RECENT LA TÈNE FINDS AND SITES IN NORTHERN CROATIA

Abstract: The most important researches have been presented together with the finds from the north Croatia in the period after the proclamation about the synthesis of the Celts in Yugoslavia in PJZ V, in 1987. The researches in the region of Vinkovci, Osijek are presented, together with researches and processing of the middle Latten cemetery in Zvonimirovo near Virovitica, as the excavations in the region of Zagreb state. Most of these finds are dated in the middle and late Latten, although very rare early Latten finds are also mentioned.

Key words: Croatia, Pannonia, Latten, Dux horizon, necropolis in Zvonimirovo, Taurisci, Scordisci

Apstrakt: Iznose se najvažnija istraživanja i nalazi iz sjeverne Hrvatske u vremenu nakon objave sinteze o Keltima u Jugoslaviji u PJZ V, 1987. godine. Predstavljaju se istraživanja na području Vinkovaca, Osijeka, istraživanje i obrada srednjolatenskog groblja u Zvonimirovu kod Virovitice te navode iskopavanja na području Zagreba. Pretežno su to sve nalazi iz srednjeg i kasnog latena, no spominju se i rijetki ranolatenski nalazi.

Ključne reči: Hrvatska, Panonija, laten, Dux horizont, nekropola Zvonimirovo, Taurisci, Skordisci

I will outline the work and discoveries that took place in northern Croatia following the publication of the synthesis on the Celtic culture in Yugoslavia in the edition "Praistorija jugoslavenskih zemalja" ("*Prehistory of the Yugoslav Lands*"), Vol. 5 (Jovanović 1987; Božić 1987). I shall present the new discoveries in chronological order, from the early to late La Tène, and not with regard to the moment at which a discovery or a study took place.¹

P. Popović and myself, independently from each other and not knowing of the other one's work, simultaneously undertook to study the period of the early Latenization of the late Hallstatt regions of South Pannonia and Central Balkans (Popović 1996; Majnarić Pandžić 1996). Even though we dealt with the same sites and material, our basic interests differed to a certain extent. P. Popović succeeded in demonstrating that most of the early La Tène fibulae, which form the bulk of the subject matter, appeared as the result of the influence of the early La Tène fashion, but as products of local workshops. In this he put to the fore the Balkan symbolism of the snake and the decoration of certain pieces. In my paper, on the other hand, the emphasis was placed on the diversity and compositeness of the style, contacts and influences during the 4th cent. B.C. in Pannonia. Considering that influences do not

travel through a vacuum, as today, but are connected with their bearers, i.e. mobile individuals or smaller groups that are still difficult to determine in ethnic terms, and the interest for the mobility of individuals in prehistoric periods is on the rise, as testified by a long series of works, I drew attention to the fact that certain early La Tène pieces of costume and even of sets, appear quite early in the 4th century, which certainly speaks of the early Latenization of the late Hallstatt Pannonian world. I find it important that in our territory, where we have mostly pieces of costume, not luxury items but average ones, there appear whole sets of early La Tène forms! In these lands there are no imports of luxury weapons whatsoever, as is for instance the case in Slovenia. It seems to me that we should no longer satisfy ourselves with formulae such as "influences, presence of elements" and the like, and that we should conceive of this pre-colonizing layer of early Latenization as a marker of real contacts between various cultural and stylistic concepts, taking place with the participation of actual individuals.

Here I can add that during a recent examination of the repository of the Požega Municipal Museum the grave from Velika was complemented with a certain number of amber, glass and amphorae-shaped beads, which however did not result in any significant changes in the character of the grave (Sokač-Štimac 1984; Majnarić Pandžić 1996; Dizdar-Potrebica 2002, Pl. 1–4). In northern Croatia two young prehistorians have been active in the last few years, Marko Dizdar and Hrvoje

¹ I delivered the paper in Novi Sad in the autumn of 2004, so only the discoveries and publications until that date were mentioned. Here I complement the data only to a limited extent, without claims to completeness.



Potrebica, to whom we owe many discoveries that will now be presented here. In addition to Velika, we should mention the new site of Bilač, near the entrance to the Požega Basin from the Posavina region. This site yielded a chance find of a zoomorphic fibula with a duck's head, related with the pieces from Vrućica and Donja Dolina, which reveals the way and the nature of the connections between the Posavina region and the Basin (Dizdar-Potrebica 2002, Pl. 7,3)(Fig. 1).

We can conclude that in Croatia this horizon of early La Tène zoomorphic fibulae, i.e. Lt B1, certainly precedes the Dux-horizon, when the archaeologically proven and historically documented more compact settling of the Celts in the Pannonian Podunavlje (Danubian Basin) had only just started. The finds analyzed by P. Popović and myself bear clear testimony to the interest of the local population in new La Tène forms and the acquisition thereof, but solid archaeological foundations are too few to allow us to assert that there were indeed some Celts settled at that time in the area between the Sava and the Drava rivers. In the same way, without real archaeological evidence, which is indeed insufficient at the moment, we cannot solve the question of early Latenization in the course of the 4th cent. by explaining it as a result of military raids (Marić 1963 and 1964; Žeravica 1985). Still, we should admit that there are also indications speaking in favour of this.

An important signpost towards a comprehensive look at early Latenization is the late Hallstatt cemetery in Szentlörinc in Hungarian Baranya (Jerem 1968).

The recently analyzed and published cemetery with human and horse burials at the position of NaMa in Vinkovci is related to this site and this subject (Majnarić Pandžić 1999-2000; 2003). In addition to a typically late Hallstatt skeletal cemetery from the end of the 5th and the first half of the 4th cent. this site yielded also three horse graves, two of which contained a horse harness. One harness belongs to the European early La Tène style (Dehn 1966)(Fig. 2), while the other belongs to the eastern, Thraco-Scythian style, which can be connected with the only find to date of this nature from Barać in the Iron Gate (Jovanović 1976), and to a degree also with Ritopek (Todorović 1966). There are many instances for comparison with Szentlörinc, for human as well as for horse burials, so this phenomenon in Vinkovci is fortunately not isolated. The very rich horse harness stands out against the all but poorly equipped graves of the local south Pannonian late Hallstatt population. This is why in my interpretation from 1999-2000 I put forward the idea that these finds indicate that the local south Pannonian population bred horses and took part in the at that time widely distributed trade in horses between the lower Danubian Basin, Italy and Central Europe. The palaeozoological analyses carried out on the samples from Vinkovci fit the types of harness excellently: the skeleton of the horse with La Tène phalerae is the shorter breed of the Central European horse, while the other skeleton, with Thraco-Scythian rein fittings, is the high and robust breed of the eastern type (Jurišić 2003). These finds from Vinkovci provided us with

insight into a complex and stratified picture of the final Hallstatt period in southern Pannonia, an image about the territory incorporated into intensive currents between the Danubian Basin and Italy. It deserves special mention that considerations of this kind would not have been possible without important research conducted by S. Bökönyi (Bökönyi 1964; 1981).

We have come to the time of historically testified Celtic colonization of the Syrmian-Slavonian areas, characterized by the Dux-style of the older and younger phases. We presently have a considerable number of graves at our disposal. In northern Croatia in the 1990s important work was done by J. Šimić the on organization and realization of the exhibition "The Celts and Romans in Osijek" (Šimić 1997). The entire material in the Museum of Slavonia was revised on that occasion and it was corroborated that the necropolis at Ciglana (Brick factory), i.e. Zeleno Polje in the Lower Town of Osijek had indeed been excavated without the presence of archaeologists. We, therefore, have wonderful material from that site, but consisting of only probable but not certain grave assemblages (mostly arranged by typology, without any documentation). The burials at that site clearly started in the Dux horizon, even though there are also certain finds from an earlier period, and lasted during middle La Tène, whereas during late La Tène life shifted and became more intense at another place, closer to the Drava. The nearby warrior grave from Batina in Baranja (Vinski-Gasparini 1959; Božić 1987) can also be attributed to the time of the early burials at Zeleno Polje in the Dux period, as can a whole series of early graves from Syrmian necropolises (Majnarić Pandžić 1970).

In recent years the investigations carried out by M. Dizdar in the area of Vinkovci yielded important new contributions: for instance, an open settlement from the earlier phase of middle La Tène, i.e. from the 3rd century, was discovered at Ervenica, and a little further a late La Tène open settlement was discovered. Salvage excavations at Damića Gradina in Stari Mikanovci offered a wealth of ceramic forms which, together with the finds from Ervenica and from the central oppidum in Vinkovci at Dirov Brijeg, made possible a detailed typological-statistical analysis (Dizdar 2001). We gained a wide range of forms and of their frequency during the 3rd cent. up until the 1st cent. B.C. (Fig. 3); moreover, in addition to a complex of settlements, particularly late La Tène ones, fortified and open, we gained for the first time a middle La Tène settlement with pit-houses, whose existence had been hinted at earlier by metal finds (Dimitrijević 1979; Majnarić Pandžić 1970). Unfortunately, a larger late La Tène cemetery from Blato below Borinci in Vinkovačko Novo Selo, which would have complemented the picture of bustling life in the area of Vinkovci in the 1st cent. B.C., was discovered only after it had been destroyed. Nevertheless, a wealth of finds from the end of the 2nd and from the 1st cent. B.C. determined the general significance of that large cinerary cemetery (Dizdar 1998). As much as 34 fibulae were found, in addition to fragments of other grave goods. The case is the same with most south Pannonian cemeteries.²

Vinkovci are a particularly suitable archaeological area for the discovery of the organization of life in the La Tène period; its area contains preserved archaeological evidence about the continuing settled life from the 3rd until the 1st cent. B.C., and it was shown that the La Tène traditions and population continue to live in the early provincial Cibalae (Majnarić Pandžić 1996 a and c; 1997). This was observed in the ceramic production with the finds of pottery kilns by M. Šaranović (Šaranović-Svetek 1980). Recent investigations constantly complement this picture (Majnarić Pandžić 1997): the salvage excavations at Dirov Brijeg next to the Bosut river, as well as those within the present-day town revealed close to 60 pottery kilns, many belonging to the La Tène period (Dizdar 2001; Iskra-Janošić 2001, 20-23, 106-116).

We expected all of this also in Osijek - Mursa, but our expectations have not been met to date. I have already mentioned the archaeological neglect in the case of Zeleno Polje, a necropolis of such importance that it can be considered almost an equal to Karaburma. The salvage excavations at Pristanište (Berth) on the Drava in the Lower Town, on the other hand, were a decent contribution. M. Bulat published from that site, in addition to other things, also several middle La Tène pits, as the remains of the local settlement (Bulat 1977). However, due to the rather scant finds this interpretation was corroborated well only with the new and detailed typological evaluation of the finds from Ervenica in Vinkovci (Dizdar 2001). This is a testimony to the fact that the settlement still existed at the time of the burials at Zeleno Polje, on the bank of the Drava where what was probably the largest and most important La Tène settlement in Slavonia

² This is obvious in two larger studies on the Slavonian and Syrmian material. Majnarić Pandžić 1970, passim; M. Knežević Jovanović, Keltsko oružje iz razorenih ratničkih grobova sa teritorija Srema i Bačke (*Celtic weapons from the destroyed warrior graves from the territory of Syrmium and Bačka*), OA 27, 2003, 287–309.

developed in late La Tène. This settlement has already been traced and partly test-excavated.

The position of that settlement had already been ascertained earlier, and test excavations were carried out on a part of the settlement (Bulat 2001), while salvage excavations in the 1980s uncovered large areas which revealed a large settlement along the Drava bank, a big production and commercial centre with a berth on the river. Further, a large number of pottery kilns was discovered; an abundance of pottery, including lots of painted and polished pieces, as well as traces of intense metallurgical production. However, the excavation was organized with youth brigades and wage labourers "with wages paid per cubic metre excavated", so the local archaeologists could not document the excavation properly. The time for the excavation was very short and it was necessary to clear the way for the building of a large hospital complex with the buildings for Surgery, Gynecology and a Children's hospital. The typological-statistical analysis of the abundant ceramic material was carried out in general outline by M. Dalić, but this work has remained at the level of a manuscript, in contrast to the published analysis of the ceramics from the fortified late La Tène settlements from the surroundings of Vinkovci, Orolik and Privlaka (Dalić 1998). Around 20 pottery kilns from late La Tène were discovered in the spacious settlement in the Lower Town adjacent to the Drava, in addition to a number of semi-products, and discarded pieces. Another smaller complex of pottery kilns was discovered a little further away from the Drava, in present-day Hadrian's Street (Hadrijanova ulica). The importance of the settlement is underlined also by the discoveries of one Mr. Franjetić, e.g. a 1934 discovery of furnaces for iron smelting upstream the 1980s-trenches (Bulat 2001).³

The greatest discovery in the last few years in northern Croatia is definitely the Celtic cinerary necropolis in the village of Zvonimirovo near Suhopolje in the vicinity of Virovitica (Tomičić 1997; Pavičić 1997). More than 80 graves were excavated so far, the excavation is in progress, and everything is excellently

documented archaeologically, with the use of an interdisciplinary approach. The cemetery was analyzed in M. Dizdar's doctoral thesis, defended in 2004 and ready for publication.

In the Virovitica region along the Drava river occasional surface finds of La Tène material had been known from before, bearing testimony of the life in La Tène, late La Tène in particular, but the discovery in Zvonimirovo was a true surprise (Majnarić Pandžić 2001). What was revealed was the long-term presence of the Celts in an area in northern Croatia: an in-depth and detailed analysis of the finds and all accompanying circumstances ascertained that the cemetery was in use from the Dux horizon, i.e. in terms of relative chronology from phase Lt B2 to Lt C1, and that it continued without interruption, extending in a regular pattern, during the 3rd and 2nd cent. B.C. (Dizdar, unpublished dissertation from 2004; Dizdar 2005a; 2006 a and b; 2007; Fig. 4).

We did not know previously of such a prominent Celtic presence in this area, so this discovery raised a number of important issues. The burial ritual, pursued in detail, showed certain specific features of which we previously knew nothing due to the lack of documentation and destruction of almost every grave in Slavonia, as well as in Syrmia to the largest extent. Prominent are thus cinerary graves with a preserved wooden grave structure, a chest and traces of wooden piles in the grave, which may have reinforced the coffin or the funerary litter. These structures appear in female graves in the northeastern part of the cemetery (Dizdar 2005; Fig. 5).

A detailed analysis of grave finds, but also of other anthropological data, indicates that in Zvonimirovo we have a preserved horizontal stratigraphy of the cemetery: it extended from the north towards the southeast, and in this it shows a fairly regular pattern (Fig. 6). M. Dizdar naturally registered all observations on the plan of the cemetery and he succeeded in distinguishing graphically a wealth of information: for instance, regarding the relationship between the sexes in the deposition in graves; family groups; double or triple burials; a wealth of grave goods and their reflection in the concept of social relations within the community. The completed anthropological and zoological analyses, together with the typological study, contributed to Zvonimirovo today being a solid foothold for considerations about the Celtic society in the 3rd and 2nd cent. in northern Croatia.⁴

³ The construction of new highways in northern Croatia brought about open-area salvage excavations. Of interest for our subject is the discovery of a late La Tène settlement at Kiškorija near Virovitica in the Podravina region. This site provided the best documented infrastructure of a settlement in Croatia so far – groups of houses and their economic features: wells, working pits and refuse pits as well as fences (Dizdar 2006 b). The finds of glass necklaces from that settlement inspired M. Dizdar to undertake a synthetic analysis of jewellery of that kind in northern Croatia (Dizdar 2006 a).

⁴ I thank Dr Dizdar for the permission to publish grave Lt 35. Because the metal finds, which are very numerous,

It is natural that Zvonimirovo should raise questions about the ethnic affiliation of the local inhabitants. It lies in the area between the Drava and Sava rivers in central Slavonia, where no traces of Celtic presence had been known to us previously, so it was assumed that it represented an enclave of the indigenous Pannonian population, settled between the Scordisci and the Taurisci (Božič 1987; Sokol 2001 b). After the analyses and the synthetic evaluation of the graves discovered to date in Zvonimirovo, as well as other minor sites, particularly in the Podravina region around Koprivnica (Marković 1984), we acquired an entirely new picture of the Celtic settlement in northern Croatia. I established as far back as 1970 on the basis of the graves from Malunje and Vojakovac that the area of northwestern Croatia belonged to the Taurisci (Majnarić Pandžić 1970). It now transpired from Dizdar's comprehensive analysis of Zvonimirovo and other sites that in all probability a large part of central Croatia was settled by the Taurisci⁵ (the geographic term Central Croatia is relatively recent; it encompasses also northwestern Croatia, but it is larger and corresponds well to the geographic and cultural division precisely in the La Tène).

The investigations by Dizdar and Potrebica in the Požega Basin filled also this area with new La Tène finds, spanning the period from early to late La Tène. Following the discovery of the isolated grave in Velika the picture is being increasingly complemented (Dizdar-Potrebica 2002). The analysis of the finds so far connects the Požega Basin with the Scordisci, and the border between the eastern Celtic group and the western one, i.e. between the Scordisci and the Taurisci is perceived by our young experts on the mountain chain of the Papuk and the Psunj, which they identify with the ancient term Mons Claudius.

The finds from the early 1990s from Gradec in the heart of Zagreb significantly complemented our knowledge about the life of the Celts in this area: this is a spacious fortified late La Tène settlement at

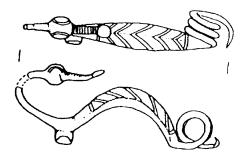
were not entirely cleaned and were not conserved, and consequently could not be drawn and photographed properly, Dizdar's dissertation is still waiting to be published. The most interesting and valuable pieces are being restored in Mainz.

⁵ Marko Dizdar carried out the analysis of diverse forms, from jewellery and weapons to ceramic types, and with increasing conviction determined the inhabitants of Zvonimirovo as belonging to the Taurisci. He nevertheless ascertained also the connection with the La Tène forms from the Danubian Basin from the Slovakian-Hungarian border to the Danubian Basin in Serbia.

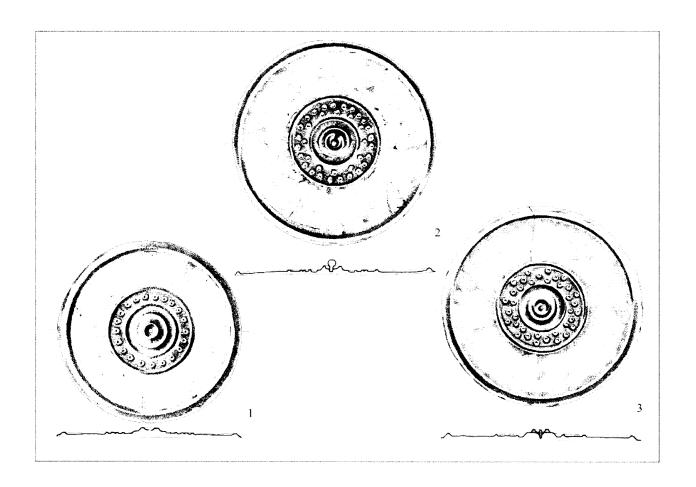
the highest point of the city of Zagreb, in the north of Gradec - Grič. The salvage excavations over several years yielded a stratified site with substantial prehistoric layers: the early phase of the early Iron Age; a distinctive late Hallstatt phase, succeeded by a late La Tène layer, which yielded above-ground houses, a layer rich with finds, a well-preserved bronze melting furnace and occasional coins from eastern Noricum. An earthen rampart, burnt through at the top, was likewise well preserved. The knowledge obtained at Privlaka and Stari Mikanovci (Majnarić Pandžić 1984) would indicate that the rampart belongs to late La Tène period, but the entire situation on that position at Grič by no means excludes the possibility that a rampart built in this way protected also the powerful Hallstatt settlement, located on the same position (Majnarić Pandžić 2004). Unfortunately, even though this salvage excavation was quite extensive and yielded very valuable results, nothing has been published except my summary reports (Majnarić Pandžić 1992); both the material and the documentation are temporarily unavailable. The expectations from that site at Gradec are rightly great, as it considerably complements the picture otherwise acquired from graves. These Iron Age settlements - the Hallstatt and the La Tène one were certainly important centres on an important strategical point at the entrance from Lower Carniola to the Sava plain.

Another important and similar late La Tène fortified settlement lay at the elevation called Kuzelin, near Sesvete not far from Zagreb. The finds were published in brief reports, but here also a comprehensive analysis and presentation are yet to come (Sokol 1992 and 2001b). Not far from Kuzelin, close to the Sava river, there was a recent find of a neck-guard from a late La Tène helmet of the Novo Mesto type, which was already presented in the literature (Sokol 2001a). The most sensational find, in terms of the state of preservation as well as regarding the place where it was found, shifted considerably towards the east, was a helmet of the Novo Mesto type, found in the bed of the Sava river next to its right bank in the vicinity of Stara Gradiška.

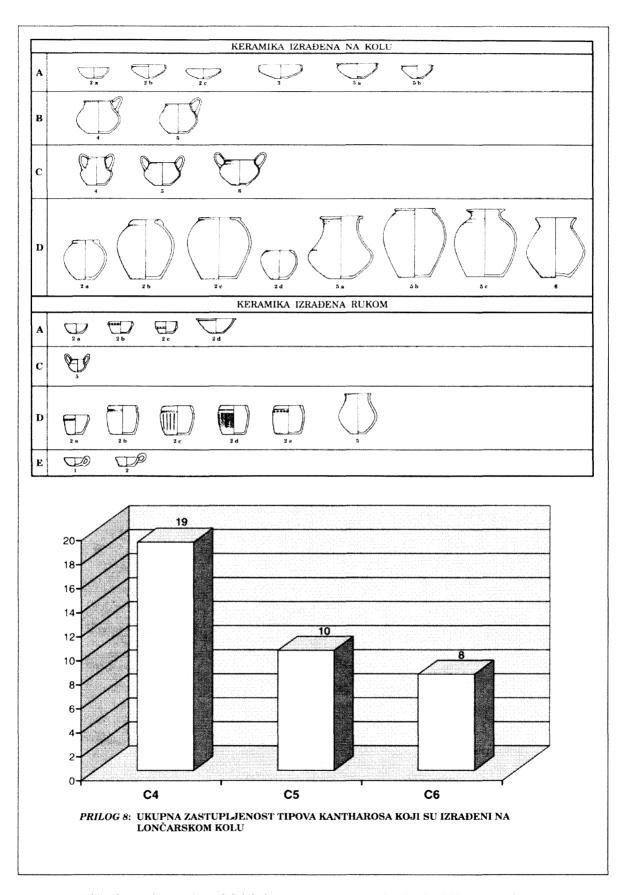
All these finds confirm the orientation of the western part of northern Croatia towards the southeastern Alpine Taurisci, and at the same time underline the importance of the Sava communication in late La Tène, which was at the same time the direction of the trade in Italic luxury goods into the south Pannonian Celtic world, and where at the same time the interest of the Romans opened towards the conquest of these lands.



- 1. Ranolatenska zoomorfna fibula iz Bilača (iz Dizdar – Potrebica T. 7, 3)
- 1. An early La Tène zoomorphic fibula from Bilač (from Dizdar – Potrebica Pl. 7, 3)

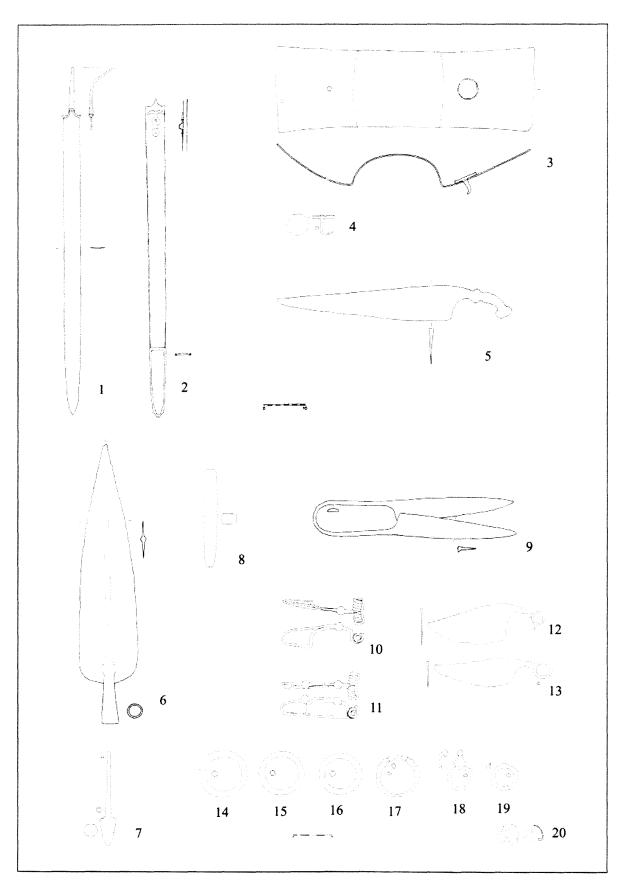


2. Ranolatenska konjska oprema iz Vinkovaca (NaMa) (iz Majnarić-Pandžić 2003) 2. An early La Tène horse harness from Vinkovci (NaMa) (From Majnarić-Pandžić 2003)

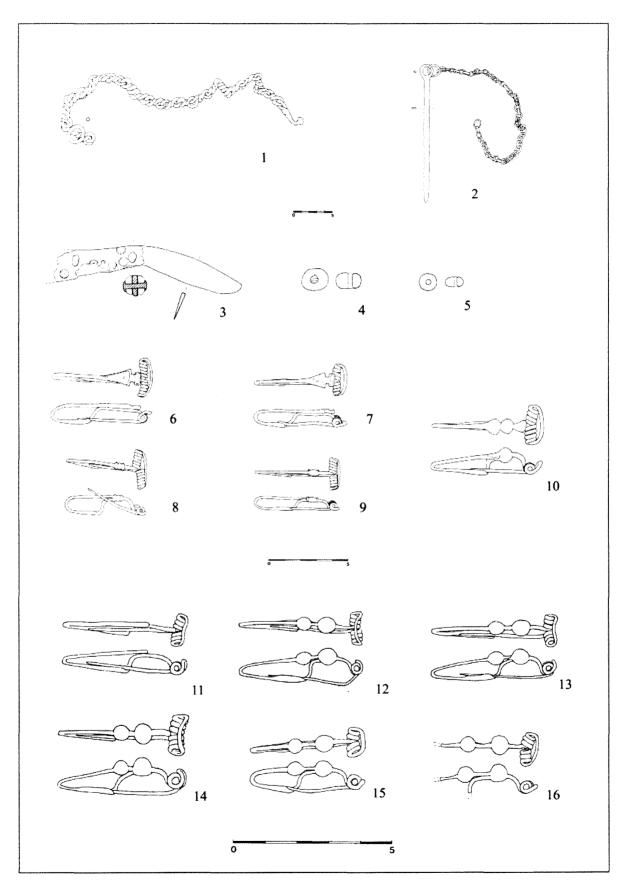


3. Oblici keramike s vinkovačkih lokaliteta i primjer statističke obrade oblika (iz Dizdar 2001)

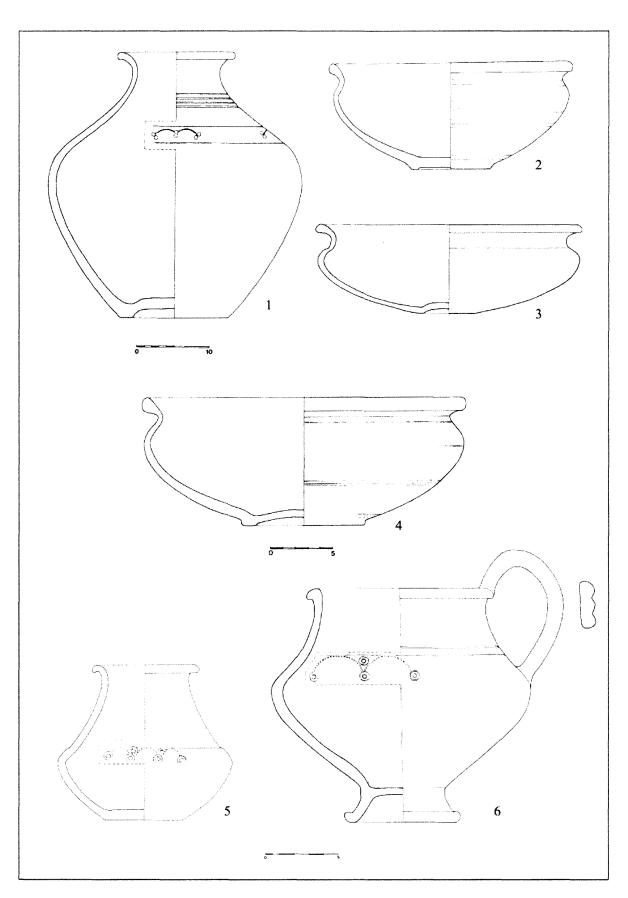
3. Ceramic forms from the sites in Vinkovci and an example of a statistical analysis of the forms (from Dizdar 2001)



4. Trojni ukop Lt 12 iz Zvonimirova (iz Majnarić-Pandžić 2001) 4. Triple burial Lt 12 from Zvonimirovo (From Majnarić-Pandžić 2001)

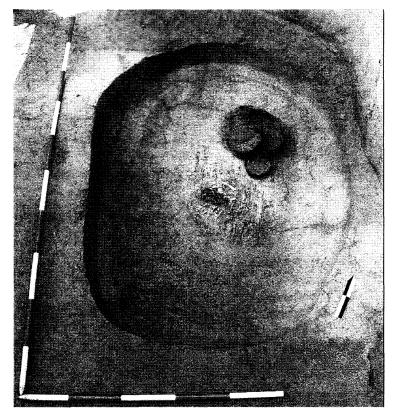


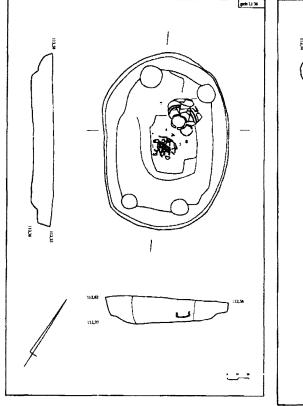
4. Trojni ukop Lt 12 iz Zvonimirova (iz Majnarić-Pandžić 2001) 4. Triple burial Lt 12 from Zvonimirovo (From Majnarić-Pandžić 2001)

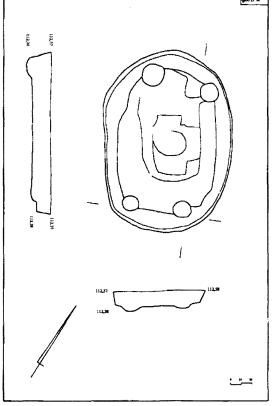


4. Trojni ukop Lt 12 iz Zvonimirova (iz Majnarić-Pandžić 2001) 4. Triple burial Lt 12 from Zvonimirovo (From Majnarić-Pandžić 2001)

Grob Lt 36

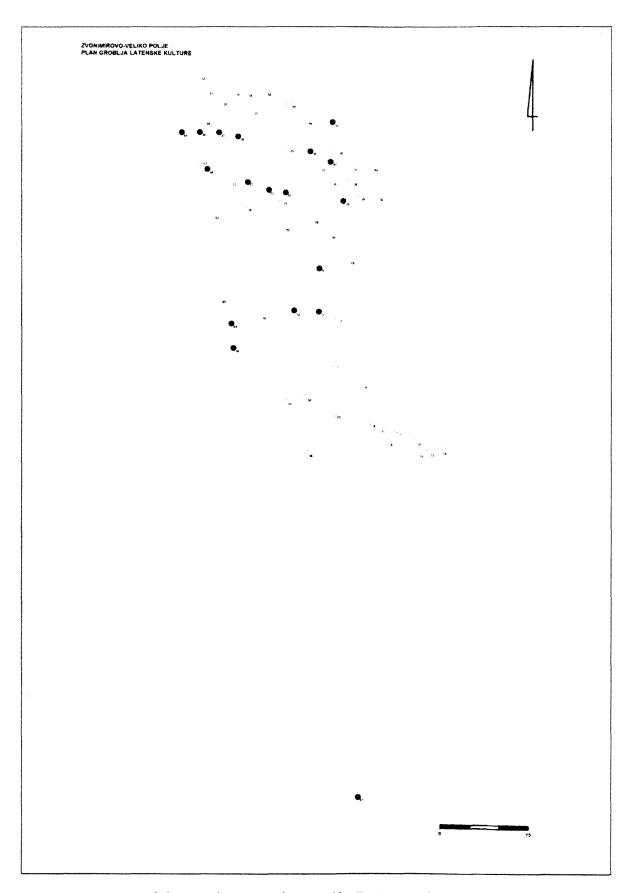




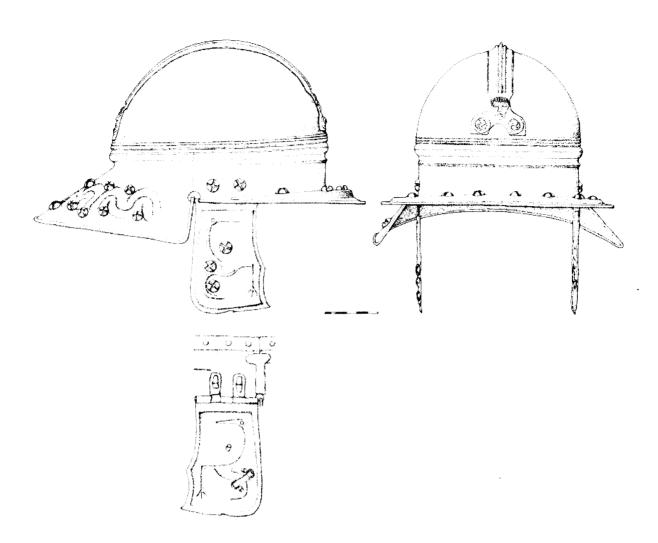


5. Ženski grob s drvenom grobnom konstrukcijom iz Zvonimirova (iz Dizdar 2004)

5. A female grave with a wooden grave structure from Zvonimirovo (from Dizdar 2005)



6. Primjer razrade horizontalne stratigrafije na groblju Zvonimirovo (iz Tomičić – Dizdar 2005) 6. An example of an elaboration of horizontal stratigraphy at the cemetery in Zvonimirovo (from Tomičić – Dizdar 2005)



7. Kasnolatenska kaciga iz korita Save kod Stare Gradiške (iz Mihaljević – Dizdar) 7. A late La Tène helm et from the bed of the Sava river near Stara Gradiška (from Mihaljević – Dizdar)

Nives Majnarić-Pandžić

NOVI LATENSKI NALAZI I NALAZIŠTA U SJEVERNOJ HRVATSKOJ

Rezime

Predstavit ću u glavnim crtama rad i otkrića koja su se u sjevernoj Hrvatskoj odvijala nakon objavljivanja sinteze o keltskoj kulturi u Jugoslaviji u ediciji "Praistorija jugoslavenskih zemalja", sv. 5 (Jovanović 1987; Božić 1987). Nova ću saznanja navoditi kronološkim redom, u smislu od ranog do kasnog latena, a ne prema vremenu kada su se otkrića i studije događale.⁶

Možemo zaključiti da u nas taj horizont ranolatenskih zoomorfnih fibula, tj. Lt Bl, svakako prethodi Duxhorizontu kada se tek javilo arheološki dokazano i povijesno zabilježeno kompaktnije naseljavanje Kelta u panonskom Podunavlju. Nalazi koje smo P. Popović i ja analizirali jasno svjedoče o interesu domaćeg stanovništva za nove latenske oblike i njihovo preuzimanje, no premalo je čvrstih arheoloških oslonaca da ustvrdimo da je tada u međurječju bilo doista naseljenih Kelta. Isto tako ne možemo bez pravih arheoloških potvrda, a njih zasada doista nema dovoljno, pitanje rane latenizacije u toku 4. st. riješiti vojnim racijama (Marić 1963. i 1964; Žeravica 1985); ipak treba priznati da ima indicija koje govore i tome u prilog.

Najveće otkriće posljednjih godina u sjevernoj Hrvatskoj svakako je keltska paljevinska nekropola u selu Zvonimirovo kod Suhopolja, nedaleko Virovitice (Tomičić 1997; Pavičić 1997). Dosada je istraženo preko 80 grobova, istraživanja će se nastaviti, a sve je izvrsno arheološki i interdisciplinarno dokumentirano. Groblje je obrađeno u disertaciji M. Dizdara, obranjenoj 2004. godine i spremnoj za objavu.

⁶ Referat u Novom Sadu održala sam u jesen 2004. godine, pa su navedena samo dotadašnja otkrića i objave. Ovdje podatke ponešto nadopunjujem bez pretenzije na potpunost.