Roman Empire the third century represents a period in which significant changes took place in the politics and economics of the Empire. Very often it is considered as a century of crisis, when the transformation of Roman and classical society began. However, there have recently been a series of debates on the adequacy of the word 'crisis' to describe the complex situation in the Empire at that time and, particularly, whether it is appropriate to interpret a whole century in such way.²⁵² The term was preferred and introduced to history by earlier scholars, such as Rostovtzeff, who saw the end of Roman culture as a result of this troubled period.²⁵³ More recently, on the other hand, scholars perceive the 3rd century not as a period of overall crisis, but as a period during which, at certain moments, extensive troubles affected the Empire. Political crisis started with the assassination of Alexander Severus in AD 235 and lasted until Diocletian's succession to the throne in AD 284. Within this period numerous pretenders for the throne alternated in the Roman political arena and they were simultaneously accompanied by invasions and attacks of barbarians, as well as by an outbreak of the plague. However, the greatest instability in the Empire was between AD 260 and 280.²⁵⁴ The Empire managed to overcome this crisis and to endure, but it was considerably transformed afterwards.

²⁵² Liebeschuetz 2007, 11 – 20

²⁵³ Liebeschuetz 2007, 16

²⁵⁴ Liebeschuetz 2007, 17

The monetary affairs of the third century were marked by a constant debasement of the silver content of the *denarius* and by inflation.²⁵⁵ This process was a continuation from the previous century, but during the third century it reached its highest point. As one of the possible solutions for the “problematic” *denarius*, Caracalla introduced a new type of coin in AD 215 – the *antoninianus*. Its nominal value was two *denarii*, but it actually weighed only 1 ½ of a *denarius* at the same silver content when introduced, and it was also constantly reduced in weight and metal purity during the 3rd century. At the same time, Caracalla also reduced the weight of an *aureus* to 1/50 of a pound. Very soon after the introduction of the *antoninianus*, the minting of this coin denomination was abandoned by Elagabalus in AD 219. The only silver denomination then minted was the *denarius* until AD 238, when the *antoninianus* was reintroduced by Balbinus and Pupineus, and at this point the *denarius* disappeared. The fineness of *antoniniani* at the end of the reigns of Gallienus, Claudius II, Quintillus and the early issues of Aurelian fell to 2.5% or less. In these circumstances, Aurelian (270 – 275) initiated a monetary reform in AD 274 in which a new type of *antoninianus* (*aurelianus* or *radiate*) was minted bearing the marks XXI or the Greek numerals KA, which are interpreted as “20 to make 1”. Whether this signifies the ratio of other denominations to this *antoninianus*, or the *antoninianus* to larger coins, is very much debated. The latest interpretation is that this mark refers to the silver content of 5% in this piece and to the intention of restoring a denomination of pure silver which would be equal to 20 *antoniniani*.²⁵⁶

The organization of coin production also started to change during the 3rd century and the number of provincial mints grew. It culminated in more than 340 mints under the Severans, located mainly in Asia Minor.²⁵⁷ The mint of Rome slowly began to lose its supremacy and its central role. Under Aurelian’s reign mint marks became more regular and systematic in order to facilitate administrative control. By the time Diocletian’s reign began, a network of Imperial mints had been established and the production of coinage was regionalized. However, all these mints were now unified under Imperial control and no longer mints operating as local or provincial mints, but as an integrated system.

Diocletian’s succession to the throne and his overall reformation of the Empire crucially changed the Roman state. In addition to legal, military and administrative changes, one of

²⁵⁵ Verboven 2007, 245 – 257

²⁵⁶ Estoit 2012, 546

²⁵⁷ Estoit 2012, 538

the pillars of these reforms was the reformation of the monetary system. In his reforms of Roman coinage, dated usually to AD 294, the main aim was to restore the three-metal system and the quality of the pieces.

However, very soon thereafter, two major edicts were issued by Diocletian in AD 301 that affected the ratios between the different denominations: “Diocletian’s currency revaluation” or the “Aphrodisias currency inscription”, and Diocletian’s edict on maximum prices.²⁵⁸ After this, the value of the *aureus* remained the same, but the *argenteus* and other lower denominations were worth double. The term *denarii communes* became a unit of account; it was not a specific coin denomination. *Nummus* was usually termed as *follis* in earlier studies, but this name was used for a much later copper Byzantine coin. In this period *follis* describes a standard sealed purse, comprising 125 silver pieces, i.e. 12 500 *d. c.* which created a larger denomination.²⁵⁹

The mint network was organized according to the administrative division of the Empire’s territory. Ideally, each diocese was supposed to have one mint, but there were exceptions to this rule.²⁶⁰ At the beginning of the reign of Diocletian mints were operating in the following cities: Lyons, Rome, Ticinum, Siscia, Cyzicus, Antioch and Tripolis (+ Alexandria). After a while certain changes occurred and the network of mints was as follows: London, Trier, Carthage, Aquileia, and Rome in the West, and Siscia, Thessalonica, Heraclea, Nicomedia, Cyzicus, Antioch and Alexandria in the East.²⁶¹ These mints produced some or all of the possible denominations; all legends were in Latin, and the reverses of commoner coins were highly standardized. Mint signatures often identified the product down to its particular workshop.

After Diocletian’s retirement the concept of the tetrarchy collapsed and the state fell into civil war. By defeating Licinius in AD 324 Constantine asserted his power and continued with the reformation of the Empire. He introduced a new gold coin, the *solidus*, in AD 309 which became the basis of the monetary system. It was struck at 1/72 of a pound and was worth roughly 1389 *d.c.* Two fractions of the *solidus* were the half-*solidus* (*semissis*) and

²⁵⁸ For more on the economic reforms, see Ermatinger 1996

²⁵⁹ Abdy 2012, 587

²⁶⁰ The view that there was a strong correlation between the administrative units and the locations of mints was argued by Hendy 1985, 371, while Duncan 1993, 8 stressed the link between the situation of the mints and the location of the main concentrations of troops and civil servants.

²⁶¹ Hendy 1985, 379

the *tremissis* (1/3 of a *solidus*). The silver denominations remained problematic as in the previous period. In the Constantinian era two silver coins were minted: the *milarensis*, a larger denomination, and the *siliqua*, a smaller coin. The *milarensis* was struck at 1/72 of a pound of silver, while the *siliqua* was 1/96 of a pound of silver. At the time of Constantine's death a larger silver denomination was also introduced at 1/60 of a pound and it is usually termed by numismatists as "heavy *milarensis*". Concerning bronze coins, Constantine did not create any new denomination and the tetrarchic *nummus* of decreasing weight continued to be minted. But, as noted in the introduction of the seventh volume of RIC: "Few monetary problems have caused more dispute than those concerning the fourth-century bronze coinage. There is no agreement even with regard to the basic character of the bronzes."²⁶² It seems that the "problem" with bronze denominations was that there was no fixed value ratio in regards to gold coinage, but also among the different base metal denominations.

In terms of the organization of coin production at this time, the minting in precious metals was ruled by the principle of constant and strong supervision, which resulted in mobile minting.²⁶³ Generally, it was concentrated in the temporary residence of the emperor or in the somewhat more permanent residence of the court. Therefore, in addition to permanent mints there were a number of travelling mints operating, the so-called comitatensian mints, which followed the Emperor and his court. Probable locations of these mints were in Sirmium, Aquileia, Trier, Milan, Thessalonica, and Constantinople. The network of mints operating in AD 327 included the mints presented in Trier, Lyons, Arles, Aquileia and Rome in the West, and the mints in Siscia, Thessalonica, Heraclea, Nicomedia, Cyzicus, Antioch and Alexandria in the East, as well as the mint in Constantinople, which had an exceptional status.²⁶⁴

The organization of coin production was characterized by the division of labour in the minting of precious metal coins and bronzes. Not more than five mints produced bronze coins continuously throughout the rule of Constantine and his family. Those were namely Trier, Arles, Siscia, Heraclea and Cyzicus. With the exception of Trier, in these mints gold issues were scarce and most probably the main purpose of these five mints was the supply

²⁶² Bruun 1966, 8

²⁶³ Hendy 1985, 386 – 394

²⁶⁴ Hendy 1985, 381

of small change for permanently garrisoned troops and for civilian needs.²⁶⁵ Thus, Trier provided northern Gaul and Britain with small change, Arles produced for Spain and southern Gaul, Siscia for the frontier provinces on the Danube, Heraclea for Eastern Europe and Cyzicus for Asia Minor. The majority of the other mints were employed for special purposes in accordance with the ever-changing political needs. In the period after Constantine's reign the distribution pattern of bronze coinage remained regionalized. The dominant position of the mint in Trier in supplying bronzes to Britain ceased in 364 when it virtually stopped producing base metal denominations and was replaced by Lyons and later by Arles. A similar pattern of mint representation in bronze coinage occurs in Germany and France. A more heterogeneous picture is encountered in the territory of Switzerland, where the mints of Trier and Lyons are almost equally represented, constituting almost 60% of the total, while bronzes from Arles, Rome and Siscia evenly constitute the remainder. In the territory of Spain the distribution of small change was affected by two factors. Apart from the important role of the closest mints, Arles and Rome, this territory was also supplied by the coastal mints of the Levant, from Thessalonica to Alexandria, with Constantinople and Cyzicus being well represented, indicating the importance of sea routes for the Iberian Peninsula. Provinces in the territories of central Europe and the western and central Balkans were mainly supplied by the mint in Siscia, though the mint of Sirmium had an important role during its production period. The issues of Sirmium were especially numerous in Dacia. The supremacy of the mint in Siscia in the central Balkans was later undermined by the mints of Thessalonica and Constantinople, which became serious providers of base metal denominations in this area. In the south, in Greece, the main mint was certainly that of Thessalonica, while the Antioch and Sea of Marmara mints were of a lesser importance. Several mints were the main providers for Asia Minor – Constantinople, Nicomedia and Cyzicus. In Syria and Cyprus the issues of Antioch dominated, though the mints of Sea of Marmara and Alexandria were also very well represented. Finally, in Egypt currency was mainly comprised of issues from the Alexandrian mint (35%), as well as the mints of Sea of Marmara (35%) and Antioch (20%).

In the second half of the fourth century the dominance of the *solidus* continued and it became the core piece of the Byzantine Empire for the centuries to come. On the other hand, an attempt from AD 379 to reform the base metal coinage, by providing three

²⁶⁵ On distribution of coins in the 4th century, see Kent and Sutherland 1981, 91 – 95

denominations, again failed and from the late fourth century small denominations dominated the coin pool. Thus, from this period onwards large gold issues and miniscule copper coins comprised the denominations in circulation. During the reign of Valentinian I further important currency reforms were taken in 365 – 368. These were concerned mainly with the gold coinage and the purity of the metal, since forgeries by corrupted officials increased. Valentinian I declared that all taxes paid in gold coins should be delivered to the state treasury in bullion form, thus requiring the melting down of coinage. From his time on, gold coinage was of 99% purity and all gold was to be struck in the comitatensian mints operating at the emperor's residence. The introduction of the one-third *solidus*, the *tremisis*, in around 383 became especially important, since this coin came to be largely used by "barbarians". In around AD 355 the situation with the silver denominations was quite complicated. Apart from "heavy and light *milarensis*", *siliquae* were also struck, but at a wide range of different weights – at 1/96, 1/144, 1/192 and 1/216 of a pound. Since it is difficult to determine a coherent weight standard for *siliquae*, the suggestion is that these coins were traded by weight rather than denomination.²⁶⁶ The main features of the bronze coinage in the second half of the fourth century are the elimination of the already small silver content and the complete withdrawal of the larger denominations "AE1" and "AE2". In AD 379 "AE2" was reintroduced, but this did not last long, and in AD 395 Honorius outlawed the largest denomination. After this, "AE3" became the dominant issue in the eastern part of the Empire.

As in the period of the Principate, the largest state expenditure in Late Antiquity was for the military. In addition to salaries, soldiers received special gifts (*donativa*) that were paid out in gold and silver. *Donativa* were distributed on various occasions, such as the accession of a new emperor to throne, imperial birthdays or other jubilees. Other large expenses were also similar to the previous period – salaries of officials, public works, and tributes to barbarians. Taxes generally remained the main source of income for the state, but in this period tax in kind (*annona*) became the most important levy, while tax in money, paid in gold and silver, was smaller in scope. However, the aforementioned reforms of Valentinian I requiring the payment of taxes in pure gold obliged people to get hold of *solidi*. Thus, it could be assumed that as a consequence of this measure one of the options for the people was to hoard the abundant issues of bronze in order to get a hold of gold. This issue will be discussed in more detail afterwards when I present details on coin

²⁶⁶ Moorhead 2012, 609

circulation in Serbia. In general, the division between the tax-importing and tax-exporting provinces also remained in this period, but with the addition of new administrative centres that, in addition to Rome, became significant tax-importing areas, such as Milan, Sirmium and Constantinople. On the question of the impact of long-distance trade in the distribution and circulation of coins in the 4th-century Empire, it seems that the same provinces were involved as in the previous period – mainly those around the Mediterranean Sea.

4.3.1 Monetary issues of the 3rd and 4th centuries in the territory of Serbia

From the second half of the 3rd century and throughout the 4th century the provinces on the Danubian limes and in the Balkan Peninsula became more important in the politics of the Empire. During the political crisis of the 3rd century a significant number of the usurpers, the so-called barracks emperors, originated from this area. Two Danubian regions stand out as the homeland of several emperors: the area of Sirmium and the region of Moesia below the Danubian Iron Gate. To name but a few: Decius, Hostilianus, Claudius II “Gothicus”, Quintillus, Aurelian and Probus. In the upcoming transformation of the Empire in the 4th century, the leading figures of these changes were again emperors coming from the Balkans, from which the most important are certainly Diocletian and Constantine the Great; but also many other *augusti* from this region marked 4th-century history, such as Maximianus Herculius, Galerius, Maximinus Daia, Jovian, Valentinian I, Valens, Gratian and Valentinian II.

As across the whole Empire, administrative changes took place in the territories along the middle Danube and central Balkans in this period (Map 3). The loss of Dacia in AD 271 had the greatest effect on the transformation of the boundaries in this area. After Diocletian’s reforms in administration, the territory of the previous provinces Pannonia Inferior and Moesia Superior was now divided into Pannonia Secunda, Moesia Prima, Dacia Ripensis, Dacia Mediteranea and Dardania, belonging to the dioceses of Pannonia and Dacia.

Several Roman settlements established over the course of the 1st century became important centres that were shaped into “proper” Roman towns through intensive public construction from the second half of the 2nd century, reaching its peak in the first decades of the 3rd century. The most prominent architectural remains of Antiquity in the territory of Serbia belong to the monumental palaces and villas that were erected in the 4th century. Thus, the

landscape changed and in this period, in addition to the dominant military forts that were intensively reorganized at the end of the 3rd century, luxurious edifices became another distinctive feature of the Late Antiquity surroundings. Alongside changes in the defensive tactics of the Roman *limes* from the end of the 3rd to the first half of the 4th century, smaller fortifications, the so-called *burgus*, were built and they were noted at several sites in the Iron Gate area.²⁶⁷ Concerning settlements of civilian character, apart from important urban centres, the number of large agricultural estates increased in the interior of the provinces. Many of these were recorded through surveys and a number were excavated to some degree. Archaeological research to date has confirmed an intensive construction and occupation of these estates from the late 3rd through the 4th century AD.²⁶⁸ However, the crucial stimuli of building activities in the 4th century in this region were initiated by the emperors themselves. By becoming one of the capitals and a residence of the Empire, Sirmium underwent extensive architectural transformation, in which the construction of the Imperial Palace and circus are the prominent examples. Other lavish edifices from this period were the Felix Romulliana at Gamzigrad, constructed for Emperor Galerius, and the residential-memorial complex of Maximinus Daia in Šarkamen.²⁶⁹

In terms of coin finds, during these two centuries an increase is observed in the number of coins recorded on sites and coin hoards, especially containing bronze denominations. From the territory of Upper Moesia, there are 47 hoards that were buried between the reign of Gordian III and the reign of Aurelian.²⁷⁰ The 4th century is generally known for numerous hoards containing thousands of small bronzes. Moreover, coins were not only used in these areas, but in this period they were also occasionally produced in the region. In the middle of the 3rd century a mint was opened in Viminacium.²⁷¹ It struck mainly copper coins, but on several occasions it also issued *antoniniani*. Later under Constantine I, Sirmium, besides being one of the Imperial residences, became famous for its coin production. As in the research of hoard depositions in the earlier period, scholars of the hoards from this time have been mainly concerned with correlating the horizons of depositions and barbarian invasions. This approach is even more dominant in the research on material from the second half of the 3rd century since historical sources describe the region in this period as

²⁶⁷ Tomović 1987, 97

²⁶⁸ Kostić 2006, 13 – 15, 20 – 24; Dautova-Ruševljan 2005, 239 – 249; Brukner 1995; 137 – 174

²⁶⁹ Živić 2011, 101 – 111; Tomović et al. 2005

²⁷⁰ Arsenijević 2004, 225 – 234

²⁷¹ Borić-Brešković 1976

being under constant threat, and thus the investigations of hoards were mainly used as a tool to establish the hypothetical routes of the invaders.²⁷² Due to these research questions, many other aspects of the hoards from this period have not been discussed.

During the period when the mint in Viminacium was in operation, another provincial coinage had a significant role in the monetary affairs of the provinces in the lower Danubian area – coinage of the province of Dacia.²⁷³ This type is especially important since it was found as a grave offering in an early medieval grave from Kormadin – Jakovo, included in the case studies of this research.²⁷⁴ Copper coins with the legend *PROVINCIA DACIA* were produced between AD 246 and 257 and they resemble the Viminacium issues in style and denomination. The location of the mint of the Dacian coins has been much debated, and the question is still open. Most probably the mint was in Sarmizegethusa or Apulum – two major administrative and economic centres in Roman Dacia. The iconography of the reverse of the Dacian issues is almost the same as on the coinage of Viminacium. Apart from the reverse legend *PROVINCIA DACIA*, there is a mark *AN[NO]* with Roman numerals (I – XI) in the exergue, but in this case we have only eleven years of production. The personification of the province of Dacia is standing or seated between the symbols of two legions from Dacia (V Macedonica and XIII Gemina) – an eagle with a wreath in his beak and a lion. Dacian issues were also minted in three denominations – *sestertius*, *dupondius* and *as*. The distribution of coin finds of this type indicates that they mainly circulated within the province of Dacia and the production was mostly designed to meet the demand for base metal denominations within this province.²⁷⁵ The Dacian issues also circulated outside the province of Dacia and this is confirmed by finds of these coins in Pannonia and Moesia, though it has to be emphasised that these comprise a minor part of circulation in comparison to the issues of the Viminacium mint. Dacian issues usually comprise no more than 5% of coin finds in Pannonia and Moesia.²⁷⁶ In the few hoards of copper coinage dated to the middle of the 3rd century from the territory of Serbia these coins are present with a few examples, up to two coins, while the rest are issues of the Viminacium mint. It is evident that both of the provincial coin types

²⁷² Arsenijević 2004, 229 – 232

²⁷³ For more on Provincia Dacia coins, see Crnobrnja 1993

²⁷⁴ Dimitrijević 1960, 13

²⁷⁵ Alföldy-Găzdac and Găzdac 2005, 651 – 661

²⁷⁶ In the Sremska Mitrovica hoard about 5%: Orlov 1968, 250; in the Vrkašice hoard less than 4%: Orlov 1970, 160; in Vlajića Brdo hoard around 17% of the copper finds: Arsenijević 1997, 48

were interconnected in terms of the reasons for their production and how the production was managed, and should thus be studied together.

4.3.2 Coin circulation and use in the 3rd century

The changes in the organization of the production of coinage throughout the Empire also affected the supply in Lower Pannonia and Upper Moesia. Though the production of the Viminacium mint was without a doubt an important supplier of small change and occasionally *antoniniani* for this region in the middle of the 3rd century and its establishment presents an essential novelty in the organization of the supply, the mint in Rome remained the main provider of coins, especially *denarii* and the new coin type – *antoniniani*. A smaller amount of silver coinage came from other mints, and it is estimated that issues of the Antioch mint comprise up to approximately 10% of the coinage in circulation at this time in the Balkans.²⁷⁷ Coins from Mediolanum follow, while issues of Laodicea, Emesa and other mints also start to appear, but in very small quantities. The examination of the content of 3rd-century hoards confirmed the general notion that *denarii* stopped being minted and disappeared from common circulation by the middle of the 3rd century. *Antoniniani* did not circulate widely before the time of Gordian III. Additionally, the hoarding of *denarii* of the 2nd century and *antoniniani* was a common practice up to this time. *Denarii* of Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius or Commodus are normally represented by only a few pieces in hoards,²⁷⁸ while *denarii* of Septimius Severus are considerably more represented.²⁷⁹ An attempt of Alexander Severus to restore the *denarius* is also visible in several hoards deposited around the middle of the 3rd century.²⁸⁰ However, the largest amount of coins in the majority of hoards from this period consist of issues of several emperors starting with Gordian III²⁸¹ and Philip I,²⁸² followed by Trajan Decius

²⁷⁷ Vasić 1972, 60; in Maradik hoard around 18%: Dautova-Ruševljan 1980, 27 – 45; in Vlajića Brdo hoard around 11%: Arsenijević 1997, 49; in Donje Crniljevo hoard around 7%: Vasić 2005, 12; in Supska I hoard around 7%: Borić-Brešković and Stamenković 2008, 167, 169 – 170; but in Dobri Do hoard less than 2%: Vasić 1972, 60

²⁷⁸ In the Dobri Do hoard less than 1% are 2nd century *denarii*: Vasić 1972, 60; in the Vlajića Brdo hoard only two pieces out of 1156 are 2nd century *denarii*: Arsenijević 1997, 47

²⁷⁹ In the Sikirica hoard around 12%: Vasić 1972, 57; in the Dobri Do hoard around 10%: Vasić 1972, 57; in the Vlajića Brdo hoard less than 4%: Arsenijević 1997, 47

²⁸⁰ In the Sikirica hoard almost 20%: Vasić 1972, 57; in the Dobri Do hoard around 13%: Vasić 1972, 57; in the Vlajića Brdo hoard around 7%: Arsenijević 1997, 47

²⁸¹ In the Sikirica hoard around 24%: Vasić 1972, 57; in the Dobri Do hoard around 30%: Vasić 1972, 57; in the Vlajića Brdo hoard around 20%: Arsenijević 1997, 47; in the Donje Crniljevo hoard almost 11%: Vasić 2005, 10; in the Supska I hoard around 30%: Borić-Brešković and Stamenković 2008, 166 – 167; in the Dvorska hoard around 24%: Vasić 1972, 63

and Trebonianus Gallus. In hoards that were deposited at the end of the 250s, issues of Valerian I were especially numerous.²⁸³ The situation with hoards deposited just before Diocletian's succession to the throne or in the first years of his reign usually do not contain any issues before Gallienus, and coins of Aurelian dominate followed by a significant number of issues of Probus.²⁸⁴

A general characteristic of the hoards from the 3rd century in the territory of Serbia is that large hoards, containing more than one thousand pieces, are recorded more often than in the previous period of Roman presence.²⁸⁵ One of the most famous examples of these large treasuries is most certainly the "Niš hoard", which allegedly had more than 20 000 silver coins, ranging from Marcus Antonius to Maximinus Thrax or Gordian III, but unfortunately the hoard was dispersed amongst various collections and was never properly studied.²⁸⁶ Additionally, hoards with mixed denominations, including silver and bronze coins, were also more usual than before. Base metal denominations were mainly supplied by the Viminacium mint, but there are also coins of Provincia Dacia present.²⁸⁷ Depositions of only bronze denominations also increase, especially from the 260s onwards.²⁸⁸ On the other hand, the presence of other objects (jewelry or similar) in these hoards is not recorded, as in the hoards of the first two centuries. Very often these large hoards are found in the context of *villa rustica*,²⁸⁹ and hoards are generally situated not only in the vicinity of major urban or military centres, but are also scattered deeply in the interior of provinces along magistral and vicinal roads.

The distribution and pattern of depositions of hoards in the Roman Empire during the 3rd century has been a topic of interest for scholars for quite some time. Though instability and warfare could to a certain extent explain why we encounter a larger number of unrecovered hoards from this time, many other aspects stay unanswered. In the attempt to clarify the

²⁸² In the Dobri Do hoard around 8%: Vasić 1972, 57; in the Vlajića Brdo hoard around 12%: Arsenijević 1997, 47; in the Donje Crniljevo hoard almost 7%: Vasić 2005, 10; in the Supska I hoard around 30%: Borić-Brešković and Stamenković 2008, 167; in the Dvorska hoard around 11%: Vasić 1972, 63

²⁸³ In the Donje Crniljevo hoard around 22%: Vasić 2005, 10;

²⁸⁴ Dautova-Ruševljan 1981, 65 – 66

²⁸⁵ Only for the Nemenikuće hoard buried at the end of the 2nd century is there information that this hoard contained about 3000 – 3500 pieces, but it was dispersed: Borić-Brešković and Crnobrnja 2005, 7 – 94

²⁸⁶ Mihailović 2008, 125 – 142

²⁸⁷ For example, the Vlajića Brdo hoard: Arsenijević 1997, 43 – 108; Gornje Štiplje hoard: Arsenijević and Dodić 2004, 235 – 250

²⁸⁸ Orlov 1968, 239 – 250; 1970, 153 – 161

²⁸⁹ Donje Crniljevo: Vasić 2005, 8, 65; Supska I hoard: Borić-Brešković and Stamenković 2008, 158; "Niš" hoard: Mihailović 2008, 140

nature and logic of such hoarding, several interpretations have developed. While hoards buried until the end of the 2nd century are mainly understood as a store of value, since they were usually comprised of gold or silver coins, the features of 3rd-century hoards do not seem to allow for such a straightforward explanation. Furthermore, some scholars have in fact proposed the opposite motivation for the practice of hoarding in the third century – people realised that the coins had become worthless due to inflation.

In such circumstances hoard owners did not bother to recover their savings.²⁹⁰ Contrary to the large number of hoards with debased coins, hoards of gold coins are very rare in this period across the Empire and generally *aurei* single finds are also scarce. In Bland's research on the changing patterns of hoards of precious metal coins, he states that only 11 hoards containing exclusively gold issues are known in the western provinces during the 3rd century.²⁹¹ At the same time, besides being treasured with jewellery, it seems that gold coinage was transformed into jewellery itself.²⁹² Receiving pay in gold in the third century apparently was a special honour as some inscriptions suggest.²⁹³ Therefore, gold coins in this period might be understood as a sign of wealth, but above all they were a mark of distinction.²⁹⁴ Thus, transforming gold coins into jewellery enabled owners to publicly demonstrate their status in society. In the eastern provinces of Syria, Greece and Asia Minor no gold hoards of the Severan and Military Anarchy periods were recovered.²⁹⁵ Thus, *aurei*, which in the previous period represented 2/3 of the total value of coins in circulation, became practically unavailable in the middle of the 3rd century, leaving the circulation pool with no large denomination.²⁹⁶ This raises questions as to what became a store of value and how major transactions were managed in the absence of gold coins.

In this context the hoarding of large amounts of coins was one option for acquiring the value of the larger denomination, which was non-existent or at least very difficult to obtain. However, most probably, major payments or commercial transactions in this period were conducted with bullion.

²⁹⁰ Aitchison 1988, 274

²⁹¹ Bland 1997, 35

²⁹² Bland 1997, 34 – 35; van Heesch 2008, 54

²⁹³ van Heesch 2008, 54 – 55

²⁹⁴ van Heesch 2008, 55

²⁹⁵ Katsari 2005, 271

²⁹⁶ Katsari 2005, 270

The situation is the same in the territory of Serbia where hoards of gold issues before the reign of Diocletian are absent and only a few single finds have been found as grave goods, such as an *aureus quinarius* of Gallienus found in a grave in Belgrade.²⁹⁷ The use of coins as jewellery also increases from the time of the Severans, though in this region mainly silver *denarii* of Caracalla and other Severans were modified for this purpose.²⁹⁸ Although there is one example of a pendant with an inserted *aureus* of Alexander Severus in the National Museum in Belgrade, it is not certain that it originates from the territory of Serbia.²⁹⁹

Single finds of coins demonstrate an increase of examples from the 3rd century. The number of coins from Caracalla to Diocletian is almost double that of single coins from the first two centuries. *Antoniniani* are the most represented, while other denominations of the 3rd century are quite rare. For example, among the single finds of coins from the 3rd century at Rittium, more than 80% were *antoniniani*, while the rest were *denarii* and bronze denominations.³⁰⁰

4.3.3 Coin circulation and use in the 4th century

During the 4th century AD, not only did the supply of coinage comprise once more all three metals, but coins were again produced in a mint located in the area – this time the mint in Sirmium.³⁰¹ However, gold and silver denominations comprised a minor part of the circulating stock in comparison to bronze pieces.³⁰² The trend of very large hoards of bronze coins, which started in the previous century, continued and numerous hoards

²⁹⁷ Crnobrnja 1978, 202; Crnobrnja and Crnobrnja 2004, 32

²⁹⁸ Popović 1993, 49 – 60

²⁹⁹ Popović 1993, 52 – 53, 56

³⁰⁰ Dautova-Ruševljan 1995, 140

³⁰¹ The mint in Sirmium (Pannonia II) was opened between AD 320 and 324 by Constantine I, as a wartime expedient during the war with Licinius, but it was closed shortly afterwards in AD 326. It was probably reopened in 351 to strike for Constantius II and Gallus during the campaign against Magnentius and remained working until AD 366. The final phase of the production of coins in Sirmium was from 367 until 395 when it ceased to operate. It should be noted that the mint in Sirmium was reopened during the rule of the Gepids in the Sirmian region in the late 5th and early 6th centuries. On the role of the Sirmium mint in the Imperial system of mints in the 4th century and the reasons for its opening, there are no firm conclusions. It is always interpreted as a comitatensian mint and its volume of bronze coinage production remained very low, leaving the Siscian mint as the main supplier of small change for Pannonia. In terms of gold coins, the Sirmium mint is far better known, and especially for the finds of golden bars produced there, probably in AD 379.

³⁰² For a detailed discussion on gold and silver coins of late antiquity from the territory of Serbia, see Vasić 2008

containing several thousands of bronzes are known from the archaeological record.³⁰³ So far it is estimated that in the territory of Serbia there are over 80 hoards of bronze coins recorded among the museum collections, from which 55 were hoarded in the Roman territories and the remainder from the border region and the former Barbaricum.³⁰⁴

Aurei gradually started to circulate again already from AD 286, while silver coinage appeared only after Diocletian's reform in AD 294 when the *argenteus* was introduced. The single finds of precious metal coins from Late Antiquity in the territory of Serbia are poorly documented and usually we have no data about the site or any other circumstances of the find. In addition to this, only hoards of gold coins are known from this period, while all silver pieces are single finds. It seems that silver played only a very subordinate role in the currency of the region. The minting of gold and silver was not continuous, but rather occasional. It probably took place on the accession of an emperor to the throne and the celebration of *quinquennalia*, or when *donativa* were issued to soldiers. Apart from this, precious metal coins were also issued during military campaigns against barbarians and especially in the periods of struggles between usurpers and legitimate rulers. Prior to Valentinian's reform regional mints were in charge of producing coinage, but afterwards it was mainly done by the comitatensian mints. Such organization of the production of gold and silver coins was also reflected in the coin evidence from Serbia.

In the early period of the Dominate until the second tetrarchy (305 – 313), issues of the mints of Rome, Cyzicus, Antioch and Siscia prevail in the coin evidence. Among silver issues a greater diversity of mints is present, but again the mints of Rome and Siscia dominate. Among the rulers, issues of Diocletian dominate the *aurei*, and Diocletian's issues are almost as equally represented as Magnetius' coins among the silver.³⁰⁵ The predominance of the Balkan and eastern mints continued into the period of the second tetrarchy. From the time of the joint rule of Constantine I and Licinius (313 – 324), and afterwards from Constantine's sole reign (324 – 337), the mint in Trier became more important for Moesia II in the supply of gold coinage.³⁰⁶ The gold coins, almost all *solidi*, of Constantine I dominate in the period of the struggles between Constantine I and

³⁰³ Such as the Kosmaj hoard containing over 20 000 pieces: Bendžarević 2005, 526 or Bikić – The Do hoard with more than 10 000 bronze pieces: Brenot 1978, 5 – 98

³⁰⁴ Bendžarević 2005, 523 – 550

³⁰⁵ Vasić 2008, 56 – 62

³⁰⁶ Vasić 2008, 67, 71

Licinius.³⁰⁷ After the death of Constantine I and in the period of the rule of his sons (337 – 350) mints in Nicomedia, Antioch and Siscia are the most represented among the gold coins. Within silver denominations, apart from the aforementioned mints that were important, Aquileia and Constantinople are the most represented.³⁰⁸ In the time of the sole rule of Constantius II (350 – 361) the mints in Thessalonica and Nicomedia are most represented among the golden coinage. The mint in Thessalonica was also dominant in terms of silver issues, but shared this position with the mint of Sirmium. Among the silver issues of Constantius II the type VOTIS/XXX/MULTIS/XXXX was especially numerous.³⁰⁹ *Solidi* from Trier dominate again from the time of Valentinian I, Valens and Gratian (364 – 378), while issues of the Constantinople mint follow in terms of number.³¹⁰ At this time, among the silver issues, two types of Valens' coins – VOT/V and VOT/X/MULT/XX – were particularly numerous.³¹¹ The mint in Constantinople was also the main provider of silver coins together with the mint in Antioch. Towards the end of the 4th century *solidi* were predominantly provided by the Constantinople mint. This tendency is indicated by the single finds, but also a hoard of *solidi* from Gamzigrad deposited after AD 391, where almost 80% of the coins were from the mint of Constantinople and the most numerous coins were of Theodosius I, the CONCOR – DIA AUGGG B. VOT/X/MULT/XV type (c. 50%).³¹²

A general feature of the circulation pattern of the base metal denominations in the Empire during the 4th century is the increasing regionalism in the distribution of mint production. However, this regionalism was not of equal intensity in all areas of the Empire throughout the whole century. It seems that it became more pronounced from the post-Tetrarchic period (AD 305 – 337) onwards.³¹³ Additionally, the coin distribution across the Empire could be divided into two groups, local and extended.³¹⁴ In areas with local coin distribution issues of nearby mints prevail. These areas are the northern frontier provinces (Britain and Germany), Gaul, Italy, Pannonia, the Balkans and Egypt. The other type of coin circulation, the extended distribution, contains issues from most mints of the Empire,

³⁰⁷ Vasić 2008, 67

³⁰⁸ Vasić 2008, 81 – 82

³⁰⁹ Vasić 2008, 86

³¹⁰ Vasić 2008, 93

³¹¹ Vasić 2008, 94

³¹² Vasić 2008, 105, 108

³¹³ Ermatinger 1990, 115

³¹⁴ Ermatinger 1990, 107 – 117

usually without any single mint or group of mints dominating. The Iberian Peninsula is an excellent example of this extended distribution pattern with issues from all over the Empire. To a lesser extent that is also a feature of the hoards from Greece, Africa, Turkey and Palestine.

As we see in the territory of Serbia the distribution of bronze coins was mainly regional, but several mints interchanged as the role of the main supplier during the 4th century. This was dependent on the micro-regions within this territory, but also on the productivity levels among different nearby mints during the period. Three mints stand out as the main suppliers: Siscia,³¹⁵ Sirmium and Thessalonica. Vasić came to several conclusions about mint representation in his research by analysing coins from the site of St. Irenaeus' Basilica in Sirmium as well as three hoards – Viminacium, Pincum and Horreum Margi.³¹⁶ Among the coins from Sirmium the most represented mint was Siscia until the 380s from which point the mint in Aquileia dominates until the end of the century. Other mints that were also significantly represented in these finds are Thessalonica, Sirmium, Cyzicus, Constantinopolis and, to a lesser extent, Heraclea. In hoards the mint in Thessalonica is the most represented until about AD 378, when Siscia and Cyzicus prevail. Again the mints of Constantinopolis, Heraclea, but also of Nicomedia are very important. The research of Duncan on the circulation of bronze coins in this area mainly confirmed the pattern of mint representation established by Vasić.³¹⁷ The most common reverse types that occur among the bronze coins during the 4th century are GLORIA EXERCITVS (2 standards), GLORIA EXERCITVS (1 standard), FEL TEMP REPARATIO (Falling horseman), GLORIA ROMANORVM, SECVRITAS REI PVBLICAE, and we should add VICTORIAE DD AVGGQ NN as another usual type in the southeastern part of the Pannonia II province.³¹⁸ Both the coin finds from sites and hoards indicate that the supply of coinage to the provinces stopped in the early 5th century. According to Duncan:

³¹⁵ Though the mint in Siscia had started to produce coins as a provincial mint in the time of Gallienus (see Carson 1972, 27 – 33), after the reformations of Diocletian it became significant for the supply of coins in the provinces in the middle Danubian region and in the central Balkans. The mint managed to “survive” and to be incorporated into the Imperial network of mints. From the time of Diocletian not only was the mint stationed here, but the main treasury of the province Pannonia Savia (adjacent to Pannonia II) was there as well. The Siscian mint produced coinage until the late 380s or until the early 5th century according to some authors; for more see Buzov 2009, 621 – 645

³¹⁶ Vasić 1988, 165 – 184.

³¹⁷ Duncan 1993, 58 – 106.

³¹⁸ Among coins from Sirmium and Burgenae: Duncan 1993, 80, 81; Pincum hoard: Vasić 1980, 94 – 95

“On the Danubian limes, the supply of new copper coinage tapered off after 375 and then, in the last decade of the fourth century with SALVS REI PUBLICAE of the western mints or in the first decades of the fifth century with GLORIA ROMANORVM of the eastern mints, practically ceased. Copper coinage ceased altogether to be used along the most of the Danube during the fifth century, in many areas perhaps in the 440s as a result of the devastation caused by the Huns.”³¹⁹

4.4 Concluding remarks

Coin evidence from the territory of Serbia revealed certain changes in the patterns of the use and discard of coins in the 3rd and 4th centuries. The number of coins as single finds and also in hoards increased. During the 3rd century AD the same denominations occur as single finds and in hoards, mainly *antoniniani* and local copper coins, and towards the end of the 3rd century the debased silver issues. In hoards there are no other objects besides coins. At the same time, there is a lack of gold coins on sites and no hoards containing gold issues were noted in the territory of Serbia. This differs from the previous period in which base metal denominations dominate among the single finds, while silver and gold coins occur mostly in hoards, and it is not unusual that they are hoarded together with other objects.

After the monetary reforms of Diocletian, gold and silver appear in circulation again, but silver is very problematic and represents only a minor part of the circulating pool. Further increases in the number of bronze coins on sites and in hoards could indicate somewhat contradictory conclusions. The great quantity of lost bronze coins could be explained, not only as an abundant level of production, but as a result of their low and constantly diminishing value, which lowered the efforts for recovery. However, large hoards with carefully stored bronze pieces, in which the range between the oldest and the latest issue is sometimes more than a century, indicate that they were valuable at the same time. In other words, the time span in gold hoards gets shorter, while the time span in bronze hoards becomes longer. In the case of gold this could be explained to a certain degree by the reformations of Valentinian I, where the interest of the state was to withdraw gold as fast as possible and return it to the state treasury. On the other hand, bronze coins as single pieces were not only used as a means of exchange in everyday transactions, but could be stored together and handled apparently in bags as a unit of larger denomination.

³¹⁹ Duncan 1993, 167

V. ROMAN COINS IN GRAVES (AD 400 – 700)

In this chapter, I will explore how Roman coins were valued in the post-Roman context by examining the (re)use of the coins in the cemeteries of the early medieval period dated between c. AD 400 and 700. The main questions in this chapter are concerned with the process of valuation of Roman coins in a time when the political authority that issued these coins and the whole monetary system created by the Romans were seriously challenged, and conclusively stopped existing. Yet, at the same time, the awareness of Rome and her former glory was very much present and most certainly it was not forgotten in the minds of the contemporaries of its decline. How did this affect the perception of Roman coins and their values? In what way was this reflected in the use of these coins in funeral practices among the societies that were formed during and after the collapse of the Roman Empire?

Case studies are mainly situated in the cemeteries that were formed in declining Roman urban centres during the 5th and early 6th centuries, which became seriously devastated during several invasions: Sirmium (2 graves), Singidunum (11 graves), Viminacium (6 graves) and Naissus (1 grave). Traditionally, most of these cemeteries are interpreted as belonging to Germanic populations of the Migration Period. To this group an example from Kormadin – Jakovo (near Belgrade) and a case from Vajuga (Iron Gate area) should be added, as well as one female grave from Subotica that was situated in the former “Barbaricum”. From the period of the Avar invasions and numerous necropoles associated with this population in the area north of the Sava and Danube rivers from the late 6th to the end of the 8th century, there is only one cemetery where Roman coins were found. It is situated in the site Aradac, also in the former Barbaricum, dated to the late 6th and first half of the 7th centuries, and Roman coins were discovered in four graves. Roman coins deposited in the graves in the mentioned sites date from the 2nd to the 4th century and they include: three 2nd-century *denarii*, nine 3rd-century coins, in which two *antoniniani* and one Provincia Dacia type are also among the mainly base metal denominations; lastly, the 4th-century base metal coinage were the most numerous with 23 pieces, but also a pendant in a form that imitates a Roman coin from the grave in Subotica should be included. However, as coins were very often part of the grave assemblages that included other types of

artefacts, Roman coins are investigated together with other objects from graves, as well as in relation to skeletal remains.³²⁰

Apart from emphasising the relevance of the immediate archaeological context in which coins are found, an attempt to relate it to the wider socio-political background is also considered to be of great importance for the question of revaluation of these coins. To begin with, it is questioned: what was the state of monetary affairs and of coin use as a social practice when the (re)use of Roman coins occurred? This is a difficult matter for several reasons. On a general level, during the 5th century the Roman monetary system collapsed alongside the fall of the Western Roman Empire. In the territories of the former western provinces several medieval coinage systems were formed alongside the formation of various medieval kingdoms.³²¹ In the eastern half, though seriously troubled, coinage endured, but it underwent significant reforms. In local terms, the period is characterized by a very unstable political control of the region. Though the provinces in the territory of Serbia were recovered by the Eastern Roman Empire, i.e. the Byzantine Empire, especially in the time of the Justinianus I (527 – 565), the actual rule of the state authority was constantly questioned throughout the period by various devastating invasions (Map 4).³²² In addition, the presence of the army in the rebuilt Byzantine forts never reached the same level as in the previous period. These two factors had a direct influence on the general supply of coins by the state to this area. Another issue is that the extensive incorporation of these territories into the realm of the Byzantine state and partial renewal of coin circulation occurred after Anastasias I (491 – 518) reformed the monetary system. Despite relying on the Roman 4th century monetary system, it significantly differed from the previous standard, mainly in bronze denominations, and it is usually accepted that from this time we can speak about Byzantine coinage.³²³ Lastly, but certainly not of least significance, the social relations between the various Germanic tribes and disunited Empire had to be considered. The same goes for the later period, when the arrival of Avar and Slavic populations continued a line of conflicts and tensions in the region. Massive population shifts from the middle of the 4th to the end of the 8th century had a major impact in these territories, challenging the whole previously established Roman social order in the

³²⁰ For detailed description of case studies, see Appendix

³²¹ Grierson 1986

³²² Srejšović et al. 1994, 95 – 124; Ostrogorski 1980, 72, 81

³²³ Grierson 1982

provinces.³²⁴ Within this wide corpus of social changes the coin use habits specific for the Roman culture were also questioned and it seems they were no longer sustainable. Communities with significantly different social organization in comparison to Roman, and later Byzantine society, inhabited this region, but in a very different context of power relations than when the Roman Empire was expanding and subjecting people to the Roman state. Moreover, the main objects mediating these relationships were coins – from payments to tributes. These transactions are not only economic transfers, but are always social interactions – in this case the establishment of new positions between the Roman Empire and barbarians. Therefore, we should assume that all coinage involved – Roman, Byzantine and barbarian – most certainly had a symbolic power. In other words, it was not just a means of payment, an imitation or reuse, but the coinage was a part of the process of confirming these new positions of the “barbarians” in the Roman world and among barbarians themselves.

Firstly, I will give a brief outline of the historical and social context of the case studies, followed by the state of monetary affairs of that time and in the region of the central Balkans. Afterwards, I will present the case studies, primarily those examples that are traditionally interpreted as “Germanic” graves and I will also give some general features of such cemeteries. Subsequently, I will present one case of the reuse of Roman coins in an Avar cemetery, as well as a short overview of the “Avar” material culture and the function of Byzantine coinage in the Avar Khaganate.

5.1 Socio-political context: the fall of the “Roman” and rise of the “Byzantine” Empire, relations between the barbarian populations and the Empire

Theodosius I (379 – 395) was the last emperor of the unified Roman Empire and after his death in AD 395 the Empire was divided between his two sons, Arcadius and Honorius.³²⁵ Arcadius ruled the eastern half, while Honorius was the emperor of the Western Roman Empire. The section of the border between the two halves in the Balkans most probably went along the Drina River, leaving the region that is of interest for this research in the

³²⁴ Recent critical reconsideration of the social transformation in Late Antiquity and early medieval period is given by Mathisen and Shanzer (eds) 2011

³²⁵ On the Imperial policy of the late 4th century and on the circumstances of the administrative and political division of the Empire, see Errington 2006

domain of the Eastern Roman Empire (Map 3). Following this division, the increasing conflict of interests between the two successors of the once-unified and powerful state along with the rising power of Germanic tribes soon led to the end of the Roman Empire in its classical sense. The Western Roman Empire fell in AD 476 when Romulus Augustulus was overthrown by the Gothic leader Odoacer, who proclaimed himself king.³²⁶ During the following centuries Italy would be ruled by Germanic kings, whether Goths or Lombards. Despite difficulties to maintain its border on the Danube, the Eastern Empire managed to endure as Byzantium and it would last until the fall of Constantinople into the hands of the Ottomans in AD 1453.

In this section, I will give a short historical outline of a particularly important matter of relations between the barbarian populations and the Roman / Byzantine state. The practice of settling barbarians within the Roman Empire started after Constantine defeated the Sarmatians in AD 322, when some parts of the barbarian tribes inhabited Roman cities.³²⁷ A similar situation also occurred after the wars of Constantius II in AD 358. However, only after Gratianus and Theodosius I made an agreement with the Goths in AD 382 were barbarians more intensively settled in the Roman territories from the 380s onwards. The Goths that inhabited the territories of Pannonia and Thrace were free to keep their law customs and their tribal leaders and kings, but their obligations were to protect the Roman boundaries and to provide a certain number of troops. Thus, some kind of communal political life continued among the settlers. Goths were apparently being settled in distinct clusters, within which established customs and sense of identity could be maintained.³²⁸ The agreements between the Goths and Roman emperors were always of a very fragile nature and subject to violation, leaving the boundaries without proper defence. At the beginning of the 5th century military defence did not exist in some areas and Goths led by Alaric passed through Moesia I and Pannonia on their way to Italy without coming across any resistance.³²⁹ In short, the relation between the political top of the Empire and the Goths could be described as a combination of outbursts of severe conflicts and partial integration. In Heather's opinion, such situations had disastrous consequences on the Romanized population, particularly on the elite with large *villa* estates, who ended up

³²⁶ For more details on Theodoric becoming the first man in Rome, see Moorhead 1992; on the perception of this event as the end of Rome and fall of the Western Empire by contemporaries, see Watts 2011, 97 – 106; Croke 1983, 81 – 119

³²⁷ Srejšović et al. 1994, 96

³²⁸ Heather 2007, 169

³²⁹ Srejšović et al. 1994, 96

being in the middle between the highest interest of the emperor and state and the constant intention of Germanic *foederati* to maximize their position.³³⁰ The archaeological record from the territory of Serbia shows that indeed large villa estates were abandoned in the 5th century.³³¹ The so-called warrior graves dated to the first half of the 5th century appear as another novelty in the archaeological record from the territory of Serbia. These remains are associated with the aforementioned practice of inhabiting barbarians and population migrations, but it is not always possible to distinguish between *foederati* and groups who were passing by on their raids.

In AD 441 the Danubian limes and Roman cities in the central Balkans were completely devastated in the Hun invasion and afterwards the network of urban centres never really recovered. Popović defined the period from the early 5th to the 7th century as a time of disintegration and ruralisation of the urban settlements in Eastern Illyricum.³³² The Huns first occupied Margum, but soon after invaded many other cities, including Sirmium, Singidunum, Viminacium and Naissus.³³³ Even though the Hun invasion was catastrophic they did not achieve control over the conquered territories for a longer period. Following the death of Attila in AD 453, the Srem area and the Danubian region were again under the control of different Germanic tribes – Ostrogoths, Gepids and Heruls. The Germanic tribes that were initially in alliance with the Huns broke their deal with them after Attila's death and offered their services as *foederati* to the Byzantine Empire. Their obligations were to restore the boundaries and defend them from the remaining Hun forces. Ostrogoths took over Pannonia, while Gepids and Heruls remained in the Danubian region, mainly around Singidunum.³³⁴ However, the Ostrogoths left southeastern Pannonia in the 480s, dispersing in three directions towards Noricum, Italy and Greece.³³⁵ This situation was taken advantage of by the Gepids, who spread to the Srem area and made Sirmium their centre.³³⁶ Yet, the rule of the Ostrogoths in this area was only temporary interrupted, since as soon as Theodoric conquered Italy in AD 488 he sent troops to recover the Srem area from the Gepids, in which he succeeded. Thus, the wide territory from Italy over Noricum

³³⁰ Heather 2007, 163 – 190

³³¹ Mirković 1996, 57 – 75

³³² Popović 1982, 545 – 566

³³³ Srejović et al. 1994, 96 – 97

³³⁴ Mirković 1968b, 119 – 128; Barišić 1955, 1 – 13; Kovačević 1977, 36 – 37

³³⁵ Srejović et al. 1994, 103

³³⁶ Mirković 1968b, 119 – 128; Mirković 2006, 103 – 104

and all of Pannonia were under Gothic rule at the beginning of the 6th century. Only Bassiana remained under the control of the Byzantine Empire.³³⁷

Though the Byzantine Empire endeavoured to re-establish and reinforce control over the central Balkans from the end of the 5th century, this became possible only in the time of Justinianus I (527 – 565). During his reign many of the former territories of the Western Roman Empire were restored, including Italy, Dalmatia, Africa and southern Hispania.³³⁸ In the Balkans and along the middle Danube region intensive reconstruction work began in the 530s in many cities and forts, and numerous new towns and fortifications were also built. Among the reconstructed cities and forts along the Danube were Singidunum, Viminacium, Pincus, Cuppae, Pontes, etc.³³⁹ In the interior of the Province cities that were rebuilt were Naissus and Ulpiana, which was now renamed Iustiniana Secunda, as well as Timacum Minus and Remesiana. Apart from the intensive reconstruction works in the former Roman towns and forts, this period also featured the formation of completely new settlements with a considerably different structural pattern than that of previous Roman centres. Their main distinctive feature was the position, which was usually on a hilltop, mostly above 500 m but sometimes above 1500 m and quite inaccessible.³⁴⁰ It is assumed that the Romanized population retrieved themselves in these settlements, which could be defined as something like “fortified villages”.³⁴¹ These settlements, besides being protected by their position, were also secured with walls and usually had a basilica on the most dominant position inside the fortification. Investigation of the small finds within these structures revealed that they existed mainly on stock-farming. Amongst the newly built towns, particularly important for this region was the foundation of Iustiniana Prima (Caričin grad) by Justinianus I (527 – 565) in the vicinity of his birthplace (Tauresium). This new town was the centre of the archbishopric and it was supposed to replace Sirmium in significance. Archaeological excavations carried out in the period of a century revealed one of the most significant examples of early Byzantine architecture and urban planning. The town consists of three parts – the upper, middle and lower city – and within its walls

³³⁷ Srejović et al. 1994, 104

³³⁸ Maas 2005, 3 – 27; Ostrogorski 1980, 68 – 86

³³⁹ Srejović et al. 1994, 105; Only in the section of limes between the confluence of the rivers Porečka Reka and Slatinska Reka into the Danube there are 22 early Byzantine fortifications noted, see Špehar 2010a

³⁴⁰ For an overview of such settlements in the territory of Serbia, see Milinković 2011, 285 – 302; Milinković 2008, 533 – 557

³⁴¹ Milinković 2011, 285 – 302; 2008, 557

are, among other edifices, five basilicas as well as one impressive residence building for the bishop.³⁴²

The Byzantine Empire never managed to restore Sirmium and its surroundings within the boundaries of the Empire. In AD 535 the Byzantines regained the city for a shorter period, but it was lost very quickly and fell into the hands of the Gepids again.³⁴³ There was another attempt to take Sirmium with the help of the Langobards, but this turned out to only speed up the fall of the northern boundary. As the Gepids lost to the Langobards in AD 562, for support they turned to the Avars – a confederation of nomadic tribes from the steppes of central Asia.³⁴⁴ Already from the middle of the 6th century the Avars, together with Slavic tribes, continuously invaded the territories south of the Sava and Danube rivers and became a serious threat to the Byzantine Empire. The first record in Byzantine sources is about their delegation at Constantinople in AD 558 demanding land within the Empire and subsidy, of which they received the latter.³⁴⁵ The fall of Sirmium to the Avars in AD 582 represents a crucial moment for the final collapse of the Danubian limes. Very soon thereafter other restored Byzantine cities were destroyed, such as Singidunum and Viminacium in AD 584. The Avar Khaganate dominated the Pannonian plain and Carpathian basin until the beginning of the 9th century. Avars and Slavs even reached Constantinople in AD 626, but they were repelled.³⁴⁶ Nevertheless, from this time on, Byzantium lost control over the central Balkans and, though after the defeat at Constantinople the Avars no longer represented a threat to the territories south of the Sava and Danube, South Slavic tribes gained permission to permanently inhabit this region. It is thought that the Byzantine Empire lost actual political control over the central Balkan territories at the beginning of the 7th century.

5.2 Production of coins in the transition from Late Antiquity to the early medieval period

The turbulence in the politics of the Empire and major social transformation also reflected on monetary affairs. In the following section, I will present what the situation was in terms of coin production and circulation in the period of the collapse of the Roman Empire. Furthermore, what was the relation between the older Roman issues and the coinage

³⁴² For more on the site Iustiniana Prima, see for example Bavant and Ivanišević 2006 and Mano-Zisi 1979.

³⁴³ Mirković 2006, 103 – 104

³⁴⁴ For more on Avars, see Kovačević 1977

³⁴⁵ Srejović et al. 1994, 114

³⁴⁶ Ostrogorski 1980, 87

systems that developed during the 5th and 6th centuries? Could it have been that the older Roman coins were still accepted as valid currency? And, if so, to what extent was this a common social practice? But, more importantly, could this have affected and been reflected in the custom of leaving Roman coins as a funeral offering?

The Byzantine coinage system and barbarian coinage

The monetary reform of Anastasius I (491 – 518) in AD 498 is usually considered by numismatists as the starting point of Byzantine coinage. His reformed monetary system relied on the late Roman coinage, especially in terms of gold denominations which stayed unchanged, and most of the reforms actually concerned the base metal denomination.³⁴⁷ New bronze coins, multiples of the *nummus* were introduced, such as the *folles* worth 40 *nummi*, but also 20 *nummi*, 10 *nummi* and 5 *nummi* coins were struck. Different denominations were marked by the Greek numbering system on their reverses – 40= M; 20= K; 10= I; and 5= E. The production of silver coins remained problematic as in the previous period and they were produced extremely rarely. From the time of Heraclius in AD 615, one silver denomination was issued regularly until the end of the century when the production of silver coins ceased again.³⁴⁸

Apart from the differences in bronze denominations, Byzantine coinage differs in the stylistic sense too.³⁴⁹ Byzantine coins are characterized by facing figures in the ruler representation in contrast to the Roman imperial portraiture, almost always taking the form of profile heads and busts. Although this change had already started in the 4th century with some Licinius' issues and occasionally emperors were represented in such a way during the 5th century, it is considered that this became a standard feature of Byzantine coinage, especially from the time of Justinianus I (527 – 565). A similar situation is also with Christian symbols, which first appeared on coins from the time of Constantine I (324 – 337), and replaced representations of various personifications and symbols of imperial cult and became common iconography on the coins only from the second half of the 5th century onwards.

³⁴⁷ For more on Byzantine coinage in the 6th century, see Grierson 1982, 43 – 83

³⁴⁸ Grierson 1982, 83 – 149

³⁴⁹ Grierson 1982, 4

The once extensive system of Roman mints dating back to the 3rd century had collapsed by the time of Anastasius' accession, when only Constantinople and Thessalonica remained in operation.³⁵⁰ After the death of Theodosius I, mints were gradually shut down across the Empire, though this process had started even earlier when the mint in Siscia was closed in AD 387. However, one new mint was established at that time in Ravenna when the Imperial court was moved to this location, and it remained open until AD 476. The Sirmium mint was closed in AD 395, shortly after it had reopened in AD 394, and soon thereafter the mint in Aquileia was shut down in AD 403. It is thought that the mint in London was closed by AD 409 at the latest, when Roman troops left Britain, or perhaps even earlier during the time of Magnus Maximus (383 – 388). The last issues of the Lyon mint were of Constantine III in AD 421, while Trier ceased to mint coins after the issues of the usurper Johannes (423 – 425) were produced. In contrast to these two mints, the mint in Lyon managed to stay open until AD 461. The Italian mints, Rome and Mediolanum, produced coins until the fall of the Western Roman Empire in AD 476. The majority of the eastern mints were also shut down by AD 475, such as Alexandria, Antioch, Cyzicus and Nicomedia.

After the reform in AD 498 the Nicomedia mint was re-commissioned to contribute in issuing the new denominations of copper coinage. Later in the reign Antioch was brought into operation, so by the time of Anastasius' death in AD 518 four mints were producing coinage. A further extension of the mint system occurred during the rule of Justin I (518 – 527) with the reopening of Cyzicus and Alexandria. Chreson in Crimea also commenced operations at this time. Justinianus' restoration of territories in Italy, North Africa and Spain necessitated the establishment of more minting centres to serve the needs of the new provinces. Accordingly, Carthage opened in 533/4; Rome and Ravenna in about 540; a Sicilian mint or mints producing gold and bronze sometime in the 540s; and Carthage towards the end of the reign. Other mints, less certainly identified, were also active during this period of expansion, such as Constantine in Numidia, Perugia and Salona. At various times during Justinianus' long reign at least fifteen mints were operational. For the remainder of the 6th century the pattern of the mints remained fairly stable, but already in the first half of the 7th century the number of mints was rapidly decreased.

³⁵⁰ Sear 1987, 19 – 23

Barbarian coinage in Sirmium

Parallel to the production of coins by the Byzantine Empire, different Germanic rulers who were established in the occupied Roman provinces issued their own coinage during the 5th and 6th centuries (P. LX). The relation between these coins and the official Byzantine issues is a complicated matter. Usually, these are known among scholars as pseudo-imperial coinage, and their forms varied greatly from one Germanic kingdom to the other.³⁵¹ The utilization of the names of Byzantine emperors whose coins had formed the bulk of the circulating medium at the time when the regions were occupied by Germanic rulers did not necessarily imply formal recognition of the imperial authority. Only in the case of the Ostrogothic issues from the period between AD 491 and 552 can this be understood in such a way; in other Germanic coinages the use of imperial names and types was due to the fact that coins bearing them had greater acceptability.³⁵² Moreover, Germanic kings mainly struck precious metal coins, while bronze issues were not incorporated in their stock. This could imply that they were more concerned with maintaining and mediating relationships among the socially high-positioned individuals through distributions and exchange of these precious pieces than with initiating monetary transactions on a daily basis.

For the region in question, recommissioning the mint in Sirmium during the rule of the Ostrogoths and Gepids in this city represents an example of pseudo-imperial coinage. The Ostrogoths probably minted in Sirmium from AD 504 to 526 and these consisted of ¼ of *siliquae* issues of Theodoric.³⁵³ Theodoric's coins were minted under the names of two emperors – Anastasius I (491 – 518) and Justinus I (518 – 527). They are recognizable by the reverse with Theodoric's monogram encircled by the legend INVICTA ROMA. After the Ostrogoths left Sirmium and the surrounding region, the Gepids took over the city and began to mint their coins in AD 546.³⁵⁴ Minting lasted under two Gepid rulers, Thurisind (c. 546 – 560/4) and Kunimund (c. 560/4 – 567), and used the names of Justinus I (527 – 565) and Justin II (565 – 578). Gepidic coinage differs from Gothic issues in the reverse types where the legend around the monogram is replaced with the crown.

³⁵¹ Grierson 1982, 77 – 83; for more on the development of coinage in western Europe between the 5th and 10th centuries, see Grierson 1986

³⁵² Grierson 1986, 33 – 38

³⁵³ Mrkograd 1980, 43 – 44

³⁵⁴ Mrkograd 1980, 57

5.3 Circulation and use of coins – renewal of the coin supply by Byzantine authorities in the Balkans

As mentioned in the previous chapter, it is generally accepted that the supply of bronze coinage to the middle Danubian region was seriously reduced at the end of the 4th century and that it completely stopped during the first three decades of the 5th century. It is believed that this directly caused the end of the use of bronze coins in the region. However, new revisions of the numismatic evidence have implied that this perhaps was not the case in the area southwest of Naissus.³⁵⁵ The coin finds from the site Rujkovac, a fortified settlement situated some 75 km southwest of Naissus, provided indices for such assumptions. The fortification was an important point for the protection of the roads and mining centres in the vicinity. Coin finds from this site include issues covering the period from the 3rd to the late 6th century. Especially important are the finds of coins from the second half of the 5th century, such as the issues of Theodosius II, Marcian, Leo I, Zeno and Basiliscus, which are absent from sites and hoards along the Danube and in the hinterland. Another important feature of the coin finds from Rujkovac is a large number of cut coins of the 3rd and 4th centuries (139) and of lead flans. A possible explanation for this phenomenon is that the cut coins and lead flans were put in or continued to be in circulation in the second half of the 5th century, precisely when the shortage of small denominations was at its peak.³⁵⁶ A hoard of *minimi* from Gamzigrad, the only example of a hoard with a closing date in the time of Anastasius I (498 – 518) in the territory of Serbia, could contribute to this assumption since it also contained cut examples of earlier issues and a few examples from the second half of the 5th century.³⁵⁷ Rašković and other colleagues also supposed that the earlier Roman coins of the 3rd and 4th centuries were in use during the 5th century in their investigation of coin finds in the area near Kruševac.³⁵⁸

The renewal of the coin supply in the rebuilt Byzantine forts and settlements started slowly from the very end of the 5th century to be intensified in the time of Justin I and Justinianus I. In Sirmium and Naissus coins started to circulate again from AD 498,³⁵⁹ while in

³⁵⁵ Ivanišević and Stamenković 2010, 59 – 84; 2011, 757 – 763; It should be also remembered that the circulation of bronze coinage never ceased in the southern parts of the Balkan Peninsula (Macedonia and Greece) during the 5th century; see Duncun 1993, 167

³⁵⁶ Ivanišević and Stamenković 2010, 60; 2011, 762

³⁵⁷ Janković 1984, 7 – 11

³⁵⁸ Rašković and Gavrić 2011, 443 – 470; Rašković 2011, 174

³⁵⁹ Popović 1978, 179 – 193; Crnoglavac 2005, 61 – 162

Singidunum and Viminacium a little bit later, from the time of Justin I (518 – 527).³⁶⁰ Among the single finds from the fortifications in the Iron Gate section of the Danube limes between the confluence of the Porečka Reka and Timok rivers into the Danube, the earliest issues are those of Anastasius I, after AD 498, while the last coins before the final break of the border date from 587/588, the time of Maurice (582 – 602).³⁶¹ The most represented mint is Constantinople. The issues from the Thessalonica mint became more represented only from the time of Justin II (565 – 578). A similar situation is also observable in hoards. In a very large hoard (599) of mostly *folles* from Aquae buried after AD 537/538, the issues of Justin I dominate comprising almost half of the content, while the rest belong to Anastasius I (c. 26%) and Justinianus I (c. 22%).³⁶² However, important for this research is the information that three Roman coins were also stored in this hoard.³⁶³ The most represented mint in this hoard was Constantinople with over 90% of coins originating from this mint. Constantinople is the most represented mint in other hoards that are buried outside Iron Gate area,³⁶⁴ but later the Thessalonica mint again became important for this region.³⁶⁵ The hoards from Ušće Slatinske reke and Tekija show the increasing importance of the mint in Thessalonica very well.³⁶⁶ A small number of coins of Nicomedia, Cyzicus and Antioch are also constantly present among the hoards and coin finds from this period.

In Curta's and Gândilă's opinion, the pattern of hoard deposition and their content in the central and northern Balkans was specific in comparison to the region of Greece and Asia Minor and it reflected the different states of the monetary economy in these regions.³⁶⁷ In the Balkans hoards did not mirror the money circulation on the market, as in Greece and Asia Minor, but rather the supply of cash through army distributions.³⁶⁸ Most of the hoards were, first of all, hidden either in fortifications or in basilicas; secondly, they contained a small number of pieces, less than 100, but mainly consisted of large copper denominations – *folles* and half-*folles*. Thus, they suggested that these savings present a part of soldiers' *donativa* that was changed at money changers for smaller denominations and who, being

³⁶⁰ Ivanišević 1987, 90; 1988, 88

³⁶¹ Špehar 2010a, 139 – 143

³⁶² Popović 1984, 57 – 90

³⁶³ Popović 1984, 58

³⁶⁴ Such as Klinovac and Orašje hoards: Gaj-Popović 1973, 28 – 29; 1984, 18 – 30

³⁶⁵ See hoard from Veliki Gradac: Minić 1984d, 39 – 47

³⁶⁶ Jovanović 1984, 31 – 35; Popović 1984, 57 – 90

³⁶⁷ Curta and Gândilă 2011 – 2012, 45 – 111

³⁶⁸ Curta and Gândilă 2011 – 2012, 95

supplied directly from the mint, did not have any smaller value pieces. Finds of weights and balances in the forts, another feature of the Balkan region of that time, confirm the presence of money changers.³⁶⁹ In spite of all efforts of the state to induce monetary transactions, it failed to accomplish it. Early Byzantine coins ceased to circulate in the territory of Serbia in the first half of the 7th century as the dating of the last coins at all major sites show; in Singidunum the last coin is from AD 577/578; in Sirmium it is from AD 578/579.³⁷⁰ In Viminacium coins are found from a little bit later, AD 592/593,³⁷¹ while in Naissus and Carčin Grad the supply of coins lasted the longest. In Iustiniana Prima a hoard buried after AD 613 was found,³⁷² whereas the youngest example from Naissus is a hexagram of Heraclius (610 – 641), dated to AD 615.³⁷³ From this time onwards and up to the end of the 10th century, there was no monetary circulation in the territory of Serbia.

5.3.1 Occasional integration and reuse of older Roman coins in barbarian and Byzantine coinage

Since at several points during the discussion of the monetary affairs and coin circulation in the Balkans the occasional reuse and integration of earlier Roman coins in the coinage systems of this period was mentioned, I wish to focus a little bit more on this issue. My opinion is that this is important because it enables us to observe the reuse of Roman coins in the case studies as a part of the wider phenomenon, and not just as related to the funerary ritual. As we saw, the finds of cut coins of the 3rd and 4th centuries from the site Rujkovac indicated that the old coinage was most probably mobilised in times of shortage of small cash. However, it is difficult to establish whether such actions were initiated from the bottom, i.e. from the people who felt the need to reuse the old coins in order to continue their everyday transactions, or whether it was a decision made by some political authority. On the other hand, what is important to notice is that in order for older coins to continue circulating with the new issues, the need to adjust them to the current system of denominations is apparent, in this case by cutting coins. Thus, the revaluation was formed through a pressure from the political authority and social recognition of it. I will for a

³⁶⁹ Špehar 2010a, 79 – 80

³⁷⁰ Ivanišević 1987, 91; Popović 1978, 179 – 193

³⁷¹ Ivanišević 1988, 88

³⁷² Popović 1984, 81 – 82

³⁷³ Crnoglavac 2005, 61 – 62

moment deal with the position of the official authorities, Byzantine and barbarians who minted coinage, to the “outdated” Roman coins.

The most famous example of the revaluation of the old Roman issues is the series of countermarked Imperial bronzes of the early Empire, spanning the 1st and 2nd centuries (P. LXI).³⁷⁴ These include mainly *sestertii* and *asses* with countermarks LXXXIII and XLII made by chisel cuts. Numismatists attributed these series to the coin production of Vandals in North Africa at Carthage, namely since the mark XLII is famous for the Vandalic autonomous *folles*.³⁷⁵ Stahl dated this series approximately from 498 to Justinianus’ conquest of the North African territories.³⁷⁶ Morrison suggested several explanations for this phenomenon by studying such pieces from Philip Grierson’s collection.³⁷⁷ Since the quality, precision and fineness of the countermarks vary from piece to piece, from a somewhat standardized practice to crude workmanship, in his opinion, “an official practice of marking and re-issuing older bronzes was followed with varying success by private individuals as and when they came into possession of similar pieces.”³⁷⁸ Most probably these coins did not stay in the circulation pool from the time that they were minted but were recovered from older hoards, from which coins of corresponding size were chosen. In spite of their provenance determined as Vandalic territories in North Africa, most of the countermarked early Empire bronzes were found in Italy, indicating that they were circulating there. Morrison explained that after the Vandalic territories in North Africa were conquered by Justinianus I the use of these coins spread to Italy alongside the transfer of troops and at this time the war conditions made the official low-value currency scarce. In his final conclusion, he states:

“Thus, the countermarked coins may be considered to have constituted a token coinage or emergency money, in two senses: in the first, as a response to the limited size of the Vandalic issues of autonomous *folles*, and in the second, by their reuse in Italy under war conditions.”³⁷⁹

³⁷⁴ Hahn 1973, 93 – 94

³⁷⁵ Grierson disagreed with the attribution to Vandals and locating their production in North Africa but insisted that they should be associated with the Ostrogoths; see Grierson 1982, 79; 1986, 28 – 31

³⁷⁶ Stahl 2012, 636

³⁷⁷ Morrison 1983, 95 – 111

³⁷⁸ Morrison 1983, 97

³⁷⁹ Morrison 1983, 100

Apart from these examples that were revaluated both by the “barbarian” political authorities and later by the Byzantines, the integration of older Roman issues is also known in the “entirely” Byzantine context. These include not only early imperial issues, but also coinage from the 4th century. Some of these have been noted in several coin collections across the world: *dupondius* of Domitianus (81 – 96) restruck as a *follis* of Constans II (641 – 668),³⁸⁰ as well as restruck of the same emperor on the issue of Constantine I,³⁸¹ then *follis* of Heraclius on a coin of Hadrianeia from Hadrian,³⁸² three half-*folles* of Leontius (695 – 698) overstruck on two *nummi* of Constantine I (324 – 337) and one of Maximimian I (285 – 305),³⁸³ *folles* of Tiberius III (698 – 705) on a coin of the First or Second Tetrarchy, most probably of Maximian Herculius, etc.³⁸⁴

Indirect evidence for the inclusion of older Roman issues in the circulation pool of Byzantine coins during the 6th century in the territory of Serbia are provided by the coin finds from Iustiniana Prima (Caričin grad), near Leskovac. As mentioned earlier, Iustiniana Prima was established by Justinianus I in honour of his mother, close to his birthplace Taurision. However, what is of interest for this research is that among the coin finds from this site, Roman coins from the 2nd to 4th century were found in addition to the predominant Byzantine issues of the 6th and early 7th centuries. These coins from the earlier Roman period were especially intriguing for numismatists and archaeologists, since Iustiniana Prima was not formed on any former Roman settlement. Thus, it was not possible to explain the presence of Roman coins as having originated from older archaeological layers and disturbed features. Popović suggested that the explanation for this should be sought in the general monetary circumstances of the early Byzantine period. In his opinion, the earlier issues were circulating at that time and were accepted as valid currency alongside the Byzantine issues, and in this way reached the town.³⁸⁵ Most probably the “big bronzes” from the mid-3rd century of the Viminacium mint could have been a replacement for the *follis* of Anastasius I. The issues of the 4th century could have replaced the scarce small change. Therefore, it could be assumed that in certain cases the earlier Roman issues could

³⁸⁰ Morrison 1983, 104; Spahr 1976, 24, pl. III, no.118, ter.

³⁸¹ Bendall 1975, 338

³⁸² Morrison 1983, 104

³⁸³ Bendall 1971, 7

³⁸⁴ Grierson 1968, 629 no 8b.3

³⁸⁵ Popović 1980, 127; 1985, 47

have been used as money, even without requiring countermarking or other visible marks of readjustment with the Byzantine monetary system.

5.4 Roman coins in early medieval graves (AD 400 – 700)

Graves of the early medieval period with finds of Roman coins belong to a large corpus of cemeteries excavated in the territory of Serbia and date to the period from c. AD 400 to 800.³⁸⁶ These cemeteries, associated with the Migration Period, could be divided into several groups depending on their chronology and location. One group includes finds from both south and north of the Danube and Sava rivers and could be divided into two phases. The earlier phase dates from c. AD 375 to 454 when the Hun Empire collapsed, while the later phase covers the period from this time until the final break of the Danubian limes in the early 7th century.³⁸⁷ In the region north of the Sava and Danube rivers a large group of graves is related to the dominance of the Avars, which lasted from c. AD 568 until they were defeated by Franks at the beginning of the 9th century.³⁸⁸

5.4.1 General features of the “Germanic” early medieval cemeteries in the territory of Serbia

The cemeteries of the early medieval period are distinguished by several features, including their position and structure, but more often they are recognizable by the specific grave goods. For instance, Germanic necropolises usually consist of several larger or smaller groups of graves that are separated from each other. Within one such group of graves, members of the clan and of the family are buried encircling, most often, one male grave with lavish offerings and weaponry. Frequently, a richly furnished female burial is close to the central grave, which contains luxurious jewellery and is sometimes accompanied with a child burial too. Around these graves are situated other poorer burials. Such organization of the cemetery is interpreted as reflecting the social structure of the Germanic tribes in which a clan chief and his family dominate the group and therefore have the central position in the cemetery, while other members of the group, ranked lower in the social hierarchy, were buried surrounding the central grave.³⁸⁹ These and similar types of

³⁸⁶ By now several studies on these cemeteries have been done; as a starting point, see Dimitrijević, Kovačević and Vinski 1962; Mrkobrad 1980; Milinković 2005, 197 – 218

³⁸⁷ Milinković 2005, 201, 207

³⁸⁸ Mrkobrad 1980, 71 – 108; Kovačević 1977

³⁸⁹ See Härke 1990, 22 – 43; Périn and Kazanski 2011, 299 – 330

cemeteries were recorded in several sites in the territory of Serbia, on both sides of the Danube, such as Kormadin - Jakovo, Bočar, etc.³⁹⁰ They also appear within the territories of the Roman cities, such as Sirmium, Singidunum, Margum, Viminacium and Naissus.³⁹¹ In the Roman sites, graves from the Migration Period are clustered in smaller groups forming a distinct cemetery even if they are situated in the vicinity of the previous Roman necropolis, though sometimes their positioning reveals a clear discontinuity with the previous city layout by forming the cemetery in the earlier residential areas.³⁹² Unfortunately, a vast number of finds originate from accidental finds with very poor data on the archaeological context.

Concerning finds, the main feature of the grave goods is most certainly the specific type of *fibulae* that were worn in different ways among the various Germanic groups. Among Goths, they were usually worn in pairs on the shoulders by women and, in the case of men, only one was used (LXII/1, 2).³⁹³ Single pieces were worn too, and sometimes pairs were pinned in the waist area instead of on the shoulders, as indicated by numerous grave finds. The most common type of *fibula* found in these graves belong to the so-called bow *fibulae*, which consist of a semicircular head plate and a rhomboid footplate, connected by an arched bow, or bridge, with the pin proper attached to the reverse of the *fibula*. As a rule these *fibulae* were worn with the head plate downward. Over time they slightly changed in form, becoming larger and more elongated, while the semicircular head plate was occasionally modified. It is very common among the finds from the territory of Serbia that the head plate and footplate were modified in a zoomorphic style.³⁹⁴ From the beginning of the 5th century some types grew to be a lavish and precious piece of jewellery, sometimes made of gold and silver, decorated with filigree, granulation, and, particularly, with stones and cloisonné inlay, or in niello technique. Although these *fibulae* are traditionally mainly associated with the Ostrogoths, literal ethnic attribution of the graves according to these

³⁹⁰ Dimitrijević 1960, 5 – 50; Dimitrijević and Girić 1971, 190 – 193

³⁹¹ Milošević 1994, 13 – 14; Ivanišević and Kazanski 2007, 113 – 135; Jovanović and Cunjak 1994, 120; Ivanišević, Kazanski and Mastykova 2006; Maksimović 2010, 23 – 53

³⁹² Ivanišević and Kazanski 2002, 101 – 103; Ivanišević, Kazanski and Mastykova 2006

³⁹³ Milinković 2004, 189; Périn and Kazanski 2011, 316 – 318

³⁹⁴ Dimitrijević, Kovačević and Vinski 1962, T IV (3), T V (1, 2); Mrkobrad 1980, 48

finds is questionable, and actually it is really not possible to distinguish material culture of the different Germanic tribes that settled this region at that time.³⁹⁵

The other object most commonly found in these graves are combs made of bone or antler, which appear among rich and poor graves as well as among all age and sex groups.³⁹⁶ They are single- or double-sided, usually decorated with incised geometrical patterns, composed from linear elements, or with a pattern of concentric circles. Depending on the gender, age and other factors, we find other artefacts, mainly pieces of clothing and body decoration, such as buckles, earrings, bracelets and necklaces; furthermore, in rare instances in male graves different parts of weaponry are found – such as swords, arrowheads and spearheads, shield umbos, and even helmets (P. LXII/2, LXIII/1);³⁹⁷ pottery is also a relatively rare offering, from which the most famous in this region is the so-called “Gepid ceramic” or “stempelkeramik” with an impressed distinctive rhomboid network pattern (P. LXIII/2);³⁹⁸ glass beakers are extremely rare, but have been found in a few instances.³⁹⁹

5.4.2 Roman coins in early medieval cemeteries – “Germanic” examples

In the following section, I will focus on the specific features of the grave contexts in which Roman coins were deposited. At sites 3 and 5 in Sirmium, early medieval graves dated to the late 5th and early 6th centuries were found dug into the remains of an abandoned *villa urbana* that was in use during the 3rd and 4th centuries. Of interest for this research are the so-called “Germanic grave” and grave no. 4 where Roman coins were deposited. An especially important example is the “Germanic grave”, in which, besides the two copper coins of Claudius Gothicus (268 – 270) and Valens (364 – 378), a pair of golden-plated bow *fibulae*, type Aquileia, lavishly decorated with inlaid almandine stones, and two amber and golden beads were found. In another grave that had a construction of reused Roman bricks, only one Roman coin (Ae3), type Constantinopolis (330 – 337) was documented as a possible grave offering. Since sites 3 and 5 were severely devastated, the

³⁹⁵ For critical discussion on the possibility to relate certain archaeological traits to distinctive ethnic groups in the early medieval period, see Milinković 2004, 185 – 196; Périn and Kazanski 2011, 310 – 322

³⁹⁶ These combs are usually considered to be one of the most typical artefacts of the period and they are associated with the so-called Černjahov culture, see Kazanski and Legoux 1988, 7 – 53; for distribution of the finds of these combs in Serbia, see Mrkobrad 1980, 40, 54

³⁹⁷ Kovačević 1960, 31; Dimitrijević, Kovačević and Vinski 1962, 74

³⁹⁸ Mrkobrad 1980, 53

³⁹⁹ Two examples are found at Kormadin – Jakovo: Dimitrijević 1960, 11– 12, 30 – 31; and Singidunum IV: Ivanišević and Kazanski 2007, 117, 121

exact locations of the coins within these graves are not documented, but all three coins are filed as grave finds in the inventory book of the numismatic collection of Srem Museum in Sremska Mitrovica.⁴⁰⁰

Table 7: Roman coins in graves from sites Sirmium 3 and 5

Necropolis	Dating of grave	Grave Nr. (sex)	Number of R. coins in the grave	Dating of coin	Difference in time between minting and deposition
Sirmium, sites 3 and 5	c. AD 475 – 525	“Germanic grave”	2	Claudius Gothicus (268 – 270) Valens (364 – 378)	At least c. 200 years At least c. 100 years
		4 (?)	1	type Constantinopolis, 330 – 337	At least c. 130 years

The excavated cemetery at the site Kormadin – Jakovo (near Belgrade) represents a typical Germanic burial site; more than 70 graves were excavated there over several occasions, but only 26 burials that were investigated in 1956 – 1958 were properly documented.⁴⁰¹ In terms of structure and finds it corresponds relatively well with the previously described type of cemeteries. It is dated to the first half of the 6th century, and Dimitrijević associated it with the Gepids and their domination in the Srem area during this period. Distinctive features of this necropolis are several warrior graves and the presence of artificially modified skulls among the skeletons.⁴⁰² Probably male grave no. 2 could represent a central burial of this cemetery. Around it were two female graves, both rich with pieces of jewellery, and one child burial. Another group of burials was situated around one more female grave (no. 5) that had also luxurious jewellery, including a bow *fibula*, and toiletry items. In the neck area of this grave was a bead necklace with a pendant made of a “barbarian” imitation of Anastasius I (491 – 518) *solidus*. The male grave (no. 7) with one

⁴⁰⁰ Courtesy of curator P. Popović from the Museum in Srem

⁴⁰¹ Dimitrijević 1960, 5 – 50

⁴⁰² This practice is another distinctive feature of the Migration Period and it is associated mainly with the Goths and Gepids. Apart from being an aesthetic model, it was also a marker of social status; for more on this phenomenon and examples from the necropoles in the territory of Serbia, see Mikić 1994, 133 – 138

Roman coin of Philipus (244 – 249), type Provincia Dacia, was situated between these two groups of graves and it also had one iron knife, one bronze buckle and an antler comb.⁴⁰³

Table 8: Roman coins in the graves from the site Kormadin – Jakovo

Necropolis	Dating of grave	Grave Nr. (sex)	Number of R. coins in the grave	Dating of coin	Difference in time between minting and deposition
<i>Kormadin – Jakovo</i>	c. 500 – 550	7(♂)	1	Philipus (244 – 249), type Provincia Dacia	At least c. 250 years

During the Migration Period several cemeteries emerged in the territory of Singidunum. By now four cemeteries have been excavated from which two were located northwest of the Singidunum *castrum* (I and IV), one was located inside the camp (II) in the southeastern section, and one was situated in the former residential area of Singidunum (III) northeast of the fortification.⁴⁰⁴ All of these are dated to the period from the end of the 4th to the early 7th century, but narrower dating was also possible for some graves within this timeframe. Roman coins deposited in graves were found at three cemeteries (II, III and IV). Among the 15 graves in the cemetery inside the *castrum* (II), one grave (no. 15) had one bronze piece of Constantius II (337 – 361) deposited on the skull of an adult.⁴⁰⁵ Other items were a bronze earring and a bracelet, three bead necklaces and a pair of silver-plated *fibulae* in the shape of a bird, dated AD 450 – 500. More examples of Roman coins (12) have been discovered in nine graves in the cemetery (III) situated northeast of the *castrum*.⁴⁰⁶ This cemetery, with 106 excavated graves, was the largest among the four mentioned burial sites. Though more than half were buried in plain rectangular pits, elaborate grave constructions were also often made of reused Roman bricks, fragmented and whole pieces, and with partial use of stone. Grave goods were present in 58 burials, including mainly garment objects, combs and mirrors, but also weaponry. Among the graves with Roman coins, five contained either only these coins as offerings, such as grave no. 41 and 43 with only two *antoniniani* of Gallienus (260 – 268) and Claudius Gothicus

⁴⁰³ Dimitrijević 1960, 13

⁴⁰⁴ Bjelajac and Ivanišević 1991, 123 – 139; Ivanišević and Kazanski 2002, 101 – 157; Ivanišević and Kazanski 2007, 113 – 135

⁴⁰⁵ Bjelajac and Ivanišević 1991, 136 – 137

⁴⁰⁶ Ivanišević and Kazanski 2002, 101 – 157

(268 – 270), or some poor finds besides the coins, such as grave no. 10 with two 4th-century coins, one issue of Vetrano (350) and one that is not readable; then in grave no. 73 one bronze issue, possible type *Gloria Romanorum* (364 – 378) was deposited on the skull; and in grave no. 89 bronze of Constantine II (337 – 340) was found.⁴⁰⁷ However, the Roman coins in the other four graves were found in slightly more interesting contexts. In grave no. 79, which was dated to AD 430/440 – 460/470, a pendant made of a 2nd-century *denarius* was found below the skull together with a golden pendant in shield form and a bead necklace.⁴⁰⁸ The remaining three graves with Roman coins (no. 2, 6 and 55) are dated to the turn of the 6th century. Graves no. 2 and 6 had a construction made of Roman bricks with a double-sided roof, while grave no. 55 was severely destroyed and actually finds were found piled up without any bone remains. In grave no. 2, probably a female, two bronzes of Constantius II (337 – 361) were found near the left elbow.⁴⁰⁹ Apart from these, one bronze *fibula*, a bead necklace and golden earring were also in the grave. According to the analysis of the humerus bone there were no stress markers, which was very unusual since these markers were very often found in the population of this cemetery among both males and females.⁴¹⁰ Two bronze issues of the 4th century were also found in the grave of a young male (no. 6) near his right leg.⁴¹¹ One issue was fragmented and unreadable, while the other was of Valens (364 – 378). The rest of the grave goods include a buckle, one ring, weapons (three arrowheads and a knife), a hair pin and one antler comb. In the disturbed grave no. 55 one bronze of Constans (337 – 350) was found together with luxurious pieces of jewellery, including one silver and golden-plated bow *fibula*, type Arčar – Histria, two golden earrings and two amber beads.⁴¹²

The last cemetery (IV) of the Migration Period in the Singidunum area where Roman coins were found is located to the southwest of the *castrum* and some 100 m from another burial site from the same period (I).⁴¹³ The fourth necropolis is a small burial site consisting of only three graves. Most probably it was a cemetery of warriors buried here around the mid-5th century AD according to the finds from grave no. 2/2006, in which Roman coins were also found. This assumption is also supported by the position of this group of burials

⁴⁰⁷ Ivanišević and Kazanski 2002, 129, 132, 135 – 136, 138

⁴⁰⁸ Ivanišević and Kazanski 2002, 136

⁴⁰⁹ Ivanišević and Kazanski 2002, 127

⁴¹⁰ Stefanović 2002, 163, 173 – 174

⁴¹¹ Ivanišević and Kazanski 2002, 128

⁴¹² Ivanišević and Kazanski 2002, 133

⁴¹³ Ivanišević and Kazanski 2007, 113 – 135

as a separate cluster in relation to the other cemetery in the vicinity, where, judging by the finds, a population of lower social status was buried. Apart from coin finds, other grave goods were numerous (49) and remarkable. The group of four Roman coins was near the right hip together with two flints and also the remains of a purse buckle. Other objects of the deceased were parts of the clothing, weapons and a glass beaker of high quality. Among the remains of clothing a silver laminar buckle with a golden plate is the most representative item from this group of objects. Weaponry deposited in this grave indicates, together with other objects, a very elaborate and carefully thought through funeral practice. Most of the weapons were broken before being deposited as a funeral offering and they included a sword, a shield, a spear, a composite archery bow and a quiver with arrowheads. All Roman coins were found very close to each other with indications that they were in a purse that was probably hanging on the right side of the waist. Among them were one *denarius* of Marcus Aurelius (169 – 177) issued under Antoninus Pius (138 – 161), one copper coin of Valens (364 – 378), an issue of Honorius (393 – 400) and one copper coin from the 4th century AD that was not readable.⁴¹⁴

Table 9: Roman coins in the graves from sites around Singidunum *castrum*

Necropolis	Dating of grave	Grave Nr. (sex)	Number of R. coins in the grave	Dating of coin	Difference in time between minting and deposition
<i>Singidunum II</i>	c. 450	15 (?)	1	Ae3 Constantius II, type Fel Temp Reparatio (341 – 361)	At least c. 90 years
<i>Singidunum III</i>	c. AD 500	2 (♀)	2	Ae Constantius II, mint Thess., 347/8; Ae mint Siscia, 347/8	At least c. 150 years
		6 (♂)	2	Ae Valens, mint Thessal., 364/78 Ae, 4 th century	At least c. 100 – 120 years

⁴¹⁴ Ivanišević and Kazanski 2007, 117

	c. AD 400 – 600	10 (?)		Ae Vetrico, 350	At least c. 50 years
		43 (?)			
	c. AD 500	55 (?)	1	Ae Constans, mint Siscia, 347/8	At least c. 150 years
	c. AD 400 – 600	71(?)	1	Ant., Claudius II 268/270	At least c. 130 years
		73(♀)	1	Ant. Gallienus (260 – 268)	At least c. 130 years
	c. AD 430 – 470	79(?)	1	2 nd century denarius	At least c. 230 years
c. AD 430 – 510	89 (?)	1	Ae Constantine II, mint Heraclea, 337/340	At least c. 100 years	
<i>Singidunum IV</i>	c. AD 440/450	2/2006 (♂)	4	Denarius Marcus-Aurelius 148–149;	At least c. 300 years
				Ae3 Valens R 364–378;	At least c. 50 – 70 years
				Ae4 Honorius?	
				393–400?	
				Ae4, 4 th century	

The following case studies are connected to the most famous and the largest Roman necropolis in the territory of Serbia, which is situated in the vicinity of Viminacium. More than 13 500 graves are recorded in several sites around the territory of the city. Only one section of the Roman cemetery (middle of 1st – middle of 3rd century AD), with 3989 burials, was investigated at the site Više Grobalja.⁴¹⁵ In the northwestern section of this site a group of graves (106) belonging to the Migration Period was found.⁴¹⁶ The other cemetery (45 graves) from this time is located at the site Burdelj, at the southeastern fringe of the Roman necropolis, and in the vicinity of a building dated to the 4th century.⁴¹⁷ Both

⁴¹⁵ Zotović and Jordović 1990

⁴¹⁶ Zotović 1992 – 1993, 183 – 190; Ivanišević, Kazanski and Mastykova 2006

⁴¹⁷ Zotović 1980, 95 – 115; Ivanišević, Kazanski and Mastykova 2006

cemeteries had similar features in terms of burial constructions and finds. Burial constructions varied between the plain pits (which were the most numerous), structures made of reused Roman bricks and *tegulae* that were very rare, and the occasional use of wooden caskets. At the Više Grobalja cemetery Roman coins (5) have been found in four graves, while at Burdelj only two pieces in two cases. All coins from Više Grobalja were base metal denominations, mostly from Alexander Severus and his family. One coin that could not be read was deposited in a juvenile grave (no. 1292), on the abdomen, in which only one bronze buckle was found.⁴¹⁸ The three other examples are all adult burials. In a male grave (no. 141), buried in a wooden casket and dated to AD 530 –560, a bronze issue of Alexander Severus (222 – 235) was near the head.⁴¹⁹ The other finds in it were a handle of a shield, two iron knives, a whetstone, an antler comb and a silver belt set. Two bronzes, a *sestertius* of Alexander Severus (222 – 235) and an issue of Julia Mamaea (228), were found in grave no. 1193, probably a female, next to the left arm.⁴²⁰ In this grave dated to AD 430/440 – 500/510, a pair of bronze earrings with golden plate, one bronze *fibula* in the shape of a bird, several amber and glass beads and one bone needle were found. In grave no. 1311, dated the same as the previous grave, one copper coin was found on the shoulders, while other offerings were a silver bow *fibula* with gold plate and bronze tweezers.⁴²¹ Another *denarius*, an issue of Hadrian (117 – 138), was found at Burdelj cemetery in the grave of an adult (no. 24), dated AD 430/440 – 470/480, on the right side of the pelvis.⁴²² Besides this, two buckles, a silver tongue of a belt buckle, other parts of belt set and a knife were found. Grave no. 52, from the same time, had a more modest inventory. A bronze issue of Constantine I (324 – 337) was next to the left femur, together with one antler comb and a chain ring.⁴²³

⁴¹⁸ Ivanišević, Kazanski and Mastykova 2006, 208

⁴¹⁹ Ivanišević, Kazanski and Mastykova 2006, 186 – 187

⁴²⁰ Ivanišević, Kazanski and Mastykova 2006, 206

⁴²¹ Ivanišević, Kazanski and Mastykova 2006, 208

⁴²² Zotović 1980, 110

⁴²³ Zotović 1980, 114

Table 10: Roman coins in graves from sites around Viminacium

Necropolis	Dating of grave	Grave Nr. (sex)	Number of R. coins in the grave	Dating of coin	Difference in time between minting and deposition
<i>Viminacium</i>	c. 530 – 560	141(?)	1	Alexander Severus (222 – 235)	At least c. 300 years
<i>Više Grobalja</i>	c. AD 430 – 470	1193(?)	2	Alexander Severus (222 – 235) Julia Mamaea 222/8	At least c. 200 years
	c. AD 400 – 600	1292(?)	1	3rd century?	?
	c. AD 430 – 510	1311(?)	1	3rd century?	?
<i>Viminacium</i> <i>Burdelj</i>	c. AD 430 – 470	24 (?)	1	silver Hadrian 117 – 138	At least c. 200 years
		52 (?)	1	bronze Constantine I 306 – 337	At least c. 100 years

The cemetery of the Migration Period at Vajuga revealed an exceptional example of the use of Roman coins in the funeral practice of this period. It is situated next to the early Byzantine fort, probably from the time of Justinian I (527 – 565), where also one basilica was found. The cemetery had about twenty graves, from which we have only data about one grave (no. 18) of a young girl (12 – 14 years).⁴²⁴ Tiny bones of a bird were found on her thorax. Other grave goods included a pair of silver *fibulae* with gold plate, an earring, three rings, a bead necklace, one pot and two pierced bronze Roman coins. One was found in the mouth and the other beneath the chin. The later coin was an issue of Gratianus (367 – 375), minted in Thessalonica. The grave is dated according to the chronology of *fibulae* which were type Viškov, dated to AD 425 – 450.

⁴²⁴ Popović 1987c, 129 – 132; Špehar 2012, 42 – 43

Table 11: Roman coins from the grave in Vajuga

Necropolis	Dating of grave	Grave Nr. (sex)	Number of R. coins in the grave	Dating of coin	Difference in time from minting to deposition
<i>Vajuga</i>	c. 425 – 450	(♀)	2	Gratianus (367 – 375)	At least c. 50 years

Several graves (4) from the Migration Period were found in the area of the luxurious 4th-century villa at the site Medijana – Brzi Brod near Naissus.⁴²⁵ In one grave (no. 35) of an adult male who had an artificially modified skull, one 4th-century bronze coin was found in his right hand, while other objects present were an iron buckle and knife.⁴²⁶ In connection with this burial was grave no. 34, where the deceased also had an artificially modified skull, but he was buried in a construction made of bricks. These graves represent the southernmost point where the practice of the artificially modified skull was recorded in the territory of Serbia.

Table 12: Roman coin from graves in Naissus – Medijana

Necropolis	Dating of grave	Grave Nr. (sex)	Number of R. coins in the grave	Dating of coin	Difference in time between minting and deposition
<i>Naissus – Medijana</i>	c. AD 400 – 600	(♂)	1	Ae 4 th century	?

The last example of the Germanic graves originates from an unknown site in the vicinity of Subotica. It represents a case in which a Roman coin was deposited in a grave dated to the early 6th century that is located in the former Barbaricum. This grave assemblage consisted of one bronze issue of Constantius II (337 – 361), one bronze pendant imitating the form of

⁴²⁵ Maksimović 2010, 23 – 53

⁴²⁶ Maksimović 2010, 30 – 31, 35

a Roman coin, one golden-plated bow *fibula* with almandine stones, one arm ring and a pair of golden-plated earring pendants.⁴²⁷

Table 13: Roman coin from the grave in Subotica

Necropolis	Dating of grave	Grave Nr. (sex)	Number of R. coins in the grave	Dating of coin	Difference in time from minting o deposition
<i>Subotica</i>	c. 500 – 525	1 (♀)	1	Ae Constantius II (337 – 361), CONCORDIA– MILITVM (351)	At least c. 150 years

5.4.3 Roman coins in early medieval cemeteries – “Avar” examples and general features of these cemeteries

The Roman coins deposited in the four graves at the necropolis in Aradac are the only examples found in the context of Avar material culture from the territory of Serbia.⁴²⁸

Before I continue with the details of the graves at Aradac, I will first shortly present some general features of cemeteries connected to the period of Avar domination. My focus is on the so-called “first wave” of Avar migration (c. 568 – 670s AD) to the Pannonian plain, mainly to the area between the Danube and Tisza rivers, since the case study included in this research is from that period. In the analysis of cemeteries from this period, Mrkobrad distinguished several features – cemeteries are usually small in numbers of burials; the appearance of very richly furnished individual graves, so-called princely graves; the presence of graves of goldsmiths with specific tool equipment; generally the jewellery found in cemeteries was made in the technique of impressing thin sheets of metal (gold, silver and bronze) with a matrix; earrings of the type Szent-Endre are common in female graves, while earrings with a spherical pendant are found in both male and female graves; in weaponry, the main characteristic is a sword with “P” grip and parts of the bone plate of the reflex arc; separate horse burials or only buried equipment for the horse; crude pottery; finds of the so-called “martinovska” culture characterized by bow *fibulae* with

⁴²⁷ Klemenc 1952, 337 – 342

⁴²⁸ Nađ 1959, 45 – 102

anthropomorphic footplate;⁴²⁹ relatively common presence of Byzantine coins from the 6th and 7th centuries.⁴³⁰ In later periods, the cemeteries became larger with modest inventories, while princely graves slowly disappeared, as well as Byzantine coins. The technique of metal craftsmanship changed and mostly casting in bronze was employed.

However, the most characteristic item of Avar material culture is most certainly the belt set. Many archaeologists are of the opinion that the belt sets have a more symbolic function in addition to their practical purpose of holding the trousers and different objects. It is thought that belt sets signified a specific status within the clan hierarchy.⁴³¹ The number of parts in the set, their craftsmanship and material could indicate the rank of its wearer in Avar society together with other features of the burial. One of the most representative examples of Avar belt sets found in the territory of Serbia is the lavish golden belt set from the vicinity of Sirmium (P. LXIII/3), dated to the period between AD 630 and 670.⁴³² Unfortunately, the belt is an accidental find without any data on its context, but nevertheless it remains one of the most luxurious known examples, and presumably was an insignia of the highest rank – that of a khagan.⁴³³

But, let us return to the cemetery in Aradac and the finds of Roman coins in it. The cemetery at the site Aradac – Mečka consisted of 98 burials, from which only 19 had no grave goods. In general, this cemetery corresponds very well to all previously described features of the “first wave” of Avar migration. Even the richly furnished horse burial was found at this site.⁴³⁴ Roman coins were found in four graves – one female and three male burials. In the female grave (no. 22) the small bronze of Maximianus Daia (305 – 313) was found in a metal bulk, near the left hand, while other objects were one bronze earring, one iron knife and one unidentified bone object.⁴³⁵ The other graves had more numerous inventories. Especially interesting is the grave (no. 18) of some kind of a craftsman, according to the finds of tools near his feet, but unfortunately it was not possible to

⁴²⁹ Artefacts of the „martinovska grupa“ were usually considered to indicate the presence of Slavs in the Avar Khaganate. A specific type of a bow fibulae associated with this material culture was understood as an element of the Slavic costume, but recent studies rejected such interpretation, see Curta 2009, 45 – 78.

⁴³⁰ Mrkobrad 1980, 77 – 78

⁴³¹ Kovačević 1977, 101, 109

⁴³² Popović 1997, 47

⁴³³ Popović 1997, 22

⁴³⁴ Nađ 1959, 63

⁴³⁵ Nađ 1959, 57

establish the crafts in which he was specialized.⁴³⁶ Here a bronze issue of Constantine II (337 – 340) was found under the left hand.⁴³⁷ In the burial of a young male (no. 42) a bronze coin of Constantius II (337 – 361) was found in the right hand together with several other objects – an iron firesteel, a bronze sheet, one flint, an awl, a fragment of glass and a bulk of corroded metal.⁴³⁸ The last example from this necropolis comes from the male grave (no. 31) in which one coin of Constans (337 – 350) was sealed on bronze plate, probably a part of the handle of the knife that was found under the left femur.⁴³⁹ Additionally an iron sword, one semispherical button, two earring pendants, two iron buckles and one flint were also found. Traces of oxidation found in the waist area, as well as one bronze rivet, lead to the assumption that the deceased also had a bronze belt that was not preserved for some reason. Roman coins were not the only coin finds in this cemetery; in grave no. II one bronze coin of Tiberius II Constantine (578 – 582) was also found.⁴⁴⁰ It is interesting that in this instance the coin was also found in a male grave together with a few other objects (bronze loop, whetstone and some iron object) in the right hand.

Table 14: Roman coins in graves from the site Aradac

Necropolis	Dating of grave	Grave Nr. (sex)	Number of R. coins in the grave	Dating of coin	Difference in time between minting and deposition
<i>Aradac</i>	c. AD 550 – 625	18 (♂)	1	Constantine II 337 – 340	At least c. 200 years
		22 (♀)	1	Ae3 Maximinus 305 – 313 mint Siscia	At least c. 250 years
		31 (♂)	1	bronze Constans 337 – 350	At least c. 200 years
		42 (♂)	1	bronze Constantius II 337 – 361	At least c. 200 years

⁴³⁶ Dimitrijević, Kovačević and Vinski 1962, 10

⁴³⁷ Nađ 1959, 57

⁴³⁸ Nađ 1959, 59

⁴³⁹ Nađ 1959, 58

⁴⁴⁰ Nađ 1959, 62

5.5 Revaluation of Roman coins in the early medieval period

As we have seen, the time difference between the coins' issue date and their deposition varies between c. 50 to 300 years. Though the examples where the time difference is about 50 years could be considered to perhaps not be relatively short for some essential difference in perception, use and valuation of coins to become observable to the archaeologists, they are included because of several reasons – either such examples were found together with significantly older coins, such as at Singidunum III and IV and at Viminacium, or in other cases even if there were no other coins (older or younger) in the graves but these cemeteries were formed in a time when monetary circulation was seriously troubled, as has already been pointed out. It is shown in the previous chapter that *denarii* stopped circulating already by the middle of the 3rd century. The situation with bronze denominations became complicated in the 4th century and become even worse in the 5th century. At that time, the complex network of Roman mints collapsed and the whole coinage system broke down, which had different effects across the Empire. In some places the coins stopped being used completely, as in Britain, and elsewhere they were modified. In the eastern half of the Empire, coin production succeeded in recovering at the beginning of the 6th century. However, it seems that the old Roman coins and the restored or new coinage systems were still very interrelated. Yet, it should be emphasised that even if the incorporation of the older Roman issues into the contemporary coinage systems was occasionally attested and could be assumed as a practice that was relatively frequent in this period across the territories of the former Roman Empire, we cannot assume that the older Roman coins were at all times and continually accepted as valid currency. But, as we saw, in some cases this required visible interventions on these issues – such as cutting, countermarking and re-striking – and such coins are regularly marked in coin collections as extremely rare examples.⁴⁴¹ On the other hand, when it could be supposed that the older Roman coins were circulating together with the current Byzantine issues without any visible adjustments, they again comprised only a tiny part of the circulating pool, and most certainly were exceptional pieces. This is the case with Roman coins at the site Iustiniana Prima where only 24 Roman coins out of 350 pieces from the 6th and 7th centuries were found.⁴⁴² The same goes for the hoard from Aquae where besides 599 coins from the early

⁴⁴¹ For example Spahr 1976, 24

⁴⁴² Popović 1980, 122

6th century three earlier Roman coins were also hoarded.⁴⁴³ However, in my opinion, the generally ambiguous position towards older Roman coins in this period is perhaps the most crucial feature for the construction of their value in the examples from the early medieval graves. I think this unclear situation of their nominal value, but also their constant potential to be incorporated in the current system of denominations, opens a range of opportunities in forming the conception of the coins' value. The possibility that older Roman coins became a valid currency is enabled, apart from being of the appropriate size or weight and through the recognition of the former political authority that minted the coins in the first place, i.e. Rome, by the one currently in power, i.e. Byzantine or a barbarian kingdom. That these coins had the potential to be incorporated into a monetary system is also important for the reason that the valuation of these coins depended not only on the subjective perception of their owners, excluded from the outside factors, but also in reaction to events in the wider social and monetary context. Thus, these coins also had the capacity to be used in an economic transaction. However, inconsistency in this practice and the non-existence of a fixed and regulated system of revaluation makes it possible that these coins could be at the same time “over” and “under” valued by their users, depending on the context. In other words, Roman coins are identified as potential valuables, but they become valuable only in specific circumstances. Thus, I will return to the specific contexts of the case studies in order to try to bring all these different aspects together and make an attempt to give some suggestions for the interpretation of the use of Roman coins in them.

Firstly, I would like to take another look at the case studies in which Roman coins are found in graves where there are firm indications that the deceased was of higher and special social status. Such cases most definitely include the warrior grave from the Singidunum IV necropolis and a grave of a girl at the Vajuga cemetery. In both cases, if we observe the Roman coins found only in their nominal value within the Roman coinage system, they would actually be in contradiction to the rest of the grave assemblage and the whole context. But, since they are deposited in the previously described circumstances – social and monetary – their denomination and number is not crucial in the conception of their value. More important, in my opinion, is their potential to be valuable, and moreover the social status of their owners. In the case from Singidunum IV four coins – a *denarius* of Marcus Aurelius and three copper coins – do not represent a great treasure on their own.

⁴⁴³ Popović 1984, 58

But, one *denarius* in a time when silver coinage is constantly lacking could have become much more valuable. Together with the other finds from the grave and, moreover, their use in an elaborate and sophisticated funeral practice, reveals that these coins served as confirmation of the higher social status of the deceased, and therefore their value was perceived in accordance with the position of the person within the social hierarchy – the social value of the deceased. Two Roman coins from the site Vajuga could be observed in the same way. The young girl from this cemetery most certainly was a descendant of some very important members of the Germanic society. The grave goods found in her burial, particularly the lavish pair of silver *fibulae* with gold plate, and the exceptional practice of laying a small bird on the girl's chest support such assumption. Therefore, two bronze coins present only one segment in the group of value-laden objects used to reproduce her special social status through funeral practice.

Similarly for the examples of the “Germanic grave” from Sirmium and grave assemblage from Subotica, in order to attempt to comprehend the evaluation of Roman coins the social status of the deceased most certainly should be taken into account. The “Germanic grave” is one of the most famous finds from the Migration Period in the territory of Serbia because of the pair of gold-plated bow *fibulae* with inserted almandine stones. However, since the position of all grave goods was disturbed I will not go into further details, but it is clear that such type of *fibulae* could not have been the property of a wide range of individuals. In the case of Subotica, the context of this grave is unfortunately unclear as well. Nevertheless, based on the gold-plated *fibula* and golden earrings, both decorated with almandine stones, some hints at the higher position of the owner of this assemblage could be envisaged. Furthermore, apart from these finds and the Roman coin, a coin pendant that imitates the form of a Roman coin indicates a special affection towards this type of object. It clearly shows understanding of the original and of the barbarian interpretation in the same way.

In the Singidunum III and Viminacium cemeteries, which are all larger necropolises where we have more examples of Roman coins, the situation is more heterogeneous. We should also be reminded that at the time when these cemeteries were formed, both in Singidunum and Viminacium, no evidence for the circulation of any contemporary base metal denominations were noted. On the other hand, the inflow of precious metal issues should not be excluded, either as payments or tributes, depending on how we observe the

population buried in these cemeteries, as *foederati* or as invaders. In either case, the inflow of gold coins would probably not have been regular and it would have been given to the leaders, from whom it could be distributed to other members of the group. Thus, these populations were left either with old Roman small cash, scattered around ruins or perhaps even still in some kind of use, or with the occasional inflow of new gold coins, but available only for highly-ranked individuals. Observed in this light, this leaves a limited choice of types, and more importantly of denominations, that could be selected to be incorporated into the funeral offerings. In such circumstances the same denominations could appear in the graves of individuals of different social status, but we should suppose that they had very different meanings and values depending on whose funeral offering the coins were part of.

At the Singidunum III cemetery, several graves in which Roman coins have been found were those of community members of the upper social strata, but deposited in a few graves in which, judging by the plainness of the grave construction and lack of other finds or by their humbleness, the people buried were not considered high-positioned members of this group (no. 71, 73, 89). In grave no. 55, even though the grave has been disturbed, the finds of a silver *fibula*, type Arčar – Histria, and a pair of golden earrings indicate that the deceased was well situated. For graves no. 2 and 6, in addition to the grave goods, it is important to take into account that these belonged to the group of burials with an elaborated construction of reused Roman bricks, which required certain time and effort be invested by the community. Additionally, the female from grave no. 2 was also exceptional because no occupational stress markers on the humerus bone were recorded, as previously mentioned. This means that this woman belonged to the group of few individuals who were free of doing the repetitive activity that causes it or that she was not capable of carrying it out. Two graves (no. 10 and 43) have only Roman coins as offerings, but on the other side burial constructions are present too. The deceased from grave no. 10 was placed in a tomb made of stone slabs, a unique case at this necropolis, while grave no. 43 had a construction of bricks, though of a simpler form. Grave no. 79, positioned on the very fringe of the excavated area of the cemetery, is very interesting since the finds that included a golden pendant and pendant made of a 2nd-century *denarius* are in contradiction with the position of the grave and the simple burial pit.

At the two cemeteries in the vicinity of Viminacium, all graves with Roman coins were plain burial pits with no constructions, except for one where the deceased was buried in a wooden casket. Therefore, the representation of social status through distinctive and elaborate burial structures is not present among these graves. According to the other grave goods found besides the Roman coins, none of the graves could be marked as examples of really richly furnished funerals. In three cases from the Više Grobalja site several singular objects could be considered relatively valuable, such as parts of the silver belt set from grave no. 141, a pair of golden earrings from grave no. 1193 and gold-plated *fibula* from grave no. 1311, while graves no. 1292 (Više Grobalja) and no. 52 (Burdelj), if we are to judge by the finds, present very humble funerals. A very interesting example is grave no. 24 from Burdelj in which the most valuable coin, in monetary terms, was found – a *denarius* of Hadrian – but in which the other finds were not lavish at all.

Although Roman coins were noted as grave goods in only one cemetery from the domination of the Avars in the territory of Serbia, north of the Sava and Danube rivers,, this should not be understood as an exceptional case and that it represents a highly rare practice among the Avar population. On the contrary, finds from other parts of the Carpathian basin, mostly from modern Hungary, indicate that the reuse of Roman coins in Avar graves was widely practiced. We know this from the classic work on coin finds in Avar graves, and generally on coins found within Avar territories, which was done by Huszár in his study of coin material from the Migration Period in the Middle Danube region.⁴⁴⁴ He listed a vast number of Avar cemetery sites in which coins were found (48), and the most interesting and particularly important point for this research is that the coins found in these graves were most often the old Roman issues dated from Domitianus (81 – 96) to Theodosius I (379 – 395), while the contemporary coins, including Byzantine coins and their imitations, were found only in 16 cases.⁴⁴⁵ Later studies mention a greater number of grave finds.⁴⁴⁶ Byzantine coins were mostly precious metal denominations, in contrast to the old Roman coins consisting mainly of small change from the 4th century (180 pieces), but also a few *denarii* were found. The older Roman coins appear very rarely

⁴⁴⁴ Huszár 1955, 61 – 109

⁴⁴⁵ The number of 16 cases of Byzantine issues in Avar graves is also confirmed by a later study by Garam 1992, 135 – 250

⁴⁴⁶ Bóna 1993, 530 lists 40 Byzantine gold coins as grave offerings; Somogyi 1997, 109 – 110, lists 43 grave finds

in the graves of “the first Avar wave” and they became more frequently used in graves dated from the 680s onwards, at the same time as the inflow of contemporary Byzantine coins to the Avar Khaganate ended. Thus, it seems that the reuse of old Roman coins was interrelated with the use of received Byzantine coins and could not be observed separately from the circulation of Byzantine coins. For this reason, I will give a short overview on this subject and try to relate these two aspects of coin use in Avar society.

The inflow of coins into the territory of the Avar Khaganate came through plunder, gifts, trade and tribute. However, the basis of it was the tribute paid regularly by the Byzantines between c. AD 558 and 626. In his calculations and by analysing written sources, Kovačević established that approximately 6 000 000 *solidi* were given to the Avars during this period of over 80 years (Table 12).⁴⁴⁷

Table 15: Inflow of Byzantine tribute to Avars in *solidi*

Period	Amount of <i>solidi</i> per year	Total
558 – 565	Lower than 80000	c. 45 000
565 – 575	No tribute, but peace was negotiated for 800	800
575 – 585	80 000	800 000
585 – 600	100 000	1 500 000
600 – 604	120 000	480 000
604 – 623	Between 120 000 and 200 000	c. 2 500 000
623 – 626	200 000	600 000

After the Avars were defeated at Constantinople the regular tribute stopped being paid. However, the numismatic evidence shows that the inflow of Byzantine coins to the Avar territories continued until the 680s and the issues of Constantine IV were the last to reach the Khaganate. It seems that there was a sharp decline after AD 626, but around the 650s *solidi* and, for the first time, silver coins reappeared in Avar lands. However, this lasted only until c. AD 681 and no later coins are known from their region. The reason why the influx of Byzantine coins stopped at this time has been debated, but probably it was a combination of several reasons. Scholars mostly debated whether the crucial factor that led

⁴⁴⁷ Kovačević 1962 – 63, 126; even though the written sources provide us with poor quantitative data, it is nevertheless useful to have at least a vague idea of the possible amount of coins that were given to the Avars as a tribute.

to the end of the outflow of coins to this area was the generally bad situation in the monetary affairs of the Byzantine Empire, as well as what the connection of Bulgar migration in AD 681 to Thrace was with the relations between the Byzantines and Avars.⁴⁴⁸

Most of the coin finds from Avar territories are either grave finds or stray finds, while hoards are very poorly known. Only five hoards are associated with the Avars, from which we have data on the context of only one, Zemiansky Vrbovok in Slovakia, whereas the others are not properly documented and much data are missing.⁴⁴⁹ The Avars also made an attempt to produce coins by forging Byzantine coins during the 6th and 7th centuries, but their production had too low a capacity, much lower in comparison to the Germanic production of pseudo-Imperial coinage, to have any significant effect on the amount of coins in use – within or outside the Avar territories.⁴⁵⁰ Additionally, there are indications that the imitations of Byzantine issues were made based on vague memory, when obviously these types of coins were no longer supplied to the Khaganate.⁴⁵¹

However, what the nature of coin use in Avar society was is a more important issue and a question that is still open. How Byzantine coins circulated after reaching the Avar context is questionable. Whether they were redistributed or continued to be used as monetary objects among the population of the Khaganate is a matter of debate. Yet, it is clear that much of the lavish golden jewellery, which was the main feature of the early period of the Avar domination, was made from Byzantine gold coins.⁴⁵² This assumption is supported by several indications. The aforementioned hoard at Zemiansky Vrbovok is interpreted to have belonged to a silversmith based on the analysis of finds, which included 18 silver hexagram coins, jewellery items, and, more importantly, also semi-finished products.⁴⁵³ Furthermore, the beautiful belt sets made in gold disappear from the archaeological record at the same time as when the inflow of golden coins stopped.⁴⁵⁴ Bóna also emphasised that the weight of golden earrings typical for Avars of the 6th century was 3–4, 6–7 or 9–12 gr.

⁴⁴⁸ A recent study on the issue of the inflow of Byzantine coins in Avaria in c. 650 – 680 was done by Somogyi 2008, 83 – 149; he suggested these represent the tribute and mercenary payments to Avars and Slavs against the Bulgars, which stopped after the Bulgars invaded the Byzantine territories.

⁴⁴⁹ Somogyi 1997, 135 – 153; Bóna 1993, 530

⁴⁵⁰ For more on Avar imitations of Byzantine coins, see Bóna 1993, 529 – 538; Somogyi 1997, 122 – 134

⁴⁵¹ Somogyi 2008, 88

⁴⁵² Somogyi 1997, 142 with footnote 22

⁴⁵³ Somogyi 1997, 97 – 139

⁴⁵⁴ Kovačević 1962 – 63, 131

per piece which coincides with the weight of 1–3 light *solidi*.⁴⁵⁵ Therefore, it cannot be excluded that one of the main functions of golden coins in Avar society was as a resource of material. Thus, this could explain to a certain degree the disproportion of the amount of gold coins paid to the Avars as recorded in written sources and the surviving coin evidence, but also the widely distributed golden jewellery and the concentration of coin finds only in certain areas and some graves.

Thus, observed in this light, it could be concluded, as Somogyi also suggested, that the circulation of coins in the Avar Khaganate was governed by rules very different than in the economies of Rome or Byzantium.⁴⁵⁶ Since coins were regularly transformed into prestige objects, belts and jewellery, then their circulation within Avar society is actually driven by the desire of the members of the upper strata to get a hold of such items. This means that we could ponder to what extent golden coins were distributed among the Avars in their unchanged form and to what extent this was done indirectly through coins that had already been transformed into jewellery and other objects. Related to this, it is most certainly necessary to reconsider the relevance of acquiring gold in the form of coinage in the process of creating prestige goods. It is not excluded that the Avars also received gold in bullion, but I am of the opinion that most probably gold was gained in the form of coins, with the representation of political authority obliged to submit such great amounts of its treasures to the Avar leader(s) thereby creating “an additional touch of prestige” to the goods made of it. In addition, the affection for golden coins in their original form is also visible in the pierced examples.⁴⁵⁷ However, the end of the regular inflow of golden coins most certainly had a great impact on how, and more importantly, what would be exchanged among the elite.

After discussion of the use of Byzantine gold coins, I wish to return to the question of the reuse of older Roman bronze coins. The reuse of Roman coins significantly increased after the inflow of Byzantine coins stopped, but it was also present prior to that point on rare occasions. The example included in this research from Aradac confirms this, since this cemetery is dated to the early period of Avar domination. What is also important to be aware of is that besides reused Roman bronze coins, a small number of Byzantine copper

⁴⁵⁵ Bóna 1993, 530

⁴⁵⁶ Somogyi 1997, 142 – 143

⁴⁵⁷ Somogyi 1997, 109 – 110

issues were found in the Avar context.⁴⁵⁸ Scholars have not yet agreed on whether these contemporary base metal denominations reached the Avars as a part of the tribute or in some other way, and how they could be related to the circulation and use of gold issues. On this issue, Somogyi pointed out that most probably Byzantine coins and older Roman issues had a similar role in Avar society, but without explaining what this role was.⁴⁵⁹ He noted that the Byzantine copper issues were unlikely a part of tribute payments due to their low value, suggesting that: “Their import into Avaria must be attributed to specific circumstances of a rather private character.”⁴⁶⁰ The example from Aradac could also suggest such undefined conclusion. According to the analysis of the context, both – one *follis* of Tiberius II and four Roman coins of the 4th century – were found in similar contexts, indicating that there were no differences in the handling of the contemporary and older issues. However, insight was not given on what their meaning and function were among the population buried there. My opinion is that the attitude towards these old Roman coins changed and became more defined only after the inflow of gold coins stopped. At that point, given the lack of coinage in a context where probably the memory of the importance of the gold coinage in former times was still alive, people started to use the old Roman issues found in the Roman ruins of Pannonia Prima. This could maybe explain why there are no more finds of reuse in the territory of Serbia, since in this region Avars were mostly settled in the part that was the former Barbaricum. Being mostly base metal denominations, the valuation of these coins was not based on their material, rather they were appreciated in their original form. Perhaps the iconography and aesthetics of the coins or some vague recognition of the Roman / Byzantine authority substituted the material value. Most of the reused Roman coins in Huszár’s study were pierced and used as pendants.⁴⁶¹ Additional indicators that the iconography of the 4th-century coins perhaps became important as a sign of prestige objects in the later period of the Avar Khaganate is the find of a casted bronze belt with golden plate, typical for the “second Avar wave”, from one warrior grave in Zemun.⁴⁶² This lavish and elaborate example of the late Avar style was completely decorated with depictions inspired by the Imperial portraits of the 4th-century coinage (P. LXIV - LXVII). Besides the warrior who was without any doubt a member of the elite, two women were also buried next to him. Even though the belt set

⁴⁵⁸ Somogyi 1997, 109 – 110

⁴⁵⁹ Somogyi 1997, 145

⁴⁶⁰ Somogyi 2008, 102, footnote 44

⁴⁶¹ Huszár 1955, 61 – 109

⁴⁶² Dimitrijević 1966, 53 – 76; Kovačević 1977, 96; Mrkobrad 1980, 88, T. CXVI (1, 2, 7)

from this grave is the only example of such style from the territory of Serbia (Srem), several analogous finds were found mainly in the territory of Hungary,⁴⁶³ particularly in areas that coincide with the reuse of old Roman coins.

⁴⁶³ Dimitrijević 1966, 56 – 59

VI. ROMAN COINS IN GRAVES (AD 900 – 1400)

Apart from being (re)used in the time of the transition from Late Antiquity to the early medieval period, the reuse of Roman coins also occurred in much later periods of the Middle Ages in the territory of Serbia. In this chapter, I will explore how Roman coins were valued in a period when the Roman Empire had been long gone from the political landscape and when the state of affairs had changed very much since the last Roman troops had been stationed in this region. In some cases the coins were deposited in graves even a millennium after they were minted. Such great time difference between the issuing date and deposition indicates that the incorporation of Roman coins in the funeral offerings composed otherwise of the usual medieval material culture occurred after the coins had been discarded and probably retrieved from Roman ruins. This presents the question: how did the people using these coins perceive and evaluate the material remains from older civilizations, in this case Roman, that they encountered and even adjusted to their cultural desires. Could the cultural meanings and values previously ascribed to these coins have been “read” by the new users and did they play any part in the creation of the new meaning, or were they totally irrelevant? In what way did people perceive and evaluate these reused objects in comparison to those that they either manufactured themselves or, to a lesser extent, bought? And when it comes to coins, in comparison to medieval currency, which came into possession through trade or labour?

The medieval cemeteries dated between c. AD 900 to 1400 in which the reuse of Roman coins (2nd – 4th centuries) is noted includes 24 sites. Geographically, we can distinguish several groups of cemeteries; from Sremska Mitrovica and Srem area, four sites are included (Sirmium sites 4 and 66, Vrcalova Vodenica and Mačvanska Mitrovica); in Bačka and Banat, only one cemetery in each (Bogojevo III and Omoljica); a group of four cemeteries located in the modern suburbs of Belgrade (Mirijevo, Vinča – Belo Brdo, Brestovik – Čair and Brestovik – Visoka Ravan); in the area along the Morava River and in central Serbia, five cemeteries (Dubravica – Orašje, Trnjane, Doničko Brdo, Popovac and Konopljara); in the city of Niš, two sites (Glasija and Sv. Pantelejmon); and in eastern Serbia and the Iron Gate area, seven cemeteries (Ravna – Slog, Pesača, Pontes, Veliki Gradac, Porečka Reka, Ljubičevac – Glamija and Brza Palanka). From the listed medieval

necropolises the oldest dated is Ravna Slog (9th – 10th centuries) and the youngest is at Dubravica – Orašje (15th – 16th centuries).⁴⁶⁴ The Roman coins found in these cemeteries are all base metal denominations and consist of three examples from the 2nd century, four issues from the 3rd century, one issue from the early 5th century and the rest (72) are from the 4th century. As in the examples from the early medieval period, in several instances Roman coins were parts of the grave assemblages, thus they are observed inseparably from the rest of the archaeological context. Their deposition contexts vary from simple placement of the coin in the burial pit or in the hand of the deceased to contexts where we have indications that the Roman coins had been personal belongings, such as the pierced Roman coins reused as pendants.

Concerning the wider social and historical context, it should be noted up front that the reuse of the Roman coins coincides with the renewal of coin circulation in the region of Serbia and with the reoccupation of Roman / early Byzantine sites in the 10th / 11th centuries. In a period subsequent to the so-called “dark age”, a time where we have very little data on the events in the whole Balkan Peninsula, particularly concerning the region of the central Balkans between c. AD 600 and 800.⁴⁶⁵

In the period from the 10th to the 15th century, important social, economic and political changes took place in the territory of what is now Serbia. At that time this territory did not present any unified entity, in contrast to the previous period when it had been, to a large extent, incorporated into the Roman Empire. However, the Byzantine Empire still considered this region part of its realm. The Byzantines endeavoured to re-establish domination and maintain the region under their control and influence, but new political authorities emerged after the Migration Period who claimed their hegemony as independent kingdoms (Map 5). Among the South Slavic population and Hungarians appetites for separate states grew. During the 9th and 10th centuries Bulgarians managed to create a powerful empire that seriously threatened Byzantium. At the turn of the 11th century the Hungarians, who were the last to migrate to the Pannonian plain from the steppes of Central Asia, established a kingdom with the coronation of Stephen I and strove to control the section north of the Danube and Sava rivers, as well as to expand to the

⁴⁶⁴ See Chapters I and II

⁴⁶⁵ On questions and issues of this period, see Curta 2006, 70 – 110

south.⁴⁶⁶ The regions south of the Sava and Danube rivers were mostly under the domination of the Byzantine Empire.⁴⁶⁷ However, Serbian chiefs succeeded in creating an independent kingdom under the royal family of Nemanjić in the second half of the 12th century, which became stronger in the 13th and 14th centuries.⁴⁶⁸ In other words, this was a time of severe struggles between these various powers over the territories in this area, and when administrative borders changed rapidly.

Such heterogeneous and dynamic political context is also reflected in the patterns of medieval coin use, and generally various coin types were available during this epoch. Every ruler wanted to further assert his power through the creation of his own coinage. We can roughly distinguish two main monetary zones at the time – the northern zone in which the issues of the medieval Hungarian kings dominate, and the southern zone where chiefly Byzantine money was in use.⁴⁶⁹ Only at the beginning of the 13th century did the Serbian kings start to mint their own coinage, but it became more widely used only from the late 13th century onwards.⁴⁷⁰ Generally, more intensive coin use has been detected in the period extending from the 12th to the 14th century, which is in connection to the formation of medieval urban centres.⁴⁷¹ In short, diversity of the coin types in use would describe this period, even without the reuse of Roman coins.

In terms of social organization, this period is when the process of feudalization was largely completed in this area.⁴⁷² Unfortunately, the issues of the social organization and structure of medieval Serbia and Balkans have mostly remained insufficiently explored. Historians and archaeologists have been mostly concerned, apart from the political history, with the question of ethnicity in this period; since the ethnic groups and states that were formed during the medieval period have been seen as the basis for the modern nations formed in the 19th century. Thus, most of the research focused on ethnic attributions of the medieval material culture and attempted to locate certain populations and their spreading. Earlier studies on medieval jewellery, besides emphasising the importance of Byzantine influence, often pointed out regional differences by signifying assemblages with national adjectives,

⁴⁶⁶ Engel 2001; Dinić 1978, 52, 336

⁴⁶⁷ Stephenson 2008, 664 – 691

⁴⁶⁸ Stephenson 2008, 686

⁴⁶⁹ Metcalf 1966, 65, 63

⁴⁷⁰ Ivanišević 2001

⁴⁷¹ Metcalf 1966, 11

⁴⁷² Ćirković 1994, 223–235

mainly “ancient Serbian or ancient Croatian”.⁴⁷³ In this research, the population buried in the cemeteries is observed more from the aspect of their socio-economic position, as I am of the opinion that the questions of ethnicity are not as important for the study of the reuse of Roman coins in these cemeteries.⁴⁷⁴ In this sense, the vast majority of the case studies were village cemeteries, while only few belonged to “proto urban” or a town context.

Another issue that is always raised when the medieval necropolises of Europe are investigated is Christianity and its impact on the funeral practice. Christianity started to spread among the South Slavic population with the missionary work of Cyril and Methodius in the 9th century and was accepted as a religion by the mid-12th century.⁴⁷⁵ Whether the burials with grave goods indicate “non-Christian” traditions has been a matter of debate and Serbian medieval archaeologists mainly understood this custom as inconsistent with the adoption of Christianity.⁴⁷⁶ However, the practice of leaving funeral offerings was never officially condemned by the Church at any time during the Middle Ages of Europe and some archaeologists see the decline in quality and quantity of grave goods in this period as a consequence of several social factors rather than religion.⁴⁷⁷ Therefore, the uniqueness of reused Roman coins as grave goods should be observed from other perspectives and not only in the light of religious beliefs or as a reflection of “pagan” customs.

6.1 Historical, political and social context

The period between the 7th and the 9th century is usually interpreted by scholars as a time when the process of *slavization* of the Balkan Peninsula occurred.⁴⁷⁸ However, very much about this process actually remains open for discussion since the data – historical and archaeological – are indeed obscure. On the other hand, it is evident according to the sources from later centuries that the Slavic populations certainly became an important element of Byzantine society and culture. The indications for the slavization process are

⁴⁷³ Bikić 2010, 11

⁴⁷⁴ Especially, since historical sources designate someone as a Croat, Serb etc., mostly when mentioning powerful individuals and members of the elite, but it is not possible to determine to what extent people of the lower social strata were identified as members of such groups or integrated in them: Curta 2006, 141

⁴⁷⁵ Ostrogorski 1980, 228 – 231, 236; Blagojević 2011, 129

⁴⁷⁶ Petković et al. 2005, 237

⁴⁷⁷ Gilchrist 2008, 121; Effros 2009, 72

⁴⁷⁸ Ostrogorski 1980, 94; on the recent critical reconsideration of the construction of Slavic ethnicity, see Curta 2001

perhaps most visible in the change of toponyms to Slavic from 9th-century. From the various Slavic tribes that settled on the Balkan Peninsula, Croats, Serbs and Bulgarians⁴⁷⁹ had seriously threatened the Byzantine Empire on different occasions and managed to form noteworthy medieval states on the expanses of Byzantine territories. The migration of Hungarian tribes to the Pannonian plain at the very end of the 9th century also became a menace to the Byzantines. Yet, at the same time, despite having a common enemy, all these groups also entered into conflict with each other, since their interests clashed more than often.

During the 9th and 10th centuries Bulgarians created a mighty empire and most of the territories of interest for this research were at that time incorporated within its boundaries.⁴⁸⁰ During the rule of Simeon (893 – 927) the Bulgarian Empire culminated in prosperity and it was the most powerful force in the Balkans. However, in spite of the Bulgarians' constant endeavors to conquer Constantinople, the Byzantines significantly influenced the culture of the Bulgarian state through Christianization and the work of the Byzantine missionaries, which was most intensive under the rule of Simeon's father Boris (852 – 888).⁴⁸¹ The Bulgarian Empire gradually weakened in the second half of the 10th century and from that time on Byzantine efforts in retrieving the territories from Bulgarians became more serious. Finally, Basil II (958 – 1025), also known as “Bulgar slayer”, broke down the Bulgarian resistance in 1018 and imposed Byzantine rule on the majority of the Balkan territories. In the territory of modern Serbia, the archaeological record revealed that the Byzantines restored and rebuilt numerous Roman / early Byzantine forts, mostly along the Sava and Danube rivers during the late 10th and early 11th centuries (Sremska Mitrovica, Mačvanska Mitrovica, Belgrade, Braničevo, Veliki Gradac, Niš, etc.).⁴⁸² However, it is not certain whether the Byzantines managed to re-establish their rule west of the Velika Morava River. It is considered that the borderline zone went along the line of forts at Lipljan, Zvečan, Galič, Jeleč, Ras and Brvenik, and west of this line were Serbian territories, which were not included in the Byzantine administrative district.⁴⁸³ The territory of the first Serbian chiefs was in the area that is now the modern

⁴⁷⁹ It is considered that the Bulgarians in this period were a mixture of Bulgar tribal groups that settled in Thrace under Asparuch in 680/1 and the prevailing South Slavic population. For more details, see Ćorović 1989

⁴⁸⁰ Curta 2006, 147 – 166

⁴⁸¹ Ostrogorski 1980, 228 – 231; Curta 2006, 166 – 179

⁴⁸² Stephenson 2008, 668

⁴⁸³ Stephenson 2008, 668; Ras was already a borderline fort in the Bulgarian Empire: Curta 2006, 147

borderline between Bosnia and Serbia and, to the Adriatic coast, mostly modern Montenegro. However, it should be noted that the Byzantines also never compromised the local Slavic power structures even in the conquered regions, and that they actually sought to work through local rulers, to whom titles and stipends were distributed. Thus, it was very often the case that the rebellions of certain Slavic potentates were often suppressed by other ones in the name of the Byzantine emperors.⁴⁸⁴ In the latter half of the 11th century several such upheavals occurred.

The whole 12th century was marked by the intensification of struggles, mainly between Hungarian, Byzantine and Serbian sovereigns. The Hungarian Kingdom became stronger, and it consolidated and significantly expanded its territories during the rule of Ladislaus I (1077 – 1095). This trend continued during the 12th century, especially in the time of Coloman (1097 – 1116), who annexed the Croatian Kingdom (Slavonia and Dalmatia).⁴⁸⁵ Furthermore, Hungarian forces regularly sacked territories south of the Sava and Danube, and their influence in Srem and Sremska Mitrovica (Sirmium) also increased.⁴⁸⁶ Apart from the further strengthening of Hungary, in the second half of the 12th century Serbian *župans* also strove towards full independence from the Byzantine Empire. This became possible only after the death of the Byzantine emperor Manuel I Komnenus (1143 – 1180) when Stefan Nemanja proclaimed independence and became the founder of the Nemanjić dynasty.⁴⁸⁷ The Hungarians also used Manuel's death to expand into Srem and Dalmatia.⁴⁸⁸ Moreover, when Andronikos I seized the imperial throne, the Hungarian king Béla III established his control across the whole Niš – Braničevo area, from Belgrade to as far as Sofia. However, this was of a very short breath, and as soon as Isaac II Angelos (1185 – 1195) became the emperor this region was again returned to the Byzantines, but Srem and Dalmatia remained under Hungarian rule.

The sacking of Constantinople by the Fourth Crusade in AD 1204 and the creation of the Latin Empire (1204 – 1261) represents a crucial point for the growing powers of the Balkans. Afterwards, Byzantine emperors would never again enjoy political control over the Balkan Peninsula. Serbians used this situation and the second son of Stefan Nemanja,

⁴⁸⁴ Stephenson 2008, 670 – 673

⁴⁸⁵ Stephenson 2008, 681

⁴⁸⁶ Curta 2006, 328 – 338; Stephenson 2008, 682

⁴⁸⁷ Stephenson 2008, 686

⁴⁸⁸ Stephenson 2008, 687; Curta 2006, 334 – 335

Stefan Prvovenčani, became the first king of Serbia when he received the crown from Pope Honorius III in AD 1217.⁴⁸⁹ Two years later his younger brother Sava achieved the independence of the Serbian Orthodox Church from the patriarch of Nicaea. At the same time Bulgarians also re-established their state.⁴⁹⁰ The boundaries between Serbian and Bulgarian lands were very fluid and changed during this time. Under Ivan II Asen (1218 – 41), Bulgarians recovered their strength and his conquests enabled him to intervene in the affairs of Serbia, and even led to the downfall of the Serbian ruler Stefan Radoslav (1228 – 1234), son of Stefan Prvovenčani.⁴⁹¹ Ivan II Asen replaced him with his younger brother Stefan Vladislav (1234 – 1243), but after Ivan's death Vladislav lost respect and was very soon thereafter overthrown by Stefan Uroš I (1243 – 1273). From this time onwards Serbia started to flourish economically and Uroš is remembered for the significant exploitation of metal ores that he initiated.⁴⁹² Considerable territorial expansions started in the late 13th century when the sons of Uroš, Milutin and Dragutin expanded to the south (Macedonia) and north (Srem), and they divided these new lands among themselves.⁴⁹³ Yet, the greatest territorial extension of the Serbian medieval state occurred during the rule of Dušan (1331 – 1355) who proclaimed himself the Emperor of “Serbs, Greeks and Albanians” in 1346.⁴⁹⁴ The territory conquered by Dušan was not maintained by his successors after his death and it was split into several dukedoms among the few powerful noble families. In 1402 Serbia was organized as a despotate under despot Stefan Lazarević (1402 – 1427). At the same time, Ottoman Turks were rapidly expanding and conquering what was left of the Byzantine Empire and progressing towards the Balkans. By the middle of the 15th century most of the Balkans was under their rule, and scholars take this as the turning point when the medieval period ended in this region and the Ottoman phase of history began.

In relation to social organization in the Middle Ages, many facets have remained unsolved and unknown to scholars. This is especially true for the period from the late 7th to the beginning of the 9th century. For later centuries the situation is to some extent clearer, but mainly for the parts of the Byzantine Empire in Greece and the Near East, while the

⁴⁸⁹ Ducellier 2008, 785

⁴⁹⁰ Curta 2006, 379 – 389

⁴⁹¹ Ducellier 2008, 791

⁴⁹² Mrkobrad 1995, 241 – 250

⁴⁹³ Ducellier 2008, 801

⁴⁹⁴ Ćorović 1989, 146

territory of modern-day Serbia is insufficiently represented in written sources. However, along with the firmer consolidation of the Serbian state in the 14th century a process of legislation occurred, leaving legal documents that shed more light on the social structure at that time. Thus, it is possible to assume that some aspects of the societal organization described in them also existed in earlier times.

It is assumed that in the period after the South Slavic populations settled in the Balkan Peninsula the basic administrative unit was the *župa*, which could be understood as some kind of a small rural district.⁴⁹⁵ Each *župa* was under the jurisdiction of one *župan*. Most likely the *župan* developed into a hereditary title through the process of more intensive social stratification and the emergence of a powerful level of tribal-warrior leaders governed by one prince.⁴⁹⁶ Though there is no direct evidence for this process of social stratification in the region of Serbia, most of the argumentation for it was based on the excavations of the cemeteries of the 8th and 9th centuries from Croatia and Bulgaria in which a number of very richly furnished burials were investigated.⁴⁹⁷ The names of certain *župani* also start to appear in the written sources from the 9th century onwards.⁴⁹⁸ In the economic sense, the Balkans and southeastern Europe are often imagined as a world of small farms in possession of peasants specializing in cereal cultivation. Transhumant pastoralism was most certainly an important segment in the economy of the Balkan lands, but this topic requires additional research since it was mostly studied through ethnographic examples from the 19th and 20th centuries.⁴⁹⁹ From the perspective of Byzantine legislative documents, the period before the 10th century is widely considered as a time when the economy of the Empire was based on a free peasant cultivating his own land.⁵⁰⁰ Such conclusion was mostly based on the compilation of documents known as the Farmer's Law, dated to the late 7th or 8th century.⁵⁰¹ It mostly concerns the protection of peasants' land property. However, the situation changed considerably in later periods, and it is also

⁴⁹⁵ Ćorović 1989, 50

⁴⁹⁶ Curta 2006, 141

⁴⁹⁷ Curta 2006, 142 – 143;

⁴⁹⁸ Curta 2006, 145

⁴⁹⁹ Curta 2006, 421 – 422

⁵⁰⁰ Laiou and Morrison 2007, 105; Kaplan 2009, 148 – 153

⁵⁰¹ Ashburner 1910, 85 – 108; 1912, 68 – 95

necessary to take all these notions on the existence of free peasantry before the 10th century, either as part of the Slavic or Byzantine world, with a certain scepticism.⁵⁰²

The later period, from the 11th century onwards, is usually considered a time when the “feudalization” of the Byzantine Empire occurred, but it is also thought that this process developed to some extent differently in comparison to western Europe, because of the specifics of the Byzantine culture.⁵⁰³ Nevertheless, the landed aristocracy strengthened from that time on, while peasants, to a large extent, started to leave their land and moved to the land of powerful landlords, thus becoming tenants. Of course, peasants with land in their own possession also continued to exist, but it is thought that enserfment prevailed as the dominant social relation in the middle and later Byzantine period.⁵⁰⁴ Laiou and Morrison explained the importance of this shift in the following words:

“The major institutional change that took place over a period that extends from the tenth to the twelfth century is the shift from the village community of landowning, tax-paying peasants, prevalent in the earlier period, to the *estate*, cultivated by rent-paying peasants, that progressively dominated the countryside. Free landowning peasants who paid taxes to the state continued to exist until the end of the Byzantine Empire; but they were no longer dominant. This is a major shift, that implicates the relations of the state, the peasants and the great landlords; and it changed the nature of the state as well as of the economy, after the tenth century.”⁵⁰⁵

Apart from Imperial lands and aristocratic estates, the church and clergy were the third component of the magnate landholdings. According to medieval Serbian documents, the vast majority of the population belonged to different categories of dependent groups, from which the most numerous were *meropsi* – dependent peasants.⁵⁰⁶ Apart from peasants, other dependent groups also included craftsmen, lower clerics and slaves. The urban population in the medieval Serbian state consisted of various groups and life in the town did not immediately imply membership in an autonomous class, but usually people living in towns had the same status as peasants, while foreigners were differently positioned.⁵⁰⁷ Furthermore, in the forts and towns conquered from the Byzantines the organization remained the same as it was during Byzantine rule. The privileged class of medieval Serbia

⁵⁰² Curta 2006, 425

⁵⁰³ Haldon 2009, 17 – 21

⁵⁰⁴ Whittow 2008, 489; Kaplan 2009, 155; Frankopan 2009, 112 – 142

⁵⁰⁵ Laiou and Morrison 2007, 101; my emphasis.

⁵⁰⁶ Šarkić 2010, 23 – 36

⁵⁰⁷ Šarkić 2011, 17 – 27

was the *vlastela* and, together with the sovereign and the church, owned the vast majority of the land.

According to archaeological excavations of settlements in the period between the 7th and 12th century, the villages were “spontaneously” formed, mostly on river banks and valleys, and consisting of 20 to 40 houses.⁵⁰⁸ A typical dwelling was a semi-dugout house with walls made in wattle and daub technique. The size of these dwellings varied from around 6 m² to 15 m², but generally the houses became bigger than 10 m² from the 10th century onwards, when above-ground houses also started to be built. Especially important for this research is the reoccupation of Roman / Early Byzantine forts from the 10th and early 11th centuries.⁵⁰⁹ It is interesting that these settlements remained villages in their character even though they were established inside the ancient walls that were sometimes partially reconstructed. In these settlements the reuse of bricks often occurred, mostly for paving floors, but was not always the case. Only few of these reoccupied ancient ruins became proto-urban centres such as Sremska Mitrovica (Sirmium) and Niš (Naissus).⁵¹⁰ It is interesting that medieval Belgrade emerged outside the walls of ancient Singidunum, but very close by, firstly as an unfortified settlement, and only later in the 12th century did the Byzantines build the fort. A similar situation was also in Viminacium where the medieval fort and town of Braničevo were also formed outside the ancient site. Without doubt Belgrade and Braničevo were the two most important fortifications during the domination of the Byzantines in the region. A greater diversification of settlement organization occurred from the 13th century onwards. Some of the forts developed into important medieval towns due to being the centre of a district, located in the vicinity of a mine, or becoming a capital or residence of rulers. The reactivation of mines and metal exploitation significantly benefitted urban development. The first mines that were activated in the second half of the 13th century were Brskovo (Montenegro) and Rudnik.⁵¹¹ The number of mines increased during the 14th century, and some of the towns such as Rudnik and Novo Brdo became well-known international centres, attracting people from distant lands. Serbian rulers also settled Saxon miners due to their good reputation in mining skills. The

⁵⁰⁸ For questions on medieval housing in the territory of Serbia, see Milošević 1997

⁵⁰⁹ Milošević 1997, 121

⁵¹⁰ Milošević 1997, 122 – 123

⁵¹¹ Mrkobrad 1995, 241 – 250

exploitation of metals culminated in the late 14th and first half of the 15th century. The export of silver from Serbian medieval mines took fourth place in 15th-century Europe.⁵¹²

6.2 Monetary affairs of the medieval Balkans (c. AD 1000 – 1500)

As Metcalf had already noticed in the 1960s in his studies on coin use during the Middle Ages in the Balkans:

“There is nothing that would lead one to suppose that either the Bulgarians or the Slavonic tribal groupings of the Balkan Peninsula had by the early 9th century adopted the use of coinage for the purposes of the everyday exchange of commodities.”⁵¹³

The archaeological and numismatic evidence clearly showed that the renewal of coin circulation in the region was directly connected with the reoccupation of these lands by the Byzantines and the establishment of their political and administrative infrastructure.⁵¹⁴ Prior to this, the main form of exchange in the Balkans north of Greece and Macedonia was barter, as some written sources from the 10th century indicate.⁵¹⁵ That the inflow and intensification of coin use after the Byzantine conquest was a partial and slow process is indicated by the distribution of coin finds, mostly along the line from Mačvanska Mitrovica to Braničevo, and by the fact that the Byzantines also continued to collect tax in kind, as was established under the Bulgarians, and not in coins as was preferred by the Byzantines.⁵¹⁶ The earliest hoard, which is considered an indicator of the reappearance of coin use in the central Balkans, was found in Ram and consisted of 5 *nomisma*.⁵¹⁷ According to the youngest issues in the hoard, two examples of John Tzimiskes (969 – 979), the time of its deposition is dated to the late 10th century and from this time coin use was gradually reintroduced in the region. Finds of coins of an earlier date, before the 10th century, are extremely rare and insufficient to indicate wider use of coins in the 8th and 9th centuries.⁵¹⁸ Byzantine coins were only one of the many types of coinage that were in use in the territory of Serbia from the 10th century until the Ottoman Turks' conquest in the mid-15th century. Usually these different coinages circulated in separate zones and in

⁵¹² Mrkobrad 1995, 243

⁵¹³ Metcalf 1966, 17

⁵¹⁴ Ivanišević and Radić 1998, 132

⁵¹⁵ Ivanišević 1993, 80

⁵¹⁶ Ivanišević 1993, 80

⁵¹⁷ Ivanišević and Radić 1998, 132 – 133

⁵¹⁸ Metcalf 1966, 18

different chronological phases, but also in certain regions sometimes various types of coins were simultaneously used.⁵¹⁹ Since the Byzantine coinage was the most complex and most dominant monetary system in this region, I will first present the structure of Byzantine currency and the patterns of its circulation in the region of Serbia.

At that time the Byzantine coinage system was simplified in comparison to the system of denominations in use in the Early Byzantine period. From the 8th to the end of the 11th century Byzantines minted three denominations, one in each metal: *nomisma* (gold), *milaresion* (silver) and *follis* (copper).⁵²⁰ However, from the late 10th century light *nomismata* were also struck and the purity of gold was seriously debased, falling to 70%, even to 11%. Fractions of silver (2/3 and 1/3) were also introduced in the 11th century, while the *follis* was reduced in weight from c. 14 g to 3 g. A more complex system of denominations was introduced with the monetary reform of Alexius I Komnenos (1081 – 1118) in 1092, which was effective roughly until the end of the 13th century.⁵²¹ It consisted of several denominations of debased metal (*trachea*), which differed strikingly from earlier coins in being concave instead of flat. A slightly debased golden coin (85 – 60%) was the highest denomination – *hyperpyron*. It was followed by the electrum coin (*trachy aspron*) which was eventually made from pure silver. Small change was provided by a *billon trachea* with a very low silver content (c. 2%), and which later became pure copper, and by two copper denominations of small flat coins. Scholars think that the main motivation of these elaborate monetary reforms was the state's desire to provide a means suitable for a diverse scale of exchanges and not only for the simple needs of tax collection.⁵²² At the time this was the most elaborate monetary system compared to those operating in Western Europe, which generally consisted of a silver denomination and their half.

Apart from the reappearance of Byzantine golden coins, the base metal denominations also started to circulate again in this region. It is possible to distinguish two zones of copper coin circulation in which different denominations are represented.⁵²³ The first covers the region along the Sava and Danube rivers from Mačvanska Mitrovica to Veliki Gradac where anonymous *folles*, group A2, of Basil II (976 – 1025) and Constantine VIII (1025 –

⁵¹⁹ Metcalf 1966, 61 – 79

⁵²⁰ Grierson 1982, 7 – 9

⁵²¹ Grierson 1982, 9 – 11

⁵²² Laiou and Morrison 2007, 151

⁵²³ Ivanišević 1993, 79 – 90

1028) dominate, while the other issues of the later 10th and 11th centuries are very scarce. The second zone includes the eastern and southern regions of modern Serbia, along the Danube River in the section from Kladovo to Prahovo, and south of that around Niš. Here, in addition to the A2 group of Basil II and Constantine VIII, other issues were also circulating, namely, anonymous *folles* of the first half of the 11th century (groups B and C) and later issues of Constantine X (1059 – 1067) and Romanus IV (1068 – 1071). Metcalf thought that the reappearance of the coins in the hinterlands of the Balkans should be primarily observed in association with the military presence, or as a result of diplomatic intervention in the form of payment of tribute, and not as immediate evidence of monetary circulation caused by market and trade.⁵²⁴ However, in the Late Middle Ages the situation was quite different and coin use was also governed by market transaction.

During the 12th century the *billon trachy* were widely distributed and were the most represented denomination from this time. From 30 hoards noted in the central Balkans and dated to the 12th and 13th centuries, 24 contained only *billon trachy*, counting over 9000 examples.⁵²⁵ The coins in the hoards from the territory of Serbia cover the time period from the rule of Alexius I Komnenos (1081 – 1118) to the early 13th century when Bulgarian and Latin imitations appeared. In Srem the hoards with *billon trachy* are noticeably rarer, with only two found (Novi Banovci and Čortanovci).⁵²⁶ The situation is similar when it comes to finds north of the Danube; again only two hoards containing *billon trachy* were found in Đurđevo and Kovin.⁵²⁷ As the Byzantine Empire was slowly losing its political supremacy over the Balkans the use of its coinage also began to dwindle from the early 13th century and Latin and Bulgarian imitations appeared. After the Byzantines restored their state in 1261, the coinage was also recovered, but in the central Balkans other types of coinage became the more dominant means of payment and exchange.⁵²⁸

The second coinage system of great importance to the monetary affairs in this region was that of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom.⁵²⁹ The first king of Hungary, Stephen I (1000 – 1038), started to mint coins. Hungarian currency was mainly struck in silver and based on

⁵²⁴ Metcalf 1976, 89 – 97

⁵²⁵ Metcalf 1967; Radić, Papadopoulou and Ivanišević 2008, 319 – 354

⁵²⁶ Nedvidek 2002, 231 – 242

⁵²⁷ Nedvidek 1993, 87 – 94; Mirmik 1982, 100

⁵²⁸ Mirmik 1982, 105

⁵²⁹ Huszár 1979

the *denarius* coin of 1,3 g. Soon after coins of smaller value were also introduced – *obolus* and half-*denarius*. During the short reign of Stephen IV (1163 – 1165) medieval Hungary minted bronze coins very similar to Byzantine *billon trachy*, which is very understandable since Stephen IV managed to usurp the throne only with the help of the Byzantine emperor Manuel Comnenus (1143 – 1182). Thus, he tried to correlate the Hungarian coins with the Byzantine coinage as much as possible. A new phase in the Hungarian coinage system, as well as in the Hungarian Kingdom, started with King Charles Robert Anjou (1307 – 1342), the founder of the new dynasty. He started to mint a larger silver denomination, similar to groat, as well as to strike golden coins that were identical to florins of Florence, aside from being inscribed with the name of Robert.

In the territory of Serbia, medieval Hungarian coins are mostly found in Vojvodina (Srem, Bačka and Banat).⁵³⁰ During the Middle Ages the Srem area was an especially vibrant monetary zone, where Hungarian regal issues were probably always dominant in the currency, but Byzantine and other issues have been found in significant proportions. Single finds from Novi Banovci confirmed this picture with more than 80% being Hungarian pieces.⁵³¹ However, finds of Hungarian coinage are not so common in Belgrade, even though Hungarians and Byzantines struggled for control over this fortress for most of the 12th century. Until AD 1204 Byzantine coins dominated in Belgrade, but afterwards Hungarian issues and Friesacher coins began to be used.⁵³² The situation was quite different across the Danube and around the fort in Semlin (Zemun) where Hungarian currency dominated the circulating pool throughout most of the Middle Ages.⁵³³

Around the middle of the 12th century the Friesacher silver *pfennigs* had a major role in the circulation of coins in the northern Balkans.⁵³⁴ Besides *pfennigs*, a smaller denomination, half of the *pfennig*, was also minted. Some of the most important mints that produced this coinage were Friesach, St. Veit and Villach (Austria). It is thought that Aquileia was the intermediary for their distribution to the Balkans. As with Hungarian medieval coins, they were mainly found in Vojvodina, but occasionally Friesacher coins were used in the

⁵³⁰ Nedvidek 1994, 71 – 80; 1996, 95 – 105

⁵³¹ Metcalf 1966, 133

⁵³² Ivanišević 1987, 95

⁵³³ Ljubić 1879, 27 – 28

⁵³⁴ Metcalf 1966, 65 – 66, 133

regions south of the Danube and Sava rivers.⁵³⁵ They continued to be used throughout the 13th century, but by the beginning of the 14th they were no longer in circuit in this region.

The last significant coinage system of the medieval central Balkans was that of the Serbian Kingdom. The first Serbian king who minted coins was Radoslav (1228 – 1235), but his production had very little effect on the monetary affairs of that time.⁵³⁶ Coins were modelled after the Byzantine system and Radoslav minted silver *aspron trachy* and *billon trachy*. One of the distinctive features of Serbian coinage is that Serbian kings never issued gold denominations, and that it was essentially a mono metallic system with only one large denomination – *dinar*.⁵³⁷ Such structure of the monetary system indicates that it was not very suitable for any small-scale transactions, thus perhaps testifying to the low level of monetization in medieval Serbia, at least until the end of the 14th and early 15th centuries.

In 1276 Stefan Uroš I (1243 – 1276) restarted production and Serbian coinage became more important in the economy of the Balkans and Europe. At that time the mining industry started to develop intensively and silver was one of the main export articles of medieval Serbia. Most of the mining centres also minted coins, such as Brskovo (Montenegro), Rudnik, Novo Brdo, Trepča and Srebrenica (Bosnia).⁵³⁸ Uroš's successors Milutin and Dragutin minted coins that were identical to Venetian *matapan*.⁵³⁹ In the long period of the two-and-a-half-centuries' production, Serbian medieval coinage developed various types of coins and, on several occasions, attempts to introduce smaller denominations were made. Some issues of Milutin, Vladislav II and Emperor Dušan are interpreted as half *dinari*, but they are extremely rare.⁵⁴⁰ Only in the beginning of the 15th century did Despot Stefan Lazarević introduce small change – *obol*. Coin finds from the site Novo Brdo, mainly from the necropoles, revealed that the small change was indeed used more frequently and circulated in the early 15th century.⁵⁴¹

⁵³⁵ For hoards, see Nedvidek and Pašić 2007, 159 – 186; Nedvidek 2010, 40 – 93

⁵³⁶ Ivanišević 2001, 26 – 27

⁵³⁷ Ivanišević 2001, 28

⁵³⁸ Ivanišević and Radić 2004, 222 – 247

⁵³⁹ Ivanišević 2001, 27

⁵⁴⁰ Ivanišević 2001, 28

⁵⁴¹ Dimitrijević 1967, 306

The main feature of the Serbian *dinar* was its continuous decrease in weight, from the initial 2,178 g it went below 0,5 g at certain points.⁵⁴² The most critical time was after the death of Emperor Dušan in 1371 when decentralization of the state took place, until Despot Stefan Lazarević reformed the monetary system between 1402 and 1407. However, the average weight was mostly around 1 g from the beginning of Dušan's reign until the last issue of Despot Lazar Branković in 1458.

Serbian medieval coinage did not only circulate within the boundaries of the Serbian state, but was also an important element of the circulating stock in other regions in Europe. Issues of King Milutin and Emperor Dušan were especially large in volume, spreading beyond medieval Serbia. *Dinari* with the flag of King Milutin dominated the Adriatic basin and were even so numerous in Bologna that they squeezed out the local currency.⁵⁴³ Thus, the city authorities wanted to ban the import and use of Serbian coins in 1305. Milutin's issues were found in hoards in France, Austria, across Italy, Slovenia, Greece and Asia Minor. Other important issues were of Stefan Dušan and his *dinari* were found in numerous hoards across the Balkans, mostly in the central zone. Yet, they were also very well represented in the Danube – Pontus region.⁵⁴⁴ In Serbia some of the famous hoards with his and of his father Stefan Dečanski's issues are: Žabare, Priluzje, Soko Banja, Uroševac, Novi Pazar and Novi Banovci.⁵⁴⁵

6.3 Roman coins in medieval graves (AD 900 – 1400)

Most of the graves with finds of Roman coins that are discussed in this chapter belong to a group of about 100 cemeteries formed between the 10th and 13th century AD.⁵⁴⁶ Even though this number is an approximate estimation and this research includes some necropoles that were used in later periods, it is noteworthy for getting a picture of how frequent this phenomenon was. According to this, almost one quarter of the necropoles had Roman coins in their grave inventories. The majority of these cemeteries were within the district of the Ohrid Archbishopric that was established by the Byzantines in the early 11th century. However, along with the changes of political borders the cemeteries that were in use for long periods did not remain within the same administrative / celestial districts

⁵⁴² Ivanišević 2001, 28 – 29

⁵⁴³ Ivanišević 2001, 35

⁵⁴⁴ Ivanišević 2001, 35

⁵⁴⁵ Radić and Ivanišević 2001, 285 – 286

⁵⁴⁶ The number 100 necropoles is estimated by Špehar 2010b, 205

throughout the duration of their use. Similarly, the population buried in these cemeteries was not necessarily of only South Slavic or Serbian origin, nor that Christianity was fully accepted among the people buried in them. Without a doubt, the efforts of the Byzantine authorities to convert the Balkan population were ultimately successful, but funeral practice was also formed by traditions other than Christian.

Before focusing on the examples with the Roman coins, I will give a short overview of general features of the cemeteries and graves from this period. The typical Slavic cemeteries of the period before the acceptance of Christianity – cremation and a tumulus with various funeral gifts and ritually broken pottery – were not documented in the territory of Serbia.⁵⁴⁷ Obviously inhumation was very quickly adopted, and the deceased were buried in the plain pits, usually with no constructions, oriented east-west, with the head to the west, and organized in rows. In the cemeteries that emerged in the vicinity or directly on the ruins of Roman sites, the reuse of stones and bricks was noted.⁵⁴⁸ One or two bricks were usually placed near the head or the feet. However, the custom of leaving various funeral gifts and ritually broken pottery remained in practice for a while, which is confirmed at the necropolis Ravna – Slog.⁵⁴⁹ Later, the grave inventories decreased in the amount and types of objects that were placed with the deceased, becoming limited to jewellery, parts of garments and objects designating personal piety such as *encolpia* and cross pendants which became more common in the 12th century.⁵⁵⁰ Earrings and finger rings were the most common finds of jewellery from this period. Due to their number and being subjected to changes in fashion, they present the basis for the stylistic and chronological analysis.⁵⁵¹ Earrings were an especially important part of the female head decoration and through time various types of this jewellery developed. Female garments also included long strings of necklaces made of colourful beads with various pendants and jingles, as well as bracelets and arm-rings made from metal and glass paste. On the other hand, rings were equally represented among the female and male graves. The majority of the jewellery pieces from grave assemblages and other medieval sites were local or regional products, mostly manufactured in the local village workshops or in the nearby

⁵⁴⁷ Špehar 2010b, 216

⁵⁴⁸ See Chapter II

⁵⁴⁹ Petković et al. 2005, 223

⁵⁵⁰ Špehar 2010b, 216

⁵⁵¹ For more on medieval jewellery from the territory of Serbia, see Bikić 2010; Marjanović-Vujović 1985b, 5 – 20; Bajalović-Hadžić Pešić 1984

urban centres.⁵⁵² The question of the production of the jewellery in this period remains open, since only four moulds for rings, bracelets and pendants dated between the 11th and 13th century were found at two sites – Belgrade fortress and Veliki Gradac.⁵⁵³ Regarding the material, bronze jewellery dominates among the finds and silver is also relatively common, while golden jewellery is extremely rare.⁵⁵⁴ Yet, all were produced in “Byzantine style”, imitating fashionable forms of jewellery in the Byzantine Empire (P. LXIX). However, the Byzantine forms of jewellery were also modified and adjusted to the taste of the central Balkan populations. One of the features of the medieval jewellery from the territory of Serbia is that the pieces, especially earrings and finger rings, and their decorative elements are more massive and emphasised in comparison to the same types of jewellery in the principal areas of the Byzantine Empire.⁵⁵⁵ All the features of cemeteries described above are mostly associated with the village communities, while the rulers, nobility and other high-ranking members of society were, as a rule, buried in the tombs inside the churches they founded during their lifetime. The cemeteries of the urban population are known only from the Late Middle Ages, such as the famous necropolis from the mining centre and town at Novo Brdo or the one in the vicinity of the Smederevo fortress. These town cemeteries mostly stand out with the quality of jewellery pieces in their grave inventories.⁵⁵⁶ Imports from distant and well-known centres or of exquisite craftsmanship were affordable only to the elites of the medieval society.

But, let us return to the case studies of this research. The practice of leaving Roman coins with the deceased in the period discussed in this chapter can be observed in relation to different aspects of the context in which it was practiced. If we start by focusing on the immediate archaeological context, the treatment of the coin and its relation to the other grave goods and skeletal remains, then two major groups could be distinguished. One consists of examples where no modifications were made to the coins, which were simply placed in the grave. Sometimes these were put in the hand or in the mouth of the deceased, but more often coins were laid next to the body or on the thorax. The other group are those examples where Roman coins were pierced and reused as parts of necklaces or decorations found in female and child graves. It should be noted that one means of reuse of Roman

⁵⁵² Bikić 2010, 135

⁵⁵³ Bikić 2010, 135 – 140

⁵⁵⁴ Bikić 2010, 134

⁵⁵⁵ Bikić 2010, 150

⁵⁵⁶ Zečević 2006, 149 – 153

coins does not exclude the other. The cemetery at Konopljara demonstrated this very well in the three graves where Roman coins were found.⁵⁵⁷ In one case a coin was part of the necklace and in the other two graves coins were not modified at all, only placed as a funeral offering. Yet, they were put in different manners – one was placed in the mouth of the deceased and the other was found on the knee of the skeleton.

Apart from the analysis of the immediate context and eventual interventions on the coins, both of these groups of reused coins are explored in relation to the wider social context, such as the monetary state of the period when the grave is dated, the presence of contemporary medieval coins at the cemetery in question, as well as the type of the cemetery – village or urban – and its position in relation to Roman material remains. I will first address the wider context and present some general observations on the reuse of the Roman coins, whether they were modified or not. Afterwards, I will focus on the closer context, on the ways they were handled in the funeral practice and where the Roman coins were placed in the burial pit. In addition to this, I will present an overview on the reuse of Roman objects apart from coins in these cemeteries in order to position the reuse of coins in relation to the reuse of the rest of the small Roman finds. Finally, I will consider those examples that were modified into pendants, since this occurrence is especially interesting for the question of revaluation of Roman coins and requires additional consideration.

At the beginning, I will present the frequency of Roman coins in relation to the period in which the cemetery was formed and used (Table 13). I divided the cemeteries in three groups: the first is those that stopped being used during the 11th century; in the second group we have cemeteries of several chronological phases – those that were in use for a very long period, but in which the most intensive occupation period was in 12th and 13th centuries (Mačvanska Mitrovica, Vrcalova Vodenica, Mirijevo Vinča – Belo Brdo Trnjane) and those with a shorter period of use within the timeframe of the 11th –14th centuries, either used in the 11th – 12th centuries or 12th – 13th centuries; and the third group of cemeteries are dated the latest, to the Late Middle Ages. Most of the Roman coins were found in the cemeteries of the second group, in the period when more intensive use of coins is generally noted. As mentioned earlier, coin use in the territory of Serbia was reintroduced with the preparations for and the Byzantine reoccupation of these lands in the late 10th and early 11th centuries; but to speak about a more regular and more extensive

⁵⁵⁷ Berić 2001, 110 – 111, 113

coin use in this region is possible only from the 12th century onwards. Thus, it seems that the reuse of Roman coins increased together with, generally speaking, more intensive use of medieval coinage as well. In other words, perhaps the reuse of discarded Roman coins was an isolated phenomenon from handling medieval contemporary coins. However, the reuse of Roman coins was also present even in times when we can assume that the circulation of medieval coins in this region was at a very low level, yet still no cemeteries with reused Roman coins before the renewal of medieval coin circulation are known.

Table 16: Roman coins in the cemeteries from the 10th to 15th centuries – chronological classification

Period	Site	Number of Roman coins
10 th – 11 th centuries or earlier	Ravna – Slog	1 coin in one grave
	Bogojevo	2 coins in one grave
	Sirmium site 66	? (at least 1 in one grave)
	Pesača	2 coins in two graves
	Pontes	1 coin in one grave
11 th – 14 th centuries	Sirmium site 4	3 coins in three graves
	Mačvanska Mitrovica	2 coins in two graves + 4 coins in one grave?
	Vrcalova Vodenica	1 coin in one grave
	Omoljica	1 coin in one grave
	Mirijevo	1 coin in one grave
	Vinča – Belo Brdo	4 coins in four graves
	Brestovik – Čair	1 coin in one grave
	Brestovik – Visoka Ravan	20 coins in four graves

	Trnjane	3 coins in two graves
	Doniće Brdo	2 coins in two graves
	Popovac	2 coins in one grave
	Konopljara	3 coins in three graves
	Niš – Glasija	3 coins in three graves
	Niš – Sv. Pantelejmon	13 coins in 13 graves
	Veliki Gradac	5 coins in four graves
	Ljubičevac – Glamija	1 coin in one grave
	Brza Palanka	1 coin in one grave
15 th and early 16 th centuries	Dubravica – Orašje	2 coins in one grave
	Porečka Reka	2 coins in ? graves

Furthermore, it is important to compare the finds of Roman coins in relation to the presence or absence of current coins at the cemetery. Only at five cemeteries were Roman coins the only type of coinage found in the graves. All except for Popovac are cemeteries from the earlier period between the 10th and 11th centuries (Bogojevo, Ravna – Slog, Pesača and Pontes). In all the rest of the cemeteries, besides Roman coins, medieval coins were also found. The following table presents the ratio of Roman and medieval coins found as funeral offerings.

Table 17: Number of Roman coins and medieval coins found in medieval cemeteries

Site	N. of Roman coins	N. of graves	N. of medieval coins	N. of graves	Total n. of graves excavated at cemetery
Sirmium site 4	3	3	2	2	33
Mačvanska Mitrovica	2 +4	2 +1	12	6	159
Vrcalova Vodenica	1	1	10	8	267

Omoljica	1	1	69	57	158
Mirijevo	1	1	5	5	160
Vinča – Belo Brdo	4	4	at least 5 (but probably many more)	at least 4	c. 1000
Brestovik – Čair	1	1	?	?	?
Brestovik – Visoka Ravan	20	4	at least 3 (but probably many more)	at least 3	888
Trnjane	3	2	9	9	379
Doničko Brdo	2	2	2	1	40
Konopljara	3	3	1	1	126
Niš – Glasija	3	3	1	1	77
Niš – Sv. Pantelejmon	13	13	32	15	c. 235
Veliki Gradac	5	4	1	1	105
Ljubičevac – Glamija	1	1	1	1	7
Brza Palanka	1	1	1	1	57
Porečka Reka	2	1	1	1	37
Dubravica – Orašje	1	1	1	1	7

As is observable from the data presented in the table, generally the practice of leaving coins as a funeral offering, regardless of Roman or medieval, was not wide-spread, but very selective in nature. Usually, below 5% of the excavated graves had any coin finds. However, it should not be forgotten that generally the presence of grave goods was at a very low level in these necropolises, thus any other objects in these graves are also very rare, and still coins seem to be the least represented type of objects among the grave goods.

The only exception to this rule is the cemetery at Omoljica where a strikingly greater number of coins were found – over one third of the graves had coins among the grave

goods.⁵⁵⁸ Mainly one coin was put in the grave, but in seven cases two were found, and in one case even three. The position of the coins in the grave and the manner in which they were deposited indicates a very elaborate and thought through practice of leaving coins with the deceased. The coins were usually placed in the mouth or, very rarely, in the waist area. Extraordinary examples were the cases where a piece of leather was preserved on the outer side of the jaw bone and a coin was found below it, indicating that the coin had been fastened to the chin with some kind of a leather belt strap. According to the type analysis of the medieval coins found at Omoljica and the location of the site, north of the Danube, the population buried in this cemetery mostly used the Hungarian currency. Except for one reused Roman coin, the other coins were mainly from the Hungarian kings, from the reign of Bela II (1131 – 1141) up to Bela IV (1234 – 1270), but there were also three Bulgarian imitations of the Byzantine coinage and two Friesacher *denarii* found. In addition, a great number of Hungarian coins were silver *denarii*, i.e. the largest denomination, indicating a pretty well economic standard of the deceased and his / her mourners as well as intensive coin use among this population. Thus, observed in this light, a worn-out Roman coin from the female grave could perhaps be explained in the following way. Most probably the Roman coin was reused as a funeral offering under the obvious “pressure” of the custom of burying the deceased with a coin. But, since the deceased and her mourners were perhaps not well off or they were unable to get hold of the current coinage, the old Roman one was thought to satisfy the norm.

In the other group of cemeteries, in which the presence of coins in the grave assemblages is very rare, usually both Roman and medieval coins are relatively equally represented, with medieval coins generally more preferred. The one example where Roman coins were far more represented is the necropolis at Brestovik – Visoka Ravan, where there were 20 Roman issues and we have data on only three medieval coins at this site.⁵⁵⁹ However, since all of the Roman coins at this necropolis were reused as pendants, I will address them a little bit later in the section about the reuse of Roman coins as parts of jewellery. For now, let us turn to these other cemeteries and to the issue of greater representation of the medieval coinage in comparison to Roman. As has already been mentioned, given that during the Middle Ages in this territory several monetary systems were operating in different parts and time periods, very often intersecting each other, it is questionable in

⁵⁵⁸ Đorđević and Đorđević 2007, 14

⁵⁵⁹ I got this information courtesy of the curator of the National Museum in Belgrade, S. Fidanovski

comparison to which particular coinage system the Roman coins were underrepresented. At some cemeteries where the medieval coins found belonged to several coinage systems, the Roman coins were often equally represented or even strikingly outnumbered issues of certain contemporary currencies. Thus, for example, at the Vrčalova Vodenica cemetery Hungarian issues are the most numerous, but medieval Byzantine coinage and old Roman coins are equally represented – one example from each coinage.⁵⁶⁰ The same situation is also at the Mirijevo cemetery.⁵⁶¹ On the other hand, at Trnjane Roman coins (3) slightly outnumbered the Frisacher issues (2), while the rest were Byzantine coins (7).⁵⁶² An interesting case is the cemetery at Niš – Sv. Pantelejmon where not only were the finds of Roman coins numerous, they were also far more represented in comparison to Hungarian medieval coinage, from which only two issues were found. All the rest were Byzantine coinage and its imitations (30).⁵⁶³ In other words, it seems that it should not be immediately supposed that old Roman coinage was necessarily an unusual type of coins, only because it was “outdated”. But, perhaps some of the medieval coins, obviously those which were not the issues of the dominant monetary system during the time when the necropolis was being used, were even more exceptional. This would bring us to the question of the general availability of coinage to and the overall level of monetization of the populations buried in these cemeteries. As was explained in the section on historical context, political authorities and administrative borders changed very rapidly and thus some necropoles were often under different political entities over the whole period of their use. With many rulers probably came many different currencies. Is it possible that old Roman coinage was more readily available at certain times than the contemporary coinage was?

Most probably, Roman coins were found in the ruins of Roman towns, forts or necropoles.⁵⁶⁴ Another possibility is that the coins were found by discovering Roman coin hoards. In the vicinity of the Brestovik – Visoka Ravan site a hoard of more than one thousand bronze coins from the 4th and early 5th centuries was found.⁵⁶⁵ However, the presence and access to Roman ruins itself is not enough to explain the phenomenon of the

⁵⁶⁰ Minić 1995, 292 – 293

⁵⁶¹ Bajalović-Birtašević 1960, 11

⁵⁶² Marjanović-Vujović 1984a, 103 – 104

⁵⁶³ Crnoglavac and Čerškov 2011, 135; Crnoglavac 2008, 88, 90, 99, 101 – 102, 105, 107

⁵⁶⁴ See Chapter II, Table 2

⁵⁶⁵ Bendžarević 2005, 568

reuse – it is just a starting point. Therefore, it is also important to explore the frequency of Roman coins in relation to the type of cemetery and its position, not only with respect to Roman ruins, but also to consider their relation to important medieval centres. Only cemeteries that emerged on the ruins of ancient Sirmium (Sremska Mitrovica) and Naissus (Niš) could be understood to some degree as town cemeteries. However, such attribution should not be taken for granted, but rather carefully applied. There is no doubt that both Niš and Sremska Mitrovica were great political, celestial, cultural and trade centres, but the lifestyle practiced in them did not differ very much for the major part of the medieval period from that which was practiced in the villages. Actually, only the necropolis Niš – Sv. Pantelejmon could be considered to have been used by the “urban population”. The rest of the case studies were all village cemeteries that were used for a lengthy period of time by people largely coming from a peasant-level socio-economic background.⁵⁶⁶ However, it can be observed that many of the village cemeteries with reused Roman coins were also in the very vicinity of the important medieval centres in which the intensity of monetary circulation was probably the greatest; around Sremska Mitrovica (Mačvanska Mitrovica and Vrcalova Vodenica), Belgrade (Mirijevo, Vinča, Brestovik, Visoka – Ravan, Brestovik – Čair), Braničevo (Trnjane). Thus, living in the environs the populations of these villages were certainly familiar with handling coins and, above all, perhaps aware of the importance of money in social relations, even if they did not participate in the monetary transactions at the same level as urban residents did.

In other words, even if the availability of Roman coins at deserted Roman sites or in discovered Roman hoards was an indispensable precondition for their reuse, this is not enough to explain why they were reused and how they were revaluated. It seems that the reuse of Roman coins was affected to a great extent by the changing conditions in the socio-economic and cultural context of the medieval period. This could best be illustrated with the cemeteries that were formed very close to each other, such as Brestovik – Visoka Ravan and Brestovik – Čair, as well as Niš – Sv. Pantelejmon and Niš – Glasija, where, in theory, the vicinity of Roman ruins would have been the same and obviously known to some part of the population throughout the whole period of the cemeteries’ use, and nevertheless the Roman coins were not reused at the same level at both of the necropoles. However, in both of these pairs, one cemetery was in use slightly earlier than the other. Brestovik – Čair is dated to the 11th – 12th centuries, while Brestovik – Visoka Ravan is a

⁵⁶⁶ Ćorović-Ljubinković 1956, 131; Bajalović-Birtašević 1960, 39; Marjanović-Vujović 1984a, 114

later cemetery from the 12th – 13th centuries. In the other case, Niš – Glasija is slightly younger and Niš – Sv. Pantelejmon was used in the 12th – 13th centuries. Furthermore, in both of these pairs the cemetery dated later had significantly more reused Roman coins. Thus, what might have occurred is that the people's attitude towards the coins changed. I assume that people started to perceive and generally understand coins as a category of object that becomes increasingly significant in mediating social relations. Probably this was observable in the first place through the handling of medieval coins, and then also that the old Roman coins drew more attention. In the case of Sv. Pantelejmon, perhaps the greater use and reuse of coins was a result of the social structure and lifestyle change at the time when Niš started more and more to resemble a “proper” medieval town in which coinage grew to be a part of everyday life; this is indirectly reflected in the funeral practice of leaving a coin to the deceased.⁵⁶⁷ The following table demonstrates the contexts in which Roman coins without any modifications were found in the burial pits. Unfortunately, for some examples more precise data were not available on where in the burial pit the Roman coin was located – at Sirmium site 66, Poreča Reka, Pontes, Vinča – Belo Brdo, Niš – Glasija, Dubravica – Orašje, for two graves at Veliki Gradac and for the graves excavated in the 1960s at Niš – Sv. Pantelejmon.

Table 18: Contexts of Roman coins within burials

Site	Number of the grave (sex)	Roman coin	Context of the Roman coin find
Sirmium site 4	g. 5 (♂)	Ae3 of Theodosius (379 – 395),	between the knees
	g. 6 (♂)	Ae4 (4 th century)	near the heel of the r. foot
	g. 35 (♀?)	Ae3 of Constantine I (324 – 337)	in the l. hand
Mačvanska Mitrovica	g. 226 (♀)	Ae3 of Valentinianus (364 – 378)	on the l. side of the skull
	g. 230 (♀)	radiate (3 rd century)	near the l. femur
	g. 215 (♀)	Ae4 (4 th century)	in the l. hand
		Ae3 of Valens (364 – 378)	

⁵⁶⁷ On the custom of leaving coins in medieval times in the territory of Serbia, see Prica 1995, 313 – 317

Vrcalova Vodenica	g. 189 (♂)	Ae3 of Valens (364 – 378)	beside the l. femur
Omoljica	g. 94 (♀)	Ae4 (4 th century)	next to the l. clavicle
Doničko Brdo	g. 4 (♀)	Ae4 (4 th / 5 th centuries)	thorax?
	g. 8 (♂)	Ae4 (4 th / 5 th centuries)	thorax?
Popovac	g. 2 (?)	Ae4 (4 th century)	near the feet
Konopljara	g. 66 (?)	Ae3 of Constantius II (337 – 361)	in the mouth
	g. 82 (♂)	Ae4 (4 th century)	on the r. knee
Niš – Sv. Pantelejmo n	g. 22/2002 (child)	Ae3 of Constantius II (337 – 361)	near the r. elbow
	g. 33/2002 (♂)	Ae3 of Constantius II (337 – 361)	near the l. shoulder
	g. 41/2003 (♂)	Ae3 of Constantius II (337 – 361)	on the chest
	g. 45/2003 (♀)	radiate of Tacitus (275 – 276)	between the legs
	g. 47/2003 (♂)	Ae4 (4 th century)	near the r. knee
	g. 66/2003 (♂)	Ae3 of Constantius II (337 – 361)	near the r. leg
	g. 80/2004 (♂)	Ae4 of Constantius II (337 – 361)	the skeleton was dislocated with a younger burial and the skull was placed on a Roman brick and the coin was under the brick
	g. 84/2004 (♂)	Ae4 of Constantine I (324 – 330)	near the l. elbow
Veliki Gradac	g. 100 (?)	Ae3 (4 th century)	near the feet
	g. 102 (juvenile)	Ae? (4 th century)	near the pelvis
Ljubičevac – Glamija	g. 1 (?)	Ae? of Constantius II (337 – 361)	under the skeleton
Brza Palanka	g. 18 (♀)	Ae? of Constantine I (324 – 330)	underneath the bones of the chest
Pesača	g. 1 (♂)	Ae? (4 th century)	near the hand

	g. 8 (?)	sestertius of Faustina 146 – 161	on the l. side of the skull
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The importance of the social structure and organization of the community using the cemetery in respect to the reuse of Roman coins, but more importantly to their perception and revaluation, is further explored in the analysis of the reuse of other Roman material remains. Since Roman coins were not the only type of objects from the Roman period that were reused, it is important to place and relate this practice with the attitude and perception of various other artefacts that could have been found in the deserted Roman sites. Finally, at the end of this chapter I will address the most specific examples of this study – the Roman coins that were modified as pendants.

6.3.1 Reuse of Roman objects other than coins in graves (AD 900 – 1400)

In this section, I wish to summarize some data on the reuse of other small Roman objects in the case studies of this research. Apart from this, I wish to present the situation on the question of the reuse of Roman material culture in the settlement context. The following table presents types of Roman objects other than coins that were reused in the case studies from this period. However, there are a number of medieval cemeteries in which the reuse of Roman objects was confirmed, but no coins were among them. Though these are not included, I will mention one example from the site Ribnica where secondarily-used bricks with inscribed crosses were found.⁵⁶⁸

Table 19: Roman objects reused in medieval cemeteries (AD 900 – 1400)

Medieval necropolis	Roman objects in burial structures	Roman objects in grave goods
Sirmium 4 ⁵⁶⁹	Bricks and stones: flooring, enclosures, one brick reshaped in an anthropomorphic(?) form	Coins (3)
Mačvanska Mitrovica – Zidine ⁵⁷⁰	Bricks	Coins (6); lamp, glass bottle, bronze application

⁵⁶⁸ Minić 1984b, 262

⁵⁶⁹ Parović-Pešikan 1981, 181, 186, 188 – 189

⁵⁷⁰ Ercegović-Pavlović 1980, 22, 64

Vinča – Belo Brdo ⁵⁷¹	Bricks	Coins (4)
Doničko – Brdo ⁵⁷²	<i>Tegulae</i> and stone, some with inscribed crosses	<i>Fibulae</i> (1) Coins (2)
Niš – Glasija ⁵⁷³	Bricks	Coins (3); <i>fibulae</i> (2); swastika application (1); knife (1)
Niš – Sv. Pantelejmon ⁵⁷⁴	<i>Tegulae</i>	Coins (13)
Ravna – Slog ⁵⁷⁵	Stone	Coins (1)
Bogojevo ⁵⁷⁶		Coins (2); spoon
Omoljica ⁵⁷⁷	Bricks	Coins (1); fragment of a Roman bulbous <i>fibula</i>
Pesača ⁵⁷⁸	Bricks, some with inscriptions in ancient Slavic	Coins (2)
Veliki Gradac ⁵⁷⁹	Bricks, stone, a fragmented dedication to Septimius Severus	Coins (5) <i>Fibulae</i> (1)
Porečka Reka ⁵⁸⁰	Bricks and stone	Coins (2)
Ljubičevac – Glamija ⁵⁸¹	Fragmented bricks and stone	Coins (1)
Brza Palanka ⁵⁸²	Fragmented <i>tegulae</i> and stone	Coins (2)

As we see, the reuse of artefacts is actually limited to coins and bricks, while other types of objects are reused only rarely and exceptionally. This shows that the variety of Roman products scattered amongst the ruins passed through the test of time and the strong selection process of the new users. In the end, just a few of them were incorporated into the

⁵⁷¹ Marjanović-Vujović 1979, 130;

⁵⁷² Petrović 1963, 282 – 283, 288

⁵⁷³ Ercegović-Pavlović 1977, 83, 95 – 96

⁵⁷⁴ Crnoglavac and Čerškov 2011, 128, 134

⁵⁷⁵ Petković et al. 2005, 234, 194

⁵⁷⁶ Stanojev 1989, 24

⁵⁷⁷ Đorđević and Đorđević 2007, 44, 47

⁵⁷⁸ Minić 1984a, 173 – 175

⁵⁷⁹ Minić 1970, 235 – 238, 247

⁵⁸⁰ Minić 1984c, 295

⁵⁸¹ Parović-Pešikan 1984, 139

⁵⁸² Ercegović-Pavlović 1967, 143, 93

offerings chosen from the usual medieval material culture. Even the immediate vicinity of Roman sites for which we know of a diversity of objects from Roman material culture did not appear to affect the repertoire of reused artefacts in significant terms. The same types of reused objects were also found in medieval cemeteries that were not on an earlier Roman site. For the latter, we could assume that the absence of a major Roman site and its material culture reduced the possibilities, and that perhaps the reuse of coins was the result of discovering individual hoard sites. However, obviously not all of the Roman scraps appealed to the medieval population to the same degree, even if it was available. Additionally, it should be noted that a selection process can also be observed in the distribution of Roman objects among the graves. Actually, only a very small number of graves in a particular cemetery had Roman objects among the grave goods or within the burial structure.

The differences in the secondary use of Roman bricks within the cemetery context are interesting indicators as to how the form of reuse probably depended on the social status of the deceased. To illustrate this, I will present this practice on the site Mačvanska Mitrovica – Zidine. The structures of medieval graves varied from plain burial pits with no constructions (i.e. without reuse) to the example of male grave no. 18, where not only were Roman bricks reused in a significant quantity, but where the structure of late Roman tombs was clearly imitated (P. X/1). According to the position of this tomb inside the church and the finds in it, this was most probably the grave of a cleric. One silver reliquary cross with traces of golden plate and an inscription in Greek, which translated reads, “Lord, help the one who wears it”, was found on the right side of the thorax.⁵⁸³ On the ankle of this skeleton, some traces of silver threads were found. Most probably these are the remains of the decoration of the lower part of the dress. In this case, the secondary use of Roman bricks, but more importantly the reproduction of the design of late Roman tombs, is linked with the highest immediate social authority for this community. Through this reproduction of the physical form of the tomb and its association with a member of the clergy, the reuse of Roman bricks most certainly was much more than plain thrift but rather it incorporated aspects of ideology. The power of the church was affirmed by embedding itself in the late Roman and early Christian funeral tradition. Another example is grave no. 8 (P. X/2), the medieval tomb without any remains of the deceased, which also shows that through a cenotaph made of carefully selected Roman bricks that were in very good condition, the

⁵⁸³ Ercegović-Pavlović 1979–1980, 174; my translation.

community paid respect to one of its very important members, since he or she deserved a worthy receptacle in spite of the absence of the body.

However, in order to realize a more comprehensive understanding of how the selection process operated, it is also necessary to examine whether it was present in the settlement context.

6.3.2 Reuse of Roman material culture in the medieval settlement context

A good example of the reuse of Roman material culture is provided by the aforementioned multilayered site Zidine in Mačvanska Mitrovica. Apart from the cemetery, a medieval settlement was excavated where the reuse of objects from the previous Roman necropolis and its cult building were noted too.⁵⁸⁴ It presents a rare opportunity where we could try to analyse how the medieval community organized the secondary use of Roman objects within all of these different contexts. Were these Roman objects handled differently in a household in a profane context, outside of the religious and sacral spheres? And how did this affect the evaluation and understanding of these objects?

All dwellings at this site had a rectangular base, consisting of one room with dimensions approximately between 3,50 x 3,50 m and 4,50 x 4,50 m.⁵⁸⁵ Inside the house was a floor made of dirt or crushed Roman bricks and a hearth in one corner or beside the wall. Depending on the mode and material of construction of the walls, floor and hearth, the houses could be divided into four types which roughly correspond to different periods of occupation.⁵⁸⁶ The first type of house, dated to the late 10th / early 11th century, was partially set into the ground to a depth of 50 or 60 cm and had wooden walls coated with clay. Within these houses hearths were also made of clay. The second group of houses were also partially dug into the ground (30 to 50 cm), but the walls were made of reused Roman bricks. The bricks were regularly sorted and bonded with mud. It is uncertain whether the upper parts of the walls were made of bricks or wood. The hearths were also made of fragmented Roman bricks, sometimes simply sorted and sometimes also bonded with mud. Houses of the third type differ from the second group only in the sense that the reused fragmented bricks were not bonded with any material and they were used as a base

⁵⁸⁴ Minić 1980, 7, 15 – 17, 56 – 57, 63 – 66, 76; Ercegović-Pavlović 1980, 18 – 20, 22 – 23, 64 – 65

⁵⁸⁵ Minić 1980, 76

⁵⁸⁶ Minić 1980, 15 – 17

for wooden walls. Both the second and the third types of houses are dated to the 11th and early 12th centuries. In the last group of houses, dated from the late 12th to the 13th century, we have examples of constructions that are completely above ground. The floors were made of clay, but they had a base of bricks, which also served as base for the wooden walls. In the corners of these houses was a hearth also made of fragmented Roman bricks.

There are also indications that small Roman objects were reused within the settlement context, apart from being found in the inventories of graves. Four Roman coins from the 4th century were found together with nine medieval coins from the 11th to 13th centuries (Byzantine and Hungarian issues) on the floor of one dwelling.⁵⁸⁷ Another example from the medieval archaeological layers of the settlement is a perforated late Roman coin, probably used as a pendant.⁵⁸⁸ Unfortunately, due to the destruction of the site, we do not have clear contexts of deposition for many of the artefacts of Roman material culture that were found in the medieval layers. It is therefore not possible to reconstruct exactly how – or even if at all – these objects were reused. In the rubble of Roman material, some fragments of marble and porphyry slabs, as well as some parts of columns were also found.⁵⁸⁹ However, it is unclear whether these marble slabs were used in the construction of medieval dwellings, as were the bricks, or for making different objects, such as the example of one cross.⁵⁹⁰ Whether these fragmented slabs originate from the remains of the nearby city of Sirmium, or some other ancient site, or if they were taken from the martyrium or destroyed tombs, remains open for discussion.

The data from the settlement context also confirms that the choice of reused objects was made through a clear selection process. These objects are at the same time a form of “local” product, in terms of space, but also a “foreign” good, in terms of the time of their production. Unlike other possessions, usually made by the inhabitants themselves or by local craftsmen, their production history was not really clear. On the other hand, they also differ from other contemporary products acquired through trade. Bearing this, as well as the general medieval / feudal economic organization, in mind, I suggest that these Roman objects circulated through redistribution. Although the reuse of Roman objects was detected in all contexts of the medieval site, it varied in terms of the ways and quantities of

⁵⁸⁷ Minić 1980, 7

⁵⁸⁸ Minić 1980, 56

⁵⁸⁹ Minić 1980, 63 – 66

⁵⁹⁰ Minić 1980, 57

reuse – sometimes depending on context, but also within the same sphere, such as the cemetery. In my opinion this distribution of Roman material culture was mostly shaped by the already established social structure of this medieval community. If we compare the extent and mode of reuse for dwellings and the church, it is obvious that there were some differences in approach. On one hand, we have a uniform pattern of dwelling types and limited reuse or modest needs for this material, while in the case of the church the situation is quite different. After all, to build a church you need more construction material. Therefore, the issues of priority and authority were probably most crucial for the redistribution model. In other words, the peasants from the Middle Ages were usually in charge of providing the home for their pastor and for building a house of worship.⁵⁹¹ Thus in our case, it would only be possible to use the leftover material for private dwellings once this main concern had been solved. As shown above, it was then redistributed quite evenly among the population.

Another example of how the reuse of Roman material culture was organized in accordance with the medieval social structure is found in the Smederevo fortress, a residence of Despot Đurađ Branković. It is important to note that at the time “despot” was the highest title in the Serbian state. The fortress had been constructed over several building phases. First the court, i.e. *Mali grad* (small fort) was built between 1428 and 1430 and the construction of *Veliki grad* (large fort) immediately followed between 1430 and 1439. Among the huge amount of stone of different kinds necessary for the construction of this fortification, valuable Roman stone monuments brought here from many sites, including Vinceia, Aureus Mons, Margum and Viminacium were used.⁵⁹² Many of these monuments still embellish the towers and walls of this medieval fort, while plenty of them were destroyed, taken away or are now in museum collections. Several particularly valuable antique monuments that are still visible at the Smederevo fortress are a tombstone depicting the scene “Heracles brings back Alcestis”, a relief depicting Jupiter, Mars and Silvanus and a torso of Apollo (?). Well-preserved Roman monuments were used as decorative elements on the walls and in the towers of this medieval fortress: sculptures of deities, fragments of tombs, sarcophagi parts, etc. A series of sculptural fragments were used as building material, including parts of epigraphs, Roman stele, votive reliefs, sarcophagi parts, tombstones, capitals, grindstones, etc. Its complexity and marvellous

⁵⁹¹ Dinić-Knežević 2005, 25

⁵⁹² Cvetković 2009, 29 – 44

synthesis of ancient and medieval aesthetics makes the Smederevo fortress stand out from all of the other similar buildings. However, what is important for this research is that it clearly shows how the extent and manner of the reuse of Roman objects was in direct correlation with the authority of the owner of the edifice.

At the end of this examination of the reuse of Roman material culture in the medieval period, I would like to readdress some of the questions that were raised in the first part of this study, particularly the emphasis on the role of objects and their potential agency in the construction and maintenance of values within a society. In my opinion, there can be no doubt that the remains of Roman cities, forts and other structures with their monumentality and physicality “forced” the new users to deal with them. The ruins must have left strong impressions, especially since they were now populated by communities with no tradition of monumental architecture. Yet, it is very questionable to what extent these objects themselves had the agency of communicating some specific meanings or previous Roman values to the people handling them. In most of the examples, it is my impression that people used the objects primarily within their own value system and mostly adjusted them to their own cultural desires. The interventions on Roman bricks, such as the inscriptions of crosses,⁵⁹³ are the best examples. Yet the very materiality of the brick, its fine flat surface, probably encouraged people to put inscriptions on it. Furthermore, the reuse of coinage was probably most common since this category of thing was recognizable, as the medieval communities also handled money. In contrast to this, items such as *fibulae*, for example, simply would be hard to “recognize”, as people in the late medieval times used buttons. As such, incorporating a *fibula* in its original sense into common medieval “stuff” would require serious conceptual reconsideration of the object categories.

This brings us back to the on-going debate in archaeology and other humanities on the meaning and position of material culture in human societies, and, more importantly, how and why social groups adopt or refuse foreign things, and change or do not alter their material culture. Of course, my intention is not to raise and recall now the extensive discussion that this subject no doubt deserves, as it has been discussed many times already. I would, however, like to refer to an older article of I. Hodder, *Economic and Social Stress and Material Culture Patterning*,⁵⁹⁴ which I think still contributes to this debate and

⁵⁹³ Minić 1984a, 174; 1967, 87–90

⁵⁹⁴ Hodder 1979, 446 – 454

contains some ideas that are directly relevant for this research. Primarily, I am thinking of the idea “that material culture can be used to express and reinforce aspects of social relationships.”⁵⁹⁵ Especially, when social relations are under strain, artefacts play an important role in symbolizing and supporting those relations. In this case, probable tensions between different subgroups in the societal hierarchy might have been expressed in the structure of artefacts association, including Roman objects. It seems to me that the importance of analysing social relationships between sex, age, and political groups within societies as much as between societies as a whole, and how this is reflected on the material culture, is now often being neglected in favour of concentrating on the objects, their supposed power to act, and the people as subjected to them in the same way as to other people. Changing the perspective, in this case from the dominant anthropocentric view, most certainly brings new insights. On the other hand, by examining the reuse of Roman objects in medieval sites in the territory of Serbia, I came to the conclusion that the social relationships within the medieval community and forming a social structure are crucial in order to understand the revaluation and patterns of adoption of these objects. As the examples of reuse of Roman bricks at Mačvanska Mitrovica in both the cemetery and the settlement contexts, as well as the implementation of various remains of Roman material culture in the Smederevo fortress demonstrated, the social standing of certain individuals directly affected how these objects were handled and distributed, in spite of their theoretical availability to everybody. The value assigned to reused Roman material culture was constructed in such a way that its usage together with other objects of medieval material culture reflected certain positions of different groups or social personas within society. Therefore, any meanings and values that were identified with these objects have been employed to distinguish or assert the position of certain social groups – in the aforementioned cases, of rulers and clerics.

6.3.3 Roman coins modified as pendants – remains of a dowry custom?

Finally, I wish to consider the group of Roman coins that were modified into pendants in the medieval period. Finds of Roman coins used as jewellery and as part of bodily ornamentation in female burials from the 10th to the 14th / 15th centuries have been uncovered at the following sites: Bogojevo (10th – 11th centuries),⁵⁹⁶ Brestovik – Čair (11th

⁵⁹⁵ Hodder 1979, 448

⁵⁹⁶ Stanojev 1989, 24

– 12th centuries),⁵⁹⁷ Ravna – Slog (9th – 10th centuries),⁵⁹⁸ Brestovik – Visoka Ravan (12th – 13th centuries),⁵⁹⁹ Mirijevo (11th – 15th centuries),⁶⁰⁰ Trnjane (11th – 14th centuries)⁶⁰¹ and Konopljara (12th – 13th centuries).⁶⁰² All of the coins were pierced and reused as pendants in necklaces or as head decorations (Mirijevo). Usually, only one or two Roman coins were reused as pendants and found in one or two graves per necropolis, but at the cemetery in Brestovik – Visoka Ravan, Roman coin pendants were found in four graves and in one grave eight Roman coins were found.⁶⁰³ The other grave goods found in these graves are mainly jewellery – earrings, finger rings and bracelets. Interestingly, cowry shells are also found in some of these graves, and these were also used as pendants (Brestovik – Visoka Ravan, Mirijevo and Trnjane). Cowry shell necklaces and pendants are a wide-spread feature of the female graves of village cemeteries from this period, not only in the territory of Serbia, but also in neighbouring regions. Strangely enough, even though it was established already in studies from the early 1950s that these cowries originated from the Indian Ocean and Red Sea, and thus present one of the rare or only objects imported from such distant lands and at the same time were so widely used, there has been no research on how the transport and trade of these objects was organized.⁶⁰⁴

The funerary customs practiced in these communities show that the deceased was very rarely buried with offerings in cemeteries dating from the late 11th century onwards (for example at the Mirijevo necropolis only 27% of graves contained grave goods),⁶⁰⁵ while at the Ravna – Slog medieval necropolis, dated slightly earlier, funeral offerings were found in more than half of the excavated graves.⁶⁰⁶ In cases where the vast majority of burials had no objects in them, graves with Roman coin necklaces and other types of jewellery are even more exceptional. The following table presents the archaeological contexts in which these modified Roman coins were found.

⁵⁹⁷ I got this information courtesy of the curator of the National Museum in Belgrade, S. Fidanovski.

⁵⁹⁸ Petković et al. 2005, 194

⁵⁹⁹ Ćorović-Ljubinković 1956, 136; 1958, 329

⁶⁰⁰ Bajalović-Birtašević 1960, 14, 40

⁶⁰¹ Marjanović-Vujović 1984a, 51 – 52

⁶⁰² Berić 2001, 113

⁶⁰³ I got this information courtesy of the curator of the National Museum in Belgrade, S. Fidanovski.

⁶⁰⁴ Hadži 1953, 66 – 74; Birtašević 1973, 183 – 187

⁶⁰⁵ It should be noted that of these graves only three contained many items, including the grave with a reused Roman coin, while the rest were very modest in their inventories; Bajalović-Birtašević 1960, 29, 36

⁶⁰⁶ Petković et al. 2005, 181 – 203

Table 20: Roman coins modified as pendants

Necropolis	Period	Roman coins	Other grave goods
Ravna – Slog	9 th – 10 th century	Ae4 (4 th century), very worn g. 98	Three bronze earrings of “berry” type; one necklace consisting of this coin and 99 glass paste beads; two bronze finger rings; an iron knife
Bogojevo III	10 th – 11 th century	Ae3 of Constantine II (337 – 340), very worn out Ae4 of Valentinian I (364 – 375), very worn out g. 3	A pair of bronze earrings, cone type; one bronze pendant from a secondarily-used Roman spoon (?); one bronze garment object in a shape of a rectangular frame with two holes
Brestovik – Čair	11 th – 12 th century	Ae4 of Valens (364 – 378) or Valentinian I (364 – 375), type <i>Gloria Romanorum</i> , mint Thessalonica g. 2	?
Brestovik – Visoka Ravan	12 th – 13 th century	Two Ae4 (4 th century), very worn Ae4 of Constantius II (337 – 361)?, type <i>Gloria Exercitus</i> with two standards, mint Antioch Ae3 (4 th century), very worn One (3 rd century), very worn g. 41	Two bracelets; one ring; one necklace made of ceramic beads, 10 cowry shells and these five coins

	<p>Ae2 of Theodosius II and Valentinian III (?), 425 – 450</p> <p>One radiate (3rd century), very worn,</p> <p>Ae4, type <i>Gloria Exercitus</i> with two standards, mint Thessalonica, 330 – 335</p> <p>g. 65</p>	<p>Three metal bracelets; two rings; two earrings; one necklace made of ceramic beads, three cowry shells, one bronze jingle and these three coins</p>
	<p>Ae1 (4th century), very worn, two Ae4, type <i>Gloria Exercitus</i> with two standards</p> <p>g. 68</p>	<p>Eight bracelets; one necklace made of ceramic beads, nine cowry shells and these three coins</p>
	<p>Four Ae4 (4th century), very worn,</p> <p>Ae3, type Wolf with twins, 330 – 335, mint Siscia</p> <p>Ae3 of Constatine I (324 – 337), type <i>Iovi Consrevatori</i></p> <p>Ae3, type <i>Providentiae Avgg</i></p> <p>Ae3 of Valens (364 – 378)?</p> <p>very worn out <i>as</i>, 2nd century AD</p> <p>g. 297</p>	<p>One ring; one necklace made of ceramic beads, 17 cowry shells, one jingle, one Byzantine "cup" coin and these nine coins</p>

Mirijevo	11 th – 15 th century	Ae? (4 th century) mint Siscia g. 20	A pair of bronze earrings of “S” type; a pair of silver granulated earrings with a “knuckle” type; one bronze triangle shaped pendant; one round bronze pendant; two bronze buttons, three necklaces made of 322 beads, one amethyst bead, three bronze beads, ten cowry shells; one bead bracelet, one glass bracelet; one bronze bracelet; one bronze ring
Trnjane	11 th – 14 th century	Ae3 (4 th century), very worn out Ae 4 of Constantine I or Constantius or Constans, type <i>Gloria Exercitvs</i> with two standards, mint Thessalonica, 330 – 335 g. 324	One bronze earring; one bronze ring; three bronze bracelets; one necklace made of 112 glass paste beads, one cowry shell and these two coins
Konopljara	12 th – 13 th century	Ae3 of Constantius II (337 – 361), type <i>Gloria Exercitvs</i> g. 84	One necklace made of seven glass paste beads and seven bone beads and this coin; One necklace made of 34 white glass paste beads and one blue glass paste bead

Besides the Roman coins, there are also examples of medieval coins used as jewellery in cemeteries from the 10th to 14th / 15th centuries, but these examples are even scarcer than Roman ones. One Byzantine *billon trachy* was used as a pendant on a necklace together with Roman coins in one grave at the Brestovik – Visoka Ravan cemetery.⁶⁰⁷ Other cases have been detected at the sites of Mačvanska Mitrovica,⁶⁰⁸ Doničko Brdo,⁶⁰⁹ and Brza

⁶⁰⁷ I got this information courtesy of the curator of the National Museum in Belgrade, S. Fidanovski.

⁶⁰⁸ Ercegović-Pavlović 1980, 28

Palanka (P. IX, XLIII/7 and XLIX/2).⁶¹⁰ This leads one to conclude that generally old Roman coins were preferred for modification as pendants as opposed to coins of some contemporary currency, but obviously it was not a strict rule. Indirect evidence for more use of medieval coins as pendants could be found in museum collections where many perforated medieval coins are stored, but usually with no data on the circumstances of their discovery.⁶¹¹

I wish to propose that the explanation for these graves could be that they are “women buried with their dowry”, or maybe with a part of the possessions they gained through marriage. Analogies from ethnographic studies of Serbia and other Balkan countries might support such an explanation, as well as some mentions of dowries in medieval writings. Through these particular examples, my aim is to explore the meaning of these coins in the creation of family or bridal valuables, their exchange through the custom of dowry and finally their role in funerary customs. How were these coins valued by their new users in these different situations? Since the Roman coins found in these graves are not overly abundant, and always consist of base metal denominations, no immediate understanding of their value as a metal resource is possible. Rather, their symbolic and representative character may have been important. In other words, I will examine how the value of these coins was constructed in a manner beyond purely direct and literal economic logic, but rather how their value was embedded in, and indirectly formed by, the wider socio-economic matrix of the medieval peasantry.

General social and economic implications of dowry custom

Dowries belong to one of two main broad categories of gift exchange, payment and other transactions that occur at the time of marriage between families. It is often distinguished from the custom of bride price (or bride wealth).⁶¹² The difference between the two is principally found in the direction of the wealth transfers and property rights. In the case of a dowry the transfer goes from the bride's family to the bride and through her assets enters the groom's family.⁶¹³ The property rights, in principle, are in favour of the wife, although in reality the rights are usually under the control of the husband. In the case of a bride price

⁶⁰⁹ Petrović 1963, 288

⁶¹⁰ Ercegović-Pavlović 1967, 145

⁶¹¹ Crnoglavac 2008, 84

⁶¹² Goody and Tambiah 1973

⁶¹³ Goody and Tambiah 1973, 6

the transfer goes directly from the groom's side to the bride's family and becomes their property.

Both dowry and bride price have been the topic of stimulating research in anthropology as well as in economics. Each discipline has sought to understand and explain these customs for a long time. This has resulted in an abundance of work done on the matter, in which the two differing disciplines at times complemented each other and at other times opposed each other.⁶¹⁴ The practice of dowry has usually been associated with socio-economically stratified societies. It is then a means of maintaining or upgrading a family's social status by marrying one's daughter to a man of at least equal standing. Dowries are thought to be a form of a pre-mortem inheritance for female children.⁶¹⁵ Hence there is pressure on the future bride's father and family to accumulate the wealth by the time the girl is mature enough for marriage. Another important feature of the dowry is that it is commonly a public display of wealth.⁶¹⁶ To display wealth publicly is necessary only in competitive situations or when there is a need for affirmation from the rest of the community – either of wealth or of status. In summary, the dowry intertwines itself in a complex network of transactions, cutting across the different spheres of tradition, symbol and finance.

Concerning the period and territory that is considered in this paper, the practice of dowry is confirmed in historical sources from at least the 13th century and is thought to be the legacy of Roman and Byzantine traditions.⁶¹⁷ On the other hand, earlier scholars assumed the practice of bride price among the Slavic populations up to the 10th century,⁶¹⁸ though there is no direct evidence for such tradition.

Coins in bridal jewellery in ethnographic examples from Serbia and the Balkans

After presenting the medieval case studies and general implications of the dowry custom, I would like to explain why I have considered the possibility that these are examples of women buried with their dowries or parts of their possessions gained through marriage. The interpretation is by no means certain, but nonetheless this possibility is worth considering. Many ethnographic studies of traditional female jewellery and garments in

⁶¹⁴ For more on the economic perspective of dowry, see Anderson 2007, 151 – 174

⁶¹⁵ Goody and Tambiah 1973, 6

⁶¹⁶ Harrell and Dickey 1985, 105 – 120

⁶¹⁷ Šarkić 2006, 186 – 189

⁶¹⁸ Kadlec 1924, 82

Serbia and other Balkan countries have revealed that coins were regularly used for the purpose of decoration – being transformed into pendants for necklaces, earrings, head ornaments, etc.⁶¹⁹ A woman would get most of her jewellery as a dowry and would wear it at her wedding ceremony. It is here, in the form of a dowry, that coin jewellery becomes very important, even obtaining a central place in the bride's visual identity (P. LXX).⁶²⁰ How important coin jewellery was in the 18th and 19th centuries in the Balkans is confirmed by various Austro-Hungarian documents, since the thaler of Maria Theresa was especially favoured by the Balkan population. There was such a great need for this coin and of other Austro-Hungarian gold issues in the form of jewellery that it was a very profitable business for the mints.⁶²¹ According to early ethnographers, in addition to the thaler and other more or less contemporary coins, Balkan people were quite the collectors of various old coins, mostly of Serbian medieval coins, but also of Roman pieces. In the villages located near some Roman ruins, mainly in the areas around Požarevac, Negotin and Niš, mostly silver coins of Emperors Vespasianus, Titus, Trajanus, Antoninus Pius, Commodus and Alexander Severus were incorporated into jewellery, while later issues were not found.⁶²²

The coins given to the bride are not only evaluated in economic terms, but are also appreciated for their apotropaic functions. Such function of coinage in the Byzantine context is recorded since the early period⁶²³ and in medieval England, as well as in latter periods, apotropaic powers were seen in old Roman coins due to their antiquity.⁶²⁴ It is often believed that the material features of coinage – the strength of the metal, or the clinging sound that is produced when coins hit each other – protect against curses and bad luck.⁶²⁵ In addition to coins, cowry shells are mentioned in some of the ethnographic studies as another significant apotropaic object for the bride.⁶²⁶ Cowries were also used in the form of pendants. Of course, jewellery that is worn by the bride represents only a part of the dowry that is given to her. The rest is packed in her trousseau and could consist of

⁶¹⁹ Zegga 1925, 40 – 44; Rašević 2006, 200

⁶²⁰ Tešić 2003, 55 – 57

⁶²¹ Brzić 2005, 253 – 261

⁶²² Zegga 1925, 43

⁶²³ Fulgham 2001, 139 – 147

⁶²⁴ Gilchrist 2008, 141

⁶²⁵ Tešić 2003, 111 – 112

⁶²⁶ Pantelić 1971, 21

more coins (money), linens, clothes, furniture, etc.⁶²⁷ Sometimes, but not often and only recently, from the middle of the 20th century onwards, she is also bequeathed with a section of the family land.⁶²⁸ After the wedding the idea is that parts of the dowry, especially jewellery, are to be saved for the future daughter and given to her, again as a dowry. Therefore, this jewellery becomes a family heirloom handed down over generations. Speaking in archaeological terms, this means that the jewellery is actually never to be seen in the funerary record, since it continues to circulate from generation to generation. But, ethnographic studies of funeral customs in the Balkans from the late 19th and throughout the 20th centuries revealed that in special cases the woman was also buried with some of her dowry jewellery. For example, if she died before the wedding or if there was no one to inherit them, the jewellery became a funeral offering.⁶²⁹

Within all medieval states that dominated this region (Byzantium, Hungarian and Serbian Kingdom) we have historical sources confirming the practice of dowry from at least the 13th century. Remarks on the subject of dowries have been found in many Byzantine lists of possessions or in records of disputes over properties and assets.⁶³⁰ The most common items mentioned as being part of the dowries are coins and jewellery. In the Late Middle Ages (the 14th and 15th centuries), the dowry had become a powerful tool to distribute wealth and capital between elite noble families, creating mighty alliances. The archives of the medieval town of Ragusa (Dubrovnik) provide numerous records of this occurrence.⁶³¹

Examining Serbian writings on law from the 13th and 14th centuries, mentions of dowry were most probably formulated under the influence of Byzantine legal documents.⁶³² Some of these documents are St. Sava's *Zakonopravilo* (1262), in which the dowry is mentioned via the translation of the Byzantine *Prochiron* (between 870 and 879); the *Sintagma* of Matija Vlastar (translated in Serbia in 1348), the Code of Emperor Dušan (1349 and 1359 with amendments), etc.⁶³³ As for the period before the 13th century, it is unclear whether

⁶²⁷ Fileki 2010, 95

⁶²⁸ Dorđević 2005, 212

⁶²⁹ Đaković 1989, 141, 143; for more on the use of coins in the funeral practices of the Balkans from the ethnological perspective, see Đaković 1987, 51 – 59

⁶³⁰ Macrides 1992, 89 – 98; Oikonomides 1990, 205 – 214

⁶³¹ Stuard 1981, 795 – 811

⁶³² Šarkić 2006, 185

⁶³³ Šarkić 2006, 186 – 189

dowries existed. Kadlec was of the opinion that dowry was not a practice in the Slavic world before the 10th century, and that the girls wed with only a robe or a few jewels.⁶³⁴

However, written records shed light mainly on the importance and power of dowries in the upper strata of society. They reveal how great the wealth of some dowries was, often measured in thousands of golden and silver coins of the appropriate currency, depending on the specific monetary zone in which they were. In other words, these dowries are at the opposite side of the spectrum to those seen in the graves, which contain only a few outdated bronze coins. So how are we to understand these coins? I would suggest we turn to the social organization of the medieval peasantry in this area.

The social organization of the medieval peasantry

The question of the social organization of the medieval peasantry has been a matter of debate, but the notion of *zadruga* has dominated the discussion in both history and anthropology. In addition to historical sources that indicate its existence in the late medieval period,⁶³⁵ *zadruga* was also common in villages in the 19th and 20th centuries and was the subject of many anthropological studies.⁶³⁶ *Zadruga* (usually translated as “community” or “joint family”) consists of numerous nuclear families united together in managing one shared property / household (land, livestock, etc.) maintained at a subsistence level.⁶³⁷ Within such a socio-economic setting, the possibility of hoarding coins in the Middle Ages was most certainly limited after all liabilities were settled to the lords, but not impossible. Here the fact that the coins found in our graves were Roman and not contemporary becomes important, since the acquisition of Roman coins was most probably not the result of trade or labour, as was medieval coinage; rather the Roman coins were likely discovered in the ground. This would open the opportunity for “alternative” ways to obtain coinage, however we should bear two things in mind. Firstly, most probably anything found in or on the ground would be generally regarded as the property of the feudal lords, perhaps in a similar way as wild animals were considered the possession of the lords, and it was not allowed to hunt them; this could perhaps explain why we find only Roman bronze coinage reused in these cemeteries. In the case of precious metal coins or

⁶³⁴ Kadlec 1924, 82

⁶³⁵ Novaković 1965, 139 – 142; Đorđević 2006, 123–131

⁶³⁶ For an overview on *zadruga* topic in English start with Halpern and Kerewsky Halpern 1972, 16 – 44

⁶³⁷ Novaković 2005, 105 – 134; Gorunović 2006, 114

coin hoards, it is most unlikely that the peasantry would have been able to keep the find. Secondly, in a *zadruga* the assets were considered to be collective, except for a few personal belongings.⁶³⁸ Only girls had slightly more private possessions, mainly jewellery, which they gained mainly through their dowries and gift exchanges in connection with marriage. Therefore, any money earned or found would also be a collective asset. Usually, the opinion of the head of the *zadruga* (the oldest male or the oldest brother) was the most important in any decision-making process, especially concerning property, but the final decision would be made only after a discussion among all adult male members.⁶³⁹ In this sense, the resolution of how, why and to whom to redistribute the coinage would be a matter of concern for the whole community and the person to whom the coins were given would have to be approved on a communal level. Therefore, to use rediscovered Roman coins in the dowries of brides might have been an acceptable option.

However, whether these Roman coins reflect the differing wealth levels of different *zadruga*, or variances among the members, is difficult to know. Earlier medieval archaeologists often assumed that only wealthier families or individuals were able to obtain and then give away their possessions as funeral offerings, and that the graves with more grave goods, such as the examples of female graves with many jewellery pieces from Trnjane, show us economic stratification within a village.⁶⁴⁰ As we saw from the described examples, the reuse of Roman coins as jewellery coincides with relatively richer grave assemblages. Yet, in my opinion, to equate the reuse of Roman coins in these cases only with the economic state of the woman's family is too straightforward and obscures other aspects of the phenomenon. In what way could these coins have contributed to the family's or *zadruga*'s wealth? It is more likely that these coins operated on a symbolic and representative level, since their value could not have been understood on the basis of their intrinsic qualities, due to their small number, nor could the value have been guaranteed by the authority in whose name they were minted, as the Roman Empire had disappeared from the political landscape long before. In other words, the capability of the coins themselves to be a store or measurement of value in a traditional sense would have been limited. Their

⁶³⁸ Novaković 2005, 128

⁶³⁹ Gorunović 2006, 125; Laiou and Morrison 2007, 101 suggest similar social organization for the Byzantine villages: "The village retained a certain cohesion; in economic terms, there was probably cooperation among peasants who shared oxen or agricultural implements, or who cleared land together or constructed mills. There was also a degree of social cohesion manifested in the presence of the „first man of the village,” the village elders, the proestoi, kreittones, protogeroi who mediated disputes and represented the village in its relation with the outsiders.”

⁶⁴⁰ Marjanović – Vujović 1984a, 107 – 108

value would have to be agreed upon, not on a legislative level, but within a community on a customary level. Furthermore, the value of the object was probably secondary to the “value” of the person, and actually constructed in association with the specific social status of person who was wearing it – the bride.

6.4 Concluding remarks

In this chapter, I have tried to give some suggestions and guidelines for better understanding of the reuse of Roman coins in the cemeteries of the High and Late Middle Ages in the territory of Serbia. Since clearly there was a coincidence of renewal of coin circulation with the reuse of Roman coins, I have approached this phenomenon by examining the circumstances of the wider social context in which this practice was performed. I strove to establish how Roman coins were understood and evaluated in relation to the state of monetary affairs, overall level of monetization and the socio-economic position of the population that used these cemeteries. It seems that the wider medieval social context shaped the processes of selection and distribution of the Roman material remains, not only coins, but of other types of objects.

The group of Roman coins that were modified into pendants inspired me to question whether the reuse of Roman coins in the presented examples could be better understood, if we perceive them as part of the dowries in the lower levels of medieval society. While the dowry is commonly associated with the elite, it was also practiced among peasantry. The dowry and its value among the peasantry, in my opinion, were mostly shaped by the specifics of the dowry-receiver's position within the medieval social structure. Although the people buried in these cemeteries, being peasantry, were probably not involved in monetary transactions to the extent that people from urban areas were, they would have been familiar with handling coins and would have been aware of the power that money had in social relations. To begin with, these peasants would have known who had the right to mint and who was obliged to pay tax. The antagonism created by this awareness of the importance of money in the creation of wealth, and the difficulties in gaining access to money, probably resulted in ambiguous understanding of money. The economic value of coins was surpassed in favour of a conceptualization on a symbolic level. Therefore, not having enough wealth or money to have social power, and the other way around, the coins that were in the peasantry's possession, even the small Roman bronzes, were attributed

with powers of a different kind – the protection against curses and evil eyes. Moreover, it is likely that outside the peasantry these Roman coins did not possess any great value.

VII. CONCLUSION

In this research, I have explored how the values ascribed to Roman coins have changed during different periods of their use and reuse: (1) while they were an operating currency, (2) at the time when the Roman Empire and its monetary system collapsed, and finally, (3) in the period after they had been discarded and the Roman Empire had been long gone from the political landscape. Roman coins (2nd – 4th centuries) that were reused in the medieval funeral practices (5th – 15th centuries) in the territory of present-day Serbia were the basis of my study. The context of their final deposition – the medieval grave – implied a more diverse and extended usage of these coins than what might have been initially thought to be their original function. In that sense, the reuse of Roman coins was understood in relation to the transformation of value systems in the widest sense during these time periods. However, the change of specific values ascribed to Roman coins was also investigated.

As was stated at several points in this study, the research faced several obstacles along the way. It is obvious that the following conclusions are based on a limited territorial sample and the information about the grave goods analysed here are often derived from poorly documented material in addition to the fact that there is no similar past research in the region from which to build upon. I believe that the results would tend to be more reliable if the large-scale projects are applied, and if the documentation and survey methodology improves. In addition, a detailed comparison should be conducted with the results from research on this topic in neighbouring regions. This is necessary especially because the territory of modern-day Serbia does not correspond to ancient and medieval political or cultural divisions. Only by extending the research can we better perceive the transformation of the Roman into the medieval social landscape and comprehend more profoundly the role of certain Roman material remains in this process in the Balkan region.

Yet, the material that was gathered and studied in this research provided sufficient data for the initial understanding of the phenomenon. Conclusions on this matter are far from final, but still encouraging for us to continue to deal with this topic in the future. The sample of 36 sites, 83 graves and 117 Roman coins provided a suitable starting point. Together with more than 230 objects that were accompanying these Roman coins in the graves, the material presented a solid base. The study encompassed a rather wide chronological period

of over one millennium – spanning from the date of the oldest Roman coin of Hadrian 117 – 138 found in a medieval grave at Burdelj to the youngest medieval cemetery in which Roman coins were found, dated to the late 15th century (site Porečka reka). At the same time, heterogeneous types of objects, apart from Roman coins, that were also found in the grave assemblages were the object of scrutiny. Furthermore, the goal of the research was to question a complex phenomenon of transformation of values. Therefore, all of these aspects of the archaeological material and the questions posed upon it demanded a multifaceted approach in the theoretical and methodological sense. Initially, I critically reconsidered the specialization in the study of past societies; namely, how the study of ancient coinage, being the focus of numismatics, was usually neglected by archaeologists and therefore interpreted mainly in isolation from the rest of the material culture. Furthermore, I drew attention to some weaknesses of the specialization within archaeology itself, between the period focused sub-disciplines (Roman and medieval archaeology), since I am of the opinion that this led to the negligence of the phenomenon of the reuse of Roman coins in the course of the Middle Ages within the archaeology of Serbia. The reuse of Roman coins did not only intersect various cultural spheres in the past, but it also intersects different fields in archaeology at the present moment. Therefore, this phenomenon represents a difficult topic for establishing its appropriate field of study. It seemed unjustified that this phenomenon should remain so poorly discussed, since it integrates a complex network of relationships between people, values and objects. In this research, the coins were analysed as any other archaeological find and as a part of a wider social context. This means that these coins and their (re)uses could be, and in this research were, the subject of both archaeological sub-disciplines, Roman and medieval archaeology, but as well of numismatics. However, the main challenge was to interrelate the results and approaches from these various specialized fields. For example, the numismatic analysis was not only employed to identify the Roman coins, but also the other results from this field concerning wider monetary issues during these periods were considered in relation to, firstly, the use of the Roman coins and later reuse in the medieval funerary context. Apart from this, monetary questions are interrelated with the results from archaeologies of the Roman and medieval periods.

Further theoretical and methodological issues that have been elaborated concerned: (1) the concepts of object biography and life cycles of artefacts, (2) the potential of analysis of mortuary practices in archaeology and (3) different approaches to the interpretation of the reuse and recycling of material culture in the past. I concluded that the concept of social life history or cultural biography of things indeed corresponds to this topic, since it enables us to perceive how the value ascribed to these coins depended mainly on the wider social context in which they were used or reused. In other words, the meaning and value of objects is not constructed in a vacuum and, more importantly, the meaning and value of an object are not fixed categories, but changeable under different conditions. In terms of the concept of the life cycles of artefacts, particularly important was to determine the different stages of the production, circulation, discard and reuses of coins as a category of object, in order to realize whether there were any specific moments in which the opportunities for divergence and transformation of values arose. Especially important for the investigation were the phases between circulation and discard, as well as between discard and reuse. However, object biography and similar concepts are ultimately insufficient on their own for this interpretation and they leave many dilemmas unsolved. It was necessary to grasp the specific historical circumstances and particularities of the social setting in which these Roman coins were handled. I focused on these issues in the second part of the study, which is on the nature of the societal structure and social relations of the communities in which Roman coins were used and reused – Roman and medieval.

The medieval grave and cemetery, in which Roman coins were found, are as a type of an archaeological context a fruitful basis for inquiries on social structure and organization. At the same time, the analysis of mortuary practices provides a foundation for interpreting the value of objects used in the ritual. Even though archaeologists should carefully reconsider the notion that wealth and/or status are directly reflected in the contents of the tomb, it was nevertheless noteworthy to inspect the content, form, size and location of the graves with Roman coins in relation to the tombs of other burials. Through the analysis of the medieval cemeteries, it was indeed possible to detect glimpses of the social organization of the communities that used them. One of the most important features of these case studies that needed a detailed reconsideration is the practice of reusing and recycling materials and objects. I positioned the reuse of Roman coins within a wider framework of the reuse of other material remains of Roman civilisation throughout the Middle Ages. Until now, reuse and recycling were usually seen as markers of a “backward” economy and technological

incompetence to overcome and process the natural resources. Alternatives to such interpretations usually were sought in the ideological sphere. Both of these approaches to the subject of reuse proposed possible directions for the interpretation of the examples from the territory of Serbia, but they also enabled questions on whether the practical and ideological reasoning behind the reuse were correlated and how this affected the revaluation process.

In the second part of the study (Chapters IV, V and VI), I discussed the transformation of values ascribed to Roman coins through different historical periods in greater detail. The existence of the Roman authority was considered to be the main factor in relation to which all other elements in the coin use or reuse were observed, since its appearance or disappearance is the principal variation in the wider context of the coins' usage. Being that the coins were always linked to some specific political authority the major issue in this study was to see how such changes in its dominance affected the transformation of the coins' values and, furthermore, with which other social mechanisms was the absence of the primary authority compensated in the revaluation process during the medieval period.

The examination of how the value of these coins was constructed in a time when they were a valid currency (Roman period), imposed many dilemmas as the archaeological context is not preserved. However, by analysing the coin types, I concluded that they were relics of the coin pool of the Roman provinces in the discussed region and since there is a considerable amount of numismatic and archaeological evidence from various studies on this subject it is possible to grasp some basics on how the value of coinage was constructed, maintained and deconstructed. Without any doubt the turning point in the use of coins in the region was its conquest by the Romans and its incorporation into the complex state apparatus of the Empire. Though the conquest was a trigger for the changes, the transformation of coinage use and its understanding was influenced by more factors than just the conquest. The main changes that occurred after this area became a part of the Roman state were most certainly the alterations of power relations within the social structure. Social status was an important factor in the use of coins in the prehistoric communities in the Balkans, and this is also the case in the Roman context. After the conquest, the positions of powerful agents and those without social power had to be re-established within the Roman social structure. This does not mean that the previous power relations were completely denied; on the contrary, many of the local chiefs were

recognized as powerful and remained to be so even in the Roman context. It is just that these relations were transferred to be suitable for Roman dominance and according to Roman cultural norms. At the same time, coin use was embedded within the restructured society, reflecting and confirming the re-established power relations. Thus, the manner and degree of coin use was defined mostly by the social stratification, and this limited the extent of coin use. However, it is important to notice that this is contrary to the Roman monetary system, in its ideal sense, at least during the first two centuries, when the value ratios between the denominations were fixed and the system corresponded relatively well with the prices. But, as we saw, the use of coins as a means of exchange, though certainly was of a larger extent in comparison to period before the Roman conquest, and any greater quantities of bronze coins are in connection with formation of Roman settlements, this was not accepted widely. Coin evidence from the territory of Serbia revealed certain changes in the patterns of the use and discard of coins in the 3rd and 4th centuries. The number of coins increased, both as single finds and also in hoards. During the 3rd century AD the same denominations occur as single finds and in hoards, mainly *antoniniani* and local copper coins, and towards the end of the 3rd century the debased silver issues. In hoards there are no other objects besides coins. At the same time, there is a lack of gold coins on sites and no hoards containing gold issues were noted on the territory of Serbia. This differs from the previous period in which base metal denominations dominate among the single finds, while silver and gold coins occur mostly in hoards, and it is not unusual that they are hoarded together with other objects. After the monetary reforms of Diocletian, gold and silver appear in circulation again, but silver is very problematic and represents only a minor part of the circulating pool. A further increase in the number of bronze coins on sites and in hoards could indicate somewhat contradictory conclusions. The great quantity of lost bronze coins could be explained, aside from abundant production, by their low and constantly diminishing value, which did not motivate efforts for recovering them. However, large hoards with carefully stored bronze pieces, in which the range between the oldest and the latest issue is sometimes over one century, indicate that they were still valuable. In other words, the time span in gold hoards gets shorter, while the time span in bronze hoards is longer. In the case of the gold this could be explained to a certain degree by the reformations of Valentinian I, where it was in the interest of the state to withdraw gold as fast as possible back to the state treasury. On the other hand, bronze coins as single pieces were not only used as a means of exchange in everyday transactions, but stored together and handled apparently in bags as a unit of larger denomination. In the course of

the 5th century the Roman Empire and the whole monetary system collapsed, thus what was once a massive production of coinage was disturbed and the use of coins as a social practice was seriously questioned. In these circumstances, a historical context was created in which Roman currency, but in some instances even coins as a category of object, would have to be reconsidered. It is in this period that the function, value and meaning of these coins were subject to devaluation, but, at the same time, an opportunity for the reinterpretation of these objects opened.

In order to understand how the Roman coins were revaluated in the medieval period, I have positioned their reuse in funerary customs within the wider social and historical context, but furthermore it was important to relate this practice with two other factors – the general state of medieval coin use and the reuse of other remains of Roman material culture during these times.

After I examined the reuse of Roman coins in relation to the general state of monetary issues in the course of the Middle Ages, I came to several conclusions. In the period of transformation from Late Antiquity to the early medieval period, in my opinion, an ambiguous understanding of the value of older Roman coins was created. As the old Roman issues were still very interrelated with the Byzantine and new barbarian coinage systems they were from time to time still used in monetary transactions. Yet, it should be emphasised that even if the incorporation of older Roman issues into the contemporary coinage systems was occasionally attested and could be assumed as a practice that was relatively frequent across the territories of the former Roman Empire in this period, we cannot assume that the older Roman coins were at all times and continually accepted as a valid currency. Therefore, the unclear situation of their nominal value, but also their constant potential to be incorporated in the current system of denominations opens a range of opportunities in forming the conception of the coins' value. The possibility that older Roman coins become a valid currency is enabled, apart from being of the appropriate size or weight, through the recognition of the former political authority that minted the coins in the first place, i.e. Rome, by the one currently in power, i.e. Byzantine or a barbarian kingdom. That these coins had the potential to be incorporated into a monetary system is also important for the reason that the valuation of these coins depended not only on the subjective perception of their owners, excluded from outside factors, but also on reactions to events in the wider social and monetary context. Thus, these coins also had a capacity to

be used in an economic transaction. However, in my opinion, the inconsistency in this practice and nonexistence of a fixed and regulated system of revaluation makes it possible that these coins could be at the same time “over” and “under” valued by their users depending on the context. In other words, Roman coins are identified as potential valuables, but they become indeed valuable only in specific circumstances.

Though the one example of reuse from the Avar period (Aradac – Mečka) is a single case, it revealed that this fact should not be neglected. The find from Aradac demonstrated that revision of the previously excavated material of the Avar period concerning finds of Roman coins is seriously needed, since neighbouring Hungary has significant quantities of such finds. Therefore, the question is whether this absence of Roman coins in the Avar cemeteries in the region of Serbia was a result of the practices in the past or a consequence of negligence in the archaeological research? Furthermore, the studies concerning the use of Byzantine coins and reuse of Roman coins from Hungarian archaeologists demonstrate that these two were more than interrelated. I am of the opinion that examples from Serbia could only enrich this interesting discussion.

The reuse of Roman coins in the cemeteries of the High and Late Middle Ages in the territory of Serbia coincided with the renewal of coin circulation in this region (the late 10th and early 11th centuries) after almost three centuries of no coin use. Generally, the Roman coins were understood and valued in relation to the state of monetary affairs, overall level of monetization and the socio-economic position of the population that used these cemeteries. The context of increasing importance of coins in the lives of medieval people probably stimulated them to perhaps start appreciating the old Roman coins scattered in the ruins. Thus, this led to the appearance of Roman coins as grave offerings. However, their value had to be positioned within the value orders of both people and things. As the coins were mainly reused in village cemeteries, I assumed that this should be taken as a crucial indicator of how their value should be interpreted. It seemed to me that it was not possible to determine the transformed value of the coins without looking into the status of their users. Especially significant was to compare the reuse of other Roman objects with the reuse of coins. In the case of the reuse of Roman bricks, which was the most widely reused object from the Roman period, we could assume that there was a regulation of some kind of political authority at hand that structured the distribution of such objects. However, in

the case of coins this still remains an open question and we have only sufficient data from the moment when they came into the possession of certain medieval people.

The group of Roman coins that were modified into pendants provided the most inspiring data on the possible interpretation of such peculiar possessions. My question was whether the reuse of Roman coins in such examples could be better understood if we perceive them as part of the dowries among the lower levels of medieval society. While the dowry is commonly associated with the elite in the historical sources of the medieval time, ethnographic studies show that it was also practiced among peasantry, leaving the possibility for such custom to be practiced among the populations buried in the studied cemeteries. The dowry and its value among the peasantry, in my opinion, would then be shaped mostly by the specifics of the dowry-receiver's position within the medieval social structure. Although the people buried in these cemeteries, being peasantry, were probably not involved in monetary transactions to the extent that people from urban areas were, they would have been familiar with handling coins and would have been aware of the power that money had in social relations. To begin with, these peasants would have known who had the right to mint and who was obliged to pay tax. The antagonism created by this awareness of the importance of money in the creation of wealth and the difficulties in gaining access to money probably resulted in an ambiguous understanding of money. However, recognition of its importance would have predisposed that such category of object should be part of the dowry. Thus, the economic value of coins could have been surpassed in favour of conceptualization on a symbolic level. Therefore, not having enough wealth or money to have social power, and vice versa, the peasantry attributed coins in their possession, even the small Roman bronzes, with powers of a different kind, such as protection against curses and evil eyes, protecting the actual value – the bride. Moreover, it is likely that outside the peasantry these Roman coins did not possess any great value.

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- P. XL Necropolis Viminacium Više Grobalja, (1)- grave no. 1193, two bronze earrings with a golden plate; (2)- bronze *fibula* shaped into a bird; (3, 4)- coins of Julia Mamaea and Alexander Severus (222 – 235); (5, 6)- amber beads; (7)- fragmented bone needle; (8)- beads from green and blue glass; (9)- fragmented bronze object; (10–11)- grave no. 1292, Roman coin and bronze circular buckle; (12–14)- grave no. 1311, a silver *fibula* with golden plate, type Gourzouf, coin and tweezers (Ivanišević, Kazanski and Mastykova 2006, Pl. 34, 35)
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- P. XLII Necropolis Doničko Brdo, (1–5)- reused (?) *fibulae*; (6)- grave no. 4, in situ position and a reused early Byzantine *fibula*; (7)- grave no. 37, a necklace made of beads and various pendants, including two medieval coins (Petrović 1963, Fig. 24, 37, 40; The National Museum in Kragujevac, Igor Djurović)
- P. XLIII Necropolis Konopljara – Čitluk, (1)- grave no. 66, coin of Constantius II (?); (2)- grave no. 82, a worn-out Roman coin (?); (3)- a pair of earring pendants; (4)- fragmented spur; (5)- a spearhead (The National Museum of Kruševac, Marin Bugar)
- P. XLIV Necropolis Konopljara – Čitluk, (1, 2)- grave no. 84, coin of Constantius II and a necklace with a Roman coin pendant (The National Museum of Kruševac, Marin Bugar)
- P. XLV Necropolis Niš – Medijana, position of grave no. 34 within the necropolis (Maksimović 2010, Pl. I)
- P. XLVI Necropolis Niš – Medijana, (1)- position of graves no. 34 and 35; (2–4)- grave no. 35, an iron knife, worn-out Roman coin and a buckle (Maksimović 2010, T. II, T. VII, 7–9)
- P. XLVII Necropolis Niš – Glasija, (1)- position of grave no. 16 within the necropolis (Ercegović-Pavlović 1977, Pl. 2)
- P. XLVIII Necropolis Niš – Sv. Pantelejmon, (1–4)- Roman coins, 4th century (?) from graves no. 22 (1966), 120 (1969), 123 (1969) and grave no. 48 (1969) (The National Museum in Niš); (5–6)- grave no. 125, fragmented cross pendant and fragmented glass cup (Korać 2002, T. VI, 219; T. XII, 218)

P. XLIX Necropolis Niš – Sv. Pantelejmon, (1)- grave no. 125 (1969), Roman coin of Constantius II (?); (2)- grave no. 22 (2002), coin of Constantius II; (3)- grave no. 33 (2002), coin of Constantius II (?); (4)- grave no. 45 (2003), coin of Tacitus (The National Museum in Niš)

P. L Necropolis Niš – Sv. Pantelejmon, (1)- grave no. 84 (2003), coin of Constantine I; (2)- grave no. 66, coin of Constantius II; (3,4)- graves no. 47 (Crnoglavac and Čerškov 2011, Tb.III, Sl. 6) and 80, coins from the 4th century; (5)- grave no. 41, coin of Constantius II (The National Museum in Niš)

P. LI Necropolis Ravna – Slog, position of grave no. 98 within the necropolis (Petković et al. 2005, Plan 7)

P. LII Necropolis Ravna – Slog, distribution of the grave goods (Petković et al. 2005, Plan 8)

P. LIII Necropolis Ravna – Slog, grave 98, (1–6)- three pairs of silver-plated earrings; (7, 11)- a bead necklace with a worn-out Roman coin; (8–9)- two bronze finger rings; (10)- position of the deceased and finds in grave no. 98 (Petković et al. 2005, p. 194; P. IX, Zavičajni muzej u Knjaževcu, Bojana Iljić)

P. LIV Necropolis Pesača, (1)- position of graves no. 1 and 8 within the necropolis in the Roman fortification; (2)- graves no. 1 and 9, reused Roman brick with an inscription in Old Slavonic (Minić 1984, Fig. 1-3)

P. LV Necropolis Veliki Gradac, (1)- plan of the church and the necropolis; (2, 3)- grave no. 72, reused *fibula* and “Avar” earring (Minić 1970, Fig. 1, 19, 24-25)

P. LVI Necropolis Vajuga, grave no. 18, (1)- bronze earring; (2)- necklace made of glass beads; (3, 4)- two pierced Roman coins from the 4th century; (5, 6)- pair of silver *fibulae* with golden plate, type Viškov; (7)- triple band finger ring; (8, 9)- two bronze finger rings; (10)- red glazed pot with two handles; (11)- position of the deceased and grave goods (Popović 1987, Abb. 10; Špehar 2012, Fig. 11)

P. LVII Necropolis Brza Palanka, plan of the necropolis (Ercegović-Pavlović 1967, T. VI)

P. LVIII Necropolis Brza Palanka, (1, 2)- position of graves no. 17 and 18 (The Archaeological Institute in Belgrade)

P. LIX Necropolis Brza Palanka, grave no. 18, (1)- coin of Constantine I (324 – 337); (2)- pierced *billon trachey* of Manoilo I Comnenus (1143 – 1180); (3)- fragment of a pot; (4)- four cowry shells; (5, 6, 7)- various beads and pendants; (8, 9)- glass paste bracelets; (10)- bone and bronze pendants (The Archaeological Institute in Belgrade)

P. LX Examples of Ostrogothic coinage (Grierson 1986, Pl. 7)

P. LXI Revaluated early Imperial bronzes (Vandals?) (Grierson 1986, Pl. 4)

- P. LXII (1)- Reconstruction of garments of the Germanic women from the Great Migration Period; (2)- a grave of an elite member of a Germanic tribe; (3)- typical grave goods from a female Germanic grave (Périn and Kazanski 2011, Fig. 23. 8, 23. 15, 23.9)
- P. LXIII (1)- The helmet from Batajnica; (2)- “Gepidic” pot from Bočar; (3)- Gold Avar belt from the vicinity of Sirmium (Dimitrijević, Kovačević and Vinski 1962, Tb. VIII-IX; Popović 1997, Fig. 31)
- P. LXIV Parts of the Avar belt set decorated with 4th-century coinage iconography from Zemun (Dimitrijević 1966, T. I)
- P. LXV Parts of the Avar belt set decorated with 4th-century coinage iconography from Zemun (Dimitrijević 1966, T. II)
- P. LXVI Parts of the Avar belt set decorated with 4th-century coinage iconography from Zemun (Dimitrijević 1966, T. III)
- P. LXVII Parts of the Avar belt set decorated with 4th-century coinage iconography from Zemun (Dimitrijević 1966, T. V)
- P. LXVIII Parts of the Avar belt set decorated with 4th-century coinage iconography from Zemun (Dimitrijević 1966, T. VII)
- P. LXIX (1–3)- Typical medieval jewellery from the territory of Serbia, earrings, rings and bracelets (Bikić 2010, Sl. 5-7)
- P. LXX The use of coins as jewellery in ethnographic examples of the Balkans (Zegga 1925, Abb. 1, 3)

APPENDIX I:

LIST OF MEDIEVAL NECROPOLES WITH ROMAN COINS IN SERBIA

The review of case studies included in the research is organised and presented according to their geographical location, since the artefacts and documentation about the archaeological excavations are either stored in regional museums or, if they are held in central institutions (The National Museum and The Archaeological Institute in Belgrade), they follow the same classification – according to their geographical provenance. This seemed to be the most convenient way for classification as my survey of available documentation and publications also followed this territorial pattern. The review starts with northern Serbia (Vojvodina) and presents sites in the regional districts of Srem (A), Bačka (B), Banat (C); followed by an overview of sites south of the Sava and Danube rivers; in the area of Belgrade (D), in the region of Požarevac (E), in central and south Serbia (F); in eastern Serbia (G) and finally in the Iron Gate region (H). For each of the case-sites a brief description is provided: location, research history, type of structures and objects recovered and chronological determination.

3.1 SREM (A)

1) Sirmium/site 3 – Germanic grave⁶⁴¹

The site is located in the Trg Sv. Stefana Street 6 in Sremska Mitrovica, a town located near the Sava River, about 75 km NW of Belgrade. Underneath this town are the remains of Sirmium – the capital of the Roman province Pannonia Inferior, later Pannonia Secunda. During the 1st century AD it gained the status of a colony of Roman citizens and was one of the most important centres of the Empire in the Late Antique Period.

⁶⁴¹ Milošević 1994, 13; Brukner 1959, 122 – 124; Excavation diary 1959 356/32, Inv. No. 40

Systematic excavations of this ancient city started in 1957, but it has been known in the scholarly studies since the 17th century. Over 80 sites have been explored in the city and in its very close surroundings, dating from the 1st century BC to the Late Medieval Period. Some of the major buildings discovered over the course of numerous excavations are the “Imperial palace” (site 1a), *villa urbana* with peristyle and baths (site 4), city baths (site 29), *horreum* (site 31) and several sections of the hippodrome (site 25).

On site 3, during the rescue excavations in 1958 and 1959 a part of one *villa urbana* was found near the southern city wall of Sirmium. The structure is dated to the 3rd and 4th centuries AD. At this site, Late Antique burials and one “Germanic grave”, dated to the end of the 5th or early 6th century AD, were also found. The (female?) grave was found in the SE part of the hole dug for modern construction work. All of the bones and finds were disturbed and not found in situ. The grave was oriented W – E, head to the E.

The Roman coins associated with this grave are not mentioned in the excavation diary, rather in the inventory book of the numismatic collection of the Museum of Srem, coins no. 631 and 632 are filed as found in this grave.

Grave goods:

1. Two bronze *fibulae* with the golden plate, type Aquileia, with a headplate in a semicircular shape and five radiate zoomorphic extensions, with a rhomboid foot that has three almandine stones inserted around the edge; the whole *fibula* is decorated with incised wreaths and lines; L= 15,1 and 7,1 cm; near the skull (P. I/4).
2. One bead from golden tin in egg shape, near the skull.
3. One amber bead in spin whorl shape, near the skull.
4. One copper coin of Claudius Gothicus (268 – 270), Ob. IMP C CLAVDIVS [AVG], Rv. [GEN]IVS EXERCI, RIC 48, R= 2,1 cm, location not documented (P. I/ 2).⁶⁴²
5. One copper coin (Ae3) of Valens (364 – 378), Ob. DN VALEN[-S PF AVG], Rv. Not readable [GLORIA ROMANORVM](?), mint Siscia (?), R= 1,7 cm, location not documented (P. I/ 1).⁶⁴³

⁶⁴² Inventory book of the numismatic collection of the Museum of Srem no. 631

⁶⁴³ Inventory book of the numismatic collection of the Museum of Srem no. 632

2) Sirmium/site 5⁶⁴⁴

The site is located in the area between the streets Puškinova and Trg Sv. Stefana in Sremska Mitrovica. This site and the previous site, Sirmium/site 3, are one entity. During the rescue excavations in 1959 seven graves buried near the 3rd-century *villa urbana* were discovered. Five graves were found in the southern part of the site, in the area between the channel A-A and wall 1, while two other graves were situated in the northern side of this channel. All graves were oriented E – W and had a burial pit constructed out of bricks. Due to the severe destruction of the site and poor archaeological finds, the dating was made on the basis of stratigraphy and its proximity to other early medieval graves – 5th century AD.

One Roman coin is found in grave no. 4.

Grave no. 4

The grave is oriented E – W. The remains were poor and dislocated. The burial pit was constructed out of bricks lined up sideways and was covered with a roof on two sides.

Grave goods:

1. One copper coin (Ae3), Ob. [CONSTAT]INOPOLIS, mint Antioch, 330 – 337, LRBC 1360 or 1369, R= 1,7 cm, location not documented (P. I/3).⁶⁴⁵

3) Sirmium/site 4⁶⁴⁶

Site 4 is located in the Zmaj Jovina Str. 19 in the backyard of the Boško Palkovljević – Pinki School in Sremska Mitrovica. The rescue archaeological excavations were done in 1957 – 1960, 1962 and 1968 – 1969. The multi-layered remains of architecture, graves and small finds indicate that this area was in use for various purposes in the past. In the 2nd century AD this was a necropolis. The necropolis was deserted in the beginning of the 4th century AD and a relatively big object with a basilica ground plan was erected. At the end

⁶⁴⁴ Milošević 1994, 14; Brukner 1959, 122 – 124; Excavation diary 1959 356/33, Inv. No. 41 (Museum of Srem)

⁶⁴⁵ Inventory book of the numismatic collection of the Museum of Srem no. 650

⁶⁴⁶ Parović-Pešikan 1981, 179 – 191

of the 4th century AD in the same area a villa with peristyle and small baths was erected. Numerous reconstructions and adaptations indicate that it was in use during the whole 4th century AD. Afterwards, in the 6th century AD, several graves were dug into this villa. The youngest layer is the necropolis from the high medieval period dated to the 11th / 12th centuries AD.

This necropolis was mostly dug into the *villa urbana* on site 4 in the eastern and southern sectors (P. II, III). There were some graves also in the ruins of the baths in the northern part of the site and partially south of the Roman street in site 35. During the excavations in 1968 – 1969 a total of 33 graves were investigated. The necropolis was organized in rows. The orientation of the burials was E – W, head to the west. The skeletons were in a supine position. Mostly the arms were on the pelvis or on the stomach, sometimes one hand was extended beside the body. Only in three cases were the arms crossed on the chest.

The tracking of the construction of burial pits was very difficult, because the graves were dug into the building rubble. The burial pit constructions consisted mainly of a paved floor with fragments of stone and bricks extracted from the Roman structures. Sometimes graves had an enclosure made of the same material. Only in grave no. 35 were bricks noted above the grave. The enclosure was sometimes just around the head and, in some instances, under the skull was a fragment of a brick or stone slab. The interesting find was a Roman brick in an anthropomorphic (?) shape found near graves no. 25 and 28 (P. IV/7). In these graves iron nails were found, which could indicate possible use of wooden caskets in some cases. One example of an animal burial (sheep?) is noted 1,50 m south of grave no. 32. Also in grave no. 8 bones from a horse leg were found and in grave no. 13 near the head, in a small separate hole, bones of a cow were discovered.

The grave goods were found in 15 graves and could be divided into jewellery and garment objects (earrings, rings, bracelets and buckles), weapons (knife and spearhead arrow) and parts of horse equipment (horse bridle). The earrings were the most numerous objects in the necropolis and, together with finds of medieval Hungarian coins, one from Béla II (1131 – 1141), provided the chronological framework of the necropolis (11th / 12th centuries AD).

Most of the earring types found in the necropolis were so-called “S” earrings (from the 10th – 11th and even sometimes from the 12th century AD). Three examples were silver and the

rest were made of bronze. Beside the “S” earrings, there were also three silver earrings with a “grape” pendant (“Byzantine forms”). In these areas they appeared in the 11th – 12th centuries AD.

Roman coins were found in graves no. 5, 6, and 35. In addition, silver medieval Hungarian coins were found in graves no. 4 and 12. The coin from grave no. 12 is of Béla II (1131 – 1141).

Grave no. 5

The burial of a male deceased. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the west. A small deviation towards S was noted. The skeleton was in a supine position with arms slightly bent towards the pelvis. The burial pit had a paved floor from fragmented bricks below the upper part of the body. Under the skull was a fragment of a greenish marble slab (P IV/1).

Grave goods:

1. One copper coin (Ae3) of Theodosius I (379 – 395), Ob. DN THE[ODO] – SIVS PF AVG, Rv. VIRTVS AVGGG, mint Thessalonica, 383 – 388, R= 1,7 cm, between the knees (P IV/3).⁶⁴⁷
2. One pendant from a pierced stone, near the hand.

Grave no. 6

The burial of a male deceased. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the west. The skeleton was in a supine position with the right arm on the pelvis and the left hand extended beside the body. The burial pit had a paved floor from fragmented bricks below the head and the upper part of the body (T IV/2).

Grave goods:

1. A fragment of an iron knife, below the waist.
2. One bronze ring, on the right hand (P. IV/5).
3. One iron horse bridle, below the legs.

⁶⁴⁷ Inventory book of the numismatic collection of the Museum of Srem no. 1191

4. One copper coin, probably Roman, very worn out, unreadable, R= 1,3 cm, near the heel of the right foot.

Grave no. 35

A burial of a female (?) deceased. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the west. The skeleton was in supine position with the right hand on the stomach and the left hand extended beside the body. The bones of the legs were broken. Bricks were noted above the grave.

Grave goods:

1. Two silver earrings, “S” type, on the right and left sides of the head (P. IV/4, 6).
2. One copper coin (Ae3) of Constantine (324 – 337), R= 1,8 cm, near the left hand.⁶⁴⁸

4) Sirmium/site 66⁶⁴⁹

During several rescue excavations in 1969, 1970, 1971 and 1984 a section of the Sirmium hippodrome from the 4th century was investigated. Namely, the northern part of the auditorium was excavated, where a necropolis from the 10th and 11th centuries was also found in 1984. Unfortunately, the necropolis was never published and the documentation of the Museum of Srem on this cemetery was very scarce. However, according to the available documentation – the drawings of the artefacts (P. V, VI) and C-cards (grave no. 41) – there are indications that reused Roman coins (4th century) were found among the grave goods.

5) Mačvanska Mitrovica – Zidine⁶⁵⁰

The site Zidine is located on the right bank of the Sava River in Mačvanska Mitrovica, directly across from Sremska Mitrovica. Once this site consisted of three smaller

⁶⁴⁸ According to the excavation documentation of the Archaeological Institute in Belgrade Inv. No. 3564/929

⁶⁴⁹ Milošević 1994, 46; Documentation of the Museum of Srem Inv. no. 98

⁶⁵⁰ Ercegović-Pavlović 1980

elevations, but during the construction of the shipyard in 1948 the site was severely damaged and by the time of the excavations (1966 – 1970) it was a mild elongated slope. A Roman and medieval necropolis with a cult object in the middle was discovered at this site. The sacral complex – an ancient martyrrium and three medieval churches – was on the highest point of elevation and the necropoles were organized around it. In the surrounding area was also a corresponding medieval settlement.⁶⁵¹

Since a large amount of dislocated graves and bones were found, the exact number of graves could not be calculated, but it is designated as 241, including 30 large groups of bones of different individuals. Within this scope several Roman and medieval horizons were distinguished, as well as one group of non-dateable graves (13). From the Roman period two layers of burials were noted. In the older layer from the early 2nd to the mid-3rd centuries AD, two different funeral practices – cremation (37) and skeletal burials (24) – were carried out at the same time. The orientation of the skeletal burials varied. The later period (the late 4th century AD) is marked with the use of monumental tombs constructed of brick drywall with roof on two sides, but burial in simple pits was also still practiced. This level of graves (44) was formed around the first cult object – the martyrrium. Most of the burials follow the orientation of the object (SW – NE), with the head to the SW. During the Migration Period some sporadic use of this necropolis was detected. One grave (no. 149) is attributed to the Gepids (early 6th century AD) according to the *fibula* with a rectangular headplate. Also, the devastation of the monumental tomb no. 167 is interpreted as a consequence of the Avar invasion and fall of Sirmium in the late 6th century AD.

Graves from the later medieval period were densely situated around the church and the necropolis did not spread very far from it. The oldest layer of the medieval necropolis consisted of large groups and piles of dislocated human bones and a small one-apse church with a circular baptistery. This church was destroyed in a fire and very soon thereafter a new, large, church with three apses was built on its foundations. Based on a find of anonymous *foliis* from the beginning of the 11th century AD on the floor of the new church as well as other material, the older church and the corresponding layer of graves was dated to the 10th century AD. This period is also taken as a time when this area started to be used as a cemetery again.

⁶⁵¹ Minić 1980

Around the church with three apses two layers of burials were noted (P. VII). Most of the graves from this layer were without any construction (33), but in a few cases vertically placed Roman bricks were found. A special novelty was a rectangular tomb (grave no. 18) made of bricks and mortar with a roof on two sides, very similar to those of the Late Antique Period (P. XVIII 1). Grave goods in this layer were very rare with the exception of the metal crosses from graves no. 18 and 226. Grave goods were more common in the layer with younger graves (76) connected to the church with three apses, but the tendency of burials with no construction still remains. The only exception is grave no. 8 with the construction of vertically placed Roman bricks and a covering of five horizontal bricks. This grave did not contain any remains of the deceased and it is therefore a rare example of a medieval cenotaph. Most of the objects found in the graves of this layer are jewellery and garment objects – “S” earrings, bead necklaces and buttons. The use of this area around the church with three apses is dated from the beginning of the 11th to the late 12th or early 13th century AD.

Around the youngest and biggest church (the Benedictine one) graves (43) were severely destroyed, since they had been laid shallow in the ground. Due to this, grave goods from this layer are generally missing with the exception of a few graves. An interesting find is certainly one glass bottle in grave no. 181. Concerning the construction of the graves, most were just plain burial pits with no constructions. Occasional placement of one Roman brick near the head or feet was present. The whole layer is dated to the 14th – 15th centuries AD.

Roman coins were found in graves no. 226 and 230 in the older layer around the church with three apses. In grave no. 215, in the younger layer, three pierced coins found as part of a necklace and four pierced coins found in the left hand are all attributed as medieval Hungarian coins from Coloman (1095 – 1116) to Geza II (1141 – 1162). However, in the inventory book of the numismatic collection of the Museum of Srem four copper coins (inv. No. 1751 – 1754) are attributed as Roman coins – one from the 2nd (?) and others from the 4th century AD – and noted as belonging to the context of grave no. 215. Therefore, I have incorporated the Roman coins in the grave goods of grave no. 215.

Other coin finds are noted in graves no. 54, 60, 62, 113 and 198. In grave no. 54 one byzantine *billon trachey* of Manuel I Komnenus (1143 – 1180) was found. Two Byzantine *anonymous* were in the graves no. 60 and 62. The attribution of the coins in graves no. 113 and 198 was the same as for the coins from grave no. 215.

Grave no. 226

A burial of a female adult. The remains were oriented NE – SW with the head to the west. The skeleton was in a supine position with arms on the pelvis. Below the head was one Roman brick.

Grave goods:

1. One copper coin (Ae3) of Valentinian I (364 – 375), Ob. [DN VALENTINI]ANVS [PF AVG], Rv. [GLORIA ROMANORVM], mint Siscia, R= 1,8 cm, on the left side of the skull (P. VIII/ 3).⁶⁵²
2. One pierced boar tooth on the thorax (P. VIII/ 1).
3. One bronze cross reliquary on the thorax (P. VIII/ 2).

Grave no. 230

A burial of a female adult. The remains were oriented E – W with the head to the west. The skeleton was in a supine position with arms on the waist.

Grave goods:

1. One bronze earring under the skull.
2. One *radiate* from the 3rd century, R= 1,8 cm, near the left femur (P. VIII /4).⁶⁵³

Grave no. 215

A burial of a female adult. The remains were oriented E – W with the head to the west. The skeleton was in a supine position with the right arm on the chest and the left arm on the pelvis.

Grave goods:

1. One large metal chain ring near the skull.
2. One bronze earring, “S” type, with the lower part decorated in spiral form, near the skull (P. IX).

⁶⁵² Inventory book of the numismatic collection of the Museum of Srem no. 1765

⁶⁵³ Inventory book of the numismatic collection of the Museum of Srem no. 1767

3. One necklace made of 34 cowry shells, 68 glass paste beads, one bone pendant and three pierced Hungarian copper coins, around the neck (P.IX).
4. Fragments of bronze tin, a button (?), on the chest (P. IX).
5. Four perforated small Hungarian coins in the left hand.
6. One copper coin, (Ae4), very worn, unreadable, 4th century AD, R= 1,3 cm, in the left hand.⁶⁵⁴
7. One copper coin, very worn, unreadable, 2nd century AD (?), R= 1,6 cm, in the left hand.⁶⁵⁵
8. One copper coin (Ae3) of Valens (364 – 378), Ob. DN VALEN-SPFAV[G], Rv. GLORIA ROMANORVM, mint Sis, 367/75, LRBC 1306, R= 1,8 cm, pierced, in the left hand.⁶⁵⁶
9. One copper coin (Ae4) of Constantius II (337 – 361), Ob. CONSTANTIV-SPFAVG, Rv. GLOR-IAEXERC-ITVS, mint Sis, 337/41, LRBC 767, R= 1,5 cm, pierced, in the left hand (P. VIII/5).⁶⁵⁷

6) Vrcalova Vodenica⁶⁵⁸

The site Vrcalova Vodenica is located about 2 km from Ruma in Srem. In 1983 a mound about 2 m high was investigated. The excavations revealed that the whole area of the mound was a medieval necropolis with one church in its central area at the highest point of the mound. Unfortunately, due to intensive ploughing activities, most of the church had been destroyed and only some sections of the foundations of its western part were detected. The church was built out of broken stone and mortar with some broken Roman bricks secondarily used from the nearby Roman sites. Probable width was about 8,40 m, but other dimensions could not be reconstructed. Scarce fragments of the fresco paintings indicate rich interior decoration. The church was probably younger than the cemetery, because some graves had been damaged with the construction of the church, but most of the time both were used simultaneously.

⁶⁵⁴ Inventory book of the numismatic collection of the Museum of Srem no. 1751

⁶⁵⁵ Inventory book of the numismatic collection of the Museum of Srem no. 1752

⁶⁵⁶ Inventory book of the numismatic collection of the Museum of Srem no. 1753

⁶⁵⁷ Inventory book of the numismatic collection of the Museum of Srem no. 1754

⁶⁵⁸ Minić 1995, 287 – 311

The spacious necropolis stretched across the whole mound. Most of the graves were situated west of the church, while fewer graves were on the slopes of the mound. The burials were organized in relatively regular rows without any marking of the graves. This could be supported by many examples of destroyed and dislocated graves. In the excavated area 267 graves and 25 groups of disturbed skeletal remains were found. In these groups 278 skeletons could be distinguished. Usually the burials were oriented E – W with the head to the west and some deviations towards the north. Only grave no. 22 was oriented in the opposite direction with the head NE. Graves near the church follow the orientation of the church SW – NE, while on the periphery of the cemetery the deviations are less significant. The majority of the graves had no burial construction and occasionally burial pits were encircled with Roman bricks. An enclosure around the whole burial pit was found only in grave no. 86. In two cases encircling was done on the longer sides of pits and in three cases only on one side. More frequent was the placement of one Roman brick near the head, feet or chest. The construction of grave no. 84 was slightly more complex than the others with horizontally placed bricks in several rows. Maybe it was even covered with bricks, because a group of disturbed Roman bricks were found very close by. All of the skeletons were in a supine position. The placement of arms differed: both hands on the waist (20), on the pelvis (18) or on the chest (16); combination of the previous (29); both arms completely extended beside the body (23); one arm extended and the other on the pelvis or waist (13); arms strongly bent with hands on the shoulders (5).

Grave goods were found in 47 graves dated from the late 10th to early 15th centuries AD. Most of the artefacts were jewellery and garment objects. From the period between the 10th and 12th centuries AD there are finds of “S”-type earrings (18), a necklace of glass paste and chalcedony beads and a ring with a head of glass paste dated with a coin of Basil II and Constantine VIII (976 – 1028). The material from the 13th century AD is represented through parts of the belt sets. Most of them were bronze buckles, but there was also an example of a belt set with numerous decorative applications made of bronze tin (grave no. 41). An interesting find from this period is a silver cross pendant with a chain that was found in the child burial (grave no. 100). The few finds of weapons and horse equipment are dated to the last centuries of the necropolis. The arrow heads were found in graves no. 29 and 145.

Very characteristic for this necropolis were relatively frequent finds of coins – 10 medieval and two Roman coins. Two medieval coins and one Roman coin were in the area with disturbed skeletons and the rest were in graves. The medieval coins are dated from the late 10th / early 11th to the mid-15th century AD. The oldest one is a Byzantine *foliis* of Basil II and Constantine VII (976 – 1025) followed by coins of the Hungarian rulers Stephen I (1000 – 1038), Stephen II (1114 – 1131), Coloman I (1095 – 1114), Geza II (1141 – 1161), Stephen IV (1162 – 1173), Stephen V (1270 – 1272), Laszlo IV (1272- 1290) and Lois I (1342 – 1382). The youngest one is from the Serbian despot Đurađ Branković (1427 – 1456). The Roman coin was found in grave no. 189.

Grave no. 189

A burial of a male 25 – 30 years old. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the west, with a deviation of 25° towards S. The skeleton was in a supine position with the right arm on the pelvis and left arm beside the body (P. XI).

Grave goods:

1. One iron buckle, L= 4,2 and 4,5 cm, on the right side of the pelvis (P. XI/1).
2. One reddish pellet made of fired earth, R= 2 cm, on the right side of the pelvis (P. XI/2).
3. One copper coin (Ae3) of Valens (364 – 375), Ob. DN VALEN – [S PF AVG], Rv. SECVRITAS [REI]PVBLICAE, Mint Siscia, 364/7, LRBC 1274 or 1278, R= 1,8 cm, under the chin (P. XI/3).⁶⁵⁹
4. One iron knife, L= 3,5 cm, beside the left femur (P. XI/4).
5. One fragment of iron wire, a tongue of a buckle (?), L= 3,5 cm, near the right shoulder (P. XI/5).
6. One iron application or a pendant shaped into a leaf, L= 2,8 and 2 cm, near the left elbow (P. XI/6).
7. One iron nail, L= 6 cm, near the left arm (P. XI/7).

⁶⁵⁹ Popović 1995, 224

3.2 BAČKA (B)

7) Subotica⁶⁶⁰

Subotica is a town located in the northern part of Serbia, very close to the border with Hungary and about 184 km from Belgrade. One accidental find of, most probably, a female grave was found in 1929 during ploughing near the town of Subotica. The exact location is not known. The grave is dated to the early 6th century AD according to the *fibula* find that has analogies in other early medieval necropoles.

Grave goods:

1. One bronze pendant with a golden plate in the shape of a Roman coin (?), Obv. A male bust with long hair, l., diad., in the place for an inscription stands mark III, Rv. Decoration with stylized flower with four leaves and crescent, R= 1,9 cm (P. XII/2).
2. One copper coin of Constantius II (337 – 361), Obv. [DN CONSTAN-TIVS PF AVG] Bust dr., pd., letter A behind busts, Rev., [CONCORDIA-MILITVM], Emperor diad. and in military dress stg. Facing, head l., above him a star. In each hand he holds a standard with Chi –Rho on the banner, III in l. filed, mint Siscia, 351, mint mark ASIS...⁶⁶¹, LRBC 1187(?), RIC 8, 301/302 (?) (P. XII/1).
3. One bronze arm ring, R= 7,8 cm.
4. Two cubical pendants for earrings from golden-plated tin with inserted almandine stones, L= 1,2 cm.
5. One bronze *fibula*, golden plated, with semicircular head and rhomboid foot ending in the shape of a bird head, decorated with incised lines and inserted almandine stones, L= 6,5 cm (P. XII/3).

⁶⁶⁰ Klemenc 1952, 337 – 342; Dimitrijević, Kovačević and Vinski 1962, 61

⁶⁶¹ Klemenc sees * SIS

8) **Bogojevo III**⁶⁶²

The early medieval necropolis Bogojevo III is located in Biboja Street in the small town of Bogojevo. This town is situated very near the Danube River and the contemporary border between Serbia and Croatia. This site was discovered in 1899 and excavated in 1900 – 1901. At that time 40 graves were discovered, from which 15 contained grave goods. More precise data about the necropolis are not known, except that the graves were oriented W – E and the burial pits had no constructions. Besides this necropolis from the 10th / 11th centuries AD, there were three other necropoles from the second Avar period (8th century AD) found along the road Bogojevo – Srpski Miletić (Bogojevo I, II and IV).

According to the material the Bogojevo III necropolis is associated with the Bjelo Brdo culture (10th – 11th century AD). This culture developed in Pannonia and is considered to be a mixture of Slavic and ancient Hungarian elements.

The Roman coins were found in grave no. 3.

Grave no. 3

The skeleton of a young female.

Grave goods:

1. A pair of bronze earrings, cone type, R= 1,8 cm, next to the skull, on both sides (P. XII/6).
2. One bronze pendant from a secondarily-used spoon (?), L= 4,7 and 1,5 cm, location not documented (P. XII/6).
3. One copper coin (Ae3) of Constantine II (337 – 340)?, perforated, R= 1,9 cm, very worn out (P. XII/5).
4. One copper coin (Ae4) of Valentinian I (364 – 375)?, perforated R= 1,6 cm, very worn out (P. XII/4).
5. One bronze garment object in the shape of a rectangular frame with two holes, L= 2,2 cm, lost.

⁶⁶² Stanojev 1989, 24 – 29; Dimitrijević, Kovačević and Vinski 1962, 37 – 40; Cziráky 1900, 257 – 267

3.3 BANAT (C)

9) Aradac - Mečka⁶⁶³

The archaeological site Mečka is situated between the village of Aradac (near Zrenjanin) and the Tisza River. Today the Tisza River is enclosed by an embankment, but in the past the whole area was swampy terrain. The site was excavated on several occasions from 1951 to 1955 by the Museum of Vojvodina and the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments. During these excavations 98 graves from the early medieval period were discovered.

All the burial pits were rectangular and dug into the ground without any constructions. Most of the graves were oriented E – W or NE – SW, head to the W or SW. One grave was oriented in the opposite way, SW – NE, with the head to the NE (grave no. 43). The remains in this grave were also laid in a different way – on the stomach. Every other burial was with a skeleton in a supine position on their back with hands usually beside the body. Sometimes one or both hands were bent across the thorax or pelvis. Beside the human burials, one burial of a horse was found. The horse skeleton was on its right side and oriented SW – NE, head to the NE, with numerous objects. The majority of the objects were parts of trappings: stirrups, metal applications and decorations for different kinds of belts, etc. One spear arrow was found in the area of the horse's neck. There was also a group of bone plates of a reflex bow in this grave.

Concerning human burials, only 19 graves were found without any offerings. The objects from the rest of the graves could be divided into: garment and decorative objects (belt sets, necklaces, earrings and rings); weapons (swords, knives, spear heads and axes); everyday objects (steels, pots and buckets) and tools (clamps). The material indicated the early Avar period (the end of the 6th and the first half of the 7th centuries AD), in particular the belt sets from silver tin made in the technique of pressing with a matrix (grave no. 85), silver earring type Szent-Endre (grave no. 57), "P"-shaped holders of a sword (grave no. 31) and the reflex bow from the horse grave.

⁶⁶³ Nađ 1959, 45 – 102; Dimitrijević, Kovačević and Vinski, 1962, 9 – 12

Roman coins were found in graves no. 18, 22, 31 and 42. In grave no. II one bronze coin of Tiberius II Constantine (578 – 582) was found.

Grave no. 18

The burial of a male adult. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the W. The skeleton was in a supine position with the right arm slightly bent.

Grave goods:

1. One iron object, function unknown, corroded, on the left side of the skull (P. XIII/14).
2. One iron arrow head, L= 6,4 and 1,9 cm, on the left side of the skull (P. XIII/3).
3. One iron knife, L= 14,8 cm, next to the left hand (P. XIII/16).
4. One iron firesteel, L= 7,4 and 2,8 cm, under the left hand (P. XIII/11).
5. Four flints, under the left hand (P. XIII/5-8).
6. Fragments of tin, under the left hand.
7. One half of a bronze chain link, under the left hand.
8. One copper coin of Constantine II (337 – 340), under the left hand.
9. A fragment of glass, under the left hand (P. XIII/9).
10. One bead, under the left hand (P. XIII/4).
11. A fragment of a glass bracelet, L= 5,7 cm, under the left hand (P. XIII/2).
12. One bronze object with one straight end and the other curved, a mould (?), L= 8,7 and 3,3 cm, near the feet (P. XIII/12).
13. One iron clamp, L= 27 cm, near the feet (P. XIV/3).
14. One iron tube, a holder for some tool (?), near the feet (P. XIV/4).
15. One iron object, tool (?), near the feet (P. XIV/5).
16. One iron object, tool (?), near the feet (P. XIV/6).
17. One iron plate with two rings and traces of holes, near the feet (P. XIV/1, 2).
18. One iron buckle, L= 5,2 cm and 3,3 cm, on the right side of the pelvis (P. XIII/1).
19. One iron buckle, L= 2,4 and 2 cm, next to the right femur (P. XIII/10).
20. One whetstone, L= 13 and 1,5 cm, near the feet (P. XIII/14, 15).

Grave no. 22

A burial of a female, age unspecified. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the W. The skeleton was in a supine position with the legs adjoined together (P. XV/1).

Grave goods:

1. One earring from bronze wire with open ends, on the right side of the skull (P. XV/4).
2. One small copper coin of Maximianus Daia (305 – 313), in a metal bulk, near the left hand.
3. One iron knife, L= 14 cm, under the femur and pelvis (P. XV/5).
4. One bone object in a semispherical shape with a small hole in the middle, near the left hand (P. XV/2, 3).

Grave no. 31

A burial of an old male. The remains were oriented E – W, with a deviation of 15° towards SW, head to the W. The skeleton was in a supine position.

Grave goods:

1. One iron knife with traces of wooden scabbard, L= 14,8 cm, under the left femur (P. XVI/2).
2. One copper coin of Constans (337 – 350) sealed on the bronze plate, probably a part of the knife's handle, under the left femur (P. XVI/4).
3. One iron sword with a hilt and traces of wooden scabbard, two "P"-shaped bronze holders of the sword and three plates from bronze tin, in the shape of a ring for the hilt, L= 99,5 cm, on the inner side of the left arm (P. XVI/1).
4. One semispherical button, near the left hand (P. XVI/6).
5. Two earring pendants (?), near the left hand (P. XVI/7, 8).
6. One iron buckle, L= 4 and 3,3 cm, on the pelvis (P. XVI/3).
7. One iron buckle, L= 4,8 and 3,8 cm, on the pelvis (P. XVI/5).
8. One flint, in the left hand (P. XVI/10).
9. One iron object in "L" shape, near the right foot (P. XVI/11).
10. One bronze rivet, a part of the belt (?), (traces of oxidation were found in the waist area), near the pelvis (P. XVII/9).

Grave no. 42

A burial of a young male. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the W. The skeleton was in a supine position.

Grave goods:

1. One iron firesteels (?), in a “D” shape, in the right hand.
2. One rectangular bronze tin, pierced on one side, L= 4,1 cm, in the right hand.
3. A fragment of glass, in the right hand.
4. One flint, in the right hand.
5. One small copper coin of Constantius II (337 – 361), mint Thessalonica, in the right hand.
6. One iron awl, L= 6,9 cm, in the right hand (P. XIII/18).
7. Bulks of corroded iron, in the right hand (P. XIII/17).

10) Omoljica – Preko Slatine⁶⁶⁴

Omoljica village is located in the southwestern part of Banat about 12 km southeast of the town of Pančevo. Some 5 km in the NE direction from the centre of the village is the site Preko Slatine. The site was investigated in 2004 and 2005 and excavations showed that it was a multi-layered site with prehistoric, Late Antique and medieval layers. Most intensive was the stratum of the medieval church with a cemetery, while the prehistoric layer was present with just finds of fragmented pottery (Starčevo and Vinča culture) and from the Late Antique Period three waste pits were excavated.

Although the excavations concentrated on the church and cemetery, two probable medieval settlements were noted. One to the NW and SE of the church, dated to the 11th – 13th century AD, and the other in the very near proximity of the church from the later medieval period (14th – 15th century AD).

⁶⁶⁴ Đorđević and Đorđević 2007; Đorđević, Đorđević and Radičević 2006, 159 – 166

The church (12 x 6,4 m) had one nave and one apse. It was oriented in the direction SW – NE. About 1 m from the west wall of the church a rectangular construction (3,15 x 1,25 m) was found that probably carried the steeple. The walls of the church were constructed out of bricks with mortar. On the south side of the church was a construction of stone and bricks, probably *piscinae*.

The necropolis investigated around the church had 158 graves, but a large amount of dislocated human bones were also excavated. The bodies were usually laid in a burial pit with no constructions. The simple burial constructions were very rare. They consisted of one brick placed vertically near the head or feet, or of a wooden board along the sides of a burial pit or covering the deceased. Finds of iron nails in one grave could indicate the use of a wooden casket. The orientation of the graves was NE – SW, with the head to the SW. The deviations from the axis E – W were between 11 – 67° towards the south. The skeletons were in a supine position with arms on the pelvis, stomach or chest. Rarely were the hands extended beside the body.

The grave goods belong to jewellery and garment objects (earrings, rings, necklaces and buckles). Most numerous were the bronze and silver earrings (12) – plain hoops, “S”-type earrings and silver granulated earrings. Very characteristic for this necropolis was the great number of coins found in the graves (57) and in the areas with the dislocated human bones (12). Coins were mainly from the Hungarian kings, from the reign of Bela II (1131 – 1141) up to Bela IV (1234 – 1270), but also three Bulgarian imitations of Byzantine coinage and two Friesacher *denarii* were found. One Roman coin was found (grave no. 94) as well as a fragment of a Roman bulbous *fibula*, secondarily used as a button (?) in grave no. 66. The placement of the coins was usually in the mouth and very rarely in the area of the waist. Extraordinary examples were the cases where a piece of leather was preserved on the outer side of the jaw bone with a coin below it. Usually only one coin was offered, but in seven graves two coins were found. One exception was the grave with one silver Hungarian coin in the mouth and two Bulgarian imitations in a bag.

The chronological framework of the necropolis is from the second third of the 12th century to the mid-13th century AD with at least two horizons, but without any great time difference. It was noted that the foundations of the western wall of the church destroyed three older graves. The church was probably destroyed during the Mongol invasion in AD 1242.

Grave no. 94

A burial of a female deceased over 50 years old. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the west, with a deviation of 32° towards S. The skeleton was in a supine position with the left arm on the stomach and the right arm on the pelvis.

Grave goods:

1. One copper coin, Ae4 (?), worn out and unreadable, R= 1,4 cm, next to the left clavicle.

3.4 BELGRADE AND VICINITY (D)

11) Singidunum II⁶⁶⁵

The early medieval necropolis Singidunum II is located in the southeastern area of the Singidunum *castrum*. Together with the necropolis Singidunum I at the foot of the Belgrade fortress, this necropolis presents the second horizon of the Migration Period layer in the Belgrade fortress that dated from the end of the 4th to the late 6th / beginning of 7th centuries AD. A total of 15 graves were excavated (12 adult and 3 child burials), oriented E – W, the head to the W, with small deviation in several examples. There was also one burial of a horse found, oriented E – W, and it was probably related to grave no. 8. Grave goods were found in three graves. The grave with the most offerings was no. 15 and based on the analysis of that material the chronological framework was provided – the 5th and 6th centuries AD.

One Roman coin was found in grave no. 15.

Grave no. 15

A burial of an adult deceased.

⁶⁶⁵ Bjelajac and Ivanišević 1991, 123 – 139

Grave goods:

1. One bronze bracelet, L= 6 cm, location not documented (P. XVII/6).
2. A pair of bronze *fibulae* with a silver plate in the shape of a bird, usually dated to 450 – 500, L= 4 cm, on the chest (P. XVII/1).
3. Three necklaces of beads from amber, glass in different colours, on the skull, under the skull and on the chest (P. XVII/3,4,7).
4. One bronze earring of a curved band, L= 0,5 cm, location not documented (P. XVII/2).
5. One copper coin of Constantius II (337 – 361), Rv. TEMP REPARATIO, on the skull.
6. One iron object, L= 4 and 2,5 cm, location not documented (P. XVII/5).

12) Singidunum III⁶⁶⁶

The necropolis was excavated in the course of extensive rescue archaeological excavations from 1991 to 1993 in a block between the streets Tadeuša Koščuška 28 – 30, Gospodar Jovanova 2 – 6 and Rige od Fere. Beside this necropolis from the early medieval period, an antique horizon with remains of buildings and finds, a later medieval layer, as well as parts of a bath and one large building with a cellar from the Turkish Period were explored. The site is situated in the area of the Danube slope descending in the direction of NE, towards the Danube bank. Today this area is an urban part of modern Belgrade.

The cemetery emerged at the foot of the stone military camp of the legion *IV Flavia*, at its northeastern side, on the ruins of the civil part of Roman Singidunum. This part developed from the 2nd century AD and was probably deserted at the end of the 4th century AD. At that time this area became a necropolis and was in use until the end of the 6th – beginning of the 7th century AD. The necropolis extended through the whole excavated area, but most of the graves had already been robbed in the past. In addition, numerous graves were damaged by later activities and one section of the necropolis was totally destroyed by the digging for the foundations of Turkish buildings. The best-preserved part was in the northern section with the high density of burial pits and numerous graves overlapping,

⁶⁶⁶ Ivanišević and Kazanski 2002, 101 – 157; Stefanović 2002, 159 – 178

which testifies to the continuance of burial in this area. In the explored section 106 graves were excavated.

Most of the deceased were buried with the head in the direction of the west with some deviations towards north or south. A smaller amount of deceased were buried with the head in the direction of the east with the deviations towards the south. This group of graves (no. 63, 96, 103 and 105) was located in the southern part of the site, while one grave (no. 84) was in the central part of the cemetery. The third group of graves were with the deceased buried with the head in the direction of the south. They were mostly in the northwestern part of the necropolis (no. 11, 23, 27, 46, 48, 70 and 76) and three graves were in the southern area (no. 56, 58 and 97). The graves that deviate from the main orientation of the deceased with the head in the direction of the west correspond to the older horizon of the necropolis.

Concerning the types of burial pits, there were two basic groups: the plain burial pits and the “casket” type. The majority of the graves belong to the first group (52%). The second group, which could be divided into several different types, accounted for 38% of the graves. Groups of graves with walled sides, burial pits enhanced with drywall and those with stone blocks are much more uncommon. The following typology of the burial pits could be noted:

Type I – a plain pit dug into the ground, adjusted to the height of the deceased, slightly longer and wider than the body (50 graves). A large number of nails discovered in graves could indicate the use of a wooden casket.

Type II – a plain pit paved with bricks and covered with bricks or shreds or with a combination of both (5 graves).

Type III – a pit shaped into a casket made from bricks (3 graves). The bricks were put sideways and they were also used for a flat cover.

Type IV – a pit shaped into a casket made of bricks with a roof on two sides (16 graves). There were two versions of this type: one had a simpler construction and the other had a slightly more sophisticated construction. The enhanced covering leaned on the horizontally placed bricks, which were placed against the walls of the casket. The part near the head of the deceased was additionally enhanced with three rows of bricks placed sideways.

Type V – a pit of a similar construction as the previous type, but without a brick casket and just with a roof on two sides (1 grave).

Type VI – a pit with walls made of fragmented bricks and shreds (1 grave). The longer sides were walled, while bricks were placed sideways on the shorter sides.

Type VII – a pit constructed in drywall from bricks and stones (7 graves).

Type VIII – a pit constructed from large stone blocks placed to imitate a casket (1 grave). The floor was made from horizontally placed bricks and brick fragments.

The grave goods were found in 58 graves including garment or decorative objects – *fibulae*, buckles, bracelets, earrings, pendants and beads; armour – swords, spears, knives and umbo; objects such as mirrors and combs; and coins.

Most of the objects from the grave furniture could be determined to be material culture typical for the 5th and 6th centuries AD. Usually it is attributed to the different Germanic tribes (Ostrogoths, Gepids and Heruls) inhabiting the Danube limes as mercenaries – *foederati*. Based on stylistic analysis, the objects could be divided into four chronological groups:

I – objects typical for the 4th and beginning of the 5th century AD (for example, cruciform *fibula* type Keller 3-4 in grave no. 78)

II – objects typical for the period AD 430/440 – 460/470 (for example, *fibula* type Smolin in grave no. 63 or umbo type Verand or Libenau from grave no. 103)

III – objects typical for the period AD 470/480 – 500/510 (for example, *fibula* type Reggio Emilia from grave no. 1)

IV – objects of one grave (no. 82) from the late 6th and early 7th centuries AD

The majority of graves that could be more precisely dated belong to the second and third chronological groups (28 graves), while three graves belong to the first chronological group. Only one grave could be ascribed to the fourth chronological group. The other graves were not suitable for more accurate dating within the general chronological framework of the necropolis.

The examples of Roman coins are found in graves no. 2, 6, 10, 43, 55, 71, 73 and 89. In grave no. 79 a pendant from a 2nd-century *denarius* (?) was found (P. XVIII).

Grave no. 2

A burial of a female (?) deceased about 30 years old. The remains were oriented E – W, head towards the west, with a deviation of 12° towards S. The burial pit belongs to the type IV (P. XIX/6). The anthropological (physical) analysis showed that the humerus is extremely gracile and without any stress markers, which is very rare for the population buried in the necropolis.⁶⁶⁷

Dating of the grave: III chronological group, most probably around AD 500.

Grave goods:

1. One bronze *fibula*, type Kormadin – Jakovo, with a semicircular headplate and triangle footplate in a zoomorphic style, L = 5,2 cm, next to the left arm (P. XIX/1).
2. One golden earring with a cubical pendant *ajoure* and inserted stone, R = 3,9 cm, on top of the skull (P. XIX/2).
3. One necklace from beads from amber, glass and carnelian in different shapes – laminar, round, tubular and rhomboid, on the thorax (P. XIX/3).
4. One pierced copper coin of Constantius II (337 – 361), type VICTORIAE DD AVGG Q NN; mint Thessaloniki, 347/8, RIC 99, L= 1,8 cm, near the left elbow (P. XIX/4, 7).
5. One copper coin of Constantius II (337 – 361), type VICTORIAE DD AVGG Q NN; mint Siscia, 347/8, RIC 188, L= 1,6 cm, near the left elbow (P. XIX/5, 8).

Grave no. 6

A burial of a male (?) deceased about 20 years old. The remains were oriented E – W, head towards the west. The skeleton was dislocated and only the bones of the pelvis, including some vertebrae, and bones of the legs were preserved. The grave goods were clustered around the right leg. The burial pit belongs to the type IV (P. XX/14).

Dating of the grave: III chronological group, most probably around AD 500

⁶⁶⁷ Stefanović 2002, 163

Grave goods:

1. One bronze buckle with a tongue extended on one side in a shield-like shape, around the right leg (P. XX/1).
2. Two iron spear heads with three blades in a fragmented state: L = 10 cm, L = 4,6 cm, around the right leg (P. XX/2, 3).
3. One iron spear head in a leaf shape with a socket cast, in a fragmented state, L = 6,6 cm, around the right leg (P. XX/4).
4. One iron knife in a fragmented state, L = 11,9 cm, around the right leg (P. XX/5).
5. One bronze application, L= 4,3 cm, around the right leg (P. XX/6).
6. One bone comb with two sides in a fragmented state, L= 10,1 cm, location not documented (P. XX/7).
7. Three bronze rivets, H= 0,5 – 0,6 cm, around the right leg (P. XX/8).
8. One bronze hairpin, L= 4,3 cm, around the right leg (P. XX/9).
9. One bronze ring, R= 2,1 cm, around the right leg (P. XX/10).
10. One bronze wire, L= 2 cm, location not documented (P. XX/11).
11. One copper coin of Valens (364 – 378), type SECVRITAS REPUBLICAE, mint Thessaloniki, 364 – 378, L= 1,8 cm, around the right leg (P. XX/12, 15).
12. One copper coin in a fragmented state, unreadable, 4th century AD, L= 1,6 cm, around the right leg (P. XX/13, 16).

Grave no. 10

A burial of an adult deceased, 30 – 50 years old. The skeleton was completely dislocated. The bones were grouped in two corners of the tomb: the jaw bone was in the west corner and the bones of the legs, arms and vertebrae were in the east corner. The burial pit belongs to the type VIII (P. XXI/1). The casket was oriented E – W with a deviation of 29° towards S.

Dating of the grave: It was not possible to determine a more precise date.

Grave goods:

1. One bronze rod, L= 3,5 cm, location not documented.
2. One pierced copper coin of Vetrico (350), type CONCORDIA MILITVM, mint Siscia (?), 350, L= 2,3 cm, location not documented (P. XXI/2).

3. One copper coin in a corroded state, unreadable, 4th century AD, L= 1,9 cm, location not documented (P. XXI/3).

Grave no. 43

A burial of an adult. The skeleton was preserved in the area of the hips and legs and was oriented E – W with a deviation of 27° towards N. The burial pit belongs to the type III.

Dating of the grave: It was not possible to determine a more precise date.

Grave goods:

1. One *antoninian* of Galienus (260 – 268), type FORTUNA REDVX, mint Siscia, 260/8, RIC 572, L= 1,9 cm, location not documented (P. XXI/4).

Grave no. 55

The burial was without remains of the deceased and construction. It was destroyed and grave goods were stacked together.

Dating of the grave: III chronological group, most probably around AD 500.

Grave goods:

1. One silver *fibula* with golden plate, type Arčar – Histria, with a semicircular headplate and footplate shaped into a rhomboid enlargement, decorated with vegetal pattern in relief and inserted stones and with two extensions in zoomorphic style and one anthropomorphic application, L= 12,9 cm (P. XXII/1).

2. Two golden earrings with cubical pendants *ajoure*, R= 4,1 cm, R= 4 cm (P. XXII/2, 3).

3. Two large beads from amber in a discoid shape and one small bead from glass in a biconique shape (P. XXII/4, 5).

4. One ceramic spindle whorl in a biconique shape, R= 2,8 cm (P. XXII/7).

5. One copper coin of Constans (337 – 350), type VICTORIAE DD AVGG Q NN, mint Siscia, 347/8, RIC 184, L= 1,7 cm, location not documented (P. XXII/6, 8).

Grave no. 71

A burial of an adult deceased. The skeleton was completely destroyed except for some remains of the bones of the legs.

Dating of the grave: It was not possible to determine a more precise date.

Grave goods:

1. One *antoninian* of Claudius II (268 – 270), unreadable, L= 1,9 cm, location not documented (P. XXI/5).

Grave no. 73

A burial of a female deceased from 30 to 40 years old. The remains were oriented E – W, head towards the west. The bones were scattered. The burial pit belongs to type I.

Dating of the grave: It was not possible to determine a more precise date.

Grave goods:

1. One ceramic spindle whorl in a biconique shape, R= 3,6 cm, near the left arm (P. XXII/9).
2. One iron rod in a fragmented state, L= 5,5 cm, near the legs (P. XXII/9).
3. One copper coin in a fragmented state, type GLORIA ROMANORUM, mint ?, 364/78, near the skull (P. XXII/10).

Grave no. 79

A burial of an adult (?). The remains were oriented E – W, head towards W, with a deviation of 4° towards S. The upper part of the skeleton was dislocated and destroyed. The burial pit belongs to type I (P. XXIII/6).

Dating of the grave: II chronological group, AD 430/440 – 460/470.

Grave goods:

1. One golden pendant in a shield-like shape, decorated in granulation technique, L= 3,6 cm, under the skull (P. XXIII/1).
2. One pendant made from a 2nd-century *denarius*?, L= 2 cm, under the skull (P. XXIII/2).
3. Two silver links from a chain, L= 1,7 cm, L= 1,5 cm, around the thorax (P. XXIII/3).
4. One necklace from glass and carnelian beads in different shapes – cubical, round and rhomboid, on thorax and shoulders (P. XXIII/4).
5. The rest of the necklace from glass and carnelian beads in different shapes – cubical, rhomboid and tubular, between the knees (P. XXIII/5).

Grave no. 89

The tomb, oriented E – W with a deviation of 17° towards S, was completely destroyed and the skeleton was also not preserved. The burial pit belongs to type I.

Dating of the grave: II / III chronological group, AD 430 – 510.

Grave goods:

1. One bronze rivet, H= 0,6 cm, location not documented.
2. One copper coin of Constantine II (337 – 340), type GLORIA EXERCITVS, mint Heraclea, 337/40, RIC 15, location not documented (P. XXIII/7).

13) Singidunum IV⁶⁶⁸

During the archaeological excavations of the Belgrade fortress in 2005 and 2006, a necropolis from the early medieval period was discovered beneath the western part of the fort. This necropolis was located about 100 m SW from the other early medieval necropolis Singidunum I.⁶⁶⁹ In the excavated area, beside the outer wall of the big Austrian gunpowder storage house, two horizons of burials were noted. Two graves belonged to the first horizon – later medieval, and three graves were from the early medieval period. Though the necropolis is very small it was possible to determine that it belonged to this

⁶⁶⁸ Ivanišević and Kazanski 2007, 135 – 113

⁶⁶⁹ Bjelajac and Ivanišević 1993, 123 – 139

period based on the analysis of the grave goods from grave no. 2/ 2006. It showed that this necropolis was most probably the cemetery of warriors buried here in the mid-5th century AD, unlike the Singidunum I necropolis. In this time of Hun invasions the barbarians from different Germanic tribes inhabited semi-deserted Roman cities on the Danube limes.

Roman coins were found in one grave – 2/ 2006.

Grave no. 2/ 2006

The deceased was buried in a rectangular pit (2,70 m x 1,20 m) which was dug into a Roman building with a hypocaust. The orientation of the skeleton in a supine position was NE – SW, with the head to the SW (P. XXIV/1).

Grave goods:

1. One iron *fibula*, L= 8,7 cm and 1,5 cm, on the right side of the thorax (P. XXV/1).
2. One silver object, L= 3 cm and 0,5 cm, beside the right forearm (P. XVII/2).
3. A clasp of a purse (?) made of iron, bent on one end with a small silver buckle, L= 7,9 and 1,6 cm; L= 2,1 and 1,1 cm; near the right hip (P. XXV/3, 4).
4. One *denarius* of Marcus Aurelius (161 – 180), Ob. AVRELIVSCAE-SARAVGPIIF, Rv. TRPOTIII – COSII, RIC – 447, 148/9, R= 1,7 cm, near the right hip (P. XXV/ 5).
5. One copper coin (Ae4) of Valens (364 – 378), Ob. DNVALEN – PFAVG, Rv. GLORIARO- MANORVM, mint ?, 364/78, R= 1,6 cm, near the right hip (P. XXV/6).
6. One copper coin (Ae4) of Honorius? (393 – 400), Ob. unreadable, Rv. SALVSREI-PUBLICAE?, RIC - ?, R= 1 cm, near the right hip (P. XXV7).
7. One copper coin (Ae4) from the 4th century AD, unreadable, R= 1,2 cm, near the right hip (P. XXV/8).
8. One flint, L= 1 and 0,4 cm, near the right hip (P. XXV/9).
9. One flint, L= 3,8 and 2,9 cm, near the right hip (P. XXV/10).
10. One silver laminar buckle with a golden plate, traces of leather were found on it, L= 6,9 and 1,9; near the right hip (P. XXIV/3, XXV/11).
11. Fragments of bronze plating, L= 3,1 and 1,3 cm, around the pelvis (P. XXV/12).
12. One iron knife with a convex blade, reinforced with the silver plate near the socket cast, L= 20,6 cm and 2,8 cm, on the left hip (P. XXV/13).
13. One silver circular buckle, L= 2,1 and 2,2 cm, near the left hip (P. XXV/14).

14. One silver circular buckle with curved tongue, L= 1,9 and 1,5 cm, near the right foot (P. XXV/15).
15. One silver circular buckle with curved tongue, L= 1,9 and 1,5 cm, near the left foot (P. XXV/16).
16. One iron bar, L= 17,7 and 1,8 cm, on the right side of the skull (P. XXV/17).
17. One iron languette, L= 3,9 cm and 1,5 cm, to the left of the skull (P. XXV/18).
18. One beaker of greenish glass with flared edges and flat bottom, decorated with blue pellets, R= 7,1 cm, H= 6,9 cm, next to the left forearm (P. XXIV/2, XXV/19).
19. One iron handle of a shield with a thickening in the grip area. The handle was voluntarily bent and broken. L= 24,6 cm and 1,4 cm, on the left side of the skull (P. XXVI/20).
20. One iron umbo of conical shape, R= 17,2 cm, H= 8,1 cm, next to the left forearm (P. XXVI/21).
21. One iron rivet, L= 13,1 cm and 0,7 cm, near the left arm (P. XXVI/22).
22. One fragment of an iron sleeve, L= 4,8 cm and 0,5 cm, near the left knee (P. XXVI/23).
23. One silver scabbard with an incised line decoration, L= 2,9 cm and 0,9 cm, near the left knee (P. XXVI/24).
24. One iron sword with a long double-edged blade, broken in three parts, L= 42,4 and 9,3 cm; L= 32 and 5,5 cm; L= 25,6 and 4,4 cm, beside the left hip and leg (P. XXVI/25 – 27).
25. One iron disk pommel (?) L= 2,9 and 1,7 cm, near the left knee (P. XXVI/28).
26. One circular bone plate decorated with two incised circles, R= 4,7 cm, H= 0,7 cm, near the left hip (P. XXVI/29).
27. One discoid amber bead, R= 4,6 cm, H= 1 cm, near the left knee (P. XXVI/30).
28. One silver rod with circular bulges, L= 2,3 cm and 0,9 cm, near the left knee (P. XXVI/31).
29. One iron spearhead in a flame shape with a socket cast, broken in two parts, L= 26,7 and 4,6 cm, besides the left knee and leg (P. XXVII/32, 33).
30. One composite bow made of four bone plates, L= 33,8 and 1,2 cm; L= 31,3 and 1,2 cm; L= 16,5 and 1,4 cm; L= 12,1 and 1,6 cm; near the left leg (P. XXVII/34, 35).
31. Five iron arrows, L= 6,8 and 1,9 cm; L= 7,5 and 1,8 cm; L= 5,6 and 1,8 cm; L= 4,8 and 1,9 cm; L= 4,6 and 1,5 cm (P. XXVII/36 – 40).
32. Two iron arrows with short points and a socket cast, L= 5,1 cm and 1,4 cm; L= 6,9 and 1,4 cm (P. XXVII/41, 42).

33. Three iron arrows in rhomboid shape, L= 5,6 and 2,4 cm; L= 5,1 and 2,4 cm; L= 5 and 2,1 cm (P. XXVII/43 – 45).
34. One iron blade curved in a semicircular shape, used as reinforcement for a socket cast, L= 8,5 and 1,1 cm, beside the left foot (P. XXVII/46).
35. Three iron nails, L= 6,2 and 2,8 cm; L= 2,9 and 1,9 cm; one on the stomach and two in the east angle of the burial pit (P. XXVII/47, 48).

14) Kormadin – Jakovo⁶⁷⁰

The site Kormadin is located SW of the village of Surčin, about 20 km from Belgrade. This region is dominated by swamps, but the site itself is a slight mound. The remains of an early medieval necropolis and an eneolithic settlement in this area are noted from the beginning of the 20th century and were excavated on several occasions. Before the Second World War, excavations were carried out by the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb between 1902 and 1905 when at least 50 skeletons were discovered, but the documentation of these excavations is very poor and without any reliable data. Later investigations were carried out by the National Museum in Zemun in 1956, 1957 and 1958. At that time 26 burials were discovered (P. XXVIII). The burials were mainly oriented E – W, with the head to the west. There were slight deviations towards N and S, but all were under 10°. The skeletons were in a supine position with both hands usually beside the body and sometimes with one hand on the thorax or pelvis (3) and very rarely with both hands on the thorax (1).

Stylistic analysis of the offerings found in 24 graves provided a chronological framework of the necropolis – the first half of the 6th century AD. The objects could be divided into garment and decorative objects (*fibulae*, buckles, buttons, earrings, bracelets, beads, pendants, rings); utilitarian objects (combs, knives, ceramic spin whorls, glass beakers, pots, etc.); and weapons (swords, arrow and spear heads, etc.). The most prominent find from this necropolis is the *fibula* type Hanheim I from grave no. 13. A delicate glass beaker was found in the child grave (no. 3), probably an import from the early Byzantine workshops, which is very rare among the grave inventories in this region (P. XXIX/6). One grave could be attributed as a “warrior” grave (no. 2), but there are also indications that

⁶⁷⁰ Dimitrijević 1960, 5 – 50

some of the graves from the earlier excavations could be defined as warrior graves too. This necropolis was probably in use by some of the Germanic tribes that inhabited these areas during the Migration Period, most probably the Gepids.

One Roman coin was found in grave no. 7. In the very richly furnished female grave no. 5 probably a forged *solidus* of Anastasius (491 – 518) was found. This assumption is made because the coin is just gold-plated and this type had no copper denominations. It was pierced and used as a pendant on a necklace of glass and amber beads (P. XXIX/1,2).

Grave no. 7

A burial of a male adult. The remains were oriented in E – W, head to the W. The skeleton was in a supine position with both hands beside the body.

Grave goods:

1. Fragments of a corroded iron object, knife (?), near the right hand (P. XXIX/3).
2. One copper coin of Philippus (244 – 249), Ob. IMP M IVL PHILIPPVS AVG, Rv. PROVINCIA DACIA in the bottom AN. I., 246/7, a local production, near the right hand.
3. Fragments of an antler comb decorated with incised lines, L= 5,9 and 2,4 cm, near the left foot (P. XXIX/4).
4. One bronze circular buckle, L= 2 cm, on the pelvis (P. XXIX/5).

15) Mirijevo⁶⁷¹

The medieval necropolis in Mirijevo is located on the Čurtovo Brdo hill about 7 km from Belgrade in the SE direction. Due to the exploitation of the sand, the eastern section of this hill was significantly destroyed. The systemized archaeological excavations were carried out on three occasions in 1955, 1958 and 1959. During this excavation 160 graves were discovered.

The necropolis consisted of burial pits organized in rather regular rows (P. XXX). The orientation of the graves was E – W, with the head to the west. Deviations of 5° to 30°

⁶⁷¹ Bajalović-Birtašević, 1960

towards S and N were noted. Only grave no. 110 was oriented W – E, with the head to the E.

Two layers on the necropolis could be roughly noted. Probably the necropolis was in use for several centuries. In 49 cases a younger burial pit devastated the older grave. There were also examples where the bones from an older grave were put in a pile in the new pit. Sometimes only the head was relocated and the rest of the body was destroyed. This overlapping of the graves indicates that there were no grave markers or that they had been lost by the time of the younger burial.

The skeletons were in a supine position with arms usually on the pelvis (47). Sometimes one arm was extended beside the body and the other was on the chest (5) or both arms were beside the body (3).

The burial pits had no constructions except for the smaller stones placed near the head or the feet, or both. One grave (no. 148) was encircled with stones and in one case one stone slab was on the pelvis.

Grave goods were found in 43 graves. Most of the objects were jewellery and garment objects (diadem, earrings, necklaces, buttons, bracelets, rings and buckles). Also broken pottery (grave no. 54 and 68), blades of knives (grave no. 46) and nails were found (grave no. 26, 55 and 126). Only three graves (no. 20, 50, 100), all of them female, had numerous offerings (P. XXXI-XXXIII) and all other had one or very few objects. The stylistic analysis of the jewellery and finds of coins provided the chronological framework of the necropolis – 11th to 15th century AD.

One Roman coin was found in grave no. 20. In some cases found pendants could have been actually worn-out (Roman?) coins, but it is not sure if they are (graves no. 50, 70, 77 and 100; P. XXXII/5, 6). Also coins from the medieval period were found in six more graves. In grave no. 70 of Manoilo I Comnenus (1141 – 1180); in grave no. 16 of Andrew II (1205 – 1235); in grave no. 80 of Kun Laszlo (1272 – 1290); in grave no. 89 of Mary, Queen of Hungary (1382 – 1385); and in grave no. 73 one very worn-out Hungarian penny.

Grave no. 20

The burial of a female deceased. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the west, with a deviation of 12° towards S. The skeleton was in a supine position with arms crossed over the thorax (P.XXXI/1).

Grave goods:

1. One perforated Roman bronze coin, mint Siscia, 4th century, on the skull (P.XXXI/5).
2. A pair of bronze earrings, “S” type, R= 2,6 and 2,5 cm, on both sides of the skull (P.XXXI/8, 9).
3. A pair of silver granulated earrings with a “knuckle”, R= 2,7 and 2,6 cm, on both sides of the skull (P.XXXI/2, 3).
4. One bronze triangle-shaped pendant, L= 2,9 cm, between the neck and the right shoulder.
5. One round bronze pendant, R= 1,4 cm, on the right shoulder (P.XXXI/6).
6. Two bronze buttons, R= 2 and 1,1 cm, near the neck (P.XXXI/7, 4).
7. One necklace made of large beads, one amethyst bead, three bronze spindle whorls, ten cowry shells, around the neck (P.XXXI/10).
8. Two necklaces made of 322 small beads, on the chest (P.XXXI/10).
9. One bracelet made of beads on the left forearm (P.XXXI/10).
10. One glass bracelet R= 6,2, on the left hand (P.XXXII/2).
11. One bronze bracelet, 5,7 cm, on the left hand (P.XXXII/1).
12. One bronze ring with a half spherical head made of glass paste, R= 1,3 cm, on a finger of the left hand.

16) Vinča – Belo Brdo⁶⁷²

The site Vinča – Belo Brdo is famous for the extraordinary remains of the late Neolithic culture named after this site – Vinča culture. M. Vasić, the first trained Serbian archaeologist, started excavations on this site in 1908 and continued the research until his death in 1955. Later excavations took place from 1978 to 1986. Since 1998 Vinča is excavated regularly with researchers of various specializations (archaeozoology, archaeobotany, etc.)

⁶⁷² Marjanović-Vujović 1984b, 131 – 136; 1980, 186 – 187; 1979, 129 – 130

The site is located on the right Danube bank about 11 km from Belgrade and it is an 8-m high tell with Neolithic settlement remains (5500 – 4500 BC). During the excavations in 1978 the research of a medieval necropolis on this site started. This necropolis had already been mentioned in M. Vasić's publications, but had never been properly investigated. Excavations continued in 1979, 1981 and 1983 when 713 graves were unearthed. The exact number of excavated graves is still not known, since it still has not been published, but it is probably around 1000 from the estimated 3000 burials.

The Vinča necropolis represents a very complex multi-layered cemetery that was in use for several centuries. The following horizons could be distinguished:

- 1) Horizon of burials from the 8th until the 10th century AD
- 2) Horizon of burials from the 11th to the 12th century AD
- 3) Horizon of burials from the 13th to the 15th century AD
- 4) Horizon of burials from the 16th to the 17th century AD

Some accidental finds and a few artefacts from M. Vasić's excavations correspond to the oldest horizon. Also, one disturbed grave (no. 460) found in 1979 could be dated to this period. The orientation of the graves was E – W. The main feature of this period was the custom of leaving food in a pot for the deceased.

The burials from the second horizon were mainly destroyed and disturbed by later burials. The orientation was E – W with the head to the west. Some small deviations were noted towards N and S. The skeletons were in a supine position with the arms crossed on the upper part of the body. In some cases, one stone or a brick was placed near the head or the feet. Most of the grave goods in graves from this period are jewellery or garment objects (for example, silver Tokaj earrings or earrings with granulated berry pendants). Only occasionally were some tools found, usually knives. One bronze coin of Isaac II Angelus (1185 – 1195) was found in grave no. 194.

The third horizon of the burials was not very different from the second one. The orientation of the graves was still E – W with skeletons in a supine position and arms on the upper part of the body. Again, occasionally one roughly polished stone was placed near the head. The appearance of remains of wooden boards was a new feature. Grave goods are notably

reduced in this period, but it was still mainly jewellery and garment objects. The youngest period is actually not confirmed with any burials, but just with some accidental finds of jewellery.

The Roman coins were found in four graves, probably from the second horizon, although it can be confirmed only for one grave (no. 143). Since the necropolis has not yet been fully published with a catalogue of all the graves, possible other finds within a grave with a Roman coin are not known.

Grave no. 134

1. One copper coin of Valentinianus (364 – 371), Ob. D N VALENTINI-ANVS P F AVG, Rv. GLORIA RO-MANORVM, 364/375, mint(?), location not documented.⁶⁷³

Grave no. 143

1. One copper coin, Ob. VRBS – ROMA, Rv. Wolf, mint Cyzicus, 331/4, RIC 90, location not documented.

2. Two bronze buttons, location not documented.

Grave no. 289

1. One copper coin of Constans (337- 340), Ob. CONST-ANS AVG, Rv. GLOR-IA EXERC-ITVS, mint Heraclea, 337/40, RIC 30, location not documented.

Grave no. 326

1. One copper coin of Constantine (324 – 337), Ob. IMP CONSTANTINVS P F AVG, Rv. VICTORIAE LAETAE PRINC PERP VOT/PR, Mint (?), 318/20, location not documented.

⁶⁷³ Information on Roman coins from this necropolis given by courtesy of Dr. V. Ivanišević from the Archaeological Institute

17) Brestovik – Visoka Ravan⁶⁷⁴

The site Visoka Ravan is located in the village of Brestovik about 40 km south of Belgrade. It is an elevation with its northern slope descending to the Danube bank. During the construction of the Belgrade – Smederevo road in 1951, a rather large medieval necropolis was discovered. Excavations continued in 1953 and were conducted until 1959. Since the results of the excavations have not yet been fully published the available data about this necropolis are limited. The number of graves excavated so far is around 900. All the graves were organized in regular rows and oriented E – W with the head to the west. Some smaller deviations (up to 15°) were noted towards N and S. In two cases wooden grave markers were still preserved. Two horizons of burials could be distinguished. The older graves were dug in shallow, while the new burials were much deeper. These new burials often disturbed the older graves and usually these bones were then relocated and deposited in a new grave very nearby. In the earlier phase, the deceased was just placed in a ground pit and very rarely was the body covered with or laid on a wooden board. Later the deceased was covered with two wooden boards forming a roof on two sides, but burials with no construction were still present. The skeletons were in a supine position with arms placed differently – beside the body, on the stomach, pelvis or chest, etc.

Grave goods were very rare and most of the burials had no offerings. Usually finds belong to jewellery and garment objects. In two cases iron arrowheads were found. Earrings are represented by various types, from plain hoops and “S” earrings to “knuckle”-type earrings and earrings with a “berry”-like pendant. Very common were metal bracelets from a twisted wire, long bead necklaces, buttons and buckles. According to stylistic analysis the necropolis is dated to the 12th – 13th centuries AD.

Roman coins (19) were found in four female graves (no. 41, 65, 68 and 297). Besides these, three medieval coins were found: one in a child burial, one in grave no. 297 as a pendant together with Roman coins and in grave no. 848 a silver medieval coin was found in the mouth of the deceased.

Grave no. 41

⁶⁷⁴ Ćorović-Ljubinković 1956, 131 – 137; 1958, 325 – 333; 1959, 153 – 156; Gavrilović 1958 – 1959, 317 – 318; 1962 – 1963, 243 – 249

A burial of an adult female. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the west. The skeleton was in a supine position.

Grave goods:

1. One bracelet on the right hand.
2. One bracelet on the right hand.
3. One ring on the right hand.
4. One necklace made of ceramic beads, ten cowry shells and five pierced coins around the neck (XXXIV/1):
 - a) One copper coin, very worn out, fragmented, unreadable, R= 0,9 – 1,2 cm.
 - b) One copper coin of Constantius II (?), Rv. GLORIA EXERCITVS Two soldiers with two standards, mint mark SMNA (?), mint Antioch (?), LRBC 1358(?), 330 – 335, R= 1,5 cm.
 - c) One *antoninian (radiate)*, R= 2 cm.
 - d) Two very worn-out copper coins, unreadable, R= 1,9 cm and 1,5 cm.
5. Fragments of earrings below the neck.
6. Fragment of an iron object below the skeleton (XXXIV/1).

Grave no. 65

A burial of an adult female. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the west. The skeleton was in a supine position.

Grave goods:

1. One bracelet on the right hand (XXXIV/1).
2. Two “twisted wire” bracelets on the right arm (XXXIV/2).
3. One ring on the right hand (XXXIV/1).
4. One ring on the left hand.
5. Two earrings on both sides of the skull (XXXIV/1).
6. One necklace made of ceramic beads, three cowry shells, one bronze jingle and three pierced coins (XXXIV/2):

- a) One copper coin, very worn out, Theodosius II and Valentinianus III (?) Ob. unreadable, head r., Ob. [CON]CORDIA [AGV], 425 – 450, LRBC 1878 or 2231-32 (?), mint Thessalonica or Constantinople (?), R= 2,1 cm.
- b) One *antoninian (radiate)*, unreadable, R= 1,9 cm.
- c) One copper coin Ob. unreadable, Ob. GLORIA EXERCITVS, two soldiers with two standards, mint Thessalonica (?) mint mark SMTS, 330-335, R= 1,6 cm.

Grave no. 68

A burial of an adult female. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the west. The skeleton was in a supine position.

Grave goods:

- 1. Three bracelets on the left hand.
- 2. Five bracelets on the right hand.
- 3. One necklace made of ceramic beads, nine cowry shells and three pierced coins (P. XXXV/1):
 - a) Two very worn-out copper coins, unreadable, Ob. GLORIA EXERCITVS, two soldiers with two standards, 330-335, R= 1,6 cm.
 - b) One very worn-out copper coin, unreadable, R= 2,8 cm.

Grave no. 297

A burial of an adult female. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the west. The skeleton was in a supine position.

Grave goods:

- 1. One ring on the right arm (P. XXXV/2).
- 2. One necklace made of ceramic beads, 17 cowry shells, one jingle and ten pierced coins (P. XXXV/2):
 - a) One very worn-out and broken Byzantine *billon trachy* coin, R= 2,9 cm.
 - b) One copper coin, Ob. very worn out, unreadable. Rv. Wolf and twins l., above two stars, mint Siscia (?), 330 – 335, mint mark [.AS]IS., LRBC 750 (?), R= 1,8 cm.

- c) One copper coin, Ob. IMP CONSTANT(INVS) AVG, Constantine I (324 – 337), type IOVI CONSERVATORI, mint Trier or Thessalonica (?), mint mark TRP or TES(?), R= 1,9 cm.
- d) Four very worn-out copper coins, unreadable, R= 1,4 cm, R= 0,9 cm, R= 1,4 cm, R= 1,5 cm.
- e) One copper coin, Ob. very worn out, unreadable. Ob. PROVIDENTIAE AVGG (Camp gate), mint mark unreadable, R= 1,8 cm.
- f) One very worn-out copper coin, Av. Valens (?), R= 1,7 cm.
- g) One very worn-out *as*, 2nd century AD, R=2,6 cm.

18) Brestovik – Čair

This site is located very close to the previous site Brestovik – Visoka Ravan and is currently under investigation by curator S. Fidanovski from the National Museum in Belgrade. At the moment a medieval necropolis is being explored, which, according to preliminary conclusions, is dated slightly earlier in the 11th and 12th centuries than the one in the vicinity. So far one reused Roman coin has been found in grave no. 2.

Grave no. 2

1. One pierced Ae4 of Valens (364 – 378) or Valentinian I (364 – 375), type *Gloria Romanorum*, mint Thessalonica, reused as a pendant on a necklace made of glass paste beads (P. XXXVI/1, 2).⁶⁷⁵

⁶⁷⁵ Attribution of the coin by courtesy of curator T. Bendžarević from the National Museum in Belgrade

3.5 POŽAREVAC AND VICINITY (E)

19) Dubravica – Orašje⁶⁷⁶

The village of Dubravica is located on the right bank of the Morava River, near its confluence with the Danube. Excavations at the Orašje site near the railway station Dubravica started in 1947 and were renewed in 1989 and 1990. The main intention was to investigate the remains of the *Municipium Aurelium Augustum Margum* and finds from other periods since it was a multi-layered site with rich prehistoric and medieval horizons. Unfortunately, most of the stone from the Roman fort and town had been taken and reused for the building of the nearby Smederevo fortress in the 15th century AD.⁶⁷⁷

The excavations in 1947 – 1949 were mainly done around the large Roman building built in *opus incertum*. Out of several rooms in the building, one had remains of a hypocaust system. Many fragments of frescos and mosaics were found. The building is roughly dated to the end of the 2nd and beginning of the 3rd centuries AD. Below and above this building were layers from prehistoric and medieval periods. The main features of the prehistoric layer were the remains of two houses from late Vinča culture and Žuto Brdo culture. Above the Roman building several horizons from the medieval period could be distinguished. Directly over the building in trench III is a layer of remains of a probable early medieval settlement. Also in trench II, two graves with brick burial constructions were found from the Late Antique and early medieval period. Afterwards follows a layer with several large hearths (trench III) and above it another layer with burials. Two cemeteries were found, one older (10th / 11th centuries AD) in trench II and a later one (15th / 16th centuries AD) in trench III.

In 1989 and 1990 excavations were done in the area about 500 m SE of the Roman building. At that time 58 graves belonging to different periods were discovered. From the prehistoric period two were urn burials of the Middle and Late Bronze Age Žuto Brdo culture. The next horizon consisted of graves Mala Kopašnica – Sase type, variant I (4 graves) and variant II (8 graves). The general dating of these graves is from the end of the 1st century AD to the first half of the 3rd century AD. Graves dated in the period of the mid-

⁶⁷⁶ Mano-Zisi, Marić and Garašanin 1950, 143 – 164; Marić 1951, 113 – 132; Cunjak 1991, 39 – 41; Jovanović and Cunjak 1994, 107 – 122

⁶⁷⁷ Cvetković 2009, 29 – 44

3rd century AD and throughout the 4th century AD are with burial constructions (7 graves and 1 tomb). In addition, four graves contained material that is generally attributed to the Gepids (early 6th century AD). The youngest horizon, with the most graves (31), is dated from the 9th to the 10th / 11th centuries AD and is probably a part of the cemetery excavated in 1947 in trench II.

For this dissertation the necropolis in trench III from the 1947 excavations is important. Seven graves were excavated from which one had only a head buried in it. The orientation of the graves was SE – NW, with the head to the NW. All of the deceased were in a supine position with arms crossed on the chest. The cemetery is dated to the 15th / 16th century AD, according to the Hungarian coin from that period, although very little material was found within the graves.

One Roman coin was found in grave no. V.

Grave no. V

Grave goods:

1. One necklace of glass beads and cowry shells, location not documented.
2. One earring with a pierced copper coin, worn out not readable, location not documented.
3. One copper coin, the late 4th or early 5th century AD, location not documented.

20) Viminacium - Burdelj⁶⁷⁸

During the rescue excavations in 1977 and 1978 in the area of the villages of Stari Kostolac and Drmno an early medieval necropolis was found. These villages are located 13 km from the city of Požarevac in a small plain near the Mlava River. Beneath the villages at the site Čair the remains of the Roman legionary camp and town Viminacium were discovered. Viminacium was the capital of the Roman province Moesia Superior, later Moesia Prima, and a camp for the *Legio VII Flavia*. The military camp was founded probably in the first decades of the 1st century AD. Shortly afterwards the civilian

⁶⁷⁸ Zotović 1981, 95 – 115; Ivanišević, Kazanski and Mastykova 2006

settlement started to develop and the town obtained municipal status during the reign of Emperor Hadrian (117 – 138). The status of a colony of Roman citizens was given to Viminacium by Gordianus III (238 – 244). At the same time, the town acquired the right to mint copper coins. The Huns devastated the town during their invasions in AD 441.

The necropolis is situated about 1200 m away from the legionary camp and in the SE area of the huge Roman necropolis (the middle of the 1st to the middle of the 3rd century AD). So far archaeologists have discovered about 13 500 burials around the Viminacium territory. The total number of early medieval graves was 45, of which 43 belong to this necropolis and two are located at the nearby Roman necropolis (no. 25 and 26). The orientation of the graves varied from W – E to SW – NE, with the head to the west. The body of the deceased was in a supine position with arms usually beside the body. There was no overlapping of the graves noted. The burial pits could be divided into four groups:

I – burial pits dug into the ground with no constructions (34).

II – burial pits with a construction of bricks and *tegulae* (6).

III – burial pits paved and the bottom covered with a board (4).

IV – burial pits with a casket made of a tree trunk (1).

All offerings in the graves could be divided into objects of garment and decoration (*fibulae*, buckles, buttons, earrings, bracelets, beads, pendants, rings). There were also objects that could be defined as personal objects for everyday use (knives, combs, flints, spindle whorls and tinder).

This necropolis is dated to the period from the mid-5th to the early 6th century AD based on the typological analysis of the material and location of the cemetery; for example, *fibula* type Shulze – Viminacium (grave no. 14, 38), *fibula* type cicadas (grave no. 16), “oriental” mirrors (graves no. 29, 38), laminar buckles, etc. Probably, the cemetery was in use by some of the Germanic tribes that inhabited these areas during the Migration Period.

Roman coins were found in graves no. 24 and 52.

Grave no. 24

A burial of an adult dug into a plain burial pit. The remains were oriented W – E, with a deviation of 26° towards S. The skeleton was in a supine position with hands beside the body.

Dating of the grave: AD 430/440 – 470/480

Grave goods:

1. One silver *denarius* of Hadrian (117 – 138), R= 1,8 cm, on the right side of the pelvis (XXXVII/1).
2. One bronze circular buckle, L= 1,8 and 1,2 cm, next to the right hand (XXXVII/2).
3. One silver tongue of a belt buckle, made out of double tin, decorated with incised lines and circles, L= 3,8 and 1,2 cm, near the left hip (XXXVII/3).
4. One fragmented iron ring, R= 1 cm, on the right side of the pelvis (XXXVII/4).
5. Two silver belt rivets with a semispherical head, H= 1 cm, R= 0,6 cm, next to the right hand (XXXVII/5).
6. One fragmented iron knife with a convex blade, L= 12,3 and 1,9 cm, next to the left shoulder (XXXVII/6).
7. One iron circular buckle, L= 4,1 and 2,3 cm, near the stomach (XXXVII/7).
8. One fragmented iron buckle, location not documented.

Grave no. 52

A burial of an adult dug into a plain burial pit. The remains were oriented W – E, with a deviation of 11° towards S. The skeleton was in a supine position with the hands beside the body.

Dating of the grave: AD 430/440 – 470/480

Grave goods:

1. One copper coin of Constantine I (324 – 337), R= 1,7 cm, next to the left femur (XXXVII/9).
2. One fragmented two-sided antler comb, L= 10,5 cm, next to the left femur (XXXVII/8).

3. One bronze chain ring, R= 3 cm, next to the left femur (XXXVII/10).

21) Viminacium – Više Grobalja⁶⁷⁹

Another necropolis from the early medieval period in the area of the village of Stari Kostolac is located on the northwestern side of the Roman necropolis (AD 50 – 250), about 700 m to the south of the legionary camp. In this area a part of the Roman necropolis was investigated (3989 burials). The burials had 1776 cremations and 2213 inhumations. The excavations were done on two occasions in 1979 – 1980 and 1984 – 1985. The total number of early medieval graves was 106 (P. LVI). Usually the burials were oriented E – W, with the head to the west, with some exceptions towards N and S (76). There were also examples of burials oriented in the direction N – S, with the head to the south (4). The bodies were in a supine position with hands beside the body or sometimes with one hand on the thorax or pelvis and very rarely with both hands crossed over thorax. The burial pits could be divided into:

I – burial pits dug into the ground with no constructions (92).

II – burial pits with a construction of bricks (1).

III – burial pits with a wooden casket (13).

Based on the typological analysis of the material and stratigraphy the cemetery could be dated to the period from the beginning of the 5th to the end of the 6th century AD. In general, the offering consisted of garment and decorative objects (*fibulae*, buckles, buttons, earrings, bracelets, beads, pendants, rings) and utilitarian objects (combs, tweezers, knives, whet stones etc.). Also, a group of “warrior” graves could be distinguished in the cemetery (18 graves) with different weapons (swords, arrow and spear heads, umbos, etc.).

The early phase (A) of the cemetery (late 4th / early 5th) was confirmed with just two graves. The rest of the graves with their material culture belong to the later period, which

⁶⁷⁹ Zotović 1994, 183 – 190; Ivanišević, Kazanski and Mastykova 2006

was divided in two phases (B and C). Some of the typical objects for phase B (430/440 – 470/480) are *fibulae* type Smolin (graves no. 1685 and 1758), *fibulae* in the shape of a bird (grave no. 1193), “oriental” mirrors (grave no. 1317, 1461 and 1758), etc. The objects dated to the latest phase C were divided into three subgroups: C1 (470/480 – 510), C2 (530 – 560) and C3 (570 – 600/610). Most of the datable artefacts were from the phases C2 and C3. For the phase C2 *fibulae* type Uenze Salona, buckles type Sucidava, belt sets type Pleidelsaheim Y 20 and for the phase C3 Byzantine buckle similar to the type Syracuse.

Roman coins were found in graves no. 141, 1193, 1292 and 1311 (P. XXXVIII).

Grave no. 141

A burial of an adult male, about 45 years old. The burial pit belongs to type III. The remains were oriented E – W with a deviation of 20° towards S, head to the west. The skeleton was in a supine position with the left hand on the pelvis.

Dating of the grave: AD 530 – 560

Grave goods:

1. One coin of Alexander Severus (222 – 235), R= 1,9 cm, near the skull (P. XXXIX/1).
2. Iron slag, L= 5,1 and 1,4 cm, next to the left leg (P. XXXIX/2).
3. One iron handle of a shield, Merovingian type, with a widening in the grip area, L= 31 and 3,3 cm, near the skull (P. XXXIX/3).
4. One whetstone in rectangular shape, L= 12,6 and 2,3 cm, beside the right elbow (P. XXXIX/4).
5. One fragmented iron knife with a convex blade, L= 8,4 and 1,2 cm, beside the right elbow (P. XXXIX/5).
6. One fragmented antler comb with one row, decorated with incised lines and circles. The handle is fixed with silver rivets. L= 15,3 and 2,8 cm, next to the right arm (P. XXXIX/6).
7. One fragmented iron knife with a flat blade, L= 19 and 2,4 cm, near the left shoulder (P. XXXIX/7).
8. One silver belt set, type Pleidelsheim Y 20, composed of one buckle and a tongue (P. XXXIX/8)

Grave no. 1193

A burial of an adult. The remains were oriented E – W with a deviation of 2° towards N, head to the west. The burial belongs to type I. The skeleton was in a supine position with arms beside the body.

Dating of the grave: AD 430/440 – 500/510

Grave goods:

1. Two bronze earrings with a golden plate and cubical pendant, R= 3,2 and 2,7 cm, on the left and right side of the skull (P. XL/1).
2. One bronze *fibula* shaped into a bird with folded wings, L= 3,3 and 1,3 cm, on the thorax (P. XL/2).
3. One copper coin of Julia Mamaea, Ob. IOYΛΙΑ MAMAIA AVΓ, Ob. NI-KA-IE-[ΩN], 222/8 R= 2 cm, next to the left elbow (P. XL/3).⁶⁸⁰
4. One *sestertius* of Alexander Severus (222 – 235), Ob. IMP SEV ALEXANDER AVG, IOVI CONSER[VATORI] S C, 228/231, RIC 558, R= 2,7 cm, next to the left forearm (P. XL/4).
5. One semispherical amber bead, R= 2,6 cm, H= 1,5 cm, on the thorax (P. XL/5).
6. Three discoid amber beads, R= 2 cm, H= 0,6 cm, R= 1,8, H= 0,7 cm, R= 1,6 cm, H= 0,6 cm, on the pelvis (P. XL/6).
7. One fragmented bone needle, L= 4,6 and 0,3 cm, on the thorax (P. XL7).
8. Eleven beads from green and blue glass in circular and round shapes, R= 0,2 – 0,3 cm, on the left hip (P. XL/8).
9. One fragmented bronze object, L= 2,5 and 1,5 cm, on the left hip (P. XL/9).

Grave no. 1292

A burial of a juvenile. The remains were oriented E – W. The burial belongs to type I. The skeleton was in a supine position.

⁶⁸⁰ Identification according to the unpublished work of Dr. M. Vojvoda

Grave goods:

1. One coin, R= 1,8 cm, in the abdomen area (P. XL/10).
2. One bronze circular buckle, L= 2,5 and 1,9 cm, on the pelvis (P. XL/11).

Grave no. 1311

A burial of an adult. The remains were oriented N – S with a deviation of 18° towards E, head to the S. The burial belongs to type I. The skeleton was in a supine position with both hands on the pelvis.

Dating of the grave: AD 430/440 – 500/510

Grave goods:

1. One silver *fibula*, golden plated, type Gourzouf, with a headplate with three finger-like extensions, decorated with wreaths, and a rhomboid-shaped footplate, L= 4,9 and 2,4 cm, in the abdomen area (P. XL/12).
2. One Roman coin (Ae3), R= 1,8 cm, near the right shoulder (P. XL/13).
3. One fragmented bronze tweezers (?), L= 8,2 and 0,7 cm, near the right leg (P. XL/14).

22) Trnjane⁶⁸¹

The Trnjane village is located on the right bank of the Mlava River, some 10 km from the town of Požarevac. The site itself was in a section known among the local population as Staro Groblje (Old Cemetery). It is situated in the eastern periphery of the village, not very far from the two contemporary cemeteries. Due to the increased activity of extracting the soil for brick production this site had been significantly destroyed by the time the archaeological excavations began. Systematic excavations took place from 1976 to 1978. The total number of excavated graves was 379, including five cremated graves from the prehistoric period. All of the rest belonged to the medieval necropolis, dated to the period from the 11th to early 14th century AD.

⁶⁸¹ Marjanović-Vujović, 1984a; 1977, 144 – 145; 1978, 127 – 129; Marjanović-Vujović and Tomić 1976, 132 – 133

The medieval necropolis at Trnjane is a typical cemetery where the dead were buried by simple inhumation in the graves in relatively regular rows. The deceased were laid down into graves pits with no trace of burial construction or grave marking. The grave pits were most probably rectangular and the deceased were laid in them oriented E – W (head). Some exceptions towards south and north were noted. The usual position of the skeletons was supine and extended. A few cases of exceptions in the position of the skeleton were found. A crouched position was noted in four female graves. In eight graves the deceased had one leg crouched.

Grave goods were found in 136 graves, consisting mainly of dress objects and jewellery: buttons, buckles and hooks, necklaces, earrings, finger rings and bracelets. Knives were found only in two cases. According to stylistic analysis most of the types of jewellery were dated to the 12th century AD. The use of pendants made of cowry shells was noted in six graves: in a necklace or a bracelet (no. 80, 129, 273, 278, 308 and 324) and on an earring (no. 165).

Roman coins were found in graves no. 204 and 324. Medieval coins (103 – 104) were found in nine graves. The seven specimens are Byzantine scyphates, belonging to the rulers of Comnenus and Angelus dynasties and other two are silver Friesacher pfennigs. Of the scyphates, four pieces found in three female graves (no. 206, 239, 344) and in one male burial (no. 17) could be attributed to Manuel Comnenus (1143 – 1180). The other three are attributed to Alexius III Angelus (1195 – 1203) and found in the female burials no. 349, 352 and male burial no. 348. Both pieces of silver Friesacher coins were found in the male graves, the coin of Duke Andrew (1196 – 1204) in grave no. 179 and the coin of Duke Bernhard (1202 – 1230) in grave no. 243. It is very interesting that the coin from grave no. 344 was wrapped in a piece of cloth.

Grave no. 204

A burial of a female girl about 10 years old. The remains were orientated E – W, head to the west, with a deviation of 35° to the south. The skeleton was in a supine position with arms crossed over the thorax (P. XLI/4).

Grave goods:

1. Two copper cord earrings (R= 1,5 and 1,8 cm) on both sides of the skull (P. XLI/1, 2).

2. One copper coin, Late Roman, perforated in the middle, R= 1,2 cm, on the right shoulder (P. XLI/3).

Grave no. 324

A burial of an elderly female. The remains were orientated E – W, head to the W, with a deviation of 19° towards N. The skeleton was in a supine position with arms crossed over thorax (P. XLI /11).

Grave goods:

1. One fragmented bronze cord earring on the left side of the skull (P. XLI/5).
2. One bronze molten ring with rhomboid head on a finger of the right hand (P. XLI/6).
3. Three bracelets made of four bronze twisted wires, R= 5,7 cm, R= 5,7 cm and R= 5,5 cm, on the right hand (P. XLI/7 - 9).
4. One necklace consisting of 112 glass paste beads, one cowry shell and two pierced Roman coins as pendants (P. XLI/10).
5. One Roman coin (Ae3), very worn, broken, unreadable R= 1,6 – 2,1 cm.
6. One Roman coin (Ae4), Ob. very worn, Constantine I or Constantius or Constans; Ob. [GLORIA AE]XER CITVS (2 standards), mint Thessalonica, 330 – 335, mint mark SMTS[A], LRBC 840 – 843, R= 1,6 cm.

3.6 CENTRAL AND SOUTH SERBIA (F)

23) Doničko Brdo⁶⁸²

The Straževica hill is situated between the villages of Gradac and Dobrovodice near Kragujevac. It consists of two elevations, Doničko Brdo and Jerinino Brdo, which are now divided by the Kragujevac – Batočina road. Both are very rich with limestone and have been being exploited for a long time. Therefore, unfortunately, most of the cultural layers are destroyed and archaeological excavations in 1951 and 1952 discovered only a small portion of a once very rich archaeological site. At Jerinino Brdo some sectors of the walls of a Roman fortification with later medieval burials were detected. In the middle of this

⁶⁸² Petrović 1963, 275 – 290

fortification the remains of an early Christian church (16,75 x 8,10 m) were noted. The church was built out of stone and fragmented *tegulae*. Near the wall of the apse several skeletons were found, while inside the church one child and one woman were buried. At Doničko Brdo the medieval necropolis had already been severely devastated by the time of the archaeological excavations. A total of 40 graves were discovered. There were no regular rows detected. The orientation of the burials was E – W with the head to the west. Some deviations toward N and S were noted with more examples towards the north. All of the skeletons were in a supine position with the arms placed differently. Respect for the older graves was noted with examples of carefully gathered bones in one corner of a grave or the laying of the new deceased slightly bent in order to not disturb the remains of an older grave. This could indicate that no grave markers were used or at least that they were not visible at the time of the next burial. Some burials had been encircled and paved with stone and Roman *tegulae* from the Roman fortification at Jerinino Brdo, but more common was a stone or brick near the feet or the head. A few *tegulae* even had inscribed crosses on them.

Grave goods were found in eight graves, but many other finds were discovered in the area with previously destroyed graves. Most of the artefacts belong to jewellery and garment objects. The grave inventory consisted usually of one or two objects. Only graves no. 23 and 37 had slightly more objects. Earrings were present with different types from plain hoops and “S”-type earrings to one Byzantine “knuckle”-type earring and two earrings with twisted wire decoration. Metal and glass bracelets found on the necropolis were from the disturbed graves, but two were found in grave no. 23. Long bead necklaces were found in graves no. 23 and 37. The necklace from grave no. 37 was interesting for its colourful beads and various pendants – jingles, one cross and one pier-shaped pendant and two medieval coins (P. XLII/7). Also very remarkable were finds of fibulas (P. XLII/1 – 5), especially of one bronze Roman *fibula* found on the clavicle in grave no. 4, since in the late medieval period fibulas were not typical and buttons were used for clothing. According to the stylistic analysis of the material the necropolis was dated to the 11th / 12th – 14th centuries AD.

Roman coins were found in graves no. 4 and 8.

Grave no. 4

A burial of a female deceased. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the W. The skeleton was in a supine position with the left arm beside the body and the right arm on the pelvis.

Grave goods:

1. One bronze *fibula*, on the clavicle bone (P. XLII/5, 6).
2. One copper coin, the late 4th / early 5th century AD, very worn out, above the middle part of the body.

Grave no. 8

A burial of a male deceased. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the west. The skeleton was in a supine position.

Grave goods:

1. One bronze buckle in the waist area.
2. One copper coin, the late 4th / early 5th century AD, very worn out, above the middle part of the body.

24) Popovac⁶⁸³

During the construction of the Paraćin – Popovac railway in 1951 a medieval necropolis was found on the site Donji Popljesak in the village of Popovac (central Serbia). Most of the necropolis had already been destroyed and archaeologists excavated 30 graves. No grave markers or burial pit constructions were found and it was not possible to define the rows of burial pits. The orientation of the graves was E – W, head to the west, with a deviation of up to 30° towards N in some cases. The skeletons were in a supine position with arms crossed usually on the stomach, sometimes on the chest and very rarely with one arm extended beside the body. In two cases legs were slightly bent in the knees and in one case feet were crossed.

⁶⁸³ Milošević 1959, 111 – 134

The grave goods were found in only three graves and therefore it is very difficult to make any solid dating or other conclusions about the necropolis. The material found – one bronze ring, a pair of silver earrings with a berry pendant and one bead necklace – provides only a rough chronological framework from the 11th to the 12th century AD.

The Roman coins were found in grave no. 2.

Grave no. 2

A burial of an adult. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the W, with a deviation of 10° towards N. The skeleton was in a supine position with arms crossed on the stomach.

Grave goods:

1. Two copper Roman coins, 4th century AD, near the feet.

25) Konopljara⁶⁸⁴

The site Konopljara is located on the flat plateau on the right side of the West Morava River in the village of Čitluk near Kruševac. During the rescue excavations in 1994, 1995 and 1996 this multi-layered archaeological site was investigated. The horizons of Konopljara have a horizontal stratigraphy and are dated from the neolithic to the full medieval period. The medieval necropolis is situated in the eastern section of the site and covers an area of about 700 m². A total of 126 graves were excavated.

All of the burials were oriented in E – W direction, except for grave no. 126 which had N – S orientation. This grave probably does not belong to this necropolis. The burial pits had no construction and were in rows. The deceased were in a supine position with arms on the chest or stomach. In some cases the arms were on the pelvis, and very rarely extended beside the body. Grave goods were found in 27 graves, consisting of jewellery (earrings, rings, bracelets and necklaces), garment objects (buttons and buckles), weapons (knives and spear heads), and one spur.

⁶⁸⁴ Berić 2001, 109 – 115; Rašković 1998, 72, 73

The majority of the offerings have analogies with the grave goods from the Trnjane necropolis, such as hoop earrings, earrings with one or three knuckles, a ring decorated with a stylized lion or bracelets of four intertwined bronze wires. Based on this and on the find of a copper coin of Manuilo I Comnenus (1143 – 1180) in grave no. 83, the necropolis is dated to the period from the second half of the 12th to the early 13th century AD.

Roman coins were found in three graves (no. 66, 82 and 84). The aforementioned Byzantine coin was found in grave no. 83 in the hand of the deceased.

Grave no. 66

Grave goods:

1. One copper coin (Ae3) of Constantius II (337 – 361), very worn, R= 1,8 cm, in the mouth (P. XLIII/1).

Grave no. 82

A burial of a male deceased.

Grave goods:

1. One bronze hoop earring, R= 2,6 – 2,8 cm, to the left of the deceased.
2. Two bronze pendants from an earring, berry type, L= 1,5 cm, near the left shoulder (P. XLIII/3).
3. One fragment of an iron spur, L= 10,7 cm, in the right hand (P. XLIII/4).
4. One iron spear head, L= 13,5 cm, near the right elbow (P. XLIII/5).
5. One Roman copper coin (Ae4), very worn, unreadable, R= 1,3 cm, on the right knee (P. XLIII /2).⁶⁸⁵

Grave no. 84

A burial of a female deceased.

Grave goods:

⁶⁸⁵ Information provided by courtesy of curator M. Bugarin from the National Museum in Kruševac

1. One necklace made of seven white glass paste beads and seven bone beads and one perforated copper coin (Ae3) of Constantius II (337 – 361), R= 1,5 cm, very worn, around the head (P. XLIV/1, 2).
2. One necklace made of 34 white glass paste beads and one blue glass paste bead, R= 0,8 cm, L= 0,9 cm, on the right hand (P. XLIV/1, 2).

26) Niš – Medijana⁶⁸⁶

Medijana is situated some 4,5 km from Niš (Naissus), in the southeast of the Niš basin. At this site, a complex of summer residences, type *villa urbana*, and a large agricultural estate were explored over the last 150 years. The whole complex was erected in the late 3rd and early 4th centuries, and some of the most important edifices are: villa with peristyle, *thermae* and *nymphaeum*, the central structure around which all other buildings were organized; west of it was a *horreum*, while in the north of the complex was a building with circular and octagonal rooms; in the south a water tower was found. Between these structures several smaller villas were situated. Apart from architectural remains, necropolises were also found at this site, mostly from the transition period from the Late Antiquity to the early medieval period. The graves (56) at Medijana were excavated in several archaeological campaigns, in 1961, 1972, 2000, 2001 and 2006. For this research, two graves (no. 34 and 35), found next to the villa with peristyle in the excavation in 2000, are of importance (P. XLV). In both of them skeletons had artificially deformed skulls, testifying to the Germanic presence in this area between AD 400 and 600. These two graves also represent the southernmost point in the territory of Serbia where Germanic elements are confirmed. A Roman coin was found in only one grave (no. 35).

Grave no. 35

A burial of a male deceased about 40 years old. The orientation was W – E, with the head to the W and with slight divergence towards N (23°). The skeleton was in a supine position with hands laid on the pelvis. The skull was artificially modified (P. XLVI/1).

Grave goods:

⁶⁸⁶ Maksimović 2010, 23 – 53

1. One iron knife (5,7 cm) on the left side of the thorax (P. XLVI/2).
2. One iron buckle, D shaped, (4,4 x 2,6 cm) on the left side of the pelvis (P. XLVI/4).
3. One Roman coin (Ae4) from the 4th century (R= 1,6 cm) in the right hand (P. XLVI/3).

27) Niš – Glasija⁶⁸⁷

The elevation Glasija is located SW from the Niš fortress. Under the modern city of Niš are the remains of ancient Naissus. In Glasija a medieval necropolis was discovered during the construction of the bus station in 1975. The medieval necropolis was dug into a Late Antique profane building. A total of 77 graves were excavated. According to the different ways of burial, the burial pits could have been divided into:

I – burial pits with no construction (52).

II – burial pits with a construction of fragmented bricks laid sideways, sometimes with stones (15).

III – burial pits with a construction of drywall made of horizontally placed fragmented bricks (5).

IV – burial pits with a construction of one whole or fragmented brick placed sideways near the head and feet (3).

V – burial pits with a construction of a floor paved with fragmented bricks (2).

The orientation of the burials was E – W with the head to the west. There were some deviations towards N and S noted. The skeletons were in a supine position with arms in different positions. The majority had arms on the stomach/pelvis or crossed on the chest (57). Very rarely, the arms were extended beside the body (1) or with just one arm beside the body (4). Due to the very poor state of the osteological remains in 56 cases it was not possible to determine the sex or a more precise age of the individual. There were 3 males, 13 females and 5 child skeletons.

⁶⁸⁷ Ercegović-Pavlović 1977, 83 – 99

Grave goods were found in 31 graves and all of them belong to jewellery or garment objects – earrings, bracelets, necklaces, pendants, rings and applications. The stylistic analysis provided a chronological framework of the necropolis from the 11th until the end of the 12th / early 13th century AD. Four types of earrings were present in the Glasija necropolis. The most numerous were plain bronze hoops with open ends (15) dated to the 9th – 11th centuries AD. Some more luxurious earrings were far less present. Two examples of silver “volin”-type earrings (grave no. 18), one silver “grape”-type earring dated to the 12th century AD (grave no. 17) and two silver earrings with a spindle-like pendant also dated to the 12th century AD (grave no. 38). The bracelets were from bronze (6) and glass paste (15). Among the finds of pendants (5) and applications (3), particularly interesting was a bronze cross with ovoid ends and holes for enamel – the so-called pectoral cross. These pendants are relatively rare and this pendant could be dated to the period from the 10th to the 12th century AD.

The secondarily-used objects from the Late Antique Period were found in seven graves: coins (graves no. 16, 35, and 37), *fibulae* (grave no. 5 and 19), an application in swastika shape (grave no. 47), and a needle (grave no. 51). In grave no. 3 a Bulgarian imitation of a coin of Manoilo I Comnenus (1143 – 1180) was found, dated to AD 1195 – 1200.⁶⁸⁸

Grave no. 16

A burial of a young deceased. The orientation was E – W, head to the west. The skeleton was in a supine position with arms on the stomach. The burial pit belongs to type II. On one brick there was a cross (P. XLVII).

Grave goods:

1. One copper Roman coin.
2. One bead in funnel shape.

Grave no. 35

⁶⁸⁸ Crnoglavac 2008, 96

A burial of a young deceased. The orientation was E – W, head to the west. The skeleton was in a supine position with arms on the pelvis. The burial pit belongs to type II.

Grave goods:

1. One copper Roman coin.

Grave no. 37

A burial of an indeterminable individual. The orientation was E – W, head to the west. The skeleton was in a supine position with arms on the chest. The burial pit belongs to type II.

Grave goods:

1. One copper Roman coin.

28) Niš – Sv. Pantelejmon⁶⁸⁹

The site Sv. Pantelejmon is situated in Niš (ancient Naissus), in the vicinity of the Roman and late Roman necropolis Jagodin – Mala. In the late 19th century a church dedicated to this saint was built near the position of an older medieval church. According to oral tradition, stone from the medieval church was built into this new church. Research of the remains of the medieval church Sv. Pantelejmon was done in 1966 and 1969. Excavations took place some 50 m NE of the modern church. During the excavations a necropolis in connection with this church was discovered. Since these excavations were published more than 30 years after the end of excavations, the report is not clear and not very detailed. Much of the information about the position and organization of the necropolis is missing in this report. New research was done on this site from 2002 until 2007, which provided more detailed data on this necropolis.

In the 1966 – 1969 excavations, 149 graves in two layers were excavated. The burial pits had no constructions and occasionally some of the graves were covered with *tegulae*. The skeletons were in a supine position with arms placed differently. The orientation was along the E – W axis with the head to the W. Grave goods were mainly jewellery and garment

⁶⁸⁹ Korać 2002, 103 – 145; Crnoglavac and Čerškov 2011, 105 – 142

objects. The erection of the church is dated to the late 12th century AD, while the necropolis was in use during the 13th century AD. New excavations in the 2000s confirm the general conclusions from the previous research. On this occasion 95 graves were excavated. The majority of the grave goods were parts of garment and bodily decoration – earrings, finger rings, bracelets, necklaces, pendants and buttons.

Roman coins were found in 13 graves: no. 22 (1966) and 48, 120, 123, 125 (1969) and 22, 33 (2002) and 41, 45, 47, 66 (2003) and 80, 84 (2004). Fifteen more Roman coins were detected in the necropolis in the period 1966 – 1969, but without any data on their deposition context. Medieval coins were also found in both campaigns: 21 in the 1966 – 1969 excavations and 11 in later research. For earlier excavations we have no data on how many graves were found, but they were all Byzantine issues of the late 12th and early 13th centuries. Medieval coins found in 2002 – 2007 were found in five graves: nine were Byzantine (early 13th c. AD) and two were Hungarian medieval coins (12th c. AD).

Grave no. 22 (1966)

1. One copper coin from the 4th century AD (?), R= 1,3 cm, location not documented (P. XLVIII/1).

Grave no. 48 (1969)

1. One pierced copper coin from the 4th century AD (?), R= 2 cm location not documented (P. XLVIII /4).

Grave no. 120 (1969)

1. One copper coin from the 4th century AD (?), R= 1,2 cm, location not documented (P. XLVIII /2).

Grave no. 123 (1969)

1. One copper coin from the 4th century AD (?), R= 1,5 cm, location not documented (P. XLVIII /3).

Grave no. 125 (1969)

1. One fragmented stone cross pendant, 2,2 cm x 1,7 cm, location not documented (P. XLVIII/5).
2. A fragment of the bottom of a glass cup, 2,2 cm x 1,7 cm, location not documented (P. XLVIII/6).
3. One copper coin of Constantius II (337 – 361)?, R= 1,4 cm, location not documented (P. XLIX/1).

Grave no. 22 (2002)

A burial of a child about 7 years old. The skeleton was in a supine position with the left arm extended by the body and right arm on the chest.

1. One copper coin of Constantius II (337 – 361), R= 1,5 cm, near the right elbow (P. XLIX/2).

Grave no. 33 (2002)

A burial of a young male about 18 years old. The skeleton was in a supine position.

1. One copper coin of Constantius II (337 – 361) and Constantius Gallus (351 – 354), 351/4, LRBC 1674, R= 2,2 cm, near the left shoulder (P. XLIX/3).

Grave no. 41 (2003)

A burial of a male about 45 years old. The skeleton was in a supine position.

1. One copper coin of Constantius II (337 – 361), 355/61, LRBC 1689, R= 1,6 cm on the chest (P. L/5).

Grave no. 45 (2003)

A burial of female about 40 – 45 years old. The skeleton was in a supine position.

1. One cross pendant made of steatite on the chest.
2. One copper coin of Tacitus (275–276), 275/6, RIC 183, R= 2,3 cm, between the legs (P. XLIX/4).

Grave no. 47 (2003)

A burial of a male about 25 – 30 years old. The skeleton was in a supine position.

1. One copper coin from the 4th century AD, R= 1,4 cm, near the right knee (P. L/3).

Grave no. 66 (2003)

A burial of a male about 50 – 60 years old. The skeleton was in a supine position.

1. One copper coin of Constantius II (337 – 361), 337/41, LRBC 855, R= 1,4 cm, near the lower part of the right leg (P. L/2).
2. A half of the *billon trachey* of Theodore I Laskaris (1204/5 – 1221/2), 1205/1212 ?, R= 2 cm.

Grave no. 80 (2004)

A burial of a male about 60 years old. The skeleton was dislocated with a younger burial and the skull was placed on a Roman brick.

1. One copper coin from the 4th century AD, R= 1,5 cm, under the brick (P. L/4).

Grave no. 84 (2004)

A burial of a male about 35 – 45 years old. The skeleton was in a supine position.

1. One copper coin of Constantine I (324 – 337), 330/5, LRBC 1117, R= 1,8 cm, near the left elbow (P. L/1).

3.7 EASTERN SERBIA (F)

29) Ravna – Slog⁶⁹⁰

The segment of a rather large two-layered late Roman and early medieval necropolis was investigated in the course of archaeological excavations in 1995 – 1996 at the beginning of the Ravna – Debelica road. Both necropolises were located in the SE and E part of the Slog plateau foothill, an elevated part at the western edge of the Timok Valley in eastern Serbia. This hilly terrain of fertile soil gently slopes for 600 m towards the far-left bank of the Beli Timok River. Near this site are also remains of a Roman *castrum* and settlement dated to the period from the 1st to the 6th century AD.

The early medieval necropolis is a cemetery with inhumation burials in parallel rows (P. LI) with no overlapping of the graves, except for graves no. 136 and 138. Partial overlapping was also very rare in the case of the early medieval and deeper excavated late Roman graves. The number of excavated early medieval graves was 65. In most instances the deceased had been buried in simple rectangular pits without any constructions. The only exception is grave no. 46, situated next to the eastern wall of the late Roman masonry tomb I. In the upper section of the grave, above the skeleton, a small section paved with large river pebbles was discovered. Some partial encircling of the graves with stones is noted in grave no. 116. In graves no. 17 and 24 one stone was put near the right foot and in grave no. 115 two stones were put near the head and left shoulder.

The graves were oriented E – W with the head to the west. Only 10 graves had regular orientation, 8 graves had a deviation of 4° – 17° toward S and 30 graves had a deviation of 2° – 35° toward N. Only one exception in orientation was in grave no. 61. This grave was buried transversally in the late Roman masonry tomb and hence oriented N – S with the head to S. The skeletons were in a supine position and with arms usually extended beside the body (15). In eight cases arms were slightly bent and placed on the stomach. There were examples of arms crossed on the stomach (5) or one arm placed on the stomach and the other on the pelvis (3). In one case the arms were crossed high on the chest.

⁶⁹⁰ Petković et al., 2005, 179 – 255

Offerings were found in 40 graves and could be divided into: garment and decorative objects (earrings, rings, necklaces, buttons and pendants); weapons (knives, axes, arrow heads); and pots (P. LII). The typological analysis of the material (mainly jewellery and pottery) provided a chronological framework of the cemetery – 9th / 10th century AD. The authors attributed this necropolis to Slavs – ancient Serbs. The most numerous category of jewellery were earrings (80), found in 22 graves. The stylistic analysis provided the following typology:

Type I – hoops in 5 variants (23) / 7th – 9th centuries AD.

Type II – grape-like earrings in 3 variants (5) / variant A: 8th – 9th centuries AD.; variant B: 10th – 12th centuries AD.

Type III – earrings with a cone (2) / 9th – 10th centuries AD.

Type IV – earring with entwined wire and variously shaped pendants in 2 variants (7) / 9th – 10th centuries AD.

Type V – earring with one spherical or berry-like pendant in 5 variants (21) / 9th – 10th centuries AD.

Type VI – earrings with two hollow ovoid berry-like pendants (1) / 9th – 10th centuries AD.

Type VII – earrings with three berry-like pendants in two variants (6) / 9th – 10th century AD.

Type VIII – earrings with four berry-like pendants in three variants (16) / second half of the 9th – 11th centuries AD.

The Roman coin was found in grave no. 98. No other coins were found.

Grave no. 98

A burial of a female, 29 – 35 years old. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the W. The skeleton was in a supine position with arms extended beside the body. The bottom of the rectangular pit was covered with ash mixed with lumps of carbonized wood (P. LIII/10).

Grave goods:

1. Three pairs of silver-plated bronze earrings with four ovoid pendants, “berry” type, L= 4,1 and 3 cm, to the left and right of the skull respectively (P. LIII/1 – 6).
2. One necklace consisting of one worn-out and perforated Roman bronze coin (not readable), R= 1,6 cm, and 99 glass paste beads, R= 1,5 cm; R= 0,2 – 0,5 cm, under the skull and around the neck (P. LIII/7, 11);
3. Two bronze finger rings with closed band, R= 2,1 and 2,3 cm, low at the stomach on the right (P. LIII/8, 9);
4. One iron knife lost after the excavation, by the internal side of the right pelvic bone.

3.8 THE IRON GATE AREA (G)

30) Pesača⁶⁹¹

The site Pesača is located on the confluence of the small Pesača River into the Danube River. This area is a broad valley which is closed in by the high and steep slopes of the Greben hills. In 1968 and 1969 archaeological excavations were done within the Iron Gate II project that was organized due to the Danube dam construction. During the excavations remains of a settlement from prehistory, some parts of a smaller ancient fort and one medieval necropolis were found.

The ancient fort was situated in the central part of the site not very far from the Pesača River and very close to the Danube bank. The fortification consisted of one rectangular tower and one wide enclosure added afterwards. The walls of the tower (7,5 x 7,5 m) were made of broken stones and river pebbles bound with mortar. In the inside of the tower a floor of fragmented bricks was partially preserved. The enclosure (cc. 36,4 x 34 m) was mostly devastated and just some parts of drywall, foundations and parts of the flooring made of burned ground or mortar with bricks were found. Most probably this fortification was a *speculum* used in the 3rd and 4th centuries AD.

⁶⁹¹ Minić 1984, 171 – 175

During the medieval period this area was used for a small cemetery. Only 11 graves were discovered from which six were dug into the tower in the outer side of its walls and the other five graves were some 15 m further to the east (P. LIV/1). All of the graves were at a distance from each other and no overlapping of the graves was noted. The orientation of the graves was E – W, head to the west, with some deviations towards the N. The skeletons were in a supine position with arms on the chest, stomach or pelvis. In just two cases one arm was extended beside the body. In seven graves there was a burial pit construction noted which consisted of a partial enclosure with small fragments of stone or bricks. This enclosure was most often around the head. A smaller stone slab or a brick was laid under the head in five cases. Very interesting was the use of Roman bricks in the area around the feet. Every brick was vertically placed and supported with one or two stones, so they stood upright. Each had a carved cross on the side towards the face of the deceased. This was noted in seven cases and in two graves there were also inscriptions carved in ancient Slavic (graves no. 1 and 9). According to the analysis of the letters (Round Glagolitic Script) the necropolis was dated to the 10th or beginning of the 11th century AD (P. LIV/2).

Grave goods were very rare in this necropolis. In grave no. 5 the iron hoop of a buckle was found. Other finds were the Roman coins in graves no. 1 and no. 8.

Grave no. 1

A burial of a male adult. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the west, with some deviation towards the N. The skeleton was in a supine position with the right arm beside the body and the left arm on the pelvis. The brick with the carved cross and inscription was placed upright near the feet. The inscription was in two rows and could be read as *next to you*, if we assume that the first and the third letter in the second row are Cyrillic and others are Glagolitic. The other variant could be Fedor – a male name – if we assume that all the letters are Glagolitic.

Grave goods:

1. One copper coin, 4th century AD, near the hand.

Grave no. 8

A burial of an adult. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the west, with some deviation towards N. The skeleton was in a supine position with arms on the stomach.

Grave goods:

1. One copper coin, Ob. DIVA FAVSTINA, Rv. CONSECRATIO, *sestertius* (?), c. 146 – 161, on the left side of the skull.⁶⁹²

31) Veliki Gradac⁶⁹³

The site Veliki Gradac near Donji Milanovac is located about 2 km upstream from Porečka Reka in the immediate vicinity of Paprenica stream. There were a few archaeological campaigns: 1958, 1960–1962, 1965, but only in 1966 were excavations of a considerable extent undertaken. During the excavations a fortification with four architectural horizons was recorded. The fortification was almost square in shape – 134 x 126 meters. A rampart dating from the 1st century, the earliest *horreum* and a few incompletely excavated structures in the south and central area of the camp belong to the first architectural horizon. The second horizon is characterized by a solid wall about 2 meters thick. The paved streets were connecting the south and north as well as east and west gates. The gates were strengthened by the rectangular towers. At the corners were interior towers of trapezoid plan. On the northern wall, between the corner towers and the gate, there was one rectangular tower with external reinforcement at each section. Judging by the discovered roof tiles the rectangular towers by the gate had a roof cover. In the interior only a *horreum* and one more structure were uncovered. This second phase dates from the second half of the 3rd century, which is suggested by the numismatic finds and some structural features of the walls and towers, like for instance, the use of 2–3 or even 4 layers of bricks. The destruction of this Late Roman fortification was the consequence of the invasion by the Huns in the first decades of the 5th century.

The construction of the third fortification was related to the restoration of the Danube frontier at the beginning of Justinian's reign (527 – 565). The walls were restored,

⁶⁹² Excavation documentation, Archaeological Institute in Belgrade, Inv. No. 1315; in the filling of the grave there were also two copper coins from the 3rd and 4th centuries AD.

⁶⁹³ Minić 1969, 233 – 247

rectangular towers were reconstructed and all but the northern gate were closed. New, round towers of larger size were erected at the corners. The new *horreum* with a porch was built by the northern gate, and by the western gate, which was transformed into a baptistery, the new single-aisled church with narthex and annex was constructed. The third fortification at Veliki Gradac was destroyed by the Avars in AD 595 and 596. The fourth and final architectural horizon dates from the 11th – 12th centuries. At that time the walls were restored and a large cemetery was formed around the restored Early Byzantine basilica in the western sector of the ancient fort.

Around the church a relatively big necropolis was formed (P. LV/1). During the excavations 105 burials were detected. The majority of the graves were in the area around the apse, two smaller groups were north and south of the church, and inside the church there were only 14 graves. Inside the church, the rows of burials were detectable, while the situation was not so clear outside. The orientation of the burials was E – W, with the head to the west. In the area south and north of the church, as well as inside the church, the orientation was without any deviations. Some deviations towards N and S were in the burials around the apse. The simple burial constructions consisted of a partial enclosure of bricks and stone. Rarely was this enclosure around the whole burial pit. The material used for these constructions was from the ruins of the Roman fort. The construction was present in 60 instances. Sometimes the enclosure had only a few stones on the right or left side, or it had one or two bricks either near the head or the foot. There were some examples of graves with more sophisticated burial constructions (graves no. 65 and 105).

In some cases, overlapping between the older and younger graves was noted, but in all of them the remains of the older burial were carefully placed aside or placed in a new burial pit. The skeletons were in a supine position with the arms on the chest or on the pelvis. Sometimes one arm was on the chest and the other was on the pelvis. Very rarely were the arms extended beside the body.

Of the 105 graves, offerings were found in 23. The majority of graves with goods had only one or two objects. In two examples where the grave goods were numerous, children were buried (graves no. 43 and 72). All artefacts found in the graves belong to jewellery or garment objects (earrings, rings, buttons, pendants, bracelets, necklaces and buckles). The stylistic analysis provided the chronological framework of the 11th and 12th centuries AD, maybe even the beginning of the 13th century AD. The most numerous objects were

earrings: plain hoops (4), one cone-type earring and “volin”-type earrings (12th century AD).

Roman coins were found in graves no. 8, 23, 100 and 102. Beside the secondarily-used Roman coins, the use of objects that were not from the usual medieval material culture was noted in grave no. 72. In this grave a golden earring with one hollow “berry” pendant was found on the left side of the head (P. LV/3). This type of earring is typical for the necropoles from the second Avar period (8th century AD). The other reused find from this grave is a Roman bronze *fibula* found on the chest (P. LV/2). Additionally, one of the burial constructions (grave no. 87) had a stone with an inscription in Latin dedicated to Emperor Septimius Severus. The stone (42 x 25 x 10,5 cm) was placed near the feet. The inscription was: IOMPRO LSEPTIMIS ACISAUG ...CAE AESURE NVOPEST EXA.. RE.⁶⁹⁴

Grave no. 8

A burial of a male adult deceased. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the west. The skeleton was in a supine position with the left arm on the chest and the right arm on the pelvis. The burial pit had no construction.

Grave goods:

1. One silver ring, imitation of a twisted wire, in the area of the waist.
2. One perforated copper coin, 4th century AD (?), very worn out and unreadable, near the grave.⁶⁹⁵
3. One copper coin, 4th century AD (?), very worn out and unreadable, near the grave.

Grave no. 23

A burial of a male adult deceased. The remains were oriented E – W, with the head to the west. Some deviation towards S was noted. The skeleton was in a supine position with arms on the chest. The burial pit had an enclosure made of bricks and stones; also it had a paved floor made of fragmented bricks.

⁶⁹⁴ Excavation documentation, Archaeological Institute in Belgrade, Inv. No. 388/1032; diary for 1966, page 26

⁶⁹⁵ Excavation documentation, Archaeological Institute in Belgrade, Inv. No. 388/1032

Grave goods:

1. One copper coin (Ae3), 4th century AD, very worn out, Ob. head of an emperor on the right, Rv. Two Victoriae holding wreaths, R= 1,8 cm, below the grave.⁶⁹⁶

Grave no. 100

A burial of an adult deceased. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the west. The skeleton was in a supine position with the arms on the pelvis. The burial pit had an enclosure made of stone pebbles.

Grave goods:

1. One copper coin (Ae3), very worn out, unreadable, R= 1,7 cm, near the feet.⁶⁹⁷

Grave no. 102

A burial of a young deceased. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the W, with a deviation towards the N. The skeleton was in a supine position with the right arm on the waist and left arm on the chest. There was no burial construction noted.

Grave goods:

1. One bronze ring with wide head, R = 2 cm, near the left hand.
2. One copper coin, 4th century AD (?), very worn, unreadable, near the pelvis.⁶⁹⁸

32) Porečka Reka⁶⁹⁹

The site is located on a mild slope of the Caretina hill in the delta of Porečka Reka and Gradešnica rivers into the Danube River (Iron Gate area). During the archaeological excavations in 1968 in the area of the Roman fortification and baths a late medieval settlement (13th – 15th century AD) was discovered. Remains of houses and pottery finds as

⁶⁹⁶ Excavation documentation, Archaeological Institute in Belgrade, Inv. No. 388/1032

⁶⁹⁷ Excavation documentation, Archaeological Institute in Belgrade, Inv. No. 388/1032

⁶⁹⁸ Excavation documentation, Archaeological Institute in Belgrade, Inv. No. 388/1032

⁶⁹⁹ Minić 1968, 72 – 73; 1984, 293 – 295

well as other objects were excavated. Near this settlement, about 100 m SE, was a medieval necropolis. A total of 37 graves were excavated, which were organized in relatively regular rows. Some of the graves had grave markers made of roughly polished stone slabs and placed on vertical posts near the head. In very few cases stones and fragmented bricks as well as the remains of wooden boards were near the skeleton. The orientation of the graves was E – W with the head to the west. Some deviations toward S and N were present. Only one grave (no. 29) was oriented S – N. The skeletons were in a supine position with arms on the chest, waist or pelvis.

Grave goods were very rare in this necropolis, except for in one grave (no. 29). There were only two copper coins from the 4th century AD, a fragment of a bronze button and one silver coin of Ivan Sratsimir (1356 – 1396) found. According to this coin the necropolis is dated to the 14th – 15th centuries AD. The aforementioned grave no. 29 was also exceptional because of the finds in it. The female skeleton had four bronze pins with round heads and glass paste beads on the skull. In the area of the neck and chest were eight pierced bronze tokens and one pendant. Near the feet were two iron soles. This grave is dated to the 16th century AD.

33) Pontes – Early Medieval Necropolis II⁷⁰⁰

The site Pontes was excavated during the vast rescue archaeological excavations for the building of the hydro-power plant on the Danube in the area of the Iron Gate. In 1979 and 1980 the whole northern wall with the northern gate (*Porta praetoria*), parts of the northwestern corner and the western gate (*Porta principalis sinistra*) and small section of the southwestern corner of the *castrum* Pontes were discovered. This *castrum* was one of the two military camps erected on both sides of the Traianus Bridge (AD 103 – 105). The *castrum* opposite from Pontes is located in Drobeta (Romania). Besides this on the site Pontes on the northern slope towards the Danube River a Roman trench was noted and an object defined as a bastion. In this area and near the Traianus Bridge two medieval necropoles and a medieval settlement were discovered. For this dissertation the second necropolis is important. Fifteen graves were excavated, of which three were dated to the later medieval period and others were dated to the 10th – 11th century AD.

⁷⁰⁰ Garašanin, Vasić and Marjanović-Vujović 1984, 25 – 54

One Roman coin was found in grave no. 8.

Grave goods:

1. One tongue of an iron buckle.
2. One copper coin.

34) Vajuga⁷⁰¹

In the section Karaula an early Byzantine fort with a basilica from the time of Justinian I (527 – 565) were found. Within this fort, a cemetery with 20 graves, dated to the 5th century, was excavated. The data are available only about one grave (no. 18) which is also important for this research, since two Roman coins were found in it. The grave is dated according to the typological analysis of *fibulae*-type Viškov (AD 425 – 450).

Grave no. 18

A burial of a young girl (12 – 14 years). The orientation was W – E, with the head to the west. The skeleton was in a supine position with hands next to the body. Tiny bones of a bird were found on her thorax (P. LVI/11).

Grave goods:

1. A pair of silver *fibulae*, golden plated, with triangular headplates (8,1 and 8,4 cm) on shoulders respectively (P. LVI/ 5, 6).
2. On bronze earring with a hoop, on the right side of the skull (P. LVI/1).
3. One triple band finger ring from bronze, on the left side of the thorax (P. LVI/7).
4. Two bronze finger rings, on the right side of the thorax (P. LVI/8, 9).
5. A necklace made of glass beads, around the neck (P. LVI/2).
6. One red glazed pot with two handles, left of the skull (P. LVI/10).
7. One pierced bronze Roman coin from the 4th century, in the mouth (P. LVI/3).
8. One pierced bronze Roman coin of Gratianus (367 – 375), mint Thessalonica, beneath the chin (P. LVI/4).

⁷⁰¹ Popović 1987c, 129 – 132; Špehar 2012, 42 – 43

35) Ljubičevac – Glamija⁷⁰²

The site Glamija is located on the Danube River bank about 2 km from the village of Ljubičevac. Here the remains of a Roman *castrum* were first noted in 1939 by Fewkes, but the *castrum* had been devastated by the time of the systemized archaeological excavations. Most of the stone had been taken out by the local peasants and the 1980 excavations did not discover the remains of the *castrum* walls. In the layer with intensive remains of broken stone and bricks a medieval necropolis was found. A total of seven graves were excavated. The graves were situated in rows and oriented approximately along the E – W axis. Graves no. 1 and 2 had a deviation of 15° and 25°. Graves no. 3, 5 – 7 were oriented SW – NE.

Traces of burial constructions were noted in graves no. 1, 2 and 3. This construction consisted of small walls from fragments of stone and bricks from the *castrum* and paved floor of fragmented bricks. In graves no. 6 and 7 only paved flooring was found.

Offerings were found in three graves (no. 1, 5 and 7). Grave no. 7 had the most objects and provided the chronological framework of the necropolis – the 12th to the 14th century AD.

One Roman coin was found in grave no. 1. Also, one broken Byzantine (?) coin was found in grave no. 7.

Grave no. 1

The remains were oriented W – E with a deviation of 15° towards the S. The burial pit was encircled with fragmented stones and bricks preserved only in the area around the legs. Traces of burned wood were found in the burial pit. The skeleton was in a supine position with hands crossed on the thorax.

Grave goods:

1. Glass beads in yellow and blue colour.
2. One copper coin of Constantius II (337 – 361), under the skeleton.

⁷⁰² Parović-Pešikan 1984, 137 – 140

36) Brza Palanka⁷⁰³

In the southern area of the town of Brza Palanka on the Danube River (Iron Gate) are remains of the Roman *castrum* and town of Egeta. In the course of the Negotin – Kladovo road construction a medieval necropolis was discovered to the west of the local church (P. LVII). The rescue archaeological excavations in 1964 investigated 32 graves. Later archaeological research was conducted in 1980 within the Iron Gate II project when another segment with 25 graves of this necropolis was discovered beneath a late medieval settlement. Also, in sector III a medieval settlement was discovered that was contemporary with the cemetery, but the layers had been very destroyed and nothing could be confirmed with certainty.

The medieval necropolis had burial pits in rows and the graves were oriented E – W, with the head to the west. Very small deviations towards S and N were present. In some cases (10) burial pits had been partially encircled with stones and fragments of *tegulae* from the Roman fortification or with just one brick near the head or feet. The skeletons were in a supine position with arms on the pelvis, in the waist area or on the chest.

The grave goods were found in eight graves in 1964 and in four graves in 1980. The objects belong to the jewellery and garments of the deceased (earrings, necklaces, rings, bracelets, buckles and buttons). The stylistic analysis of the finds provided the chronological framework from the late 12th to the 15th / 16th century AD. This late upper date was determined with the finds from graves no. 8 and 28 (1964), the so-called “folk” jewellery, in particular, diadem of poor silver (grave no. 28) and chain-like decoration with two glass paste beads for the head (grave no. 8). The rest of the material was dated from the 10th to the 13th century AD.

A Roman coin was found in grave no. 18 from 1964. In the same grave a necklace with a pierced *billon trachey* of Manoil I Comnenus (1143 – 1180) was found. In the 1980 excavations two coins were found in the filling of grave 17, a silver and a bronze one, and in grave no. 19 one bronze coin was found near the right femur. These coins are not mentioned in the published article, but are noted in the excavation diary.

⁷⁰³ Ercegović-Pavlović 1967, 143 – 150; Ercegović-Pavlović and Minić 1984, 167 – 170

Grave no. 18 (1964)

A burial of a female adult. The remains were oriented E – W, head to the west. The skeleton was in a supine position with arms on the waist. On the right side of the skeleton, towards grave 17, was a burial construction made of stone and vertically placed *tegulae* (P. LVIII/1, 2).

Grave goods:

1. Four cowry shells below the mandibular bone (P. LIX/4).
2. One bone pendant below the mandibular bone (P. LIX/10).
3. One green pendant from glass paste below the mandibular bone (P. LIX/7).
4. One glass paste bead of rhomboid section below the mandibular bone (P. LIX/6).
5. Glass paste beads (59), blue with yellow “eyes” below the mandibular bone (P. LIX/5).
6. One bronze earring of “grape” type, secondarily used as a pendant below the mandibular bone.
7. One pierced bronze coin of Manuel I Komnenos (1143 – 1180) below the mandibular bone (P. LIX/2).
8. Glass paste bracelets (10) in gray-black colour, R= 6,5 cm, on the left forearm (P. LIX/8, 9).
9. One copper coin of Constantine I (324 – 337), Rv. Two soldiers with legion symbols, beneath the bones of the chest (P. LIX/1).⁷⁰⁴
10. Fragment of a pot in the thorax area, (P. LIX/3).⁷⁰⁵

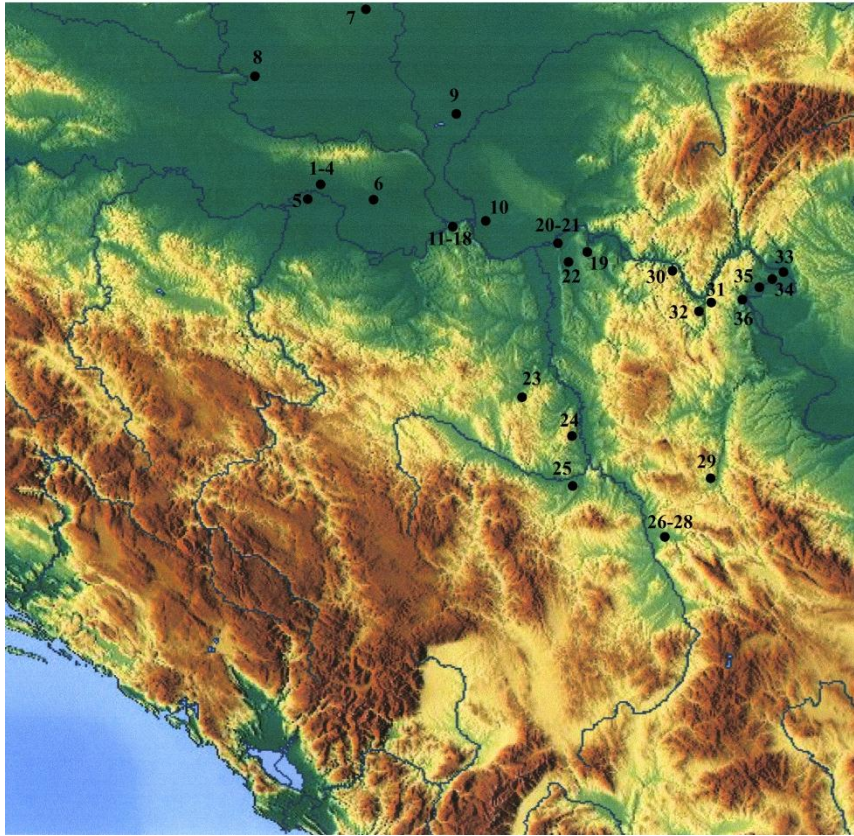
⁷⁰⁴ Ercegović-Pavlović 1967, 150; probably it is Gloria Exercitus type

⁷⁰⁵ Excavation documentation, Archaeological Institute in Belgrade, Inv. No. 394/1056

Biography of the author:

Gordana Ćirić was born in Belgrade in 1983. She studied Archaeology at the Philosophical Faculty (University of Belgrade) and graduated in 2007. In 2008 she did her MA research in Museum studies at the Art history department of the Philosophical Faculty. From 2010 until 2013, she was a scholarship holder for the PhD studies within the project Value and Equivalence at the Goethe University in Frankfurt a. M. financed by the German Research Foundation. She defended her PhD thesis in 2014 with Magna Cum Laude. Apart from research, she was involved in different projects concerning museum and heritage practice.

APPENDIX II: Maps and Plates



Map 1. Distribution of sites:

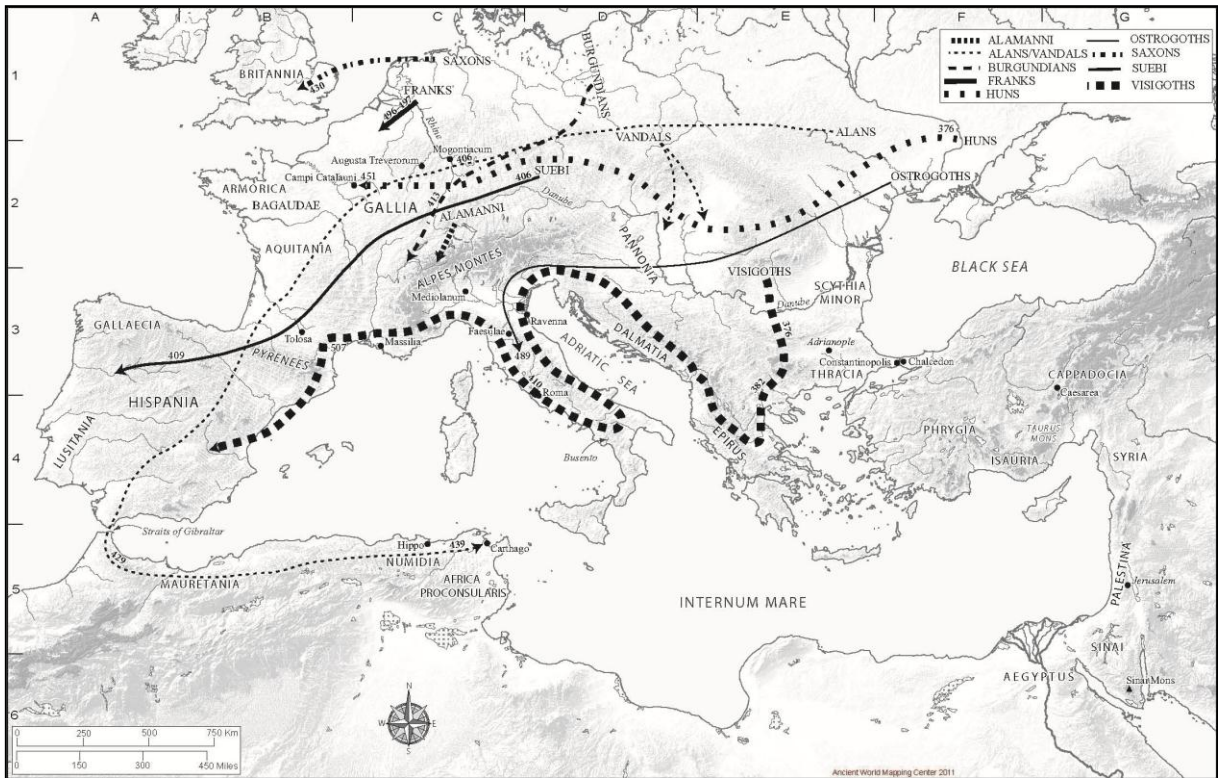
- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Sirmium/site 3 – Germanic grave | 21. Viminacium – Više Grobalja |
| 2. Sirmium/site 5 | 22. Trnjane |
| 3. Sirmium/site 4 | 23. Doničko Brdo |
| 4. Sirmium/site 66 | 24. Popovac |
| 5. Mačvanska Mitrovica – Zidine | 25. Konopljara |
| 6. Vrcalova Vodenica | 26. Niš – Medijana |
| 7. Subotica | 27. Niš – Glasija |
| 8. Bogojevo III | 28. Niš – Sv. Pantelejmon |
| 9. Aradac - Mečka | 29. Ravna – Slog |
| 10. Omoljica – Preko slatine | 30. Pesača |
| 11. Singidunum II | 31. Veliki Gradac |
| 12. Singidunum III | 32. Porečka Reka |
| 13. Singidunum IV | 33. Pontes – Early Medieval Necropolis II |
| 14. Kormadin – Jakovo | 34. Vajuga |
| 15. Mirijevo | 35. Ljubičevac – Glamija |
| 16. Vinča – Belo Brdo | 36. Brza Palanka |
| 17. Brestovik – Visoka Ravan | |
| 18. Brestovik – Čair | |
| 19. Dubravica – Orašje | |
| 20. Viminacium – Burdelj | |



Map 2. The Roman Empire in the time of Marcus Aurelius and Severan emperors



Map 3 The Roman Empire in the time of Diocletian and Constantine



Map 4. Barbarian Invasions during the IV and V centuries



Map 5. The Balkans in the High and Late Middle Ages (c. 1000 – 1350 AD)

P.I



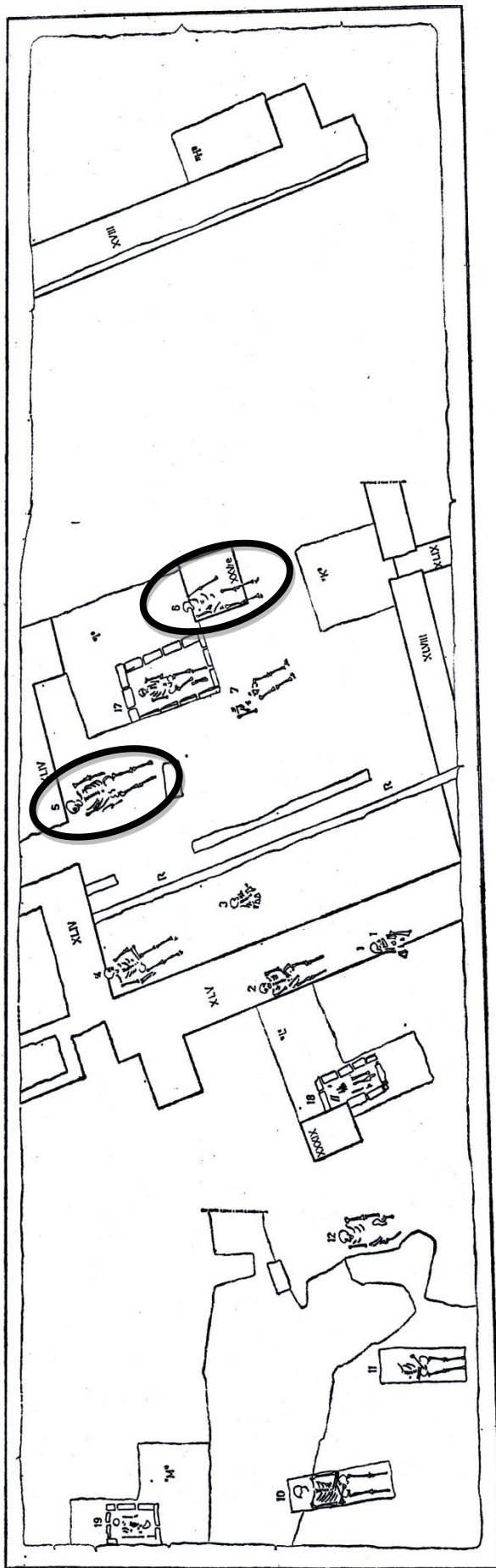
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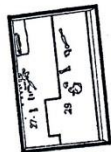
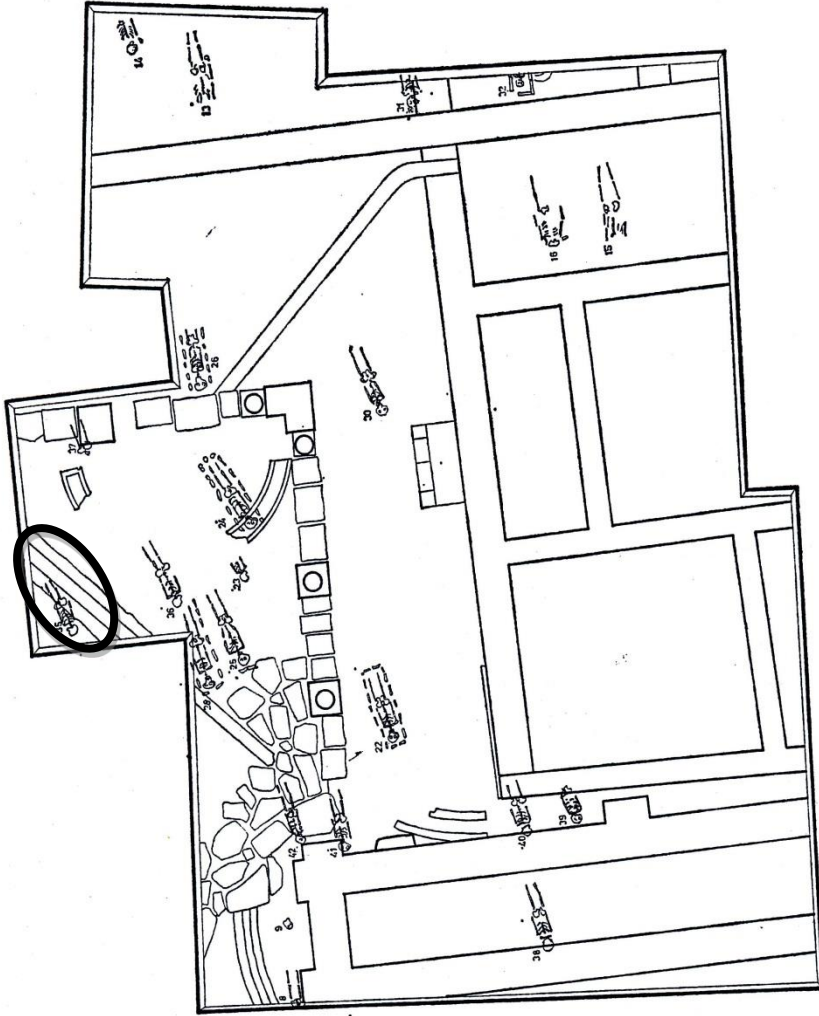
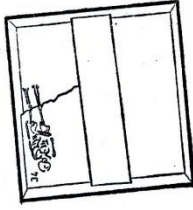
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P. III



P. IV



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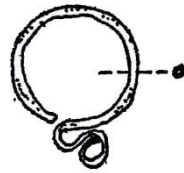


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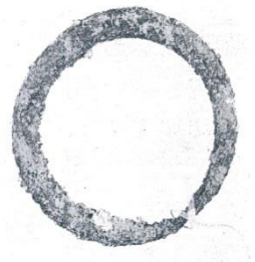


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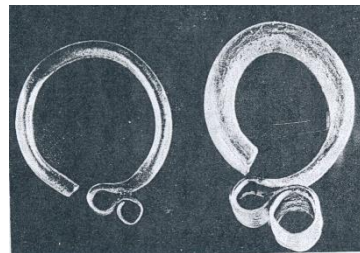
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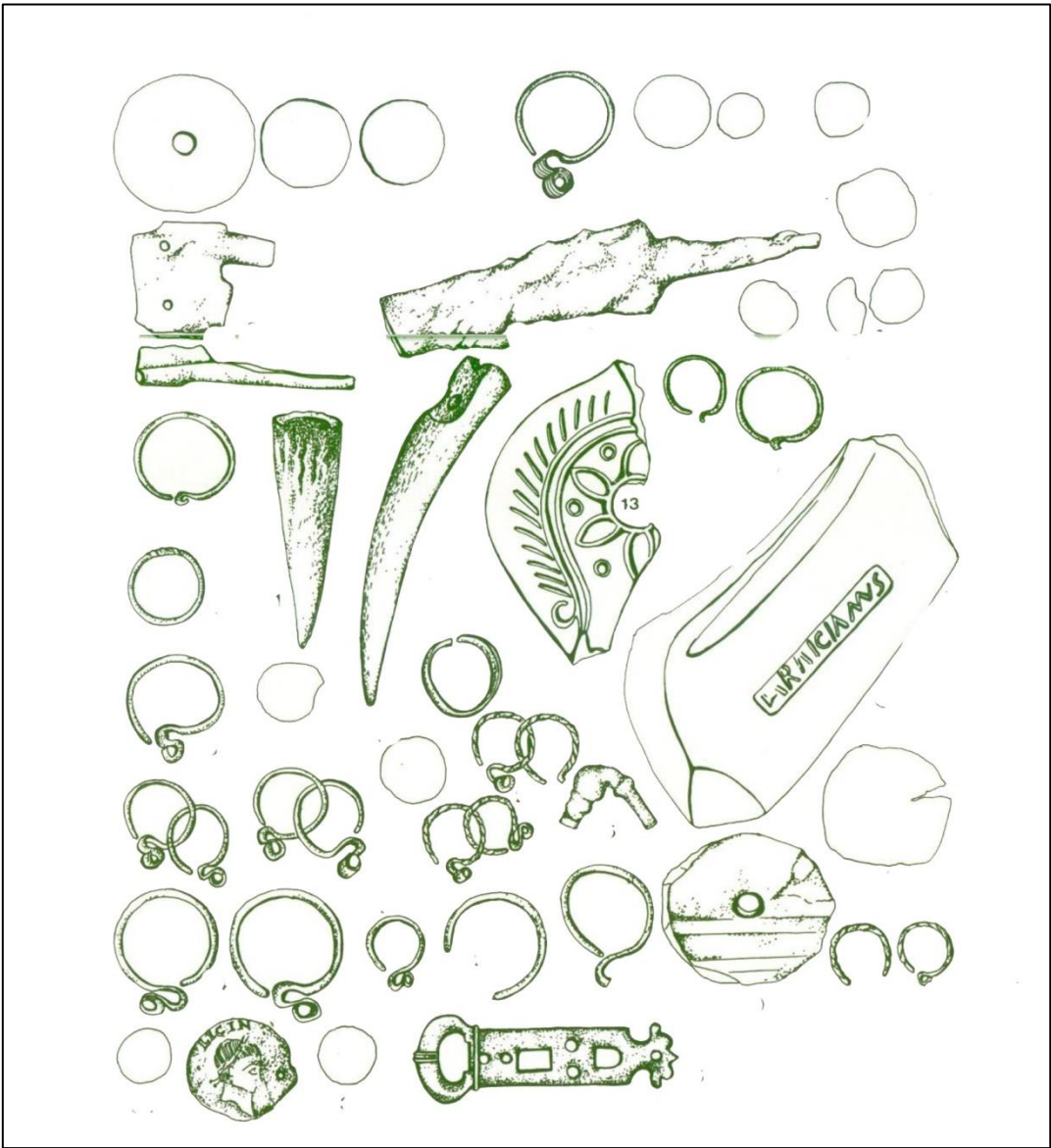
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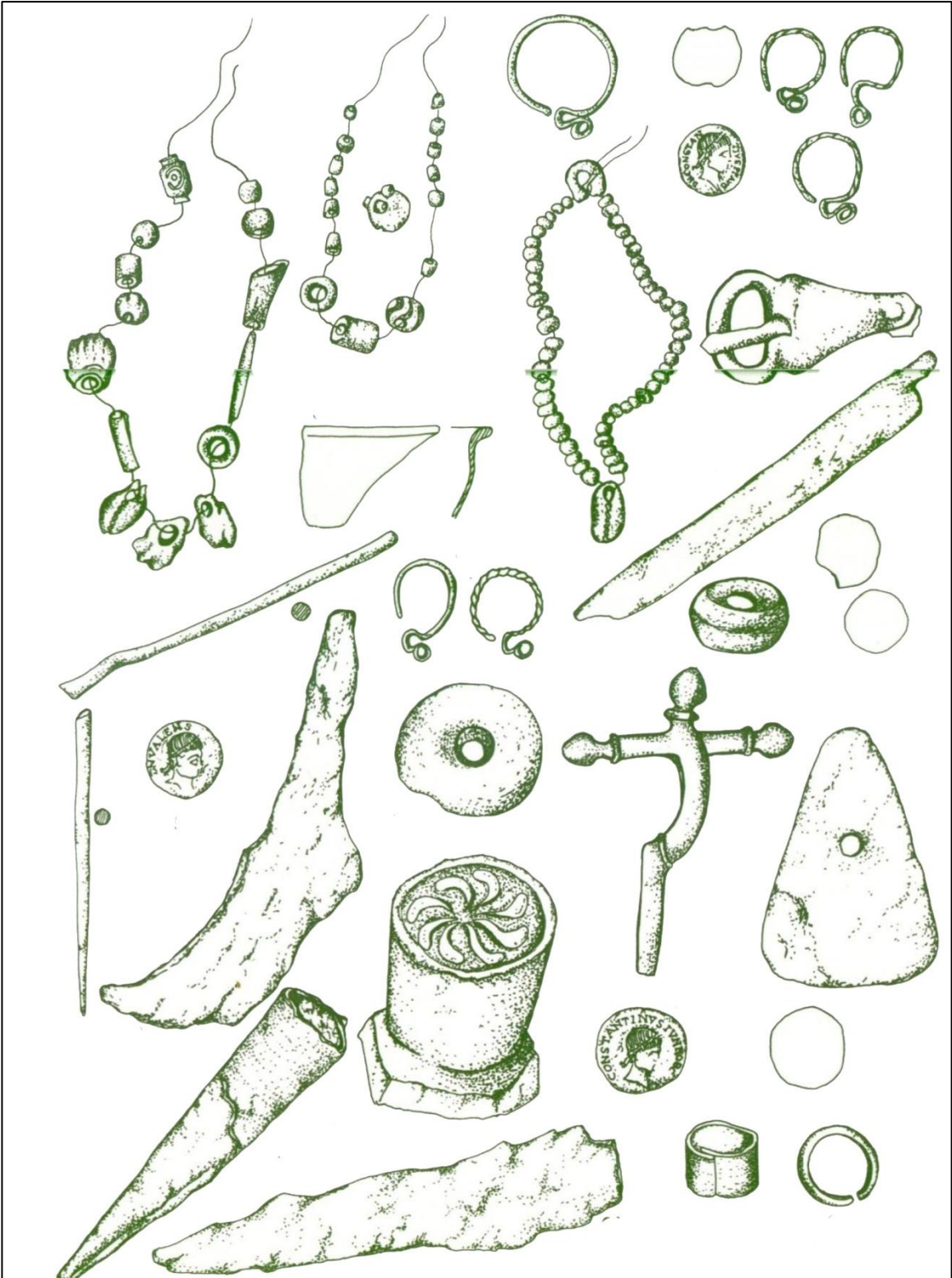
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P. V



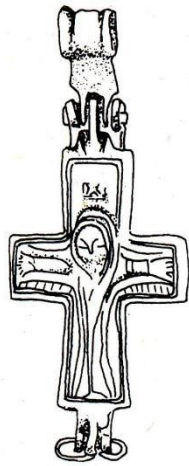
Objects not to scale



Objects not to scale

P. VIII

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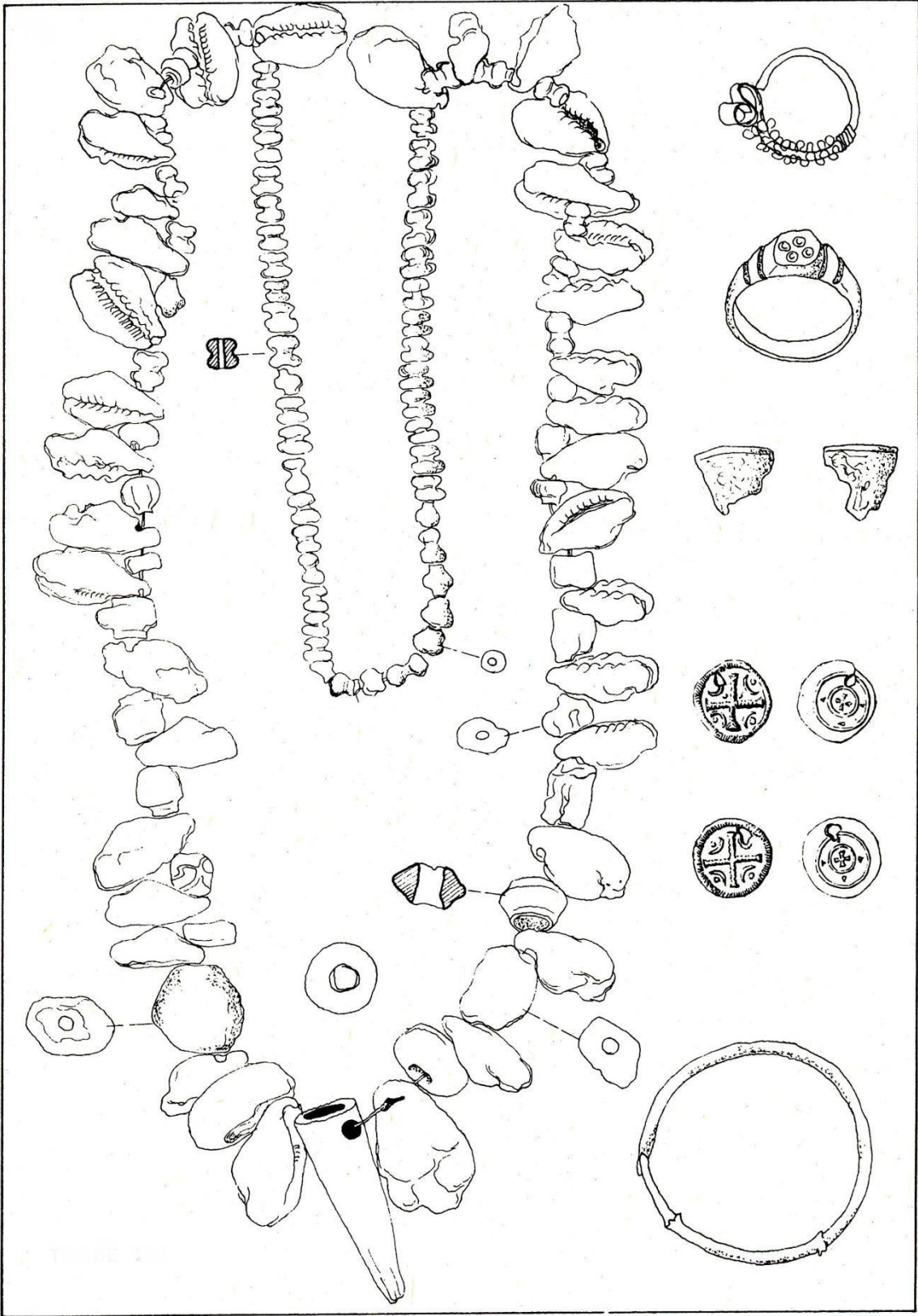
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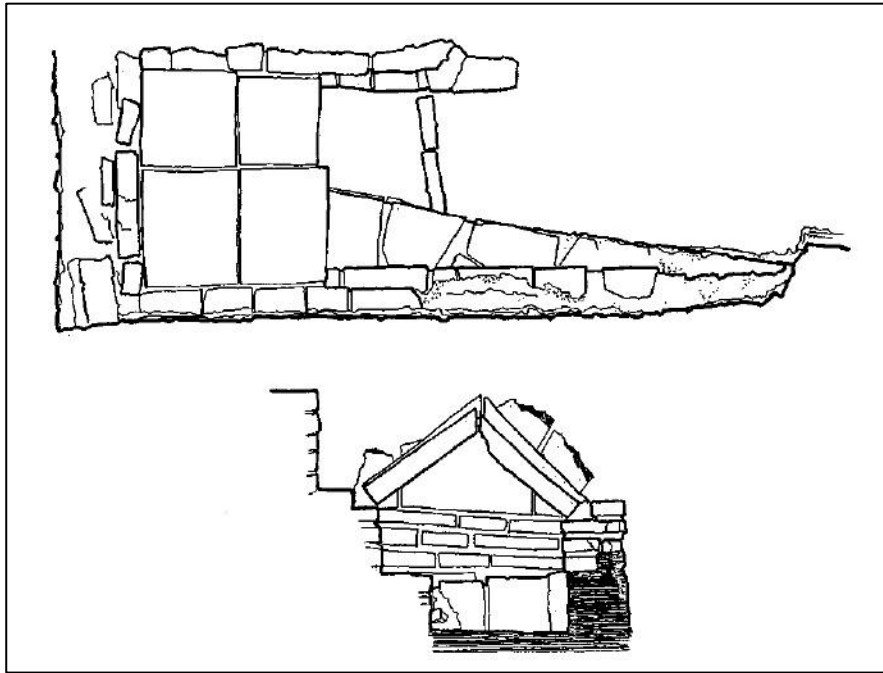
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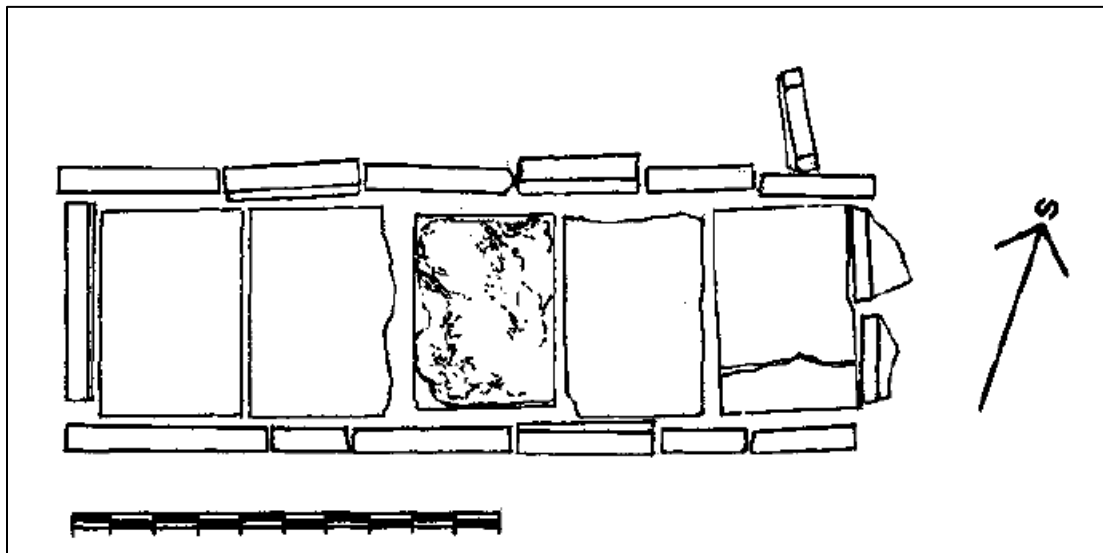
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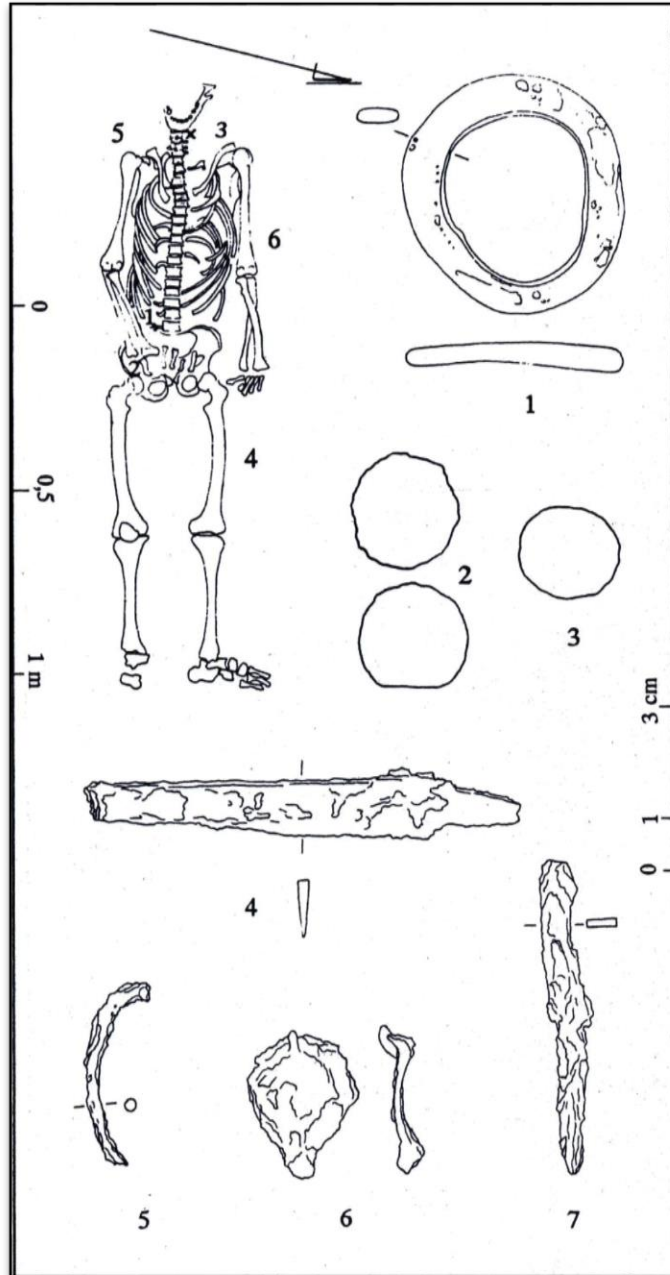
P. X

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P. XII



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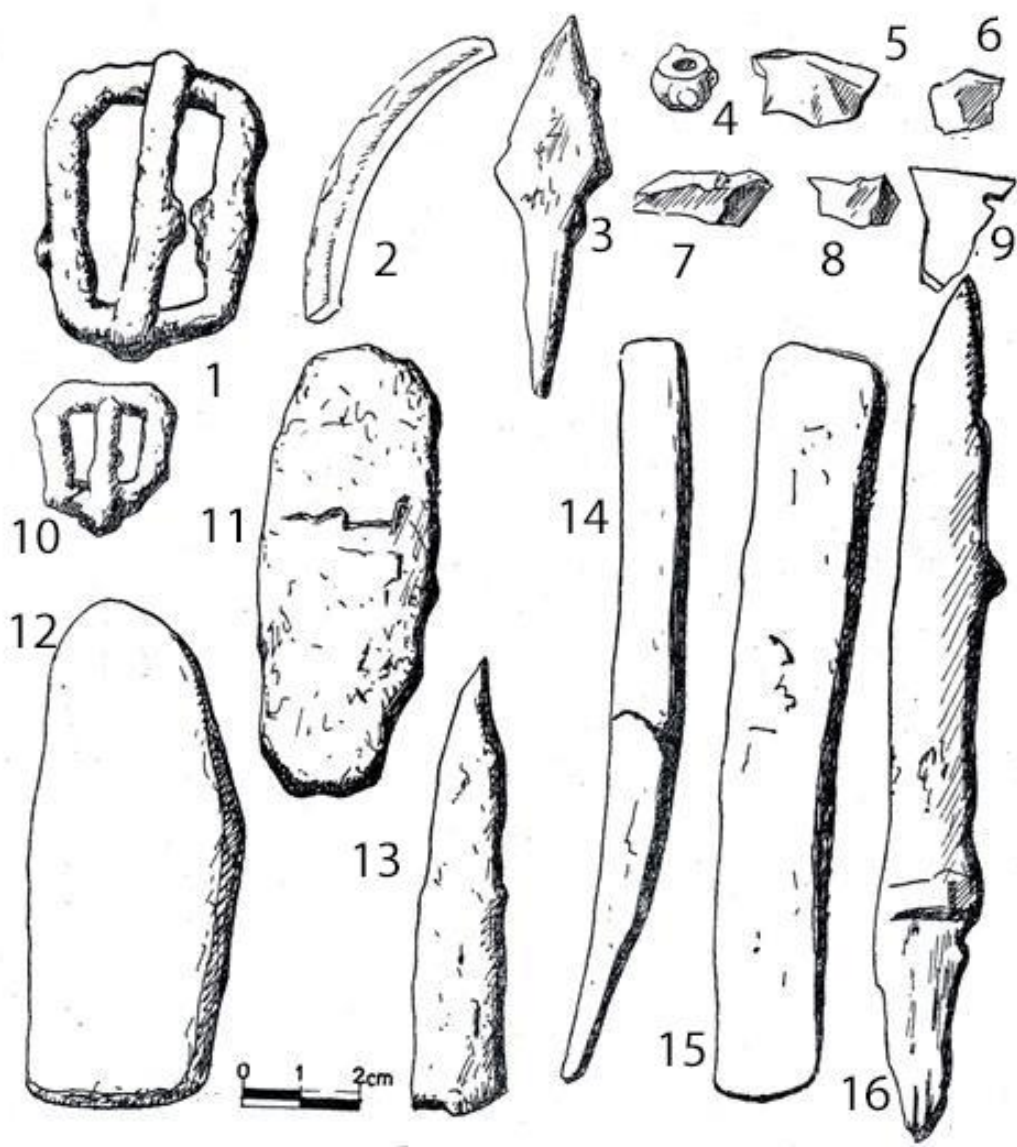
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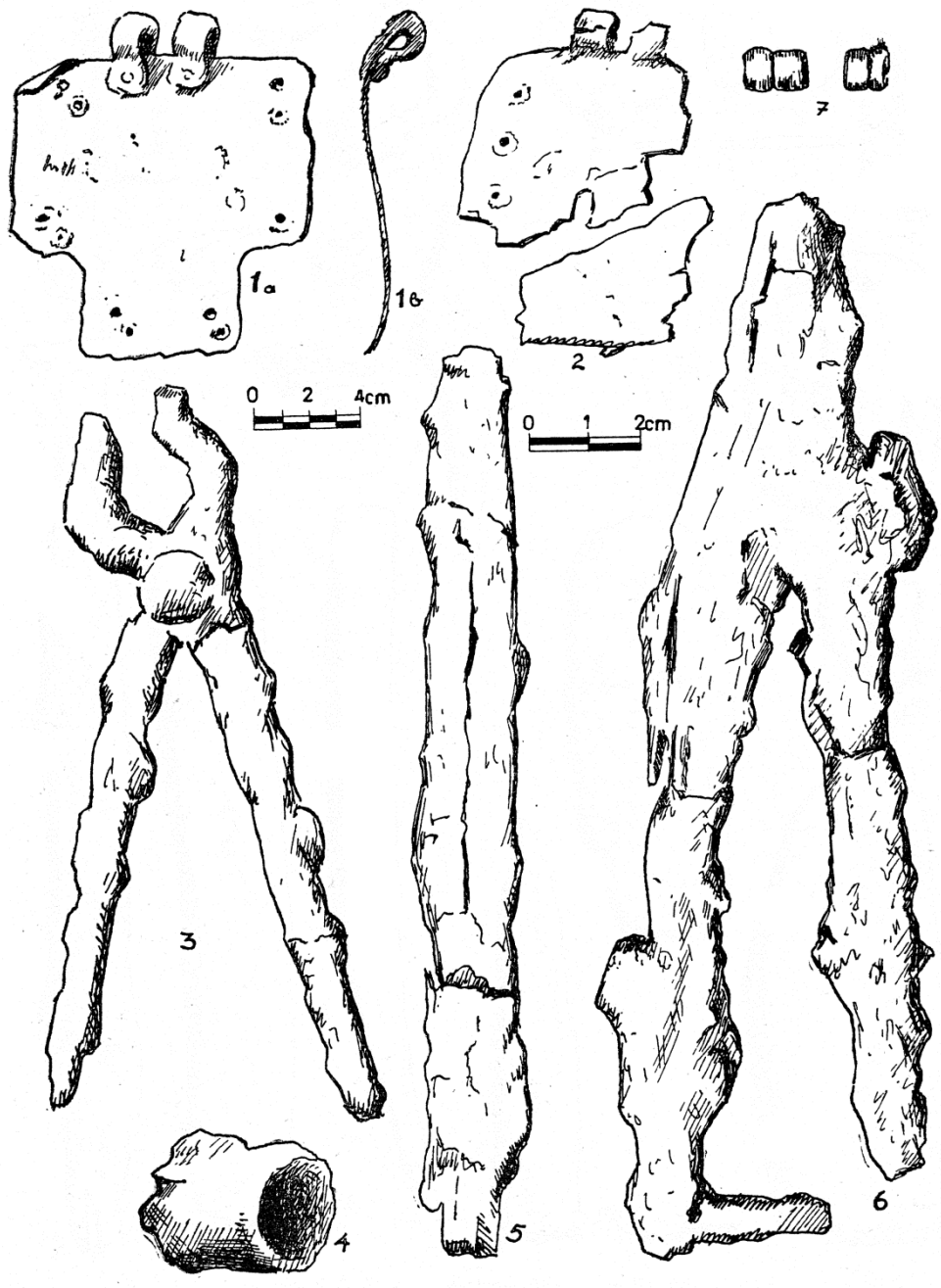
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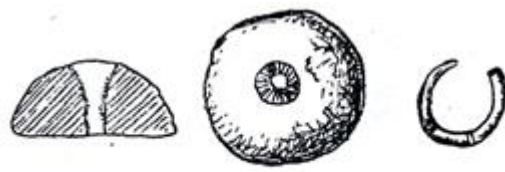
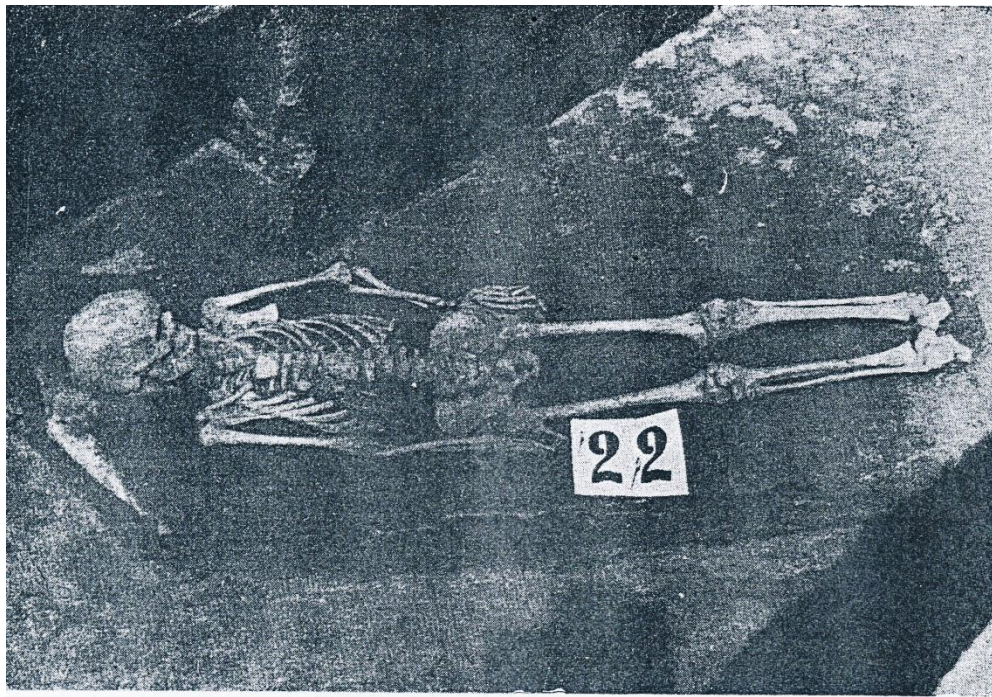
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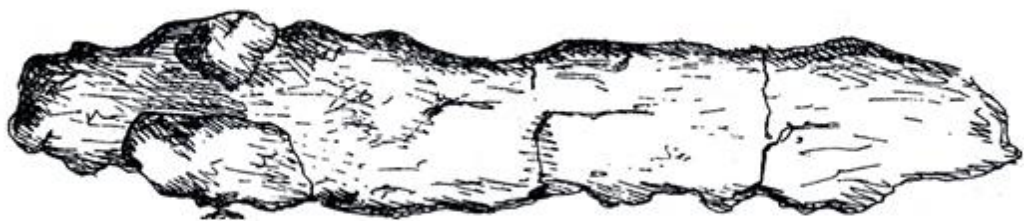
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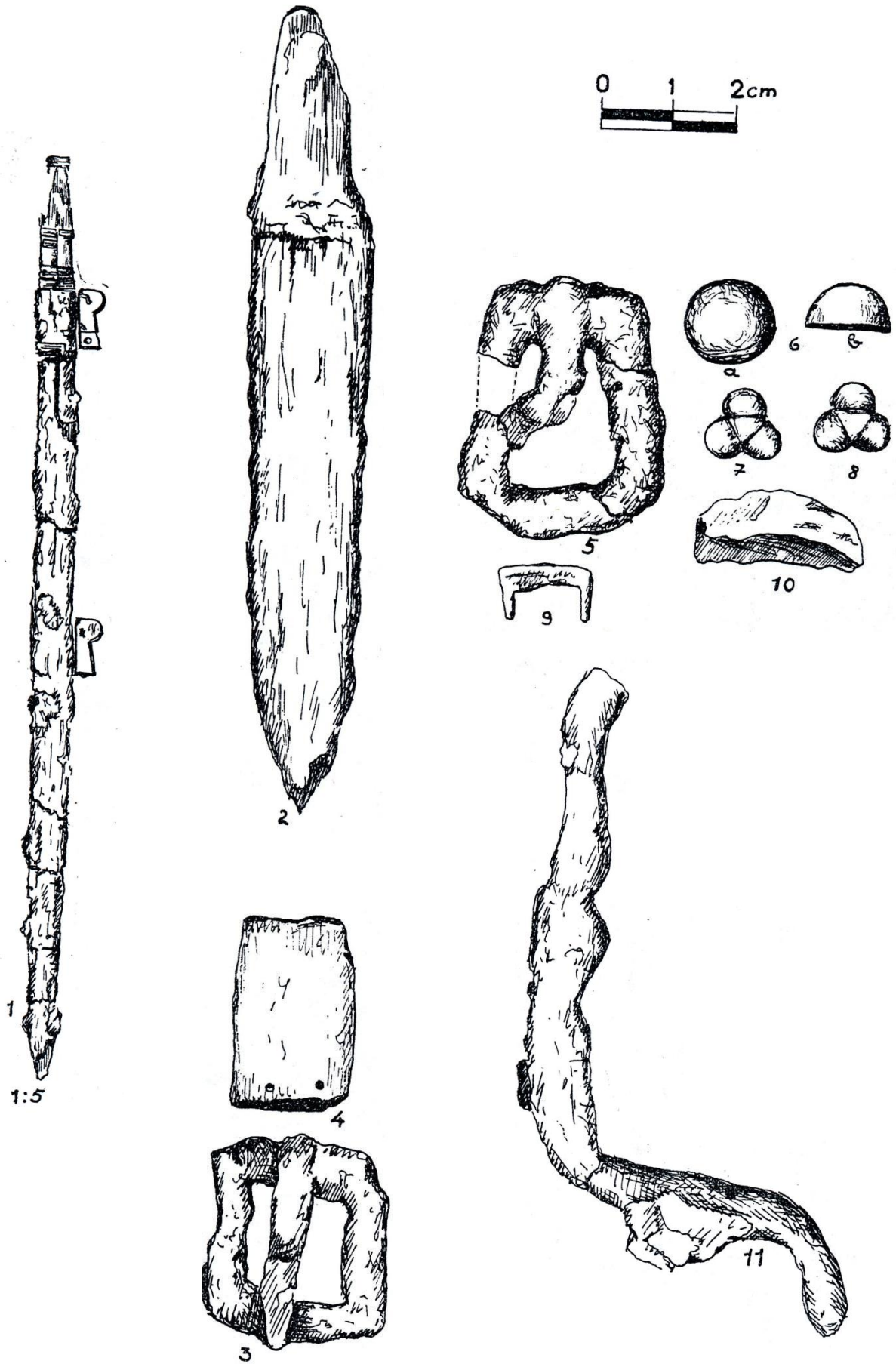
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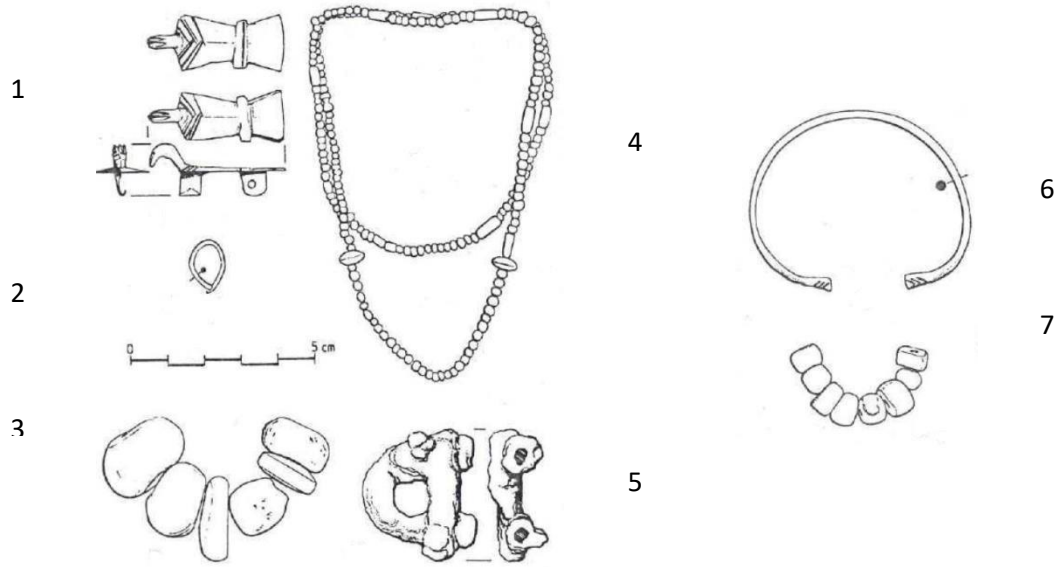


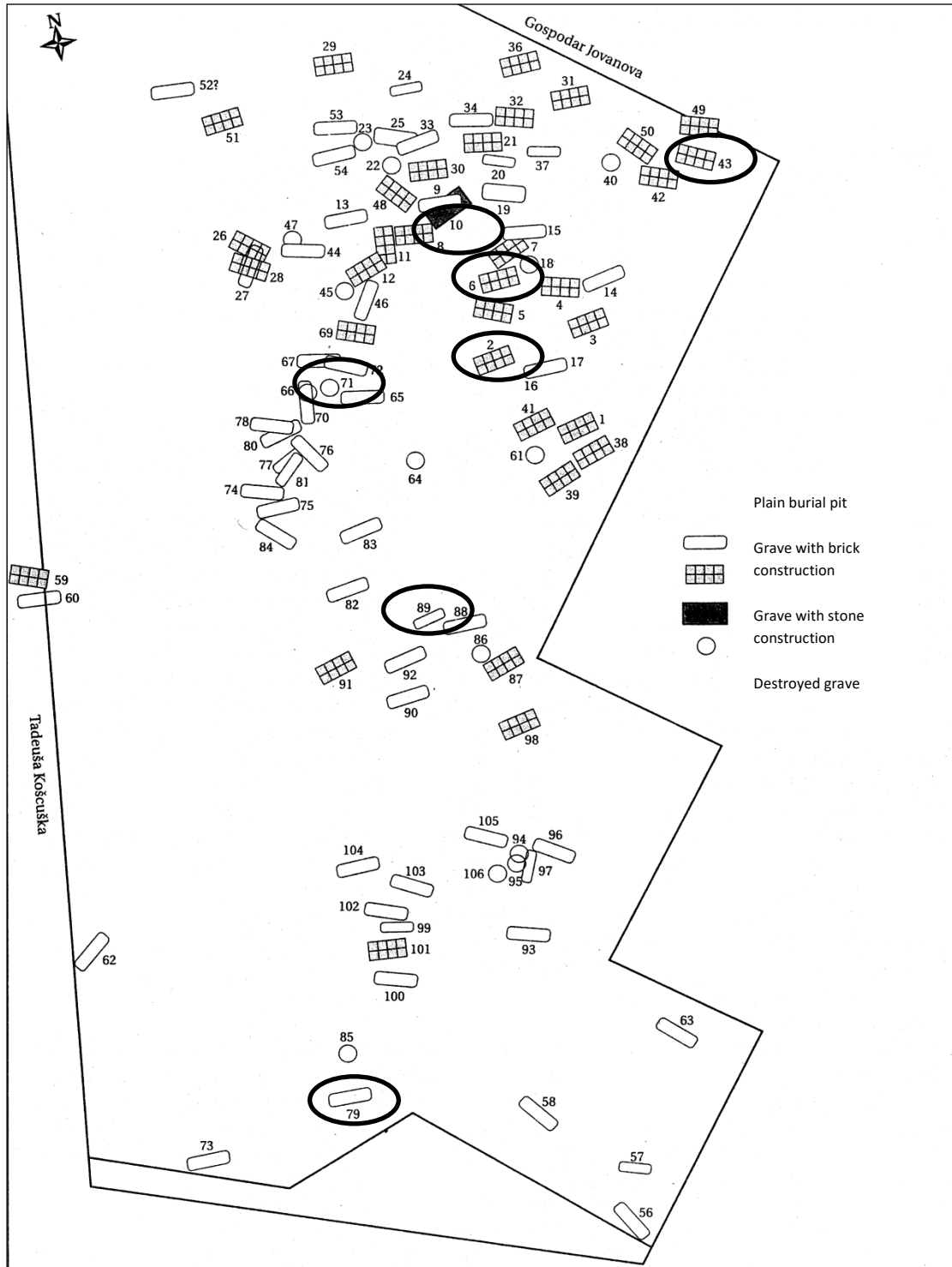
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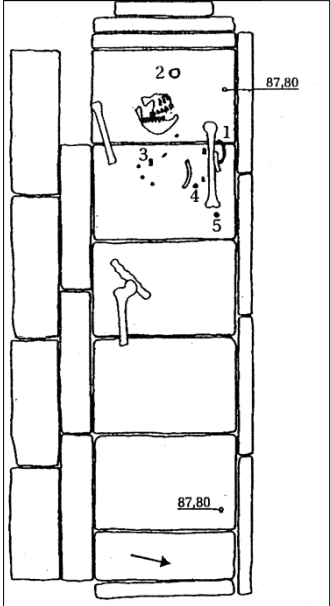
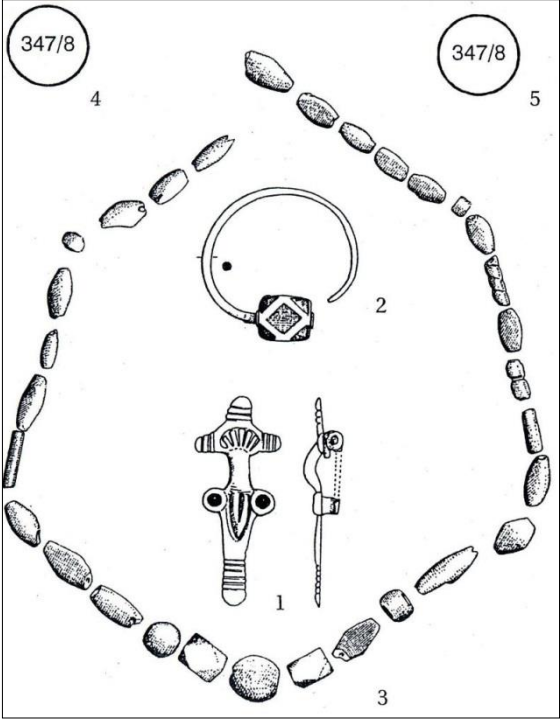


P. XVII





P. XIX



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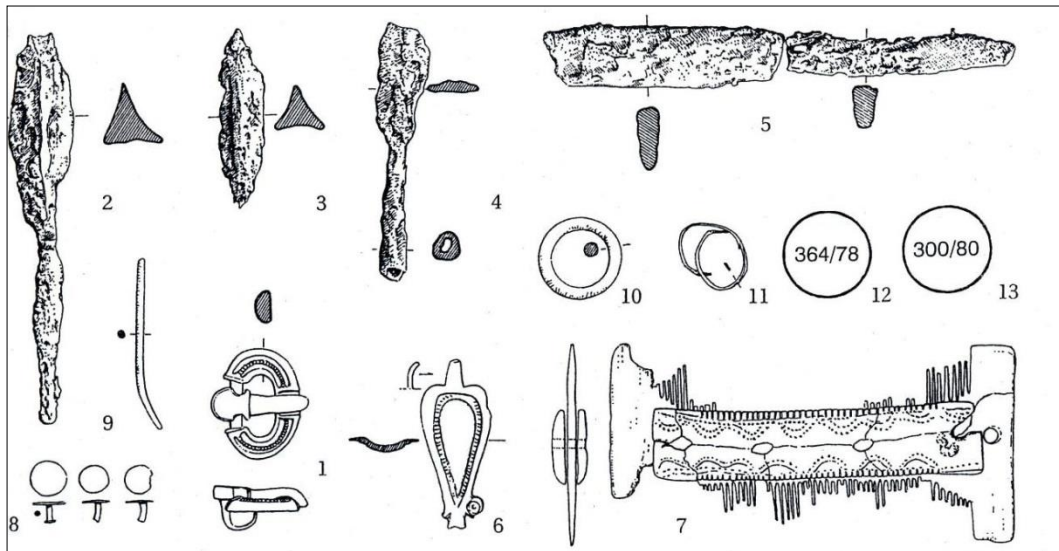


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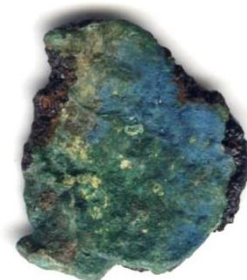
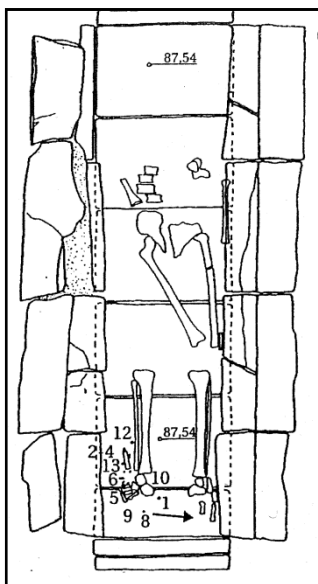
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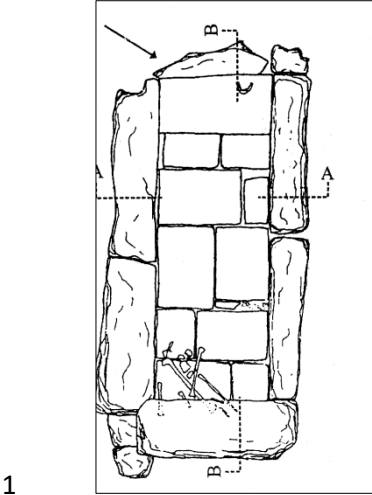
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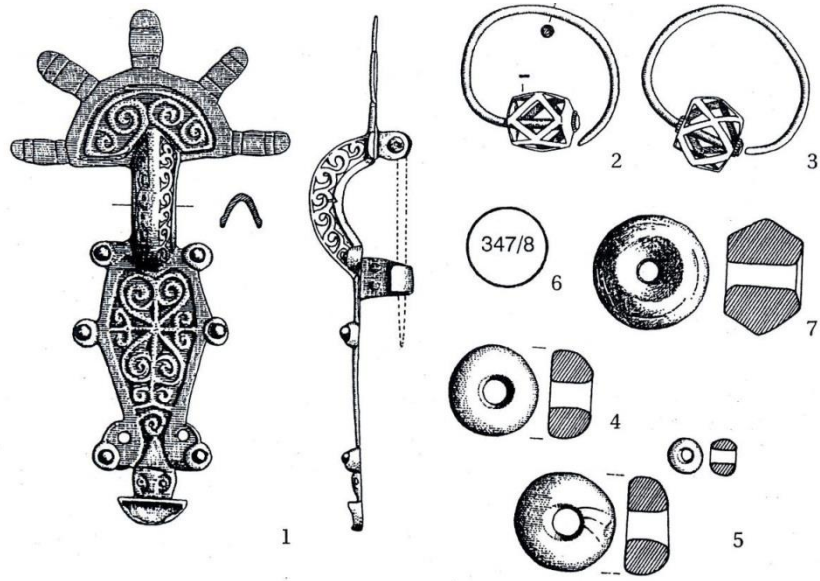


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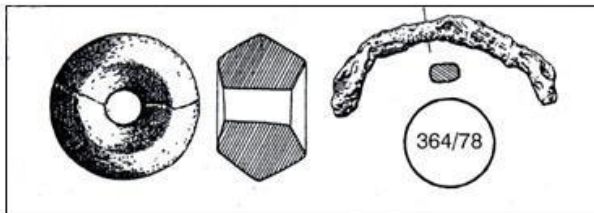


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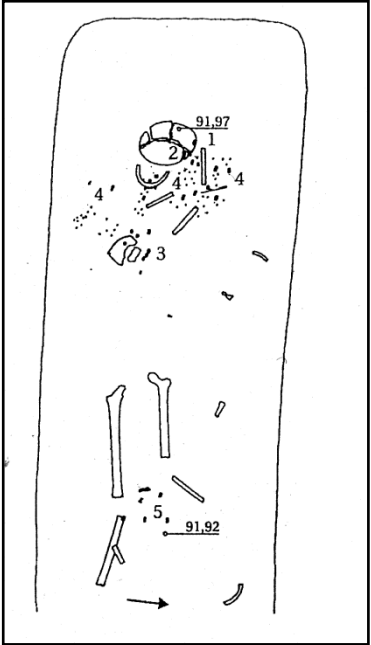
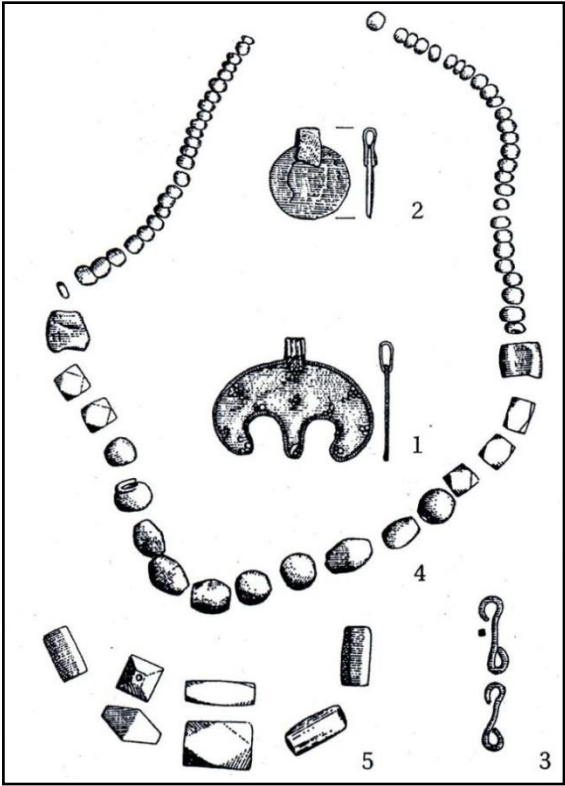


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P. XXIII



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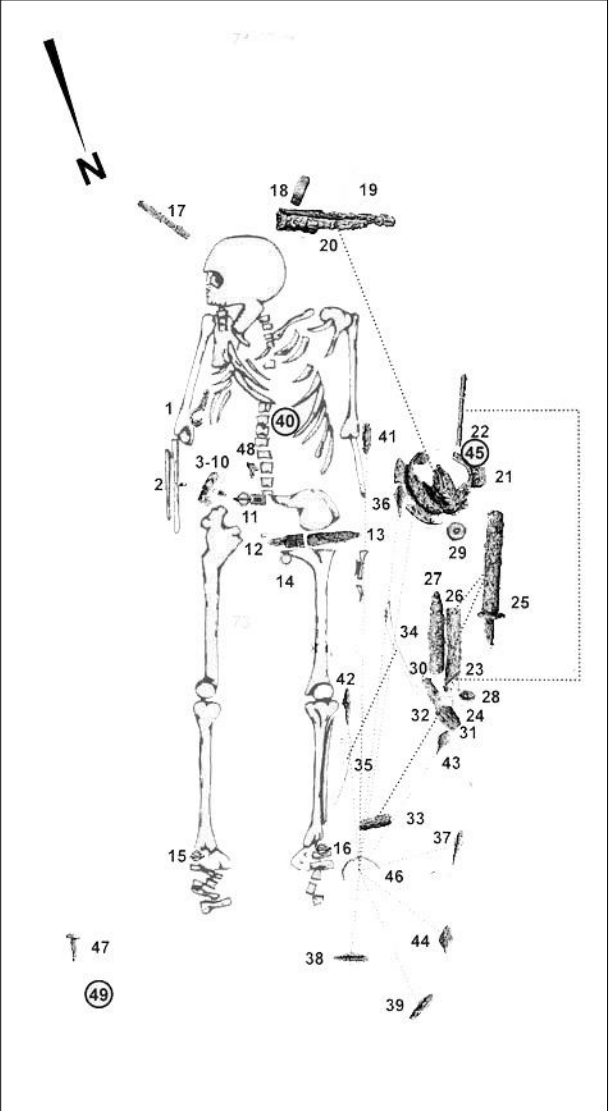
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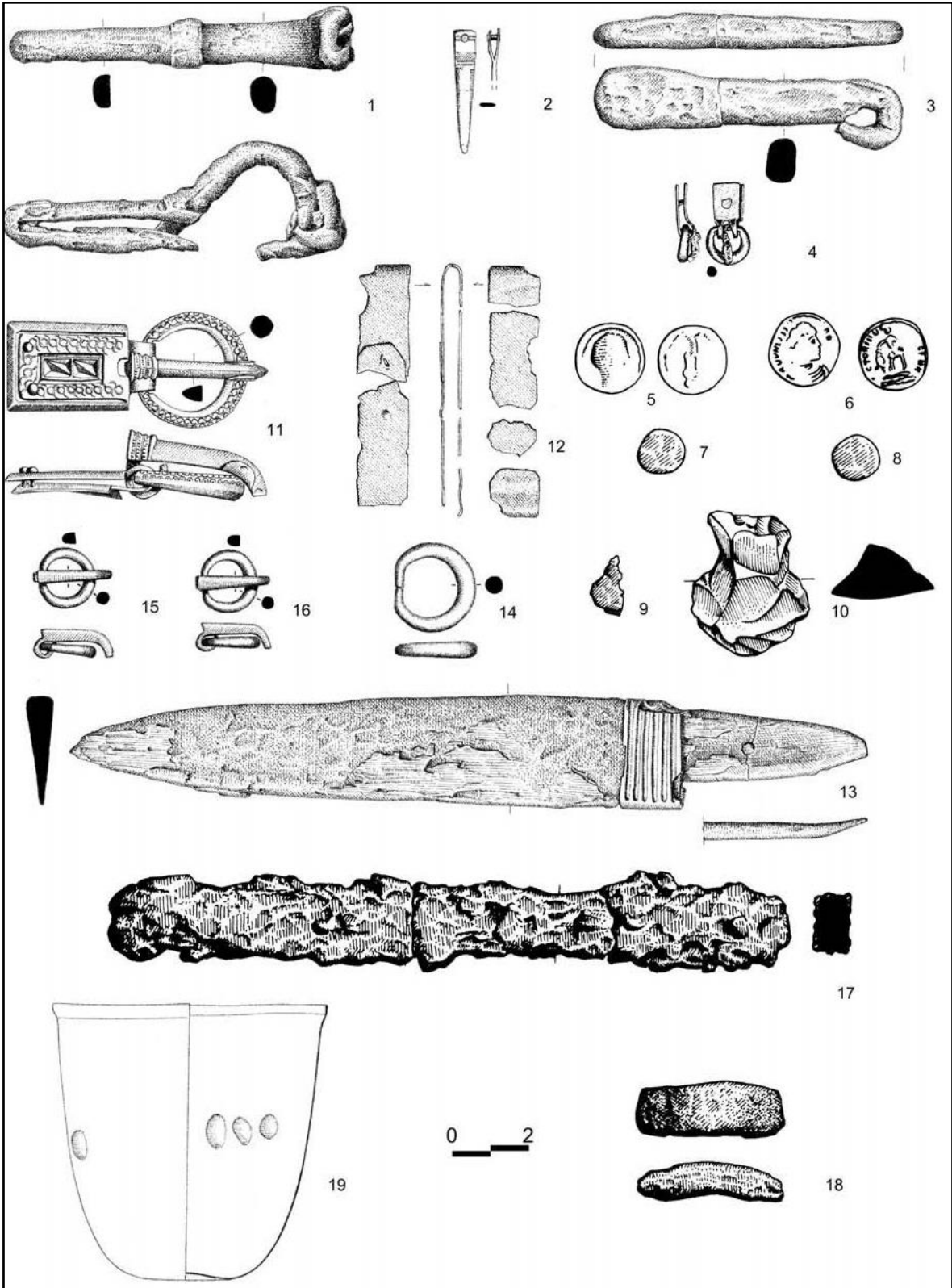
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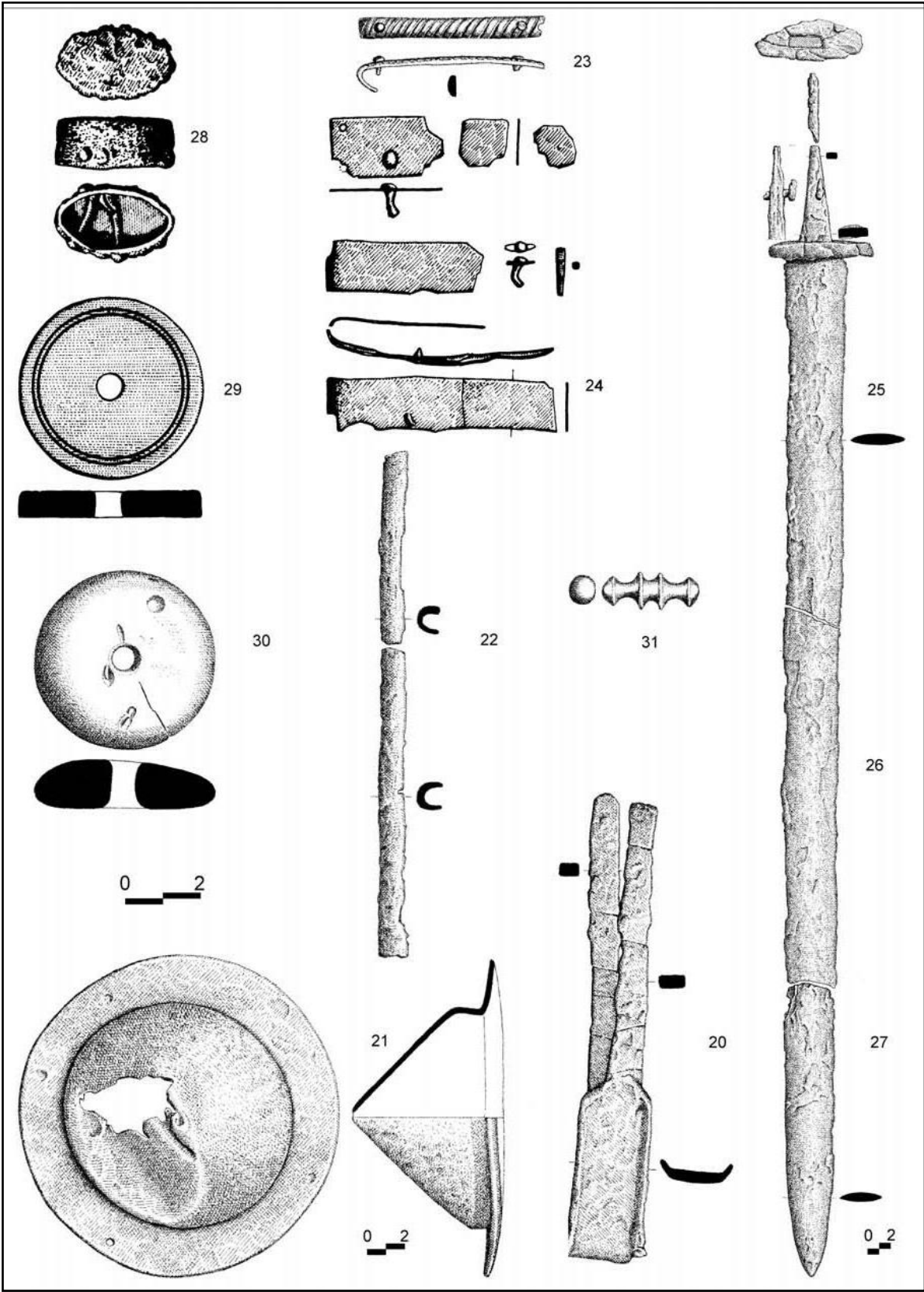


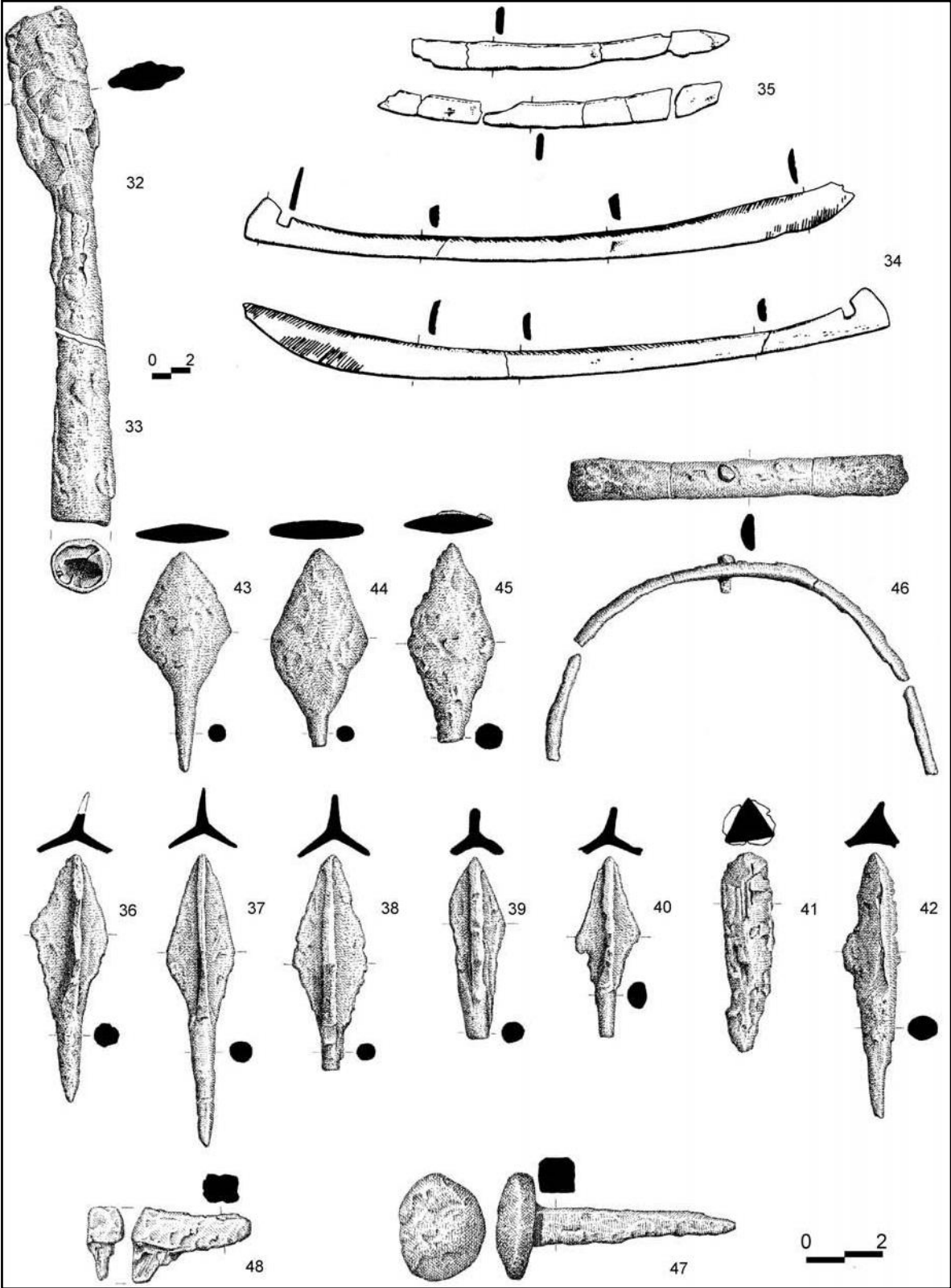
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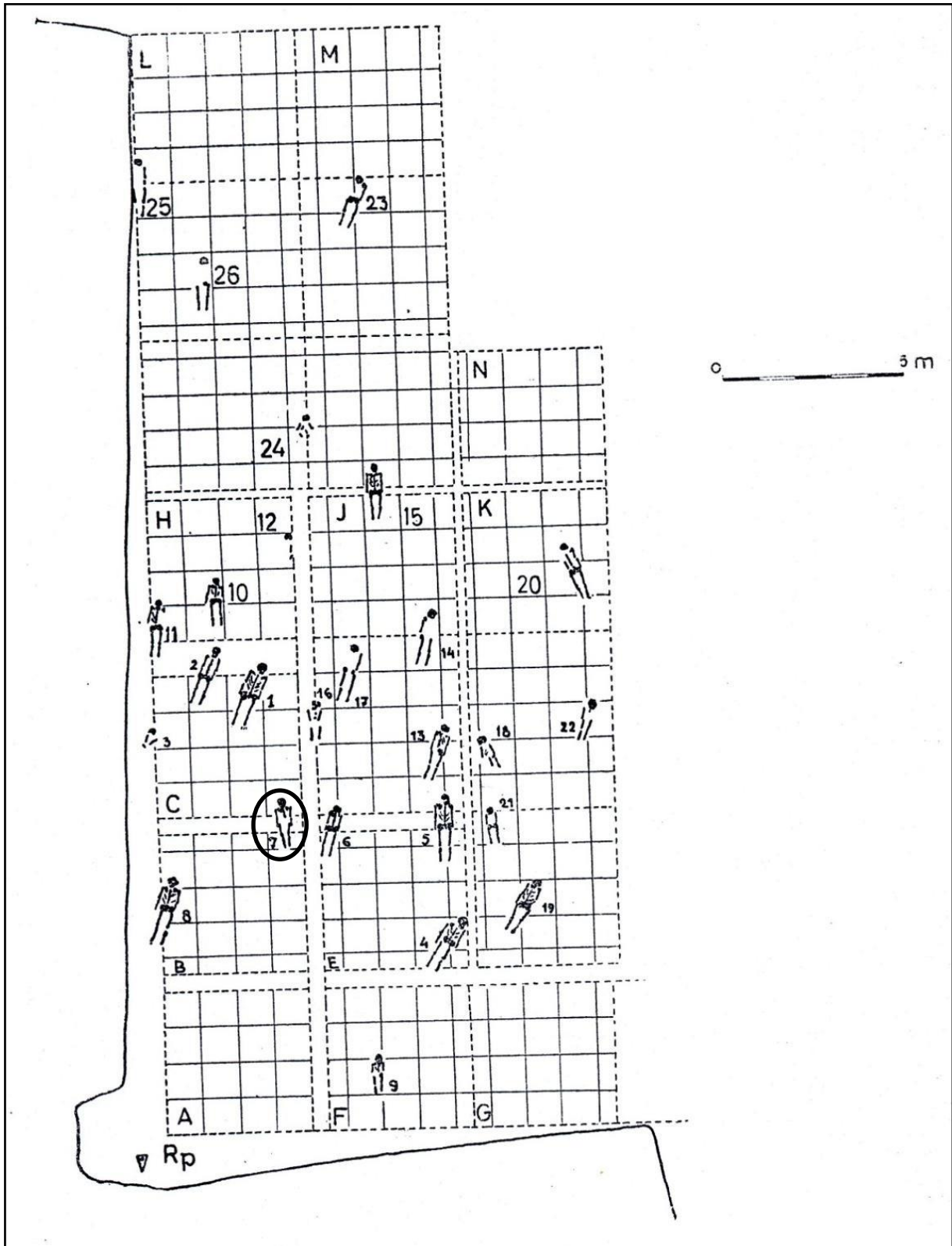
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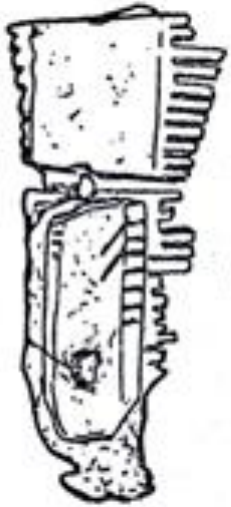
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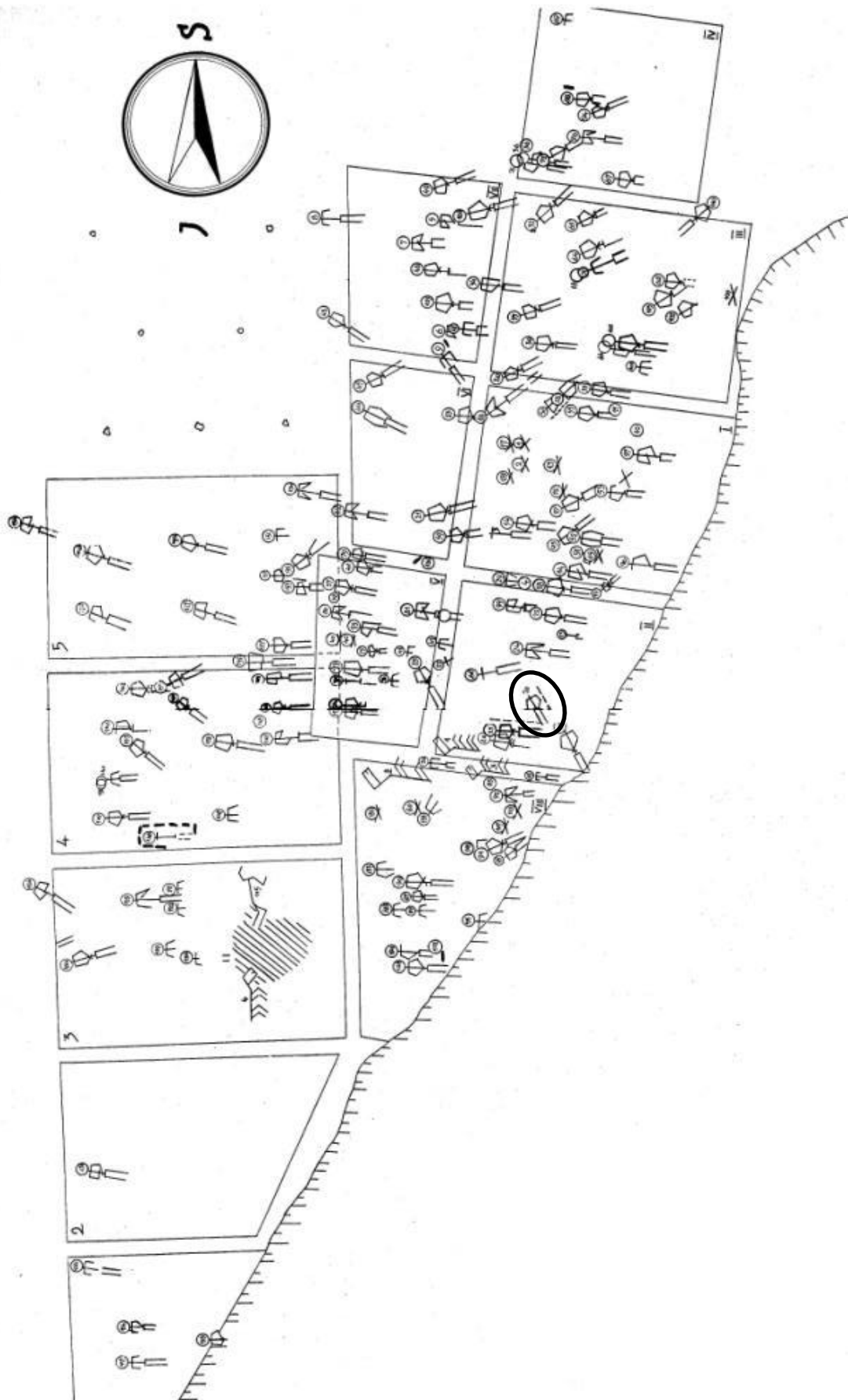


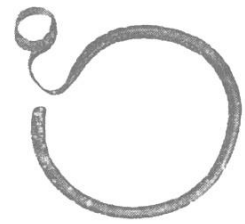
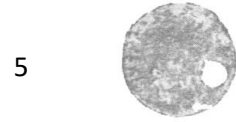
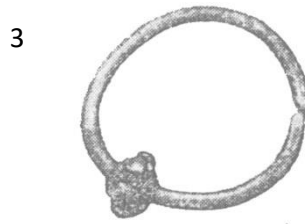
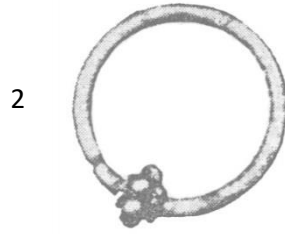
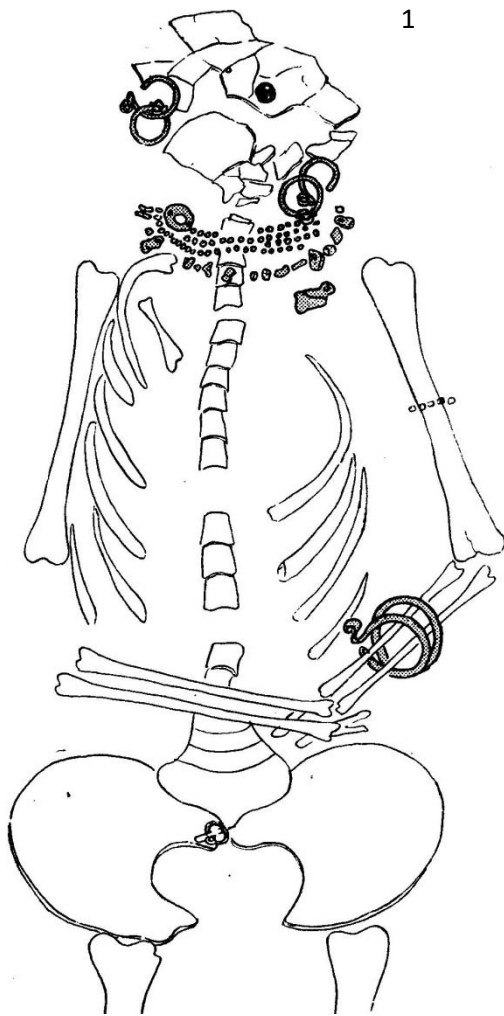
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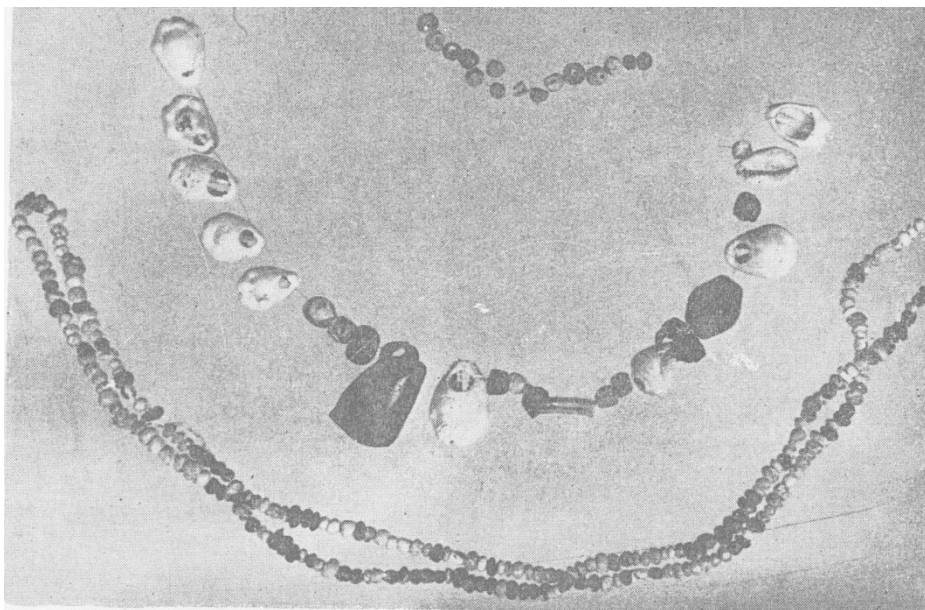
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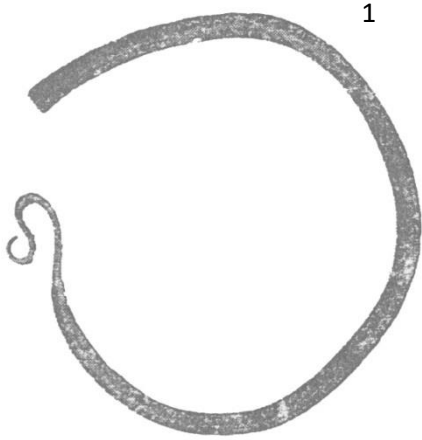




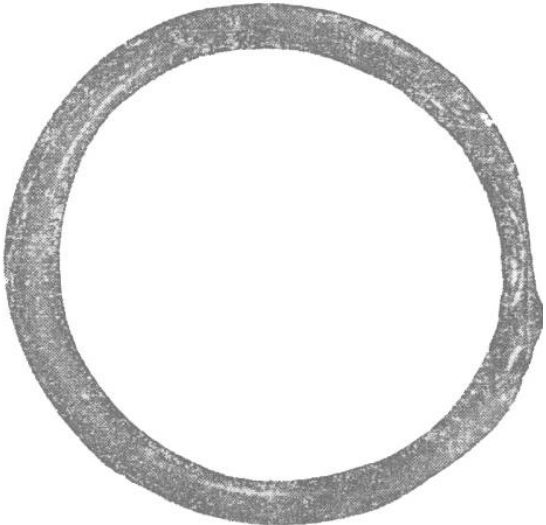
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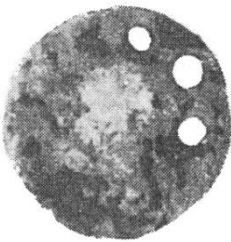
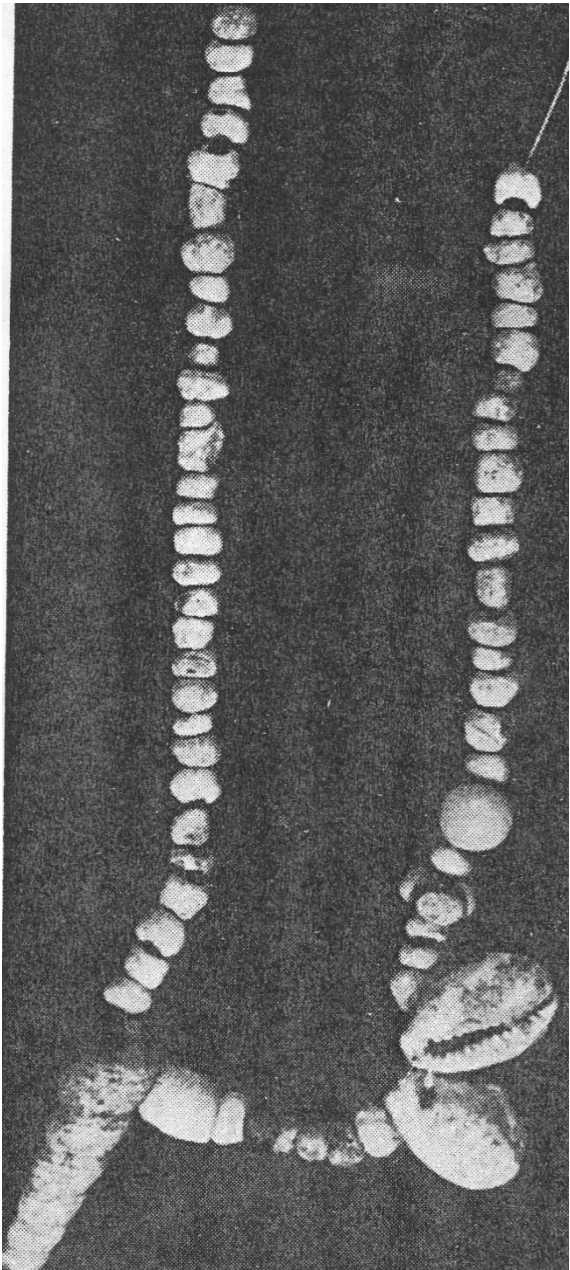
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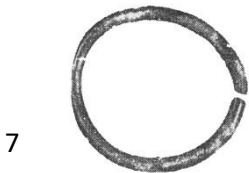
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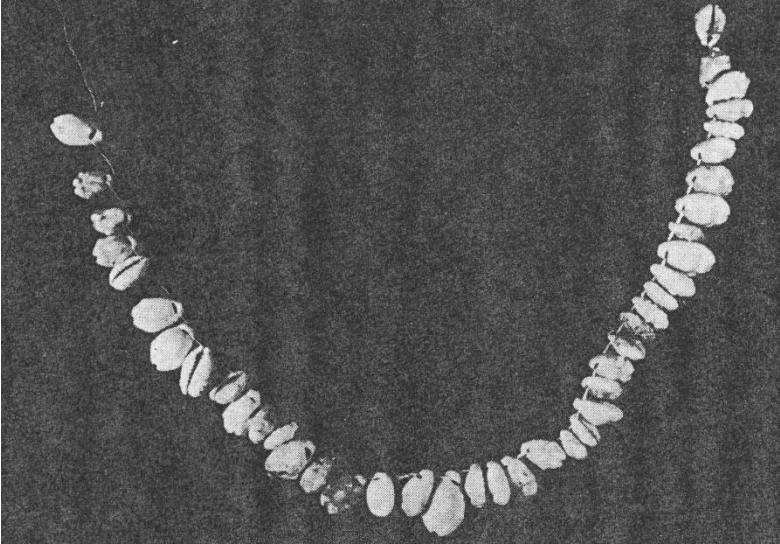
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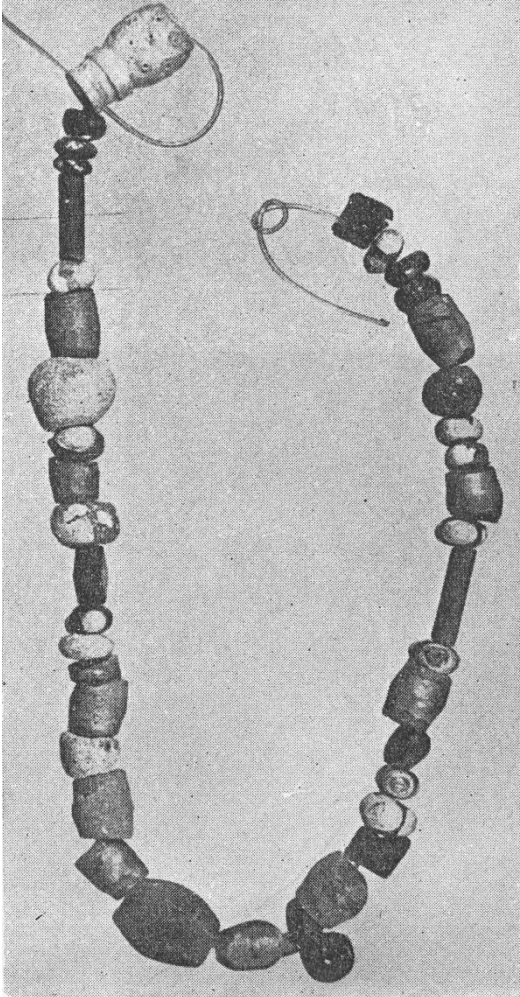
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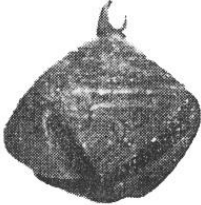
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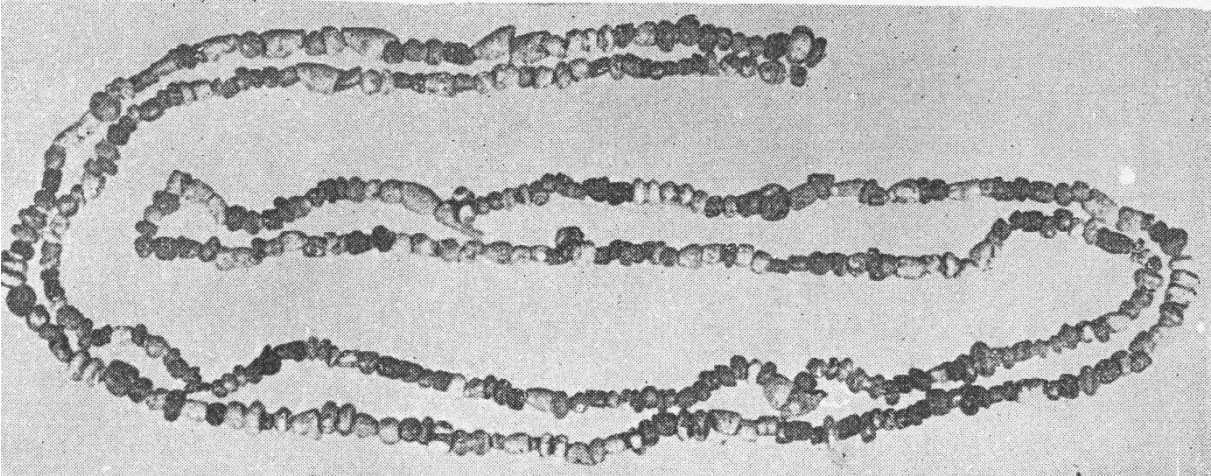


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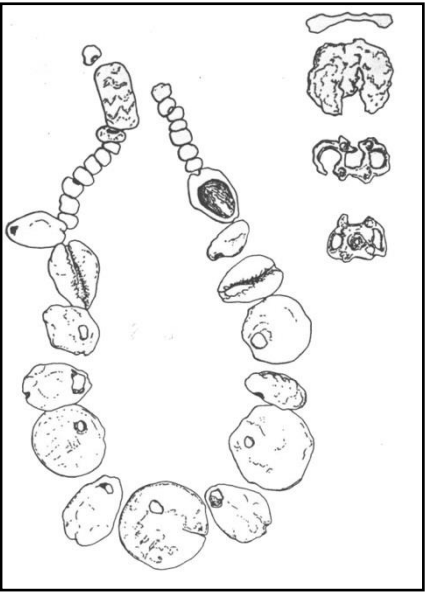


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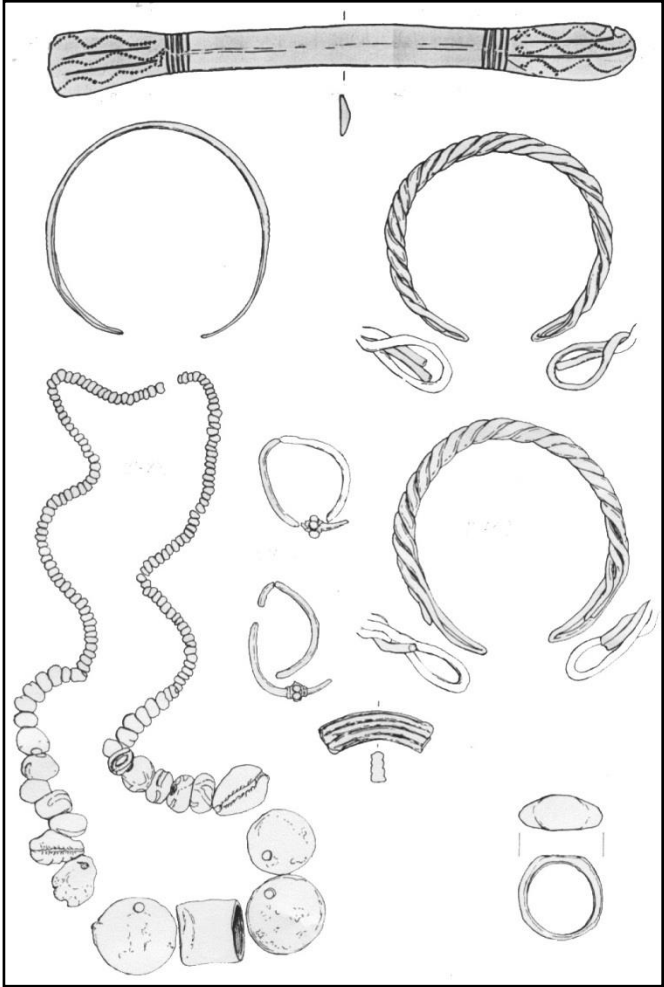


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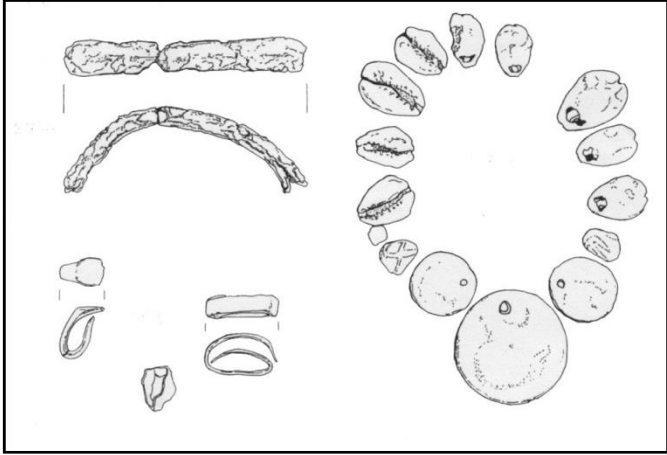
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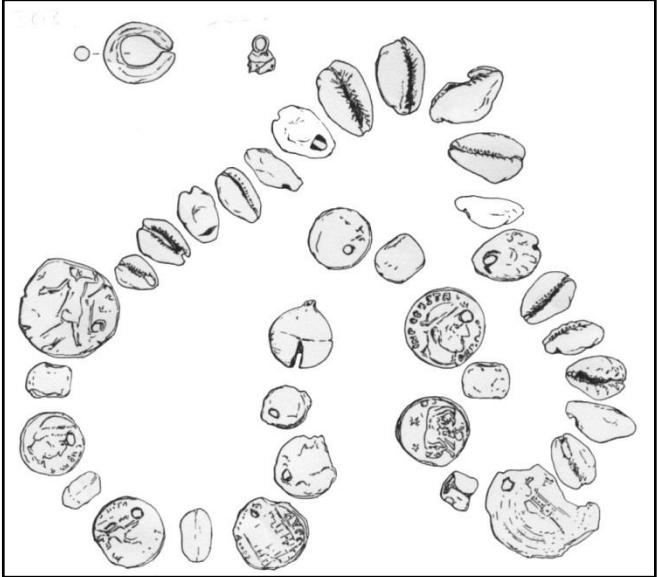
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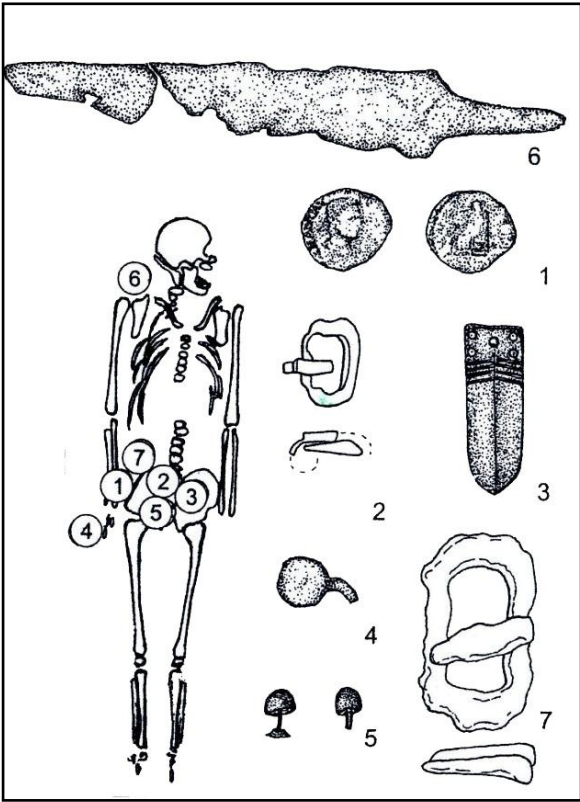
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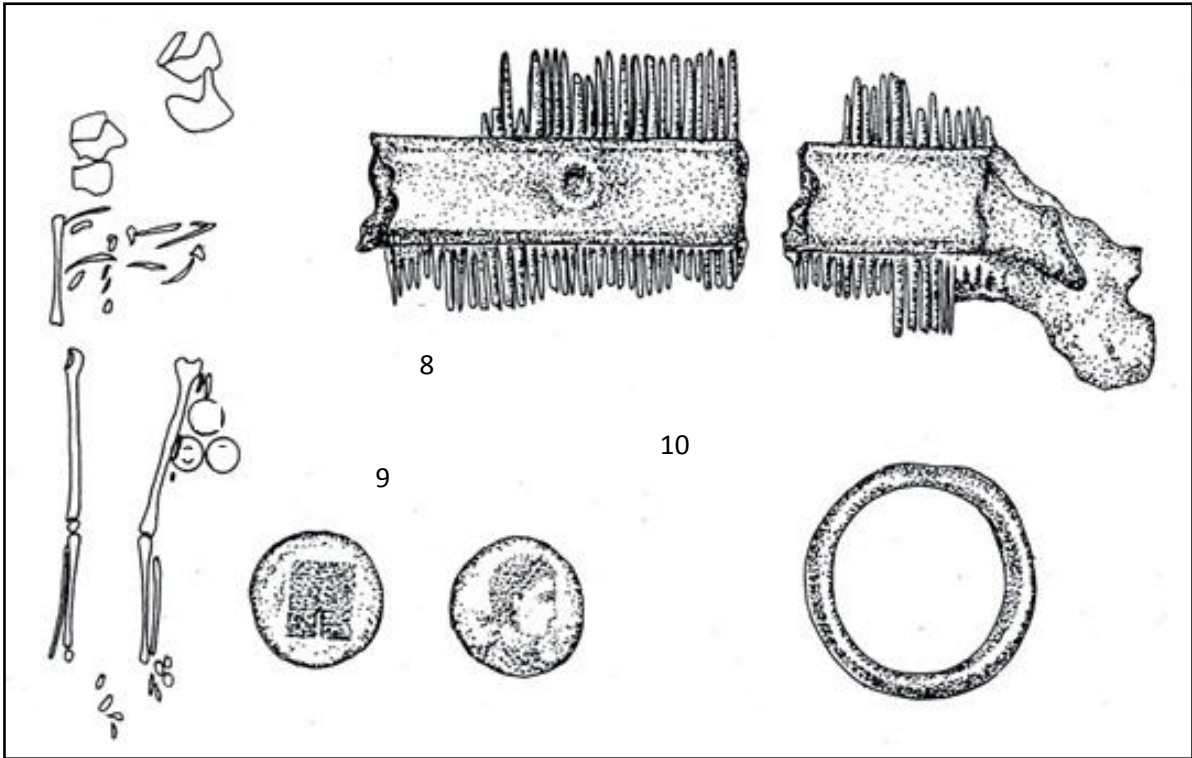
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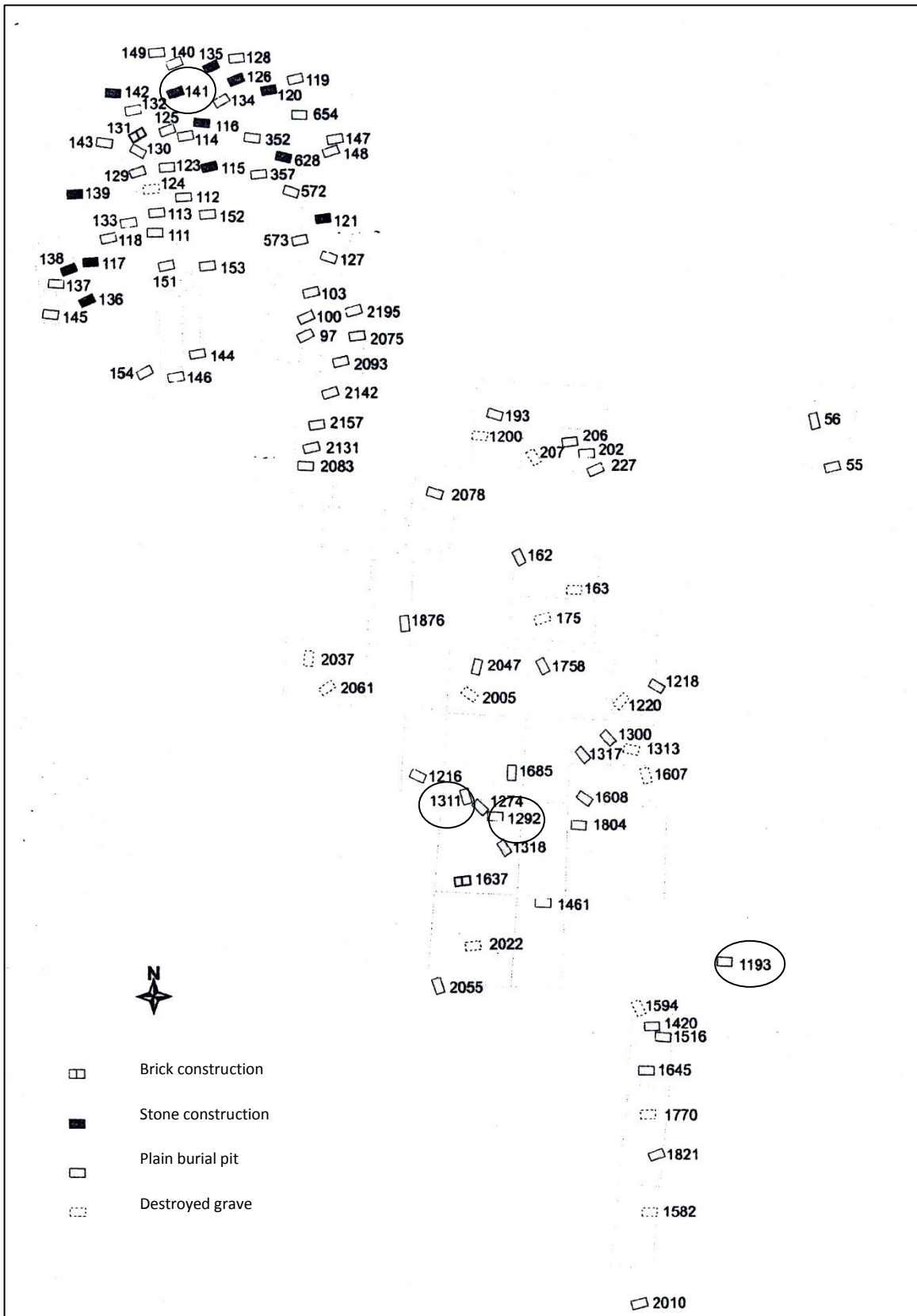


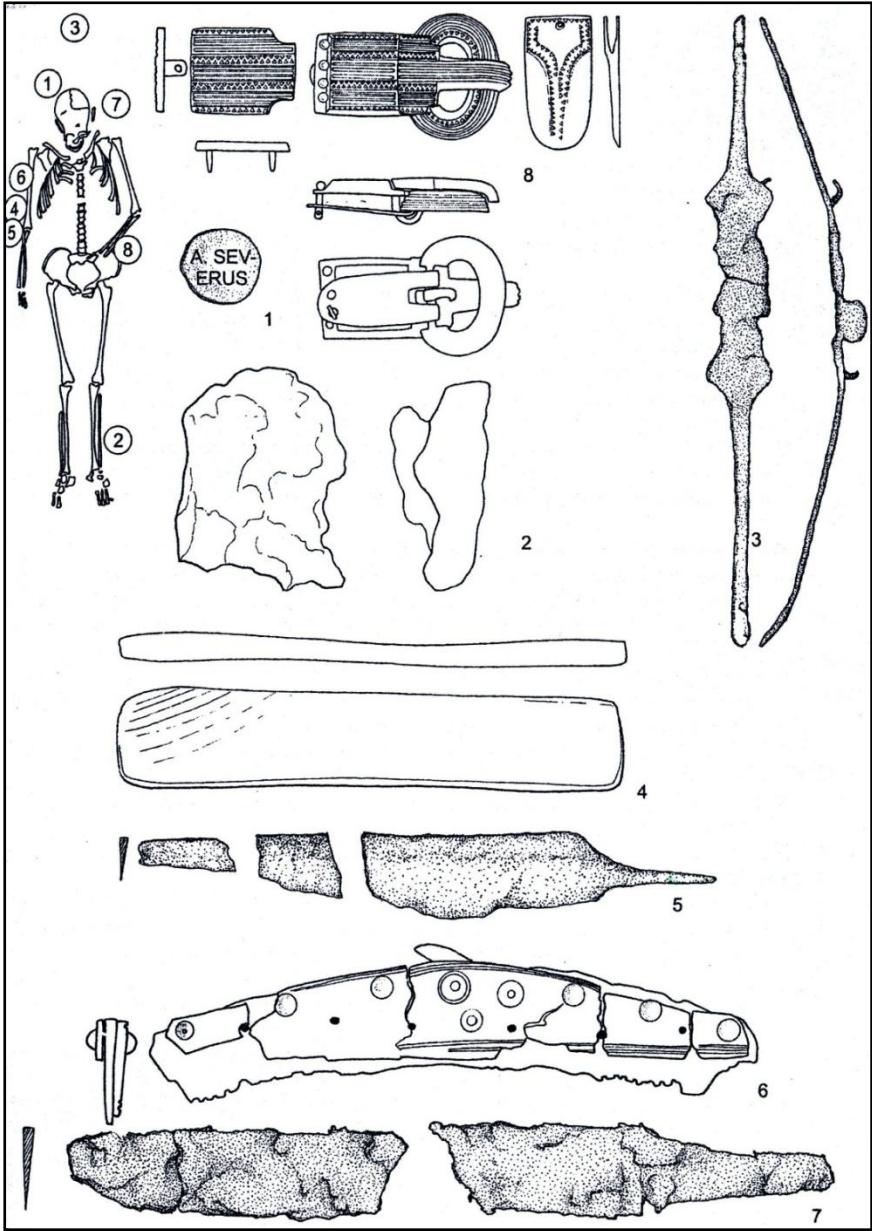


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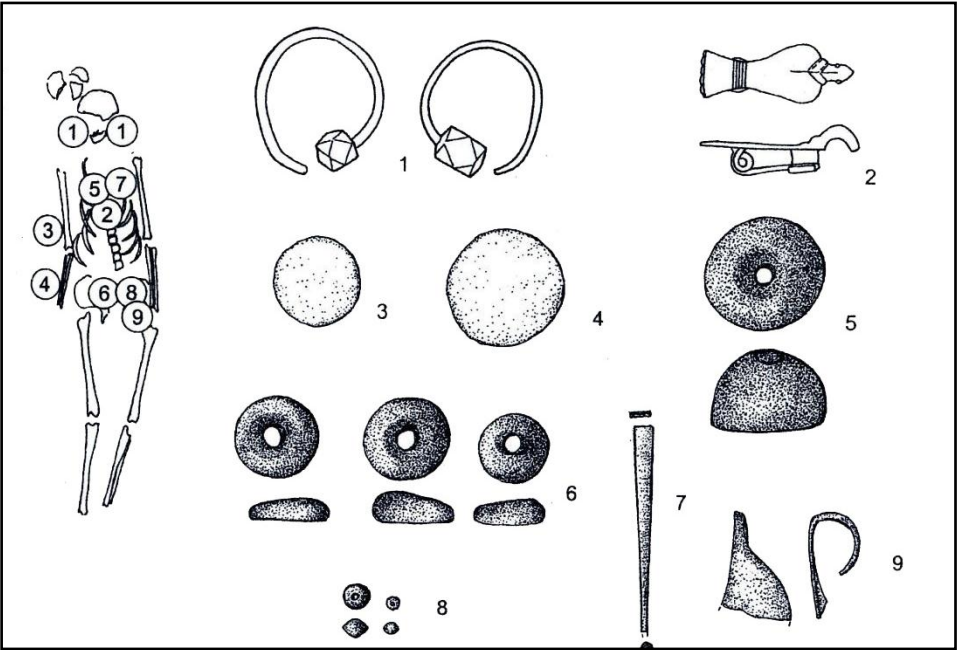
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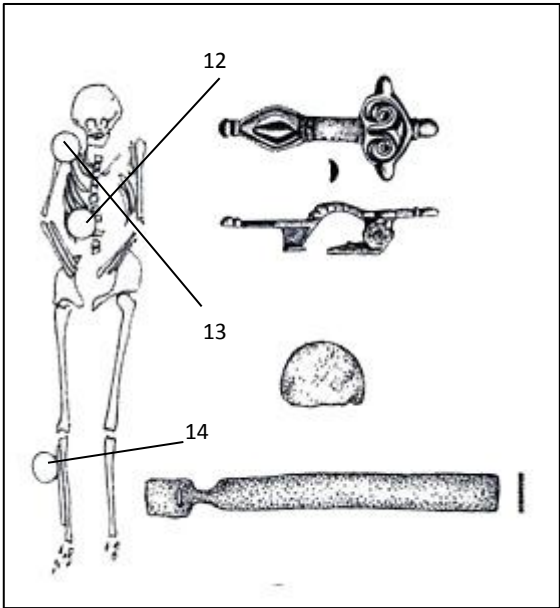
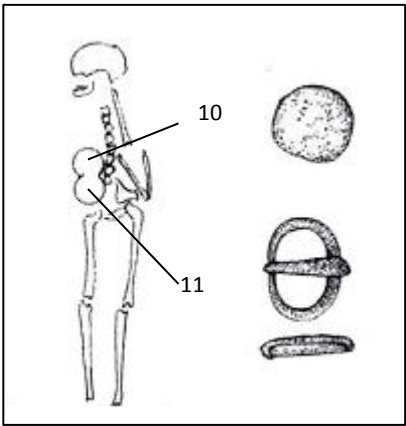




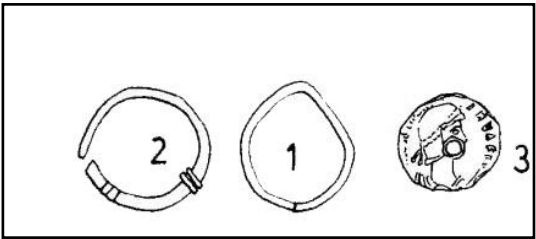
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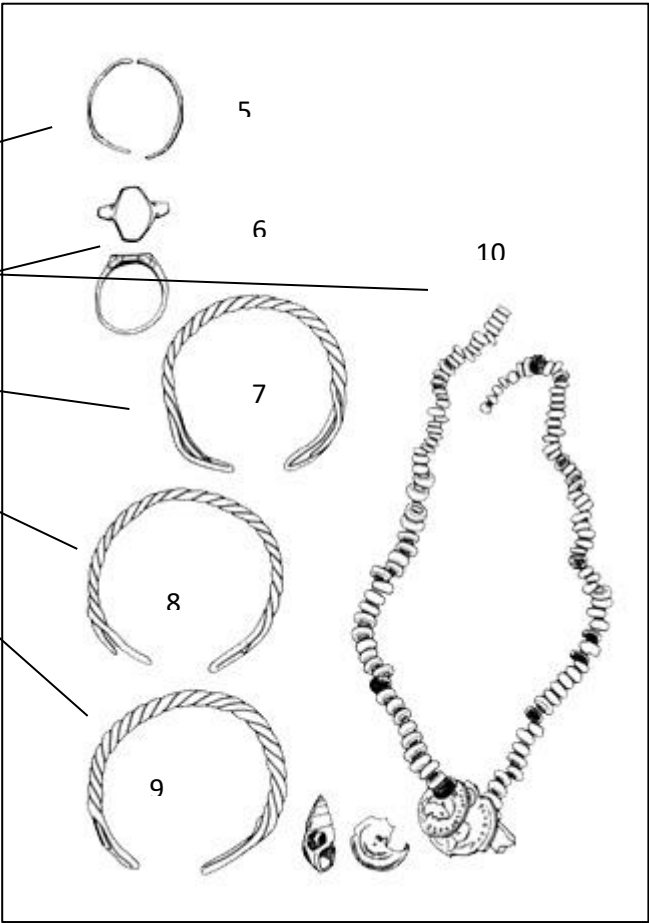
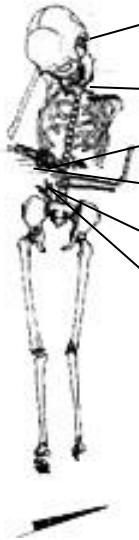


P. XLI



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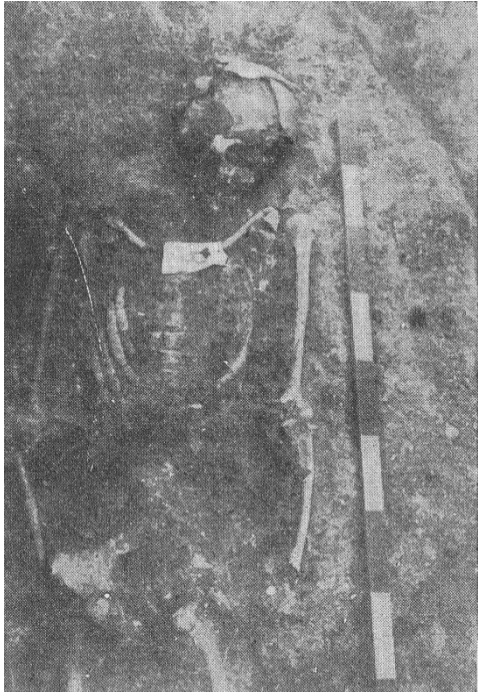
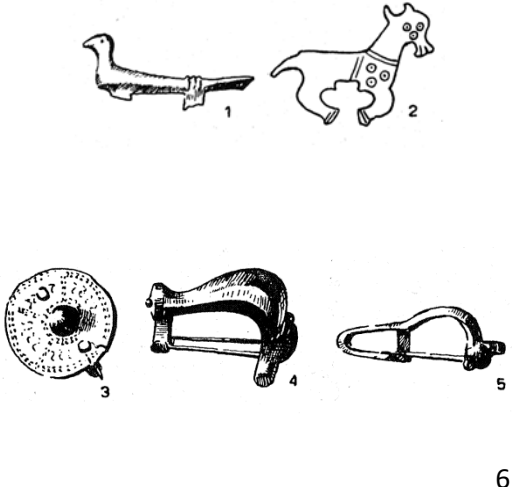
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1:2

11

P. XLII



7 Objects not to scale



P. XLIII



2:1



1:1



P. XLIV



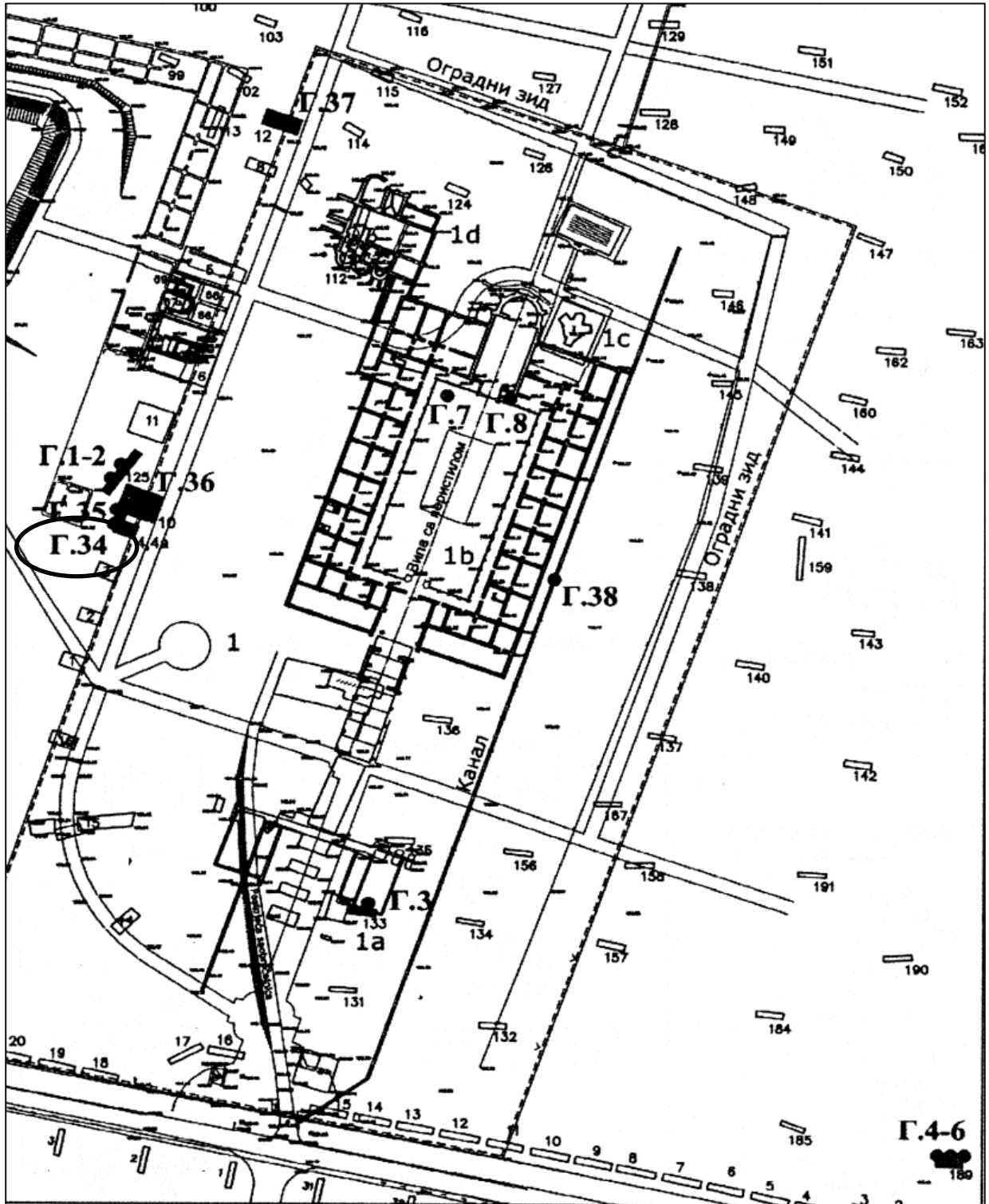
1

2:1

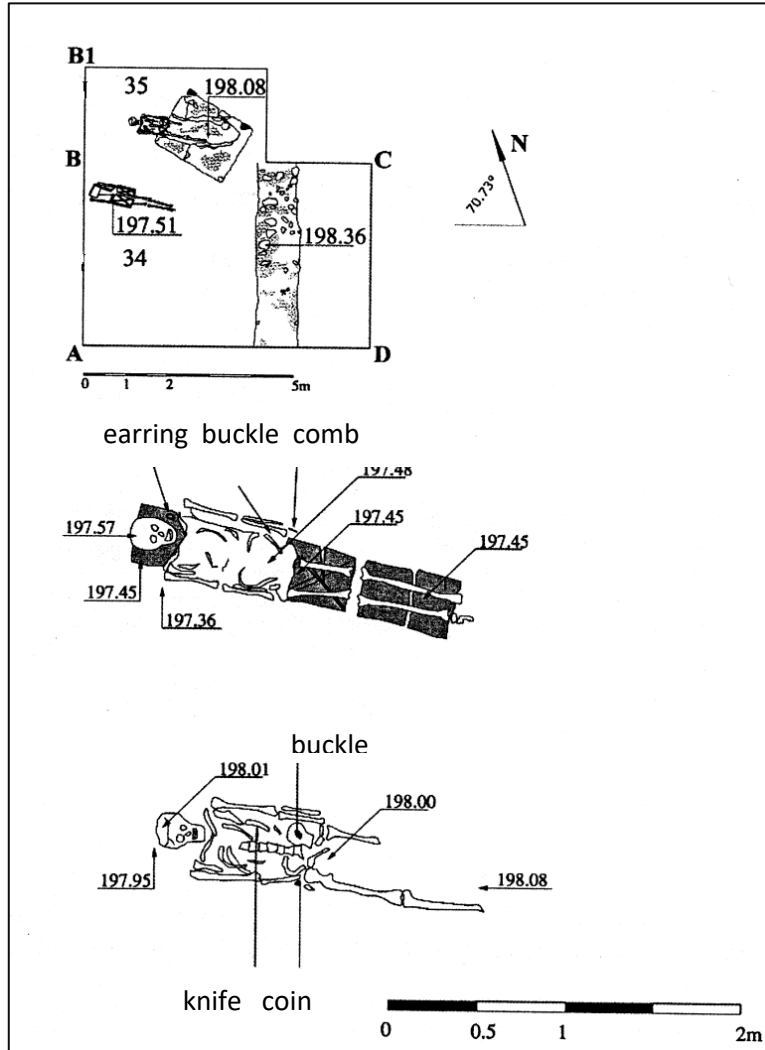
2



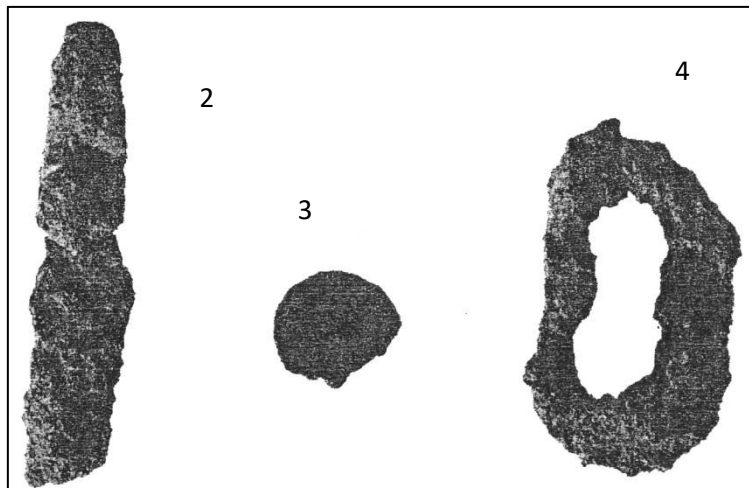
1:1

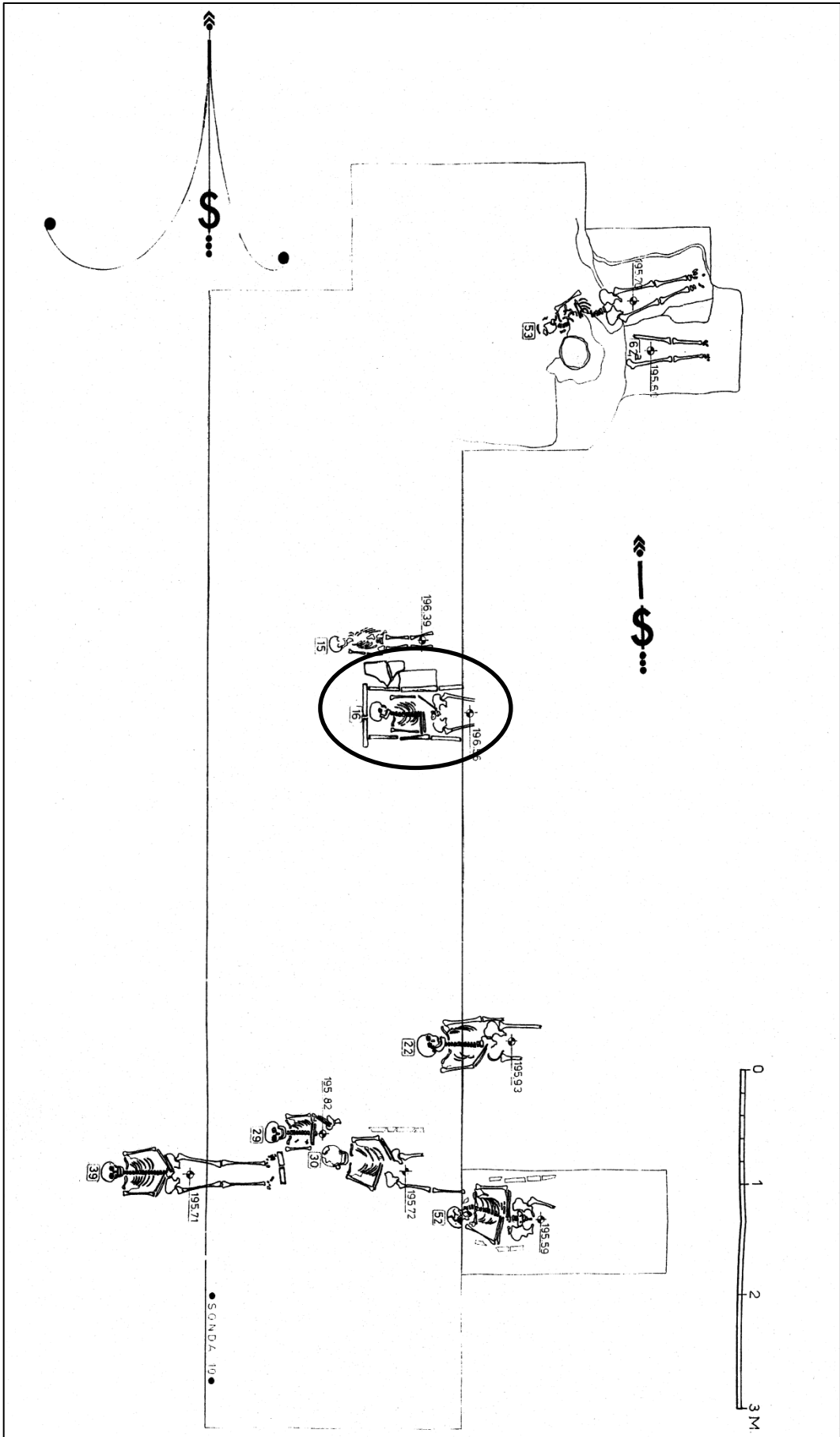


1



1:1





P. XLVIII

1



2



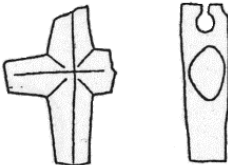
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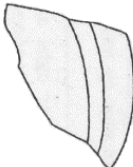
4



5



6



P. XLIX

1



2



3



4



P. L

1



2



3



4

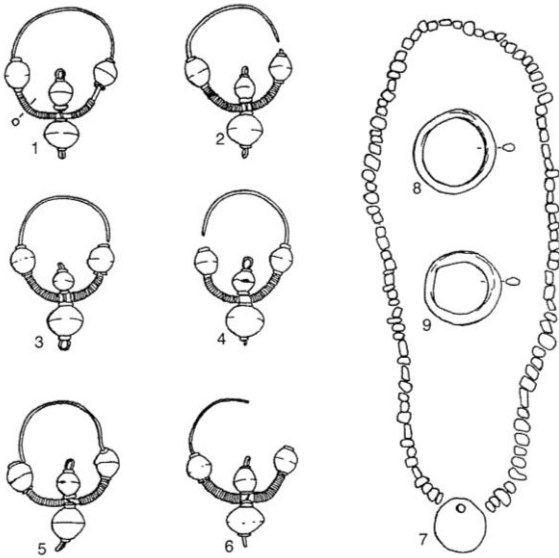


5



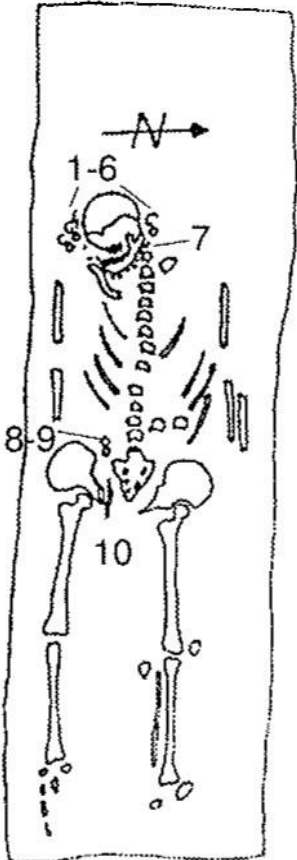
1:1





1:2

10



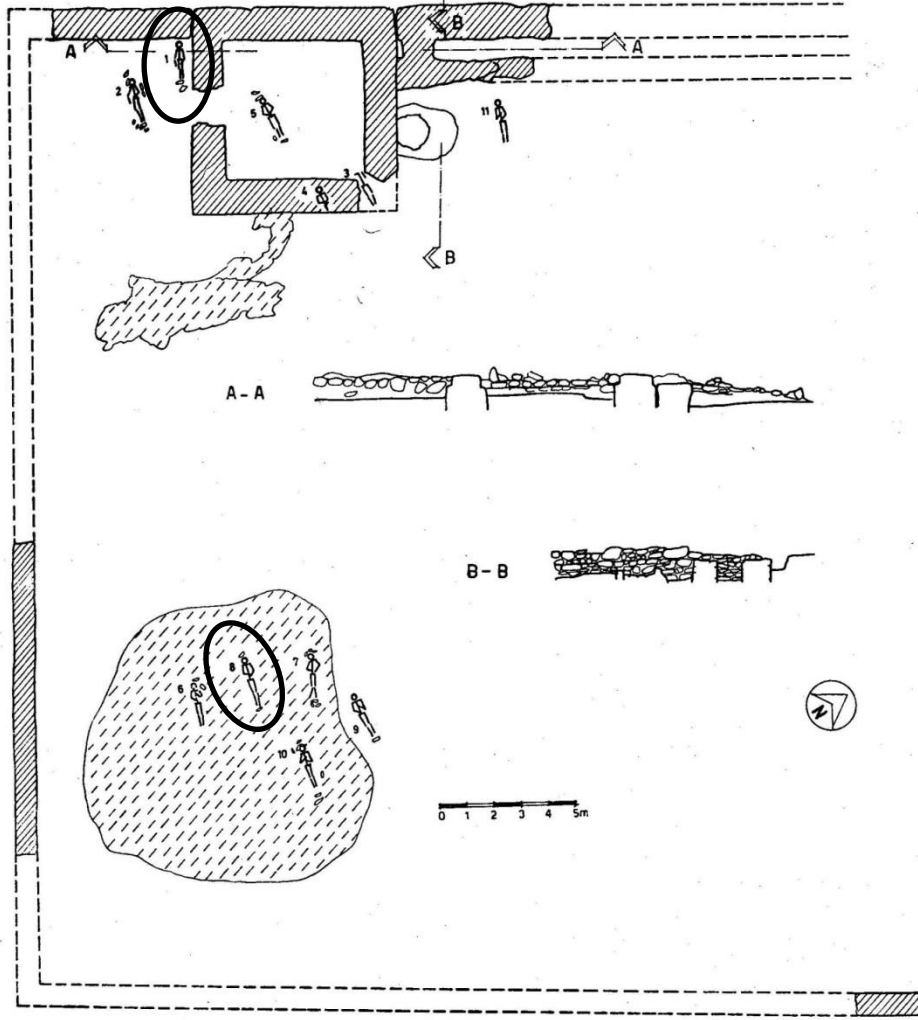
11



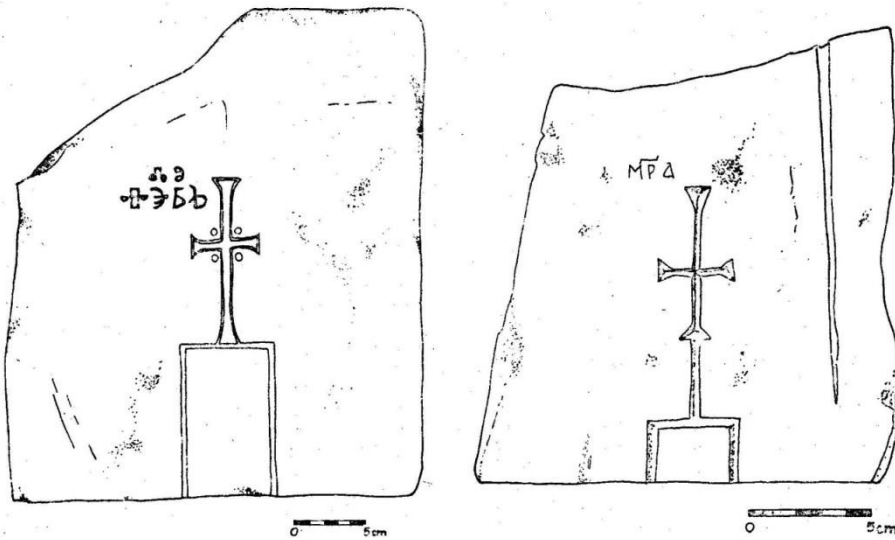
Object not to scale

P. LIV

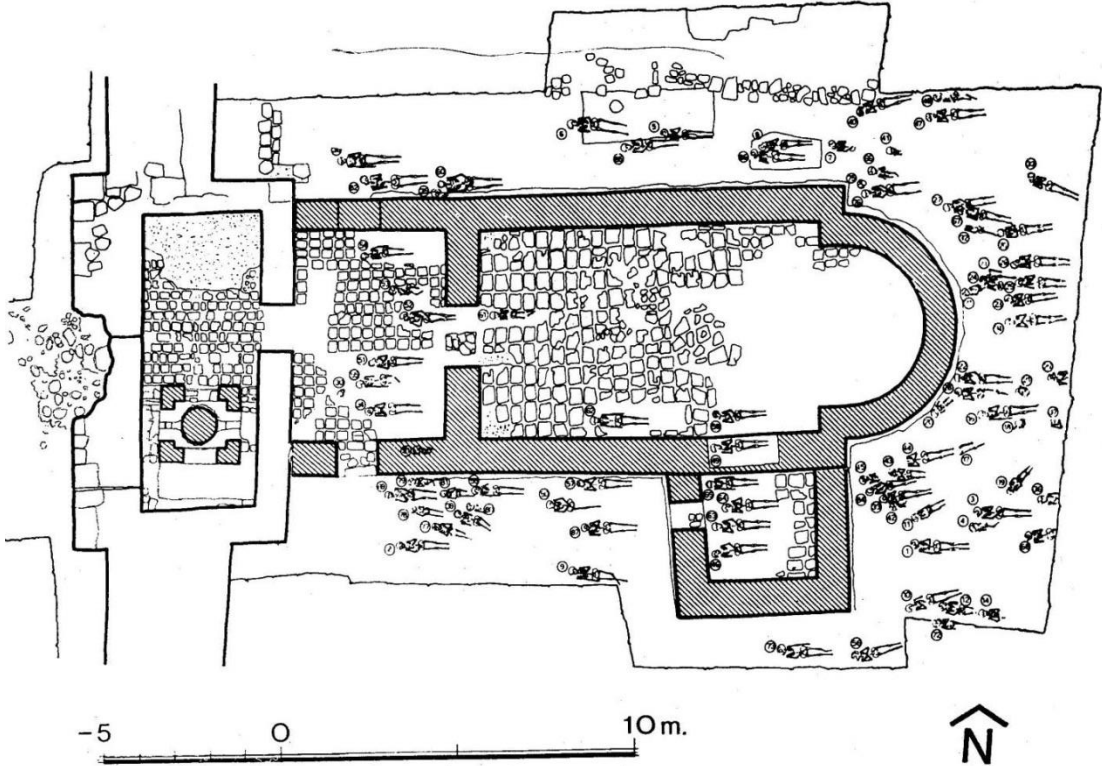
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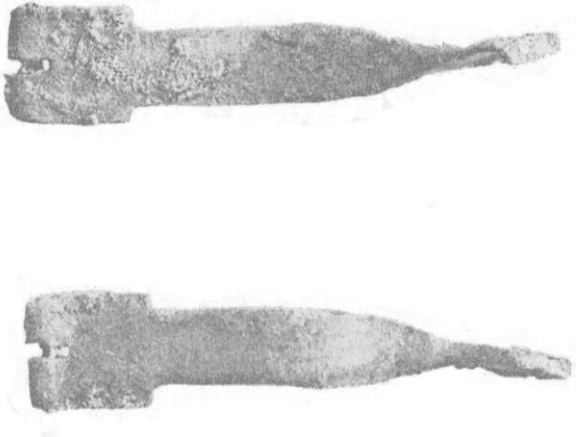
2



1



2

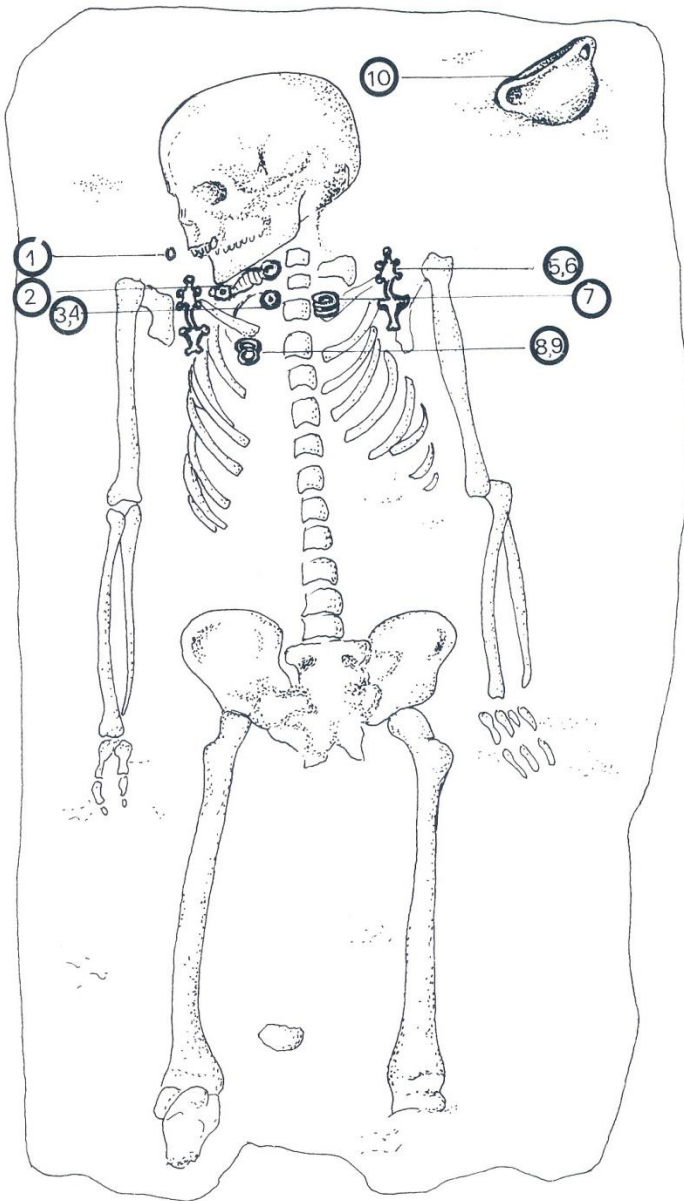


3

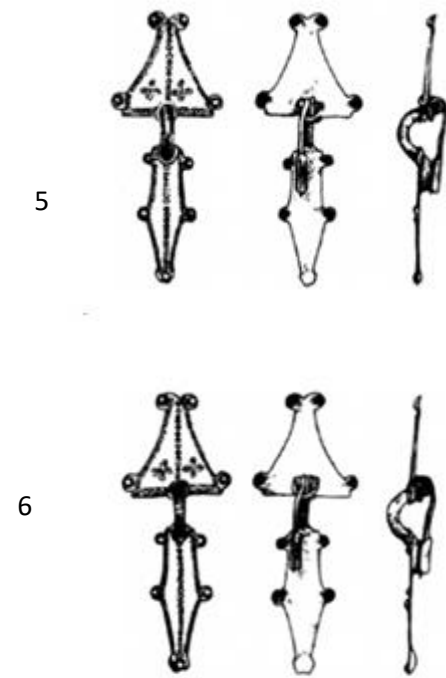


Objects not to scale

P. LVI



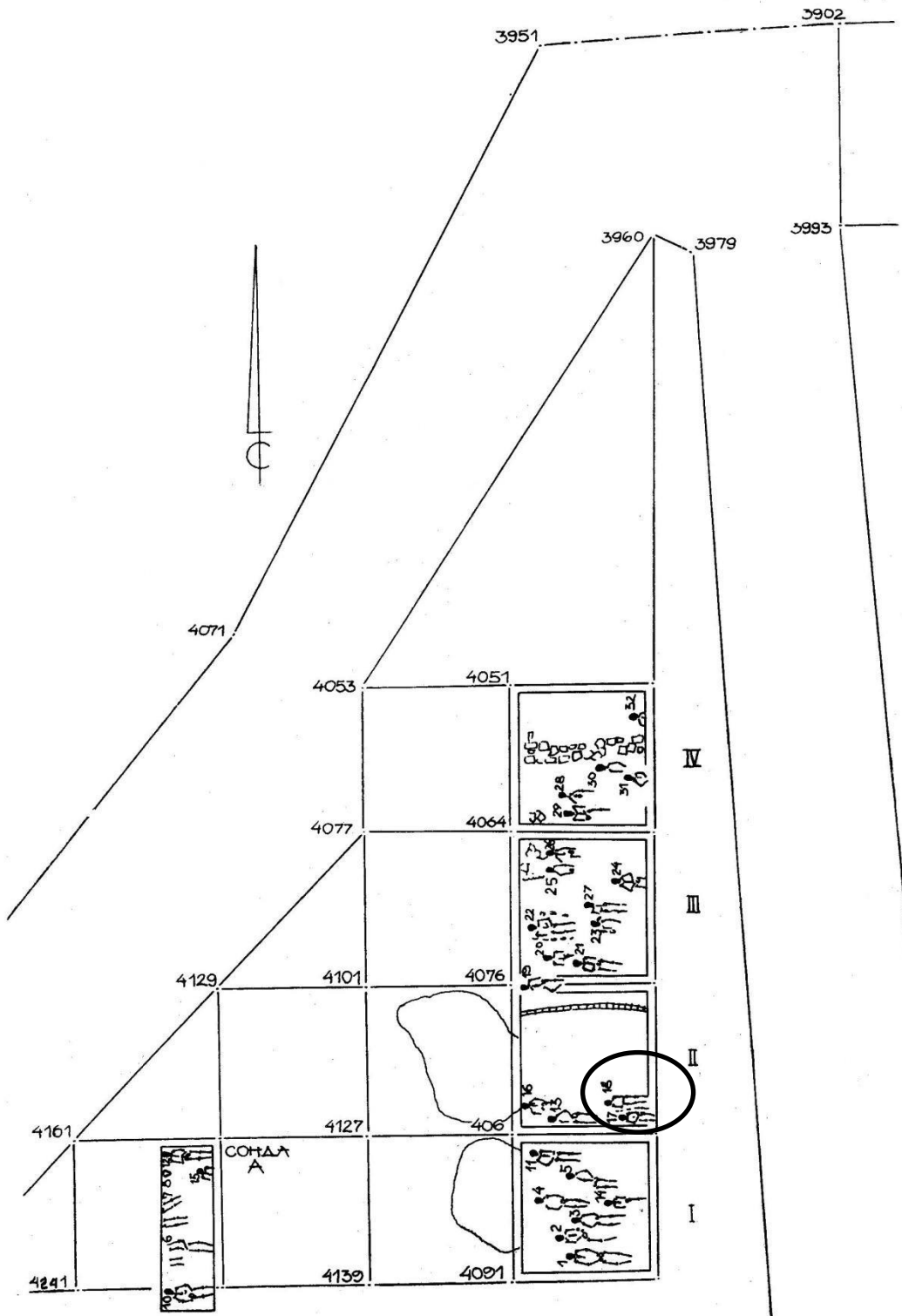
11



10

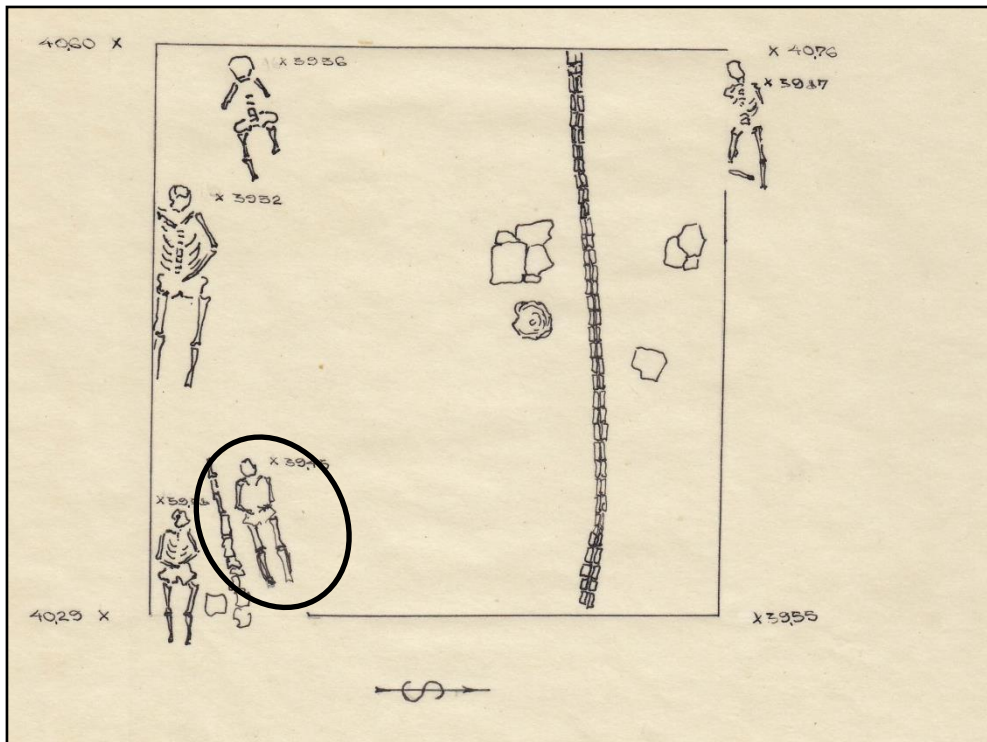


P. LVII

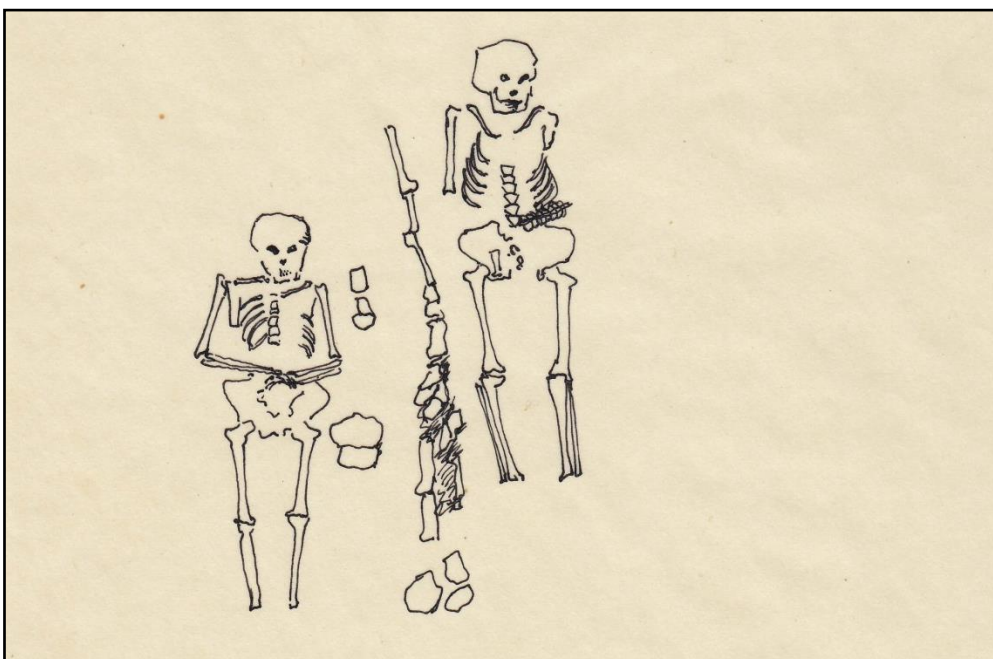


P. LVIII

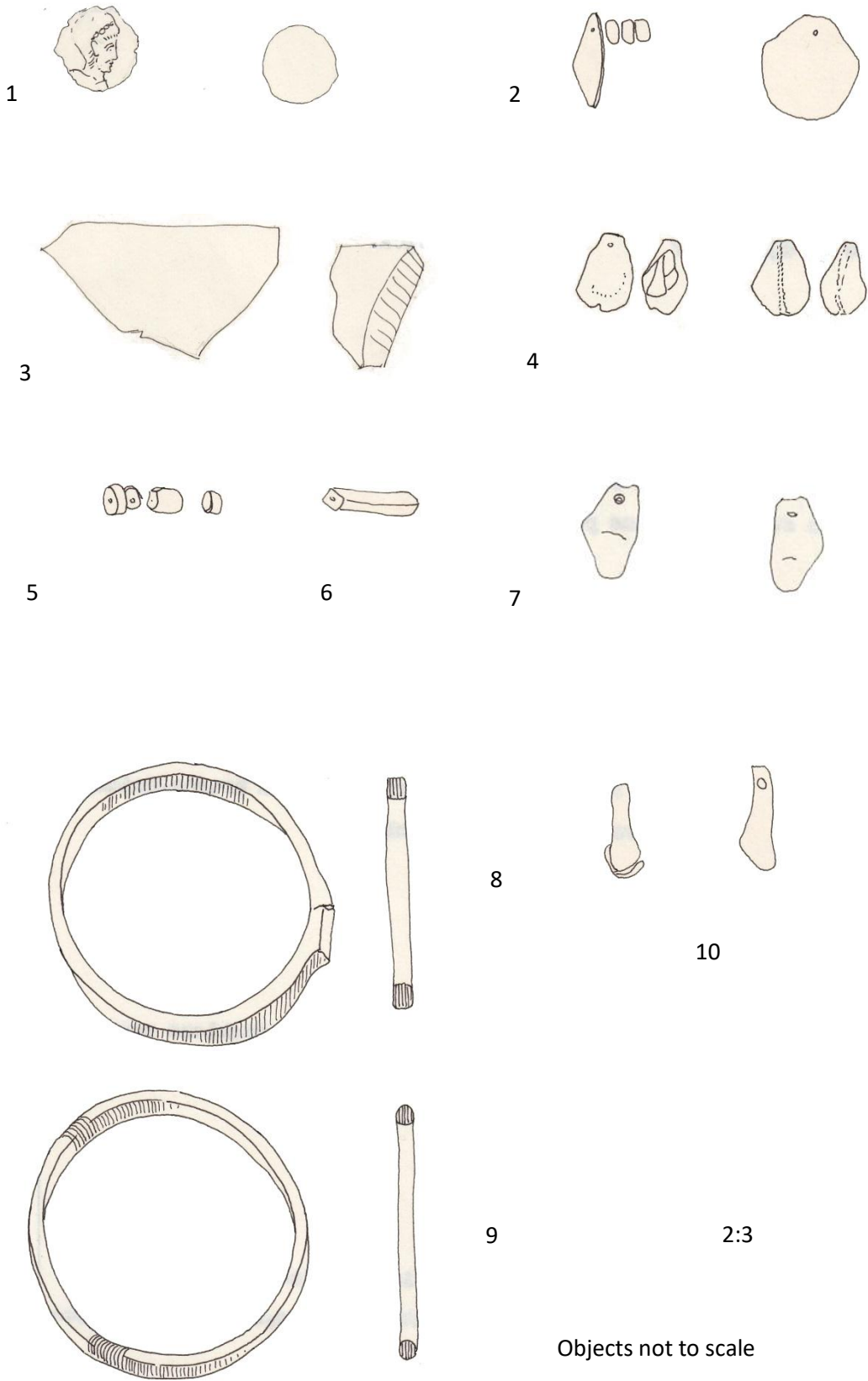
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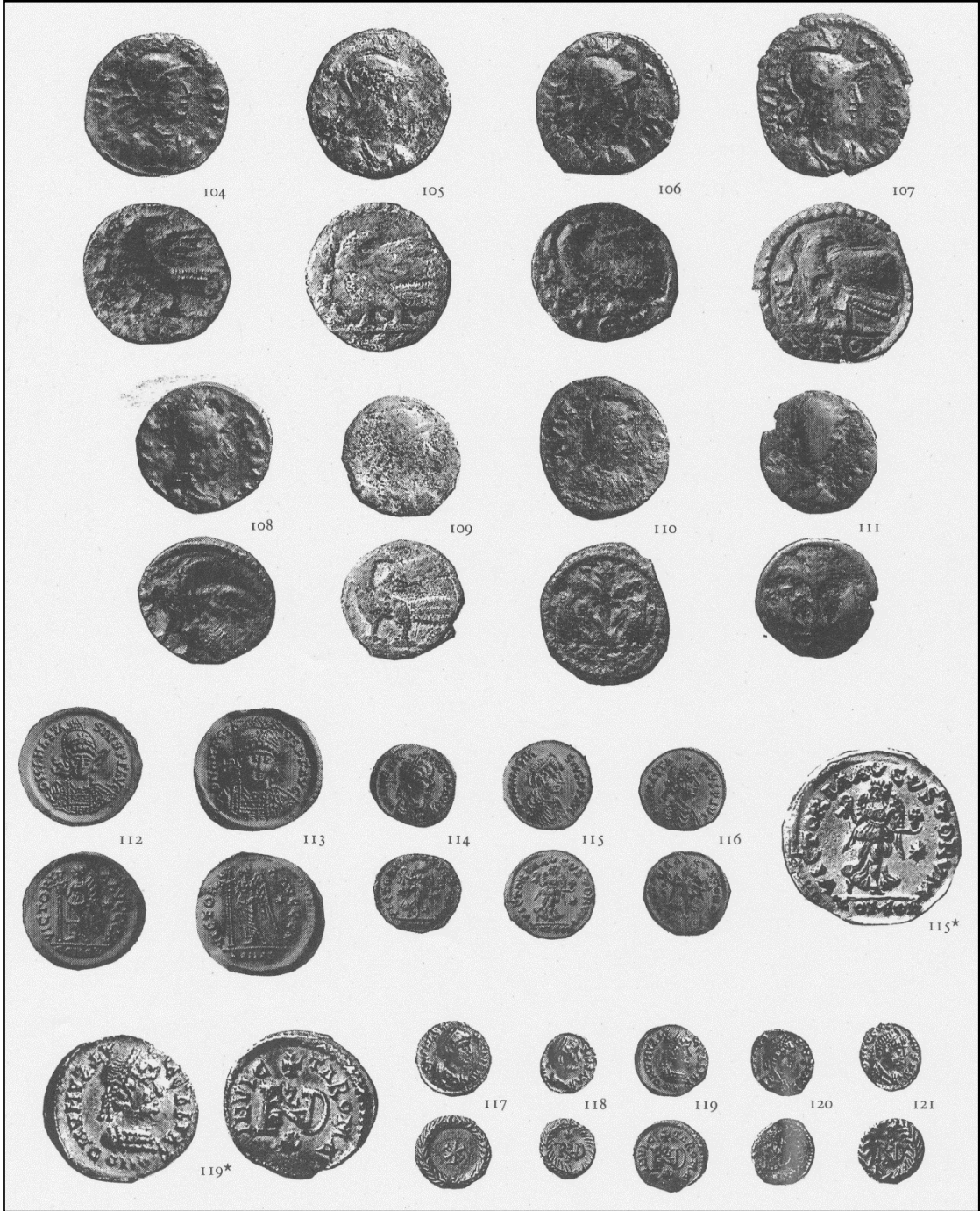


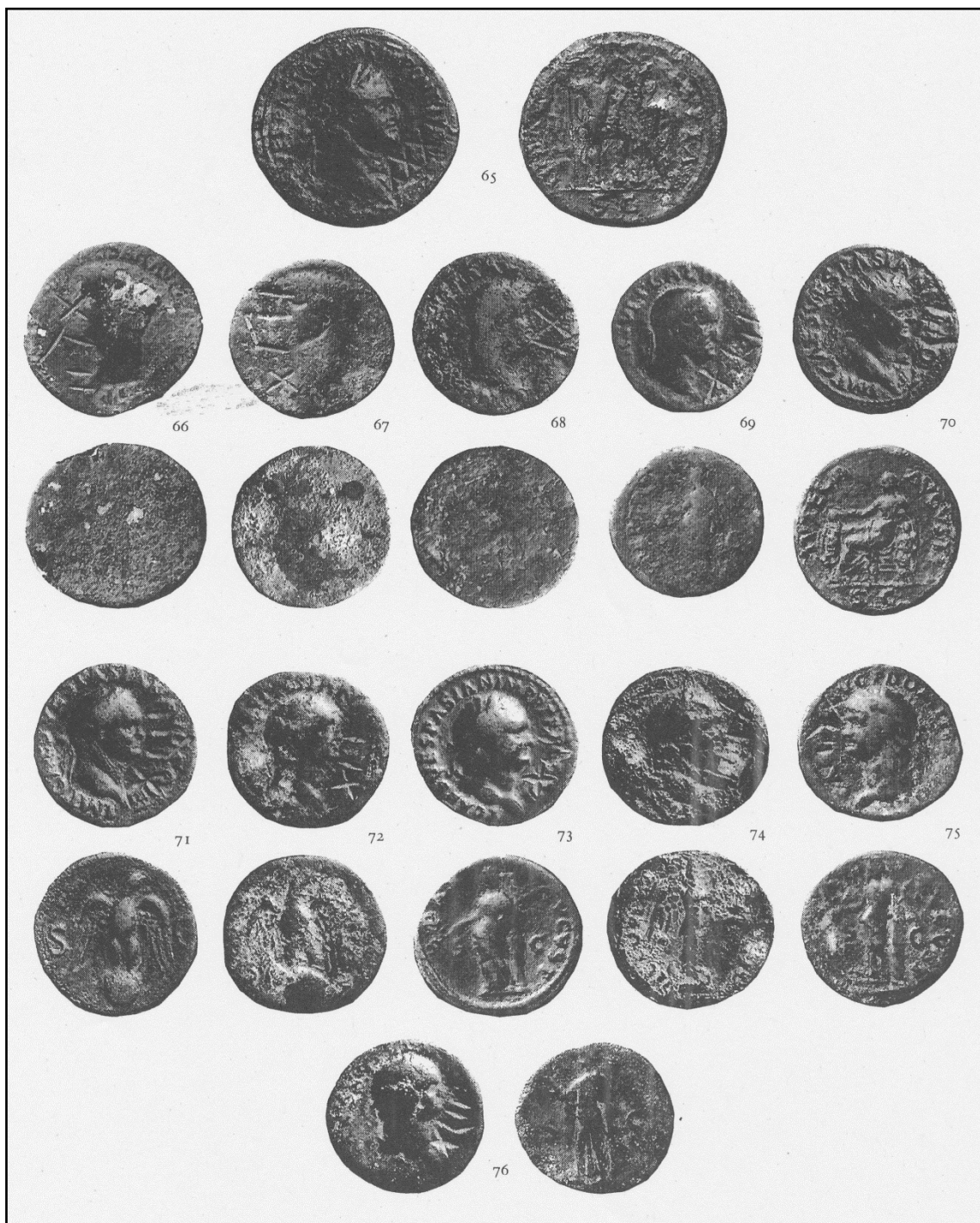
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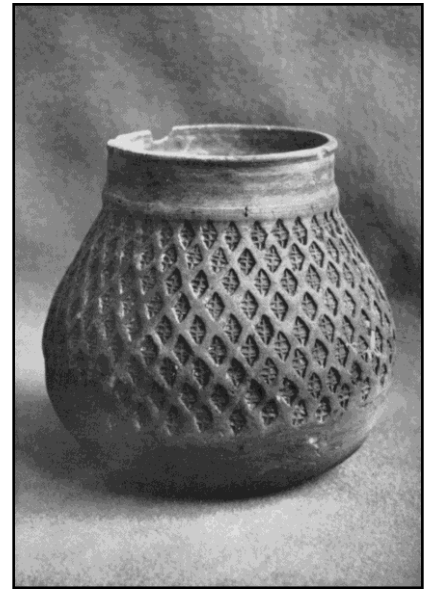
P. LIX







P. LXIII



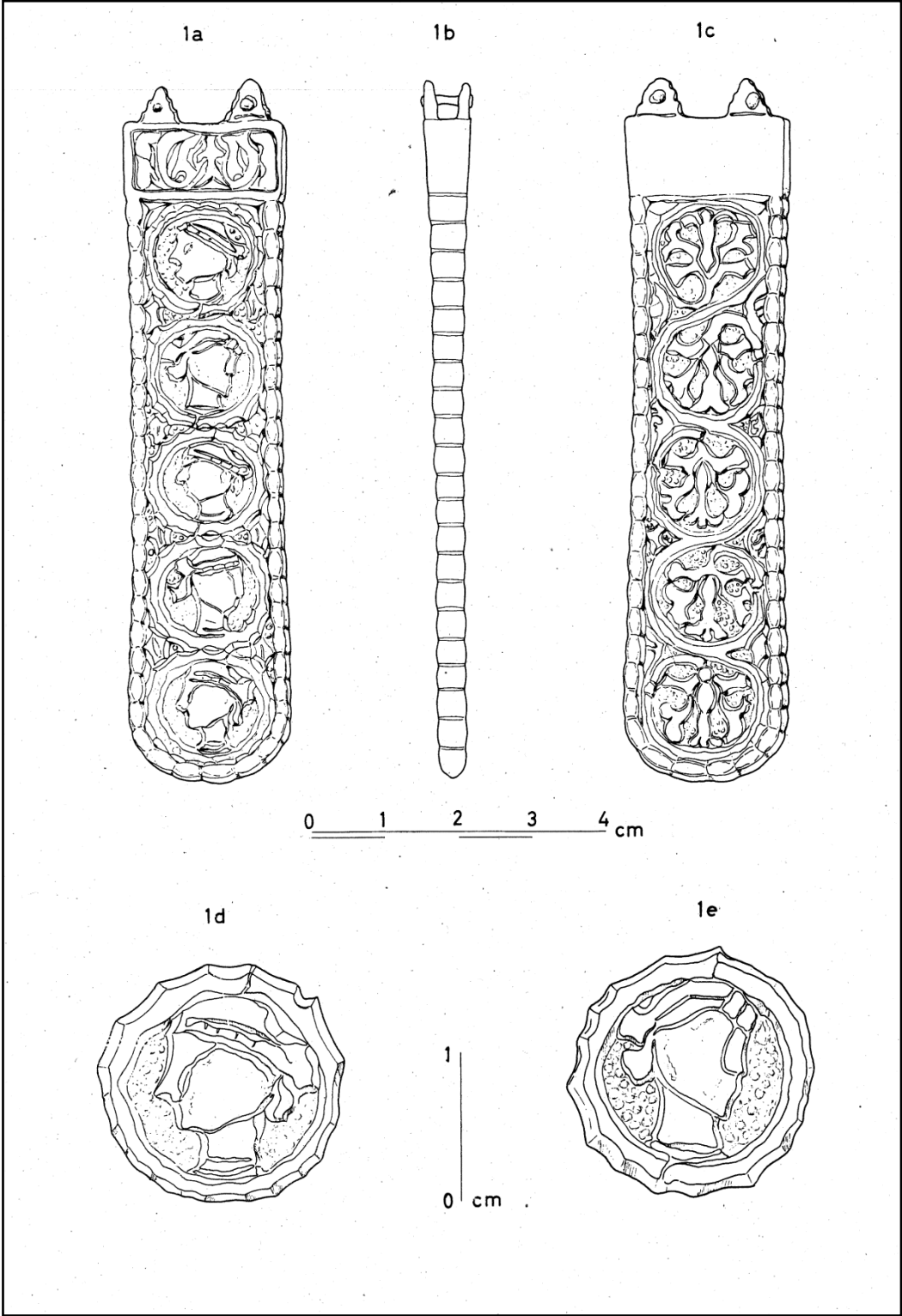
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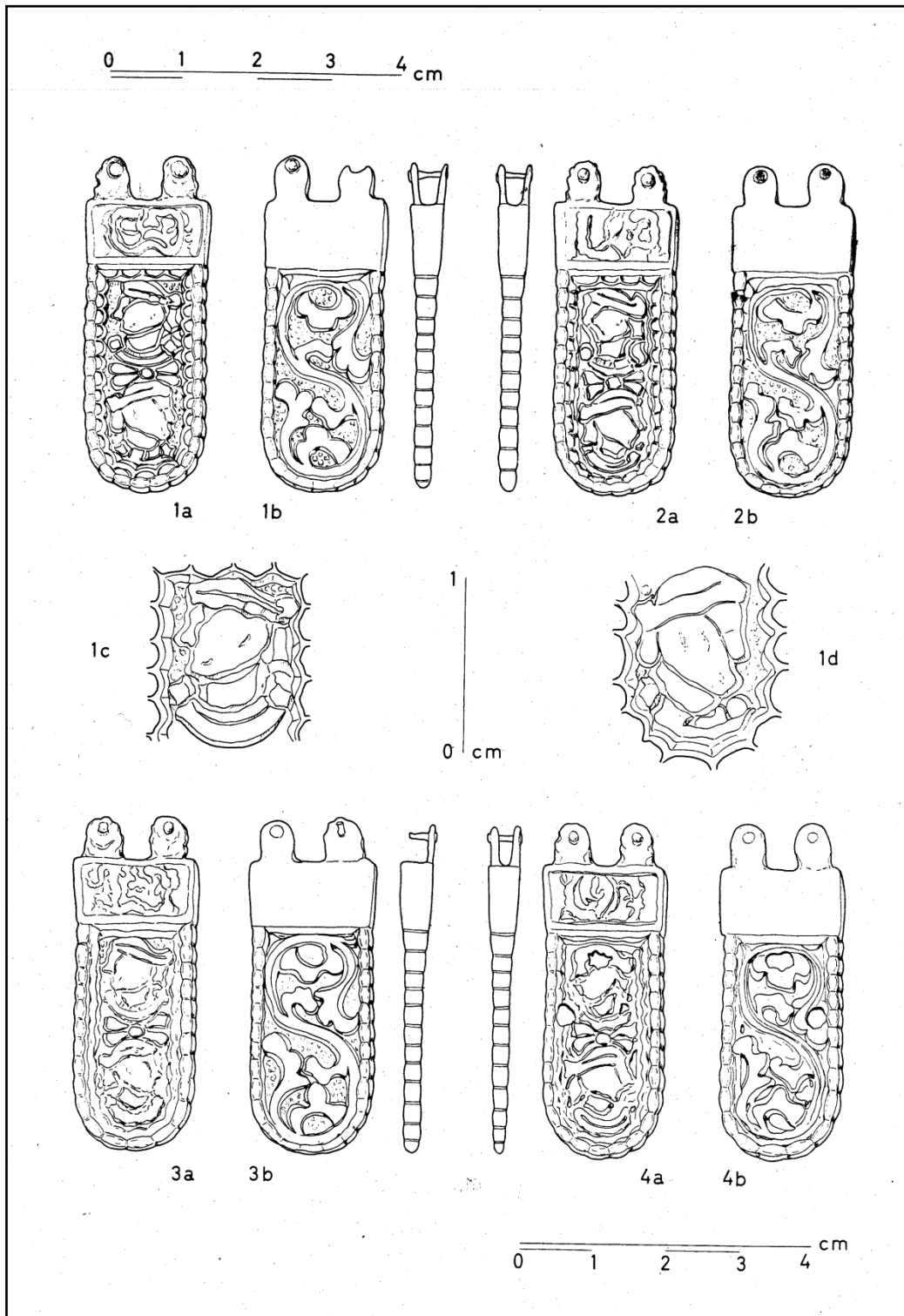
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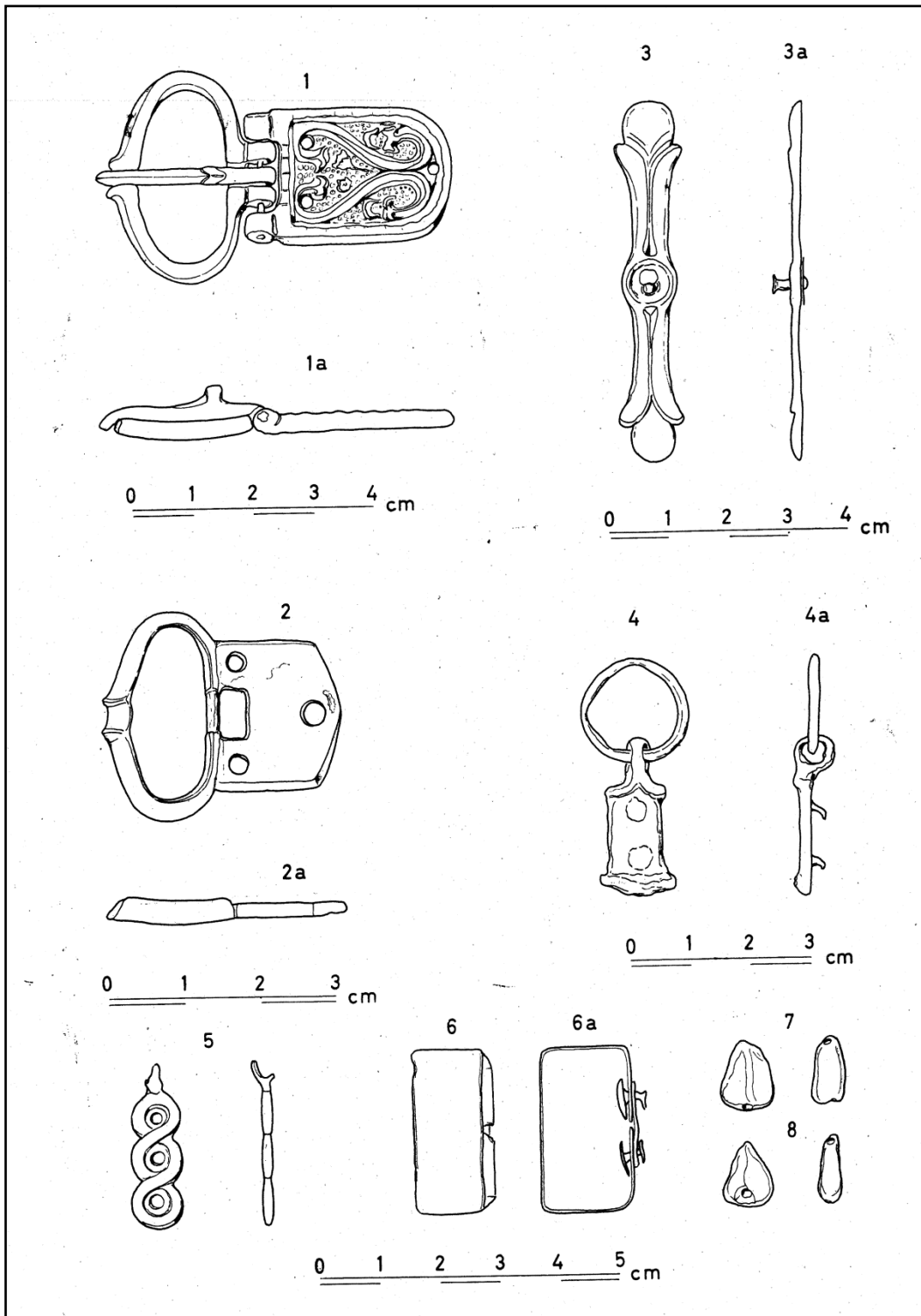
Objects not to scale

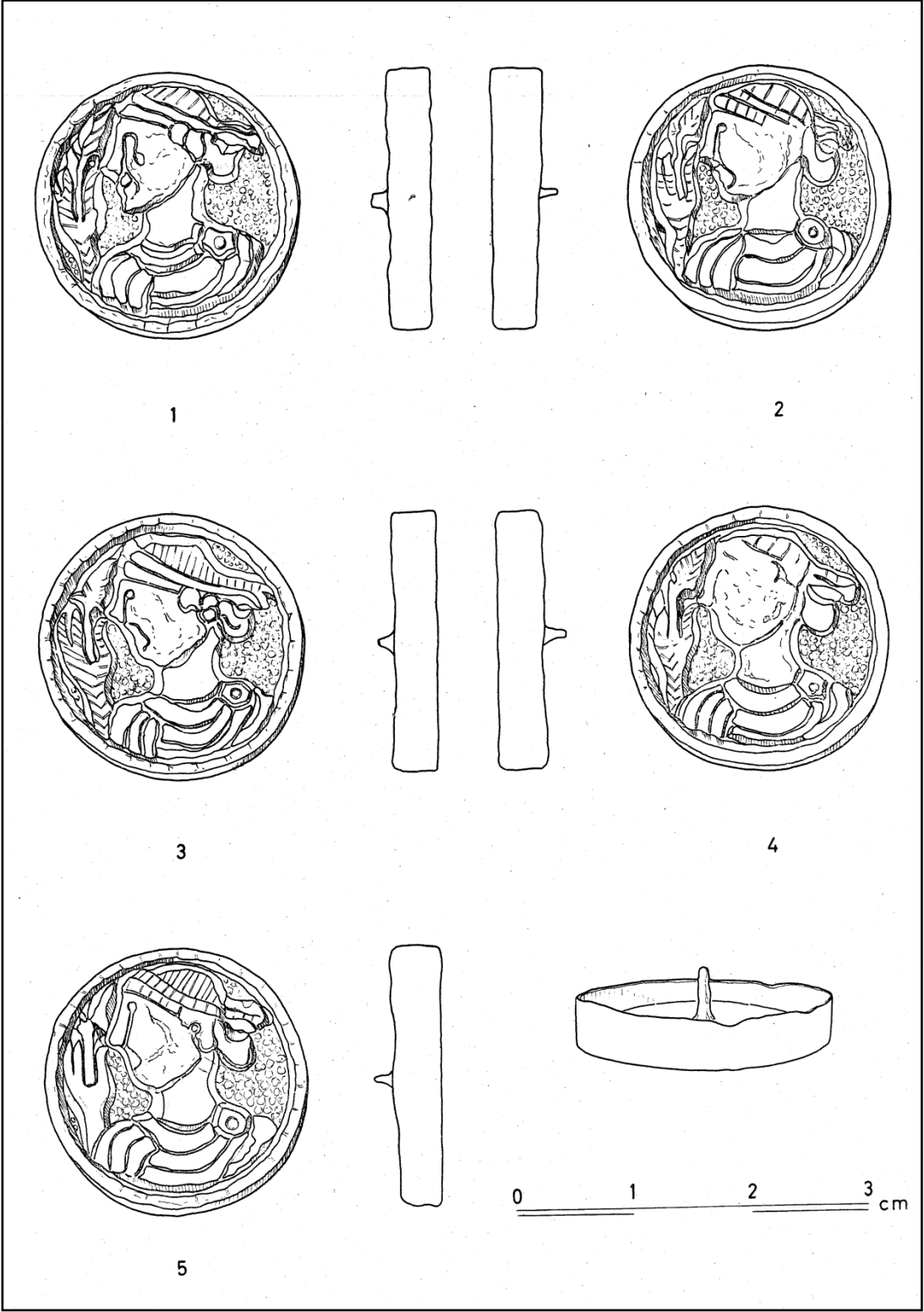
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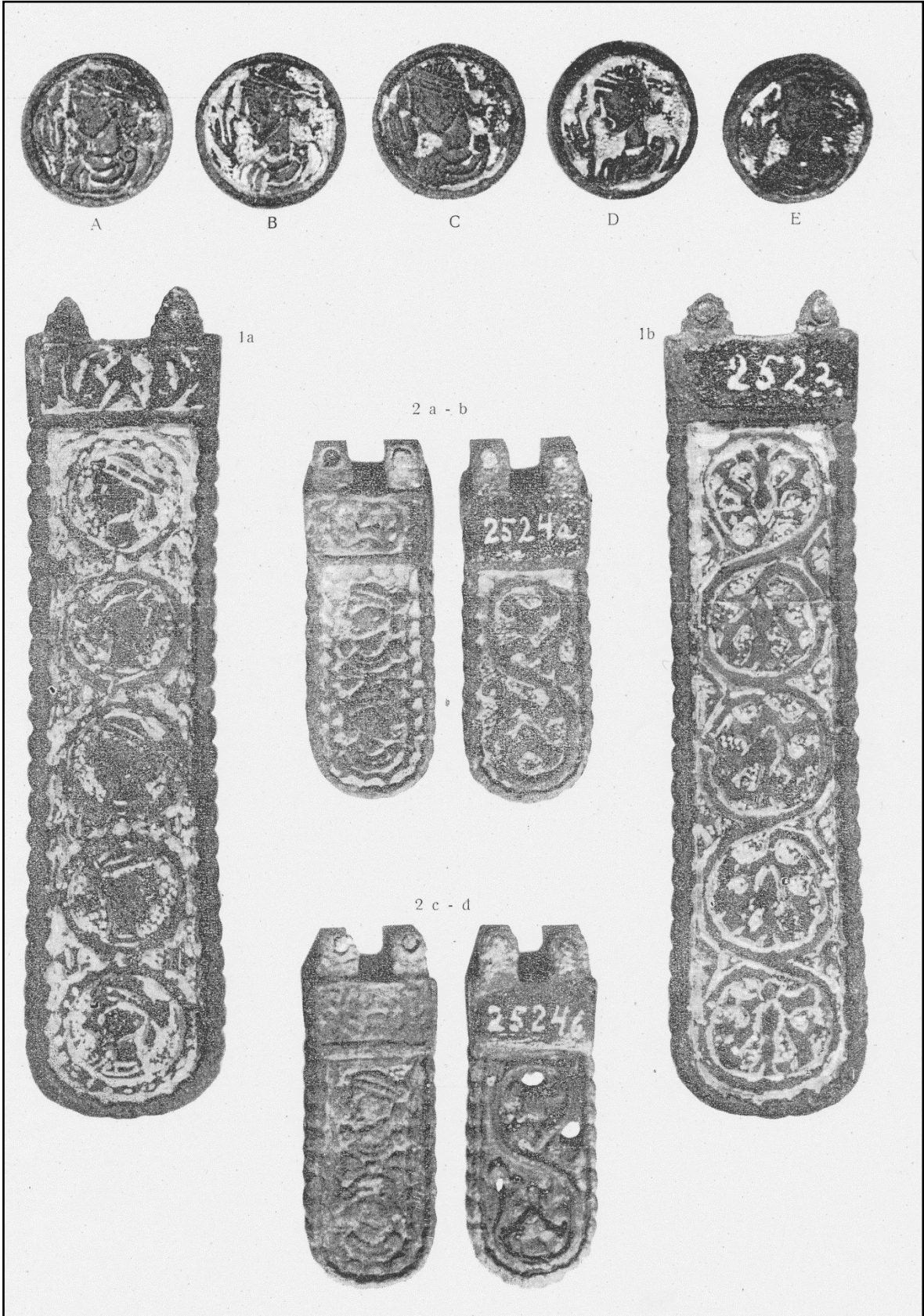




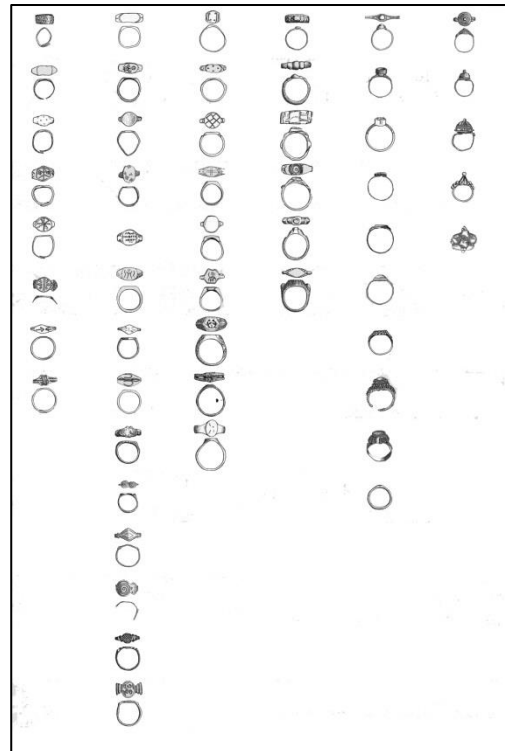
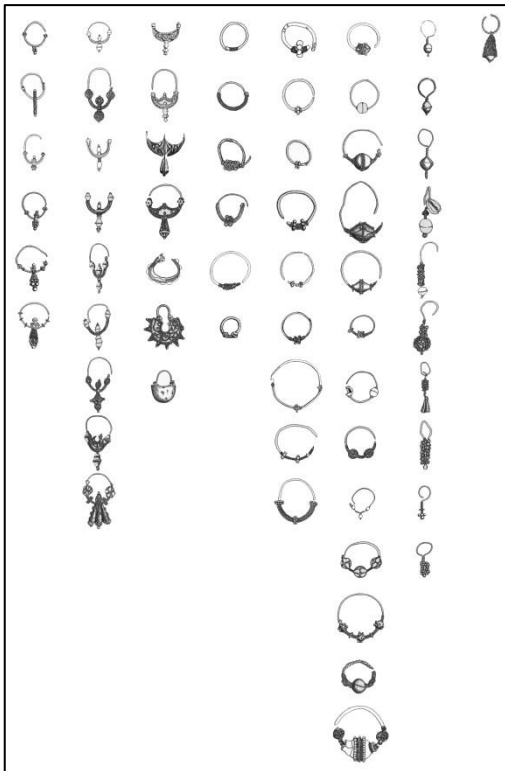




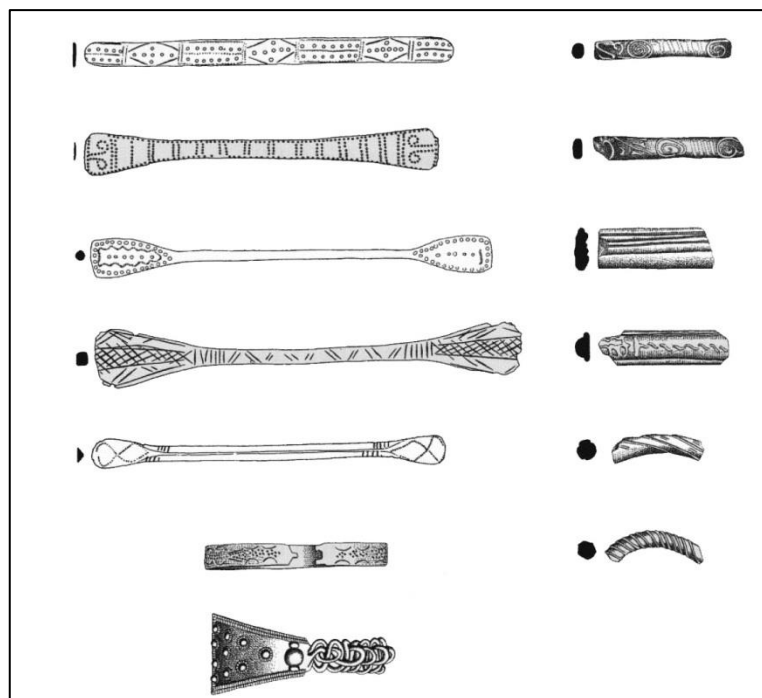




P. LXIX



Objects not to scale





1



2