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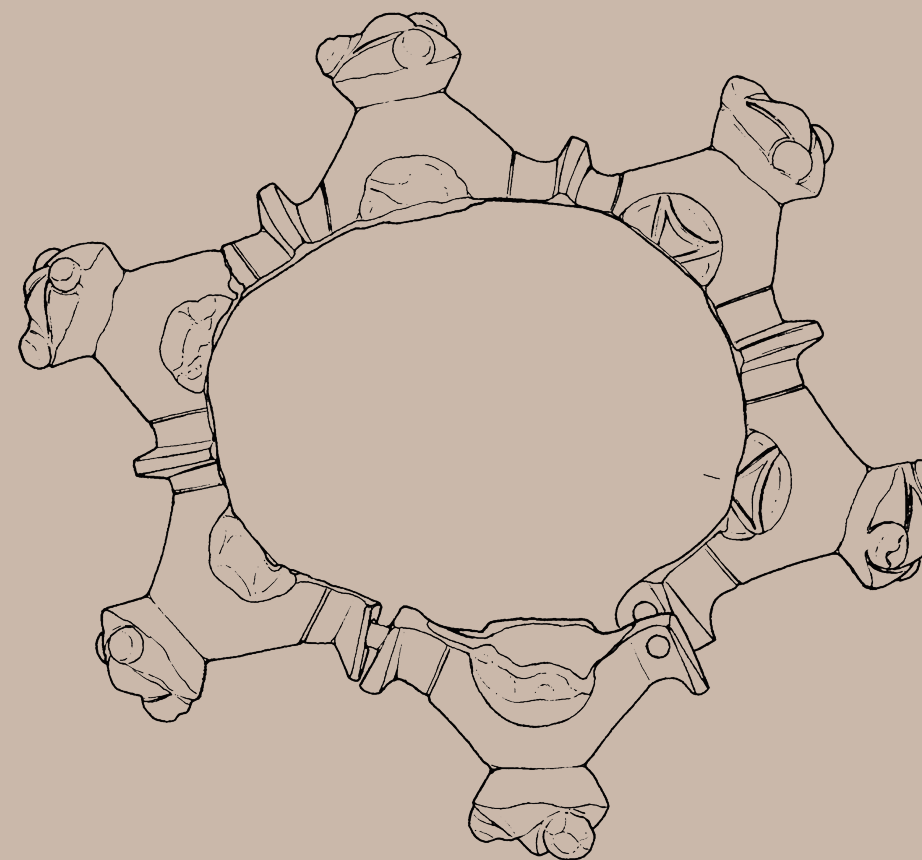
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IRON AGE FEMALE IDENTITIES IN
THE SOUTHERN CARPATHIAN BASIN

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Zagreb, 2022.



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IRON AGE FEMALE IDENTITIES IN THE SOUTHERN CARPATHIAN BASIN

EDITOR MARKO DIZDAR

Zagreb, 2022.

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LATE LA TÈNE BRONZE KNOBBED RINGS AND ARMRINGS IN THE SOUTH-EASTERN CARPATHIAN BASIN: BELOVED JEWELLERY AND AMULETS OF THE SCORDISCAN WOMEN?

Knobbed rings and armrings are among the most numerous Late La Tène forms of jewellery in the territory of the Scordisci. Even though the circumstances of discovery are unknown for most finds, the knobbed rings and armrings found in the richly furnished grave 1 in the cemetery of Sotin — Zmajevac showed that they were popular and frequently worn items of jewellery, which seems to be confirmed by numerous finds from La Tène settlements around Vinkovci. Based on size differences, some knobbed rings are assumed to have served as pendants, while those of larger diameter are believed to be arm jewellery. Parallels for knobbed rings and armrings from Scordiscan sites have been found in Transylvania and central Europe, confirming the intensive cultural contacts and involvement of the Scordisci in the complex communication networks of the Late La Tène. Among the finds from Scordiscan sites, many knobbed rings belong to the Szárazd — Regöly type, which is characteristic for the south-eastern Carpathian Basin, but their function is still unclear. On the other hand, the presence of triple knobbed rings and rings with zoomorphic representations indicates a connection between the Scordisci and contemporary communities in central Europe. The finds from grave 1 in Sotin show that knobbed rings and armrings could have been worn by women of high status in the community, who used body ornamentation to display various aspects of their visual identity.

KEY WORDS: KNOBBED RINGS AND ARMRINGS, SCORDISCI, LATE LA TÈNE, JEWELLERY, AMULETS, CULTURAL CONTACTS, IDENTITY, STATUS

INTRODUCTION

The material heritage of the Scordisci, inhabiting the south-eastern Carpathian Basin in the Late Iron Age, during the last development phase — LT D — which covers the second half of the 2nd and the 1st cent. BC, is well known from the results of excavations in settlements and cemeteries (Božič

1981; Guštin 1984; Jovanović B. 1987). Actually, it is the only phase in the development of their material heritage where the content is defined not only by the results of excavations of cemeteries, but also by the knowledge gleaned from settlements. Also, the greatest number of graves from Karaburma, the largest explored cemetery of the Scordisci (Todorović 1972), can be dated to LT

D1; they are contemporary with the graves from some other cemeteries, such as Rospri Ćuprija, Sotin, and those at Đerdap (Božić 1981). The Late La Tène material heritage of the Scordisci also includes many chance finds that probably originate from destroyed graves (Todorović 1968; 1971; Majnarić-Pandžić 1970). However, latest research shows that the finds sometimes come from settlements, especially those representing prominent centres (Dizdar 2016).¹

The Late La Tène material heritage of the Scordisci, especially the heritage dated to LT D1, is well known — from the weaponry in warriors' graves to female costume and jewellery items and a diverse range of ceramic forms. Like during previous phases of development, similarities in weaponry forms have been documented in the Carpathian Basin, especially its eastern part (cf. Dizdar 2009; Drnić 2015). On the other hand, the Late La Tène costume and jewellery items of Scordiscan women were assumed to show certain peculiarities in comparison with the neighbouring areas, especially within the Carpathian Basin (Guštin 1984: 341). These are finds from the mentioned cemeteries where particular forms of female costume have been singled out — e.g. Laminci-type buckles, Belgrade-type astragal belts, and fibulae of the Jarak and Karaburma 39 types — with the greatest numbers recorded at Scordiscan sites (Božić 1981: 319–320, Pl. 3–5; 8–9; 11: 7–11; Guštin 1984: 326–327, Fig. 14–16; Pl. 47: 4; 50, App. 1: 90–105). They can be made to include some other forms of Late La Tène bronze fibulae, such as the fibulae of the types of Vinkovci (Dizdar 2016: 37, Fig. 8: 1–3) or Gomolava (Dizdar 2019: 38–41, Fig. 3–5). On the other hand, there are fewer recorded Late La Tène female costume and jewellery forms that have been found in large numbers at contemporary central European sites, such as e.g. D-sectioned glass armrings (Dizdar 2006: 76–77; 2016: 38) or ring-shaped glass beads (Dizdar 2016: 38). This seems to show that the Scordisci, while still involved in the networks of contacts, developed certain peculiarities in their material heritage in the Late La Tène, most clearly recognized in the female costume and jewellery items that were assumed to arise under the influences of the indigenous population and the Dacians from the east (Guštin 1984: 337–338, 341). However, recent research of the Late La Tène material heritage of the Scordisci shows an increasing number of objects that are a distinct part of the heritage of the

central European La Tène culture, such as certain forms of bronze fibulae (e.g. different variants of cast fibulae: Drnić 2012; 2016; Dizdar 2016: 37–38, Fig. 9), bronze pendants (Dizdar 2016: 39, Fig. 12), or various items of Late La Tène horse gear (Dizdar 2016: 40, Fig. 13; Dizdar, Filipović 2020: 94–95, Fig. 10: 3–8). The existence of intensive contacts, especially with the northern Carpathian Basin and the area of central Europe, is evidenced by particular forms of the Late La Tène female costume, such as the eponymous find of a Sotin-type bronze buckle (Dizdar 2015: 302, Fig. 6) or bronze fibulae with loops on the foot (*fibules à crête*) (Dizdar 2020). It should be mentioned that the same conclusion was reached in the study of the Late La Tène material heritage from the sites of the Mokronog group in the south-eastern Alpine area (Božić 1993b; 1998).

A Late La Tène form of Scordiscan jewellery appearing in ever larger numbers and having numerous parallels in the central European La Tène sites, especially the numerous and exceptionally heterogeneous group of ring jewellery that is characterized by an ornamentation scheme of variously arranged knob-like protrusions on the outer edge of the ring, called *Knotenringe* or *knobbed rings* (Fig. 15). In the territory of the Scordisci, knobbed rings appear rarely in Late La Tène graves — e.g. in double grave 1 in the Sotin — Zmajevac cemetery (Fig. 1) (Majnarić-Pandžić 1973). Also, these rings are known from a few settlements, but most finds are lacking data on the context and circumstances of the discovery (e.g. the finds from the area of Kostolac: Spasić 1992; Stojić 2006). Considering the different dimensions, these are probably objects that could have different uses: they could have been pendants and/or armrings. The finds from the grave in Sotin, since it was a cremation grave, do not testify about their functional position on the dead woman's body. Still, on the basis of the dimensions of the knobbed rings in the mentioned grave 1 in Sotin, dated to LT D1, it is believed that they were probably armrings (Majnarić-Pandžić 1973: 56, 63–64, Pl. I: 1–2, 4–5). A similar conclusion, considering the dimensions, is assumed for the three knobbed rings that were found during the construction of the Niš — Pirot railway (Todorović 1968: 58, 141, Pl. XI: 2, 8–9).

Before the analysis of the known ensemble of the finds of Late La Tène bronze knobbed rings and/or armrings from the territory of the Scordisci and similar forms, it must be pointed out that they

¹ — This article was funded by the Croatian Science Foundation with the project (IP-06-2016-1749): Iron Age Female Identities in the Southern Carpathian Basin (FEMINE).



Figure 1 — Grave 1 from the cemetery of Sotin — Zmajevac (after: Majnarić-Pandžić 1973)

will be included in the typological classification proposed by M. Dębiec and M. Karwowski on the basis of the finds recorded in the *Boian coinage zone* (Dębiec, Karwowski 2014; 2016). Also, some new typological forms will be singled out, primarily regarding their dimensions and the method of making the knots. The analysis will include the known and published finds of knobbed rings from the sites of the Scordisci (cf. Todorović 1968; 1971; Majnarić-Pandžić 1970; 1973; Jacanović 1987; Spasić 1992; Trifunović, Pašić 2003; Stojić 2006 etc.), with the addition of the large group of knobbed rings that were found around Vinkovci in the last two decades. These finds were discovered in trial excavations and field surveys; their greatest number originates from Late La Tène settlements, but we cannot rule out the possibility that some finds originate from destroyed graves.²

The number and diversity of bronze knobbed rings from Scordiscan sites probably indicates that it was a very popular item of the Late La Tène ring jewellery of the Scordiscan women. Similar insights were documented in the analysis of the knobbed rings from Mokronog group sites, which were also dated to the Late La Tène (Guštin 1984: 335; Božić 1987: 878; 1993a: 190–193; 1993b: 146; 1999: 199; Guštin et al. 1993: 18–20). Also, different forms of bronze knobbed rings with variously arranged knots have been found in large numbers in Transylvania (Glodariu 1984; Rustoiu 1996: 106–107, Fig. 53).

LATE LA TÈNE KNOBBED RINGS FROM THE SCORDISCAN SITES

The mentioned analyses of knobbed rings done by M. Dębiec and M. Karwowski, constituting the basis for the classification of knobbed rings from the Scordiscan sites, include a detailed review of research on this distinct and widespread Late La Tène form (Dębiec, Karwowski 2014; 2016). They are classified into two basic types of knobbed rings with variants based on certain stylistic details: the number of knots, the space between them, and their arrangement on the ring, then the size and shape of knots etc. The classification encompasses knobbed rings that most often have the inner diameter of 10 to 40 mm, meaning they probably served as pendants or amulets. Larger knobbed rings, which were probably armrings and are far fewer in number in the observed area, have

not been included in the analysis. Knobbed rings are divided into two basic types, depending on how their knot(s) or groups of knots are arranged on the outer edge of the ring: whether the interval between them is greater than the size of each knot (type I), or equal to or smaller than the size of knots (type II). Furthermore, variants are distinguished on the basis of the number of knots and their arrangement on the ring (Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 667; 2016: 116–117, 120). As already pointed out, this analysis does not include large-size knobbed rings, which are known in large numbers from the Scordiscan sites and assumed to be armrings, as this group of finds will be the subject of a separate analysis. Also, there remains the open question of defining the dimensions, i.e. the inner diameter of the ring, dividing the knobbed rings into pendants or armrings. The analysis of the knobbed rings from the Scordiscan sites sets the dividing line at the inner diameter of 50 mm; however, this does not mean that smaller-diameter knobbed rings could not have served as armrings — for example, those worn by little girls. There is the important fact that the inner diameter of bronze armrings from the earlier development phases of the La Tène culture is usually under 60 mm, while it is over 60 mm for armlets (Bujna 2005: 4). However, there are few finds of more fully preserved knobbed rings from the Scordiscan sites for which the inner diameter can be measured. In fact, they are usually fragments, especially in the case of finds from settlements. Moreover, some fragments of knobbed rings are so poorly preserved that they cannot be associated with certainty to the defined types and variants based on the classification proposed by M. Dębiec and M. Karwowski. Also, there are particular finds of knobbed rings, usually of small dimensions, showing some shape particularities (i.e. Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 670, Fig. 3: 23–25; 2016: 117, 129–130, Fig. 14). Considering the common idea of ornamenting the body of the ring with variously arranged knots or groups of knots, the analysis will include two more groups of finds from the territory of the Scordisci — triple knobbed rings and knobbed rings that are ornamented not only with knots, but also with zoomorphic forms (Fig. 16).

As it has already been pointed out, the classification proposed by M. Dębiec and M. Karwowski (2014; 2016) will be used for the bronze knobbed rings from the Scordiscan sites, which have the inner diameter under 50 mm and are assumed

² — We thank our colleagues Hrvoje Vulić and Boris Kratožil from the Vinkovci Municipal Museum for the data on the knobbed rings found at the sites around Vinkovci.

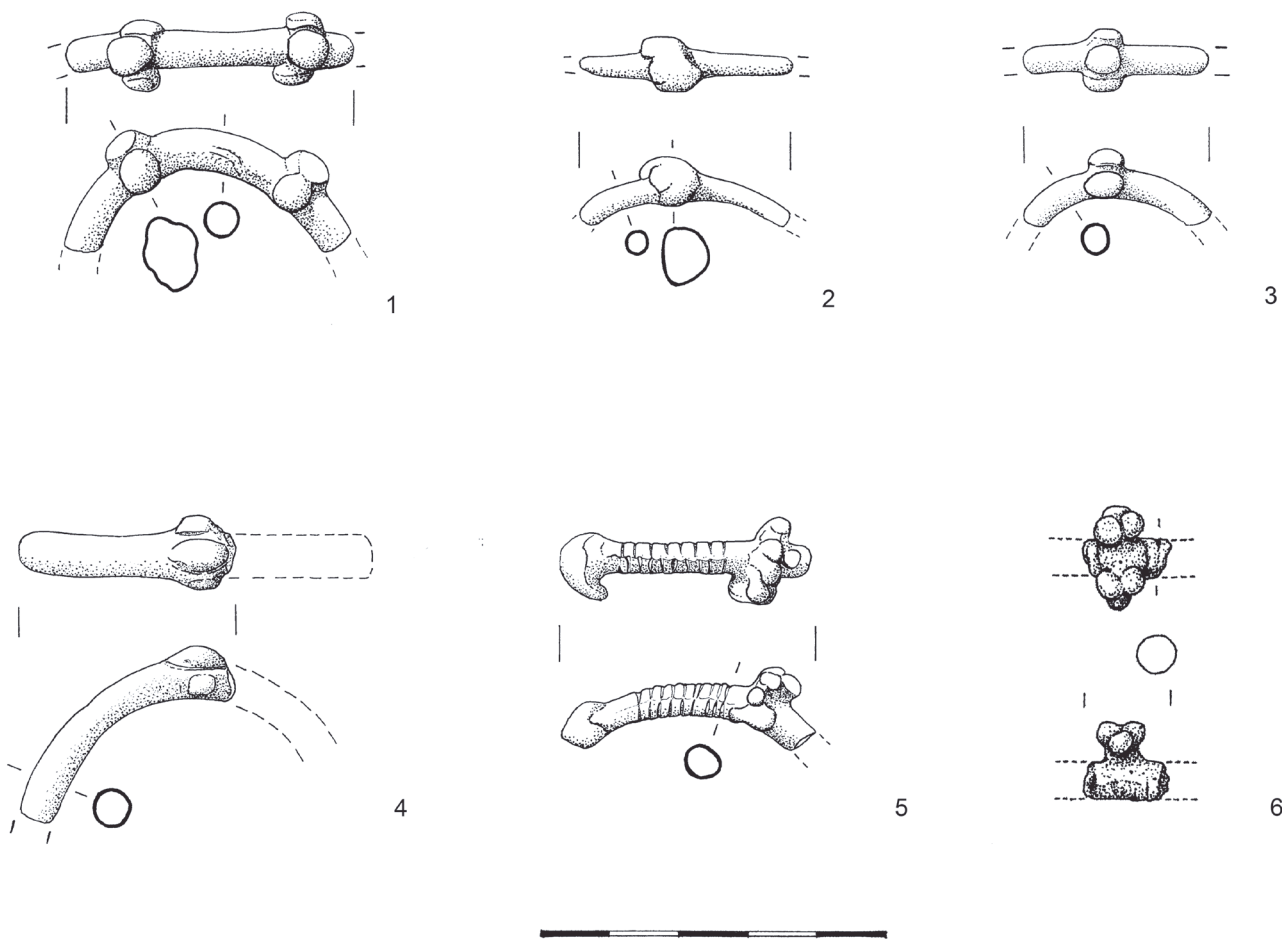


Figure 2 — Knobbed rings of type IA: 1–2 Podgrađe — Livade; 3–4 Srijemske Laze — Staro Selo; 5 Ostrovo — Sokolovac; 6 Ostrovo — Gorica (drawing by: M. Rončević and M. Marijanović Lešić)

to have served as pendants. On the other hand, knobbed rings with a bigger inner diameter (> 50 mm) from the Scordiscan sites are considered separately as arm jewellery, probably serving as armrings or even armlets, but their analysis will also use the mentioned classification based on stylistic details, i.e. the arrangement and number of knots. The ring with knots is usually round-sectioned and only exceptionally oval-sectioned, with a cross-section of 20 to 60 mm. Only the knobbed rings that are assumed on the basis of their size to have served as armrings have a cross-section exceeding 60 mm.

KNOBBED RINGS OF TYPE IA

Knobbed rings of type IA are characterized by triple groups of knots — one knot on the outer surface of the ring and two on its upper and lower sides — that are evenly spaced at smaller or larger

intervals. The number of groups of knots varies between 3 and 12, depending on the intervals between them and the size of the ring (Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 670, Fig. 1: 1–6; 2016: 117, Fig. 2–4). It is the second most numerous type of knobbed rings; it has a separate variant, Staré Hradisko, where each knot consists of several (usually three) smaller knots (Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 670, Fig. 1: 4–6; 2016: 117, Fig. 4: 33–35). This kind of knots associated with the Staré Hradisko variant has also been identified on knobbed rings of types IB and IIA (Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 673, Fig. 2: 15; 5; 2016: 117, 121 Fig. 5: 48, 58; 8: 90).

Finds from the Scordiscan sites associated with type IA include the knobbed ring from La Tène pit XXV at Gomolava, 36 mm in diameter and 4 mm in thickness. The ring has six triple groups of knots with large intervals between them (Sekereš 1961: 85, 88, Pl. V: 55). Moreover, this type seems to include the knobbed ring with somewhat denser triple groups of knots from the settlement

of Stari Kostolac — Čair (Jacanović 1987: 13, Pl. III: 7) and two more knobbed rings, one 42 mm and the other 40 mm in diameter (Spasić 1992: 12, Pl. IV: 10, 14). A fragment from the Salakovac site associated with type IA has triple groups of knots with three smaller knots each (Stojić 2006: 18, Fig. 1: 4), which would mean that it actually belongs to the Staré Hradisko variant; the smaller knots are believed to represent minute stylized animal heads.

In the area of Vinkovci, fragments of knobbed rings associated with type IA have been found at the site of Podgrađe — Livade. Fragment has a slightly smaller diameter (**Fig. 2: 1**), while the knots of fragment (**Fig. 2: 2**) are almost joined into a larger knot, which could be a production flaw. The site of Srijemske Laze — Staro selo (**Fig. 2: 3**) contained a fragment with triple groups of knots arranged along the ring at larger intervals, while the other fragment (**Fig. 2: 4**) seems to have had oval knots on the outer surface. The site of Ostrovo — Sokolovac included a fragment of a knobbed ring (**Fig. 2: 5**); the outer surface of the ring, between triple groups of knots, is ornamented with transverse grooves. Interestingly, each knot is topped by three smaller knots, so it can also be associated with the Staré Hradisko variant. One knot is poorly preserved, so it could have been a production flaw. The site of Ostrovo — Gorica contained another minute fragment associated with the same variant (**Fig. 2: 6**), but there is a difference: a group on the ring consists of only two knots, each of them topped by three smaller knots.

Another knobbed ring of type IA has been found at the site of Gradačac — Jadrina in northern Bosnia; it is described as having a diameter of 53 mm, which is probably its outer diameter (Marić 1963: 74, Pl. II: 20). One find associated with the same type is the knobbed ring from the Late La Tène hill-top settlement of Kuzelin near Sesvete in north-western Croatia (Sokol 2001: 17, Fig. 1: 3). Another knobbed ring of this type comes from the settlement of Gradišče pri Dunaju near Krško in Slovenia (Božič 1993a: 190, Fig. 1: 2), while a knobbed ring from the fortified settlement of Žerovnišček in Inner Carniola is 48 mm in diameter and decorated with eight triple groups of knots (Laharnar 2009: 131, 138, Pl. 2: 4).

KNOBBED RINGS OF TYPE IB

Knobbed rings of type IB are characterized by triple groups of knots — one knot on the outer

surface of the ring and two on its upper and lower sides — that are evenly spaced along the ring, each of them alternating with a single knot on the outer surface of the ring. The number of the groups of knots varies from 6 to around 10 depending on the intervals between the knots and the size of the ring (Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 670, Fig. 1: 7–9; 2016: 117, Fig. 5). Finds associated with this type include bronze knobbed rings from the sites of Supska, Donje Štiplje, and Prevešt (Stojić 2006: 16, Fig. 1a–c). A knobbed ring with a diameter of 40 mm is a chance find from the Late La Tène and Roman cemetery at the site of Novo mesto — Ljubljanska cesta. Triple groups of knots alternate with single knots on the outer surface of the ring. One spot has two knots instead of three; also, the ring has a small thickening with two small depressions on each side, possibly made to hang the knobbed ring (Božič 2008: 116, 151, Fig. 7, Pl. 2: 7).

KNOBBED RINGS OF TYPE IC

Knobbed rings of type IC are characterized by single knots set on the outer surface of the ring that sometimes alternate with groups composed of two knots. There are 4 to 8 knots and/or groups of knots; this is the least numerous type (Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 670, Fig. 1: 10; 2016: 120, Fig. 6).

A find associated with this type is a small and massive ring with large spherical knots from the Late La Tène structure 2 in the cemetery of Čurug — Stari Vinogradi (Trifunović 2019: 256, Fig. 22: 10). Another one is a fragment of a knobbed ring from the site of Andrijaševci — Gornje Njive (**Fig. 3: 1**), 29 mm in inner diameter, with single knots on the outer surface of the ring. One fragment close to type IC comes from the settlement of Mirkovci — Malat (**Fig. 3: 2**). It is a part of an oval-sectioned ring, 38 mm in inner diameter, that seems to have had groups of three oval knots in four opposite places on the outer surface of the ring. Another find from the site of Novi Jankovci — Velika Livada (**Fig. 3: 3**) is a small ring, 11 mm in inner diameter, that has hemispherical ribs on the outer edge, which make it different from other described finds. Also, it has a protrusion on one side, which might be the remains of a suspension hoop. One fragment broadly associated with this type comes from the site of Ivankovo — Slatine (**Fig. 3: 4**) and has a dense series of knots on the outer surface of the ring only.

Two knobbed rings, 45 mm and 43 mm in diameter, were found at the cemetery of Novo mesto — Okrajno glavarstvo. Both were damaged by fire,

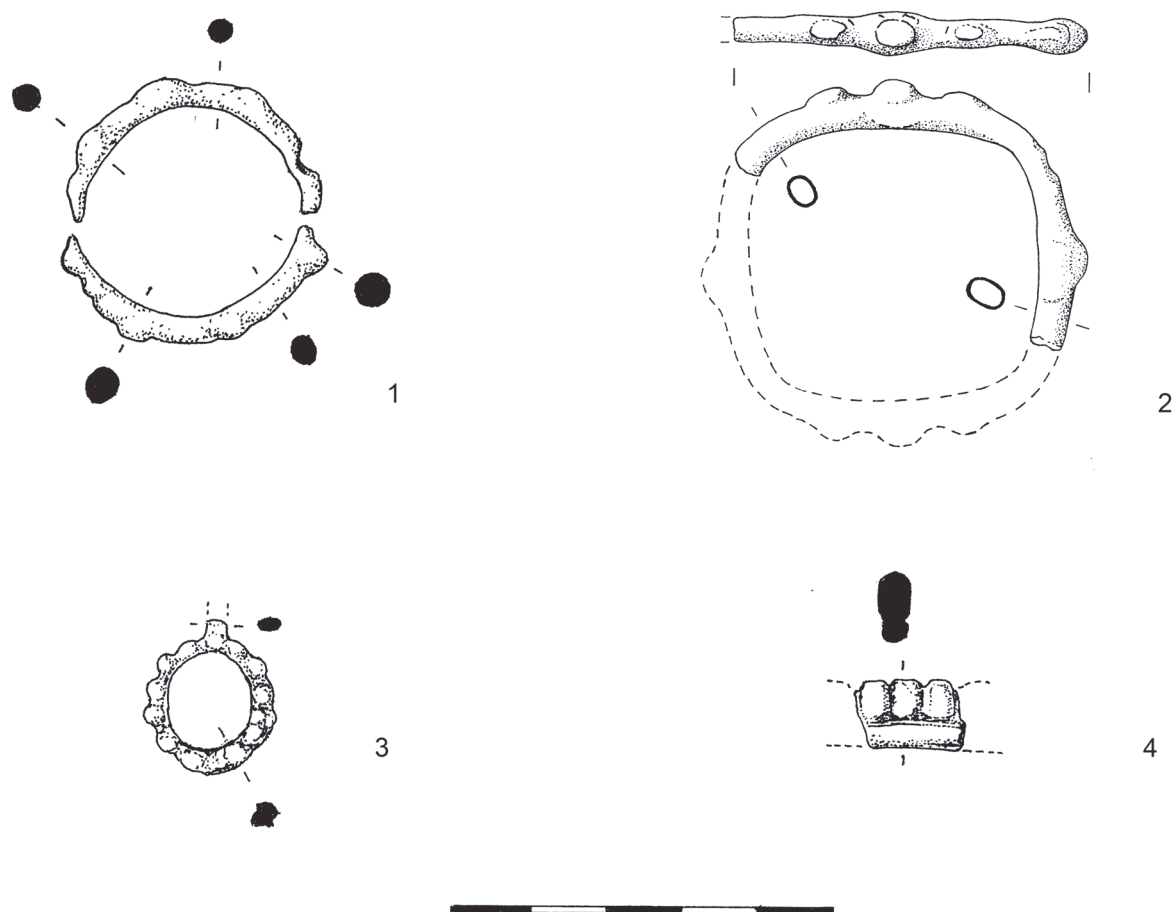


Figure 3 — Knobbed rings of type IC: 1 Andrijaševci — Gornje Njive; 2 Mirkovci — Malat; 3 Novi Jankovci — Velika Livada; 4 Ivankovo — Slatine (drawing by: M. Rončević and M. Marijanović Lešić)

probably indicating that they originated from a cremation grave or graves; they have been dated to LT D1. The rings have two-knot groups alternating with single knots — one has 4 two-knot groups and 3 single knots; the other has 6 two-knot groups and 6 single knots (Božič 2008: 115, 168–169, Pl. 20: 7–8). A fragment from the river Savinja at Celje has a preserved length of 42 mm and thickness of 6 mm, which seems to indicate it belonged to an armring dated to the Late La Tène. The fragment has a series of minute single oval knots set in intervals along the outer surface of the ring; it seems there is a groove along the centre of the knots (Lazar 1996: 281, 286, Pl. 2: 1).

KNOBBED RINGS OF TYPE IIA

Knobbed rings of type IIA are characterized by densely arranged groups of three knots — one

knot on the outer surface of the ring and two on its upper and lower sides — with the Staré Hradisko variant singled out again (Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 670, Fig. 2: 11–15; 2016: 120–121, Fig. 7–8).

A find associated with this type is the knobbed ring from grave 1 in Sotin (**Fig. 1**), described as having a diameter of 45 mm, which is probably its outer diameter (Majnarić-Pandžić 1973: 56, Pl. I: 1). A knobbed ring from Vukovar, dated to the Late La Tène, is 54 mm in diameter (probably the outer diameter) and ornamented with triple groups of knots. Interestingly, the knots have a large spherical shape (Majnarić-Pandžić 1970: 52, 100, Pl. LI: 12; Drnić 2015: 85). Čurug — Stari Vinogradi, the site of excavations of a Late La Tène settlement and a contemporary cemetery, contained a knobbed ring of type IIA, less than 50 mm in inner diameter (Trifunović, Pašić 2003: 268, Fig. 6: 9). Likewise, a find associated with this type is the knobbed ring with densely arranged groups of three knots from the

site of Stari Kostolac — Čair (Jacanović 1987: 13, Pl. III: 6). A fragment of a knobbed ring of type IIA has been found in a layer of trench 2 in the Late La Tène fortified settlement of Plavna in southern Bačka. The preserved length of the fragment is 50 mm; it is believed to be an armring (Jovanović M. 1989: 61, 66, Pl. VI: 8). A knobbed ring of type IIA is known from the Late La Tène hoard of Szárazd — Regöly (Hunyady 1942: Pl. XXXVII: 20). The Holubov hoard contained an interesting find of a small knobbed ring of type IIA, 20–21 mm in inner diameter and dated to LT D1, which had a suspension hoop (John, Houfková 2014: 182–184, Fig. 3: 1). The site of Podbočje — Stari Grad included a knobbed ring of the same type, described as having a diameter of 60 mm (Guštin et al. 1993: 18, Fig. 6: 13). Likewise, the Late La Tène hoard of Schwarzenbach contained numerous fragments of knobbed rings of types IIA and probably IA, as well as fragments of the Staré Hradisko variant. However, some fragments are larger and probably belonged to armrings; but there are smaller fragments too, some of them burnt (Urban 1998: 803–804, Fig. 2: 3–6, 8–18; 4).

A large number of knobbed rings from the area of Vinkovci can be associated with type IIA. The site of Vinkovci — Ljeskovac contained an almost completely preserved knobbed ring of this type (**Fig. 4: 1**); its inner diameter is 33 mm. The large Late La Tène settlement of Mirkovci — Malat (**Fig. 4: 2**) included a fragment of a knobbed ring of type IIA. The knots on the outer surface of the ring are round, while those on the edges are flatter. Approximately one-third of this knobbed ring has been preserved, and its inner diameter seems to have been around 45 mm. The same site contained another fragment of a knobbed ring of this type (**Fig. 4: 3**), with a big preserved length (56 mm). But the fragment is partly deformed, so it seems that there was a mistake in its production, since the knots on the upper and lower sides are actually turned towards the inner part of the ring. There is another interesting fragment with three-knot groups: between each knot on upper and lower sides, it has one smaller knot, so that the knots are set up in an exceptionally thick arrangement (**Fig. 4: 4**). Other fragments of knobbed rings of type IIA have been found at the sites of Orolik — Krčevine (**Fig. 4: 5**) and Vinkovački Banovci — Šuma (**Fig. 4: 6**). The fragment from Orolik is dark grey on the outside, which might indicate that it was made of copper with a large admixture of lead. A find associated with type IIA is the small but massive knobbed ring from the site of Nuštar — Rimski Most (**Fig. 4: 7**), with an inner diameter of only 11 mm.

KNOBBED RINGS OF TYPE IIB

Knobbed rings of type IIB are characterized by knots that are not linked in groups, but densely arranged in three rows — on the outer edge of the ring and on its upper and lower sides. The number of knots on the outer edge and the upper and lower sides should be the same, but it usually isn't. This is the most numerous type of knobbed rings; they can have an eyelet, but rarely, and usually when they are smaller (Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 670, Fig. 2: 16–20; 2016: 121–124, Fig. 9–11).

The finds from the site of Stari Kostolac — Čair that can be associated with this type are a small bronze knobbed ring measuring 18 mm in diameter and a knobbed ring measuring 35 mm in diameter that has an irregular protrusion on one side, possibly the remnant of a suspension eyelet (Spasić 1992: 12, Pl. III: 14–15). Another small knobbed ring of type IIB, 28 mm in diameter, comes from Stari Kostolac (Stojić, Jacanović 2008: 262, Fig. 133, Pl. CIX: 23). A knobbed ring of type IIB with an inner diameter of only 13 mm has been found at the site of Vinkovački Banovci — Šuma (**Fig. 5: 1**); a similar find from the site of Šiškovci — Selište (**Fig. 5: 2**) has a small protrusion on one side, which could be the remnant of a suspension eyelet.

Another find that could be associated with type IIB is a small knobbed ring from Vače, even though the knots are not clearly pronounced and have an irregular arrangement (Božič 1993a, 190, Fig. 1: 3). One more find associated with type IIB is a small bronze knobbed ring from the site of Pavlov — Děvín, believed to be a pendant and dated to LT C2–D1 (Goláňová, Navrátil 2017: 400, Fig. 4: 17). Interestingly, knobbed rings of this type from the sites of Mikulov — U Aleje and Sedlec — Za Čelovským have been dated to LT C (Goláňová et al. 2020: 33, Fig. 5: 9, 15), which seems to match the dating for the finds from the Žehuň settlement (Danielisová et al. 2018: 144–145, n. 7, Fig. 13: 87–88).

KNOBBED RINGS OF TYPE IIC

Knobbed rings of type IIC are characterized by knots that do not make up distinct groups but are densely set on the outer edge of the ring, with only a few knots on the upper and lower sides spaced at large intervals. The number of knots on the outer edge is usually twice the number of knots on the upper and the lower sides. Also, the knots are elongated, which is a characteristic of type IIC, and there is one clearly larger knot (Dębiec, Karwowski

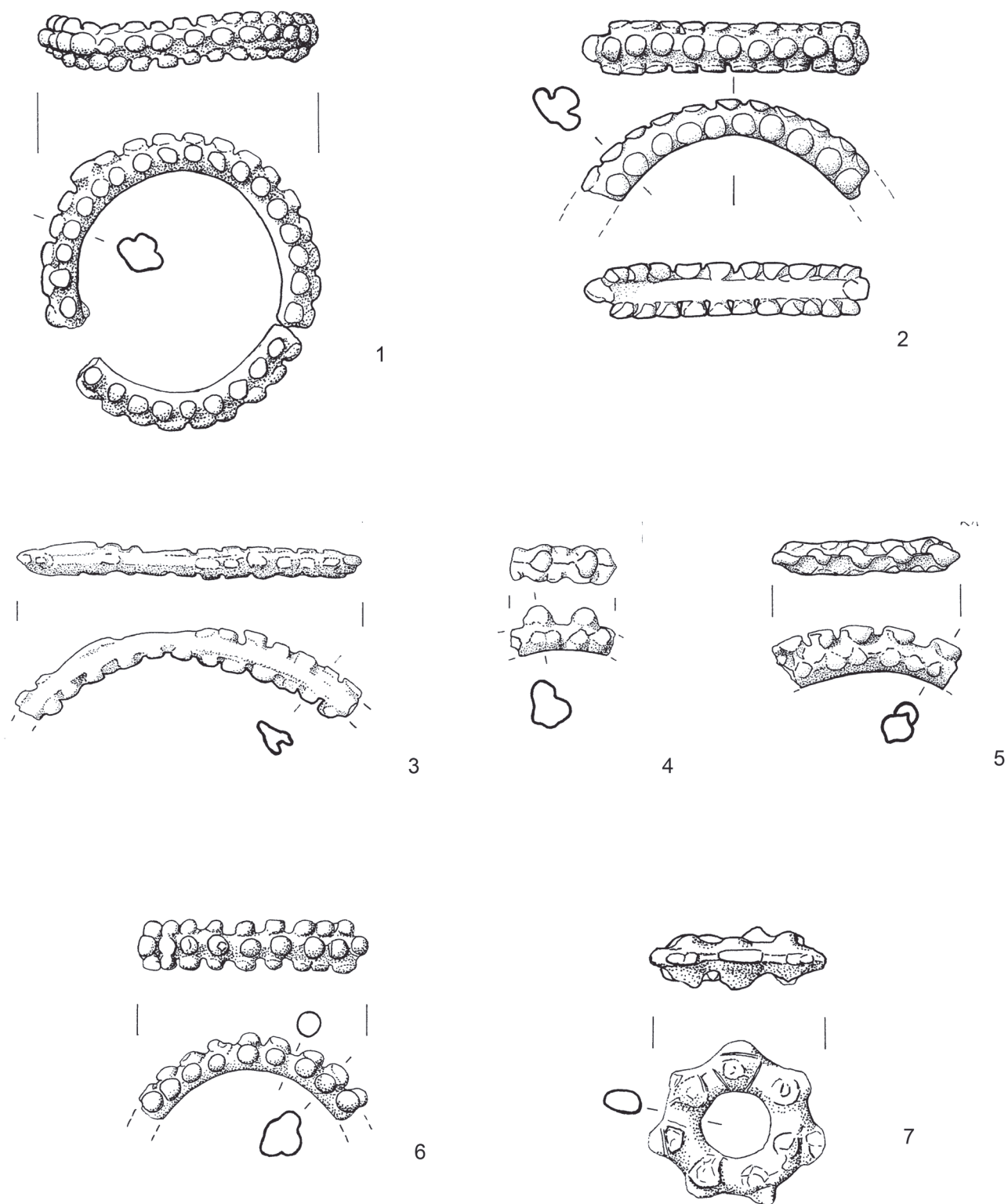


Figure 4 — Knobbed rings of type IIA: 1 Vinkovci — Ljeskovac; 2–4 Mirkovci — Malat; 5 Orolik — Krčevine; 6 Vinkovački Banovci — Šuma; 7 Nuštar — Rimski Most (drawing by: M. Rončević and M. Marijanović Lešić)

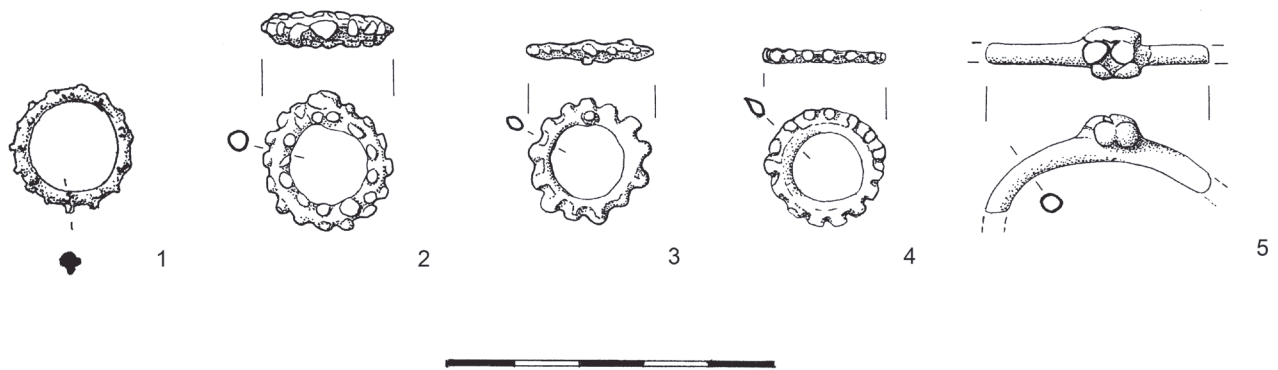


Figure 5 — Knobbled rings of types IIB and IIC: 1 Vinkovački Banovci — Šuma; 2 Šiškovci — Selište; 3–4 Mirkovci — Malat; 5 Vinkovci — Blato (drawing by: M. Rončević and M. Marijanović Lešić)

2014: 670, Fig. 2: 21–22; 2016: 124–125, 129, Fig. 13). It is believed there are numerous knobbled rings of type IIC at the sites in Moravia and the neighbouring areas (Goláňová, Kysela 2019: 79). A find associated with this type is the small knobbled ring from the settlement of Mirkovci — Malat (**Fig. 5: 3**) with the inner diameter of 11 mm and only a few knots on its upper and lower sides. The same site (**Fig. 5: 4**) contained another small knobbled ring with the inner diameter of 10 mm and small knots along the outer edge, which are quite worn on one side and fused by casting on the other side of the ring.

The area of Vinkovci included fragments of knobbled rings with a slightly different arrangement of knots that cannot be associated with any known type (Dębiec, Karwowski 2014; 2016). For example, the settlement of Vinkovci — Blato (**Fig. 5: 5**) contained a fragment with a preserved single group of six connected knots, including two on the upper side that are not clearly pronounced, probably as a result of casting.

LATE LA TÈNE KNOBBED ARMRINGS FROM THE SCORDISCAN SITES

As already mentioned, the finds from Scordiscan sites included a large number of fragments of knobbled rings, the state of preservation of which indicates their inner diameter exceeded 50 mm (and often larger than 70 and even 100 mm), provoking questions on their original use. It is assumed for these fragments, as testified by the finds of whole knobbled rings in grave 1 in Sotin, that they were knobbled armrings. A similar

conclusion was reached by M. Dębiec and M. Karwowski, who recognize larger rings ornamented with differently arranged knots, like those on knobbled rings, with the inner diameter between 70 and 100 mm. In fact, the scheme of ornamentation used on these larger rings is very similar to the one used on smaller rings of types IA and IB. It is believed that these larger rings ornamented with knots follow the development of the *relief style* from the Early La Tène and the beginning of the Middle La Tène. This seems to be evidenced by the finds from graves, as the basis for the conclusion that they served as bracelets or anklets (Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 674; 2016: 130; cf. Pieta 2006: 139). However, it must be pointed out that large rings with this scheme of ornamentation have not been found in graves dated to LT C, at least in the areas where there are known graves with this dating: in the south-eastern Carpathian Basin, which is the territory of the Scordisci, and in the south-eastern Alpine area, which is the territory of the Taurisci (i.e. the Mokronog group). Evidence of large knotted rings worn as armrings seems to be provided by the Late La Tène grave Padarič 6 in the cemetery of Strmec nad Belo Cerkvu, where a ring with this scheme of ornamentation was found on the dead woman's arm (Dular 1991: 88, Pl. 51: 32; Božič 1993a: 192–193). Considering the arrangement of its knots, the knobbled armring from this grave seems to belong to type IB. This use probably also applies to knobbled rings with an inner diameter that often exceeds 70 mm, including those originating from the areas that still have no known Late La Tène cemeteries (central Europe) or have Late La Tène cremation graves, as in the case of the Scordisci and in Transylvania, which is why their functional position has not been documented.

One of these large-diameter knobbed rings was found in the richly furnished double cremation grave 1 from Sotin, which has been mentioned several times (**Fig. 1**). The ring, 104 mm in diameter (probably the outer diameter), is ornamented with evenly spaced triple groups of knots — one knot on the outer surface of the ring and two on its upper and lower sides — alternating with single knots on the outer surface of the ring. Still, it seems that some parts of the ring have intervals between triple groups of knots (Majnarić-Pandžić 1973: 56, Pl. I: 5). Considering these typological characteristics, this ring seems to belong to type IB; considering its dimensions, it could have served as an armring or armllet. There are other rings associated with type IA: a ring with the diameter of 65 mm, ornamented with triple groups of knots that are arranged regularly and more densely (Majnarić-Pandžić 1973: 56, Pl. I: 4), and a ring with the diameter of 66 mm, ornamented with triple groups of knots that are arranged more sparsely as there are only seven of them (Majnarić-Pandžić 1973: 56, Pl. I: 2). A knobbed ring 65 mm in diameter, that was a chance find from the cemetery of Sotin — Zmajevac, probably originating from a destroyed grave, was described as an armring dated to the Late La Tène. Four opposite places on the ring are ornamented with two triple groups of knots each (Majnarić-Pandžić 1970: 42, 93, Pl. XXXVI: 4). A fragment of a knobbed armring from the same site, with the preserved length of 60 mm, seems to belong to type IA; the knots at the top seem to be divided into three smaller knobs (Majnarić-Pandžić 1970: 42, 94, Pl. XXXVII: 6), associating the fragment with the Staré Hradiško variant. Sotin is also the origin of one half of an armring 68 mm in diameter. The armring has a unique scheme of ornamentation, combining densely arranged triple groups of knots associated with type IIA, arranged into larger groups alternating with single larger knots at small intervals on the outer surface of the ring (Majnarić-Pandžić 1970: 42, 94, Pl. XXXVIII: 5). Two bronze knobbed armrings of type IA are known from Dalj and dated to the Late La Tène. One is described as having a diameter of 88 mm and being made of iron, but is actually of bronze, while the other has a diameter of 60 mm and a more massive ring with nine triple groups of knots at slightly smaller intervals than the larger one (Majnarić-Pandžić 1970: 20, 79: Pl. III: 11–12; Drnić 2015: 85). A contemporary knobbed armring, 90 mm in diameter, was discovered at the site of Dalj — Planina (Majnarić-Pandžić 1970: 20, 80, Pl. VII: 4; Drnić 2015: 85). The cemetery of Kupinovo contained a fragment of a

bronze knobbed armring 84 mm in diameter with triple groups of knots, which has also been dated to the Late La Tène and is associated with type IA (Majnarić-Pandžić 1970: 27–28, 82, Pl. X: 8; Drnić 2015: 85, 156, Pl. 36: 6). This armring is associated with the fragment of an armring, 81 mm in diameter, that has traces of burning indicating that it was probably cremated with the deceased woman. The ring has two triple groups of knots on the outer surface of the ring, regularly alternating with a single knot that is almost triangular and decorated with a triskele motif (Majnarić-Pandžić 1970: 28, 82, Pl. X: 2; Drnić 2015: 84, 156, Pl. 36: 5). This fragment could be older, from the Middle La Tène. Knobbed rings and armrings have been recorded at some other Scordiscan sites in Syrmia, such as Novi Banovci, Golubovac, and Sremska Mitrovica (Drnić 2015: 85). A find dated to the Late La Tène is a bronze knobbed armring of type IC from the fortified settlement of Stari Mikanovci — Damića Gradina. The round-sectioned armring is decorated with a single row of knots on the outer surface of the ring (Dizdar 2001: 30, Pl. 46: 11). Three interesting bronze knobbed armrings of type IA have been found during the construction of the Niš — Pirot railway and might originate from a destroyed grave. Their diameters are 102 mm (83 mm), 78 mm (63 mm), and 68 mm (Garašanin 1954: 63: Pl. XLII: 2–4; Todorović 1968: 58, 141, Pl. XI: 2, 8–9; 1974: 75–76, Fig. 52). D. Garašanin dates these armrings to HA D (Garašanin 1954: 63); J. Todorović singles them out as granulated armrings, i.e. armrings produced with the granulation technique; here he adds the armrings from grave 1 in Sotin and dates them to the Early La Tène, spanning the 3rd cent. BC (Todorović 1968: 58; 1974: 75–76).

Considering their preserved length, the greatest number of the fragments of rings ornamented with triple groups of knots that have been found at the sites around Vinkovci are probably armrings, but it should not be ruled out that some of the fragments are actually parts of knobbed rings. Beside the size of preserved fragments, there is another important fact: fragments with a larger diameter usually have a ring with a thicker cross-section. Knobbed armrings of type IA, characterized by regularly spaced triple groups of knots at larger or smaller intervals, have been recorded at the greatest number of sites: the mentioned Late La Tène settlement of Vinkovci — Blato (**Fig. 6: 1**), where most knots on the upper and lower sides are not clearly pronounced; the site of Ivankovo — Dren (**Fig. 6: 2**); the site of Ivankovo — Nadiševci (**Fig. 6: 3**); the mentioned Late La Tène settlement

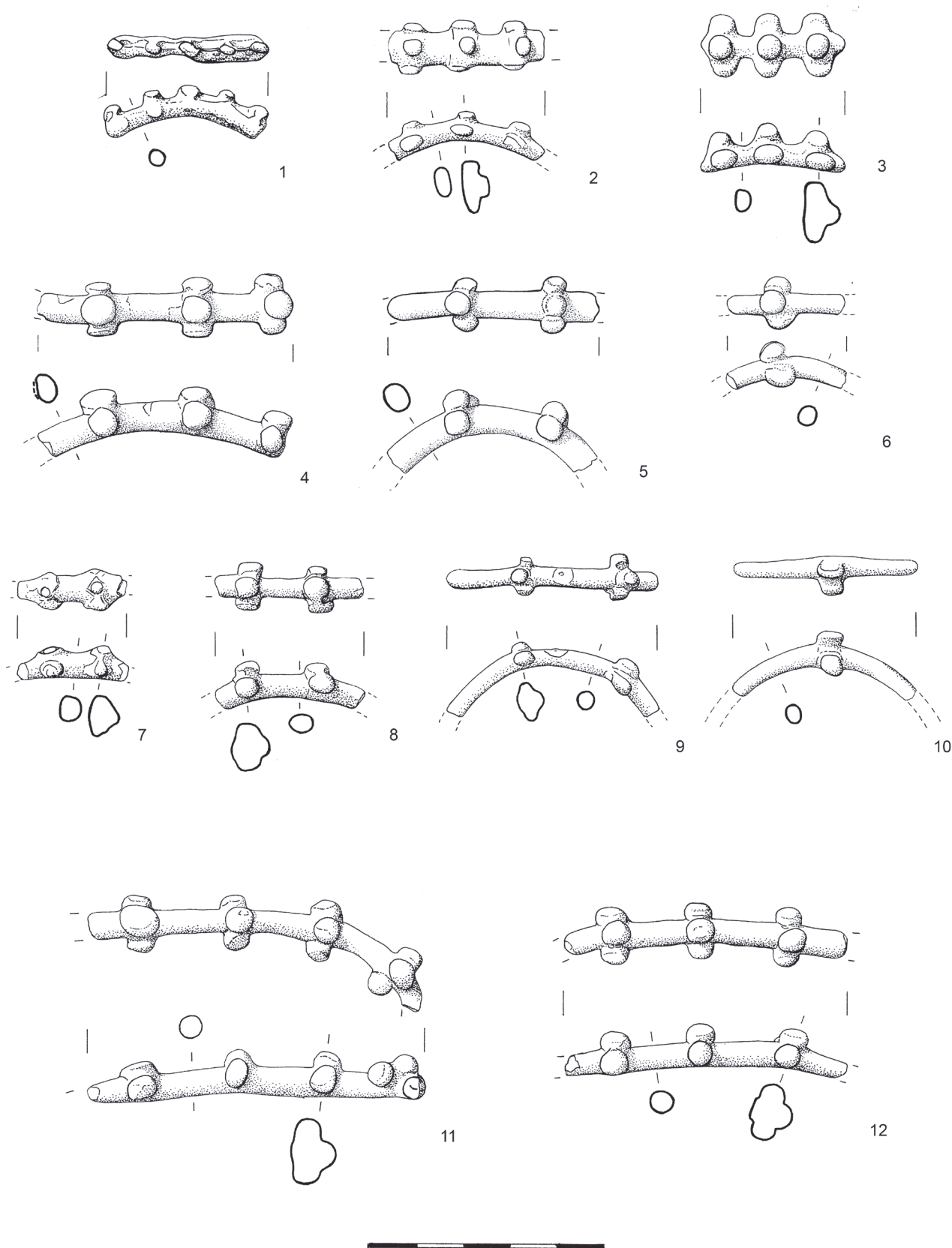


Figure 6 — Knobbed armrings of type IA: 1 Vinkovci — Blato; 2 Ivankovo — Dren; 3 Ivankovo — Nadiševci; 4–6 Mirkovci — Malat; 7 Đeletovci — Groblje; 8–10 Vinkovački Banovci — Šuma; 11–12 Podgrađe — Livade (drawing by: M. Rončević and M. Marijanović Lešić)

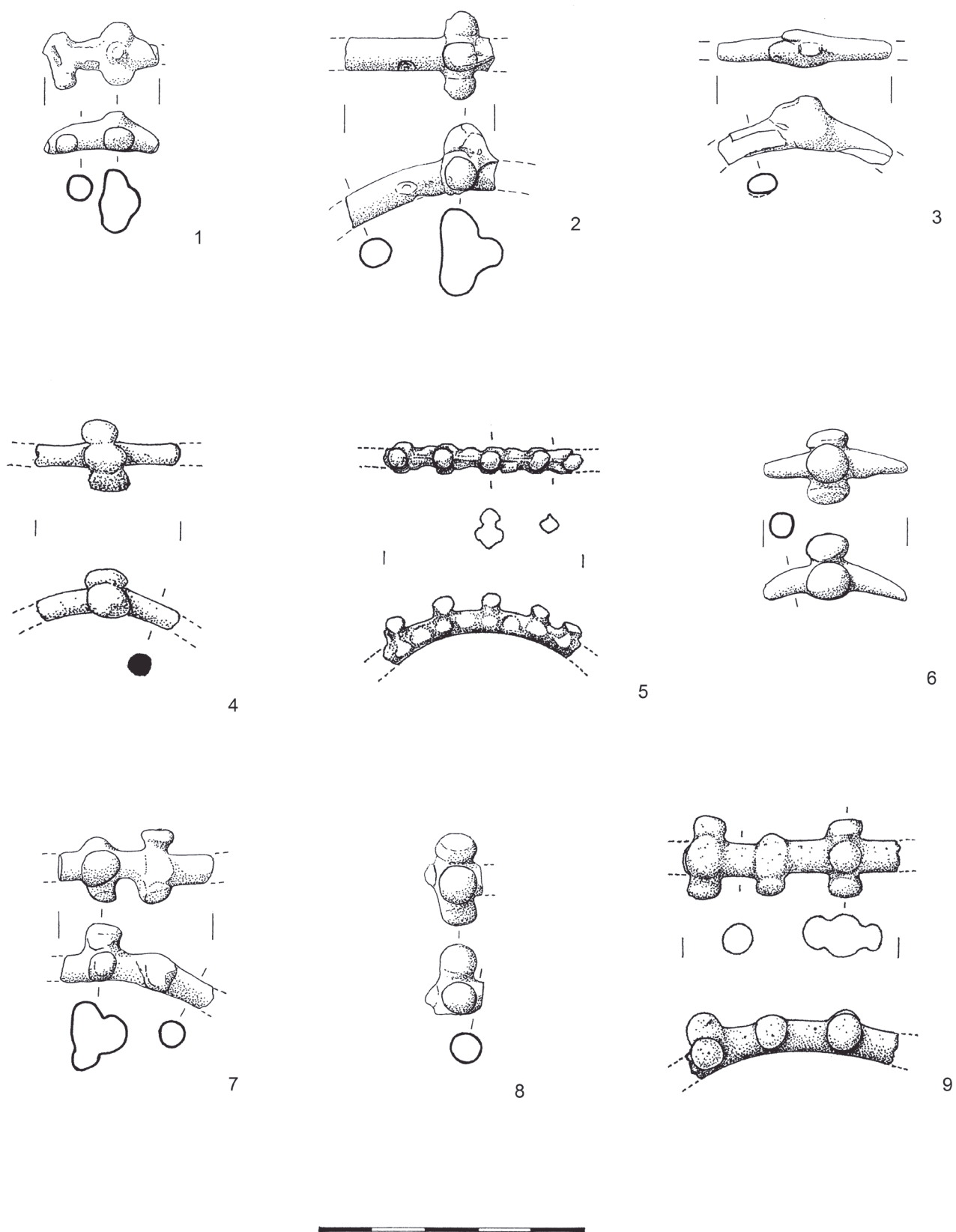


Figure 7 — 1 Privlaka — Gradina; 2–3 Andrijaševci — Ogredak; 4 Nuštar — Parlozi; 5 Ostrovo — Sokolovac; 6 Markušica — Gradina; 7 Tordinci — Močila; 8 Pačetin — Pazarište; 9 Černa — Višnjevci (drawing by: M. Rončević and M. Marijanović Lešić)

of Mirkovci — Malat (**Fig. 6: 4–6**); Đeletovci — Groblje (**Fig. 6: 7**); Vinkovački Banovci — Šuma (**Fig. 6: 8–10**), where fragment (**Fig. 6: 10**) has three protrusions: two preserved and one missing; Podgrađe — Livade (**Fig. 6: 11–12**); the fortified settlement of Privlaka — Gradina (**Fig. 7: 1**); Andrijaševci — Ogredak (**Fig. 7: 2–3**), where fragment (**Fig. 7: 3**) shows traces of three knots that were almost fused into a single large knot by casting; Nuštar — Parlozi (**Fig. 7: 4**); Ostrovo — Sokolovac (**Fig. 7: 5**); Markušica — Gradina (**Fig. 7: 6**); Tordinci — Močila (**Fig. 7: 7**); Pačetin — Pazarište (**Fig. 7: 8**); Cerna — Višnjevci (**Fig. 7: 9**).

Fragments of armrings associated with type IB have been found at the sites of Novi Jankovci — Velika livada (**Fig. 8: 1**) and Podgrađe — Livade (**Fig. 8: 2**). A find that is close to this type is the fragment of an armring from the site of Vinkovački Banovci — Šuma (**Fig. 8: 3**), which has triple groups of knots set at large intervals, alternating with several smaller knots on the outer surface of the ring. There are fewer fragments of knobbed armrings of type IC: Mirkovci — Malat (**Fig. 8: 4–6**), with some fragments possibly belonging to knobbed rings, but this is hard to establish with certainty because of the size of the fragments; Andrijaševci — Gole Njive (**Fig. 8: 7**). A fragment of a knobbed armring with triple groups of larger knots of type IIA has been found at the site of Stari Jankovci — Kovačevac (**Fig. 8: 8**), while fragment (**Fig. 8: 9**) has fewer knots.

The finds in the area of Vinkovci include several fragments of knobbed armrings with a somewhat different arrangement of knots, which cannot be associated with any of the known types of the mentioned typology (Dębiec, Karwowski 2014; 2016). The site of Mrzović — Taborište included a small fragment, probably of an armring. Its preserved part is ornamented with three triple groups of knots which seem to have an interval on each side (**Fig. 9: 1**). The site of Ivankovo — Dren (**Fig. 9: 2**) included a fragment of a round-sectioned armring with a triple group of knots, an interval, and then four connected triple groups of knots. A similar but more badly preserved fragment comes from the site of Retkovci — Tomašinci (**Fig. 9: 3**). The site of Nuštar — Parlozi (**Fig. 9: 4**) contained a fragment of an armring with three triple groups of knots separated by intervals. Similarities with these finds can be seen in the fragment found in the settlement of Sotin — Srednje polje, dated to the Late La Tène. This fragment with a preserved length of 39 mm has three triple groups of bigger knots, then a small interval, and then a triple group of even bigger knots (Ilkić 1999: 42, 81, Pl. XXIV: 11).

Finds of knobbed armrings have been recorded at other Scordiscan sites too, especially the mentioned site of Stari Kostolac — Čair, which contained numerous fragments with variously arranged triple groups of knots. Considering their preserved dimensions, they can probably be considered as remains of knobbed armrings. It is a heterogeneous and most numerous group of bronze armrings at this site. Incidentally, these armrings were described as having a pseudo-granulated scheme of ornamentation and singled out as the fourth group, represented by five variants and dated to the Late La Tène, even though they are actually knobbed armrings of types IA and IB. Also, magical significance can be recognized in the ornamentation with the motif of triple groups of knots, or in the number three itself (Spasić 1992: 15–16). The fragments with a diameter of 60 to 80 mm are associated with type IA (Spasić 1992: 13, Pl. IV: 8–9, 11–13, 15; V: 1), while the fragment with a diameter of 100 mm with sparsely arranged triple groups of knots, each with three smaller knobs, is associated with the Staré Hradisko variant of type IA (Spasić 1992: 13, Pl. V: 3). The fragments with a diameter of 70 to 100 mm are associated with type IB (Spasić 1992: 13, Pl. IV: 7; V: 2), while the two fragments with a diameter of 60 mm, one of them with almost rectangular knots, are associated with type IIA (Spasić 1992: 12–14, Pl. III: 20; V: 9–10). Interestingly, a fragment associated with type IIA is highlighted as the oldest find (i.e. Spasić 1992: Pl. V: 10), related with the Bölcške-type Early La Tène fibula from Vukovar, and that is the reason for dating the fragment to the developed 2nd cent. BC, while the other two fragments (i.e. Spasić 1992: Pl. V: 9; III: 20) are younger, with the youngest one (i.e. Pl. III: 20) dated to the 1st cent. BC. Incidentally, these finds are associated with the relief style and assumed to be two-part armrings with a hinge for closing (Spasić 1992: 14, 18). The conclusion that these were Early and Middle La Tène finds was probably influenced by the fact that the same site included fragments of Early La Tène bronze armrings with a hinge for closing — but with a significantly more complex form (e.g. Spasić 1992: 14–15, Pl. V: 4–8). Other fragments of knobbed armrings associated with type IA have been recorded at Požarevac, Kostolac, Dubravica, Velika Plana, Svilajnac, Čuprija, and Ljuljaci (Stojić 2006: 16, 18, Fig. 1: 2a–i), while possible fragments of knobbed armrings of types IIA or IIB are known from the sites of Kostolac, Požarevac, and Čuprija (Stojić 2006: 18; Fig. 1: 5a–c). Moreover, type IA is associated with the fragment of a bronze armring with preserved four groups of triple knots that is

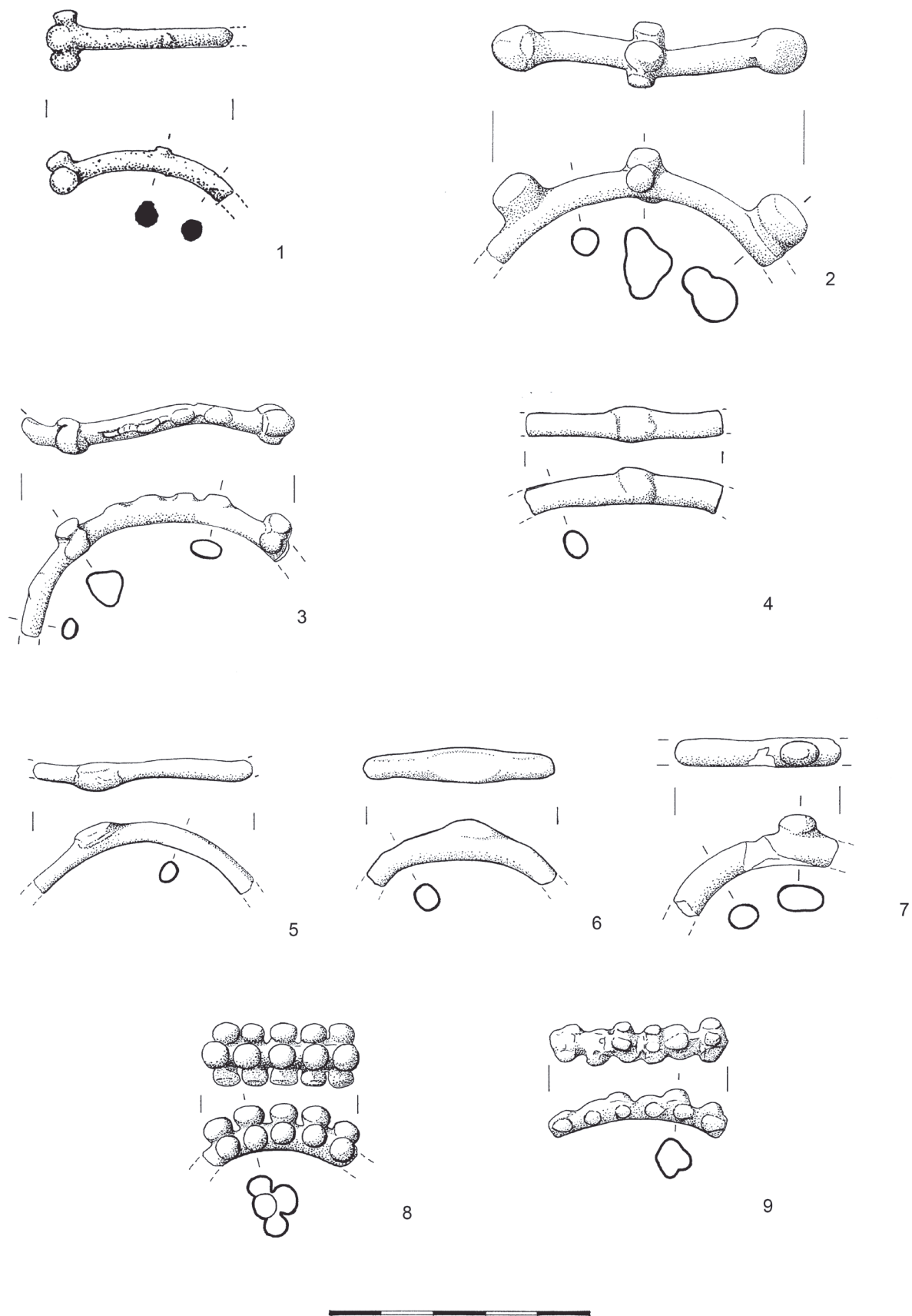


Figure 8 — Knobbed armrings of types IB, IC, and IIA: 1 Novi Jankovci — Velika Livada; 2 Podgrađe — Livade; 3 Vinkovački Banovci — Šuma; 4–6 Mirkovci — Malat; 7 Andrijaševci — Gole Njive; 8–9 Stari Jankovci — Kovačevac (drawing by: M. Rončević and M. Marijanović Lešić)

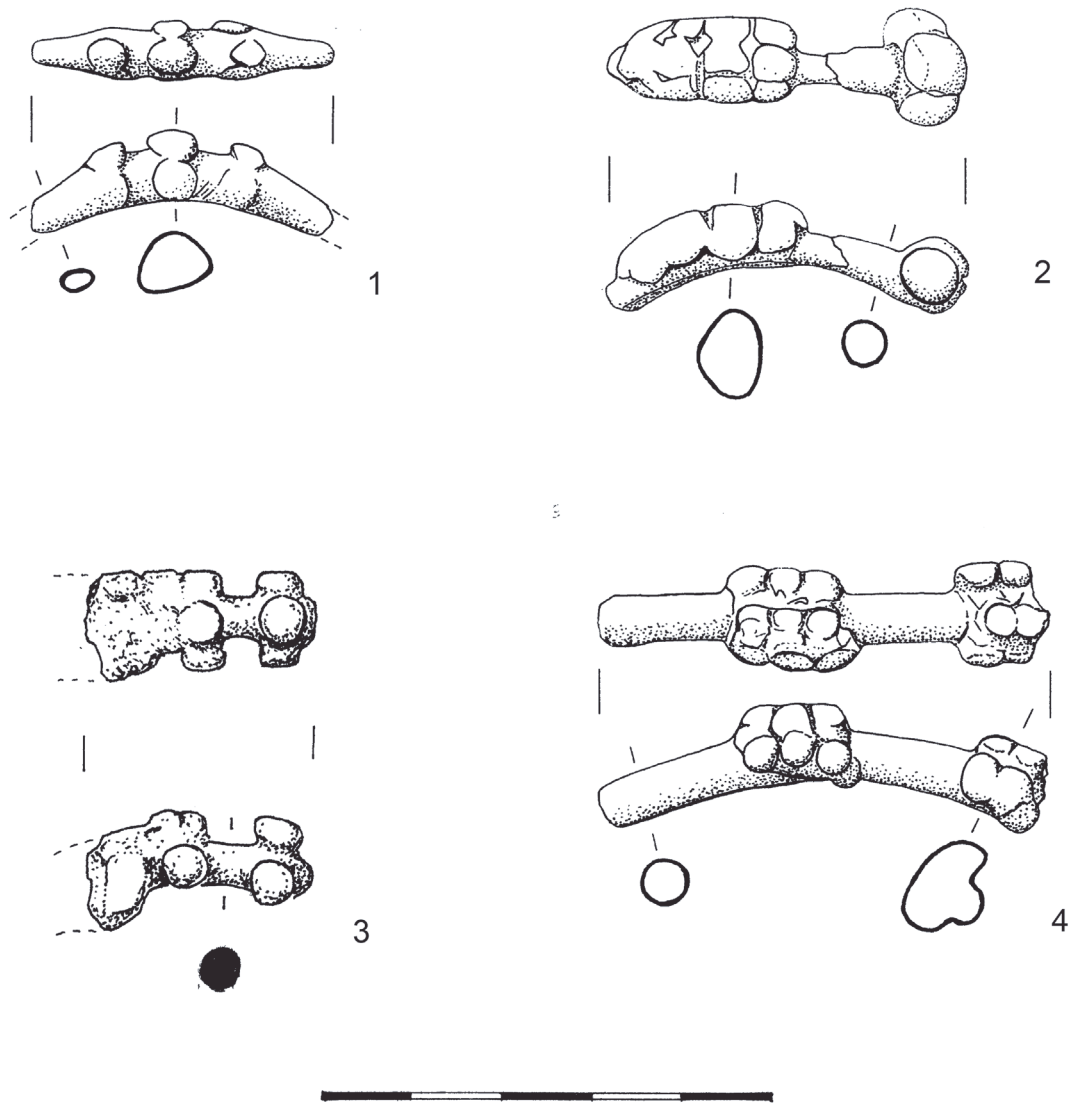


Figure 9 — Knobbed rings of different variants: 1 Mrzović — Taborište; 2 Ivankovo — Dren; 3 Retkovci — Tomašinci; 4 Nuštar — Parlozi (drawing by: M. Rončević and M. Marijanović Lešić)

kept in Belgrade City Museum (the Čeleketić collection) and originates from an unknown site near Belgrade.³ Finally, we should mention the find of a bronze knobbed armring of type IB from Donja Dolina, 73 mm in diameter (Truhelka 1904: 147, Pl. LXXXI: 24; Marić 1963: 74, Pl. II: 23).

Bronze knobbed armrings are also known from a large number of sites in Transylvania. These are usually 60 to 90 mm in diameter and associated with type II with variants after the classification of I. Glodariu (1984) and A. Rustoiu (1996), and with types IA, IB and IIA after the classification of M. Dębiec and M. Karwowski (2014; 2016). The sites with knobbed armrings are Căpâlna (Glodariu

1984: 64, Fig. 3: 4; Rustoiu 1996: 197, Fig. 54: 10); Costești (Glodariu 1984: 65, Fig. 2: 2; Rustoiu 1996: 197, Fig. 55: 11); Craiva (Glodariu 1984: 66, Fig. 2: 10; 3: 5; Rustoiu 1996: 198, Fig. 55: 12; 56: 10); Măgherus (Glodariu 1984: 66, Fig. 4: 2). The fortress of Piatra Roșie included four rings and armrings with an inner diameter between 42 and 76 mm, dated to the Late La Tène (Ferencz, Bodó 2000: 172–173, Pl. III: 5–8); the smallest one is associated with type IIA and is actually a knobbed ring, while the larger ones are associated with the knobbed armrings of type IA. The site of Măgura Moigradului included a knobbed armring with an inner diameter of 58 mm that belongs to

³ — We thank the colleagues from Beograd City Museum for this information.

type IIA. The site of Meseșenii de Sus included two knobbed armrings (rings) of type IA with inner diameters of 56 mm and 44 mm. There is a particularly interesting armring from the site of Șimleu Silvaniei — Observator, with an inner diameter of 58–59 mm, associated with type IIA. Along with densely arranged triple groups of knots, it has three spots with a short protrusion with four knots — one on top and three on the sides (Pop 2018: 326–331, Fig. 5–8).

Bronze knobbed armrings have also been found at sites of the Mokronog group. A fragment of an armring of type IB comes from the site of Ljubična nad Zbelovsko Goro (Božič 1993a: 190, Fig. 1: 4), while a knobbed armring associated with type IIB, with a diameter of 64 mm and a large thickness of 8 mm, comes from the settlement of Panorama in Ptuj (Pahič 1966: 314, Pl. 16: 2; Božič 1993a: 189, Fig. 1: 1). A fragment associated with type IIC from the cemetery of Novo mesto — Okrajno Glavarstvo is defined as the remnant of an anklet ornamented with groups of two knots alternating with a single knot. The fragment has a preserved length of 35 mm and has been dated to LT D1 (Božič 2008: 115, 170, Pl. 21: 11). Knobbed armrings have also been found at central European sites, but these are fewer in number than the finds from the Scordiscan territory. For example, the Stradonice oppidum included large-diameter fragments ornamented with triple groups of knots, which are assumed to be armrings (Píč 1903: 60, Pl. XI: 15, 20). Particularly important knobbed armrings are those found in hoard 10/2005 in the Pohanská oppidum in Plavecké Podhradie, where they were together with knobbed rings of types IA, IIA, IIB, and IIC. It is even possible that these large rings — knobbed armrings — inspired the creation of knobbed rings (*Knotenringe*). It is certain that small and large rings with knobs, regardless of use, were made at the same time within the same style (Pieta 2010: 212, 216, Fig. F23; Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 674; 2016: 130, Fig. 15; Čambal 2015: 42, Fig. 3). That this is not a solitary find testified the discovery of two knobbed armrings of type IA in the small hoard 3, found at the foot of the settlement of Udiča — Klapý in the territory of the Púchov culture. Considering their inner diameter of 79 and 82/87 mm, the rings were probably used as armrings. The hoard, which includes a part of a horse bit and a zoomorphic pendant, has been dated to the Late La Tène (Pieta 2006: 137–139, Fig. 4: 1–2; 2010: 218, Fig. 95: 1–2). A bronze knobbed armring from the site of Nimnica — Holíč has triple groups of knots alternating with single knots on

the outer surface of the ring. The inner diameter is slightly under 60 mm (Ježišková, Pieta 2019: 84, Fig. 13: 6). The fragments from the Staré Hradisko oppidum, assumed to have a larger diameter and decorated with two knots, are probably armrings or armlets (Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 674, Fig. 7: b–d).

LATE LA TÈNE KNOBBED RINGS OF THE SZÁRAZD — REGÖLY TYPE FROM THE SCORDISCAN SITES

One of particularly numerous groups of finds of knobbed rings from the territory of the Scordisci (Fig. 16) and from Transylvania is represented by the finds of bronze rings with somewhat different typological characteristics. Most often, these rings have a round cross-section, but sometimes it can be oval. The distinctive characteristic of these rings is the outer surface of the ring with four to six large spherical or oval knots at smaller or larger intervals. These rings have a diameter between 25 and 100 mm, but usually under 60 mm; more massive rings have larger knots too. In fact, it is a large group of finds with an unclear basic function, but it was decided to analyse them because of the number of these finds from the territory of the Scordisci and similarities in the ornamentation of the rings with knots.

After I. Glodariu, these rings are attributed to type I, variant 1, characterized by three to five protrusions at large intervals on the outer edge, while the inner diameter is under 50 mm (Glodariu 1984: 64). A. Rustoiu classifies the rings of this form as sub-variant 2a1 (Rustoiu 1996: 106–107, 197–198, Fig. 53). These rings, assumed to have belonged to belt sets, are particularly numerous in Transylvania (Glodariu 1984: 71, Fig. 9; Rustoiu 1996, 106–107, Fig. 58: 3–5).

The fact that these rings are somehow related to items of Late La Tène women's costume and/or jewellery is evidenced by the numerous finds of rings of this form in the hoard of Szárazd — Regöly, dated to LT D1, which is why they are called knobbed rings of the Szárazd — Regöly type. This hoard, or actually the set/groups of finds consisting of items of female costume and jewellery (astragal belts, Jarak-type fibulae, amber and glass beads, pendants etc.), contained a large number of rings of different diameters (from 23 to 101 mm!) with four to six knots on the outer surface of the ring. Some have spherical or hemispherical knots on a short cylindrical extension,

while some rings have only a narrow oval knot. T. Kemenczei says that these rings have a long duration, from the 5th cent. BC already, and that they could have served as a pre-monetary means of payment. Also, the smaller ones were probably not used as armrings (Hunyady 1942: Pl. XXXVII: 15; Kemenczei 2012: 324–325, 328–329, 344, Fig. 6: 7–9, 12–17; 7: 4, 13, 16–18, 23).

Fragments of rings of this shape have been found at several sites in the area of Vinkovci (**Fig. 16**), most often with only preserved a part of the ring with one or two knots: Vinkovci — Krčevine (**Fig. 10: 1**); Vinkovci — Ljeskovac (**Fig. 10: 2**); Ivankovo — Dren (**Fig. 10: 3–4**); Mirkovci — Malat (**Fig. 10: 5**), with an inner diameter of around 35 mm; Slakovci — Rimsko Polje (**Fig. 10: 6**); Orolik — Krčevine (**Fig. 10: 7**); Vinkovački Banovci — Šuma (**Fig. 10: 8**); the fortified settlement of Privlaka — Gradina (**Fig. 10: 9**) with an inner diameter of around 32 mm; Andrijaševci — Lončarski Poloj (**Fig. 10: 10**); Nuštar — Žankovac (**Fig. 10: 11**); Ostrovo — Sokolovac (**Fig. 10: 12**), where the knot in the middle has a groove.

Rings defined as the Szárazd — Regöly type have also been found at other sites of the Scordisci. For example, the site of Dalj — Busija included a ring with four small oval knots, 50 mm in diameter, and a more massive ring, 70 mm in diameter, with four regularly spaced massive spherical knots. It is assumed that the Dalj rings belonged to belt sets or horse gear (Majnarić-Pandžić 1970: 22, 81, Pl. VIII: 9–10). Sotin — Zmajevac, the site of the mentioned cremation graves from LT D1, included a massive ring, 90 mm in diameter, ornamented with six spherical knots (Majnarić-Pandžić 1970: 93, Pl. XXXVI: 5). Grave 46 in the cemetery of Čurug — Stari Vinogradi contained an important find: a massive ring with five spherical knots, 35 mm in inner diameter. It seems to be a richly furnished double grave from LT D1 (Trifunović 2019: 256, Fig. 14: 7; 21: 4). The site of Stari Kostolac — Čair also included fragments of rings with large oval knots along the edge. One fragment, which is better preserved, has a diameter of 40 mm, while the other is believed to have a diameter of 70 mm. Other fragments are more poorly preserved so it is impossible to determine their diameter (Spasić 1992: 12–13, Pl. IV: 2–4, 6). This form could include a smaller ring with four small knots, which comes from the same site (Jacanović 1987: 13, Pl. III: 4). Moreover, Kostolac is the origin of a fragment of a large-diameter ring with two large oval knots (Stojić 2006: 18, Fig. 1: 6b), while the site of Ritopek — Dalekovod included a ring 48 mm in diameter with five large spherical knots, which

probably belonged to horse gear from the Early Iron Age (Todorović 1971: 99, Pl. XLVII: 2). An unknown site contained two massive connected rings 42 mm in diameter with five spherical knots and a smaller ring 32 mm in diameter; the rings have been dated to Ha D (Garašanin 1954: 68, Pl. LI: 1–2). The site of Katun — Šopića Strana also contained two connected rings with five knots (Stojić, Jocić 2006: 115, Pl. XLII: 6, Fig. 20).

As already pointed out, rings of the Szárazd — Regöly type, i.e. type I, variant 1, have also been found at sites in Romania: Costești (Glodariu 1984: 65, Fig. 1: 3; Rustoiu 1996: 197, Fig. 55: 10); Craiva (Glodariu 1984: 65, Fig. 1: 2; Rustoiu 1996: 198, Fig. 56: 6); Pecica (Glodariu 1984: 67, Fig. 1: 5; Rustoiu 1996: 198, Fig. 57: 4); Poiana (Glodariu 1984: 67, Fig. 1: 1; Rustoiu 1996: 198); Sighișoara (Glodariu 1984: 67, Fig. 1: 4; Rustoiu 1996: 198). A small ring with five small knots has been found in the Velem — Szentvid oppidum (Miske 1908: 57, Pl. XL: 61), while the small ring from the site of Břeclav — Přední Čvrtky has five knots and an inner diameter of 17,5 mm. This ring is made of copper with a large admixture of lead and has been associated with type IC, which is considered rare in Bohemia and Moravia (Goláňová et al. 2020: 13, 33, Fig. 2: 8). A similar but slightly larger ring originates from the Stradonice oppidum (Píř 1903: 61, Pl. XI: 4).

In sum, the greatest number of rings of the Szárazd — Regöly type has been found at the Scordiscan sites and in Transylvania. The finds from the eponymous hoard and the cemetery of Čurug — Stari Vinogradi show that it is a Late La Tène form. The purpose of these rings is still unclear: they could belong to belt sets, but it should not be ruled out that they are Late La Tène ring jewellery that served as an armring and/or pendant. In any case, this form seems to be related with women's costume or jewellery.

LATE LA TÈNE KNOBBED RINGS WITH ZOOMORPHIC REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE SCORDISCAN SITES

A small but very important group of finds from a number of Scordiscan sites consists of rings that are ornamented not only with knots or groups of knots, but also with various stylized zoomorphic representations (**Fig. 16**). Aside from schemes of ornamentation, this group of rings probably had a particular symbolic meaning; it connects the Late

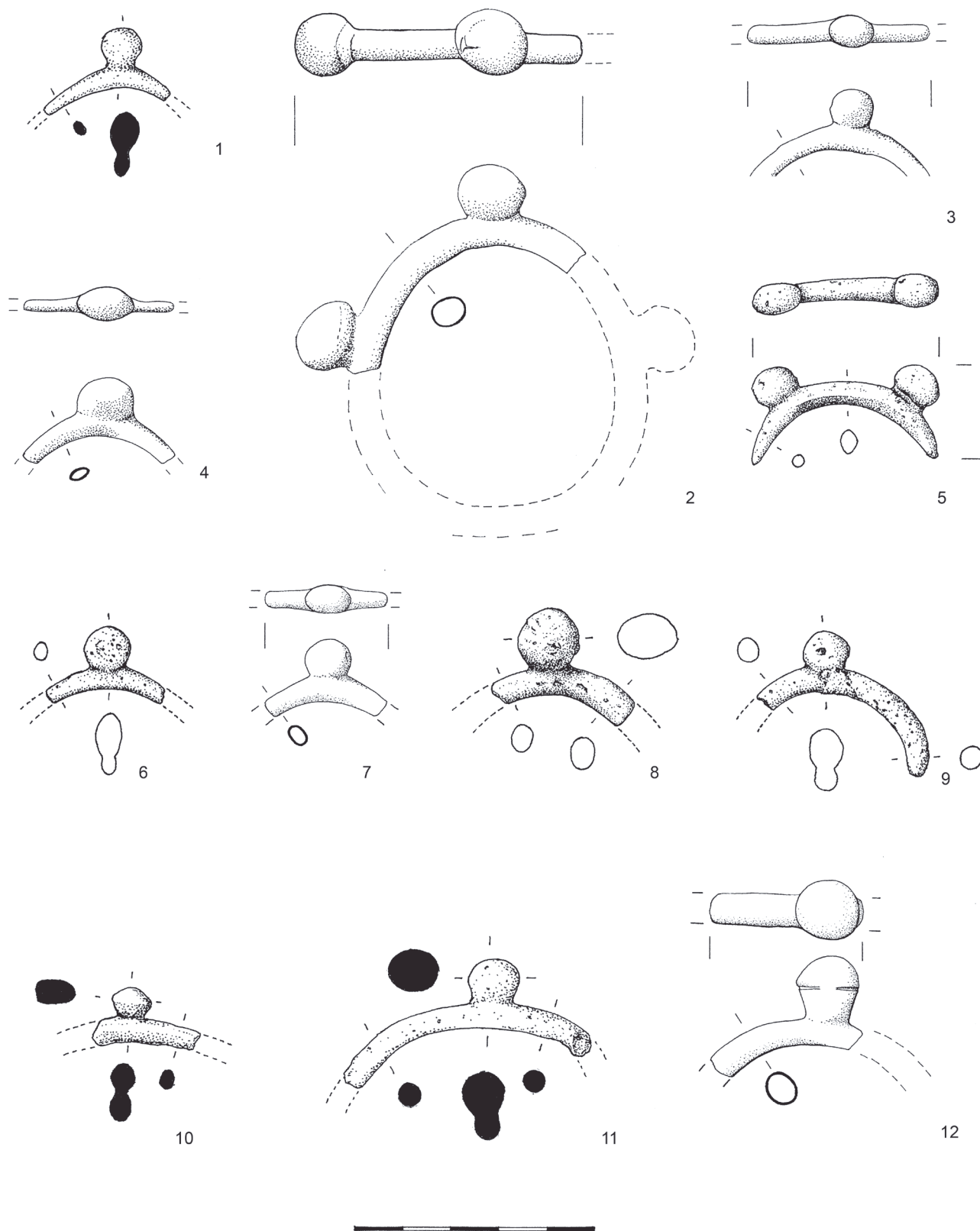


Figure 10 — Knobbed rings of the Szárazd — Regöly type: 1 Vinkovci — Krčevine; 2 Vinkovci — Ljeskovac; 3–4 Ivankovo — Dren; 5 Mirkovci — Malat; 6 Slakovci — Rimsko Polje; 7 Orolik — Krčevine; 8 Vinkovački Banovci — Šuma; 9 Privlaka — Gradina; 10 Andrijaševci — Lončarski Poloj; 11 Nuštar — Žankovac; 12 Ostrovo — Sokolovac (drawing by: M. Rončević and M. Marijanović Lešić)

La Tène material heritage of the Scordisci with the Central European material heritage, as evidenced by various forms of knobbed rings. In general, rings ornamented with zoomorphic representations are believed to have stylistic and chronological connections with knobbed rings. However, it is a separate and heterogeneous group of Late La Tène finds, where the use of these carefully created rings is related to a symbolic meaning (Dannheimer 1975: 61; Tappert 2000: 173; Hlava 2015: 271–272; Dębiec, Karwowski 2016: 130).

The site of Orolik — Krčevine included a fragment of a round-sectioned ring that could have served as an armring considering its preserved length of 49 mm (**Fig. 11: 1**). The fragment is decorated with three triple groups of knots and a small interval on each side. Moreover, there is a damaged elongated and slightly bent protrusion on the outer surface of the ring — probably the remnant of the representation of a bird with a bent body that is missing the head. After C. Tappert (2000), who classifies rings with zoomorphic representations into six basic types, the fragment from Orolik can be ascribed to type 5B (Tappert 2000: 183, Fig. 10). The closest parallel for the find from Orolik comes from the Epfach site. It is a ring with densely arranged triple groups of knots, alternating in three places with the representation of a bird with a bent body, prominent short and pointed beak, and slightly raised tail. The bodies of two birds are ornamented with short transversal grooves (Dannheimer 1975: 61, Fig. 4: 7; Tappert 2000: 183, 200, Fig. 10: 1). Grave 248 in the Giubiasco cemetery also contained a ring of type 5B that has been dated to the beginning of the 1st cent. AD. The ring has densely arranged triple groups of knots and four birds with an almost triangular body and minute head with hints of eyes and beak (Dannheimer 1975: 61, Fig. 4: 6; Tappert 2000: 183, 210, Fig. 10: 3).

A representation of a bird has also been preserved on a small fragment of a ring found at the site of Šiškovci — Selište (**Fig. 11: 2**). The ring has a tall cylindrical protrusion in the form of two connected oval thickenings, topped by the representation of a bird that is 22 mm long. There are two transversal grooves on the bird's neck. Since the knots on the ring have not been preserved, this find is associated with type 6 after the classification of C. Tappert (2000: 185–186, Fig. 11). However, considering its state of preservation, this fragment cannot be typologically identified with greater precision. Maybe the ring from Šiškovci was like the one from the Podgorac site; the preserved part of the ring has two small birds

set on a short cylindrical protrusion. Between each bird there are two triple groups of knots at slightly larger intervals. Approximately a third of the ring has not been preserved, but it probably contained the representation of another bird (Stojić 2006: 16, Fig. 1: 3b). It is mentioned together with the zoomorphic representation on a fragment of a larger ring from the Svrljig site, which is additionally ornamented with densely arranged triple groups of knots (Stojić 2006: 18, Fig. 1: 3a). The settlement of Mirkovci — Malat included a smaller fragment of a massive ring with a larger diameter and barely visible knots on the upper and lower sides; on the outer surface there is a short cylindrical protrusion with a damaged tip, so it is unclear whether the tip had a zoomorphic representation or three smaller knots (**Fig. 11: 3**).

Grave 98 in the cemetery of Novo mesto — Beletov Vrt, dated to the Augustan age, contained a fragment of a knobbed armring with a single protrusion between triple groups of knobs; the protrusion looks zoomorphic and could be a representation of a bird (Knez 1992: 46, Pl. 35: 6; Božič 1993a: 201, n. 34). The cemetery of Novo mesto — Ljubljanska Cesta included a fragment of an armring; along with groups of three or two knots, the fragment has two large animal-shaped protrusions on two opposite spots. One protrusion is damaged, while the opposite one has the shape of a small animal (hare or dog). The armring, 74 mm in diameter, has been dated to LT D1 (Božič 2008: 116, 151–152, Pl. 2: 10, Fig. 7; 75).

A particularly important small ring with zoomorphic representations, 14 mm in inner diameter, comes from the site of Ostrovo — Sokolovac (**Fig. 11: 4**). The ring is round-sectioned; its outer surface has four extremely stylized minute horned ram's heads turned in the same direction. In one place on the outer surface of the ring there is an oval knot, and the ring is thinner on the opposite side, as if it was worn by hanging from that side. The pendant has a dark grey patina and could have been made of copper with a large admixture of lead. Since the ram's heads are laid directly on the ring, the pendant from Ostrovo seems to belong to type 1 (Tappert 2000: 178, Fig. 4); in general, rings with three ram's heads are a characteristic of this type.

Rings ornamented with zoomorphic representations first came to the attention of H. Dannheimer, who divided them into three basic groups — a minute ram's or bull's head and a representation of a bird — and believed them to belong to the large and heterogeneous group of knobbed rings. Animal heads are usually arranged symmetrically

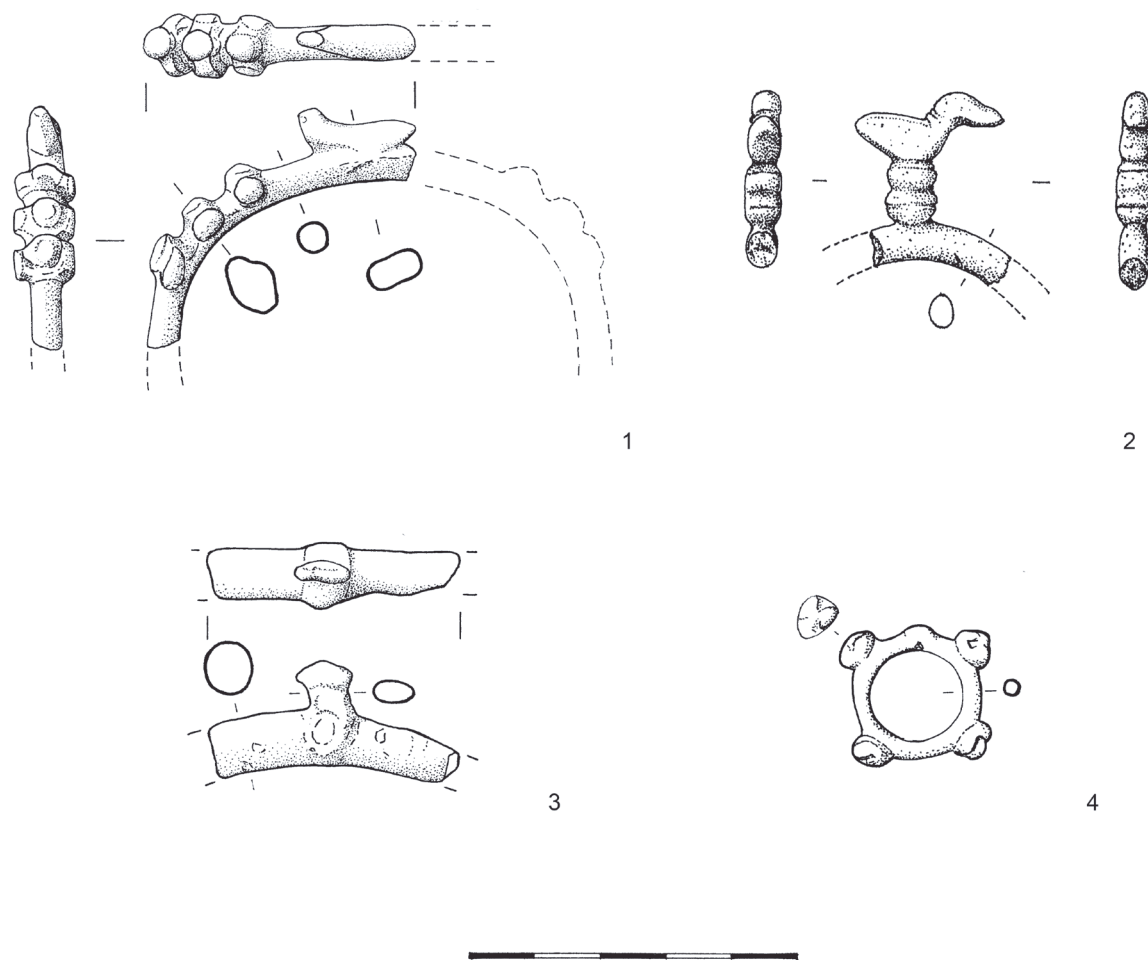


Figure 11 — Knobbed rings with zoomorphic representations: 1 Orolik — Krčevine; 2 Šiškovci — Selište; 3 Mirkovi — Malat; 4 Ostrovo — Sokolovac (drawing by: M. Rončević and M. Marijanović Lešić)

along the ring and are often antithetical to each other, rarely looking in the same direction. These rings have been dated to the Late La Tène, with the youngest finds belonging to early antiquity (Dannheimer 1975: 61–65, Fig. 1–4). The most comprehensive analysis is the one made by C. Tappert (2000), who pointed out that these were usually stray finds without a preserved context, which makes the dating of such rings difficult. However, they are most numerous in the Late La Tène; again, it is emphasized that the youngest finds belong to early antiquity. The typological division into six basic types is based on the recognized species of animals, the number of representations and their direction, but also the existence of knots and the cross-sections of rings. It can be seen that rings of types 1 to 4 appear in the »Eastern Celtic« area, i.e. the area from Bohemia to western Hungary, from which they arrived to eastern France by means of contacts, while types

5 and 6 (i.e. those ornamented with representations of birds) are believed to characterize the western part of their distribution area. Also, C. Tappert believes that zoomorphic rings appeared in the Eastern Celtic area (Tappert 2000: 176–200, Fig. 13 with a distribution map). M. Čižmář also dates the zoomorphic rings from Moravian sites to the Late La Tène and points out that they are widespread in western and central Europe, while knobbed rings characterize the Eastern Celtic area (Čižmář 2002: 206; 2012: 152, 165–166, Fig. 15). Moreover, zoomorphic rings are dated to LT C2 and LT D1–2 (Michálek et al. 2018: 168). The most recent study dedicated to rings ornamented with zoomorphic representations points out that they are widespread in western and central Europe, but that they appear in greatest numbers at sites ranging from Bavaria to western Hungary, again emphasizing that they appeared with the Eastern Celts, where they are most numerous. Zoomorphic

rings show differences both in the represented species of animals and in their dimensions, but most of them have an inner diameter of 16 to 27 mm, while larger ones, up to 80 mm in diameter, are less numerous. Also, it is pointed out that animal heads could be oriented the same way or arranged antithetically on the ring, and that they could alternate with variously shaped knots. Zoomorphic rings, considered to be pendants as occasionally evidenced by depressions caused by hanging, are most often dated to the Late La Tène, but they keep appearing until the Early Augustan period (Goldhorn 2018: 154–157, Fig. 6–7 with a distribution map and a list of finds).

Parallels for the ring ornamented with four ram's heads from Ostrovo (**Fig. 11: 4**), which seems to belong to type 1, are not that numerous. A small ring associated with this type has three ram's heads, each alternating with a single knot, and comes from the site of Mauerkirchen (Artner 2007: 22, Fig. 7). The settlement of Němčice nad Hanou included a ring of type 1 with three very stylized minute ram's heads (Filip 1956: Pl. CXXX: 2; Dannheimer 1975: 61, Fig. 2: 3; Tappert 2000: 178, 214, Fig. 4: 1; Čížmář 2012: 166, Fig. 15: 6; Goldhorn 2018: 156, Fig. 5: 13), while the Třisov oppidum contained a ring with four ram's heads that are arranged antithetically, alternating with triple groups of knots (Hlava 2009: 119–120, Fig. 1: 15). A ring from the site of Klenovice na Hané is ornamented with only two ram's heads alternating with a single knot and three knots (Čížmář 2012: 165, Fig. 15: 2). The hoard of Ptení, dated to LT D1, contained two zoomorphic rings, one of them close to type 1. The ring has four ram's heads with twisted horns (Čížmář 2002: 203, Fig. 3: 1; Hlava 2015: 271, Fig. 12: 8). A small ring from the site of Leonberg in Upper Bavaria has two preserved ram's heads (there were probably four, turned in the same direction) and is dated to the Late La Tène, or to LT D1b and LT D2 (Schäfer 2007: 355, Fig. 10: 1). Also interesting is a small ring 2.3 cm in diameter with three ram's heads from the large settlement in Eggfling which is attributed to type 1 variant A (Uenze 2005: 60, 79, Fig. 2: 22). An interesting zoomorphic ring of type 1, found in a Baiuvarian grave in the Straubing cemetery, has three very simplified ram's heads with twisted horns around the ring (Tappert 2000: 173, Fig. 1–2).

Mention should be made of other rings ornamented with ram's heads belonging to type 3 with variants A and B, but also of those of type 4 that have a larger diameter and only a representation of twisted horns (Tappert 2000: 178–182, Fig. 6–9). A zoomorphic ring associated with type

3A comes from the important settlement of Neubau near Linz, dated to the Middle and Late La Tène. The ring has four ram's heads, two of them antithetical, each alternating with a triple group of knots (Gruber 2007: 178, Fig. 10). The site of Malhostovice included a ring of type 3A with three ram's heads alternating with triple groups of knots and another one with two knots on the outer surface of the ring (Tappert 2000: 181, 214, Fig. 6: 1; Čížmář 2012: 166, Fig. 15: 5; Goldhorn 2018: 156, Fig. 5: 12). A ring with four antithetical ram's heads comes from the site of Velechvín. Between the heads there are triple groups of knots (Michálek et al. 2018: 168, Fig. 21: 5). A zoomorphic ring of type 3A which comes from Avanches is ornamented with four ram's heads with twisted horns, each alternating with a triple group of knots. The ring is believed to have served as an amulet and has been dated to between the second half of the 1st cent. BC and the Augustan–Tiberian period (Goldhorn 2018: 153–154, Fig. 3–4). A ring of type 3B from the mentioned hoard of Ptení is ornamented with four antithetical ram's heads that have a grooved ring-shaped thickening between them (Čížmář 2012: 165–166, Fig. 15: 1; Hlava 2015: 271, Fig. 3: 10–11; 10: 1c; this ring was once thought to originate from the Stradonice oppidum: cf. Hlava 2015: 264–265; also: Dannheimer 1975: 61, Fig. 2: 2; Tappert 2000: 182, 213, Fig. 7: 2; Goldhorn 2018: 156, Fig. 5: 14). A zoomorphic ring of type 3B from the Manching oppidum is ornamented with four very stylized ram's heads, each alternating with a single ring-like thickening. The ring was probably worn as an amulet; it has been dated to the Late La Tène (van Endert 1991: 21, Pl. 5: 129; Tappert 2000: 182, 202, Fig. 7: 3).

A large-diameter ring associated with type 4 comes from the site of Bratislava — Devín. Four opposite places on the ring are ornamented with a motif of twisted ram's horns. Between the horns, in two opposite places along the outer edge of the ring, there is a series of minute knots; also between the horns and in two opposite places, there is a triple group of small knots (Pieta 2010: 198, 207, 330, Fig. 88: 1; 136: 14). For the dating of zoomorphic rings of type 4, particular importance is given to the find from hoard 10/2005 in the Pohanská oppidum in Plavecké Podhradie from LT D1 (Pieta 2010: F23: 2; Čambal 2015: 42, Fig. 3). A fragment of a large ring of type 4 from the site of Jaroměřice nad Rokytnou is probably a fragment of an armring. It has two preserved ram's heads; between them, on the outer surface of the ring, there is a longitudinal triple protrusion (Tappert 2000: 182, 213–214, Fig. 9: 4; Čížmář 2012: 165,

Fig. 15: 4). A large number of rings of type 4 comes from the Velem — Szentvid oppidum (Miske 1908: 57, Pl. XL: 69; XLVI: 7–8; Dannheimer 1975: 61, Fig. 2: 6, 8; Tappert 2000: 182, 216–217, Fig. 9: 1), while a fragment of a large-diameter ring of type 4 comes from the Stradonice oppidum (Píč 1903: 60, Pl. XI: 16; Dannheimer 1975: 61, Fig. 2: 7; Tappert 2000: 182, 213, Fig. 9: 3). The dimensions of a ring found in a hoard discovered in the fortified settlement of Schwarzenbach (around 55 mm in diameter) are close to zoomorphic rings of type 4. Most of the ring has been preserved, with five ram's heads (it seems there were originally six of them) arranged in three groups of two antithetic heads each. Between the heads, along the outer edge of the ring, there is an ornamental wavy line in relief, while the sides have a motif of pseudo-filigree spirals (Urban 1998: 799–801, Fig. 1). A fragment of what is probably an armring, with a relief protrusion twisted in a semicircle around its body (maybe a remainder of twisted ram's horns), has been found at the site of Graz — Grottenhof (Artner 2007: 21–22, Fig. 1–4).

Finds include not only zoomorphic rings with ram's heads or representations of birds, but also contemporary rings ornamented with bull's heads and singled out within types 2 and 3 (Tappert 2000: 178–182, Fig. 3: 5–6). A ring of this kind, ornamented with three bull's heads, comes from the site of Križovany nad Dudvám; between the heads there are triple groups of knots (Bazovský 2014: 615, 617, Fig. 1: 4; 2: 4). A ring from the site of Nimnica — Holíš is decorated with three bull's heads that have very prominent long horns ending with a hemisphere. Between each pair of heads there is a single knot on the outer surface of the ring (Pieta 2010: 330, Fig. F31: 3; Ježišková, Pieta 2019: 84, Fig. 13: 5). A ring of type 3B from the Stradonice oppidum has antithetic bull's heads with a ring-like transversally grooved thickening between them (Píč 1903: 60, Fig. 8: 1, Pl. XI: 24; Dannheimer 1975: 61, Fig. 2: 1; Tappert 2000: 182, 212, Fig. 7: 1). A ring of type 2 from the same oppidum has three bull's heads (Píč 1903: 60, Pl. XVI: 7; Dannheimer 1975: 61, Fig. 3: 2; Tappert 2000: 178, 212, Fig. 5: 2). A ring from the site of Zihl near Port, associated with a distinct variant of type 2, has three bull's heads with twisted horns; in two places on the outer surface of the ring there is the representation of a bird (Dannheimer 1975: 61: Pl. 17: 3; Tappert 2000: 178, 210–211, Fig. 3; Wyss et al. 2002: 95, Pl. 64: 256).

Even though zoomorphic rings from the territory of the Scordisci are few in number (**Fig. 16**), especially in relation to different forms of knobbed

rings and armrings, it is an exceptionally important and diverse group of finds representing the south-easternmost specimens. Similarly to the mentioned knobbed rings, especially those of types IA, IB, and IIA (**Fig. 15**), these finds have direct parallels at central European sites. This again confirms the assumption that some finds from the Late La Tène material heritage of the Scordisci point to intensive contacts with communities living in central Europe (Dizdar 2016), as was already documented for the contemporary heritage of the Mokronog group (Božič 1993b; 1998). Of course, the material heritage of the Scordisci from the Late La Tène shows many of the mentioned local characteristics, which are currently most clearly seen in items of women's costume and jewellery.

Since zoomorphic rings from the Scordiscan sites have different dimensions and are usually badly preserved, it is not always possible to say with certainty whether they are pendants and/or armrings. Therefore, it is important to point out that each described object has a particular shape, meaning that each of them is almost individualized and maybe created upon order from its future owner. Most of them seem to be pendants believed to have served as amulets, which is indicated by their discovery in aquatic contexts in the western part of the distribution area, and that is the reason for their interpretation as votive gifts. Amulets (lat. *amuletum*; gr. *phylaktèrion*), small devices usually worn on or attached to the body, were supposed to afford protection and may have been thought to imbue the wearer with particular qualities. Some superstitiously thought amulets could heal diseases or help the wearer avoid them (Hanegraaff 2006: 60; Kipfer 2007: 9–10). These uses fall under the "apotropaic" category, meaning the "warding away (of evil forces)". But more general functions such as procuring good luck, or targeting successful outcomes in a variety of social contexts (business, love, jurisprudence, gamesmanship), also define common uses of amulets. In death, amulets can even be used to protect the soul on its dangerous journey to the afterlife, as it attempts to navigate harmful archontic powers in the ascent to its final resting place (Kotansky 2019: 507). Amulets are treated and displayed on one hand as a universal phenomenon in human societies from very early times until today and on the other hand as a phenomenon which is not easy to decipher due to the nature of the evidence (Bohák 2015: 83; Raja, Rüpke 2015: 11). Meanwhile, probable finds from settlements such as the ones from the territory of the Scordisci show that these pendants were worn every day, probably as personal amulets (Tappert

2000: 196–200; Hlava 2015: 271–272; Goldhorn 2018: 157). The pendants ornamented with a ram's head, such as the find from Ostrovo, probably represent a symbol of strength and fertility; the image of a ram was believed to be a solar symbol that provides the wearer with powerful protection (Tappert 2000: 199; Goldhorn 2018: 157). There remains the question of who wore this amulet in the Late La Tène settlement in Ostrovo.

LATE LA TÈNE KNOBBED RING WITH A CROSS MOTIF FROM THE SCORDISCAN SITES

A field survey at the site of Vinkovci — Teretna Stanica, some 1.5 km south-west of the large Late La Tène settlement of Vinkovci — Blato, found a ring of round cross-section (**Fig. 12**) with triple groups of knots alternating on the outer surface of the ring, which would mean it belongs to knobbed rings of type IA. The central part of the ring is divided by a cross; in the middle, where the bars connect, there is a single knot on each side. The inner diameter of the ring amounts to 45 mm, while the diameter of knots amounts to 5 mm.

Knobbed rings of this form, which have an addition within the ring — usually in the form of a cross, as other motifs are rare — probably served as pendants with a symbolic meaning. Finds of rings with a cross motif in the middle are mentioned at several sites — Čejč, Podivín, Oberleiserberg, Stradonice — and associated with types IA and IIC

(Dębiec, Karwowski 2016: 130, n. 14). A ring from Vinkovci could be associated with wheel-shaped pendants — *Radanhänger* — that are singled out as group IV. This group of finds is not particularly numerous; it is actually an object created by combining a wheel shape with an ornament in the form of knots on the outer surface of the ring. The mentioned parallels have been recorded at the sites of Čejč and Podivín — Čejč; the pendants have a series of small knots along the outer edge of the ring and at the place where the bars connect. These pendants are assumed to have been worn as amulets and are symbolically related to the cult of the Sun (Čižmářová 2014: 658, Fig. 3: 28–29). Mention should be made of a similar pendant from the settlement of Němčice nad Hanou, decorated with only six protrusions on the outer surface of the ring (Čižmář et al. 2008: 660, Fig. 3: 16; Čižmářová 2014: 658, Fig. 3: 27). Actually, the pendant from Vinkovci shows certain similarities with the finds of »toothed« wheel-shaped pendants — *Gezähnte Radanhänger* (Božič 1998: 143–144; Čižmář 2002: 204–205, 217; Čižmářová 2014). A small bronze ring of this kind, ornamented with minute knots and having a cross motif in the middle, has been found in grave Padarič 3 in the cemetery of Bela Cerkev — Strmec. It is an inhumation grave dated to LT D1; the pendant was most probably worn as part of an armring together with small bronze rings, knobbed rings, and beads (Dular 1991: 88, Fig. 51: 19; Božič 1993a: 192; 1998: 144, Fig. 3: 7). Parallels have been recorded at the Velem — Szentvid oppidum, where there were three small rings with densely arranged knots on the outer

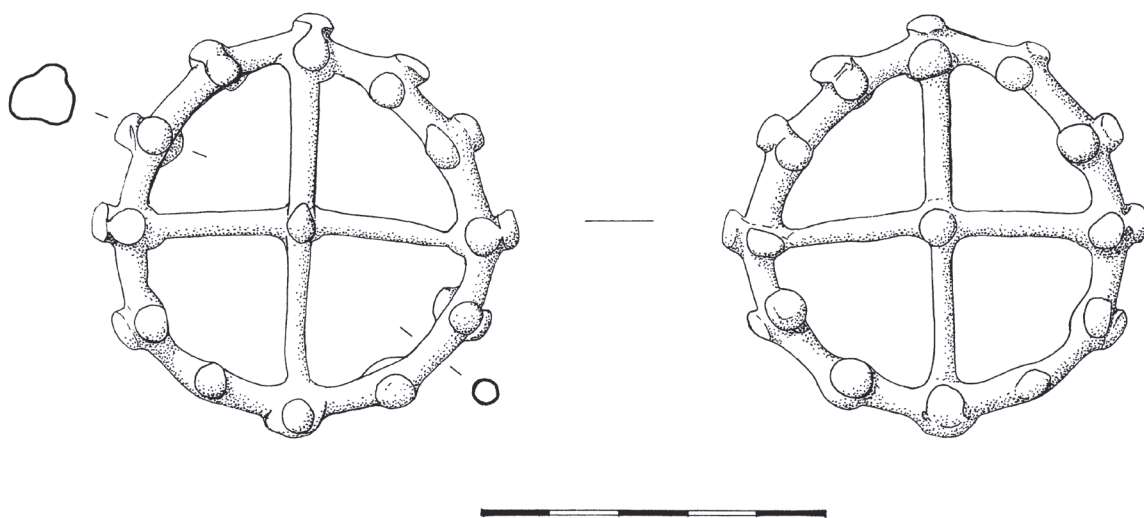


Figure 12 — Knobbed ring with the cross motif: Vinkovci — Teretna Stanica (drawing by: M. Rončević)

edge, while the middle part is also cross-divided. There are protrusions in the place where the bars meet and the places where the bars meet the ring (Miske 1908: 57, Pl. XL: 64–66; XLVI: 19).

LATE LA TÈNE TRIPLE KNOBBED RINGS FROM THE SCORDISCAN SITES

A separate group of finds from the area of Vinkovci (**Fig. 16**) is represented by triple knobbed rings that are also ornamented with differently arranged knots that often have irregular shapes, which is why they match knobbed rings and probably also served as pendants. They are actually three small connected rings, often round-sectioned, with a small triangular opening between them. The knobs are usually on the outer surface of the ring and on its upper sides, while the lower sides of the ring are sometimes smooth. Triple knobbed rings measure up to 35 mm in height and width, and up to 20 mm in diameter.

A fragment of a triple knobbed ring has been found at the site of Ivankovo — Dren (**Fig. 13: 1**), with one ring preserved only in traces. There are irregularly arranged small knots on the body of the ring and slightly larger knots in the place where the rings meet. A fully preserved triple knobbed ring comes from the nearby site of Ivankovo — Slatine (**Fig. 13: 2**); the places where the rings meet have a single larger and more regularly shaped knot. All three rings usually have knots on their outer surface. The site of Orolik — Krčevine (**Fig. 13: 3**) included a fragment of a triple knobbed ring with a single preserved ring. There are small knots on one side of the ring and in the place where it used to meet the others, while the other side is smooth. The site of Andrijaševci — Lončarski Poloj (**Fig. 13: 4**) also included a fragment of a triple knobbed ring; the knobs in the place where rings meet is large and irregularly ring-shaped. There is an interesting find of a triple knobbed ring from the site of Šiškovci — Selište (**Fig. 13: 5**), with preserved two rings and a part of the third. The place where the rings meet has low and barely visible knots, while the rest of the ring is smooth. One ring is exceptionally thin on one side, so it seems that it was hung exactly from that place. The triple knobbed ring with two preserved rings from the site of Ivankovo — Nadiševci (**Fig. 13: 6**) differs from these because it has no knots, but it completely matches their dimensions.

Triple knobbed rings (*Dreipassring*), meaning three connected small-diameter rings ornamented

with variously arranged knots, are thought to have an ornamentation matching the numerous and heterogeneous group of knobbed rings, usually of types IIA and IIB. Triple knobbed rings are not a numerous group and are known from a few sites only: Staré Hradisko, Medlovice, and Bad Aussee (Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 673–674, Fig. 6). Most of the triple knobbed ring from the Staré Hradisko oppidum, with two preserved rings, is decorated with long protrusions that otherwise appear at Moravian sites (Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 673, Fig. 6a). There is another known fragment from the same oppidum (Meduna 1970: 85, Pl. 6: 4; Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 673, Fig. 6b), while the ring from the site of Bad Aussee — Koppental is completely preserved and somewhat larger, measuring 51 x 51 mm (Windholz-Konrad 2009: 309–311, Fig. 4–5). Interestingly, the arrangement of knots associates two rings with type IIA and one ring with type IIB (Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 674).

Another distinct form coming from sites in the area of Vinkovci is a small but heterogeneous group of small rings ornamented in a unique way: each of four opposite places on the outer side of the ring has a knot or a group consisting of three knots, the middle one being the largest and tallest. The groups can consist of four knots too: three connected knots and one more knot on top. The inner diameter of these rings is always under 15 mm. The site of Mirkovci — Malat included two rings with groups of three knots each (**Fig. 14: 1–2**), while the site of Vinkovački Banovci — Šuma (**Fig. 14: 3**) contained a ring with groups of four connected knots. A ring from the site of Mrzović — Taborište (**Fig. 14: 4**) has an oval-sectioned body, with a small, almost triangular protrusion in four places on the outer edge. The site of Ivankovo — Slatine (**Fig. 14: 5**) included a fragment of what was probably a ring of this shape, with a small diameter and a preserved single knot.

CONCLUSION

Numerous finds of knobbed rings and armrings of different types in the territory of the Scordisci (**Fig. 15**) confirm the already documented intensive contacts with central Europe in the Late La Tène (Dizdar 2015; 2016; 2019). It is an extremely heterogeneous group of finds of Late La Tène women's ring jewellery, characterized by a great variety of forms, as testified by finds from the Scordiscan territory. Interestingly, however, this distinctive form is still rarely found in Late La Tène graves of the Scordisci, where double grave 1 from

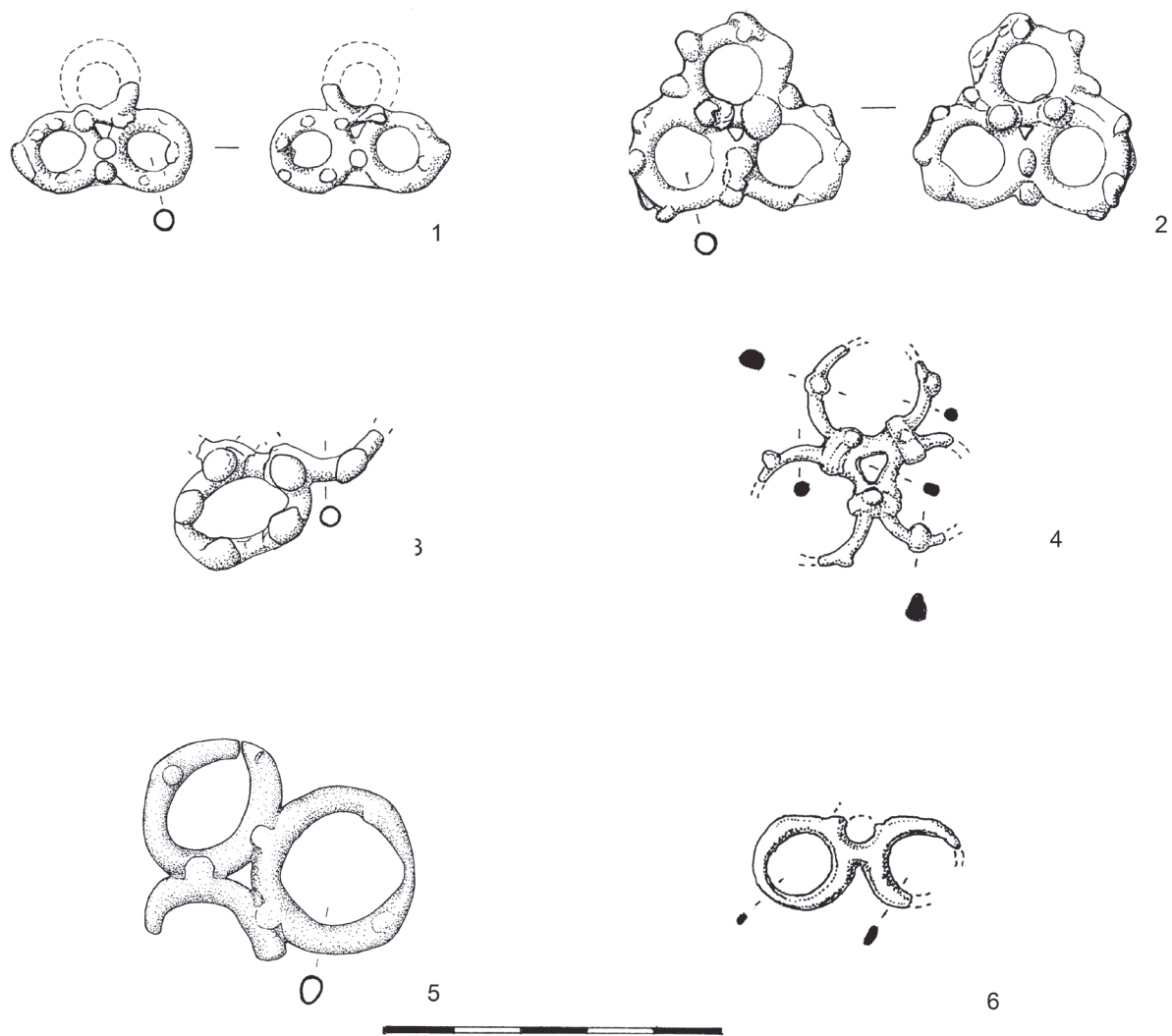


Figure 13 — Triple knobbed rings: 1 Ivankovo — Dren; 2 Ivankovo — Slatine; 3 Orolik — Krčevine; 4 Andrijaševci — Lončarski Poloj; 5 Šiškovci — Selište; 6 Ivankovo — Nadiševci (drawing by: M. Rončević and M. Marijanović Lešić)

the cemetery of Sotin — Zmajevac stands out for their number and variety (**Fig. 1**). Some other finds can be assumed to originate from destroyed grave assemblages, while finds of fragments of knobbed rings and armrings originating from Scordiscan settlements indicate that it was a frequent and favourite form of jewellery. The finds from the territory of the Scordisci stand out among contemporary finds from central Europe because of more numerous knobbed rings and/or armrings of the Százrad — Regöly type (**Fig. 16**); similar facts have been documented for Transylvania. On the other hand, intensive contacts with central Europe also seem to be indicated by the finds of knobbed rings associated with the Staré Hradisko variant, then triple knobbed rings, and particularly rings with zoomorphic representations. In fact, this last

group of rings from Scordiscan sites contains the south-easternmost finds in the distribution area of the La Tène culture (**Fig. 16**). Furthermore, the overall amount of new finds makes a rather significant contribution to the distribution lists of such finds in the Sava–Drava–Danube confluence, but also in general in this part of the Carpathian Basin.

A possible origin of knobbed rings was sought in south-eastern Europe, especially in the areas of Transylvania, Dobruja, and Moldova, where such objects appear in great numbers (cf. Rus-toiu 1996: 106–107, Fig. 54–57 as type 2) and are dated to the 4th–3rd cent. BC (Glodariu 1984: 70–71; Moscalu 1990: 148–151). It is emphasized for these rings that they showed typological similarities with knobbed rings of types IA and IC originating from central European sites, with certain

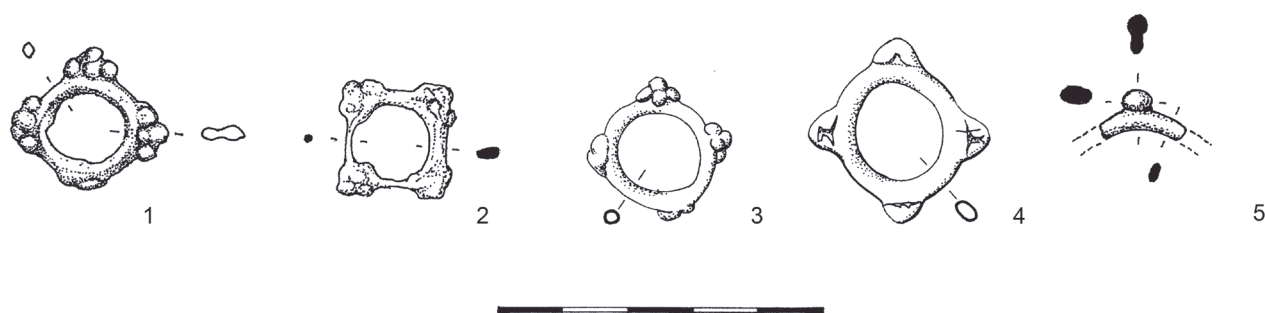


Figure 14 — Small knobbed rings: 1–2 Mirkovci — Malat; 3 Vinkovački Banovci — Šuma; 4 Mrzović — Taborište; 5 Ivankovo — Slatine (drawing by: M. Rončević and M. Marijanović Lešić)

differences in the arrangement of knots and the intervals between them. Likewise, the few finds of rings of type IC from central European sites have parallels precisely in south-eastern Europe (Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 672; 2016: 130–131; Čambal et al. 2017: 438). There is the interesting idea that knobbed rings from south-eastern Europe, where they first appeared, could have arrived to central Europe by the agency of the Scordisci and the Taurisci (Čižmář 2002: 206; Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 672; 2016: 131), which was already evidenced by the finds from the territory of the Mokronog group, or the Taurisci (Božič 1993a: 190–193, Fig. 1; Guštin et al. 1993: 18–20, Fig. 6: 13, 15–16; Božič 1993b: 137, 146, Fig. 1: 3–4), and now, a proof of this hypothesis could be the large number and diversity of finds in the territory of the Scordisci. Regardless of the source of knobbed rings and armrings, they were considered to be stylistically related to ring jewellery from the Middle La Tène, ornamented with rows of small knobs or in the pseudo-filigree technique (Pieta 2006: 139; Dębiec, Karwowski 2016: 133). However, rings or armrings with this scheme of ornamentation have not been found in Middle La Tène graves, neither in the cemeteries of the Scordisci nor of the Taurisci. Consequently, there is no clear antecedence of their appearance in these regions which would support the hypothesis of an intermediary role of these communities. Nevertheless, not all rings from Scordiscan sites come from certain contexts, so we cannot exclude the possibility that knobbed rings indeed appear already during the Middle La Tène period.

Excavations have shown a notable concentration of finds of knobbed rings in the »Eastern Celtic« area, i.e. at the sites lying along the Amber Road from eastern Moravia to eastern Lower Austria and western Slovakia (Dębiec, Karwowski

2014: 667, 670–671, Fig. 4; 2016: 116, 132, Fig. 1; also: Čižmář 2002: 205–206; 2008: 233; Pieta 2006: 139; Hlava 2009: 119; 2015: 271; Bazovský 2014: 616–617; Goláňová, Navrátil 2017: 400; Čambal et al. 2017: 438–439; Danielisová et al. 2018: 144–145; Goláňová, Kysela 2019: 79 etc.). The contemporary appearance of different types of knobbed rings seems to be evidenced by their presence in Late La Tène hoards from central Europe (Dębiec, Karwowski 2016: 133) such as the hoard of Ptení (Meduna 1996: 102–103; Čižmář 2002: 200–203, Fig. 2: 1, 3–4; 3: 2–8; 2008: 233; Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 671, Fig. 5a; 2016: 132–133; Hlava 2015: 271, Fig. 12: 5–7; 13), hoard 10/2005 from the Pohanská oppidum at Plavecké Podhradie (Pieta 2010: 338, Fig. F23; Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 671; 2016: 130, 133, Fig. 15; Čambal 2015: 42, Fig. 3), Křižovany nad Dudváchom (Pieta 2010: 338; Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 671; 2016: 133), and Schwarzenbach (Urban 1998; Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 672; 2016: 134); to these can be added the finds from the hoard or the find group of Szárazd — Regöly (Hunyady 1942: Pl. XXXVII: 15, 20–23; Kemenczei 2012: 344; Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 672). Considering the mentioned large number of finds in central Europe, they were produced on a local level (Čižmář 2002: 205–206; Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 670–671; 2016: 132), as possibly testified by the analysis of the composition of some knobbed rings from sites in southern Moravia that include a large admixture of lead, with different values for each knobbed ring (Goláňová et al. 2020: 25, 28–29, Tab. 3–4). On the other hand, it can be seen that knobbed rings rarely appear at some important sites that are more to the west (Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 672; 2016: 132), such as the Manching oppidum (van Endert 1991: 21, Pl. 5: 130) or the large settlements of Eggfling (Uenze 2000: 4, Fig. 11: 17), Altenburg (Lauber

2012: 724, 726, Fig. 17: 70, 102), and Beching — Pollanten (Schäfer 2010: 67–68, Fig. 46: 2517), even though they can be found as far as Gaul (Pierrevelcin 2009: 227–228, 241–242; Lauber 2012: 726, Fig. 4).

Considering the current state of knowledge, knobbed rings and armrings are dated to the Late La Tène, and it is believed they became common not long before the beginning of LT D (Pieta 2006: 139; Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 673; 2016: 115, 132–133; Goláňová, Kysela 2019: 79). This is confirmed by the finds from Mokronog group cemeteries, where knobbed rings and armrings have been found in inhumation and cremation graves from LT D1 (Guštin 1977: 72–74, Pl. 19: 8; 1984: 333, 335, Fig. 25: 8; Božič 1987: 878, Fig. 46: 10, Pl. LXXXVIII: 8; 1993a: 190–193, Fig. 1; 2008: 50–54, Fig. 23: 10–13), which is also the date of grave 1 from the cemetery of Sotin — Zmajevac. For the time being, it is impossible to establish which types of knobbed rings are older and which are younger, but it is assumed that those of type IIC perhaps precede those of types IIA and IIB (Dębiec, Karwowski 2016: 132–133). Also, it cannot be ruled out that knobbed rings appeared during the Middle La Tène already, i.e. between LT C1 and LT D1, as testified by the finds from the settlement of Nĕmčice nad Hanou, where most finds come from LT C2 and much fewer from LT D1 (Čižmář et al. 2008: 660, Fig. 3: 13–14; Danielisová et al. 2018: 145, n. 7). The finds of knobbed rings and armrings from the Scordiscan sites, just like the finds from the Mokronog group territory (Božič 1993a: 191–193; 1987: 878, Fig. 46: 10, Pl. LXXXVIII: 8; 1999: 199; 2008: 52, 112, 115–116, Fig. 23; Knez 1992: 67, Pl. 71: 7–8, 11–12; Dular 1991: 88, Fig. 51: 18, 20–21, 32; 52: 14–15; 74: 6), can be dated to LT D1, as confirmed by the finds from grave 1 in Sotin (Majnarić-Pandžić 1973: 63–64; Božič 1981: 319). As mentioned, there is no proof to support the appearance of these items before LT D, at least for the time being. However, it must be pointed out that they could have persisted into the second half of the 1st cent. AD, as shown by finds from some early Roman graves (Božič 1993a: 192).

Aside from distribution and dating, there is the important question of defining the use of knobbed rings, while keeping in mind that possible usefulness does not exclude a symbolic meaning (Pauli 1975). It is supposed that knobbed rings could have different uses. Those of smaller dimensions were probably worn as pendants around the neck, and could symbolically serve as amulets. There are situations in which an object could have easily served as an amulet, but could just as easily

have been a piece of jewellery. In such situations lies the ambiguity and difficulties in interpretation of objects — as well as most likely the multiple meaning of such objects. What may have served for one purpose in a certain situation may have served another purpose in another situation. Its appeal lies in our assumptions that certain objects have the power to protect, heal, or assist those who carry them, and from the general human need of health, protection, and success. However, the nature of the objects used, the manner of their use, the assumptions as to why they possess such powers, and the identity of their producers and users, vary greatly from one human society to the next and even among specific individuals in any human society, which are important points to keep in mind when dealing with such objects (Bohàk 2015: 83; Raja, Rüpke 2015: 11). We know that dress and ornaments played a large role in ancient society. Much recent research has testified to this — both in “secular” and “religious” contexts. However, in many contexts we still do not comprehend exactly how these mechanisms of understanding, encoding and decoding functioned (Raja, Rüpke 2015: 11).

That knobbed rings were hung from a necklace is testified by traces on particular rings, especially rings with a preserved suspension eyelet. Also, it is argued that knobbed rings could have been parts of belt sets or horse gear (Dębiec, Karwowski 2014: 667, 673; 2016: 133), but the possibility is small. I. Glodariu also believed that knobbed rings could have belonged to belt sets (1984: 69–70, Fig. 7; Rustoiu 1996, 106–107, Fig. 58: 3–5). A similar conclusion was made about two small rings connected with a bronze chain, which were found among the remains of a house dated to the 1st cent. AD in the settlement of Liptovská Mara I (Pieta 1996: 96–97, Pl. XI: 18–19; 2006: 143; 2010: 209, Fig. 136: 1); they were believed to be a part used for belt buckling or hanging from a belt (John, Houfková 2014: 184; Michálek et al. 2018: 168). D. Spasić proposed a hypothesis for variously shaped knobbed rings found in the settlement of Stari Kostolac — Čair: that they were items of warrior or horse gear (Spasić 1992: 12). A particularly interesting hypothesis says that knobbed rings could have been an equivalent of currency (Dembski 1995: 72; 2012; Stojić 2006: 16–18; Kemenczei 2012: 344; Dębiec, Karwowski 2016: 133). However, it is most probable that knobbed rings were worn as pendants on a necklace and had an apotropaic function (Pieta 2006: 139; Lauber 2012: 726). Generally speaking, annular jewellery (finger-rings, bracelets, anklets, neck rings) was often

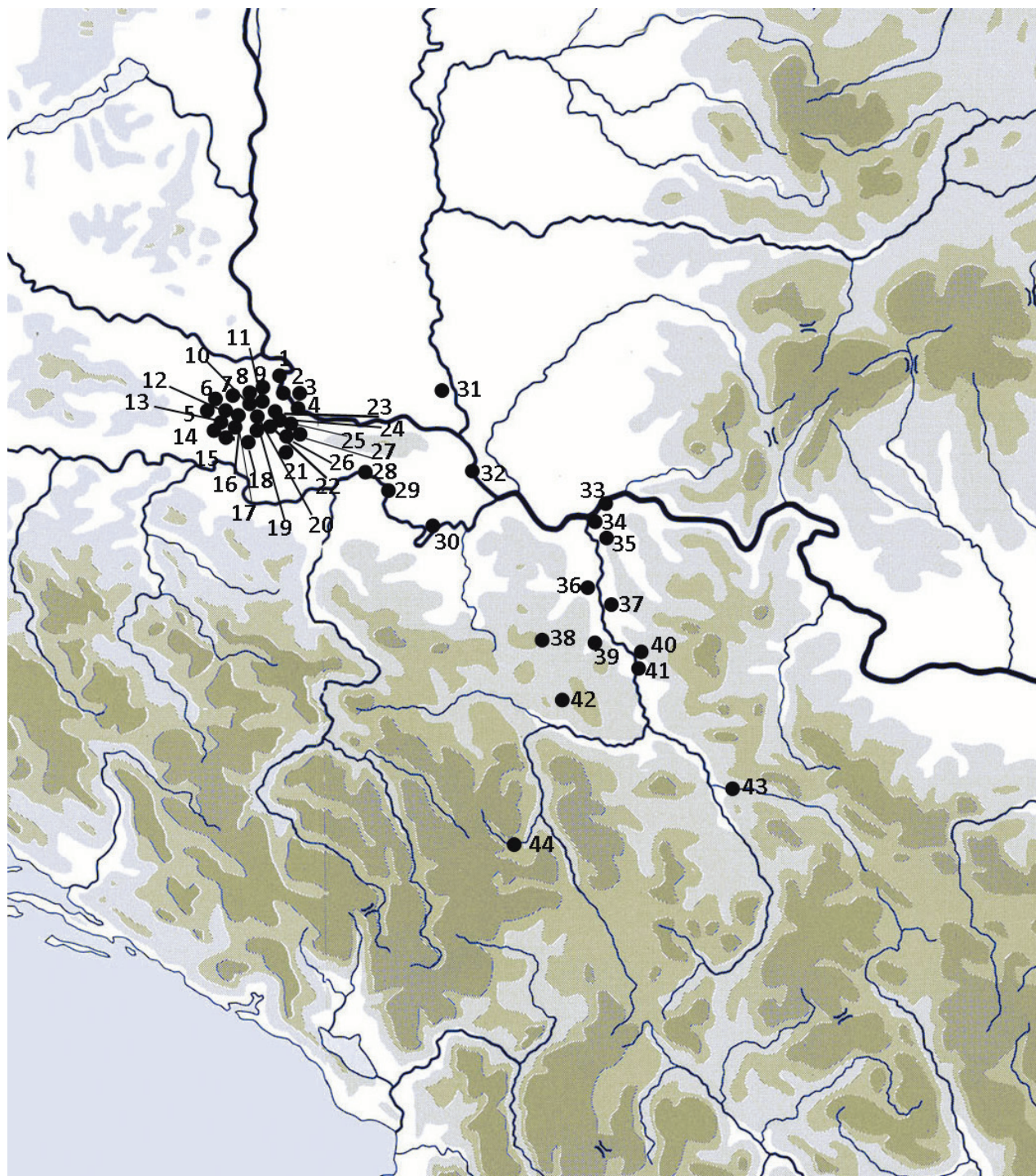


Figure 15 — Distribution of knobbed rings and armrings (●) in the territory of the Scordisci: 1 Dalj; 2 Vukovar; 3 Plavna; 4 Sotin; 5 Stari Mikanovci; 6 Mrzović; 7 Markušica; 8 Tordinci; 9 Pačetin; 10 Ostrovo; 11 Nuštar; 12 Ivankovo; 13 Retkovci; 14 Šiškovci; 15 Cerna; 16 Vinkovci; 17 Andrijaševci; 18 Golubovac; 19 Privlaka 20 Mirkovci; 21 Podgrađe; 22 Novi Jankovci; 23 Stari Jankovci; 24 Srijemske Laze; 25 Orolik; 26 Đeletovci; 27 Vinkovački Banovci; 28 Sremska Mitrovica; 29 Gomolava; 30 Kupinovo; 31 Čurug; 32 Novi Banovci; 33 Stari Kostolac; 34 Dubravica; 35 Požarevac; 36 Velika Plana; 37 Svilajnac; 38 Ljuljaci; 39 Donje Štiplje; 40 Supska; 41 Čuprija; 42 Prevešt; 43 Niš — Piroć; 44 Salakovac

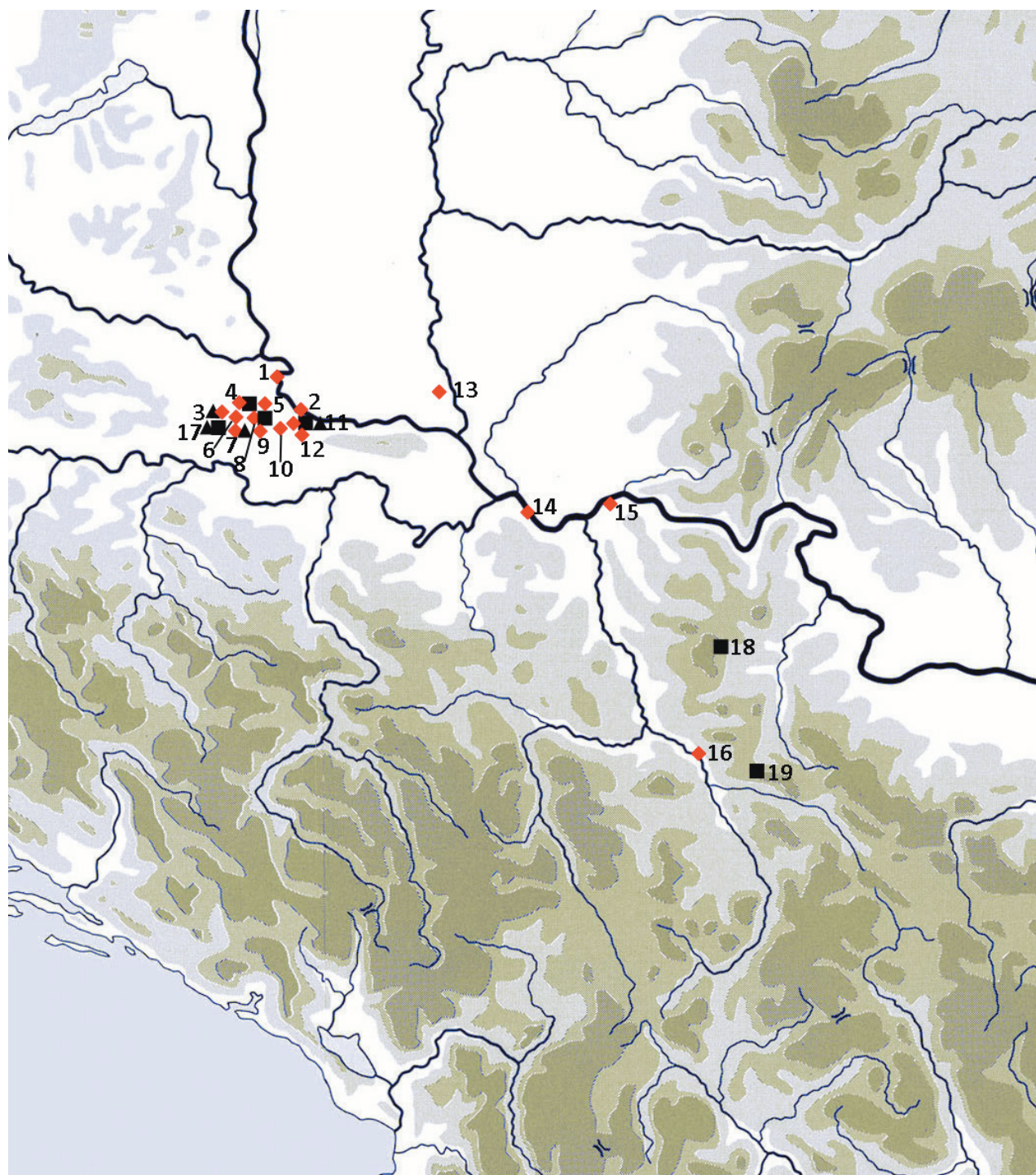


Figure 16 — Distribution of knobbled rings of the Szárazd — Regöly type (◆), knobbled rings with zoomorphic representations (■) and triple knobbled rings (▲) in the territory of the Scordisci:

Rings of the Szárazd — Regöly type (◆): 1 Dalj; 2 Sotin; 3 Ivankovo; 4 Ostrovo; 5 Nuštar; 6 Vinkovci; 7 Andrijaševci; 8 Mirkovci; 9 Privlaka; 10 Slakovci; 11 Orolik; 12 Vinkovački Banovci; 13 Čurug; 14 Ritopek; 15 Stari Kostolac; 16 Katun
 Rings with zoomorphic representations (■): 4 Ostrovo; 8 Mirkovci; 11 Orolik; 17 Šiškovci; 18 Podgorac; 19 Svrlijig
 Triple knobbled rings (▲): 3 Ivankovo; 7 Andrijaševci; 11 Orolik; 17 Šiškovci

perceived as having significant magical powers. These qualities crossed over from the symbolic meanings of knots, which were among the oldest tools of humankind. The perceived power of binding, closing, or holding together turned these objects into powerful magical instruments which were used in different rituals (Rustoiu 2010: 237). An apotropaic function can also be ascribed to triple knobbed rings and rings with zoomorphic representations, whose craftsmanship and selection of a particular motif already suggest a potentially special symbolic meaning. This is testified by finds in Late La Tène inhumation graves in the cemetery of Strmec nad Belo Cerkvom and some early Roman graves in Bavaria, showing that knobbed rings were hung from necklaces with glass and amber beads (van Endert 1991: 22; Božič 1993a: 192–193; Hlava 2009: 119; 2015: 271). On the other hand, knobbed armrings were worn on arms, as also shown by a find from the Late La Tène grave Padarič 6 in the cemetery of Strmec nad Belo Cerkvom (Božič 1993a: 192–193). Although in this case one cannot assume the same symbolism as for the knobbed rings that were used as some kind of amulets, they were clearly a significant element of the Late La Tène female attire, as indicated by the frequency of finds of knobbed armrings in Scordiscan territory. If a special significance is assumed for their smaller counterparts, i.e. the knobbed rings, there is a possibility that such armrings were used by prominent women.

Numerous finds of differently shaped knobbed rings and armrings from Scordiscan sites show that they were a very popular Late La Tène form of jewellery and favourites of Scordiscan women (**Fig. 15–16**). The closest parallels were recorded at sites in Transylvania and along the Amber Road in central Europe. The existence of intensive cultural contacts with central Europe in the Late La Tène has also been evidenced by previously unknown finds in the territory of the Scordisci: triple knobbed rings, rings with zoomorphic representations, and knobbed rings of the Staré Hradisko variant. Since the circumstances of discovery of knobbed rings and armrings in the territory of the Scordisci are usually unknown, particular importance was given to the finds of various types of knobbed rings and armrings in grave 1 in Sotin, which enabled their dating to LT D1 while leaving open the possibility that they also existed among the Scordisci during LT D2. In any case, it is a distinct Late La Tène form of jewellery that could have had different uses considering its dimensions: necklace pendants or arm jewellery. The symbolic meaning of knobbed

rings is particularly important, as they — along with rings with zoomorphic representations or triple knobbed rings — are believed to have served as amulets. The finds from grave 1 in Sotin show that knobbed rings and armrings could have been worn by women of high status in the community, who used body ornamentation to display various aspects of their visual identity.

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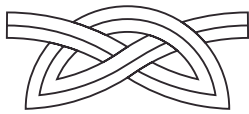
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