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## **MATERIAL CULTURE**

Chairs: **Orsolya Heinrich-Tamaska, Ivana Popović**

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María José Sánchez Vicent

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*Late Antique Bronze Crosses Found in Punta de l'Illa de Cullera, Valencia, Spain.  
Archaeological Remains of the Emperor Justinian's Dream:  
A Reunified Roman Empire*

The Punta de l'Illa de Cullera was archaeologically examined for the first time during the summer in 1955. The archaeological excavations were supported by the Bryan Foundation and managed by Mr M. Tarradell and Mr E. Pla. Several architectural frames were kept record, inside one of them, archaeological remains found are, mainly, great amount of Late Roman Unguentaria, a collection of coins, which included several Justinian nummi, and two bronze crosses, the latest are subject of this paper. These archaeological remains are unrelated to other sited nearby, so that these are regarded as very singular finds.

The largest cross has 22,5 centimeters whole arms and 1 millimeters of thickness, and a fragment of one arm was loosed. Despite this, it could be an equal-armed cross and tree-shaped motifs can be distinguished in each of its arms, which will be focused on this paper. The decoration was done by small cross-shaped patterns graved in the bronze. The smallest cross has less than 5 centimeters, it was found complete and it is also an equal-armed cross. This cross could be considered a pendant cross because it has three hanging elements.

The aim of this paper is to research from archaeological information provided, to go on looking for similar remains in the subject, shaped, manufactured and function, mainly, into Byzantine ecclesiastical objects and the Early Byzantine city of Caričin Grad. Also asking what is the cultural context where the Christian meaning of the Tree of Life could be understood and identified by.

In addition, the different aspects above will be linked to the geographical features of this archaeological site, and, according to Procopius, to one of the aims of Justinian's policies: expanding the Empire 'to the farthest shores of the ocean'.



Valentina De Pasca

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### *A Symbol of Power. Many Outstanding Issues*

Disc brooches, as well as crossbow fibulae, were a clear symbol of social status and their typological differentiation connoted the social level of the bearer and his role. With the beginning of the fourth century disc brooches become an imperial insignia of the emperors of the Eastern Roman Empire. It is no accident that in the well-known sixth-century mosaic panel of San Vitale (Ravenna, Italy) the only one to wear a disc brooch with three pendulia is the emperor Justinian. This kind of clasp was indeed one of the imperial insignia of the Byzantine emperors therefore a symbol of power.

Portraits of Byzantine emperors on the most different media are often characterised by the presence of a clasp which holds the chlamys fastened on the right shoulder. Although literary and iconographic sources (e.g. coins, mosaics, statues) record such a custom, few luxury artefacts attest this kind of production, and none of them attributable with certainty to a Byzantine court workshop. The reverse occurs instead among the Lombards. Excavations in Lombard necropolis as well as sporadic findings in areas inhabited by the Lombards brought to light different typologies of disc clasps. It is so significant that a symbol of power purely “Byzantine” is used even by a different ethnic group. Why? If we assume that the Lombards inherited the symbolic meaning of the disc brooch to legitimate their power, it is not clear why most of the disc brooches were discovered in female burials. The discovery of some fibulas of particular value, however, poses another issue: was it a Lombard production or the result of an imperial donation?

This contribution will be built on such a dichotomy.

At first the focus will be on the iconographic sources which attest this custom in the Byzantine society and on the distinctive features of that jewel. When it would seem to start this fashion? What is its origin? These are only some of the questions we will attempt to give an answer bringing attention to an aspect often neglected.

The actors of the second part of the contribution will be the disc brooches stored in Italian and international museums. Although the luxury which distinguishes some of these objects suggests a high patronage (e.g. disc brooch from Benevento preserved at the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford, UK), to date unfortunately these artefacts are not attributable directly to the imperial sphere. Their typological and morphological analysis will allow us to give concrete shape to this kind of objects and to deepen this field of study in which the dialogue between archaeology and art history may lead to new possible interpretations.



Ivana Popović

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*Coupes en argent paléo-byzantines de Viminacium :  
pièces de service de table ou vases sacrés*

Cinq coupes sur pied en argent, dont quatre couvertes, sont devenues l'objet de différentes approches en ce qui concerne la question de leur fonction et de leur fabrication, depuis la publication des recherches en 1903. Dans la littérature existante, leur datation s'étend dans l'intervalle entre l'an 250 jusqu'au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle, et la détermination de leur affectation varie – des offrandes votives aux dieux païens, aux vases liturgiques. Les coupes ont été découvertes en 1899 à Kostolac (Viminacium), dans une niche au-dessus des fondations d'un édifice dont l'emplacement exact n'a jamais été déterminé. Au même endroit on a trouvé aussi un objet cylindrique en argent, orné des rangées de cases ellipsoïdes avec des motifs des intailles imprimées, ainsi que deux petites assiettes en argent, dont les bords sont ornés des représentations des animaux en pleine course et des masques d'une Ménade et d'un Satyre. Ces objets ont disparu pendant la Première Guerre mondiale. Les coupes trouvées à Viminacium sont hémisphériques, avec un pied haut en forme de trompette, et un couvercle concave muni d'une anse conique. Les formes analogues les plus proches sont celles des coupes des dépôts trouvés à Carthage et à Canoscio en Ombrie. Bien que ces coupes appartiennent à un groupe uniforme, de point de vue typologique les exemplaires de Viminacium sont quelque peu différents des coupes des dépôts nord-africain et italien ci-dessus, dont le pied est plus large et plus court, et le récipient plus profond. Après la publication d'une analyse détaillée de ces trouvailles, on a conclu que les coupes avec pied et couvercle étaient des ustensiles de table dans lesquels on conservait des aliments liquides ou des sauces, et le couvercle permettait de les garder au chaud. En tournant le couvercle à l'envers et en le posant sur son anse conique, on pouvait l'utiliser comme une assiette plate. Il ne faut pas exclure la possibilité de la fonction paraliturgique de ces coupes en tant que récipients dans lesquels on apportait les provisions nécessaires à la célébration de l'eucharistie. Les trouvailles de Viminacium comportent cinq coupes, tandis que les dépôts de Carthage et de Canoscio comprennent quatre récipients de ce type, et on a donc conclu que quatre ou cinq coupes sur pied avec couvercle, en tant qu'ustensiles de table, faisaient complète partie d'un service de diner. La remise des objets dans les dépôts de Carthage et de Canoscio est datée de la fin du Ve ou du début du VI<sup>e</sup> siècle, ce qui n'exclut pas la possibilité que certains objets soient fabriqués avant et conservés comme objets précieux. Le dépôt de Viminacium, comprenant des objets en argent – la propriété d'un citoyen riche – fabriqués vers la fin du IV<sup>e</sup> ou le début du Ve siècle, était peut-être déposé au cours de la quatrième décennie du Ve siècle, lorsque les villes de l'Illyrie étaient en danger de l'irruption des Huns et de leurs ravages. Étant donné que les coupes sur pied de Viminacium sont atypiques de ce groupe de récipients, il est possible qu'elles soient un produit local. Ces coupes, ainsi que d'autres objets de ces trouvailles, indiquent des liens commerciaux et artistiques étroits entre les ateliers toreutiques de l'Illyrie byzantine et ceux des parties ouest de l'Empire.



Jelena Anđelković Grašar

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*Type and Archetype in Female Representations on the Territory  
of the Central Balkans from the 4th to the Beginning of the 7th Century*

Female representations from the territory of the central Balkans in the period between the 4th and the beginning of the 7th century can be recognized as images of empresses, “ordinary” women and divine feminine. All these images separately have their significance and meaning within the visual culture of the time, but strong associations between them suggest multifold influences and correlations. Image of an empress was one of the most important models among representations of “ordinary” women, in terms of fashion, adornments, coiffure or beauty. Thus empress’s image was the type of representation desirable to be imitated. By following this type “ordinary” women were able to emphasize their social status or virtues that adorned their role models. In Christian ideology virtues of modesty and chastity were personified in another type, most exemplary image of the Theotokos. The Theotokos maternity and virginity were two main ideals for all Christian women, therefore empresses too. On the other hand, the Theotokos maternal type comprehend the vast heritage of mother’s figures known from various religions and cults, as well as archetypes from distant past.

Visual material from the territory of the central Balkans can be observed as a significant contribution in overall view at the feminine imagery in the period between the 4th and beginning of the 7th century, with relations between them that allow research of the types and archetypes that influenced their creation and meaning.



Orsolya Heinrich-Tamaska

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*Byzantine Goldsmithing in Avaria? Exchange and Transfer  
at the Periphery of the Empire during the 7th–8th Centuries AD*

The influence of Byzantium on the material culture has long been the subject of debate in archaeological research of the Avar period. Discussions have focused on the classic ‘centre-periphery’ model, which emphasises the cultural dominance of Byzantium over its nomadic horsemen neighbours in the Carpathian Basin. For example, attempts have been made to set up a list of criteria — on the basis of analyses of the technical and decorative attributes of fine metalwork — to separate originally Byzantine products from their imitations. This model will be discussed in this contribution using selected examples.



Berna Yildirim

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### *Metal Finds of Amorium Excavations: Architecture and Furniture Components*

Amorium where is in Antique Frigia, is located 168 km southwest of Ankara, 70 km northeast of Afyonkarahisar and 12 km east of Emirdağ district. Due to the location on the main roads extending in Anatolia and become a capital city of Anatolikon Thema in mid 7th century AD. Amorium has kept its existence as a military and administrative center until the middle period of the Byzantine Empire. The city is considered under two headings: The Upper City and The Lower City. Metal finds, which is the matter of this proceeding, were uncovered in the excavation of “Enclosure” at the Lower City between 1996-2008 years.

First scientific studies in Amorium have begun with a survey by Prof. Dr. R. Martin Harrison in 1987 year. Prof. Harrison has carried out excavations in the city between 1988-1992 years. The studies which were between 1993-2009 years, have sustained by Dr. Chris S. Lightfoot. Excavations are continuing under the presidency of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zeliha Demirel Gökalp on behalf of Culture and Tourism Ministry and Anadolu University since 2014.

“Enclosure” is located approximately 50-70 m. southwest of the Lower City Church and this place is almost in the middle of the archeological site. In the excavations which took place between 1996-2008 years, was unearthed Byzantine Bath, wine production workplace and unassociated places. Metal “architecture and furniture components” which is the subject of this proceeding and unearthed in the excavations which were at “Enclosure” between 1996-2008 years, they were dated and categorized considering their context and similar samples. Beside, these metal finds have been evaluated with the other finds which were unearthed in the context (glass, ceramic, bone, coin, lead seal etc.).



Krino Konstantinidou – Konstantinos T. Raptis

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*The Eleventh Century Innovations in the Byzantine Firing Technology:  
Evidence from Thessaloniki*

In an undisturbed bed of the main commercial road of Byzantine Thessaloniki —dated according to numismatic and ceramic evidence in the late eleventh or early twelfth century— numerous fragments of clay rods with pointed edges were found along with small sigmoid clay objects of circular section, which evidence the operation of a Middle Byzantine kiln with clay rods for glazed pottery production in the vicinity.

The clay rods form a shorter conical nib on the one edge and a longer, gradually thinner and pointed part on the other. The conical edges would be inserted in holes opened in successive rows in the internal walls of the kiln, while the elongated pointed parts of the clay rods were projected from the wall surface and formed series of shelves whereon the glazed wares were placed for firing. The smaller and significantly thinner sigmoid clay devices have been considered as standoffs, used to keep the glazed wares separated on the shelves and prevent their adherence. However, two sigmoid clay devices —adhered during the second firing procedure around the body of one clay rod— showcase their use also as hangers for the suspension of small-scaled glazed wares from the firing rods.

The recent findings from Thessaloniki — along with the firing rods that have been discovered in eleventh century layers in Ierissos, near the entrance to mount Athos provide evidence for the use of Byzantine kilns with rods as early as the eleventh century and clarify the purpose of the few sigmoid clay yokes found in the Middle Byzantine ceramic workshops of Corinth, where a fragment of a similar firing device was found adhered around the stem of a glazed goblet. The findings from Thessaloniki, Ierissos and Corinth comprise the earliest evidence of kilns with rods in Middle Byzantine potteries in Greece and the Balkans. So far in this geographical area this —common in the Islamic world and the western Mediterranean— kiln type had been securely documented only in two thirteenth-century glazed pottery workshops in Northern Greece (Serres and Mosynopolis). Similar recent findings from the Studenica Monastery showcase the operation of a glazed-pottery kiln with rods also in late thirteenth Serbia.

It seems that the type with rods was probably introduced in the Byzantine pottery workshops from the workshops of the Islamic world, where it was in common use from the tenth century. Furthermore, based on the suggestion that the use of tripod stilts for the prevention of the glazed wares adhesion was not invented in Byzantium before the thirteenth century, it seems that this —little documented so far— kiln type was probably the main one for the second firing of the Middle Byzantine glazed wares.

Architectural remains of kilns with rods have never been traced —or at least identified— in Greece. Based on the morphological and structural characteristics of similar kilns found in the Hispan-gaulish, the Levantine and the African shores of the Mediterranean basin, the Byzantine kilns with rods might be hypothetically reconstructed as one-storey furnaces with unified combustion and firing chamber. The lower part of the kilns would be defined by a perimetric, either rock-cut or built bench, designed to confine the hearth; over that, the clay rod shelves would be arranged in series, projected in the interior of the cylindrical or latency conical upper-structure of the kilns.