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CELTS ON THEIR WAY TO THE “SOUTH” ONCE AGAIN DISCUSSING SOME FINDS FROM THE BALKANS

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Abstract: *Major finds, used for the creation of complex networks of connected locations, representing the bases for the revision of absolute chronologies, were composed of items of La Tène provenience discovered in the Mediterranean, especially Aegean contexts with absolute dating. On the other side, chronological data were supplemented with finds of items, originating from the Aegean world discovered, in Central European prehistoric contexts. Gradually their chronological position becomes less a subject of debate, but their interpretations became more and more controversial. Archaeologists working on both sides of the great divide – in the European prehistoric and the Aegean classical world interpreted these items traditionally as booty or payment of mercenaries. Only recently, they started to think about diplomatic presents that travelled the trade routes and connected the social elites of old Europe.*

For the understanding of this complexity will be presented and discussed anklets from Orešani near Skopje in Macedonia and Isthmia near Corinth in Greece. They will be interpreted in the existing circulation of Latene finds on the territory of the Balkans and the synchronous circulation of Hellenistic finds on the territory of Central Balkans and all the way to Pannonia.

Key words: Orešani, Isthmia, annular ring forms, anklets, diplomatic presents, chronology

In passages of his historical writings, Theopompus referred to the events in the hinterlands of the Macedonian sphere of interest and claimed that on the central Balkans we can await the initial Celtic occupation as early as in 359/358 BC. They entered into history after the defeat and dislodge of the Ardiaei (Zaninović 2003, 278; Šašel Kos 2005, 168-170). If the historical accuracy of this passage and its historical interpretations could be debated, we can be sure about Celtic presence since 335 BC. As reported by Arrianus, when on his military campaign against the Tribali, Alexander the Great accepted the Celtic representatives (Papazoglu 2007, 210-211; Theodossiev 2000, 80-82; 2005, 85; Džino 2008, 56). These were the moments of direct contacts between dignitaries of the highest ranks of the Celtic military and po-

litical aristocracy with the aristocracy and diplomacy of ancient Macedonia (Blečić Kavur, Kavur 2010; 2016; 2017).

After the death of Alexander the Great, and particularly after the disintegration of the Hellenistic kingdom of Lysimachus in 281 BC, the Celts entered the historical arena again. Due to the lack of control on the Central Balkan, especially in the Morava – Vardar corridor and the vacuum of power on the territory of Macedonia, the doors to the “South” opened to them. They appeared in the role of militant intruders, presented as the greatest cataclysm that affected the Greek world since the Persian menace. Of course, these descriptions differed from the previous ones. Consequently, this expedition, the Celtic raid towards Delphi in 279 BC is famous for being the first example of a description focusing on a Celtic migration in the ancient literate tradition (Mitchel 2001, 13). However, the archaeological sources suggest a much more complex and even different interpretation of the causes for these historic events!

Orešani



Fig. 1. Bronze ankle ring from Selo near Orešani (according to Пашиќ 1978)

From the periphery of the Aegean world, but located on the main corridor which channelled for centuries migrations, trade and cultural contacts, comes to the perhaps most interesting finds – a bronze ankle ring (Fig. 1). According to the initial publication, the find was discovered in Selo near Orešani, in the southern part of Skopje basin in Macedonia. It was discovered on a necropolis with biritual burials from which come numerous older Macedonian bronze items (Пашиќ 1978, 63, Т. II; cf. Kilian 1975, 95, 125, Т. 57, cf. Ристов 2016, 58-67). The anklet, despite its visual unattractiveness is definitely one of the most

representative finds from this site. It was decorated in accordance with late Early La Tène technological and stylistic tradition, e.i. in plastic style. It belongs to the group of bronze tubular sheet rings with vertical ribbing decorated with simple triple protuberances. It is partially damaged and measures in diameter 6 centimetres consequently falling within the diameter size range of bracelets (Massse 2007, 302). Unfortunately, being an isolated find, not discovered in a grave, we will never be able to interpret it otherwise than according to its size. In addition, since the list of

anklets of this type listed for the territory of Slovakia (Bujna 2005, 30, T. 15; 36, T. 18), clearly indicates that several of them had a comparable diameter, we can assume that the later represents an anklet. It represents a typical Central European object and was habitually worn in pairs. As demonstrated by J. Bujna and M. Furman in Slovakia (Bujna 2005, 29-36; Furman 2014, 253) they could be typologically and chronologically distinguished in to two groups. An initial one with simple triple protuberances limited mostly to southwestern Slovakia and dated to Lt B1, and a later one with triple profiled protuberances spreading to the south and dated to Lt B2/C1.

According to the recognizable characteristics, we could confirmatively assume that the ankle ring from Orešani could be dated into the younger group (Fig. 1). Keeping this in mind we have to stress that this type of jewellery represents more or less a *unicum* on the Central Balkans with only a single example known from the Late Iron Age/Celtic cemetery in Serbia – Pećine, grave 20 (Jovanović 2018, 51-54, 139, 140). Located on the communication corridor to the south the find from Orešani, unrecognized and ignored in interpretations, represents one of the oldest items of Celtic production demonstrating the long tradition of contacts between “prehistoric” Europe and the Macedonian and Greek world.

Isthmia

On contrary, the pair of the anklets, discovered near the sanctuary of Poseidon in Isthmia in the Corinthian strait, was presented in detail and often discussed in scientific literature (Fig. 2). They were produced from bronze with eight hollow knobs and an inner diameter ranging from 7 to 7, 5 centimetres. The knobs were 4 centimetres high and linked with a saddle-shaped transition between individual knobs. The saddles were bordered with an incised line. They consisted of two integral parts – one of 6 and the closing part with 2 knobs. They were discovered in the so-called Spanos well together with a smaller number of ceramic vessels (skyphoid krater, Corinthian skyphos, a cup, 3 miniature bowls, 5 simple pitchers, 3 oil lamps and a figure from terracotta). On the skyphoid crater was incised an inscription, a dedication to the goddess Demeter from Sopha – a woman which according to the structure of the inscription was speaking a Doric dialect of the Greek language (Caskey 1960, 168, 172).

For their proper understanding are of major importance the first two interpretations following their discovery – the first one formulated in the initial publication of J. Caskey and the subsequent analytical discussion as well as the chronological paradigm of W. Krämer. Caskey recognized immediately that they were a foreign object in the Greek world originating from the central European La Tène cultural area where such jewellery was a common find in the graves. Consequently, he dated

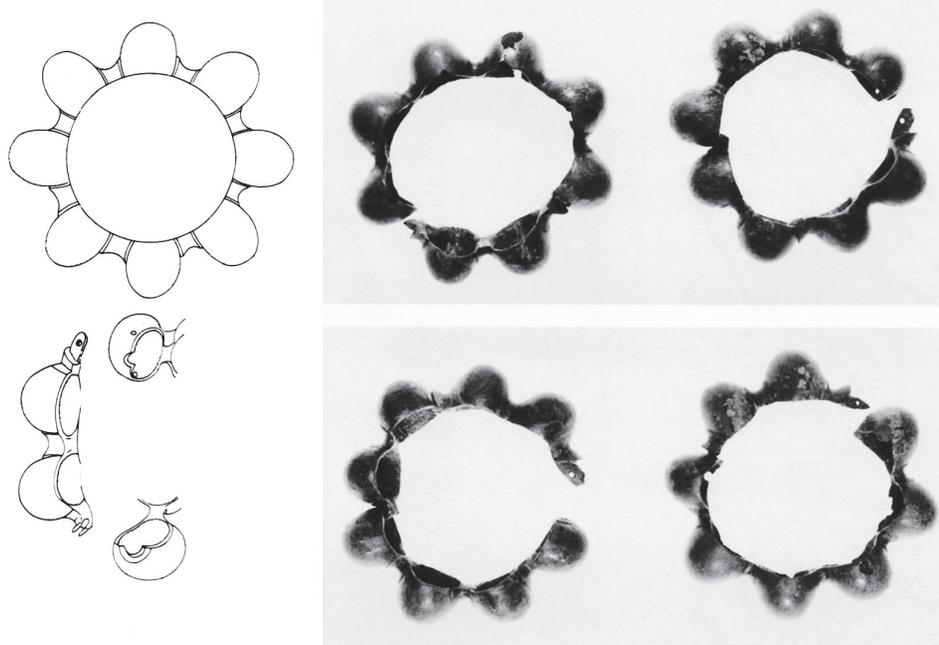


Fig. 2. A bronze pair of the anklets discovered near the sanctuary of Poseidon in Isthmia (according to Raubitschek 1998)

them into Lt C which was according to his opinion the period from the 3rd to the 1st century BC. In the preliminary publication, he distanced himself from the chronological interpretation of the find since a majority of the ceramic finds could be dated between 350 and 300 BC while the anklets should be, according to the accepted chronology of Iron Age Europe younger. He saw a solution to the problem in the possibility that the items fell into the well in different periods. He assumed even further than they were hoarded in the sanctuary for a long time before they were subsequently deposited together into the well. In addition, the composition was considered being conspicuous and he, taking into consideration the inscriptions, stated that at least the luxurious vessels should have been a dedication to the goddess. According to his interpretation, items of surplus value were discovered in wells due to accidents or the fullness of temples when the old votives were discarded. But the discovered composition presented a problem since the number of valuable items which could be interpreted as results of cleaning of old votives was small and variable – the assembly was composed of few luxurious and majority of functional, everyday ceramic items (Caskey 1960, 176).

In the second discussion, W. Krämer focused especially on the dating and on the territorial recognition of the origins of walnut-shaped jewellery and explained the importance of this fashion indicative for the late Lt B period in Bavaria (Krämer 1962, 307, Abb. 1). He agreed with Caskey that the composition was a hoard of ob-

jects deposited during the cleaning of the sanctuary, but he also claimed that the pitchers demonstrated a functional use of the well (Krämer 1961, 33). Accepting the dating of pottery into the end of 4th century BC he concluded that it was not an initially coherent assemblage but that the objects were initially hoarded for a long time in the sanctuary and only later discarded together into the well (Krämer 1961, 37). For the anklets, he concluded that they arrived in Greece together with their owner included into the Celtic groups which: “... *with wives and children under the guidance of their princes protruded towards Thracia and Macedonia while searching for new territories to settle ...*” (Krämer 1961, 38). In his argumentation was, due to the presence of a female element of attire, the historical event of a military incursion towards Greece transformed into a migration of the whole group in order to find new territories to settle – it was transformed into the first model of an Iron Age migration! It seemed to him that due to the proximity of Delphi where the turnover in the Celtic invasion appeared, it would be reasonable to link the finds with the historic event. However, he was aware of the chronological discrepancy between the dating of the assemblage and the accepted, presumably younger chronological position of walnut-shaped anklets in Central Europe (Krämer 1961, 38). Mapping this type of jewellery he demonstrated that within the whole distribution of examples with more than 6 thickenings concentrated in two regions at the end of Early and the beginning of Middle La Tène – along with the south Bavarian flow of Danube and in northern Bohemia. Consequently, he assumed that the contacts followed the flow of Danube from where the discovered examples must have arrived in Greece (Krämer 1961, 36-40, Abb. 1; 2). In conclusion, he explained that he would not dare to, without inspection of other such finds, assume that the finds from Isthmia originate from the Bavarian flow of Danube (Krämer 1961, 40-42).

The same question of their origins and dating occupied at different occasions also M. Szabó. Initially, he considered the anklets dated to the 4th century BC (Szabó 1968, 175-177), but later changed his mind and linked them to the Delphi expedition (Szabó 1971, 503). A decade later, he returned to the question of the anklets and noted that since the time of Krämer the number of such finds dramatically increased, especially on the territories of Hungary, Slovakia and Romania where they were dated into a transitional horizon between Lt B and Lt C (Szabó 1983, 45-46).

Several other authors joined the discussion in the seventies – U. Schaaf decided for a chronological compromise and dated the anklets to Lt B2/C1 (Schaaf 1972b, 155). However, in the discussion, he agreed with Krämer that the find from Isthmia could not be considered as a closed context and should be linked to the Celtic raid in 279 BC. Accepting the hypothesis of Szabó, he proposed an older dating and noted that Celtic mercenaries were present in the Greek world before the Delphi exhibition (Schaaf 1972a, 95). Knowing that the dating into the 4th century BC would neces-

sarily change the chronology of central European Iron Age, he considered that they represent an element of female attire. Consequently, it was not possible to link them to male mercenaries since the later did not lead their wives along on their military campaigns (Schaaff 1972a, 96-97).

On the contrary, F. Maier positioned into the core of his argumentation the presence of woman and children during the Celtic raid towards the “South” (Maier 1973, 461) and stated that due to the proximity of Delphi the ankle rings from Isthmia should be linked to that raid (Maier 1973, 477). Even recently, several other authors accepted the rhetoric and dating of Krämer. S. Rieckhoff and J. Biel claimed that the Celtic migrations could be observed on the bases of distribution of certain forms of female jewellery not changing while spreading in space – and of course, the find from Isthmia could be linked to the Celtic raid in 279 BC (Rieckhoff, Biel 2001, 58-58). W. Megaw accepted the suggested dating of walnut-shaped jewellery into Lt B2/C1. Interpreting the anklets in the context of Szabós mercenary hypothesis he considered the find as a property of a mercenary included into the army of Corinthian hero Tymoleon which with the help of Celts defeated the Carthaginians at Crimissos in 339 BC (Megaw 2004, 97).

Finally in the publication of all metal objects from the complex of the sanctuary of Poseidon in Isthmia I. Raubitschek made a short summary of the debate and confirmed the dating of pottery into the third quarter of 4th century BC. Under the influence of the dynamic history of interpretations of walnut-shaped anklets, she extended the dating of the assemblage from the third quarter of 4th century to the beginning of the 3rd century BC. It is important to notice that she did not link the find with the invasion to Delphi since she draws the attention to the fact that the survived fugitives from the catastrophically ending expedition of Brennus withdraw through Thermopylae to the north and not to the south (Raubitschek 1998, 70, Pl. 41, 267A, B)!

In an attempt of a theoretical overview of migrations documented and described in Iron Age archaeology was the find from Isthmia discussed by G. Kaenel who devised interpretations from facts. On one hand, he presented the initial hypothesis, further the history of interpretations and the dictate of the historical source in its interpretations, unfortunately, linking it to the expedition to the “South”. In his conclusion, he stated that the find belonged definitely into the female sphere of material culture that could or could not be linked to the military raid to Greece (Kaenel 2007, 392). So discussing its interpretation, he avoided a firm interpretation and did not address the wider chronological problem of Celtic presence in the Aegean, the main problem arising from different interpretations of the find.

In the last two, but mostly in the last decade, several authors focused on the problem of annular ring forms in a female fashion of the western Celtic world, but

only rarely mentioned in this context the find from Isthmia. The most influential publication became the typological study of finds from Slovakia by J. Bujna (2005) who created the conceptual basics and research methodology for several subsequent divisions and discussions (Fábry 2012; 2016; Furman 2012).

A vicious circle of interpretations

Perhaps the most comprehensive attempt of a widely synchronized absolute chronology of the La Tène world was published in the late eighties by R. Gebhard. Combining previous chronological attempts, he created chronological horizons that were subsequently with the aid of dated imports from the Mediterranean world inserted into an absolute chronology. In this model the annular ring forms (bracelets and anklets) were one of the main forms of late Early La Tène jewellery, positioned in to the horizons 4 and 5, and gradually changing and transforming, especially their size and form of thickenings, in the younger, Middle La Tène horizon 6 (Gebhard 1989, 109, 120). Isthmia was beside Ceretolo in Greece one of the main arguments for the absolute chronological dating of the horizon 5 into the first decades to the middle of the 3rd century BC. Defining a historical framework the author assumed that the find “could be very probably” linked to the Celtic raid towards Delphi in 279 BC (Gebhard 1989, 122–124).

In discussing, the chronology of the annular jewellery A. Masse and M. Szabó noted that the dating of the Isthmia context, predating the year 300 BC, according to the pottery discovered, clearly demonstrated a discrepancy with the assumed absolute chronology still widely used in traditional archaeological circles (Masse, Szabó 2007, 220). Still, in most of the works focusing on the annular ring forms, they used the chronological framework proposed by R. Gebhard (Masse, Szabó 2005; Masse 2007; Fábry 2016) where the assumed absolute dating of the horizons contradicts the dating of contexts such as Isthmia. Lately, the inability to conceptually move away from the historical dictature of the Delphi event was reflected by the entry in *Lexikon zur keltischen Archäologie* by M. Szabó. In the first paragraph, he dated the context into the end of 4th century BC, according to the presence of “sherds” of Greek pottery. However, in the second paragraph, he linked it, according to the opinion of “specialists”, to the Delphi campaign (Szabó 2012, 840-841).

Discovered on the other side of the great cultural and chronological divide, in the Aegean world, the find of two anklets from Isthmia was not the only discovery that could be used for a creation of a chronological synchronization. In the last century, several finds were presented, although most of them lacked any detailed stratigraphic data or known contexts. Perhaps the most famous was the sword of an Early La Tène scheme from Dodona (Szabó 1971, 504; Maier 1973, 463-464; Megaw 2004, 99)

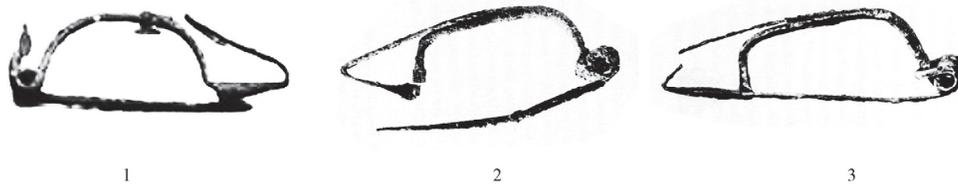


Fig. 3. A bronze wire fibulae of Middle La Tène scheme from: 1 – Chaushitsa (according to Casson 1923/24-1924/25), 2 – Dodona and 3 – Athens (according to Maier 1973)

as well as wire fibulae of a Middle La Tène scheme from Dodona, Delos, Athens (Szabó 1971, Fig. 1; Maier 1973, T. 30, 2-3; Megaw 2004, 100) and Chaushitsa (Casson 1923/24-1924/25, 27, Pl. II, 2a) (Fig. 3, 1-3).

It was F. Maier who convinced us that Celtic finds in the Greek world could be compressed into a single chronological horizon at the end of Early and beginning of Middle La Tène period. And since a majority of these finds were discovered in sanctuaries, they demonstrated the existence of military votives or *tropaia* which should be linked to the turbulent events in 279 and 278 BC (Szabó 1971, 514; 1972, 39; Maier 1973, 474, 477). Reflecting it almost half a century later, we should in addition to the finds observe and understand the depictions of Celtic weapons in Greek sanctuaries. In Delphi, in the porticos where the Aetolians put on display the weapons of the defeated Celts, is preserved a relief depicting a band-like shield boss (Amandry 1978, 579, Fig. 7). Similar shields were depicted on the *tropaion* from Marathon (Vanderpool 1967, 109, Pl. 31; Maier 1973, 470) and on younger reliefs from the complex of the sanctuary of Athena Polias in Pergamon (Bohn 1885, T. XLIII-XLVI, L). In all three cases, one younger and two older were depicted weapons connected with the spoils of defeated Celts. However, all the weapons could be, according to its presented forms dated to Middle La Tène or Lt C according to the central European relative chronology.

For the solution of the chronological problem, turn our attention to prehistoric Europe and review the items of Macedonian/Greek/Hellenistic provenience that were discovered in Late Iron Age/Celtic contexts. For the discussion are of major importance bronze vessels from Karaburma in Serbia, Hurbanovo in Slovakia, Szob and Szabolc in Hungary and, at least but not, at last, Sremska Mitrovica in Serbia.

Perhaps the oldest known discovery, chronologically and from the literature, predating the arrival of the Eastern Celts, but clearly indicating the circulation of prestigious items of material culture was unfortunately also mostly ignored. Already in 1902 published assemblage from Sremska Mitrovica, most probably the remains of a single burial, included 3 fibulae and 2 bracelets made from silver, 74 amber beads, 61 coral beads, 262 amphoriskos-shaped glass pendants, a single melon sha-

ped glass bead, 2 elongated black glass beads and, most important, the remains of a bronze cup (Brunšmid 1902, 80). Although fragmented, the remains could be reconstructed as a cup with everted rim, low foot and two handles. Similar finds were in the assemblages from the Athenian Agora dated to the end of 5th century BC (Vokotopoulou 1975, 761-764).

The Celtic necropolis in Karaburma represents the most prominent south-eastern stronghold of Celtic military expansion (Blečić Kavur, Kavur 2010; Ljuština, Spasić 2016, 328). Although the number of graves from every period from Early to Late La Tène is not large enough to be statistically significant, we can examine a trend of unusually numerous graves with weapons (interpreted as male warriors graves) demonstrating that the strategic role of the settlement was rather unchanged for a long period. A high proportion of warrior's graves and several imports in the later suggest that we could interpret the population buried in Karaburma as the border garrison through which long-distance trade and diplomatic contacts were negotiated and filtered. The most prominent example of contacts with the Macedonian cultural area was the, in grave number 22 discovered, symposium service consisting of a phiale and a bell-shaped situla. These imported luxurious vessels were an international substitute for the older traditional Celtic ceramic services consisting of a bowl and a container for liquids (situla-shaped pot or lens-shaped flask) (Blečić Kavur, Kavur 2010). Situla and cup were standard, iconic parts of services used in festivities and ritual banquets/symposia. Ascribed to Macedonian artistic production of the 4th century BC they were discovered in numerous tombs in Greece, Macedonia and Thrace, including finds from the Gethic and northern Adriatic area (Rolley 1990, 371-372; 2002, 57; cf. Archibald 1998; Sideris 2000; Blečić Kavur 2012; 2015, 179-189, fig. 65, 67).

In addition in the context of Macedonian production should be observed and evaluated the bronze lekythos from grave 18/64 from Hurbanovo near Nitra (Benadik 1981, 191-192). It is a Talcott type lekythos from the younger group dated into the end of 4th century BC with examples known especially from Greece, Macedonia and Thrace (Bouzek 2002, 53-55; Teleaga 2008, 267-268). When J. Bujna compared the find with the grave 22 from Karaburma, the interpretation of the later assisted him to create a chronological footing. Placing all the items of southern origins into the transitional horizon Lt B2/C1, he deduced that the time of their depositions should be placed into the years following the Delphi campaign (Bujna 2006, 217).

On contrary the dating of J. Bouzek was based on the comparisons with closed contexts from the Hellenistic world – an information lately supported by the discoveries in Makryalos, grave 187 (Lilibaki-Akamati 2004, 112), Derveni, graves A and B (Zimmermann 1998, 42-47; Vokotopoulou 1996, 208-213, B 23) and the graves from Corinth (Touchais et al. 1996, 1143-1144, Fig. 39). It is not by chance that such vessels



Fig. 4. Distribution map of bronze cups and kantharoi of the 4th century BC (supplemented after Sideris 2000; Blečić Kavur 2015)

are further known from the necropoles of Isar Marvinci and from Chaushitsa in the Gevgelija Region (Sideris 2000, 10-11, fig. 6). Consequently, the dating of the lekythos into the final quarter of the 4th century becomes more and more plausible.

The same goes for the kantharos from Szob, grave 1 – preserved was only the recipient of the vessel with handles while unfortunately, the foot is missing (Hunyady 1942, T. XXXVIII, 1) (Fig. 4). It's dating could be defined on the bases of similar kantharoi on a short and broader foot from the necropolis of Aghios Mamas, grave 3 (Kottaridi 2004, 85) or again from the exceptional Derveni, grave B, demonstrating that this form is older from the examples on a longer, thinner foot (Barr-Sharrar 2008, 26-27; cf. Sideris 2000; Blečić Kavur 2015, 191-195, fig. 69). For that reason, the dating into the second half of 4th century BC becomes more plausible.

Further, for the intention of discussion, we could observe also the calix-kantharos from a grave in Szabolc (Szabó 2000, 288, Fig. 2) (Fig. 4). Lacking the information about its discovery, it has best comparisons in the famous hoard of Hellenistic metal vessels from Vontonosi dated into the third quarter of 4th century BC (Vokotopoulou 1975, 767-768, Fig. 28). M. Szabó recognized these metal vessels in the nineties as finds, which were older than the Delphi campaign but concluded that their arrival did not necessarily happen before this historic event (Szabó 1992, 156). In later discussion, he considered, besides the interpretation as war booty, also other opti-

ons for contacts. This idea was supported by the presence of less luxurious items such as ceramic oenochoe from Pećine, grave 25 (Szabó 2006, 104-107; 2015, 393-407; cf. Jovanović 2018, 112, Pl. 29).

Nevertheless, what was flowing from Macedonia to the “North”?

To answer the question we have to observe the distribution of less luxurious items and the direct reflection of an economy – we have to observe the distribution of mostly transparent amphoriskos shaped glass pendants and Macedonian coins minted in the 4th century BC. Being the most widely circulated item produced in the Hellenistic world, the amphoriskos shaped pendants can be traced from Macedonia to Central Europe following the ancient and established trade routes linking for centuries the centres of Mediterranean “civilizations” and “prehistoric” Europe (Bitrakova Grozdanova 2011, 169-171; 2015, 78-81; cf. Blečić Kavur, Kavur 2017). Important arguments for the existence of such routes supporting economic contacts are also the distributions of Macedonian coin finds radiating towards Central Europe. Among them, the most important discovery is the hoard of tetradrachmae of Philip II from Ušće near Obrenovac in Serbia. According to the available information, the hoard was discovered inside the remains of a bronze situla, presumably of the stamnoïd type, which was unfortunately discarded. In the discussion, A. Crnobrnja demonstrated that the first period of hoards with coins of Phillip II and early Celtic imitations could be dated to the end of 4th and the beginning of 3rd century BC (Crnobrnja 2014; 2018). This was a period in which the ancient Macedonian state spread its influence to the “North”, and the Celtic migrations of the end of Early La Tène reached the point of maximal extent. With contacts established, the flow of people, but mostly items intensified. To the “North” were travelling items of lesser or higher economic value ranging from coins to bronze vessels. Due to the social structures of the targeted societies in which big men or women played a major role in the political decisions, these items ended mostly in their graves. On contrary to the “South” were, following the centuries-old traditions, travelling elements of (mostly female) attire which, again due to the social and political structure of the Macedonian and Greek societies, ended institutionalized as gifts to the gods in sanctuaries. The find from Isthmia was such a find. Due to its isolation in space and time, numerous interpretations were created in which the find was forced up and down in time to fit a specific historic event that was prominent enough to enable the interpretation of the find.

With the discovery, and interpretation of the anklet from Orešani, although an isolated single find, the quantity of information increased dramatically. Relatively and absolute contemporaneous with it created a middle point in the direction linking the centres of power, bridging cultures, connecting worlds ...

The symbolism of partnership between “North” and “South”

Major archaeological discoveries that could be used for the creation of complex networks of interlinked locations, which with their dated contexts enable the creation of a chronological network, were discovered on both sides of the great divide. They are known from the prehistoric as well as from the classical world and archaeologists identified and interpreted these items from a limited perspective. For decades, they were conservatively perceived as war booty or payment of mercenaries (Szabó 1996, 21; Schönfelder 2007...). As a result, their linking to known historical events was considered more important for the interpretation as the dating of the finds for themselves. Only recently we started to interpret the distribution of these finds as reflections of the process of exchange of diplomatic gifts as well as the result of other forms of economic or symbolic negotiations (Blečić Kavur, Kavur 2010; 2016; 2017; Rustoiu, Egri 2010; Potrelica, Dizdar 2014; Szabó 2015). It is clear that items of Macedonian production were mostly discovered in graves of the Celtic aristocracy (interpreted as such due to the presence of Macedonian imports) on cemeteries such as Karaburma, Sob, Szabolc, and Hurbanovo ... While the items of Celtic provenience were discovered mostly in ritual contexts such as temples in Dodona, Delos, Delphi and Isthmia or were depicted on public/ritual monuments such as in Delphi, Marathon or Pergamon.

Observing the items of La Tène provenience we can immediately conclude that majority of artefacts comes from the beginning of Middle La Tène Lt C1 while only the sword from Dodona, the anklets from Isthmia and Orešani could be older. Moreover, this brings us to the paradox – all finds discovered in contexts that could be linked to the historical event of Celtic raid towards Delphi such as reliefs from Delphi or Marathon exhibit stylistic characteristics of artefacts of Middle La Tène production. In addition, the items of Macedonian provenience discovered in prehistoric contexts were mostly produced in the 4th century BC!

Today we have come to the point, where we have to state that a period of intensive contacts or at least a period of bilateral economic flow of artefacts occurred at the end of 4th century BC definitely predating the turbulent epoch after the collapse of a centralized and strong Macedonian presence in Central Balkan. It was a period of cultural and economic expansion supported by trade and diplomatic actions of the Macedonian state towards the peoples in their northern hinterlands. These diplomatic gifts, symbols and tokens of prestige could be observed as markers for the existence of networks in to which Celts were attracted and incorporated. Celts, becoming partners in the period when Macedonians accelerated their rise to prominence in the Greek world, have also reached the maximum extent of their territorial expansion. Moreover, the territories of the central Balkans, especially the Morava/Vardar

corridor were major communication routes through which local populations channelled the pace and intensity of these contacts. Observed in this perspective the “forgotten” bronze ankle ring from Orešani, more than half a century predating the notorious campaign to the “South” can be interpreted as the oldest item of Celtic origins demonstrating the inclusion of Celts from the central Balkan into the flow of goods or mobility of persons to the “South”.¹

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БОРИС КАВУР
МАТИНА БЛЕЧИЌ КАВУР

КЕЛТИТЕ НА НИВНИОТ ПАТ КОН „ЈУГ“ УШТЕ ЕДНА ДИСКУСИЈА ЗА НЕКОИ НАОДИ ОД БАЛКАНОТ

Резиме

Најважните наоди со кои можеме да исткаеме сложена мрежа од поврзани точки, а кои воедно претставуваат темел за предлог апсолутна хронологија, ја изразуваат на една страна предметите со латенска провиниенција на Медитеранот, т.е. во егејските контексти со апсолутна датација. Од друга страна, тие се дополнети со наодите на материјална култура кои потекнуваат од егејскиот свет во контекст на келтско-латенското милје. Но, иако нивното апсолутно позиционирање е сè помалку предмет на расправа, нивното интерпретирање станува сè поконтроверзно. Имено, импортираните предмети со егејско потекло, со децении се конзервативно сфаќани или како воен плен или како платежно средство на платениците/наемниците, поради што поврзувањето со познати историски моменти било значително поважно од датирањето на самите предмети. Дури од неодамна дистрибуцијата на тие наоди почна да се толкува како израз на процесот за размена на дипломатски дарови и други облици на економски и симболички потези, кои, според утврдените трговски патишта, ја собирале општествената елита на старата Европа. Со цел да ја разбереме оваа проблематика, во текстот се претставени наоди од алка која се носела на нога од Орешани кај Скопје и од Истмија кај Коринт во Грција. Познато е дека предмети од македонско производство се пронајдени, главно, во гробовите на келтската аристократија во некрополите во Карабурма, Соб, Саболц и Хурбаново... додека, пак, предмети со келтска провиниенција се наоѓани во главно во обредни контексти, како што се храмовите во Додона, Делос, во Делфи и Истмија, или пак се прикажани на јавни /ритуални споменици како што се оние во Делфи, на Маратон или во Пергамон.

Со вреднување на предметите од латенска провиниенција можеме да заклучиме дека повеќето потекнуваат од рано среднолатенскиот период (Lt C1). За разлика од тоа, железниот меч од Додона, како и алките за нога од Истмија и Орешани, се со постар датум, што, секако, доведува до парадокс! Имено, сите наоди откриени во контексти кои би можеле да бидат поврзани со познатиот историски настан на келтските напади на Делфи, како што се релјефите од Делфи

или Маратон, отсликуваат стилски карактеристики на среднолатенскиот период. Исто така, предметите со македонска провиниенција, откриени во европски праисториски контекст, во главно се настанати во 4 век пред. н.е.

Оттука, располагаеме со податоци кои сведочат дека на крајот на 4 век пред н. е. се случил период на интензивни контакти, или барем билатерален економски проток на предмети. Тоа било време на културна и економска експанзија на македонската држава кон општествата во нивото северно опкружување. Во тоа опкружување, Келтите им стануваат партнери, исто така остварувајќи најголема територијална експанзија. Подрачјето на среден Балкан, особено моравско – вардарскиот коридор, било главна комуникација по која се насочувале брзината и интензитетот на таквите контакти. „Заборавената“ бронзена алка за нога од Орешани е повеќе од половина век постара од озлогласената келтска кампања на „југ“, поради што претставува најстар предмет со келтско потекло, преку кој ќе можеме да го следиме вклучувањето на Келтите од среден Балкан во протокот на стоки или во мобилноста на луѓе кон „југ“.

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