

MUZEUL OLTENIEI CRAIOVA

IN HONOREM
CONSTANTIN
C. PETOLESCU

IN HONOREM CONSTANTIN C. PETOLESCU



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MUZEUL OLTENIEI CRAIOVA

**IN HONOREM
CONSTANTIN C. PETOLESCU**

Edited by

Dorel Bondoc
&
Călin Timoc

*Coperta: Monument statuar de marmură cu inscripție dedicată lui Hercules, descoperită la Cioroiu Nou.
Foto Dorel Bondoc, Muzeul Olteniei Craiova.*

*Front cover illustration: A marble statuary monument with an inscription dedicated to Hercules,
discovered at Cioroiu Nou. Photo Dorel Bondoc, Oltenia Museum Craiova*

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PROFESORUL CONSTANTIN C. PETOLESCU LA 80 DE ANI

Îl sărbătorim în anul 2023 pe profesorul Constantin C. Petolescu, reputat epigrafist și arheolog al Daciei romane, aflat la cea de-a 80-a aniversare. Ajuns la o așa vârstă frumoasă, profesorul academician Constantin C. Petolescu are ce împărtăși celor mai tineri decât dumnealui. O viață închinată științei, cu campanii de săpături arheologice pe nu mai puțin de douăsprezece șantiere, mai multe sute de articole, câteva zeci de cărți, precum și nenumărate participări la sesiuni de comunicări și congrese de specialitate. Din această postură și-a atras multe prietenii, dar și rivalități. Pe prieteni i-a prețuit, iar pe cei care i-au greșit, i-a iertat demult. Ani de-a rândul a instruit generații de studenți și masteranzi în cadrul facultăților de istorie din București și Craiova, iar din anul 1991 și până în prezent este conducător de doctorate.

Am avut privilegiul să-l cunoaștem în urmă cu mai bine de două decenii și am rămas surprinși să vedem că avem de-a face cu un om simplu, politicos și cu simțul umorului, dar întotdeauna, dublat de un savant de prestigiu. Ulterior, relațiile noastre de colaborare s-au intensificat, și de-a lungul anilor, am fost onorați de prietenia și de încrederea domniei sale.

A fost și este mereu animat de a ajuta pe cei mai tineri, aflați la început de drum, care întotdeauna pot găsi la dumnealui, sfaturi, sprijin și ajutor. Această calitate umană, împreună cu pregătirea sa academică, l-au făcut un foarte bun și apreciat profesor.

Plecat de jos, din sud-vestul Olteniei, profesorul Constantin C. Petolescu a trecut prin toate furcile caudine ale carierei academice: profesor de istorie, muzeograf, cercetător științific, cercetător științific principal III, lector, conferențiar universitar, profesor universitar, cercetător științific principal II, cercetător științific I, cercetător științific asociat și în prezent, membru corespondent al Academiei Române.

A rămas fidel până la capăt vocației sale de epigrafist al epocii romane, cu toate că cercetările domniei sale au vizat și alte direcții, precum: istoria războaielor daco-romane, culte și credințe religioase, armata romană, numismatică și sfragistică, etimologie și onomastică, castre, organizarea administrativă a Daciei, monumente funerare și votive, dacii din epoca romană, ștampile tegulare ori imprimate pe vase ceramice.

Lucrarea *Dacia. Un mileniu de istorie*, publicată de domnia sa în anul 2010 și reeditată în 2014, reprezintă cea mai bună sinteză în domeniu, însă și volumul de inscripții dedicat Olteniei și Munteniei, publicat împreună cu Gr. Florescu (*Inscripțiile Daciei romane. Volumul II. Oltenia și Muntenia*, București 1977), rămâne o lucrare de referință pentru istoria Daciei romane și un instrument indispensabil și în ziua de azi. La acestea se adaugă volumele de *Inscripții latine din Dacia* (ILD), cele de inscripții externe referitoare la istoria Daciei (IDRE), *Cronica epigrafică a României* începută în anul 1981 și multe altele¹.

Prin urmare, avem toate motivele să-i dedicăm acest volum, odată cu urările noastre de sănătate și viață lungă !

editorii

¹ Lista publicațiilor dlui Petolescu, la M. Popescu, I. Achim, F. Matei-Popescu (eds.), *La Dacie et l'Empire romain. Mélanges d'épigraphie et d'archéologie offerts à Constantin C. Petolescu*, București 2018, p. 13-33 și <https://iabvp.ro/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/CV-RO-Constantin-C.-Petolescu.pdf>

PROFESSOR CONSTANTIN C. PETOLESCU AT 80 YEARS OLD

In 2023, we celebrate Professor Constantin C. Petolescu, renowned epigraphist and archaeologist of Roman Dacia, on his 80th birthday. Having reached such a beautiful age, the academic professor Constantin C. Petolescu has something to share with those younger than him. A life dedicated to science, with campaigns of archaeological excavations on no less than twelve sites, several hundred articles, several dozen books, as well as countless participations in communication sessions and specialist congresses. From this position he attracted many friendships, but also rivalries. He cherished his friends, and forgave those who wronged him a long time ago. For years, he has trained generations of students and Master students in the faculties of history in Bucharest and Craiova, and since 1991 he has been supervisor of doctorates.

We had the privilege of knowing him more than two decades ago and were surprised to see that we were dealing with a simple man, polite and with a sense of humor, but always doubled by a prestigious scholar. Thereafter, our collaborative relationship intensified, and over the years, we have been honored by his lordship's friendship and trust.

He was and is always excited to help the younger ones, who are just starting out, who can always find advice, support and help from you. This human quality, together with his academic training, made him a very good and appreciated teacher.

Starting from the bottom, from the south-west of Oltenia, Professor Constantin C. Petolescu went through all the *caudine forks* of his academic career: history teacher, curator, scientific researcher, senior scientific researcher III, lecturer, university lecturer, university professor, senior scientific researcher II, scientific researcher I, associate scientific researcher and currently, corresponding member of the Romanian Academy.

He remained faithful to the end of his vocation as an epigraphist of the Roman era, although the researches of his reign also targeted other directions, such as: the history of the Daco-Roman wars, religious cults and beliefs, the Roman army, numismatics and sigillography, etymology and onomastics, forts, the administrative organization of Dacia, funerary and votive monuments, Dacians from the Roman era, tegular stamps or printed on ceramic vessels.

The work *Dacia. A millennium of history*, published by his lordship in 2010 and republished in 2014, represents the best synthesis in the field, but also the volume of inscriptions dedicated to Oltenia and Muntenia, published together with Gr. Florescu (*Inscriptions of Roman Dacia. Volume II. Oltenia and Muntenia*, Bucharest 1977), remains a reference work for the history of Roman Dacia and an indispensable tool even today. To these are added the volumes of Latin Inscriptions from Dacia (ILD), those of external inscriptions relating to the history of Dacia (IDRE), Epigraphic Chronicle of Romania started in 1981 and many others².

Therefore, we have every reason to dedicate this volume to him, together with our wishes for good health and long life!

the editors

² List of Mr. Petolescu's publications, in M. Popescu, I. Achim, F. Matei-Popescu (eds.), *La Dacie et l'Empire romain. Mélanges d'épigraphie et d'archéologie offerts à Constantin C. Petolescu*, Bucharest 2018, p. 13-33; [https://iabvp.ro/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/CV-RO-Constantin-C.-Petolescu .pdf](https://iabvp.ro/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/CV-RO-Constantin-C.-Petolescu.pdf)

EPOCA PREROMANĂ / THE PRE-ROMAN ERA

BRIDGING THE GAP: REMARKS ON POPULATION (DIS)CONTINUITY IN NORTH MONTENEGRO IN THE 2ND HALF OF THE 1ST MILLENNIUM BC¹

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Rezumat. Regiunea de nord a Muntenegrului este dominată de un număr considerabil de necropole tumulare, din care cele mai multe au fost atribuite orizontului final al primei epoci a fierului/ Hallstatt. În prima jumătate a mileniului I î.Chr., zona a fost integrată în complexul cultural Glasinac – Mati. Spre deosebire de acesta, este general acceptat faptul că ultimele secole de dinainte de Cristos, nu au lăsat urme arheologice. Practicile de înmormântare din necropola plană de la Komini reprezintă cel mai bun exemplu și au fost plasate cronologic în secolul I î.Chr. Cea mai recentă analiză a inventarelor mormintelor și a documentației de la Komini au conturat un grup de morminte mai timpurii, completând tabloul practicilor funerare din secolul al III-lea î.Chr și după.

Cuvinte cheie: epoca fierului, practice funerare, tumuli, necropola de la Komini, nordul Muntenegrului.

Abstract. The landscape of North Montenegro is dominated by a considerable number of tumular necropolises, the greatest number of which were attributed to the final horizon of the First Iron Age/Hallstatt period. During the first half of the 1st millennium BC the area was integrated in the cultural complex Glasinac – Mati. In contrast to it, it was widely accepted that the last centuries BC left almost no trace in archaeological sense. Burial practices in the flat necropolises – Komini being the best example – were chronologically placed as early as the 1st century BC. The most recent analyses of the grave inventories and documentation from Komini were conducted and a group of much earlier grave units resulted, consolidating the picture of funerary practices of the 3rd century BC and later.

Keywords: Iron Age, funerary practices, tumuli, Komini necropolis, North Montenegro.

Introduction

According to our knowledge, which is based on decades of reconnaissance and archaeological research, the area in the northernmost region of today's Montenegro was inhabited almost throughout all eras, from prehistory to modern times. It is an area of vast karst plateau, with an average height of 1200-1300m, framed by one of the deepest canyons in the world (the Tara canyon) and mountain ranges in the Dinaric direction, with mountains from about 1500 to 2238m high (Fig. 1). The entire region is mountainous, without a point below 500m above sea level. And while three mountain ridges rise from the plateau, deep valleys descend in certain parts of it, among which the Pljevaljska is the most prominent representative of these forms (770m).² The Čehotina River flows through its central part, in whose canyon traces of human habitation have been discovered in the caves and cavelets as far back as the Paleolithic.³

The landscape of the studied area is dominated by a considerable number of tumular necropolises (Fig. 2). Thanks to the archaeological survey and excavations, it can be stated that the greatest number of tumular burials belongs to the final horizon of the First Iron Age/Hallstatt period. It is widely accepted that during the first half of the 1st millennium BC the area was integrated in the cultural complex Glasinac – Mati⁴. In search of the Iron Age populations who buried their dear under the tumuli, one has to turn to the northwest and the eponymous Glasinac region of south-eastern Bosnia.

¹ Realization of this research is financially supported by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia, within financing of scientific work at the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Philosophy (no. 451-03-47/2023-01/ 200163).

² Васовић 2009, 13 and ff.

³ Срејовић 2009, 37 and ff.

⁴ Ljuština, Cvijetić 2019, 84; Ljuština, Cvijetić 2022, 159.



Figure 1: North Montenegro landscape: a motif from Ljubišnja (after Васовић 2009, сл. 11).

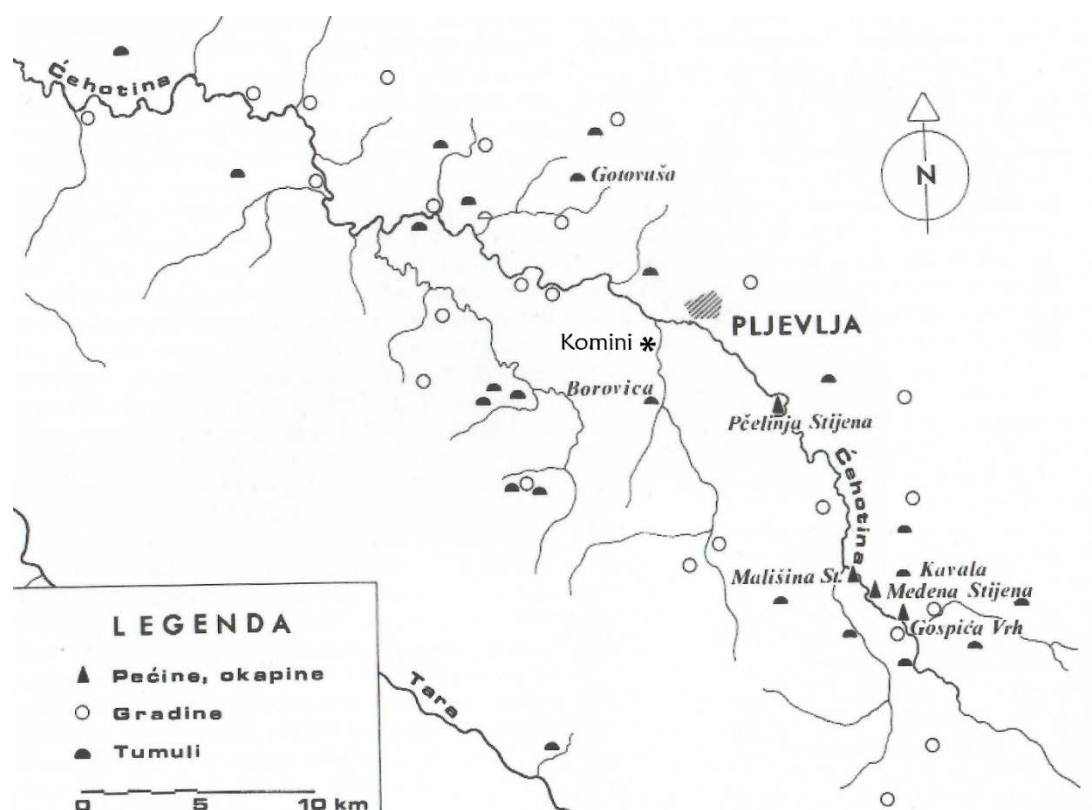


Figure 2: Archaeological sites in the Čehotina valley: triangles – caves and cavelets; circles – hillforts; semicircles – tumular necropolises; asterisk – the necropolis of Komini (modified after Срејовић 2009, сл. 11).

Thanks to the priority the Glasinac plateau got with the early start of archaeological excavations of the tumuli and hillforts, already in the 2nd half of the 19th century, and the scarce data from the historical sources, the complex of archaeological sites from the territory was ascribed to the Autariatae. Ethnic attribution of the complex was Illyrian in wider sense⁵. Consequently, were the Illyrian Autariatae the native community who went through the process of Romanisation at the dawn of the new era? Neither the tumular necropolises nor the historical sources provided confirmation for this. Archaeological sites of different type are still subject to exploration in order to reconstruct what happened with the Iron Age communities at the threshold of the new era.

Starting point: population discontinuity

Funerary practices of the Iron Age communities from North Montenegro are well known due to the archaeological excavations of tumuli. On the other side, we have yet to trace testimonies about their settlement strategies, economic preferences, everyday life, despite the fact that a significant number of hillforts (Fig. 2) have been ascribed to the Iron Age⁶. If we focus on the mortuary record, the region of the city of Pljevlja is of particular importance, since tumular necropolises were explored in Gotovuša, Ljutići near Mataruge, Lever Tara, Borovica and Otilovići⁷. In most of the mounds, built of earth and stone, with outstanding complexity of funerary practices and several burial horizons, there were graves of inhumed deceased in supine position, with jewellery and elements of attire (most of them made of bronze, such as massive cast bracelets, decorated circular plates, arch fibulae and decorative pins), weapons and pottery. Ceramic repertoire is reduced to greyish beakers with one or two handles and incised geometric ornaments. In spite of the fact that in the Pljevlja area more than ten mounds with significant number of graves from the Hallstatt period have been explored, the archaeological material from the graves indicated mid-5th c. BC as the latest date. In contrast to it, in the Glasinac area and the Drina valley there were graves from later periods, which testified about prolonged and continual existence of the Autariatae, unlike in the region of Pljevlja⁸.

Our picture about populations who lived in North Montenegro in the Iron Age and at the dawn of the new era remained unexpectedly blurry. In our previous studies⁹, we took a number of statements from the literature for granted. One of them is that the last centuries BC left almost no trace in archaeological sense. If this observation about chronology of archaeological finds from the Hallstatt period in the Pljevlja region and other parts of the territory of the Autariatae is connected with historical sources, it can lead to interesting and tempting hypotheses. M. Lazić and M. Cerović¹⁰ emphasized the often-quoted information on movements of the Autariatae towards the east and their conflict with the Triballi. The migration of the Autariatae is not chronologically positioned with precision, although some historians, F. Papazoglu¹¹ above all, consider it to have taken place after 335 BC. It was the most convenient moment to defeat the Triballi and expel them from their homeland, after the defeat by Alexander III of Macedon. However, the archaeological material from the Pljevlja region suggests different solutions. Absence of finds later than the 5th c. BC in the area indicates an assumption that the Autariatae exactly in that period left it for good¹².

The fact that we took for granted the absence of material from the Late Iron Age in the studied territory prevented us from dealing with ethnic and cultural continuity and questioning presence of inhabitants immediately prior to the Roman conquest. We sought the missing link in the inhumation burials under

⁵ Венас 1987; Ћовић 1987; Лазвић, Церовић 2008; Ljuština, Cvijetić 2019, 84; Cvijetić, Ljuština 2022, 159-160.

⁶ Cf. Срејовић 2009.

⁷ Cf. Ljuština, Cvijetić 2019, Fig. 2.

⁸ Лазвић, Церовић 2008; Ljuština, Cvijetić 2019, 84; Ljuština, Cvijetić 2022, 160.

⁹ Ljuština, Cvijetić 2019; Ljuština, Cvijetić 2022.

¹⁰ Лазвић, Церовић 2008.

¹¹ Papazoglu 1969, 80-84 with further references.

¹² Ljuština, Cvijetić 2019, 86; Ljuština, Cvijetić 2022, 161.

tumulus from Krajčinovići in the southwest of Serbia (2nd/1st century BC)¹³, although the finding conditions and the find itself are questionable¹⁴. However, we remained on the same interpretational route set up by the generations of explorers.

Another set of statements taken for granted concerns the necropolis of Komini. The first in the line is the statement that the first archaeological evidence of the inhabitants of this region after the Iron Age populations recognised as the Autariatae dates from the 1st century AD. During the systematic researches in Komini near Pljevlja (ancient Municipium S.) carried out from 1964 to 1976, almost seven hundred graves were discovered, mostly cremated deceased buried from the 1st to 4th century¹⁵. According to the research, there were two ancient necropolises. The older one, necropolis I, situated in the area of Bijelo brdo, and the later one, well-known in scientific literature as necropolis II, placed at the foot of the eponymous hill. The necropolis I, with about 400 graves of cremated burials of native non-Romanized population, dated to the 1st and the beginning of the 2nd century AD, contained a few grave forms, which could be divided into two groups: graves with recipient and graves without receptacle for ashes of the dead. To the first group belong graves with oval/circular pit with remains from the pyre as well as rectangular pits with burned sides. The other group is represented by circular grave pits with ceramic urn (mostly hand-made), which is often covered by a stone slab, or placed in the ring of stones i.e. surrounded by stones¹⁶. To this group also belong graves with stone caskets for the ashes of the dead, concentrated in one section of the necropolis, while the other graves on the necropolis I are distributed without particular order¹⁷.

Graves from the older necropolis in Komini contain simple grave goods, mostly composed of ceramic vessels (hand-made or wheel-thrown) and metal objects (bronze fibulae of the Aucissa type, rare bronze coins, rings and earrings), while the graves with long knives and spears with their tip dug into the earth are especially interesting¹⁸. This custom is also familiar to Iapodes. Some links and analogies with the Iapodean pottery are notable as well¹⁹. A. Cermanović-Kuzmanović also denoted significant similarity with the material from the Cetina river (the Delmate region)²⁰.

As we have already seen, according to the several investigated tumuli, cremation was not known in the earlier sepulchral tradition, i.e. the native population used only inhumation under the tumuli. With the beginning of new millennium, with the Roman occupation or even earlier, the burial rite changed²¹. Since there is no evidence that the native population had cremation in their own sepulchral tradition and according to the grave forms and material from them, which cannot be ascribed to the Romanized population, it is believed that the new grave forms were probably adopted from the neighbouring regions, where cremation was dominant sepulchral form in the pre-Roman period. This custom is characteristic from the middle of the I millennium BC in the wider Illyrian region, from the Iapodes on the north-west to the southern Serbia and Kosovo on the south-east. It is suggested that this form could have been adopted from the north-west, from the territory of the Illyrian/Pannonian tribe Daesidiates, or from the east, or the Dardanians, an Illyrian-Thracian tribe, as suggested by A. Jovanović²². So far, several assumptions have been made in relation to this issue. Grave forms and

¹³ Zotović 1985; Gabrovec, Čović 1987, 907; Jovanović 1987a, 828, 848; Jovanović 1987b, 813; Zotović 2007.

¹⁴ Ljuština, Cvijetić 2019, 86; Ljuština, Cvijetić 2022, 161.

¹⁵ Cf. Cermanović-Kuzmanović 1967; Cermanović-Kuzmanović 1980a; Cermanović-Kuzmanović 1980b; Цермановић-Кузмановић 1998; Цермановић-Кузмановић 2009.

¹⁶ Ljuština, Cvijetić 2019, Fig. 6.

¹⁷ Цермановић-Кузмановић 1998; Цермановић-Кузмановић 2009; Ljuština, Cvijetić 2019, 86-87; Ljuština, Cvijetić 2022, 161.

¹⁸ Ljuština, Cvijetić 2019, Fig. 7, 7a.

¹⁹ Cermanović-Kuzmanović 1980a, 227-232; Цермановић-Кузмановић 1998; Цермановић-Кузмановић 2009; Ружић 2009.

²⁰ Цермановић-Кузмановић 1998; Цермановић-Кузмановић 2009.

²¹ Јовановић 1984, 66.

²² Јовановић 1984, 66.

grave goods (especially pottery finds) are indicative of relations with the Iapodean, Dalmatian, Desidiatean and Dardanian cultural circle²³. According to the opinion of A. Jovanović, grave pits without recipient for the ashes of the dead with the remains of the pyre or the pits with burned sides are older and belong to the native population. Having developed A. Evans' idea²⁴, A. Jovanović stated about the Pirustae as autochthonous population, or the population who settled in today region of north Albania and north-eastern Montenegro²⁵. The same problem was also dealt by J. Wilkes²⁶ and A. Cermanović-Kuzmanović²⁷. A. Jovanović²⁸ supposed that this model had come from the east or from the neighbouring territory of the Dardanians (basic forms of the Mala Kopašnica Sase grave type) at the turn of the new era, i.e. with the beginning of the Roman domination. The other grave form, or pits with urns and ash-chests (Aucissa type fibulae, long knives) occurred at beginning of the 2nd century with population from central Dalmatia. Moreover, it has been suggested that this depopulated area was resettled by the groups of refugees of the Scordisci and Dardanians, during the 2nd or the 1st century BC²⁹.

As already stated, we were quite cautious when dealing with ethnical problems. We were of the opinion that we could count on varied ethnic components in the studied territory in pre-Roman and early Roman period, and also should be very careful with conclusions about indigenous population. All of the suggestions should be taken with caution, because the results of the excavations in Komini have not been completely published. They are the subject of the study which is in preparation³⁰. Interestingly, some of the most recent results from Komini became a significant step forward in comprehension of population continuity, at least in the last centuries of the old era.

Bridging the chronological gap

Meticulous analyses of the grave inventories and documentation from Komini were conducted and a group of much earlier grave units resulted. Our attention was particularly attracted by two graves with chronologically sensitive finds of fibulae.

In grave 4/1973, a pit of circular base, with diameter of 0,60m and depth of 0,22m, an urn with the remains from the pyre was found, in which bronze fibula and one smaller fragmented bronze bell were placed³¹. In the pit close to the urn there was a fragmented wheel-thrown vessel with handles, made from medium baked earth and light-brown firing colour (Terrain Inventory = TI 294/1973). The urn of smaller dimension (R-rim = 11cm; h = 20cm; R-bottom = 9,5cm), with recessed rim, dumpy, globular receptacle and non-profiled flat bottom with two horseshoe handles on the shoulder, was made by hand from rough baked earth and grey-brown firing colour (TI 295/1973)³². Bronze fibula, 48mm in length, is characterized by a slightly curved leaf-like arch and reversed foot ending with a smaller button-shaped thickening (Fig. 3; TI 296/1973)³³.

²³ Cermanović-Kuzmanović 1980a; Јовановић 1984; Цермановић-Кузмановић 1998; Цермановић-Кузмановић 2009.

²⁴ Evans 1885, 38.

²⁵ Јовановић 2011; Јовановић 2012.

²⁶ Wilkes 1969.

²⁷ Цермановић-Кузмановић 2009.

²⁸ Јовановић 1984, 64-68.

²⁹ Лазих, Церовић 2013; Ljuština, Cvijetić 2019, 87; Ljuština, Cvijetić 2022, 161-162.

³⁰ Ljuština, Cvijetić 2019, 87-88; Ljuština, Cvijetić 2022, 162.

³¹ Cvijetić, Ljuština 2022, Fig. 1.

³² Cvijetić, Ljuština 2022, Fig. 2.

³³ Cvijetić, Ljuština 2022, Fig. 3, 3a.



Figure 3: Komini necropolis - fibula from the grave No. 4/1973
(after Cvijetić, Ljuština 2022, Fig. 3).

This type of Early La Tène fibulae is defined as the Karaburma 63 type based on the find from the grave no. 63 from the necropolis of Karaburma in Belgrade. The grave belongs to an inhumed deceased, lying on the back with arms stretched next to the body. Lower parts of the stretched legs were damaged. The head is slightly turned leftwards. The skeleton is well preserved. Its orientation is W–E, the head being on the west and the legs on the east³⁴. The skeleton was attributed to a female deceased, on the basis of the grave inventory. No detailed anthropological analysis has been performed so far. Two silver earrings made of twisted wire were on the left and right side of the head. There were 7 multi-coloured glass beads on the neck of the deceased. A bronze fibula of Duchcov/Dux type, 4,8cm in length, with decorated arch and two pairs of chain pendants was on the right shoulder. Its foot is bent and spherically ended. Its widened arch has elliptical ornamentation. The spring is bilateral, with six coils. The four chain pendants, their lengths varying from 6 to 17cm, hang from the pivot bar. It was dated at the end of the 4th and the beginning of the 3rd century BC³⁵. A large wheel-thrown clay bowl was placed some 40cm from the left side of the head. Next to the right side of the head there was a fragment of biconical iron object³⁶.

The Karaburma 63 type of fibulae was defined by D. Božič³⁷ as being characteristic of the Belgrade 1 phase. In chronological sense, it equals the phase Lt B2 in the territory of Croatian and Serbian Danube region, although this type of fibulae has been found throughout the Western Balkans. These are fibulae of the Early La Tène scheme made of copper alloy, which generally speaking represent a local variant of the Duchcov type, with an eight-coil or, more rarely (as in the case of the specimen from the grave 4/1973 in Komini), six-coil spring and an external chord, a massive bow of square outline and lenticular or elliptical cross-section, and a back-bent foot with a large globular thickening in the middle, and a smaller button-shaped thickening at the bow end. The upper side of the bow can be decorated with various motifs rendered in relief, though finds with a smooth bow are the most numerous³⁸.

In search of the nearest analogies for the fibula from Komini, the importance of the sites from the Glasinac region in eastern Bosnia (Rusanovići, Podilijak, Breza) was recognized³⁹. Overview of the sites from Bosnia and Herzegovina with the analogous material discovered by the mid-20th century and kept in the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina was provided by R. Bižić⁴⁰, while recently the fibulae from the Early La Tène period was in research focus of A. Marić. She gave the lecture under the title “Tvarna stopnja Lt B2 v Bosni in Hercegovini” at the conference “Latenizacija na prostoru od jugovzhodnih Alp do hrvaško-srbskega Podonavja” held in Kobarid, Slovenia, between 23 and 25 November 2012⁴¹ and

³⁴ Todorović 1972, 26.

³⁵ Todorović 1972, 62.

³⁶ Todorović 1972, 26–27; Ljuština, Spasić 2012, 368-369; Cvijetić, Ljuština 2022, 24.

³⁷ Božič 1981, 317, note 52, 325, T. 3.

³⁸ Drnić 2015, 76; Cvijetić, Ljuština 2022, 25.

³⁹ Cf. Cvijetić, Ljuština 2022, Fig. 4.

⁴⁰ Bižić 1951.

⁴¹ Cf. Drnić 2015, 76, note 446.

further extended her work in the subsequent years⁴². Fibulae of Karaburma 63 type are leading elements of the material culture of the LT B2 phase in Serbian-Croatian part of the Danube basin. A. Marić⁴³ recognised six main variants with sub-variants, depending on the way of bow and foot decoration. They are spread in the zone settled by the Scordisci, as well to the south from the Sava, in a few sites in present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina⁴⁴, where they were dominant type of fibulae during the phase Lt B2. They are attributed to the Lt B2 phase based on the grave units no. 60 and 63 from the eponymous site of Karaburma in Belgrade, and considered to have been part of female attire⁴⁵. Dealing with the origin of Late Iron Age fibulae found in Bosnia and Herzegovina, A. Marić⁴⁶ reached the conclusion that some of them were imported, but the majority of them were probably made locally under different influences. She used typological similarities and differences, quantity and distribution area as the basic tool for pointing out cultural connections and interactions during the Late Iron Age⁴⁷. Clustering of the finds of only three subtypes and variants of Karaburma 63 type of fibulae has proven to be very instructive for our find from Komini⁴⁸. Already at this stage of research it is obvious that the nearest analogies can be found among the sites in the Glasinac region of eastern Bosnia, while the high concentration of the finds in Serbian-Croatian part of the Danube basin indicates the zone of original centres from which these highly appreciated elements of fashion reached the Central Balkan communities⁴⁹.

The grave 3/1973 is also of great importance. In its grave pit of circular base and dimension: R = 0,55m; d = 0,30m, which was filled with char, there was an urn with the remains from the pyre, covered with the stone slab⁵⁰. In the urn there was a bronze fibula and a fragmented, handmade bowl of rough fired clay and dark red firing colour next to the urn (TI 292/1973)⁵¹. The urn, also fragmented, of non-profile recessed rim, ovoid receptacle and slightly profiled flat bottom, was made of fired clay and dark red firing colour (TI 289/1973). Bronze fibula with the leg bent backwards and attached to the arch with one plastic ring of 48mm in length (Fig. 4; TI 290/1973)⁵² was found together with the fragment of “hinged fibula” according to one source, but no further information is available.



Figure 4: Komini necropolis - fibula from the grave No. 3/1973 (after Cvijetić, Ljuština 2022, Fig. 7).

This type, otherwise characteristic of the Middle La Tène period, is also present in a large number of sites in the surrounding area, primarily in numerous necropolises in the region of the neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina (the sites of Vir near Posušje, Donja Dolina, Zlatište and Debelo Brdo near Sarajevo), in graves with cremated deceased. Territorially the closest to our find are the specimens

⁴² Marić 2015; Marić 2019.

⁴³ Marić 2015, 152.

⁴⁴ Marić 2015, sl. 4.

⁴⁵ Marić 2015, 152.

⁴⁶ Marić 2019, 23.

⁴⁷ Cvijetić, Ljuština 2022, 25-26.

⁴⁸ Cvijetić, Ljuština 2022, Fig. 4.

⁴⁹ Cvijetić, Ljuština 2022, 26.

⁵⁰ Cvijetić, Ljuština 2022, Fig. 5.

⁵¹ Cvijetić, Ljuština 2022, Fig. 6.

⁵² Cvijetić, Ljuština 2022, Fig. 7.

from the site Mahrevići (Marevići) near Čajniče⁵³ which was partly investigated in early 20th century, and which is about 30km away from Komini or Pljevlja by air. The fibulae from Mahrevići match the specimen from Komini by the size, too, their lengths varying between 4,7 and 5,5cm. This type of fibulae is also much appreciated by the Late Iron Age communities of the western part of the Balkan peninsula - namely by the Liburni, Iapodes, Colapians – during the phase Lt C⁵⁴. Interestingly, not many of them were found in the inventory of the Middle La Tène female graves at the territory of the Scordisci⁵⁵, from where we expect cultural impetus revealed through the elements of costume to have come⁵⁶.

Conclusions

Having started to consolidate the chronological frame for the necropolis of Komini, our perception of population mobility, shifts of cultures and cultural influences changed. Future excavation of tumuli in the region might provide burial units with material from the 4th century BC. If not, we will have to accept that the cultural shift happened in the late 5th / early 4th c. BC, after which tumuli as grave markers and significant interventions in the landscape ceased to be erected. Flat necropolises – Komini being among them – in the future also might provide new burial units consolidating the picture of funerary practices of the 4th century BC and later. Our recent research enlightened these practices as early as the 3rd c. BC. It is important to note that the mentioned graves 3 and 4 were located at the most prominent point in Necropolis I at an altitude of 760m, so that according to the finds - the fibulae in the first instance - they could most likely be assigned to the earliest burials in Komini. Based on already obtained information it is clear that the community continued to bury their deceased in the following centuries. The earliest burial units revealed that the community was incorporated in already established communication networks which provided the people from the vicinity of Komini with desirable goods, in accordance with the fashion common for both the Central and Western Balkan and south Pannonian areas. Another question is tracing identities of the populations within specific areas. In this sense differences shown in material culture, particularly in dress elements and their combinations as well as specificities in burial customs, can be very instructive, as testified in the zone of the Western Balkans⁵⁷. Unfortunately, the region of north Montenegro is still insufficiently explored and our knowledge is restricted to very few sites. Thorough publication of these sites – Komini being the one with the great potential – will undoubtedly shed light on numerous aspects of life of the local communities at the dawn of the new era⁵⁸.

On the basis of the currently available pieces of information, we draw the conclusion that the Western Balkans communities lived in a well-connected and fast-changing world all the way through the 1st millennium BC. Their territorial borders were permeable and population movements – both in the sense of migrations within the common Balkan environment, and individual mobility - are acceptable explanation for the archaeological testimonies which are not always easy to decipher.

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⁵³ Truhelka 1909, fig. 16-20; Bižić 1951, 292, 293, T. III, 32; Tonc 2015, 140-141, fig. 15.

⁵⁴ Cf. Tonc 2015, 140-142, map 10.

⁵⁵ Cf. Dizdar 2020, 333-364.

⁵⁶ Cvijetić, Ljuština 2022, 26-27.

⁵⁷ Cf. Tonc 2015; Tonc 2017.

⁵⁸ Cvijetić, Ljuština 2022, 27.

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